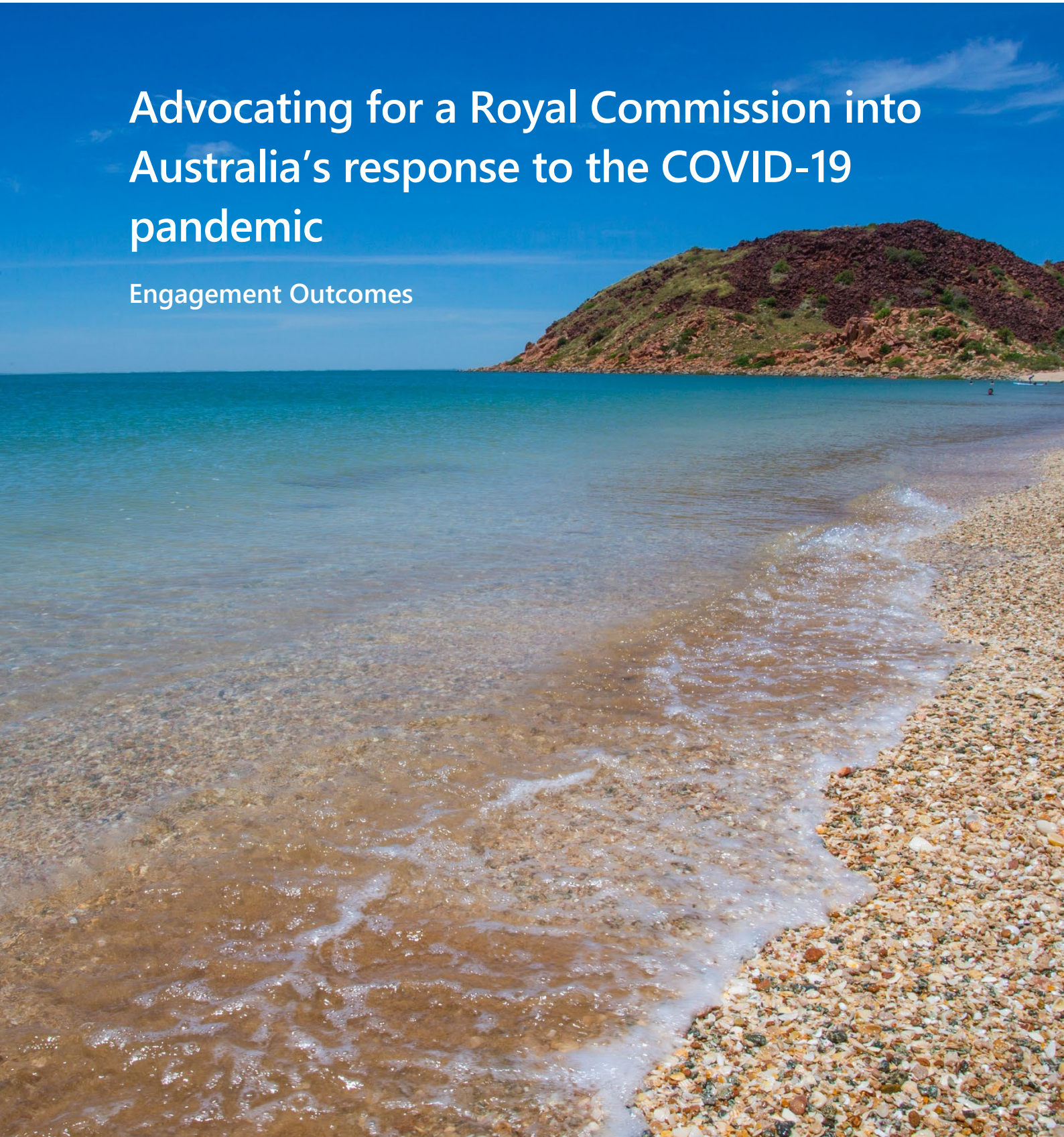


# Advocating for a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Engagement Outcomes





## 1.1 Background

The City of Karratha sought feedback from our community to understand if advocating for a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the purpose of restoring public trust in the three tiers of government, through an independent and comprehensive inquiry is a matter of importance to our community.

This feedback was sought in response to a Notice of Motion put forward to the Council for consideration by Councillor(Cr) Brenton Johannsen, and the subsequent request from Council to the Chief Executive Officer to undertake engagement with the community to understand their thoughts.

