Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services

Responsive Government
A New Service Agenda

July 2006

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT OFFICE (AGIMO)
Contents

Foreword 6

one Executive summary 8

1.1 Background to the study 8
1.2 About the study 8
1.3 Approach to study 9
1.4 Major findings 9

1.4.1 Accessing and using e-government services 9
1.4.2 Motivators of channel use 9
1.4.3 Barriers to e-government use 10
1.4.4 E-government satisfaction 10
1.4.5 Future preferences for e-government use 10
1.4.6 Security and privacy issues 11

two Accessing and using e-government services 14

2.1 Use of government services provided through the internet 14

2.1.1 Use of the internet to contact government services in the past 12 months 14
2.1.2 Levels of internet use 15
2.1.3 Disability as a barrier to internet use 16
2.1.4 Broadband connection 17

2.2 Overall use of government services 19

2.2.1 Level of government being accessed 19
2.2.2 Channel of delivery being used 20
2.2.3 Type of transactions being undertaken 21

three Types of services being accessed 24

3.1 Most popular service categories 24
3.2 Most popular specific services 25
3.3 Services most frequently accessed via all channels 26
### Contents

**four Demographic profiles of users of e-government services**

4.1 Profiles of users of government services 28

**five Motivators of channel use**

5.1 Reasons for using the internet to contact government services 32
5.2 Reasons for using the telephone to contact government services 33
5.3 Reasons for contacting government services in person 35
5.4 Reasons for using mail to contact government services 37

**six Barriers to e-government use**

6.1 Barriers to increased use of the internet 40
   6.1.1 Reasons why internet users did not use the internet to make contact 40
6.2 Barriers to increased use of the telephone 41
   6.2.1 Reasons why non-internet users did not use the telephone 41

**seven E-government satisfaction**

7.1 Satisfaction with service 44
   7.1.1 Comparison of satisfaction ratings in 2006 and 2004–05 45
7.1.2 Achieving intended outcome 46
7.1.3 Satisfaction with outcome 46
7.1.4 Satisfaction with outcome, by channel 46
7.1.5 Satisfaction with how long respondents had to wait for a reply 46
7.1.6 Satisfaction with length of wait for a reply, by channel 46
7.1.7 Satisfaction with ease of finding information or a service 47
7.1.8 Satisfaction with ease of finding information, by channel 47
7.1.9 Satisfaction with ease of using the service 47
7.1.10 Satisfaction with ease of using the service, by channel 47

7.2 Current causes of dissatisfaction 49
   7.2.1 Dissatisfaction with internet contacts 49
   7.2.2 Dissatisfaction with phone contacts 51
   7.2.3 Dissatisfaction with in-person contacts 53
   7.2.4 Dissatisfaction with mail contacts 55
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eight</td>
<td>Future preferences for e-government use</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.1 Preferred channel for accessing government services</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.2 Change in use of government websites</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.3 Factors that would encourage use of the internet</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.4 Preferences for website structures and locations</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.4.1 Website structures</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.4.2 Locations of government websites</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine</td>
<td>Security and privacy issues</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1 Trade-offs between anonymity, convenience and security</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.1 Anonymity and convenience</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.2 Tailored services versus anonymity</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.3 Updating personal information</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.4 Added security versus ease of use and time savings</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.5 Willingness to provide credit card and banking details</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1.6 Reasons for reluctance to provide details</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.1 Conclusions about motivations for channel selection</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.2 Conclusions about barriers to e-government uptake</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.3 Conclusions about e-government satisfaction</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.4 Conclusions about future preferences for e-government use</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.5 Conclusions about security and privacy issues</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eleven</td>
<td>Appendix – Background and methodology</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.1 Terms of reference</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.2 Research team</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.3 Methodology</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreword

Australia is a leading e-government nation in implementing and delivering e-government initiatives and developing user-centric models of service delivery.

In March 2006, I released the 2006 e-Government Strategy, Responsive Government: A New Service Agenda. The strategy outlines a co-ordinated and citizen-driven focus to the government’s e-government initiatives. One of the four priorities identified in the strategy is meeting users’ needs.

The Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services – 2006 report provides an insight into user needs and how these needs are being met.

This 2006 study is the second in what will be a series of reports. The first study, undertaken in 2005, provided a benchmark to inform future e-government strategies and priorities and further support the citizen focus of e-government. It measured the uptake of e-government across all levels of government.

Studies such as these are integral to ensuring the Australian Government is able to work toward a more holistic picture of e-government in Australia.

The 2006 study measures the degree of citizen ‘take-up’ and adoption of e-government and also allows us to draw comparisons with the 2004–05 study. Consequently we are able to identify changes and trends in citizens’ preferences on how they deal with government electronically.

I am pleased to report that the 2006 study clearly demonstrates an increase of 9 per cent in the uptake of e-government services by Australians. Similarly, the number of Australians who chose to make the majority of their contacts with government via the internet rose from 14 per cent to 19 per cent in the same period.

Importantly, ratings of citizens’ satisfaction with e-government services remained high, right across the board. Sixty eight per cent of citizens said they were either extremely satisfied, or very satisfied, with their interactions with government generally. More specifically, those who had contacted government via the internet said they were extremely satisfied with the service they received.

Central to the 2006 e-Government Strategy is the concept that e-government should reflect citizens’ needs, circumstances and preferences.

Clearly, the implementation of the strategy is starting from a strong foundation of citizen satisfaction with the way that government services have been delivered electronically to date. The Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services – 2006 report provides a sound basis for that understanding, and I am pleased to commend this report to you.

THE HON GARY NAIRN MP
Special Minister of State
July 2006
Executive summary
Executive summary

1.1 Background to the study

One of the Australian Government’s visions for 2010 is to provide Australian citizens with services which offer fully integrated online, electronic and voice-based capabilities (Responsive Government: A New Service Agenda, e-Government Strategy, 2006). Understanding the current experiences and evolving expectations of government service users is imperative to designing seamless, multi-channel entry points to government services.

In 2004, the Australian Government, through the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) conducted the first survey of Australians’ use of and satisfaction with e-government services. The report relating to this study was published in June 2005 and is referred to throughout this publication as the 2004–05 report.

The 2006 survey was commissioned to allow experiences and satisfaction with government services to be monitored on an ongoing basis, so that developing e-government services can meet potentially changing user expectations.

1.2 About the study

The present study replicated aspects of the 2004–05 national survey in order to monitor any changes in behaviour and attitudes to e-government services. The main objectives of the study were to explore:

- current usage levels of all government services, whether they be telephone, internet, in-person or mail contacts
- motivations for use and barriers to use of e-government services (government services provided through the internet and telephone), and
- satisfaction with government services through all channels, including reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The study was designed to provide information to guide government decision-making for e-government policy development.

The present study expanded the scope of the previous study by exploring:

- use of and satisfaction with services accessed by mail and in person in addition to e-government services. This allowed a more thorough evaluation of how e-government services compare against all other government service provision methods in terms of user satisfaction
- more in-depth issues regarding security and privacy on the internet
- changes in accessing government websites in the last 12 months, and
- use of new technologies, including broadband, and how that might impact on use of e-government services.
1.3 Approach to study

A telephone survey was conducted comprising a nationally representative sample of the Australian population of 5040 interviews. This included 2219 interviews with people who have indicated accessing government services via the internet in the past year.

Four focus groups were also conducted to explore the motivations and attitudes related to key findings in the survey. A total of 33 people participated in the focus groups which were conducted in metropolitan and regional areas of NSW, South Australia and Queensland. The focus groups were intended to explore issues and ideas in greater depth than was possible in the telephone survey. See the Appendix to this report for a description of the survey and focus group methodologies.

1.4 Major findings

1.4.1 Accessing and using e-government services

The level of use of government internet services has increased since 2004–05.

- Internet contact was the only method of contacting government that increased significantly from 2004–05 (from 19% to 25%), while in-person (43%) and mail contact (10%) decreased slightly from 2004–05. Telephone contact stayed the same at 28%.
- The level of use of e-government services among the Australian population who access government services has increased significantly since 2004–05, with 48% of the survey sample accessing a government service via the internet at least once in the past 12 months compared with 39% of those interviewed in 2004–05.
- The percentage of people who did all or most of their dealings with government over the internet increased to 19% from 14% in 2004–05.

Those with broadband connection are more likely to use the internet to access government services.

- Broadband connection was related to the likelihood of using the internet to contact government, with 41% of broadband owners contacting the government by internet on their most recent contact, compared with 23% of internet users who did not have a broadband connection.
- Focus group findings suggest that those who use dial-up connections find the relative slowness of their connections to be a deterrent to conducting transactions with government.

1.4.2 Motivators of channel use

Time and convenience are the key motivators of channel selection for all but in-person contacts.

- Being able to undertake a transaction at a time that suits the individual, together with a method that is perceived to take less time, were the key reasons given for selecting most channels.
- Reasons for choosing to conduct the transaction in person differed from the other channels, with the main reasons given being either that there was no other choice, or because they wanted to speak to someone face-to-face.
The speed and convenience of an automated telephone system is gaining popularity. The proportion of people who preferred the speed or convenience of an automated telephone contact increased to 23% in 2006 from 17% in 2004–05.

The internet is primarily seen as a channel for obtaining information. The majority of internet contacts (54%) were to seek or obtain information. This was also reflected by focus group participants who said that the internet was primarily a channel for obtaining information. However, most focus group participants did not regard the internet as ‘official enough’ for other types of transactions. If the nature of the transaction was regarded as serious or important, the perception was that it warrants speaking to a person directly.

1.4.3 Barriers to e-government use

Lack of knowledge about the availability of internet services is the most common reason for not accessing them. Almost one in three (32%) internet users who did not use the internet for their most recent contact with government thought (rightly or wrongly) that the contact could not be done online. This was mentioned by 9% more respondents in 2006 than in 2004–05 (23%).

