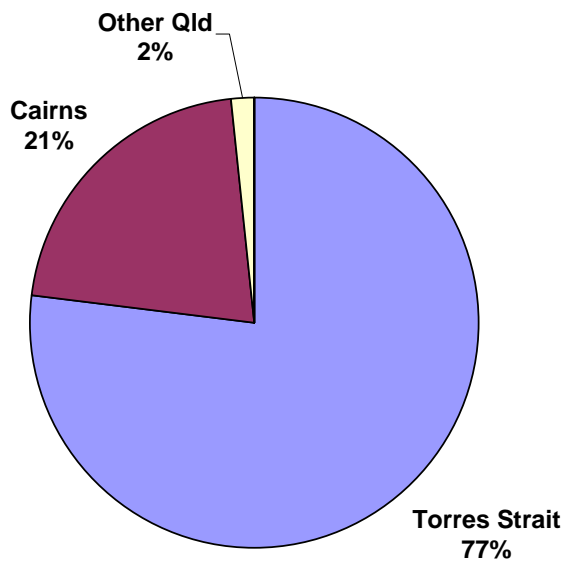


5.4.2 Origin and Destination

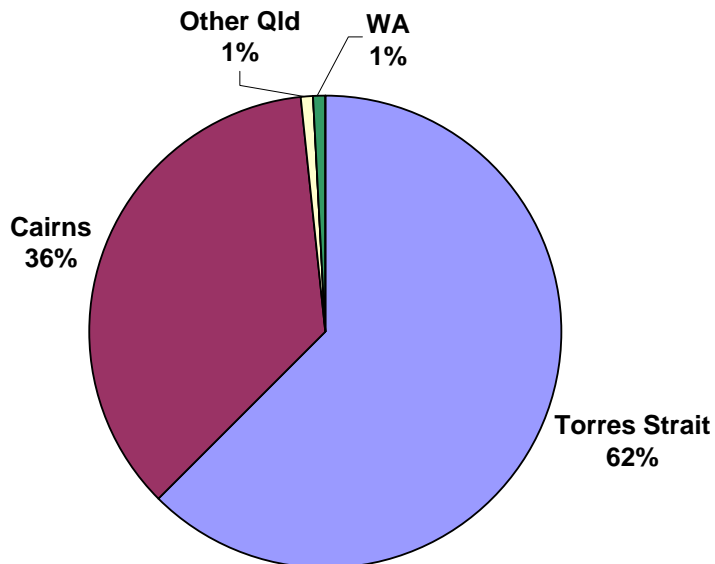
Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 shows the respective origins and destinations of the users surveyed. As expected, most of the travel undertaken was intra-regional (within the Torres Strait), with 77% of all trips originating in the Torres Strait and 62% terminating there. Cairns was the second most common origin/destination, accounting for almost all of the remaining trips. Only 2% of the travellers had origins or destinations outside of Cairns or the Torres Strait.

Figure 5.3 Origin of Travellers



117 Responses

Figure 5.4 Destination of Travellers



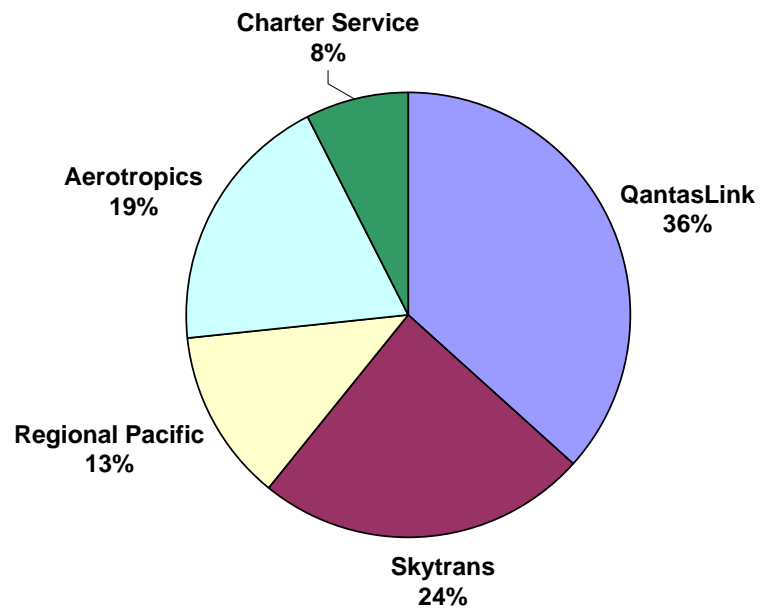
117 Responses

5.4.3 Airline

Travellers flew with a mix of airlines from the two airports where the surveys were carried out, with the ordered breakdown as follows (shown graphically in **Figure 5.5**):

