



Priorities, Value & Performance 2026



Vision Thinking



Fish & Game New Zealand Priorities, Value, and Performance 2026

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Fish & Game New Zealand would like to acknowledge all those fishing and game bird licence-holders that gave their time, knowledge, and opinions. By doing so they have helped the organisation work towards its vision of a nation ‘where freshwater species flourish, where hunting and fishing traditions thrive, and all Kiwis enjoy access to sustainable wild fish and game resources.’

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1 Structure and contents of this report

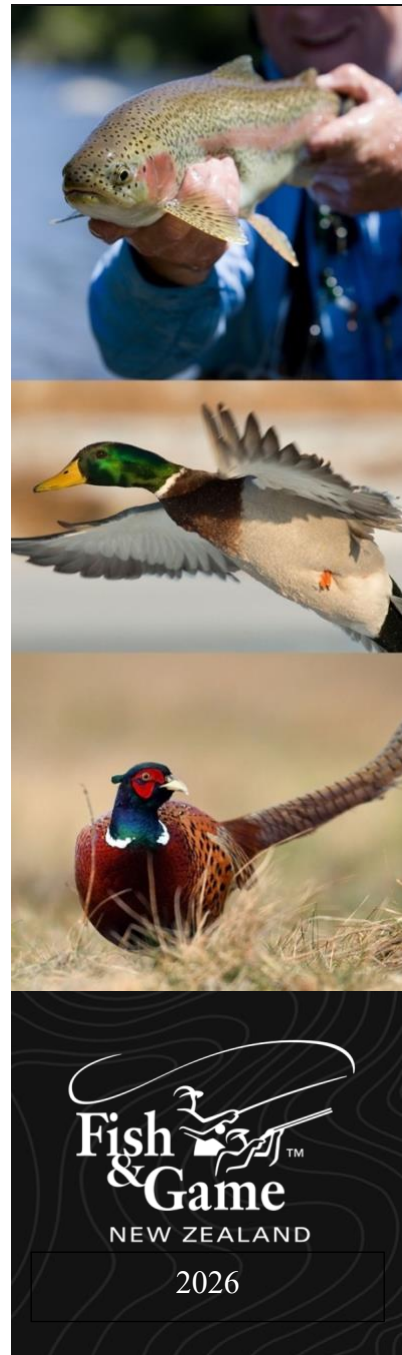
In pursuit of Fish & Game's strategic objective to attract and retain licence-holders, this report details a May-June 2026 survey of past and present purchasers of fish and game licences.

Sample demographics are reported first, including a new question on the economic sector of employment and a breakdown by orientation towards angling or game bird hunting, or both. Following this are the results of a simple rank-order exercise used to prioritise attributes of Fish & Game's operations according to the importance licence-holders placed upon them. The attributes were the same as those used in 2025.

This is followed by the yearly monitoring of perceptions of fishing and game bird licence value for money and of Fish & Game's general performance. For easy comparison, reporting follows the same format as past years.

Following the 2025 special section on access, this year included sections with a special focus on the representation of licence-holders. The representation sections focus on perceptions of i) the importance of broadly defined areas of advocacy, ii) what advocacy activities should be a priority for Fish & Game, and iii) what licence-holders would like to see from a government to further the interests of freshwater angling and game bird hunting.

The report is structured to present key points from the research in a readable format. The executive summary is followed by an introduction, method and methodology, results, and conclusions. The final section contains some points for consideration.



2 Executive summary

This report is the fourth annual study towards the strategic goal of attracting and retaining licence-holders. A survey of past and present licence-holders was conducted from 26th May to 30th June 2026. The aim was to quantify and characterise perceptions of licence value, service delivery, and licence-holder representation. The analysis of this year's special focus on representation tested whether responses differed by respondents' employment sector and age group.

A high proportion of respondents were retired (29.6%), 2% worked in the home, 19.8% in the *Primary* sector, 19.3% in the *Secondary* sector, 25.4% in the *Tertiary* sector and 3.9% in the *Quaternary* sector. When those not in employment were stripped from the sample, and the proportions compared to the general population, it was clear that those in the *Primary* (29% F&G; 5.3% NZ) and *Secondary* (28.2% F&G; 20.1% NZ) sectors are over-represented in the F&G population, and those in the service industries (42% F&G; 74.7% NZ) are under-represented.

The rank-order of the five selected service attributes remains unchanged from past years. Licence holder's priorities remain 1.) Access, 2.) Ecology monitoring, 3.) Fish population monitoring, 4.) Advocacy, and 5.) F&G owned wetlands.

Most (63.8%) of those purchasing a 2025/26 Fishing licence had purchased at least four out of the last five years and the most loyal purchasers were the 'Loyal Seniors'. The highest rate of mixed licence tenure was in those under 35 years old. Most purchasers (61.3%, up 6 percentage points from 2025) rated their fishing licence value positively¹ at ≥ 6 out of 9. Neutral ratings (5 out of 9) were 17.3% and 21.5% rated the value poorly at ≤ 4 (down 5 percentage points from 2025). The median rating was 6 out of 9, mirroring last year's result. The highest proportion of 'Excellent value' ratings by licence type was among the *Long-Break-Adult* (1.6% of purchasers in this sample) followed by *Whole-Season-Loyal-Seniors*. Of those that did not purchase in 2025/26, 36.4% had become too busy (mirroring 2025), 21.2% chose to focus on other hobbies, and 13.9% found it too expensive.

Of those that purchased a 2026 Game Bird licence most (74%) had purchased at least four out of the last five years (down 10 percentage points on 2025). A minority (48%) rated licence value as ≥ 6 (up 2 percentage points from 2025). The median rating for game licences was the same as last year at 5 out of 9. Poor value ratings (1-4) were given by 34% of respondents (down 2 percentage points from 2025), and 8.8% gave a *Very poor* value rating (5 percentage points down on last year to a level similar to that of 2024). The trend of game licences being seen as lower value for money than fishing licences continues. Expense accounted for 17.7% of those that did not purchase (up 2 percentage points from 2025), 22.6% had become too busy (up 4 percentage points from 2025 and 10 percentage points since 2024), and 8.1% chose to focus on other hobbies (down 5 percentage points from 2025). Access was an issue for 9.7% of those that did not purchase.

Most licence holders (57.8%) gave F&G a good performance rating (up 4 percentage points from 2025) which sits within the margin of error of the 60% target. Bad ratings were 9.9% (similar to last year). A further 16.4% gave a neutral rating (down 5.4 percentage points from

¹ The rating scale, adopted from that of the Otago F&G Region, ranged from 1(Very poor value) to 9(Excellent Value).

2025), and 15.8% were unsure (up 2 percentage points from 2025). Uncertainty was highest among the 16-25yr age-group followed by the 24-35yr age-group.

In all, 778 respondents chose to leave a comment. Those happy with F&G felt it provided the best vehicle for their political and legal representation (30.2%, 2026; 31%, 2025). Efforts to promote stocks of quarry were still much appreciated (21.2%, 2026; 15.6%, 2025). Licence monitoring and enforcement (14.6%, 2026; 13.3%, 2025) was still seen as an essential element of fairness and natural justice. Those giving a ‘Good’ rating were also grateful for F&G providing and maintaining access points (19.4%, 2026; 22.9%, 2025) and of F&G’s involvement in environmental protection (15.0%, 2026; 14.8%, 2025), especially efforts on water quality and enhancing and restoring habitat. Friendly and helpful interactions with F&G team members featured in 8.8% of comments, up from 6.6% in 2025. Sample ‘Good’ rating comments were:

Without them our stocks would plummet and our future generations might not be able to get the same opportunities.

They look after the water ways, check fishermen are fishing in the correct place and keeping to legal limit.

They are passionate about the outdoors and care about the resources we have.

Poor ratings were mainly associated with perceptions of insufficient efforts to promote stocks of fish and game (27%, 2026; 20.7%, 2025), mismanagement of funds (20%, 2026; 14.1%, 2025), and licence cost (17%, 2026; 13.3%, 2025). A theme of perceived conflict with farmers was in 8% of comments offered, down from 17% in 2025. Negative views of leadership were present in 6% of comments down from 14.8% in 2025. Sample comments from those giving ‘Bad’ ratings were:

The state of the salmon fishery.

I don't believe Fish and Game work well with other key players in the environment (e.g., mana whenua, DOC, regional councils). I think better outcomes for the environment and all agencies and fishers and communities could be achieved by working more collaboratively than the current confrontational approach.

Four broad spheres of F&G advocacy were presented to respondents for importance rating on a 5-point scale. Most respondents felt all four spheres of representation were important with total positive² sentiment ranging from 86.6% down to 70.3%.

There were no groups with distributions that differed at the $p < .05$ level for ‘Working to promote positive public attitudes towards angling and game bird hunting’ and just one significant difference between 65+ and 45-54yr olds for ‘Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).’ For all pairwise comparisons between groups with significant differences in distributions, the effect was weak ($r \leq .290$). When comparing sectors of employment, all significant findings involved the Primary sector as one of the groups and the most common difference was between the Primary sector and the Retired. For age-group comparisons, all significant findings involved the 65+age-group and all but one were between the 65+yrs and the 45-54yrs age-groups.

² Positive sentiment for this scale was taken as an importance rating of either ‘Very important’ or ‘Extremely important.’

Most respondents felt all of the F&G advocacy activities were important with total positive sentiment ranging from 73.2% to 93.0%. '*Working to represent game bird hunters interests in firearms legislation should be a priority*' had the lowest overall positive sentiment. When those not game-orientated were stripped away, this translated into 91.7% support among game-orientated respondents for Fish & Game to advocate for their interests in firearms legislation.

For all group comparisons for F&G advocacy activities with significant differences in distributions, the effect was weak ($r \leq .290$). When grouped by employment sector all questions had responses with distributions that differed at the $p < .05$ level and all significant findings involved the *Primary* sector as one of the groups. The most common difference was between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired*. In all but one case, (*Working to represent game bird hunter's interests in firearms legislation should be a priority*) the graphs show that those in the *Primary* sector were less positive. The *Primary* sector was more positive than the *Retired* regarding firearms representation. There were no significantly differing response distributions regarding firearms representation when age-groups were compared. Age-group comparisons show the most common significant difference in distributions was between the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age groups with the 65+yrs being more positive.

Most respondents felt it was important that a government fulfil the objectives stated in all ten F&G statements. Levels of agreement ranged from 80.3% to 89.5%, with the remainder largely rating as *Somewhat important*. Once again, the size of the effect on significantly ($p < .05$) differing distributions was weak ($r \leq .290$) for comparisons based on both employment sector and age-group. Ultimately, there were no significant difference in distributions grouped by age-group for; '*How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?*', '*How important is it that a government improves public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?*', and '*How important is it that a government recognises the economic value of freshwater fishing and game bird hunting to New Zealand?*' No significant differences in response distributions were found grouped by employment sector for '*How important is it that a government recognises the economic value of freshwater fishing and game bird hunting to New Zealand?*'

Overall, the *Primary* sector was less positive in their responses and the *Retired* were more positive. As expected, the 65+yrs age-group had distributions that very closely followed those of the *Retired* and they were also more positive in their responses. Although 92.3% of the *Retired* are 65 or older, only 72.1% of the 65+yr are retired. The 45-54yrs age group were most frequently significantly different to the 65+yrs group and had less positive distributions.

This research will help the NZ Fish & Game Council evaluate the impact of their governance from the perspective of anglers and game bird hunters and inform R3 strategies. In particular, the results will support the organisation's efforts to represent the interests of anglers and game bird hunters, assess licence-holder perceptions of value and performance, and report to the Minister.

3 Introduction

In the shadow of proposed new legislation governing Fish & Game, the organisation continues to focus on increasing participation while facing an ageing licence-holder base, cultural pressure on the social licence to hunt and fish and competition for the recreational use of public spaces. The current organisational strategy is founded on a vision for its future, a defined purpose, and a set of core values (Fish & Game, 2022). Five objectives underpin efforts to meet the strategic vision. The objective relevant to this study is the ‘*attraction and retention of licence-holders*.’ Providing the organisation with sustainable revenue through growth and retention of licence-holders has been identified as an essential goal if other programmes are to be funded.

3.1 Purpose

This study was commissioned by the New Zealand Fish & Game Council (NZFGC) as part of their attitudinal research towards achieving the attraction and retention of licence-holders.

3.2 Project definition

3.2.1 Aim

To quantify and characterise perceptions of licence value, service delivery, and licence-holder representation.

3.2.2 Objectives

To address the aim of the research, four main objectives have been identified:

- i. To rank licence-holder prioritisation of five selected services delivered by Fish & Game.
- ii. To quantify perceptions of fishing and game bird hunting licence value.
- iii. To quantify and characterise licence-holder perceptions of Fish & Game’s performance.
- iv. To quantify perceptions of Fish & Game’s representation of licence-holder’s interests.

3.3 Approach

The research surveyed licence-holders nationally. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. These included a simple ranking task, ordinal rating scales, and open-ended responses. The data was analysed using SPSS V31 and Excel, and comments were coded using a tagging function within the survey delivery platform.

3.4 Contribution

This research will help the NZFGC evaluate the impact of their governance and advocacy from the perspective of anglers and game bird hunters. In particular, the information will support the NZFGC’s efforts to represent the interests of anglers and game bird hunters, assess licence-holder perceptions of value and performance, and report to the Minister.

4 Method and methodology

4.1 Questionnaire development

This survey was based on the survey deployed in 2025. It used a simple ranking task to measure respondent's service priorities and the same Fish & Game service attributes were used as last year. In addition, the survey applied Likert-type rating scales and open-ended responses. The questions used in the sections on representation were developed and refined through an iterative process in conjunction with the executive team, the Senior Policy Advisor, a communications contractor, and regional managers. The questionnaire was deployed as a pilot to a convenience sample of 22 respondents to test for survey logic, layout, comprehension and general feedback. No concerns were reported.

4.1.1 Ranking importance

Participants were faced with five randomised service delivery items which they were asked to place in order of importance to them from highest to lowest. The service items used are shown in [Table 1, p.16](#). The final rank order was obtained by applying positional weighted mean scores as shown in Equation below.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{(w_1 x_1 + w_2 x_2 + \dots + w_n x_n)}{n_T}$$

Where

$\bar{x}$ is the positional weighted mean score

x_i are the data points

w_i are their corresponding weights

n_T is the total response count

4.1.2 Rating scales and nominal responses

A 5-point rating scale for performance was adopted in 2024 from Primary Purpose (2023) to enable a comparison of results, this scale was continued in 2026. A 9-point scale for licence value was adopted in 2024 at the request of the Otago Fish and Game Council to allow comparison with their independent yearly studies. This was also continued in 2026. Five-point Likert-type scales were otherwise applied along with nominal multichoice questions.

4.1.3 Thematic analysis of comments

Respondent's comments relating to their F&G performance rating were coded using a tagging function within the survey delivery platform. Each comment was coded for one or more sub-themes, and these were grouped into a smaller number of themes. The qualitative analysis was largely deductive carrying over themes from past years where practicable. Comments containing multiple sub-themes within the same theme may inflate the apparent frequency of that theme. This effect has been corrected in the results.

4.1.4 Analysis of responses to the questions focused on representation

In addition to frequency reporting, the analysis of responses to the questions on representation checks for differences in the distribution of answers based on respondent's economic sector of employment and age-group. A Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) tests for differences in distributions of responses to each question that are significant at the $p < .05$ level. The H-test is suitable for nominal and ordinal data, multiple groups, skewed distributions and disparate sample sizes. A Dunn-Bonferroni (Dunn's) test is used to test pairwise comparisons between groups within

responses to each question. It reports a z -statistic, and applies the Bonferroni correction to the reported p -values. Effects sizes are reported as an r value using the Equation below.

$$r = \frac{|z|}{\sqrt{n_1+n_2}}$$

Where

r is the effect size

$|z|$ is the absolute value of the test statistic z

n_1 and n_2 are the sample sizes of the two groups in the pair

4.2 Sample and survey delivery

Following past years, the sample was comprised of a random extraction of 11,500 current (2025/26) and 4,500 lapsed licence-holders from the previous year. This construct captured views of the most current licence-holders while also representing the views of lapsed licence-holders, based on the best-known estimate of a 30% lapse rate in licence purchase.

The sample was further stratified to represent age, gender, region, and the fishing /game bird licence sales split. Following Primary Purpose (2023), where more than one licence was held, the highest value licence was retained ensuring one record per licence holder, all non-resident-licence purchasers were removed, and where one email address was used for multiple licence-holders they were reviewed for the most appropriate match and the others removed. Where multiple emails were going to a fishing and hunting guide all were removed. Following 2025, the minimum age for participation was 16 years old. Only those consenting to being contacted by Fish & Game were eligible for selection.

The survey was fielded from 26th May to 30th June 2026, and respondents were incentivised with the option to enter a draw for a \$350 Hunting & Fishing store voucher. Delivery was early in the game season, however, approximately 90% of all game bird licence sales occur prior to opening weekend. Invitations containing a survey link were emailed directly to the sample and weekly reminder emails were sent targeting those who had not replied.

As per previous years, the survey contained a privacy statement assuring respondents that their answers were anonymous and not connected to their licence record. Those choosing to enter the draw for the incentive and leave a contact email address, were assured that collection was solely for the purpose of contacting a winner and their email would be destroyed following the draw. This was undertaken.

5 Results

This section details the survey results. [Section 5.1](#) covers the demographic profile of the sample, [section 5.2](#) reveals the ranked priorities for service delivery, [section 5.3](#) gives insights into licence-holder perceptions of licence value-for-money, [section 5.4](#) details perceptions of F&G's performance, and [section 5.5](#) covers the special focus on representation.

In total, 1294 respondents started the survey with 1135 completing all questions. This yielded an 88% completion rate, which was consistent with the 91% completion rate in 2025. Once again, the completion rate was much higher than the software estimate of 71%. There were 235 fewer complete responses compared to 2025 which reflected a lower uptake this year despite an extended collection time and increased incentive. Based on the completed responses, the sample margin of error at the 95% confidence level for a 50% figure is $\pm 2.9\%$. Rake weighting for age and F&G region was applied where appropriate and weighting for gender was not required.

5.1 Demographics and orientation towards licence type

To provide deeper insight, demographic reporting also includes a breakdown based on those who, in the past 5-years, have purchased either just a game licence, just a fishing licence, or both licence types. The total sample breakdown by usual licence type purchased is shown in [Figure 1](#). There has been a slight drop in the proportion of the sample having a history of purchasing both licence types compared to last year (23.8%, 2026; 26.3%, 2025).

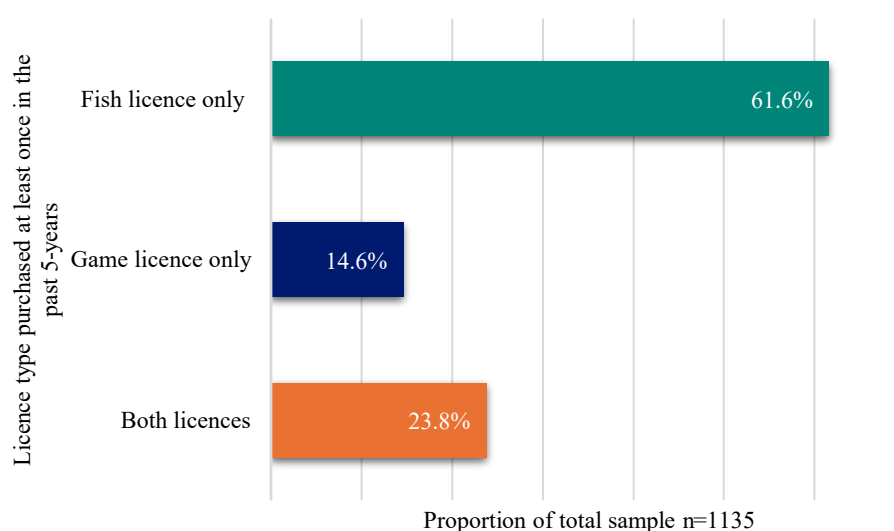


Figure 1 Sample Breakdown by the Type of Licence Usually Purchased

5.1.1 Age

The age profile of the sample reflects the older age skew of F&G's customer base, however, there was still an over-representation in the 65+ age bracket, although slightly less so than last year. Notably, the number of responses from the 16-24yrs age group had dropped from n=47 last year to n=26 this year.

