

# Who is a Massive Murray Paddler? Survey results / 90 paddlers of the Murray River April 2026 – Headline Results

**By: Sydney Harbour Kayaks / Mirage Sea Kayaks and the Massive Murray Paddle**

# “A flagship event driving health, tourism and economic outcomes across the Murray River.”

“The Massive Murray Paddle is a powerful platform for promoting the Murray River—connecting people to place, driving regional visitation, and delivering measurable economic and wellbeing benefits.”

## **Health & Wellbeing**

- Promotes active lifestyles and endurance sport
- Strong mental health and “reset” benefits
- Encourages lifelong participation in outdoor recreation

## **Tourism & Destination Promotion**

- Showcases 400km+ of the Murray River corridor
- Drives awareness of regional towns and experiences
- Converts first-time visitors into repeat travellers

## **Economic Impact**

- Multi-day visitor spend across accommodation, food, fuel and retail
- Dispersed economic benefit across multiple communities
- Supports small businesses and regional employment

## **Community & Social Value**

- Builds strong connections between participants and local communities
- Encourages fundraising and social contribution
- Strengthens regional identity and pride

“The Massive Murray Paddle is not just an event—it is a catalyst for regional growth, delivering sustained tourism, economic and community outcomes along the Murray River.”

## Murray River Paddler Experience – Key Insights

“An overwhelmingly positive, experience-rich destination driving repeat visitation.”

 **90%**

Positive Experience

*Amazing, memorable, must-return*

 **70%**

Nature & Serenity

*Scenery, wildlife, peace*

 **60%**

Community & Connection

*Friendships, welcoming towns*

 **50%**

Challenge & Achievement

*Endurance, personal goals*

 **45%**

Regional Engagement

*Towns, dining, accommodation*

 **35%**

Accessibility & Safety

*Easy access, structured events*

 **25%**

Infrastructure Gaps

*Toilets, access, logistics*

 **25%**

Emotional Connection

*Home, tradition, meaning*

“The Murray River delivers a unique combination of nature, challenge and community—creating a highly compelling tourism experience.”

## Local Business Engagement – Murray River Corridor

“Consistent, multi-day spend across multiple regional sectors.”

 **80%**

Food & Beverage

*Bakeries, pubs, takeaway*

 **70%**

Fuel & Convenience

*Service stations*

 **65%**

Supermarkets

*Coles, Woolworths, IGA*

 **60%**

Accommodation

*Caravan parks, motels*

 **50%**

Pubs & Clubs

*Evening economy*

 **45%**

Cafés

*Daily spend*

 **25%**

Support Services

*Hardware, camping*

 **15%**

Distributed Spend

*Many businesses benefit*

“The Massive Murray Paddle drives sustained economic activity along the entire river corridor, benefiting both major centres and small communities.”

## What the Massive Murray Paddle Means

“A legacy experience built on challenge, connection and country.”

### **Challenge & Achievement**

One of Australia’s great endurance events  
Personal goals, resilience, identity

### **Community & Connection**

Lifelong friendships  
Strong paddling “family”  
Multi-generational participation

### **River & Country**

Deep connection to the Murray  
Cultural and environmental significance  
Immersive experience



### **Tradition & Legacy**



### **Wellbeing & Mental Health**



### **Adventure & Escape**



### **Purpose & Contribution**

“The Massive Murray Paddle is more than an event—it is a defining life experience that builds identity, community and long-term connection to the Murray River.”

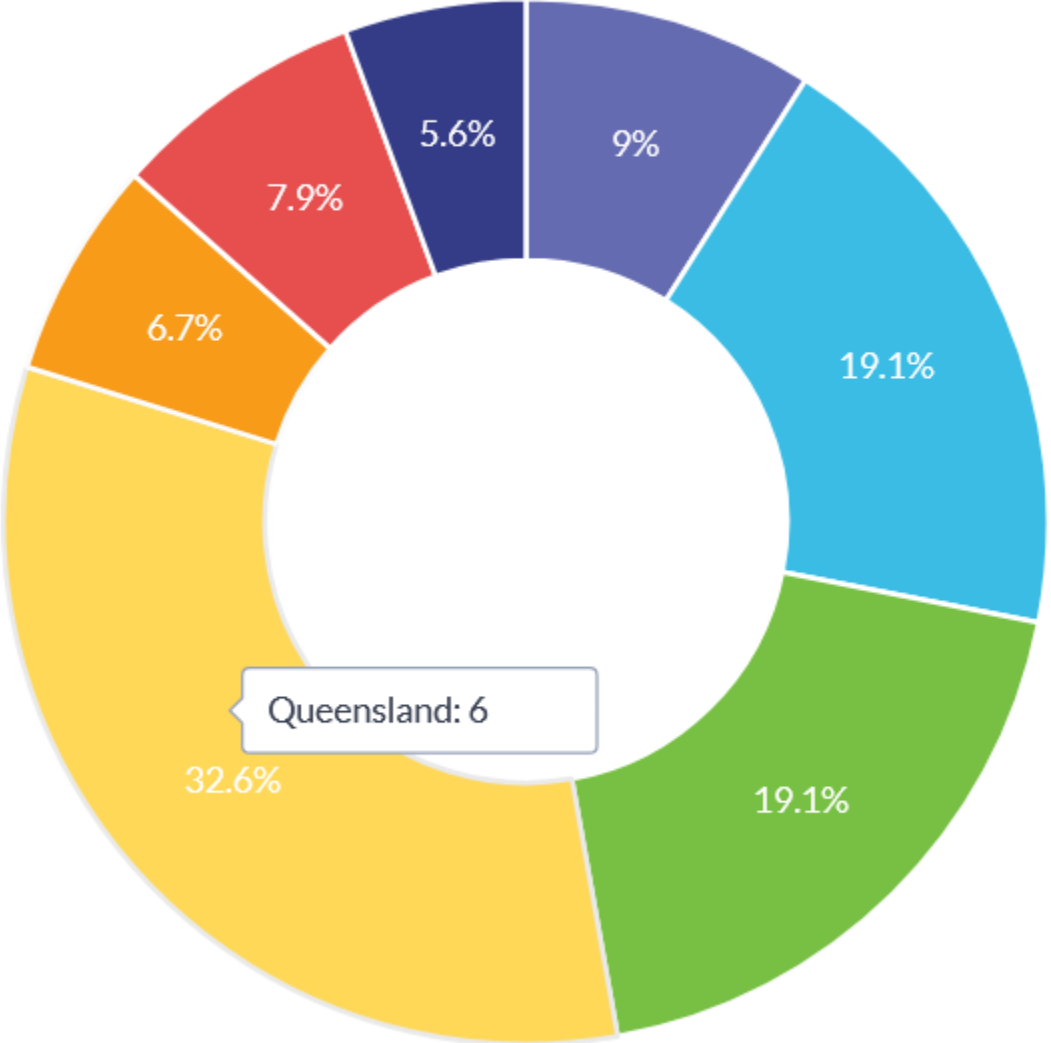
# Who is a Massive Murray Paddler?

Survey results / 90 paddlers of the Murray River  
April 2026 - Details



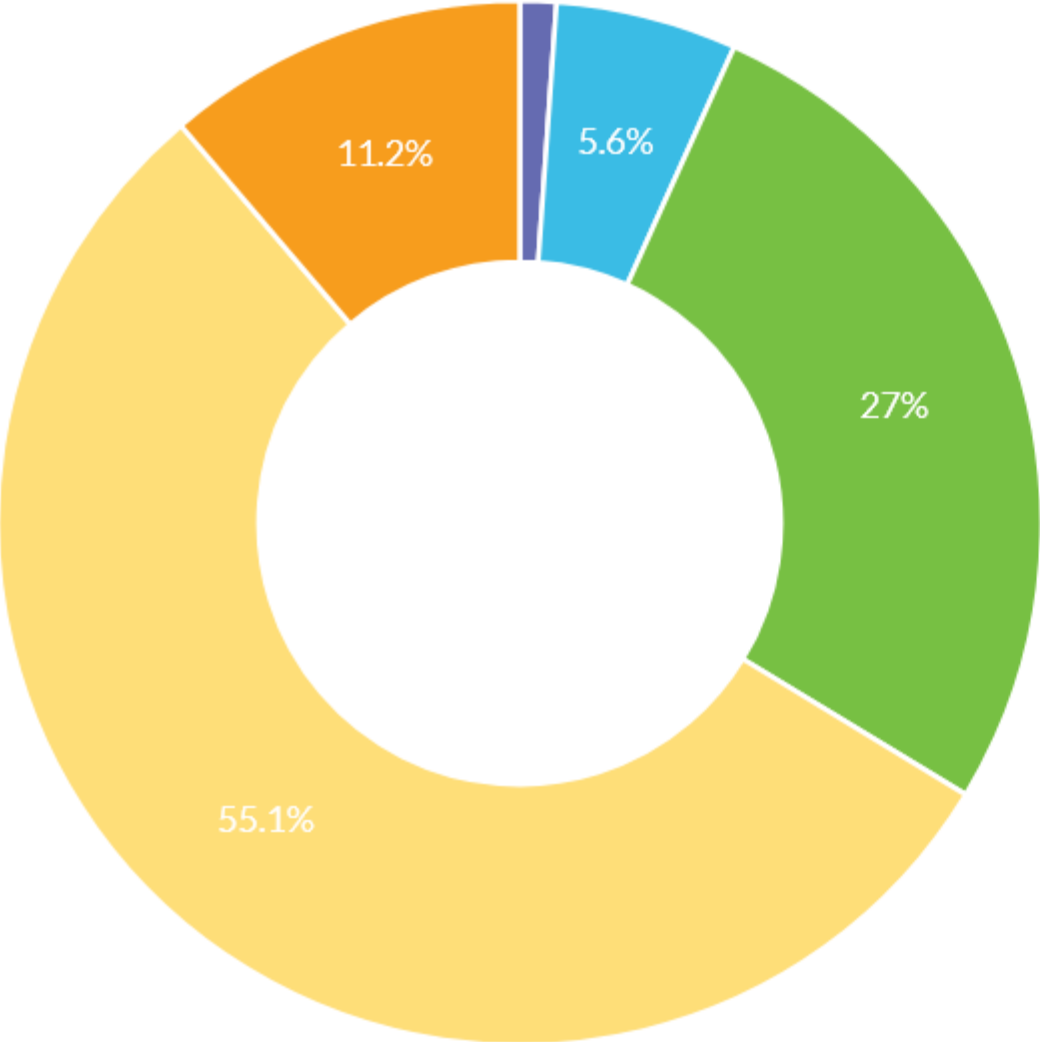
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# Visitor Profile (Who Are They?) Where is your primary residence?



