The Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey 2022 Data

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ACU INSTITUTE FOR POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY & EDUCATION

Executive Summary

The occupational health and wellbeing of many Australian school leaders is at a tipping point. Successive reports from this project have chronicled the challenge of school leadership for over a decade. While some consistent themes run through these reports, a significant shift is clear in this year's report which leads us to suggest the situation is more serious and pressing than previously reported. The pressures of the last few years were met by school leaders with resolve, dedication, and commitment to the welfare of students and staff; this is to be applauded. The cost for doing so, however, has been paid by those same school leaders and increasingly to their detriment. This year's report suggests increasing numbers of school leaders may not be able to continue doing so. Should this materialise, school leaders' absence will seriously limit the achievement of national educational priorities and policies. The implications of this year's report are wide, and urgent.

The starkness of this year's report is underscored by the overall scale and significance of our program. The **Australian Principals' Occupational Health and Wellbeing Survey** includes principals, assistant principals, and deputy principals from every school type, sector, state, and territory. It commenced in 2011 and is the longest-running survey of its type. It is one of the most comprehensive longitudinal data sets of school leader health and wellbeing in the world. Each year since 2011, approximately 2,500 school leaders respond, many of whom return year after year to complete the survey; in total, over 7,100 individual school leaders have completed the survey at least once.

The survey captures three types of information drawn from existing validated research instruments:

- Comprehensive school demographic items;
- Personal demographic and historical information;
- Quality of life and psychosocial indicators/variables.

We analyse variation in school leaders' occupational health, safety, and wellbeing across geolocation, school type, school sector, and personal attributes.

Not just another COVID-19 year

A third year of managing COVID-19 and significant natural disasters frame this year's report. School leaders demonstrated extraordinary leadership, however the dynamics impacting their occupational health and wellbeing changed significantly in 2022. Teacher shortages and managing the health and wellbeing of students and staff emerged as greater concerns than previously reported.

These extend the challenges school leaders face in their communities, again limiting the time they have available for the core purposes of schooling – student learning and growth. They contribute to discernible and concerning shifts in our overall assessment of occupational health and wellbeing, adding an urgency to our call for

action. Time to redress these concerns is diminishing as there are signs the cumulative impact may see a growing exodus from the profession. The implications of this for education in Australia cannot be understated.

Our 2021 report congratulated the commitment, tenacity, and dedication school leaders showed through the first couple of years of COVID-19 and extreme weather events. At that time, however, we also noted caution about how long school leaders might be able to sustain themselves once the crises subside. Rather than subside, their impact through 2022 continued.

As school leaders, teachers, and students prepared to return to school, the COVID-19 Omicron variant threatened to force another disruptive start to the year. Having only arrived in December 2021, its high transmissibility required school leaders and authorities to prepare safety plans for the start of the school year, given governments reduced requirements for isolation. In addition to normal preparations for the year's learning priorities, school leaders found themselves preparing to manage rapid antigen testing for school staff and student isolation requirements, although requirements differed across jurisdictions.

Soon after the school year began, many communities in south-east Queensland experienced their worst flooding on record. This extended into northern New South Wales, then down the east coast to the Sydney metropolitan region. A second major flooding event occurred for the Sydney and Central Coast areas in New South Wales through July. In October, Tasmania and Victoria experienced record rainfalls, and across October-December, communities spread throughout New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia experienced one of the most significant and widespread flooding events since the 1950s. For some school leaders, it was the fifth flooding event they experienced in less than two years.

The challenge of compounding stresses

Despite these challenges, the expectations on school leaders to focus on student learning throughout this period has not abated. It is therefore not surprising the key findings of this report show ongoing stresses are still high, with many recording their highest level. There is concern, however, about the compounding impact of changing stress profiles:

- The top two stressors remain **sheer quantity of work** and **lack of time to focus on teaching and learning**. They have been the top two stressors since the start of the survey in 2011. Each year, they show a mean score higher than 7.35 (on a scale of 1-10), with the highest ranked stressor, **sheer quantity of work,** having a mean score of 8.18 in 2022, the second highest on record;
- For the first time, **teacher shortages** is reported as the third highest source of stress (mean score = 7.33, up from 5.35 in 2021). This has been steadily rising during COVID-19, understandably, however the rate and scale of change are

significant. In 2020, it was ranked 17 out of 19, rose in 2021 to 12 out of 19, and is now third. This is the most notable change to any stressor in the history of the project;

- **Mental health issues of students** (mean score = 7.27) and **mental health issues of staff** (mean score = 7.20) are at their highest reported level since the establishment of the survey;
- For the first time, 7 of the 19 sources of stress have mean scores above 7.00; previous years have had between 2-4 sources of stress with mean scores above 7.00.

