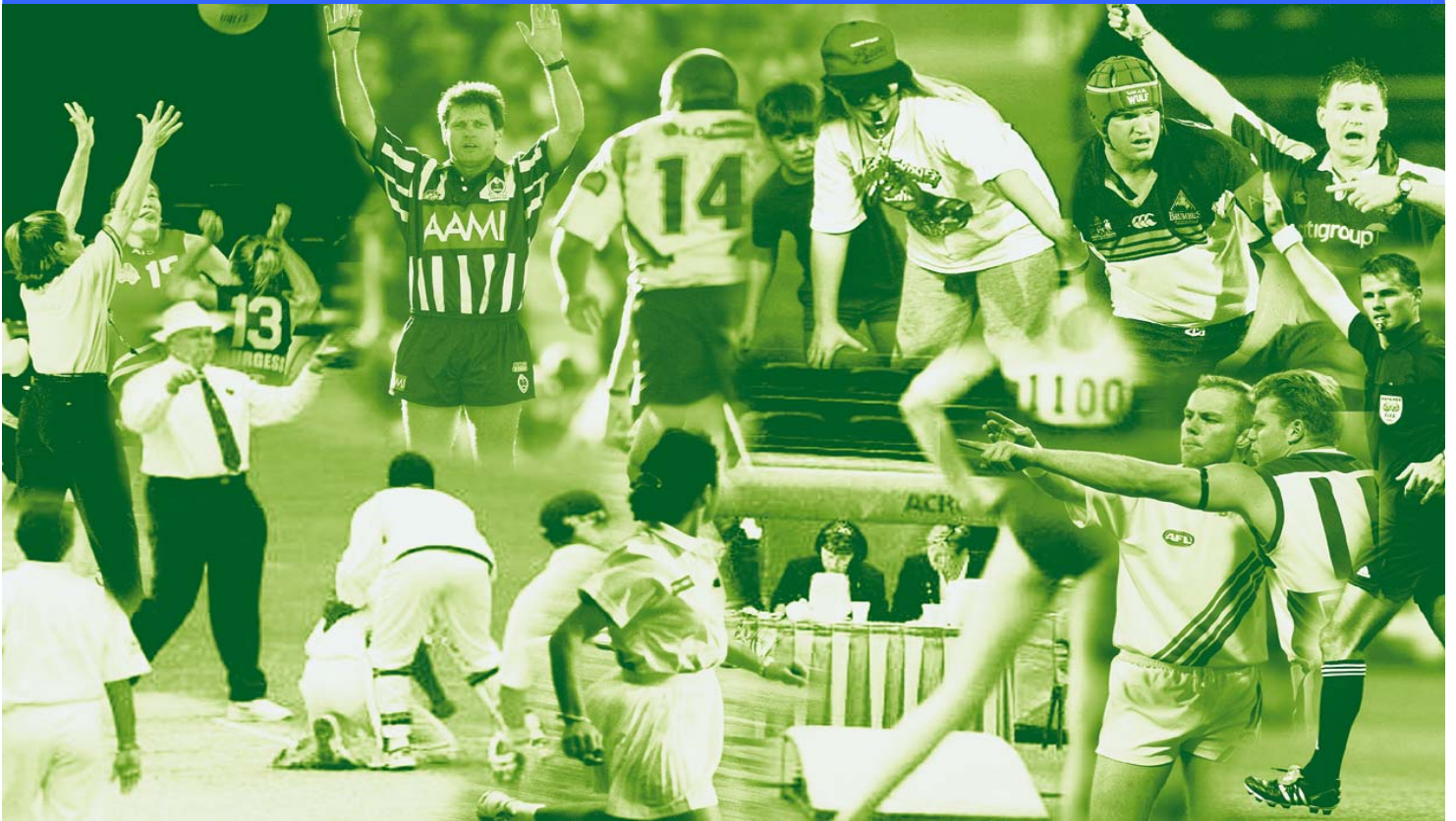




Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission



Evaluation Report of a National Survey on the Impact of the Year of the Official (June 2004)



.....
Time to Respect the Official, Sport
.....

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Evidence of a decline in the number of sports officials (in particular referees and umpires) has been revealed in surveys from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other sources. Criticism and abuse of officials has been identified as a significant cause of this trend.

A public education campaign was initiated and funded by the Australian Sports Commission during 2003 and included posters, radio and television commercials broadcast during late 2003 and early 2004 as community service announcements. The campaign was based around the line “Time to Respect the Official, Sport”.

The aim was to encourage recognition of the positive contribution made by officials and to discourage abuse by spectators, players and, to a lesser extent, officials themselves, at community or club events. The target audience for the campaign was people involved in organised local, community and/or club sporting events and competitions as well as the wider community.

Main Findings

The “Year of the Official” campaign has communicated the intended message to approximately 3 million (20% of people aged 18 or over). More than 3 million people recall hearing or seeing the campaign, and 2.9 million recall the campaign message “Time to Respect the Official, Sport”.

The campaign appears to have been well targeted. Of the 7.5 million who participated in non-professional sport in the past year, 2 million of these (27%) recalled the campaign. Among non participants 1 million (14%) recalled it. Two thirds of those who recalled the campaign were involved in, or have attended non- professional, club or community sporting events in the past year. The campaign was recalled by men and women of all ages in all States.

This is a strong result for a campaign with limited expenditure and suggests good creative ideas manifested in a message that is strongly supported by a clear majority of Australians. It is well presented and produced with arresting pictures and graphics, communicated in ways that have been seen or heard by a wide audience. Television, relying solely on community service announcements, was recalled as the medium by 2.4 million (77% of people who remembered the campaign). This was supported by other media including newspapers, radio, sporting clubs, family and friends.

More work is required to reach people who abuse officials. Results indicate a significantly lower awareness of the campaign by people who abused officials in the past 12 months than among people who have been abused, other participants in non-professional sport, and other adults not involved in community sport.

The problem of abuse is widespread and frequent, rather than isolated. An estimated 3.5 million Australians (46% of people attending, playing in or officiating at non professional sport) have seen or heard abuse, insults or violence towards officials in the previous 12 months. Most witnesses (40%) have seen or heard abuse at least twice in the past 12 months.

Abusive behaviour occurs equally at junior and senior club levels; 2.2 million (30%) reported seeing or hearing abuse at senior sport, while 1.8 million (25%) reported seeing or hearing incidents at junior sport.

An estimated 6 million people (81% of people attending or participating in non-professional sport) believe that abusing officials is never acceptable. There are 1.2 million (16% of those attending non professional sport) who feel abuse is acceptable on some occasions and 2%, representing 170,000 Australians, believe abuse of officials is acceptable on most or all occasions.

An estimated 5.8 million (77%) adults are concerned about abuse of officials at these events.

INTRODUCTION

Background

This report summarises results of a survey conducted during May 2004 to evaluate a public education campaign to discourage the abuse of officials in community and club sport. Evidence of a decline in the number of sports officials (in particular referees and umpires) has been revealed in surveys from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other sources¹. Criticism and abuse of officials has been identified as a significant cause of this trend²

A public education campaign was initiated and funded by the Australian Sports Commission during 2003 and included posters, and radio and television commercials broadcast during late 2003 and early 2004 as community service announcements.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage recognition of the positive contribution of officials and discourage the abuse of sports officials by spectators, players and others at community or club events. The target audience for the campaign was people involved in organised local, community and/or club sporting events and competitions as well as the wider community.

The message of this campaign centred on the tag line:

“Time to Respect the Official, Sport”

It was presented in a poster/print advertisement, radio and television commercials. 4000 sets of posters were distributed to organisations representing more than 80 sports and to other sporting, educational and local government networks. Radio and television relied on community service announcements for exposure and received coverage on most if not all metropolitan and all regional stations during the last quarter of 2003 and the first quarter of 2004.

Objectives

The survey was designed primarily to evaluate the campaign. This was achieved by questions that sought to establish how many people had seen or heard it and could recall details such as the message and where it had been seen or heard. A secondary aim was to assess attitudes and the perceived incidence of abusive behaviour to officials. The more specific questions included:

- Awareness of the campaign and how they were informed;
- Knowledge of the message “Time to Respect the Official, Sport”;
- Knowledge and experience of abuse of officials;
- Attitudes to and concern regarding abuse of officials;
- Perception of trends in abuse;
- Involvement in community, club or local sport.

¹ Involvement in Organised Sport and Physical Activity. Australian Bureau of Statistics April 2001 Ref: 6285.0

² Harassment of Officials Survey 2002. Australian Sports Commission.

Methods

The questionnaire (see Appendix) was designed by Newspoll, in collaboration with ASC officers. The survey was conducted by telephone with 1250 Australians aged 18 and over between May 7 and 11, 2004. The sample was randomly selected from households with fixed telephones from those available in each area code within Australia. Respondents were randomly selected within each household by a “last birthday” screening question.

