

# 2023 Customer Satisfaction Survey

Rural



1800 808 830 [www.lmw.vic.gov.au](http://www.lmw.vic.gov.au)



LOWER MURRAY  
WATER



# 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 Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2023. Distribution of the survey 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 Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

A total of 68 rural customers completed the survey comprising:

- n=58 district customers
- n=4 Millewa customers
- n=6 private diverter customers.

*Note: Due to the small sample sizes for the latter two cohorts, when reported separately, these results have been shown as number of respondents rather than as percentages. Results for these cohorts should be regarded as indicative of the population at large.*

The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=68 is +/-11.8% at the 95% confidence level.

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

The data has not been weighted.

2022:  
89

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



## Snapshot of key findings

Seven in ten rural district customers (71%) 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** (82% satisfied).

Telephone is the most frequently used method of contact



**60%**



**26%**



**24%**

More than six in ten rural customers (62%) 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'** – 41% would like to hear 'more'



**'How LMW manage the water supply'** – 37% of customers would like to hear 'more'



**'How to report a non-urgent water leak'** – 28% would like to hear 'more'



**'How to apply for Financial Hardship Assistance'** – 28% would like to hear 'more'.

Seven in ten rural customers rate LMW positively on its **reputation in the community** (71%).

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



**24%**



**47%**

**LMW's Net Promoter Score (NPS) is -24**  
(promoters minus detractors).

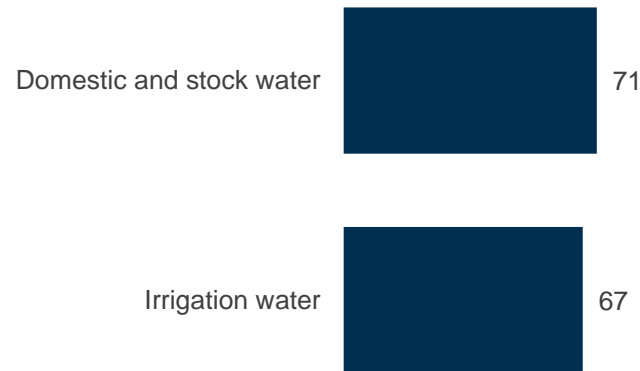


# Detailed findings

# District customers receive domestic and stock water and/or irrigation water from LMW



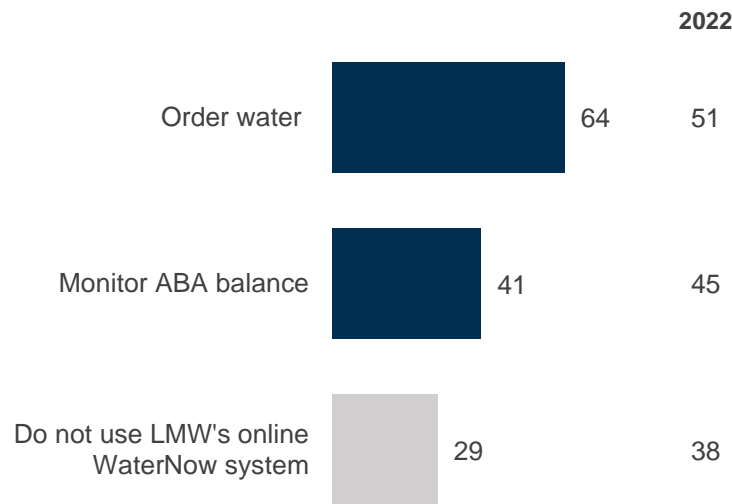
## Lower Murray Water service use (%) (Multiple response)



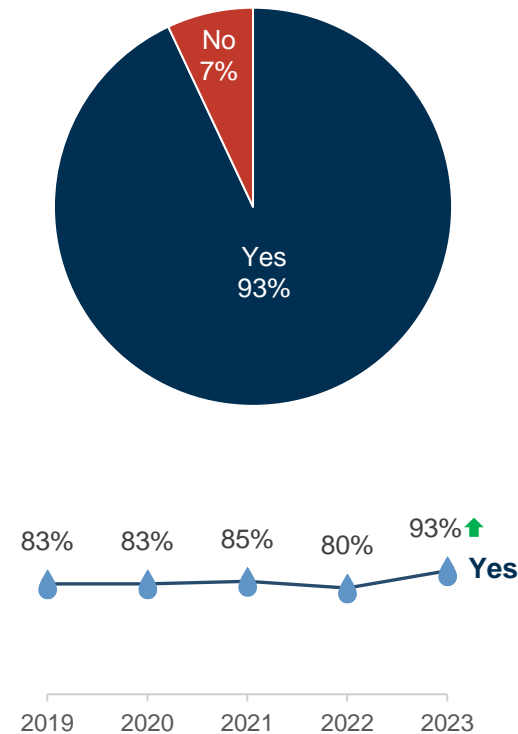
# Most district customers order water via the WaterNow system, more than nine in ten users say it is 'easy to use'



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



Find online WaterNow system easy to use  
(Among users)



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?

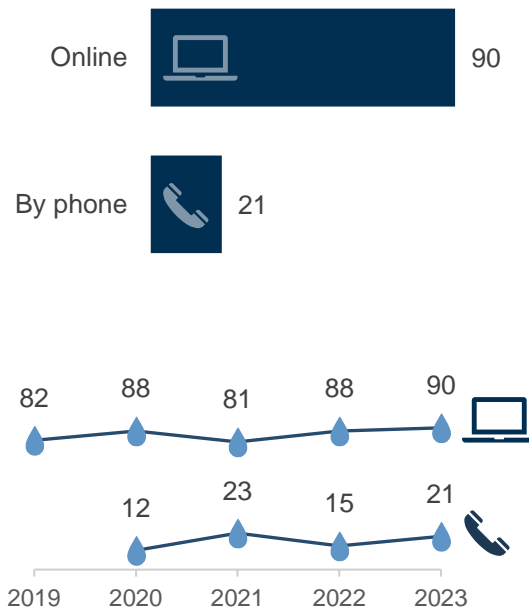
Base: Rural district customers (n=58), Rural district customers who use the WaterNow system (n=41).

# Irrigation water is predominantly ordered through online channels



## Method of ordering irrigation water (%)

(Multiple response – among those who receive irrigation water)



## Suggestions for how LMW water ordering system could be improved

"Works well, may need to make it clearer order has been approved and sometimes can be challenging to edit active order."

"The flow rate information seems to be updated intermittently. It would be useful if this information was updated in real time."

"Be able to order in the hour for that hour. Got one outlet like that, the others need one clear hour to order."

"Should be able to order water inside the same hour."

"Not monitoring on weekends when finishing irrigation early so other irrigators can utilise freed up water."

"The online cancellation/ edit section seems to work arbitrarily. It does not allow for circumstances, such as need to halt pumping to undertake necessary repairs."

"Showing how delivery share works for all irrigators."

"Is it possible to be hacked and data stolen?"

"It is satisfactory for my needs. But would love to be connected to town water which passes by 200 metres up the road."

