

IPC Information Access Study 2019

Prepared for: Western Australia



Karyn Wong kwong@woolcott.com.au

Liz Sparham lsparham@woolcott.com.au

May 2019

Research design

- Woolcott Research was commissioned by the IPC to investigate awareness and experience of information access rights amongst the general WA public
- A mixed mode survey amongst n=350 WA residents aged 18+ years was conducted between 18th April and 5th May 2019 utilising an online panel and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI).
- Quotas were set by location (Perth/Regional WA), gender and age, and data was post-weighted to reflect the latest ABS population estimates

Information Access



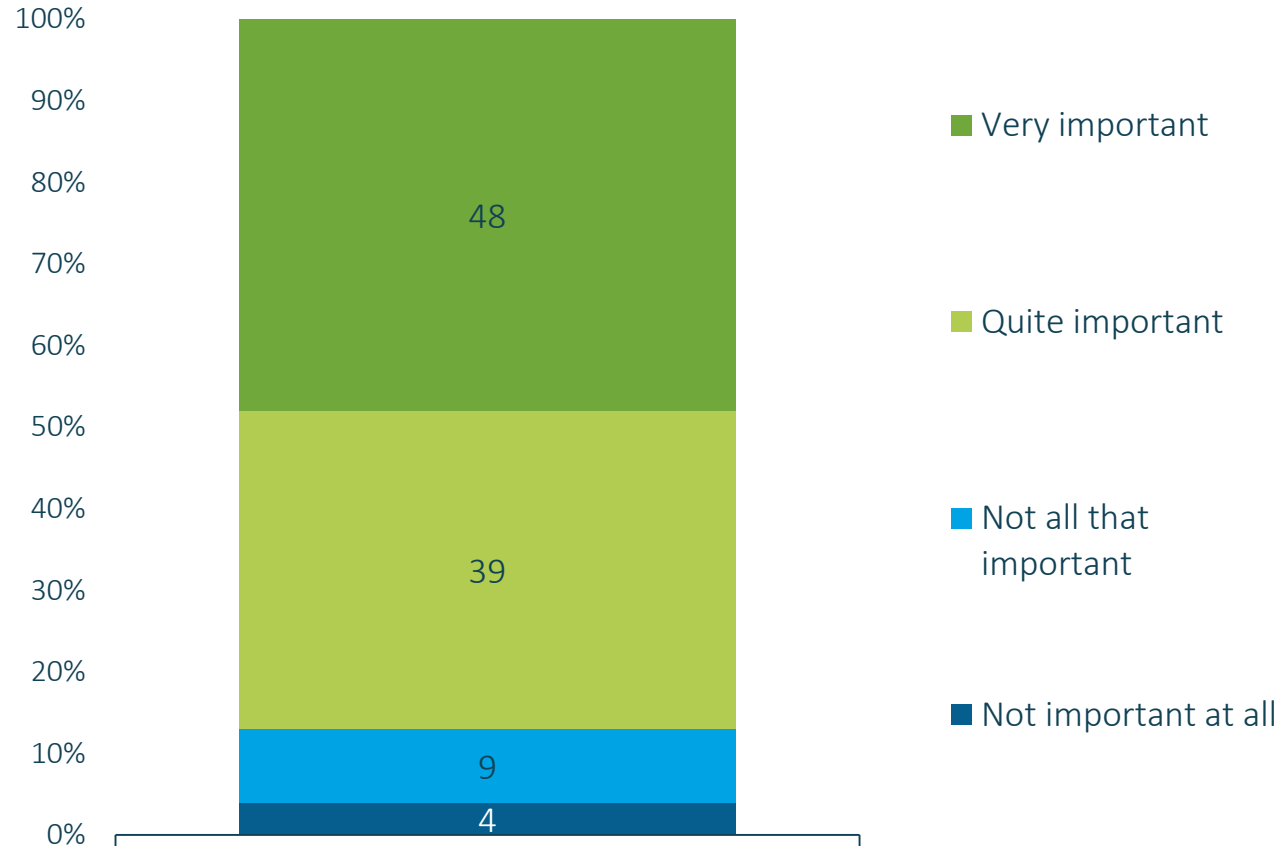
Demographics



Summary

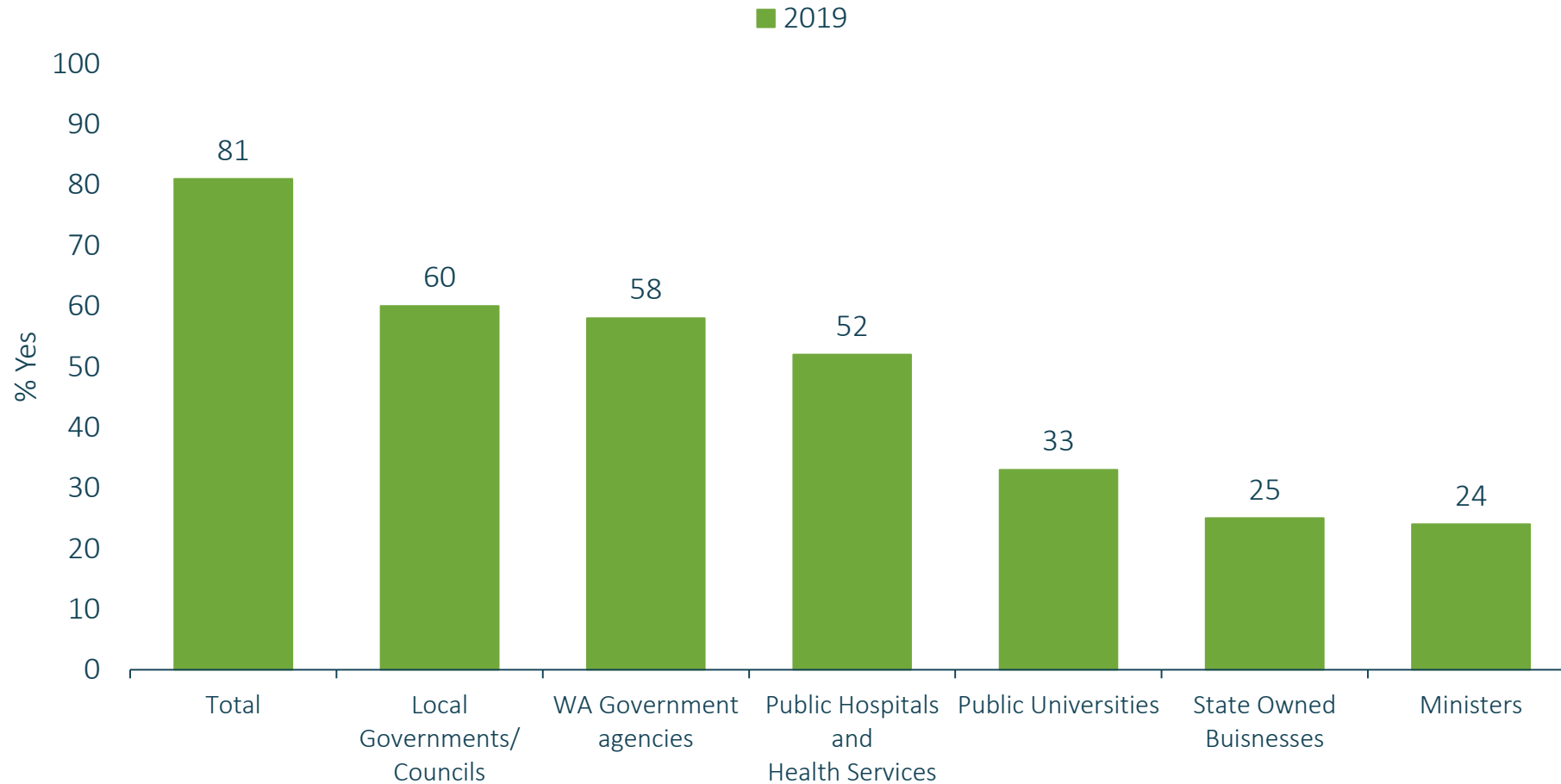


Importance of having the right to access government information



Almost half of respondents felt that having the right to access information held by government agencies was 'very important' (48%), with a further two fifths regarding the right as 'quite important' (39%)

