



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

NQF Snapshot Q3 2014

A quarterly report from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

October 2014

Table of contents



Introduction	3
Snapshot highlights	3
The state of the sector	5
Progress of assessment and rating	7
Overall quality ratings of services	8
Overall quality ratings of services - (SEIFA)	10
Overall quality ratings of services - (ARIA+)	11
Services rated Working Towards NQS	12
Quality area ratings of services	13
Waivers	14
National summary	16
Jurisdiction summaries	17

Introduction

NQF Snapshot Q3 2014 is ACECQA's seventh national report on children's education and care services.

It provides analysis and information on the state of the sector, progress of assessment and rating, quality ratings of services and waivers held by services.

The data presented in this Snapshot was taken from the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) on 1 October 2014 for the quarter ending 30 September 2014. To demonstrate changes over time, including the number of approved children's education and care services and the progress in the number of services with a quality rating, the data in places has been compared with data from NQF Snapshot Q3 2013.

When reviewing the quality rating information in the Snapshot, caution should be taken when making comparisons between jurisdictions or making predictions about services yet to be rated. Some jurisdictions have rated a smaller number of services and the services rated are not representative of all services.

Over the past 12 months the number of services with a quality rating has nearly doubled from 3441 (25%) to 6722 (46%). There has also been an increase in the proportion of assessed services that are Meeting or Exceeding the National Quality Standard, up from 58% to 64% over the same period.

The individual results for the 6722 children's education and care services already quality rated are available online at www.acecqa.gov.au/national-registers.

For further information on this report please email enquiries@acecqa.gov.au or telephone 1300 4 ACECQA (1300 422 327).

Snapshot highlights



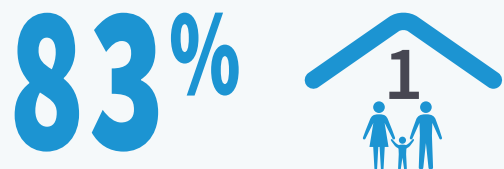
Number of children's education and care services operating across Australia



Number of services that have received a quality rating



Number of approved providers operating services



Proportion of approved providers operating only one children's education and care service

Snapshot highlights

64% **58%**
in Q3 2013

Proportion of assessed services that are Meeting or Exceeding the National Quality Standard (NQS)

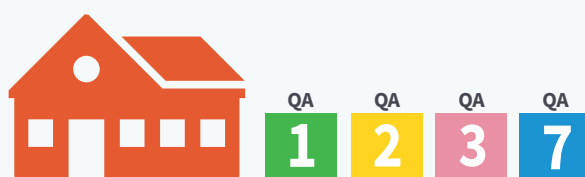


6.4%

Proportion of approved services with a waiver



Services are more likely to achieve Exceeding or Meeting NQS in Quality Area 4 - Staffing arrangements, Quality Area 5 - Relationships with children and Quality Area 6 - Partnerships with families and communities



Services are less likely to achieve Exceeding or Meeting NQS in Quality Area 1 - Educational program and practice, Quality Area 2 - Children's health and safety, Quality Area 3 - Physical environment and Quality Area 7 - Leadership and service management

 **829** **35%**
Increase on Q3 2013

Number of approved family day care services

 **13 657** **5%**
Increase on Q3 2013

Number of approved centre-based services

State of the sector

Figure 1: The number of approved services by jurisdiction and service type on 30 September 2014

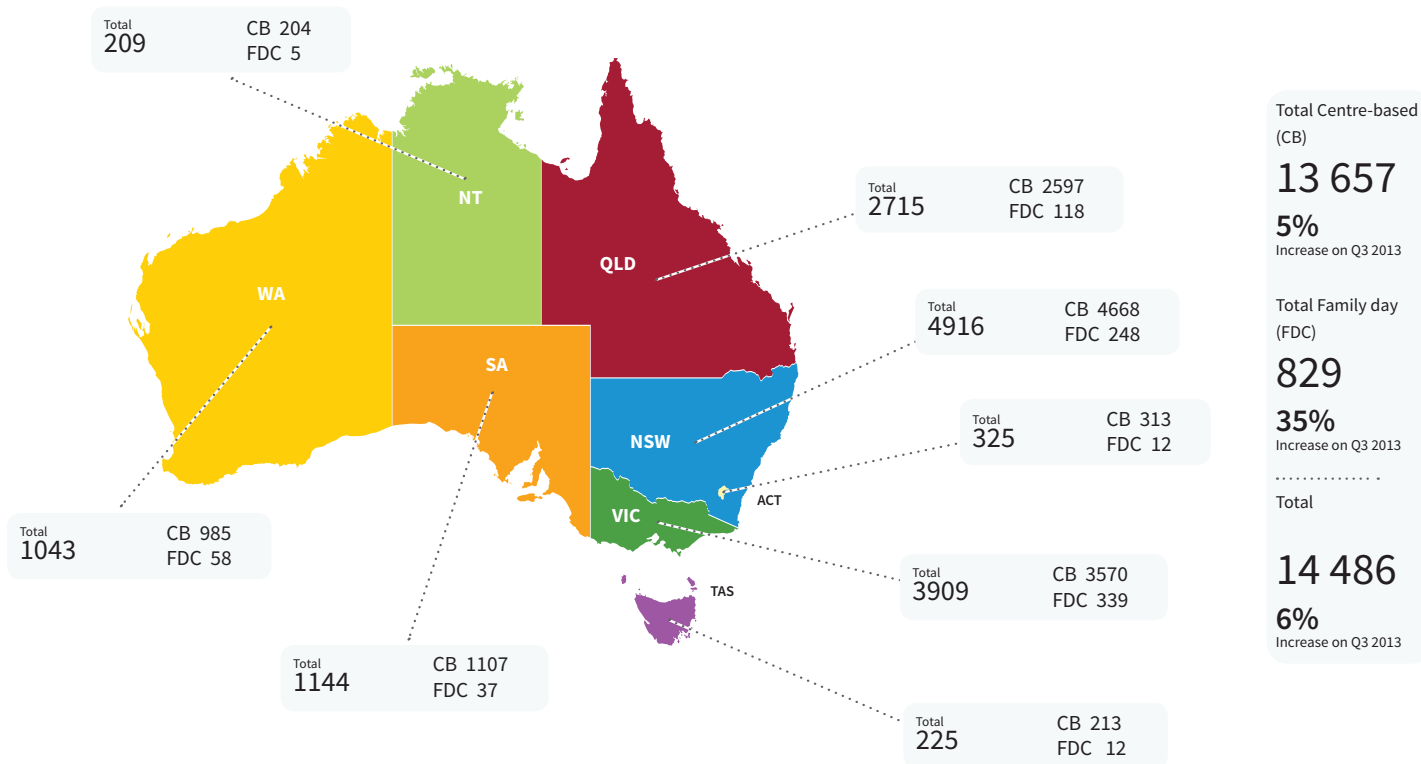


Table 1: The proportion of approved services by jurisdiction on 30 September 2014

