

# Cross Jurisdictional Information Access Study

Australia (All Jurisdictions)

June 2023



Australian Government  
Office of the Australian  
Information Commissioner



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# Research Design



# Research Design



**Six jurisdictions from across Australia (ACT, NSW, QLD, TAS, VIC, WA) as well as a national study was commissioned to investigate awareness and experience of information access rights amongst the general public.**

Each jurisdiction had their own mixed study comprising of n=350, and n=405 nationally, amongst Australian residents aged 18+ years. The studies were conducted between May 14 and June 23, 2023 utilising an online panel and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). A breakdown of respondents by jurisdiction is displayed below:

Federal Survey	ACT	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	WA
n=405	N=350	n=350	n=351	n=350	n=350	n=350

For each jurisdiction, quotas were set by state, gender, age and location (metro/regional when applicable), and data was post-weighted to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Due to rounding, percentages may not always add to 100.

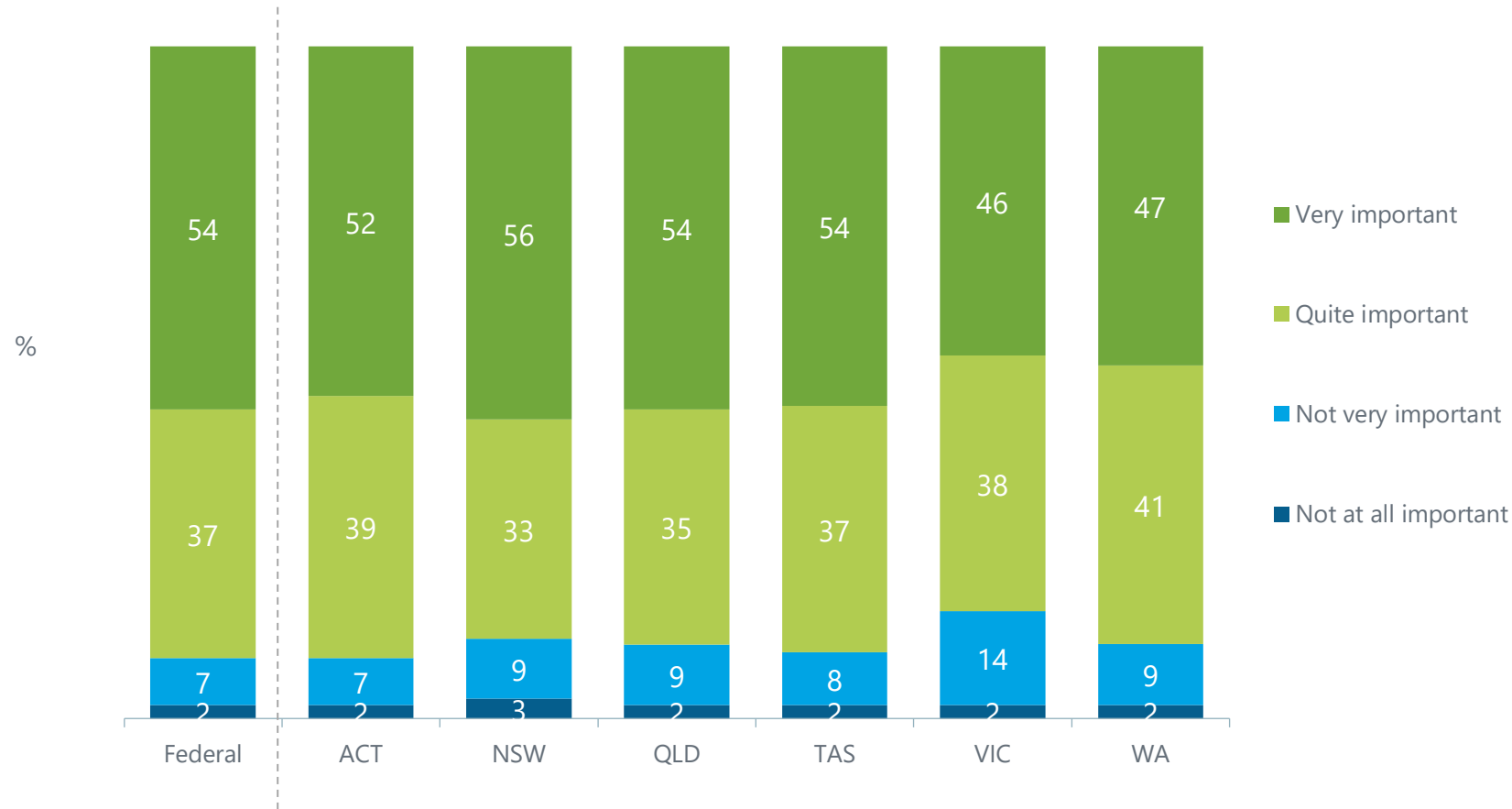
Information from the Australian Government Information Access Study is presented as a the 'Federal' total.



