

# Mornington Peninsula Shire Business Survey 2025

12 March  
2026



Mornington  
Peninsula Shire

# Mornington Peninsula Business Survey 2025

## Introduction

Mornington Peninsula Shires Business and Industry Support team worked with Metropolis Research to conduct a survey of Mornington Peninsula businesses across September and October 2025.

The survey was conducted using a mixed methodology of online promotion and direct phone calls.

Questions asked covered the following topics:

- Business Profile
- Employment
- Business confidence
- Business turnover
- Business Challenges and issues
- Business support activities: events, workshops, training & services

Survey responses were categorised by ANZIC code to ensure results were representative of all industries

The total sample of 372 respondent businesses is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, with a margin of error of (+/-) 5.0.

**Random sample telephone interview survey** – a total of 228 surveys were completed using a telephone interview method, from a randomly selected and pre-weighted sample of businesses located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

**Follow-up self-completion online survey** – a total of 41 surveys were completed by the respondent business themselves online after being approached by Metropolis Research by telephone.

**Self-selection online survey via Council's website** – a total of 103 surveys were completed by respondent businesses themselves via the Mornington Peninsula communication channels.

# Business Profile

## Township/postcode

Number and percent of respondents by township

Suburb	Number	Percent	Suburb	Number	Percent
Mornington	87	26%	Portsea	4	1%
Rosebud	45	13%	Flinders	3	1%
Mount Eliza	23	7%	Red Hill	3	1%
Hastings	19	6%	Safety Beach	3	1%
Dromana	18	5%	St Andrews Beach	3	1%
Somerville	18	5%	Capel Sound	2	1%
Mount Martha	17	5%	Pearcedale	2	1%
Rye	17	5%	Point Leo	2	1%
Balnarring	12	4%	Somers	2	1%
Sorrento	11	3%	Arthurs Seat	1	0%
Tyabb	8	2%	Boneo	1	0%
Bittern	6	2%	Crib Point	1	0%
Moorooduc	6	2%	Merricks	1	0%
Baxter	5	1%	Merricks Beach	1	0%
Blairgowrie	5	1%	Red Hill South	1	0%
McCrae	5	1%	Tootgarook	1	0%
Main Ridge	4	1%	Not Stated	35	
<b>Total</b>			<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## Industry

Number and percent of respondents by industry

Industry	Number	Percent
Construction	67	18%
Retail Trade	62	17%
Accommodation and Food services	40	11%
Health Care and Social Assistance	37	10%
Manufacturing	24	6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	18	5%
Education and Training	18	5%
Administrative and Support Services	13	3%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	12	3%
Arts and Recreation Services	11	3%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	10	3%
Wholesale Trade	10	3%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	9	2%
Information Media and Telecommunications	8	2%
Financial and Insurance Services	5	1%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	3	1%
Public Administration and Safety	3	1%
Other Services	21	6%
Inadequately described	1	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Business Profile

## Business Structure

Most businesses surveyed were set up as a Company 53%, with Sole Trader as the second most popular structure in use at 24%.

	Number	Percent
Company	196	53%
Sole Trader	88	24%
Trust	57	15%
Partnership	25	7%
Other	6	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Age of business

	Number	Percent
Less than 1 year	8	2%
1 to less than 5 years	47	13%
5 to less than 10 years	48	13%
10 to less than 20 years	108	30%
More than 20 years	155	42%
Can't say	6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

There are many long-term businesses across the peninsula, with 42% of respondent businesses being over 20 years old. The lowest number of respondent businesses were aged less than 10 yrs.

# Business Profile

## Business location

The majority (94%) of respondent businesses nominated at least one reason, from a pre-coded list of 13 reasons (including “other”), as to why they chose to operate at their current location, at an average of approximately 1.5 reasons per business.

The most common reasons for operating from their current location was that it was close to the managers’ residence, with almost half (44%) of respondent businesses nominating this reason.

The three other most common reasons for operating from their current location was that it was close to customers (23%), the identity and characteristics of the Mornington Peninsula community (20%), and opportunities for business development (17%).

