

Courts' Users and Partners Survey

Report on the Results of
the Courts' Users and Partners Survey

March 2012

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Executive Summary

From October to December 2011, the Queensland Courts Service (QCS) conducted a State-wide survey of our courts' users and partners to gain their opinions of the services we provide. The results will be used to establish a baseline view of who our most regular courts' users are and their expectations of our services.

The response to the survey (1859 responses) exceeded expectations. The survey collected both qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of respondents including legal professionals, self-represented litigants, jurors, witnesses, mercantile agents and members of the public. Staff members were excluded from the scope.

The high response rate has provided QCS with significant feedback to review and consider.

Overall, results indicate satisfaction with the services provided by QCS across the State. Particular highlights include:

- 90.8% of all respondents either strongly agreed or agreed to the statement, *I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff.*
- 87.8 % of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement, *I am satisfied by how quickly I was attended to by staff.*

The importance of the content and performance of the QCS website and the request for new or improved technology services, such as wi-fi, is highlighted by the many comments and suggestions for improvements. The legal profession, who comprise 25% of respondents and are regular users of court services and facilities, provided much comment on online services, the standard of facilities, and availability of meetings rooms.

Of those who were visiting the courthouse for the first time or who rarely visit, 97% of this group of respondents expressed satisfaction with the timeliness and professionalism of staff, public facilities, and safety within the courthouse.

In 45 of the 83 courthouses across Queensland, 14% of the 1859 total respondents identified their primary reason for visiting as *seeking Justice of the Peace services* which highlights the importance of providing access to this service across urban and regional (including remote) Queensland.

While the overall responses indicate satisfaction with the processing of applications for Grant of Probate and Default Judgment by Registrars, comments indicate that the processing of documentation takes too long and that more explanation of the results would be useful.

As this was the first survey of our courts' users and partners on this scale, there are no comparative findings to be made.

Survey results have been analysed by the QCS to identify key areas for improvement that will inform our 2012-13 planning processes. The resulting baseline also gives us a starting point with which to compare future surveys.

Overall, the results are very encouraging and we are proud of the services provided by our committed and hard working staff.

Background

The requirement to better understand the needs of our courts' users and partners was articulated in the Queensland Courts Services 2011-2015 Strategic Plan under QCS1: *provide better courts services to courts' users and our partners*. Specifically, the strategy identified was: *engage with courts' users and our partners to understand their needs*.

Survey Development

As a result of this strategy being initiated, it was decided to develop a survey for our courts' users and partners. A small working party consisting of representatives from the Supreme, District and Land Courts Service; Magistrates Court Service; Quality Management Unit, and Corporate Governance Branch met to develop this survey.

Consultation with Stakeholders

Consultation on the development of this survey with the Heads of Jurisdiction of the Queensland Courts occurred on 21 September 2011. The Heads of Jurisdiction were very supportive of the survey being conducted.

Consultation also took place with the Court Users Reference Group (CURG) on 22 September 2011, where the Bar Association of Queensland and the Queensland Law Society were invited to provide feedback on the survey. The feedback provided was very favourable with both the Association and Society suggesting that the survey be further promoted on their websites with accompanying hyperlink so they can participate.

Scope of the Survey

The scope of the survey focused on all users of services provided by Queensland Courts across the State, with a focus on registry services. A wide range of respondents participated in the survey including legal professionals, self-represented litigants, jurors, witnesses, mercantile agents and members of the public. Staff members were excluded from the scope of the survey.

The survey questions were specifically developed to obtain information on the following key areas:

- Identification of courts users;
- Timeliness and professionalism of staff;
- Location and layout of courthouses; and
- Provision of, and access to, information.

The survey was designed to be completed in 5-10 minutes. Of the 20 survey questions:

- 11 questions were Likert scale ratings (for example: strongly disagree/disagree/neither agree nor disagree/agree/strongly agree);
- 8 questions provided fixed options to select via check boxes or radio button bars;
- 17 of the questions provided an opportunity for the respondents to provide additional comments or to specify further if they chose to, with question 20 providing the opportunity for respondents to make any additional general comments.

Survey Marketing and Deployment

Prior to the survey being released, an information kit was distributed electronically to the Queensland Courts' Regional Directors for further distribution through each of their regions. The information kit contained:

- Survey project outline;
- Instructions for staff on promotion and distribution of the survey;
- Signage for the registry;
- Online survey link for staff to add to their signature block on emails; and
- Details for return of hardcopy surveys.

All courthouses were provided with hardcopy surveys. The online survey was developed and made accessible on the Queensland Courts website www.courts.qld.gov.au for the duration of the survey.

The survey was released on 10 October 2011 and closed on 31 December 2011.

Survey Results

The results of the survey provide Queensland Courts with formal feedback from our courts' users and partners on their perceptions of our registry services.

The response to the survey (1859 responses) exceeded expectations. It collected both formal qualitative and quantitative data. 734 surveys were completed electronically via the SurveyMonkey instrument and 1,125 hardcopy surveys were completed.

These results identified courts' users' and partners' perceptions of what the QCS does well and areas that could be considered for improvement. These results will be used to inform 2012-13 planning processes and provide a baseline with which to compare future survey results.

The results for each question are reported below.

Snapshot of the Legal Profession

25% of respondents identified themselves as Legal Professional, either working in private practice or with a public agency.

As Legal Professionals spend a considerable amount of their time in courthouses their feedback is a significant contribution to QCS's evaluation of its services. Some of the suggestions reflect the importance of the courthouse as being viewed almost as a 'second office' to many.

Many respondents took the time to provide suggestions for improvements, not just of the existing facilities, but of the potential for using technology to improve access and expedite processes, such as:

'The court needs computer areas in meeting rooms either wifi or cable for practitioners'.

'The ability to watch a hearing online would be quite useful as it can be difficult to sit in on a hearing, unless you have to because of other situations, e.g. work commitments, university'.

'Would like to see Mount Isa Daily Law Lists being emailed when District/ Supreme Court in town'.

'I suggest access to a computer room for the times we are expected to wait for three hours. We all have lives after all'.

'Caloundra Court badly needs installation of wi fi also an automated touch screen form selection including being hooked in to the Justice Intranet and printing facility needed similar to that in Federal Courts'.

Responses to: I have visited the site and found it easy to navigate.

Of the 470 Legal Professionals that responded, 10% have not visited the web site.
313 Legal Professionals expressed an opinion.

88% overall agreed/strongly agreed with the statement.

25% of these responses were from Brisbane and 75% from the regions.

FEATURE OF WEB SITE	COMMENTS (Suggestions for improvements)
Web site look and feel	A little too small writing . Needs to be in Auslan for Deaf people.
	Needs to be more user friendly .
	The website used to be very easy to use, but the recent changes have made the website very hard to navigate .
	I find that since the Queensland Courts website has been changed it is far more difficult to navigate - for example, it took nearly five minutes to find the Supreme Court Civil Lists clerk phone number.
	Since the update to the Qld Courts website, I have found it very difficult navigating to find the information I require. Also the forms search is totally unhelpful.
	I could not find the forms I needed on internet & had to come to registry to collect which was an extra trip.
	Quicker access to documents needed for work, such as immediate availability of Court orders, QP9 and Criminal History is the most important.
	Website pages which are often accessed, such as daily law list, e court and available trial dates, should be a one click stop from the main website.
	Locating forms such as Affidavits and Stat Decs to down load is difficult.
Content	The website has been recently changed and it is particularly difficult to navigate when trying to find contact details for the different courts.
	Could be improved e.g. List Courts locations in postal code.
	Would like to see more information e.g entire civil court files placed online , not just file numbers and parties.
	It would be nice to be able to access court lists (upcoming call over's, trials, etc) in advance. A calendar system and/or search by name via the web. This facility would be very helpful to clarify dates.
	All court documents that appear on the file should also be available in soft copy. These soft copies should also be stamped with the court seal.
	Some forms duplicated. " Forms " on Website not greatly user friendly. Forms are difficult to locate and require listing under alternative headings other than by Form number.
	The Court Calendars need to show the Judges for specific locations and specific dates.
	Not up to date eg Magistrate [name provided] is deceased but still listed as sitting (nb. This was corrected during the period of the survey).
	Mostly fine for judgments, law lists and forms but news updates and registry processes are not as easy to find.

FEATURE OF WEB SITE	COMMENTS (Suggestions for improvements)
	<p>Difficult to find library ref since recent changes & District Ct listings not available.</p> <p>Need online facility to search Magistrates Court civil files (like the one available for Supreme and District Court files).</p> <p>Publishing of Magistrate Court judgements of sentences etc would be valuable.</p> <p>Found it difficult to find details of QCAT Orders on the Net.</p> <p>The new QCAT Forms are confusing and too long. They cost us a fortune in paper. Online lodgement and payment should be a priority.</p>
eCOURTS	<p>The ecourts Civil Search changed its URL without notice it seems - even the terminal in the court itself was linking to the old, dead address.</p> <p>The website in its previous form was very user friendly. Ecourt, trial dates and daily law lists were easy to locate. The new website is complicated and the pages which lawyers usually need to access are hard to locate.</p> <p>Need to make the Ecourts a tab at the top of the page for ease of reference.</p> <p>When clicking on e-courts from the home page - there is an unnecessary page between that link and the search page.</p> <p>Some common pages are difficult to locate, such as Mags Court professional costs, interest rates, etc.</p> <p>E-Courts and Court calendars could be more prominently shown on the first page of the Courts website. It would be good if calendars could be accessed for all courts not just Brisbane.</p> <p>I would like to see files in ecourts accessed by the internet. eg affidavits and documents on file.</p>
Access & Technical Issues	<p>Sometimes the 'page cannot be displayed' on certain important sections. Some links frequently stop working.</p> <p>Still needs easier search.</p> <p>Not good. Cannot download many forms.</p> <p>Case database not always operational.</p> <p>Of late, approximately a month ago, the Qld Courts site has been a shamble with numerous 404 errors, a major inconvenience is no longer being able to view the daily list via the court website.</p>
Lodgement and Online filing	<p>Need a better way to lodge court copies of NTA and charge lists.</p> <p>Online access to file document lists such as in Supreme and District Courts would be a fantastic improvement.</p> <p>Online access to files, etc would be easier and also more online things, payment, view files, etc.</p>

FEATURE OF WEB SITE	COMMENTS (Suggestions for improvements)
	<p>We are users of all the courts in QLD and online. We would like a system where documents can all be lodged in one court not restricted to jurisdiction, this way we deal with one registrar and not every QLD registrar who often interpret the rules different.</p>
	<p>The electronic filing for the Planning and Environment Court is fantastic.</p>
	<p>eCourts is wonderful. It should be extended to all Registries and Jurisdictions. The placing of documents on the site for P&E is a great boon too. Subject to privacy issues, this should be extended to all matters.</p>
	<p>The P & E Court system of scanning documents and making them available on ECourts assists greatly in handling matters and in keeping costs of parties down.</p>
	<p>All court file documents should be accessible online similar to planning and environment court - it is well overdue.</p>

Snapshot of First Time and Rarely Visit Courts' Users and Partners

Respondents to the first time and rarely visit Queensland Courts category responded positively to their courthouse experiences.

Question 7 - I am satisfied with how quickly I was attended to by staff.

678 expressed an opinion.

95% agreed/strongly agreed

Question 8 - I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff.

693 expressed an opinion.

97% agreed/strongly agreed

'Simple task, but done politely and professionally'.

'The ticket was still printing when I was called to the counter'.

'Lady at counter was talking to security and took her time to serve me'.

'Obliging personnel and very helpful'.

'The wait time in the Registry was far too long. I was waiting on a DVO'.

'They don't know who is responsible for the interpreter'.

'Lack of deaf cultural awareness'.

Question 12 - I was able to easily find where I needed to go within the courthouse.

665 expressed an opinion.

98% agreed/strongly agreed

5% of these from Brisbane

Question 13 - I found the public facilities satisfactory overall.