# Information Access



# Importance of Having the Right to Access Government Information



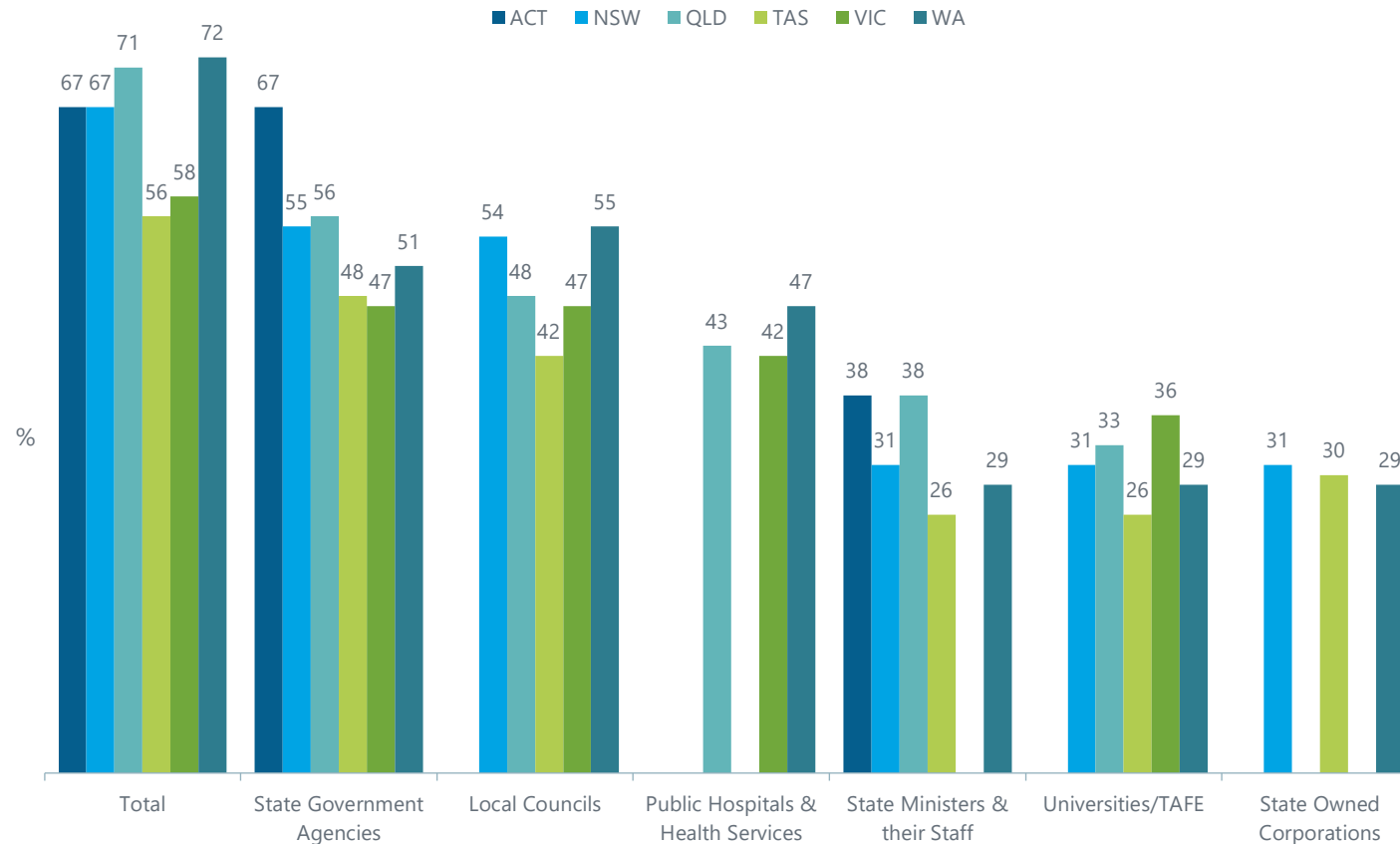
Majority of Australians (91%) indicated it is important to have the right to access government information. This is consistent across each of the jurisdictions.



# Awareness of Right to Access Information



Awareness of the right to access information from Federal Agencies	Total % (n=405)
Total	60
Australian (Federal) Government department/agencies (e.g. Centrelink, Home Affairs)	54
Australian (Federal) Government – your personal information	40
Australian (Federal) Government – policy and procedural documents	33
Federal statutory bodies such as ACCC and ASIC	30
Australian (Federal) Government Ministers	22



60% of the Nation were aware of the right to access information from Federal agencies.

Averaging across states, roughly two thirds of respondents in 2023 were aware of their right to access information from the listed agencies.

