

Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey

2009

State-wide Research Results Summary

May 2009

A project sponsored by the
Department of Planning and
Community Development
and local governments

Prepared by
Wallis
CONSULTING GROUP

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the 2009 *Community Satisfaction Survey* results, which provide Victoria's local government sector with a valuable overview of how communities view the performance of councils.

Importantly, the individual results give each participating council information about its own performance, as rated by residents, enabling trends in community satisfaction to be monitored and areas for both celebration and improvement to be highlighted.

The trend in overall council performance since the survey commenced in 1998 continues to be positive. In 2009, 79 per cent of respondents rated their councils' overall performance as *excellent*, *good* or *adequate*. This compares with 69 per cent in 1998. However, the result of 79 per cent is a slight fall on the previous year's result of 80 per cent. Metropolitan councils continue to report higher satisfaction with overall council performance than country councils, 82 per cent compared with 78 per cent respectively.

The survey questions refer to the broad areas of governance and service delivery. Governance is covered by overall council performance, advocacy, council contact and community. Service delivery is captured by nine key service areas ranging from town planning and economic development to local laws and waste management.

Town planning, economic development, and local roads and footpaths continue to be the key drivers of community satisfaction. These issues were identified as having the greatest influence on residents' levels of satisfaction, followed by recreational facilities and enforcement of local laws.

Seventy-eight of seventy-nine councils participated in the survey this year. The consistent involvement enables trends to be monitored and supports the survey's value as a powerful benchmarking tool for councils.

Three of the survey results form part of the Victorian Local Government Indicators, which councils publish annually in their annual reports. It is pleasing to note that some councils are making more than just these three survey results publicly available.

The *Community Satisfaction Survey*, together with the financial and asset management measures reported annually in the recently released *Local Government in Victoria Report*, provide a comprehensive overview of the sector's performance.

While councils recognise the *Community Satisfaction Survey* as important for benchmarking performance, it is essential that they continue to refine their own performance measurement systems. This enables a wide and robust selection of both qualitative and quantitative measures to be used to assess council performance.

I would like to thank all councils that participated in this year's survey as well as the independent research company, Wallis Consulting Group, for conducting the survey.



RICHARD WYNNE MP
Minister for Local Government

Summary Table of Year to Year Change (2008-2009)

a. Local Government Indicators	Total		Inner Metro		Outer Metro		Regional Centres		Large Shires		Small Shires	
	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Overall Performance	80	79	86	83	82	80	78	79	75	74	79	80
Advocacy	77	78	77	78	78	77	78	80	74	75	78	80
Community Engagement	69	70	70	69	71	73	66	68	65	64	72	73
Customer Contact	79	80	81	81	78	80	82	81	78	78	80	80
b. Specific Performance Areas												
Local Roads and Footpaths	58	60	71	72	64	65	60	63	49	48	51	53
Health and Human Services	89	90	88	88	87	88	90	89	89	90	91	92
Recreational Facilities	81	81	87	89	80	81	84	83	74	73	79	79
Appearance of Public Areas	79	78	78	76	74	74	79	79	79	79	83	82
Traffic Management and Parking	65	66	62	61	61	63	55	58	63	67	79	78
Waste Management	82	83	86	87	83	85	83	82	77	78	82	81
Enforcement of Local Laws	78	75	76	77	74	70	80	78	77	75	82	77
Economic Development	73	70	83	78	78	72	74	70	68	66	66	67
Town Planning Policy and Approvals	65	62	63	61	70	67	63	61	57	54	70	67

Data are based on percentage of respondents rating satisfaction as excellent, good or adequate.

Data displayed in **blue** show an improvement of more than one percentage point since 2008.

Data displayed in **red** show a decline of more than one percentage point since 2008.

Notes on Survey Methodology

Since its inception in 1998, the Community Satisfaction Survey has been conducted annually, using Computer Assisted telephone Interviewing (CATI).

Each year, all Victorian Councils are offered the opportunity to participate in this survey, which offers an opportunity to obtain feedback from residents in a timely and cost-effective manner. In 2009, 78 of Victoria's 79 Councils took part in the study.

The 'standard' sample size for the project is 350 interviews per local government area, but a few Councils chose to boost their sample to 800 to permit smaller area analysis of their results. The total number of interviews completed across Victoria in 2009 was 29,265.

Interviewing began in the inner metropolitan areas on 3rd February and concluded with interviews in small rural shires on 28th April 2009.

It is noteworthy that in 2009, some interviewing was delayed because of the impact of the bushfires in several council areas. Bushfire affected administrations were given the opportunity to have their interviewing delayed to minimise the disruptions that many residents were experiencing. In consultation with councils, the normal survey timetable was modified across a number of council areas to accommodate this.

Overall Performance

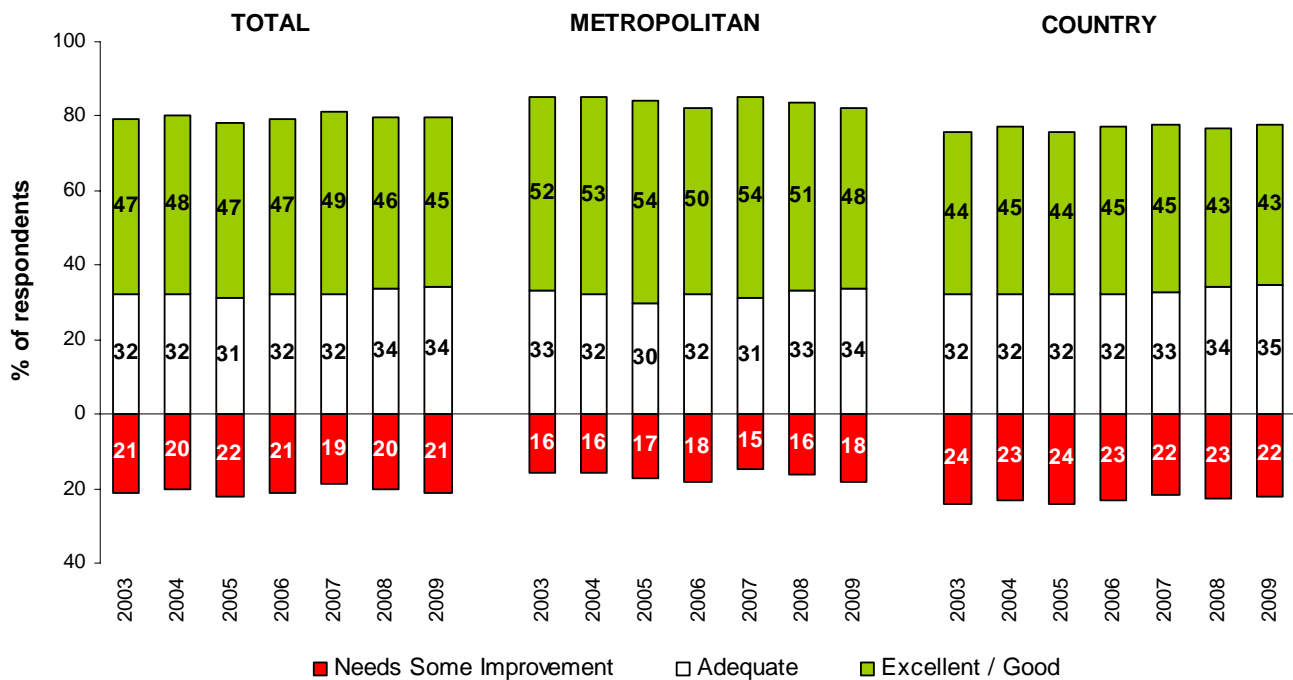
Across Victoria, since the survey commenced in 1998, there has been an improvement in overall council performance of 10% (69% of respondents rated their council's performance as excellent, good or adequate in 1998 compared with 79% in 2009).

In 2007, satisfaction with local councils across Victoria as a whole improved on the previous year. In 2008, and again in 2009, there were declines in comparison to the 2007 result. The 2009 result is comparable to that recorded in 2006 in respect of the percentage of residents rating their council overall as excellent, good or adequate. The result, however, continues to indicate a generally steady overall result for council performance over the 2003 – 2009 period as shown in the graph below.

In **metropolitan councils** in 2008, 84% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. In 2009 this declined to 82%.

For **country councils**, which have rated below metropolitan councils on this measure historically, the percentage in 2008 was 77% and in 2009 was 78%.

Overall Performance: 2003 – 2009

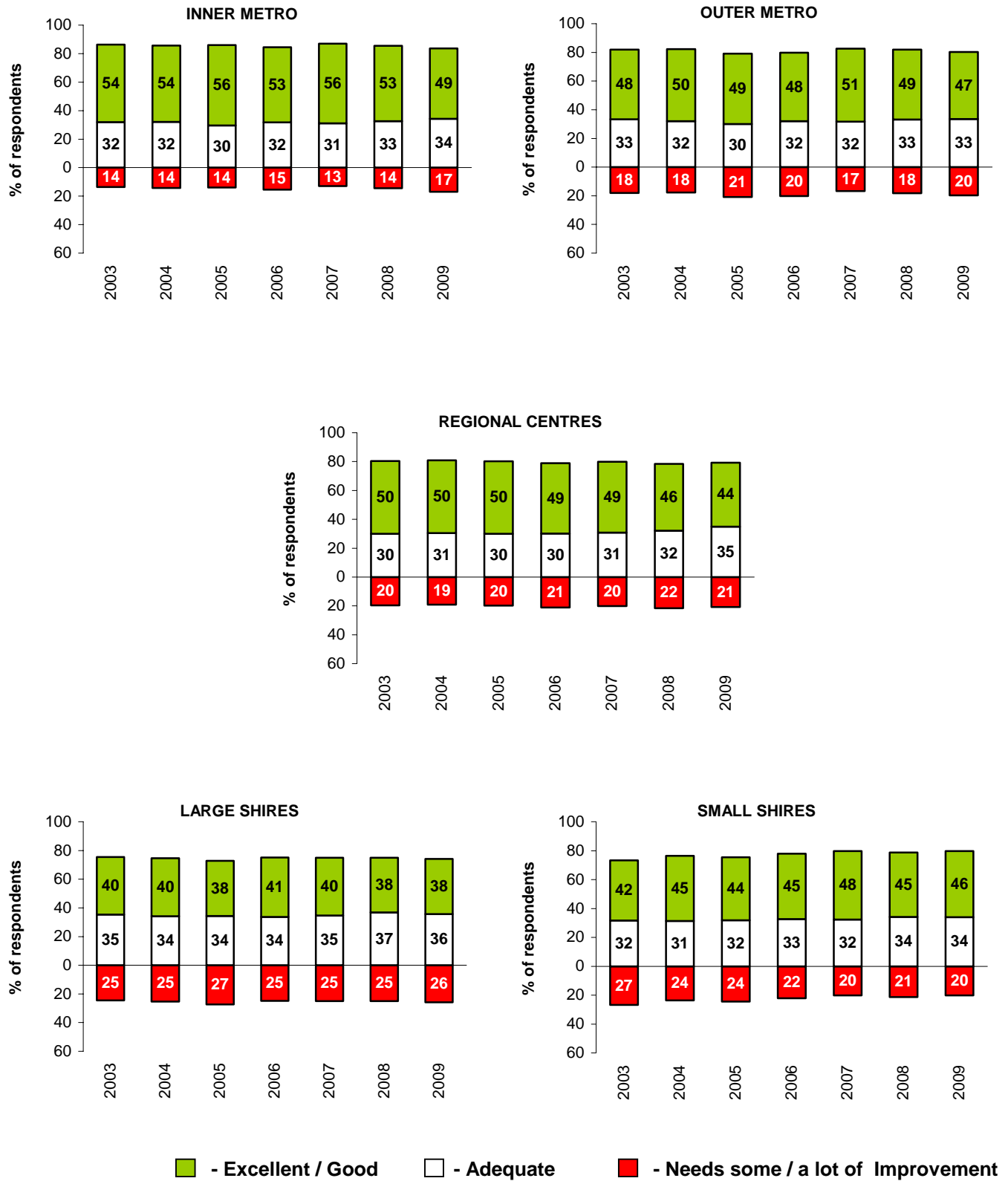


Note: Charts in this report show percentages rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages shown may not add exactly to 100% due to this rounding.

