

2024 Customer Satisfaction Survey

Rural



1800 808 830 www.lmw.vic.gov.au





Research methodology

Quantitative Online survey

The survey was designed and administered by JWS Research:

- A link to the online survey was emailed to customers on Tuesday, 8th October, 2024. Paper surveys were also distributed via post on Thursday, 3rd October, 2024. Distribution of the survey (both online and paper) to rural customers was undertaken by Lower Murray Water.
- A reminder email was sent to customers by LMW. To boost response rates, LMW also emailed the link via two reminder text message to rural customers.
- The survey remained open until Tuesday, 12th November 2024.

A total of 322 rural customers took part in the survey comprising:

- n=226 district customers
- n=30 Millewa customers
- n=69 private diverter customers.

Note: Not all respondents answered all questions.

The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=322 is +/-5.3% at the 95% confidence level.

Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding.

The data has not been weighted.

2023:
89

When shown throughout the report, figures in the water drop represent the equivalent rating obtained in previous years.



Snapshot of key findings

Almost seven in ten rural district customers (69%) use LMW’s online WaterNow system.



93%

agree that the WaterNow system is ‘easy to use’

Customers report very high levels of satisfaction with the **ease of contacting LMW** (90% satisfied).

Telephone is the most frequently used method of contact



More than eight in 10 rural customers (80%) agree that LMW **meets their expectations** as their water service provider.

The topics that attract most interest for increased communication include:



‘Major infrastructure projects that LMW is working on’ – 31% would like to hear ‘more’



‘How LMW manage the water supply’ – 22% of customers would like to hear ‘more’



‘How to read your bill’ – 18% would like to hear ‘more’



‘How to report a non-urgent water leak’ – 17% would like to hear ‘more’.

More than eight in 10 rural customers rate LMW positively on its **reputation in the community** (84%).

LMW has far fewer rural customers who are ‘**promoters**’ compared to those who are ‘**detractors**’



LMW’s Net Promoter Score (NPS) is **-27** (promoters minus detractors).

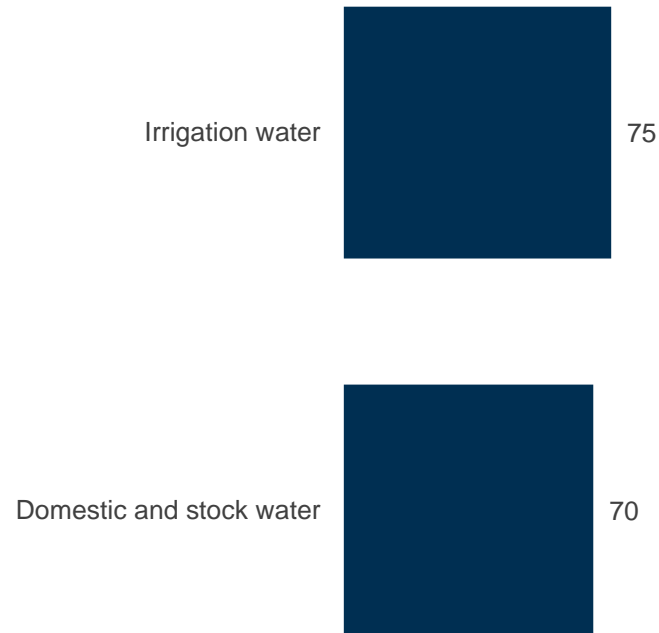


Detailed findings

At least seven in ten district customers receive irrigation water and/or domestic and stock water from LMW



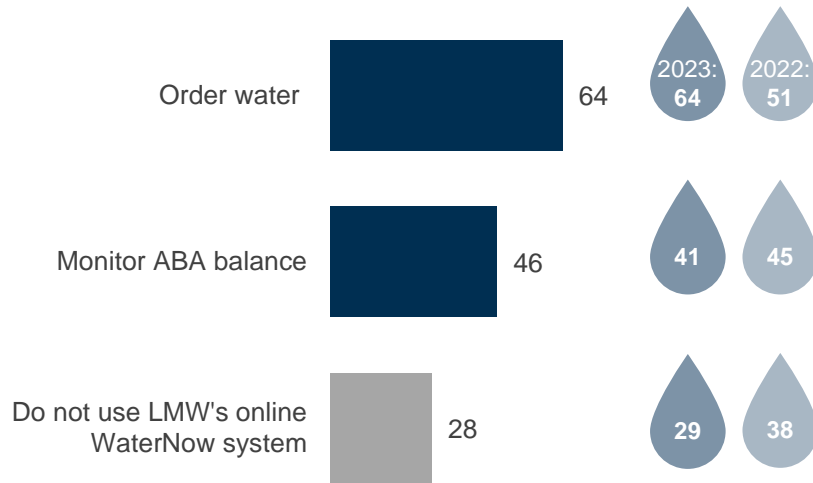
Lower Murray Water service use (%)
(multiple response)



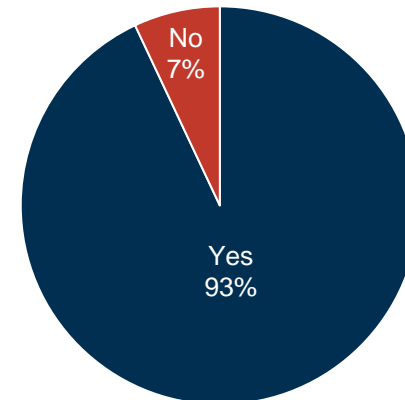
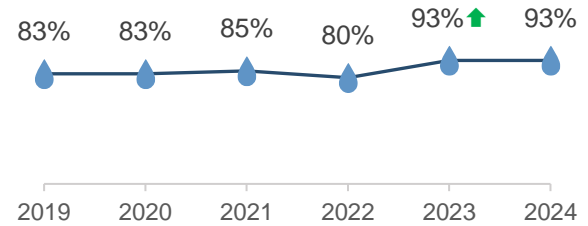
Majority of district customers use LMW’s WaterNow system to order water, most users find the system ‘easy to use’



Online WaterNow system used for (%)
(multiple response)



Find online WaterNow system easy to use
(among users)
(% 'yes')

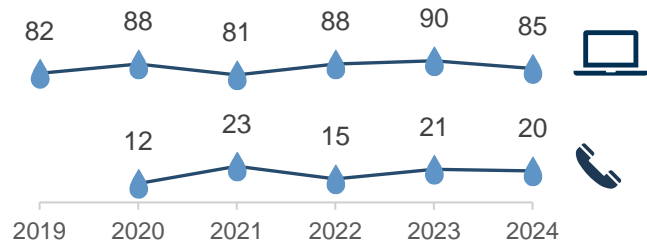
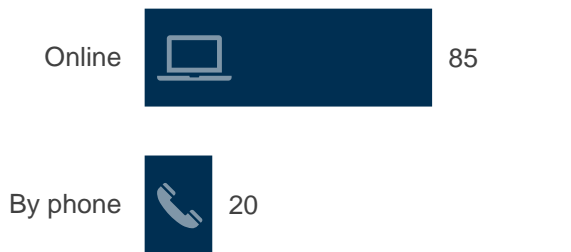


Significantly higher ↑ than the previous wave at 95% confidence interval.
 D2. For which of the following do you use Lower Murray Water's online WaterNow system?
 D2a. Do you find Lower Murray Water's online WaterNow system easy to use?
 Base: District customers (n=224), district customers who use the WaterNow system (n=155).

Online channels continue to be the most used method of ordering irrigation water among district customers



Method of ordering irrigation water (%)
(multiple response – among those who receive irrigation water)



Suggestions for how LMW water ordering system could be improved
(among those who receive irrigation water)

Ability to order in half-hour intervals

- “Order available in 30 minute intervals and less time to order, say 30 minutes rather than one hour.”
- “Further break up one hour intervals being ordered into half hour intervals?”
- “Be able to order in half hour time slots, not just on the hour.”
- “Be able to order every half hour.”

Improve website experience

- “Make it easier to navigate – not a clear website.”
- “More simple [and] to use larger icons.”

Introduce an app for ordering

- “Make it an app. Get in line with 2024 technology.”
- “Update system. It’s vintage, use apps for ordering and for monitoring flow.”

Other feedback

- “Less interruptions by power failure.”
- “Due to the type of irrigation system ordering a fortnight in advance would be good.”

Q2. How do you order your irrigation water?

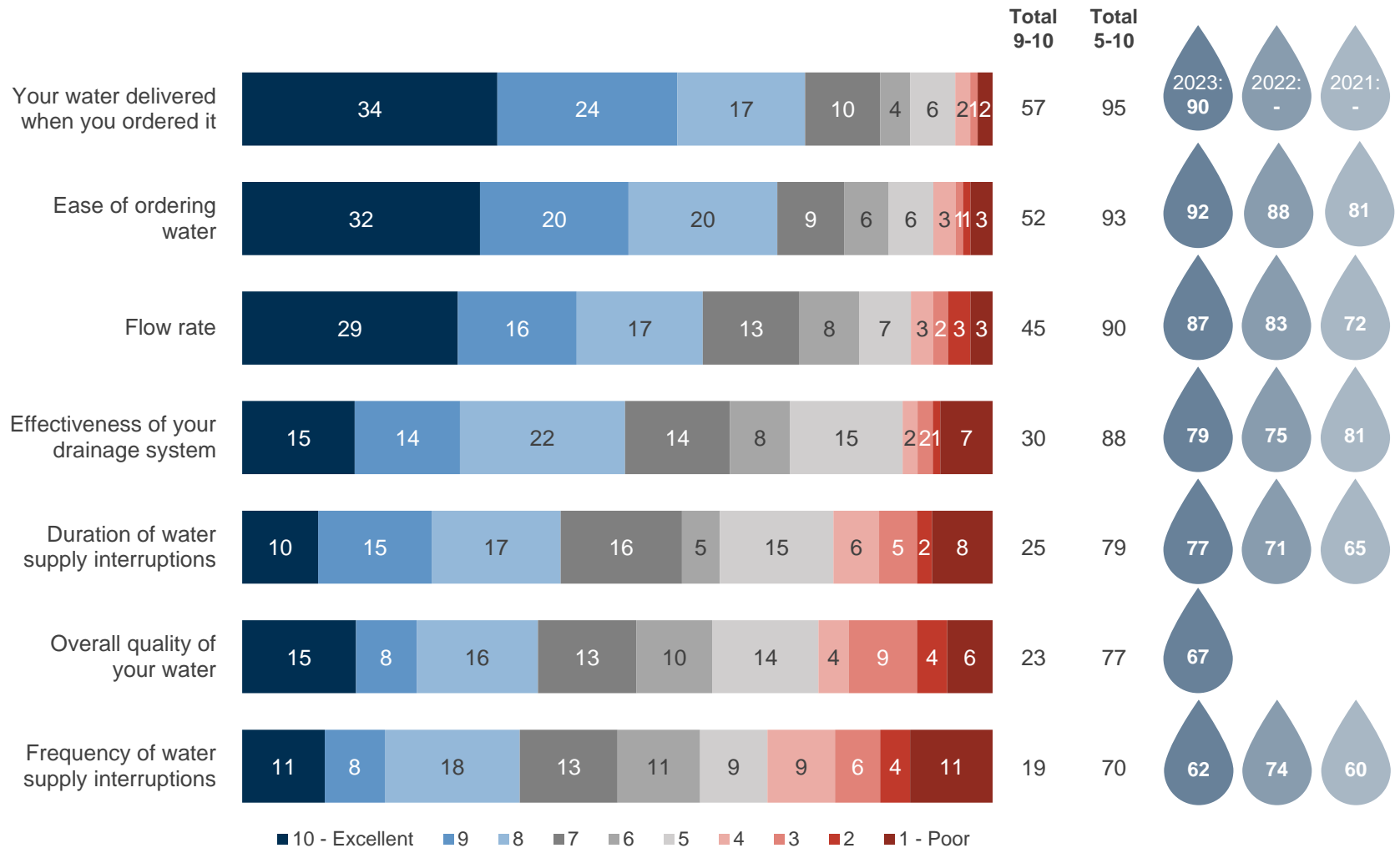
Q3. How could Lower Murray Water’s water ordering system be improved?

