



INDEPENDENT
COMMISSION
AGAINST
CORRUPTION

Community Attitudes
to
Corruption and the ICAC
1995

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary	i
1. Introduction	1
2. Awareness of services provided by the NSW public sector	3
3. Perceptions of public and private sector integrity	5
3.1 Where people believe the standard of honesty <i>should</i> be higher	5
3.2 Where the standard of honesty is perceived to be <i>actually</i> higher	8
3.3 Attitude statements about the NSW public sector	10
4. Community perceptions of corruption as a problem	12
5. What the public feel they could and would do about corruption	13
5.1 Attitudes to reporting corruption	13
5.2 What ordinary members of the public can do about corruption	14
5.3 Responses to a scenario: what they <i>could</i> and <i>would</i> do about it	16
6. Views about and support for the work of the ICAC	20
6.1 Awareness of the existence of the ICAC	20
6.2 Perceptions of the type of work that should be undertaken by the ICAC	20
6.3 Support for the work of the ICAC	22
6.4 Perceived success of ICAC in exposing and in reducing corruption in the NSW public sector	24
6.5 How approachable the ICAC is perceived to be	27
7. Observations	30
Appendices	33

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Services named as being provided by the NSW public sector 3

Table 2: Where people believe the standard of honesty *should* be higher 5

Table 3: Reasons why the standard of honesty *should* be higher/both the same 6

Table 4: Where the standard of honesty is perceived to be actually higher 8

Table 5: Why respondents considered the standard of honesty is *actually* higher/both the
same 9

Table 6: Perceptions of the NSW public sector 11

Table 7: Perception of corruption as a problem for the community 12

Table 8: Attitudes to reporting corruption 13

Table 9: What the ordinary member of the public can do about corruption 14

Table 10: Why some people think that nothing can be done about corruption 15

Table 11: What people feel they *could* do about this scenario 17

Table 12: Whether people believe they would take the action specified 17

Table 13: Factors people report considering when deciding whether to take action or
not 18

Table 14: Unprompted awareness of the ICAC over time 20

Table 15: Preferred focus of the ICAC: investigation or prevention 21

Table 16: Preferred focus of the ICAC: investigation *and* education? 21

Table 17: Support for work of the ICAC 22

Table 18: Reasons for whether the ICAC is a good thing for NSW or not 23

Table 19: Perceived success of the ICAC 25

Table 20: Why the ICAC considered unsuccessful in reducing corruption or respondent
did not know 26

Table 21: Whether people feel comfortable to approach the ICAC with information about
corruption 27

Table 22: Why some people said that they would not feel comfortable to approach the
ICAC 28

Table 23: Why some people felt more comfortable approaching another organisation . . . 29

SUMMARY

In order to facilitate its education and corruption prevention work, the ICAC has conducted a survey measuring community perceptions of: the NSW public sector service and integrity; corruption; avenues available to individuals to take action about corruption; and the work of the ICAC. Public support for the work of the Commission was also examined. A representative sample of 515 NSW adults participated in the telephone survey, most of which was completed in October 1995. This report documents their responses. Selected findings are presented below. See pages 30-32 for comments on and interpretation of results.

AWARENESS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NSW PUBLIC SECTOR

- ◇ Services most readily recognised as being provided by the NSW public sector were: health services (including hospitals, baby and community health services) (mentioned by 31% of respondents); public transport (including buses, trains and ferries) (28%); education (including childcare, schools, universities and TAFE) (25%); road services (including road building and maintenance and car registration) (22%); and policing (including community safety) (19%) (see Section 2, pp. 3-4).

PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INTEGRITY

- ◇ Nearly two-thirds of respondents said that they thought that the standard of honesty *should* be the same in both the public and private sectors (64%). Over one-quarter of respondents considered that the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector (29%), while only 5% thought that the standard of honesty should be higher in the private sector rather than the public sector (Section 3.1, p. 5).
- ◇ Reasons for saying that the standard of honesty should be the same in both sectors centred around the notion of honesty being the best policy, irrespective of where one was employed, as well as the fact that the community relies on services from both sectors. Those who believed the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector tended to cite as reasons that sector's use of public money and the fact that it should work in the public interest (Section 3.1, pp. 5-7).
- ◇ In contrast to the percentage of respondents who thought the standard of honesty should be the same in both sectors (64%), only 16% of respondents thought the standard of honesty *is actually* the same in both the public and private sectors. More respondents thought the standard of honesty is actually higher in the private sector (37%), while 25% thought the reverse. Over one-fifth of respondents said that they did not know where the standard of honesty was higher (22%) (Section 3.2, p. 8).
- ◇ Reasons for saying the standard of honesty is *actually* higher in the private sector included that: the private sector employees stake their livelihood on an honest reputation, and therefore have too much to lose by being dishonest; the private sector is more accountable; and there is evidence of corruption in the public sector. Those who thought the standard of honesty was higher in the public sector spoke of: greater public accountability and more watchdog bodies; its obligation to serve the public; and the lack of profit motive that might lead to corruption (Section 3.2, pp. 8-10).

- ◇ Thirty-two per cent of respondents agreed with the statement *The activities of the public sector have little or no impact on my life* (Section 3.3, pp. 10-11).

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM

- ◇ Fifty-eight per cent of the respondents considered that corruption in the NSW public sector is a major problem (compared to 44% in the 1994 survey), while 38% considered it to be a minor problem (compared to 47% in 1994). Less than 1% considered corruption not to be a problem for the community (4% in 1994). A further 3% had no opinion (Section 4, p. 12).

WHAT THE PUBLIC FEEL THEY COULD AND WOULD DO ABOUT CORRUPTION

- ◇ Seventy-one per cent of respondents agreed that *People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it*, while 31% agreed that *There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it*. Fifty per cent of respondents agreed that *There is nothing I can personally do about corruption in the NSW public sector* (Section 5.1, pp. 13-14).
- ◇ Respondents were asked: *When there is corruption in the NSW public sector, what, if anything, can an ordinary member of the public do about it?* The courses of action most frequently mentioned were to ring, write or report to the: local MP (35%); relevant department or council where the corrupt conduct was occurring (27%); Office of the Ombudsman (24%); Police Service (17%); the media (12%) (Section 5.2, pp. 14-15).
- ◇ Twelve per cent of respondents said there was nothing or not much that the ordinary member of the public could do about corruption, while another 10% said they did not know what could be done. When asked why they felt this was the case, common responses were that: individuals make no difference or no one takes any notice of individuals; nothing *can* be done about it, or corruption is endemic/too widespread; and that they did not know who to trust to report corruption to (Section 5.2, pp. 14-16).
- ◇ Respondents were also asked what they believed they *could* and *would* do in response the following scenario:

A developer gets council permission to build a block of units on a small public park near your home. You suspect the developer has corruptly paid off someone at the council.

Over 40% said they could approach the local council, with a further 28% stating that they could approach the councillors or the Mayor specifically. Thirty per cent mentioned the local Member of Parliament as a possible place to report this conduct, more than one-quarter of respondents said they could band together and protest or voice their opinion (27%), while a further 16% said they could contact the media (Section 5.3, pp. 16-17).

- ◇ Nearly 60% of respondents said they would *definitely* take the action specified, while a further 25% said they would *probably* take that action (Section 5.3, pp. 17-19).

VIEWS ABOUT AND SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE ICAC

- ◇ When asked, 92% of respondents could either name the ICAC spontaneously, or said that they had heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption or ICAC (pronounced either I-C-A-C or I-cac) (Section 6.1, p. 20).
- ◇ Fifty-five per cent of respondents considered that it is more important for the ICAC to reduce opportunities for corruption than to investigate individuals. Only 16% thought the reverse. More than one-quarter of respondents (27%) thought the ICAC should do both: investigate individuals *and* reduce opportunities for corruption to occur (Section 6.2, pp. 20-21).
- ◇ When asked to say which of the two statements they agreed with more, 83% of respondents selected the statement: *As well as doing investigations, ICAC should actively educate people so that corruption will not be tolerated.* The remaining 17% selected the statement *The ICAC should stick to investigating corruption* (Section 6.2, pp. 21-22).
- ◇ Ninety-one per cent of respondents agreed that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW. Only 3% believed that the ICAC was not a good thing, and 6% said they did not know whether it was a good thing or not. The most common reasons provided for saying that the ICAC was a good thing included that: the ICAC is somewhere for people to go to report corruption (18%); it acts as a deterrent and keeps people honest (16%); it provides a necessary watchdog (14%); and that it exposes and makes people aware of corruption (14%) (Section 6.3, pp. 22-24).
- ◇ Eighty-one per cent of respondents thought that the ICAC had been successful in *exposing* some of the corruption which has occurred in NSW (Section 6.4, pp. 24-25).
- ◇ Nearly half of the respondents (49%) thought that the ICAC had been successful in *reducing* the level of corruption in NSW. This figure has improved from 1994, when 43% of respondents considered that ICAC had been successful in this regard. Reasons given by respondents for saying that the ICAC had been unsuccessful in reducing the level of corruption in NSW included that: corruption is still going on; corruption is too large a problem and cannot be stopped; and there are no (or not enough) results or prosecutions arising from the work of the ICAC (Section 6.4, pp. 24-27).
- ◇ Three-quarters of the respondents who knew of the ICAC said they would feel comfortable to approach the ICAC with information about corruption. Of those who said they would *not* feel comfortable, half said that there was *no other* organisation they would feel more comfortable to approach than the ICAC, with information about corruption (Section 6.5, pp. 27-29).
- ◇ The ICAC maintains a prominent profile in the media. It is likely that public opinion of the ICAC varies, influenced by media coverage at the time. In this survey, respondents expressed a reasonably positive opinion of the ICAC.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) was established in March 1989 to expose and prevent corruption in the NSW public sector. The ICAC has three main functions: investigation, corruption prevention and education.

The ICAC conducts annual community attitude surveys to inform its education and corruption prevention work. Information is collected through a telephone survey with members of the public. This report documents responses to a survey conducted in October 1995. In the survey information was obtained about community:

- ◇ awareness of services provided by the NSW public sector;
- ◇ views about the integrity of the NSW public sector;
- ◇ awareness of what individual members of the public can do about corruption and their willingness to take those actions;
- ◇ understanding of the work of the ICAC; and
- ◇ support for that work.

HOW COMMUNITY VIEWS WERE OBTAINED

The majority of the telephone interviews were conducted between 11 - 18 October 1995¹, with a representative sample of the NSW adult (aged 18 years and over) population. A total of 515 people responded to the survey. For a profile of those who responded to the survey, refer to Appendix 1.

The interview schedule was designed by the ICAC Research Section. (Refer to Appendix 2 for a copy of the questions asked and summary of the responses given.) The Commission engaged Taverner Research Company to pilot and conduct the survey on its behalf. The survey was administered as a stand alone (rather than as part of a larger, omnibus) survey. The results were analysed and this report was prepared by the ICAC Research Section.

Responses to the survey questions are summarised in the following tables. Some of the comments made by respondents are quoted to further illustrate the results. Responses were also examined to ascertain whether those with different demographic characteristics (gender, location of residence, employment status, sector of employment and age) differed in their opinions. Any statistically significant differences identified have been detailed in footnotes. If there is no footnote, no statistically significant differences were found between different demographic groups.

One would not necessarily expect considered responses from respondents in a telephone survey. 'Off the top of the head' responses are more likely. Considering this, the rich responses given to the questions provide an encouraging picture of community understanding of corruption and their views about the ICAC.

¹ An extra 12 interviews were conducted in early December 1995.

CONTEXT FOR THE 1995 SURVEY

A number of factors may influence people's responses to the survey, including what is heard about corruption and about the ICAC through the media.