Awareness of right to access information under WA's Freedom of Information Law

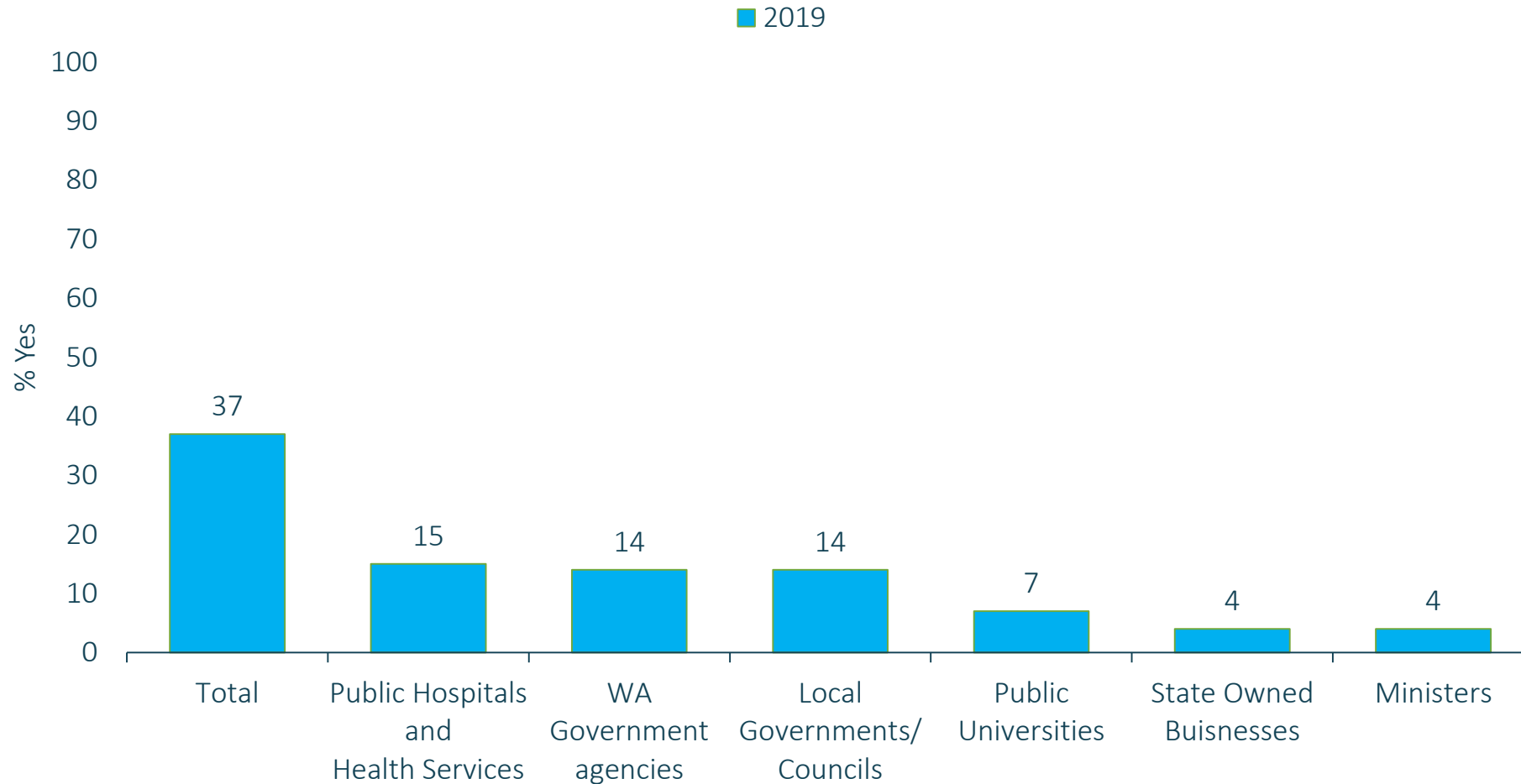


Four out of five respondents knew that they had the right to access information held by at least one of the agencies listed