## 1.2 Survey Promotional Activities

### **Media Release**

Friday 22 November 2024:

The media release was sent via Campaign Monitor with 373 recipients, 37.4 per cent open rate and 3.5 per cent click rate (clicked on the link to the WWMI page).

### **Facebook Posts**

Post 1 – Friday 22 November 2024:

Copy: *Do you think the City of Karratha should advocate for a royal commission into Australia's COVID-19 response?*

*Your thoughts will inform the Council's decision at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 December 2024.*

*Learn more and have your say at: <https://whatwemakeit.karratha.wa.gov.au/should-we-advocate-royal-commission-covid-19-response>*

Reach: 1,500

Likes/Reactions: 3

Comments: 13

Shares: 6

Post 2 – Monday 25 November 2024:

Copy: *You may receive a call from our independent survey provider about the proposed Royal Commission into the Australian Government's response to COVID-19.*

*Please don't hang up - we want to hear your views on:*

- *The role of the City of Karratha in advocating for a Royal Commission*
- *Whether you support an inquiry into the government's pandemic response*

*Your thoughts will help guide the Council's decision at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 December.*

*Stay tuned for your call - your voice matters.*

*Learn more and have your say at: <https://whatwemakeit.karratha.wa.gov.au/should-we-advocate-royal-commission-covid-19-response>*

Reach: 843

Likes/Reactions: 4

Comments: 1

Shares: 3

Post 3 – Friday 29 November 2024:

Copy: *The City of Karratha is seeking community feedback on a proposed Notice of Motion on whether the City should advocate for a Royal Commission into Australia's COVID-19 response.*

*The aim of consultation is to gather a wide range of perspectives to better understand public sentiment on this matter.*

*Community feedback will help inform a final Council decision when the motion is reconsidered at the December Council meeting.*

*Learn more and have your say at: <https://whatwemakeit.karratha.wa.gov.au/should-we-advocate-royal-commission-covid-19-response>*

*To read more, <https://karratha.wa.gov.au/news/city-karratha-seeks-community-feedback-call-covid-royal-commission>*

Reach: 3,300

Likes/Reactions: 39

Comments: 59

Shares: 40

#### **What We Make It Online Platform Performance Summary:**

2,482 Views

1,326 Visits

1,125 Visitors

289 Contributions

289 Contributors

54 Followers

### **1.3 Survey Consultation**

The survey questions were replicated across three survey methods, with slight adaptations, to suit the data collection method, detailed below.

<b>Survey Method</b>	<b>Survey Adaptions</b>
Online Survey	Pre-populated answers provided via drop-down boxes for participants to select their responses from, for each question.
Telephone Survey	Pre-populated answers provided and read out by telephone interviewers for participants to select their responses from, for each question.
Paper-based Survey	Pre-populated answers provided, and participants instructed to circle the answer most relevant to them.

## **Information Provided and Questions Asked**

Council is seeking feedback from community to help them understand the level of community support for the City of Karratha to take an active role in advocating for a Royal Commission into the federal, state and local governments response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This survey should take no longer than 5 minutes.

**1. In which town do you usually live? If you live in Karratha, please select your suburb.**

Dampier  
Baynton/Baynton West  
Bulgarra  
Gap Ridge  
Karratha CBD  
Karratha Industrial Estate  
Millars Well  
Nickol / Nickol West  
Pegs Creek  
Roebourne (Ieramugadu)  
Wickham / Cossack  
Point Samson

**2. How would you describe your gender?**

Female  
Male  
Prefer to self-describe \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to say

**3. What is your age?**

16 – 24 years  
25 – 34 years  
35 – 44 years  
45 – 54 years  
55 – 64 years  
65 – 74 years  
75+ years

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**The following is some background information relevant to the last three survey questions.**

In October 2024 the Commonwealth Government released a report that said the Commonwealth needed to *'re-establish and build (the community's) trust in the government's response to any future public health emergency.'*

At the Monday 18 November Council Meeting, Cr Brenton Johannsen put forward a Notice of Motion recommending the City of Karratha advocate for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australian's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cr Johannsen's Notice of Motion argues as follows:

*'The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the greatest health and economic crisis of our time. We need a transparent and accountable public inquiry at the highest level so the nation can learn the lessons from this time in history. A Royal Commission will assist the public to regain trust in the decisions of Government.'*

Royal commissions can only be established by our Commonwealth government and are the highest form of inquiry on matters of public importance.

