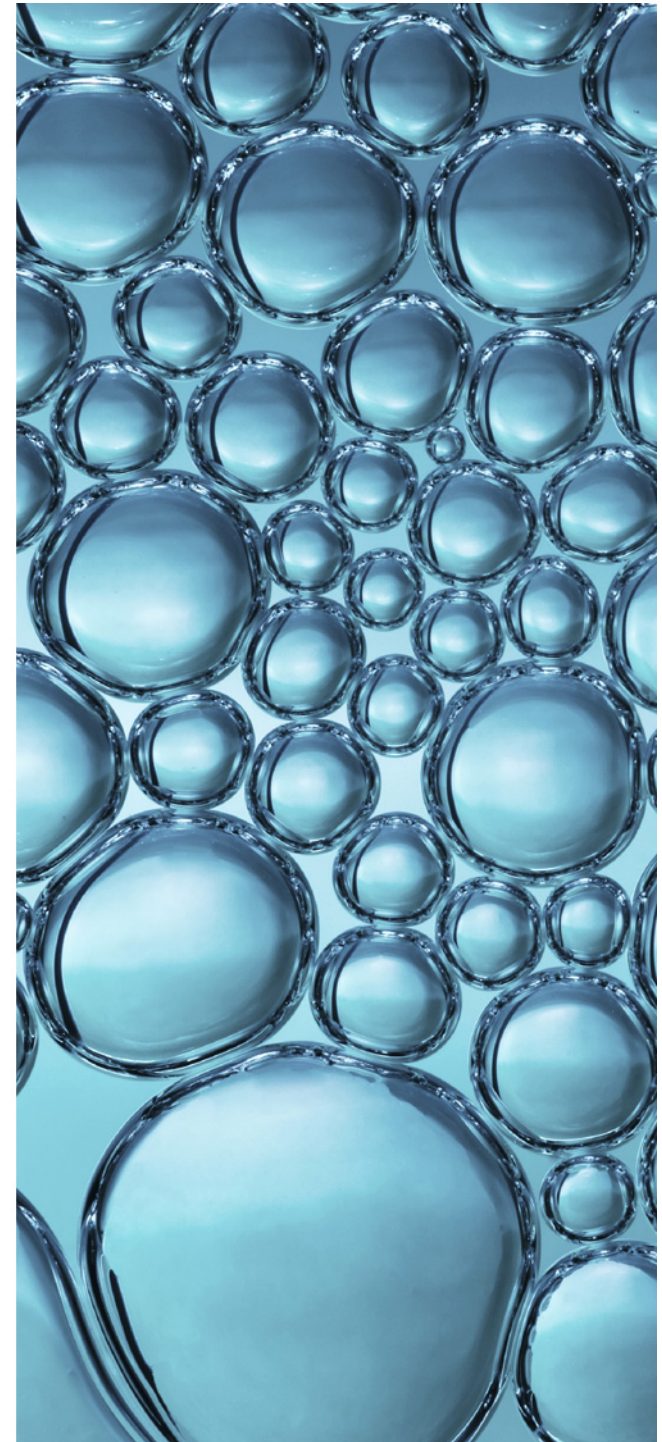

Tracking Community Attitudes to the Southern Seawater Desalination Plant

WAVE 3 - FINAL WAVE

Final Report
Prepared for the Water Corporation
November 14 2008

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This report presents the 3rd wave of community research measuring attitudes towards the SSDP

- Initial research was conducted in August and November 2007 with residents living in Bunbury, Binningup, Myalup and along the pipeline route in the Shire of Harvey, to provide a baseline for community consultation planning for the SSDP.
- Since then, extensive community consultation has been undertaken to understand community concerns related to the project. The PER period has now ended and EPA has granted approval for the project, pending an appeal regarding the Pilot Program.
- The aim of this final wave is to assess whether community perspectives and concerns have changed as a result of the comprehensive program of community consultation – PLUS identify future direction for communication strategy.



Our approach has remained consistent across waves allowing for comparability of data



- Telephone interviews were conducted with residents of the following areas:
 - Binningup
 - Myalup
 - Bunbury
 - Pipeline path (households along the proposed pipeline path)
- Interviewing was conducted between 10th and 23rd of October, with the aim of obtaining as many responses as possible in Binningup, Myalup and from residents living along the pipeline path.

Area	Stage 1 Sample Size	Stage 2 Sample Size	Stage 3 Sample Size
Binningup	88	94	120
Myalup	38	40	37
Bunbury	203	100	100
Pipeline	N/A	20	25
Total	329	254	282

Note: Residents living along the proposed pipeline path were not interviewed in Stage 1.

Key Findings – Community Perspectives

- Opposition to the desalination plant appears to have increased over the past 12 months among the residents of Binningup, Myalup and those living along the pipeline route. Bunbury residents show less concern. Major issues include:
 - **Environmental impact concerns** - The environmental impact of the plant, i.e. damage to the coastline and the impact of salt being released into the ocean. General marine and coastal environment impacts.
 - **Amenity impact concerns** - The proximity of the plant to the Binningup and Myalup townships, i.e. potential noise, smell and visual impacts as well as construction impacts.
 - **Specific site concerns** - regarding the lack of consultation as to initial selection of the site, as well as the unsuitability of the site due to proximity to recreational beaches.
 - **Concerns the area is residential** - and not suited to industrial use in any form – it is seen as the ‘thin edge of the wedge’ for more industrial development.
 - There is also some **opposition to desalination *per se*** as a water source due to heavy energy use and perceptions there are alternatives available such as an increased focus on water efficiency and the better use of Wellington Dam.
 - Concerns that there is **no local benefit at all**, with the water produced for the sole use of the Perth metro area.
- It is also important to note that the research was conducted immediately after the project received **EPA approval**, potentially **galvanising opposition to the project in the short term.**



Key Findings – Consultation and Communication Needs

More information required on some issues

- Given the concerns we have seen, the major information or knowledge gaps identified relate directly to these areas and include the perception that they have not received enough information about the decision to locate the plant at the Taranto Road site.
- Local residents also continue to feel that they have not received enough information about the environmental and social and environmental assessment process. This could be based around concerns regarding the basis for the EPA's approval.

Mixed response to community consultation by Water Corporation

- Most local residents continue to be satisfied with opportunities provided to give feedback and provide opinion.
- There is lower satisfaction with the Water Corporation's responsiveness to community concerns with the project. Potentially this stems from low awareness of project changes made that have been based on the feedback received from the community.

Clearly some of these core 'outrage' components are playing out in community concerns regarding the plant



Safe	Risky
Voluntary	Coerced
Natural	Industrial
Familiar	Not familiar
Not memorable	Memorable
Not dreaded	Dreaded
Knowable	Unknowable
Responsive process	Unresponsive process
Trustworthy sources	Untrustworthy sources
Morally irrelevant	Morally relevant
Chronic	Catastrophic
Individually controlled	Controlled by others
Fair	Unfair

Source : Peter Sandman Workshop – Water Corporation 2007

Food for thought – unpacking stakeholder motives

- Greed – *“I want more for me”*
 - A new park, a victory that can be converted into a ‘currency’ of some type. Don’t be contemptuous - use it, greed can be bought – outrage can not. You can bargain with greed!

- Outrage – *“I want to see you punished”*
 - While greed wants to win (a win-win is ok) outrage wants you to lose. You can’t bargain until outrage is off the table.

- Self esteem – *“I want to feel better about myself”*
 - Preoccupation with the sense of themselves as the loser in every encounter looks like outrage but needs more to be vindicated – cites indigenous Australians.

Source : Peter Sandman Workshop – Water Corporation 2007

Recommendations

- Results therefore show that opposition to the plant stems from 'hazard type' concerns as well as more 'outrage type' concerns.
- An effective solution will need to deal with:
 - Concerns over the plants potential **environmental impacts** (Hazard)
 - **Social and amenity impacts** (Hazard)
 - **Rationale for the site being selected** in the first place given the benefits are for Perth (Outrage)
 - Despite the initial lack of consultation, the number of concessions made based on community feedback in a **very responsive process** (Outrage)
 - And to a lesser extent concerns re the **use of desalination before other forms of water sourcing**.



Recommendations

- 1. Restate the reasons for choosing the Binningup site in terms of broader WA community benefit as well as benefits to local community**
 - Potentially this information has been forgotten considering the time lapse since the project was announced
 - This includes restating the benefits the local community can expect in terms of jobs and economic benefits

- 2. Acknowledge the flaws in the initial selection process, and promote the transparency of Water Corporation's subsequent comprehensive consultation and approvals process:**
 - Raise awareness of changes made to the project based on community feedback, continue to highlight Water Corporation's desire for a partnership with the community
 - Recognise the community's concerns and highlight how these will be managed
 - Communicate why EPA has approved the project (environmental impacts and satisfaction with community consultation)

- 3. Continue to mitigate community concerns regarding the potential environmental and amenity impacts**
 - Through stressing environmental controls in place and assessments made as part of EPA approval process – many of which were added to the submission in response to community concerns

Recommendations

4. Manage concerns regarding the use of desalination through broader Water Forever 50 Year Plan narrative

- There is some evidence that the community perceives desalination as an option needed to be considered after other options such as the Wellington Dam, or greater water efficiency measures.
- As part of the broader Water Forever 50 Year Plan, it will be possible to paint a broader picture of the Water Corporation's combined focus on efficiency and recycling measures as well as new source developments such as the SSDP. How it fits into the broader overall picture may assuage some public benefit concerns.

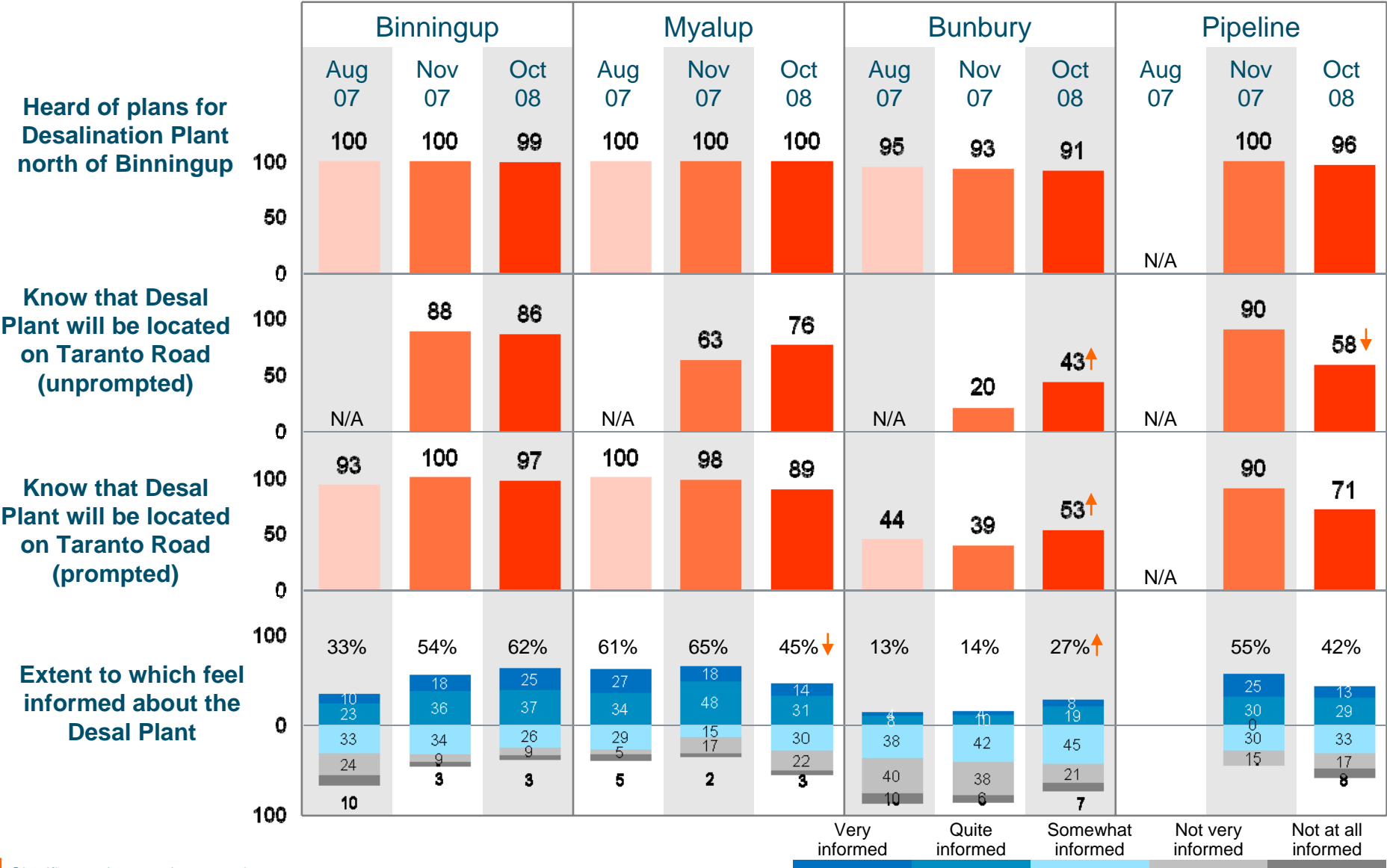
5. Target communications to those still in need through more one-on-one approaches and less broad brush approaches

- Given there is a lesser need for communication, it may be a better use of resources now to target remaining pockets of concern through a direct one-on-one approach to those with remaining concerns through site visits, or expert discussions and perhaps enrol third party endorsers such as the EPA.



