

Australian Government Information Access Study

Australia

June 2023



Australian Government
Office of the Australian
Information Commissioner



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Research Design



Research Design



The OAIC commissioned Woolcott Research & Engagement to investigate awareness and experience of information access rights amongst the general public.

A mixed mode survey amongst n=405 Australian residents aged 18+ years was conducted between June 9 and June 19 2023 utilising an online panel and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). A breakdown of respondents by state/territory is displayed below:

ACT	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	WA
n=9	n=135	n=91	n=8	n=113	n=49

Quotas were set by state, gender, age and location (metro/ regional when applicable), and data was post-weighted to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Significant differences in results at the 95% confidence level between years are shown in **GREEN** (increased significantly) or **RED** (decreased significantly).

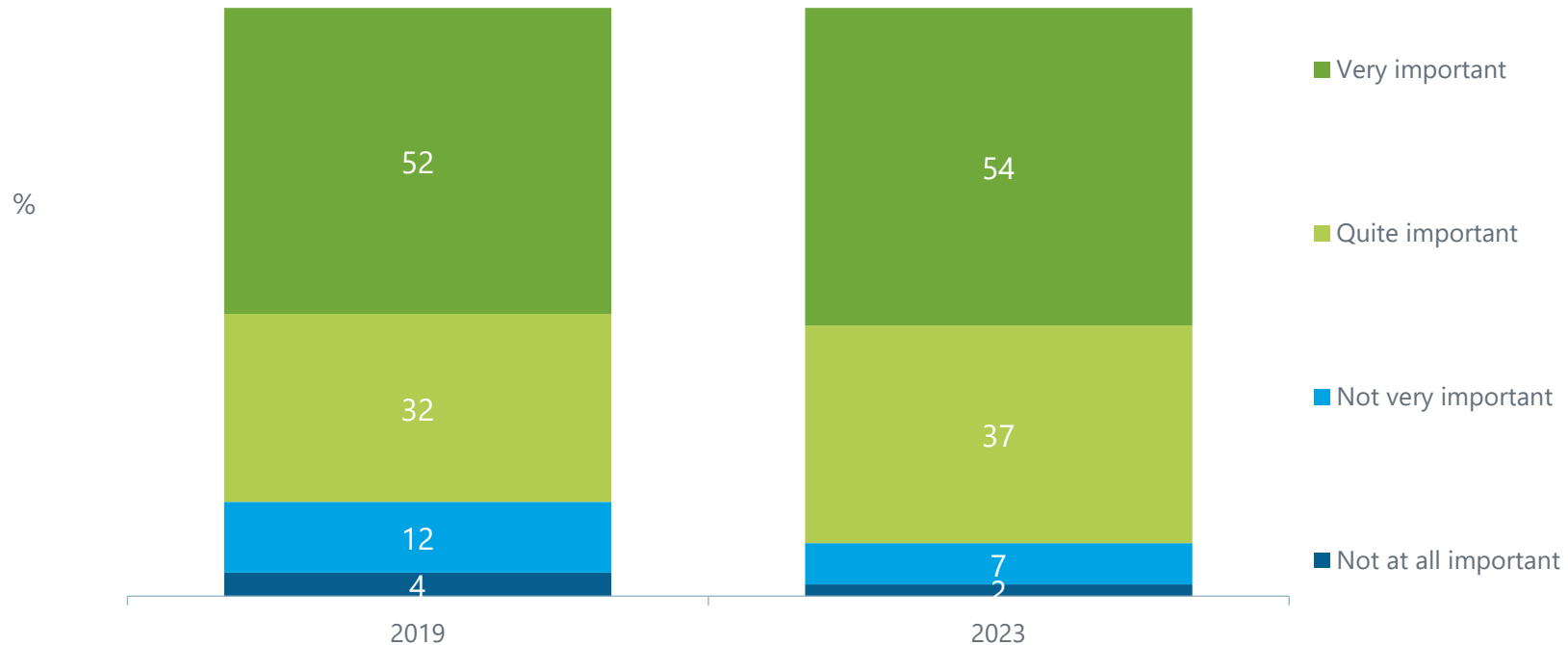
Due to rounding, percentages may not always add to 100.



