



Local Government

Spatial Reference

Group

GIS Good Practice Framework



Assessment: 2020-2021

Vision: Appropriate and effective spatial capability is established across all Local Councils and is recognised as fundamental to council efficiency and service delivery.

About this Document

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Executive Summary

The role of geospatial information and platforms has never been more prominent than in the last 12 months. Communication of the locations of bushfires and communities at risk, and Covid 19 cases and restrictions have relied on readily understood map-based information.

With more 60% of Australia's Local Government leaders considering or undertaking Smart City or Regions projects¹ it is timely to reflect on our levels of geospatial (GIS) capabilities.

The GIS Good Practice Framework (GPF) assessment helps Local Governments to understand how their current level of investment in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) or geospatial technologies and skilled resources is meeting industry-wide benchmarks.

The MAV and the Local Government Spatial Reference Group (LGSRG) implemented the annual GIS Good Practice Framework (GPF) assessment to assist working towards a common vision: *Appropriate and effective spatial capability is established across all Local Councils and is recognised as fundamental to council efficiency and service delivery.*

The 2020-2021 GPF assessment was completed by 69% of all Councils across Victoria. This report presents the results of the 2020-2021 Good Practice Framework assessment and compares them to previous years.

The GPF defines good practice for five proficiency areas. At a summary level, it appears that there has been no change in capabilities across each of these focus areas. However, the devil is in the details as further described in the report.

There has been a decline in the general geospatial capabilities of large shires and their ability to maintain the Victorian Government's Vicmap data products.

However, there is a positive news as small shires and inner metropolitan Councils have increased their combined asset management - GIS capabilities. There is also a trend up in community engagement.

This year's survey introduced questions relating to level of preparedness for receiving data from the State Government's \$45 million Digital Cadastre Modernisation (DCM) program and adoption of the GDA 2020 datum. These changes will significantly increase the accuracy and reliability of Victoria's Vicmap data suite and deliver benefits to Local Governments.

The State Government through the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning has also recently committed to investing in Digital Twins covering both metropolitan and rural areas. The combined investments in DCM and Digital Twins will underpin Smart City programs.

Councils use the GPF results in many different ways. Many Council officers discuss the GPF Assessment Reports with their Council Executive Team. Reports are often used to support decisions regarding investment in people, processes and technologies.

¹ <https://www.smartlocalgovernment.com.au/>

Statewide averages for the five proficiency focus areas are as follows

Proficiency Focus Areas	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Spatial Capability	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Core Data Maintenance	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Property and Rates Integration	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Asset Management to GIS Integration	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Community Engagement & Self Service	N/A	N/A	D	D	D	D	D	D

(Highest Grade)				(Lowest Grade)
A	B	C	D	E

The following report presents the GPF assessment results as averages for statewide and different types of Councils.

Councils that have subscribed to the Local Government Spatial Reference Group and participated in this year’s GPF Assessment will receive a custom report presenting their responses against statewide averages and their relevant type of Council.

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1. Introduction

The following strategic vision was developed for the Victorian Local Government spatial sector.

“Appropriate and effective spatial capability is established across all Local Councils and is recognised as fundamental to council efficiency and service delivery”

GIS Good Practice Framework (GPF)

To progress toward the strategic vision, the Local Government Spatial Reference Group (LGSRG), with the support of Spatial Vision, developed a GIS Good Practice Framework (GPF).

The purpose of the GPF is to assist Councils in assessing their awareness and level of adoption of sector-wide accepted ‘good practices’.

1.1 Proficiency Focus Areas

The GPF focuses on five areas of proficiency relating to Council practices as presented in Table 1. The type of spatial technology used by Council is not relevant.

Proficiency Focus Areas	Description
Spatial Capability	Recognition of spatial capability to support council service delivery
Core Vicmap Data Maintenance	Support for core Vicmap data for use by Council and the public
Property and Rates Integration	Effective integration between GIS and Property & Rates data
Asset Management Integration	Effective integration between GIS & Asset data
Community Engagement & Self Service	Spatial technologies support relationships with the community and delivery of services when and where required

Table 1 - Proficiency Focus Areas

1.2 Objectives of the Good Practice Framework

The objectives of the GPF include:

- Establishing a practical approach for councils to deliver consistent and standardised output.
- Ensuring the approach is sufficiently flexible to account for different Council capabilities.
- Enabling measurement and tracking of levels of GIS good practice adoption.
- Developing sector influence (bargaining power) to lobby agencies, solution vendors and consultancies to recognise and adhere to agreed standards.
- Supporting future Council directions such as increasing movement towards cloud based systems and platforms.

1.3 Application of the Good Practice Framework

The Survey Questions can be used as a KPI framework for the ongoing development of your GIS Function.

A good example can be found in the following case study from the Rural City of Wangaratta. [Sharing the GIS Good Practice Framework Survey results with the Corporate Management Team](#)² prepared by Jane Kaye.

Finally, with the addition of GDA2020 and Digital Cadastre Modernisation section the survey can be used as a data source to help support a business case to undertake these large data transformation projects.

2. Methodology

The GIS Good Practice Framework questionnaire was developed in conjunction with members of the LGSRG Committee.

This year's assessment retains the same questions as the 2019 – 2020 questionnaire, enabling comparison of assessment grades over time.

New questions were added to the survey this year, to collect information around the adaption to GDA 2020 and the Digital Cadastre Modernisation Project.

An email was sent to each council with a link to the questionnaire. Respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire and ensure the manager overseeing GIS reviews and authorises the response prior to submission.

Reponses were received between 29th October and 2nd December, 2020.

² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11MxHPHL05i8P5AcaKO5tnpuInJxXQjbR/view>

3. Findings

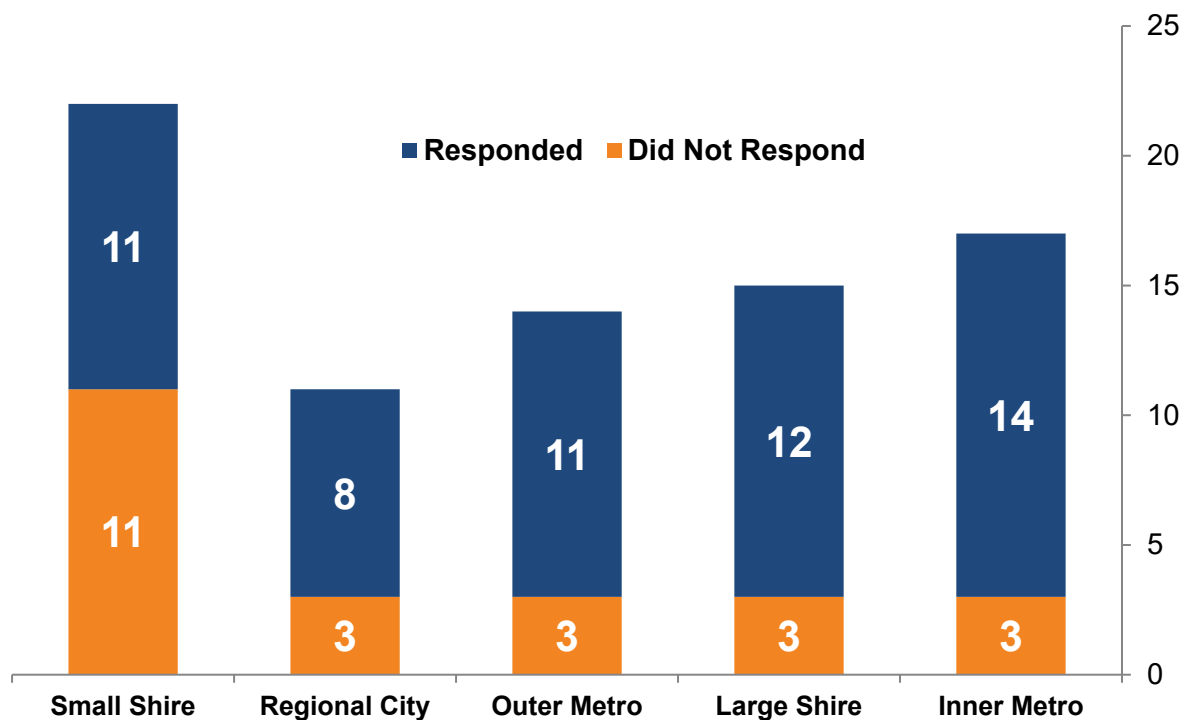
3.1 Response Overview

A total of 56 valid responses were received for 2020-2021.
Responses from previous years: 57 for 2019-2020, 62 for 2018-2019, 59 for 2017, 60 for 2016, 63 for 2015, 59 for 2014, and 49 for 2013.

3.2 Council Breakdown by Type

Respondents represented a range of metropolitan, rural and regional city councils. Figure 1 below presents the count of responding and non-responding councils by the MAV council classification.