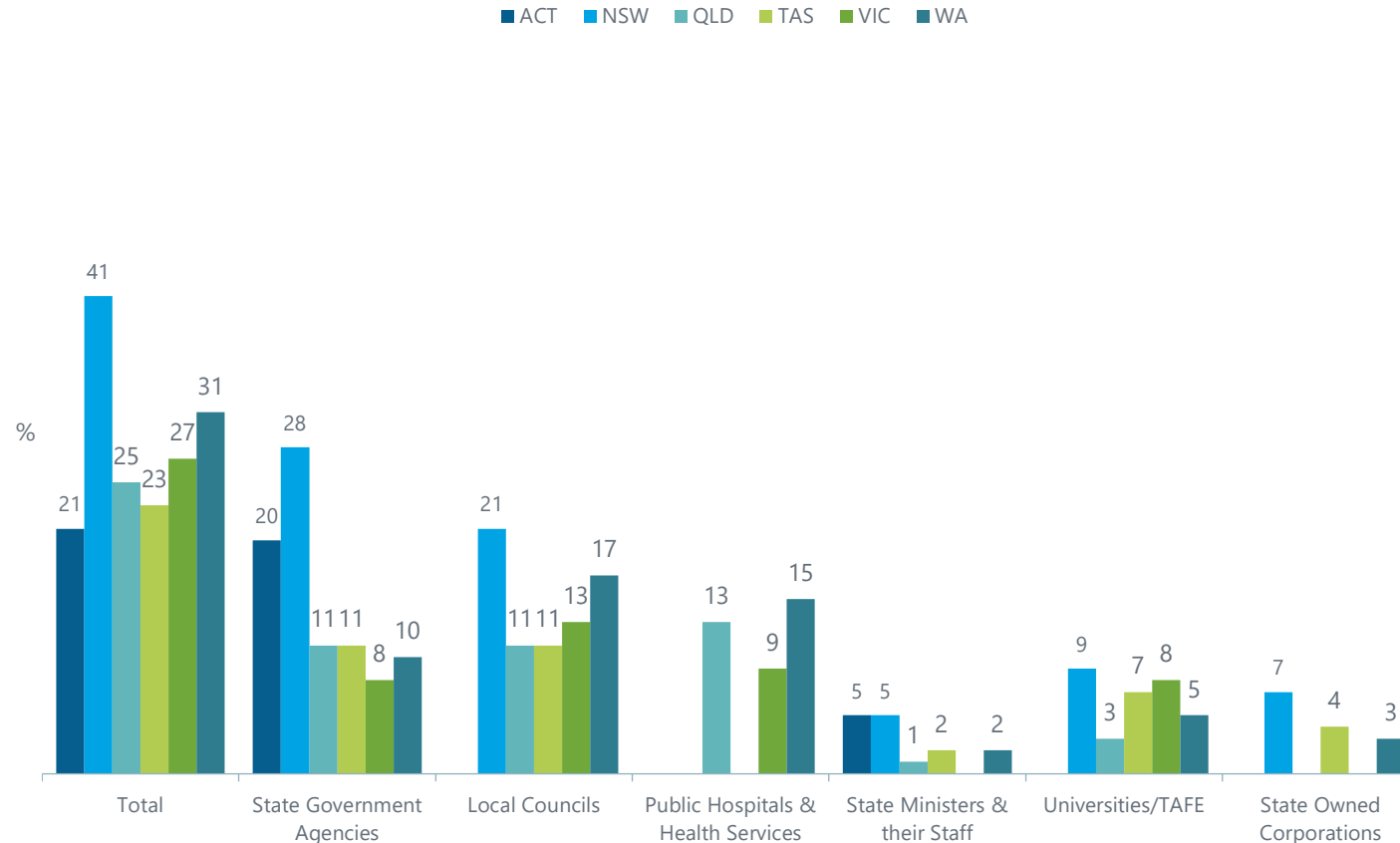
Respondents from Western Australia were most likely to indicate their awareness of their right to access government information (72%), while Tasmanian respondents were least likely be aware (56%).



# Attempts to Access Information in the Last 3 Years



Attempts to access information from Federal Agencies	Total % (n=405)
Total	27
Australian (Federal) Government department/agencies (e.g. Centrelink, Home Affairs)	24
Australian (Federal) Government – your personal information	10
Federal statutory bodies such as ACCC and ASIC	9
Australian (Federal) Government – policy and procedural documents	7
Australian (Federal) Government Ministers	5



