Annual Client and Stakeholder Research 2016

Quantitative Research Report

EY Sweeney contacts: Adeline Ong and Jason Marriott
Client contact: Louise Mitchell
Project no. 26369
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31 January 2017

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
Attention: Louise Mitchell, Senior Communications Officer
Level 4 Casselden, 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

VRQA ANNUAL CLIENT AND STAKEHOLDER RESEARCH 2016

Dear Louise

Enclosed is the quantitative research report relating to the VRQA Annual Client And Stakeholder Research 2016.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the terms and conditions of the proposal accepted dated 5 October 2016.

We acknowledge and appreciate the assistance provided by Louise Mitchell in the performance of our work with regards to this project.

Please contact Dr Adeline Ong on 03 8650 7829 if you have any questions regarding this report.

Yours sincerely,

Lewis Jones
Managing Director - Melbourne
EY Sweeney

Dr Adeline Ong
Head of Education
EY Sweeney

EY Sweeney

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Executive summary
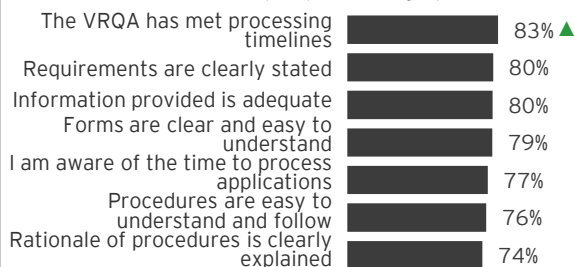
Executive summary

Satisfaction levels among providers are on the incline

Satisfaction with the VRQA has climbed to the highest level on record, with more than four in five in five satisfied with the organisation. Staff helpfulness and responsiveness, quality information and an easy to use website are key reasons for being satisfied with the VRQA.

% Very/fairly satisfied

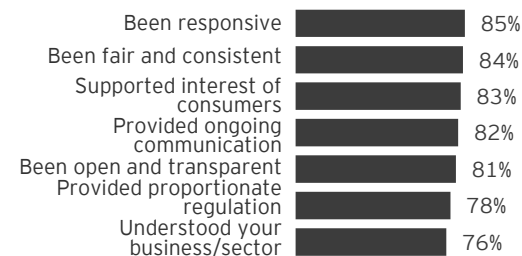| 2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
67%	63%	74%	74%	81% ▲	85%
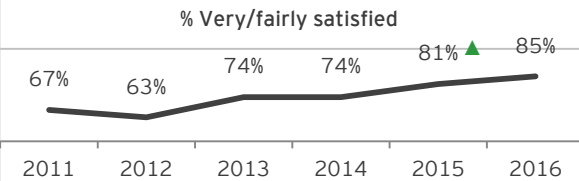
Perceptions of the VRQA's regulatory processes are highly rated

All measured aspects of the VRQA's regulatory performance are positively rated, with significant improvement shown in meeting processing timelines since 2015, up 8 percentage points.

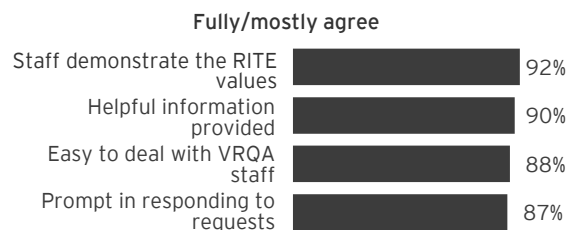|	
The VRQA has met processing timelines	83% ▲
Requirements are clearly stated	80%
Information provided is adequate	80%
Forms are clear and easy to understand	79%
I am aware of the time to process applications	77%
Procedures are easy to understand and follow	76%
Rationale of procedures is clearly explained	74%

Almost all providers rate the VRQA as being an effective regulator

95% of education providers rate the VRQA as being highly/fairly effective in performing its regulatory function. Responsiveness and consistency are most commendable aspects of the VRQA as a regulator

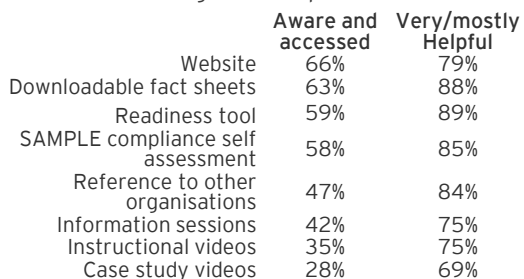|	
Been responsive	85%
Been fair and consistent	84%
Supported interest of consumers	83%
Provided ongoing communication	82%
Been open and transparent	81%
Provided proportionate regulation	78%
Understood your business/sector	76%

Positive customer service and staff experience

VRQA staff continue to demonstrate the RITE values and all aspects of customer service are commended, including the helpfulness of information provided, the ease of dealing with relevant staff and promptness in responding to requests.

Fully/mostly agree

Staff demonstrate the RITE values	92%
Helpful information provided	90%
Easy to deal with VRQA staff	88%
Prompt in responding to requests	87%

Providers have used a variety of VRQA child safe standards resources and consider them helpful

Education providers are aware of most of the VRQA's child safe standards resources. The website and downloadable fact sheets have highest usage with over three in five having accessed them before and most users finding them helpful.

	Aware and accessed	Very/mostly Helpful
Website	66%	79%
Downloadable fact sheets	63%	88%
Readiness tool	59%	89%
SAMPLE compliance self assessment	58%	85%
Reference to other organisations	47%	84%
Information sessions	42%	75%
Instructional videos	35%	75%
Case study videos	28%	69%

Better regulatory services to encourage proper training practices and better governance, and more practical help

The VRQA is perceived to have improved on regulating 'dodgy practices' by private RTOs however there is still work to be done in this area.

A call for better regulatory services that lead to better training practices and governance, and that support providers, are desired. There is an appreciation for simplified guidelines, better training, and personalised assistance to help deliver better outcomes for the sector.

"Each VET provider should be assigned a consultant that they can develop a relationship with to ensure they are kept and keeping up-to-date at all times … there should be a better focus on personal contact."

26369 – VRQA – Annual Client and Stakeholder Research 2016 – Report V5 – 31January 2017

EY Sweeney

Introduction

Background

▶ Established under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, the role of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is to regulate education and training providers in Victoria.

▶ The VRQA is committed to quality relationships with stakeholders as a strategic priority and has identified annual client and stakeholder research as an important feedback mechanism which has been conducted since 2008. EY Sweeney has conducted the annual research on behalf of the VRQA since 2011.

▶ Feedback is sought from six key audience groups:

- Education providers including independent schools, VET and RTOs, non-school secondary education providers and overseas student exchange organisations

- Education provider-related stakeholders

- Apprenticeships and Traineeships (A&T) apprentices and trainees

- Apprenticeships and Traineeships (A&T) employers

- Apprenticeships and Traineeships (A&T) stakeholders

- Apprenticeship and traineeship Group Training Organisations (GTOs)

▶ This report includes the quantitative findings only. A separate report has been prepared for the qualitative research. Trend comparisons have been made where possible.

EY Sweeney

Objectives

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority

The business objective is...

To provide longitudinal and representative insights into clients' and stakeholders' working relationship with the VRQA to enhance the reputation and satisfaction with the VRQA.

The research objective is...

To gather feedback from VRQA clients and stakeholders about their knowledge and experience with the agency, its products and services, and communication, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the dynamics of client and stakeholder needs and expectations.

In line with this, the specific needs of the research programme have been defined as follows:

1 Understand client and stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of the VRQA as a regulator

2 Gain insight into client and stakeholder perceptions of the VRQA's regulatory processes and communications

3 Identify the specific aspects of the VRQA's connections and engagement with clients and stakeholders including the areas for improvement in relation to VRQA regulatory processes and communications

4 Understand the industry trends, challenges, and business needs relevant to clients and stakeholders, and their resulting impact on their engagement with the VRQA

5 Establish an ongoing measure of client and stakeholder experience and satisfaction over time across various measures of the engagement process and monitoring shifts over time.

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Quantitative research

The study involved a qualitative and quantitative research program.

For the quantitative component, a total of 331 surveys with education providers were conducted. Details of the quantitative research program are summarised in the table below.

	Audience	Method	Fieldwork period	Duration
Quantitative research				
Education providers	Education providers regulated by the VRQA including the School/ VET/OSSEO sector	331 online surveys	2nd to 22nd November 2016	10 minutes

All contacts were provided by the VRQA.

To achieve the 331 completed surveys, a total of 506 participants were invited to participate in the online survey, where a completion rate of 65% (cf. 59% in 2015) was achieved (see formula below).

Note:

1   **Significance testing:** All results (where n≥30) have been tested for significance (measured at the 95% confidence level). Significant differences in results are highlighted as follows: ▲ for subgroups/yearly results that are significantly lower; and   ▼   for subgroups/yearly results that are significantly lower.

2   **Base sizes and descriptions:** Base sizes and descriptions for each question are noted for each table and chart. Where relevant, 'Don't knows/NAs' have been excluded and the respective sample sizes noted on the slides.

3   **Net delighted score:** This is a metric derived from responses to a satisfaction question and is calculated as follows: Net delighted = Very satisfied - Total dissatisfied.

4   **Completion rate:** In keeping with previous calculations, the completion rate is based on the number of completes over the total number of unique email invitations sent.

5   **Duplicates:** Due to the level of care and detail undertaken by the VRQA in preparing the lists, there were only a handful (<3) of duplicates. Participants who took on multiple roles at different organisations/institutions were asked to respond to the survey based on the main sector they represented.

EY Sweeney

Qualitative research

Details of the qualitative research program are summarised in the table below.

	Audience	Method	Fieldwork period	Duration
Qualitative research				
Education provider stakeholders	Stakeholders (i.e. Senior Executives) associated with the School/ VET/OSSEO sector	10 phone interviews (from a list of 24 contacts)	7th November – 14th December 2016	30 minutes
A&T stakeholders	Stakeholders (i.e., Senior Executives) associated with the A&T sector	5 phone interviews (from a list of 13 contacts)	7th November – 14th December 2016	30 minutes
Apprentices and trainees	Apprentices and trainees regulated by the VRQA	8 phone interviews[1] (from a list of 231 contacts)	7th November – 14th December 2016	30 minutes
A&T employers	Businesses employing apprentices and trainees	8 phone interviews[2] (from a list of 700 contacts)	7th November – 14th December 2016	30 minutes
A&T Group Training Organisations	GTOs that deliver training to apprentices and trainees	5 phone interviews (from a list of 40 contacts)	7th November – 14th December 2016	30 minutes

Similarly, all contacts for the qualitative research were provided by the VRQA.