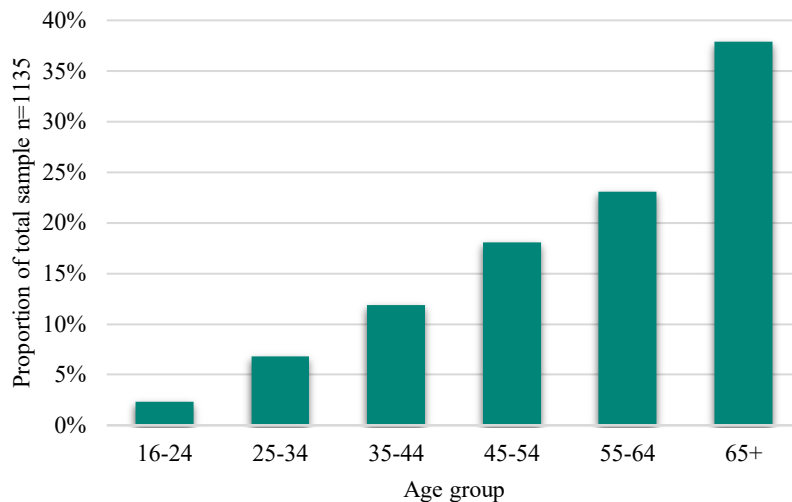


Figure 2 Total Sample Age Profile

A breakdown of usual licence type purchased by age groups is shown in [Figure 3](#). Compared to 2025 there has been a drop in the proportion of those with a dual licence purchasing habit across all age groups other than the 45–54-year-olds. The most notable drop is in the 16-24yrs age group from 42.6% dual purchasers in 2025 to 34.6% this year.

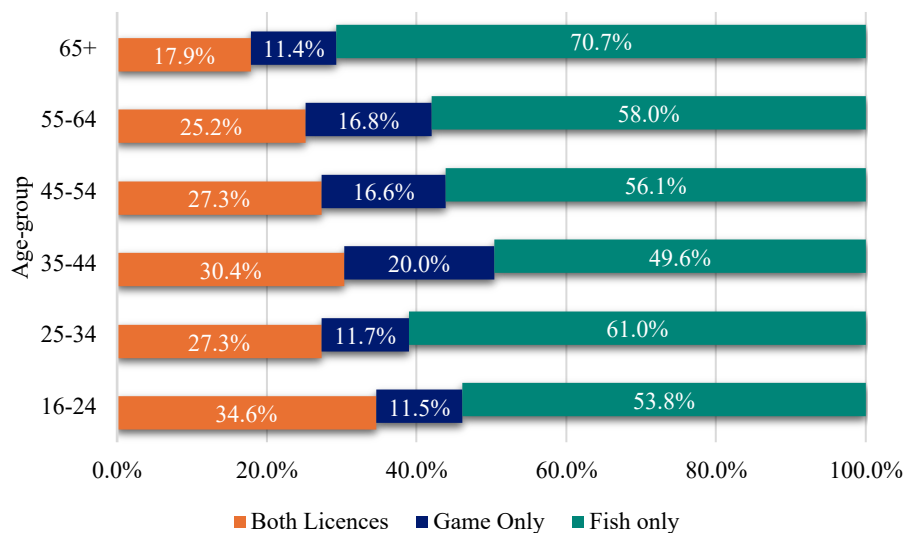


Figure 3 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Age Groups

5.1.2 Gender

The gender proportions of the sample were 92.3% male and 7% female, which has remained constant since 2024. Less than 1% either preferred-not-to-say or identified as non-binary/third gender. These proportions closely reflected those of the 2005-2023 Licence Holder Insights (Sanders-Garrick, 2024). [Figure 4](#) shows licence purchasing habit as a proportion of gender³. A history of purchasing both licence types continues to be most common among male respondents with rates nearly three times that of females. Game bird orientation in females has increased from 7.6% in 2025 to 10% in this sample.

³ Only the two main genders are shown, as the proportion of the remaining two respondents does not lend itself to graphical representation.

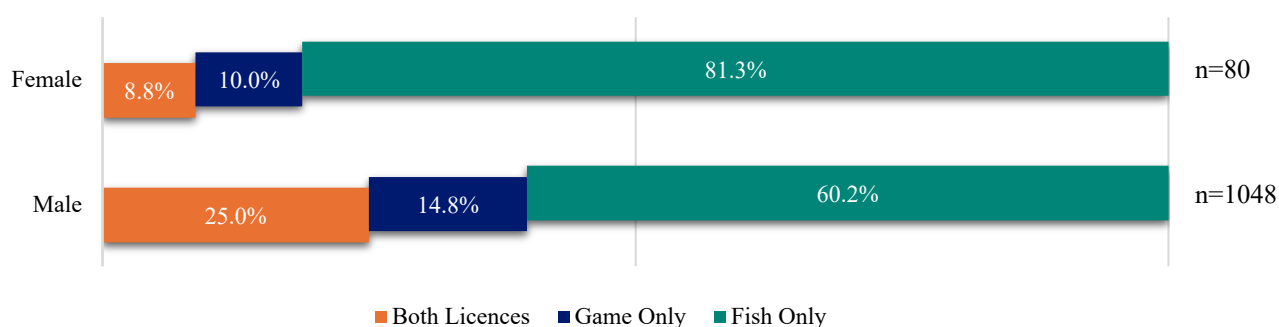
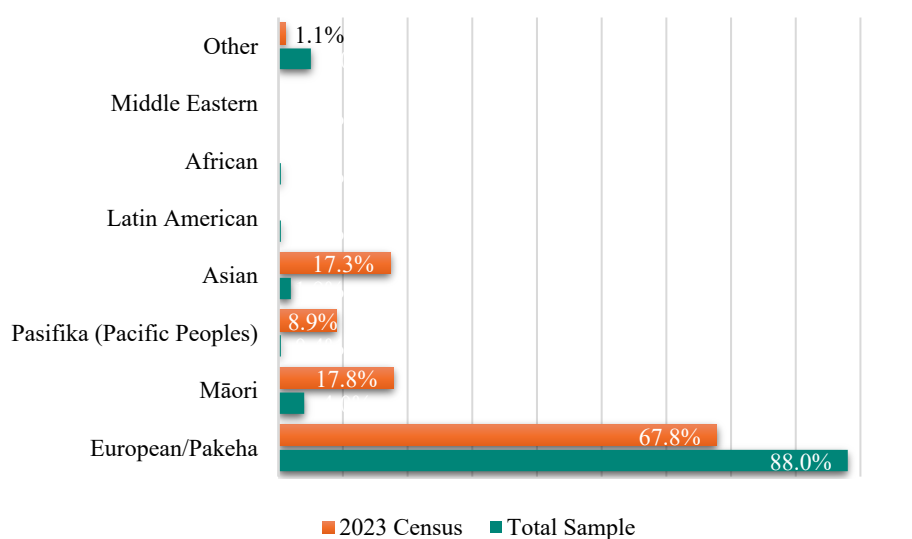


Figure 4 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Gender

5.1.3 Ethnicity

Figure 5 shows the sample largely identified as *European/Pakeha* and demonstrates an underrepresentation of *Māori* and other ethnic minorities. The profile was near identical to that of both 2024 and 2025.



*Note: African, Latin American, and Middle Eastern are a combined group in NZ Census reporting and this was 1.9% of the population (Stats NZ, 2024).

Figure 5 Total Sample Ethnicity Profile Compared to the 2023 NZ Census

Usual licence purchasing behaviour for the sample as a proportion of each ethnicity is shown in Figure 6. The proportion of *Asian* respondents with dual licence purchasing history was almost half that of 2025, while *Māori* had an increase in dual licence purchase history compared to last year. *European/Pākehā* showed a slight decrease in dual licence orientation compared to last year. Any inference taken from the results for ethnic minorities should be approached cautiously given their very small sample size.

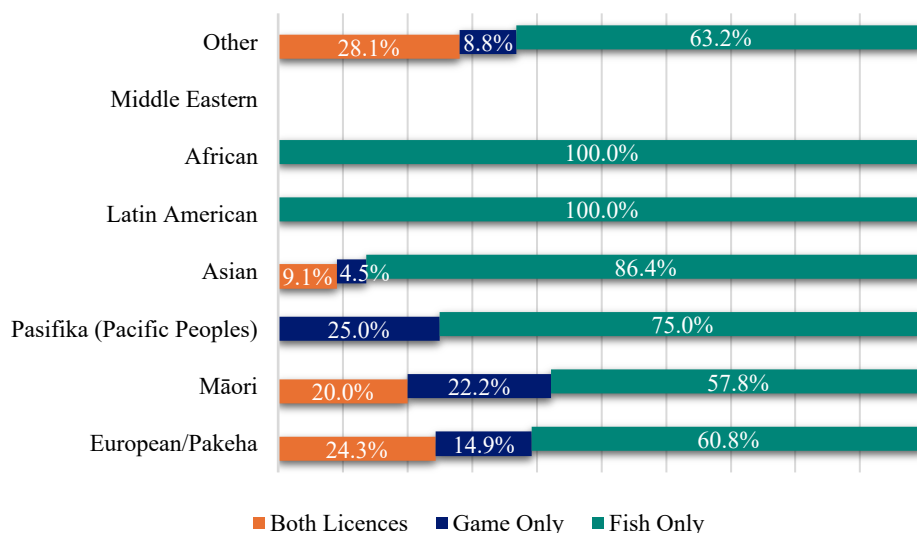


Figure 6 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Ethnicity

5.1.4 Dependent children

Of the total sample, 33.9% had dependent children, which was similar to last year (32.8%, 2025). The usual licence purchasing habit for those with and without dependent children is shown in [Figure 7](#). Those without dependent children were a little more angling-focussed while those with dependent children had a higher frequency of having purchased both licence types at least once in the past 5-years. This was also the case in 2025.

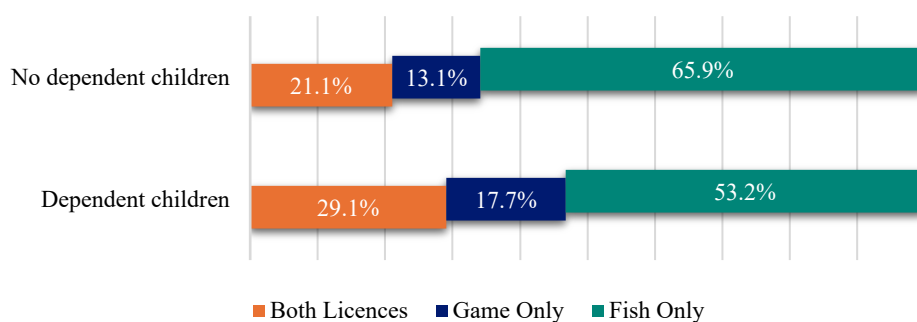


Figure 7 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Dependent/No Dependent Children

5.1.5 Household income (before tax)

The 2025 mean New Zealand household income was \$147,909 (Infometrics, 2026). It is likely the proportion of respondents with a household income over \$200,000 is over-represented in the sample, however, the proportion may also be indicative of the F&G customer base.

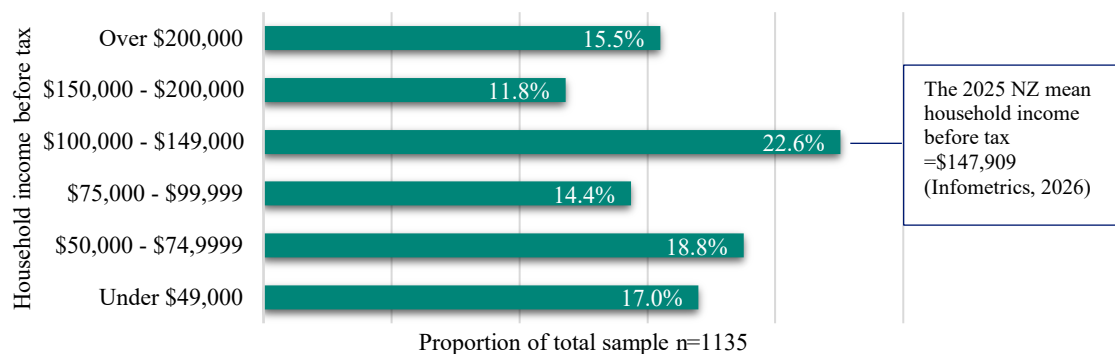


Figure 8 Household Income

Usual licence purchasing habits by income bracket are shown in Figure 9. Like last year, the proportion of game licences purchased tends to increase with income. The proportion of respondents with a history of purchasing both licence types was highest in the \$149,999 - \$200,000 bracket at 35.1%, which increased from 24.7% in 2025. Dual purchasers dropped as a proportion of all other income brackets compared to 2025, with the most notable drop in households with income between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

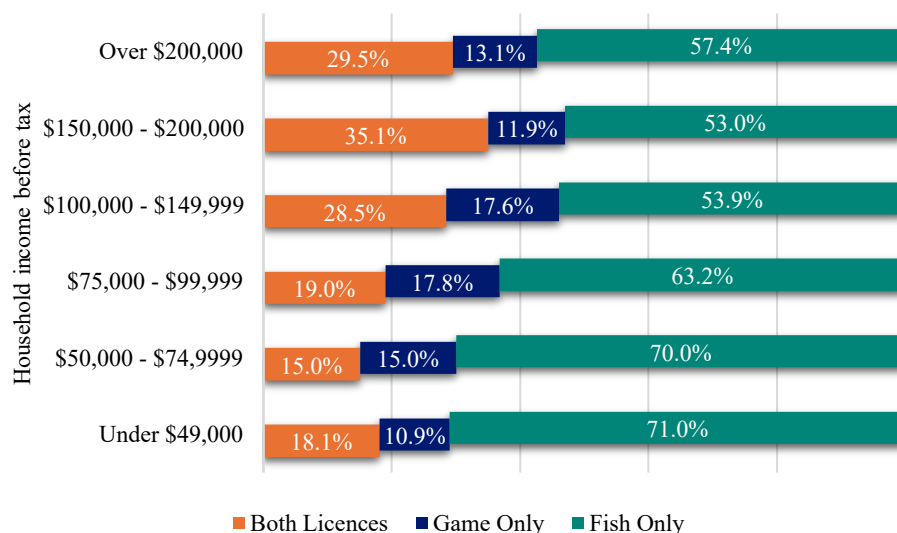
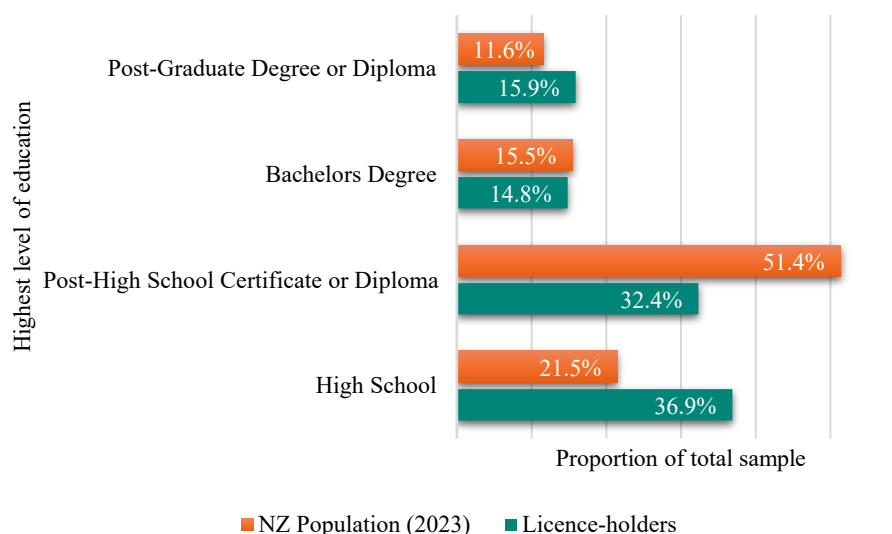


Figure 9 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Household Income Brackets

5.1.6 Education

Figure 10 and Figure 11 show the respondent's highest level of education and the usual purchasing habit as a proportion of the highest level of education respectively. Figure 10 contrasts the respondent's educational profile with that of the general New Zealand population. There is an over-representation of those with high school as the highest education and of those with a post-graduate degree or diploma. There is an under-representation of those with a post-high school certificate or diploma. This profile is very similar to that obtained in the 2024 study when this question was last included and, therefore, may be indicative of the Fish & Game population.

The highest proportion of those with high school as the highest education were employed in the primary (39.4%) and secondary (42.7%) sectors. Game bird orientation tends to decrease with the level of education, as shown in Figure 11, while the rate of dual licence orientation is similar across all levels of education.



Note: NZ population statistics are from Figure.nz and endorsed as high quality data by Stats NZ (Figure.nz, 2026).

Figure 10 Highest Level of Education

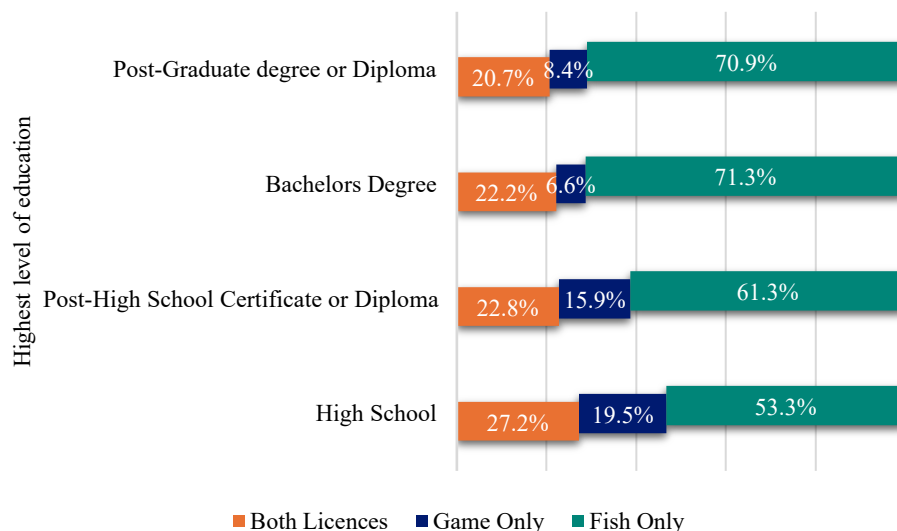


Figure 11 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Highest Level of Education

5.1.7 Employment sector

The distribution of respondents across economic sectors of employment is shown in Figure 12. The high proportion of those retired (29.6%) reflects the age distribution of respondents, while only 2% worked in the home. Figure 13 shows the proportion of licence-holders by employment sector compared to that of the New Zealand general population (Infometrics, 2026b). For ease of comparison the two service sectors have been combined and the *Retired*

and *Home-workers* removed. The figures represented in Figure 13 are recalculated as a proportion of those in paid employment. Over half of respondents worked in the primary and secondary sectors with the proportion in primary sector employment being six times that of the general population. This suggests that positive engagement with the primary sector is important to Fish & Game.

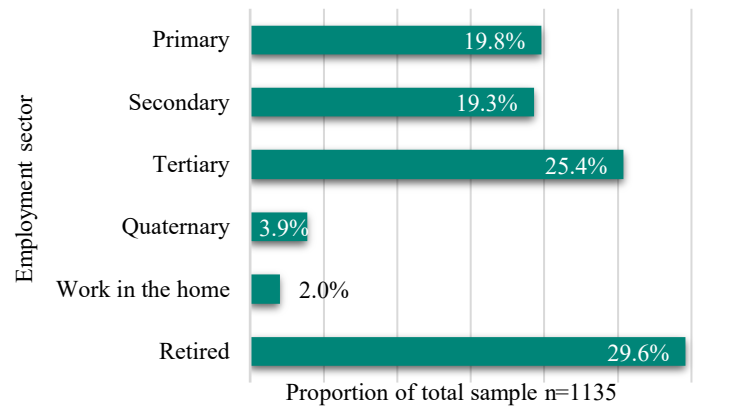


Figure 12 Licence-holder's Economic Sector of Employment

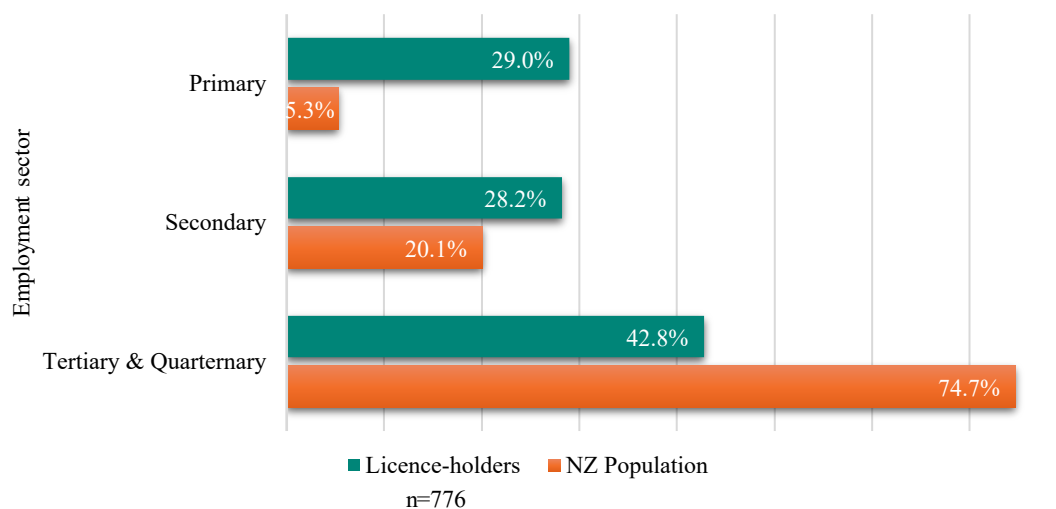


Figure 13 Employment by Economic Sector: Licence-holders Compared to the New Zealand Population.