Jurisdiction	Proportion
ACT	2%
NSW	34%
NT	1%
QLD	19%
SA	8%
TAS	2%
VIC	27%
WA	7%

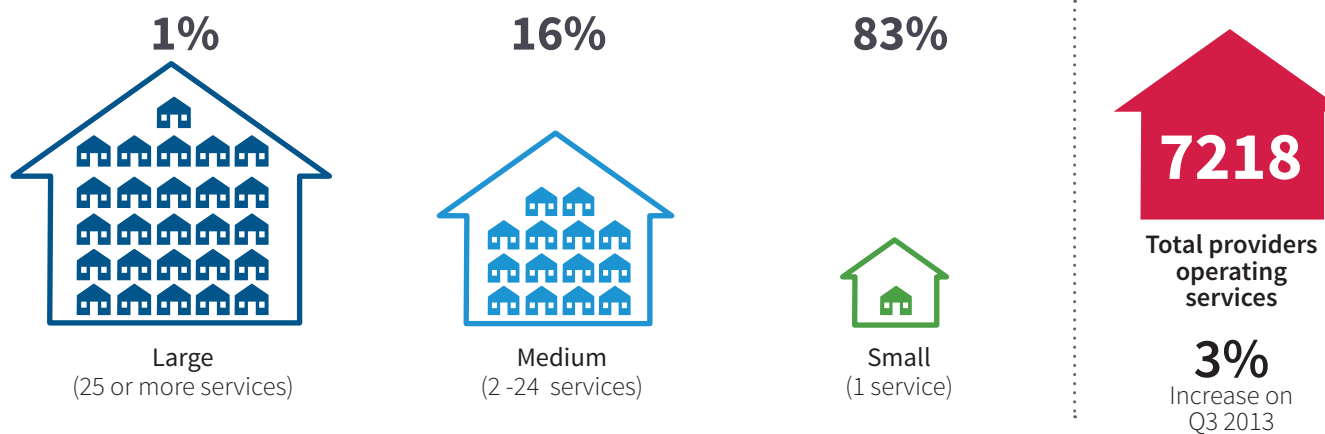
¹A centre-based service is an education and care service other than a family day care service. This includes most long day care, preschool and outside school hours care services that are delivered at a centre. It does not include preschools in Tasmania or Western Australia.

²A family day care service is an education and care service delivered through the use of two or more educators to provide education and care for children in residences, whether or not the service also provides education and care to children at a place other than a residence. They are sometimes known as family day care schemes and they are administered and supported by central coordination units.

State of the sector



Figure 2: The proportion of approved providers with services by size on 30 September 2014



Progress of assessment and rating

The first assessment and rating of services began in August 2012 and over time all services will be assessed and rated against the National Quality Standard. South Australia and Western Australia have completed the smallest proportion of quality ratings. This can be attributed in part to the delay in the commencement of the National Law in Western Australia (August 2012) and the establishment of a new regulatory authority in South Australia to conduct the assessment and rating.

The data shows that while 46% of all services have been quality rated since the assessment and rating process began, many more services have contact with authorised officers carrying out complementary functions.

Five jurisdictions are above the national average of 46% services rated - Northern Territory (60%), New South Wales (54%), the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria are both on (52%) and Tasmania (47%).

Table 2: The number and proportion of approved services with a quality rating by jurisdiction on 30 September 2014

	Number of services	Number of services with a quality rating	Proportion of services with a quality rating
ACT	325	168	52%
NSW	4916	2668	54%
NT	209	126	60%
QLD	2715	1125	41%
SA	1144	270	24%
TAS	225	106	47%
VIC	3909	2024	52%
WA	1043	235	23%
TOTAL	14 486	6722	46%

Table 3: The number and proportion of approved services with a quality rating by service type on 30 September 2014

	Number of services	Number of services with a quality rating	Proportion of services with a quality rating
Centre-based care	13 657	6478	47%
Family day care	829	244	29%
TOTAL	14 486	6722	46%

Overall quality ratings of services

Authorised officers from regulatory authorities assess and rate services using the seven quality areas, 18 standards and 58 elements that make up the National Quality Standard. Services are given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating.

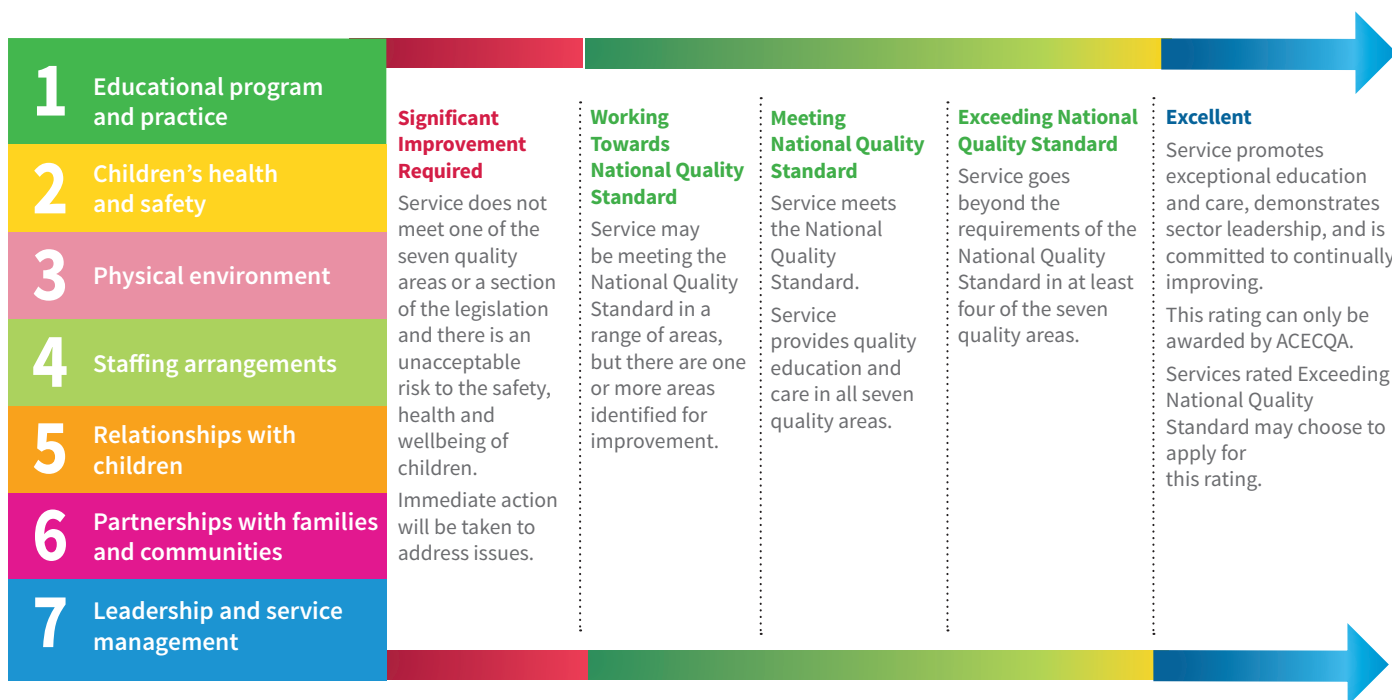


Table 4 shows that nationally, 64% of assessed and rated services are Meeting (36%) or Exceeding (28%) the NQS, up from 58% in Q3 2013.

Table 4: The number and proportion of approved services with a quality rating by quality rating level and jurisdiction on 30 September 2014

	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent rated	TOTAL
ACT	0	94 (56%)	32 (19%)	40 (24%)	2	168
NSW	3	1193 (45%)	935 (35%)	534 (20%)	3	2668
NT	0	102 (81%)	12 (10%)	12 (10%)	0	126
QLD	1	302 (27%)	373 (33%)	444 (39%)	5	1125
SA	0	91 (34%)	70 (26%)	103 (38%)	6	270
TAS	0	58 (55%)	26 (25%)	22 (21%)	0	106
VIC	1	424 (21%)	940 (46%)	656 (32%)	3	2024
WA	1	114 (49%)	62 (26%)	57 (24%)	1	235
TOTAL	6	2378 (35%)	2450 (36%)	1868 (28%)	20	6722

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

Overall quality ratings of services

Of services quality rated, centre-based services³ are more likely to be rated Meeting NQS (37%) than family day care services⁴ (31%). However, both centre-based services and family day care services are equally likely to be rated Exceeding NQS.

