

# DWER Corporate Research 2020 Stakeholder Insights



**March 2020**

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# Scope of Engagement



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation



# Background and Objectives

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) undertakes an annual survey of its stakeholders to monitor stakeholder perceptions of DWER, including a KPI measure of the Department's effectiveness at managing the state's water as a resource for sustainable productive use. Metrix Consulting was engaged to review and redesign the survey instrument in 2020, in line with a revised set of Corporate research objectives designed to inform:

- Corporate risk management, environmental scanning and business planning;
- Outcome based management/KPI reporting; and
- Adaptive management of functions and initiatives.

The core objectives of this year's survey were to:

1. Quantify overarching perceptions of DWER as an organisation;
2. Monitor the Key Performance Indicator of *effectively managing the State's water resources for sustainable productive use*;
3. Quantify attitudes towards water and environmental issues;
4. Measure awareness of DWER services;
5. Measure perceptions of DWER's knowledge, expertise and decision making; and
6. Evaluate the Department's communications and engagement with Stakeholders.



# Research Approach

Metrix received an initial database of 1390 Stakeholders from DWER. From this list, 35 contacts either had changed their contact information (phone, email or postal address) or were no longer with the target organisation, and could not be contacted, resulting in a final usable sample of 1355.

Consistent with previous years, a multi-modal method was developed to maximise stakeholder engagement and participation in the survey. This included data collection via an online survey and telephone interviews:

- A letter under the hand of the Director General of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation was sent to Stakeholders for whom the Department had only a postal address, inviting them to go online to complete the survey via a simple web address - [www.dwerstakeholdersurveys.com.au](http://www.dwerstakeholdersurveys.com.au). They were each provided with a unique access code to prevent unauthorised (or multiple) entries in the survey.
- Those with a direct email address were sent an email from the Director General inviting them to participate in the survey. Similar to the letter approach, each email included a unique link for the DWER Stakeholder Survey, to prevent unauthorised or repeat entries.
- Those who did not respond to the online survey and had a known contact number were contacted via a fieldwork agency, Thinkfield, to complete the survey over the phone. They were also given the option to receive an email with a link to the online survey if that was more convenient.

This resulted in a final sample of n=374. This is a response rate of 28% and provides results with a maximum sampling accuracy of +/- 4.31% at the 95% confidence level.

Fieldwork was conducted between the 20<sup>th</sup> of January and the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2020.

A summary of the available valid sample of stakeholders is summarised below:

Contact Channel	Valid Sample
Phone only	819
Email only	428
Phone and email	41
Address only	67
Total	1355

The sample for the Water KPI is based on those Stakeholders who have had water dealings with DWER. This ensures they were able to adequately rate the Department on its performance. A final sample of n=298 had water dealings with DWER and was used to calculate the Water KPI.

# Weighting

To ensure consistency with previous research, two weightings have been developed for the analysis of data.

For the KPI result, it was essential that the profile of respondents were maintained over time. Hence the sample for the KPI result has been weighted back in line with the 2016 sample composition, as detailed below:

## 2020 Sample Profile for Water KPI

	2020			2019		2018		2017		2016
	Weight factor Used	% unweighted	% weighted	Sample profile						
Top Priority/Key Stakeholders	0.38	21%	8%	17%	8%	22%	8%	9%	8%	8%
Large Water Users	2.22	7%	16%	25%	16%	8%	16%	10%	16%	16%
Other Stakeholders	1.06	72%	76%	59%	76%	70%	76%	80%	76%	77%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Also in line with last year's survey, after the amalgamation into the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, responses for all other questions has been weighted to be representative of the 2020 Stakeholder database, as provided by DWER.

## 2020 Sample Profile for Other Questions

	2020				2019		
	Weight factor Used	Total Profile	% unweighted	% weighted	Total profile	% unweighted	% weighted
Top Priority/Key Stakeholders	0.92	20%	21%	20%	15%	17%	14%
Large Water Users	1.09	7%	7%	7%	20%	25%	20%
Other Stakeholders	1.01	73%	72%	73%	65%	59%	66%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

For reporting purposes, Large Water Users and Other Stakeholders have been grouped into an 'Other Stakeholders' group.

# Summary of Key Insights - *Stakeholders*



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation



# Key Insights

## Overall Perceptions of DWER

- Stakeholders are largely positive about DWER (71% Net Positive).
- Two-thirds are satisfied with their relationship with DWER, however Top Priority/Key Stakeholders are no more satisfied with their relationship with DWER than Other Stakeholders, despite more time and effort being invested into managing these key influencers.
- Good customer service (helpful, knowledgeable and responsive staff), working in partnership with DWER, clear advice and access to data are key drivers of positive overall perceptions.
- Being a trustworthy organisation, providing valuable advice and recommendations and being able to clearly explain complex issues are DWER's strongest performing attributes
- Improving the timeliness of decision making and approvals, more proactive communications, better collaboration and consultation with Stakeholders are key opportunities to improve overall perceptions and strength of relationship with Stakeholders.



# Key Insights

## Perceived Effectiveness – Water & Environmental Management

Consistent with last year, approximately half of stakeholders:

- Believe DWER is striking the right balance between development and protection of water and environmental resources.
- Rate DWER as effective at managing the State's water and environment for sustainable productive use.

However, Top Priority and Key stakeholders rated DWER's effectiveness weaker than in 2019.

Key reasons cited by Stakeholders for perceived ineffectiveness include:

### Water Management

- Water allocation issues;
- Lack of long-term planning for water sources; and
- Inadequate compliance monitoring and enforcement.

### Environmental Management

- Being too development focused and allowing too much clearing of land that is not sustainable was commonly mentioned.
- However a small proportion feel that DWER is too focused on the environment at the expense of development.



# Key Insights

## Attitudes Towards Water and Environmental Issues

Managing and planning the State's water supply and protection of water resources are considered key water related priority areas for DWER to focus on.

Clearing of land for development, climate change and waste management are considered key environmental priorities.



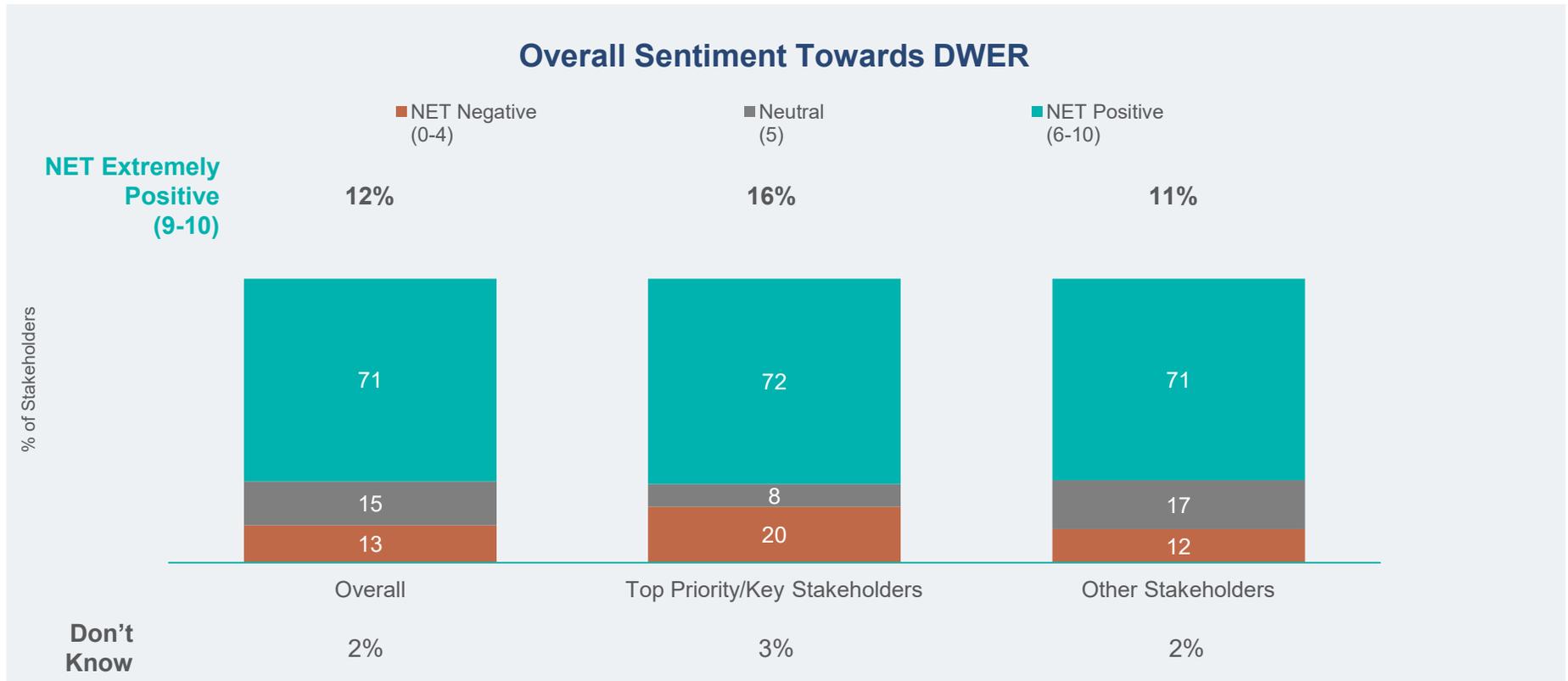
# Overall Perceptions of DWER



# Stakeholders are largely positive about DWER as an organisation



However there is an opportunity to shift sentiment into the 'extremely' positive bracket.



Overall n=367 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=76 | Other Stakeholders n=296  
 Q6. Overall, how do you feel about the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as an organisation?  
 ↑↓ Significant difference of at least 95%  
 Don't know responses have been removed from charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Staff being responsive and helpful when answering queries and resolving issues are key reasons cited by those who feel positive about DWER



Reasons for positive sentiment are consistent across Stakeholder type, regardless of the area Stakeholders are interacting with DWER for (i.e. water, the environment, waste).

## Reasons for Positive Sentiment | Top 5



17%

Positive Interactions



15%

Responsive to Queries and Needs



14%

Helpful in Resolving Issues



8%

Good Customer Service / Staff



7%

Knowledgeable and Able to Solve Problems

% of stakeholders with positive sentiment towards DWER

# In their own words...

## Positive Interactions

*“My interactions with DWER are generally positive and fruitful. I have a positive relationship with them and I’ve also had good interactions with other areas of the Department when required.”*

– Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

*“Happy with it at this stage, interactions have been pretty good but there is always room for improvement.”* – Other Stakeholder



## Responsive to Queries and Needs

*“They provide timely advice and assistance on water supply and use issues, however follow-up and timeline for both vegetation clearing permits and investigations of illegal clearing are costly and time consuming.”*

- Other Stakeholder

*“Quality of communication, responsiveness and ability to engage with any area of the organisation.”*

- Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



## Helpful in Resolving Issues

*“I think that the assistance we have had with the refuse site and the planning there has been helpful.”*

- Other Stakeholder

*“When I’ve contacted the Department, I’ve found the staff to be helpful and relatively knowledgeable.”*

– Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



# In their own words...

## Good Customer Service / Staff

*“The dealings I have had with policy officers and staff have been great, but they are constrained in what needs to be done longer term in regard to policy and strategic development.”*

- Other Stakeholder

*“From the Director General down, the staff at DWER are good and decent human beings. They are incredibly proactive, willing to assist, and great information sharers. Information sharing, educational session support and accessing meetings with key staff is always conducted professionally and in good spirit. There is a great willingness to be involved with stakeholders and to provide a quality service. It's a remarkable department with a particularly decent and ethical Director General. It is my observation that his leadership skills, integrity, responsible attitude and caring decency support a very capable network of satisfied employees, who do their best to accommodate, support, direct and share with stakeholders.”* - Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



## Knowledgeable and Able to Solve Problems

*“The people I have dealt with are extremely knowledgeable and generally very happy to help us as consultants or our clients in getting the best outcomes possible for all parties.”*

-Other Stakeholder

*“I consider DWER officers to be helpful, knowledgeable and concerned about waterways protection. The REI program is a great way to deliver local works on ground and the program is greatly supported.”*

- Top Priority / Key Stakeholders



# Being slow to respond and make decisions is a key reason for negative overall perceptions of DWER



A perception that DWER is too bureaucratic, lacking sufficient resources, not thinking innovatively for solutions and not effectively managing compliance and enforcement are also contributing towards negative overall perceptions.

## Reasons for Negative Sentiment | Top 5



22%

Slow Response  
to Issues /  
Decision Making



18%

Too Bureaucratic



16%

Not Enough Human  
Resources To Assist



12%

Lack of Innovative  
Thinking



12%

Lack of Compliance  
and Enforcement

% of stakeholders with negative sentiment towards DWER

Overall n=49\*  
Q7. Why is that?