	Number	Percent
Close proximity to manager’s residence	164	44%
Close to customers	84	23%
Identity and characteristics of the Mornington Peninsula community	74	20%
Opportunities for business development	62	17%
Visitors / tourists	32	9%
Similar businesses in local area	26	7%
Close to competition	19	5%
Close to suppliers	20	5%
Already existing	19	5%
Distribution advantages	14	4%
Public transport access for employees	11	3%
Access to skilled employees	7	2%
Other	13	3%

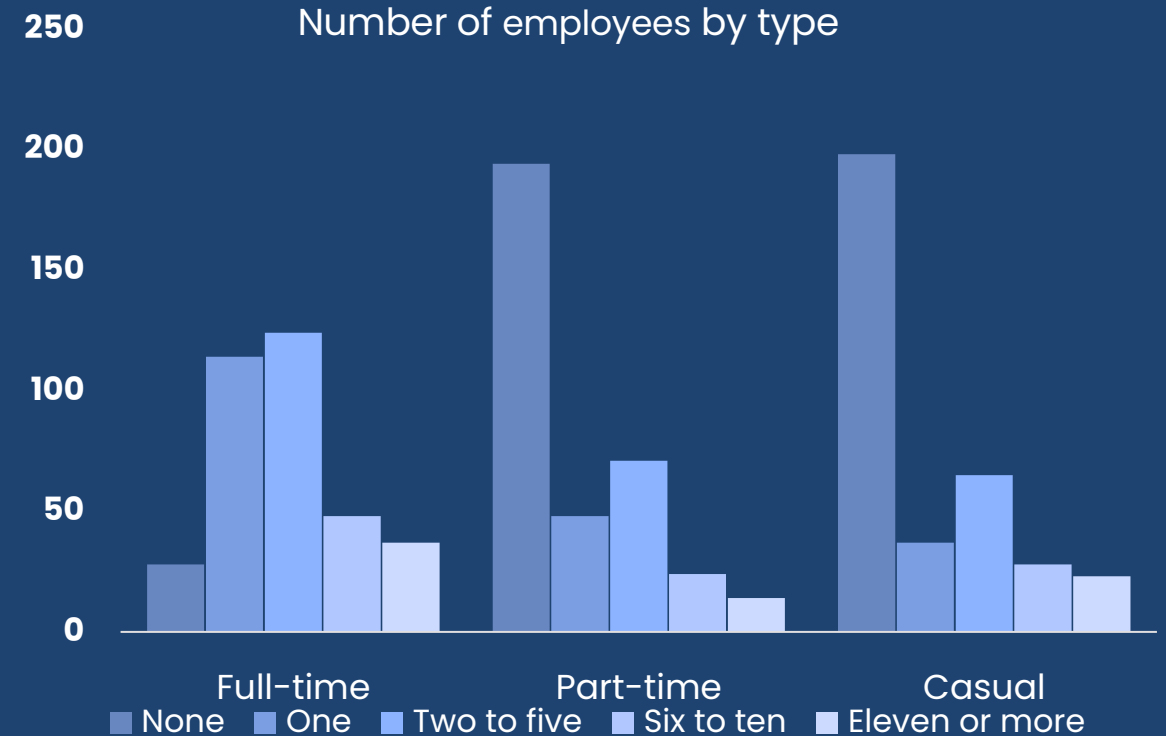
# Employment

## Number of employees

The majority of respondent businesses employed between one and five full-time employees, and no part-time or casual employees.

This is consistent with 2024 ABS figures that indicate 89% of Mornington Peninsula businesses employ less than 5 people.

The small number of employees for businesses was also consistent with business turnover results, that recorded 38% of the respondent businesses (providing a response) are small businesses with a turnover of less than \$500,000 per annum.