Results were post weighted to Australian Bureau of Statistics data on age, highest level of schooling completed and sex within each State and Territory and extrapolated to estimate the attitudes and behaviour of 15.3million Australians aged 18 years and over. Care should be taken when extrapolating results derived from small samples. For example, results from the Northern Territory, based on 17 respondents participating in club or community sport in the previous 12 months and ACT (29 respondents) are not reliable and have not been used in comparisons.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Results are presented in five sections as follows:

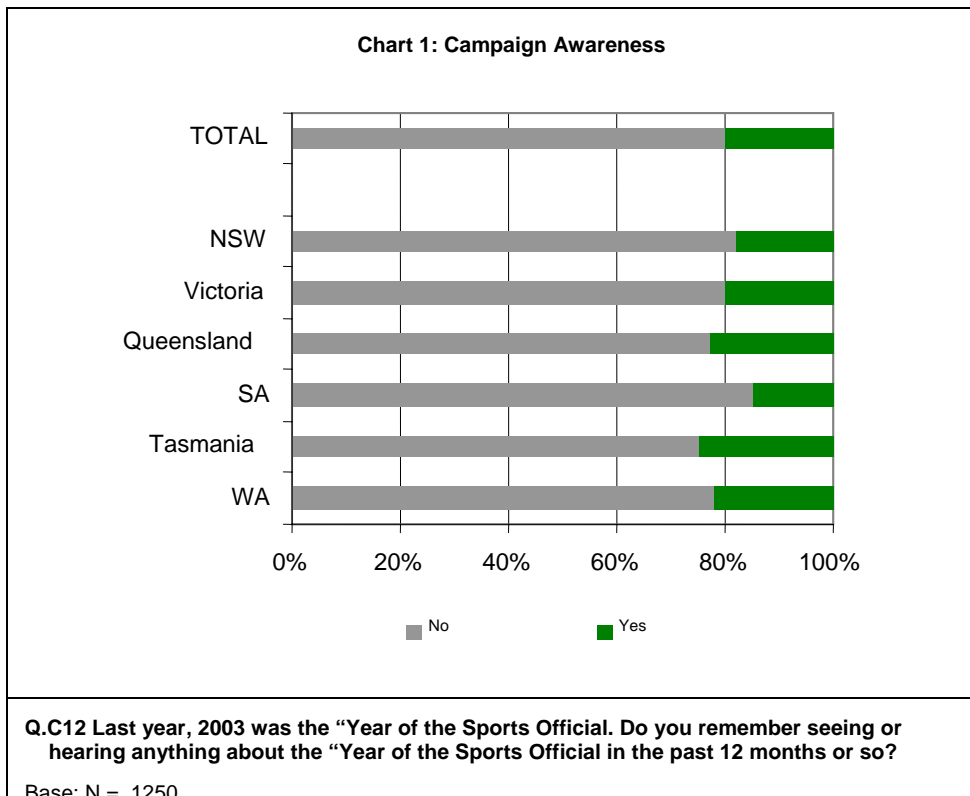
- **Results of promotion**, in terms of campaign awareness, tag line, and media;
- **Perceptions**, in terms of the perceived trend of abuse of officials, acceptability and concern;
- **Observations of abusive behaviour**, in terms of the frequency, age and sports affected;
- **Experience**, including personal involvement as the abused and/or abuser and;
- **Participation** in sport and physical activity.

Results of Promotion

1. Campaign Recall

An estimated 3.1 million Australians aged 18 years and over (20%) recalled the promotion. This is a very good result considering the limited resources for broadcast media. Campaign awareness was:

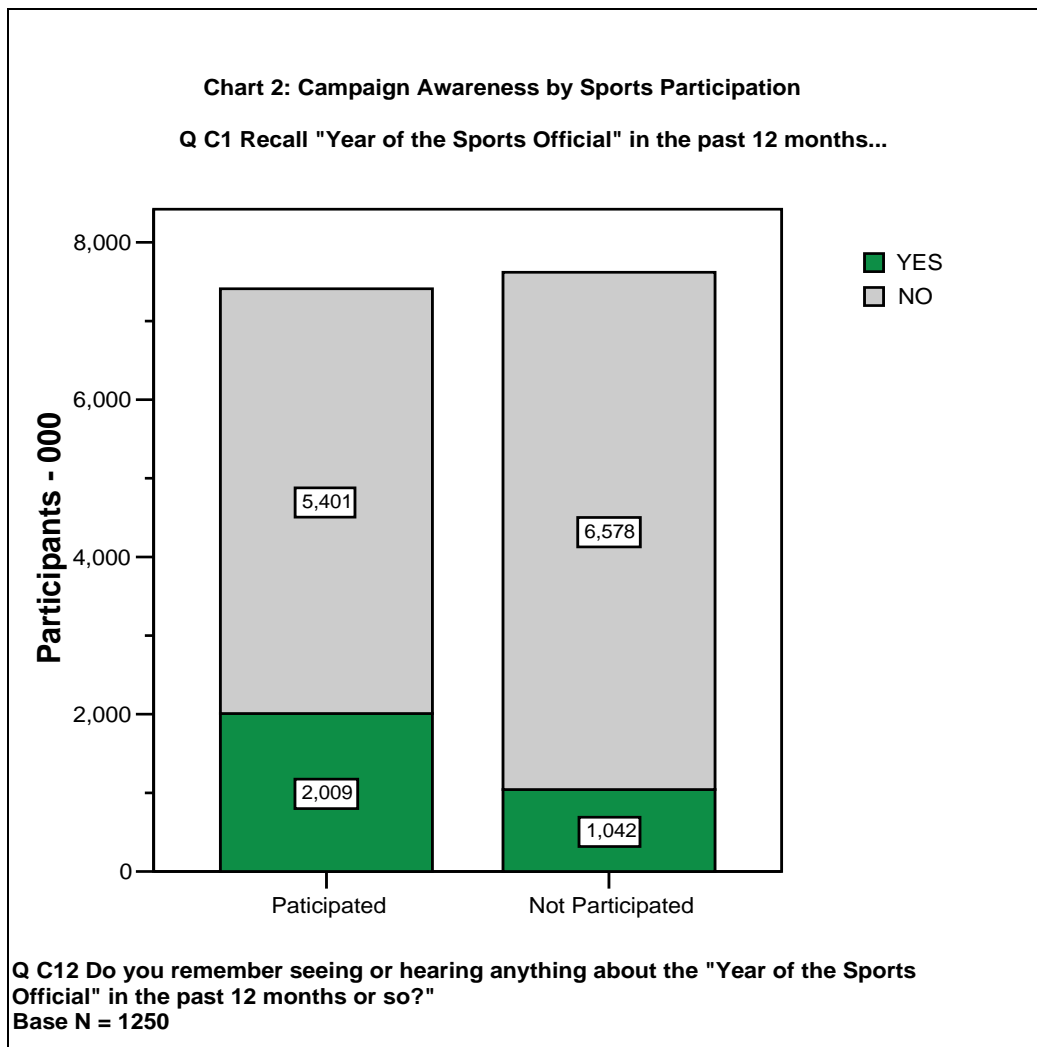
- higher among men (25%) than women (15%);
- higher among younger than older participants;
- highest in Tasmania (24%);
- lowest in South Australia (15%) and NSW (18%);
- higher among white collar workers (22%) than blue (18%).



2. Recall by Participation

The campaign was designed to inform and influence primarily those involved in sport at the club and community level. Targeting was successful in that a greater proportion of people who were involved in community sport could remember the campaign than others.

Of 7.5 million Australians aged 18 and over who participated in community sport in the past 12 months, approximately 2.0 million (27%) recalled the campaign. Of 7.7 million who were not involved in community sport, 1.0 million (14%) remembered the campaign.



3. Media Recall

Three quarters of those who recalled the campaign saw it on television, confirming the continuing power of this medium to communicate messages of importance.

The commercial was widely and frequently broadcast as a community service announcement, consequently many exposures were at times to small audiences.

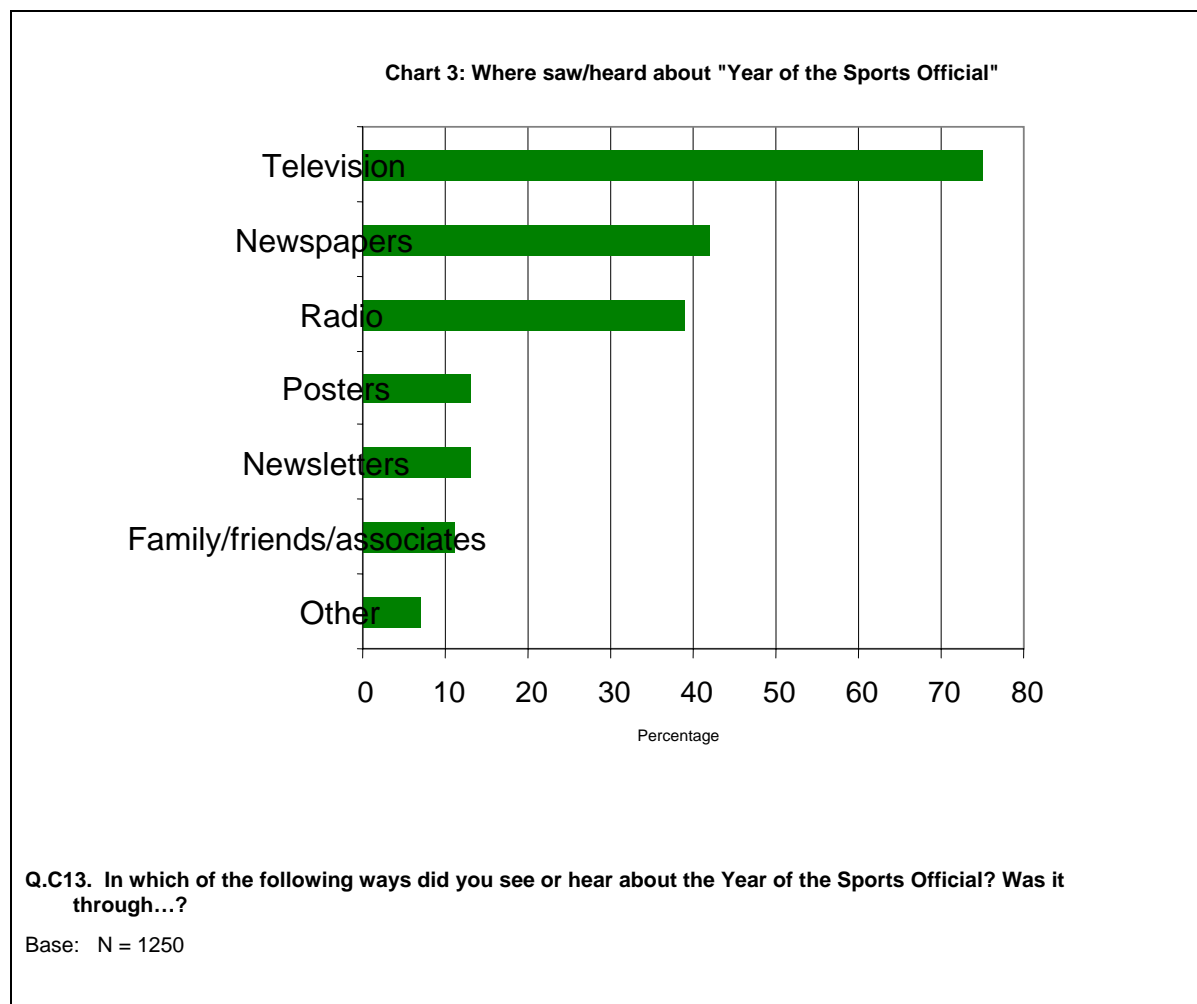
To reach an audience of approximately 1.5 million with no media budget for television is a very satisfactory outcome.