Preference for ‘real person’ contact continues to be a significant barrier to internet use. One of the main reasons given by internet users for not using internet contact was the preference for speaking to a real person (stated by 14% of internet users). This is similar to 2004–05 findings and remains a key motivator for telephone and in-person contacts.

1.4.4 E-government satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with government services remains high and has not changed significantly since 2004–05. Overall satisfaction levels were reasonably high with between 82% and 94% of respondents expressing some level of satisfaction with the outcome of their transaction across all channels. Satisfaction levels for internet and telephone transactions were the same or slightly above 2004–05 satisfaction levels.

1.4.5 Future preferences for e-government use

There has been a shift away from preferring to access government services in person toward a greater preference for telephone access. Overall, telephone was the preferred method for 35% of respondents, followed by internet (33%), in-person (25%) and mail (3%). This differs from preferences identified in 2004–05 when in-person was the favoured method (33%), followed by internet (31%) and telephone (28%).
The percentage of people who nominated the internet as a preferred channel did not change significantly.

The percentage of people who nominated the internet as a preferred channel has increased slightly to 33% in 2006 from 31% in 2004–05. In total, 8% of respondents who said they would prefer to use the internet are instead using other channels for government transactions. This figure has decreased from 2004–05 when 12% of people who would have preferred to access services via the internet used another channel instead.

1.4.6 Security and privacy issues

Security consciousness is increasing with regard to internet transactions.

Internet users are becoming more cautious. The vast majority of respondents (82%) said they would prefer a higher level of security that adds time to transactions when dealing with government services via the internet. This is a 5% increase in security consciousness from 2004–05 respondents.

Focus group findings also suggested that security issues were at the forefront of people’s minds with regard to transactions on the internet. The majority of participants had not personally experienced security breaches or fraud through the internet, but they all heard stories of people who had been victims of internet ‘scams’. Some participants indicated they could not be converted to using any internet site for financial transactions because they simply do not trust the channel to be secure.
two Accessing and using e-government services
2 Accessing and using e-government services

Significant changes in 2006

- The level of internet use among survey respondents increased to 77% from 71% in 2004–05.
- The level of use of e-government has increased significantly to 48% of the Australian adult population accessing a government service via the internet at least once in the past 12 months, compared with 39% in 2004–05.
- The percentage of people who did all or most of their dealings with government over the internet increased to 19% from 14% in 2004–05.
- Internet was the only method of contact that increased significantly, to 25% in 2006 from 19% in 2004–05.
- Metropolitan residents (54%) were more likely than regional (40%) and rural (37%) residents to say they had used a government internet service at least once in the last 12 months.

2.1 Use of government services provided through the internet

2.1.1 Use of the internet to contact government services in the past 12 months

The level of use of e-government services by the Australian population has increased significantly since 2004–05. The 2006 study found that:

- 48% of people who had accessed government services had accessed a government service via the internet in the past 12 months compared with 39% in 2004
- 19% of all adult Australians said they used the internet in the majority (all or most) of their contacts with government services. This represents an increase from 14% of 2004–05 respondents who said the same
- 63% of internet users had accessed a government service via the internet in the past year. This is a significant increase from 2004–05 when 55% of all internet users said they had accessed a government service via the internet in the past year, and
- metropolitan residents (54%) were more likely than regional (40%) and rural (37%) residents to say they had used a government internet service at least once in the last 12 months. They also made up the majority of the most recent government internet contacts (70%), even though they only made up 57% of the survey sample (see Table 3, page 30).
Figure 1: Proportion of contact with government services by internet in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just one</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can't say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 12: Thinking of all the contacts that you have had with government agencies and services over the past 12 months, about what proportion of these took place over the internet?

Base: All respondents n=5040

Note 1: Percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

Note 2: The figure above shows rounded figures for each category. The actual percentage of 2004–05 respondents who had used the internet to contact government at least once in the last 12 months was 39% without decimal rounding.

2.1.2 Levels of internet use

More than three out of four survey respondents (77%) said they were internet users. Respondents were asked to nominate all the locations where they typically use the internet (respondents could nominate more than one location). Most (67%) said they used the internet at home, while 41% used it at work and 18% at school, a library or other location.

Most internet users (65%) said they used the internet at least once a day. This is a significant increase from 2004–05 when 42% of internet users said they used the internet daily. More than two out of five internet users (42%) said they used it more than once a day. More than one in four internet users (27%) said they used it once or a few times a week, compared with 22% of 2004–05 internet users who used it weekly. Six per cent of internet users indicated they use the internet only monthly, which is similar to 2004–05 when 5% of internet users said they used it monthly. A further 3% of internet users said they used it once or twice a year, which is comparable to the 2004–05 results which indicated that 2% of internet users used it less than monthly.
Figure 2: Frequency of internet use among internet users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times per week</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2A: How often do you use the internet?
Base: Internet users n=3804
Note: Percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

2.1.3 Disability as a barrier to internet use

Those who had never used the internet were asked if they had a disability that would make it difficult for them to access the internet. Only 4% of those who had never used the internet indicated that a disability prevented them from using the internet.

The main categories of disabilities nominated included:
- sensory (including sight) and speech (39%)
- physical restrictions (32%)
- intellectual (10%)
- head injury or stroke (5%), and
- psychological (4%).

Given that 19.3% of the Australian population identify themselves as having a disability¹, and 6.1% are identified as severely or profoundly restricted in core daily activities², this would suggest that the figure in this survey is a significant underestimate. This may be due to the problems inherent in phone survey methodologies in making contact with people who may have difficulties in answering telephones or communicating on the telephone. The data must be interpreted with caution.

² Core daily activities involve self-care, mobility or communication. Severe or profound restriction means that assistance is always or sometimes needed to undertake these activities.
2.1.4 Broadband connection

More than one half of internet users surveyed (57%) said they had a broadband connection. Of these, 57% said their internet use had increased since obtaining a broadband connection. Users with broadband were more likely to say they use the internet more than once a day (54%) compared with people who only had a dial-up connection (26%).

**Figure 3:** Frequency of internet use among broadband and dial-up internet users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Broadband</th>
<th>Dial-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times per week</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Change in internet use since getting broadband:**

- Increased: 57%
- Decreased: 1%
- Stayed the same: 40%
- Can’t say: 2%

**Question 2A:** How often do you use the internet?
**Q2C:** Would you say that since getting broadband your use of the internet has: increased; decreased; stayed the same?

**Base:** Internet users n=3804; Broadband users n=2177

**Note:** Percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

Broadband connection was related to the likelihood of using the internet to contact government, with 41% of broadband owners contacting the government by internet on their most recent contact, compared with 23% of internet users who did not have a broadband connection.
As shown in Figure 4, internet users with dial-up connections were far more likely (49%) than broadband users (29%) to say that none of their contacts with government services in the last 12 months had been via the internet.

Users of broadband (45%) were as likely as dial-up users (42%) to indicate that their access of government websites had increased in the last year. However, dial-up users were slightly more likely to indicate that their access of government websites had decreased in the last year (5%) compared with broadband users (2%).

Users of broadband (51%) were more likely than dial-up users (31%) to say their preferred method of contacting government services was by internet.

Figure 4: Proportion of contact with government services by internet in the past 12 months by internet users with broadband and dial-up connections

Question 12: Thinking of all the contacts that you have had with government agencies and services over the past 12 months, about what proportion of these took place over the internet?

Base: Internet users n=3804
Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

Table 1 shows a comparison of broadband and dial-up users in relation to their internet behaviours in contacting government services, and their distribution in each of the broad geographic areas. As shown in the table, metropolitan residents are still far more likely to have broadband, with 64% of metropolitan internet users having broadband, compared with 52% of regional internet users and only 32% of rural internet users.
**Table 1: Comparison of broadband users and dial-up users**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of Broadband Users</th>
<th>% of Dial-up Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most recent contact with government by internet</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased access to government sites in last 12 months</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased access to government websites in last 12 months</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet as preferred method of contacting government</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Geographic distribution***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>% of Broadband Users</th>
<th>% of Dial-up Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan residents</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional residents</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural residents</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Totals for each geographic area do not add up to 100% as the ‘don’t know’ responses have been excluded from the table.

### 2.2 Overall use of government services

Survey respondents were asked to recall their most recent contact (whether initiated by them or by the service provider) with government services in the previous 12 months, regardless of the method of contact. Respondents were asked to consider all types of contacts they may have had with local, state/territory governments or the Australian Government.

They were asked to identify four things:

1. Level of government contacted (federal, state/territory or local).
2. Channel through which they made their contact (phone, internet, mail, in-person).
   - Some respondents (8%) said they used more than one channel for one transaction.
3. Type of transaction³ (seeking or obtaining information, providing information, exchanging information, or making/receiving payment).

#### 2.2.1 Level of government being accessed

Respondents were asked to specify the level of government for the most recent government service they accessed. As shown in Figure 5, the percentage of people who contacted the three levels of government remained exactly the same as in 2004–05.

³ Type of transaction was referred to as ‘level of sophistication’ in the 2004–05 survey report.
**Question 3C: What level of government was that contact with: federal, state/territory or local?**

**Base:** All respondents n=5040

**2.2.2 Channel of delivery being used**

In-person continued to be the most common way of contacting government, identified by 43% of respondents, followed by telephone (28%), the internet (25%), and mail (10%).

As shown in Figure 6, internet contact was the only method of contact that increased significantly from 2004–05, while in-person and mail contact decreased slightly from 2004–05. Telephone contact remained stable.
Figure 6: Government services used in the last 12 months analysed by channels of delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 4: Thinking about the most recent contact with any government services in the past 12 months, did you do this by...