# Employment

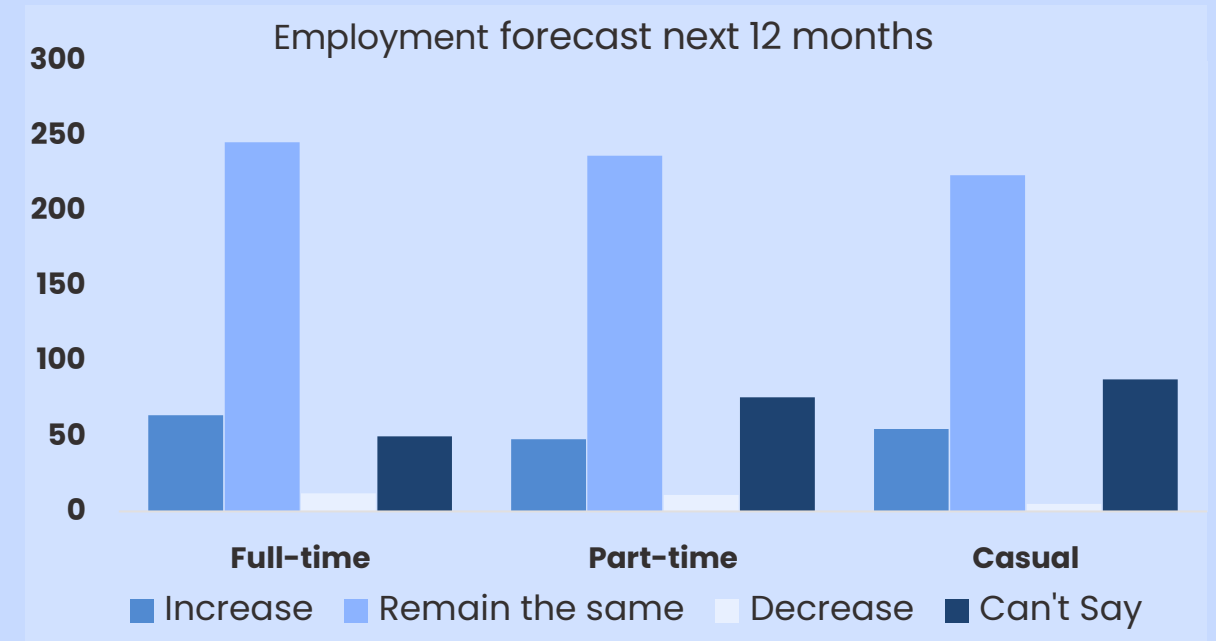
## Proportion of employees living on the Mornington Peninsula

The majority of the 346 businesses who provided a response to this question reported that all of their employees lived on the Mornington Peninsula, with a further 20% reporting that most (up to around  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) lived on the Peninsula.

	Number	Percent
All	195	56%
Most (up to three quarters)	68	20%
Around half	33	10%
Some (up to one quarter)	32	9%
None	18	5%
Not stated	26	

## Employment forecast

More than three-quarters of businesses surveyed reported that they expect the number of employees (full-time, part-time, and casual) to remain the same in the next financial year.



Of note, significantly more respondent businesses expected that they would increase rather than decrease the number of employees in the next year

# Employment

## Vacancies

Approximately one-quarter (23%) of the respondent businesses providing a response to the question reported that they had vacancies that they have found difficult to fill.

	Number	Percent
Yes	81	23%
No	267	77%
Not stated	24	
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

Noting the relatively small sample size at the industry level, respondent businesses from accommodation and food service; health care and social assistance; agricultural, forestry, and fishing; rental, hiring, and real estate; and manufacturing were more likely to report current hard-to-fill vacancies

## Period positions were vacant

When asked how long positions had been vacant, the majority of positions had been vacant for less than six months (52%), although there were many that were vacant for a year or more.

	Number	Percent
Less Less than three months	18	36%
Three to less than six months	8	16%
Six months to less than one year	2	4%
One to less than five years	15	30%
Five years or more	7	14%
Not further defined	14	
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Business Confidence

## Current level of business confidence

A total of 344 respondent businesses provided a response as to their current level of confidence for their own business, and 322 provided a response in relation to the local Peninsula economy and the broader economy

On average, respondents were moderately positive in relation to confidence in their own business, they were very mildly positive in relation to the local Peninsula economy, and they were mildly negative in relation to the broader economy

Respondent businesses were notably more likely to have high confidence in the local peninsula economy than in the broader economy

**Business confidence**  
scale from 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)



# Business Turnover

## Approximate business turnover for 2024/25

A total of 275 of the 372 respondent businesses provided a response as to their approximate business turnover in 2024/25.

