

1.14 A REMARKABLE INCREASE IN PUBLIC LIFE

How is the city used in 2004 compared to 1993?

As a final item in this story of Melbourne City's achievements, it only remains to take a closer look at the extent and character of public life in the city compared to the situation recorded in 1993.

This is possible because Melbourne is one of the few cities in the world where accurate data on public life have previously been collected.

The surveys carried out in November 2004 used exactly the same methods, in similar seasonal and weather conditions and at the same locations as in 1993. Given that a number of new public spaces have been added over the intervening period, however, the 2004 study covered a wider range of sites. The public life survey is described in detail in Part 3 of this document. Outlined below are the most interesting findings regarding changes to public life.

A remarkable increase in pedestrian traffic

Pedestrian traffic was recorded on ten sites both during the week and on Saturdays, from 10am to midnight. Nine of the ten streets were also studied in 1993, which gives a solid basis for comparing the situation then and now.

The 2004 survey shows a remarkable increase in the number of people who walk in the city.

On weekdays during the day (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) an increase of pedestrian traffic by 39 per cent was recorded. Significantly, the number of pedestrians in the evening (6 p.m. to midnight) on weekdays has doubled. In 1993, the pedestrian flows on weekdays were markedly lower than on Saturdays. In 2004, the pedestrian numbers on weekdays – by day or by night – have grown so much as to equal the Saturday figures, while the Saturday figures have increased less than on weekdays, but still grown by a notable 10 per cent.

The most prominent increases are found in Bourke Street Mall, Bourke Street (Swanston to Russell Streets), Swanston Street (south) and at Princes Bridge, while the recordings from Russell Street are almost unchanged. The widened footpaths in Bourke Street (east), the development of Federation Square and upgrading of laneways west of Swanston Street are attributed to this trend. Fears expressed years ago about the viability of Swanston Street Walk have clearly been proved unfounded. In 2004 Swanston Street has more pedestrians per day than Regent Street in London!

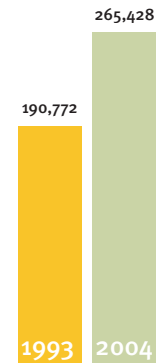
In summary, the increase in pedestrian traffic at all times of the day and week – and not least the doubling of people on the streets by night – are absolutely remarkable. The pattern is logical and consistent, with figures from one street being reflected by similar counts in connecting streets, and collectively forms a resounding picture of a city that is experiencing an impressive increase in public life.

Pedestrian traffic 1993 and 2004 weekdays

Daytime
10am - 6pm

TOTAL 1993: 190,772
TOTAL 2004: 265,428

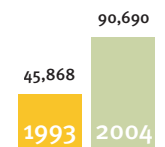
UP 39%



Evening
6pm - 12am

TOTAL 1993: 45,868
TOTAL 2004: 90,690

UP 98%



Pedestrian traffic 1993 and 2004 Saturday

Daytime
10am - 6pm

TOTAL 1993: 194,764
TOTAL 2004: 212,862

UP 9%



Evening
6pm - 12am

TOTAL 1993: 88,020
TOTAL 2004: 99,420

UP 13%