The interviews with respondents for this survey largely took place between October 11-18 1995. In the week prior to the interviews being conducted, the media reported that two ICAC officers, seconded to the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, had admitted to having been involved in corrupt activities. Other relevant events and news coverage, occurring in 1995 up to this date included the coverage of the release of ICAC reports and other work such as:

- Hearings into circumstances surrounding the payment of a parliamentary pension to Phillip Smiles (media coverage January 1995);
- Launch of ICAC HSC Legal Studies curriculum material (25 January 1995);
- Investigation report released concerning the RTA and dealings with real estate agents (2 February 1995);
- Internal Reporting Systems guidelines launched (10 February 1995);
- Investigation report released concerning Randwick Council (15 February 1995);
- Commissioner's statement concerning new directions for the ICAC released (21 February 1995);
- Investigation report released concerning the circumstances surrounding the payment of a parliamentary pension to Philip Smiles (23 February 1995);
- Contracting for NSW Government Services guidelines issued (17 May 1995);
- Hearings into activities involving Byron Bay Shire Council (media coverage May to August 1995);
- Hearings into activities involving Fairfield Council (media coverage June-July 1995);
- Hearings into Police Air Wing (media coverage June-July 1995);
- Inquiry into Aboriginal Land Councils announced, search warrants executed (media coverage August and September 1995);
- Hearings into activities involving Southern Mitchell Electricity (media coverage July to September 1995).

In addition it was a period in which the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service's public hearings received much media coverage, further raising the profile of corruption within the community.

2. AWARENESS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NSW PUBLIC SECTOR

The ICAC Education Section expressed an interest in discovering which services members of the community most readily recognise as being provided by the NSW public sector. The Education Section hopes to use this information to demonstrate how corruption can affect services people know to be provided by the NSW public sector.

Accordingly, after defining the NSW public sector as "state government departments and authorities, local councils, as well as members of the parliament, judges and magistrates", respondents were asked:

The NSW public sector provides a number of services to the community. Can you give me an example of services provided to you by the NSW public sector? Any others? Any others?

Table 1: Services named as being provided by the NSW public sector

Services mentioned by respondents	% of respondents (n=515)	% of examples* (n=1305)
Health/hospitals/baby health/community health	31	13
Public transport (bus, train, ferries, school buses)	28	12
Education (childcare, school, university, TAFE)	25	10
Roads/road maintenance/car registration	22	9
Police	19	8
Garbage collection/street cleaning	12	5
Local Council (planning, development, regulation, etc.)	12	5
Community services (welfare, disabilities, special needs, home help)	12	5
Employment (CES/DEET) jobskills/skillshare/social security/pension	9	4
Sewerage/water	7	3
Culture/arts/music	7	3
Emergency services (ambulance, bush/fire brigades)	6	3
Gas/electricity	6	3
Environment/national parks/forests/conservation	6	2
Sport/recreation/parks	5	2
Courts/judges & magistrates/justice/prisons	5	2
Post/telephone/telecommunication	3	1
Agriculture/fisheries	2	1
Tax/rates/have to pay \$	2	1
Legal Aid	2	1
Medicare	2	1
Other	12	6
No example given/don't know any	15	-

* The number of examples exceeds the number of respondents, as each individual gave up to 5 examples.

Table 1 has two columns of results. The left hand column indicates the percentage of *respondents* who gave a particular response. For example, nearly one-third of all respondents (31%) gave at least one example concerning health services (including hospitals and baby and community health services). Twenty-eight per cent of respondents gave at least one example concerning public transport (including buses, trains and ferries) and one-quarter

of respondents gave an example concerning education (including childcare, schools, universities and TAFE).

Fifteen per cent of respondents were not able to give any examples at all².

The right hand column of Table 1 gives the percentage of all *examples* which concerned that particular service. For instance, 13% of all the examples given concerned health (including hospitals and baby and community health services). The percentages in the two columns differ as respondents gave up to five separate examples of services provided by the NSW public sector.

From the responses provided it is not possible to tell whether people could differentiate between state and federal public sector services. For instance, while health, education and road services are often provided by the state, there are federal services in these areas as well. Furthermore, while some people mentioned Medicare, employment, post, etc., it is not clear whether they simply did not attend to the mention of the *NSW* public sector in the question, or whether they are confused about which level of government provides these services.

² Significantly *more* NSW public sector employees (99%), than those working outside the NSW public sector (83%) and than unemployed people (82%), were able to provide at least one example. Similarly, significantly *more* Sydney residents could provide an example (88%) compared to those residing outside Sydney (80%).

3. PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INTEGRITY

3.1 WHERE PEOPLE BELIEVE THE STANDARD OF HONESTY SHOULD BE HIGHER

One issue of interest to the ICAC was the community perception of public sector integrity. In order to provide a context in which to explore people’s perceptions of the public sector, respondents were asked to consider *public* sector integrity relative to that of the *private* sector. The reasons *why* people held the views they did were also explored.

To address the above issues, respondents were asked a series of questions, the first of which was:

Firstly, do you believe that the standards of honesty should be higher in the public sector or higher in the private sector?

As Table 2 indicates, nearly two-thirds of respondents said that they thought the standard of honesty should be same in both the public and private sectors (64%). Over one-quarter of the respondents considered that the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector (29%), while only 5% thought that the standard of honesty should be higher in the private sector rather than the public sector.

Table 2: Where people believe the standard of honesty *should* be higher

Sector	% (n=515)
Same in both	64
Public higher than private	29
Private higher than public	5
Depends/Don’t know	2

Respondents were then asked *why* they responded as they did.

Reasons given - why the standard of honesty should be the same in both

The major reason that people thought the standard of honesty should be the same in both the public and private sectors, centred around the inherent value of honesty and accountability (see Table 3). Examples of such responses include:

"Honesty is the keystone in a successful enterprise. You can’t run a organisation without being 100% honest with the clients" (Case 21);

"People should be honest either way - keeps the reputation in both public and private up and maintains people’s trust" (Case 196);

"Everybody should be accountable and everybody should be honest" (Case 311).

Other respondents commented that members of the public relied on and put their trust in both the public and the private sector, and for that reason honesty is expected from both. For example:

"Oh well, you have to put your trust in both of them, so honesty should be part of that business. If you go to a private service station you have to put your trust in the mechanic, the same as if you go to a Government Department..." (Case 195).

Still other respondents noted that, either directly or indirectly, the public are paying for the service offered. For example:

"We're all paying for the service. Ultimately we're paying for the public and if we were paying for private I'd expect the same integrity" (Case 145).

Table 3: Reasons why the standard of honesty *should* be higher/both the same

Reason given	%* (n=515)
<i>Same in both</i>	64
Honesty best policy/all should be honest/accountable/maintain high standard	44
We depend on/need to trust in both	12
Both provide services/deal with public/we pay for both	10
Both are dishonest/need to improve	4
Other (both the same)	2
<i>Public higher than private</i>	29
We pay taxes/their wages/It's public money	8
Public sector less honest/accountable and should improve	7
It should work in the public interest/is there for the public/provides service	5
It is more accountable/regulated (e.g., have codes of conduct, ICAC)	4
So many/more people affected by the public sector (than by private sector)	3
Should set the standard/be an example	3
We need to trust them (that they will be honest)	3
Not motivated by profit but ideals	2
They are running the country	2
We vote for them/elect them	1
We have no choice/dependent on public sector	1
Other (public higher than private)	3
<i>Private higher than public</i>	5
Private sector less honest/accountable/should improve	2
Can't trust the government/it's corrupt/slack/not accountable	1
Private sector better managed/more accountable/more competition	1
Other (private higher than public)	1
<i>Don't know</i>	2
Don't know	4 ^{***}

* The italicised figures are responses to the first question, 'Where should the standard of honesty be higher...?'. The figures listed under each are responses to the second question 'Why do you say that?'. Responses to the second question do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

*** The two 'don't know' categories are not equal as some people gave a specific response to the first question, but said "don't know" in response to the second.

From some of the responses it became clear that some respondents had interpreted the question in a different way than intended. Rather than answering that one sector should (or should not) have higher integrity than the other, some people responded in terms of which sector needed to most *improve* their standard of honesty. Accordingly, some respondents noted that both sectors contained dishonesty and hence both needed to improve:

"Hearing the latest news in the newspapers they both could improve the standards of honesty - mainly because they both deal closely with the public" (Case 81);

"Politicians are crooks and the business people are crooks - they all lie" (Case 208).

Reasons given - why the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector

Twenty-nine per cent of respondents said that the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector rather than the private. The most common reason given for this view was that the public sector is supported by taxpayers' money (see Table 3). For example:

"We as taxpayers are paying for a service and we have put our trust in the Government to provide it honestly. It would be a betrayal of our trust if they were seen to be using our funds in a way that's not congruent with how we'd like them to be used. It's my money so I want to know exactly how it's used. I want accountability and I want service" (Case 57).

Other respondents considered that the public sector should set the standard or act as an example for others to follow:

"Because the public sector is the law-maker. In other words, if they can't keep up standards they can't expect the private sector to keep up standards. Plus, the public sector affects everybody, the private sector affects only those who choose to deal with them" (Case 76).

The monopoly held by the public sector in providing certain services, coupled with the community's dependence on those services, was also cited by respondents as a reason why the standard of honesty should be higher in the public sector:

"With the private sector, we have a choice. If we don't like it, we can go somewhere else, but with the public sector, there's no choice - you have to take what you're given" (Case 444);

"So many people rely on the public sector. The public sector have a lot of services" (Case 39).

The notion of public trust was also raised by some respondents:

"They're running most things and looking after the country. They should be more honest because people put their trust in them" (Case 483).

Reasons given - why the standard of honesty should be higher in the private sector

Only 5% of respondents considered that standard of honesty should be higher in the private sector than in the public sector (see Table 3). Reasons given included that:

"I don't think corporate morality is what it should be. It's not as high as it could be" (Case 187);

"You get a lot of people in the private sector who are untruthful. I feel they need to be more honest with us. They after all, are dealing with the public for the public" (Case 273);

"Because in private sector they have competition. That's why they need to be more honest in dealings with people, and fair" (Case 378).

3.2 WHERE THE STANDARD OF HONESTY IS PERCEIVED TO BE ACTUALLY HIGHER

The ICAC was also interested in where respondents thought the standard of honesty was *actually* higher. Respondents were asked:

And where do you think that the standard of honesty is actually higher - in the public sector or in the private sector?

While most respondents thought that the standard of honesty *should* be the same in both the public and private sectors, there was less consensus about where the standard of honesty is *actually* higher (see Table 4).

Table 4: Where the standard of honesty is perceived to be actually higher

Sector	% (n=515)
Private higher than public	37
Public higher than private	25
Depends/Don't know	22
Same in both	16

Only 16% of respondents thought the standard of honesty was the same in both the public and private sectors. Most respondents thought the standard of honesty is actually higher in the private sector (37%), while 25% thought the reverse. Over one-fifth of respondents said that they did not know where the standard of honesty was higher (22%)³.

Reasons given - why the standard of honesty is actually higher in the private sector

More than one-third of the respondents (37%) considered that the standard of honesty is actually higher in the private sector. The reason most commonly given for this view (see Table 5) was that the private sector has more to lose by not being honest. Some people also referred to the permanency of public sector jobs to support this point of view. For example:

"Honesty is higher in the private sector because they've got more to lose, i.e., money, customers, business, etc." (Case 543);

"More likely to be private because their jobs depend upon it. In the public they are just doing their job. It is not their livelihood. The private have to watch [out] for their livelihood more" (Case 298).

Some took a perception of an attentive private sector service as an indication of honesty, while others considered that supervision and accountability in the private sector was greater than in the public sector. For example:

³ Significantly *more* NSW public sector employees (42%) than those employed outside the NSW public sector (23%) or unemployed people (22%), thought that the standard of honesty is higher in the public sector.

"Maybe the private sector is more keen on doing a better job. Private companies make more of an effort to do things in the quality of their service" (Case 148);

"Because public sector is a bureaucracy, and people can get away with things more easily - being dishonest. Harder to keep in check. Bureaucracy is a huge system with multiple tiers" (Case 293).

