



Department of Energy, Mines,
Industry Regulation and Safety



Indigenous Consumers Count

2023

A consultative approach to Consumer Protection
for Indigenous Western Australians



Date of Publication: December 2024

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has completed its new consumer count report on Aboriginal consumers.

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Acknowledgement

The Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal peoples as being the traditional custodians of Western Australia. We acknowledge the enduring connection Aboriginal people continue to share with the land, sea and sky through both their ancestral ties and custodianship to Country. We pay our respect to Elders both past and present, and acknowledge the value brought to our department through the collective contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Western Australia.

In respect and reflection of the diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities across Australia, the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety respectfully uses the terms 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples,' and 'Indigenous' interchangeably.

Consumer Protection extends a warm thank you to all Aboriginal people across Western Australia (WA) who took part in the Aboriginal Consumer Count survey.

To the stakeholders across WA who collaborate closely with Consumer Protection and Aboriginal consumers, thank you for your participation.

The artwork featured on the cover and throughout this report was created by Impact Digi, an Aboriginal-owned, creative agency, and features a series of wavy, organic shapes dancing gracefully. Each curve tells a story – of song lines made and connections formed across the diverse landscape of WA. The colours evoke a sense of place and draw inspiration from natural landscapes. Sandy hues bring to mind riverbanks, beaches, and desert plains, while earthy reflect the ancient soils and striking rock formations, that connect the Pilbara to the Kimberley and beyond. Soft greens hint at lush forests and the rugged outback, and cool blues mirror the flow of powerful rivers and vast oceans.

A subtle sandstone textured cover with an earthy, organic feel, grounding the artwork in the very essence of country and culture. Across these painted landscapes, delicate kangaroo tracks trace the paths of trade and cultural exchange that crisscrossed the state for generations.

At the heart of it all, a handprint – a motif found in ancient caves across Australia, symbolising the enduring connection of Aboriginal peoples to their land and their stories, a testament to their rich heritage spanning millennia. This handprint, alongside the kangaroo tracks, is more than just decoration but a statement of resilience and continuity.

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Section 1

Introduction

Executive summary

The Indigenous¹ Consumer Count (ICC) report is a comprehensive research project undertaken by the Consumer Protection division of the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (the department).

It focuses on Aboriginal² consumers, Aboriginal corporations, advocates and service providers concerned with the needs of Aboriginal Western Australians.

The research upholds the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research, in recognition and respect for the rights of Aboriginal peoples as stated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.³ In that, Aboriginal people have the right to be fully engaged in any processes, projects and activities that may impact them.⁴

The 2023 report is the third publication from Consumer Protection's Aboriginal Community Education team.

The ICC survey, conducted from March to June 2023 across WA, aimed to capture the perspectives of Aboriginal consumers with buying powers. A total of 188 activities spanning digital, face-to-face, and traditional media, were undertaken, with Consumer Protection's regionally-based officers playing a crucial role in facilitating consumer participation.

In total, 106 Aboriginal individuals contributed to the survey.

Key stakeholder agencies supporting Aboriginal consumers took part in the survey, with 17 agencies providing valuable insights.

The survey identified motor vehicle sales and purchases as the leading consumer issue impacting Aboriginal people in WA, followed by tenancy issues in private tenancies.

Consumer Protection continues to collaborate with key state and federal agencies to promote consumer rights and address issues. These partnerships aim to ensure a fair and equitable marketplace for all Australians, with a focus on promoting consumer messages, resolving complaints, and taking legal action when necessary.

1 The term Indigenous refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups.

2 The term Aboriginal, used by Western Australian Government, refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

3 [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

4 [AIATSIS Code of Ethics](#)

Aboriginal communities across WA represent a diverse tapestry of cultures, traditions, and socio-economic realities. Understanding the consumer experiences, challenges, and needs within these communities is essential for fostering equitable access to goods and services and promoting consumer rights.

In response to this, the aim of the consultation was to provide insights into the consumer patterns, preferences, and concerns of Aboriginal consumers across WA. The report evaluates the recommendations implemented by the department from the 2015 Indigenous Consumer Count report.

Background to project

In 2008, the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs (MCCA) released the first national report on the National Indigenous Consumer Strategy (NICS) “Taking Action, Gaining Trust” Action Plan⁵ for 2005–10. This marked a collaborative effort across state and territory consumer affairs agencies to empower Aboriginal consumers by enhancing their knowledge of rights, improving trader behaviour through education and compliance, and fostering partnerships to improve consumer outcomes.

Since 2004, Consumer Protection has expanded its Aboriginal staff focused on Australian Consumer Law and rights. Their aim is to educate consumers, influence trader behaviour, and build culturally appropriate networks in Western Australia. Research projects in 2004–05⁶, 2013–14⁷, and 2022–23 have documented consumer issues, culminating in “Indigenous Consumers Count” reports that guide future consumer education efforts.

Research

Analysing internal data from complaints, enquiries, WA ScamNet reports, and the survey, was the key method used to explore the consumer issues affecting Aboriginal people in WA.

Limitations

Time, distance, and budget constraints were all limitations in the collection of the supporting data for this project.

The data collected was gathered with the assistance of senior regional officers who were able to engage participants and support Aboriginal people to take the survey. There was limited ability for the researcher to conduct face-to-face interviews in remote communities.

Literacy and numeracy skills were a factor for some participants. To overcome this obstacle, senior regional officers supported consumers through the survey.

Participants proactively engaged in the research and appeared comfortable in sharing their consumer experiences.

5 [Taking Action, Gaining Trust report 2008](#)
6 [Indigenous Consumers Count report 2007](#)
7 [Indigenous Consumers Count report 2015](#)

Section 2

Achievements emerging from 2015 recommendations

2015 report recommendation outcomes

The 2015 Indigenous Consumer Count report played a crucial role in ensuring that the eight recommendations were not only acknowledged by Consumer Protection's Aboriginal Community Education team (the team) but fully embraced, leading to successful implementation and positive outcomes.

