

**VICTORIAN UTILITY CONSUMPTION HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2015**

**FINAL REPORT**

March 2016

(Incorporating errata September 2016)

* *Prepared for –*

Department of Health and Human Services

50 Lonsdale Street

Melbourne, Victoria 3000

*- Prepared by -*

**Roy Morgan Research**

401 Collins Street



To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 1800 658 521, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia (Department of Health and Human Services) 2016

[](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

With the exception of any images, photographs or branding (including, but not limited to the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo or the Department of Health and Human Services logo), this work, Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence.

The terms and conditions of this licence, including disclaimer of warranties and limitation of liability are available at (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>).

You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria, Australia (Department of Health and Human Services) as the owner of the copyright in the work, indicate if any changes have been made to the work and comply with the other licence terms.

Available at: http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/victorian-utility-consumption-household-survey-2015

An appropriate citation for this report is:

Department of Health and Human Services 2016, *Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015*, Roy Morgan Research Ltd, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne

INDEX

[EXECUTIVE SUMMARY i](#_Toc445571628)

[Background i](#_Toc445571629)

[Approach i](#_Toc445571630)

[Sample Characteristics iii](#_Toc445571631)

[Energy Usage, Consumption and Expenditure vi](#_Toc445571632)

[Water Usage, Consumption and Expenditure x](#_Toc445571633)

[Council Rates and Expenditure xiii](#_Toc445571634)

[Knowledge and Take-up of Concessions xiv](#_Toc445571635)

[Difficulties in Meeting Bill Payments xv](#_Toc445571636)

[1 INTRODUCTION 1](#_Toc445571637)

[1.1 BACKGROUND 1](#_Toc445571638)

[1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 1](#_Toc445571639)

[1.3 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH 2](#_Toc445571640)

[1.3.1 Collection of Survey Data 3](#_Toc445571641)

[1.4 LIMITATIONS OF SURVEY AND BILLING DATA 6](#_Toc445571642)

[2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 9](#_Toc445571643)

[2.1 SUB-GROUP DEFINITIONS 9](#_Toc445571644)

[2.2 SAMPLING 10](#_Toc445571645)

[2.2.1 Sample Frame 10](#_Toc445571646)

[2.2.2 Sample Stratification and Selection 11](#_Toc445571647)

[2.2.3 Survey Respondent 14](#_Toc445571648)

[2.2.4 Sample Interviewed 15](#_Toc445571649)

[2.2.5 Sample Returning Consent Forms 16](#_Toc445571650)

[2.3 TELEPHONE INTERVIEW STAGE 18](#_Toc445571651)

[2.3.1 Pre-interview mail-out 18](#_Toc445571652)

[2.3.2 CATI interviewing 18](#_Toc445571653)

[2.3.3 Follow-up of consent forms 19](#_Toc445571654)

[2.4 OBTAINING BILLING AND CONSUMPTION DATA FROM SUPPLIERS AND COUNCILS 20](#_Toc445571655)

[2.5 DATA IMPUTATION FOR BILLING AND CONSUMPTION ITEMS 21](#_Toc445571656)

[2.6 SAMPLE WEIGHTING 24](#_Toc445571657)

[2.7 RESPONSE RATES 30](#_Toc445571658)

[2.8 THIS REPORT 33](#_Toc445571659)

[2.8.1 Notations 33](#_Toc445571660)

[2.8.2 Comparisons with past reports 33](#_Toc445571661)

[3 SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS 35](#_Toc445571662)

[3.1 SAMPLE OVERVIEW 35](#_Toc445571663)

[3.2 SAMPLE GROUPS 37](#_Toc445571664)

[3.2.1 Concession Status 37](#_Toc445571665)

[3.2.2 Age and Gender of the Selected Respondent 39](#_Toc445571666)

[3.3 HOUSEHOLD PROFILE 41](#_Toc445571667)

[3.3.1 Length of Time Living at Current Address 41](#_Toc445571668)

[3.3.2 Household Size 42](#_Toc445571669)

[3.3.3 Incidence of Children under 15 in Household 43](#_Toc445571670)

[3.3.4 Derived Total Household Income 44](#_Toc445571671)

[3.3.5 Main Language Spoken in the Household 46](#_Toc445571672)

[3.3.6 Home Ownership Status 47](#_Toc445571673)

[3.3.7 Incidence of Other Household Members Holding Concession Cards 48](#_Toc445571674)

[3.3.8 Registered Motor Vehicles 50](#_Toc445571675)

[3.3.9 Date when Home was Built 52](#_Toc445571676)

[3.3.10 Number of Bedrooms in the Home 54](#_Toc445571677)

[3.3.11 Material from which Home is Built 56](#_Toc445571678)

[3.3.12 Dwelling Type 58](#_Toc445571679)

[3.3.13 Incidence of Ceiling Insulation 60](#_Toc445571680)

[3.4 RESPONDENT PROFILE 62](#_Toc445571681)

[3.4.1 Length of Time Holding a Concession Card 62](#_Toc445571682)

[3.4.2 Employment Status 63](#_Toc445571683)

[3.4.3 Income Sources 65](#_Toc445571684)

[3.4.4 Personal Income 66](#_Toc445571685)

[3.4.5 Derived Personal Income 67](#_Toc445571686)

[4 ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND EXPENDITURE 69](#_Toc445571687)

[4.1 USE OF ELECTRICITY AND GAS 69](#_Toc445571688)

[4.1.1 Incidence of Electricity Use 69](#_Toc445571689)

[4.1.2 Incidence of Gas Use 69](#_Toc445571690)

[4.2 ELECTRICITY COSTS AND CONSUMPTION 73](#_Toc445571691)

[4.2.1 Electricity Consumption 73](#_Toc445571692)

[4.2.2 Electricity Costs 84](#_Toc445571693)

[4.3 GAS COSTS AND CONSUMPTION 100](#_Toc445571694)

[4.3.1 Gas Consumption 100](#_Toc445571695)

[4.3.2 Gas Charges 106](#_Toc445571696)

[5 WATER CONSUMPTION AND EXPENDITURE 117](#_Toc445571697)

[5.1 INCIDENCE OF BILLING FOR WATER CONSUMPTION 117](#_Toc445571698)

[5.1.1 Incidence of Claiming to Receive a Water Bill 117](#_Toc445571699)

[5.1.2 Type of Water Bill Claimed to Receive 118](#_Toc445571700)

[5.2 WATER COSTS AND CONSUMPTION 120](#_Toc445571701)

[5.2.1 Water Consumption 120](#_Toc445571702)

[5.2.2 Water Charges 126](#_Toc445571703)

[6 COUNCIL RATES AND EXPENDITURE 138](#_Toc445571704)

[6.1 BILLING FOR COUNCIL RATES AND ASSOCIATED CONCESSIONS 138](#_Toc445571705)

[6.1.1 Incidence of Being Billed for Council Rates 138](#_Toc445571706)

[6.1.2 Incidence of Receiving a DHHS Concession on Council Rates 141](#_Toc445571707)

[6.2 COUNCIL RATES CHARGES 142](#_Toc445571708)

[7 KNOWLEDGE AND TAKE UP OF CONCESSIONS 151](#_Toc445571709)

[7.1 REPORTED Incidence of Claiming Concessions 151](#_Toc445571710)

[8 DIFFICULTIES IN MEETING BILL PAYMENTS 156](#_Toc445571711)

[8.1 INCIDENCE AND FREQUENCY OF DIFFICULTIES MEETING BILL PAYMENTS 156](#_Toc445571712)

[8.1.1 Electricity Payment Difficulties 156](#_Toc445571713)

[8.1.2 Gas Payment Difficulties 158](#_Toc445571714)

[8.1.3 Water Payment Difficulties 159](#_Toc445571715)

[8.1.4 Council Rates Payment Difficulties 161](#_Toc445571716)

[8.2 ASSISTANCE WITH MEETING PAYMENTS 163](#_Toc445571717)

[8.3 DISCONNECTION AND RECONNECTION 167](#_Toc445571718)

[8.4 THE UTILITY RELIEF GRANTS SCHEME (URGS) 170](#_Toc445571719)

[8.4.1 Awareness of the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS) 170](#_Toc445571720)

[8.4.2 Advice about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS) 171](#_Toc445571721)

[8.4.3 Assistance through Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS) 171](#_Toc445571722)

[9 GLOSSARY 173](#_Toc445571723)

**Appendices**………..Provided separately.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Background

The Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 is a follow-on from the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey conducted in 2007, 2001 and 1996. Telephone interviews were conducted amongst concession and non-concession households throughout Victoria.

The Department of Health and Human Services commissioned Roy Morgan Research to conduct this survey in 2015 to identify patterns of household utility consumption amongst Victorian households in 2014, and to make comparisons with data collected and developed in 2007, 2001 and 1996. Furthermore, the Department sought to examine the impact of utility pricing changes and concession availability on consumption patterns and use the information collected as inputs into modelling exercises for policy development.

#### Approach

For the 2014 survey Roy Morgan Research selected Victorian households from its Single Source database, stratified and selected on the presence or absence of government benefits received in Victoria. This initial sample was then mailed out an information pack for the survey, following which the household was contacted to complete a short telephone survey. At the end of the telephone survey, respondents were asked to complete and return a set of consent forms which allowed Roy Morgan Research to contact energy suppliers, water suppliers and councils in order to obtain billing and consumption information for each household providing consent.

The sampling and data collection approach for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 differed somewhat from the approaches taken in 2007, 2001 and 1996. Past Victorian Utility Consumption Household Surveys had employed a face-to-face survey methodology and had only covered selected regions of Victoria, whereas for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 almost the entire state of Victoria was in scope.

The research methodology is discussed in detail in the body of the report. Telephone interviews were conducted with 2,204 respondents who agreed to send consent forms that would enable their billing data to be obtained from their relevant suppliers. Overall 1,861 households provided one or more consent forms.

The collection of reliable billing data from utilities and councils was a critical and integral component of the project. While the majority of councils and utilities provided the required data within the required timeframes, several, including one of the largest energy suppliers, provided the data much later than requested.

At the time of preparing the draft report (mid December 2015) final data had still not been received from one major gas and electricity supplier and a related (more minor) electricity supplier.  This missing data has now been received and processed (the final component being provided in early February 2016), and overall figures have since been updated. The data in this report therefore differs in some respects from the draft report.

In past surveys, the geographic scope has been limited to the Melbourne metropolitan area and to a small number of major regional cities. For this survey, however, almost all of Victoria was covered. This clearly improves the confidence with which the results can be generalised to the whole population of Victoria, but means that most comparisons with past surveys’ results need to be conducted with care.

In previous surveys a small component of the sample was defined as “LPG area”, which was geographically defined based on limited available information, and was thus geographically distinct from the Melbourne and Country VIC strata in those past surveys.  In 2014, no specific “LPG area” has been defined: rather households that both reported in the telephone interview that they use LPG for heating/cooking/hot water and did not provide a consent form for a gas supplier have been defined as “LPG households” but are not a separate stratum for sampling purposes. This change in approach should allow for a much more representative sample of LPG households. It should be noted that initial results suggested that the responses provided by telephone showed a degree of possible misunderstanding of “LPG” usage by mains gas users may have occurred. For this final report it has been decided that to qualify as an “LPG household” for analysis purposes, the household had to meet two criteria: firstly, indicating that they use LPG for heating/cooking/hot water and secondly, not providing a consent form for a mains gas supplier.

Throughout this report primary analysis has been conducted amongst three main sub-groups – aged concession households, other concession households and non-concession households. Whilst this report refers to a survey that was conducted in 2015, associated billing and consumption data was collected for the 2014 calendar year for electricity, gas and water and for the 2013-14 financial year for council rates. However, all survey results refer to the year 2014 for simplicity.

#### Sample Characteristics

A total of 1,861 households both completed the telephone interview and provided consent form(s) so that billing and consumption data could be obtained from suppliers and councils. Of these, 61% were from Melbourne and 39% from country Victoria.

Just under half (45%) of households were defined as concession households, with aged and non-aged concession households representing 23% and 22% respectively of the total sample. The proportion of non-concession households in 2014 (55%) was slightly lower than in previous years of the study.

As with all past surveys, the sample has been weighted to households, rather than to individuals. Nevertheless, it is instructive to consider some characteristics of the selected respondent/main bill-payer. Overall, the 2014 sample comprises proportionately more females (63%) than males (37%). Similar gender distributions are evident across household types. A similar gender distribution was evident when the sample was analysed by region, with the proportion of females in country areas (67%) being slightly higher than in Melbourne (61%).

As would be expected, the great majority (98%) of aged concession card holders were aged 65 years or over, while the other concession sample included higher proportions (95%) aged 25-64. The age profile of the selected respondent/main bill-payer from non-concession households is relatively similar to that of other concession households. The mean age amongst aged concession card holders was 72.7 years, substantially higher than that for the selected respondents from other concession households (52.2 years). Within the total concession household sample the selected respondent/main bill-payer had a mean age of 62.6 years compared with 50.5 years for non-concession households. Little difference was evident when examined by region, with respondents from country Victoria having a mean age of 57.0 years, compared with 55.7 years for those from Melbourne.

Over three-quarters of respondents (78%) had lived at their current address for more than 5 years, 21% for between 2 and 5 years, and 1% for less than 2 years. Half (49%) of aged concession households had lived at their current address for over 20 years, which was roughly twice the proportion for other concession (26%) and non-concession (27%) households.

One-quarter (24%) of all respondents lived by themselves, while one-third (33%) lived with one other person. Not surprisingly, aged concession households were much more likely to comprise smaller households, with 88% of selected respondents/main bill-payers living either by themselves or with one other person. In contrast, non-concession respondents were more likely to live in larger households, with 36% living in households of four or more persons. The prevalence of aged concession card holders living alone has been on the decline since 1996, while the proportion of non-concession respondents living alone has slowly increased over this period. The proportion of other concession card holders living alone rose substantially (from 19% to 31%) compared with 2007.

Seventy five per cent of all participating households had no children under 15 years living in them. Almost all aged concession households (98%) had no children under 15 living in them, compared with 71% of other concession households and 67% of non-concession households.

Average estimated household income was much higher for non-concession ($120,022 per annum) than concession households ($57,270 per annum). Thirteen per cent of concession households had a total estimated income of less than $20,000 annually, compared with just 2% of non-concession households. Households in Melbourne had higher estimated average annual household income ($96,103) than households in country Victoria ($77,869).

Eighty per cent of households were currently buying or already owned their own home, while 20% were renting. Owning or paying off a home was more prevalent amongst non-concession households (87%) than concession households (71%), though 84% of aged concession households were home owners, including 79% who owned their house outright. Renting was far more prevalent among other concession households (43%) compared with aged concession (15%) and non-concession households (13%).

Forty two per cent of concession households had another member of the household holding a concession card of some type. In contrast, only 11% of non-concession households included members with a concession card, with the majority of these holding a Health Care Card (7%). Results were broadly consistent with those of 2007 and 2001, however the proportion of other concession households with other members holding a Health Care Card almost halved between 2001 (33%) and 2014 (17%), while remaining fairly steady among aged concession and non-concession households.

Overall, an average of 1.42 persons per household had a vehicle registered in their name, which was marginally higher than in 2007. Non-concession households had the highest average number of persons with a vehicle registered in their name (1.56, compared with 1.26 for concession households).

Overall, the majority of homes were built before 1991 (66%), and this was generally consistent across sub-groups. Non-concession households were almost twice as likely (15%) as concession households (8%) to live in a home built after 2004.

Overall, brick veneer was the most common material from which homes were built (65%). Brick veneer homes were more common in Melbourne (68%) than in country Victoria (58%). In contrast, weatherboard/timber homes were more common in country Victoria (24%) than in Melbourne (17%). The great majority of homes had 3 or more bedrooms.

The great majority of respondents lived in separate houses (80%). Not surprisingly, separate houses were more common amongst country Victoria (90%) than Melbourne (76%) residents. Renters were considerably less likely to live in separate houses than were home owners/buyers (84%). About one-quarter (25%) of public renters lived in low rise flats/units, compared with 19% of private renters and 5% of home owners/buyers. Homes built before 1991 were less likely to be semi-detached (6%) than those built between 1991 and 2004 (10%) or after 2004 (13%).

The great majority of households (87%) had some ceiling insulation, an increase of 10 percentage points over 2007. Non-concession households (90%) were more likely than concession households (85%) to have some insulation. Home owners/buyers (95%) were much more likely than private renters (58%) or public renters (55%) to have some insulation. Homes built before 1991 were slightly less likely to have any insulation (87%) than those built between 1991 and 2004 (93%) or after 2004 (94%).

Half (50%) of all respondents reported employment as one of their income sources, and 45% reported government benefits as one of their income sources. Not surprisingly, the great majority of respondents in concession households derived income from government benefits (89%) while most respondents in non-concession households derived income from employment (74%). The proportion of respondents in aged concession households reporting self-funded income has risen in every survey since 1996, and substantially since the last survey (47% in 2014, compared with 21% in 2007).

#### Energy Usage, Consumption and Expenditure

Well over 99% of households in 2014 paid electricity bills, almost identical results to those observed in past surveys. On average, 2014 electricity bill-payers received 5.2 bills per year, compared with an average of 4.6 bills per year in 2007. Almost all electricity bill-payers (99.2%) received all bills based on an actual reading of the meter.

In 2014, 96% of households paid their electricity bill in full[[1]](#footnote-1), with little difference between Melbourne (96%) and country Victoria (97%). Public renters (80%) were less likely than home owners (98%), home buyers (97%) or private renters (96%) to have fully paid their electricity bill. Concession households (92%) were less likely than non-concession households (98%) to have paid their electricity bill in full.

The results indicate that average annual **electricity consumption** per household has decreased by 19.6% since 2007. There are likely to be many factors behind this result. In particular, the steady increase in the proportion of households that generate some of their own power by means of solar panels is likely to have a considerable impact on *mean* consumption, though of course this particular impact only applies in a minority of households (approximately one in five). Factors that would affect a large proportion of households would include an increase in energy saving appliances and light bulbs. Further, media and community awareness of climate change and the impetus to reduce the carbon footprint may have encouraged energy saving behaviour. Finally, the impact of significantly higher unit electricity prices may have also acted as a curb on consumption.

In 2014, 44% of all households with electricity bills received the Annual Electricity Concession, up from the 36% recorded in 2007 (when it was known as the Winter Energy Concession). Incidence of receiving the Annual Electricity Concession was highest amongst aged concession households (93%) and other concession households (86%). The average Annual Electricity Concession amount received was $165.

One in ten households received the Controlled Load Electricity Concession in 2014. The average concession amount was $34.

Overall some type of DHHS funded concession was received in 2014 by 44% of households with electricity bills (38% in 2007), although the incidence was far higher amongst concession households (89%, up from 77% in 2007) and public rental households (80%, up from 74% in 2007). The survey does not indicate the concession status of each person whose name is on each bill, but defines the concession status of the household according to the concession status of the respondent, who is the main bill-payer. Therefore it is not possible to calculate a precise estimate of the proportion of *eligible* households that actually received an electricity concession. Nevertheless, a very close approximation is the proportion of ‘concession households’ that received the concession.

The average DHHS concession amount received by households in 2014 was $186, representing an 82% increase since the $100 recorded in 2007 and following the 64% increase between 2001 and 2007 (1996 data is not strictly comparable with the other survey results).

One in five households (19%) received generation or solar credits, with an average annual value of $596. Households in Melbourne were less likely than those in country Victoria to receive these credits (17% and 24% respectively) and the credits earned tended to be lower (average of $563 , compared with $662). Aged concession households (22%) were more likely to receive generation or solar credits than non-concession (19%) or other concession (16%) households. The average generation or solar credit was highest among non-concession households ($715), compared with $497 for aged concession households and $379 among non-concession households.

As in 2007, less than 1% of households received a Utility Relief Grant Scheme (URGS) grant for electricity in 2014. The average URGS payment was $452, compared with $429 in 2007.

In 2014, 80% of households with electricity bills received some other form of supplier funded discount, with an average annual value of $142 ($48 in 2007). Only a minority of electricity suppliers provided explanatory notes on the nature of other discounts. To the extent this information was provided, the discounts were usually said to be guaranteed discounts and/or pay on time discounts.

Overall, almost all households (99%) received some sort of discount or concession off their electricity bill. This was up from the 79% reported in 2007, but a return to the 100% figure of 2001. The average amount received in 2014 was $327, which was almost four times the average amount received in 2007 ($86).

The average total electricity charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were *not* applied) in 2014 was $1,455 (excluding GST), up 54% from $946 in 2007. After taking concessions and discounts into account, the average annual electricity bill paid by households in 2014 was $1,247 (including GST), up 28% from $973 in 2007.

The majority of households **used mains gas** (88%), consistent with the findings of the 2007 survey. Households in Melbourne (94%) were more likely to use mains gas than those in country Victoria (72%) again consistent with 2007’s results. Using the adjusted LPG definition already referred to, cylinder gas (LPG) was estimated to be used in 11% of households in country Victoria, and in just 1% of households in Melbourne.

In 2014, each mains gas-using household on average consumed 46,845 megajoules of gas, compared with 62,529 MJ in 2007, 59,415 MJ in 2001 and 54,851 MJ in 1996. This represents an average decrease in gas consumption per household of 25.1% since the 2007 survey. This decrease in consumption was consistent across the various sub groups, with the only one differing substantially being single person households (down 20.0%).

Possible explanations for the decline in gas consumption could include weather differences between the years, an increase in solar hot water systems, an increase in the use of gas-efficient appliances, increased media focus on climate change having an impact, an increase in households that generate their own electricity switching some of their energy usage from gas to solar electricity, and the impact of significantly higher per unit gas prices (an increase of approximately 90% between 2007 and 2014).

Gas consumers on average received 6.2 bills per year in 2014, which was consistent with 2007 (6.3 bills). The vast majority (94.4%) of gas bill-payers received bills based on actual meter readings only.

In 2014, 97% of gas using households paid their annual gas bill in full, with little difference in incidence across the various sample types. Seven per cent of households paid their gas bills by compulsory instalment, down from 13% in 2007. Public renters (18%) were by far the most likely to be paying by compulsory instalments, compared with 9% of private renters, 9% of home buyers and 6% of home owners. Similarly, other concession households (14%) were much more likely than non-concession (6%) or aged concession (2%) households to be paying by compulsory instalments. Households in Melbourne (6%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (9%) to be paying by compulsory instalments.

In 2014, 42% of gas paying households received the DHHS concession on their gas bill, up from 27% in 2007. Respondents in Melbourne (41%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (46%) to receive a DHHS concession on their gas bill in 2014. The DHHS concession was obtained by 82% of public renters, compared with 49% of home owners, 47% of private renters and 21% of those paying off their home. The average size of the DHHS concession in 2014 was $85, virtually unchanged from 2007 ($86).

The average total gas charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were *not* applied) in 2014 was $993 (excluding GST), up 47% from $675 in 2007. After taking concessions and discounts into account, households that received gas bills in 2014 spent an average of $980 (including GST) per year on gas consumption compared with $700 in 2007, $500 in 2001 and $415 in 1996. This represents an increase in outlays of 40.0% since 2007, despite a reduction in gas consumption over the same period. This continues the trend since 1996 of gas bills increasing at a rate well above the inflation rate.

The average annual gas bill was higher in Melbourne ($994) than in country Victoria ($926), and higher for non-concession households ($1,050) than concession households ($892). The average amount paid by aged concession households ($885) represented an increase of 48.5% since 2007, compared with 42.4%% for non-concession households and 30.6% for other concession households. As expected, the average amount paid rose with household size, though the rate of increase since 2007 for one or two person households (both 45.5%) was higher than for three (38.4%) or four (37.9%) person households.

#### Water Usage, Consumption and Expenditure

Overall, 92% of households claimed to have **received a water bill** in 2014, virtually unchanged from previous surveys. A higher proportion of concession than non-concession households claimed to receive water consumption only bills (22% and 14% respectively).

On average, households received four water bills per year (3.8). In 2014, 98% of households paid their total 2014 amount owing for water in full, with very little difference in incidence across the various sample groups. Seven per cent of households made payments by compulsory instalment, with little difference in incidence between households in Melbourne (7%) and country Victoria (6%). Public renters (19%) were more likely than private renters (11%), home buyers (10%) or home owners (3%) to have paid by compulsory instalment. Other concession households (13%) were more likely to have paid by compulsory instalment than aged concession (6%) or non-concession (5%) households.

Average annual **water consumption** per household has fallen by 25% since 2007, from 216 kilolitres to 162 kilolitres in 2014. This follows the 22% reduction between the 2007 and 2001 surveys. This fall in water consumption is possibly a result of water restrictions across Victoria leading to households modifying their water consumption habits, and suggests that some of these habits have been maintained after the partial easing of these restrictions. Other factors could include increased use of water-efficient or water-saving fittings and water efficient appliances. An increase in the installation and use of water tanks may also be a factor. Related factors would also include the extent of media focus on climate change and water-shortage issues, which could certainly have played a part in changing water usage behaviour. Sensitivity of demand to increasing unit prices could also be a factor.

Aged concession households had the lowest average water consumption rates of all sample types (138 kL), but the percentage fall in consumption between 2007 and 2014 (-24%) is similar to both other concession households (-28%) and non-concession households (-23%) over the same period.

Not surprisingly, water consumption increases with household size, ranging from an average of 91 kilolitres per annum for single person households up to 227 kilolitres per annum for households of four or more persons. On average, single person households reduced their annual consumption by 29% since the 2007 survey, which was a proportionally greater reduction than that observed for the other household sizes (2 persons: 23%; 3 persons: 23%; 4 or more persons: 21%.) Average monthly water consumption in summer months has fallen marginally less than in winter months (-24% compared with -26%).

The average total water charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were *not* applied) in 2014 was $1,072, up 89% from $567 in 2007. After taking into account concessions and discounts, the average annual bill paid for water by households in 2014 was $801. This compares with an average outlay of $516 in 2007, $442 in 2001 and $444 in 1996. This represents a 55% increase in the water bill amount since 2007, while average annual household consumption has fallen by 25%. The average annual water bill for non-concession households ($977) was substantially higher than the average bill for other concession ($579) or aged concession ($575) households.

The only group to experience a decrease in average water bills since 2007 were public renters (-33%). The greatest increase in average water bills since 2007 was observed amongst non-concession households (71%), despite average water usage declining by 23% over this same period. Four or more person households also recorded significant growth in water bills since 2007 (+64%), while reducing consumption by 21%.

Since 2007, the average water consumption charge has increased 104%, with the average water and sewerage service charges increasing 125% and 114% respectively. Average increases since 2007 in sewerage disposal, drainage & waterways service and parks charges were substantially less dramatic (49%, 41% and 21% respectively).

Eight in ten households paying water bills received a sewerage service charge in 2014. The average sewerage service charge amount in 2014 was $391, compared with $183 in 2007 and $122 in 2001. Sewerage service charges were far higher in country areas, averaging $554 in 2014, compared with $343 for Melbourne households.

Just under three quarters of all Victorian water using households were charged the sewerage disposal charge (71%, down from 76% in 2007), though this overwhelmingly occurred in Melbourne (93%) rather than country Victorian (3%) households The annual average sewerage disposal charge amount was $207, up from $139 in 2007 and $96 in 2001. The drainage service charge was applied to 64% of Victorian households receiving water bills, up from the 55% recorded in the 2007 survey. Again, this was far more likely to apply to Melbourne households (83%) than those in country Victoria (5%). The average drainage service charge was $91 per annum in 2014, compared with $64 in 2007 and $56 in 2001.

In 2014, 61% of households receiving water bills paid a parks charge (see glossary), up slightly from 2007 (57%), with the charge being applied to 79% of Melbourne households and just 3% of households in country Victoria.

The proportion of households receiving any **DHHS concessions on their water bills** in 2014 was 44%, compared with 43% in 2007 and 35% in 2001.

The average amount of DHHS concession in 2014 was $253 per annum, representing a 92% increase since the 2007 survey.

The Fairer Water Bills Saving (introduced in July 2014) was obtained by 86% of households receiving a water bill, at an average amount of $94.

Twenty per cent of households that received a water bill received some other discount from the water supplier, at an average amount of $8 per annum. In contrast, in 2007 only 1% of households received another form of discount off their water bills in 2007, but the average amount was higher ($40).

#### Council Rates and Expenditure

In 2014, 80% of all households received Council rates bills, similar to past surveys. A greater proportion of non-concession households paid Council rates than concession households in 2014 (87% compared with 71%), as was the case in 2007 and 2001. Aged concession households, being predominantly home owners, had a high proportion paying Council bills (85%), while the high proportion of renters among other concession households meant that only 57% of that group received a council bill.

In 2014, 96% of all households paid their annual rates bill in full. Households in Melbourne (97%) were more likely than those in country Victoria (94%) to have paid their rates bill in full. The incidence of paying Council rate by compulsory instalment was only 1%.

The average total council rates charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were *not* applied) in 2014 was $1,685, up 67% from $1,006 in 2007. Taking concessions and discounts into account, total council rates bills averaged $1,593 in 2014, an increase of 68% from 2007 ($948). This was well above the inflation rate over the corresponding period (20.4%), and is also somewhat above the increase in property prices over the same period (approximately 40%). Interestingly, the rate of increase in the total rates paid was higher among households in country Victoria (89%) than in Melbourne (60%), despite house price rises being greater in the capital city. Total council rate bill amounts had also increased markedly for aged concession households (82% - from $752 to $1,368), compared with 70% for other concession households and 67% for non-concession households.

The average annual municipal rates charge allocated to properties in 2014 was $1,325, compared with $863 in 2007, an increase of 54%. The proportional increase in the average annual municipal rate charge was higher in country Victoria (73%, to an average of $1,295) than in Melbourne (46%, to an average of $1,336). The proportional increase was higher among aged (63%) and other concession (60%) households than among non-concession households (52%).

The Fire Services Property Levy (introduced in 2012) was reported by councils as being charged to 99% of all rate paying households, at an average of $147.

The proportion of rate paying households levied a waste management charge was 77% in 2014, down from 80% in 2007. Virtually all households in country Victoria (94%) had this charge imposed, but only 71% of Melbourne households did so. The average amount levied for waste management was $241, up 66% from $145 in 2007. The average increase in this levy was higher in Melbourne (76%) than in country Victoria (61%).

The average DHHS concession amount received by eligible households in 2014 was $203, an increase of 21% from the $168 recorded in the 2007 survey. Thirty-eight per cent of all rates paying households received the DHHS concession, with the proportion higher in country Victoria (42%) than in Melbourne (36%).

Just over one in ten households paying Council rates also received other discounts off their 2014 rates bill (13%, compared with 9% in 2007). The average discount applicable in 2014 was $67, compared with $61 in 2007. Only a minority of councils provided explanatory notes on the nature of other discounts. To the extent this information was provided, the discounts were usually said to be council-funded rates rebates offered to pensioners.

#### Knowledge and Take-up of Concessions

Overall, the reported incidence of claiming concessions for utility bills has trended slightly upwards since 1996. In 2014, one-third (36%) of households claimed concessions on gas bills (compared with 34% in 2007; 32% in 2001; 33% in 1996), 42% claimed concessions on electricity bills (compared with 38% in 2007; 35% in 2001; 38% in 1996) and 37% claimed concessions on water bills (compared with 34% in 2007; 31% in 2001; 30% in 1996).

As would be expected, concession households were far more likely than non-concession households to claim concessions on their bills. Public renters were far more likely than private renters or home owners/buyers to claim a concession on their gas, electricity or water bill. As would be expected, home owners/buyers (33%) were far more likely than private renters (1%) or public renters (2%) to claim a concession on their council rates. Please note that whilst other members of the household may hold concessions cards, these persons were not defined as being the person responsible for payment of the household bills. Therefore in some instances a non-concession household may in fact receive concessions on some bills because another member in their household may hold a concession card.

Keeping in mind the time differences involved, discrepancies between those claiming to have received a concession and those that actually did receive a concession were substantially less prevalent than in the 2007 survey. In 2014, 97% of those reporting receiving a concession on their water bill actually received this concession (compared with 82% in 2007). For council rates the proportion ‘correctly’ reporting receiving a concession was 92% (76% in 2007), for electricity 90% (78% in 2007) and gas 88% (58% in 2007).

#### Difficulties in Meeting Bill Payments

The questions about difficulties in paying bills reverted to the 2001 approach, dropping 2007’s reference to “the last 5 years”. The proportion of households experiencing difficulty paying electricity, gas and/or water bills decreased in 2014 relative to 2007, and reflected a consistent downward trend since the initial survey. The proportion of households having trouble paying council rates bills rose marginally in 2014 (to 7% from 6% in 2007), but remained lower than the 9% recorded when the question was first asked in 2001. This is an interesting result, given that utility and council rate bills have been increasing over and above the inflation rate over time. The trend towards paying bills by electronic funds transfer, credit/debit card and direct debit may possibly be allowing households to more readily clear these sorts of bills.

# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

The Department of Health and Human Services commissioned Roy Morgan Research to conduct this survey during 2015 to identify patterns of household utility consumption amongst Victorian households in 2014, and to make comparisons with baseline data developed in 2007, 2001 and 1996. Furthermore, the Department sought to examine the impact of utility pricing changes and concession availability on consumption patterns and use the information collected as inputs into a micro-modelling exercise for policy development.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to collect and report on current, detailed data about concession and non-concession households, in order to provide an update to the 2007 Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey.

The information obtained from the survey would then be used:

* To examine the distributional impact of current utility tariff rates and structures;
* To inform the evaluation of the adequacy, equity and effectiveness of concessions in meeting their objectives; and
* To identify other opportunities for improving the affordability of utility charges for low income households.

## SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

For the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 Roy Morgan Research selected Victorian households from its Single Source database, which has been built up from annual survey samples of over 50,000 interviews with Australians aged 14 years and over, the vast majority of which were originally conducted face to face. Among the major benefits of re-contacting Single Source respondents is that the Single Source database identifies whether a respondent receives government benefits, including age pensions, non-aged pensions and Veterans’ Affairs Gold Card users. The initial sample for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 was stratified and selected on the presence or absence of government benefits received in Victoria. The initial sample was then mailed out an information pack for the survey, following which the household was contacted to complete a short telephone survey. At the end of the telephone survey, respondents were asked to complete and return a set of consent forms which allowed Roy Morgan Research to contact energy suppliers, water suppliers and councils in order to obtain billing and consumption information for each household providing consent.

The sampling and data collection approach for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 differed somewhat from the approaches taken in 2007, 2001 and 1996 for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey. Past Victorian Utility Consumption Household Surveys had employed a face-to-face survey methodology of approximately 2,000 households, stratified according to location and presence or absence of concession cards. These past surveys only covered selected regions of Victoria, whereas for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015 almost the entire state of Victoria was in scope.

For both the current and past surveys information was collected both from the household and from the utility companies supplying that household with water, gas and electricity, plus municipal councils. In order to obtain information from utility suppliers and councils, permission from *account holders* within each household was obtained in writing beforehand. Data obtained from utilities and councils contained consumption and billing information for the property associated with each respondent household for a 12-month period.

The questionnaire was designed as a collaborative process between Roy Morgan Research and the Department. Some topics included in past surveys were not included for the Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey 2015. Copies of the questionnaire and billing information sought from utilities and councils are included in the Appendices, provided separately to this report.

The research methodology is outlined briefly below and is discussed in more detail in the following section.

### Collection of Survey Data

The first step in the fieldwork process was sending a letter and brochure to all households selected for the survey. A sample of 12,135 households was drawn, stratified by region and apparent concession status (based on the existing Single Source data).

Interviewer briefings commenced on 10 June 2015, with telephone interviewing commencing thereafter. Over the subsequent weeks:

* Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was conducted with 2,204 respondents who agreed to send consent forms that would enable Roy Morgan Research to obtain their billing data from their relevant suppliers;
* Those who either did not send their consent forms, or sent incomplete forms, were re-contacted as far as possible in order to maximise the number of usable forms received;
* Interviewing ceased on 6 July and re-contacting was largely completed by 21 July. A few late consent forms were accepted until 25 August. Overall 1,861 households provided one or more consent forms.

Fieldwork took slightly longer than expected. Respondents were offered an incentive of a $30 shopping voucher if they completed the CATI survey and returned their forms.

The CATI data obtained from respondents was relatively ‘clean’. As such, little data editing or imputation was required for CATI survey results.

The collection of reliable billing data from utilities and councils was a critical and integral component of the project. While the majority of councils and utilities provided the required data within the required timeframes, several failed to meet the requested deadlines for data return by various margins.

In March and April 2015, suppliers and councils were contacted and sent information in relation to the requirements of the survey and the responsibilities that suppliers would need to undertake in relation to these requirements. Feedback was also sought from suppliers and councils using an electronic feedback form, and reminders. Overall, feedback was received from 37 councils, 5 electricity suppliers, 3 gas suppliers and 12 water suppliers, representing the great majority of water suppliers and councils invited, but fewer than half of electricity and gas suppliers. Briefing sessions for utilities and councils were conducted on 29 and 30 April in order to inform them of the data requirements for the project and to identify any difficulties suppliers may have in providing such data. Approximately 21% of councils, 46% of energy suppliers and 25% of water suppliers attended the briefing sessions.

A secure web-site was designed to allow suppliers to download billing pro formas and upload them when completed. This website and the data communication process in general took into account all feedback provided by suppliers and councils over the previous weeks and months.

In order to ensure that the entire process was working smoothly, an initial data request was sent to suppliers and councils in mid-July, containing the consent information for a sub-sample of respondents. All suppliers and councils were provided with the procedures for uploading and downloading, how to complete the data files and providing them with a user-id and password to access the web-site.

Taking into account some additional fine-tuning required based on the response to the preliminary data request, the main data requests were then prepared. The main data requests were sent to councils on 12 August, to water suppliers on 20 August, and to gas and electricity suppliers on 24 August.

In most instances suppliers responded swiftly to data requests. For the initial batch and the main batch data returns, several suppliers were contacted to clarify the data provided. The main problems encountered with the data initially provided included:

* Several councils – failure to split the annual rates payment into the individual payments that had been made;
* For several councils and suppliers – instances where the sum of charges less the sum of discounts did not equal the amount payable; and
* For several water and energy suppliers - billing data provided that did not cover the entire calendar year.

All suppliers were co-operative in re-issuing revised data sets, although some delays were experienced in their return.  At the time of preparing the draft report (mid December 2015) final data had still not been received from one major gas and electricity supplier and a related (more minor) electricity supplier.  This missing data has now been received and processed (the final component being provided in early February 2016), and overall figures have since been updated. The data in this report therefore differs in some respects from the draft report.

As in past waves of this survey, it was anticipated that a proportion of supplier records could not be matched with the respondent data obtained from consent forms, resulting in completely blank billing records for a number of respondents. In other cases the data provided by suppliers was missing certain fields for some respondents. In these cases billing data has been imputed (fully or partially as may be required). The imputation process is discussed in more detail later in this report.

## LIMITATIONS OF SURVEY AND BILLING DATA

Please note that “Survey Data” refers to all data collected via the CATI household survey, while “Billing Data” refers to consumption and billing information provided by utilities and councils that was linked to each household in the respondent survey. This “Billing Data” covers a 12-month period of consumption and billing information for each household surveyed.

*Survey Scope*

In past surveys, the survey’s scope has been limited to the Melbourne metropolitan area and to a small number of major regional cities. For this survey, however, almost all of Victoria was covered. This clearly improves the confidence with which the results can be generalised to the whole population of Victoria, but means that most comparisons with past surveys’ results need to be conducted with care.

In previous surveys a small component of the sample was defined as “LPG area”, which was geographically defined based on limited available information, and was thus geographically distinct from the Melbourne and Country VIC strata in those past surveys.  In 2014, no specific “LPG area” has been defined: rather households that reported in the telephone interview that they use LPG for heating/cooking/hot water have been defined as “LPG households” but are not a separate stratum for sampling purposes. This change in approach should allow for a much more representative sample of LPG households, and for Victorian households in general. It should be noted, however, that as it is based on respondents’ perceptions of “LPG” it may not be entirely accurate, i.e. some respondents may use mains gas but may incorrectly think of it as “LPG”. (The telephone questionnaire sought to minimise any such misunderstanding of the term “LPG” by incorporating detailed question wording, including clarifications and interviewer notes. However, the results obtained suggest that a degree of over-reporting of “LPG” usage by mains gas users may have occurred.) As a result, it was decided that to qualify as an “LPG household” for analysis purposes, the household had to meet two criteria: firstly, indicating that they use LPG for heating/cooking/hot water and secondly, not providing a consent form for a mains gas supplier.