This cumulative impact of increasing workload, teacher shortages, and supporting the wellbeing of students and teachers are among the factors that have led to this escalation in stress levels. As a result, the health and wellbeing of school leaders are at risk and have resulted in significant increases to Red Flags (i.e., at risk of serious mental health concern in the following years); participants triggering a Red Flag receive an immediate email alert which encourages them to seek support. Overall, a concerning number of school leaders (47.8%) triggered a Red Flag email in 2022, marking an increase of 18.7% points compared to the 29.1% recorded in 2021. While this increase is present across the total population of participants, of particular concern is sectoral disparity:

- Government - 51.8% (up from 31% in 2021);
- Catholic - 35.3% (up from 22.4% in 2021);
- Independent - 27.7% (up from 18% in 2021).

Some states and territories had more than 50% of school leaders trigger a Red Flag, proportions significantly higher than for each jurisdiction in 2021 (figure in brackets):

- ACT - 58.5% (34.6%);
- NT - 57.4% (34.4%);
- NSW - 55.7% (28.4%);
- WA - 52.2% (28.3%).

Past reports have also featured threats of violence and other unacceptable behaviours that principals experience. We reported last year these had slightly decreased from 2020, possibly due to the impact of off-campus modes of learning. Unfortunately, that decrease appears to be an aberration, and the trend has returned in 2022; all categories have reported an increase from 2021, the most significant of which are:

- Threats of Violence - 48.8% (up 4.5% points);
- Physical Violence - 44.0% (up 4.6% points);
- Gossip and Slander - 49.7% (up 4.3% points).

Waning energy

Our 2021 report noted that school leaders showed high levels for **meaning of work** and **commitment to the workplace**, despite the challenges faced in their daily work. Importantly, these 2021 data were much higher compared to the general population, based on results of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ-II)

[1], regarded as the "gold standard" in occupational health and safety self-report measures. Data on both measures for 2022, however, while still higher than the general population, have declined and are now at their lowest levels since the start of the survey. Indicators of positive school culture are also declining. **Job satisfaction**, **mutual trust between employees**, and **trust regarding management** have all declined to their lowest levels since the start of the survey, highlighting that many school leaders are now working in more stressed school cultures. Furthermore, measures associated with health and wellbeing now show the highest levels of **burnout**, **sleeping troubles**, **stress**, **depressive symptoms**, **somatic stress**, and **cognitive stress** since the start of the survey.

This combination of increasing stressors and diminishing positives raise more urgent concerns than we have previously expressed [2, 3] and researched [4, 5]. Past reports have suggested these positive factors enable school leaders to continue their work despite the challenges and stresses. They reflect a professional culture and commitment oriented towards the needs of school communities. We strongly suggest this may be changing.

Participants are given opportunity each year to include open-ended comments on any other matter they wish to comment. This year shows the number of comments indicating a willingness to leave the profession early has tripled. In 2021, there were 19 comments about intention to leave early, rising to 65 comments in 2022. Because this data is volunteered, it suggests the population considering such action may be far higher than those who have been willing to express it.

School leaders typically draw their support preferentially from family, personal connections, and collegial relationships. While these are useful, it is concerning that only 20% of participants report they seek support to manage their occupational health and wellbeing from employers or their professional association. This suggests that positive strategies and services which might already exist may be underutilised; it also poses a challenge for employers and associations to consider how to provide support that school leaders will find helpful.

A choice of futures

The current situation has not appeared only in the last twelve months. Our report, along with similar projects over the past two decades, has consistently highlighted the impact on school leaders of increasing workloads, diminishing resources, and ever broadening student achievement and social expectations. What is different this year is the rate of change in some key measures. One value of longitudinal study is the observance of rate and scale of change; their combination in this year's report underpins our sense of urgency about the future for Australia's school leaders.

Approaches to the future have been described as possible, probable, plausible, and preferred [6]. This year's report suggests to us it is both probable and plausible there are increasing numbers of school leaders considering leaving the profession early. This suggestion comes on the

back of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan released in December 2022 and the Productivity Commission's Review of the National School Reform Agreement, released in January 2023. Both paint stark pictures and call for major change. The success of their recommendations will require significant contribution from school leaders at a time when our report shows many of them may have less energy and drive than has previously been reported. The preferred futures outlined in the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and the Productivity Commission's recommendations require urgent attention to support the work of school leaders. Important goals, such as increasing student learning outcomes, mentoring early career teachers, and recalibrating the work of school assistants and Initial Teacher Education practicum students all need the practical support of school leaders. For this reason, we call for an even greater inclusion of school leaders in these strategic discussions and even more principal-specific initiatives to be included in the plan.

The Productivity Commission identified two key areas of direct relevance to the findings in this report:

1. reduction of low-value tasks;
2. development of evidence-backed resources that teachers and school leaders trust and use.

We endorse these and applaud their inclusion in the recommendations for the National School Reform Agreement. We suggest school leaders have much to contribute to education authorities and jurisdictions as they pursue these reforms if their outcomes are to be achieved. We strongly encourage the inclusion of school leaders in implementing these important reforms, both through their associations and directly, where practicable.

