



Communities  
& Justice

# Community attitudes survey on data sharing and privacy

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# LONERGAN.

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This study was conducted in compliance with quality and data privacy standards and legislation including ISO 20252, Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), The (Market and Social Research) Privacy Code 2014 and The Research Society Code of Professional Behaviour.



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# 1 Executive summary

## 1.1 Background

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), through the Stronger Communities Investment Unit (SCIU) commissioned a community survey to investigate NSW community attitudes towards data sharing and privacy protection.

The objective of the research was to enable DCJ to:

- better understand what the NSW community thinks about data sharing, and in particular, the benefits of sharing and using de-identified, linked government datasets;
- establish the acceptable scope of data sharing and release; and,
- establish community understanding of the risks associated with data sharing, including of de-identified government datasets, and identify expected safeguards for protecting individual privacy.





The survey was administered online and via telephone interviews between 24<sup>th</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

Insights from the research will inform DCJ's preparation of a Privacy Code of Practice and Health Privacy Code of Practice for the Human Services Dataset (HSDS), to ensure the collection, use and protection of data is consistent with community expectations.

The HSDS brings together the service records of over seven million individuals collected by NSW government agencies, and some Commonwealth Government supports (i.e. welfare and medical benefits). This allows the HSDS to provide a unique and powerful view of service usage and effectiveness to improve outcomes. All records are anonymous and information like names, dates of birth and addresses are removed to ensure the data does not identify individuals and privacy is protected.

A total of **n=2,013** members of the NSW community completed the survey with representation across four key cohorts as follows:

**Figure 1: Sampling strategy**

	Cohort	Achieved sample
	Young people and adults aged 14 to 24 years	n=763
	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	n=750
	Residents aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	n=572
	Indigenous residents	n=153

There is some degree of overlap across the four core respondent groups. Firstly, the sample of n=153 Indigenous residents was proportionally spread across the other three groups. Secondly, n=72 respondents were both young people (aged 14 to 24 years) **and** parents of children aged under 25 years.

## 1.2 Summary of findings

- 1 There is a high degree of familiarity (94%) with the fact that the NSW Government collects residents' personal data, and there are moderate levels of comfort with this data being collected. Whilst over half (59%) do feel comfortable, most feel 'somewhat' comfortable (38%), rather than 'very' (21%).
- 2 Over half feel confident (54%) that data is managed well by the NSW Government, although most feel 'somewhat' confident (38%), rather than 'very' (16%).
- 3 Despite this, there is support for de-identified linked data being shared across the NSW Government, with a majority (62%) feeling comfortable, and just one in seven (14%) indicating that they feel uncomfortable.
- 4 Perceptions are positive with regards to the outcomes of sharing de-identified linked data with two thirds (65%) agreeing that data sharing across government leads to benefits for people living in NSW. However, most respondents tended to 'agree' (47%) rather than 'strongly' agree (18%).
- 5 Agreement that the sharing of de-identified linked data benefits the NSW community generally is higher (65%) than the proportion agreeing that this benefits them personally or their family (50%).
- 6 The majority think that the sharing of de-identified linked data presents some degree of privacy risk, with just one in 10 thinking there is no risk at all. Of those who believe there is a high risk (9%), the greatest concern is the risk of a data breach e.g. getting hacked or cyber-crime (21%).
- 7 Comfort levels with de-identified linked data being shared across (non-NSW) government departments and agencies (49%), is almost double the comfort level for sharing such data with private sector organisations (27%) or the public (25%).
- 8 There is more acceptance of de-identified linked data being used for specific purposes relating to government services, such as evaluating services for vulnerable people (66%), and more generally such as evaluating government services (66%) or designing new social services (64%). Support decreases as the potential use of the data become less specific, such as data being used for any purpose that is in the public interest (53%), or by anyone for any purpose (21%).
- 9 There are different perceptions across community sub-groups, with Indigenous residents 1.7 times (32%) more likely to strongly agree that the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government leads to better social outcomes than non-Indigenous residents (18%). Indigenous residents are also more likely (64%) to think that the data will be used to target groups in the community for monitoring purposes than non-Indigenous residents (48%).
- 10 Young respondents aged 14-24 years are less positive. Only half of young respondents are comfortable with personal data being collected (50%), and they are less likely to strongly agree that the sharing of de-identified linked data leads to better social outcomes (13%).

## 2 Research background

### 2.1 Methodology

#### Research sampling strategy

The minimum requirement detailed in the project specification brief was for n=1,500 respondents across the following three cohorts:

- young people and adults aged 16-24 years;
- parents, guardians and carers of young people aged under 25 years; and,
- Indigenous people (equivalent to their representation among the NSW population i.e. three percent).

Our approach went beyond the above requirements and recommended additional cohorts for inclusion. This resulted in n=2,013 surveys being completed with respondents across four core groups:

- young people and adults aged 14-24 years;
- parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years;
- people aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years; and,
- Indigenous people.

#### Inclusion of children aged 14-15 years

Loneran Research recommended the age of survey participants be expanded to include children aged 14-15 years, within the total core quota of n=1,500 surveys, under the condition that the survey instrument did not collect sensitive information about the respondent.

In the design of the survey, we aimed to ensure that readability of the survey was suitable for 14 years and free from verbosity, and that complicated concepts were explained.

The recruitment of young respondents aged 14-16 years was contracted to Student Edge, which is the only panel with a sizeable number of young Australians. Loneran contracted the services of our panel partner, Dynata, to conduct the quantitative recruitment of respondents aged over 16 years.

#### Inclusion of non-parents, guardians and carers aged 25 years and over

Loneran recommended that an additional sample of n=500 respondents aged 25 and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of young people were also included in the research.

#### Increased Indigenous representation

Loneran also recommended boosting the Indigenous sample to a minimum of n=100 and suggested that approximately half of this group be reached using computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). This ensured that the

views of Indigenous residents who may be less likely to form part of an online panel were also collected.

Lonergan Research are specialists in Indigenous consultation and maintain a database of Indigenous Australians who have consented to take part in research. Some respondents were recruited from this database, whilst others were contacts provided by members of the database (a technique known as snowball sampling). A total of n=50 Indigenous respondents completed a telephone interview.

#### Sample management

Stratified sampling, a method in which the total population is divided into smaller groups, is the single most significant process in ensuring a representative sample of respondents. A well-designed, quota-based sampling frame is key to acquire a final representative sample.

The community attitudes survey sample was distributed in accordance to 2016 ABS Census data to ensure state-based representation by age and gender. In addition, data was representative by location (SA4)<sup>1</sup>.

Quotas were set to ensure a minimum of responses across the four key cohorts and data was weighted to be representative of the NSW population.

#### Questionnaire design

A draft questionnaire was provided by the SCIU project team. Lonergan undertook an in-depth critical evaluation and refined the questionnaire based on pilot and cognitive tests. This was to ensure the survey tool was effective in extracting high-quality responses.

The questionnaire structure and content were also considered in detail to ensure questions were presented concisely and free from verbosity or jargon, thus accommodating the diverse reading ability and style of a wide range of potential respondents, including young people.

It was important for all participants to be advised of the survey purpose. Contextual explanations about the Their Futures Matter Project and the project to develop Privacy Codes of Practice were provided to all participants.

Following the comprehensive evaluation process, a workshop was held with the SCIU team to discuss the findings and recommendations for the survey. Once the survey was approved, a two-staged testing process was undertaken comprising cognitive testing and pilot testing. Detailed reports on both phases were provided to the SCIU. Neither the cognitive testing results, nor the pilot testing results were included in the final dataset on which this report is based.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), an SA4 includes between 100,000 and 500,000 people.



### Cognitive testing

Cognitive testing was used to assess comprehension and relevance of the questionnaire content. A series of six face-to-face interviews explored the following:

- General interest in the survey content
- Overall perceptions of the survey
- Relevance of the questions
- Comprehension of the question wording and ease of completion
- Comprehension and suitability of the rating scales
- Length of survey and respondent experience.

### Pilot testing

Pilot testing was undertaken as an emulation of the full conduct of the research methodology. Pilot testing aims to measure the effectiveness of the methodology and ascertain if there are any key challenges for implementation that were not identified while designing the survey approach.

A sample of n=51 surveys were completed with respondents across the four core groups, with the findings used to review the survey approach in the following ways:

- Identified partially completed surveys to see where they stopped, and to see if there was a common factor
- Ensured disqualifications were screened out for the right purpose
- Reviewed open-ended answers
- Assessed the time it took for respondents to complete the survey.

### Fieldwork

#### Online surveys

Participants were informed of the purpose of the survey, and collection of information, and were provided with a link to further information in relation to the project and use of information collected. The average survey length was 13 minutes.

#### Telephone interviews

All telephone interviews were completed in-house by a senior Lonergan interviewer. A mixed approach was used to recruit participants via a panel or by way of participant referral.

The same questionnaire was used in both the online survey and the telephone interviews with minor modifications made to the supporting information such as additional interviewer instructions. Interviewers read out specified text to inform participants of the purpose of the survey, the collection of information, and the use of the information collected.

## Weighting

The final dataset was weighted to the same profile used for the sampling frame, with a state-based cell-weighting methodology applied based on region, age and gender. This ensures the final weighted sample is representative of the NSW population aged 14 years and over. To achieve the minimum requirements of young people, parents and Indigenous residents, these groups were over-sampled. As a result, a further weighting strategy was applied to ensure representativeness of the NSW population. The weighting profile was based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, which are based on the 2016 Census.