While *all* 17 DHHS regions of Victoria *are* represented in the survey, 23 local government areas with very low populations (representing about 5% of the total Victorian population) were deliberately not included in the sample as there would have been far too few respondents for meaningful separate analysis, and a considerable burden would have been imposed on some small councils in setting up data extraction and matching systems for just a handful of households.

*Survey Data*

Survey data is limited by the fact that it is people’s perceptions of what actually is or has occurred in the household. As such, there are likely to be some logical discrepancies in some survey data, based on people’s perceptions. Some examples are provided below:

* Concession status is determined by what concession card the respondent reports. Some households may be mis-defined in terms of sample type based on the respondent’s perception;
* Concession status for each household is determined by whether the respondent (i.e. the person mainly responsible for payment of household bills) holds or does not hold a concession card. As other members of the household can hold concession cards and they can be the account holder for specific household bills, it is possible that a household defined as a non-concession household (i.e. the respondent does not hold a concession card) can receive a concession on a certain bill (i.e. as it is in another household member’s name and they hold a concession card). As a consequence, certain households may be mis-defined in terms of sample type based on the fact that another member of the household obtained concessions on specific household bills;
* Respondents do not necessarily have an accurate perception of which concession cards other members of the household hold; and
* While respondents are responsible for paying the majority of household bills, they may not be the account holder of all bills. Therefore their perceptions of whether their household received or does not receive a concession on a specific bill may be inaccurate.

It is therefore wise to interpret survey data as being *perceptions* of one member of the household and not always an accurate assessment of that household.

*Billing Data*

* Whilst survey data was collected in mid-2015, billing data from utilities was obtained for each household for the 2014 calendar year and for councils for the 2013-2014 financial year. As such, there is a time lag between survey data and billing data. This has some consequences –
  + Whilst a household may hold a concession card in 2015, they may not have held it in 2014. Therefore it is possible that billing data does not reflect a concession amount for that household in that year, even though that household is defined as being a concession household. Of course, the opposite can also be true (i.e. a household received a concession amount in 2014, but is defined as a non-concession household in 2015). On average, one would expect that results should be quite accurate in terms of overall levels of concessions in Victoria, even though there may be some occasional mis-allocation between respondents;
  + Utility billing and consumption data is collected from each bill sent to the household over the 2014 calendar year. It is possible that a household was eligible for a concession for *part* of the 12-month period surveyed. If a concession amount was received by that household on at least one bill, then it was deemed that that household received concessions in that year. As a consequence, it is likely that the proportion of households obtaining concessions based on billing data will be overstated in each year.
* Data provided by utilities and councils was thoroughly checked to ensure that data was provided for each item collected (in particular, consumption items, charges, retailer discounts and concessions). The agencies were instructed on how to complete these data files. Where data files provided had gaps, suppliers were contacted directly to ascertain whether that data item was in fact blank or not for their agency. In some cases, Roy Morgan Research needed to edit the billing data provided to make it consistent with the formats and definitions required. It is also possible that some errors may have occurred in suppliers’ data-matching and extraction processes, errors which are not evident by such checking.
* Missing data, either for an entire record (e.g. for a household’s entire electricity billing) or for just a small component of a record, was imputed by Roy Morgan Research following a set of imputation rules (detailed later in this report). The imputation process is likely to have slightly reduced the variation in the data, as imputation is based on applying the *mean* result for similar sized households in similar areas.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology was designed to ensure that the aims and objectives of the study were adequately addressed and to ensure that comparison with 2007, 2001 and 1996 results, where possible, could be reliably conducted.

## SUB-GROUP DEFINITIONS

Throughout this report detailed analysis of survey results has been conducted by ‘sample type’. This comprises two main sub-groups, **concession households** and **non-concession households**. Concession households were further segmented into ***aged concession households*** and ***other concession households***. The definitions for each of these sub-groups are provided below:

**Concession households -** The adult member of the household who is normally responsible for payment of the household bills *must currently hold* one or more of the following – a Pensioner Concession Card (aged or non-aged), a Health Care Card or a Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) Gold Card (except those stamped ‘Dependent’).

Within concession households the sample is divided into –

***Aged concession households*** - The adult member of the household who is normally responsible for payment of the household bills *must currently hold* one or more of the following – an Aged Pensioner Concession Card or a DVA Gold card (except those stamped ‘Dependent’);

***Other concession households*** - The adult member of the household who is normally responsible for payment of the household bills *must currently hold* one or more of the following – a Non-aged Pensioner Concession Card or a Health Care Card.

**Non-concession households -** The adult member of the household who is normally responsible for payment of the household bills *must not currently hold* any of the Concession cards listed above.

Please note that in some circumstances other members of the household being surveyed may hold concession cards; however, these persons were not identified as the person responsible for payment of the household bills. Therefore in some instances a non-concession household may in fact receive concessions on some bills because another member of the household may hold a concession card. This also means that a household defined as an ‘other’ concession household may also have another household member who holds aged concession cards, or vice versa.

## SAMPLING

For the 2015 Victorian Utility Consumption Household Survey, the sampling differed from previous surveys in this series. The key differences were:

* For the 2014 survey, effectively most of Victoria was in-scope. In past waves, the survey has generally been limited to just Melbourne and four major regional cities.
* For the 2007 survey a specific LPG geographic stratum had been included. For the 2014 survey, LPG households were identified based on their responses, and therefore were not limited to any particular geographic strata.
* The 2014 survey used a telephone methodology, drawing a random stratified sample from a sample frame of past respondents to a major, ongoing syndicated survey (Roy Morgan Single Source). Previous waves used a face-to-face door-to-door approach, with a multi-stage stratified sample, employing CCDs (Census Collector’s Districts) in the stratified design.
* For the 2014 survey, respondents were sent an explanatory letter and consent forms by mail prior to the telephone interview. Respondents completed and returned these forms by mail after their telephone interview. In previous waves, these forms were provided and collected by face to face interviewers.

### Sample Frame

The sample frame employed for the 2014 survey comprised past respondents (from Victoria only) to Roy Morgan Research’s Single Source surveys. This database of respondents has been built up from annual national survey samples of over 50,000 interviews with Australians aged 14 years and over, the vast majority of which were originally conducted face to face. In a typical year, approximately 11,700 respondents from Victoria are interviewed for the Single Source survey and added to its cumulative database.

The benefits of using this sample frame included:

* It covers the whole of the state.
* The survey from which it has been accumulated employs a random, geographically representative stratified sample design rather than a self-selected panel.
* It identifies whether a respondent receives particular government benefits, including age pensions, non-aged pensions and Veterans’ Affairs Gold Card users, thus enabling the initial sample for this survey to be pre-stratified and selected with regard to probable concession status, thus cost-effectively enabling the over-sampling of concession households that is a feature of this survey series.
* For most records in the sample frame, both telephone numbers and mailing addresses are available.

It was agreed with the Department during the planning stages that the sample should not include people living in very low population councils, as the burden that would be imposed upon such councils setting up the procedures to match and extract billing data for a tiny number of respondents would not be justified, since the sample size in all these council areas would be too small for any analysis. It was possible to stratify the sample such that all of the 17 DHHS regions were reasonably represented without including the 23 lowest population councils. The population of the council areas excluded together total about 5% of the State’s population.

### Sample Stratification and Selection

The final sample needed to include sufficient sample for reliable analysis across a number of dimensions, including regions, concession status and household size. Apart from any stratification necessary to achieve minimum sample sizes along any of these dimensions, the aim was that the sample should be broadly representative. The aim was that the overall final sample should be at least 1,500, and that at least 375 aged concession households and at least 375 non-aged concession households be included in the final sample. This involved a deliberate, moderate over-sampling of concession households in order to ensure that a sufficiently large sample was available in order to undertaken detailed and reliable sub-group analysis.

The size and distribution of the initial sample selected in order to achieve these targets took into account the likely contact rates, co-operation rates and qualifying rates to the CATI survey as well as the likely completion rate of usable consent forms (see Table 2.1, Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 following).

It was recognised that it would be preferable to pilot the entire survey process, partly to gain a clearer guide as to these rates; however the Department advised that the timeline and budget available did not allow for a pilot in this case. The initial sample drawn comprised 12,135 cases, distributed as shown in the following tables.

**Table 2.1 – Initial sample drawn – by likely concession status and DHHS region**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DHHS Region** | **Likely Aged Concession** | **Likely Non Aged Concession** | **Likely Non Concession** | **Total** |
| Barwon | 165 | 194 | 308 | 667 |
| Bayside Peninsula | 527 | 369 | 847 | 1,743 |
| Brimbank Melton | 94 | 155 | 183 | 432 |
| Central Highlands | 121 | 148 | 251 | 520 |
| Goulburn | 107 | 85 | 200 | 392 |
| Hume Moreland | 115 | 147 | 206 | 468 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 342 | 211 | 673 | 1,226 |
| Inner Gippsland | 176 | 154 | 242 | 572 |
| Loddon | 180 | 184 | 286 | 650 |
| Mallee | 145 | 98 | 222 | 465 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 217 | 252 | 609 | 1,078 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 259 | 229 | 378 | 866 |
| Outer Gippsland | 177 | 157 | 310 | 644 |
| Ovens Murray | 73 | 86 | 153 | 312 |
| Southern Melbourne | 205 | 280 | 444 | 929 |
| Western District | 51 | 67 | 89 | 207 |
| Western Melbourne | 159 | 217 | 588 | 964 |
| **Total** | **3,113** | **3,033** | **5,989** | **12,135** |

**Table 2.2 – Initial sample drawn – by likely concession status and overall region**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Likely Aged Concession** | **Likely Non Aged Concession** | **Likely Non Concession** | **Total** |
| Metropolitan | 1,918 | 1,860 | 3,928 | 7,706 |
| Regional | 1,195 | 1,173 | 2,061 | 4,429 |
| **Total** | **3,113** | **3,033** | **5,989** | **12,135** |

**Table 2.3 – Initial sample drawn – by likely household size and overall region**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **1 person in household** | **2 people in household** | **3 people in household** | **4 plus people in household** | **Total** |
| Metropolitan | 1,760 | 2,896 | 1,201 | 1,849 | 7,706 |
| Regional | 1,204 | 1,988 | 503 | 734 | 4,429 |
| **Total** | **2,964** | **4,884** | **1,704** | **2,583** | **12,135** |

The initial sample was then mailed out an information pack for the survey, including a letter, a brochure and set of blank consent forms. Following the mail-out, telephone contact was attempted with the households, in order to complete a short telephone survey. At the end of the telephone survey, willing respondents were asked to complete and return a set of consent forms which allowed Roy Morgan Research to contact energy suppliers, water suppliers and councils in order to obtain billing and consumption information for each household providing consent.

As expected, the CATI interview resulted in a number of households being allocated to a different concession status than the one that they had when initially selected. Partly reflecting this and partly reflecting the different response rates experienced, stratum by stratum, during fieldwork some adjustments to target quotas were implemented to ensure that the overall sampling requirements of the project were achieved.

### Survey Respondent

The eligible respondent for this survey was defined as:

***The adult member of the household who is normally responsible for payment of the household bills or the adult member of the household who could provide details about bills paid by the household.***

This was usually the person whose name appears on the bill, but it may have been another member of the household who was responsible for the financial management of the household.

In some circumstances there were households where different utility and rate bills were in different names. We interviewed the person who could properly answer on behalf of the other residents, in respect of all utility and rate bills.

In households where two or more people were equally responsible for payment of bills, then either (or any) of these people were interviewed.

The account holder, joint account holder or authorised person on behalf of the householder needed to ***sign consent forms*** on behalf of the household so that Roy Morgan Research could obtain billing information from each applicable utility and council. In some instances, the respondent was not the account holder for one or more of the household bills. In these instances the respondent was asked to arrange for the actual account holder to sign the form.

Only information about the household and dwelling approached for interview was gathered. If the respondent had other properties they were to limit their responses only to the dwelling approached and exclude any information about other properties for which they had responsibility.

For a household to be eligible for the survey ***current residents must have lived at the address approached since at least 1 July 2013***. If not, the household was not eligible for the survey.

### Sample Interviewed

A total of 2,204 telephone interviews were successfully completed. Table 2.4shows the distribution of these respondents by DHHS region and by concession status. Table 2.5 shows the distribution of respondents by household size and metropolitan/regional split. (Note that the household’s final concession status may have changed from the status that the household was originally assigned when drawing the sample.)

**Table 2.4 – CATI interviews – by concession status and DHHS region**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DHHS Region** | **Aged Concession** | **Other Concession** | **Non-concession** | **Total** |
| Barwon | 43 | 33 | 50 | 126 |
| Bayside Peninsula | 103 | 55 | 155 | 313 |
| Brimbank Melton | 22 | 22 | 28 | 72 |
| Central Highlands | 33 | 38 | 38 | 109 |
| Goulburn | 25 | 16 | 39 | 80 |
| Hume Moreland | 21 | 20 | 32 | 73 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 77 | 33 | 109 | 219 |
| Inner Gippsland | 38 | 24 | 46 | 108 |
| Loddon | 53 | 40 | 51 | 144 |
| Mallee | 30 | 11 | 26 | 67 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 37 | 42 | 103 | 182 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 56 | 36 | 72 | 164 |
| Outer Gippsland | 40 | 29 | 39 | 108 |
| Ovens Murray | 19 | 15 | 31 | 65 |
| Southern Melbourne | 41 | 45 | 79 | 165 |
| Western District | 13 | 15 | 15 | 43 |
| Western Melbourne | 30 | 32 | 104 | 166 |
| **Grand Total** | **681** | **506** | **1,017** | **2,204** |

**Table 2.5 – CATI Interviews – by household size and overall region**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **1 person in household** | **2 people in household** | **3 people in household** | **4 plus people in household** | **Total** |
| Metropolitan | 336 | 558 | 193 | 267 | 1,354 |
| Regional | 242 | 419 | 90 | 99 | 850 |
| Total | 578 | 977 | 283 | 366 | 2,204 |

### Sample Returning Consent Forms

Not all of those who were interviewed provided completed consent forms. An extensive follow-up process was undertaken, involving re-contacting those who had either not provided completed forms, or whose forms required further information or clarification. After the follow-up processes were completed, a total of 1,861 respondents had returned some or all of the necessary consent forms, and had their details passed on the relevant suppliers and councils. Table 2.6 below provides a breakdown of these 1,861 respondents by concession status and DHHS region, and Table 2.7 breaks the sample down by households size and overall region Respondents classified as aged concession card holders were the most likely to provide consent forms: 91% did so. Of the other two categories, approximately 81% of those interviewed by telephone provided consent forms.

As requested, weights have been calculated so that survey results can be obtained either for the 1,861 who provided completed consent forms, or for the 2,204 who completed the telephone survey. For this report, the results have been based to the 1,861 who provided completed consent forms.

**Table 2.6 – Final sample returning consent forms – by concession status and DHHS region**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DHHS Region** | **Aged Concession** | **Other Concession** | **Non-concession** | **Total** |
| Barwon | 42 | 28 | 45 | 115 |
| Bayside | 95 | 45 | 129 | 269 |
| Brimbank Melton | 20 | 17 | 25 | 62 |
| Central Highlands | 32 | 34 | 31 | 97 |
| Goulburn | 23 | 15 | 33 | 71 |
| Hume Moreland | 21 | 17 | 20 | 58 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 72 | 23 | 90 | 185 |
| Inner Gippsland | 31 | 19 | 33 | 83 |
| Loddon | 50 | 35 | 42 | 127 |
| Mallee | 26 | 10 | 20 | 56 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 34 | 35 | 80 | 149 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 50 | 33 | 56 | 139 |
| Outer Gippsland | 34 | 20 | 35 | 89 |
| Ovens Murray | 17 | 13 | 22 | 52 |
| Southern Melbourne | 39 | 31 | 66 | 136 |
| Western District | 12 | 14 | 12 | 38 |
| Western Melbourne | 25 | 26 | 84 | 135 |
| **Total** | **623** | **415** | **823** | **1,861** |

**Table 2.7 – Final sample returning consent forms – by household size and overall region**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **1 person in household** | **2 people in household** | **3 people in household** | **4 plus people in household** | **Total** |
| Metropolitan | 292 | 488 | 160 | 193 | 1,133 |
| Regional | 212 | 368 | 72 | 76 | 728 |
| **Total** | **504** | **856** | **232** | **269** | **1,861** |

## TELEPHONE INTERVIEW STAGE

### Pre-interview mail-out

The first step in the fieldwork process was sending a letter and brochure and blank consent forms to all 12,135 households selected for the survey. Copies of the materials mailed out are included in the Appendices, which are provided separately to this report.

### CATI interviewing

Briefing of telephone interviewers commenced on 10 June 2015, with telephone interviewing commencing the same day. Over the subsequent weeks CATI interviews were conducted with 2,204 respondents, with interviewing ceasing on 6 July. Respondents were offered an incentive of a $30 shopping voucher if they completed the CATI survey and returned their forms.

The telephone interview, on average was 15.14 minutes in length, very much in line with expectations. On average, approximately two thirds of the interview time was spent asking and answering the survey questions, and approximately one third was spent on explaining the consent form process, and helping respondents understand how to accurately complete and return the forms.

The questionnaire covered considerably fewer topics than in previous surveys within this series. Average interview lengths in past surveys were:

* 35.7 minutes in 1996
* 39.0 minutes in 2001
* 51.3 minutes in 2007

The length of the average interview varied slightly by sample type, as in past years. The average interview length was slightly longer amongst concession households than amongst non-concession households, reflecting some additional questions that would have been asked in concession households.

The topics covered in the interview included

* detailed information about each member of the household, including their concession status;
* information about the size and location of the household and utilities usage of the household;
* whether or not the household used LPG;
* whether or not the household claimed concessions for any of its utility bills or council rates;
* the household’s experience (if any) with difficulties in paying bills;
* awareness and usage of the Utility Relief Grant Scheme;
* explanation of the consent forms and how to complete and return them.

### Follow-up of consent forms

Those respondents who completed the telephone interview but did not send their consent forms, or sent incomplete forms, were re-contacted as far as possible in order to maximise the number of usable forms received. The re-contacting process, which involved phone calls, emails, text messages and mail as appropriate, was largely completed by 21 July. A few late consent forms were accepted until 25 August. Fieldwork and follow-up took slightly longer than expected. Overall, by the end of the follow-up stage a total of 1,861 households had provided one or more apparently usable consent forms.

## OBTAINING BILLING AND CONSUMPTION DATA FROM SUPPLIERS AND COUNCILS

The collection of reliable billing data from utilities and councils was a critical and integral component of the project. It was recognised that early and detailed communication with councils and suppliers would be essential. The initial start of the entire study was delayed as a result of the Victorian State Election and the subsequent restructuring of the Department. Only once this was fully resolved was it considered appropriate to commence communications with suppliers and councils.

In March and April 2015, suppliers and councils were contacted both by the Department and by Roy Morgan Research and were sent information in relation to the requirements of the survey and the responsibilities that they would need to undertake in relation to these requirements. Feedback on the proposed process was sought by Roy Morgan Research from suppliers and councils using an electronic feedback form. Following reminders, feedback was received from 37 councils, 5 electricity suppliers, 3 gas suppliers and 12 water suppliers, representing the great majority of water suppliers and councils invited, but fewer than half of electricity and gas suppliers.

Briefing sessions were conducted in Melbourne by Roy Morgan Research for utilities and councils on 29 and 30 April in order to inform them of the data requirements for the project and to identify any difficulties suppliers may have in providing such data. Representatives of approximately 21% of councils, 46% of energy suppliers and 25% of water suppliers attended the briefing sessions.

A secure web-site was designed and implemented by Roy Morgan Research to allow suppliers to download billing pro formas and upload them when completed. This website and the data communication processes in general were based on the processes used in 2007 and also took into account all feedback provided by suppliers and councils over the previous weeks and months.

In order to ensure that the entire process was working smoothly, an initial data request was sent to suppliers and councils in mid-July, containing the consent information for a sub-sample of respondents. All suppliers and councils were provided with the procedures for uploading and downloading, how to complete the data files and providing them with a user-ID and password to access the web-site.

Taking into account some additional fine-tuning required based on the response to the preliminary data request, the main data requests were then prepared. The main data requests were sent to councils on 12 August, to water suppliers on 20 August, and to gas and electricity suppliers on 24 August.

In most instances suppliers responded swiftly to data requests. For the initial batch and the main batch data returns, several suppliers were contacted to clarify the data provided. The main problems encountered with the data initially provided included:

* Several councils – failure to split the annual rates payment into the individual payments that had been made
* For several councils and suppliers – instances where the sum of charges less the sum of discounts did not equal the amount payable
* For several water and energy suppliers - billing data provided that did not cover the entire calendar year.

All suppliers were co-operative in re-issuing revised data sets, although some delays were experienced in their return.  At the time of preparing the draft report (mid December 2015) final data had still not been received from one major gas and electricity supplier and a related (more minor) electricity supplier.  This missing data has now been received and processed (the final component being provided in early February 2016), and overall figures have since been updated. The data in this report therefore differs in some respects from the draft report.

## DATA IMPUTATION FOR BILLING AND CONSUMPTION ITEMS

The CATI data obtained from respondents was relatively ‘clean’. As such, little data editing or imputation was required for CATI survey results. Imputation and editing largely related to the data provided by councils and suppliers.

In some instances, respondents who had provided consent for collection of billing information could not be identified by utilities or councils. For these respondents, consumption and billing information was imputed. In addition, for some respondents, councils and suppliers only provided partial information. In these cases the remaining data was imputed. The following paragraphs describe this imputation process. Reflecting the benefits of the detailed consultation and testing process undertaken, the provision of data by most suppliers and councils was, in most instances, entirely complete, with very few data items excluded (if any).

For energy and water suppliers the following process was used to impute data:

* The number of bills each supplier normally issues in a 12-month period was calculated;
* For each respondent household, the number of bills was calculated to determine if one or more were missing.  Bill issue dates or meter reading dates were used to determine whether the entire 12- month period had been covered and for which period a bill was missing;
* Billing data for the missing bill was initially sought from existing billing data for that respondent. An existing bill record was ‘cloned’ (i.e. copied) if it was determined that the existing data would be a suitable replacement for the missing data.  Suitability was determined by time of the year in which the billing related.  For example a summer bill would be cloned to fill a bill gap that also related to summer – a winter bill for a winter bill gap etc.  Bills from adjacent or most recent time periods were preferred over non-adjacent or non-recent time periods;
* If there were insufficient numbers of existing bills for that respondent household to clone a bill to fill a gap, bills were imputed –
  + From information provided by the respondent in the CATI survey it was determined whether the household was a concession or non-concession household.  If the household was a concession household, data was imputed from similar concession households.  A similar process applied for non-concession households where like households were used for imputation;
  + Based on concession status imputation was based on –
    1. The average for that sized household for that supplier in the region it was located;
    2. If region data was too sparse, the average was taken for that sized household for that supplier across all regions that supplier serviced;
    3. If household size data was too sparse, the average was taken for that supplier in the region the household was located;
    4. If supplier data was too sparse, the average was taken for that household size for all suppliers servicing that specific region;
    5. A specific order of imputation was undertaken if more than one variable (i.e. household size, concession status, supplier or region) was too sparse to create averages.
  + In some circumstances a specific fixed charge or discount was applicable for each supplier.  In these instances the average amount was not used, but the fixed amount to be charged/discounted.

For council data, imputation was undertaken as follows:

* Only one annual bill was required to be imputed for each respondent household;
* The respondent household was categorised as being either a concession or non-concession household;
* Cloning could not occur as no other billing data was collected for each household for council rate billing data;
* Based on concession status imputation was based on –
  + - The average for that council;
    - If council data was too sparse, the average for all councils in that region;
    - A specific order of imputation was undertaken if more than one variable (i.e. concession status, council or region) was too sparse to create averages.
* In some circumstances a specific fixed charge or discount was applicable for each council.  In these instances the average amount was not used, but the fixed amount to be charged/discounted.

Other rules included:

* A cloned bill/record could not be used to clone or impute another bill/record; and
* An imputed bill/record could not be used clone or impute another bill/record.

## SAMPLE WEIGHTING

As the sampling process was somewhat different to the process used in 2007 and previous surveys, the weighting process also required a slightly different approach. As requested by the Department, two weight sets were provided: one based to all 1,861 respondents providing at least one apparently usable consent form; the other based to all 2,204 respondents who completed the telephone interview, irrespective of whether or not they ended up providing any usable consent forms. For most purposes, the weights based to the 1,861 households that provided consent forms will be used.

Weights were calculated as follows:

* Each household was initially treated as the sum of its inhabitants. All the inhabitants of the household (including both the respondent and those not interviewed) were treated as ‘pseudo-respondents’. Using marginal weighting (or raking/rim weighting), the sample of pseudo-respondents was weighted to yield the appropriate proportions of holders on the following four dimensions (population information for which was derived from data provided by DHHS from Centrelink and the Department of Veterans Affairs, adjusted for estimated overlaps and inconsistencies):
* Summary concession status (aged; non-aged; none) by DHHS region;
* Summary concession status (aged; non-aged; none) by sex;
* Summary concession status (aged; non-aged; none) by age;
* Detailed concession status.
* As the demographic profiles for holders of concession cards were limited and inconsistent across card type, the process of marginal weighting (‘raking’ or ‘rim-weighting’) was the most appropriate approach. The weights were developed by an iterative process such that all target sums of weights were met on the specific dimensions. (Some concession card holders hold more than one concession, but for weighting purposes respondents need to be allocated to mutually exclusive categories.  Where publicly available information existed that indicated the size and nature of particular overlaps, this was used in developing and adjusting weighting targets.  For weighting purposes, a respondent can only be allocated to mutually exclusive categories, so for weighting purposes only, population targets were adjusted according to a set of priority rules so that they added to the total – i.e. so that the targets were themselves mutually exclusive.  Therefore some of the weighting targets will not reflect the publicly available figures.)
* When the pseudo-respondent weights had been calculated, the household was assigned a preliminary weight equal to the mean of its members’ individual weights. Within each stratum, these preliminary household weights were then adjusted so as to represent the precise number of households in the stratum, by size of household.
* The targets for this final weighting stage were derived from ABS data for 2014 and ABS 2011 Census data, as it was considered that the 2011 Census data, unadjusted, would be too out of date for a survey with a reference period of 2014. The adjustment steps are summarized below:
* ABS data for June 2014 shows the number of households in Victoria to be 2,222,805. This figure was not adjusted. Using ABS data for June 2014 showing total number of persons for each LGA, and ABS 2011 Census data for number of households by household size (1 person, 2 persons, 3 persons, 4+ persons) by LGA we calculated the population growth (or decline) for each LGA for the period 2011 to 2014, and applied that growth/decline to the number of households of each size for each LGA, adjusted to the known total of 2,222,805.

It should be noted that some weighting assumptions concerning population targets have been slightly revised and corrected since the issue of the draft report in December 2015.  The data has been re-weighted on this basis, with the result that a few figures will be slightly different in this final report.

The key figures used at various stages in the weighting are detailed on the following pages as Table 2.8 to Table 2.12 inclusive.

**Table 2.8: Estimated number of persons by broad concession type by DHHS region, 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DHHS Region** | **Number of persons with an aged concession** | **Number of persons with a non-aged concession** | **Number of persons without any relevant concession** | **2014 all persons** |
| Barwon | 37,530 | 46,458 | 192,984 | 276,972 |
| Bayside Peninsula | 91,169 | 97,635 | 708,266 | 897,070 |
| Brimbank Melton | 29,166 | 61,835 | 234,419 | 325,421 |
| Central Highlands | 23,054 | 33,971 | 127,803 | 184,828 |
| Goulburn | 20,991 | 28,144 | 104,907 | 154,042 |
| Hume Moreland | 33,794 | 62,933 | 255,639 | 352,365 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 64,672 | 56,634 | 518,644 | 639,950 |
| Inner Gippsland | 27,073 | 34,275 | 117,833 | 179,181 |
| Loddon | 31,756 | 41,215 | 153,699 | 226,669 |
| Mallee | 13,312 | 18,682 | 57,864 | 89,858 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 57,014 | 83,626 | 470,054 | 610,694 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 45,518 | 53,445 | 317,921 | 416,883 |
| Outer Gippsland | 14,821 | 17,132 | 54,049 | 86,002 |
| Ovens Murray | 17,761 | 20,190 | 82,362 | 120,313 |
| Southern Melbourne | 47,051 | 88,360 | 384,598 | 520,009 |
| Western District | 21,572 | 26,723 | 100,769 | 149,064 |
| Western Melbourne | 43,673 | 77,377 | 491,296 | 612,346 |
| **Total** | **619,926** | **848,634** | **4,373,107** | **5,841,667** |

The estimates in this table have been derived from population figures provided by DHHS, and adjusted for DVA figures, including an allowance for overlaps

**Table 2.9: Estimated number of persons by broad concession type by sex, 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | **Number of persons with an aged concession** | **Number of persons with a non-aged concession** | **Number of persons without any concession** | **2014 Total number of persons (all ages)** |
| Male | 273,956 | 328,155 | 2,288,427 | 2,890,538 |
| Female | 345,971 | 520,479 | 2,084,680 | 2,951,129 |
| **Total** | **619,926** | **848,634** | **4,373,107** | **5,841,667** |

The estimates in this table have been derived from population figures provided by DHHS, and adjusted for DVA figures, including an allowance for overlaps

**Table 2.10: Estimated number of persons by broad concession type by age, 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Number of persons with an aged concession** | **Number of persons with a non-aged concession** | **Number of persons without any concession** | **Total estimated number of persons** |
| Under 16 | - | 165 | 1,163,717 | 1,163,882 |
| 16-20 | - | 80,604 | 302,410 | 383,014 |
| 21-24 | - | 86,311 | 242,732 | 329,043 |
| 25-34 | - | 154,789 | 674,400 | 829,190 |
| 35-44 | - | 181,027 | 663,923 | 844,950 |
| 45-54 | - | 159,728 | 633,057 | 792,785 |
| 55-64 | 2,447 | 167,482 | 497,210 | 667,139 |
| 65 and over | 617,479 | 18,528 | 195,658 | 831,665 |
| **Total** | **619,926** | **848,634** | **4,373,107** | **5,841,667** |

The estimates in this table have been derived from population figures provided by DHHS, and adjusted for DVA figures, including an allowance for overlaps

**Table 2.11: Estimated number of persons by detailed concession type, VIC 2014**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Detailed concession categories** | **Estimated population** |
| 1. DHS/Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card – Aged | 605,921 |
| 2. DHS/Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card – Non-Aged | 398,051 |
| 3. DHS/Centrelink Health Care Card | 423,142 |
| 4. DVA Gold Card - all conditions | 21,888 |
| 5. DVA Gold Card TPI | 3,336 |
| 6. DVA Pensioner Concession Card – Aged | 14,005 |
| 7. DVA Pensioner Concession Card – Non-Aged | 2,216 |
| 8. No concession/ No relevant concession | 4,373,107 |
| **Total** | **5,841,667** |

The estimates in this table have been derived from population figures provided by DHHS from DSS/Centrelink   
and DVA, then adjusted for overlaps. They will not precisely match either DSS or DVA figures.

**Table 2.12: Estimated number of households by household size by DHHS region, 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DHHS Region** | **Number of 1 person households** | **Number of 2 person households** | **Number of 3 person households** | **Number of 4 plus person households** | **Total estimated number of households** |
| Barwon | 29,799 | 38,584 | 16,287 | 25,253 | 109,923 |
| Bayside Peninsula | 106,044 | 125,633 | 53,910 | 80,368 | 365,955 |
| Brimbank Melton | 18,867 | 30,756 | 21,032 | 38,691 | 109,346 |
| Central Highlands | 19,509 | 25,658 | 10,516 | 16,998 | 72,681 |
| Goulburn | 15,239 | 20,986 | 8,368 | 14,245 | 58,837 |
| Hume Moreland | 27,565 | 38,112 | 22,376 | 38,488 | 126,542 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 52,137 | 75,709 | 41,462 | 69,459 | 238,768 |
| Inner Gippsland | 20,297 | 26,643 | 9,796 | 15,451 | 72,187 |
| Loddon | 23,979 | 32,406 | 12,849 | 20,518 | 89,753 |
| Mallee | 10,396 | 12,670 | 4,831 | 7,915 | 35,812 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 52,358 | 74,472 | 40,067 | 62,965 | 229,863 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 32,775 | 49,638 | 26,671 | 45,811 | 154,895 |
| Outer Gippsland | 9,998 | 13,740 | 4,471 | 6,806 | 35,015 |
| Ovens Murray | 13,538 | 18,076 | 6,628 | 10,291 | 48,533 |
| Southern Melbourne | 32,289 | 51,228 | 32,713 | 61,617 | 177,848 |
| Western District | 17,624 | 22,076 | 7,814 | 12,952 | 60,467 |
| Western Melbourne | 61,932 | 79,236 | 39,945 | 55,267 | 236,381 |
| **Total** | **544,348** | **735,624** | **359,736** | **583,098** | **2,222,805** |

ABS data for 2014 at this level of detail is not available. The estimates in this table have been derived from 2014 data for all Vic households   
and allocated to the various regions based on the change in population numbers in every LGA since 2011 census.

## RESPONSE RATES

A number of different measures of response rates are relevant given the particular multi-stage methodology used in 2014.

The contact rate achieved by the CATI survey was 83%. This is calculated as total contacts achieved (irrespective of whether the contact was in-scope or not) as a proportion of total usable sample where CATI contact was attempted. Not all the 12,135 cases were attempted as either quotas were achieved, or we were advised the respondent had died, or the sample had no valid phone number, or was withdrawn for other reasons.

The cooperation rate achieved by the CATI survey was 31%. This is calculated as interviews as a proportion of in-scope contacts.

The consent return rate was 84%. This is calculated as total households that provided at least one usable consent form as a proportion of CATI interviews.

The response rate was 26%. This is calculated as total households that provided at least one usable consent form as a proportion of in-scope contacts.

Table 2.13 and Table 2.14 on the following pages provide more details.

Reflecting the difference in methodologies, the calculation of response rates is not identical to previous surveys. In the 2007 survey, the response rate was defined as the number of interviews divided by the number of *in-scope* households contacted, and was calculated as 32%. Allowing for the differences in methodology, this can be compared with either the 2014 cooperation rate (31%) or the 2014 response rate (26%).

**Table 2.13: Sample Outcomes Following CATI Stage**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sample Outcomes Following CATI Stage** | **Number** | **Per cent of total sample drawn** |
| Telephone number invalid, missing, fax, modem or disconnected | 32 | 0.3% |
| Non-contact (no reply, answering machine etc.) | 1,566 | 12.9% |
| Refusal | 2,760 | 22.7% |
| Termination | 1,692 | 13.9% |
| Screened out | 334 | 2.8% |
| Interview completed | 2,204 | 18.2% |
| Quota fail | 43 | 0.4% |
| Incomplete appointment | 469 | 3.9% |
| Incomplete interview | 22 | 0.2% |
| Withdrawn | 226 | 1.9% |
| Deceased | 28 | 0.2% |
| Mail-out returned to sender | 541 | 4.5% |
| Other unusable sample | 75 | 0.6% |
| Fresh sample not required (no CATI contact attempted as quotas achieved) | 2,143 | 17.7% |
| **Total sample drawn for mail-out** | **12,135** | **100.0%** |

**Table 2.14: Key Measures of Response**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total in-scope contacts | 7,147 |
| Total interviews completed | 2,204 |
| **Cooperation rate** | **31%** |
|  |  |
| Total usable sample where CATI contact was attempted | 9,090 |
| Total contacts (whether in-scope or not) | 7,524 |
| **Contact rate** | **83%** |
|  |  |
| Total telephone interviews completed | 2,204 |
| Total telephone respondents who provided consent forms | 1,861 |
| **Consent return rate** | **84%** |
|  |  |
| Total in-scope contacts | 7,147 |
| Total telephone respondents who provided consent forms | 1,861 |
| **Response rate** | **26%** |

## THIS REPORT

### Notations

The following notations are used throughout this report:

\* Less than 0.5% response.

n/a not applicable.

n/c not collected for this survey.

- null or zero.

### Comparisons with past reports

Throughout this report, where possible, results obtained are compared with those from 2007. Tables also include data for 2001 and 1996. Certain caveats need to be made with regard to these inter-survey comparisons.

* Due to the format in which the 1996 data was provided, the relative lack of information on how the 1996 sample was selected, modifications to question wording and response categories, plus 1996’s weighting restrictions, results obtained in 1996 may not be strictly comparable with later surveys.
* Consumption and billing data in 2001 was edited heavily due to the poor format and quality of data provided by suppliers, and may as a result be less reliable than in other surveys.
* The 2014 survey, as noted, did not cover many of the topics that had been included in previous waves. While the obvious result of this is that certain comparisons are not available, a less obvious result is that imputation of billing and consumption data was able to rely much less on information already known about households from the survey, and therefore may not be quite as thorough as imputation in previous surveys.
* The geographic scope of past surveys has been limited to the Melbourne metropolitan area and to a small number of major regional cities. For this survey, however, almost all of Victoria was covered. This clearly improves the confidence with which the results can be generalised to the whole population of Victoria – particularly in relation to country Victoria – but means that most comparisons with past surveys’ results need to be conducted with care.
* Inter-survey comparison of data for LPG households should be conducted with care. In previous surveys a small component of the sample was defined as “LPG area”, which was geographically defined based on limited available information, and was thus geographically distinct from the Melbourne and Country VIC strata in those past surveys.  In 2014, no specific “LPG area” has been defined: rather households that both reported in the telephone interview that they use LPG for heating/cooking/hot water and did not provide a consent form for a gas supplier have been defined as “LPG households” but are not a separate stratum for sampling purposes. This change in approach should allow for a much more representative sample of LPG households[[2]](#footnote-2).

Note: Copies of questionnaires, consent forms, other materials mailed out, and other related documents are included in the Appendices, which are provided separately to this report.

# SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

This section describes the characteristics of the sample of respondents included in the data for the 2014 survey. For most purposes, the sample being described is the sample of 1,861 households that both completed the telephone survey and provided at least one completed consent form. The initial descriptions are based on unweighted data, while most of the remaining descriptions are based on weighted survey data, in line with past reports.

## SAMPLE OVERVIEW

As described previously, the initial sample drawn was stratified according to concession status held, size of household, and region. As expected, due to different response rates and different rates of return of consent forms, the final sample achieved differed in some respects from the initial stratification. Table 3.1 overleaf compares the 2014 sample with those from the 2007, 2001 and 1996 surveys (to the extent possible), providing a detailed *unweighted* breakdown of the number of respondents in each location according to type of concession held.

As detailed earlier, there are a number of aspects in which the 2014 sample design differs significantly from previous waves, including:

* The Country Victoria sample covers nearly all of country Victoria, rather than just four regional centres as in past waves;
* The LPG sample is simply a subset of the overall sample, (defined by respondents’ answers on the LPG questions and the absence of a mains gas consent form), rather than a separate geographic stratum.