Recommendations



1. Deliver relevant information to Aboriginal consumers using the most culturally appropriate methods.

Social media

The implementation of an Aboriginal media plan in 2016 led to the creation of a Facebook page. The Ask Us Facebook page continues to raise awareness and provide up-to-date and culturally appropriate consumer information.

Radio

The team contributes to revising radio notes for consumer segments on regional and remote Aboriginal radio stations, to make them culturally appropriate and simplified, ensuring listeners understand the message, especially those for whom English is a second, third, or fourth language.



Simple English scams poster.

Material in language

The team works with Aboriginal language centres across the State to develop posters in local languages, effectively conveying consumer messages into communities that are difficult to access.



2. Increase data collection and collation of market intelligence – where possible using post codes for identifying locations.

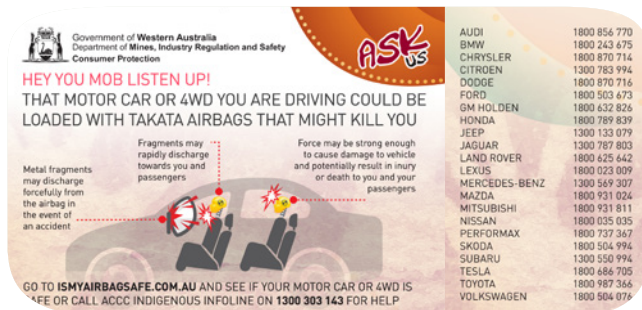
To increase data collection, in 2019 Consumer Protection added the question “Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander” on the complaint form, to gather and analyse data on consumer issues impacting Aboriginal people living in WA. To date, more than 400 complaints and enquiries have been received with the complaint resolved or the consumer was advised on how to self-resolve.



3. Deliver targeted education programs and outreach initiatives to regions that show an increase in any type of consumer issues.

The review of Consumer Protection data revealed a need for targeted consumer education and awareness campaigns. These campaigns addressed critical issues such as consumer rights, tenancy, buying a car, and shopping rights. To reach a broader audience, a variety of outreach activities were organised, including customised presentations for local communities, informative consumer workshops, yarning circles, and networking at community events.

The team played a crucial role in this initiative, tailoring information from mainstream consumer campaigns to better serve Aboriginal communities. The focus is on important topics such as button battery safety, using licensed vehicle repairers, toppling furniture, home safety for babies, safe women, and families, Takata airbag recall and fire safety.



Takata airbag recall postcard distribution.

In collaboration with Aboriginal corporations and not-for-profit agencies with strong connections in local communities, the team conducted yarning circles, addressed consumer complaints, and provided valuable advice on various enquiries.

These outreach initiatives ensured educational campaigns were relevant and accessible to Aboriginal consumers, and fostered a safer, more informed community.



4. Continue to promote financial literacy programs and services alongside general consumer education.

Many Aboriginal people find it hard to make decisions about money. This can affect their income and how money is shared within family circles, as well as their education and daily living expenses.

To help with this, the team worked together with the Australian Securities Investment Commission's, (ASIC) Indigenous Outreach Program and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) “Your Rights Mob.” Working jointly with these agencies helped to promote national campaigns like “Take a minute with your money”. These campaigns focused on financial skills, managing debt, getting paper bills, and sharing economy.

Consumer Protection officers regularly speak at the conferences of Financial Counsellors of Western Australia, providing updates on consumer issues and giving tailored information sessions about Consumer Protection programs and services. The department gives direct access to the team so that financial counsellors across WA can ensure Aboriginal consumers feel supported, culturally safe and get help with consumer issues when they arise.



Face to face presentations.⁸



5. Continue to focus community education on the issues around door-to-door selling.

Through special outreach efforts, community presentations, and working with Aboriginal businesses, awareness of programs like the “Do Not Knock” initiative increased. This initiative provides stickers that can be placed on doors, offering legal protection from unwanted salespeople. Sellers who ignore the stickers, face fines of up to \$10,000 as an individual and \$50,000 as a business.

The campaign’s success in raising awareness has become widely recognised and was crucial in addressing the issue of rogue traders targeting consumers in Aboriginal communities. The “Do Not Knock” stickers are a simple and effective tool in curbing aggressive door-to-door sales practices, particularly in regional and remote areas.



Do not knock sticker.



6. Continue to expand the network of consumer stakeholders in Western Australia and encourage them to assist Aboriginal community members with consumer-related issues.

The focus was on increasing consumer education workshops, attending community events, and initiating state-wide outreach programs.

Strong partnerships are established with local Aboriginal advocacy groups and community service providers like Legal Aid WA, Financial Counsellors Association of WA, and Consumer Credit Legal Service. Consumer Protection partners with these networks in assisting Aboriginal community members and these in turn expand our network of stakeholders, especially by supporting the Ask Us Facebook page.

Connections with key groups, such as Aboriginal language centres and Aboriginal corporations across the State have been proactive in distributing messages to their contacts and those in need.



7. Expand the development of educational materials accessed on smart phones to include new apps, social media and education and information videos in a format appropriate for Aboriginal consumers.

The team worked collaboratively with the Aboriginal community in WA to create culturally appropriate videos for a motor vehicle campaign.

Working together in a joint effort with language centres led to the creation of scam messages in Aboriginal languages.