Additionally,

- 42% recalled some newspaper coverage;
- 39% recalled radio coverage;
- 13% remembered posters, 13% club newsletters, 11% from family, friends and associates.

The wide range of media recalled and in particular the prominence of newsletters, family and others as a source of information confirms the importance of networks in this type of campaign and the value that clubs have to offer in the distribution of resources.

This was a multi media campaign – on a small scale. On average, respondents who recalled it, saw or heard it from two or more media. The fact that 11% recalled some personal discussion underlines the importance of the issue to this audience.

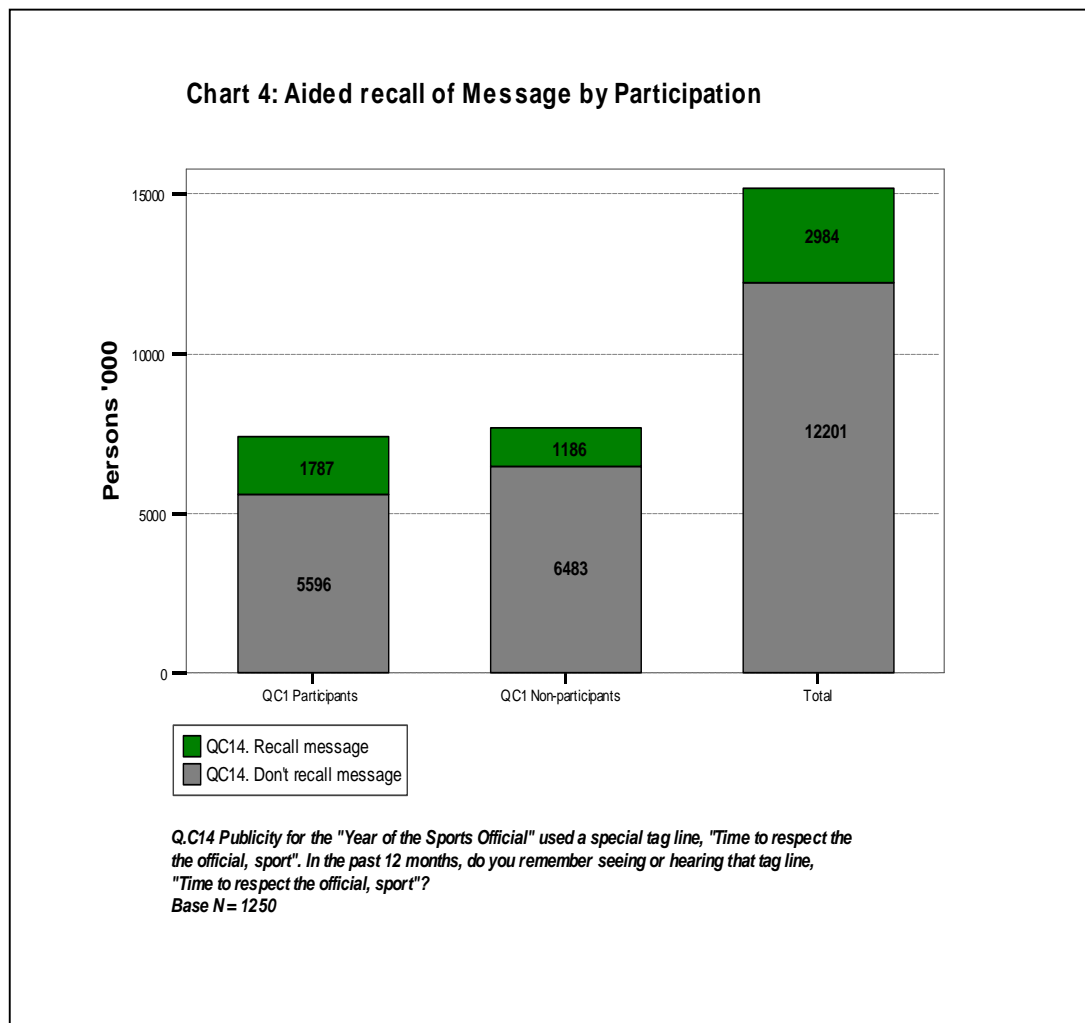


4. Message Recall

The tag line “Time to respect the Official, Sport” was recalled by 2.9 million people aged 18 and over (20%) when it was read out to them. This is a good result considering the limited exposure it has had.

Message recall was higher among people involved in community sport than for those not involved:

Of people involved in community sport 24% recalled the message, compared with 15% recall for those not involved.



Perceptions

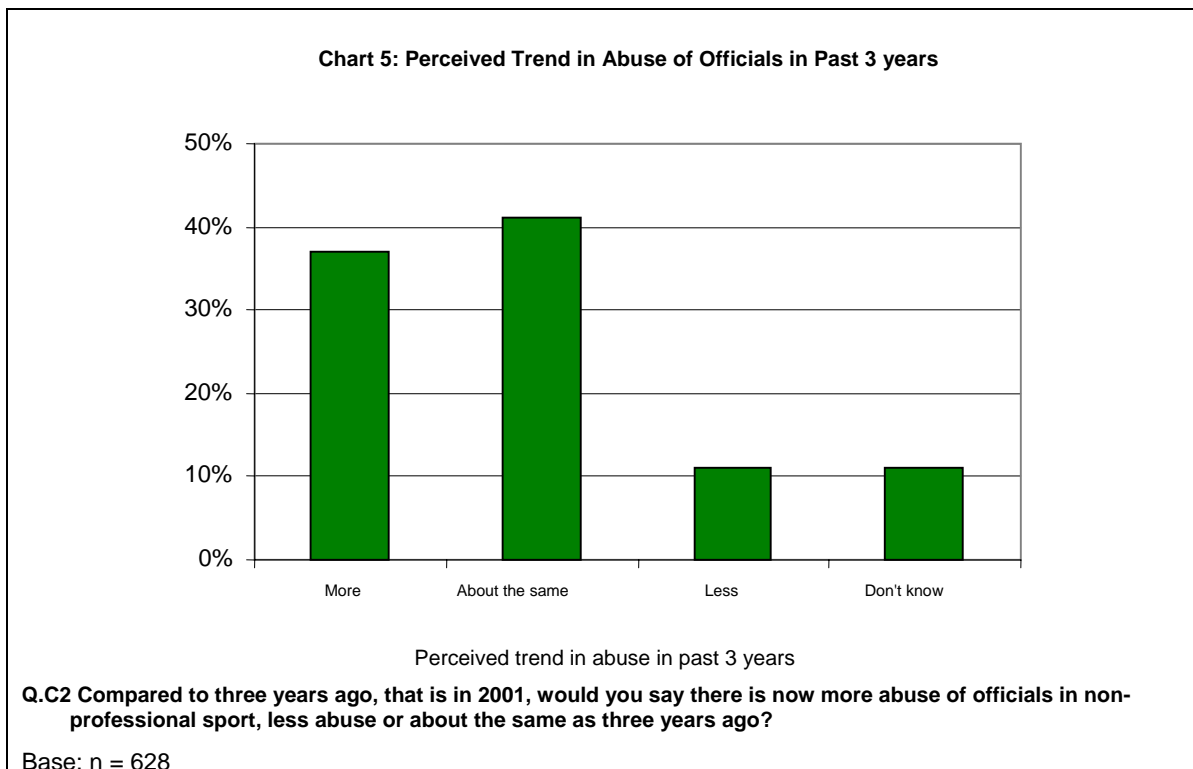
1. Trends in Abusive Behaviour towards Officials

Three quarters of Australians aged 18 and over who participate in non-professional sport perceive the trend in abusive behaviour is either increasing (37%) or the same (41%) as 3 years ago.

A minority (11%) see a reduction and 11% are not sure.

A rising trend was noted by:

- More women (42%) than men (33%);
- More people aged 50+ (47%) than 18 to 24 (39%);
- More in Queensland (43%) NSW (42%) and South Australia (41%);
- Less in Victoria (29%); and
- More lower income and blue collar than higher income and white collar workers.