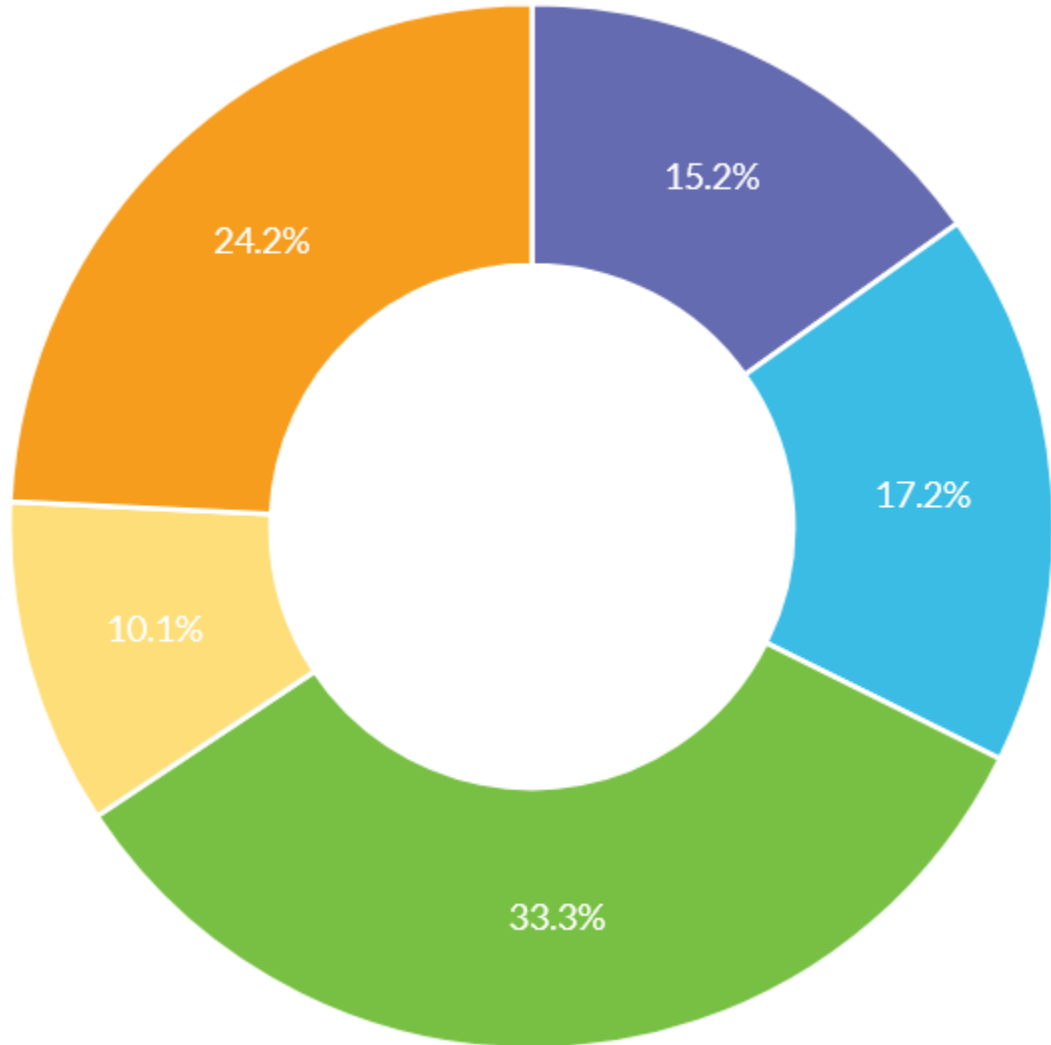
Choice	Total
Sydney Metro	8
Regional NSW	17
Melbourne Metro	17
Regional Victoria	29
Queensland	6
South Australia	7
Interstate Other	5

# Visitor Profile: Age



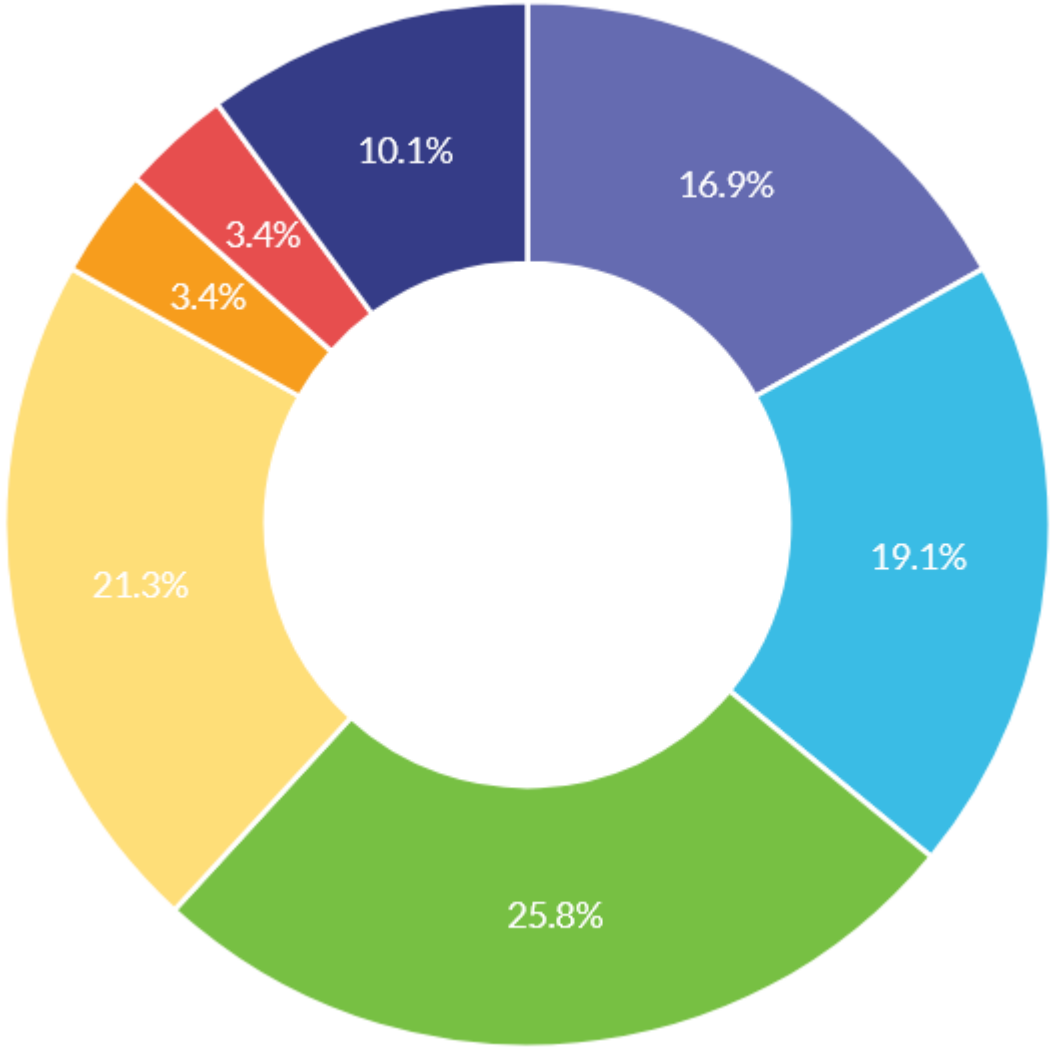
Choice	Total
Under 25	1
25-39	5
40-54	24
55-69	49
70+	10

## Visitor Profile: Travel Party Composition:



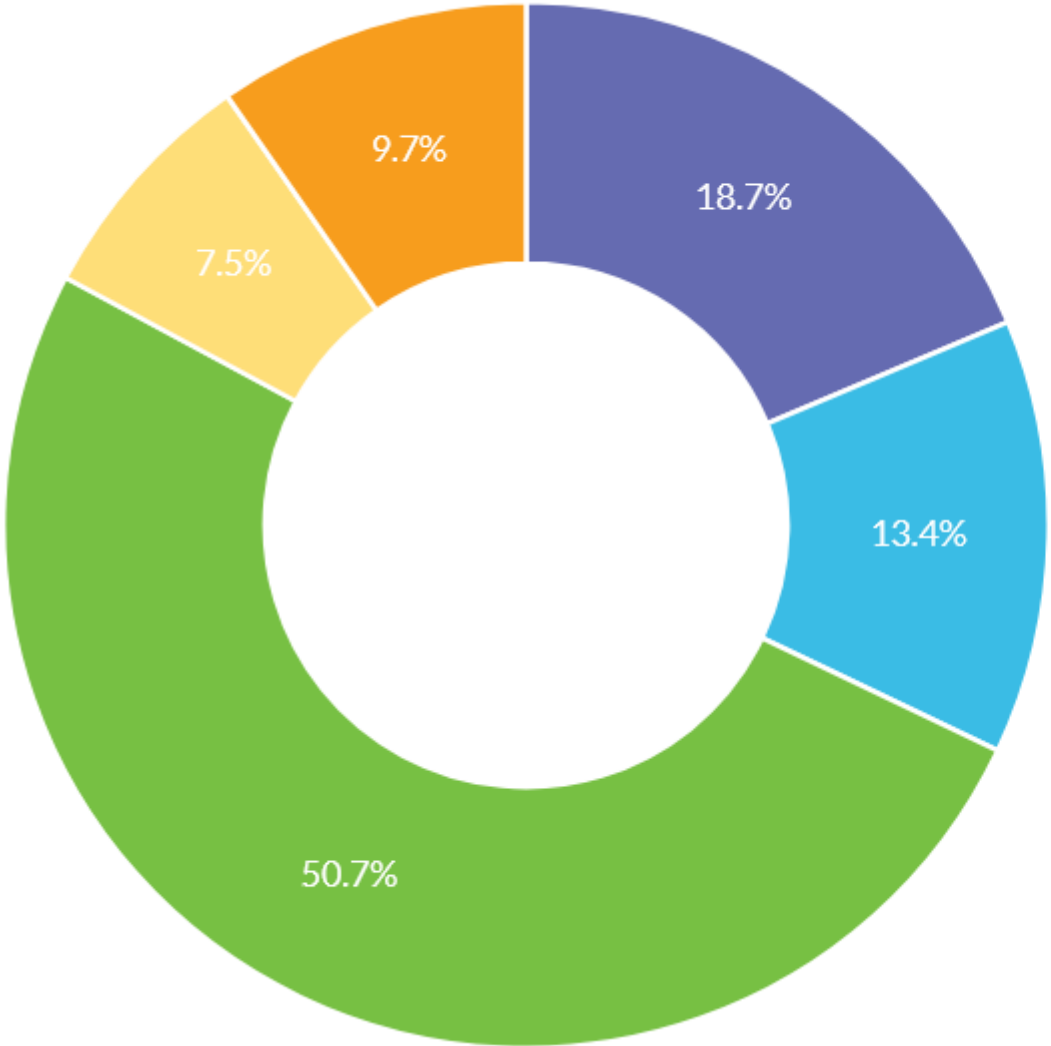
Choice	Total
Solo	15
Couple	17
Friends group	33
Family with children	10
Organised group / club	24