- QantasLink 36%;
- Skytrans 24%;
- Aerotropics 19%;
- Regional Pacific 13%; and
- Charter service 8%.

Figure 5.5 Airline Used by Travellers



120 Responses

Table 5.2 contains a list of all comments made by air travel users in relation to what they liked about using air travel as a mode of transport. Most users did not provide a comment, while others made multiple comments. The most mentioned positive comment was safety, however this was only made by 8 users (16% of respondents).

Table 5.2 Positive Air Travel Comments

Comment	Number	Percentage
Ability to carry heavy loads	2	4%
Availability	2	4%
Comfort	1	2%
Convenience	1	2%
Cost of travel	1	2%
Direct routes	1	2%
Faster and more reliable than ferries	4	8%
Frequent flyer points	4	8%
Friendly	2	4%
Good connections with other airlines	1	2%
Good for work travel	1	2%
Quality of service	1	2%
Reliable	3	6%
Reputation	3	6%
Response to 24 hour call	1	2%
Safety	8	16%
Schedule	4	8%
Seat allocations	4	8%
Wages (pilot)	1	2%
Work booking	6	12%
Total	51	100%

83 "no comment" responses were also received

Users were also asked to comment on any negative aspects they perceive of air travel in the Torres Strait. The most common response was concerns over the age of the aircraft operating the services. Other negative comments included the indirect, all-stop nature of the flights, as well as the baggage limits imposed on passengers. Each of the negative comments received are listed in **Table 5.3**.

Table 5.3 Negative Air Travel Comments

Comment	Number	Percentage
Age of aircraft	10	19%
Baggage limits	7	13%
Bumpy ride	1	2%
Cold inside	2	4%
Cost of airfare	4	8%
Delays not informed	1	2%
Dependent on timetable and route	2	4%
Don't have check-in at Thursday Island like in the old days	1	2%
Food	3	6%
Indirect all-stop flights	9	17%
Local Torres Strait people should be flight attendants	2	4%
Maintenance and standard of infrastructure at airfields	1	2%
Need bigger planes	1	2%
Need for more flights between the islands and Cairns	1	2%
Poor connectivity	1	2%
Reliability	1	2%
Rough water	2	4%
Time wasting	1	2%
Timeliness	1	2%
Travel times	1	2%
Total	52	100%

82 "no comment" responses were also received

Table 5.4 contains a list of other issues obtained from those surveyed, regarding air travel in the Torres Strait. In addition to the age of the aircrafts and baggage limits, which were listed in the negative comments table above, other issues included the cost of airfares and the maintenance of the airports and facilities.