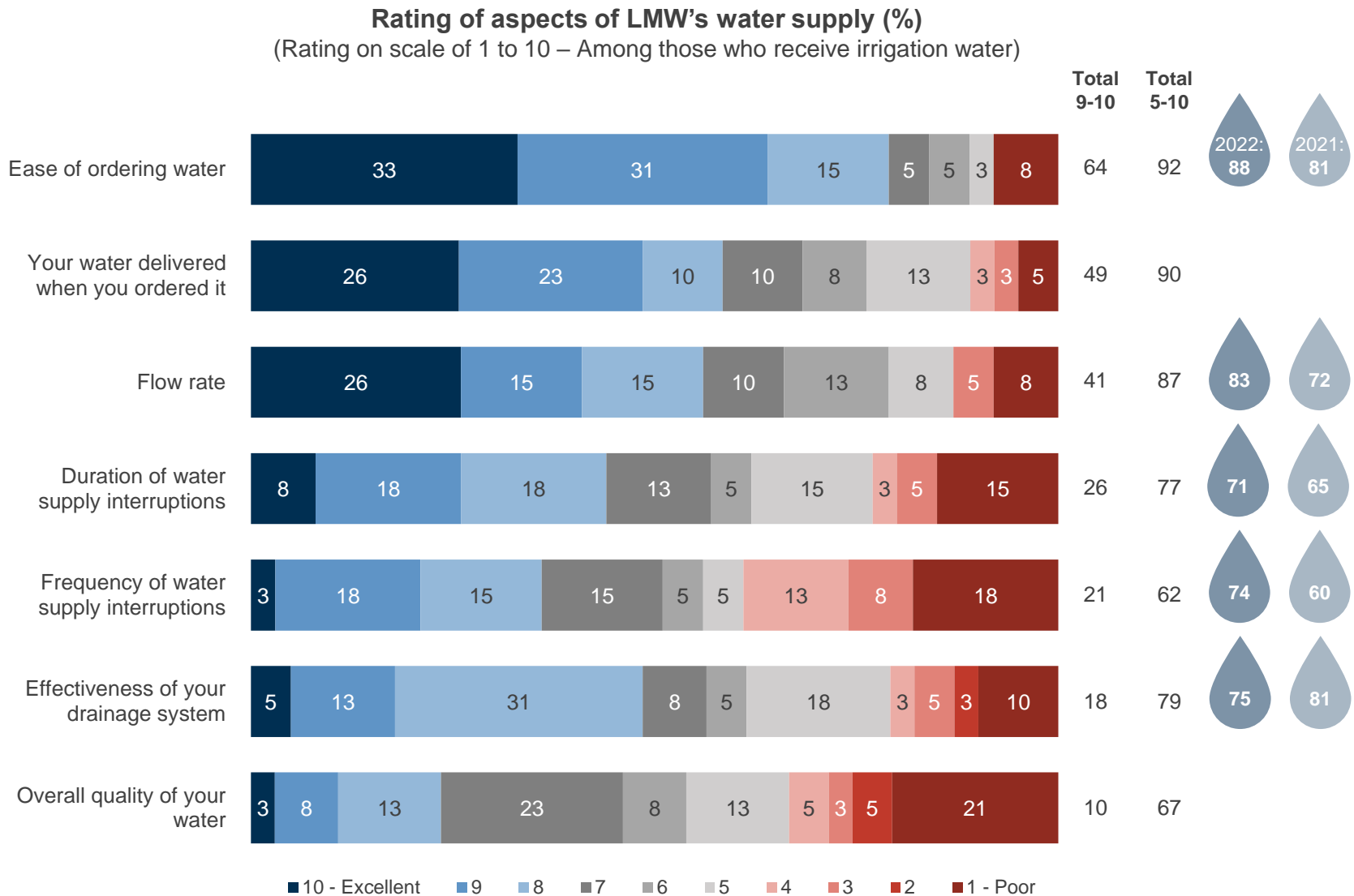
"I find the online water ordering is easy and straight forward. I'm quite happy with the layout on how I order water online."

Q2. How do you order your irrigation water?

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

Base: Rural district customers who receive irrigation water (n=64), rural district customers who made suggestions (n=16).

# Satisfaction with many aspects of ordering water and supply is improving among district customers

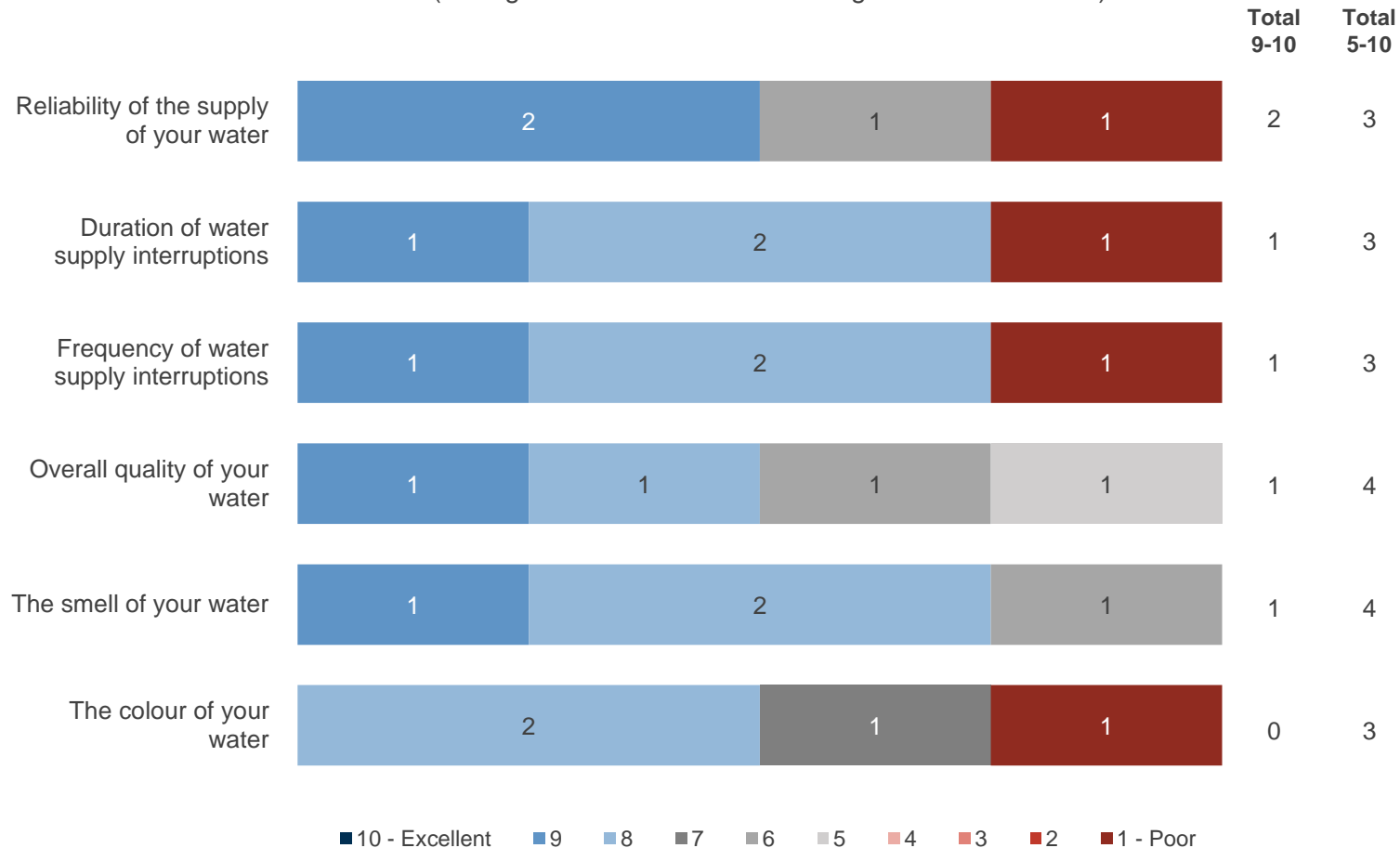




# Millewa customers rate their water supply and overall quality favourably (note small sample size, indicative only)



**Rating of aspects of LMW's water supply\* (number of respondents)**  
(Rating on scale of 1 to 10 – Among Millewa customers)

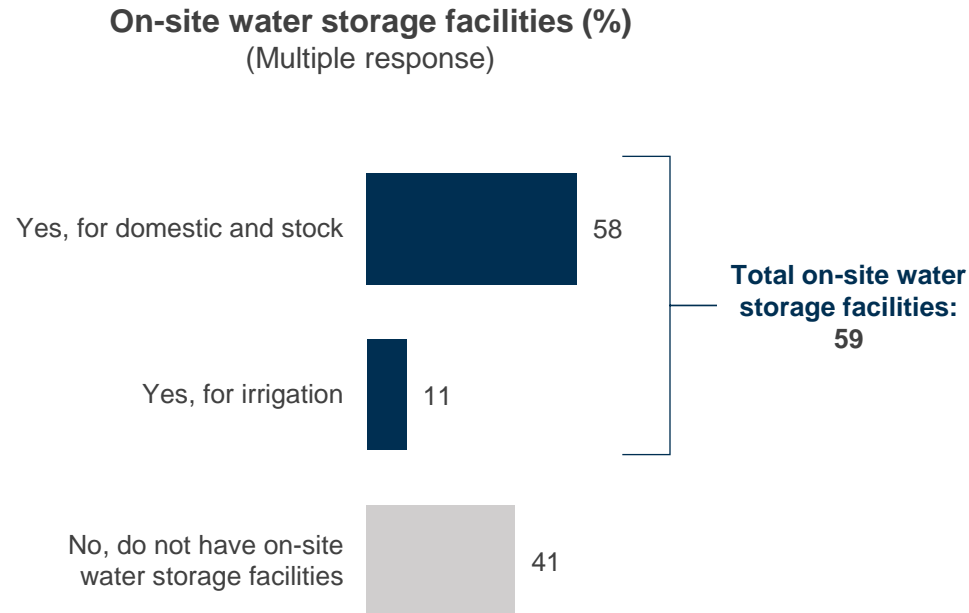


Q1. How do you rate the following aspects of your water supply from Lower Murray Water over the past 12 months?

Base: Millewa customers only (n=4).

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

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





# Most customers with on-site storage for domestic and stock have capacity to last beyond a week

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

	Domestic and stock		Irrigation*	
	District (%)	Private diverters* (n=)	District (n=)	Private diverters (n=)
3 days or less	6	0	0	1
4 to 6 days	6	0	0	0
1 to 2 weeks	24	2	1	0
3 to 4 weeks	27	0	0	0
5 to 8 weeks	12	1	2	0
More than 8 weeks	9	0	0	0
Not sure	12	1	0	1
Not applicable	3	0	2	0

*Note: Data for District 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?