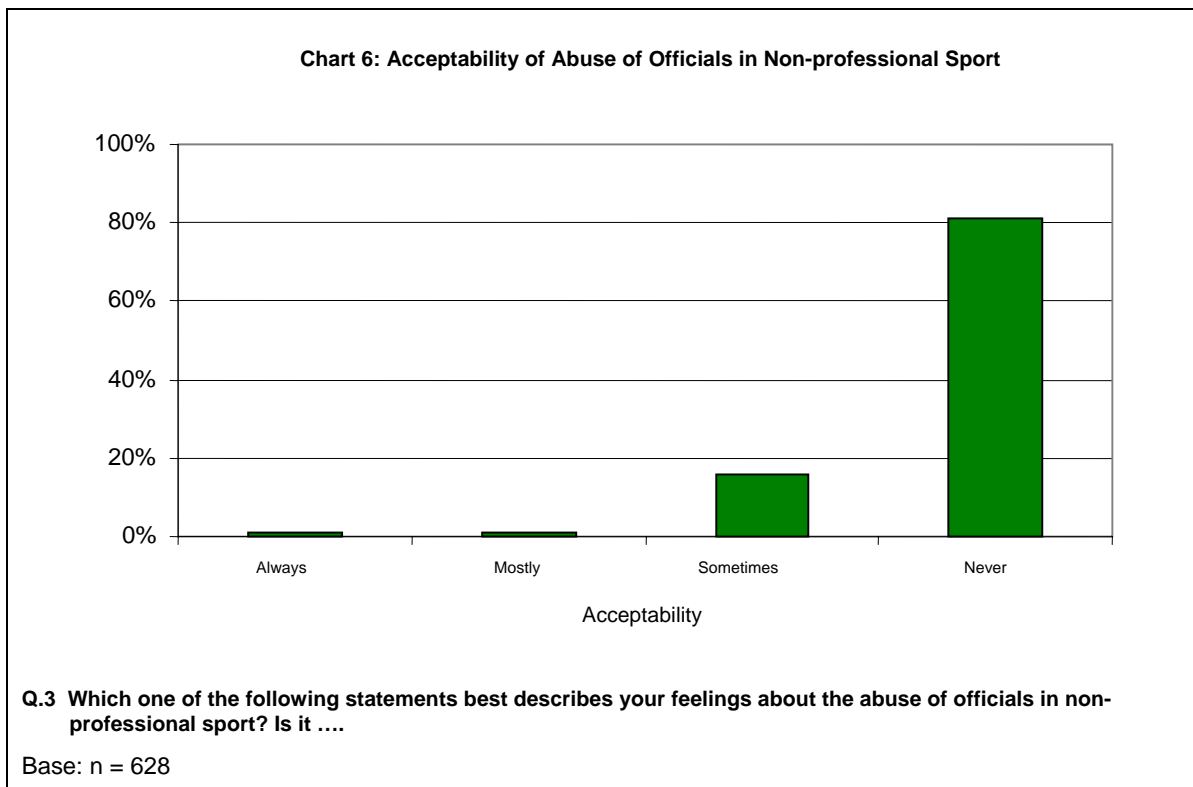


2. Acceptability of Abusive Behaviour

Abusive behaviour in non-professional sport is condemned by a large majority of Australians. 6 million people aged 18 and over (81% of those involved in non-professional sport) believe that abusing officials is never acceptable.

Additionally,

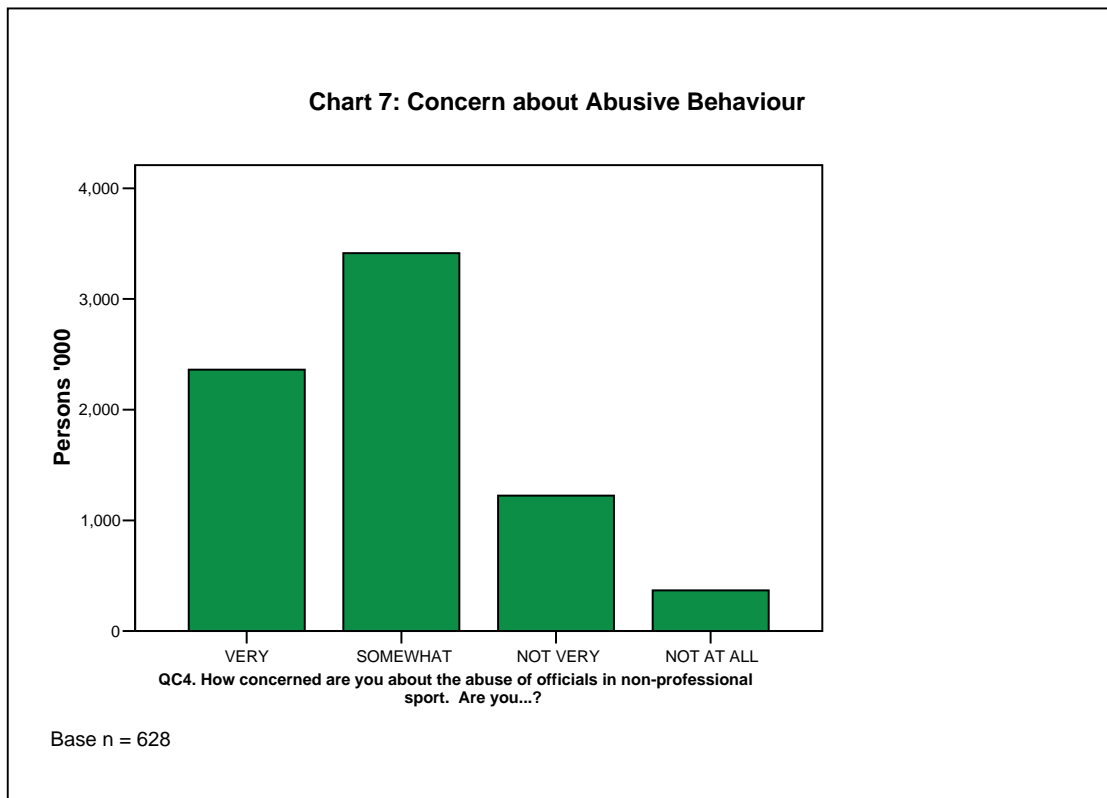
- A minority, 1.2 million (16%) feel it is acceptable on some occasions;
- A smaller minority, 101,000 (2%) believe abuse of officials is acceptable on most or all occasions;
- Those who believe abuse of officials is acceptable on most occasions are predominantly male (100%) and aged under 35 (68,000).



3. Concern about Abusive Behaviour

There is a very high level of concern about abuse of officials in non-professional sport.

- Of those involved in non-professional sport, 5.8 million people aged 18 and over (77%) are very or somewhat concerned by abuse of officials;
- Concern is higher among people aged 35 and over (84% very or somewhat concerned), with children (82%) and married (82%);
- Concern is lower in metropolitan (76% very or somewhat concerned) than country areas (80%) and stronger in smaller States (NT 88%, Tasmania 88%) than larger (NSW 79%).



Observations

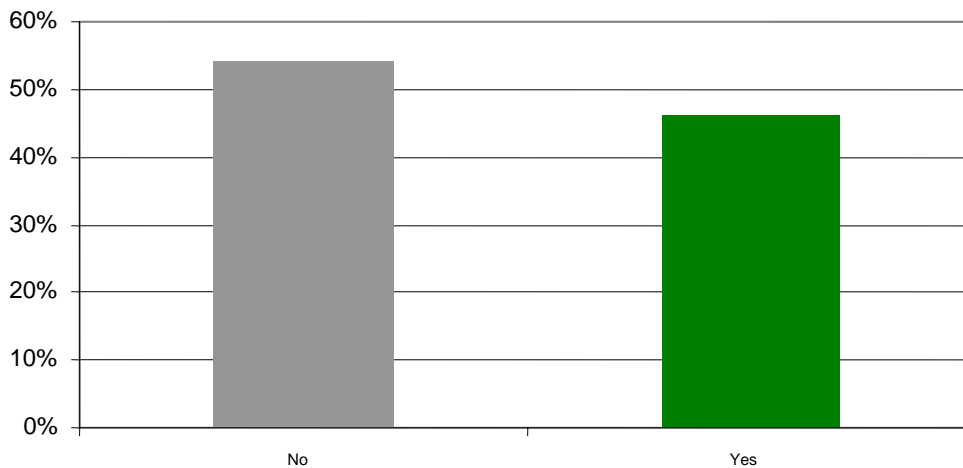
1. Incidence of Abusive Behaviour

Approximately 3.5 million Australians have seen or heard abuse, insults or violence towards officials at non professional sport in the last 12 months. This represents 46% of people attending such sporting events.

People seeing or hearing abuse of officials are more likely to:

- Be men (51%) than women (41%);
- Be young (65% of those aged 18 to 24) than older (33% of those aged 50 or over);
- To have children (54%) than not (41%);
- To be living in capital cities (48%) than country (44%); and
- To have blue collar occupations (48%) than white (45%) and to earn lower income.

Chart 8: Observed Abuse of Officials at Non-professional Sport in past 12 months



Q.C5 Have you personally seen or heard any abuse, insults or violence towards officials at non-professional sporting events in the past 12 months?