Figure 3: Proportion of approved services with a quality rating by quality rating level and service type on 30 September 2014

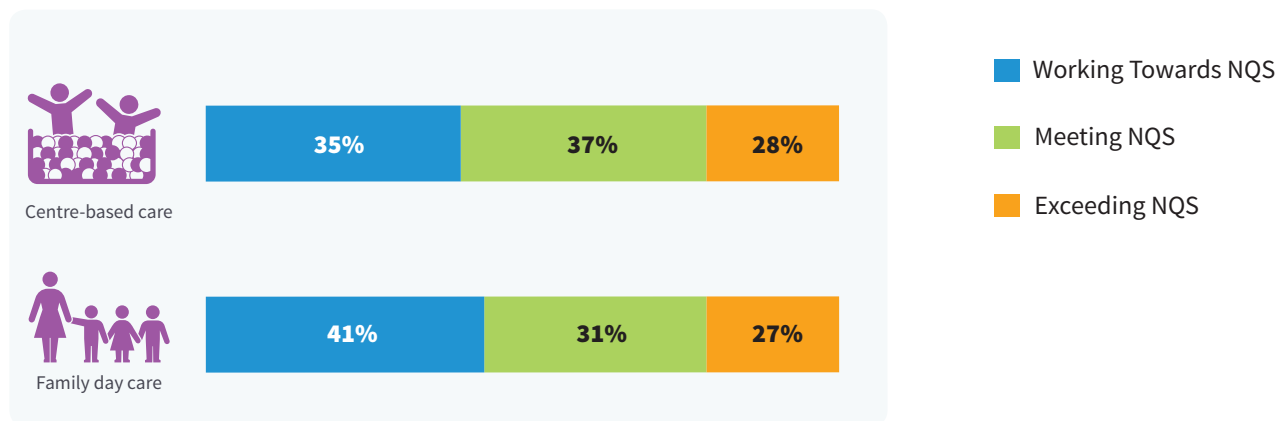


Table 5: Number of approved services with a quality rating by quality rating level and service type on 30 September 2014

	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent rated	Total
Centre-based care	3	2278	2375	1803	19	6478
Family day care	3	100	75	65	1	244
Total	6	2378	2450	1868	20	6722

Overall quality ratings of services – SEIFA

Table 6 shows the proportion of quality rated centre-based services by quality rating and Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA Index of Relative Disadvantage). SEIFA is a product that ranks areas according to socio-economic advantage and disadvantage based on census data. Variables used cover a number of areas including household income, education, employment, occupation, housing and other indicators of advantage and disadvantage.

Table 6: The proportion of approved services by quality rating and SEIFA Index of Relative Disadvantage on 30 September 2014

SEIFA Decile	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS
10 (Least disadvantaged)	32%	32%	36%
9	35%	35%	30%
8	30%	41%	29%
7	36%	35%	29%
6	31%	39%	30%
5	35%	37%	28%
4	37%	38%	25%
3	39%	35%	26%
2	36%	39%	24%
1 (Most disadvantaged)	36%	36%	27%
.....			
N/A (inc. FDC)	39%	32%	28%

Note: The Not Applicable row includes all family day care services as each service does not have a single location, plus a small number of centre-based services without an exact location in the NQA ITS. Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

Overall quality ratings of services – Remoteness Structure

Analysis of the number and proportion of approved services with a quality rating based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness Structure finds that remoteness has a minimal effect on the spread of quality ratings.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness Structure is based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+).

Table 7: Proportion of approved services by quality rating by remoteness classification (ARIA+) on 30 September 2014

	Major Cities of Australia	Inner Regional Australia	Outer Regional Australia	Remote Australia	Very Remote Australia	N/A (inc. FDC)
Working Towards NQS	36%	32%	37%	53%	37%	40%
Meeting NQS	35%	42%	35%	30%	43%	29%
Exceeding NQS	28%	26%	28%	17%	20%	30%

Note: The Not Applicable row includes all family day care services as each service does not have a single location, plus a small number of centre-based services without an exact location in the NQA ITS. Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

The method used to classify services into SEIFA and ARIA groupings has changed. This means it is not possible to compare figures based on SEIFA or ARIA classifications with previous reports.

Services rated Working Towards NQS

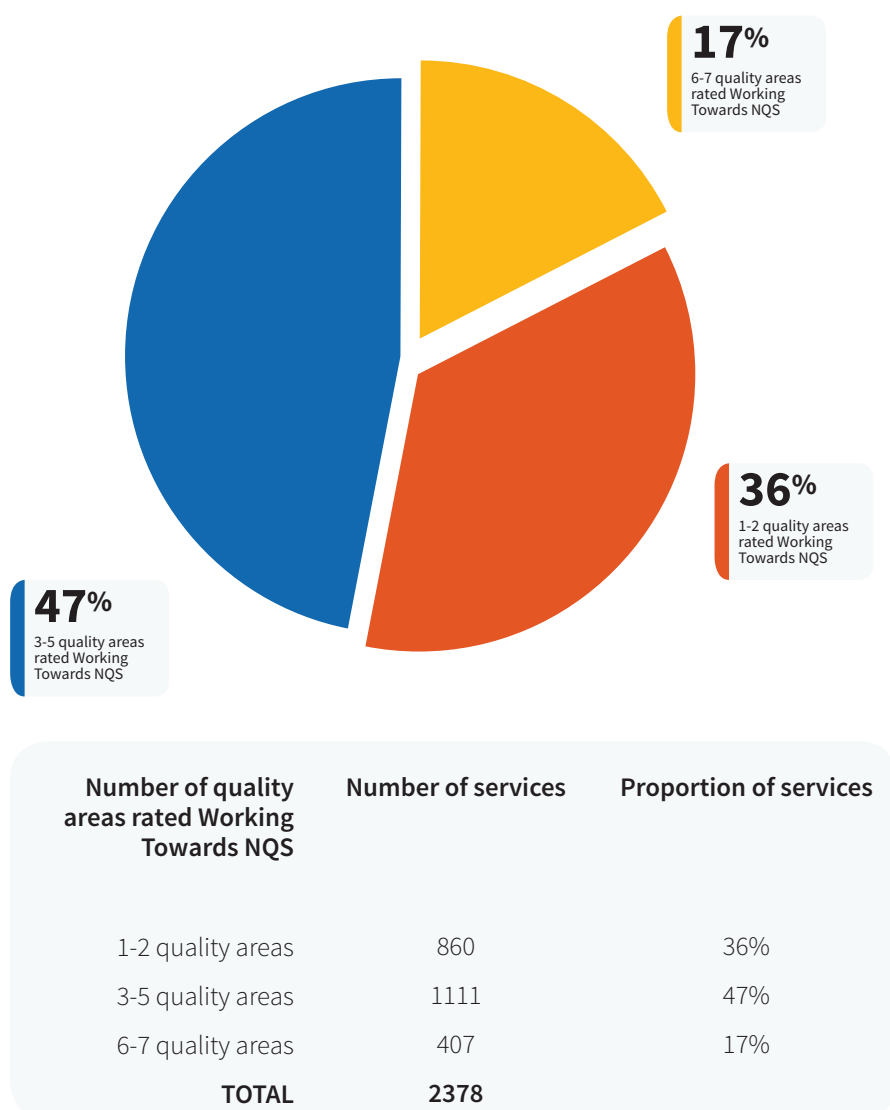
Figure 4 shows that a considerable number of services with a overall Working Towards NQS rating have only narrowly missed out on a higher rating. A service will receive an overall rating of Working Towards NQS if any of the seven quality areas are rated as Working Towards NQS. A quality area will be rated as Working Towards NQS if one of the standards within that quality area is rated as Working Towards NQS.

