2017
Client & Stakeholder Research
Final Report

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority

18 January 2018

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
Level 4 Casselden
2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Attention: Vera Rourke, Senior Communications Officer

Dear Vera,

Please find enclosed the 2017 Client and Stakeholder Research Final Report.

We are pleased to report that both the quantitative and qualitative fieldwork progressed smoothly, and yielded considerable insights into the experiences of those interacting with the VRQA.

As in previous years, the response rate to the education providers survey was very high (64%), meaning that that the results are statistically robust, and can be relied on as a true indicator of the sentiment across these stakeholders. The inclusion of surveys of apprentices and trainees, along with their employers, had predictably lower response rates (due to the lower engagement of these groups), but offer new insights nonetheless. Qualitative respondents, too, were generous with their time, and generally appreciated the opportunity to provide input into this work.

Thank you for your guidance and input throughout.

If you have any queries regarding the report, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best regards,

Josephine Foti
Director

Josh Flack
Account Director

Key take outs

Satisfaction & Effectiveness
Continued high levels of satisfaction and perceptions of VRQA effectiveness.

Awareness
Low awareness of VRQA among employers and apprentices and trainees.

Relationship
At the stakeholder level, strong relationships underpin the interactions between key organisations: people can pick up the phone and get things done.

Opportunities

VRQA has the platform to take forward and better promote its proactive approach and lead sector-wide changes.

Opportunity to increase awareness amongst employers and apprentices and trainees to ensure they know about the functions of VRQA. Ultimately if awareness increases it may allow for more timely resolution of issues.

This is a strength of the sector – but there is another side to the coin. Potentially more difficult or overwhelming for smaller providers.

This also presents a succession planning risk. VRQA may wish to explore developing the 'next generation' of strategic relationships.

Key take outs

Opportunities

Communication

Communications are well regarded, though a number of opportunities were highlighted.

Guidelines and factsheets are seen to be extremely useful however are not widely utilised. Potential for VRQA to encourage usage.

The website and e-news are very popular however are relatively less useful. Focus needs to be on improving usefulness and communicating benefits to users.

Child Safe Standards

The CSS roll out and support systems have been very well received.

Potential to use this process as a model for future initiatives also taking on board lessons learnt.

Sector Differences

Markedly different results across the VET and school sectors across almost all measures: Schools much more positive regarding VRQA systems, processes and results.

Important to exhibit understanding of sectoral differences across communication, engagement and systems. There is a hunger within the VET sector for VRQA to take a more active role.
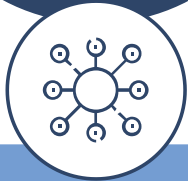
Introduction

Research objectives

Knowledge

Client and stakeholder understanding of the VRQA and its functions
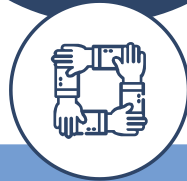
The level of client and stakeholder awareness of the VRQA and its functions

Expectations

Client and stakeholder expectations

(including types of support expected and valued)

How clients and stakeholders would like to engage with the VRQA

Delivery

Areas for improvement in VRQA performance in engaging clients and stakeholders
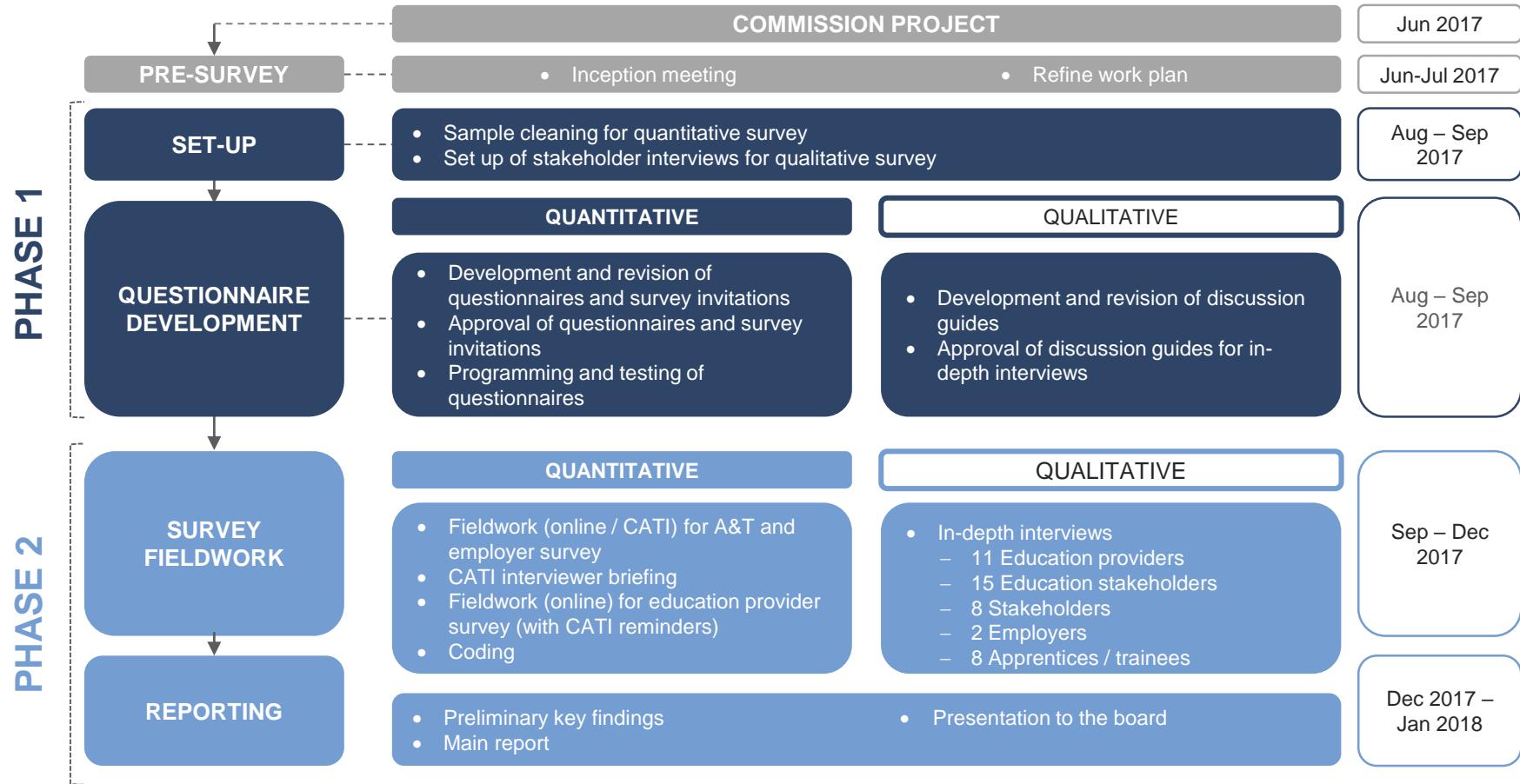
How clients and stakeholders would like to receive communication from the VRQA

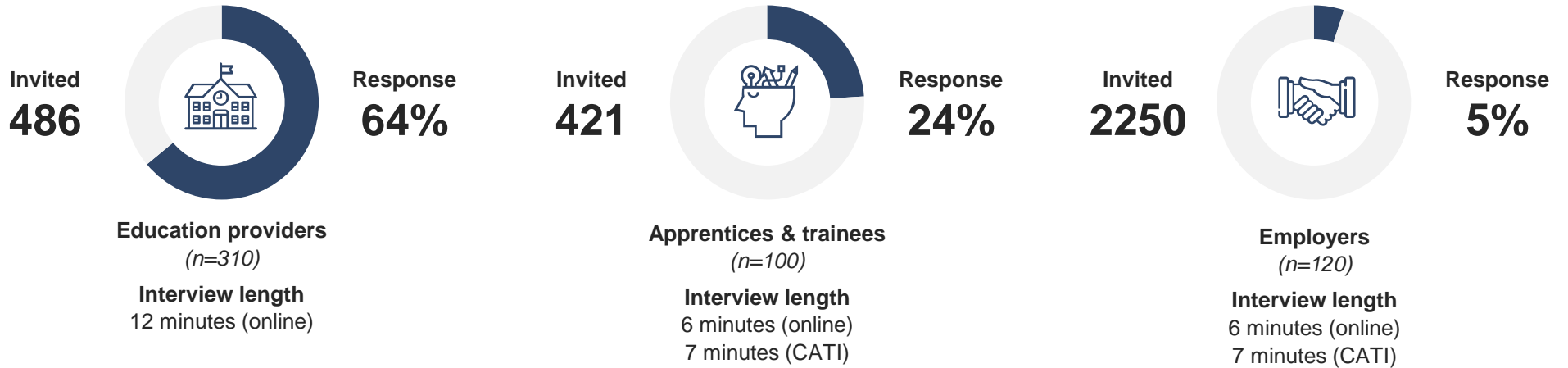An understanding of levels of and shifts in satisfaction amongst clients

