

# Sydney Food Trucks Trial Report



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# 1. Executive summary

**This report presents a comprehensive history of the Sydney Food Trucks trial, and will demonstrate some of the findings from this project.**

## Background

The food trucks trial emerged as a direct result of the *OPEN Sydney Discussion Paper* through public consultations in late 2011. People had told the City that they wanted high quality food options late at night, as seen in other global cities.

The Sydney food truck program is just one of the many key directions the City of Sydney has developed within the *OPEN Sydney* strategy to deliver the vision of becoming a globally competitive and innovative city. The popularity of the food trucks has highlighted public demand for a sophisticated world-class street food scene, and Sydney is just starting to experience a new alternative in late night culture.

The trial's objective was to create a vibrant late night economy through a unique business model, whilst providing a new sustainable food industry for a growing market. The intention was not to drive away existing customers from established food outlets, but rather to increase options where none had been previously. The City is striving to work with local businesses so that the new market demand compliments existing businesses, rather than directly competing with them.

Research reveals a number of thriving nightlife cities across North America, Europe, Canada and Asia. International cities have had positive impacts for local business through increased foot traffic. This in turn has added vitality to their late night precincts to which street vending and food truck businesses contribute to greatly.

Food trucks are creating a more diverse Sydney by trading late at night and where there are few food options. The new food truck business model is directly aligned with, and supports the initiatives of; *Sydney 2030*, *OPEN Sydney Strategy Action Plan*, *Creative Sydney Discussion Paper* and the *Late Night Trading DCP*.

Food trucks are now providing an alternative to alcohol related activities in Sydney at night. As mobile vehicles they have the ability to trade in areas that may be in need of activation, or at times and places where there are no other affordable or healthy food options.

The food truck concept has provided a new access point for start-up businesses to service the community in a variety of flexible ways. Quirky food truck designs add to the unique texture of Sydney's urban landscape. The added benefit of converting traditional day time spaces into new uses at night has been discovered with the introduction of food trucks into underused area. Food trucks have also proven that their presence in any place promotes a feeling of welcoming and safety within their environment, which in turn benefits all residents, workers and visitors alike.

## 2. International programs



The food truck phenomenon has taken the USA by storm. They have had a positive impact on social and economic vitality by bringing inexpensive and healthy food options to the public. Food trucks also promote safety in areas with passive surveillance. It has also been reported that they are opening their own brick-and-mortar businesses on the strength of their food trucks.

### New York City, New York, USA

*Population: 8,224,910*

*Size: 484.41 km<sup>2</sup>*

*Number of food trucks: 3,000 (capped)*

*Permit length: 2 years*

*Permit price: \$200*

It is estimated that there are around 20,000 street vendors according to the New York City Street Vendor Project. These small business types include hot dog vendors, flower vendors, t-shirt vendors, street artists, food trucks, and many others.

To trade in New York, food truck vendors must first have both a food vendor license and a separate permit for the vehicle. Both permits are issued by the New York City Department of Health, and while there is no limit on the number of licenses, there is a cap of 3,000 vehicle permits citywide. There is a waiting list of approximately 2,000 interested vendors and no new names have been added to the list since 2007.

The licence restrictions and loop holes have given rise to a vendor permit black market. Some of these illicit permits start from \$20,000 whereas the original permit only costs \$200. The black market thrives because permit-holders can renew their permits without having to prove that they operate or own a truck. The artificially

low cost of a license, set by the Health Department, has also contributed to the exorbitant black market prices.

### The Vandy Awards, USA

The Vandy Awards were created, by the not-for-profit Street Vendor Project, based on the strength of the food truck movement in New York. The awards are in their ninth year and have since spread to four other capital cities across the US to include New Orleans, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Public nominations determine which vendors compete against each other in a cook-off for the best street food vendor award.

### Los Angeles, California, USA

*Population: 3,792,621*

*Size: 1,215 km<sup>2</sup>*

*Number of food trucks: 6,000*

*Permit length: 1 year*

*Permit price: \$695*

It's been said that Los Angeles is where the food truck revolution was born. It is also considered to have some of the strictest standards for food truck businesses. Operators must first obtain both a business license and health permit issued by the Los Angeles Municipality. Preparation kitchens are required and must also be approved.

Operators can trade on public streets for free and on private property with prior approval from owners. Vendors are also rated on the same grading system as bricks and mortar establishments and must post on the window their latest inspection grade. Of the 6,000 food trucks, it is estimated that only around 200 sell gourmet style cuisines.



### San Francisco, California, USA

Population: 825,863

Size: 76 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of food trucks: 717

Permit length: 7 years

Permit price: from \$2,531.76 (location based)

Permits for mobile food business started in 2011. Truck owners apply for both a location permit and permit to operate from the Department of Public Works. The permits allow trading for three days within a seven-day period at one location, and operators can apply for more than one spot. Food trucks cannot park within 23m of a bricks and mortar business or within 150m of middle schools and up to 300m of high schools.

San Francisco has been mapped into zones where food trucks can and cannot operate. Each operator must nominate an area where they wish to trade including dates and times.

The new industry has created street food gatherings such as SoMa StrEat Food Park where covered seating, a beer garden and bathrooms are provided. The park has been set up in what was once a disused parking lot underneath a highway overpass. The space can accommodate up to 10 food trucks that rotate throughout the week and is open seven days.

Another enterprise born from the food truck movement is the regular Off The Grid event. This simple idea came from grouping street food vendors wanting to create an Asian style market in locations that are not easily activated throughout the day.

### Portland, Oregon, USA

Population: 603,106

Size: 209.21 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of food trucks: 218

Permit length: 1 year

Permit price: from \$2,330

Food carts have become popular in Portland as in the other cities around America and opening a food cart or truck in Portland is a multi-step process. This is mainly because the licenses and permits are based on the business models.

All mobile food units must be licensed and pass a health inspection prior to construction or operation. Mobile food vehicles must operate out of a licenced facility such as a restaurant. There are four types of permits that are based on the menu served from the vehicle. Operators must list the locations with dates and times that they will be serving from. Should a food truck menu or location change, they must notify the authorities.

The Urban Vitality Group for the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning had written a report entitled "Food Cartology" which studied the effects of food carts in the city. The report found an overall positive significant contribution to the liveability, community economic development, employment opportunities and overall social interactions. The success of the food truck economy has said to be because of the permissive regulatory structure set out by the City.

# STREET FOOD REVOLUTION

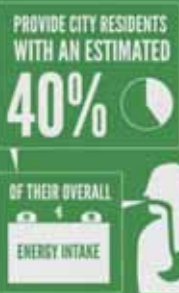
## STREET FOOD IS

Ready-to-eat food and drink sold on the street or in other public places

### STREET FOOD IS CONSUMED BY



### POPULAR STREET FOODS ARE



## STREET FOOD VENDOR EVOLUTION



### Traditional Food Carts

Throughout the ages street sellers have moved from place to place selling food.

### Chuck Wagons

Invented by a Texas Ranger in 1866 to feed cowboys, it is regarded as the first mobile 'food truck'.

### Motorised Food Trucks

The automobile improved the speed at which sellers could move from place to place.



### Electric Food Carts

Probably the icon of street food, pushcarts can be found in cities all over the world.

### Wienermobile

The Wienermobile from Oscar Mayer is generally regarded as the first mobile marketing vehicle.

### Modern Food Trucks

Hi-tech kitchens on wheels, modern food trucks provide restaurant quality food at street prices.

# STREET FOOD REVOLUTION



There are 5,738 books available on Amazon to purchase related to street food.



We predict in 2012 the search term 'street food' will continue to grow, particularly in August.



On average the search term 'street food' has 2.5k social mentions each month.



In the last 12 months the search term 'street food Asia' has increased by 120%.



Searching 'street food' in Google News shows on average 364m results in a 24h period.



Find your nearest street food vendor apps are becoming more popular in mobile app stores.

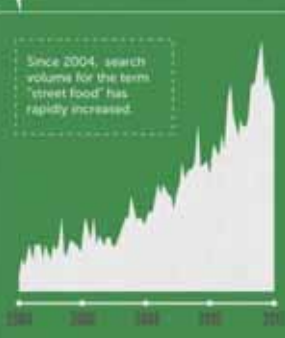
## REGIONAL INTEREST FOR THE SEARCH TERM "STREET FOOD"



### BRITISH STREET FOOD AWARDS 2011



### SEARCH TERM - "STREET FOOD"



STREET FOOD INFOGRAPHIC FROM  
**thefoodpeople**  
[www.thefoodpeople.co.uk](http://www.thefoodpeople.co.uk)

SOURCES  
Google Insights for Search  
UN Food and Agriculture Organization  
British Street Food Awards  
Topsy

## 3. Other capital cities



### City of Melbourne, Victoria

Population: 105,381

Size: 37.7 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of food trucks: 48

Permit length: 3 years

Permit price: from \$2,400 per site

The City of Melbourne had drafted a *Street Trading Strategy* to encourage activities that would provide unique experiences and enhance various areas in the city. This strategy was revised in 2003, and a schedule street trading sites were endorsed. This schedule gives locations for various street trading activities, including horse drawn carriages, fruit and flower kiosks, and food vans.

The first 'gourmet' street food truck to hit the streets of Melbourne was Beatbox Kitchen in 2009. This initiative was driven by owner Raph Rashid, whose dream was to bring American style burgers to Melbourne.

The City of Melbourne Council then launched a Street Activation Policy in 2011. The policy outlines how to govern and support this new food truck industry.

The City had also set up nine designated 'food van' areas on various streets within the Local Government Area, and has recently announced two new sites will be added in 2014.

All new food truck operators must apply for a permit to trade via a public tendering process. The process has criteria that include quality, diversity, uniqueness, safety and sustainability. Permit holders are able to trade at one of the designated food van sites and fees are paid monthly according to the value of the site.



### City of Adelaide, South Australia

Population: 19,639

Size: 15.57 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of food trucks: 40 (capped)

Permit length: 6 months

Permit price: from \$732.60

The mobile food vending pilot program was launched in 2011 as part of Splash Adelaide, an initiative of Adelaide City Council and supported by the South Australian Government. The program aims to increase the vibrancy of Adelaide by supporting the community and businesses to trial initiatives, activities and events.