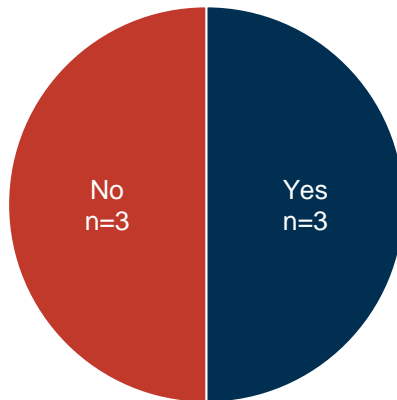
Base: Rural customers with on-site storage facilities for domestic and stock: District (n=33), Private diverters (n=4); Rural customers with on-site storage facilities for irrigation: District (n=5), Private diverters (n=2).

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

# Half of private diverters access LMW's website to understand their ABA particulars



Access LMW website for ABA particulars\*



Other resources accessed for information\* (n=)  
(Multiple response)



Q9. Do you access Lower Murray Water's website to understand your ABA particulars?

Q10. Which other resources do you access for information?

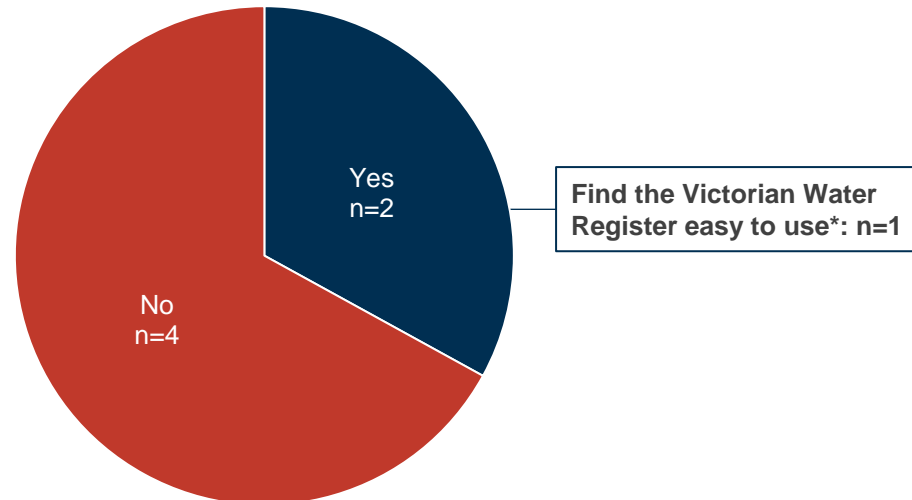
Base: Private diverters (n=6).

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

# Less than half of private diverters are registered with the Victorian Water Register



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=6); private diverters registered with the Victorian Water Register (n=2).

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

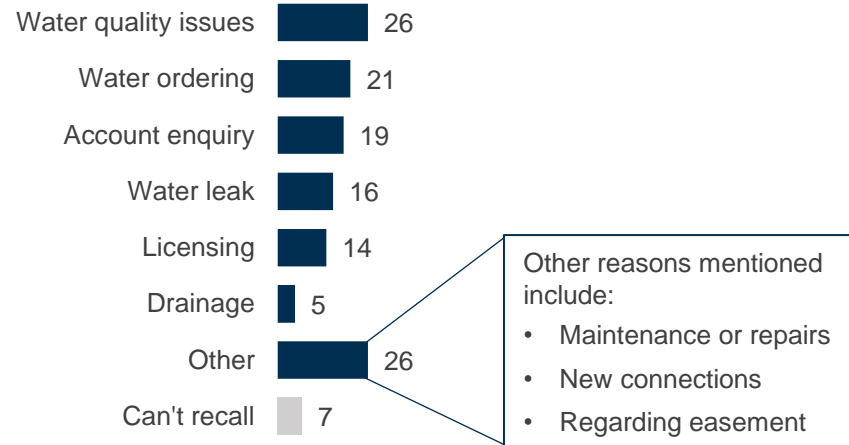
# Contact with LMW occurs most often by phone and for water quality issues, most are satisfied with responsiveness



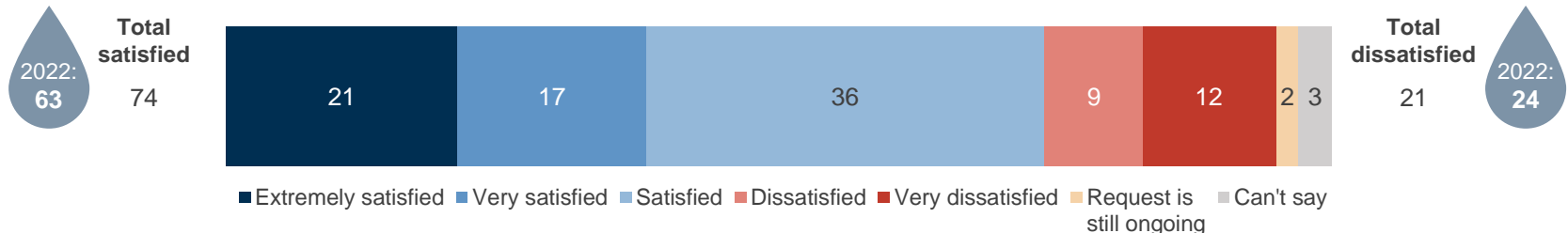
## Methods of contact with LMW in the last 12 months (%) (Multiple response)



## 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?

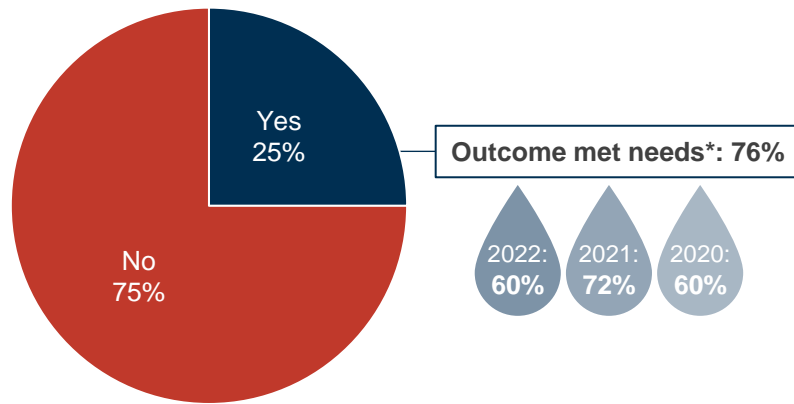
Q5a. How satisfied were you with Lower Murray Water's responsiveness to resolve your request?

Base: All respondents (n=68): those who had contact with LMW in last 12 months (n=58).

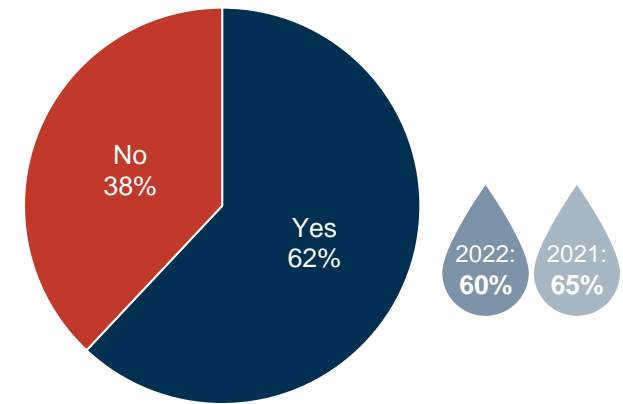
# One in four rural customers contacted LMW about their bill in the last year, and a majority felt their needs were met



Contacted LMW about bill  
in the last 12 months



LMW meets expectations as  
water service provider



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?

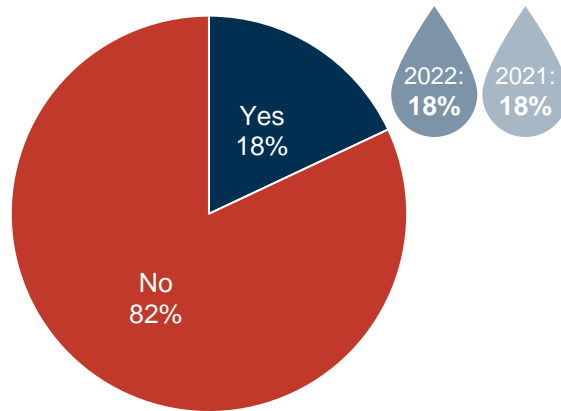
Base: All respondents (n=68); those who contacted LMW about bill in last 12 months (n=17).