This means that a service can receive an overall rating of Working Towards NQS even though they are Meeting or Exceeding NQS in most standards or quality areas.

For example, Figure 4 shows 36% of all services rated Working Towards NQS are Meeting or Exceeding NQS in at least five of the seven quality areas.

This demonstrates that a substantial proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS are close to achieving a higher rating. It also shows how the NQS encourages services to improve their quality.

Figure 4: The proportion of approved services rated Working Towards NQS by number of quality areas rated Working Towards on 30 September 2014



Quality area ratings of services

Table 8 and Figure 5 display the quality ratings results for each of the seven quality areas at a national level. Nationally, services are more likely to:

- be rated as Meeting or Exceeding NQS in Quality Areas 4 (90%), 5 (89%) and 6 (88%)
- be rated as Significant Improvement Required or Working Towards NQS in Quality Areas 1 (27%), 3 (22%), 2 (21%) and 7 (21%).

Table 8: The number of approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area nationally on 30 September 2014

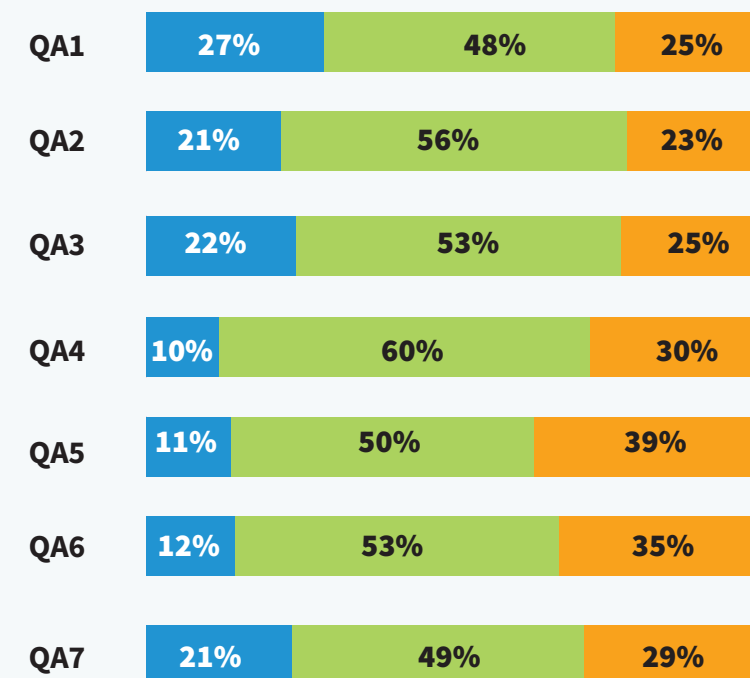
Rating outcome	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	QA7
Exceeding NQS	1701	1531	1668	2017	2626	2350	1982
Meeting NQS	3223	3769	3543	4056	3371	3571	3317
Working Towards NQS	1797	1416	1507	645	725	800	1420
Significant Improvement Required	1	6	4	4	0	1	3

Figure 5: The proportion of approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area nationally on 30 September 2014

Rating outcome

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS

Quality Area



Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.



Waivers play an important role in helping providers maintain their level of service to families while adjusting to the NQF or dealing with unexpected events.

There may be situations where, despite the best intentions, providers are unable to meet certain requirements in relation to physical environment or staffing arrangements either on a permanent or temporary basis. Under the National Law education and care providers are able to apply for waivers. Waivers are classified under two broad categories with exemptions granted for prescribed staffing arrangements or physical environment standards. Service waivers do not have a specific expiry date, whereas temporary waivers apply for a period of no more than 12 months. Providers apply to the regulatory authority in their state or territory for consideration of a waiver.

Service waivers – Where a service waiver is in force the education and care service is taken to comply with the element(s) of the NQS and National Regulations specified in the service waiver. A service waiver does not affect a service's assessment and rating against the NQS. It can be revoked by the regulatory authority either at its discretion or on receipt of an application from an approved provider.

Temporary waivers – Where a temporary waiver is in force the education and care service is not required to comply with the element(s) of the NQS and National Regulations specified in the temporary waiver. Temporary waivers must specify the period for which the waiver applies and providers may apply to the regulatory authority to extend the period of a temporary waiver by periods of not more than 12 months. A temporary waiver does not affect a service's assessment and rating against the NQS.

When comparing waivers with the previous quarter there has been minimal change in the number of services operating with a waiver. There are now 926 services with a waiver which represents 6.4% of approved services, slightly up from 6.3% in the previous quarter. When reviewing the waiver information, caution should be taken when making comparisons between jurisdictions as the proportion of services with a waiver in smaller jurisdictions is impacted by the smaller number of services.

Temporary waivers for staffing making up a larger proportion of the total number of waivers is indicative of the nature of recruitment as a service may apply for a temporary waiver while they are recruiting to fill a position.

A waiver can only be issued if children's safety, health and well-being is not compromised or at risk.

Waivers

Table 9: The number of approved services with any waiver by jurisdiction and waiver type on 30 September 2014