566 expressed an opinion.

95% agreed/strongly agreed with the statement.

6% of these from Brisbane.

First Time and Rarely visit to courts (continued)

'The facilities are very old and even though they are clean in my opinion need upgrading'.

'The standard of the restrooms is unsatisfactory. They are in need of an overhaul'.

'Only issue was the men's toilet leaking water (slip hazard)'.

'Only one restroom for a room full of jurors!'.

'Soap needed in public toilets off foyer'.

'Parking was hard to find'.

'Had to stand outside on footpath for 3 hours awaiting the selection of a jury panel no seating/no shade in 35 degree - 40 degree heat'.

'Can be a little crowded'.

'I also noticed that it is not very user friendly for the elderly'.

'Air conditioning is too cold, needs more lighting'.

'Jury room too small, clock showing incorrect time'.

'Toilet facilities are very unpleasant'. (jury member)

Question 14 - I felt safe in the courthouse

Of the 742 respondents who identified as being first time visitors or who visited the courts rarely the overwhelming response was that they felt safe in the courthouse.

656 expressed an opinion.

6% of these respondents were from Brisbane.

98% of 656 agreed/strongly agreed with the statement.

5% of these from Brisbane.

'Just criminals coming up to me as I was a girl alone'.

'Need more security officers'.

'Too many bad crims and no security'.

'Much security was helpful in feeling this'.

'There is no visible security'.

Snapshot of Justice of the Peace services

265 respondents identified their primary reason for visiting a courthouse as *seeking Justice of the Peace services*. Of this number, 3 were from Brisbane.

60% of these respondents were seeking JP Services to process documentation, while 11% were there to seek information.

How often do you use Registry services	Total responses 265
2-3 times per week	7
Once per month or less	59
Rarely	129
First Time	38

*'The first time I looked for the volunteer JP service I got lost - although it is part of registry it is not mentioned on the floor plan next to the lift. Please mention it there or have a sign immediately on entering the court before security'.
(Brisbane respondent)*

	Total responses 265 (6+)
Holland Park	40
Ipswich	31
Dalby, Wynnum	24 each
Ayr	20
Southport	15
Beenleigh	9
Stanthorpe	8
Goondiwindi, Maroochydore Richmond, Warwick	6 each

Question 1 - Respondent Categories

There were 10 options provided in the survey to respond to the statement: *Please select one of the following options that best describes your role when contacting the registry today.*

A further 357 respondents utilised the “other (please specify)” option to provide a more specific response that best identified their role. An example of the breadth of these responses is below:

Court support	Legal Professional, Government Agency	Support family/friend	QSC employee	DV support representative
Volunteer	Dept of Communities	Rego/Licence/logbook	Agent for law firm	Law clerk
Justice of the Peace	Community Service Worker	Probation and Parole officer	Government agency	Community legal centre
Tenant advocate	Birth certificate	Real Estate	Teacher	Property manager
Adult Guardian	Friends of court	Law Student	NGO	Housing Commission
Defendant	Bond Loan form	Funeral Director	permits	Paying fine
Police	Legal agency	Child Witness Support worker	Youth Justice Court Officer	ATSILS field officer
Journalist/reporter	Builder	Landlord	Masters student (legal research)	Filing clerk
Dept of Child Safety	Party to case	Indigenous health worker	Corrective services	Legal secretary
Security officer	Police prosecutor	Administrative professional	Commonwealth Bank	Paralegal private firm
Public seeking assistance	Law Enforcement Agency	Practice manager	Observer	Relationships Australia

These have subsequently been categorised into the following 4 additional sub-groupings of courts' users and partners:

- i) Legal Professional (Administration)
- ii) Other Government Department
- iii) Service Provider
- iv) Court Support

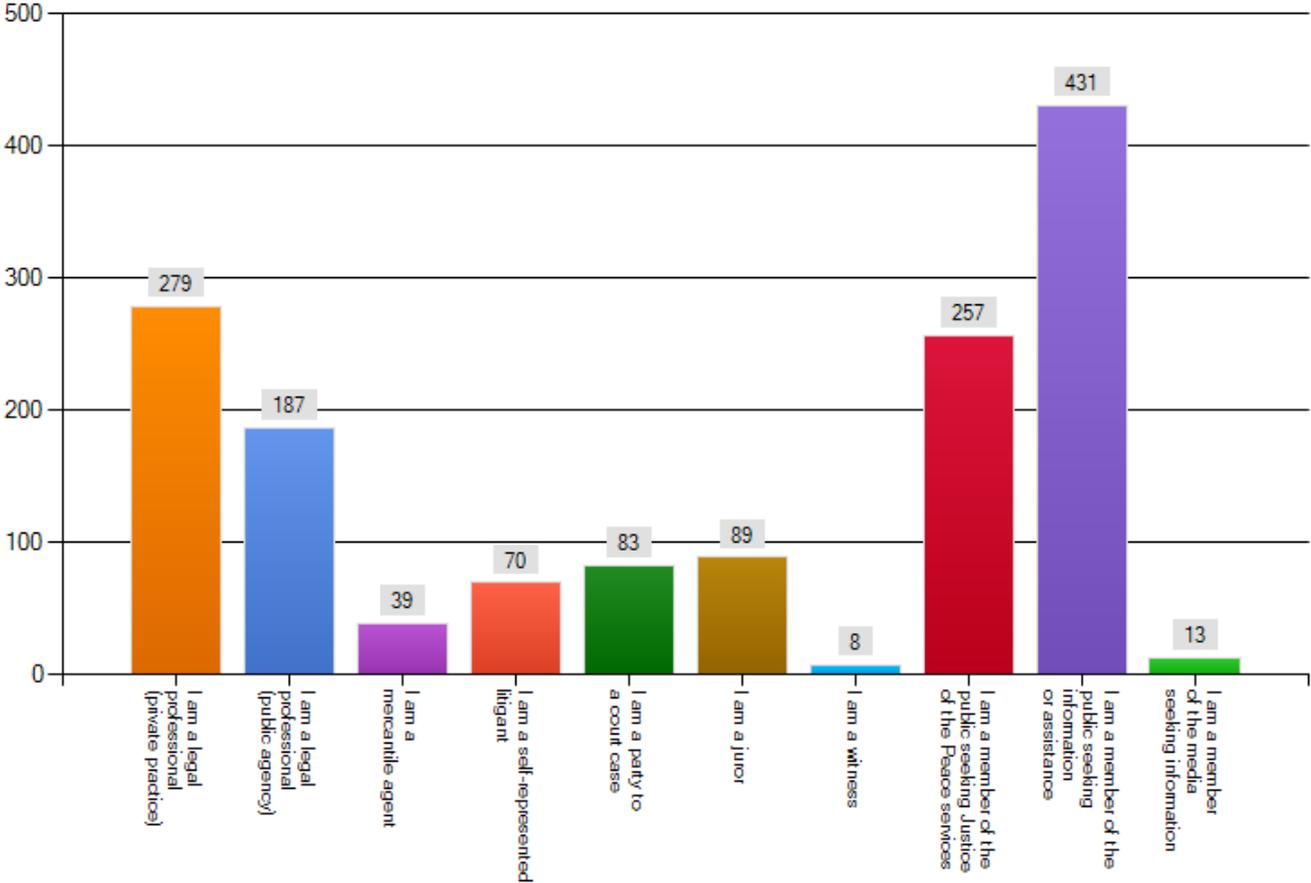
The options provided in the survey did not adequately describe or capture the vast range of our court users and partners. However, overall, the major group that responded to this survey identified as a member of the public seeking information or assistance (431 responses).

While staff were excluded from the scope of the survey, a small number of respondents did identify themselves as being court staff, or 'like' staff (27) in terms of providing a service, such as members of the judiciary or volunteer Justices of the Peace. This number is not significant enough to skew results.

Security Officer	Public servant working in the courthouse	Visiting Magistrate	Tribunal member
Bailiff	Court employee	Volunteer Justice of the Peace	Land Court Deputy Registrar

Question 1 - Respondent Categories

Please select one of the following options that best identifies your role when contacting the Registry today:



Question 2 - Which Jurisdiction

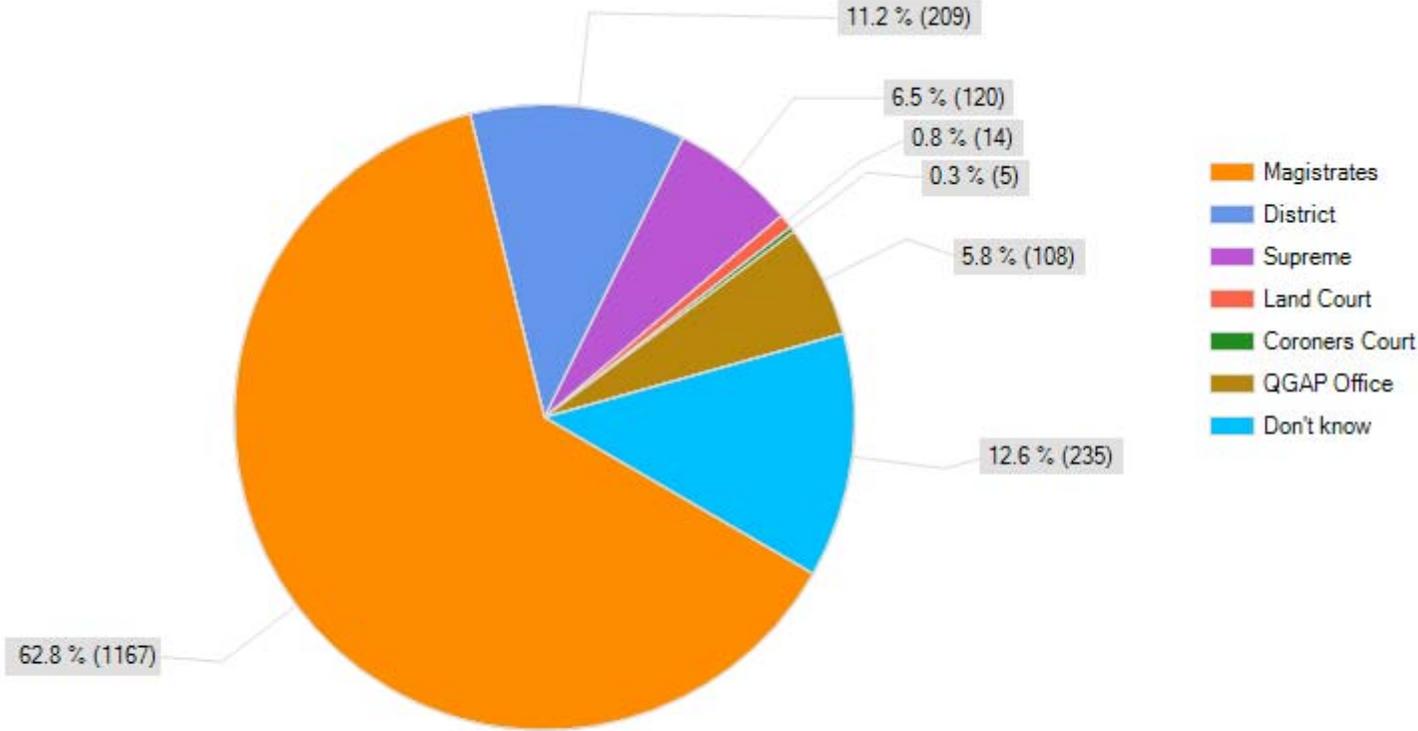
With which court did you have contact today?

As anticipated, the Magistrates Courts Service had the highest number of respondents to the survey with 1,162 responses. There were also 235 respondents who selected the “other (please specify)” option and an analysis of this information reveals a mix of responses ranging from:

- some selections not being available in the survey (such as Court of Appeal)
- some courts not being readily identifiable from the options available by respondents (such as Planning and Environment Court which is under the jurisdiction of the District Court)
- some respondents utilising courthouses for other services (such as QGAP services, paying State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER) fines or Justice of the Peace services)
- 11% of self-represented litigants indicated they did not know which court (jurisdiction) they had contact with or did not answer this question
- 155 respondents indicated they visited or used two or more services (e.g. Magistrates plus District and Supreme Courts).