Base: District customers who receive irrigation water (n=158), district customers who made suggestions (n=104).

Satisfaction with many aspects of ordering water and supply continues to improve among district customers



Rating of aspects of LMW's water supply (%)
(rating on scale of 1 to 10 – among those who receive irrigation water)

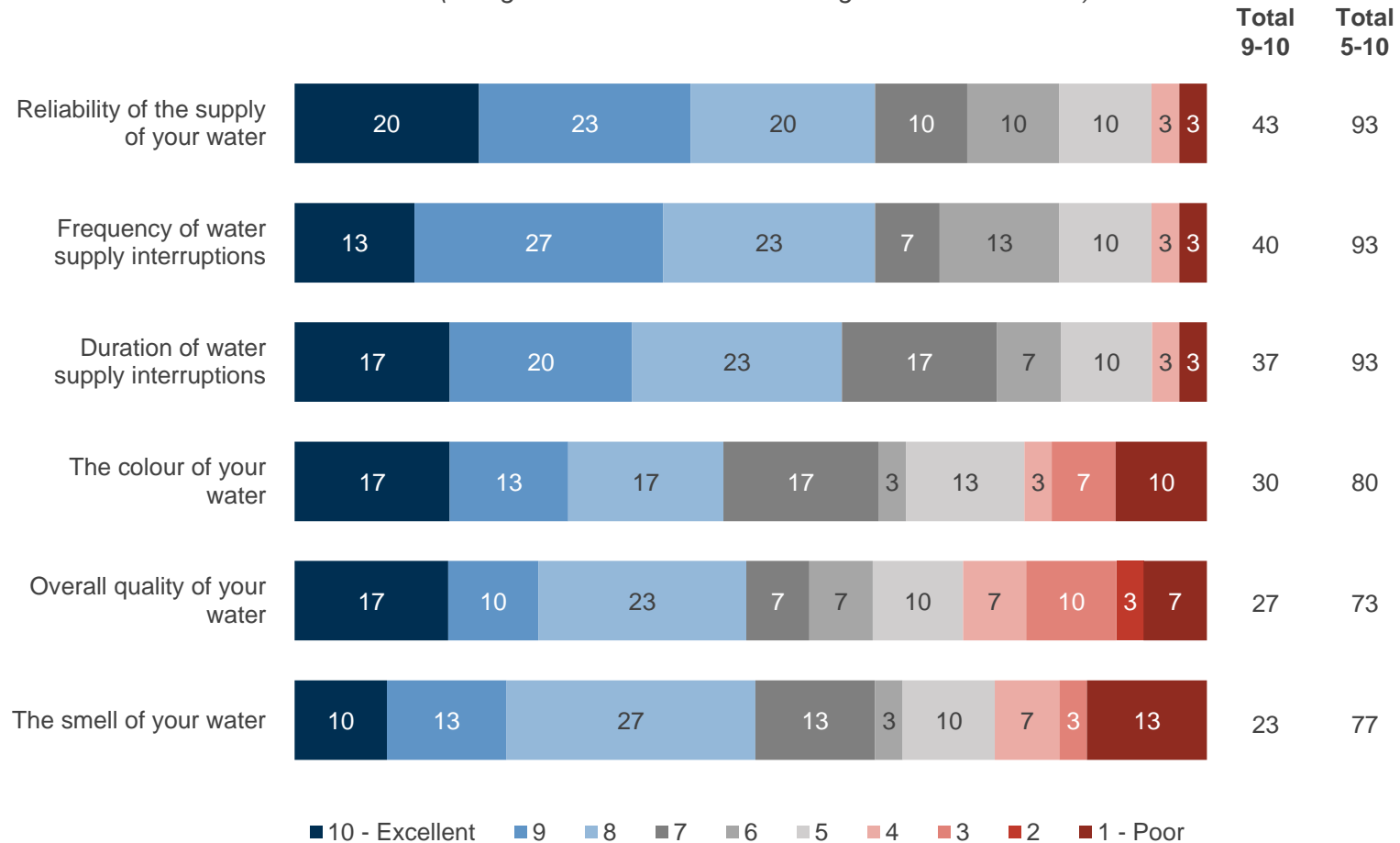


Q1. How do you rate the following aspects of your water supply from Lower Murray Water over the past 12 months?
 Base: District customers (n=155 to 159).

Most Millewa customers rate their water supply and quality favourably



Rating of aspects of LMW's water supply* (%)
 (rating on scale of 1 to 10 – among Millewa customers)

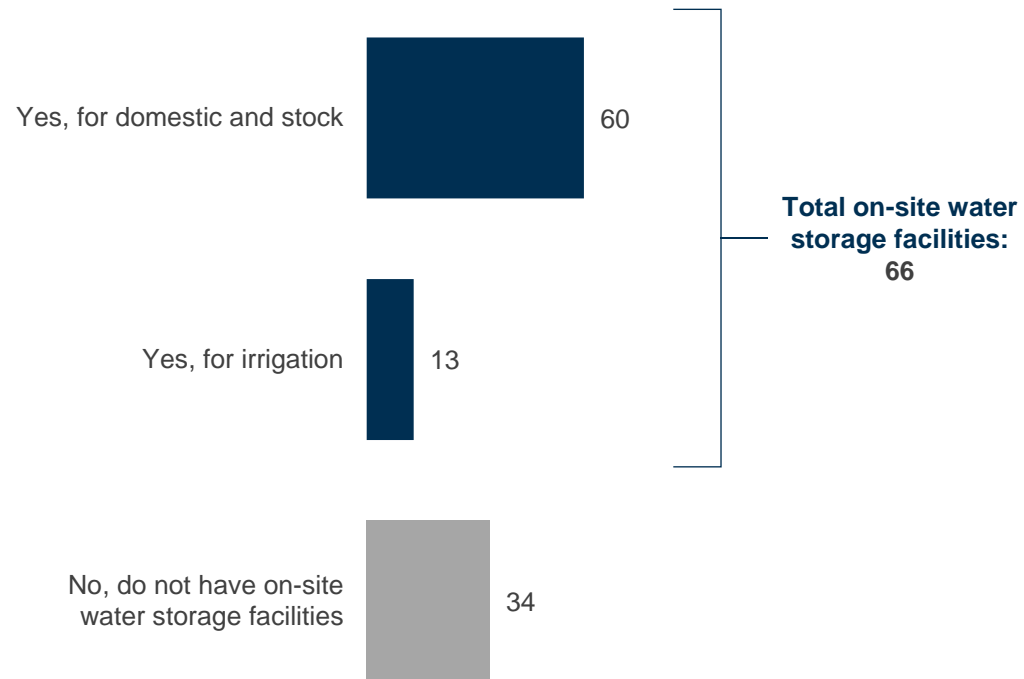


Q1. How do you rate the following aspects of your water supply from Lower Murray Water over the past 12 months?
 Base: Millewa customers only (n=30).
 *Caution: Small sample size (<50).

On-site water storage facilities are used more often for domestic and stock than for irrigation purposes



On-site water storage facilities (%)
(multiple response)



Most customers with on-site storage for domestic and stock purposes can maintain water supply for over a week



On-site storage facilities capacity (among those who have the on-site storage facility)

	Domestic and stock		Irrigation*	
	District (%)	Private diverters* (%)	District (n=)	Private diverters (n=)
3 days or less	10	14	4	7
4 to 6 days	13	14	2	1
1 to 2 weeks	27	26	5	2
3 to 4 weeks	18	14	1	0
5 to 8 weeks	9	10	2	0
More than 8 weeks	9	14	1	0
Not sure	13	5	5	2
Not applicable	0	2	2	1

Note: Data for domestic and stock on-site storage is shown as percentages.

Note: Due to the small sample sizes for the other cohorts, these results have been shown as number of respondents rather than as percentages.

D3a. What is the capacity of your on-site water storage?

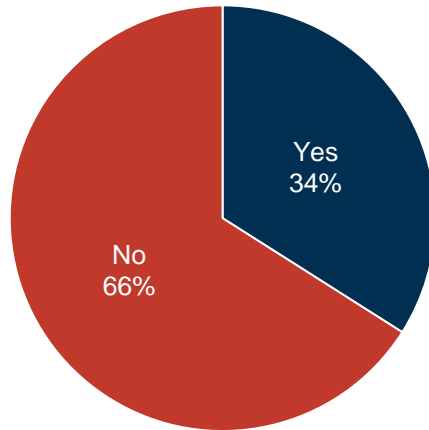
Base: Rural customers with on-site storage facilities for domestic and stock: District (n=127), Private diverters (n=42); Rural customers with on-site storage facilities for irrigation: District (n=22), Private diverters (n=13).

*Caution: Small sample size (n<50).