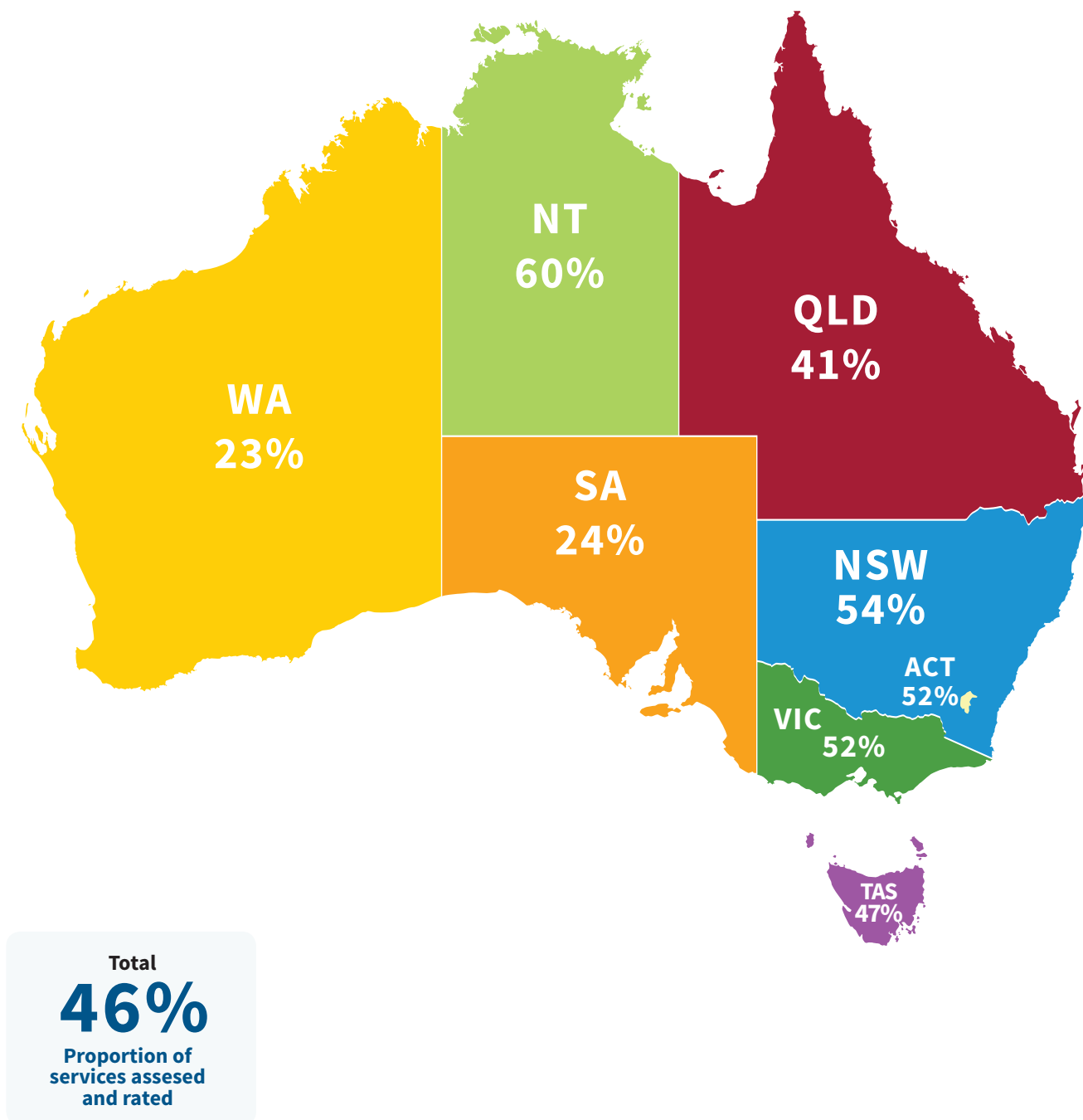
	Total number of services	Service	Temporary	Both	TOTAL	Proportion of services with a waiver
ACT	325	4	23	0	27	8.3%
NSW	4916	131	193	4	328	6.7%
NT	209	0	32	0	32	15.3%
QLD	2715	59	104	2	165	6.1%
SA	1144	1	58	0	59	5.2%
TAS	225	10	19	0	29	12.9%
VIC	3909	66	65	0	131	3.4%
WA	1043	6	149	0	155	14.9%
TOTAL	14 486	277	643	6	926	6.4%

Table 10: The number and proportion of approved services with any waiver by jurisdiction and waiver category on 30 September 2014

	Total number of services	Physical	Staff	Both	TOTAL	Proportion of services with a waiver
ACT	325	5	22	0	27	8.3%
NSW	4916	134	191	3	328	6.7%
NT	209	0	32	0	32	15.3%
QLD	2715	67	95	3	165	6.1%
SA	1144	1	58	0	59	5.2%
TAS	225	11	18	0	29	12.9%
VIC	3909	23	108	0	131	3.4%
WA	1043	7	148	0	155	14.9%
TOTAL	14 486	248	672	6	926	6.4%

National summary

Figure 6: The proportion of approved services with a finalised quality rating on 30 September 2014



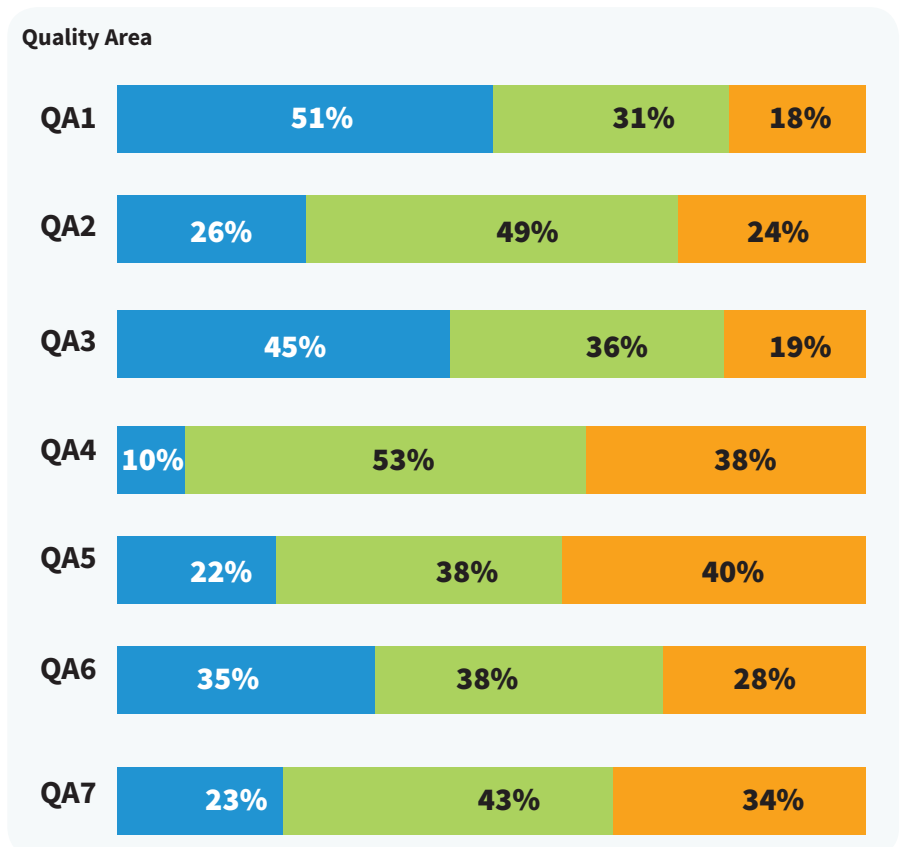
Australian Capital Territory summary

On 30 September 2014 the Australian Capital Territory had:

- 325 approved services, comprising 313 centre-based care services and 12 family day care services
- 168 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 94 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 32 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 40 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - 2 approved services with an Excellent rating

Figure 7: Proportion of ACT approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Education and Training Directorate