Question 2 - Which Jurisdiction

With which court did you have contact today?



Question 3 - Court Location

What was the location of the court?

The Brisbane based courts had the highest number of respondents to the survey. The top ten court locations for responses to this survey (in order of number of responses) were:

Top ten survey responses by courthouse location	Number of respondents	% of state total of criminal lodgements report. (Source: Appendix 1 annual report 2010-2011)
Brisbane	228	15.02
Southport	137	9.65
Holland Park	128	2.12
Ipswich	101	4.32
Dalby	83	0.49
Beenleigh	62	5.75
Ayr	60	0.38
Cairns	59	4.52
Caloundra	56	0.99
Mackay	52	2.14

When comparing the relative workload at these 10 courthouses based on percentage of Criminal Lodgements per courthouse (source: *Annual Report 2010-2011*), it is acknowledged that the courthouse staff of **Holland Park, Dalby, Ayr and Caloundra** (highlighted in table above) have made a considerable effort in achieving a very high survey response rate.

Responses by Region

Region	Total Responses	Number of Locations in each Region
Brisbane	226	3
Central Queensland	221	15
Far North Queensland	79	9
North Queensland	262	12
Sunshine Coast / Wide Bay	224	18
South East Queensland	452*	8
South West Queensland	343	18

*denotes highest number of responses

Question 4 - Reason for contact

Commentary - Why did you have contact with the registry today?

The primary reason that respondents had contact with the registry was for the processing of documentation with 47.4% or 759 respondents visiting courts for that purpose.

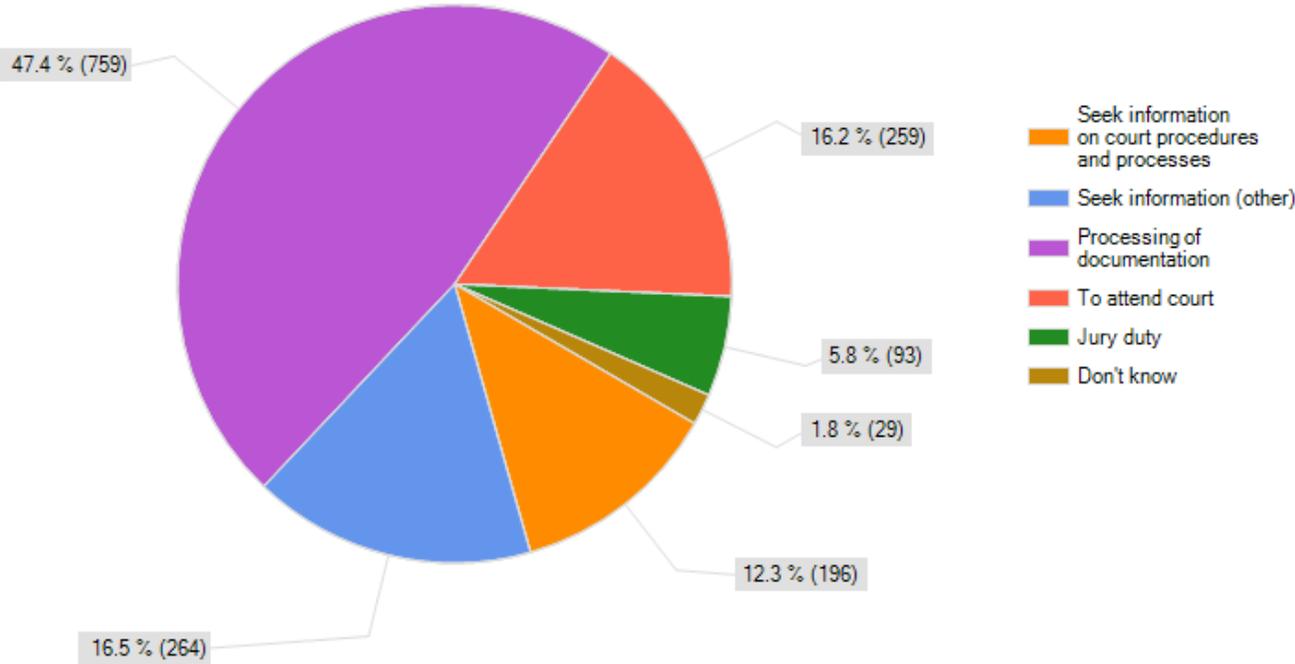
Respondents took the opportunity to provide 340 additional comments to this question on why they had contact with the registry. Whilst some of these responses, such as 'filing' could have been captured by the generic *processing of documentation* option, this large number of additional responses identifies the breadth of services provided by courthouses, as recognised by our courts' users and partners. Listed below is just a small sample of those responses:

JP services	Domestic violence order	Warrants
Roster volunteer	Coronial investigation	SPER fines
Prosecutor	Court support	Surrender
Certification of forms	Tenancy issues	Log book
Child protection orders	Breach of probation	QCAT
Filing	Kinship carer	Obtain court list
Registration	Birth or marriage certificate	Bail papers
Friends of court		

With 16.2% or 259 respondents identifying their purpose of contact as seeking information on court procedures and processes, there is an opportunity to explore the provision of additional or more relevant information resources being made available on the website to provide a more efficient and effective information 'self service'. This has the potential to reduce 'in person' information requests and, possibly, waiting times at registry counters.

Question 4 - Reason for contact

Why did you have contact with the registry today?



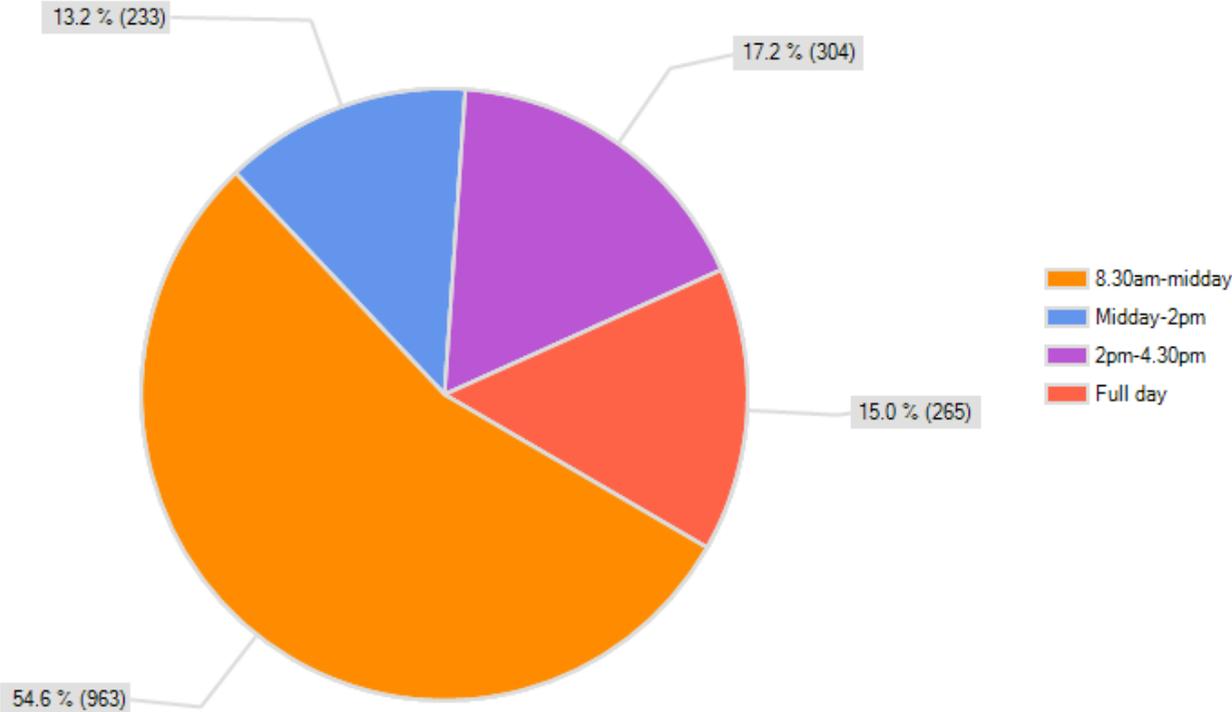
Question 5 - Time of Day

Commentary - What time of day did you or do you usually have contact with the registry?

The response to this question identifies that **more than half (54.5% or 963 of our survey respondents) visit the registry between 8.30am – midday. This finding may suggest that this is the peak time for rostering of staff for optimum counter service** to best meet our courts' users' and partners' service needs.

Question 5 - Time of Day

What time of day did you or do you usually have contact with the registry?



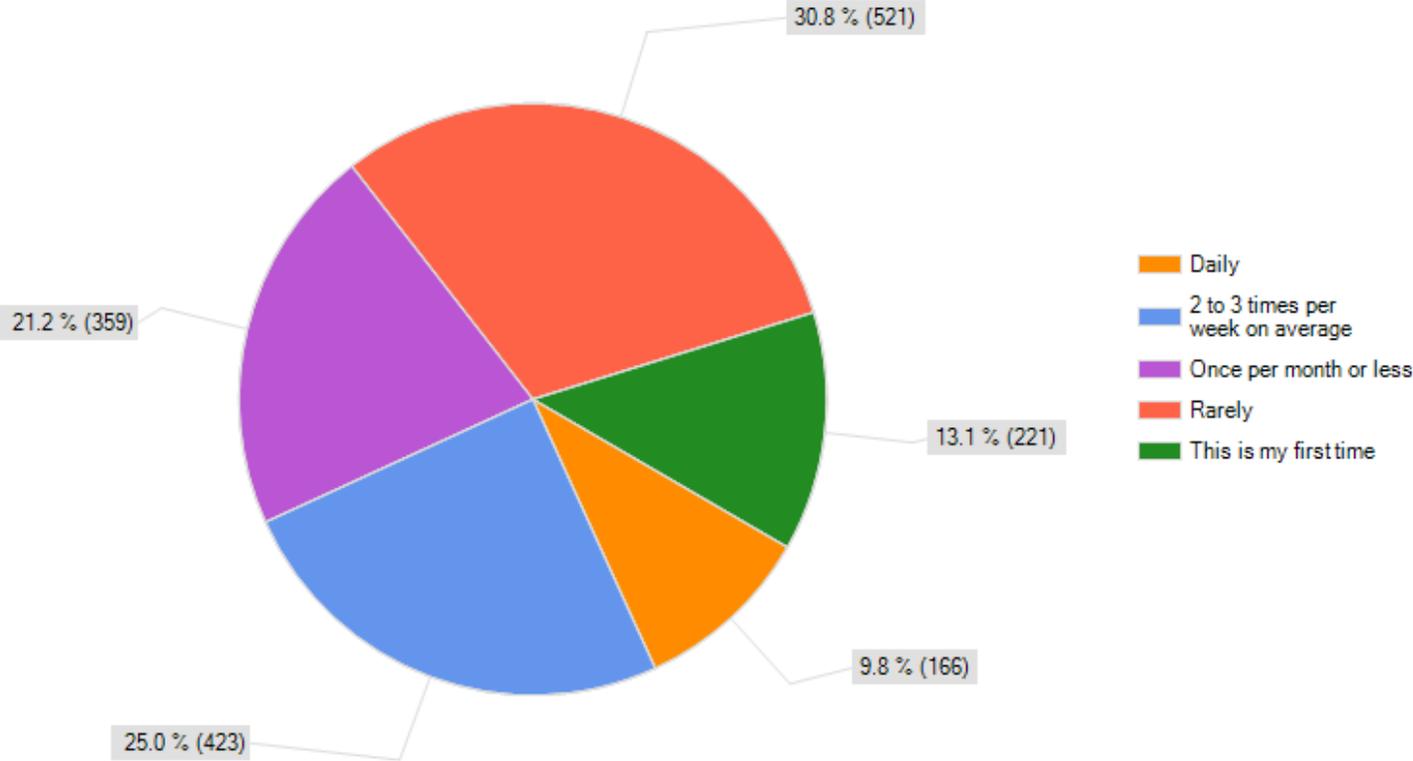
Question 6 - Regularity of visits

Commentary - How often do you use registry services?