**Table 3.1: Structure of the 2014 sample compared to the 2007, 2001 and 1996 samples – unweighted**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Non Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 356 | 351 | 376 | 386 | 227 | 220 | 304 | 269 | 550 | 689 | 724 | 740 | 1133 | 1260 | 1404 | 1395 |
| Country VIC1 | 267 | 172 | 160 | 197 | 188 | 149 | 158 | 133 | 273 | 282 | 284 | 275 | 728 | 603 | 602 | 605 |
| LPG households2 | 32 | 85 | n/a | n/a | 22 | 49 | n/a | n/a | 41 | 64 | n/a | n/a | 95 | 198 |  |  |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 21 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 17 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 20 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 58 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 34 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 35 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 80 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 149 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 50 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 56 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 139 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 72 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 23 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 90 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 185 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 39 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 31 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 66 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 136 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 95 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 129 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 269 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 25 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 26 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 135 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 20 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 17 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 25 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 62 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 26 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 20 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 56 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 50 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 35 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 42 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 127 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 17 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 13 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 52 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 23 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 15 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 34 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 20 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 35 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 89 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 31 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 19 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 83 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 12 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 14 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 12 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 38 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 42 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 28 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 115 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 32 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 34 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 31 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **Total** | **623** | **608** | **536** | **583** | **415** | **418** | **462** | **402** | **823** | **1035** | **1008** | **1015** | **1861** | **2061** | **2006** | **2000** |

Base: Total respondents providing consent, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006), 1996 (n=2,000)

1: Country VIC in 2014 includes most of regional VIC. In previous years, only 4 regional centres were sampled.

2: In 2014 LPG households are a subset of the main sample based on their responses. In 2007 they formed a separate geographic stratum.

## SAMPLE GROUPS

Analysis of this and following sections in this document have been conducted on *weighted* data for the 1996, 2001, 2007 and 2014 surveys. The weighting design is discussed in detail in the previous chapter. It should be noted that the weighted proportion of households within each of the concession status categories was not pre-determined as official statistics do not exist for the number of concession households. For each survey, the estimated number of households within each concession status has been derived by weighting the individuals within the sampled households. Differences between waves in the proportion of concession households should, therefore, *approximately* reflect actual population changes, but a number of other factors may also influence the results. In particular, the fact that the 2014 survey covers much more of regional Victoria than previous surveys may be an important factor.

### Concession Status

In 2014, just under half (45%) of households were defined as concession households, with aged and non-aged concession households representing 23% and 22% respectively of the total sample (see Table 3.2.1 overleaf). In 2007, around four in ten (41%) households were defined as concession households, with the proportions of aged and non-aged concession households 21% and 19% respectively. The proportion of non-concession households in 2014 (55%) was slightly lower than in previous years of the study (2007: 59%, 2001: 62%, 1996: 59%).

**Table 3.2.1: Concession Status by Location - Weighted**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 22% | 20% | 17% | 22% | 22% | 18% | 15% | 17% | 44% | 38% | 32% | 39% | 56% | 62% | 68% | 61% |
| Country VIC1 | 25% | 20% | 28% | 26% | 25% | 21% | 26% | 21% | 50% | 41% | 54% | 47% | 50% | 59% | 46% | 59% |
| LPG households2 | 19% | 43% | n/a | n/a | 26% | 25% | n/a | n/a | 46% | 68% | n/a | n/a | 54% | 32% | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 31% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 27% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 58% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 42% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 26% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 56% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 29% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 24% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 52% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 26% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 13% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 60% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 22% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 27% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 52% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 23% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 41% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 59% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 64% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 13% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 42% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 58% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 21% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 57% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 25% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 25% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 23% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 27% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 23% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 25% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 52% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 35% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 57% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 25% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 21% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 46% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 54% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 26% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 27% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 52% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 23% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 55% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 24% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 31% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 55% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **Total** | **23%** | **21%** | **20%** | **23%** | **22%** | **19%** | **18%** | **18%** | **45%** | **41%** | **38%** | **41%** | **55%** | **59%** | **62%** | **59%** |

Base: Total respondents providing consent, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006), 1996 (n=2,000)

1: Country VIC in 2014 includes most of regional VIC. In previous years, only 4 regional centres were sampled.

2: In 2014 LPG households are a subset of the main sample based on their responses. In 2007 they formed a separate geographic stratum.

### Age and Gender of the Selected Respondent

The sample is, of course, weighted to households rather than to individuals. Nevertheless, it is instructive to consider some characteristics of the selected respondent/main bill-payer. Overall, the 2014 sample of selected respondents comprises proportionately more females (63%) than males (37%).By comparison, the 2007 sample comprised 57% females and 43% males, while the 2001 sample comprised 62% females and 38% males. Similar gender distributions are evident across household types, with the selected respondent from other concession households the most predominantly female group (75%), possibly reflecting that single mothers make up a significant proportion of this category. A similar gender distribution was evident when the sample was analysed by region, with the proportion of females in country areas (67%) being slightly higher than in Melbourne (61%).

Table 3.2.2 presents the age and gender profiles of selected respondents in the 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 samples across household types. Please note that the 2014 survey included a change to the lowest age band, from 16-24 years to 15-24 years.

Of all selected respondents/main bill-payers from concession households in 2014, 65% of males and 46% of females were aged 65 years or over (2007: 55% of males and 43% of females). As would be expected, the great majority (98%) of aged concession card holders were aged 65 years or over, while the other concession sample included higher proportions (95%) aged 25-64. The age profile of the selected respondent/main bill-payer from non-concession households is relatively similar to that of other concession households.

The mean age amongst aged concession card holders was 72.7 years, substantially higher than that for the selected respondents from other concession households (52.2 years). Within the total concession household sample the selected respondent/main bill-payer had a mean age of 62.6 years compared with 50.5 years for non-concession households. Little difference was evident when examined by region, with respondents from country Victoria having a mean age of 57.0 years, compared with 55.7 years for those from Melbourne.

**Table 3.2.2: Sample Age and Gender of the Selected Respondent/Main Bill-payer by Household Type - Weighted**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age and Gender** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **Males -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24\* | - | - | - | - | - | 6% | 9% | 5% | - | 3% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 4% |
| 25-39 | - | 1% | - | - | 9% | 24% | 25% | 39% | 3% | 11% | 11% | 14% | 21% | 26% | 35% | 36% |
| 40-54 | - | 1% | 1% | 2% | 37% | 36% | 32% | 32% | 14% | 15% | 14% | 13% | 31% | 35% | 32% | 34% |
| 55-64 | 1% | 7% | 9% | 10% | 47% | 29% | 24% | 23% | 18% | 16% | 15% | 15% | 31% | 24% | 16% | 16% |
| 65+ | 99% | 92% | 90% | 88% | 7% | 4% | 10% | 2% | 65% | 55% | 57% | 57% | 16% | 12% | 11% | 10% |
| **Females -** | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24\* | - | 0% | - | - | 1% | 4% | 8% | 12% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 5% | 1% | 3% | 4% | 3% |
| 25-39 | \* | 0% | 1% | \* | 13% | 35% | 36% | 43% | 7% | 18% | 20% | 20% | 24% | 33% | 37% | 44% |
| 40-54 | - | 2% | 2% | - | 45% | 42% | 35% | 32% | 24% | 22% | 19% | 15% | 41% | 40% | 41% | 38% |
| 55-64 | 3% | 16% | 14% | 19% | 37% | 14% | 15% | 12% | 22% | 15% | 15% | 16% | 27% | 16% | 12% | 8% |
| 65+ | 97% | 82% | 83% | 80% | 4% | 5% | 4% | 1% | 46% | 43% | 42% | 43% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 6% |
| **Total -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24\* | - | - | - | - | 1% | 5% | 9% | 9% | \* | 2% | 4% | 4% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 3% |
| 25-39 | \* | 1% | \* | \* | 12% | 31% | 33% | 42% | 6% | 15% | 16% | 18% | 23% | 30% | 37% | 40% |
| 40-54 | - | 1% | 2% | 1% | 43% | 40% | 34% | 32% | 21% | 19% | 17% | 14% | 37% | 38% | 38% | 37% |
| 55-64 | 2% | 12% | 12% | 15% | 40% | 19% | 18% | 15% | 20% | 15% | 15% | 15% | 29% | 20% | 14% | 12% |
| 65+ | 98% | 86% | 86% | 84% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 1% | 52% | 48% | 48% | 48% | 11% | 9% | 7% | 8% |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

\* Figures for 2007, 2001 and 1996 relate to age band 16-24 years, not 15-24 years

^ Note that classification of concession type is primarily determined by the respondent themselves, so some respondents may mis-classify  
 (e.g. aged concession card holders being younger than 55 years).

## HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

### Length of Time Living at Current Address

At the time of the 2014 survey, almost three-quarters of respondents (78%) had lived at their current address for more than 5 years, 21% for between 2 and 5 years, and 1% for less than 2 years.

As illustrated in Table 3.3.1, half (49%) of aged concession households had lived at their current address for over 20 years, which was roughly twice the proportion for other concession (26%) and non-concession (27%) households. Respondents from Melbourne (33%) were more likely than those from country Victoria (29%) to have lived at their current address for more than 20 years.

**Table 3.3.1: Length of Time Living at Current Address by Sample Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Length of time at current address** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| Less than 1 yr | - | - | \* | - | - | 3% | - | - | 2% | - | - | 1% | - | - | 1% |
| 1 yr to less than 2 yrs | \* | 2% | 3% | 2% | 9% | 15% | 1% | 5% | 9% | 2% | 8% | 12% | 1% | 7% | 11% |
| 2 yrs up to 5 yrs | 9% | 10% | 10% | 22% | 28% | 28% | 15% | 18% | 19% | 25% | 27% | 27% | 21% | 23% | 24% |
| Over 5 yrs up to 10 yrs | 16% | 15% | 10% | 27% | 27% | 20% | 21% | 21% | 15% | 23% | 22% | 21% | 22% | 22% | 18% |
| Over 10 yrs up to 20 yrs | 25% | 20% | 23% | 23% | 19% | 20% | 24% | 20% | 21% | 24% | 23% | 22% | 24% | 22% | 22% |
| Over 20 yrs | 49% | 51% | 53% | 26% | 15% | 15% | 38% | 34% | 35% | 27% | 20% | 17% | 32% | 26% | 24% |
| No answer | - | 2% | - | - | 1% | - | - | 1% | - | - | \* | - | - | 1% | - |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006)

### Household Size

At the time of the 2014 survey, one-quarter (24%) of all respondents lived by themselves, while one-third (33%) lived with one other person (refer to Table 3.3.2). Not surprisingly, aged concession households were much more likely to comprise smaller households, with 88% of selected respondents/main bill-payers living either by themselves or with one other person. In contrast, non-concession respondents were more likely to live in larger households, with 36% living in households of four or more persons.

The prevalence of aged concession card holders living alone has been on the decline since 1996, while the proportion of non-concession respondents living alone has slowly increased over this period. The proportion of other concession card holders living alone rose substantially (from 19% to 31%) compared with 2007.

Respondents from Melbourne (45%) were more likely than those in country Victoria (36%) to reside in households of three or more persons.

**Table 3.3.2: Household Size by Sample Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No. persons in HH** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| 1 person | 37% | 36% | 41% | 48% | 31% | 19% | 19% | 14% | 34% | 28% | 31% | 33% | 17% | 15% | 12% | 10% | 24% | 20% | 19% | 20% |
| 2 persons | 51% | 52% | 51% | 40% | 25% | 31% | 28% | 28% | 39% | 42% | 40% | 35% | 29% | 32% | 32% | 28% | 33% | 36% | 35% | 31% |
| 3 persons | 8% | 8% | 6% | 9% | 18% | 15% | 23% | 20% | 13% | 11% | 14% | 14% | 19% | 19% | 20% | 20% | 16% | 16% | 18% | 18% |
| 4 or more persons | 3% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 26% | 34% | 29% | 38% | 14% | 19% | 15% | 18% | 36% | 34% | 36% | 41% | 26% | 28% | 28% | 32% |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

### Incidence of Children under 15 in Household

Note: In 2007, 2001 and 1996, this metric was measured and reported as children under 16 years, which should be taken into account when comparing with the 2014 results.

In 2014, 75% of all participating households had no children under 15 years living in them (refer Table 3.3.3). Almost all aged concession households (98%) had no children under 15 living in them, compared with 71% of other concession households and 67% of non-concession households.

**Table 3.3.3: Incidence of Children under 15\* in Household by Concession Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No. children living in HH** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| No children | 98% | 97% | 99% | 71% | 52% | 52% | 85% | 76% | 77% | 67% | 65% | 61% | 75% | 69% | 67% |
| 1 child | 2% | 2% | 1% | 14% | 19% | 22% | 8% | 10% | 11% | 13% | 15% | 16% | 11% | 13% | 14% |
| 2 children | - | 1% | - | 8% | 17% | 13% | 4% | 8% | 6% | 15% | 14% | 16% | 10% | 12% | 12% |
| 3 children | - | - | \* | 6% | 10% | 9% | 3% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 7% | 4% | 4% | 6% |
| 4 or more children | - | - | \* | \* | 2% | 4% | \* | 1% | 2% | \* | 2% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006)

\* Figures for 2007, 2001 and 1996 relate to children under 16 years

### Derived Total Household Income

Total household income was a **derived** survey item. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of ranges the level of any income that they and other household members received. For those receiving income from employment, the midpoint of each of the selected income ranges was used to calculate an estimated household income received from employment. Additional components of the calculation were obtained or derived from DSS sources, ABS, DVA and Roy Morgan Single Source.

Please note the following factors when drawing comparisons between the various surveys:

- Other income was excluded from the calculation of derived household income in the 2007, 2001 and 1996 surveys

- Self-funded income was excluded from the calculation of derived household income in the 2001 and 1996 surveys

As such, part of the increase in derived household income in 2014 and (to lesser degree) 2007 will be attributable to the inclusion of these additional sources of income in the calculation.

Not surprisingly, average estimated household income was much higher for non-concession ($120,022 per annum) than concession households ($57,270 per annum) – see Table 3.3.4. More than four-fifths (83%) of non-concession households in 2014 had a total estimated household income of $50,000 or more per annum, compared with just 46% of concession households. Thirteen per cent of concession households had a total estimated income of less than $20,000 annually, compared with just 2% of non-concession households. The estimated average household income in aged concession households ($58,360) was higher than in other concession households ($56,148) which is the reverse of the situation that existed in 2007 (aged concession households: $31,900; other concession households: $38,100).

Households in Melbourne had higher estimated average annual household income than households in country Victoria ($96,103 and $77,869 respectively).

**Table 3.3.4: Derived Total Annual Household Income by Concession Status and Region**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Derived Household Income** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | **Other Concession HHs** | | **Total Concession HHs** | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | **Melbourne** | | **Country VIC** | | **LPG Households** | | **Total HHs** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| Less than $10,000 | \* | - | 1% | - | \* | - | 2% | 1% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | 2% | - | 1% | \* |
| $10,000-$19,999 | - | 31% | 26% | 30% | 13% | 30% | \* | 5% | 5% | 15% | 8% | 17% | 6% | 24% | 6% | 15% |
| $20,000-$29,999 | 22% | 38% | 3% | 22% | 13% | 31% | 6% | 7% | 9% | 15% | 9% | 19% | 10% | 24% | 9% | 16% |
| $30,000-$39,999 | 1% | 7% | 11% | 13% | 6% | 10% | 2% | 4% | 3% | 5% | 5% | 9% | 2% | 11% | 3% | 7% |
| $40,000-$49,999 | 31% | 5% | 13% | 10% | 22% | 7% | 7% | 11% | 13% | 9% | 16% | 10% | 13% | 7% | 14% | 10% |
| $50,000 or more | 45% | 17% | 46% | 24% | 46% | 20% | 83% | 68% | 68% | 52% | 62% | 41% | 66% | 32% | 66% | 49% |
| Can't say | \* | 2% | - | 1% | \* | 2% | - | 4% | - | 3% | \* | 3% | 1% | 2% | \* | 3% |
| **Mean ($’000)** | **58.4** | **31.9** | **56.1** | **38.1** | **57.3** | **34.9** | **120.0** | **81** | **96.1** | **65** | **77.9** | **55.8** | **90.9** | **46.2** | **91.3** | **62** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

NB: Country VIC in 2014 includes most of regional VIC. In previous years, only 4 regional centres were sampled.

NB: In 2014 LPG households are a subset of the main sample based on their responses. In 2007 they formed a separate geographic stratum.

### Main Language Spoken in the Household

English was the main language spoken in the great majority of households (95%) – see Table 3.3.5. This proportion was highest amongst aged concession (98%) and lowest among other concession and non-concession households (both 94%). No other language reached a 1% incidence at the total household level. Almost all households in the country Victoria (99.5%) spoke English as their main language, compared with 93% of those in Melbourne.

The proportion of households with English as the main language has been increasing slightly with each wave of the survey. The more noticeable increase between 2007 and 2014 may in part reflect the methodological difference between the two surveys: 2007 being face to face and 2014 being telephone, followed by self-completion and mailing back of the consent forms.

**Table 3.3.5: Main Language Spoken in the Household of Sample**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Language of HH** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| English | 98% | 91% | 89% | 89% | 94% | 85% | 83% | 80% | 96% | 88% | 86% | 85% | 94% | 92% | 89% | 89% | 95% | 91% | 88% | 87% |
| Italian | - | 4% | 3% | 5% | - | \* | 1% | 2% | - | 2% | 2% | 3% | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Greek | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | - | \* | 3% | 2% | \* | 1% | 2% | 2% | - | \* | 1% | 1% | \* | \* | 1% | 2% |
| Vietnamese | - | \* | \* | \* | \* | 2% | 3% | 3% | \* | 1% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* | 2% | \* | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Arabic | - | \* | \* | - | 1% | 2% | 2% | 2% | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | - | \* | \* | \* | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Spanish | - | 1% | \* | \* | - | \* | 1% | 1% | - | \* | \* | 1% | - | \* | 1% | 1% | - | \* | \* | 1% |
| Turkish | - | - | \* | \* | 1% | \* | 1% | 2% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | - | - | \* | 1% | \* | \* | \* | 1% |
| Cantonese | - | \* | \* | \* | 1% | \* | \* | 1% | \* | \* | \* | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | \* | \* | 1% | 1% | \* |
| Mandarin | - | - | - | \* | 1% | \* | \* | 1% | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* | \* | \* | 1% |
| Other | 2% | 2% | 6 | 4 | 2% | 9% | 6% | 7% | 2% | 5% | 6 | 5% | 4% | 4% | 6% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 6 | 5% |
| Can't say | - | \* | - | - | - | - | \* | - | - | \* | \* | - | - | - | - | - | - | \* | \* | - |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

### Home Ownership Status

Four-fifths (80%) of respondents were currently buying or already owned their own home at the time of the 2014 survey, while 20% were renting public or private accommodation (see Table 3.3.6). Owning or paying off a home was more prevalent amongst non-concession households (87%) than concession households (71%), though 84% of aged concession households were home owners, including 79% who owned their house outright. Renting was far more prevalent among other concession households (43%) compared with aged concession (15%) and non-concession households (13%).

There was virtually no difference in the rates of home ownership between households from Melbourne and country Victoria.

**Table 3.3.6: Sample Home Ownership Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Home Ownership Status** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Owned/fully paid off | 79% | 81% | 84% | 76% | 35% | 29% | 33% | 26% | 57% | 57% | 59% | 54% | 45% | 42% | 41% | 39% | 51% | 48% | 48% | 45% |
| Buying/paying off | 5% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 22% | 22% | 23% | 17% | 13% | 13% | 13% | 10% | 42% | 40% | 42% | 42% | 29% | 29% | 31% | 28% |
| Rent – Private | 9% | 9% | 5% | 5% | 26% | 29% | 29% | 35% | 17% | 19% | 17% | 18% | 11% | 16% | 15% | 16% | 14% | 17% | 16% | 17% |
| Rent – Public | 6% | 5% | 7% | 14% | 17% | 17% | 13% | 22% | 12% | 11% | 10% | 17% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 6% | 5% | 4% | 9% |
| Other | \* | 1% | \* | \* | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* | 1% | \* | 1% | \* | 1% | \* | 1% |
| Can't say | - | - | \* | - | \* | - | \* | - | \* | - | \* | - | \* | - | 1% | - | \* | - | 1% | - |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

### Incidence of Other Household Members Holding Concession Cards

In 2014, 12% of households had at least one other member holding an aged pensioner concession card (see Table 3.3.7 overleaf), with 9% having at least one other member holding a Health Care Card and 6% holding a non-aged pensioner concession card (see glossary for an explanation of these terms). Not surprisingly, a large proportion (41%) of aged concession households had another member also holding an aged pensioner concession card. In total, 42% of concession households had another member of the household holding a concession card of some type. In contrast, only 11% of non-concession households included members with a concession card, with the majority of these holding a Health Care Card (7%).

Results were broadly consistent with those of 2007 and 2001 (the question was not asked in 1996). The biggest change was the drop in the proportion of other concession households with other members holding a Health Care Card, which has almost halved between 2001 (33%) and 2014 (17%), while remaining fairly steady among aged concession and non-concession households.

Please note that whilst other members of the household may hold concessions cards, these persons were not defined as being the person responsible for payment of the household bills. Therefore in some instances a ‘non-concession’ household may in fact receive concessions on some bills because another member of the household may hold a concession card. This also means that a household defined as an ‘other’ concession household may also have another household member who holds an aged pensioner concession card, or vice versa.

**Table 3.3.7: Incidence of Other Household Members Holding Concession Cards**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Other HH members with Concession Cards1** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| Aged Pensioner Concession Card | 41% | 45% | 41% | 7% | 8% | 5% | 24% | 27% | 24% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 12% | 12% | 10% |
| Non-Aged Pensioner Concession Card | 3% | 4% | 5% | 15% | 16% | 16% | 9% | 9% | 11% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 6% | 4% | 5% |
| Health Care Card | 4% | 6% | 4% | 18% | 28% | 33% | 11% | 16% | 18% | 7% | 5% | 7% | 9% | 10% | 11% |
| DVA Gold Card | 1% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% | \* | \* | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% |
| **Total** | **47%** | **52%** | **50%** | **37%** | **47%** | **48%** | **42%** | **49%** | **50%** | **11%** | **8%** | **10%** | **25%** | **25%** | **26%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006)

1. A member of the household could hold more than one concession card.

### Registered Motor Vehicles

Overall, an average of 1.42 persons per household had a vehicle registered in their name, which was marginally higher than in 2007 (1.38 persons per household) – see Table 3.3.8 overleaf.

Non-concession households had the highest average number of persons with a vehicle registered in their name (1.56, compared with 1.26 for concession households). There was little difference between Melbourne and country Victoria in terms of average number of persons within the household with a vehicle registered in their name (1.43 to 1.40 respectively).

When projected to population estimates, the survey results indicate that 3,161,000 Victorians had at least one vehicle registered in their name in 2014. Not surprisingly, Melbourne residents and non-concession households had the most persons with motor vehicles registered in their name (2,341,000 and 1,892,000 respectively).

**Table 3.3.8: Registered Motor Vehicles by Region and Sample Type**



Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

### Date when Home was Built

Overall, the majority of homes were built before 1991 (66%), and this was generally consistent across sub-groups (see Tables 3.3.9a and 3.3.9b). Non-concession households were almost twice as likely (15%) as concession households (8%) to live in a home built after 2004.

**Table 3.3.9a: Date when Home was Built by Region and DHHS Area**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date Home Built** | **After 2004** | **1991 to 2004** | **Before 1991** | **Can't say** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 11% | 18% | 66% | 5% |
| Country VIC | 13% | 18% | 65% | 3% |
| LPG Households | 9% | 19% | 62% | 10% |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 8% | 18% | 68% | 6% |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 12% | 12% | 68% | 8% |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 6% | 19% | 72% | 4% |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 7% | 12% | 77% | 4% |
| Southern Melbourne | 20% | 24% | 53% | 3% |
| Bayside | 9% | 21% | 67% | 4% |
| Western Melbourne | 14% | 21% | 62% | 3% |
| Brimbank Melton | 18% | 18% | 55% | 8% |
| Mallee | 16% | 17% | 58% | 9% |
| Loddon | 10% | 10% | 79% | 1% |
| Ovens Murray | 12% | 17% | 71% | - |
| Goulburn | 13% | 38% | 49% | - |
| Outer Gippsland | 13% | 17% | 67% | 3% |
| Inner Gippsland | 14% | 20% | 63% | 3% |
| Western District | 17% | 16% | 58% | 8% |
| Barwon | 15% | 16% | 64% | 4% |
| Central Highlands | 9% | 18% | 70% | 3% |
| **Total HHs** | **12%** | **18%** | **66%** | **4%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861) 2007 (n=2,061)

**Table 3.3.9b: Date when Home was Built by Concession Status and Ownership Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date Home Built** | **After 2004** | **1991 to 2004** | **Before 1991** | **Can't say** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 8% | 17% | 72% | 3% |
| Other Concession HHs | 8% | 16% | 69% | 8% |
| Total Concession HHs | 8% | 17% | 70% | 5% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 15% | 20% | 62% | 3% |
| **By Ownership Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Own/paying off | 13% | 20% | 66% | 1% |
| Rent –Private | 8% | 11% | 66% | 15% |
| Rent- Public | 6% | 6% | 67% | 21% |
| **Total HHs** | **12%** | **18%** | **66%** | **4%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861) 2007 (n=2,061)

### Number of Bedrooms in the Home

Overall, homes most commonly had three bedrooms (52%) – see Table 3.3.10a. The next most common category was four or more bedrooms: in total, therefore, 81% of homes in 2014 had 3 or more bedrooms. As might be expected, the number of bedrooms was higher amongst home owners/buyers, with 87% having three or more bedrooms, compared with 54% of private and 52% of public rental homes. Public renters were also the most likely group to live in one-bedroom homes (22%), compared with 7% of private renters and 1% of owners/buyers. Four or more bedrooms were more commonly found amongst non-concession (37%) than amongst concession (20%) households. Four or more bedrooms were also more commonly found in more recently built homes than in older homes (27% of homes built before 1991 had four or more bedrooms, compared with 35% of those built between 1991 and 2004 and 37% of those built after 2004).

**Table 3.3.10a: Number of Bedrooms in the Home by Concession Status, Home Ownership Status and Date Built**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No. of Bedrooms** | **One** | | **Two** | | **Three** | | **Four or more** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 4% | 4% | 19% | 26% | 56% | 56% | 21% | 14% |
| Other Concession HHs | 6% | 7% | 21% | 18% | 54% | 60% | 19% | 15% |
| Total Concession HHs | 5% | 6% | 20% | 22% | 55% | 58% | 20% | 15% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 1% | 2% | 14% | 16% | 49% | 55% | 37% | 26% |
| **By Ownership Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Own/paying off | 1% | 1% | 12% | 13% | 54% | 55% | 33% | 32% |
| Rent –Private | 7% | 9% | 38% | 39% | 41% | 44% | 13% | 8% |
| Rent- Public | 22% | 17% | 25% | 32% | 44% | 45% | 8% | 6% |
| **By Date Built -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| After 2004 | 2% | - | 15% | 21% | 46% | 42% | 37% | 38% |
| 1991 to 2004 | 2% | 3% | 17% | 14% | 46% | 52% | 35% | 31% |
| Before 1991 | 3% | 3% | 15% | 19% | 55% | 52% | 27% | 25% |
| **Total HHs** | **3%** | **3%** | **16%** | **19%** | **52%** | **52%** | **29%** | **26%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n= 1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

**Table 3.3.10a: Number of Bedrooms in the Home by Concession Status, Home Ownership Status and Date Built**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No. of Bedrooms** | **One** | | **Two** | | **Three** | | **Four or more** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 3% | 3% | 18% | 19% | 49% | 50% | 30% | 27% |
| Country VIC | 2% | 3% | 13% | 17% | 58% | 56% | 26% | 24% |
| LPG Households | 3% | 4% | 10% | 14% | 52% | 60% | 32% | 22% |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 1% | n/a | 19% | n/a | 62% | n/a | 17% | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 4% | n/a | 19% | n/a | 44% | n/a | 32% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 1% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 56% | n/a | 35% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 3% | n/a | 14% | n/a | 41% | n/a | 42% | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 1% | n/a | 12% | n/a | 52% | n/a | 35% | n/a |
| Bayside | 5% | n/a | 22% | n/a | 48% | n/a | 25% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 3% | n/a | 24% | n/a | 48% | n/a | 25% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | - | n/a | 13% | n/a | 58% | n/a | 29% | n/a |
| Mallee | - | n/a | 25% | n/a | 55% | n/a | 21% | n/a |
| Loddon | 1% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 62% | n/a | 27% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | - | n/a | 15% | n/a | 52% | n/a | 33% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 6% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 51% | n/a | 32% | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | - | n/a | 19% | n/a | 57% | n/a | 25% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 5% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 57% | n/a | 28% | n/a |
| Western District | 2% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 73% | n/a | 15% | n/a |
| Barwon | 2% | n/a | 16% | n/a | 59% | n/a | 23% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 3% | n/a | 15% | n/a | 56% | n/a | 26% | n/a |
| **Total HHs** | **3%** | **3%** | **16%** | **19%** | **52%** | **52%** | **29%** | **26%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n= 1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

### Material from which Home is Built

Overall, brick veneer was the most common material from which homes were built (65%) – see Table 3.3.11a. Brick veneer homes were more common in Melbourne (68%) than in country Victoria (58%) – see table 3.3.11b overleaf. In contrast, weatherboard/timber homes were more common in country Victoria (24%) than in Melbourne (17%).

The material from which homes were built varied by the date built. For example, brick veneer was more common for homes built after 1991 (1991 to 2004: 87%; after 2004: 81%) than those built before 1991 (57%). Weatherboard/timber was more common in homes built before 1991 (25%), than in homes built from 1991 to 2004 (3%) or after 2004 (7%). Double brick/cavity brick was most common amongst homes built before 1991 (12%).

**Table 3.3.11a: Material of Home by Concession Status and Date Built**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Material of Home** | **Brick veneer** | | **Double brick/ Cavity brick** | | **W'board/ Timber** | | **Fibro-cement** | | **Concrete/ Besser block** | | **Steel/ Aluminium** | | **Other Material** | | **Can't say** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 68% | 68% | 7% | 6% | 16% | 18% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | \* | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| Other Concession HHs | 62% | 63% | 11% | 8% | 19% | 19% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 1% | \* | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| Total Concession HHs | 65% | 66% | 9% | 7% | 18% | 18% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 65% | 62% | 10% | 11% | 19% | 23% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | \* | \* | 2% | 1% | \* | \* |
| **By Date Built -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| After 2004 | 81% | 78% | 5% | - | 7% | 11% | - | - | 2% | 8% | 1% | - | 3% | 3% | 2% | - |
| 1991 to 2004 | 87% | 85% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 2% | - | 2% | 1% | - | 1% | 2% | 2% | \* | - |
| Before 1991 | 57% | 59% | 12% | 11% | 25% | 24% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 2% | \* | \* | 2% | 2% | \* | \* |
| **Total HHs** | **65%** | **64%** | **9%** | **9%** | **18%** | **21%** | **2%** | **2%** | **1%** | **2%** | **\*** | **\*** | **2%** | **2%** | **1%** | **\*** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

**Table 3.3.11b: Material of Home by Region and Home Ownership Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Material of Home** | **Brick veneer** | | **Double brick/ Cavity brick** | | **W'board/ Timber** | | **Fibro-cement** | | **Concrete/ Besser block** | | **Steel/ Aluminium** | | **Other Material** | | **Can't say** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 68% | 66% | 10% | 11% | 17% | 18% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% | \* | \* | 1% | 1% | 1% | \* |
| Country VIC | 58% | 58% | 7% | 6% | 23% | 28% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 3% | 1% | 1% |
| LPG Households | 38% | 28% | 7% | 4% | 20% | 42% | 4% | 8% | 2% | 3% | 1% | 4% | 2% | 12% | 1% | 1% |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 66% | n/a | 12% | n/a | 20% | n/a | \* | n/a | 1% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 64% | n/a | 19% | n/a | 15% | n/a | \* | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | 2% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 71% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 15% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | \* | n/a | 5% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 68% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 21% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a | 1% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 82% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 1% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a |
| Bayside | 66% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 13% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 2% | n/a | - | n/a | 1% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 56% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 27% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a | 1% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 82% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 11% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | 1% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Mallee | 63% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 12% | n/a | 2% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Loddon | 47% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 31% | n/a | 6% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 4% | n/a | \* | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 73% | n/a | 14% | n/a | 13% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a |
| Goulburn | 73% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 19% | n/a | 1% | n/a | - | n/a | 2% | n/a | 4% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 40% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 32% | n/a | 18% | n/a | 1% | n/a | - | n/a | 5% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 49% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 26% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Western District | 57% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 30% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Barwon | 63% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 18% | n/a | 3% | n/a | 3% | n/a | 4% | n/a | \* | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 61% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 29% | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | 2% | n/a | - | n/a |
| **By Ownership Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Own/paying off | 67% | 63% | 8% | 8% | 19% | 23% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 1% | \* | 2% | 2% | \* | \* |
| Rent –Private | 56% | 65% | 13% | 12% | 21% | 19% | 1% | 2% | 3% | 2% | - | \* | 2% | \* | 3% | \* |
| Rent- Public | 69% | 66% | 15% | 11% | 8% | 7% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 14% | - | - | - | - | 4% | 2% |
| **Total HHs** | **65%** | **64%** | **9%** | **9%** | **18%** | **21%** | **2%** | **2%** | **1%** | **2%** | **\*** | **\*** | **2%** | **2%** | **1%** | **\*** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

### Dwelling Type

Dwelling type was a **derived** survey item in 2014, based on information gathered during the original Single Source interview at the household.

The vast majority of respondents lived in separate houses (80%). Not surprisingly, separate houses were more common amongst country Victoria (90%) than Melbourne (76%) residents, whilst semi-detached homes were more common in Melbourne (9%) than country Victoria (4%). Non-concession households were slightly more likely (82%) than concession households (77%) to live in a separate house.

Private and public renters were considerably less likely to live in separate houses (52% and 65% respectively) than were home owners/buyers (84%). One-quarter (25%) of public renters lived in low rise flats/units, compared with 19% of private renters and 5% of home owners/buyers. Homes built before 1991 were less likely to be semi-detached (6%) than those built between 1991 and 2004 (10%) or after 2004 (13%).

**Table 3.3.12a: Dwelling Type by Concession Status and Date Built**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dwelling Type** | **Separate house** | | **Dwelling/ non-dwelling combined** | | **Semi-detached** | | **Low rise flats/units** | | **High rise flats/units** | |
|
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 80% | 84% | - | - | 9% | 13% | 8% | 2% | 1% | \* |
| Other Concession HHs | 74% | 80% | - | \* | 10% | 10% | 14% | 7% | \* | 3% |
| Total Concession HHs | 77% | 82% | - | \* | 9% | 12% | 11% | 4% | 1% | 2% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 82% | 87% | \* | \* | 7% | 9% | 6% | 3% | 1% | \* |
| **By Date Built -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| After 2004 | 72% | 84% | \* | - | 13% | 16% | 8% | - | 1% | - |
| 1991 to 2004 | 75% | 81% | - | \* | 10% | 17% | 10% | 2% | 1% | - |
| Before 1991 | 84% | 87% | - | - | 6% | 8% | 7% | 4% | \* | 1% |
| **Total HHs** | **80%** | **85%** | **\*** | **\*** | **8%** | **10%** | **8%** | **4%** | **1%** | **1%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

**Table 3.3.12b: Dwelling Type by Region and Home Ownership Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dwelling Type** | **Separate house** | | **Dwelling/ non-dwelling combined** | | **Semi-detached** | | **Low rise flats/units** | | **High rise flats/units** | |
|
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 76% | 82% | \* | \* | 9% | 12% | 10% | 5% | 1% | 1% |
| Country VIC | 90% | 92% | - | \* | 4% | 6% | 4% | 1% | \* | - |
| LPG Households | 85% | 96% | - | 1% | 1% | 3% | 8% | 1% | 4% | - |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 88% | n/a | - | n/a | 6% | n/a | 5% | n/a | - | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 78% | n/a | - | n/a | 10% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 80% | n/a | - | n/a | 7% | n/a | 7% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 80% | n/a | - | n/a | 8% | n/a | 9% | n/a | \* | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 79% | n/a | - | n/a | 10% | n/a | 6% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Bayside | 68% | n/a | \* | n/a | 12% | n/a | 15% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 75% | n/a | - | n/a | 8% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 71% | n/a | - | n/a | 12% | n/a | 9% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Mallee | 76% | n/a | - | n/a | 11% | n/a | 7% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Loddon | 93% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 91% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 6% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Goulburn | 90% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 2% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 90% | n/a | - | n/a | - | n/a | 6% | n/a | \* | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 90% | n/a | - | n/a | 7% | n/a | 3% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Western District | 92% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Barwon | 92% | n/a | - | n/a | 3% | n/a | 3% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 86% | n/a | - | n/a | 5% | n/a | 4% | n/a | - | n/a |
| **By Ownership Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Own/paying off | 84% | 93% | \* | \* | 7% | 5% | 5% | 1% | \* | - |
| Rent –Private | 65% | 59% | - | \* | 11% | 27% | 19% | 13% | 3% | \* |
| Rent- Public | 52% | 54% | - | - | 20% | 23% | 25% | 11% | 3% | 12% |
| **Total HHs** | **80%** | **85%** | **\*** | **\*** | **8%** | **10%** | **8%** | **4%** | **1%** | **1%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

### Incidence of Ceiling Insulation

The 2014 survey added a response category “Insulated but not sure if complete or partial”. Comparisons with 2007 results therefore require care.

The great majority of households (87%) had some ceiling insulation[[3]](#footnote-3), an increase of 10 percentage points over 2007 – see Table 3.3.13a. Non-concession households (90%) were more likely than concession households (85%) to have some ceiling insulation. In particular, just 77% of other concession households reported any extent of ceiling insulation. Home owners/buyers (95%) were much more likely that private renters (58%) or public renters (55%) to have some ceiling insulation. Homes built before 1991 were less likely to have any insulation (87%) compared with those built between 1991 and 2004 (93%) or after 2004 (94%).

**Table 3.3.13a: Incidence of Ceiling Insulation by Concession Status and Date Built**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ceiling Insulation** | **Completely Insulated** | | **Partly Insulated** | | **Insulated -unsure if complete or partial\*** | | **Total with some insulation** | | **Not insulated** | | **Can't say** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 81% | 74% | 6% | 7% | 4% | n/a | 92% | 81% | 4% | 10% | 4% | 9% |
| Other Concession HHs | 58% | 51% | 9% | 6% | 10% | n/a | 77% | 57% | 12% | 20% | 12% | 24% |
| Total Concession HHs | 70% | 63% | 8% | 7% | 7% | n/a | 85% | 69% | 8% | 15% | 8% | 16% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 74% | 74% | 9% | 8% | 6% | n/a | 90% | 81% | 6% | 9% | 6% | 10% |
| **By Date Built -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| After 2004 | 83% | 91% | 4% | - | 7% | n/a | 94% | 91% | 2% | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| 1991 to 2004 | 84% | 84% | 4% | 3% | 5% | n/a | 93% | 88% | 1% | 5% | 6% | 7% |
| Before 1991 | 70% | 68% | 11% | 8% | 6% | n/a | 87% | 76% | 7% | 12% | 7% | 12% |
| **Total HHs** | **72%** | **69%** | **8%** | **7%** | **7%** | **n/a** | **87%** | **77%** | **5%** | **11%** | **7%** | **12%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

**Table 3.3.13b: Incidence of Ceiling Insulation by Region and Home Ownership Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ceiling Insulation** | **Completely Insulated** | | **Partly Insulated** | | **Insulated -unsure if complete or partial\*** | | **Total with some insulation** | | **Not insulated** | | **Can't say** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region** - |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 72% | 69% | 8% | 7% | 7% | n/a | 87% | 76% | 5% | 11% | 7% | 13% |
| Country VIC | 73% | 70% | 8% | 8% | 7% | n/a | 88% | 78% | 6% | 11% | 6% | 10% |
| LPG Households | 77% | 71% | 12% | 7% | 2% | n/a | 91% | 78% | 9% | 15% | \* | 7% |
| **By DHHS Areas -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 71% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 12% | n/a | 88% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 71% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 88% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 8% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 73% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 91% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 76% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 6% | n/a | 93% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 78% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 89% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| Bayside | 70% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 6% | n/a | 83% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 68% | n/a | 11% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 82% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 11% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 71% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 6% | n/a | 86% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Mallee | 73% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 2% | n/a | 84% | n/a | 1% | n/a | 14% | n/a |
| Loddon | 63% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 13% | n/a | 86% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 80% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 93% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 82% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 94% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 71% | n/a | 10% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 85% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 66% | n/a | 17% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 91% | n/a | 6% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Western District | 70% | n/a | 7% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 82% | n/a | 15% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Barwon | 79% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 8% | n/a | 90% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 74% | n/a | 9% | n/a | 5% | n/a | 87% | n/a | 4% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| **By Ownership Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Own/paying off | 80% | 81% | 9% | 8% | 5% | n/a | 95% | 89% | 3% | 6% | 2% | 5% |
| Rent –Private | 41% | 27% | 5% | 6% | 12% | n/a | 58% | 33% | 15% | 28% | 27% | 39% |
| Rent- Public | 38% | 39% | 1% | 4% | 16% | n/a | 55% | 43% | 17% | 25% | 28% | 32% |
| **Total HHs** | **72%** | **69%** | **8%** | **7%** | **7%** | **n/a** | **87%** | **77%** | **5%** | **11%** | **7%** | **12%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

## RESPONDENT PROFILE

### Length of Time Holding a Concession Card

The majority (89%) of respondents who held a concession card had held it for 2 years or more at the time of the 2014 survey, and 92% of aged concession card holders had held their card for this long (see Table 3.4.1). Other concession card holders tended to hold their concession cards for a slightly shorter term, with 85% having held their card for 2 years or more and 6% for 6 months or less. This is not surprising as many other concession card holders would have a Health Care Card due to currently being unemployed.