Base: All respondents n=5040
Note: Percentages add up to more than 100% as some respondents reported using more than one channel for the same government service.

2.2.3 Type of transactions being undertaken

Respondents were asked to specify the nature of their most recent contact with a government service, whether they:
- sought or obtained information only
- provided information about themselves (with no exchange of information)
- exchanged information with the government, or
- made or received a payment.

Overall, 36% of respondents said they sought or obtained information, 35% made or received a payment, 24% provided information only, and 20% exchanged information (1% of respondents were not able or refused to specify what the contact involved).

Seeking or obtaining information was the most common type of transaction being undertaken over the internet (54%) or by telephone (46%). Making or receiving payments was the most common type of transaction undertaken in person (45%), while providing information was the most common type of transaction undertaken by mail (43%).
Figure 7: Type of transaction by channel of delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Sought/obtained info</th>
<th>Provided info</th>
<th>Exchanged info</th>
<th>Made payment</th>
<th>Can't say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 3B: What were you doing on that occasion?

**Base:** All respondents n=5040

**Note:** Percentages add up to more than 100% as some respondents nominated more than one type of transaction for their most recent government contact.
three Types of services being accessed
three Types of services being accessed

3.1 Most popular service categories

Respondents were asked to give details of their most recent contact with government services. The same detailed list of services used in the 2004–05 survey was again used in 2006. Responses were then summarised into 15 broad categories of government services.

The broad category with the highest proportion of contacts was community and social services at 22%, followed by transport (19%), and land, property, planning, and construction (14%). As shown in Figure 8, there were no significant changes from the proportion of contacts for each service category reported in 2004–05.

Figure 8: Government service categories used in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Category</th>
<th>2004-05</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community and social services</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land, property, planning and construction</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business services, economics, finance and taxation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and health services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary industry, natural resources and energy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system, election and representatives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment, climate and conservation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International, travel and immigration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, justice and consumer protection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency services, defence and national security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture, heritage, sport, entertainment and local tourism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, science and technology</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 3A: Please tell me the most recent contact you had with any government services in the past 12 months.

Base: All respondents n=5040
Note: Percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

* Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services*
3.2 Most popular specific services

The most frequently reported specific services across all channels are summarised in Figure 9. They did not change significantly from 2004–05 and continued to be:
• car, boat, vehicle registration and licences (16% compared with 13% in 2004–05)
• land tax or rates (10% in both 2006 and 2004–05)
• income or personal tax (11% compared with 8% in 2004–05), and
• family benefit, child allowance, or childcare benefits (8% in 2006 and 7% in 2004–05).

**Figure 9:** Top 10 specific services used (by any channel) in the past 12 months

Question 3A: Please tell me the most recent contact you had with any government services in the past 12 months.

**Base:** All respondents n=5040
**Note:** Totals do not add up to 100% as only the top 10 specific services used were reported in the above figure.
3.3 Services most frequently accessed via all channels

The channel used to access the top 10 services are shown in Table 2. The services accessed did vary by channel, with income and personal tax making up the largest proportion of internet (17%) and mail (28%) contacts. Phone contacts were most frequently related to family benefits, child allowance or childcare benefits (14%) and in-person contacts most frequently related to car, boat, vehicle registrations or licences (27%).

Table 2: Top 10 specific services used in past 12 months by channel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>All channels</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>In-person</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car, boat, vehicle registrations or licences</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income or personal tax</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land rates or tax</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family benefit, child allowance or childcare benefits</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities, services or accounts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building permit or planning application</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health benefits for Australian residents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-health related services for the aged</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers allowance, unemployment benefit, working for the dole</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates service was not in the top 10 in 2004–05
Demographic profiles of users of e-government services
four Demographic profiles of users of e-government services

4.1 Profiles of users of government services

To help build a picture of the different types of people who use government services, a statistical analysis found that most respondents fell into four main groups, differing on demographic, behavioural and attitudinal variables. The main characteristics of each of the four groups are summarised below. A further 1303 respondents were unable to be easily categorised into any particular group and were not included in the four groups described here.

The four groups can be defined according to their preferred mode of contact with government, as follows:

- Group 1 (n=936) were more likely to prefer the telephone
- Group 2 (n=1248) liked the phone and the internet equally
- Group 3 (n=1018) were more likely to prefer the internet
- Group 4 (n=535) preferred the telephone and in-person contact equally.

Group 1 members
Respondents who fell into group 1 tended to be regular internet users who preferred to use the telephone to access government services. Members of this group were most likely to be couples with no children at home (63%). They were 50 years or older (99%) and had the second largest proportion of retirees of all the groups.

They tended to be more easily satisfied with government service than members of the other three groups.

Group 2 members
Respondents who fell into group 2 tended to be a bit younger than group 1 members, all being between 35 and 49 years of age. They liked telephone and internet channels equally. They tended to be in couples with dependent children (75%) and were more likely to be female (56%). They were the most likely of all the groups to be employed full time (59%).

Group 3 members
Respondents who fell into group 3 were the youngest of all the groups, with all members being under 40. They were most likely to prefer the internet (50%) as their mode of contact with government. They were most likely to be metropolitan residents (65%) and to be in couples with dependent children (54%). They were the most likely of all the groups to have a tertiary qualification (41%). While members of this group were the most likely to say they would provide bank account details over the internet (53%), they were also the most concerned about preserving their anonymity in internet transactions (62%).
They were the hardest group to satisfy. While satisfaction ratings for services were high among all the groups, members of this group were the least likely to say they were extremely satisfied with aspects of the government service they had last contacted, irrespective of the channel they had used.

**Group 4 members**

Group 4 members were the least likely of all the groups to prefer the internet (13%), with their preferred modes of contact being by telephone and in person. They were the least internet savvy, with 41% having never used the internet. They were slightly more likely to be male (57%) and they were the oldest group, all being 60 years or older. They were mainly in couples with no children at home (90%) and tended to not be employed (84%), due to having retired (94%). They were the least likely of all the groups to have tertiary qualifications (21%).

They were the second easiest group to satisfy in terms of service provision and were the least likely to have a view about issues of anonymity and security over the internet. If they did have a view, it tended to favour lower security in favour of easier-to-complete transactions, compared with the other groups who tended to be more security conscious. That aside, they were the least likely to say they would provide bank account details over the internet.

**Demographic features of government service users by channel of contact**

Table 3 summarises the percentage of each gender, age group and geographic locations of users of government services for each of the main channels they said they had used most recently. The key demographic features which distinguished users of the four channels from the average population are outlined here.

The 28% of people who used the telephone to contact government services were more likely to be:
- female (57% compared with 43% male)
- between 35 and 54 years of age (46% of telephone users).

The 25% of people who used the internet to contact government services were more likely to be:
- male (54% compared with 46% female)
- aged 25–54 (the majority of internet service users, 73%)
- in metropolitan locations (70% of internet users).

The 43% of people who contacted government services in person were more likely to be:
- older (22% were aged over 65).

The 10% of people who contacted government services by mail were more likely to be:
- older (21% were aged over 65).
Table 3: Demographic features of users of the four channels for most recent contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Phone (%)</th>
<th>Internet (%)</th>
<th>In-person (%)</th>
<th>Mail (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.
five Motivators of channel use
five  Motivators of channel use

**Significant changes in 2006**

- Motivations for channel use have changed slightly, with respondents indicating they have more choice about the type of channel they access.
- One of the most common reasons for contacting government in person, nominated by 15% of respondents, was that they thought there were no other options. This is a significant decrease from 2004–05 when 35% said the contact was only possible in person.
- Time was the most common reason for using the internet, with 47% indicating it took less time. This has increased significantly from 2004–05 when 37% mentioned time-saving as a key motivator.
- The proportion of people who preferred the speed or convenience of using an automated telephone system increased to 23% in 2006 compared with 17% in 2004–05.
- There was an increase in the proportion of people who used phone contact because they did not have to go into a government office (12%) compared to 2004–05 (5%).

5.1 Reasons for using the internet to contact government services

One in four (25%) respondents had used the internet as their main mode of contact in their most recent contact with government. This is an increase from 2004–05, when 19% of all respondents made contact with government services using the internet.

Time was the most common reason for using the internet, with 47% indicating that it took less time. This has increased significantly from 2004–05 when 37% mentioned time-saving as a key motivator. A further 33% said they could do it at a time that suited them. A further 22% mentioned that it was an uncomplicated or convenient method. Not waiting in a queue was the prime motivation for 11% of internet users. The most common reasons given for using the internet are summarised in Figure 10.

Most focus group participants indicated that the internet was the favoured tool when seeking information or for general research. The main advantages of internet use mentioned by focus group participants were:

- the speed and time-saving benefits of using the internet, allowing a transaction to be accomplished immediately and at a time that suits the respondent, and
- conducting transactions by email providing a ‘hard record’ that can then be used as reference if the transaction is not resolved to the respondent’s satisfaction, or as evidence of contact.
Question 6C: Still thinking of this most recent contact, why did you do it by internet rather than by phone or some other way?

Base: Made most recent contact by internet \( n=1171 \)

Note: Responses add up to more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason as to why they used the internet.

5.2 Reasons for using the telephone to contact government services

The percentage of government contacts undertaken by phone remained the same at 28% in 2006 and 2004–05. In 2006, the main reason given by respondents for contacting a government service by phone was because it required less time (25%). The proportion of people who preferred the speed or convenience of automated telephone contact increased to 23% in 2006 compared with 17% in 2004–05.
Following are some of the reasons given by focus group participants for phone and in-person contacts being favoured over internet contact.