Children's Policy and Regulation Unit

www.det.act.gov.au

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

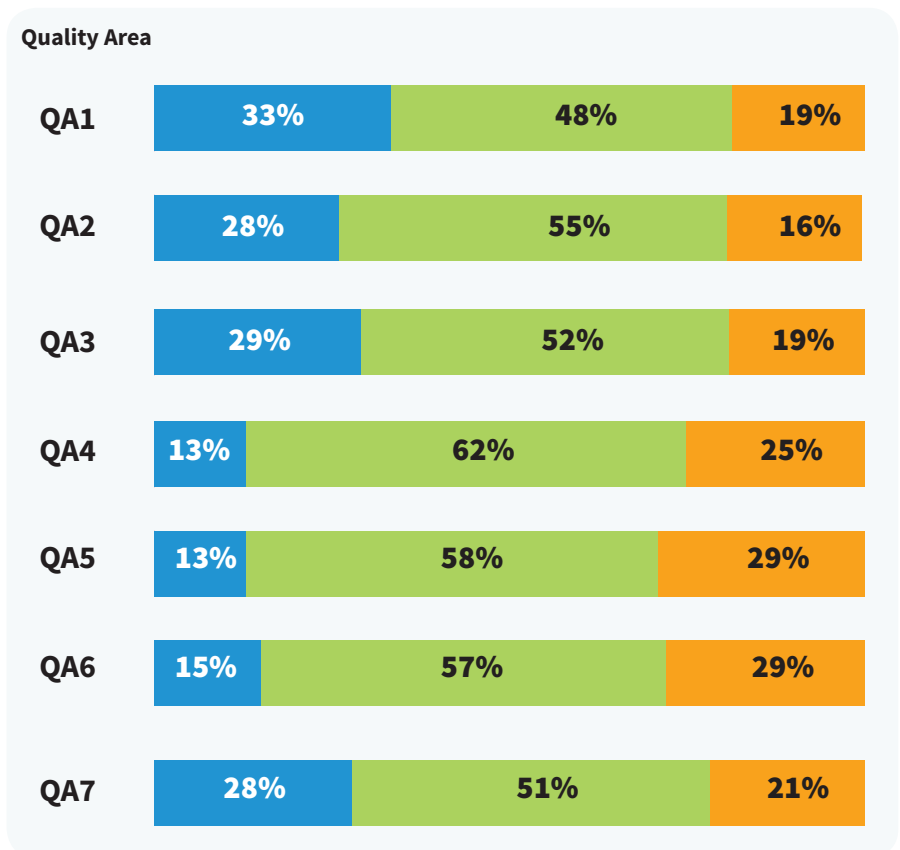
New South Wales summary

On 30 September 2014 New South Wales had:

- 4916 approved services, comprising 4668 centre-based care services and 248 family day care services
- 2668 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 3 approved services with a quality rating of Significant Improvement Required
 - 1193 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 935 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 534 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - 3 approved services with an Excellent rating

Figure 8: Proportion of NSW approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Department of Education and Communities

Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate

www.det.nsw.edu.au

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

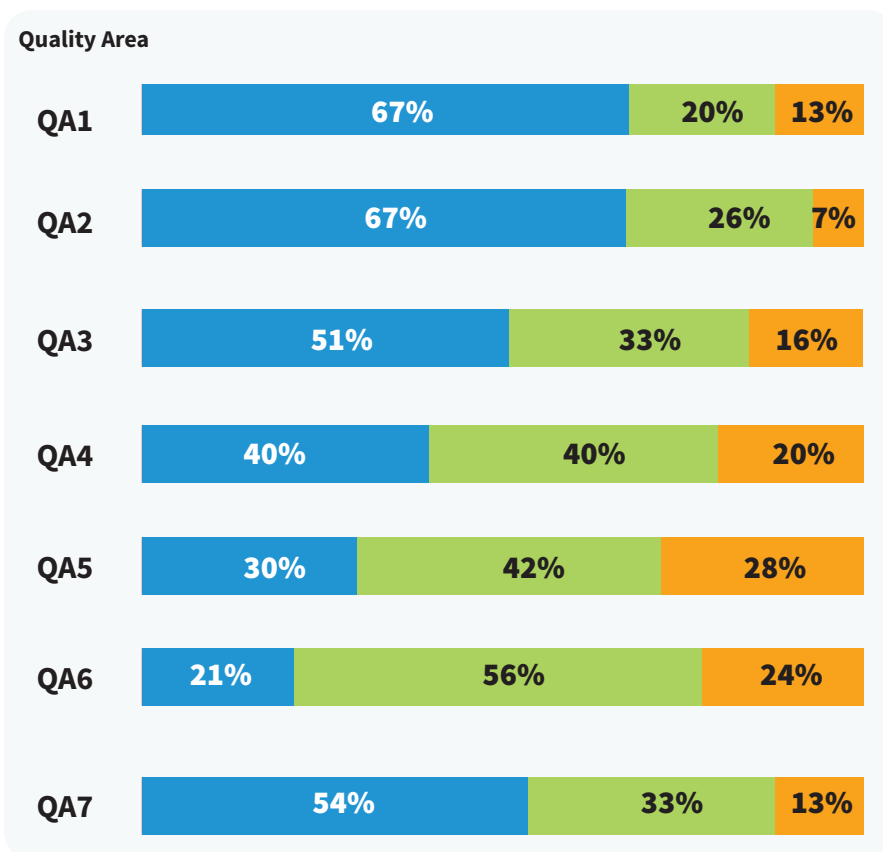
Northern Territory summary

On 30 September 2014 the Northern Territory had:

- 209 approved services, comprising 204 centre-based care services and five family day care services
- 126 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 102 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 12 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 12 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS

Figure 9: Proportion of NT approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Department of Education

Quality Education and Care NT

www.det.nt.edu.au

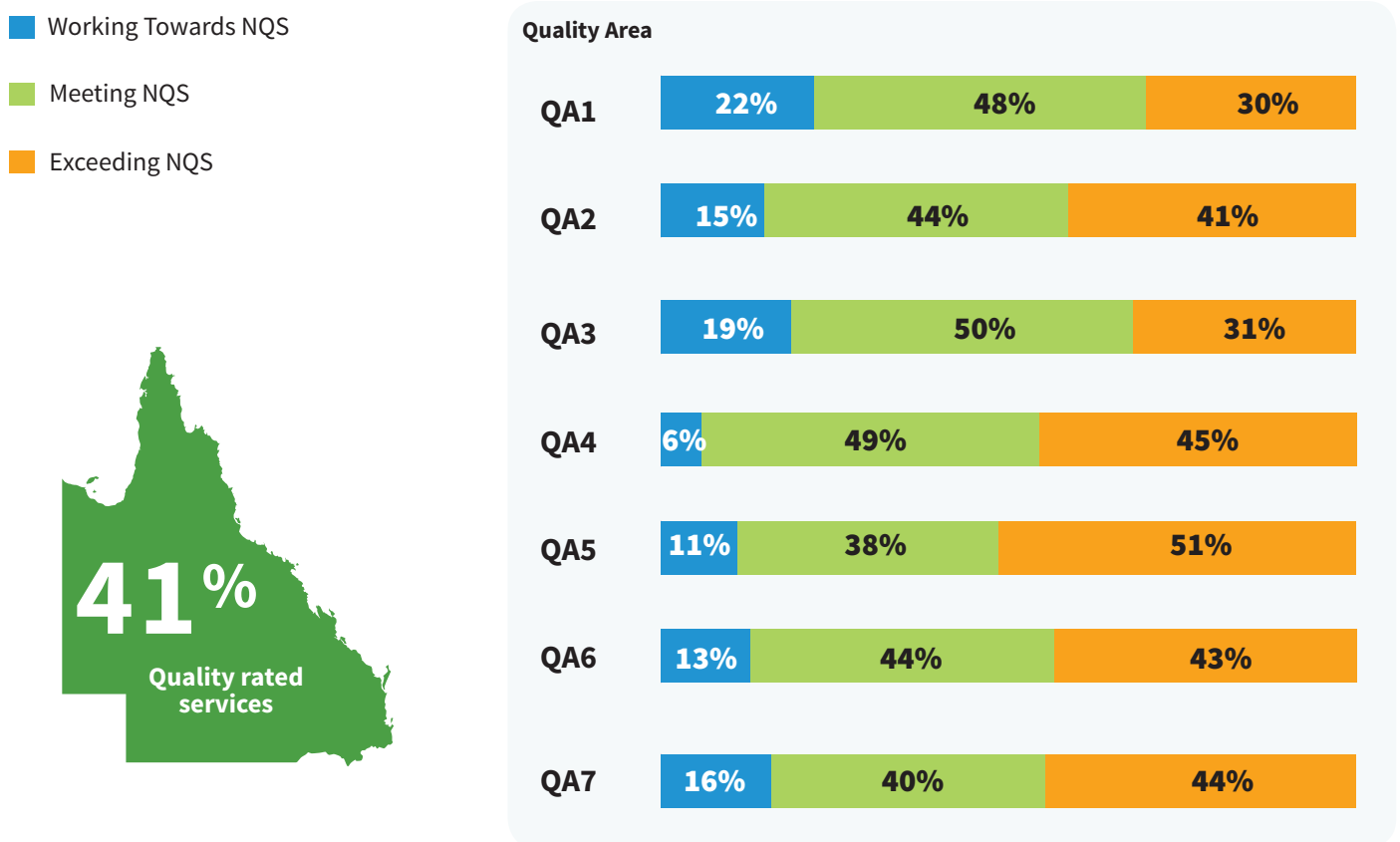
Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