A breakdown of results for the five key groups is shown on page 3:

- **Inner and outer metropolitan councils:** Relatively high satisfaction ratings, with percentages of 83% and 80% respectively.
- **Regional centres** scored 79% in 2009, whereas in 2008 it was 78%.
- **Large shires** scored 74% in 2009, a slight drop on the 2008 result of 75%, whereas **Small shires** results improved slightly from 79% last year to 80% in 2009.

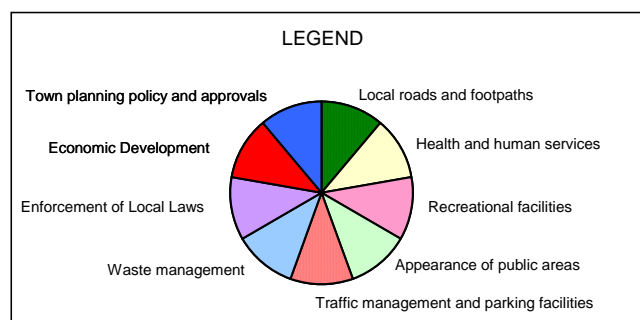
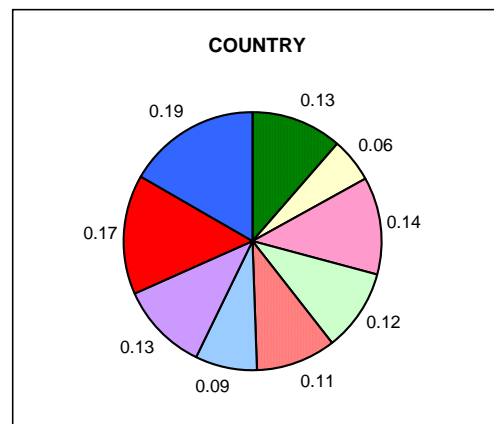
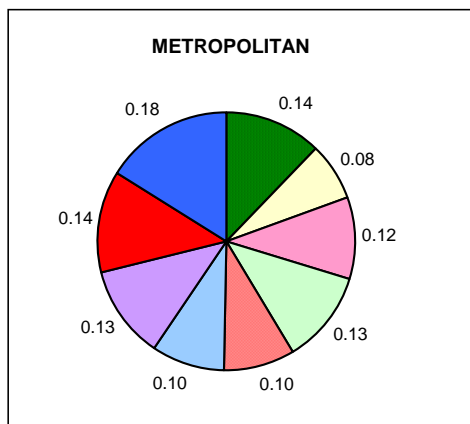
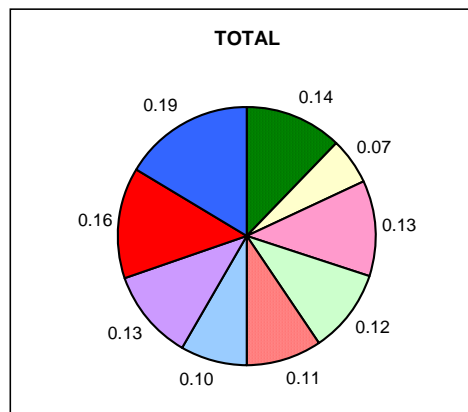
Overall Performance by Group



Relative proportion of the impact that each service area has on resident satisfaction overall

In 2009, the five services most impacting on resident satisfaction were (in order of priority) –

- Town planning, policy and approvals
- Economic development
- Local roads and footpaths
- Recreational facilities
- Enforcement of Local Laws



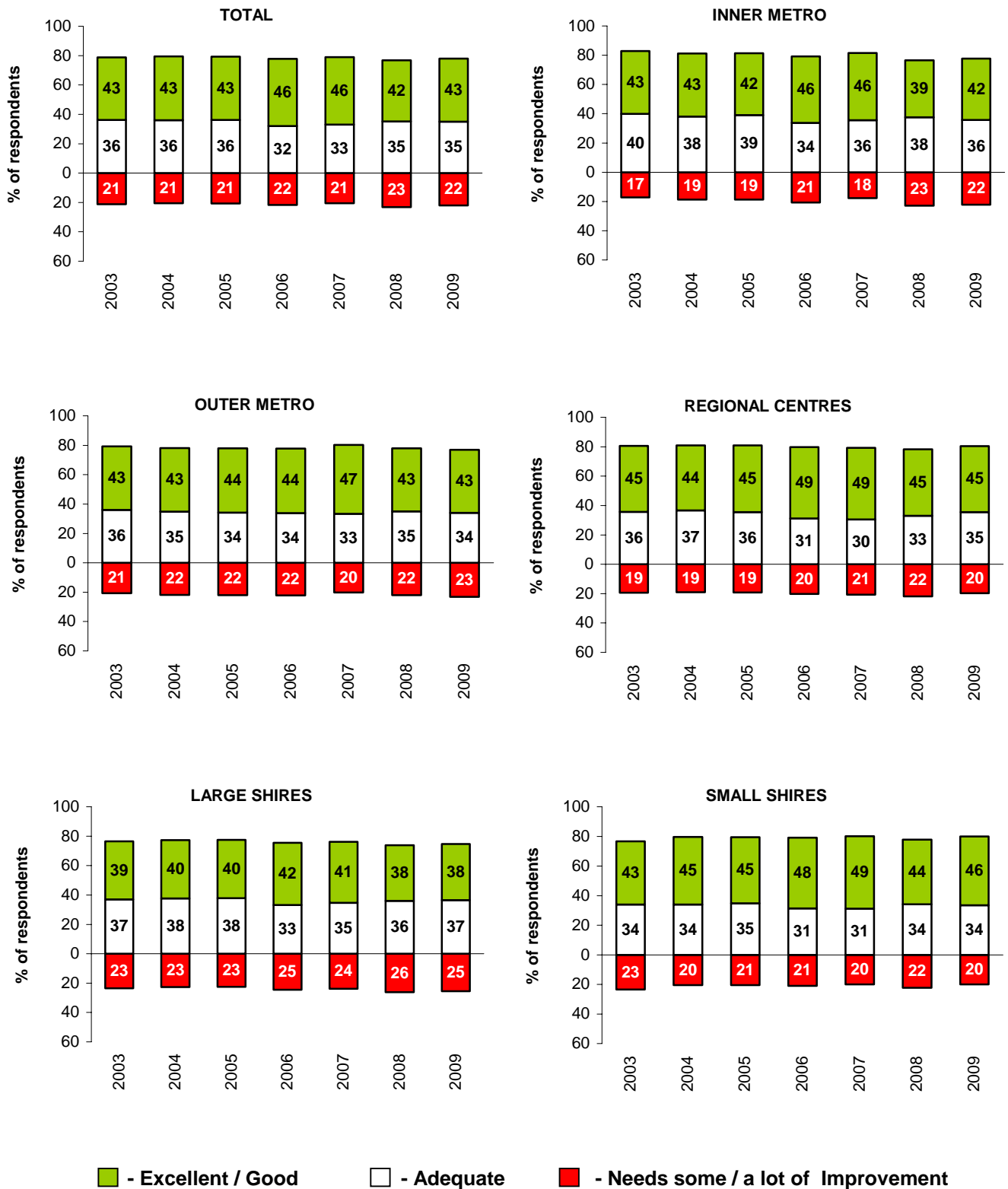
Advocacy

Levels of satisfaction with council advocacy – representing the community's interests - have shown some small gains in a number of groups.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we can see

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 77% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result rose to 78% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan** councils showed a satisfaction level of 77% in 2008, and a percentage excellent, good or adequate figure of 78% in 2009.
- **Outer metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 78% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; in 2009 this result was 77%.
- **Regional centres:** In 2008, 78% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this improved to 80% in 2009.
- **Large shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 74% in 2008 but rose to 75% this year.
- **Small shires:** 78% of residents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate in 2008 and this rose to 80% this year – this 2% increase returns the result to 2007 levels.

Advocacy: 2003 – 2009

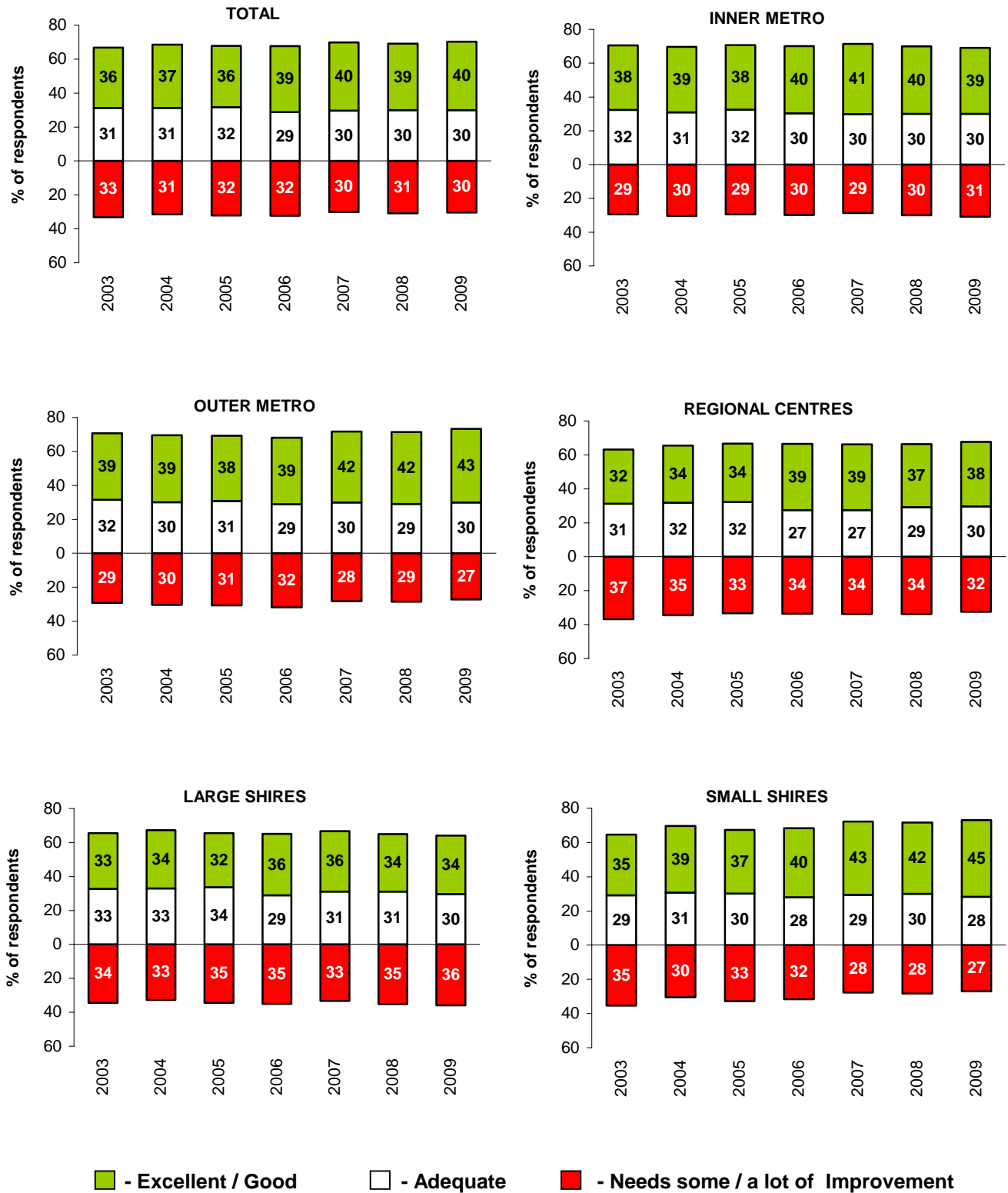


Community Engagement

Levels of satisfaction with community engagement across Victoria show some losses and some gains across the groups in 2009. Overall there has been a slight gain to return to the 2007 satisfaction level.

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 69% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; the figure was 70% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 70% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this moved to 69% in 2009.
- **Outer metropolitan** councils: Satisfaction levels improved by 2%, from 71% in 2008 to 73% this year.
- **In Regional centres:** In 2009 the percentage satisfied was 68% after being at 66% for the previous 3 years – an improvement of 2%.
- **Large shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 65% in 2008 and moved to 64% this year.
- **Small shires** little movement in results this year, with satisfaction levels moving from 72% in 2008 to 73% in 2009.