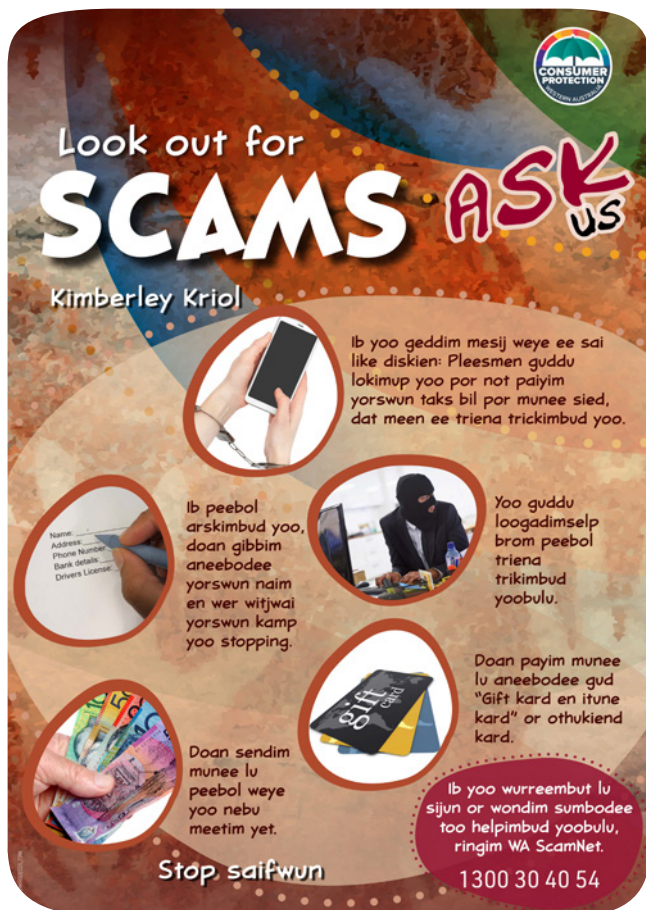
The Ask Us Facebook page was used to share important consumer information that could impact Aboriginal consumers. By enhancing the accessibility of our educational materials through smartphones, videos, translation into local Aboriginal languages, and social media, the team ensured that the messages were clear and beneficial for all.



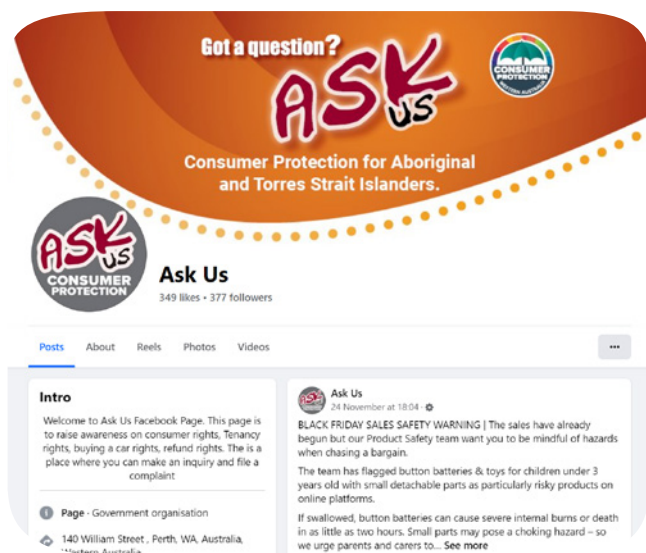
Car problems information video.



Signing a contract information video.



SCAMS language poster.



Ask Us Facebook page.

8. Acknowledge that while the use of digital technologies is increasing rapidly, elements of consumer education will need delivery face-to-face, in hard copy and via local and trusted networks within Aboriginal communities across WA.

In a world where technology and information changes quickly, Consumer Protection stays focused on grassroots and face-to-face education.

The team work with trusted local partners like Mulga Mail (now closed), Pakam Media (radio), Noongar Radio, and other local radio stations, reaching the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne Murchison, Goldfields and Great Southern regions. Face-to-face outreach in regional and remote areas is conducted on a regular basis.

By working with and meeting people in-person, the team ensures that important information about relevant consumer issues is delivered in a way that works best for that Aboriginal community.



Face to face outreach.



Mulga Mail monthly consumer column.



Noongar Radio logo.



A respondent comment.

Section 3

Unpacking the 2023 Indigenous Consumer Count: Key issues and insights

Respondent demographics

Digital and physical surveys are valuable for gaining insights into the unique perspectives, needs, and experiences of Aboriginal consumers. These surveys are a crucial part of understanding distinct cultural values, traditions, and lifestyles of Aboriginal communities, allowing for more informed and culturally sensitive approaches.

In 2023, Consumer Protection encouraged Aboriginal consumers from all over WA to “take the survey”. This activity is used to shape education and outreach programs for the future. Understanding key consumer issues provided by Aboriginal consumers in these surveys is vital to the success of these programs.

Out of 105 responses, the survey revealed that most had completed Year 10 equivalent or above.

56%

were less than 44 years old.

89%

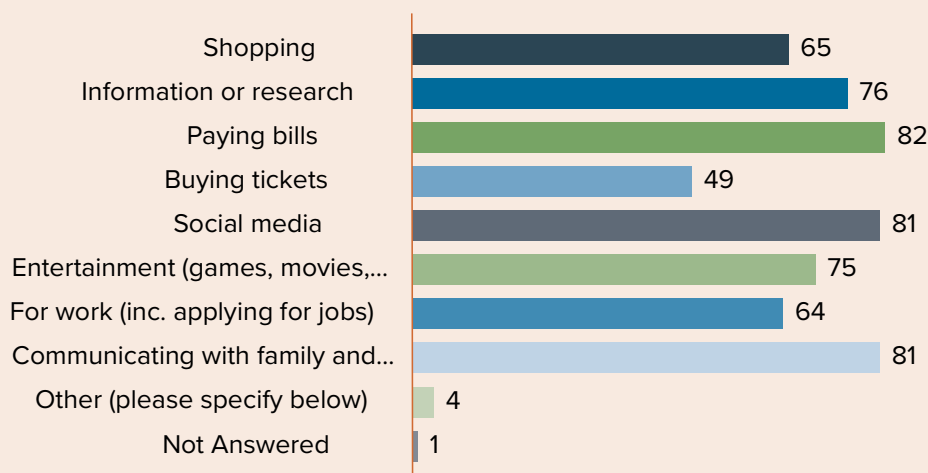
accessing the internet daily for communicating with family, social media, paying bills and shopping online.



Take the survey social media post.



What the internet is used for



Section 4

Aboriginal consumer issues from a consumer's perspective



Consumer knowledge on consumer rights

When people understand their rights, they are more likely to complain if there is a problem with something they have purchased.