Note:

[1] The focus group planned with apprentices and trainees proved difficult to recruit attendees, this was replaced by telephone interviews

[2] The workshop session with A&T employers also proved difficult to recruit, this too was replaced with telephone interviews

EY Sweeney

Findings in detail

Quantitative sample profile

Sector

🏫 **40%**
Independent School

📜 **11%**
Non- School Senior Secondary Provider

🛠 **44%**
VET/RTO Provider

🌐 **4%**
Overseas Secondary Student Exchange Organisation

Student enrolment size

None	2%
Up to 25	9%
26 to 50	10%
201 to 500	29%
51 to 200	20%
500+	31%

Location

68% Melbourne

32% Regional VIC

Other sector involvements

VET courses	21%
Non-School Senior Secondary	16%
No other courses	63%

VET type

- Enterprise 17%
- Commercial 32%
- Not for profit 51%

Role

Principal	37%
Vice Principal	2%
Director	10%
Assistant Director	1%
CEO	24%
Manager	21%
Administrator	5%

Time dealing with VRQA

Less than 1 year	0%
1 to 2 years	3%
2 to 3 years	3%
3 to 6 years	86%
Don't know	8%

S2.   Thinking about the sector you mainly operate in, which of the following best describes your organisation? (Base: All; n=331)
C2.   Approximately how many student enrolments did your organisation have across all the education and training programs you offered during 2014? Please provide your best estimate if you are not sure. (Base: All; n=331)
C1.   Where is your organisation based? If there is more than one location, please think of where your services are mainly offered. (Base: All; n=331)
S3.   Are you currently registered to deliver courses in other sectors and if so, what? (Base: All excluding OSSEO; n=317)
S4.   Which of the following best describes your organisation? (Base: VET sector; n=147)
S1.   Which best describes your role within your organisation? (Base: All; n=331)
C3.   To the best of your knowledge, how long has your organisation been dealing with the VRQA? (Base: All; n=331)

Working relationship with VRQA

Education provider satisfaction with the VRQA

▶ More than four in five (85%) education providers are very/fairly satisfied with the VRQA and its services in the past year

▶ Nett delighted scores have increased on last year's results, currently at +42 points

▶ Satisfaction levels are similarly high across subgroups

Satisfaction with the VRQA

Very/fairly dissatisfied 3%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 11%
Very satisfied 45%
Fairly satisfied 40%
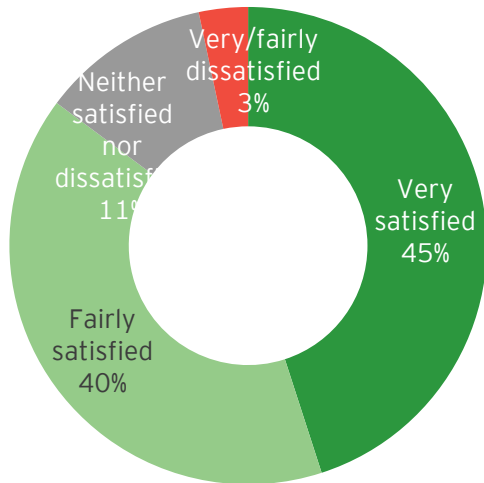
	2016		2015
	85%	Very/ fairly satisfied	**81%**
	+42	Nett delighted	**+35**

Subgroups

		(n=)	Very/fairly satisfied %
Total		(331)	85
Sector	School/OSSEO	(147)	89
	VET/RTO	(184)	82
Location	Melbourne	(226)	84
	Regional	(105)	89

Trends

% Very/fairly satisfied

67% (2011) 63% (2012) 74% (2013) 74% (2014) 81% ▲ (2015) 85% (2016)
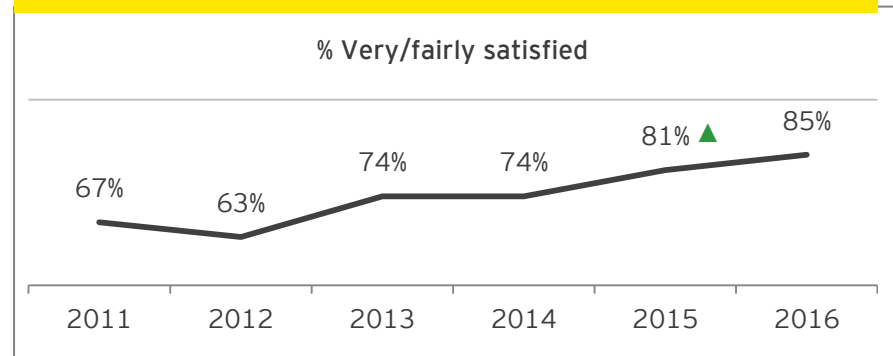
Base: All (n=331)
Note: Nett delighted score is a metric derived from responses to a satisfaction question and is calculated as follows = Those extremely satisfied – those very or fairly dissatisfied.
Q20a.   Overall, how satisfied are you with the VRQA and its services in the past 12 months?

EY Sweeney

Reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the VRQA

▶ Of those that are satisfied with the VRQA (n=282), education providers see the VRQA as being supportive (19%) and responsive (12%). 7% see the VRQA as having good communication and good information resources

▶ Among the few dissatisfied providers (n=11*), poor communication (n=3), a lack of support (n=3), and perceptions of an over regulated/restrictive system (n=2) are issues raised

Reasons for satisfaction *(Base: Satisfied with VRQA; n=282)*	(%)
Very helpful/supportive	**19%**
Prompt/ responsive	**12%**
Good communication	**7%**
Good information resources/helpful website	**7%**
No issues / OK	**6%**
Professional	**6%**
Easy to deal with	**5%**
Good Customer Service	**4%**

Reasons for dissatisfaction *(Base: Dissatisfied with VRQA; n=11*)*	(n)
Poor communication	**3**
Not supportive	**3**
Over regulated / system too restrictive	**2**
Not prompt / long response time	**1**
Unrealistic time frames	**1**
Rude communication	**1**
No understanding of marketplace	**1**

"

"Information distributed is clear, concise and easy to follow. Staff are genuinely helpful."

"As a regulator, VRQA is fair, supportive and focussed on improving the industry."

"I deal with regulators in all states and territories of Australia, and I find VRQA to be the most responsive, most transparent and also to offer the best services. VRQA is a benchmark for regulators in other states and territories to aspire to."

"Positive increase in deregulating non-compliant providers who adversely affect the training industry."

"The Child Safe Standard Conferences and the briefing I attended were informative and well run."

"I have not received responses to my emails"

"They fail to meet the commitments that they make ... we are then set completely ridiculous and unreasonable deadlines."

Base: Satisfied with the VRQA (n=282); Dissatisfied with the VRQA (n=11*) (includes those who opted out of answering the question)
Note: * Small base size (n<30). reported as number of mentions rather than percentages, Others not mentioned <4%
Q20b. Why do you say that?

EY Sweeney

Communication and information sources

VRQA website visitation

▶ Nine in ten education providers have accessed the website (89%), which is on par with previous year's visitation rates

▶ No significant differences are observed by subgroups

VRQA website visitation

Response	%
Yes, I have and I think others have	72%
Yes, I have but I don't think others have	17%
No, I haven't but I think others have	6%
No, I don't think anyone/no one has	4%
Not aware of website	1%

Subgroups

		(n=)	Yes, personally/others have accessed %
Total		(331)	89
Sector	School/OSSEO	(147)	85
	VET/RTO	(184)	92
Location	Melbourne	(226)	89
	Regional	(105)	89

Trends

% Yes, personally/others have

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
91%	90%	87%	88%	86%	89%

Base: All (n=331)
Note: 'Don't know' not shown
Q5.   Have you or if you're aware, has anyone else in your organisation accessed the VRQA website in the past 6 months?

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EY Sweeney

Specific aspects of the VRQA website

▶ The VRQA website continues to be well received with the website's comprehensive and up-to-date information improving over last year. Over four in five (85%) agree that the website keeps users up-to-date with sector information and 79% believe that it provides them with all the needed information. Around three-quarters agree that the website is easy to navigate (77%) and that information and forms are easy to find (73%)

▶ Significant improvements are observed in terms of perceptions of the adequacy of the website and how well it keeps users up-to-date with sector information

Legend: ● Fully agree ● Mostly agree ● Partially agree ● Not agree at all | **Fully/mostly agree %**

Statement	Fully agree	Mostly agree	Partially agree	Not agree at all	Fully/mostly agree %
The website keeps me up-to-date with useful information in my sector	25%	60%	13%	2%	85
All the information I need is on the VRQA website	25%	54%	18%	3%	79
The website is easy to navigate for my purpose	23%	54%	21%	2%	77
The information, guidelines, and application forms on the website are easy to find	17%	56%	24%	3%	73

Subgroups

	Total (294) %	Sector School/OSSEO (125) %	Sector VET/RTO (169) %	Location Melbourne (201) %	Location Regional (93) %
The website keeps me up-to-date with useful information in my sector	85	91 ▲	80 ▼	85	86
All the information I need is on the VRQA website	79	84	75	80	75
The website is easy to navigate for my purpose	77	86 ▲	71 ▼	78	75
The information, guidelines, and application forms on the website are easy to find	73	74	72	70	81

Trends

% Fully/mostly agree

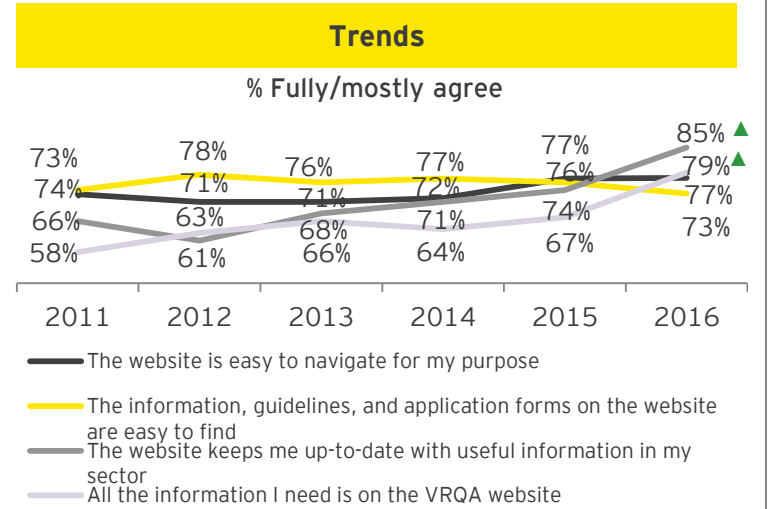|	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
The website is easy to navigate for my purpose	74%	71%	71%	72%	76%	77%
The information, guidelines, and application forms on the website are easy to find	73%	78%	76%	77%	77%	73%
The website keeps me up-to-date with useful information in my sector	66%	63%	68%	71%	74%	85% ▲
All the information I need is on the VRQA website	58%	61%	66%	64%	67%	79% ▲

Base: Accessed VRQA website in past 6 months (n=294)
Q6. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about the VRQA website?

EY Sweeney

Attendance at VRQA seminars, briefings, or workshops

▶ About half of providers have attended VRQA seminars and workshops in the last 12 months, which has risen since 2015
▶ School/OSSEOs are significantly more likely to have attended these events (61%) than VET/RTOs (45%), with no difference in attendance observed between regional and Melbourne based providers.

Attendance at VRQA seminars, briefings, or workshops

Response	%
Yes, I have and I think others have	39%
Yes, I have but I don't think others have	13%
No, I haven't but I think others have	20%
No, I don't think anyone has	20%
Not aware of any VRQA seminar/workshop	6%

Subgroups

		(n=)	Yes, personally/others have attended %
Total		(331)	52
Sector	School/OSSEO	(147)	61 ▲
	VET/RTO	(184)	45 ▼
Location	Melbourne	(226)	53
	Regional	(105)	50

Trends

% Yes, personally/others have

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
58%	47%	45%	40%	46%	52%

Base: All (n=331)
Note: 'Don't know' not shown
Q7. Have you or anyone else in your organisation attended a VRQA seminar, information briefing or workshop in the past 12 months?

EY Sweeney

Information provided at VRQA seminars, briefings, or workshops

▶ Nine in ten (88%) seminar/workshop attendees fully/mostly agree that the VRQA seminars, briefings, or workshops have been valuable in keeping them up-to-date with information they need for their operations in the sector. Perceptions of its value has been consistent in the last two years

▶ This view is consistently shared across subgroups

Information provided at workshops and seminars

Partially agree 12%

Not agree at all 0%

Mostly agree 44%

Fully agree 44%

2016	Fully/ mostly agree	2015
88%		**88%**
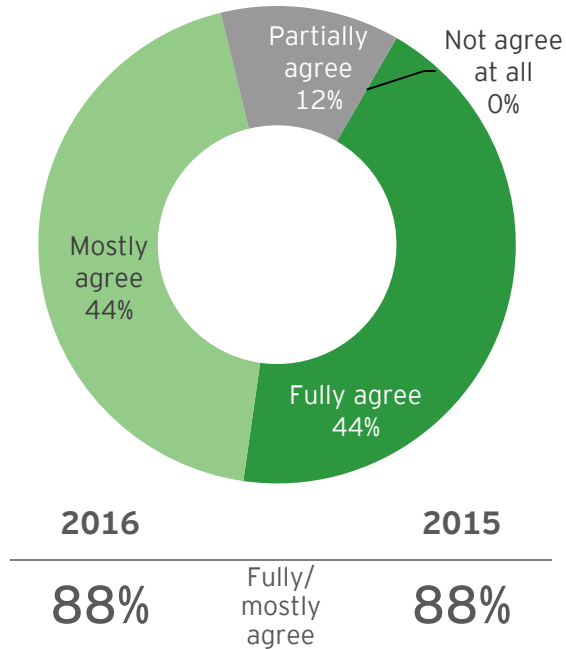
Subgroups

		(n=)	Fully/mostly agree %
Total		(173)	88
Sector	School/OSSEO	(90)	88
	VET/RTO	(83)	88
Location	Melbourne	(120)	88
	Regional	(53)	89

Trends

% Fully/mostly agree

76% · 78% · 91% · 88% · 88% · 88%

2011 · 2012 · 2013 · 2014 · 2015 · 2016
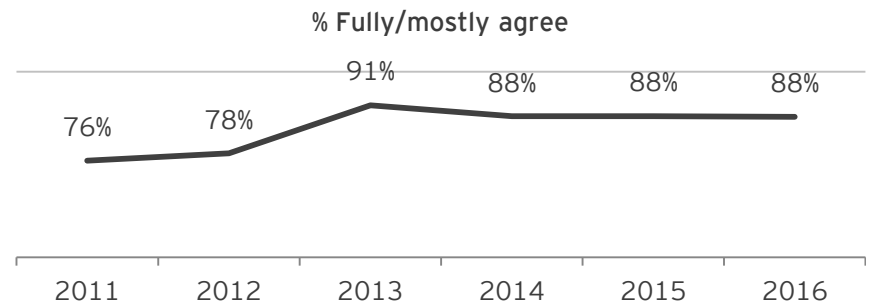
Base: Have personally attended a VRQA seminar, information briefing or workshop in the last 6 months (n=173)
Q8a. To what extent do you agree that VRQA seminars, information briefings or workshops keep you up-to-date with information you need for your operations in the sector?

