

# Alberta Issues – Omnibus Report

Focus Alberta May 2014

*Prepared for: Alberta Justice and Solicitor General*



**ENVIRONICS**  
R E S E A R C H G R O U P

# Executive summary

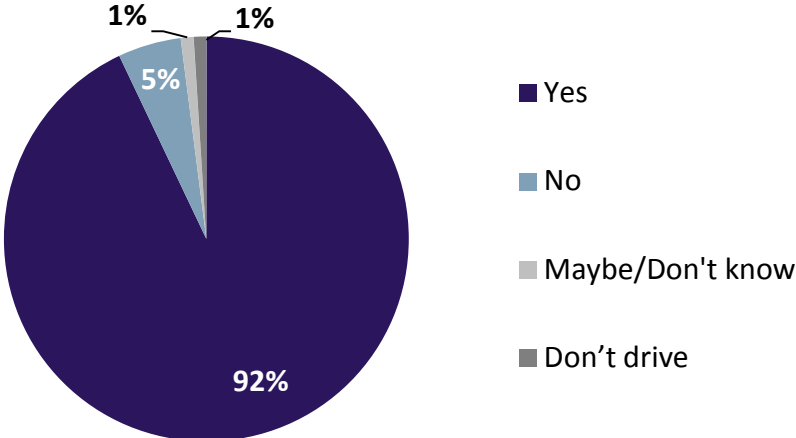
- Albertans are open to changes in the traffic ticket system that reduce fines/demerits or simplify the dispute process.
- Nine in ten Albertans (92%) would like to be able to get a reduced fine or demerits in return for early payment of a traffic ticket.
- Eight in ten (82%) would like to be able to dispute a traffic ticket by phone, and six in ten (59%) would like to use videoconference or Skype. Younger residents are more likely than seniors to want to use either of these options.
- One-quarter of Albertans (24%) have challenged a traffic ticket. Of these, around one-quarter (23%) say they have cross-examined a police officer, and close to eight in ten (78%) would like a simpler way to dispute such a ticket in the future.

# Methodology

- This report presents results of a telephone survey conducted among 1,010 adult Albertans from May 9 to 17, 2014. The margin of error for a sample of 1,000 is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points (at the 95% confidence level).
- The sampling method was designed to complete interviews within households randomly selected across the province, with quotas set for Edmonton, Calgary, small cities, and three rural regions (north, south, central). Respondents within each household reached by landline (85% of the sample) were screened for random selection using the “most recent birthday” method. Cell phone sample was also included (15% of sample).
- The data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample’s regional, age and gender composition reflects that of the actual Alberta population according to the 2011 Census.
- In this report, results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the charts due to rounding.

# Nine in ten Albertans would like to be able to get a reduced fine or demerits in return for early payment

## Would pay traffic ticket early in exchange for a reduced fine/demerits

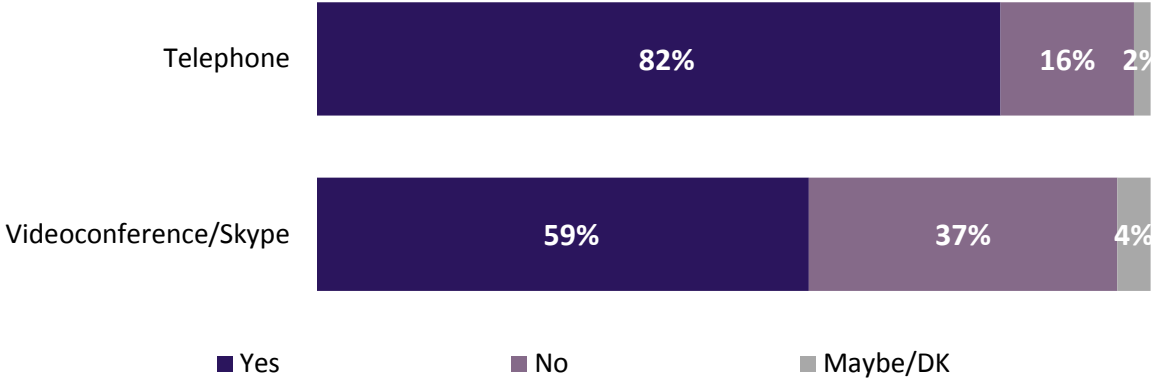


In a hypothetical situation, nine in ten (92%) Albertans say they would like to be able to pay a traffic ticket early in exchange for a reduction in the fine or the number of demerits. Only five percent would not like this option.

Saying yes is the dominant response across the province and all subgroups of the population. Not wanting this option is still a minority, but somewhat higher among, seniors (10%), those who have lived in the province for 41 or more years (8%), those with household incomes under \$30,000 (10%), and those with lower levels of education (8% who have less than a college diploma or university degree).

