

Single Emergency Number Research

Quantitative research findings

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Background

The severe storm events over the Winter of 2013/14 and the electricity supply disruptions they caused, highlighted that the **general public is confused about what number to call** to report an electricity network supply issue and obtain important information or advice.

Electricity Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) do not currently have a high profile with the general public and the confusion is compounded by each Network Operator having a different emergency number. **The general public struggle to know who to call and where to look for the number**, and how they differ from the retail companies who issue their energy bills

The Energy Networks Association (ENA) and DNOs have been **tasked to deliver a single emergency number, in particular a 3 digit number**.



Overall aims of the research and design issues:

Specifically, the ENA needs to understand/quantify the...

- General public's thoughts, opinions, behaviours and trends when needing to contact their DNO
- Level of distress suffered during a power cut or safety issue
- Level of confusion - e.g. do they know who to call and where to look for the number?
- Views on a Single Emergency Number
- Benefits of a 3 digit number compared to 0800 number

The research design needed to ensure that...

- A nationally representative sample of adults from Great Britain were interviewed, covering each of the DNO regions
- Each DNO could look at responses from their own region
- There is an appropriate urban, suburban and rural split
- The questionnaire was designed to incorporate the views of those that have / have not contacted their DNO in the last 2 years
- The questions were tailored to provide the evidence needed (see the aims above)

Methodological approach

Fieldwork stage 1: 2003 x Omnibus interviews

We spoke to a nationally and regionally representative sample of 2,003 adults across Great Britain. A form of random location sampling was used to ensure a good geographical spread. Controls were applied by region and sub-region, then quotas were set on age, gender, working status and tenure to ensure a nationally representative sample. By using this proven sample design, the omnibus was able to represent all main sub-sectors of the population, and provide robust findings across each of the main DNOs

Fieldwork stage 2: 105 x 'boost' interviews in IDNO areas

The omnibus approach did not pick up a robust number of interviews in the IDNO areas, so we boosted numbers here

All interviews were carried out in-home using computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI)

The data from both sets of fieldwork were weighted to be nationally and regionally representative



Key headlines

There's confusion about who to contact in the event of a power outage / safety issue

- Only 5% did / would contact their DNO
- Only 27% claimed they knew / know which telephone number to call
 - and only 6% of these (2% of the total sample) stated they did / would contact their DNO
- Most who did not / do not know which number to call would 'Google' search or look in the yellow pages - only 6% would go to their DNO website

Not knowing the telephone number is likely to inhibit the reporting of power outages / safety issues. Of the 73% who did not / do not know which number to call:

- 72% claim it did / may delay them reporting a problem
- 56% claim it did / may prevent them from reporting a problem
- 43% were / are concerned about having to search for a number

Three quarters (75%) are in favour of a SEN... and two thirds (65%) prefer a 3DN

- 86% agree that the 3DN is more closely associated with an emergency service and 84% feel it is easier to remember than an 0800 number
- 77% believe a 3DN would allow them to report a power outage or safety issue more quickly than an 0800 number
- 89% expect the 3DN to be free to the caller