- Communication is more effective over the phone or in person because there is the tone as well as words, so you can convey a sense of urgency if you have to. Also, you can clarify yourself or seek clarification if required.
- If you are a slow typist, it is quicker to use the phone.
- The phone is easier to use than the internet.
- It is difficult to make a mistake with a phone or in-person transaction and if you do make a mistake there is a person present who can pick it up and correct it straight away.
- You can get all the information you need in one transaction.
- If you have a question, you do not have to read pages of information to find the answer.
- You feel safer conducting financial transactions with a real person.

There was also a marked increase in the proportion of people who used phone contact because they did not have to go into a government office (12%) compared to 2004–05 (5%). There was a significant decrease in respondents who said they contacted the government by phone because they could do it at a time that suited them (down to 18% in 2006 from 28% in 2004–05).

Figure 11 summarises the main reasons given for using the telephone to contact government services.
**Figure 11:** Most common reasons for using the telephone to contact government services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requires shorter time</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed/convenience of automated system</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can do it at a time that suits me</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to speak to a real person</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have to go into a government office</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can ask and get answers immediately/don’t have to wait</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can clarify/explain to get the result that I want</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was required/no other way of doing it</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have to wait in queue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t do it online/this is the only option available</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told to do it this way</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 6A:** Still thinking of this most recent contact, why did you do it by phone?

**Base:** Made contact by phone n=1356

**Note:** Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents were able to give more than one reason for using the telephone to contact government services.

### 5.3 Reasons for contacting government services in person

Of the most recent contacts with government in the last 12 months, the most common method of contact was in-person, nominated by 43% of respondents. Of those who made contact with government services in person, 16% said they did so because they preferred to speak to a real person. This is comparable to the 2004–05 findings (18%).
According to focus group participants, in-person or phone transactions were preferred when:

- the issue was regarded as serious
- the person was in trouble
- they wanted to make a complaint
- there was money involved
- they needed to receive instructions
- they were concerned about making a mistake, or
- they needed an immediate response.

The next most common reason for contacting government in person, nominated by 15% of respondents, was that they thought there were no other options. This is a significant decrease from 2004–05 when 35% said the contact was possible only in person. A further 12% said they had to sign supporting documents.

Eleven per cent said that an in-person contact allowed them to do it at a time that suited them. This is a significant decrease from 2004–05 when twice that percentage (22%) said they could do it at a time that suited them. However, ‘convenience’ was a new category quoted in 2006, mentioned by 8% of respondents. This category may have been included in the ‘time that suits me’ category in 2004–05. If the two categories were amalgamated, it would bring the 2006 figure closer to the 2004–05 figures. A further 5% mentioned that they did it in person because they did not have the option to conduct the transaction online.

Figure 12 summarises the main reasons given for contacting government services in person.
Question 6E: Still thinking of this most recent contact, why did you do it in person?

**Base:** Made contact in person n=2006

**Note:** Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons are summarised in the above figure.

### 5.4 Reasons for using mail to contact government services

The percentage of people who mentioned mail as a method for contacting government decreased to 10% in 2006 from 13% in 2004–05.

Of those who made contact with government services by mail, 15% said that they were motivated by convenience. This is a 5% increase from 2004–05 when 10% mentioned ease or convenience. Sixteen per cent felt that they could do it at a time that suited them. This has not changed significantly from 2004–05 when 18% mentioned this motivator. A further 17% said they either had a form sent to them (8%) or they had to sign a form (9%). Six per cent mentioned either not having to go to a government office or wait in a queue (4%), while a further 15% said there was no other channel available. This is a slight decrease from 2004–05 when 19% said there were no other channels available.
Rural residents (23%) who used mail contact were more likely to see it as a convenient channel compared with metropolitan (16%) and regional (11%) mail users. Those who were making a payment were also more likely to see mail as convenient (21%) compared to those seeking or obtaining information (9%) or those providing information (12%).

Mail users dealing with state/territory governments (17%) were more likely to say it was the only channel available compared to mail users dealing with the Australian Government (8%) and local governments (12%). Having to sign a form also motivated more of those providing information to the government (14%) to use mail contact compared to those who were exchanging information (8%), making or receiving a payment (4%), or seeking or obtaining information (3%).

Figure 13 summarises the main reasons given for contacting government services by mail.

**Figure 13: Most common reasons for contacting government services by mail**

- Can do it at time that suits me: 16% (2005), 18% (2004-05)
- Easy/convenient: 15% (2005), 10% (2004-05)
- No other way available/can’t do online: 15% (2005), 19% (2004-05)
- Have always done it that way/habit: 9% (2005), 3% (2004-05)
- Had to sign form: 9% (2005), 2% (2004-05)
- Form sent to me: 8% (2005), 9% (2004-05)
- Told to do it this way: 6% (2005), 8% (2004-05)
- Didn’t have to go into government office: 6% (2005), 5% (2004-05)
- Cheaper: 5% (2005), 2% (2004-05)
- Have paper trail/needed receipt: 4% (2005), 4% (2004-05)
- Don’t have to wait in queue: 4% (2005), 4% (2004-05)
- Not familiar with internet: 3% (2005), 1% (2004-05)
- Refused/can’t say: 2% (2005), 3% (2004-05)

**Question 6D: Still thinking of this most recent contact, why did you do it by mail?**

**Base:** Made contact in person n=425

**Note:** Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons are summarised in the above figure.
six Barriers to e-government use
six Barriers to e-government use

Significant changes in 2006

- There were very few significant changes in the reasons mentioned by respondents for not using the internet.
- The only difference of note is that 9% more respondents mentioned not being aware that things could be done online.

6.1 Barriers to increased use of the internet

6.1.1 Reasons why internet users did not use the internet to make contact

Internet users who did not use the internet for their most recent contact with government gave the following reasons for choosing another channel:

- 32% thought (rightly or wrongly) that the contact could not be done online
- 14% preferred to speak to – or meet – a real person
- 8% had concerns about security of information, including credit card information
- 8% were not familiar with using computers or the internet in general, and
- 8% said they did not have access to the internet. (Some internet users indicated they did not have the internet at home or were unable to use their work internet facilities for personal purposes.)

Comparisons with 2004–05 data have been made in Figure 14. However, comparing coded data needs to be treated cautiously because of potential differences in interpretation of open-ended responses across the two surveys. Having said that, there were very few significant changes in the reasons mentioned by respondents in the two surveys. The only difference of note is that ‘not being aware that it could be done online’ was mentioned by 9% more respondents in 2006 than in 2004–05.

Barriers to using government internet sites mentioned by focus group participants included:

- prior negative experience using a government site where they had not achieved what they intended
- only being able to complete partial transactions on websites, often requiring an in-person or telephone follow-up to complete the transaction
- fear of fraud either based on a personal experience or ‘urban myth’ about internet scams, and
- the registration requirements of some sites being regarded as onerous and hence the first major hurdle to people even getting started on these sites.
Figure 14: Most common reasons for not contacting government via the internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was not aware it can be done online</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred to speak to/meet a real person</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about security of information (incl. credit card)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar with using computer/internet in general</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have computer/internet connection/access to internet*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-consuming to find the right information/other methods are quicker</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government office is close by/ easy to do it over the counter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to navigate website</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about personal privacy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to find government services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 7A: Still thinking of this most recent contact (apart from reasons you just mentioned) why didn’t you do it on the internet?

Base: Internet users who did not make any contact by internet n=2633

Note 1: Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons mentioned are shown in the above figure.

*Note 2: Some internet users indicated they did not have the internet at home or were unable to use their work internet facilities for personal purposes.

6.2 Barriers to increased use of the telephone

6.2.1 Reasons why non-internet users did not use the telephone

Respondents who said they had never used the internet, but had not used the telephone in their most recent contact with government, were asked why they had not used the telephone.

The main reasons given include that:

- it could not be done over the telephone because of the need to sign or show supporting documents (26%)
- they thought the telephone option was not available or that it could not be done by telephone (11%), and
- they preferred to speak to/meet a real person (11%).
In comparing results with 2004–05, some new reasons have emerged in 2006 as to why non-internet users did not contact the government by telephone. These included that:

- 5% disliked the automated telephone system
- 4% reported delays in getting through, and
- 3% cited a lack of accountability, saying they would get bounced from person to person if they used the phone.

Figure 15 compares results obtained in 2004–05 with those obtained in 2006. There is a dramatic difference in the percentage who said phone contact was not possible due to having to show or sign supporting documents in 2006 (26%) compared with 2004–05 (2%). Unless specific changes in service requirements in 2006 compared with 2004–05 can be identified, this difference may be due to variation in interpretation of open-ended responses and should be interpreted with caution.

**Figure 15:** Most common reasons non-internet users did not contact government by the telephone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not possible by phone – had to show/sign supporting documents</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone option is not available/cannot do it by telephone</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred to speak to/meet a real person</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government office is close by/easy to do it over the counter</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about security of information (incl. credit card)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have a credit card</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty/dislike of automated telephone system</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to navigate phone menu (other methods are easier)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delays in getting through</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about personal privacy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get bounced from person to person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 7B:** Still thinking of this most recent contact (apart from reasons you just mentioned) why didn’t you do it by phone?

**Base:** Non-internet users who did not use phone n=894

**Note:** Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons mentioned are shown in the above figure.
seven E-government satisfaction
seven E-government satisfaction

Significant changes in 2006

- There were very few changes in satisfaction ratings, which remained reasonably high for all service aspects.
- While the reasons for dissatisfaction with internet and phone contacts remained largely the same, the frequency with which the reasons were mentioned decreased significantly in most cases.
- In 2006, 26% of dissatisfied internet users mentioned difficulty in navigating the website compared with 43% in 2004–05.
- Websites containing incomplete (21%) or inappropriate (10%) information were each mentioned by fewer dissatisfied internet users in 2006 than in 2004–05 when 28% mentioned incomplete information and 20% mentioned inappropriate information.
- In 2006, the percentage of internet users mentioning poor search capabilities as a reason for dissatisfaction decreased to 7% from 15% in 2004–05.
- Of dissatisfied telephone users, 34% mentioned waiting too long to be served in 2006 compared with 41% in 2004–05.
- Being given incorrect advice over the phone (10%) was mentioned by significantly fewer dissatisfied phone users in 2006 compared with 2004–05, when 17% mentioned this problem.