# What is your approximate annual household income before tax?



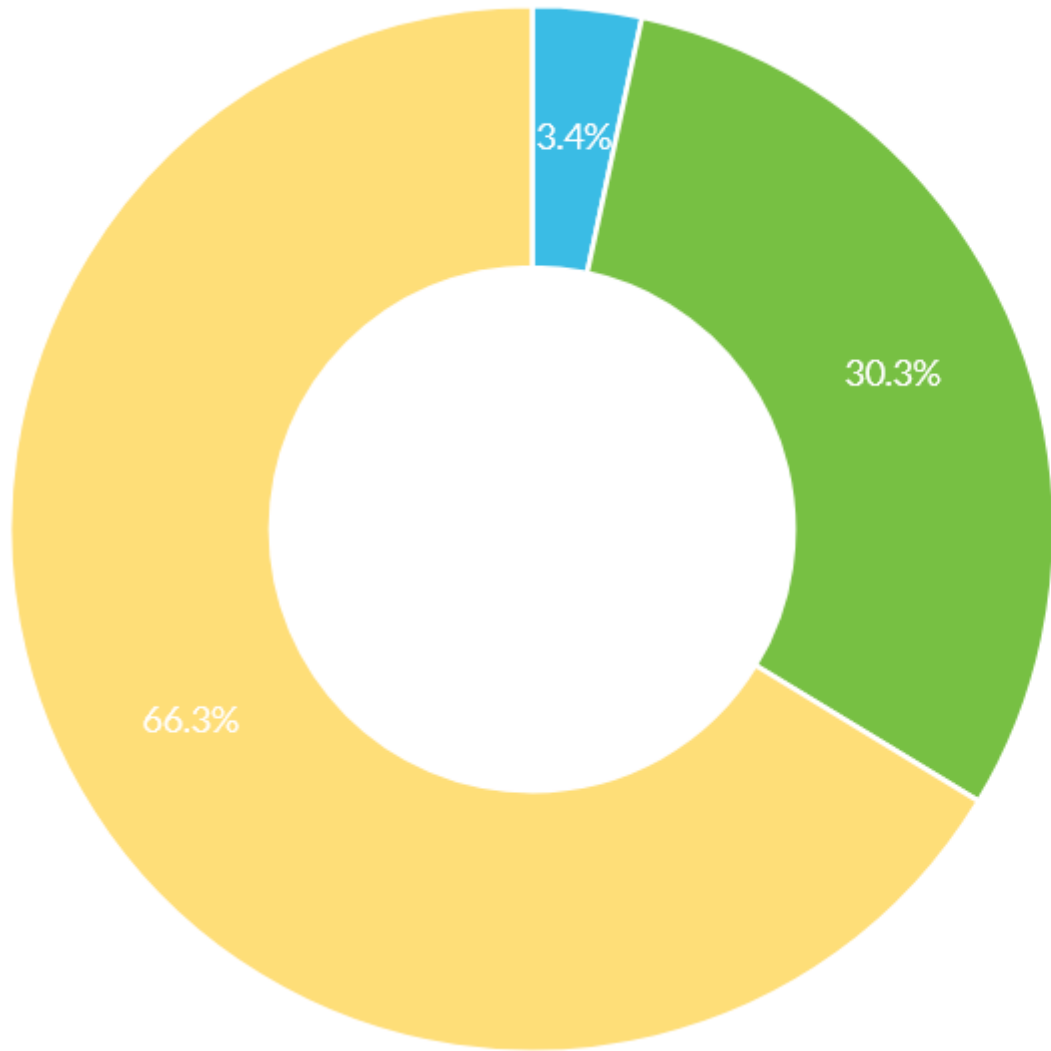
Choice	Total
Under \$75,000	15
\$75,000 - \$124,999	17
\$125,000 - \$174,999	23
\$175,000 - \$249,999	19
\$250,000 - \$349,999	3
\$350,000+	3
Prefer not to say	9

**SECTION 2: Trip Characteristics (How You Travel). What type of paddling trip are you doing?**



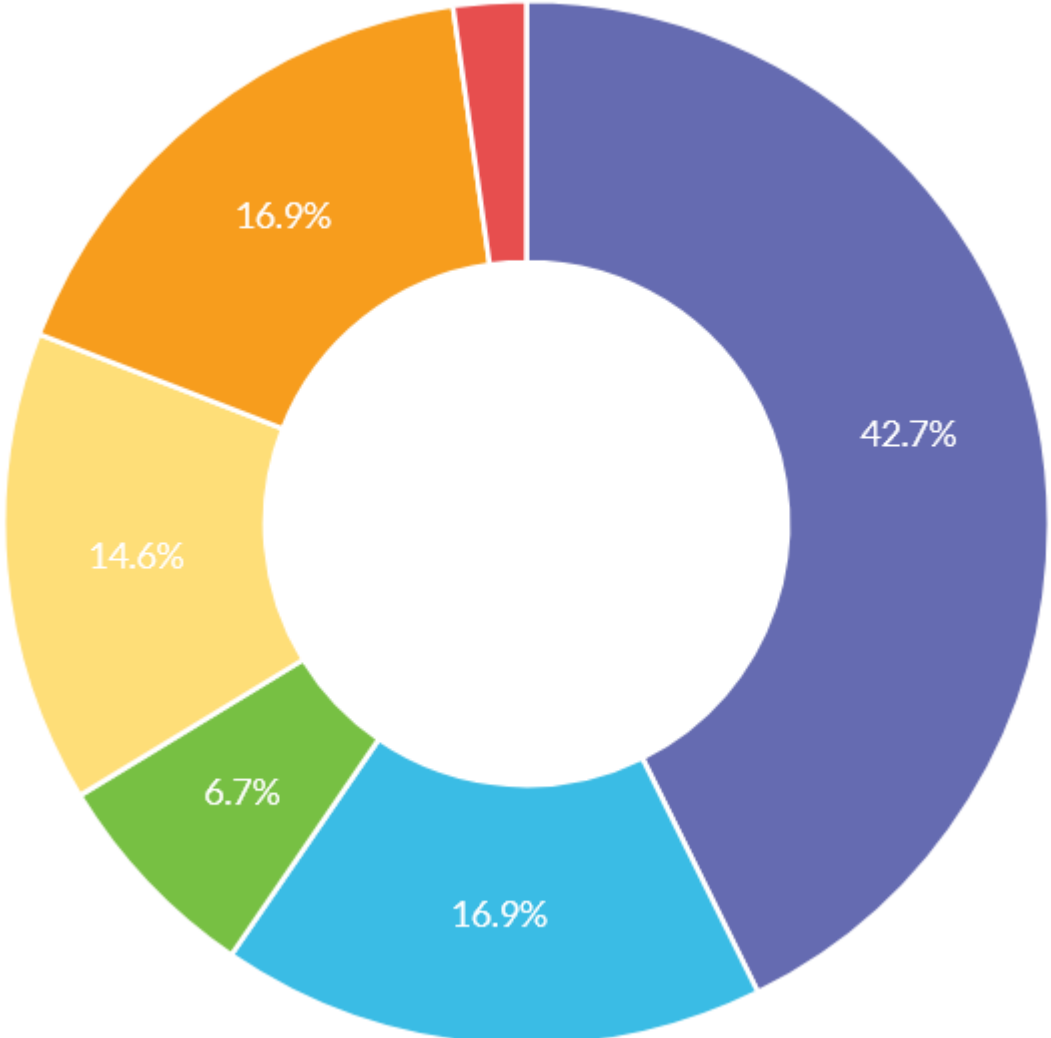
Choice	Total
Multi-day expedition	25
Day paddle(s)	18
Event participant (e.g. Massive Murray Paddle)	68
Training trip	10
Social/recreational touring	13

## Length of stay in the Riverina / Murray region:



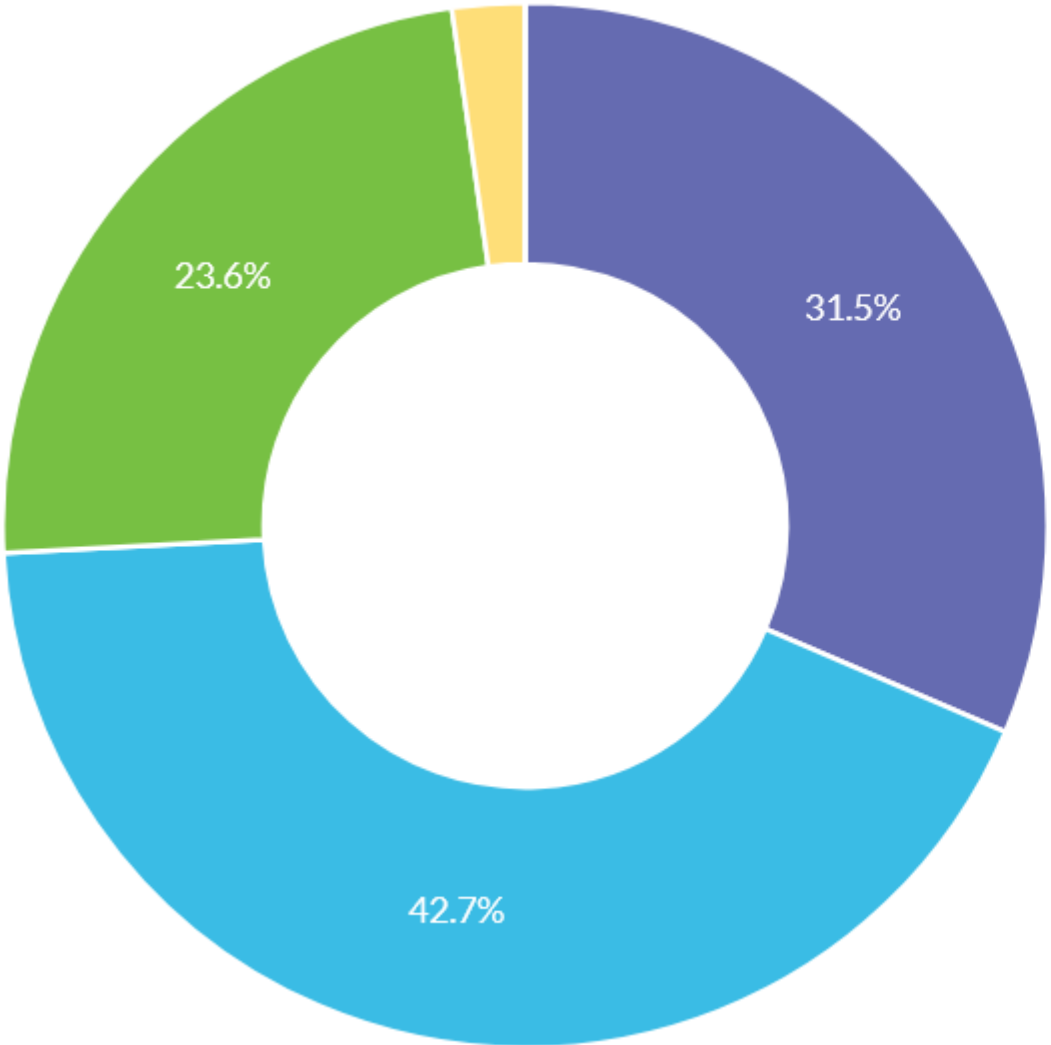
Choice	Total
Day trip	0
1-2 nights	3
3-5 nights	27
6+ nights	59