Community Engagement: 2003 – 2009



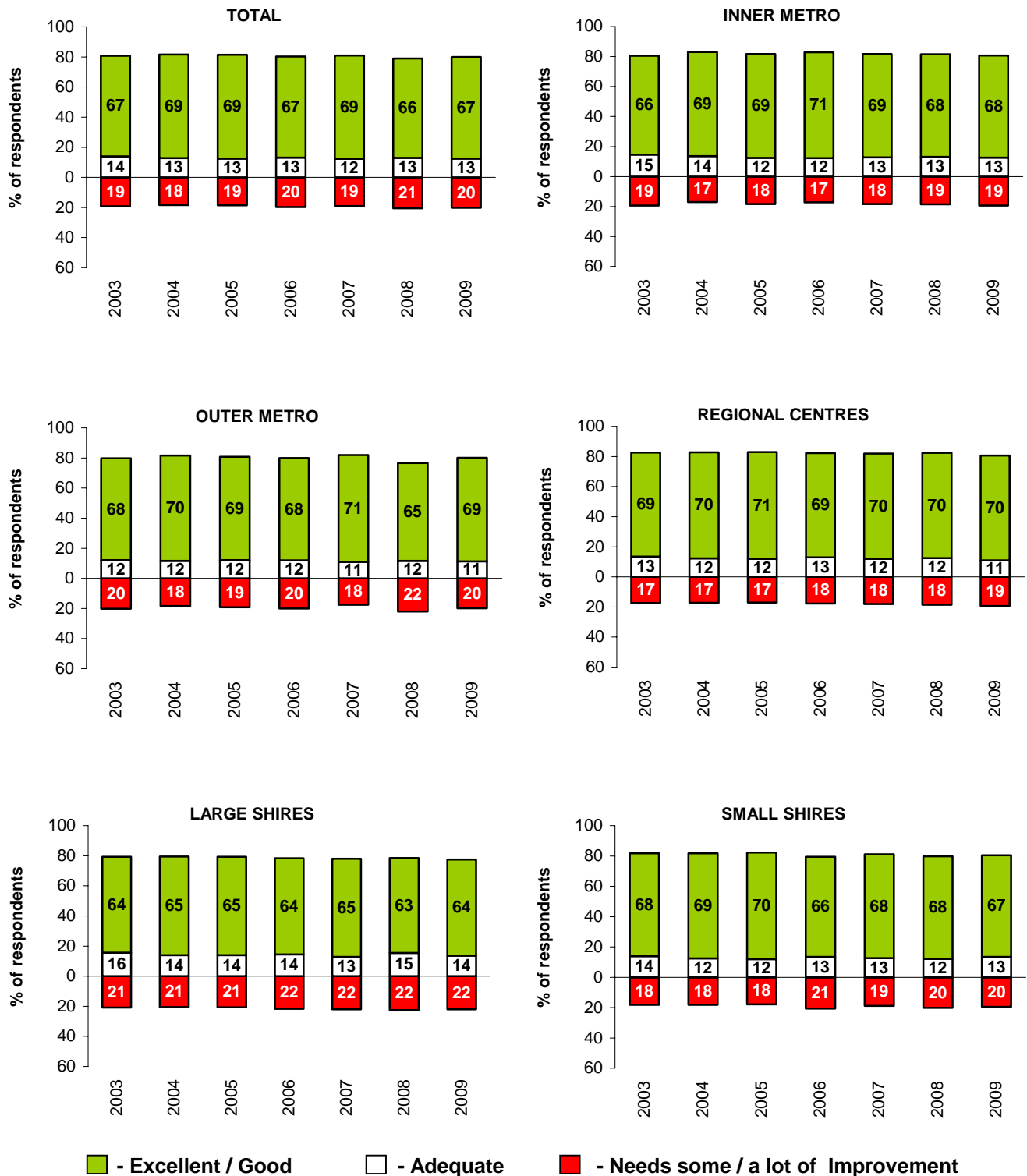
Customer Contact

As the chart on page 11 illustrates, levels of satisfaction with customer contact across Victoria are quite high amongst residents, and at similar levels in all five groups.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, results are largely unchanged in 2009 or show no significant variation compared to last year for most councils, except for the Outer metropolitan group, as outlined below.

- Across **Victoria**: In 2008, 79% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; in 2009, 80% gave this rating.
- **Inner metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 81% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this was maintained in 2009.
- **Outer metropolitan** councils had the most significant improvement in satisfaction levels amongst its residents. The percentage of respondents that reported councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate improved from 77% in 2008 to 80% in 2009.
- Results for **Regional centres** show little movement from last year, with a rating of 81% excellent, good or adequate in 2009.
- **Large shires and Small shires**: Results were unchanged this year, with satisfaction ratings of 78% and 80% respectively.

Customer Contact: 2003 – 2009



Local Roads and Footpaths

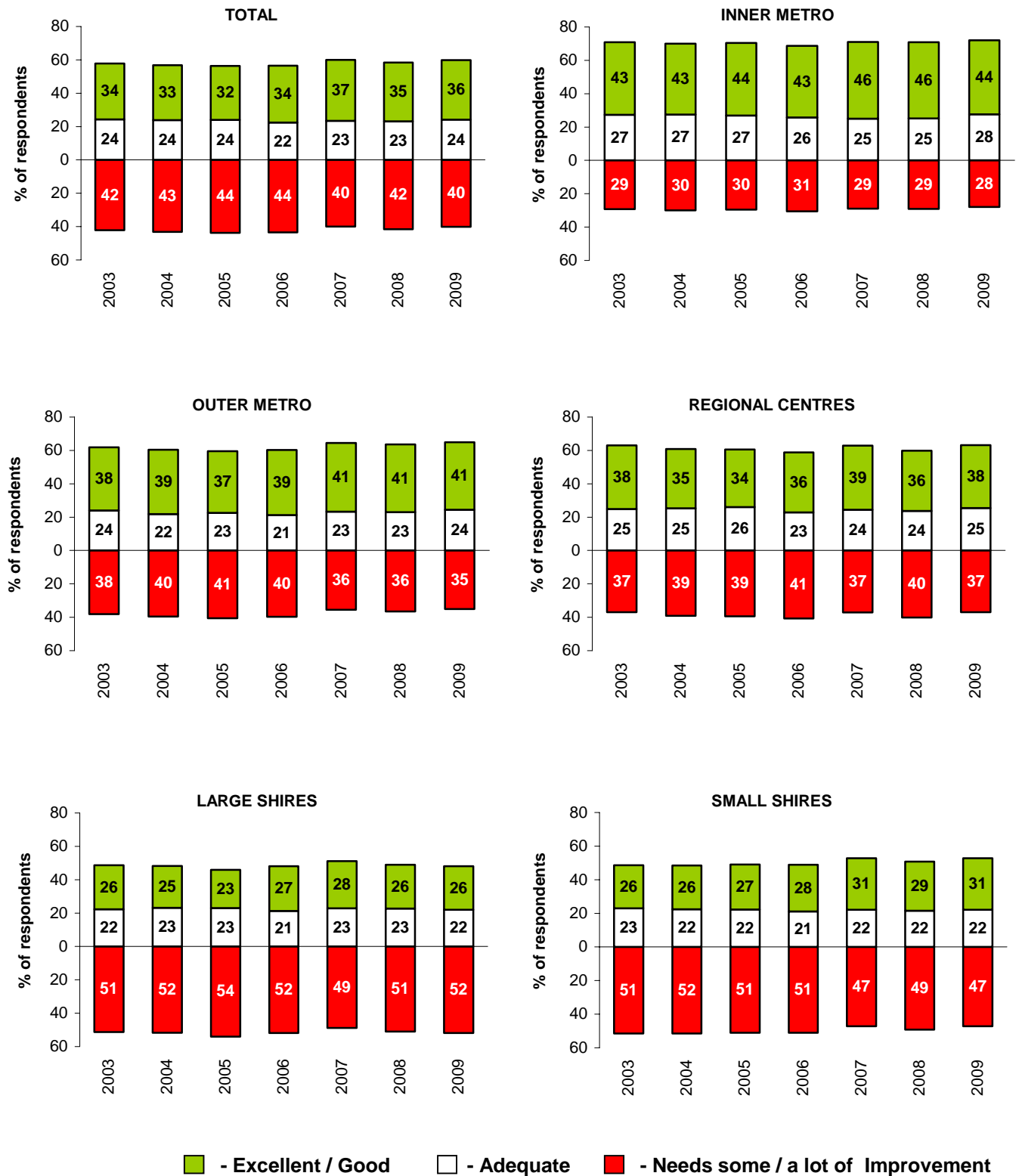
As the chart (page 13) illustrates, levels of satisfaction with local roads and footpaths are higher in metropolitan areas than in country areas.

Resident satisfaction was largely maintained across metropolitan councils and the large shires; in comparison, we see an improvement in satisfaction amongst residents living in regional centres and small shires.

Comparing last year's results to this year -

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 58% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result improved to 60% in 2009.
- **Inner and outer metropolitan councils:** We see little movement in results this year, with percentages of 72% and 65% respectively.
- **Regional centres:** In 2008, 60% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. In 2009 we see a significant move in satisfaction levels – an improvement of 3%, to 63%.
- **Large shires:** In 2008 49% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. In 2009 this moved to 48%.
- **Small shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 51% in 2008. This result improved to 53% this year.

Local Roads and Footpaths: 2003 – 2009



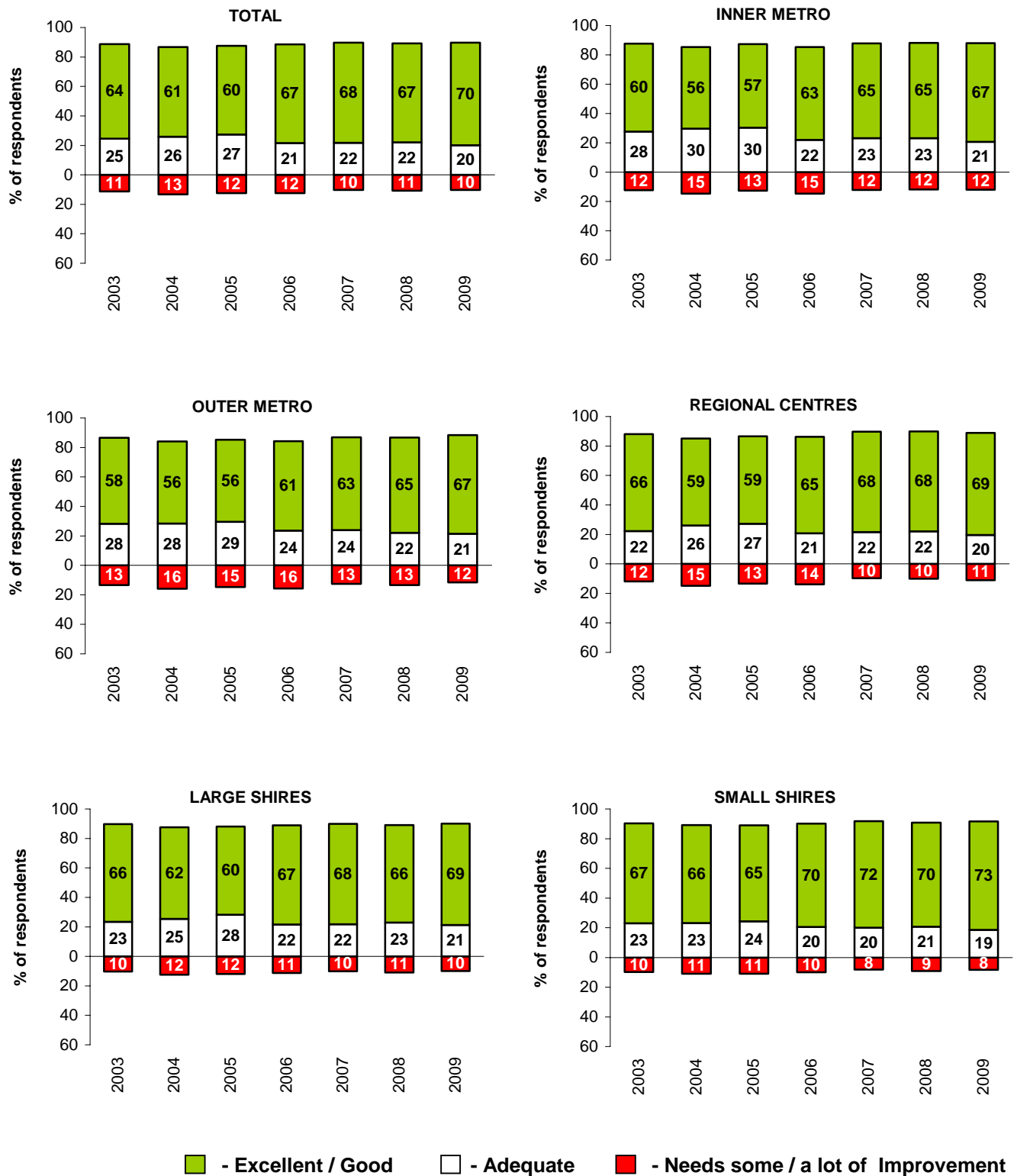
Health and Human Services

Levels of satisfaction with health and human services across Victoria are high amongst residents, and at similar levels in all five groups.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we see that results are either unchanged in 2009 or show no significant variation compared to last year.