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



# Suggestions for additional information to assist businesses

## Whether LMW could provide any information to assist business



## Suggested information LMW could provide to assist businesses

*"When will you provide drinking water access when we are just a few meters away from main line? What is the plan to increase drinking water access to rural customers."*

*"Clarity on water tariffs charged and surrender/trading options."*

*"Real time water meter flow rates that are accurate!"*

*"All information about licences and entitlement on the portal not having users to find it under a fee. Users do not have the information in the first instance. E.g. all copy of records."*

*"Recommendations for crop irrigation amounts."*

*"Give more information about allocations."*

*"Water quality issues."*

*"How I will be able to trade in or purchase place of take volume/day rates during a shortfall in the river to protect my crop."*

*"Flushing line longer to stop carp entering irrigation infrastructure."*

*"Testing water quality, dam storage updates, sooner water allocation."*

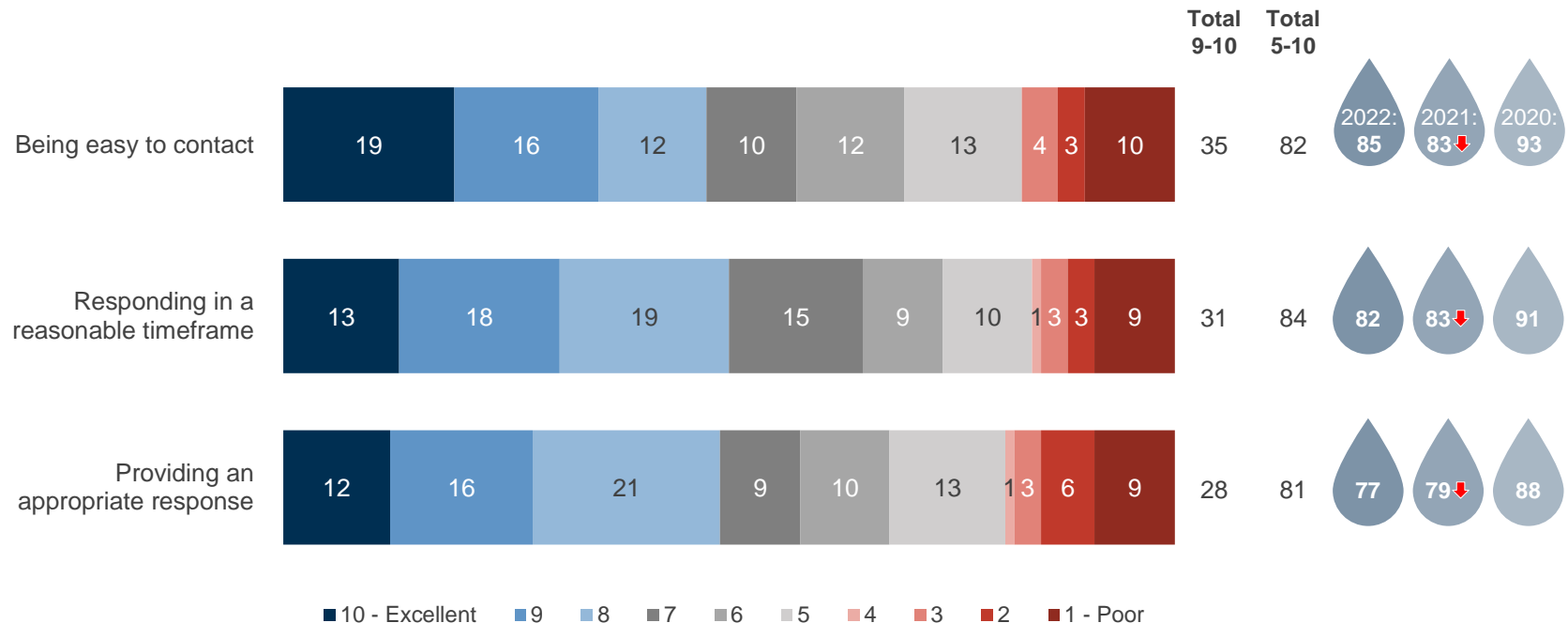
*"Stop hiding behind the ACCC. Recognise that if a property has not watered for more than 10 years then we should have the right to remove the property from Lower Murray's rate system. A so-called Water Licence does not add value to a dead fruit block. And further the property has not generated income to pay these fees. Those that choose to continue in the usage of the irrigation should be charged accordingly. Not because it runs past my property. Another thing is that irrigation water share should only be LAND. These moguls who own water do not have to share an infrastructure cost... tell me why, when I have to."*



# Rural customers' perceptions of customer service have remained largely consistent with 2022



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



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

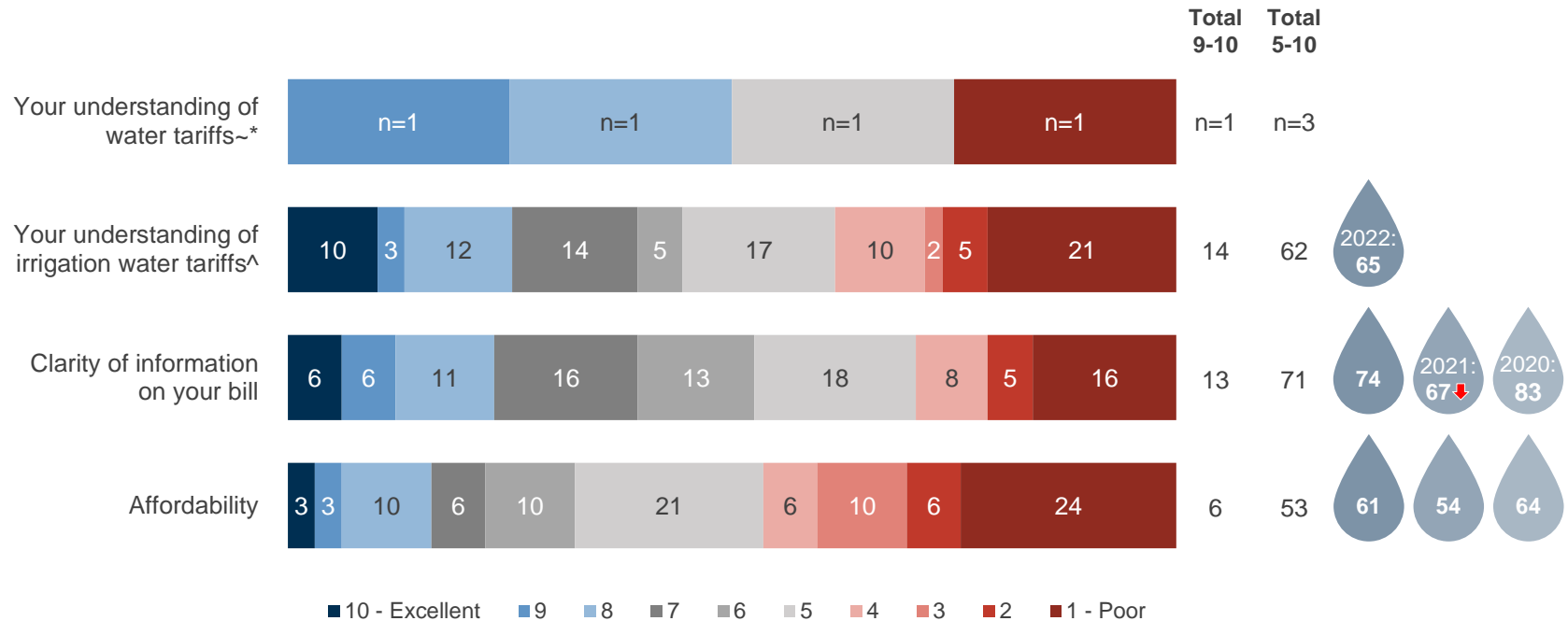
Q12. How do you rate Lower Murray Water on the following?

Base: All respondents (n=68).