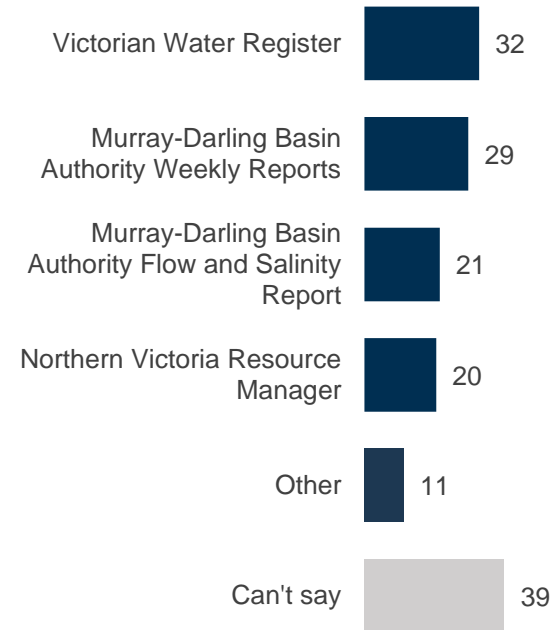
One in three private diverters access LMW’s WaterNow site to understand their ABA particulars



Access LMW’s WaterNow site for ABA particulars



Other resources accessed for water information (%)
(multiple response)

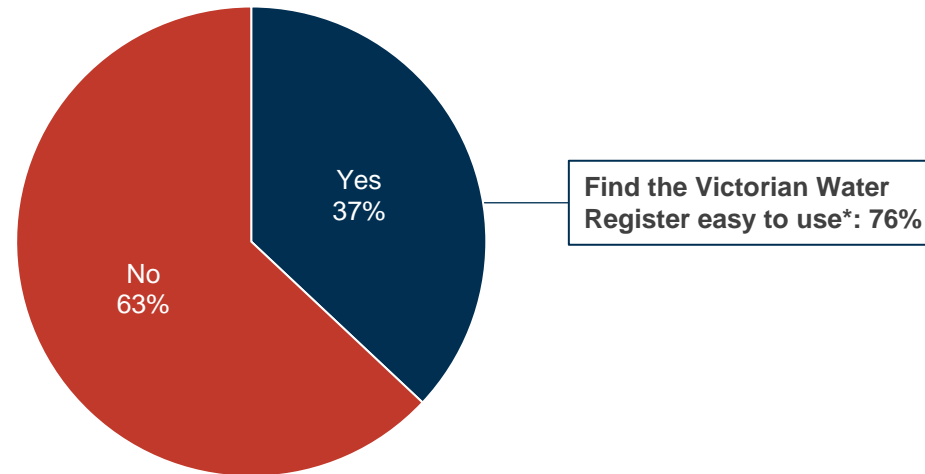


Q9. Do you access Lower Murray Water’s WaterNow site to understand your ABA particulars?
Q10. Which other resources do you access for water information?
Base: Private diverters (n=66 to 68).

Most private diverters who are registered with the Victorian Water Register find it easy to use



Registered with the Victorian Water Register



Q11. The Victorian Water Register offers the ability to sell allocation online via MyWater and obtain year-to-date ABA statements. Are you registered? / Q11a. Do you find the Victorian Water Register easy to use?

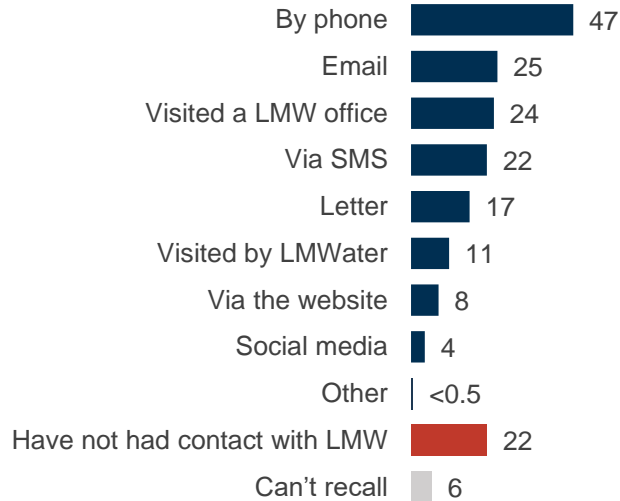
Base: Private diverters (n=67); private diverters registered with the Victorian Water Register (n=25).

*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

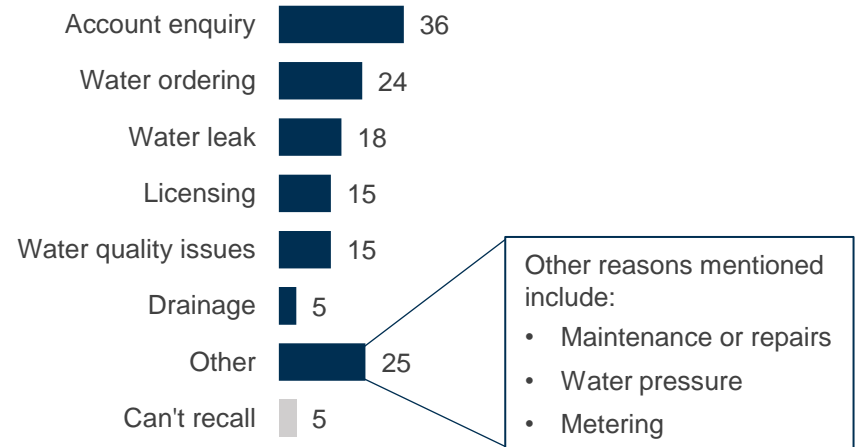
Customers mainly contact LMW by phone for account enquiries, with most satisfied with LMW’s responsiveness



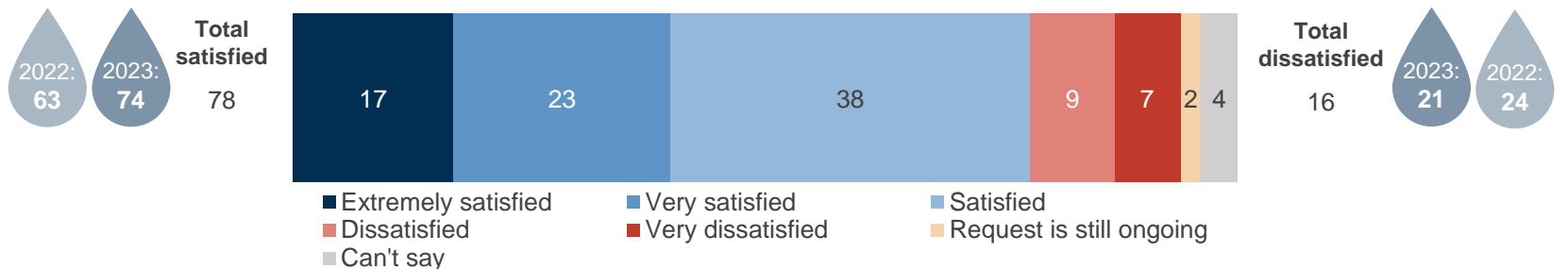
Methods of contact with LMW in the last 12 months (%)
(multiple response)



Reason for contact (%)
(multiple response – among those who had contact)



Satisfaction with LMW’s responsiveness to resolve your request (%)
(among those who had contact)

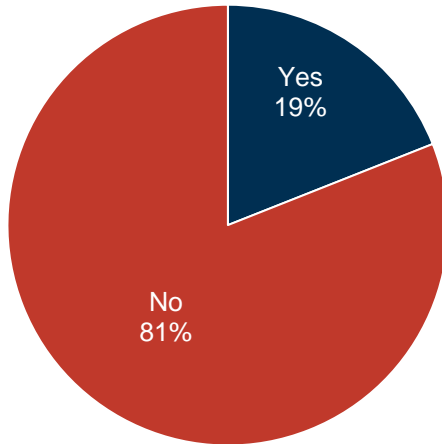


Q4. Over the last 12 months, have you had contact with Lower Murray Water in any of the following ways?
 Q5. For what reasons did you have contact with Lower Murray Water?
 Q5a. How satisfied were you with Lower Murray Water’s responsiveness to resolve your request?
 Base: All respondents (n=321); those who had contact with LMW in last 12 months (n=222 to 225).

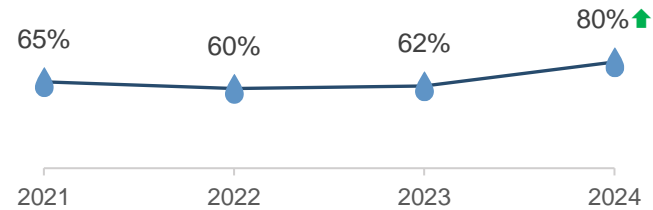
Agreement that LMW meets expectations as a water service provider has increased significantly in the past year



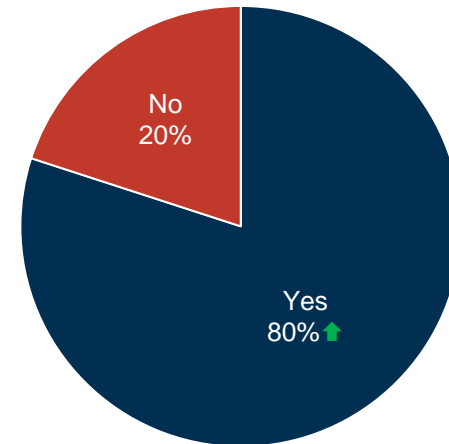
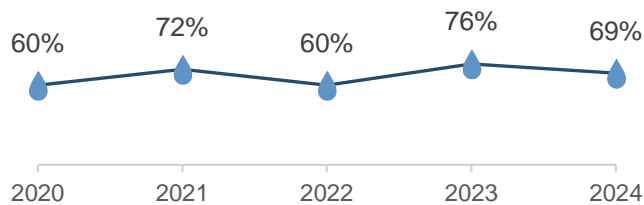
Contacted LMW about bill in the last 12 months



LMW meets expectations as water service provider (% 'yes')



Outcome met needs (among those who contacted LMW about their bill)

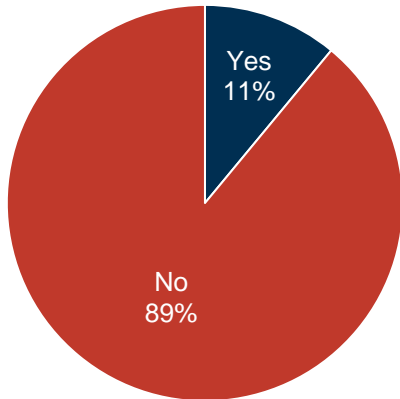
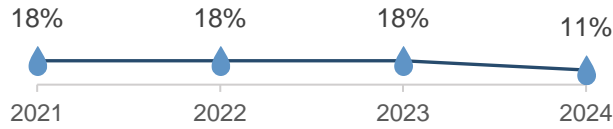


Significantly higher ↑ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence level.
 Q14. In the last 12 months have you contacted Lower Murray Water about your bill?
 Q14a. Did the outcome meet your needs?
 Q15. Is Lower Murray Water meeting your expectations as your water service provider?
 Base: All respondents (n=318); those who contacted LMW about bill in last 12 months (n=58).