# In their own words...

## Slow Response to Issues / Decision Making

*“Look they just do everything too slow. To afraid to release documents, don't complete studies or requests in timely ways. Respond too much to the squeaky wheel of red tape. Not even supporting their own experts and being too political with what they do.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“Very very slow in responding and addressing applications for anything. Hide behind lack of state funding and similar excuses for ‘lack of capacity’. No idea of service delivery and the impact of their lack of performance on commercial and other enterprises.” – Other Stakeholder*



## Too Bureaucratic

*“They just seem like a giant bureaucracy achieving nothing more than more rules.”  
– Other Stakeholder*

*“DWER is an overly bureaucratic organisation which has the effect of stultifying development. I do not believe it is streamlining or simplifying regulation.” - Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*



## Not Enough Human Resources to Assist

*“DWER are highly underfunded and they lack the people resources to review and comment on reports in a timely manner. After we've submitted reports, it's taken an extremely long period of time to hear back from people.” – Other Stakeholder*

*“They are under resourced and never able to provide timely resolutions to my enquiries. Excessive delays in processing requests severely restricts my Council's ability to go about our business.”  
– Other Stakeholder*



# In their own words...

## Lack of Innovative Thinking

*“The Department has become too regimented and is not listening or consulting with irrigators and the community to find innovative ways to solve our problems. Really, they have become very inward with their processes.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

*“DWER have little understanding of the real world issues faced on the ground and rarely look for any new solutions to our problems”* – Other Stakeholder



## Lack of Compliance and Enforcement

*“We are very concerned that DWER has very limited resources and hence the ability to track or manage compliance with approved works, or for investigating or prosecuting illegal actions (particularly illegal clearing of native vegetation). Our experience is that most investigations that do happen don't result in prosecution, meaning that illegal clearing is seen by some as an illegal activity with few or no consequences.”* - Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

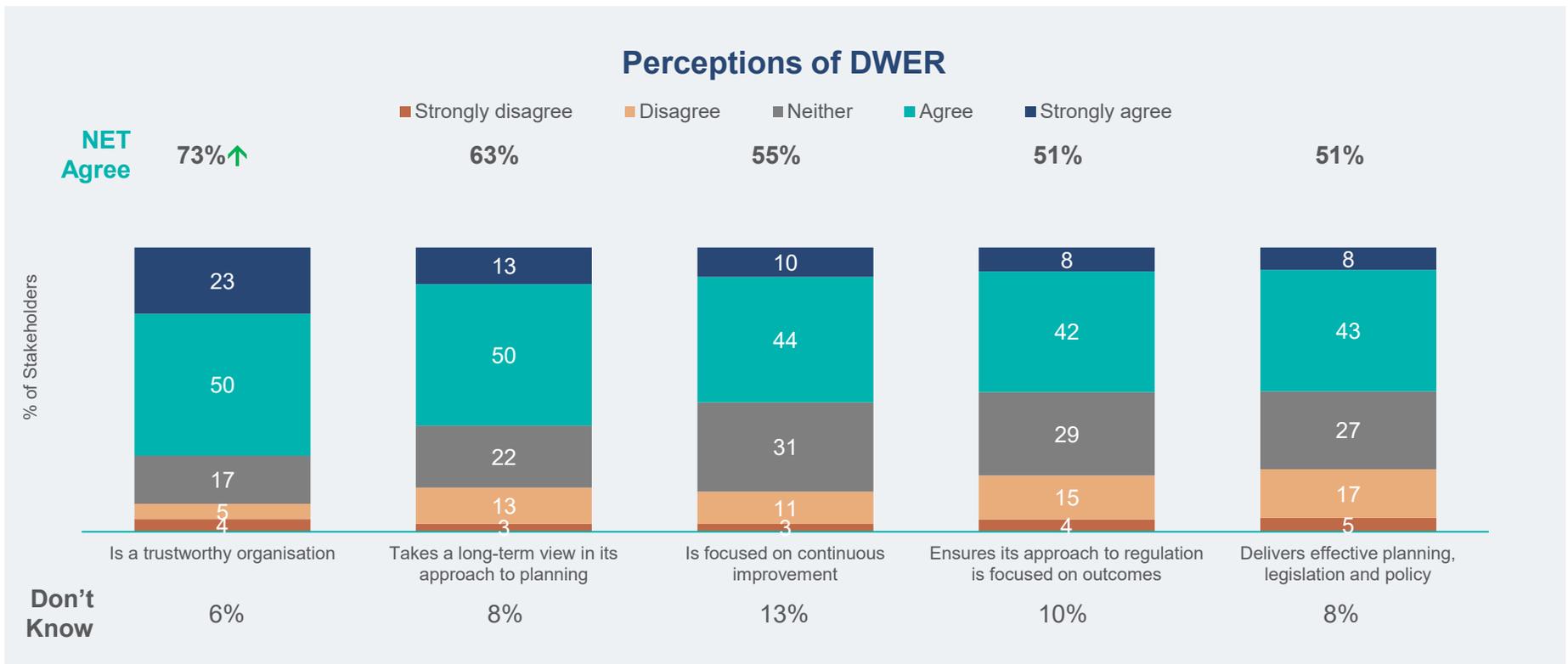
*“Unreliable and contradictory in the provision of legislative advice. Ineffective at managing and regulating native vegetation conservation. Reluctant and ineffectual in responding to compliance matters.”*  
– Other Stakeholder



# Most stakeholders agree that DWER is a trustworthy organisation that takes a long-term view in its approach to planning



Stakeholders are less likely to rate DWER as outcome focused and delivering effective planning, legislation and policy.



n= 374

Q17. Based on everything you have seen, heard or experienced, to what extent do you agree or disagree that DWER

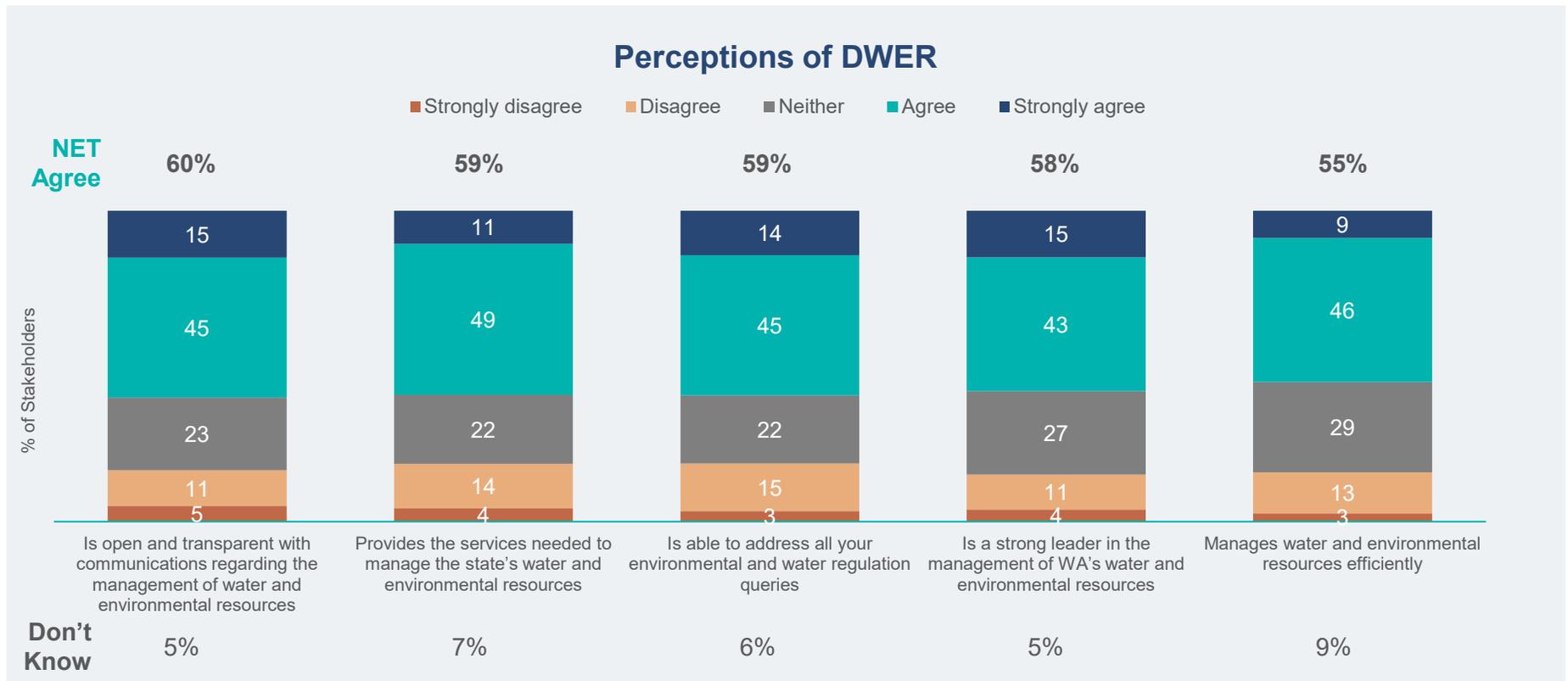
↑↓ Significant difference to other perceptions at 95% confidence

Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Overall perceptions of DWER's performance in managing the state's water and environmental resources are largely positive

However there is an opportunity to shift Stakeholder perceptions from neutral to positive.



n= 374

Q17. Based on everything you have seen, heard or experienced, to what extent do you agree or disagree that DWER

Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Improving the timeliness of decision making and communications as well as having more resources were common suggestions for improvement.



Top Priority and Key Stakeholders also suggested that DWER could provide more clarity on their strategic direction to improve perceptions (13% of Top Priority/Key stakeholders).

## Key Suggestions for Improvement | Top 5



14%

More Timely  
Decision Making /  
Communications



13%

Provide DWER with  
More Resources to  
Undertake their Roles



7%

Improve Water  
Allocation and  
Management



7%

More Collaboration  
with Stakeholders



6%

More Engagement to  
Build Relationships

% of Stakeholders

Overall n=255  
Q24. Please provide any other suggestions for how DWER could improve its services and relationship with you/your organisation.  
Don't know responses have been removed

# In their own words...

## More Timely Decision Making / Communications

*“Realistically they need to actively address the backlog of approvals. They need to deliver a more efficient approval process and streamline the operation more.” -Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“The only improvement required is to improve the approval assessment process to ensure that the expected timeline for an approval application is achieved. That could be by removing duplication with other departments or by ensuring adequate experienced resources are available to assess the applications.” – Other Stakeholder*



## Provide DWER with More Resources to Undertake their Role

*“DWER’s resources appear to be stretched and this is impacting their advice timelines. This does not appear to be because staff aren’t trying, but rather their resources are stretched.” - Other Stakeholder*

*“The staff have a very difficult job and need good resourcing to function well. Currently, I don’t think they’re getting this.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*



## Improve Water Allocation and Management

*“Complete and present the upgrade of the water act. I have concerns about DWER’s current position on take period, spring rights and variable take in the Warren Donnelly catchment. None of these issues show the logic and consistency to satisfy the need of either the water user or the environment.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“They should promote water harvesting and use of bores to lower the salinity level to all councils, a lot of water gets wasted that could be utilised.” – Other Stakeholder*



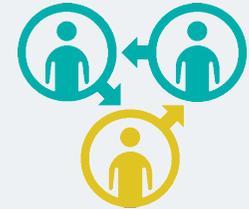
# In their own words...

## More Collaboration with Stakeholders

*“DWER could consider wider engagement with potential collaborators. One means of facilitating this would be to more widely inform stakeholders of R&D initiative earlier in their planning cycles.”*

– Other Stakeholder

*“Primarily DWER, could improve how it works cooperatively with industry in achieving better environmental outcomes.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



## More Engagement to Build Relationships

*“Have a focussed stakeholder relationship/project manager to provide an improved interface with industry.”*

– Other Stakeholder

*“Communication which is two way and respectful is the biggest single factor to improve relationships. Both parties have the same role to play in this space, however it can never be successful if one party adopts a superior position, even if not knowingly. Being outcome based, requires a better understanding, having regulation that stipulates process is not outcomes based. The outcome based decisions need greater work to achieve desired results of both parties.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

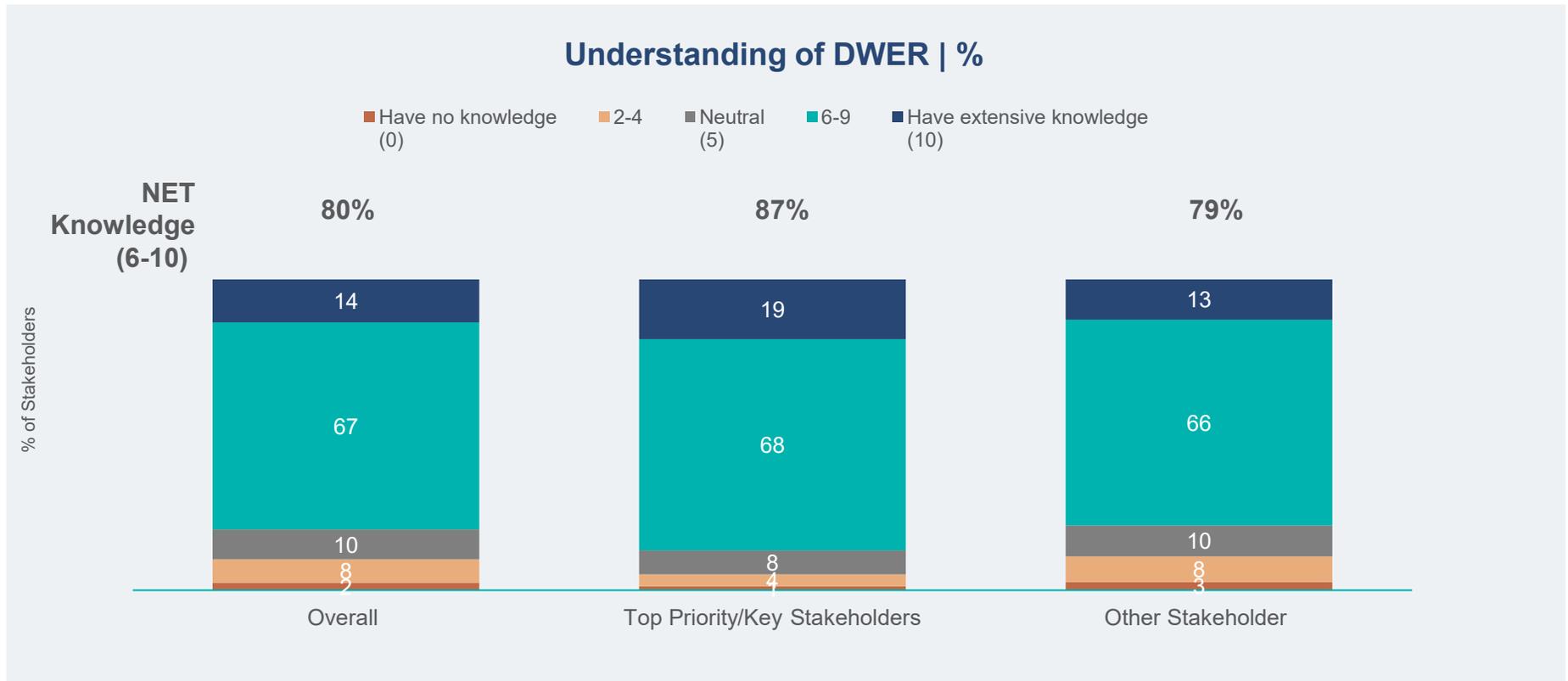


# Awareness and Understanding of DWER Services, Roles and Responsibilities



# Most stakeholders have some understanding of DWER's purpose, roles and responsibilities

Stakeholders who have had interactions with the Department within the last six months, have a higher understanding of DWER's roles and responsibilities (NET Knowledge 88%), compared to those who have had dealings over 6 months ago (58%).