43.9% of respondents identify with using registry services either *rarely* or *this is my first time*. Queensland Courts could consider if this large percentage of its user base requires further support in navigating through possibly unfamiliar court processes. One suggestion is to provide comprehensive information guides on what to expect on the Queensland Courts website in addition to some hardcopy equivalent leaflets in courthouses.

Question 6 - Regularity of visits

How often do you use Registry Services?



Question 7 - Satisfaction with response times

Commentary - I am satisfied with how quickly I was attended to by staff.

87.8% of respondents identified with either agree or strongly agree to the statement *I am satisfied by how quickly I was attended to by staff.*

Respondents took the opportunity to provide 203 additional comments to the statement regarding timeliness in being attended to.

114 comments reinforced the level of satisfaction in being attended to by staff. For example:

'The service I received was prompt, professional and informed'.

41 comments reinforced the level of dissatisfaction with the timeliness in being attended to. For example:

'I took a number there were no other persons waiting, there was staff at the counter BUT they still kept me waiting 15 minutes'.

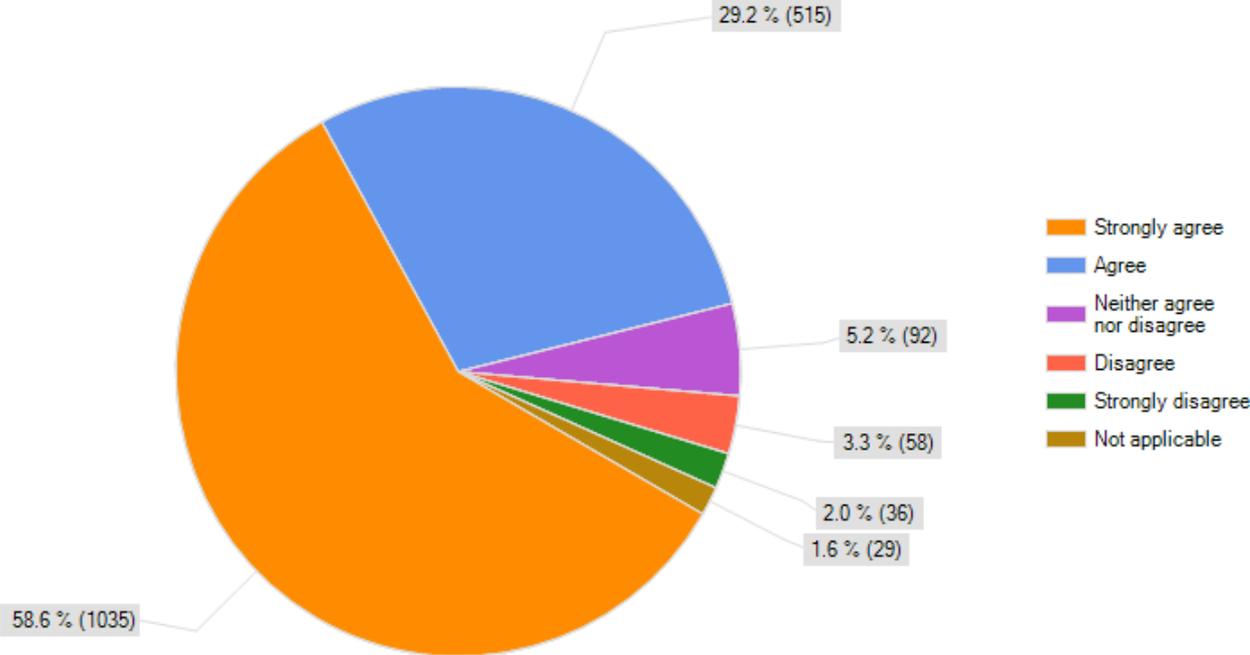
19 additional comments were received about perceptions of insufficient or inexperienced staff and queues. For example:

'The ticket system works well but there are minimal staff at the desk'.

Two respondents made reference to the limited hours of the file search facility in Brisbane and three comments were made suggesting that there be a priority queue for legal professionals and Domestic Violence support staff in registries.

Question 7 - Satisfaction with response times

I am satisfied with how quickly I was attended to by staff.



Question 8 - Satisfaction with professionalism

Commentary - I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff

From the responses to this statement, **90.8% either strongly agreed or agreed to the statement, *I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff.***

An opportunity to provide additional comments was provided and 151 respondents supplied additional comments.

A range of comments were received. Of these comments:

- **Approximately 90 comments reinforced the professionalism of staff**
- **Approximately 26 respondents outlined their perceptions of negative experiences including the unprofessional manner of staff in speaking to people, general rudeness and registry staff being perceived as difficult to deal with**
- **Approximately 12 comments related to registry staff's inconsistent application of procedures or lack of understanding of their role**
- **Notably, there were 3 comments pertaining to the lack of understanding by registry staff of deaf cultural awareness.**

Example of comments received included:

'Because of continued contact (in a small community) - staff become very friendly and helpful.'

'Generally the registry staff are excellent, however a small number are unprofessional and discourteous. In particular some are of the view that the registry is entitled to close early or that some issues (for instance obtaining copies of documents) are not a priority.'

'Knowledge was good and if didn't know then got her supervisor to assist'.

'Staff are co-operative, communicative and professional'.

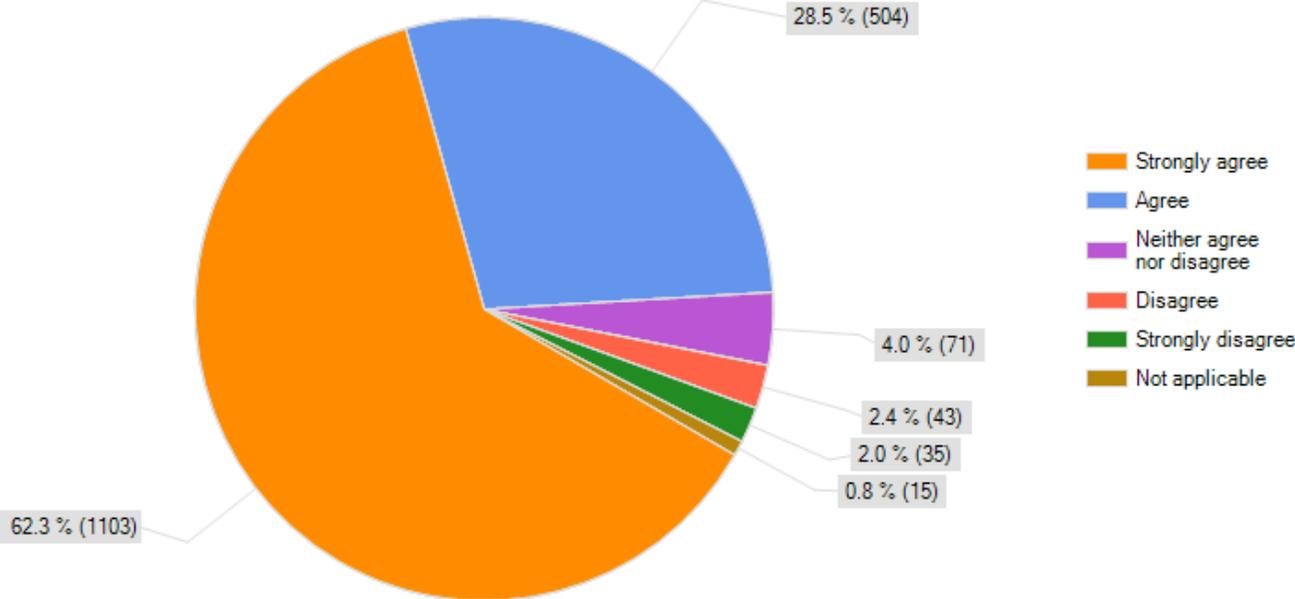
'Some staff appear to have little knowledge of their role'.

'More training required for them to satisfy their role'.

'Very professional, explained the procedure to me without talking down to me'.

Question 8 - Satisfaction with professionalism

I am satisfied with the professionalism of staff.



Question 9 - Default Judgment applications

Commentary - *I am satisfied with how my application to a Registrar for default judgment was handled.*

As can be evidenced from the response figures, this question was not applicable to 56.7%, or 920, respondents.

58 respondents opted to provide additional comments and of those comments only 22 of them were relevant to the question being asked.

'Was advised to lodge it in a different registry than where it was filed. After 17 years filing documents...found this unbelievable'.

'Usually there are long periods of time before orders are able to be collected'.

'Too officious. Little detail given as to refusal'.

'The processing of all documentation is constantly slow and inordinately delayed'.

'Sometimes I have to leave the application with the Court and it can take over a week to get the Default Judgment'.

'More explanation as to why would be appreciated'.

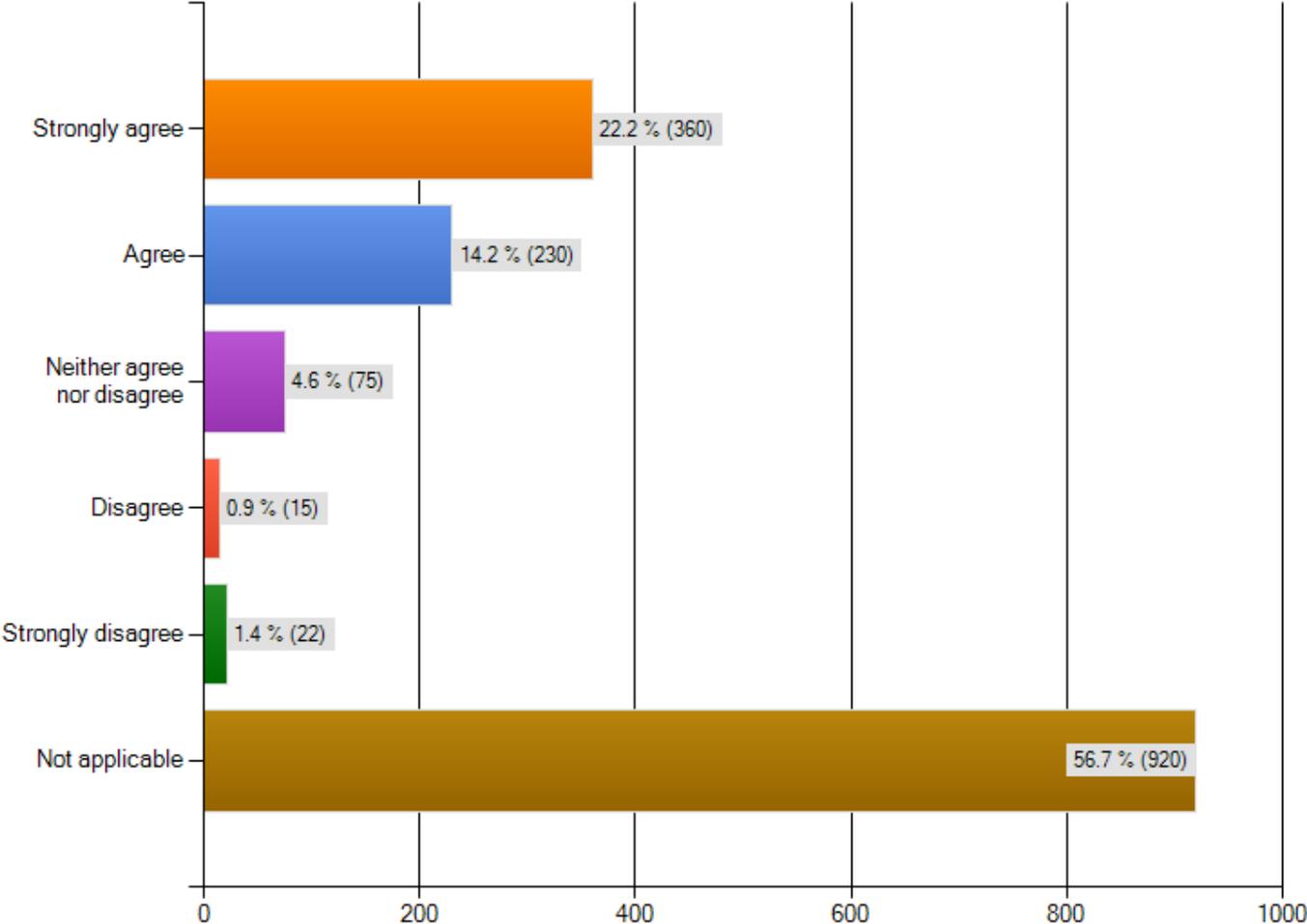
'It never goes smoothly. Registry staff usually try to tell me I have sued in the wrong jurisdiction, that my affidavit is lacking something, I then have to argue with them and contact the Registrar who usually decides that I was correct in the first instance. The level of involvement by registry staff far outweighs their obligations to accept documents in their proper form and in accordance with the UCPR. I've had registry staff read pleadings and suggest amendments. I've had affidavits returned for no particular reason. I have also had staff tell me what I should be deposing to in an affidavit despite there being no rule requiring me to do so. Regardless of all this, some of the staff tend to act as Magistrates and not counter clerks. In the end, if I have to file a document of any importance, I do so myself now because undoubtedly 'something' will go wrong'.