Information Access



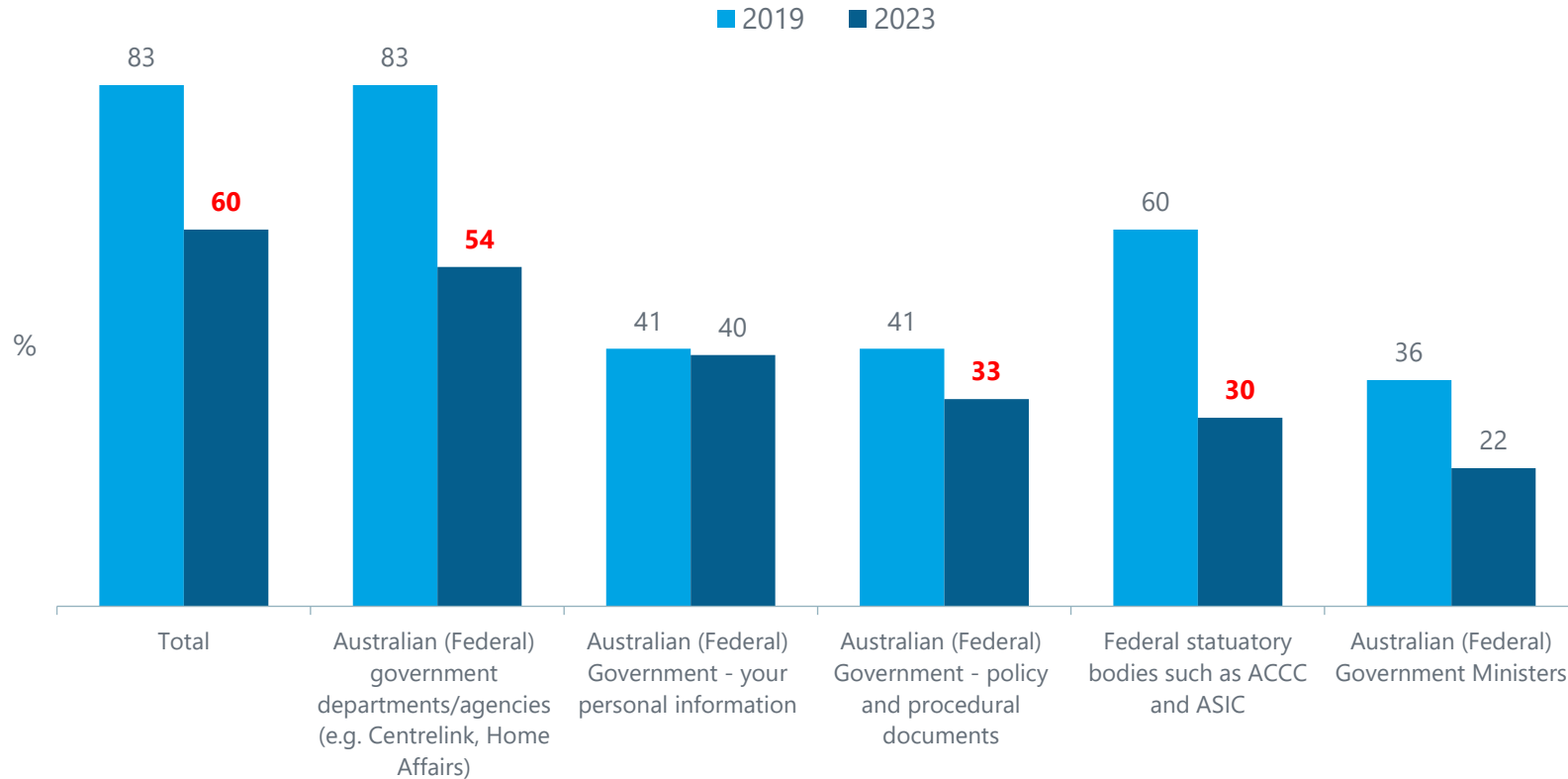
Importance of Having the Right to Access Government Information



Majority of Australians (91%) indicated it was important to have the right to access government information.