Suggestions for additional information to assist businesses

Whether LMW could provide any information to assist business
(% yes)



Suggested information LMW could provide to assist businesses

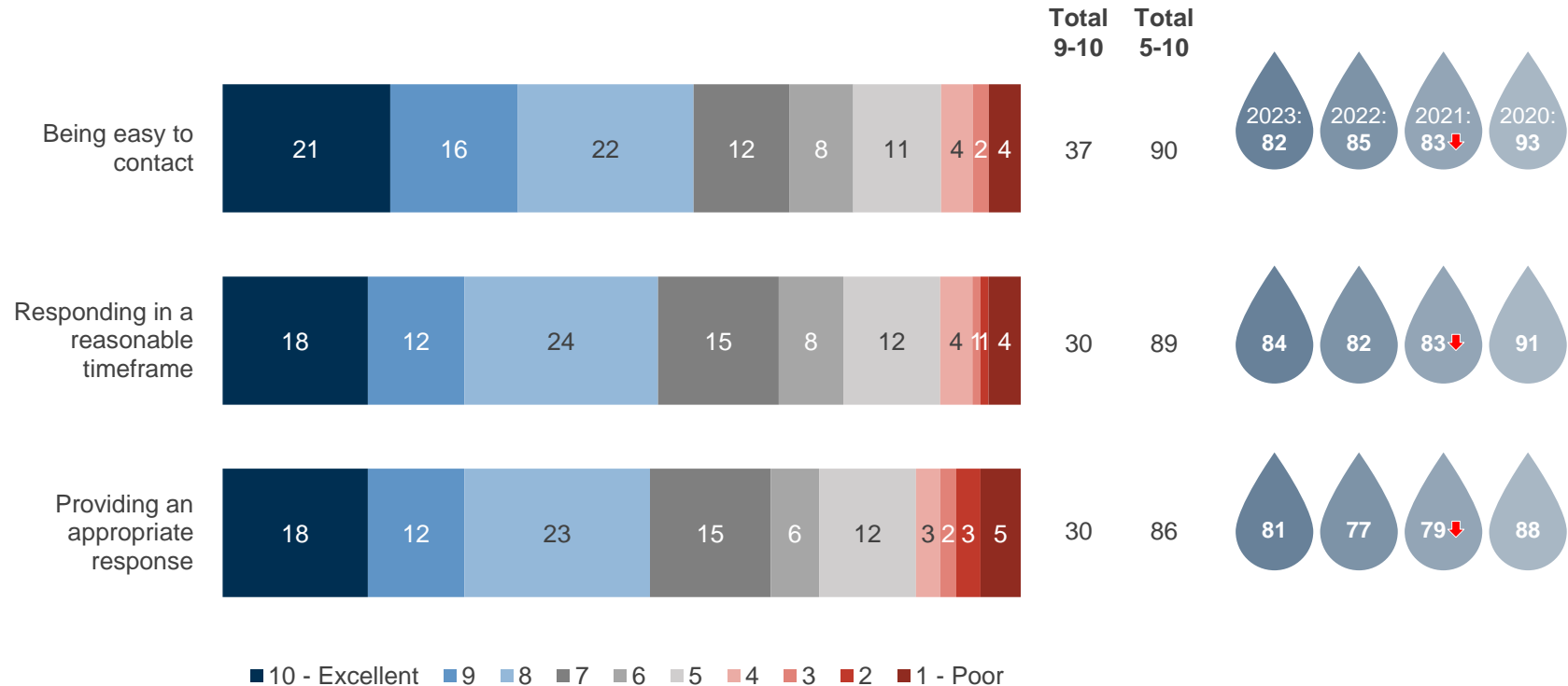
- "More thorough explanation of our irrigation bill."
- "Better information at water allocation for seasonal outlook."
- "How to use online tools and resources."
- "Future infrastructure changes, water interval periods for water ordering, price increases on water delivery and maintenance cost."
- "More information on water rights and how this system works."
- "Water security."
- "More information on the whereabouts of their infrastructure like supply lines and drainage pipes."
- "What are they doing about upgrading the 40-year-old delivery system?"
- "Better understanding of water rights."
- "Ways to assist with water trading of small quantities that are not viable to trade with commercial traders."
- "More information about what you're spending money on e.g. upcoming and current changes to both State and Federal Water policy and how it can potentially affect LMW and its customers."

Q18. Is there any information Lower Murray Water could provide to assist your business?
Q18a What information could Lower Murray Water provide to assist your business?
Base: All respondents (n=313), respondents who state LMW could provide information (n=31).

Customers' perceptions of LMW's customer service are improving, now nearing the rating achieved in 2020



Perception of LMW customer service (%)
(rating on scale of 1 to 10)

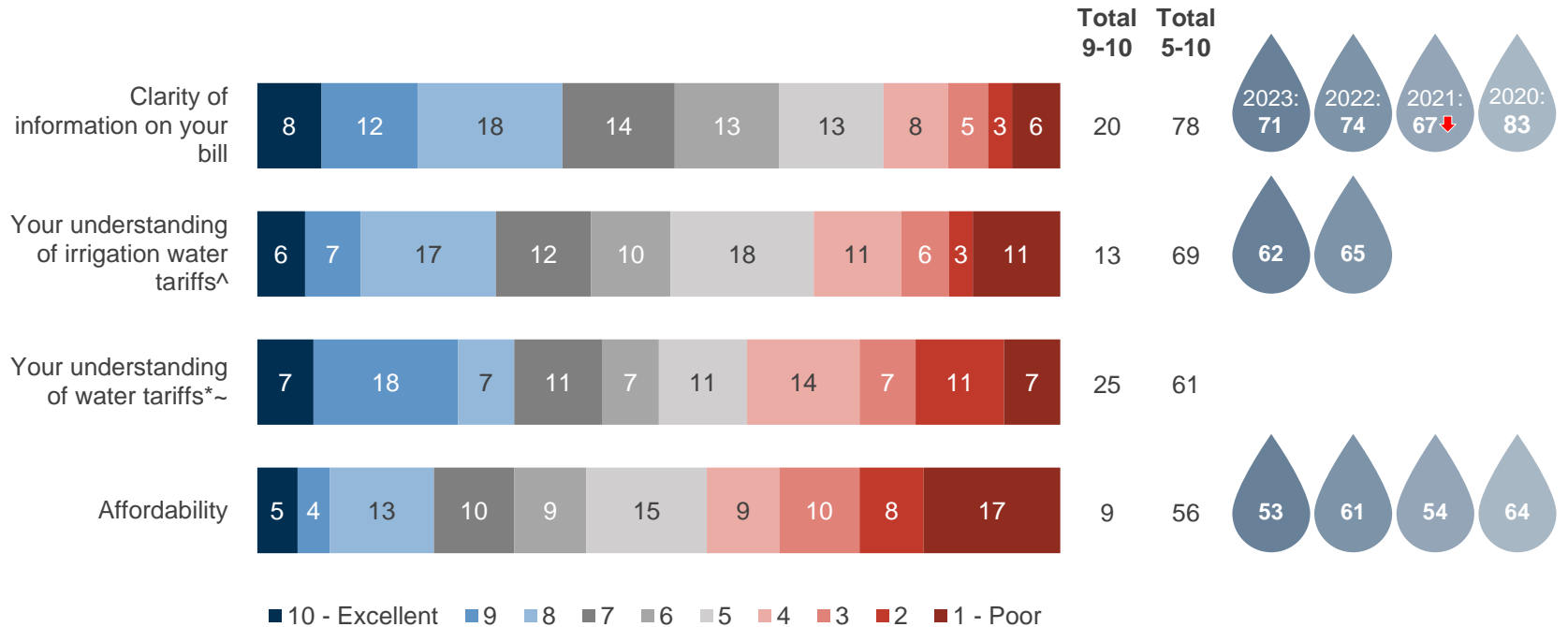


Significantly lower ↓ than the previous wave at 95% confidence interval.
Q12. How do you rate Lower Murray Water on the following?
Base: All respondents (n=318).

Customers' understanding of their billing information has improved over the past year, albeit not significantly



Perception of LMW water supply billing costs and information (%)
 District and Millewa customers only
 (rating on scale of 1 to 10)



~Only asked of Millewa customers.

^Only asked of District customers.

Significantly lower ▼ than the previous wave at 95% confidence interval.

Q13. How do you rate the following aspects of the cost of your water supply and your bill over the last 12 months?