In the survey, respondents gave details about their consumer knowledge on signing contracts, dealing with debt collectors, borrowing money, and extended warranties. The results identified that consumers are not overly confident in understanding what to do if things do not go to plan.



Consumer knowledge - Something goes wrong with something I bought

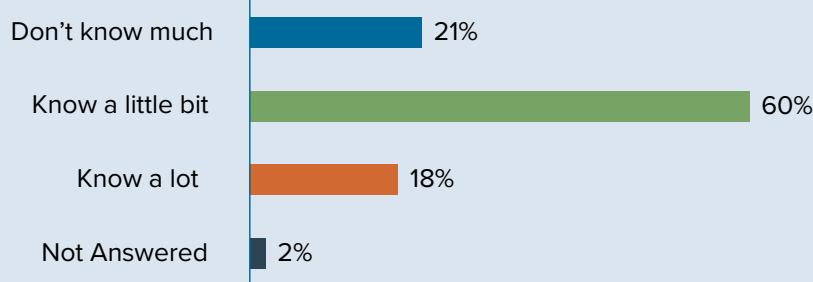
Out of 105 respondents:

60%

admitted to knowing little about their consumer rights and what to do if something goes wrong with something they bought.



When something goes wrong



Some of the comments made by respondents regarding their consumer knowledge are listed below.

- Some shops have discriminated against me and not accepting cash.
- Contract signing - too many words, pressure and rushing.
- I felt pressure to sign a contract.
- I felt pressure to buy an extended warranty.
- I was charged for extra repairs I did not ask for.
- The car/motor vehicle broke down soon after I bought it.



Door-to-door sales

The survey results found that:

46%

people did not know much about their consumer rights when faced with salespeople at their door.

17%

felt they knew about their rights in these situations.

This shows that Aboriginal consumers could benefit from more information and resources to protect themselves.



Warranties

When shopping for new cars, appliances, or electronics, you might be asked to sign up for an extended warranty by a salesperson. Often, buying this extra warranty is unnecessary because products are covered under the Australian Consumer Law.

In the survey:

15%

of people indicated they were confident about warranties.

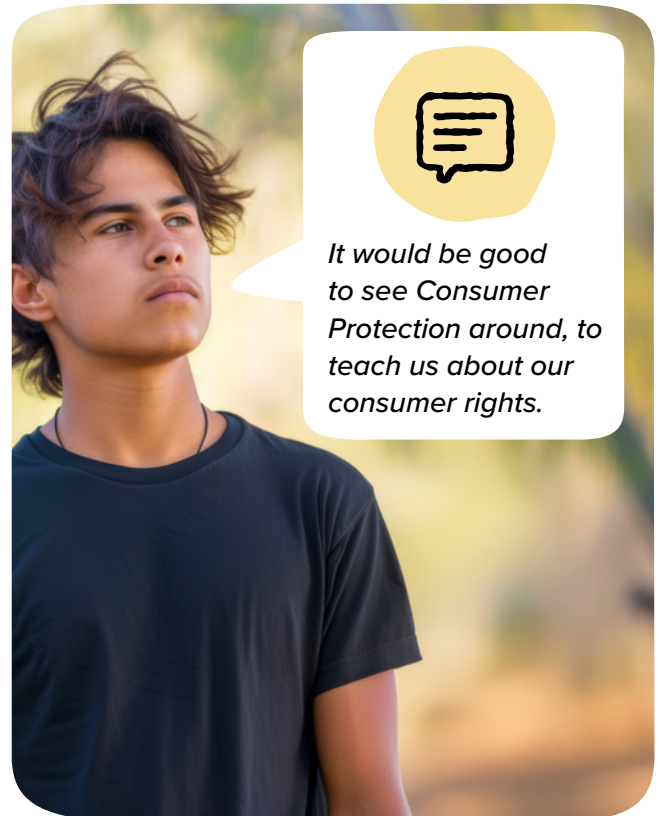
36%

said they did not know much.

47%

said they knew little.

One respondent commented that:



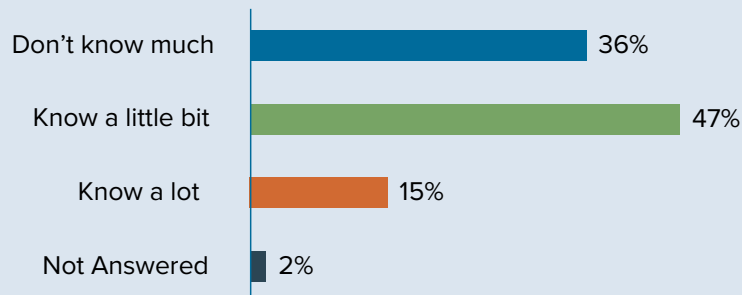
It would be good to see Consumer Protection around, to teach us about our consumer rights.

A respondent comment.



Consumer knowledge - Extended warranties - buying extra time on standard warranties

e.g. five (5) year extended warranty on a fridge





Borrowing money

In relation to borrowing money:

55%

of Aboriginal consumers said they had a limited understanding about borrowing money.

21%

felt they knew more than average about borrowing practices.

Aboriginal consumer responses in the survey showed that:

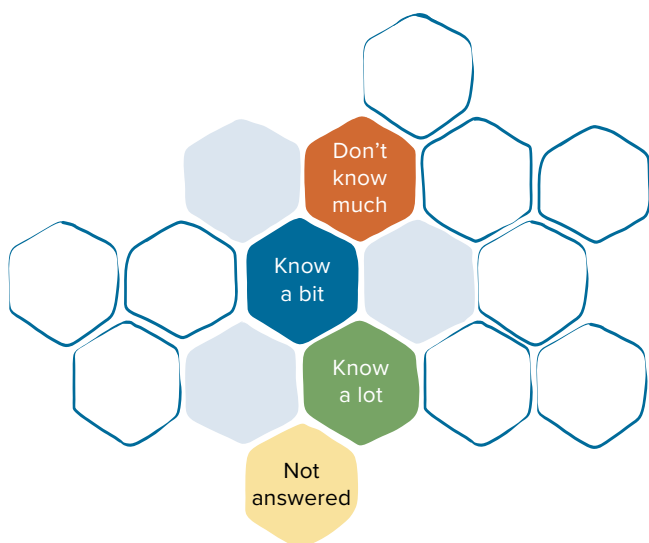
22%

felt they knew enough about signing contracts.