EY Sweeney

Specific aspects of the VRQA seminars, briefings and workshops

- ▶ Almost all education providers find VRQA seminars, briefings and workshops to be valuable. Nine in ten education providers fully/mostly agree that the sessions are important to obtain regulatory information (91%) and that the information is relevant and useful (90%)
- ▶ A high percentage (73%) agree that they would like information from briefings as a web-based resource
- ▶ Although 71% agree that meetings are convenient to attend, regional providers are less likely to agree to this as compare to Melbourne providers

	Fully agree	Mostly agree	Partially agree	Not agree at all

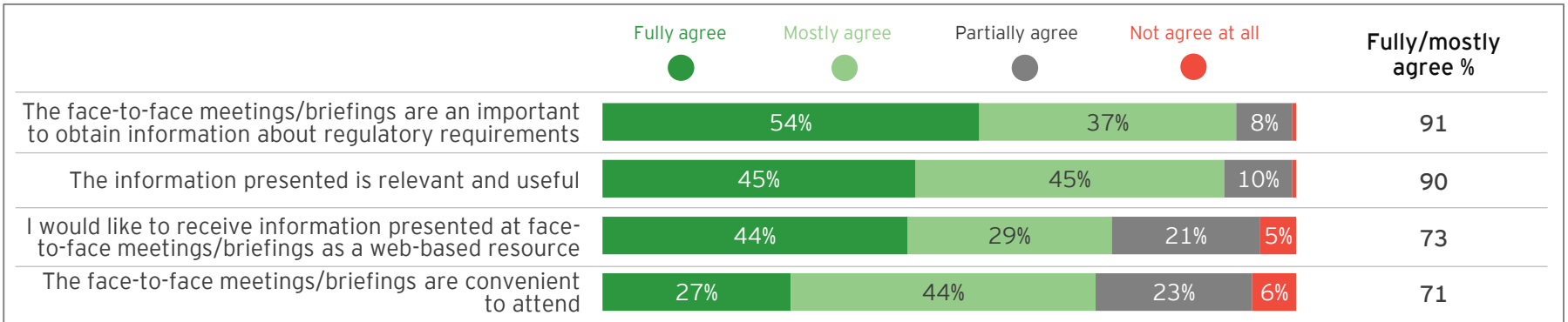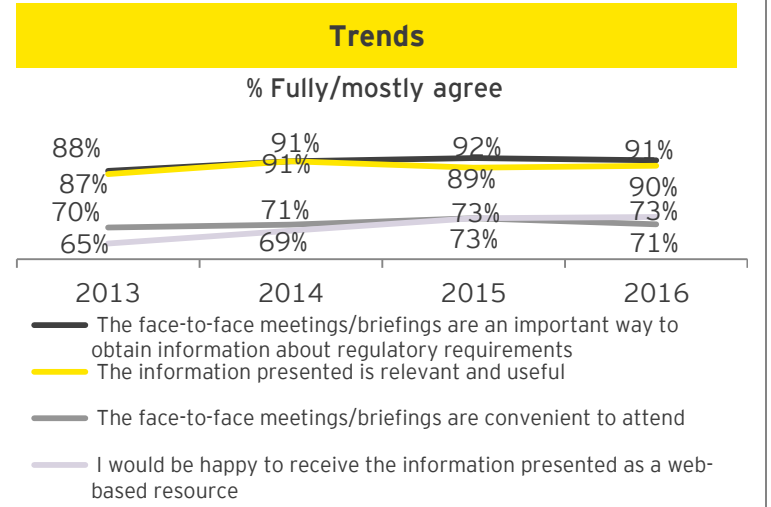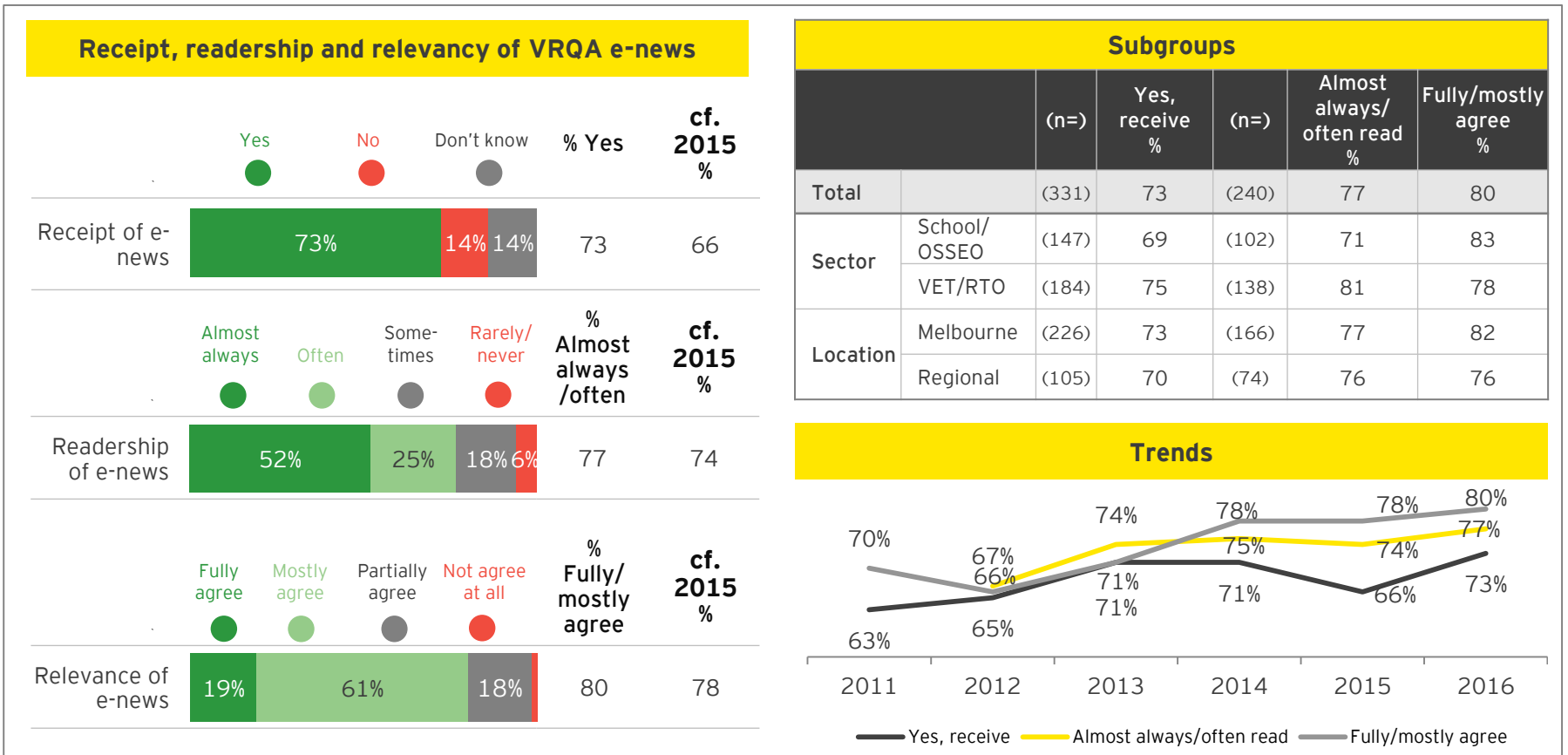|		Fully/mostly agree %
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are an important to obtain information about regulatory requirements	54% / 37% / 8%	91
The information presented is relevant and useful	45% / 45% / 10%	90
I would like to receive information presented at face-to-face meetings/briefings as a web-based resource	44% / 29% / 21% / 5%	73
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are convenient to attend	27% / 44% / 23% / 6%	71

Subgroups

	Total (173) %	Sector		Location	
		School/ OSSEO (90) %	VET/ RTO (83) %	Melb-ourne (120) %	Regi-onal (53) %
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are an important way to obtain information about regulatory requirements	91	90	93	92	91
The information presented is relevant and useful	90	92	87	89	91
I would like to receive information at face-to-face meetings/briefings as web-based resource	73	70	77	74	72
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are convenient to attend	71	68	75	78 ▲	55 ▼

Trends

% Fully/mostly agree

	2013	2014	2015	2016
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are an important way to obtain information about regulatory requirements	88%	91%	92%	91%
The information presented is relevant and useful	87%	91%	89%	90%
The face-to-face meetings/briefings are convenient to attend	70%	71%	73%	73%
I would be happy to receive the information presented as a web-based resource	65%	69%	73%	71%

— The face-to-face meetings/briefings are an important way to obtain information about regulatory requirements
— The information presented is relevant and useful
— The face-to-face meetings/briefings are convenient to attend
— I would be happy to receive the information presented as a web-based resource

Base: Have personally attended a VRQA seminar, information briefing or workshop recently (n=173)
Q8b. Thinking about face-to-face seminars, information briefings or workshops organised by VRQA, to what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

EY Sweeney
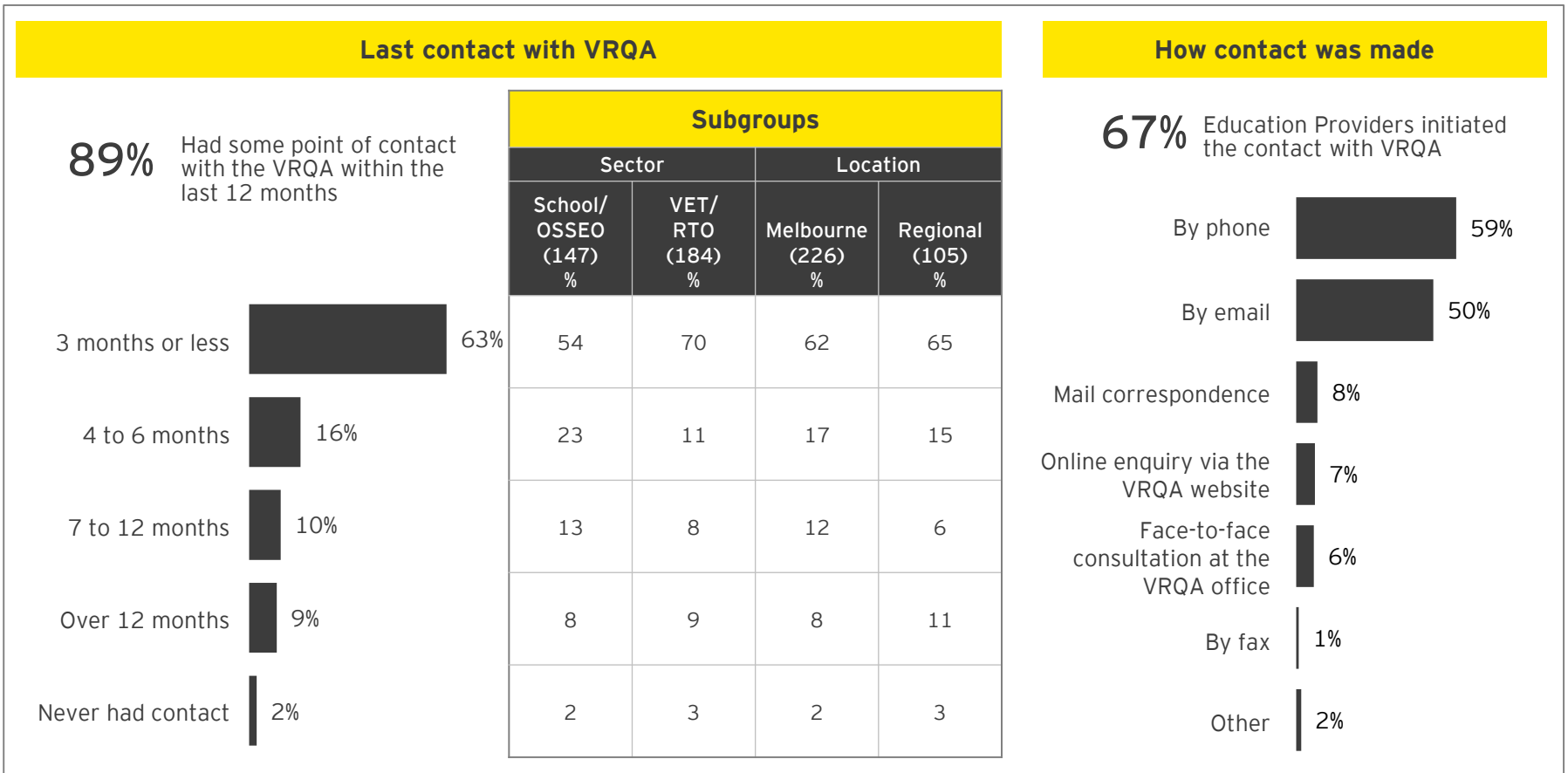
Recall, readership and relevance of the VRQA e-news