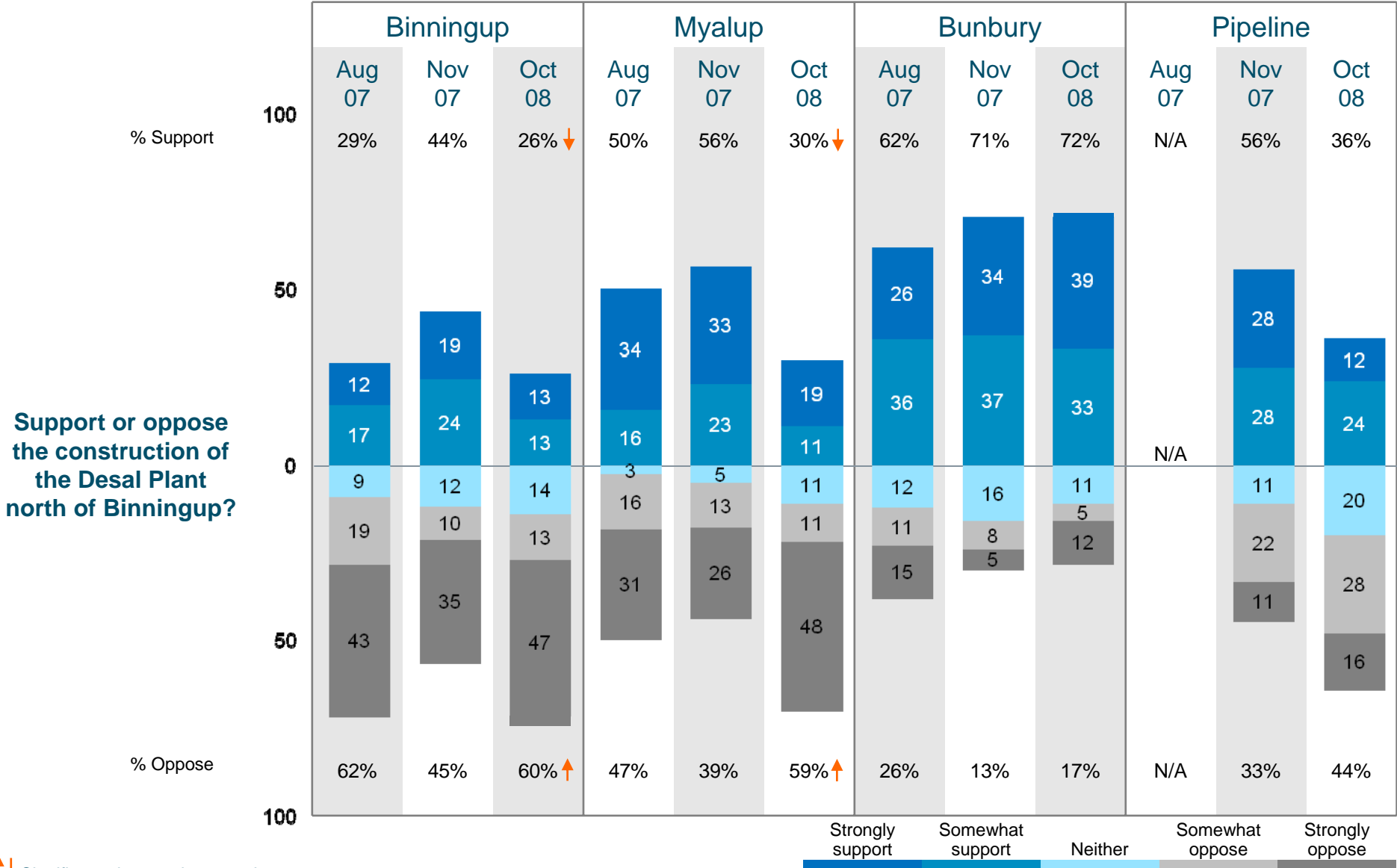
Awareness and Support

Bunbury residents feel more informed about the location of the plant compared to last wave



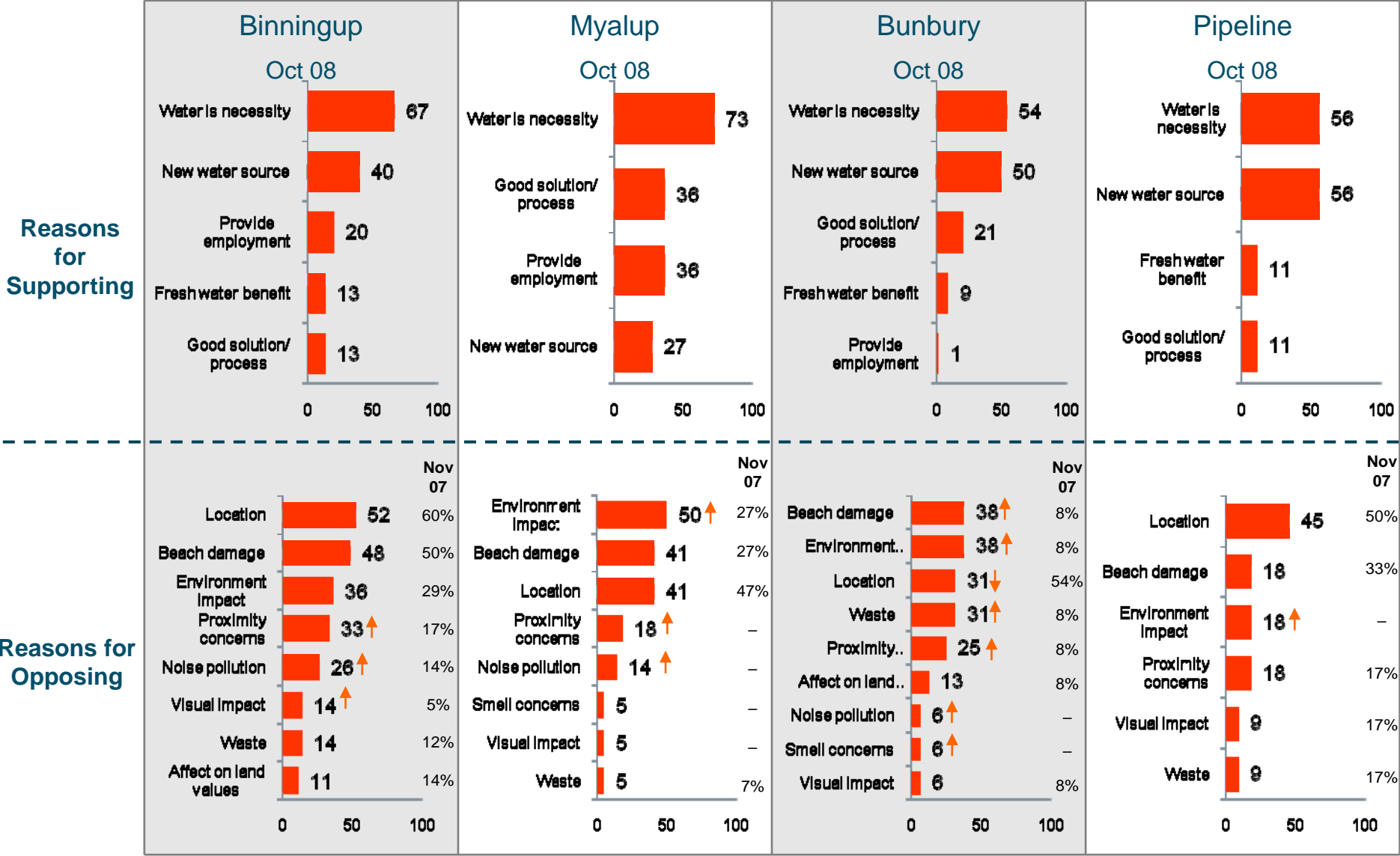
↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Opposition to the plant has increased among residents of Binningup, Myalup and those on the pipeline route



↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Whilst there is recognition for the need for new water sources, the location of the plant and potential environmental impacts are key reasons for opposition



↑↓ Significant change since previous wave



Illustrative Comments – Support and Opposition

Reasons for Opposition:

*“It’s a small country town and they are building a desalination plant **for Perth’s use**, if Perth needs one they should build it up there”. (Bunbury)*

*“I think it’s going to be an **environmentally negative thing** for the area. It’s going to ruin the coast, pollute the water and kill the native animals and fish”. (Binningup)*

*“I have no objection to desalination plants in general but it is in the wrong location, **too close to Binningup** which is a pristine location. Our house prices will fall”. (Myalup)*

*“Basically because **the government took a liberty to make a decision**. There was no public forum and they basically just chose the area they felt was least populated”. (Myalup)*

Reasons for Support:

*“We’re going to **need more water** and seawater is obviously a wonderful source and desalination has been proven to work”. (Myalup)*

*“We’re running out of water. **There is no groundwater** around so desal is the only choice as far as I’m concerned”. (Myalup)*

*“We need water. With **climate change there needs to be alternative water sources**. It isn’t IN Binningup, so I’m not going to be affected by noise or smell. It is a sustainable source of water”. (Binningup)*

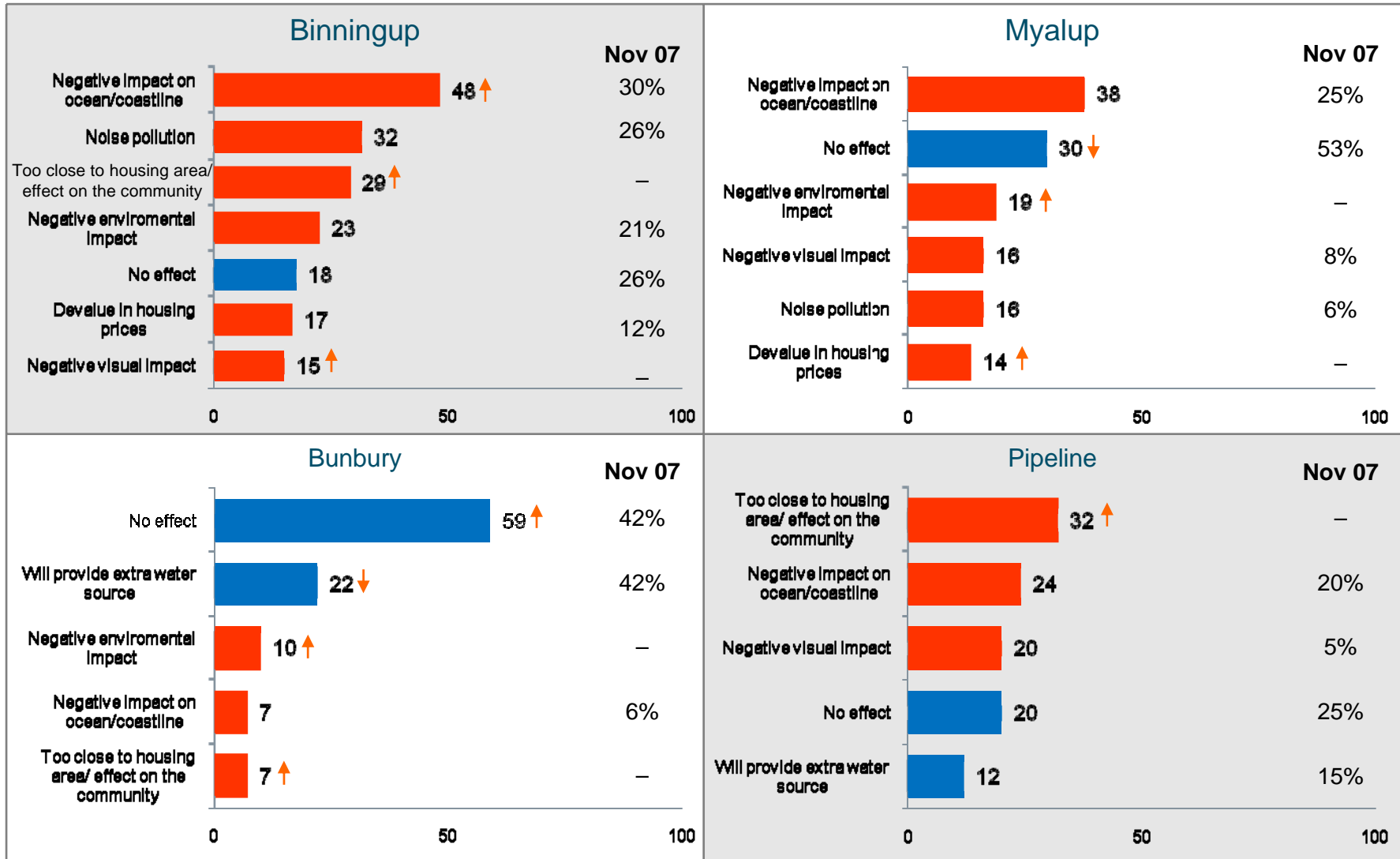
*“Any water is **better than no water**”. (Pipeline)*



Perceived Impact

More residents this wave believe the project will negatively impact the local community and coastline

- What are the perceived effects of the Desalination project on yourself, your household & the community?



↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Illustrative Comments – Perceived Impact

“It'll affect the community of Binningup. They have chosen to live in a small country town without the detrimental effects of heavy industry and through no choice of their own the plant will be built on their doorstep”. (Bunbury)

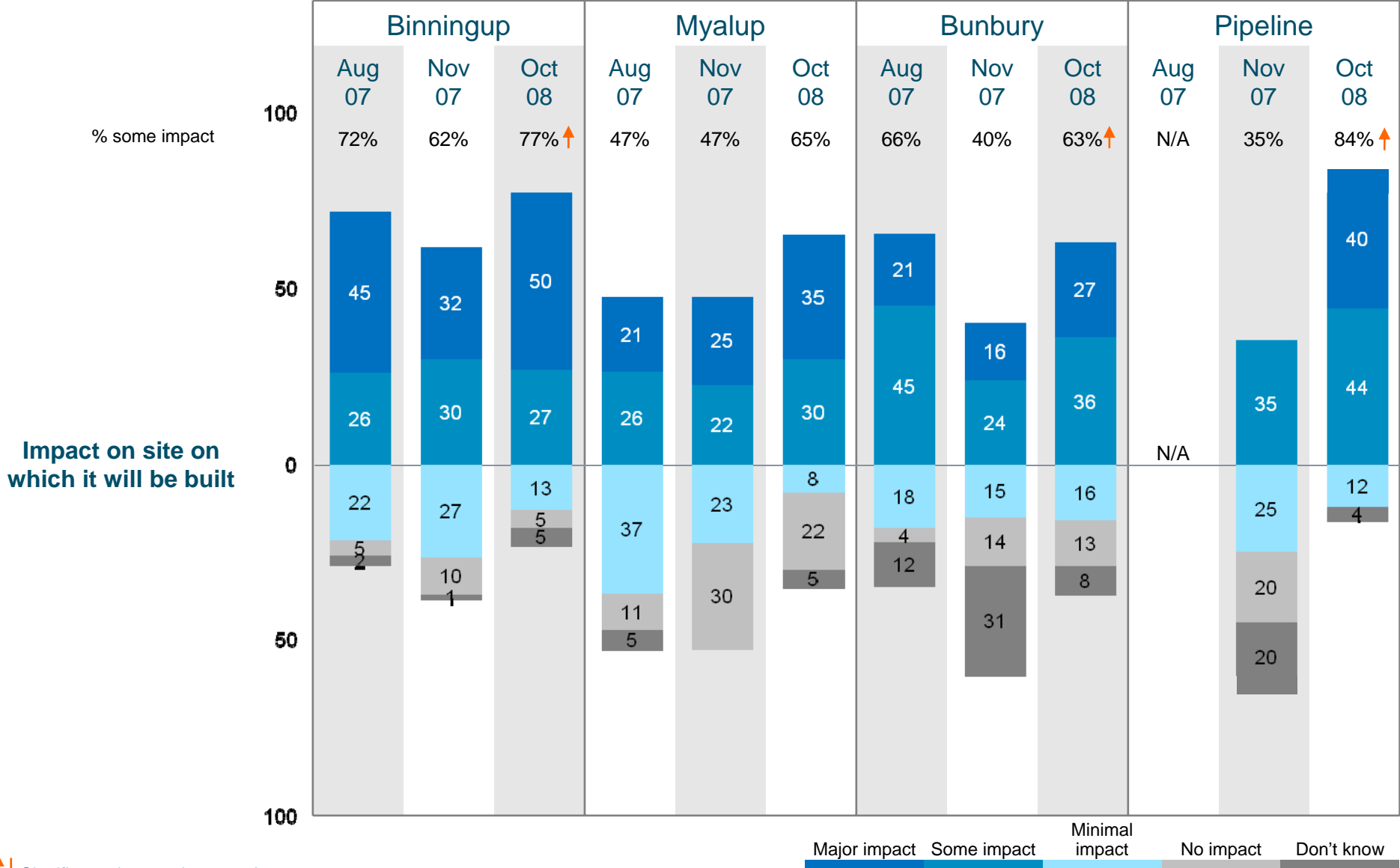
“The impact will be on my lifestyle, I use the beach to catch fish and swim and I think the plant will make the beach and coast in this area much dirtier and uglier”. (Binningup)

“Real estate prices will take a dive straight away”. (Binningup)

“Between 300 and 500 workers are due to come into the area whilst construction is taking place, where will they live? There is not enough infrastructure in Binningup to handle that many workers. There will be trucks and cars and noise all over the town and surrounding areas”. (Myalup)

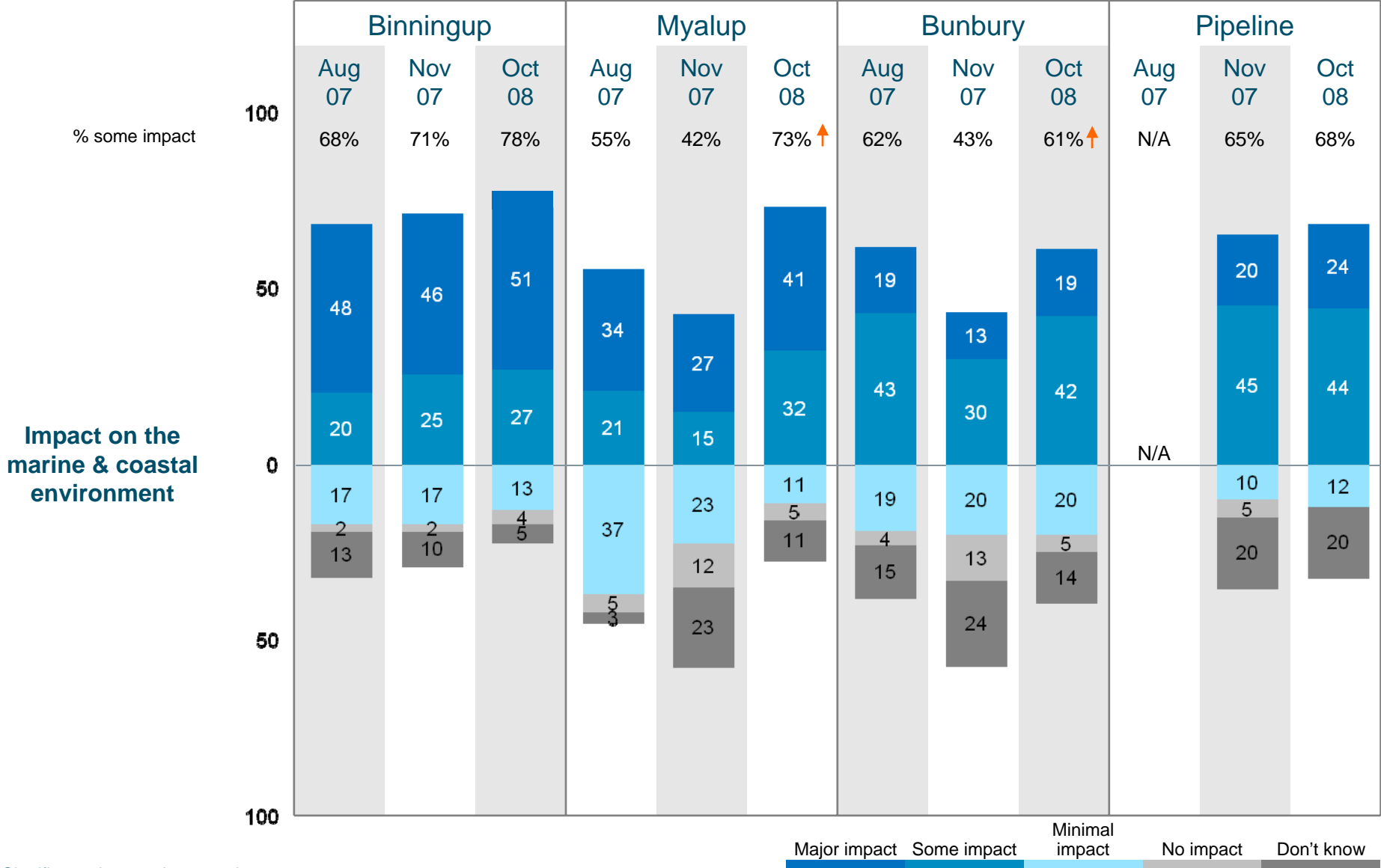
“I think I'll be able to hear the plant and that will be annoying and I'm going to be able to see it” (Myalup)

There is an increase in the number of residents who believe the plant will impact the site at Taranto Road



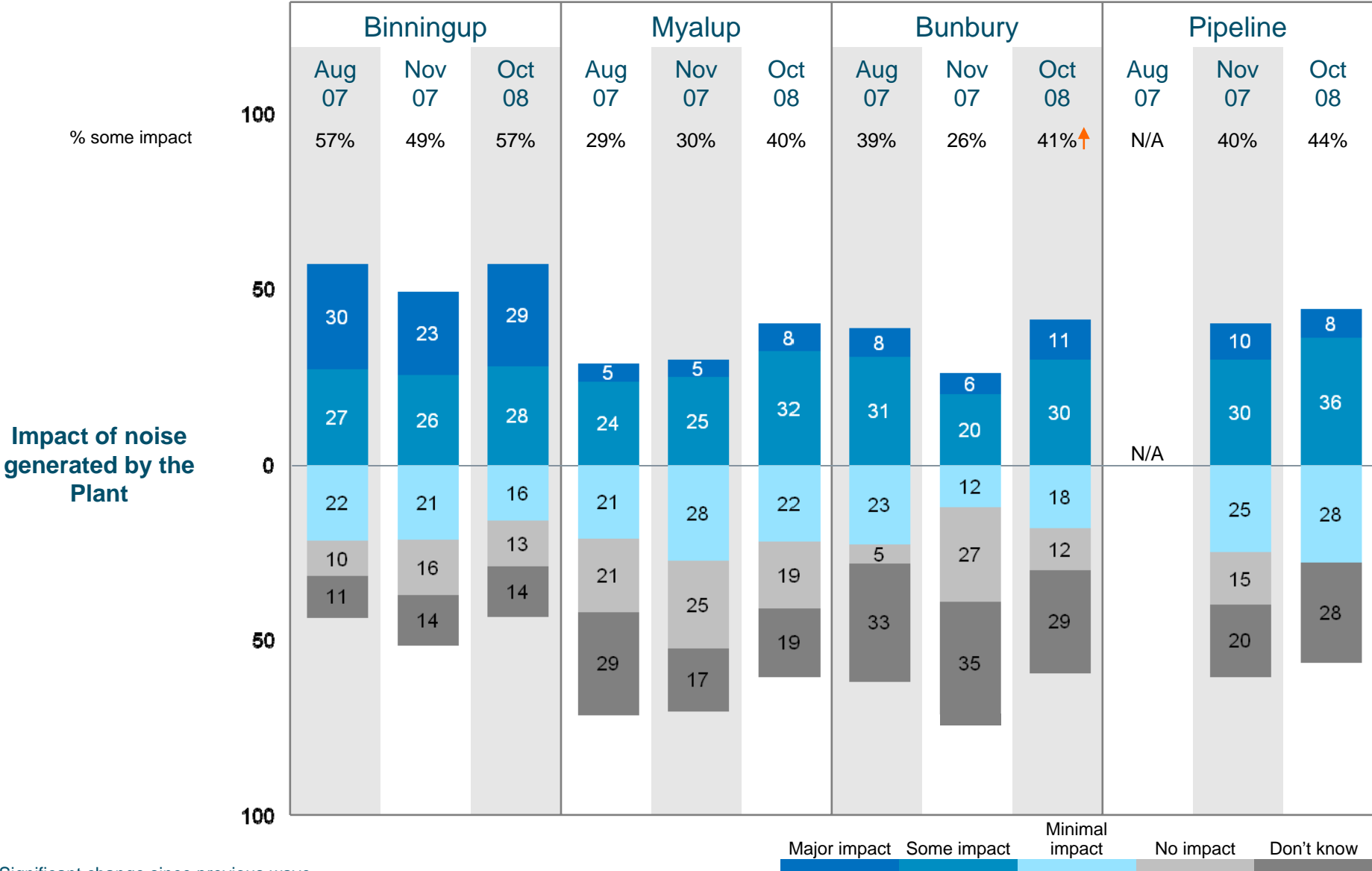
↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

An increased proportion of residents believe that the plant will have at least some impact on the marine and coastal environment