Base: n = 628

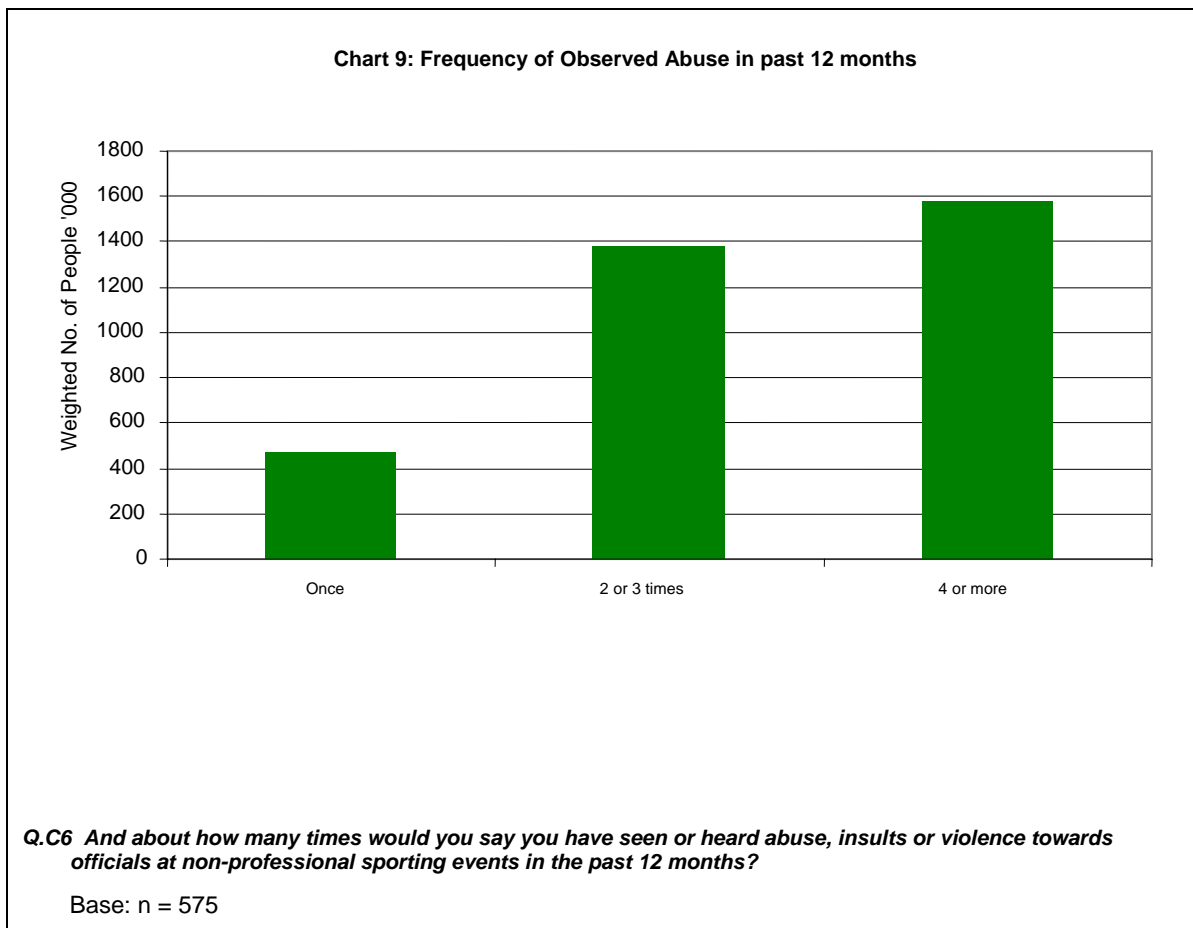
2. Frequency

Of the 3.5 million people who witnessed abuse towards officials at community and club sports, 3.0 million (86%) claim to have seen or heard it at least twice in the past 12 months.

Almost half (46%) have seen or heard abuse towards officials 4 or more times in the past year.

Observation of abuse more than 3 times in the past year is more likely to be reported by:

- Men (29%) than women (12%);
- People aged 18 to 24 (32%) rather than people aged over 35 (18%);
- People in both metropolitan and country areas;
- Resident in all States.

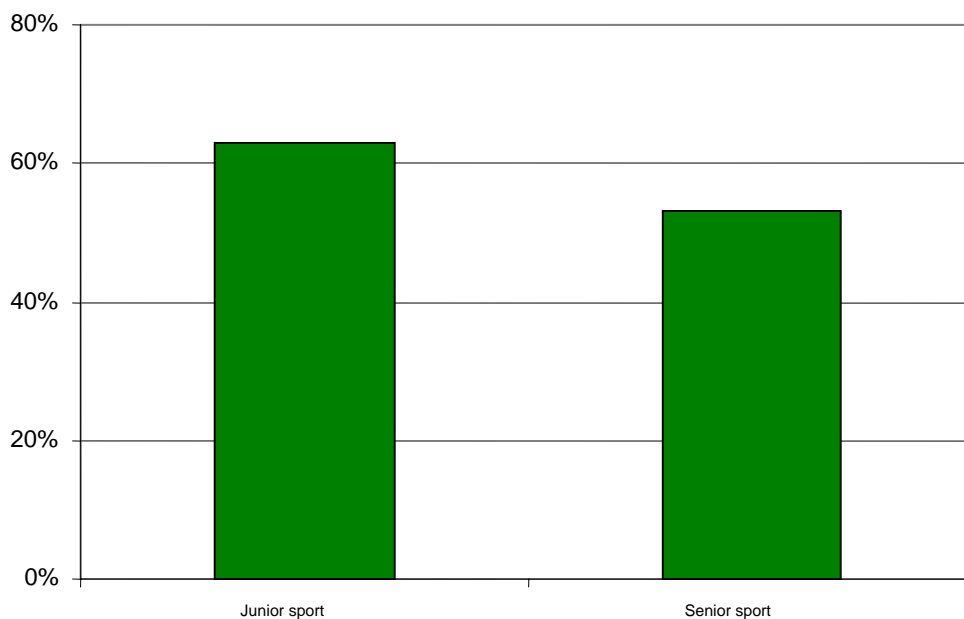


3. Abuse Observed at Junior and Senior Levels

Abuse towards officials occurs almost equally at both senior and junior club and community sport. Of the almost 3.5 million people who observed abuse, insults or violence to officials, 2.2 million (63%) witnessed incidents at senior sports, while 1.8 million (53%) witnessed it at junior sports.

- Of those aged 18 to 24 attending community sport in some capacity, 667,000 (61%) observed abuse at senior sports and 218,000 (20%) saw it at junior sport.
- There were an estimated 2.6 million adults involved in junior sports as coaches, referees, officials and spectators. Of these, 34% (884,000) saw or heard abusive behaviour at junior sport, and 26% (676,000) at senior sport in the past year.
- More than 1 million people aged 18 to 24 participated in community or club sport of which 61% (667,000) observed abuse at senior sport and 20% (218,000) at junior sport.
- Women saw more junior sport abuse, and men saw more at senior levels.
- There was a similar pattern of observation in metropolitan and country areas and in all States.

Chart 10: Where Abuse Observed



Q.C7 At which of the following age levels did that abuse occur? Junior sport, which is up to and including the under 19 age group; and/or senior sport, which is the 19 years and over age group.

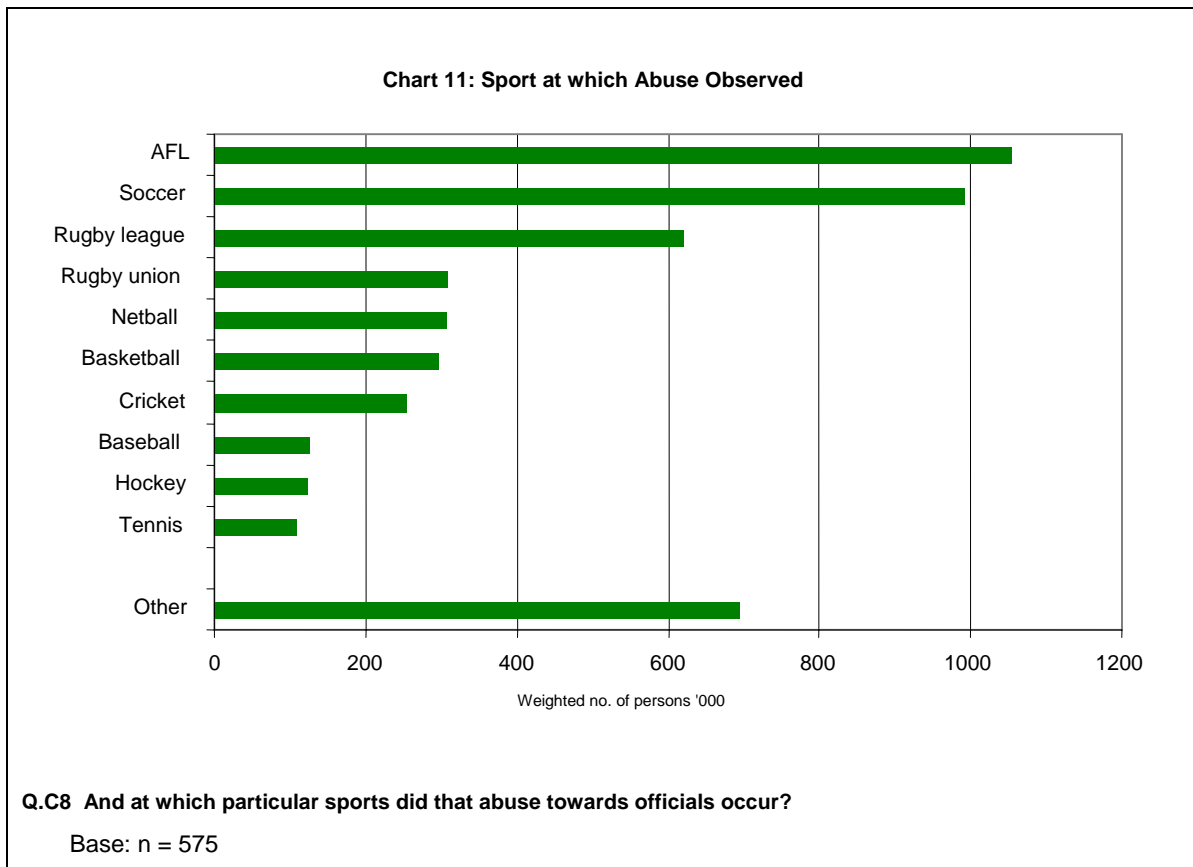
Note: Percentages below add to more than 100% because some are involved in both Junior and Senior Sports and observed abuse at both levels.

Base: n = 575

4. Sports in Which Abuse Occurred

Observations of abuse were reported from a wide range of sports but most involving close personal contact or competition among younger people.

- More than 1 million people reported observing abuse, insults and/or violence to officials at AFL in the past 12 months, representing 14% of those attending community and club level sport in some capacity.
- Almost 1 million (13% of participants) observed abuse at soccer.
- Rugby League (8%), Union (4%), basketball (4%) and netball (4%) were next.



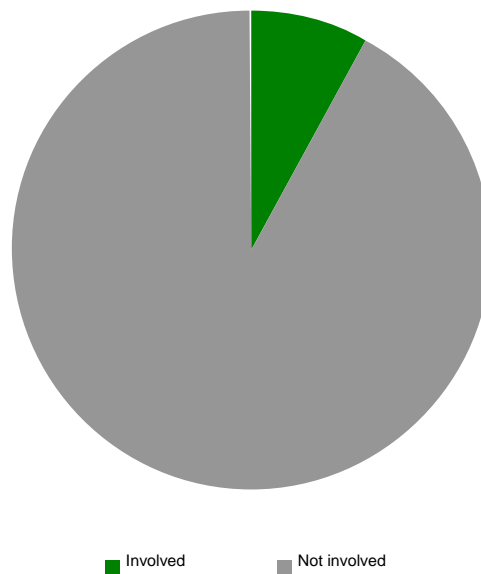
Experience

1. Personal Involvement in Abusive Behaviour

Almost 630,000 Australians, representing 8% of those involved in non-professional sport were directly involved in abuse, insults or violence towards officials at club or community sport in the past 12 months either as abusers or the abused.