Amongst other concession households, the length of time holding a concession card has been on the rise since 1996, indicating that holding these forms of concession card is becoming a long term proposition for many.

**Table 3.4.1: Length of Time Holding a Concession card by Concession Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Length of time holding concession card** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Less than 4 months | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 5% | 6% | 8% | 1% | 3% | 3% | 4% |
| 4-6 months | 1% | \* | 2% | 1% | 4% | 5% | 4% | 6% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 3% |
| 7-12 months | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 6% | 6% | 15% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 8% |
| Over 1 year to less than 2 years | 4% | 2% | 3% | 5% | 5% | 10% | 12% | 11% | 4% | 6% | 7% | 7% |
| 2 years or more | 92% | 92% | 91% | 90% | 85% | 72% | 68% | 60% | 89% | 82% | 80% | 77% |
| Can't Say | \* | 2% | 2% | \* | - | 3% | 4% | \* | \* | 3% | 3% | \* |

Base: Total respondents holding a concession card, 2014 (n=1,008); 2007 (n=1,026); 2001 (n=998); 1996 (n=985)

### Employment Status

At the time of the 2014 survey, 48% of all respondents were employed with 51% not employed, which was virtually unchanged from 2007 (see Table 3.4.2 overleaf). Pensioners/retirees (37%) and those undertaking home duties (9%) comprised the majority of those not employed, while only 3% were looking for work and 2% were studying. Of those in paid employment, half (50%) worked full-time, 40% worked part-time and 8% were self-employed.

As expected, the large majority (92%) of respondents from aged concession households were retired or pensioners compared with just over one-third (34%) of respondents from other concession households. Another one-third (33%) of respondents from other concession households were employed, though primarily on a part-time basis (22% of all other concession households).

Since 1996, the proportion of respondents reporting that they undertake home duties trended downward across all groups, whilst the opposite trend is evident for the proportion reporting that they are pensioners/retirees, indicating an ageing population.

There was little difference between respondents from Melbourne and country Victoria in terms of likelihood to be employed in some fashion (48% and 47% respectively), though those from Melbourne were more likely to be employed on a full time basis (25%, compared with 20% for those in country Victoria).

**Table 3.4.2: Employment Status by Concession Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employment Status** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Full Time Employment | \* | \* | - | \* | 5% | 6% | 4% | 7% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 41% | 42% | 36% | 45% | 24% | 26% | 23% | 28% |
| Part Time Employment | 5% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 22% | 13% | 14% | 12% | 13% | 7% | 8% | 6% | 24% | 19% | 21% | 16% | 19% | 14% | 16% | 12% |
| Self Employed | \* | \* | - | \* | 3% | 5% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 5% | 11% | 8% | 7% | 4% | 7% | 5% | 5% |
| Employed -Other | \* | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **Total Employed** | **5%** | **3%** | **2%** | **2%** | **33%** | **24%** | **21%** | **23%** | **19%** | **13%** | **11%** | **11%** | **71%** | **71%** | **65%** | **67%** | **48%** | **47%** | **44%** | **44%** |
| Home Duties | 2% | 5% | 11% | 13% | 16% | 27% | 32% | 38% | 9% | 15% | 21% | 24% | 9% | 14% | 21% | 21% | 9% | 15% | 21% | 22% |
| Studying | - | \* | - | \* | 4% | 5% | 7% | 6% | 2% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 3% |
| Looking for Work | \* | 1% | \* | \* | 10% | 11% | 10% | 14% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 3% |
| Retired/Pensioner | 92% | 89% | 87% | 82% | 34% | 31% | 28% | 16% | 63% | 62% | 59% | 53% | 15% | 10% | 8% | 7% | 37% | 31% | 28% | 26% |
| **Total Not Employed** | **94%** | **97%** | **98%** | **96%** | **64%** | **76%** | **77%** | **74%** | **79%** | **87%** | **88%** | **87%** | **28%** | **29%** | **34%** | **32%** | **51%** | **53%** | **55%** | **44%** |
| Other | \* | - | \* | \* | 3% | - | 2% | 3% | 2% | - | 1% | 2% | 1% | - | 1% | 1% | 1% | - | 1% | 1% |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

### Income Sources

Half (50%) of all respondents reported employment as an income source, and 45% reported government benefits as an income source (see Table 3.4.3). Not surprisingly, the great majority of respondents in concession households derived income from government benefits (89%) while most respondents in non-concession households derived income from employment (74%).[[4]](#footnote-4)

The proportion of respondents in aged concession households reporting self-funded income has risen in every survey since 1996, and substantially since the last survey (47% in 2014, compared with 21% in 2007). The proportion of respondents receiving income from more than one of the three major categories (employment, government benefits, self-funded) appears to have increased from the 1996 baseline, particularly since 2007.

Respondents from Melbourne were equally likely to those from country Victoria to obtain income from employment (each 50%), but somewhat less likely to receive government benefits (43% and 49% respectively).

**Table 3.4.3: Income Sources of Main Respondent by Concession Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Income Sources** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Wages/ Salary/ Income from Employment | 7% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 35% | 22% | 21% | 22% | 21% | 12% | 11% | 11% | 74% | 73% | 68% | 70% | 50% | 48% | 46% | 46% |
| Pensions/ Other Govt Benefits | 96% | 92% | 93% | 96% | 82% | 78% | 79% | 78% | 89% | 85% | 86% | 88% | 8% | 6% | 3% | 5% | 45% | 38% | 35% | 39% |
| Self-Funded | 47% | 21% | 19% | 16% | 11% | 7% | 8% | 3% | 29% | 14% | 14% | 10% | 29% | 15% | 15% | 12% | 29% | 15% | 15% | 11% |
| Other Sources | \* | 1% | - | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 1% | \* | 1% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% |
| None | \* | - | - | 1% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 4% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 7% | 6% | 14% | 14% | 4% | 4% | 9% | 10% |
| Can’t Say | \* | 3% | 1% | - | - | 3% | 2% | - | \* | 3% | 1% | - | - | 3% | 3% | - | \* | 3% | 2% | - |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

### Personal Income

As expected, the average personal income from employment amongst respondents from non-concession households was considerably higher than that amongst respondents from concession households – a mean of $73,900 per annum compared with $35,100, respectively (see Table 3.4.4). This considerable difference reflects both the fact that respondents from concession households were much less likely to be employed, and, if employed, were much less likely to be working full-time than respondents in non-concession households. At the time of the 2014 survey, almost two-thirds (61%) of respondents from non-concession households earned $50,000 or more per annum compared with only 9% of those from concession households.

Respondents from Melbourne in paid employment had higher average personal income from wages or salaries ($71,500 per annum) than those from country Victoria ($53,700 per annum).

**Table 3.4.4: Personal Income\* of Main Respondent (from employment)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Income** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Less than $10,000 | 4% | 11% | 9% | 65% | 6% | 9% | 23% | 52% | 5% | 9% | 22% | 59% | 2% | 4% | 7% | 13% | 2% | 5% | 9% | 32% |
| $10,000-$19,999 | 21% | 28% | 58% | 25% | 14% | 35% | 36% | 29% | 15% | 34% | 38% | 27% | 4% | 8% | 15% | 17% | 6% | 10% | 17% | 21% |
| $20,000-$29,999 | 13% | 14% | 14% | 4% | 26% | 23% | 24% | 7% | 24% | 22% | 24% | 5% | 7% | 14% | 17% | 20% | 10% | 15% | 18% | 14% |
| $30,000-$39,999 | 33% | 9% | 19% | \* | 22% | 14% | 5% | 2% | 24% | 14% | 6% | 1% | 6% | 11% | 17% | 13% | 10% | 12% | 16% | 8% |
| $40,000-$49,999 | 10% | - | - | - | 18% | 8% | 4% | 1% | 17% | 7% | 3% | \* | 11% | 14% | 13% | 8% | 12% | 13% | 12% | 5% |
| $50,000 or more | 4% | 6% | - | \* | 10% | 3% | 2% | - | 9% | 3% | 2% | \* | 61% | 31% | 21% | 8% | 51% | 29% | 20% | 5% |
| Can’t say | 13% | 32% | - | 5% | 5% | 8% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 11% | 5% | 5% | 8% | 17% | 9% | 7% | 8% | 16% | 9% | 6% |
| **Mean ($’000)** | **30.1** | **22.8** | **19.6** | **11.0** | **36.1** | **24.1** | **19.1** | **12.5** | **35.1** | **24.0** | **19.1** | **11.8** | **73.9** | **52.0** | **35.0** | **27.3** | **66.5** | **46.4** | **33.4** | **20.3** |

Base: Total respondents who have income from employment, 2014 (n=693), 2007 (n=831); 2001 (n=767); 1996 (n=1,195)

\* Estimated using mid-point of income ranges.

### Derived Personal Income

Total personal income was a **derived** survey item. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of ranges the level of any income that they (and other household members) received. For those receiving income from employment, the midpoint of each of the selected income ranges was used to estimate the respondent’s personal income received from employment. Additional components of the calculation were obtained or derived from DSS sources, ABS, DVA and Roy Morgan Single Source.

Please note the following factors when drawing comparisons between the various surveys:

- Other income was excluded from the calculation of derived personal income in the 2007, 2001 and 1996 surveys

- Self-funded income was excluded from the calculation of derived personal income in the 2001 and 1996 surveys

More than half (57%) of concession household respondents had total derived personal incomes below $30,000 per annum, with the proportion among those from other concession households (64%) higher than in aged concession households (51%) – see Table 3.4.5 overleaf. The mean income for respondents from other concession households was $31,100, compared with $32,300 for respondents from aged concession households. In contrast, only 35% of respondents from non-concession households had a total estimated personal income below $30,000. The estimated mean personal income for respondents from non-concession households was $67,000 per annum.

Respondents from Melbourne were more likely than those from country Victoria to have personal income of $50,000 per annum or higher (37% and 25% respectively). The average estimated personal income for Melbourne respondents was $52,900, compared with $43,300 for respondents from country Victoria.

**Table 3.4.5: Derived Personal Income of Main Respondent (from all sources)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Derived Personal income** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | **Other Concession HHs** | | **Total Concession HHs** | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | **Melbourne** | | **Total Country Vic**1 | | **LPG Households**2 | | **Total HHs** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| No income | \* | 3% | 1% | 7% | 1% | 5% | 9% | 16% | 6% | 12% | 4% | 9% | 9% | 5% | 5% | 11% |
| Less than $10,000 | - | - | 1% | 2% | \* | 1% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 3% | - | 2% | 1% | 2% |
| $10,000-$19,999 | \* | 78% | 55% | 71% | 27% | 75% | 3% | 16% | 13% | 37% | 18% | 46% | 16% | 61% | 14% | 40% |
| $20,000-$29,999 | 50% | 17% | 7% | 9% | 29% | 13% | 21% | 10% | 24% | 11% | 27% | 12% | 22% | 8% | 25% | 11% |
| $30,000-$39,999 | 1% | 0% | 7% | 4% | 4% | 2% | 4% | 9% | 3% | 5% | 5% | 8% | 5% | 7% | 4% | 6% |
| $40,000-$49,999 | 43% | 1% | 15% | 4% | 30% | 2% | 8% | 22% | 16% | 15% | 21% | 11% | 16% | 11% | 18% | 14% |
| $50,000 or more | 5% | 1% | 14% | 2% | 9% | 1% | 54% | 24% | 37% | 17% | 25% | 11% | 31% | 7% | 34% | 15% |
| Can't say | \* | - | - | \* | \* | \* | - | - | - | \* | \* | \* | 1% | - | \* | \* |
| **Mean ($’000)** | **32.3** | **22.1** | **31.1** | **23.3** | **31.8** | **22.7** | **67.0** | **39.1** | **52.9** | **31.0** | **43.3** | **26.1** | **50.1** | **23.8** | **51.0** | **32.4** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061)

1: Country VIC in 2014 includes most of regional VIC. In previous years, only 4 regional centres were sampled.

2: In 2014 LPG households are a subset of the main sample based on their responses. In 2007 they formed a separate geographic stratum.

# ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND EXPENDITURE

## USE OF ELECTRICITY AND GAS

NB. This section is based on respondent survey data from the telephone interview.

### Incidence of Electricity Use

As in previous surveys, incidence of electricity use was close to universal in 2014 (99%, compared with 99% in 2007 and 100% in 2001), with no differences evident by region or sample type.

### Incidence of Gas Use

Incidence of mains gas usage in households around Victoria in 2014 remains unchanged from 2007 at 88% (see Table 4.1.2.1 overleaf). These results are slightly lower than observed in 2001 (94%), but the difference is primarily due to the inclusion of respondents from solely LPG gas regions in 2007 and the extension of the sample in 2014 to cover most of the population of regional/rural Victoria. As such, the 2014 and 2007 figures are more likely to show the actual proportion of mains gas users than was the case in previous years.

As would be expected, households in Melbourne (94%) were more likely to use mains gas than those in country Victoria (72%), with these proportions closely matching the results of the 2007 survey (94% and 76% respectively). Homes built prior to 1991 (87%) were less likely to use mains gas than homes built from 1991 to 2004 (91%) or after 2014 (93%).

Cylinder gas was reported as being used in 21% of households in country Victoria and, surprisingly, 14% of Melbourne households (up from just 2% in 2007). While the wording of the question specifically excluded the use of cylinder gas for barbeques, patio heaters or similar, it seems likely that some respondents misunderstood the question and included these applications when answering. Therefore, the analysis of cylinder gas usage in this report (including Tables 4.1.2.1, 4.1.2.2 and 4.1.2.3 overleaf) uses an adjusted definition for ‘Use Cylinder Gas’ in 2014, namely “Said used cylinder gas and did not subsequently provide a consent form indicating used mains gas”. That is, the definition used for ‘LPG Households’ throughout this report. This adjusted definition indicates that cylinder gas was being used in 11% of households in country Victoria, and just 1% of households in Melbourne.

**Table 4.1.2.1: Use of Gas in Household by Region**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gas Use** | **Use Mains Gas** | | | | **Use Cylinder Gas** | | | | **Total Use Gas** | | | | **Don't Use Gas** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 94% | 94% | 94% | 90% | 1% | 2% | \* | \* | 95% | 94% | 94% | 90% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 10% |
| VIC Country1 | 72% | 76% | 94% | 92% | 11% | 24% | 1% | 2% | 83% | 97% | 95% | 93% | 17% | 3% | 5% | 7% |
| LPG Households2 | 3% | 2% | n/a | n/a | 100% | 100% | n/a | n/a | 100% | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 94% | n/a | n/a | 1% | 5% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 97% | n/a | n/a | 0% | 3% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | n/a | 1% | 3% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 89% | n/a | n/a | 5% | 7% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 93% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 92% | n/a | n/a | 0% | 4% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 93% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 92% | n/a | n/a | 2% | 6% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 94% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 6% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 95% | n/a | n/a | - | 1% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 95% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 5% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 36% | n/a | n/a | 17% | 20% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 54% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 46% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 69% | n/a | n/a | 9% | 14% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 78% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 81% | n/a | n/a | 3% | 9% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 16% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 79% | n/a | n/a | 9% | 9% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 88% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 12% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 34% | n/a | n/a | 24% | 26% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 56% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 65% | n/a | n/a | 17% | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 82% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 18% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 88% | n/a | n/a | 10% | 7% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 98% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 81% | n/a | n/a | 7% | 9% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 88% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 12% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 81% | n/a | n/a | 11% | 10% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 92% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 8% | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **TOTAL VIC** | **88%** | **88%** | **94%** | **91%** | **4%** | **9%** | **\*** | **\*** | **92%** | **95%** | **95%** | **91%** | **8%** | **5%** | **5%** | **9%** |

Base: Total respondents: 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

1: Country VIC in 2014 includes most of regional VIC. In previous years, only 4 regional centres were sampled.

2: In 2014 LPG households are a subset of the main sample based on their responses. In 2007 they formed a separate geographic stratum.

As in previous years, mains gas usage was more prevalent amongst non-concession households, with 90% of these households using mains gas, compared with 86% of concession households (see Table 4.1.2.2).

**Table 4.1.2.2: Use of Gas in Household by Sample Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gas Use** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | | **Other Concession HHs** | | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Use Mains Gas | 86% | 83% | 91% | 84% | 86% | 84% | 92% | 88% | 86% | 84% | 92% | 85% | 90% | 91% | 96% | 94% | 88% | 88% | 94% | 91% |
| Use Cylinder Gas | 3% | 15% | 1% | 1% | 5% | 10% | 1% | 1% | 4% | 13% | 1% | 1% | 4% | 6% | \* | \* | 4% | 9% | \* | \* |
| **Total Use Gas** | **89%** | **96%** | **92%** | **85%** | **91%** | **92%** | **93%** | **89%** | **90%** | **94%** | **93%** | **86%** | **94%** | **96%** | **96%** | **95%** | **92%** | **95%** | **95%** | **91%** |
| Don't Use Gas | 11% | 4% | 8% | 16% | 9% | 8% | 7% | 11% | 9% | 6% | 8% | 14% | 6% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 8% | 5% | 5% | 9% |

Base: Total respondents: 2014 (n=1,861), 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

Similar to previous years, incidence of mains gas usage tended to increase with household size, from 84% of single-person households to 92% of households with four or more persons (see Table 4.1.2.3).

**Table 4.1.2.3: Use of Gas in Household by Household Size**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gas Use** | **1 Person HH** | | | | **2 Person HH** | | | | **3 Person HH** | | | | **4+ Person HH** | | | | **Total HHs** | | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| Use Mains Gas | 84% | 83% | 90% | 80% | 87% | 88% | 93% | 91% | 91% | 88% | 95% | 93% | 92% | 92% | 98% | 96% | 88% | 88% | 94% | 91% |
| Use Cylinder Gas | 3% | 11% | 1% | - | 4% | 9% | \* | 1% | 2% | 8% | \* | 1% | 5% | 8% | \* | \* | 6% | 9% | \* | \* |
| **Total Use Gas** | **86%** | **91%** | **91%** | **80%** | **91%** | **95%** | **93%** | **92%** | **93%** | **95%** | **96%** | **94%** | **97%** | **98%** | **98%** | **96%** | **91%** | **95%** | **95%** | **91%** |
| Don't Use Gas | 14% | 9% | 9% | 20% | 9% | 5% | 7% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 4% | 6% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 9% | 5% | 5% | 9% |

Base: Total respondents: 2014 (n=1,861), 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

## ELECTRICITY COSTS AND CONSUMPTION

NB. This section is based on billing data supplied by energy suppliers and linked to respondent survey data.

### Electricity Consumption

Over 99% of households paid electricity bills. On average, 2014 electricity bill-payers received 5.2 bills per year, compared with an average of 4.6 bills per year in 2007. Almost all electricity bill-payers (99.2%) received all bills based on an actual reading of the meter.

In 2014, 96% of households paid their electricity bill in full[[5]](#footnote-5), with little difference between Melbourne (96%) and country Victoria (97%) – see Table 4.2.1.1 Part 1 and Part 2 on the following pages. Public renters (80%) were less likely than home owners (98%), home buyers (97%) or private renters (96%) to have fully paid their electricity bill. Concession households (92%) were less likely than non-concession households (98%) to have paid their electricity bill in full.

In 2014, 6% of households paid their electricity bills by compulsory instalments. Public renters (18%) were more likely than private renters (9%), home buyers (8%) or home owners (3%) to be paying by compulsory instalments. Other concession households (12%) were much more likely than aged concession or non-concession households (both 4%) to be paying their gas bills by compulsory instalments.

**Table 4.2.1.1: Electricity Bills Paid in Full and/or by Compulsory Instalment – Part 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How Electricity Bill Paid  (of those paying electricity bills)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 98% | 81% | 4% | 11% |
| Other Concession HHs | 92% | 63% | 12% | 18% |
| Total Concession HHs | 95% | 72% | 8% | 14% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 98% | 77% | 4% | 10% |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 97% | 76% | 6% | 14% |
| 2 persons | 97% | 80% | 6% | 9% |
| 3 persons | 95% | 70% | 6% | 12% |
| 4 or more persons | 96% | 70% | 5% | 14% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 98% | 79% | 3% | 9% |
| Buying/paying off | 97% | 75% | 8% | 12% |
| Renting – Private | 96% | 66% | 9% | 15% |
| Renting – Public | 80% | 68% | 18% | 27% |
| **Total Households** | **96%** | **75%** | **6%** | **12%** |

Notes:

The percentages for “Paid in Full” in the table above are based to total households where suppliers provided this information (n=1,366).

The percentages for “By Compulsory Instalment” in the table above are based to total households where suppliers provided this information (n=1,363).

Please note, there is no expectation that the two items in the table should add to 100% as households can appear in both columns.

Please also note that the “Instalment” data provided by suppliers in 2007 was in response to a slightly different data request. The 2007 “Instalment” data is therefore not directly comparable with 2014.

**Table 4.2.1.1: Electricity Bills Paid in Full or by Compulsory Instalment – Part 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How Electricity Bill Paid  (of those paying electricity bills)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 96% | 76% | 5% | 11% |
| Country VIC | 97% | 72% | 8% | 14% |
| LPG Households | 93% | 71% | 9% | 11% |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 97% | n/a | - | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 97% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 99% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 91% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| Bayside | 95% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 98% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 96% | n/a | 10% | n/a |
| Mallee | 97% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Loddon | 98% | n/a | 13% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 97% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 97% | n/a | 10% | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 98% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 95% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Western District | 95% | n/a | 6% | n/a |
| Barwon | 99% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 96% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| **Total Households** | **96%** | **75%** | **6%** | **12%** |

Notes:

The percentages for “Paid in Full” in the table above are based to total households where suppliers provided this information (n=1,366).

The percentages for “By Compulsory Instalment” in the table above are based to total households where suppliers provided this information (n=1,363).

Please note, there is no expectation that the two items in the table should add to 100% as households can appear in both columns.

Please also note that the “Instalment” data provided by suppliers in 2007 was in response to a slightly different data request. The 2007 “Instalment” data is therefore not directly comparable with 2014.

Annual average electricity consumption for 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 is shown in Tables 4.2.1.3, 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.1.5on the following pages. Average annual *total* electricity consumption per household has decreased by 19.6% over the seven years between 2014 and 2007, compared with increases of 6.6% between 2007 and 2001, and 14.6% between 2001 and 1996. Average electricity consumption declined across all sub groups, though only marginally (-1.5%) among public renters. Average consumption decreased more among Melbourne households (-21.9%) than among households in country Victoria (-13.2%).

On average, households in 2014 consumed 4,447 kWh in total compared with 5,533 kWh in 2007 and 5,190 kWh in 2001. In 2014, households in Melbourne, on average, consumed less electricity than those in country Victoria (4,308 kWh and 4,838 kWh) respectively. Non-concession households (4,685 kWh) used more electricity than aged concession (3,790 kWh) and other concession (4,544 kWh) households. Not surprisingly, average electricity consumption increased with household size, from 2,963 kWh for 1 person households to 5,810 kWh for households of four persons or more. Table 4.2.1.2 below shows average annual electricity consumption (kWh) by concession status and household size, and indicates that average electricity usage increased with household size, regardless of concession status. The difference in electricity consumption, on average, between single person households and households with four or more persons was however greater among aged concession households (121%) than among non-concession (99%) or other concession (90%) households

**Table 4.2.1.2: Average annual electricity consumption (kWh) by concession status and household size**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Household size** | | | | |
| **Concession Status** | 1 person HH | 2 person HH | 3 person HH | 4+ person HH | Total HHs |
| Aged Concession HH | 2,878 | 4,196 | 4,371 | 6,355 | 3,790 |
| Other Concession HH | 3,193 | 4,434 | 4,850 | 6,070 | 4,544 |
| Non-concession HH | 2,870 | 4,577 | 4,464 | 5,716 | 4,685 |

Annual average *general* electricity consumption in 2014 was 3,293 kWh, down from 4,907 kWh in 2007. Average monthly consumption during the five months of summer was 268 kWh, and averaged 296 kWh per month over the seven months of winter.

In 2014, annual average *peak* electricity consumption was 3,662 kWh, with an average monthly consumption of 284 kWh over summer and 313 kWh over winter. Annual average *off-peak* electricity consumption in 2014 was 1,941 kWh, down from 3,979 kWh in 2007. Average monthly consumption during summer was 184 kWh, compared with 230 kWh per month over winter.

In 2014, average *shoulder* electricity consumption was 882 kWh, with an average monthly consumption of 73 kWh over summer and 89 kWh over winter. Average *controlled load* electricity consumption in 2014 was 2,078 kWh, with average monthly consumption during summer of 139 kWh, compared with 213 kWh per month over winter.

**Table 4.2.1.3: Average Annual Electricity Consumption (Kilowatt Hours) – Part 1**

| **Sub-group** | **Total Consumption (kWh)\*** | | | | **% Growth from 2007 to 2014** | **% Growth from 2001 to 2007** | **% Growth from 1996 to 2001** | **General Consumption (kWh)** | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001** | | | **1996** |
|  |  |  |  | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **n=1,851** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,005** | **n=1,943** | **n=182** | **n=179** | **n=250** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,004** | **n=2,003** | **n=2,005** | **n=1,943** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 4,308 | 5,515 | 5,083 | 4,597 | -21.9% | 8.5% | 10.6% | 1,381 | 2,157 | 3,317 | 2,001 | 2,988 | 5,079 | 1,784 | 2,669 | 4,451 | 3,725 |
| Country VIC | 4,838 | 5,573 | 5,464 | 4,364 | -13.2% | 2.0% | 25.2% | 1,214 | 1,814 | 3,208 | 1,788 | 2,707 | 4,543 | 1,857 | 2,617 | 4,468 | 3,369 |
| LPG Households | 6,582 | 8,246 | n/a | n/a | -20.2% | n/a | n/a | 1,804 | 3,237 | 4,968 | 2,029 | 3,056 | 5,214 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 3,519 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,160 | 2,010 | 3,242 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North East Melbourne | 4,991 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,401 | 1,930 | 3,113 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer East Melbourne | 4,355 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,682 | 2,608 | 3,640 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 4,124 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 883 | 1,438 | 2,210 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 4,545 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,841 | 2,697 | 4,187 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 4,270 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,343 | 2,189 | 3,755 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 4,082 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,528 | 2,287 | 3,664 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 4,366 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,183 | 2,195 | 3,393 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 6,274 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3,466 | 4,485 | 6,906 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 4,686 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,315 | 1,682 | 3,077 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 4,492 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,054 | 1,323 | 2,377 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 5,668 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,516 | 2,355 | 4,422 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 5,576 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,097 | 1,715 | 2,332 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 5,236 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,248 | 2,210 | 3,841 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 4,196 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 821 | 1,313 | 2,916 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 4,120 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 906 | 1,122 | 2,223 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 4,733 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,042 | 1,783 | 2,904 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 3,790 | 4,656 | 4,390 | 3,708 | -18.6% | 6.1% | 18.4% | 1,071 | 1,722 | 2,780 | 1,573 | 2,374 | 3,968 | 1,449 | 2,101 | 3,550 | 2,761 |
| Other Concession HHs | 4,544 | 5,162 | 4,735 | 4,014 | -12.0% | 9.0% | 18.0% | 1,252 | 1,923 | 3,216 | 1,886 | 2,751 | 4,674 | 1,721 | 2,425 | 4,143 | 3,262 |
| Total Concession HHs | 4,160 | 4,895 | 4,557 | 3,840 | -15.0% | 7.4% | 18.7% | 1,169 | 1,829 | 3,000 | 1,721 | 2,552 | 4,301 | 1,580 | 2,258 | 3,836 | 2,978 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 4,685 | 5,971 | 5,578 | 5,000 | -21.5% | 7.0% | 11.6% | 1,478 | 2,281 | 3,490 | 2,077 | 3,135 | 5,322 | 1,942 | 2,898 | 4,835 | 4,062 |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 2,963 | 3,487 | 3,395 | 2,946 | -15.0% | 2.7% | 15.2% | 786 | 1,341 | 2,266 | 1,159 | 1,781 | 2,940 | 1,226 | 1,715 | 2,941 | 2,196 |
| 2 persons | 4,416 | 5,163 | 4,937 | 4,116 | -14.5% | 4.6% | 19.9% | 1,455 | 2,124 | 3,268 | 1,770 | 2,727 | 4,517 | 1,677 | 2,454 | 4,129 | 3,160 |
| 3 persons | 4,550 | 5,795 | 5,727 | 5,137 | -21.5% | 1.2% | 11.5% | 1,012 | 1,511 | 2,856 | 2,135 | 3,076 | 5,235 | 2,104 | 2,807 | 4,911 | 4,088 |
| 4 or more persons | 5,810 | 7,368 | 6,361 | 5,576 | -21.1% | 15.8% | 14.1% | 1,778 | 2,825 | 4,217 | 2,597 | 3,838 | 6,671 | 2,158 | 3,438 | 5,584 | 4,699 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 4,380 | 5,456 | 5,230 | 4,798 | -19.7% | 4.3% | 9.0% | 1,424 | 2,200 | 3,385 | 1,908 | 2,858 | 4,791 | 1,801 | 2,573 | 4,371 | 3,671 |
| Buying/paying off | 4,848 | 6,350 | 5,678 | 4,952 | -23.7% | 11.8% | 14.7% | 1,490 | 2,274 | 3,550 | 2,183 | 3,245 | 5,633 | 1,949 | 3,041 | 4,987 | 4,278 |
| Renting – Private | 4,210 | 4,982 | 4,574 | 3,960 | -15.5% | 8.9% | 15.5% | 1,003 | 1,643 | 2,750 | 1,753 | 2,692 | 4,468 | 1,631 | 2,367 | 3,994 | 3,017 |
| Renting – Public | 3,647 | 3,704 | 3,344 | 2,678 | -1.5% | 10.8% | 24.9% | 903 | 1,348 | 2,580 | 1,406 | 2,149 | 3,571 | 1,330 | 1,845 | 3,175 | 2,258 |
| **Total Households** | **4,447** | **5,533** | **5,190** | **4,529** | **-19.6%** | **6.6%** | **14.6%** | **1,342** | **2,073** | **3,293** | **1,932** | **2,898** | **4,907** | **1,804** | **2,501** | **4,456** | **3,623** |

Total consumption includes general, peak, off peak, shoulder and/or controlled load consumption

Average summer month general consumption (i.e. December-April) is 268 kWh (386 kWh – 2007; 361kWh – 2001). Average winter month general consumption (i.e. May-November) is 296 kWh (414 kWh – 2007; 367 kWh – 2001).

**Table 4.2.1.4: Average Annual Electricity Consumption (Kilowatt Hours) – Part 2**

| **Sub-group** | **Peak Consumption (kWh)** | | | **Off-Peak Consumption (kWh)** | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | | | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001** | | | **1996** |
| **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **N=1,484** | **n=1,496** | **n=1,633** | **n=504** | **n=514** | **n=700** | **n=397** | **n=403** | **n=410** | **N=360** | **n=349** | **n=360** | **n=1,943** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 1,437 | 2,230 | 3,718 | 833 | 1,557 | 1,759 | 1,273 | 2,371 | 3,911 | 1,370 | 2,354 | 3,700 | 3,643 |
| Country VIC | 1,382 | 2,084 | 3,510 | 1,031 | 1,677 | 2,220 | 1,443 | 2,582 | 4,033 | 1,782 | 3,127 | 4,862 | 3,794 |
| LPG Households | 1,823 | 2,468 | 4,277 | 1,318 | 1,907 | 2,845 | 1,573 | 2,424 | 4,009 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 1,312 | 1,651 | 3,089 | 605 | 813 | 1,152 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 1,559 | 2,926 | 4,615 | 1,265 | 1,724 | 1,884 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 1,399 | 2,059 | 3,565 | 690 | 1,416 | 1,966 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 1,670 | 2,076 | 3,698 | 879 | 1,397 | 1,334 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 1,359 | 2,299 | 3,654 | 1,092 | 1,356 | 1,875 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 1,420 | 2,217 | \* | 622 | 1,810 | 1,916 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 1,321 | 2,018 | 3,489 | 914 | 1,682 | 2,034 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 1,351 | 2,507 | 3,776 | 589 | 2,027 | 1,771 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 1,659 | 2,268 | 3,948 | 1,006 | 1,514 | 2,332 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 1,363 | 2,059 | 3,517 | 1,131 | 1,514 | 2,095 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 1,459 | 2,140 | 3,644 | 880 | 1,050 | 1,726 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 1,622 | 2,266 | 3,886 | 1,467 | 2,640 | 3,320 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 1,426 | 2,046 | 3,431 | 1,098 | 2,093 | 2,840 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 1,243 | 1,817 | 3,210 | 1,109 | 1,692 | 2,591 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 1,366 | 2,092 | 3,495 | 807 | 1,042 | 1,184 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 1,158 | 1,993 | 3,170 | 659 | 1,587 | 1,818 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 1,490 | 2,270 | 3,751 | 1,084 | 1,677 | 2,227 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 1,206 | 1,736 | 3,034 | 816 | 1,229 | 1,724 | 1,243 | 2,169 | 3,369 | 1,272 | 2,408 | 3,669 | 3,066 |
| Other Concession HHs | 1,465 | 2,414 | 3,972 | 807 | 1,483 | 1,811 | 1,423 | 2,191 | 3,482 | 1,651 | 2,156 | 3,765 | 3,672 |
| Total Concession HHs | 1,332 | 2,068 | 3,490 | 812 | 1,340 | 1,762 | 1,309 | 2,177 | 3,412 | 1,420 | 2,311 | 3,706 | 3,271 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 1,499 | 2,297 | 3,807 | 1,008 | 1,829 | 2,073 | 1,405 | 2,722 | 4,431 | 1,559 | 2,802 | 4,326 | 4,012 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 949 | 1,372 | 2,446 | 653 | 1,054 | 1,398 | 979 | 1,796 | 2,726 | 923 | 1,585 | 2,473 | 2,745 |
| 2 persons | 1,392 | 2,090 | 3,475 | 926 | 1,619 | 2,006 | 1,357 | 2,345 | 3,646 | 1,496 | 2,702 | 4,179 | 3,359 |
| 3 persons | 1,507 | 2,257 | 3,927 | 857 | 1,438 | 1,601 | 1,498 | 2,886 | 4,407 | 1,793 | 2,645 | 4,370 | 4,388 |
| 4 or more persons | 1,899 | 3,112 | 4,965 | 1,173 | 2,126 | 2,515 | 1,759 | 3,308 | 5,833 | 1,739 | 3,185 | 4,923 | 4,504 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 1,392 | 2,066 | 3,496 | 959 | 1,484 | 1,918 | 1,279 | 2,270 | 3,492 | 1,471 | 2,446 | 3,900 | 3,847 |
| Buying/paying off | 1,549 | 2,392 | 3,963 | 927 | 1,730 | 2,014 | 1,565 | 3,230 | 5,538 | 1,648 | 3,053 | 4,684 | 3,752 |
| Renting – Private | 1,301 | 2,235 | 3,709 | 704 | 2,175 | 2,119 | 1,364 | 2,127 | 3,421 | 1,369 | 2,489 | 3,740 | 3,235 |
| Renting – Public | 1,293 | 2,165 | 3,468 | 621 | 772 | 1,049 | 1,280 | 2,238 | 3,288 | 935 | 2,036 | 2,971 | 3,548 |
| **Total Households** | **1,422** | **2,192** | **3,662** | **922** | **1,609** | **1,941** | **1,362** | **2,481** | **3,979** | **1,502** | **2,601** | **4,072** | **3,689** |

Average summer month peak consumption 284 kWh. Average winter month peak consumption 313 kWh

Average summer month off peak consumption (i.e. December-April) is 184 kWh (272 kWh – 2007; 300 kWh – 2001). Average winter month off peak consumption (i.e. May-November) is 230 kWh (354 kWh – 2007; (372 kWh – 2001).

**Table 4.2.1.5: Average Annual Electricity Consumption (Kilowatt Hours) – Part 3**

| **Sub-group** | **Shoulder Consumption (kWh) 2014** | | | **Controlled Load Consumption (kWh) 2014** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|
| **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **n=42** | **n=35** | **n=42** | **n=116** | **n=116** | **n=123** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 294 | 594 | 764 | 715 | 1,378 | 1,920 |
| Country VIC | 653 | 798 | 1,365 | 656 | 1,636 | 2,314 |
| LPG Households | 859 | 2,070 | 1,938 | 816 | 1,513 | 2,625 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | - | - | - | 1,146 | 2,055 | 3,201 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 1,167 | 1,766 | 2,933 | 510 | 1,363 | 1,260 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | - | - | - | 1,013 | 1,472 | 2,130 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 554 | 719 | 1,273 | 805 | 1,261 | 2,066 |
| Southern Melbourne | 180 | 565 | 744 | 451 | 1,497 | 1,695 |
| Bayside | 137 | 364 | 359 | 728 | 1,157 | 1,791 |
| Western Melbourne | - | - | - | 474 | 1,551 | 2,025 |
| Brimbank Melton | 81 | 160 | 219 | 109 | - | 109 |
| Mallee | 167 | 1,282 | 551 | 461 | 1,734 | 2,166 |
| Loddon | - | - | - | 778 | 1,349 | 2,133 |
| Ovens Murray | 717 | 733 | 1,450 | 678 | 1,364 | 2,043 |
| Goulburn | - | - | - | 775 | 3,118 | 3,893 |
| Outer Gippsland | - | - | - | 773 | 1,400 | 1,987 |
| Inner Gippsland | 640 | 770 | 2,364 | 618 | 2,128 | 3,699 |
| Western District | - | - | - | 662 | 2,269 | 2,404 |
| Barwon | 749 | - | 749 | 682 | 991 | 1,753 |
| Central Highlands | 870 | 839 | 1,710 | 837 | 1,679 | 2,572 |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 287 | 502 | 705 | 720 | 1,472 | 2,100 |
| Other Concession HHs | 386 | 871 | 892 | 630 | 1,439 | 2,024 |
| Total Concession HHs | 321 | 586 | 770 | 675 | 1,456 | 2,063 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 396 | 644 | 962 | 717 | 1,532 | 2,096 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 320 | 492 | 719 | 596 | 1,065 | 1,620 |
| 2 persons | 243 | 616 | 830 | 738 | 1,809 | 2,476 |
| 3 persons | 287 | 460 | 661 | 695 | 1,781 | 2,155 |
| 4 or more persons | 918 | 1,307 | 1,807 | 947 | 1,610 | 2,272 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 404 | 636 | 1,028 | 730 | 1,409 | 2,128 |
| Buying/paying off | 323 | 582 | 768 | 651 | 1,773 | 2,223 |
| Renting - Private | 569 | 839 | 688 | 806 | 1,550 | 2,146 |
| Renting - Public | 98 | - | 98 | 317 | 1,136 | 1,216 |
| **Total Households** | **365** | **621** | **882** | **693** | **1,488** | **2,078** |

Average summer month shoulder consumption 73 kWh. Average winter month shoulder consumption 89 kWh

Average summer month controlled load consumption 139 kWh. Average winter month controlled load consumption 213 kWh

In simple terms, the survey indicates that average household electricity consumption has declined by 19.6% since the previous survey in 2007. There are likely to be many factors behind this result. In particular, the steady increase in the proportion of households that generate some of their own power by means of solar panels is likely to have a considerable impact on *mean* consumption, though of course this particular impact only applies in a minority of households (approximately one in five). Factors that would affect a large proportion of households would include an increase in energy saving appliances and light bulbs. Further, media and community awareness of climate change and the impetus to reduce the carbon footprint may have encouraged energy saving behaviour. Finally, the impact of significantly higher unit electricity prices may have also acted as a curb on consumption.