Table 5: Why respondents considered the standard of honesty is *actually* higher/both the same

Reason given	%* (n=515)
<i>Private higher than public</i>	37
Private - survive on reputation/too much to lose if dishonest (e.g. business, \$)	8
Private - must be honest to keep job/Public - harder to sack/steady income	7
Private - more accountable/more scrutiny/supervision	6
Politicians break promises/are corrupt/government lies	5
Evidence of public sector corruption/dishonesty	3
Private - more open/Public - protect selves/can cover up dishonesty	3
Evidence of police corruption/royal commission	3
Private - more personal/service focus/Public - anonymous/bureaucratic	2
Private - speak from experience	1
Other (private higher than public)	5
<i>Public higher than private</i>	25
Public - more accountable/more rules/legislation/watchdogs/checks	10
Private - profit motive/gain/less trustworthy	5
Public - have obligations/responsibility to/serve the public	3
Public - people have higher standards/are more honest/culture of honesty/ethics	3
Public - speak from experience	2
Other (public higher than private)	5
<i>Same in both</i>	16
Both are dishonest/will rip you off/lie/break promises	9
There is some honesty & dishonesty/good & bad people in both	7
Both are honest/Had no problems with either	2
Other (same in both)	1
<i>Don't know</i>	22
Don't know (or no real elaboration on answer)	23 ^{***}

*The italicised figures are responses to the first question, 'Where is the standard of honesty actually higher...?'. The figures listed under each are responses to the second question 'Why do you say that?'. Responses to the second question do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

^{***} The two 'don't know' categories are not equal as some people gave a specific response to the first question, but said "don't know" in response to the second.

Examples of public sector corruption were also cited as reasons for the private sector being relatively more honest:

"Public more corrupt. Hear lots of reports from the media about public being corrupt. Can't think of any other reasons" (Case 251);

"No politicians keep their promises so therefore standard of honesty in the private sector is higher. Private sector is held more accountable for what they do" (Case 49).

Reasons given - why standard of honesty is actually higher in the public sector

Reasons given for saying that the standard of honesty is higher in the public sector than in the private sector included the public sector being more accountable:

"The public sector is more honest because they have restraints such as ICAC to watch over any corruption" (Case 299);

"The public sector is more honest because it is open to public scrutiny. The private sector may or may not disclose everything. It only gives the smallest amount of information as long as it is in their interests" (Case 288).

Other respondents referred to the fact that public sector agencies do not have the same profit incentive as private sector organisations, and therefore have less to gain by being dishonest:

"There are fewer people who have something to gain in the public sector. Private sector is geared to a profit" (Case 250).

Reasons given - why the standard of honesty is actually the same in both

Only 16% of respondents considered that the standard of honesty is actually the same in both the public and private sectors. The main reasons given for this view (see Table 5) are encapsulated in the following comments:

"People are people - works out equally good or bad where ever you go. Commissioner Wood on the TV - all these shenanigans and the same on the Coles Myer Board. If you're going to be a thief you're going to be a thief whether you're in private or public" (Case 24);

"There are some parts of the public sector that are high and there are some parts of the private sector that are high and there other sections of both sectors that are also low ..." (Case 374).

Some respondents noted dishonesty in both sectors, while others noted their experiences of honesty in both. For example:

"I see villains in both. I guess in the private sector there is villainy for personal gain. When it comes to politicians I do not see them as being honest, I see them as feathering their own nest" (Case 74);

"We don't have trouble with either side. We use contractors to do bush work for us and we don't have any trouble with them" (Case 100).

3.3 ATTITUDE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE NSW PUBLIC SECTOR

In order to further explore perceptions of the public sector, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with three attitude statements (see Table 6).

One area of interest in this survey was whether the community considered that the public sector had an impact on their lives. Accordingly, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that *The activities of the public sector have little or no impact on my life*.

The results suggest that nearly one-third of respondents (32%) did *not* perceive that the activities of the public sector impacted upon their lives. This figure would appear to be high, especially considering that in the first question of the survey, 85% of respondents were able to give examples about services provided *to them* by the NSW public sector. As might be expected, significantly more of those who could *not* provide an example of public sector services (67%), agreed with this statement, than those who could provide such an example (26%).

The other two statements in Table 6 concerned the relative value of public sector efficiency compared with proper process. Nearly half of the respondents (48%) agreed that *As long as the job gets done efficiently, I don't mind how public servants go about it*. In contrast, 80% of respondents agreed that *Giving all applicants for public sector jobs a fair go is more important than filling the job quickly*. The responses to these two statements appear not to be consistent. Responses to one suggest that, in general terms, efficiency is more important than anything else, including fairness. The second suggests that 'a fair go' is more important to people than efficiency. It may be that, while people agree that efficiency is important, when given a specific example people more readily see the need for fairness.

Table 6: Perceptions of the NSW public sector

Statement	% agree or strongly agree	% disagree or strongly disagree	% don't know
	(n=515)		
The activities of the public sector have little or no impact on my life. ⁴	32	67	2
As long as the job gets done efficiently, I don't mind how public servants go about it. ⁵	48	50	2
Giving all applicants for public sector jobs a fair go is more important than filling the job quickly. ⁶	80	14	6

⁴ The likelihood of a respondent agreeing with this statement varied depending upon their age and area of residence. Those aged between 35-54 years olds (23%) were significantly *less* likely than those aged 55 years or older (37%), or than those aged between 18 and 34 (39%), to agree with this statement. Similarly, people residing in Sydney (26%) were significantly *less* likely than those living outside Sydney (40%) to agree with this statement.

⁵ Women were significantly *less* likely than men (42% compared to 54%) to agree with this statement. Similarly, people aged between 35-54 years (41%) were significantly *less* likely than those aged 18-34 years (55%), or than those aged 55 or older (50%), to agree with this statement.

⁶ Respondents living in Sydney (74%) were significantly *less* likely than those residing in the rest of NSW (90%) to agree with this statement.

4. COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM

Respondents were asked:

Do you consider that corruption in the NSW public sector is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem for the community?

Table 7: Perception of corruption as a problem for the community

Type of problem	1994 % (n=402)	1995 % (n=515)
A major problem	44	58
A minor problem	47	38
Not a problem	4	1
Don't know	5	3

Since the 1994 survey was conducted, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of respondents who consider corruption in the NSW public sector to be a "major" problem for the community (see Table 7). In this survey, 55% of the respondents considered that corruption in the NSW public sector is a major problem, compared to 44% in 1994. The high publicity accorded to the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service may be one factor affecting this increase.

5. WHAT THE PUBLIC FEEL THEY COULD AND WOULD DO ABOUT CORRUPTION

5.1 ATTITUDES TO REPORTING CORRUPTION

All respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements listed in Table 8. As this table indicates, 31% of respondents agreed that *There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it.* This figure has remained consistent over the last three years.

Table 8: Attitudes to reporting corruption

Attitude statement	% who agree		
	1993 (n=502)	1994 (n=402)	1995 (n=515)
There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it. ⁷	32	31	31
People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it. ⁸	75	73	71
There is nothing I can personally do about corruption in the NSW public sector. ⁹	*	*	50

* This statement was not asked in the 1993 or 1994 surveys.

The percentage of respondents who agree that *People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it* has marginally, but consistently declined over the last three years, from 75% in 1993 to 71% in 1995.

For the first time in this series of surveys, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement: *There is nothing I can personally do about corruption in the*

⁷ The likelihood of a respondent agreeing with this statement varied depending upon their age and employment status. People aged between 18 and 34 years (32%), or 55 years or older (40%), were *more* likely than those aged between 35-54 years (24%) to agree with this statement. Unemployed people (39%) were significantly *more* likely to agree with this statement than people employed outside the NSW public sector (29%). This group was, in turn, *more* likely to agree with this statement than NSW public sector employees (18%).

⁸ The percentage of respondents who agreed with this statement *increased* with age. Accordingly, while 64% of 18-34 year olds agreed with this statement, 72% of 35-54 year olds and 82% of those aged 55 years or older agreed with the statement.

⁹ The likelihood of a respondent agreeing with this statement varied depending upon their age and employment status. Those aged 55 years or older were *more* likely to agree with this statement (59%) than those aged between 18-34 (53%) or than those aged between 35-54 (43%). Unemployed people (60%) were significantly *more* likely to agree with this statement than people employed outside the NSW public sector (47%). This group was, in turn, *more* likely to agree with the statement than NSW public sector employees (38%).

NSW public sector. Fifty per cent of respondents agreed with this statement. However, this result should be compared to the results detailed in sections 5.2 and 5.3. In section 5.3, the results suggest that respondents *were* able to cite a large range of possible actions they could take about corruption. In that case, they were asked to respond to a scenario which potentially would impact upon them personally.

5.2 WHAT ORDINARY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN DO ABOUT CORRUPTION

From previous surveys it has become evident that the public are well aware of the impact corruption has on the community and, to a lesser extent, on their own lives. Effects on the community cited in previous surveys included financial effects as well as disillusionment and lack of trust. Effects on individuals centred around financial costs.

This year we sought to explore what people thought the ordinary member of the public *could* do about corruption which affected them and the community. If they believed that nothing could be done, we wanted to know why that was the case. For this reason, respondents were asked:

When there is corruption in the NSW public sector, what, if anything, can an ordinary member of the public do about it? What else? Anything else?

Table 9: What the ordinary member of the public can do about corruption

Possible actions nominated	%* (n=515)
Ring, report, write or go to local Member of Parliament (MP)	35
Ring, report, write or go to relevant government department/council	27
Ring, report, write or go to Ombudsman	24
Ring, report, write or go to Police	17
Ring, report, write or go to media/letter to the editor	12
Ring, report, write or go to relevant Minister	9
Form or join action group/protest/voice opinion/Attend public meetings	9
Ring, report, write or go to ICAC	6
Vote/exercise democratic right	5
Ring, report, write or go to Mayor/local councillors	5
Ring, report, write or go to lawyer/courts	3
Ring, report, write or go to Police Royal Commission	2
Go directly to person involved	1
Ring, report, write or go to Whistleblowers Australia/whistleblowers group	1
Other	3
Nothing/not much	12
Don't know/no idea	10

*The figures add to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one response.

As Table 9 indicates, the course of action most frequently mentioned was to ring, write, report or go to your local MP (35%). Other courses of action frequently mentioned were to contact the relevant Department or Council where the corrupt conduct was occurring (27%) or to contact the Office of the Ombudsman (24%). The Police Service (17%) and the media (12%) were seen as two other common places to approach in response to corruption.

In noting the action specified by respondents, it is clear that people are more likely to suggest that a member of the public could contact an institution or organisation to have action taken on their behalf, rather than to take action themselves (9% said they would form or join an action group, protest, voice their opinions or attend public meetings).

Table 9 also indicates that 12% of respondents said that there was nothing or not much that the ordinary member of the public could do about corruption, while another 10% said that they did not know what could be done. Those who said there was nothing or not much that the ordinary member of the public could do about corruption were then asked *why* they thought that this was the case.

Table 10: Why some people think that nothing can be done about corruption

Reasons provided	Number of respondents (n=61*)
Individuals make no difference/No one will take notice/Need more power	21
Nothing can be done about it/Corruption endemic/too widespread	12
Don't know who to trust/they may be involved	11
Takes too long/too difficult to take action	6
Nothing will be done about it	6
Not my problem/The government (or public servants) should fix it	6
Get yourself into trouble/retaliation for whistleblowers	3
Need evidence/Need to justify suspicions	3
Don't know who to report it to	1
Other	15

* Only those who said 'nothing or not much' to the question detailed in Table 9. Percentages not calculated because of the small number of respondents replying to this question.

The most common reason given was that an individual can make no difference, or that authorities take no notice of individuals (see Table 10). Some respondents commented that:

"Individuals do not have enough power to voice opinion. Officials never listen. They stick to themselves and only for themselves. They are always right, so they believe" (Case 268);

"We've got no say. They won't listen to us ... They never do. If I was to sit down and write a letter they wouldn't pay attention, and they should" (Case 212).