## Highlighting sub-group differences

Throughout this report the results for the following three cohorts have been compared: young people and adults aged 14-24 years; parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years; and people aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years, with key differences highlighted. Indigenous residents have been compared to non-Indigenous residents. Key differences for other demographic groups (e.g. gender) have also been highlighted.

The standard format to compare sub-groups in this report uses 'cf.' as an abbreviation to introduce the comparison. For example: Group X are less likely to feel comfortable with personal data being collected compared to Group Y (50%; cf. 61%).

## Margin of error

All sample-based surveys are subject to survey error. For the community attitudes survey, the margin of error for the total sample size at 50% is  $\pm 2\%$ . This means that if 50% of survey respondents hold a particular view, then it is 95% likely that the population estimate will be between 48% and 52%. The margin of error varies based on the sample size and the sample percentage estimate. Smaller sample sizes make the margin of error larger.

For example, there are  $n=763$  respondents aged 14 to 24 years sampled in the survey. If 50% of them held a particular view, then the margin of error for the population estimate would be  $\pm 3.5\%$ , and the population estimate will be between 47% and 53%. Higher percentage estimates make the margin of error smaller. For example, if 90% of the respondents held a particular view, then the margin of error would be  $\pm 1\%$ .

## Effect of rounding

The sum of the individual components of a question may be different ( $\pm 1\%$ ) to the aggregated data for that question due to rounding error. The results of survey responses are reported in the figures throughout the document as percentages that have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

### 3 Awareness and perceptions of government data collection

*The NSW community appears to be very familiar with government data collection, with almost all respondents (94%) aware that the NSW Government collects one or more types of personal information on people living in NSW.*

Respondents were asked about their awareness of information collection by the NSW Government. Just over 80% think the government collects information on births/deaths/marriages and licence information with approximately three-quarters selecting health records, or land and title information.

Of the seven types of data collection presented, services access and usage information is the least commonly reported type of personal information that respondents think is collected (66%). Other responses provided include police/criminal records, fines, pension details, traffic offences, living arrangements and transport, taxation records of interest, dividends and other bank information.

**Figure 2: Awareness of personal data collection**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Any	94%	93%	94%	94%	95%	95%
Births/Deaths/Marriage	83%	78%	79%	87%	66%	86%
Licence information e.g. driver's license renewals	83%	77%	77%	88%	77%	85%
Health records	76%	75%	74%	76%	70%	77%
Land and title information e.g. building permits	74%	68%	66%	80%	67%	76%
Welfare information e.g. carer support services	72%	66%	64%	78%	66%	74%
Schooling information	68%	71%	68%	67%	67%	70%
Services access and usage information e.g. emergency housing	66%	62%	61%	71%	67%	68%
Other	2%	1%	1%	3%	5%	2%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	4%
None of these	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%

**Q1. What type of personal information do you think the NSW Government currently collects on people living in NSW? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

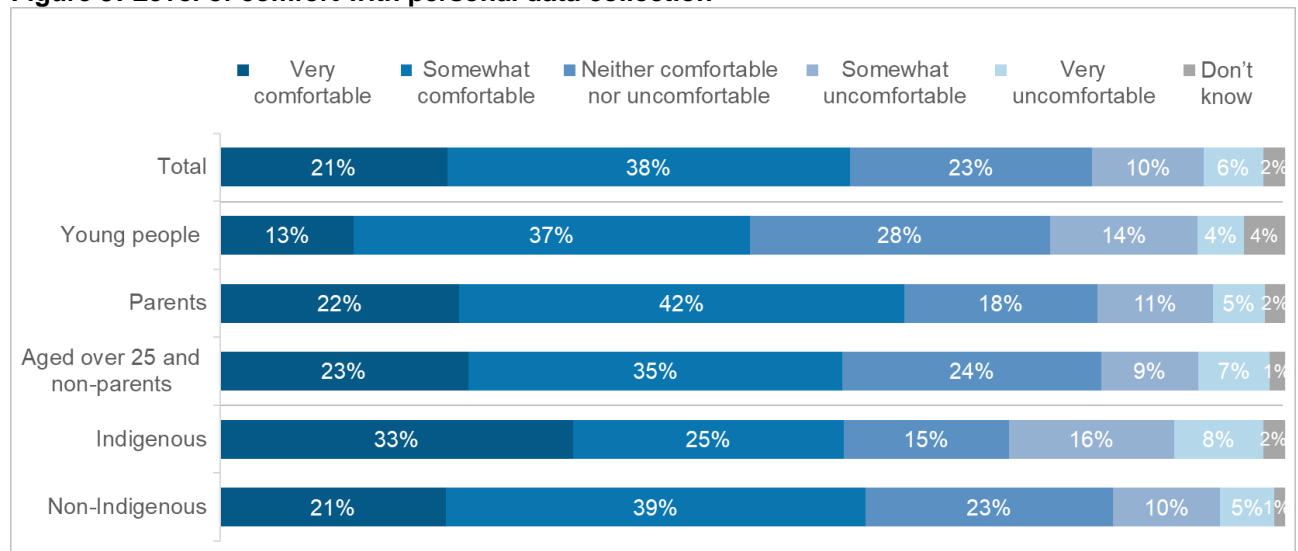
## 4 Levels of comfort with collection of personal information

*Despite high levels of awareness of NSW Government data collection, the NSW community shows moderate levels of comfort with the collection of personal data.*

Three in five respondents have some degree of comfort, with 21% feeling *very* comfortable and 38% feeling *somewhat* comfortable. A smaller proportion overall feel uncomfortable (16%). Almost a quarter feel neither comfortable nor uncomfortable suggesting a fairly high degree of indifference.

Survey respondents were then advised that the NSW Government collects personal data from people when they use NSW government services. Respondents were informed this data is also used to improve services and for research purposes, such as the development of programs designed to improve the lives of people living in NSW. With this in mind, respondents were asked about their comfort and confidence in the handling of data by the NSW Government.

**Figure 3: Level of comfort with personal data collection**




**Q2. How comfortable do you feel about this kind of personal data being collected by the NSW Government? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Young people and adults aged 14-24 years are less likely to feel comfortable with personal data being collected (50%) and are more likely to be indifferent with a quarter saying they are neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (28%).

Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years have higher levels of comfort (64%) and are less likely to say they are neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (18%).

Residents that are aged over 25 and are non-parents of children under 25 have moderate levels of comfort (58%).

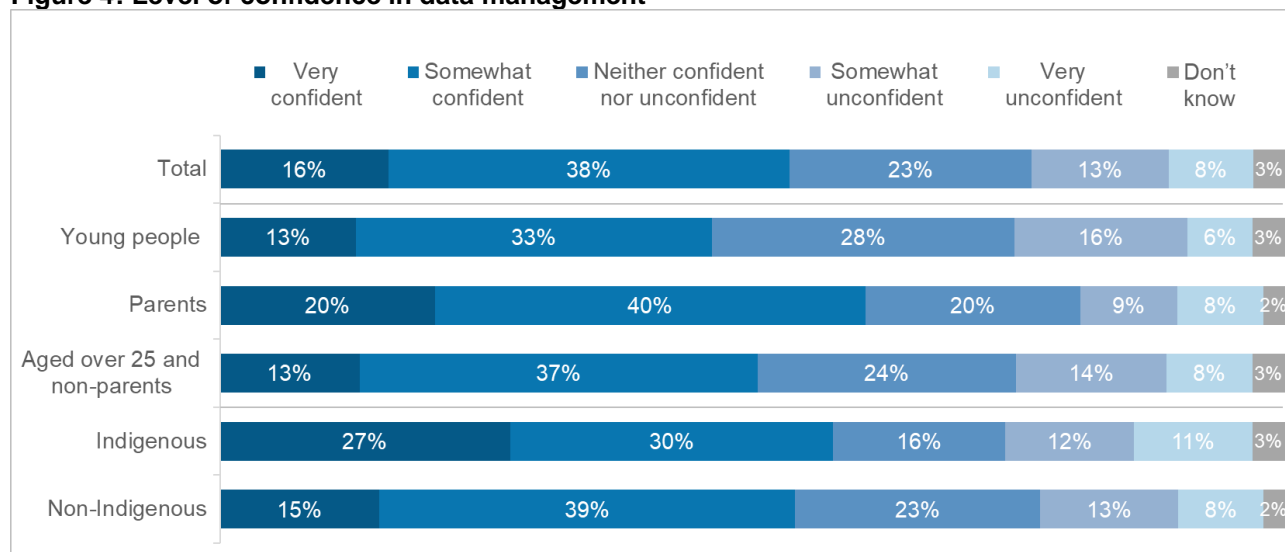
Whilst Indigenous residents are just as likely to feel comfortable as non-Indigenous residents (59%; cf. 60%), they are more likely to feel **very** comfortable (33%).