7.1 Satisfaction with service

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction for their most recent interaction with government for each of the four main channels people used to access government services.

They were asked to rate how satisfied they were with:
- the outcome
- how long they had to wait for a reply to their inquiry
- the ease of finding the specific information or service they sought
- the ease of using the service, and
- the extent to which they achieved what they intended.

On this last point, respondents were asked to rate this on an 11-point scale (0–10), with 10 being that they achieved exactly what they intended and 0 being that they did not achieve anything. Satisfaction was rated on a five-point scale, where five was extremely satisfied and one was not satisfied at all. Those who said they were not satisfied with at least one aspect of the service were asked why they were not satisfied.
7.1.1 Comparison of satisfaction ratings in 2006 and 2004–05

Figure 16 compares the 2006 and 2004–05 percentages of respondents who used the internet or telephone to contact government services, who said they were ‘extremely’, ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ satisfied with the service. As can be seen from the figure, satisfaction ratings have not changed significantly since 2004–05.

In 2004–05, levels of satisfaction were asked only in relation to contacts made by telephone and internet, so comparisons for mail and in-person contacts are not possible.

The question about satisfaction with the outcome was asked slightly differently in 2004–05 when respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the extent to which they achieved what they intended. In 2006, they were asked their level of satisfaction with the outcome. Therefore, these figures may not be directly comparable.

**Figure 16: Comparison of 2006 and 2004–05 total satisfaction for internet and telephone**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with outcome*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ease of finding specific information or service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ease of using the service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 9: Extremely, very or somewhat satisfied responses**

**Base:** Contacts by phone (n=1356), internet (n=2219)

*Note: Satisfaction with outcome was asked slightly differently in 2004–05 when respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the extent to which they achieved what they intended. In 2006 they were asked their level of satisfaction with the outcome.*
7.1.2 Achieving intended outcome

The overall average rating for having achieved the intended outcome across all channels was 8.6 out of 10. Overall ratings varied for phone contacts which received a mean score of 8.1 out of 10, compared with scores of 8.7 for internet, and 8.8 for mail and in-person contacts. Respondents in 2004–05 were not asked to rate their achieved outcome out of 10, so these figures cannot be compared to 2004–05 findings.

7.1.3 Satisfaction with outcome

Overall, 68% of respondents said they were ‘extremely satisfied’ (33%) or ‘very satisfied’ (35%) with the outcomes of their most recent interaction with government. A further 19% indicated they were only ‘somewhat satisfied’ and 10% said they were either ‘not very’ or ‘not at all satisfied’.

In total, 87% of respondents reported being satisfied with the outcome of their interaction with government. This includes people who indicated they were extremely, very or somewhat satisfied.

7.1.4 Satisfaction with outcome, by channel

Respondents were most likely to be ‘extremely’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the outcome if they had contacted government by internet (76%) or in person (69%) compared with phone (64%) or mail contacts (61%).

Respondents were most likely to say they were not satisfied with the outcome if they contacted government by phone (16%), followed by those who used mail (11%) and those who contacted government services in person (9%). Those who used the internet (6%) were least likely to say they were not satisfied.

Including people who indicated they were ‘extremely’, ‘very’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’, 82% of those making contact by phone were satisfied with the outcome in both 2004–05 and 2006. Of those making contact by internet in 2006, 94% were satisfied with the outcome, an increase from 89% in 2004–05.

7.1.5 Satisfaction with how long respondents had to wait for a reply

Overall, 56% of respondents said they were either ‘extremely satisfied’ (24%) or ‘very satisfied’ (32%) with the amount of time they had to wait for a reply to their inquiry. A further 20% said they were ‘somewhat satisfied’, giving a total of 76% of respondents who expressed some level of satisfaction with the time they had to wait for a reply. A total of 14% said they were not satisfied.

7.1.6 Satisfaction with length of wait for a reply, by channel

Satisfaction levels differed depending on the channel of contact. Those who used the internet were the most likely to say they were ‘extremely’ or ‘very satisfied’ (62%) with the amount of time they had to wait. This was followed by those who made contact in person (56%), by phone (54%) or by mail (43%).
Those who contacted the government by phone were the most likely to say they were ‘not very satisfied’ or ‘not satisfied at all’ (a total of 20%). This was followed by those who made contact in person (13%) and by mail (13%). Those who made contact by internet were the least likely to say they were not satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait for a reply (6%).

7.1.7 Satisfaction with ease of finding information or a service

Overall, 66% of people were ‘extremely satisfied’ (26%) or ‘very satisfied’ (40%) with the ease of finding information or services. A further 22% were ‘somewhat satisfied’ and 9% were not satisfied. Therefore, the majority (88%) of respondents indicated some level of satisfaction with ease of finding information or a service.

7.1.8 Satisfaction with ease of finding information, by channel

There were some slight differences in satisfaction levels between different methods of contact. People were more likely to say they were ‘extremely’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the ease of finding information if they had contacted the government by internet (68%) or in person (67%), compared to those who had contacted the government by telephone (63%) or mail (58%). Those who had contacted the government by phone were also the most likely to be ‘not very satisfied’ or ‘not satisfied at all’ (12%) compared with 7% of those making contact by internet or in person, and 8% of those making contact by mail.

Including people who indicated they were ‘extremely’, ‘very’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’, 86% of those making contact by phone were satisfied with the ease of finding information or services in 2006, compared to 83% in 2004–05. Of those making contact by internet in 2006, 91% were satisfied with the ease of finding information or services, a negligible increase from 90% in 2004–05.

7.1.9 Satisfaction with ease of using the service

Overall, 69% of respondents said they were ‘extremely’ (26%) or ‘very satisfied’ (43%) with the ease of using the government service. A further 22% said they were ‘somewhat satisfied’ and 8% said they were ‘not satisfied’. Therefore, the majority (91%) of respondents indicated some level of satisfaction with ease of using the service.

7.1.10 Satisfaction with ease of using the service, by channel

Satisfaction varied between the different methods of contact. Internet contacts were more likely (75%) to attract ratings of ‘extremely’ (28%) or ‘very satisfied’ (47%) compared with in-person (68%), phone (67%) and mail (63%) interactions. Once again, those who used the phone were more likely to say they were not satisfied (12%) compared with those who made contact in person (7%), by mail (6%) or by internet (5%).

In 2006, 88% of those making contact by phone and 94% of those making contact by internet were satisfied with the ease of using the service. This compares to 86% of those who contacted the government by phone and 93% of those making contact by internet in 2004–05 saying they were ‘extremely’, ‘very’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’.
Figure 17: Satisfaction by channel of delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with outcome</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>In-person</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied at all</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time had to wait for reply</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>In-person</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied at all</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ease of finding specific information or service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>In-person</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied at all</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ease of using the service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>In-person</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied at all</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t say</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 9: How satisfied were you with...

Base: Contacts by phone (n=1356), internet (n=2219), mail (n=425), in-person (n=2006)

Note 1: Percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.
Note 2: The high percentage of ‘can’t say’ responses indicates the service attribute is not applicable to the respondent’s service transaction.
7.2 Current causes of dissatisfaction

The most frequently mentioned reason for being dissatisfied with a government service was waiting too long to be served, which was the most frequently mentioned issue by dissatisfied in-person (41%) and phone (34%) service users. Almost one in four dissatisfied mail users (23%) mentioned waiting too long for a response as a source of dissatisfaction, and 19% of dissatisfied internet service users also indicated no response, slow or poor response as a source of dissatisfaction. Incomplete or incorrect responses were also commonly mentioned by dissatisfied users of all four channels.

The main reasons for not being satisfied with aspects of service are summarised for each of the four main channels of interaction below.

7.2.1 Dissatisfaction with internet contacts

Rates of dissatisfaction among internet users were as follows:
- 6% were not satisfied with the outcome of their contact
- 7% were not satisfied with the ease of finding information
- 6% were not satisfied with the time they had to wait for a reply, and
- 5% were not satisfied with the ease of using the service.

Figure 18 summarises the specific reasons given for dissatisfaction with internet contacts. Difficulty in navigating the website was once again the most commonly mentioned reason. However, the frequency with which it was mentioned has dropped significantly from 43% in 2004–05 to 26% in 2006. However, this difference could be due to differences in coding of open-ended questions. For example, there are two new categories in 2006: ‘no/slow/poor response’ (19%) and ‘website is slow’ (3%). These may have been included in the ‘difficult to navigate’ category in 2004–05, which would account for much of the difference seen in 2006. These new categories aside, most of the reasons mentioned remained largely the same, with the frequency with which a number of reasons were mentioned having decreased significantly.

Comparing coded data needs to be treated with some caution due to possible variations in interpretation and coding of open-ended responses. The findings might suggest that websites are becoming easier to navigate, or it might be that people are becoming more skilled at navigating websites so are less likely to experience difficulties.
Focus group participants mentioned a number of features of government internet sites that needed improvement, including:

- they needed too many clicks to find information
- information was incomplete, inaccurate or out-of-date, or they were unable to find the right information
- information was not detailed enough
- they experienced information overload
- there were limited search facilities
- some headings did not make sense, and
- there were limited help options.