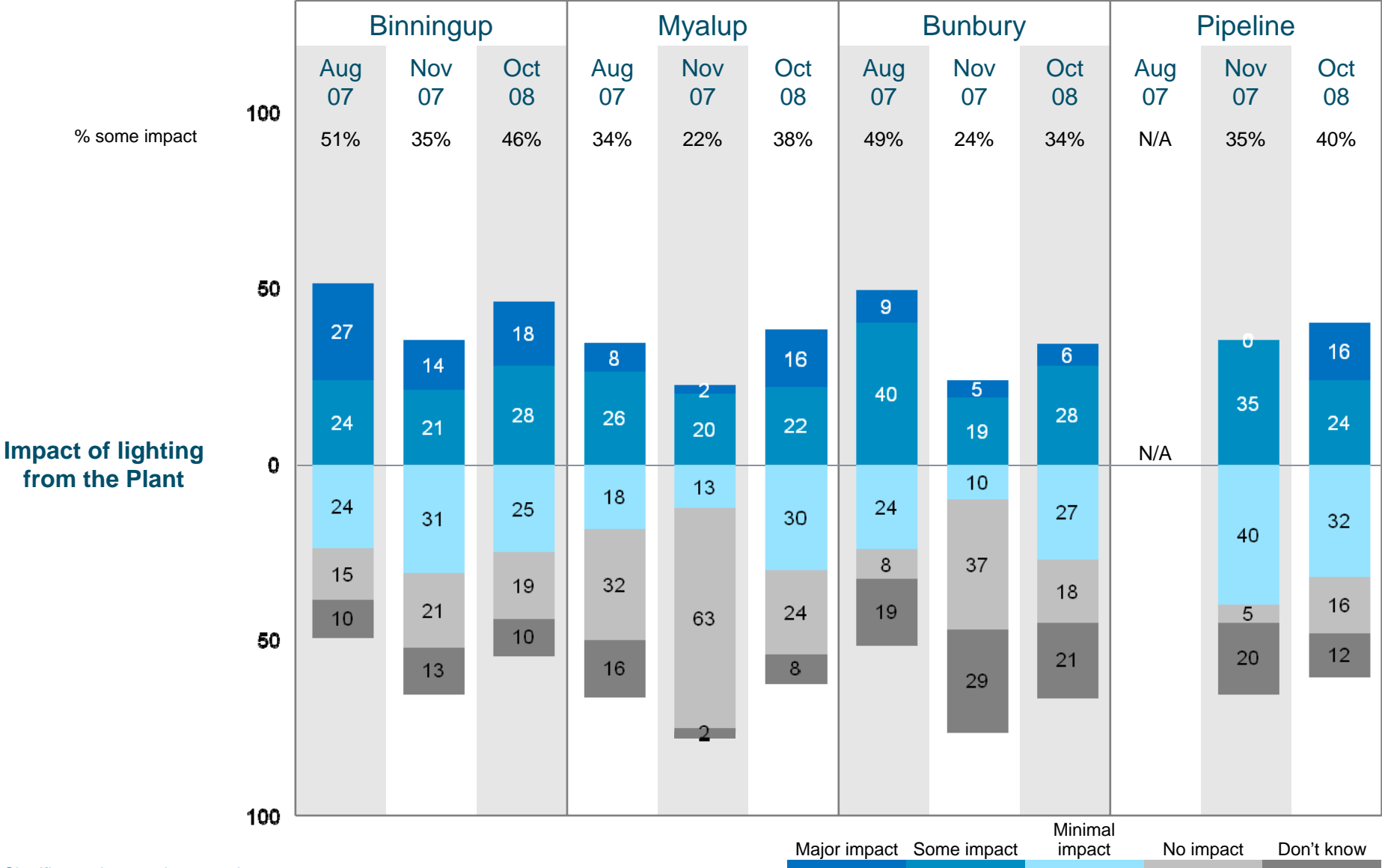
↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Many residents also continue to believe the plant will impact them in terms of the noise it generates



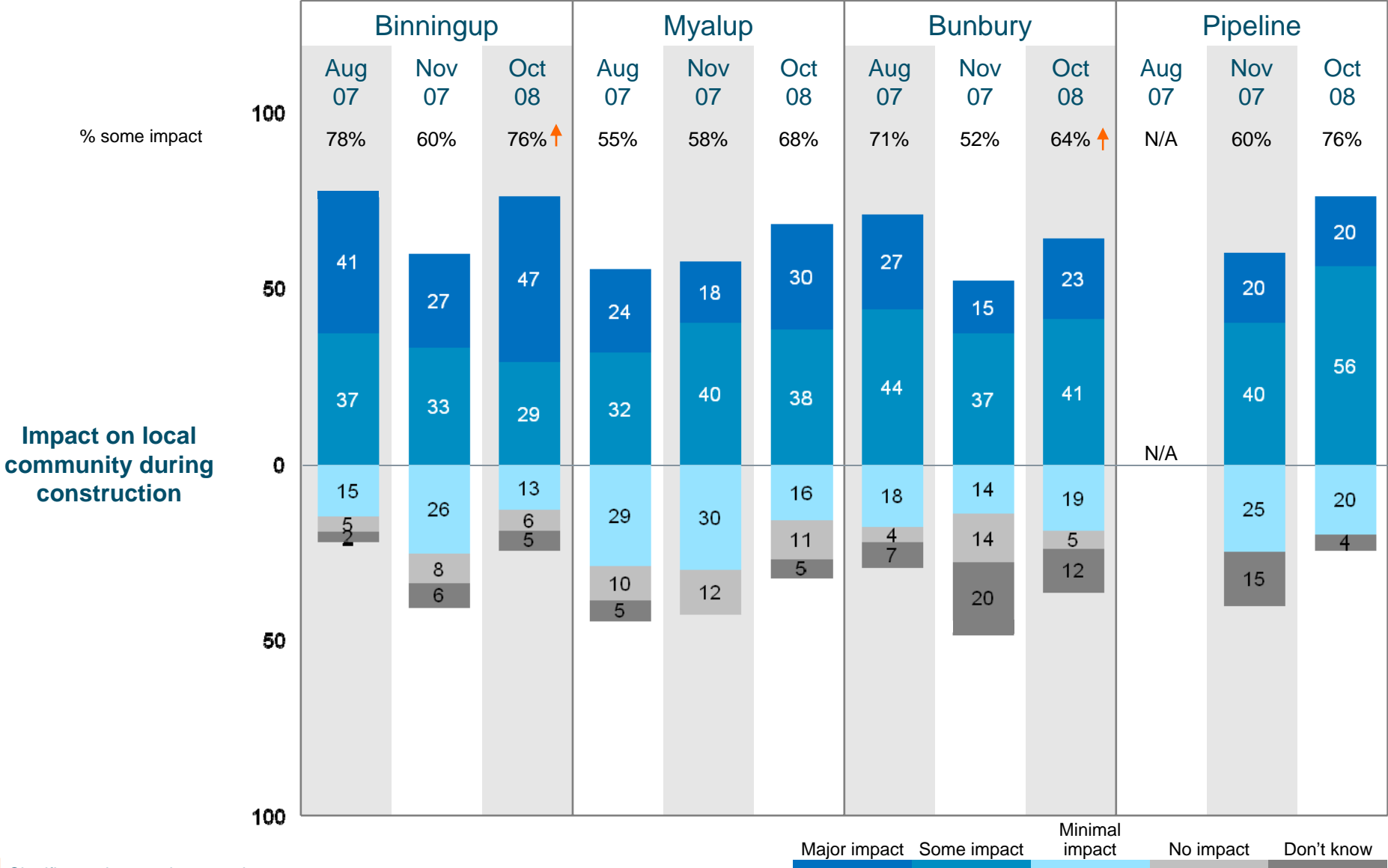
↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Concern around the impact of lighting from the plant remains stable



↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

An increased proportion of residents believe that the local community will be impacted during construction

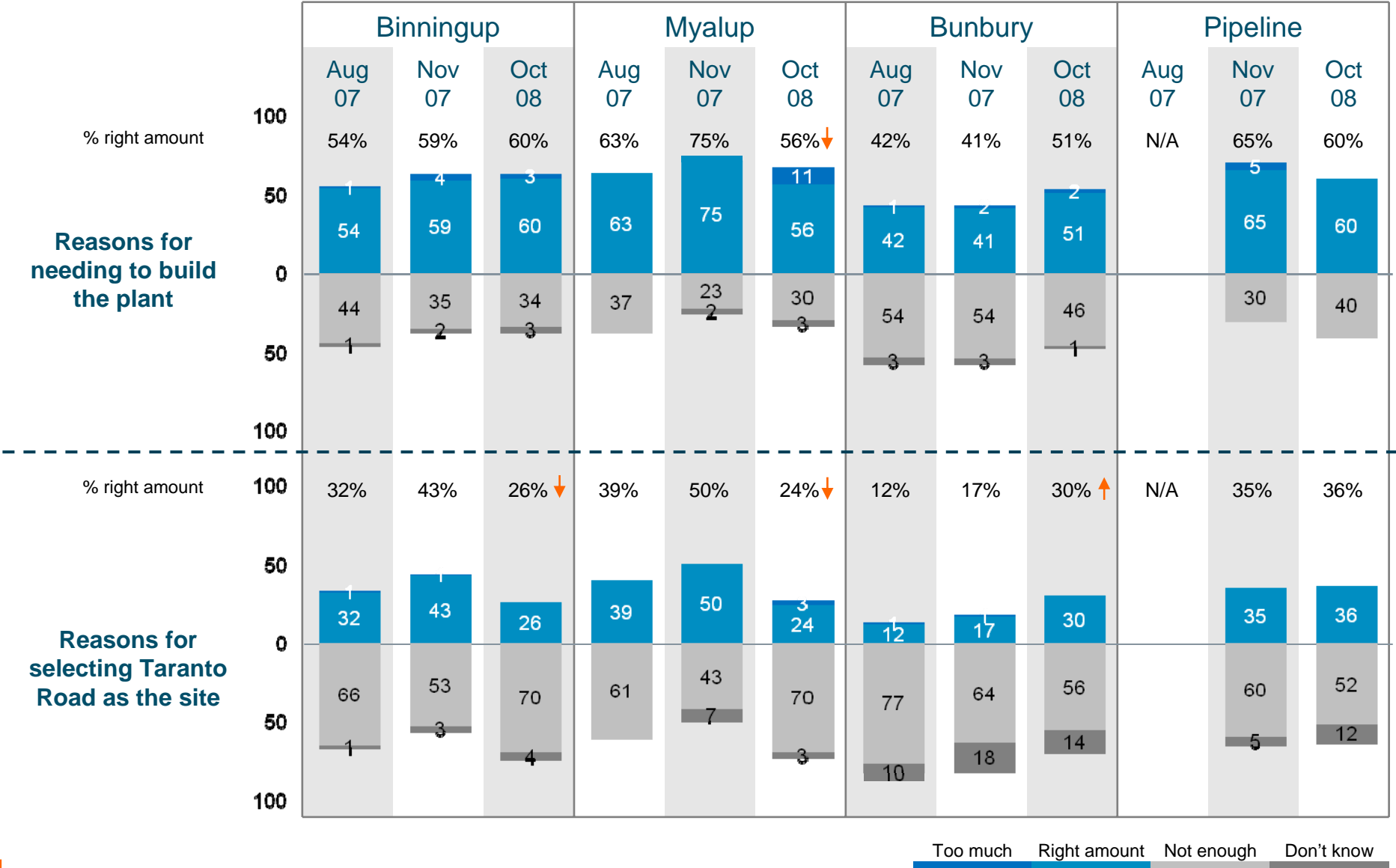


↑↓ Significant change since previous wave



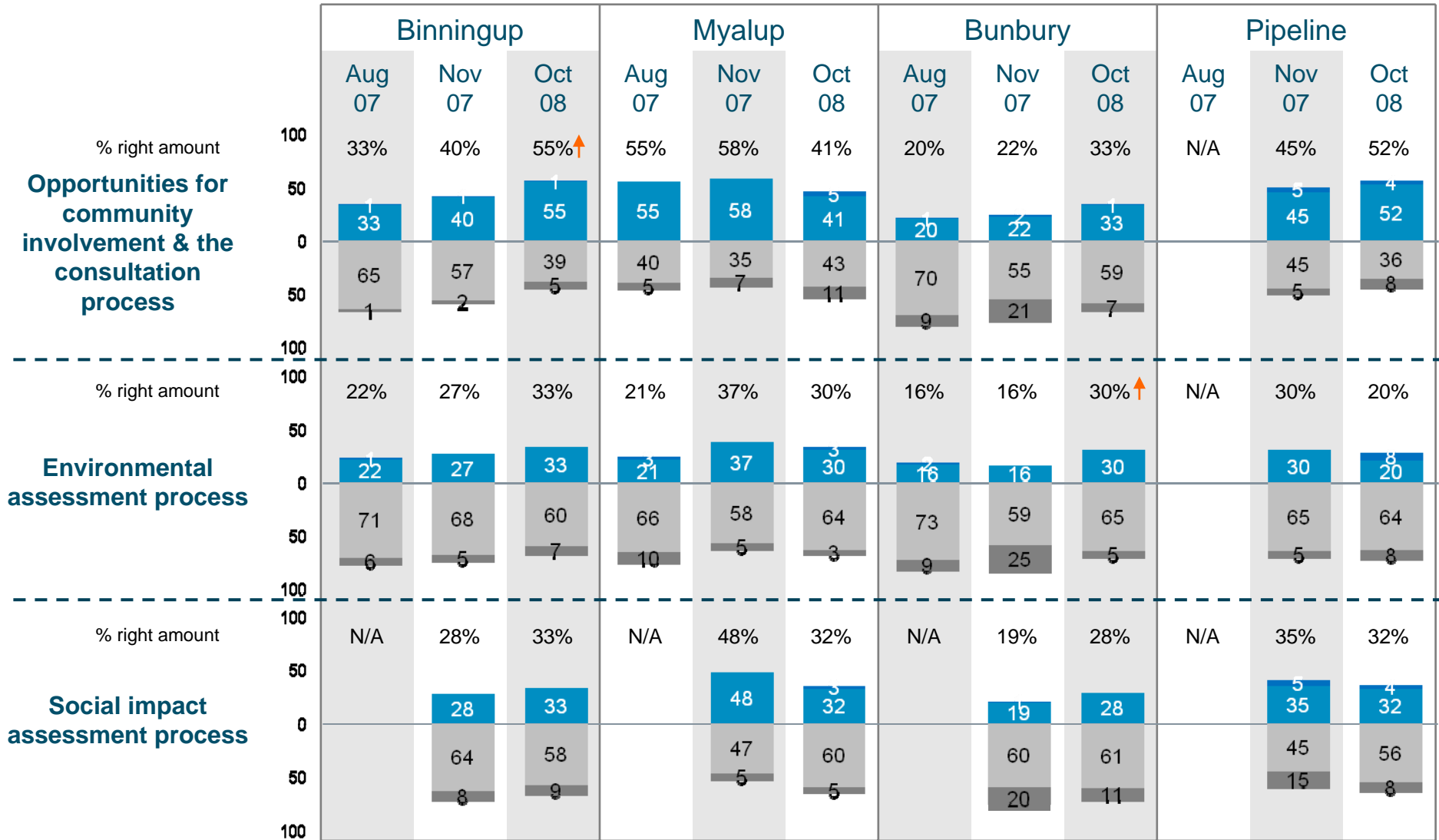
Communication and Information

Residents continue to believe they have received enough information on why we need the plant however, residents increasingly say they haven't received enough information on the reasons for selecting the site



↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

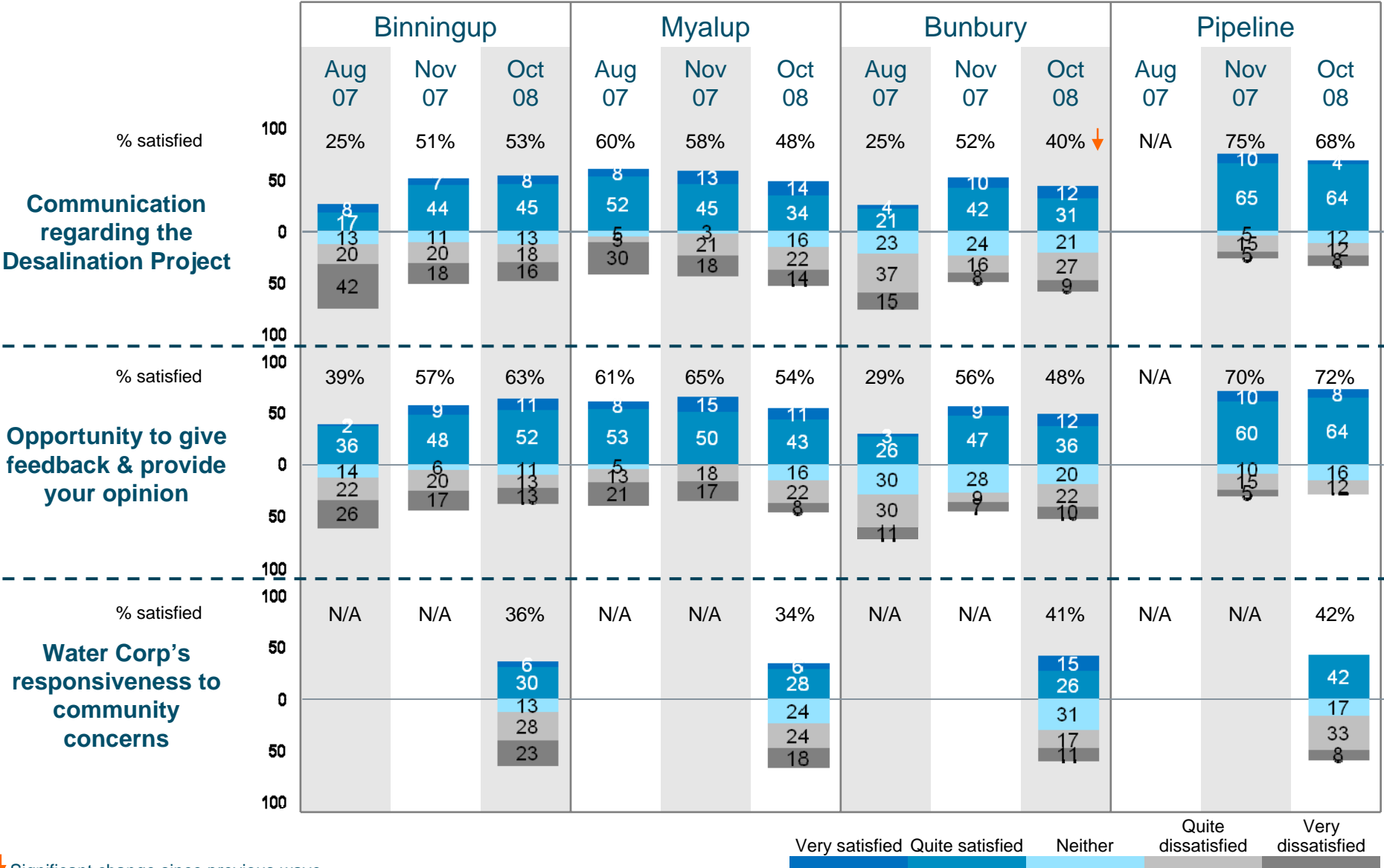
Residents continue to feel like they have not received enough information about the environmental and social impact process



Too much Right amount Not enough Don't know

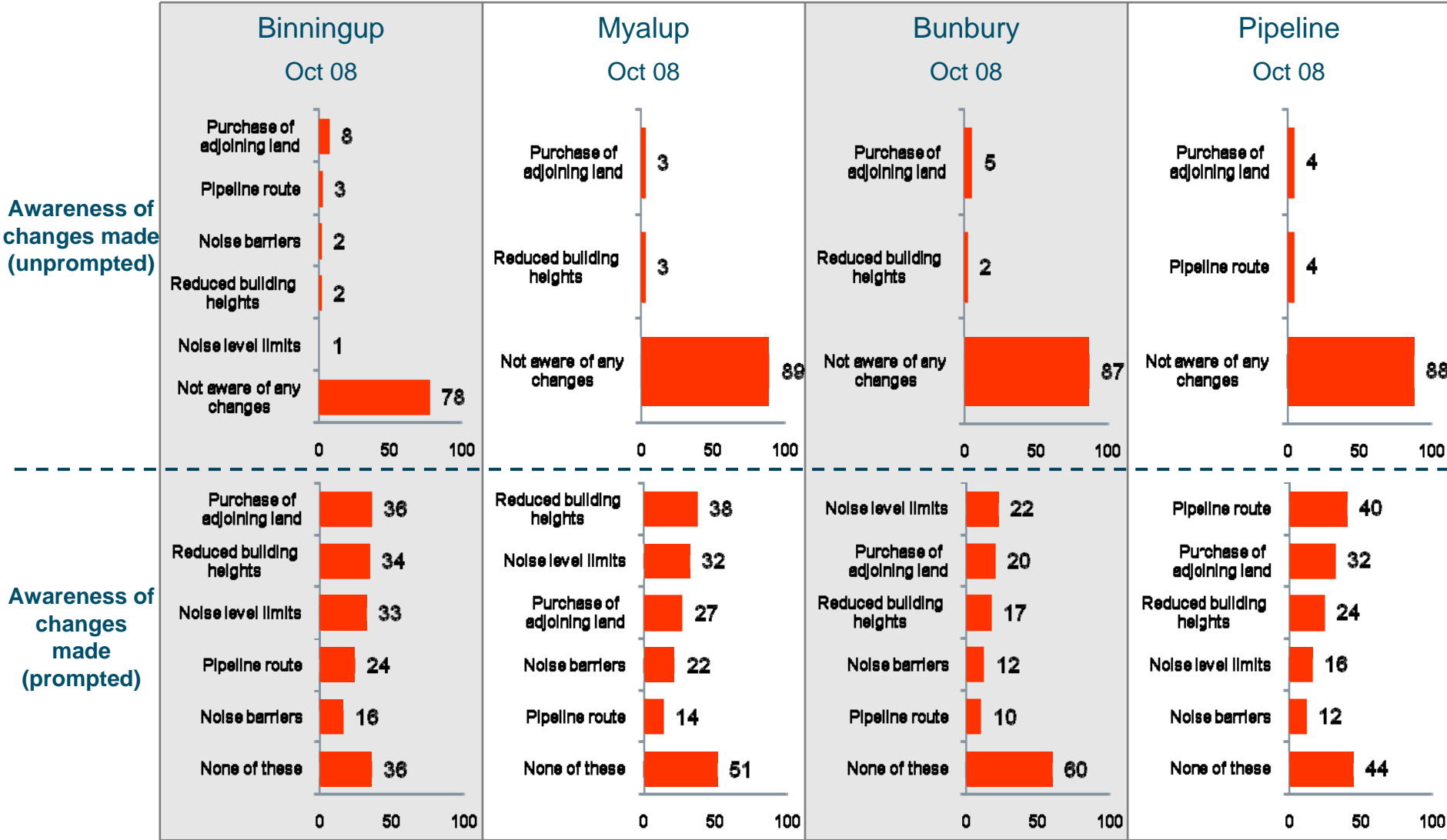
↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

The community is divided in regard to the Water Corporation's responsiveness to community concerns

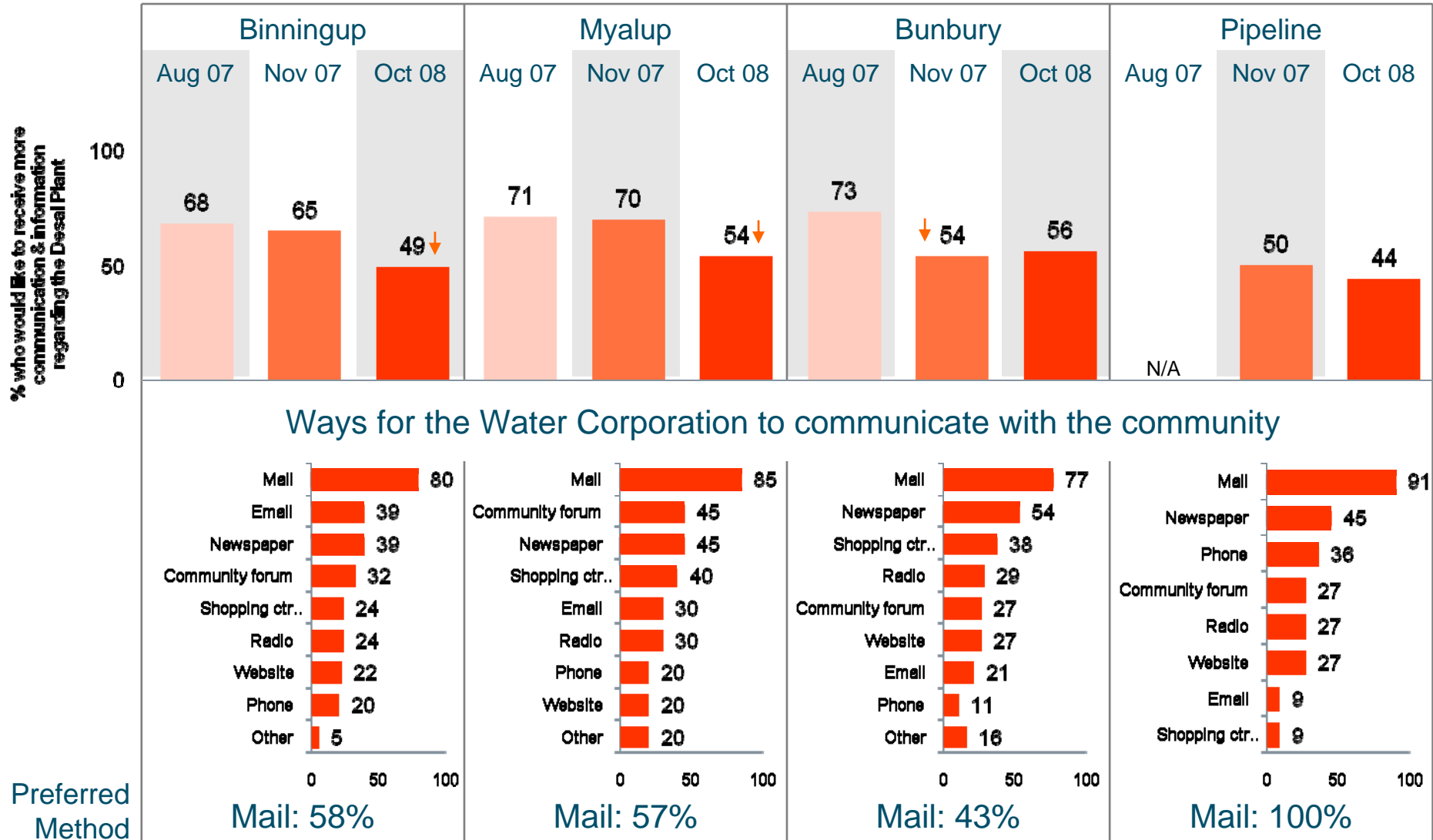


↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

There is low unprompted awareness of the changes the Water Corporation have made to the SSDP based on community feedback