Methodology

	COMMISSION PROJECT		Jun 2017
PRE-SURVEY	• Inception meeting	• Refine work plan	Jun-Jul 2017

PHASE 1

SET-UP	• Sample cleaning for quantitative survey • Set up of stakeholder interviews for qualitative survey	Aug – Sep 2017

	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE	
QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT	• Development and revision of questionnaires and survey invitations • Approval of questionnaires and survey invitations • Programming and testing of questionnaires	• Development and revision of discussion guides • Approval of discussion guides for in-depth interviews	Aug – Sep 2017

PHASE 2

	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE	

SURVEY FIELDWORK	• Fieldwork (online / CATI) for A&T and employer survey
	• CATI interviewer briefing
	• Fieldwork (online) for education provider survey (with CATI reminders)
	• Coding
		• In-depth interviews
		  – 11 Education providers
		  – 15 Education stakeholders
		  – 8 Stakeholders
		  – 2 Employers
		  – 8 Apprentices / trainees
			Sep – Dec 2017

REPORTING	• Preliminary key findings • Main report	• Presentation to the board	Dec 2017 – Jan 2018

Note: All fieldwork (both qualitative and quantitative) was conducted in Victoria.

Field results

Quantitative results

Invited
486

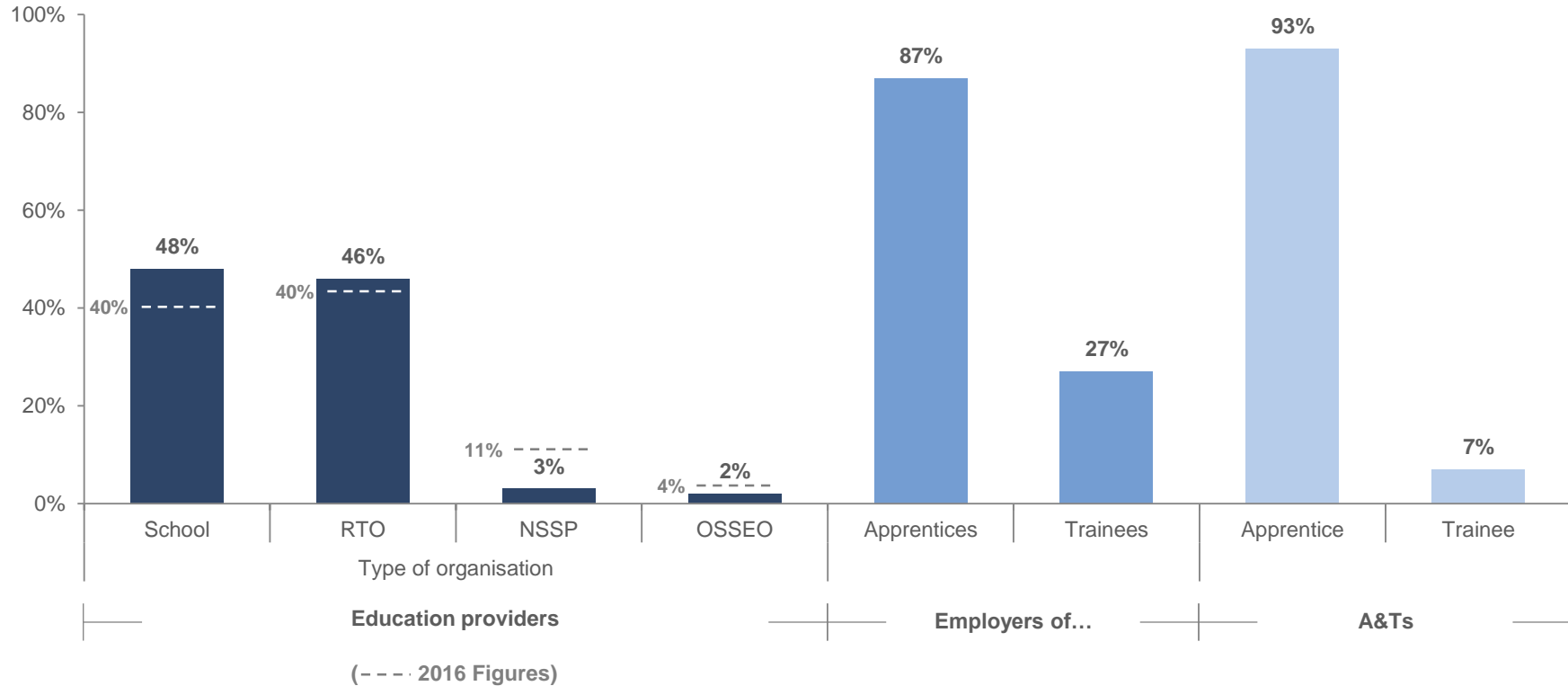**Response**
64%

Education providers
(n=310)
Interview length
12 minutes (online)

Invited
421

Response
24%

Apprentices & trainees
(n=100)
Interview length
6 minutes (online)
7 minutes (CATI)

Invited
2250

Response
5%

Employers
(n=120)
Interview length
6 minutes (online)
7 minutes (CATI)

Qualitative results

15 Education stakeholders

11 Education providers

8 Apprentice & trainee stakeholders

8 Apprentices & trainees

2 Apprentice & trainee employers

Population demographics

The education provider survey was completed mostly by schools and RTOs, in even proportions

Chart showing percentages by organisation type. Education providers (Type of organisation): School 48% (2016: 40%), RTO 46% (2016: 40%), NSSP 3% (2016: 11%), OSSEO 2% (2016: 4%). Employers of…: Apprentices 87%, Trainees 27%. A&Ts: Apprentice 93%, Trainee 7%.

(– – – 2016 Figures)

Potential methodological refinements for 2018

Quantitative

Employers

Negotiate access to DELTA 'opt ins' would likely increase response rate – cost neutral
PAL – Send hardcopy primary approach letter – $
Formal incorporation of Telephone/Online – $

Education providers

Field project earlier in the year (Term 3) – cost neutral
Incorporate telephone reminders – $
Incorporation of Telephone/Online – $

Apprentices & trainees

Incorporate SMS with embedded link to online survey – $

Qualitative

Stakeholders

Scope to administer mini online survey to all stakeholders – potentially include question relating to effectiveness & suggested improvements and recruitment to depth interview - $

Government stakeholders

Sample – Government stakeholders – VRQA to include more information regarding the nature of the relationship – cost neutral
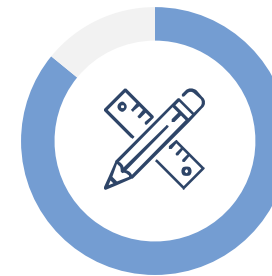
Satisfaction and assessment of effectiveness

Education providers continue to report high levels of satisfaction with VRQA – significantly different sentiment between schools & RTOs

Satisfaction has retreated slightly from 2016's high

% Satisfied education providers

- 2011: 67%
- 2012: 63%
- 2013: 74%
- 2014: 74%
- 2015: 81%
- 2016: 85%
- 2017: 82%
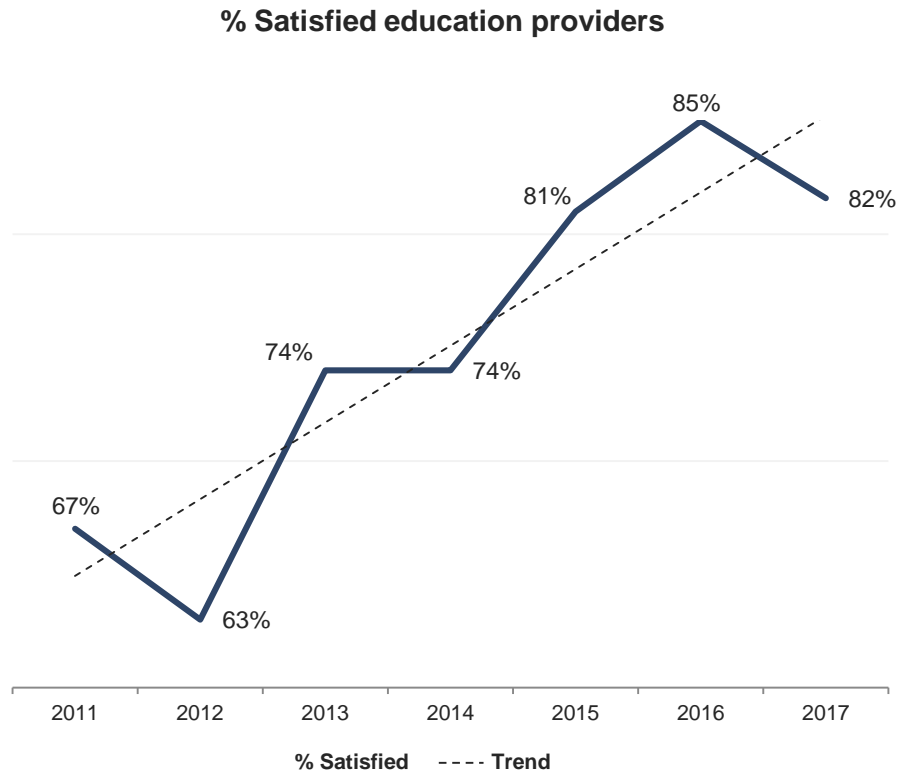
% Satisfied - - - - **Trend**

