

# 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey

## Rural



[www.lmw.vic.gov.au](http://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 Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2025. Paper surveys were also distributed via post on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2025. Distribution of the survey (both online and paper) to rural customers was undertaken by Lower Murray Water.
- A reminder email and two text messages were sent to customers by LMW to boost response rates.
- The survey remained open until Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2025.

A total of 258 rural customers took part in the survey comprising:

- n=193 district customers
- n=15 Millewa customers
- n=50 private diverter customers.

*Note: Not all respondents answered all questions.*

The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=258 is +/-6.0% at the 95% confidence level.

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

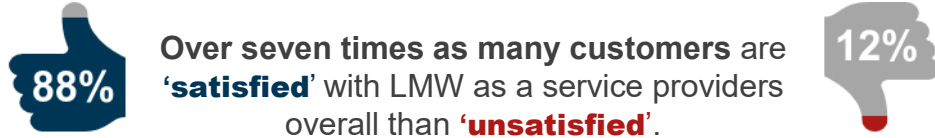
The data has not been weighted.



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

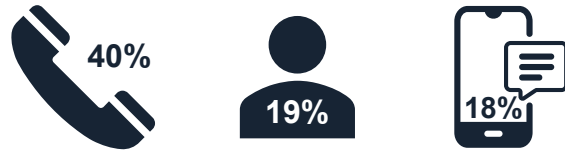
*The research was conducted in compliance with AS-ISO 20252.*

# Snapshot of key findings



Customers report very high levels of satisfaction with the **value for money of LMW's services** (83% satisfied).

Telephone (40%) remains the most frequently used **method of contact**, followed by visiting an office in person (19%) and SMS (18%).



More than eight in 10 rural customers (85%) agree that LMW **meets their expectations** as their water service provider.



say they **prefer to keep current charges and service levels**, while 18% say they **prefer to pay more for better water services**. A further 14% are **'not sure'**.

Notably, rural customers report high levels of satisfaction (rating it five or more out of 10, where 10 is 'excellent') with **LMW's customer service** including LMW:

- being easy to contact (94%)
- responding in a reasonable timeframe (91%)
- providing an appropriate response (84%).

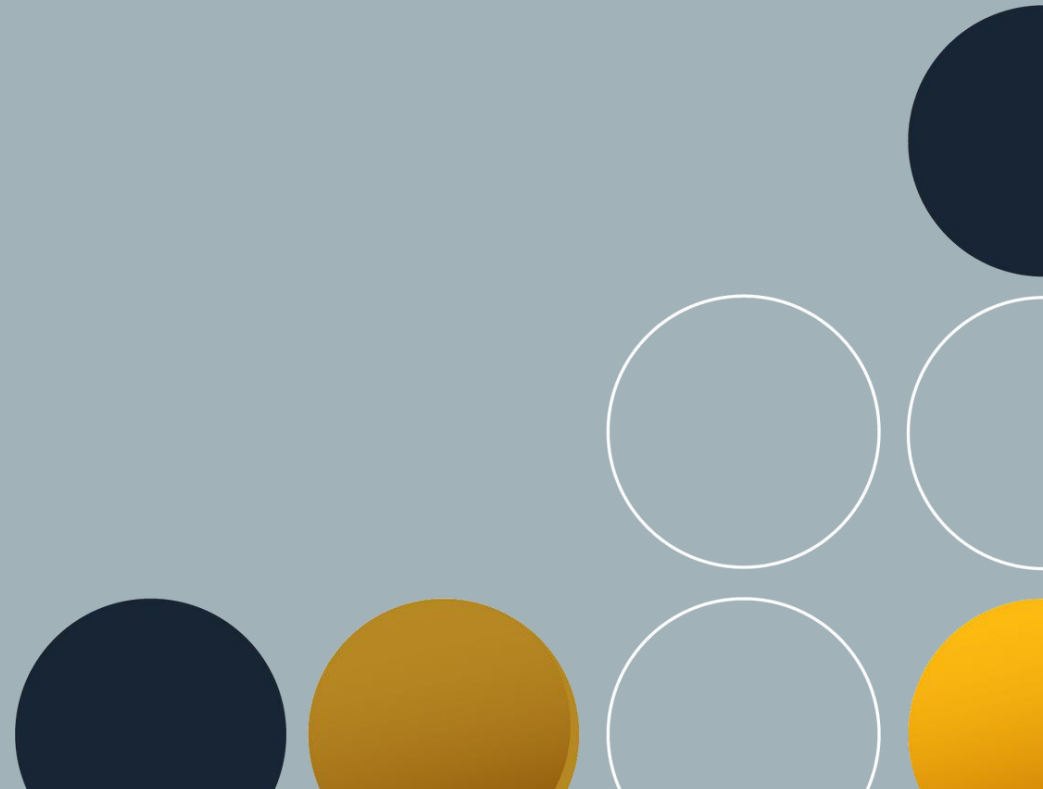
More than eight in 10 rural customers rate LMW positively on its **reputation in the community** (86%).

LMW has fewer rural customers who are likely to be **'promoters'** compared to those who are **'detractors'** – but the gap is closing.



**LMW's Net Promoter Score (NPS) sits at -13** (promoters minus detractors).

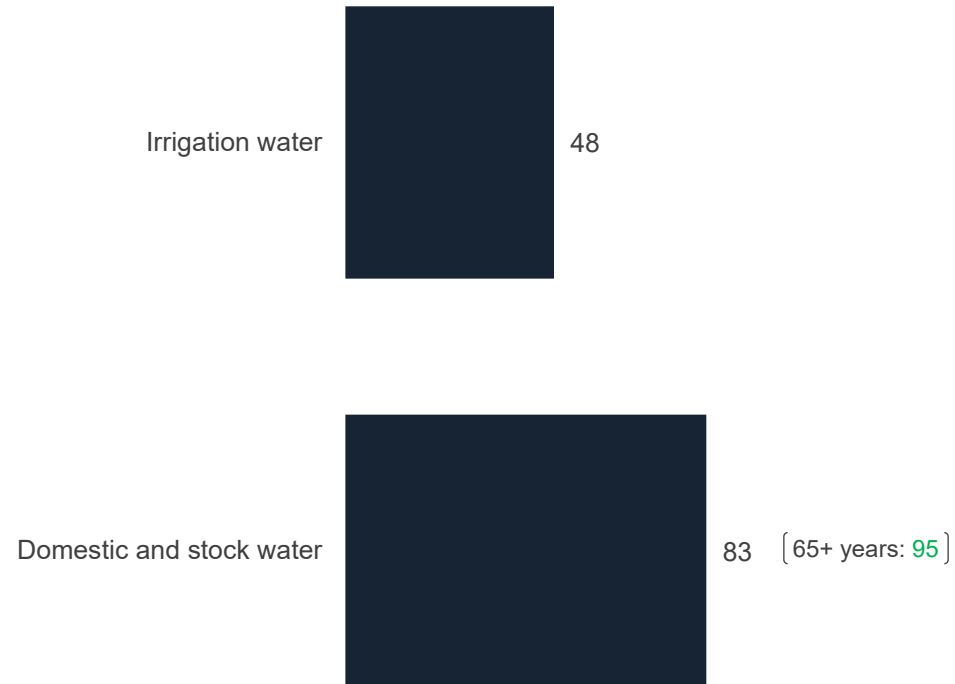
# Detailed findings



# Just under half of district customers receive irrigation water, while over eight in 10 receive domestic and stock water

## Lower Murray Water service use (%)

Multiple response

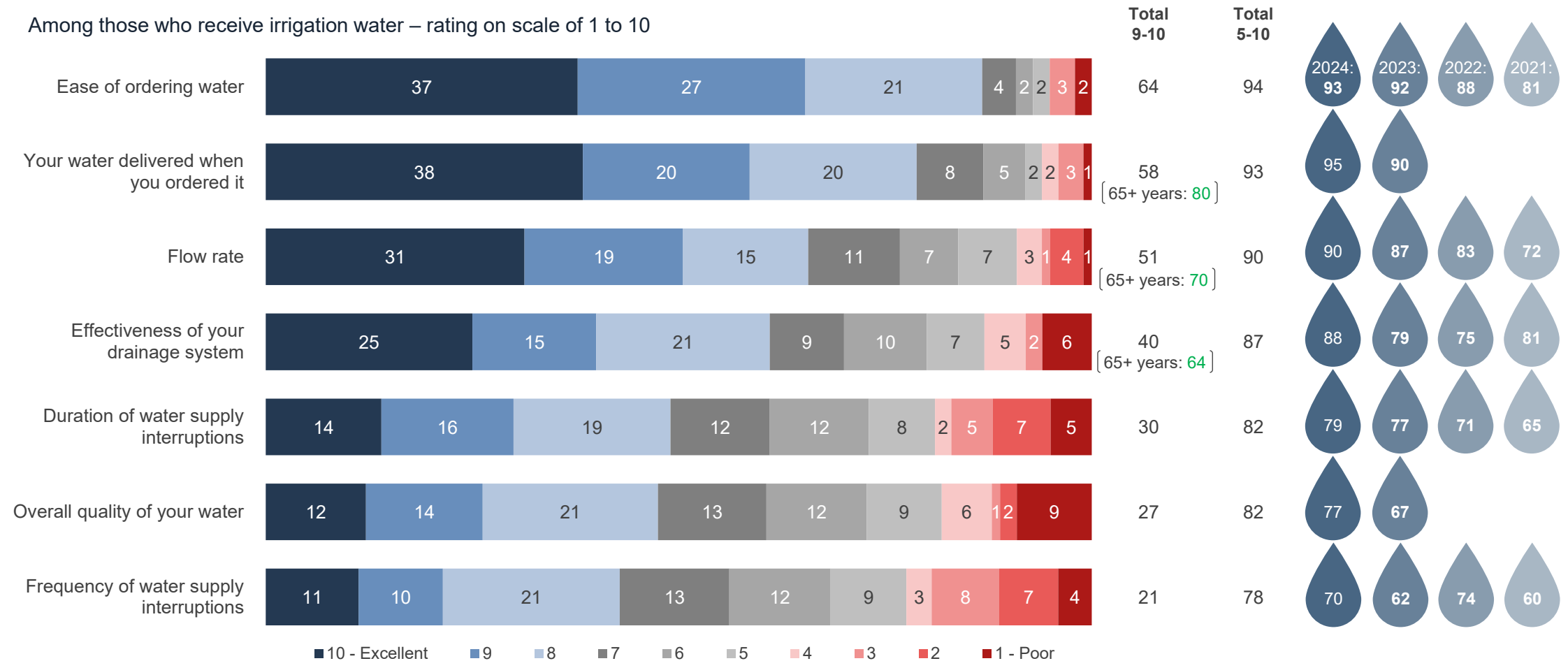


Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence level.  
D1. Which of the following do you receive from Lower Murray Water?  
Base: District customers (n=191).