 <b>Which community groups have higher levels of comfort with personal data collection?</b>		
Gender	Males are more likely to feel comfortable than females	Males (64%); cf. Females (55%)
Age of children	Parents with younger children have higher levels of comfort than those with older children	Toddlers (68%) and Primary school (66%); cf. Teens (64%) and Adult (52%)
Highest level of education	Level of comfort increases with educational attainment	Up to Year 12 (54%), Undergraduate diploma/TAFE/Trade certificate (56%), Bachelor's degree (65%), Postgraduate qualification (70%)
Household income (pre-tax)	Level of comfort increases with household income	Under \$40,000 (49%); cf. \$40-\$99,999 (62%), \$100 or more (70%)

## 5 Attitudes towards the management of personal data

Reflecting the moderate feelings of comfort with the collection of personal data, the community is moderately confident that the personal data is well managed by the NSW Government. Whilst half do have some level of confidence, just 16% report feeling **very** confident.

**Figure 4: Level of confidence in data management**



**Q3. How confident are you that this personal data collected by the NSW Government is well managed? This includes how the data is collected and stored, who can access the data, and what it can be used for. Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Reflecting their lower levels of comfort with the collection of personal data, young people and adults aged 14-24 years are less likely to feel confident that the being collected by the NSW Government is well managed (47%). Conversely, parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years have higher levels of confidence (61%) with 20% **very** confident.

Residents that are aged over 25 and are non-parents of children under 25 have moderate levels of comfort (51%). Whilst Indigenous residents are just as likely to feel confident as non-Indigenous residents (57%; cf. 54%), they are more likely to feel **very** confident (27%).

There is a relationship between perceptions of data management and how people feel about the collection of personal data. Almost all respondents (98%) who feel **very** confident that the data is well managed, feel comfortable about personal data being collected. Similarly, of respondents who feel

**somewhat** confident that the data is well managed, the majority (82%) are comfortable with the data being collected in the first place.

Comfort with personal data being collected drops significantly as confidence in how the data is managed decreases. Of respondents who are **unconfident** in how the data is managed, less than a quarter (22%) are comfortable with it being collected in the first place.

As discussed later in Chapter 5 of this report, the research also shows that confidence in data management has a direct bearing on confidence in use of data and sharing.



### Which community groups have higher levels of confidence in how the personal data is managed?

Gender	Males are more likely to feel confident than females	Males (58%); cf. Females (49%)
Age	Residents aged 25-34 years are the most confident, more so than both younger and older cohorts	25-34 years (63%); cf. 14-24 years (47%), 35+ (52%)
Age of children	Parents with younger children have higher levels of confidence than those with older children	Toddlers (65%), Primary school (66%), Teens (61%), Adult (50%)
Highest level of education	Level of confidence increases with educational attainment	Up to Year 12 (48%), Undergraduate diploma/TAFE/Trade certificate (50%), Bachelor's degree (58%), Postgraduate qualification (64%)
Work status	Employed respondents are more likely to feel confident; with those in other work situations less so	Employed (59%), retired (53%), studying (46%), other e.g. unemployed, disability benefit, homemaker (44%)
Household income (pre-tax)	Level of confidence increases with household income	Under \$40,000 (45%); cf. \$40-\$99,999 (57%), \$100 or more (64%)



## Reasons given for confidence in data management

Looking at what is driving community perceptions of confidence in how the data is managed highlights a number of themes. These are presented below with example comments provided by survey respondents.

A sense of concern regarding how secure the information is:

*“While the government might store this info safely, I believe hackers are smarter.”*

*“I’m not absolutely sure that the data is protected from misuse, and the misuse could be official or ‘unofficial’ or even malicious...”*

A general distrust of government and government services:

*“Always concerned when the government has too much power...”*

*“How can you trust the NSW Government to do the right thing..?”*

A lack of control or autonomy:

*“Don’t like my information being shared.”*

*“Out of my control, no point to dwell on it.”*

Limited awareness and understanding of what’s happening:

*“It is an alarming thing if the data is being collected without consent.”*

*“No visibility or transparency on how they are using or securing the data.”*

Awareness of security breaches:

*“I have heard that recently Services NSW website had been hacked.”*

*“Recently cyber-attacks are rampant. Governments are their target.”*

An expectation that things will run smoothly:

*“I’ve never experienced a leak in my data so I’m comfortable with it.”*

*“I think they already have some of the details and it’s always been safe.”*

Trust in the system and a belief that the data will be put to good use:

*“NSW Government is very trustworthy and transparent, works only in favour of citizens.”*

*“It is a worthwhile service and it makes sense to do this.”*



**Communicating how the data is managed is likely to build support for the collection of personal data.**



## 6 Attitudes towards the sharing of de-identified, linked datasets within the NSW Government

Overall, there is positive community sentiment with regards to sharing of de-identified linked data within the NSW Government, with nearly two thirds of respondents feeling comfortable (62%) and just 14% feeling uncomfortable.

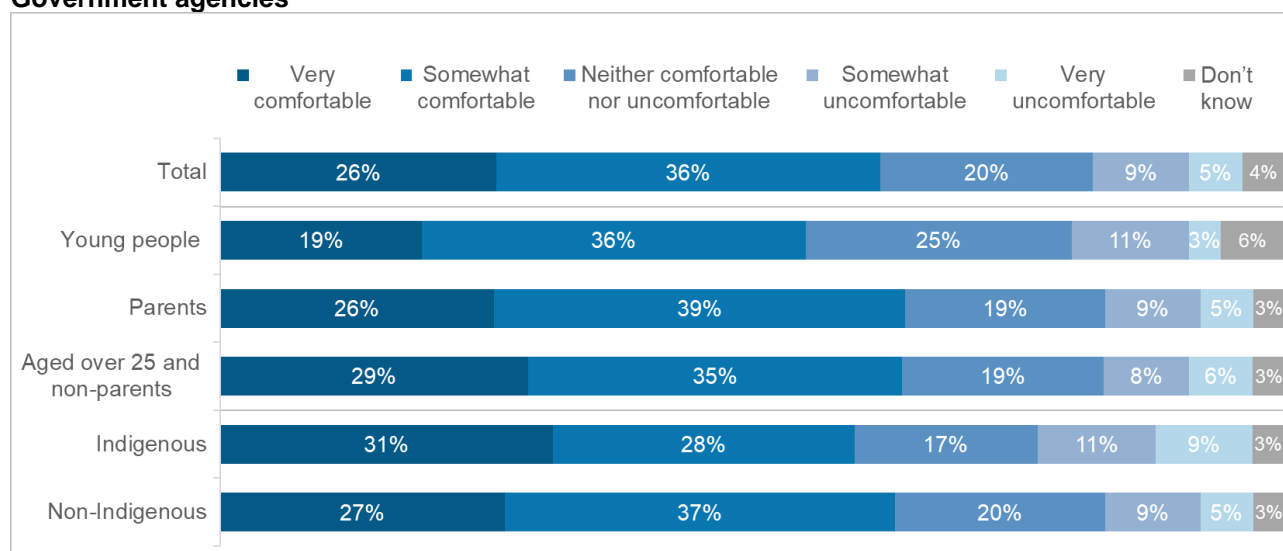
Respondents were provided with basic information about the Human Services Dataset and government use of the de-identified information:

*The NSW Department of Communities and Justice manages a dataset that links many different records about an individual together. This includes things like birth record, health data, education results and housing information.*

*This data is de-identified meaning that information such as names and addresses are removed. This makes the data anonymous.*

*This database is used by the NSW Government to understand how well they are providing services to children, young people and families in NSW, and to help them provide better services.*

**Figure 5: Level of comfort with the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies**



**Q5. How comfortable do you feel about this kind of de-identified linked data being shared across NSW Government agencies? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Reflecting their lower levels of comfort with the collection of personal data, young people and adults aged 14-24 years are less likely to feel comfortable with the sharing of data across NSW Government departments and agencies, with 55% doing so compared to 63% of residents that are aged over 25 and are non-parents of children under 25, and 65% of parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years.

Just one in five young people feel **very** comfortable (19%), and they are also more likely to be neither comfortable/uncomfortable, or to be unsure how they feel.

The survey found that if respondents are comfortable with personal data being collected, they tend to be comfortable with it being shared. Most respondents (93%) who feel **very** comfortable with personal data being collected, feel comfortable about de-identified personal data being shared. Similarly, of respondents who feel *somewhat* comfortable with the data being collected, four in five (79%) are comfortable with it being shared.

Comfort with the sharing of de-identified datasets drops significantly as comfort in the data being collected decreases. Of respondents who are **uncomfortable** that personal data is collected in the first place, comfort with it being shared across NSW Government agencies drops to a quarter (24%).