52 trial permits were provided as part of the pilot program and following the success of this program, Adelaide City Council has continued mobile food vending beyond the pilot. Guidelines were developed in consultation with mobile food vendors, local businesses and the general public and were endorsed by Council in May 2013.

Going forward new applicants are chosen by a selection panel. Mobile food vendors can trade on streets and footpaths where there is adequate space to accommodate without compromising access and safety.

Adelaide Council is also developing a smartphone app for mobile food vending.

# 4. Sydney food truck trial



## City of Sydney snap shot

Population: 180,000

Size: 26.15 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of food trucks: 50 (capped)

Permit length: 1 year

Permit price: from \$4,000

## Project manager

The City had appointed a temporary full-time staff member to ensure the smooth running of the trial by providing a central point of contact for all internal and external stakeholders.

## Participant selection

The City had initially wanted to restrict the number of food trucks to only 10 operators for the duration of the 12 month trial. These selected operators would serve hot food whilst operating under strict Plans of Management and must meet all health compliance requirements under these conditional trial permits.

The City devised a two part process to select the food truck participants for the trial. The first part was an Expression of Interest (EOI), and the second was the Cook-Off challenge where the finalists would be selected to participate in the trial.

## Expressions of Interest (EOI)

The City issued an EOI where applications were assessed by a panel according to the selection criteria. The EOI appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Government tender section as well as Good Living supplement, and the Daily Telegraph. It invited potential

applicants to design and deliver innovative menus, and prepare gourmet style take-away food for public consumption for a trial period of 6-12 months. Potential vendors were encouraged to offer a range of food items suitable for outdoor consumption and that would capture the essence of Sydney as an exciting street food destination. The trial was expected to commence after January 2012.

The EOI included a selection criteria specific to the values expressed in *Sustainable Sydney 2030*, as well as a focus on food quality. Each food truck applicant needed to comply with the following:

- Business capability and food safety compliance
- Food concept, menu, price point and operating hours
- Environmental sustainability that is aligned to *Sustainable Sydney 2030*
- Collaboration and integration with arts, cultural and social policy considerations

Under the environmental sustainability criteria, applicants provided details of their plans for sustainable management of energy, water, trade waste and litter, as well as crowd management and environmental impacts on their vending locations.





The City received 32 submissions by the closing date on 6 December 2011. The City's Procurement Selection Panel short listed 14 applicants to proceed to the taste testing Cook-off stage of the EOI process.

To ensure a clear and transparent process the Selection Panel was supported by a Food Quality Advisory Groups comprised of respected food professionals.

### Taste testing

The EOI advised that food concepts and quality would be assessed by a specialist advisory group. This group was made up of some of Sydney's best food industry representatives. The specialist group would participate in a Cook-Off where they would select the final operators. The Cook-Off final was held in January 2012 and the official Food Quality Advisory Group members were (pictured left to right):

**John Hart**, CEO, Restaurant and Catering Association

**Myffy Rigby**, TimeOut Sydney Food and Drink Editor

**Terry Durack**, Sydney Morning Herald

**Jill Dupleix**, food writer for various magazines, author of several recipe books

**Grant Jones**, Daily Telegraph Food Editor

Joanna Savill, Festival Director, Crave Sydney International Food Festival & Co-editor, The Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide was also invited but withdrew on the day before due to other work commitments.

The taste testing cook-off was held at the Ultimo TAFE student kitchens from 18 -19 January 2012.

Two cook off applications withdrew before the judging competition. One applicant was unable to comply due to their overseas business commitments, and the second could not commit to both components of the cook-off process.

### Cook-off finalists

The judges assessed sample menus from all 12 finalists and ranked the top ten finalists in the following order:

1. Eat Art Truck
2. Tsuru
3. Al Carbón
4. Lets Do Yum Cha
5. Burger Theory
6. Cantina Mobil
7. The Veggie Patch
8. Agapé Organic
9. Taco Truck
10. Bite Size Delights

Urban Pasta was ranked as 11<sup>th</sup>, however it was previously determined that only 10 trucks in total would participate in the trial. It was therefore deemed that Urban Pasta could not participate as the quota of trucks had been reached. The 12<sup>th</sup> ranked finalists was Spasso, however they were non-compliant and therefore disqualified.



### Food truck trial participants

Burger Theory and Taco Truck had withdrawn their participation prior to the start of the trial. One spot was replaced by Urban Pasta, who had passed the compliance and cook-off requirements. The City had decided that no further trucks would be assigned and the final number would be kept at nine for the entire duration of the trial.

The final nine trial trucks chosen to participate in the trial along with their cuisine types were as follows;

1. **Agapé Organic Food Truck:** Gourmet pizzas with Wagyu beef meatball, pecorino and basil or scallops with Spencer gulf prawns on a spelt grain base, all totally organic.
2. **Al Carbón:** Soft tacos with beef, pork, lamb and chicken cooked over mesquite and mango-scented charcoal with home-made salsas.
3. **Bite Size Delights:** Malta's traditional pastry pockets, pastizzi, filled with flavours including spinach and ricotta, salmon and dill, cherry, apple and chocolate mousse.
4. **Cantina Mobil:** Gourmet tacos, nachos and Mexican themed treats washed down with sparkling, non-alcoholic sangria.
5. **Eat Art Truck:** Grilled spitchcock, kingfish ceviche and other modern, progressive dishes from former Tetsuya's sous chef Stuart McGill.
6. **Lets Do Yum Cha:** Steamed gow gee, roasted duck buns and fried spring rolls are among the Chinese favourites.
7. **Tsuru:** Modern Asian fusion including braised pork served with a Chinese half-moon bun or Japanese onigiri rice ball and an origami crane.
8. **Urban Pasta:** Every 'cup' of pasta is a combination of authentic sauces and freshly cooked pasta, packed with freshness and flavour.
9. **The Veggie Patch Van:** Paddock-to-plate hits the road with high-end tofu burgers and other vegetarian fare, fresh juices and custom-made ginger beer.

### Trial commencement

From late January 2012 all nine finalists started work on their trucks and arranging various approvals through the City to start operation.

The trial officially commenced in May 2012, when the first trial food truck, Cantina Mobil, began trading. An additional six food trucks became operational between September and December 2012. The ninth and final food truck, Lets Do Yum Cha, commenced trade from April 2013.

The trial was due to end in May 2013 as it was thought that most food trucks would be built to trade by mid-2012. However the trial period was granted an extension by Council in May 2013 to continue until March 2014. This extension ensured that all nine trucks participating in the trial would be trading for a full 12 months, and enabled the City to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the trial.

## 5. Food truck operators



### Eat Art Truck

Eat Art Truck is founded by Stuart McGill, Jeremy Yang and Mo Moubayed and their dream was combine fine food and a vibrant art experience. Eat Art Truck's menu has been designed by Stuart McGill (former Tetsuya's sous chef) and Brenton Balicki (former chef of Quay). Eat Art Truck has a strong connection to street art with a huge canvas on the side of the truck that has been designed specifically for street artists to express themselves. At least once a month, different artists will be invited to explore a theme on the side of the truck and profits from the sale of the artworks will go directly to charity.

### Cantina Mobil

Operators Rode Vella and Stephanie Raco are seasoned restaurateurs with a combined 22 years' experience. They were founders of Manly's first small bar, restaurant, live music venue 'in situ' and sold the successful business to focus on their food truck. Friend and cuisine creator, Simon Livingston, channelled his vast travels within Mexico and the US to inspire the memorable flavours and aromas of the fine Mexican fare served at Cantina Mobil. Accomplished artist Kathrin Longhurst collaborated with Raco on Cantina's bold and colourful Mexican landscape which wraps around the vehicle, while Vella created and installed the internal fit-out of the food truck, from the holding tanks to the flashing light box atop. They were the first food truck to hit the streets in May 2012 and by late-2012 had set up a fixed business called Cantina HQ in Darlinghurst. In mid-2013 they had also opened their second fixed premises in Glebe called Cantina Mobil Bar & Garage.

### The Veggie Patch Van

The Veggie Patch is unique collaboration between four people and two businesses. Karl Cooney who owns the Surry Hills restaurant Yulli's, Zoran Mitrevski, and East Sydney design company TMOD consisting of Georgie Swift & Milenka Osen. The food truck team are devoted to creating accessible, high-quality vegetarian food using ingredients sourced from local producers. They go by a whole foods philosophy, using unprocessed and unrefined ingredients, with minimal impact on the environment. Instead of buying a prefab van that was decked out and ready to go, they bought Spud – a friend's old campervan. They installed new solar panels on the roof to power the fridges, basic appliances and lights. They also decked Spud out with planter boxes filled with herbs, which they use in the food. Spud is also powered by recycled vegetable oil straight from their vat, instead of petrol. All the wastage from the veggie patch is made from organic matter and hence composted.

### Al Carbón

Operator Attila Yilmaz was once in the police force, but food trucks are also in his blood. The son of a Turkish migrant chef and restaurateur, his father had one of the first kebab vans in Canberra, where he grew up. Attila has spent time travelling in Mexico where he further researched his love of the cuisine. Al Carbón, which means cooked over charcoal in Spanish, serves traditional style tacos from north Mexico and the Sonora region with tortillas made fresh to order on the truck. Ingredients include fresh produce sourced locally, as well as both home-grown chillies and speciality ones imported from Mexico.



### Lets Do Yum Cha

Owner Rowan Bates of Lets Do Yum Cha started his food truck fleet in Melbourne and later expanded to Sydney. The business has been operating since 2008, and has become the largest yum cha caterer in Australia. Their focus is on bringing authentic yum cha which is made from fresh local ingredients. A team of highly skilled Chinese chefs, with over 50 years' experience combined, make all the Lets Do Yum Cha products by hand daily.

### Bite Size Delights

Owner and operator Peter Saad is qualified chef and Catering Manager and has had years of experience managing mobile operations within the Sydney, Central Coast and Greater Hunter regions. Peter's goal is to give customers a pastry experience they will never forget, one which will keep them coming back for more and have Bite Size Delights imprinted into their minds as the premier pastizzi pastry product on the market.