Figure 1 - Breakdown of participating and non-participating councils by classification



Assessment Legend

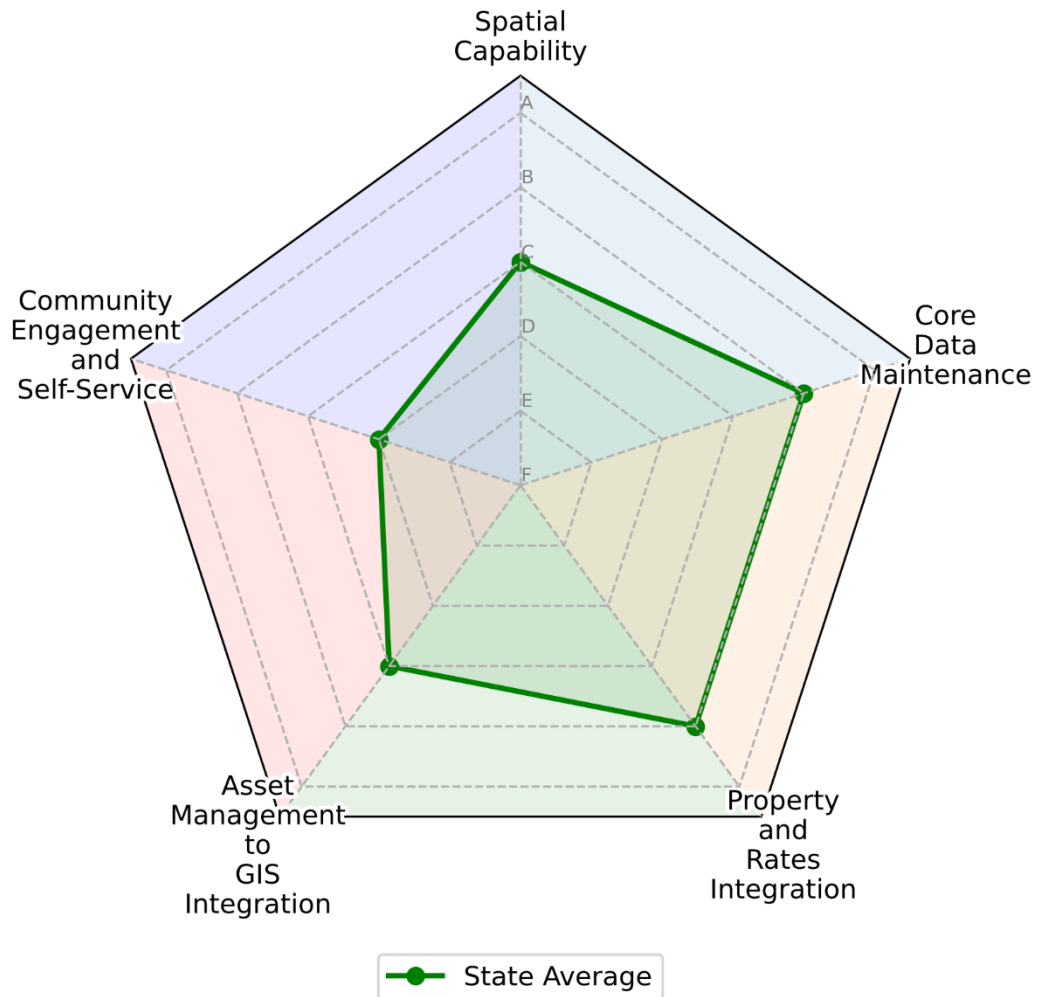
The following assessment legend is intended to assist councils in interpreting their summary grades for each of the five Proficiency Focus Areas relative to the state average and their relevant type of Council. These grades are provided at the beginning of Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this report.

(Best Grade)				(Lowest Grade)
A	B	C	D	E

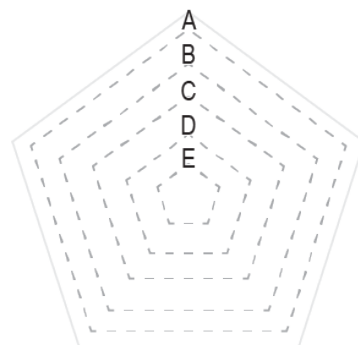
3.3 Focus Areas Overview

The following Figure 2 provides a graphical overview of the statewide results for 2020-21.

Figure 2 –State average, by focus area



In 2020-21, the state average is once again strongest in the areas of Core Data Maintenance and Property and Rates Integration (B grade); Asset Management and general Spatial Capability are slightly lower (C grade); and the area with the lowest average and hence in most need of improvement across the state is Community Engagement (D grade).



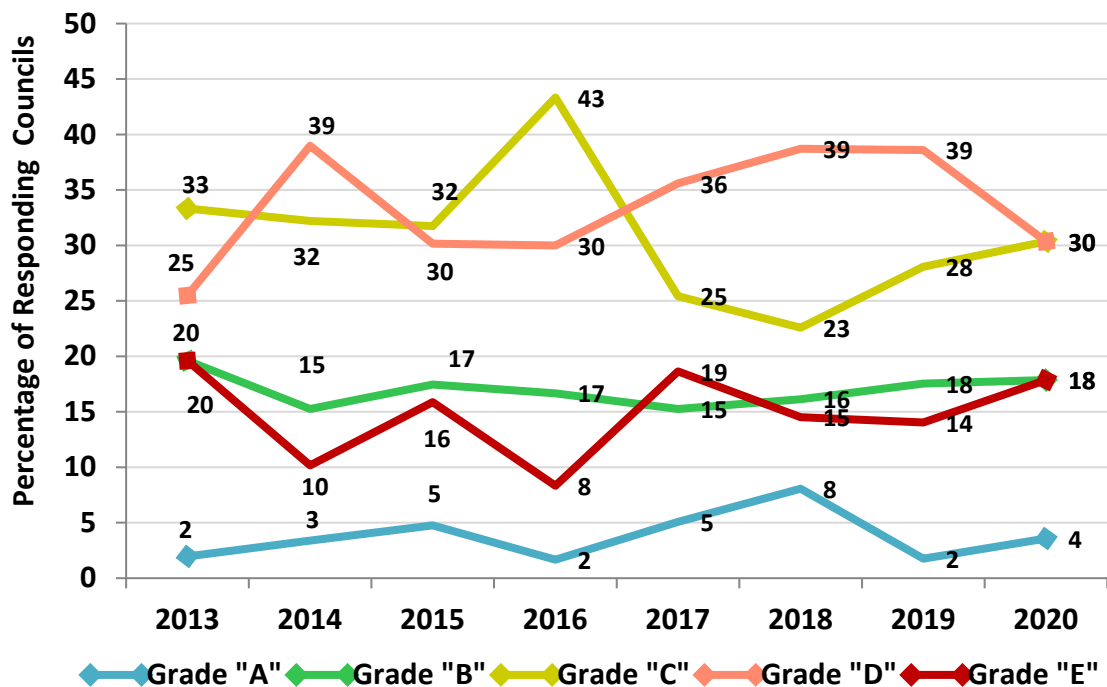
4. Spatial Capability

<i>Composite Score: "Recognition of Spatial Capability to Support Council Service Delivery."</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State average	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Small Shire average	D	D	D	C	D	D	D	D
Large Shire average	D	D	C	C	D	C	D	D
Regional City average	C	D	C	D	D	D	D	D
Outer Metro average	B	B	C	C	B	C	C	C
Inner Metro average	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C