"Satisfied" Top 2 box

School
86%

RTO
77%

EPS 10: Overall, how satisfied are you with the VRQA and its services over the last 12 months?
Base: All (n=310)

Customer service and proactivity are reasons mentioned for very satisfied education providers

Very dissatisfied reasons include complexity of processes and use of jargon

RTO

We are a Not-for-profit Community RTO. VRQA treat us as a Private RTO. Its chalk and cheese. We are TOTALLY different. VRQA double up on compliance requirements Skills Vic has. Can't they talk to each other and streamline processes? So much tedious doubling up of everything. Waste of their time and our time.

RTO

Obscure, confusing, full of acronyms, reactive rather than proactive, does not listen to what industry needs.
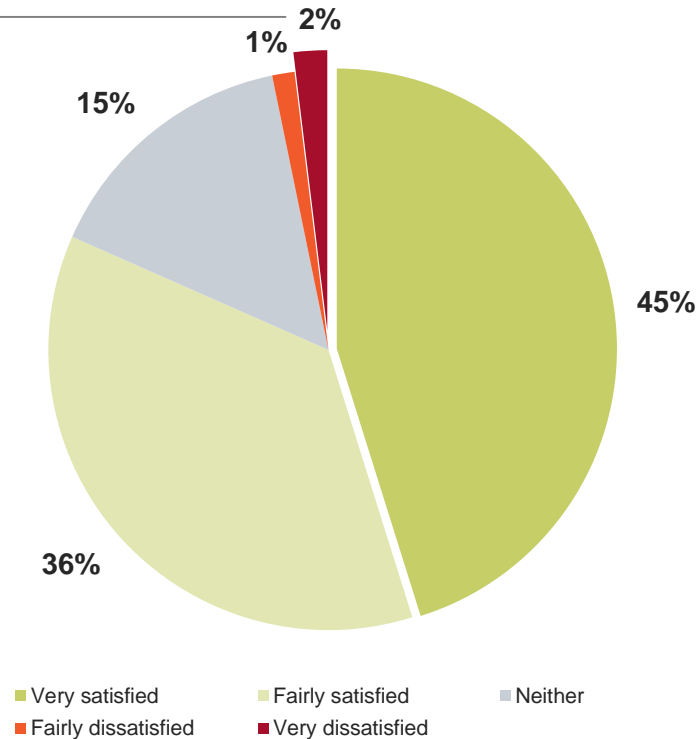
School

The VRQA staff are always exceptionally helpful when assistance / advice is required.

School

I have always had all queries answered in a timely manner and they have been very supportive of my efforts in getting a very sick school up and running again. Thank you.

RTO

Quick and effective responses to inquiries and extension to scope applications.

School

VRQA is responsive, approachable, informative, consistent and willing to consider feedback.

Pie chart values: 2%, 1%, 15%, 36%, 45%

Legend:
- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

EPS 10b: What is the main reason for your [satisfaction/dissatisfaction]?
Base: Those who were either very satisfied (n=140) or very dissatisfied (n=6) at Q10
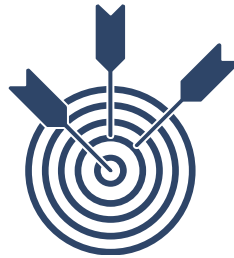
Schools and RTOs perceive VRQA as an effective regulator
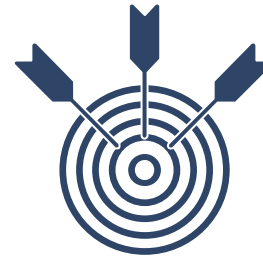
Schools are more emphatic in this assessment

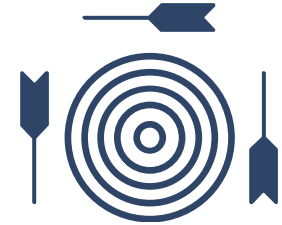### Highly effective

School	RTO
52%	**39%**

Fairly effective

School	RTO
47%	**53%**

Not very effective

School	RTO
1%	**6%**

Not at all effective

School	RTO
0%	**2%**

> **Education provider**
>
> *They understand schools. That's what I appreciate about a regulator… they don't come from outside the school experience… they understand the core business of education and schools, which is a good thing.*

> **Education provider**
>
> *You used to dread them coming and it was always such hard work whereas now it just seems to me what they're on about is doing what they should be doing… regulating… and assisting the ones who are doing the right thing and weeding out the ones who aren't…*

> **A&T stakeholder**
>
> *I think I would have to say 'effective', despite the fact that I think there are system issues that have a substantial impact. When I think of the complexity of their regulatory remit, my impression is that overall they must be effective, but around the issue of apprenticeship administration, I would say 'not effective'.*

EPS 9: Thinking about how effective the VRQA has been in performing its regulatory function, would you rate the VRQA as being…
Base: All (n=310)

Stakeholder perceptions – effectiveness (areas of strength)

Flexibility

Education system owners representing a diverse range of education systems/perspectives were happy that VRQA was able to respectfully understand their approach to education, and work with them to ensure compliance

> Education stakeholder

VRQA has adapted, taking on-board their learnings. As an example, occasionally, a non-government school goes under. VRQA has instituted process for such situations. For example, VRQA has learnt to give more advance warning with regard to this. They also offer more support to families affected.

Knowledge

Some stakeholders were impressed at the deep knowledge VRQA had of their system – this meant that VRQA could be effective in the ways in which they interacted

> Education stakeholder

Something very specific/intricate came up regarding the (xxx) sector. The senior VRQA staff showed complete understanding/awareness, and were therefore able to provide good advice and support. They should maintain this and keep working on it.

Stakeholder perceptions – effectiveness (areas of strength) *continued*

Relationship

VRQA works 'alongside' the sector to ensure that regulations are met, for the best interests of students.
Some stakeholders had been interacting with VRQA for a long time, and were very comfortable to *'pick up the phone to Lynn'*

Education stakeholder

We share a good relationship with VRQA. As a result the interaction between us has always been really good.

Education stakeholder

Well at both (upper and lower) levels, we've always found dealing with VRQA has been excellent. Their staff are very responsive to questions. We certainly get the very strong impression that we are all in this together … we're all on about best education … and the regulatory nature of providing best education, and the VRQA works with us in that regard. It's a very strong, productive relationship.

Stakeholder perceptions – effectiveness (areas for improvement)

Tick-box focus

Tendency to focus on 'tick-box' driven compliance which may not necessarily line up with the quality of education and training.

> A&T stakeholder

If I have a reservation, it's that I don't think that the quality of training is at the very centre of their operations.

Contractor quality

Challenges with the outsourced contractors' levels of knowledge.

> Education stakeholder

VRQA school reviewers (from consulting firms) haven't always had a good understanding of some of the smaller more idiosyncratic schools. The reviewers tend to be ex-principals or other ex-senior staff, often from government or Catholic schools, and tend to see things through that frame of reference. Often they're not as open to less mainstream school systems.

> A&T stakeholder

Everything pretty much went off the rails after they started outsourcing to (agency). They should have kept their regulatory field work team in house, now they have contractors who are slow.

Stakeholder perceptions – effectiveness (areas for improvement) *continued*

Communication

Some stakeholders highlighted slow communications, or a perception that VRQA would 'go quiet' if they were unable to deal with something.

