WEST COAST BUSINESS OPINION SURVEY

JUNE 2018
I am pleased to present this detailed report providing a unique insight into the opportunities, challenges and issues faced by the West Coast business community.

In particular I would like to thank all of the 258 business owners and managers who gave their time to participate in the survey which enabled the creation of this report. Close to a majority of you have been in business for over 15 years, meaning the information you have shared is borne of many years’ experience working in the West Coast region, invaluable experience and insights which we can now learn from and build on. Respondents from newer businesses have also helped shed light on the challenges and opportunities facing start-ups in our region.

Engagement with local businesses is key to us gaining a better understanding of the business landscape faced by West Coasters, both as employers and employees. Your participation enables us to work together more effectively to promote sustainable employment and economic benefits for the region.

The West Coast has been in the grip of an economic downturn over the last five years due to changes in the coal mining industry, closure of Holcim and Oceania Gold, and commodity prices that affect returns to the farming community.

However, business confidence findings from this survey suggest we are in an upswing with better times ahead. Overall, a third of West Coast businesses are expecting to see positive change over the coming year. This optimistic outlook held by local businesses suggests there is an active willingness to work towards continued recovery for the West Coast economy.

The DWC 2018–25 Strategy sets an ambitious target of creating an additional 3,500 jobs on the West Coast by 2025. While this number is under review, the findings of this survey suggest things look to be heading in the right direction - a net 23 per cent of West Coast businesses expect to employ more staff over the coming year.

To achieve this goal we need to work in collaboration with all of our local stakeholders. This survey has now produced a goldmine of information pertinent to local industry, giving us a great base from which to work.

Partnering this information with the work being undertaken in relation to the Provincial Growth Fund, we can confidently turn the current optimism on the West Coast into a reality, putting the region on track to prosperity.

We look forward to working with you.

Chris Mackenzie
CHIEF EXECUTIVE | Development West Coast
## WEST COAST BUSINESS OPINION SURVEY

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**DEVELOPMENT WEST COAST**

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www.dwc.org.nz
TECHNOLOGY CHANGES

Thanks to the data collected in this survey, we know that 33 per cent of West Coast businesses expect technology changes over the next five to 10 years will require their staff to retrain. A further five per cent expect major technology changes will require their staff to learn totally different skill-sets. Overall, 38 per cent expect their staffing requirements will be affected in some way by technological changes.

Franz Josef and Fox Glacier business owners expect the least impact, with 81 per cent saying their staff will retain their present skill-sets. Employment in Franz and Fox is largely within the tourism service industry which appears to be comparatively less susceptible to significant technology changes.

Conversely, large West Coast enterprises with more than 20 full time equivalent staff are expecting significant changes with 55 per cent expecting their staff will be affected by future technology changes.

Some 46 per cent of West Coast businesses already report having difficulty finding skilled staff. This situation may not improve quickly or easily given 38 per cent of West Coast businesses expect future technology changes to impact on staff skill-set requirements. These findings suggest that ongoing technical training will be necessary to meet the changing skill-set requirements for staff that technology changes may bring. To do this we must build on the relationships already in place with Tai Poutini Polytechnic, which is best placed to recognise and support changing educational and vocational requirements specific to the Coast.

CHALLENGES TO DOING BUSINESS ON THE WEST COAST

There is overwhelming commentary in the data provided by respondents which emphasises the pride and enjoyment West Coasters have for the region; its beauty and lifestyle is second to none.

But the same rugged landscape that creates such an amazing living space and supports our successful tourism industry also presents us with challenges not faced by businesses and industry in other parts of New Zealand.

The verbatim commentary in Appendix 3 gives a clearer picture of the specific challenges noted by respondents, but one common theme involves transport and access to the region. Contributors suggest air travel to and from the region is unreliable, irregular and expensive, which is an impediment for business growth. One respondent noted that having regular, reliable air travel between the Coast and Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch would be “a game changer” for the region’s business community.

Similarly, the cost of freight to and from the Coast was also mentioned as a key challenge to doing business in the region.

The West Coast economy has experienced some significant structural changes in recent years. According to Infometrics statistics, the mining industry contributed $438.4 million to the region’s GDP and 1,472 filled jobs in 2012, while in 2017 this has fallen to $136.1 million and only 522 filled jobs\(^2\) (note: GDP is measured in constant 2010 prices).

Much frustration was expressed by respondents from the mining industry regarding regulations limiting their access to resources. This frustration was also voiced by a number of businesses in other sectors who have been directly and/or indirectly impacted by the decline in the mining industry on the Coast.
At present the industries that employ the most people on the West Coast are Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (1,830 filled jobs) and Accommodation and Food Services (1,783 filled jobs). Businesses within these sectors have reported significant concerns about external economic factors outside of their control. Some 69 per cent of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing businesses and 59 per cent of Accommodation and Food Services businesses view international economic conditions as a major challenge over the coming year, in comparison to 36 per cent for all West Coast businesses.

Those from the accommodation sector also frequently mentioned the challenges of competing with Airbnb, which allows ‘hosts’ to operate in the same space but without the same financial constraints and overheads.

Inadequate internet access/connectivity is a key issue cited by 38 per cent of businesses in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. It was also a common issue cited industry-wide by many businesses south of Hokitika.

Close to half of respondents (46 per cent) view availability of skilled staff as a major challenge. This issue was strongest amongst businesses in the construction industry, with 63 per cent viewing it as a challenge. This further reinforces the need for quality education and training on the West Coast. It also presents an opportunity for more businesses to consider apprenticeship schemes as a way of attracting young people to the region and boosting the workforce.

Region-wide, one of the main challenges to doing business on the West Coast over the course of the next year is considered to be ensuring customer numbers and maintaining the value of transactions (36 per cent). Similarly, 44 per cent of businesses view attracting new customers as a challenge. This concern was particularly strong amongst retail businesses (71 per cent).

Maintaining work-life balance featured highly when respondents were asked what leadership challenges they faced, with 51 per cent of business owners outlining this as a significant issue.

The free-text commentary provided more insight to this, and respondents shared their concerns about not being able to hire enough staff to allow them time to focus on managerial work. Some businesses also expressed concerns around succession planning, given skilled staff do not always stay as long as they hoped.

The survey also attracted significant commentary about the state of the region’s roading network and how quickly a significant weather event can impact on business continuity. Being shut off by a storm, even just for a day, can cause a noticeable decline in business turnover. This reinforces the importance of building resilience and securing and upgrading our roading network.

The survey results show that businesses in the tourist towns of Franz Josef and Fox Glacier appear to be experiencing some unique challenges. Due to their reliance on international tourism, 75 per cent view international economic conditions as a challenge. The area also experiences unique staffing challenges, including finding accommodation for staff (67 per cent) and immigration issues (42 per cent).

Overall, this survey has produced a wealth of information on the issues being experienced by West Coast businesses. It is DWC’s intention to develop an action plan to address the issues identified in this survey, and to work alongside concerned businesses and key stakeholders in order to find unique solutions to these issues.
TRAINING / PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The areas of training and/or personal development reported as most useful by West Coast businesses were: marketing / digital marketing (34 per cent), industry specific (21 per cent) and leadership, management & governance (21 per cent). The greatest barriers to accessing training were cited as: location where training is offered (49 per cent), cost of training (39 per cent) and timing of training availability (32 per cent).

As previously mentioned, on-going industry specific training will be required to not only overcome the current lack of skilled employees on the West Coast, but also to keep up with changing skill-set requirements stemming from advances in technology. To develop industries on the West Coast it is necessary to continually build staffing capabilities through training and personal development.

The survey was conducted in collaboration with Tai Poutini Polytechnic. The results of the survey are feeding into Tai Poutini Polytechnic’s planning and organisational change process currently underway.

ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A BUSINESS ON THE WEST COAST

Overall quality of life was reported as the biggest advantage to having a business located on the West Coast by a resounding 70 per cent of businesses. Despite the local economic downturn of the last five years, West Coasters appear to be a contented bunch who realise that the region provides a unique unmatched quality of life. The beautiful scenery, lack of traffic and pollution, and the relaxed Coast way-of-life were regularly cited reasons for businesses being located in the region.

In addition to quality of life, business owners who completed our survey reported low overheads (26 per cent), low cost of living (25 per cent) and the supportive local business community (24 per cent) as key advantages to being located on the West Coast. These factors should be strong draw cards for attracting businesses to the Coast, particularly start-ups and businesses in the IT field which are not constrained by geography.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The most important regional development priorities for West Coast businesses were cited as: retaining / attracting people to the West Coast (54 per cent), business creation and development (43 per cent), tourism (37 per cent) and infrastructure (36 per cent).

These regional development priorities were relatively consistent findings across the districts.

Taking a closer look at West Coast towns, Franz Josef and Fox Glacier naturally had a much stronger emphasis on tourism with 67 per cent reporting it as an important priority, in comparison to 38 per cent for the region collectively. Greymouth businesses rated tourism with the least importance, where only 27 per cent viewed it as a major development priority.

Tourism has become a booming industry on the West Coast, growing from 5.7 per cent of the region’s GDP in 2000 to 11.5 per cent in 2017. According to the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, the West Coast is the fastest growing tourism region in New Zealand.

This rise in tourism is a very positive trend, and naturally points to the industry being favoured as a key regional development opportunity. However, many survey respondents have raised concerns and questioned the desirability of the tourism industry. One Hokitika business owner told us that although tourism is an important industry which is doing very well at present, it “can stop very quickly with a world economic downturn or natural disaster”.

Therefore, it is important to build resilience and economic diversification, which is why the majority of respondents still view retaining / attracting people to the West Coast and business creation and development as the most important regional development priorities.
BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

Business confidence is looking positive for the coming year. Collectively 44 per cent of West Coast businesses are expecting the general business situation in the region to improve, while 14 per cent expect the situation to deteriorate. This means a net 30 per cent of West Coast businesses are feeling optimistic about the next 12 months.

Data from this survey reveals that confidence varies widely across the West Coast with Buller businesses being the most optimistic about the coming year (+47 per cent), and Grey businesses the least optimistic (+13 per cent).

Despite this, optimism on the West Coast eclipses that of New Zealand as a whole. According to the latest ANZ Business Confidence Survey¹, a net -23% of New Zealand businesses are feeling optimistic about the year ahead.

The current optimism on the West Coast comes at a critical time. Our region’s GDP has been in decline for the last five years – falling from $1,924m in 2012 to $1,555m in 2017². The findings from this coast-wide survey indicates our community is resilient and willing to work hard to get the economy back on track.

Although the business confidence findings from this survey provide very encouraging reading, it is important to note such findings do not necessarily correlate strongly to GDP. According to former Reserve Bank Economist Rodney Dickens, questions relating to how businesses are feeling about their own businesses - not the wider economy - are much more accurate⁴. Luckily for the Coast, local businesses are reporting positive expectations regarding their employment and revenue expectations.