'Instalment Order Requests are Always Made for a monthly payment amount much larger than that applied for'.

'Get the documentation correct and no problems'.

Question 9 - Default Judgment applications

I am satisfied with how my application to a Registrar for default judgment was handled.



Question 10 – Grant of Probate applications

Commentary - I am satisfied with how my application to a Registrar for a grant of probate was handled

As can be evidenced from the response figures, this question was not applicable to over half of the respondents (66.8% or 1049) of respondents.

31 respondents opted to provide additional comments and of those comments only 9 of them seemed relevant to the question being asked. Other responses related to the question being not applicable.

"There is always a lag time from when the application is granted to when you can pick the grant up. It can sometimes be up to a week from after the grant of probate was provided. It leads me to believe the times are being backdated so the court can say X number of applications have been handled in time, when in fact they were outside the recommended court standards for processing the applications for grants of probate."

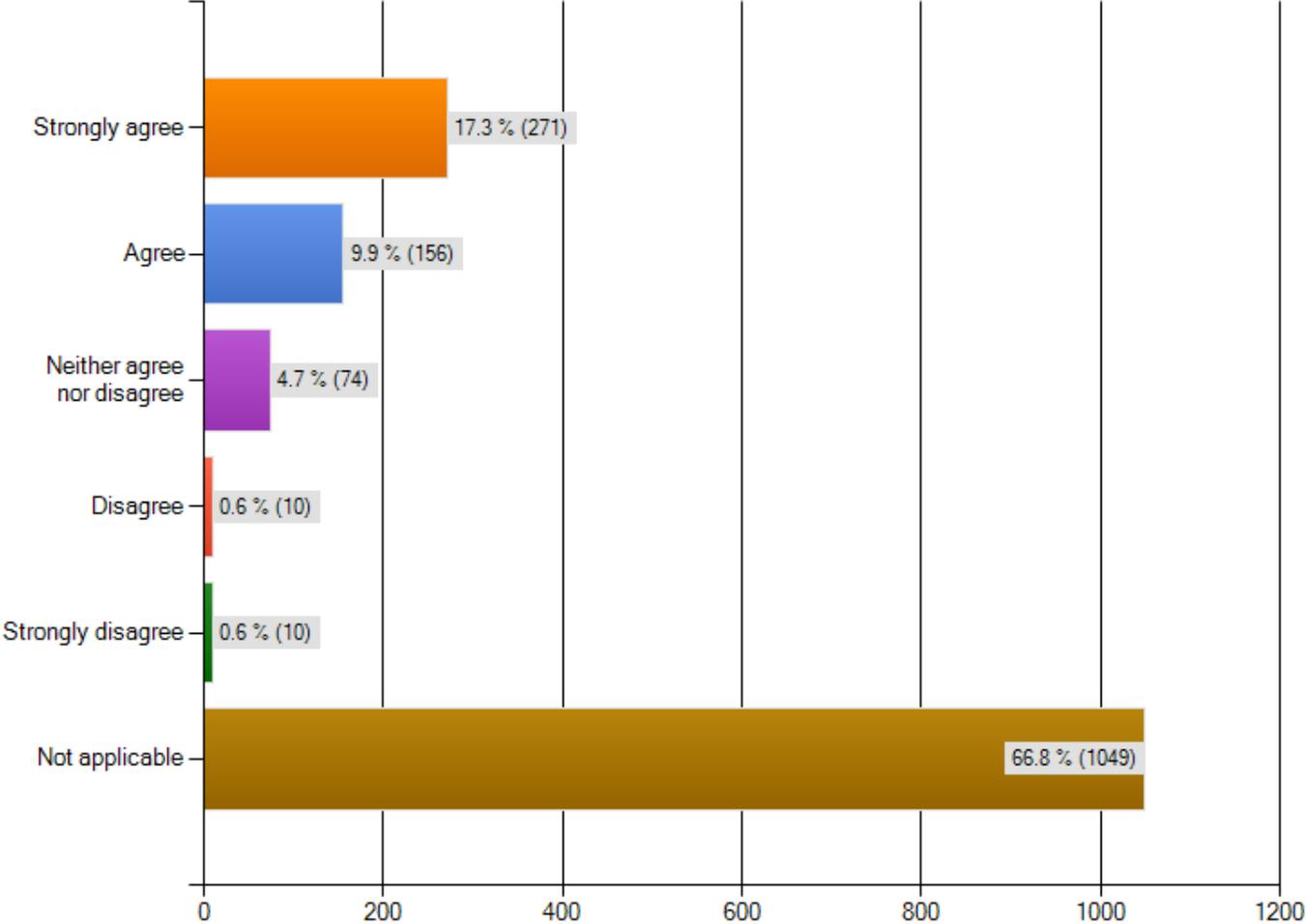
"The application process is good however probates are frequently not ready when the Court website indicates they are causing our clients to be dissatisfied."

"Not helpful at all and too many unnecessary requisitions"

"It takes far too long."

Question 10 - Grant of Probate applications

I am satisfied with how my application to a Registrar for a grant of probate was handled.



Question

Question 11 - Finding the courthouse

Commentary - I was able to easily find the courthouse

As is evident from the response figures, a very strong 91.1% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I was able to easily find the courthouse*.

The tendency to place courthouses in prominent locations in smaller towns means that they are easy to locate for many, such as being next to the police station, or on a corner. **Some respondents advised which resources they used to find the courthouse which may serve as a reminder for QCS to check local (e.g. council) and departmental (e.g. internet) content to ensure that signage and links are kept up to date:**

'The address listed was wrong'.

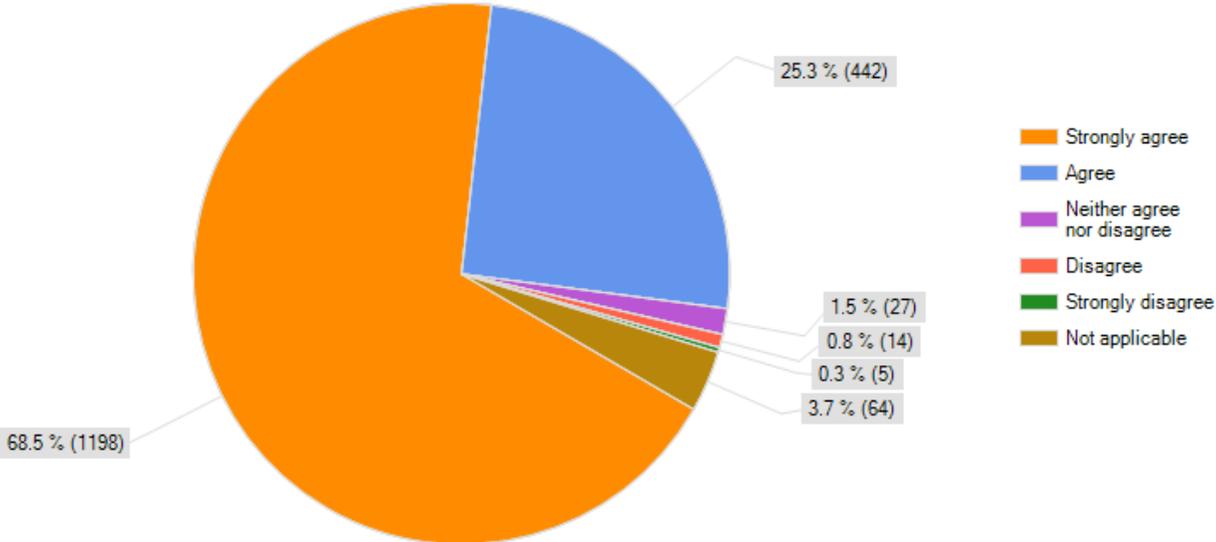
'Once I had been to the town's information centre to get a map of the local area, it was very easy to find'.

'I searched on the internet which informed me it was on Bulcock St'.

'I have been to court many times so I can find it easily. However many clients comment how difficult it is to find the Brisbane Childrens Court, especially when driving around the nearby narrow streets'.

Question 11 - Finding the courthouse

I was able to easily find the courthouse.



Question 12 - Finding where to go within the courthouse

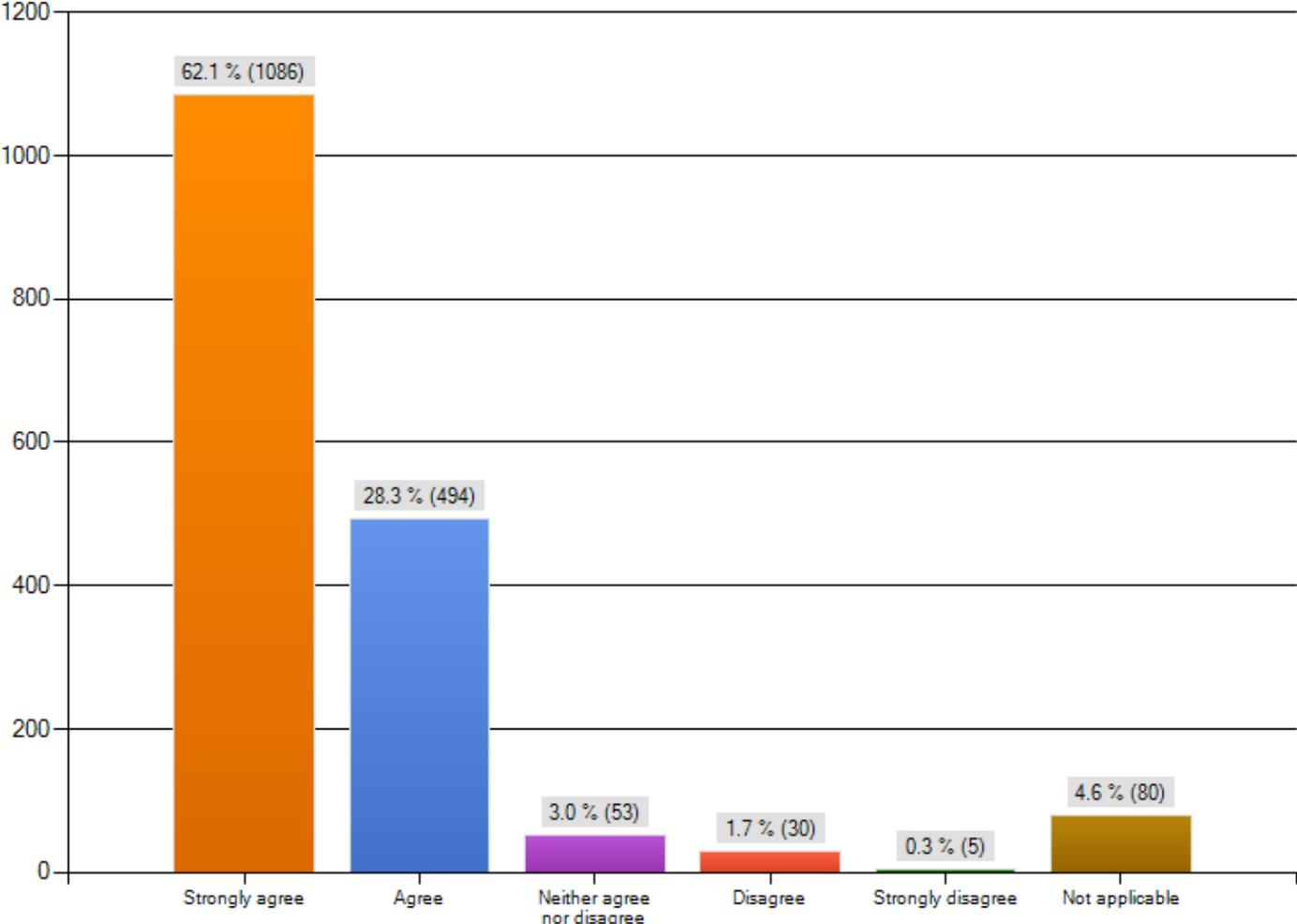
Commentary - I was able to easily find where I needed to go within the courthouse