Table 5.4 Air Travel Issues in the Torres Strait

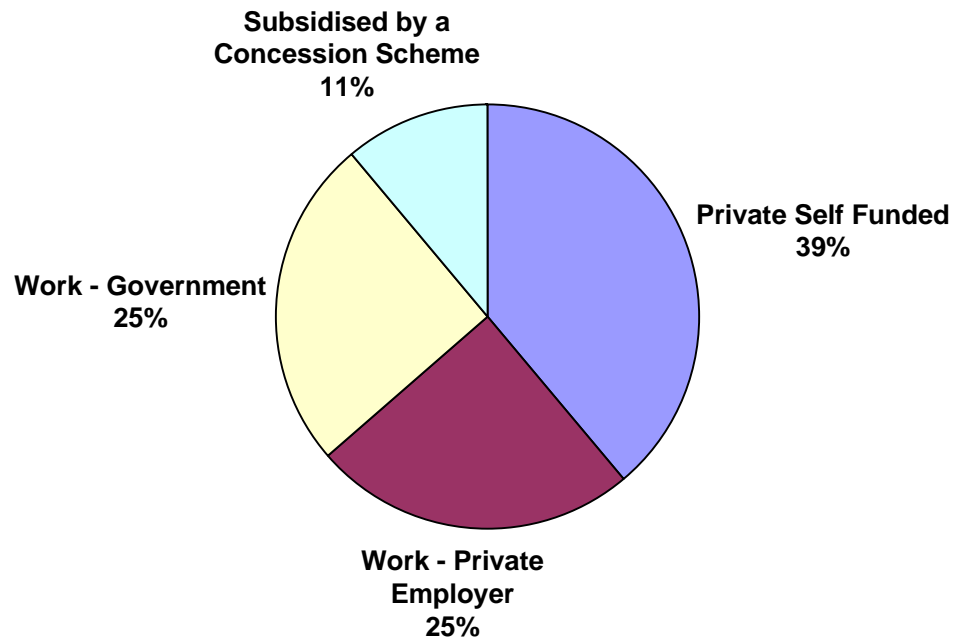
Comment	Number	Percentage
Age of fleet	13	15%
Airport security	5	6%
Baggage limits	10	11%
Connectivity with flights and hotels	5	6%
Cost of fares	14	16%
Discount for direct payment	1	1%
Don't like travel by air	1	1%
Emergency access	3	3%
Indirect flights	6	7%
In-flight refreshments	1	1%
Maintenance of airports/facilities	7	8%
Newer planes to be bigger to accommodate size of people	1	1%
Safety	6	7%
Scheduling of flights	4	5%
Security	2	2%
Short runways on islands	1	1%
Smaller operator issues	1	1%
Timeliness	2	2%
Travel time	3	3%
Weather	1	1%
Total	87	100%

66 "no comment" responses were also received

5.4.4 Trip Funding

It was previously reported that approximately 85% of air travel is either directly or indirectly funded commercially or by the State/Federal Government. **Figure 5.6** shows the survey findings on the question of how the travellers were funding their trip. 39% of respondents said that their trip was self-funded, leaving the remaining 61% paid for commercially or by the government. However, of the 25% of users that said their trip was funded by their non-government employer, a number of these costs would likely be passed on to the government. This is because many of these users were workers on government sponsored projects for the Torres Strait region, and would ultimately pass-on their travel expenses to their government client.

Figure 5.6 Trip Funding



118 Responses

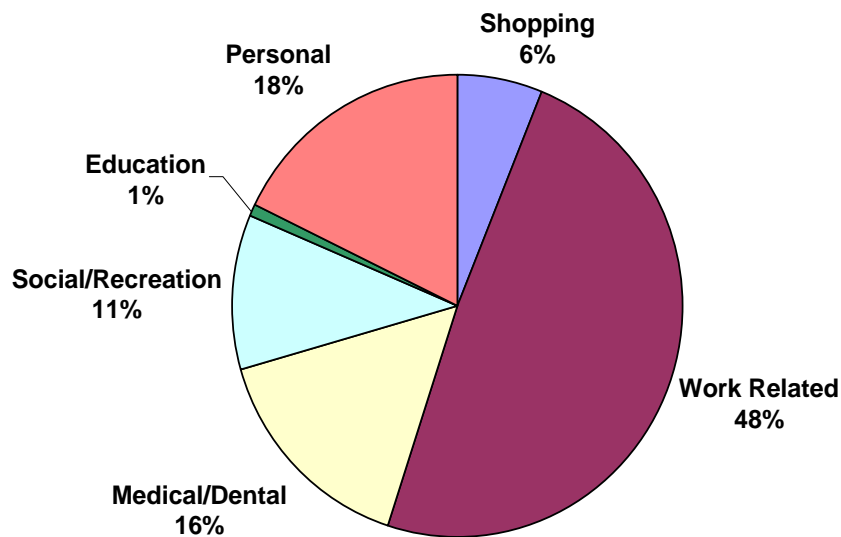
5.4.5 Trip Profile

Figure 5.7, Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 show the respective trip purpose, length and regularity of the air travel users surveyed.

All recoded “day trip” trip lengths were for users travelling for work related purposes, while the majority of “over night” trip lengths were for medical/dental purposes.