A breakdown of licence-holder purchase orientation by licence type and economic sector of employment is shown in Figure 14. Nearly two thirds of those in primary sector employment have a game bird orientation and three quarters of those retired are focussed on angling-only. The highest rates of dual licence orientation occur in those employed in the primary (40%) and secondary (26.9%) sectors, with those retired having the lowest (15.8%).

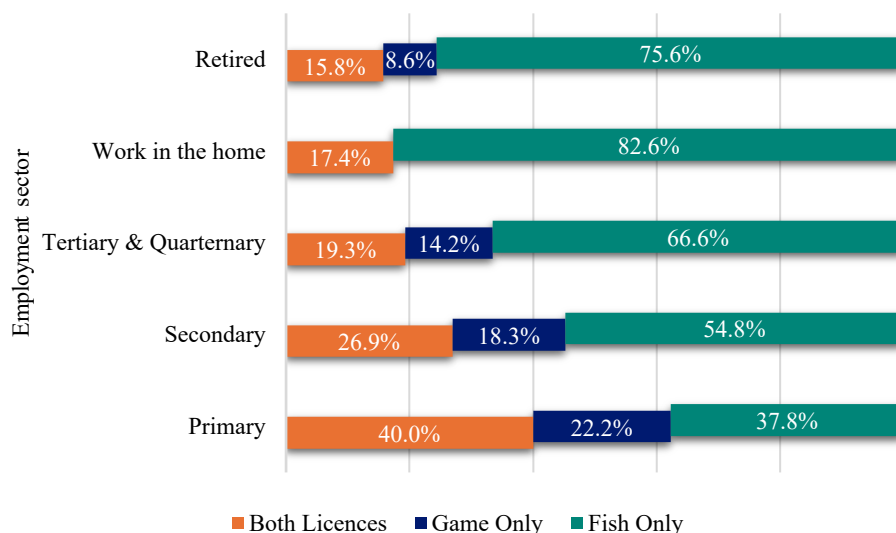


Figure 14 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Economic Employment Sector

5.1.8 Sample breakdown by F&G region

The proportions of the total sample from each of the F&G regions is shown in Figure 15. When compared to the constructed proportional sample, Auckland/Waikato and North Canterbury are somewhat overrepresented while Central South Island, Otago, and Eastern are somewhat underrepresented. Minor variation occurs across the remaining regions. This mirrors the results from both 2024 and 2025.

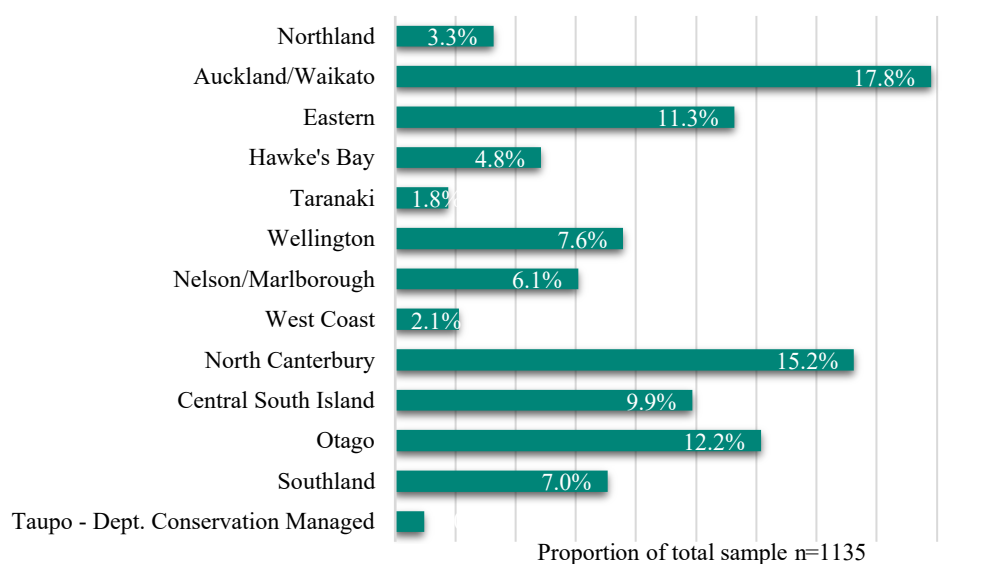


Figure 15 F&G Regions as a Proportion of the Total Sample

Figure 16 details the usual licence purchasing behaviour of respondents in each F&G region.

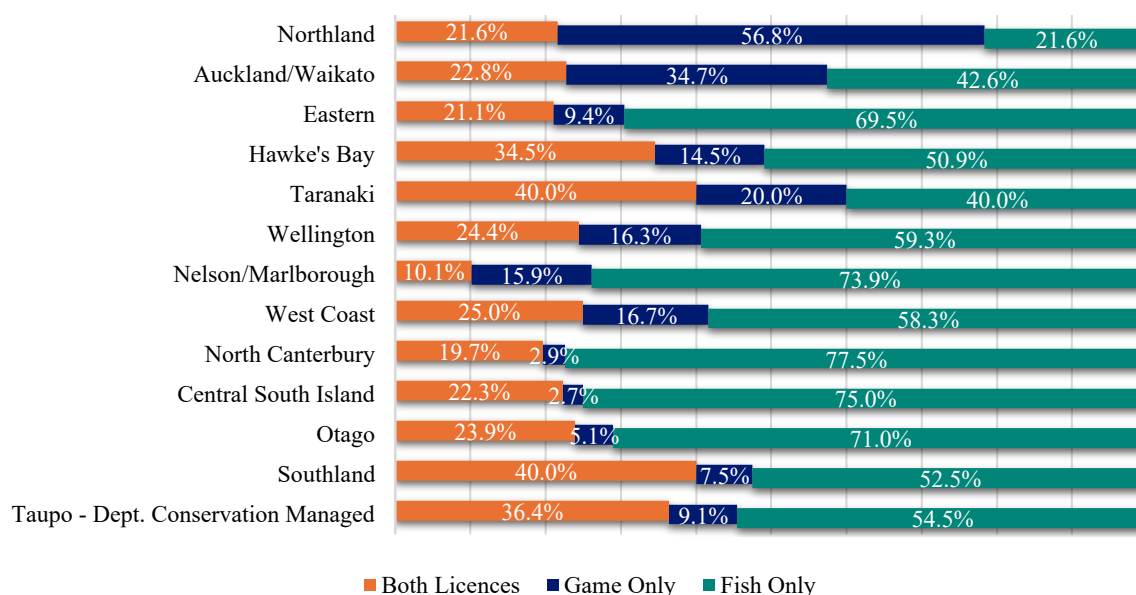


Figure 16 Usual Licence Purchasing Habit as a Proportion of Each F&G Region

The Northland, Auckland/Waikato and Taranaki samples stand out as the most heavily game-orientated. Taranaki had a substantial increase in game-orientated respondents from 24% in 2025 to 60% this year, however, it should be noted that the sample size from Taranaki is small. Respondents from Taupo were solely fishing focussed in 2025 but were more mixed in their sporting orientation this year. All other regions were characterised by a high proportion of angling, North Canterbury, Central South Island, Otago, and Nelson/Marlborough held the highest proportions of those usually purchasing only fishing licences.

5.2 Priorities for service attributes

Service attributes and their respondent-facing descriptions are shown in Table 1 and their rank-orders, based on each attribute's positional weighted mean score, are shown in Figure 17. The rank order remains unchanged since 2024.

Table 1 Respondent-facing Service Attribute Descriptions

Service attribute	Respondent-facing service attribute descriptions
Access	Working to ensure access to waterways (rivers, lakes, and canals).
Ecology monitoring	Monitoring the ecology of rivers, lakes, and wetlands.
Fish Pop. Monitoring	Monitoring fish populations and spawning sites.
Advocacy	Participating in legal processes to provide for healthy freshwater habitats and the protection of outstanding lakes and rivers.
F&G owned wetlands	Maintaining and investing in Fish & Game owned and managed wetlands and waterbodies.

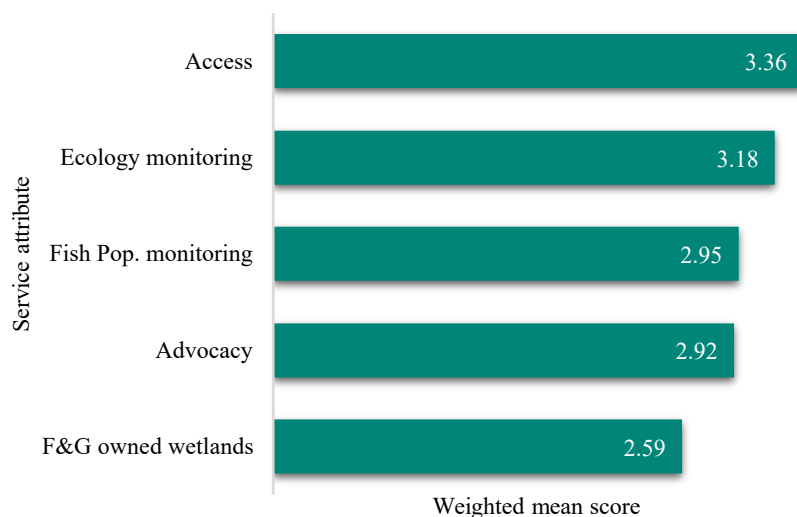


Figure 17 Respondent's Priorities for F&G Service Attributes

5.3 Value

This section details respondent's licence tenure over the past five years, perceptions of licence value-for-money, and reasons for not purchasing. Where stated, the results have been weighted for age and F&G region.

5.3.1 Fishing

Of those respondents that usually purchase a fishing licence (85.4% of the sample), 84.3% purchased a 2025/26 licence. These proportions were very similar to last year.

5.3.1.1 Fishing licence tenure over the past five years

The weighted licence tenure of those that purchased a 2025/26 fishing licence is shown in Figure 18. Most (63.8%) had purchased a licence at least four out of the past five years with the median being 5-out-of-5.

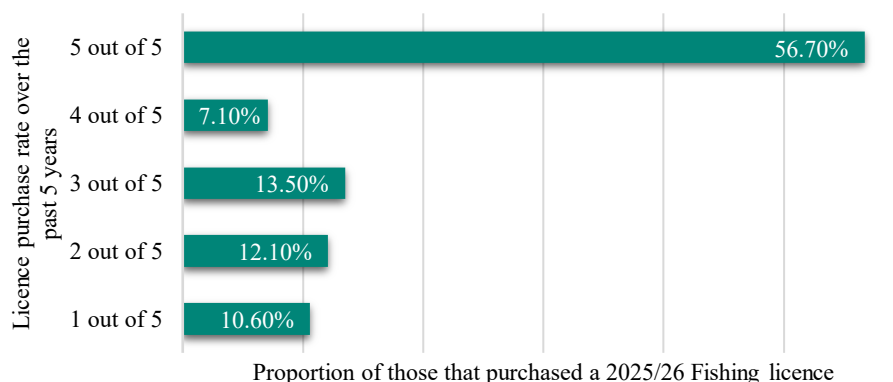


Figure 18 Fishing Licence Tenure Over the Past 5 Years

Figure 19 shows weighted fishing licence tenure by age group. As per previous years, the proportion of loyal year-on-year licence purchasers increases with age, and the most loyal purchasers were in the 65+yrs age group, all of which were 'Loyal Seniors.' The highest rate

of mixed licence tenure was in those between 16 and 34yrs of age. This year the sample of 16–24-year-olds had fewer 5-out-of-5 purchasers (16%) compared to last year (25%). Overall the shape of the graph remains unchanged from previous years.

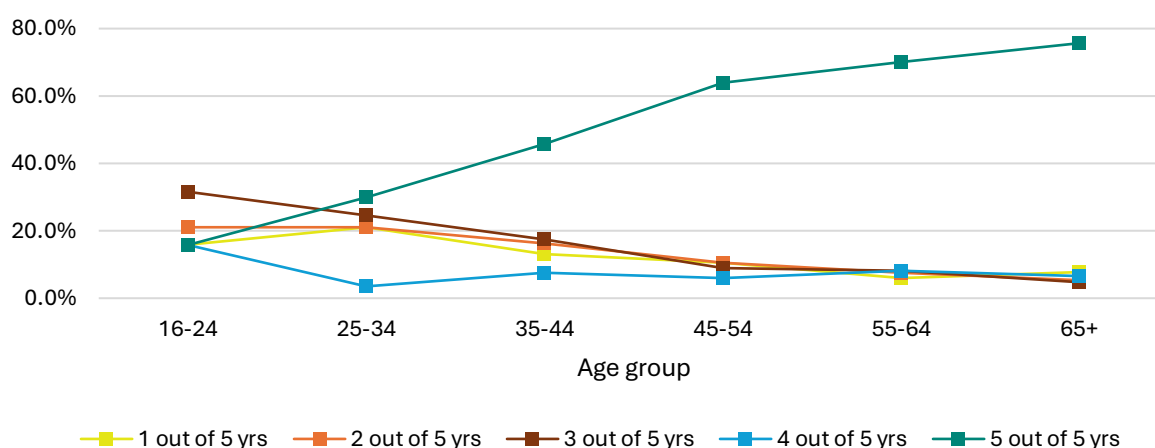


Figure 19 Fishing Licence Tenure Over the Past 5 Years by Age Group

5.3.1.2 Fishing licence value-for-money rating

The weighted distribution of fishing licence value ratings is shown in Figure 20. Most licence holders (61.3%) were positive and rated value for money as ≥ 6 , up 6 percentage points from last year. The median rating for fishing licences was 6 out of 9 which was the same as that in 2025. Poor value ratings (1-4) were given by 21.5% of respondents, down 5 percentage points from last year.

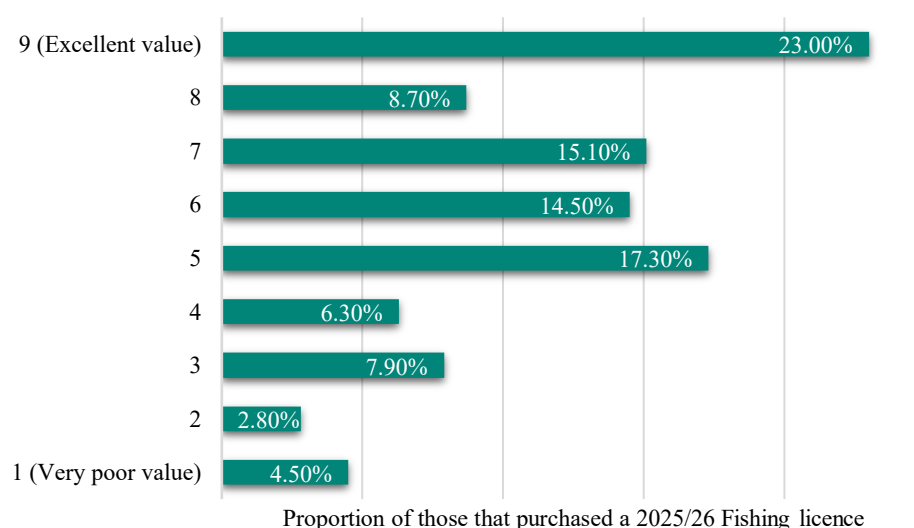


Figure 20 Fishing Licence Value for Money

5.3.1.3 Fishing licence value for money by licence type

The weighted proportion of respondents purchasing each fishing licence type are shown in Table 2 and the perceived value for money by licence type is shown in Figure 21. In 2025/26, whole season fishing licence types represent 83.1% of purchases. Stoffels & Unwin (2023) define these licence types as ‘Stratum-1’ and the proportion of Stratum-1 is higher in this

sample than the background rate for F&G licence holders. Although these anglers are responsible for a very high proportion of angler effort (Stoffles & Unwin, 2023), this means the views of these anglers are overrepresented, as they were also in 2024 and 2025.

Table 2 Fishing Licence Purchased by Licence Type

Type of 2025/26 fishing licence purchased	Proportion(%) of purchasers		
	2026	2025	2024
Whole Season Adult	49.0	44.4	50.9
Whole Season Family	18.4	27.0	27.2
Whole Season Loyal Senior	8.7	9.3	9.8
Whole Season Adult Local Area	7.0	5.7	4.4
One Day Adult or Junior	7.4	4.1	4.1
Winter Season Adult	3.1	3.5	1.7
Short Break Adult	2.0	2.3	1.3
Whole Season Junior	2.7	1.4	NA
Long Break Adult	1.6	1.0	0.6
Total	100	100	100

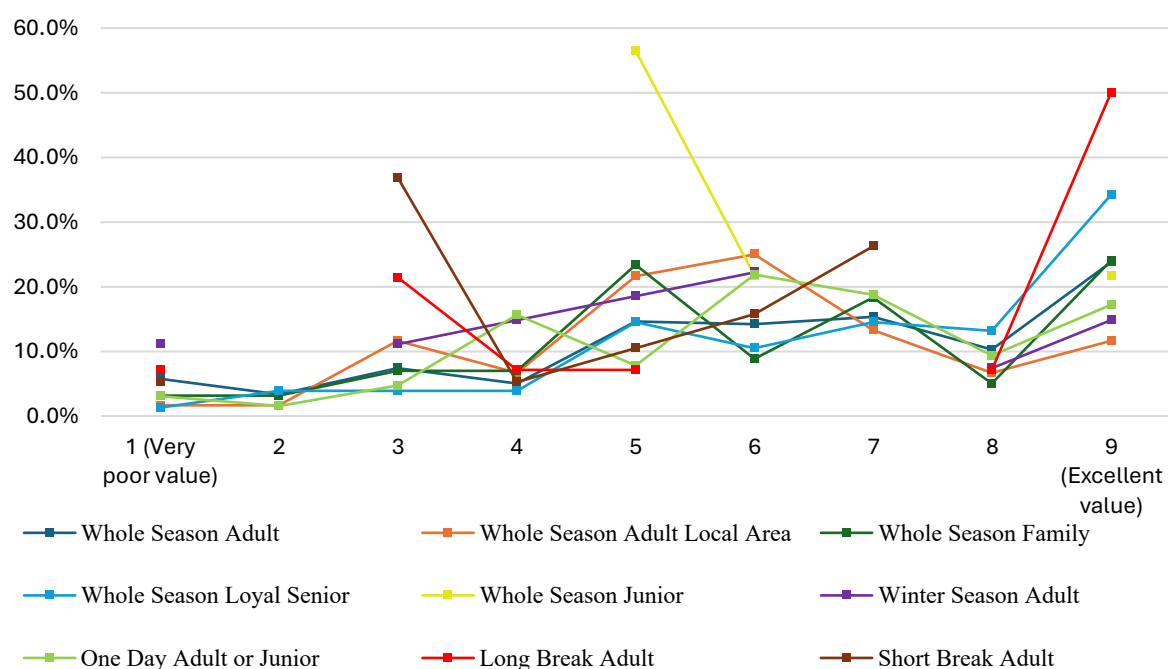


Figure 21 Fishing Licence Value for Money by Licence Type

The highest proportion of 'Excellent value' ratings were among *Long Break Adult* (50%, n=14) followed by *Whole Season Loyal Seniors* (34.2%, n=76, up 4 percentage points from 2025), *Whole Season Family* (24.1%, n=158, up 5.6 percentage points from 2025), *Whole Season Adult* (23.8%, n=416, up 5 percentage points from 2025), and *Whole Season Junior* (21.7%, n=23, up 2.9 percentage points). *Winter Season Adult* had the highest rate of 'Very poor' ratings (11.1%, n=27, nearly double that of 2025).

5.3.1.4 Reason for non-purchase of a 2025/26 fishing licence

The main reasons for not purchasing a 2025/26 fishing licence are shown in Table 3. An increasingly busy life accounted for over a third of those not purchasing, which was within one percentage point of last year's result. Choosing to focus on other hobbies (21.2%), and expense (13.9%) remained within the margin of error compared to last year's results. Once again,

analysis of the *Other* responses revealed that many fell within the existing response options and were re-assigned accordingly. The remaining *Other* included three respondents who chose not to purchase as a form of protest, eight citing a lack of success/fish/salmon, and three that were yet to purchase their licence. The remaining nine were assorted reasons including:

“Didn’t go to usual holiday destination.”