Fewer residents are seeking information about the plant compared to last year

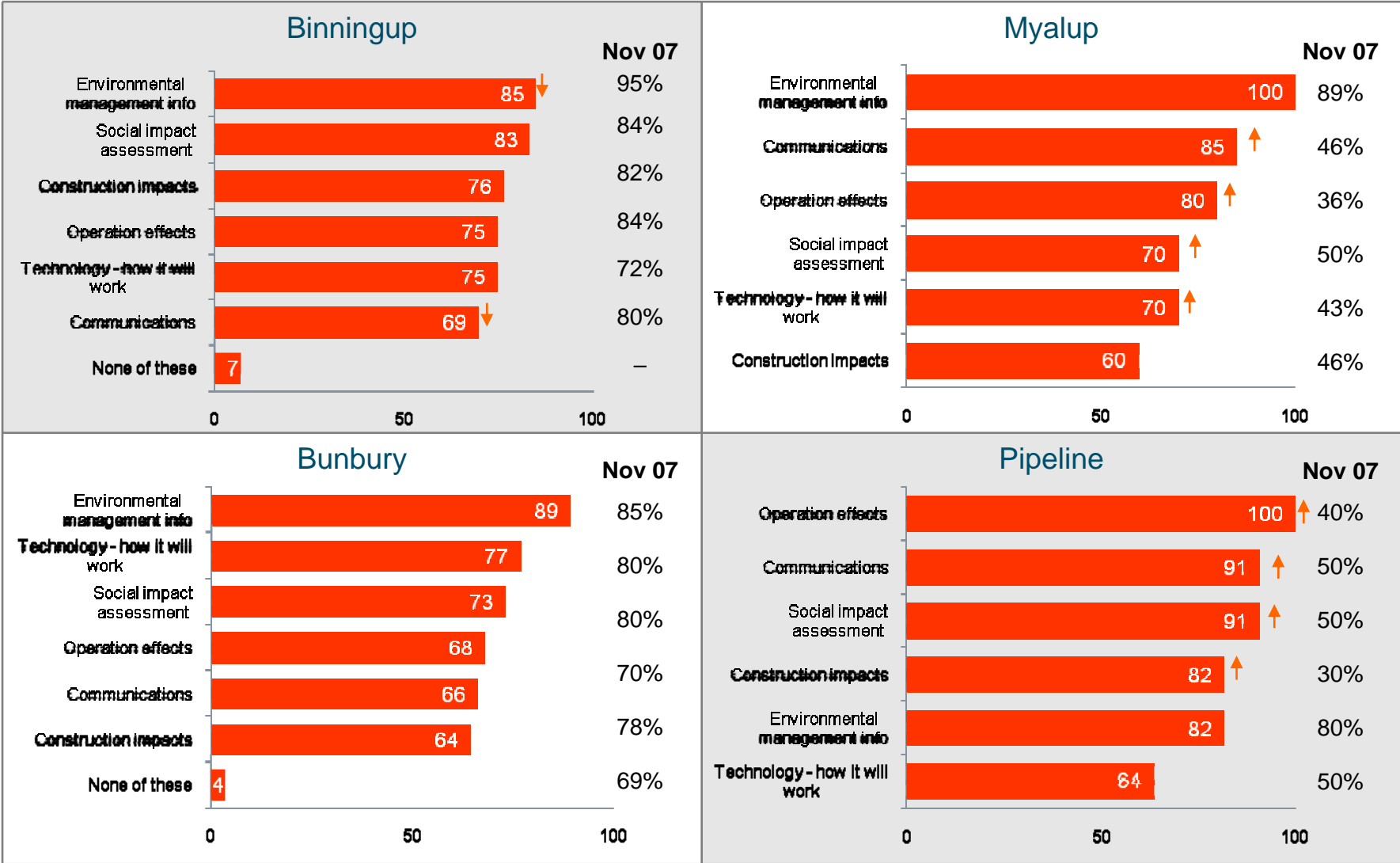


↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Residents seek further information about environmental management and the social impact assessment



Would like information about the Desalination Project in the following areas:

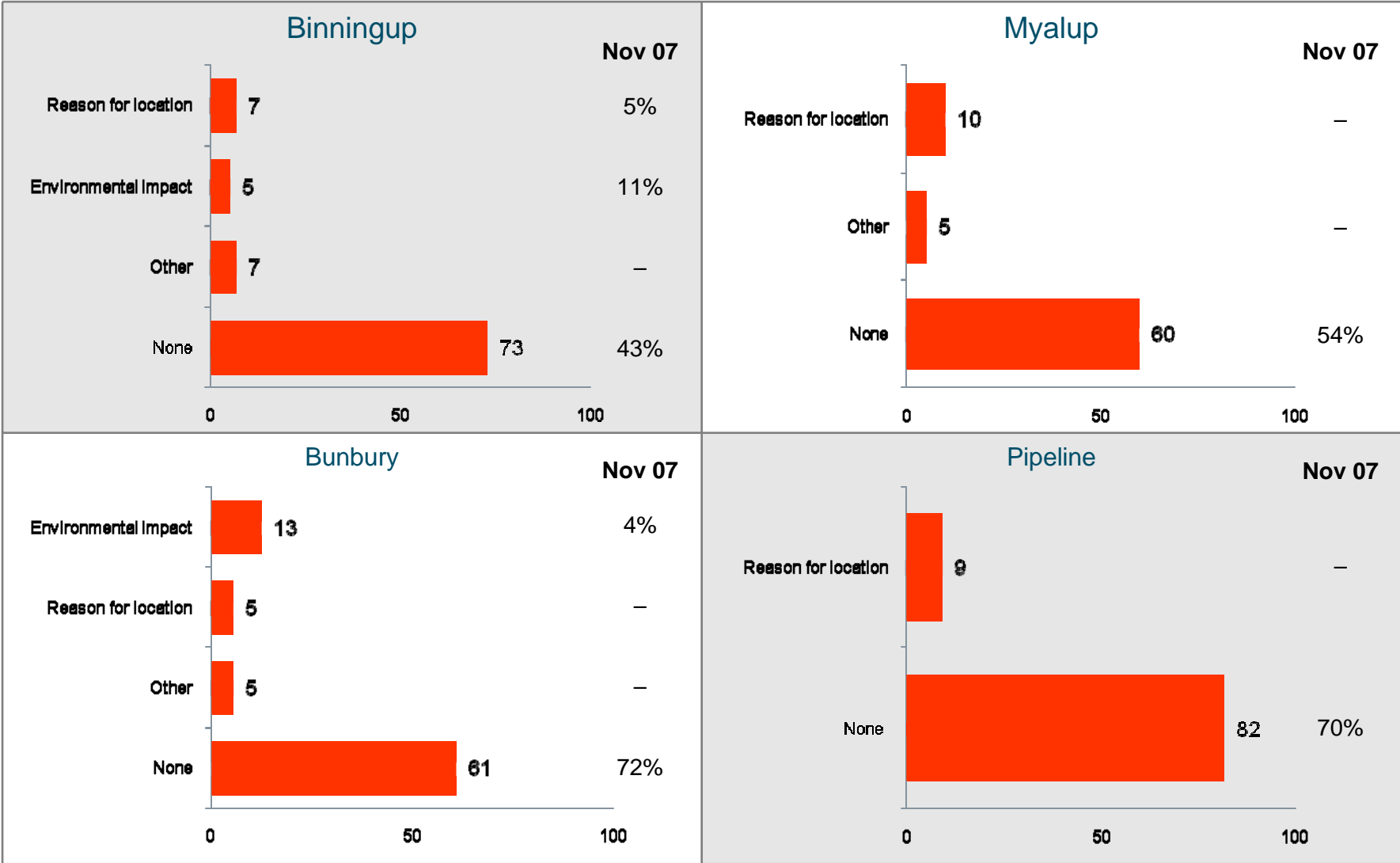


↑↓ Significant change since previous wave

Some would also like further information around the reasons for selecting the Taranto Road site



What other information residents would like regarding the Desalination Project

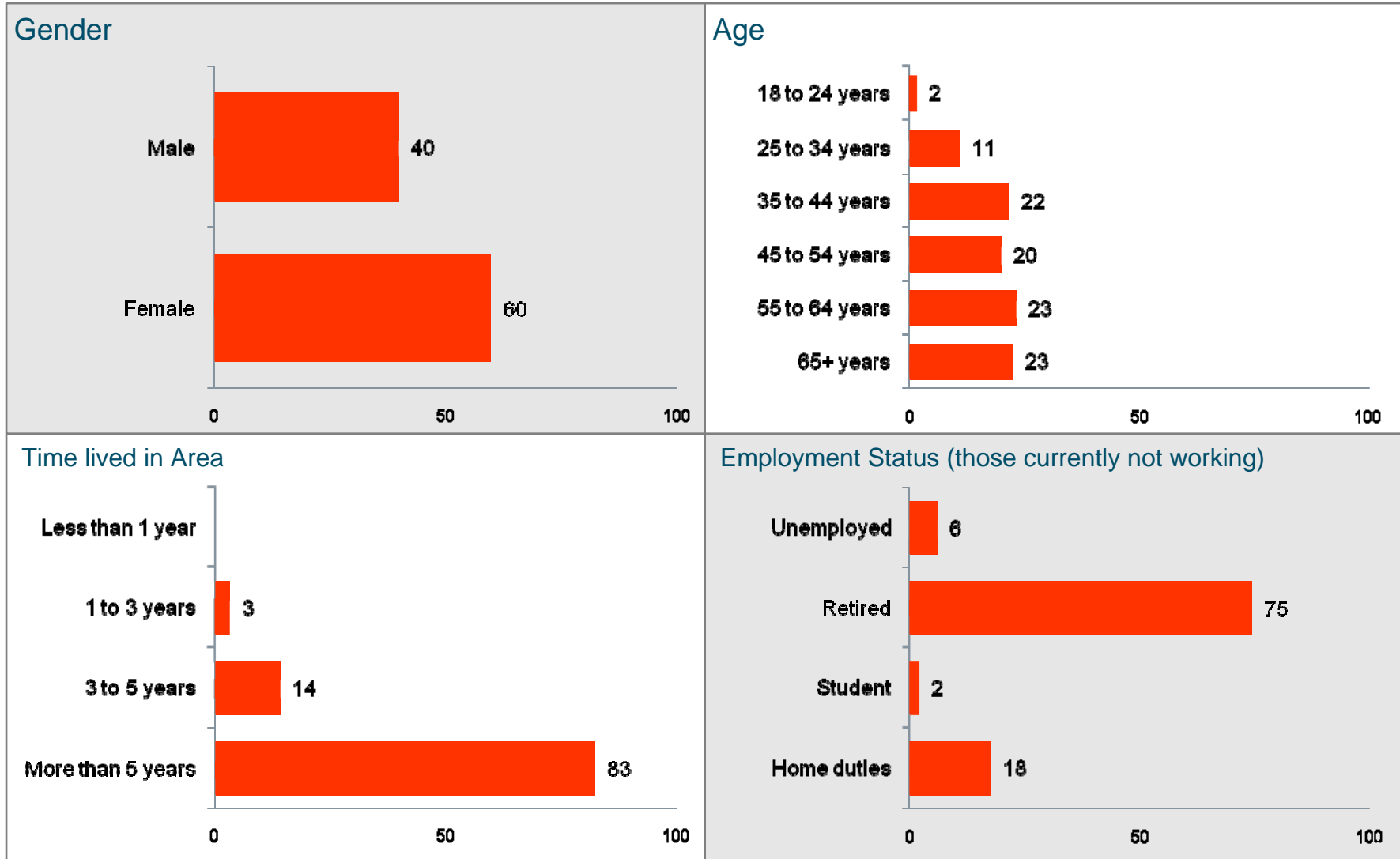


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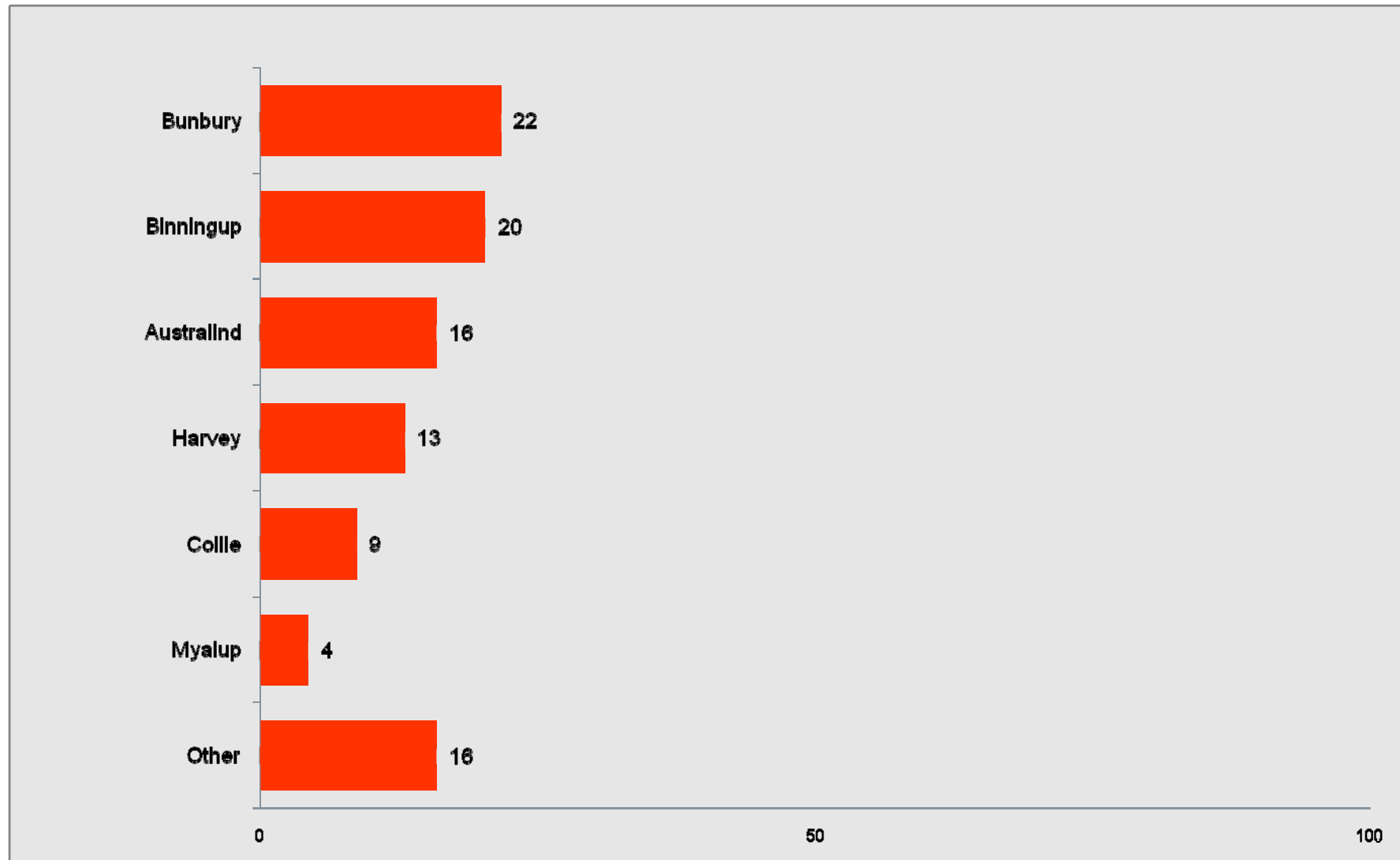
Appendix