Recommendations to focus on for immediate impact

What governments can do:

Fast-track review and elimination of low-value tasks, as advocated by the Productivity Commission.

Sheer quantity of work is consistently the highest stressor for school leaders. Engaging with school leaders to identify and reduce the impact of low-value tasks should be prioritised. Further consideration should examine whether such tasks, if of such low value, are needed at all; technology-based solutions may be useful in completing these tasks.

What employers can do:

Introduce school leader wellbeing priorities within performance frameworks.

Personal health and wellbeing are components of the AITSL Australian Professional Standard for Principals [7]. Performance frameworks would benefit from inclusion of specific measures that develop, support, and report upon the

health and wellbeing of school leaders. Including these in performance frameworks commits both employers and school leaders to take positive steps towards, and provision of resources for, their achievement.

What professional associations can do:

Seek feedback as how best to support members.

The dual role of advocacy and support offered by professional associations is crucial to the wider school leadership profession. The low take-up of school leaders seeking support provides opportunity for associations to update and possibly expand their services on offer.

What individual school leaders can do:

Actively seek support.[8-10]

It is unlikely major and significant changes can occur to the work of school leaders in the short term. In the meantime, we encourage school leaders to draw on supports already available through professional associations and other employment provided services. Importantly, we strongly encourage school leaders to seek medical advice, where needed.

I am leaving earlier than expected due to stress, the sense of frustration at being moved away from educational leadership and into management conversations, parental concerns, staff fatigue and my own burnout

- Female, combined Independent school, Qld

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Emeritus Professor Phil Riley was a catalyst in establishing the Australian Principals' Occupational Health and Wellbeing Survey. As a former school principal, he provided specialised expertise on the compounding pressures impacting school leaders across the nation. The research team would like to give special acknowledgement to Emeritus Professor Riley for his ground-breaking work on principal wellbeing and wish him all the best in his retirement.

We would like to thank the ongoing and new principals and school executives for taking part in this important research, demonstrating their trust and commitment to this study and its contribution to improving the lives of principals and school executives across Australia.

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1 Recommendations

1.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS, EMPLOYERS, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, SCHOOL LEADERS, RESEARCHERS, AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

WHAT GOVERNMENTS CAN DO:

1. Fast-track review and elimination of low-value tasks, as advocated by the Productivity Commission.

   Sheer quantity of work is consistently the highest stressor for school leaders. Engaging with school leaders to identify and reduce the impact of low-value tasks should be prioritised. Further consideration should examine whether such tasks, if of low value, are needed at all; technology-based solutions may be useful in completing these tasks.

2. Prioritise initiatives in comprehensive workforce planning systems, such as the Australian Teacher Workforce Data developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) [7].

   Australia's eight states and territories, along with three distinct sectors, impedes a nationally coordinated workforce planning process [11]. Obtaining up-to-date and comprehensive data can support workforce development planning, including attraction, development, and retention of school leaders.

3. Develop strategies to enhance teacher wellbeing.

   The increased support for student wellbeing identified by the Productivity Commission is to be applauded. The rising impact of teacher wellbeing in this report highlights the interrelationship of student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing, and school leader wellbeing [12, 13]. Occupational mental health injury for teachers can also be reduced, which will contribute to longer term student wellbeing outcomes.

WHAT EMPLOYERS CAN DO:

1. Introduce school leader wellbeing priorities within performance frameworks.

   Personal health and wellbeing are a component of the AITSL Australian Professional Standard for Principals. Performance frameworks would benefit from inclusion of specific measures that develop, support, and report upon the health and wellbeing of school leaders. Including these in performance frameworks commits both employers and school leaders to take positive steps towards, and provision of resources for, their achievement.

2. Develop supportive cultures of trust with school leaders.

   The declining data on **Trust**, combined with low rates of seeking support from employers, indicates more needs to be done to

create and sustain trusting cultures. Adopting the previous recommendation would be a valuable start. Providing ongoing opportunities for professional dialogue, both consultative and evaluative, on workload, health, and wellbeing in an environment of collegial support is essential.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS CAN DO:

1. Seek feedback as how best to support members.

   The dual role of advocacy and support offered by professional associations is important to the wider profession. The low take up of seeking support provides opportunity for associations to update their services.

2. Continue advocacy with government and employers on the positive recommendations from the Productivity Commission and National Teacher Workforce Action Plan in line with the results of this report.

WHAT SCHOOL LEADERS CAN DO:

1. Take responsibility for your personal work-life balance [8].

   Only you can know what is reasonable for your long-term health and wellbeing. It is therefore incumbent on the individual to find and maintain a healthy work-life balance. A work-life balance should not be imposed by others. The negative impact of poor work-life balance highlights that establishing one's own balance is far too important to be left in someone else's control. Educators must seek professional help where necessary, such as employer-provided professional Employee Assistance Programs.