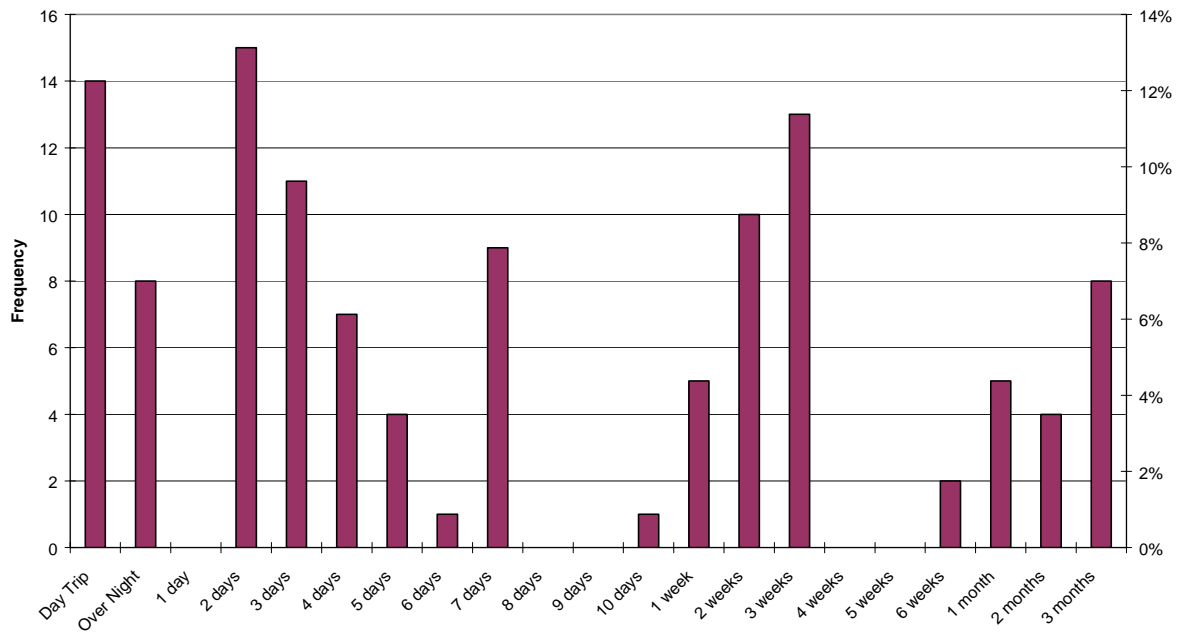
Nearly 60% of trips made were for a duration of one week or less.