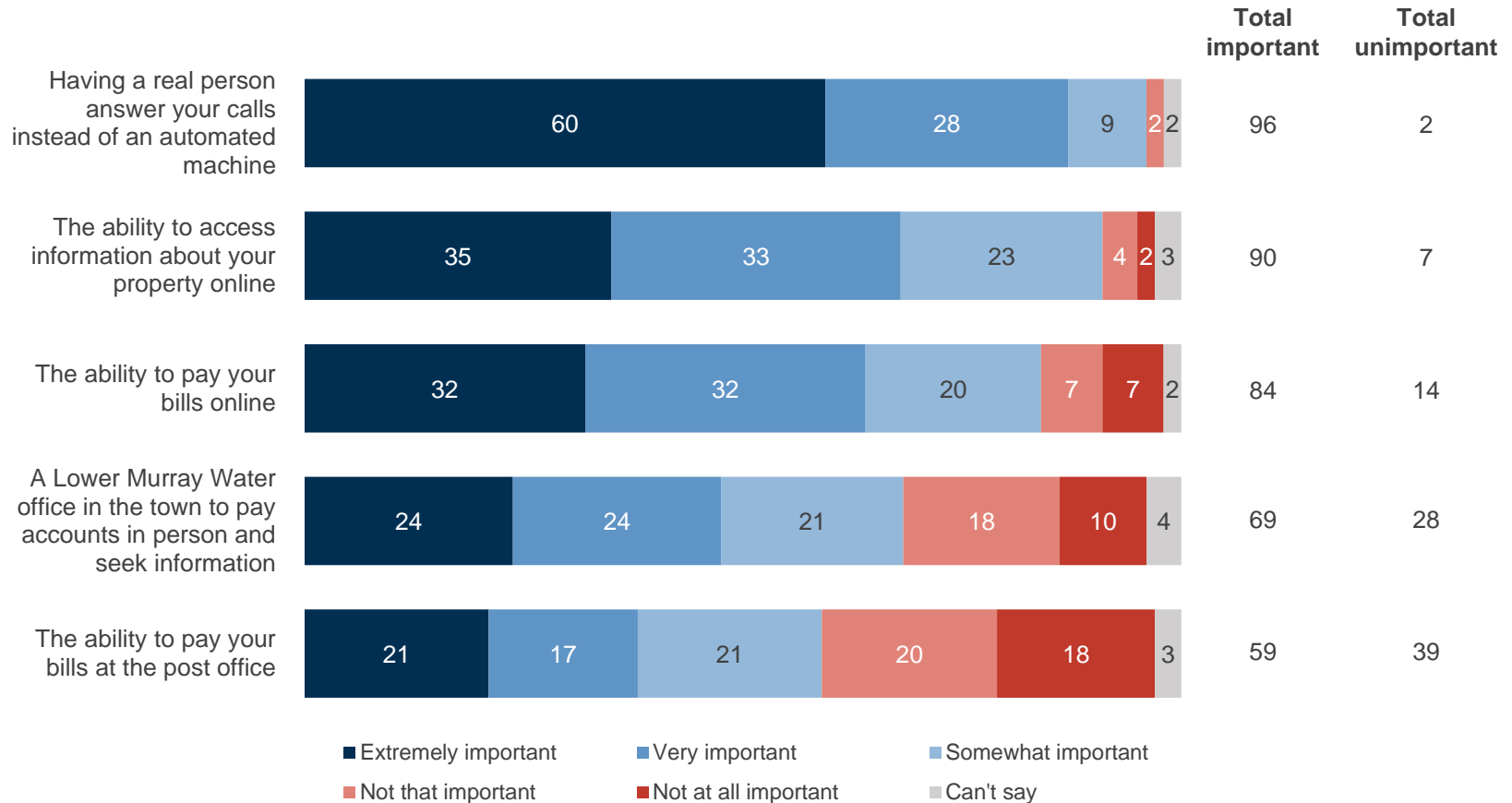
Base: Total District and Millewa customers (n=245 to 246); District customers (n=217); Millewa customers (n=28).

*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Six in ten rural customers say it is ‘extremely’ important that a real person answers their call



Importance of services (%)

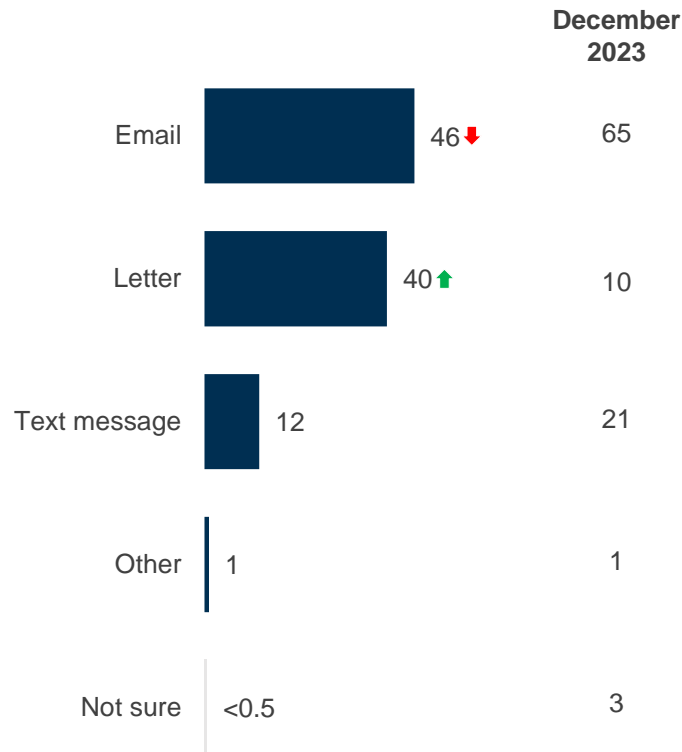


Q17a. How important is it to you that Lower Murray Water provides the following services?
 Base: All respondents (n=313 to 316).

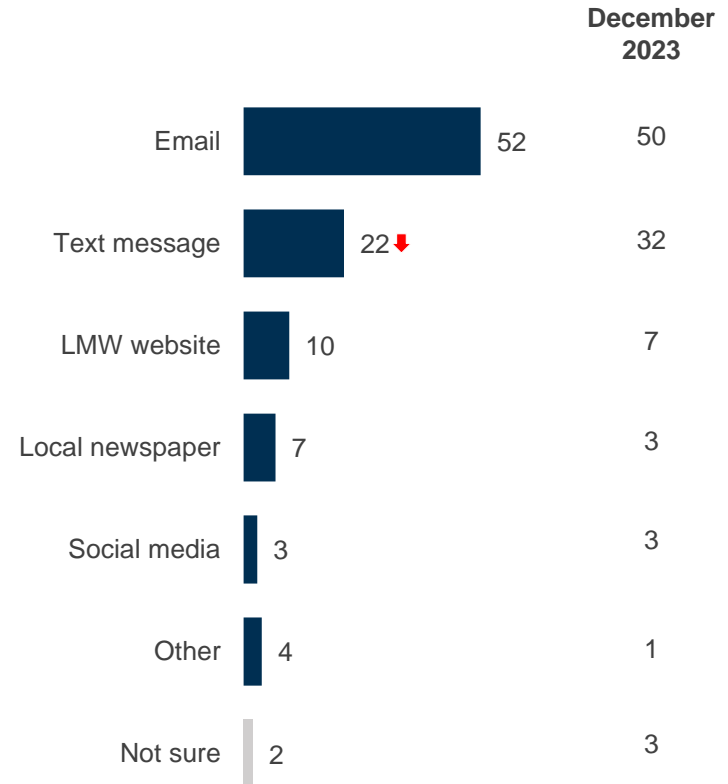
Preference to receive account information from LMW via letter has increased, although email remains preferred



Preferred method of contact for information about your account (%)



Preferred method of contact for general information (%)



Significantly higher ↑ / lower ↓ than the previous wave at 95% confidence interval.

Q6. Which is your preferred way for Lower Murray Water to provide you with information about your account, including about your bills and ordering water?

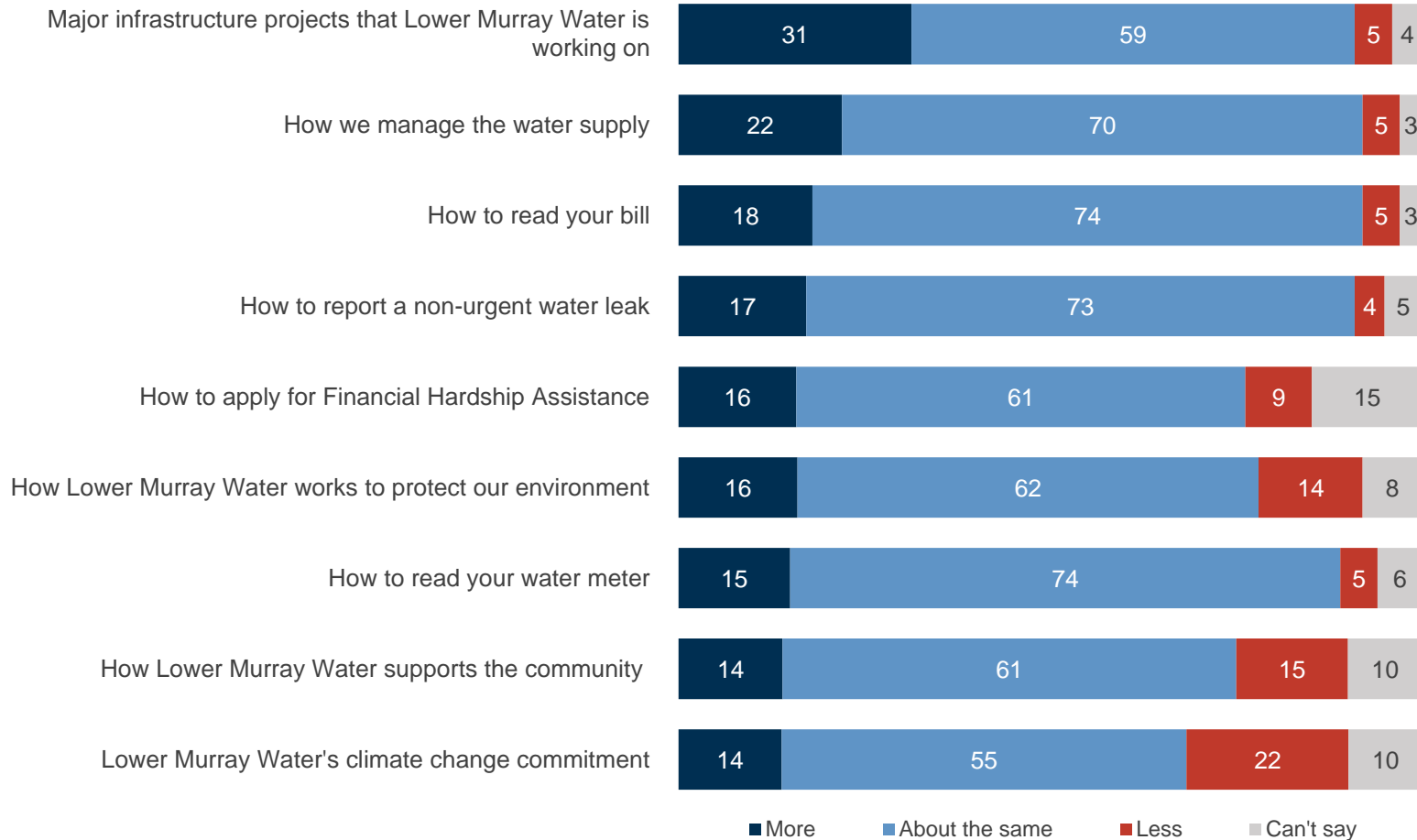
Q7. Which is your preferred way for Lower Murray Water to provide you with general information, including about public works, major projects, water saving tips, environmental initiatives, etc?