### Electricity Costs

Annual average electricity charges, discounts and expenditure for 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 are shown in Tables 4.2.2.1, 4.2.2.2 , 4.2.2.3 , 4.2.2.4, 4.2.2.5 and 4.2.2.6 on the following pages.

The average annual electricity bill[[6]](#footnote-6) paid by households in 2014 was $1,247 including GST, up 28% from 2007 ($973) and following the 38% increase from the $705 recorded in 2001.

The average total electricity charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were not applied) in 2014 was $1,465 (excluding GST), up 55% from $946 in 2007. This finding needs to be considered in the context of a decline in consumption of nearly 20%. Had consumption not declined, the increase in the average electricity charge would obviously have been considerably higher. Other factors that may perhaps have tended to act as a moderating factor on the scale of the increase in average electricity charges would include any tendency by consumers to switch some of their consumption from more expensive tariffs (e.g. peak) to less expensive tariffs (e.g. off-peak). For comparison, the average electricity charge in 2001 was $709, representing an increase of 33% since the 1996 survey.

In 2014, the monthly summer electricity consumption charge was $84 and $90 per month in winter (2007: Summer $62; Winter $64). Whilst summer and winter consumption amounts have been provided for 2001, they include GST, plus other unknown charges (such as supply charges), which were not separated out in 2001. As such, 2007 and 2001 summer and winter consumption charges are not strictly comparable. However, it is interesting that the monthly charges in summer and winter were also similar in 2001 ($63 and $66 respectively), indicating that consumption charges per month do not differ greatly over the year (**see table 4.2.2.1**).

Virtually all households billed for electricity were charged a supply charge (99.8%), which averaged $379 for the year (up 145% from the $155 recorded in 2007). This charge was obviously a set amount per household, no matter the locality, size or concession status, as average charges did not diverge significantly from the mean). As the supply charge was not separately identified in 2001 and 1996, comparisons with these years could not be undertaken.

In 2014, 44% of all households with electricity bills received the Annual Electricity Concession, up from the 36% recorded in 2007 (when it was known as the Winter Energy Concession). Incidence of receiving the Annual Electricity Concession was highest amongst aged concession households (93%, up from 82% in 2007), other concession households (86%, up from 70% in 2007) and those living in public rental housing (80%, up from 73% in 2007). The average Annual Electricity Concession amount received was $165, compared with $79 in 2007, representing a rise of 109% over the period.

One in ten households (10%) received the Controlled Load Electricity Concession in 2014 (similar to the 9% recorded in 2007). The average concession amount was $34 ($32 in 2007).

The medical cooling or life support concessions were received by only 1% or fewer households and averaged $105 and $409 respectively ($47 and $77 in 2007). The service to property concession was received by 8% of households (up from just 1% in 2007), and averaged $44 ($22 in 2007). The average is influenced by many small values, as reported by suppliers.

Overall some type of DHHS funded concession was received in 2014 by 44% of households with electricity bills (38% in 2007), although the incidence was far higher amongst concession households (89%, up from 77% in 2007) and public rental households (80%, up from 74% in 2007). In 2001 just 17% had received a DHHS concession (excluding the winter energy concession) and in 1996 it was 27%. This discrepancy is mostly due to the fact that the winter energy concession was defined as a separate concession in previous surveys, thereby resulting in lower incidence rates for the DHHS concession in those years.

The survey does not indicate the concession status of each person whose name is on each bill, but defines the concession status of the household according to the concession status of the respondent, who is the main bill-payer. Therefore it is not possible to calculate a precise estimate of the proportion of eligible households that actually received an electricity concession.  Nevertheless, a very close approximation is the proportion of ‘concession households’ that received the concession (see Table 7.1.2).

The average DHHS concession amount[[7]](#footnote-7) received by households in 2014 was $186, representing an 82% increase since the $100 recorded in 2007 and following the 64% increase between 2001 and 2007 (1996 data is not strictly comparable with the other survey results). As in previous surveys, the proportion receiving DHHS concessions decreases with household size, but the average concession amount increases with household size (i.e. concession holders tend to live in households with fewer people, but smaller households tend to consume less electricity. As some electricity concessions are linked to consumption, larger sized households are likely to receive larger concessions).

One in five households (19%) received generation or solar credits, with an average annual value of $596. Households in Melbourne were less likely than those in country Victoria to receive these credits (17% and 24% respectively) and the credits earned tended to be lower (average of $563 , compared with $662). Aged concession households (22%) were more likely to receive generation or solar credits than non-concession (19%) or other concession (16%) households. The average generation or solar credit amount was highest among non-concession households ($715), compared with $497 for aged concession households and $379 among other concession households.

As in 2007, less than 1% of households (5 households in total) received a Utility Relief Grant Scheme grant for electricity in 2014. The average URGS payment was $452, compared with $429 in 2007.

In 2014, 80% of households with electricity bills received some other form of supplier funded discount (up from 48% in 2007), with an average annual value of $142 ($48 in 2007). Only a minority of electricity suppliers provided explanatory notes on the nature of other discounts. To the extent this information was provided, the discounts were usually said to be guaranteed discounts and/or pay on time discounts.

Overall, almost all households (99%) received some sort of discount or concession off their electricity bill. This was up from the 79% reported in 2007, but a return to the 100% figure of 2001. The average amount received in 2014 was $327, which was almost four times the average amount received in 2007 ($86).

**Table 4.2.2.1: Electricity Consumption Charges – Part 1**

|  | **Electricity Consumption Charge ($)** | | | | | | | | | | **Supply Charge** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001** | | | **1996** | **2014** | | **2007** | |
|  | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Total** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,651** | **n=1,665** | **n=1,850** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,006** | **N=1,858** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,851** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,029** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 410 | 606 | 1,034 | 350 | 456 | 802 | 292 | 434 | 727 | 621 | 100% | 379 | 99% | 153 |
| Country VIC | 450 | 688 | 1,144 | 259 | 390 | 649 | 373 | 543 | 915 | 579 | 100% | 379 | 99% | 160 |
| LPG Households | 600 | 859 | 1,450 | 301 | 452 | 753 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 391 | 96% | 161 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 369 | 469 | 873 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 391 | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 441 | 643 | 1,133 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 380 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 442 | 608 | 1,073 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 405 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 442 | 540 | 961 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 363 | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 429 | 697 | 1,126 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 406 | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 383 | 596 | 1,005 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 366 | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 392 | 589 | 1,026 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 377 | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 378 | 739 | 1,088 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 365 | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 610 | 873 | 1,468 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 363 | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 441 | 647 | 1,101 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 367 | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 469 | 661 | 1,136 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 401 | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 546 | 791 | 1,325 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 370 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 529 | 819 | 1,329 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 407 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 462 | 697 | 1,224 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 406 | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 354 | 612 | 983 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 375 | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 358 | 611 | 975 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 362 | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 448 | 683 | 1,117 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 380 | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 364 | 523 | 916 | 210 | 321 | 531 | 269 | 398 | 666 | 507 | 100% | 385 | 99% | 153 |
| Other Concession HHs | 412 | 607 | 1,051 | 256 | 377 | 633 | 301 | 427 | 728 | 555 | 99% | 383 | 98% | 156 |
| Total Concession HHs | 388 | 565 | 982 | 232 | 347 | 579 | 284 | 412 | 696 | 528 | 100% | 384 | 99% | 154 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 448 | 681 | 1,130 | 381 | 495 | 872 | 334 | 497 | 831 | 666 | 100% | 375 | 99% | 155 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 274 | 398 | 709 | 152 | 236 | 387 | 229 | 326 | 555 | 431 | 100% | 378 | 98% | 154 |
| 2 persons | 427 | 635 | 1,061 | 243 | 371 | 614 | 299 | 441 | 739 | 551 | 100% | 381 | 99% | 154 |
| 3 persons | 440 | 652 | 1,115 | 288 | 418 | 707 | 364 | 499 | 863 | 670 | 100% | 373 | 100% | 153 |
| 4 or more persons | 544 | 825 | 1,364 | 563 | 675 | 1229 | 363 | 565 | 928 | 744 | 100% | 381 | 98% | 159 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 425 | 600 | 1,033 | 262 | 389 | 651 | 319 | 463 | 782 | 630 | 100% | 384 | 99% | 153 |
| Buying/paying off | 466 | 712 | 1,186 | 492 | 583 | 1066 | 335 | 516 | 851 | 681 | 100% | 376 | 99% | 157 |
| Renting – Private | 344 | 588 | 986 | 234 | 363 | 597 | 282 | 408 | 690 | 526 | 99% | 374 | 99% | 156 |
| Renting – Public | 333 | 540 | 900 | 190 | 293 | 483 | 234 | 331 | 566 | 417 | 100% | 365 | 98% | 151 |
| **Total Households** | **420** | **627** | **1,063** | **320** | **435** | **753** | **315** | **465** | **780** | **610** | **100%** | **379** | **99%** | **155** |

1. GST applies to 2014, 2007 and 2001 charges, but not 1996 charges.
2. The supply charge was not separated out from consumption charges in 2001 and 1996, so details for these years could not be provided.

Five months of summer (i.e. December-April) average monthly Electricity Charge Applicable is $84 (2007 - $64; 2001 - $63 incl. GST). For the seven months of winter (i.e. May-November) average monthly Electricity Charge Applicable is $90 (2007 - $62; 2001 - $66 incl. GST).

**Table 4.2.2.2: Electricity Consumption Charges – Part 2**

|  | **Carbon Tax Charge** | | **Renewable Energy Charge** | | **Other Charges** | | | | **Total Other Charges** | | | | **TOTAL ALL CHARGES** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | **2007** |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,855** | **n=332** | **n=2,060** | **n=25** | **n=1,855** | **n=321** | **n=2,060** | **n=56** | **n=1,855** | **n=520** | **N=2,060** | **n=2,030** | **n=1,852** | **n=2,060** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 17% | 25 | 2% | 85 | 19% | 56 | 3% | -164 | 19% | 56 | 99% | 149 | 1,425 | 977 |
| Country VIC | 20% | 30 | 1% | 68 | 14% | 70 | 2% | 177 | 14% | 70 | 96% | 165 | 1,539 | 881 |
| LPG Households | 17% | 44 | 2% | 124 | 20% | 108 | 3% | 623 | 20% | 108 | 96% | 179 | 1,871 | 1,132 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 17% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 88 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 88 | n/a | n/a | 1,284 | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 29% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 13% | 94 | n/a | n/a | 13% | 94 | n/a | n/a | 1,533 | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 27% | 21 | n/a | n/a | 14% | 40 | n/a | n/a | 14% | 40 | n/a | n/a | 1,490 | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 13% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 37 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 37 | n/a | n/a | 1,335 | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 16% | 38 | n/a | n/a | 22% | 75 | n/a | n/a | 22% | 75 | n/a | n/a | 1,555 | n/a |
| Bayside | 12% | 29 | n/a | n/a | 24% | 41 | n/a | n/a | 24% | 41 | n/a | n/a | 1,385 | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 16% | 19 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 28 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 28 | n/a | n/a | 1,392 | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 1% | 28 | n/a | n/a | 14% | 119 | n/a | n/a | 14% | 119 | n/a | n/a | 1,470 | n/a |
| Mallee | 9% | 47 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 41 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 41 | n/a | n/a | 1,842 | n/a |
| Loddon | 16% | 43 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 166 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 166 | n/a | n/a | 1,502 | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 30% | 28 | n/a | n/a | 15% | 50 | n/a | n/a | 15% | 50 | n/a | n/a | 1,553 | n/a |
| Goulburn | 14% | 28 | n/a | n/a | 12% | 89 | n/a | n/a | 12% | 89 | n/a | n/a | 1,710 | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 28% | 27 | n/a | n/a | 12% | 29 | n/a | n/a | 12% | 29 | n/a | n/a | 1,748 | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 28% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 8% | 23 | n/a | n/a | 8% | 23 | n/a | n/a | 1,638 | n/a |
| Western District | 26% | 31 | n/a | n/a | 11% | 34 | n/a | n/a | 11% | 34 | n/a | n/a | 1,370 | n/a |
| Barwon | 17% | 21 | n/a | n/a | 13% | 73 | n/a | n/a | 13% | 73 | n/a | n/a | 1,351 | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 17% | 38 | n/a | n/a | 20% | 30 | n/a | n/a | 20% | 30 | n/a | n/a | 1,509 | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 16% | 23 | \* | 128 | 17% | 77 | 2% | 53 | 17% | 77 | 99% | 154 | 1,318 | 733 |
| Other Concession HHs | 14% | 24 | 1% | 45 | 22% | 72 | 4% | 149 | 22% | 72 | 99% | 162 | 1,454 | 828 |
| Total Concession HHs | 15% | 23 | 1% | 60 | 19% | 74 | 3% | 115 | 19% | 74 | 99% | 158 | 1,385 | 778 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 19% | 28 | 2% | 86 | 16% | 43 | 3% | -217 | 16% | 43 | 99% | 152 | 1,513 | 1,062 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 18% | 16 | 1% | 42 | 19% | 44 | 4% | 65 | 19% | 44 | 99% | 157 | 1,099 | 580 |
| 2 persons | 18% | 25 | 1% | 85 | 16% | 50 | 2% | 136 | 16% | 50 | 98% | 158 | 1,454 | 816 |
| 3 persons | 15% | 32 | 1% | 50 | 15% | 83 | 3% | 71 | 15% | 83 | 99% | 155 | 1,500 | 904 |
| 4 or more persons | 18% | 35 | 2% | 101 | 20% | 70 | 3% | -536 | 20% | 70 | 100% | 146 | 1,760 | 1,411 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 17% | 26 | \* | 98 | 18% | 61 | 1% | 67 | 18% | 61 | 99% | 155 | 1,430 | 851 |
| Buying/paying off | 21% | 26 | 2% | 97 | 16% | 68 | 2% | -562 | 16% | 68 | 99% | 146 | 1,575 | 1,250 |
| Renting - Private | 16% | 30 | 2% | 63 | 19% | 40 | 6% | 132 | 19% | 40 | 99% | 167 | 1,372 | 799 |
| Renting - Public | 17% | 22 | 2% | 23 | 13% | 43 | 5% | 60 | 13% | 43 | 99% | 155 | 1,274 | 645 |
| **Total Households** | **18%** | **26** | **1%** | **81** | **18%** | **59** | **3%** | **-70** | **18%** | **59** | **99%** | **154** | **1,455** | **946** |

**Table 4.2.2.3: DHHS Funded Electricity Consumption Concessions – Part 1**

|  | **Annual Electricity Concession (formerly Winter Energy Concession)** | | | | | | **Controlled Load Concession (formerly Off Peak Concession)** | | | | **Medical Cooling Concession (formerly Multiple Sclerosis Concession)** | | | | **Life Support Concession** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,009** | **n=2,060** | **n=885** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,006** | **n=1,855** | **n=268** | **n=2,060** | **n=239** | **n=1,855** | **n=29** | **n=2,060** | **n=5** | **n=1,855** | **n=2** | **n=2,060** | **n=7** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 43% | 159 | 36% | 77 | 100% | 61 | 8% | 31 | 5% | 37 | 1% | 95 | \* | 50 | \* | 409 | \* | 82 |
| Country VIC | 47% | 180 | 36% | 83 | 100% | 75 | 15% | 38 | 15% | 28 | 2% | 114 | \* | 41 | - | - | 1% | 74 |
| LPG Households | 50% | 209 | 53% | 97 | n/a | n/a | 25% | 41 | 46% | 31 | \* | 115 | 1% | 39 | 1% | 555 | - | - |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 57% | 126 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 6% | 56 | n/a | n/a | \* | 140 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 363 | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 45% | 193 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 5% | 32 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 51% | 168 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 12% | 28 | n/a | n/a | \* | 134 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 40% | 154 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7% | 37 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 103 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 48% | 163 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 9% | 28 | n/a | n/a | \* | 8 | n/a | n/a | \* | 555 | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 42% | 143 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 10% | 27 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 31% | 154 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 15 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 40% | 188 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 9% | 33 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 55% | 204 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 37% | 35 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 155 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 48% | 185 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 15% | 25 | n/a | n/a | 4% | 144 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 39% | 192 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 13% | 34 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 49% | 190 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 16% | 43 | n/a | n/a | \* | 173 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 56% | 217 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 35% | 45 | n/a | n/a | 4% | 187 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 42% | 193 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 14% | 66 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 53% | 166 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 11% | 25 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 81 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 42% | 153 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 10% | 32 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 36 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 50% | 164 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 8% | 25 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 48 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 93% | 155 | 82% | 71 | 100% | 67 | 23% | 34 | 19% | 28 | 2% | 107 | 1% | 57 | \* | 363 | 1% | 76 |
| Other Concession HHs | 86% | 175 | 70% | 79 | 100% | 65 | 17% | 31 | 10% | 29 | 2% | 104 | 1% | 40 | \* | 555 | \* | 111 |
| Total Concession HHs | 89% | 164 | 76% | 75 | 100% | 66 | 20% | 33 | 15% | 28 | 2% | 106 | 1% | 48 | \* | 409 | 1% | 85 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 7% | 173 | 9% | 101 | 100% | 64 | 1% | 51 | 4% | 40 | \* | 96 | \* | 39 | - | - | \* | 22 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 61% | 136 | 50% | 56 | 100% | 64 | 13% | 29 | 13% | 24 | 1% | 69 | \* | 38 | \* | 363 | 1% | 51 |
| 2 persons | 52% | 176 | 42% | 75 | 100% | 65 | 13% | 35 | 10% | 26 | 2% | 113 | - | - | \* | 555 | \* | 100 |
| 3 persons | 38% | 181 | 27% | 88 | 100% | 64 | 8% | 36 | 6% | 37 | \* | 182 | 1% | 52 | - | - | - | - |
| 4 or more persons | 23% | 193 | 23% | 115 | 100% | 64 | 3% | 46 | 4% | 64 | \* | 194 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 51% | 164 | 42% | 75 | 100% | 65 | 12% | 34 | 12% | 25 | 1% | 102 | - | - | - | - | 1% | 79 |
| Buying/paying off | 21% | 184 | 17% | 110 | 100% | 64 | 5% | 33 | 5% | 65 | 1% | 146 | \* | 39 | \* | 363 | - | - |
| Renting - Private | 51% | 162 | 39% | 74 | 100% | 63 | 9% | 38 | 6% | 29 | 1% | 34 | 1% | 57 | \* | 555 | - | - |
| Renting - Public | 80% | 152 | 73% | 65 | 100% | 64 | 10% | 30 | 4% | 21 | 2% | 109 | 1% | 42 | - | - | 1% | 59 |
| **Total Households** | **44%** | **165** | **36%** | **79** | **100%** | **65** | **10%** | **34** | **9%** | **32** | **1%** | **105** | **\*** | **47** | **\*** | **409** | **\*** | **77** |

1. Some households received multiples of the Winter Bonus value in 2001 (i.e. $120 or $180 for bonuses not paid in 2001 or 2000). Hence the average value of the Winter Bonus in 2001is greater than $60.
2. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

**Table 4.2.2.4: DHHS Funded Electricity Consumption Concessions – Part 2**

|  | **Service to Property Concession** | | | | **Excess Energy Concession** | | **Electricity Transfer Fee Waiver** | | **Total DHHS Funded Concessions** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2014** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | | **1996** | |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,855** | **n=175** | **n=2,060** | **n=38** | **n=1,855** | **n=66** | **n=1,855** | **n=6** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,011** | **n=2,060** | **n=929** | **n=463** | **n=452** | **n=589** | **n=589** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 9% | 42 | 1% | 25 | 2% | 45 | \* | 21 | 43% | 178 | 36% | 92 | 21% | 59 | 30% | 276 |
| Country VIC | 6% | 52 | 1% | 13 | 4% | 43 | \* | 35 | 47% | 207 | 42% | 116 | 8% | 67 | 19% | 82 |
| LPG Households | 3% | 11 | 2% | 10 | 6% | 38 | - | - | 50% | 242 | 60% | 142 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 14% | 46 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 36 | 4% | 12 | 57% | 159 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 5% | 34 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 17 | - | - | 45% | 200 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 9% | 43 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 19 | - | - | 51% | 185 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 8% | 37 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 79 | - | - | 40% | 178 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 10% | 35 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 26 | \* | 36 | 49% | 178 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 12% | 50 | n/a | n/a | \* | 29 | - | - | 42% | 164 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 10% | 41 | n/a | n/a | - | - | 1% | 41 | 31% | 171 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 5% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 165 | - | - | 41% | 199 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 4% | 3 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 20 | - | - | 55% | 237 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 6% | 39 | n/a | n/a | 4% | 47 | - | - | 48% | 212 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 3% | 7 | n/a | n/a | 5% | 20 | - | - | 39% | 206 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 1% | 75 | n/a | n/a | 4% | 40 | - | - | 49% | 210 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 4% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 13% | 62 | 2% | 36 | 56% | 275 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 8% | 61 | n/a | n/a | 6% | 64 | \* | 33 | 42% | 236 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 13% | 60 | n/a | n/a | 7% | 18 | - | - | 53% | 191 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 6% | 62 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 42 | - | - | 42% | 173 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 7% | 61 | n/a | n/a | 2% | 36 | - | - | 50% | 179 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 20% | 46 | 3% | 24 | 7% | 48 | \* | 36 | 93% | 179 | 82% | 95 | 39% | 61 | 45% | 169 |
| Other Concession HHs | 16% | 39 | 2% | 22 | 3% | 32 | 2% | 20 | 86% | 193 | 71% | 101 | 35% | 64 | 40% | 210 |
| Total Concession HHs | 18% | 43 | 3% | 23 | 5% | 43 | 1% | 21 | 89% | 186 | 77% | 98 | 37% | 63 | 43% | 185 |
| Non-Concession HHs | \* | 127 | \* | 11 | \* | 73 | \* | 36 | 7% | 187 | 12% | 113 | 5% | 52 | 16% | 335 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 20% | 50 | 3% | 28 | 2% | 17 | - | - | 61% | 162 | 52% | 74 | 26% | 49 | 33% | 128 |
| 2 persons | 6% | 27 | 1% | 14 | 3% | 41 | \* | 35 | 52% | 194 | 44% | 97 | 20% | 63 | 28% | 226 |
| 3 persons | 3% | 55 | 1% | 21 | 2% | 52 | 1% | 26 | 38% | 198 | 29% | 111 | 13% | 57 | 24% | 278 |
| 4 or more persons | 3% | 42 | \* | 16 | 1% | 86 | \* | 11 | 23% | 210 | 25% | 141 | 10% | 80 | 24% | 326 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 9% | 43 | 1% | 21 | 3% | 46 | \* | 19 | 51% | 185 | 45% | 97 | 23% | 61 | 30% | 265 |
| Buying/paying off | 3% | 52 | \* | 25 | 1% | 53 | \* | 33 | 21% | 210 | 19% | 136 | 7% | 63 | 19% | 321 |
| Renting – Private | 9% | 49 | 1% | 9 | 1% | 17 | 1% | 24 | 51% | 181 | 40% | 92 | 16% | 60 | 22% | 150 |
| Renting – Public | 20% | 38 | 5% | 32 | 2% | 27 | - | - | 80% | 169 | 74% | 84 | 29% | 57 | 50% | 138 |
| **Total Households** | **8%** | **44** | **1%** | **22** | **2%** | **44** | **\*** | **22** | **44%** | **186** | **38%** | **100** | **17%** | **61** | **27%** | **240** |

**Table 4.2.2.5: Other Electricity Discounts and Total Electricity Bill – Part 1**

|  | **Other Discounts or Rebates** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Carbon Tax Rebate** | | **Network Tariff** | | **Generation / Solar Credits** | | **Renewable Energy Discount** | | **URGS** | | | | **Other Discounts or Rebates** | | | |
|  | **2014** | | **Rebate 2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,204** | **n=2,060** | **n=1,050** | **n=1,855** | **n=399** | **n=2,060** | **n=15** | **n=1,855** | **n=5** | **n=2,060** | **n=3** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,475** | **n=2,060** | **n=972** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 61% | 18 | 29% | 17 | 17% | 563 | 1% | 25 | \* | 485 | \* | 466 | 81% | 140 | 49% | 51 |
| Country VIC | 67% | 23 | 87% | 32 | 24% | 662 | - | - | 1% | 436 | \* | 168 | 77% | 147 | 46% | 42 |
| LPG Households | 59% | 35 | 85% | 34 | 23% | 543 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 72% | 185 | 40% | 58 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 58% | 13 | n/a | n/a | 14% | 664 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 462 | n/a | n/a | 81% | 113 | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 63% | 20 | n/a | n/a | 9% | 592 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 82% | 130 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 66% | 16 | n/a | n/a | 24% | 458 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 75% | 157 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 66% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 12% | 699 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 76% | 127 | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 60% | 20 | n/a | n/a | 26% | 623 | n/a | n/a | 1% | 500 | n/a | n/a | 82% | 128 | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 60% | 19 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 630 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 85% | 148 | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 56% | 16 | n/a | n/a | 16% | 574 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 83% | 143 | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 56% | 15 | n/a | n/a | 28% | 245 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 80% | 178 | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 79% | 27 | n/a | n/a | 27% | 682 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 68% | 225 | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 69% | 25 | n/a | n/a | 28% | 616 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 68% | 156 | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 58% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 23% | 610 | n/a | n/a | 8% | 498 | n/a | n/a | 80% | 131 | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 62% | 22 | n/a | n/a | 30% | 832 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 75% | 175 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 68% | 25 | n/a | n/a | 23% | 777 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 83% | 148 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 57% | 21 | n/a | n/a | 34% | 625 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 94% | 154 | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 72% | 22 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 459 | n/a | n/a | 3% | 305 | n/a | n/a | 69% | 151 | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 68% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 614 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 81% | 107 | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 70% | 26 | n/a | n/a | 21% | 758 | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 74% | 147 | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 65% | 16 | 61% | 24 | 22% | 497 | 1% | 28 | 1% | 497 | - | - | 81% | 122 | 48% | 39 |
| Other Concession HHs | 63% | 17 | 63% | 26 | 16% | 379 | 1% | 23 | 1% | 427 | \* | 280 | 78% | 150 | 55% | 39 |
| Total Concession HHs | 64% | 16 | 62% | 25 | 19% | 449 | 1% | 25 | 1% | 452 | \* | 280 | 80% | 135 | 51% | 39 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 61% | 21 | 38% | 26 | 19% | 715 | \* | 16 | - | - | \* | 551 | 80% | 147 | 46% | 55 |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 64% | 12 | 49% | 18 | 15% | 479 | - | - | \* | 462 | \* | 168 | 81% | 95 | 44% | 37 |
| 2 persons | 63% | 20 | 49% | 27 | 21% | 638 | 2% | 25 | \* | 386 | \* | 551 | 79% | 137 | 48% | 38 |
| 3 persons | 56% | 20 | 45% | 26 | 16% | 573 | - | - | \* | 500 | \* | 323 | 82% | 141 | 47% | 48 |
| 4 or more persons | 63% | 24 | 46% | 29 | 22% | 628 | - | - | \* | 500 | - | - | 79% | 192 | 51% | 68 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 64% | 19 | 51% | 25 | 25% | 604 | 1% | 26 | - | - | - | - | 81% | 146 | 45% | 47 |
| Buying/paying off | 60% | 20 | 44% | 27 | 21% | 586 | - | - | \* | 494 | - | - | 79% | 154 | 49% | 61 |
| Renting - Private | 61% | 21 | 41% | 27 | 4% | 540 | 1% | 27 | - | - | 1% | 429 | 75% | 114 | 51% | 36 |
| Renting - Public | 67% | 14 | 62% | 20 | - | - | 2% | 21 | 5% | 444 | - | - | 84% | 108 | 56% | 36 |
| **Total Households** | **62%** | **19** | **48%** | **26** | **19%** | **596** | **1%** | **25** | **\*** | **452** | **\*** | **429** | **80%** | **142** | **48%** | **48** |

1. GST applies to 2014, 2007 and 2001 charges, but not 1996 charges.
2. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

**Table 4.2.2.6: Other Electricity Discounts and Total Electricity Bill – Part 2**

|  | **Total ALL Discounts and Concessions** | | | | | | **Total Electricity Bill Amount (incl. GST) ($)** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,855** | **n=1,835** | **n=2,060** | **n=1,674** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,006** | **n=1,852** | **n=2,060** | **n=2,006** | **n=1,767** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 99% | 302 | 71% | 86 | 100% | 73 | 1,241 | 1,018 | 654 | 437 |
| Country VIC | 99% | 396 | 96% | 86 | 100% | 80 | 1,264 | 879 | 835 | 476 |
| LPG Households | 98% | 406 | 94% | 126 | n/a | n/a | 1,620 | 1,116 | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | 289 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,097 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 97% | 273 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,394 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 99% | 338 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,272 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 99% | 266 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,180 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 99% | 370 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,310 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 99% | 317 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,179 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 98% | 276 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,236 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 100% | 302 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,286 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 98% | 498 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,494 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 98% | 405 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,219 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 100% | 373 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,301 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 100% | 501 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,333 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 98% | 481 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,404 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 100% | 467 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,291 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 100% | 309 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,170 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 98% | 292 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,170 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 100% | 379 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,249 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 100% | 389 | 95% | 105 | 100% | 91 | 1,023 | 697 | 576 | 363 |
| Other Concession HHs | 99% | 359 | 90% | 109 | 100% | 87 | 1,206 | 803 | 641 | 401 |
| Total Concession HHs | 100% | 374 | 93% | 107 | 100% | 89 | 1,113 | 747 | 607 | 378 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 98% | 287 | 70% | 67 | 100% | 66 | 1,358 | 1,128 | 765 | 500 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 100% | 256 | 80% | 73 | 100% | 77 | 930 | 574 | 478 | 314 |
| 2 persons | 99% | 365 | 81% | 83 | 100% | 78 | 1,206 | 823 | 661 | 404 |
| 3 persons | 98% | 304 | 72% | 86 | 100% | 71 | 1,325 | 926 | 792 | 501 |
| 4 or more persons | 99% | 359 | 79% | 99 | 100% | 72 | 1,547 | 1,490 | 857 | 551 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 99% | 378 | 81% | 85 | 100% | 79 | 1,164 | 860 | 702 | 454 |
| Buying/paying off | 99% | 305 | 74% | 87 | 100% | 69 | 1,404 | 1,328 | 783 | 510 |
| Renting – Private | 99% | 214 | 76% | 84 | 100% | 72 | 1,276 | 808 | 619 | 409 |
| Renting – Public | 100% | 259 | 93% | 91 | 100% | 79 | 1,118 | 615 | 486 | 293 |
| **Total Households** | **99%** | **327** | **79%** | **86** | **100%** | **75** | **1,247** | **973** | **705** | **449** |

## GAS COSTS AND CONSUMPTION

NB. This section is based on billing data supplied by energy suppliers and linked to respondent survey data.

### Gas Consumption

The proportion of households receiving mains gas bills has remained relatively constant over time (88% in 2014 and 2007, 94% in 2001 and 91% in 1996 (see Table 4.3.2.1).Not surprisingly, the proportionof households receiving a gas bill was substantially higher in Melbourne (94%) than in country Victoria (72%).

Gas consumers on average received 6.2 bills per year in 2014, which was consistent with 2007 (6.3 bills). The vast majority (94.4%) of gas bill-payers received bills based on actual meter readings only.

In 2014, 97% of gas using households paid their annual gas bill in full, with little difference in incidence across the various sample types.

In 2014, 7% of households paid their gas bills by compulsory instalment, down from 13% in 2007. Public renters (18%) were by far the most likely to be paying by compulsory instalments, compared with 9% of private renters, 9% of home buyers and 6% of home owners. Similarly, other concession households (14%) were much more likely than non-concession (6%) or aged concession (2%) households to be paying by compulsory instalments. Households in Melbourne (6%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (9%) to be paying by compulsory instalments.

A total of 3 respondents were recorded as being on energy retailer hardship programmes for gas bills, representing approximately 0.15% of households across Victoria. Two of these came from public rental households, and the third was buying/paying off their home.

**Table 4.3.1.1: Gas Bills Paid in Full or by Compulsory Instalments**

| **How Gas Bill Paid  (of those paying gas bills)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 97% | 76% | 6% | 10% |
| Country VIC | 98% | 76% | 9% | 19% |
| LPG Households | - | 25% | - | - |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 99% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 93% | n/a | 11% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 98% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 99% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 94% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Bayside | 97% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 97% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 100% | n/a | 12% | n/a |
| Mallee | 100% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Loddon | 97% | n/a | 13% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 100% | n/a | 8% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 98% | n/a | 8% | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 93% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 95% | n/a | 10% | n/a |
| Western District | 100% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Barwon | 100% | n/a | 15% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 92% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 98% | 84% | 2% | 11% |
| Other Concession HHs | 95% | 70% | 14% | 18% |
| Total Concession HHs | 97% | 77% | 8% | 14% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 97% | 75% | 6% | 12% |

Continued on next page

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How Gas Bill Paid  (of those paying gas bills)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment** | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 97% | 81% | 7% | 13% |
| 2 persons | 98% | 75% | 6% | 10% |
| 3 persons | 97% | 66% | 7% | 13% |
| 4 or more persons | 97% | 79% | 7% | 15% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 99% | 76% | 4% | 8% |
| Buying/paying off | 96% | 78% | 9% | 15% |
| Renting – Private | 93% | 70% | 9% | 17% |
| Renting – Public | 94% | 73% | 18% | 29% |
| **Total Households** | **97%** | **76%** | **7%** | **13%** |

Notes:

The percentages for “Paid in Full” and for “By Compulsory Instalment” in the table above for 2014 are based to total gas-using households where suppliers provided this information (n=1,117).

Please note, there is no expectation that the two items in the table should add to 100% as households can appear in both columns.

Please also note that the “Instalment” data provided by suppliers in 2007 was in response to a slightly different data request. The 2007 “Instalment” data is therefore not directly comparable with 2014.

Table 4.3.1.2 following shows the average annual gas consumption by concession status and year. In 2014, each household on average consumed 46,845 MJ, compared with 62,529 in 2007, 59,415 MJ in 2001 and 54,851 MJ in 1996. This represents an average decrease in consumption per household of 25.1% since the 2007 survey, compared with average increase of 5.3% from 2001 to 2007 and 8.3% from 1996. This decrease in consumption was consistent across the various sub groups, with the only one differing substantially being single person households (down 20.0%).

Possible explanations for the decline in gas consumption could include: weather differences between the years, an increase in solar hot water systems, an increase in the use of gas-efficient appliances, increased media focus on climate change having an impact, an increase in households that generate their own electricity switching some of their energy usage from gas to solar electricity, and the impact of significantly higher per unit gas prices (an increase of approximately 90% between 2007 and 2014).

When 2014 data was analysed by winter and summer consumption[[8]](#footnote-8), on average winter month gas consumption was 2.8 times greater than summer month gas consumption (in 2007 the disparity was 3.6, and in 2001 it was 2.9). This result did not vary substantially by sub-group. This suggests that the 2007 winter may have been more severe than either 2014’s or 2001’s winter.

**Table 4.3.1.2: Average Annual Gas Consumption (Megajoules)**

|  | **Average Annual Gas Consumption (Megajoules)** | | | | | | | | | | **% Growth** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001** | | | **1996  n=1,768** | **% Growth from 2007 to 2014** | **% Growth from 2001 to 2007** | **% Growth from 1996 to 2001** |
|  | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,383** | **n=1,390** | **n=1,533** | **n=1,725** | **n=1,733** | **n=1,733** | **n=1,851** | **n=1,854** | **n=1,854** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 9,538 | 37,297 | 48,230 | 13,909 | 51,004 | 65,187 | 15,356 | 45,399 | 60,737 | 56,329 | -26.0% | 7.3% | 15.7% |
| Country VIC | 7,722 | 31,852 | 41,752 | 12,473 | 43,186 | 55,685 | 14,389 | 41,680 | 56,052 | 51,274 | -25.0% | -0.7% | 8.6% |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 11,348 | 34,129 | 46,508 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 9,882 | 38,684 | 49,666 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 9,487 | 42,662 | 54,176 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 12,138 | 46,627 | 60,217 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 9,183 | 34,147 | 44,470 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 9,271 | 34,577 | 44,736 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 6,879 | 30,730 | 39,495 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 8,061 | 38,575 | 47,660 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 3,899 | 14,746 | 18,603 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 8,793 | 35,544 | 47,428 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 5,717 | 34,649 | 44,165 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 7,219 | 28,025 | 37,892 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 9,849 | 21,783 | 34,747 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 9,351 | 29,678 | 40,830 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 4,514 | 26,296 | 32,495 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 6,300 | 27,123 | 35,200 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 12,624 | 49,406 | 62,639 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 8,202 | 33,291 | 43,414 | 11,704 | 45,281 | 57,457 | 12,185 | 37,296 | 49,441 | 43,697 | -24.4% | 16.2% | 31.5% |
| Other Concession HHs | 10,411 | 32,188 | 44,638 | 14,854 | 45,782 | 60,723 | 14,134 | 41,009 | 55,144 | 46,681 | -26.5% | 10.1% | 30.1% |
| Total Concession HHs | 9,309 | 32,743 | 44,014 | 13,198 | 45,518 | 59,004 | 13,130 | 39,093 | 52,200 | 45,034 | -25.4% | 13.0% | 31.0% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 9,034 | 38,933 | 49,072 | 13,702 | 50,893 | 64,750 | 16,232 | 47,443 | 63,661 | 61,005 | -24.2% | 1.7% | 6.1% |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 6,845 | 23,921 | 32,973 | 8,671 | 32,383 | 41,211 | 10,255 | 31,580 | 41,800 | 36,892 | -20.0% | -1.4% | 11.7% |
| 2 persons | 8,158 | 34,909 | 44,665 | 12,270 | 46,233 | 58,622 | 14,328 | 40,805 | 55,133 | 47,651 | -23.8% | 6.3% | 23.0% |
| 3 persons | 10,875 | 39,461 | 50,725 | 15,864 | 51,115 | 66,987 | 15,742 | 48,672 | 64,366 | 58,854 | -24.3% | 4.1% | 13.8% |
| 4 or more persons | 11,318 | 46,427 | 59,031 | 16,908 | 61,544 | 78,923 | 18,555 | 53,764 | 72,319 | 68,655 | -25.2% | 9.1% | 15.0% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 9,647 | 37,123 | 47,524 | 13,198 | 49,998 | 63,459 | 14,568 | 43,376 | 57,935 | 56,440 | -25.1% | 9.5% | 12.4% |
| Buying/paying off | 8,760 | 38,671 | 49,057 | 13,965 | 52,644 | 66,853 | 17,115 | 50,159 | 67,274 | 63,230 | -26.6% | -0.6% | 5.7% |
| Renting – Private | 8,314 | 30,456 | 42,218 | 13,451 | 41,599 | 55,097 | 13,545 | 38,187 | 51,682 | 38,421 | -23.4% | 6.6% | 43.4% |
| Renting – Public | 9,022 | 26,849 | 38,959 | 14,596 | 37,853 | 52,426 | 11,985 | 33,576 | 45,462 | 39,334 | -25.7% | 15.3% | 33.3% |
| **Total Households** | **9,157** | **36,154** | **46,845** | **13,508** | **48,825** | **62,539** | **15,083** | **44,350** | **59,415** | **54,851** | **-25.1%** | **5.3%** | **14.0%** |

Average monthly winter gas consumption (May-November) in 2014 was 5,165 MJ (2007: 6,975 MJ; 2001 - 6,336 MJ).