Awareness of Right to Access Information



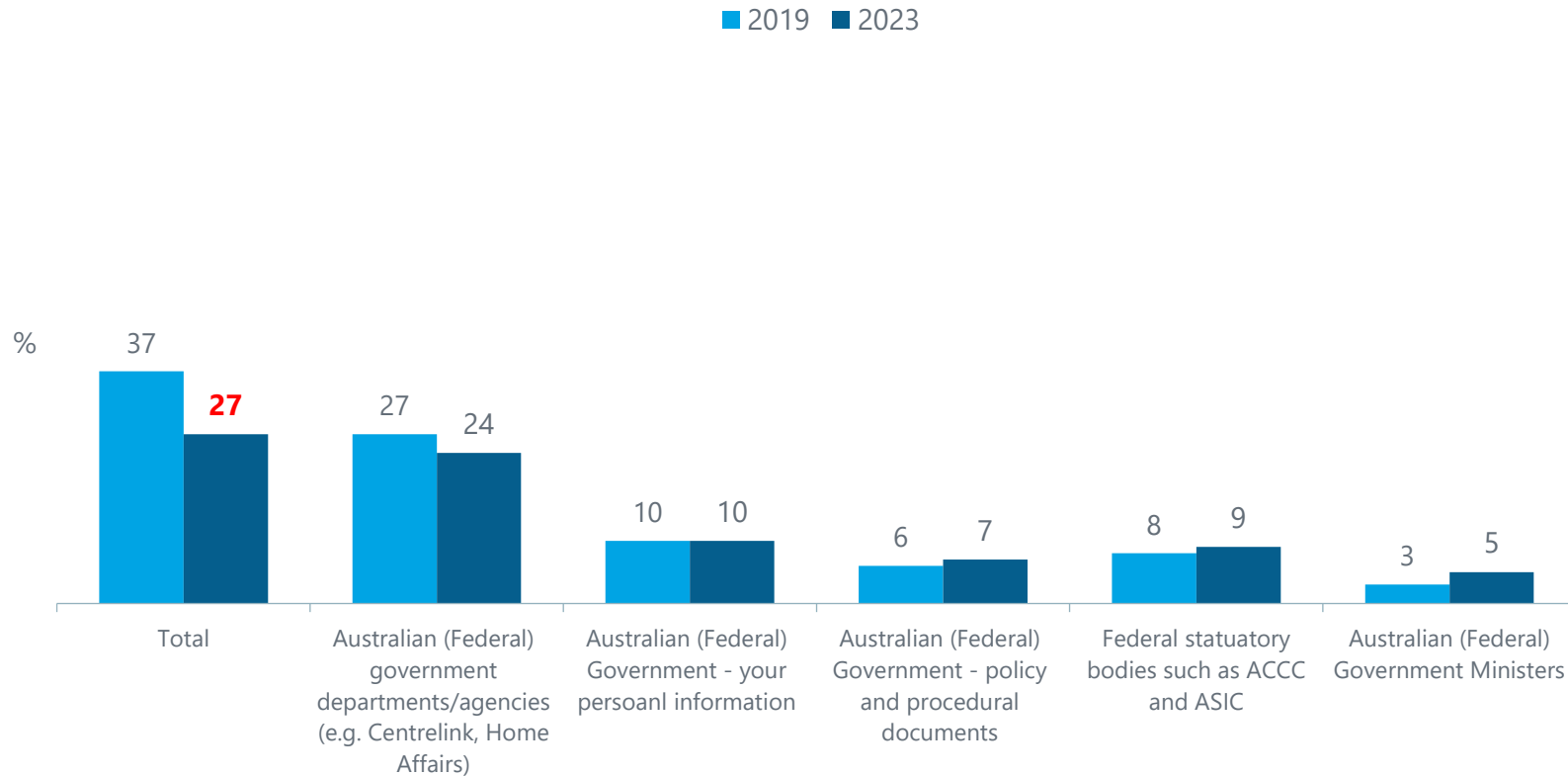
60% of the Nation were aware of the right to access information from federal agencies.