The majority (58%) of these businesses reported a turnover last financial year of less than one million dollars, with 38% reporting a turnover of less than half a million dollars.

	Number	Percent
\$50 million or more	5	2%
\$10 to less than \$50 million	10	4%
\$1 to less than \$10 million	102	37%
\$500,000 to less than \$1 million	54	20%
\$100,000 to less than \$500,000	71	26%
Less than \$100,000	33	12%
Not stated	97	

## Change between 2023/24 and 2024/25

A total of 288 of the 372 respondent businesses provided a response as to the change in business turnover between 2023/24 and 2024/25, as outlined in the following table.

	Number	Percent
Increase by 31% or more	9	3%
Increase by 21% to 30%	10	3%
Increase by 11% to 20%	29	10%
Increase by 1% to 10%	67	23%
Stayed the same	69	24%
Decrease by 1% to 10%	47	16%
Decrease by 11% to 20%	33	11%

There was a relatively even split between respondent businesses who reported an increase (40%), and those who reported a decline in turnover (36%).

# Business Turnover

## Expected change in turnover 205/26

42% of respondent businesses reported that they expect turnover to stay about the same this financial year while 40% expected increase in their turnover, which was identical to the 40% who reported an increase last financial year.

A total of 18% of respondent businesses who provided a response reported that they expect their turnover to decrease this financial year, with five percent expecting a significant decrease.

These results imply an improvement in business confidence for the current financial year over the results from the previous financial year.

When examined at the industry level (including industries with 10 or more respondents), Arts and Recreation; Wholesale Trade; Professional, Scientific, and Technical respondent businesses were more likely than average to report an expected increase in turnover.

	Number	Percent
Increase significantly	25	8%
Increase somewhat	98	32%
Stay approximately the same	127	42%
Decrease somewhat	38	13%
Decrease significantly	14	5%
Don't know / can't say	70	
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

Administrative and Support; and to a lesser extent Construction; and Health Care respondent businesses were more likely than average to report an expected decline in turnover this financial year.

# Business Challenges

## Factors hindering business over the last 12 months

A total of 298 of the 372 respondent businesses (80%) nominated at least one factor hindering their ability to operate or grow their business efficiently over the last 12 months, from a pre-coded list of 15 factors (including “other”).

This result implies that approximately one-fifth of respondent businesses did not feel there were any significant factors hindering their ability to operate or grow their business.

The most common factor hindering the ability of respondent businesses to operate or grow over the last 12 months was related to the cost of business overheads such as utilities, with 35% of respondent businesses nominating this factor.

The other factors nominated by a substantial proportion of respondent businesses including the cost of rent / lease of premises (22%), the planning approvals process (15%), and access to finance (14%).

*\*Total responses 580*

*Respondents identifying at least one response 298*



	Number	Percent
Cost of business overheads like utilities	130	35%
Cost of rent / lease of premises	80	22%
Planning approvals process	54	15%
Access to finance	52	14%
Availability of suitable commercial premises	30	8%
Internet access / speed	25	7%
Lack of access to business advice and / or support	26	7%
Lack of skilled / qualified staff	24	6%
Access to infrastructure	20	5%
Public transport	16	4%
Electricity supply	13	3%
Water supply	10	3%
Natural gas supply	9	2%
Waste water treatment	5	1%
Other	86	23%

# Business Challenges

## Possible challenges over the next 12 months

A total of 293 of the 372 respondent businesses (79%) nominated at least one challenge that they believe their business will face over the coming 12 months, from a pre-coded list of 11 challenges (including “other”).

These respondent businesses nominated an average of approximately two challenges per respondent business.

The two most common challenges faced by respondent businesses over the next 12 months were related to finding, engaging and / or keeping customers (35%), and increasing revenue (33%).