Examples of recent royal commissions include the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, and the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

A royal commission can:

- Find out why specific events happened
- Work out who is accountable
- Make findings and recommend changes to policies and laws

Advocating for a royal commission does not guarantee one will be established, however advocacy is considered a form of political pressure for the Federal government to respond to.

In this instance, Cr Johannsen is proposing that Council authorise the CEO, Virginia Miltrup, on behalf of the City of Karratha, to write letters to all Federal Members of Parliament requesting their support for the establishment of a Royal Commission.

As community leaders, Council represents the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents of the City of Karratha.

Council may advocate to the Commonwealth on matters of importance to our community and may approve the allocation of local government's resources towards advocacy activities.

Within this context:

**4. Do you think it is the City of Karratha's role to advocate for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes                      No

**5. Do you support the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes                      No

**6. Do you support the City of Karratha advocating for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by writing letters to Federal Members of Parliament on your behalf?**

Yes                      No

Thank you for your time. If you would like to find out more about this issue, please explore the City of Karratha What We Make It website.

## 1.4 Comparison of Survey Methods

Survey Method and Access	Data Integrity Strengths	Data Integrity Weaknesses
<p><b>Online:</b> Available on <b>What We Make It</b> Platform <b>Survey Open:</b> 5.47pm Thursday 21 November 2024. <b>Survey Closed:</b> 5.01pm Monday 2 December 2024.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory site registration prior to survey participation.</li> <li>• IP Address identification available.</li> <li>• Those most interested in the issue are likely to be engaged.</li> <li>• A sample size of n=289 enables a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval (margin of error) of +/- 5.71% at an aggregate level.</li> <li>• Post data collection, data weighted so it aligned with known population distributions as contained in the 2021 ABS Census.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation based on Self-selection and access to an online device.</li> <li>• Participants must 'go to the survey' relying on promotional activity to raise awareness about availability of the survey.</li> <li>• 11% (n=34) of the surveys were submitted from a single IP Address. 100% of these surveys selected 'yes' to all three questions related to the Royal Commission. Removal of these responses from the unweighted online dataset would have the following impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of City 64% - 'yes', if removed 59% - 'yes'</li> <li>○ Support Establishment 70% - 'yes', if removed 66% - 'yes'</li> <li>○ Agree with Advocacy - 64% - 'yes', if removed 59% - 'yes'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Inability to quantify the incidence of legitimate email addresses provided by participants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telephone Survey:</b> Conducted by independent field research provider, <b>Thinkfield</b>, located Leederville, Perth WA. <b>Survey conducted:</b> Monday 25 November, to Monday 2 December, 2024 <b>Participant selection:</b> based on a list of de-identified mobile and landline telephone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation based on random selection.</li> <li>• A sample size of n=400 was set to enable a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval (margin of error) of +/- 4.84% at an aggregate level.</li> <li>• Quotas set across a sample of n=400 to reflect City of Karratha demographic distribution across gender, age and suburb/town informed by 2021 ABS Census data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In comparison to the online and paper-based participants who had to self-select to participate in the survey, telephone survey participants are cold called and less likely to have seen promotional material or have been aware of the survey topic prior to completing the survey. This results in participants being more likely to have had less time to consider their responses to the survey questions.</li> </ul>

<p>lists (majority of numbers purchased by Thinkfield from independent data providers Sample Pages and Global Data). City of Karratha boosted the phone number list by providing de-identified rate payer contact numbers Monday 2 December when mobile numbers from Sample Pages and Global Data were exhausted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post data collection, the sample was weighted so it aligned with known population distributions as contained in the 2021 ABS Census.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Paper-based Survey:</u></b> Available at Dampier Library, Karratha Library, Roebourne Library, Wickham Library, City of Karratha Administrative Reception on Welcome Road. <b>Survey Open:</b> 10am Friday 22 November 2024 <b>Survey Closed:</b> 4pm Monday 2 December 2024</p> <p>Available at <b>pop-up engagement activity -Christmas on the Green</b> Friday 29 November 2024, 5pm-8pm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible to people who do not have access to a computer, tablet or mobile phone.</li> <li>• Mitigation measures put in place to secure completion of one survey per person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Staff requested to provide one survey per person and record the date surveys were handed out and returned.</li> <li>◦ Staff were requested to instruct participants to complete the survey at the facility and return it to a staff member.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation based on Self-selection</li> <li>• Participants must 'go to the survey' relying on promotional activity to raise awareness about the availability of the survey.</li> <li>• Despite measures put in place to try to achieve completion of one survey per person, it is impossible to identify if the number of surveys completed is the same as the number of participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The survey was 100% anonymous, available over 10 days, and participant activity was largely unmonitored and based on trust.</li> <li>◦ Several participants were observed filling in more than one survey.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some survey participants created their own age categories, including 5-15 years and 8-15 years. We are unable to identify if these surveys were completed by people 15 years and under or by parents on behalf of</li> </ul>