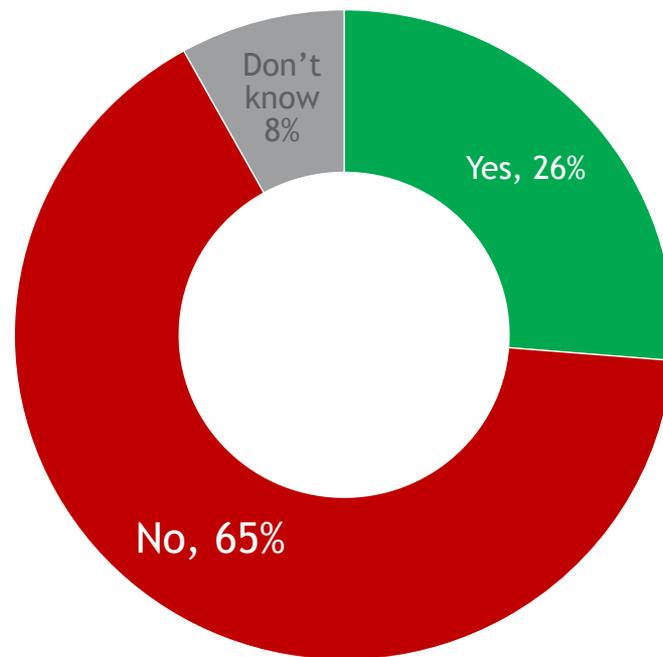
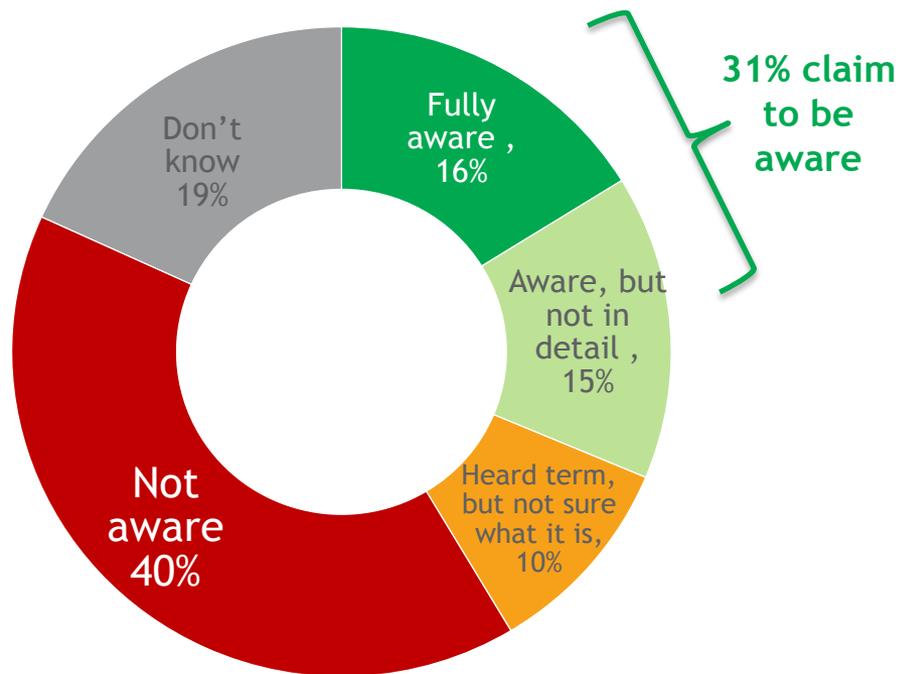


Strong public support for a 3DN SEN

31% claim to be aware of what a DNO does

Awareness of Electricity Distribution Operator

Whether know difference between supplier and distribution operator?



Awareness higher amongst those that experienced a power outage / safety issue in the last 2 years (38% 'top two box')

Awareness lower amongst women, DE social grade (both 21% 'top two box'), low income & low education (both 22%) 'top two box'

Those that experienced a power outage / safety issue in the last 2 years also claim to be more knowledgeable (34% 'yes')

Low education, no internet access (both 14%) Women, DE social grade (both 17%) and disabled (18%) are less knowledgeable

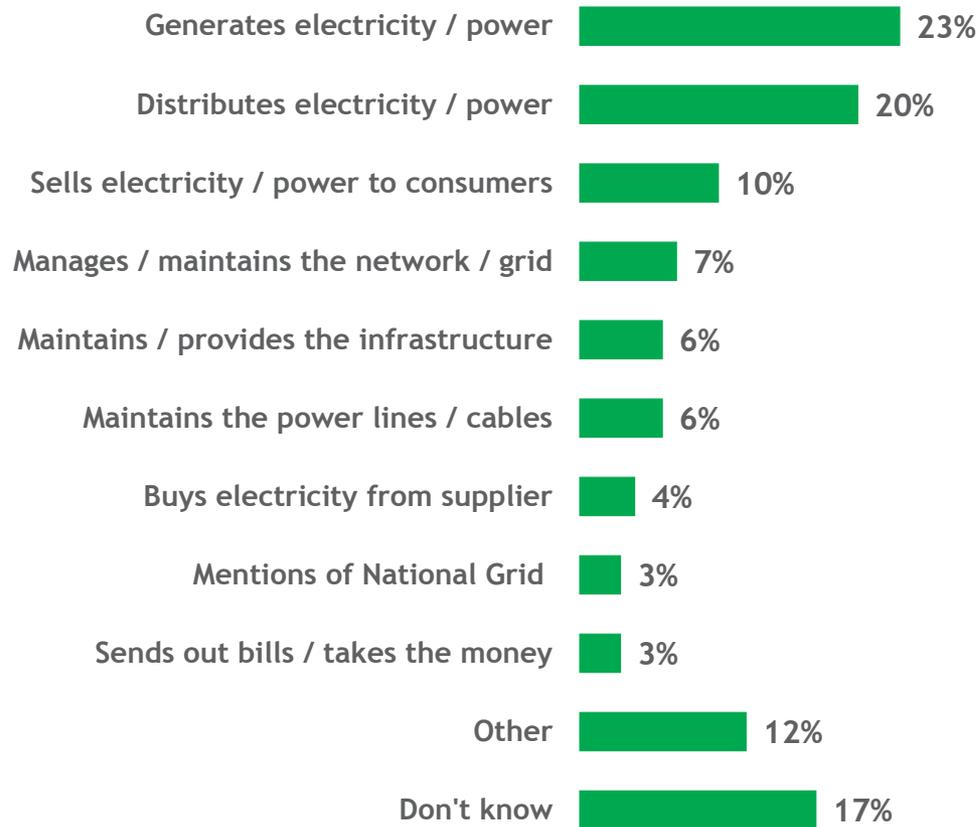
Q1. To what extent are you aware, or not, of what an Electricity Distribution Operator is?