2. Ensure your passions are either general or harmonious, not obsessive [9].

   General and harmonious passion helps avoid burnout. Love your work but do not let it dominate your life. A way to determine if passion is harmonious rather than obsessive is to monitor energy levels. Harmonious passion energises, individuals feel better after engaging in their passion than when they began. Harmonious passion "leads to a pervasive level of self-growth", while obsessive passion has "corrosive effects" [10]. For example, educators should monitor and maintain friendships and relationships with family and loved ones, be sure to flag unrealistic work burdens and take the time they need to rest.

3. Actively seek support.

   It is unlikely major changes can occur to the work of school leaders soon. In the meantime, we encourage you to draw on those supports already available through professional

associations and other employment provided services. Importantly, ensure you seek medical advice, where needed.

WHAT THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY CAN DO:

1. Provide high quality research with strong potential for impact.

   Researchers need to be careful they do not contribute further to the problem by conducting short-term research or by adding to the already high workload of principals. Research efforts need to be effective and impactful, with least requirements on school leaders as possible. Research that is collaboratively designed with school leaders and systems can inform change to education policies and practice. This will ensure research findings will have efficacy and impact.

2. Adopt a collaborative and partnership approach to research [14].

   This may involve formulating new research questions, hypotheses, or issues based on constant communication with peak bodies and end-users. Purposeful research should examine problems that are relevant to the lived professional experience of principals. Most importantly, interventions developed based on research findings need to be co-designed that specifically address the work of school leaders.

3. Look for thresholds that may be the key to administering limited resources.

   The variance in social capital suggests there are many examples of effective practice from which we can and should learn. However, the small percentage of school leaders who can successfully implement these practices suggests there is a threshold that makes it more challenging for leaders in schools with lower social capital. Leaders in these low social capital schools would benefit from support for their improvement.

   The identification of robust thresholds would enable the concentration of resources in schools most in need, preventing the unnecessary stretch of resources across schools and their leaders who are already well resourced. This is supported by ongoing qualitative analysis from participants' open-ended responses, with school leaders identifying that "one size fits all" programs and reporting requirements do not work for or benefit their school environment (see also the preceding recommendation).

4. Understand school context including its complex relationships.

   The school environment is a complex ecology that integrates the lives of students, teachers, parents, and principals. While it is important for research to focus on these groups individually, it is as important to consider the relationships between a group and any of the other groups with the school environment. In this sense, any research on principal health and wellbeing must consider the impact of principals on any other group within the school and even the wider community. This includes any effects on leadership, school climate type variables, such as school belonging, teacher wellbeing and performance, and student wellbeing and performance [12]. Because these relationships are mutual, researchers investigating principal health and wellbeing must also consider how current findings on teacher and student performance and wellbeing might impact school leaders. In this sense, research needs to apply a holistic and systemic model of school wellbeing.

WHAT THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY CAN DO:

1. Stop the offensive behaviour.

   This is beyond debate. Offensive behaviour simply must stop.

   The real issue is how to achieve this outcome. The steadily increasing levels of offensive behaviour across the country in schools of all types should give us pause and shame (see Figure 1.2.1; the decrease in 2020, increased in 2021, and returned to the pre-pandemic growth trajectory in 2022).

   Australia needs to have an adult conversation about the root causes of this behaviour and set about addressing them at every level of society.

   Reducing levels of offensive behaviour will produce significant educational gains for students. Previous research indicates that the most effective ways to prevent or diminish bullying and violence are through whole-school approaches [15-18]. The research presented in this report, and from Thomson and Hillman [19; Figure 1.2.2], suggests the problem is systemic and therefore a system-wide approach is needed [20]. Our own research [12] showed that “students, teachers, and principals influence each other and highlight the importance of targeting interventions and policies at the whole school.”