- Respondent Profile

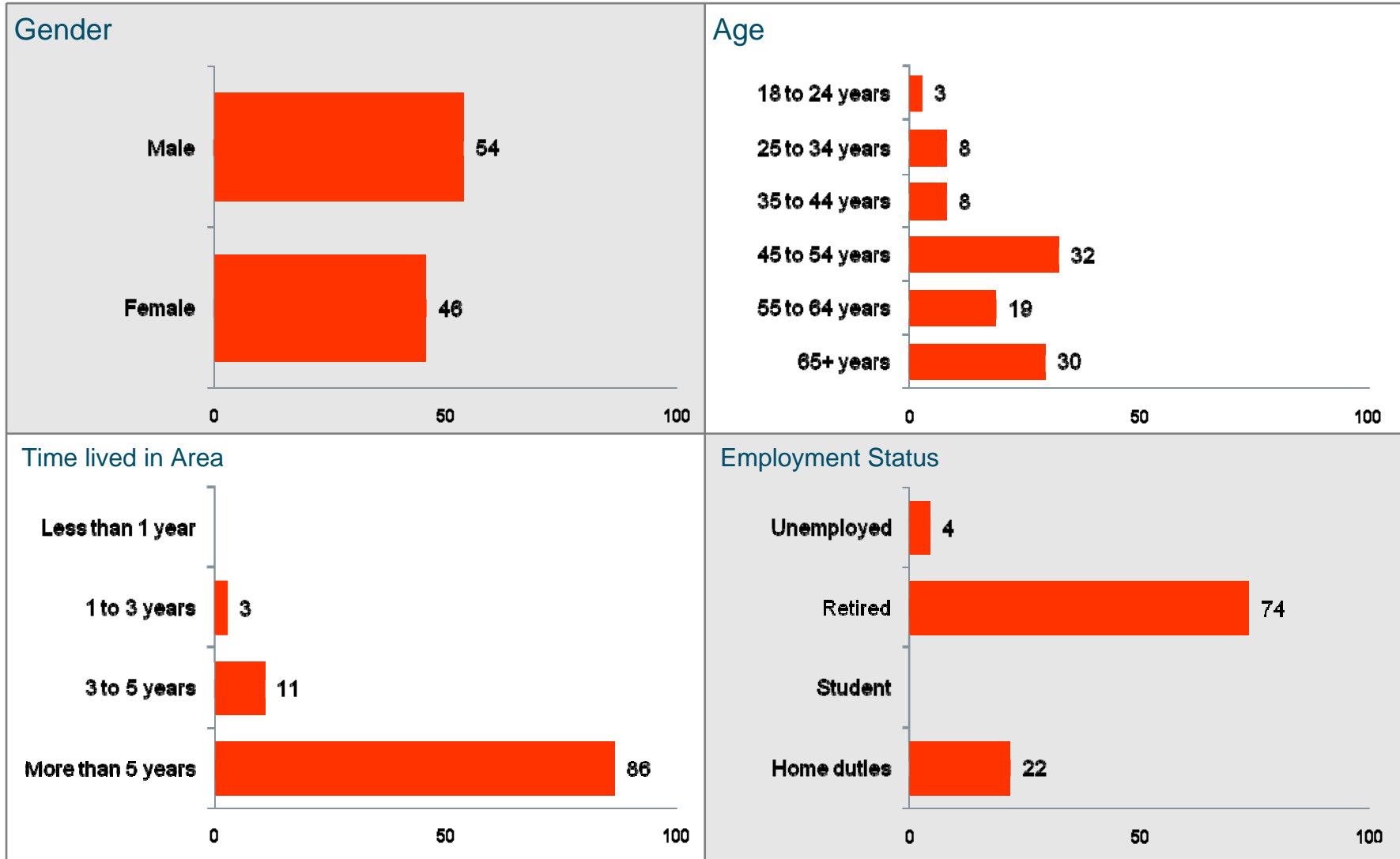
Respondent Profile - Binningup



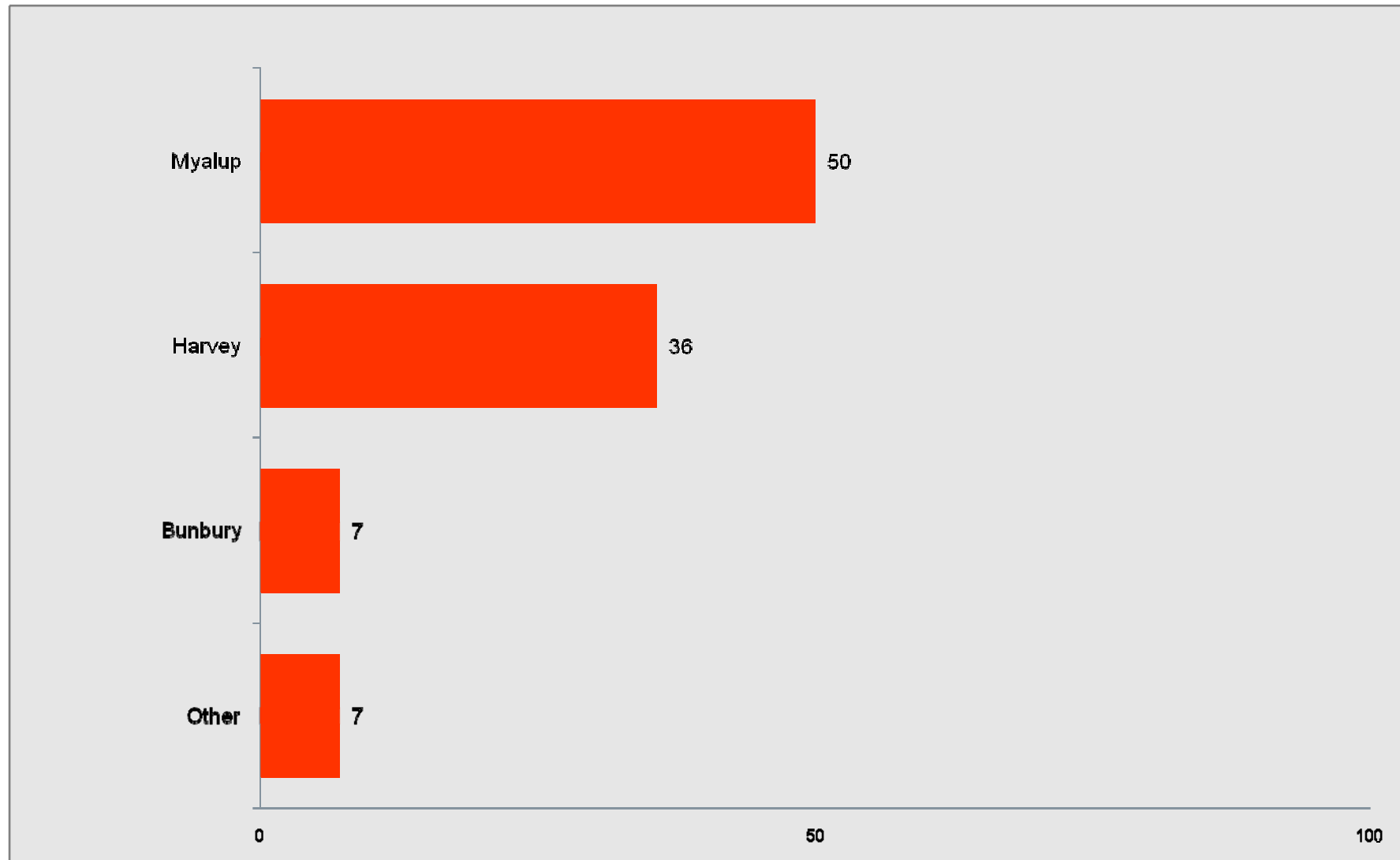
Suburb of Employment - Binningup



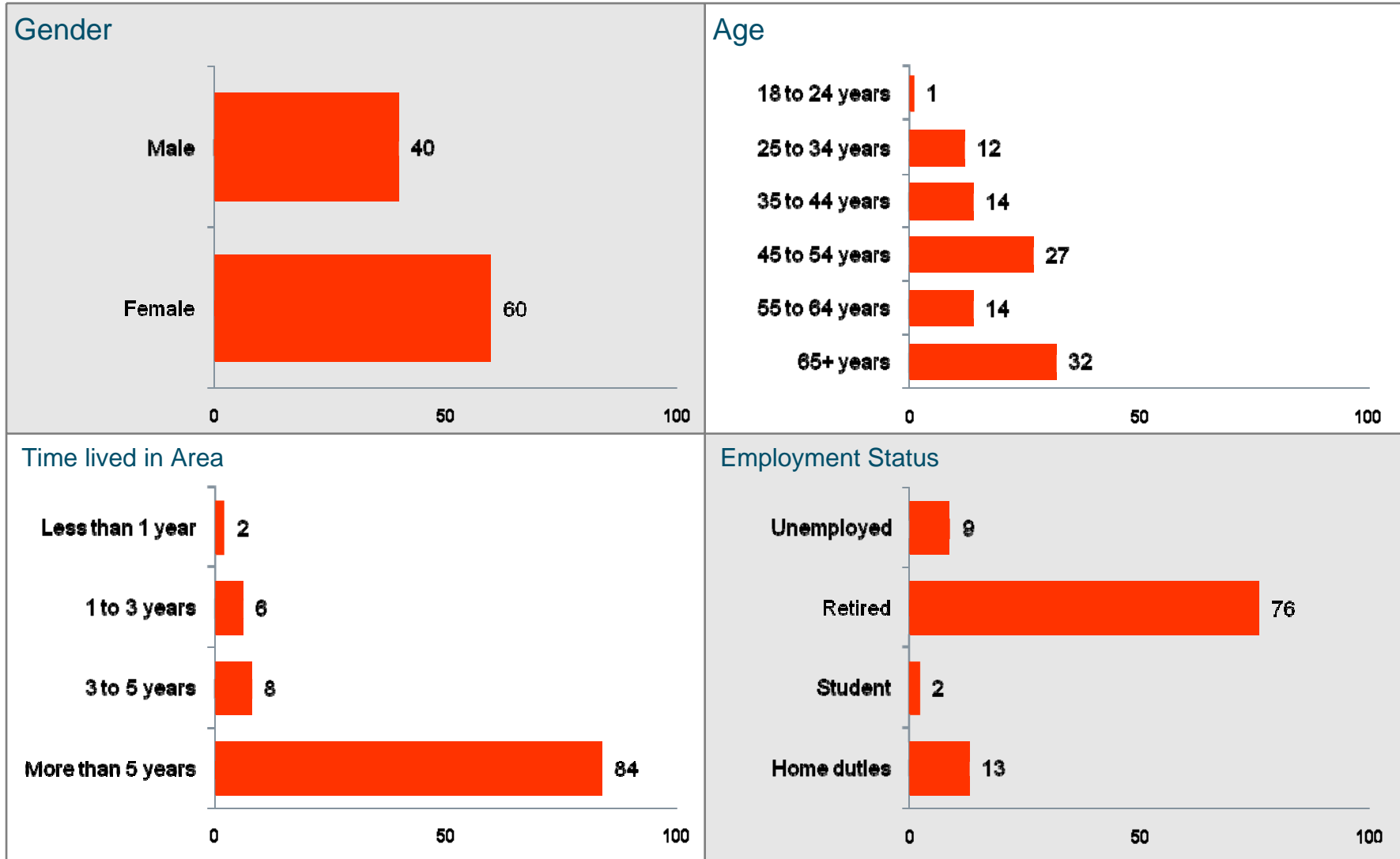
Respondent Profile - Myalup



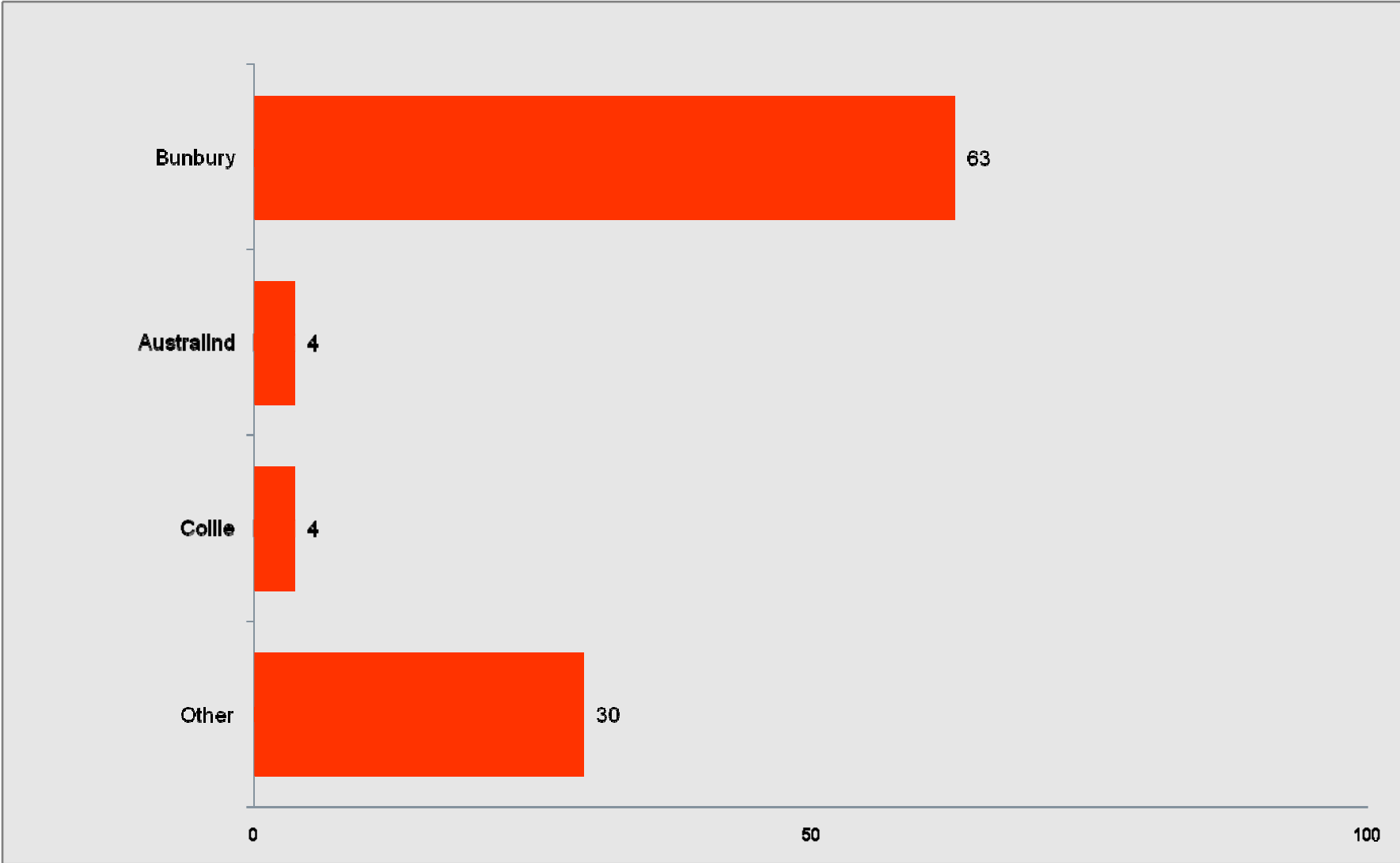
Suburb of Employment - Myalup



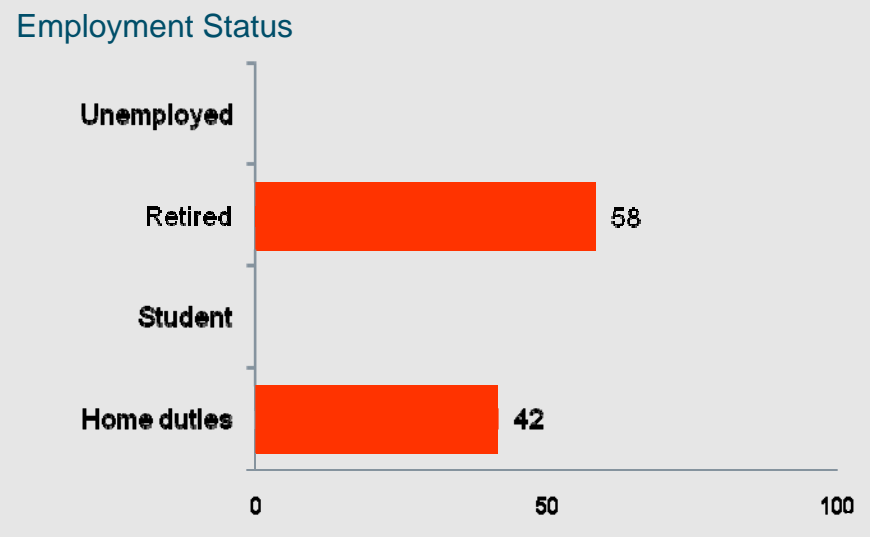
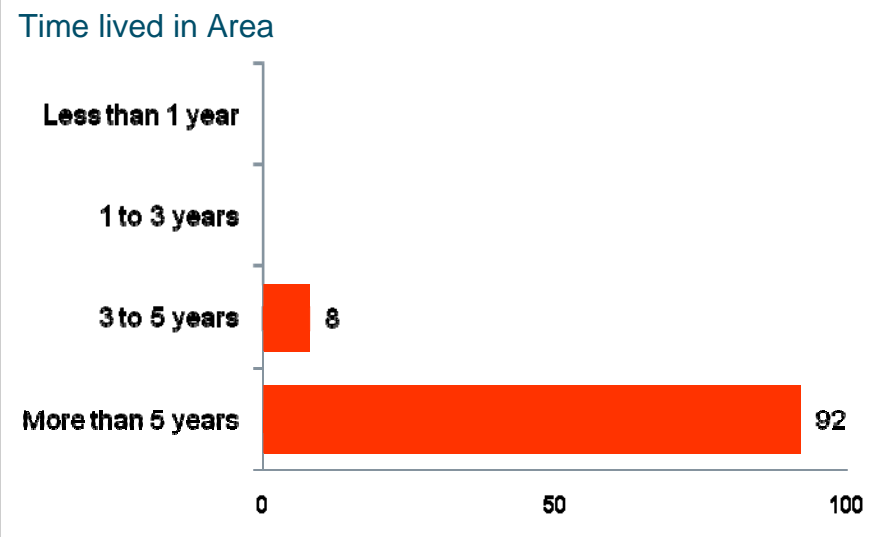
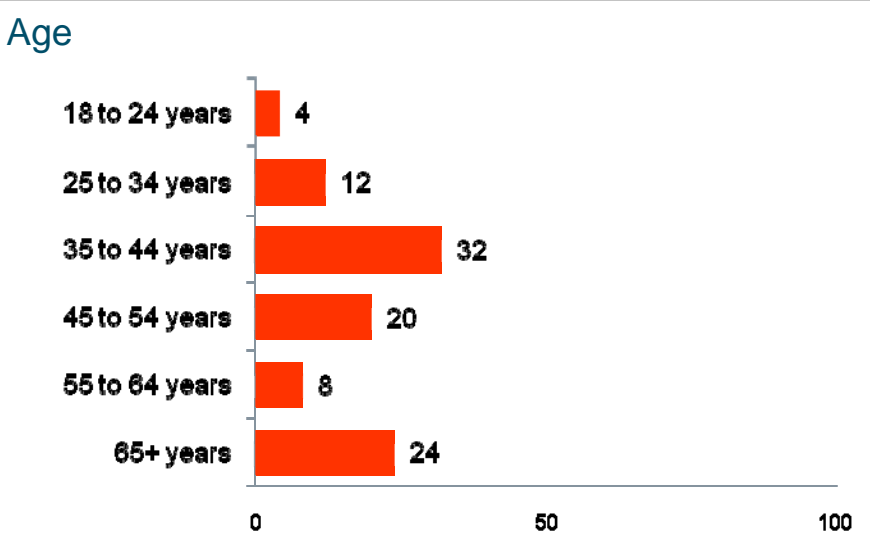
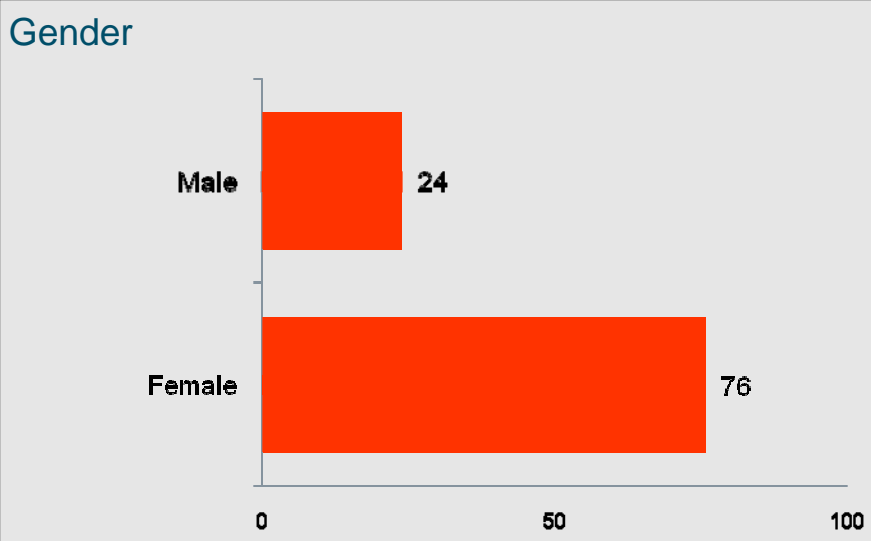
Respondent Profile - Bunbury



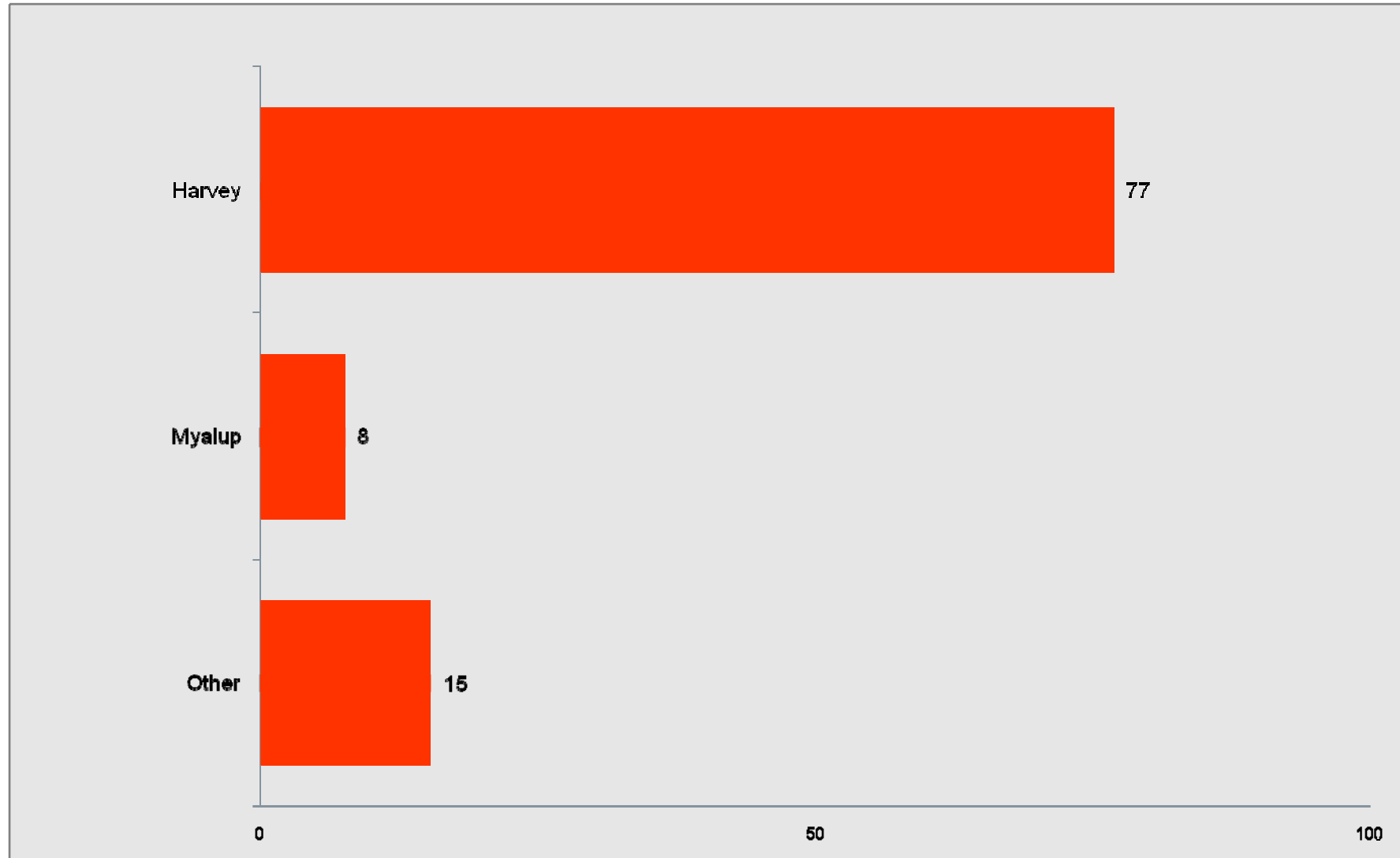
Suburb of Employment - Bunbury



Respondent Profile - Pipeline Path



Suburb of Employment - Pipeline Path



With the exception of Bunbury, interviewing continued in each area until phone numbers were exhausted



- The table below details the interviewing statistics achieved in the research.

	Binningup	Myalup	Bunbury	Pipeline path
Number of households (with phone numbers available)	445	107	50,000	42
Refusals	61	0	172	
Disconnected numbers/ no longer in area	201	65	271	
English difficulties/deaf	7	3	11	
Disconnected numbers	43	2	5	16
No answer	10		150	1
Not suitable (Know someone who works or has recently worked at the Water Corporation)	3		26	
Sample size achieved	120	37	100	25

- See appendix for full details regarding the demographic profile of each sample.

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