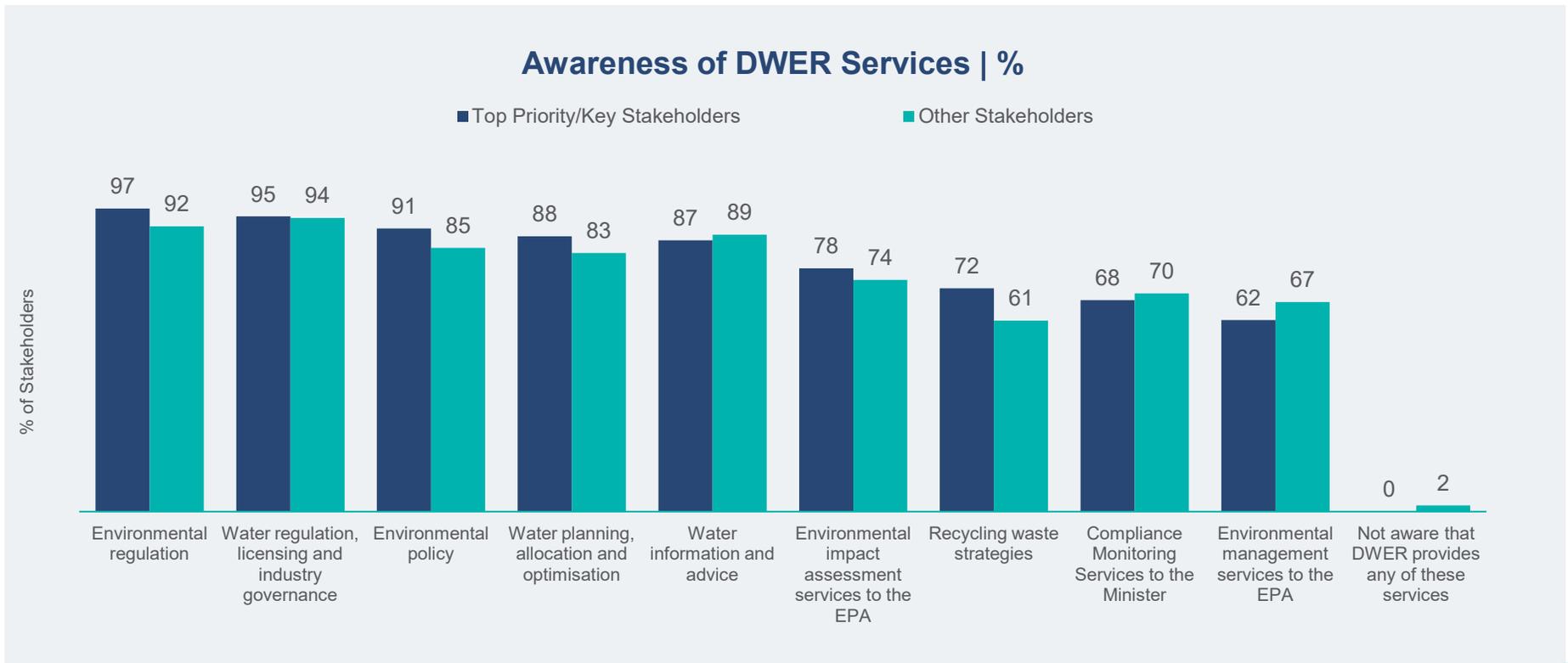
Overall n=374 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=78 | Other Stakeholders n=301

Q5: How would you rate your level of understanding of the purpose, roles and responsibilities of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, also known as DWER?  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Stakeholders are most commonly aware of DWER's core 'water' and 'environmental' services

Stakeholders are less aware of DWER's environmental management services to the EPA, compliance monitoring and recycling waste strategies.

As expected, awareness of 'water' services are higher among those Stakeholders who interact with DWER for water related dealings. Similarly, those who have environmental dealings are more aware of services related to the environment.



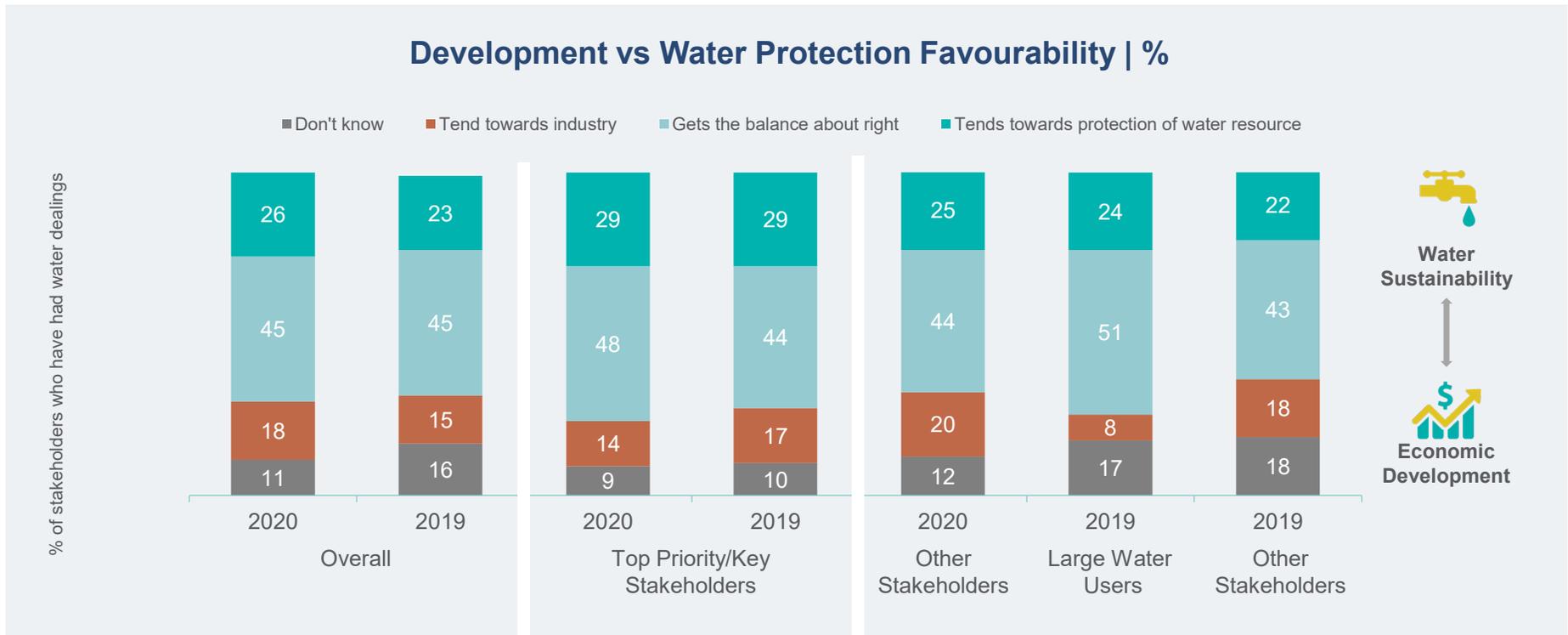
Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=78 | Other Stakeholders n=301  
 Q8. Which of the following services, if any, are you aware that DWER provides?

# Perceived Effectiveness – Water Management



# Approximately half of stakeholders believe DWER is striking the right balance between development and protection of water resources

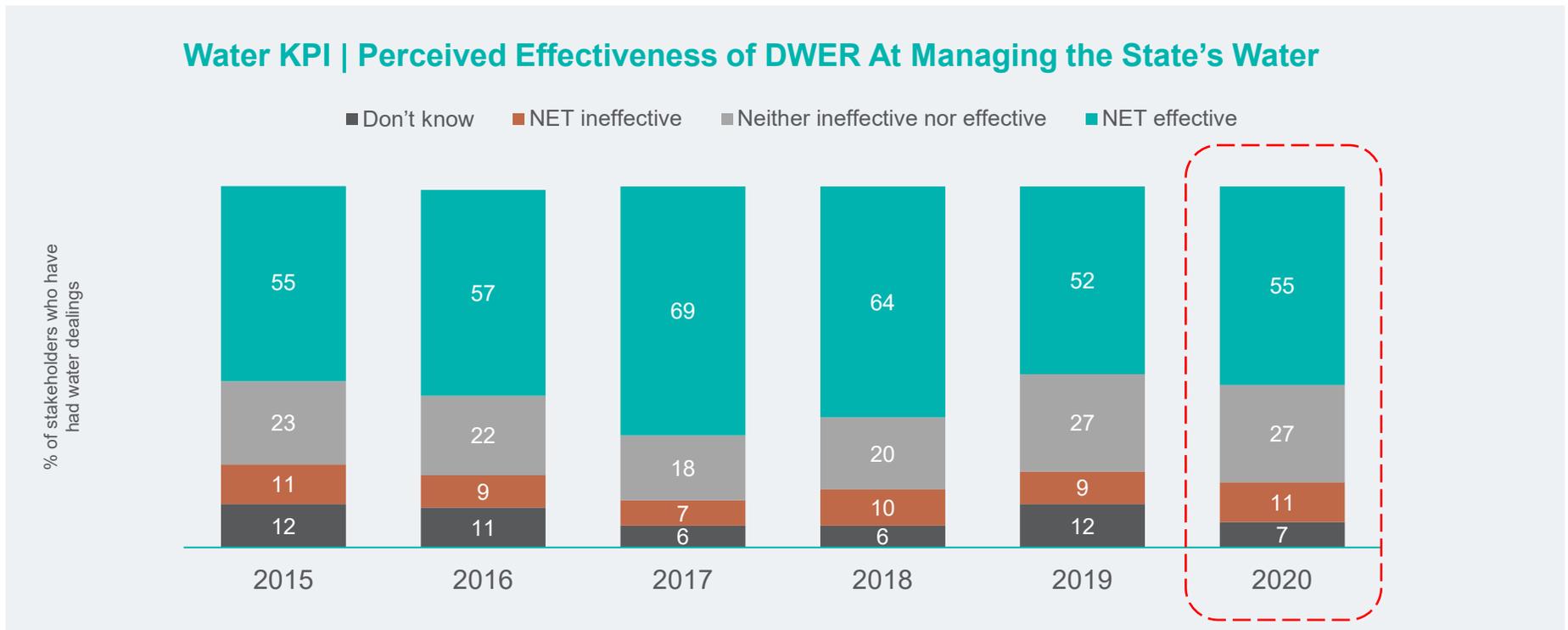
This is largely consistent with Stakeholder perceptions in 2019.



2020 Overall n=298 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=58 | Other Stakeholders n=245  
 2019 Overall n=250 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=41 | Large Stakeholders n=72 | Other Stakeholders n=137  
 Q10. From your experience with and understanding of the Department, would you say that overall it ...?  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Half of those Stakeholders who have had interactions with DWER regarding water, believe DWER is effective at managing the resource for sustainable productive use

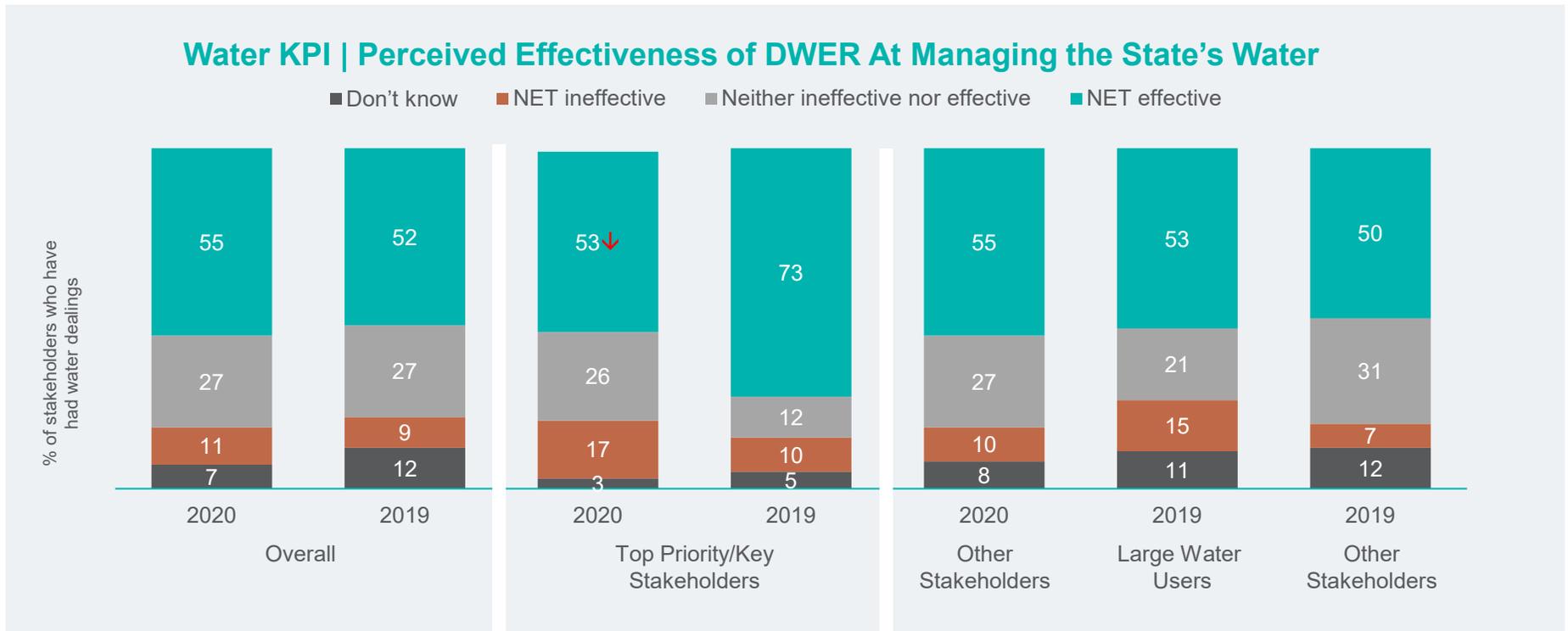
This is statistically consistent with last year's result.



2020 n=298 | 2019 n=250 | 2018 n=233 | 2017 n=319 | 2016 n=263 | 2015 n=279  
Q11. From your experience with and understanding of the Department, would you say that overall it ...?  
Scores may equal 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

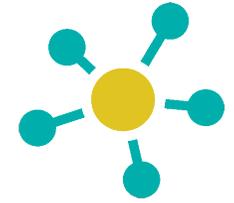
# Perceived effectiveness in managing the state's water for sustainable productive use was largely consistent across the different stakeholder types

However, ratings among the Top Priority/Key Stakeholders were lower than they were in 2019.