Average monthly summer gas consumption (December-April) in 2014 was 1,831 MJ (2007: 2,702 MJ; 2001: 3,017 MJ).

### Gas Charges

Annual average gas charges, discounts and expenditure for 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 are shown in Tables 4.3.2.2, 4.3.2.3, 4.3.2.4 and 4.3.2.5 on the following pages.

Households that received gas bills in 2014 spent an average of $980 per year[[9]](#footnote-9) on gas consumption compared with $700 in 2007, $500 in 2001 and $415 in 1996. This represents an increase in outlays of 40.0% since 2007, despite a reduction in gas consumption of 25.1% over the same period. This continues the trend since 1996 of gas bills increasing at a rate well above the inflation rate.

The average annual gas bill was higher in Melbourne ($994) than in country Victoria ($926), and higher for non-concession households ($1,050) than concession households ($892). The average amount paid by aged concession households ($885) represented an increase of 48.5% since 2007, compared with 42.4%% for non-concession households and 30.6% for other concession households. As expected, the average amount paid rose with household size, though the rate of increase since 2007 for one or two person households (both 45.5%) was higher than for three (38.4%) or four (37.9%) households. Table 4.3.2.1 overleaf shows average annual gas consumption (MJ) by concession status and household size, and indicates that average gas usage increased with household size, regardless of concession status. The difference in gas consumption, on average, between single person households and households with four or more persons was however greater among other concession households (111%) and aged concession households (102%) compared with non-concession households (77%).

**Table 4.3.2.1: Average annual gas consumption (MJ) by concession status and household size**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Household size** | | | | |
| **Concession Status** | **1 person HH** | **2 person HH** | **3 person HH** | **4+ person HH** | **Total HHs** |
| Aged Concession HH | 35,962 | 45,714 | 50,505 | 72,633 | 43,414 |
| Other Concession HH | 29,518 | 42,328 | 45,893 | 62,152 | 44,638 |
| Non-concession HH | 32,572 | 44,733 | 52,581 | 57,671 | 49,072 |

Analysis of gas consumption charges is not strictly comparable between 2007 and 2001, as it is assumed that supply charges and other charges would have been included together in the 2001 consumption charge amount, whilst in 2007 and 2014 these have been separated. However, by summing consumption, supply and other charges (excluding the carbon tax) together for 2007 and 2014 we have made some comparisons. Overall charges in 2014 were $769, compared with $559 in 2007, $538 in 2001 and $500 in 1996, representing increases of 38%, 4% and 8% respectively.

Almost every respondent who received gas bills incurred a supply charge (1,534 of 1,535 respondents in 2014). The average annual supply charge amount obtained from billing data in 2014 was $215 compared with $115 in 2007, representing an 87% increase. There was very little variation in the amount between the various sub-groups.

Sixteen per cent of gas bill-payers also had other charges imposed upon them in 2014, up from 3% in 2007. It was extremely rare for suppliers to provide any information as to the nature of these other charges, so no clear conclusions could be drawn as to their nature.

Households in Melbourne were slightly more likely than those in country Victoria to incur other charges (16% and 12% respectively), and other concession households (12%) slightly less likely than aged concession (16%) or non-concession (17%) households. The average amount of other charges in 2014 was $36, compared with $35 in 2007, but amounts varied widely across sub-groups, due at least in part to small sample sizes.

The average gas charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were not applied) in 2014 was $993 (excluding GST), up 47% from $675 in 2007.

In 2014, 42% of gas paying households received the DHHS concession on their gas bill, up from 27% in 2007[[10]](#footnote-10). Respondents in Melbourne (41%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (46%) to receive a DHHS concession on their gas bill in 2014. The DHHS concession was obtained by 82% of public renters, compared with 49% of home owners, 47% of private renters and 21% of those paying off their home. The average size of the DHHS concession in 2014 was $85, virtually unchanged from 2007 ($86).

The survey does not indicate the concession status of each person whose name is on each bill, but defines the concession status of the household according to the concession status of the respondent, who is the main bill-payer. Therefore it is not possible to calculate a precise estimate of the proportion of eligible households that actually received a gas concession.  Nevertheless, a very close approximation is the proportion of ‘concession households’ that received the concession (see Table 7.1.2).

In 2014, less than 1% (one household) received a Utility Relief Grant Scheme grant on their gas bill, at an amount of $500. In 2007, the figure was 1%, but the average amount was considerably lower at $84. We note that the 2007 figure is considered low, but it correctly reflects the data from the 2007 survey. In 2014, 83% of gas households received other forms of retailer provided discounts (up from 26% in 2007), primarily in the form of a discount for paying the bill by the due date. This proportion was fairly consistent across the various sub groups, though households in Melbourne (84%) were more likely than those in country Victoria (79%) to have received a discount. The average size of other discounts in 2014 was $59, up from $54 in 2007. The substantial increase in the proportion of gas households receiving other discounts probably reflects the growth in use of pay on time discounts as a feature of retail gas contracts.

**Table 4.3.2.2: Gas Bill Charges – Part 1**

|  | **% Paying Mains Gas Bills** | | | | **Gas Consumption Charge ($)** | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001\*** | | | **1996^** |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,861** | **n=2,061** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,000** | **n=1,383** | **n=1,390** | **n=1,533** | **n=1,726** | **n=1,733** | **n=1,734** | **n=1,853** | **n=1,853** | **n=1,854** | **n=1,767** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 94% | 94% | 94% | 90% | 163 | 598 | 785 | 124 | 442 | 566 | 143 | 407 | 549 | 512 |
| Country VIC | 72% | 76% | 94% | 93% | 136 | 539 | 712 | 123 | 420 | 543 | 135 | 377 | 511 | 469 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 195 | 580 | 793 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 94% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 169 | 621 | 809 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 97% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 161 | 653 | 845 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 199 | 677 | 898 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 89% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 160 | 549 | 729 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 92% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 159 | 550 | 724 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 92% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 123 | 545 | 702 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 95% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 141 | 684 | 844 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 130 | 406 | 537 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 69% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 148 | 611 | 814 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 81% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 101 | 512 | 680 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 79% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 131 | 471 | 648 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 34% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 182 | 398 | 641 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 65% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 169 | 474 | 674 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 88% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 71 | 422 | 522 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 81% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 116 | 485 | 633 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 81% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 206 | 836 | 1053 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 86% | 83% | 91% | 84% | 144 | 546 | 720 | 103 | 398 | 500 | 119 | 340 | 459 | 401 |
| Other Concession HHs | 86% | 84% | 92% | 89% | 178 | 528 | 740 | 156 | 416 | 572 | 133 | 369 | 502 | 433 |
| Total Concession HHs | 86% | 84% | 91% | 86% | 161 | 537 | 730 | 128 | 407 | 534 | 126 | 354 | 480 | 415 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 90% | 91% | 96% | 95% | 155 | 625 | 800 | 121 | 454 | 575 | 149 | 424 | 573 | 552 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 84% | 83% | 90% | 80% | 121 | 402 | 558 | 96 | 296 | 392 | 105 | 294 | 399 | 343 |
| 2 persons | 87% | 88% | 93% | 91% | 142 | 572 | 741 | 108 | 410 | 518 | 135 | 370 | 505 | 442 |
| 3 persons | 91% | 88% | 95% | 94% | 186 | 622 | 818 | 142 | 455 | 596 | 145 | 434 | 577 | 534 |
| 4 or more persons | 92% | 92% | 98% | 96% | 191 | 742 | 955 | 151 | 549 | 700 | 166 | 475 | 641 | 615 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 87% | 88% | 95% | 94% | 165 | 599 | 778 | 116 | 441 | 557 | 137 | 391 | 527 | 515 |
| Buying/paying off | 92% | 91% | 97% | 97% | 151 | 627 | 807 | 125 | 473 | 597 | 156 | 445 | 601 | 569 |
| Renting – Private | 84% | 85% | 89% | 84% | 146 | 493 | 694 | 122 | 383 | 505 | 130 | 348 | 477 | 362 |
| Renting – Public | 90% | 85% | 86% | 71% | 155 | 454 | 658 | 123 | 340 | 471 | 118 | 308 | 424 | 358 |
| **Total Households** | **88%** | **88%** | **94%** | **91%** | **157** | **586** | **769** | **124** | **436** | **559** | **141** | **398** | **538** | **500** |

\* Average 2014 monthly winter gas charge applicable (May-November) is $84 (2007: $62; 2001: $57). Average 2007 monthly summer gas charge applicable (December-April) is $31 (2007: $25; 2001: $28).

^It is likely that the 2001 and 1996 consumption charges included the supply charge and any other charges.

**Table 4.3.2.3: Gas Bill Charges – Part 2**

|  | **Supply Charge** | | | | **Carbon Tax 2014** | | **Other Charges** | | | | **Total All Charges** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | **2007** |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,534** | **n=1,735** | **n=1,731** | **n=1,535** | **n=329** | **n=1,535** | **n=224** | **n=1,735** | **n=54** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,735** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 100% | 215 | 100% | 114 | 19% | 22 | 16% | 32 | 3% | 24 | 1,007 | 680 |
| Country VIC | 100% | 213 | 99% | 117 | 25% | 25 | 12% | 56 | 5% | 53 | 938 | 662 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | 204 | n/a | n/a | 20% | 24 | 18% | 31 | n/a | n/a | 1,007 | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 100% | 217 | n/a | n/a | 36% | 22 | 8% | 70 | n/a | n/a | 1,040 | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 100% | 221 | n/a | n/a | 26% | 30 | 11% | 75 | n/a | n/a | 1,083 | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 100% | 229 | n/a | n/a | 11% | 32 | 16% | 14 | n/a | n/a | 1,133 | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 100% | 215 | n/a | n/a | 20% | 20 | 20% | 11 | n/a | n/a | 951 | n/a |
| Bayside | 100% | 215 | n/a | n/a | 15% | 18 | 22% | 27 | n/a | n/a | 948 | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 99% | 208 | n/a | n/a | 17% | 16 | 19% | 44 | n/a | n/a | 920 | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 100% | 205 | n/a | n/a | 6% | 1 | 11% | 11 | n/a | n/a | 1,015 | n/a |
| Mallee | 100% | 279 | n/a | n/a | - | - | - | - | n/a | n/a | 816 | n/a |
| Loddon | 100% | 211 | n/a | n/a | 31% | 30 | 14% | 44 | n/a | n/a | 1,036 | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 100% | 222 | n/a | n/a | 25% | 39 | 11% | 14 | n/a | n/a | 914 | n/a |
| Goulburn | 100% | 215 | n/a | n/a | 15% | 20 | 9% | 18 | n/a | n/a | 868 | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 100% | 225 | n/a | n/a | 25% | 12 | 7% | 1 | n/a | n/a | 869 | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 100% | 215 | n/a | n/a | 27% | 30 | 13% | 108 | n/a | n/a | 911 | n/a |
| Western District | 100% | 188 | n/a | n/a | 51% | 16 | 16% | 152 | n/a | n/a | 743 | n/a |
| Barwon | 100% | 213 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 16 | 14% | 9 | n/a | n/a | 850 | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 100% | 215 | n/a | n/a | 19% | 36 | 12% | 46 | n/a | n/a | 1,279 | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 100% | 217 | 100% | 116 | 17% | 22 | 16% | 25 | 2% | 17 | 945 | 616 |
| Other Concession HHs | 100% | 215 | 99% | 115 | 18% | 18 | 12% | 72 | 4% | 18 | 959 | 687 |
| Total Concession HHs | 100% | 216 | 100% | 116 | 18% | 20 | 14% | 45 | 3% | 18 | 952 | 650 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 100% | 214 | 100% | 115 | 23% | 25 | 17% | 30 | 4% | 43 | 1,025 | 690 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 100% | 216 | 98% | 116 | 22% | 18 | 16% | 30 | 3% | 92 | 782 | 509 |
| 2 persons | 100% | 215 | 100% | 114 | 21% | 20 | 16% | 45 | 3% | 10 | 967 | 632 |
| 3 persons | 100% | 212 | 100% | 114 | 19% | 21 | 14% | 42 | 3% | 18 | 1,040 | 711 |
| 4 or more persons | 100% | 216 | 100% | 115 | 20% | 33 | 16% | 27 | 4% | 33 | 1,173 | 817 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 100% | 216 | 100% | 115 | 19% | 23 | 17% | 33 | 2% | 11 | 1,003 | 672 |
| Buying/paying off | 100% | 214 | 100% | 114 | 24% | 24 | 16% | 33 | 3% | 40 | 1,031 | 712 |
| Renting – Private | 100% | 215 | 100% | 114 | 18% | 21 | 11% | 30 | 7% | 56 | 905 | 623 |
| Renting – Public | 100% | 213 | 100% | 116 | 19% | 14 | 4% | 236 | 2% | 32 | 883 | 587 |
| **Total Households** | **100%** | **215** | **100%** | **115** | **20%** | **23** | **16%** | **36** | **3%** | **35** | **993** | **675** |

**Table 4.3.2.4: Gas Bill Concessions, Discounts and Total Bill Amounts – Part 1**

|  | **% Receiving DHHS Concession** | | | | **DHHS Concession Breakdown 2014** | | | | **DHHS Concession ($)** | | | | **Carbon Tax Rebate 2014** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Winter Gas Concession** | | **Excess Gas Concession** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **%** | **$** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,735** | **n=1,854** | **n=1,811** | **n=1,535** | **n=789** | **n=1,535** | **n=11** | **n=789** | **n=560** | **n=1,087** | **n=722** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,141** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 41% | 30% | 53% | 35% | 41% | 86 | 1% | 32 | 87 | 86 | 73 | 85 | 72% | 21 |
| Country VIC | 46% | 21% | 56% | 40% | 46% | 80 | 1% | 19 | 80 | 87 | 67 | 78 | 72% | 22 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 53% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 53% | 89 | 2% | 59 | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 72% | 16 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 41% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 41% | 96 | 1% | 40 | 98 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 70% | 21 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 47% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 47% | 97 | - | - | 97 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 81% | 24 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 39% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 39% | 93 | 2% | 17 | 93 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 73% | 29 |
| Southern Melbourne | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | 82 | - | - | 82 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 72% | 18 |
| Bayside | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 40% | 72 | \* | 26 | 72 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 74% | 18 |
| Western Melbourne | 29% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | 77 | 1% | 8 | 77 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 69% | 18 |
| Brimbank Melton | 45% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45% | 95 | - | - | 95 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 62% | 19 |
| Mallee | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33% | 50 | - | - | 50 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 16 |
| Loddon | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | 93 | 2% | 48 | 95 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 71% | 30 |
| Ovens Murray | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | 85 | - | - | 85 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 75% | 22 |
| Goulburn | 49% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 49% | 58 | - | - | 58 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 64% | 22 |
| Outer Gippsland | 47% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 47% | 65 | - | - | 65 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 77% | 15 |
| Inner Gippsland | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 50% | 60 | 5% | \* | 60 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 65% | 18 |
| Western District | 46% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 46% | 52 | - | - | 52 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 89% | 18 |
| Barwon | 39% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 39% | 85 | 1% | 2 | 85 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 66% | 16 |
| Central Highlands | 55% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 55% | 118 | 1% | 38 | 118 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 72% | 32 |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 87% | 65% | 91% | 63% | 87% | 87 | 2% | 39 | 87 | 79 | 63 | 64 | 76% | 19 |
| Other Concession HHs | 85% | 50% | 84% | 58% | 85% | 87 | 2% | 17 | 87 | 91 | 68 | 76 | 72% | 17 |
| Total Concession HHs | 86% | 58% | 88% | 61% | 86% | 87 | 2% | 28 | 87 | 84 | 65 | 69 | 74% | 18 |
| Non-Concession HHs 1 | 7% | 8% | 34% | 21% | 7% | 68 | - | - | 68 | 96 | 81 | 109 | 70% | 23 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 58% | 35% | 66% | 47% | 58% | 66 | 1% | 1 | 66 | 65 | 54 | 53 | 77% | 15 |
| 2 persons | 49% | 33% | 61% | 36% | 49% | 92 | \* | 15 | 92 | 84 | 70 | 82 | 74% | 20 |
| 3 persons | 36% | 21% | 49% | 33% | 36% | 81 | 2% | 51 | 84 | 90 | 81 | 94 | 65% | 21 |
| 4 or more persons | 24% | 19% | 42% | 32% | 24% | 110 | \* | 9 | 110 | 112 | 83 | 102 | 70% | 29 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 49% | 34% | 60% | 42% | 49% | 91 | 1% | 27 | 91 | 87 | 69 | 91 | 77% | 21 |
| Buying/paying off | 21% | 16% | 40% | 23% | 21% | 82 | \* | 59 | 83 | 91 | 84 | 99 | 68% | 24 |
| Renting – Private | 47% | 26% | 57% | 39% | 47% | 74 | 2% | 14 | 74 | 86 | 66 | 67 | 67% | 18 |
| Renting – Public | 82% | 44% | 78% | 51% | 82% | 72 | - | - | 72 | 78 | 59 | 34 | 68% | 13 |
| **Total Households** | **42%** | **27%** | **54%** | **36%** | **42%** | **85** | **1%** | **28** | **85** | **86** | **71** | **83** | **72%** | **21** |

1. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

**Table 4.3.2.5: Gas Bill Concessions, Discounts and Total Bill Amounts – Part 2**

|  | **URGS** | | | | **Other Discounts** | | | | **Total Gas Bill Amount (incl. GST) ($)** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,535** | **n=1** | **n=1,735** | **n=16** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,261** | **n=1,735** | **n=422** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,735** | **n=1,854** | **n=1,770** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | - | - | 1% | 80 | 84% | 62 | 25% | 61 | 994 | 702 | 510 | 425 |
| Country VIC | 1% | 500 | 1% | 94 | 79% | 48 | 28% | 39 | 926 | 695 | 473 | 390 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | - | - | n/a | n/a | 83% | 76 | n/a | n/a | 973 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | - | - | n/a | n/a | 91% | 54 | n/a | n/a | 1,030 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | - | - | n/a | n/a | 81% | 61 | n/a | n/a | 1,065 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | - | - | n/a | n/a | 81% | 65 | n/a | n/a | 1,125 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | - | - | n/a | n/a | 82% | 61 | n/a | n/a | 933 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | - | - | n/a | n/a | 88% | 63 | n/a | n/a | 936 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | - | - | n/a | n/a | 84% | 58 | n/a | n/a | 919 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | - | - | n/a | n/a | 77% | 71 | n/a | n/a | 996 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | - | - | n/a | n/a | 54% | 24 | n/a | n/a | 849 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | - | - | n/a | n/a | 82% | 46 | n/a | n/a | 1,028 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 3% | 500 | n/a | n/a | 96% | 37 | n/a | n/a | 842 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | - | - | n/a | n/a | 70% | 58 | n/a | n/a | 863 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | - | - | n/a | n/a | 82% | 52 | n/a | n/a | 863 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | - | - | n/a | n/a | 84% | 43 | n/a | n/a | 916 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | - | - | n/a | n/a | 71% | 26 | n/a | n/a | 753 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | - | - | n/a | n/a | 82% | 51 | n/a | n/a | 842 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | - | - | n/a | n/a | 78% | 74 | n/a | n/a | 1,247 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | - | - | 2% | 83 | 83% | 60 | 24% | 84 | 885 | 596 | 402 | 338 |
| Other Concession HHs | 1% | 500 | 1% | 85 | 82% | 61 | 28% | 49 | 899 | 688 | 444 | 357 |
| Total Concession HHs | 1% | 500 | 2% | 84 | 83% | 61 | 26% | 66 | 892 | 640 | 423 | 347 |
| Non-Concession HHs 1 | - | - | \* | 81 | 84% | 59 | 26% | 47 | 1,050 | 737 | 545 | 458 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | - | - | 1% | 83 | 84% | 48 | 21% | 44 | 761 | 523 | 363 | 292 |
| 2 persons | - | - | 1% | 89 | 81% | 56 | 22% | 47 | 948 | 652 | 463 | 365 |
| 3 persons | - | - | \* | 71 | 84% | 64 | 29% | 39 | 1,037 | 749 | 538 | 441 |
| 4 or more persons | 1% | 500 | \* | 75 | 85% | 70 | 32% | 72 | 1,169 | 848 | 606 | 510 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | - | - | 1% | 86 | 83% | 63 | 24% | 59 | 979 | 690 | 485 | 426 |
| Buying/paying off | - | - | \* | 41 | 82% | 60 | 29% | 47 | 1,044 | 753 | 568 | 473 |
| Renting – Private | - | - | - | - | 83% | 49 | 26% | 51 | 899 | 645 | 439 | 299 |
| Renting – Public | 1% | 500 | 4% | 89 | 88% | 44 | 24% | 87 | 832 | 580 | 378 | 308 |
| **Total Households** | **\*** | **500** | **1%** | **84** | **83%** | **59** | **26%** | **54** | **980** | **700** | **500** | **415** |

1. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

# WATER CONSUMPTION AND EXPENDITURE

## INCIDENCE OF BILLING FOR WATER CONSUMPTION

NB. This section is based on respondent survey data.

### Incidence of Claiming to Receive a Water Bill

Overall, 92% of households claimed to have received a water bill in 2014, which was almost identical to the proportions in 2007 and 2001 (both 93%) – see Table 5.1.1. Non-concession households were more likely to receive a water bill (95%) than concession households (90%). Respondents living in separate houses (95%) were more likely to receive a water bill than those in semi-detached houses (89%) or low rise flats (74%), though this disparity was probably driven by the likelihood of being a renter (i.e. less likely to receive a water bill) than dwelling type *per se*.

**Table 5.1.1: Incidence of Receiving a Water Bill by Sample Type and Housing Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Claimed incidence of receiving water bills** | **Aged Concession HHs** | **Non-Aged Concession HHs** | **Total Concession HHs** | **Non-Concession HHs** | **Separate House** | **Dwelling/ Non-dwelling combined1** | **Semi Detached** | **Low Rise Flats** | **High Rise Flats1** | **Total** |
| **2014 survey** | 91% | 88% | 90% | 95% | 95% | 100% | 89% | 74% | 80% | **92%** |
| **2007 survey** | 93% | 87% | 90% | 94% | 97% | 54% | 75% | 60% | 12% | **93%** |
| **2001 survey** | 93% | 85% | 90% | 94% | 98% | 83% | 80% | 39% | 34% | **93%** |
| **1996 survey** | 84% | 74% | 80% | 92% | 96% | 91% | 66% | 34% | 1% | **87%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

1. CAUTION: Small sample sizes.

### Type of Water Bill Claimed to Receive

A higher proportion of concession than non-concession households claimed to receive *water consumption only* bills (22% and 14% respectively), while the reverse was true for *combination* bills (82% of non-concession and 68% of concession households) – see Table 5.1.2.1. As in previous surveys, other concession households (26%) were more likely than aged concession households (19%) to claim to receive bills for *water consumption only*, and less likely to claim to receive *combination* bills (62% and 73% respectively), as other concession households tend to have higher proportions of renting households, that do not have to pay fixed service charges. Respondents who owned or were paying off their home were far less likely than those who were renting to report that they received a bill for water use only (11% and 53% respectively).

**Table 5.1.2.1: Type of Water Bill Claimed Received by Sample Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Claimed Type of Water Bill Received** | **Aged Concession HHs** | | | **Other Concession HHs1** | | | **Total Concession HHs** | | | **Non-Concession HHs** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| Actual amount of water used only | 19% | 15% | 5% | 26% | 29% | 16% | 22% | 21% | 10% | 14% | 12% | 5% | 18% | 16% | 7% |
| Fixed service charge only | 1% | 8% | 4% | 2% | 6% | 3% | 2% | 7% | 4% | 1% | 8% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 4% |
| Combination of both | 73% | 76% | 88% | 62% | 61% | 79% | 68% | 69% | 84% | 82% | 76% | 89% | 75% | 73% | 87% |
| Other | 1% | 1% | - | 2% | - | - | 2% | \* | - | \* | 2% | - | 1% | 1% | - |
| Can't say | 5% | 1% | 3% | 8% | 4% | 2% | 7% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 2% | 2% |

Base: Total respondents who received a water bill, 2014 (n=1,683); 2007 (n=1,897); 2001 (n=1,817)

1. Other concession households tend to have high proportions of renting households (43% in 2014), which should not receive water bills with fixed service charges included. Therefore, it should be noted that some mis-reporting by respondents may be occurring in relation to this question.

**Table 5.1.2.2: Type of Water Bill Claimed Received by Housing Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Claimed Type of Water Bill** | **Separate House** | | | **Dwelling / Non- dwelling combined1** | | | **Semi Detached** | | | **Low Rise Flats** | | | **High Rise Flats1** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| Actual amount of water used only | 18% | 14% | 6% | - | - | - | 17% | 27% | 14% | 23% | 40% | 13% | 40% | - | 9% | 18% | 16% | 7% |
| Fixed service charge only | 1% | 7% | 4% | - | - | - | 1% | 12% | 5% | 3% | 7% | 1% | - | 100% | 11% | 1% | 7% | 4% |
| Combination of both | 76% | 76% | 88% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 73% | 56% | 78% | 64% | 49% | 76% | 60% | - | 80% | 76% | 73% | 87% |
| Other | 1% | 1% | - | - | - | - | 3% | 4% | - | 2% | 5% | - | - | - | - | 1% | 1% | - |
| Can't say | 4% | 2% | 2% | - | - | - | 6% | 2% | 3% | 8% | - | 10% | - | - | - | 4% | 2% | 2% |

Base: Total respondents who received a water bill, 2014 (n=1,683); 2007 (n=1,897); 2001 (n=1,817)

1. CAUTION: Small sample sizes.

**Table 5.1.2.3: Type of Water Bill Claimed Received by Housing Status**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Claimed Type of Water Bill** | **Owned/fully paid off** | | | **Buying/paying off** | | | **Rent - Private1** | | | **Rent - Public1** | | | **Total HHs** | | |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| Actual amount of water used only | 12% | 9% | 3% | 9% | 8% | 1% | 51% | 51% | 35% | 57% | 54% | 49% | 18% | 16% | 7% |
| Fixed service charge only | 2% | 8% | 3% | \* | 7% | 4% | 1% | 8% | 7% | 2% | 10% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 4% |
| Combination of both | 83% | 81% | 92% | 86% | 81% | 94% | 37% | 37% | 52% | 31% | 27% | 38% | 76% | 73% | 87% |
| Other | 1% | 2% | - | 1% | 2% | - | 2% | 1% | - | 1% | 1% | - | 1% | 1% | - |
| Can't say | 4% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 8% | 3% | 6% | 9% | 8% | 9% | 4% | 2% | 2% |

Base: Total respondents who received a water bill, 2014 (n=1,683); 2007 (n=1,897); 2001 (n=1,817)

1. Renting households should not receive water bills with fixed service charges included. Therefore, it should be noted that some mis-reporting  
 by respondents may be occurring in relation to this question.

## WATER COSTS AND CONSUMPTION

NB. This section is based on billing data supplied by water corporations and linked to respondent survey data.

### Water Consumption

Ninety two per cent of Victorian households received water bills in 2014, compared with 93% in both 2007 and 2001 and 87% in 1996. When examined by concession status, the lowest incidence rate was among other concession households (88%) and the highest among non-concession households (94%). Renters (77%) were less likely than home owners/buyers (96%) to receive a water bill, but there was little difference in incidence between private sector (76%) and public sector (77%) renters.

On average, households received four water bills per year (3.8).

In 2014, 98% of households paid their total 2014 amount owing for water in full, with very little difference in incidence across the various sample groups.

In 2014, 7% of households made payments by compulsory instalment, with little difference in incidence between households in Melbourne (7%) and country Victoria (6%) – see Table 5.2.1.1 overleaf. Public renters (19%) were more likely than private renters (11%), home buyers (10%) or home owners (3%) to have paid by compulsory instalment. Other concession households (13%) were more likely to have paid by compulsory instalment than aged concession (6%) or non-concession (5%) households.

**Table 5.2.1.1: Water Bills Paid in Full or By Compulsory Instalment**

| **How Water Bill Paid  (of those paying water bills)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 99% | 93% | 7% | 21% |
| Country VIC | 97% | 88% | 6% | 6% |
| LPG Households | 100% | 94% | 2% | 23% |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 100% | n/a | 10% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 100% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 100% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 100% | n/a | 10% | n/a |
| Bayside | 100% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 100% | n/a | 5% | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 92% | n/a | 7% | n/a |
| Mallee | 100% | n/a | 9% | n/a |
| Loddon | 95% | n/a | 21% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 100% | n/a | 16% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 100% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 83% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 84% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Western District | 100% | n/a | 3% | n/a |
| Barwon | 100% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 98% | n/a | 4% | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 98% | 94% | 6% | 16% |
| Other Concession HHs | 97% | 82% | 13% | 21% |
| Total Concession HHs | 98% | 89% | 9% | 18% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 99% | 93% | 5% | 15% |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 98% | 90% | 7% | 17% |
| 2 persons | 98% | 93% | 6% | 17% |
| 3 persons | 99% | 91% | 11% | 15% |
| 4 or more persons | 99% | 89% | 6% | 17% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 99% | 95% | 3% | 16% |
| Buying/paying off | 98% | 94% | 10% | 16% |
| Renting – Private | 96% | 79% | 11% | 19% |
| Renting – Public | 97% | 53% | 19% | 22% |
| **Total Households** | **98%** | **91%** | **7%** | **16%** |

Notes:

The percentages for “Paid in Full” and for “By Compulsory Instalment” in the table above for 2014 are based to households paying water bills where suppliers provided this information (n=1,228 and n=1,231 respectively).

Please note, there is no expectation that the two items in the table should add to 100% as households can appear in both columns.

Please also note that the “Instalment” data provided by suppliers in 2007 was in response to a slightly different data request. The 2007 “Instalment” data is therefore not directly comparable with 2014.

Three respondents were recorded as being on a hardship programme for water bill payment (representing approximately 0.15% of Victorian households), of which two were from other concession households, and the third had fully paid off their home.

Table 5.2.1.3 overleaf provides details of average water consumption amongst households over the past four surveys. Average annual water consumption has fallen by 25% since 2007, from 216 kilolitres to 162 kilolitres in 2014. This follows the 22% reduction between the 2007 and 2001 surveys.

Aged concession households had the lowest average water consumption rates of all sample types (138 kL), but the percentage fall in consumption between 2007 and 2014 (-24%) is similar to both other concession households (-28%) and non-concession households (-23%) over the same period. Table 5.2.1.2 below shows average annual water consumption (kL) by concession status and household size, and indicates that average water usage increased with household size, regardless of concession status. The difference in water consumption, on average, between single person households and households with four or more persons was however greater among non-concession households (172%) than among aged concession households (110%) or other concession households (102%).

**Table 5.2.1.2: Average annual water consumption (kL) by concession status and household size**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Household size** | | | | |
| **Concession Status** | 1 person HH | 2 person HH | 3 person HH | 4+ person HH | Total HHs |
| Aged Concession HH | 89 | 161 | 191 | 186 | 138 |
| Other Concession HH | 102 | 149 | 178 | 206 | 158 |
| Non-concession HH | 86 | 146 | 177 | 234 | 174 |

Not surprisingly, water consumption increases with household size, ranging from an average of 91 kilolitres per annum for single person households up to 227 kilolitres per annum for households of four or more persons. On average, single person households reduced their annual consumption by 29% since the 2007 survey, which was a proportionally greater reduction than that observed for the other household sizes (2 persons: 23%; 3 persons: 23%; 4 or more persons: 21%.)

Average monthly water consumption in summer months has fallen marginally less than in winter months (-24% compared with -26%).

**Table 5.2.1.3: Average Annual Water Consumption (Kilolitres)**

|  | **Average Annual Water Consumption (Kilolitres)** | | | | | | | | | | **% Growth/Decline** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | | **2007** | | | **2001** | | | **1996** | **From 2007 to 2014** | **From 2001 to 2007** | **From 1996 to 2001** |
|  | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** | **Summer** | **Winter** | **Total** |
| **Sub-groups** | **n=1,606** | **n=1,599** | **n=1,671** | **n=1,890** | **n=1,883** | **n=1,895** | **n=1,790** | **n=1,701** | **n=1,803** | **n=1,680** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 69 | 77 | 145 | 92 | 111 | 203 | 147 | 108 | 254 | 220 | -28.5% | -20.1% | 15.5% |
| Country VIC | 114 | 104 | 217 | 129 | 115 | 244 | 200 | 165 | 333 | 281 | -11.0% | -26.7% | 18.5% |
| LPG Households | 158 | 113 | 267 | 163 | 132 | 297 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | -10.2% | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 72 | 72 | 144 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 74 | 80 | 153 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 51 | 75 | 127 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 65 | 81 | 145 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 75 | 66 | 140 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 75 | 72 | 146 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 60 | 80 | 140 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 80 | 93 | 170 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 294 | 272 | 559 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 125 | 106 | 229 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 133 | 87 | 222 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 166 | 143 | 311 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 96 | 85 | 180 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 55 | 83 | 141 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Western District | 79 | 63 | 143 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 97 | 82 | 176 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 63 | 90 | 153 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 70 | 67 | 138 | 92 | 89 | 181 | 140 | 103 | 233 | 175 | -24.0% | -22.3% | 33.1% |
| Other Concession HHs | 77 | 80 | 158 | 99 | 120 | 219 | 167 | 129 | 285 | 247 | -28.0% | -23.2% | 15.4% |
| Total Concession HHs | 73 | 74 | 147 | 95 | 103 | 198 | 153 | 115 | 257 | 204 | -25.6% | -23.0% | 26.0% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 84 | 91 | 174 | 110 | 118 | 227 | 167 | 126 | 287 | 258 | -23.3% | -20.9% | 11.2% |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 44 | 44 | 91 | 64 | 65 | 128 | 117 | 88 | 196 | 143 | -29.0% | -34.7% | 37.1% |
| 2 persons | 77 | 75 | 152 | 99 | 98 | 196 | 161 | 114 | 268 | 200 | -22.5% | -26.9% | 34.0% |
| 3 persons | 84 | 96 | 179 | 112 | 122 | 233 | 170 | 127 | 289 | 259 | -23.3% | -19.4% | 11.6% |
| 4 or more persons | 110 | 119 | 227 | 131 | 154 | 286 | 183 | 147 | 324 | 306 | -20.7% | -11.7% | 5.9% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 80 | 80 | 160 | 107 | 106 | 212 | 162 | 116 | 269 | 226 | -24.7% | -21.2% | 19.0% |
| Buying/paying off | 85 | 94 | 178 | 107 | 125 | 233 | 163 | 132 | 290 | 269 | -23.8% | -19.7% | 7.8% |
| Renting - Private | 66 | 73 | 140 | 88 | 105 | 194 | 159 | 122 | 275 | 198 | -27.8% | -29.5% | 38.9% |
| Renting – Public | 64 | 75 | 141 | 95 | 110 | 204 | 130 | 110 | 229 | 232 | -30.7% | -10.9% | -1.3% |
| **Total Households** | **79** | **83** | **162** | **104** | **112** | **216** | **162** | **122** | **276** | **238** | **-24.9%** | **-21.7%** | **16.0%** |

\* Average monthly summer consumption (i.e. December-April) in 2014 was 16 kL (2007: 21kL). Average monthly winter consumption (i.e. May-November) was 12kL   
(2007 - 16 kL).

This fall in average per household water consumption is possibly a result of water restrictions across Victoria leading to households modifying their water consumption habits, and suggests that some of these habits have been maintained after the partial easing of these restrictions. Other factors could include increased use of water-efficient or water-saving fittings (e.g. water saving shower heads) and water efficient appliances, such as dish washers and washing machines. An increase in the installation and use of water tanks may also be a factor. Related factors would also include the extent of media focus on climate change and water-shortage issues, which could certainly have played a part in changing water usage behaviour. Sensitivity of demand to increasing unit prices could also be a factor.

### Water Charges

Between 1996 and 2001 the method of calculation of Water Charges was significantly altered. A 20% reduction in fixed service charges, plus a revised calculation of consumption charges during the period between surveys means that results in 1996 are not strictly comparable with results in 2001. As a consequence, the majority of analysis of water charges over time has been restricted to differences between 2014 and 2007 and between 2007 and 2001.

Annual average water charges, discounts and expenditure for 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 are shown in Tables 5.2.2.1, 5.2.2.2, 5.2.2.3 and 5.2.2.4 on the following pages.

The average annual bill paid for water[[11]](#footnote-11) by households in 2014 was $801.This compares with an average outlay of $516 in 2007, $442 in 2001 and $444 in 1996. This represents a 55% increase in the water bill amount since 2007, while average annual household consumption has fallen by 25%.

The only group to experience a decrease in average water bills since 2007 were public renters (-33%). The greatest increase in average water bills since 2007 were observed amongst non-concession households (71%), despite average water usage declining by 23% over this same period.

Four or more person households also recorded significant growth in water bills since 2007 (+64%), while reducing consumption by 21%.

The average annual water bill for non-concession households ($977) was substantially higher than the average bill for other concession ($579) or aged concession ($575) households.

The survey does not indicate the concession status of each person whose name is on each bill, but defines the concession status of the household according to the concession status of the respondent, who is the main bill-payer. Therefore it is not possible to calculate a precise estimate of the proportion of eligible households that actually received a water concession.  Nevertheless, a very close approximation is the proportion of ‘concession households’ that received the concession (see Table 7.1.2)

Since 2007, the average water consumption charge has increased 104%, with the average water and sewerage service charges increasing 125% and 114% respectively. Average increases since 2007 in sewerage disposal, drainage & waterways service and parks charges were substantially lower (49%, 41% and 21% respectively).

In 2014, 83% of households receiving a water bill had a water service charge levied on them. The incidence was far lower for rental households, both private and public (9% and 4% respectively, down from 15% and 13% respectively in 2007) and for other concession households (64%). This latter result is not surprising since renting households (which includes a significant proportion of other concession households) should not receive this charge. The fact that billing data shows a proportion of renters paying a water service charge suggests that there may be some mis-reporting in relation to application of this charge.[[12]](#footnote-12) Overall the average annual water service charge applied was $171 in 2014, up from $76 in 2007.

Eight in ten households paying water bills received a sewerage service charge in 2014 (79%, down from 81% in 2007), with rental households (6% private and 3% public) and other concession households (62%) again recording the lowest levels of incidence, as expected (as these properties/tenants should not receive such charges, indicating some possible mis-reporting by water retailers in this area1). The average sewerage service charge amount in 2014 was $391, compared with $183 in 2007 and $122 in 2001. Sewerage service charges were far higher in country areas, averaging $554 in 2014, compared with $343 for Melbourne households.

Just under three quarters of all Victorian water using households were charged the sewerage disposal charge (71%, down from 76% in 2007), though this overwhelmingly occurred in Melbourne (93%) rather than country Victorian (3%) households The annual average sewerage disposal charge amount was $207, up from $139 in 2007 and $96 in 2001. The drainage service charge was applied to 64% of Victorian households receiving water bills, up from the 55% recorded in the 2007 survey. Again, this was far more likely to apply to Melbourne households (83%) than those in country Victoria (5%). The average drainage service charge was $91 per annum in 2014, compared with $64 in 2007 and $56 in 2001.

In 2014, 61% of households receiving water bills paid a parks charge (see glossary), up slightly from 2007 (57%), with the charge being applied to 79% of Melbourne households and just 3% of households in country Victoria. The average fee was $71, but was substantially higher for public renters ($156), and lower for country Victorian households ($37).

The average total water charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were not applied) in 2014 was $1,072, up 89% from $567 in 2007.

The proportion of households receiving DHHS concessions on their water bills in 2014 was 44%[[13]](#footnote-13), compared with 43% in 2007 and 35% in 2001. Households in Melbourne (42%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (49%) to receive a DHHS concession. The proportion of public renters receiving a DHHS concession on their water bill increased from 57% in 2007 to 83% in 2014, while the increase among private renters was from 41% to 50%.