90.4% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I was able to easily find where I needed to go within the courthouse.*

Fifty-seven respondents took the opportunity to provide additional comments. Just under half of these additional comments confirmed the ease with which they were able to get to their location, for example, *“staff very willing to help out and inform”*. Five comments related to the layout of the court, such as *“layout of the courthouse is confusing and crowded”*. Only 6 additional comments were received that related to insufficient signage.

Question 12 - Finding where to go within the courthouse

I was able to easily find where I needed to go within the courthouse.



Question 13 - Satisfaction with public facilities

Commentary - I found the public facilities overall satisfactory

As can be evidenced from the response figures, **76.1% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I found the public facilities overall satisfactory.***

Respondents took the opportunity to provide an additional 161 comments. The most comments related to:

- condition of public toilet facilities (40)
- lack of interview rooms/waiting rooms or safe spaces (40)
- crowded conditions (25)
- aged or outdated condition of the building (22)

Other comments were also received about:

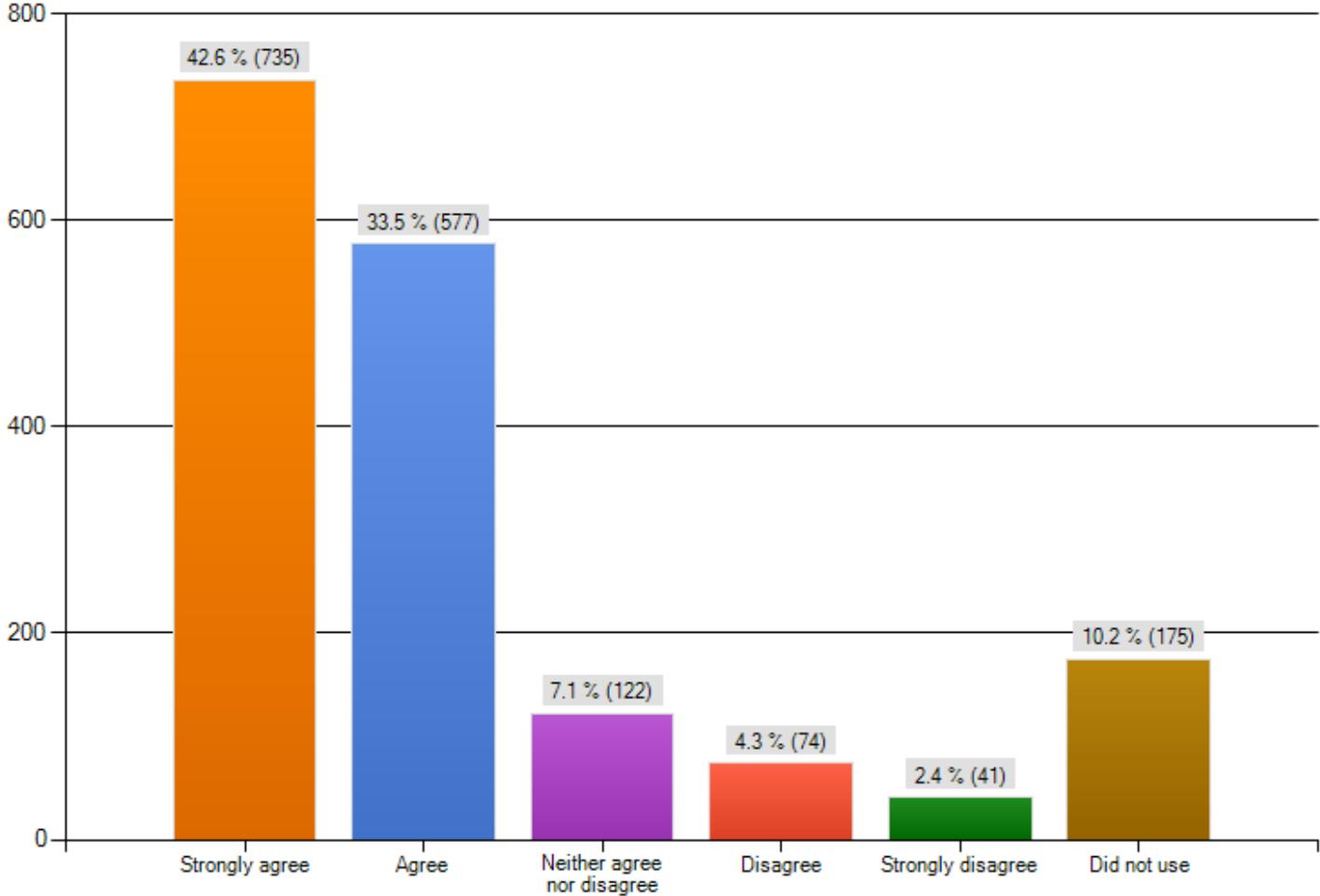
- lack of access to a water fountain
- air conditioning (too hot, too cold or none)
- considerations of physical access for people with a disability
- quality of facilities for jury members
- inadequate seating

Respondents also took the time to praise the positive facilities of the courthouses, for example:

“The new courthouse facilities are very good”.

Question 13 - Satisfaction with public facilities

I found the public facilities overall satisfactory. (Public facilities include waiting areas, toilets, airconditioning, lighting, witness/interview rooms, disability access).



Question 14 - Satisfaction with safety

Commentary - I felt safe in the courthouse

87.8% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I felt safe in the courthouse*.

Seventy-five respondents took the opportunity to provide additional responses relating to this statement. These comments reinforced their perceptions of feeling safe in the court where security staff were in attendance, for example:

“Security are very good, always friendly and helpful”.

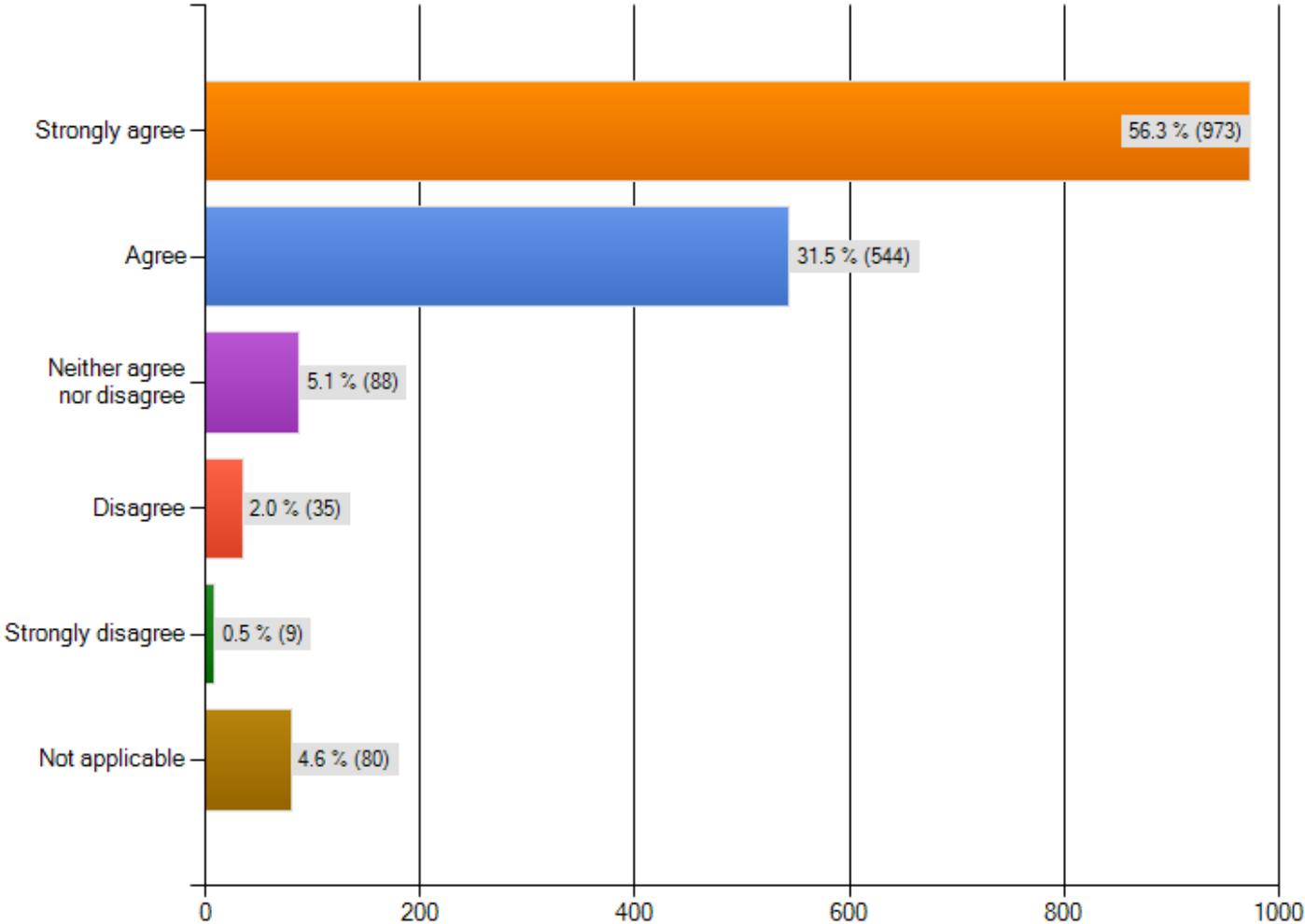
Respondents who indicated they did not feel safe at their court provided comments such as:

“No security checks are done prior to entering the building” or

“No security whatsoever. Feel it needs to be addressed”.

Question 14 - Satisfaction with safety

I felt safe in the courthouse.



Question 15 - Suggested improvements

Commentary - I would like to see the following improvements in court building and/or Registry services and access

A large percentage of respondents, that is 63.6%, indicated they would not like to see any of the four identified improvement options provided in the survey implemented in the courts.