> ❝ A&T stakeholder
>
> *VRQA should be on board from the very start, but you just don't get anything out of them. There is no communication. If we ring them and they don't like the answer, or if they don't have an answer they just drift into the wind… either they are all just sitting there asleep at their desk or they are just so busy they don't have the man power to actually do it.*

Scope for greater innovation in approach

Often VRQA works alongside other regulators and government departments. Some stakeholders felt that VRQA was a bit of an 'old school regulator' and stuck too much to their immediate responsibilities. Scope to work more collaboratively and innovatively on areas of responsibility that overlap.

> ❝ A&T stakeholder
>
> *I think the willingness (for more collaborative work) is there, but I just think: capacity. Enormous demands on both our organisations probably gets in the way.*

Education providers view the VRQA as an essential component of the education system underpinning quality of education and training outcomes
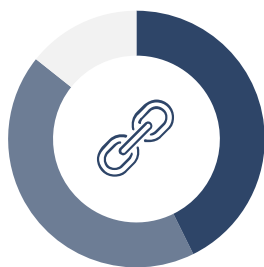
This sentiment was also echoed by stakeholders

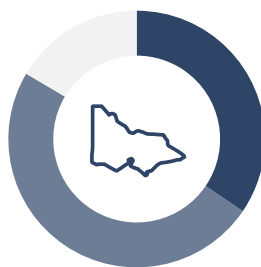**The VRQA contributes to the quality of Victoria´s education and training sector**

School
85%
RTO
87%

The VRQA engages appropriately with the regulated community

School
85%
RTO
77%

The VRQA improves the quality of VET outcomes in Victoria

RTO
83%

The VRQA promotes and encourages continuous improvement of registered training organisations

RTO
85%

■ Fully agree
■ Mostly agree

RTO

(VRQA should continue) Keeping RTOs up to date with regulatory requirements to ensure compliance and best outcomes for our students.
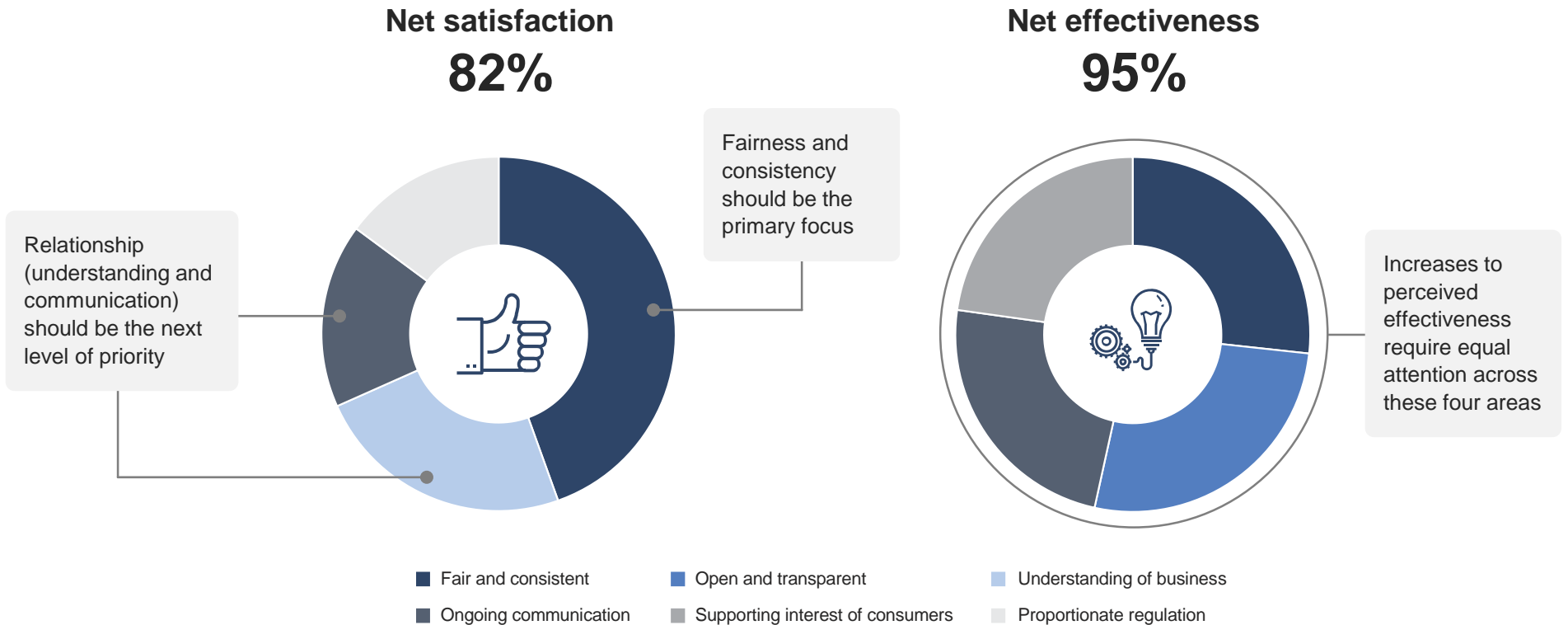
Education provider

Clearly they wanted us to succeed. The woman from VRQA…really worked with us to straighten us up and get everything that needed to be in order, in order, so that they could register us.

Education provider

When it comes to important compliance issues around safety and wellbeing, premises and all those things.. they need to do the things they do because someone needs to hold us providers to account.

EPS 8: Thinking about VRQA's regulatory work, to what extent do you agree with the following?
Base: 8A & 8B All (n=310); 8C & 8D VET providers only (n=171)

Priority levers for improving satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of VRQA for education providers

Net satisfaction

82%

Net effectiveness

95%

Fairness and consistency should be the primary focus

Relationship (understanding and communication) should be the next level of priority

Increases to perceived effectiveness require equal attention across these four areas

- ■ Fair and consistent
- ■ Open and transparent
- ■ Understanding of business
- ■ Ongoing communication
- ■ Supporting interest of consumers
- ■ Proportionate regulation

Awareness of VRQA

Low levels of awareness of VRQA

Close to half of A&Ts and employers were unaware of VRQA and only a quarter were familiar with its activities

26%

Employer
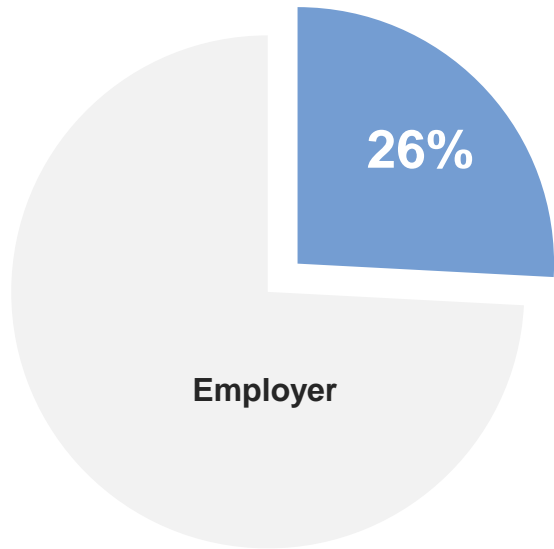
Yes, I'm aware of the VRQA and what it does

20%

Apprentices & trainees
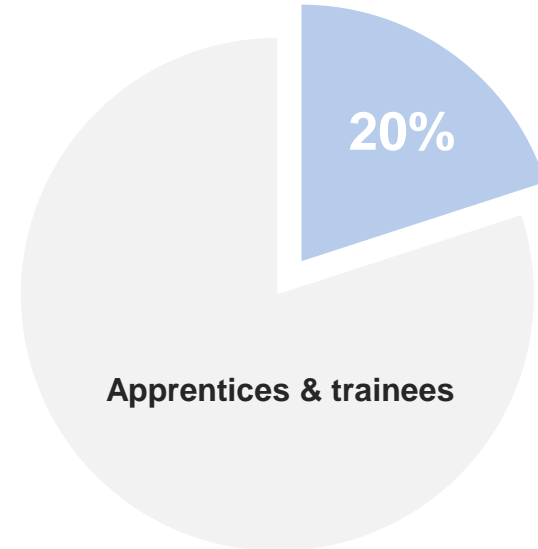
> **"** Apprentice / trainee
>
> *When I filled out the survey I didn't even know what you were talking about.*

ATE 1: Are you aware of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and the role it plays?
Base: ALL (n=220)

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Lack of awareness of VRQA has led to uncertainty for some

> **Apprentice / trainee**
>
> *My school thinks that my work didn't give me enough training and that I should look for employment elsewhere, whereas my work thinks that my school is really dodgy. But it's my boss's job to change my schools if he wants to and he hasn't… that has been quite confusing for me, it's hard to know, get an outside opinion to say 'no, your school's dodgy' or 'your work's dodgy' because it's hard to tear my loyalty between the two.*