Respondents tended to be more aware of their right to access information from Local Governments/Councils, State Government agencies and Public Hospitals and Health Services than other agencies listed

Younger age groups (18-34) were less likely to be aware of their right to access for all agencies

Attempts to access information from specific departments

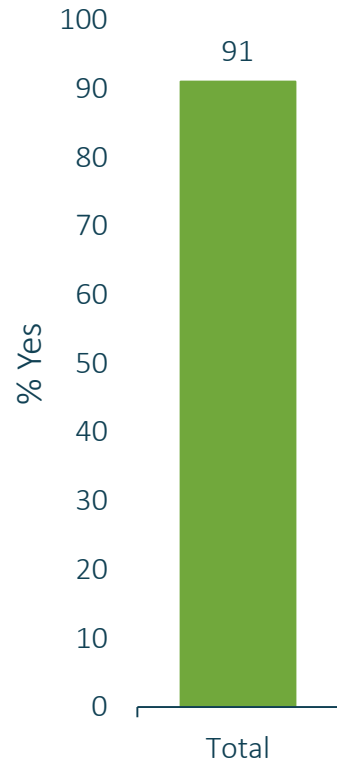


Over a third of respondents had attempted to access information held by at least one of the agencies listed (37%)

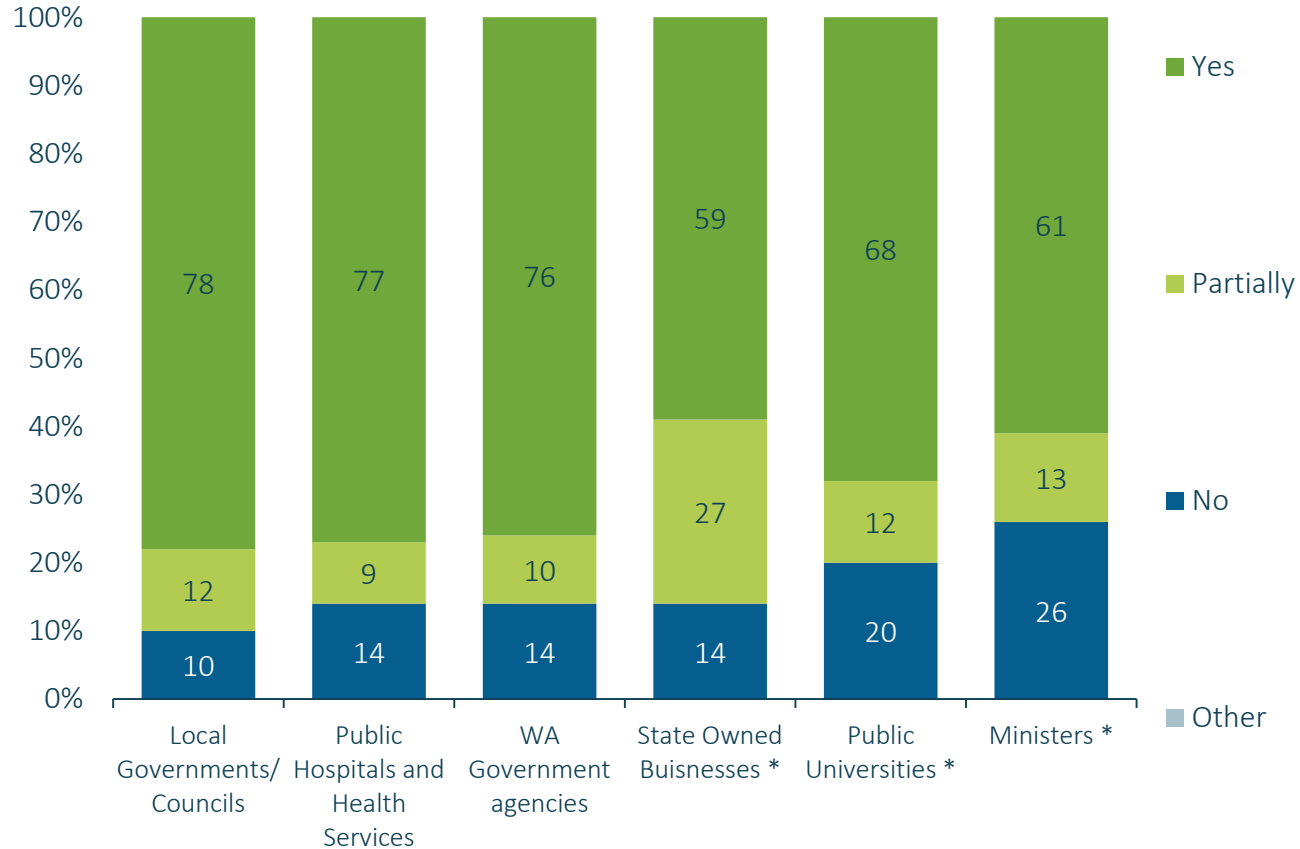
The most common agencies for respondents to contact were Public Hospitals/ Health Services, State Government agencies and Local Governments/ Councils