Respondents did, however, take the opportunity to provide an additional 241 responses relating to this statement. The most common responses related to:

- Improvements to facilities (both physical building and internal fit outs (44)
- Processing time at registries / additional staff required (26)
- Parking issues (21)
- Availability of wi fi (12)

A sample of the other suggestions for improvement included:

- Improving conditions for jurors
- Online video links or conferencing
- Online search facilities
- More interview rooms
- Access to safe rooms
- Improved signage
- Improving services to people with a disability
- Enhancing audio in courtrooms
- Express lane for legal practitioners and police

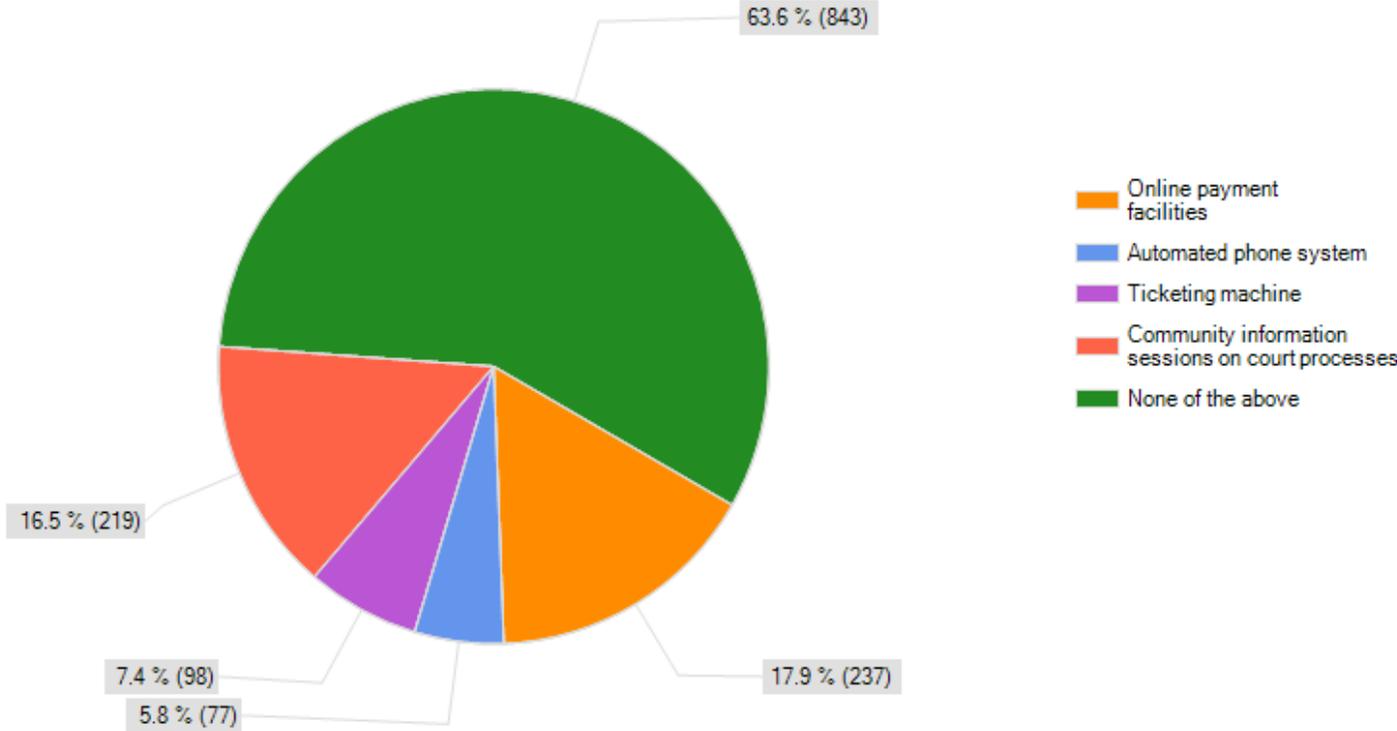
Breakdown of preferences for improvements (Brisbane compared to Regions)

From a total of 484 responses to the question *I would like to see the following improvements in court building and/or Registry services and access*, comes the following breakdown between Brisbane and Regional responses. There are higher demands in regional centres for community information sessions and perhaps there is an opportunity to identify local forums or opportunities to host information sessions.

	Brisbane (Total responses 74)	Regional (Total responses 410)
Online payment facilities	43	194
Automated phone system	10	67
Ticketing machine	21	77
Community information sessions	25	194

Question 15 - Suggested improvements

I would like to see the following improvements in court building and/or Registry services and access (You may choose more than one option):



Question 16 - Satisfaction with range of information and leaflets

Commentary - I am satisfied with the range of information and leaflets available

78.3% of respondents indicated they either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I am satisfied with the range of information and leaflets available.*

Seventy-two respondents provided additional comments. These comments primarily related to:

- our courts' users and partners not needing or noticing the information or leaflets
- the information or leaflets not being made available or only a few being displayed, e.g. leaflets on recovering debt or appearing before the courts
- having so much information or leaflets on display that it becomes overwhelming for our courts' users and partners
- outdated information displayed
- no jury information being available.

'It would be good to have display racks so different community organisations could display their leaflets at the registry or in the waiting area.'

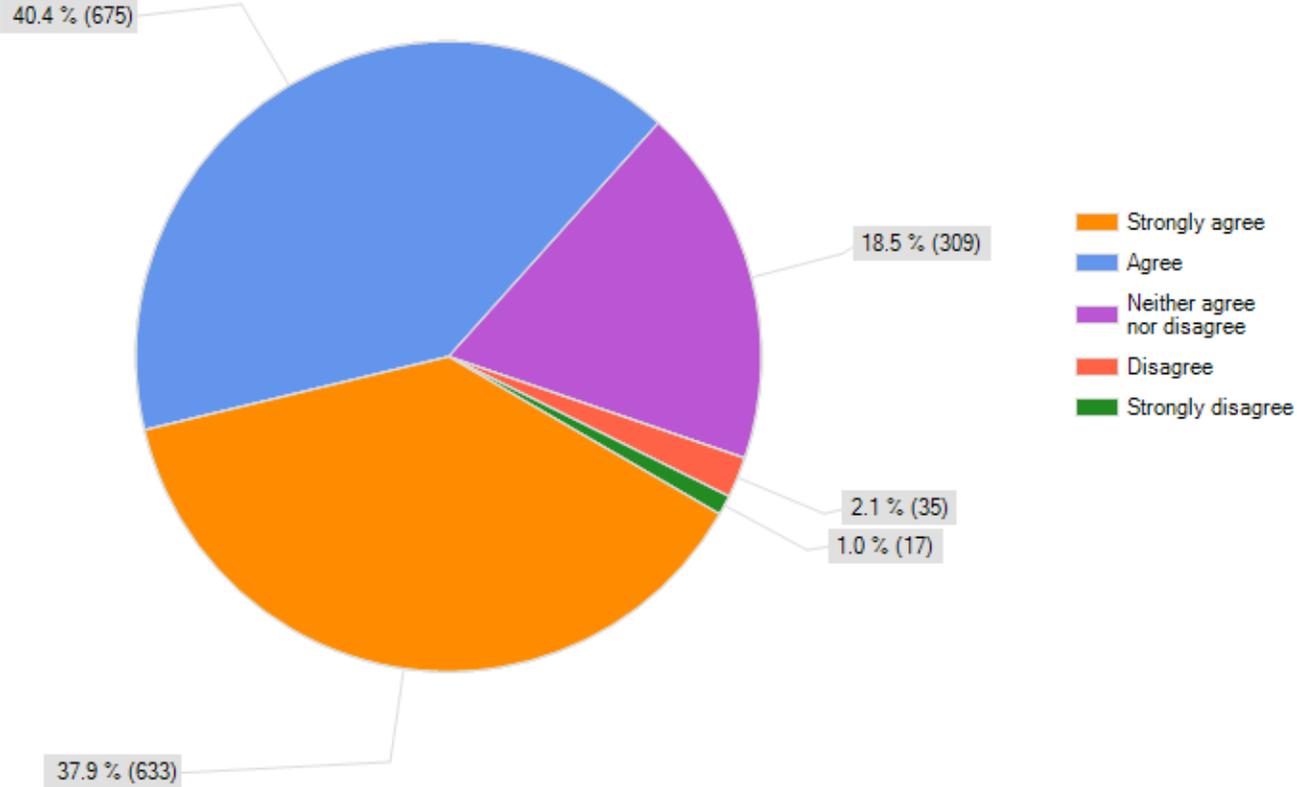
A possible solution to the ad hoc assortment of leaflets and brochures available is to develop a register of standard posters, information and leaflets to be displayed in each courthouse, in addition to local area service providers' information.

Of the 52 respondents who disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement, 75% identified as witness, jury, party, person seeking Justice of the Peace services, information or assistance, or a self-represented litigant. In other words, the people who are most likely to be seeking information.

Of all the other categories of respondents (those who are more familiar with court processes) none disagreed with the statement.

Question 16 - Satisfaction with range of information and leaflets

I am satisfied with the range of information and leaflets available.



Question 17 - Satisfaction with information provided

Commentary - I am satisfied that the information provided by staff answered my question/s

89.9% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement *I am satisfied that the information provided by staff answered my question/s.*

Figures to indicate the high level of satisfaction with information provided by staff:

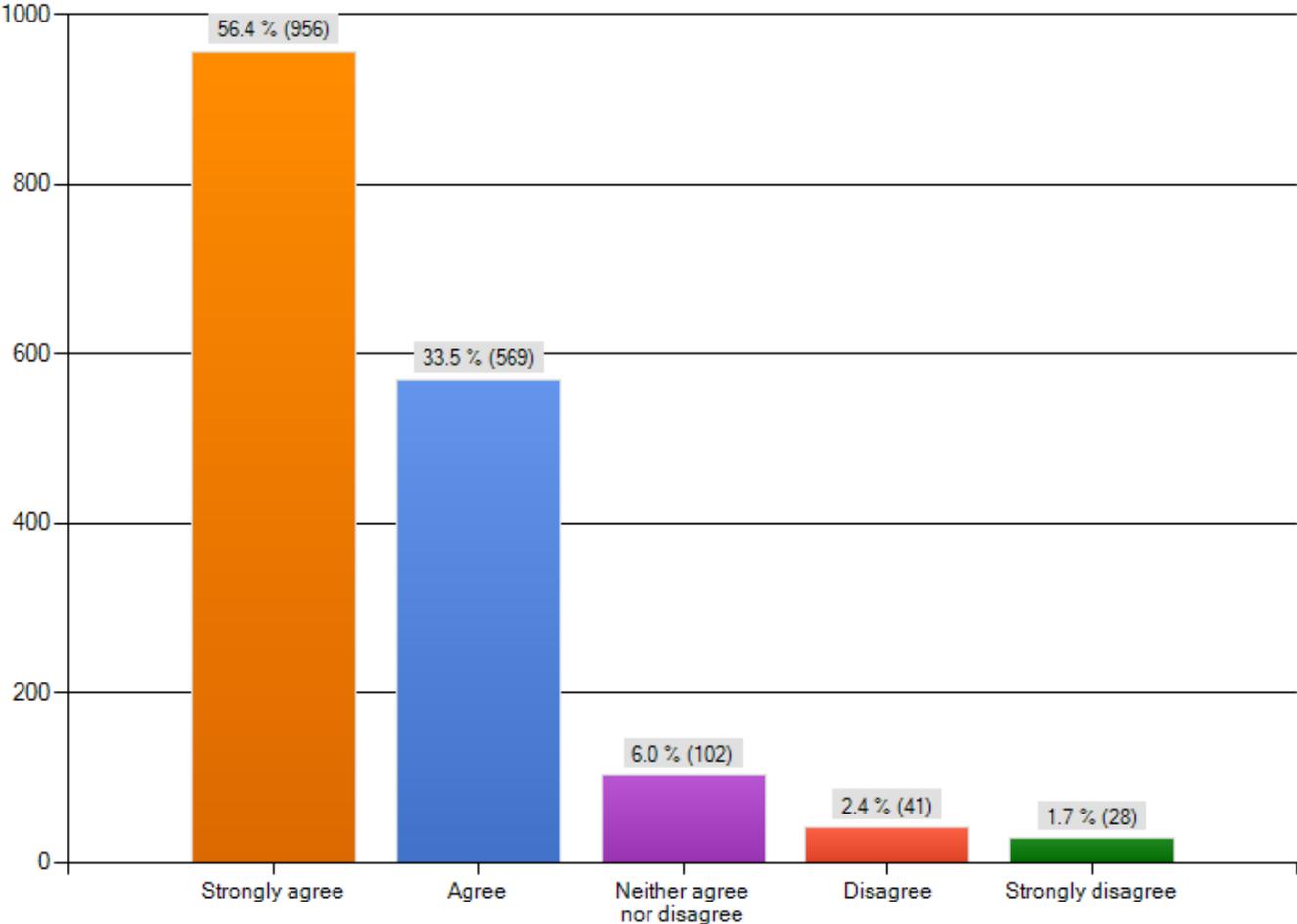
	Brisbane (Total responses 171)	Regional (Total responses 1,429)
Agree / Strongly agree	153	1,379

Respondents were able to provide additional comments and 82 additional comments were received, of these:

- 42 comments were received that reinforced the helpfulness of the court staff in answering questions
- 11 comments indicated that staff required additional training or knowledge of procedural issues
- 8 comments were received that reinforced they were not satisfied with the information provided by court staff

Question 17 - Satisfaction with information provided

I am satisfied that the information provided by staff answered my question/s.