▶ Recall of receiving the VRQA e-news is high with 73% of providers saying they have received the publication. This has marginally increased from 66% in 2015

▶ For those who read the publication, 77% read it almost always/often, and 80% fully/mostly agree that the information has been relevant to their sector

▶ No significant subgroup differences are seen in recall and readership levels, or relevance ratings

Receipt, readership and relevancy of VRQA e-news

	Yes	No	Don't know	% Yes	cf. 2015 %
Receipt of e-news	73%	14%	14%	73	66

	Almost always	Often	Some-times	Rarely/ never	% Almost always /often	cf. 2015 %
Readership of e-news	52%	25%	18%	6%	77	74

	Fully agree	Mostly agree	Partially agree	Not agree at all	% Fully/ mostly agree	cf. 2015 %
Relevance of e-news	19%	61%	18%		80	78

Subgroups

		(n=)	Yes, receive %	(n=)	Almost always/ often read %	Fully/mostly agree %
Total		(331)	73	(240)	77	80
Sector	School/OSSEO	(147)	69	(102)	71	83
	VET/RTO	(184)	75	(138)	81	78
Location	Melbourne	(226)	73	(166)	77	82
	Regional	(105)	70	(74)	76	76

Trends

Yes, receive: 63% (2011), 65% (2012), 71% (2013), 71% (2014), 66% (2015), 73% (2016)
Almost always/often read: 66% (2012), 74% (2013), 75% (2014), 74% (2015), 77% (2016)
Fully/mostly agree: 70% (2011), 67% (2012), 71% (2013), 78% (2014), 78% (2015), 80% (2016)

— Yes, receive   — Almost always/often read   — Fully/mostly agree

Q12a.   Does your organisation receive the VRQA e-news? (Base: All; n=331)
Q12b.   On average, how often do you read the VRQA e-news? (Base: Receive the e-news; n=240)
Q13.   To what extent do you agree that the VRQA e-news provides you with information relevant for your operations in your sector? (Base: Receive the e-news; n=240)
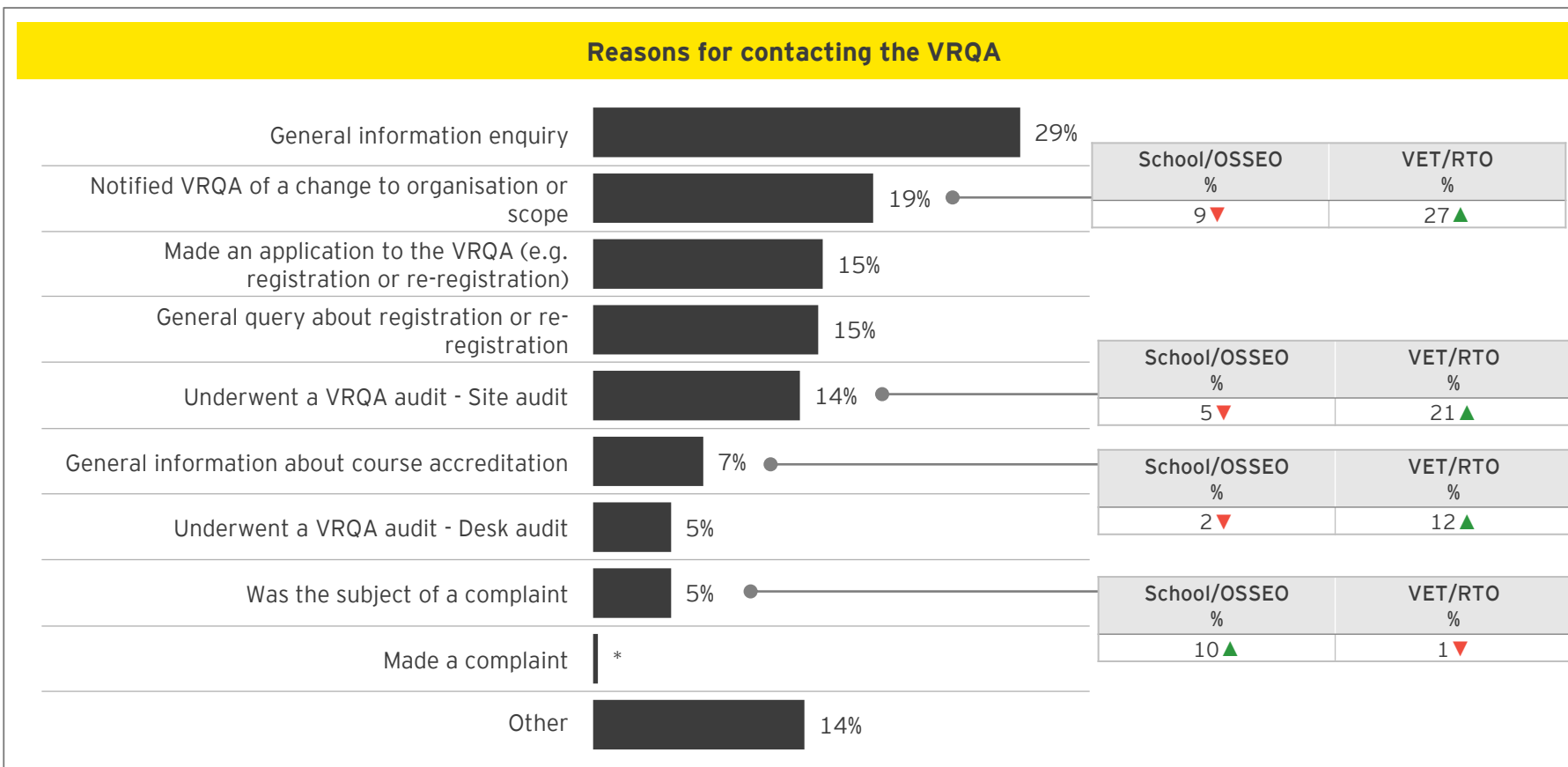
EY Sweeney

Recent contact with the VRQA

- Most (89%) providers have been in contact with the VRQA in the last 12 months, mainly within the last three months (63%), which has most commonly been initiated by the education provider (67%)
- Contact with the VRQA has been predominantly via phone and email

| Last contact with VRQA | | How contact was made |

89% Had some point of contact with the VRQA within the last 12 months

	Subgroups			
	Sector		Location	
	School/ OSSEO (147) %	VET/ RTO (184) %	Melbourne (226) %	Regional (105) %
3 months or less — 63%	54	70	62	65
4 to 6 months — 16%	23	11	17	15
7 to 12 months — 10%	13	8	12	6
Over 12 months — 9%	8	9	8	11
Never had contact — 2%	2	3	2	3

67% Education Providers initiated the contact with VRQA

How contact was made	
By phone	59%
By email	50%
Mail correspondence	8%
Online enquiry via the VRQA website	7%
Face-to-face consultation at the VRQA office	6%
By fax	1%
Other	2%

Q14a. When was the last time you had contact with the VRQA – either face-to-face, by phone, email, mail, fax, an online query, or other methods? (Base: All; n=331)
Q14b. Thinking of your most recent contact with the VRQA, did you make contact or did the VRQA contact you? (Base: Had contact with the VRQA; n=324)
Q15. Still thinking of your most recent contact, how did you make contact with the VRQA? (Base: Initiated contact with the VRQA (n=217)

EY Sweeney

Reasons for contacting the VRQA

▶ The most common reason for providers to contact the VRQA is to obtain general information. Three in ten providers have contacted the VRQA to make a general information enquiry. Other common reasons for contacting the VRQA include, notifications of change of organisation or scope (19%), applications to the VRQA (15%), general registration/re-registration queries (15%), and VRQA site audits (14%)

▶ Less than 1% of respondents contacted the VRQA to make a complaint

Reasons for contacting the VRQA

Reason	%
General information enquiry	29%
Notified VRQA of a change to organisation or scope	19%
Made an application to the VRQA (e.g. registration or re-registration)	15%
General query about registration or re-registration	15%
Underwent a VRQA audit - Site audit	14%
General information about course accreditation	7%
Underwent a VRQA audit - Desk audit	5%
Was the subject of a complaint	5%
Made a complaint	*
Other	14%

	School/OSSEO %	VET/RTO %
Notified VRQA of a change to organisation or scope	9 ▼	27 ▲
Underwent a VRQA audit - Site audit	5 ▼	21 ▲
General information about course accreditation	2 ▼	12 ▲
Was the subject of a complaint	10 ▲	1 ▼

EY Sweeney

Staff demonstration of the RITE values

▶ Staff are commended for demonstrating the RITE values, with 92% fully/mostly agreeing that VRQA staff have demonstrated the values. Levels remain on par with 2015 figures

▶ Levels are consistent across the subgroups
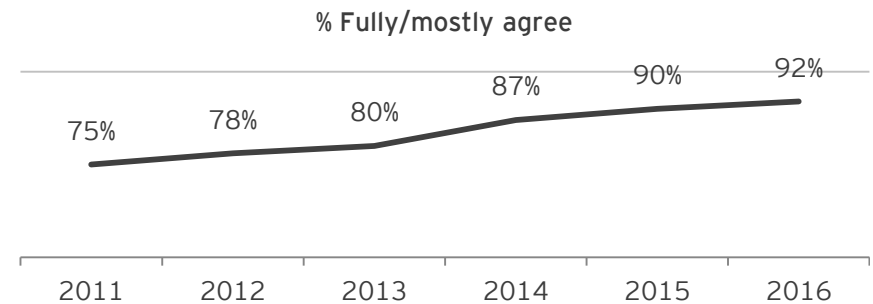
Staff demonstration of the RITE values

Not agree at all 2%
Partially agree 6%
Mostly agree 31%
Fully agree 60%
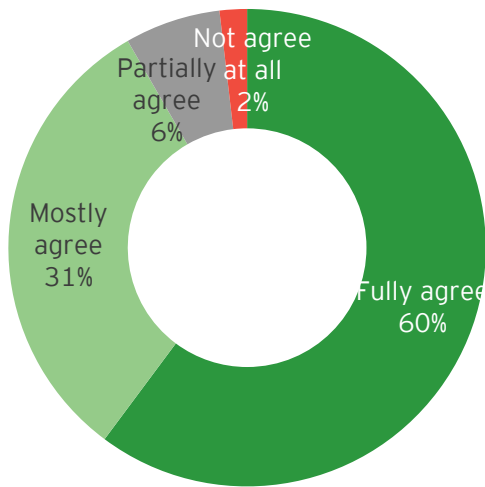
	2016	Fully/mostly agree	2015
	92%		**90%**