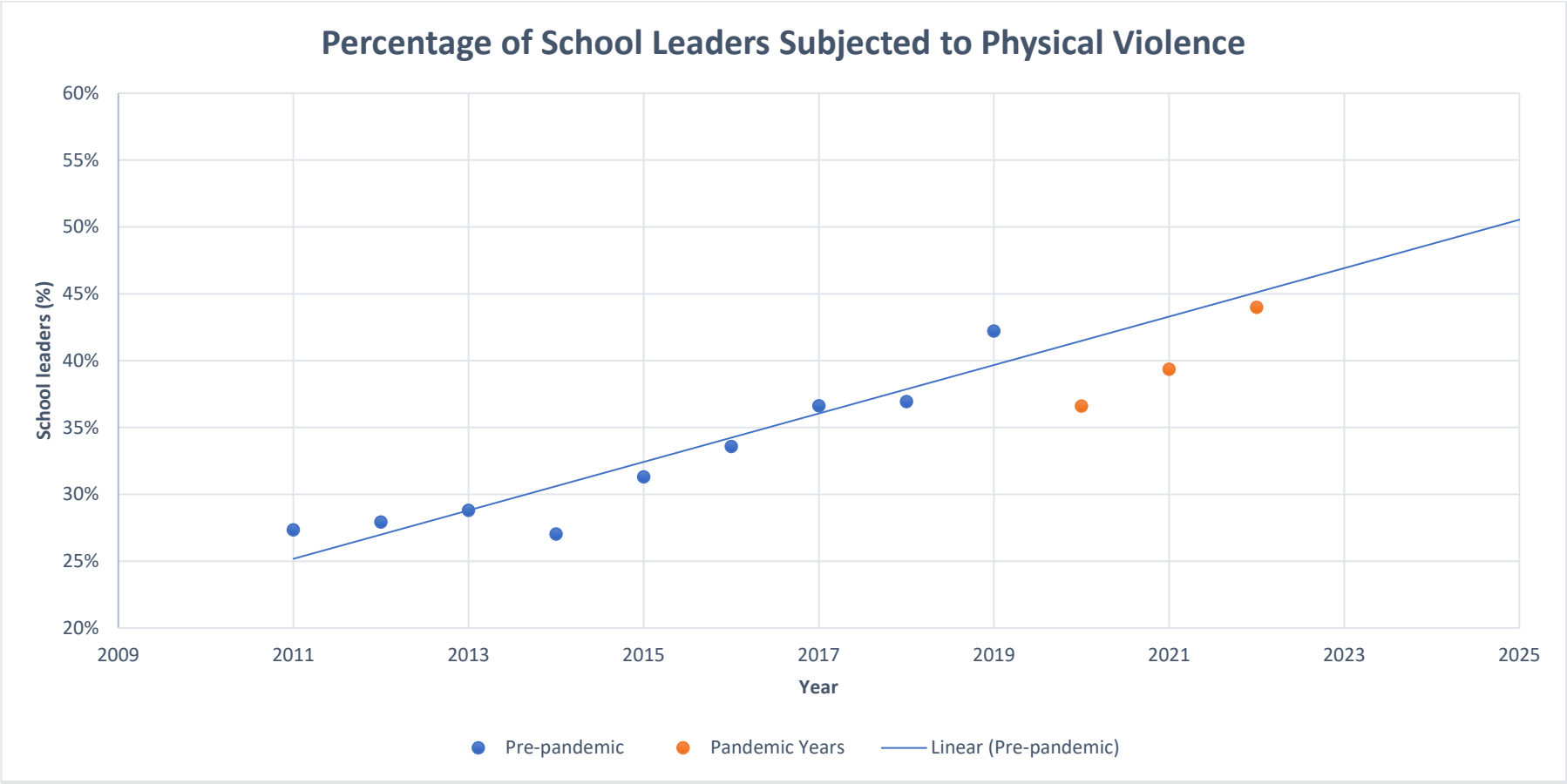


FIGURE 1.2.1: PREDICTIVE MODEL OF PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS SUBJECTED TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

1.2 CHIEF INVESTIGATORS

Professor Herb Marsh has been recognised as the most productive educational psychologist in the world. From 2006–2011 he was Professor of Education at Oxford University where he holds an Emeritus Professorship. He coined the phrase 'substantive-methodological research synergy', which underpins his substantive and methodological research interests. He is the founder of the International SELF Research Centre.

Associate Professor Theresa Dicke is an expert in performance and wellbeing of students, teachers, and school principals. She has published extensively in the area of (disadvantaged) student self-beliefs, and achievement and particularly contributed to research on (early career) teacher burnout. Most recently she has started linking all perspectives (students, teachers, principals) in a holistic model of school wellbeing.

1.3 PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

In the past few years progress has been made on some previous recommendations. The recommendations implemented in some states have had positive effects. However, as noted in the executive summary, many aspects have become worse over this period. Nevertheless, it is important to note that jurisdictions that have addressed issues raised in our research have fared better than those that have not.

In 2017, Victoria was the first state to implement substantial changes to work practices that are consistent with the recommendations of this report. As a result, Victoria still has the lowest number of Red Flags of any state or territory, and Victorian school leaders continued to report highest job satisfaction. In 2019, both Queensland and Northern Territory implemented substantial, evidence-based changes to their systems in line with the recommendations of this report.

In December 2020, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2020) released a national strategy to combat the increasing trend of abuse faced by school leaders, teachers and school staff [21]. The strategy addresses five key areas of priority: 1. Building the evidence base; 2. Wellbeing; 3. Strengthening school communities; 4. Raising the status of the profession; and 5. Responding to future challenges.

To combat the increasing adult-on-adult offensive behaviour from parents/carers, the Victorian government has implemented the community safety order in Term 3 of 2022, which coincided with data collection for the 2022 survey. Due to this timing of implementation and survey data collection, we do not expect to see the any effects on Victorian school leaders' health and wellbeing or percentage subjected to offensive behaviour. However, we will monitor the impact of this new initiative driven in part by results of previous surveys. Based on these results we will develop recommendations that can be implemented in other states and territories

As our survey is an excellent tool for monitoring the ongoing health and wellbeing (behaviours) of school principals and evaluating the effects of governmental interventions [22], it will be interesting to map out any recommended changes of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan on principals in the coming years.