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 89% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result moved to 90% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 88% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this was maintained in 2009.
- **Outer metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 87% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this moved to 88% in 2009.
- **Regional centres:** 90% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate in 2008; the figure was 89% in 2009.
- **Large shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 89% in 2008 and moved to 90% this year.
- **Small shires:** 92% of residents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate in 2009, compared to 91% last year.

Health and Human Services: 2003 – 2009



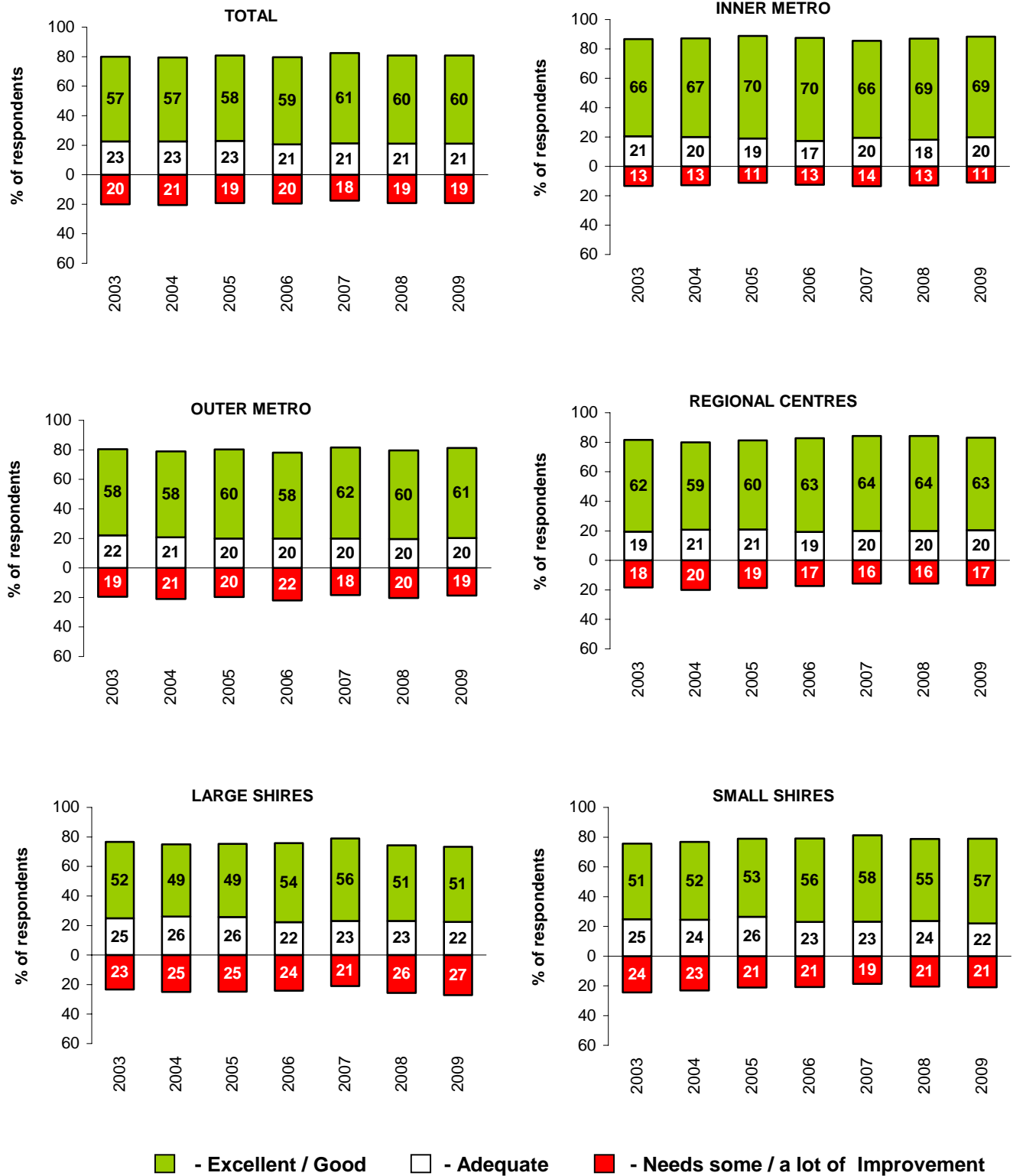
Recreational Facilities

Results indicate levels of satisfaction with recreational facilities are higher in metropolitan councils and regional centres than in large and small shires.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, results show the following –

- **Across Victoria:** Results were unchanged this year, with 81% rating councils as excellent, good or adequate.
- **Inner metropolitan councils:** In 2009, 89% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate, an improvement of 2% from last year.
- **Outer metropolitan councils:** In 2008, 80% of respondents gave a satisfaction rating; this result moved to 81% in 2009.
- **Regional centres:** In 2008, 84% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; the figure was 83% in 2009.
- **Large shires:** In 2009, 73% of residents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate, compared to 74% last year.
- **Small shires:** No movement in satisfaction levels; the percentage excellent, good or adequate was again 79% in 2009.

Recreational Facilities: 2003 – 2009



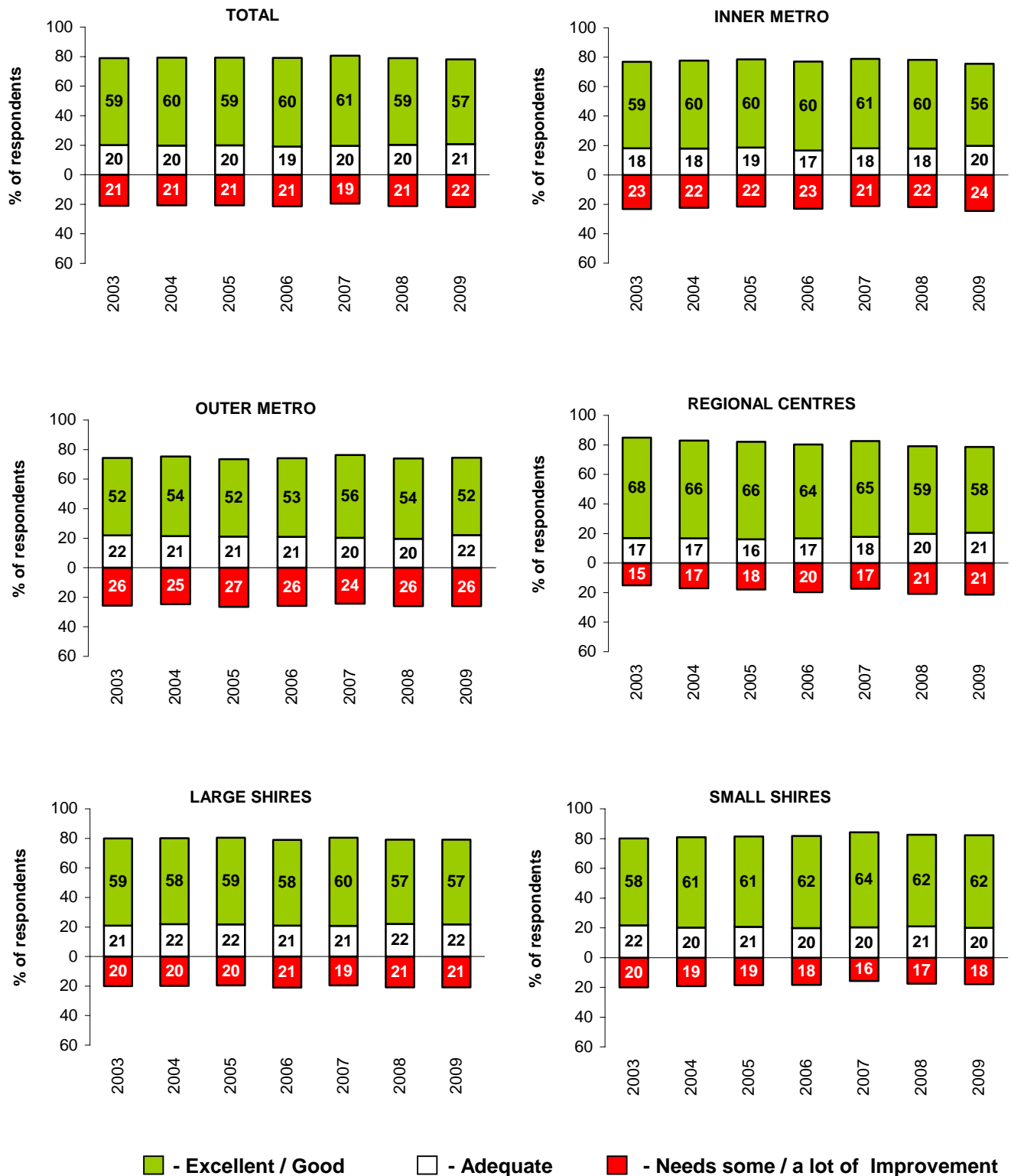
Appearance of Public Areas

As the chart on page 19 illustrates, resident satisfaction with the appearance of public areas was largely maintained across most groups, except for inner metropolitan councils, which showed a decline in ratings this year.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we can see –

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 79% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result moved to 78% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan councils:** In 2008, 78% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; this year it declined to 76%.
- **Outer metropolitan councils:** No change in results this year, with 74% giving a satisfaction rating.
- **Regional centres and Large shires:** In 2009, results were unchanged from the previous year, with both groups scoring a 79% excellent, good or adequate rating.
- **Small shires:** 83% of residents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate in 2008 and 82% gave this rating this year.