Q2. Do you know the difference between your electricity supplier and your electricity distribution operator?

Base: all respondents (2108)

However, only 36% of those that are aware (11% of the total population) are able to correctly attribute the role of a DNO

What do you think your Electricity Distribution Operator does?



36% mention distribution or maintenance/ management of the network/ grid/infrastructure

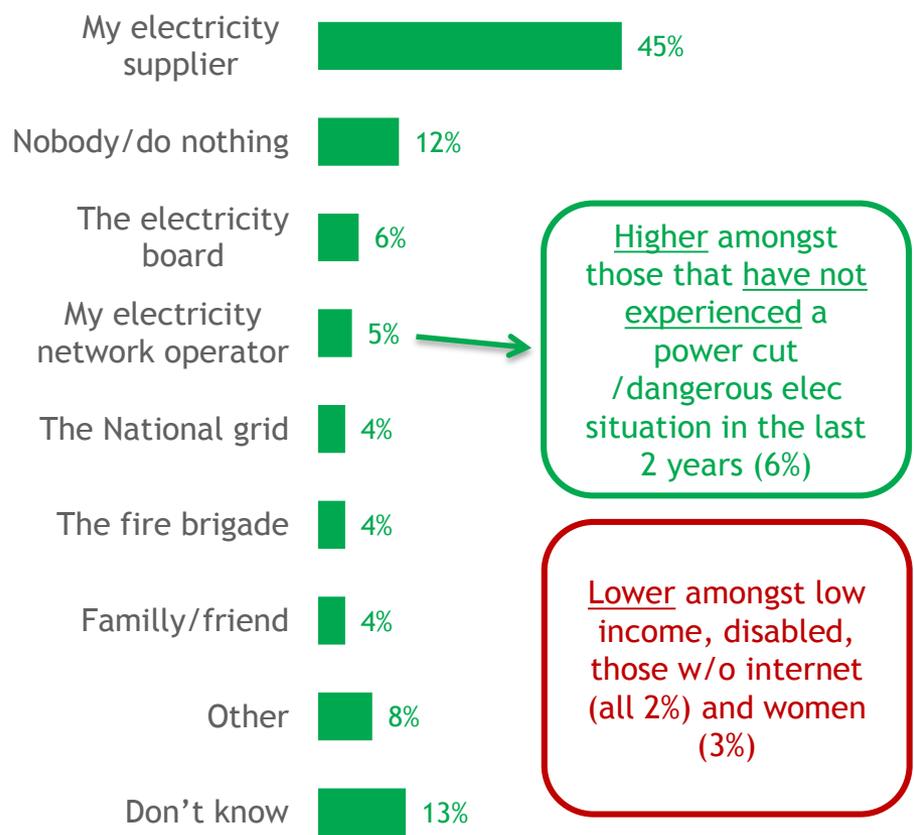
Awareness of DNO role higher amongst those that experienced a power outage / safety issue in the last 2 years (42%)

Awareness of DNO role lower amongst DE social grade (18%), low education (21%), low income (23%), disabled (27%) and women (29%)

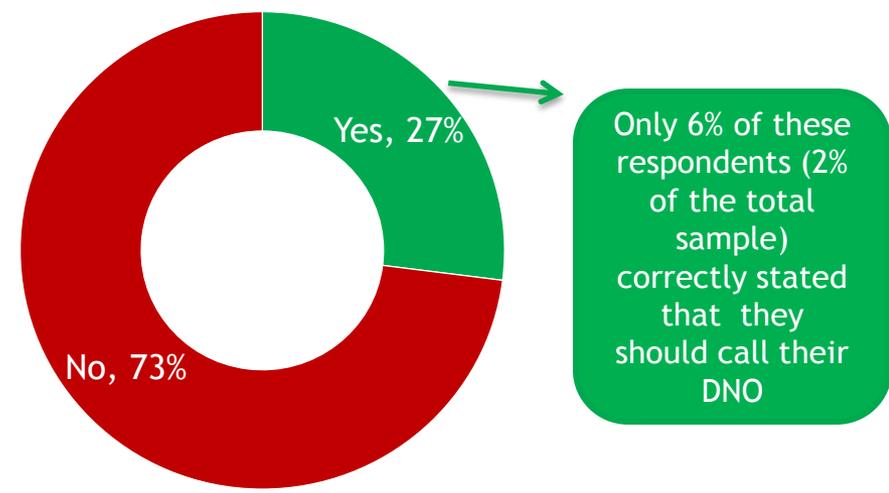
Q3. What do you think your electricity distribution operator does? Base: all aware of what an Electricity Distribution Operator is (661)

Only 5% did/would contact their DNO in the event of an outage/safety issue. Most did/would contact their electricity supplier... And only 27% claim they did or would know who to call

Who to contact in the event of power cut or dangerous electricity situation?