# Rural customers' perceptions of LMW water supply and bill have not changed significantly in the last 12 months



## Perception of LMW water supply and bill (%) 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?

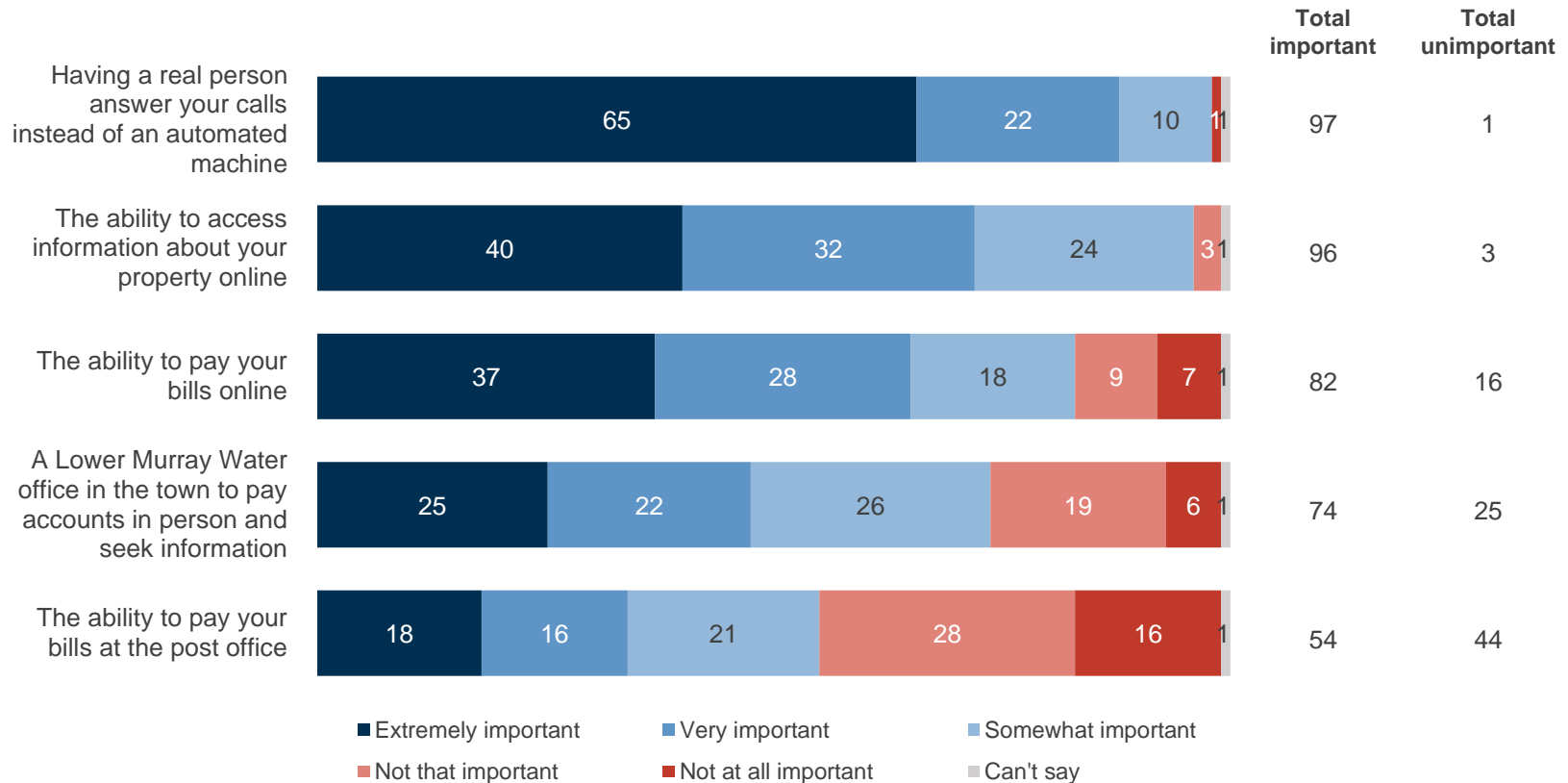
Base: Total Rural district and Millewa customers (n=62); Rural district customers (n=58); Millewa customers (n=4).

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

# Two in three rural LMW customers say it is ‘extremely’ important that a real person answers their call



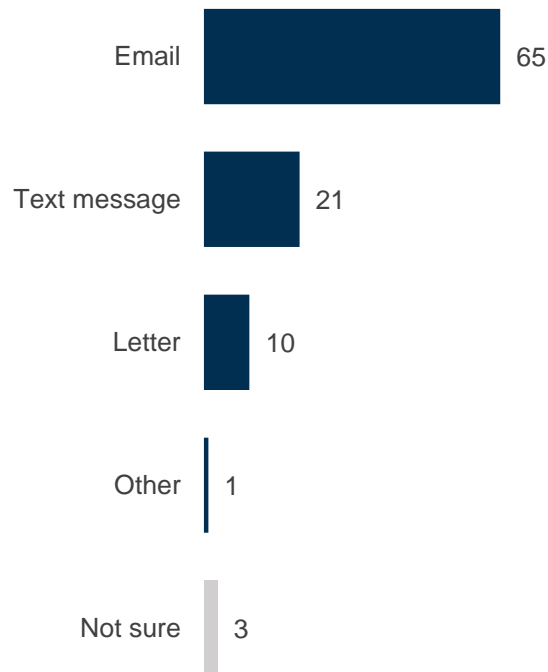
## Importance of services (%)



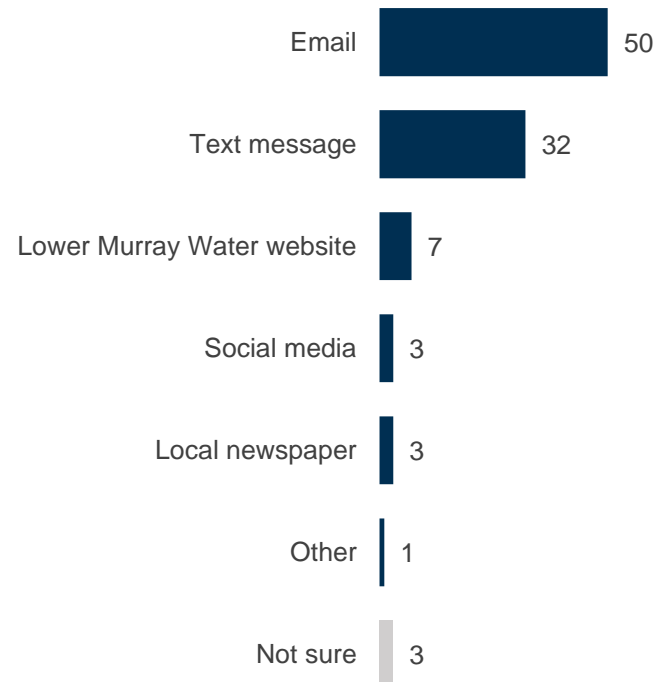
# Most rural customers prefer to receive account or general information via email from LMW



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



Preferred method of contact for general information (%)



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?

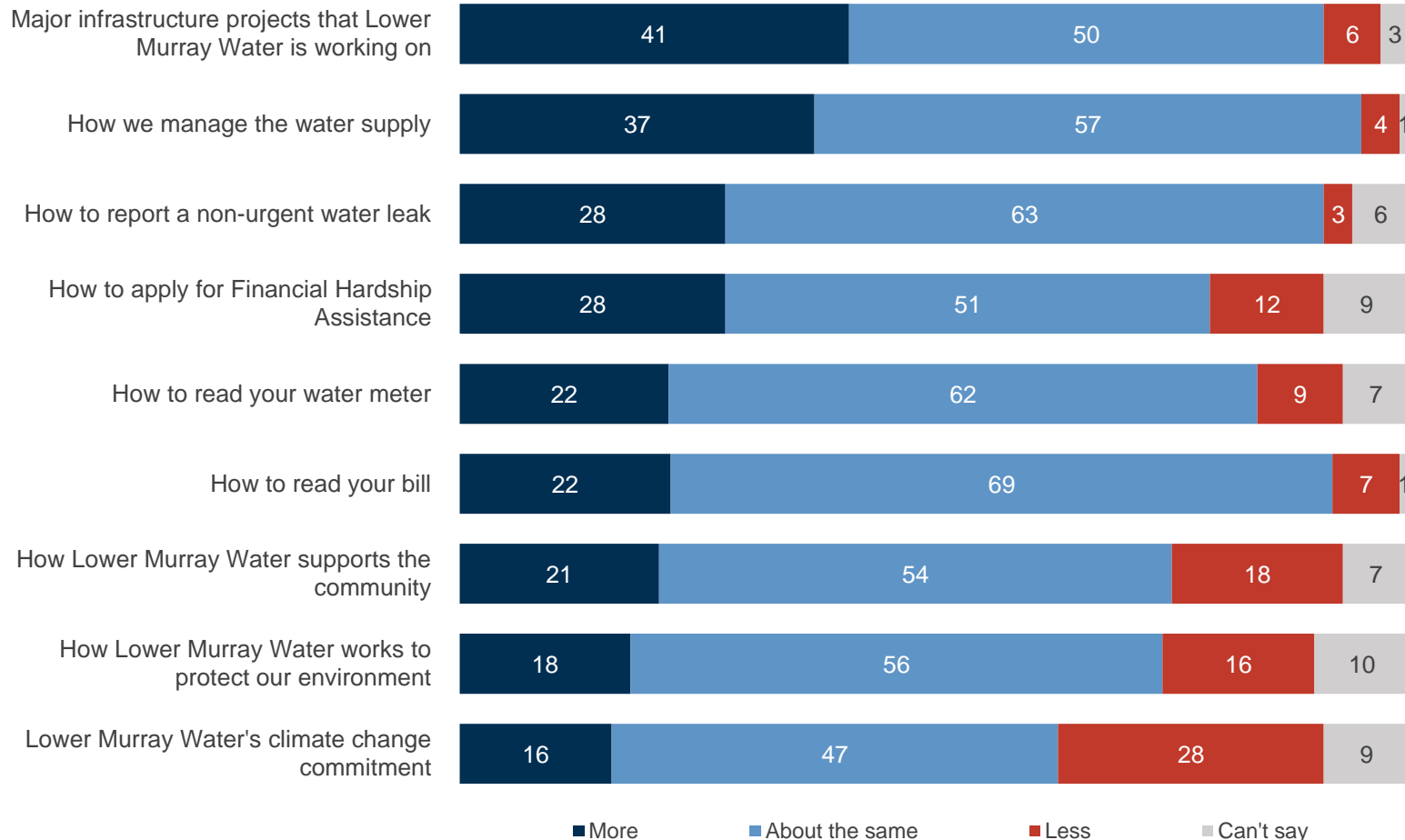
Q7. Which is your preferred way for Lower Murray Water to provide you with general information, including about public works, major projects, water saving tips, environmental initiatives, etc?