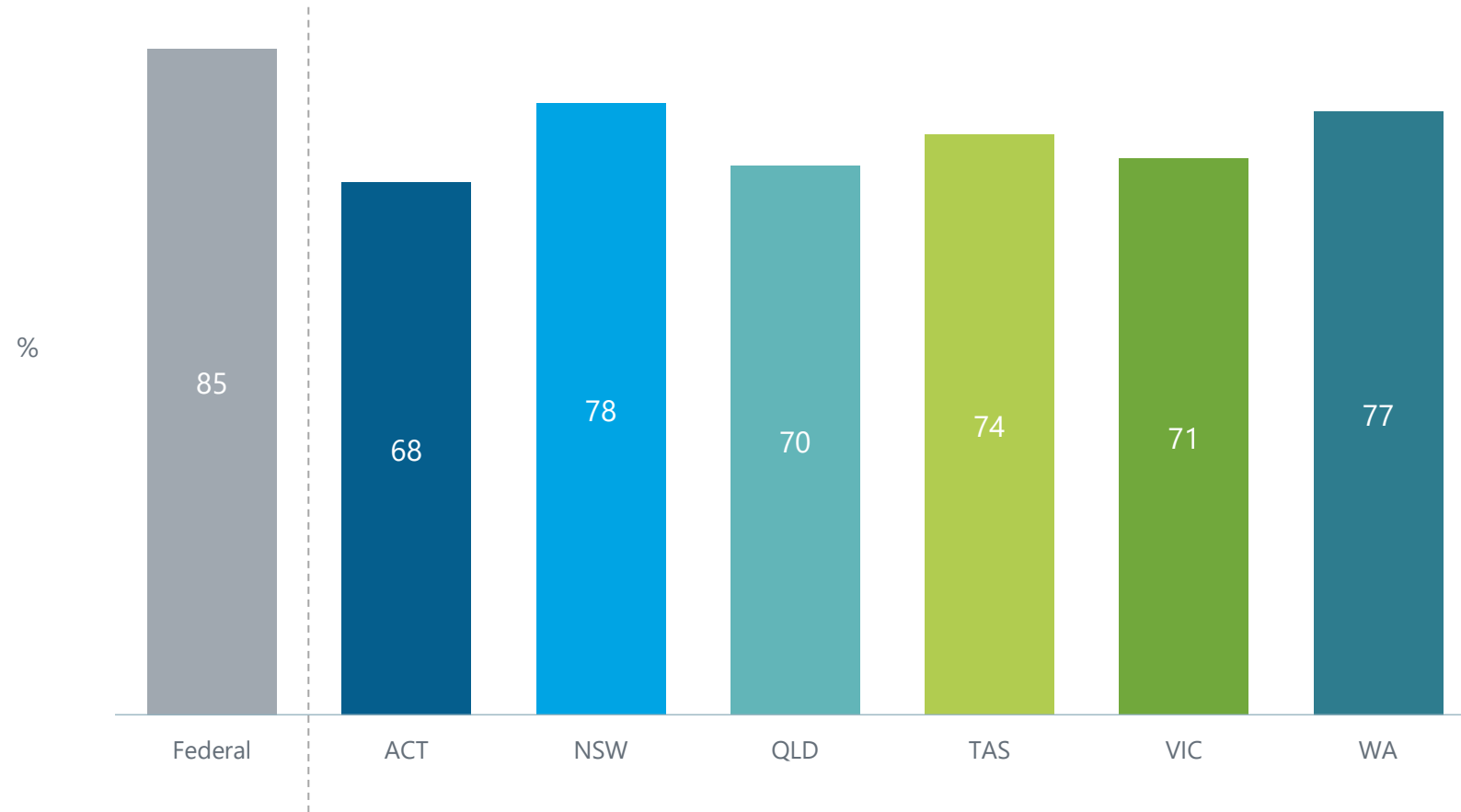
On a Federal level, less than one third (27%) of respondents had tried to access information in the last three years.

The proportion of respondents who attempted to access information from government agencies varied between a fifth and two fifths, with NSW respondents most commonly requesting information.





# Success in Attempting to Access Information



The majority of Australians were successful in accessing information from all Australian Government entities where access was attempted.