Know which number to call in event of power cut or dangerous elec. situation?

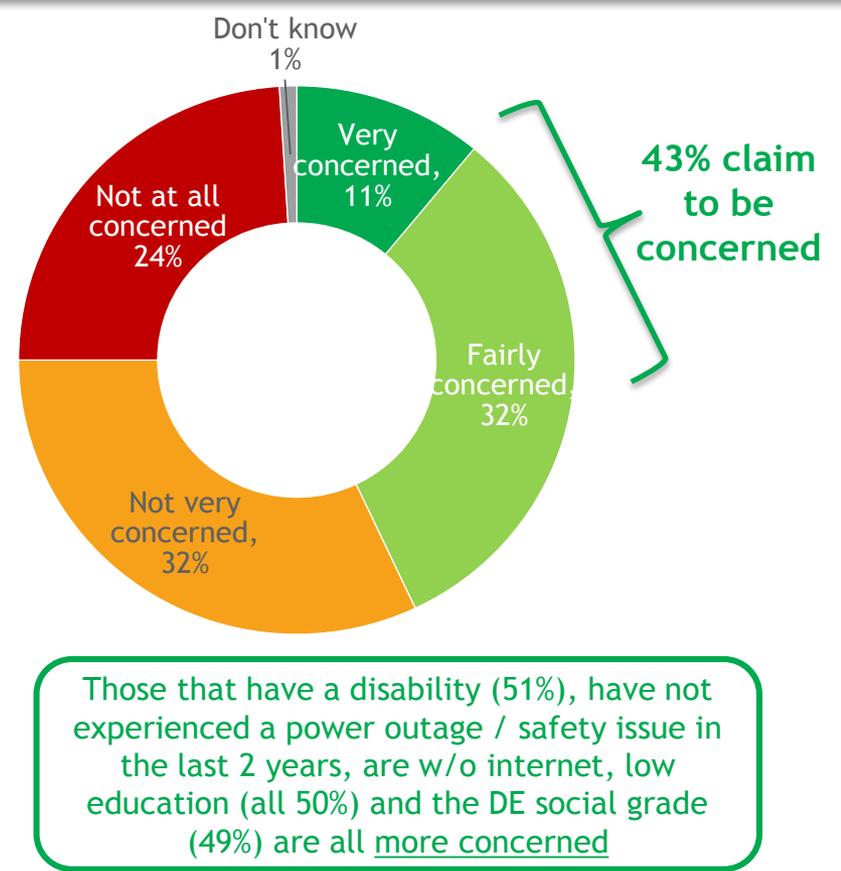
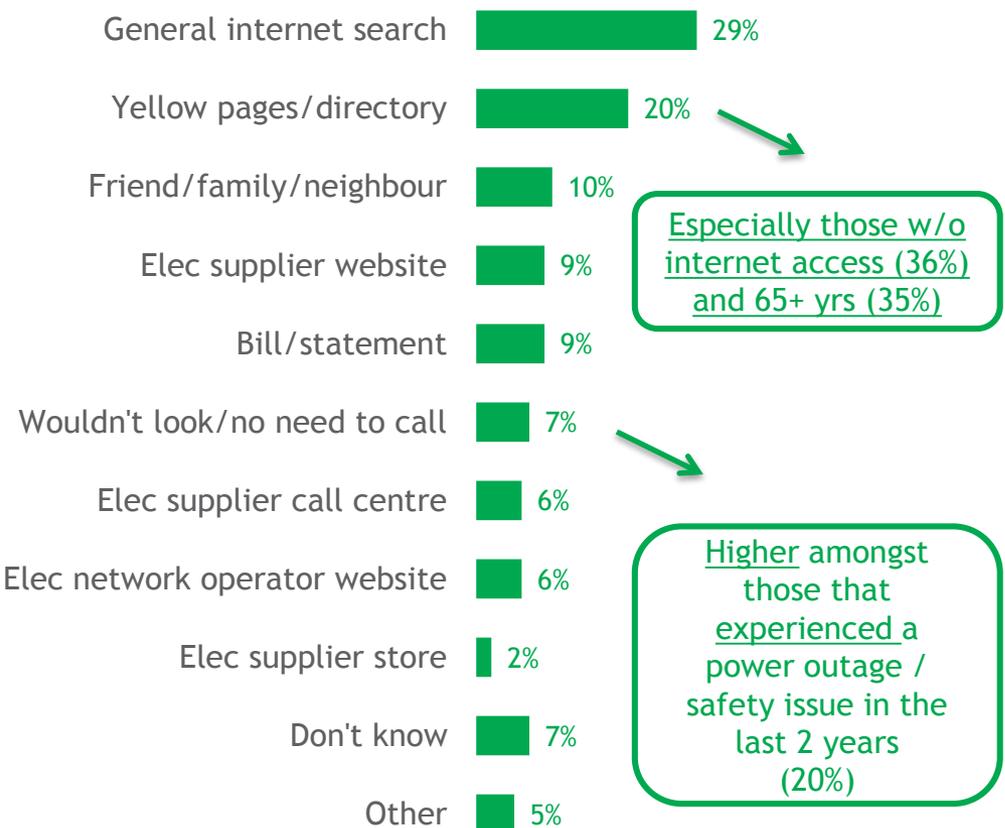