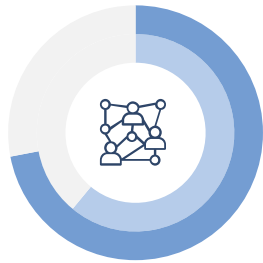> **Apprentice / trainee**
>
> *I don't know much about them so if they're not supportive now, I wonder how supportive they're going to be… if I'm not actively hearing from them then you kind of feel like you're a number.*
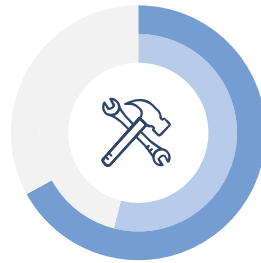
Apprenticeship network providers and RTOs are the first port of call for seeking help

Apprenticeship network provider

Employer	A&T
72%	61%

RTO / TAFE

Employer	A&T
67%	54%

The training contract

Employer	A&T
33%	31%

VRQA
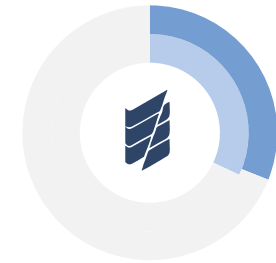
Employer	A&T
21%	32%

> **Apprentice / trainee**
>
> *Apparently at the TAFE, they have counselling programs… they would have that kind of information. It would be convenient to start there. I go there every week anyway so if something went wrong I could just go and see someone on my break… because they're a government institution I figure they would have the best access to what's available.*

> **Apprentice / trainee**
>
> *I spoke to FairWork regarding my traineeship. I just wanted more information from an external party that has all the information, all the correct information. I just called them and queried it – made sure the pay and everything was correct.*

ATE 2: Where would you go to for help with or clarification of an A&T matter if one came up?
Base: All (n=220)

Communication and relationships

Email and telephone contact are the preferred methods of communication for A&Ts and employers

Employers prefer email communication while A&Ts would rather a phone call

Email

Employer	A&T
83%	61%

Phone call

Employer	A&T
45%	66%

SMS

Employer	A&T
7%	33%

Postal mail

Employer	A&T
8%	17%

Social media

Employer	A&T
1%	5%
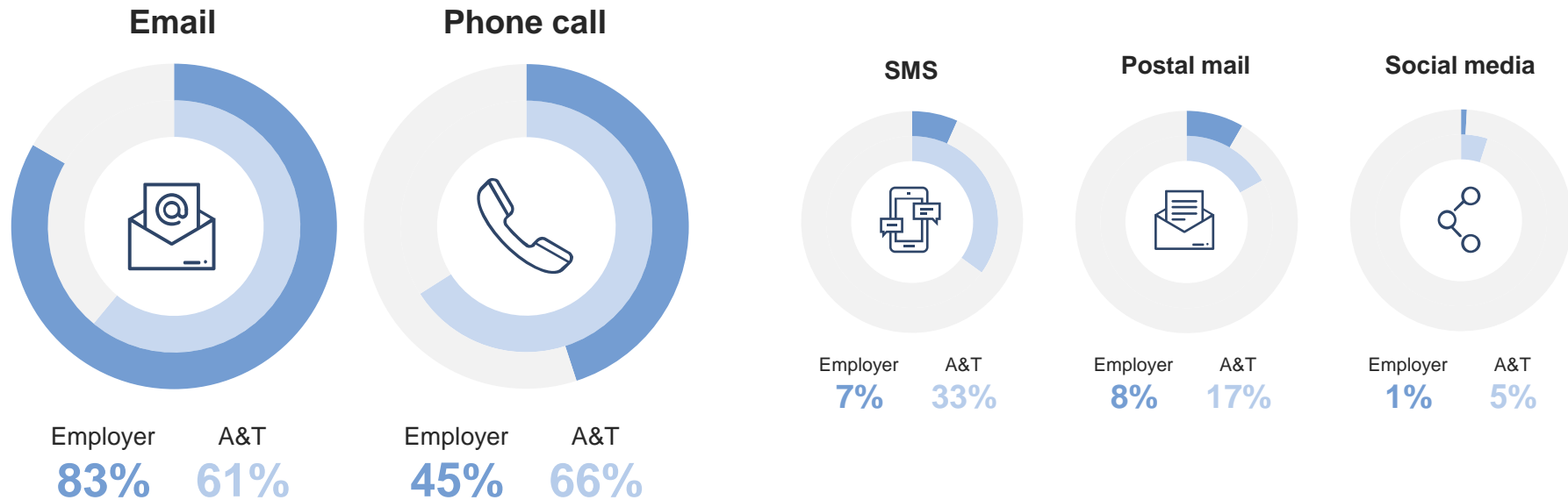
ATE 9 :If VRQA was to get in touch with you, what are your preferred methods of communication for them to use?
Base: All (n=220)

Top four communication channels used by education providers

The VRQA website is the key 'go to' resource
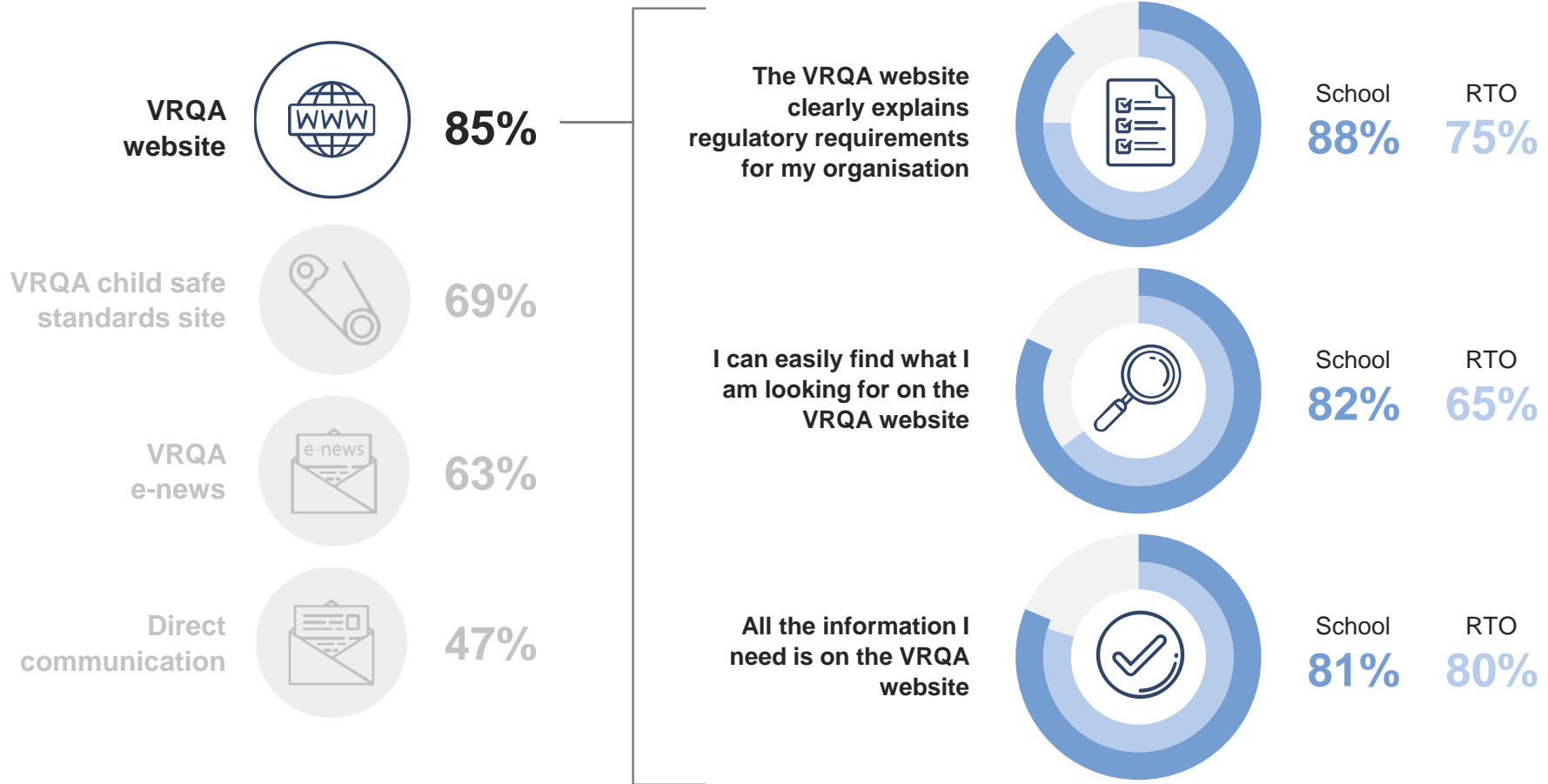
VRQA website — **85%**

VRQA child safe standards site — **69%**

VRQA e-news — **63%**

Direct communication — **47%**

The VRQA website clearly explains regulatory requirements for my organisation

School **88%**   RTO **75%**

I can easily find what I am looking for on the VRQA website

School **82%**   RTO **65%**

All the information I need is on the VRQA website

School **81%**   RTO **80%**

EPS 2a: Which of the following VRQA publications/communications have you accessed/used in the past 12 months? / EPS 3: Thinking about the VRQA website, to what extent do you agree with each of the following statements? Base: All (n=310)

Communication challenges for stakeholders

A small number of respondents felt that the VRQA could be 'officious', or unnecessarily curt on occasions. Balancing the need for direct and unambiguous communications with a more conversational or 'clear English' tone (when appropriate) is likely to be an ongoing area of consideration for VRQA.