“My former fishing friends are now mainly deceased. Others have moved away.”

Table 3 Main Reason for Not Purchasing a 2025/26 Fishing Licence

Main reason for not purchasing	Proportion(%) of non-purchasers
I am becoming too busy to find time	36.4
I chose to focus on other hobbies	21.2
Other	15.2
The sport is becoming too expensive	13.9
I was unwell or injured	7.2
Fishing locations near where I live were not easily accessible	3.3
Poor weather in my area discouraged me from fishing	2.0
I felt I was no longer physically able to fish	0.7
Total	100

5.3.1 Hunting

Of those with a usual habit of purchasing a Game Bird licence (38.4% of the sample), 85.8% purchased a 2025 Game Bird licence and 97.1% of those were whole-season adult licences. This was nearly identical to the previous two years. Results are weighted for age and F&G region.

5.3.1.1 Game licence tenure over the past five years

The weighted licence tenure of those that purchased a 2025 game bird licence is shown in [Figure 22](#). Most (74%) had purchased a licence at least four out of the past five years with the median being five out of five. The rate of 5 out of 5 purchasers had dropped from 84% in 2025, however the median remains the same.

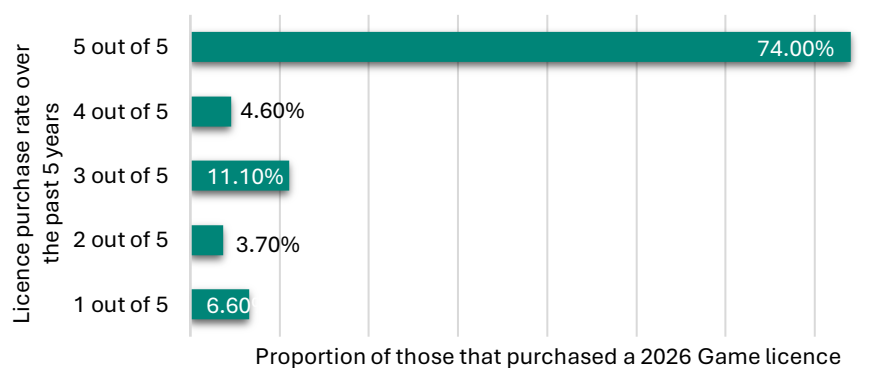


Figure 22 Hunting Licence Tenure Over the Past 5 Years

5.3.1.2 Game licence value-for-money rating

The weighted distribution of game licence value ratings is shown in Figure 23. Forty-eight percent of licence-holders were positive and rated value for money as ≥ 6 (up 2 percentage points from 2025 and falling within the margin of error). The median rating for game licences was 5 out of 9 (the same as 2025). Poor value ratings (1-4) were given by 34% of respondents (down 5 percentage points from 2025). The proportion of licence-holders rating it as *Very poor value* had fallen 5 percentage points from 2025, making it close to the 2024 result. Overall, game licences were seen as being lower value for money than fishing licences, reflecting the results from both 2024 and 2025.

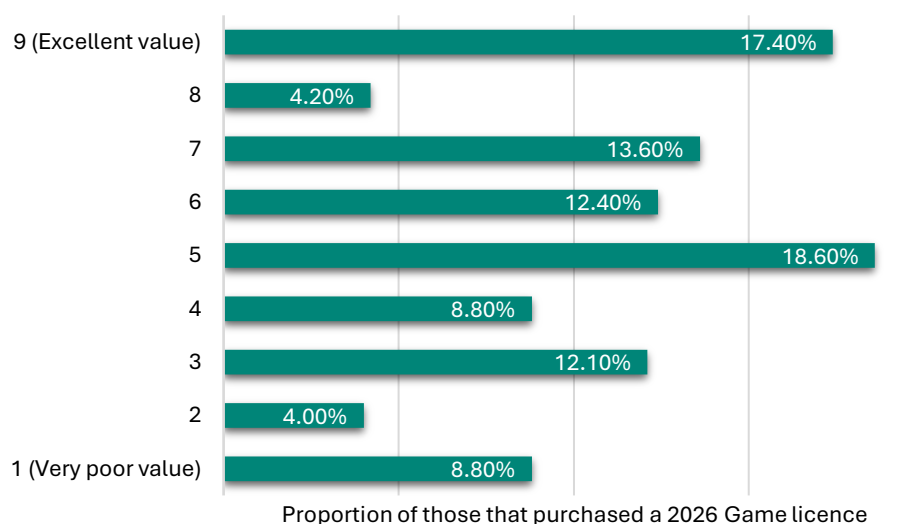


Figure 23 Game Licence Value for Money

5.3.1.3 Reason for non-purchase of a 2025 game licence

In total 62 respondents that had purchased a Game bird licence in the past 5 years did not purchase a 2026 licence. The main reasons for not purchasing a 2026 game licence are shown in Table 4. Being too busy was cited by 22.6% of non-purchasers, up from 12.5% in 2024 and 18.1% in 2025. Almost 18% found the sport too expensive, and 8.1% choosing to focus on other hobbies, down from 13.8% in 2025. The addition of a field in 2025 asking those choosing *Other* to specify their choice, revealed, once again, that many responses were represented by existing response choices. Re-coding these responses meant that *Other* fell to 19.4%. The most common reasons in *Other* were, only hunting their own property (2), lack of birds (2). Once again this year, two chose not to purchase as a form of protest.

Table 4 Main Reasons for Not Purchasing a 2026 Game Bird Licence

Main Reason for not purchasing	Proportion(%) of non-purchaser
Other	19.4
I was too busy to find time	22.6
I found the sport was too expensive	17.7
I chose to focus on other hobbies	8.1
Game bird hunting locations near where I live were not easily accessible	9.7
I was unwell or injured	16.1
I felt I was no longer physically able to hunt	3.2
I found I did not enjoy game bird hunting	3.2
Total	100

5.4 Performance

This section details fisher and hunter perceptions of F&G's performance. Respondents were asked to use a simple rating scale and were given the option to be unsure. They were then given the opportunity to offer a comment regarding the performance rating they gave. The comments were analysed according to themes and are shown in [section 5.4.2](#). Performance ratings have been weighted for age and F&G region.

5.4.1 Performance rating

Q: 'How good or bad a job would you say Fish & Game does on your behalf?'

The performance ratings are shown in [Figure 24](#). Most licence-holders (57.8%) gave F&G a good performance rating with the median rating being 4 out of 5. This result is within the margin of error for the 60% target. Bad ratings were given by 9.9% of licence-holders. The proportion of those giving the highest rating increased by 6 percentage points from 2025 and neutral ratings had dropped by 5 percentage points. There was a slight increase in those that were unsure but this remained within the margin of error.

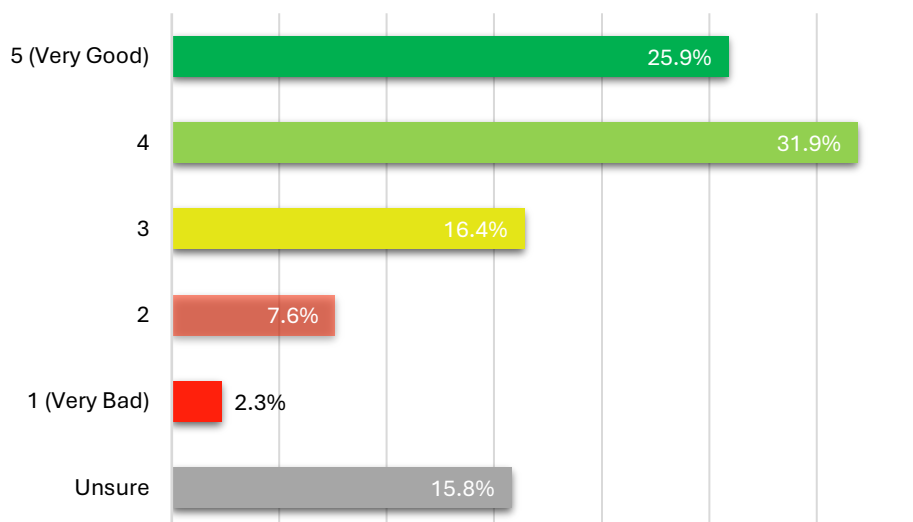


Figure 24 Customer Performance Ratings of F&G

5.4.1.1 Performance rating by age groups

Respondent performance ratings by age group are shown in [Figure 25](#) and they are weighted by F&G region only. The proportion of uncertainty is highest among the 16-24yrs group. In 2025 the 18-24yrs age group had the lowest rate of uncertainty in a reversal from 2024. The results this year support the notion that the low rate of uncertainty in the 2025 results for the 16-24yrs age group was an aberration, however, the sample size this year was smaller. This year there was an increase in uncertainty in the 25-34yrs group and uncertainty across the other age groups was similar to 2024 and 2025. The proportion of positive ratings was still highest among the 65+yrs group (66.5%) having increased from 58% in 2025.

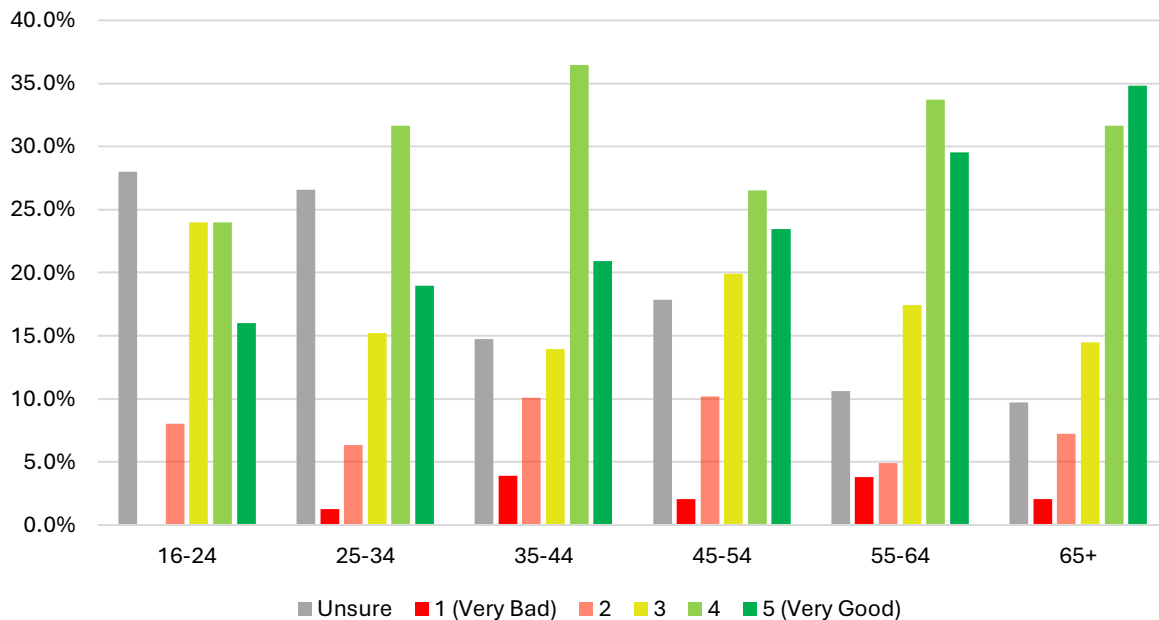


Figure 25 F&G Performance Rating by Age Groups

5.4.2 Thematic analysis of performance comments

In all, 778 respondents chose to leave a performance comment. Comments were analysed according to themes and are detailed in [Figure 26](#), [Figure 27](#), [Figure 28](#), and [Figure 29](#). Comments often had more than one theme; therefore, percentages sum to more than 100. Following the methodology used last year, the amplification effects of comments containing multiple themes within a single higher-order theme have been corrected for, see [section 4.1.3](#), p 8.

Those happy with F&G felt it provided the best vehicle for governance and their political and legal representation (30.2%, 2026; 31%, 2025) and appreciated F&G efforts to communicate (16.1%, 2026; 23.9%, 2025). It is likely that the high 2025 communications figure was driven in some part by the preceding questions within the 2025 special focus on access. Efforts to promote stocks of quarry were appreciated (21.2%, 2026; 15.6%, 2025) and licence monitoring and enforcement (14.6%, 2026; 13.3%, 2025) was still seen as an essential element of fairness and natural justice. Good raters were also grateful of providing and maintaining access points (19.4%, 2026; 22.9%, 2025) and of F&G's involvement in environmental protection (15.0%, 2026; 14.8%, 2025), especially efforts on water quality and enhancing and restoring habitat. Friendly and helpful interactions with F&G team members featured in 8.8% of comments, up from 6.6% in 2025. Typical 'Good' rating comments were:

Without them our stocks would plummet and our future generations might not be able to get the same opportunities

They look after the water ways, check fisherman are fishing in the correct place and keeping to legal limit.

They are passionate about the outdoors and care about the resources we have.

Communication and education have been good through social media and website. Have been advocating for hunters and anglers and have been public about advocating in mainstream media. Rewild campaign was well received.

I went in to the [Region removed] office for advice about fishing with my grandkids .They were so helpful and it was worth the price of my fishing license

Given my preferred ranking of what I would like to see achieved in see F&G does an OK job in an environmental watchdog role. I would like to see even more focus on that aspect. I enjoy fishing primarily for the in nature experience. Catching trout is a secondary bonus.

They help look after hunting rights on public land

I hear on the news and through other channels the advocacy work F&G do on our behalf and are very thankful for that work.

I think fish and game does a good job of ensuring public access, and ensuring fish numbers and game numbers are adequate for the general public. Thank you.

I consistently find the Fish & Game officers to be incredibly friendly, approachable, and professional out in the field. Furthermore, the hard work and dedication the team has put into managing and preserving our local waterways and habitats has been immensely helpful. Thank you for your continued efforts to support our outdoor community—it is greatly appreciated.

Where I live in the [region removed] there is excellent access to fishing and gamebird hunting within close travel to our home. I also travel around NZ to hunt and fish and F&G regulations and requirements don't impact that negatively. I'm happy to pay a licensing fee to ensure this ready access to hunting and fishing remains for my family and I.

Protecting the rights of all New Zealanders to Hunt and Fish

I have had my license checked in the [region removed] at least twice this season which I appreciate. I have witnessed too much rape & pillage of salmon over the last 20 years and from feed-back from other licensed holders the more policing the better. Also I see water quality issues with land use development and to have a voice in Fish & Game is important. I cannot put a price on the enjoyment I get from fishing and Fish & Game go a long way to protecting this.

Poor ratings were mainly associated with perceptions of insufficient efforts to promote stocks of fish and game (27%, 2026; 20.7%, 2025), mismanagement of funds (20%, 2026; 14.1%, 2025), and licence cost (17%, 2026; 13.3%, 2025). Themes of a perceived conflict with farmers were in 8% of comments offered, down from 17% in 2025. Negative views of leadership were present in 6% of comments down from 14.8% in 2025. Typical comments from 'Bad' raters were:

As a dairy farmer, fisherman and game bird hunter I'm very saddened by the battle that we are constantly in with F and G, seems I am funding the fight on myself. I would like to see more science backed information and more effort to work with farmers to come up with solutions for the problems we both face. I have never been in favour of destroying our environment, I have children who love farming, fishing and hunting and I want that to continue to grandchildren. It seems the people that fight the fight for F and G are extremists with no understanding of what it takes to feed the country. I believe we can have the best of both worlds with more understanding from both parties.

expensive license, not protecting waterways and fishing locations for anglers

I don't believe Fish and Game work well with other key players in the environment (e.g., mana whenua, DOC, regional councils). I think better outcomes for the environment and all agencies and fishers and communities could be achieved by working more collaboratively than the current confrontational approach.

Not protecting the few remaining public access game bird hunting spots. Cycle ways have marginalised hunters and pushed them out of areas.

The State of the salmon fishery

From the outside looking in I consider F&G to be a dysfunctional organisation that doesn't appear to be representing its members appropriately. It has got itself offside with the rural community and it appears to spend more time and effort trying to get in the way of environmental issues than it does looking after the interests of fisherman and hunters.

Of those that were unsure of how to rate F&G's performance, many felt they did not know enough about the organisation to rate it (55%, 2026; 67.5%, 2025) and others felt there was no evidence of any work having been done (23%, 2026; 13.8%, 2025). Those that gave a neutral rating, valued monitoring and enforcement and felt more was needed (16%, 2026; 13.4%, 2025). Some also felt that for the licence-fee, F&G did little for them personally (14.4%, 2026; 7.6%, 2025). Concern over conflict with farmers had dropped and featured in 7.2% of comments, down from 12.1% in 2025. Some comments received from unsure and neutral rating respondents were:

Not really sure where the money goes and what benefit I gain from it. I purchase out of an obligation to do the 'right thing'.

Haven't had much to do with fish and game. Phoned once to ask about access to shoot an area. The lady took my details and said she would call back but never did. That was a bit of disappointing only encounter

I don't know exactly what they do apart from put up some signs

do not see staff out and about whereas 20 odd years ago this was regularly.

you're not being seen to be an advocate for hunters and fishermen, only in a punishment sense.