Subgroups

		(n=)	Fully/mostly agree %
Total		(324)	92
Sector	School/OSSEO	(144)	93
	VET/RTO	(180)	91
Location	Melbourne	(222)	92
	Regional	(102)	91

Trends

% Fully/mostly agree

75% (2011) 78% (2012) 80% (2013) 87% (2014) 90% (2015) 92% (2016)

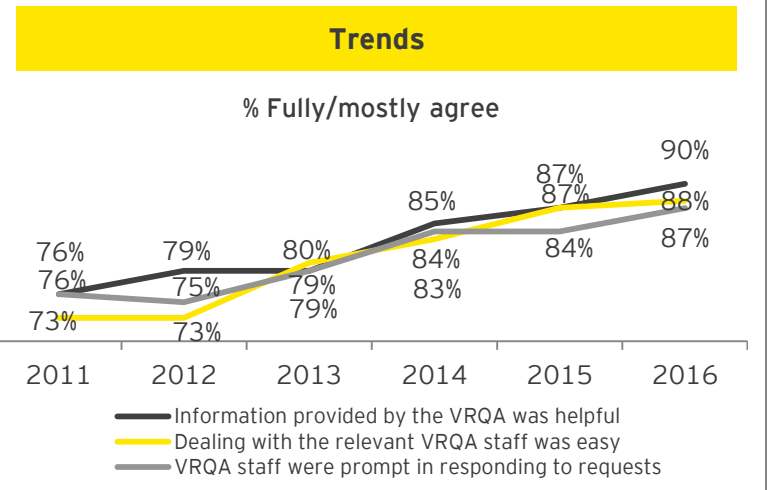Base: Had contact with the VRQA (n=324)
Q16. Thinking of your most recent contact with the VRQA, to what extent do you agree that the staff you had contact with generally demonstrated [the RITE] values?

EY Sweeney

Specific aspects of VRQA staff performance

▶ Providers have had a positive experience with VRQA staff, who are rated highly across most aspects, including the helpfulness of Information provided (90% fully/mostly agree), the ease of dealing with them (88%), and promptness of response to requests (87%)

▶ No significant differences are noted across subgroups

	Fully agree	Mostly agree	Partially agree	Not agree at all	Fully/mostly agree %
Information provided by the VRQA was helpful	54%	37%	8%	2%	90
Dealing with the relevant VRQA staff was easy	56%	32%	10%	2%	88
VRQA staff were prompt in responding to requests	51%	36%	10%	3%	87
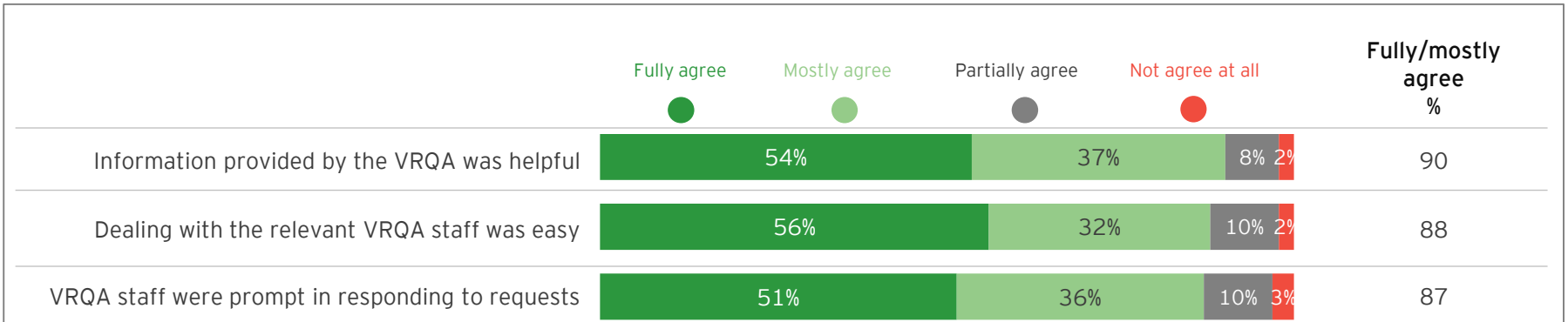
Subgroups

		Sector		Location	
	Total (323) %	School/ OSSEO (144) %	VET/ RTO (179) %	Melb-ourne (221) %	Reg-ional (102) %
Information provided by the VRQA was helpful	90	92	88	90	90
Dealing with the relevant VRQA staff was easy	88	91	85	88	87
VRQA staff were prompt in responding to requests	87	90	85	87	86

Trends

% Fully/mostly agree

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Information provided by the VRQA was helpful	76%	79%	80%	85%	87%	90%
Dealing with the relevant VRQA staff was easy	73%	73%	79%	83%	87%	88%
VRQA staff were prompt in responding to requests	76%	75%	79%	84%	84%	87%

Base: Had contact with the VRQA (n=323)
Q18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements describing your most recent contact with the VRQA?

EY Sweeney

# Recent sector changes and support

Child safe standards

As a new question in 2016, education providers were provided with the following description and then asked a series of questions relating to the child safe standards:

> The Victorian Government has introduced child safe standards for organisations that work with children. The standards strengthen existing approaches to preventing and responding to child abuse.

> The child safe standards are being progressively phased in during 2016 and 2017. The VRQA has provided its education and training providers with information and guidance to assist them to understand and meet the child safe standards.
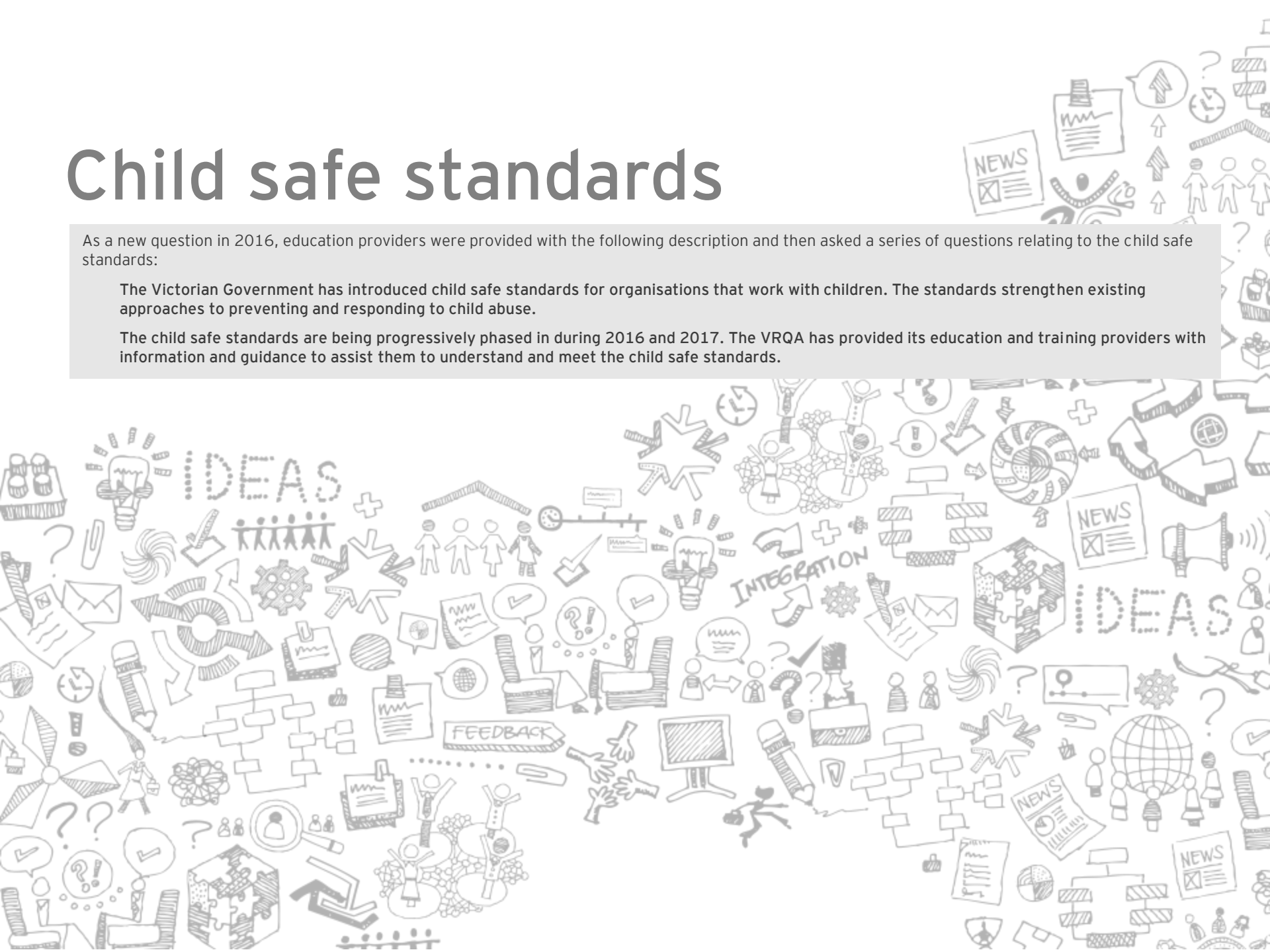
Awareness of and access to the VRQA child safe standards resources

▶ Providers generally have a high level of awareness of most of the VRQA child safe standards resources. The highest recall includes the downloadable fact sheets (84%) and the child safe standard website (83%). Both are also the most commonly accessed resources with over three-fifths of providers having accessed them before. The instructional videos and case study videos are the lowest recalled and used resources

▶ Given the relevance of the child safe standards to their sector, School and OSSEO providers are more likely to be aware of the resources than VET/RTO providers. No differences are observed by location

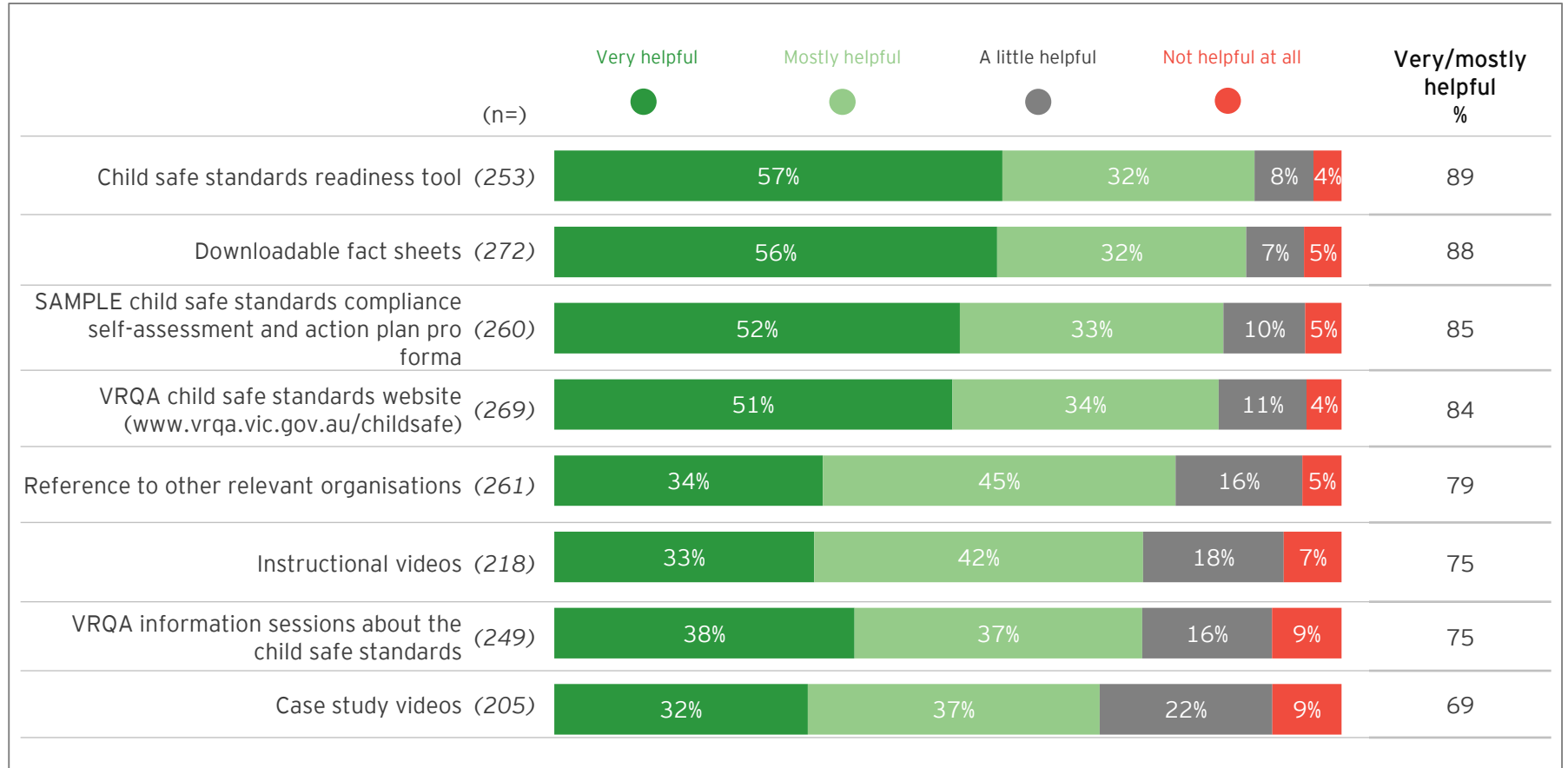|	Aware and have accessed/ attended 🟢	Aware but have not accessed/ attended ⚪	Not aware 🔴	Aware %	Subgroups			
					Sector		Location	
					School/ OSSEO (n=144) %	VET/ RTO (n=179) %	Melbourne (n=221) %	Regional (n=102) %
Downloadable fact sheets	63%	21%	16%	84	99 ▲	73 ▼	84	84
VRQA child safe standards website (www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe)	66%	18%	17%	83	99 ▲	71 ▼	86	77
Reference to other relevant organisations	47%	33%	19%	81	96 ▲	69 ▼	81	80
SAMPLE child safe standards compliance self-assessment and action plan pro forma	58%	22%	20%	80	99 ▲	66 ▼	82	76
Child safe standards readiness tool	59%	19%	22%	78	98 ▲	63 ▼	79	77
VRQA information sessions about the child safe standards	42%	35%	23%	77	99 ▲	60 ▼	78	75
Instructional videos	35%	33%	33%	67	89 ▲	50 ▼	70	63
Case study videos	28%	36%	37%	63	83 ▲	47 ▼	64	62