Type of accommodation used:



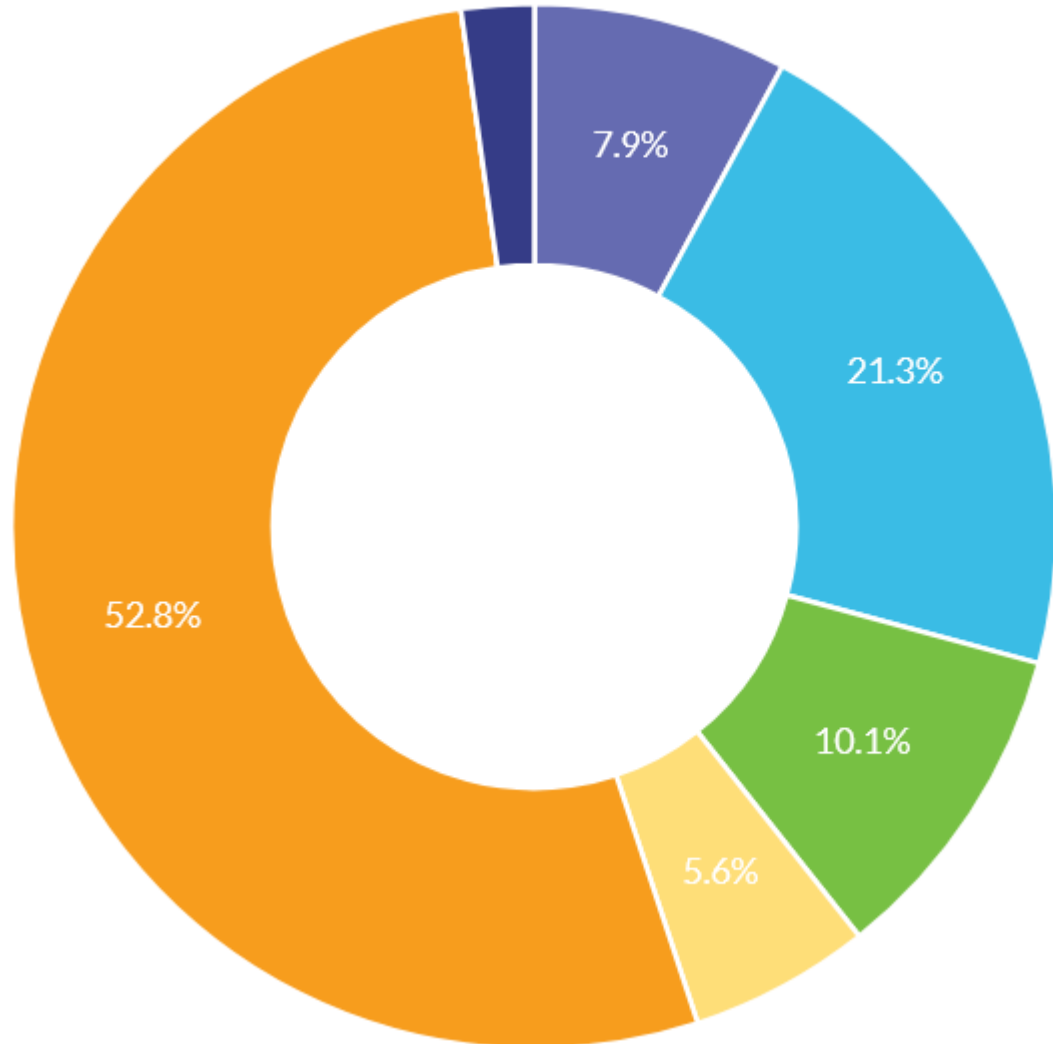
Choice	Total
Caravan park	38
Hotel/motel	15
Airbnb/holiday rental	6
Camping (formal campground)	13
Bush camping	15
Staying with friends/family	2

**Average daily spend per person (excluding fuel to get to the area):**



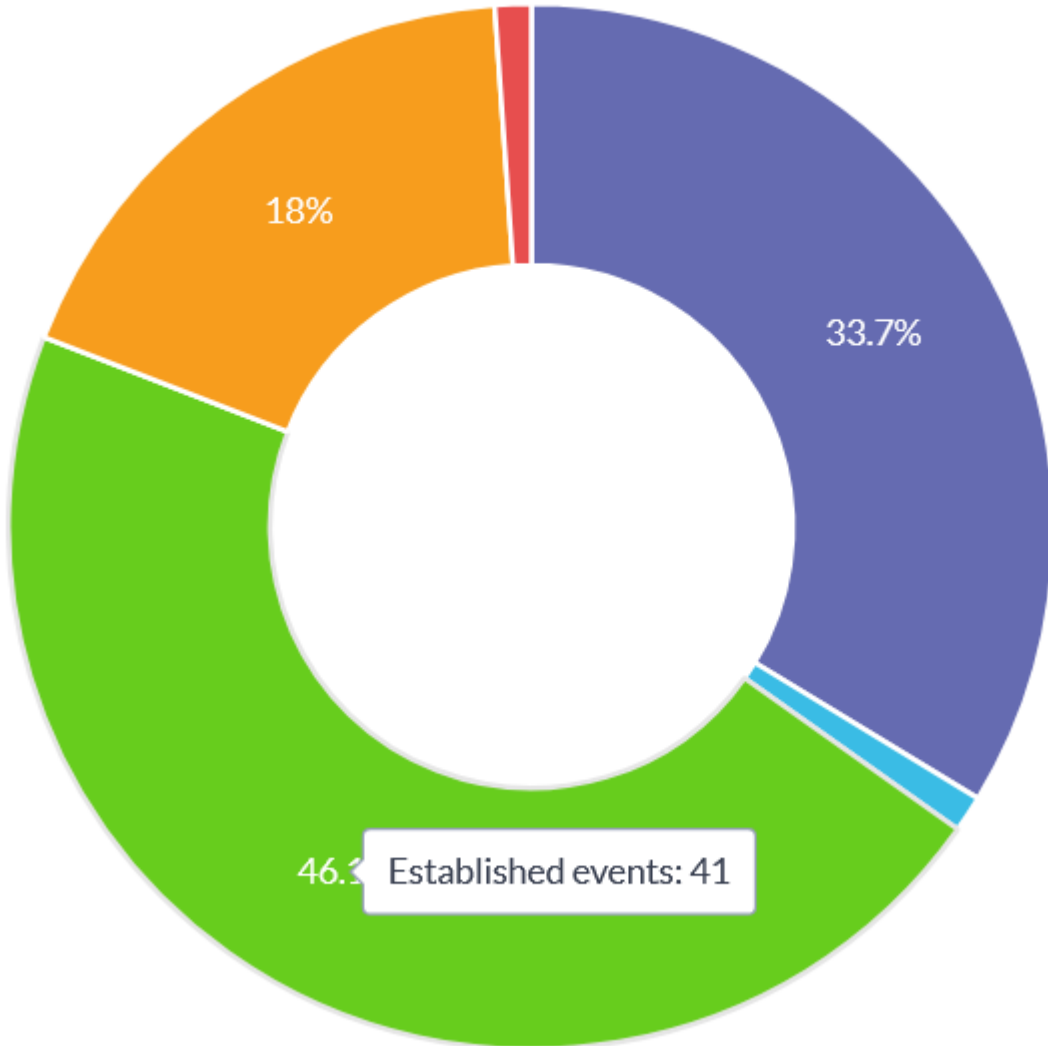
Choice	Total
<\$75	28
\$75-\$150	38
\$150-\$250	21
\$250-\$500	2
\$500+	0

## Motivations (Why You Come) Primary motivation for visiting the Murray River:



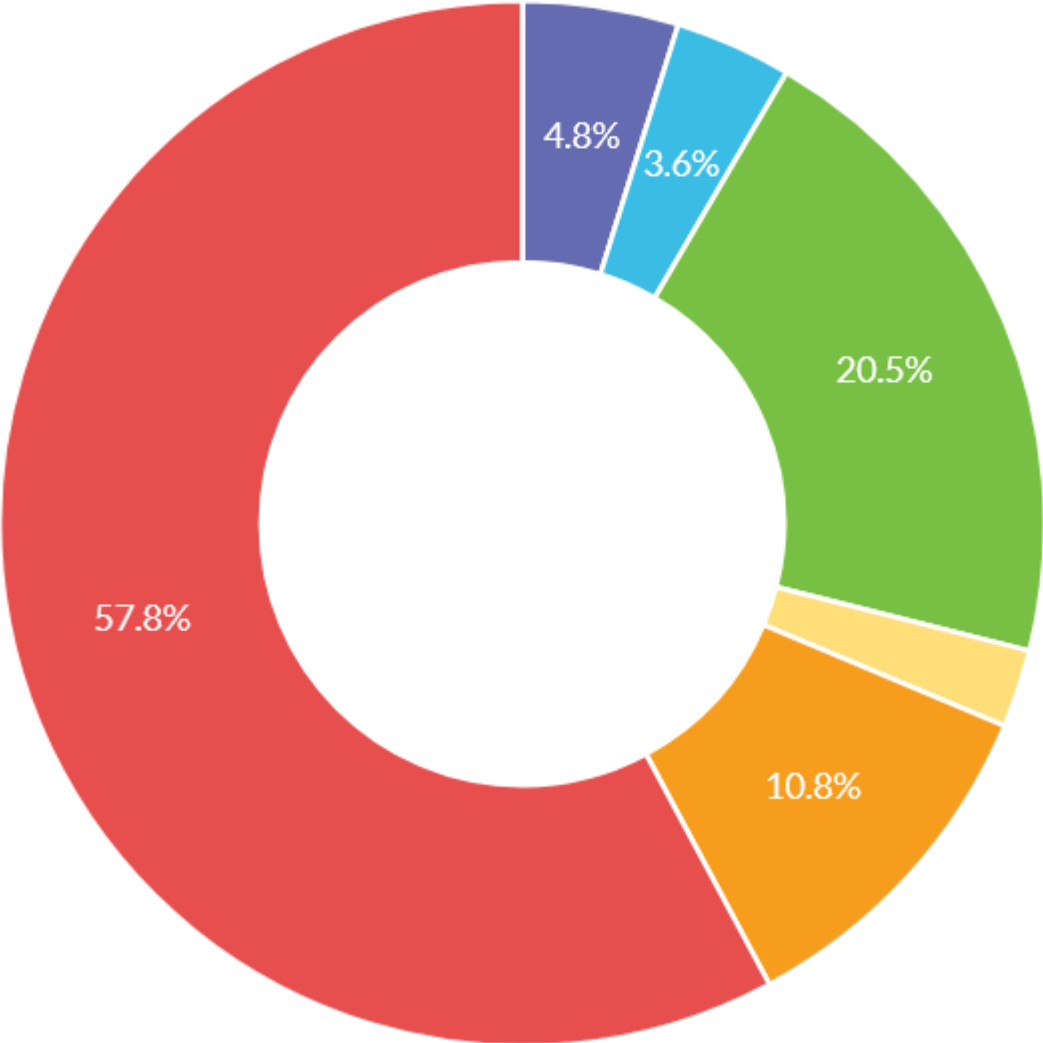
Choice	Total
Nature & scenery	7
Physical challenge	19
Relaxation & slow travel	9
Social connection	5
Event participation	47
Wildlife & ecology	0
Cultural/heritage interest	2