Spends more time on conservation than promoting fishing and securing access

5.4.2.1 Unsure ratings

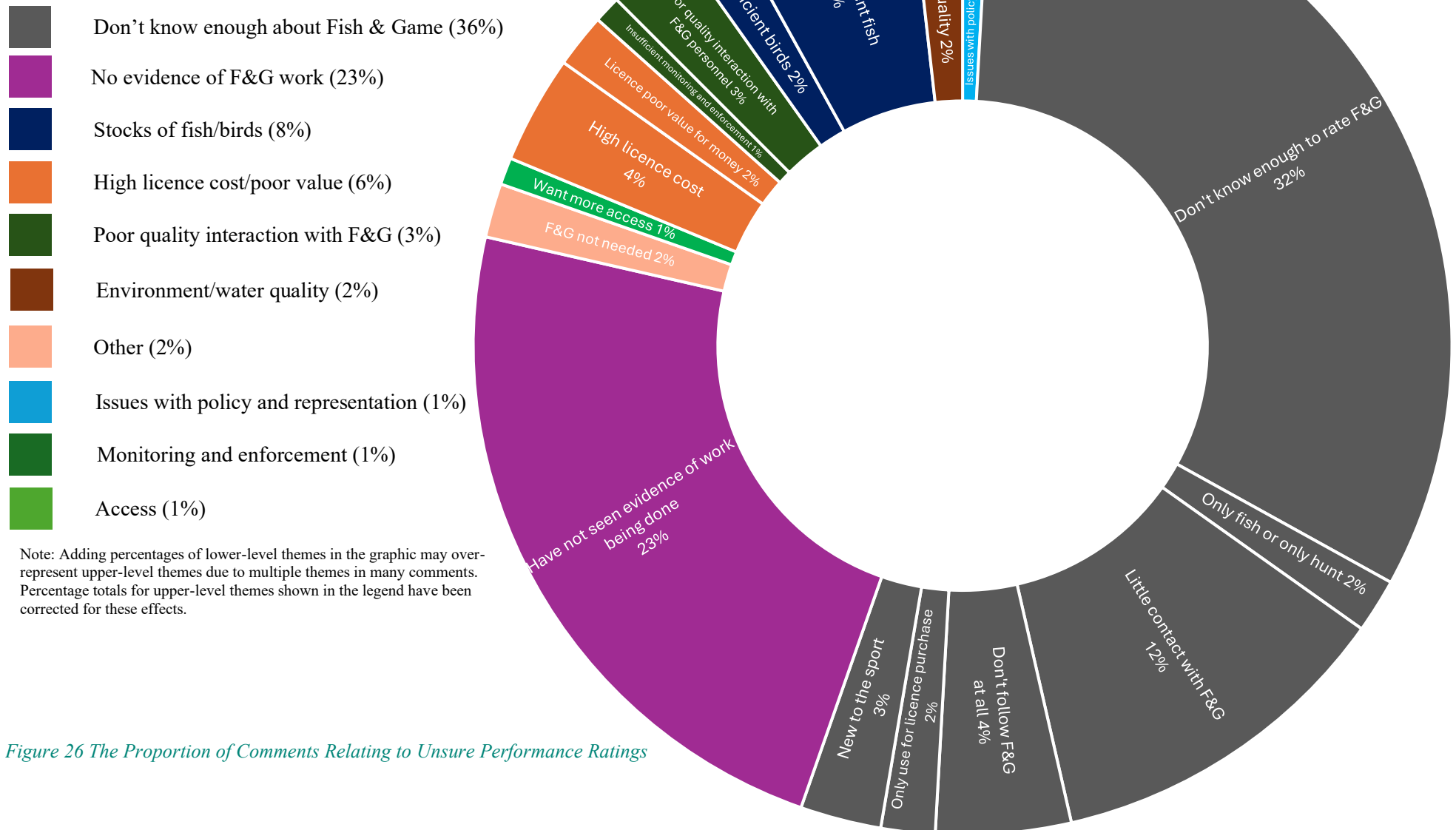


Figure 26 The Proportion of Comments Relating to Unsure Performance Ratings

5.4.2.2 Poor ratings

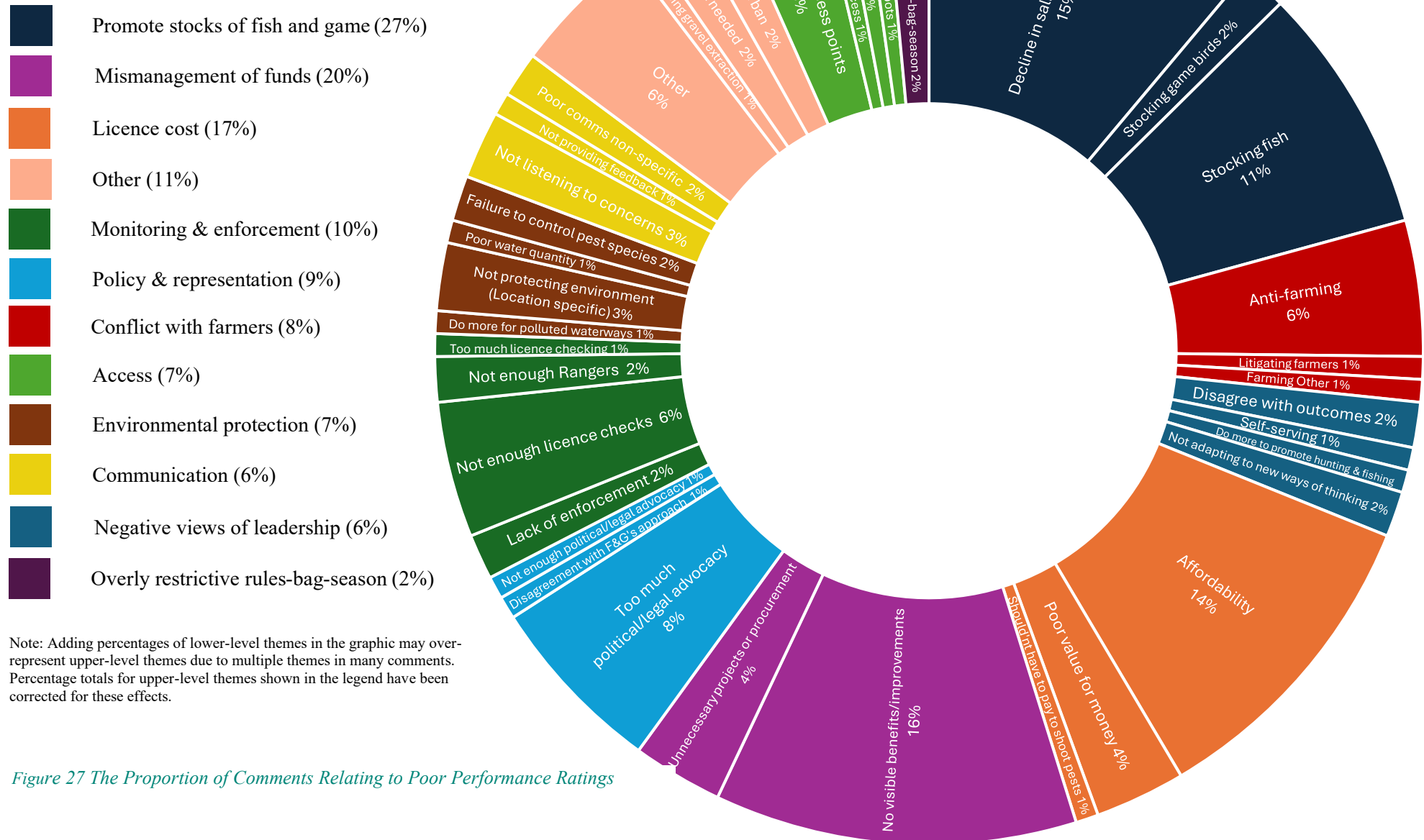


Figure 27 The Proportion of Comments Relating to Poor Performance Ratings

5.4.2.3 Neutral ratings

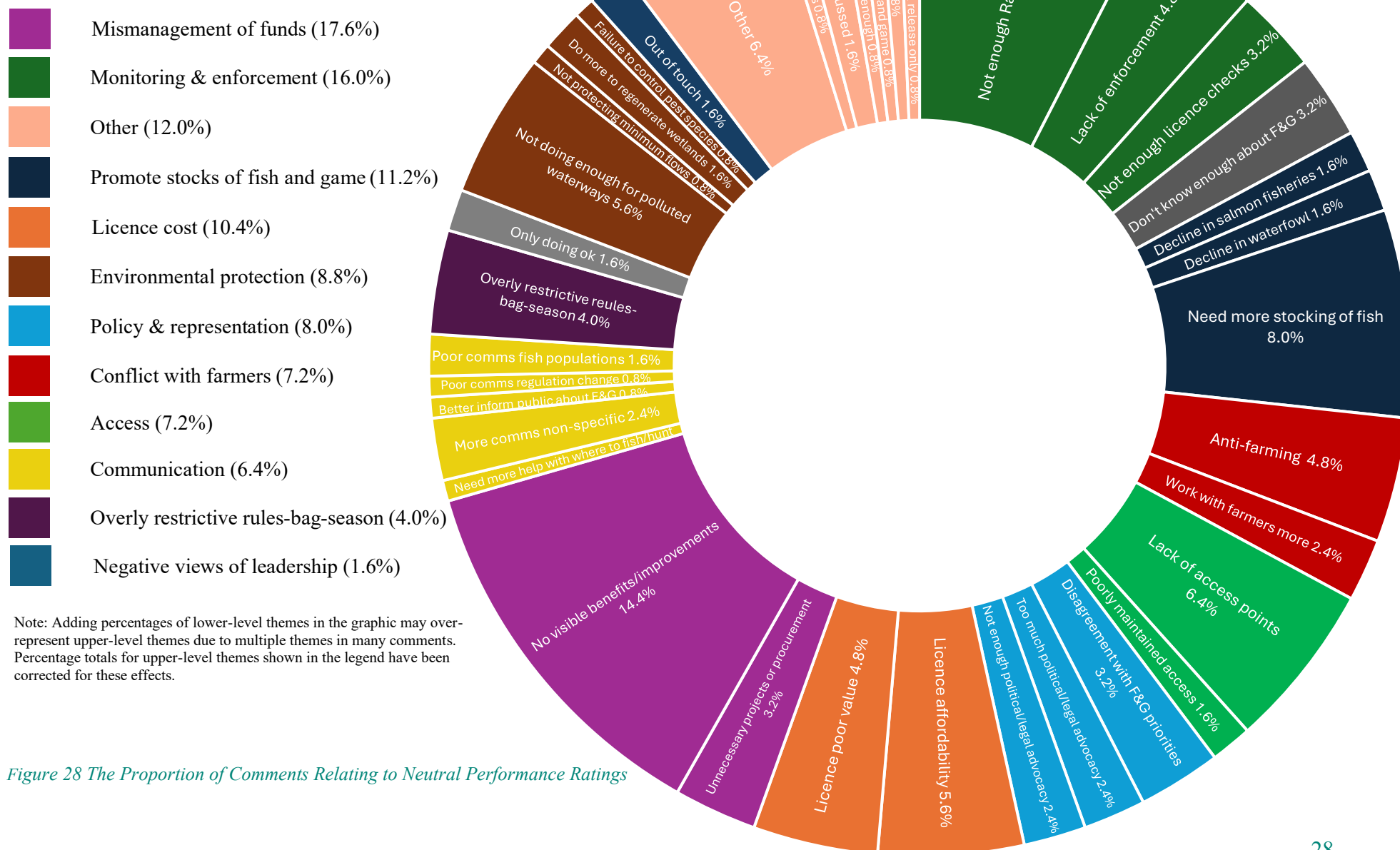


Figure 28 The Proportion of Comments Relating to Neutral Performance Ratings

5.4.2.4 Good ratings

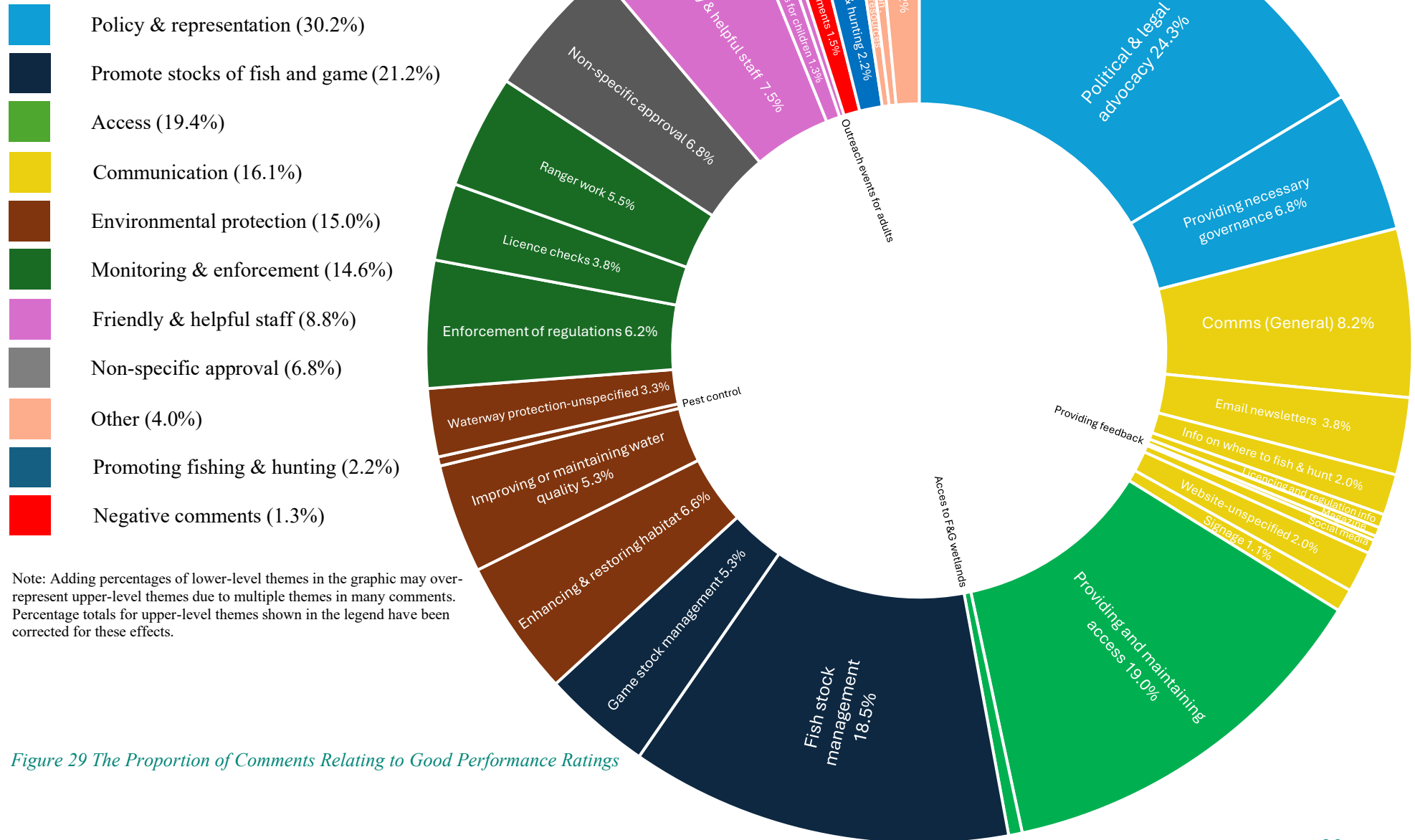


Figure 29 The Proportion of Comments Relating to Good Performance Ratings

5.5 Focus on Representation

This section details the results for this year's special focus on representation. Section 5.5.1 details licence-holder's level of support for the four selected broad spheres of advocacy in which Fish & Game represent their interests, section 5.5.2 details support for seven selected advocacy activities undertaken on licence-holder's behalf, and section 5.5.3 details licence-holder's expectations of a government based on selected questions regarding issues impacting freshwater fishing and game bird hunting.

Frequency statistics are weighted for age and F&G region. Kruskal-Wallis tests investigate the relationship between survey responses and respondent's economic employment sector and age-group. The null and alternative hypotheses for the Kruskal-Wallis test were:

H_0 There is no significant difference in the distribution of responses (to the relevant question) based on the; a) employment sector, b) age-group.

H_1 There is a significant difference in the distribution of response (to the relevant question) based on the; a) employment sector, b) age-group.

Post-hoc Dunn-Bonferroni (Dunn's) tests investigate pairwise comparisons between the grouping variables for differences in the distributions of their answers. The relationship between perceptions and employment sector is of interest because of the perceived tension between the protection of habitat for F&G managed species and economic activity. The relationship between perceptions and age-group is of interest because the recruitment, retention, and reactivation of licence-holders is important to F&G.

5.5.1 Support for the spheres of representation engaged by Fish & Game

Figure 30 details licence-holder's support for the four main spheres of representation engaged in by Fish & Game. Most respondents felt all four spheres of representation were important with total positive sentiment ranging from 70.3% to 86.6%. Negative sentiment ranged from 8.0% to 3.2%.

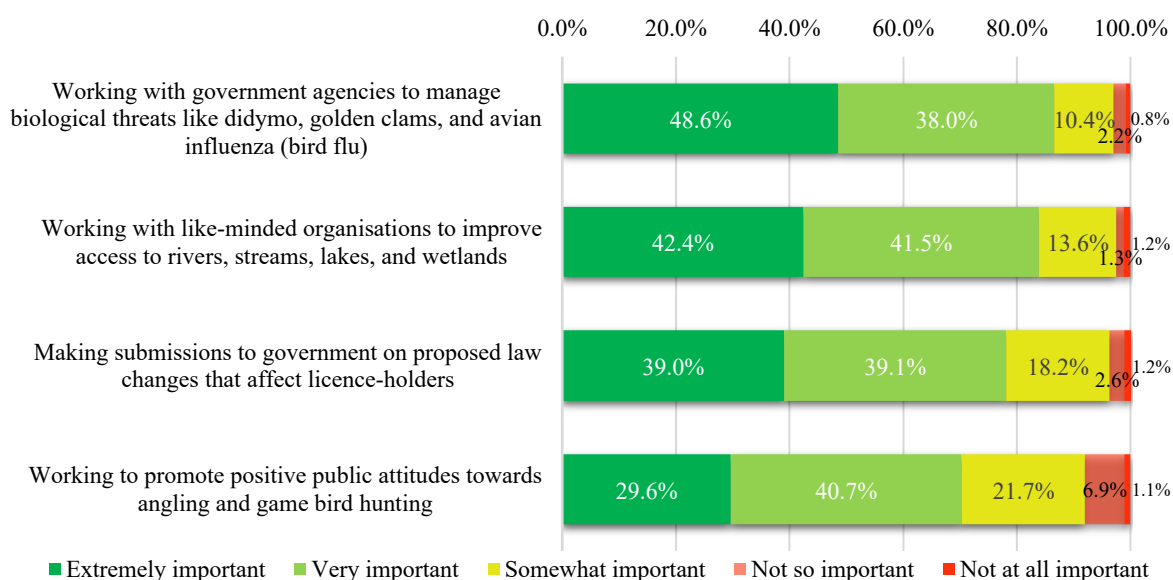


Figure 30 Licence-holder Support for the Four Broad Spheres of Representation Engaged by Fish & Game

5.5.1.1 Kruskal-Wallis test

The Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test statistic for the unweighted responses, grouped by employment sector, was significant at $p < .05$ for three out of the four spheres of activity as shown in Table 5. H_0 held true for ‘Working to promote positive public attitudes towards angling and game bird hunting’ and, after applying the Dunn’s⁴ test, H_0 also held true for ‘Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).’ The others contained responses with distributions that differed significantly based on the respondent’s economic sector of employment. The H-test grouped by age-group was significant at $p < .05$ for three out of four spheres of activity. H_0 held true for ‘Working to promote positive public attitudes towards angling and game bird hunting’ and H-test statistics by age-group are shown in Table 6.

Table 5 Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics for Responses to Fish & Game’s Broad Spheres of Representation Grouped by Employment Sector

n=1135	H (df=5)	p-value
Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).	11.760	.038*
Working with like-minded organisations to improve access to rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands.	28.672	<.001**
Making submissions to government on proposed law changes that affect licence-holders.	15.858	.007**
Working to promote positive public attitudes towards angling and game bird hunting.	7.684	.175

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent’s economic sector of employment. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

* Significance at $p < .05$, ** Significance at $p < .01$

Table 6 Kruskal-Wallis test for responses to Fish & Game’s Broad Spheres of Representation Grouped by Age-group

n=1135	H (df=5)	p-value
Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).	22.528	<.001**
Working with like-minded organisations to improve access to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.	21.321	<.001**
Making submissions to government on proposed law changes that affect licence-holders.	30.231	<.001**
Working to promote positive public attitudes towards angling and game bird hunting.	8.214	.145

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent’s age-group. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

** Significance at $p < .01$

⁴ The Bonferroni correction in the Dunn’s test provides a conservative estimation of p -values and is designed to avoid false-positive results.

5.5.1.2 Pairwise comparisons

For all group pairs with significant differences in distributions, the effect was weak ($r \leq .290$). For sectors of employment, all significant findings involved the *Primary* sector as one of the groups and the most common difference was between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired*. For age-groups, all significant findings involved the *65+yrs* age-group and all but one were between the *65+yrs* and the *45-54yrs* age-groups. Significant group pairs for each question are detailed below with line graphs to help visualise the distributions. The graphs show those in the *Primary* sector to be less positive than their comparison groups and those in the *45-54yrs* age-group to be less positive than the *65+yrs* age group.

5.5.1.2.1 Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).

Dunn's test revealed that, despite $H(5, n=1135) = 11.76, p = .038$, there was no difference between any pairs of employment sector groups that was significant at $p < .05$. There was a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *65+yrs* and *45-54yrs* age groups ($z = -4.269, p_{Adj} < .001, r = .169$) and the distributions are shown in [Figure 31](#).

5.5.1.2.2 Working with like-minded organisations to improve access to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.

Dunn's test revealed a significant but weak difference in distributions between those in the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -5.054, p_{Adj} < .001, r = .189$) and between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z = -3.191, p_{Adj} = .021, r = .151$). The distributions of the three groups are shown in [Figure 32](#). There was a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *65+yrs* and *45-54yrs* age groups ($z = -4.299, p_{Adj} < .001, r = .171$) and the distributions are shown in [Figure 33](#).

5.5.1.2.3 Making submissions to government on proposed law changes that affect licence-holders.

Dunn's test revealed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -3.695, p_{Adj} = .003, r = .138$). The distributions of the two groups are shown in [Figure 34](#). There was a significant but weak difference in the distributions between *16-24yrs* and *65+yrs* age-groups ($z = -3.633, p_{Adj} < .001, r = .170$) and between the *45-54yrs* and *65+yrs* ($z = -4.237, p_{Adj} < .001, r = .168$) age-groups. The distributions of the three groups are shown in [Figure 35](#). The *16-24yrs* age-group had the highest proportion of mid-importance ratings of any age-group which may reflect uncertainty on the subject matter.

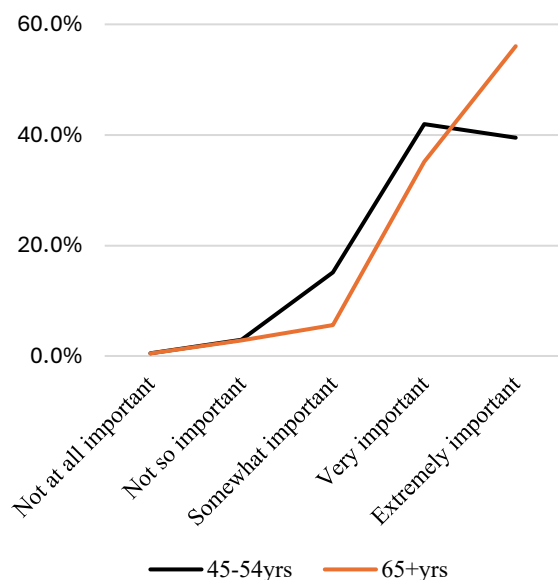


Figure 31 Distributions of 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Working with government agencies to manage biological threats like didymo, golden clams, and avian influenza (bird flu).'