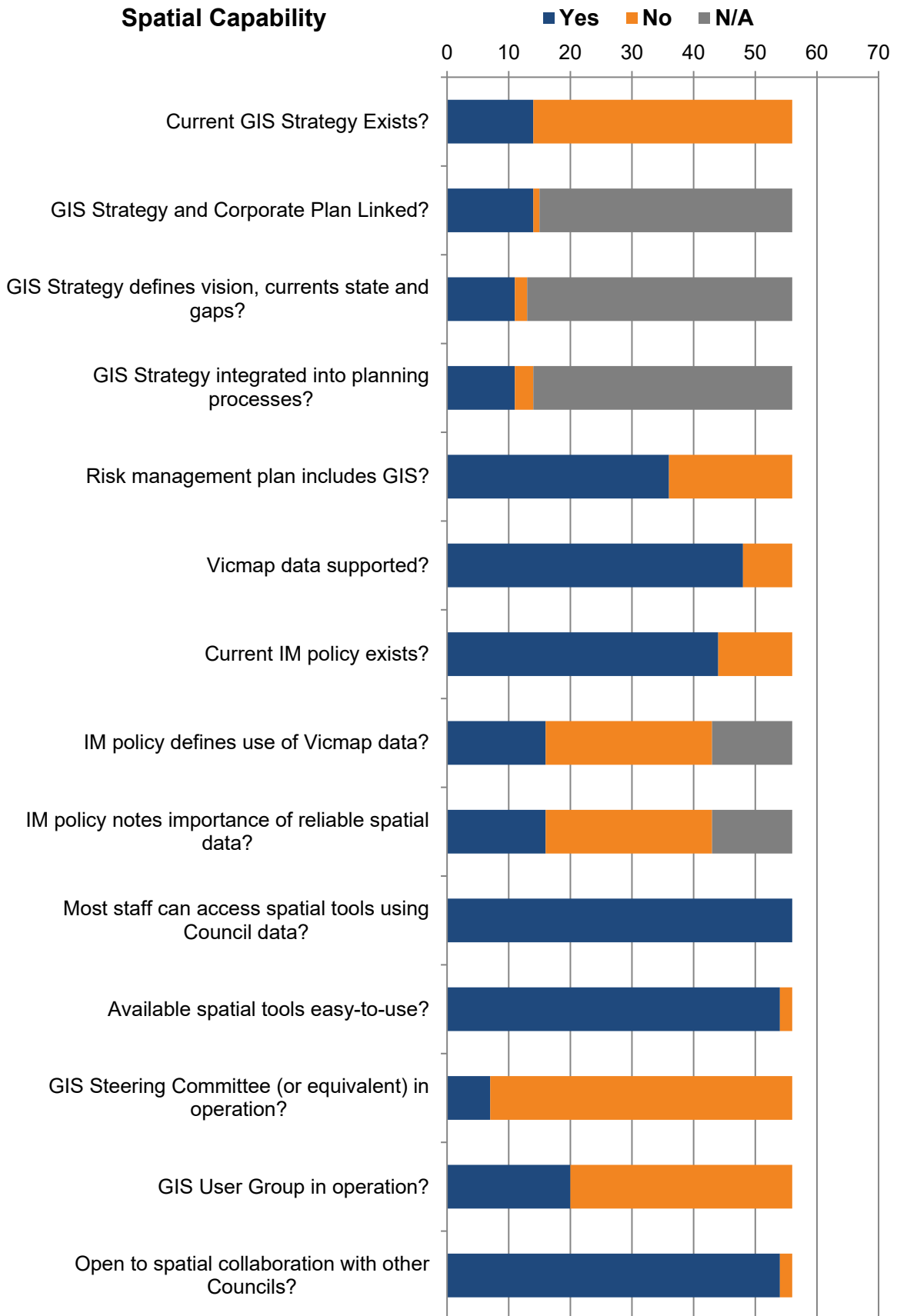
The state average Spatial Capability grade for the sector has remained steady at a "C" since the survey was commenced. Among council types, all remained uniform overall, except for Large Shire councils which between this year and the last have decreased to a "D" grade, though remained balance with +0 overall grade changes. +3 Inner Metro and +2 Small Shire councils raised their score; 0 Regional Cities raised theirs; and -3 Outer Metro councils decreased their scores.

As seen below, "D" grade scores decreased by 9%, "A" grades doubled to 4% but "E" grades also increased by 4%.

% Change in Councils' GIS Good Practice Grades: Spatial Capability



Statewide Responses (count): Spatial Capability

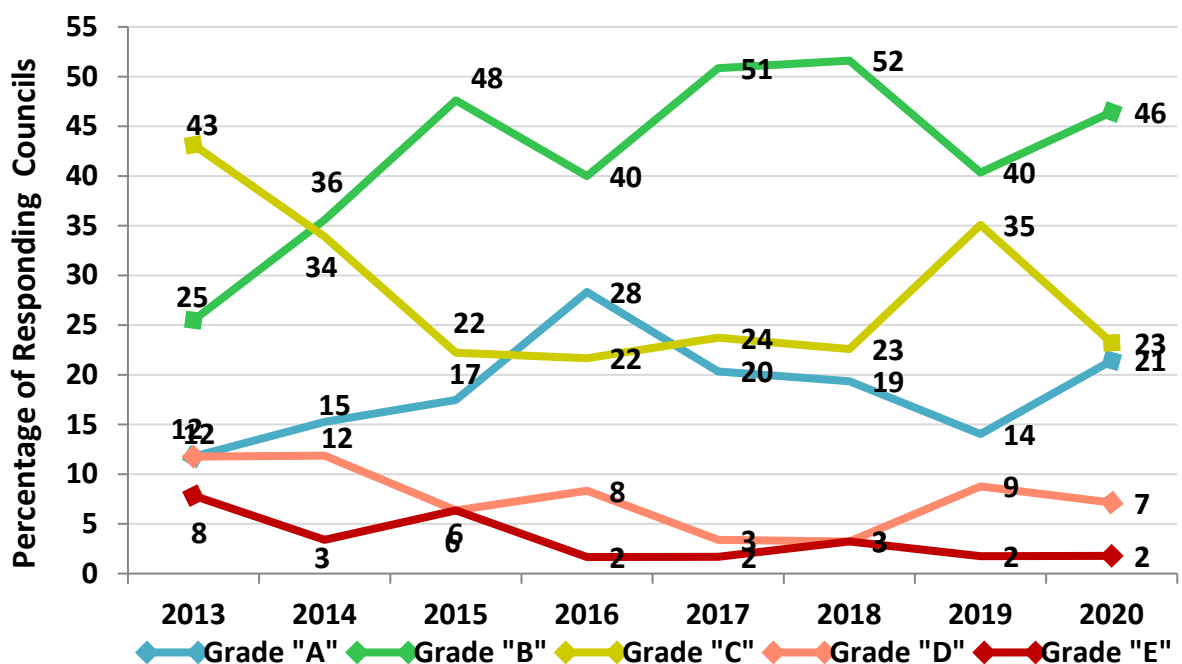


5. Core Vicmap Data Maintenance

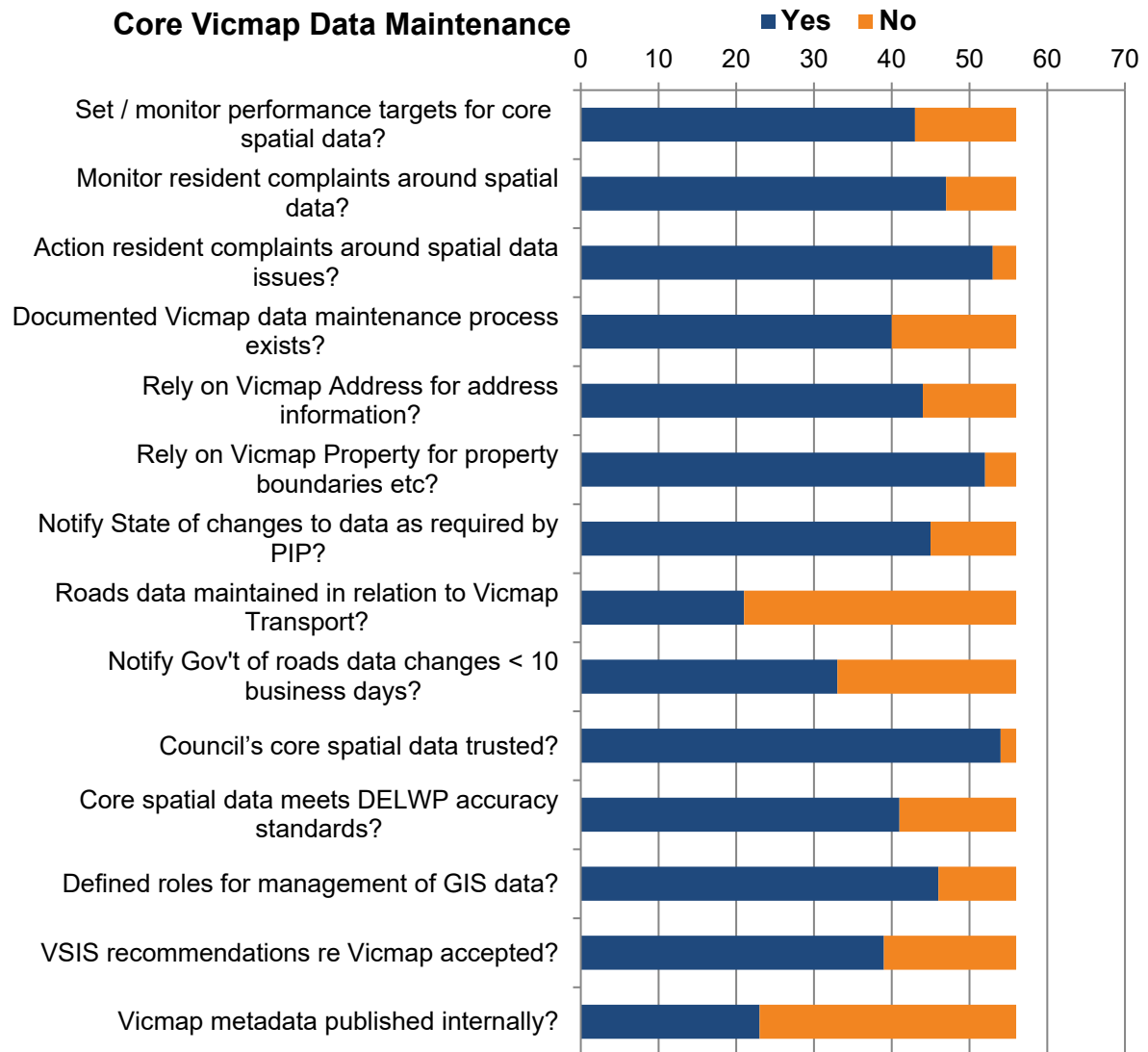
<i>Composite Score: "Support for Core Vicmap Data for use by Council and the public"</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State average	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Small Shire average	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	B
Large Shire average	C	C	B	B	B	B	C	C
Regional City average	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	B
Outer Metro average	B	B	B	A	A	B	B	B
Inner Metro average	C	C	B	B	B	B	B	B

Overall there was a statewide increase in Core Vicmap Data Maintenance scores. This year Small Shires increased back to "B" whilst Large shires maintained their "C" grading. As below, there was a general increase of approximately 6% this year for "B" grades and "A" grades with a corresponding decrease in "C" and "D" grades. Despite this, the statewide average has remained at "B".