### Tsuru

Tsuru, the Japanese word for crane is the brainchild of Ellyn Tse, head chef and owner, who grew up learning how to prepare food from her family of restaurateurs. Her family owns and runs various establishments in Indonesia and have been doing so for more than 40 years. In Australia, Ellyn had been running her own catering entity whilst also actively volunteering her time by cooking for a not-for-profit organisation Eat.Drink.Give. Tsuru regularly hosts events where proceeds go towards funding the Food without Prejudice – a project carried out to provide for the less fortunate in the community.

### Agapé Organic Food Truck

Agapé Organic Food Truck is an extension to Agapé Organic Restaurant, Australia's largest organic restaurant and bar located in Botany. Executive Chef and owner Simon Lawson first started cooking at a very early age in his grandmother's kitchen where he developed a lifelong passion for food. Simon worked in Sydney's top restaurants and after cooking professionally for over 18 years, realized his dream to open his first restaurant and shortly followed up with a food truck. Agapé Organic Food Truck is breaking down the stigma that organic food is expensive, and has achieved this by producing a food truck menu that uses certified organic, biodynamic and sustainable ingredients that are in season. Its belief that sustainability extends beyond - to human life Agape Organic Food Truck partners with Feed The Hungry who send a meal to feed hungry children for every meal sold from the truck.

### Urban Pasta

Growing up in France, operator Stephane Chevassus has fond memories of food from his childhood and developed an enthusiasm for cooking early on from his mum. His passion grew when he moved to Australia in 2005 and was exposed to the diversity of cuisine available here. Stephane began to cook constantly for family and friends, experimenting with dishes ranging from classical European to pastry making. Stephane quit his job as a software engineer to follow his dream of setting up the mobile pasta bar. With guidance and advice from experienced pasta makers and chefs, Stephane couldn't wait to get his truck on the road.

# 6. Local Approvals Policy



## Mobile Food Vending Vehicles Local Approvals Policy (LAP)

For the trial, and to support the amendment to *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012*, a Local Approvals Policy (LAP) was prepared in accordance with section 160 of the Local Government Act 1993 to regulate the operation of food trucks on Council-owned roads and manage their overall impact.

A Mobile Food Vending LAP had already existed and was governing the operation food vans. These vans were mainly Mr Whippy type businesses that had been trading in the city since 1996. There were already over 30 food van approvals issued by the City and it was stipulated that they would not be affected. These businesses were not participating in the food truck trial and would continue to trade as normal.

An amended LAP was drafted to include the additional criteria that would govern the new food trucks participating in the trial. The LAP was split into two parts; part one would cover the food vans and part two would cover the food trucks. The majority of the LAP applied to both business types, but there were some differences around regulation and operational hours.

The draft LAP included the essential criteria for the operation of food trucks and allowed Council to impose appropriate conditions on any approval issued.

Some conditions of the draft LAP for food trucks included;

- No trading within 50m radius of another food truck or existing takeaway food and drink premises. Exemptions to this condition are for special event/festival purposes only or when trading on one of ten the off-street trading sites.
- No trading on the same side of the road and directly in front of a residential building.
- Trading only in a lawful car parking space and complying with local parking restrictions, such as ticketing requirements.
- Cannot trade for longer than four hours at one time any one location.
- All waste must be removed from the site by the food truck operator at the end of the trading.
- Lighting from a food truck cannot interrupt or distract traffic flows or be unreasonably observable from surrounding residential areas.

In May 2013 Council had adopted the draft LAP and at the same time had granted an extension of the trial period until March 2014. The extension was so that a comprehensive evaluation could be conducted on the food truck trial participants.

In the newly adopted LAP Council had included a restriction of trade within the Kings Cross liquor freeze zone. This was in direct response to local residences and businesses who were concerned with traffic congestion and direct competition. However no food trucks had traded in this precinct since the start of the trial at this time, and regardless of this fact, the exclusion zone was added to the LAP. This effectively bans the food truck operators to trade in this area until the 2017 liquor freeze zone review.



To align with the end of the trial, Council were presented with a report in November 2013 that had recommended amendments to the current Mobile Food Vending Vehicles LAP. The time frames for the draft LAP had been brought forward so that the exhibition period would conclude in early 2014, allowing an assessment of submissions and reporting back of the Policy to coincide with the conclusion of the trial in March 2014.

Changes made to the LAP had been based on feedback received from the City's internal and external stakeholders. Additional amendments had been based on correspondence with Councils who have adopted similar mobile vending policies, such as Melbourne, Yarra, Adelaide, Parramatta and Portland Oregon, USA.

Some of the significant amendments to the LAP were as follows;

- Two categories for Mobile Food Vending Vehicles based on menu types:
  - Category 1** food vans (ice-cream vans)
  - Category 2** food trucks (kitchen on wheels)
- Street vending stopping time, for Category 2 food trucks, to be increased to a maximum of five hours
- Concept designs are required for all Category 2 food truck applications.
- If an operator had ceased trading, or does not trade for a period of longer than six months, Council will reserve the right to revoke their approval.

- Locations defined as two options for Category 1 and 2 approval types:

**Street vending**

Applies to both category types

**Off-street trading**

Applies to only Category 2 food truck

- Extend the street vending operation as follows;

**Central Sydney**

8am – 3am, Monday to Sunday

**Remainder of the Local Government Area**

9am – 12midnight, Monday to Sunday

- Removal of the 50 metre proximity requirement for Food Trucks to trade near other food trucks.
- Definition of “existing takeaway food and drink businesses” limited to businesses that are serving the same or similar types of food types.
- No Mobile Food Vending Vehicle is to obtain a liquor licence or sell alcohol to the public.
- Mobile Food Vending Vehicles are not permitted to trade on Council-owned roads or sites if they are re-branded or re-appropriated for a temporary promotion, third party advertising or corporate sponsorship.

# 7. Kings Cross exclusion zone map



# 8. Street vending



Included within the LAP were regulations around trading locations in the City for mobile food vendors. There are two types of trading areas and are classed as **Street Vending** and **Off-Street Trading Sites**.

## Street vending

From September 2012, a street vending pilot had commenced to allow the food truck trial participants to operate on the Council-owned streets in accordance with their conditions of approval. In March 2012 Council resolved to develop a schedule of appropriate street vending locations, which also requiring trucks not to trade within 200m of an open “food business”, defined under the *Food Act 1993*, while that business is open.

Street vending for food trucks had initially required development consent or an activity assessment as stated under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Therefore, in order to reduce red tape and enable the timely operation of the trial, it was recommended and approved at the June 2012 Council Meeting, that the Planning Proposal amends the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012* to allow Food Trucks as Exempt Development.

Additionally Council approved an amendment to the required distance of the food truck trading on the street from 200m to 50m of a comparable existing, lawful take away food and drink premises when open for business. The broad definition of food business and requirement for food trucks to trade more than 200m from an open food business was found to unintentionally restrict street vending opportunities for the food truck operators.

The schedule of streets outlined within the Local Approvals Policy also included;

- All state roads controlled by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). For example, George Street.
- The Kings Cross Precinct exclusion zone (see map).
- Any land not owned by Council without prior permission.

Hours of operation for street vending are restricted and are dependent on the zone. A street vending map was developed based on the City’s late night trading zones, then posted on the City’s website.

The current street vending trading hours are as follows;

### Central Sydney

8am – 3am, Monday to Sunday

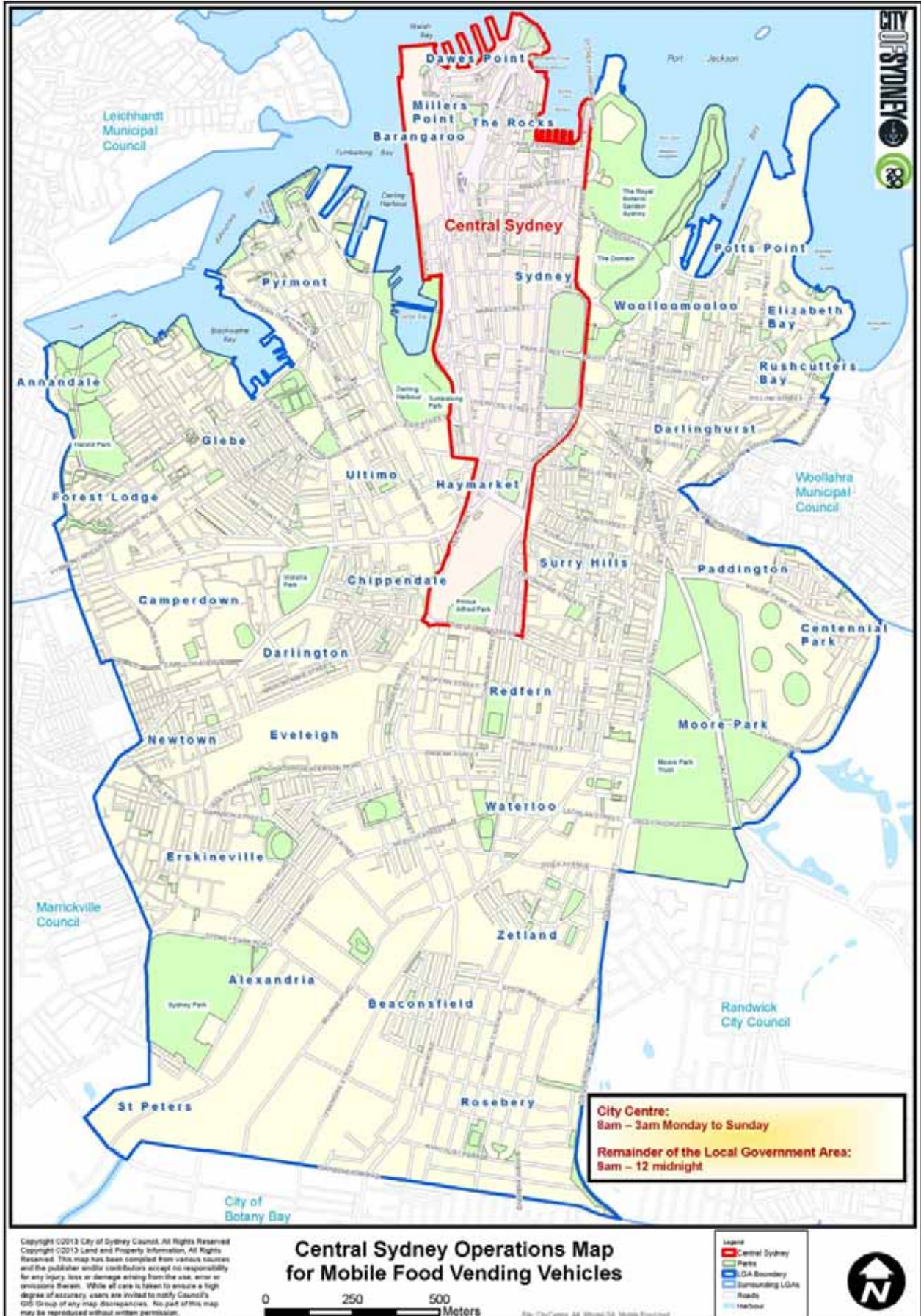
### Remainder of the Local Government Area

9am – 12 midnight, Monday to Sunday

Following is the street vending map for Mobile Food Vending Vehicles within the City of Sydney Local Government Area.