2020 Overall n=298 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=58 | Other Stakeholders n=245  
 2019 Overall n= 250 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=41 | Large Stakeholder n=72 | Other Stakeholders n=137  
 Q11. From your experience with and understanding of the Department, would you say that overall it ...?  
 ↑↓ Significant difference to 2019 scores at least 95% confidence  
 Scores may equal 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Water allocation issues and lack of compliance enforcement commonly contributed to ratings of ineffectiveness among stakeholders



## Reasons for Perceived Ineffectiveness of DWER's Management of the State's Water | Top 5



n=6

Poor Allocation of Water



n=5

Poor Monitoring and Enforcement



n=4

Poor Long Term Planning of Water Sources



n=3

Need Stronger Enforcement and Prosecution for Water Mis-use



n=3

Limited Focus on Industry Water Wastage

Number (n=) of stakeholders who have had water dealings

Overall n=36

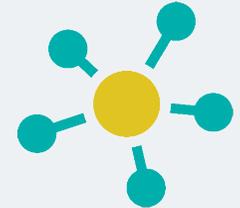
Q12. Why do you rate DWER's management of water for sustainable productive use as ineffective? What are the things you would like to see improved?

# In their own words...

## Poor Allocation of Water

*“Encourage water use efficiency. If a user increases efficiency they should be encouraged (not lose water licence). Charge people when water is taken off property. Water licenses should not be transferred off property. If a property is sold, then the licence should be reviewed. Need to make the community understand water is valuable.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

*“There has been insufficient studies of water resources, especially ground water, with very optimistic evaluations at times of the management of ground water management. I also feel there has been far too little water allocation planning which will have serious effects on the long term resources.”*  
- Top Priority/Key Stakeholder



## Poor Monitoring and Enforcement

*“In general, improved monitoring, compliance and prosecution is required.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

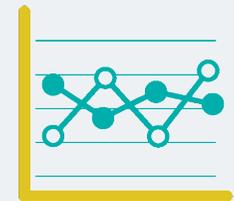
*“They do not police adequately the overuse of water allocations. They do not adequately police the lack of compliance with monitoring plans linked to the Licence to Take Water or the drilling of water bores for industry/agriculture without a S26D licence.”* – Other Stakeholders



## Poor Long term Planning of Water Sources

*“Minimal long term planning. Currently, I feel like it is very knee jerk and not looking at long term sustainability of the State.”* – Other Stakeholders

*“Long term planning for larger population and drier climate, what is DWER planning? I have seen no proposals that can manage water long term. Desal plants subsidised in Ag regions, pipeline from north?”* – Other Stakeholders



# In their own words...

## Stronger Enforcement and Prosecution for Water Mis-use

*“Greater oversight and consistency in decision making about appropriateness of large scale proposals that potentially affect water quality. Currently policies such as the Peel-Harvey Catchment policy lack teeth and realistic objectives and mechanism for monitoring to hold polluters to account.”*

– Other Stakeholders



## Limited Focus on Industry Water Wastage

*“Stop using our precious water for development/infrastructure and use grey water instead. Stop allowing water ways and environmental lakes from being destroyed for short term gains and benefits for the corporations and business. Our country will die if we continue the way governments across Australia handle all our precious water.”* – Other Stakeholders

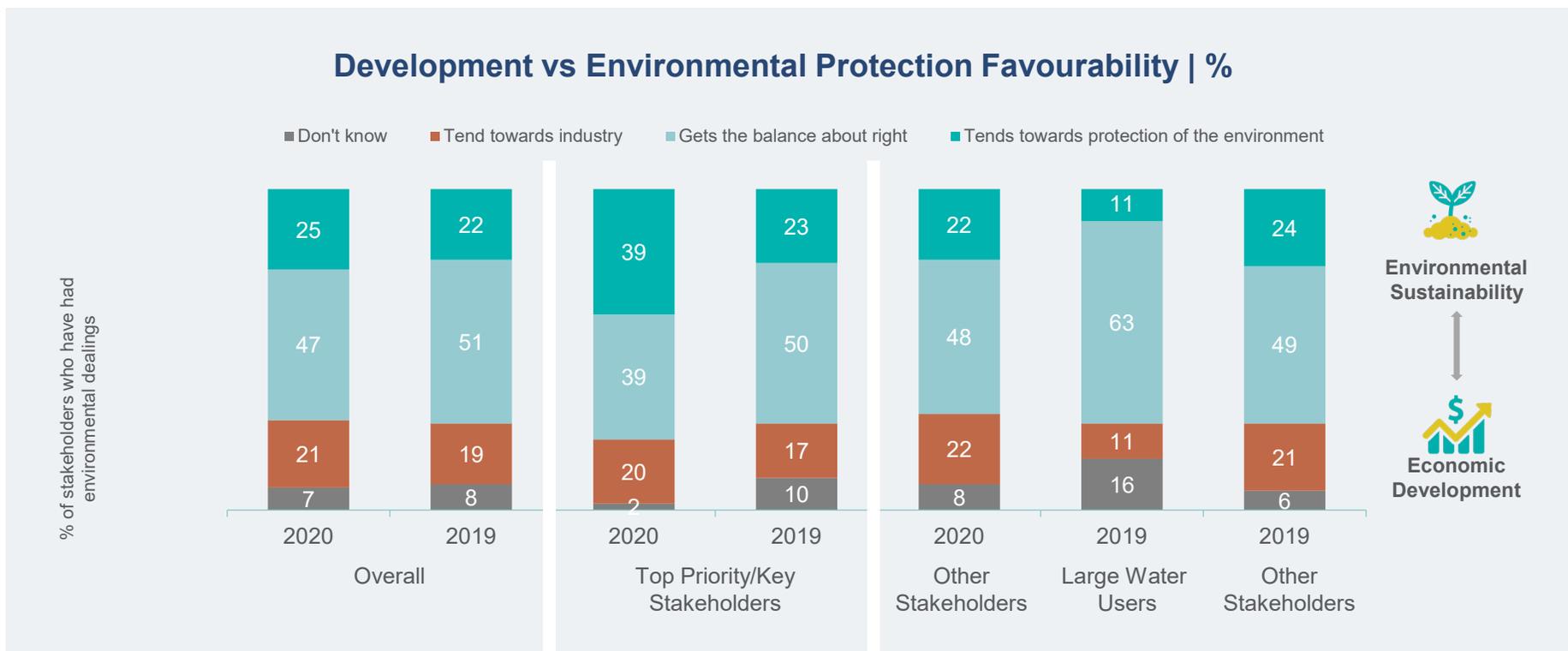


# Perceived Effectiveness – Environmental Management



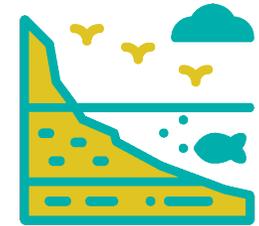
# Of those stakeholders who have had environmental dealings with DWER, half believe DWER is currently getting the balance right

Although not statistically significant given sample sizes, the proportion of Top Priority/Key Stakeholders who said that DWER is tending more towards environmental protection was slightly higher than last year.

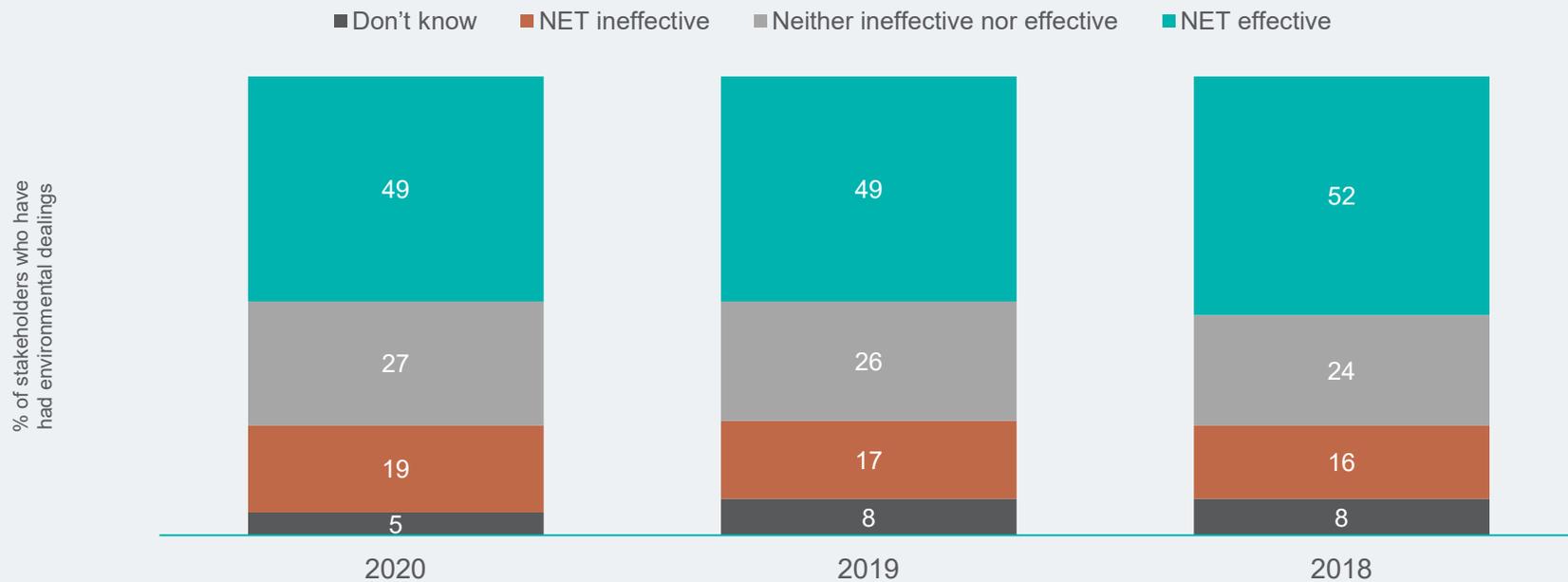


2020 Overall n=240 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=54 | Other Stakeholders n=191  
 2019 Overall n=189 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=30 | Large Stakeholders n= 38 | Other Stakeholders n=121  
 Q13. From your experience with and understanding of the Department, would you say that overall it...?  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Perceived effectiveness in managing the state's environment for sustainable productive use has remained steady



Perceived Effectiveness of DWER At Managing the State's Environment | Year on Year



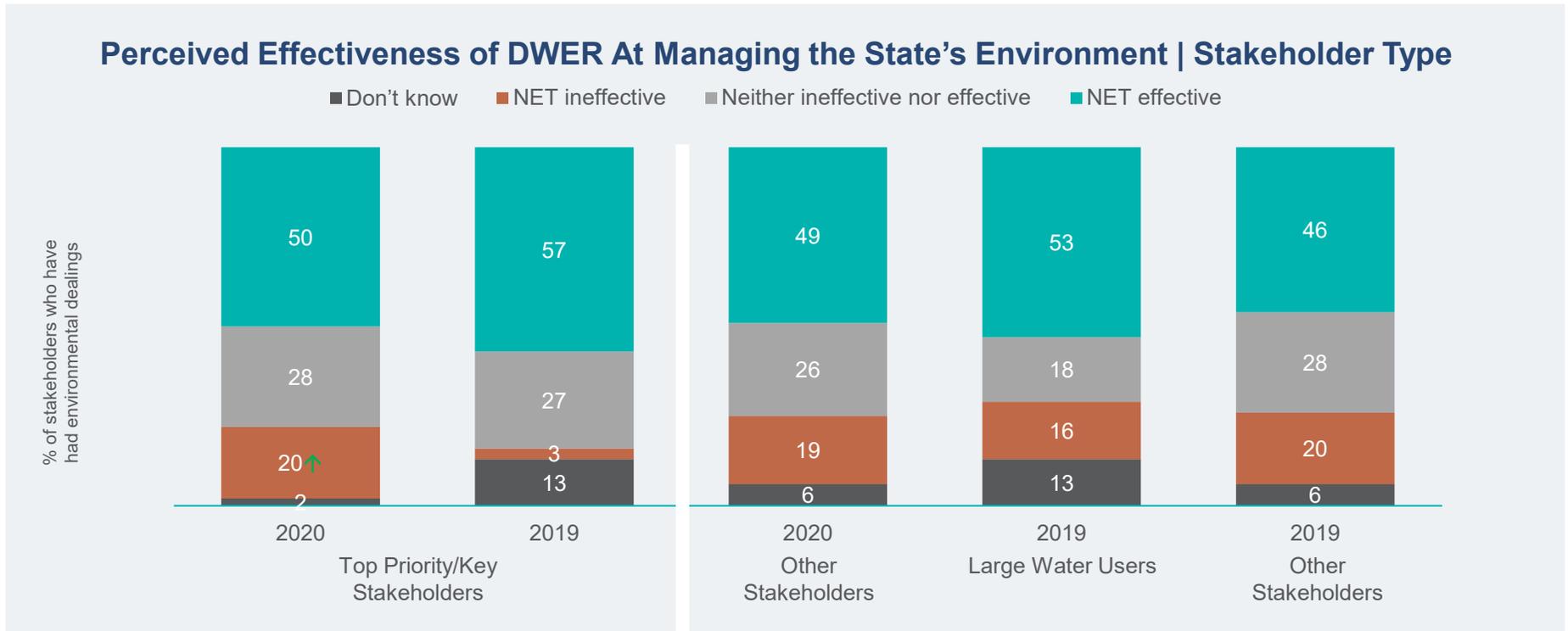
2020 n=240 | 2019 n=189 | 2018 n=214

Q14. Overall, how effective do you think DWER is in managing the state's environment for sustainable productive use?

\*Caution: results indicative only due to small sample

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# However ratings of ineffectiveness have increased among Top Priority and Key Stakeholders



2020: Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=54 | Other Stakeholders n=191

2019: Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=30 \* | Large Stakeholders n=38 | Other Stakeholders n=121

Q14. Overall, how effective do you think DWER is in managing the state's environment for sustainable productive use?

↑↓ Significant difference to 2019 scores at least 95% confidence

\*Caution: results indicative only due to small sample

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Being too development focused was a key reason for perceived ineffectiveness in DWER's management of the environment



## Reasons for Perceived Ineffectiveness of DWER's Management of the State's Environment | Top 5



n=13

Too Development Focused



n=8

Allowing Too Much Clearing of Land



n=7

Lack of Compliance Enforcement



n=5

Too Environmentally Focused



n=3

Too Bureaucratic

Number (n=) of stakeholders who have had environmental dealings

Overall n=46

Q15. Why do you rate DWER's management of the environment for sustainable productive use as ineffective? What are the things you would like to see improved?

# In their own words...

## Too Development Focused

*“The just tend to favour corporate entities like mining and don't seem to care about our needs.”*  
- Other Stakeholder

*“Every where you look there is horticulture being set up at the expense of native environment - no corridors, no buffers. Chemicals, endless sprinklers overwatering adjoining bush. It appears that in the South West nothing has been learnt from the Wheatbelt. It is a slow extinction of what is Australian fauna.”* – Other Stakeholder



## Allowing Too Much Clearing of Land

*“I think in particular when it comes to the protection of native vegetation, the extent of land clearing being permitted is not sustainable, and I would say in particular there is limited consideration of smaller scale proposals which have a larger impact collectively.”* – Other Stakeholder

*“We are losing our unique bushland, the ecological linkages at an alarming rate for high density development. We have over cleared and it continues. There is little compromise. We have more threatened communities of vegetation and plant and animal species and the clearing goes ahead with no regard for this or climate change.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



## Lack of Compliance and Enforcement

*“Improved monitoring and mapping. Improved compliance and prosecution. Consistent advise for and application of regulation.”* – Other Stakeholder

*“Our experience is that DWER has a culture of not dealing adequately with threats to natural ecosystems. We see no evidence that DWER takes account of cumulative impacts and we believe that DWER lacks sufficient resourcing for policing bad actors - non-compliance is not taken seriously enough.”* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder



# In their own words...

## Too Environmentally Focused

*“They have locked up vast areas of the state, and many resources that can’t be used for economic development.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“Too much focus on protecting insignificant vegetation/wetlands in terms of size, quality and scope for sustainable management. DWER uses the planning and environmental approval process to pursue its own agenda at the expense of desirable development. Developers have to accede to unreasonable demands to avoid project delays and costs.” – Other Stakeholder*



## Too Bureaucratic

*“Less red tape and regulation. Also less interference and a better practical understanding of why farmers need to clear/manage land for the well being of the environment and protection against fires.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

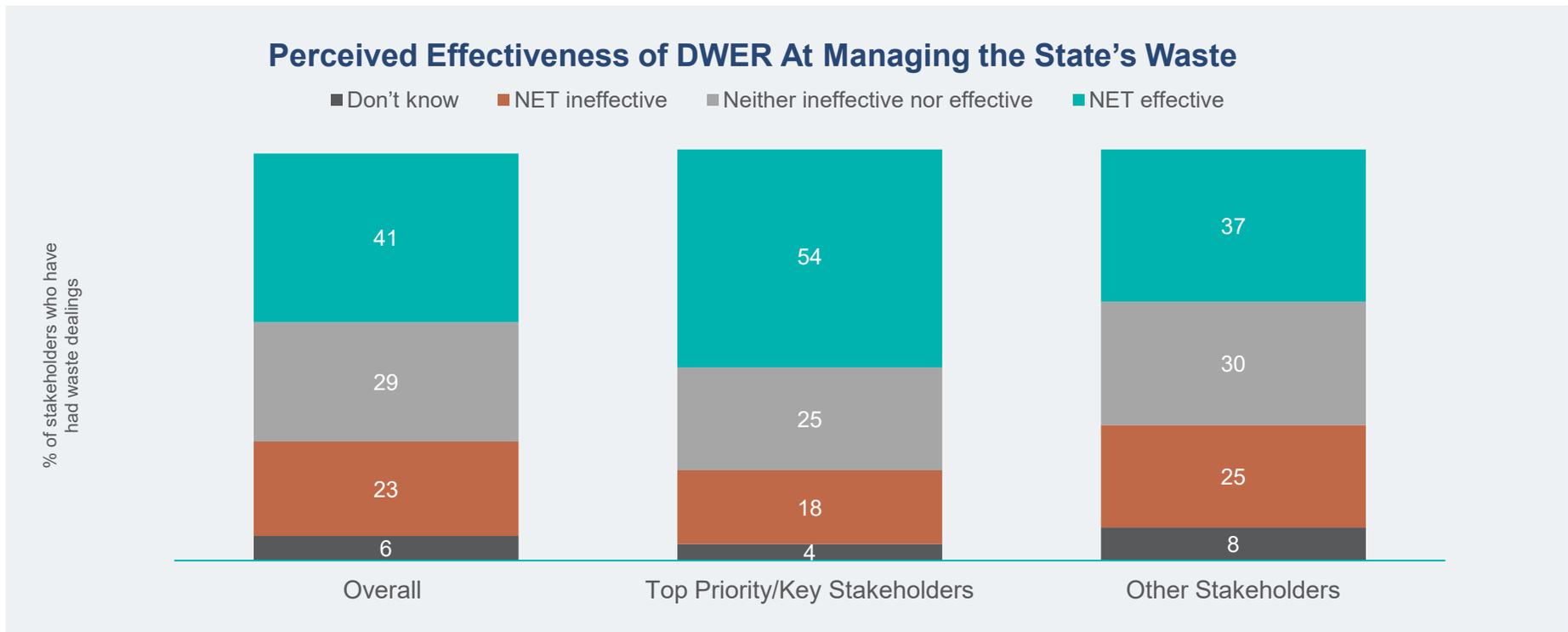
*“There is always too much red tape to get through, especially when dealing with Councils.” – Other Stakeholder*



# Two-in-five Stakeholders who have had waste related dealings with DWER feel the Department is effective at managing waste



Perceived effectiveness is slightly higher among Top Priority and Key Stakeholders.



Overall n=116 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholders n=28\* | Other Stakeholders n=89

Q16. Overall, how effective do you think DWER is in setting the framework for better management of waste including improving the reuse and recycling of waste products?

\*Caution: results indicative only due to small sample

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

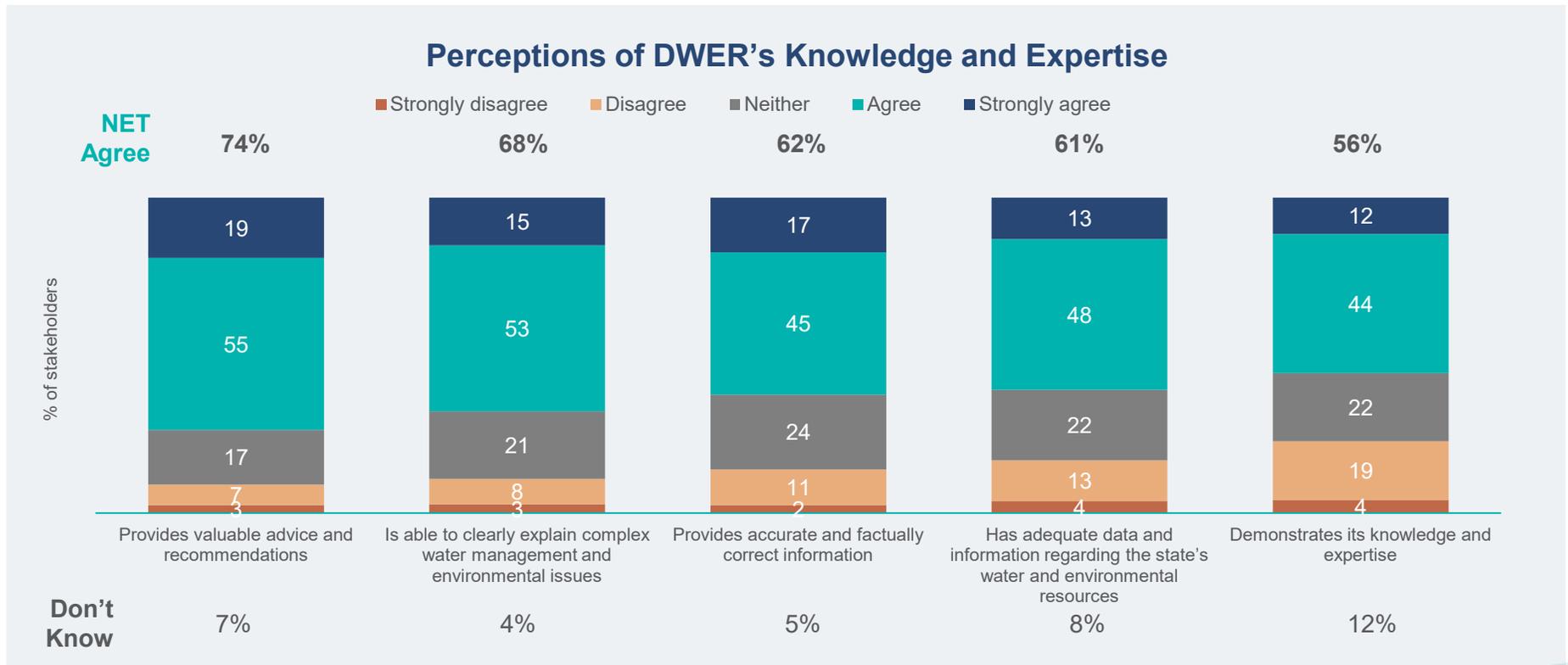
# Perceptions of DWER's Knowledge, Expertise and Decision Making



# Stakeholders commonly agree that DWER provides valuable advice and recommendations and is able to clearly explain complex issues



However there is some room to improve the extent to which Stakeholders agree that DWER demonstrates its knowledge and expertise. Perceptions of DWER's knowledge and expertise are consistent across Stakeholder groups.

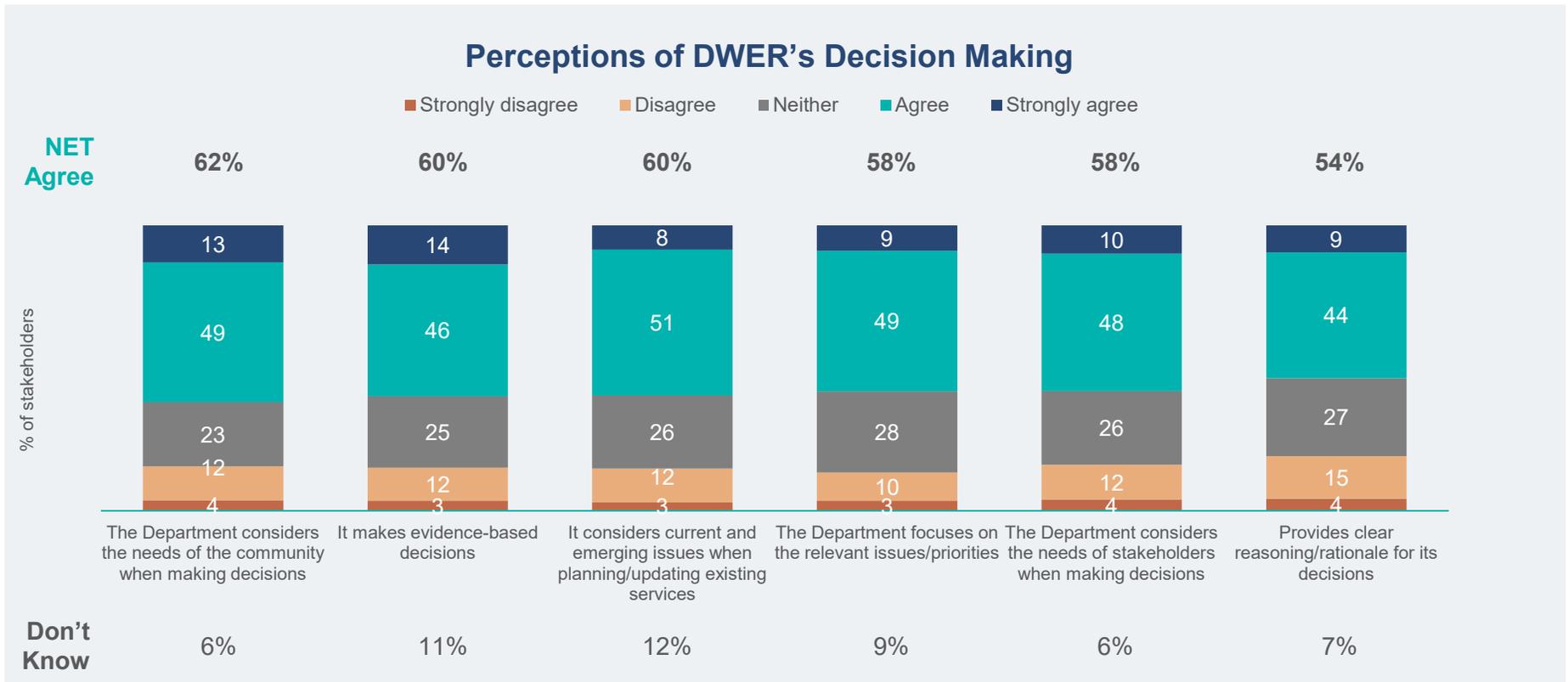


Overall n=347  
 Q18A. And to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about DWER's knowledge and expertise in the management of the state's water resources and environment  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Most Stakeholders agree that DWER makes evidence based decisions and considers relevant needs when making its decisions



However, DWER doesn't perform as strongly in terms of providing a clear rationale for its decisions.



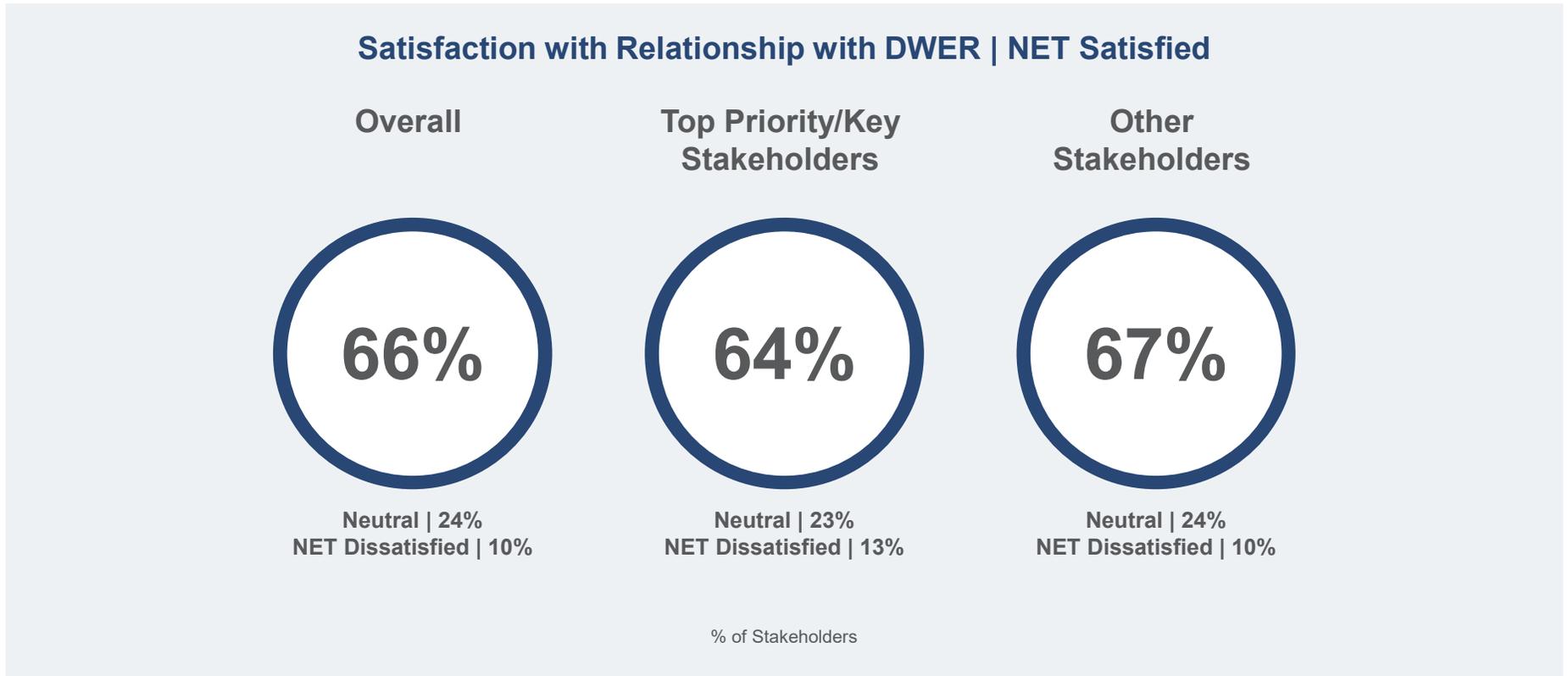
Overall n= 374  
 Q18B. Thinking now about how DWER makes its decisions, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Communications and Engagement



# Two-thirds of Stakeholders are satisfied with their current relationship with DWER

Satisfaction with their relationship with DWER is consistent across the different Stakeholder types.



Overall n=370 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholder n=78 | Other Stakeholders n=297  
Q19. Overall, how would you rate your current relationship with DWER?  
Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

# Those who are satisfied with their relationship with DWER mostly attribute this to receiving good customer service and working in partnership with DWER



## Reasons for Satisfaction | Top 5



19%

Good Customer Service



12%

Collaborative Partnership



10%

Provides Clear Advice



10%

Good Access to Data



10%

Staff have Adequate Knowledge to Help

% of stakeholders satisfied with their relationship

Overall n=223  
Q20a. Why is that? What does DWER do well?  
Scores under 10% not shown

# In their own words...

## Good Customer Service

*"They are always helpful when we need them and their staff provide a good service. I've also never had an issue with communications, they're always onto it."* - Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

*"They are always helpful when we need them and they also have good communication with use."*  
- Other Stakeholder



## Collaborative Partnership

*"Good relationship at senior levels. DWER are always looking to jointly seek a solution, however are sometimes restricted by capacity."* – Other Stakeholder

*"DWER works well with stakeholders and provides valuable, informed contribution to a range of policy discussions and stakeholder interactions."* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholders

*"Always available to discuss projects and work together to gain the best outcome for the environment while still allowing infrastructure projects to proceed."* – Other Stakeholder



## Provides Clear Advice

*"I get a response from them whenever I require it and I also get good guidance and advice whenever I need it. They are always there for me."* – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder

*"When I have had complex issue with water quality they are able to explain and break it down so I could break it down for the resident at the time."* – Other Stakeholder



# In their own words...

## Good Access to Data

*“Moving to improve data capture and sharing of that data for Western Australia. Strong regulatory reform agenda. They’re also good at stakeholder management.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“My dealings with DWER have been satisfactory in that the information and data provided has been useful for future requirements in the process.” – Other Stakeholder*



## Staff have Adequate Knowledge to Help

*“Our organisation has had most of our questions answered by knowledgeable and timely staff. Generally DWER is very helpful in respect to questions asked about waste management and any other matters related to that area.” – Other Stakeholder*

*“Staff are knowledgeable, helpful, competent and provide timely advice and the processes occur within a reasonable time frame. Comparatively and from an infrastructure development and management perspective, DWER is an efficient government department that has clear policies and guidelines.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*



# Limited collaboration and slow response times are key causes of dissatisfaction among Stakeholders



## Reasons for Dissatisfaction | Top 5



15%

Not Enough  
Collaboration



15%

Generally Ok, but Room  
for Improvement



11%

Have had Limited  
Interactions with  
DWER to Date



11%

Slow Response to  
Queries



10%

Processes are  
Confusing and Not  
Timely Enough

% of stakeholders dissatisfied/neutral with their relationship

Overall n=116

Q20b. Why is that? Please provide any suggestions for improvement in the way DWER manages its relationship with you and your organisation.  
Scores under 10% not shown

# In their own words...

## Not Enough Collaboration

*“They need to work more collaboratively with us to identify effective processes to ensure government and stakeholder objectives in our area of operation can be delivered.” - Other Stakeholder*

*“More consultation and communications is of the utmost importance for us. We want to be more collaborative but it’s just not happening.” - Top Priority / Key Stakeholders*



## Generally Ok, but Room for Improvement

*“Most issues are with water but have found huge improvements with environment and the Department staff have been very helpful recently.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“Generally we are pretty happy, but there’s room to improve the environmental side of things!” – Other Stakeholder*



## Have had Limited Interactions with DWER to Date

*“We have only had two meetings and they have only developed this new group I am involved in and it is in early stages. So I don’t have much to comment on yet.” – Top Priority / Key Stakeholder*

*“I’ve had limited interaction in the past 2 to 3 years, however had maintained a positive working relationship with the Department.” –Other Stakeholder*



# In their own words...

## Slow Response to Queries

*“Response to investigations of a reported complaint can be slow, this needs to be addressed”*  
– Other Stakeholder

*“Over the past year my experience with the native vegetation permit application process has not been very good. The two applications were not dealt with in the usual timeframe indicated by the department. When they were dealt with after five months of no action, information was asked as to why the permits could not be provided in the timeframe given, and I got a little response back.”*  
- Other Stakeholder



## Processes are Confusing and Not Timely Enough

*“Advice is usually a bit uncertain and not overly timely. I’ve also found they’re not very forthcoming and their processes are not very transparent.”* - Top Priority / Key Stakeholders

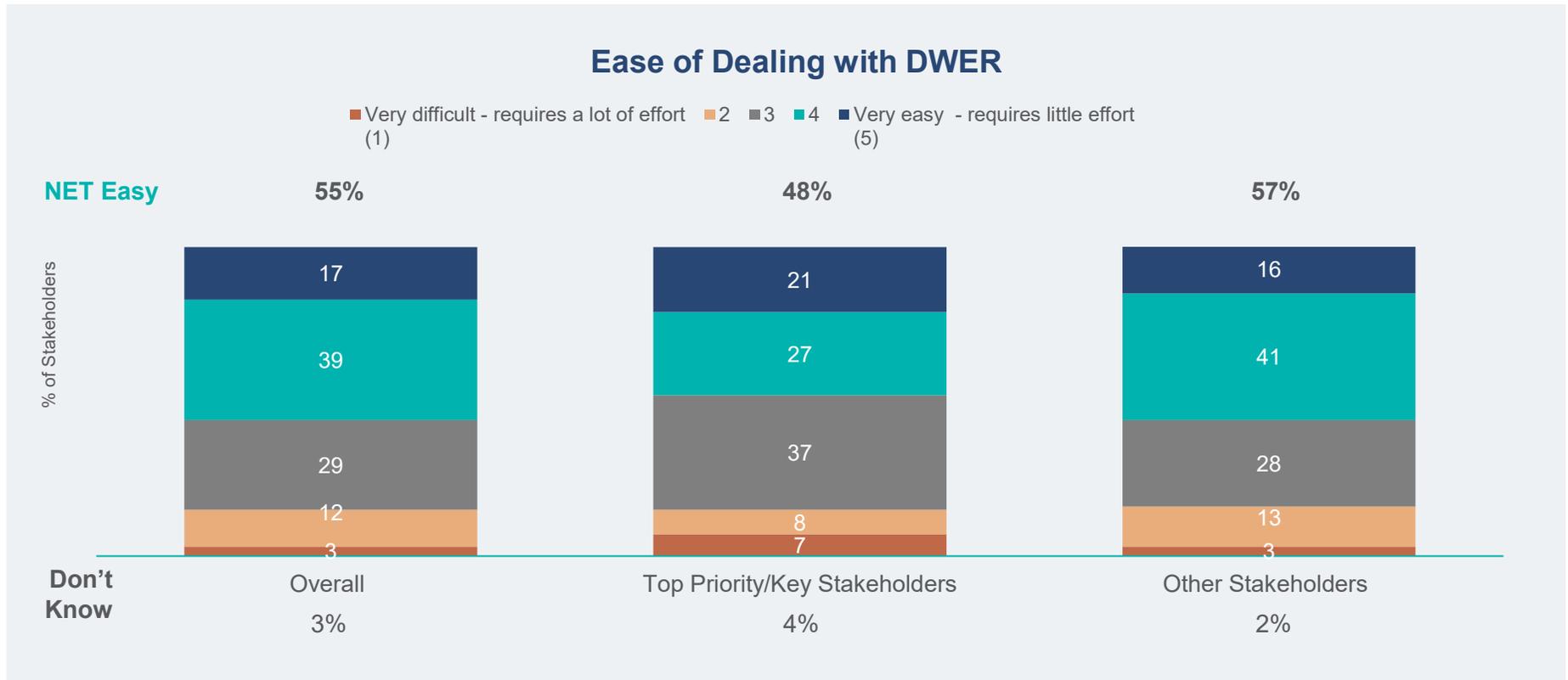
*“The application process is inconsistent and the expectations are always changing throughout the process.”* – Other Stakeholder



# Approximately half of Stakeholders say DWER is easy to deal with



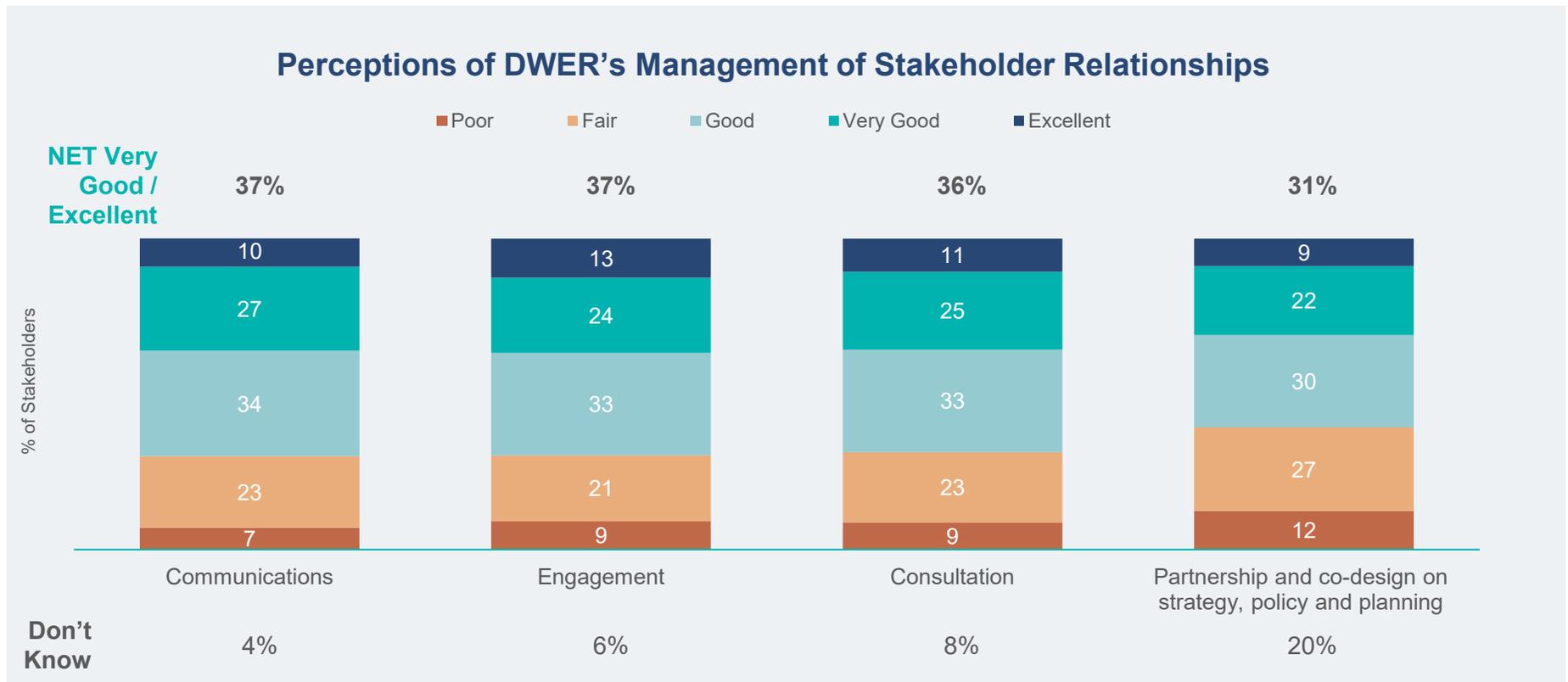
Overall, the perceived ease of dealing with DWER is slightly weaker among Top Priority and Key Stakeholders.