The average amount of DHHS concession in 2014 was $253 per annum, representing a 92% increase since the 2007 survey. The only sub-groups that were substantially below this average amount were public and private renters ($166 and $176 per annum respectively).

The Fairer Water Bills Saving (introduced in July 2014) was obtained by 86% of households receiving a water bill, at an average amount of $94.

In 2014, just one household received a Utility Relief Grant Scheme grant on their water bill, for the amount of $321. There were no such cases in 2007 or 2001.

Twenty per cent of households that received a water bill received some other discount from the water supplier, at an average amount of $8 per annum. In contrast, only 1% of households received another form of discount off their water bills in 2007, but the average amount was higher ($40). In 2014, only a minority of water suppliers provided explanatory notes on the nature of these other discounts, and most comments described rounding adjustments or other administrative adjustments rather than genuine discounts.

**Table 5.2.2.1: Water Bill Charges – Part 1**

|  | **% Paying Water Bills** | | | | **Water Consumption Charge** | | | | | | **Water Service Charge** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,861** | **n=2,061** | **n=2,006** | **n=2,000** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,670** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,895** | **n=1,809** | **n=1,677** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,440** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,583** | **n=1,686** | **n=1,524** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 95% | 93% | 92% | 86% | 100% | 375 | 100% | 178 | 168 | 144 | 83% | 160 | 84% | 57 | 58 | 88 |
| Country VIC | 84% | 91% | 94% | 89% | 99% | 365 | 100% | 190 | 164 | 108 | 83% | 206 | 85% | 116 | 76 | 110 |
| LPG Households | 56% | 96% | n/a | n/a | 93% | 496 | 100% | 175 | n/a | n/a | 67% | 220 | 92% | 146 | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 97% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 370 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 78% | 178 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 410 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 74% | 177 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 95% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 333 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | 137 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 391 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 85% | 165 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 363 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 86% | 114 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 91% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 386 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 87% | 116 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 95% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 343 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | 217 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 98% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 384 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 87% | 222 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 90% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 335 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 74% | 196 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 82% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 452 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 85% | 233 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 92% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 502 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 81% | 197 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 87% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 398 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 83% | 169 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 66% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 98% | 328 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | 210 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 80% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 272 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 85% | 213 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 75% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 255 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 90% | 254 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 92% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 398 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 85% | 173 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 82% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 276 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 72% | 225 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 91% | 93% | 93% | 84% | 99% | 296 | 100% | 142 | 139 | 96 | 87% | 167 | 90% | 81 | 73 | 92 |
| Other Concession HHs | 88% | 87% | 85% | 74% | 99% | 363 | 99% | 202 | 166 | 134 | 64% | 173 | 63% | 78 | 75 | 83 |
| Total Concession HHs | 89% | 90% | 90% | 80% | 99% | 328 | 100% | 169 | 151 | 111 | 76% | 169 | 78% | 80 | 74 | 89 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 94% | 94% | 94% | 92% | 99% | 408 | 100% | 190 | 176 | 147 | 89% | 172 | 88% | 74 | 57 | 97 |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 88% | 83% | 86% | 73% | 99% | 193 | 100% | 96 | 118 | 76 | 79% | 172 | 84% | 79 | 59 | 96 |
| 2 persons | 92% | 94% | 93% | 87% | 100% | 338 | 99% | 158 | 161 | 113 | 85% | 170 | 83% | 78 | 64 | 92 |
| 3 persons | 95% | 95% | 91% | 89% | 99% | 416 | 100% | 192 | 177 | 144 | 77% | 168 | 91% | 71 | 65 | 93 |
| 4 or more persons | 95% | 97% | 98% | 94% | 99% | 545 | 100% | 261 | 197 | 175 | 88% | 173 | 87% | 75 | 64 | 96 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 95% | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% | 368 | 100% | 175 | 164 | 127 | 98% | 169 | 98% | 75 | 65 | 95 |
| Buying/paying off | 98% | 100% | 100% | 99% | 99% | 404 | 100% | 205 | 175 | 152 | 99% | 173 | 98% | 76 | 61 | 94 |
| Renting - Private1 | 76% | 70% | 64% | 59% | 99% | 327 | 100% | 157 | 164 | 116 | 4% | 223 | 15% | 93 | 57 | 90 |
| Renting - Public1 | 77% | 71% | 62% | 39% | 100% | 315 | 100% | 170 | 139 | 115 | 9% | 236 | 13% | 66 | 56 | 91 |
| **Total Households** | **92%** | **93%** | **93%** | **87%** | **99%** | **373** | **100%** | **182** | **167** | **134** | **83%** | **171** | **84%** | **76** | **63** | **94** |

1. Renting households would not be charged water service charges. As such, there may be some mis-reporting in the data provided by water suppliers. As respondent survey   
 data was collected for the 2015 year and billing data was collected for the 2014 year, there is some likelihood that respondent and billing data will cause  
 some anomalies in terms of analysis. For example, a household in 2015 may have been renting, but not in 2014 (although such an occurrence should be rare).

**Table 5.2.2.2: Water Bill Charges – Part 2**

|  | **Sewerage Service Charge** | | | | | | **Sewerage Disposal Charge** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,362** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,535** | **n=1,661** | **n=1,512** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,010** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,246** | **n=1,419** | **n=1,357** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 81% | 343 | 79% | 142 | 98 | 321 | 93% | 206 | 96% | 139 | 98 | 22 |
| Country VIC | 75% | 554 | 85% | 265 | 185 | 174 | 3% | 241 | 33% | 139 | 82 | 83 |
| LPG Households | 36% | 488 | 85% | 334 | n/a | n/a | 27% | 247 | 1% | 96 | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 78% | 361 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 88% | 228 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 72% | 339 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 98% | 233 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 75% | 368 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 87% | 183 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 84% | 347 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 217 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 78% | 378 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 88% | 192 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 86% | 375 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 96% | 205 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 83% | 250 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 186 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 86% | 338 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 68% | 201 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 62% | 450 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 80% | 609 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 73% | 224 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 78% | 393 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 9% | 236 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 75% | 670 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 70% | 697 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 8% | 265 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 90% | 643 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 78% | 545 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3% | 211 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 65% | 688 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 84% | 405 | 88% | 190 | 123 | 260 | 69% | 166 | 71% | 117 | 77 | 25 |
| Other Concession HHs | 62% | 401 | 61% | 184 | 118 | 231 | 66% | 211 | 72% | 145 | 90 | 31 |
| Total Concession HHs | 73% | 403 | 76% | 188 | 121 | 250 | 68% | 188 | 71% | 130 | 82 | 27 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 84% | 383 | 84% | 180 | 122 | 296 | 74% | 220 | 79% | 145 | 103 | 34 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 77% | 404 | 81% | 189 | 121 | 259 | 66% | 111 | 74% | 79 | 76 | 20 |
| 2 persons | 82% | 401 | 80% | 188 | 120 | 266 | 71% | 193 | 74% | 126 | 89 | 29 |
| 3 persons | 73% | 383 | 77% | 179 | 119 | 279 | 74% | 233 | 75% | 149 | 102 | 33 |
| 4 or more persons | 82% | 373 | 84% | 175 | 126 | 302 | 75% | 280 | 79% | 186 | 111 | 38 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 95% | 388 | 94% | 183 | 125 | 275 | 73% | 200 | 74% | 135 | 92 | 33 |
| Buying/paying off | 94% | 395 | 95% | 183 | 119 | 284 | 69% | 221 | 77% | 150 | 104 | 34 |
| Renting - Private1 | 3% | 500 | 15% | 176 | 112 | 295 | 74% | 195 | 80% | 131 | 92 | 20 |
| Renting - Public1 | 6% | 326 | 13% | 155 | 109 | 250 | 57% | 205 | 76% | 139 | 102 | 28 |
| **Total Households** | **79%** | **391** | **81%** | **183** | **122** | **279** | **71%** | **207** | **76%** | **139** | **96** | **32** |

1. Renting households would not be charged sewerage service charges. As such, there may be some mis-reporting in the data provided by water suppliers. As respondent  
 survey data was collected for the 2015 year and billing data was collected for the 2014 year, there is some likelihood that respondent and billing data will cause  
 some anomalies in terms of analysis. For example, a household in 2015 may have been renting, but not in 2014 (although such an occurrence should be rare).

**Table 5.2.2.3: Water Bill Charges – Part 3**

|  | **Drainage & Waterways Service Charge (formerly Drainage Service Charge)** | | | | | | **Parks Victoria or Annual Parks Charge** | | | | | | **Other Charges** | | | | **Total All Charges** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | **2007** |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,681** | **n=962** | **n=1,897** | **n=914** | **n=1,202** | **n=1,120** | **n=1,681** | **n=888** | **n=1,897** | **n=959** | **n=1,249** | **n=1,075** | **n=1,681** | **n=17** | **n=1,897** | **n=59** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,897** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 83% | 91 | 81% | 64 | 57 | 56 | 79% | 72 | 83% | 59 | 37 | 43 | \* | 140 | 3% | -15 | 1,107 | 571 |
| Country VIC | 5% | 70 | \* | 60 | 42 | 90 | 3% | 37 | - | - | 26 | 41 | 3% | 101 | 3% | 17 | 962 | 559 |
| LPG Households | 21% | 96 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 9% | 71 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 8% | 41 | 5% | 31 | 886 | 596 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 78% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 72% | 72 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,113 | n/a |
| North Eastern Melb. | 73% | 89 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 76% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,132 | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melb. | 85% | 86 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 83% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,015 | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melb. | 85% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | 72 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,175 | n/a |
| Southern Melb. | 85% | 96 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 68% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,044 | n/a |
| Bayside | 86% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 86% | 74 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1% | 140 | n/a | n/a | 1,147 | n/a |
| Western Melb. | \* | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 84% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,050 | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 87% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 58% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,122 | n/a |
| Mallee | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3% | 8 | n/a | n/a | 751 | n/a |
| Loddon | 8% | 50 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 5% | 48 | n/a | n/a | 1,137 | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1% | 800 | n/a | n/a | 836 | n/a |
| Goulburn | 9% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2% | 1 | n/a | n/a | 860 | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,002 | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 12% | 80 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 8% | 71 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4% | 4 | n/a | n/a | 981 | n/a |
| Western District | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 20% | 8 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3% | 2 | n/a | n/a | 1,058 | n/a |
| Barwon | 2% | 91 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 2% | 86 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | 980 | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 11% | 55 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 5% | 208 | n/a | n/a | 905 | n/a |
| Continued on next page | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Conc. HHs | 64% | 91 | 55% | 59 | 76 | 62 | 62% | 71 | 57% | 55 | 43 | 43 | 1% | 172 | 5% | -10 | 995 | 528 |
| Other Conc. HHs | 48% | 92 | 37% | 56 | 64 | 51 | 43% | 75 | 38% | 63 | 40 | 41 | 1% | 191 | 4% | 9 | 940 | 512 |
| Total Conc. HHs | 56% | 91 | 47% | 58 | 71 | 58 | 53% | 73 | 48% | 58 | 42 | 42 | 1% | 184 | 4% | -3 | 969 | 520 |
| Non-Conc. HHs | 70% | 90 | 61% | 66 | 49 | 60 | 67% | 70 | 63% | 59 | 34 | 43 | 1% | 48 | 2% | -8 | 1,154 | 598 |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 59% | 91 | 52% | 60 | 61 | 59 | 54% | 71 | 53% | 62 | 41 | 43 | \* | 3 | 4% | -2 | 806 | 436 |
| 2 persons | 63% | 90 | 52% | 64 | 58 | 60 | 60% | 71 | 55% | 57 | 37 | 42 | 1% | 246 | 2% | -7 | 1,045 | 531 |
| 3 persons | 64% | 89 | 56% | 64 | 52 | 56 | 60% | 71 | 58% | 58 | 35 | 43 | 1% | 7 | 2% | -6 | 1,093 | 569 |
| 4 or more persons | 71% | 92 | 61% | 65 | 53 | 61 | 68% | 72 | 62% | 60 | 34 | 43 | 1% | 91 | 3% | -5 | 1,322 | 695 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 77% | 91 | 66% | 65 | 61 | 61 | 74% | 71 | 68% | 56 | 38 | 43 | 1% | 107 | 3% | -6 | 1,170 | 602 |
| Buying/paying off | 76% | 89 | 64% | 63 | 52 | 58 | 68% | 70 | 65% | 58 | 36 | 43 | 1% | 30 | 2% | -5 | 1,210 | 646 |
| Renting - Private1 | 2% | 92 | 8% | 55 | 42 | 55 | 4% | 63 | 7% | 141 | 28 | 43 | - | - | 3% | 0 | 500 | 317 |
| Renting - Public1 | 3% | 91 | 7% | 48 | 40 | 55 | 8% | 156 | 7% | 168 | 26 | 39 | 2% | 380 | 1% | 3 | 494 | 319 |
| **Total Households** | **64%** | **91** | **55%** | **64** | **56** | **59** | **61%** | **71** | **57%** | **59** | **36** | **43** | **1%** | **108** | **3%** | **-5** | **1,072** | **567** |

1. Renting households would not be charged drainage service or annual parks charges. As such, there may be some mis-reporting in the data provided by water suppliers. As respondent survey data was collected for the 2015 year and billing data was collected for the 2014 year, there is some likelihood that respondent and billing data will cause some anomalies in terms of analysis. For example, a household in 2015 may have been renting, but not in 2014 (although such an occurrence should be rare).

**Table 5.2.2.4: Water Bill Concessions and Total Bill Amounts**

|  | **DHHS Concession (Water & Sewerage Concession)** | | | | | | | | **Fairer Water Bills Saving** | | **Other Discounts** | | | | **Total Water Bill Amount (excl. GST)** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** |
|  | **%** | **%** | **%** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | $ | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,817** | **n=1,723** | **n=908** | **n=932** | **n=782** | **n=751** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,338** | **n=1,681** | **n=300** | **n=1,897** | **n=32** | **n=1,681** | **n=1,897** | **n=1,815** | **n=1,530** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 42% | 39% | 29% | 35% | 263 | 129 | 114 | 142 | 98% | 100 | 23% | 6 | 1% | 43 | 798 | 521 | 467 | 512 |
| Country VIC | 49% | 52% | 53% | 40% | 227 | 136 | 100 | 124 | 47% | 52 | 13% | 19 | 2% | 38 | 811 | 506 | 377 | 255 |
| LPG Households | 44% | 67% | n/a | n/a | 214 | 143 | n/a | n/a | 63% | 72 | 20% | 17 | 2% | 13 | 705 | 500 | n/a | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 270 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 101 | 26% | 17 | n/a | n/a | 671 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North East Melb. | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 270 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 100 | 14% | 16 | n/a | n/a | 655 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer East Melb. | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 267 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 101 | \* | 50 | n/a | n/a | 753 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner East Melb. | 37% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 269 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 100 | 5% | 32 | n/a | n/a | 811 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melb. | 50% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 255 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 98% | 102 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 814 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 265 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 96% | 100 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 944 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melb. | 31% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 241 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 100 | 83% | 4 | n/a | n/a | 811 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 46% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 266 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 95% | 100 | 85% | 2 | n/a | n/a | 757 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 46% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 180 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | 4% | 30 | n/a | n/a | 638 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 257 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 10% | 100 | 14% | 64 | n/a | n/a | 1215 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 49% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 220 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | - | - | n/a | n/a | 540 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 52% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 230 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 9% | 100 | 68% | 0 | n/a | n/a | 701 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 64% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 225 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 98% | 29 | 4% | 87 | n/a | n/a | 681 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 225 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97% | 34 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 843 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 63% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 264 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 70% | 70 | 2% | 130 | n/a | n/a | 737 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 41% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 228 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 51 | 3% | 0 | n/a | n/a | 864 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 59% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 192 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 13% | 100 | 22% | 23 | n/a | n/a | 688 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Conc. HHs | 92% | 87% | 85% | 92% | 268 | 139 | 118 | 172 | 85% | 94 | 17% | 12 | 1% | 28 | 575 | 407 | 355 | 323 |
| Other Conc. HHs | 91% | 71% | 67% | 70% | 240 | 122 | 104 | 129 | 84% | 94 | 24% | 13 | 2% | 48 | 579 | 457 | 363 | 318 |
| Total Conc. HHs | 91% | 80% | 76% | 83% | 254 | 132 | 113 | 155 | 84% | 94 | 20% | 12 | 1% | 38 | 576 | 430 | 359 | 321 |
| Non-Conc. HHs | 6% | 19% | 12% | 9% | 240 | 131 | 92 | 159 | 87% | 94 | 20% | 5 | 1% | 42 | 977 | 573 | 490 | 515 |
| Continued on next page | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 58% | 56% | 55% | 59% | 237 | 131 | 103 | 143 | 84% | 92 | 20% | 6 | 1% | 36 | 522 | 364 | 355 | 350 |
| 2 persons | 53% | 48% | 41% | 41% | 264 | 134 | 113 | 168 | 86% | 93 | 22% | 9 | 2% | 41 | 741 | 466 | 420 | 397 |
| 3 persons | 37% | 35% | 32% | 31% | 256 | 128 | 106 | 170 | 88% | 94 | 23% | 13 | \* | 37 | 824 | 524 | 456 | 456 |
| 4 or more persons | 24% | 33% | 20% | 25% | 254 | 130 | 109 | 144 | 87% | 96 | 17% | 6 | 1% | 41 | 1101 | 672 | 509 | 519 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 52% | 50% | 47% | 48% | 278 | 139 | 114 | 178 | 87% | 94 | 18% | 6 | 1% | 50 | 864 | 532 | 444 | 450 |
| Buying/paying off | 21% | 31% | 18% | 18% | 276 | 132 | 107 | 158 | 85% | 94 | 22% | 7 | \* | 10 | 960 | 624 | 488 | 523 |
| Renting - Private1 | 50% | 41% | 26% | 33% | 176 | 103 | 88 | 81 | 86% | 95 | 27% | 15 | 1% | 15 | 351 | 274 | 347 | 274 |
| Renting - Public1 | 83% | 57% | 61% | 54% | 166 | 107 | 65 | 83 | 80% | 89 | 23% | 18 | 1% | 15 | 173 | 258 | 223 | 234 |
| **Total Households** | **44%** | **43%** | **35%** | **37%** | **253** | **132** | **108** | **155** | **86%** | **94** | **20%** | **8** | **1%** | **40** | **801** | **516** | **442** | **444** |

1. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

# COUNCIL RATES AND EXPENDITURE

NB. This section is based on billing data supplied by councils and linked to respondent survey data.

## BILLING FOR COUNCIL RATES AND ASSOCIATED CONCESSIONS

### Incidence of Being Billed for Council Rates

In 2014, 80% of all households received Council rates bills, a proportion similar to that observed in 2007 (77%) and 2001 (80%). Data for Council rates was not collected in the 1996 survey. The proportion of households paying Council rates bills in 2014 was virtually identical in Melbourne and country Victoria (80.0% compared with 79.5%), which is consistent with the findings of the 2007 and 2001 surveys.

A greater proportion of non-concession households paid Council rates than concession households in 2014 (87% compared with 71%), as was the case in 2007 and 2001. Aged concession households, being predominantly home owners, had a high proportion paying Council bills (85%), while the high proportion of renters among other concession households meant that only 57% of that group received a council bill.

It should be noted that a very small number of respondents both indicated that they rented and that they paid Council rates, possibly indicating either a misunderstanding of the question and/or a change in circumstances during the year.  The percentages showing for renters in the council rates tables are based to this very small group of respondents, not to renters overall.  They should be interpreted with care.

In 2014, 96% of all households paid their annual rates bill in full. Households in Melbourne (97%) were more likely than those in country Victoria (94%) to have paid their rates bill in full. The incidence of paying Council rate by compulsory instalment was only 1%.

Seven respondents were recorded as being on a hardship programme for their Council rate payments, representing approximately 0.37% of Victorian households.

**Table 6.1.1: Council Rate Bill Paid in Full or by Compulsory Instalment**

| **How Council Rate Bill Paid  (of those paying Council Rates)** | **In Full** | | **By Compulsory Instalment**2 | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2014** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 97% | 96% | \* | 56% |
| Country VIC | 94% | 97% | 1% | 70% |
| LPG Households | 98% | 98% | 1% | 61% |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 100% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 94% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 96% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 97% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 97% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Bayside | 98% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 98% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 95% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Mallee | 100% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Loddon | 99% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 88% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Goulburn | 94% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 93% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 91% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Western District | 100% | n/a | - | n/a |
| Barwon | 87% | n/a | 1% | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 99% | n/a | 2% | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 96% | 98% | \* | 60% |
| Other Concession HHs | 95% | 95% | 2% | 61% |
| Total Concession HHs | 95% | 97% | 1% | 61% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 97% | 96% | \* | 61% |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 95% | 98% | \* | 60% |
| 2 persons | 97% | 98% | 1% | 58% |
| 3 persons | 96% | 98% | 1% | 57% |
| 4 or more persons | 96% | 92% | \* | 66% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 97% | 98% | \* | 58% |
| Buying/paying off | 95% | 94% | 1% | 66% |
| Renting – Private1 | 63% | 65% | - | 55% |
| Renting – Public1 | 100% | 57% | - | 57% |
| **Total Households** | **96%** | **96%** | **1%** | **61%** |

Notes:

The percentages for “Paid in Full” and for “By Compulsory Instalment” in the table above for 2014 are based to households paying council rates bills where councils provided this information (n=1,535).

Please note, there is no expectation that the two items in the table should add to 100% as households can appear in both columns.

Please also note that the “Instalment” data provided by councils in 2007 was in response to a slightly different data request. The 2007 “Instalment” data is therefore not directly comparable with 2014.

### Incidence of Receiving a DHHS Concession on Council Rates

Of those paying Council rates bills in 2014, 38% received a DHHS concession on their rates bill, up from 31% in 2007 and 29% in 2001.(**see Table 6.2.2**). Households in Melbourne (36%) were less likely than those in country Victoria (42%) to receive a DHHS concession on the rates bill.

The proportion of concession households paying Council rates and receiving a DHHS concession was 86%, up from 77% and 75% in 2007 and 2001 respectively. Aged concession households (91%) were more likely than other concession households (78%) to receive a DHHS concession on their council rates.

As in previous surveys, the incidence of receiving concessions on Council rates bills decreased with household size. In 2014, only 17% of households of four or more persons paying council rates received a DHHS concession on the bill, compared with 49% of single person households and 50% of two person households.

## COUNCIL RATES CHARGES

Annual average council rate charges, discounts and expenditure for 2014, 2007, 2001 and 1996 are shown in Tables 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 on the following pages.

Council rates averaged $1,593[[14]](#footnote-14) in 2014, an increase of 68.4% from 2007 ($948). This was well above the inflation rate over the corresponding period (20.4%), and is also somewhat above the increase in property prices over the same period (approximately 40%).

Interestingly, the rate of increase in the total rates paid was higher among households in country Victoria (89%) than in Melbourne (60%), despite house price rises being greater in the capital city. Total council rate bill amounts had also increased markedly for aged concession households (82% - from $752 to $1,368), compared with 70% for other concession households and 67% for non-concession households.

Fewer than one in ten households (7%) had their annual municipal rates charge calculated using the Net Asset Value (NAV) of the property, with all of these households being in Melbourne. Ninety-three per cent used the Capital Improved Value (CIV) method (9% and 91% respectively in 2007). The average NAV estimate of a property in Victoria in 2014 was $29,406 ($25,628 in 2007), while the average CIV estimate was $487,237 ($327,110 in 2007). Both NAV and CIV values tended to be lower for other concession households ($20,950 and $375,115 respectively) than for aged concession ($25,554 and $477,633 respectively) or non-concession households ($31,867 and $524,349 respectively).

The average annual municipal rates charge allocated to properties in 2014 was $1,325, compared with $863 in 2007, an increase of 54% The proportional increase in the average annual municipal rate charge was higher in country Victoria (73%, to an average of $1,295) than in Melbourne (46%, to an average of $1,336). The proportional increase was higher among aged (63%) and other concession (60%) households than among non-concession households (52%).

The Fire Services Property Levy (introduced in 2012) was reported by councils as being charged to 99% of all rate paying households, at an average of $147.

The proportion of rate paying households levied a waste management charge was 77% in 2014, down from 80% in 2007. Virtually all households in country Victoria (94%) had this charge imposed, but only 71% of Melbourne households did so. The average amount levied for waste management was $241, up 66.3% from $145 in 2007. The average increase in this levy was higher in Melbourne (76%) than in country Victoria (61%).

Only 9% of rate paying households had a special product charge imposed, down from 25% in 2007, although the average amount of this charge was 173% higher in 2014 than 2007 ($186, compared with $68). The special product charge was applied to 9% of rate paying households in Melbourne, at an average of $59 (19% at $56 in 2007). In country Victoria, a smaller proportion of households incurred the charge than in 2007 (9%, compared with 37%), but the average amount of the charge increased more than 5 times to $527 from $82. The proportional increase was also much higher among non-concession households (221%) than in concession households (106%).

Approximately one in ten rate paying households were levied other charges in 2014 (12%, down from 14% in 2007), with the average amount increasing 14% from the 2007 level to $90. These charges were more likely to be levied on households in country Victoria (25%) than in Melbourne (8%), and tended to be at a higher rate (average of $103 in country Victoria, compared with $76 in Melbourne). This did, however, represent a substantial decrease in the average amount payable for country Victorians compared with 2007 (down 66%). Only a minority of councils provided explanatory notes on the nature of these other charges. To the extent this information was provided, the charges were usually related to additional/larger bins (e.g. green waste) or for a flat rate municipal charge on top of the property rates.

The average total council rates charge applicable (i.e. the amount that could be charged if concessions and discounts were not applied) in 2014 was $1,685, up 67% from $1,006 in 2007.

The average DHHS concession amount received by eligible households in 2014 was $203, an increase of 21% from the $168 recorded in the 2007 survey. Thirty-eightper cent of all rates paying households received the DHHS concession, with the proportion higher in country Victoria (42%) than in Melbourne (36%). The DHHS (Municipal Rates) concession was received by 86% of concession households and by 5% of non-concession households (compared with 77% and 5% respectively in 2007). There was very little difference between the various sub-groups in terms of percentage increase in the amount of the DHHS municipal rates concession.

The survey does not indicate the concession status of each person whose name is on each bill, but defines the concession status of the household according to the concession status of the respondent, who is the main bill-payer. In addition, the eligibility criteria for the rates concession are more restricted than the general criteria for counting as a ‘concession household’.  Therefore it is not possible to calculate a precise estimate of the proportion of eligible households that actually received the council rates concession.  One approximation is the proportion of ‘concession households’ that received the concession.  Another approximation could be calculated using as a base those households where the main respondent held a PCC or Gold Card.

Just over one in ten households paying Council rates also received other discounts off their 2014 rates bill (13%, compared with 9% in 2007). The average discount applicable in 2014 was $67, compared with $61 in 2007. Only a minority of councils provided explanatory notes on the nature of these other discounts. To the extent this information was provided, the discounts were usually said to be council-funded rates rebates offered to pensioners.

**Table 6.2.1: Council Rate Charges – Part 1**

|  | **% Paying Council Rates** | | | **Valuation Method Used** | | | | **Valuation Amount ($)** | | | | **Annual Municipal Rates  Charge ($)** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | | **2007** | |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **NAV** | **CIV** | **NAV** | **CIV** | **NAV** | **CIV** | **NAV** | **CIV** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,861** | **n=2,061** | **n=2,006** | **n=90** | **n=1,457** | **n=1,579** | **n=1,579** | **n=89** | **N=1,373** | **n=138** | **n=1,436** | **n=1,545** | **n=1,574** | **n=1,545** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 80% | 78% | 80% | 10% | 90% | 13% | 87% | 29,406 | 547,792 | 25,628 | 373,080 | 1,336 | 915 | 631 |
| Country VIC | 80% | 77% | 81% | - | 100% | - | 100% | - | 343,328 | - | 241,500 | 1,295 | 750 | 520 |
| LPG Households | 81% | 90% | n/a | - | 100% | - | 100% | - | 435,638 | - | 207,400 | 1,668 | 701 | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 79% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 441,091 | n/a | n/a | 1,512 | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 71% | n/a | n/a | 34% | 66% | n/a | n/a | 25,354 | 685,414 | n/a | n/a | 1,504 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 80% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 465,670 | n/a | n/a | 1,257 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 83% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 732,918 | n/a | n/a | 1,413 | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 85% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 390,532 | n/a | n/a | 1,159 | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 79% | n/a | n/a | 13% | 87% | n/a | n/a | 37,810 | 676,811 | n/a | n/a | 1,261 | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 82% | n/a | n/a | 21% | 79% | n/a | n/a | 27,312 | 484,431 | n/a | n/a | 1,460 | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 85% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 333,911 | n/a | n/a | 1,055 | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 72% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 215,115 | n/a | n/a | 1,490 | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 84% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 339,645 | n/a | n/a | 1,319 | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 76% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 286,663 | n/a | n/a | 1,414 | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 84% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 330,208 | n/a | n/a | 1,543 | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 84% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 314,809 | n/a | n/a | 1,384 | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 81% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 358,057 | n/a | n/a | 1,292 | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 71% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 287,698 | n/a | n/a | 819 | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 84% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 452,585 | n/a | n/a | 1,250 | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 73% | n/a | n/a | - | 100% | n/a | n/a | - | 317,019 | n/a | n/a | 1,272 | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 85% | 85% | 88% | 5% | 95% | 8% | 92% | 25,554 | 477,633 | 19,351 | 284,640 | 1,257 | 773 | 520 |
| Other Concession HHs | 57% | 52% | 58% | 6% | 94% | 10% | 90% | 20,950 | 375,115 | 13,931 | 261,160 | 1,135 | 711 | 552 |
| Total Concession HHs | 71% | 70% | 73% | 5% | 95% | 9% | 91% | 23,563 | 436,221 | 17,237 | 276,390 | 1,209 | 751 | 532 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 87% | 83% | 84% | 9% | 91% | 9% | 91% | 31,867 | 524,349 | 30,483 | 356,420 | 1,405 | 927 | 636 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 71% | 67% | 74% | 7% | 93% | 11% | 89% | 26,612 | 417,234 | 19,605 | 282,740 | 1,142 | 748 | 500 |
| 2 persons | 83% | 79% | 81% | 9% | 91% | 9% | 91% | 29,319 | 505,261 | 34,024 | 328,840 | 1,352 | 849 | 612 |
| 3 persons | 77% | 76% | 77% | 9% | 91% | 9% | 91% | 31,600 | 492,529 | 20,606 | 337,020 | 1,340 | 885 | 596 |
| 4 or more persons | 85% | 83% | 84% | 5% | 95% | 7% | 93% | 30,546 | 514,655 | 21,626 | 345,070 | 1,426 | 935 | 647 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 99% | 100% | 100% | 7% | 93% | 9% | 91% | 31,063 | 513,086 | 20,956 | 333,370 | 1,362 | 873 | 601 |
| Buying/paying off | 100% | 99% | 100% | 8% | 92% | 8% | 91% | 27,483 | 444,561 | 34,616 | 318,750 | 1,268 | 850 | 601 |
| Renting – Private1 | 2% | 2% | 2% | - | 100% | 19% | 56% | - | 317,454 | 16,050 | 150,290 | 984 | 577 | 450 |
| Renting – Public1 | 1% | 1% | \* | - | 100% | - | 57% | - | 336,911 | - | 200,000 | 936 | 732 | 391 |
| **Total Households** | **80%** | **77%** | **80%** | **7%** | **93%** | **9%** | **91%** | **29,406** | **487,237** | **25,628** | **327,110** | **1,325** | **863** | **600** |

1.Very small sample size. The percentages showing for renters in the council rates tables are based to a tiny group of respondents who indicated they both rented and paid council rates. This may indicate misunderstanding of the question, or changed circumstances, and should be interpreted with care.

**Table 6.2.2: Council Rate Charges – Part 2**

|  | **Waste Management Charges** | | | | | **Special Product/Service/Rates Charges** | | | | | **Fire Services Property Levy 2014** | | **Other Charges** | | | | **Total All Charges** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2001** | **2014** | | **2007** | | **2014** | **2007** |
|  | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,547** | **n=1244** | **n=1,579** | **n=1,266** | **n=1,019** | **n=1,547** | **n=131** | **n=1,579** | **N=320** | **n=687** | **n=1,547** | **n=1,532** | **n=1,547** | **n=184** | **n=1,579** | **n=185** | **n=1,545** | **n=1,574** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 71% | 227 | 70% | 129 | 98 | 9% | 59 | 19% | 56 | 61 | 100% | 147 | 8% | 76 | 18% | 53 | 1,655 | 1,026 |
| Country VIC | 94% | 273 | 100% | 170 | 94 | 9% | 527 | 37% | 82 | 53 | 97% | 147 | 25% | 103 | 4% | 298 | 1,767 | 964 |
| LPG Households | 85% | 261 | 100% | 212 | n/a | 12% | 164 | 23% | 166 | n/a | 94% | 193 | 10% | 60 | 7% | 512 | 2,098 | 989 |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 45% | 103 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 134 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 1,693 | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 56% | 161 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 150 | 28% | 95 | n/a | n/a | 1,770 | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 96% | 182 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 41% | 32 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 150 | 4% | 82 | n/a | n/a | 1,596 | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 41% | 246 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 153 | 2% | 3 | n/a | n/a | 1,666 | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 99% | 286 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 13% | 142 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 99% | 145 | 2% | 57 | n/a | n/a | 1,610 | n/a |
| Bayside | 75% | 221 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 153 | 5% | 134 | n/a | n/a | 1,588 | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 72% | 250 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | 51 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 142 | 4% | 9 | n/a | n/a | 1,794 | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 100% | 273 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 129 | 25% | 39 | n/a | n/a | 1,468 | n/a |
| Mallee | 99% | 288 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 129 | 14% | 2 | n/a | n/a | 1,905 | n/a |
| Loddon | 97% | 270 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 18% | 133 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 148 | 13% | 40 | n/a | n/a | 1,758 | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 100% | 375 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 133 | 13% | 30 | n/a | n/a | 1,927 | n/a |
| Goulburn | 98% | 299 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 144 | 6% | 9 | n/a | n/a | 1,981 | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 83% | 221 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 6% | 234 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 159 | 2% | 42 | n/a | n/a | 1,742 | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 76% | 307 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 80% | 141 | 2% | 1 | n/a | n/a | 1,638 | n/a |
| Western District | 97% | 250 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | 1390 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 133 | 54% | 220 | n/a | n/a | 1,712 | n/a |
| Barwon | 94% | 244 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 15% | 184 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 167 | 75% | 90 | n/a | n/a | 1,741 | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 100% | 234 | n/a | n/a | n/a | - | - | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100% | 144 | 5% | 52 | n/a | n/a | 1,653 | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 76% | 240 | 78% | 150 | 94 | 8% | 136 | 27% | 67 | 54 | 99% | 142 | 11% | 71 | 14% | 48 | 1,602 | 914 |
| Other Concession HHs | 83% | 237 | 80% | 147 | 99 | 11% | 149 | 28% | 73 | 53 | 100% | 136 | 13% | 81 | 18% | 112 | 1,494 | 870 |
| Total Concession HHs | 79% | 239 | 79% | 149 | 96 | 9% | 142 | 27% | 69 | 54 | 100% | 140 | 12% | 76 | 15% | 75 | 1,559 | 898 |
| Non-Concession HHs | 76% | 243 | 80% | 143 | 97 | 8% | 219 | 23% | 68 | 59 | 99% | 151 | 13% | 100 | 13% | 81 | 1,770 | 1,069 |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 74% | 239 | 79% | 146 | 99 | 8% | 140 | 28% | 69 | 54 | 99% | 139 | 15% | 89 | 12% | 45 | 1,482 | 889 |
| 2 persons | 76% | 243 | 80% | 145 | 96 | 8% | 146 | 24% | 71 | 54 | 99% | 146 | 11% | 100 | 11% | 61 | 1,703 | 989 |
| 3 persons | 77% | 236 | 81% | 153 | 97 | 9% | 345 | 21% | 71 | 59 | 100% | 149 | 15% | 74 | 13% | 146 | 1,712 | 1,042 |
| 4 or more persons | 81% | 244 | 80% | 141 | 95 | 11% | 173 | 27% | 64 | 61 | 99% | 153 | 10% | 93 | 17% | 81 | 1,804 | 1,079 |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 75% | 241 | 79% | 150 | 98 | 8% | 122 | 24% | 67 | 55 | 100% | 149 | 11% | 88 | 15% | 57 | 1,711 | 1,016 |
| Buying/paying off | 80% | 242 | 82% | 138 | 93 | 11% | 268 | 26% | 70 | 60 | 99% | 143 | 15% | 94 | 12% | 122 | 1,646 | 996 |
| Renting – Private1 | 100% | 248 | 56% | 167 | 97 | - | - | 29% | 100 | 52 | 100% | 135 | - | - | - | - | 1,367 | 741 |
| Renting – Public1 | 100% | 244 | 57% | 145 | 105 | - | - | - | - | - | 100% | 136 | 46% | 89 | - | - | 1,357 | 877 |
| **Total Households** | **77%** | **241** | **80%** | **145** | **96** | **9%** | **186** | **25%** | **68** | **57** | 99% | **147** | **12%** | **90** | **14%** | **79** | **1,685** | **1,006** |

1.Very small sample size. The percentages showing for renters in the council rates tables are based to a tiny group of respondents who indicated they both rented and paid council rates. This may indicate misunderstanding of the question, or changed circumstances, and should be interpreted with care.