### Which community groups have higher levels of comfort with data sharing?

Household income (pre-tax)	Level of comfort increases with household income	Under \$40,000 (60%), \$40-\$99,999 (65%), \$100,000 or more (69%)



**Explaining what, why and how personal data is collected is the first step in building support for that data being shared.**

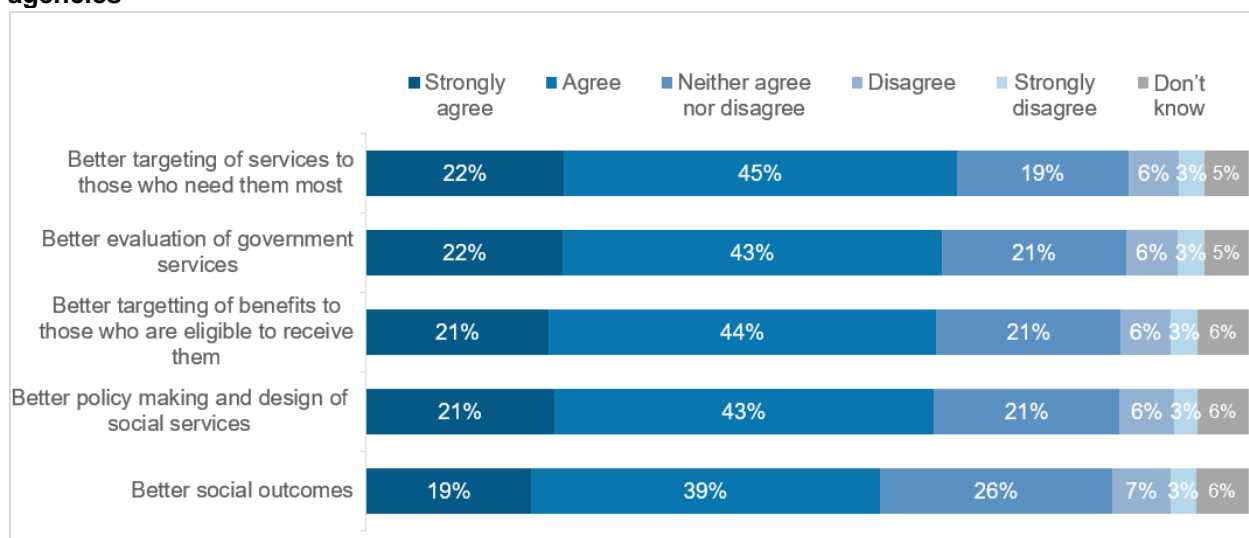
## 7 Benefits of sharing de-identified datasets within the NSW Government

*In general, respondents do feel that the sharing of de-identified linked datasets delivers positive outcomes and benefits the community. However, a detailed understanding of the outcomes, and a personal connection to the benefits, are not widespread.*

Agreement across *four of the five* presented outcomes is consistent with two thirds of respondents responding **positively**, and less than one in 10 having some level of disagreement.

Agreement is lower (58%) for the claim that sharing of de-identified linked data leads to better social outcomes, with this statement also having the highest proportion of respondents choosing 'neither agree nor disagree' (26%).

**Figure 6: Outcomes of sharing de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies**



**Q6. Do you think the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies leads to the following outcomes? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Young people and adults aged 14-24 years are less likely to **strongly** agree that the sharing of de-identified linked data leads to three of the five presented outcomes:

- Better evaluation of government services (16%), compared to a quarter of the parent and non-parent cohorts (25% and 23% respectively)
- Better policy making and design of social services (16%), compared to a quarter of the parent cohort (25%) and 21% of the non-parent cohort

- Better social outcomes (13%), compared to one in five of the parent and non-parent cohorts (22% and 18% respectively).

Indigenous residents are 1.7 times more likely to **strongly** agree that the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies leads to better social outcomes than non-Indigenous residents (32%; cf. 18%).

**Figure 7: Outcomes of sharing de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies – agreement by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree' for each statement						
Better targeting of services to those who need them most	67%	64%	68%	67%	75%	68%
Better evaluation of government services	65%	61%	68%	64%	65%	66%
Better targeting of benefits to those who are eligible to receive them	65%	65%	66%	64%	71%	65%
Better policy making and design of social services	64%	64%	65%	64%	70%	65%
Better social outcomes	58%	57%	63%	55%	64%	59%

**Q6. Do you think the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies leads to the following outcomes? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

*MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO BELIEVE SHARING OF DE-IDENTIFIED DATA LEADS TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES ARE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH PERSONAL DATA BEING COLLECTED AND MORE CONFIDENT THAT IT IS WELL MANAGED*

Of those who believe that sharing of de-identified linked data leads to beneficial outcomes, on average almost three-quarters are *comfortable* with the NSW Government collecting the personal data and over two thirds are *confident* that the data is well managed.

Conversely, of those that disagree (strongly disagree/disagree) that data sharing leads to beneficial outcomes, on average just a quarter are comfortable with such data collection and one in five are confident that the data is well managed.

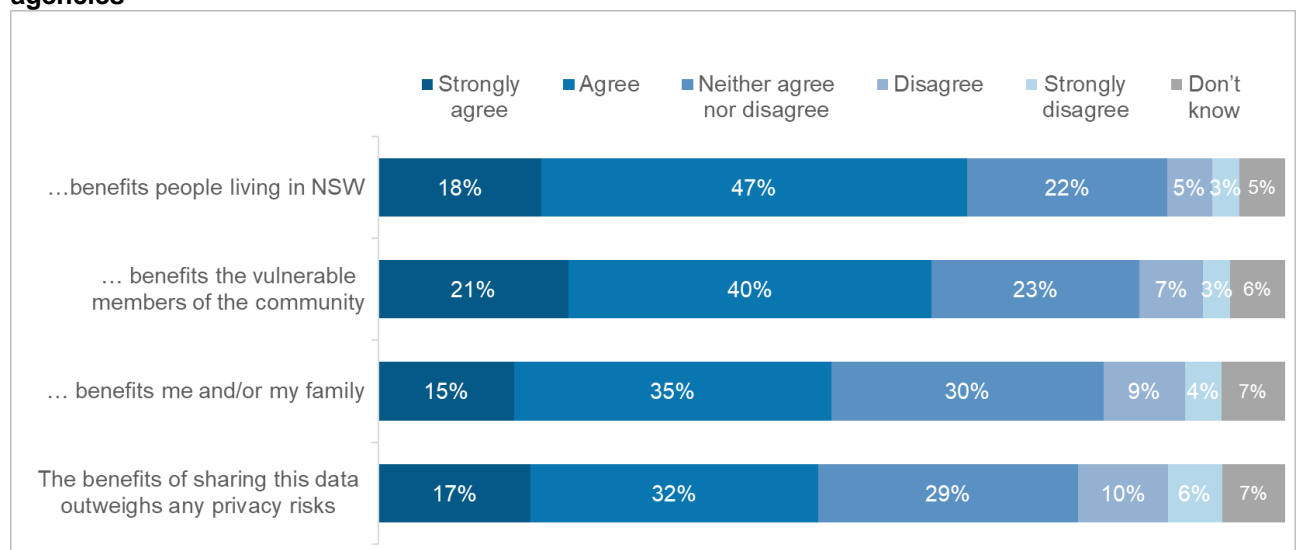
*THE FINDINGS HIGHLIGHT A LACK OF FAMILIARITY AND LIMITED PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE BENEFITS OF DATA SHARING.*

Overall, perceptions are **positive** with at least half of respondents responding favourably to each benefit presented, compared to a small minority who have some level of disagreement (approximately 10%). Consistent with perceptions of the outcomes of data sharing, of those that agreed, most respondents tended to agree rather than strongly agree.

Exploring perceptions of who benefits from data sharing, overall agreement (strongly agree/agree) decreases as the benefit being discussed becomes more specific. Whilst two thirds think that sharing of de-identified linked data benefits **people living in NSW** (65%), this decreases to three in five agreeing that data sharing benefits **vulnerable members of the NSW community** (61%), which drops to half agreeing that it benefits **them personally or their family** (50%). There is also a high proportion of respondents selecting 'neither agree nor disagree' across all the benefit statements, particularly that data sharing has benefited themselves, or their family (30%).

Similarly, half agree (strongly agree/agree) that the benefits of sharing de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies outweighs any privacy risks. At this point of the questionnaire our intention was to explore respondents' general perceptions of risk. When presented with more context later in the questionnaire, community perceptions of privacy risks became more pronounced. This is explored in detail in Chapters 8 and 9.

**Figure 8: Benefits of sharing de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies**



**Q7. Still thinking about the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The sharing of this data... Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Young people and adults aged 14-24 years are *less likely* to **strongly** agree that data sharing leads to any of the presented benefits; with parents,

guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years *more likely* to **strongly** agree with three of the four benefits. Indigenous residents are almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous residents to **strongly** agree that data sharing across NSW Government agencies benefits them and/or their family (27%; cf. 15%).

**Figure 9: Benefits of sharing de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies – agreement by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree' with each statement						
... benefits people living in NSW	65%	63%	68%	63%	74%	65%
... benefits the vulnerable members	61%	59%	67%	58%	67%	61%
... benefits me and/or my family	50%	46%	61%	45%	62%	50%
The benefits of sharing this data outweighs any privacy risks	49%	42%	57%	46%	58%	49%

**Q7. Still thinking about the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The sharing of this data...** Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)

*MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY THAT CAN PERSONALLY RELATE TO THE BENEFITS OF SHARING DE-IDENTIFIED LINKED DATA ARE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH DATA BEING SHARED AND BELIEVE THAT THE BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE PRIVACY RISKS*

Of respondents that think the sharing of de-identified linked data benefits them and/or their family, 83% are comfortable with the data being shared across NSW Government agencies (cf. other NSW residents 42%). Three-quarters of respondents (77%) who have some level of agreement (strongly agree/agree) that the sharing of de-identified data across NSW Government agencies *benefits themselves and/or their family*, agree (strongly agree/agree) that the benefits of sharing this data outweighs the privacy risk. Conversely, of respondents who **disagree** (disagree strongly/disagree) that the sharing benefits them and/or their family, just one in 10 (12%) feel that the benefits of data sharing outweighs the privacy risk.