Base: All respondents – Dec 2024 (n=322), Dec 2023 (n=68).

Rural customers most want more information from LMW on major infrastructure projects and water supply management



Interest in hearing more, less or about the same from LMW (%)

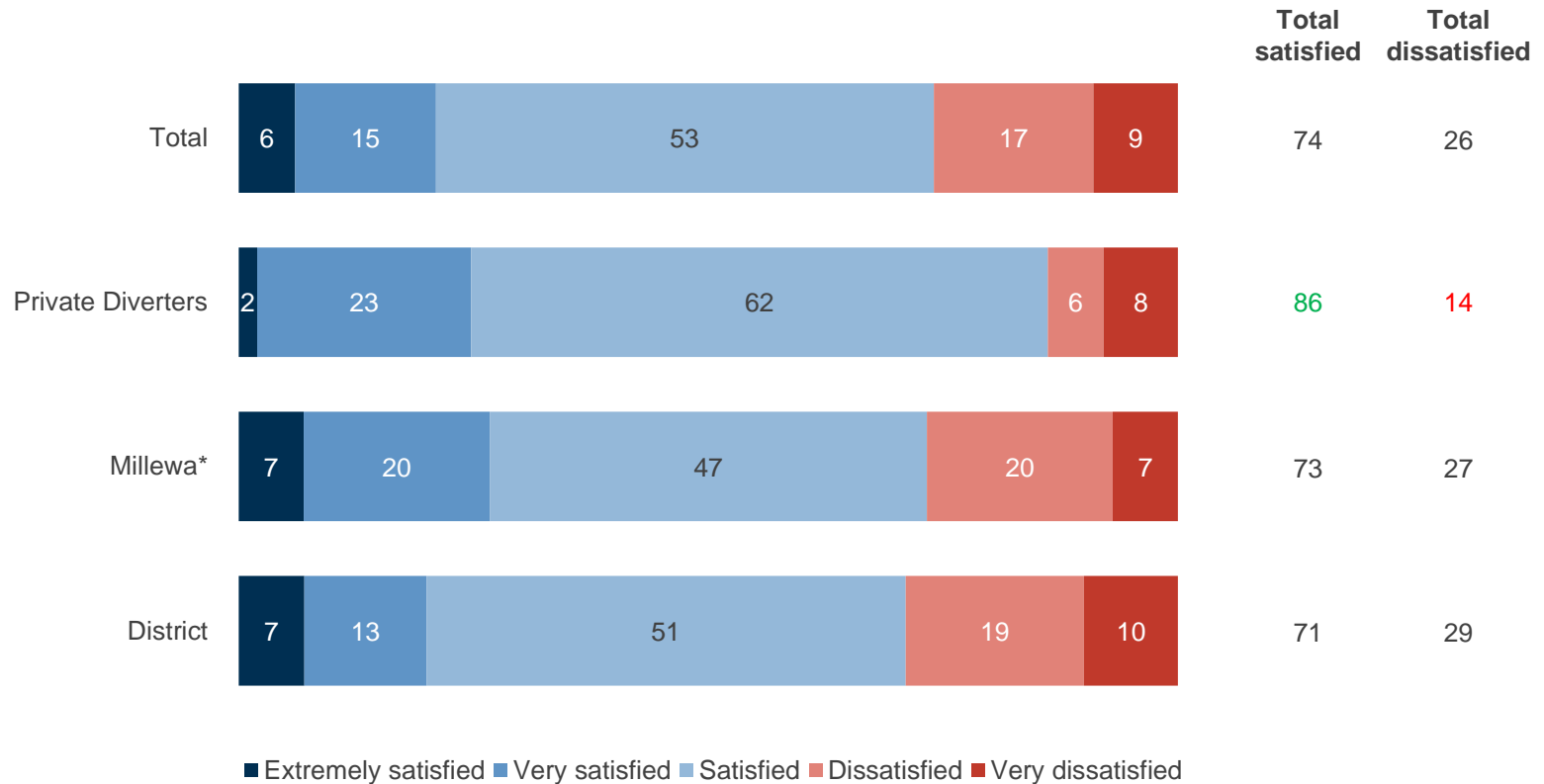


Q8. And would you like to hear more, less or about the same from Lower Murray Water in relation to...
 Base: All respondents (n=304 to 313).

Most customers are satisfied with LMW’s value for money, with private diverters being significantly more satisfied



Satisfaction with value for money of water service (%)

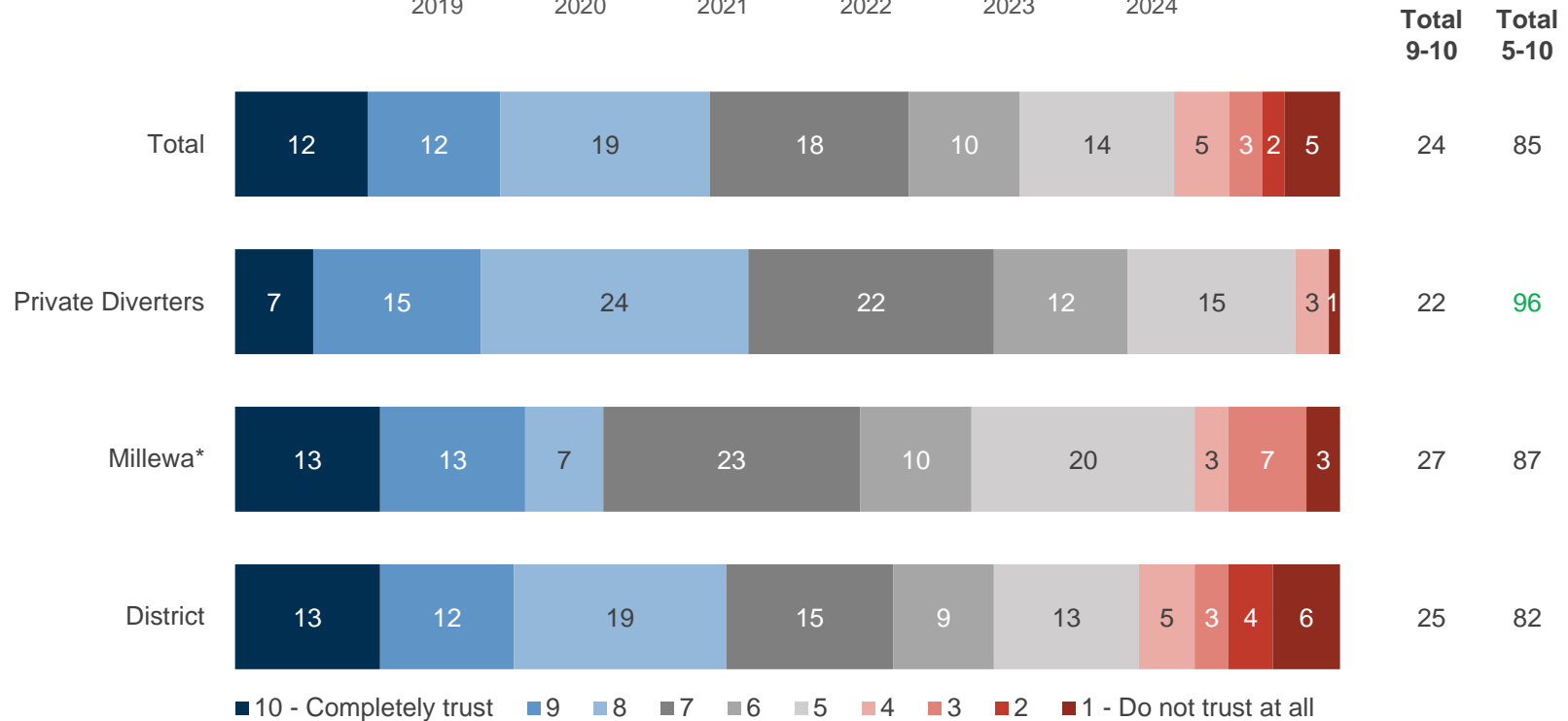
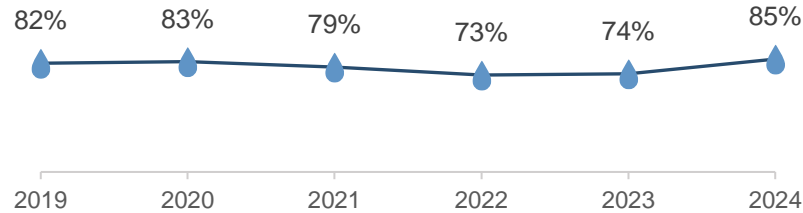


Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence level.
 Q19a. Overall, how satisfied are you that Lower Murray Water services provide value for money?
 Base: All respondents (n=317), District (n=221), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=66).
 *Caution: Small sample size (<50).



Rural customers' trust in LMW has reached a record high

Level of trust in LMW (%)
(rating on scale of 1 to 10)



Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence level.

Q20. On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'do not trust at all' and 10 is 'completely trust', how would you rate your trust for Lower Murray Water?