- This represents 18% of those who observed abusive behaviour in the past 12 months;
- There were 421,000 men (11% of male participants in non-professional sport) and 208,000 women (6% of female participants in non-professional sport);
- People from all age groups were personally involved, but there were an estimated:
 - 253,000 people 35 to 49 years of age (10% of that age group participating);
 - 187,000 people 18 to 24 (17% of that age group participating).

Chart 12: Personal Involvement in Abuse towards Officials



Q.C9 Were you personally directly involved, in any capacity, in any incidents involving abuse towards officials in the past 12 months?

Base: n = 575

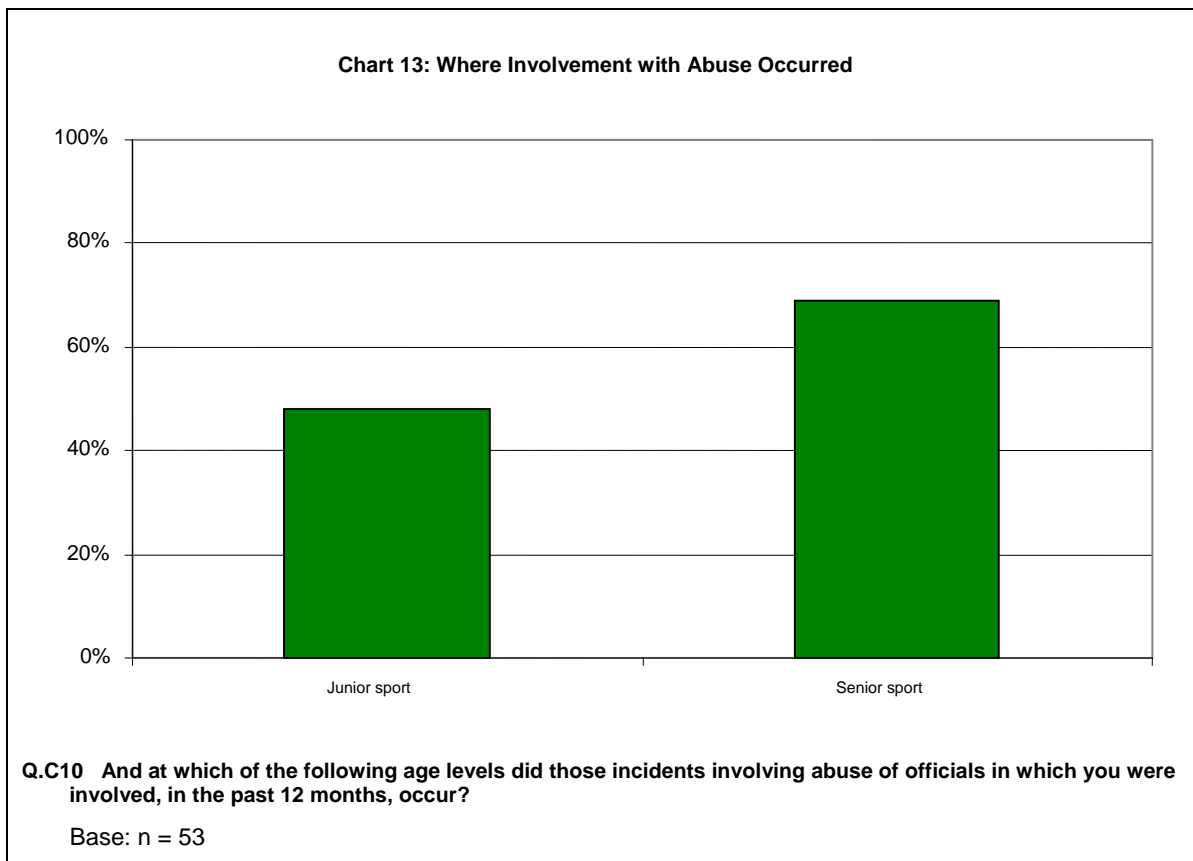
2. Level of Sport where Involvement Occurred

Involvement in the abuse of officials as either the abused, the abuser or both, occurs at both junior and senior levels. This reflects the same situation as reported by those persons who observed abuse of officials. There were 629,000 (8% of participants in non-professional sport) who claimed to have been directly involved in abuse of officials at non-professional sport in the previous 12 months.

- Of these, 300,000, (48%) experienced abuse at junior sports; and
- 435,000 (69%) reported incidents at senior sports.

(Figures add to more than 100% because some people reported incidents at both junior and senior levels.)

- Of those reporting involvement at junior sports, 170,000 (57%) were aged 35 to 49; and
- Of those involved at senior sports, 172,000 (40%) were aged 18 to 24.

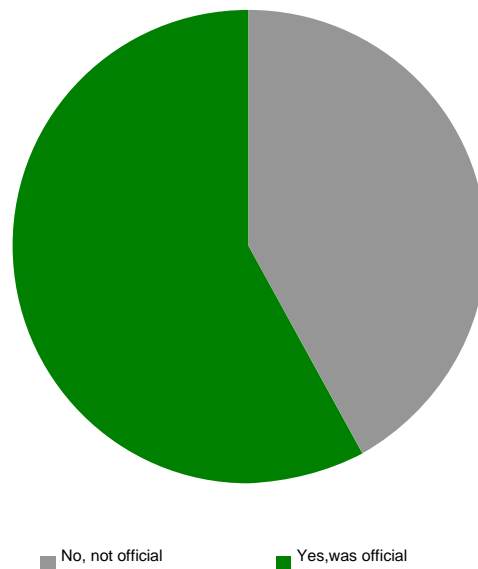


3. Officials abused at non-professional Sport

Almost 346,000 officials, representing 5% of people attending or participating in community or club level sport in Australia, were subjected to abuse, insults or violence in the past 12 months.

- This means that more than half the people (58%) directly involved in an incident of abuse with an official were in fact the official concerned.
- This represents 241,000 men, and 105,000 women;
- Of all ages ranging from 18 to over 50;
- Equally in all States and in metropolitan and country areas.

Chart 14: Whether an Official who was abused in the past 12 months



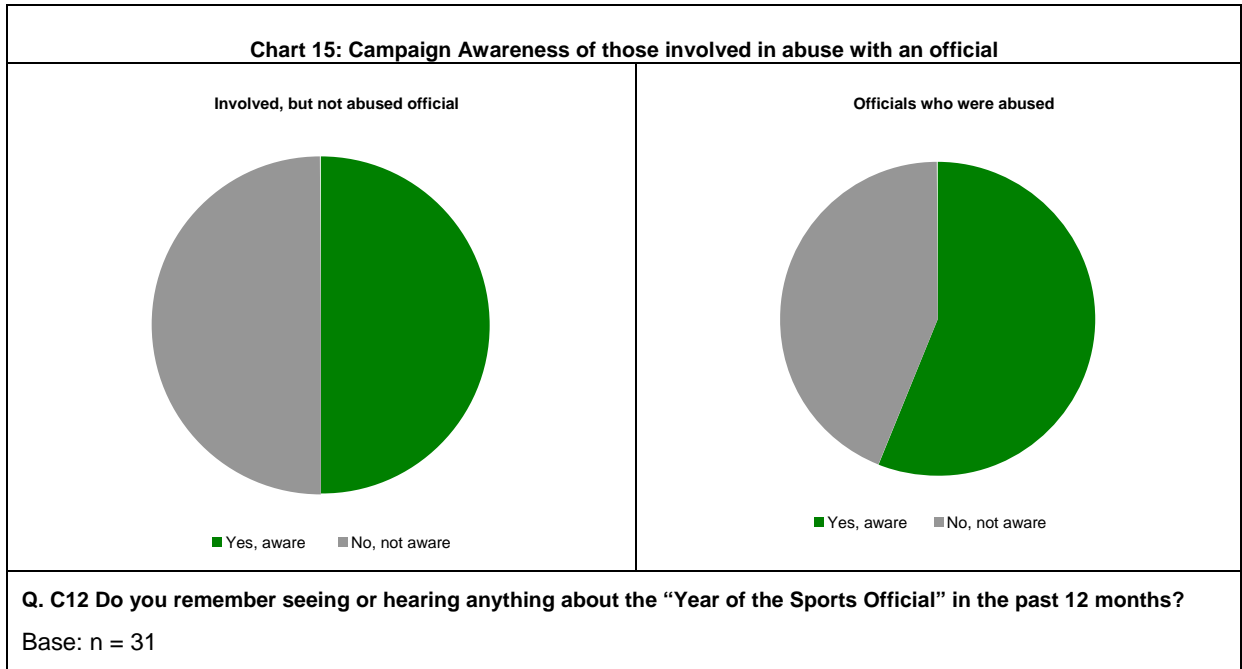
Q.11a In the past 12 months, have you personally been an official at a non-professional sporting event who has been abused?

Base: n = 53

4. Officials’ Awareness of Campaign

Of the 346,000 officials who were abused, 193,000 (56%) saw or heard something about the Year of the Official.

Of the 284,000 people who were directly involved in an incident involving abuse of an official but were not the abused official, 140,000 (50%) saw or heard something about the Year of the Official.



5. People who Abuse Officials at non-professional Sport

Almost 189,000 people representing 3% of people playing, officiating or watching non-professional sport admit to abuse, insults or violence towards officials at club sports events in the past 12 months. Samples are too small for reliable demographic analysis, however, the following appears to be supported:

- Abusers include 113,000 players, 110,000 spectators, 34,000 coaches and 34,000 others, including administrators
- They involve all ages, men and women, high and low incomes, working and non-working.