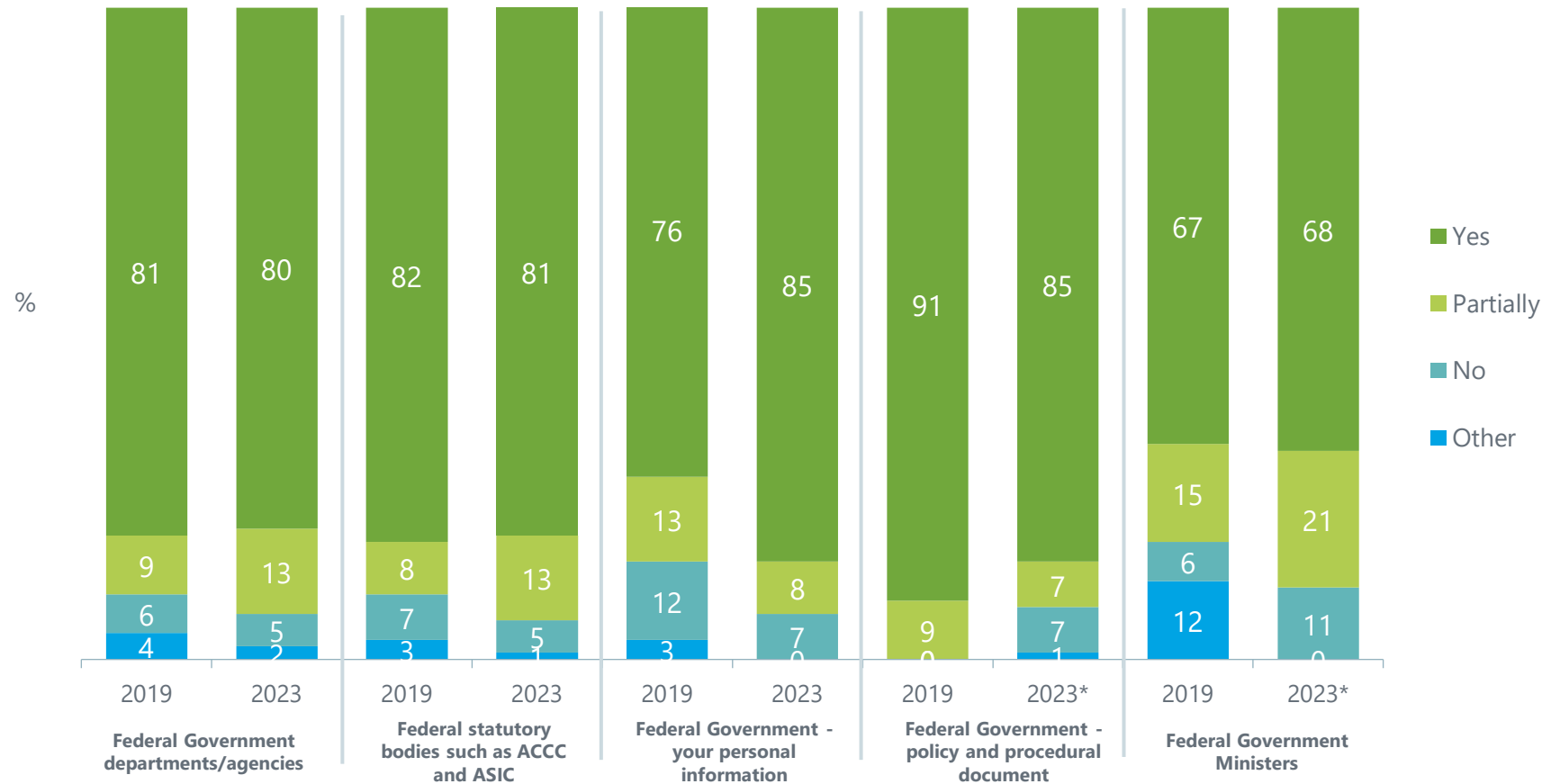
At a jurisdictional level, success in attempting to access information was similar across states, ranging from two thirds (68%) in ACT to close to four fifths (78%) in NSW.



# Success in Attempting to Access Information



## Federal Agencies Accessed



The majority of Australians were successful in accessing information from almost all Australian Government entities where access was attempted.

Respondents were less successful accessing information from Ministers.

Q7. Were you successful in accessing information from ...? SR

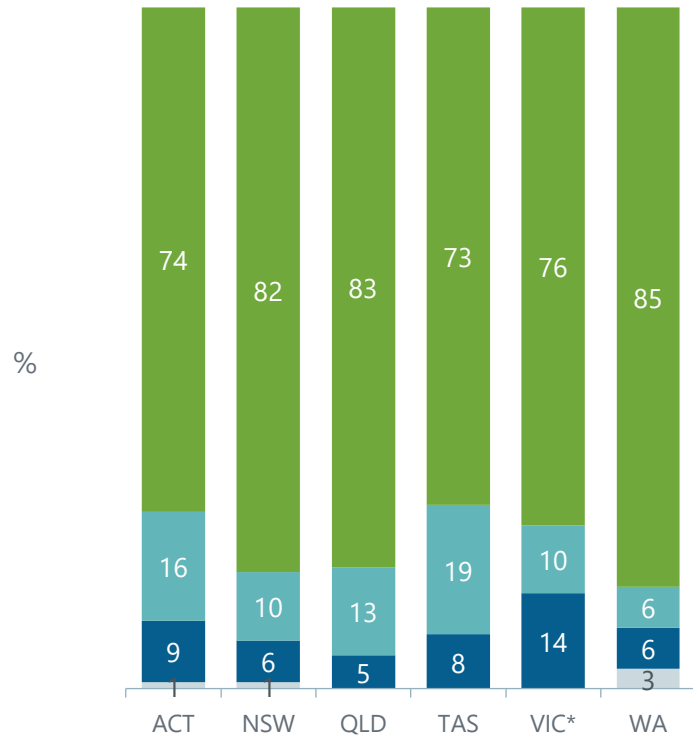
Base: Respondents who had attempted to access information; 2019 n=369; 2023 n=110