# 9. Street vending map



# 10. Off-street trading



To help the new food truck operators establish themselves, the City lodged and approved Development Applications (DA) for 10 Council owned sites within the City's Local Government Area. Only food trucks participating in the trial were permitted to trade at off-street trading sites which excluded all food vans.

A long list of sites within the City of Sydney Local Government Area were identified and discussed with various City of Sydney departments including Parks, Strategic Planning, Health & Building and Venue Management. The sites that were nominated and discussed were;

- Belmore Park, Haymarket
- Federal Park, Chapman Road Car Park, Glebe
- Chifley Square, CBD
- Cook and Philip Park, CBD
- Custom's House Forecourt, Circular Quay
- Green Square, various parks
- Hyde Park, CBD
- Joynton Park, Zetland
- Lang Park, CBD
- Macquarie Place, CBD
- Martin Place, CBD
- Paddington Reservoir Gardens, Paddington
- Pine Street Creative Arts Centre, Chippendale
- Pirrama Park, Pyrmont
- Pitt Street Mall, CBD
- Pope Paul VI Park, Federal Road, Glebe
- Queen's Square, CBD
- Redfern Park, Redfern

- Shakespeare Place, State Library, CBD
- Shannon Reserve, Surry Hills
- Sydney Park, Alexandria
- Tote Park, Zetland
- Town Hall, Sydney Square
- Victoria Park, City Road Car Park
- Wynyard Park, CBD

## Approved off-street trading sites

After long deliberation and numerous meetings, the City had decided on 10 specific off-street food truck sites to trial and monitor. These sites included;

1. Belmore Park, Haymarket (3 zones)
2. Bicentennial Park, Glebe (1 zone)
3. Customs House, Circular Quay (2 zones)
4. Hyde Park North, CBD (1 zone)
5. Macquarie Place, CBD (1 zone)
6. Pirrama Park, Pyrmont (1 zone)
7. Pitt Street Mall, CBD (1 zone)
8. Queen's Square, CBD (2 zones)
9. Sydney Park, Alexandria (3 zones)
10. Victoria Park, Camperdown (2 zones)

All the sites chosen are owned and managed by the City of Sydney; therefore Owners Consent was required and granted by the City. The lodgement of all Development Applications were processed and approved by the City between April and May 2012. Each site had been drafted plans of management as well as specific trading hours for the food trucks to operate.



An online booking system was identified as the best way to help facilitate a fair management process of the sites. It was the responsibility of the City's food truck project manager to monitor the system and ensure operators had equal amounts of time on each site. SuperSaaS was the software system subscribed to for the length of the trial period at a rental rate of \$36 per month.

The off-street trading sites proved to be popular with the food truck trial operators. The main reason was that they were guaranteed parking, making it easy for them to plan their schedules. The sites were more reliable than trying to find a parking spot on busy Sydney streets, and it gave operators the opportunity to build a regular customer base.

From November 2012 to November 2013, the off-street sites were booked **1,324** times. The site bookings are listed in order of popularity as follows;

- 388** – Customs House
- 336** – Sydney Park
- 136** – Belmore Park
- 107** – Victoria Park
- 102** – Macquarie Place
- 101** – Queen's Square
- 96** – Pitt Street Mall
- 44** – Pirrama Park
- 6** – Bicentennial Park
- 8** – Hyde Park

Pirrama Park had extensive maintenance works within the space that was originally allocated to the food trucks. This contributed to the low booking rate of food trucks as these works were scheduled from February 2013 until September 2013.

Low booking rates for Bicentennial Park was due to the location in Chapman Road Car Park. Because of the heavy use of the car park most days, the truck operators found it difficult to secure a spot to trade.

The combination location, hours of operation (9pm and 2am) and poor night time lighting within Hyde Park, the food truck operators did not feel safe enough to utilise this site more regularly.

To bring the off-street sites into line with the extension of the trial, Section 96 and DAs were lodged to continue food truck trading.

To utilise these sites more effectively, amendments were made for the sites mentioned and minimal or no changes to others. These changes reflected the lessons learned from the trucks that had been trading since May 2012. Daytime hours were granted for Queen's Square and Hyde Park. The food truck zone was moved from Chapman Road Car Park to the other side of Bicentennial Park, and the zone moved from where the maintenance works had been conducted to a hard stand area by the water in Pirrama Park. Additional truck zones were added to Belmore Park in the hope that a group of trucks could trade in the area late at night and provide some security for each other, rather than trading alone. See the table following for all the trading hours and requirements regarding the off-street sites.

# 11. Off-street summary

LOCATION	ZONE LOCATION	TRUCKS PER ZONE	HOURS OF OPERATION	HOURS OF TRADE
Hyde Park North	Near College Street	1	7am - 2am, 7 Days	5
Queen's Square	Cnr Macquarie St & St James Rd	2	7am - 2am, 7 Days	5
Belmore Park	Park Centre	3	7am to 3am, 7 Days	5
Customs House	East Zone	1	9pm - 2am, 7 Days	5
	West Zone	1		
Macquarie Place	Bridge Street	1	5pm - 2am, 7 Days	5
Pitt Street Mall	King Street End	1	7pm - 2am, 7 Days	5
Pirrama Park	Eastern Section	1	10am - 8pm, 7 Days	5
Victoria Park	Totem Pole	2	7am - 2am, 7 Days	5
Bicentennial Park	Northcote Road	1	6am - 8pm, 7 Days 6am - 9pm, 7 Days (Daylight Savings)	5
Sydney Park	Zone A: Sydney Park Rd Car Park	2	7am - 11pm Mon 7am - 12midnight, Tue - Sat 7am - 10pm, Sun	5
	Zone B: Princes Hwy Car Park	1	7am - 11pm, Mon 5pm - 11pm, Tue - Sat 5pm - 10pm Sun	5



# 13. Fees & charges



The initial trial fee had been based on the existing food vans approval fees. Historically, the food vans only offered low-risk food type products, such as ice-cream or hot drinks and pre-packaged foods, whereas the food truck trial operators were providing freshly made to order hot food. The fee charged for the trial participants was \$300 for a 12 month period. However, these fees did not reflect the additional services that were established and maintained by the City throughout the trial.

To better reflect the services provided to the food truck operator, the City had calculated actual costs including management and maintenance of the program. A new fees & charges structure was presented to Council in December 2013 and subsequently put on public exhibition for comment.

The new Mobile Food Vending Vehicle fees include;

- Dedicated full-time Project Manager;
- Processing all application forms;
- Concept design assessment by the Food Truck Design Panel;
- Vehicle inspections;
- Off-street trading sites Development Application renewals and associated fees;
- Off-street trading sites hire based on outdoor dining fees for footway dining;
- Off-street sites software costs and management; and
- Access to the City’s award winning Sydney Food Truck free smartphone app including ongoing technical maintenance and support.

### CATEGORY 1 - Food Van Fees

**\$400** per annum Street vending only.

### CATEGORY 2 - Food Truck Fees

**\$4,000** per annum Street vending only.

**\$9,350\*** per annum Street vending and low demand off-street sites only.

**\$16,830\*** per annum Street vending and all off-street sites.

*\*Separate \$2,000 refundable bond to be paid upon application.*

The new fee structure has been compared to other cities operating their own food truck programs, and these comparisons have been outlined below;

**Table 1 –Mobile Food Vending fees in other cities**

City	Fee
City of Sydney	\$400 to \$16,830
City of Melbourne	\$2,400 to \$19,992
City of Yarra	\$1,500 to \$2,000 per location
City of Adelaide	\$333 to \$1,000
Portland, USA	\$2,330 to \$2,385
San Francisco, USA	\$2,861.76 + \$305 per location

# 14. Smartphone app



In conjunction with the trial, the City of Sydney had developed a smartphone app called **Sydney Food Trucks**. This free app provides customers with real-time information about truck locations, operating times and menus. The app also draws in feeds from the operators social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram.

The app launched in October 2012 and was included in Apple's Best apps of 2012 list. This list selected by Apple's iTunes editors, out of over 700,000 apps, and recognised in the "disruptive services" category for helping to reshape industries.

The app costs to date (January 2014) are \$40,000. This includes the initial building of the app and subsequent minor and major upgrades along with the monthly server fee of \$40.

## App ratings

\*Android and all other non-iPhone devices

### App ratings

Number of ratings: 30  
Average rating: 4.33 out of 5 stars



## App reviews

★★★★★

"Not enough trucks great idea but there are only 8 trucks for the whole of Sydney. Currently it is easier to walk to one of the many food shops in Parramatta than to go to the food trucks. Need more trucks !!"

★★★★★

"Great app, well done! Should be an awesome summer addition to Sydney. And yes, hope the test of the trucks get into action soon."