Base: Had contact with the VRQA (n=323)
Note: New question in 2016
Q28.   Which of the following resources and events from the VRQA in relation to the implementation of the child safe standards were you aware of and have accessed/attended before today?

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EY Sweeney

Helpfulness of the VRQA child safe standards resources

▶ Most of the VRQA child safe standards resources are considered helpful by providers who have used them. The child readiness tool (89% rating very/mostly helpful) and downloadable fact sheets (88%) are most helpful to providers. Other useful resources include the SAMPLE child safe standards compliance self-assessment and action plan pro forma (85%) and the VRQA child safe standards website (84%)

▶ School/OSSEO providers are significantly more likely to find the downloadable fact sheets, SAMPLE pro forma, and website useful. (Note: Data not shown here)

	(n=)	Very helpful ●	Mostly helpful ●	A little helpful ●	Not helpful at all ●	Very/mostly helpful %
Child safe standards readiness tool	(253)	57%	32%	8%	4%	89
Downloadable fact sheets	(272)	56%	32%	7%	5%	88
SAMPLE child safe standards compliance self-assessment and action plan pro forma	(260)	52%	33%	10%	5%	85
VRQA child safe standards website (www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe)	(269)	51%	34%	11%	4%	84
Reference to other relevant organisations	(261)	34%	45%	16%	5%	79
Instructional videos	(218)	33%	42%	18%	7%	75
VRQA information sessions about the child safe standards	(249)	38%	37%	16%	9%	75
Case study videos	(205)	32%	37%	22%	9%	69

Base: Have accessed VRQA's safe standards resources/events (n=varies)
Note: New question in 2016
Q29. To what extent do you find the following resources and events helpful in assisting your organisation with understanding and meeting the child safe standards?

EY Sweeney

Updated VET Guidelines

As a new question in 2016, VET providers were provided with the following description and then asked a series of questions relating to the VRQA updated VET Guidelines:

Updated VRQA VET Guidelines for VET providers commenced on 1 January 2016. The VRQA has provided its vocational training providers with information and guidance to assist them to understand and meet the child safe standards.

Awareness of and access to the VRQA resources relating to the updated VET Guidelines

▶ Awareness of VRQA provided resources relating to the implementation of the updated VRQA VET guidelines is high across the board. Particularly, information about the updated guidelines on the VRQA website scores the highest level of awareness (89%) and access (62%). This is followed by the FAQs on the VRQA website - 85% are aware and 49% have accessed this resource

▶ Providers have a good level of awareness of the remaining VRQA resources although access tends to be lower; less than half have reviewed them before

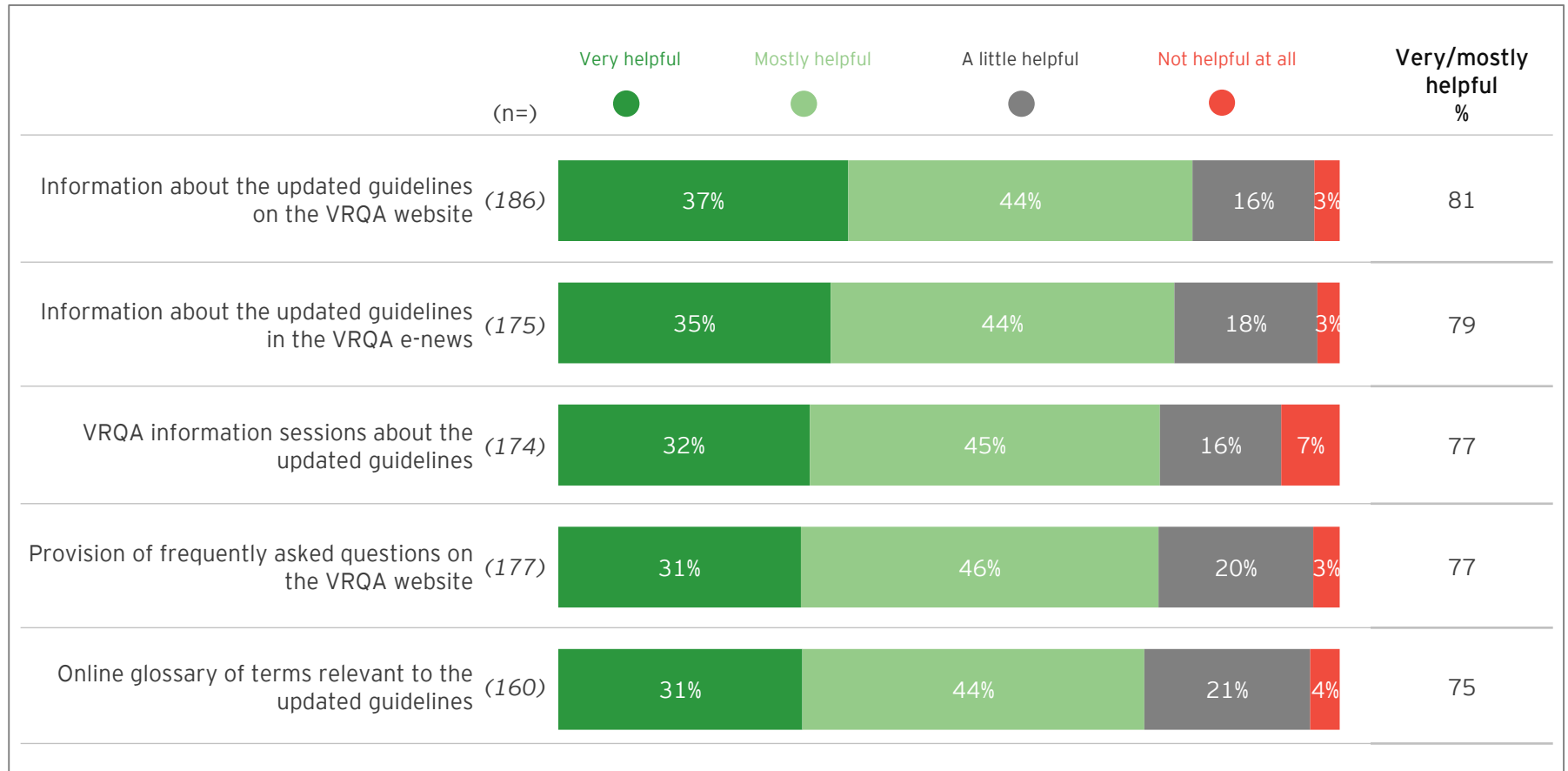|	Aware and have accessed/ attended 🟢	Aware but have not accessed/ attended ⚫	Not aware 🔴	Aware %	Sector — School/ OSSEO (n=37) %	Sector — VET/ RTO (n=172) %	Location — Melbourne (n=143) %	Location — Regional (n=66) %
Information about the updated guidelines on the VRQA website	62%	27%	11%	89	84	90	90	88
Provision of frequently asked questions on the VRQA website	49%	36%	15%	85	89	84	87	80
Information about the updated guidelines in the VRQA e-news	47%	36%	16%	84	84	84	85	80
VRQA information sessions about the updated guidelines	36%	47%	17%	83	84	83	84	82
Online glossary of terms relevant to the updated guidelines	38%	39%	23%	77	76	77	78	74

Base: VET providers who had contact with the VRQA (n=209)
Note: New question in 2016
Q30. Which of the following resources and events from the VRQA in relation to the implementation of the updated VRQA VET Guidelines were you aware of and have accessed/attended before today?

EY Sweeney

Helpfulness of the VRQA resources relating to the updated VET Guidelines

▶ For providers that have accessed/used each of the VRQA resources relating to the updated VET Guidelines, the resources have been helpful. At least three in four providers feel that the resources have been very/mostly helpful

▶ No significant differences observed across subgroups. (Note: Data not shown here)

	(n=)	Very helpful ●	Mostly helpful ●	A little helpful ●	Not helpful at all ●	Very/mostly helpful %
Information about the updated guidelines on the VRQA website	(186)	37%	44%	16%	3%	81
Information about the updated guidelines in the VRQA e-news	(175)	35%	44%	18%	3%	79
VRQA information sessions about the updated guidelines	(174)	32%	45%	16%	7%	77
Provision of frequently asked questions on the VRQA website	(177)	31%	46%	20%	3%	77
Online glossary of terms relevant to the updated guidelines	(160)	31%	44%	21%	4%	75

Base: VET providers who have accessed child VRQA's safe standards resources/events (n=varies)
Q31. To what extent do you find the following resources and events helpful in assisting your organisation with understanding and meeting the requirements of the updated VRQA VET Guidelines?

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EY Sweeney

ETR reform regulations

As a new question in 2016, education providers were provided with the following description and then asked a series of questions relating to the Revised Education and Training Reform Regulations:

Revised Education and Training Reform Regulations commence on 1 July 2017. The VRQA will be providing information and guidance to providers to assist them to understand and meet any changed requirements under the regulations.