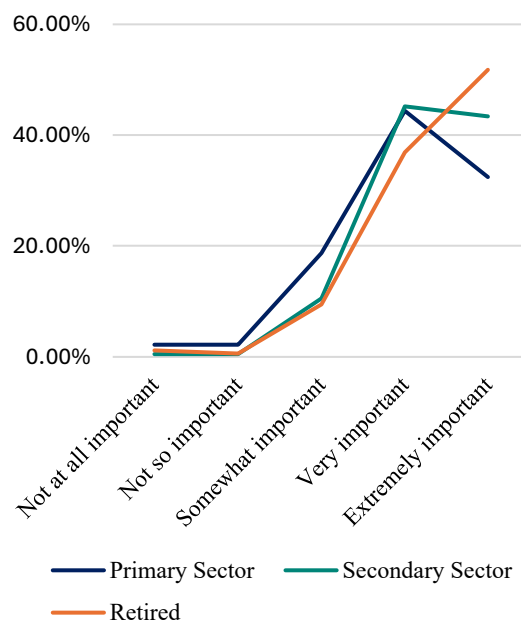


Figure 32 Distribution of Primary and Secondary Sectors and Retiree's Responses to: 'Working with like-minded organisations to improve access to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.'

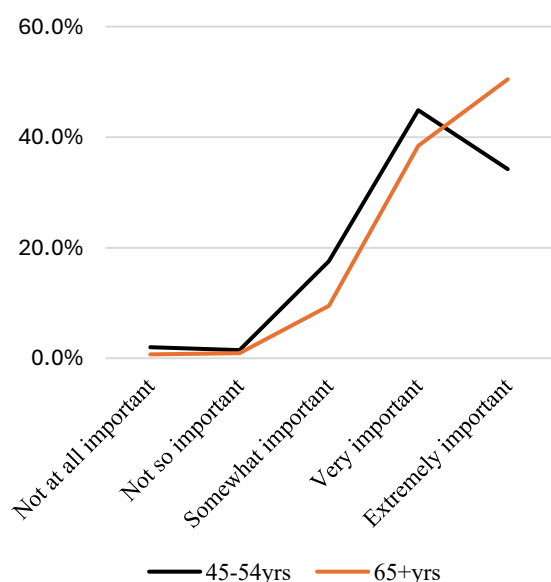


Figure 33 Distributions of 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's responses to: 'Working with like-minded organisations to improve access to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.'

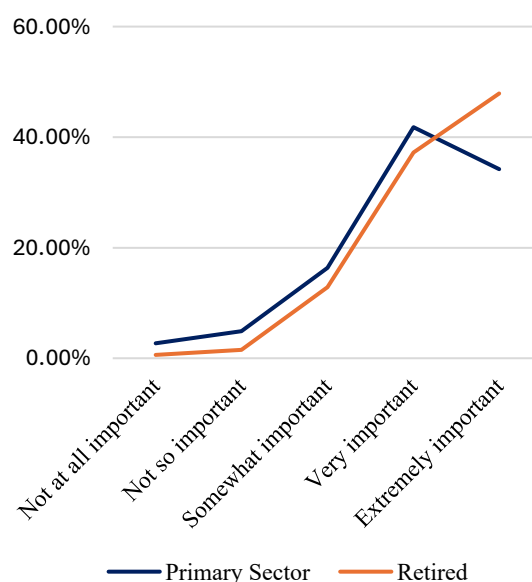


Figure 34 Distribution of Primary Sector and Retiree's Responses to: 'Making submissions to government on proposed law changes that affect licence-holders.'

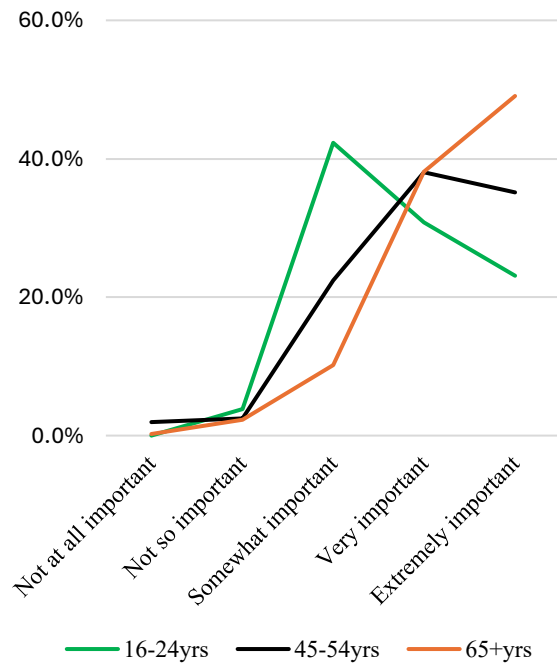


Figure 35 Distributions of 16-25yrs, 45-54yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Making submissions to government on proposed law changes that affect licence-holders.'

5.5.2 Support for Fish & Game advocacy activities

Figure 36 details licence-holder support for the selected Fish & Game advocacy activities undertaken. Most respondents felt all of the activities were important with total positive sentiment ranging from 73.2% to 93.0%. As expected, ‘*Working to represent game bird hunters interests in firearms legislation should be a priority*’ had the lowest overall positive sentiment and the highest proportion of neutral responses.

Of those respondents that were not game-orientated (had not purchased a game bird licence at least once in the past 5-years, n=702), 32% were neutral and 6.1% were in disagreement. Of those that were game-orientated (had purchased a game bird licence at least once in the past 5-years, n=433), only 6.6% were neutral and 1.7% in disagreement. This translates into 91.7% support among game-orientated respondents for Fish & Game to advocate for their interests in firearms legislation.

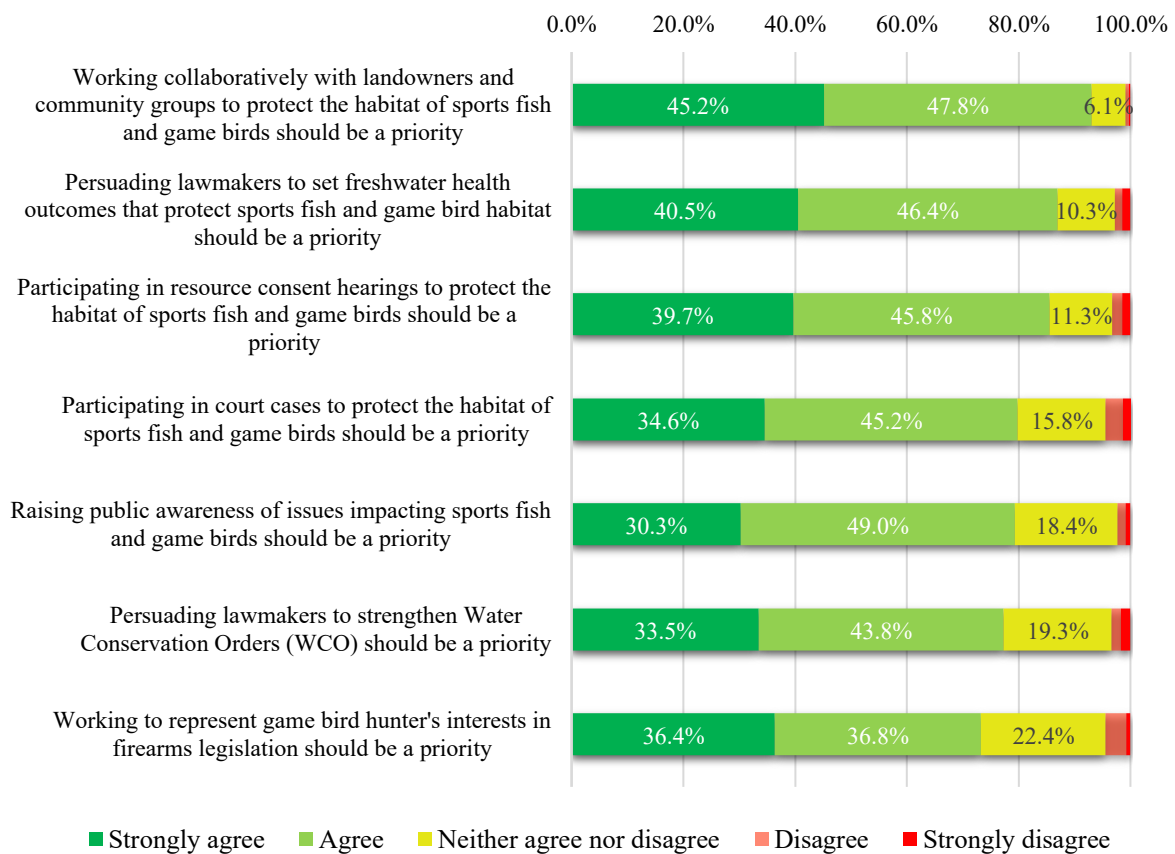


Figure 36 Licence-holder Support for Fish & Game Advocacy Activities

5.5.2.1 Kruskal-Wallis test

The Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test statistic for the unweighted responses, grouped by employment sector revealed that all questions in this section had distributions that differed significantly at $p < .05$. When age-groups were compared, all but one question had distributions that differed significantly and H_0 was retained for ‘*Working to represent game bird hunters interests in firearms legislation should be a priority.*’ Test statistics are shown in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7 Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics for Responses to Fish & Game's Advocacy Activities Grouped by Employment Sector

	H (df=5)	p-value
Persuading lawmakers to set freshwater health outcomes that protect sports fish and game bird habitat should be a priority.	33.897	<.001**
Participating in resource consent hearings to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	38.252	<.001**
Participating in court cases to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	28.116	<.001**
Working collaboratively with landowners and community groups to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	18.828	.002**
Raising public awareness of issues impacting sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	12.445	.029*
Working to represent game bird hunters' interests in firearms legislation should be a priority.	17.261	.004**
Persuading lawmakers to strengthen Water Conservation Orders (WCO) should be a priority. (WCO recognise specific water bodies with outstanding values and protects them in law. There are currently 16 WCO).	54.912	<.001**

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent's economic sector of employment. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

* Significance at $p < .05$, ** Significance at $p < .01$

Table 8 Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics for Responses to Fish & Game's Advocacy Activities Grouped by Age-groups

	H (df=5)	p-value
Persuading lawmakers to set freshwater health outcomes that protect sports fish and game bird habitat should be a priority.	54.159	<.001**
Participating in resource consent hearings to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	47.382	<.001**
Participating in court cases to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	32.924	<.001**
Working collaboratively with landowners and community groups to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	21.212	<.001**
Raising public awareness of issues impacting sports fish and game birds should be a priority.	20.685	<.001**
Working to represent game bird hunters' interests in firearms legislation should be a priority.	7.299	.199
Persuading lawmakers to strengthen Water Conservation Orders (WCO) should be a priority. (WCO recognise specific water bodies with outstanding values and protects them in law. There are currently 16 WCO).	35.004	<.001**

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent's economic sector of employment. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

** Significance at $p < .01$

5.5.2.2 Pairwise comparisons

Once again, for all group pairs with significant differences in distributions, the effect was weak ($r \leq .290$). For comparisons by employment sector, all significant findings involved the *Primary* sector as one of the groups and the most common difference was between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired*. Significant group pairs for each question are detailed below with line graphs to help visualise the distributions. In all but one case, (*Working to represent game bird hunter's interests in firearms legislation should be a priority*) the graphs show those in the *Primary* sector are less positive. Age-group comparisons show the most common significant difference in distributions was between the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age groups with the 65+yrs being more positive.

5.5.2.2.1 Persuading lawmakers to set freshwater health outcomes that protect sports fish and game bird habitat should be a priority.

Dunn's test of pairwise comparisons by employment sector showed a significant but weak difference in the distribution of responses between the *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z = -3.462$, $p_{Adj} = .008$, $r = .153$) and between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -5.782$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .217$). The distributions of the three groups are shown in Figure 37. Pairwise comparisons by age-group showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the 25-34yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -4.967$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .221$), 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -5.560$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .221$), and the 55-64yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -3.569$, $p_{Adj} = .005$, $r = .136$) age groups. The distributions of the four groups are shown in Figure 38.

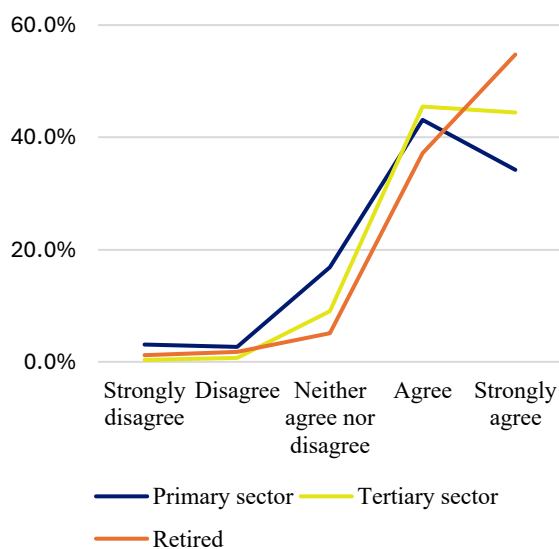


Figure 37 Distribution of the Primary and Tertiary Sectors and Retiree's Responses to: 'Persuading lawmakers to set freshwater health outcomes that protect sports fish and game bird habitat should be a priority.'

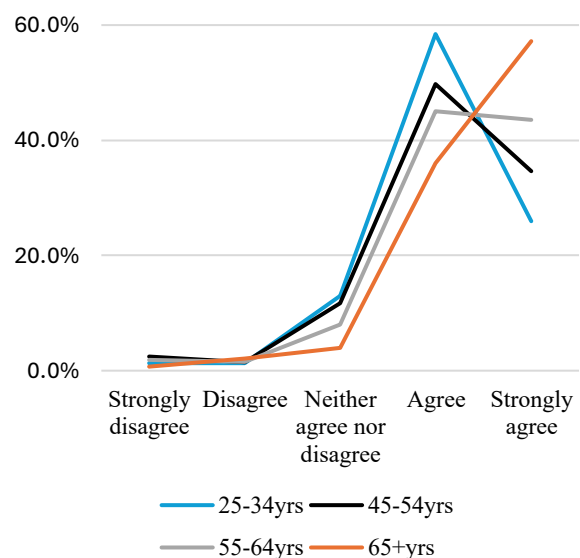
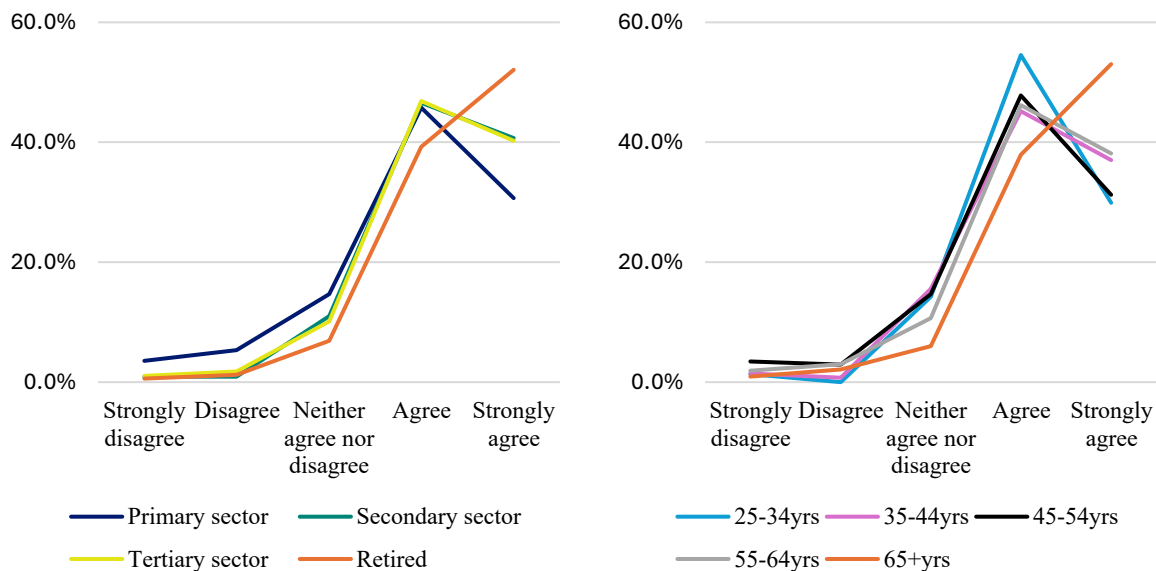


Figure 38 Distribution of the 25-34yrs, 45-54yrs, 55-64yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Persuading lawmakers to set freshwater health outcomes that protect sports fish and game bird habitat should be a priority.'

5.5.2.2.2 Participating in resource consent hearings to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-3.056$, $p_{Adj}=.034$, $r=.145$), the *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z=-3.161$, $p_{Adj}=.024$, $r=.140$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-6.020$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.226$). The distributions are shown in Figure 39. Pairwise comparisons of age-groups showed significant but weak differences between the 25-34yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.546$, $p_{Adj}=.006$, $r=.157$), 35-44yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.517$, $p_{Adj}=.007$, $r=.148$), 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-5.714$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.227$), and 54-55yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-4.001$, $p_{Adj}=.001$, $r=.152$) age groups. The distributions of these groups are shown in Figure 40.



Note: Distributions for Secondary and Tertiary sectors are near coincident.

Figure 39 Distribution of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Sectors and Retiree's Responses to: 'Participating in resource consent hearings to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

Figure 40 Distributions of the 25-34yrs, 35-44yrs, 45-54yrs, 55-64yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Participating in resource consent hearings to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

5.5.2.2.3 Participating in court cases to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-3.790$, $p_{Adj}=.002$, $r=.180$), the *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z=-3.552$, $p_{Adj}=.006$, $r=.157$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-5.016$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.188$). The distributions are shown in Figure 41. Test statistics revealed a significant but weak difference between distributions of 16-24yrs and 25-34yrs ($z=2.949$, $p_{Adj}=.048$, $r=.291$), 16-24yrs and 45-54yrs ($z=3.847$, $p_{Adj}=.002$, $r=.253$), and between 45-54yrs and the 65+yrs ($z=-4.852$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.193$) age groups. The 25-34yrs and 45-54yrs age-groups appear to be less positive than the 65+yrs and the 16-24yrs appear to be more positive than the 65+yrs. The distributions of these four groups are shown in Figure 42.

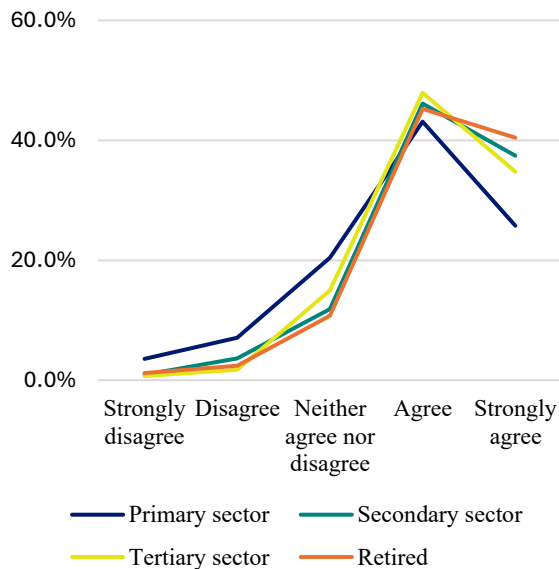


Figure 41 Distribution of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Sectors and Retiree's Responses to: 'Participating in court cases to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

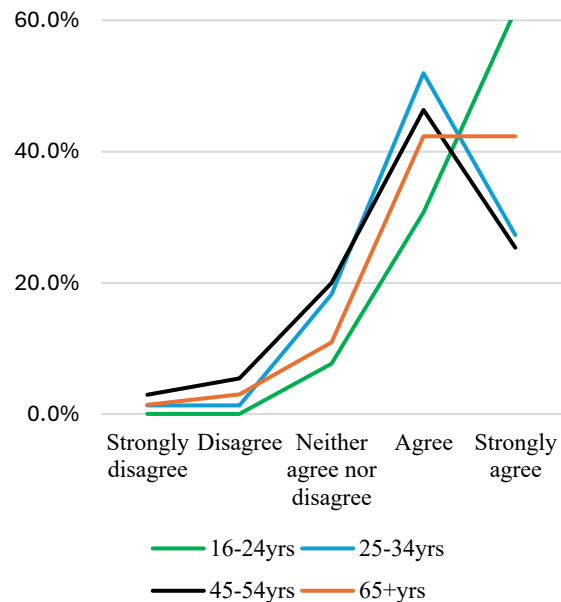


Figure 42 Distribution of 16-24yrs, 25-34yrs, 45-54yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Participating in court cases to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

5.5.2.2.4 Working collaboratively with landowners and community groups to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-3.474$, $p_{Adj}=.008$, $r=.130$). The distributions are shown in Figure 43. This question placed two entity types 'landowners' and 'community groups' in the same response. It is possible that the response from the primary sector would have been more positive if the question had only stipulated 'landowners', given there is a wide spectrum of ideologies among 'community groups.' It is also possible that the *Retired* are over-represented as part of community groups and were therefore overly positive. A comparison of age-groups showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age-groups ($z=-4.174$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.166$). The distributions are shown in Figure 44.