# Satisfaction with ordering water and supply among district customers remains steady

## Rating of aspects of LMW's water supply (%)

Among those who receive irrigation water – rating on scale of 1 to 10



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

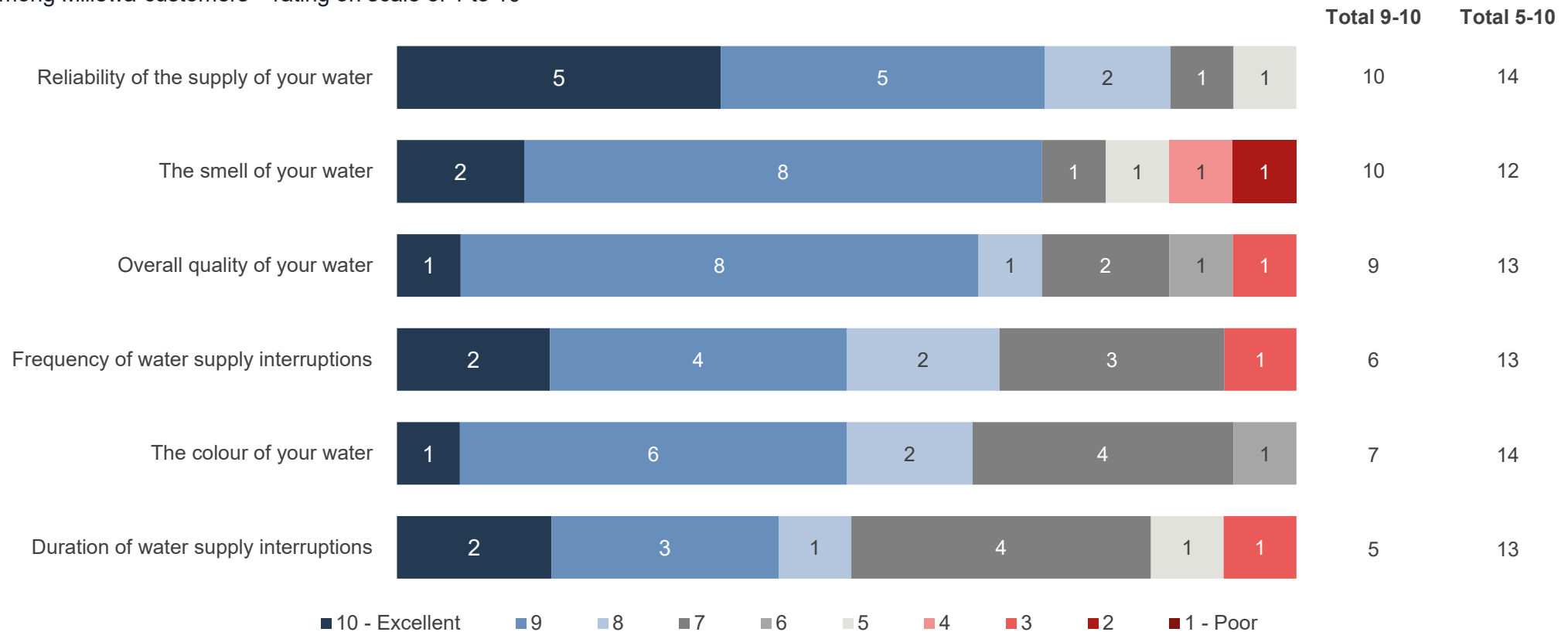
Q1. How do you rate the following aspects of your water supply from Lower Murray Water over the past 12 months?

Base: District customers (n=86-90).

# Millewa customers rate the reliability of water supply and the smell and overall quality of their water positively

## Rating of aspects of LMW's water supply (n=)\*

Among Millewa customers – rating on scale of 1 to 10



\* Caution: Small sample size (n<15).

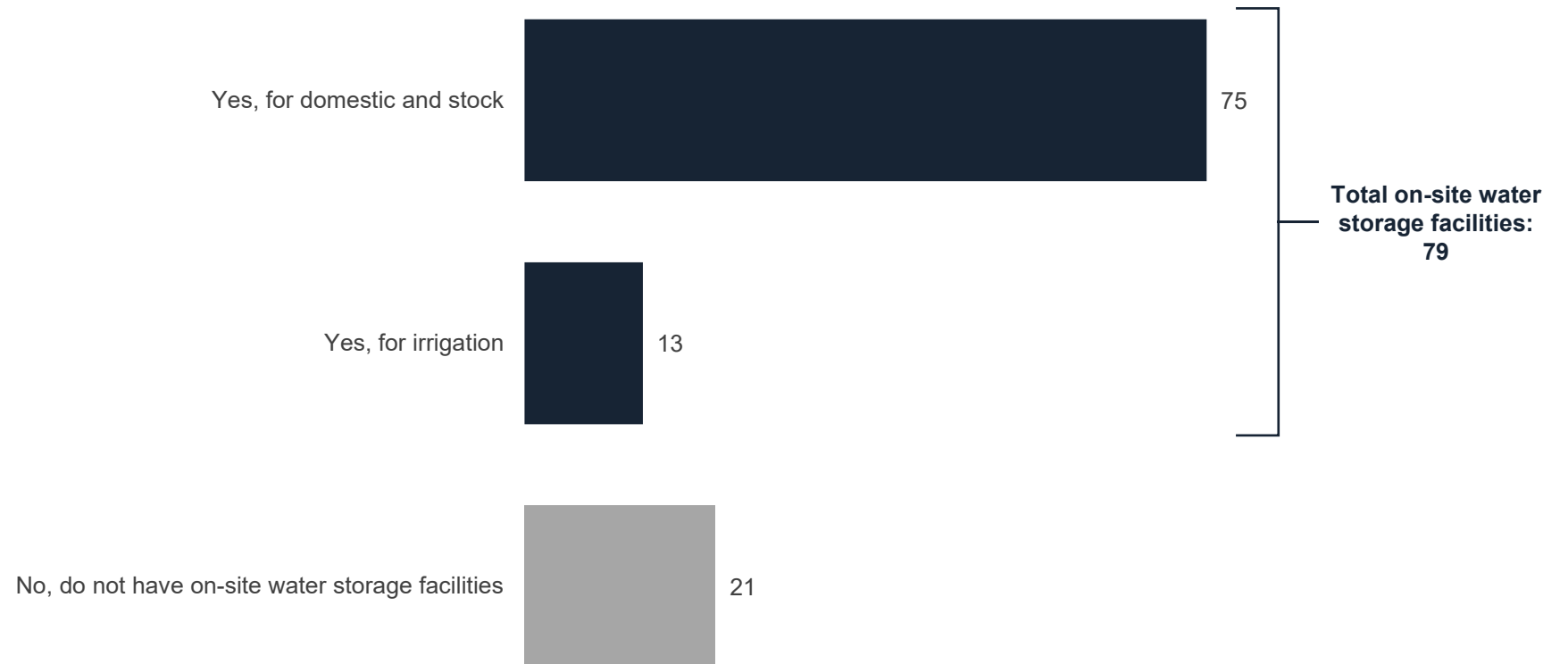
Q1. How do you rate the following aspects of your water supply from Lower Murray Water over the past 12 months?

Base: Millewa customers only (n=14).

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

## On-site water storage facilities (%)

Multiple response



D3. Do you have on-site water storage facilities?

Base: District and private diverters (n=241).

# Most customers with on-site storage for domestic and stock can maintain water supply for at least three to four weeks

## 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	8	6	4	5
4 to 6 days	8	12	2	2
1 to 2 weeks	17	25	6	0
3 to 4 weeks	24	38	1	1
5 to 8 weeks	19	9	1	0
More than 8 weeks	12	6	0	0
Not sure	12	-	5	0
Not applicable	-	3	2	0

*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.*

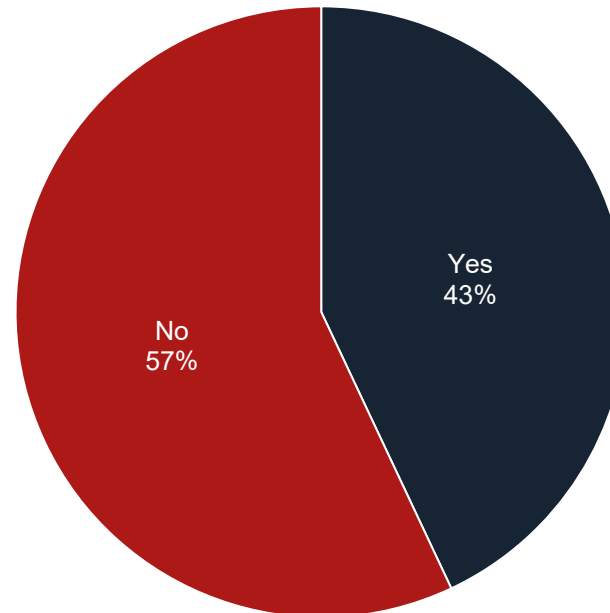
\* Caution: Small sample size (n<50).