In the coming year, 25 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their employee levels to increase, while only 5 per cent expect a decrease. This means a net 20 per cent of businesses expect to employ more people, which is far more positive than the rest of the country. Only a net nine per cent of New Zealand businesses expect a rise in employee levels over the next 12 months¹.

Employment growth on the West Coast has been falling over the last five years, with filled jobs dropping from 17,635 in 2012 to 15,944 in 2017². The optimism reported by local businesses may well lead the way to employment growth.

On a similar note, 51 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their total revenue to increase over the next 12 months, while only seven per cent expect a decline. This net optimism of 44 per cent outshines New Zealand’s collective view that suggests a net one per cent of business owners are actually expecting to see a decrease in profits.

Overall, the business confidence findings from this survey point to a much needed recovery on the horizon for the West Coast economy. This may partly be due to the poor economy experienced by Coasters since 2012, with the prevailing feeling summed up by one Westport Business interviewed: “the situation can only improve.”

To transform the current level of optimism into tangible outcomes, the region must work collaboratively to address the issues voiced by local businesses in this survey and work together to realise the opportunities that have been identified.
### WEST COAST KEY STATISTICS

#### 2017 Statistical Snapshot *(source: Infometrics²)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION:</th>
<th>32,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
<td>10,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>13,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
<td>8,810</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS UNITS:</th>
<th>3,792</th>
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<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
<td>1,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>1,380</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
<td>1,236</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FILLED JOBS:</th>
<th>15,944</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
<td>4,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>7,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
<td>4,486</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GDP millions:</th>
<th>$1,555m</th>
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<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
<td>$496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>$633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
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<table>
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<th>MEAN ANNUAL EARNINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
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### WEST COAST BUSINESS UNITS BY SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Businesses Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business owner only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 or more</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Filled Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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[www.dwc.org.nz](http://www.dwc.org.nz)
2017 West Coast Economy Structure (source: Infometrics²)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Filled Jobs</th>
<th>Share of total jobs</th>
<th>Business units</th>
<th>Share of total business units</th>
<th>GDP (millions)</th>
<th>Share of total GDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>25.70%</td>
<td>$268.6</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>1,783</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>8.50%</td>
<td>$65.4</td>
<td>4.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,757</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>4.30%</td>
<td>$140.4</td>
<td>9.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1,757</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>9.40%</td>
<td>$154.1</td>
<td>9.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
<td>$69.0</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>1,534</td>
<td>9.60%</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
<td>$81.4</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
<td>$45.5</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>4.50%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
<td>$56.6</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
<td>$21.8</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>$136.1</td>
<td>8.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
<td>$15.9</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>3.20%</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>$28.7</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
<td>$34.3</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>2.40%</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
<td>$29.5</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Recreation Services</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>2.40%</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
<td>$19.2</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>11.90%</td>
<td>$87.2</td>
<td>5.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Media and Telecommunications</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.60%</td>
<td>$12.4</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and Insurance Services</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
<td>$21.0</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>$46.0</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,944</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,729</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,554.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Filled Jobs, 2000 to 2017

GDP ($m) 2000 to 2017
Survey Overview

The survey was designed and executed to capture business responses within the West Coast Region. The survey questions were created to help DWC better understand the issues, concerns and opportunities facing West Coast businesses.

The surveys were conducted in-person and online. The survey consisted of 26 questions, including both multi-choice and open-ended questions. The average time spent completing the online survey was 24 minutes.

SURVEY COLLECTION

The survey responses were conducted either in-person or online.

In-person interviews were conducted with a selection of businesses viewed as representative of the overall business population on the West Coast. Conducting face-to-face interviews provided an opportunity to delve deeper into respondents’ answers with follow-up questions.

The online responses were generated by sending out invitations via email and Facebook with a link to the survey online. Collecting survey responses online allowed for a much wider and more time efficient reach, ensuring more businesses were given voice in the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of collection</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-person</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online via-email</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online via-Facebook</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via-phone</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>258</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TIME PERIOD / STAGES OF DATA COLLECTION

The survey responses were collected from 26 February 2018 until 15 May 2018.

The collection period loosely followed three stages. Firstly, face-to-face interviews were conducted. Next, emails were sent to potential respondents with a link to the survey online. Finally, a post on the Development West Coast Facebook page was created containing a link to the online survey.

These different stages were used to ensure we obtained a good range of respondents. The online survey responses were checked to ensure the respondents were from within the target population.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL AND MARGIN OF ERROR

There are 3,729 businesses operating on the West Coast\(^2\). To achieve a 95% confidence level with 258 survey responses there will be a margin of error of plus or minus 5.89%.
Q1. Location of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franz Josef / Fox Glacier</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grany</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greymouth</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>37.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haast</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hari Hari</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hokitika</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumara</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karamea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokatahi / Kowhitirangi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okarito</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punakaiki / Barrytown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reefton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westport</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whataroa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>258</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey responses vs Actual location of West Coast businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Survey responses</th>
<th>Actual location of businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE ON REPRESENTATION**

**LOCATION:** The survey responses provided a relatively good representation of the actual locations of businesses on the West Coast. However, Grey businesses were slightly over-represented and Buller businesses slightly under-represented.

**INDUSTRIES:** We received a wide spread of responses across the industries. However, businesses in ‘Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing’ were relatively under-represented in comparison to their actual numbers, and businesses in ‘Retail Trade’ and ‘Accommodation and Food Services’ were over-represented.

Q2. Which best describes the principal industry of your business?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Media and Telecommunications</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and Insurance Services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Recreation Services</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>258</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3. How long has your business been in operation?

- 17% 0 - 3 years
- 13% 4 - 7 years
- 23% 8 - 15 years
- 46% 15+ years

Q4. How many full-time equivalent employees are employed in your business? (not including contractors)

- 20% Business owner only
- 41% 1-5
- 16% 6-9
- 11% 10-19
- 8% 20-49
- 3% 50-99
- 1% 100 or more

NOTE ON REPRESENTATION
We received a good spread of responses from businesses of all different sizes. However, it is important to note our 'business owner only' responses were significantly underrepresented. 'Business owner only' businesses make up 57 per cent of all businesses on the West Coast, but only 20 per cent of our respondents.

Q5. Which of the following categories best represents your total revenue over the past 12 months?

- 25% Under $150,000
- 6% $150,001 - $250,000
- 10% $250,001 - $500,000
- 15% $500,001 - $1,000,000
- 19% $1,000,001 - $5,000,000
- 6% Over $5,000,000
- 17% Prefer not to answer
- 1% Don't know
Q6. Technology changes over the coming years may affect staffing requirements in some industries. Over the next 5-10 years do you expect your business will ...

**TECHNOLOGY CHANGES**

A closer look: comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Type</th>
<th>Require staff to have similar skill sets to now</th>
<th>Require staff to re-train due to changes in technology</th>
<th>Undergo major changes which may require staff to have totally different skill-sets</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller Businesses</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Businesses</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland Businesses</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME’s</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY**

Net per cent of businesses expecting to be affected by technology changes

- Grey District: +42%
- Westland District: +43%
- Buller District: +33%
- WEST COAST REGION: +38%

38 per cent of West Coast businesses expect technology changes over the next 5-10 years will require their staff to either re-train or require totally different skill sets.

**COMMENTS**

A total of 33 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their staff will have to re-train due to technology changes over the next five to 10 years, while an additional five per cent expect to undergo major changes that will require totally different skill sets for their employees.

Grey District is expecting the most change with 42 per cent saying their staff are likely to be affected in some way by future technology changes. Franz Josef Glacier and Fox Glacier towns expect to be the least affected with 81 per cent of respondents indicating their staff will not need new or additional skills.

Large enterprises with more than 20 FTE’s are also expecting significant changes with 55 per cent reporting their staff will be affected by technology changes over the next five to 10 years.
Q7. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a financial perspective?

**Key Stat**
Expect customer numbers & transaction value to be a challenge over the next 12 months (36%)

**Comparisons: top financial challenges**

**Buller Businesses**
- Customer numbers & transaction value: 47%
- Managing staffing costs: 33%
- Cash flow / Working capital: 32%

**Grey Businesses**
- Managing overheads: 36%
- Customer numbers & transaction value: 36%
- Competitor pricing: 28%

**Westland Businesses**
- Managing overheads: 30%
- Customer numbers & transaction value: 29%
- Cash flow / Working capital: 29%

**Summary**
The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a financial perspective were reported as:
- Customer numbers & transaction value: 36%
- Managing overheads: 32%
- Managing staffing costs: 27%
- Cash flow / Working capital: 27%

**Differences across the region**
In Buller 47 per cent of respondents reported Customer numbers & transaction value as a challenge in comparison to the Coast average of 36 per cent. This issue was elaborated on by some respondents from Buller (particularly in Westport), expressing concern about the lack of customers in town.

Respondents involved in the tourism industry highlighted the financial pressures involved in running a business year-round in what is largely a seasonal industry (see Appendix 3).

**Business voices**

“*It is now, and has always been seasonality that is the challenge*” Buller Accommodation and Food Services Business

“*Margins are rapidly shrinking. Sales are up, but margins are down*” Grey Informational, Media and Telecommunications Business

“*Regulatory compliance costs (both time and money) particularly around health and safety. Small business compliance requirements are no less significant than for larger entities, but our ability to properly resource them are a challenge.*” Buller Professional Services Business
CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES

Q8. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a customer / client perspective?

Comparisons: top customer / client challenges

**BULLER BUSINESSES**
- Attracting new customers: 56%
- Improving customer awareness: 42%
- Consistent customer service: 32%

**GREY BUSINESSES**
- Attracting new customers: 45%
- Maintaining competitive prices: 37%
- Meeting changing customer needs: 29%

**WESTLAND BUSINESSES**
- Attracting new customers: 34%
- Maintaining competitive: 33%
- Predicting sales activity: 28%

**SUMMARY**

The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a customer / client perspective were reported as:

- Attracting new customers: 44%
- Maintaining competitive prices: 32%
- Improving customer awareness: 31%

**DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE REGION**

A total of 56 per cent of Buller businesses reported attracting new customers as a challenge, in comparison to the West Coast average of 44 per cent. This is a major issue for businesses in retail trade, with 71 per cent citing attracting new customers as an issue.

**BUSINESS VOICES**

“Trying to reach the entire West Coast. The distance of customers is difficult!” Buller other Services Business

“Being aware of trends, ensuring the parent body are effective in marketing the product overseas whilst ensuring the product is available in local supermarkets” Westland Agriculture Business

“Competition from online sales and shopping away from town, due to a lack of shopping options in Greymouth” Grey Retail Business

“Delivering what we say, when we say. No lack of opportunity at all” Buller Manufacturing Business

“People just drive through Whataroa, we need to make them stop here” Westland Recreation Services Business

“We are finding the average person is having a very high expectation of every aspect of customer service.” Grey Retail Business
Q9. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a broader market perspective?