6. Campaign Awareness by Abusers

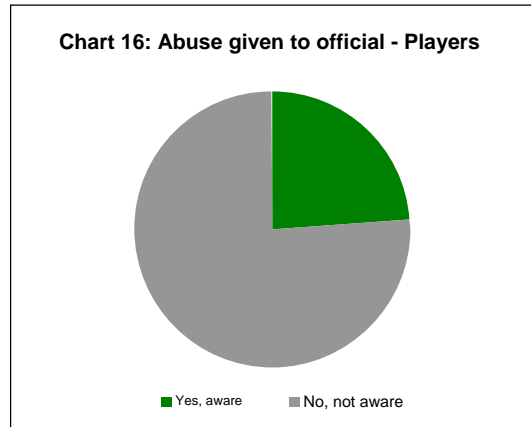
While the campaign appears to have reached a large and wide audience, evidence suggests it was more successful in reaching non abusers than it was in reaching people who had abused officials in the past 12 months. This result might be attributed to one or more of the following:

- The campaign did not reach abusers, or
- The campaign did in fact reach abusers but they did not see or hear it, or they did not remember doing so, or
- The campaign did in fact reach abusers but they did not admit it.

Players

There were an estimated 113,000 players who admitted abusing officials in the past 12 months. Of these the campaign reached 27,000 (24%) but failed to reach three quarters (76%).

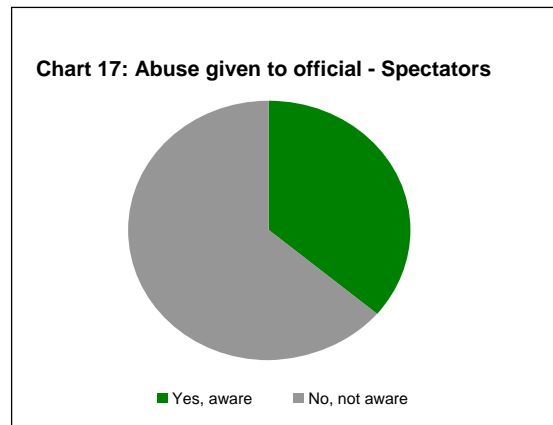
Q C12 ...Do you remember seeing or hearing anything about the “Year of the Official” in the past 12 months?



Spectators

There were 110,000 spectators who admitted abusing officials. Of these, 40,000 (36%) remembered the campaign, but 70,000 (64%) did not.

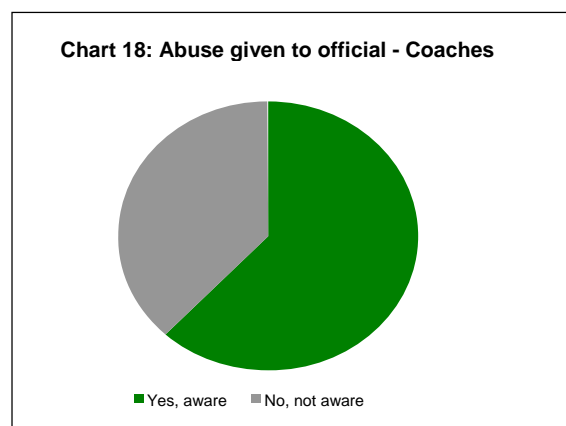
Q C12 ...Do you remember seeing or hearing anything about the “Year of the Official” in the past 12 months?



Coaches

There were a relatively small number of coaches (34,000) who admitted abusing officials in the previous 12 months. Of these 62% recalled the campaign.

Q C12 ...Do you remember seeing or hearing anything about the “Year of the Official” in the past 12 months?



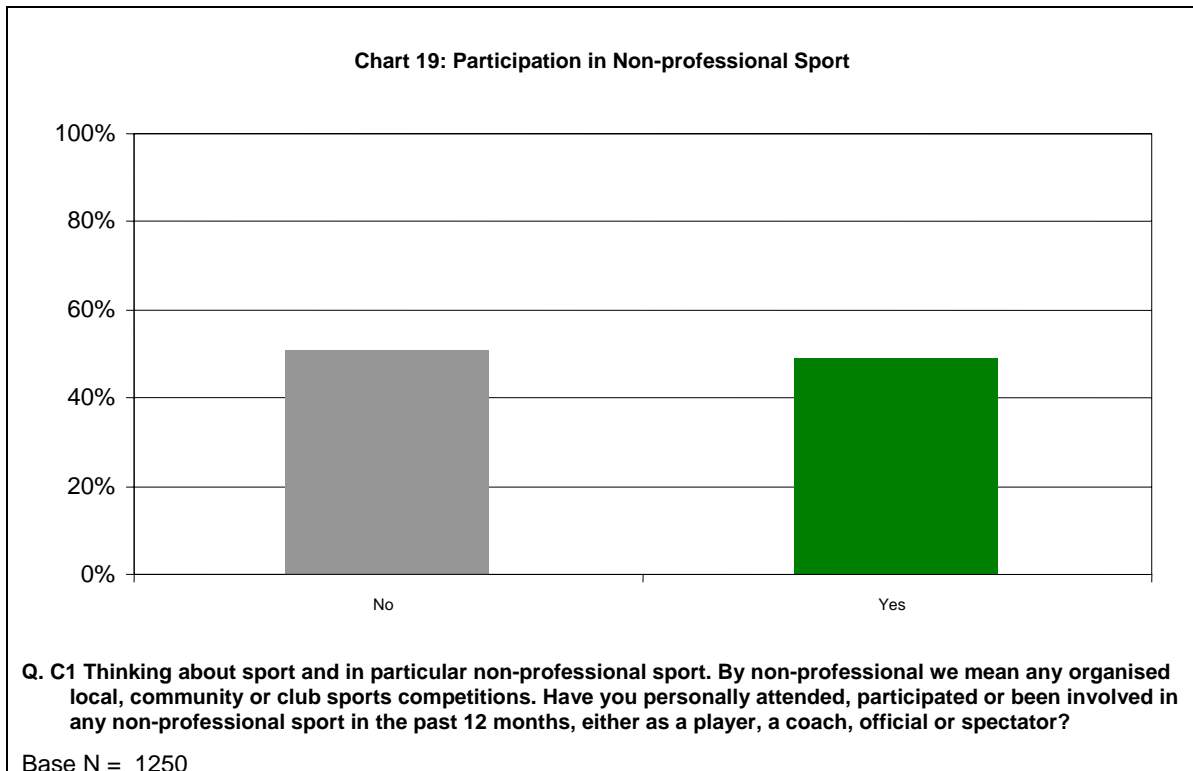
Participation

1. Organised Local, Community or Club Sport

49% of Australians (7.5 million) aged 18 and over were involved in club, community or junior sport in the past 12 months, including players, coaches, officials and spectators.

Analysis shows the following demographic differences in participation:

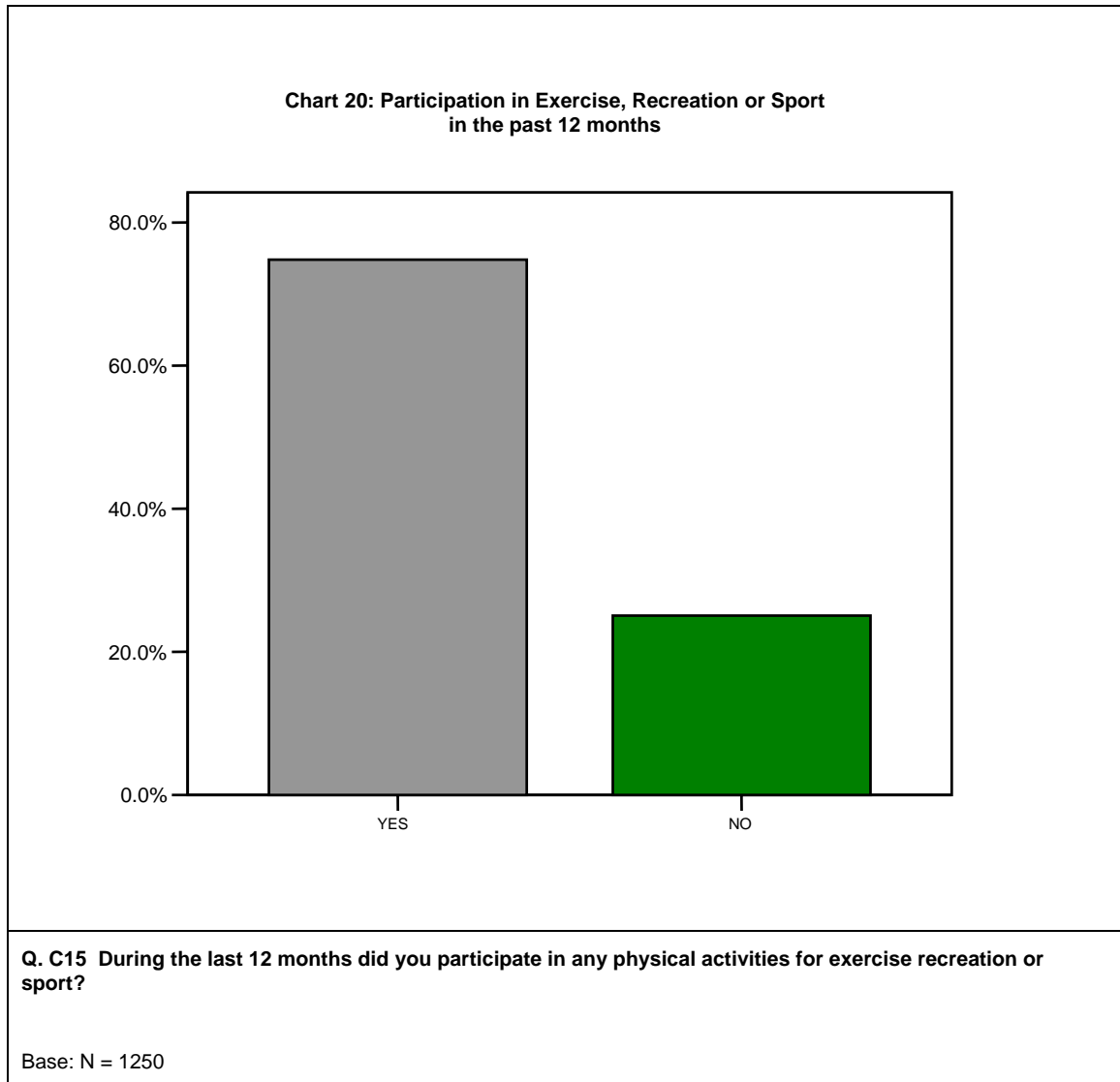
- More men (51%) than women (46%)
- More younger than older
- Evenly distributed between metropolitan and country areas, and between States
- More white collar (55%), than blue (43%)
- More higher income (61%) than lower (36%)



2. Exercise, Recreation or Sport

75% (11.5 million adult Australians) were involved in exercise, recreation or sport in the previous 12 months.