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=136), Private diverters (n=32); Rural customers with on-site storage facilities for irrigation: District (n=21), Private diverters (n=8).

# Four in 10 private diverters access LMW's WaterNow site to understand their ABA and Extraction Share particulars

Access LMW's WaterNow site to understand ABA and Extraction Share particulars\*



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

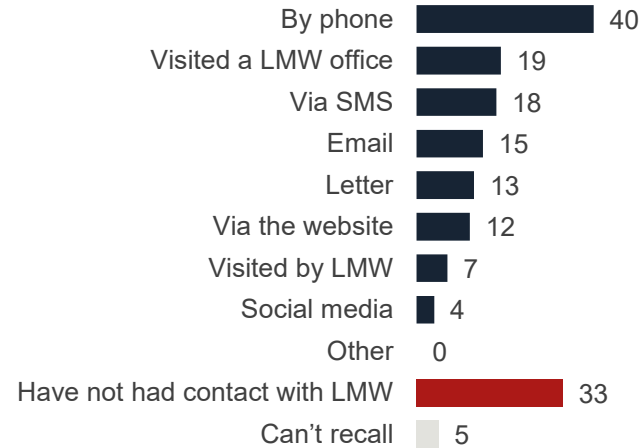
Q9. Do you access Lower Murray Water's WaterNow system to understand your Allocation Bank Account (ABA) and Extraction Share particulars?

Base: Private diverters (n=49).

# Customers contact LMW by phone for account enquiries and water orders, with most satisfied with responsiveness

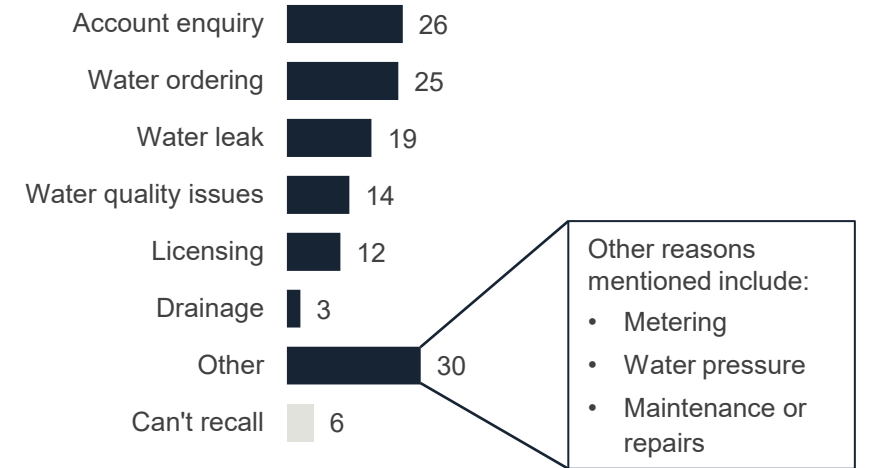
## Methods of contact with LMW in the last 12 months (%)

Multiple response



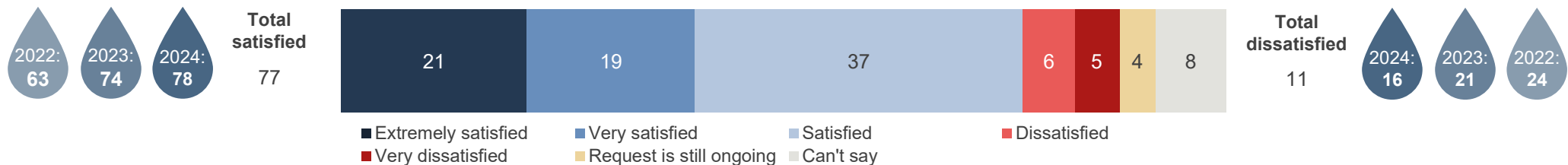
## Reason for contact (%)

Multiple response – among those who had contact in the last 12 months



## Satisfaction with LMW's responsiveness to resolve your request(%)

Among those who had contact in the last 12 months



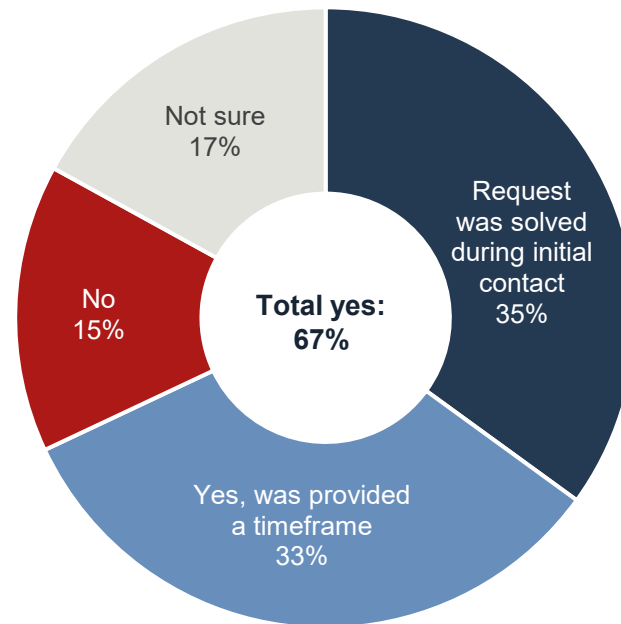
Q4. Over the last 12 months, have you had contact with Lower Murray Water in any of the following ways? / Q5. For what reasons did you have contact with Lower Murray Water? / Q5a. How satisfied were you with Lower Murray Water's responsiveness to resolve your request?

Base: All respondents (n=257); those who had contact with LMW in last 12 months (n=155-156).

# More than half of customers are given a timeframe for a response or had their request resolved during initial contact

## Time indicated for LMW to respond

Among those who had contact in the last 12 months

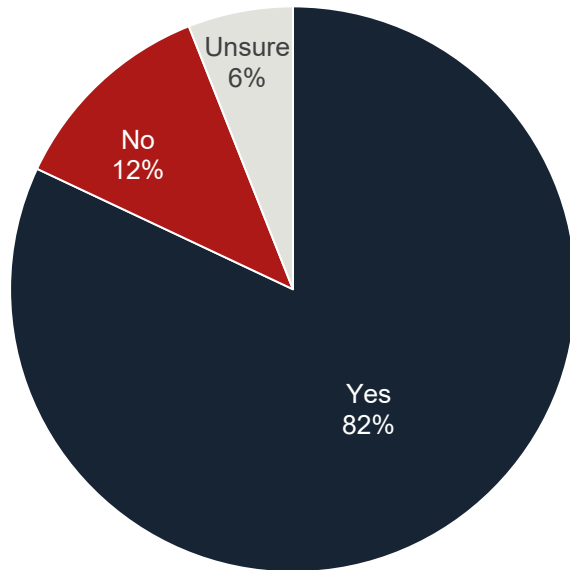


Q5b. When you contacted Lower Murray Water, were you given an indication (e.g. via automated email, verbal communication or some other way) of how long it would take for Lower Murray Water to get back to you?  
Base: Those who had contact with LMW in last 12 months (n=150).

# Over one in four customers without a given time frame felt LMW's response time was not reasonable

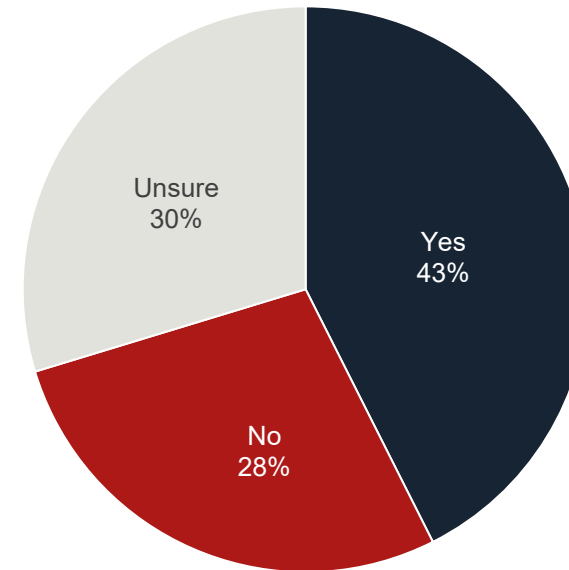
## Respond to request within the given time frame\*

Among those who were given a time frame



## Respond to request within a reasonable time frame\*

Among those 'not sure' or not given a time frame



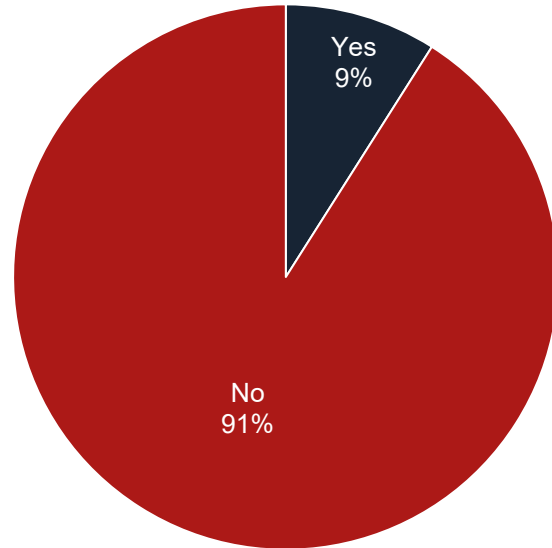
\* Caution: Small sample size (n<50).