2 Snapshot of 2022 School Leaders

2.1 PARTICIPATION SAMPLE SIZE AND DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

In 2022, 2 461 participants took part in the survey, with 2 032 full survey completions and 429 partial survey completions. Of total survey participants, 86.6% were returning participants and 13.4% were new participants. Of the 2022 survey participants, 85.8% are currently working school leaders (SL); 6.5% are former school leaders who are currently working within the education sector in a non-school leader position; 4.1% are school leaders who are currently on leave; and 3.4% are retired former school leaders. This report concentrates on the aggregated results of 2022 school leaders. To maintain participant anonymity, aggregate data is reported at demographic grouping levels. Some sub-groups were unable to be reported due to insufficient sample size.

Participants who are retired, on leave, employed in the education sector in a non-school leader capacity, or career changes, continue to take part in a shorter version of the survey.

This year's report's quotes focus on female SL. The quotes selected are tempered reflections on the data reported from all SL.

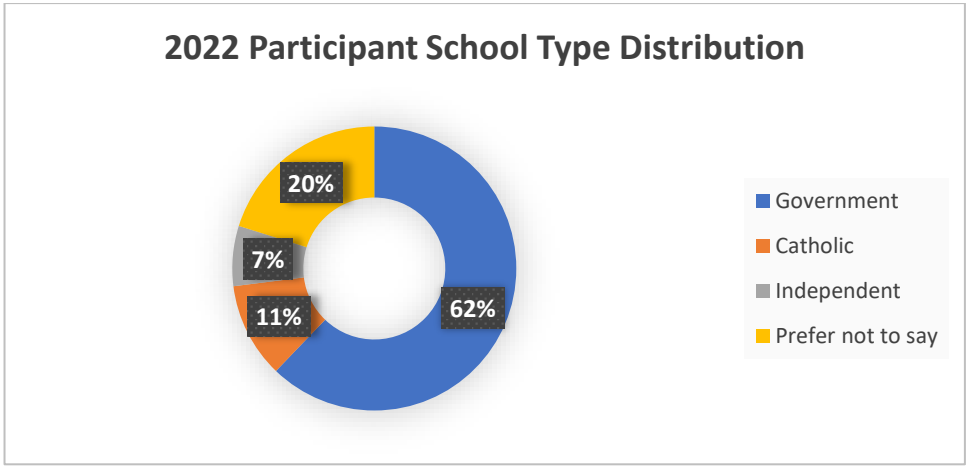


FIGURE 2.1.1: SCHOOL LEADERS' ACARA SCHOOL TYPE DISTRIBUTION

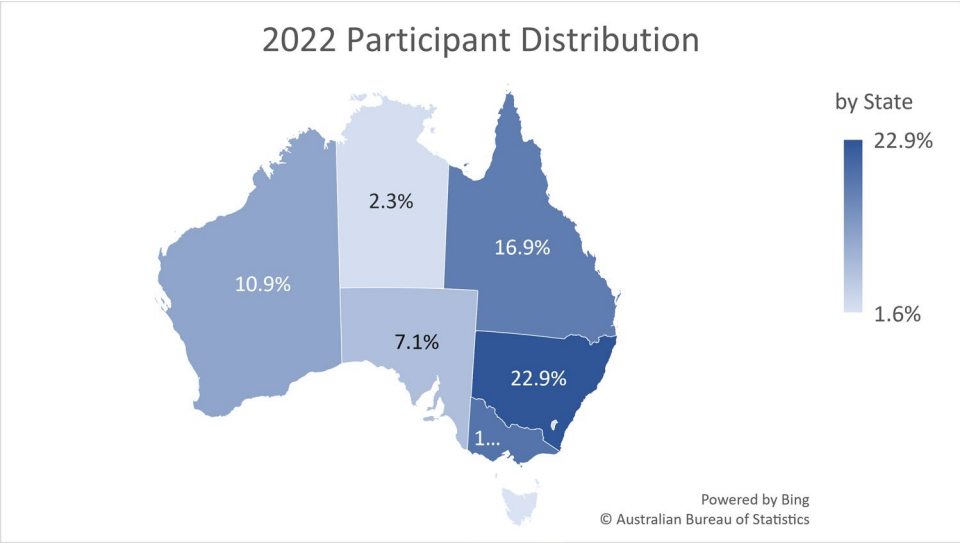


FIGURE 2.1.2: SCHOOL LEADERS' SCHOOL STATE AND TERRITORY DISTRIBUTION

The 2022 survey provided the following school demographic breakdown:

1. School sector: 64.6% government school leaders, 11.3% Catholic school leaders, and 7.1% Independent school leaders (Figure 2.1.1).
2. School state: 22.9% from NSW, 18.3% from Victoria, 16.9% from Qld, 7.1% from SA, 10.9% from WA, 2.0% from the ACT, 2.3% from the NT, and 1.6% from Tasmania (Figure 2.1.2).
3. School type: 42.7% primary, 22.2% secondary, 11.0% combined, and 4.8% special schools.
4. School Geolocation: 51.3% major cities, 19.2% inner regional, 10.8% outer regional, 2.1% remote, and 1.5% very remote.