Figure 5.7 Trip Purpose



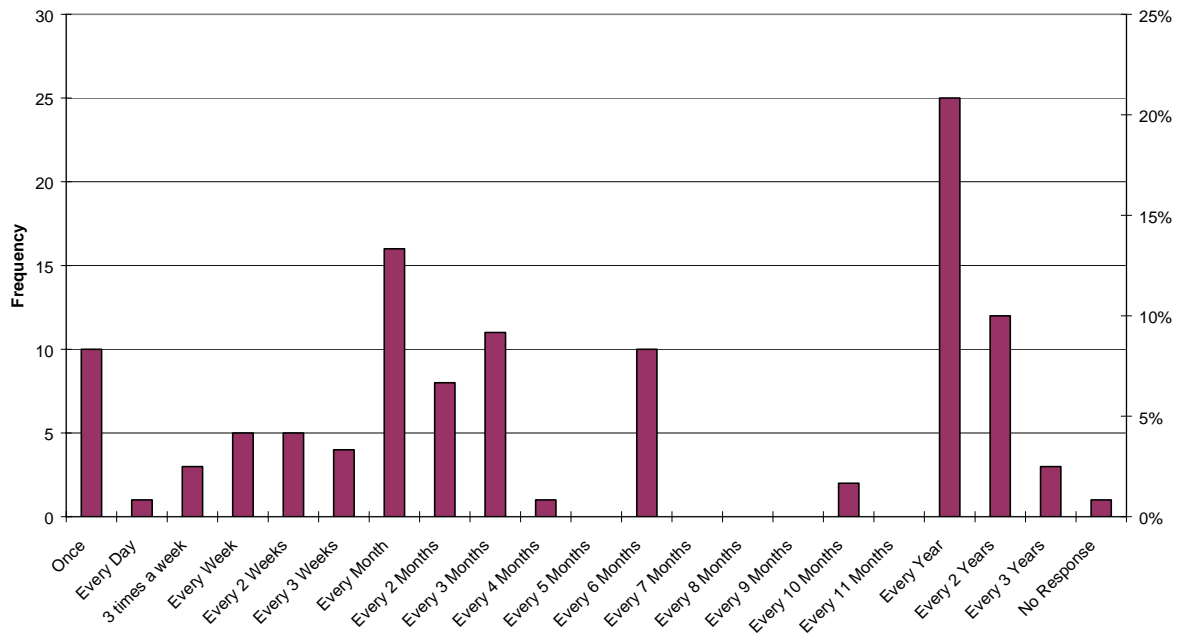
129 Responses

Figure 5.8 Trip Length



117 Responses

Figure 5.9 Trip Regularity



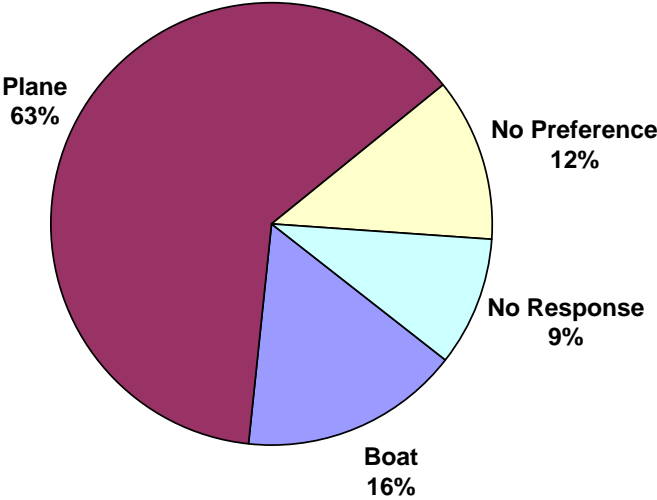
117 Responses

5.4.6 Mode Preferences

Out of the 117 users surveyed, 73 (63%) said that they preferred to travel by plane rather than boat, without regard to cost, time and safety. Conversely, 19 (16%) respondents preferred to travel by boat to the other islands in the Torres Strait and Cairns, while 14 (12%) had no preference as shown in **Figure 5.10**.

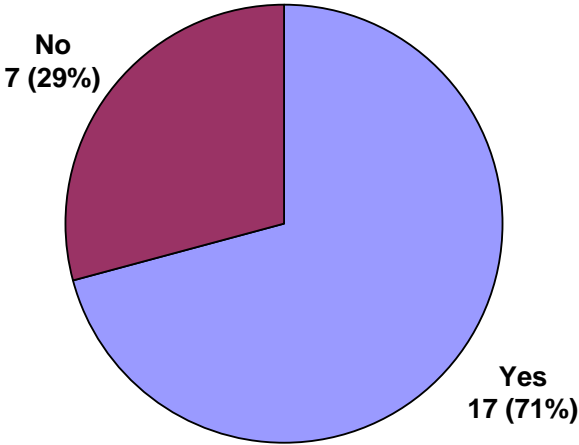
After taking account the lower cost of boat travel, as well as the longer journey times, the number of users preferring boat travel dropped to 17, as shown in **Figure 5.11**.

Figure 5.10 Travel Mode Preference



117 Responses

Figure 5.11 Boat Travel Preference (After Taking Account of Cost and Travel Time)