The awareness of the right to access was highest for Federal agencies, and to access your personal information.

Fewer were aware of the ability to access Government Ministers.



Attempts to Access Information in the Last 3 Years



Nationally, less than one third (27%) of respondents had tried to access information in the last three years.

Respondents were most likely to have attempted to access information from Federal government departments/agencies, and least likely to have attempted to access information from Federal Ministers.

Q6. In the last 3 years have you tried to access information held by? MR

Base: All respondents; Total 2019 n=1005; 2023 n=405

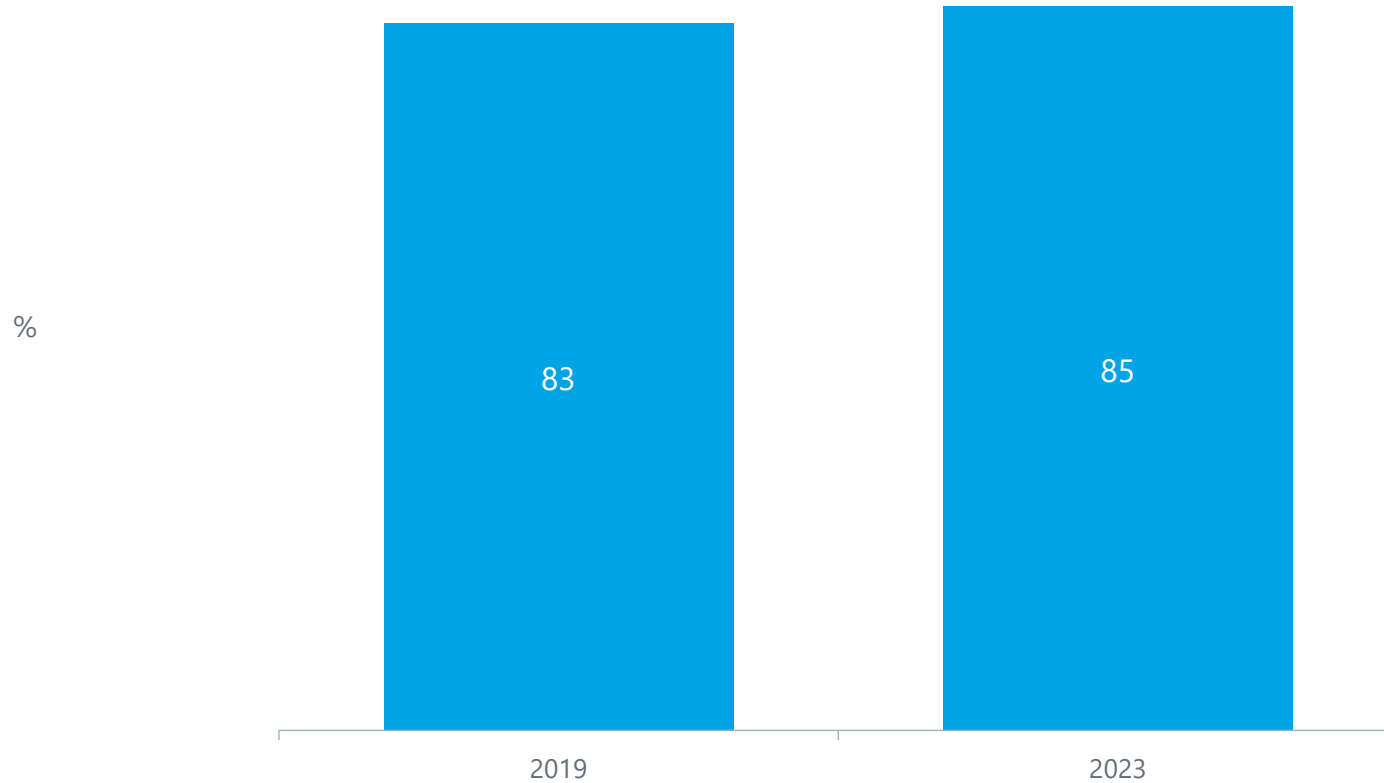
Respondents who had attempted to access information Govt. agencies 2019 n= 272, 2023 n=99; Statutory bodies 2019 n=80; 2023 n=37; Personal Information 2019 n=92, 2023 n=40; Policy and Procedural documents 2019 n=53, 2023 n=27; Ministers 2019 n=33, 2023 n=19