SUMMARY
The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a broader market perspective were reported as:

- Local economic conditions: 50%
- International economic conditions: 36%
- Government compliance and regulations: 36%

DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE REGION
In Westland 53 per cent reported international economic conditions as a challenge, compared to the Coast average of 36 per cent. This is due to the significant role of tourism and agriculture in the district. 75 per cent of businesses in the tourist towns of Franz Josef and Fox Glacier reported international economic conditions as a major challenge. Similarly, 69 per cent of businesses involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing across the region view it as a challenge.

Over half of respondents from Grey and Buller districts reported local economic conditions as a major challenge. Hopefully this will improve as a net 30 per cent of West Coast businesses expect the local business situation will improve over the coming year (see p.22).

BUSINESS VOICES
“Government’s Green policies! Anti-mining” Grey Mining Business

“The unknown potential impacts of natural disasters - storms, road and transport continuity, winter impacts on road accessibility, and increased compliance costs” Grey Recreation Business

“tourism … this can stop very quickly with a world economic downturn or natural disaster” Westland Mining Business
Q10. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a leadership perspective?

**Comparisons: top leadership challenges**

**BULLER BUSINESSES**
- Work / Life balance: 49%
- Time management / Productivity: 39%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’ instead of ‘managing the business’: 37%

**GREY BUSINESSES**
- Work / Life balance: 48%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’ instead of ‘managing the business’: 41%
- Time management / Productivity: 30%

**WESTLAND BUSINESSES**
- Work / Life balance: 55%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’ instead of ‘managing the business’: 34%
- Time management / Productivity: 30%

**SUMMARY**

The three greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a leadership perspective were reported as:

- **Work / life balance**: 51%
- **Too much time ‘working in the business’ instead of ‘managing the business’**: 37%
- **Time management / productivity**: 32%

These challenges appear to be quite consistent, with work / life balance being a significant issue for business owners and managers across the West Coast – particularly in Westland where 55 per cent view it as a concern.

**BUSINESS VOICES**

“*We are run off our feet. I would like to train someone to operate the front desk, but staff only stay a few months. So I end up having to do the front desk as well as everything else*” Westland Accommodation Business

“*Just keep being a leader and don’t get bogged down. Remember to go home and get out in the garden or ride and allow thinking time without distractions*” Buller Education and Training Business

“*Succession – attracting professional staff to take over the business*” Grey Professional Services Business

“*Because we have been short-staffed, I have had to spend too much time on the shop floor*” Westland Food Services Business

“*All business owners will agree here, customers have an expectation of seeing the owner in their business, but this does cut into – working on your business time!*” Grey Food Services Business

“*Being aligned to a corporate the rules of engagement keep changing. We tend to do more for less.*” Grey Retail Business
Q11. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a staffing perspective?

**SUMMARY**

The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a staffing perspective were reported as:

- Availability of skilled staff: 46%
- Wage levels / staff costs: 31%
- Staff performance: 23%

**DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE REGION**

These challenges appear to be quite consistent across the region, with lack of skilled staff being reported as a significant issue that needs to be addressed Coast-wide.

However, businesses in Franz Josef and Fox Glacier are experiencing some unique staffing challenges. Some 67 per cent report accommodation for staff as an issue compared to the Coast average of nine per cent, and 42 per cent view immigration as a significant issue versus 11 per cent for the region (see Appendix 3 for more on these issues).

**BUSINESS VOICES**

“Often very hard to find staff with the right skills and qualifications … It is time consuming and expensive to train people, and often they move on after you have put a lot of time and money into the training. Lack of personal responsibility and attitude often a problem with staff” Westland Mining Business

“We can’t compete with Westland Milk Product’s wages so the skilled staff end up working for them” Westland Manufacturing Business

“… due to the seasonality of the tourism business … it is difficult to pay staff year-round” Westland Accommodation Business
**DIGITAL CHALLENGES**

**Q12.** What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from a digital perspective?

**SUMMARY**

The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from a digital perspective were reported as:

- Optimising website traffic: 31%
- Using social media: 27%
- Insufficient technical skills / knowledge: 22%

**DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE REGION**

These challenges appear to be relatively consistent across the region. However, inadequate internet access / connectivity was more of an issue for businesses south of Hokitika in Westland (see Appendix 3).

**BUSINESS VOICES**

"The complexity of online booking systems, channel managers etc and the fact that spotty teenagers keep coming up with new apps all the time...Keeping up with fickle technological trends is increasingly difficult and time-consuming" Buller Accommodation and Food Services Business

"I hate social media but realise it is an important part of doing business nowadays." Buller Retail Business

"Need to strengthen and modernize communication networks (this includes phone coverage and broadband access speed)" Westland Agriculture Business

"As an IT company that also operates as an ISP, our fibre connection costs thousands per month. UFB rollout changes nothing in terms of our current connection, when it “arrives” it’s costs will plummet. NZ rural areas held to ransom by Chorus!" Buller Professional Services Business

"It’s hard to reach customers electronically now because social media and emails are getting so over-loaded people switch off." Buller Manufacturing Business
INNOVATION CHALLENGES

Q13. What are the greatest challenges to your business over the next 12 months from an innovation perspective?

36%
Improving business processes

35%
Improving current products, services and technology

24%
Developing new products, services and technology

19%
N/A

15%
Cooperation with other businesses

11%
Building an innovative work culture

10%
Resources for research and development

5%
Protection of intellectual property rights

Comparisons: top innovation challenges

BULLER BUSINESSES

Improving business processes 47%
Improving current products, services & technology 40%
Cooperation with other businesses 26%

GREY BUSINESSES

Improving business processes 33%
Improving current products, services and technology 32%
Developing new products, services ... 26%

WESTLAND BUSINESSES

Improving current products, services and technology 35%
Improving business processes 33%
Developing new products, services ... 23%

SUMMARY

The greatest challenges to West Coast businesses from an innovation perspective were reported as:

- Improving business processes: 36%
- Improving current, products, services and technology: 35%
- Developing new products, services and technology: 24%

BUSINESS VOICES

“The infrastructure has to improve first – otherwise no innovation” Buller Accommodation Business

“I need to set up an online store. There is currently no one in my industry selling online to rural markets – so a great opportunity for me.” Buller Retail Business

“If I had more staff I would have more time to innovate and try new recipes and new ideas.” Westland Food Services Business

“Resource consents are preventing innovation” Grey Manufacturing Business

“As long as government agencies turn a blind eye to fake product in New Zealand in the long run NZ will be perceived as a corrupt country.” Westland Manufacturing Business

“We are always looking to improve our factory processes. This allows us to produce more with the same staffing levels” Westland Agriculture Business
Q14. What additional training / personal development areas would be useful for your business?

- Marketing / digital marketing: 34%
- N/A: 22%
- Industry specific: 21%
- Leadership, management & governance: 21%
- Health and safety: 20%
- Computer skills: 18%
- HR / People management: 16%
- Access to business mentoring: 16%
- Financial management: 14%
- Business processes: 14%
- Workplace literacy / numeracy: 3%

Q19. What barriers do you face in accessing training for you and/or your employees?

- Location where training is offered: 49%
- Cost of training: 39%
- Timing of training availability: 32%
- Time taken participating in training: 31%
- N/A: 18%
- Training needed is not offered: 14%
- Training is not available online: 10%
Q15. What are the advantages of your business being located on the West Coast?

**ADVANTAGES OF THE WEST COAST**

Report overall quality of life as an advantage to having their business on the West Coast: 70%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Buller Business Percentage</th>
<th>Grey Business Percentage</th>
<th>Westland Business Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of life</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low overhead costs</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low cost of living</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive local business community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low staff turnover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less competition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to local resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to business support services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMPARISONS: advantages of being on the West Coast**

**BULLER BUSINESSES**

- Overall quality of life: 76%
- Low overhead costs: 28%
- Low cost of living: 31%
- Supportive local business community
- Low staff turnover
- Less competition
- Access to local resources: N/A
- Access to business support services: 4%

**GREY BUSINESSES**

- Overall quality of life: 65%
- Low overhead costs: 34%
- Low cost of living
- Supportive local business community
- Low staff turnover: 30%
- Less competition
- Access to local resources
- Access to business support services

**WESTLAND BUSINESSES**

- Overall quality of life: 72%
- Supportive local business community: 28%
- Less competition: 17%
- Low overhead costs
- Low cost of living
- Low staff turnover
- Less competition
- Access to local resources
- Access to business support services

**SUMMARY**

Overall quality of life was reported as the greatest advantage of having a business located on the West Coast by a majority of respondents: 70%.

**BUSINESS VOICES**

- “Easy commute to work! Fantastic scenery. People love coming here to visit” Grey Retail Business
- “About 2% of our sales come from the Coast … from a business perspective it doesn’t make sense to be here, BUT I couldn’t see me live anywhere else” Westland Agriculture Business
- “The West Coast is one of the most beautiful places in NZ, we just have to spread the word and get people to stay here” Buller Retail Business
- “I came here for the relaxed lifestyle. That’s why I am here” Westland Accommodation Business
- “I love it here, there is plenty of opportunity and a lot of world class local talent. We have it all and don’t really know our own strengths” Buller Education and Training Business
- “Not based on the Coast because it is the best place for the business – it is where we like to live so we make it work by outsourcing as much as possible” Grey Wholesale Trade Business
- “Close to friends, family & loyal staff – probably the greatest things that keeps us here now, as everything else seems to be fast going backwards.” Westland Retail Business
- “West Coast tradesmen have a wide range of experience and versatility” Grey Manufacturing Business
Q16. What do you believe are the most important regional development priorities for the West Coast?

**Comparisons: Regional Development Priorities**

**Buller Businesses**
- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 48%
- Tourism: 41%
- Business creation and development: 34%

**Grey Businesses**
- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 64%
- Business creation and development: 57%
- Infrastructure: 34%

**Westland Businesses**
- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 46%
- Tourism: 44%
- Infrastructure: 38%

**Summary**

The most important regional development priorities for West Coast businesses were reported as:

- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 54%
- Business creation and development: 43%
- Tourism: 37%
- Infrastructure: 36%

**Differences Across the Region**

**Tourism:** In Franz Josef and Fox Glacier 67 per cent of businesses view tourism as a key development priority as opposed to 27 per cent of Greymouth businesses.

**Business creation and development:** A total of 61 per cent of Greymouth businesses reported business creation and development as a priority versus 12.5 per cent of Franz Josef and Fox Glacier businesses.

**Infrastructure:** Infrastructure is considered a key development priority by 54 per cent of Franz Josef and Fox Glacier businesses compared to just 30 per cent in Hokitika.

**Business Voices**

“There needs to be significant, long term and tangible financial incentives (tax savings) to attract significant businesses to the Coast.”

**Buller Manufacturing Business**

“The largest priority has to be in making the West Coast an attractive place to live, without population growth we will be in trouble long term.”

**Grey Financial Service Business**

“No point attracting people to a region without top notch education and health care”

**Grey Transport Business**
Q17. Compared to 12 months ago, do you feel the general business situation on the West Coast is ...