Base: All respondents (n=68).

# Major infrastructure projects and water supply management the most popular topics for more information from LMW



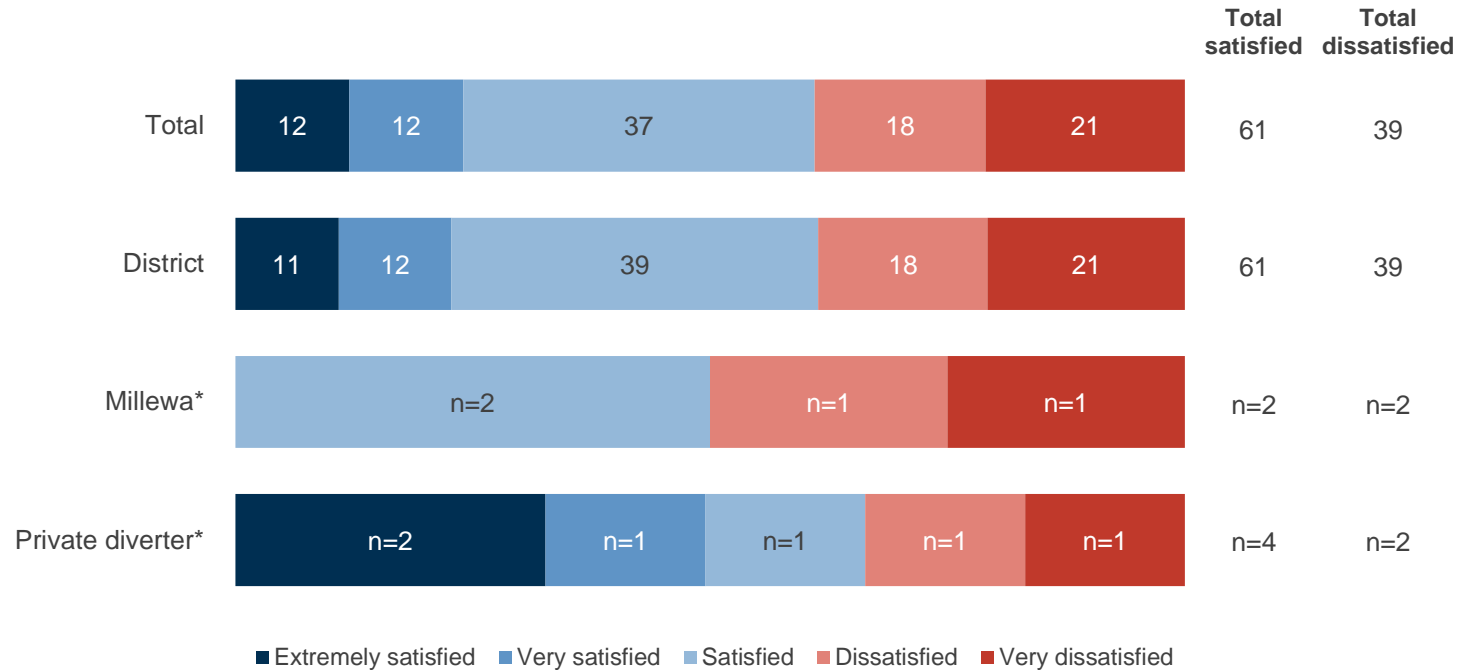
## Interest in hearing more, less or about the same from LMW (%)



# Six in ten rural customers are satisfied that LMW services provide value for money



## Satisfaction with value for money of water service (%)



Q19a. Overall, how satisfied are you that Lower Murray Water services provide value for money?

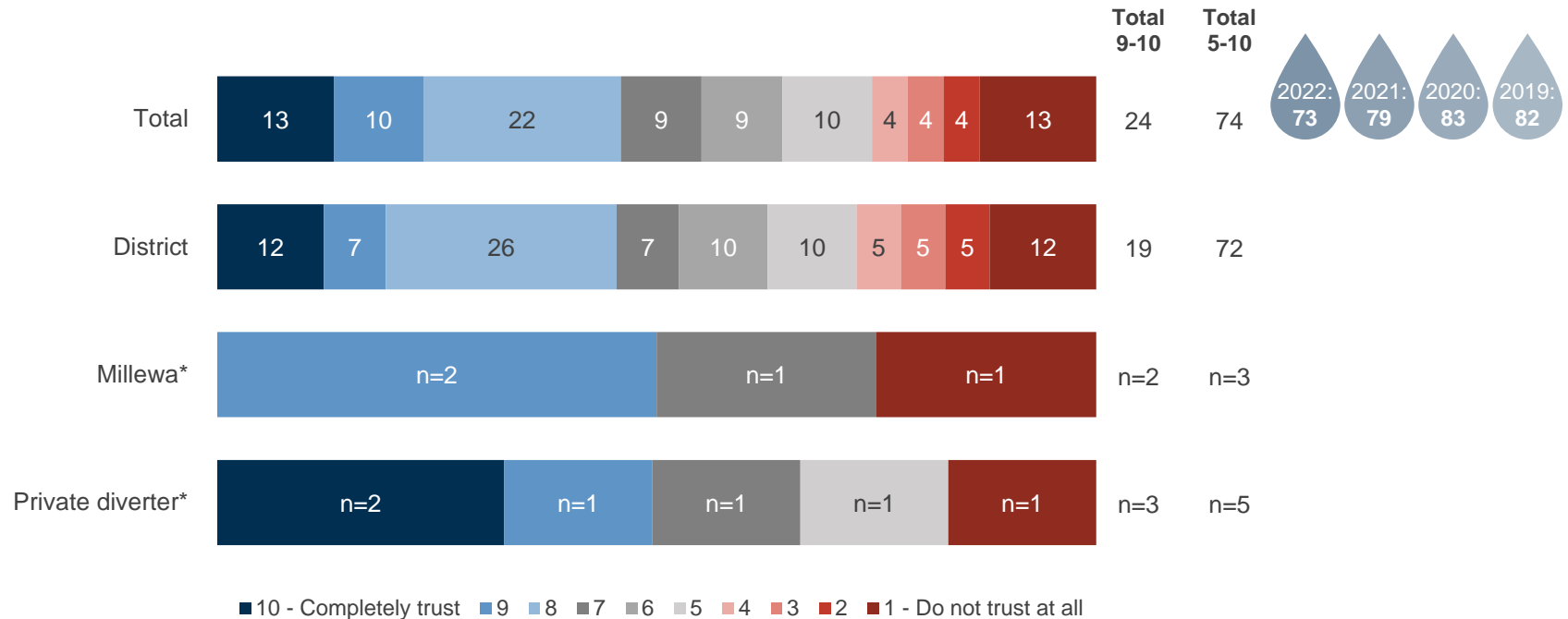
Base: All respondents (n=67), district (n=57), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

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

# Rural customers' trust in LMW is high but remains lower than in 2020



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



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?