Appearance of Public Areas: 2003 – 2009

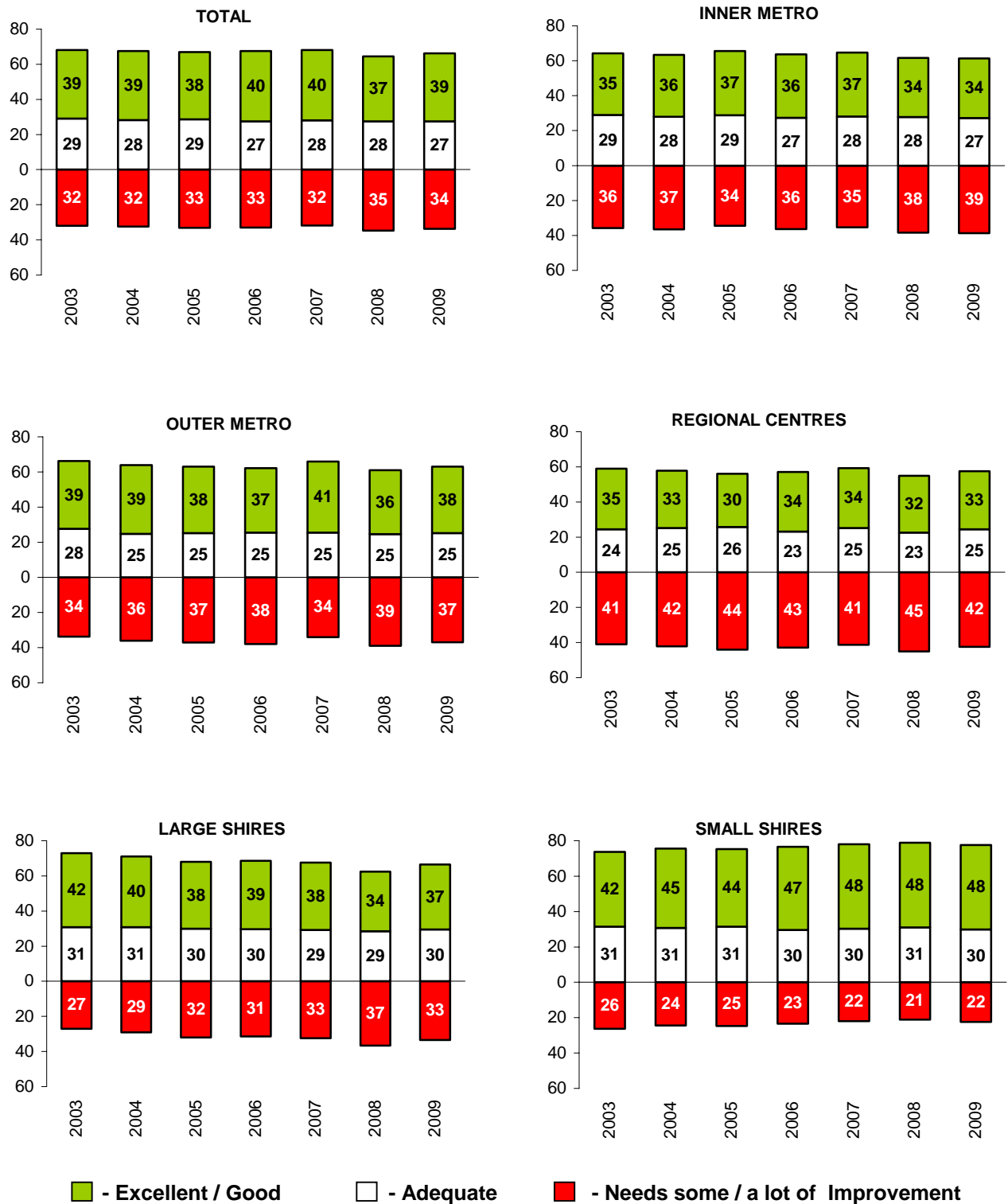


Traffic Management and Parking

As the chart on page 21 indicates, levels of satisfaction with traffic management and parking facilities are highest amongst the shires.

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 65% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result moved to 66% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan councils:** Little change in results this year, with 61% of respondents giving a satisfaction rating, compared to 62% in 2008.
- **Outer metropolitan councils:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 61% in 2008 and 63% in 2009 – an improvement of 2%.
- **Regional centres** showed a significant improvement in satisfaction levels amongst their residents: The percentage that reported councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate improved from 55% in 2008 to 58% in 2009.
- **Large shires** had the largest improvement in satisfaction levels compared to the other groups. This year 67% of residents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate, an improvement from 63% in 2008.
- **Small shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 79% in 2008. The result was 78% this year.

Traffic Management and Parking: 2003 – 2009



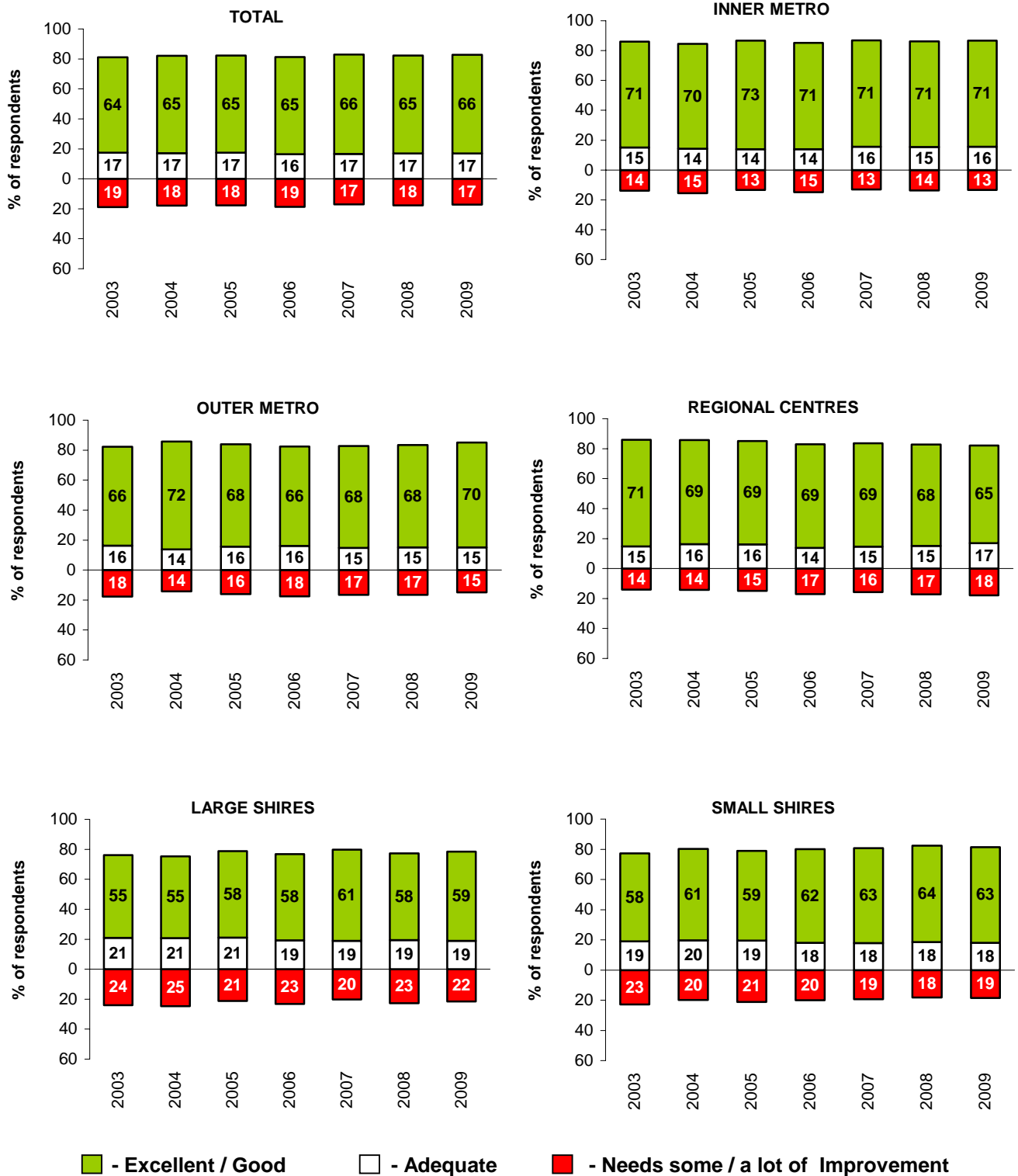
Waste Management

Levels of satisfaction with waste management across Victoria are relatively high amongst residents. Results are slightly better among metropolitan areas and regional centres than in the shires.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we see no notable variation in any of the groups.

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 82% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result moved to 83% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 86% rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; in 2009 we see a slight movement to 87%.
- **Outer metropolitan** councils: In 2008, 83% rated councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate; in 2009 this moved to 85% - an improvement of 2%.
- **Regional centres:** In 2008, 83% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate; the result was 82% in 2009.
- **Large shires:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 77% in 2008 and 78% this year.
- **Small shires:** Little change again this year, with 81% giving a satisfaction rating, compared to 82% in 2008.

Waste Management: 2003 – 2009



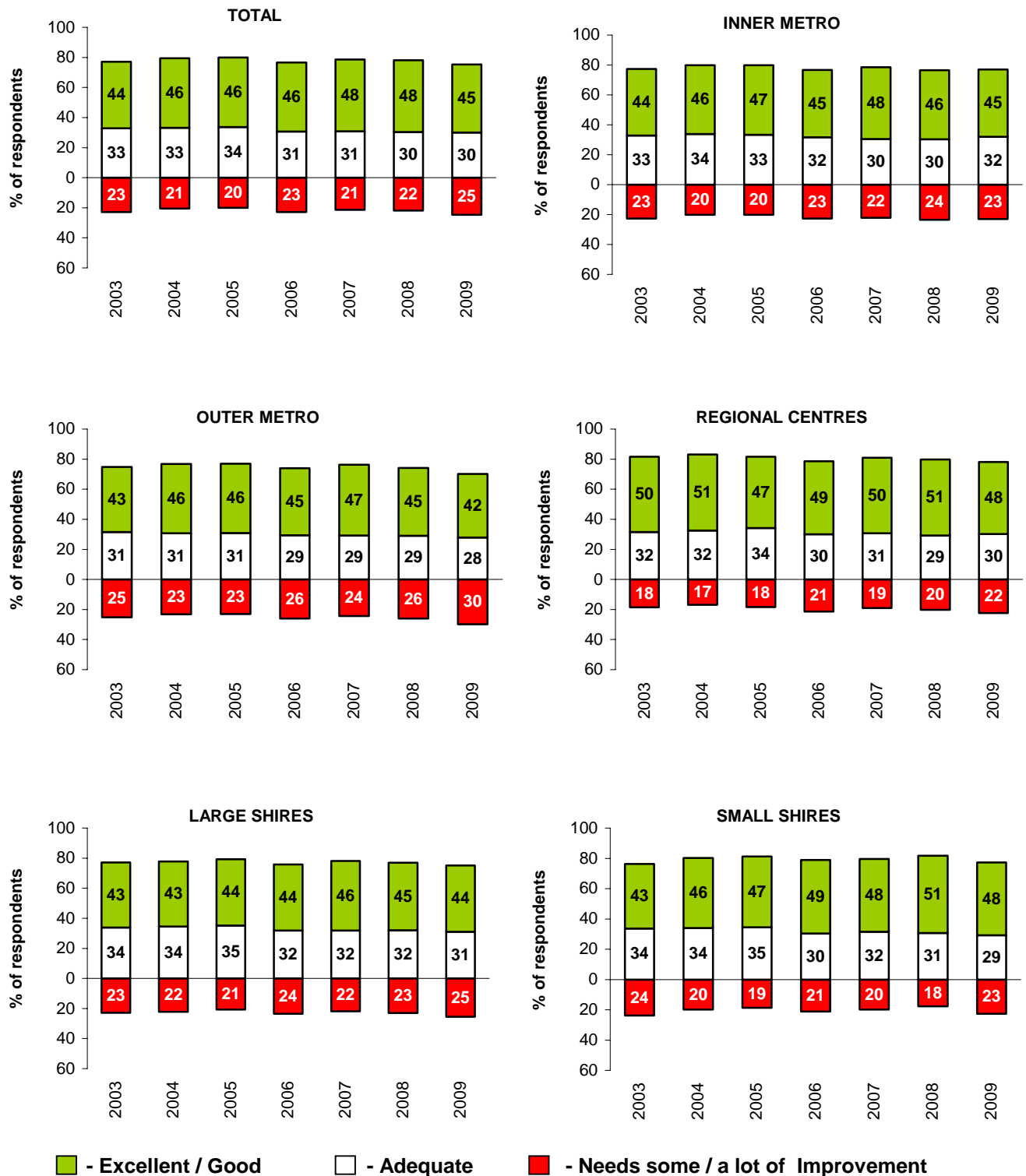
Enforcement of Local Laws

Satisfaction levels with enforcement of local laws have generally declined from the 2008 result, showing further reductions on the 2007 results. This is particularly noticeable in the Outer Metropolitan areas and Small Shires.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we can see -

- Across **Victoria**: In 2008, 78% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result declined to 75% in 2009.
- **Inner metropolitan councils**: The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 76% in 2008, moving to 77% in 2009.
- **Outer metropolitan councils**: In 2008, 74% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. In 2009 this declined to 70% – down by 4% and the lowest result for this group in 8 years.
- In **Regional centres** results were 78% in 2009, a fall of 2% since the 2008 survey.
- **Large shires**: Again, there was a decline from the 2008 result of 77% to 75% this year.
- **Small shires** had the most notable decline across all five groups. In 2009, 77% rated councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate – a decline of 5% from the previous year.