**SUMMARY**

Net % of businesses who feel the general business situation has improved compared to 12 months ago

- Westland District +33%
- Buller District +31%
- Grey District -5%
- SME’s +16%
- Large Enterprises +26%
- WEST COAST REGION +18%

A net 18 per cent of West Coast businesses feel the general business situation is better compared to 12 months ago.

**COMMENTS**

In total 40 per cent of West Coast businesses feel the general business situation on the West Coast is better than compared to 12 months ago, while 22 per cent reported the situation has worsened. Overall, a net 18 per cent of businesses feel the situation is better.

Westland was the most positive region with a net 33 per cent. This was partly driven by Franz Josef and Fox Glacier businesses where a net 63 per cent feel the business situation on the West Coast has improved over the last 12 months.

Something to note is that a net five per cent of Grey District business feel the general business situation has actually worsened compared to 12 months ago.

**A closer look: comparisons**
Q18. For the next 12 months, do you expect the general business situation on the West Coast to ...

SUMMARY

Net % of businesses expecting the general business situation to improve over the next 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller District</td>
<td>+47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland District</td>
<td>+38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey District</td>
<td>+13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST COAST REGION</td>
<td>+30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME’s</td>
<td>+29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>+29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW ZEALAND</td>
<td>-23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A net 30 per cent of West Coast businesses feel the general business situation will improve over the next 12 months, compared to -23 per cent throughout NZ.

COMMENTS

The survey suggests 44 per cent expect the general business situation on the West Coast will improve over the next 12 months, while 14 per cent expect the situation will deteriorate. Overall, a net 30 per cent expect the situation to improve. This is far more optimistic than the general view in New Zealand, where a net 23 per cent expect the situation to deteriorate.

Buller is the most optimistic of the districts (+47 per cent) and Grey the least optimistic (+13 per cent). Although businesses in the Grey District were the least optimistic it is important to note their confidence is still far higher than New Zealand as a whole (-23 per cent), and it appears to be a positive step towards improvement considering a net five per cent felt the situation had worsened over the past year.

A closer look at the towns reveals Franz Josef and Fox Glacier businesses were the most positive with 67 per cent stating the business situation on the West Coast will improve over the next 12 months. Westport businesses were also relatively optimistic with a net 53 per cent expecting improvement.

A closer look: comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Improve</th>
<th>Stay the same</th>
<th>Deteriorate</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller Businesses</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Businesses</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland Businesses</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME’s</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q19. Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to:

Increase 63%
Stay the same 25%
Decrease 5%
Don’t know 6%

**SUMMARY**

Net % of businesses expecting employee levels to increase over the next 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Stay the same</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grey District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buller District</td>
<td>+22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland District</td>
<td>+19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST COAST REGION</td>
<td>+20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>+18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>+62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW ZEALAND¹</td>
<td>+9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A net 20 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their employee levels to increase over the next 12 months, compared to only 9 per cent throughout NZ.

**COMMENTS**

In total 25 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their employee levels to increase over the next 12 months, while around five percent expect a decrease. This means a net 20 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their employee levels to increase. This is a very positive finding that will hopefully translate to a rise in employment on the West Coast over the coming year.

These trends were relatively consistent across the region with Grey District the most optimistic (+22 per cent).

Within the towns, Hokitika had the most optimism regarding employee levels (+24 per cent). There was however a significant amount of uncertainty amongst Franz Josef and Fox Glacier businesses with 14 per cent not knowing what to expect (see Appendix 2 for some of the possible reasons behind this uncertainty). Large enterprises were very optimistic for the coming year, with a net 62 per cent expecting an increase to employee levels.

**A closer look: comparisons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Type</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Stay the same</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buller Businesses</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Businesses</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westland Businesses</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME’s</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Q20.** Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...  

**SUMMARY**

Net % of businesses expecting revenue to increase over the coming 12 months

- Grey District +48%
- Buller District +45%
- Westland District +38%
- WEST COAST REGION +44%
- SME’s +38%
- Large Enterprises +90%
- NEW ZEALAND -1%

A net 44 per cent of West Coast businesses expect their total revenue to increase over the next 12 months, compared to minus one per cent throughout New Zealand.

**COMMENTS**

The outlook for the coming year is looking very positive with a net 44 per cent of West Coast businesses expecting their total revenue to increase over the coming year.

Of the districts, Grey businesses were the most optimistic (+48 per cent) and Westland the least optimistic (+38 per cent).

Businesses in Franz Josef and Fox Glacier were the most optimistic with +71 per cent expecting revenue to increase, while only +19 per cent in Hokitika were expecting revenue to increase.

Large enterprises with more than 20 FTEs are looking extremely bullish with 90 per cent expecting their total revenue to increase over the next year.

**A closer look: comparisons**

- Buller Businesses: Increase 52%, Stay the same 33%, Decrease 7%, Don't know 9%
- Grey Businesses: Increase 57%, Stay the same 29%, Decrease 9%, Don't know 5%
- Westland Businesses: Increase 44%, Stay the same 42%, Decrease 6%, Don't know 9%
- SME’s: Increase 46%, Stay the same 38%, Decrease 8%, Don't know 8%
- Large Enterprises: Increase 90%, Stay the same 6%, Decrease 0%, Don't know 3%
CONCLUSION

The 2018 West Coast Business Opinion Survey has provided DWC, and the community, with a wealth of information. Engaging with local businesses and letting their voices be heard has helped shed invaluable light on the challenges, issues and opportunities being faced by businesses and industry across the region.

The survey reveals that our business community is feeling relatively positive about the future. The years of hard work that have gone into business creation and development is on the cusp of significant success. To fulfil this optimistic outlook the region must work collaboratively to address the issues outlined in this survey, as well as working together to realise the many great opportunities our unique region has to offer.

There are already tools in place to support the local community as it surges forward, in particular the Provincial Growth Fund which DWC considers to be a once in a generation opportunity. Through utilisation of this fund our region will benefit through co-investment and partnerships with central government, private enterprise and other organisations.

In the words of DWC Chair Renee Rooney, we know that working collaboratively is a good place to start, and agreeing on the steps along the way will only serve to strengthen our region. Working together is the key to achieving great results for the entire region and we look forward to getting started.
INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017®)

**BUSINESS UNITS:** 957

**FILLED JOBS:** 1,830

**GDP million:** $268.6m

**INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY**
GDP per person employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing

West Coast New Zealand Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017®)

Filled Jobs – Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing 2000 to 2017

GDP – Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing 2000 to 2017
INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing Survey Responses (26 respondents)

Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months

TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES
- Cash flow / working capital: 38%
- Cost of inputs: 38%

TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES
- Maintaining competitive prices: 28%
- Meeting changing customer needs: 28%

TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES
- International economic conditions: 69%
- Government compliance and regulations: 50%

TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES
- Work / life balance: 56%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’: 40%

TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES
- Availability of skilled staff: 42%
- Staff training: 27%

TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES
- Inadequate internet access/connectivity: 38%
- Insufficient tech skills: 19%

TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES
- Improving business processes: 60%
- Business cooperation: 20%

Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to ...
- Increase: 81%
- Stay the same: 19%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...
- Increase: 46%
- Stay the same: 46%
- Don’t know: 8%

Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 60%
- Access to local resources: 28%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 61%
- Telecommunications / internet access / connectivity: 38%
Accommodation & Food Services Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017)

**BUSINESS UNITS:** 318

**FILLED JOBS:** 1,783

**GDP million:** $65.4 m

**INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY**
GDP per person employed in accommodation and food services

West Coast: $36,654
New Zealand: $31,175

### Filled Jobs – Accommodation and Food Services 2000 to 2017

- **West Coast:**
- **Buller:** 105
- **Grey:** 87
- **Westland:** 123

- **Buller:** 413
- **Grey:** 541
- **Westland:** 830

- **Buller:** $15.1
- **Grey:** $19.7
- **Westland:** $30.5

### GDP – Accommodation and Food Services 2000 to 2017

- **West Coast:**
- **Buller:** $36,654
- **Grey:** $31,175

- **West Coast:**
- **Buller:** 105
- **Grey:** 87
- **Westland:** 123

- **Buller:** 413
- **Grey:** 541
- **Westland:** 830

- **Buller:** $15.1
- **Grey:** $19.7
- **Westland:** $30.5

- **West Coast:**
- **Buller:** $36,654
- **Grey:** $31,175
Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to...

- Increase: 20%
- Stay the same: 69%
- Decrease: 5%
- Don't know: 5%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to...

- Increase: 63%
- Stay the same: 24%
- Decrease: 4%
- Don't know: 9%

Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 65%
- Supportive local business community: 29%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Tourism: 73%
- Infrastructure: 40%
INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Manufacturing Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017)

BUSINESS UNITS: 159

FILLED JOBS: 1,757

GDP million: $140.4 m

INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY
GDP per person employed in Manufacturing

West Coast
New Zealand

Filled Jobs – Manufacturing 2000 to 2017

GDP – Manufacturing 2000 to 2017
Manufacturing Survey Responses (30 respondents)

Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to ...

- Increase: 50%
- Stay the same: 35%
- Decrease: 10%
- Don’t know: 5%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...

- Increase: 70%
- Stay the same: 25%
- Decrease: 5%

Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months:

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Cash flow / Working capital: 40%
- Managing staffing costs: 40%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Consistent customer service: 45%
- Attracting new customers: 35%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- National economic conditions: 55%
- Government compliance and regulations: 30%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Time management / productivity: 35%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’: 30%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Availability of skilled staff: 55%
- Wage levels / staff costs: 30%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Optimising website traffic: 45%
- Using social media: 30%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving business processes: 55%
- Developing new products, services and technologies: 50%

Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast:

- Overall quality of life: 60%
- Low staff turnover: 35%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast:

- Business creation and development: 55%
- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 55%
INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Construction Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017²)

BUSINESS UNITS: 351

FILLED JOBS: 1,757

GDP million: $154.1m

INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY

GDP per person employed in Construction

APPENDIX 1

Filled Jobs – Construction 2000 to 2017

GDP – Construction 2000 to 2017

WEST COAST

Buller Grey Westland

Buller Grey Westland

West Coast New Zealand

Buller Grey Westland

Buller Grey Westland

$87,704 $67,837

$37.1 $84.7 $32.3

$99 $135 $96

$475 $64 $418

$87,704 $67,837

$37.1 $84.7 $32.3

DWC | 2018 WEST COAST BUSINESS OPINION SURVEY

www.dwc.org.nz
### Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Competitor pricing: 56%
- Cash flow / Working capital: 38%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Maintaining competitive prices: 50%
- Predicting sales activity: 38%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- Local economic conditions: 75%
- Government compliance and regulations: 44%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Work / Life balance: 63%
- Time management / Productivity: 38%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Availability of skilled staff: 63%
- Wage levels / staff costs: 31%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Using social media: 25%
- Inactive web: 13%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving business processes: 44%
- Improving current products, services: 38%

---

### Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 69%
- Low overhead costs: 38%

---

### Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Business creation & development: 50%
- Infrastructure: 44%
INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Retail Trade Statistics (source: Infometrics 2017)

**BUSINESS UNITS:** 249

**FILLED JOBS:** 1,593

**GDP million:** $69m

**INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY**

GDP per person employed in Retail

West Coast: $43,301
New Zealand: $51,550

Filled Jobs – Retail Trade 2000 to 2017

GDP – Retail Trade 2000 to 2017
*Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to...*

- **Increase**: 12%
- **Stay the same**: 75%
- **Decrease**: 8%
- **Don't know**: 5%

*Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to...*

- **Increase**: 41%
- **Stay the same**: 37%
- **Decrease**: 12%
- **Don't know**: 10%

---

**Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months**

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Managing overheads: 46%
- Customer numbers & transactional value: 44%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Attracting new customers: 71%
- Maintaining competitive prices: 41%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- Local economic conditions: 76%
- International economic conditions: 32%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Work / Life balance: 63%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’...: 40%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Wage levels / staff costs: 44%
- Availability of skilled staff: 29%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Optimising website traffic: 33%
- Using social media: 26%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving current products, services: 40%
- Developing new products: 30%

---

**Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast**

- Overall quality of life: 78%
- Low cost of living: 37%

---

**Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast**

- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 56%
- Infrastructure: 41%
Franz Josef and Fox Glacier Survey Responses (24 respondents)

Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to ...