% Change in Councils' GIS Good Practice Grades: Core Vicmap Data Maintenance



Statewide Responses (count): Core Vicmap Data Maintenance



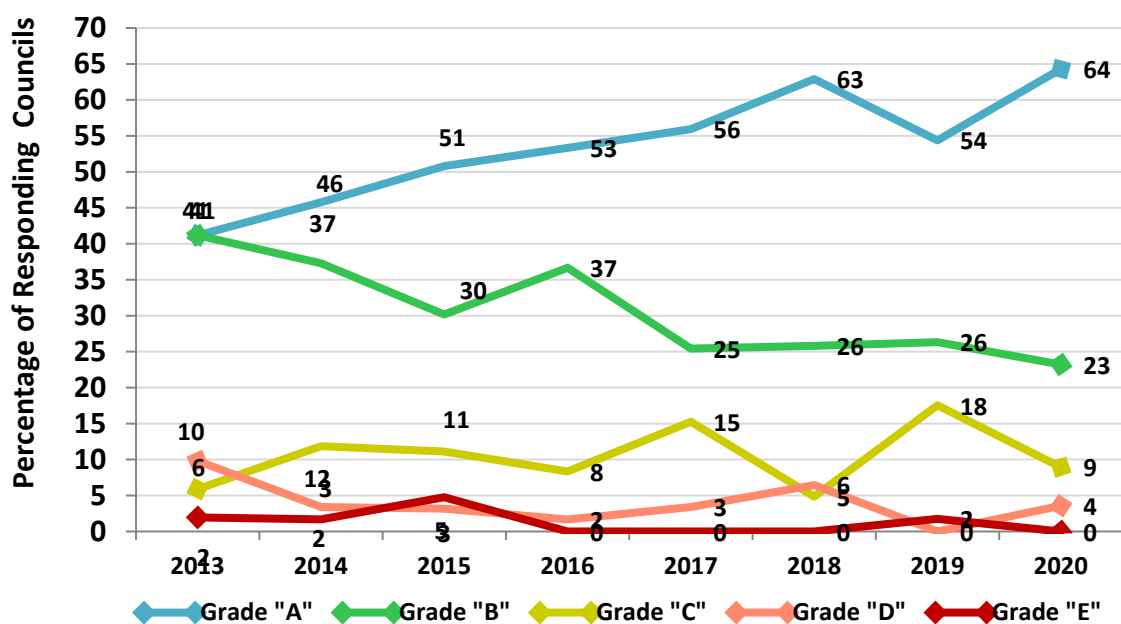
6. Property and Rates (P&R) Integration

<i>Composite Score: “Effective Integration between GIS and Property & Rates Data”</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State average	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Small Shire average	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Large Shire average	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Regional City average	B	B	B	B	A	A	B	A
Outer Metro average	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Inner Metro average	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	A

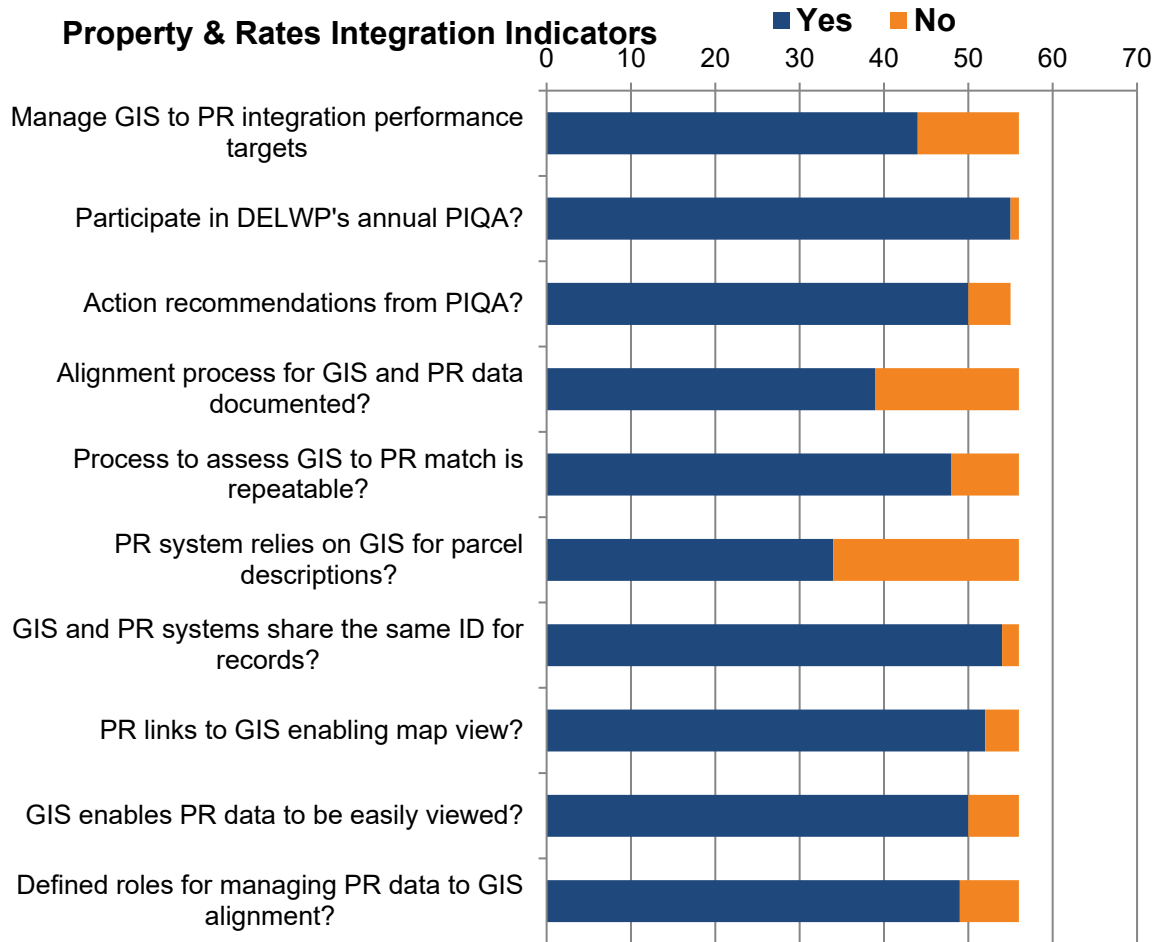
The state average Property & Rates Integration grade has again remained at a steady “B” this year. All other averages remained the same too, save for Regional Cities which improved from a “B” to an “A”.

As below, “A” grade respondents increased the most by +10% this year, correlating with a drop in “C” (-9%), “E” (-2%) and “B” (-3%) grade councils. However there has been an increase in “D” grades by 4%. These results are very similar to the results seen in 2018.