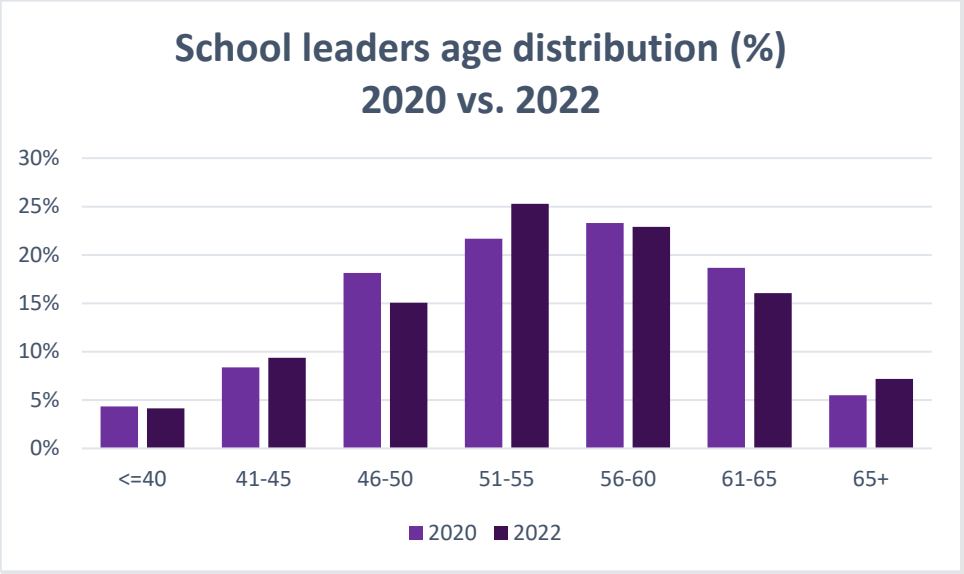


FIGURE 2.1.3: SCHOOL LEADERS' AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2020 VS. 2022

The 2022 survey provided the following school leader demographic breakdown:

1. Position: 69.7% are principals, 16.9% are deputy/assistant principals, and 13.3% did not say or work in other school leadership positions (e.g. head teacher).
2. Gender: 49.3% are female, 32.1% are male, and 18.6% prefer not to say.
3. SL age range from 31 to 78 years, with an average age of 54.5 years. Average age for female SL is 55.2 years, male SL is 54.1 years, and 51.9 for those who prefer not to say.
    - Male SL have less teaching experience than their female counterparts (9.5 years versus 11.3 years).
    - Male SL have more years in school leadership positions than their female counterparts (18.6 years versus 15.7 years).
4. 83.3% of male SL are married or in a de facto relationship, compared to 67.5% of their female counterparts.
5. 7.1% of SL reported plans to retire in 2023.
6. 39.8% of SL have a masters and 1.8% have a PhD.

2.2 HIGH HOURS WORKED, SOURCES OF STRESS AND SUPPORT

SL reported working an average of 56.2 hours per week during term, and 22.2 hours during school holidays. SL subgroups reported working the following hours during the school term (and school holidays):

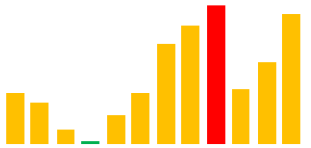
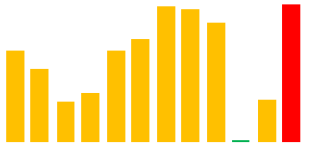
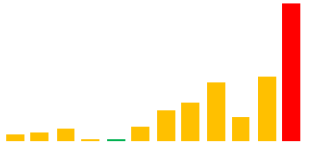
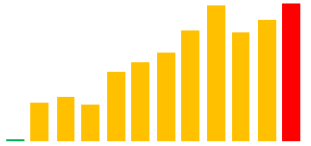
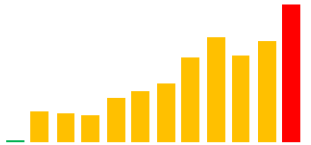
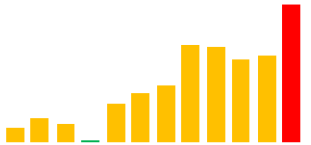
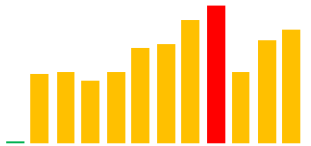
1. Female SL worked 56.2 hrs/wk (23.3 hrs/wk), male SL worked 55.8 hrs/wk (20.7 hrs/wk).
2. Primary SL worked 55.4 hrs/wk (20.5 hrs/wk), secondary SL worked 57.6 hrs/wk (22.3 hrs/wk), combined SL worked 57.7 hrs/wk (27.2 hrs/wk), and special SL worked 54.8 hrs/wk (24.0 hrs/wk).
3. Government SL worked 55.9 hrs/wk (20.9 hrs/wk), Catholic SL worked 57.8 hrs/wk (23.0 hrs/wk), and Independent SL worked 56.8 hrs/wk (30.9 hrs/wk).