Q5c. Did Lower Murray Water respond to your request within the given timeframe? / Q5d. Did Lower Murray Water respond to your request within a reasonable timeframe?

Base: Those who were given a timeframe (n=49); those who were not sure or not given a timeframe (n=47).

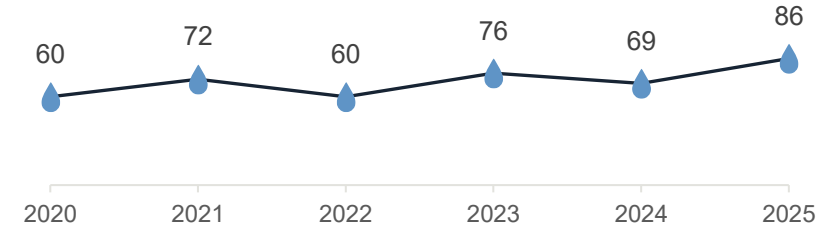
# Among those who contacted LMW regarding a payment arrangement, over eight in 10 had their needs fulfilled

**Contacted LMW about a payment arrangement for their bill in the last 12 months\***



**Outcome met needs (%)^**

Among those who contacted LMW about a payment arrangement for their bill



\* Caution: Was 'In the last 12 months have you contacted Lower Murray Water about your bill?' in 2024.

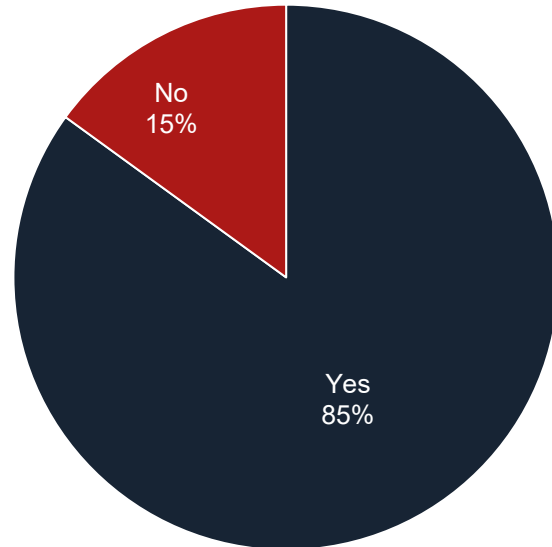
^ Caution: Small sample size (n<50).

Q14. In the last 12 months have you contacted Lower Murray Water about a payment arrangement for your bill? / Q14a. Did the outcome meet your needs?

Base: All respondents (n=256); those who contacted LMW about bill in last 12 months (n=22).

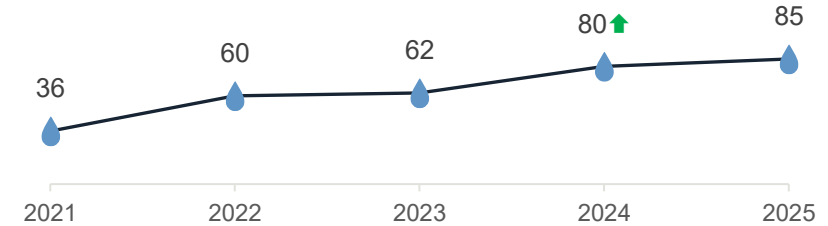
# For over eight in 10 rural customers, LMW meets expectations as a water service provider

## LMW meets expectations as water service provider



## LMW meets expectations as water service provider (%)

Yes – 2021 to 2025 trend



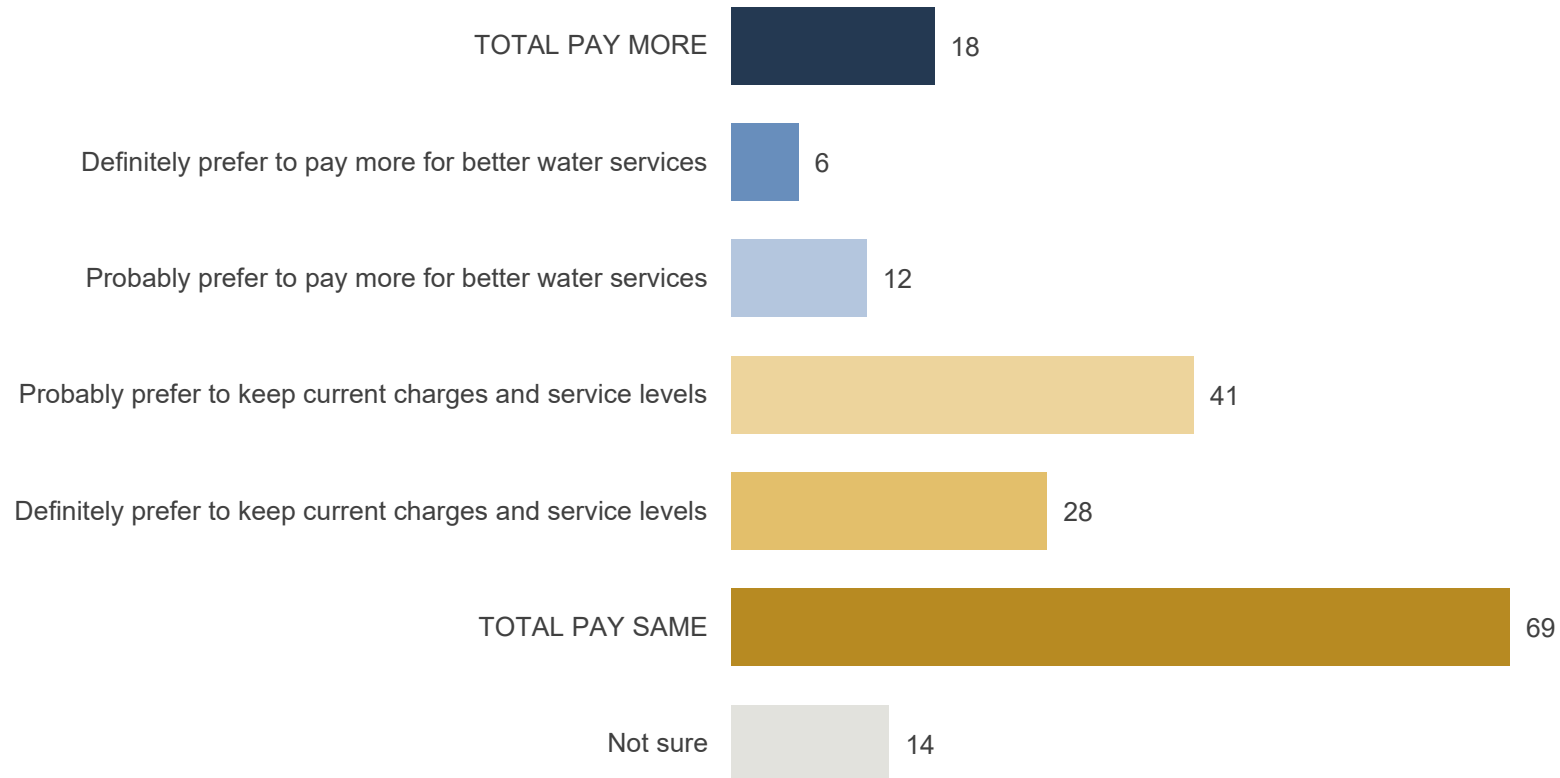
Significantly higher <sup>↑</sup> than the previous wave at the 95% confidence level.

Q15. Is Lower Murray Water meeting your expectations as your water service provider?

Base: All respondents (n=255).

# Nearly four times as many rural customers prefer keeping current service levels than paying more for better services

## Preference to pay more for improved services versus current charges and maintain existing service levels (%)



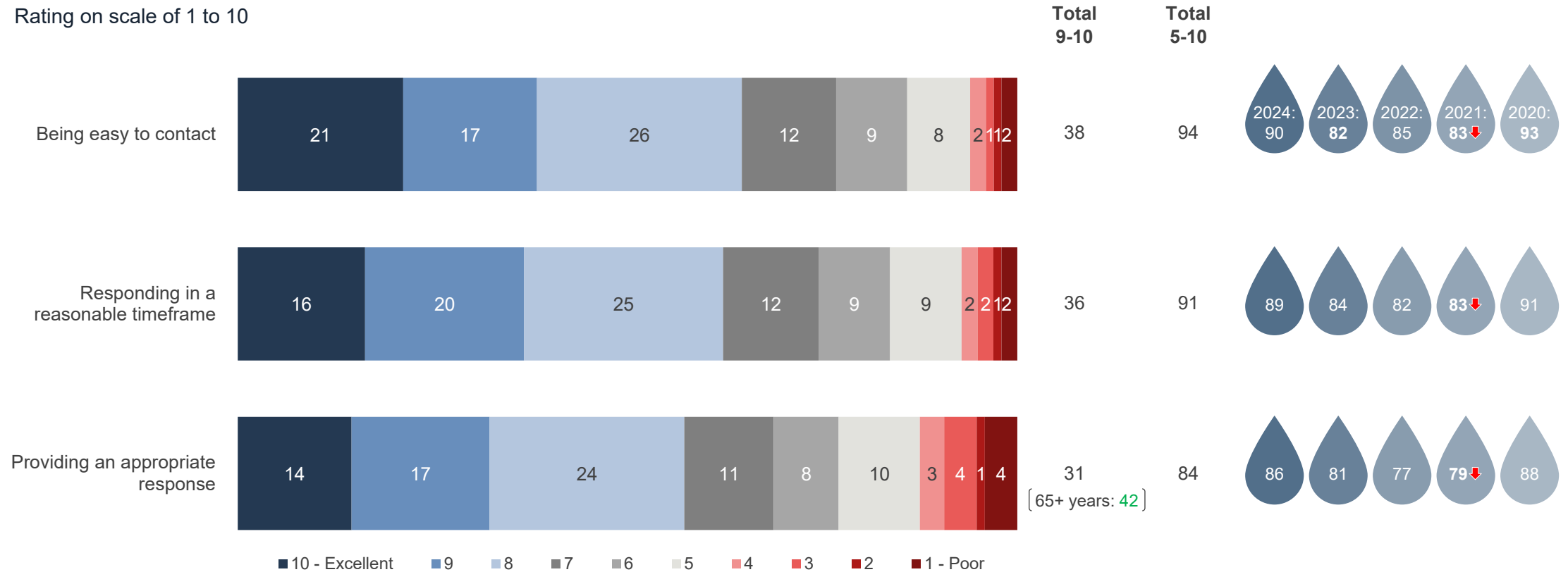
Q25. If you had to choose, would you prefer to pay more for water to receive improved services (e.g. digital metering, upgrades to infrastructure to improve water pressure or wet weather storage), or keep your current water charges and maintain existing service levels?