% Change in Councils' GIS Good Practice Grades: Property and Rates Integration



Statewide Responses (count): Property & Rates Integration



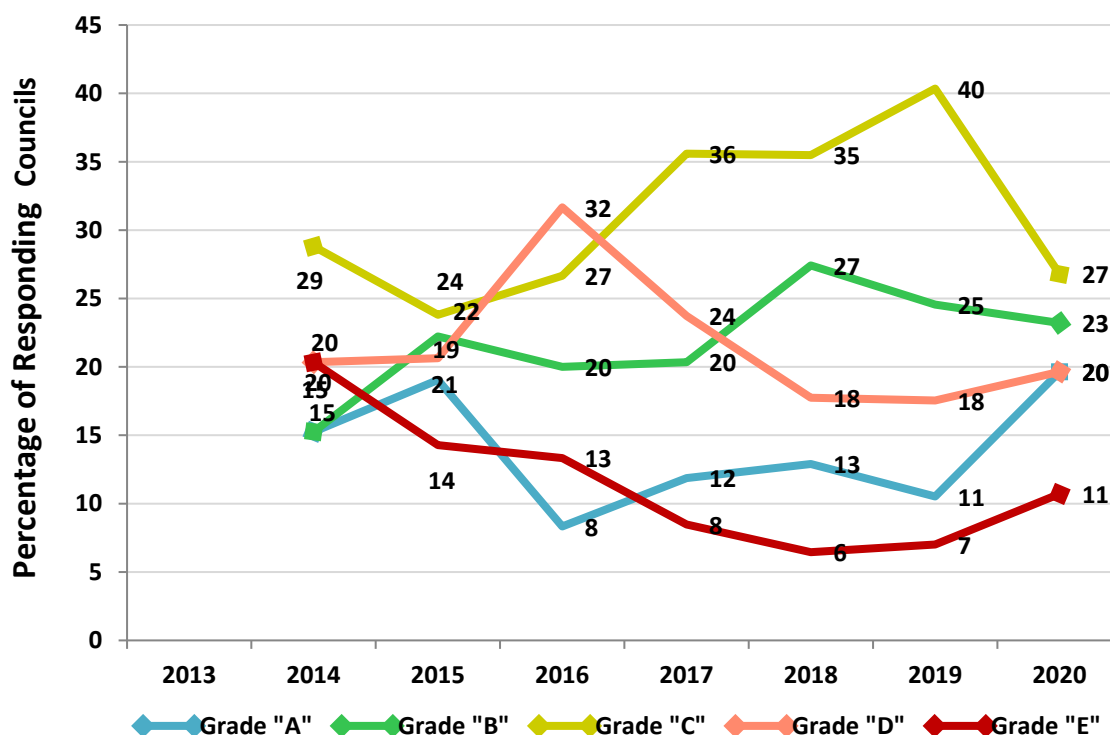
7. Asset Management to GIS Integration

Composite Score: “Effective Integration between GIS & Asset Data”	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State average	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Small Shire average	N/A	D	D	D	D	D	C	D
Large Shire average	N/A	C	C	D	C	C	C	C
Regional City average	N/A	C	B	C	C	C	C	C
Outer Metro average	N/A	C	B	B	B	B	B	B
Inner Metro average	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	B	B

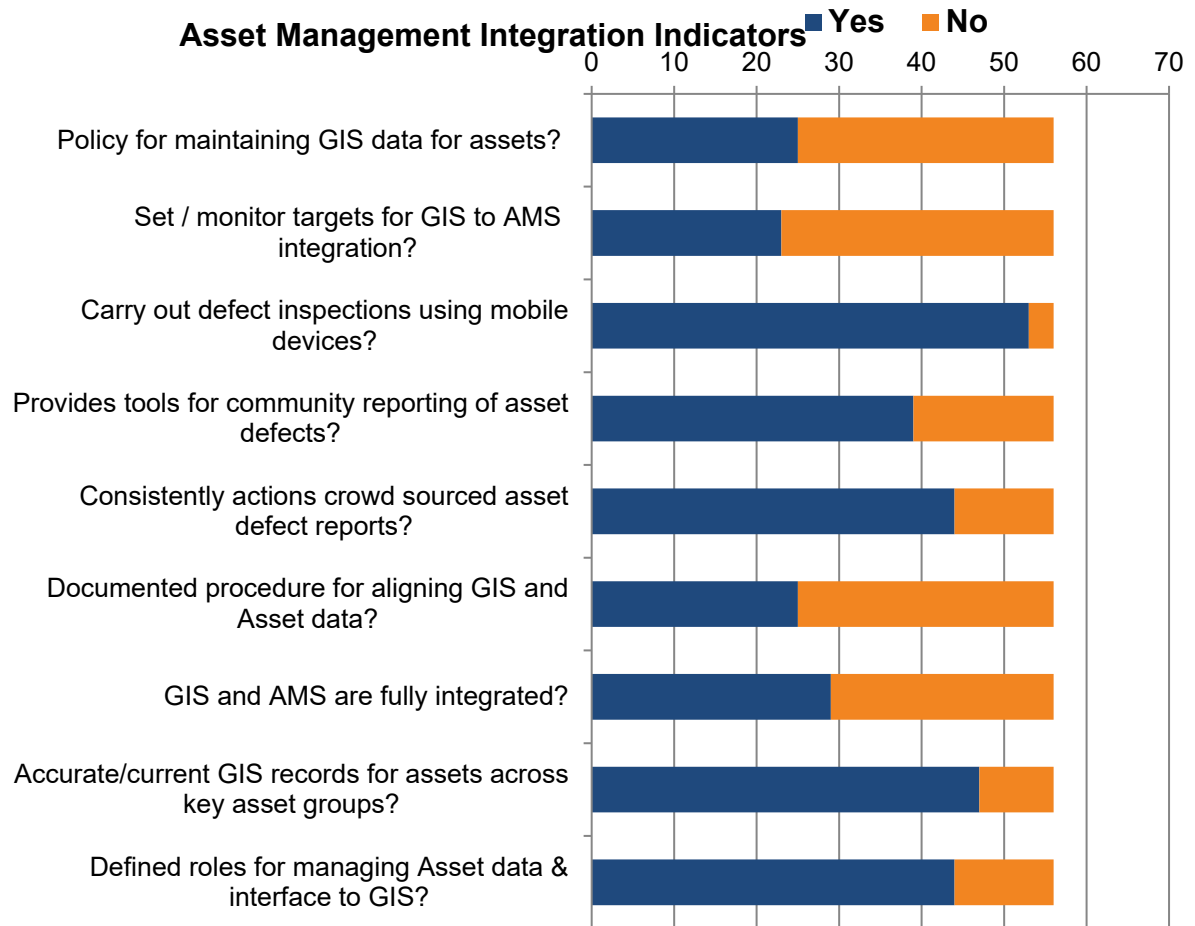
The state average Asset Management to GIS integration grade for the sector is once again a steady “C”, as it has been for the last 7 years. Within this average is a notable decrease in Small Shires from a “C” to a “D” grade.

Interestingly, the overall trend in the chart below sees a substantial decrease in in councils with a “C” grade by 13% and an increase in “A” grades by 9%. However, there was also an increase in “E” and “D” grades by 4% and 2% respectively. The decrease of “B” grades was 2%. Whilst the “A” grades are at a 5 year high, the other grades are somewhat plateauing (with the exception of “C” grades equally proportioning away to the positive and negative ends).

% Change in Councils' GIS Good Practice Grades: Asset Management Integration



Statewide Responses (count): Asset Management Integration



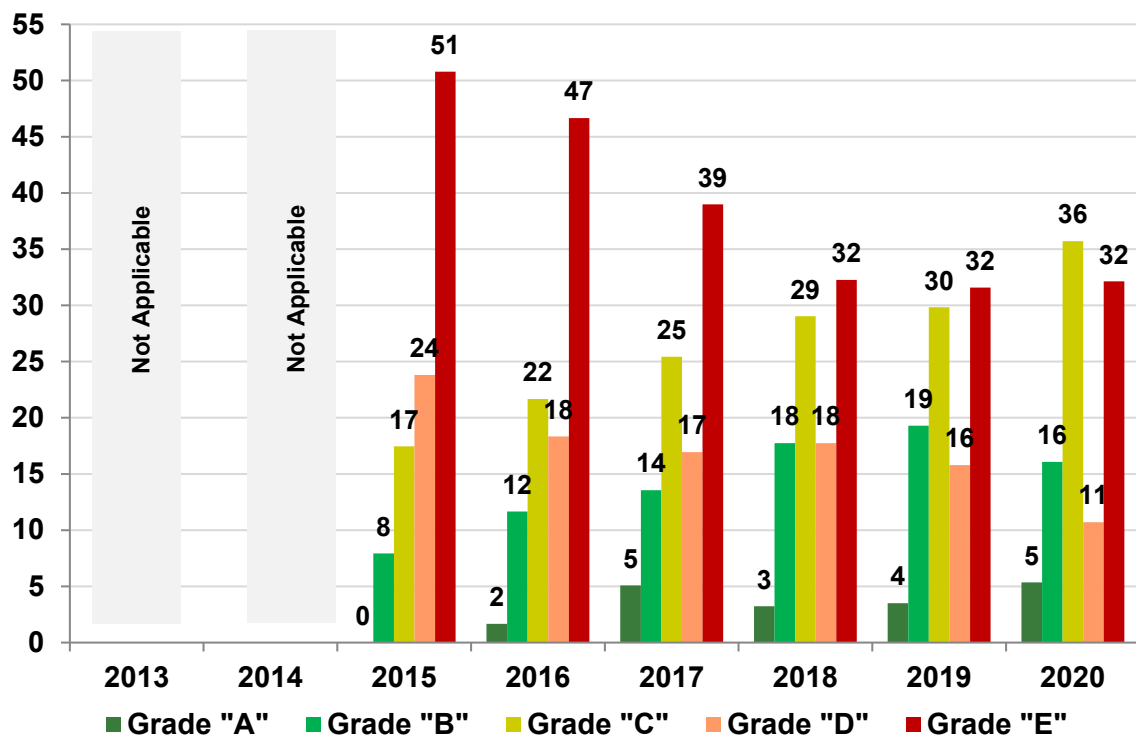
8. Community Engagement & Self Service

<i>Composite Score: “Spatial technologies support relationships with the community and delivery of services when and where required”</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State average	N/A	N/A	D	D	D	D	D	D
Small Shire average	N/A	N/A	E	E	D	D	D	D
Large Shire average	N/A	N/A	D	D	D	D	D	D
Regional City average	N/A	N/A	D	D	C	C	C	C
Outer Metro average	N/A	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	C
Inner Metro average	N/A	N/A	D	D	D	C	C	C

This is now the sixth year that the GPF assessment has included a series of questions pertaining to *Community Engagement and Self Service* as a proficiency focus area. The state average for this area is once again a “D”.