5.5.2.2.5 Raising public awareness of issues impacting sports fish and game birds should be a priority.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-3.287$, $p_{Adj}=.015$, $r=.123$). The distributions are shown in Figure 45. Pairwise comparison of age-groups showed a significant but weak difference in the distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age-groups ($z=-3.624$, $p_{Adj}=.004$, $r=.144$). The distributions are shown in

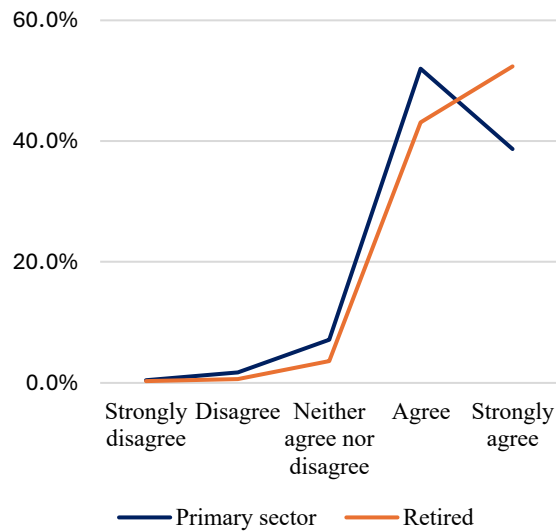


Figure 43 Distribution of the Primary Sector and Retiree's Responses to: 'Working collaboratively with landowners and community groups to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

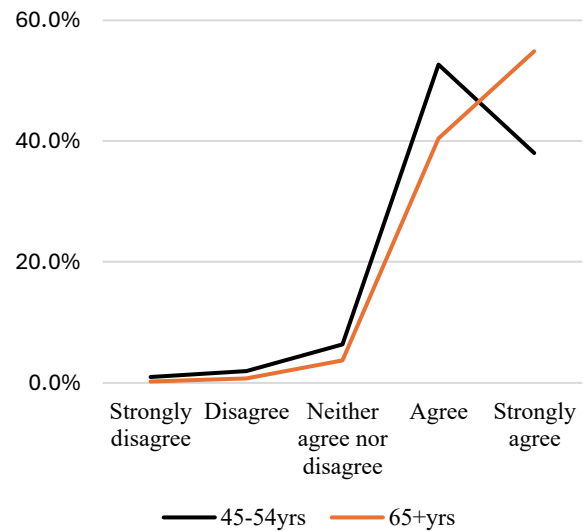


Figure 44 Distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Working collaboratively with landowners and community groups to protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

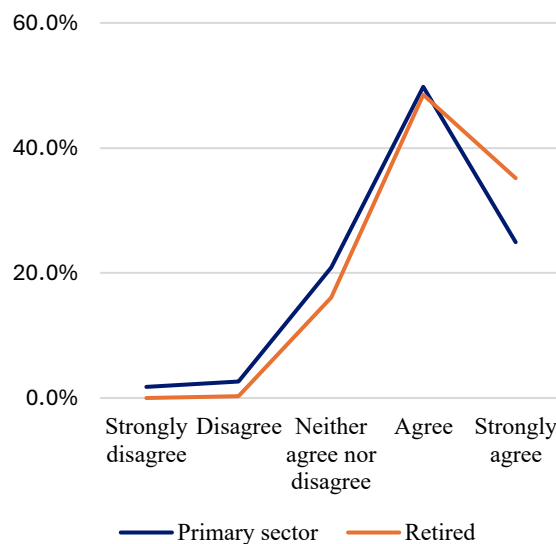


Figure 45 The Distribution of Primary Sector and Retiree's Responses to: 'Raising public awareness of issues impacting sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

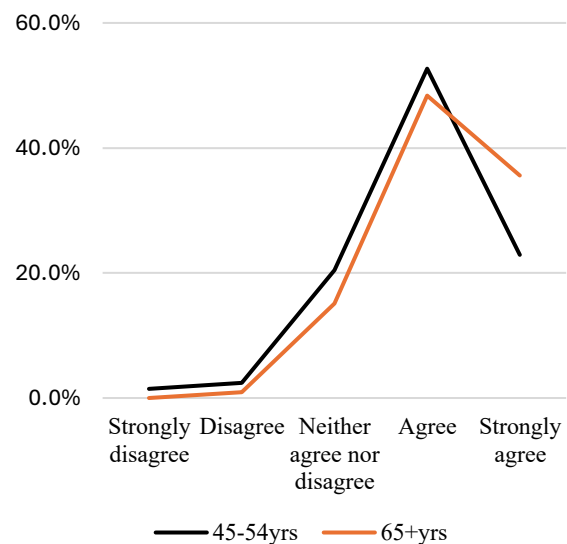


Figure 46 The Distributions of 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Response to: 'Raising public awareness of issues impacting sports fish and game birds should be a priority.'

5.5.2.2.6 Working to represent game bird hunters' interests in firearms legislation should be a priority.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=3.310$, $p_{Adj}=.014$, $r=.124$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 47. It shows the *Retired* to be less positive about firearms representation than the *Primary* sector. A pairwise comparison of age-groups revealed no significant difference in response distributions.

5.5.2.2.7 Persuading lawmakers to strengthen Water Conservation Orders (WCO) should be a priority. (WCO recognise specific water bodies with outstanding values and protects them in law. There are currently 16 WCO.

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-4.156$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.197$), the *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z=-5.093$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.225$), *Primary* and *Quaternary* sectors ($z=-3.367$, $p_{Adj}=.011$, $r=.205$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-7.139$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.268$). The pairwise distributions are shown in [Figure 48](#). Pairwise comparisons based on age-groups revealed four pairs with significant but weak differences in their distribution of responses. These were, 25-34yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.284$, $p_{Adj}=.015$, $r=.146$), 35-44yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.139$, $p_{Adj}=.025$, $r=.132$), 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-4.993$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.198$), and 55-64yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.902$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.148$). The distributions are shown in [Figure 49](#) and all appear less positive than the 65+yrs group.

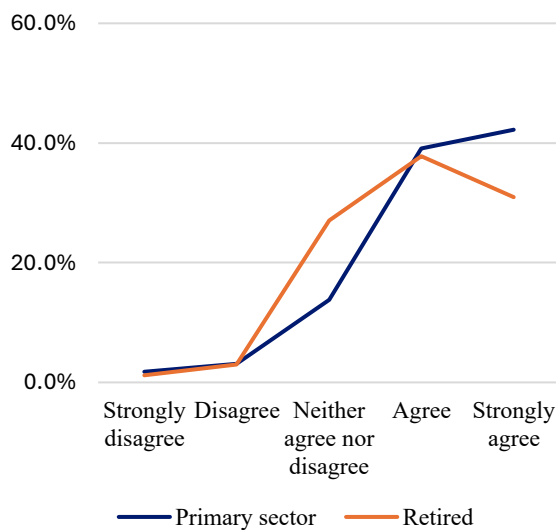


Figure 47 The Distribution of Primary Sector and Retiree's Responses to: 'Working to represent game bird hunters' interests in firearms legislation should be a priority.'

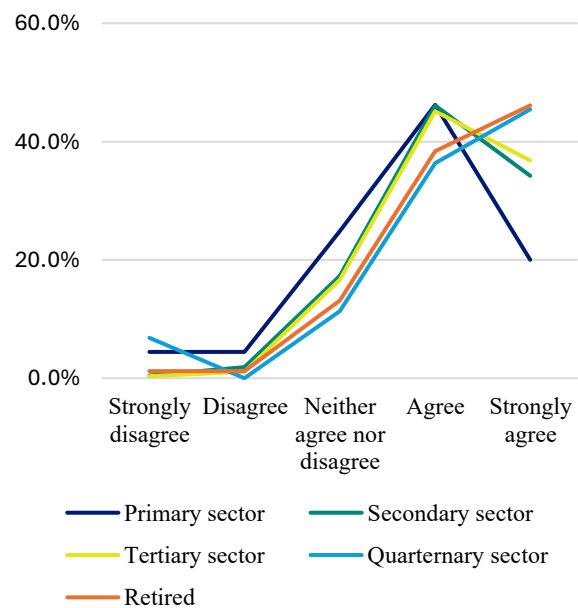


Figure 48 The Distributions of Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, Quaternary and Retiree's Responses to: 'Persuading lawmakers to strengthen Water Conservation Orders (WCO) should be a priority.'

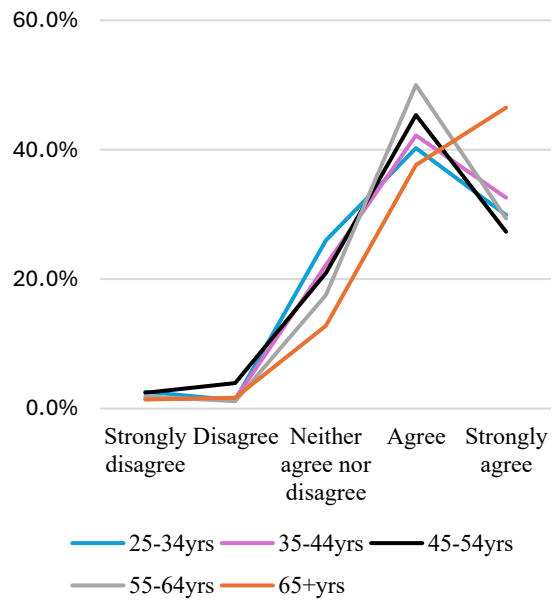


Figure 49 The Distributions of 25-34yrs, 35-44yrs, 45-54yrs, 55-64yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'Persuading lawmakers to strengthen Water Conservation Orders (WCO) should be a priority.'

5.5.3 Expectations of a government regarding matters impacting freshwater fishing and game bird hunting

Licence-holder expectations of a future government regarding matters impacting freshwater fishing and game bird hunting are detailed in Figure 50. Most respondents felt it was important that a future government fulfil the objectives stated in all ten statements. Levels of agreement ranged from 80.3% to 89.5%, with the remainder largely rating as *Somewhat important*.



Figure 50 Expectations of a Government with Regard to Matters Impacting Freshwater Fishing and Game Bird Hunting

5.5.3.1 Kruskal-Wallis test

The Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) statistics, shown in Table 9, revealed that nine of the ten questions in this section had distributions that differed significantly based on respondent's economic sector of employment. Although eight of the ten questions returned significant values when grouped for age-groups, 'How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?' Returned no significant pairwise comparisons with the Dunn-Bonferroni (Dunn's) test.

Table 9 Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics for Responses to Expectations of a Government with Respect to Matters Impacting Freshwater Fishing and Game Bird Hunting Grouped by Employment Sector

	H(df=5)	p-value
How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?	19.137	.002**
How important is it that a government continues to recognise and protect the habitat of trout and salmon?	49.927	<.001**
How important is it that a government sets strong minimum standards for freshwater that protect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?	47.187	<.001**
How important is it that a government recognises the interests of hunters and anglers when reviewing laws impacting the management of Fish & Game species?	27.633	<.001**
How important is it that a government introduces stronger protections to ensure no further loss of wetlands?	51.862	<.001**
How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game New Zealand in managing sports fish and game birds?	32.740	<.001**
How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game to advocate for hunters and anglers?	25.778	<.001**
How important is it that a government protects public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?	27.019	<.001**
How important is it that a government improves public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?	12.439	.029*
How important is it that a government recognises the economic value of freshwater fishing and game bird hunting to New Zealand?	8.916	.112

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent's economic sector of employment. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

* Significance at $p < .05$, ** Significance at $p < .01$

Table 10 Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics for Responses to Expectations of a Government with Respect to Matters Impacting Freshwater Fishing and Game Bird Hunting Grouped by Age-group

	H(df=5)	p-value
How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?	13.129	0.022*
How important is it that a government continues to recognise and protect the habitat of trout and salmon?	34.007	<.001**
How important is it that a government sets strong minimum standards for freshwater that protect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?	18.682	.002**
How important is it that a government recognises the interests of hunters and anglers when reviewing laws impacting the management of Fish & Game species?	11.489	.042*
How important is it that a government introduces stronger protections to ensure no further loss of wetlands?	10.631	.059
How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game New Zealand in managing sports fish and game birds?	18.951	.002**
How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game to advocate for hunters and anglers?	17.621	.003**
How important is it that a government protects public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?	22.139	<.001**
How important is it that a government improves public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?	2.934	.710
How important is it that a government recognises the economic value of freshwater fishing and game bird hunting to New Zealand?	4.317	.505

Note: This table shows the Kruskal-Wallis (H-test) test for differences in distributions in the response to each question based on respondent's economic sector of employment. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.

* Significance at $p < .05$, ** Significance at $p < .01$

5.5.3.2 Pairwise comparisons

Once again, the size of the effect on significantly differing distributions was weak ($r \leq .290$) for comparisons based on both employment sector and age-group. Overall, the *Primary* sector was less positive in their responses and the *Retired* were more positive. As expected, the *65+ yrs* age-group had distributions that very closely followed those of the *Retired* and they were also more positive in their responses. The *45-54 yrs* age group were most frequently significantly different to the *65+ yrs* group and had less positive distributions. Significant comparisons are detailed below.

5.5.3.2.1 How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -2.996$, $p_{Adj} = .041$, $r = .112$), the *Tertiary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -3.065$, $p_{Adj} = .033$, $r = .123$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 51. Despite the

significant value returned by the H-test, there were no pairwise comparisons with distributions that differed significantly by age-group at the $p < .05$ level.

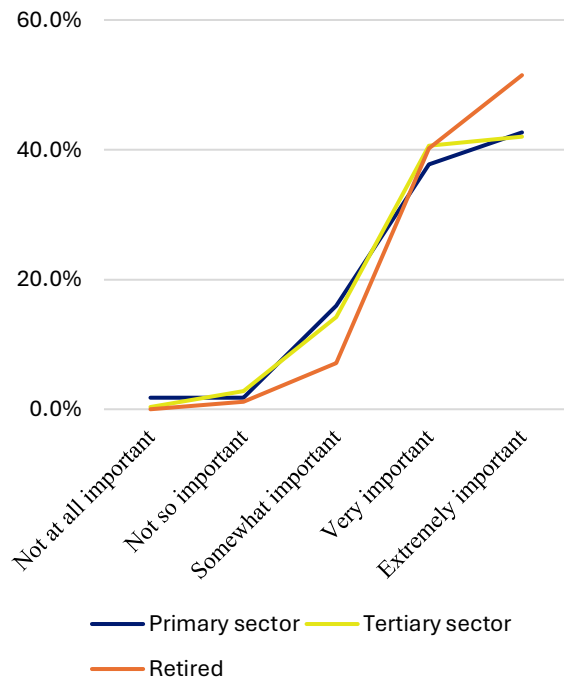


Figure 51 The Distributions of Primary and Tertiary Sectors, and Retiree's Response to: 'How important is it that a government recognises the importance of game bird hunting and freshwater fishing to New Zealanders?'

5.5.3.2.2 How important is it that a government continues to recognise and protect the habitat of trout and salmon?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z = -3.636$, $p_{Adj} = .004$, $r = .173$), *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z = -4.611$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .204$), *Primary* and *Quaternary* sectors ($z = -3.136$, $p_{Adj} = .026$, $r = .191$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -6.917$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .259$). The significant employment sector distributions are shown in Figure 52. Significant but weak differences in distributions were also found between 35-44yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -3.992$, $p_{Adj} = .001$, $r = .168$), and between the 55-64yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -3.184$, $p_{Adj} = .002$, $r = .121$) age -groups. The significant age-group distributions are shown in Figure 53.

5.5.3.2.3 How important is it that a government sets strong minimum standards for freshwater that protect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z = -4.987$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .237$), *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z = -4.984$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .220$), *Primary* and *Quaternary* sectors ($z = -3.071$, $p_{Adj} = .032$, $r = .187$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z = -6.328$, $p_{Adj} < .001$, $r = .237$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 54. Comparisons for age-groups revealed significant differences in distributions between 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -3.550$, $p_{Adj} = .006$, $r = .141$), and between the 55-64yrs and 65+yrs ($z = -3.376$, $p_{Adj} = .011$, $r = .128$), age-groups. The significant age-group distributions are shown in Figure 55.

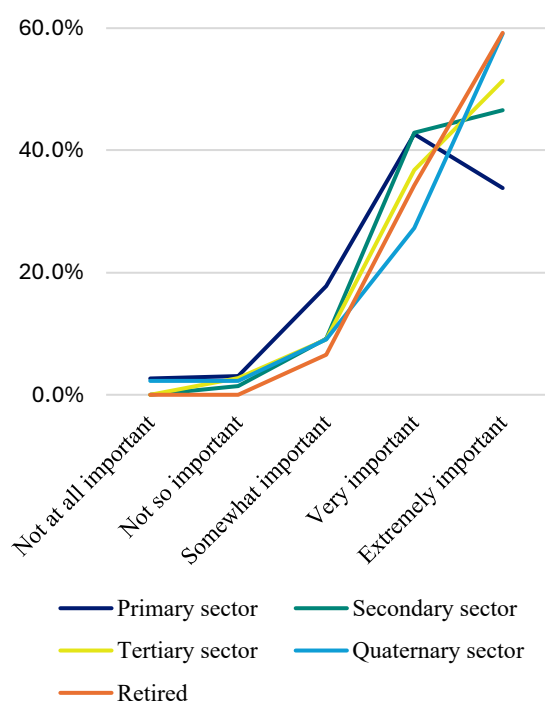


Figure 52 The Distributions of the Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Quaternary, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise and protect the habitat of trout and salmon?'

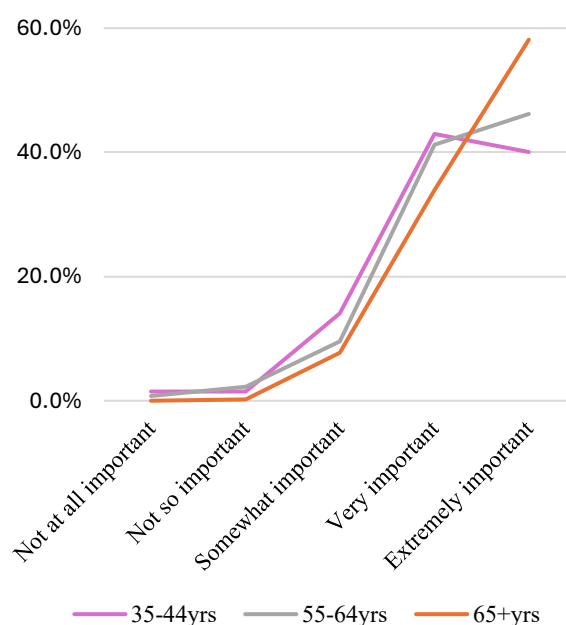


Figure 53 The Distributions of the 35-44yrs, 55-64yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise and protect the habitat of trout and salmon?'