Some considered corruption to be too big a problem, while others raised the issue of knowing who to trust when it comes to reporting corruption. For example:

"It is endemic - it is everywhere. Corruption exists under every Government and Police Commissioner. How many honest people try to do something about it and it still exists?" (Case 276);

"Because power and money rule ... carry influence. A rich powerful person always can buy their way out of a situation" (Case 306);

"You hear of corruption in the police then who do you trust? Who do you go to? I don't know. People should be made aware of who to report to" (Case 155).

Other reasons given included:

"You'd just be a fool to stick your nose in without very much evidence. I can't see myself being in that situation. In our neck of the woods that is not much of a problem" (Case 70);

"I'm aware there are ways for people to help stop corruption but it doesn't concern me. I don't care" (Case 217);

"I've seen people report corruption and nothing has been done" (Case 464).

5.3 RESPONSES TO A SCENARIO: WHAT THEY *COULD* AND *WOULD* DO ABOUT IT

As well as asking respondents what they thought the ordinary member of the public could do about corruption, we were interested in how people believed that *they could* and *would* respond in a specific situation. Accordingly, respondents were read the following scenario:

A developer gets council permission to build a block of units on a small public park near your home. You suspect the developer has corruptly paid off someone at the council.

Points to note about the scenario chosen are that:

- ◇ the situation could occur in most neighbourhoods, including the respondent's own;
- ◇ a local public resource was being lost as a result of the behaviour;
- ◇ it was an example that people would be likely to see as affecting them personally;
- ◇ the activity was defined as corrupt for respondents (they did not have to decide whether or not the behaviour was corrupt).

In short the scenario was designed to motivate people to consider the *range* of actions they could take.

What people thought they could do about it

The first question respondents were asked about the scenario was:

What could you do about this situation? What else? Anything else?

The results suggest that people considered a wide range of options (see Table 11). The types of actions considered by respondents were not just that they could report the conduct to various agencies and individuals, but they could take action themselves (e.g., forming or joining an action group, circulating or signing a petition, etc.).

It is interesting to note that, in response to this specific situation, people more readily provided examples of action which could be taken. Firstly, the percentage of respondents who said that "nothing could be done" dropped from 12% in response to the question of what the ordinary member of the public could do about corruption, to 5% in response to the scenario. Similarly, the percentage who said that "they did not know what could be done" dropped from 10% in response to the earlier question, to 4% in response to the scenario. The fact that the situation described was a "local issue", may have also influenced these results.

In terms of the types of action given by respondents, 43% said they could approach the local council, with a further 28% stating that they could approach the councillors or the Mayor specifically. Again, the local Member of Parliament featured as a possible place to report corruption which had occurred (30%). More than one-quarter of the respondents said they could band together and protest or voice their opinion (27%). A further 16% said they could contact the media.

Table 11: What people feel they *could* do about this scenario

Possible actions	% (n=515)
Ring, report, write or go to local council	43
Ring, report, write or go to local Members of Parliament	30
Ring, report, write or go to Mayor/local councillors	28
Form or join action group/protest/Voice opinion/Attend public meetings	27
Ring, report, write or go to media/letter to the editor	16
Ring, report, write or go to Department of Local Government	13
Ring, report, write or go to Ombudsman	12
Ring, report, write or go to lawyer/courts (inc. Land & Environment Court)	10
Ring, report, write or go to Police	8
Discuss it with friends	8
Ring, report, write or go to ICAC	5
Get proof/evidence/facts/investigate further	5
Look at specific legislation/documents	3
Arrange/sign a petition	1
Approach developer	1
Approach State planning authority/dept	1
Other	5
Nothing/Not much	5
Don't know/no idea	4

The figures add to more than 100% as respondents were able to suggest more than one type of action.

What people thought they would do about it

The second question respondents were asked about the scenario was:

Do you think you would ever take this action?

The answer to this question (probably due to the nature of the scenario) was overwhelmingly 'yes' (see Table 12).

Table 12: Whether people believe they would take the action specified

Do you think you would ever take this action?	% (n=471*)
Yes - definitely	58
Yes - probably	25
Unlikely	7
No	6
Depends/Don't know	4

* Only those who gave an action which could be taken, in the previous question.

Eighty-three per cent of respondents said they would take the action they had specified, about the scenario, with nearly 60% stating they would definitely take this action. While this result is very encouraging, it should be recognised that just because respondents said they would take this action in response to a survey, it does not mean that if actually faced with this situation, they would do as they said they would do.

Why people said they would take action

Respondents who said that they would definitely or probably take action were then asked *why* they thought they would take action.

Table 13: Factors people report considering when deciding whether to take action or not

Factors mentioned	%^{**} (n=471)
Should do something/To get results/stop it happening/maintain standards	17
It is dishonest/wrong/I dislike dishonesty/corruption	15
Unfair/They shouldn't get away with it/get advantage	9
The park is a public facility/space	7
I have taken action before	7
I can take action/it's easy/possible	5
To do the right thing/civic duty/be law abiding person	3
Council voted in by us/Accountable to us/taxpayers	2
 If affects me/my family	 23
If I felt strongly about it/it was serious	9
If affects the environment/community	9
If I had evidence	5
 That's the way it is/will not any good/nobody would listen	 3
Don't want to get involved or make waves/ Shy/Someone else will do it	3
Apathy/no energy/too much hassle	3
Concern re consequences/retaliation/safety	3
Need a group to take action	2
Too costly (time, legal costs)	1
Not important enough	1
Would not happen here/I'd never see it	1
 Other	 4

^{**}The figures add to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one response.

It is interesting to note that the most common reason given for saying that they would definitely or probably take action, was conditional: if it affected me or my family (23%) (see Table 13). Other conditional statements were 'if I felt strongly about it' (9%), 'if it affects the environment or community' (9)% or 'if I had the evidence' (5%). Examples included:

"If it was affecting my family and I, I would definitely do something. If it directly affected or harmed my environment I would take action" (Case 15);

"If they did it to my park down here, yes I would. Because it impacts on me and secondly because it is corrupt and wrong..." (Case 374);

"If the evidence was strong enough ... I'm not looking for trouble. If I was angered by something I'd have to be careful and have strong evidence" (Case 422).

Other reasons people gave for believing that they would take action (either definitely or probably) included that something should be done to stop it happening (17%) and that it is dishonest (15%):

"I don't think people should get away with dishonesty" (Case 19);

"I believe in standing up for what is right. I believe truth is more important than going with the flow" (Case 501).

Other comments made by respondents included:

"It would be affecting a lot of people. You couldn't do much on your own, it would have to be a community effort. ... It's wrong and if you shut your eyes to it you're agreeing with it" (Case 157);

"I don't like the thought of someone getting favours that the average person cannot get, just because of a little power or money. I'm against the concept that some get favours that the ordinary person cannot have. It's wrong" (Case 242);

"Because I'm a women of action and I'm not going to hang around and let corruption happen" (Case 481);

"I think it is your duty as a citizen if someone has got something through bribery and corruption. It's your civic duty as a rate payer. It also encourages others to stand up and take notice and do something about it and in turn, support you" (Case 511).

Why people thought they would not take action

People who said they would not take action or who thought it was unlikely that they would take action, were asked why this was the case. Responses included:

"Nothing would be done if I did take this action. No-one takes any notice because there are so many people doing it. Especially when people such as police appear to be corrupt and how can we do anything about that when we are just an ordinary individual" (Case 312);

"I'd just go along with whatever was happening. I don't think my doing anything would make any difference. You just have to live with things like that. That's just the way it is" (Case 411);

"As far as I'm concerned if they can build something that can do good for someone then I don't care how they do it. As long as it's not infringing on me" (Case 545);

"I'm like the average Australian. I keep quiet about a lot of things ... Usually if you see something wrong you just don't bother reporting it" (Case 255);

"Don't think I'd be game enough - financially not secure enough" (Case 27);

"Maybe I'm too old to be joining protest groups" (Case 278).

6. VIEWS ABOUT AND SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE ICAC

6.1 AWARENESS OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE ICAC

Forty-seven per cent of respondents were able to provide the full name or an abbreviation by which the Commission is known¹⁰ when asked:

Several years ago, the government set up a body to deal with corruption in NSW government organisations. Can you tell me what it is called?

A further 8% of the respondents supplied an incorrect name, while 45% were not able to give a name at all. Of the 41 respondents who gave an incorrect name, ten nominated the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service and four nominated the Ombudsman's Office.

As Table 14 indicates, since March 1989, there has been a steady rise in the percentage of respondents who are able to name the ICAC without prompting.

Table 14: Unprompted awareness of the ICAC over time

Identification of the ICAC	March 1989 (n=350)	October 1989 (n=350)	May 1990 (n=350)	November 1993 (n=502)	November 1994 (n=402)	October 1995 (n=515)
Correct name	3%	16%	21%	42%	45%	47%
Incorrect name	12%	9%	14%	12%	7%	8%
Can't say	85%	75%	66%	47%	48%	45%

Those who could not spontaneously name the ICAC were then asked if they had heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption or ICAC (pronounced either I-C-A-C or I-cac). Overall, only 8% of all respondents said that they had *not* heard of ICAC, or did not know whether they had heard of the Commission¹¹. This figure remains unchanged since 1994.

6.2 PERCEPTIONS OF THE TYPE OF WORK THAT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE ICAC

In February 1995, the ICAC Commissioner announced a new direction for the ICAC. While the investigative role is to remain a vital function of the ICAC, a greater emphasis is being given to the ICAC's educative and corruption prevention roles. In order to gauge public opinion about this new focus, the 475 respondents who said that they had heard of the ICAC were asked:

¹⁰ People residing in Sydney (51% compared to 42% of those residing outside Sydney) and men (58% compared to 37% of women) were significantly *more* likely than their counterparts, to be able to spontaneously name the ICAC. NSW public sector employees (63%) and people employed outside the public sector (51%) were significantly *more* likely to be able to correctly name the ICAC than unemployed people (34%).

¹¹ Significantly *less* unemployed people (86%) than NSW public sector employees (97%) or those employed outside the NSW public sector (95%), had heard of or could name the ICAC. Similarly, significantly *less* people living outside Sydney (89%) than those living in Sydney (95%) had heard of or could name the ICAC.

*What do you think is **more** important for the ICAC to do - investigate individuals or reduce opportunities for corruption to occur?*

Fifty-five per cent of respondents considered that it is more important for the ICAC to reduce opportunities for corruption than to investigate individuals (see Table 15)¹². Only 16% thought the reverse. More than one-quarter of respondents (27%) thought the ICAC should do both: investigate individuals *and* reduce opportunities for corruption to occur.

Table 15: Preferred focus of the ICAC: investigation or prevention

Focus	% (n=475)
Reducing opportunities for corruption	55
Both	27
Investigating individuals	16
Not sure/don't know	2

The question above may be compared to the question asked in the 1994 survey:

*Do you believe that the ICAC is **more interested in** investigating individuals or reducing the opportunities for corruption?*

In the 1994 question the focus was not on what the ICAC *should* be doing, but on what people perceived the Commission was doing. In response to this 1994 question, 40% of the respondents thought the ICAC had a greater interest in reducing opportunities for corruption, 31% thought it had a greater interest in investigating individuals, 7% thought it was equally interested in both and 19% were unsure.

At a later point in the 1995 survey, the two statements listed in Table 16 were read to respondents. Respondents were then asked to select the statement which they considered more closely reflected their view. The order in which the statements were presented to respondents was randomly rotated.

Table 16: Preferred focus of the ICAC: investigation *and* education?

Statement	% (n=475)
"As well as doing investigations, ICAC should actively educate people so that corruption will not be tolerated."	83
"The ICAC should stick to investigating corruption."	17

The purpose of these two statements was to assess whether the community believed the ICAC should have an educative function, as well as an investigative role. Overwhelmingly, the results suggested the community supported the ICAC having this wider focus. Eighty-three

¹² Significantly *more* men than women thought the ICAC should focus on investigating individuals (20% compared to 11%), while significantly *less* men than women thought the ICAC should focus on reducing opportunities for corruption to occur (49% compared to 61%).

per cent of respondents agreed more with the statement that *As well as doing investigations, ICAC should actively educate people so that corruption will not be tolerated*, than they did with statement *The ICAC should stick to investigating corruption* (see Table 16)¹³.