Desired information and guidance from the VRQA

▶ Providers were asked what types of information and guidance providers would value from the VRQA to help them understand and meet any changed requirements relating to the Revised Education and Training Reform Regulations. Three types of support stood out for providers that would be most valuable to them, including compliance self assessment tools (87%), downloadable fact sheets (87%), and information sessions (79%)

▶ A dedicated website (47%), instructional videos (44%), case study videos (39%), and reference to other organisations (32%) also featured to some degree

Desired information and guidance from the VRQA	
Compliance self-assessment tools	87%
Downloadable fact sheets	87%
VRQA information sessions	79%
A dedicated website	47%
Instructional videos	44%
Case study video (e.g. exemplar organisations)	39%
Reference to other relevant organisations	32%
Sample Documentation/ Template	2%
Live chat/ Phone call with a person	2%
Timely publication of information	1%
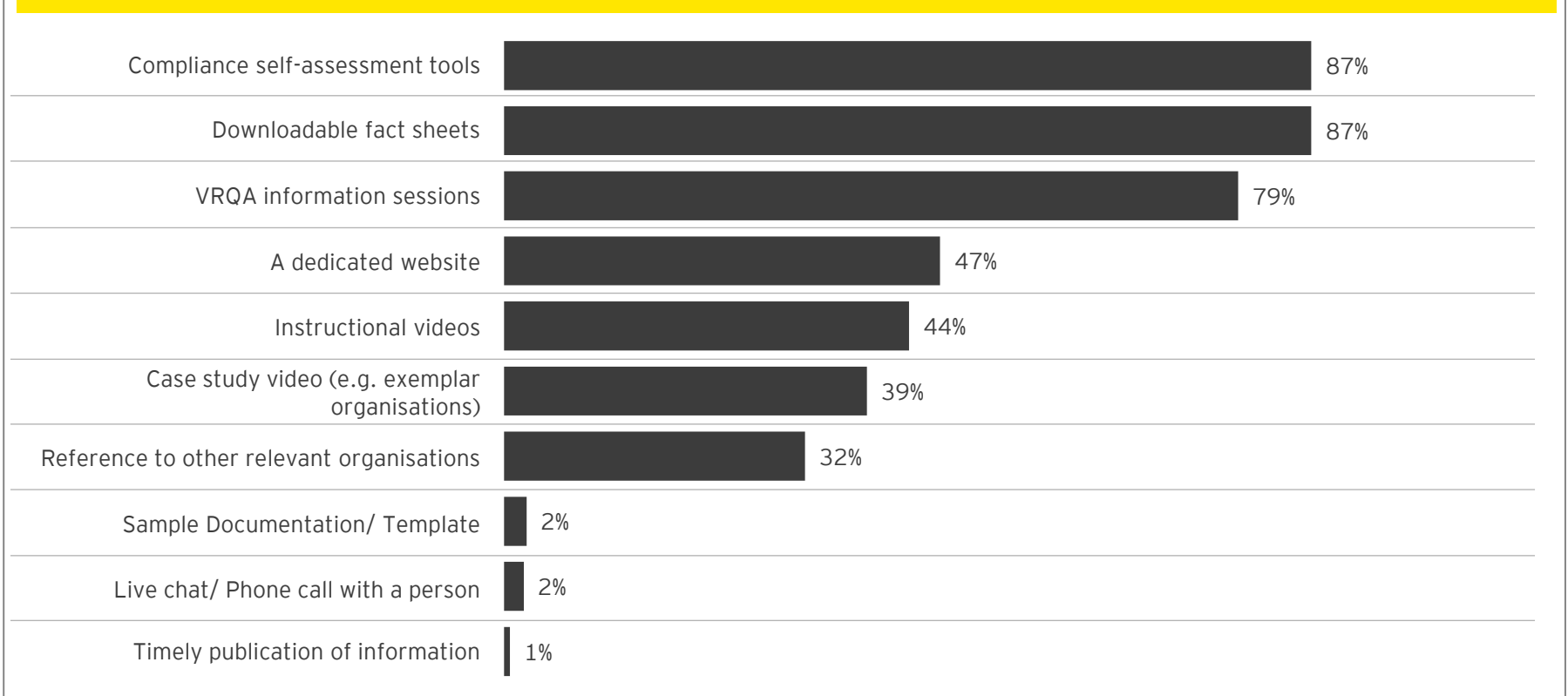
Base: All (n=331)
Note: New question in 2016
Q32.   What information and guidance from the VRQA would you value to help you to understand and meet any changed requirements?

EY Sweeney

Regulatory processes and feedback

Perceptions of the VRQA's regulatory processes

- All aspects of the VRQA's regulatory process are viewed positively by providers with agreement levels averaging between 74% and 83% across the board
- At the top of the list, four in five providers fully/mostly agree that the VRQA has met expected processing timelines (83%), that requirements including evidence requirements are clearly stated (80%), and VRQA information is adequate in supporting providers' operations in the sector (80%)
- Schools/OSSEOs are more likely to be in greater agreement on a number of aspects than VET/RTO providers

	(n=)	Fully agree / Mostly agree / Partially agree / Not agree at all	Fully/ mostly agree %	Subgroups			
				Sector		Location	
				School/ OSSEO %	VET/ RTO %	Melbourne %	Regional %
The VRQA has met the processing timelines outlined on the VRQA website with previously submitted applications	(304)	37% / 46% / 13% / 4%	83	87	79	82	84
Requirements, including evidence requirements, are clearly stated	(328)	28% / 52% / 16% / 4%	80	89 ▲	73 ▼	78	84
The information provided by the VRQA is adequate to support my operations in the sector	(329)	30% / 50% / 16% / 5%	80	88 ▲	73 ▼	78	83
VRQA forms such as application forms are clear and easy to understand	(325)	31% / 49% / 18% / 2%	79	84	76	80	78
I am aware of the time it takes to process applications relevant to my sector	(317)	30% / 47% / 18% / 5%	77	78	76	75	81
Procedures are easy to understand and follow	(327)	24% / 52% / 19% / 5%	76	81	73	75	79
The rationale of procedures is clearly explained	(327)	29% / 45% / 22% / 4%	74	85 ▲	65 ▼	73	75

Base: All (excl. NAs) (n=varies)
Q19. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements relating to the VRQA's regulatory processes? If any of these statements are not relevant to you (e.g. no previous experience), please select 'Not Applicable'.

EY Sweeney
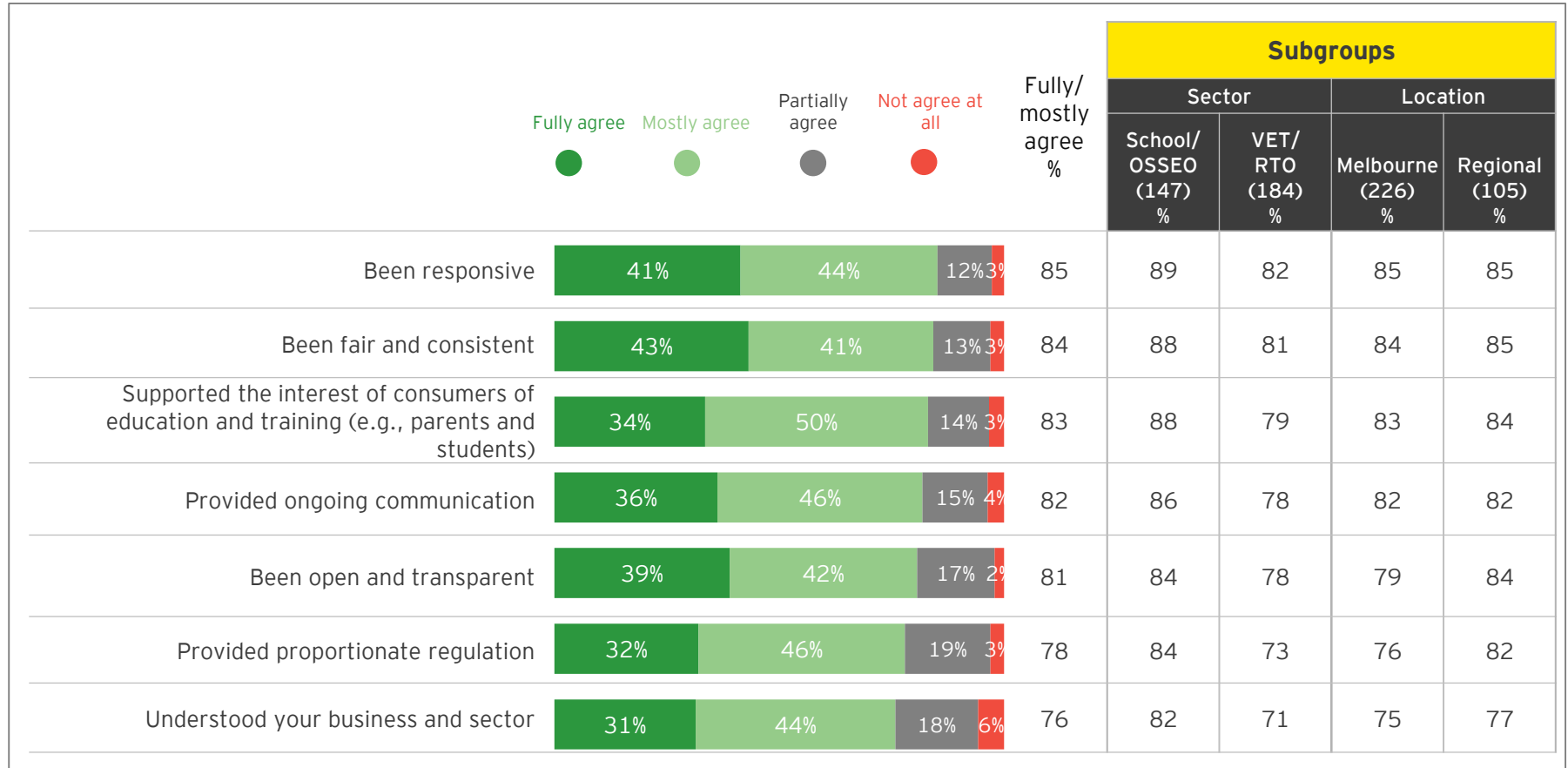
Perceptions of the VRQA's regulatory processes – Trends

▶ Improved perceptions of the VRQAs regulatory processes are noted across all measures since 2015. A significant increase is seen in the ability of the VRQA to meet processing timelines for applications, growing from 75% in 2015 to 83% in the current year
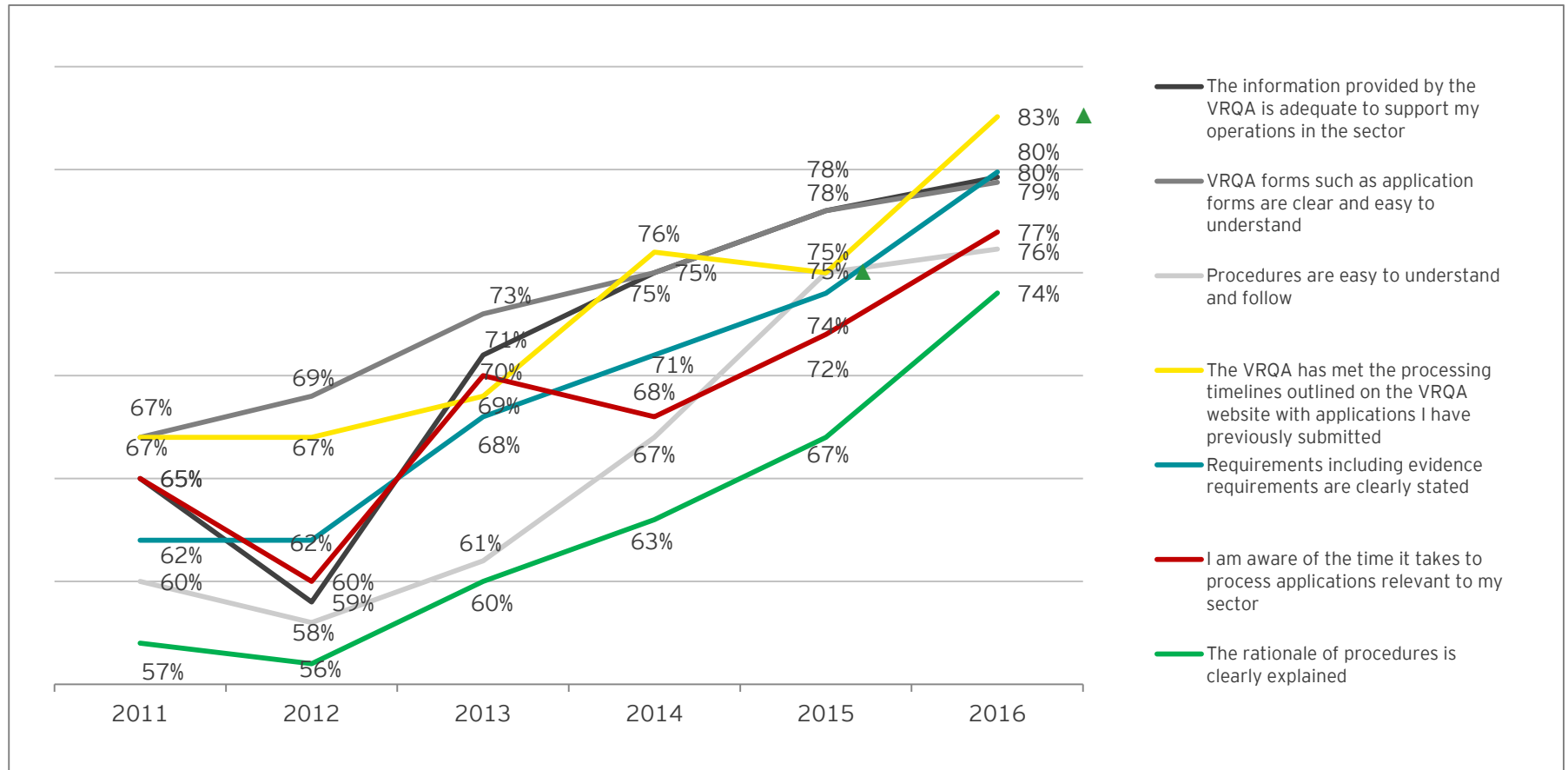
Legend:
- The information provided by the VRQA is adequate to support my operations in the sector
- VRQA forms such as application forms are clear and easy to understand
- Procedures are easy to understand and follow
- The VRQA has met the processing timelines outlined on the VRQA website with applications I have previously submitted
- Requirements including evidence requirements are clearly stated
- I am aware of the time it takes to process applications relevant to my sector
- The rationale of procedures is clearly explained

Base: All (excl. NAs) (n=varies)
Q19. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements relating to the VRQA's regulatory processes? If any of these statements are not relevant to you (e.g. no previous experience), please select 'Not Applicable'.