Q5. When you had a power cut or dangerous electricity situation, who did you contact? / If you had a power cut or dangerous electricity situation, who would you contact? Q6. Did you know which telephone number to call when you had a power cut a dangerous electricity situation? / Would you know which telephone number to call if you had a power cut or dangerous electricity situation? Base: all respondents (2108)

Most would/did look online or in the yellow pages. Only 6% would go directly to their DNO website. 43% of those who did not know which number to call claim to be concerned about having to search for it

Where look for your electricity network operator's telephone number?

Extent to which having to search for a number causes concern?

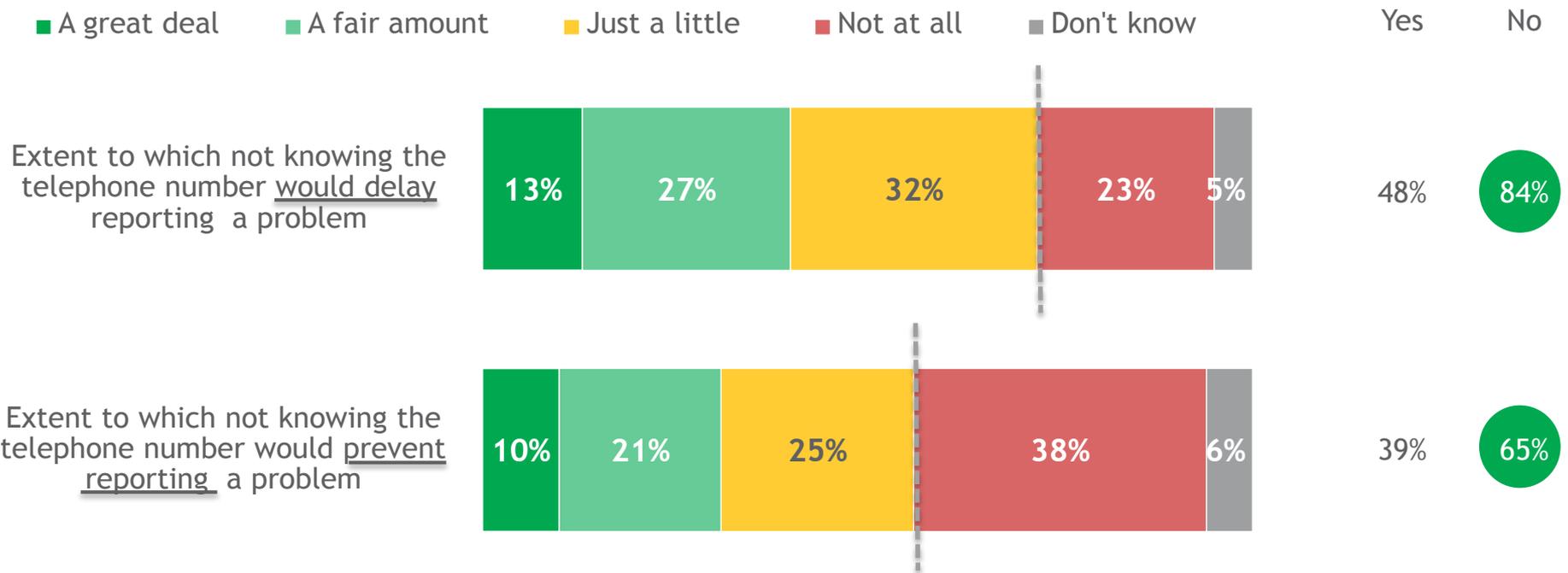


Q7. Where did /would you look for your electricity network operator's telephone number?
 Q8. To what extent, if at all, did /would the prospect of having to search for a number during a power cut or dangerous electricity situation cause you concern? Were you/would you be...
 BASE: All who did not know/would not know which telephone number to call in the event of a power cut/dangerous electricity situation (1533)

Amongst those who did not know which number to call...
72% claim it did/may delay them and 56% claim it did/may prevent them from reporting a problem.