This compares with and tends to support an estimate of 83% of people aged 15 and over reporting participation in other ASC surveys (ERASS).



Appendix 1.

Newspoll Questionnaire

SECTION C - ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

C1 Thinking now about sport and in particular **non-professional** sport. By non-professional we mean any organised local, community or club sports competitions. Have you personally attended, participated or been involved in any non-professional sport in the **past 12 months**, either as a player, coach, official or spectator?

YES / HAVE 1 *
C2
 NO / NOT 2 #
#
 DON'T KNOW 3
#
C12

ASK IF PARTICIPATED / INVOLVED IN LOCAL / COMMUNITY SPORT IE CODE 1 IN C1. CODE 2-3 GO TO C12

C2 Now thinking about sport **officials**, including referees, umpires, linesmen and so on, and in particular **abuse, insults or violence** towards officials in non-professional sport. Compared with three years ago, that is early 2001, would you say there is now **more** abuse of officials in non-professional sport, **less** abuse, or is it **about the same** as three years ago?

MORE.....1
 LESS.....2
 ABOUT
 SAME.....3
 DON'T
 KNOW.....4

C3 Which **one** of the following statements best describes your own feelings about the abuse of officials in non-professional sport? It is... **READ OUT 1-4**

SR
ALWAYS ACCEPTABLE TO ABUSE OFFICIALS..... 1
ACCEPTABLE ON MOST OCCASIONS.... 2
ACCEPTABLE ON SOME OCCASIONS.... 3
OR, NEVER ACCEPTABLE TO ABUSE OFFICIALS..... 4
NONE / DON'T KNOW..... 5

C4 How **concerned** are you about the abuse of officials in non-professional sport? Are you...? **READ OUT AND ROTATE 1-4 AND 4-1 ONLY**

VERY CONCERNED
 SOMEWHAT
 CONCERNED.....
 NOT VERY
 CONCERNED.....
 NOT AT ALL
 CONCERNED.....
 DON'T KNOW

C5 Have you personally **seen** or **heard** any abuse, insults or violence towards officials at non-professional sporting events in the past 12 months?

YES / HAVE. 1 *
C6
 NO / NOT 2 #
#
 DON'T KNOW 3
#
C12

ASK IF SEEN / HEARD ABUSE IE CODE 1 IN C5. CODE 2-3 GO TO C12

C6 And about how many times would you say you ONCE 1
have seen or heard abuse, insults or violence TWO OR THREE TIMES 2
towards officials at non-professional sporting OR, MORE THAN THREE
events in the past 12 months? Would it be ...? TIMES 3
READ OUT 1-3 DON'T KNOW 4

C7 At which of the following **age** MR
levels did that abuse occur? JUNIOR SPORT, WHICH IS UP TO AND
READ OUT 1-2 INCLUDING THE UNDER 19 YEARS AGE
GROUP 1
SENIOR SPORT, WHICH IS
THE 19 YEARS AND OVER AGE GROUP2
DON'T KNOW 3

C8	And at which particular sports did that abuse towards officials occur?	<u>MR</u>
	AUSTRALIAN RULES / A.F.L.....	01
	BASEBALL.....	02
	BASKETBALL	03
	<u>IF RUGBY NFI</u> Was that CRICKET	04

	<u>IF FOOTBALL NFI</u> What HOCKEY.....	05
	type of football was that? NETBALL	06
	RUGBY LEAGUE / LEAGUE	07
	RUGBY UNION / UNION.....	08

	SOCCER.....	09
	SOFTBALL	10
	SQUASH	11
	TAEKWONDO / KARATE /	
	MARTIAL ARTS OTHER / NFI.....	12

	TENNIS	13
	VOLLEYBALL.....	14
	WATERPOLO.....	15
	OTHER	16
	(SPECIFY)_____	

	DON'T KNOW.....	17

C9	Were you personally directly involved , in any capacity, in any incidents involving abuse towards officials in the past 12 months?	YES1 *
	 C10
		NO.....2 # #
		DON'T KNOW 3 #
	 C12

ASK IF PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN INCIDENT IE CODE 1 IN C9. CODE 2-3 GO TO C12

C10	And at which of the following age levels did those incidents involving abuse of officials in	<u>MR</u>
	JUNIOR SPORT, WHICH IS UP TO AND	

<p>which you were personally involved, in the past 12 months, occur? READ OUT 1-2</p>	<p>INCLUDING THE UNDER 19 YEARS AGE GROUP 1</p> <p>SENIOR SPORT, WHICH IS THE 19 YEARS AND OVER AGE GROUP2</p> <p>DON'T KNOW 3</p>
<p>C11(a) In the past 12 months, have you personally been an official at a non-professional sporting event who has been abused?</p>	<p>YES 1</p> <p>NO 2</p> <p>DON'T KNOW 3</p>
<p>C11(b) And in the past 12 months have you personally given abuse to an official at a non-professional sporting event?</p> <p><u>IF YES</u> And at any of those incidents, were you a...? READ OUT 1-3</p>	<p>YES <u>MR</u></p> <p>PLAYER..... 1</p> <p>SPECTATOR..... 2</p> <p>COACH 3</p> <p>OTHER / DON'T KNOW 4</p> <p>NO / DON'T KNOW . 5</p>

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

<p>C12 Now about something different. Last year, 2003, was the “Year of the Sports Official”. Do you remember seeing or hearing anything about the “Year of the Sports Official” in the past 12 months or so?</p>	<p>YES1 *</p> <p>..... C13</p> <p>NO.....2 # #</p> <p>DON'T KNOW 3 #</p> <p>..... C14</p>
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**ASK IF SEEN / HEARD OF YEAR OF SPORTS OFFICIAL IE CODE 1 IN C12.
CODE 2-3 GO TO C14**

C13	In which of the following ways did you see or hear about the Year of the Sports Official? Was it through...? READ OUT 1-7 AND ROTATE 1-5	<p style="text-align: right;"><u>MR</u></p> NEWSPAPERS 1 RADIO.....2 TV3 POSTERS4 CLUB NEWSLETTERS5 ----- ----- FROM FAMILY, FRIENDS OR ASSOCIATES6 OR, SOMEWHERE ELSE7 (SPECIFY) _____ DON'T KNOW 8
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ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

C14	Publicity for the "Year of the Sports Official" used a special tag line, "Time to respect the official, sport ". In the past 12 months, do you remember seeing or hearing that tag line, "Time to respect the official, sport "?	YES / REMEMBER 1 NO / NOT 2 DON'T KNOW .. 3
C15	Now thinking about your own participation in exercise, recreation and sport. During the last 12 months, did you participate in any physical activities for exercise, recreation or sport?	YES 1 NO.....2 DON'T KNOW3

Appendix 2.

Posters



Time to respect the official, sport.

Every weekend, rain, hail or shine, thousands of Australians give up their time for your sport. Referees, timekeepers, umpires, linesmen – they all put in the extra time to make yours the best sport of all time. Don't give them a hard time. For more information, see www.ausport.gov.au/yearoftheofficial.



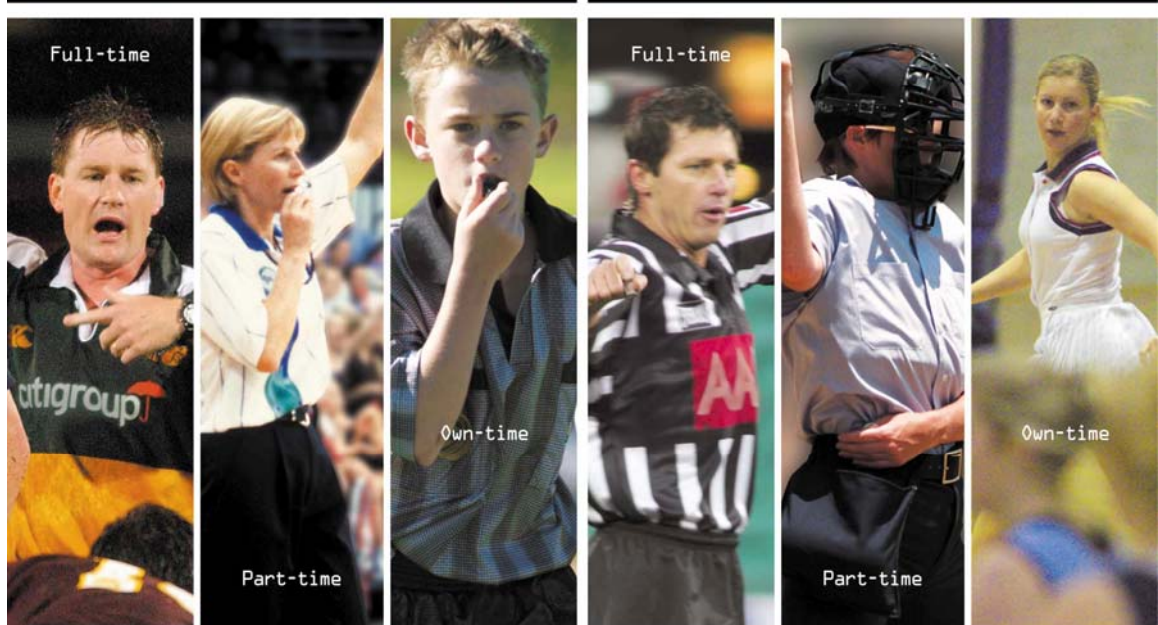
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