Base: All respondents (n=251).

# Perceptions of LMW being easy to contact and responding in a reasonable time frame have recovered to levels seen in 2020

## Perception of LMW customer service (%)

Rating on scale of 1 to 10

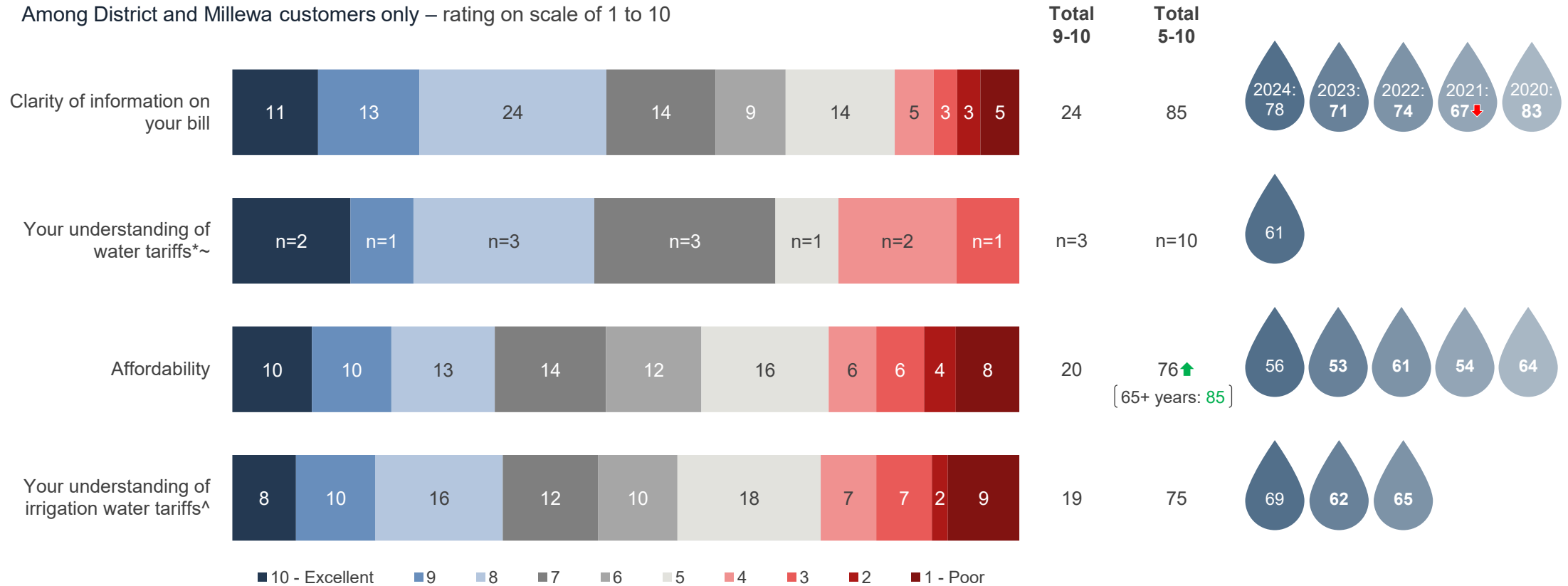


Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence level.  
 Significantly **lower** than the previous wave at 95% confidence level.  
 Q12. How do you rate Lower Murray Water on the following?  
 Base: All respondents (n=248).

# Customer perceptions of affordability have improved significantly over the past year

## Perception of LMW water supply billing costs and information (%)

Among District and Millewa customers only – rating on scale of 1 to 10



\* Caution: Small sample size (n<15). ~ Note: Only asked of Millewa customers. ^ Note: Only asked of District customers. Significantly higher ↑ than the total at the 95% confidence level.

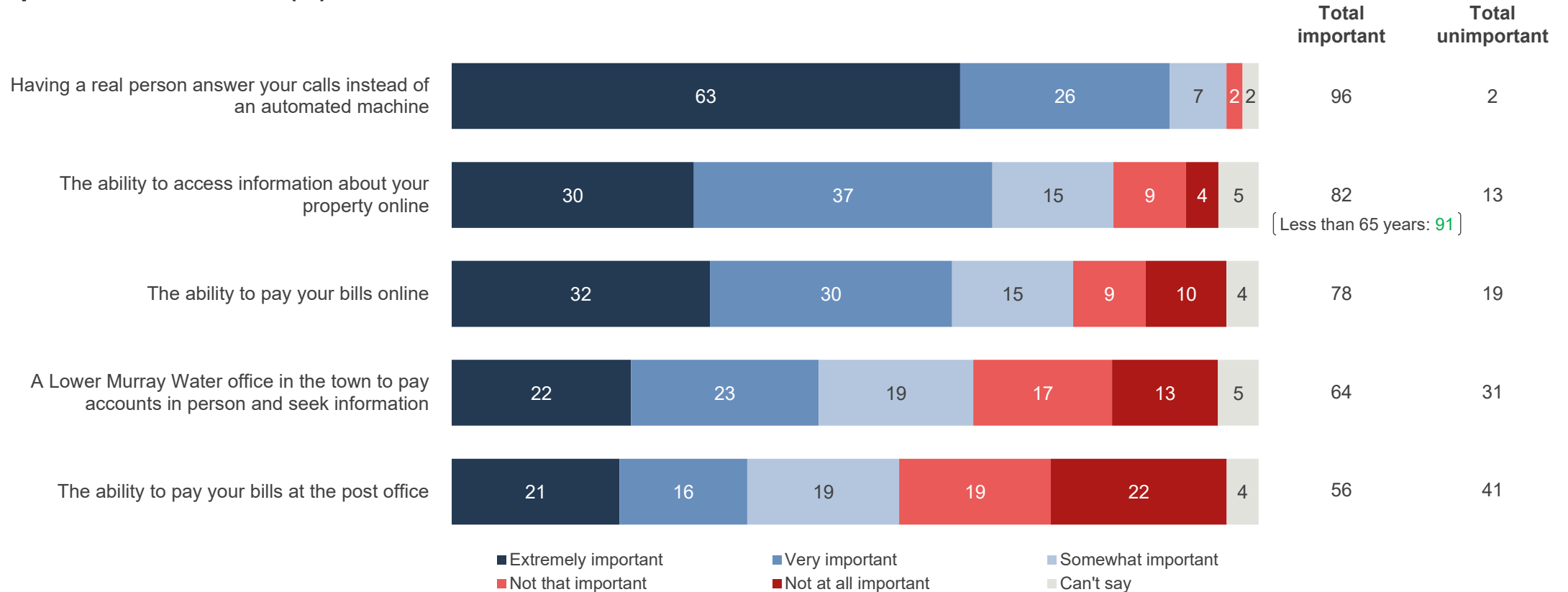
Significantly lower ↓ than the previous wave at 95% confidence level.

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=199-200); District customers (n=181); Millewa customers (n=13).