6.3 SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE ICAC

Respondents who said that they had heard of the ICAC were asked:

Do you think that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW? Why do you say that?

Table 17: Support for work of the ICAC

Opinion of the ICAC	1993 % (n=486)	1994 % (n=371)	1995 % (n=475)
A good thing	92	91	91
Not a good thing	3	4	3
Not sure/Don't know	4	5	6

Since 1993, when this question was first asked, over 90% of respondents have agreed that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW (see Table 17). In 1995, only 3% believed that the ICAC was not a good thing, and 6% said they did not know whether it was a good thing or not.

Why the ICAC is considered a good thing

The most common reasons provided for believing that the ICAC was a good thing for the people of NSW are described in Table 18 and illustrated by the following comments.

The ICAC is somewhere for people to go to report corruption (18%):

"It's somewhere that you can give information on corruption if you know about it. If it wasn't for ICAC who else can you complain to? Who can you contact in confidence" (Case 389);

"Better than none at all. You have to have somebody to complain to about corruption" (Case 50).

It acts as a deterrent and keeps people honest (16%):

"The ICAC highlights and therefore reduces corruption in NSW. Makes people think twice about being corrupt. It's a bigger risk now to be corrupt in NSW so people are less inclined to do it" (Case 237);

"It obviously deters people from being corrupt. It acts as a watchdog and puts people off being corrupt in case they get caught" (Case 321).

¹³ Significantly *more* women than men selected the first statement as their preferred option (88% compared to 78%).

The community needs a watchdog or something to stop corruption (14%):

"You need to have some body. There needs to be a body that will help to increase public confidence that the public sector is not above the law. The public sector has to answer to some independent body to keep them accountable" (Case 365);

"Because every country and council and governing body needs a restraint, a watchful group. Because if they feel that there is no one watching they will take advantage of this. ICAC is this restraint." (Case 25).

The ICAC exposes and makes people aware of corruption (14%):

"Because it has created an awareness of corruption and the extent of how much corruption prevails" (Case 262);

"If things get out in the open, it's better. If it's in the papers and people know about it, it makes people talk about it" (Case 175).

Table 18: Reasons for whether the ICAC is a good thing for NSW or not

Reasons given	%* (n=475)
<i>Good thing</i>	91
Somewhere to go about/report corruption	18
It acts as a deterrent/keeps people honest	16
Need a watchdog/something	14
It exposes corruption/makes people (us) aware of corruption	14
It is trying to stop corruption	8
Anything is better than nothing	7
Good in theory/good idea	7
It is independent/impartial	6
If/As long as ...	6
It stops/can stop corruption/is effective	4
It acts on behalf of public/serves community	4
Reassuring to have an ICAC	3
It is a start/step in the right direction	3
Needs to raise its profile/advertise more	2
Yes, but needs more power	2
Other (good thing)	10
<i>Not a good thing</i>	3
No results/nothing's changed	2
Waste of money	2
Not enough power/toothless tiger	1
Other (not a good thing)	1
<i>Don't know</i>	6
Don't know what effect it has/question value for money	3
Don't know enough about the ICAC/what they do	2
Other (don't know)	2

* Percentages add to more than 100%, as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

Other comments made by respondents about why the ICAC is a good thing included:

"Having ICAC is good - having an investigative body with a focus on one issue i.e., corruption. Also it's independent of bodies it might be investigating" (Case 82);

"It's a dirty job but somebody has to do it. An example: investigating the police - you need an independent body to do that. I think it is good because it is independent - it has to be, otherwise there is too much scope for corruption - because of internal or conflicting interests being involved otherwise" (Case 169);

"I think it gave the NSW people a voice against corruption" (Case 23);

"I think it's a step in the right direction but it could be a lot tougher - a lot stronger. It certainly isn't if I cannot recall its name" (Case 41);

"If it operates correctly - yes, and if it operates honestly. There is corruption obviously evident. They are useful so they can penalise and eradicate corruption" (Case 17).

Why the ICAC is not considered a good thing

Reasons given as to why the ICAC was not considered to be a good thing for the people of NSW are illustrated by the following comments:

"Because of their track record. The corruption doesn't seem to be being stopped. They never charge any one. You never hear in the media of them (ICAC) doing anything. What's the point in having a body to investigate corruption when they don't. It's a waste of taxpayer's money" (Case 457);

"Costs too much. The QCs and lawyers make too much money out of it without doing that much to get rid of corruption" (Case 360);

"It's probably a waste of time. It was politically motivated to begin with, and I don't know that anything happens at the end of an investigation. I'd like to see charges laid and people convicted. I may be wrong but I don't recall much of that happening" (Case 436).

6.4 PERCEIVED SUCCESS OF ICAC IN EXPOSING AND IN REDUCING CORRUPTION IN THE NSW PUBLIC SECTOR

Respondents who said they had heard of the ICAC were also asked to rate the ICAC's success in terms of its mission statement. They were asked both:

*Do you think that the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in **exposing** some of the corruption which has occurred in NSW? and*

*Do you think that the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in **reducing** the level of corruption which has occurred in NSW?*

As indicated by Table 19, approximately four out of every five respondents (81%) thought that the ICAC had been successful in *exposing* some of the corruption which has occurred in NSW. Eleven per cent thought the ICAC had been unsuccessful in this regard, while a

further 8% were undecided or did not know. For a comparison with the 1993 and 1994 figures, see Table 19.

Table 19: Perceived success of the ICAC

Attitudes statements	1993 % (n=486)			1994 % (n=371)			1995 % (n=475)		
	S	U	DK	S	U	DK	S	U	DK
Do you think that the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in <i>exposing</i> some of the corruption which has occurred in NSW?	80	9	11	78	10	12	81	11	8
Do you think that the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in <i>reducing</i> the level of corruption which has occurred in NSW?	53	30	17	43	36	21	49	32	19

S = "Successful" (or also "Very successful" in 1993); U = "Unsuccessful" (or also "Very unsuccessful" in 1993); DK = "Don't know"

Nearly half of the respondents (49%) thought that the ICAC had been successful in *reducing* the level of corruption in NSW. This figure improved from 1994, when 43% of respondents considered that ICAC had been successful. It is, however, still lower than the 1993 figure of 53%. Nearly one-third of respondents (32%) considered that the ICAC had been unsuccessful in this regard, while 19% said that they did not know.

Between 1993 and 1994, the percentage of people who thought that the ICAC had been successful in *reducing* corruption dropped by 10%. To better understand what was behind this perception, in the 1995 survey, respondents who said that the ICAC had been unsuccessful or that they did not know, were asked *why* they considered this to be the case. The most common reasons offered by respondents, are described in Table 20 and illustrated by the comments listed below.

The corruption was still going on (22%):

"Well you only have to see what happened at [Local Council]. Developers came in from the council and just built without a permit. The things that I disagree with. It was a waste of time and a hell of a waste of money. The corruption that it was set up to get rid of, has not [gone] and nothing seems to be done" (Case 525);

"Because from the news reports it is still going on and it is just as bad as ever" (Case 504);

"Because it exposes corruption but no one has actually been charged. If it was ordinary people they would lock them up for thirty years. These politicians get off every time" (Case 448);

"Nothing has really changed. They haven't caught the people that are corrupt. The people that are corrupt get away with it easier. Making lots of money on the side ..." (Case 392).

Table 20: Why the ICAC considered unsuccessful in reducing corruption or respondent did not know

Reasons provided	% (n=244)
<i>Unsuccessful</i>	32
Corruption still happening/still there/Can see evidence of it	22
Corruption cannot be stopped/human nature/too large a problem	13
No results/prosecutions/nothing done	13
Need more power/support/wider terms of reference	5
Police Royal Commission successful/ICAC not	4
Not reduced, but had other effects (e.g., public awareness)	3
Too early to say	3
Not addressed serious corruption	2
ICAC corrupt	2
Other (Unsuccessful)	10
<i>Don't know</i>	19
Don't know how much corruption there was/is	12
I'm not informed/don't follow it in the media/have no information	12
Never hear results of their work	5
Too hard to reduce/always going to be corruption	3
Too early to say	3
Other (Don't know)	4
Don't know (no elaboration)	5

Corruption is too large a problem/it's human nature and cannot be stopped (13%):

"I don't think ICAC will change too much, corruption is a way of life in NSW, it's an ongoing thing" (Case 494);

"Probably people who are corrupt feel that they can always get away with it. I feel ICAC would not act as a deterrent because those corrupt have that much power that they feel that the ICAC is not a threat to them" (Case 412);

"Because all they are doing is exposing it, they are not reducing it. Corruption in the public sector is still going on. I just think corruption will always be here, it's human nature. You can fight it but, it won't stop it" (Case 346).

They have not seen any results or prosecutions (13%):

"It hasn't produced prosecutions but corruption seems common knowledge and pinpointable, so how come they can't? The police corruption commission is producing prosecutions but we have heard nothing from the ICAC" (Case 315);

"It's a big sham. They have just made it a little more difficult. They should have turned out a lot more by now" (Case 533).

Other comments included:

"...maybe ICAC isn't seen as a credible deterrent. But too early to say whether it's been successful" (Case 572);

"Just personal experience - when ICAC came here [to a regional town]. We knew what was going on, but ICAC said that everything [was] above board. Many people in the town reckon that ICAC is also corrupt because of this" (Case 405).

Some of the reasons given for saying that they did not know whether or not the ICAC had been successful at reducing corruption included:

"I have no way of judging that. I don't know the statistics. I don't have access to any information. I suppose I would if I delved deep enough, but after working and studying all day I have to leave them to the job I pay them to do" (Case 57);

"You never hear the results. You never really now what the final outcome is" (Case 96);

"I don't know how big the corruption is or how much it has been reduced" (Case 136);

"I have not examined the matter or taken much notice of it" (Case 188).

6.5 HOW APPROACHABLE THE ICAC IS PERCEIVED TO BE

The Assessments Section of the ICAC is responsible for receiving information provided to the Commission from the public, among others. Staff of this section were interested to explore how comfortable people felt about approaching the ICAC with information about corruption. For this reason, respondents were directly asked:

Would you feel comfortable to approach ICAC with information about corruption?

If they said no to this question, respondents were asked:

*Are there any **other** organisations you would feel comfortable to approach about corruption?*

Table 21: Whether people feel comfortable to approach the ICAC with information about corruption

Response	% (n=475)
Yes	68
Yes - but I don't know how	7
No or don't know - there are <i>no</i> other organisations I would feel more comfortable to approach	13
No or don't know - there <i>are</i> other organisations I would feel more comfortable to approach	8
No or don't know - don't know if there are other organisations I would feel more comfortable to approach	5

As indicated in Table 21, three-quarters of the respondents said they would feel comfortable to approach the ICAC with information about corruption. Of this 75%, however, seven per cent spontaneously mentioned that they would not know how to go about it.

Thirteen per cent of the respondents said they would not feel comfortable to approach the ICAC (or that they did not know if they would feel comfortable), but that there was no other organisation they would feel comfortable to approach. Eight per cent said they there was

another organisation they would feel comfortable to approach, while a further five per cent said they did not know if there was another organisation they would feel comfortable to approach.

Why people would not feel comfortable approaching the ICAC

Those who indicated that they would not feel comfortable to approach the ICAC, were asked why this was the case.

Table 22: Why some people said that they would not feel comfortable to approach the ICAC

Reasons provided	% (n=120)
Concern/fear safety/retaliation	31
If sufficiently motivated/If it was serious/affected me	17
I have no authority/out of my depth/not user friendly	12
Don't know enough about them/don't know how	12
Pragmatic considerations(work,mobility,time,age)	11
Concern about confidentiality/name being publicised	9
ICAC may be/is corrupt/don't trust them/not independent	7
Don't want to get involved	3
They won't do anything/too slow	3
Other	16

As Table 22 indicates, reasons generally centred around concerns for their own safety and fear of retaliation (31%). For example:

"No protection for people who do report. They say there is protection but then later the newspapers or media reveal that they don't. Thank goodness I have not had a reason to go to them - worried about consequences. Whoever I report will come and get me" (Case 77);

"Because I'd be worried about what the people I doxed in would do to me or my family - like disturbing or threatening us" (Case 442).