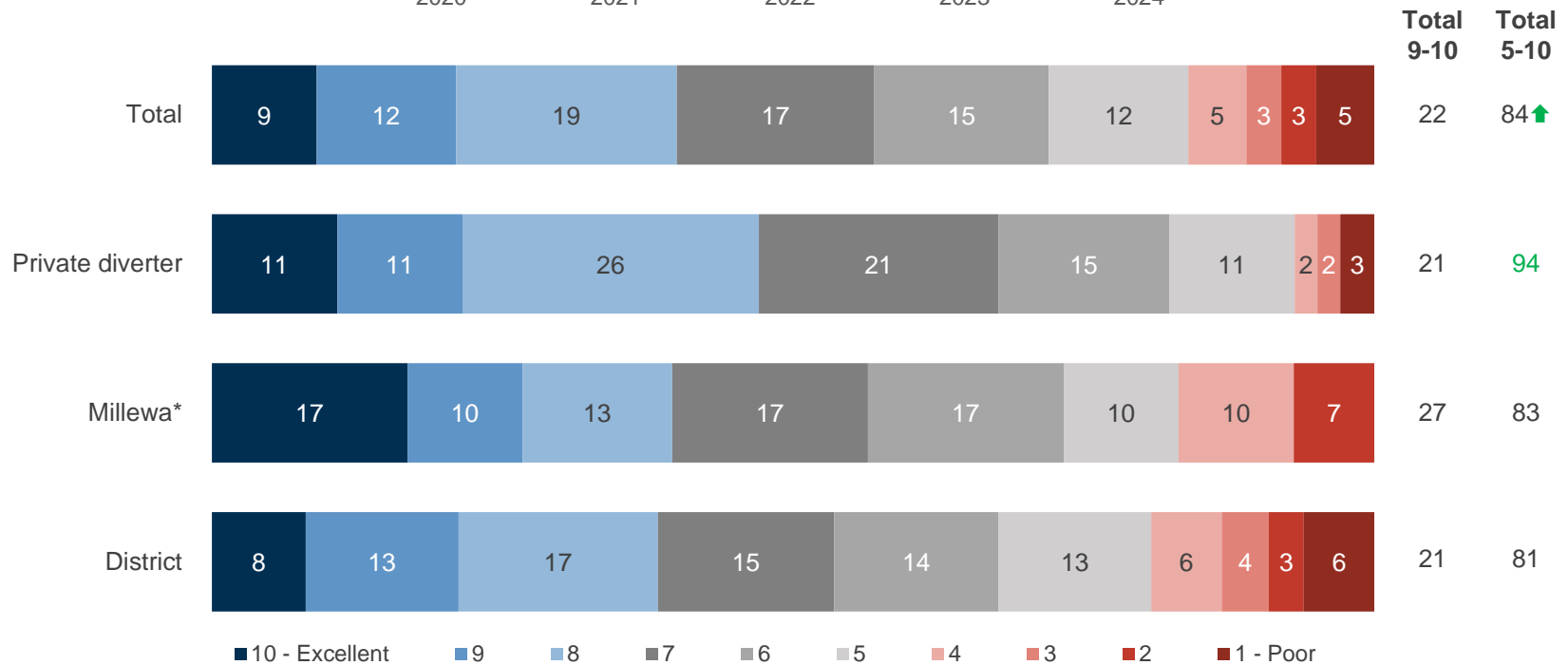
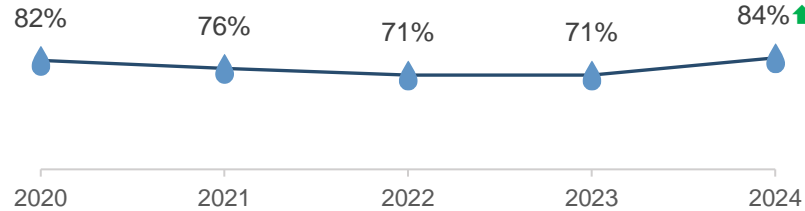
Base: All respondents (n=320), District (n=223), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=67).

*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Rural customers' rating of LMW's reputation in the community has increased significantly in 2024



LMW's reputation in the community (%)
(rating on scale of 1 to 10)



Significantly higher ↑ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence level.

Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence level.

Q21. On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is 'excellent', how would you rate Lower Murray Water's reputation in the community?

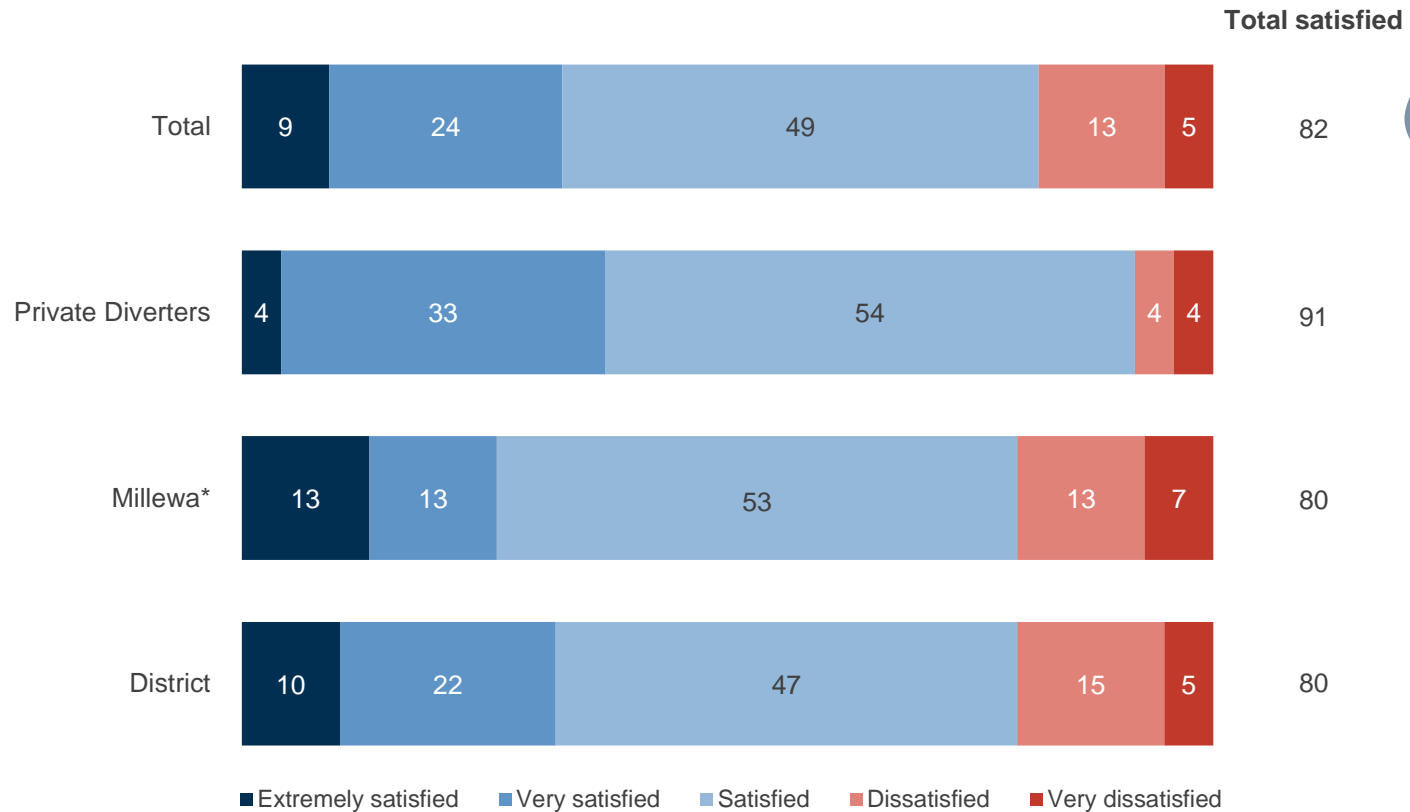
Base: All respondents (n=314), District (n=218), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=66).

*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Four in five rural customers are satisfied with LMW as a service provider overall



Satisfaction with LMW as a service provider overall (%)

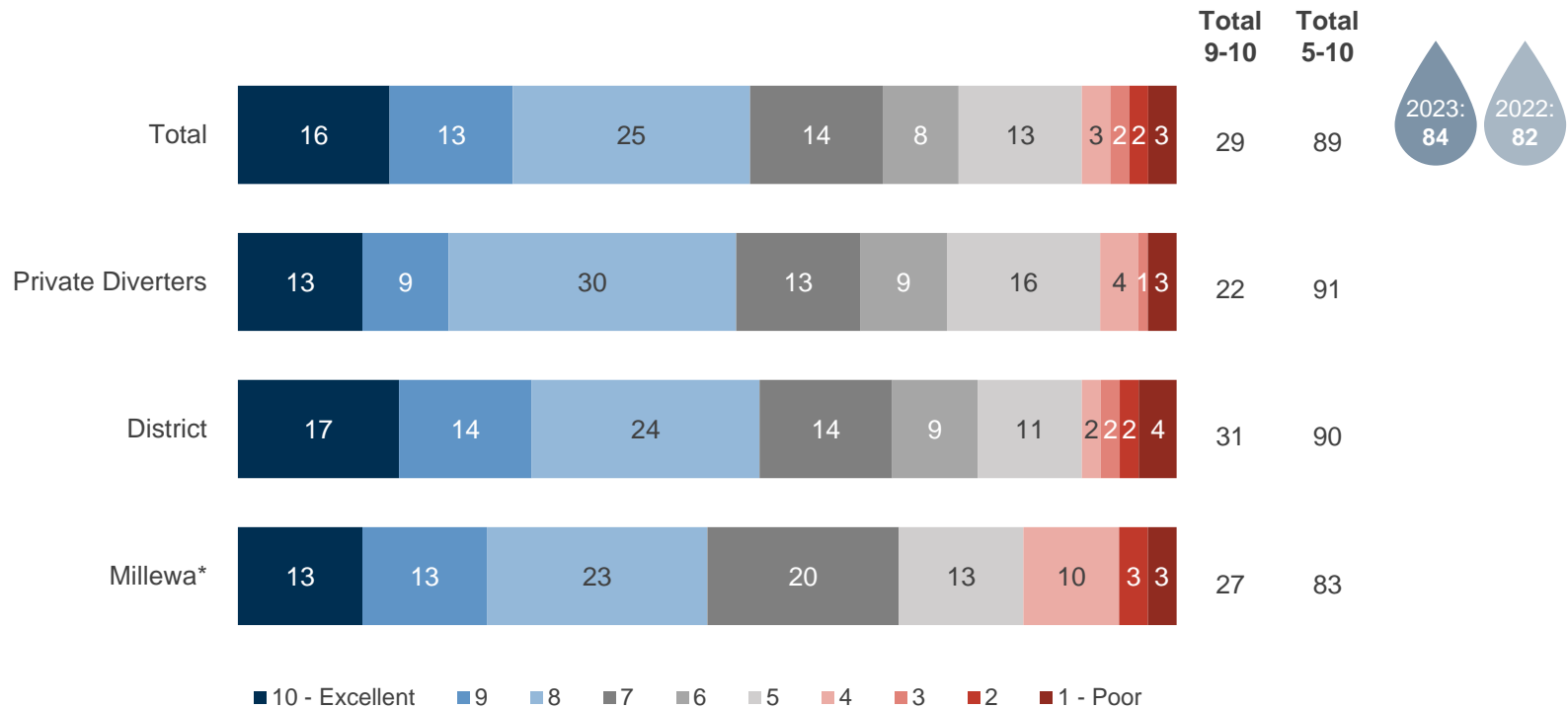


Q22. How would you rate your satisfaction with Lower Murray Water as a service provider overall?
 Base: All respondents (n=319), District (n=222), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=67).
 *Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Customers' rating of LMW's reliability in fulfilling their commitments has improved