## What influences your decision to paddle here?



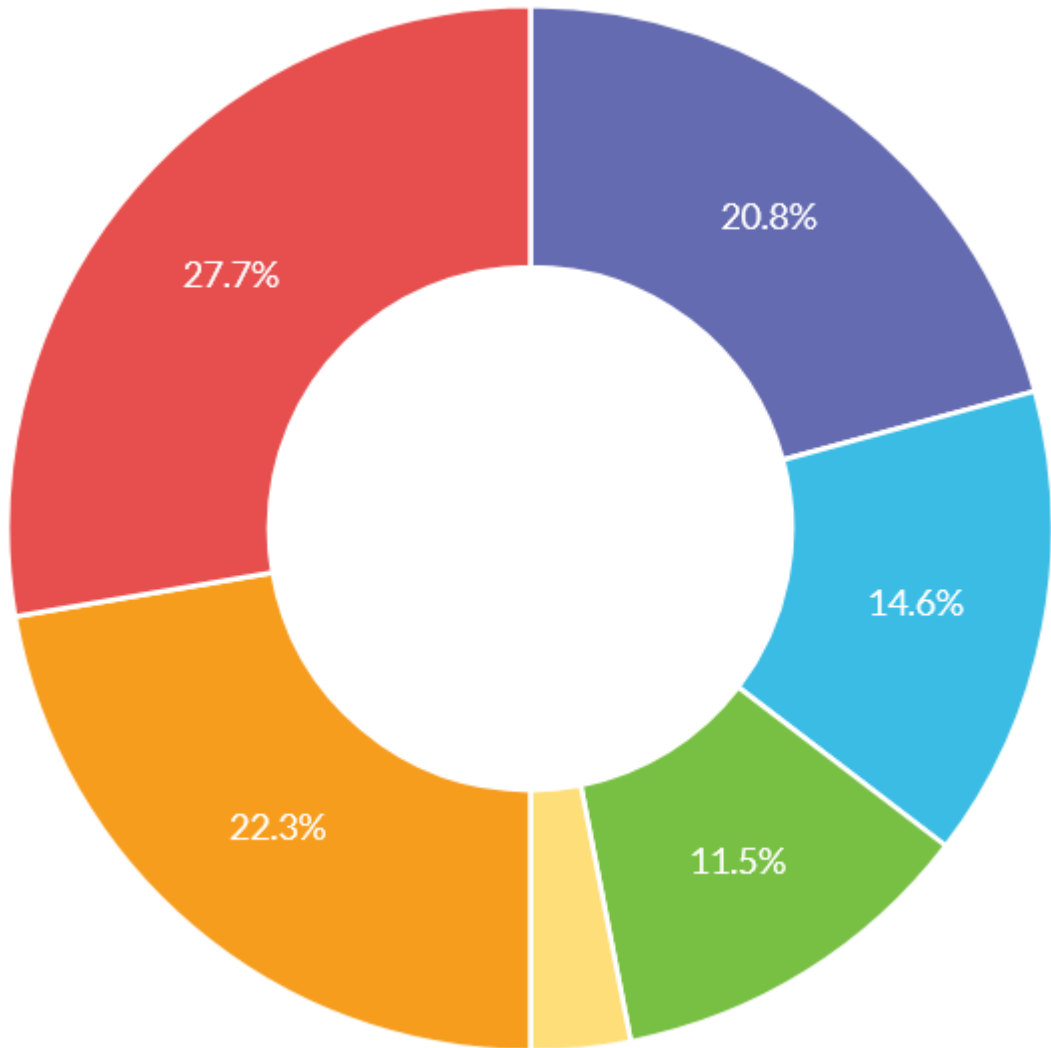
Choice	Total
River length & remoteness	30
Climate	1
Established events	41
Accessibility by road	0
Reputation within paddling community	16
Social media / word of mouth	1

# What would encourage you to stay longer?



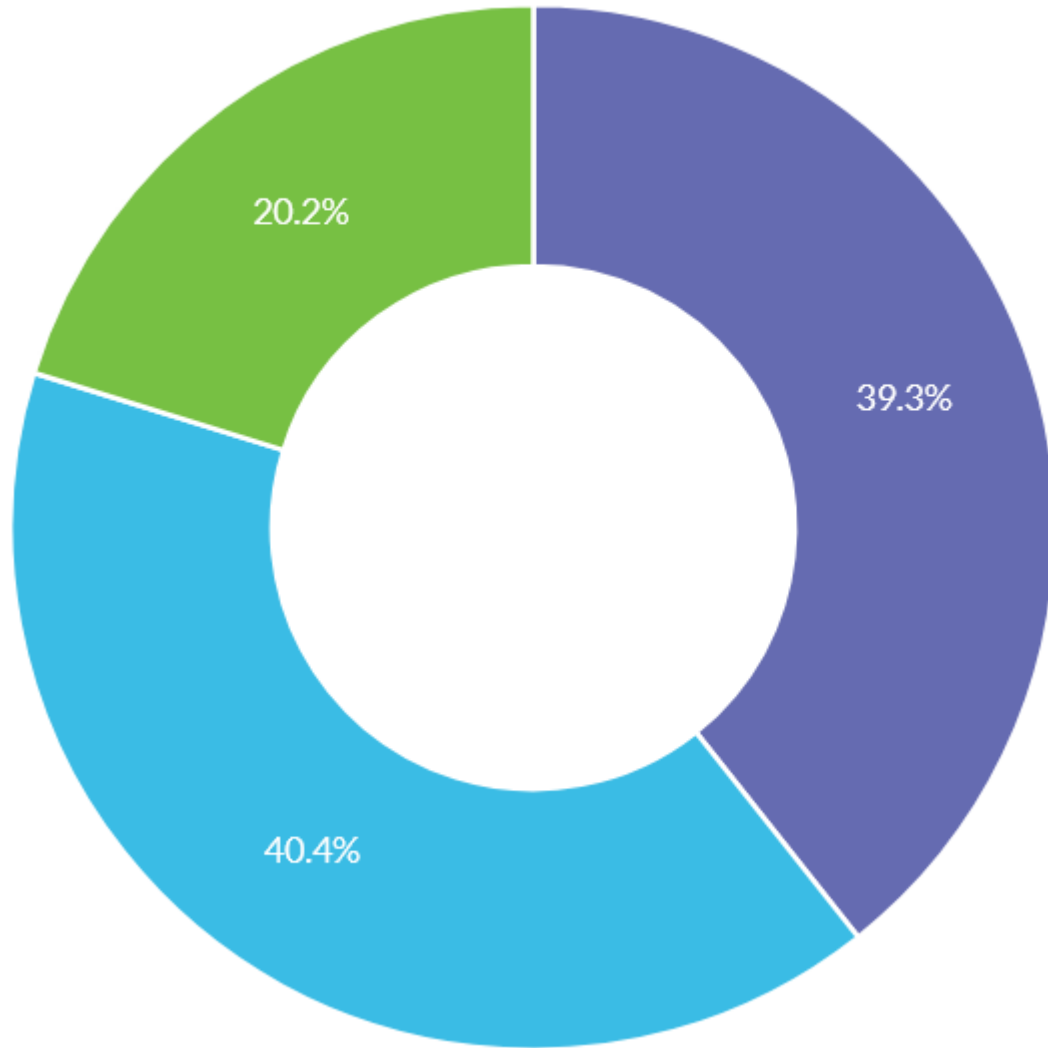
Choice	↕	Total
Better accommodation options		4
Riverfront dining		3
Shuttle / logistics support		17
Guided eco tours		2
Wellness/recovery facilities		9
Local festivals aligned with paddling		48

## Behaviour & Marketing Channels How did you learn about paddling in this region?



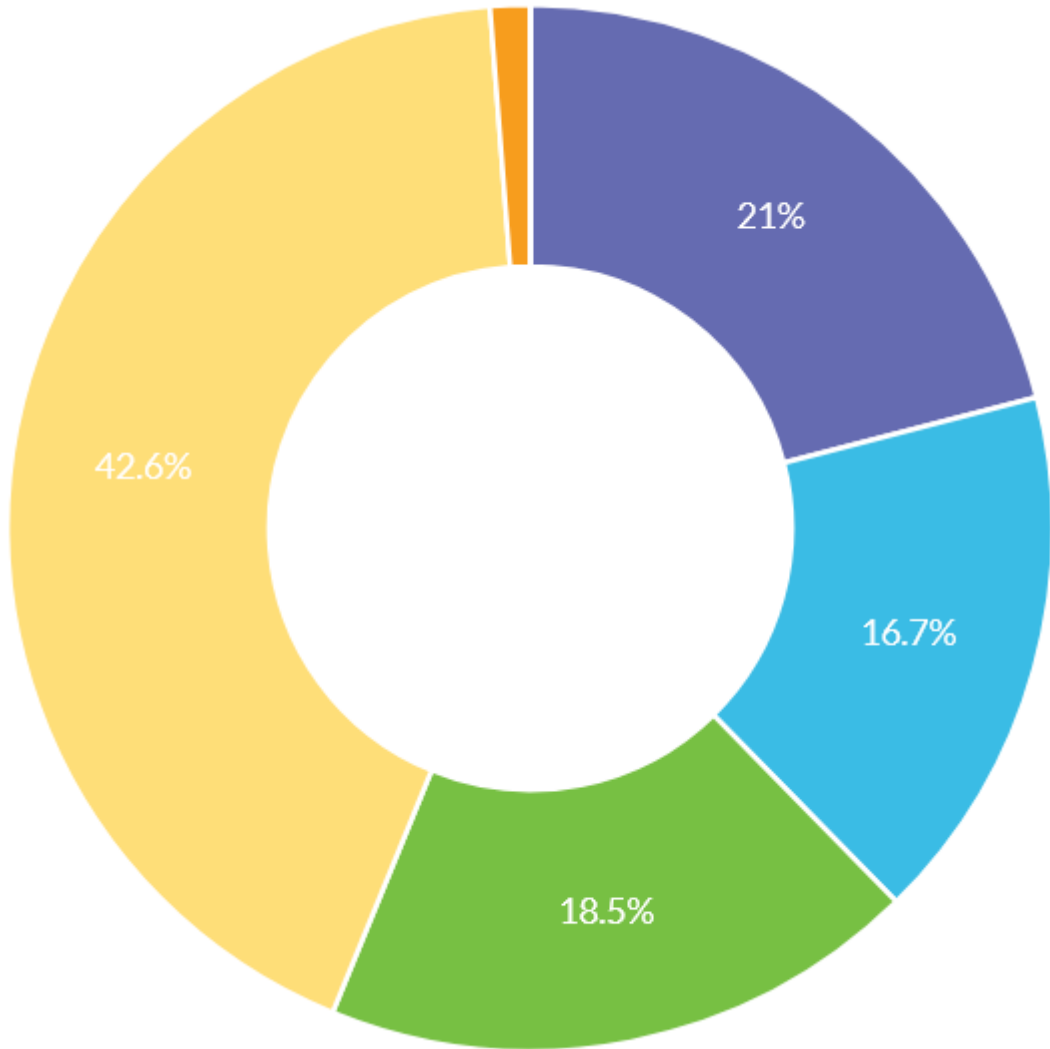
Choice	Total
Paddling club	27
Event website	19
Social media	15
Tourism NSW / Victoria website	4
Word of mouth	29
Previous visit	36

## Do you travel to paddle elsewhere in Australia?



Choice	↕	Total
● Yes - 1-2 trips per year		35
● Yes - 3+ trips per year		36
● No		18


## Would you return to the Riverina / Murray River for:



Choice	Total
Another event	34
Independent expedition	27
Holiday (non-paddling)	30
Yes, definitely	69
Maybe	2
Unlikely	0


## Perception & Economic Value. >>> How would you describe your Murray River experience? (Open response)

“An overwhelmingly positive, experience-rich destination driving repeat visitation and regional spend.”