Some respondents indicated that they felt out of their depth, and that the ICAC was alien to them (12%), while others said that they did not know enough about the ICAC to feel comfortable to approach it (12%):

"I see them as an arm of the government that I'm unfamiliar with. I'd prefer not to get involved. Not familiar with Australian politics - [I'm a] new Australian, ... they're there for the big boys and the big problems" (Case 145);

"... I just wouldn't. ICAC seems too big to go to, so I wouldn't go to them" (Case 352);

"I think I would be out of my depth if I went to ICAC" (Case 135);

"I don't know enough about them. I wouldn't know how to go about contacting them. I would if I really needed to, but it's just that I wouldn't know who or where to contact" (Case 343).

Other reasons given for not being comfortable to approach the ICAC, may be illustrated by the following comments:

"Because of what I have said earlier. ICAC are capable of being corrupt. If the Wood Royal Commission can have officers sacked during the course of an enquiry for corruption what can happen to an individual?" (Case 152);

"Well, why waste my time going down to see them if they aren't going to do anything about it ..." (Case 283);

"Not at my stage in life. I would not want to get involved. Couldn't cope and complain about these things. My health stops me from doing very much" (Case 116).

Why people felt more comfortable to approach an organisation other than the ICAC

Of the 37 respondents (8%) who said there was another organisation they would feel more comfortable to approach than the ICAC, approximately one-third (12 respondents) mentioned the Ombudsman's Office, ten mentioned the Police Service and five specified a Member of Parliament. This small group of respondents was then asked:

What is it about this organisation which makes you feel comfortable to approach it?

Table 23: Why some people felt more comfortable approaching another organisation

Factors considered	Number of respondents* (n=37)
Are (more) honest/impartial/objective/Not corrupt	13
They are (more likely to be) effective/do something	10
Well established/I trust them/I've dealt with them before/was positive	7
It's more individual/personal/less threatening	3
More confidential/anonymous	3
No elaboration/response	3
Other	9

*Percentages not calculated because of the small number of respondents replying to this question.

Thirteen respondents said that the other organisation nominated was more honest, impartial or less likely to be corrupt (see Table 23). A further ten respondents considered that the other organisation was more likely to take action on their behalf and/or achieve a result. Seven people cited their familiarity with the other agency as the reason they would feel more comfortable to approach that organisation rather than the ICAC.

7. OBSERVATIONS

VIEWS ABOUT NSW PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY

It is clear from the comments made by respondents, that people want honesty from organisations providing services to them, irrespective of which sector is providing those services. In general terms, when it is their own money which is seen to be at stake, or services to them which appear to be compromised, people will be concerned. This may be money paid in taxes to the public sector, or money paid directly for goods or a service in either sector.

Some of those who thought the standard of honesty should be higher in the *public* sector, saw a role for the public sector in setting a good example for others. However, the results pertaining to where the standard of honesty is perceived to be *actually* higher, would suggest that people do not generally believe the public sector is providing this example. Only 25 % of respondents considered that the standard of honesty was higher in the public sector than the private sector, while 37% thought the opposite.

Two sets of factors appear to have largely influenced a perception of the private sector as more honest. The first is a view that people working in the private sector have more to lose by being dishonest. In contrast, public sector employees are perceived to enjoy job security, irrespective of their skills or behaviour. There appears to be a belief that, no matter what public sector employees may get up to, they cannot be sacked. The second set of factors tend to focus on evidence of public sector corruption (including police corruption); a perception of politicians and governments as self-interested, lying or corrupt; and the public sector as less accountable (again, because of perceived job security).

In contrast, where the standard of honesty was perceived to be higher in the public sector, reasons focused on visible forms of public accountability, including bodies such as the ICAC and the Ombudsman.

Given the high profile of public sector corruption in the media, it is easy to see how perceptions of the NSW public sector as "corrupt" are fed. One way to counter such a view is for action to be taken, and *to be seen* to be taken, by agencies established to deal with these issues. However, it may not be enough in the long term, for such organisations to simply expose corruption. The impression formed from the responses to this survey is that people want to see corruption stopped. It should be noted that stopping corruption does not simply involve investigations, perhaps resulting in prosecutions. There is also clear support for corruption prevention and education as tools to reduce corruption in the public sector.

WHAT PEOPLE FEEL THAT THEY, AS INDIVIDUALS, CAN DO ABOUT CORRUPTION

Over one-third of respondents mentioned approaching the local Member of Parliament (MP) as a course of action an individual may take about corruption. This was the most frequently provided response. A further 9% of respondents said that the relevant Minister could be approached.

The prominence of MPs as an avenue *recognised by the community* to deal to corruption,

raises a number of questions for the Commission to consider. For example: how well informed are MPs about:

- i) the options available to deal with corruption;
- ii) the role, function and jurisdiction of the ICAC;
- iii) how to pass on information or a complaint to the ICAC?

A further question concerns how well *resourced* MPs are to properly inform their constituents about corruption and how it can be dealt with.

The results also suggest the ICAC is not foremost in people's minds as a place to report corruption. This is appropriate. While the ICAC does take complaints about corruption from members of the public, it was never meant as a first resort. Rather, the types of avenues mentioned by respondents are the more appropriate places to take complaints about corruption, at least in the first instance. For example, in response to the scenario, respondents said they could approach the local council, local councillors or the Mayor specifically. The local MP was another commonly perceived avenue for having something done about corruption. It was interesting, that in response to this local issue (a development on a public park) that over one-quarter of the respondents thought they would take action themselves, in the form of protests and action groups.

Over 80% of respondents said that they would actually take the action they specified in response to the scenario. One central factor in respondents' motivation to take action appears to be the potential impact the conduct would have on themselves, their families and their community. In the survey people were very candid about this being the case. Another very strong influence seems to be public indignance about dishonesty and corruption: more specifically, about some people (especially those with money or power) getting an unfair or dishonest advantage over others. These may be useful themes to employ in an education strategy directed at encouraging people to take action about corruption.

The types of reasons people gave for not taking action centred around the lack of impact an individual can have on corruption, and that corruption is too large a problem to be dealt with on this level. One way to counter such a view is to ensure that effective courses of action *are* available to members of the public, communicating these to those people and providing information about *how* to take these actions.

VIEWS ABOUT AND SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE ICAC

Public support for the ICAC has remained consistently high. This is positive considering the potential impact of the existence and work of the Royal Commission into the Police Service on public support for the ICAC.

A further question of interest to the ICAC was whether members of the public could clearly discriminate between the two bodies. Responses to the surveys suggest that some people could differentiate between the two bodies, while others clearly do not. There are yet others who understand that there is an ICAC and there is a Royal Commission, but who are not sure about the relationship between the two, (e.g., whether they are two branches of the same organisation). To place these perceptions in context, previous surveys have also

suggested that some members of the public have trouble distinguishing between the activities of particular government bodies and regulatory agencies. The boundaries between all these bodies are perhaps more important to those of us who work in them, than to others.

In terms of the type of work undertaken by the ICAC, there is support for a wider role than investigations alone. Members of the public in NSW appear to strongly support both a corruption prevention and an education role for the ICAC, in addition to its investigative function.

Only 49% thought that the ICAC had been successful in *reducing* the level of corruption in NSW. (In contrast, 81% of respondents thought the ICAC had been successful in *exposing* corruption.) The main reason given for saying that the ICAC had not been successful in reducing corruption was that corruption was still going on or that there is evidence of corruption in the media.

This presents an interesting dilemma for organisations such as the ICAC and the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, who use public exposure of corrupt activities as a tool of trade. The more corruption is exposed (one function of public hearings) the more this may contribute to a perception that corruption is still going on. The amount of corruption being exposed in hearings, and the attendant news coverage, may also contribute to the perception that corruption is too large a problem to be dealt with. When nothing is seen to be done about the corruption which is exposed, it is easy to see how members of the public may become cynical about what can and will be done about corruption by the ICAC and others.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of respondents

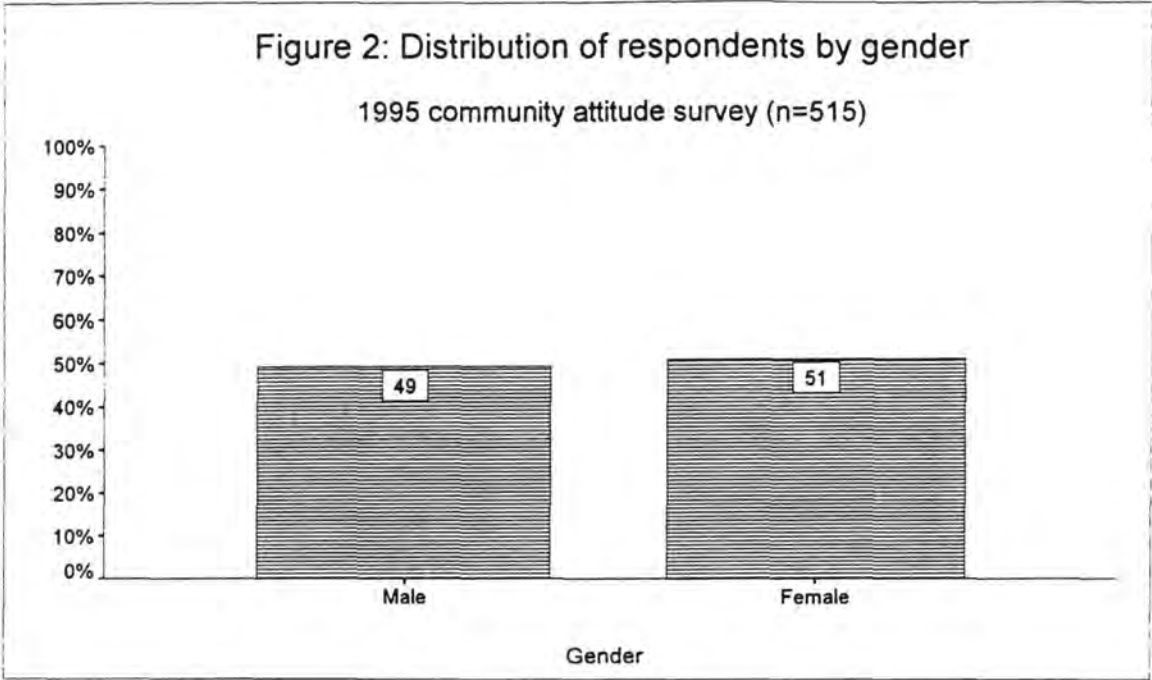
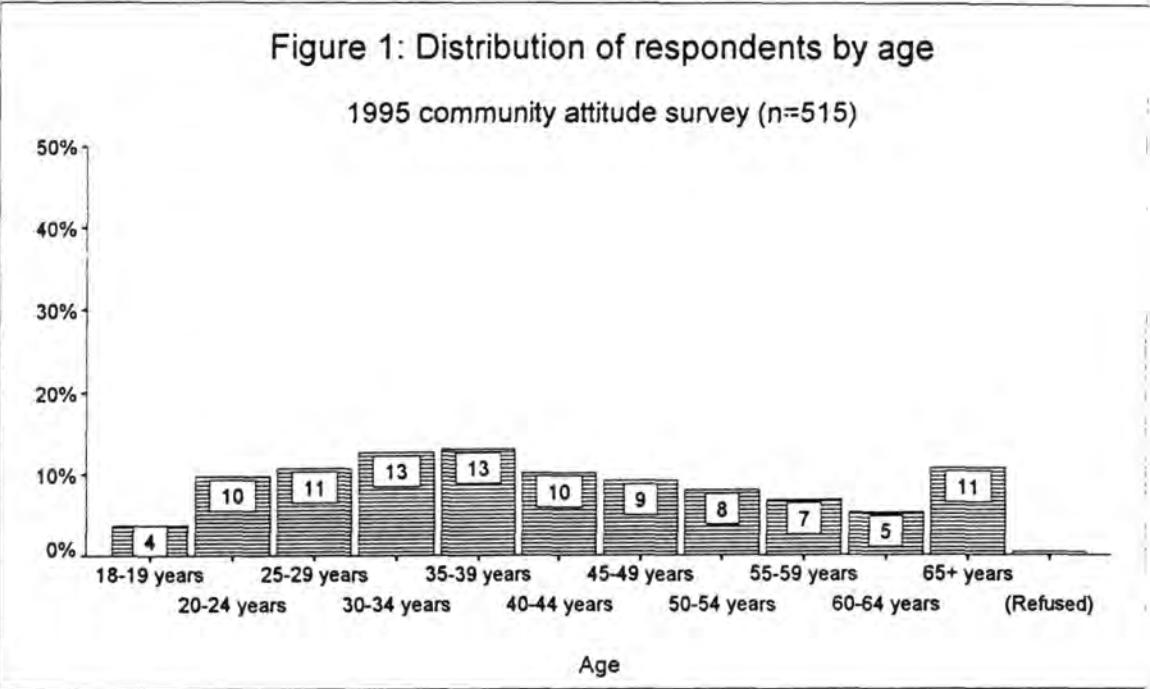