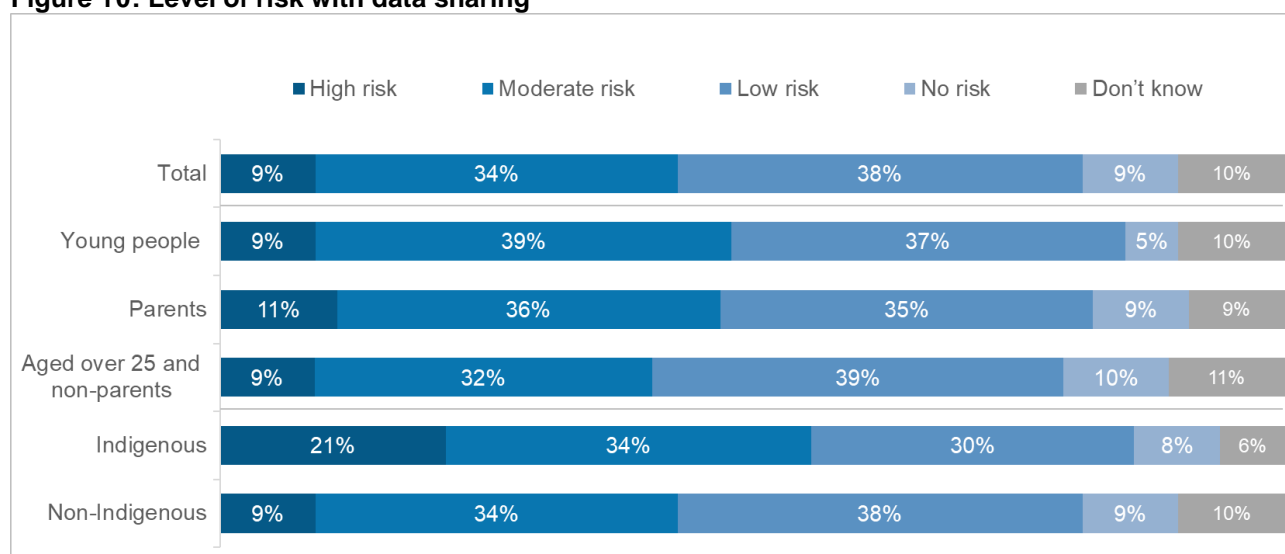


**Educating the community about the outcomes that data sharing delivers, and making the benefits tangible to more people, will build awareness and understanding of the work being done, and the value it provides.**

## 8 Perceptions of risk in sharing de-identified linked datasets

The majority of residents surveyed think that sharing of de-identified linked data presents some degree of privacy risk, with just one in 10 thinking such activity presents no risk. That said almost three-quarters believe the level of risk to be moderate or low.

**Figure 10: Level of risk with data sharing**



**Q8. Does the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies pose a privacy risk to people living in NSW? Is it a ...? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**



### Reasons given for risk perceptions

Respondents were asked to give a reason for why they thought data sharing posed a high, moderate, low or no risk. Nine percent of respondents think that the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government departments and agencies poses a **high privacy risk** to people living in NSW. The top reasons given for this view are:

- 1 The data is at risk of a data breach e.g. getting hacked/cyber-crime (21%)
- 2 Distrust of the government (18%)
- 3 Personal data is never anonymous (10%)

- 4 The government has a history of data breaches/leaks/mismanagement (9%)
- 5 Don't trust the government's ability to manage data (8%)

A third (34%) of respondents think that the sharing of data poses a **moderate privacy risk**. The top reasons given are similar to those presented above:

- 1 The data is at risk of a data breach e.g. getting hacked/cyber-crime (18%)
- 2 Just think it is a risk (generic) (9%)
- 3 Risk of mismanagement (8%)
- 4 Personal data is never anonymous (7%)
- 5 There is always a risk (generic) (7%)

Two in five (38%) respondents think that the sharing of data poses a **low privacy risk**. The top reasons given for this view are:

- 1 Government adheres to security protocols and the data is anonymised (45%)
- 2 The government is trustworthy (11%)
- 3 Just think it is a low risk (generic) (10%)
- 4 There is always a risk (generic) (6%)
- 5 The data is at risk of a data breach e.g. getting hacked/cyber-crime (6%)

Nine percent of respondents think that the sharing of data across NSW Government agencies poses **no privacy risk** to people living in NSW. The top reasons given are similar to those presented above in relation to why data sharing poses a low privacy risk:

- 1 Government adheres to security protocols and the data is anonymised (58%)
- 2 The government is trustworthy (14%)
- 3 Just think it is a low risk (generic) (7%)
- 4 The information is being used for good (7%)
- 5 Do not foresee any problems/consequences with data sharing (5%)



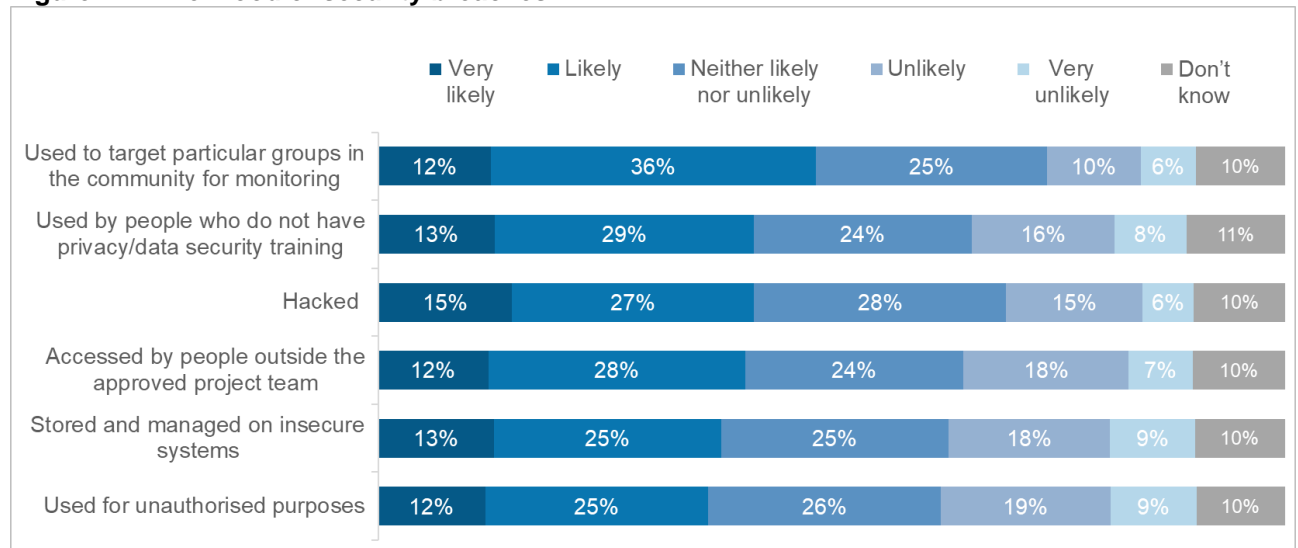
## 9 Community attitudes towards different types of risk

The results show that community sentiment leans towards data being compromised to some degree as likely rather than unlikely to occur.

The risk respondents thought **most likely** to occur is that the data could be used to target particular groups in the community for monitoring purposes (very likely/likely 48%, unlikely/very unlikely 16%). Conversely, data being used for unauthorised purposes was thought the least likely risk to occur (very likely/likely 36%, unlikely/very unlikely 28%).

Across all the potential risks presented, approximately a quarter of respondents said that the risk occurring was neither likely nor unlikely.

**Figure 11: Likelihood of security breaches**



**Q10. How likely is it that this de-identified linked data will be...? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Across the presented security breaches, Indigenous residents are more likely to think each one is likely to occur than non-Indigenous residents. Particularly, that the data is likely to be accessed by people outside the approved project team (+18%), used for unauthorised purposes (+17%), or used to target particular groups in the community for monitoring purposes (+16%).

**Figure 12: Likelihood of security breaches – agreement by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Very likely' or 'Likely' for each statement						
Used to target particular groups in the community for monitoring purposes	48%	50%	50%	46%	64%	48%
Used by people who do not have privacy/data security education and training	42%	38%	45%	41%	51%	41%
Hacked	41%	37%	42%	42%	52%	41%
Accessed by people outside the approved project team	41%	39%	41%	41%	58%	40%
Stored and managed on insecure systems	38%	36%	39%	38%	46%	38%
Used for unauthorised purposes	36%	34%	39%	35%	53%	36%

**Q10. How likely is it that this de-identified linked data will be...? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Perhaps not surprisingly, respondents who think that the sharing of de-identified linked data across NSW Government agencies poses a **high/moderate** privacy risk to people living in NSW, are more likely to expect each of the presented security breaches to occur.

What is perhaps more interesting is that even amongst people believing that data sharing poses low or no privacy risk (refer Chapter 8), as shown in the table below, between 19% and 37% expect each of the presented security breaches to occur.