> ❝ Education stakeholder
>
> *You look at a letter and it's a bit like Good Morning Mr Smith. We say good morning pursuant to section 44 of The Act that says each letter should start with the words good morning.' … They refer to the sections of the Act on everything they say … I let it skip past me because I'm used to working with the bureaucracy and it doesn't bother me, but it does bother some of the schools.*

Some respondents applauded the content and delivery of various VRQA communication materials, while pointing out that there was potential for 'information overload' when similar information was coming from other sources.

> ❝ Education stakeholder
>
> *To give you an example, with the child safe standards … obviously VRQA gave information about the standards and what was required for compliance, but so did ISV, the Department of Education, and CCV. The guys on the ground who were implementing it, they were working pretty hard to make sure various sources of information were the same and that the compliance sources weren't vague.*

Some had feedback regarding the website navigation and clarity.

> ❝ Apprentice & trainee stakeholder
>
> *(The website) changes a lot. Information on there is adequate, but sometimes hard to find, due to the website changes.*
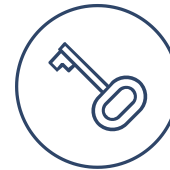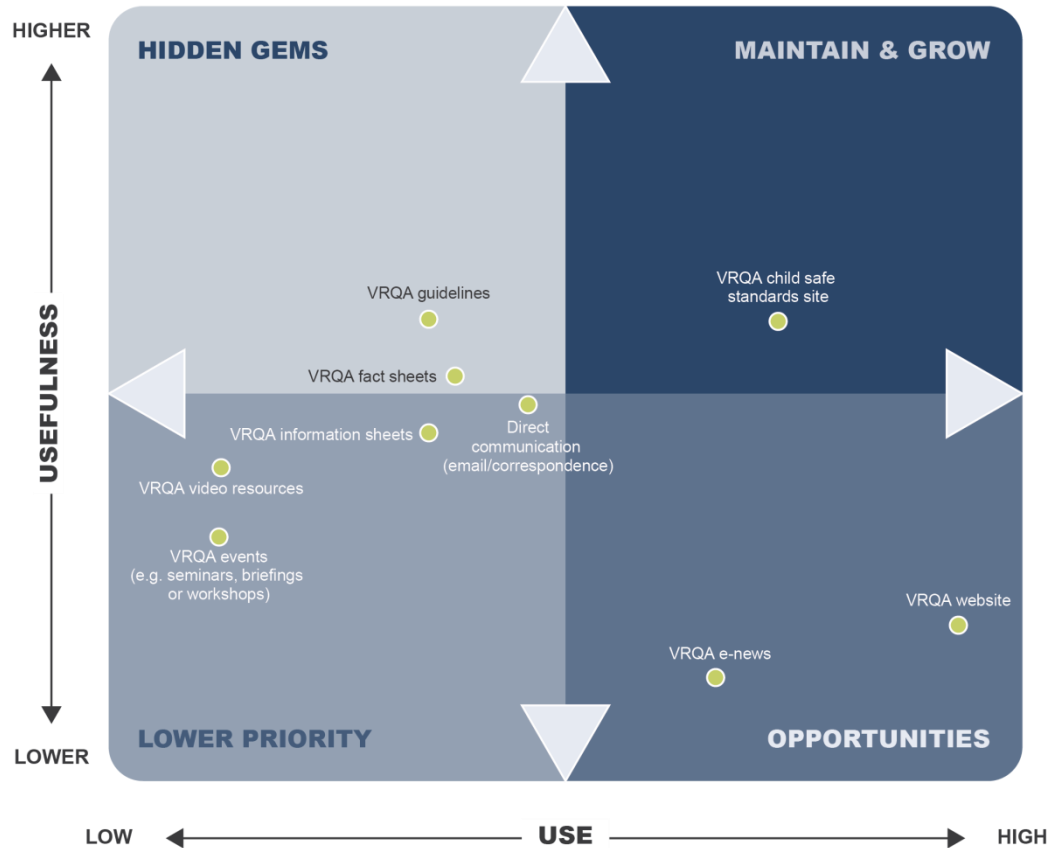
> ❝ Apprentice & trainee stakeholder
>
> *Often useful, but sometime information isn't always clear.*

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Opportunities exist for VRQA website & e-news

Guidelines and fact sheets are useful - potential to disseminate more widely

HIGHER

HIDDEN GEMS

MAINTAIN & GROW

USEFULNESS

VRQA guidelines

VRQA child safe standards site

VRQA fact sheets

VRQA information sheets

Direct communication (email/correspondence)

VRQA video resources

VRQA events (e.g. seminars, briefings or workshops)

VRQA website

VRQA e-news

LOWER PRIORITY

OPPORTUNITIES

LOWER

LOW ← USE → HIGH

Opportunities

E-news and the website widely accessed but found to be relatively less useful. Any improvements to the usefulness of the resources will have wide impacts

Hidden gems

VRQA guidelines and fact sheets widely acknowledged as useful, but relatively less accessed. Scope to give greater prominence to these resources

EPS 2a: Which of the following VRQA publications/communications have you accessed/used in the past 12 months? / EPS 3: Thinking about the VRQA website, to what extent do you agree with each of the following statements? Base: All (n=310)

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High levels of agreement that VRQA events keep education providers up to date

Higher levels of agreement among schools compared with RTOs

Fully / mostly agree

School	RTO
69%	**62%**

Partially agree

School	RTO
14%	**18%**

Do not agree at all

School	RTO
2%	**6%**

> **Education provider**
>
> *Whenever the VRQA runs workshops or information sessions for schools … meeting the people at the VRQA and realising that they're just average people really helps a lot, and it has meant that I'm much more likely now, having been to a few of these sessions, to ring them with a question.*

> **Education stakeholder**
>
> *That was great from our perspective (the stakeholder breakfast). We got to meet to a whole lot of people. They really get everyone in the room, and that's really to their credit. It's an opportunity for people to talk amongst themselves and to really think about the issues ... and then they spread their staff around the tables to make sure there are people there listening.*

> **Education stakeholder**
>
> *It's a good chance to make contact with people from the organisation, and make sure you can put faces to names…. I'm not necessarily convinced that's a great way to do that. It's a good opportunity… you're in a group, and you do get an opportunity to hear what other people have to say – that's useful – but because you're in a group, you don't as an individual, necessarily get as much opportunity, as you might in a conversation like this, to give much more detailed feedback.*

EPS 4: To what extent do you agree that VRQA events (e.g. seminars, information briefings or workshops) keep you up to date with the information you need for your operations in the sector? Base: All (n=310)

Most stakeholders have a positive and constructive relationship with the VRQA

Even though VRQA is the regulator, which can entail hard decisions/determinations, the relationship is usually positive

❝ School principal

We've crossed swords, and I've had to appeal a decision that's been made, but at all times everything has been dealt with in a very professional manner, even when they've had to say no … Even in hard times, I've had very positive dealings with the VRQA.

The VRQA is widely applauded for its understanding of the sector, and its ability to apply regulation appropriately to different educational contexts. The main exception to this is the feeling among some small schools, or not-for-profit RTOs that the VRQA does not appreciate their specific context

❝ School principal running non-mainstream school

The VRQA embrace difference; they embrace and enable alternative operations … they are actually willing to embrace and look at what is going on the ground, rather than being judgemental.

❝ RTO

When the auditor comes around, they're treating our (ESL) students (learning English basics) as if they're doing an accounting, or welding, or bookkeeping, or panel beating course.