- Increase: 58%
- Stay the same: 25%
- Decrease: 4%
- Don’t know: 13%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...

- Increase: 71%
- Stay the same: 17%
- Decrease: 13%
- Don’t know: 4%

Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Managing overheads: 29%
- Managing staffing costs: 33%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Predicting sales activity: 33%
- Consistent customer service: 29%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- International economic conditions: 75%
- Government compliance: 33%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Work / Life balance: 42%
- People management: 38%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Accommodation for staff: 67%
- Availability of skilled staff: 54%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Optimising website traffic: 46%
- Inadequate internet access: 29%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving current products, services: 42%
- Developing new products, services: 38%

Compared to 12 months ago, do you feel the general business situation on the West Coast is ...

- Better: 67%
- The same: 21%
- Worse: 4%
- Don’t know: 8%

For the next 12 months, do you expect the general business situation on the West Coast to ...

- Improve: 67%
- Stay the same: 29%
- Don’t know: 4%
Franz Josef and Fox Glacier Survey Responses (24 respondents)

Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 63%
- Suportive local businesses: 33%
- Less competition: 17%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Tourism: 67%
- Infrastructure: 54%
- Telecommunications / internet access: 54%
IMMIGRATION

There is a lot of concern in Franz Josef and Fox Glacier about recent tightening of immigration rules. These changes are creating significant staffing challenges in Franz and Fox where a significant number of overseas employees are used.

“It took 5/6 months to get one chef through the immigration process. Another chef in Franz left his previous job, to work for us. Now it has been 4 months and he is still in limbo, we can’t get his visa processed. It seems a lot of immigration work has been outsourced to China, and they are constantly making us jump through unnecessary hoops ... These crazy immigration rules are dictating our business, and how much we can earn. We have to hire overseas staff, as NZ chefs don’t want to work in Franz. Franz is lacking the infrastructure for NZ families.” Westland Food Service Business

“Recently some new immigration rules have happened. Some staff are only allowed to work for 3 months at a business. There is no rhyme or reason to this ... It takes two weeks to train someone, and that investment is only recovered after 3 month’s work.” Westland Food Service Business

STAFF TURNOVER

High staff turnover was a common issue mentioned by Franz and Fox businesses.

“we always have a high staff turnover due to the fact that we need to work with travellers because there are not enough locals around to fill all positions” Westland Accommodation & Food Service Business

“I wish I could have staff training. But staff turnover is too high, so it is not realistic” Westland Accommodation Business

“due to high changeover for staff it might affect the quality of customer service” Westland Accommodation Business

UNCERTAINTY

Uncertainty regarding the future was another oft-cited issue by Franz and Fox business.

“We need clarification from local and national government about what is going to be done about the natural hazards imposing on the township of Franz Josef, i.e. the Alpine Fault and the Waiho River flooding, power outages and road closures” Westland other Services Business

“There is so much uncertainty, such as the fault-line in Fox. Or if they build a gondola in Franz, it will kill Fox” Westland Accommodation & Food Service Business

“What happens if the main tourism draw-card of the glacier continue to retreat or tourism in general takes a hit – what will people do for work?” Westland Accommodation & Food Service Business

ACCOMMODATION FOR STAFF

Another key issue raised by many businesses in Franz and Fox is the lack of accommodation for staff. Land constraints, unwillingness of local landowners to sell land, and existing residential properties being converted to Airbnbs were all cited as causes of this issue.

“The biggest issue is accommodation for the staff. We have four staff members and they are living with myself, husband and baby. Things are very hectic at home. We want to build accommodation for staff, but have hit a road block with council consent for the shower/toilet” Westland Accommodation Business

“we own a considerable amount of accommodation so accommodation for our staff is not a large issue. BUT when you get good staff who want to have their families here and contribute to the town there are no houses for first home owners to buy which typically means they move on creating an extreme transient town which has a knock on effect with the community, schools etc.” Westland Accommodation & Food Service Business

“Lock of residential housing diverts business funds into housing to secure homes for staff. That’s money not being spent within businesses but on rent/buying houses instead” Westland Recreation Business

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FRANZ & FOX

“Fox Glacier is separate to Franz Josef in a lot of ways, especially when it comes to attracting staff here. I wanted to comment that hiring staff and getting them to Fox is tricky as Franz simply has more going on, more bars for younger people” Westland Recreation Business
Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to ...

- Increase: 28%
- Stay the same: 59%
- Decrease: 6%
- Don't know: 7%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...

- Increase: 57%
- Stay the same: 29%
- Decrease: 9%
- Don't know: 4%

Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Customer numbers & transactional value: 37%
- Managing overheads: 34%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Attracting new customers: 47%
- Maintaining competitive prices: 36%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- Local economic conditions: 64%
- National economic conditions: 35%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Work / Life balance: 46%
- Too much time ‘working in the business’ ...: 39%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Availability of skilled staff: 54%
- Wage levels / Staff costs: 30%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Optimising website traffic: 31%
- Using social media: 26%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving current products, services ...: 33%
- Improving business processes: 32%

Compared to 12 months ago, do you feel the general business situation on the West Coast is ...

- Better: 26%
- The same: 38%
- Worse: 33%
- Don't know: 3%

For the next 12 months, do you expect the general business situation on the West Coast to ...

- Improve: 31%
- Stay the same: 35%
- Deteriorate: 20%
- Don't know: 14%
Many Greymouth businesses expressed concerns over the CBD.

“The number of empty commercial premises around town is a continual worry. The poor quality of stock of buildings as well ... The town desperately needs beautification, but as a building owner I understand the limitations on this due to the obvious expense, on top of earthquake strengthening and Mawhera lease during economic downturn” Grey Retail Business

“No one is buying, really dull feeling in the town. Greymouth residents don’t have the disposable income like they used to 5-10 years ago” Grey Retail Business

“The population of Greymouth has changed. At one time there were many people who worked in high wage employment, with the mine closures etc, these people and their families who were our customers are no longer here” Grey Transport Business

“As the town centre loses more shops we have less people coming to town. This is a big issue” Grey Retail Business

“There is no confidence in Greymouth and the occupancy of buildings in CBD is severely threatened. In five years time we will be lucky to have any suitable retail spaces in the CBD available to lease.” Grey Real Estate Services Business

“Concerned about the visitor perception of Greymouth and how this negativity is easily exaggerated and spread via social media.” Grey Retail Business

**MAWHERA LEASES**

“Longterm leases on buildings are at risk due to Mawhera Incorporation failing to acknowledge anyone else’s interests other than their own. Shorter ground lease renewal timeframes are essential to resuscitate Greymouth CBD, if Mawhera do not engage and compromise the town will die.” Grey Real Estate Services Business

“We need a voice at government level to bring some fairness to the Maori Land Amendment Act , and our local government representatives must achieve some engagement with Mawhera to find a way forward for Greymouth.” Grey Retail Business

“We need to align timeframes for business leases in available building stocks with ground lease durations. Currently too high a risk involved to renew Mawhera lease, resulting in buildings being gifted to Mawhera. This is completely unfair, as Mawhera only have to hold out for 21-year lease to basically render a building worthless, and wait for it to be given to them.” Grey Real Estate Services Business

“Mawhera lease rates = high cost of insurances.” Grey Retail Business
Hokitika Survey Responses (37 respondents)

Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to...

- Increase: 30%
- Stay the same: 54%
- Decrease: 5%
- Don’t know: 11%

Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to...

- Increase: 32%
- Stay the same: 43%
- Decrease: 14%
- Don’t know: 11%

Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months

**TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**
- Cashflow / Working capital: 39%
- Competitor pricing: 36%

**TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES**
- Maintaining competitive prices: 42%
- Improving customer awareness: 36%

**TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES**
- Local economic conditions: 59%
- International economic conditions: 32%

**TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES**
- Work / Life balance: 56%
- Time management / Productivity: 33%

**TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES**
- Availability of skilled staff: 43%
- Staff training: 32%

**TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES**
- Using social media: 28%
- Optimising website traffic: 25%

**TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES**
- Improving business processes: 36%
- Improving current products, services ...: 33%

Compared to 12 months ago, do you feel the general business situation on the West Coast is...

- Better: 41%
- The same: 32%
- Worse: 19%
- Don’t know: 8%

For the next 12 months, do you expect the general business situation on the West Coast to...

- Improve: 42%
- Stay the same: 31%
- Deteriorate: 25%
- Don’t know: 3%
Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 65%
- Low cost of living: 32%
- Low staff turnover: 27%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 62%
- Business creation & development: 41%
- Tourism: 35%
**Westport Survey Responses (38 respondents)**

**Greatest business challenges over the next 12 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP FINANCIAL CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer numbers &amp; transactional value</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing staffing costs</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP CUSTOMER/CLIENT CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting new customers</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving customer awareness</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP BROADER MARKET CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local economic conditions</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government compliance and regulations</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work / Life balance</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management / Productivity</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP STAFFING CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage levels / Staff costs</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of skilled staff</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP DIGITAL CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimising website traffic</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive / Ineffective website</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP INNOVATION CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving business processes</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving current products, services ...</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Over the next 12 months do you expect your employee levels to ...**

- Increase: 27%
- Stay the same: 62%
- Decrease: 5%
- Don’t know: 5%

**Over the coming 12 months do you expect your total revenue to ...**

- Increase: 47%
- Stay the same: 34%
- Decrease: 8%
- Don’t know: 11%

**Compared to 12 months ago, do you feel the general business situation on the West Coast is ...**

- Better: 47%
- The same: 29%
- Worse: 21%
- Don’t know: 3%

**For the next 12 months, do you expect the general business situation on the West Coast to ...**

- Improve: 58%
- Stay the same: 29%
- Deteriorate: 5%
- Don’t know: 8%
Westport Survey Responses (38 respondents)

Greatest advantages of having a business located on the West Coast

- Overall quality of life: 79%
- Low cost of living: 42%
- Low overhead costs: 34%

Most important regional development priorities for the West Coast

- Retaining / attracting people to the West Coast: 47%
- Business creation and development: 42%
- Making it easier to do business: 34%

“The rates in Westport are over the top for commercial buildings. This makes doing business really hard.” Buller Retail Business

“There is a lot of opportunity and I will quietly take up the challenge to meet needs and demands. Westport has a lot of talent and I will look to local suppliers.” Buller Manufacturing Business
The purpose of this section is to draw attention to some of the common issues mentioned by West Coast businesses. This is not an exhaustive review of the issues, nor is it a reflection of DWC’s position or strategic direction, it is simply a verbatim summary of some of the common themes reported by local businesses.