		<p>minors. These age groups are outside the scope of this data collection activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration made a conscious decision to restrict the age of survey participation to align with the age of consent laws in Australia and the legal definition of consent<sup>1</sup>. In Western Australia the minimum age of consent is 16 years.</li> </ul>
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#### 1. Legal definitions of consent

Consent is an individual's free agreement to participate in an activity. Consent can only be given if it is free and voluntary, without fear, coercion, intimidation or anything else that inhibits free agreement (Australian Law Reform Commission, 2010; Powell, 2010). Consent also needs to be actively communicated in order to establish a free agreement (Fileborn, 2011; Powell, 2010); this is known as 'positive consent' (Fileborn, 2011). It is not enough to say that an individual consented just because they did not refuse or resist. Source: [www.aifs.gov.au/resource-sheets/age-consent-laws-australia](http://www.aifs.gov.au/resource-sheets/age-consent-laws-australia)

## 1.5 Information Differences by Survey Method

Participants who accessed the survey via the online platform, **What We Make It**, were given access to the following additional information that was not made available to telephone survey or paper-based survey participants who did not visit the What We Make It page:

- **Notice of Motion – Royal Commission into the COVID-19 Pandemic Response** and the **Alternate Recommendation** documents
- **Answers to Frequently Asked Questions**
  - What will we do with your survey responses?
  - What is a Royal Commission?
  - Is it appropriate for the City of Karratha to call for a Royal Commission?
  - Is an erosion of trust in Government a problem for the City of Karratha?

## 1.6 Understanding Confidence Interval and Confidence Level

When we make an estimate in statistics, or identify a statistical result, there is always uncertainty around that result because it is based on a sample of the population.

The **confidence interval** or **margin of error** is the range of values one would expect the result to fall between if we were to re-sample the population in the same way.

The **confidence level** is the percentage of times we expect to reproduce a result between the upper and lower bounds of the margin of error.

For our telephone survey with a sample size of n=402, the confidence level is 95%, which means we are 95% confident that if we re-sampled the City of Karratha population, the results would fall between the confidence interval or margin of error of +/-4.84%.



For example: 57% of telephone survey participants answered 'yes' to the question:

***“Do you think it is the City of Karratha's role to advocate for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?”***

If we were to conduct the telephone survey again, aiming for a sample of n=400, we would be 95% confident that the percentage of participants that would say 'yes' to this question would fall between 52.16% and 61.84% (which is our current percentage of 'yes' responses, 57%, plus or minus 4.84%).

When examining statistical survey results, it is important to consider the **confidence interval** (margin of error) and **confidence level**.

## 1.7 Survey Results

Given the identified data integrity strengths and weaknesses across the survey methods, and differing sample sizes, results have been analysed and presented by survey method. There is significant concern that if we were to combine the online survey data with the paper-based survey data, the integrity of this combined dataset would be highly compromised.

We have 95% confidence in the statistical validity of the telephone survey data (currently weighted to align with the City's demographic profile) with a margin of error of +/-4.84% and the online survey data (also weighted) with a margin of error of +/-5.71%.