Success in attempting to access information

Successful at accessing information from at least one agency



Successful at accessing information from different agencies



The majority of those who tried to access were successful in gaining information held by at least one of the agencies listed

Respondents who contacted agencies were largely successful at accessing the information they requested

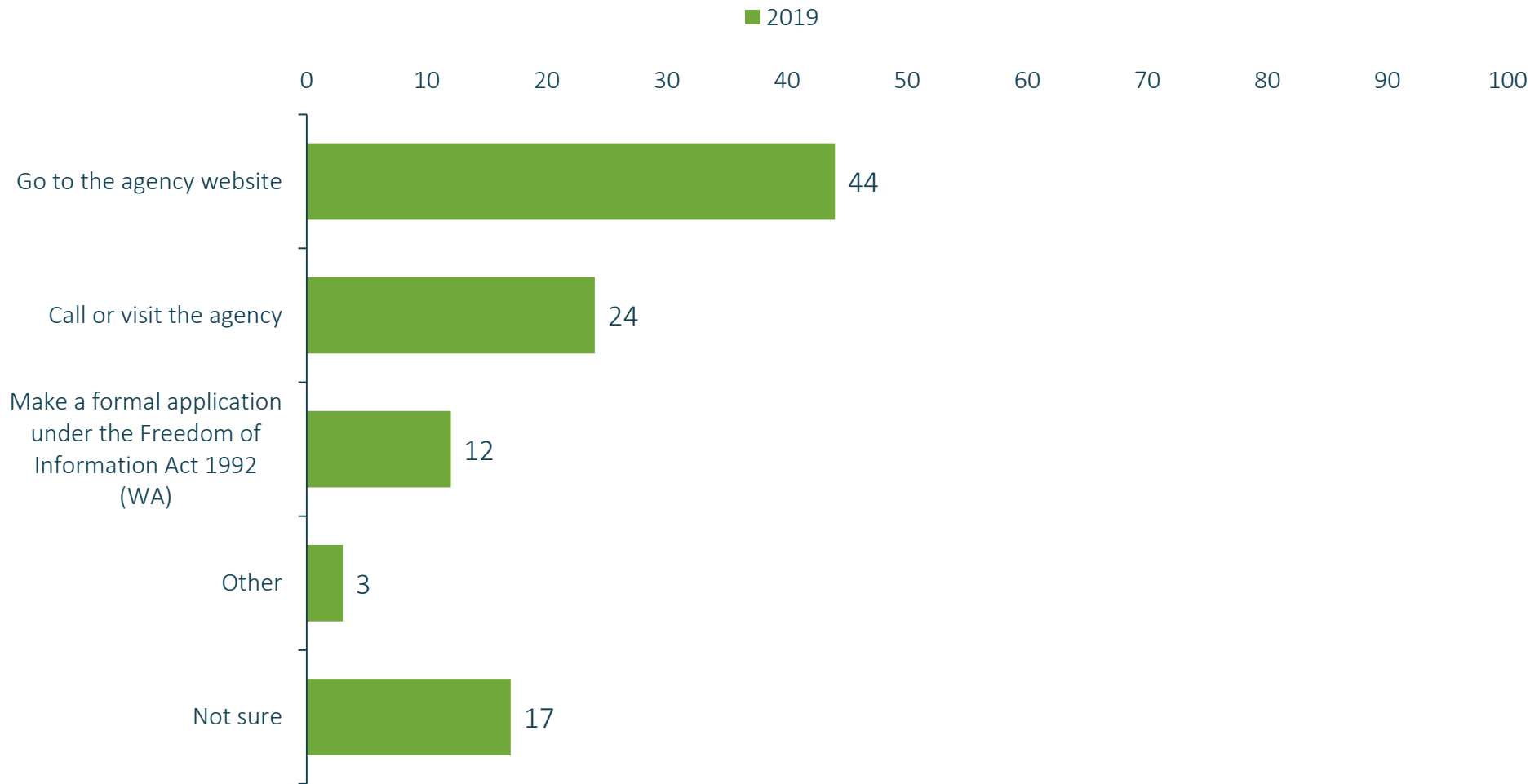
Q5. In the last 3 years have you tried to access information held by: information from (INSERT FROM Q5)...? SR for each one