❝ School principal

Particularly for very small schools, they really do struggle to find the resources to fully understand (new regulations/legislation). If you've got a best practice policy out there you can look at, you can ask 'Ok, what does it look like? What does it feel like in our context?' and amend it to your own context - that would be a great support.

VRQA processes and performance

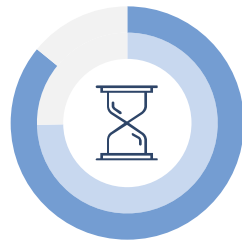# High ratings for VRQA customer service performance across both schools and RTOs

VRQA customer service is perceived more positively among schools compared to RTOS

Providing sufficient contact information so that I (or my organisation) can contact/recontact a VRQA staff member if necessary	Providing timely information about regulatory changes/general directions	Providing timely, quality advice about my sector to my organisation	Providing staff who are courteous and helpful	Engaging effectively with stakeholders, like my organisation, in the regulation of the sector
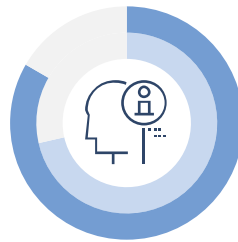
School	RTO	School	RTO	School	RTO	School	RTO
87%	**76%**	**86%**	**75%**	**83%**	**71%**	**82%**	**79%**
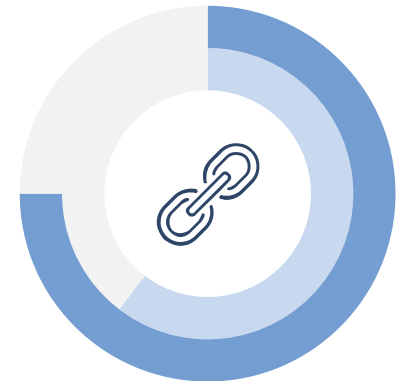
Ratings of excellent or good

School	RTO
75%	**60%**

Areas identified for improvement from those providing 'poor' ratings

Three key themes which emerged include – ambiguity, inflexibility and timeliness

Difficulty in determining exactly what is required

Their expectations of RTOs are not clearly articulated and when contacting the department, you will receive different answers based on who you speak to. This is even more evident when speaking to one of their contracted auditors. (RTO)

Bureaucratic

Information is bureaucratic. Staff will not provide definitive answers, rather they always prefer back to guidelines / standards. (RTO)

I don't feel that schools have any voice in lessening the compliance burden - which would require meeting stakeholders and implementing their suggestions. (School)

Delays in communicating

The VRQA do not respond at all or in a timely fashion, we have waited over six months for email replies, sometimes no replies at all, I have submitted scope additions for considerations, I haven't heard back, the communication needs to improve 100%, they expect us to respond to things in a specific timeframe, so they should as well. (RTO)

It took three months for a reply email to confirm receipt of Quality Indicator Report. Over phone couldn't get an answer to how long Police Checks were valid for. (RTO)

Most agree that VRQA operational processes are straightforward

VRQA forms are clear and easy to understand

School **91%**   RTO **84%**

Regulatory requirements are clearly stated

School **93%**   RTO **79%**

Procedures are easy to understand and follow
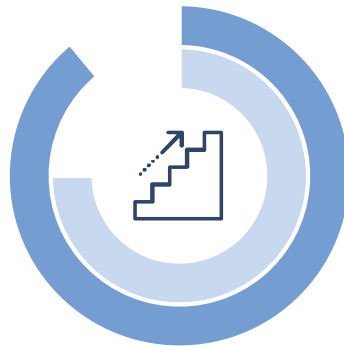
School **89%**   RTO **75%**

Other requirements, including evidence requirements are clearly stated

School **88%**   RTO **74%**

EPS 6: To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements relating to the VRQA's processes?
Base: All (n=310)

Education providers give overwhelmingly high ratings of VRQA performance

Half of the education providers 'fully agree' that VRQA is fair, consistent, open and transparent

					School Net Fully / Mostly	RTO Net Fully / Mostly
The VRQA has been fair and consistent	50%	39%	9%	3%	**83%**	**75%**
The VRQA has been open and transparent	49%	38%	11%	2%	**94%**	**80%**
The VRQA has been responsive	46%	43%	8%	2%	**92%**	**84%**
The VRQA has provided ongoing communication	43%	43%	13%	1%	**91%**	**88%**
The VRQA has supported the interest of consumers (parents and students)	35%	54%	8%	3%	**90%**	**82%**
The VRQA has understood your business	34%	45%	19%	2%	**88%**	**81%**
The VRQA has provided proportionate regulation	28%	56%	13%	3%	**92%**	**87%**

0%   100%

■ Fully agree   ■ Mostly agree   ■ Partially agree   ■ Do not agree at all

EPS 7: In the past 12 months, to what extent do you agree that the VRQA's performance aligned with each of the following?
Base: All (n=310)