## App statistics

Statistical data of usage and downloads of apps has been collected since the launch of the app and website.

Please refer to the following information regarding all data collected from October 2012 to October 2013;

### SNAPSHOT

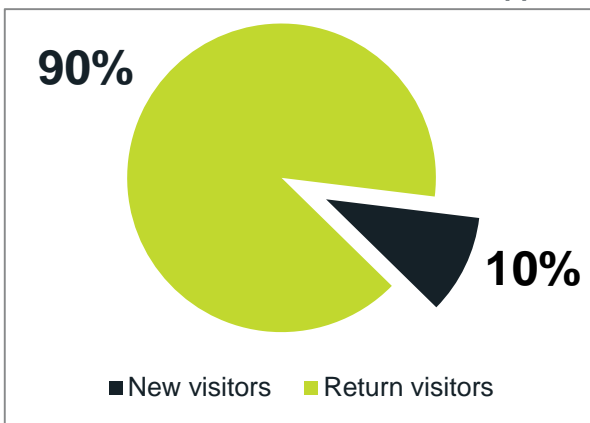
51,888 downloads  
260,328 visits  
1,183,887 pages visited  
2 min 17 sec average time duration of a visit

### VISITS

27,338 unique visitors  
2 min 17 sec average visit duration  
657 average visits per day



Chart 1 –return vs. new visitors to the app



**APP DOWNLOADS**

51,888 Downloads

42,387 Updates

**TWITTER FEED**

3,132 operator tweets

**SERVING STATUS**

2,500 serving location updates

Majority of the locations the operators had served in are based within City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA). The main trading sites were located at the specific off-street trading areas for food trucks. However there are a few trading locations that were posted outside the City of Sydney area which were mainly large festivals or events.

Some locations outside the LGA include:

- Annandale
- Auburn
- Balmoral Beach
- Baulkham Hills
- Bondi
- Burwood
- Byron Bay
- Canterbury
- Cockatoo Island
- Dee Why
- Five Dock
- Homebush
- Lane Cove
- Lilyfield
- Macquarie Park
- Marrickville
- Mudgee
- Narrabeen
- Parramatta
- Pittwater
- Randwick
- Turramurra
- Wahroonga
- Waverton
- West Pymble



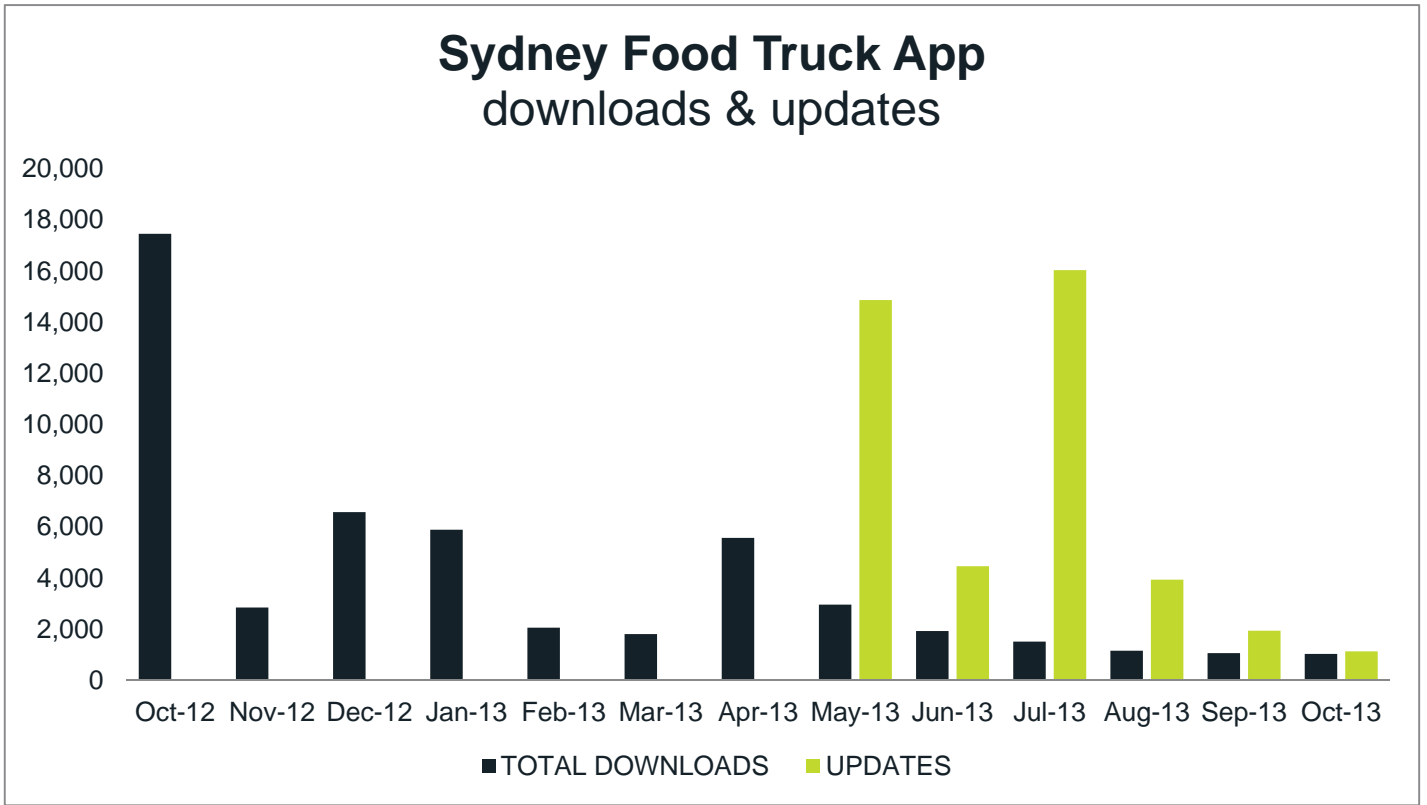


Chart 2 – App downloads and updates

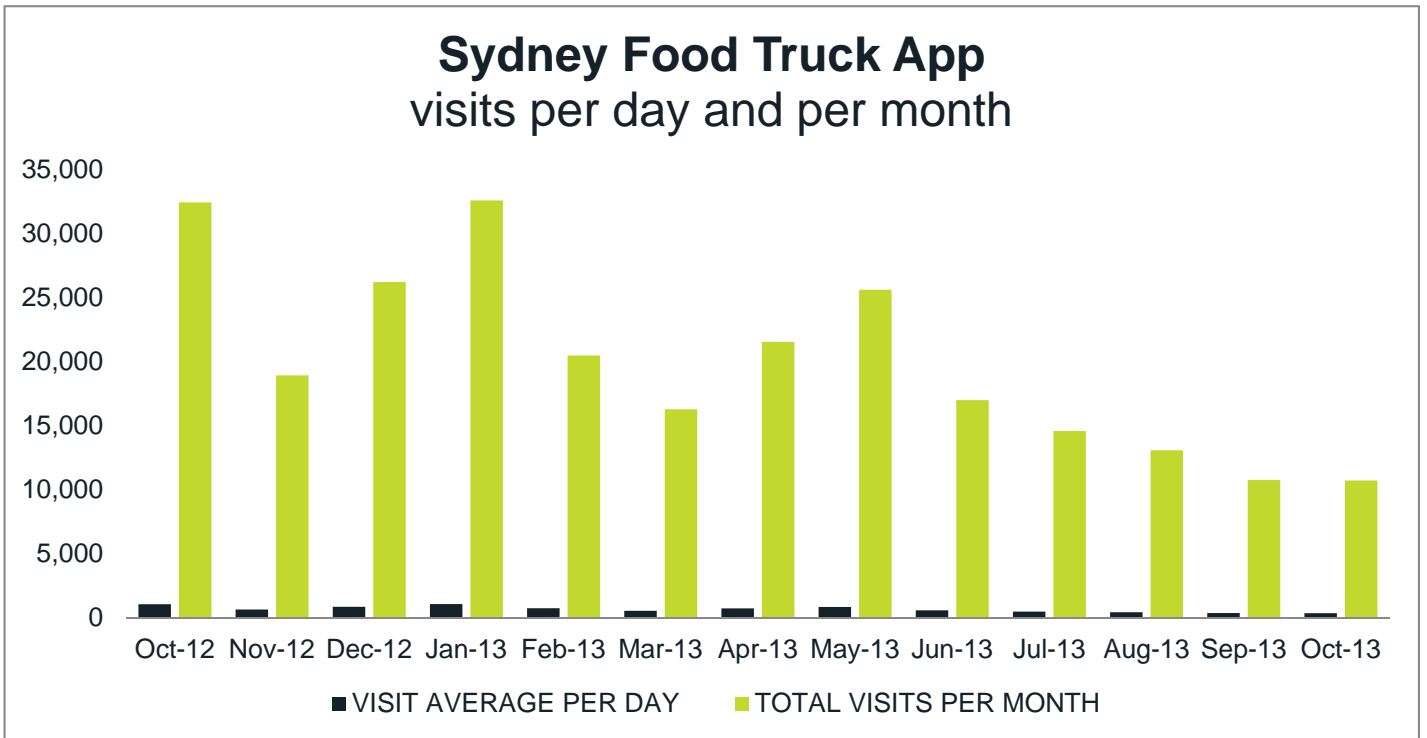


Chart 3 – App visits per day and per month

# 15. Food truck website



The City of Sydney had also developed a food truck website [sydneyfoodtrucks.com.au](http://sydneyfoodtrucks.com.au). This website was designed to provide access to food truck information for people who may not have the food truck app or a smartphone. The website also contains additional information, not held by the app, including Council and food truck operators contact details.

The website was designed, maintained and managed by Council and is branded with the City's *OPEN Sydney* colours and design patterns.

### Website statistics

Statistical data of visits to the website has been collected since the launch of both the app and website.