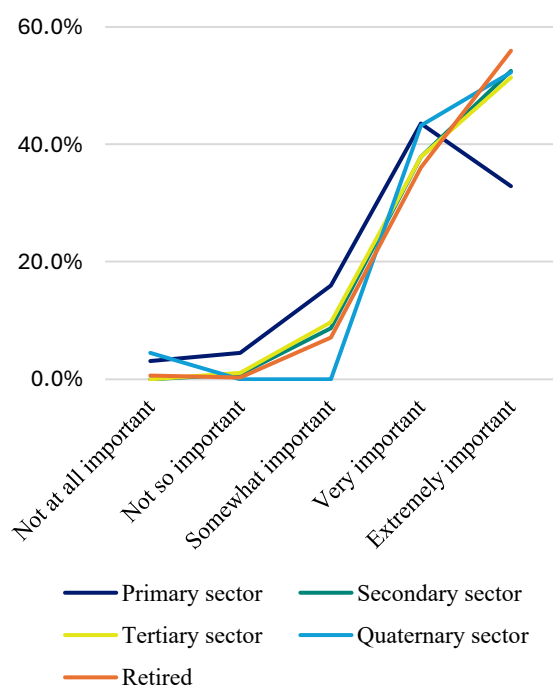


Figure 54 The Distributions of the Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Quaternary, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government

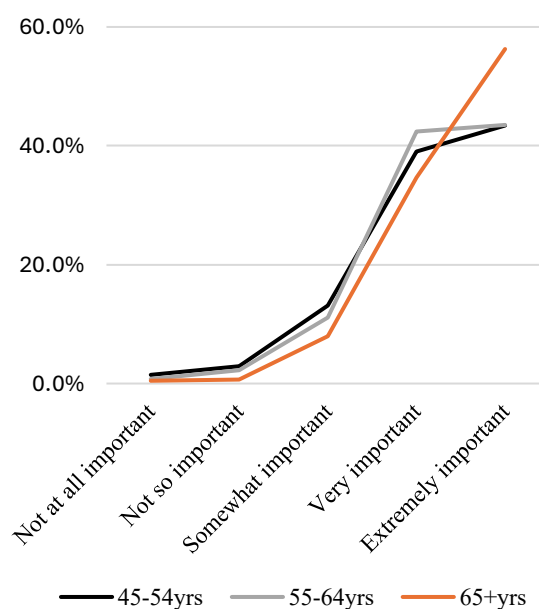


Figure 55 The Distributions of the 45-54yrs, 55-64yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government sets strong minimum

sets strong minimum standards for freshwater that protect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?' standards for freshwater that protect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?'

5.5.3.2.4 How important is it that a government recognises the interests of hunters and anglers when reviewing laws impacting the management of Fish & Game species?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-4.721$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.224$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-3.681$, $p_{Adj}=.003$, $r=.138$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 56. Pairwise comparisons showed a significant but weak difference in distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age-groups and their distributions are shown in Figure 57.

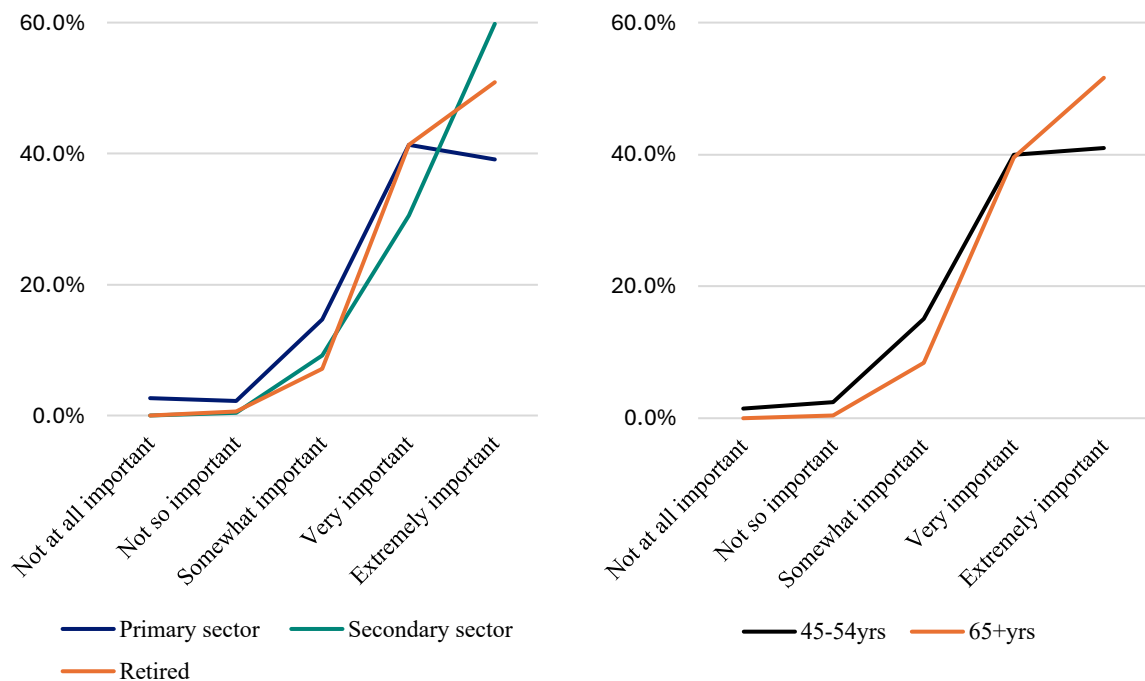


Figure 56 The Distributions of the Primary and Secondary sectors , and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government recognises the interests of hunters and anglers when reviewing laws impacting the management of Fish & Game species?'

Figure 57 The Distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government recognises the interests of hunters and anglers when reviewing laws impacting the management of Fish & Game species?'

5.5.3.2.5 How important is it that a government introduces stronger protections to ensure no further loss of wetlands?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-5.332$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.253$), *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z=-6.634$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.293$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-5.815$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.218$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 58. The test revealed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs age-groups ($z=-3.022$, $p_{Adj}=.038$, $r=.120$). The distributions are shown in Figure 59.

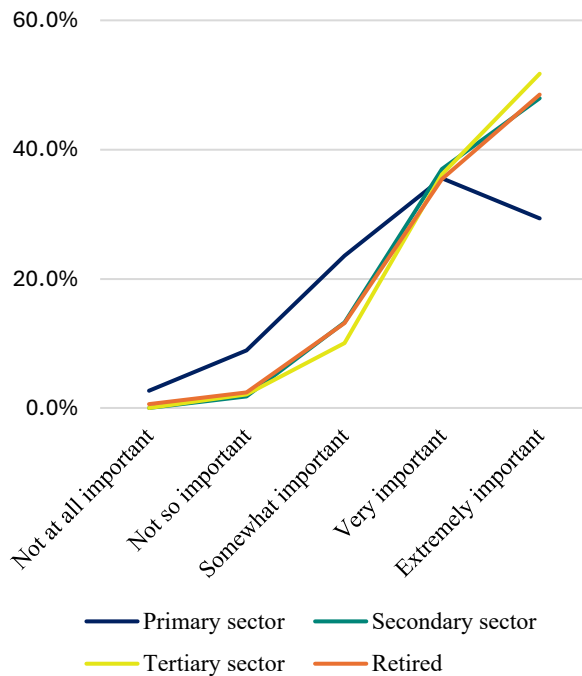


Figure 58 The Distributions of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary sectors, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government introduces stronger protections to ensure no further loss of wetlands?'

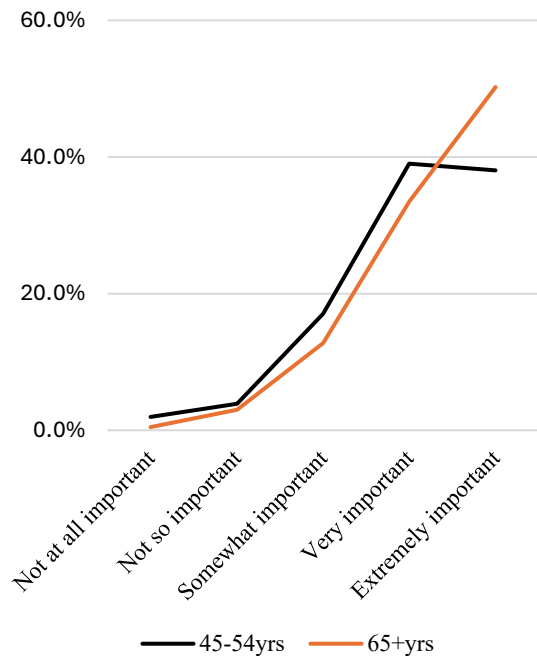


Figure 59 The Distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government introduces stronger protections to ensure no further loss of wetlands?'

5.5.3.2.6 How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game New Zealand in managing sports fish and game birds?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-4.651$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.253$), *Primary* and *Tertiary* sectors ($z=-3.387$, $p_{Adj}=.011$, $r=.293$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-5.277$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.218$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 60. A comparison of age-groups showed a significant but weak difference in distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-4.016$, $p_{Adj}=.001$, $r=.159$) age-groups. Their distributions are shown in Figure 61.

5.5.3.2.7 How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game to advocate for hunters and anglers?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-4.337$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.206$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-4.112$, $p_{Adj}=.001$, $r=.154$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 62. Pairwise comparison of age-groups showed a significant but weak difference between the distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.782$, $p_{Adj}=.002$, $r=.150$) age-groups. Their distributions are shown in Figure 63.

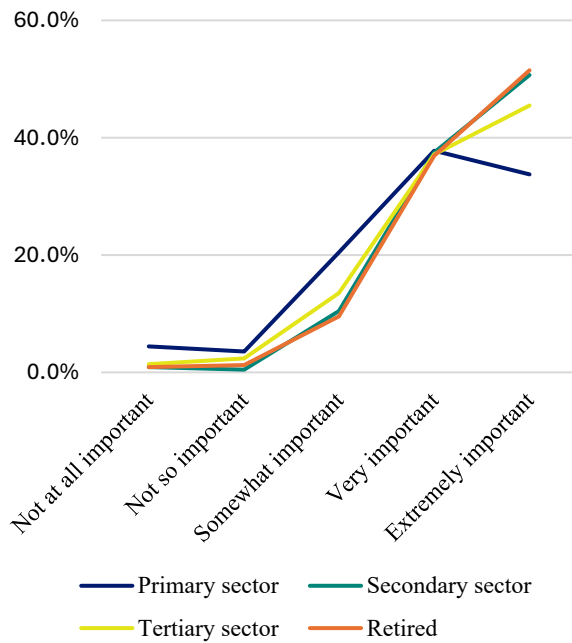


Figure 60 The Distributions of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary sectors, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game New Zealand in managing sports fish and game birds?'

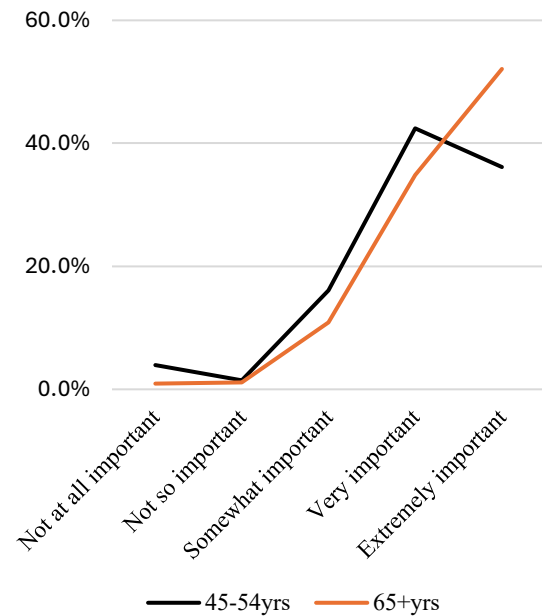


Figure 61 The Distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game New Zealand in managing sports fish and game birds?'

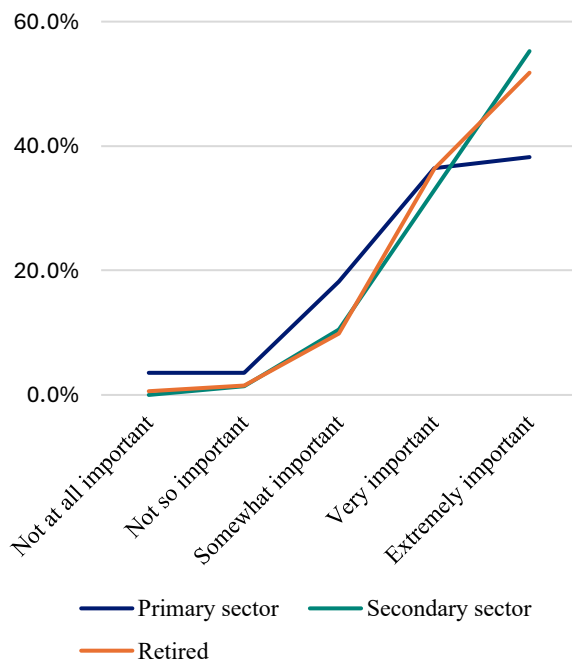


Figure 62 The Distributions of Primary and Secondary Sectors, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game to advocate for hunters and anglers?'

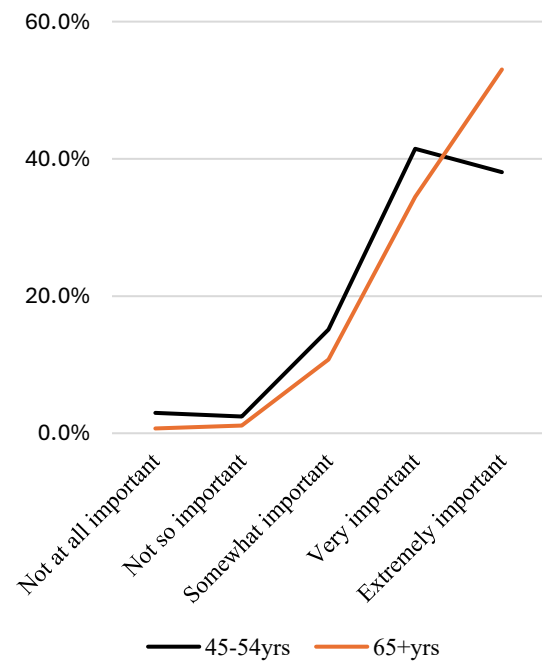


Figure 63 The Distributions of the 45-54yrs and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government continues to recognise the statutory role of Fish & Game to advocate for hunters and anglers?'

5.5.3.2.8 How important is it that a government protects public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-3.271$, $p_{Adj}=.016$, $r=.155$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-4.623$, $p_{Adj}<.001$, $r=.173$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 64. There were significant but weak differences in the distribution of responses to this question between the 25-34yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.367$, $p_{Adj}=.011$, $r=.150$) and between the 35-44yrs and 65+yrs ($z=-3.137$, $p_{Adj}=.026$, $r=.132$) age-groups. The distribution of responses for these age-groups are shown in Figure 65.

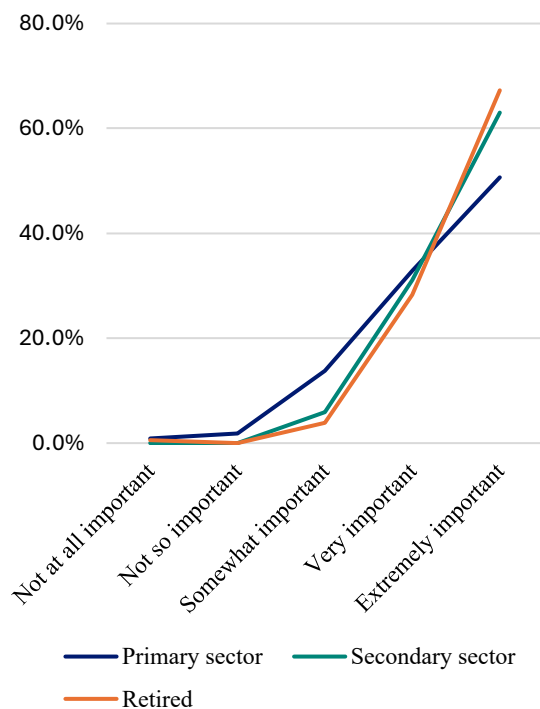


Figure 64 The Distributions of Primary and Secondary Sectors, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government protects public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?'

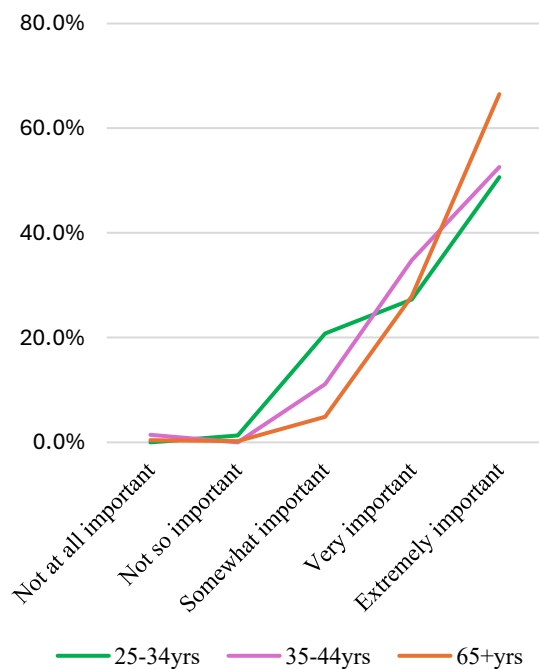


Figure 65 The Distributions of the 25-34yrs, 35-44yrs, and 65+yrs Age-group's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government protects public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?'

5.5.3.2.9 How important is it that a government improves public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?

Dunn's test showed a significant but weak difference in distributions between the *Primary* and *Secondary* sectors ($z=-3.055$, $p_{Adj}=.034$, $r=.145$), and the *Primary* sector and the *Retired* ($z=-2.937$, $p_{Adj}=.044$, $r=.110$). The pairwise distributions are shown in Figure 66. There were no differences in distribution of responses to this question between age-groups that were significant at the $p<.05$ level.

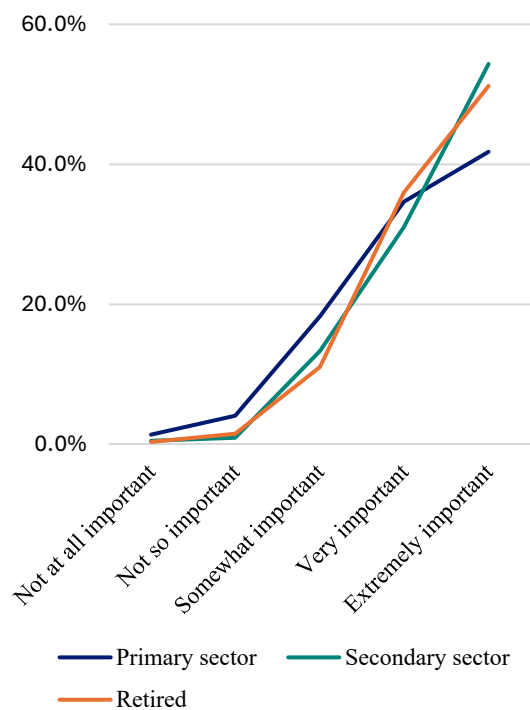


Figure 66 The Distributions of Primary and Secondary, and Retiree's Responses to: 'How important is it that a government improves public access to rivers, lakes and wetlands for fishing and game bird hunting?'

6 Conclusions

1. Access continues to be the highest priority for licence-holders.
2. Some ground has been regained in the perceptions of value in both fishing and game licences.
3. Some ground has been regained in the perceptions of F&G's overall performance.
4. Political and legal representation continues to be the most common theme among those offering comments on their 'good' rating.
5. Comments citing conflict with farmers were halved in number, giving hope that a perception of strained relationships may be easing.
6. Those employed in the primary and secondary sectors are over-represented in the F&G community and, therefore, are important groups with regard to R3 strategies.
7. There is solid support for F&G to continue working in its spheres of advocacy and for the various activities it undertakes as part of that work.
8. There is solid support for a future government to deliver on all ten statements regarding matters impacting freshwater fishing and game bird hunting.
9. Despite perceived tension between F&G and the *Primary* sector, where the sentiment of that sector differs significantly from other sectors towards F&G advocacy, the size of the effect is weak. However, employment in the *Primary* sector should not be conflated with land ownership in the context of these results.
10. The *Retired* and the *65+yr* age group tend to have more positive sentiment with regard to F&G advocacy. Although 92.3% of the *Retired* are 65 or older, only 72.1% of the *65+yr* are retired.
11. Loyal Seniors continue to be loyal. The *65+* age group have the highest proportion of 'Excellent' performance ratings and show very positive support of F&G advocacy.
12. F&G have a clear mandate to represent the interests of game bird hunters in the realm of firearms legislation. This advocacy is also well supported by those in the *Primary* sector.

7 Points to consider

1. F&G continue to face a difficult prospect meeting the expectations of their community. Analysis of comments offered by licence-holders gives life to the sometimes stark contrast between individual's expectations of the organisation. Tension between elements of primary production and F&G advocacy remain part of the resource management discourse. While employment in the *Primary* sector cannot be conflated with land ownership, the results of this survey should give some confidence that the gap between *Primary* sector licence-holder's sentiments towards the things that matter to F&G, compared to the sentiments from other licence-holders, appear small. This provides a very positive basis on which to rebuild collaborative relationships in the primary sector.
2. It is likely that the high number of positive comments citing communications in 2025 was driven, in some part, by the preceding questions within the 2025 special focus on access. The drop in the number of communications-related comments this year was more in keeping with the 2024 results.
3. The rate of lapsed licence-holders in this survey continues to be much less than the estimated 30%. This means the views of lapsed licence-holders are underrepresented.
4. The sample likely has an avidity bias. This is a self-selection bias in which the most avid recreational participants are over-represented.

8 References

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