Enforcement of Local Laws: 2003 – 2009



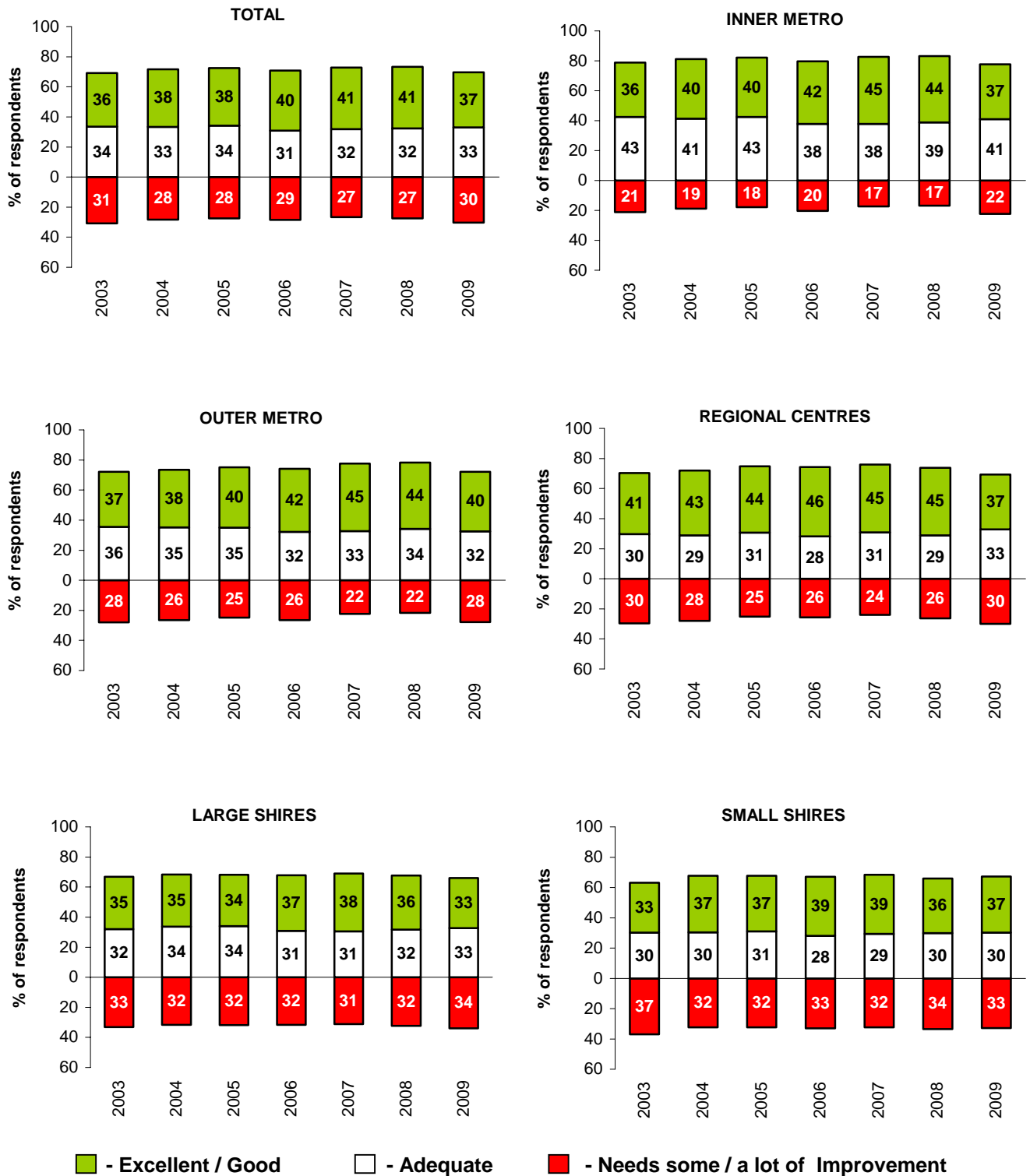
Economic Development

As the chart on page 27 illustrates, levels of satisfaction with economic development are higher in metropolitan areas than in country areas.

Despite this, satisfaction levels fell in all areas with the exception of Small Shires, and this is reflected in a fall in the overall satisfaction rate.

- Across **Victoria**: In 2008, 73% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. The 2009 level declined to 70%.
- The result was 78% excellent, good, adequate for **Inner metropolitan** councils, and 72% for **Outer metropolitan** councils, both notable falls since last year.
- **Regional centres**: In 2008, 74% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. This result declined to 70% in 2009.
- **Large shires**: The percentage of excellent, good or adequate was 68% in 2008 and 66% in 2009
- **Small shires**: Little movement in results this year, with 67% rating councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate, compared to 66% in 2008.

Economic Development: 2003 – 2009



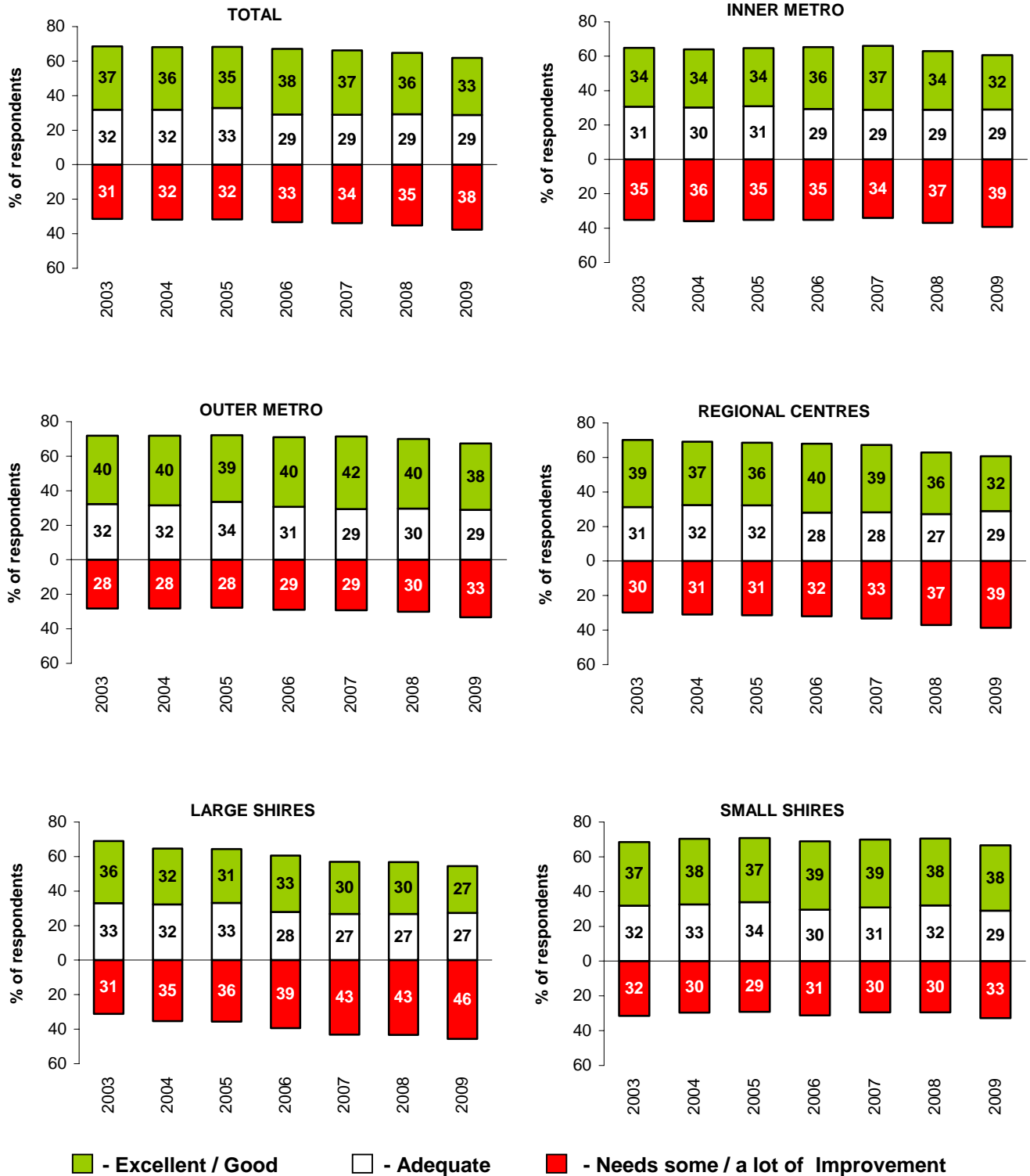
Town Planning Policy and Approvals

As the chart on page 29 indicates, levels of satisfaction with Town Planning Policy and Approvals have declined across all Victorian councils.

Comparing this year's results to 2008, we can see –

- **Across Victoria:** In 2008, 65% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. The figure was 62% in 2009 – a decline of 3%.
- **Inner metropolitan councils:** In 2008, 63% of respondents rated councils as excellent, good or adequate. In 2009 this was reduced by 2% to 61%.
- **Outer metropolitan councils:** The percentage excellent, good or adequate was 70% in 2008, and 67% this year.
- **Regional centres:** Satisfaction levels amongst their residents continue to decline, evident since 2006. The percentage of respondents that reported councils' performance as excellent, good or adequate declined from 63% in 2008 to 61% in 2009.
- **Large shires** is the group with the lowest level of satisfaction amongst its constituents, with a score of 54% in 2009 – a decline of 3% from 2008.
- **Small shires** have also shown a fall. There is a 3% decline from last year, with a satisfaction rating of 67% in 2009.

Town Planning Policy and Approvals: 2003 – 2009



APPENDIX 1

Survey Questionnaire

WALLIS CONSULTING GROUP**Department for Planning & Community Development
Community Satisfaction Survey 2009****WG3585
January 2009****INTRODUCTION****IF IN COUNCIL AREA:**

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name isfrom Wallis Consulting Group. We are conducting research on behalf of Victorian Local Government. The survey aims to find out how residents feel about the PERFORMANCE of local Government in your area. Can you confirm that you live in **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**?

IF NON-RESIDENT RATE-PAYER:

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name isfrom Wallis Consulting Group. We are conducting research on behalf of Victorian Local Government. The survey aims to find out how residents feel about the PERFORMANCE of local Government in the **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**. Council records indicate that you are a rate-payer in that area.

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Yes | GO TO S1 |
| 2 | In different Council area | GO TO PRE S1 |
| 3 | Not available/callback (make appt) | RETURN TO SMS |
| 4 | Household refusal | RETURN TO SMS |
| 5 | Selected resident refusal | RETURN TO SMS |
| 6 | Language Difficulties | RETURN TO SMS |

PRE S1

LIST ALL COUNCILS IN SAME GROUP

What Local Government Area do you live in?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Correct Council can be selected | CONTINUE |
| 2 | Council not listed – cannot select | RETURN TO SMS |
| 3 | Don't know | RETURN TO SMS |

SCREENING

S1: Firstly, have you or anyone in your household worked in a market research organisation or local government anywhere in the last three years?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | No (continue) | CONTINUE |
| 2 | Yes - Market Research | RETURN TO SMS |
| 3 | Yes - Local Government | RETURN TO SMS |

S2: Also, we just wish to speak to residents, not businesses, of **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**. Are you a residential household **(IF GROUPS 3-5: or a farming household)**?

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Yes - Residential Household | |
| 2 | Yes - Farming Household | |
| 3 | No | RETURN TO SMS |

S3: Can I please speak to a head of your household (either male or female) that is 18 years or older?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Yes – available | Continue |
| 2 | Not available/callback (make appt) | RETURN TO SMS |
| 3 | Household refusal | RETURN TO SMS |
| 4 | Selected resident refusal | RETURN TO SMS |
| 5 | Not in Council area | RETURN TO SMS |
| 6 | Language Difficulties | RETURN TO SMS |

ONCE HAVE CORRECT PERSON: Thank-you for your participation. The survey will only take about 8 or 9 minutes AND THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE WILL BE USED TO HELP COUNCILS IMPROVE THEIR SERVICES. No information that you provide will be linked to your name.