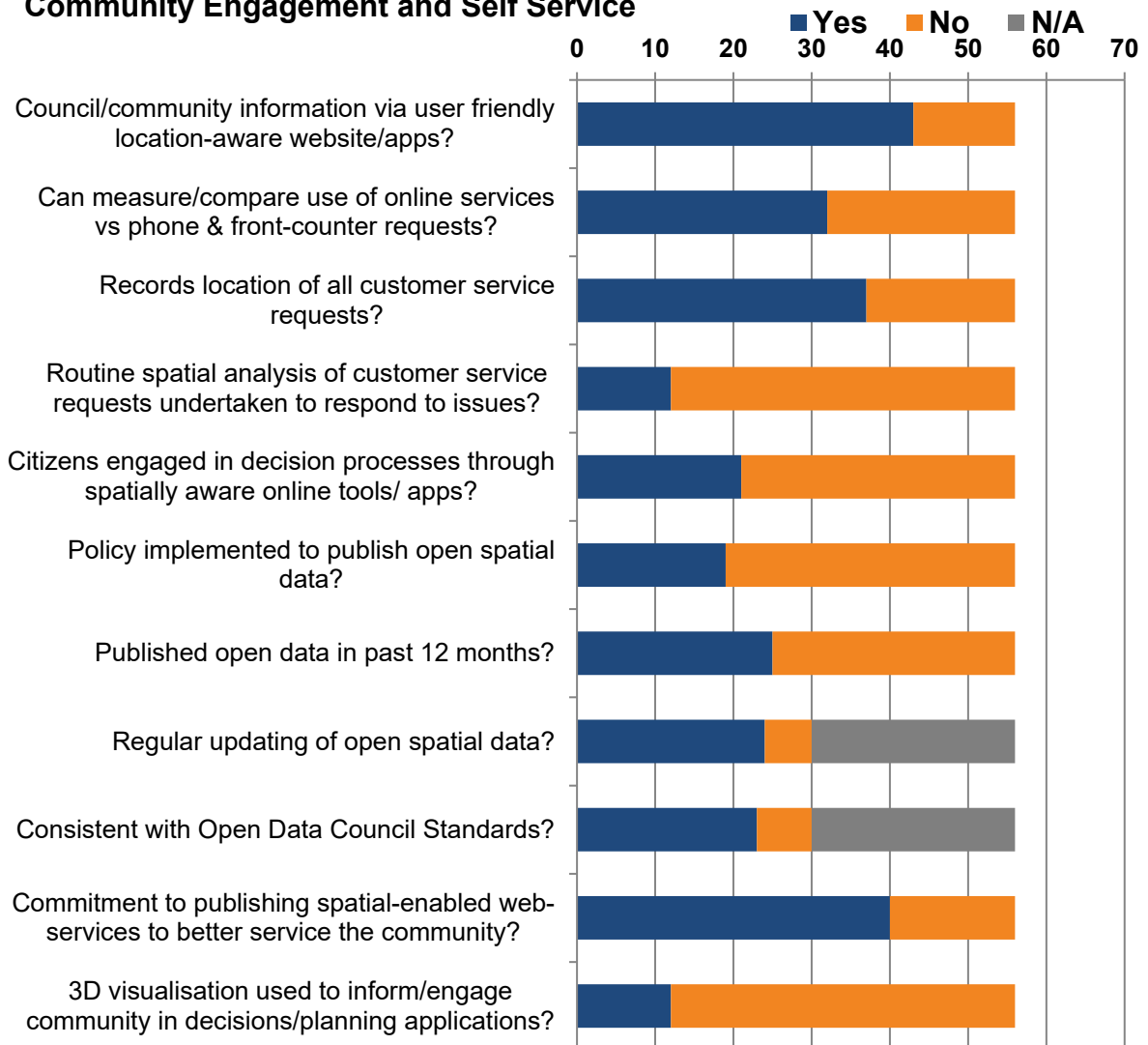
After gradually improving across different council types since 2015, the scores have stabilised over the last three years. However, the chart below reveals the 2020-2021 assessment actually did see a small downturn for “B” but an increase in the “C” grade with a corresponding downturn in the “D” grade. Grades are continuing to slowly improve.

% Change in Councils' GIS Good Practice Grades: Community Engagement & Self Service



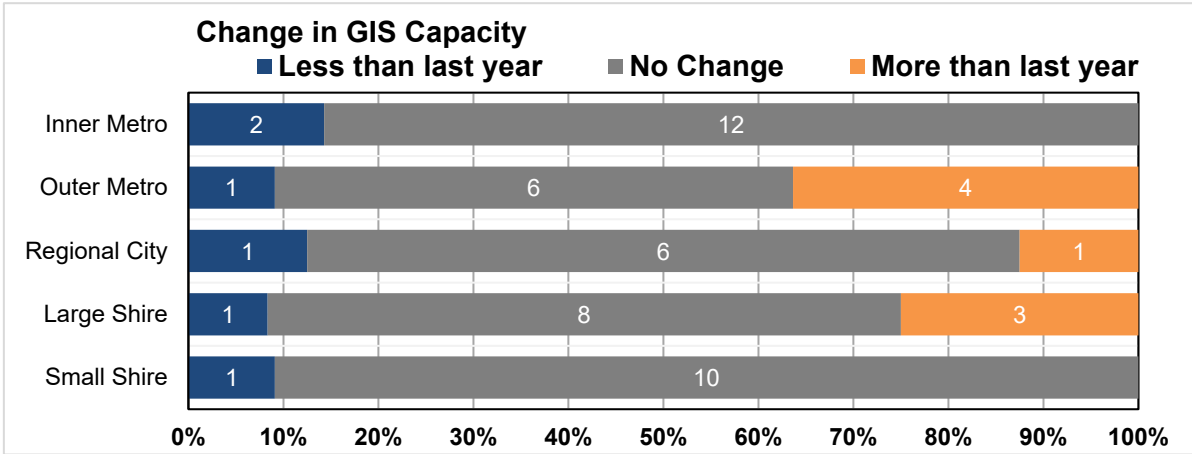
Statewide Responses (count): Community Engagement and Self Service

Community Engagement and Self Service



9. Council Profile

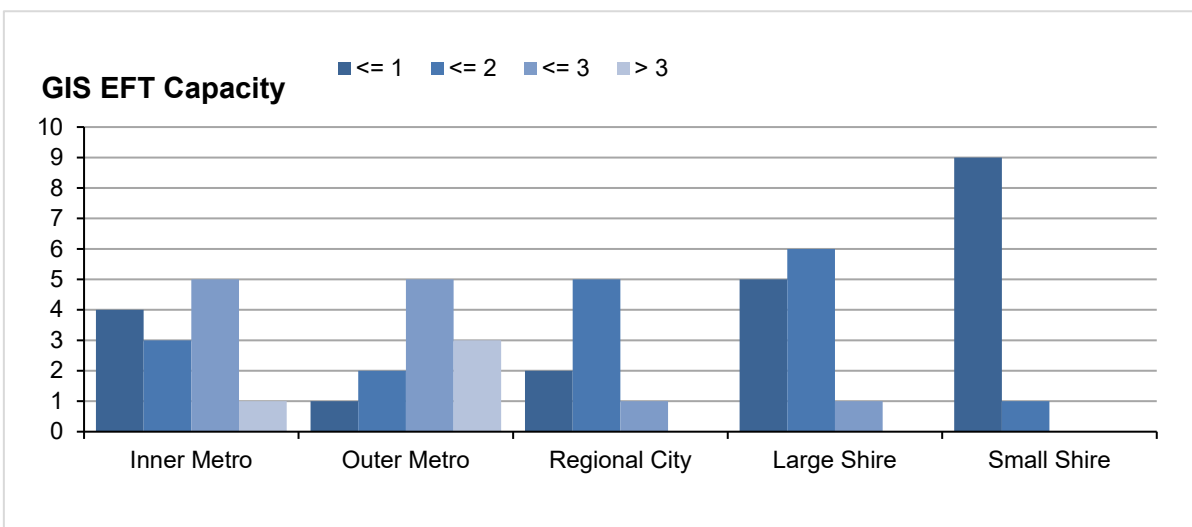
Skilled GIS resources (capacity) are crucial to Councils' abilities to maintain their spatial data, systems and to leverage the technology for decisions. The Capability questions are intended to capture the levels and changes in Equivalent Full Time (EFT) GIS staff at each council.



The chart above shows the number of councils that since last year have decreased numbers in their GIS team, kept their GIS team as-is, or increased their GIS team, grouped by council type.

This year saw most councils' GIS capacity remaining unchanged since last year, however, Outer Metro and Large Shire councils saw the biggest increase, with 7 out of 23 these councils growing their GIS teams.

The chart below shows these results in terms of actual GIS EFT, grouped by council type. Small Shire councils once again tend to have the smallest GIS teams, with none over two EFT positions and most with one. Outer Metro councils once more have the largest teams, 8 respondents reporting 3 or more GIS positions.