Question 18 - Methods of accessing courthouse

Commentary - I have accessed information via the following:

The primary means of accessing information for our courts' users and partners was through speaking to registry staff in person. This finding highlights the importance of having well trained staff who possess very well-developed client service skills.

From a total of 70 self-represented litigants, some expressed frustration at not knowing the next step or where to go after a court appearance. For example:

'Uncertainty about what to do next'.

'I need to be treated with empathy and have it explained what a decision means and what to do next'.

'Forms are difficult to locate and require listing [on the internet] under alternative headings other than by Form number'.

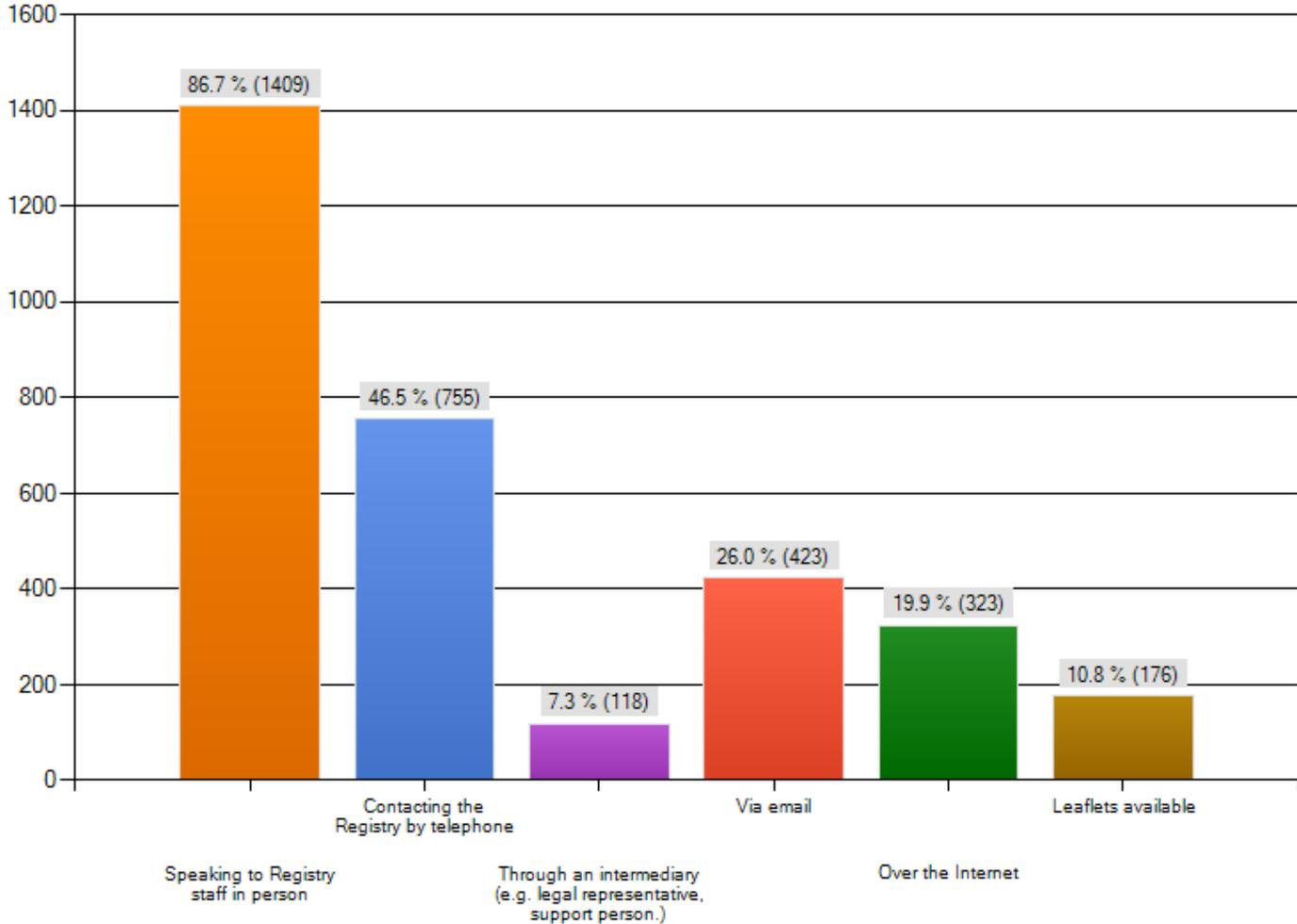
Self-represented litigants predominantly accessed information via the following means, with 33% accessing information via more than one method:

In person	70%
Telephone	21%
Via an Intermediary	8%
Email	10%
Internet	20%
Leaflets	8%

It is suggested that there are opportunities to increase and enhance current information available on the Queensland Courts website to meet our courts' users' and partners' information needs.

Question 18 - Methods of accessing courthouse

I have accessed information via the following: (You can choose more than one option)



Question 19 - Ease of navigating Queensland Courts web site

Commentary - I have visited the Queensland Courts web site and found it easy to navigate

41.9% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that they *have visited the Queensland Courts website and found it easy to navigate.*

Ninety-five additional comments were received to this question and the comments primarily related to the difficulties our courts' users and partners had in locating information:

- 55 comments identifying that the Queensland Courts website was not user friendly, difficult to navigate, and difficult to locate specific information or forms
- 13 comments indicating that the previous website was preferred
- 5 comments relating to technical difficulties with the website.

Interestingly, 35.1% of respondents to the survey had not visited the website. This may provide an opportunity to identify ways to channel courts' users and partners to the website to access information directly (should the information or service be available and accessible via the website).

In addition, the number of comments relating to the Queensland Courts website and perceived lack of 'user friendliness' of the site could provide an opportunity for review of the functionality/navigation with a view to improving our courts users and partners experience.

Of the 470 legal professionals that responded, 10% have not visited the web site.

313 legal professionals expressed an opinion stating that 88% overall agreed/strongly agreed with the statement (25% of those respondents were from Brisbane and 75% from the regions).

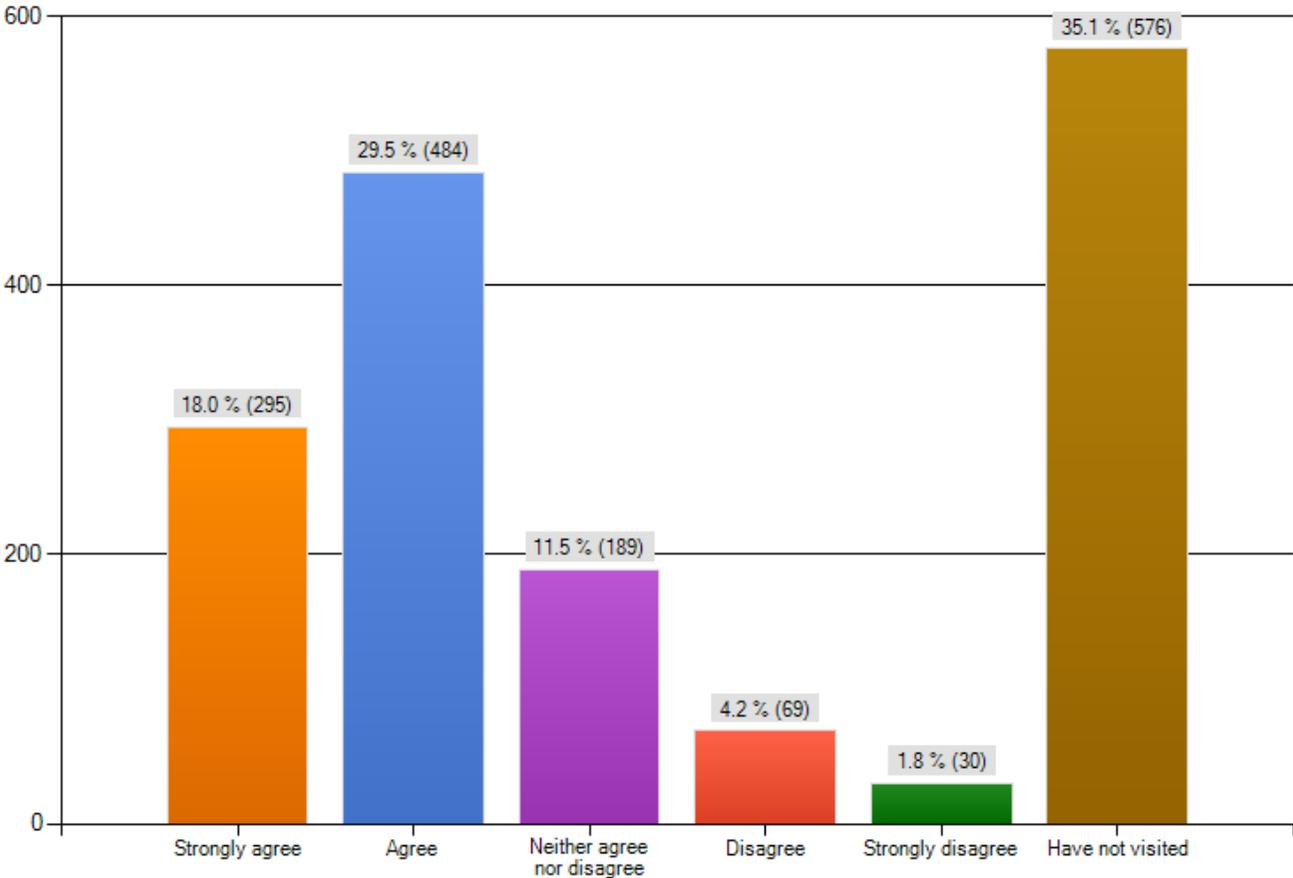
Of the 565 responses from the *All Other* respondents, 89% overall agreed/strongly agreed with the statement (9% of these were from Brisbane and 91% from the regions).

Of the 576 respondents who indicated they have never visited the web site:

- 45% were at court to process documentation
- 20% were there to seek information on court procedures and processes or 'other'.
- 8% of these two groups would like to see 'online payment facilities' implemented.

Question 19 - Ease of navigating Queensland Courts web site

I have visited the Queensland Courts web site (www.courts.qld.gov.au) and found it easy to navigate.



Question 20 - Any other comments?

This question provided the opportunity for respondents to add any other comments in a free text box and 396 additional comments were received. These comments often reinforced respondents' opinions stated elsewhere in the survey and primarily related to:

- 204 comments reinforcing the positive experience of the interaction they had received
- 33 comments relating to insufficient staff numbers in registries that delay processing times
- 30 comments relating to procedural issues
- 17 comments on the lack of car parking facilities

A sample of the other suggestions for improvement included:

- General facilities related comments
- More use of e-filing and online services
- Improvements to the Queensland Courts website
- Jury-related comments
- Staff training and customer service skills.

Please note: This publication was produced prior to the current government.