IF A FARMING HOUSEHOLD: Please note, we would like you to participate in the survey thinking of your needs as a resident, rather than specific farm management issues.

S5: My supervisor may be monitoring the interview for quality control purposes. If you do not wish this to occur, please let me know.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 | Monitoring allowed |
| 2 | Monitoring NOT allowed |

MAIN SURVEY

Q1 I'm going to read out a list of nine areas which are the responsibility of local Government. For each area of responsibility, I would like to establish your **ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE** of **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** over the last twelve months. Please keep in mind that the focus is on local government only.

NOW ASK (a) AND (b) WHERE NECESSARY FOR EACH RESPONSIBILITY AREA, BEFORE PROCEEDING TO NEXT SERVICE AREA. RANDOMISE.

Q1ax) In the last twelve months, how has **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** performed on **(RESPONSIBILITY AREA)**? Was it ... ?

READ OUT 1-5 INCLUDING DEFINITIONS THE FIRST TIME AND THEREAFTER ONLY THE KEY WORDS.

- 5 Excellent - outstanding performance
- 4 Good - a high standard
- 3 Adequate - an acceptable standard
- 2 Needs some improvement
- 1 Needs a lot of improvement
- 0 Don't Know / Can't Say

ASK Q1b IF CODES 4 OR 5 IN Q1a. OTHERWISE CONTINUE WITH THE NEXT RESPONSIBILITY AREA.

Q1bx) Why do you say that? PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

USE ATTACHED PRE-CODES FOR EACH RESPONSIBILITY AREA.

ASK Q1c FOR THE SECOND RESPONSIBILITY AREA ONLY.

Q1c) Have you or any member of your household used any of the **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** provided by the **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** in the last 12 months?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

RESPONSIBILITY AREAS:

1. LOCAL ROADS AND FOOTPATHS, excluding highways and main roads **(IF GROUPS 2-5: but INCLUDING roadside slashing / maintenance)**
2. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; this includes Meals on Wheels, home help, maternal and child health, immunisation, child care, and support for disadvantaged and minority groups, but **EXCLUDES** hospitals.
3. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES; this includes sporting facilities, swimming pools, sports fields and playgrounds, arts centres and festivals, and library services.
4. APPEARANCE OF PUBLIC AREAS; this includes local parks and gardens, street cleaning and litter collection, and street trees.
5. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PARKING FACILITIES; this includes council provision of street and off street parking, and local road safety.
6. WASTE MANAGEMENT; this includes garbage and recyclable collection, and operation of tips / transfer stations.

-
7. ENFORCEMENT OF LOCAL LAWS; this includes food and health, noise, animal control, parking, and fire prevention.
 8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; this includes business and tourism, and jobs creation.
 9. TOWN PLANNING POLICY AND APPROVALS, including heritage and environmental issues.
-

Q2a In the last twelve months, have you had any contact with **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**? This may have been in person, by telephone, in writing, email or by fax.

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

SKIP TO Q3

Q2b Thinking of the most recent contact, how well did **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** perform in the WAY you were treated - things like the ease of contact, helpfulness and ability of staff, speed of response, and their attitude towards you. We do NOT mean the ACTUAL OUTCOME. Was it ... READ OUT 1-5 ... ?

- 5 Excellent - outstanding performance
- 4 Good - a high standard
- 3 Adequate - an acceptable standard
- 2 Needs some improvement
- 1 Needs a lot of improvement
- 0 Don't Know / Can't Say

ASK Q2c IF OPTION 2 AND CODES 4 OR 5 IN Q2b. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q3a

Q2c Why do you say that? PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

(USE ATTACHED PRE-CODES)

ASK ALL

Q3a Over the last 12 months, how would you rate the performance of **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** on consulting with the community and leading discussion on key social, economic and environmental issues which could impact on the local area, and may require decisions by Council? Would you say it was... READ OUT PERFORMANCE SCALE 1-5... ?

- 5 Excellent - outstanding performance
- 4 Good - a high standard
- 3 Adequate - an acceptable standard
- 2 Needs some improvement
- 1 Needs a lot of improvement
- 0 Don't Know / Can't Say

ASK Q3b IF OPTION 2 AND CODES 4 OR 5 IN Q3a. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q4a

Q3b Why do you say that? PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

(USE ATTACHED PRE-CODES)

Q4a In the last twelve months, how well has **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** represented and lobbied on behalf of the community with other levels of government and private organisations, on key local issues? Was it ... READ OUT 1-5 ... ?

- 5 Excellent - outstanding performance
- 4 Good - a high standard
- 3 Adequate - an acceptable standard
- 2 Needs some improvement
- 1 Needs a lot of improvement
- 0 Don't Know / Can't Say

ASK Q4b IF OPTION 2 AND CODES 4 OR 5 IN Q4a. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q5

Q4b Why do you say that? PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

(USE ATTACHED PRE-CODES)

Q5 ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas. Was it ... READ OUT PERFORMANCE SCALE 1-5 ... ?

- 5 Excellent - outstanding performance
- 4 Good - a high standard
- 3 Adequate - an acceptable standard
- 2 Needs some improvement
- 1 Needs a lot of improvement
- 0 Don't Know / Can't Say

SKIP TO Q7

Q6a In giving your answer to the previous question, has any particular issue STRONGLY influenced your view, either in a positive or negative way? IF YES: Was it a positive or negative influence? MULTICODE IF NECESSARY

- 1 Yes - Positive
- 2 Yes - Negative
- 3 No
- 4 Don't Know / No Response

ASK Q6b IF OPTION 2 AND CODES 4 OR 5 IN Q5. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q7

Q6b Why do you say that on balance the council's overall performance is in need of improvement? PROBE FULLY. DO NOT READ OUT.

(USE ATTACHED PRE-CODES)

Q7 Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of **(NAME OF COUNCIL)**'s overall performance? Has it IMPROVED, STAYED THE SAME or DETERIORATED?

- 1 Improved
- 2 Stayed the Same
- 3 Deteriorated
- 4 Don't Know / Can't Say

DEMOGRAPHICS

Q8a Now I have just three final questions ...To which one of the following age groups do you belong? (READ OUT 1-5)

- 1 18 - 24
- 2 25 - 34
- 3 35 - 49
- 4 50 - 64
- 5 65 +
- 6 Refused
- 7 Under 18

GO TO Q8b

NOW GO TO Q9

Q8b I originally asked to speak to someone who is 18 years or older. Can you please confirm that you are under 18 years old?

- 1 Yes, confirm
- 2 No

GO BACK TO Q8a

Q9 Thinking of the property you live in, do you OWN it or are you RENTING?

- 1 Own (includes purchasing)
- 2 Renting

IF CALLING PROPERTY IN COUNCIL AREA ASK Q10a, IF CALLING PROPERTY OUTSIDE COUNCIL AREA ASK Q10b

Q10a Is the property WE HAVE CALLED YOU AT your main permanent residence or a secondary residence such as a holiday home?

Q10b Is the property in the **(NAME OF COUNCIL)** area your main permanent residence or a secondary residence such as a holiday home?

- 1 Permanent residence
- 2 Secondary residence

Q11 Record gender:

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

Q12 Record language interview conducted in:

- 1 English
- 2 Other SPECIFY (including home translator)

CLOSE: Thank you for taking part in this research. Your views count and we're very glad you made them known to us. This research is being carried out in accordance with the Privacy Act and the information you provided will be used for research purposes only. Once the survey is complete, any information that could identify you will be removed from the computer records.

Just in case you missed it, my name is and I'm from the Wallis Group. If you have any questions about this survey you may contact the Australian Market and Social Research Society on 1300 364 830.

RESPONSIBILITY AREA PRE-CODES**RA 1 – Local Roads and Footpaths Pre-codes****ON SCREEN:**

1. Improve/ Fix/ Repair uneven surface of footpaths
2. More frequent/ better re-surfacing of roads
3. More frequent / better slashing of roadside verges
4. Improve standard of unsealed roads (loose gravel, dust, corrugations)
5. Improve/More frequent grading etc of unsealed roads
6. Quicker response for repairs to roads, footpaths or gutters
7. Increase number of footpaths/ widen footpaths
8. Fix/ improve unsafe sections of roads
9. Improve the quality of maintenance on roads and footpaths
10. More frequent maintenance/ cleaning of roadside drains and culverts
11. Fix/ improve edges and shoulders of roads
12. More/ better roadside drains and culverts
13. Prune/trim trees/shrubs overhanging footpaths/roads
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Widen roads/roads too narrow
16. More/better street/road signs (including position/visibility)
17. More/better street lighting
18. Need improved/more frequent weed control
19. Increase number of sealed roads - outside town limits
20. Increase number of sealed roads - inside town limits
21. Tree roots causing damage to footpaths/roads/drains
22. Council favours/focuses on certain areas over others
23. Traffic management issues

RA 2 – Health and Human Services Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. More funds/resources to reduce waiting lists for services
2. More facilities/resources for Aged Care/better nursing homes
3. More/better support/services for minority/disadvantaged groups
4. Increase resources for/availability of home help /meals on wheels
5. More resources/longer hours for Maternal & Child Health Facilities
6. Improved/More childcare facilities/after school/holiday care
7. Improve quality of home help
8. More/better centres/facilities generally in more remote towns/areas
9. Services need to be improved in all areas/council needs to do more
10. Improve quality/variety of food in meals on wheels program
11. More/better publicity/information about available services
12. More/better premises for health or community facilities
13. Better transport to/from health or community centres/facilities
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. More/better activities/programs for young people
16. More information/resources to immunisation programs
17. Improve services for children with special needs/ disability services
18. More facilities/services for mental health
19. Improve/increased dental program/services
20. Better management of services/organisations

RA 3 – Recreational Facilities Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. More/better Sporting Complexes (including pools)
2. Better maintenance of Sporting facilities (including pools)
3. More facilities/activities for young people/teenagers
4. More/better/safer Playgrounds and/or equipment/with sun shade
5. More/better sporting complexes and/or facilities in smaller towns
6. More/better recreational activities/programs
7. More/better library buildings/no library service/closing /moving library
8. More/better facilities and resources at libraries (incl funding)
9. More community consultation about recreational facilities etc
10. More/better arts/cultural facilities/events in smaller towns
11. More/better bike paths/ walking tracks/ skate board facilities
12. Longer opening hours for Sporting Complexes (including pools)
13. More support/funding needed for recreational/sporting facilities
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. More/better amenities in recreation areas (eg. seats, picnic tables, barbeques etc)
16. Less expensive recreational facilities and activities/more consistent fees
17. Better/More maintenance of Parks/Playgrounds-syringes/ lighting/ trees/ equipment etc
18. More support for local sporting clubs in smaller towns
19. Council favours certain areas over others in regard to recreational facilities
20. More publicity/information on facilities and activities/programs
21. More/better performing arts facilities
22. More/better events and festivals
23. Not enough money spent on cultural events and festivals
24. Not enough support for local community groups/clubs
25. Larger range/greater availability of books
26. Pool/baths closing/moving/closed/should be open more months a year
27. Need more parks/open space
28. Everything takes too long/upgrading of facilities/decision making i.e. facilities
29. Improved management of facilities/sports/recreation/library etc (incl food management)

RA 4 – Appearance of Public Areas Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. Better maintenance of parks and gardens
2. More frequent/better street cleaning
3. More frequent/better pruning of street trees/plants
4. More frequent slashing/mowing of public areas/fire hazard
5. More frequent/better removal of litter in parks and gardens
6. Better care of street trees - watering, staking, removal etc
7. Better landscaping/design (eg. more colour, more shady trees)
8. More street trees
9. Better maintenance of beaches, lakes, rivers and surrounding areas
10. Some areas favoured over others/some areas are neglected
11. Better maintenance of amenities in parks (BBQ's, tables, toilets etc)
12. More frequent sweeping of leaves
13. More emphasis on smaller towns
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. More frequent spraying of weeds in open spaces/better weed management
16. Retain/More parks and gardens/open spaces
17. Better amenities within parks/gardens (eg. BBQ's, Picnic tables, toilets, play equipment etc.)
18. Better/different types/mix of trees/vegetation/more appropriate trees
19. Cleaning of public areas/generally untidy
20. More frequent clearing of public litter bins
21. More/better cleaning up of condoms, syringes etc. in parks, beaches, alleys
22. Clear drains regularly/stormwater drains often blocked/gutters
23. Improve streetscapes with landscape or architectural features
24. More public litter bins
25. Quicker/more frequent removal of graffiti/attention to vandalism
26. Cutting down too many trees
27. More maintenance of nature strips/median strips
28. Improve/better maintenance of entrances to town
29. Not responsive to maintenance requests/takes too long