 90%


### Positive Experience

*Amazing, memorable, must-return destination*

 70%

### Nature & Serenity

*Scenery, wildlife, peace, unique river environment*

 60%

### Community & Connection

*Camaraderie, friendships, welcoming towns*

 50%


### Challenge & Achievement

*Physical endurance, personal goals, iconic event*

 45%


### Regional Engagement

*Accommodation, dining, supporting local towns*

 35%

### Accessibility & Safety

*Easy access, safe paddling, event structure*

 25%

### Infrastructure Gaps

*Toilets, launch points, logistics*

 25%

### Emotional Connection

*Spiritual, family ties, “feels like home”*

“The Massive Murray Paddle and broader Murray River experience combine nature, challenge and community—creating a high-value tourism asset with strong economic and social impact, and clear opportunities for infrastructure-led growth.”


## Name a few local businesses that you used?

“Consistent, multi-category spend across the entire river corridor.”

 **80%**

Food & Beverage

*Bakeries, pubs, takeaway*

 **70%**

Fuel & Convenience

*Service stations, general stores*

 **65%**

Supermarkets

*Coles, Woolworths, IGA*

 **60%**


Accommodation

*Caravan parks, motels*

 **50%**


Pubs & Clubs

*Evening dining & social*

 **45%**


Cafés

*Daily coffee & meals*

 **25%**

Support Services

*Hardware, camping, misc.*

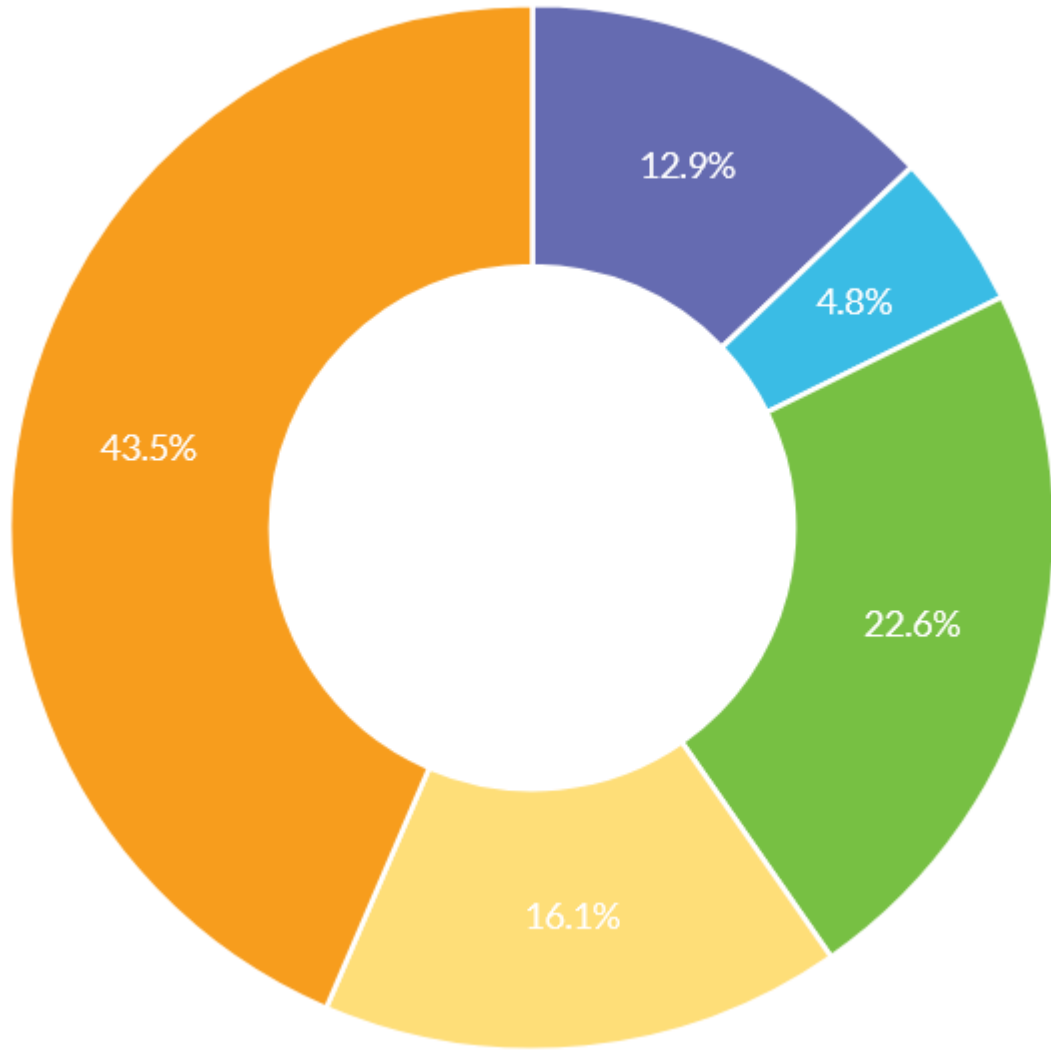
 **15%**

Distributed Spend

*Many businesses, low recall*

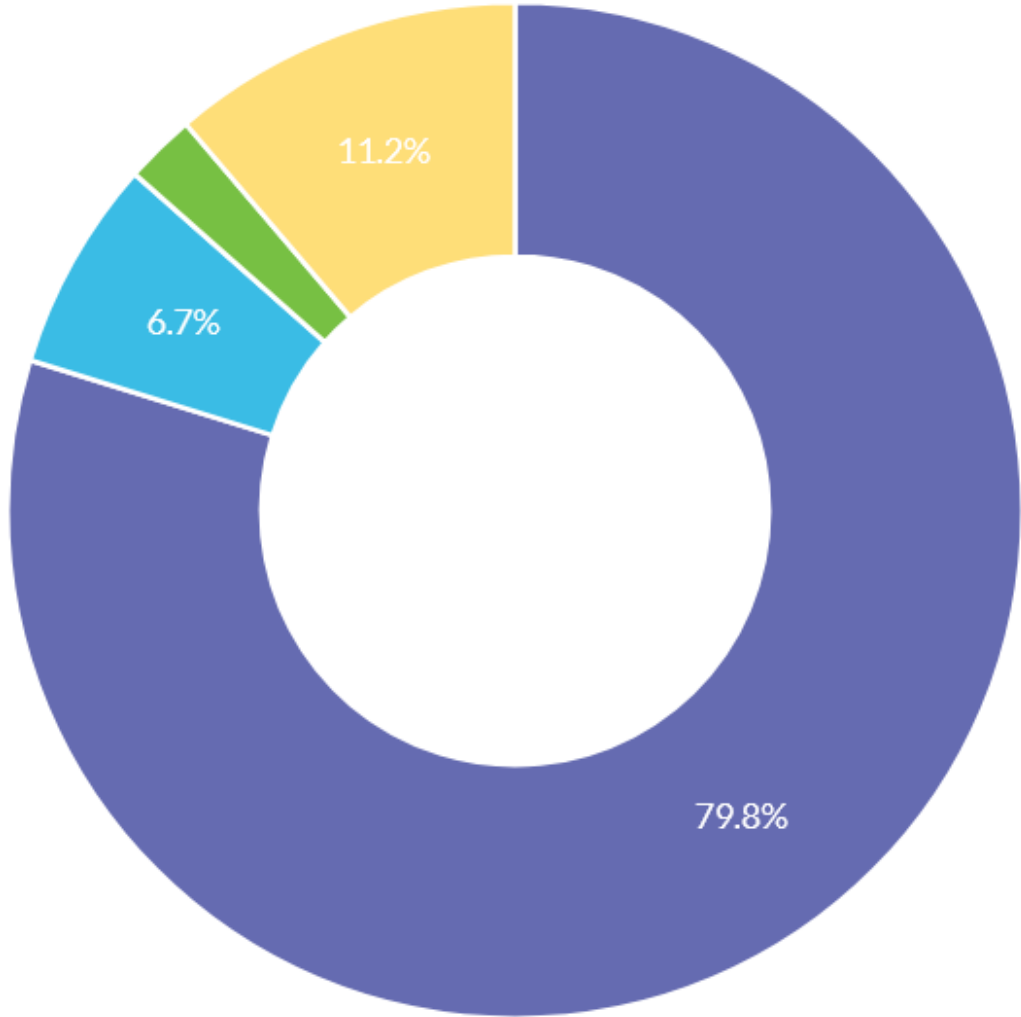
“The Massive Murray Paddle drives sustained economic activity across multiple sectors, with paddlers engaging in daily spend across food, fuel, accommodation and retail—benefiting both large centres and smaller river communities.”