Queensland summary

On 30 September 2014 Queensland had:

- 2715 approved services, comprising 2597 centre-based care services and 118 family day care services
- 1125 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 1 approved service with a quality rating of Significant Improvement Required
 - 302 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 373 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 444 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - 5 approved services with an Excellent rating

Figure 10: Proportion of Qld approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014



Contact details

Department of Education, Training and Employment

Office for Early Childhood Education and Care

www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

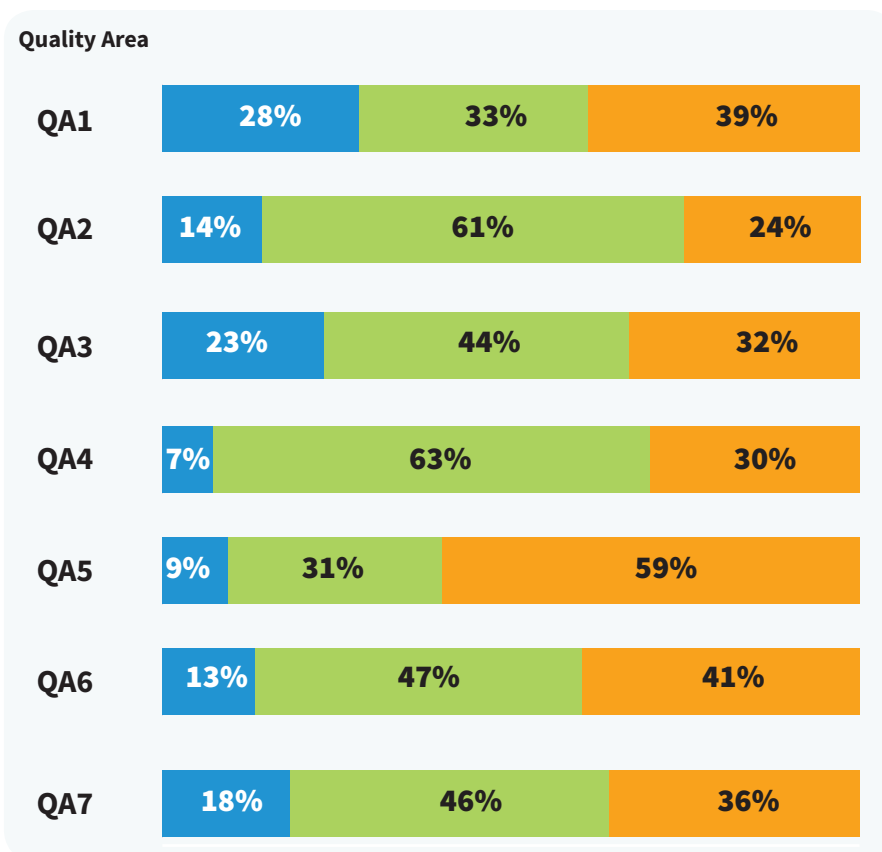
South Australia summary

On 30 September 2014 South Australia had:

- **1144** approved services, comprising **1107** centre-based care services and **37** family day care services
- **270** approved services with a quality rating including:
 - **91** approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - **70** approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - **103** approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - **6** approved services with an Excellent rating

Figure 11: Proportion of SA approved services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Education and Early Childhood Services

Registration and Standards Board of South Australia

www.eecsrbsa.gov.au

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

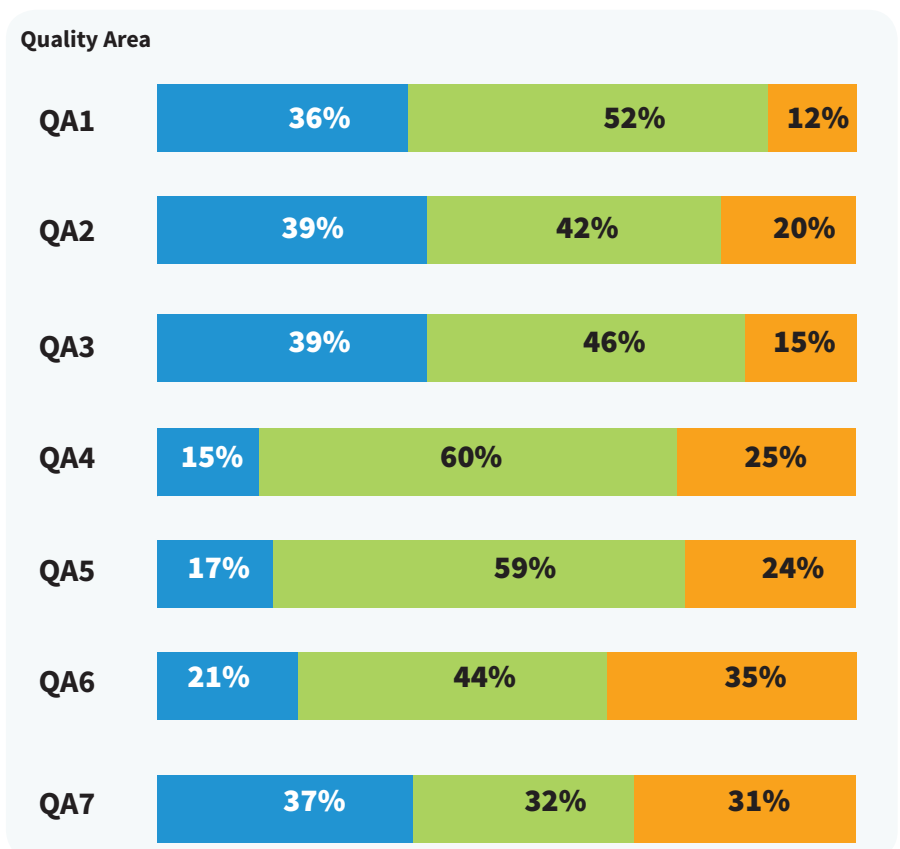
Tasmania summary

On 30 September 2014 Tasmania had:

- 225 approved services, comprising 213 centre-based care services and 12 family day care services
- 106 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 58 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 26 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 22 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS

Figure 12: Proportion of approved Tas services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Department of Education, Education and Care Unit

www.education.tas.gov.au

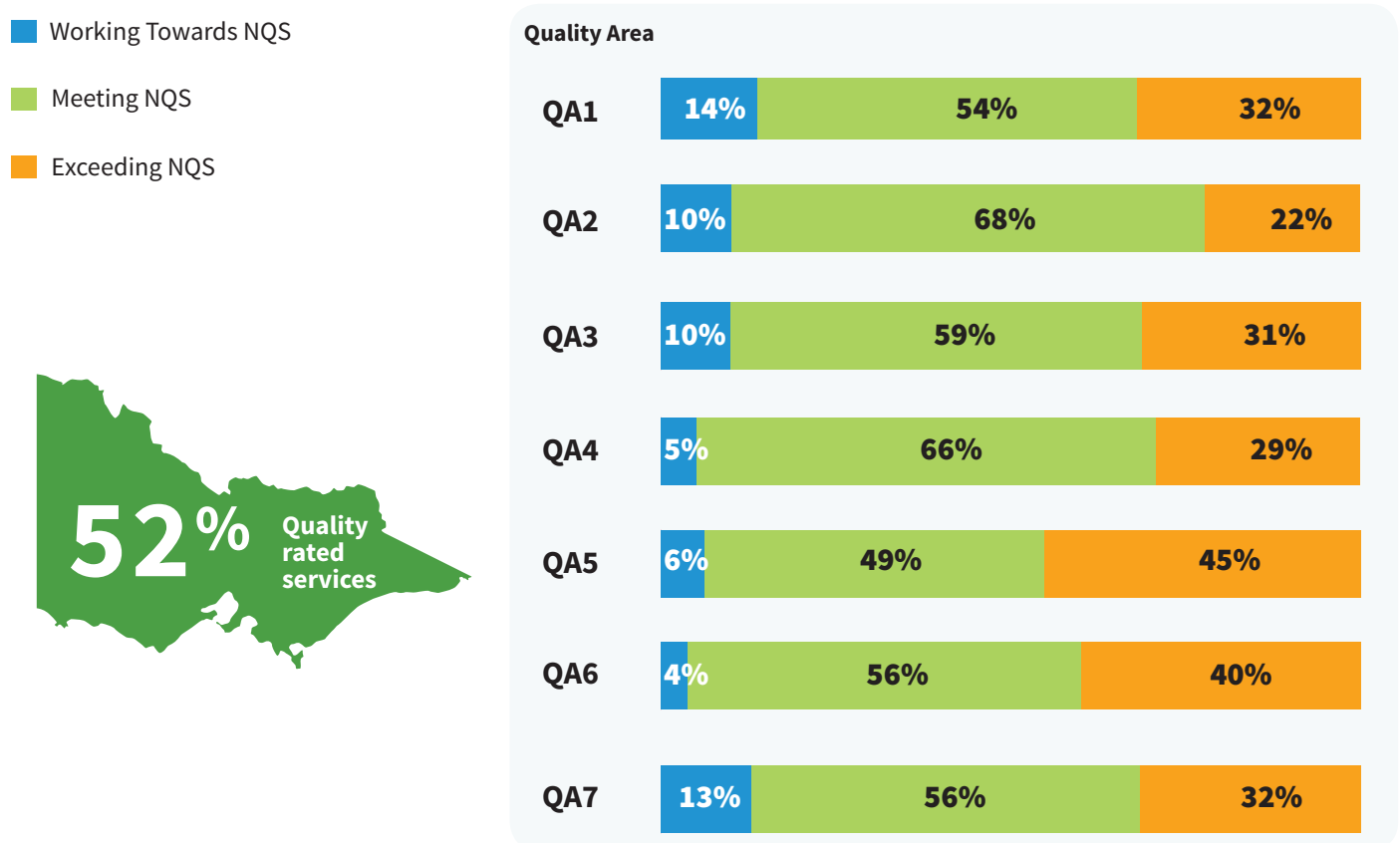
Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

Victoria summary

On 30 September 2014 Victoria had:

- 3909 approved services, comprising 3570 centre-based care services and 339 family day care services
- 2024 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 1 approved service with a quality rating of Significant Improvement Required
 - 424 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 940 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 656 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - 3 approved services with an Excellent rating

Figure 13: Proportion of approved Vic services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014



Contact details

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Quality Assessment and Regulation Division

www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/educareservices

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.

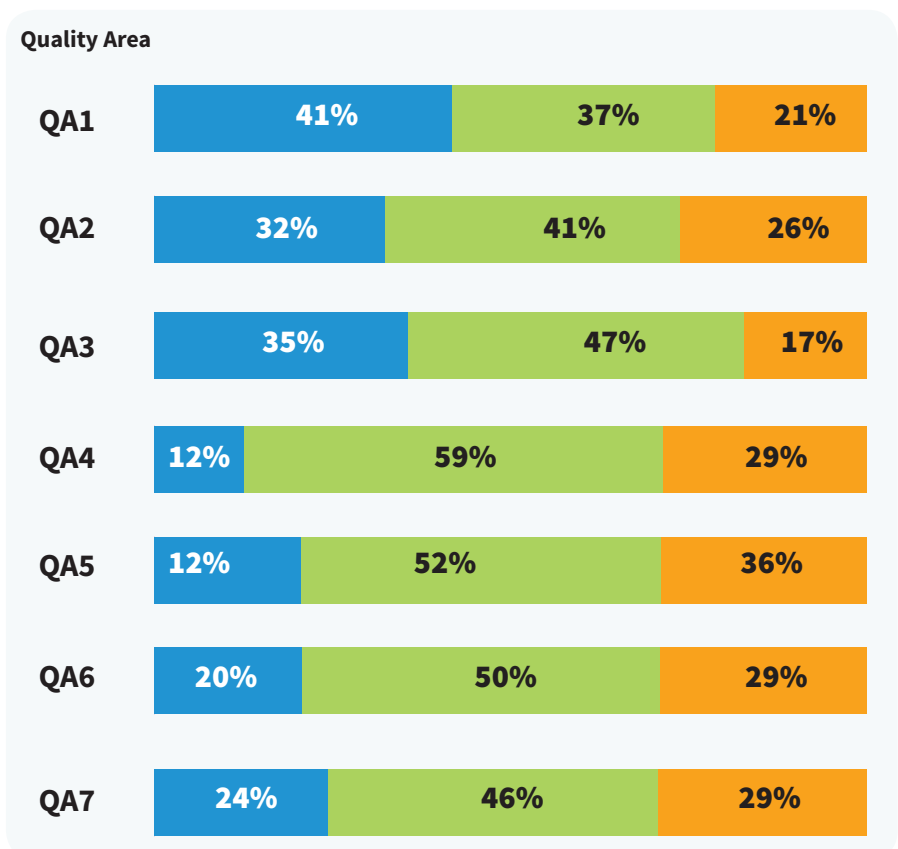
Western Australia summary

On 30 September 2014 Western Australia had:

- 1043 approved services, comprising 985 centre-based care services and 58 family day care services
- 235 approved services with a quality rating including:
 - 1 approved service with a quality rating of Significant Improvement Required
 - 114 approved services with a quality rating of Working Towards NQS
 - 62 approved services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS
 - 57 approved services with a quality rating of Exceeding NQS
 - 1 approved service with an Excellent rating

Figure 14: Proportion of approved WA services with a finalised quality rating by quality area on 30 September 2014

- Working Towards NQS
- Meeting NQS
- Exceeding NQS



Contact details

Department of Local Government and Communities
Education and Care Regulatory Unit

www.dlhc.wa.gov.au

Note: Due to rounding, individual values may not add to 100% in all cases.



© Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority 2014

This work has been produced by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this publication may be reproduced by any process without written permission from ACECQA.

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication are welcomed and should be forwarded to ACECQA.

Published by ACECQA

ABN 59 372 786 746

Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Web: www.acecqa.gov.au

Email: enquiries@acecqa.gov.au

Media enquiries: media@acecqa.gov.au



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority