NSW GOVERNMENT | Public Service Commission

# People Matter Employee Survey 2014

## Main Findings Report

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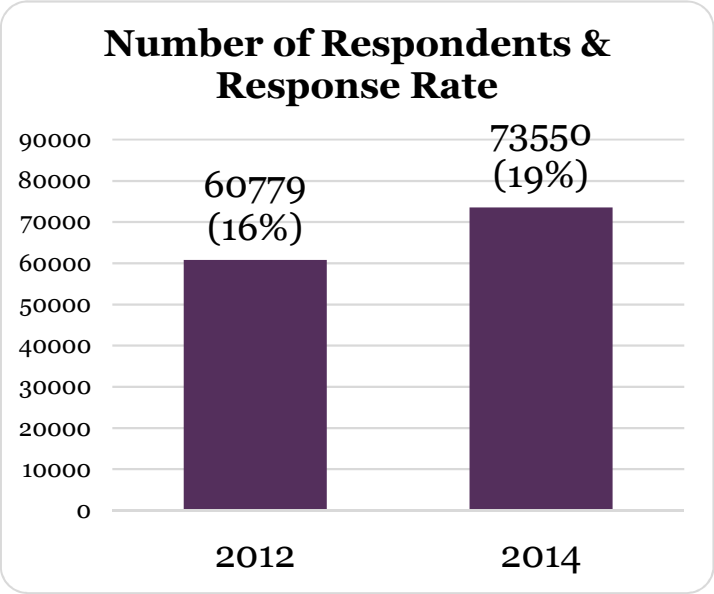
# 1 Executive Summary

The 2014 People Matter Employee Survey (PMES) is the second of its kind in NSW, with the first having been run in 2012. The purpose of the survey is to assess levels of employee engagement, determine the extent to which Departments and agencies are embedding the NSW government sector core values, ensure workplaces are supporting diversity and ethical behaviour, and give employees the opportunity to voice their opinions about their workplace experiences.

The survey was anonymous, and led by the Public Service Commission (PSC) with the support of Voice Project, a research and consulting company affiliated with Macquarie University. The 2014 PMES was open in May and participation of all NSW Public Sector agencies and employees was encouraged. 73,550 responses were received, representing a 19% response rate (up from 60,779 responses with a 16% response rate in 2012). Surveys were predominantly completed online, with only 2,155 paper surveys being completed. The profile of respondents to the 2014 survey closely matched the profile of respondents in the 2012 survey and the overall NSW Public Sector workforce profile, providing strong confidence that the overall results provide an accurate representation of the total workforce.




**Engagement Index**

| | |
|---|---|
| NSW 2014 | 65% |
| VIC 2014 | 67% |
| QLD 2013 | 58% |

An "Engagement Index" was calculated, representing the extent to which staff feel motivated, inspired, attached, proud and would be willing to recommend their organisation as a great place to work. Engagement is important to measure, because a higher level of engagement is found be associated with higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and decresed turnover of valued staff. In 2014, an engagement index of 65% compares favourably with a score of 61% in the 2012 PMES. It should be noted that the rating scale for the Engagement Index has changed since 2012 to enable confident benchmarking against other jurisdictions. However a closely related question: *I am satisfied with my job* used the same rating scale in 2012 and 2014, and improved from 74% agreement in 2012 to 78% in 2014. This supports the view that employee engagement has improved over the last two years. The score of 65% for the Engagement Index is similar to that of Victoria (67%), and compares favourably to the recent scores in the Queensland Public Service and UK Civil Service (both 58% in 2013 for the same set of questions).

An analysis was also conducted to look at the association between work practices and engagement based on the pattern of employee responses in the survey. It was found that engagement was highest in workplaces in which employees believed their organisations were achieving objectives, managing change well, contributing to the community, and adhering to the NSW government sector core values. Other factors like pay, workload, relationships with co-workers, and job security showed weaker association with employee engagement. However, this is at odds with the self-reported data from employees considering leaving the public sector. They reported that "Better pay and benefits" was the strongest factor that would encourage them to continue working in the sector, followed by "Improved career opportunities" and "Greater recognition for the work I do", with technology, facilities and location being the least likely factors that would influence a decision to stay.

**Statements with Strongest Association with Engagement**

**I have confidence in the ways my organisation resolves grievances**

**I feel that senior managers listen to employees**

**I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation**

**Employee Engagement**

**Largest Improvements**

**I feel that senior managers model the values of my organisation (70%)** — **+9% Improvement**

**I am satisfied with my total benefits package (71%)** — **+9% Improvement**

**I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation (54%)** — **+8% Improvement**

Throughout the survey there was a strong overall upward trend in results since the 2012 survey. For comparable agree/disagree questions between 2014 and 2012, 78% of the questions have improved, and only 10% have dropped.

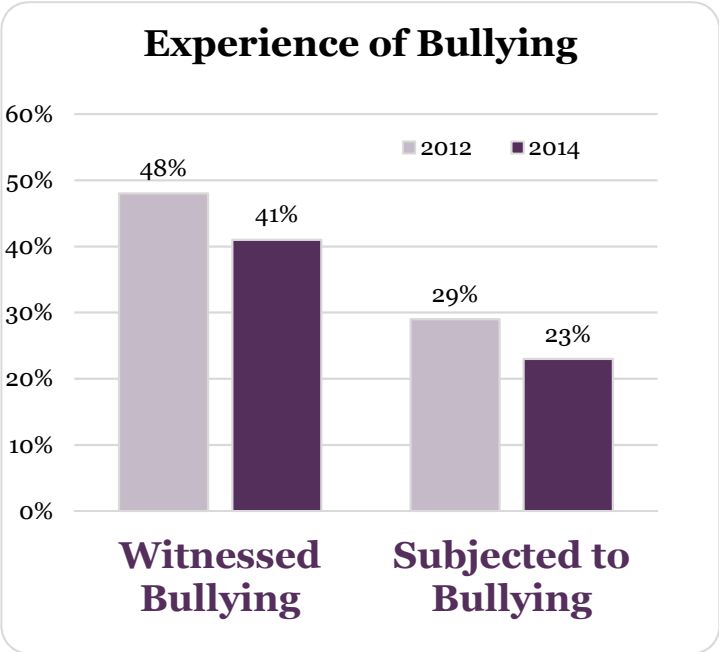
Three of the themes showing the largest improvements included trust in senior management (e.g., 9% improvement in the statement *I feel that senior managers model the values of my organisation* and 8% improvement in *I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation* ), learning and development (e.g., 6% improvement in both the statements *My organisation is committed to developing its employees* and *I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to* , and an 8% improvement in the statement *My manager considers my needs and career aspirations when approving my development plans* ), and the frequency of performance-related feedback (an improvement from 49% to 55% of staff who reported receiving formal performance feedback in the last 12 months, and an improvement from 66% to 70% of staff who reported receiving informal performance feedback).

Some of the highest scoring statements in the survey included staff's awareness of the organisation's code of conduct (98% answering "Yes"), sexual orientation is not a barrier to success (94% agreement), employee workgroup striving to achieve customer/client satisfaction (94%), being encouraged to report health and safety incidents and injuries (92%), and staff understanding what is expected of them to do well in their role (92%).

In contrast, some of the lower scoring statements included feeling that change is handled well in their organisation (44%), awareness of opportunities for career development in another agency within the NSW Public Sector (48%), employees' manager talking to them about what they could do to improve their performance (49%), that their manager appropriately deals with employees who perform poorly (50%), and that they feel their job is secure (53%).

In large part, the NSW government sector core values were reported as being well understood throughout the sector. The average scores for each of the four core values have also improved compared to 2012 - Integrity (75%, up 4%) Trust (76%, up 3%), Service (84%, up 3%) and Accountability (73%, up 5%).

There were some differences in the way groups of staff answered the questions. In general, staff who tended to give more positive scores included middle-level and senior managers, staff early or late in their careers, staff with low or high salaries, staff involved in administrative or legal work, staff who are new to their role or organisation.

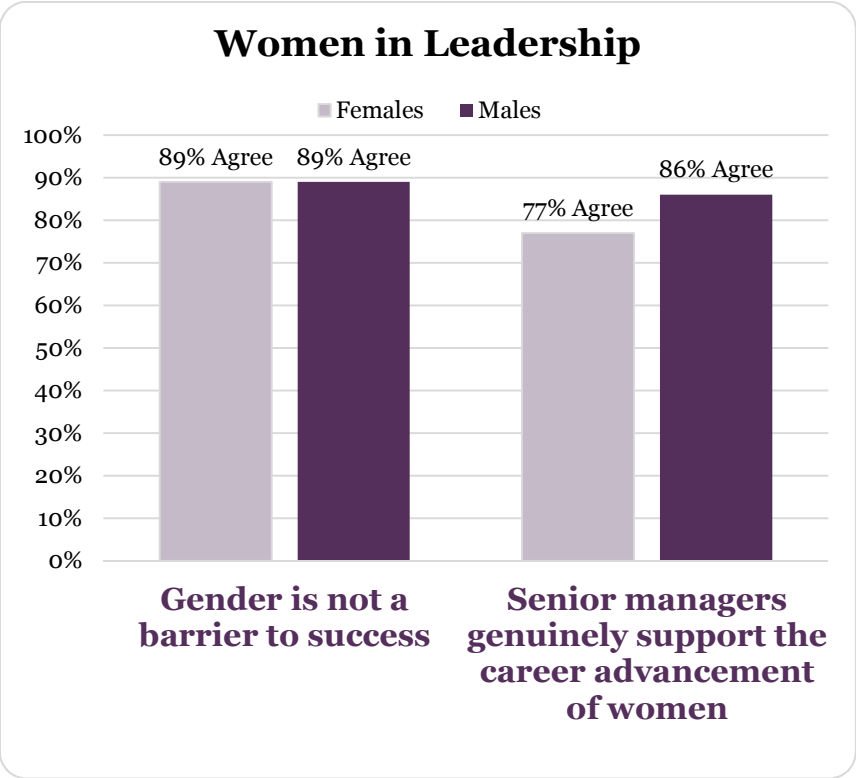



Responding to concerns about bullying in the 2012 survey, the 2014 PMES further investigated the incidence of bullying. Reports of bullying decreased noticeably across the two surveys, with 23% of staff reporting being subjected to bullying, compared to 29% in 2012. It should be noted that the wording for this question was changed slightly to clarify meaning, but the result was mirrored in those staff who reported having witnessed bullying in their workplace, dropping from 48% in 2012 to 41% in 2014. Despite the drop, 41% still represents a high proportion of people who have witnessed bullying in their workplace.

For those staff who reported being bullied, the most common source of bullying was one's immediate manager, and the most commonly described behaviours were negative body language, devaluing work efforts, avoiding or ignoring, and mistreating other co-workers.

Only a small percentage of staff who said they had been bullied (21%) have submitted a formal complaint. Most of those who have were not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint.

Some new themes were investigated in the 2014 PMES, including mobility between agencies and support for gender equality. Regarding mobility, most staff (90%) believed they have skills to be able to work in other agencies, and a majority (58%) of staff indicated a desire to work in another agencies. Although, a limiting factor for mobility appears to be that only a minority of staff (48%) are aware of opportunities to work in other agencies.




With regard to gender equality, results were generally very positive. 89% of staff said gender was not a barrier to success and 86% of staff reported women and men are given the same opportunities to lead on important work, with near identical responses by males and females to these questions. Although still scoring quite highly, there was a difference in opinions about senior managers genuinely supporting the career advancement of women, with 86% agreement from males and 77% agreement from females.

Finally, an open-ended question was included in the 2014 PMES, asking staff *If you could change one thing to improve your workplace, what would it be?* A thematic analysis of responses was conducted and the most commonly reported themes were related to senior leadership, processes, and resources.

**Suggestions From Text Comments**

**Leadership** (transparency, visibility & clear direction) — **15%** of comments

**Processes** (reduction in red tape & bureaucracy) — **13%** of comments

**Resources** (ensuring sufficient staff & budgets to meet demands) — **11%** of comments

# 2 About the Survey and Report

## 2.1 Overview

Employee surveys are considered good human resource practice, as they allow employees' wellbeing, engagement, adoption of organisational values, and perception of workplace practices to be measured. The People Matter Employee Survey 2014 is the second time employees from across the sector have been given the opportunity to answer questions about workplace values and experiences. The information provided by employees is extremely valuable, and assists in shaping future initiatives. Results from the 2012 survey impacted on key reforms included in the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and in the development of the cross-sector Performance Development Framework.

A key requirement of the 2014 survey was the ability to compare equivalent items with the People Matter Employee Survey 2012 and allow for opportunities to benchmark with other jurisdictions. In future years, the PSC will continue to evolve the survey to ensure it is current in its assessment of workforce management issues in the NSW Public Sector.

## 2.2 Response rate and respondents

A total of 73, 550 NSW Public Sector employees responded to the People Matter Employee Survey 2014, compared to 60,779 in 2012. The 2014 survey achieved a response rate of 19%, compared to 16% in 2012. Of all completed surveys, 71,395 were online responses, and 2,155 were completed paper surveys.

The following table shows how the response rate varied across the NSW Public Sector. Because of the difference in response rates, we examined whether the overall scores would be different if all Departments achieved equivalent response rates. We found very little difference. As such, the results in this report can be confidently taken to express the views of the sector as a whole.

**Table 1: Response rates across the NSW Public Sector**

| | No. of Responses | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|
| Education and Communities | 22137 | 19.7% |
| Family and Community Services | 6033 | 29.2% |
| Health | 17189 | 13.0% |
| Justice | 6365 | 15.2% |
| Planning and Environment | 2357 | 40.4% |
| Premier and Cabinet | 649 | 47.4% |
| Trade & Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services | 2826 | 37.7% |
| Transport | 7517 | 27.3% |
| Treasury & Finance | 4907 | 64.7% |
| Separate Agencies | 1678 | 49.4% |
| State-owned corporations | 1610 | 9.0% |
| Other entities | 282 | 39.4% |
| **Overall** | **73550** | **19.4%** |

In addition, the profile of respondents in terms of age, gender, and type of work is consistent with the profile of respondents in the 2012 survey. The profile is also reflective of the current NSW Public Sector Workforce (see Respondent Profile tables in the Appendix 1: Survey Methodology).

## 2.3 How to read this report

### 2.3.1 Analysis

The analysis in this report has been conducted at the whole-of-sector level. Most results are expressed in terms of percentages and the percent positive score (%+ve) has been used to indicate the level of agreement within the response sample at an item level. Percent positive is the number of respondents who selected a rating point of *agree* or *strongly agree* divided by the total number of respondents who selected any rating point. This excludes those who selected *don't know* or did not provide an answer.

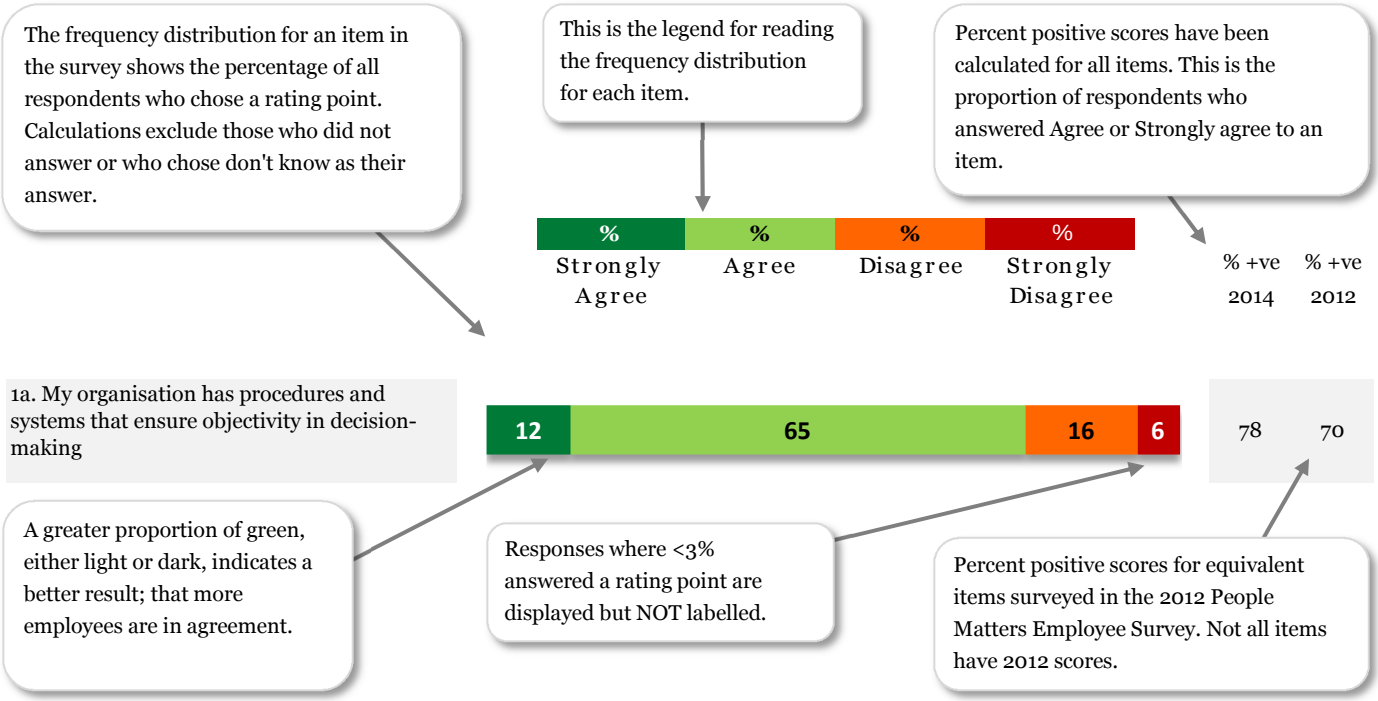
Since *don't know* and no response answers were excluded, it was important to identify questions with a high proportion of these responses. A table of these items has been included Appendix 1: Survey Methodology. While smaller differences in scores may be statistically significant, for this report, we have only highlighted differences between groups where there were at least 1000 people in each group, and the results differed by 5% or more.

### 2.3.2 Benchmarking results

Due to the strong similarity of the People Matter Employee Survey 2014 with the People Matter Employee Survey 2012, the primary benchmarking contained in this report will be the comparison of 2014 results to the 2012 results. For some questions, an asterisk has been used to show minor wording changes compared to 2012, but where the questions can still be benchmarked.

This report also contains comparisons to other Australian jurisdictions as well as the UK Civil Service.

### 2.3.3 How to interpret results



### 2.3.4 Rounding

Throughout the report, percentages have been rounded to whole numbers. When looking at charts and tables the percent positive score displayed may not always add up to 100% because of rounding effects. However, if more decimal places were used, additions would be correct.

## 2.4 How results will be used

The People Matter Employee Survey 2014 provides an important source of information which will be used by the PSC in a number of ways, now as well as in the future. The PSC will use these results of the People Matter Employee Survey 2014 to:

- Continue to build the evidence base of NSW Public Sector workforce management issues, strengths and weaknesses in the sector, and work towards feasible public sector performance improvement strategies.
- Assess the survey results alongside other PSC data sources and strengthen knowledge of the state of NSW Public Sector.
- Identify workforce issues emerging in this survey, and evolve the survey in future years to understand these in more detail, the next survey is due to be run in 2016.
- Support Departments and agencies in communicating the results of the survey to staff.

Most importantly, the results of the survey can be used throughout the sector by employees, managers, workgroups, agencies and Departments. These results allow for improvement strategies to be evidence based. The PSC encourages all sector employees to engage with the results of the survey and think about how change can be affected at an individual, organisational and systems level to improve results over time.

# 3 Engagement & Leadership

## 3.1 Employee Engagement

Over the last decade employee engagement has become a widely used key performance indicator. Although definitions vary slightly across consultants and academics, there is general acceptance that engagement expands upon the longstanding notion of job satisfaction and incorporates positive employee attitudes of absorption in one's job, commitment to one's organisation, and willingness to put in extra effort to support colleagues and customers.

The "Engage For Success" Taskforce, commissioned by the United Kingdom Government, concluded "employee engagement . . . is a bottom-line issue, impacting profitability [and] service outcomes" [1]. The positive consequences of engagement include improved productivity, decreased turnover of valued staff, lower absenteeism, improved customer service, higher innovation, lower health and safety incidents, and reduced time lost to industrial action.

## 3.2 Sector-wide "Engagement Index"

To assess employee engagement, the PMES uses five statements that measure the extent to which employees feel proud, attached, motivated, inspired and would be willing to recommend their organisation as a great place to work (see Figure 1). These statements, and the five-point rating scale used to show agreement with these statements, enable external benchmarking with other Australian states, the Australian Public Service (APS), and the UK Civil Service.

To calculate the Engagement Index in this report, the average score of the five engagement items was calculated for each respondent who answered all five items. In turn, this individual score was used to calculate a whole-of-sector average and was also used to generate averages for Departments, agencies and demographic sub-groups. It is important to note that all figures used in the Engagement Index analyses reported here are not percent agreement scores but instead are average scores on a 0 to 100 scale, with “Strongly Disagree” = 0 and “Strongly Agree” = 100.

1 Rayton, B., Dodge, T. & D'Analeze, G. (2012). The evidence: Employee engagement taskforce "Nailing the evidence" workgroup. University of Bath.

## Figure 1: Engagement in the NSW Public Sector

### Statements in the Engagement Index

| | % Strongly Agree | % Agree | % Neither Agree Nor Disagree | % Disagree | % Strongly Disagree | % +ve 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14a. I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work | 17 | 41 | 28 | 10 | 5 | 57 |
| 14b. I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation | 23 | 47 | 20 | 7 | 3 | 70 |
| 14c. I feel a strong personal attachment to my organisation | 24 | 43 | 22 | 9 | 4 | 66 |
| 14d. My organisation motivates me to help it achieve its objectives | 15 | 38 | 28 | 15 | 5 | 52 |
| 14e. My organisation inspires me to do the best in my job | 16 | 37 | 27 | 14 | 6 | 53 |

### Additional engagement statements not included in the Engagement Index

| | % Strongly Agree | % Agree | % Disagree | % Strongly Disagree | % +ve 2014 | % +ve 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14f. I am satisfied with my job | 21 | 58 | 16 | 6 | 78 | 74 |
| 14g. I view the NSW Public Sector as an employer of choice | 19 | 59 | 16 | 6 | 78 | 79 |

## 3.3 Benchmarking Engagement

The Engagement Index for the whole of the NSW Public Sector in 2014 was 65%, comparing favourably with 61% from the 2012 survey. Some caution is needed with this comparison with 2012 because a 5 point rating scale was used in 2014 (in order to mirror the approach used in other jurisdictions and enable confident benchmarking) whereas a 4 point rating scale was used in the 2012 PMES. Supporting the claim for an improvement in engagement, however, are the results for the question *I am satisfied with my job* which used the same rating scale in 2012 and 2014 and the percent favourable result improved from 74% in 2012 to 78% in 2014.

The Engagement Index score of 65% for the NSW Public Sector is similar to that of Victoria (67% in 2014), and compares favourably to recent scores in the Queensland Public Service and UK Civil Service (both 58% in 2013 for the same set of questions).

Table 2 provides a comparison of the scores for each engagement statement across different Australian jurisdictions.

**Engagement Index**

| | |
|---|---|
| **NSW 2014** | **65%** |
| VIC 2014 | 67% |
| QLD 2013 | 58% |

**Table 2: Engagement comparisons across Australian Jurisdictions**

| Engagement Item | NSW 2014 | VIC 2014 | QLD 2013 | APS 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14a. I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work | **64** | 68 | 57 | 63 |
| 14b. I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation | **70** | 72 | 63 | 69 |
| 14c. I feel a strong personal attachment to my organisation | **69** | 67 | 61 | 63 |
| 14d. My organisation motivates me to help it achieve its objectives | **60** | 63 | 55 | 57 |
| 14e. My organisation inspires me to do the best in my job | **61** | 64 | 56 | 57 |

*Note: Engagement scores in this table are averages, calculated by assigning a score of 100 to 'Strongly Agree', a score of 75 to 'Agree', a score of 50 to 'Neither agree nor disagree', a score of 25 to 'Disagree' and a score of 0 to 'Strongly Disagree'. There is some variation in question wording in Victoria and APS. Statement 14a is 'I would recommend my [organisation /agency] as a good place to work' in Vic/APS and 14b is 'I am proud to work in my agency' in APS.*

## 3.4 Themes with strongest association with Engagement

As the Engagement Index alone does not tell us how best to improve engagement levels in the NSW Public Sector, further analyses were conducted to identify employee experiences that are most strongly associated with levels of engagement. Such an analysis provides insight into the work practices and experiences that are most important to improve in order to enhance employee engagement.

Figure 2 shows all the broad categories in the survey and their relative association with engagement, in descending order. The values along the horizontal axis show the strength of association, based on statistical correlations, where 0 represents no association and 1 shows a perfect association. Practically, a stronger association means that employees who reported higher engagement are also likely to respond favourably about a particular survey category (e.g. *My Organisation*). As was found in the 2012 survey, the category *My Organisation* shows the strongest association with engagement. Examining the questions within this category, this finding highlights the importance of employees believing their workplace is achieving its objectives, managing change well, and contributing to the community. Four of the top 6 categories in Figure 2 represent the NSW government sector core values of Integrity, Trust, Service and Accountability, emphasising the relevance and importance of these values for engaging public sector employees.

Table 3 shows the 10 statements in the survey that show the strongest association with engagement. A few clear themes are evident from this selection of statements. Three of the statements highlight the importance of employees' experiences with senior managers, in particular the level of bottom-up and top-down communication, and the extent to which senior managers model organisational values. A second major theme is that of the importance of innovation, change and development, with engagement being closely associated with employees being encouraged to be innovative, there being organisational support of better practice, organisations making necessary improvements to meet future challenges, and organisations developing employee capability. Finally, two of the statements highlight the importance of employees feeling safe to raise grievances and reporting wrongdoing.

**Figure 2: Strength of association between survey categories and engagement**

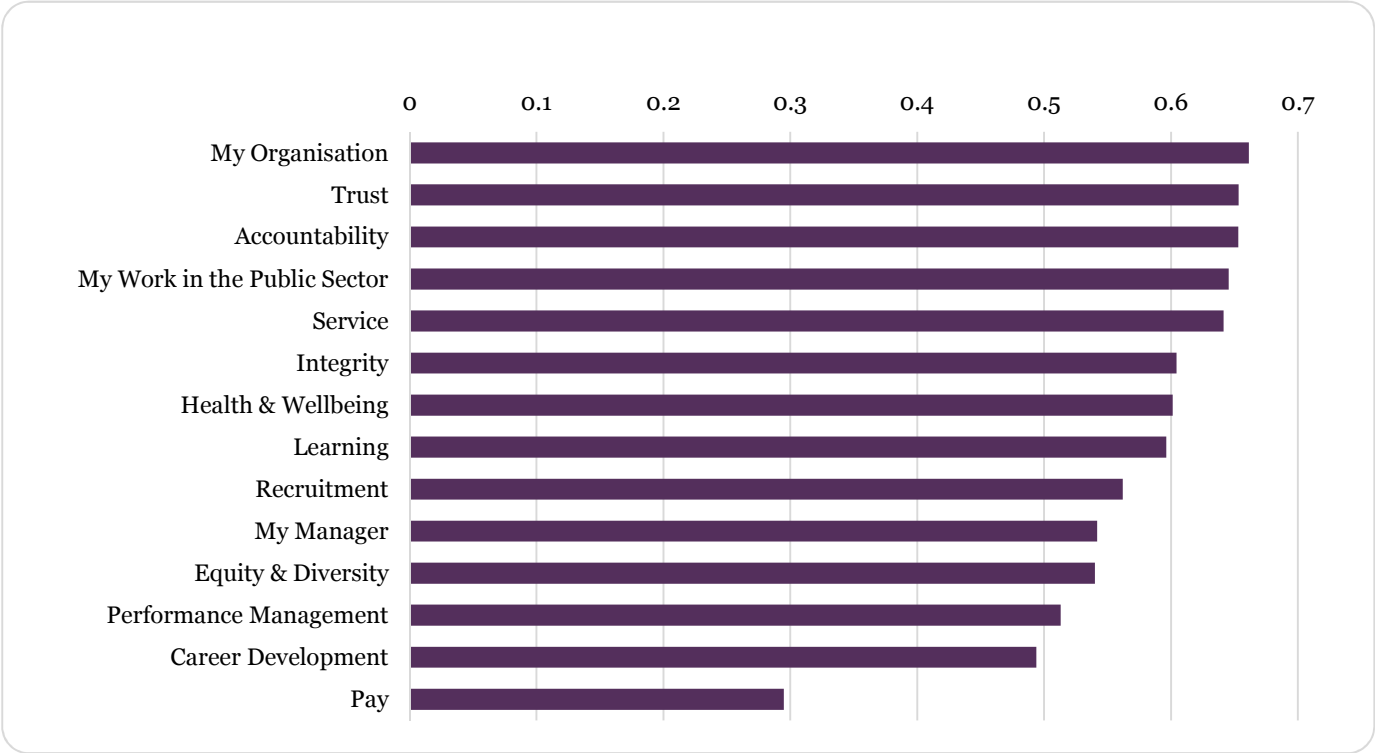


**Table 3: The 10 statements showing the strongest association with engagement**

| |
|---|
| 1. I have confidence in the ways my organisation resolves grievances |
| 2. I feel that senior managers listen to employees |
| 3. I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation |
| 4. My organisation is committed to developing its employees |
| 5. My organisation's involvement in the community helps motivate staff |
| 6. I feel that senior managers model the values of my organisation |
| 7. I am confident that I would be protected from reprisal for reporting misconduct/wrongdoing |
| 8. My organisation is making the necessary improvements to meet our future challenges |
| 9. My organisation supports better practice so we can provide better service |
| 10. I am encouraged to be innovative in my work |

## 3.5 Engagement Differences

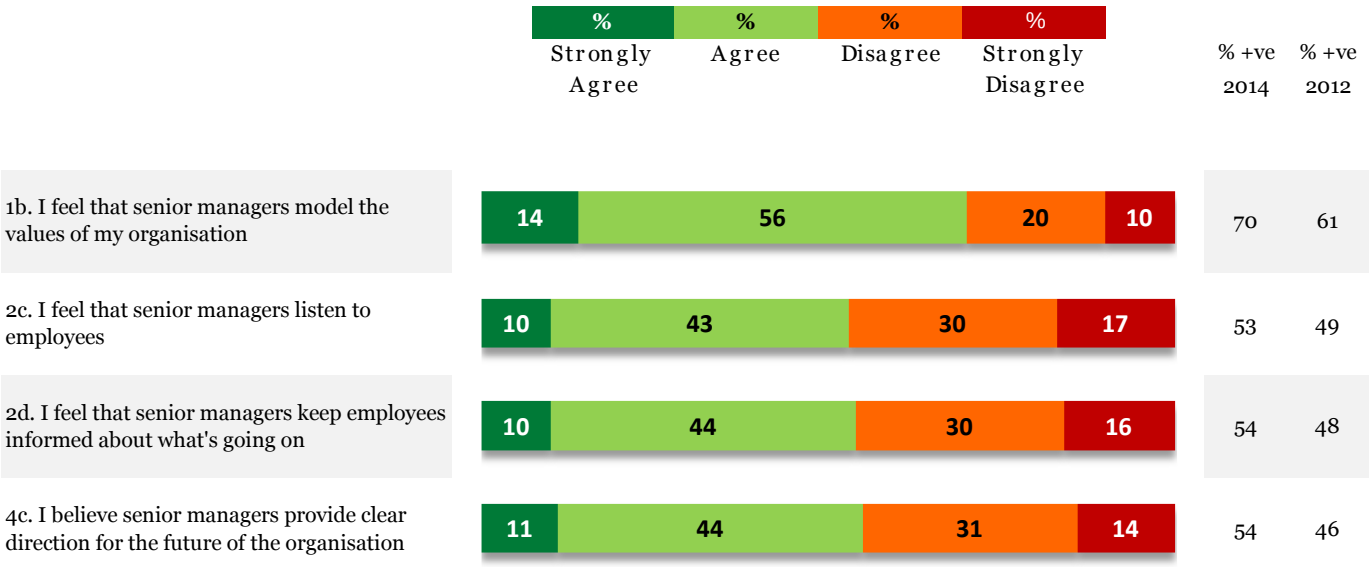
The points below highlight groups with 1,000 or more responses that showed differences of 5% or more:

- Staff aged 24 or younger (Engagement Index = 73) or 65 or older (69) showed higher levels of engagement than other staff.
- Engagement was lower for those staff planning an early retirement (e.g., EI = 58 for those staff planning to retire before 55) compared to staff planning a more typical retirement age (EI = 66 for staff planning to retire after age 60).
- Staff with a disability showed lower engagement (60) than staff without a disability (65).
- Mid and senior level managers (i.e., those who manage other managers) report higher engagement (71) than do frontline managers and employees (64).
- Staff on lower salaries (EI = 68 for staff on salaries of less than $45,000) and higher salaries (EI = 69 for staff on salaries of $140,000 or more) reported higher engagement than other staff (e.g., EI = 62 for staff on salaries between $65,000 and $95,000).
- Newer staff reported higher levels of engagement (e.g., EI = 69 for staff who have been in their roles or in their current organisation for less than 2 years; EI = 71 for staff who have been in the NSW Public Sector for less than 2 years) than longer term staff (EI = 62 for staff who have been in their role for 10 or more years; EI = 64 for staff who have been in their current organisation or in the NSW Public Sector for more than 10 years).
- Staff with lower levels of engagement report being much less likely to continue working in their current organisation and in the NSW Public Sector than those staff with higher levels of engagement (e.g., those staff planning to leave their current organisation within 2 years have an EI of 54, whereas those staff planning to stay with their current organisation for 10 or more years have an EI of 70).

## 3.6 Senior Management

Questions relating to Senior Management showed some of the strongest association with Engagement. These questions focused on communication, integrity and support for the career advancement of women. The practices of senior managers that were measured in 2012 have all significantly improved. However, concerns were still raised within the questions around communication. Only 53% of respondents felt that senior management listened to employees. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Perceptions about communication from senior managers**




When examined in more detail, there were some further differences amongst employee sub-groups:

- Employees who had worked within their organisation for less than a year expressed greater agreement that senior managers listened to employees (79%) and kept people informed (76%) than did employees who had been working in the current organisation between 10-20 years (48% and 49% respectively).
- Employees who intended to continue working within their organisation for more than 20 years had higher levels of agreement across all practices relating to senior management than employees who only intended on staying within their organisation for less than a year.

**Table 4: Perceptions about communication from senior managers by tenure (% +ve)**

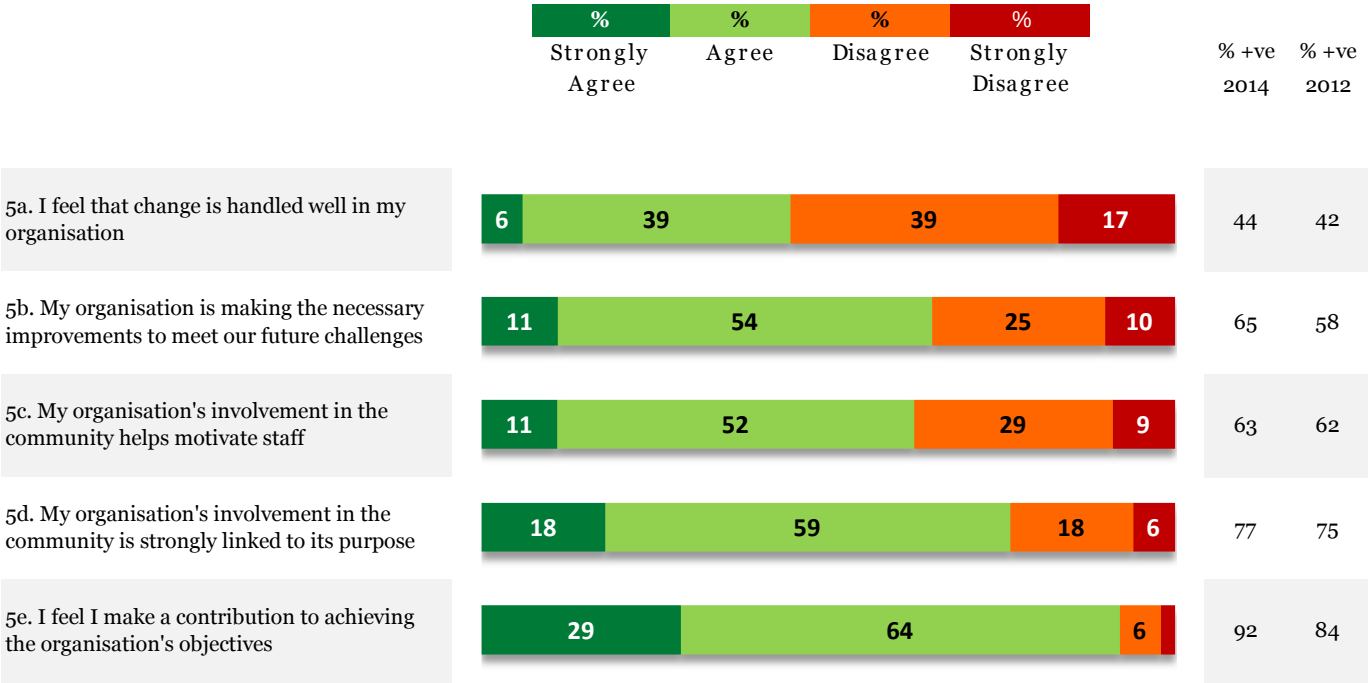
| Survey Item | Empl. in NSW Public Sector < 1 year (%+ve) | Empl. in NSW Public Sector 10-20 years (%+ve) |
|---|---|---|
| 1b. I feel that senior managers model the values of my organisation | 88 | 67 |
| 2c. I feel that senior managers listen to employees | 80 | 49 |
| 2d. I feel that senior managers keep employees informed about what's going on | 77 | 50 |
| 4c. I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation | 77 | 51 |
| 10d. Senior managers in my organisation genuinely support the career advancement of women | 91 | 78 |

Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of managing change. In response to the statement *I feel that change is handled well in my organisation,* only 44% of respondents agreed, a 2% increase since 2012. In response to the statement *My organisation is making the necessary improvements to meet our future challenge* , results showed a 7% improvement since the 2012 People Matters survey with 65% of respondents agreeing.

## 3.7 My Organisation

Questions about my organisation also showed some strong association with Engagement. Results are presented in the Figure below. In general, perceptions have improved in comparison to results from 2012.

**Figure 4: Perceptions about the individual organisation**

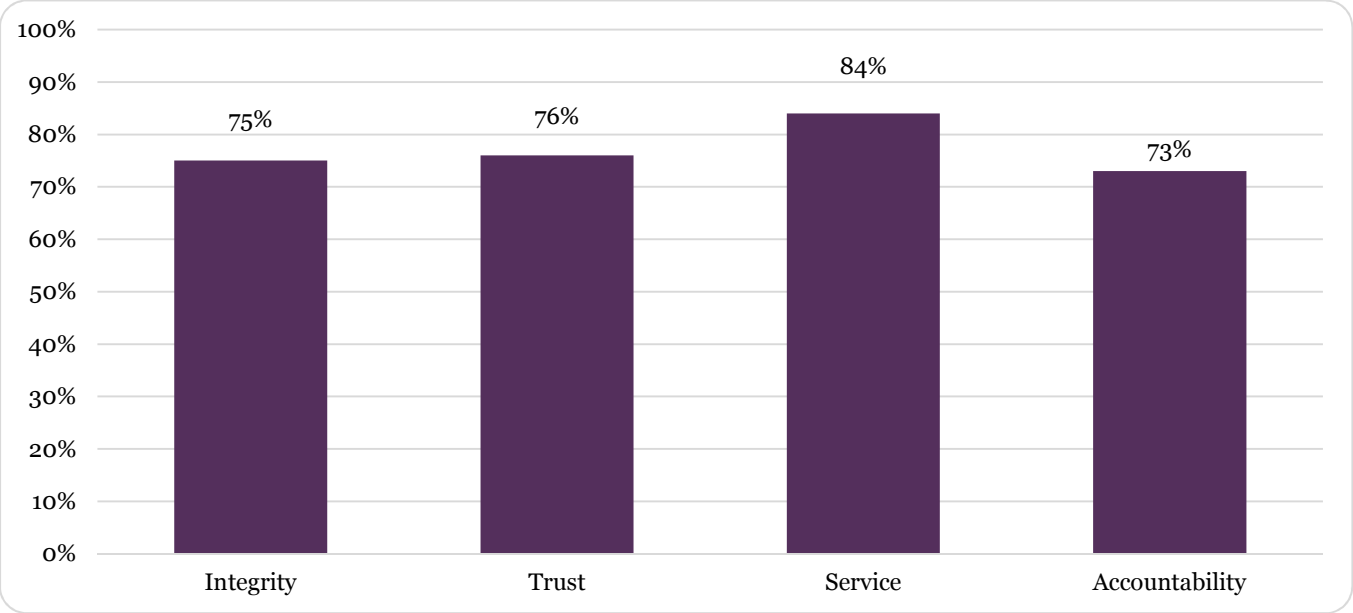


# 4 Values & Conduct

This section identifies how employees perceive the NSW government sector core values of Integrity, Trust, Service and Accountability and demonstrate them in their workplaces.

Percent positive scores for the 31 items in the Values section of the survey range from 94% (*My workgroup strives to achieve customer/client satisfaction* , which was also the highest scoring statement in 2012, and the score has remained unchanged from 2012) to 53% (*I feel that senior managers listen to employees* ). As shown in Figure 5 below, statements in the Service category received the most positive responses, and statements in the Accountability category received the least positive responses. The average agreement have improved since 2012, with Service and Trust increasing by an average of 3%, Integrity up 4% and the statements in the Accountability section went up by an average of 5%.

**Figure 5: Average agreement for the categories representing each of the NSW government sector core values (% +ve)**

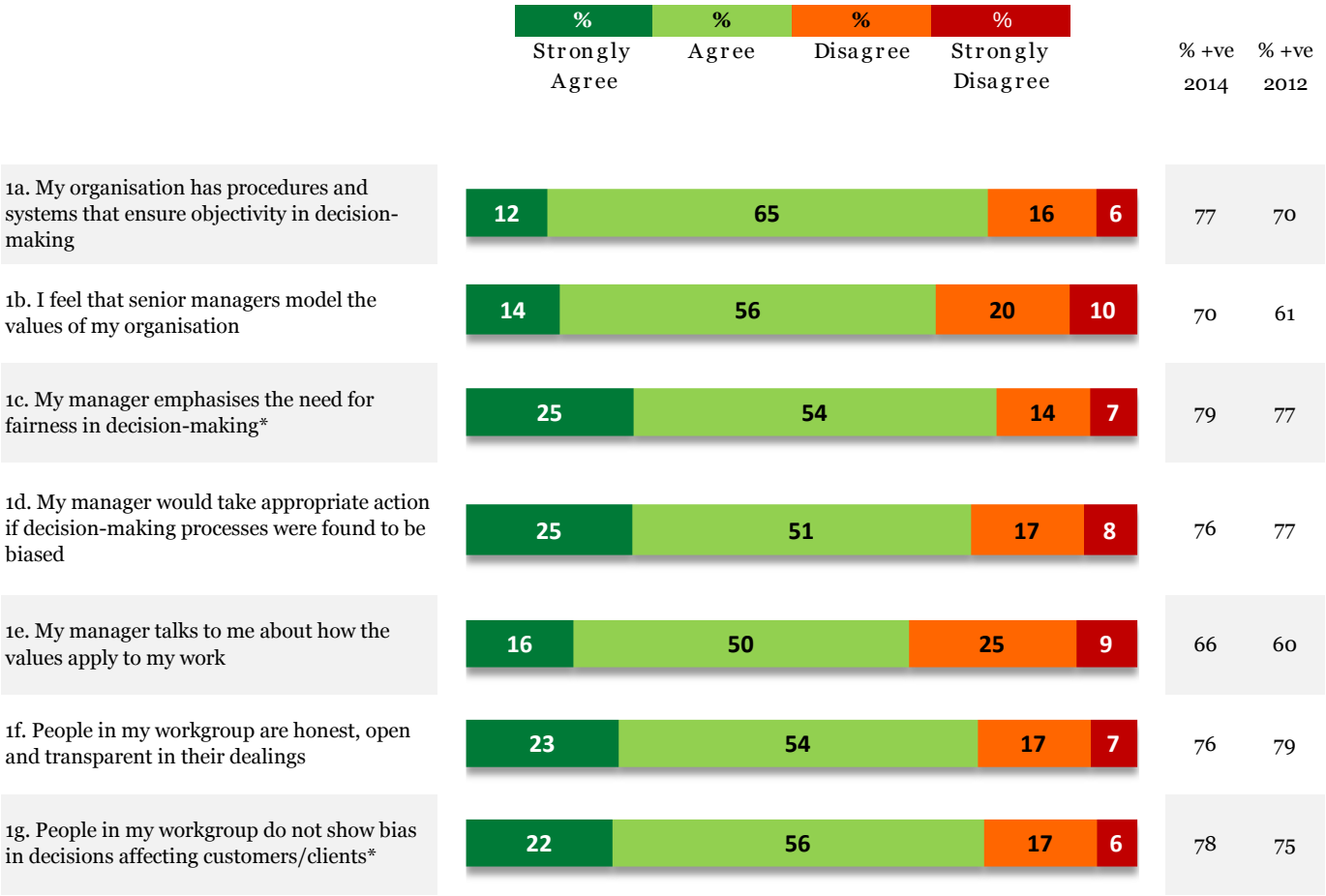



The following sections describe results within each of the four core values, and explore differences in responses across demographic groups such as age, tenure, job role, employment type, and salary.

## 4.1 Integrity

Responses to the statements about Integrity were quite positive, with six of the seven statements receiving 70% agreement or higher. The highest scoring statement, with 79% agreement, was *My manager emphasises the need for fairness in decision-making* . The statement with the lowest score, 66% agreement, was *My manager talks to me about how the values apply to my work* , although it should be noted that this statement has shown a 7% improvement since the 2012 survey. Two other statements showed substantial improvements since 2012: *I feel that senior managers model the values of my organisation* (up 9%) and *My organisation has procedures and systems that ensure objectivity in decision-making* (up 7%).

**Figure 6: Integrity in the NSW Public Sector**




**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

## *Group Differences - Integrity*

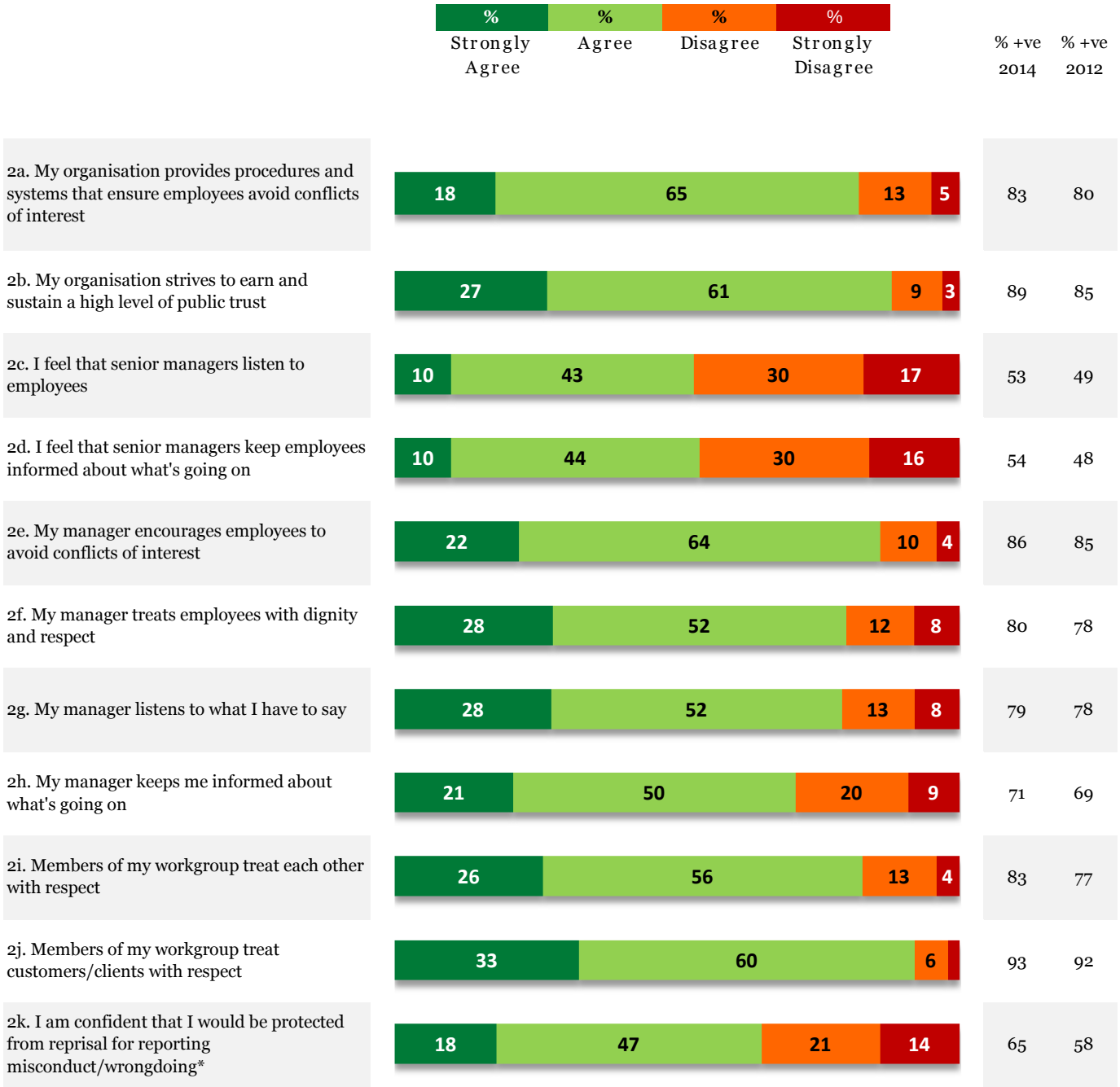
The points below highlight groups with 1,000 or more responses that showed differences of 5% or more:

- Younger staff gave more positive responses about Integrity (percent agreement = 83% for staff 24 years of age or younger) than other staff (percent agreement = 75%).
- Staff without a disability reported higher agreement (76%) than staff with a disability (67%) and staff with a disability requiring work-related adjustment (64%).
- Staff not involved in service delivery (78%) reported higher agreement than those involved in service delivery (72% for those with contact with the general public).
- Mid and senior level managers report higher agreement (82% for people who manage other managers) than did other staff (74% for frontline non-supervisory staff).
- Temporary staff (80% agreement) and non-executive contract staff (81%) reported higher agreement than did casual staff (75%) and ongoing-permanent staff (73%).
- Staff on lower salaries (80% agreement for staff on salaries of less than $35,000) and higher salaries (80% or higher agreement for staff on salaries of $110,000 or more) reported higher agreement than other staff (e.g., 72% for staff on salaries between $65,000 and $95,000).
- Staff who have been in their roles, their organisation or the NSW Public Sector for less than 2 years gave more favourable responses about Integrity (79% or higher average agreement) than longer term staff (74% or lower average agreement for staff in their roles, in the organisation or in the NSW Public Sector for 5 or more years).

## 4.2 Trust

The level of agreement with the statements about Trust was generally high, although there was considerable variation. Very high scoring statements included *Members of my workgroup treat customers/clients with respect* (93%) and *My organisation strives to earn and sustain a high level of public trust* (89%). At lower levels of agreement were two questions related to senior managers listening to employees and keeping employees informed (53% and 54% respectively), although these two questions showed substantial improvements since 2012 (improving 4% and 6% respectively). Two of the other largest changes since 2012 include the statements *Members of my workgroup treat each other with respect* (up 6%) and *I am confident that I would be protected from reprisal for reporting misconduct/wrongdoing* (up 6%).

**Figure 7: Trust in the NSW Public Sector**




**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

### *Group Differences - Trust*

The points below highlight groups with 1,000 or more responses that showed differences of 5% or more:

- Younger staff gave more positive responses about Trust (80% or higher agreement on average for staff younger than 30) than other staff (75% for staff aged 35 to 64).
- Non Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff reported higher agreement (77%) than staff of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin (71%).
- Staff without a disability reported higher agreement (77%) than staff with a disability (68%) and staff with a disability requiring work-related adjustment (66%).
- Mid and senior level managers report higher agreement (83% for people who manage other managers) than did other staff (75% for frontline non-supervisory staff).
- Temporary staff and non-executive contract staff reported higher agreement (82%) than did casual staff (77%) and ongoing-permanent staff (74%).
- Staff on lower salaries (81% agreement for staff on salaries of less than $35,000) and higher salaries (81% or higher agreement for staff on salaries of $110,000 or more) reported higher agreement than other staff (e.g., 74% for staff on salaries between $65,000 and $95,000).
- Staff who have been in their roles, their organisation or the NSW Public Sector for less than 2 years gave more positive responses about Trust (81% or higher average agreement) than longer term staff (75% or lower average agreement for staff in their roles, in the organisation or in the NSW Public Sector for 5 or more years).

## 4.3 Service

Levels of agreement with the statements about Service were strong, with seven of the eight questions scoring 83% agreement or higher. The one exception was the statement *I feel that the NSW Public Sector is innovative* (56%), although the score for this statement has improved 6% since 2012. The two other statements showing large improvements were *My organisation ensures Government policies and programs affecting the community are implemented equitably* (up 5%) and *My workgroup uses research and expertise to identify better practice* (also up 5%).

**Figure 8: Service in the NSW Public Sector**

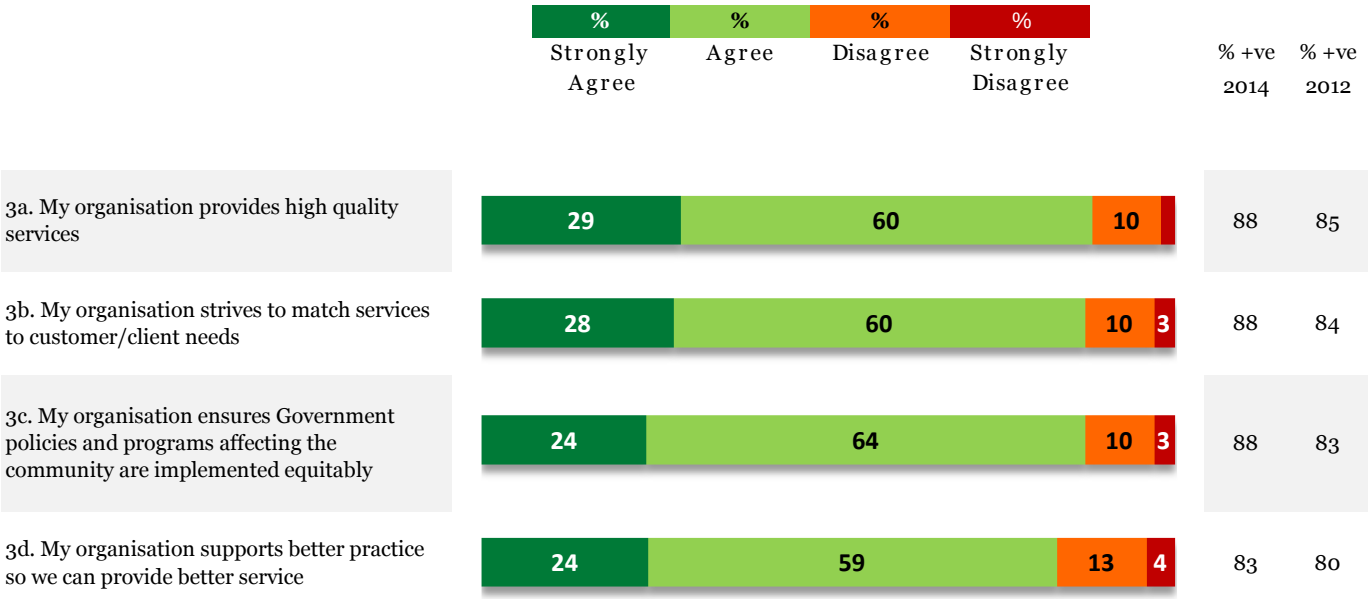
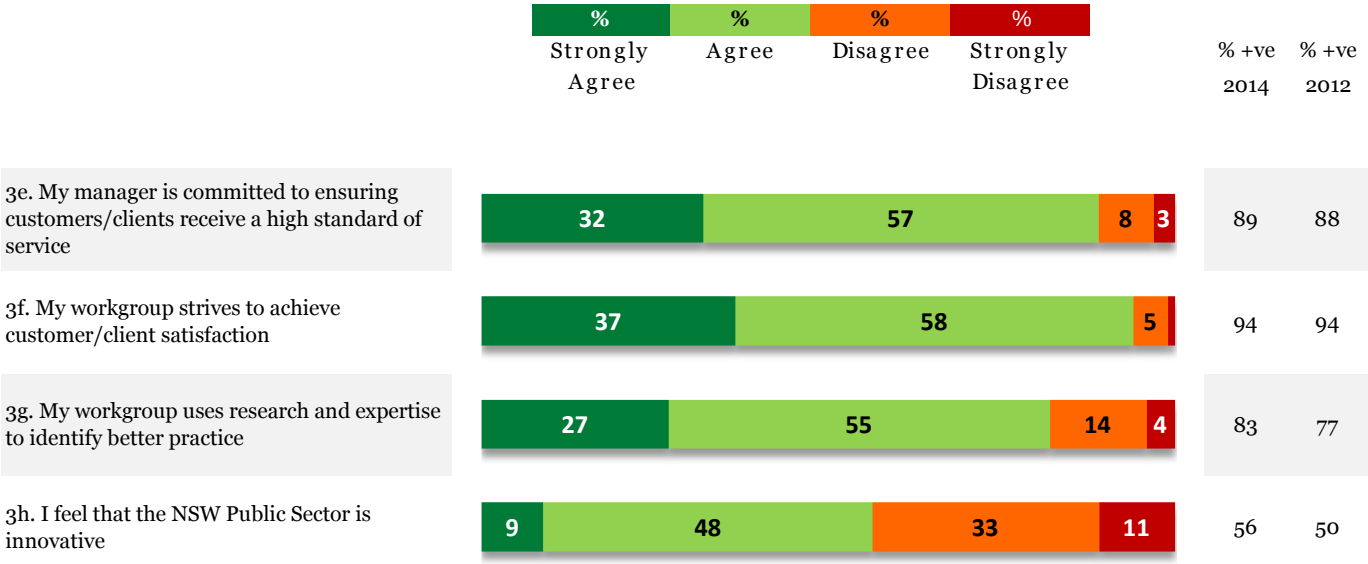


**Figure 9: Service in the NSW Public Sector (continued)**




## *Group Differences - Service*

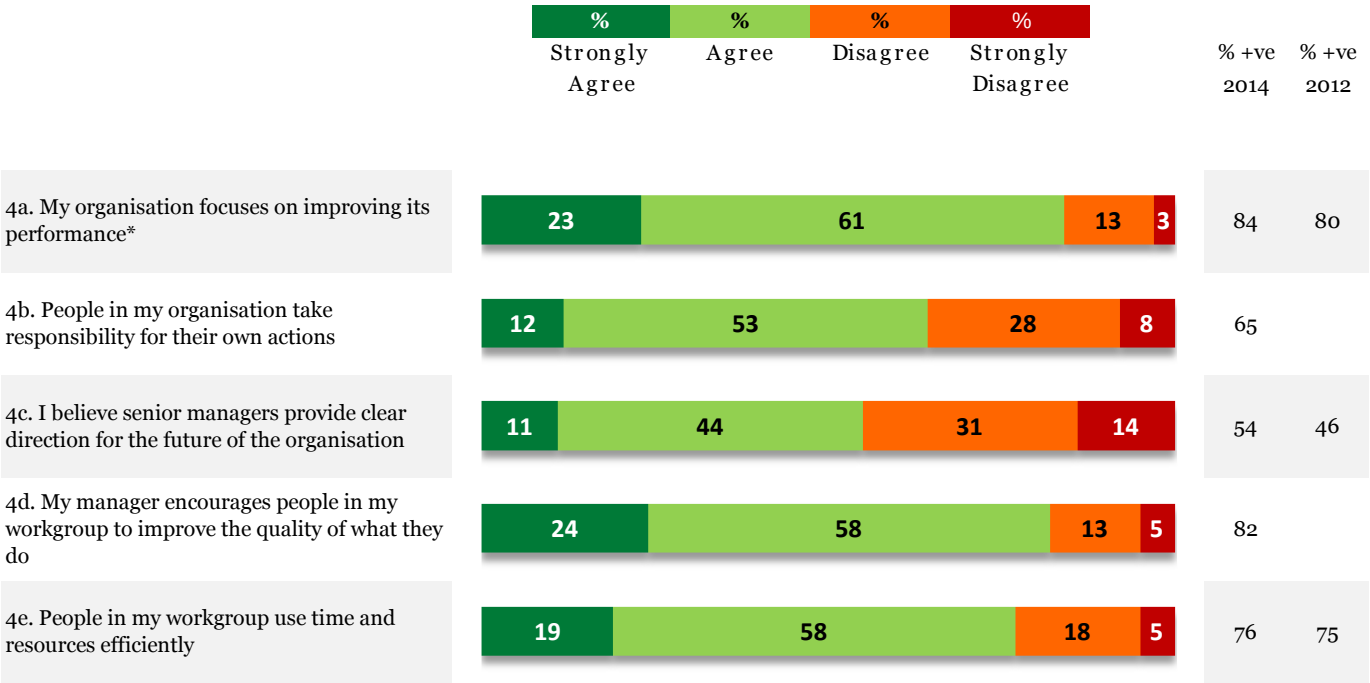
The points below highlight groups with 1,000 or more responses that showed differences of 5% or more:

- Females reported higher agreement (86% agreement) than males (80%).
- Younger staff gave more positive responses about Service (89% or higher agreement on average for staff younger than 25) than older staff (84% or lower for staff aged 30-59).
- Staff without a disability reported higher agreement (85%) than staff with a disability (79%) and staff with a disability requiring work-related adjustment (77%).
- Administrative support staff reported higher agreement (89%) than most other staff (e.g., 83% for staff in service delivery).
- Staff on lower salaries reported higher agreement (87% or higher agreement for staff on salaries less than $45,000) reported higher agreement than other staff (e.g., 82% for staff on salaries between $65,000 and $110,000).
- Staff who have been in their roles, their organisation or the NSW Public Sector for less than 1 year gave more positive responses about Service (88% or higher agreement) than longer term staff (84% or lower average agreement for staff in their roles, in the organisation or in the NSW Public Sector for 5 or more years).

## 4.4 Accountability

Agreement scores for statements about Accountability ranged from 84% (*My organisation focuses on improving its performance*) to 54% (*I believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation*). This latter question, however, had improved 8% since 2012.

**Figure 10: Accountability in the NSW Public Sector**




**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

### *Group Differences - Accountability*

The points below highlight groups with 1,000 or more responses that showed differences of 5% or more:

- Females reported higher agreement (74% agreement) than males (69%).
- Younger staff gave more positive responses about Accountability (80% or higher agreement on average for staff younger than 25) than other staff (71% for staff aged 30 to 54).
- Mid and senior level managers report higher agreement (78% for people who manage other managers) than did other staff (72% for frontline non-supervisory staff).
- Staff on lower salaries (80% agreement for staff on salaries of less than $35,000) and higher salaries (76% or higher agreement for staff on salaries of $140,000 or more) reported higher agreement than other staff (e.g., 70% for staff on salaries between $65,000 and $95,000).
- Staff who have been in their roles, their organisation or the NSW Public Sector for less than 2 years gave more positive responses about Accountability (75% or higher agreement) than longer term staff (73% or lower average agreement for staff in their roles, in the organisation or in the NSW Public Sector for 5 or more years).

## 4.5 Bullying

The bullying questions have been expanded in 2014 to better understand the extent, source, and nature of bullying across the NSW Public Sector. The survey provided respondents with the following definition on bullying.

*Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour that creates a risk to health and safety. Types of behaviour that could be considered bullying, if they are repeated, include: abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments; unjustified criticism or complaints; setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines; spreading misinformation or malicious rumours; and changing work arrangements, such as rosters or leave, to deliberately inconvenience others. Bullying should not be confused with legitimate feedback given to staff (including negative comments) on their work performance or work-related behaviour; or other legitimate management decisions and actions undertaken in a reasonable and respectful way.*

There was a substantial decrease in the proportion of people who reported that they have witnessed bullying at work, from 48% in 2012 to 41% in 2014. Similarly, a lower proportion of survey respondents reported that they have been subjected to bullying at work, a drop of 6 percentage points in comparison to 2012.

**Table 5: Witnessed and being subjected to bullying at work (% total respondents)**

| | % NSW 2014 | % NSW 2012 |
|---|---|---|
| **Witnessed** bullying at work in the last 12 mths | 41% | 48% |
| **Have been subjected** to bullying at work in the last 12 mths | 23% | 29%* |

**In 2012, the question referred to survey respondents having personally experienced bullying at work in the last 12 months. In 2014, this has been changed to clarify the original intention of the question, which was to understand the extent of bullying experienced directly by respondents rather than bullying experienced indirectly by respondents witnessing a friend or colleague being bullied.*

Table 6 shows that of those who indicated they had been subjected to bullying at work, which person was the source of the most serious bullying. Of the 23% of survey respondents who indicated they had been subjected to bullying at work, 28% said that their immediate manager/supervisor was the source. This is followed closely by 23% who reported that a senior manager was the source, and 23% who said that a fellow worker at their level was the source of the most serious bullying.

**Table 6: Person who was the source of the most serious bullying (% bullied staff)**

| | % bullied NSW 2014 |
|---|---|
| Your immediate manager/supervisor | 28% |
| A senior manager | 23% |
| A fellow worker at your level | 23% |
| Prefer not to say | 10% |
| A subordinate | 9% |
| Someone else (please specify) | 4% |
| A client or customer | 3% |
| A member of the public other than a client or customer | 1% |

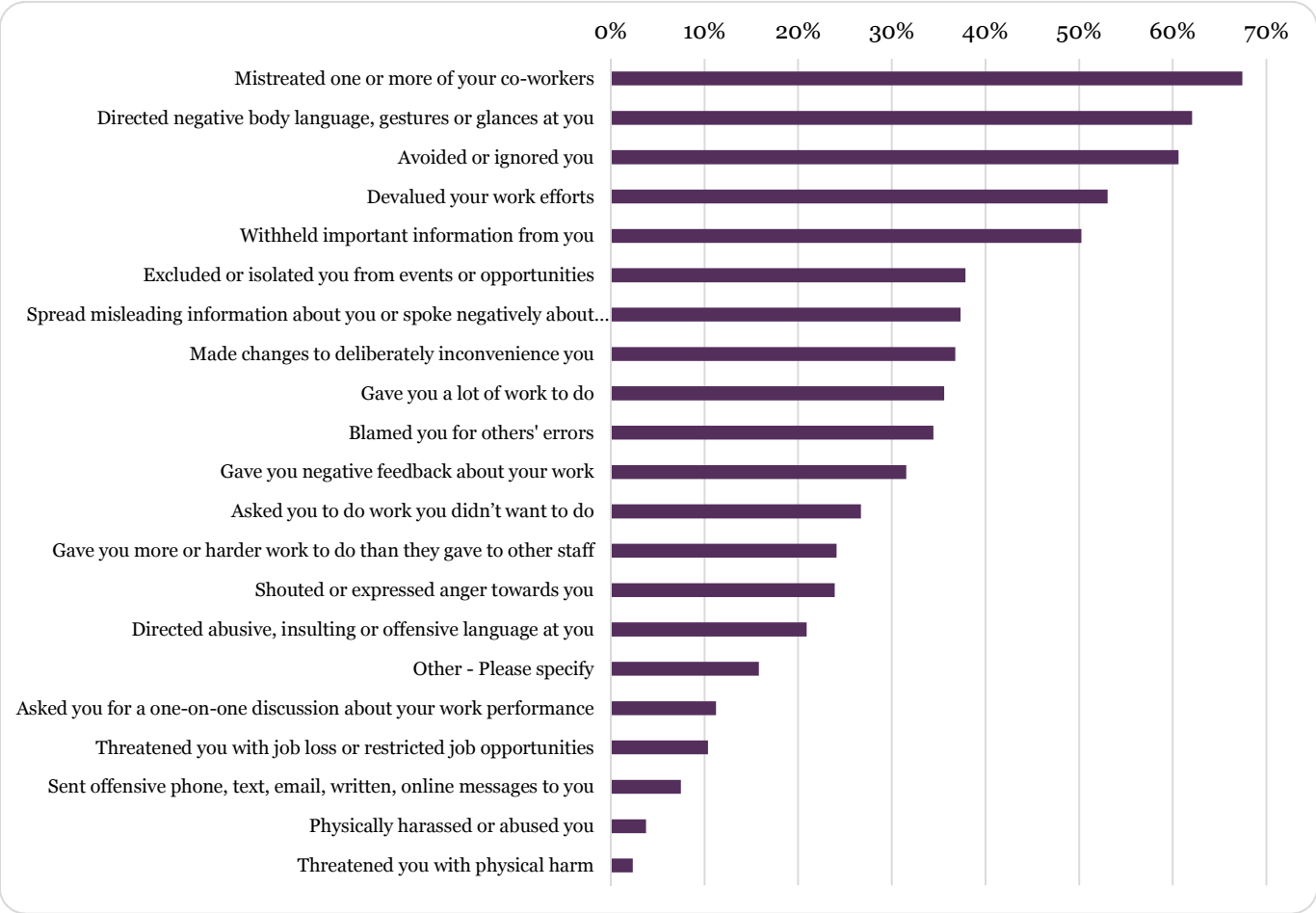
## Table 7: Frequency of bullying behaviours (% bullied staff)

| | % bullied staff NSW 2014 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nature of bullying from the person who was the source of the most serious bullying** | **Never** in the last 12 months | **Once** in the last 12 months | **Twice** in the last 12 months | **3-5 times** in the last 12 months | **> than 5 times** in the last 12 months |
| 1.Mistreated one or more of your co-workers | 14% | 8% | 11% | 26% | 41% |
| 2.Asked you for a one-on-one discussion about your work performance | 68% | 14% | 8% | 7% | 5% |
| 3.Gave you negative feedback about your work | 40% | 15% | 14% | 16% | 15% |
| 4.Gave you a lot of work to do | 51% | 6% | 7% | 13% | 23% |
| 5.Asked you to do work you didn't want to do | 54% | 9% | 10% | 12% | 15% |
| 6.Avoided or ignored you | 24% | 7% | 9% | 18% | 43% |
| 7.Withheld important information from you | 30% | 9% | 11% | 17% | 33% |
| 8.Directed negative body language, gestures or glances at you | 21% | 7% | 10% | 19% | 44% |
| 9.Gave you more or harder work to do than they gave to other staff | 64% | 6% | 7% | 8% | 16% |
| 10.Made changes to deliberately inconvenience you | 43% | 10% | 11% | 13% | 24% |
| 11.Blamed you for others' errors | 42% | 12% | 13% | 14% | 21% |
| 12.Devalued your work efforts | 22% | 12% | 14% | 21% | 32% |
| 13.Excluded or isolated you from events or opportunities | 42% | 10% | 11% | 14% | 24% |
| 14.Spread misleading information about you or spoke negatively about you in public | 39% | 12% | 12% | 14% | 24% |
| 15.Directed abusive, insulting or offensive language at you | 58% | 12% | 10% | 8% | 13% |
| 16.Shouted or expressed anger towards you | 45% | 17% | 14% | 11% | 13% |
| 17.Sent offensive phone, text, email, written, online messages to you | 83% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 4% |
| 18.Threatened you with job loss or restricted job opportunities | 73% | 11% | 7% | 4% | 6% |
| 19.Threatened you with physical harm | 95% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| 20.Physically harassed or abused you | 93% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| 21.Other - Please specify | 76% | 5% | 4% | 5% | 11% |

Survey respondents who answered that they have been subjected to bullying in the last 12 months were given the opportunity to report the frequency of behaviours from the source of the most serious bullying, and to select multiple behaviours where they apply. From Table 7, physical harassment happened less frequently, with 95% said that the source of the most serious bullying never threatened them with physical harm. On the other hand, 44% of bullied staff indicating that the most serious offenders directed negative body language, gestures or glances at them 5 or more times in the last 12 months.

Of the bullying behaviours listed, Figure 11 shows the types of behaviours by the most serious bully that have the highest reported frequency. Approximately two thirds (67%) of bullied staff indicated that mistreatment of one of more of their co-workers happened 3 or more times in the last 12 months. On the other hand, only 4% indicated that they have been physically harassed 3 or more times in the last 12 months.

**Figure 11: High frequency bullying behaviours (% 3 or more times in the last 12 months)**




It should be noted that almost all staff who report being bullied (97.2%) described experiencing two or more incidents of behaviours that meet the definition of bullying. Roughly two-thirds of these staff report experiencing bullying behaviours numbered 14 through to 20 in Table 7.

Of the 23% who said that they have been subjected to bullying at work, 21% reported that they submitted a formal complaint. This is the same as the frequency reported in the 2012 survey.

**Table 8: Have you submitted a formal complaint? (% bullied staff)**

| | % bullied staff NSW 2014 | % bullied staff NSW 2012 |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 21% | 21% |
| No | 79% | 79% |

Additionally, of the 21% who submitted a formal complaint, 19% indicated that their complaint was resolved to their satisfaction, while 62% said that they were not satisfied with the outcome

**Table 9: Was the complaint resolved to your satisfaction? (% bullied staff who submitted a formal complaint)**

| | % bullied staff NSW 2014 |
|---|---|
| Yes | 19% |
| No | 62% |
| Complaint is still being processed | 19% |

## *Group Differences - Bullying*

Survey respondents from various demographic backgrounds showed some substantial differences in the way they answered the questions about bullying. Key differences have been highlighted below.

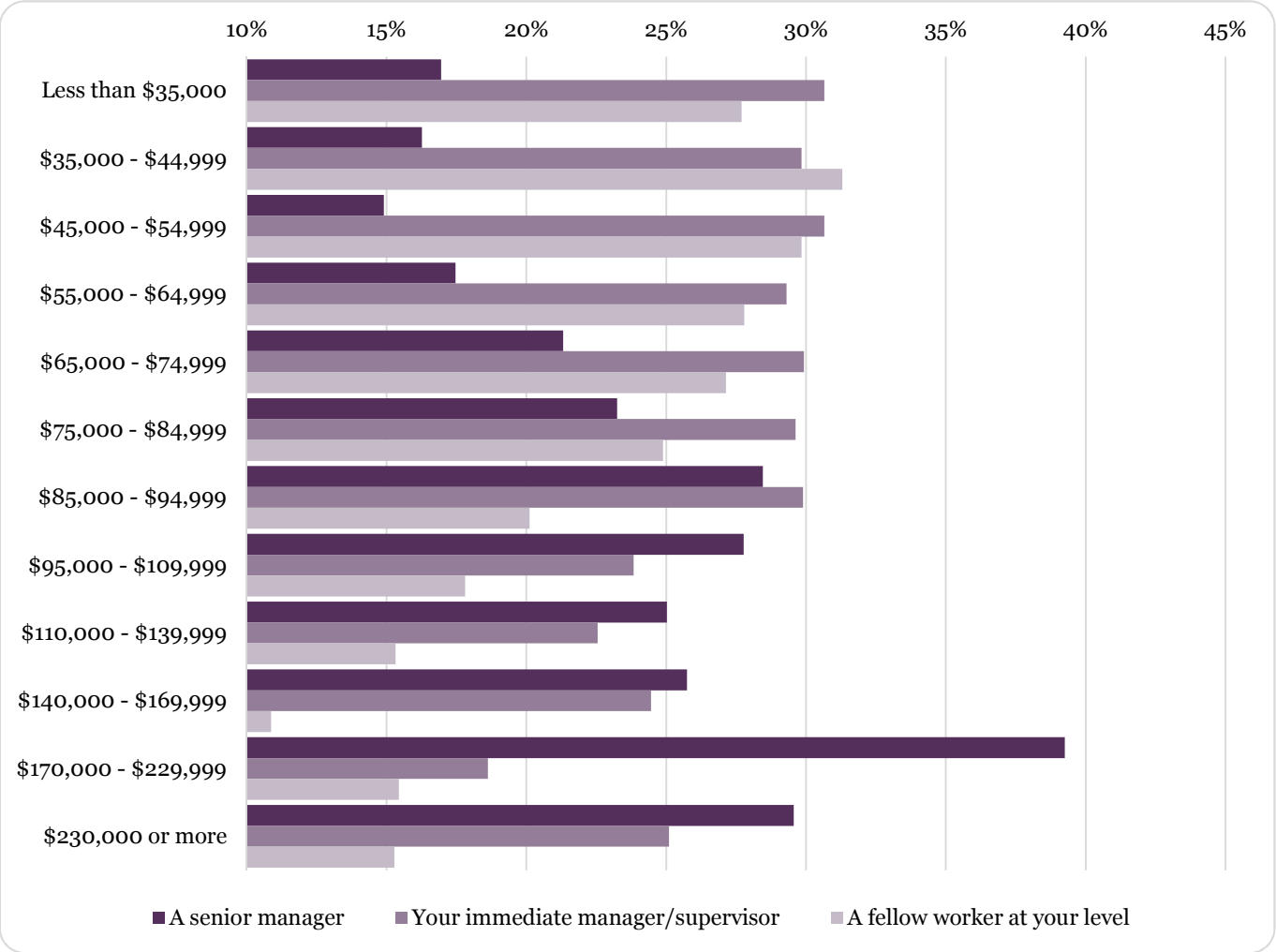
### Gender

- A higher proportion of female employees reported having witnessed bullying at work (44%), compared to 35% of the male respondents. A higher proportion of females also indicated that they have been subjected to bullying at work (25%) than their male counterparts (20%). When it comes to the bullying source, an equal proportion of males and females said that their immediate manager or supervisor was the most serious perpetrator (28% respectively). Interestingly, a higher percentage of males reported that a senior manager was the source of the most serious bullying than females (29% males versus 21% females). This pattern is reversed when looking at the fellow worker at their level, with a greater proportion of females indicating that they are the most serious perpetrator (25% females, 18% males).
- With respect to bullying behaviours, a higher proportion of males indicated that they were threatened with job loss or restricted job opportunities (14% males, 9% females) 3 or more times in the last 12 months. Whereas for females, a higher proportion indicated mistreatment of colleagues, avoiding or ignoring behaviours, and directed negative body language, gestures or glances were frequently experienced bullying behaviours (on average, approximately 6 percent higher than their male counterparts).

### Salary bands

- With respect to the three most common bullying sources, the following Figure shows the difference in perception from respondents across salary bands. At the lower end, noticeably higher proportion of people selected a fellow worker as a source of serious bullying. This pattern starts to change as we move to the higher salary bands, where the primary source of bullying came from a senior manager.

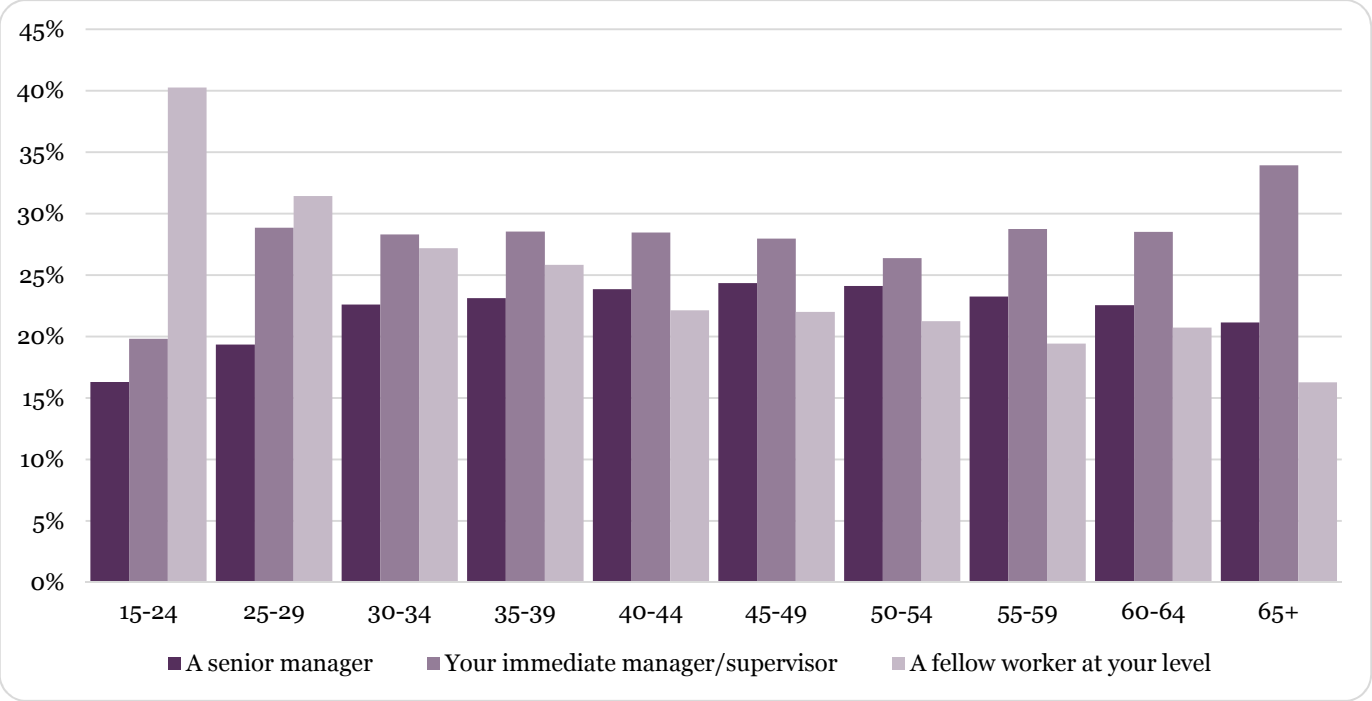
**Figure 12: Bullying source by salary bands (% +ve)**




### Age

- Across age groups, a higher percentage of younger workers than older workers indicated that their fellow worker at their level was the source of the most serious bullying. For employees aged 40 and above, a higher percentage said that a senior manager or their immediate supervisor was the source of the most serious bullying, rather than their colleagues at their level (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Bullying source by age (% +ve)**




Other Demographic Differences

- Overall, 32% of staff from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin reported being subjected to bullying at work, which is noticeably higher than the average. Similarly, a higher proportion of staff with a disability reported to being subjected to bullying at work (36%). In both cases, a higher proportion indicated that they have frequently experienced behaviours such as being given a lot of work to do, being given harder work, being excluded or isolated from events/opportunities, and being threatened with job loss or restricted job opportunities.

## 4.6 Misconduct/Wrongdoing

About a third (30%) of staff reported having witnessed misconduct or wrongdoing. This was defined as *behaviour that is unethical or wrong, that breaches your organisation's code of conduct, or that compromises your duties*.

**Figure 14: Misconduct/Wrongdoing**

| | % Yes | % No | % Yes 2014 | % Yes 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17a. In the last 12 months, I have witnessed misconduct/wrongdoing at work? | 30 | 70 | 30 | 30 |

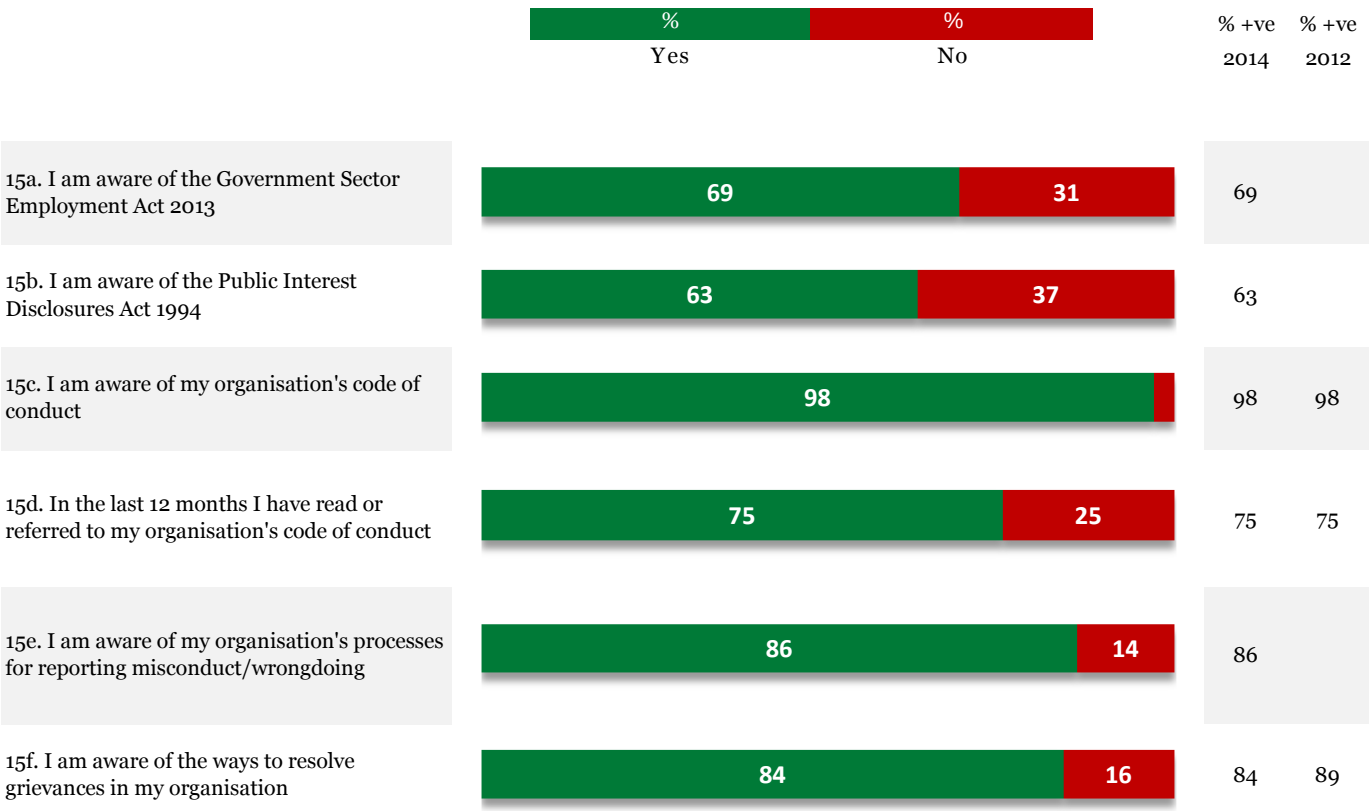
Of the 30% of total respondents who reported having witnessed misconduct/wrongdoing at work, 62% said that they reported the misconduct/wrongdoing.

## 4.7 Awareness of Legislation, Policies, Processes

Overall, scores within this theme were reasonably strong. Almost all respondents (98%) said they were aware of their organisation's code of conduct, with three-quarters having read or referred to it within the past 12 months. These scores remain unchanged since 2012. A high proportion of staff also reported an awareness of processes for reporting misconduct/wrongdoing (86%) and grievance resolution (84% - down 5% since 2012) in their organisations.

The two areas which did not score as strongly were *I am aware of the Government Sector Employment Act 2013* , and *I am aware of the Public Interest Disclosures Act of 1994* (see Figure below).

**Figure 15: Awareness of Legislation, Policies, Processes in the NSW Public Sector**




### *Group Differences - Awareness of Legislation, Policies, Processes*

Type of work

- Overall, frontline workers (including those who answered as doing service delivery or other service delivery work) reported higher awareness of *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* and the *Public Interest Disclosures Act* than non frontline workers. They also reported being more aware of their organisation's processes for reporting misconduct/wrongdoing, and of ways for resolving grievances.

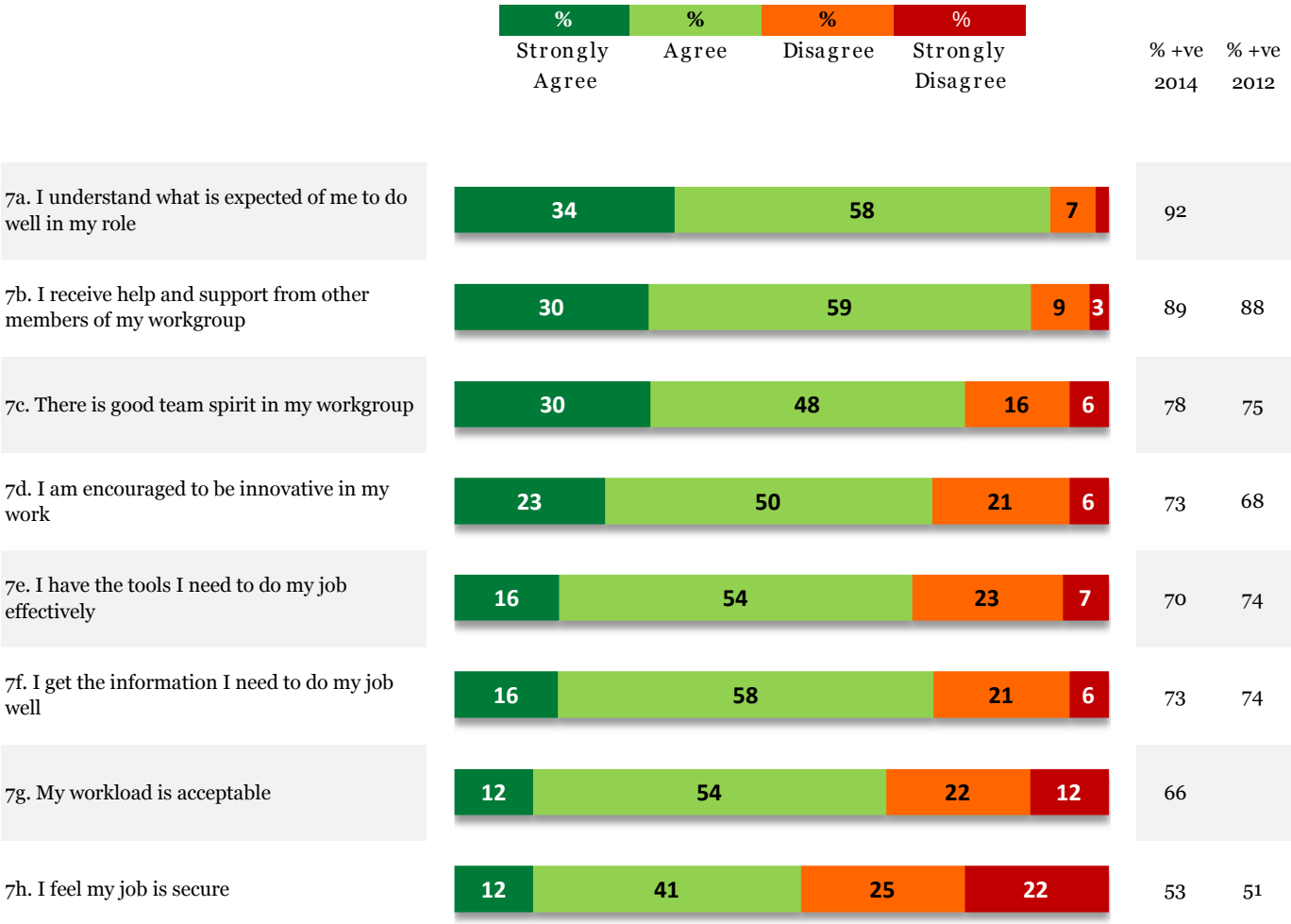
# 5 Workplace Experiences

The PMES 2014 asked a range of questions about staff's experiences in their workplace. This section describes the main findings.

## 5.1 My work in the NSW Public Sector

Figure 16 shows that while respondents tend to agree that they understand what is expected of them to do well in their role (92%), a lower proportion of staff believed that they have the tools (70% down 4%) and information (73%) they need to do their job well. In addition, a lower proportion of staff believed that their workload is acceptable (66%). The lowest score in this section was 53% for *I feel my job is secure,* though that improved marginally compared to PMES 2012 (51%)

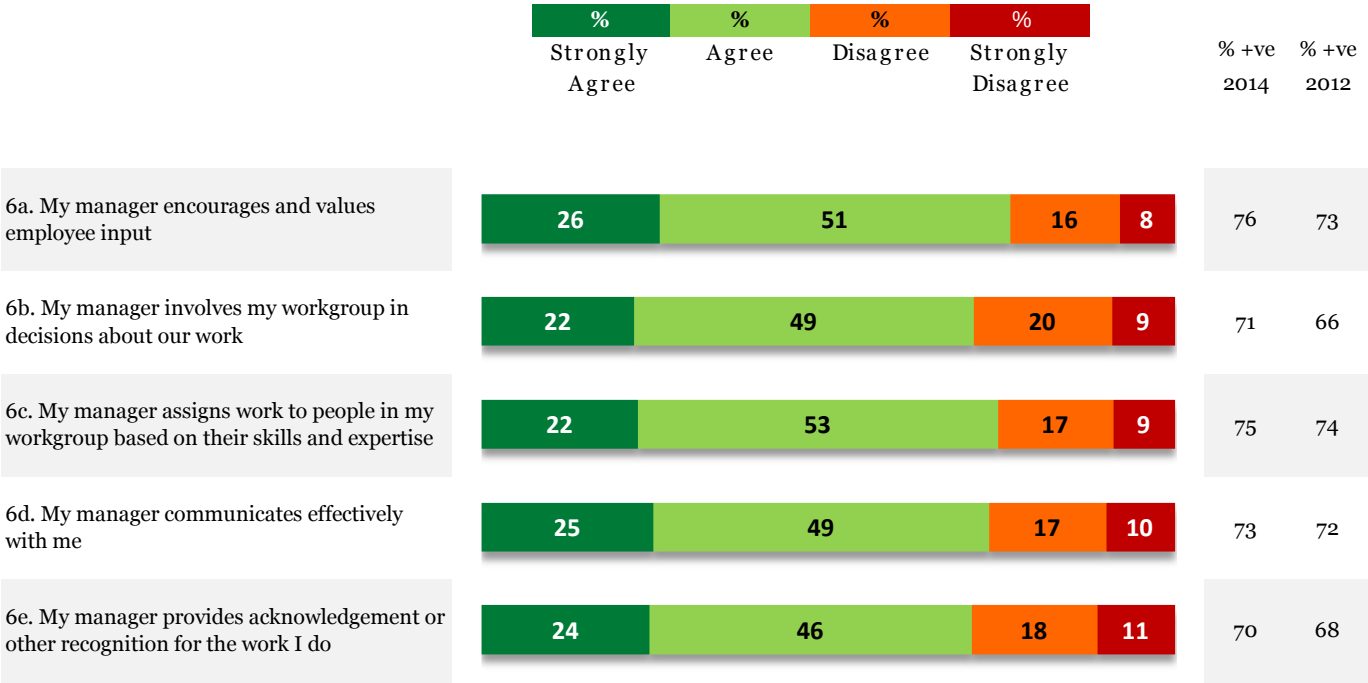
**Figure 16: My work in the NSW Public Sector**



## 5.2 My Manager

Figure 17 describes staff's perceptions of their manager. When compared to 2012, a higher percentage of staff believed *My manager involves my workgroup in decisions about our work* (71%, up from 66%), and *My manager provides acknowledgement or other recognition for the work I do* (70%, up from 68%).

**Figure 17: My manager**




## 5.3 Performance Management

Overall, Figure 18 shows that 70% of respondents reported receiving informal feedback on their performance in the past 12 months, while fewer (55%) received a formal review. These proportions represent a 4% and 6% increase respectively compared to the 2012 results.

The proportion of respondents receiving a formal review in the last 12 months was similar to that in Queensland (52% received a formal feedback in 2013) but considerably lower than in the Australian Public Service (over 80% received formal feedback in 2013).

Almost half of respondents (48%) indicated that they received both formal and informal performance feedback in the last 12 months. This figure has increased since 2012 but is still below that of Victoria (as shown in Table 10). Not surprisingly, those who have received both formal and informal feedback gave the most positive ratings about the frequency and usefulness of the feedback compared to those who only received one form of feedback (formal or informal). Those who have received no appraisal or review were the least positive about the usefulness of the process, and their manager's effectiveness in dealing with poor performance. Interestingly, staff who have received only informal feedback gave more positive ratings across all but one performance related questions (the exception being *My performance is assessed against a clear criteria* ) than those who received only formal feedback.

When feedback was provided, a third of the respondents reported that the criteria performance was measured against was unclear, while 41% did not agree that the feedback was useful in enabling the delivery of required results. The way in which poor performers were dealt with by managers was considered to be appropriate by just 50% of employees.

## Figure 18: Performance Management in the NSW Public Sector

## Table 10: Type of feedback received in the last 12 months - NSW and VIC comparison (% Yes)

| Feedback Received | NSW 2014 | VIC 2014 |
|---|---|---|
| **Both Formal and Informal** | 48% | 57% |
| **Informal Only** | 22% | 16% |
| **Formal Only** | 7% | 8% |
| **Neither** | 23% | 20% |

## *Group Differences - Performance Management*

### Gross Annual Salary

- Responses to questions about the receipt of formal and informal performance reviews were most negative among those at the lower salary levels, and most positive at the highest salary levels. Just 31% of those earning less than $35,000/yr said they had been part of a formal review. This group was also substantially less likely to have performance plans setting out their objectives (31%, compared to 72% for earners of $170,000-$229,999/yr).

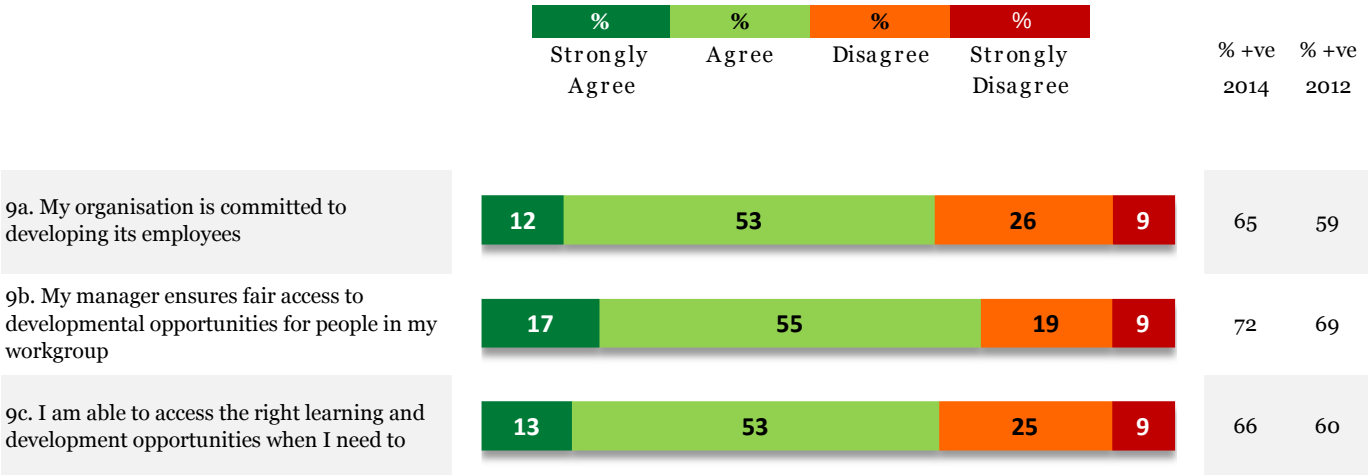
**Table 11: Gross annual salary and Performance Management (% +ve)**

| Salary | In the last 12 months I have received a formal performance appraisal/review | In the last 12 months I have received informal feedback on my performance | I have a current performance plan that sets out my individual objectives |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Less than $35,000** | 31 | 56 | 31 |
| **$35,000 - $44,999** | 36 | 58 | 36 |
| **$45,000 - $54,999** | 45 | 61 | 42 |
| **$55,000 - $64,999** | 51 | 68 | 49 |
| **$65,000 - $74,999** | 53 | 68 | 50 |
| **$75,000 - $84,999** | 55 | 71 | 52 |
| **$85,000 - $94,999** | 63 | 75 | 57 |
| **$95,000 - $109,999** | 61 | 74 | 57 |
| **$110,000 - $139,999** | 61 | 76 | 58 |
| **$140,000 - $169,999** | 62 | 78 | 61 |
| **$170,000 - $229,999** | 69 | 81 | 72 |
| **$230,000 or more** | 69 | 83 | 68 |

## 5.4 Learning

This theme has seen significant improvement since the 2012 People Matter Survey. Overall, 66% of respondents agreed that their organisations were committed to employee development (a 6% improvement). Over two-thirds of staff responded positively to question *I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to* (6% higher than 2012), with 72% reporting that their managers kept access to such opportunities fair.

**Figure 19: Learning in the NSW Public Sector**



## *Group Differences - Learning*

### Age

- Responses to this theme's questions varied significantly according to the age of respondents (see Table 12). A general pattern emerged where younger employees (that is, those in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups) responded more positively to all Learning questions. Those aged between 25 and 50 reported lower levels of agreement. Beyond the age of 50, agreement levels began to increase to levels closer to that of the youngest respondents.

### Length of Employment

- Results showed that those employed within their organisation for the shortest period of time (that is, less than one year) were the most positive about the access and organisational commitment to employee development. They also expressed the highest agreement that access to development opportunities were kept fair by managers. Agreement with questions within this theme appeared to be at their lowest for those who had been with their organisation for between 5 and 20 years.

**Table 12: Age and Learning (% +ve)**

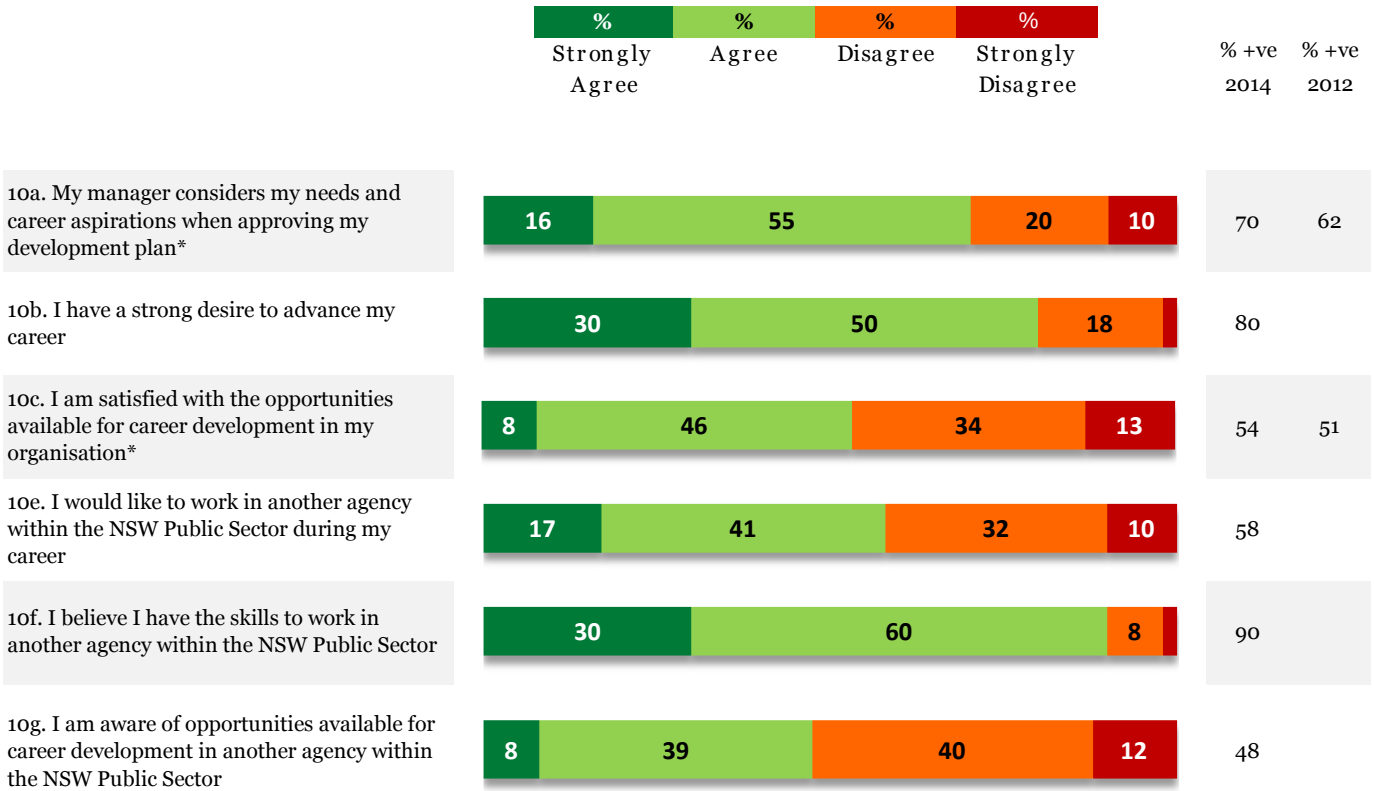
| Age | My organisation is committed to developing its employees | My manager ensures fair access to developmental opportunities for people in my workgroup | I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to |
|---|---|---|---|
| **15-19** | 79 | 81 | 76 |
| **20-24** | 80 | 82 | 79 |
| **25-29** | 69 | 75 | 70 |
| **30-34** | 64 | 71 | 66 |
| **35-39** | 63 | 71 | 64 |
| **40-44** | 64 | 71 | 65 |
| **45-49** | 64 | 71 | 65 |
| **50-54** | 64 | 71 | 65 |
| **55-59** | 66 | 73 | 68 |
| **60-64** | 69 | 75 | 71 |
| **65+** | 74 | 78 | 75 |

## 5.5 Career Development

Most respondents reported a strong desire to advance their careers (80% agreement) but just 54% of the people surveyed were satisfied with the opportunities available in their organisations. Less than half of the respondents agreed that they were aware of opportunities in other agencies, but while 90% thought they had the skills to work in other agencies, only 58% would like to do so.

Despite their dissatisfaction with the availability of opportunities, the majority of staff agreed that support was received from different levels of leadership . A total of 70% of people said their managers considered their needs and aspirations when approving development plans (an 8 percentage point since 2012).

**Figure 20: Career Development in the NSW Public Sector**




**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

### *Group Differences - Career Development*

Age

- Results showed that the desire for career advancement was strongest in the 20-24 age group, and weakened gradually as age increased. Similarly, satisfaction with available career opportunities decreases with age, but begins to rise again from the age of 50. Results also showed that while the belief in having the skills to work in other agencies remained strong across age groups, the desire to make such a change also reduced significantly with age. This is provided in more detail in Table 13.

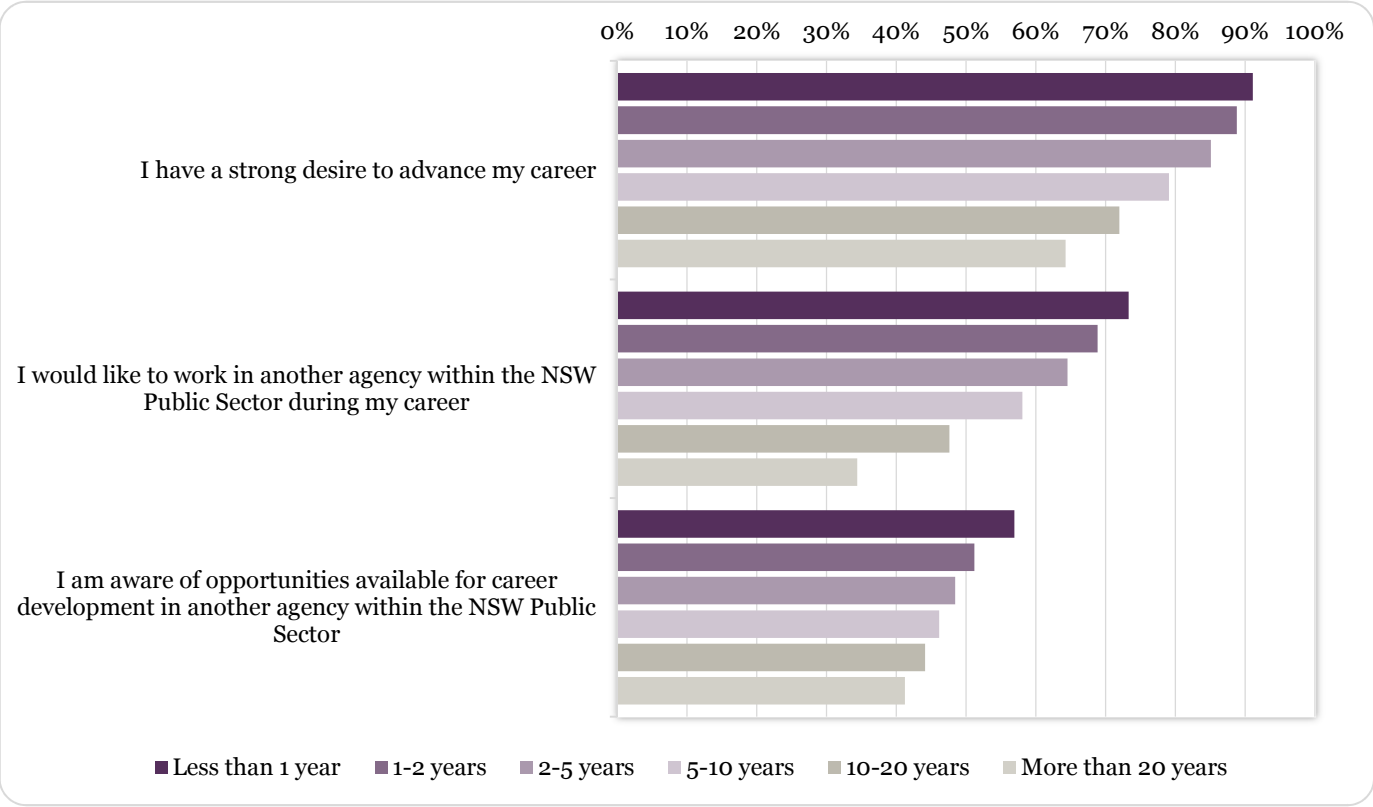
**Table 13: Age and Career Development (% +ve)**

| Age | 10b.I have a strong desire to advance my career | 10c. I am satisfied with the opportunities available for career development in my organisation* | 10e. I would like to work in another agency within the NSW Public Sector during my career | 10f. I believe I have the skills to work in another agency within the NSW Public Sector |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **15-19** | 92 | 73 | 78 | 94 |
| **20-24** | 97 | 69 | 80 | 93 |
| **25-29** | 94 | 57 | 75 | 92 |
| **30-34** | 91 | 52 | 75 | 94 |
| **35-39** | 88 | 51 | 71 | 93 |
| **40-44** | 84 | 51 | 66 | 92 |
| **45-49** | 80 | 51 | 60 | 91 |
| **50-54** | 76 | 52 | 53 | 89 |
| **55-59** | 70 | 55 | 43 | 87 |
| **60-64** | 69 | 60 | 36 | 85 |
| **65+** | 68 | 67 | 31 | 82 |

### Years Employed in Current Role

- The desire to advance one's career appeared to weaken the longer respondents remained in their roles (see Figure 21). Newer employees were also more willing to work in other agencies, reported greater awareness of opportunities to do so, and were more likely to feel that they had the skills required. Results also showed a trend whereby satisfaction with career development opportunities gradually decreased as people stayed in their roles longer, before rising again once people had been in their role for more than 20 years.

**Figure 21: Career Development by length of service (% +ve)**



## 5.6 Recruitment

Results from the 2014 survey showed that Recruitment continues to be one of the lower scoring themes. Similar to 2012, just 56% of respondents felt that their organisation had good recruiting processes and procedures in place. Also, only 68% of respondents believed that role descriptions advertised within their organisations accurately reflected job requirements. It should be noted that the majority of people (over three-quarters) continue to hold the belief that their managers have the skills required to make the right selection decisions.

**Figure 22: Recruitment in the NSW Public Sector**

| | % Strongly Agree | % Agree | % Disagree | % Strongly Disagree | % +ve 2014 | % +ve 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12a. My organisation has good procedures and processes for recruiting employees | 8 | 48 | 29 | 15 | 56 | 56 |
| 12b. In my organisation the advertised role descriptions accurately reflect the requirements of the role* | 9 | 59 | 23 | 10 | 68 | 71 |
| 12c. My manager is sufficiently skilled to make good selection decisions | 21 | 58 | 13 | 9 | 78 | 77 |

**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

### *Group Differences - Recruitment*

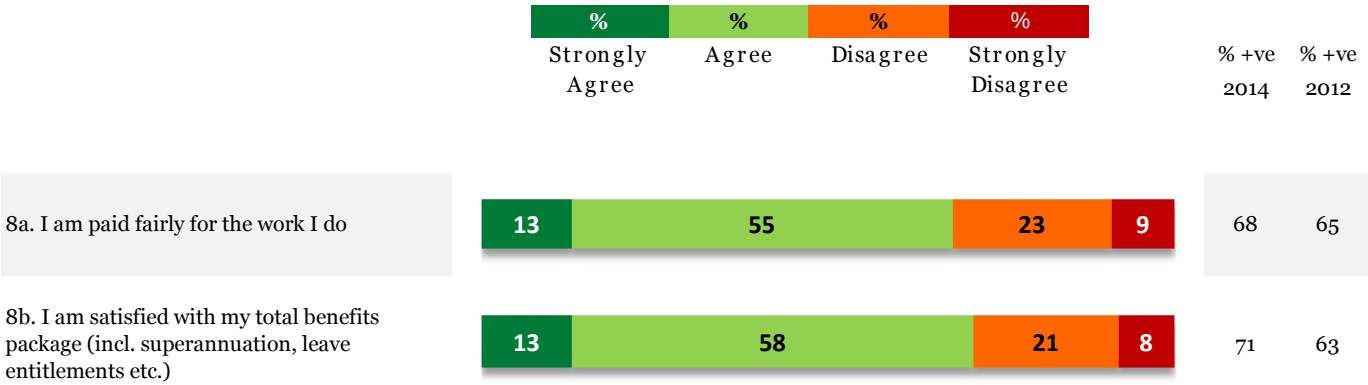
#### Length of Employment

- Opinions regarding recruitment varied depending on how long respondents had been employed with their organisations. On all three recruitment questions, people employed for shorter periods of time (Less than 1 year or between 1 and 2 years) expressed higher agreement, while longer serving staff tended to be less satisfied.

## 5.7 Pay

Two questions asked staff about their satisfaction with pay and total benefits package. Both have improved compared to the 2012 results. In particular, *I am satisfied with my total benefits package (incl. superannuation, leave entitlements etc.)* improved by 8 percentage points (from 63% to 71%).

**Figure 23: Pay in the NSW Public Sector**



# 6 Diversity & Wellbeing

## 6.1 Equity & Diversity

The following questions look at equity and diversity of employment within organisations in the NSW Public Sector. Overall, the vast majority of employees gave a positive response to the questions around equity and diversity. This pattern is consistent with the findings in 2012.

**Figure 24: Equity & Diversity in the NSW Public Sector**

| | % Strongly Agree | % Agree | % Disagree | % Strongly Disagree | % +ve 2014 | % +ve 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16a. Equal employment opportunity is provided in my organisation | 25 | 60 | 11 | 5 | 85 | 85 |
| 16b. My organisation is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. in terms of gender, disability, age, cultural background) | 25 | 63 | 9 | 3 | 88 | 88 |
| 16c. Cultural background is not a barrier to success in my organisation* | 28 | 63 | 6 | 3 | 91 | 91 |
| 16d. Age is not a barrier to success in my organisation* | 24 | 59 | 13 | 5 | 82 | 86 |
| 16e. Disability is not a barrier to success in my organisation* | 23 | 62 | 12 | 3 | 85 | 86 |
| 16f. Sexual orientation is not a barrier to success in my organisation | 27 | 67 | 4 | | 94 | |

**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

### *Group Differences - Equity & Diversity*

With respect to the perception of the question *Equal employment opportunity is provided in my organisation,* the following table shows the differences across demographic groups.

- Of the employees who answered 'No' to speaking a language other than English at home, having a disability, providing care for others outside of work, and being of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, a higher proportion reported that equal employment opportunity is provided in their organisation than when compared to those who answered 'Yes' to the corresponding questions. This trend is similar to the findings in the 2012 survey.

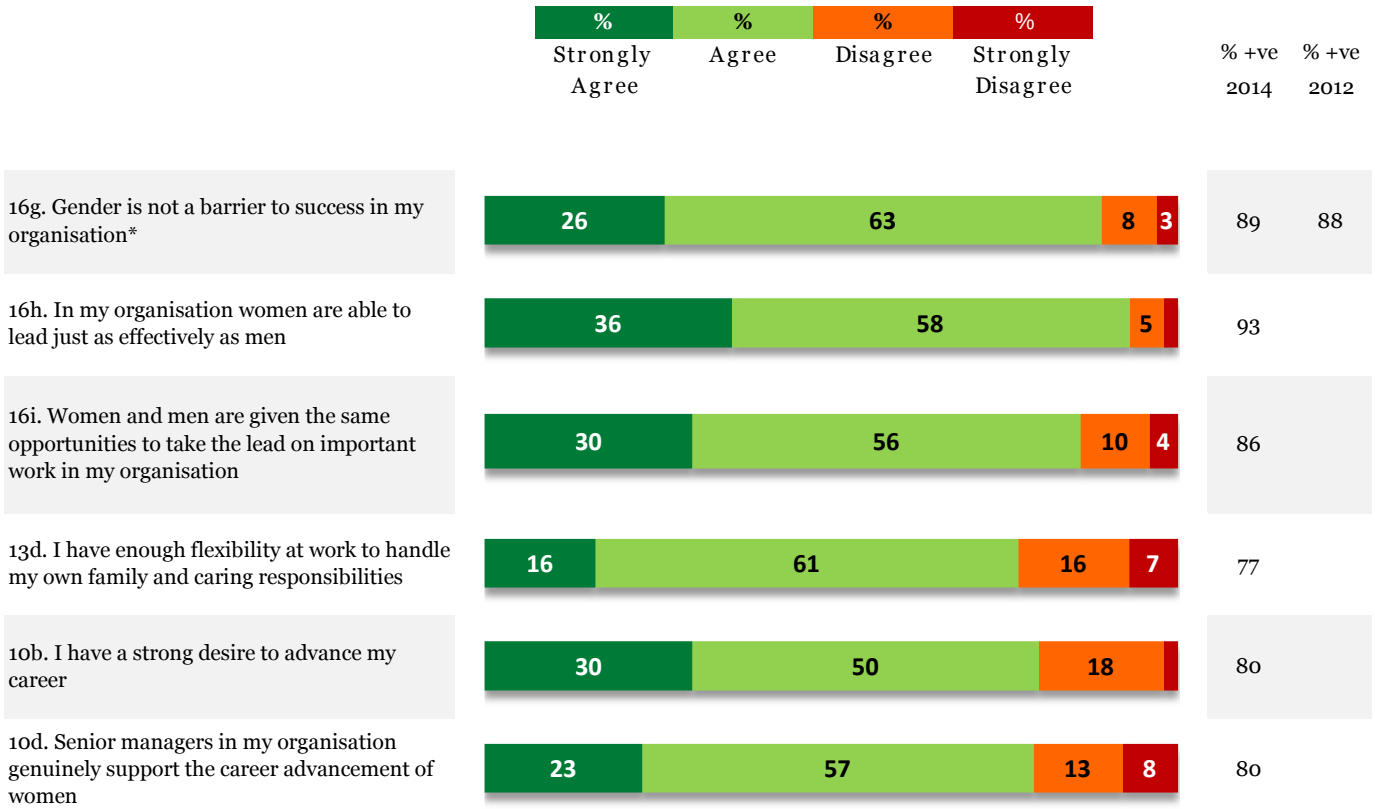
**Table 14: Perception of equal employment opportunities by demographic groups (% +ve)**

| Respondent Group | % +ve 2014 | % +ve 2012 |
|---|---|---|
| **Language other than English (LOTE)** | 82 | 79 |
| **Non LOTE** | 86 | 87 |
| **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander** | 80 | 77 |
| **Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander** | 86 | 86 |
| **Disability** | 78 | 78 |
| **No Disability** | 86 | 86 |
| **Provide care for others outside work** | 83 | |
| **Does not provide care for others outside work** | 87 | |

## 6.2 Women in Leadership

The following Table includes a selection of questions looking at gender equity and women in leadership within the NSW Public Sector. Most questions were added in 2014 to help measure and understand factors that may prevent or encourage women's career advancement within the public sector. Overall, the perception regarding women's capability appears to be positive, with 93% of survey respondents reporting that they believe women are able to lead just as effectively as men. Similarly, 86% believe that the same opportunities are given to men and women to lead important work. Most participants believed they have a strong desire to advance their career (80%), and people tended to report that senior managers in their organisation genuinely support the advancement of women (80%). Similar to 2012, 89% of respondents thought that gender is not a barrier to success in their organisation.

**Figure 25: Women in Leadership in the NSW Public Sector**



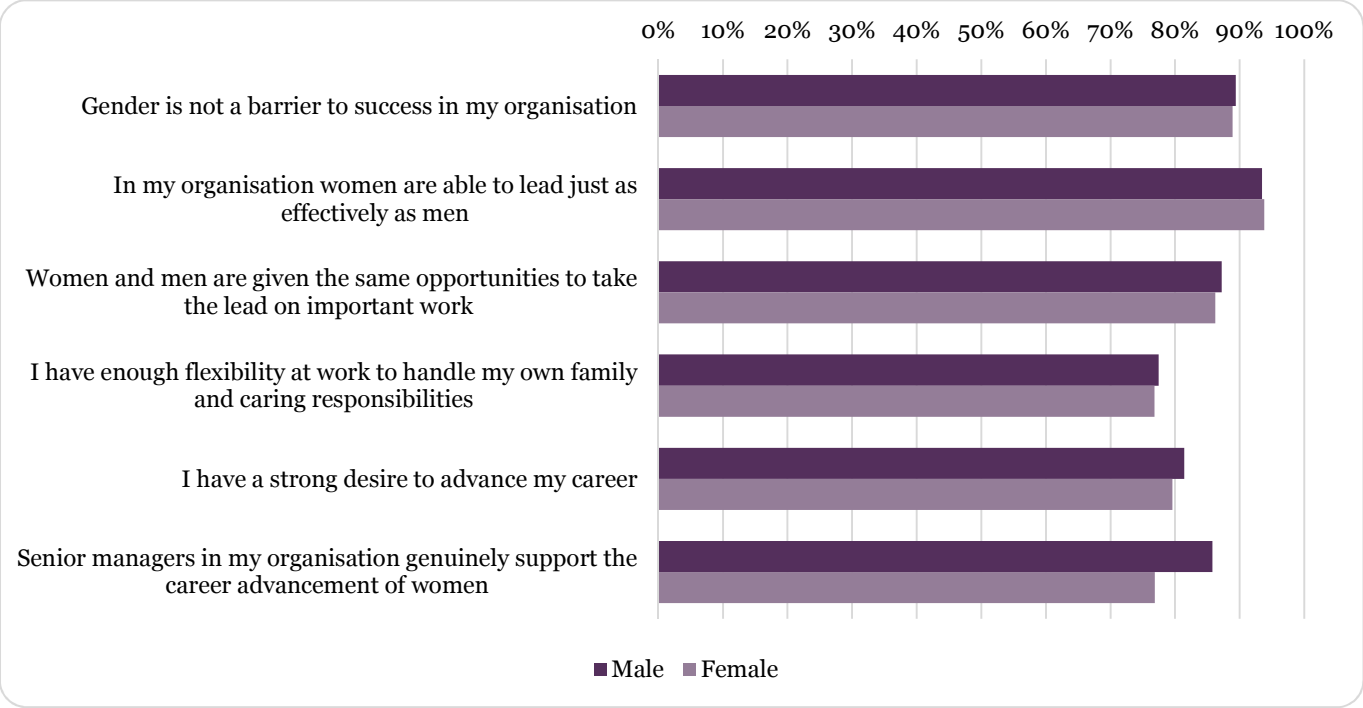

**Slight change in wording compared to PMES 2012*

## *Group Differences - Women in Leadership*

### Gender

- Figure 26 shows the difference in the perceptions of men and women with respect to equity and diversity. Overall, there appeared to be little gender differences across most of the questions. However, a noticeably higher proportion of males (86%) indicated that senior managers in their organisation genuinely support the career advance of women compared their female counterparts (77%).

**Figure 26: Gender differences in the perception of Equity & Diversity (% +ve)**

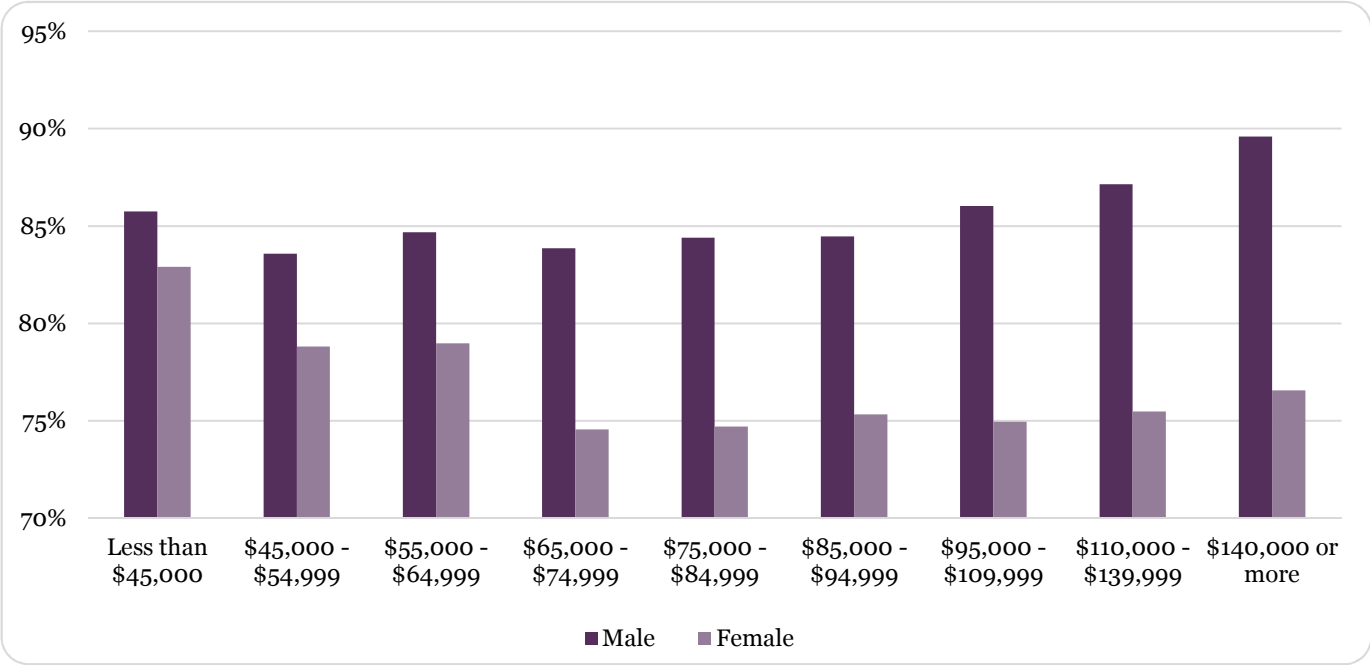



### Gender by Salary

- Figure 27 shows responses to *Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation* split by the gender of respondents, and salary bands. Interestingly, at the lower salary bands (less than $74,999), a higher percentage of female respondents thought that gender is not a barrier to success in their organisation compared to male respondents. However, at the upper salary range (greater than $85,000), this trend is reversed, where male respondents gave more positive responses to the same question than their female counterparts. It should be noted however that females represent the majority of workforce in the lower salary bands, while males represent the majority of the workforce in the higher salary bands.
- A similar trend like the one observed in Figure 27 applies to *In my organisation women are able to lead just as effectively as men,* and *Women and men are given the same opportunities to take the lead on important work in my organisation.*
- For *Senior managers in my organisation genuinely support the career advancement of women,* male respondents gave more positive responses across all salary bands than female respondents. This trend is more pronounced at the higher salary bands (see Figure 28).

**Figure 27: Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation (% +ve)**

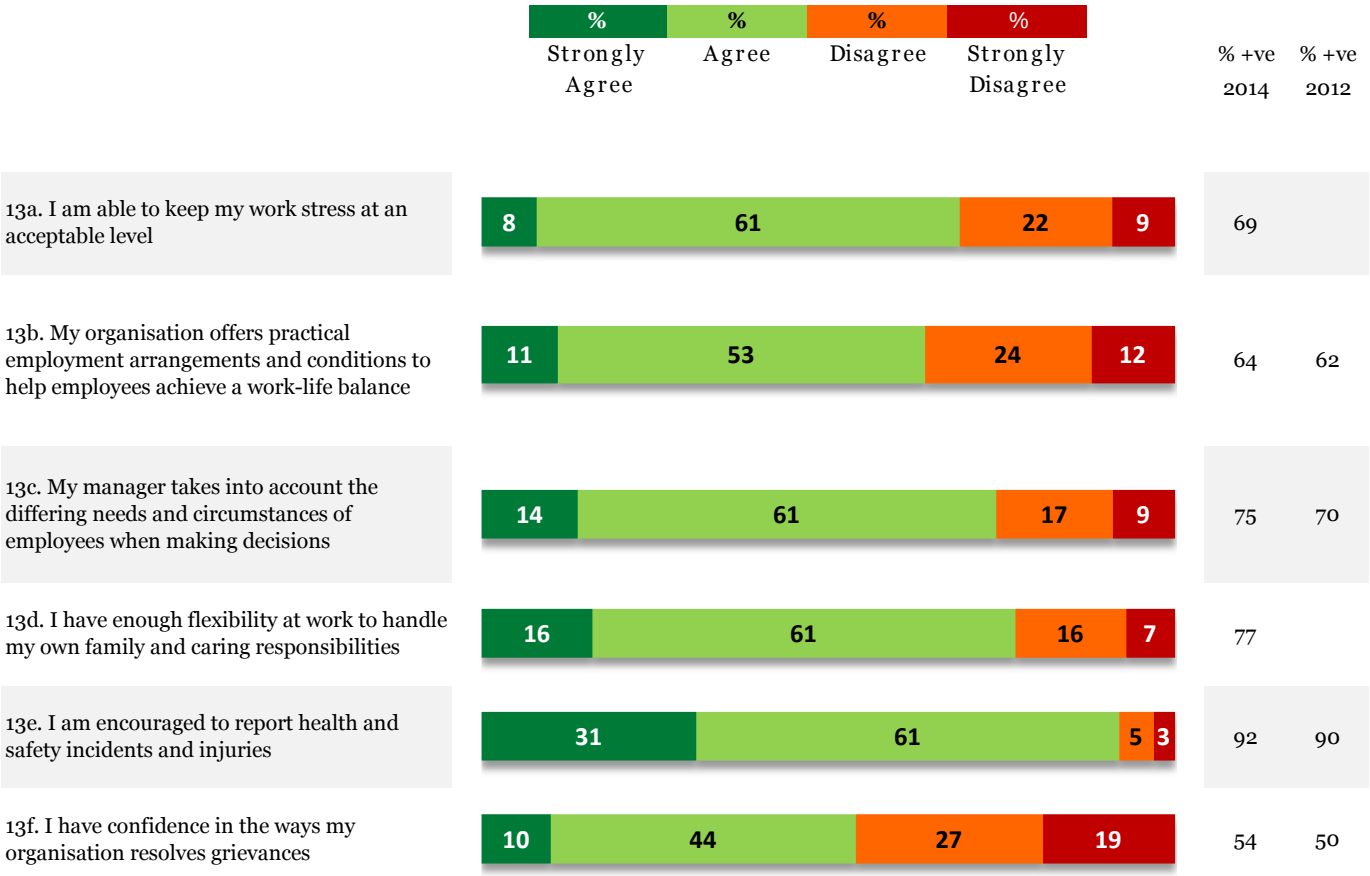
**Figure 28: Senior managers in my organisation genuinely support the career advancement of women (% +ve)**



## 6.3 Health & Wellbeing

Where comparable, responses to health and wellbeing questions have improved since 2012 in the NSW Public Sector. A higher percentage of respondents believed that their manager takes into account different needs when making decisions (75%, up from 70%). The majority of respondents said that they are encouraged to report health and safety incidents and injuries (92%, up from 90%). A relatively lower but improving score was shown for the question *I have confidence in the ways my organisation resolves grievances* (54%, up from 50%).

**Figure 29: Health & Wellbeing in the NSW Public Sector**




### *Group Differences - Health & Wellbeing*

#### Manager/Non Manager

The views of managers (people who supervise others) were also compared with those employees who indicated in the survey that they did not supervise others. The general trend was for managers to be significantly more positive than non-managers in most areas of the survey. The exceptions to this trend which most differentiated managers and non-managers were related to wellness and work-life balance. These are covered below.

- Non-managers were significantly more likely to feel that their workloads were manageable. The agreement level of non-managers was 71%, compared to 57% for managers.
- More non-managers reported an ability to keep their work stress at an acceptable level (72%) than did managers, where only 64% of respondents agreed.

## Caring Responsibility

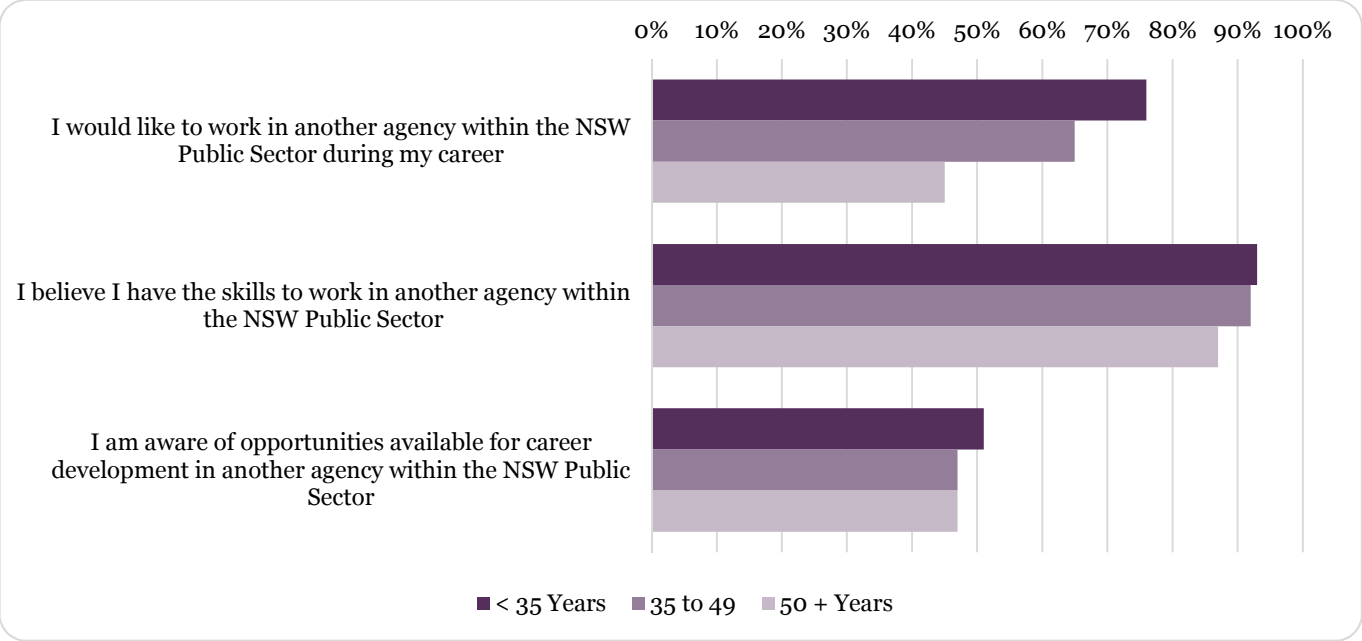
- In general, respondents who do not provide care for others outside of work gave more favourable responses (81%) to *I have enough flexibility at work to handle my own family and caring responsibilities* than those who do have caring responsibilities outside of work (72%). Similarly, respondents without caring responsibilities outside of work gave more positive responses (67%) to *My organisation offers practical employment arrangements and conditions to help employees achieve a work-life balance* than those with caring responsibilities (61%). Amongst those staff who have caring responsibilities, their agreement level did not vary substantially based on whether they were the primary carer or not.

# 7 Future Intentions

## 7.1 Mobility

Figure 30 shows the results for three questions about staff motivation, capability and opportunity to work in another agency, split across three age groups. Overall, 58% of staff indicated that they would like to work in another agency, although this desire varies greatly across age groups, with younger staff having a noticeably stronger desire to work in another agency. In total, 90% of staff believe they have the skills to work in another agency, and this is fairly stable across all age groups. Despite reasonable motivation and a strong belief in capability, a limiting factor appears to be awareness of opportunities, with only 48% of staff reporting they were aware of opportunities to work in another agency, and again this result is stable across age groups.