Respondents who had attempted to access information Govt. agencies 2019 n= 272; 2023 n=99; Statutory bodies 2019 n=80; 2023 n=37; Personal Information 2019 n=92, 2023 n=40; Policy and Procedural documents 2019 n=53, 2023 n=27\*; Ministers 2019 n=33, 2023 n=19\*

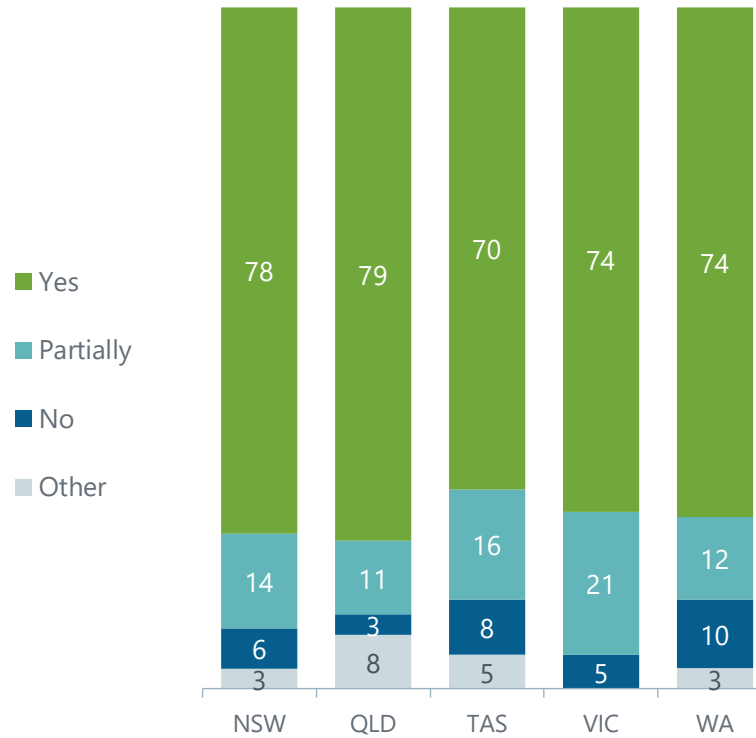
\*Caution: small base size, indicative only