Success in Attempting to Access Information



Incidence of Success



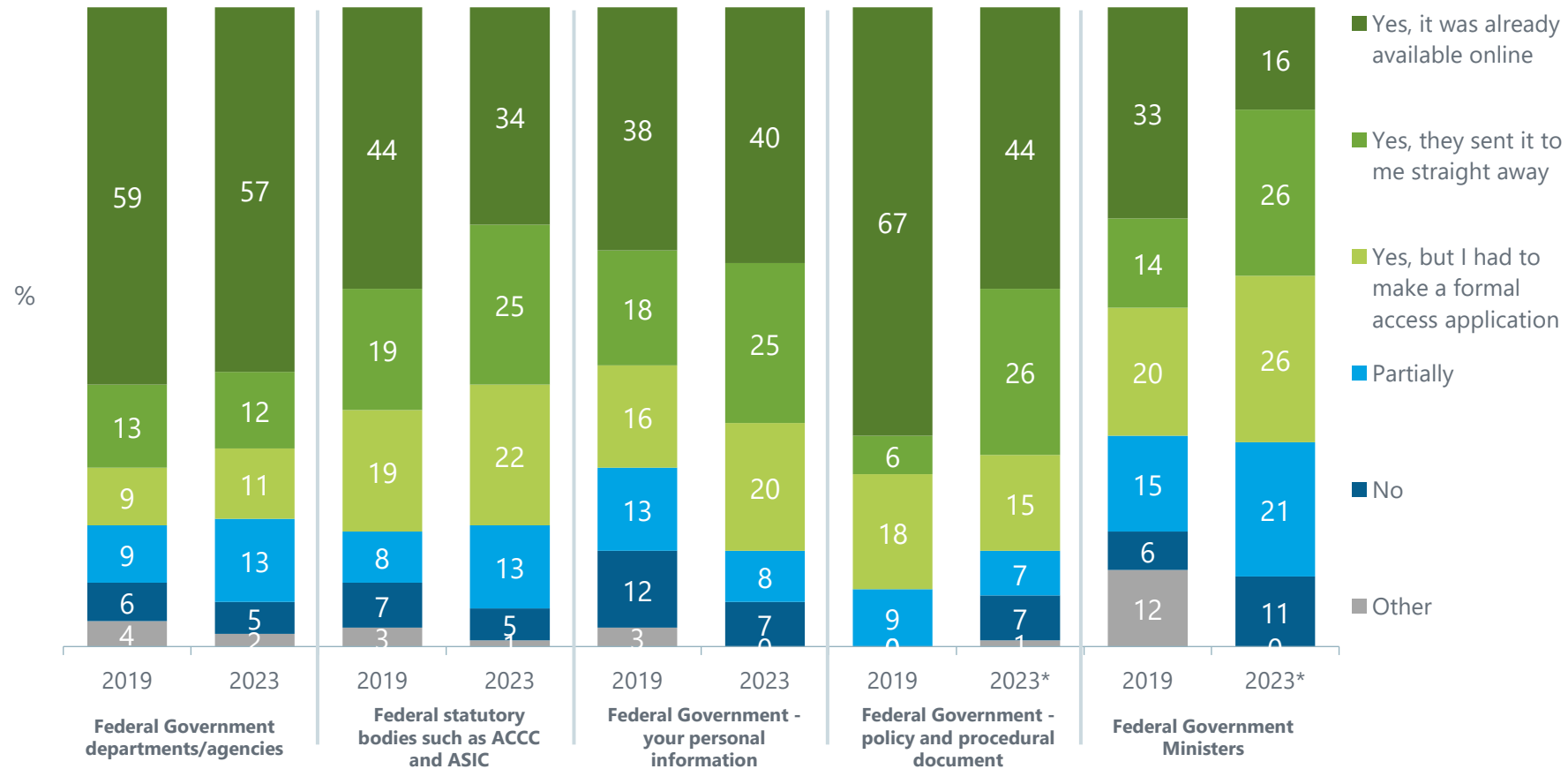
The majority of Australians were successful in accessing information from all Australian Government entities where access was attempted.