## Did you extend your trip to visit any of the following:



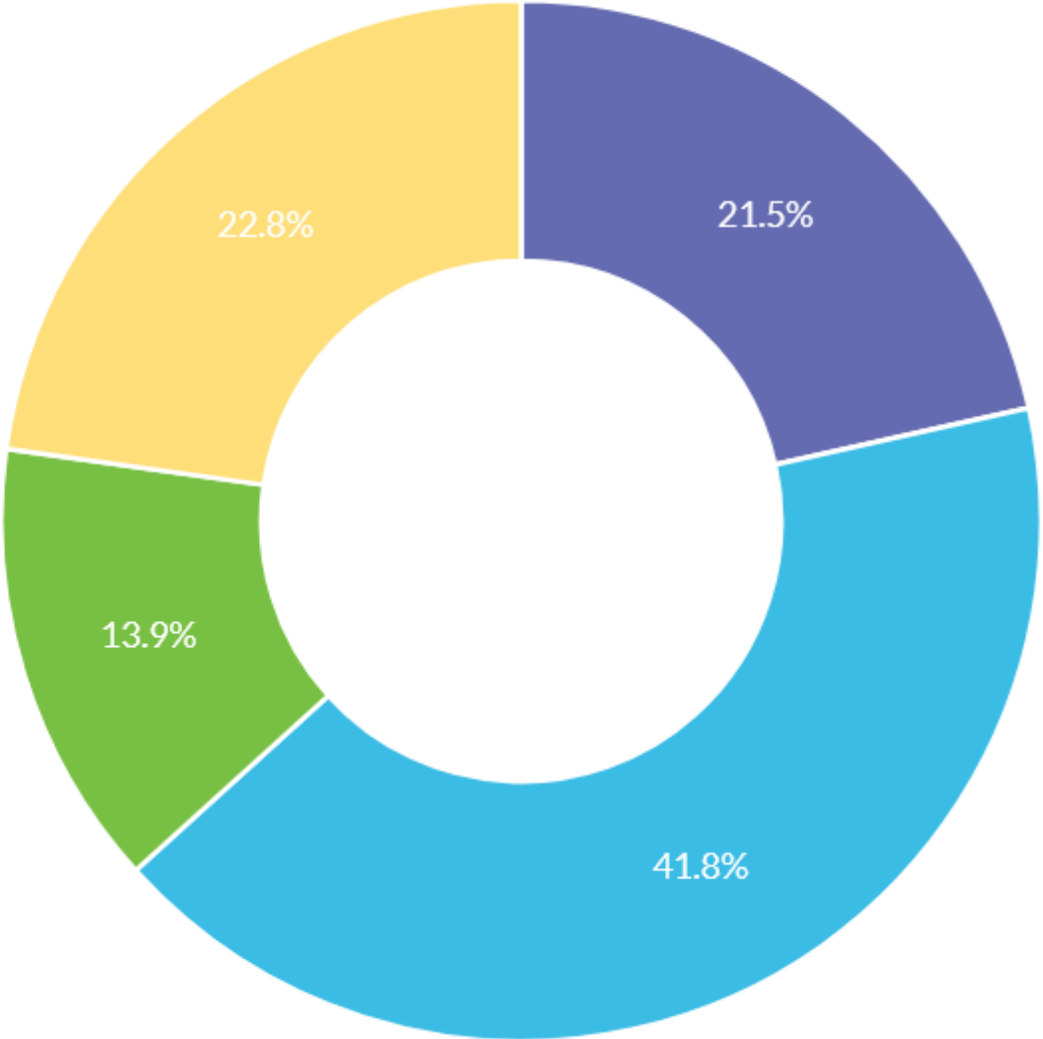
Choice	Total
Wineries	8
Local produce stores	3
Heritage towns	14
Nature reserves	10
Restaurants/cafes	27

# Massive Murray Paddle (Event Impact & Legacy) >>> Are you / have you participated in the Massive Murray Paddle?



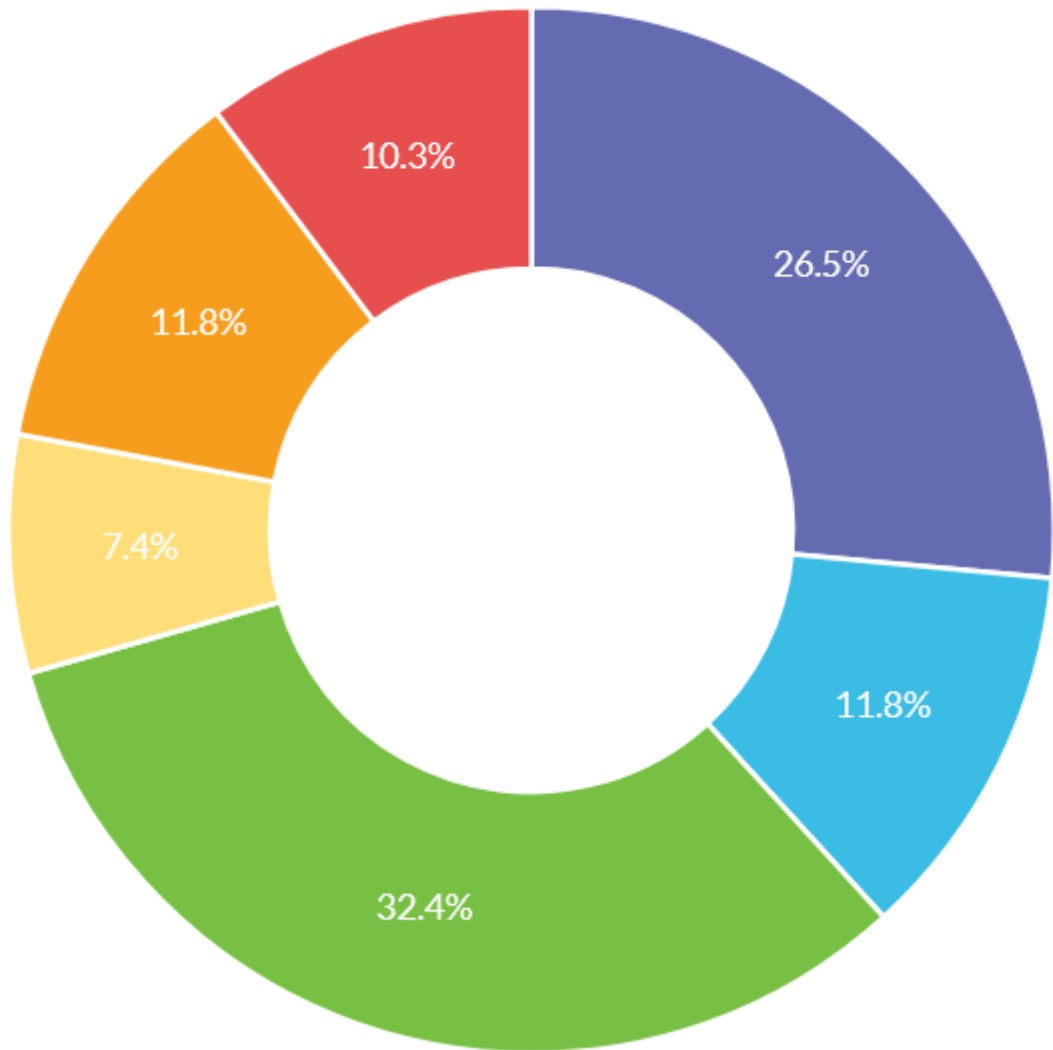
Choice	Total
Yes - Competitor	71
Yes - Support crew	6
Yes - Spectator	2
No	10

**If yes, how many times have you participated?**



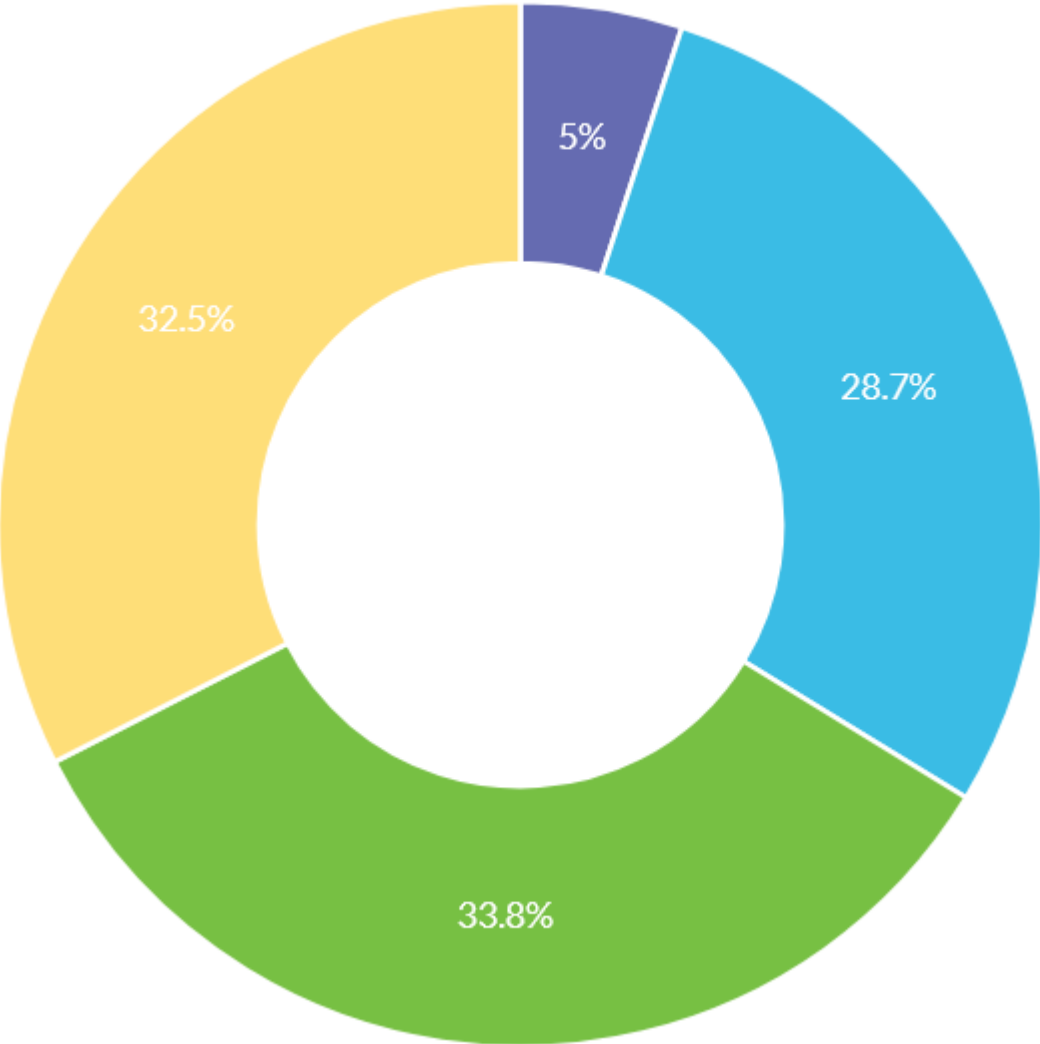
Choice	Total
● First time	17
● 2-5 times	33
● 6-10 times	11
● 10+ times	18