**AIR FLIGHTS**

The lack of regular flights to and from the West Coast has been reported as a major issue for some businesses.

“We are trying to build a business that is nationwide, this is happening … But we have to travel a lot and with no good plane service out of Hokitika or Greymouth this really restricts us”

Grey Retail Business

“We need to get better flights in and out of the West Coast … currently we spend hours driving to Christchurch. We have to get Sounds Air flying out of Greymouth or Hoki direct to Wellington.”

Grey Wholesale Trade Business

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Grey Wholesale Trade Business

“Regular GUARANTEED flights in and out to Auckland/Wellington/CHCH would be a game changer”

Westland Information Media Business

“Travel of sales staff now (is difficult) there is no good airline service out of West Coast. Have to leave home 3.30am to get 7.00am flight out of CHCH to Auckland. Alright in summer, dangerous in winter”

Grey Retail Business

**CELL PHONE COVERAGE**

Businesses in South Westland cited lack of cell phone coverage as a major issue.

“No cell phone coverage. Staff don’t want to live here with no wifi or no cell phones”

Westland Accommodation and Food Services

“Cell phones for safety is a must in Haast … this needs to be sorted it’s a joke”

Westland Accommodation Business

“There is a lack of reliable cell phone coverage”

Westland Accommodation and Food Services

“The biggest challenge in our area is having no cell phone coverage and inadequate internet”

Westland Agriculture Business

“Internet / phone connectivity is ridiculous. It cuts out 5 km out of Fox. This is dangerous, what happens if someone breaks down or needs help where there is no coverage. We look like a third world country”

Westland Accommodation and Food Services

**COST OF FREIGHT / TRANSPORT**

The cost of freight/transport was a frequently cited issue.

“Disadvantages are freight costs to the main centres and travel time and costs for sales reps”

Grey Manufacturing Business

“It’s not low cost to have a business here, it’s very expensive with freight cost”

Grey Retail Business

“Cost of freight is a big issue for us”

Buller Retail Business

“Cost of freight is a big issue for us”

Buller Retail Business

**ROADING**

“Farm access and main roads with the roads closing is an issue. The weather is a major contributor”

Westland Retail Business

“As recent weather events show, our roading is very important, along with the appropriate level of infrastructure to cope with the number of visitors to our region”

Westland Retail Business

“We would invest in tourism however until the Knights Point road situation is either sorted or an alternative developed there will be high risk to tourism in South Westland”

Grey Mining Business
CONSENTS AND COMPLIANCE

Council consents and compliance was another frequently raised issue.

“Regulatory compliance costs (both time and money) particularly around health and safety. Smaller business compliance requirements are no less significant than larger entities, but our ability to properly resource them are a challenge” Buller Professional Services Business

“The constant need to be away from the business for H&S, compliance and training” Westland Mining Business

“Hard to stay motivated. More time spent proving compliance than on design to produce a better end result” Grey Agriculture Business

“Council consents are making things tough. We wanted to open a new restaurant but to do so we needed X number of toilets just for a small restaurant!” Westland Food Services Business

“We have great natural resources but can’t use them. Too many rules” Westland Transport Business

“New Zealand laws are written for people living in urban centres, it is often very difficult to comply with such laws and they are often nonsensical when applied to West Coast situations” Buller Food Services Business

“Competing with cowboy drilling companies who are undercutting below cost at times but not adhering to H&S, not paying employees their entitlements etc, and often doing substandard work and getting away with it.” Grey Mining Business

RATES

Numerous businesses cited council rates as a key issue.

“Council rates /water/ rates tourism rates etc are getting out of hand. Whereas bns etc have no compliance costs, commercial rate costs etc.” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

“Biggest challenges are council regulations and rates, really holding back smaller businesses” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

“The rates in Westport need to be revised if they want commercial businesses to succeed” Buller Retail Business

MINIMUM WAGE

Concern has been raised by some businesses about rising minimum wage levels.

“No way we can pay minimum wages in our situation. We are both working 80-100 hours a week each and mainly we can only pay one of us $500/week” Buller Food Services Business

“Rise in minimum wages ... will probably result in a decrease (employee levels)” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

LACK OF SUPPORT FROM LOCALS

A ‘supportive local business community’ was cited by 24% of businesses as an advantage to doing business on the Coast, however many still voiced concern about a lack of support from local customers and local businesses.

“Lack of value is given to professional services on the Coast generally, including from local and national government purchasers” Westland Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business

“Locals are not coming into town and online shopping is increasing” Grey Retail Business

“Many bigger businesses on the WC don’t seem to accept that West Coast professionals are as good as those from other regions. We need to start believing in and supporting each other!” Buller Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business

“We need to work together better than we do to help rejuvenate our communities” Grey Retail Business

“Having a supportive business community would help” Grey Financial Services Business

“My key customers are local and regional authorities who have shown an increasing propensity to bypass local providers and use more expensive, less relevant and less committed professionals and consultants from outside the district” Buller Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business

LACK OF UNITY AMONGST GOVERNING BODIES

Some businesses raised concern about West Coast governing bodies and agencies not working together in a unified manner.

“Everyone needs to work together more, rather than against one another, especially the 3 district councils” Westland Mining Business

“Four councils and a separate ED agency?” Grey Recreation Services Business

“The West Coast needs one unified message to Wellington, all the councils and DWC need a single clear message” Westland Agriculture Business
Many businesses in the accommodation industry have cited Airbnb as a major issue. Some believe Airbnbs have an unfair advantage as they do not have to meet the same regulations and compliances.

“There is a lot more competition out there and we don’t see it as a level playing field in the accommodation sector at present. There are now over 100 Airbnb properties in Hokitika, who don’t have to follow the same regulations and cost or meet the same code of compliance” Westland Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Insurance cost makes us question our viability as we stand. We could convert to Airbnb and be a lot better off!” Westland Accommodation and Food Service Business

LACK OF CONSULTATION

Lack of consultation and community engagement by the councils, DWC and TWC was also raised by some businesses as an issue.

“The perception is that DWC are a remote, big-business orientated organisation. West Coast industry is if anything the opposite; better engagement is needed to foster small business networking” Westland Recreation Services Business

“Business owners in the Punakaiki aren’t being consulted” Buller Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Council needs to work with people and business owners in the community and be more helpful” Grey Retail Business

“We have not seen or heard from Tourism West Coast since the day we paid our $600 subscription” Westland Recreation Services Business

SEASONALITY

The seasonality of the tourism industry was a frequently reported issue. Many tourism businesses cited having year-round expenses, but only a seasonal income as a key issue affecting them in a variety of ways.

“Inability to retain staff year-round, & develop skills and structure, due to seasonality of industry, affects many of the above challenges” Westland Business Recreation Services Business

“We are seasonal ... with the winter months proving very quiet, but we still pay commercial rates, contribute to Tourism tax ... etc.” Westland Accommodation and Food Service Business

“The Seasonal nature of tourism makes it difficult to plan, staff and resource tourism businesses.” Westland Accommodation Business

AIRBNBs

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TOURISM

Many respondents in the accommodation sector expressed concern about freedom campers.

“Tourists seem to all be on a budget. Don't seem to have had the wealthy visitors just lots of backpackers and freedom campers! Maybe we are marketing the region to the wrong people?” Grey Retail Business

“Competition from Freedom camping sites limits the ability to increase pricing, however increased visitor numbers to NZ should result in higher occupancy rates” Grey Accommodation Business

“We are very concerned that the mayor of Hokitika plans for more public toilets at Sunset Point, which will only add to a growing problem of overflowing bins and “shoestring travellers” washing their underwear in the hand basins, unless there are some new rules put in place and enforced. Give an inch and these people will take a mile” Westland Accommodation Business

“The national and local government policy on freedom camping threatens the Motor Home Park sector” Grey Accommodation Business

UNPREDICTIBILITY OF TOURISM

A common message expressed by many respondents was the fickle nature of tourism - the industry is heavily reliant on external factors.

“Global changes, might affect tourism levels which would have a big impact on us” Westland Retail Business

“We are currently riding the tourism wave - but we need to balance that with being able to function without that trade.” Westland Retail Business

TALL POPPY SYNDROME

The ‘tall poppy syndrome’ was also cited as an issue to doing business on the West Coast.

“Biggest problem with Coasters is the tall poppy syndrome” Westland Construction Business

“Council needs to work with people and business owners in the community and be more helpful” Grey Retail Business

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NOT WORKING TOGETHER (cont.)
TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

Some respondents have cited inadequate infrastructure as an issue impeding growth in tourism.

“Better tourism infrastructure is needed. People whinge all the time about freedom campers, but if you provided good public toilets there wouldn’t be any issues” Westland Accommodation Business

“Better tourist infrastructure. Lots of the roads need work (ie knights point) to ensure our lifeline stays open during peak seasons” Westland Recreation Services Business

“We continue to fail on the West Coast to provide infrastructure to support tourism hospitality experience, making us scenic pass through townships (excluding Franz Josef)” Westland Retail Business

DIFFICULTY ATTRACTING / RETAINING TOURISTS

While certain areas are doing relatively well with tourism, some businesses in Westport, Greymouth, Whataroa and Karamea have reported difficulty in attracting and retaining tourists.

“Tourists have the impression there is nothing to do here (Westport). And we’ve heard tourism operators are contributing to this, telling them not to stay in Westport!” Buller Retail Business

“The biggest challenge is to get tourists to stay longer. Rather than just passing through” Buller Recreation Services Business

“So many buildings in Whataroa are run down. This puts tourists off from stopping here” Westland Recreation Services Business

IS TOURISM DESIRABLE?

37% of respondents cited tourism as a key regional development priority. However, many respondents have expressed doubts over the desirability of tourism; raising concerns about who actually benefits from tourism, and the risks of becoming overdependent on an industry so heavily linked to ‘unpredictable’ forces.

“Yes tourist numbers might be up but they generally do not spend anything” Grey Retail Business

“Increasing tourists … puts more pressure on small communities, so it’s not always considered ‘better’” Westland Recreation Services Business

“Increasing jobs in tourism are fine but low paying. We need to encourage our natural resources, gold, coal, forestry, agriculture etc to generate some discretionary spend” Grey Information, Media and Telecommunications Business

“Tourism will be improving immeasurably, but unfortunately not much of that will be going back into the community as a lot of the business owners are not living here and they are paying a lot of their staff minimum wage or using WWOOFERS for free. - (a great example of a thriving economy not delivering to the locals)” Buller Recreation Services Business

“Tourism is not enough and only feeds petrol stations, accommodation and supermarkets” Grey Accommodation and Food Services Business

“this (tourism) can stop very quickly with a world economic downturn or natural disaster” Westland Mining Business

“The West Coast is becoming very dependant on the Tourist trade. So weather conditions, road closures, bad experiences when here (visitor sites too crowded, lack of facilities ie toilets, places to camp), locals whining about the traffic and tourist driving can have negative effects that could easily impact on the tourists decision to visit - we are especially vulnerable to social media. The local West Coasters need to have buy-in and maintain our friendly welcome….. it’s getting hard for some…..” Westland Retail Business
The purpose of this section is to give voice to local businesses, presenting some of the development ideas suggested by the respondents to the survey.

**CYCLE TRAIL / MOUNTAIN BIKING**

“Bring the cycle trail north of Greymouth. We have many beautiful historical sites. Utilise them. Many cycle tours are halting certain areas due to safety” 
Grey Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Better utilisation of existing assets...like opening the Oparara Valley Track to MTBing...Keeping abreast of industry and market trends...giving the customer what they want...and there is a ton of compelling evidence that they want mountain biking tracks” 
Buller Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Supporting the cycleway and building business around tours” 
Westland Agriculture Business

**POSSIBLE TOURS**

“Heritage tourism needs to be increased. Potential big market for these types of tourists” 
Westland Retail Business

“History tours showing early gold, coal forestry industries, using Grey River, Point Elizabeth walkway” 
Grey Transport Business

“Whitebaiting tours, utilising walk ways with tours, use old tears on grey bridge and erect monuments of minors, toilets and rubbish facilities using apps” 
Grey Food Service Business

**ADVENTURE TOURISM**

“adventure tourism (zip line in Cobden Quarry across the river).” 
Grey Transport Business

“Zip line/ flying fox” 
Grey Manufacturing Business

**AIRBNB**

“People complain about Airbnb & want them to pay rates. That’s not really feasible. Why not have them pay rates based on their turnover (i.e if they are only earning a few thousand a year, their rates will be lower” 
Buller Food Services Business

**DIVERSIFICATION**

“Diversification within the tourism industry - keeping up with change or even keeping ahead of it - i.e. chasing disappearing glaciers with helicopters seems a bit odd at best - instead of celebrating what we are losing, perhaps protecting and celebrating what we can sustain could be a new/fresh approach.” 
Westland Recreation Service Business

“Promoting more than just glaciers and pancake rocks, we need people to explore the local businesses.” 
Westland Agriculture Business

**ECOTOURISM**

“We are behind the game in terms of eco tourism, which is the primary bread-winner for the coast. We need to be on-top of our game to continue our ‘clean green’ image to continue to attract tourism, and likewise attract people who want to live here to work in tourism” 
Westland Recreation Service Business

“We need to promote our nature and the fact that we are unique here. No McDonalds, KFC, fast food outlets. Our international guests LOVE the fact that they can walk on the beach, walk through the bush, fresh air, unspoiled beauty, all without hordes of tourists. We think that Tourism NZ should be pushing for “Quality Tourism not Quantity” Wallets on Wheels for the Wilderness Trail is a good example.” 
Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

**DWC | 2018 WEST COAST BUSINESS OPINION SURVEY**

www.dwc.org.nz
GENERAL TOURISM IDEAS

“Golf putting on to a barge in the river, gold prize for hole in one! Local Food, meat, beer cider etc....and incorporating our local artists and musicians, in the Town Square or in Postie Building” Grey Transport, Postal and Warehousing Business

“Shanty town - night lantern walk. Night activities for people in town and tourists to enjoy. The Chinese tourists market is different, so the shops and local businesses should try to tailor to this market. Fire permits for bon-fires on the beach for tourists.” Grey Retail Business

“We need a few more attractions (cycle trails & a hot pool) and art culture events plus a prime art gallery” Buller Arts Business

“We need to look at the Rotorua model - there are a heap of easy to copy activity’s like clay bird shooting, bungy jumps, zip lines - there is no reason we can’t set this type of thing up here on the coast to make our tourists stay another few nights. We have some very good natural attractions but need some more things to do for them. A good 5-star Hotel would help. Greymouth needs to get it sorted with a heap of tourist shops for the ones getting off the train along with a decent train station.” Grey Wholesale Trade Business

“Health and wellness retreat would be perfect on the West Coast” Westland Healthcare Business

“Tourism is great for the Coast but must be one of the cheapest destinations for the amount of attractions there are that cost nothing for the tourist to visit yet cost a lot to maintain. Thought needs to be put into how key attractions (e.g. Pancake Rocks) can introduce a levy of sorts, to help alleviate the costs to not only maintain, but further develop them.” Grey Healthcare and Social Assistance Business

“Get the identity sussed first. Then look at projects. If it’s “Untamed Natural Wilderness” then start attracting investors around building things that match that theme” Buller Wholesale Trade Business

ROADING

“alternative roads to access/leave West Coast other than SH6. Totally unacceptable given rise in tourist numbers” Westland Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Road link from Karamea to Tapawera” Buller Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business

“Securing the roading network” Westland Accommodation Business

“Haast to Hollyford Road maybe?” Grey Construction Business

“They need to work on widening the roads to the gorge (farmers complain). Upgrade roading for amount of traffic” Westland Retail Business

“Link the roads from Golden bay into Milford” Westland Construction Business

“Roading - the Haast Holliford Road. If you fund more tourism local activities the Infrastructure will be built around it” Westland Financial Services Business

“The Haast Hollyford road link, The Wangapeka Tapawera road link.” Grey Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Sections of winding roads need to be upgraded with more pull offs for traffic to pass slower vehicles.” Grey other Services Business

“Wangapeka Northern link for horticulture growth in Karamea and tourism.” Buller Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Our key message is to build resilience … Strengthening and upgrading our road transport networks” Westland Agriculture Business

INFRASTRUCTURE

AIR FLIGHTS

“Regular GUARANTEED flights in and out to Auckland/ Wellington/CHCH would be a game changer” Westland Information Media and Telecommunications Business

“Good Airport in Greymouth with regular commercial flights” Grey Wholesale Trade Business

“Airport that planes can actually fly into” Grey Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business

“An international airport” Grey Accommodation and Food Service Business

SHIPPING

“An international shipping port.” Grey Accommodation and Food Service Business

“Development of our ports for direct export.” Westland Mining Business
INFRASTRUCTURE (cont.)

RAIL

“We need to put in a toilet system on the main road every 30 kms. Or in the case of toilets off the road i.e. Lake Mahinapua advertise that they are there.” Westland Manufacturing Business

“Improve toilet facilities for tourists.” Grey other Services Business

“More toilet and rubbish facilities for tourists.” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

INTERNET / PHONE CONNECTIVITY

“Build resilience ... Strengthening and modernizing our communication networks (this includes mobile phone coverage and broadband access speed).” Westland Agriculture Business

TOWN SPOTLIGHT

GREYMOUTH

“Reopen the raceway in centre of the Greymouth township and build a multi sports event centre there to encourage live entertainment and get league rugby and rugby matches played in one location. Stop the bus companies picking tourists up off the Trans Alpine Train at Arthurs Pass and let to travel into the Greymouth Railway Station to get on their buses. The town needs to get the tourists to come to the actual Greymouth township, this would certainly help Greymouth and not affect other areas by doing this. THIS WOULD BE A GREAT THING TO HAPPEN.” Grey other Services Business

“New train station + tourist centre at Victoria park?” Grey Manufacturing Business

“Greymouth needs a re-haul. It is such an unattractive - tourist unfriendly town. My $20 million dollar dream for Grey would be to build a multi-storey building/Mall opposite the Regent (car parking, and food courts in the top, with view overlooking the river etc). The square needs to be covered. The whole of Tainui St should be traffic free and covered.” Buller Food Services Business

“Indoor climbing/trampoline/activity centre, a luge & chair lift in” Grey Retail Business

“The whole town ascetic looks terrible. No Life, the building and town look and feel depressing. The whole town needs a makeover. Spending money on town centre and building infrastructure would definitely help. It’s 2018 and our town needs to be much more innovative.” Grey Accommodation and Food Services Business

“Sort out Victoria park, work with the Maori land owners really needs communication and a plan to help our town grow and move forward as a community. The park is a great piece of land that could help attract and retain visitors in Greymouth for longer rather than buy-passing the town.” Grey Retail Business

“Mountain bike trail would be great for Greymouth. E.g maybe a smaller scale adventure park like in chch or Rotorua.” Grey Retail Business

FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER

“Build staff accommodation in Franz.” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

“Cell phones for Safety is a must in Haast ... This needs to be sorted Its a joke!!” Westland Fishing Business

HAAST

“DHB housing looked into. There is a house down here in Haast that belongs to the DHB it had mould issues. But what a waste of land and recourses. It’s not the only empty DHB house on the coast” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

“Cell phones for Safety is a must in Haast ... This needs to be sorted Its a joke!!” Westland Fishing Business

ROSS

“Would like to see some push-bike stands. And some work on the intersection. It can be quite dangerous.” Westland Food Services Business

“(historic theme activity) in Ross. ...This would help keep more people in Ross for longer, spend some more money in town.” Westland Retail Business
WESTPORT

“We need to figure out what our “Westport identity” is and weave that into our Economic Development strategy. Look at Reefton - they’ve embraced their history and created a buzzy little cool town. Otago Rail Trail towns have their identity completely tied in with the RailTrail. Revived from near collapse. What’s Westport’s identity going to be? And how are we going to attract the right investors who share the same vision? I believe Westport needs to take the good work of the Buller Cycling Club and OGR and create our own “Rail Trail” up to Ngakawau and up the Buller Gorge to link in with OGR and eventually the Kawatiri trail. At the moment Nelson has poached the OGR and Westport is missing out. That needs to change.” Buller Wholesale Trade Business

“A Bridge over the Buller for those who don’t won’t to pay toll fee to drive in the highway … And to push Holcim to do what their obligations are taking down the plant accordingly to environmental standards. After that you can think (or whoever is doing it) to buy the properties from Holcim. Don’t put a $30 million load on ratepayers’ shoulders” Buller Retail Business

“More promotion. Towns like Hokitika are doing a good job, Westport not so much.” Buller Retail Business

“Rock grones to help erosion that create surfing breaks. Better marketing of our load on ratepayers’ shoulders” Buller Retail Business

“We need to promote the West coast as destination people can stay at for more time to explore what it has to offer, we are finding most people pass straight through (Hari Hari) only staying one night” Westland Agriculture Business

PUNAKAIKI

“We need more public toilets, and car hire companies to be more proactive in training their clients. We need to encourage better pay for workers - businesses are complaining they can’t get good staff out here (Punakaki) yet they pay peanuts. - also Punakaki needs some government assistance re flood protection etc, more public toilets- the rate hikes are unreasonable I feel as the tourists that pass through there contribute to the rest of the Coast and countries reputation.” Buller Accommodation and Food Services Business

“The Paparoa business group’s aim is to hold tourists in the area for 2hrs (as opposed to the current 45mins). There is a lot of development needed in the area. But too many issues preventing it. An ethnic food court is one idea that would really help the area.” Buller Food Services Business

“Need to keep Tourists on coast for another night, need more activities at places they already stop like Punakaki so they take longer and have to speed another night, Like a gondola up the hill behind the pancake rocks.” Grey Retail Trade Business

“Punakaki needs more attention. more infrastructure and hotels, restaurants. Stunning place which needs a lot more work to retain people on the West Coast.” Grey Warehousing Business

KARAMEA

“Other than provide a scenic activity for visitors to the Karama region in the summertime, the Oparara Basin is a thoroughly underutilised asset that could be better marketed and promoted as a year-round, must-see iconic West Coast attraction. Karama tourism operators really need the Oparara Valley Track open to mountain biking to better utilise that asset, which is currently latent. This would go a long way toward addressing the seasonality challenge faced by all Karama tourism operators as Heaphy Track mountain bikers would then have a compelling reason to stay in Karama after completing the Heaphy Track...ie They could stay in Karama after the Heaphy and ride into the Oparara the following day and visit the arches and caves (it’s a 45 km loop track that is already there...we don’t have to build it, we just have to utilise it better)...they’d likely stay another night before moving on to the Old Ghost Road. Currently, most (I estimate 80%) of Heaphy Track MTBers finish the track and immediately leave Karama...this is because there is no marketable mountain biking track in the Karama region...the Oparara Valley Track would be an idea and opening it to MTBing would be a game-changer for Karama tourism businesses and by association, the local economy, local employment etc. (For example, a bike mechanic could set up shop in Karamea to service bikes coming off the Heaphy to prepare them for the Oparara ride). The Heaphy Track is open to MTBing form May 1 to November 30 each year...this is the quietest time of year in terms of business cash flow, revenue and turnover...Please consider this...we really need it.” Buller Accommodation and Food Services Business

“Develop Oparara Basin, this would improve our Tourism numbers, work opportunities and marketing of our district.” Buller Accommodation and Food Services Business

HARI HARI

“We need to promote the West coast as destination people can stay at for more time to explore what it has to offer, we are finding most people pass straight through (Hari Hari) only staying one night” Westland Agriculture Business

APPENDIX 4

TOWN SPOTLIGHT (cont.)
HOKITIKA

“Hokitika Cass Square / Skatepark upgrade to have a Hub that Families can hang out. It would be great for the west coast if the train continued down to Hokitika and I feel the cycle trail has been really great for the West Coast.” Westland Construction Business

“Hokitika’s aesthetic and evening options continue to not meet the expectation and quest for experience and atmosphere that create memories for tourists. As a community the need to build strong brand architecture and grow activity continues to be hindered by enterprise groups that focus on professional hours and dated concepts that don’t make the township a destination. Hospitality offerings are not seen as essential infrastructure for growing accommodation numbers. The town planning has in the past hindered growth in this area and with available commercial buildings needing large investment viability impacts entrepreneurs seeing Hokitika as an opportunity. Hospitality food and beverage sectors need investment to create offerings that are destination and complimentary to the scenic attractions that engage tourists. We need a strong plan that encourages growth in our evening offerings meeting the expectations of visitors and brand architecture that creates destination.” Westland Food Services Business

“I’d also like to see Hokitika gain a multi-use all weather sports complex!” Westland Accommodation Business

“Fortifying our power supply and security
• Strengthening and upgrading our road transport networks
• Strengthening and modernizing our communication networks (this includes mobile phone coverage and broadband access speed)
• Building a resilient and diverse community
• Working together on protecting our unique environment
• Building capability with an education provider” Westland Agriculture Business

“would love to see that the council would put some effort into what they claim is the heritage trail of Hokitika but yet nothing is done to promote it.” Westland Retail Business

FOX GLACIER

“They could build a staffing village in Fox, - that could help. Public toilets are needed in Fox, people constantly come off the street to use ours (without making any purchases).” Westland Food Services Business

“Fox needs some wet weather activities. Franz at least has the hot pools. There is nothing to do in Fox when it rains.” Westland Accommodation and Food Services Business

Fox should be promoted as a winter destination, it is most beautiful during the winter, but tourists don’t know this. Fox would be a better location than Franz for a gondola. Westland Food Services Business

WHATAROA

“More work needs to be done beautifying small towns like Whataroa”. Westland Recreation Services Business

“A fund could be set-up for maintenance in small towns. So many buildings in Whataroa are run down – need to be painted. This puts tourists off from stopping here. If there was a fund for this, the town would look more beautiful and more people would stop and stay. Look at the difference in Kumara after buildings were painted.” Westland Recreation Services Business

INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT BUSINESSES

“Incentives to help existing West Coast businesses grow and expand.” Grey Retail Business

“Tax breaks for setting up &/or operating a business on the West Coast.” Grey Wholesale Trade Business

“Work with Govt to put in significant financial benefits for more businesses to move to the Coast. Offer cheaper power, subsidise freight, lower taxes for businesses based in isolated regions are a few ideas.” Buller Manufacturing Business

“DWCV has the responsibility to assist with employment growth on the WC. This needs to be large scale and bold but still responsible. Partnerships with large business to bring staff to the WC under mutually beneficial arrangements, eg, cheaper costs, fit for purpose buildings etc, if they employ certain numbers of staff.” Grey Financial Services Business

“There needs to be significant, long term and tangible financial incentives (tax savings) to attract significant businesses to the Coast.” Buller Manufacturing Business

ATTACH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

“Government departments decentralise to regions. Try to attract call centres etc to Coast Promote West Coast as a place to live and visit.” Grey Media Business

“Moving some government departments here, and reopening ones that have been taken away. NZPAM should be based on the West Coast so that staff understand the industry better.” Westland Mining Business

“Relocation of part of a Government Department to the region. This would have the advantage of reducing risk of service delivery if Wellington had a serious earthquake or similar event.” Buller Retail Business
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

“Let West Coast people have more say in what developments should proceed instead of people from out of the region.” Grey Manufacturing Business

“Many of the great opportunities I see are community driven” Reefton Food Services Business

“More opportunities like this survey to participate.” Westland Recreation Services Business

REALITY TV SHOW

“There are a lot of misconceptions about the West Coast and what is here regarding the people, the weather and the infrastructure. “Coast NZ” helps get the positive image of the West Coast out there. There could be room for reality TV where an Auckland family switches with a West Coast family for a week! Myths need to be dispelled to attract more long-term people to this amazing place we call home!” Westland Accommodation Business

LESS REGULATION

“Less government regulation and increased access to DOC land for mining.” Grey Technical Services Business

“A better balance is required, a better attitude of the councils consent and compliance approaches.” Grey Telecommunication Business


EDUCATION

“Training institutions for nurses, teachers etc. Attracting students to the Coast and allowing us to keep more of our young people on the coast.” Grey Manufacturing Business

“A small manufacturing hub in conjunction with polytechnic teaching cad design CNC machining training centre, could be very competitive given low overhead costs” Westland Manufacturing Business

“Small scale or start-up business training/mentoring courses. I know these have been made available in places like Karamea; how about Franz Josef or Haast? Travel to Grey and Hokitika is expensive and time-consuming and so puts off participation.” Westland Recreation Services Business

HELP FOR ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

“Plenty of help for start-ups, of which 4 in 5 don’t last more than 5 years. Seems a bit wasteful. Little help for established businesses facing change, or having difficulties recruiting people with the kind of skills they need.” Westland Healthcare Business

“No enough work and money is being spent into existing businesses where coasters have been putting a lot of work and effort into creating a successful community without having to rely on the dairy. Supporting people who ready live here would be beneficial.” Westland Manufacturing Business

“Spending money on businesses that are already established but need the extra help to take their business to the next level is needed.” Grey Retail Business

HELP FOR STARTUPS & SMALL BUSINESSES

“Get behind small businesses, taking advantage of the situation” Grey Retail Business

“Supporting more innovative IT start-ups on the Coast.” Grey Financial Services Business

“More support for small scale or start-up businesses” Buller Retail Business

“Investment into attracting more small-medium ‘niche’ type businesses into the area.” Buller Arts Business

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

“It is critical. It is evolving but new companies need funding support to come here.” Buller Financial Services Business

“More involvement in IT and other jobs that can be done from anywhere.” Westland Recreation Services Business

“Technology companies love it here because of quality of life, cost effective housing but as it grows we don’t have enough support to continue attracting them and helping them set up.” Buller Financial Services Business

IMPROVING PRODUCTS & SERVICES

“A real emphasis on improving ‘Products & Services’ Coast wide is needed - at times it feels as if we’re stuck in the ’80s or ’90s. Everyone needs to lift their game(s) to ensure we leave the right impression of our beautiful Region to visitors.” Westport Retail Services Business

“Replacement for lost mining jobs MUST be found. Tourism will NOT do it. Rather ironic that we are made to now feel guilty if mining is even mentioned for the future & is labelled a “sunset industry”, yet Australia is employing a huge number of our local mine workers & is currently experiencing record production??? Anything that employs manual labour workers at a reasonable wage rate must be encouraged” Grey Wholesale Trade Business

NEW MANUAL LABOUR JOBS

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APPENDIX 4
UTILISING NATURAL RESOURCES

“We have an abundance of water – how can this be harnessed for the future when other regions have less access to water. Develop power generation on the West Coast, maybe then subsidise power to attract new business” Grey Public Administration Business


“Using our natural resources on a sustainable bases and have them leave here made into something. Dairy also, stop growing the supply and value add to the products.” Westland Agriculture Business

“more hydro schemes so that we will be self sufficient on case of natural disasters. A better attitude to economic impact of mining with a lot of the emotional environmental objections. A better balance is required, a better attitude of the councils consent and compliance approaches.” Grey Information Media and Telecommunications Business


“Salmon farming, continue mining, stewardship land, expand the port and fishing industries.” Grey Retail Business

“Utilizing fallen trees. People shouldn’t be prevented from utilizing fallen trees. That could create some jobs” Westland Transport Business
REFERENCES


NOTES

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): Throughout this report, GDP is measured in constant 2010 prices. By using constant prices we remove the distractionary effect of inflation, enabling us to meaningfully compare GDP from one year to the next.