**Table 6.2.3: Council Rate Concessions, Fire Service Concession, Other Discounts and Annual Bill Amount**

|  | **DHHS (Municipal Rates) Concession** | | | | | | **Fire Services Property Levy Concession 2014** | | **Other Discounts** | | | | **Total Rates Amount (excl. GST) ($)** | | | **%** | **%** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **%** | | | **$** | | | **2014** | | **2007** | | **Growth** | **Growth** |
|  | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **%** | **$** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **Since** | **2001-** |
| **Sub-group** | **n=1,547** | **n=1,579** | **n=1,545** | **n=752** | **n=627** | **n=576** | **n=1,547** | **n=752** | **n=1,547** | **n=235** | **n=1,579** | **n=178** | **n=1545** | **n=1,574** | **n=1,545** | **2007** | **2007** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 36% | 28% | 24% | 204 | 168 | 136 | 36% | 50 | 15% | 67 | 10% | 50 | 1,558 | 973 | 681 | 60.1% | 42.9% |
| Country VIC | 42% | 38% | 40% | 200 | 168 | 135 | 42% | 49 | 8% | 69 | 8% | 90 | 1,691 | 893 | 581 | 89.4% | 53.7% |
| LPG Households | 46% | 55% | n/a | 193 | 168 | n/a | 46% | 48 | 11% | 159 | 21% | 43 | 1,997 | 887 | n/a | 125.2% | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 53% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 53% | 50 | 31% | 30 | n/a | n/a | 1,549 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 31% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 31% | 50 | 6% | 134 | n/a | n/a | 1,710 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 49% | n/a | n/a | 204 | n/a | n/a | 49% | 50 | 21% | 103 | n/a | n/a | 1,435 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 33% | n/a | n/a | 197 | n/a | n/a | 33% | 49 | 7% | 41 | n/a | n/a | 1,583 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 41% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 41% | 50 | \* | 100 | n/a | n/a | 1,530 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 36% | n/a | n/a | 201 | n/a | n/a | 36% | 50 | 16% | 92 | n/a | n/a | 1,488 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 26% | n/a | n/a | 219 | n/a | n/a | 26% | 54 | 17% | 64 | n/a | n/a | 1,723 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 37% | n/a | n/a | 205 | n/a | n/a | 37% | 50 | 36% | 31 | n/a | n/a | 1,339 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 32% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 32% | 50 | 6% | 32 | n/a | n/a | 1,818 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 48% | n/a | n/a | 188 | n/a | n/a | 48% | 47 | 16% | 45 | n/a | n/a | 1,637 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 37% | n/a | n/a | 199 | n/a | n/a | 37% | 50 | - | - | n/a | n/a | 2,162 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goulburn | 37% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 37% | 50 | 1% | 140 | n/a | n/a | 1,913 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 47% | n/a | n/a | 211 | n/a | n/a | 47% | 50 | 28% | 50 | n/a | n/a | 1,639 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 34% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 34% | 50 | 10% | 98 | n/a | n/a | 1,508 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 78% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 78% | 50 | 3% | 198 | n/a | n/a | 1,507 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 32% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 32% | 50 | 1% | 198 | n/a | n/a | 1,695 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 39% | n/a | n/a | 203 | n/a | n/a | 39% | 50 | 13% | 75 | n/a | n/a | 1,545 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 91% | 91% | 89% | 203 | 168 | 136 | 91% | 50 | 24% | 69 | 20% | 45 | 1,368 | 752 | 486 | 82.0% | 54.7% |
| Other Concession HHs | 78% | 51% | 53% | 202 | 168 | 135 | 78% | 50 | 29% | 62 | 11% | 96 | 1,314 | 772 | 572 | 70.2% | 35.0% |
| Total Concession HHs | 86% | 77% | 75% | 203 | 168 | 136 | 86% | 50 | 26% | 66 | 17% | 57 | 1,347 | 759 | 519 | 77.5% | 46.2% |
| Non-Concession HHs2 | 5% | 5% | 4% | 205 | 167 | 129 | 5% | 50 | 4% | 73 | 5% | 68 | 1,761 | 1,057 | 724 | 66.6% | 46.0% |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 49% | 50% | 51% | 203 | 168 | 135 | 49% | 50 | 17% | 62 | 13% | 63 | 1,359 | 796 | 525 | 70.7% | 51.6% |
| 2 persons | 50% | 43% | 37% | 203 | 168 | 135 | 50% | 50 | 14% | 68 | 13% | 45 | 1,585 | 910 | 649 | 74.2% | 40.2% |
| 3 persons | 33% | 23% | 22% | 203 | 166 | 132 | 33% | 50 | 14% | 83 | 6% | 93 | 1,641 | 998 | 660 | 64.5% | 51.2% |
| 4 or more persons | 17% | 11% | 10% | 202 | 168 | 138 | 17% | 49 | 8% | 58 | 4% | 93 | 1,758 | 1,057 | 727 | 66.3% | 45.4% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owned/paid off | 49% | 44% | 40% | 203 | 168 | 136 | 49% | 50 | 17% | 67 | 13% | 53 | 1,576 | 935 | 637 | 68.6% | 46.8% |
| Buying/paying off | 18% | 11% | 10% | 203 | 168 | 132 | 18% | 50 | 7% | 69 | 4% | 108 | 1,631 | 973 | 681 | 67.6% | 42.9% |
| Renting – Private1 | 55% | - | 38% | 203 | - | 135 | 55% | 50 | 19% | 25 | - | - | 1,223 | 741 | 486 | 65.1% | 52.5% |
| Renting - Public1 | 100% | 57% | - | 203 | 168 | - | 100% | 50 | - | - | - | - | 1,104 | 709 | 496 | 55.7% | 42.9% |
| **Total Households** | **38%** | **31%** | **29%** | **203** | **168** | **135** | **38%** | **50** | **13%** | **67** | **9%** | **61** | **1,593** | **948** | **652** | **68.0%** | **45.4%** |

1.Very small sample size. The percentages showing for renters in the council rates tables are based to a tiny group of respondents who indicated they both rented and paid council rates. This may indicate misunderstanding of the question, or changed circumstances, and should be interpreted with care.

2. Whilst the person who pays the bills for the household may not hold a concession card, another person in the household may do so.

# KNOWLEDGE AND TAKE UP OF CONCESSIONS

NB. This section is based on respondent survey data.

## REPORTED Incidence of Claiming Concessions

Overall, the reported incidence of claiming concessions for utility bills has trended upwards since 1996 (see Table 7.1.1 overleaf). In 2014, one-third (36%) of households claimed concessions on gas bills (compared with 34% in 2007; 32% in 2001; 33% in 1996), 42% claimed concessions on electricity bills (compared with 38% in 2007; 35% in 2001; 38% in 1996) and 37% claimed concessions on water bills (compared with 34% in 2007; 31% in 2001; 30% in 1996).

More than a quarter (26%) of households claimed they receive concessions on their Council rate bills in 2014, which was similar to 2007 (28%), but higher than the 23% recorded in 2001. However, this result should be considered in the light that not all households pay Council rates. Furthermore, not all concession card holders (e.g. Health Care Card holders) are eligible for DHHS concessions on their Council rates, which would also explain the lower proportion of concession card holders claiming DHHS concessions on their Council rates.

As would be expected, concession households were far more likely than non-concession households to claim concessions on their bills.

In line with previous surveys, the incidence of claiming a concession typically declined with household size. The main exception was for council rates, where 31% of single person households claimed a concession, compared with 38% of households containing two people.

Public renters were far more likely than private renters or home owners/buyers to claim a concession on their gas, electricity or water bill. As would be expected, home owners/buyers (33%) were far more likely than private renters (1%) or public renters (2%) to claim a concession on their council rates

Please note that whilst other members of the household may hold concessions cards, these persons were not defined as being the person responsible for payment of the household bills. Therefore in some instances a non-concession household may in fact receive concessions on some bills because another member in their household may hold a concession card.

**Table 7.1.1: Reported Incidence of Claiming Concessions by Year**

| **Sub-groups** | **For Gas** | | | | **For Electricity** | | | | **For Water** | | | | **For Council Rates** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** | **1996** | **2014** | **2007** | **2001** |
| **By Region -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Melbourne | 36% | 33% | 27% | 30% | 40% | 35% | 30% | 35% | 37% | 31% | 26% | 28% | 26% | 25% | 19% |
| Country VIC1 | 33% | 37% | 46% | n/a | 47% | 43% | 49% | n/a | 39% | 38% | 45% | n/a | 30% | 34% | 34% |
| LPG Households | - | 33% | n/a | n/a | 46% | 58% | n/a | n/a | 24% | 55% | n/a | n/a | 29% | 47% | n/a |
| **By DHHS Area -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hume Moreland | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 48% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 49% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 34% | n/a | n/a |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 39% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 42% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 47% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 41% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 31% | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 24% | n/a | n/a |
| Southern Melbourne | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 42% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a |
| Bayside | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 39% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 34% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 25% | n/a | n/a |
| Western Melbourne | 26% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 31% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 19% | n/a | n/a |
| Brimbank Melton | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a |
| Mallee | 10% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 22% | n/a | n/a |
| Loddon | 32% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 47% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 34% | n/a | n/a |
| Ovens Murray | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 35% | n/a | n/a |
| Continued on next page |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Goulburn | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 42% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 26% | n/a | n/a |
| Outer Gippsland | 17% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 65% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 34% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 44% | n/a | n/a |
| Inner Gippsland | 28% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 45% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 33% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 29% | n/a | n/a |
| Western District | 56%\* | n/a | n/a | n/a | 58%\* | n/a | n/a | n/a | 51%\* | n/a | n/a | n/a | 36%\* | n/a | n/a |
| Barwon | 31% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 41% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 36% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 27% | n/a | n/a |
| Central Highlands | 40% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 47% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 43% | n/a | n/a | n/a | 24% | n/a | n/a |
| **By Concession Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged Concession HHs | 76% | 82% | 83% | 78% | 90% | 90% | 91% | 91% | 80% | 83% | 83% | 78% | 72% | 76% | 76% |
| Other Concession HHs | 71% | 73% | 77% | 73% | 83% | 83% | 82% | 82% | 76% | 71% | 69% | 57% | 38% | 36% | 39% |
| Total Concession HHs | 74% | 78% | 80% | 76% | 87% | 86% | 87% | 87% | 78% | 77% | 77% | 69% | 55% | 57% | 58% |
| Non-Concession HHs | 4% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 7% | 2% |
| **By Household Size -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 person | 48% | 44% | 50% | 46% | 57% | 49% | 50% | 61% | 49% | 40% | 47% | 43% | 31% | 35% | 38% |
| 2 persons | 43% | 40% | 36% | 38% | 51% | 44% | 36% | 42% | 45% | 41% | 36% | 35% | 38% | 34% | 29% |
| 3 persons | 30% | 24% | 26% | 30% | 37% | 28% | 26% | 32% | 32% | 25% | 24% | 27% | 23% | 23% | 18% |
| 4 or more persons | 19% | 24% | 20% | 22% | 20% | 26% | 20% | 22% | 19% | 24% | 19% | 19% | 11% | 16% | 9% |
| **By Housing Status -** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Owning/buying | 32% | 32% | 30% | 31% | 38% | 35% | 30% | 33% | 36% | 34% | 32% | 32% | 33% | 35% | 29% |
| Renting – Private | 38% | 32% | 30% | 32% | 49% | 38% | 30% | 39% | 34% | 27% | 21% | 20% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Renting – Public | 76% | 73% | 73% | 52% | 82% | 83% | 73% | 72% | 65% | 60% | 50% | 29% | 2% | 1% | - |
| **Total Households** | **36%** | **34%** | **32%** | **33%** | **42%** | **38%** | **35%** | **38%** | **37%** | **34%** | **31%** | **30%** | **27%** | **28%** | **23%** |

Base: Total respondents, 2014 (n=1,861); 2007 (n=2,061); 2001 (n=2,006); 1996 (n=2,000)

\* Small sample size

1. 2007 and 2001 totals for Country VIC are not directly comparable as they included just 4 regional cities and a small sample of LPG areas.

Keeping in mind the time differences, analysis has been undertaken of those reporting receiving concessions in the telephone survey by those that actually did receive a concession on their bill in 2014 (for gas, electricity and water bills) and 2013/14 (for council rate bills) as indicated by the supplier data received (see Table 7.1.2 overleaf).

Discrepancies between those claiming to have received a concession and those that actually did receive a concession were substantially less prevalent than in the 2007 survey. In 2014, 97% of those reporting receiving a concession on their water bill actually received this concession (compared with 82% in 2007). For council rates the proportion ‘correctly’ reporting receiving a concession was 94% (76% in 2007), for electricity 90% (78% in 2007) and gas 88% (58% in 2007).

The proportion of respondents ‘incorrectly reporting’ that a concession was not claimed reduced for electricity (9%, compared with 13% in 2007) and water (6%, compared with 20% in 2007), remained steady for gas (9% in both years) and increased in relation to council rates (8%, compared with 5% in 2007.

Respondents who in the telephone survey were unable to say whether or not they received a particular concession were generally shown by the supplier data to be actually receiving the concession (Electricity – 71%; Gas – 78%; Water – 66%; Council – 73%.).

It should also be noted that for energy and water bills, a household can be entitled to a DHHS concession on one or more of the bills they pay within a 12 month period and not be entitled to a DHHS concession on the rest of the bills they pay in the same period. In terms of billing data, a respondent receiving a DHHS concession on just one bill in a 12 month period would be classified as receiving a DHHS concession. Therefore, it is possible that discrepancies can occur when comparing respondent survey information with supplier provided billing information.

**Table 7.1.2: Comparison of Claimed DHHS Concession Receipt with Actual DHHS Concession Receipt**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bill-payers1** | **Electricity bill-payers** | | | | | **Gas bill-payers** | | | | |
| **2014** | | | **2007** | | **2014** | | | **2007** | |
| **n= 1,777** | | | **n=2,060** | | **n=1,529** | | | **n=1,735** | |
| **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Can't say/ Refused** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Can't say/ Refused** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** |
| Received concession | 90% | 9% | 71% | 78% | 13% | 88% | 9% | 78% | 58% | 9% |
| Did not receive concession | 10% | 91% | 29% | 22% | 87% | 12% | 91% | 22% | 42% | 91% |
| **Bill-payers1** | **Water bill-payers** | | | | | **Council rate bill-payers** | | | | |
| **2014** | | | **2007** | | **2014** | | | **2007** | |
| **n=1,681** | | | **n=1,897** | | **n=1,547** | | | **n=1,579** | |
| **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Can't say/ Refused** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** | **Can't say/ Refused** | **Claimed Received Concession** | **Claimed Did Not Receive Concession** |
| Received concession | 97% | 6% | 66% | 82% | 20% | 94% | 8% | 73% | 76% | 5% |
| Did not receive concession | 3% | 94% | 34% | 18% | 80% | 6% | 92% | 27% | 24% | 95% |

# DIFFICULTIES IN MEETING BILL PAYMENTS

## INCIDENCE AND FREQUENCY OF DIFFICULTIES MEETING BILL PAYMENTS

These two questions were modified slightly in 2007. Instead of asking about ever having difficulties in paying utility or council rate bills, a time period of “in the last 5 years” was specified in 2007 so as to determine the level and frequency of payment difficulties between survey periods. At the Department’s request, the 2014 version of the question reverted to the original format, dropping the reference to the last 5 years. The different format of the question in 2007 should be kept in mind when comparing results between surveys.

The proportion of households that had experienced trouble paying electricity, gas and/or water bills decreased in 2014 relative to 2007, and reflected a consistent downward trend since the initial survey. The proportion of households that had experienced trouble paying council rates bills rose marginally in 2014 (to 7% from 6% in 2007), but remained lower than the 9% recorded when the question was first asked in 2001. This is an interesting result, given that utility and council rate bills have been increasing over and above the inflation rate over time. The trend towards paying bills by electronic funds transfer, credit/debit card and direct debit may possibly be allowing households to more readily clear these sorts of bills.

### Electricity Payment Difficulties

In 2014, 11% of all households that received electricity bills (n=1,849) claimed they had experienced financial problems in paying their electricity bill. This continued the downward trend in incidence of payment difficulty since 1996 (12% in 2007, 14% in 2001, and 16% in 1996).

Respondents from Melbourne (10%) were less likely than those from country Victoria (13%) to report having experienced trouble paying their electricity bill, which is consistent with the results of previous surveys (2007: 12% and 13% respectively; 2001: 12% and 17% respectively; 1996: 16% and 20% respectively). The proportion reporting experiencing trouble paying electricity bills varied substantially by DHHS region. The areas most likely to report having experienced trouble were Brimbank Melton (22%) and Barwon (17%). In contrast, only 5% of respondents from Inner Eastern Melbourne region had experienced trouble paying their electricity bill.

Twenty five per cent of other concession households reported having experienced financial problems paying their electricity bill, a much higher proportion than either aged concession households (6%) or non-concession households (7%). This pattern was also observed in past surveys: for example, in 2007 30% of other concession households reported trouble paying the bill, compared with 5% of aged concession households and 10% of non-concession households.

In previous surveys, the incidence of having experienced financial problems in paying electricity bills tended to increase with household size (for example, in 2007: 10% for 1 person, 9% for 2 people, 14% for 3 people, and 18% for 4 or more people). This pattern was not particularly evident in 2014, with 12% of single person households reporting trouble paying their electricity bill, compared with 9% of two person, 13% of three person and 11% of four person households.

One-third (31%) of households in the public rental sector had experienced financial problems paying electricity bills (down slightly from 2007: 35%), with one- quarter (27%) of those renting privately also having done so (again, down slightly from 2007: 29%). Only 7% of owner/buyers had experienced financial trouble in paying their electricity bills (7% in 2007).

Of households that had ever had difficulty paying their electricity bills (n=175), 26% *always* had difficulty, 42% *sometimes* had difficulty and, 24% *hardly ever* had difficulty. The corresponding proportions in 2007 were 13%, 61%, and 25% respectively), indicating that while the proportion *sometimes* or *always* having difficulty paying is roughly similar to 2007, respondents in 2014 were twice as likely to *always* experience difficulty.

Households that *always* or *sometimes* had difficulty paying their electricity bills used (on average) 4,466 kWh per annum, compared with 4,440 kWh for households that *hardly ever* or *never* had difficulty paying.

### Gas Payment Difficulties

Nine per cent of households that paid gas bills (n=1,540) had experienced financial problems paying them, continuing the downward trend over the history of the survey (16% in 1996, 12% in 2001, 10% in 2007).

Respondents from Melbourne (8%) were less likely than those from country Victoria (12%) to report experiencing financial problems in paying their gas bill, which is consistent with results from previous surveys (2007: 10% and 11% respectively: 2001: 10% and 16% respectively; 1996: 15% and 18% respectively). The proportion reporting experiencing trouble paying gas bills varied substantially by DHHS region. The areas most likely to report experiencing trouble were Mallee[[15]](#footnote-15) and Brimbank Melton (both 19%) and Central Highlands (18%). In contrast, only 4% of respondents from Inner Eastern Melbourne region and 5% from Southern Melbourne had experienced problems paying their gas bill.

As with electricity, and consistent with previous surveys, other concession households (20%) were substantially more likely than non-concession or aged concession households (both 5%) to report experiencing trouble paying their gas bill. In 2007, the proportions for other concession and aged concession respondents were 27% and 3% respectively.

Like previous surveys, the incidence of having experienced financial problems in paying gas bills tended to increase with household size (9% for 1 person, 7% for 2 people, 10% for 3 people, and 10% for 4 or more people). The corresponding proportions in 2007 were 9%, 7%, 13% and 15% respectively.

One-quarter (25%) of households in the public rental sector had experienced problems paying gas bills (down from 36% in 2007, and compared with 22% in 2001 and 38% in 1996). Nineteen per cent of those renting privately had experienced problems (down from 26% in 2007). As in 2007, only 6% of owner/buyers had experienced financial trouble in paying their gas bills.

Of households that had ever had difficulty paying their gas bills (n=114), 18% *always* had difficulty paying, 40% *sometimes* had difficulty and 34% *hardly ever* had difficulty. The corresponding proportions in 2007 were 15%, 54% and 30% respectively, and in 2001 the proportions were 15%, 50% and 35% respectively.

Households that *always* or *sometimes* had difficulty paying their gas bills used (on average) 54,692 MJ per annum, compared with 46,503 MJ for households that *hardly ever* or *never* had difficulty paying.

### Water Payment Difficulties

In 2014, 7% of all households who received water bills (n=1,683) reported that they had experienced trouble paying them. This is down from 9% in 2007, and continues the downward trend over the history of the survey (11% in 2001 and 13% in 1996).

Respondents from Melbourne (6%) were less likely than those from country Victoria (10%) to report having experienced trouble paying their water bills. These results are similar to those of 2007 (8% and 10%) and similar to prior surveys. The DHHS regions with the highest proportion of respondents experiencing trouble paying water bills were Brimbank Melton (17%) and Inner Gippsland (16%). In contrast, only 2% of respondents from Inner Eastern Melbourne or Outer Gippsland had experienced such problems.

As with electricity and gas, and consistent with previous surveys, other concession households (15%) were substantially more likely than non-concession (5%) or aged concession households (4%) to report having experienced problems paying their water bill. In 2007, the proportions for other concession and aged concession respondents were 22% and 3% respectively (2001: 23% and 5% respectively; 1996: 30% and 5% respectively). Overall, the trend since 1996 has been a decline in the proportion of non-concession households experiencing trouble paying their water bill, and particularly so since the previous survey in 2007.

In 2007, households with four or more people had been more likely than smaller households to report having experienced trouble paying their water bills (15% 4+ person households, 8% 3 person households, 6% 2 person households and 5% one person households). Similar trends were apparent in both 2001 (15% 4+ person households, 11% 3 person households, 8% 2 person households and 6% one person households) and 1996 (18% 4+ person households, 17% 3 person households, 8% 2 person and single person households). This pattern was less evident in 2014, with 6% of single person households reporting having experienced trouble paying their water bill, compared with 5% of two person, 10% of three person and 8% of four person households.

In 2014, 16% of respondents in the public rental sector reported having experienced problems paying their water bills, down substantially from 35% in 2007. In contrast to the situation with electricity and gas, this proportion was not substantially more than reported by those in the private rental sector (14%, down from 19% in 2007). The proportion of owner/buyers who had experienced problems paying their water bill was 5%, compared with 6% in 2007.

Of households that had ever had difficulty paying their water bills (n=101), 21% *always* had difficulty paying, 31% *sometimes* had difficulty and 38% *hardly ever* had difficulty. The corresponding proportions in 2007 were 58%, 29% and 12% respectively, while in 2001 they were 49%, 36% and 15% respectively. This suggests that while the proportion experiencing occasional difficulties may be declining, the proportion experiencing regular difficulties is remaining relatively stable.

Households that *always* or *sometimes* had difficulty paying their water bills used (on average) 194kL per annum, compared with 161kL for households that *hardly ever* or *never* had difficulty paying.

### Council Rates Payment Difficulties

In 2014, 7% of households who paid council rates (n=1,547) said they had experienced trouble paying these bills (compared with 6% in 2007 and 9% in 2001, with the question not asked in 1996).

Melbourne respondents (5%) were only half as likely as those in country Victoria (11%) to have had trouble paying council bills. This contrasts with the situation in 2007, where there was no notable difference between these subgroups (Melbourne 6%; country Victoria 7%); however the limited geographic scope of the country Victoria sample in 2007 and other previous surveys may need to be taken into account. Respondents from the DHHS region of Inner Gippsland (22%) were substantially more likely than those from any other region to have had trouble paying these bills, while only 1% of respondents from Inner Eastern Melbourne and 2% of respondents from Loddon had experienced such difficulty.

Consistent with the situation with the various utilities in 2014, other concession households (16%) were much more likely than aged concession or non-concession households (both 5%) to have had trouble paying council rates bills. In 2007, the proportion of other concession households that had experienced trouble was 13%, compared with 3% of aged concession households (20% and 4% respectively in 2001).

Consistent with previous surveys, the propensity of households to have experienced trouble paying the council rates bill tended to rise with household size. In 2014, 8% of four person households and 8% of three person households had experienced trouble paying these bills, compared with 6% of two person households and 4% of single person households. The corresponding proportions in 2007 were 11%, 5%, 5% and 3% respectively. (As 99% of council rate payers were home owners or buyers, investigation by home ownership status was not conducted.)

Of households that had difficulty paying their council rates (n=89), 24% *always* had difficulty, 31% had difficulty *sometimes* and31% *hardly ever* had difficulty. In 2007 the proportions were 17% who *always* had difficulty, 58% who had difficulty *sometimes* and 25% who *hardly ever* had difficulty. In 2001, the proportions were 16%, 47% and 37% respectively.

An analysis was conducted comparing the property value of households that had always or sometimes had difficulty paying their rates bill (‘Had Difficulty’) with those who hardly ever or never had this difficulty (‘Didn’t Have Difficulty’). This analysis (see table 8.1.4) indicated that those who had difficulty paying their rates bill tended to live in houses with lower valuations than those who did not have difficulty paying their rates.

**Table 8.1.4: Reported Difficulty in Paying Rates Bills by Property Valuation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Had Difficulty Paying Rates** | **Didn't Have Difficulty Paying Rates** |
| **Average property valuation (CIV method)** | $365,714  (n=49) | $492,030  (n=1,316) |
| **Average property valuation (NAV method)** | $16,976  (n=3) | $29,799  (n=86) |

## ASSISTANCE WITH MEETING PAYMENTS

There was no clear trend when comparing propensity to ask for and receive assistance from suppliers in 2014 with 2007. While movements since 2007 were fairly small, respondents were more likely to seek assistance from electricity suppliers or councils, and less likely to do so with gas or water suppliers. In terms of receiving assistance once asked, respondents were more likely than in 2007 to receive assistance from gas suppliers and councils, and less likely to receive assistance from electricity and water suppliers. Due to small sample sizes, analysis by sub-groups was not possible.

The following sections cover questions to do with how suppliers responded to difficulties households had paying their bills. The numbers of respondents involved are relatively small and trends are not always apparent. Therefore the results from past surveys are simply presented in text format.

*Electricity*

One-half (52%) of households that had difficulty paying their electricity bills (n=163) had discussed the problem with their supplier in the last 12 months (48% in 2007). Three-quarters (73%) of the households that asked for assistance from the supplier (n=81) received help (78% in 2007). The form of assistance received by these households (n=58) included being allowed to pay the bill off in instalments (60%, compared with 58% in 2007), extension of the due date (28%, down substantially from 54% in 2007) and/or being provided information about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (13%, compared with 4% in 2007). Respondents could provide multiple responses for this question.

In 2001, 38% of households who had difficulty with their electricity bills discussed the problem with their supplier. The proportion of assistance provided (72%), and the forms of assistance were similar to 2007. In 1996, two thirds (64%) of households that regularly had difficulty paying their electricity bills had discussed the problem with the supplier in the last 12 months. In 1996, most (84%) of the households that had discussed the problems said that the supplier had offered assistance. Of those households in 1996 that had been offered assistance, half (49%) were allowed to pay the bill off in instalments, 41% were offered an extension on the due date, 4% were given information on the Utility Relief Grants Scheme and the remainder (6%) were given other (unspecified) forms of assistance.

*Gas*

One-third (34%) of households that had had difficulty meeting payments for gas bills in 2014 (n=104) had discussed the problem with their gas supplier in the last 12 months (down from 44% in 2007). Of these (n=36), 78% had received assistance from their supplier (similar to the 75% recorded in 2007). The form of assistance received by these respondents (n=28) included: allowed to pay off the bill in instalments (68%, compared with 56% in 2007[[16]](#footnote-16)), an extension of the due date on the relevant bill/s (22%, compared with 64% in 2007) and provision of information about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (6%, compared with 8% in 2007). Multiple responses were permitted for this question.

In comparison, in 2001 a little over a third (34%) of households that had ever had difficulty meeting payments for gas bills had discussed the problem with the gas supplier in the last 12 months, and 70% of those households received assistance. The form of assistance received was extension of the due date of the bill (50%), allowed to pay off the bill in instalments (45%), information given about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (7%) or other unspecified assistance (2%). In 1996, 58% of households that regularly had difficulties paying their gas bills had spoken to the supplier about them in the last 12 months. Most (89%) of the households from 1996 that had discussed their problems were offered assistance. Of the households offered assistance, half (51%) were allowed to pay the bill off in instalments, 43% were offered an extension on the due date and the remainder were given other (unspecified) forms of assistance (6%).

*Water*

In 2014, 29% of households that had difficulty paying their water bills (n=90) had discussed the problem with their water supplier (down from 36% in 2007). Of those that discussed the problem with the supplier (n=30), 76% received some sort of assistance from the water supplier which, after allowing for the small sample size involved, is consistent with the 80% recorded in 2007. Of those who received assistance (n=22), this assistance took the form of: allowed to pay off the bill in instalments (75%, compared with 54% in 2007); extension of the due date of the bill (28%, compared with 62% in 2007) and information about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (1%, compared with 8% in 2007). Multiple responses were permitted for this question.

In 2001, 29% of households that had difficulty paying had discussed the problem with the supplier, and 61% of those that asked for assistance received assistance from the water supplier. In 54% of cases, the assistance was in the form of payment of the bill in instalments. Other assistance offered to those households was an extension of the due date for the bill (31%), information on the Utility Relief Grant Scheme (18%) and other unspecified assistance (2%). In 1996, 43% of households that regularly had difficulties paying their water bills had discussed the problem with the supplier. In 1996 most (81%) of the households that had discussed the problem received assistance from the supplier and of those, 53% were given an extension on the due date of the bill and 43% were allowed to pay the bill off in instalments.

*Council Rates*

One-third (36%) of households that had difficulty in paying their council rates bills (n=79) had discussed their problem with their relevant Council (compared with 33% in 2007). Of those households who had discussed the problem with their council (n=29) two-thirds (69%) received assistance (compared with 66% in 2007). Of those who received assistance (n=21), the type of assistance received was: allowing the payment of the bill in instalments (80%, compared with 45% in 2007) or an extension of the due date on the bill (35%, compared with 43% in 2007).

In 2001, 30% of households that had difficulty paying had discussed the difficulties with the relevant Council. Half (50%) of households that had discussed their problems with local Council received assistance. The assistance received by households that were offered assistance were one or more of the following: payment of the bill in instalments (59%), extension of the due date (27%), referral to a financial counsellor (11%) and other unspecified forms of assistance (10%). This question was not asked in 1996.

## DISCONNECTION AND RECONNECTION

Though sample sizes are very small, respondents were less likely than in 2007 to report that services had been disconnected/restricted in the last 12 months due to payment problems and, if so, to have had problems getting the service restored. Analysis by sub-group is not presented in this section due to small sample sizes.

*Electricity*

In 2014, only one respondent that had difficulty paying their electricity bills actually had their electricity disconnected in the last 12 months (representing 0.4% of households that had ever had difficulty paying the bill and 0.05% of households that received an electricity bill). This respondent was unable to say how many times this had occurred or if there had been trouble restoring the service.

In 2007, 2% of households that had difficulty paying their electricity bills actually had their electricity disconnected in the last 12 months, which represented 0.2% of households with electricity bills (5 respondents). Of those, 4 households had the electricity disconnected once in the last 12 months and one household had been disconnected three times. One respondent had difficulties getting the electricity reconnected and that was due to not being able to afford the reconnection fee.

In 2001, 2% of households that had ever had difficulty paying their electricity bills actually had their electricity disconnected in the last 12 months (0.2% of households with electricity bills – 5 respondents). Of those, 4 households had the electricity disconnected once in the last 12 months and one household had been disconnected four or more times. One household had problems getting electricity reconnected for a reason other than being able to afford the reconnection fee. In 1996, a similar proportion of households that had ever had difficulty paying their electricity bills had actually had the electricity disconnected in the last 12 months (3% - 0.5% of all households that receive electricity bills). Of those 12 respondents, 6 had had the electricity disconnected more than once and half of those (3 respondents) had had problems in getting it reconnected. One of those respondents could not afford the reconnection fee and the remaining two respondents gave other reasons for having had problems with reconnection.

*Gas*

In 2014, only one household that had difficulty paying their gas bills actually had their gas disconnected in the last 12 months (representing 1.2% of households that had ever had difficulty paying the bill and 0.06% of households that received a gas bill). This had occurred on one occasion and there had not been any problems getting the service restored.

In 2007, 4% of households who had difficulty paying their gas bill had their gas disconnected in the last 12 months (0.4% of households with gas bills – 5 respondents). Of those five respondents, four had the gas disconnected once and one had it disconnected three times. Three of the five respondents had difficulties getting the gas reconnected – all of whom could not afford the reconnection fee.

In 2001, 5% of households who had difficulty paying their gas bill had their gas disconnected in the last 12 months (0.5% of households with gas bills – 10 respondents). Of those 10 households, 9 only had their gas disconnected once. The remaining household had it disconnected four or more times. Three of the 10 households that had gas disconnected had problems getting it reconnected. One of these households had problems because they could not afford the reconnection fee and the remaining two households gave other reasons for the problems. In 1996, 3% of households had had their gas disconnected in the last 12 months (0.5% of households that received a gas bill), and all of those households had had the gas disconnected more than once in that time (9 households). Less than half (4 households) of households that had their gas disconnected had had problems getting it reconnected. For all of them the reason was that they could not afford the reconnection fee.

*Water*

In 2014 there were no instances of households that had difficulty paying their water bills actually having their water service restricted during the last 12 months.

One per cent of households that had ever had problems with water bills had their water restricted in 2007 (two respondents, 0.1% of households with water bills). One household had their water restricted two times, and the other had it restricted four or more times. Neither respondent who had their water restricted experienced difficulties having the restrictions lifted. In 2001, 2% of households that had ever had problems with water bills had their water restricted (0.3% of households with water bills – 5 respondents). Four households had water restricted once in this time and one household had had it restricted four or more times. One respondent had had problems getting the water restored for a reason other than being able to afford the reconnection fee. In 1996, only one respondent had had the water restricted and it had not happened more than once to that household (0.1% of all households that receive water bills).

*Council Rates*

As in 2007, there were no instances in 2014 of households that had difficulty paying their council rates having legal action taken against them by the council during the last 12 months.

In 2001, 2% of households who had difficulty paying their Council rates had had legal action taken against them (0.2% of households with Council rates – 3 respondents). These three households had legal action taken against them by the Council only once in the last 12 months. This question was not asked in 1996.

## THE UTILITY RELIEF GRANTS SCHEME (URGS)

### Awareness of the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS)

In 2014, almost one quarter (23%) of households were aware of the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS), a state Government scheme *“to assist customers in an emergency situation with payment of electricity, gas or water bills”* (as detailed in the survey question). This was an increase from the results of previous surveys (17% in 2007, 16% in 2001 and 19% in 1996).

Consistent with previous surveys, awareness of the URGS in 2014 was virtually the same amongst both Melbourne and country Victorian households 23% and 22% respectively. The corresponding figures in 2007 were 16% and 19% respectively (2001: 15% and 18% respectively, 1996: 19% and 20% respectively). In 2014, the DHHS regions with the highest level of awareness of the scheme were Outer Gippsland (31%), Central Highlands and Brimbank Melton (both 30%). The regions with the lowest level of awareness were Western District[[17]](#footnote-17) (7%) and Ovens Murray (12%).

Concession households had greater awareness of the URGS than non-concession households (30% compared with 17%). This was consistent with the results of previous surveys (2007: 22% compared with 13%; 2001: 20% compared with 13%; 1996: 24% compared with 15%). Other concession households were slightly more likely than aged concession households to be aware of the URGS (31% compared with 28%), which was also consistent with the results of previous surveys (2007: 27% compared with 17%; 2001: 21% compared with 19%; 1996: 23% compared with 21% in 1996).

A higher proportion of households in the public rental sector were aware of the URGS (51%) than private renters (23%) or home owners/buyers (20%). Again, this was consistent with the results of previous surveys. In 2007, 40% of public renters were aware of the URGS, compared with 17% of private renters and 15% of owner/buyers. In 2001, the corresponding proportions were 29%, 16% and 17% respectively, and in 1996 it was 26%, 16% and 21% respectively.

### Advice about the Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS)

Those aware of URGS (n=446) were asked if they had received advice about URGS from anywhere or anyone. (All percentages quoted in this section are expressed as a proportion of those aware of URGS.) Nineteen per cent of those aware of URGS had received advice about the scheme. Those in concession households (24%) were almost twice as likely as those in non-concession households (13%) to have received such advice. Other concession households (34%) were substantially more likely than aged concession households (14%) to have received advice about the scheme.

Households in country Victoria (24%) were more likely than those in Melbourne (18%) to have received advice about URGS. Public renters (47%) were more likely than private renters (47%) or home owners/buyers (12%) to have received advice about the scheme.

The question about having received advice about URGS was not asked in this format in previous surveys, so no comparisons have been made.

### Assistance through Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS)

Those aware of URGS (n=446) were asked if they had ever received assistance through the scheme in relation to help pay their electricity, gas or water bills. (Again, all percentages quoted in this section are expressed as a proportion of those aware of URGS[[18]](#footnote-18).) Sixteen per cent of households that were aware of the URGS scheme had received assistance through the URGS, a similar proportion to 2007 (18%) (2001:11%; 1996: 7%). In 2014, 16% of households in Melbourne had been assisted through the scheme, compared with 17% of households located in country Victoria.

A considerably higher proportion of concession households aware of the scheme had ever received assistance through the scheme, compared with non-concession households[[19]](#footnote-19) (22% compared with 18%), which was broadly consistent with the result in 2007 (27% compared with 8%). One third (35%) of other concession households aware of the scheme had ever received assistance through the URGS, compared with 8% of aged concession households aware of URGS. The corresponding figures in 2007 were 41% and 9% respectively, compared with 13% and 5% in 2001 and 13% and 2% in 1996.

In 2014, one-half of public sector renters who were aware of URGS reported ever receiving assistance through the scheme (53%), as did 27% of private renters and 8% of home owner/buyers. These proportions were similar to those of 2007 (49%, 36% and 9% respectively).

# GLOSSARY

**Aged Pensioner Concession Card –** DHS/Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card (aged pensioner) or DVA Pensioner Concession Card (aged pensioner)

**Compulsory Instalment** – Formal repayment arrangement with supplier, designed to clear arrears. Does not include instalment option provided to customers for repayment of current charges over an extended period.

**Controlled load electricity charge/consumption** – Controlled load charges apply to separately metered electric hot water or slab heating which is measured via a dual element electricity meter or dual element smart meter. These tariffs are usually shown as ‘controlled load’ or ‘dedicated circuit’ tariffs.

**DVA Gold Card** – DVA Gold Health Card (for all conditions) or DVA Gold Health Card (for total and permanent incapacitation)

**Health Care Card** – DHS/Centrelink Health Care Card

**Non-Aged Pensioner Concession Card** - DHS/Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card (non-aged pensioner) or DVA Pensioner Concession Card (non-aged pensioner)

**Off-Peak electricity charge/consumption** – Off-peak refers to lower, discounted electricity prices during specific times.  Off-peak times are generally when residential homes and businesses use less electricity.  Off-peak times vary depending on location and meter type, but typically are at night and/or weekends.

**Parks charge** – Charge applied annually by some (but not all), water suppliers on behalf of the Department of Environment Land, Water & Planning, Funds raised go to Parks Victoria, Zoos Victoria, the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Shrine of Remembrance for the development, management and maintenance of metropolitan parks, gardens, trails, waterways, and zoos.

**Peak electricity charge/consumption** – The price of electricity is higher during the 'peak' times, typically on weekday afternoons and evenings, when the demand for electricity is the highest.

**Shoulder electricity charge/consumption** – The price of electricity during shoulder periods is lower than the peak rate and higher than the off-peak rate.

**Total electricity charge/consumption** – Sum of (as applicable) general, off-peak, peak, shoulder and controlled load charge/consumption.

1. Some suppliers did not provide information on payment in full and/or compulsory instalments. The figures quoted here and in similar sections of this report are based to the number of records for which this data was provided by suppliers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For more details and explanation regarding LPG definition, please see Section 1.4 on page 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Includes respondents who stated that the ceiling of their home was completely insulated or partly insulated, or who stated that the ceiling was insulated but were unable to say whether it was completely or partly insulated. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. NB there may be inconsistencies between the figures reported at Tables 3.4.2 (Employment Status) and 3.4.3 (Income Sources). The employment status question asked respondents to nominate a single category that best described their status, while the income sources question asked about income received from any source. A respondent could (for example) have selected ‘Home Duties’ as the best description of their employment status, yet still earned some income from employment and disclosed this at the income sources question. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Some suppliers did not provide information on payment in full and/or compulsory instalments. The figures quoted here and in similar sections of this report are based to the number of records for which this data was provided by suppliers. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Refers to the actual bill paid by households, including any concessions or discounts applied. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The aggregation of the Annual Electricity Concession, Controlled Load Concession, Medical Cooling Concession, Life Support Concession, Service to Property Concession, Excess Energy Concession and Electricity Transfer Fee Waiver. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. So that survey results from respondents could be compared with billing and consumption data obtained for each respondent household provided by energy suppliers, ‘summer’ was  
    classified as being December to April while ‘winter’ was classified as being May to November. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Refers to the actual bill paid by households, including any concessions or discounts applied. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Data for DHS concessions in 2001 was compromised by, among other reasons, data received from Origin Energy indicating that nearly all of their customers received this concession – which could not have been the case. For this reason, in this report we do not attempt comparisons with data prior to 2007. A more extensive description of these issues is contained in the 2007 study report. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Refers to the actual bill paid by households, including any concessions or discounts applied. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. As respondent survey data was collected in mid-2015 and billing data was collected for the 2014 calendar year, there is a likelihood that respondent and billing data will occasionally show some anomalies in terms of analysis. For example, a household in 2015 may have been renting, but not in 2014 (although such an occurrence should be rare). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Note that for this survey, a household is classified as receiving a DHHS concession if it receives a concession amount on just one of the bills it received in a 12-month period. As such an over-estimation in the proportion receiving a concession, in comparison with supplier billing data, is possible. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Refers to the actual bill paid by households, including any concessions or discounts applied. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Small sample size. Result should be interpreted with care. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The small sample size involved (n=28) means that comparisons with previous years should be interpreted with caution. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Small sample size [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. If the proportion that ever received assistance through URGS is expressed as a percentage of *total* households, it shows a gradual increase from 1.3% (1996) to 3.7% (2014). A gradual increase is apparent for aged concession households and non-concession households, while for other concession households, the proportion that have ever received assistance increased substantially between 2001 and 2007 – to 11% - and has remained at approximately that level in 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Non-concession households can claim URGS because another household member holds a concession card. Households that do not hold a concession card can access URGS if they are registered with their utility company’s hardship program and are part of a low-income household. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)