Websites containing incomplete (21%) or inappropriate (10%) information were mentioned by dissatisfied internet users. This is a marked decrease from 2004–05 when 28% mentioned incomplete information and 20% mentioned inappropriate information as reasons for dissatisfaction.

Poor search capabilities continued to be a problem for 7% of internet users. This also shows a significant decrease from 2004–05 when 15% mentioned this as a reason for dissatisfaction. Slightly fewer people mentioned website crashes in 2006 (4%) compared with 2004–05 (6%).

Suggestions made by focus group participants as to how website navigability might be improved included the following:

- conduct research to better understand the logic people apply when they search for information on the internet and set up sites that fit with users’ logical processes
- have a quick and efficient search engine like Google for government sites where you can type in a few words and get the information you want
- construct sites so that new users can identify themselves and be directed through a more step-by-step pathway, while more advanced users can select a more efficient route
- provide tracking facilities for internet transactions and provide online confirmations for transactions
- have a common login for all sites requiring registration, and
- use plain English.
**Figure 18: Most common reasons for dissatisfaction with internet contacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to navigate website</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website contains incomplete information</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website contains inappropriate information</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No/slow/poor response</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to find government services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government websites all work differently and are confusing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites have poor search capabilities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to do some part offline/can't do the entire process online</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website is slow</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website crashes/unreliable internet connection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website contains out-of-date/incorrect information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information too complicated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 16:** You mentioned you were not satisfied when you did this most recent contact by the internet. Why do you say that? What else? Anything else?

**Base:** Dissatisfied with contact by internet n=370

**Note:** Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons mentioned are shown in the above figure.

### 7.2.2 Dissatisfaction with phone contacts

Rates of dissatisfaction among respondents who had used the telephone to contact government were as follows:

- 20% were not satisfied with the time they had to wait for a reply
- 16% were not satisfied with the outcome of their contact
- 12% were not satisfied with the ease of finding information, and
- 12% were not satisfied with the ease of using the service.
Some of the frustrations expressed by focus group participants regarding phone interactions were similar to those expressed for in-person interactions. For example, a number of people mentioned being frustrated by:

- being passed from one person/department to the next because the person they were dealing with (either in person or on the phone) was not trained to have all the answers
- having to speak to someone who has difficulty understanding their requests and whom they have difficulty understanding
- being restricted to office hours
- having to wait in queues for up to two hours, and
- counter or call centre staff not having enough power to make decisions, or enough knowledge to give good advice.

Waiting too long to be served was, once again, the main reason for unsatisfactory phone contacts, although it was mentioned by significantly fewer dissatisfied phone users in 2006 (34%) than in 2004–05 when it was mentioned by 41%.

Being unable to complete an enquiry by phone (7%) and being given incorrect advice over the phone (10%) were mentioned by significantly fewer dissatisfied people in 2006 compared with 2004–05 when almost one in five (17%) dissatisfied phone users mentioned each of these reasons. New categories were reported in 2006, including that the issue remained unresolved (7%) and that the task required multiple attempts (6%). If these categories were amalgamated into the ‘unable to complete inquiry by phone’ category, it would bring the figure closer to the 2004–05 percentage.

Figure 19 shows the most common reasons for dissatisfaction among respondents who conducted a government contact by phone.
Figure 19: Most common reasons for dissatisfaction with phone contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too long a wait to be served</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect advice given</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got transferred too many times</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor customer service</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couldn’t talk to a real person/had to do it via automated answering</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The person didn’t understand the issue</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No/poor follow up/reply to my query</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could not complete my enquiry by phone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue remains unresolved</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated menu too complicated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task required multiple attempts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process too complicated/tedious</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to find phone number for the relevant service provider</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t speak to person of authority</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 10: You mentioned you were not satisfied when you did this most recent contact by the phone. Why do you say that? What else? Anything else?

Base: Dissatisfied with contact by phone n=393
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons mentioned are shown in the above figure.

7.2.3 Dissatisfaction with in-person contacts

Rates of dissatisfaction among in-person service users were as follows:
- 13% were not satisfied with the time they had to wait for a reply
- 9% were not satisfied with the outcome of their contact
- 7% were not satisfied with the ease of finding information, and
- 7% were not satisfied with the ease of using the service.
The main reason for dissatisfaction with in-person contacts are summarised in Figure 20. The most frequently mentioned reason was having to wait too long to be served, mentioned by 41% of dissatisfied people, while poor customer service was the next most frequently mentioned reason at 15%.

**Figure 20: Most common reasons for dissatisfaction with in-person contacts**

- Too long a wait to be served: 41%
- Poor customer service/poor attitude/incompetent staff: 15%
- Incorrect advice given: 11%
- No/poor follow-up/reply to my query: 10%
- The person didn’t understand the issue: 9%
- Did not receive desired response: 6%
- Process too complicated/tedious: 7%
- Got transferred too many times: 4%
- Issue remains unresolved: 4%
- Task required multiple attempts: 4%
- Difficult to locate desired information/information insufficient (non internet): 2%
- Inadequate facilities (seats/parking/signs): 2%

**Question 10:** You mentioned you were not satisfied when you did this most recent contact in person. Why do you say that? What else? Anything else?

**Base:** Dissatisfied with contact in person n=389

**Note:** Totals add up to more than 100% as respondents were able to provide more than one reason for dissatisfaction. Question was not asked in 2004–05.
7.2.4 Dissatisfaction with mail contacts

Rates of dissatisfaction among mail service users were as follows:
- 13% were not satisfied with the time they had to wait for a reply
- 11% were not satisfied with the outcome of their contact
- 8% were not satisfied with the ease of finding information, and
- 6% were not satisfied with the ease of using the service.

The main reasons for dissatisfaction with mail contacts were ‘no/poor follow-up/reply to my query’, mentioned by one in four (26%) dissatisfied mail users, and ‘too long a wait for a reply’, mentioned by 23% of mail service users.

Figure 21: Most common reasons for dissatisfaction with mail contacts

Question 10: You mentioned you were not satisfied when you did this most recent contact by mail. Why do you say that? What else? Anything else?

Base: Dissatisfied with contact by mail n=89
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most common reasons mentioned are shown in the above figure. Question was not asked in 2004–05.
Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services
Future preferences for e-government use
Future preferences for e-government use

Significant changes in 2006

- There has been a shift away from preferring to access government services in person towards a greater preference for telephone access. Overall, telephone was the preferred method for 35% of respondents, followed by internet (33%), in-person (25%) and mail (3%). This differs from preferences identified in 2004–05 when in-person was the favoured method (33%), followed by internet (31%) and telephone (28%).
- More than two out of five (44%) internet users indicated that their use of government websites had increased in the last 12 months.
- Internet contact was the preferred method of contact by 33% of respondents, but only 25% used it. This is a discrepancy of 8% which compares favourably with 2004–05 when 31% of respondents preferred the internet but only 19% used it (a discrepancy of 12%).
- In 2006, 35% of respondents preferred the phone and 28% were actually using it. In 2004–05, all those who said they would prefer to use the phone were actually using the phone.
- The highest percentage of respondents (45%) favoured having a portal that would direct users to the most suitable government site.
- In 2006, 39% of internet users preferred sites to be organised according to topic area compared with 58% in 2004–05.
- Preference for organising websites by department name increased significantly to 42% in 2006 from 32% in 2004–05.

8.1 Preferred channel for accessing government services

Respondents were asked their preferred method of contacting government services.

Overall, telephone was the preferred method for 35% of respondents, followed by internet (33%), in-person (25%) and mail (3%). This differs from preferences identified in 2004–05 when in-person was the favoured method (33%), followed by internet (31%) and telephone (28%).
Figure 22 indicates the discrepancy between the channel that respondents actually used for a given transaction, and the channel they would have preferred to use given the choice. The main differences found between actual and preferred channel are as follows:

- 43% of people accessed services in person but only 25% identified it as the preferred channel. This is similar to 2004–05 findings when 46% of people accessed government services in person but only 33% said they preferred it to other channels.
- 33% of respondents preferred to use the internet but only 25% are actually using it. The discrepancy between preference and use has decreased from 2004–05 when 31% of people would have preferred to access services via the internet but only 19% were actually using it.
- In 2004–05, all those who said they would prefer to use the phone were actually using the phone. This was not the case in 2006, when 35% said they would prefer to use the phone but only 28% were currently using it, and
- 10% of people continue to use mail even though it is the preferred method for only 3%.

**Figure 22: Preferred channel of delivery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Contact</th>
<th>2006 Preferred</th>
<th>2006 Actual Use</th>
<th>2004-05 Preferred</th>
<th>2004-05 Actual Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 11:** If you could access government services by telephone, by the internet, by mail, in person, or by some other method, what would be your preferred way of doing it?

**Base:** All respondents n=5040

**Note:** Totals in 2006 do not add up to exactly 100% because of other responses given by approximately 2% of respondents. These responses included the following: fax, SMS (text message), direct debit, mobile phone to access internet (3G third generation wireless networks), ‘it depends on the situation’, ‘don’t know’.
8.2 Change in use of government websites

People who had contacted the government via the internet were asked if their use of government websites had changed in the last 12 months. While half the respondents (53%) indicated that their government website use had stayed the same, more than two out of five (44%) internet users indicated that their use of government websites had increased. Only 3% of internet users indicated that their use had decreased.

8.3 Factors that would encourage use of the internet

To understand what factors might encourage people to increase their internet access of government services, internet users were asked, 'What, if anything, would encourage you to use the internet more often for accessing or communicating with government services?' The main factors suggested by respondents have not changed significantly since 2004–05. The main motivator suggested by internet users was to make it easier for them to find government services online (14%), followed by better website layout or navigating tools (12%). Almost one in three (31%) felt there was nothing that could be done to further encourage them to use internet contact for government services.