# Eight in ten would like to be able to dispute a traffic ticket by phone, and six in ten by videoconference or Skype

## Would like to be able to use method to dispute traffic ticket



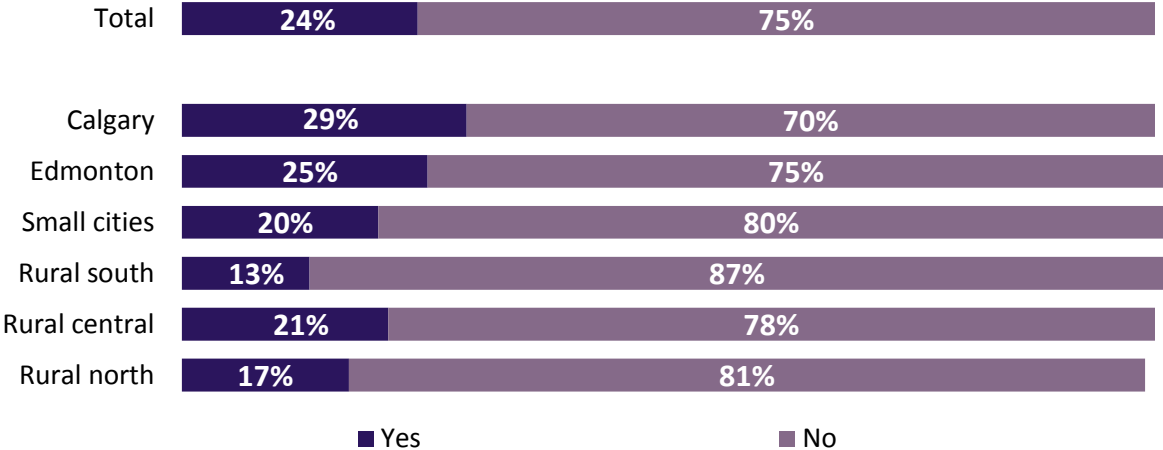
There is widespread support for the idea of non-court options for disputing traffic tickets. Eight in ten (82%) would like to be able to dispute a traffic ticket by telephone, and six in ten (59%) would like to be able to do this using a videoconference or Skype.

Results are quite similar by region, but there are some notable demographic differences. For both telephone and videoconference options, wanting to be able to use this method is highest among those age 18 to 34 (87% telephone, 69% videoconference) and decreases with age, being lowest among seniors (74% telephone, 30% videoconference). Interest in alternate methods is also lowest among those with high school or less education (75% telephone, 48% videoconference). Interest in the telephone option is highest among those with household incomes of \$100,000 to under \$150,000 (90%).

Q25/27 The government is considering letting people dispute traffic tickets without requiring them to attend court. If you were in this situation, would you like to be able to dispute your traffic ticket:

# One-quarter of Albertans have challenged a traffic ticket

## Have ever challenged a ticket

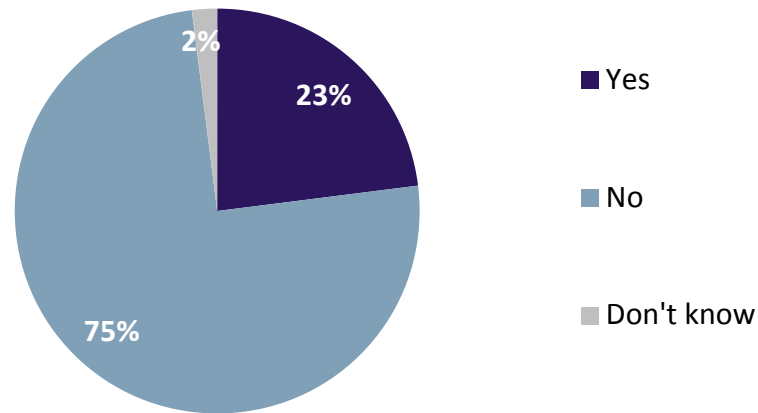


One-quarter of Albertans (24%) say they have ever challenged a traffic ticket.

Results vary by region (related to size of community), ranging from a low of 13 percent in the rural south to a high of 29 percent of Calgarians. Men are twice as likely (33%) as women (16%) to report having challenged a ticket. There are no important differences by education level or age, but having challenged a ticket is lower among those who have lived in Alberta for 10 years or fewer (17%) than longer-term residents, and those with household incomes of \$150,000 or more are the most likely (32%) to have challenged a ticket.

# Around one-quarter among those who have ever challenged a traffic ticket say they have cross-examined a police officer

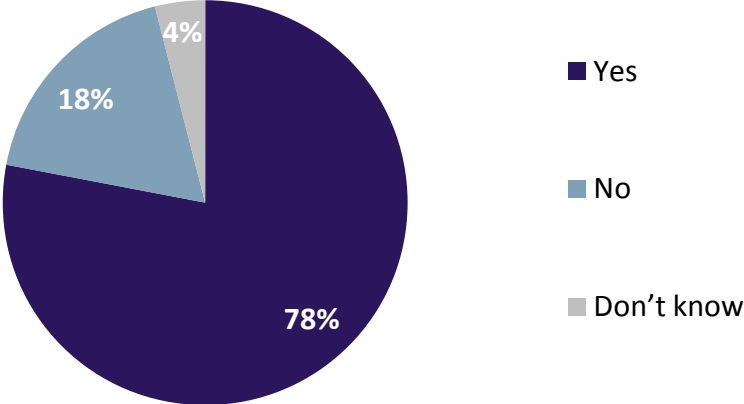
## Have ever cross-examined a police officer (subgroup: those who have challenged a ticket - n=231)



About one-quarter of Albertans who have ever challenged a traffic ticket (23% of the population) say they have cross-examined a police officer. Having cross-examined a police officer is the minority response across all subgroups. Men are twice as likely as women to do so (27% vs. 14%).

# Close to eight in ten who have challenged a traffic ticket would like a simpler way to dispute such a ticket in the future

## Would like a simpler way of disputing tickets (subgroup: those who have challenged a ticket - n=231)



A strong majority of close to eight in ten (78%) Albertans who have ever challenged a traffic ticket would like to have a simpler way to dispute tickets in the future. This proportion is similar across the province and across all subgroups of this population.

Q30 Would you like a simpler way of disputing tickets?  
SUBSAMPLE: Those who have challenged a ticket (N=231)



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