Please refer to the following information regarding all data collected between October 2012 and October 2013;

#### WEBSITE SNAPSHOT

**90,704** visits

**330,115** pages visited

**1:59 sec** average time duration of a visit

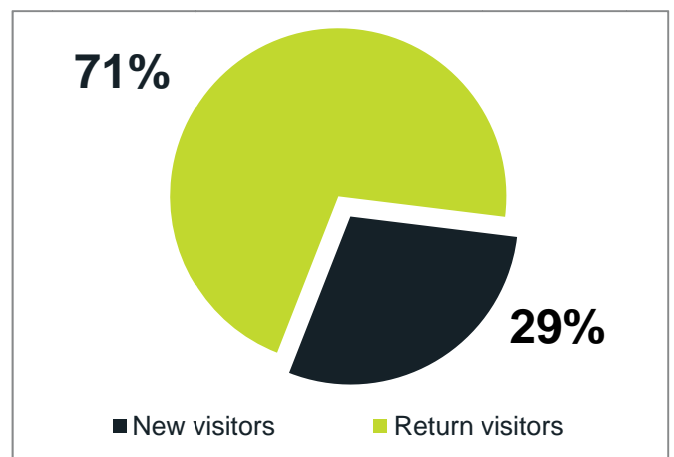
#### WEBSITE VISITS

**65,165** unique visitors

**229** average visits per day

**3.64** average pages per visit

Chart 4– return vs. new visitors to the website



#### Top 10 countries

Country / Territory	Visits	% Visits
1. Australia	80,444	88.69%
2. United States	1,310	1.44%
3. United Kingdom	792	0.87%
4. France	600	0.66%
5. India	568	0.63%
6. New Zealand	502	0.55%
7. Canada	418	0.46%
8. Turkey	382	0.42%
9. (not set)	370	0.41%
10. Singapore	354	0.39%

# 16. Media coverage



Since the City's announcement in November 2011 of a Sydney food truck trial, there have been extensive articles, press releases, reviews and other media related activities.

Most of the media stories generated have been positive. However, there have been a small number of negative articles generated. Most of the negative articles were in relation to the ban of food trucks in the Kings Cross area.

In 2012 the City of Sydney won the Remix the City award from FBi Radio. This award recognises the efforts to bring art and culture into unusual spaces in Sydney. The award was for the food truck trial and presented to the City at the FBi Radio Sydney Music Art & Culture (SMAC) Awards ceremony.

In the same year the City also won the SMH Good Food Guide Awards for Innovation. This award acknowledges the exciting new dimension mobile diners bring to city streets.

A number of articles have been collected and recorded throughout the trial. The following statistics are based on media related activities between November 2011 and November 2013.

### Media statistics

- 241 total media stories
- 216 positive stories
- 25 negative stories
  
- 137 online stories
- 90 print media stories
- 9 radio media stories
- 5 television stories

Chart 5 – Food truck media coverage breakdown

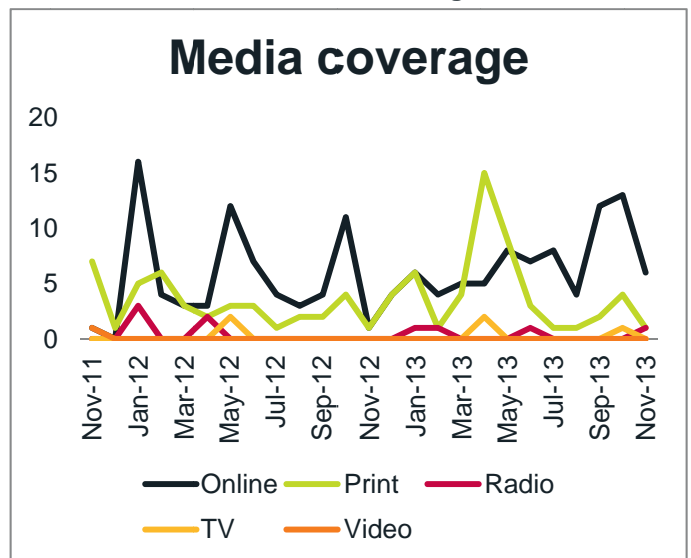
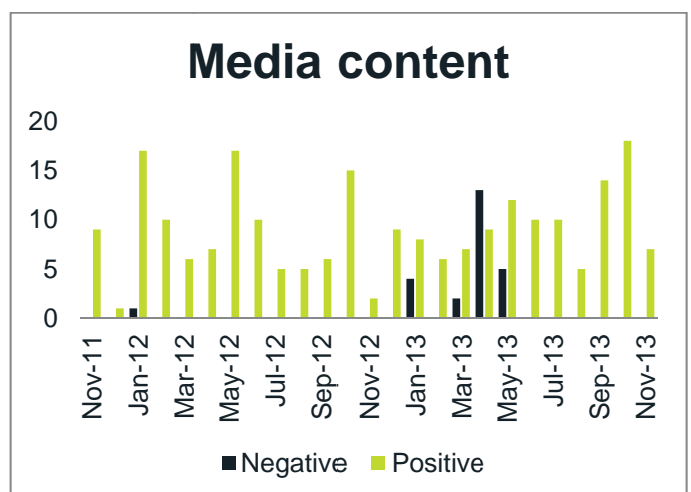


Chart 6 – Food truck media content breakdown



# 17. Customer survey



As part of the evaluation of the trial, the City commissioned a Sydney Food Trucks Trial Customer Research Report to collect statistical data from customers who had visited the food trucks.

This survey was conducted by Woolcott Research in January and February 2013. The key research objectives were to understand:

- Visitor demographics;
- Thoughts on the food truck initiative;
- Perceptions of the food trucks;
- Impact on feelings of safety;
- Economic benefits to areas;
- Reasons for visiting the area; and
- Suggestions for improvement.

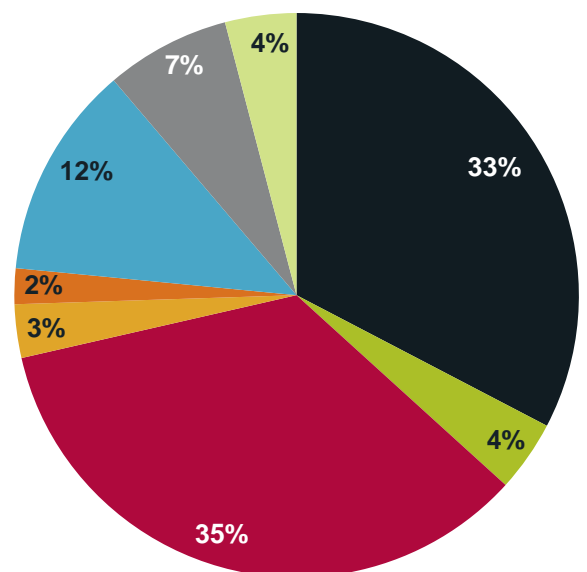
A total of **408** interviews were conducted with an almost even spread between street vending and off-street locations. The total numbers of visitors were also collected in each interview shift.

Some key results from those interviewed include:

- 52%** were aged between 25 and 34
- 98%** supported the food truck initiative
- 22%** said there should be more trucks
- 35%** would have eaten at home
- 9pm-12am** was the peak time for visitors
- 72%** said that the area felt safer
- 44%** were in the area specifically for the food truck
- 44%** were visiting for the first time
- 36%** said the app was their information source
- 38%** said no improvements were needed

## Where customers would have eaten if not at a food truck

- Takeaway
- Unsure
- Home
- Wouldn't have eaten
- Other
- Restaurant
- Café
- Supermarket



# 18. Stakeholder interviews



The City had conducted regular monthly online surveys with the nine operators. The surveys were to measure the food truck operator's economic data progression during the trial. The surveys were tailored to capture the following;

- Food Truck set up costs;
- Monthly operating costs and turnover;
- Number of staff employed;
- Number of customers per month;
- Are they operating other businesses; and
- Suggestions for improvement regarding the application process.

The City also commissioned a second report which measured qualitative results from interviews of the operators and other external and internal stakeholders. This report also incorporated the data collected from the operator surveys.

Interviews were conducted by Woolcott Research in August to October 2013 and the key stakeholders were:

- All nine Sydney food truck trial operators
- Key City of Sydney units including;
  - Rangers
  - Traffic Operations
  - Venue Management
  - Cleansing & Waste
  - Parks Management
- Key external stakeholders including;
  - NSW Police
  - Business Chambers of Commerce
  - Restaurant & Catering NSW
  - Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
  - Small Business NSW

Interview questions for stakeholders included;

- What feedback has there been from the community/public/businesses?
- Has there been an increase of activity in the area?
- Have there been any incidents in the area?
- What is your perception of the Food Trucks?

Findings of the report have been published with the final Council report in March 2014. Some of the main findings are outlined as follows.

## Food Truck Operators

Overall, Food Truck operators were very positive about the trial, but there were some consistent themes in the suggestions they put forward for potential improvement.

They provided, what they believed, was a much needed quality food option particularly late at night. This was seen as particularly noteworthy for their customers who were shift worker e.g. police, firemen, taxi drivers etc.

The trucks also generally felt to contribute to safety in the area in which they operated – to the extent that one stakeholder described them as a “beacon” of safety.

Operators tended to be conscious of, but somewhat unsympathetic, toward other business owners who felt they were being impacted by the food trucks. Food truck operators believed they offered genuinely healthy food options, and as such were fair. In fact, many felt that the 50m exclusion rule was overly prohibitive,

*“If people want to sit down and eat at a café restaurant then they will. We’re offering a healthy take-away option. And anyway – we’re bringing more people to the area.”*



Costs for setting up a food truck vehicle tended to be around \$100,000 to \$150,000. Weekly operating costs were said to be between \$1,000 and \$5,000. Staff employment numbers were on average 4 per truck, and three of the four staff members lived within the LGA.

Turnover was between \$5,000 to over \$10,000 per week. Weather was also said to have some impact on turnover, however special events were the biggest cause of variation. Some trucks didn't trade at all if it was raining, while others had established a regular trading schedule and traded regardless of the weather.

Maintenance issues and breakdowns were a cause of significant disruption to trading. A few had been unable to trade for days on end while the issue was fixed.

The food trucks business model was considered to be sustainable, although it was noted that hard work was required to ensure this. Operators felt that given their self-contained nature, trucks were very versatile and able to move or change if trading conditions were bad.