**Figure 13: Likelihood of security breaches – by perceptions of risk**

Very likely/likely to occur	Level of privacy risk that sharing data poses	
	High/moderate (n=924)	Low/none (n=890)
Used for unauthorised purposes	58%	19%
Accessed by people outside the approved project team	63%	23%
Hacked	64%	24%
Stored and managed on insecure systems	55%	24%
Used by people who do not have privacy/data security education and training	63%	25%
Used to target particular groups in the community for monitoring purposes	63%	37%

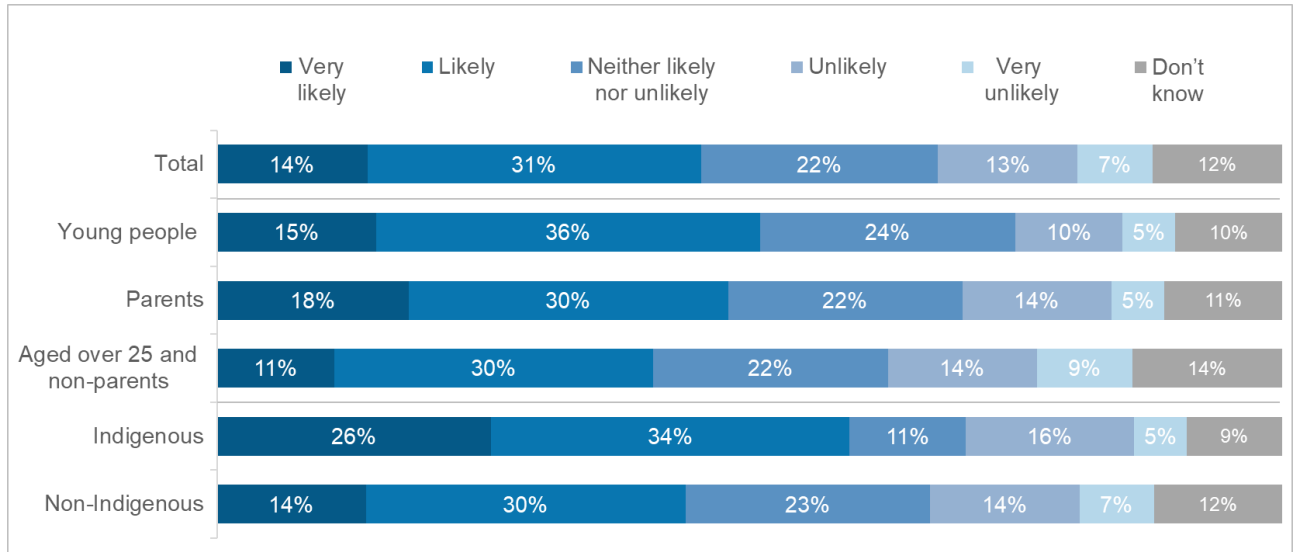
**Q10. How likely is it that this de-identified linked data will be...? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

## Risk of re-identification of data

Another risk which was tested was re-identification of information. It was explained to respondents that re-identification refers to when personal information that has been de-identified is traced back to an individual even after personal identifiers have been removed.

Almost half of respondents think re-identification likely to some degree, with a small group believing it to be **very** likely to occur. However, a third of respondents were unable to say whether they thought re-identification was likely or unlikely, being either ambivalent (22%) or unsure (12%).

**Figure 14: Likelihood of data being re-identified**



**Q11. When data is de-identified, the records are made anonymous. How likely do you think it is that someone could be re-identified? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Whilst half of young people and adults aged 14-24 years think that re-identification is likely (very likely/likely) (52%), this decreases to 41% of residents that are aged over 25 and are non-parents of children under 25.

Indigenous residents are almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous residents to think that re-identification is **very** likely.



## Reasons given for why re-identification is likely/unlikely

There are a number of reasons why respondents think re-identification is likely or unlikely. These reasons have been summarised into a number of broad themes which are presented below with example comments provided by survey respondents.

Two in five (45%) think that re-identification is **very likely or likely**. The main reasons given for this view are the availability of technology that can do this and the ability of hackers to infiltrate systems.

## Technology

*“Anything is possible with modern technology.”*

*“Although the identifier of the person is not in the data, there would be other identifiers about the services they used and their location. 10 years ago, I would have said no it's not possible, not anymore.”*

*“Technological development is growing in the same pace as the security enhancement. This may come up with new ways to re-identify the data.”*

## Hacking

*“Too many Government sites have been hacked in the past.”*

*“No matter how good a storage system is, there is always someone smarter with the ability to hack and once in a supposedly secure data base, I'm certain if required, names could be obtained.”*

*“That identifiable data is in the system somewhere, if someone can hack the system to get the de-identified data, then they can certainly figure out how to get the other data.”*

One in five (20%) think that re-identification is **unlikely or very unlikely**. The main reasons given for this view are the perceived difficulty of the process and a belief that security systems are in place and working well.

## Re-identification is not easy

*“If all identifying data is removed properly, correlating a particular piece of data to an individual becomes very difficult.”*

*“I think it would need a high technology system to hack and re-identify any anonymous data.”*

*“As long as there are no distinct identifiers, I don't believe there is any straightforward way of backtracking and identifying a person through de-identified data.”*

## Trust in the system

*“Have some level of confidence that the systems are well managed and protected.”*

*“Because the government are supposed to make it secure so people can't re-trace your details.”*

*“IT systems should ensure this can't happen.”*



Community sentiment regarding security breaches seems to be ‘not if but when’. Across each security breach discussed, only a minority think it is **unlikely** to happen.

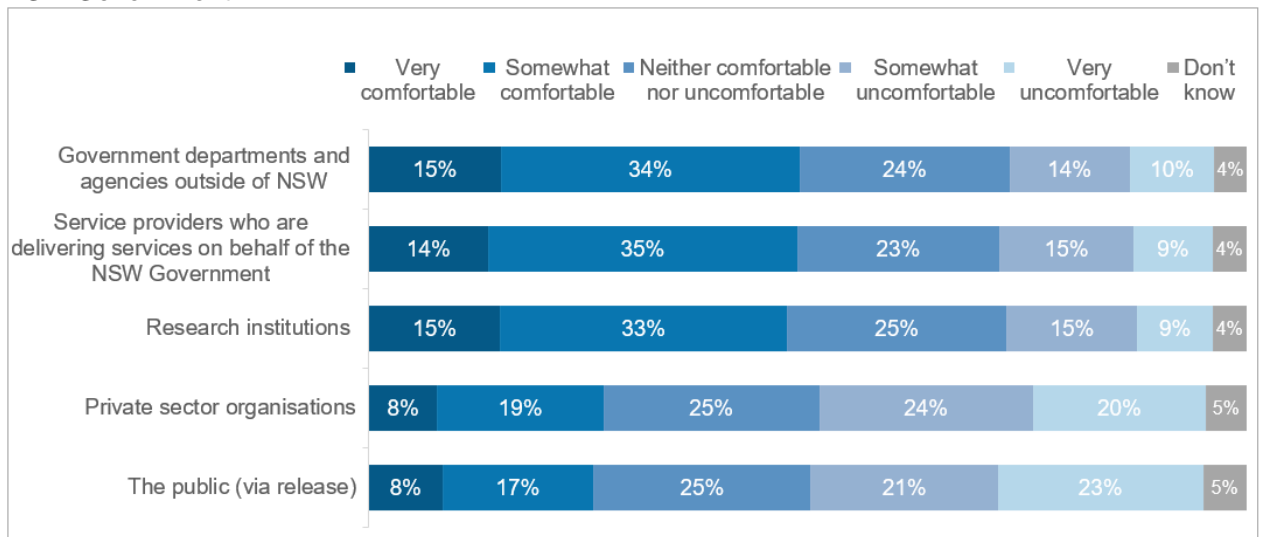
# 10 Views on sharing de-identified linked data outside the NSW Government

Respondents were informed that de-identified linked data collected by the NSW Government is also shared with other government and non-government organisations to help provide better services to children, families and young people in NSW.

Overall, the community is far less comfortable with de-identified linked data being shared **outside** the NSW Government. There is also a clear delineation of attitudes to different types of entities and organisations. Comfort levels with de-identified linked data being shared across (non-NSW) government departments and agencies, service providers delivering government services, and research institutions, is almost double the comfort level for private sector organisations and the public.

Almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents have some level of comfort with de-identified linked data being shared across NSW Government departments and agencies (refer Chapter 6). However, when asked about de-identified linked data being shared with private sector, less than a third (27%) of respondents were comfortable with this. Similarly, only a quarter (25%) were comfortable with de-identified linked data being released publicly.

**Figure 15: Level of comfort with de-identified linked data being shared outside the NSW Government**



**Q13. How comfortable are you with this data being shared with each of the following?**  
**Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Indigenous residents have higher levels of comfort with data being shared across all the presented organisations outside the NSW Government than non-Indigenous residents. Particularly:

- Private sector organisations: 41%; cf. 26%
- The public: 41%; cf. 25%.

**Figure 16: Level of comfort with de-identified linked data being shared outside the NSW Government – comfort by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Very comfortable' or 'Somewhat comfortable' for each statement						
Government departments and agencies outside of NSW e.g. Commonwealth, other states	49%	46%	54%	47%	62%	49%
Service providers who are delivering services on behalf of the NSW Government e.g. not for profit organisations, charities	49%	49%	51%	47%	58%	49%
Research institutions e.g. universities	48%	51%	51%	44%	58%	48%
Private sector organisations	27%	27%	34%	22%	41%	26%
The public (via release)	26%	23%	32%	22%	41%	25%

**Q13. How comfortable are you with this data being shared with each of the following?**  
**Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

Residents aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 are more likely to feel *uncomfortable* with data being shared across four of the five organisations. Particularly:

- Service providers who are delivering services on behalf of the NSW Government e.g. not for profit organisations, charities: 29%; cf. 20% parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years, 19% young people aged 14-24 years
- Private sector organisations: 52%; cf. 40% young people aged 14-24 years, 34% parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25.