Other challenges nominated by a substantial proportion of respondents included finding / engaging and / or keeping staff (23%), marketing products and services (16%), and sourcing products or suppliers (12%).

*\*Total responses 620*

*Respondents identifying at least one response 293*

Challenges past 12 months	Number	Percent
Finding / engaging / keeping customers	129	35%
Increasing revenue	124	33%
Finding / engaging / keeping staff	85	23%
Marketing products and services	59	16%
Sourcing products or suppliers	43	12%
Reviewing your business model	30	8%
Cost of living	24	6%
Accessing national markets	19	5%
Transporting materials	10	3%
Accessing export markets	7	2%
Other	90	24%

Of the ‘other’ challenges raised by respondents most of these challenges related to government regulations, laws, and policies (14), new / more rates, taxes, and fines (11), competition (9) and general economic factors (8).

# Business Support

## Council services

Businesses were asked if they had utilised any of a list of 12 Council services, commonly used by businesses, over the last 2 years, and to rate their satisfaction with that service.

More than half of the respondent businesses who provided a satisfaction score were “very satisfied” with Economic Development business support, health business registration, food premises registration, tourism services, business grants, funding finder, business newsletter, and business networking events.

A significant proportion of respondent businesses who provided a satisfaction score were “dissatisfied” with footpath trading / outdoor dining, and planning permits.

	Dissatisfied	Neutral to somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	Can't say	Total
Economic Development - business support	16%	5%	79%	2	21
Health business registration	14%	14%	73%	4	26
Food premises registration	15%	15%	71%	9	43
Tourism services including Visitor Information Centre	6%	33%	61%	3	21
Business grant	20%	20%	60%	3	13
Funding Finder	11%	33%	56%	2	11
Business newsletter	3%	42%	55%	3	34
Business networking events	3%	47%	50%	2	32
Council business website (mpbusiness.com.au)	15%	39%	46%	4	45
Footpath trading / outdoor dining	46%	8%	46%	1	14
Agribusiness and Agroecology support	0%	67%	33%	1	4
Planning permits	67%	19%	14%	8	71



# Business Support

## Events Training and Workshops

15% of respondent businesses reported attending or participating in at least one event, workshop, or training by Council in the last two years, at an average of approximately two activities per respondent business.

*\*Total responses 124*

*Respondents identifying at least one response 57*

	Number	Percent
Business Grants	16	4%
Social media advertising / promotion workshop	16	4%
Tourism Information session	16	4%
Small business festival event	15	4%
Sustainability workshop	12	3%
Small business awards	9	2%
Mental health and wellbeing workshops	5	1%
Food Forum	4	1%
Farmer Discussion Group	4	1%
Starting a business workshop	3	1%
Start-up Spotlight	3	1%
Local Employment session	2	1%
Food Photography	2	1%
Event Packaging workshop	1	0%
Tourism podcast launch	1	0%
Other	15	4%



# Business support

## Future training or workshops

A little more than half (58%) of the 372 respondent businesses nominated at least one type of business training or workshop that they would like to see Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to provide in the future.

These businesses nominated an average of approximately 3.6 types of training each.

The most common types of training nominated by respondent businesses included social media advertising / promotion (25%), marketing and branding (24%), online marketing, website development (23%), and AI (19%).

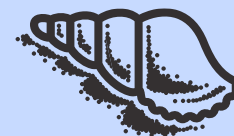
The 'Other' category included approximately 30 individual suggestions or comments and a few suggestions with 2-3 mentions, including cyber security and mental health workshops.

*\*Total responses 781  
Respondents identifying at least one response 216*

	Number	Percent
Social media advertising / promotion	94	25%
Marketing and branding	88	24%
Online marketing, website development	84	23%
AI	72	19%
Business planning	60	16%
Financial management	54	15%
Sustainability	45	12%
Employment and retention	43	12%
Tourism information sessions	37	10%
Waste reduction	34	9%
Leveraging events	31	8%
Tourism packaging	29	8%
Agricultural programs / field days	25	7%
Accessibility and inclusion	25	7%
Exporting products	19	5%
Other	41	11%

**For more information regarding  
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