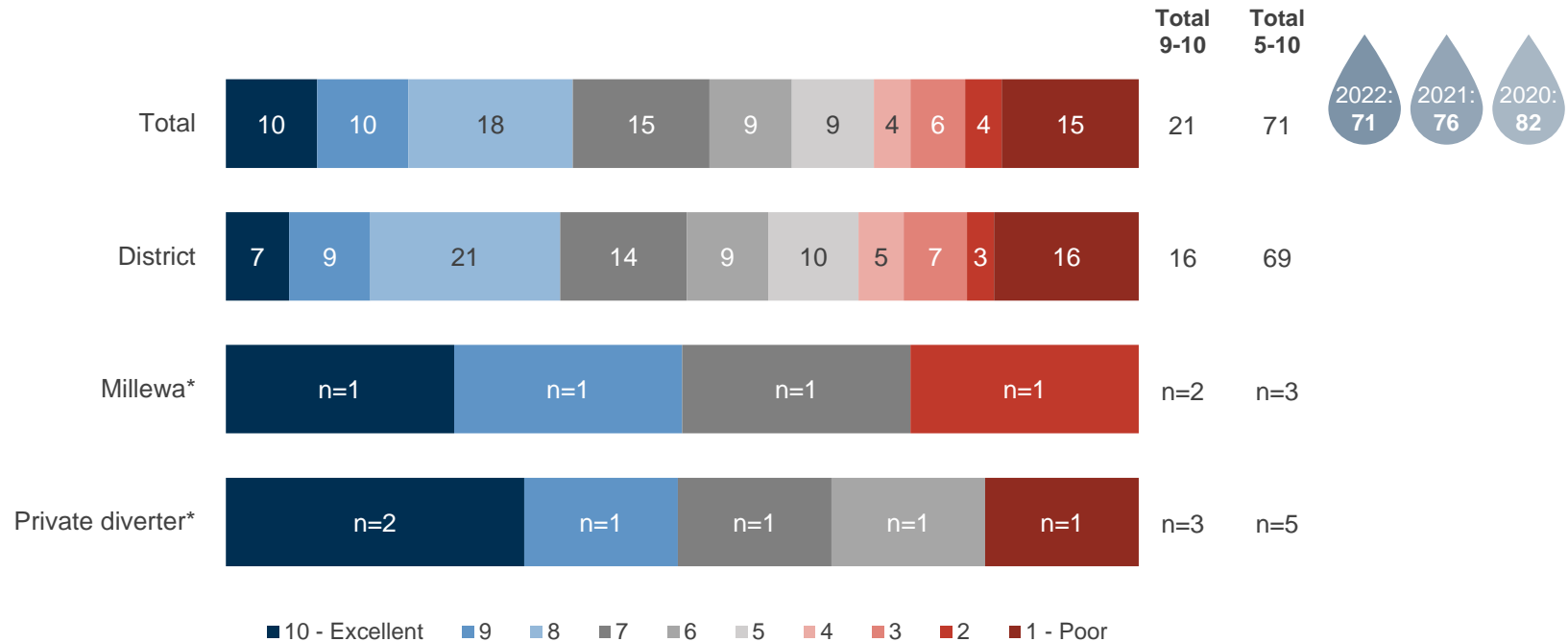
Base: All respondents (n=68), district (n=58), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

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

# Most rural customers rate LMW's reputation in the community five out of 10 or higher



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



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=68), district (n=58), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

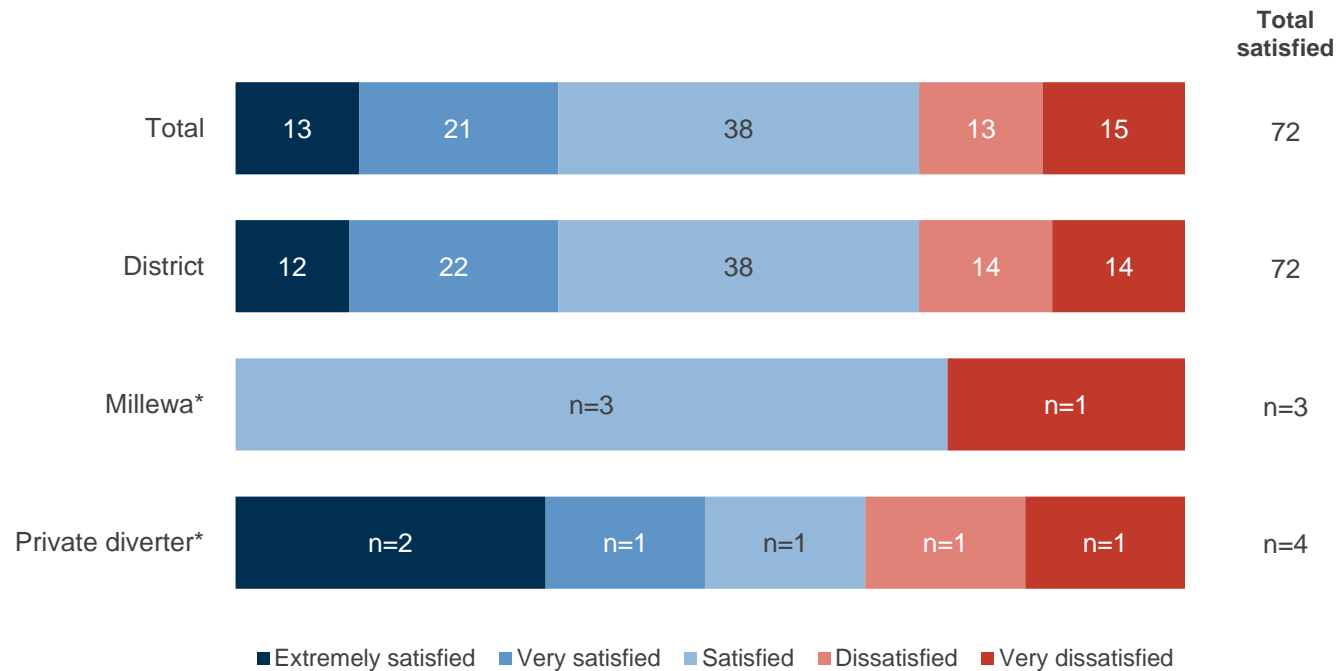
\*Caution: Small sample size (<50).



# Seven in ten 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?

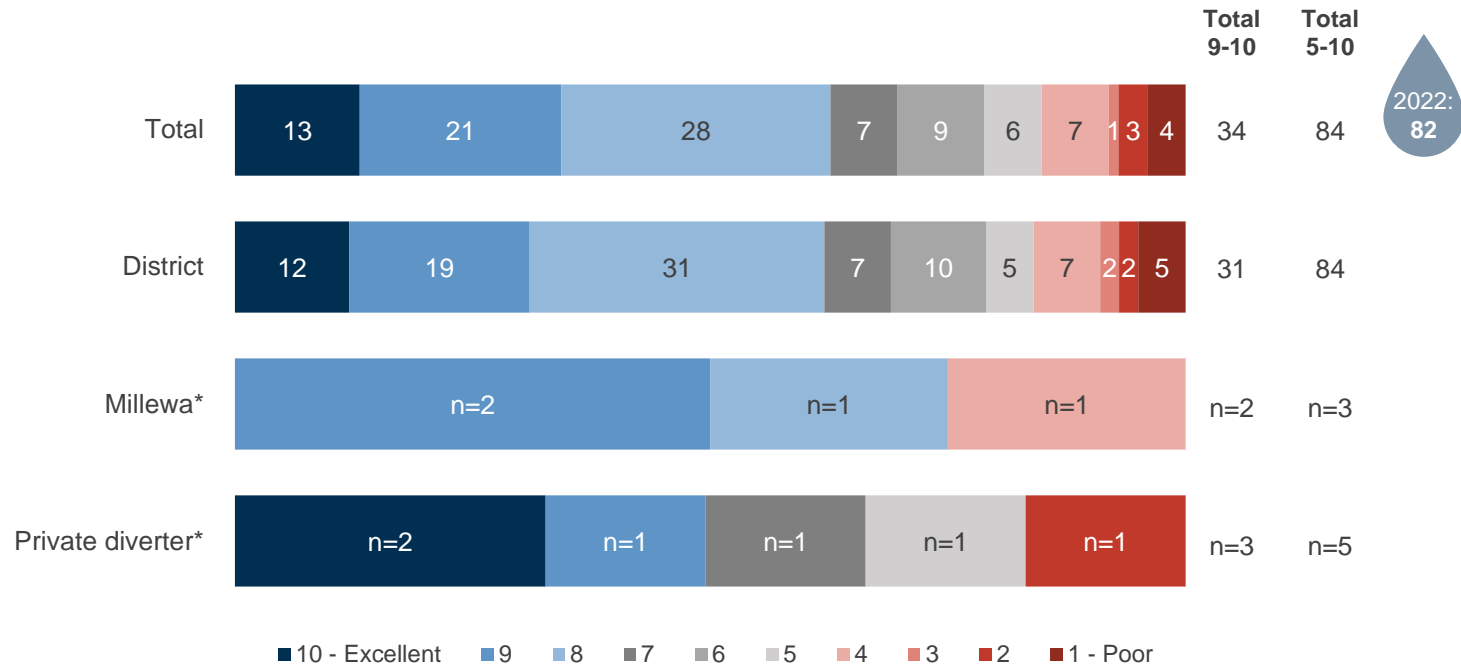
Base: All respondents (n=68), district (n=58), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