Suggestions by focus group participants for increasing use of e-government services included providing:
- step-by-step instructions on how to find websites
- information to people when they go into branches about how they can access these services online
- information about what services are actually available on government websites
- self-help pamphlets at branches that give step-by-step instructions
- a government helpline (phone and internet) where everyone goes as a first step to find out where they need to go to get the information they are seeking, and
- training to call centre people so they are able to answer more questions rather than having to transfer people.
Figure 23: Factors that would encourage more internet contacts by internet users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easier to find government services</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better website layout/navigating tools</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better informed of what I can do online</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being more familiar with using the internet/computer in general</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites offering better search capabilities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having computer/internet access at home/work/school/library</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better security when transferring personal information via the internet</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast-loading websites</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More services available online</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker/immediate reply to my queries/faster</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower costs for internet connection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More reliable internet connection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better protection on personal privacy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly detailed information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic, concise information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving tailored email reply to my queries</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website containing appropriate information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website containing complete information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faster/broadband internet connection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 13: What, if anything, would encourage you to use the internet more often for accessing or communicating with government services?

Base: Internet users n=3804
Note: Totals do not add up to 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.
8.4 Preferences for website structures and locations

Internet users were asked their preferences regarding some options for website structures and locations.

8.4.1 Website structures

Internet users were asked if they would prefer government websites to be organised according to life milestones, by topic area, or according to government department name.

Preferences differed significantly from those in 2004–05. In 2004–05, the majority (58%) of internet users preferred sites to be organised according to topic area. Almost 20% fewer people selected this option in 2006, with only 39% preferring topic areas. Preference for organisation by department name increased significantly from 32% in 2004–05 to 42% in 2006. Those who preferred sites to be structured according to milestones increased to 10% from only 4% in 2004–05, but remained the least favoured option. Fast changing technology and user expectations may contribute to the volatility in these figures, suggesting that these numbers need to be treated with caution.

The shift away from topic area toward department name might suggest that internet users are becoming more knowledgeable about the names of government departments and the services each provides, and are therefore able to go directly to the department website they need.

Figure 24: Preference between services organised by milestones, topic, or department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Organization</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milestones in life</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic area</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government department name</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 18C: When dealing with government services via internet, would you generally prefer: services organised by milestones in your life, or by topic area, or by government department name?

Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349

Note: Totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.
8.4.2 Locations of government websites

Internet users were asked whether they would prefer accessing government services through a single government site, via a portal that would guide them to the best site or by going directly to an individual government site.

The largest preference was for a portal that guides people to the best site, preferred by 45% of respondents. The next most popular method was to go directly to an individual government site, preferred by 33% of respondents. Only 17% preferred a single government site. A further 5% were unable to identify a preference. Comparisons were not possible with 2004–05 since this question was not asked in the 2004–05 survey.

These findings are consistent with the Responsive Government: A New Service Agenda strategy, which designates www.australia.gov.au as the Australian Government’s online entry point.

**Figure 25:** Preference between single or multiple government sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single government site</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A portal to guide to the best site</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go direct to individual site</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 18H: When accessing government services via the internet, would you prefer a single government site, a portal to guide you to the best site, or going direct to an individual government site?

Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349
nine Security and privacy issues
nine  Security and privacy issues

### Significant changes in 2006

- Internet users are becoming more cautious.
- The majority of internet users (55%) said they would prefer to re-enter their personal information each time they go back to a website. This is a 5% increase from 2004–05.
- The percentage of internet users who would be happy for the government to store their personal information decreased in 2006 to 38% from 43% in 2004–05.
- While security of information was a key concern, most people nevertheless preferred having to update their personal details with government only once (72%). This desire for convenience has increased since 2004–05 when 64% of respondents preferred to update their details only once.
- The increasing desire for convenience is in conflict with the increased tendency to want anonymity on websites. These conflicting responses are a good example of the tension people are experiencing between the desire for a fast convenient service and the desire for a completely secure service.
- The vast majority of respondents (82%) prefer a higher level of security that adds time to transactions when dealing with government services via the internet. This is a 5% increase in security consciousness from 2004–05, when 77% of respondents said they preferred higher security.

### 9.1 Trade-offs between anonymity, convenience and security

Internet users were asked questions to ascertain their priorities between security and convenience of internet services.

#### 9.1.1 Anonymity and convenience

Internet users were asked whether they would prefer to re-enter their personal details every time they visited a government website or have the convenience of government keeping their details so they do not have to enter them every time they enter a site. Most internet users (55%) said they would prefer to re-enter their personal information each time. This is a 5% increase from 2004–05. The percentage of internet users who would be happy for the government to store their personal information decreased to 38% from 43% in 2004–05.

These findings are consistent with the *Responsive Government: A New Service Agenda* strategy, under which users can choose to set up individual online accounts, with options on how to store and manage personal information.
Figure 26: Preference between anonymity and convenience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>2004–05</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-entering personal information each time</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government keeping information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused/can’t say</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 18A: When dealing with government services via the internet, would you prefer: Having to re-enter your personal information each time you go back to a government site or the government keeping your information for next time?

Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349

9.1.2 Tailored services versus anonymity

Internet users were asked if they would prefer the government to use some of their information to better tailor their products to them or whether they would prefer to remain completely anonymous. Again, when it came to a preference between a tailored service and being completely anonymous, the 2006 respondents showed a tendency to becoming more conservative than internet users in 2004–05. The majority of internet users (59%) said they would prefer to remain completely anonymous. This is a 9% increase from 2004–05.

This increased tendency to want anonymity reveals a tension between the requirement for security and the desire for convenience.
9.1.3 Updating personal information

Internet users were asked when updating personal information on government websites, such as a change of address, whether they would generally prefer to tell the government only once or advise each agency themselves.

While security of information was a key concern, most people nevertheless preferred having to update their personal details with government only once (72%). This desire for convenience has increased since 2004–05 when 64% preferred to update their details only once.

This desire for convenience is in conflict with the increased tendency to want anonymity online and is a good example of the tension between the desire for a fast convenient service and the desire for a completely secure service.
Figure 28: Preference between telling government once or advising each agency yourself

Question 18D: When updating information such as a change of address, would you generally prefer telling the government only once and have them advise all other agencies you deal with, or you advising each agency yourself?
Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349

9.1.4 Added security versus ease of use and time savings

Internet users were asked whether, when accessing government services via the internet, they would prefer a higher level of security that adds time to transactions or a lower level of security that is faster and easier to complete.

In line with the preference for anonymity, the vast majority of respondents (82%) preferred a higher level of security that adds time to transactions when dealing with government services via the internet. This is an increase in security consciousness from 2004–05 respondents. Only 13% of respondents preferred a lower level of security that is faster and easier to complete when dealing with government services via the internet.

Focus group findings suggest that security issues were at the forefront of people’s minds in relation to transactions on the internet. The majority had not personally experienced security breaches or fraud through the internet, but they all had stories of people they had heard about who had been victims of internet ‘scams’.
Question 18E: When dealing with government services via the internet, would you generally prefer a higher level of security that adds time to transactions or a lower level of security that is faster and easier to complete?

Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349

9.1.5 Willingness to provide credit card and banking details

Internet users in 2006 were asked their willingness to give credit card and banking details over the internet.

As shown in Figure 30, people were more willing to provide their credit card details (60%) than their bank account details (45%).

Some cautious focus group participants suggested they would consider financial transactions on government sites if they were given a guarantee by the government that any financial losses due to security breaches would be fully reimbursed.
Question 18F/G: When accessing government services via the internet are you willing to provide credit card/bank account details over the internet?

Base: Contacted government agencies by internet in the past 12 months n=2349
Note: Totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.

9.1.6 Reasons for reluctance to provide details

The reasons for being reluctant to provide credit card or banking details on a government website were similar, with the majority citing general concerns about security or about the security of the internet in general.

The main reasons given for being reluctant to provide credit card details included:
- general concerns about security (52%)
- specific concerns about internet security (20%)
- not owning a credit card (9%)
- past experience of fraud (7%)
- not trusting government websites (5%), and
- concerns about privacy (5%)

Some focus group participants said they could not be converted to using any internet site for financial transactions because they simply do not trust the channel to be secure. Many participants believed that hackers can do whatever they want regardless of the security measures in place, so they believe that providing financial information on the internet will inevitably expose people to a security breach.
The main reasons given for being reluctant to provide bank account details differed only slightly from those for credit cards and included:

- general concerns about security (57%)
- specific concerns about internet security (14%)
- being concerned about privacy (9%)
- not seeing why government would need bank account details (7%)
- bank details being less secure than credit card details (7%)
- not trusting government websites (5%), and
- past experience of fraud (2%).

Many focus group participants felt that bank account details were far more dangerous to give away than credit card details as hackers would have access to a lot more money through their bank accounts.

**Figure 31:** Main reasons for unwillingness to provide credit card and bank account details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Credit card</th>
<th>Bank account</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General security concerns</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet security concerns</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t own credit card</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past experience of fraud</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t trust government websites</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about privacy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t see why government needs it</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank details less secure than credit card</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 18F/G:** When accessing government services via the internet are you willing to provide credit card/bank account details over the internet? (If no) what are the main reasons?

**Base:** Reluctant to provide credit card or bank account details n=1248

**Note:** Totals do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding of decimals.
Conclusions
Conclusions

10.1 Conclusions about motivations for channel selection

A move towards increased online capability

In-person contact continued to be the most commonly used method of contact, used by 43% of surveyed respondents. However, 20% fewer respondents in 2006 (15%) compared with 2004–05 (35%) indicated that they used in-person contacts because they had no other choice. This would suggest that, in line with the Australian Government’s e-government strategy, governments are providing a greater choice of channel selection, even though there may be a little inertia in moving to other channels. The 6% increase in internet use in 2006 (25%) compared with 2004–05 (19%) does suggest that people are making some changes in the types of channels they are using to contact government services.

