

Re-imagining Massey Staff International Air Travel Practices - Executive Summary Dr Sal Lampkin (27/1/23)

Context

The purpose of this project was threefold: to improve understanding of historical (pre-Covid) Massey staff international air travel patterns, to categorize reasons for such travel, and to identify opportunities to maximize value of that travel. The 23-month project was led by Dr Sal Lampkin, Ohu Toitūtanga/Sustainability Office, supported by the International Air Travel Advisory Group and the Australasian Universities Air Travel Consortium. Staff concerns initially included how the quality of Massey's core business will be maintained with reduced travel, the impact of developing a OneMassey travel policy and that travel was being targetted to save costs.

2019 international travel data

In 2019, 29.4% of staff travelled internationally; 83.3% of which was by academics (43.2% of all academic staff). 7,376 trips were completed, 24% international and 76% domestic. Long-haul trips contributed 80% to Massey's total emissions from 2019 air travel.

The biggest percentage of travel was to Australia (37%), with 29% to Asia, 17% to UK/Europe and 12% to US/Canada. Twenty three percent of staff travelled overseas once or twice (77% of staff who travelled), 18% three or four times and 5% travelled five or more times.

Senior Lecturers (24%) and Professors (22%) made up just under half of travel, with Associate Professors, Lecturers, Unit Heads and Directors all 10% or less.

Project data analysis

The five reasons for staff travel were relationship building/exposure, access to resources, external drivers, building capacity, marketing and recruitment.

As much as 85% of staff travelled to attend/participate in a conference. Those staff who travelled once or twice that year were more likely to be presenting at the conference than attending/participating, the opposite being true for staff travelling three times or more.

Not being able to travel overseas due to Covid-19 was found to have had a lot/huge impact for 57% of survey respondents who identified as early career researchers, with a moderate impact for 20% of them and none/little impact for 22%. In response to how well they managed their career during this time, 51% said ok, 26% poorly and 23% well.

Fifty four percent of respondents who travelled overseas in 2019, and 72% who did not, considered reducing international travel should be a strategic priority for Massey. Forty percent of respondents considered that at least 40% of the activities they travelled for, can now be achieved without flying. Opportunities for change include travelling smarter, changing conference practices and improving the internal travel application process.

Report recommendations

Complete internal leave policy review

Introduce software to provide adequate data metrics

Co-create a system to enhance connectivity & inclusivity regarding staff travel

Continue consultation with tertiary sector stakeholders regarding the need for a global culture of online events and interactions

Massey to host an AUATC 2023 symposium.

Click [here](#) for full report.