Reliability of LMW doing what they say they will do in the past 12 months (%)
(rating on scale of 1 to 10)

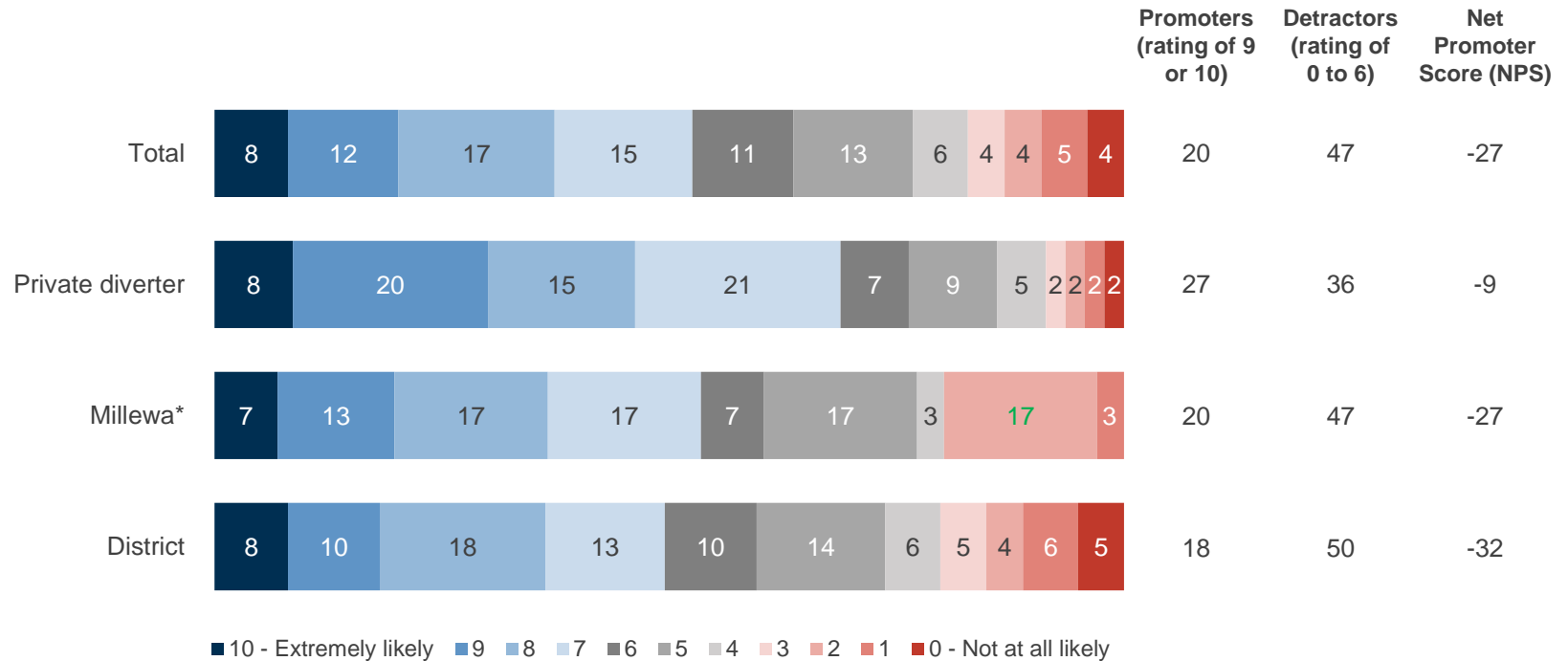


Q3a. Thinking about the past 12 months, how do you rate the reliability of Lower Murray Water to do what they say they will do?
Base: All respondents (n=319), District (n=222), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=67).
*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Private diverters are more likely than average to speak favourably about LMW



Likelihood to speak favourably about LMW (%)
(rating on scale of 0 to 10)

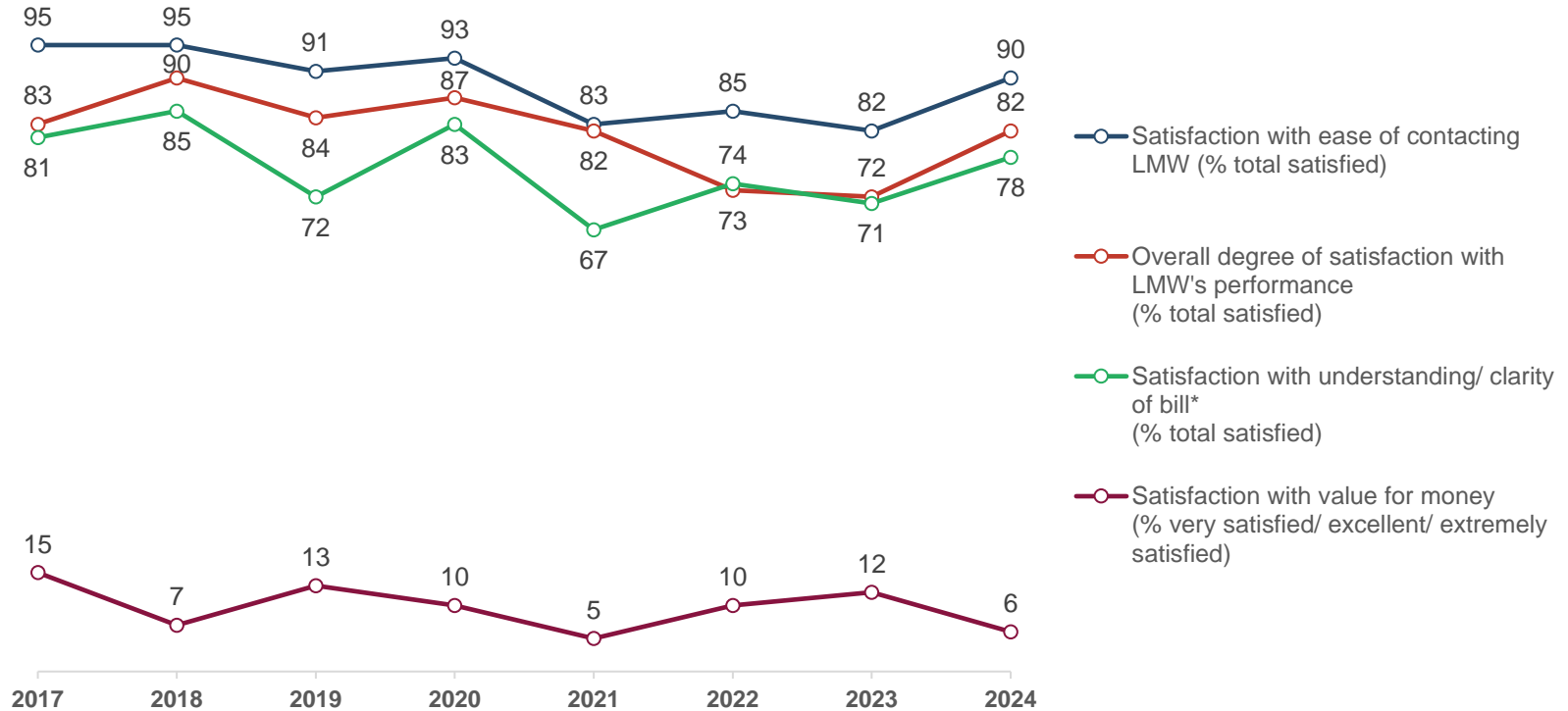


Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence level.
Q23. If asked, how likely would you be to speak favourably about Lower Murray Water?
Base: All respondents (n=315), District (n=219), Millewa (n=30), Private diverters (n=66).
*Caution: Small sample size (<50).

Comparison of rural customer satisfaction survey results over time: Key metrics



Rural Customer Satisfaction Survey results 2017-2024 trend



Note: Methodology varies year on year so results over time should be regarded as indicative only.

Q12. How do you rate Lower Murray Water on the following? / Q13. How do you rate the following aspects of the cost of your water supply and your bill over the last 12 months? / Q19a. Overall, how satisfied are you that Lower Murray Water services provide value for money? / Q22. How would you rate your satisfaction with Lower Murray Water as a service provider overall?
 Base: 2023 All respondents (n=317 to 319). Base of Q13: Millewa and District customers (n=246).
 *In 2020 and 2021, District and Millewa customers only.



Considerations

LMW is increasingly meeting rural customer expectations

Significantly more rural customers this year (80%, up from 62% last year) agree that LMW meets their expectations as a service provider. This is underpinned by an upward trend in rural customers' satisfaction with LMW's responsiveness to resolve their requests (78%, up from 63% in 2022). This is a positive result.

The online WaterNow system continues to be easy to use

Of the seven in 10 rural customers who use LMW's online WaterNow system, the vast majority (93%) regard the system as easy to use. This maintains the significant improvement in perceptions of ease of use seen last year. Individual suggestions on how to further enhance the system continue to include a desire to be able to order water inside the hour.

Perceptions of LMW's customer service continue to improve

LMW is increasingly seen to be 'easy to contact', to 'respond in a reasonable timeframe' and to 'provide an appropriate response'. Positive ratings (of 5 or more out of 10, where 10 is 'excellent') have increased year-on-year over the last three years. Customers stress the importance of being able to speak to a 'real person'.

Bill enquiries remain a key reason for contacting LMW

One in five rural customers (19%) have contacted LMW about their bill in the last 12 months. For most customers (69%), the outcome met their needs. Perceptions of clarity of the information on the bill is improving (from a low point in 2021), but has been better regarded in the past – suggesting there is more work to do. One in five customers (18%) seek 'more' information from LMW on how to read their bill.

Some desire for information on water tariffs, allocations and rights

Close to one in five rural district (14%) and Millewa (18%) customers rate their understanding of irrigation water tariffs and water tariffs as 'poor' (rating of 1 or 2 out of 10). Individual feedback shows that some customers would like assistance from LMW with understanding water allocations, water rights and 'how the system works'.

**THERE ARE
OVER
5,000 LMW
RURAL
CUSTOMERS...**

**FIND OUT
WHAT THEY'RE
THINKING.**



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03 8685 8555



Follow us
[@JWSResearch](#)

John Scales
Founder
jcales@jwsresearch.com

Mark Zuker
Managing Director
mzucker@jwsresearch.com

Katrina Cox
Director of Client Services
kcox@jwsresearch.com

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