# Success in Attempting to Access Information by Agency



State Government Agencies



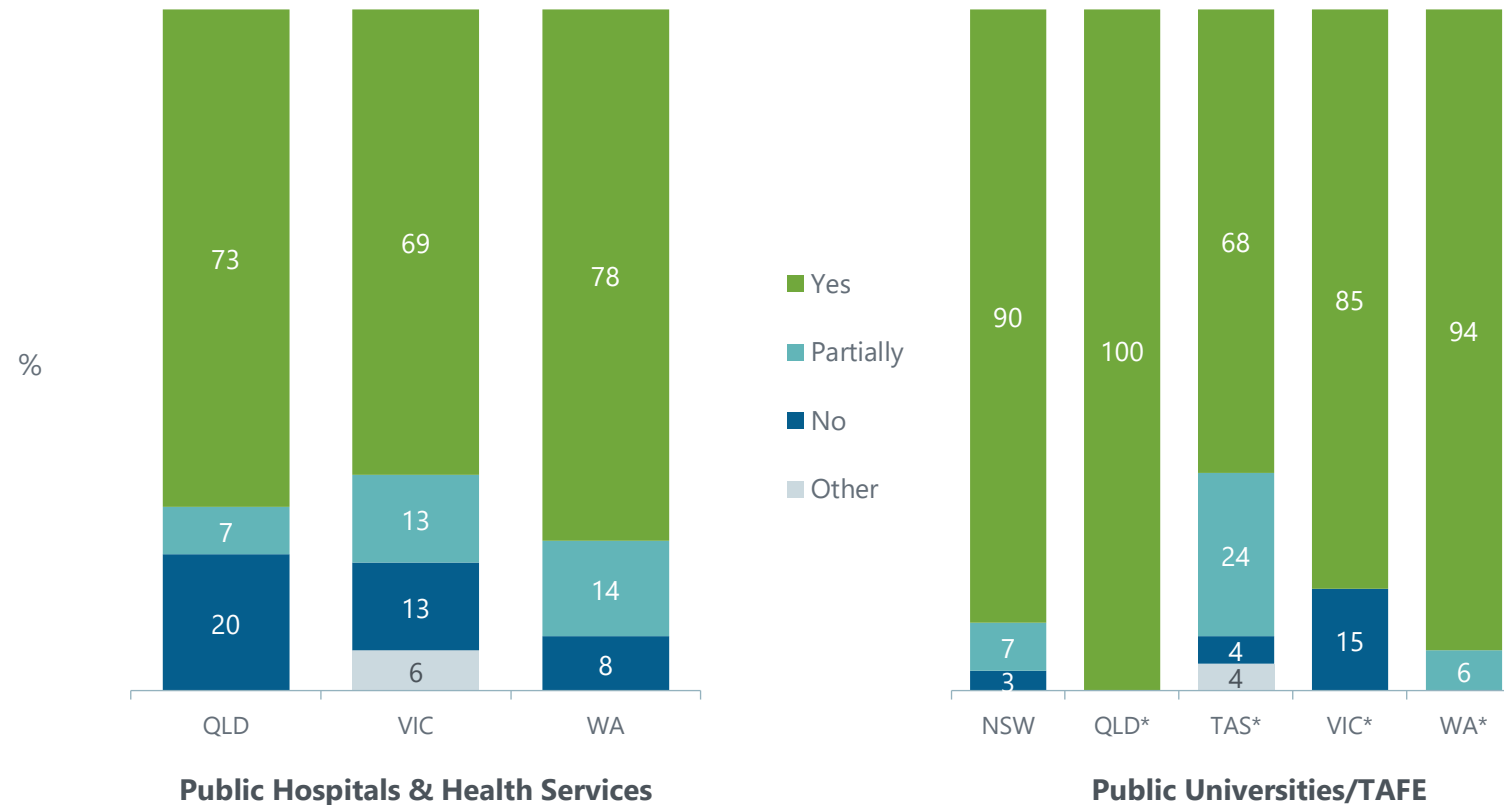
Local Governments/Councils

The majority of respondents across states were successful in accessing information from states government agencies and local councils, with three quarters or more of respondents being successful in accessing information.

Q7. Were you successful in accessing information from ...? SR  
 Base: Respondents who had attempted to access information; State Government Agencies (ACT n=69, NSW n=96, QLD n=40, TAS n=37, VIC n=29, WA n=35), Local Councils (NSW n=72, QLD n=38, TAS n=37, VIC n=46, WA n=58)



# Success in Attempting to Access Information by Agency



Over eight in ten respondents were at least partially successful in accessing information from public hospitals and health services.

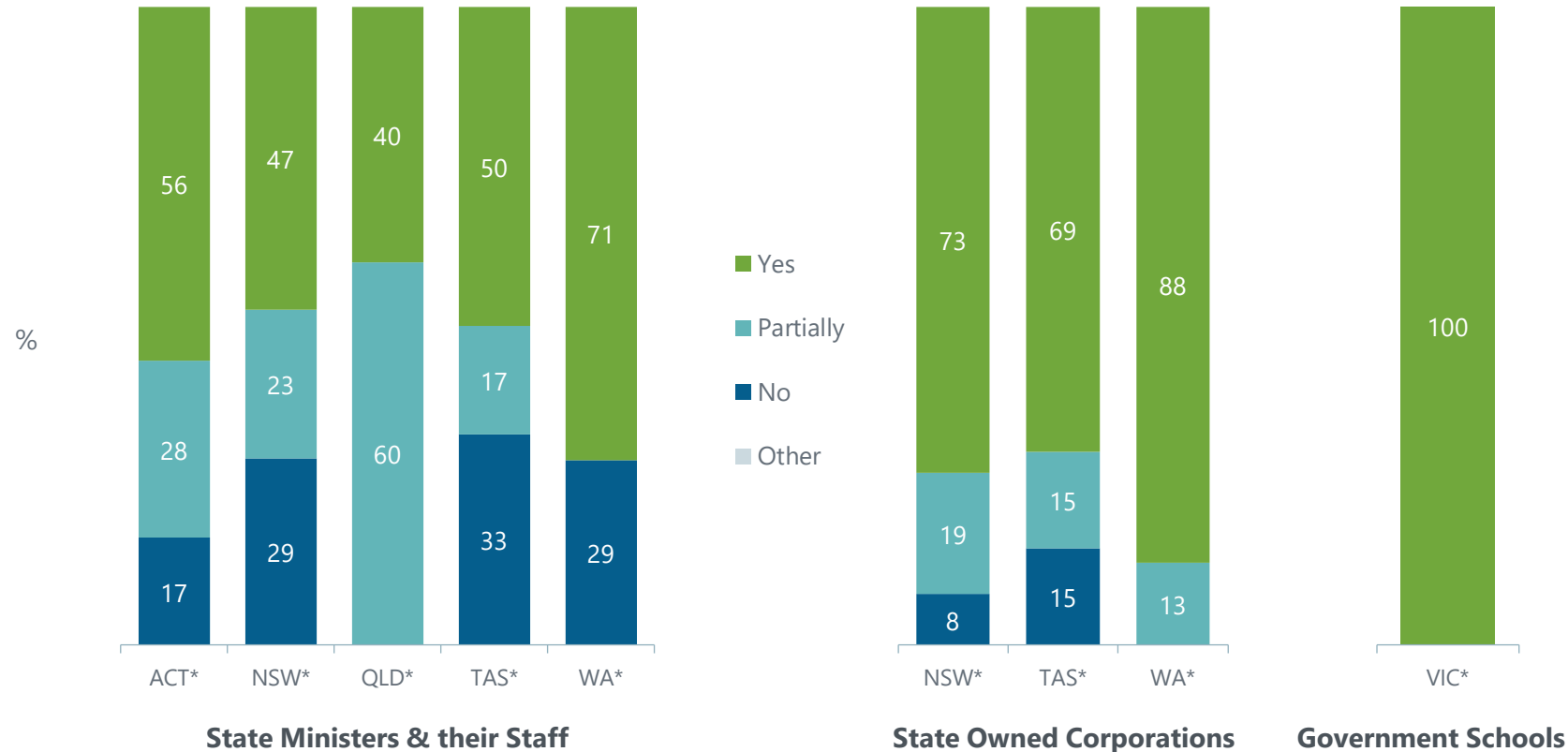
Although fewer respondents requested information from public universities or TAFEs, most reported being successful in accessing that information.