**Figure 30: Motivation, skill and opportunity for working in another agency, split across age groups (% +ve)**



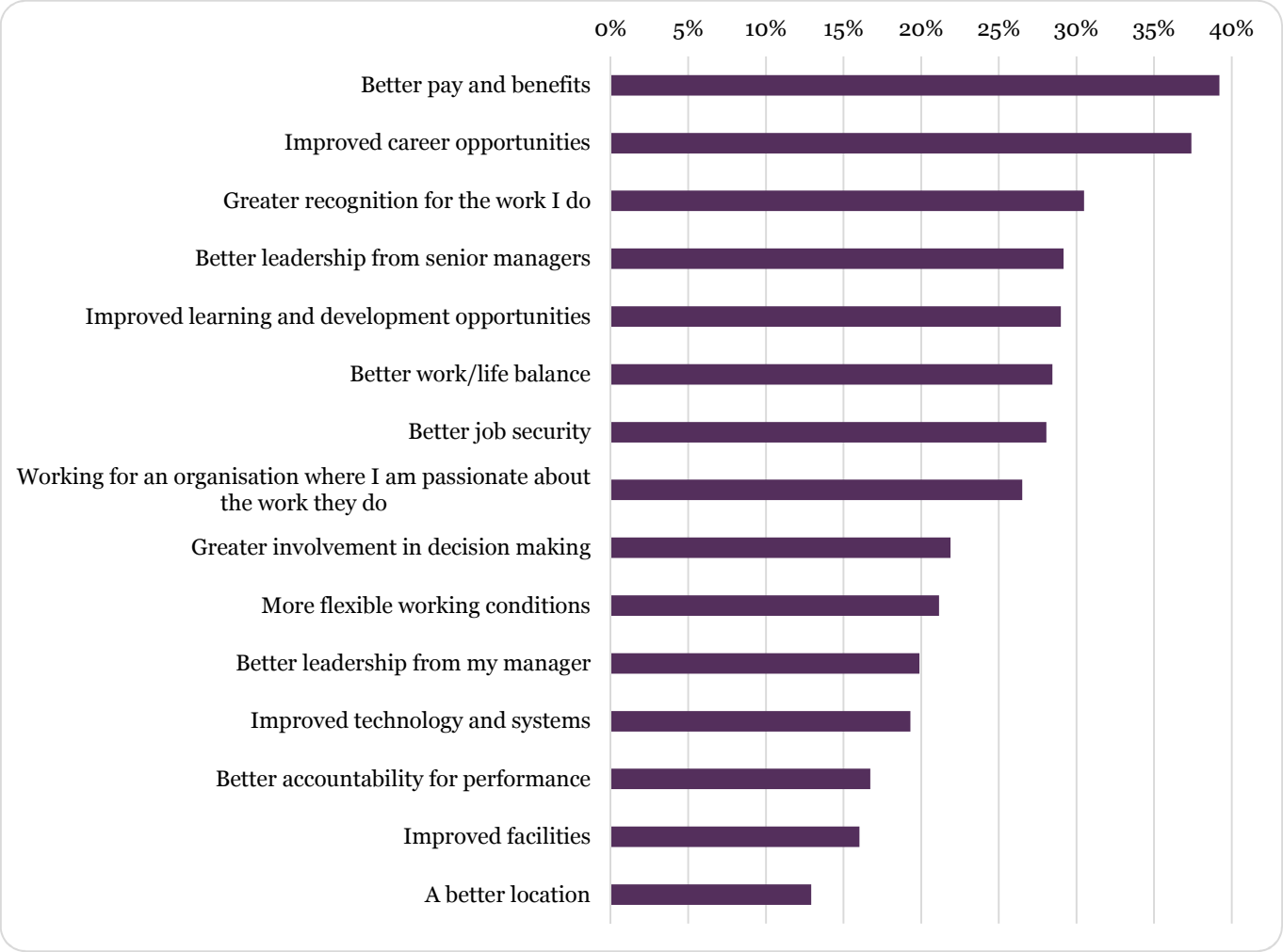

## 7.2 Intention to Stay

To the question *How long do you think you will continue to work in your current organisation?,* 20% of staff indicated 2 years or less, whereas 31% of staff indicated they will continue for another 10 or more years. In comparison, to the question *How long do you think you will continue to work in the NSW Public Sector (including other agencies beyond the organisation you currently work for)?* , 14% of staff indicated they would leave within 2 years, and 40% of staff indicated they would continue for another 10 or more years. As such, a large proportion of staff planning to leave their current organisation are considering moving to another agency.

Of course, a major reason staff leave is for retirement. Of those staff who provided a likely age, only 12% indicated they are planning to retire prior to 60 years of age, 52% indicated a retirement age ranging from 60 to 65 years, and 36% selected “Beyond 65”.

Figure 31 shows, in descending order, the frequency with which staff selected the options in response to the question *If you are thinking about leaving the NSW Public Sector, what factors would motivate you to stay?* The numbers represent the proportion of staff that selected each option. Staff could select multiple options, so the totals add up to more than 100%. The most frequently selector motivator was "Better pay and benefits" selected by 39% of staff, followed by "Improved career opportunities" (37%), and "Greater recognition for the work I do" (30%). This relative ranking of selections was similar across genders and age groups, although males and younger staff tended to select all options more frequently than did females and older staff.

**Figure 31: Factors that staff indicated would motivate them to continue working in the NSW Public Sector (% of respondents thinking about leaving the sector)**



# 8 Qualitative Comment Analysis

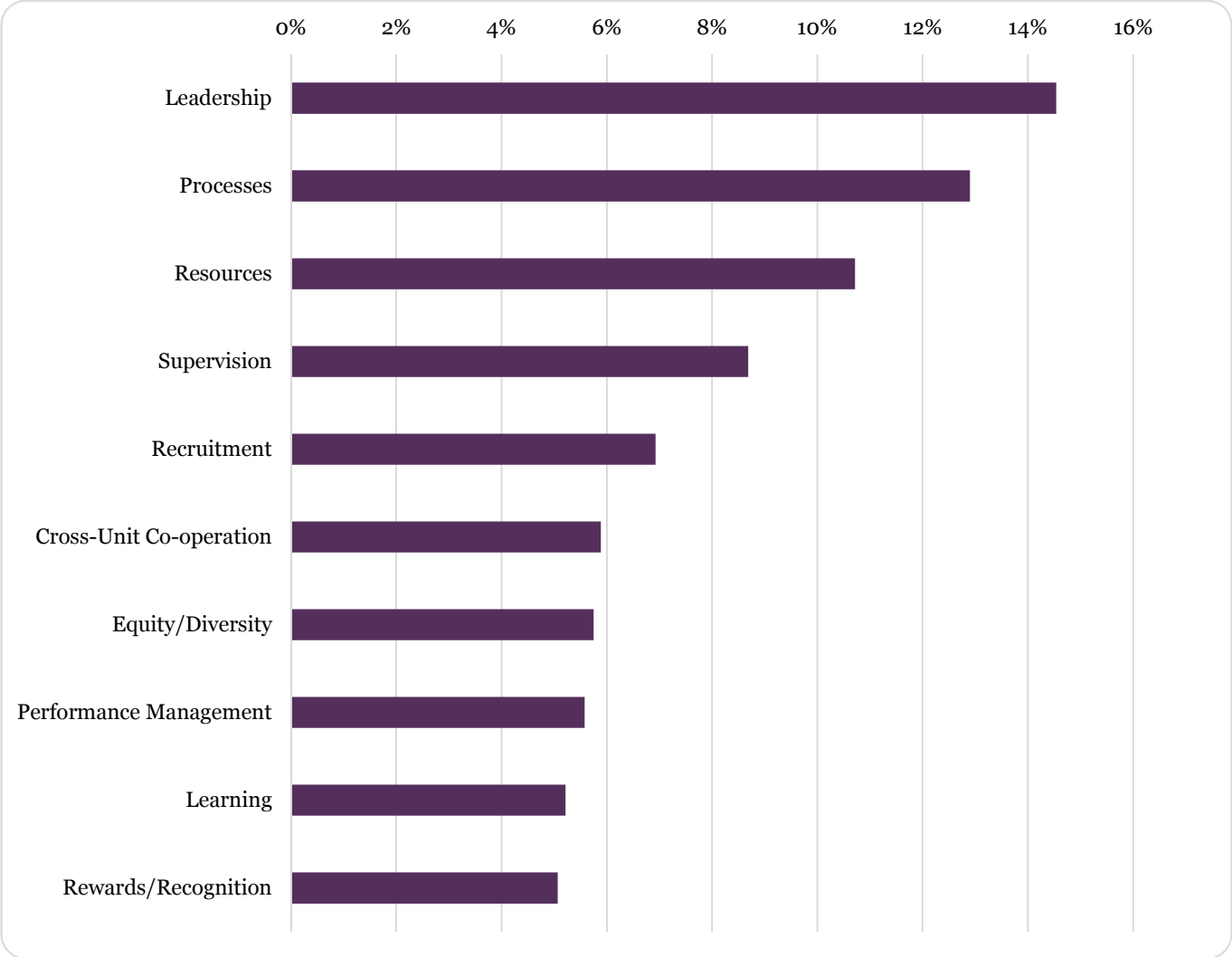
## 8.1 Overview of Themes

Respondents in the survey were asked the question:

*If you could change one thing to improve the effectiveness of your workplace, what would it be?*

A random sample of approximately 4400 responses to the open-ended text question were summarised into themes. The sample comprised on comments selected from survey response from each Department within the NSW Public Sector who participated in the survey. The sampling allows us to produce a set of common themes that are largely representative of working experiences within NSW Public Sector. The top 10 most common themes identified are presented in Figure below. The data indicate the estimated percentage of total survey respondents whose text responses relate to the common themes below.

**Figure 32: Top 10 themes from text responses (% of people commenting)**



## 8.2 Descriptions of top 5 most common themes

Respondents provided a range of ideas on what could be changed to improve the effectiveness of their workplace. Below is a description of the ideas raised that sit under each of the common themes reported in Figure 32.

*Leadership*

The most frequently raised issue referred to the role of Senior Leadership figures in improving the effectiveness of the workplace. Employees referred to a range of specific issues in this context such as; transparency and integrity, providing clear direction, capability around decision making and strategic planning; honesty in communication, leading by example, equity and diversity issues, being accountable, visibility to lower level staff, general people skills, and listening to staff. Some respondents had concerns about the general competence of people in senior leadership positions and the processes used to appoint them.

*Processes*

A relatively large proportion of the responses mentioned improvements in day-to-day work processes that would improve the effectiveness of the workplace. These comments included suggestions to improve the efficiency of policies and procedures (e.g., reducing 'red tape' and 'bureaucracy'), changing the way work is currently conducted or allocated, introducing new policies and procedures, and increasing the standardisation of policies and procedures.

*Resources*

Comments in this category indicated that increased resources would improve workplace effectiveness. Generally, these comments suggested increasing staff numbers, budgets and funding.

*Supervision*

Comments in this category referred to issues relating to people's direct supervisor or manager. Employees mentioned a range of issues including; honesty and transparency, people management skills, less micromanagement, being accountable, giving feedback, general capability of supervisors, listening to staff, and treating staff fairly.

*Recruitment*

A number of the comments also referred to improvements in recruitment and selection practices. Typical responses included; improving fairness and equity in relation to promotional or other career opportunities, similarly ensuring merit based selection rather than cronyism or other forms of favouritism, reviewing policies around whether staff should be recruited internally or externally, adopting recruitment practices that will ensure the right staff are selected for the job, and faster recruitment processes.

# 9 Appendix 1: Survey Methodology

## 9.1 Survey Development

The People Matter Employee Survey 2014 question-set was based on the People Matter Employee Survey 2012. In building the People Matter Employee Survey 2014, the PSC reviewed the survey instruments used by other jurisdictions and considered the feedback received from the 2012 survey participants. The PSC also introduced questions to explore new areas. Survey questions were refined through PSC stakeholder discussions and the advice of Voice Project. A draft version of the survey was pilot tested with approximately 150 employees across the NSW Public Sector. The pilot test participants were not involved in question development and each was asked for feedback about survey question wording, clarity of definitions, navigation and layout. Their feedback led to some changes in the final version of the survey instrument.

As in the PMES 2012, the NSW government sector values were explored in Part One and workplace experiences were explored in Part Two. To assess representativeness of the sample and to allow further analysis, job characteristics and demographic information were also collected in the survey.

## 9.2 Respondent and Workforce Profile

**Table 15: Profile of 2014 PMES respondents compared with 2012 PMES**

| | PMES 2014 | | PMES 2012 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | % | Count | % |
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Male | 26340 | 36% | 22719 | 37% |
| Female | 47077 | 64% | 37999 | 63% |
| Missing/not available | 133 | 0% | 61 | 0% |
| ***Total*** | 73550 | 100% | 60779 | 100% |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 15-24 | 1520 | 2% | 1264 | 2% |
| 25-34 | 10981 | 15% | 8916 | 15% |
| 35-44 | 18134 | 25% | 14538 | 24% |
| 45-54 | 23962 | 33% | 19948 | 33% |
| 55-64 | 17167 | 23% | 14135 | 23% |
| 65 and older | 1728 | 2% | 1372 | 2% |
| Missing/not available | 58 | 0% | 606 | 1% |
| ***Total*** | 73550 | 100% | 60779 | 100% |
| **Type of Work** | | | | |
| Service delivery (invl. direct contact with general public) | 36931 | 50% | 30175 | 50% |
| Other service delivery work | 6985 | 9% | 6408 | 11% |
| Administrative support | 8068 | 11% | 7419 | 12% |
| Corporate services | 7168 | 10% | 5250 | 9% |
| Policy | 1624 | 2% | 1398 | 2% |
| Research | 1000 | 1% | 882 | 1% |
| Program and project management support | 5202 | 7% | 3691 | 6% |
| Legal | 1121 | 2% | 862 | 1% |
| Others | 5128 | 7% | 4400 | 7% |
| Missing/not available | 323 | 0% | 294 | 0 |
| ***Total*** | 73550 | 100% | 60779 | 100% |

# Appendix 1: Survey Methodology

Table 15 profiles the People Matter Employee Survey 2014 respondents across three key demographics. The workforce profile data was obtained from the NSW Public Sector workforce profile collected earlier in 2014. The People Matter Employee Survey 2014 response profile displays a very similar pattern to the workforce profile for these particular demographics (see Table 16), strongly indicating that the sample is representative of the public sector population as a whole.

**Table 16: Profile of 2014 respondents compared with NSW Public Sector workforce**

| | People Matter Employee Survey 2014 May 2014 | | NSW Public Sector Workforce 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | % | % |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Male | 26,340 | 36 | 38 |
| Female | 47,077 | 64 | 62 |
| Missing/not available | 133 | 0 | 0 |
| ***Total*** | 73,550 | 100 | 100 |
| **Age** | | | |
| 15-24 | 1,520 | 2 | 4 |
| 25-34 | 10,981 | 15 | 21 |
| 35-44 | 18,134 | 25 | 25 |
| 45-54 | 23,962 | 33 | 27 |
| 55-64 | 17,167 | 23 | 21 |
| 65 and older | 1,728 | 2 | 3 |
| Missing | 58 | 0 | 0 |
| ***Total*** | 73,550 | 100 | 100 |
| **Years in current organisation** | | | |
| 0-2 yrs | 10,611 | 14 | 15 |
| 2-5 yrs | 11,556 | 16 | 16 |
| 5-10 yrs | 16,232 | 22 | 22 |
| 10-20 yrs | 19,305 | 26 | 26 |
| 20+ yrs | 15,737 | 21 | 20 |
| Unknown | 109 | 0 | 0 |
| ***Total*** | 73,550 | 100 | 100 |

*Note: All percentages in the table above and have been rounded to whole numbers.*

## 9.3 Survey Delivery

The survey was open to all public sector employees across NSW via an online and a paper-based survey instrument. Participation was strongly encouraged, though not mandatory.

*Champions*

Survey champions were identified in each Department and agency that participated. Survey champions communicated key details about the survey to their organisation and were the contact point for enquiries from their organisation.

*Online Survey*

The PSC provided each Department Secretary and Agency head with a link to the online survey to distribute to employees within their agency.

*Paper Surveys*

Identical versions of the online survey were produced in paper forms. Paper surveys with reply paid envelopes were distributed to employees where required; however, online completion was encouraged.

*Live Survey Period*
The online survey was open from Monday 5 May 2014 to Friday 30 May 2014. Completed paper-based versions of the survey were accepted for another two weeks until Friday 13 June to allow for postage.

## 9.4 Survey Response Collection

All agree disagree questions in the online survey were non-compulsory, allowing participants to skip through any items that they did not wish to answer. However, demographic questions and questions asking about Department or Work Area were set to compulsory in the online survey. Participants were informed that responses would only be included in the final dataset if they had proceeded to the final question in the survey and answered all compulsory questions. Whilst similar instructions were provided for the paper surveys, there are obviously less controls available for managing paper based responses.

## 9.5 Statistical Confidence and Group Comparison

Attitudinal research is normally conducted at a 95% confidence level ($p \leq 0.05$) and aims for a ±5% margin of error.

The margin of error across the PMES2014 project was 0.3% at a confidence level of 95%. This means that, had we achieved a response rate of 100%, then 95 times out of 100 the various % +ve figures used in this report would be unlikely to change by more than .3 percentage points.

Whilst the margin of error for sub-groups may be higher or lower depending on their size and response rate, the results indicate a generally high level of confidence in the data and accuracy of results. Where there is a high level of confidence in the accuracy results, a difference between groups of 5% or more is often considered to be practically significant. That is, whilst the difference between two groups may be considered statistically significant at a much lower level, a difference of 5% or more is often considered as a criterion for the difference to be meaningful. In this report, we have only highlighted differences between groups where there were at least 1000 people in each group, and the results differed by 5% or more.

## 9.6 Comparison with other Jurisdictions - Data Sources

*Australian Public Service*
2013 State of the Service Employee Census data, Australian Public Service Commission.

*Queensland*
2013 Working for Queensland Employee Opinion Survey data, Queensland Public Service Commission.

*Victoria*
2014 People Matter Survey, unweighted data of organisations covered by Public Administration Act (2004), Victorian Public Sector Commission.

*United Kingdom*
Civil Service People Survey 2013: Summary of Findings, UK Cabinet Office

## 9.7 Privacy Considerations

The privacy of survey participants and confidentiality of responses is of the highest importance in the PMES 2014. The PSC takes a number of steps to ensure that this is maintained throughout. As with the *2012 People Matter Employee Survey* , the PSC commissioned an independent provider to administer the survey during the live period and analyse the results.

The survey was conducted as an anonymous survey and employees were not tracked in the process. Identifying information was not collected in the online or paper survey. Voice Project hosted the online survey, addressed technical enquiries and coordinated the distribution and return of paper surveys. As a further assurance, Voice Project consultants are bound by the code of conduct and ethical guidelines of the Australian Psychological Society and the Psychology Board of Australia.

At the completion of the survey, Voice Project provided the PSC with de-identified data. To maintain confidentiality of results, the PSC has a number reporting rules in place, one of which being that any group requires a minimum of 10 respondents to be reported on.

## 9.8 Glossary of Key Terms

**Table 17: Glossary of Key Terms**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Percent positive**<br>**% +ve** | Percent positive, or agreement level, is the number of respondents who selected a rating point of *agree* or *strongly agree* divided by the total number of respondents who selected any rating point. This excludes those who chose don't know or did not provide any answer. |
| **PSC** | NSW Public Service Commission. |
| **Engagement Index** | Whilst the majority of figures in this report use a percentage favourable (% +ve) statistic, to allow comparisons with other Australian Jurisdictions and the UK, figures relating to the engagement index are calculated using a percentage mean. To determine the index, for each individual an engagement score is calculated where; Strongly Agree = %100, Agree = %75, Neutral = %50, Disagree = %25, Strongly Disagree = %0. An individual must have answered all five engagement questions to have a valid engagement score, and the score is the average across these five questions. The engagement index is then the average of these engagement scores. |

## 9.9 Questions with high not applicable/don't know responses

**Table 18: List of questions with high percentage not applicable/don't know responses**

| Questions | % Don't Know/N/A |
|---|---|
| My manager appropriately deals with employees who perform poorly | 22% |
| I would like to work in another agency within the NSW Public Sector during my career | 19% |
| Senior managers in my organisation genuinely support the career advancement of women | 18% |
| I am aware of opportunities available for career development in another agency within the NSW Public Sector | 17% |
| I have confidence in the ways my organisation resolves grievances | 16% |
| Disability is not a barrier to success in my organisation | 16% |
| My organisation's involvement in the community helps motivate staff | 15% |
| My performance is assessed against clear criteria | 14% |
| My organisation's involvement in the community is strongly linked to its purpose | 14% |
| My manager considers my needs and career aspirations when approving my development plan | 13% |
| I am confident that I would be protected from reprisal for reporting misconduct/wrongdoing | 13% |
| Sexual orientation is not a barrier to success in my organisation | 12% |
| I view the NSW Public Sector as an employer of choice | 11% |
| I feel that the NSW Public Sector is innovative | 11% |
| My organisation has good procedures and processes for recruiting employees | 11% |
| I am aware of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 | 11% |
| My manager is sufficiently skilled to make good selection decisions | 11% |
| In my organisation the advertised role descriptions accurately reflect the requirements of the role | 10% |
| I believe I have the skills to work in another agency within the NSW Public Sector | 10% |

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