**Statistics**

33% of food prepping kitchens located within the LGA.

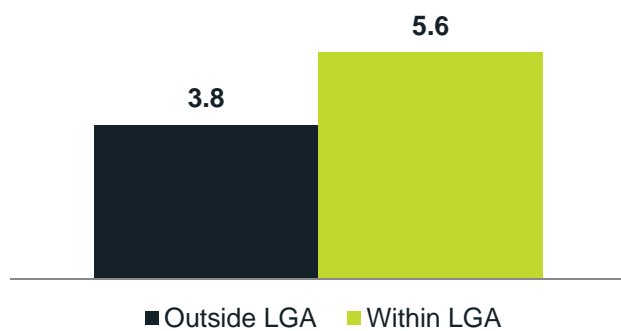
50% own a 'bricks and mortar' food business and all were located within the LGA. The remainder intended to open a 'bricks and mortar' food business in the future and all hoped to be within the LGA.

Monthly wage costs were \$6,233.97 and most staff lived within the LGA.

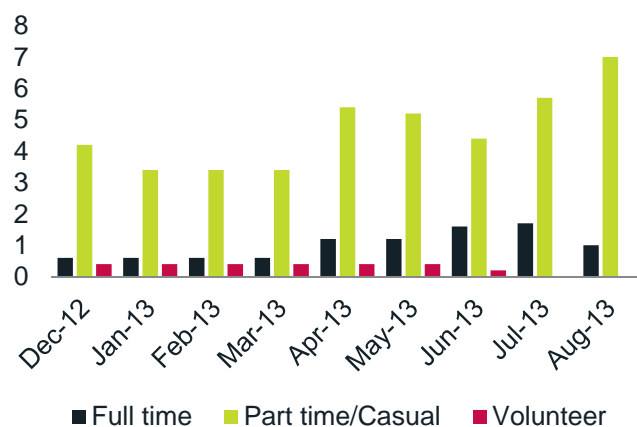
The average number of customers was just over 1,700 per month.

**Event trading**

Average per month



**Employment**





### Other stakeholders

City of Sydney staff and external stakeholders generally believed the food trucks initiative to be a positive one, describing the trucks as an 'interesting', 'unique' and even 'excellent'. The fact that the initiative was started as a trial was appreciated by some, as they felt it gave the City the chance to 'get it right'.

Food trucks were thought to add a real benefit in delivering quality late night food options, and a fast, effective solution for events,

*"It's really ideal for event organisers. They drive in, they feed everyone and they drive out. No mess, no clean up, no set up. Easy."*

A noted difference between the Trucks and other food service providers was their mobility, which was seen to allow them to provide a service when and where it is most needed within the city e.g. at special events.

There was also a perceived financial benefit to the trucks, with many feeling that more people and therefore more business would be attracted to the city as a result of the trucks.

While they hadn't noted any direct correlations, Police felt that the trucks would provide a safety benefit by increasing passive surveillance. They also indicated that there was benefit in lowering the concentration of late night crowds in fast food restaurants, which tend to be hotspots for crime. The lack of seating at food trucks was also seen as a safety benefit, as it meant less loitering late at night, which some believed led to crime.

There had been a number of complaints from other businesses who felt that the trucks were impacting on their normal catchment areas. There were mixed

reactions to these complaints. Some felt they were justified, particularly external stakeholders, while others felt that they were just 'healthy competition' and that the complaints weren't warranted, and most agreed that initial concern held by other businesses had tended to dissipate. Even so, one external stakeholder felt they had an obligation to restrict competition for their current 'tenants', and as such had not allowed the trucks to trade in their area,

There were no traffic issues reported by any departments or external stakeholders. The City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations department indicated that this was because they have only been allowed to trade in areas where their impact on traffic would be minimal.

On the whole, the truck operators were seen to be very compliant with regulations. On occasions where they weren't compliant, this was extremely easy to communicate to operators, who were generally seen to be enthusiastic and open to suggestions for improvement. Again, it was appreciated that the City's food truck project manager was available for discussion regarding non-compliance.

Most City staff, external stakeholders and operators felt that the food trucks had addressed, or were on their way to addressing the community's calls for more accessible, affordable, diverse food options. However, a few participants thought there needed to be more trucks in order to ensure they were accessible to more of the community.



### Food truck enquires

Many people have approached the City to enquire about the food trucks or the trial in general. Queries have been predominantly around potential operators wanting to set up a food truck business of their own. The other majority of enquiries have been about asking for food trucks to trade at various events and festivals.

Between July 2011 and December 2013 there have been 551 enquiries from potential food truck operators wishing to apply for approval to trade within the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

There is also a number of general enquires recoded. These range from messages of support for the food trucks, to Councils from around Australia wanting to start their own food truck program. Over 80 general enquires have been answered between October 2011 and December 2013.

From May 2012 to December 2013 there have been almost 150 individual enquiries requesting that food trucks participate and vend at their events. The events vary from private weddings to large music festivals.

### Food truck complaints

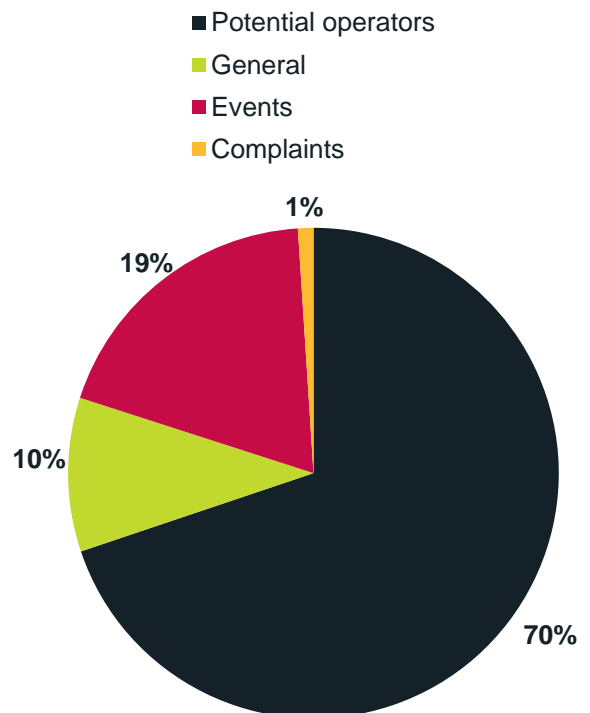
Only eight complaints have been made between May 2012 and October 2013.

Out of this, four complaints were regarding food trucks trading in their areas, however the food trucks were not in breach of their conditions and therefore allowed to trade. One other complaint was regarding a food poisoning claim. In this instance, a Health & Building Officer was assigned to the case, however no other claims were received and the case was subsequently closed.

The remaining three complaints were in relation to minor breaches of approvals, such as trading 30 minutes outside the hours of operation. In these instances, all trucks were moved on by Council officers and either issued a verbal or written warning from Council.

No fines have been issued as there have been no major or serious breaches in permits since the beginning of the trial in May 2012.

### Food truck enquires





# 19. Food business data



The following statistics are to help illustrate the City of Sydney residents, workers, visitors and food businesses.

### Food business retailers

2,249 restaurants, cafes and takeaway food services operate within the City of Sydney LGA.

The 9 food truck operators represent 0.4% of food businesses within the City area.

The highest numbers of food retailers are located in Chinatown and CBD South Village and Harbour Village (1,074 businesses or 48%) and the lowest number in Green Square, City South and Redfern Street Village (204 businesses or 9% combined).

Majority of food retailers (92%) in the LGA are considered to be small business, i.e., employing less than 20 people.

### Workers

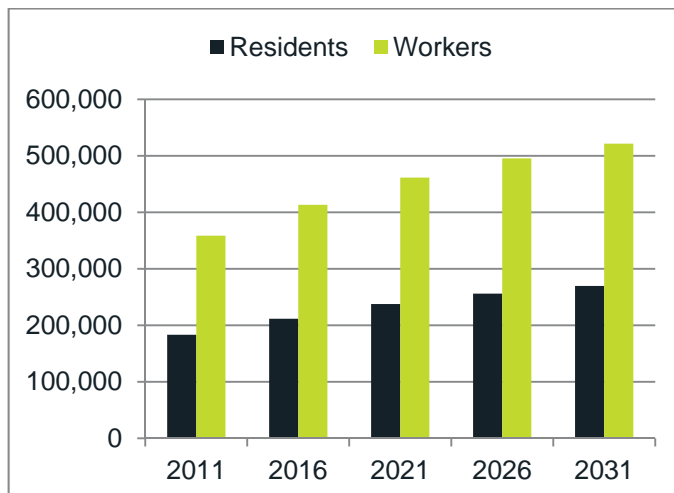
Workers are one of the key sources of growth for the City and in turn will generate a greater demand for a range of services, infrastructure and food outlets.

### Residents

By 2016, the number of residents living in our LGA is forecast to increase to 211, 695 (or 15.4%)

### Visitors

In 2012, the City received 4.25 million hotel visitors with an estimated direct spend into the City of over \$5 billion.



With a fast growing potential market of consumers (workers, visitors and residents), the City is actively promoting and encouraging more diverse eating options, such as the food truck program, to support this rapid growth.

### Access to food services

Residents rate their access to various facilities and services including;

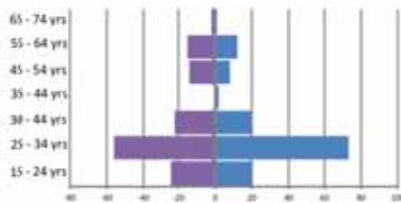
- Supermarkets
- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Local shops (butcher, newsagent, chemist etc.)

Access to local shops and cafes was a greater issue for Green Square and City South Villages households compared to other villages. 16.7% of Green Square households indicated 'no or inadequate access' to cafes compared to just 3.8% for the LGA.

# Moveable Feast

**8** Food Trucks from Food Trucks Trial  
**4** additional food vendors

Age groups of attendees interviewed



Do they live in Australia?