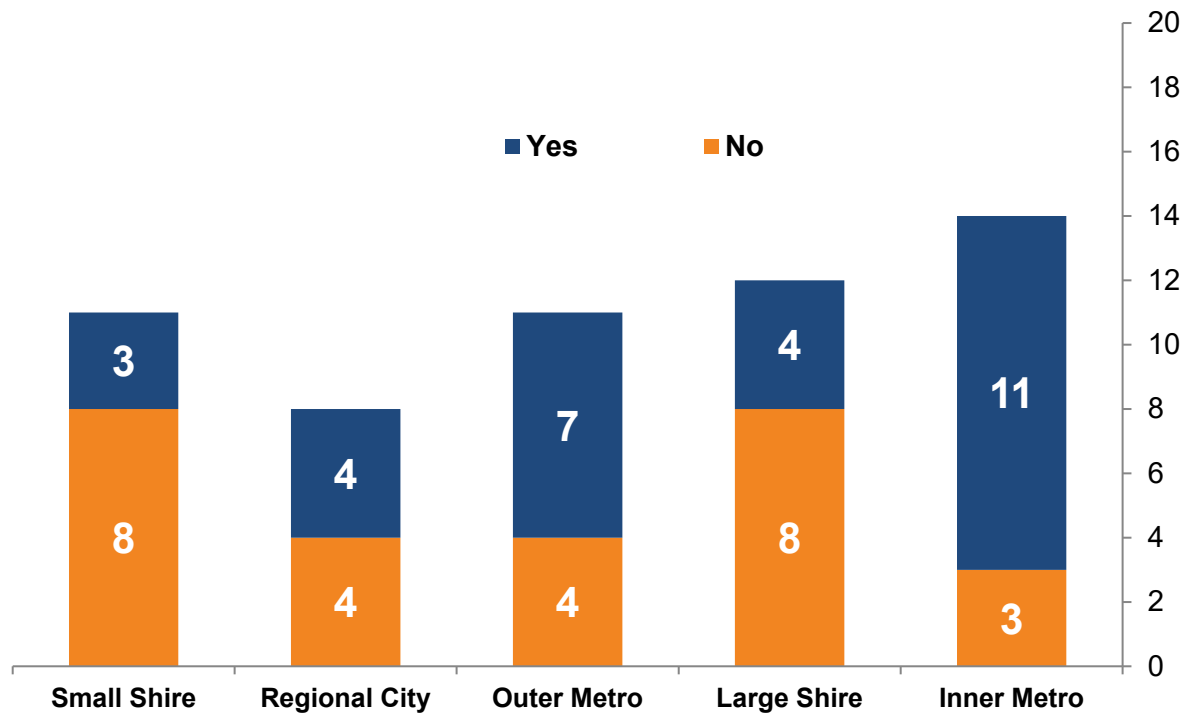
10. GDA2020 and DCM Readiness

This year new questions were added to the survey in order to gauge the status of councils to adopt the GDA2020 datum shift as well as prepare for the Digital Cadastre Modernisation (DCM) project currently underway.

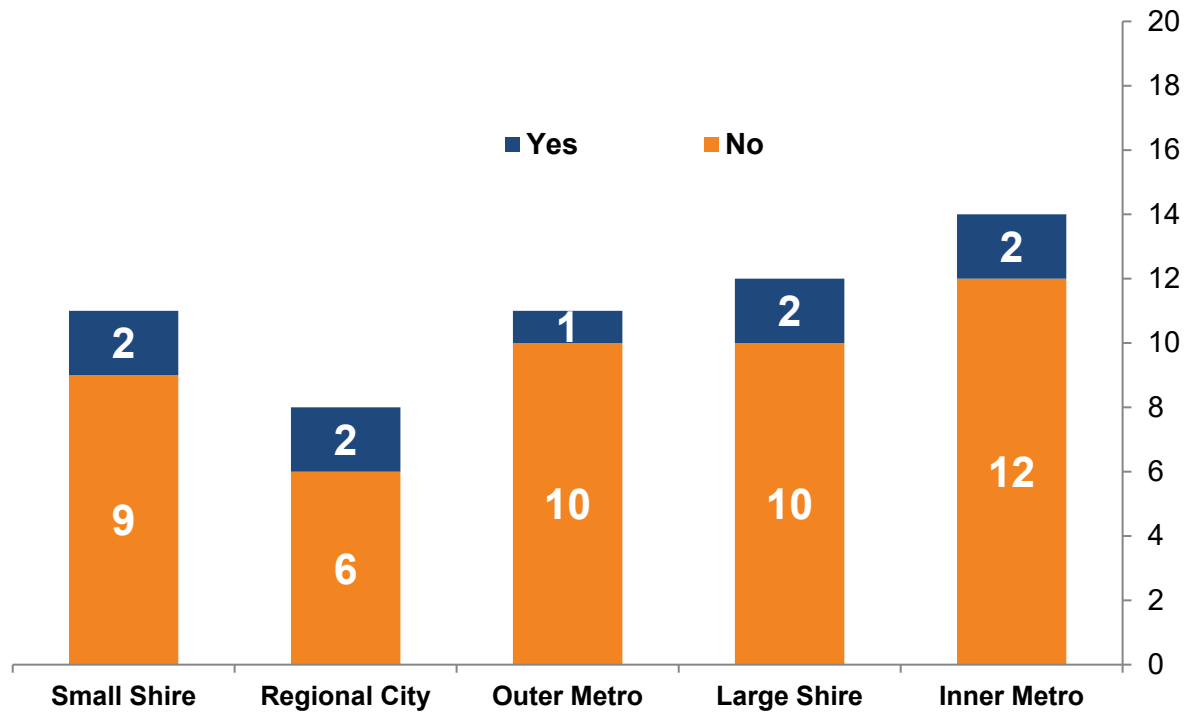
GDA2020

Given that the year 2020 is when the new datum was planned to be adopted at a national level, it is refreshing to know that many councils (52%) have a roadmap for transferring their datasets into GDA2020. Whereas 16% of councils have already implemented changes to their datasets.

Councils that have a roadmap for GDA2020 migration



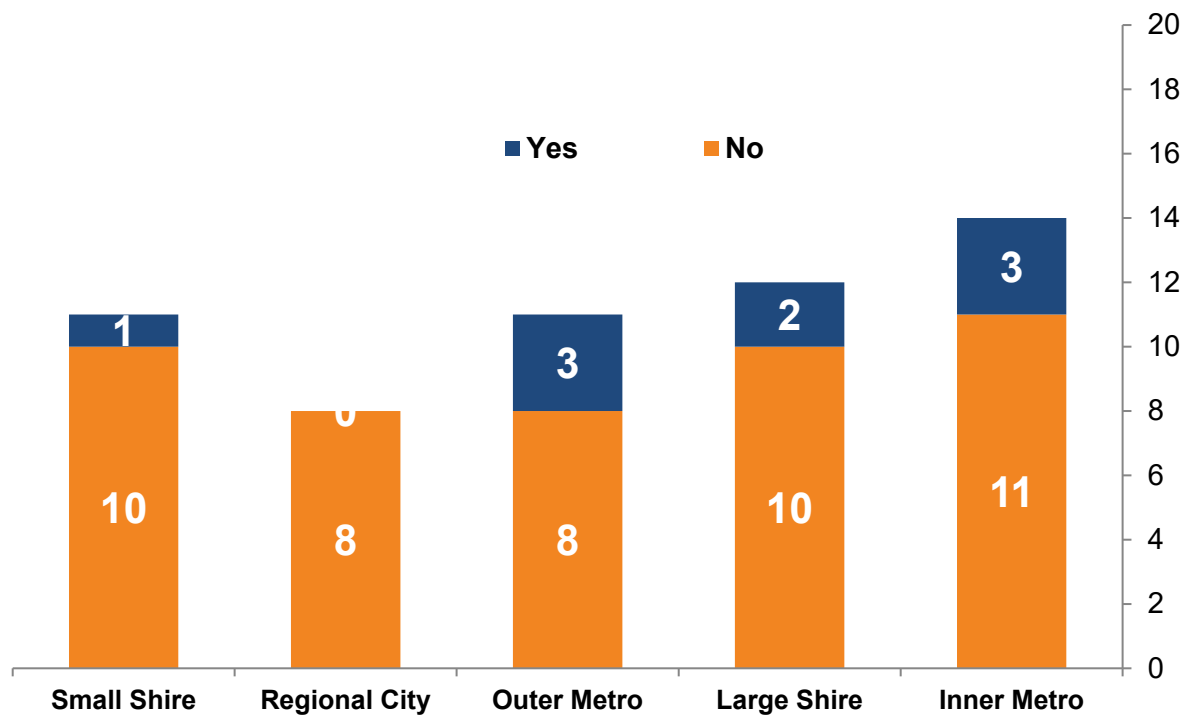
Councils that have completed migration of their data into GDA2020



DCM

At this time, the DCM project is underway however no LGA corrected data has been released yet. Pleasing to see that some councils (16%) already have a roadmap for implementing DCM changes into their datasets.