Success in Attempting to Access Information



Agencies Accessed



The majority of Australians were successful in accessing information from almost all Australian Government entities where access was attempted.

Respondents were less successful accessing information from Ministers.

Q7. Were you successful in accessing information from ...? SR

Base: Respondents who had attempted to access information; 2019 n=369; 2023 n=110

Respondents who had attempted to access information Govt. agencies 2019 n= 272; 2023 n=99; Statutory bodies 2019 n=80; 2023 n=37; Personal Information 2019 n=92, 2023 n=40; Policy and Procedural documents 2019 n=53, 2023 n=27*; Ministers 2019 n=33, 2023 n=19*

*Caution: small base size, indicative only



Demographics



Gender & Age



		ACT % (n=9*)	NSW % (n=135)	QLD % (n=91)	TAS % (n=8*)	VIC % (n=113)	WA % (n=49)
Gender 	Female	78	50	47	63	47	55
	Male	22	50	53	37	53	45
	Gender Neutral	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Prefer not to indicate	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age 	18-24		14	7	0	7	2
	25-34	22	20	20	0	25	16
	35-44	11	20	13	0	25	20
	45-54	22	13	20	38	13	18
	55-64		21	23	13	11	16
	65-74	11	10	12	0	15	16
	75+	33	2	5	50	4	10





Q2. Which of the following age brackets do you belong to?

Q3. Do you identify as being...?

Base: All respondents; Total n=405 (ACT n=9*, NSW n=135, QLD n=91, TAS n=8*, VIC n=113, WA n=49) **CAUTION *indicates small bases sizes**

Working Status & Main Language Spoken



		ACT % (n=9*)	NSW % (n=135)	QLD % (n=91)	TAS % (n=8*)	VIC % (n=8)	WA % (n=49)
Working Status 	Working full time	67	48	48	38	44	45
	Retired	33	14	19	50	18	29
	Working part time	-	15	19	-	24	18
	Unemployed	-	7	6	13	4	4
	Engaged in home duties	-	10	7	-	6	2
	Student	-	7	2	-	4	2
	Prefer not to answer	-	-	-	-	-	-
Main Language Spoken 	English	100	84	93	100	91	92
	Other	-	16	7	-	9	8



Q8. Which of these categories best describes you?

Q9. What is the main language spoken at home?

Base: All respondents; Total n=405 (ACT n=9*, NSW n=135, QLD n=91, TAS n=8*, VIC n=113, WA n=49) **CAUTION *indicates small bases sizes**

Summary



Summary



The majority (91%) of Australians felt that their right to access information from government sources was very or quite important.

60% of the Nation were aware of the right to access information from federal agencies.

- The awareness of the right to access was highest for Federal agencies, and to access your personal information.
- Fewer were aware of the ability to access information from Federal Ministers.

Nationally, less than one third (27%) of respondents had tried to access information in the last three years.

- Respondents were most likely to have attempted to access information from Federal government departments/agencies, and least likely to have attempted to access information from Federal Ministers.

The majority of Australians were successful in accessing information from all Australian Government entities where access was attempted. Those least successful were those who attempted to access information from Federal Ministers.





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