# Having a real person answer calls instead of an automated machine is considered 'extremely' important by a majority

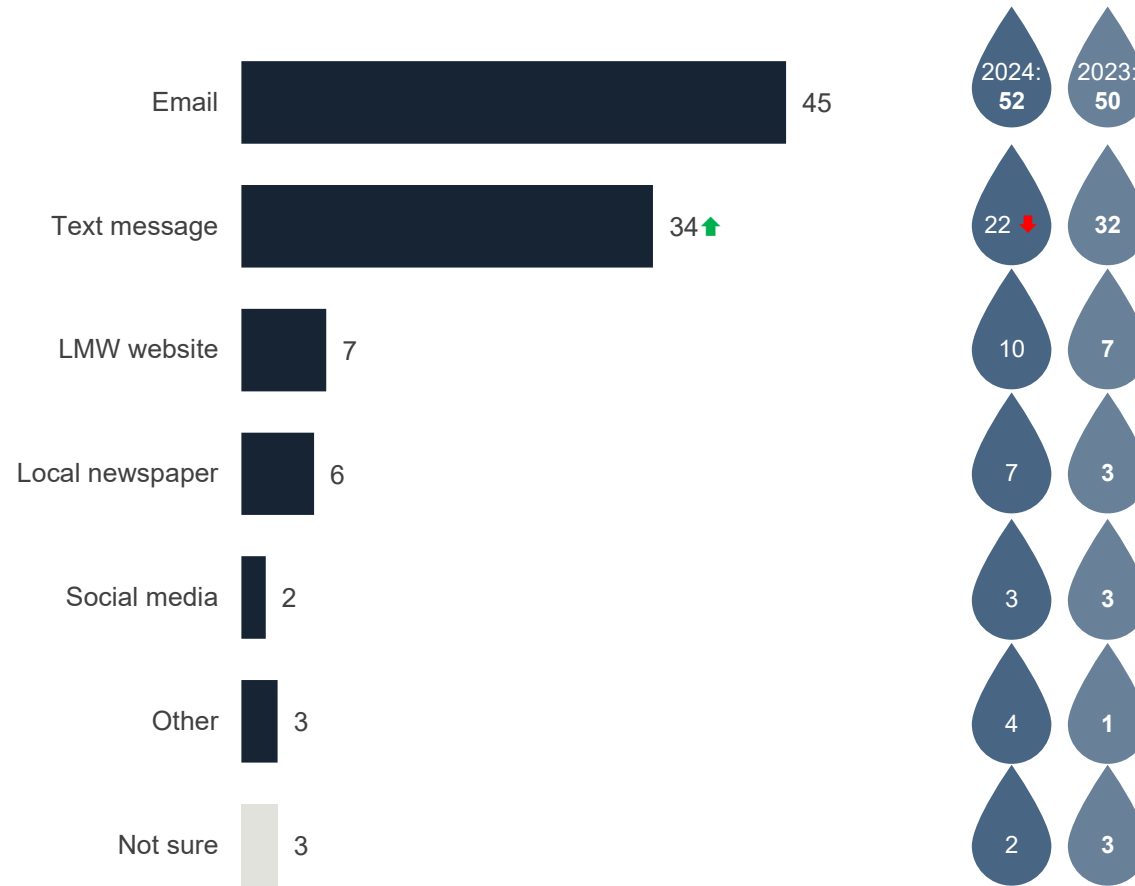
## Importance of services (%)



Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence level.  
 Q17a. How important is it to you that Lower Murray Water provides the following services?  
 Base: All respondents (n=251-257).

# Customers mainly prefer to receive general information via email, although preference for text message has increased

Preferred method of contact for general information (%)



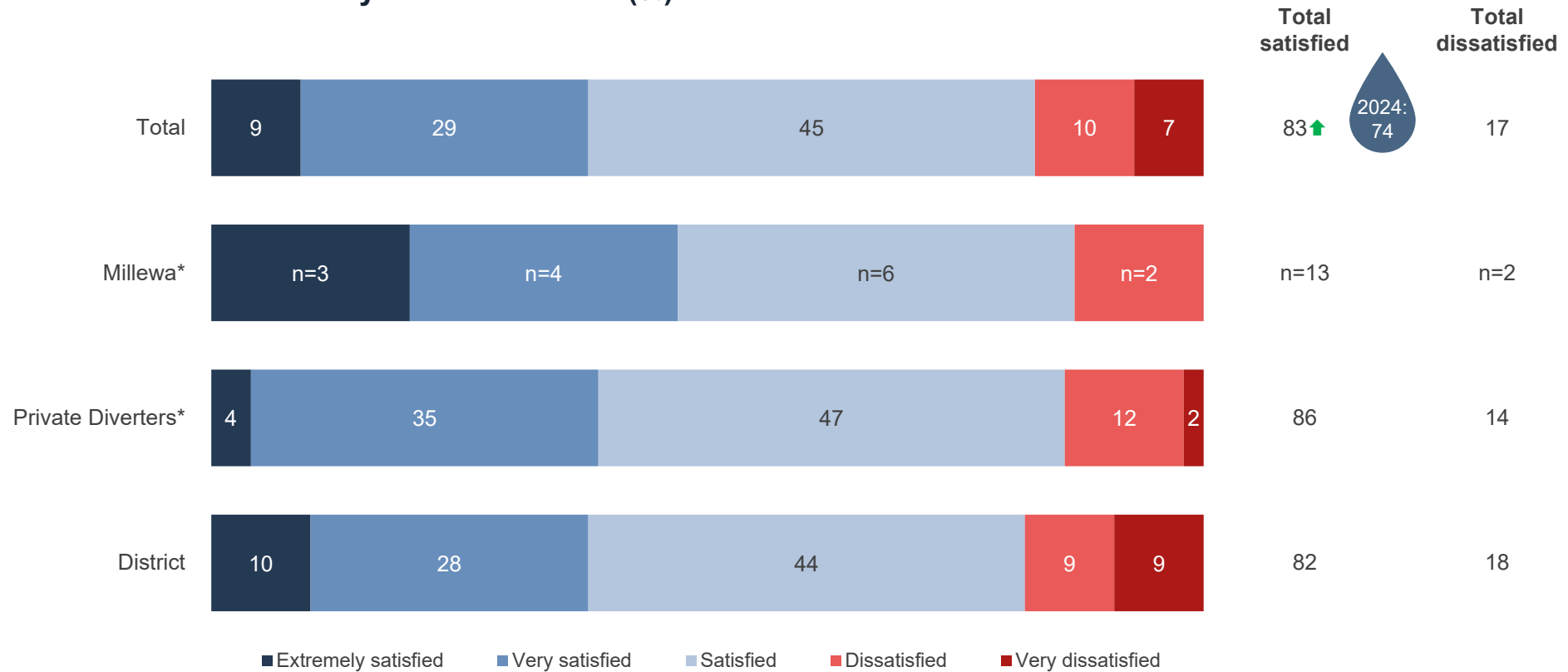
Significantly higher ↑ / lower ↓ than the previous wave at 95% confidence level.

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=255).

# Satisfaction with LMW providing value for money is similar across rural customer groups

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



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

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

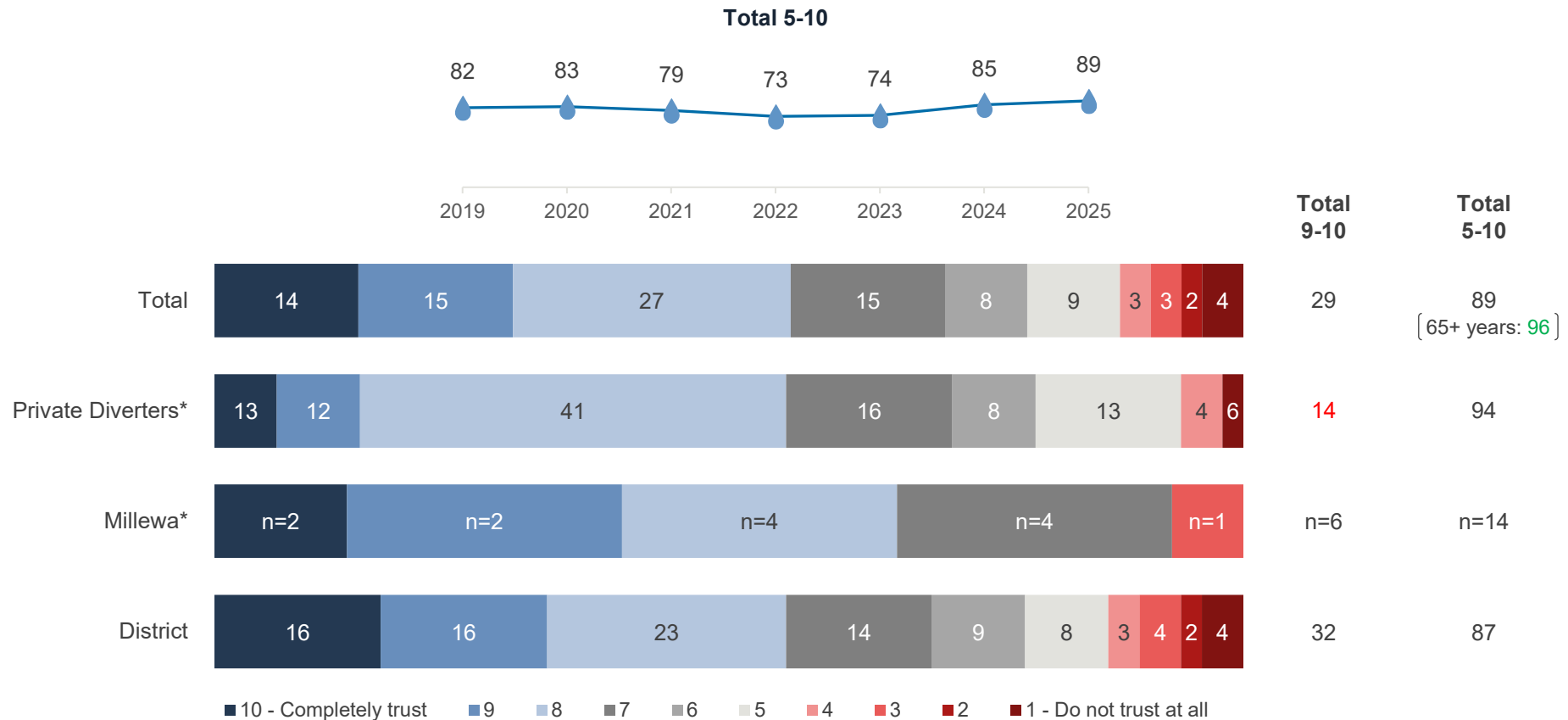
Q19a. Overall, how satisfied are you that Lower Murray Water services provide value for money?

Base: All respondents (n=256), District (n=192), Millewa (n=15), Private diverters (n=49).