### **About the Survey Participants**

#### **Gender**

	Gender % after weighting applied to the telephone survey data.		Gender % after weighting applied to the online survey data.		
		n=402	n=289	n=289	n=42
		Telephone Survey Unweighted Count (%)	Online Survey Weighted %	Online Survey Unweighted Count (%)	Paper-based Survey Unweighted Count (%)
Male	55%	215 (53%)	55%	117 (40%)	17 (40%)
Female	45%	187 (47%)	45%	170 (59%)	25 (60%)
Prefer not to say	0%	0 ( 0%)	0%	2 ( 1%)	0 ( 0%)

## Age

	Age % after weighting being applied to the telephone survey data.		Age % after weighting applied to the online survey data.		
		n=402	n=289	n=289	n=42
		Telephone Survey Unweighted Count (%)	Online Survey Weighted %	Online Survey Unweighted Count (%)	Paper-based Survey Unweighted Count
16-24 years	13%	11 ( 3%)	13%	17 ( 6%)	4
25-34 years	25%	74 (18%)	25%	49 (17%)	4
35-44 years	27%	148 (37%)	27%	118 (41%)	24
45-54 years	19%	93 (23%)	19%	69 (24%)	0
55-64 years	11%	56 (14%)	11%	24 ( 8%)	4
65+ years	5%	20 ( 5%)	5%	12 ( 4%)	6

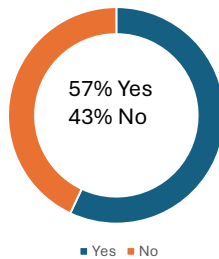
## Suburb/Town

	Suburb/Town % after weighting applied to the telephone survey data.		Suburb/Town % after weighting applied to the online survey data.		
		n=402	n=289	n=289	n=42
		Telephone Survey Unweighted Count	Online Survey Weighted %	Online Survey Unweighted Count	Paper-based Survey Unweighted Count
Dampier	10%	34	10%	14 ( 5%)	5
Baynton/Baynton West	19%	65	19%	67 (23%)	3
Bulgarra	14%	84	14%	41 (14%)	10
Gap Ridge/Nickol/Nickol West	22%	68	22%	79 (27%)	7
Karratha CBD/Karratha Industrial Estate	1%	37	1%	15 ( 5%)	1
Millars Well	9%	35	9%	27 ( 9%)	4
Pegs Creek	10%	33	10%	27 ( 9%)	6
Roebourne	2%	5	2%	3 ( 1%)	0
Wickham/Cossack	11%	34	11%	12 ( 5%)	4
Point Samson	2%	7	2%	4 ( 2%)	2

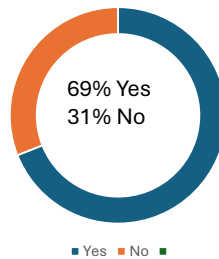
## **Results**

**Do you think it is the City of Karratha's role to advocate for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID -19 pandemic?**

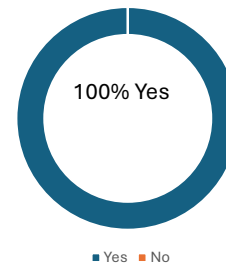
**Telephone Survey  
n=402  
Weighted**



**Online Survey  
n=289  
Weighted**

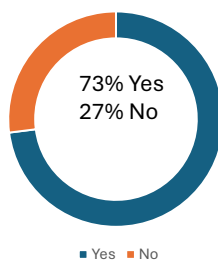


**Paper-based Survey  
n=42  
Unweighted**

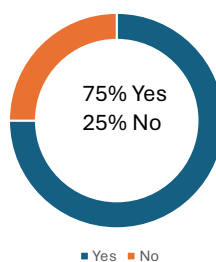


**Do you support the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

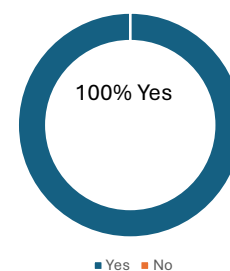
**Telephone Survey  
n=402  
Weighted**



**Online Survey  
n=289  
Weighted**

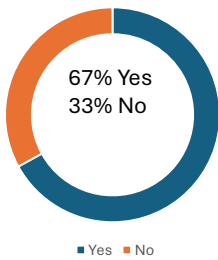


**Paper-based Survey  
n=42  
Unweighted**

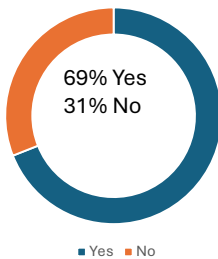


**Do you support the City of Karratha advocating for the establishment of a Royal Commission into Australia's response to the COVID -19 pandemic by writing letters to Federal Members of Parliament on your behalf?**

**Telephone Survey**  
**n=402**  
**Weighted**



**Online Survey**  
**n=289**  
**Weighted**



**Paper-based Survey**  
**n=42**  
**Unweighted**