RA 5 – Traffic Management and Parking Facilities Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. More parking facilities adjacent to shopping and business centres
2. More parking facilities/capacity
3. Poor traffic/parking management
4. Improve traffic flow/congestion
5. Improve traffic management at intersections
6. More free parking/cheaper parking
7. Improve road signage – general (parking/speed/road works)
8. More parking specifically allocated for residents
9. Longer parking times/more long-term parking
10. More speed inhibitors (humps, barriers, traffic islands etc)
11. Improved parking management /more parking around schools
12. Less parking restrictions
13. Fewer parking meters
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. More parking enforcement/traffic officers
16. More disabled parking needed
17. Reduce speed limits in residential areas
18. More pedestrian crossings
19. Streets/roads too narrow/need widening/cars parked on sides
20. Improve blind spots, dangerous curves etc. on country roads (excluding highways)
21. More community consultation
22. Greater restriction of non-resident parking
23. More parking restrictions
24. More parking around specific areas, eg train stations, hospitals, etc
25. Fewer speed inhibitors (humps, barriers traffic islands etc)
26. Install more traffic lights at dangerous intersections
27. Less Roundabouts
28. Restrict/discourage traffic on residential roads
29. Restrict truck traffic in streets
30. Parking spaces too small/need to be widened
31. Greater enforcement of speed limits

RA 6 – Waste Management Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. More consistent/ lower fees for tips etc (reintroduce vouchers)
2. Any/more frequent hard waste collection
3. More comprehensive recycling program/no recycling program
4. More consistent/convenient/Longer opening times/days for Tips etc.
5. No garbage collection
6. More reliable Collections
7. Bigger bins
8. Any/More frequent collection of green waste/vegetation
9. Better location of tip/transfer station/rubbish dump/no tip/closed tip
10. No collection of recyclable materials
11. Any/Better containers for collection of recyclable /green materials
12. More frequent collection of recyclable materials
13. Tip/transfer stations in poor condition/badly managed
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Spilling garbage on footpath/ road during garbage collection/rubbish blows out of truck
16. Bins should be returned upright to curbside/in same place/with lids closed
17. More frequent rubbish collection
18. Cost of garbage/waste collection too much (including bins)
19. Extend areas covered by garbage collection in areas outside townships
20. Provide more info/keep residents informed about waste management procedures
21. More community consultation
22. Less damage to garbage bins
23. More education/promotion for recycling
24. Recyclable material goes into garbage truck/Doubt recycling occurs
25. Inconvenient time of day for pick-ups (too early/late/too noisy)
26. Collection of rubbish left on streets/footpaths/gutters/public areas
27. Quicker response to requests i.e., for new bins/bin lids

RA 7 – Enforcement of Local Laws Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. Greater enforcement of animal Local Laws
2. Greater enforcement of noise Local Laws (domestic, industrial, traffic)
3. Greater enforcement of parking restrictions/more officers/rangers
4. Greater enforcement of Local Laws generally/more Local Laws officers
5. Greater enforcement of fire prevention Local Laws to clean up properties
6. Greater enforcement of fire prevention Local Laws
7. Greater enforcement of health/food handling Local Laws
8. Greater enforcement of littering Local Laws
9. Local Laws are too stringent
10. Less enforcement of parking restrictions
11. Quicker response to reports of Local Law infringements
12. Better attitude for Local Laws enforcement officers/rangers
13. Local Laws are too lenient
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Greater enforcement of pollution Local Laws (domestic, industrial, traffic etc)
16. More publicity/information to residents
17. Local Laws purely revenue raising
18. Animal Local Laws are too stringent
19. Greater enforcement of traffic/road laws (including footpaths)
20. More consistent application of Local Laws/enforcement
21. Create access to/more free parking/unrestricted parking/dislike parking meters

RA 8 – Economic Development Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. More/better job creation programs/employment opportunities
2. Encourage more tourism
3. Too little support for local businesses/ new business/many closing down
4. Greater emphasis on Economic Development in general
5. Encourage more companies/industries to re-locate to the area
6. Unaware of any economic development/improvement needed
7. Better financial planning/manage't of Council budget/ money wasted
8. Too much focus on major towns/need more focus on rural & regional areas
9. Not enough promotion of local businesses
10. Encourage more desirable industries to locate to the area
11. Need to publicise/inform the community of Council activities
12. More community consultation/consultation with business
13. Too much emphasis on tourism
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Some areas of local govt are neglected
16. Stop rate increases/rates too high for businesses
17. Attract/encourage better/more diverse shops/businesses i.e. Target/ Spotlight/ newsagents
18. Takes too long to get things done/complete projects
19. Infrastructure in the area needs to be improved/keep up with new developments

RA 9 – Town Planning Policy and Approvals Pre-codes**ON SCREEN:**

1. Better planning policies
2. More efficient/faster approval processes
3. More consultation with community
4. More consistent decisions
5. Too little regulation in heritage areas/knocking down old houses
6. Council should be stronger in representing community opinion
7. Take better account of environmental issues
8. Less high density dwellings
9. Too much residential sub-division
10. Ugly/inappropriate design/development/out of character with area
11. Greater enforcement of/adherence to planning policies
12. Take better account of impact on neighbouring properties
13. Too much regulation in heritage areas
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Less development/too much overdevelopment
16. Greater clarity/information on guidelines and process for building application
17. Too much highrise development/high rise apartments
18. More helpful Town planning staff
19. Not enough infrastructure to support new developments i.e. lack of water/ parking/ roads
20. Process is too bureaucratic/needs to be flexible/too many regulations/in exports
21. Council not very professional in this area/poor management
22. Could do better in this area/some areas favoured over others
23. Better planning for development of shopping areas
24. Decisions overridden by State Government/VCAT/the Tribunal

VALUE-ADD QUESTIONS PRE-CODES

Customer Contact: Q2c Why do you say that?

ON SCREEN (ALL):

1. Lack of follow up
2. Took too long to respond
3. Not interested in helping/didn't take an interest/responsibility
4. Poor customer service/ need better communication skills/personal service
5. Impolite/rude manner/tone
6. Issue not resolved in a satisfactory manner
7. Passed around departments/not clear who to speak to
8. Not knowledgeable
9. Did not achieve outcome I wanted
10. Too hard to get through to anyone/kept getting machine
11. Need longer opening hours/after hours contacts
12. Understaffed/spent too long waiting in queue/on phone
13. Not enough information/keep community informed
14. Other (SPECIFY)

Advocacy: Q3b Why do you say that?**ON SCREEN:**

1. Don't represent the interests of the community
2. Not sure what the council does/ need to promote/ communicate effectively
3. Council does not make sufficient effort
4. Council represents some areas/services/interests but neglect others
5. Council more interested in politics/themselves than community interests
6. Don't consult to gauge community views
7. Not doing enough/ need to lobby harder on key local issues
8. Lobbying skills need improvement/ more professional/ effective lobbying
9. Didn't lobby effectively on freeway/toll issues etc
10. Division within council/infighting/need to be more cohesive
11. Need to assist/protect/encourage local business/industry
12. Town planning issues/ inappropriate development
13. Need more/improved public transport
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Time taken for action to take place is too long
16. Could generally improve/do better
17. Rates are too high/unjustified increases
18. Councillors seem incompetent/naive/inexperienced
19. Waste money/spending money in the wrong areas

Overall Performance:

Q5b Why do you say that on balance the council's overall performance is in need of improvement?

ON SCREEN:

1. Favour certain areas in Shire/ local government area over others
2. Council too focused on internal politics/ don't achieve outcomes
3. Make decisions despite community consultation/ don't listen to community
4. Rates are not giving value for money
5. Local roads and footpaths
6. Town planning policy and approvals
7. Decline in standard of service generally provided by council
8. Waste/spend too much money/poor financial management/in debt
9. Communicating/leading discussion with community
10. Appearance of public areas including foreshore
11. Traffic management and parking facilities
12. Recreational facilities
13. Economic development
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. More resources/better handling of environmental issues
16. Service not as good as other councils
17. Health and human services
18. Waste management
19. Customer contact
20. Enforcement of Local laws
21. Too slow to act/respond/make decisions
22. Advocacy - representation to other levels of govt
23. Crime/drug related problems/violence
24. Wasted money on plastic cows/moving art/public sculpture

Community Engagement: Q7b Why do you say that?**ON SCREEN:**

1. Need to keep community better informed/communicate more
2. Don't consult sufficiently/effectively/with entire community
3. Don't listen/ need to take more notice of community's wishes
4. More community consultation/ use consultants less/more public meetings
5. Need to publicise/promote consultation sessions and inform us of results
6. Only pay lip service to issues/need to follow through
7. Don't take a role in leading discussion/aren't proactive
8. Communicate more regularly via newsletter/ local paper etc
9. Only talk to the same people
10. Need to consult with all areas of the LGD
11. Inconsistent/ pick and choose which issues it leads discussion on
12. Too much council in-fighting/get politics out of it
13. Takes too long to get things done/ not enough action
14. Other (SPECIFY)

CODING:

15. Should explain/justify/consult more on rates and fees
16. Rates are too high
17. More knowledgeable people/senior management on council
18. People don't get opportunity to speak at council meetings
19. Too concerned with lobby groups/minority groups
20. Could generally improve
21. Inappropriate developments/poor town planning decisions
22. Need to focus more on environmental issues

APPENDIX 2

List of participating councils

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey 2009

Participating Councils

1. Inner Melbourne Metropolitan Councils

Banyule City Council
Bayside City Council
Boroondara City Council
Darebin City Council
Glen Eira City Council
Hobsons Bay City Council
Kingston City Council
Maroondah City Council
Melbourne City Council
Monash City Council
Moonee Valley City Council
Moreland City Council
Port Phillip City Council
Stonnington City Council
Whitehorse City Council
Yarra City Council

2. Outer Melbourne Metropolitan Councils

Brimbank City Council
Cardinia Shire Council
Casey City Council
Frankston City Council
Greater Dandenong City Council
Hume City Council
Knox City Council
Manningham City Council
Melton Shire Council
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
Nillumbik Shire Council
Whittlesea City Council
Wyndham City Council
Yarra Ranges Shire Council

3. Rural Cities and Regional Centres

Ballarat City Council
Greater Bendigo City Council
Greater Geelong City Council
Greater Shepparton City Council
Horsham Rural City Council
Latrobe City Council
Mildura Rural City Council
Swan Hill Rural City Council
Wangaratta Rural City Council
Warrnambool City Council
Wodonga City Council

4. Large Rural Shires

Bass Coast Shire Council
Baw Baw Shire Council
Campaspe Shire Council
Colac-Otway Shire Council
Corangamite Shire Council
East Gippsland Shire Council
Glenelg Shire Council
Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Mitchell Shire Council
Moir Shire Council
Moorabool Shire Council
Moyne Shire Council
South Gippsland Shire Council
Southern Grampians Shire Council
Surf Coast Shire Council
Wellington Shire Council

5. Small Rural Shires

Alpine Shire Council
Ararat Rural City Council
Benalla Rural City Council
Buloke Shire Council
Central Goldfields Shire Council
Gannawarra Shire Council
Golden Plains Shire Council
Hepburn Shire Council
Hindmarsh Shire Council
Indigo Shire Council
Loddon Shire Council
Mansfield Shire Council
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Murrindindi Shire Council
Northern Grampians Shire Council
Pyrenees Shire Council
Borough of Queenscliffe
Strathbogie Shire Council
Towong Shire Council
West Wimmera Shire Council
Yarriambiack Shire Council