Base: Respondents who tried to: At least one agency (n=133); Local Governments/Councils (n=50); WA Government agencies (n=51); Public Hospitals and Health Services (n=55); State Owned Businesses (n=15); Ministers (n=15); Public Universities (n=26)

* CAUTION SMALL BASE SIZES

IF YES Q6. FOR EACH ENTITY ANSWERED AT Q5 ASK: Were you successful in accessing

Methods of accessing information



Almost half would attempt to access information through a specific agency's website

One in six were unsure about how they would access information held by a WA State or Local government agency

Online information and assistance

Types of government agency information and/or assistance respondents would like to access online	All respondents (n=350) %
Policies and procedures	60
Being directed to online action, for example, obtaining a service or conducting a transaction online	54
Information about decision making processes affecting the community	50
Financial information, for example, expenditure, procurement and contracts	39
Statistics and datasets	36

Most respondents wanted to have online access to at least one of the types of government agency information and assistance listed

The most common type of government agency information and/or assistance that respondents would like to access online were policies and procedures

Information Access



Demographics



Summary



Participant demographics

All respondents % (n=350)	
Gender	
Male	50
Female	50
Age	
18-24	9
25-34	24
35-44	17
45-54	18
55-64	8
65-74	10
75+	13

Q1. Which of the following age brackets do you belong to?

Q2. Are you...?

Base: All respondents (n=350)

Participant demographics

	All respondents % (n=350)
Working status	
Working full time	36
Working part time	17
Student	8
Unemployed	7
Engaged in home duties	8
Retired	24
Main language spoken	
English	93
Cantonese/Mandarin	2
Australian Indigenous Languages	1
Italian	1
Tagalog (Filipino)	1
Hindi	1
Other	3

Q9. Which of these categories best describes you?
 Q10. What is the main language spoken at home?
 Base: All respondents (n=350)

Information Access



Demographics



Summary



Summary



Information Access

- Four out of five respondents were aware of their right to access information held by at least one of these Western Australian government agencies (with younger people being less aware)
 - Local Governments/Councils (60% aware)
 - WA Government agencies (58% aware)
 - Public Hospitals and Health Services (52% aware)
 - Public Universities (33% aware)
 - State Owned Businesses (25% aware)
 - Ministers (24% aware)
- Over one third of respondents had attempted to access information held by at least one of the Western Australian government agencies listed
- Nine out of ten respondents who attempted to access information held by at least one agency were successful in doing so
- Had they needed to, visiting a government agency's website was the most common way that respondents would have tried to access information held by a State or local government agency
- Most respondents wanted to have online access to at least one of the types of government agency information and assistance listed, the most commonly selected being policies and procedures (60%)



Woolcott Research & Engagement
L6, 104 Mount Street, North Sydney 2060



+61 29261 5221



woolcott.com.au

Information Access Study 2019

Office of the Information
Commissioner WA

Contacts: Karyn Wong, Liz Sparham
(kwong@woolcott.com.au,
lsparham@woolcott.com.au)