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

# Rural customers continue to rate LMW highly on their reliability to do what they say they will do



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

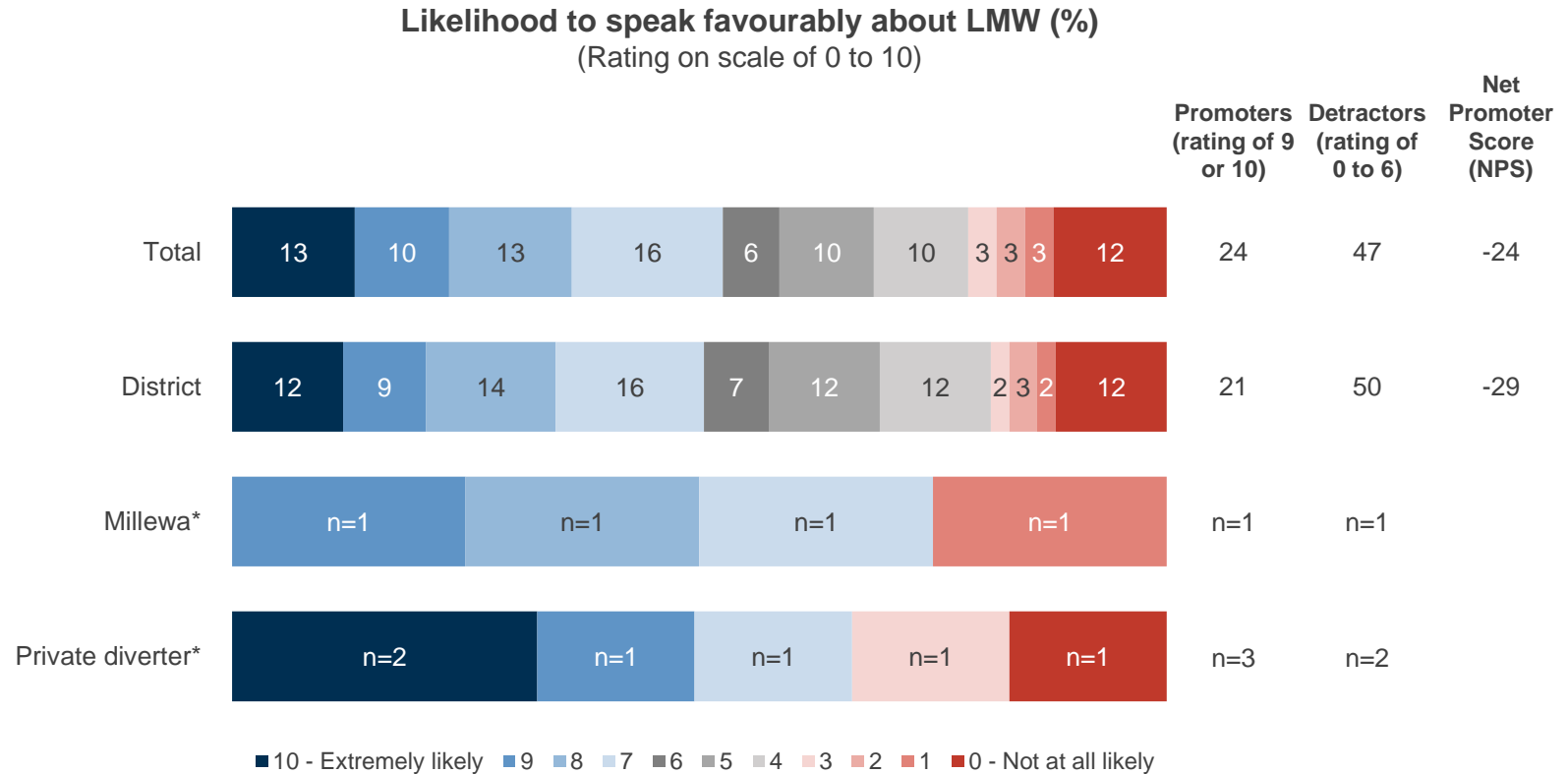


Q3a. Thinking about the past 12 months, how do you rate the reliability of Lower Murray Water to do what they say they will do?

Base: All respondents (n=68), district (n=58), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

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

# Nearly one in four rural customers are ‘promoters’ meaning they are highly likely to speak favourably about LMW



Q23. If asked, how likely would you be to speak favourably about Lower Murray Water?

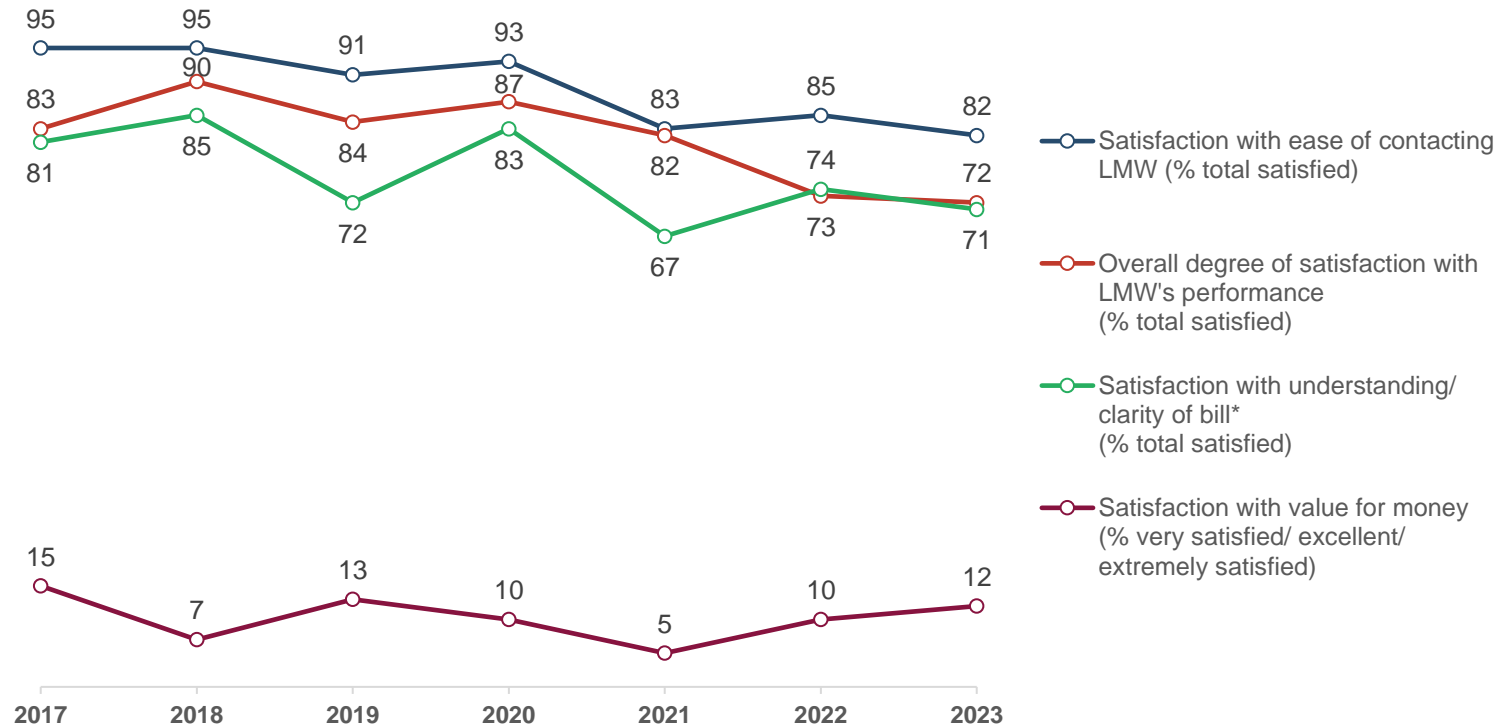
Base: All respondents (n=68), district (n=58), Millewa (n=4), Private diverters (n=6).

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

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



Rural Customer Satisfaction Survey results 2017-2023 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=68).  
\* In 2020 and 2021, District and Millewa customers only.



## Considerations

### Rural customers are mostly satisfied with LMW

Seven in 10 rural customers (72%) are satisfied with LMW as a service provider overall. Agreement that LMW meets their expectations as their water service provider is, however, lower (62%).

### Some notable customer service improvements

While not a statistically significant improvement, there has been an uplift relative to 2022 in satisfaction with LMW's responsiveness to resolve the requests of rural customers (74%, up from 63% in 2022). The proportion of customers claiming they are dissatisfied has declined (from 24% to 21% currently). This shift should be celebrated and LMW should continue to work to further move the dial here.

### The online WaterNow system continues to be easy to use

Of the seven in 10 rural customers who use the online WaterNow system, an increasing proportion regard the system as easy to use (93%, a significant improvement from 80% in 2022). Individual suggestions on how to further enhance the system include being able to order water inside the hour.

### A focus on clarity of bill information and understanding of water tariffs

Rural customers want to hear more, rather than less, on 'how to read your bill' and 'how to read your water meter'. Indeed, a key segment of customers rate LMW poorly on 'clarity of information on your bill' and on 'understanding irrigation water tariffs'. This is likely impacting other key metrics (such as LMW's trust and reputation) and LMW should aim to address this information gap.

### There remains interest in receiving information from LMW

On balance, rural customers continue to want to hear 'more' rather than 'less' from LMW. Key areas of interest include 'major infrastructure projects LMW is working on' and 'how LMW manage the water supply'. There is also interest in hearing 'how LMW works to protect our environment'.

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

## FIND OUT WHAT THEY'RE THINKING.



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