Influence of having to search / not knowing the telephone number

Whether experienced power outage / safety issue in the last 2 years



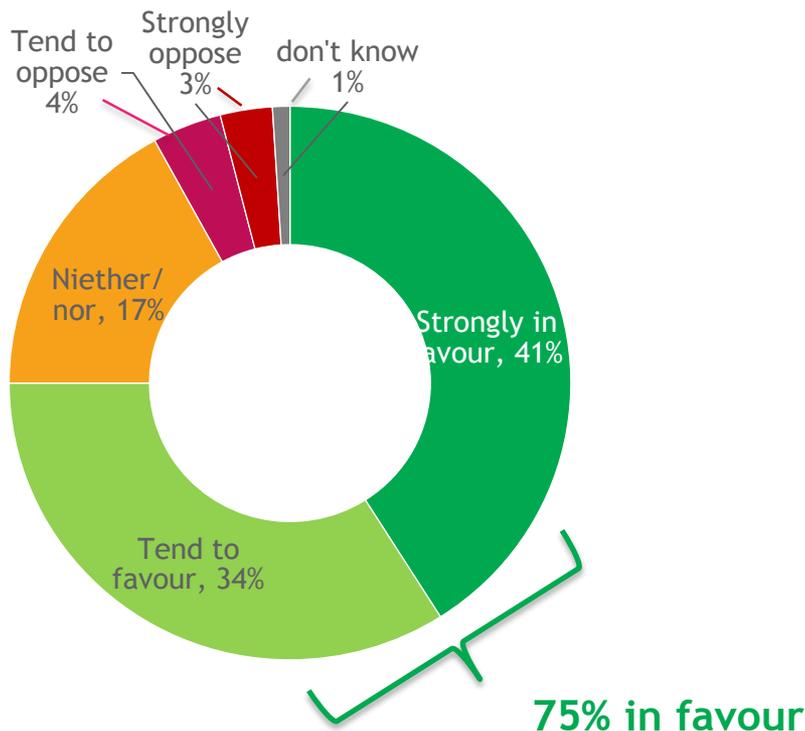
Q9 When you had a power cut / dangerous electricity situation to what extent, if at all, did not knowing the telephone number cause a delay when contacting your electricity network provider to report the problem / To what extent, if at all, do you think not knowing the telephone number would cause a delay when contacting your electricity network provider to report a problem. (1533)

Q10 To what extent, if at all, did not knowing who to call prevent you from reporting the power cut or dangerous electricity situation? To what extent, if at all, do you think not knowing who to call would prevent you from reporting a power cut or dangerous electricity situation?

BASE: All who did not know/would not know which telephone number to call in the event of a power cut/dangerous electricity situation (1533)

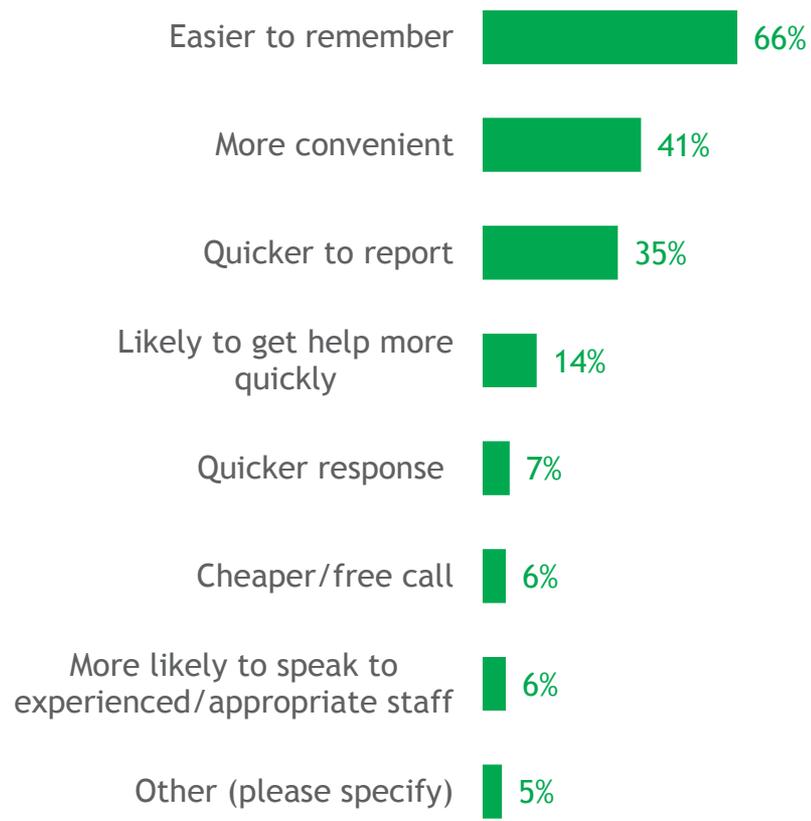
Three quarters are in favour of a SEN - mainly because it's easier to remember, more convenient and it makes it quicker to report a problem

Whether in favour or opposed to a single national electricity emergency telephone number?