EY Sweeney

Perceptions of specific aspects of the VRQA as a regulator

- ▶ Attitudes towards the VRQA's regulatory performance are positive across all measures. At least three in four fully/mostly agree that the VRQA's performance has aligned with all dimensions. Providers particularly commend the VRQA for staff's responsiveness (85%), fairness and consistency (84%), and the supported interests towards consumers (83%)
- ▶ No significant subgroup differences are reported across the dimensions

	Fully agree	Mostly agree	Partially agree	Not agree at all	Fully/ mostly agree %	Subgroups			
						Sector		Location	
						School/ OSSEO (147) %	VET/ RTO (184) %	Melbourne (226) %	Regional (105) %
Been responsive	41%	44%	12%	3%	85	89	82	85	85
Been fair and consistent	43%	41%	13%	3%	84	88	81	84	85
Supported the interest of consumers of education and training (e.g., parents and students)	34%	50%	14%	3%	83	88	79	83	84
Provided ongoing communication	36%	46%	15%	4%	82	86	78	82	82
Been open and transparent	39%	42%	17%	2%	81	84	78	79	84
Provided proportionate regulation	32%	46%	19%	3%	78	84	73	76	82
Understood your business and sector	31%	44%	18%	6%	76	82	71	75	77

Base: All (n=331)
Q25.   Now thinking of the last 12 months, to what extent do you agree that VRQA's performance aligned with each of the following dimensions? The VRQA has...

EY Sweeney

Perceptions of specific aspects of the VRQA as a regulator – Trends

▶ Perceptions of the VRQA's regulatory performance have steadied after significant increases across a number of measures in the last year

▶ While differences are not statistically significant, we note that perceptions of the VRQA's level openness and transparency have dipped a little, now more closely aligned to levels reported in 2014

Legend:
- Been open and transparent
- Been fair and consistent
- Been responsive
- Provided ongoing communication
- Supported the interest of consumers of education and training (e.g., parents and students)
- Provided proportionate regulation
- Understood your business and sector

Data points by year:

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Been open and transparent	68%	74%	76%	84% ▲	81%
Been fair and consistent	66%	76%	78%	84% ▲	85%
Been responsive	64%	76%	76%	81%	84%
Provided ongoing communication	64%	71%	76%	79% ▲	82%
Supported the interest of consumers	64%	72%	70%		83%
Provided proportionate regulation	61%	69%	71%	77% ▲	78%
Understood your business and sector	56%	63%	66%	72%	76%

Base: All (n=331)
Q25.   Now thinking of the last 12 months, to what extent do you agree that VRQA's performance aligned with each of the following dimensions? The VRQA has…

EY Sweeney

Perceptions of the effectiveness of the VRQA as a regulator

▶ As a new question introduced this year, providers were asked to rate how effective the VRQA has been in performing its regulatory function. Overall, almost all (95%) providers rate the VRQA as being a highly/fairly effective regulator, which concurs with the high ratings reported before relating to the different dimensions of the VRQA as a regulator

▶ School/OSSEO providers are more likely to rate the VRQA as a highly effective regulator (54%) than VET/RTOs (36%). (Note: Data not shown here)

Effectiveness of the VRQA as a regulator

Not effective at all 1%
Not very effective 4%
Highly effective 44%
Fairly effective 51%
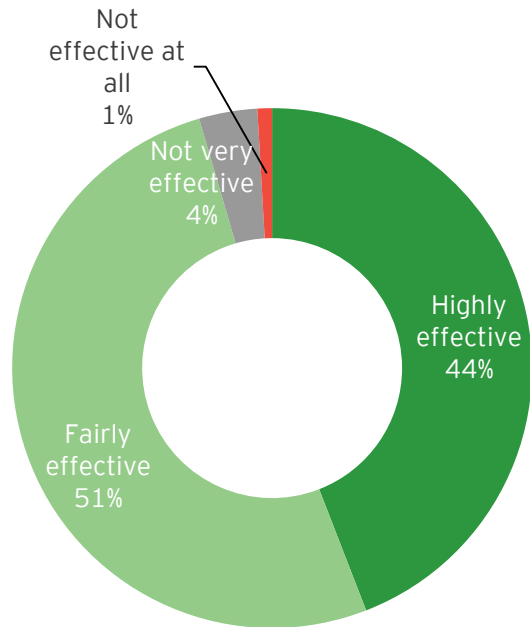
Subgroups

		(n=)	Highly/fairly effective %
Total		(331)	95
Sector	School/OSSEO	(147)	99
	VET/RTO	(184)	93
Location	Melbourne	(226)	95
	Regional	(105)	96

Base: All (n=331)
Note: New question in 2016
Q33.   Thinking about how effective the VRQA has been in performing its regulatory function, would you rate the VRQA as being...?

EY Sweeney

Identified sector challenges

▶ Education providers currently face a diverse range of challenges. Issues tend to be sector specific, with school/OSSEOs mainly struggling with continuous review and improvement of systems (35%) and in ensuring governance arrangements support the effective management of schools (27%). Effective address of complaints and appeals and the teacher quality also features for school/OSSEOs

▶ VET/RTO providers voice a wider mix of frustrations including setting appropriate course lengths (30%), adequacy of employer engagements (28%), ensuring individual student needs are met (22%), accurate course marketing (22%) and adequacy of student training (21%)

		Sector	
		School/ OSSEO %	VET/ RTO %
Continuous review and improvement of systems	19%	35 ▲	7 ▼
Setting appropriate length of courses	17%	1 ▼	30 ▲
Adequately engaging employers and other parties in client training and assessment	17%	3 ▼	28 ▲
Ensuring students individual needs are met	15%	6 ▼	22 ▲
Ensuring governance arrangements support the effective management of schools	14%	27 ▲	4 ▼
Accurate marketing of courses	14%	3 ▼	22 ▲
Provision of adequate training to students	12%	1 ▼	21 ▲
Addressing complaints and appeals effectively	12%	18 ▲	8 ▼
Having high quality teaching staff	10%	16 ▲	5 ▼
Ensuring assessments are in line with training package requirements	10%	3 ▼	16 ▲
Having appropriately trained trainers and assessors	9%	2 ▼	15 ▲
Having effective financial management	9%	13	5

" "Trainers are only checked on there certificates and not on there ability."

"Consistent interpretation of training package requirements. Even auditors have different interpretations of requirements."

"In general I believe our sector does things well."

"My perspective of the sector is there is a lack of financial prudence and it has difficulty attracting/paying high quality staff."

"The skills councils lack in developing units that are in line with industry and thus we are left training out of date products." "

EY Sweeney

Industry trends of concern

▶ When planning regulatory services, providers are calling for better regulatory services from the VRQA that would encourage proper training practices and better governance. Most common trends identified include the need to regulate and audit private RTOS and dodgy practices in particular (17%), reduced regulation and compliance to support providers with their business (11%), and better quality standards of courses (11%)

▶ Providers also appreciate more practical help from the VRQA including the provision of training, better communication of industry requirements, and specific support for disadvantaged RTOs including small, not for profit organisations, and community/rural based learning centres

Regulate and audit private RTOS and dodgy practices	17%
Reduced regulation and compliance	11%
Ensure quality standards of courses and services	11%
More training	7%
Addressing specific regulation needs for different fields	7%
Clear communication of industry requirements/compliance expectation changes	7%
Lack of quality training/education because of compliance/profits	6%
Cost of meeting regulations	6%
Providing industry ready course content/training for industry growth	5%
Support smaller/not for profit RTOS	5%
Support community/rural base learning centres	5%
Reduce paperwork/increase digital documentation	4%
Qualified staff	3%

"There are too many rogue players giving RTO's a poor reputation, even after recent reviews. I would like the VRQA to be more responsive to complaints about this."

"Delivering courses where the actual hours are nowhere near the nominal hours. We were approved to deliver a unit over 3 days and other RTOs can deliver the unit in one day."

"The focus on compliance has removed resources from content delivery. "Compliance" has improved but the quality of delivery has generally declined."

"Continue with the clean-up of the sector but don't penalise the good operators in the process."

"Attracting quality teachers. The pool is becoming less academically qualified."

"School governance: the vulnerability of schools through school councils. The difficulty of terminating the employment of poor teachers."

"I think that the VRQA needs to be more aware of some of the current challenges on the horizon for faith-based schools should the State Government's EO Amendment successfully pass through the Upper House"

"Prepare for the possibility of an education disruption - like a "Google School". Contingency plans for a third player in education - government, independent and ???"

Base: All (n=147, excludes those who opted out of answering the question)
Note: Others not mentioned <3%. 2% mentioned 'don't know'
Q27.   In your opinion, are there any particular trends in your industry or sector that the VRQA should consider when planning regulatory services?

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Suggestions to improve VRQA product and service support

▶ When asked if there were any products or services education providers would like to see offered by the VRQA which are currently not offered or that they would like to see improved, one in four providers have asked for better guidance in the provision of guidelines/templates. There is a sense that the current materials can be improved and made more consistent with better examples included. Providers would also like more personalised assistance/guidance in delivering outcomes that support their business as well as better training options to help them meet regulation and compliance requirements. Alignment to ASQA standards have also been raised by some

Consistent/simplified guidelines/expectations with examples/templates	**25%**
More personalised assistance/guidance in delivering outcomes	**15%**
More/better training/face-to-face information sessions	**13%**
Use ASQA standards	**9%**
More accessible/user friendly contact/advice desk/online portal	**6%**
More approachable/friendlier staff	**2%**
Staff performance appraisal/ performance management	**2%**
More efficient/professional/ knowledgeable auditors	**2%**

"

"Each VET provider should be assigned a consultant that they can develop a relationship with to ensure they are kept and keeping up-to-date at all times … there should be a better focus on personal contact."

"Face to Face consultation when issues require more than an email response."

"A template that aligns VRQA Guidelines and Requirements as well as AQTF Conditions and Standards. There is overlap, doubling up and confusion."

"An ability of us to seek internal reviews of our activities through VRQA as part of our continuous improvement."

"'Best practice' sample documents for RTO's."

"Workshops or recommended events that compel RTO's to attend a minimal amount each year as their commitment to being an engaged participant in the VET sector."

"Change the standards to be the same as ASQA - Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015. It is a nightmare out here with two lots of different standards and then the VRQA Guidelines on top of that. Just make it the same nationally."

"Help with bushfire compliance/risk assessment."

"

Base: All (n=104, excludes those who opted out of answering the question)
Note: Others not mentioned <2%. 2% mentioned 'don't know' . 34% ,mentioned 'none'
Q21b. Finally, are there any products or services you would like to see offered by the VRQA which are currently not offered or that you would like to see improved? If so, please feel free to make any comments here

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