Well entrenched upward trajectory for education providers on all measures

90%
89%
88%
87%
86%
84%

79%

68%
66%
64%
64%
63%
61%
56%

2012   2013   2014   2015   2016   2017

— understood your business
— been fair and consistent
— provided ongoing communication
— has supported the interest of consumers (parents and students)
— been open and transparent
— been responsive
— provided proportionate regulation
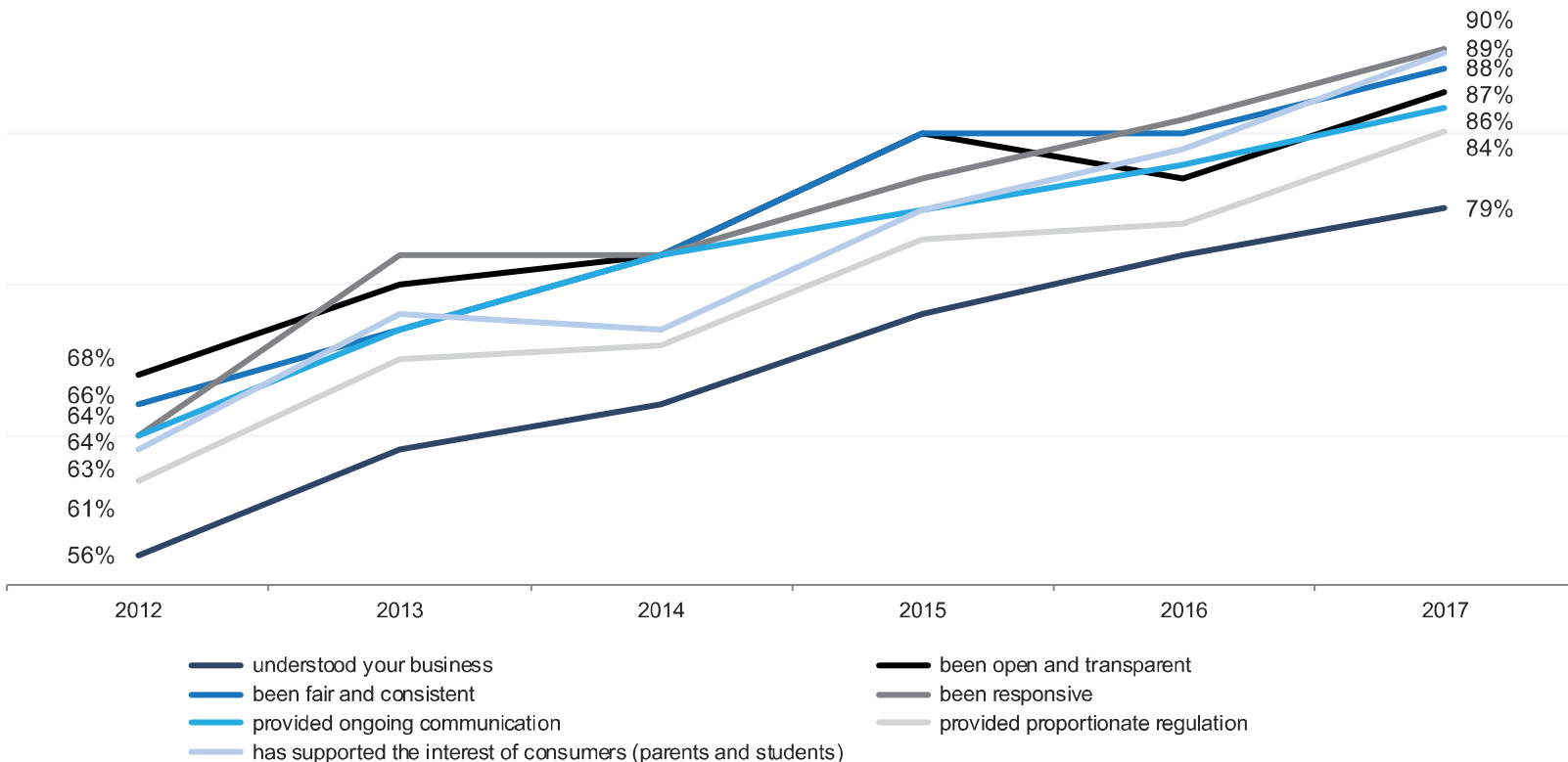
EPS 7: In the past 12 months, to what extent do you agree that the VRQA's performance aligned with each of the following?
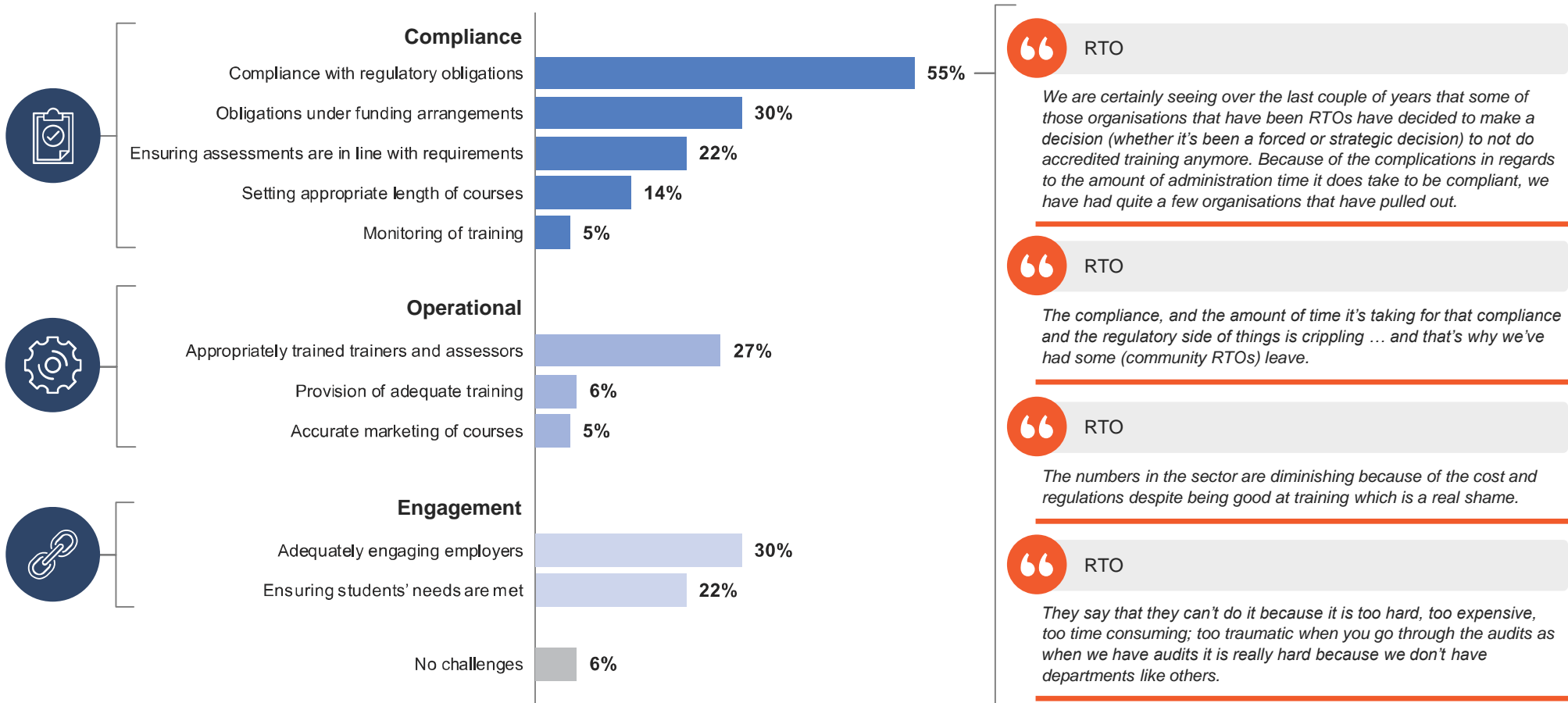*Base: All (n=310)*

RTOs

The biggest challenges for RTOs relate to compliance

Compliance

- Compliance with regulatory obligations — **55%**
- Obligations under funding arrangements — **30%**
- Ensuring assessments are in line with requirements — **22%**
- Setting appropriate length of courses — **14%**
- Monitoring of training — **5%**

Operational

- Appropriately trained trainers and assessors — **27%**
- Provision of adequate training — **6%**
- Accurate marketing of courses — **5%**

Engagement

- Adequately engaging employers — **30%**
- Ensuring students' needs are met — **22%**

No challenges — **6%**

RTO
We are certainly seeing over the last couple of years that some of those organisations that have been RTOs have decided to make a decision (whether it's been a forced or strategic decision) to not do accredited training anymore. Because of the complications in regards to the amount of administration time it does take to be compliant, we have had quite a few organisations that have pulled out.

RTO
The compliance, and the amount of time it's taking for that compliance and the regulatory side of things is crippling … and that's why we've had some (community RTOs) leave.

RTO
The numbers in the sector are diminishing because of the cost and regulations despite being good at training which is a real shame.

RTO
They say that they can't do it because it is too hard, too expensive, too time consuming; too traumatic when you go through the audits as when we have audits it is really hard because we don't have departments like others.

Q15: As an RTO, which of following aspects present your organisation with the greatest challenges?
Base: RTOs only (per Q1) (n=185)

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority

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Child safe standards

High levels of engagement and participation with child safe standards
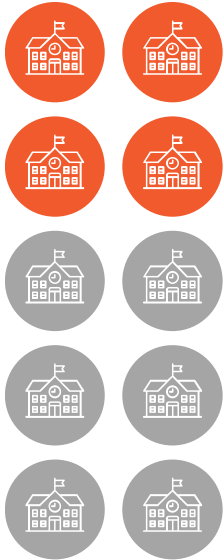
9 out of 10 schools agree:

- Governing body actively engaged with the CSS

- Our school community is actively engaged in the CSS

- CSS helped highlight the need for a culture of child safety at our school

- The materials and support from the VRQA have been helpful for our school in adopting the Child Safe Standards

4 out of 10 schools

require further help or support from VRQA

Opportunities for VRQA to provide further practical support

4 out of 10 schools

require further help or support from VRQA

Examples of good practice

" *Examples of excellent practice in relation to implementation of the standards.*

" *Information in continuing to develop best practice in Child Safe Standards is valued. Case studies of best practice in schools of different types, sizes and communities (e.g. rural vs city) would be helpful.*

" *Schools are required to meet the standards without practical useful models, samples or resources for what is actually required. Schools then invest an inordinate amount of resources attempting to achieve an unknown set of criteria.*

Continuing / ongoing support

" *Continuing advice on the Child Safe Standards will be helpful, particularly in the provision of seminars and materials on embedding the child safe standards into the curriculum. Links with reportable conduct would also be of value.*

" *Continued updated information assisting schools in meeting the standards.*

Fact sheets

" *Information sheets (simple).*

" *Instant information/fact sheets on regulation changes. Websites/video information that can be shared on changes.*

EPS 13: What kind of further support does your school require from the VRQA in implementing the Child Safe Standards?
Base: Those who at least partially agreed that their school requires further support from the VRQA in implementing the Child Safe Standards (Q12E = 1-3) (n=68)

The CSS website and downloadable fact sheets were most helpful for education providers

These sentiments echoed by stakeholders

Child safe standards website

41%

> Education stakeholder

> *The whole Child-Safe standards thing – they were very, very good through that whole process. And very mindful and respectful of the different types of schools … they were very sensible and grown-up in how they did that.*

Downloadable fact sheets and tip sheets

36%

> Education stakeholder

> *We use their website to look at what they're doing on child safe standards, and it's really good!*

> Education stakeholder

> *I think some information sessions would have helped.*

Video resources

13%

VRQA discussion tools

7%

> Education stakeholder

> *Rather than chasing multiple websites and looking for different forms, which is what occurred... It wasn't all the VRQA's fault… the fact that the Department and the VRQA were sending out information on the same thing, trying to complement each other, but it just confused people.*

EPS 14: Which of the following VRQA resources have been helpful for your school in the implementation of the Child Safe Standards?
Base: Those who at least partially agreed that the materials and support from the VRQA have been helpful for their school in adopting the Child Safe Standards (Q12b = 1-3) (n=150)

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& social research