47%

knew a little or did not know much about signing contracts.

These findings highlight the need for further education on financial matters and contract signing to help people make informed decisions.



Tenancy

Consumer Protection collaborates with tenant advocates across the state, who help tenants understand their rights and responsibilities when renting.

Research from Shelter WA⁹ highlights the significant challenges Aboriginal groups face in housing markets. In 2020–21, **these consumer groups** made up 50.5 per cent of people using specialist homelessness services.

In the survey, we asked Aboriginal consumers about their knowledge of dealing with landlords and knowing their tenant rights. The results indicated that:

88%

are not confident in dealing with landlords.

This shows significant improvements in educating Aboriginal people about their tenancy rights is necessary.



Shopping – refund, replace or repair?

Surveyed Aboriginal consumers showed that most issues were about electrical and white goods.

8%

of people said they had issues after buying these items.

69%

concerned about their shopping rights.

Retail services like beauty treatments, haircuts, massages, renting or hiring goods, and short-term accommodation also featured in this question.



Scams and identity theft

The release of the [WA ScamNet Year in Review report](#) revealed that 2023 was a record year for Facebook scams, which is a highly used social media platform for Aboriginal consumers. With reported losses in 2023 up 36 per cent from 2022, data shows buyers and sellers on classified sites and online marketplaces accounted for the highest number of victims across all scam types.

Nationally, the [ACCC 2021 - Targeting Scams report](#) listed the most financially damaging scams for Aboriginal communities are investment scams, followed by phishing and romance scams.

The same report provided by [ACCC 2021 – Targeting scams](#) revealed another increase of Aboriginal people falling victim to scams, and alarmingly, that only

13 per cent of scam victims report these losses. The number of scam losses is even lower for Aboriginal groups, who are less likely to complain or report to the [National Anti-Scams Centre](#).

In WA losses of \$13,644 has been reported by 11 victims in 2022. This data supports the significant under reporting of scams and the department is committed to prioritising scam education and awareness across WA.

Aboriginal consumer responses in the survey to scams showed over 90 per cent have little knowledge of scams and identity theft. The graph below highlights financial losses reported by Aboriginal consumers in 2022.



Financial losses

Online shopping scams	\$361
Classified scams	\$8,083
Phishing	\$0.00
Hacking	\$200
Remote access scams	\$5,000



Raising awareness language poster.



Raising awareness scam poster.



Identity theft and the sale of fake art

Over

50%

of people were extremely concerned about identity theft.

Upward of

69%

are worried about unauthorised counterfeit art products, designed to deceive consumers into believing they were product by an Aboriginal artist.

Fake Indigenous Australian art hurts the sales of real art made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and harms the culture and social value of true art and artifacts.



Paying for funerals

With the recent collapse of Youpla Group, also called the Aboriginal Community Benefit Fund (ACBF) – a provider of funeral products to Aboriginal people across Australia – understanding what funeral products to buy has become more important.

64%

of Aboriginal consumers surveyed were concerned about paying for funerals.

Paying for a funeral can be stressful and is a difficult process in regional or remote locations throughout WA.

Consumer Protection has two dedicated funeral information webpages. The pages include information on applying for a death certificate, funeral pricing, pre-paid funerals, a funeral check list, organising a funeral, and filing complaints.

The Metropolitan Cemeteries Board covers the Perth metropolitan area. In regional and remote areas, local shires and councils can be contacted for additional funeral and burial information.

Consumer Protection provides information sessions on funeral products to Aboriginal community groups across WA.



Information for consumers organising a funeral

Funeral directors can help you organise a funeral service. They must be transparent with their pricing and not make incorrect or misleading statements and not offer unfair contract terms.

Use this information to assist you to organise a funeral service.

Please note: This is not an exhaustive list and has been produced for guidance only.

TASK	TICK ONCE COMPLETED
Does the deceased have funeral insurance or a pre-paid funeral?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a pre-paid burial plot been organised?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the deceased person's will for any funeral preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the deceased person have funds in their bank account that could be used to pay for the funeral? Contact the bank to find out whether funds can be accessed to pay for the funeral.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was the deceased person a returned service person or did they belong to a club, pensioner association or a trade union that may entitle them to a payment that could help pay for the funeral?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you or did the deceased person receive Centrelink payments? If so, check if there is bereavement payment/allowance available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seek quotes from at least three funeral companies. Funeral directors are legally required to provide you with an itemised price list within two business days of request.	<input type="checkbox"/>
When choosing your funeral company, are you satisfied they offered enough information about your options and listened to your requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once you have a chosen a funeral company, contact the funeral director to organise the funeral.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scan the QR code to download the full funeral checklist.

Scan here





Motor vehicle matters

Since May 2019, Consumer Protection has collected data on motor vehicle complaints from Aboriginal consumers. There were 142 complaints against new and used car dealers and repairers.

Out of these:

53%

had positive outcomes.

\$213,688

was returned to consumers.

25%+

of complaints did not have a positive outcome.

Common reasons for bad outcomes included lack of or conflicting evidence, which led to no mutual agreement.

Aboriginal consumers surveyed indicated that:

73%

are concerned about buying a used car.

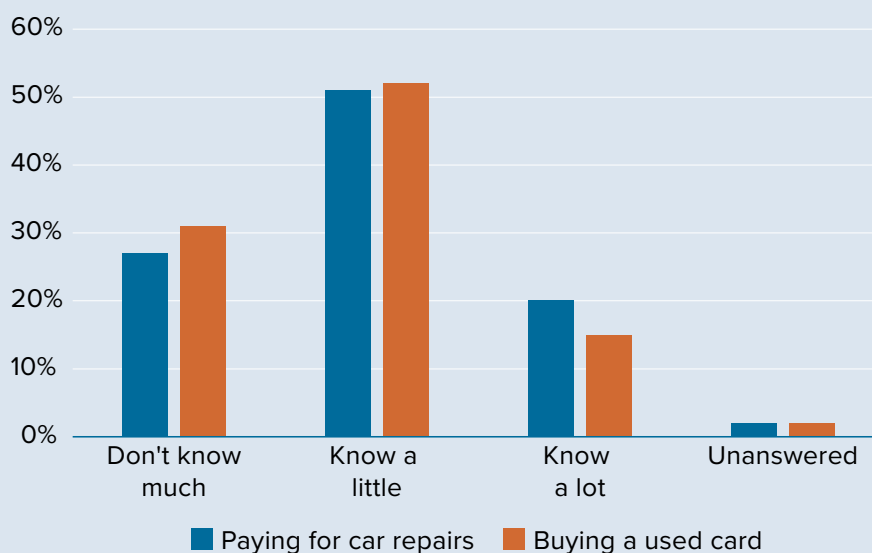
81%

were concerned about car repair issues and knew little about motor vehicle matters.

The lack of knowledge on motor vehicle matters are a great concern and primary focus for Consumer Protection.



Consumer knowledge on motor vehicles





Motor vehicle repairs

We asked Aboriginal consumers if they had paid for motor vehicle repairs in the past two years:

66%

of respondents saying that they had.

13%

mentioned their car took longer to repair than originally told.

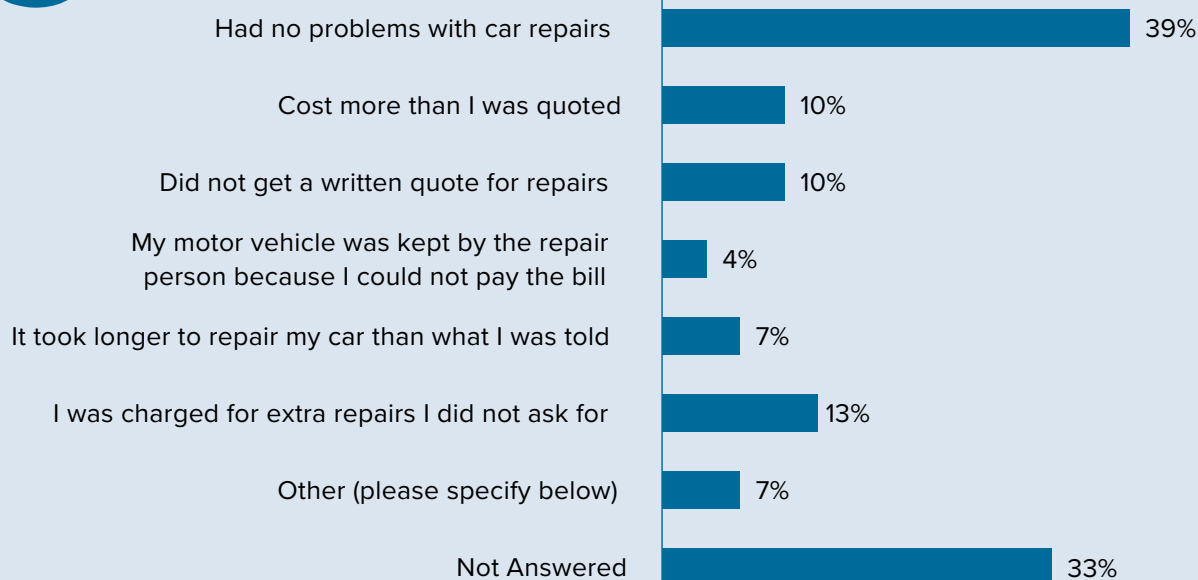
It was noted in the survey that:

75%

of Aboriginal consumers are concerned with car repair issues.



MV Repair issues



Section 5

Enquiries and complaints data collection

Enquiries

In 2019, Consumer Protection began gathering data of people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Since then, 202 consumers have made enquiries. This information helps us understand key issues under the laws Consumer Protection manages.

Of the 202 enquiries:

40%

were related to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* (WA).

33%

of enquiries were related to the *Motor Vehicle Dealers Act 1973* and *Motor Vehicle Repairers Act 2003*.

21%

of enquiries were around the Australian Consumer Law for goods and services.

4%

Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (WA) and *Charitable Collections Act 1946* (WA).

2%

for the *Building Act 2011* (WA).

Complaints by region

The data collected allows Consumer Protection to analyse specific complaint types and see where they come from, down to specific regions and locations.



Kimberley west and east data

The Kimberley region has a population of 14,408¹⁰ people who identify as Aboriginal.

Motor vehicle sales, service and repairs took the top spot with 44 per cent of all complaints from the Kimberley being motor vehicle related. Most complaints came in from Broome.



Pilbara west and east

In the Pilbara west and east, complaints related to motor vehicles, retail, building, tenancy, and real estate with most complaints from Karratha and West Pilbara.

¹⁰ Retrieved from www.abs.gov.au



Gascoyne/Murchison and Mid West

For the Gascoyne/Murchison and Mid West, motor vehicle sales, service and repairs took the top spot with 41 per cent. Most complaints came from Geraldton, and particularly the Geraldton suburb, Rangeway.



Goldfields/Esperance and Great Southern

From the time Consumer Protection has been gathering data, there have been no recorded complaints or enquiries made from Aboriginal consumers living in the Goldfields/Esperance and the Great Southern regions, potentially due to low Consumer Protection representation, outreach, and engagement in the area for some time.



Perth and greater Perth

The data collected for the suburbs of Perth have been grouped together to include north-north-eastern (N/NE) suburbs, north-northwest suburbs (N/NW), eastern suburbs, and southern suburbs. Motor vehicles car sales, repairs and service received most complaints in all these regions.

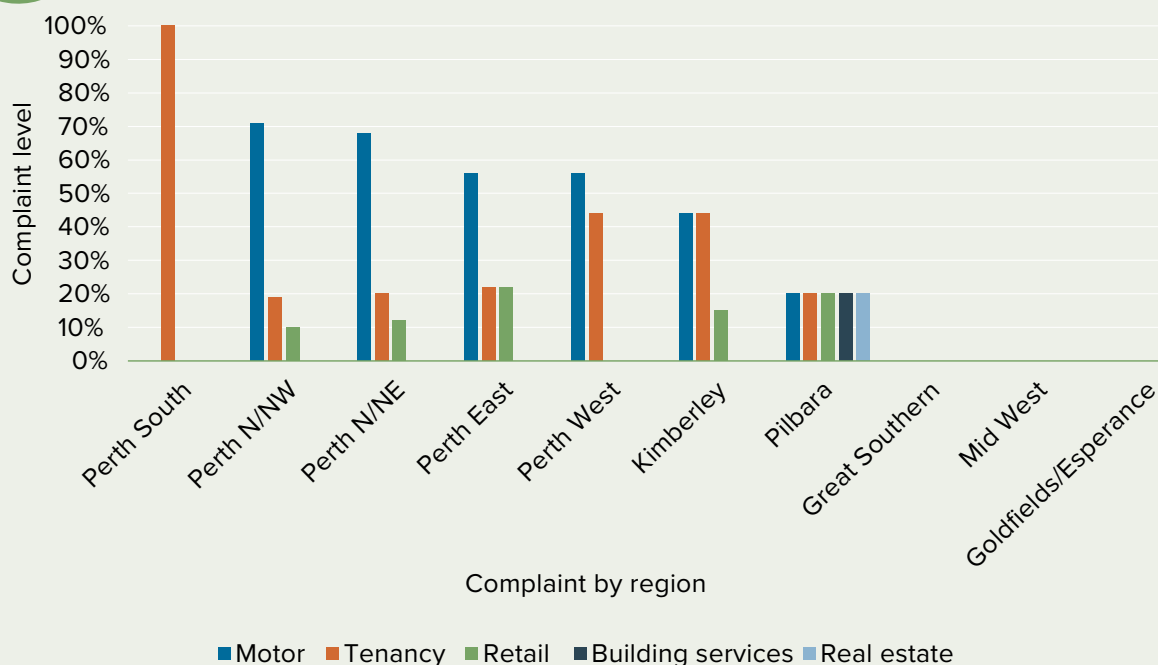
Complaints by location

Consumer Protection can generate data about complaint types, the region they are reported in, and can even pinpoint a specific location.

The graphs below highlights complaints received in different regions in WA and can be broken down into postcodes.

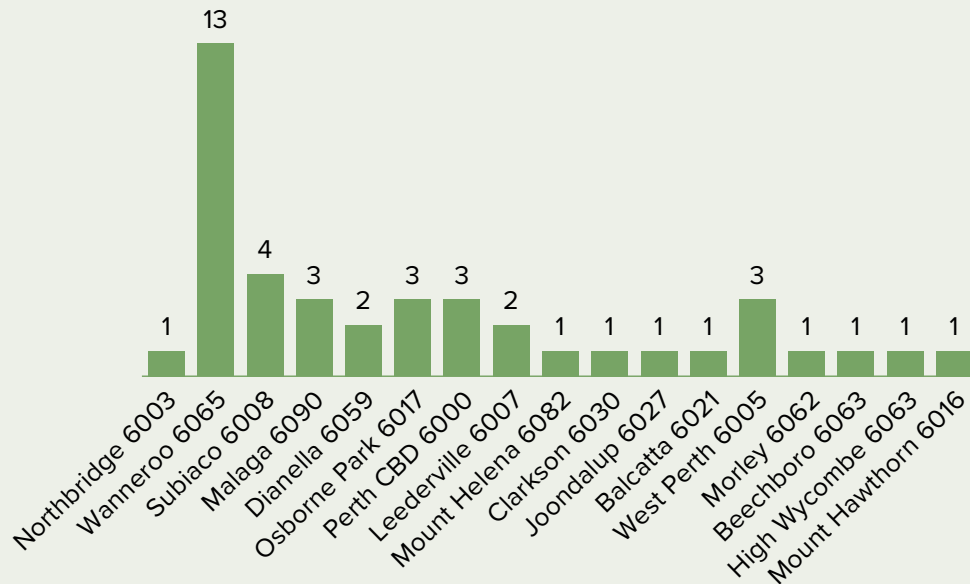


MV Repair issues





Perth N/NW complaint locations



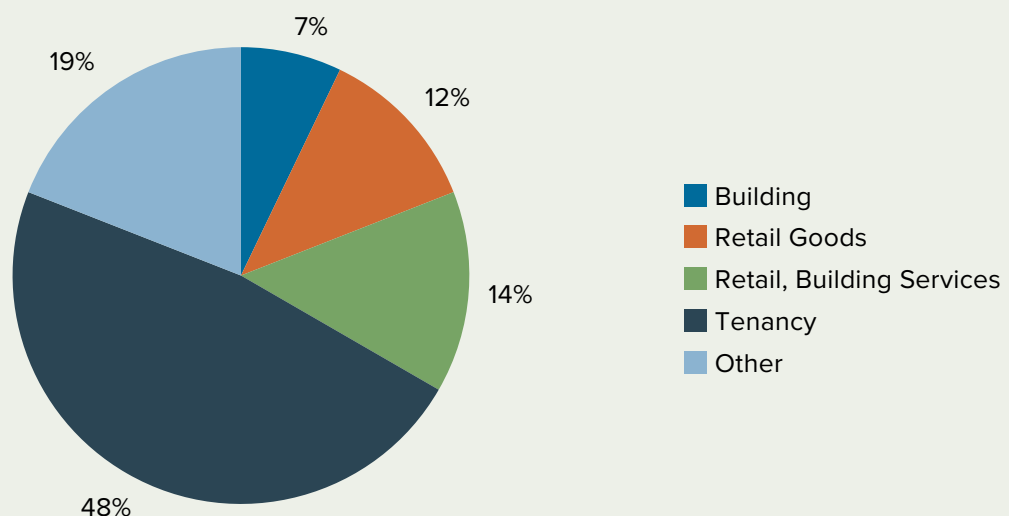
Locations not identified

When people call Consumer Protection to make an enquiry, not everyone discloses their location. This information is voluntary and assists when mapping which locations people are making an enquiry from and what they are making an enquiry about.

From data collected, the graph below identifies the types of complaints received, but without knowing the location, it makes it hard for Consumer Protection to provide targeted outreach and education initiatives.



Unidentified consumer enquiry locations



Section 6

Identified insights

Community education, outreach, and engagement initiatives

Reduce barriers and build trust with Aboriginal organisations

Through engagement, Consumer Protection can build stronger connections between community members, organisations, and local authorities. By providing outreach and education, the team helps people gain the knowledge and skills they need to make informed choices and actively participate in their decision-making. This approach supports the development of targeted programs that make a real difference.

The survey taken by Aboriginal consumers asked if they were aware of Consumer Protection's resources available for outreach and education.

Responses showed that:

50%

were familiar with radio.

6%

with printed materials.

Others mentioned direct messaging, social media, newsletters, and articles as effective engagement methods.

The survey also highlighted that:

64%

of respondents had not seen a Consumer Protection presence at community events.

Respondents suggested that Consumer Protection attend more local and cultural events to engage better with the community and increase visibility. They recommended attending NAIDOC events, open days, career expos, and regional events like the Geraldton Sunshine Festival and Champion Centre events. Other ideas included providing practical education sessions on contracts, loans, and scams, and offering informal sit-down discussions with community members.

To strengthen trust, it is key to reduce barriers by focusing on visible, regular, and culturally relevant outreach.

Increasing face-to-face engagement with elders, carers, and youth would show a commitment to understanding and addressing community concerns. Working in closer partnership with Aboriginal organisations can also support Consumer Protection in meeting the unique needs of Aboriginal consumers and build stronger connections.

Section 7

Aboriginal consumer issues - the stakeholder's perspective

Seventeen community service providers voiced their concerns on consumer issues that impact Aboriginal clients.

For instance:

24%

of respondents indicated that they were not familiar with any issues relating to identity theft.

18%

were unaware of problems associated with door-to-door sales

18%

were uncertain about the impact of this practice.

These issues, such as door-to-door sales tactics and identity theft, are of significant concern to Aboriginal consumers but appear to be under recognised by some stakeholders.

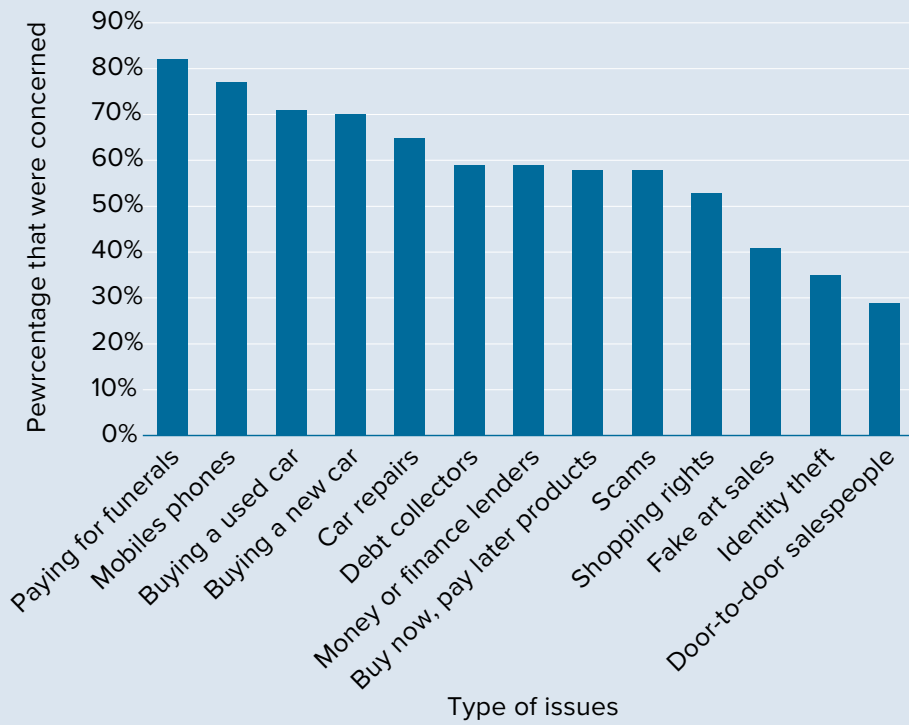
47%

of stakeholders responded that they are willing to promote Consumer Protection and our messages.

This percentage is considerably low and shows there is room for improvement in this space.



Consumer issues that impact Aboriginal people



Section 8

Recommendations

This report aims to highlight areas for future community engagement and awareness campaigns to meet the needs of Aboriginal consumers in WA. The key findings and recommendations for future public education and outreach include:



1. Continue to build relationships with regional Aboriginal organisations and communities to share consumer information on topics like:

- tenancy rights and responsibilities;
- funeral products;
- shopping rights;
- buying new or used vehicles;
- making informed choices on vehicle repairs; and
- protecting against scams.



2. Revise the Ask Us Facebook page to improve consumer education and engagement on rights and responsibilities.



3. Develop and share culturally appropriate resources — such as publications and digital content — to promote Consumer Protection messages.



4. Attend local events and gatherings (e.g. interagency meetings, yarning circles, Elders' gatherings) to share updates on consumer law.



5. Collaborate with regional officers to improve outreach to Aboriginal consumers in regional and remote areas.



6. Distribute national consumer campaigns to Aboriginal consumers across WA.



7. Simplify all digital content on the Aboriginal consumers' webpage to make it easier to understand.

These recommendations focus on building connections, improving resources, and ensuring accessible consumer information for Aboriginal communities.

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