Stronger backing from low income (80%) and disabled (79%) respondents

75% in favour 

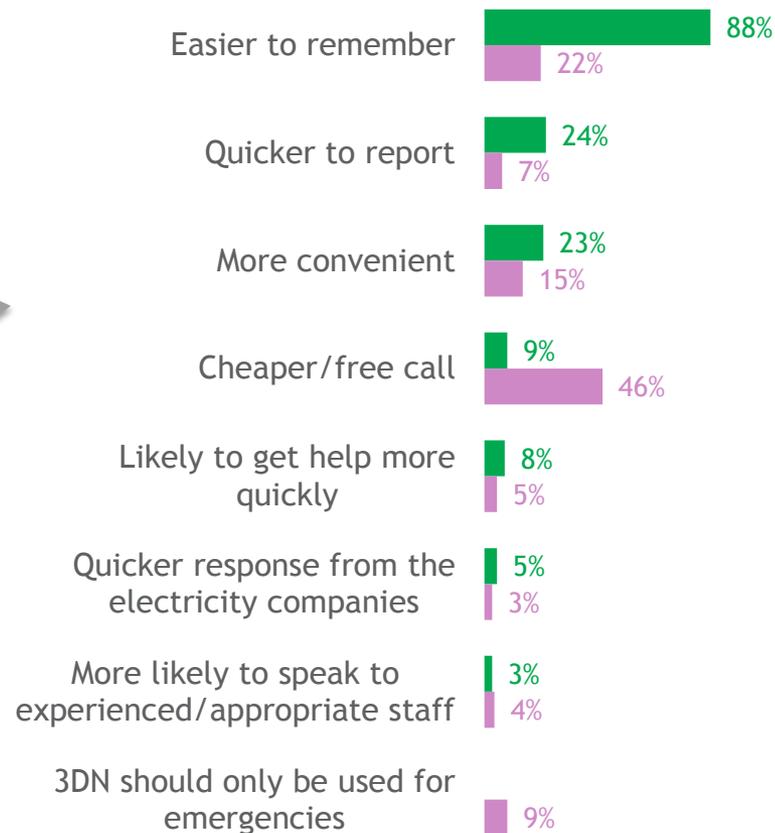
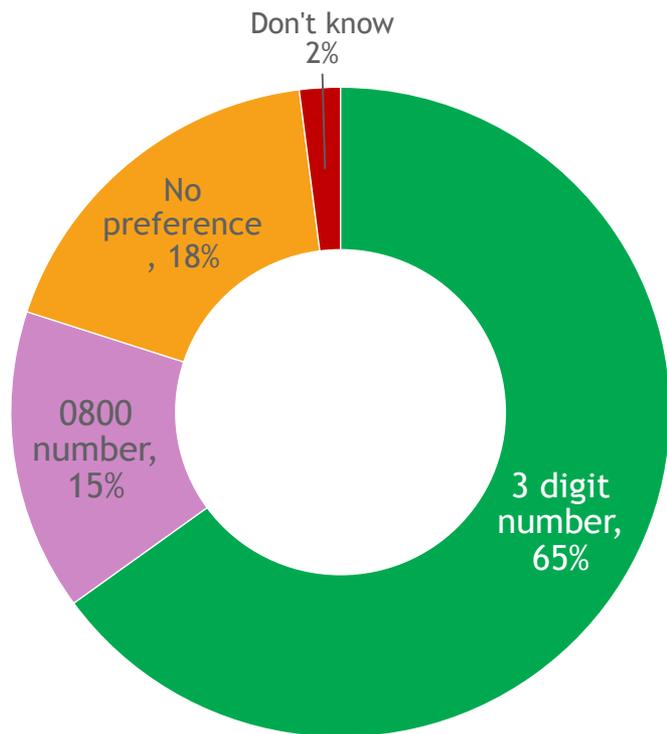


Q11. To what extent are you in favour or opposed to a single national electricity emergency telephone number? Base: all respondents (2108)
 Q12. You said you [In favour/opposed], why do you say that? Base: all in favour (1579/156)

Two thirds (65%) are in favour of a 3DN. Again, mostly because it's easier to remember, it makes it quicker to report a problem and is more convenient

Preference for 3 digit or 0800 national electricity emergency number?