Overall n=364 | Top Priority/Key Stakeholder n=75 | Other Stakeholders n=294  
 Q21. Overall, how would you rate DWER in terms of being easy to deal with in relation to your business/organisation's needs?  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Approximately one-in-three rate DWER as very good or excellent on the key aspects of relationship management

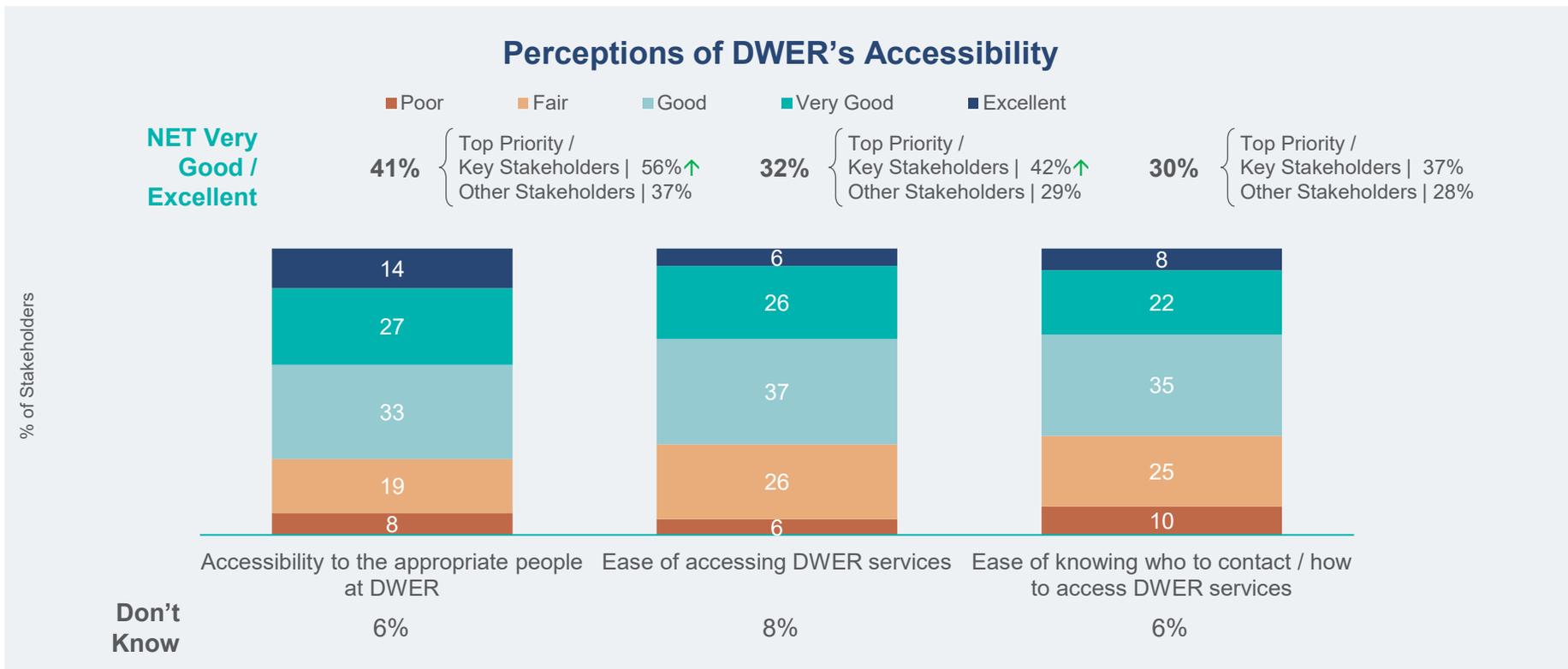
There is an opportunity to improve DWER's perceived performance on these criteria, particularly partnership and co-design on strategy, policy and planning where almost four-in-ten rate the organisation as poor or fair.



Overall n=360 | 351 | 343 | 300  
 Q22A. How would you rate DWER's performance in managing their relationship with you and your business/organisation, across each of the following areas  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

# Perceived ease of access to DWER staff and services rates higher among Top Priority and Key Stakeholders

Other Stakeholders are less likely to rate ease of access to DWER as very good or excellent.



Overall n=350 | 343 | 352

Q22B. And, how would you rate DWER's performance in managing their relationship with you and your business/organisation, across each of the following areas?

Q23. Still thinking about your interactions with DWER, how would you rate the following?

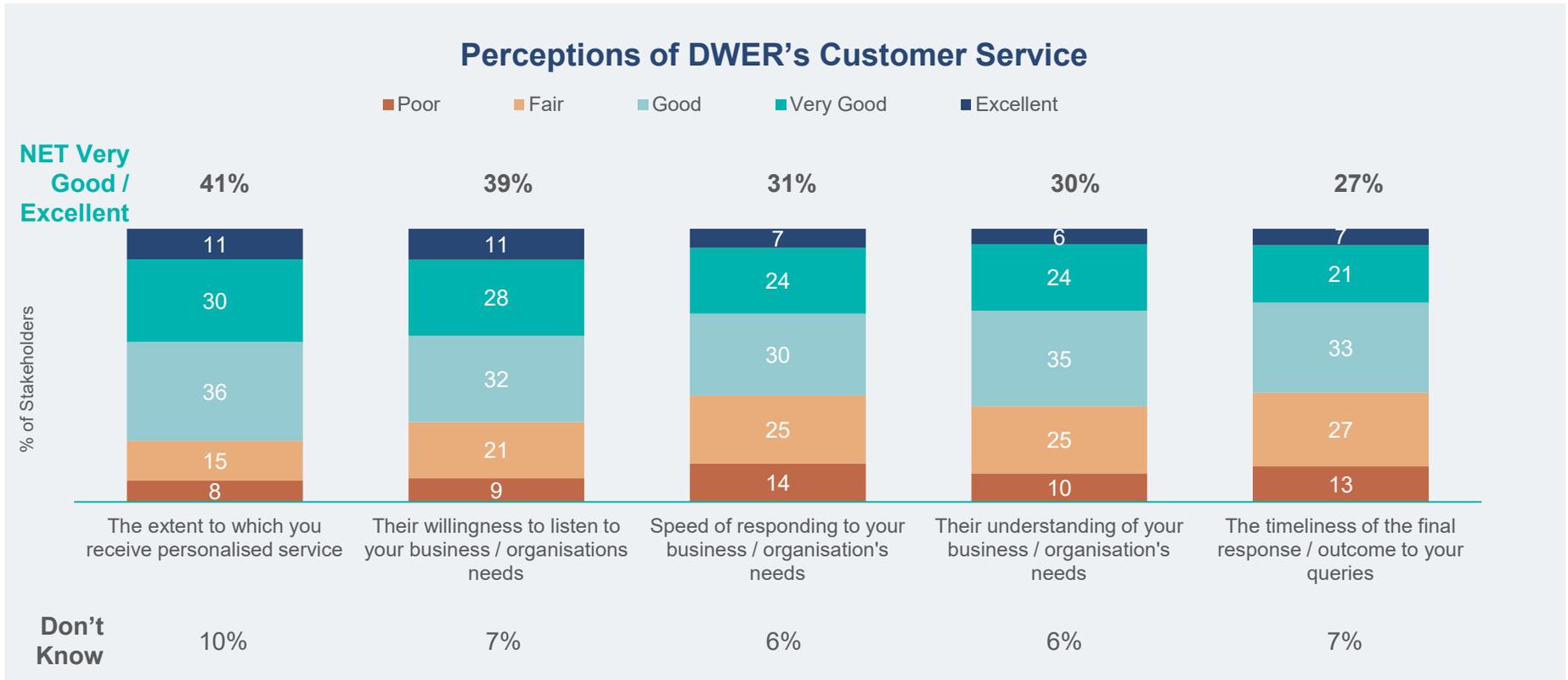
Don't know responses have been removed

↑↓ Significant difference to other stakeholders at 95% confidence

Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Timeliness and speed of response are some of the weaker aspects of DWER's relationship management

There is an opportunity for DWER to increase their understanding of Stakeholder's businesses, which could help to identify relevant information needs and requirements which could be used during communications.



Overall n=337 | 349 | 351 | 352 | 347

Q22B. And, how would you rate DWER's performance in managing their relationship with you and your business/organisation, across each of the following areas?

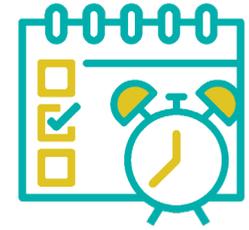
Q23. Still thinking about your interactions with DWER, how would you rate the following?

Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

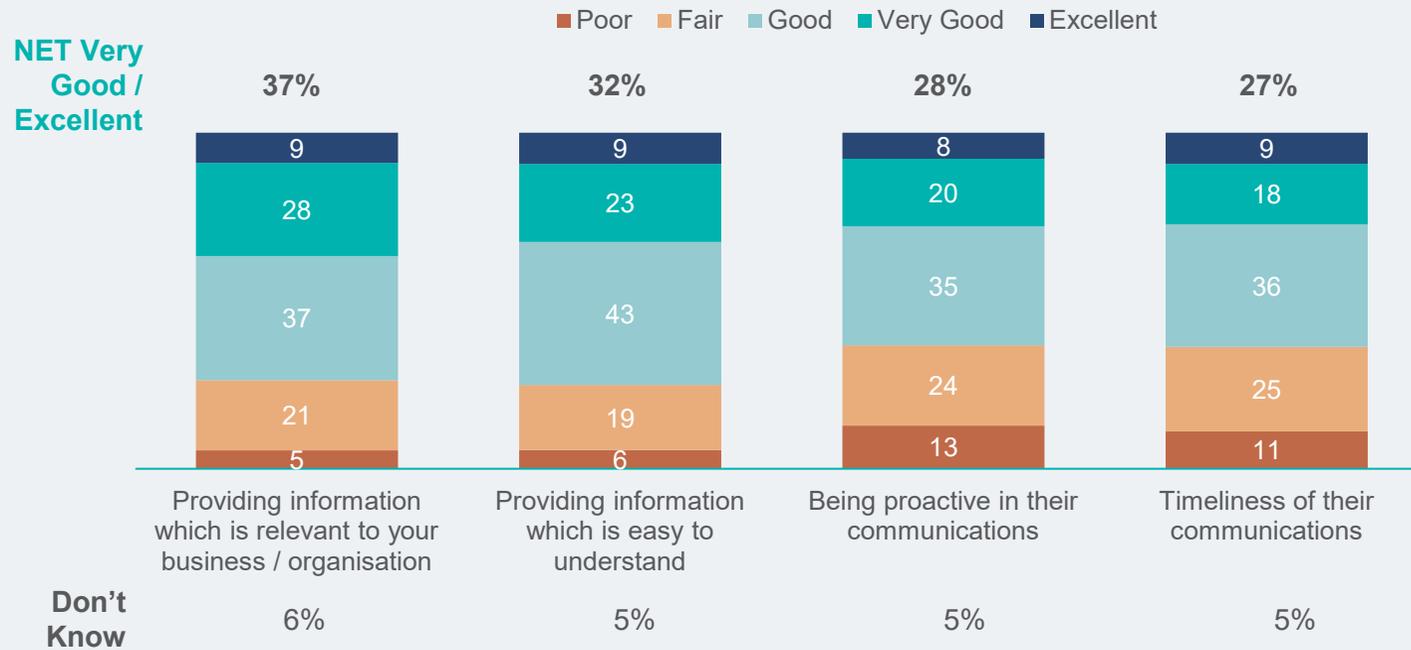
Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# More timely and proactive communications is also an area for improvement

Over one-in-three Stakeholders rate DWER as poor or fair in terms of being proactive and timely in its communications.



### Perceptions of DWER's Communications

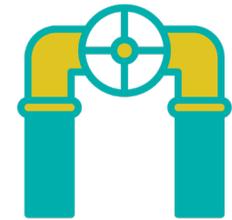


Overall n= 353 | 357 | 357 | 357  
 Q22B. And, how would you rate DWER's performance in managing their relationship with you and your business/organisation, across each of the following areas?  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Attitudes Towards Water and Environmental Issues

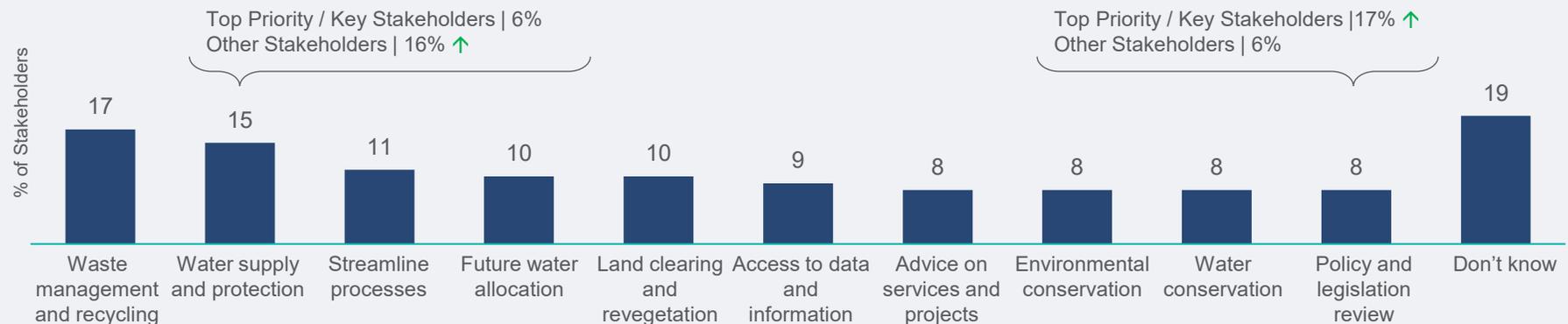


# Waste management and future water supply are considered priorities for DWER



Priority focus areas were largely consistent by Stakeholder type, except for two key areas – Other Stakeholders were more likely to suggest a focus on water supply and protection while Top Priority and Key Stakeholders were more likely to say that DWER needs to review its policies and legislation.

### Priority Areas For DWER To Focus On | Top Ten



n= 374

Q25. Thinking about water and environment issues that are most important to you business/organisation, please let up to three key priority areas your business/organisation would like to see DWER focus on regarding the management of our state's water and environmental issues.

Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

↑↓ Significant difference to other stakeholders at least 95% confidence

# In their words...



## Waste management and recycling

*“Licensing of new amended facilities in line with the State Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030.”*

- **Top Priority / Key Stakeholder**

*“Recycling service like waste recycling processing. This is one area that is big for our area of operation.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**

*“Waste management and policy needs to be a focus.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**



## Water supply and protection

*“We should be focusing of the sustainable and reliable supply of water.”*

- **Top Priority / Key Stakeholders**

*“Long term water strategy for this resource.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**

*“Water and safeguards to it’s allocation and supply.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**

*“Access to water for food production and liveability.”*

- **Top Priority / Key Stakeholder**



## Streamline processes

*“Need to make things easier and more efficient when providing environmental approvals.”*

- **Top Priority / Key Stakeholders**

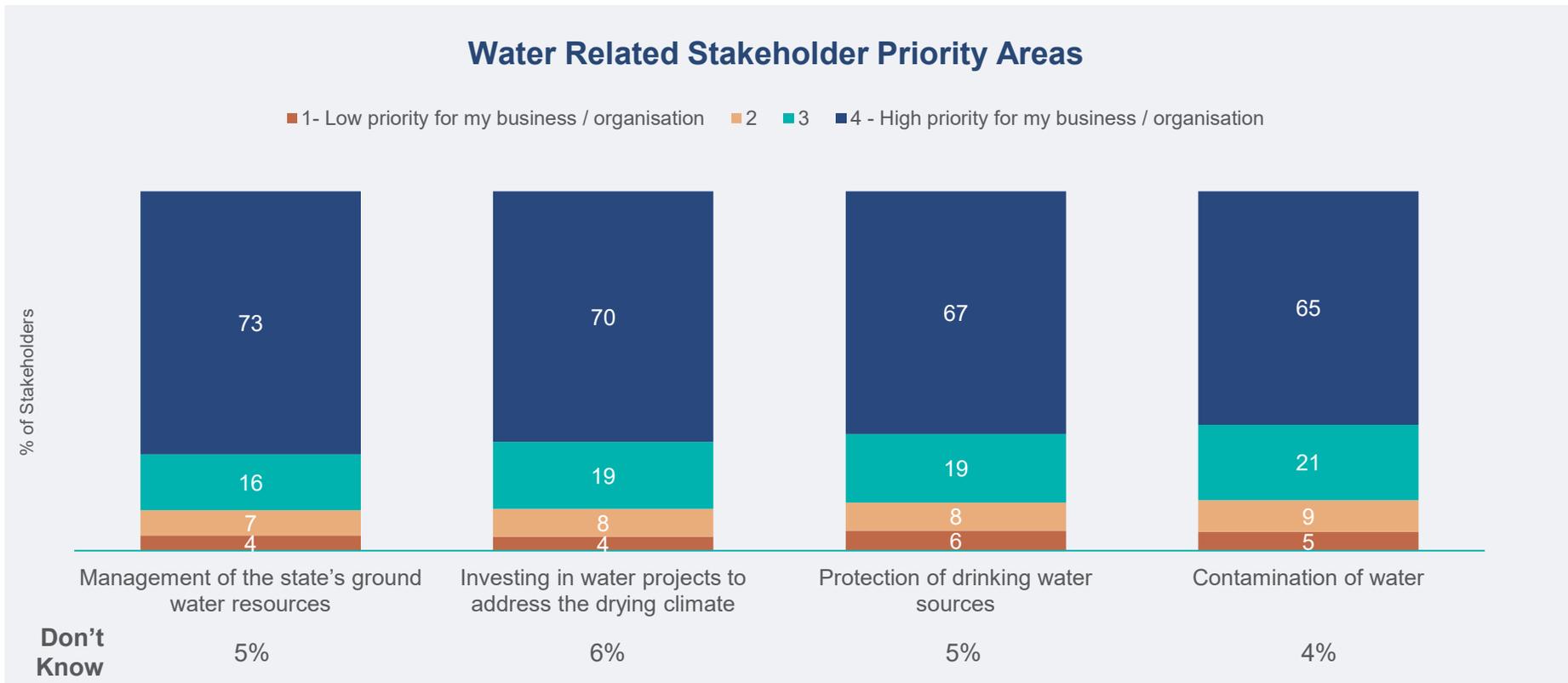
*“Again they are working on it but there needs to be simplified clearing permits for our needs. So if we only want to take out 3 trees that should be how it is compared to someone that wants to take out 10 hectares.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**

*“Prompt clearing permits with relevant information required only.”*

- **Other Stakeholder**

# Managing and planning of the State's water resources are considered key water related priority areas for DWER to focus on



n= 354 | 353 | 355 | 360

Q26. And to what extent are each of the following considered a priority by your business/organisation for DWER to focus on regarding the management of our state's water and environmental issues  
 Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data  
 Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Clearing of land for development, climate change and waste management are considered key environmental priority areas for DWER to focus on

Specifically the clearing of land as a key priority area is significantly higher among those Stakeholders who have environmental dealings with the department (67% High Priority).



n= 349 | 349 | 349 | 349 | 353 | 345 | 351

Q26. And to what extent are each of the following considered a priority by your business/organisation for DWER to focus on regarding the management of our state's water and environmental issues

Don't know responses have been removed from the charted data

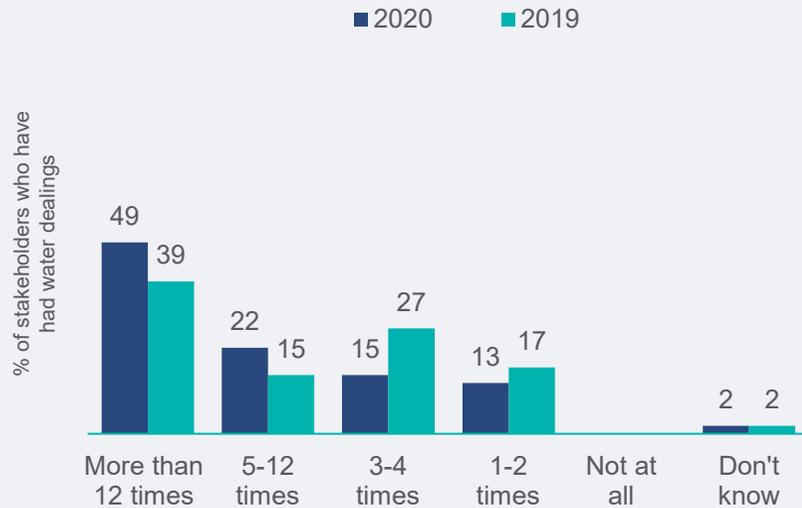
Results may not equal to 100% by +/- 1% due to rounding

# Sample Profile



# Top Priority and Key Stakeholder Profile

## Frequency of Contact with DWER in Connection to Water over the Past Year



2020 n=55 | 2019 n=41

Q2B. How frequently have you had dealings with DWER over the past year?

## Dealings in Relation To....

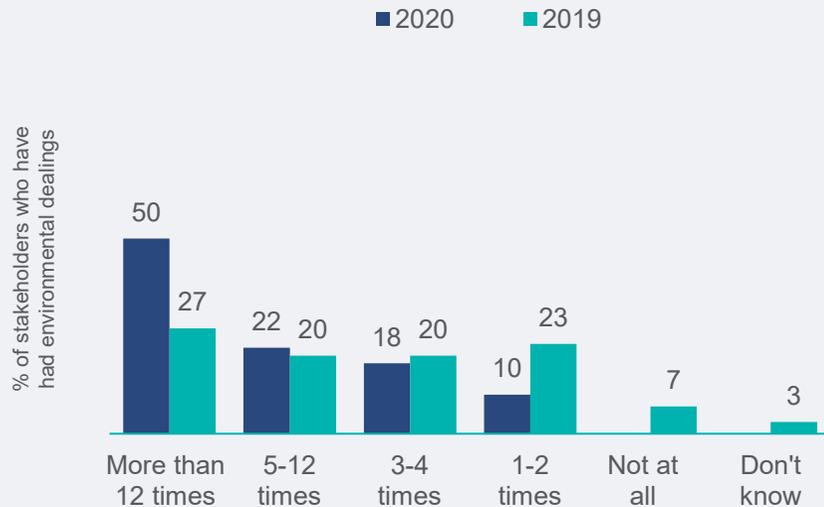


2020 n=58 | 2019 n=40

Q3. And what have your dealings with DWER been related to

# Top Priority and Key Stakeholder Profile

## Frequency of Contact with DWER in Connection to the Environment over the Past Year



2020 n=50 | 2019 n=30\*

Q2B. How frequently have you had dealings with DWER over the past year?  
Caution results indicative only due to small sample

## Dealings in Relation To....



2020 n=25 | 2019 n=30\*

Q3. And what have your dealings with DWER been related to  
Caution results indicative only due to small sample

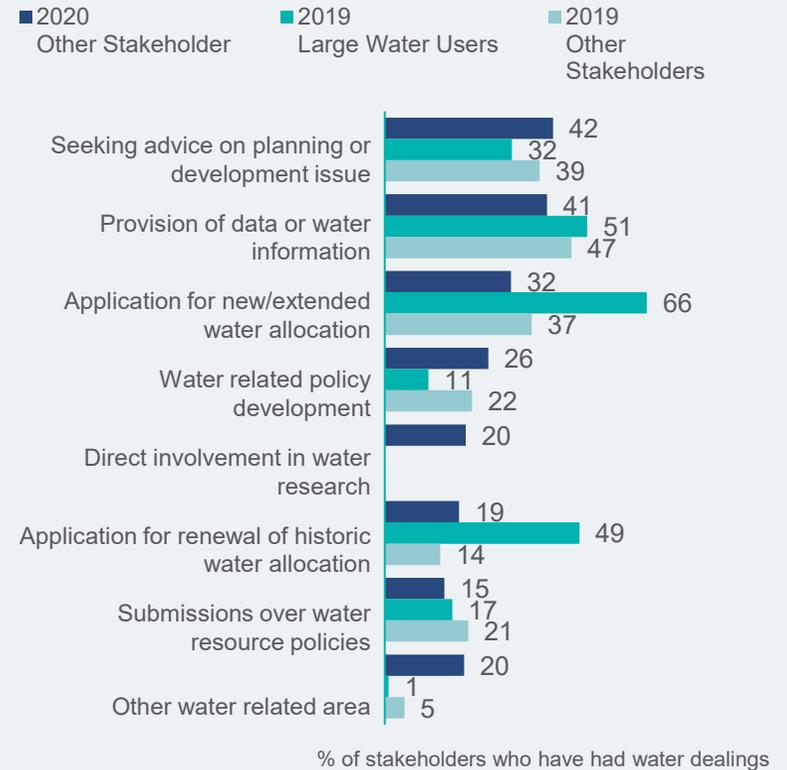
# Other Stakeholder Profile

## Frequency of Contact with DWER in Connection to Water over the Past Year



2020 n=221 | 2019 Large Stakeholder n=72 | Other Stakeholders n=137  
Q2B. How frequently have you had dealings with DWER over the past year?

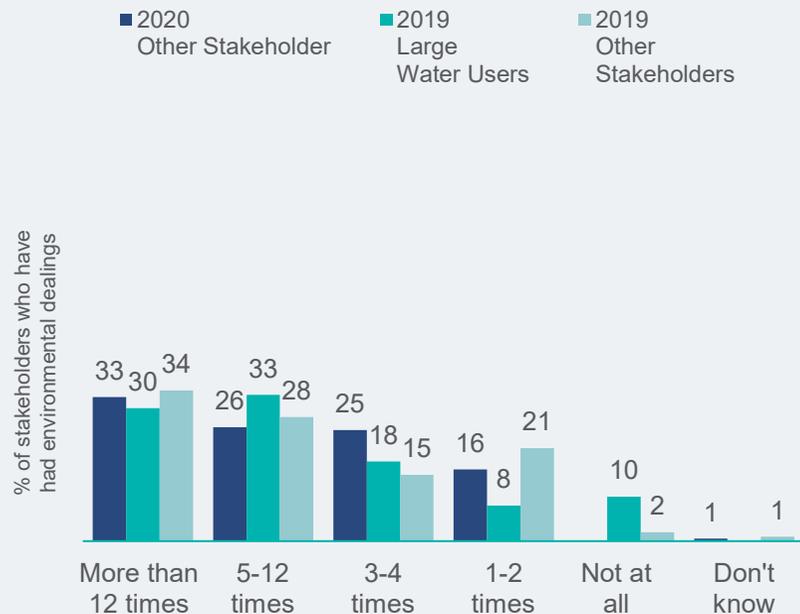
## Dealings in Relation To....



2020 n=245 | 2019 Large Stakeholder n=71 | Other Stakeholders n=125  
Q3. And what have your dealings with DWER been related to

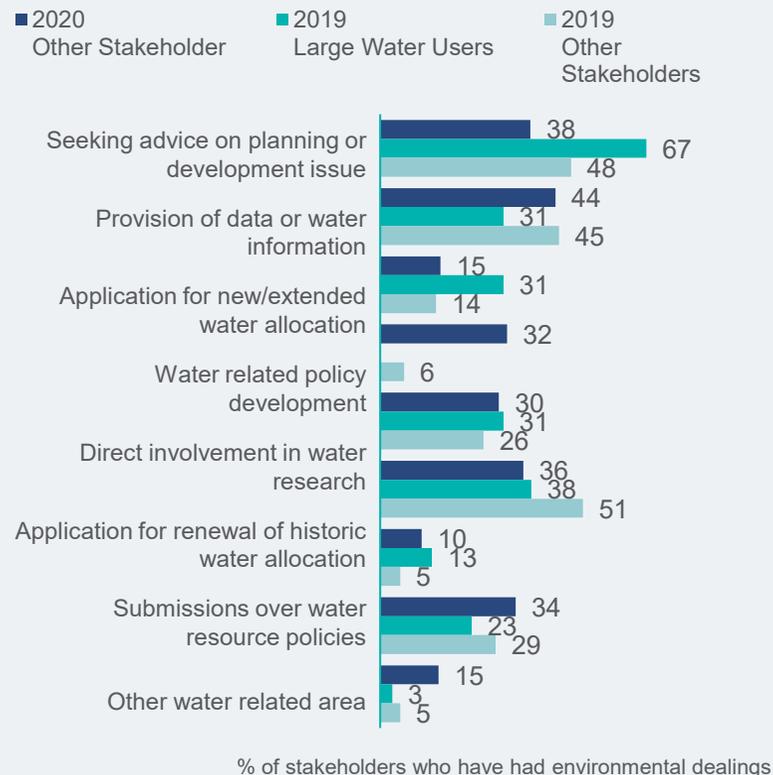
# Large Water Users and Other Stakeholder Profile

## Frequency of Contact with DWER in Connection to the Environment over the Past Year



2020 n=172 | 2019 Large Stakeholder n=39 | Other Stakeholders n=121  
Q2B. How frequently have you had dealings with DWER over the past year?

## Dealings in Relation To....



2020 n=172 | 2019 Large Stakeholder n=39 | Other Stakeholders n=121  
Q3. And what have your dealings with DWER been related to

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