Councils that have a roadmap for implementing DCM corrected data



Appendix A: GPF Assessment Questionnaire

1) Spatial Capability	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Does your Council have a current GIS Strategy?	Current GIS Strategy Exists?
Is there a direct relationship or link between the Council's GIS Strategy and its Corporate Plan?	GIS Strategy and Corporate Plan Linked?
Would you say the GIS Strategy clearly defines the future vision for GIS and identifies gaps between Council's current and future states?	GIS Strategy defines vision, current state and gaps?
Is Council's GIS Strategy integrated into Council's annual planning and/or budgeting processes?	GIS Strategy integrated into planning processes?
Does Council have a risk management plan that includes GIS software, resources and data?	Risk management plan includes GIS?
Is Council formally committed to supporting Vicmap data?	Vicmap data supported?
Does Council have a current Information Management policy?	Current IM policy exists?
Does Council's Information Management policy acknowledge that relevant spatial business data should be based on or derived from Vicmap data when relevant?	IM policy defines use of Vicmap data?
Would you say Council's Information Management policy sufficiently acknowledges the importance of reliable spatial data?	IM policy notes importance of reliable spatial data?
Do the majority of Council staff have access to useful spatial tools (e.g. GIS or web mapping) underpinned by Council data?	Most staff can access spatial tools using Council data?
Would you say that Council staff generally find the available spatial tools (e.g. GIS or web mapping) easy-to-use?	Available spatial tools easy-to-use?
An effective GIS Steering Committee is one that maximises opportunities for utilising capabilities and monitoring performance. Does your Council have an effective GIS Steering Committee (or equivalent) in operation?	GIS Steering Committee (or equivalent) in operation?
An effective GIS User Group is one that engages appropriate staff to generate ideas and gather feedback. Does Council have an effective GIS User Group in operation?	GIS User Group in operation?
If it could be demonstrated that collaboration with other Councils can deliver improved spatial capabilities, would your Council be open to such collaboration?	Open to spatial collaboration with other Councils?
2) Core Vicmap Data Maintenance	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Does Council set and monitor performance targets for core spatial data? (e.g. frequency of update, match rates etc)	Set / monitor performance targets for core spatial data?
Does Council monitor resident complaints around incomplete or inaccurate data for address, property, roads or locality?	Monitor resident complaints around spatial data?
Does Council action or follow up resident complaints around incomplete or inaccurate spatial data?	Action resident complaints around spatial data issues?
Does Council have a documented procedure for maintaining core Vicmap data?	Documented Vicmap data maintenance process exists?
Does Council rely on Vicmap Address for address information?	Rely on Vicmap Address for address information?
Does Council rely on Vicmap Property for Council and ratepayer property boundaries and attributes?	Rely on Vicmap Property for property boundaries etc?
Does Council notify State Government typically within 10 business days of changes or corrections in property, parcel and address information?	Notify State of changes to data as required by PIP?
Is Council road asset data maintained in relation to Vicmap Transport roads?	Roads data maintained in relation to Vicmap Transport?
Does Council notify State Government typically within 10 business days of changes or corrections in roads and transport information?	Notify Gov't of roads data changes < 10 business days?
Would you say that most users of Council's core spatial data trust it as authoritative?	Council's core spatial data trusted?
Does Council's core spatial data meet documented DELWP standards for spatial and attribute accuracy?	Core spatial data meets DELWP accuracy standards?
Would you say that your Council has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for managing its GIS data?	Defined roles for management of GIS data?

Has Council accepted or (adhered to) the Victorian Spatial Council / DELWP Custodianship Program guidelines for relevant Vicmap data through a PIP or MOU agreement?	VSIS recommendations re Vicmap accepted?
Does your Council share/ publish metadata about Vicmap data for internal users?	Vicmap metadata published internally?
3) Property and Rates Integration	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Does Council set and monitor performance targets for integration between GIS and Property & Rates systems? (e.g. match rates)	Manage GIS to PR integration performance targets
Does Council participate in DELWP's annual Property Information Quality Audit?	Participate in DELWP's annual PIQA?
Does Council action the recommendations of the Property Information Quality Audit?	Action recommendations from PIQA?
Does Council have a current documented procedure for aligning data between GIS and Property & Rates systems?	Alignment process for GIS and PR data documented?
Does Council have repeatable processes to measure the reliability of matching between GIS/spatial and Property & Rates business data?	Process to assess GIS to PR match is repeatable?
Does Council's Property & Rates system rely on GIS property data for parcel descriptions?	PR system relies on GIS for parcel descriptions?
Do the GIS and Property & Rates systems share the same identifier for property records?	GIS and PR systems share the same ID for records?
Would you say that users can easily link from the Property & Rates system to GIS (or to a map within the Property & Rates system) to find and view properties and parcels?	PR links to GIS enabling map view?
Does Council's GIS or web map enable users to easily view the Property & Rates data via a link?	GIS enables PR data to be easily viewed?
Would you say that Council has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for managing Property & Rates data and its interface to GIS?	Defined roles for managing PR data to GIS alignment?
4) Asset Management to GIS Integration	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Does Council have a policy for maintaining GIS data for assets?	Policy for maintaining GIS data for assets?
Does Council set and monitor performance targets for integration between GIS and Asset Management Systems?	Set / monitor targets for GIS to AMS integration?
Does Council carry out defect inspections using location-enabled mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, trimbles etc)?	Carry out defect inspections using mobile devices?
Does Council provide a web or mobile app or support third party apps such as 'Snap Send Solve' for members of the community to report the location of an asset defect?	Provides tools for community reporting of asset defects?
Does council consistently action 'crowd sourced' asset defect reports e.g. from third party apps such as 'Snap Send Solve' or from a Council provided tool or app?	Consistently actions crowd sourced asset defect reports?
Does Council have a current documented procedure for aligning data between GIS and Asset Management systems?	Documented procedure for aligning GIS and Asset data?
Is Council's GIS web portal fully integrated (two-way integration) with its Asset Management System?	GIS and AMS are fully integrated?
Are there accurate and up to date GIS/spatial records for assets across the major relevant asset groups? NOTE: relevant groups include Roads (e.g. kerb, channel, footpath) Drainage, Marine (e.g. jetties, boat ramps), Properties (eg. council managed buildings, parks, gardens and reserves)	Accurate/current GIS records for assets across key asset groups?
Does Council have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for managing Assets data and its interface to GIS?	Defined roles for managing Asset data & interface to GIS?
5) Community Engagement and Self Service	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Are people able to access dynamic information about Council services and their local community through user friendly location-aware website or apps?	Council/community information via user friendly location-aware website/apps?
Is Council able to measure and compare the similar uses of online services (website or apps) to telephone and front-counter requests?	Can measure/compare use of online services vs phone & front-counter requests?
Does Customer Service record the location of all customer service requests?	Records location of all customer service requests?

Does Council undertake routine spatial analysis of customer service requests to proactively respond to issue hotspots?	Routine spatial analysis of customer service requests undertaken to respond to issues?
Are citizens dynamically engaged with Council and its decision-making processes through geospatially aware online tools (or apps)?	Citizens engaged in decision processes through spatially aware online tools/ apps?
Has Council implemented a policy to publish Open data to demonstrate transparency and encourage innovation in the delivery of services by other providers?	Policy implemented to publish open spatial data?
Has Council published at least one spatial dataset as open data in the past 12 months?	Published open data in past 12 months?
Is Council regularly updating spatial data that is published as open data?	Regular updating of open spatial data?
Is Council published open spatial data consistent with Open Data Council Standards? see standards.opencouncildata.org/	Consistent with Open Data Council Standards?
Is Council committed to publishing spatially enabled web-services to better service the community and activate their city or townships for visitors, for example parking availability, dial-before-your-dig, and notification of events?	Commitment to publishing spatial-enabled web-services to better service the community?
Does Council use 3D visualisation to inform and engage the community in significant decisions such as Precinct Structure Plans, Capital Works Plans or major planning development applications?	3D visualisation used to inform/engage community in decisions/planning applications?
6) GDA 2020 and DCM Readiness	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
Does Council have a roadmap for migration of corporate spatial data to GDA2020?	Councils that have a roadmap for GDA2020 migration
Has Council completed migration of all corporate spatial data to GDA2020?	Councils that have completed migration of their data into GDA2020
Does Council have a roadmap for integration of Digital Cadastral Mapping (DCM) corrected Vicmap data with corporate spatial data?	Councils that have a roadmap for implementing DCM corrected data
Has Council completed integration of DCM corrected Vicmap data with corporate spatial data?	Councils that have completed integration of DCM corrected data
7) Council Profile	
Long Form (as asked in online questionnaire)	Short Form (as presented in charts)
How many people in Equivalent Full Time (EFT) work in the internal GIS area?	EFT in GIS area?
Has the number of people in EFT working in the internal GIS area changed in the last 12 months?	EFT changed in the last year?
Did you complete the GPF assessment survey last year?	GPF survey completed last year?