Q7. Were you successful in accessing information from ...? SR  
 Base: Respondents who had attempted to access information; Public Hospitals & Health Services (QLD n=44, VIC n=32, WA n=51), Public Universities/TAFE (NSW n=30, QLD n=12\*, TAS n=25\*, VIC n=27\*, WA n=17\*)

\*Caution: small base size, indicative only



# Success in Attempting to Access Information by Agency



Success rates in accessing information from state ministers and their staff was lower and varied by state, though there was a small base size.

Success in accessing information from State Owned corporations was high across respondents from Tasmania, New South Wales and Western Australia.

All Victorian respondents indicated that they were able to successfully access information from government schools.

Q7. Were you successful in accessing information from ...? SR

Base: Respondents who had attempted to access information; State Ministers & their Staff (ACT n=18\*, NSW n=17\*, QLD n=5\*, TAS n=6\*, WA n=8\*), State Owned Corporations (NSW n=26\*, TAS n=13\*, WA n=9\*), Government Schools (VIC n=18\*)

\*Caution: small base size, indicative only



# Demographics



# Gender & Age



		Federal % (n=405)	ACT % (n=350)	NSW % (n=350)	QLD % (n=351)	TAS % (n=350)	VIC % (n=350)	WA % (n=350)
Gender 	Female	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Male	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Gender Neutral †	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Prefer not to indicate †	-	-	-	<1	-	-	-
Age 	18-24	8	5	11	7	10	5	7
	25-34	20	23	17	21	18	23	23
	35-44	19	22	21	20	17	22	20
	45-54	16	13	13	15	18	13	15
	55-64	18	16	15	18	14	12	5
	65-74	12	13	14	12	12	14	9
	75+	6	8	8	7	11	11	21






Which of the following age brackets do you belong to?  
Do you identify as being...?

Base: All respondents; Federal n=405, ACT n=350, NSW n=350, QLD n=351, TAS n=350, VIC n=350, WA n=350

# Working Status & Main Language Spoken



		Federal % (n=405)	ACT % (n=350)	NSW % (n=350)	QLD % (n=351)	TAS % (n=350)	VIC % (n=350)	WA % (n=350)
<b>Working Status</b> 	Working full time	47	53	50	49	37	48	44
	Retired	19	24	21	19	23	22	28
	Working part time	18	11	15	17	23	19	17
	Engaged in home duties	7	3	5	6	6	3	6
	Unemployed	5	4	3	5	7	3	2
	Student	4	4	5	3	2	3	2
	Prefer not to answer	-	-	1	2	1	2	1
<b>Main Language Spoken</b> 	English	90	80	88	92	97	88	93
	Other	10	20	12	8	3	12	7
<b>Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</b> 	Yes	3	3	2	3	7	1	3
	No	97	97	98	97	93	99	97



Which of these categories best describes you?

What is the main language spoken at home?

Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Base: All respondents; Federal n=405, ACT n=350, NSW n=350, QLD n=350, TAS n=351, VIC n=350, WA n=350



# Summary



# Summary



The majority (91%) of Australians nationwide felt that their right to access information from government sources was very or quite important. This is consistent across the jurisdictions.

Roughly two thirds of respondents in 2023 were aware of their right to access information from the listed agencies within their respective jurisdictions.

- Respondents from Western Australia were most likely to indicate their awareness of their right to access government information (72%), while Tasmanian respondents were least likely to be aware (56%).

The proportion of respondents who attempted to access information from their respective jurisdiction varied between a fifth and two fifths, with NSW respondents most commonly requesting information. Nationally, less than one third (27%) of respondents had tried to access information at a Federal level in the last three years.

The proportion of respondents who attempted to access information from government agencies within their jurisdiction varied between a fifth and two fifths, with NSW respondents most commonly requesting information.

- Respondents tended to be more likely to have tried to access information from state government agencies and local councils.

Success in attempting to access information was similar across states, ranging from two thirds (68%) in ACT to close to four fifths (78%) in NSW.

The majority of respondents across the states were successful in accessing the information they were after, however were less likely to be successful accessing information from State Ministers and staff. At a Federal level, those least successful had attempted to access information from Federal Ministers.





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