## If this is not your first time, what motivates you to return?



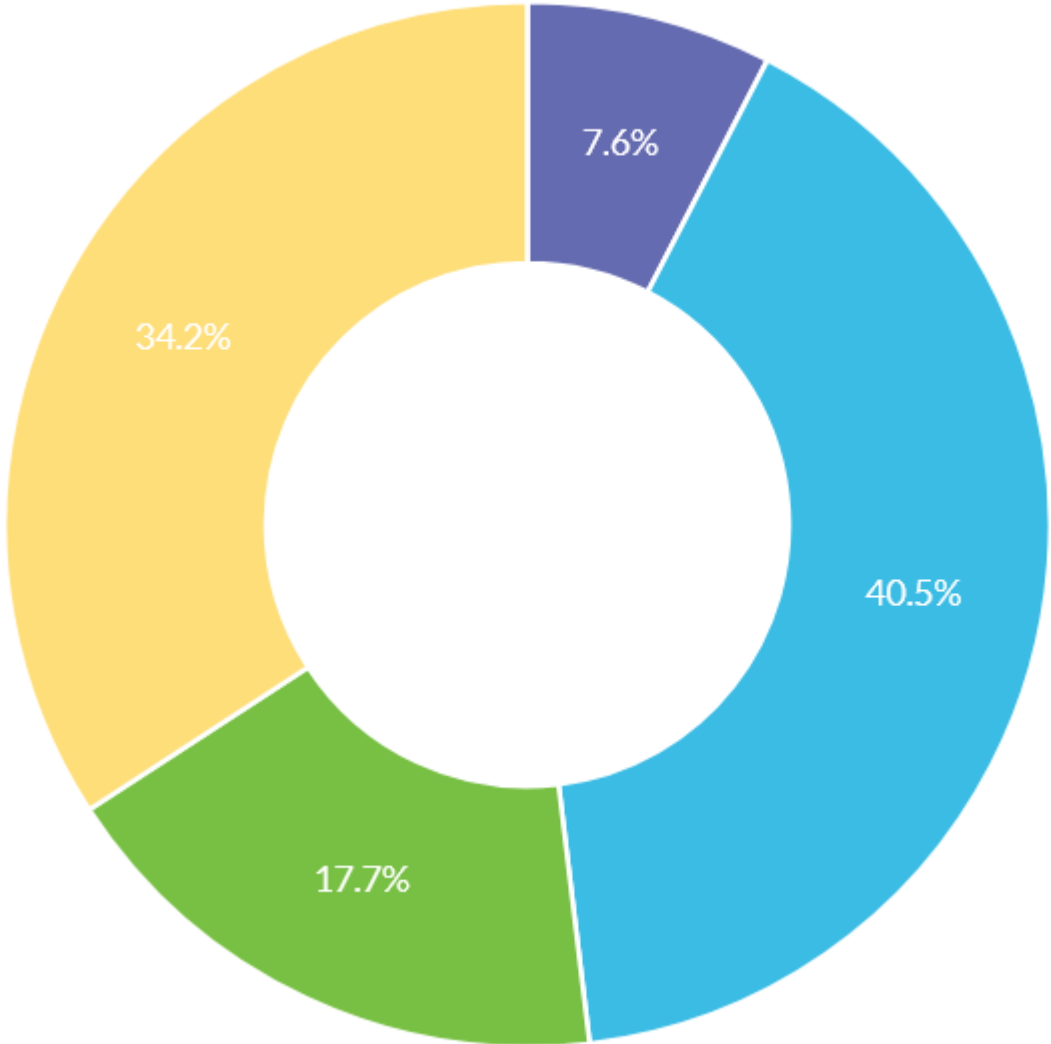
Choice	Total
Tradition / legacy of the event	18
Social connections	8
Competitive challenge	22
Scenic river environment	5
Community atmosphere	8
Well-organised logistics	7

# How many people travelled with you specifically because of the event?



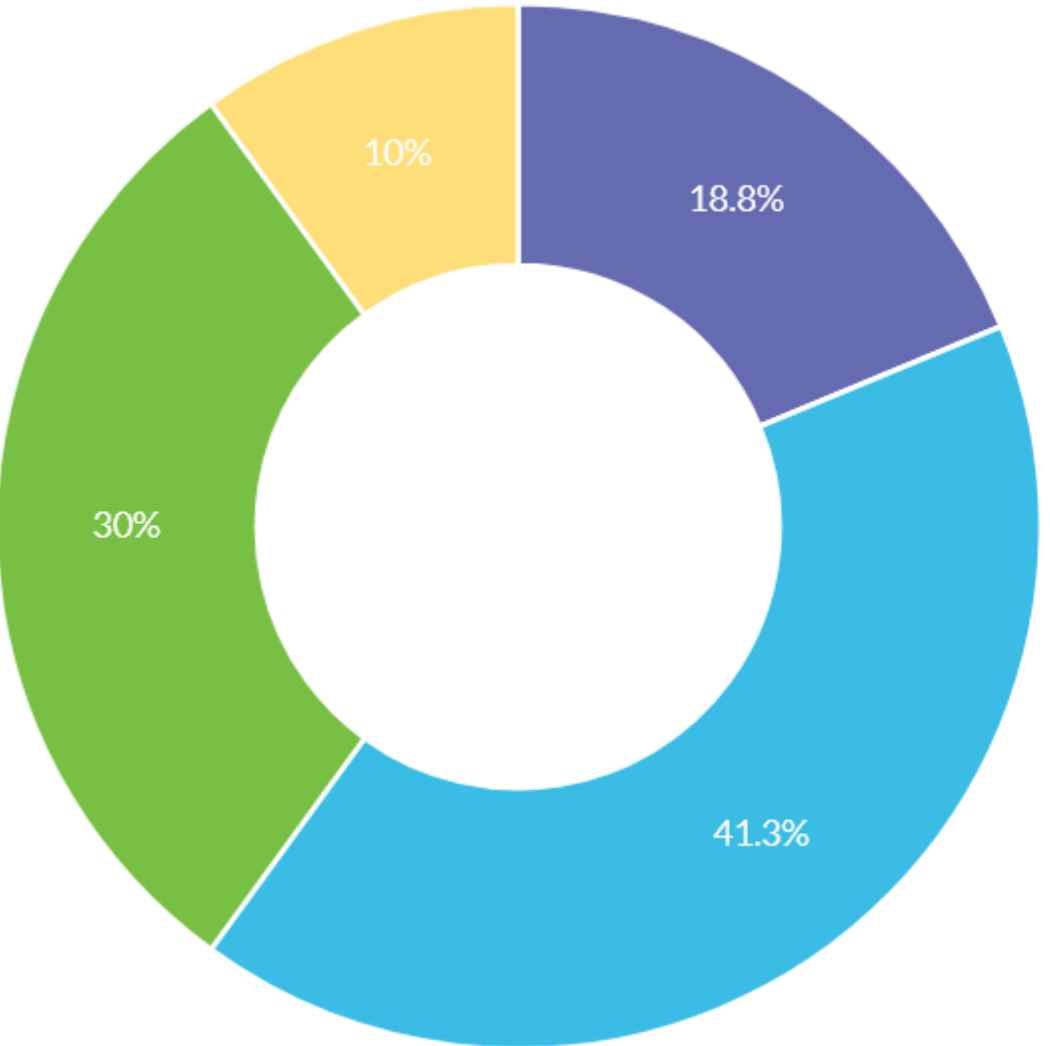
Choice	Total
None	4
1-2	23
3-5	27
6+	26

**Total length of stay associated with the event (including pre- or post-event nights):**



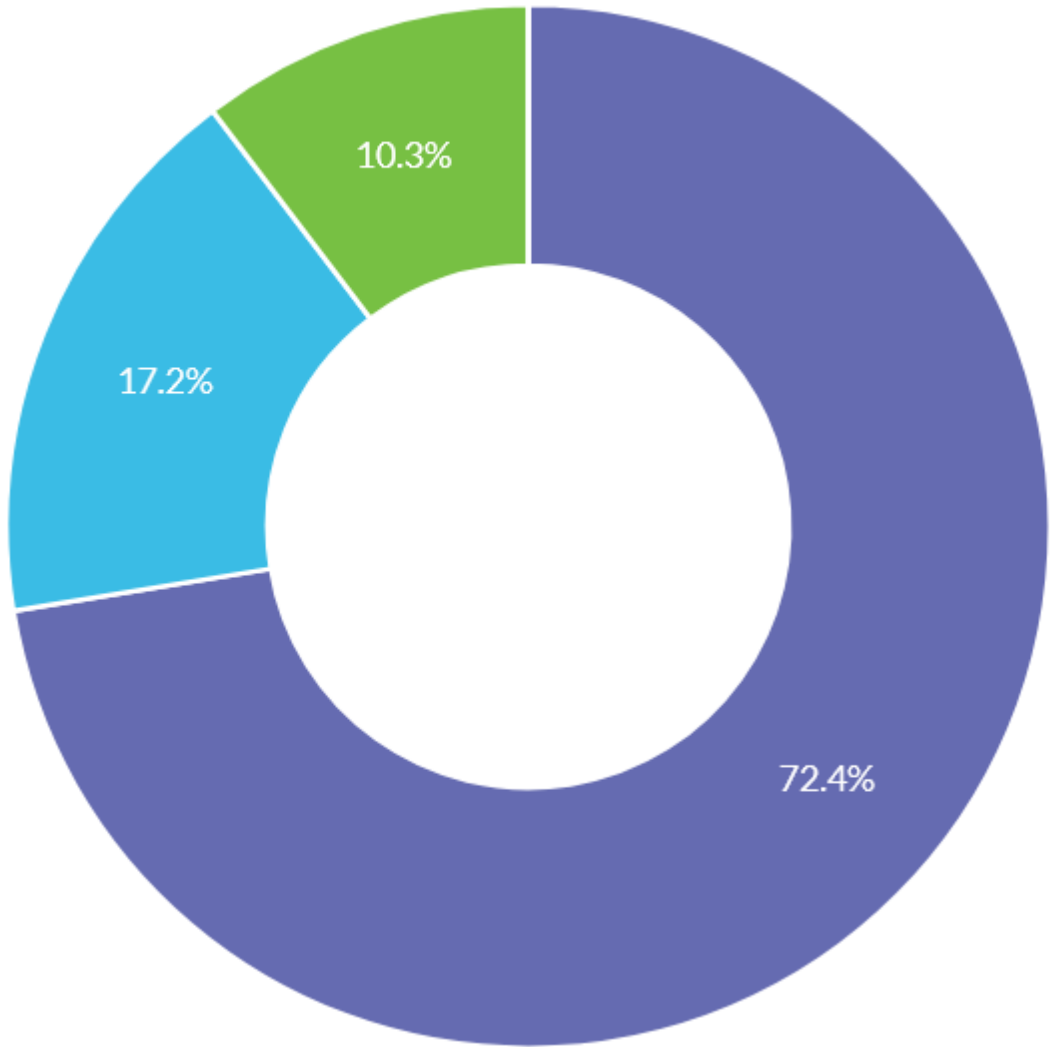
Choice	Total
Event only (5 days)	6
Event + 1-2 nights	32
Event + 3-5 nights	14
Event + 6+ nights	27

**Estimated total spend during your Massive Murray Paddle visit (per person):**



Choice	Total
<\$500	15
\$500-\$1,000	33
\$1,000-\$2,000	24
\$2,000+	8

## Would you return to the Riverina / Murray River area if the Massive Murray Paddle did not exist?



Choice	Total
Yes	63
Maybe	15
Unlikley	9
No	0

## What does the Massive Murray Paddle mean to you?

“A legacy experience built on challenge, connection and country.”

“The Massive Murray Paddle is far more than an endurance event—it is a deeply personal, community-driven experience. It combines physical challenge, lifelong social connection, and a profound relationship with the Murray River, creating a legacy event that delivers lasting emotional, cultural and regional impact.”

### **Challenge & Achievement**

- One of Australia’s great endurance events
- Personal goals, resilience, identity

### **Community & Connection**

- Lifelong friendships
- Strong paddling “family”
- Shared experience across generations

### **River & Country**

- Deep connection to the Murray
- Cultural and environmental significance
- Immersive, place-based experience