# Stronger ratings of trust are significantly lower among private diverters compared to the average

## Level of trust in LMW (%)

Rating on scale of 1 to 10



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

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

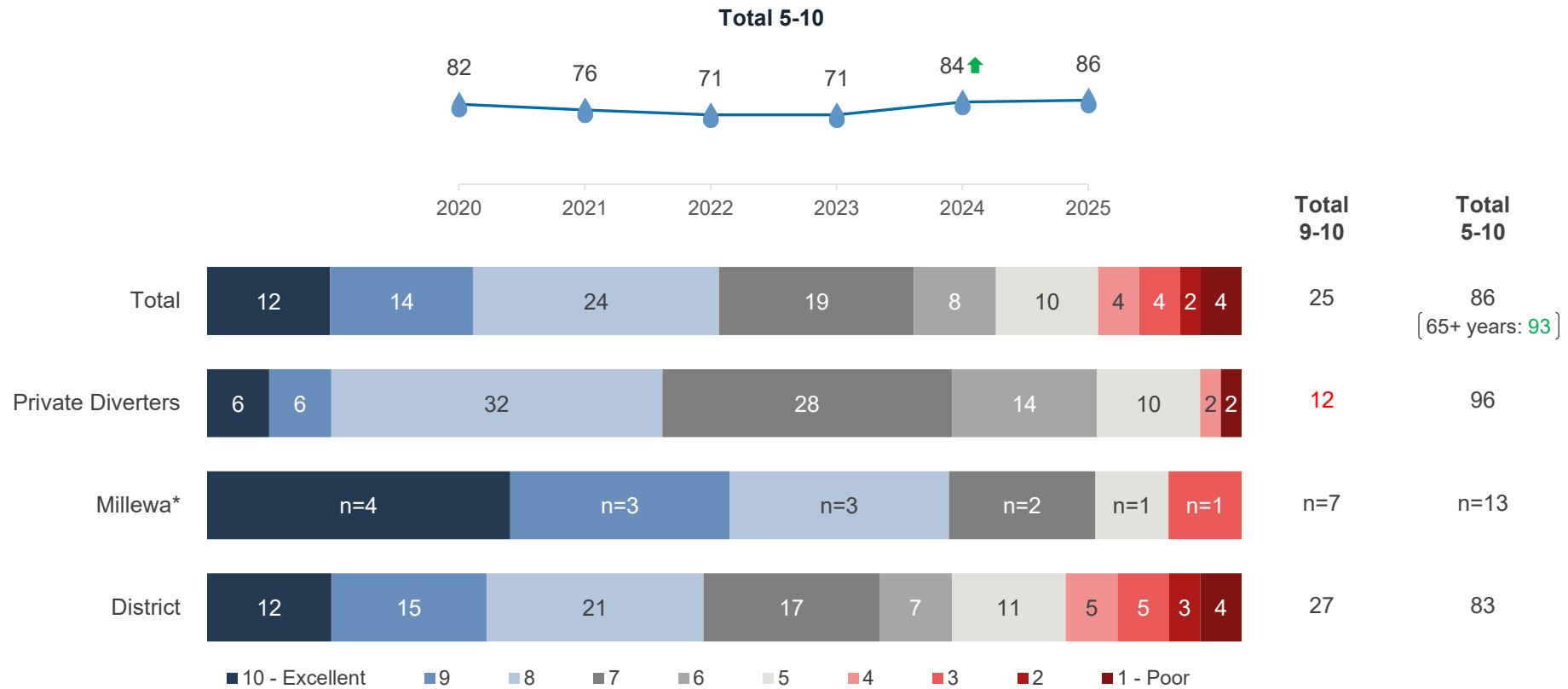
Q20. On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'do not trust at all' and 10 is 'completely trust', how would you rate your trust for Lower Murray Water?

Base: All respondents (n=256), District (n=192), Millewa (n=15), Private diverters (n=49).

# LMW's overall community reputation remains steady, however stronger ratings are significantly lower among private diverters

## LMW's reputation in the community (%)

Rating on scale of 1 to 10



\* Caution: Small sample size (n<15).

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

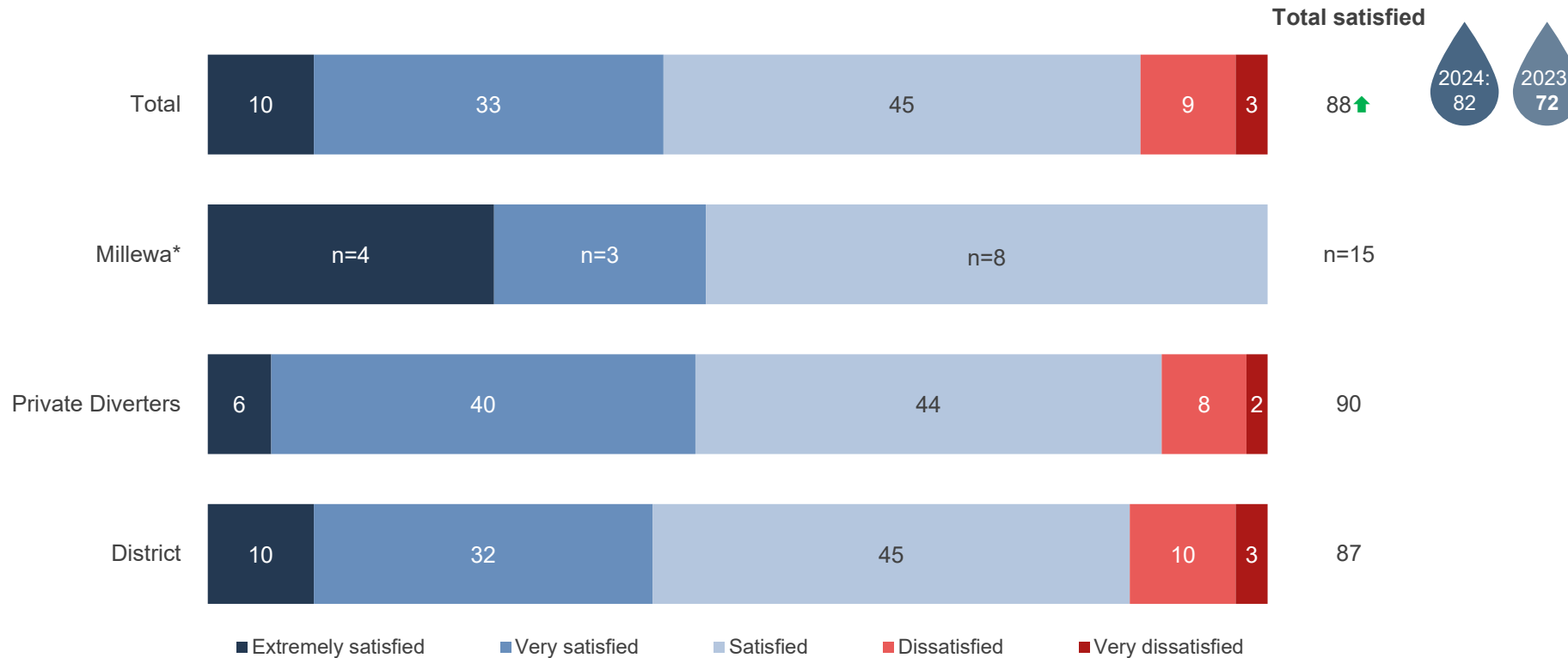
Significantly higher ↑ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence level.

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=251), District (n=187), Millewa (n=14), Private diverters (n=50).

# Rural customers' satisfaction with LMW as a water service provider has increased significantly in 2025

## Satisfaction with LMW as a service provider overall (%)



\* Caution: Small sample size (n<30).

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

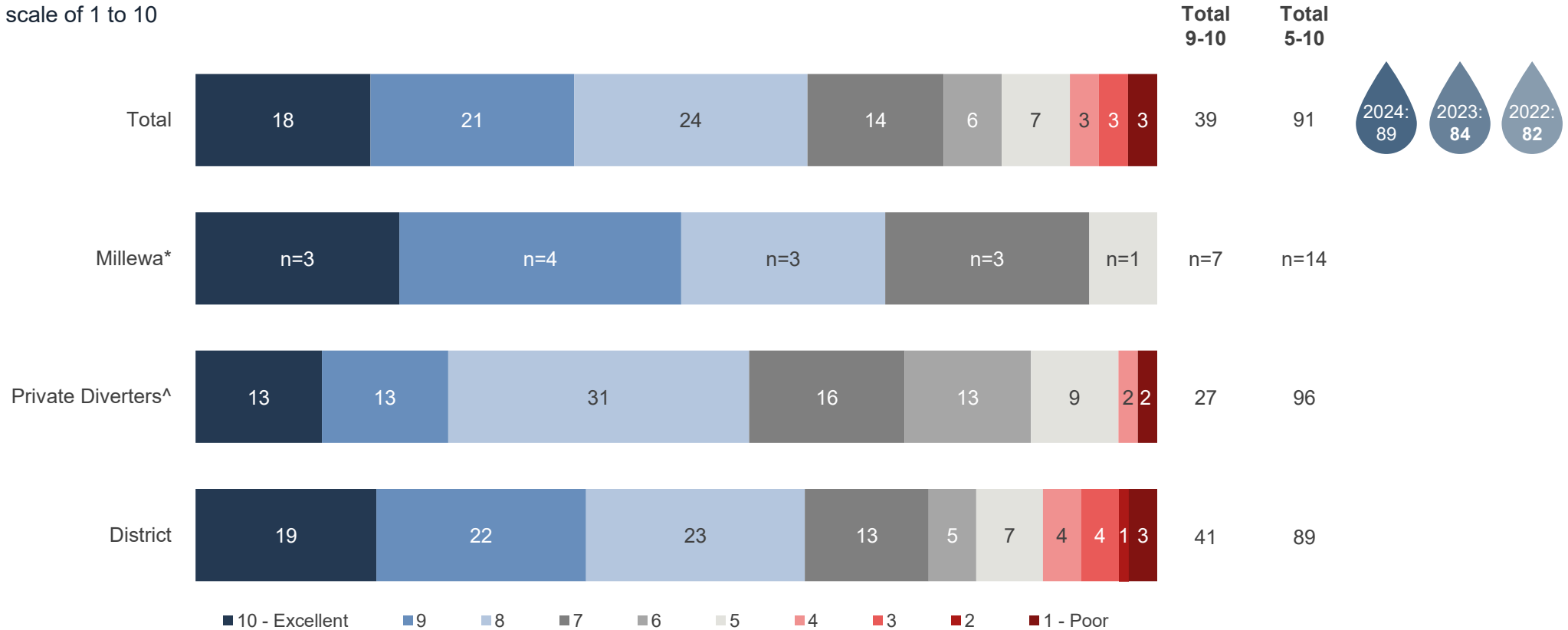
Q22. How would you rate your satisfaction with Lower Murray Water as a service provider overall?