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by area of residence

1995 community attitude survey (n=515)

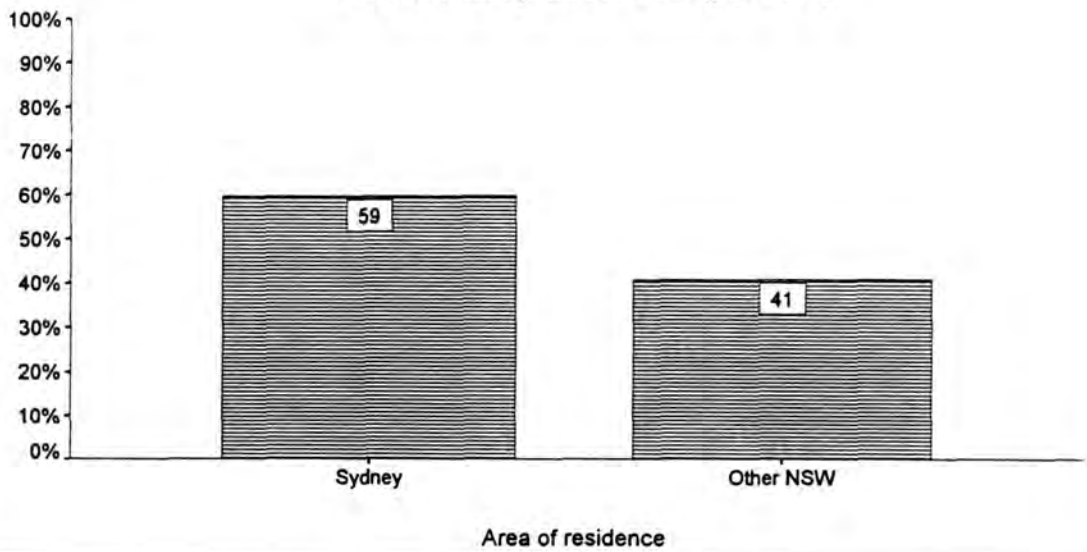
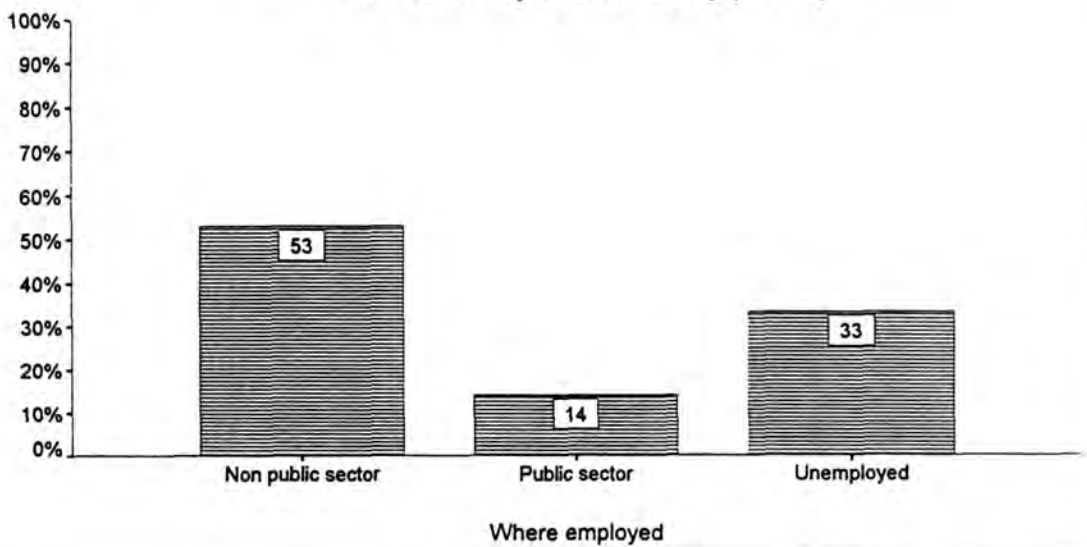


Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by employment sector

1995 community attitude survey (n=515)



Appendix 2: Copy of questions asked and summary of responses given¹

1995 COMMUNITY ATTITUDES SURVEY

Good (...). My name is from TAVERNER RESEARCH COMPANY. Today we are conducting a survey about your thoughts on the activities of the NSW public sector.

...

When I talk about "the NSW public sector" I mean state government departments and authorities, local councils, as well as members of the parliament, judges and magistrates.

Q1 The NSW public sector provides a number of services to the community. Can you give me an example of services provided to you by the "NSW public sector"?
(probe) Any others? (probe) Any others?

Services mentioned by respondents	% of respondents (n=515)	% of examples* (n=1305)
Health/hospitals/baby health/community health	31.1	12.9
Public transport (bus, train, ferries, school buses)	28.0	11.9
Education (childcare, school, university, TAFE)	24.5	10.0
Roads/road maintenance/car registration	21.9	8.7
Police	19.2	7.9
Garbage collection/street cleaning	12.2	5.0
Local Council (planning, development, regulation, etc.)	11.8	5.1
Community services (welfare, disabilities, special needs, home help)	11.5	5.3
Employment (CES/DEET) jobskills/skillshare/social security/pension	9.1	4.1
Sewerage/water	7.4	3.0
Culture/arts/music	7.2	3.0
Emergency services (ambulance, bush/fire brigades)	6.2	3.2
Gas/electricity	6.2	2.6
Environment/national parks/forests/conservation	5.6	2.3
Sport/recreation/parks	5.2	2.2
Courts/judges & magistrates/justice/prisons	4.7	1.9
Post/telephone/telecommunication	2.5	1.1
Agriculture/fisheries	2.3	1.1
Tax/rates/have to pay \$	2.1	0.8
Legal Aid	1.9	0.8
Medicare	1.9	0.8
Other	12.2	5.7
No example given/don't know any services	15.1	-

* The number of examples exceeds the number of respondents, as each individual gave up to 5 examples.

I would like to ask you about differences between the *public* sector and the *private* sector in NSW.

¹ **Shaded responses** are responses to the 1994 survey, included for comparison where relevant.

Q2a Firstly, do *you* believe that the standards of honesty *should* be higher in the public sector or higher in the private sector?

(n=515)

Public higher than private	28.9%
Private higher than public	4.9%
Same in both	64.1%
Depends/Don't know	2.1%

Q2b Why do you say that?

Reason given	% (n=515)
<i>Same in both</i>	64.1*
Honesty best policy/all should be honest/accountable/maintain high standard	44.1
We depend on/need to trust in both	11.5
Both provide services/deal with public/we pay for both	9.9
Both are dishonest & need to improve	4.1
Other (same in both)	2.3
<i>Public higher than private</i>	28.9
We pay taxes/their wages/it's public money	8.2
Public sector less honest/accountable and should improve	6.8
It should work in the public interest/is there for the public/provides service	4.9
It is more accountable/regulated (e.g., have codes of conduct, ICAC)	3.5
So many/more people affected by the public sector (than by private sector)	3.3
We need to trust them (that they will be honest)	2.7
Should set the standard/be an example	2.5
They are running the country	1.7
Not motivated by profit but ideals	1.6
We vote for them/elect them	1.4
We have no choice/dependent on public sector	1.4
Other (public higher than private)	3.3
<i>Private higher than public</i>	4.9
Private sector less honest/accountable/should improve	2.3
Private sector better managed/more accountable/more competition	1.4
Can't trust the government/it's corrupt/slack/not accountable	1.2
Other (private higher than public)	1.2
<i>Don't know</i>	2.1
Don't know	3.7**

The italicised figures are responses to Q2a. The figures listed under each are responses to Q2b. Responses to Q2b do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

** The two 'don't know' categories are not equal as some people gave a specific response to Q2a, but said "don't know" in response to Q2b.

Q3a And where do you think that the standard of honesty is *actually* higher - in the public sector or in the private sector?

(n=515)

Public higher than private	25.0%
Private higher than public	36.9%
Same in both	15.9%
Depends/Don't know	22.1%

Q3b Why do you say that?

Reason given	%* (n=515)
<i>Private higher than public</i>	36.9
Private - survive on reputation/too much to lose if dishonest (e.g. business, \$)	7.8
Private - must be honest to keep job/Public - harder to sack/steady income	7.0
Private - more accountable/more scrutiny/supervision	5.6
Politicians break promises/are corrupt/government lies	4.7
Evidence of public sector corruption/dishonesty	3.3
Private - more open/Public - protect selves/can cover up dishonesty	2.7
Evidence of police corruption/royal commission	2.5
Private - more personal/service focus/Public - anonymous/bureaucratic	2.1
Private - speak from experience	1.4
Other (private higher than public)	4.5
<i>Public higher than private</i>	25.0
Public - more accountable/more rules/legislation/watchdogs/checks	9.5
Private - profit motive/gain/less trustworthy	4.7
Public - have obligations/responsibility to/serve the public	2.7
Public - people have higher standards/are more honest/culture of honesty/ethics	2.5
Public - speak from experience	2.1
Other (public higher than private)	5.3
<i>Same in both</i>	15.9
Both are dishonest/will rip you off/lie/break promises	8.5
There is some honesty & dishonesty/good & bad people in both	6.8
Both are honest/Had no problems with either	2.3
Other (same in both)	1.4
<i>Don't know</i>	22.1
Don't know (or no real elaboration on answer)	22.9 ^{***}

* The italicised figures are responses to Q3a. The figures listed under each are responses to Q3b. Responses to Q3b do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

** The two 'don't know' categories are not equal as some people gave a response to Q3a, but said "don't know" in response to Q3b.

Q4 I am now going to read six statements. I would like you to tell me if you agree or disagree with each of these statements. The first statement is

....

Do you agree or disagree? Is that strongly agree/disagree or just agree/disagree?

Statement	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree	% Don't Know
The activities of the public sector have little or no impact on my life.	7.6	24.3	36.1	30.5	1.6
As long as the job gets done efficiently, I don't mind how public servants go about it.	11.5	36.5	31.5	18.6	1.9
There is nothing that I can personally do about corruption in the public sector.	15.7	34.4	34.6	14.2	1.2
People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it.	27.2	44.1	19.4	3.3	6.0
There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it.	11.3	19.8	45.0	17.5	6.4
Giving all applicants for public sector jobs a "fair go" is more important than filling the job quickly.	28.2	52.2	10.9	3.1	5.6

Q5 Do you consider that corruption in the NSW *public* sector is ... for the community?

	1995 (n=515)	1994 (n=402)
A major problem	57.9%	44.0%
A minor problem	38.1%	47.3%
Or not a problem	0.8%	4.0%
(Don't know)	3.3%	4.7%

Q6a When there is corruption in the NSW public sector, what, if anything, can an ordinary member of the public do about it? What else? Anything else?

Possible actions nominated	%* (n=515)
Ring, report, write or go to local Member of Parliament	34.6
Ring, report, write or go to relevant government department/council	27.0
Ring, report, write or go to Ombudsman	24.3
Ring, report, write or go to Police	16.9
Ring, report, write or go to media/letter to the editor	12.4
Ring, report, write or go to relevant Minister	8.9
Form or join action group/protest/voice opinion/Attend public meetings	8.7
Ring, report, write or go to ICAC	6.2
Vote/exercise democratic right	4.9
Ring, report, write or go to Mayor/local councillors	4.9
Ring, report, write or go to lawyer/courts	2.7
Ring, report, write or go to Police Royal Commission	1.7
Go directly to person involved	0.8
Ring, report, write or go to Whistleblowers Australia/whistleblowers group	0.6
Other	3.3
Nothing/not much	11.8
Don't know/no idea	10.1

The figures listed add up to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one response.

Q6b (If nothing or not much) Why do you say that?

Reasons provided for saying could do nothing or not much	Number of respondents (n=61*)
Individuals make no difference/no one will take notice/need more power	21
Nothing <i>can</i> be done about it/corruption endemic/too widespread	12
Don't know who to trust/they may be involved	11
Nothing <i>will</i> be done about it	6
Not my problem/The government (or public servants) should fix it	6
Get yourself into trouble/retaliation for whistleblowers	6
Takes too long/too difficult to take action	3
Don't know who to report it to	3
Need evidence/to justify suspicions	1
Other	15

The figures listed add up to more than 61 as respondents were able to give more than one response.

Q7 I am going to read out a scenario to you and I will then ask for your opinion about it.

"A developer gets council permission to build a block of units on a small public park near your home. You suspect the developer has corruptly paid off someone at the council."

Q7a What *could* you do about this situation? (probe) What else? (probe) Anything else?

Possible actions nominated	%* (n=515)
Ring, report, write or go to local council	42.7
Ring, report, write or go to local Members of Parliament	30.1
Ring, report, write or go to Mayor/local councillors	28.3
Form or join action group/protest/Voice opinion/Attend public meetings	26.6
Ring, report, write or go to media/letter to the editor	16.1
Ring, report, write or go to Department of Local Government	12.6
Ring, report, write or go to Ombudsman	12.0
Ring, report, write or go to lawyer/courts (inc. Land & Environment Court)	9.7
Ring, report, write or go to Police	7.8
Discuss it with friends	7.6
Ring, report, write or go to ICAC	5.4
Get proof/evidence/facts/investigate further	5.4
Look at specific legislation/documents	2.9
Arrange/sign a petition	1.2
Approach developer	1.4
Approach State planning authority/dept	1.0
Other	4.5
Nothing/Not much	4.5
Don't know/no idea	4.1

The figures listed add up to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one response.

Q7b (for those who gave an action) Do you think you *would* ever take this/ any one of these action(s)?

	(n=471)
Yes - definitely	58.4%
Yes - probably	24.6%
Unlikely	7.0%
No	6.2%
Depends/Don't know	3.8%

Q7c Why do you say that?

Factors people report considering when deciding to take action or not	% (n=471)
Should do something/To get results/stop it happening/maintain standards	17.2
It is dishonest/wrong/I dislike dishonesty/corruption	15.1
Unfair/They shouldn't get away with it/get advantage	8.5
I have taken action before	7.4
The park is a public facility/space	7.2
I can take action/it's easy/possible	4.7
To do the right thing/civic duty/be a law-abiding person	3.4
Council voted in by us/Accountable to us/taxpayers	1.9
If affects me/my family (does/not affect me)	23.1
If I felt strongly about it/it was serious	9.1
If affects the environment/community	8.5
If I have evidence	4.9
That's the way it is/will not any good/nobody would listen	3.4
Don't want to get involved or make waves/Shy/Someone else will do it	3.2
Apathy/no energy/too much hassle	2.5
Concern re consequences/retaliation/safety	2.5
Need a group to take action	1.5
Would not happen here/I'd never see it	1.1
Too costly (time, legal costs)	0.8
Not important enough	0.6
Other	3.8

Q8a Several years ago, the government set up a body to deal with corruption in NSW Government organisations. Can you tell me what it is called?

(n=515)

Correct response	47.2%
Don't know/Not sure	44.9%
Incorrect name - Other	5.2%
Incorrect name - Police Royal Commission	1.9%
Incorrect name - Ombudsman	0.8%

Q8b (if incorrect or don't know) Have you heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the I.C.A.C., or I-cac?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No (Go to demographics)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know/ Not sure (Go to demographics)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Combining answers to Q8a & Q8b, **92.4%** had heard of the ICAC.

Q9 As you may know, the ICAC deals with corruption in all public sector organisations and local councils. I'd now like to ask you some questions about your opinion of the ICAC.

Do you think the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in *exposing some of* the corruption in NSW?

	1995 (n=475)	1994 (n=371)
Successful	80.6%	78.4%
Unsuccessful	11.2%	9.7%
Don't know/Not sure	8.2%	11.9%

Q10a Do you think that the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in *reducing* the level of the corruption in NSW?

	1995 (n=475)	1994 (n=371)
Successful	48.6%	43.4%
Unsuccessful	32.0%	35.8%
Don't know/Not sure	19.4%	20.8%

Q10b (*If unsuccessful or don't know*) Why do you say that?

Reasons why respondent considers ICAC unsuccessful or respondent did not know	%* (n=244)
<i>Unsuccessful</i>	32.0
Corruption still happening/still there/Can see evidence of it	21.7
No results/prosecutions/nothing done	13.1
Corruption cannot be stopped/human nature/too large a problem	12.9
Need more power/support/wider terms of reference	4.9
Police Royal Commission successful/ICAC not	4.1
Not reduced, but had other effects (e.g., public awareness)	2.9
Too early to say	2.5
Not addressed serious corruption	1.6
ICAC corrupt	1.6
Other (Unsuccessful)	9.8
<i>Don't know</i>	19.4
Don't know how much corruption there was/is	11.9
I'm not informed/don't follow it in the media/have no information	11.9
Never hear results of their work	5.3
Too hard to reduce/always going to be corruption	2.9
Too early to say	2.9
Other (Don't know)	3.7
Don't know (no elaboration)	4.5

The italicised figures are responses to Q10a. The figures listed under each are responses to Q10b. Responses to Q10b do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

Q11a Do you think that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW?

	1995 (n=475)	1994 (n=371)
Yes	90.5 %	91.4 %
No	3.4 %	3.8 %
Depends/Don't know	6.1 %	4.9 %

Q11b Why do you say that?

Reasons given	% (n=475)
<i>Good thing</i>	<i>90.5</i>
Somewhere to go about/report corruption	17.9
It acts as a deterrent/keeps people honest	15.6
Need a watchdog/need something	14.1
It exposes corruption/makes people (us) aware of corruption	14.1
It is trying to stop corruption	7.6
Good in theory/good idea	7.2
Anything is better than nothing	6.9
It is independent/impartial	5.7
If/As long as ...	5.7
It acts on behalf of public/serves community	4.0
It stops/can stop corruption/is effective	3.6
Reassuring to have an ICAC	2.7
It is a start/step in the right direction	2.5
Needs to raise its profile/advertise more	2.3
Yes, but needs more power	1.5
Other (good thing)	10.1
<i>Not a good thing</i>	<i>3.4</i>
No results/nothing's changed	1.5
Waste of money	1.5
Not enough power/toothless tiger	0.6
Other (not a good thing)	0.6
<i>Don't know</i>	<i>6.1^{***}</i>
Don't know what effect it has/question value for money	2.5
Don't know enough about the ICAC/what they do	1.9
Other (don't know)	1.5

The italicised figures are responses to Q11a. The figures listed under each are responses to Q11b. Responses to Q11b do not add up to the italicised figure, as respondents often gave more than one reason.

^{***} The responses listed under 'don't know' do not add up to the italicised figure, as some of the reasons given for not knowing could be coded as reasons for believing the ICAC was (or was not) a good thing.

Q12 What do you think is *more* important for the ICAC to do - investigate individuals or to reduce opportunities for corruption to occur?

(n=475)

Individuals	15.8%
Reducing opportunities	54.9%
Both	27.4%
Depends/Don't know	1.9%

Q13a Would *you* feel comfortable to approach ICAC with information about corruption?

(n=475)

Yes	68.2%
Yes - but I don't know how	6.5%
No	18.3%
Depends/Don't know	6.9%

Q13b (If no or depends/don't know) Why do you say that?

Why not comfortable to approach the ICAC	% (n=120)
Concern/fear safety/retaliation	30.8
If sufficiently motivated/If it was serious/affected me	16.7
I have no authority/out of my depth/not user friendly	11.7
Don't know enough about them/don't know how	11.7
Pragmatic considerations (e.g., work, mobility, time, age)	10.8
Concern about confidentiality/name being publicised	9.2
ICAC may be/is corrupt/don't trust them/not independent	6.7
They won't do anything/too slow	3.3
Don't want to get involved	2.5
Other	15.8

Q13c (If yes) Are there any *other* organisations you would feel comfortable to approach about corruption?

More comfortable to approach other organisations?	% (n=120)
No	50.0
Yes (specify)	30.8
Ombudsman	10.0
Police/Crimestoppers	8.3
Member of Parliament	4.2
Newspaper/Media	2.5
Police Royal Commission	1.7
Relevant Dept	0.8
Other (specify)	3.3
Depends/don't know	19.2

Q13d (If yes) What is it about this organisation which makes you feel comfortable to approach it?

Reasons given by the 37 people who said that there was another organisation they would feel more comfortable to approach (from most frequently mentioned to least mentioned) included that the other organisation(s) are:

- ▷ (more) honest/impartial/objective/not corrupt;
- ▷ (more likely to be) effective/do something;
- ▷ well established/I trust them/I've dealt with them before and it was positive;
- ▷ more individual/personal/less threatening;
- ▷ more confidential/anonymous.

Q14 I am going to read out two short statements. I will ask you to tell me which statement *most* reflects your point of view.

(n=475)

"As well as doing investigations, ICAC should actively educate people so that corruption will not be tolerated."

82.9%

"The ICAC should stick to investigating corruption."

17.1%

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

D1 Record gender

(n=515)

Male

49.1%

Female

50.9%

D2	Into which of the following age groups do you fall?	(n=515)
	18-19 years	3.5%
	20-24 years	9.7%
	25-29 years	10.5%
	30-34 years	12.6%
	35-39 years	13.0%
	40-44 years	10.3%
	45-49 years	9.3%
	50-54 years	8.0%
	55-59 years	6.8%
	60-64 years	5.4%
	65+ years	10.5%
	Refused to nominate age	0.4%
D3	And could you please tell me your occupation?	
	Senior executive/Management	1.9%
	Academic/Teacher	5.2%
	Business manager/Executive	5.4%
	Business owner/Consultant	4.9%
	Professional (e.g. doctor, lawyer, etc.)	11.8%
	Clerical	9.7%
	Sales/marketing	4.7%
	Skilled trade	13.6%
	Student	5.4%
	Home maker	13.2%
	Retired	11.1%
	Looking for work	3.3%
	Unskilled	3.3%
	Labourer	2.5%
	Other	3.7%
	Refused to nominate occupation	0.2%
D4	Are you or any member of your household employed in the NSW public sector?	
	Yes - self	14.0%
	Yes - other household member	11.1%
	Neither self or other household member	75.7%
D5	May I have the suburb (or town) and postcode of your home?	
	Sydney	59.4%
	Other NSW	40.6%
D6	What area do you live in?	
	Sydney	59.4%
	Country	35.0%
	Wollongong	2.5%
	Newcastle	3.1%