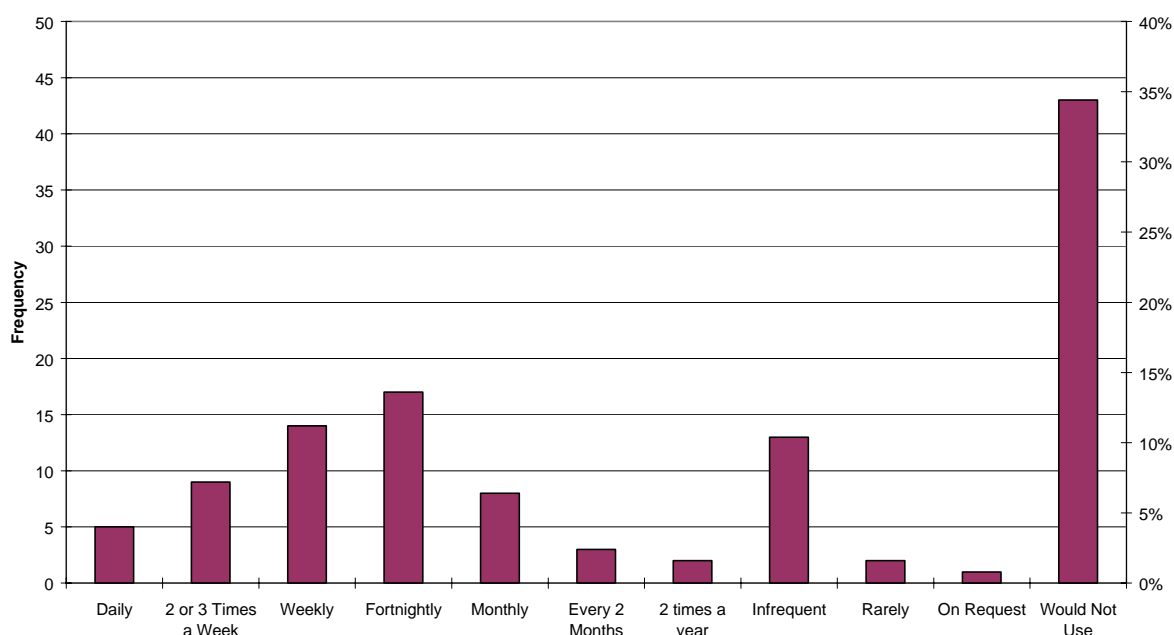


24 Responses

The air travel users were also asked to estimate their usage of a future ferry service in the Torres Strait, if one was offered. Usage of the service was as follows (see **Figure 5.12**):

- 43 (37%) said they would never use such a service;
- 28 (24%) would use the service once a week or more;
- 25 (21%) would use the service fortnightly or monthly; and
- 21 (18%) would use the service less frequently than monthly.

Figure 5.12 Potential Use of a Ferry Service



117 Responses

Table 5.5 lists a series of issues that air travel users could foresee with a ferry service operating in the Torres Strait. The main concern with such a service would be the safety and weather issues of travelling by boat between the islands. Additional perceived issues were the possible lengthy travel times and uncertainty over whether appropriate ferry and boarding (jetty) facilities would be provided.

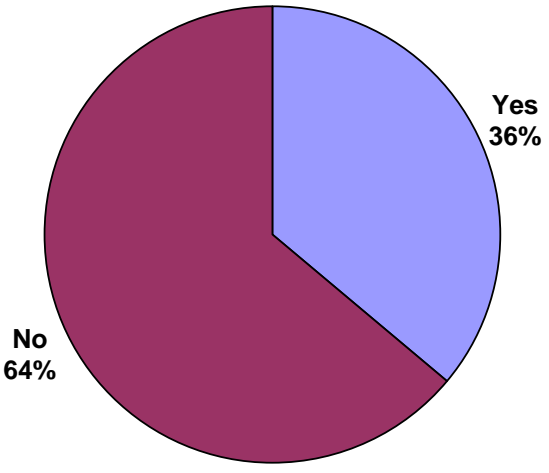
Table 5.5 Issues on Proposed Ferry Service in the Torres Strait

Comment	Number	Percentage
Appropriate ferry and boarding facilities	12	16%
Connectivity	1	1%
Cost	3	4%
Dinghy will still be used for fishing	8	10%
Ferry for cargo	1	1%
Improved availability of route and timetable information	4	5%
Loading and unloading	1	1%
More ferries	8	10%
One ticket	1	1%
Reliability	2	3%
Timetable	1	1%
Travel time	12	16%
Weather and safety (ferry/jetty)	23	30%
Total	77	100%

51 "no comment" responses were also received

Users were also asked to comment on their preference between using a dinghy as opposed to a ferry. Out of the 83 respondents, 30 (36%) preferred to travel by dinghy, while 53 (64%) preferred the ferry.

Figure 5.13 Preference for using a Dinghy over a Ferry



83 Reponses