Base: All respondents (n=258), District (n=193), Millewa (n=15), Private diverters (n=50).

# Customers' rating of LMW's reliability in fulfilling their commitments has reached a four-year high

## Reliability of LMW doing what they say they will do in the past 12 months (%)

Rating on scale of 1 to 10



\* Caution: Small sample size (n<15).

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

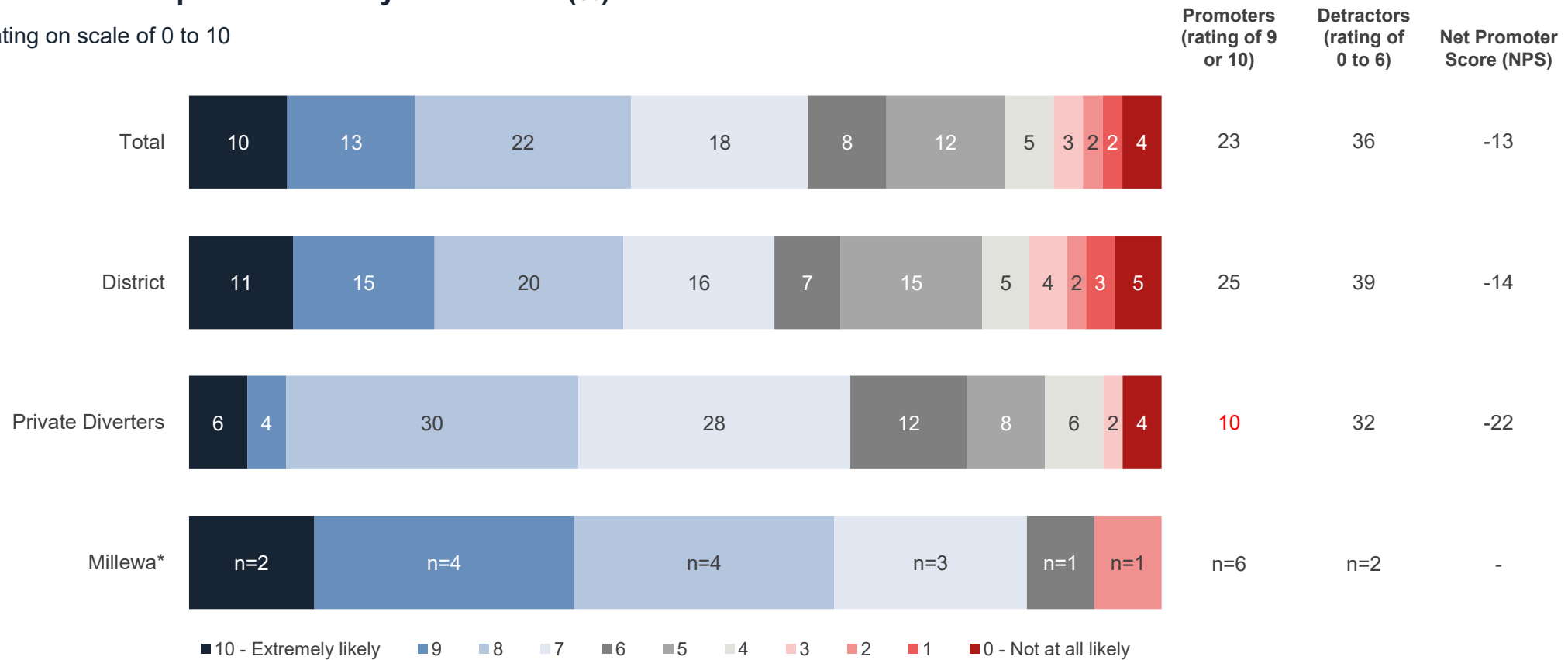
Q3a. Thinking about the past 12 months, how do you rate the reliability of Lower Murray Water to do what they say they will do?

Base: All respondents (n=248), District (n=189), Millewa (n=14), Private diverters (n=45).

# Private diverters are less likely than average to speak favourably about LMW

## Likelihood to speak favourably about LMW (%)

Rating on scale of 0 to 10



2024:  
-27

\* Caution: Small sample size (n<30).

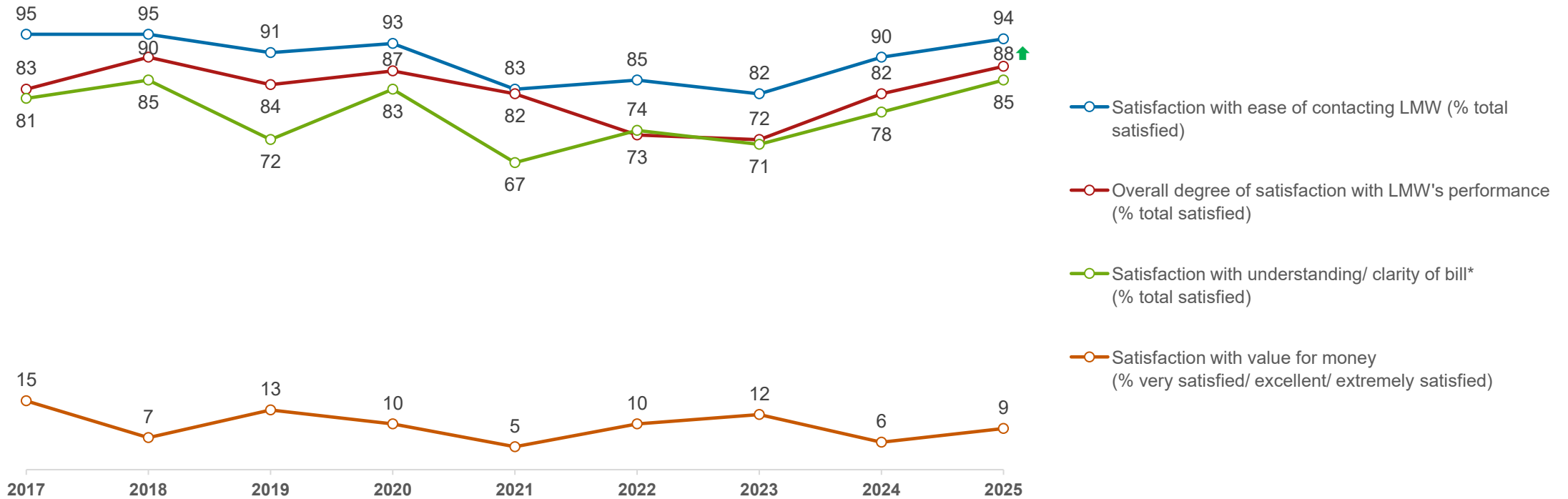
Significantly **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence level.

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

Base: All respondents (n=258), District (n=193), Millewa (n=15), Private diverters (n=50).

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

## Rural Customer Satisfaction Survey results 2017-2025 trend



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

\* In 2020 and 2021, District and Millewa customers only.  
 Significantly higher ↑ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence level.  
 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: 2025 All respondents (n=248-258). Base of Q13: Millewa and District customers (n=200).


# Considerations

<b>Preference for current rates even as perceptions of affordability improve</b>	Perceptions of the affordability of the water supply has improved significantly since the previous evaluation (76%, up from 56%). Views of affordability are significantly higher among rural customers aged 65 years and over (85%). That said, almost four times as many rural customers prefer to maintain current service levels rather than pay more for enhanced services.
<b>LMW continues to perform well in customer service</b>	Positive ratings for LMW’s customer service in ease of contact and responding in a reasonable timeframe continues to rise across four consecutive years, reaching its highest (or equal highest) level. However, among customers who did not recall being given a timeframe for resolution of their query, 28% felt the time taken was unreasonable. Providing an indication of when customers can expect a response could strengthen perceptions of timely service.
<b>Customers aged 65 years and over are more satisfied</b>	Customers aged 65 years and over give higher ratings for several aspects of LMW’s water supply and customer service responsiveness, a positive result given they represent over half of rural customers (54%). While younger customers’ satisfaction is not significantly lower, there is room for improvement.
<b>Reputational ratings among private diverters sees decline</b>	While overall trust and reputation ratings among private diverters are in line with the average, strong ratings (i.e. those indicating the highest levels of trust in LMW and its reputation in the community) are significantly lower among this group compared to the average. Private diverters are also less likely to be a ‘promoter’ and speak favourably about LMW. This cohort may warrant further attention.
<b>Steady improvements on key satisfaction metrics</b>	Overall satisfaction with LMW as a service provider and with value for money is significantly higher compared to the 2024 result. While not statistically significant, this year also saw steady improvements across other key metrics like ease of contact and bill understanding and clarity. This is a positive result for Lower Murray Water and efforts should focus on maintaining these improvements in the year ahead.



**There are over 6,000 LMW rural customers...**

**Find out what they're thinking.**

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