**Figure 17: Level of discomfort with de-identified linked data being shared outside the NSW Government – discomfort by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Very uncomfortable' or 'Somewhat uncomfortable' for each statement						
Government departments and agencies outside of NSW e.g., Commonwealth, other states	23%	21%	21%	26%	25%	23%
Service providers who are delivering services on behalf of the NSW Government e.g., not for profit organisations, charities	24%	19%	20%	29%	26%	25%
Research institutions e.g., universities	23%	19%	21%	27%	24%	24%
Private sector organisations	44%	40%	34%	52%	38%	45%
The public (via release)	45%	47%	38%	49%	38%	46%

**Q13. How comfortable are you with this data being shared with each of the following?**  
**Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**



## Which community groups have higher levels of agreement with the sharing of de-identified linked data outside the NSW Government?

### Sharing data with research institutions e.g. universities

Age	The youngest cohort (aged 14-17 years) are most comfortable with data being shared with research institutions, with comfort decreasing with age.	14-17 years (59%); cf. 18-34 years (51%), 35-49 years (47%), 50+ years (44%)
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### Sharing data with private sector organisations

Age	People aged 25-34 years are more comfortable with data being shared with private sector organisations, more so than both younger and older cohorts.	25-34 years (36%); cf. 14-24 years (27%), 35+ years (24%)
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### Sharing data with the public (via release)

Gender	Females are more likely to feel uncomfortable with data being shared with the public.	Females (49%); cf. Males (41%)
Education	People with higher levels of education are more comfortable with data being shared with the public.	Up to Year 12 (23%), Undergraduate diploma/TAFE/Trade certificate (22%), Bachelor's degree (28%), Postgraduate qualification (35%)



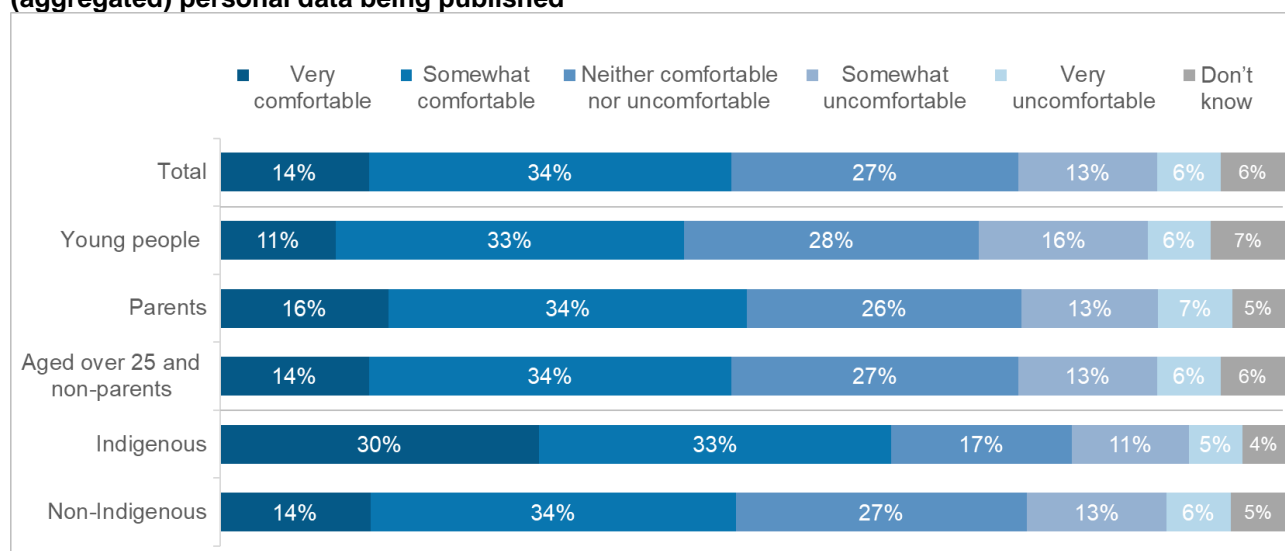
## 10.1 Use of de-identified data in research and publication

NSW government undertakes research using de-identified combined (aggregated) data, the findings of which may be published. Participants were asked about comfort levels in relation to such publications.

There is moderate support for the publishing of research based on de-identified combined (aggregated) data with less than half of respondents (48%) feeling comfortable with the data being used in this way.

Whilst one in five feel uncomfortable, a quarter feel neither positive or negative (27%) about publishing research, suggesting that this is perhaps something they have not considered before and do not have a strong opinion about.

**Figure 18: Level of comfort with research based on de-identified combined (aggregated) personal data being published**



**Q14. Research findings based on the de-identified combined data are often published. How comfortable do you feel about this? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**



The results highlight a degree of discomfort with data being shared with the private sector, released to the public or published, even when it has been de-identified and aggregated.

# 11 Acceptable uses of de-identified linked data

Respondents are much more comfortable with data being used for specific purposes relating to government services, with support decreasing as the potential use of the data become less specific.



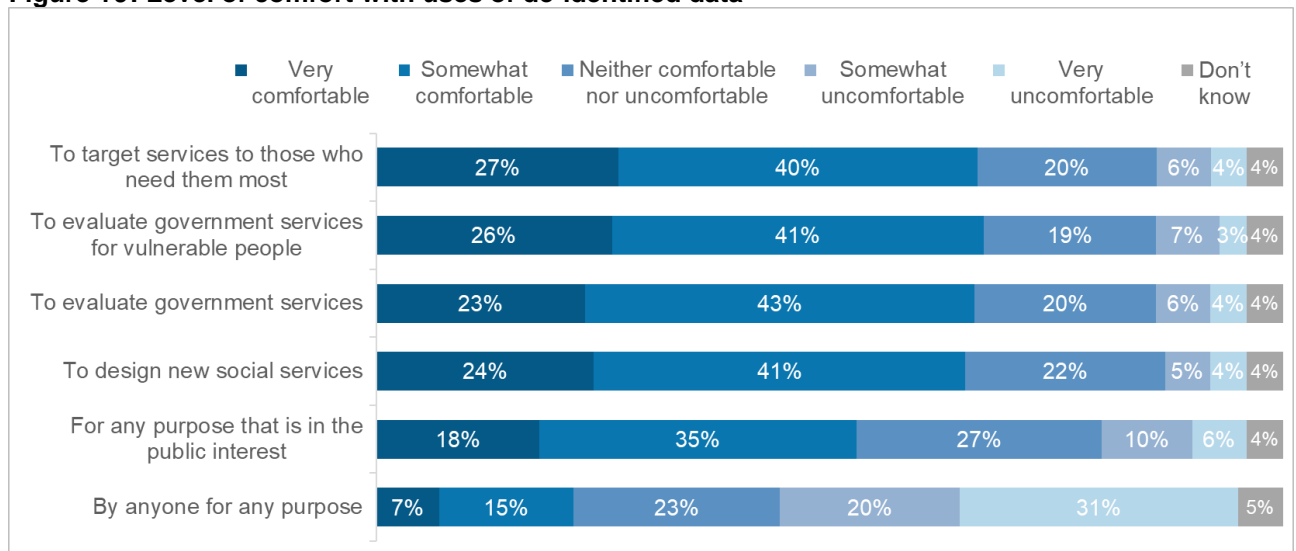
Around two thirds are positively disposed to de-identified data being used to evaluate, design and target government services.

Support then decreases to 53% comfortable with data being used for any purpose that is in the public interest, down to 21% comfortable with the data being used by anyone for any purpose.



Across five of the six potential uses, a small minority (six percent or less) actively feel **very** uncomfortable, however this increases to almost a third feeling **very** uncomfortable with de-identified data being used by anyone for any purpose.

**Figure 19: Level of comfort with uses of de-identified data**



**Q15. How comfortable are you with de-identified data being used for each of the following? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Young people aged 14-24 years, parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years, and residents aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years have consistent levels of comfort with de-identified data being used in five of the six ways presented.

The exception is comfort with the data being used by anyone for any purpose, which ranges from 30% of parents, to 24% of young people down to 15% of the over 25, non-parent segment.

Indigenous residents have higher levels of comfort across all six of the uses than non-Indigenous residents and are also more likely to feel **very comfortable** with each one too. Particularly, with regards to the data being used to evaluate government services (47% cf. 23%).