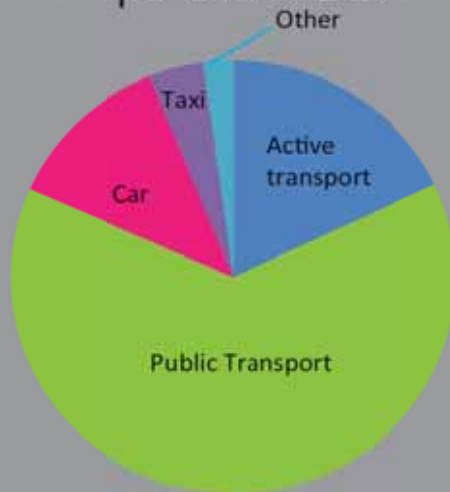


**69%** of respondents had not eaten at a food truck previously



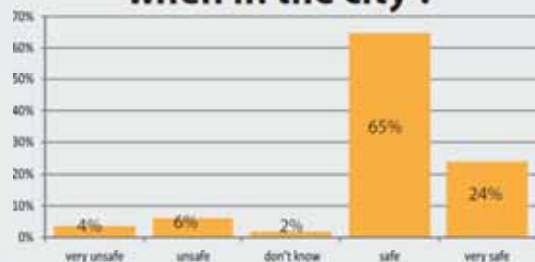
**92%** are likely or very likely to eat at a Food Truck in the future

Transport to the event?



Over **5200** meals sold from the food trucks during the event

How safe do you feel when in the city?



**Sydney Food Truck App**

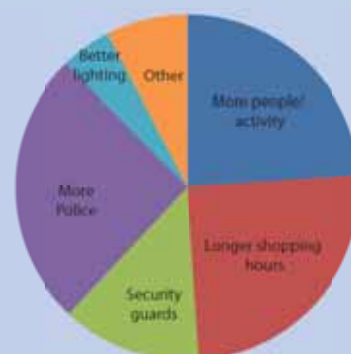
**17,623** people downloaded the app to date

**3,003** visits to the app on event day- highest visits recorded on a single day!



Sydney Food Trucks

What would increase your feeling of safety?



**46%**

**54%**



**Planned to attend the event**

**Walked past the event**

## 20. Trial summary



Overall, feedback regarding the Food Truck initiative has been very positive. This has been measured from comments given to the City by the operators, City of Sydney staff, external stakeholders and customers.

The trial's evaluation's aim was to measure and evaluate three key objectives;

1. **Trucks** *creation of a new economy*
2. **Place** *activation of spaces*
3. **People** *supplying services to the community*

### Trucks

There appears to have been a new economic market created by the food trucks and as a result of the trial. This is evident in the customers' report of where they would have eaten if the truck hadn't been trading. A total of 44% would not have purchased food from another food outlet, meaning most would have eaten at home or not at all.

Food truck operators were also contributing to the businesses they were engaging with. While there was considerable variation in spend with these businesses over the year, the overall average (per month) was in excess of \$9,000.

Food truck operators themselves have sustained their unique business model for nearly two years and none have gone out of businesses since the start of the trial. Most operators indicated that they were on target with their business plan, with a few even exceeding their expectations. Turnover varied greatly, from \$5,000 to over \$10,000 per week. Weather was also said to have some impact on turnover, however special events were the biggest cause of variation. Some trucks didn't trade at all if it was raining, while others had established a

regular trading schedule and traded regardless of the weather.

The food trucks business model was considered to be sustainable, although it was noted that hard work was required to ensure this. Operators felt that given their self-contained nature, trucks were very versatile and able to move or change if trading conditions were bad.

### Place

There were mixed reactions regarding the activation of spaces; however it appears that there has been some low level activation to date. The change is most notable on the off-street sites, and was considered a temporary change which would not occur past the trucks trading time. However, the trucks were certainly felt to have brought vibrancy to the areas by providing a reason for people to enjoy parks and areas that may previously have been underused.

92% of customers felt that the presence of a food truck in the area made it feel more welcoming. There also appear to have been some safety benefits, with Police believing that the trucks had had a positive impact on some locations, particularly late at night. Additionally, 72% of customers felt that the presence of food trucks made the area feel safer.

Just under half of all respondents (44%) indicated that they had travelled specifically to the area to eat at a food truck, and most visitors left immediately with their food. While 91% of respondents were participating in at least one other activity in the local area at some point that day, these were most likely to be working or being in transit (heading to or from home). Only 9% indicated that they wouldn't do any other activities in the nearby area.



There were very few negative impacts as a result of the trial. Some local businesses felt that the trucks were impacting on their normal catchment areas, although there were mixed reactions to these complaints, with many other stakeholders feeling they were unjustified as the trucks and expressed that they are just 'healthy competition'.

Food trucks were also seen to contribute a unique, quality food option for the community, as well as generating financial benefits for the area.

In October 2012, as part of the *Art & About* festival curated by the City, *A Movable Feast* was created to celebrate the arrival of the new trial trucks. George Street was closed to traffic and the food trucks were set up along the road along with other entertainment activities. Over 50,000 people had arrived to participate in the event and eat at the new food trucks.

Encouraged by the response to *Art & About*, one of the truck operators decided to organise a regular *StreetFest Food Trucks United* festival. The aim was to have a regular food truck event on the first Friday of every month in Belmore Park near Central. The launch of *StreetFest* in October 2013 was very well received. It was estimated that around 5,000 people had attended. Based on the success of this event, the organisers of *StreetFest* will now hold an event on the first Friday of every month.

## People

Overwhelmingly, there was support for the trucks amongst stakeholders, customers and operators. 98% of customers said that they supported the food truck initiative, and they gave the trucks very high scores in terms of convenience, quality and affordability.

From all reports, the food truck consumer is a relatively younger crowd. Two-thirds of customers (67%) indicated that they were under the age of 35, and there was little gender difference. More than half (55%) also lived in Inner Sydney. It was felt that while younger people had been the early adopters of the initiative, others would 'catch on' as it continued, and so the current market was thought to have the potential to expand considerably.

The trucks were also attracting customers from outside their area of operation, with 25% of respondents indicating that they had travelled 2km or more. There also appears to be a dedicated following of the food trucks, with 18% indicating that they visit a truck at least once a week.

In terms of finding out about them, the Sydney Food Trucks app was the most popular source of information (36%), but more than one-quarter (26%) hadn't heard of food trucks previously, and almost half just 'happened upon' them.

The most common motivators for visiting a truck were convenience (33%), followed by the quality of the food (25%). Many respondents also mentioned the novelty of the trucks (23%) or wanting to try something new (19%).

When customers were asked for suggestions for improvement, 38% thought that no improvements were needed. The most common suggestions from customers were to increase the number of trucks operating and locations for trade.

In summary, the food trucks were seen to be an added attraction for the city, and were felt to bring variety and diversity to the area. They were described as visually appealing, and offered good quality food options.

# 21. Timeline



## 2011

### Mid 2011

Public consultations *OPEN Sydney Discussion Paper* & City of Sydney Food Truck Project Manager appointed

### November 2011

Sydney Food Truck Trial EOI commences

### 6 December 2011

Sydney Food Truck Trial EOI Submissions close

## 2012

### January 2012

Off-street trading sites reviewed and 10 selected

### 6 January 2012

Off-street trading site Development Applications lodged

### 9 January 2012

Food Truck finalists notified of the cook-off

### 18 January 2012

Cook-off food truck finalists briefed

### 19 January 2012

Cook-off commences

### 20 January 2012

Food truck winners announced

### 21 March 2012

Urban Pasta notified as the replacement trial truck

### 4 May 2012

The Sydney Food Truck Trial officially commences with Cantina Mobil as the first to start trading

### 23 May 2012

EAT Art Truck launches as the second truck

### 20 July 2012

Agapé Organic Food Truck launches as the third truck

### 1 September 2012

Street trading pilot to commence

### 4 September 2012

City of Sydney wins the SMH Good Food Guide Innovation Award for the Sydney Food Truck Trial

### 26 September 2012

Tsuru launches as the fourth truck

### 27 September 2012

Veggie Patch Van launches as the fifth truck

### 10 October 2012

Sydney Food Truck free smartphone app is launched

### 20 October 2012

Art & About *A Moveable Feast* event on George Street & Al Carbón launches as the sixth truck

### 17 November 2012

Off-street site management software launched

### 28 November 2012

Urban Pasta launches as the seventh truck

### 1 December 2012

Bite Size Delights launches eighth truck

### 7 December 2012

Sydney Food Truck app wins the App Store Best of 2012 Disruptive Services award



## 2013

### 17 January 2013

City of Sydney wins 2012 FBi Radio SMAC Remix the City award for the Sydney Food Truck Trial program

### 18 January 2013

Food truck customer surveys to commence

### 4 March 2013

Sydney Food Trucks Field Trial report on findings from customer surveys delivered by Woolcott Research

### 22 April 2013

Lets Do Yum Cha launches as the ninth and final truck

### 24 April 2013

DA renewals for off-street trading sites lodged

### 6 May 2013

Council grant an extension of the trial until March 2014

### 5 August 2013

Interviews with operators and other stakeholders commences for final trial evaluation report

### 2 September 2013

Off-street trading site renewals granted by the City

### 11 November 2013

Trial Evaluation report on feedback from food truck operators and external stakeholders

### 4 October 2013

Launch of the monthly *StreetFest First Fridays* food trucks event in Belmore Park

### 31 October 2013

Sydney Food Truck Trial Evaluation report on findings from stakeholder interviews delivered by Woolcott Research

### 1 November 2013

Second *StreetFest First Fridays* food trucks event

### 2 December 2013

Exhibition period to commence draft LAP and new Fees & Charges Schedule for Mobile Food Vending Vehicles

### 6 December 2013

Third *StreetFest First Fridays* food trucks

## 2014

### 14 January 2014

Exhibition closes for the draft LAP and Fees & Charges Schedule

### 7 February 2014

Fourth *StreetFest First Fridays* food trucks event

### 7 March 2014

Fifth *StreetFest First Fridays* food trucks event

### 17 March 2014

Council approve a permanent food truck program

### 1 April 2014

Applications open for other potential operators to apply for approval to trade as a food truck