

Journey Time Study

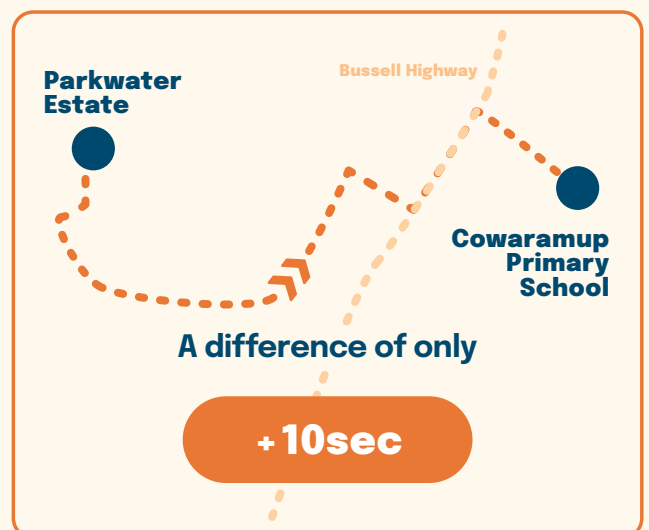
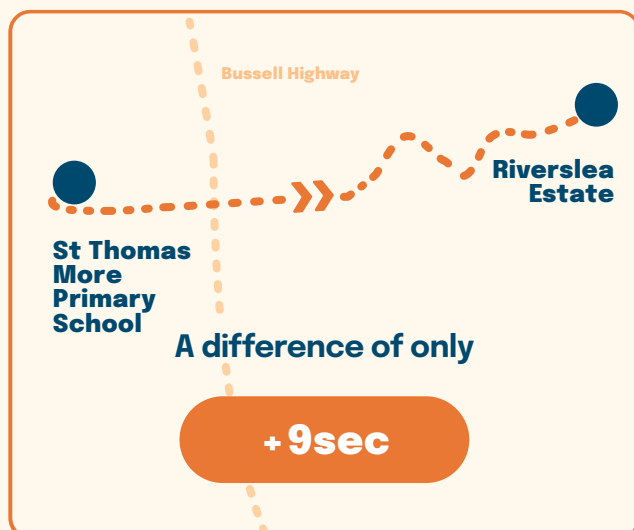
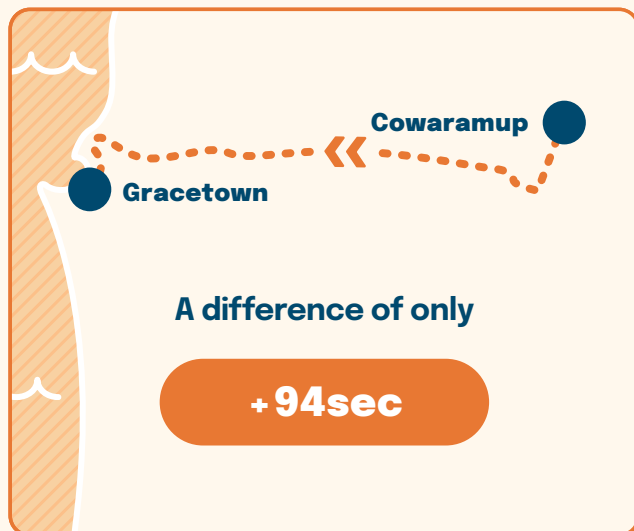
Overview

To show how the Safer Speeds Trial might impact travel times, several routes affected by the speed limit changes were driven.

Arterial, state government-managed roads are excluded from the Trial (with the exception of a small stretch of Bussell Highway within Augusta).

The study calculated the impact of the Trial would be negligible on several routes between major towns that utilise these arterial roads, including Augusta to Margaret River, so they were not included in the driving assessment.

Real-world examples



Theoretical assessment

Consultant PJA were engaged to determine the theoretical increase in travel times on routes that connect with known landmarks or destinations within the Trial area, with a focus on four route types:

- » Connection to major towns.
- » Connection between town centres in different local government areas.
- » Connections between town centres and tourist attractions.
- » Connections from major town centres to local amenities such as schools.

The theoretical calculations identified the routes likely to have the biggest increase in travel time due to the proposed speed limit changes.

Real-world testing

Several of the routes were then taken forward for real-world testing, with priority given to routes with the biggest theoretical increase in journey time.

Routes were also chosen to ensure an even spread of real-world tests across the network.

A key insight was that real-world journey times were heavily impacted by congestion, traffic lights, other road users and driving conditions.

Methodology for real-world driving assessment

Each route was driven two or three times at the existing speed, and two or three times at the proposed speed, depending on the total length of the route. The assessment also ensured:

- » Journeys were undertaken outside of peak periods to avoid congestion.
- » Flashing beacons were used when travelling at speeds less than the posted speed limit.
- » Allowed vehicles following to pass (if safe to do so).
- » Any events that may impact on the driving experience were noted.
- » If events occurred that impacted on the results of driving assessment (e.g. trip 1 and trip 2 had significantly different results), additional driving of the routes were conducted.

The driving assessment was undertaken in fine weather, mid-January 2024. They were typically done during weekdays.

As the assessment was undertaken in school holidays, there were some areas where congestion was frequent and consistent. Therefore, some driving was done in the evening hours to avoid the heavy traffic and activity.

The travel times were dictated somewhat by:

- » The volume and speed of other road users, with traffic flows restricting the ability to drive at the posted speed limit or the proposed speed limit.
- » Navigating the town centres, where there was heavy pedestrian activity and parking space use.
- » Delays at intersections (particularly signalised intersections).
- » Other road users such as cyclists where immediate passing was not an option.
- » The road alignment forcing a reduction in actual safe travel speed.

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