**Figure 20: Level of comfort with uses of de-identified data – comfort by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Very comfortable' or 'Somewhat comfortable' for each statement						
To target services to those who need them most	67%	64%	66%	68%	71%	68%
To evaluate government services for vulnerable people	66%	64%	64%	68%	71%	67%
To evaluate government services	66%	65%	65%	66%	74%	67%
To design new social services	64%	62%	61%	66%	74%	65%
For any purpose that is in the public interest	53%	49%	56%	52%	58%	54%
By anyone for any purpose	21%	24%	30%	15%	33%	20%

**Q15. How comfortable are you with de-identified data being used for each of the following? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**

**Figure 21: Level of discomfort with uses of de-identified data – discomfort by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Very uncomfortable' or 'Somewhat uncomfortable' for each statement						
To target services to those who need them most	9%	9%	11%	9%	14%	9%
To evaluate government services for vulnerable people	10%	9%	11%	10%	12%	9%
To evaluate government services	10%	10%	11%	10%	13%	9%
To design new social services	9%	9%	11%	8%	10%	9%
For any purpose that is in the public interest	16%	19%	16%	16%	19%	16%
By anyone for any purpose	51%	47%	44%	56%	53%	52%

**Q15. How comfortable are you with de-identified data being used for each of the following? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**



**Very targeted communication regarding how the data is used will increase community engagement with the collection process and build confidence that it is an important activity that benefits everybody.**

## 12 Expected privacy protections

Respondents were informed that the NSW Government's privacy practices in collecting, storing, using and disclosing personal and health information are governed by **privacy principles** that provide:

- What information can be collected and how
- How information should be stored and protected
- How residents can find out what information is held and how to correct it if it is wrong
- How personal information can be used and disclosed
- How residents can complain about privacy breaches

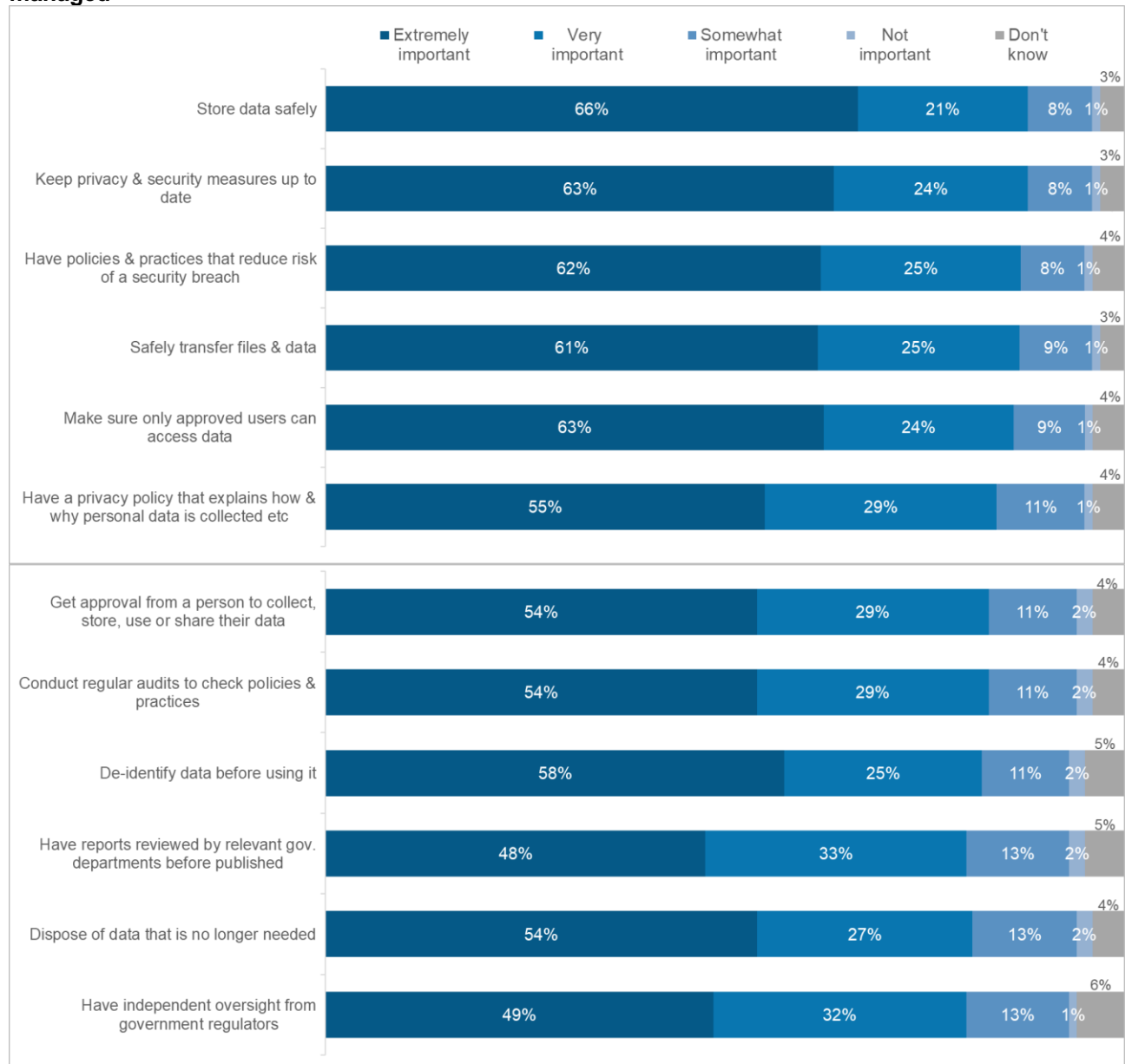
*Importance is high across **all** the standards, with the majority of respondents thinking each one is extremely/very important, and just one or two percent indicating each one is not important.*

Importance ranges from 88% of respondents thinking that storing data safely is extremely/very important to 80% thinking that having independent oversight from government regulators is extremely/very important.

Five of the standards are highlighted as being key to community perceptions of their personal data being well managed, with at least three in five respondents saying that each one is **extremely** important:

- 1 Store data safely **66%**
- 2 Keep privacy and security measures up to date **63%**
- 3 Make sure only approved users can access the data **63%**
- 4 Have policies and practices that reduce the risk of a security breach **62%**
- 5 Safely transfer files and data **61%**

**Figure 22: Importance of standards in making sure personal data is being well managed**



**Q16. The privacy principles incorporate a set of standards that the NSW Government must comply with. These standards are listed below. How important is each one in making sure that your personal data is being well managed by NSW Government agencies? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013)**

Young people and adults aged 14-24 years are *less likely* to view each of the 12 standards as extremely/very important. Conversely, residents aged 25 years and over, who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years are *more likely* to view each standard as extremely/very important. This group are also more likely to view each one as **extremely** important, particularly:

- De-identify data before using it: 65%; cf. 51% young people aged 14-24 years, 50% parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years
- Conduct regular audits to check policies and practices: 60%; cf. 48% parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years, 47% young people aged 14-24 years.

Indigenous residents are more likely to think that independent oversight from government regulators is **extremely** important: 63%; cf. 49% non-Indigenous residents.

**Figure 23: Importance of standards in making sure personal data is being well managed – importance by resident segmentation**

	Total	Young people and adults aged 14-24 years	Parents, guardians and carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Residents aged 25 years and over who are not parents, guardians or carers of children and young people aged under 25 years	Indigenous residents	Non-Indigenous residents
Table shows % 'Extremely important' or 'Very important' for each statement						
Store data safely	88%	83%	86%	90%	82%	89%
Keep privacy and security measures up to date	87%	80%	85%	90%	85%	89%
Have policies and practices that reduce the risk of a security breach	87%	81%	86%	89%	85%	88%
Safely transfer files and data	87%	80%	85%	89%	81%	88%
Make sure only approved users can access the data	87%	81%	84%	89%	85%	88%
Have a privacy policy that explains how and why personal data is collected, stored, used and shared	84%	82%	84%	85%	85%	85%
Get approval from a person to collect, store, use or share their data	84%	77%	85%	85%	81%	85%
Conduct regular audits to check policies and practices	83%	78%	81%	87%	80%	85%
De-identify data before using it	82%	76%	81%	85%	84%	84%
Have reports reviewed by relevant government departments and agencies before being published	81%	77%	81%	82%	80%	82%
Dispose of data that is no longer needed	80%	67%	80%	84%	82%	82%
Have independent oversight from government regulators	80%	75%	81%	82%	84%	81%

**Q16. The privacy principles incorporate a set of standards that the NSW Government must comply with. These standards are listed below. How important is each one in making sure that your personal data is being well managed by NSW Government agencies? Base: NSW residents 14+ (n=2,013), Young people (n=763), Parents of children under 25 (n=750), Residents aged over 25 and non-parents of children under 25 (n=572), Indigenous residents (n=153), Non-Indigenous residents (n=1,726)**



## Which community groups view the standards as more important?

Age

Respondents aged 50+ are more likely to regard all the standards as **extremely** important than respondents aged 49 and under. This is particularly the case for:

- De-identify data before using it (70%; cf. 48%)
- Conduct regular audits to check policies and practices (67%; cf. 46%)
- Dispose of data that is no longer needed (67%; cf. 44%).



**Building awareness of the standards and communicating how the NSW Government adheres to them is a potentially powerful means of building community trust in how the data is managed.**



## 13 Increasing community trust



### Final comments

At the end of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide any final comments. These responses have been grouped into themes which are presented below with example comments for each.

Some made practical suggestions on how to improve security:

*“Ensure that information is protected by the latest technology to ensure that sophisticated hackers cannot access information.”*

*“No data should be stored overseas or via private organisations!!!!”*

Others referred to increasing transparency:

*“I think the terms and conditions should be made available to all concerned, in plain English, that is terms that can be easily understood.”*

*“Keen to actually hear how the Department is using our data and which data that is.”*

There were also comments about opting out:

*“Do not collect personal information in the first place.”*

*“Allow the people to opt out for certain non-essential data collection.”*

Some reported a lack of trust in the government:

*“Whilst this government is in power, nothing good will come from it.”*

*“They can stop being all corrupt and selling our data for their own personal gains ...”*

Whilst others provided more positive comments:

*“...the government of this country is always by the side of the people, the government system of this country is very good....”*

*“NSW data is very safe and trustworthy.”*

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