Benefits of e-government services

While one in four (25%) respondents indicated having contacted government services via the internet in their most recent government contact, there is scope for further uptake of internet use, particularly by those who use the telephone.

The main drivers of using internet contact are that it requires a shorter time (cited by 47% of those who had contacted the government via the internet in the past year), that respondents can initiate contact at a time that suits them (33%), and that the process is easy or uncomplicated (22%).

These reasons are similar to those given for using telephone contact. A much higher proportion of those who used the internet stated that it ‘requires shorter time’ (47%) compared with 25% of those who used the telephone. In addition, 33% of those who used the internet to contact government services said they chose this method of contact because they ‘can do it at a time that suits me’ compared with 18% of those who used the telephone.

Due to this similarity in drivers for contact, people who mainly use the telephone when contacting the government could be targeted as a group with high potential for uptake of internet contact. Internet contact appears to improve on the features people like most about phone contact. The main barriers that may need to be overcome are:

- difficulties with speed of connection for those without broadband, particularly relevant to people in rural areas
- a preference for interaction with a ‘real person’, and
- people who are not used to using computers or typing.

Contact with a ‘real person’ and flexibility of questioning

The main point of difference between internet, telephone and in-person contact is the level of personal interaction. Sixteen per cent of people who made in-person contact and 15% of people who made telephone contact with the government said they did so because they preferred speaking to ‘a real person’.
Insights from focus groups indicate this may be because they are then able to:
- communicate urgency or create some sense of accountability when speaking directly to someone, and
- explain complex problems or obtain clarification from someone if problems are encountered with documents or online.

10.2. Conclusions about barriers to e-government uptake

Awareness of e-government options
Almost one in three (32%) internet users said they did not use the internet to contact the government because they believed (rightly or wrongly), that an online option was not available. It seems from this finding that government agencies need to raise awareness of the availability of internet channels.

Preference for ‘real person’ contact
One of the main reasons given by internet users for not using internet contact was the preference for speaking to a real person (stated by 14% of internet users). This is similar to 2004–05 findings and remains a key motivator for telephone and in-person contacts.

Broadband access
The findings indicate that speed of connection is a barrier to further uptake of internet services. The slowness of dial-up connections may cancel out the time-saving benefit of conducting transactions via the internet, and can be frustrating for users. This is a particular issue for residents in rural areas, where significantly fewer internet users had broadband (32%) compared with metropolitan (64%) and regional (52%) residents.

10.3 Conclusions about e-government satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with government services remains high and has not changed significantly since 2004–05.

Overall satisfaction levels were reasonably high in all aspects of service provision that were measured. In total, 87% of respondents reported some level of satisfaction with the outcomes of their most recent interaction with government. This included 35% who were ‘very satisfied’, 33% who were ‘extremely satisfied’ and 19% who were ‘somewhat satisfied’. Ten per cent said they were either ‘not very’ or ‘not at all satisfied’.

Internet transactions attracted the highest level of satisfaction for all service aspects.
Respondents were most likely to be ‘extremely’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the outcome (76%), the ease of using the service (75%) and the amount of time they had to wait for a response (62%), if they used the internet compared with all other channels. They were equally likely to be ‘extremely’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the ease of finding information if they contacted the government by internet (68%) or in person (67%).
Phone contacts were the most likely to receive ratings of dissatisfaction. Those who used the phone compared with all other channels were more likely to say they were not satisfied with the outcome (16%), the ease of using the service (12%), the time they had to wait for a response (20%), and the ease of finding information (12%).

Waiting too long is the main cause of dissatisfaction, particularly for in-person and phone transactions. The most frequently mentioned reason for being dissatisfied with a government service was waiting too long to be served, mentioned by 41% of in-person service users, 34% of dissatisfied phone service users, 23% of mail service users, and 19% of internet service users.

10.4 Conclusions about future preferences for e-government use

There have been changes in user preferences. There has been a switch from a preference for in-person government contact in 2004–05 (33%) to a preference for telephone contact in 2006 (35%). There has also been a slight increase in preferences for internet contact to 33% of those surveyed in 2006 from 31% of people surveyed in 2004–05.

Older respondents appear to be the hardest segment of the population to encourage using internet contact. Older respondents in the survey sample were more likely to prefer more traditional channels (phone and in-person) compared to younger people, who were more likely to prefer the internet.

There are ways to encourage the use of the internet as a means of contacting government. Respondents suggested that improvements be made to make it easier for them to find government services online (14%) and to make navigating websites easier (12%). The greatest preference by respondents (45%) was to have a single online portal that would then direct users to the most suitable government site, as this single site would be easier to remember.

10.5 Conclusions about security and privacy issues

Internet users are becoming more cautious. Fewer respondents in 2006 were willing to have the government store their personal details, and more people preferred to remain completely anonymous despite having to sacrifice the convenience of more tailored products. The vast majority of respondents (82%) also preferred a higher level of security, even if it adds time to transactions when dealing with government services via the internet.

People were more willing to provide their credit card details (60%) than their bank account details (45%). The reasons for being reluctant to provide credit card or banking details on a government website were similar, with the majority citing general concerns about security or about the security of the internet in general.
eleven Appendix – Background and methodology
11.1 Terms of reference

This project is an ongoing study of Australians (over the age of 18) using government services provided through the internet, telephone, and the more traditional service delivery methods of in-person and mail. It measures and tracks over time the uptake of, and satisfaction with, e-government services across all tiers of governments, compared with the more traditional methods of service delivery. In addition to exploring the evolving needs of those who use e-government services, this information will enable Australian governments to plan for the future, identify priority areas and deliver more responsive, people-focused services through the Australian Government’s e-government strategy.

Project objectives

The project’s objectives were similar to those for the 2004–05 study, with some additional focus on internet government services and the barriers to increasing uptake of this channel. The overall objectives included to:
• provide an ongoing snapshot of the use of e-government services, particularly internet services
• profile and compare users of the various government service channels
• study the behaviour of e-government users to understand the way in which they interact with government through the internet, telephone, in-person and mail channels
• identify e-government user and non-user segments
• identify impediments and barriers to e-government use
• measure user satisfaction with e-government services and identify possible future service delivery expectations, and
• compare findings to the 2004–05 findings to reveal any changes in behaviour, expectations or experiences with e-government services since the previous survey.

11.2 Research team

This research was conducted by Taverner Research Company in partnership with STM Consulting who provided the technical expertise with regard to e-government issues. The research was conducted in close consultation with the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) project team.
11.3 Methodology

The research project comprised two stages:

1. A telephone survey comprised a nationally representative sample of the Australian population. A total of 5040 interviews were conducted, including 2219 interviews with people who had indicated accessing government services via the internet in the previous 12 months. The survey was conducted in February and March 2006.

2. Four focus groups explored the motivations and attitudes related to key findings in the survey. The focus groups were conducted in March 2006.

Telephone survey

Refinements to the 2004–05 questionnaire and methodology were made after discussions with AGIMO staff. This included the slight re-wording of some questions and the addition of new questions. Methodological changes included internet users as part of the entire random sample of the survey rather than as a separate survey, and asking about the most recent main contact with government, rather than the last three contacts. This change was made to ensure the reliability of responses.

In order to ensure that the revised questionnaire was valid and reliable, an initial telephone cognitive pilot process was undertaken involving 50 in-depth interviews with a random sample of adult Australians. Some changes to the wording of questions and to response categories were made as a result of the pilot.

It should be noted that comparing coded data such as this needs to treated cautiously because of potential differences in interpretation of open-ended responses across the two surveys.

Survey sample

In order to provide a survey sample which was representative of the Australian population aged 18 years and over, sampling quotas were set based on the population distribution in each of the states and territories of Australia (using figures taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census of Population and Housing).

The quotas were stratified according to minimum numbers of interviews to be conducted in metropolitan and regional areas, by age and by gender of respondents.

Table 4 shows the distribution of interviews in metropolitan and regional areas of each Australian state and territory.
Table 4: Survey sample for each Australian state and territory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other New South Wales</td>
<td>759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Victoria</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Queensland</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other South Australia</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Western Australia</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Northern Territory</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Tasmania</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5040</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weighting**

In addition to quota setting, the data were weighted according to the population distribution in each state and territory on gender and age distribution in metropolitan and non-metropolitan locations (based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census of Population and Housing).

**Sampling strategy**

The sampling strategy applied was the electronic white pages (EWP) sampling approach (also used in the 2004–05 survey). EWP is a known and replicable frame and still represents at least 75–80% of households throughout Australia. Mobile phones were contacted when necessary.
Focus groups

Four focus groups were conducted to allow certain issues to be explored in greater depth. The issues explored included:

• internet use
• use of other technologies
• security issues
• current dealings with government
• experiences accessing e-government services, and
• improving e-government services.

Focus group participants

Four groups were conducted in Sydney, Brisbane, Tamworth and Port Augusta. A total of 33 people took part in the focus groups. Participants were contacted at random using the electronic white pages and asked a set of questions to decide whether they met certain criteria. The groups varied according to the following variables to ensure a good cross-section of the population was included:

• internet use (all participants were required to be internet users)
• location (regional and metropolitan)
• age (groups were made up of participants less than 40 years of age or 40+ years of age)
• gender (an even proportion of males and females was recruited for each group), and
• use of government websites (non-users of e-government services made up three of the groups and users of e-government services made up one group. Non-users were emphasised, as one of the prime objectives of the groups was to explore current barriers to use of e-government services and possible solutions).