65% prefer a 3DN / 15% prefer 0800



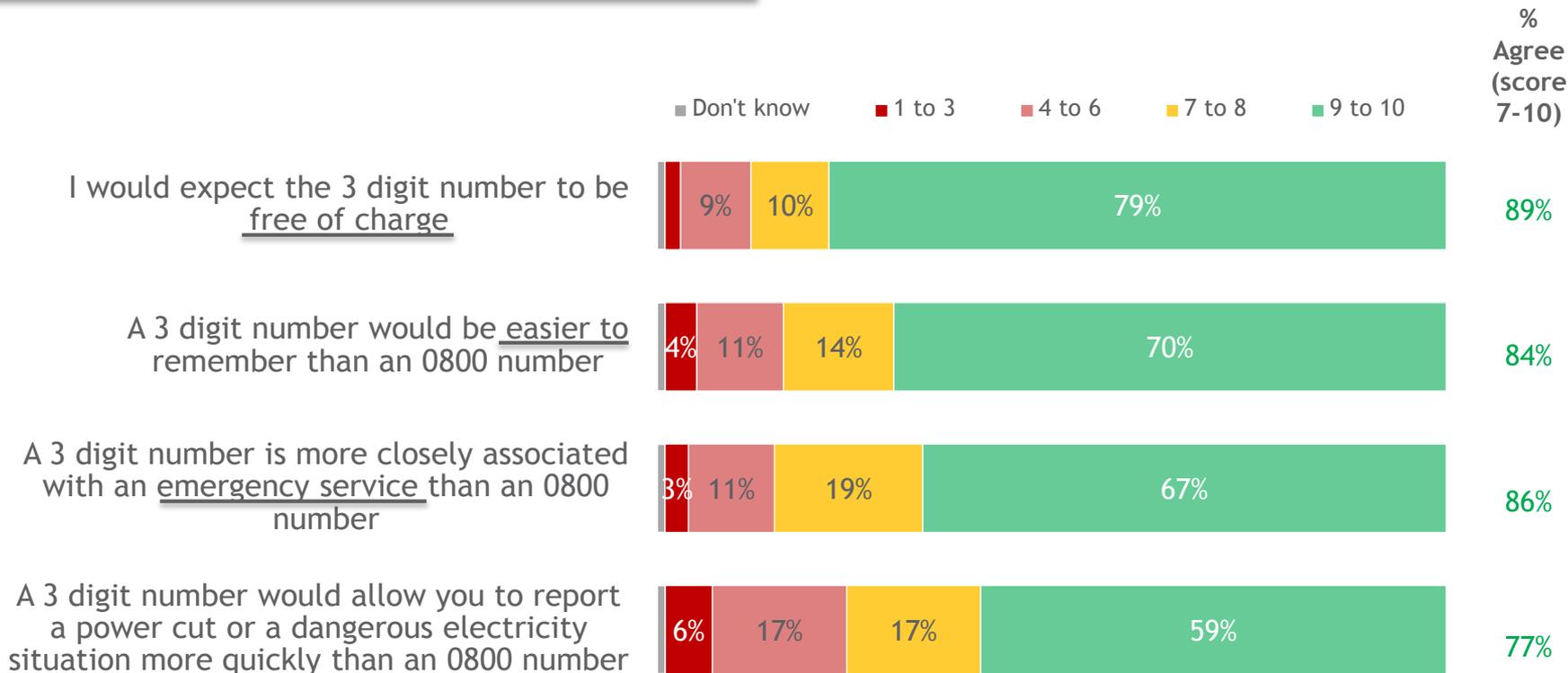
Q13. Would you prefer to have a [3 digit national electricity emergency number similar to 999 or 111] or [an 0800 national electricity emergency number]? Base: all respondents (2108)

Q14. You said you prefer [3 digit /0800 number], why do you say that? Base: all preferring 3 digit number /0800 (1373 / 314)

The vast majority expect a 3DN to be free (89%), feel it is more closely associated with an emergency service (86%) and easier to remember (84%). Three quarters (77%) feel a 3DN would allow them to report a power outage / safety issue more quickly

Extent to which they agree with the following statements

Higher social grades, income and education levels are more likely to agree with these statements



Q15. To what extent do you agree, or disagree with the following statements. Please give your answer on a scale of one to ten where one means you strongly disagree and ten means you strongly agree.

A 3 digit number would allow you to report a power cut or a dangerous electricity situation more quickly than an 0800 number

A 3 digit number would be easier to remember than an 0800 number

A 3 digit number is more closely associated with an emergency service than an 0800 number

I would expect the 3 digit number to be free of charge

Base: all respondents (2108)