



From the CEO

Regular readers of this column will know the weighing up of pros and cons undertaken in 2012 that resulted in my husband and I deciding to try to live without a second car. It is now two years since we made that decision so I thought an update was in order.

We have achieved all that we set out to in terms of saving money and taking a car off the Kwinana Freeway during peak hour. Now that our youngest has moved home again she often comes with us and so in fact we have taken a second car off the congested road system.

During those first few months, coming to terms with sharing a car did require some getting used to. However, since then Bob has moved to a city based job which has made it easier, especially given that his office is across the road from the Esplanade Train Station. Mostly the three of us set off in the morning and go via Bullcreek Train Station to drop him off whilst we battle the traffic. We can still be on the Mount Henry Bridge when he smugly texts to say that he is already at his desk just 20 minutes later. We usually arrive at the office about 45 minutes after leaving home and if there are any accidents, traffic police or cars stopped in the emergency lane it can be an hour or more. Without traffic the journey by car takes 20 minutes door to door.

The reverse journey for Bob is straightforward: he hops on the train and connects with the bus with a journey time of 35 minutes. For me it can be a dream run if I get away on time or am coming home late from a function but if I leave at what seems to be the same time as everyone else is spilling out of car parks across the city it is a slow journey.

Bob's daily experience, and my infrequent one, is that the train is cramped with an atmosphere made worse by some people having no shame talking about personal issues loudly either to their neighbour or the person hanging on the end of their mobile phone and those that don't know how to use deodorant. Most commuters however are just numb to the journey in that it is a means to an end, yet every once in a while a wry smile reaches their lips as the train speeds by the cars that are crawling along.

During the day, unless I have to leave the city limits, I walk or catch a CAT Bus or one of the many other buses that service the CBD for free.

In reality our journey as a one car couple has meant that I have the car during the week more often than not and, as long as Bob has a means of getting to his Saturday golf game, he doesn't seem to mind. On the odd occasion when we have both needed it, one of us has borrowed our daughter's car or caught a taxi. This is a small price to pay against the more than \$1,000 a month the second car was costing.

Over these past two years I have heard of more people switching to public transport or at least using it as an option for their commute. As I travel up and down the Terrace I see more familiar faces on the buses than ever before. Cycling seems to be enjoying an uptake and end of trip facilities are becoming an increasingly important consideration for organisations when thinking about their tenancy arrangements.

The metro region was designed with a 'car is king' attitude, however with car ownership reaching 2 million vehicles and congestion a much talked about issue there are a number of us considering our options and all power to those of you who are.