In 2022, the top five sources of stress (Table 2.2.1, Table 2.2.2,Table 2.2.3) for SL are:

1. Sheer quantity of work,
2. Lack of time to focus on teaching and learning,
3. Teacher shortages,
4. Mental health issues of students, and
5. Mental health issues of staff.

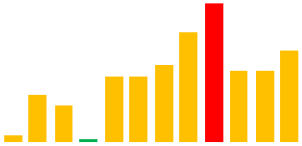
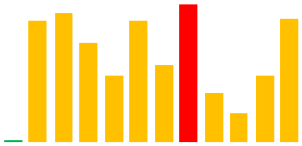
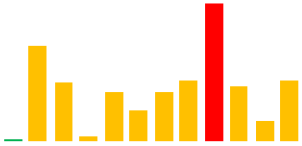
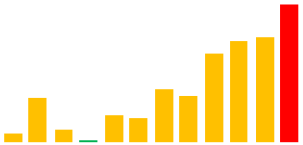
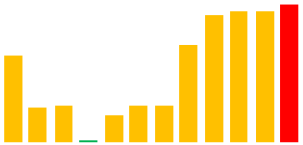
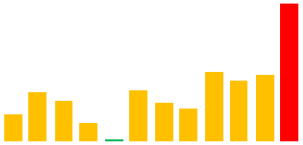
> The workload has increased to a stage that administrators have an unrealistic workload per week. Demands from parents and students have increased significantly as well. E.g. school refusal - the amount of hours that you put into one student and family is unproportionable to the rest of your workload.
>
> - Female, secondary government school, Qld

TABLE 2.2.1: LONGITUDINAL SOURCES OF STRESS (PART 1 OF 3) – CHART CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE

Rank	Sources of Stress	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scales)	Trendlines (zoomed)
1	Sheer quantity of work	7.85	7.81	7.70	7.65	7.76	7.85	8.05	8.13	8.21	7.87	7.98	8.18		
2	Lack of time to focus on teaching and learning	7.75	7.67	7.53	7.56	7.75	7.80	7.94	7.93	7.87	7.36	7.54	7.95		
3	Teacher shortages	3.74	3.76	3.86	3.60	3.59	3.94	4.41	4.62	5.14	4.22	5.35	7.33		
4	Mental health issues of students	5.53	6.01	6.07	5.99	6.38	6.52	6.66	6.93	7.24	6.92	7.05	7.27		
5	Mental health issues of staff	5.24	5.65	5.64	5.61	5.86	5.96	6.06	6.45	6.74	6.48	6.69	7.20		
6	Student related issues	6.18	6.25	6.20	6.07	6.36	6.45	6.51	6.83	6.82	6.72	6.75	7.16		
7	Expectations of the employer	6.44	6.79	6.80	6.76	6.80	6.92	6.94	7.07	7.14	6.80	6.96	7.02		

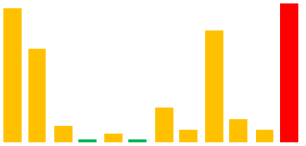
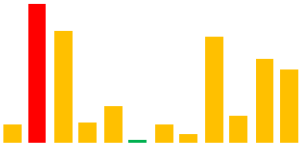
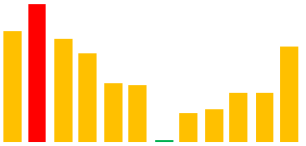
highest score lowest score

TABLE 2.2.2: LONGITUDINAL SOURCES OF STRESS (PART 2 OF 3) – CHART CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE

Rank	Sources of Stress	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scales)	Trendlines (zoomed)
8	Parent related issues	6.20	6.42	6.36	6.17	6.52	6.52	6.59	6.76	6.92	6.55	6.56	6.66		
9	Government initiatives	5.98	6.52	6.55	6.42	6.27	6.52	6.32	6.59	6.19	6.10	6.27	6.53		
10	Resourcing needs	5.96	6.55	6.43	6.06	6.23	6.03	6.00	6.23	6.35	5.92	5.97	6.52		
11	Poorly performing staff	6.06	6.42	6.28	6.07	6.24	6.17	6.24	6.29	6.58	6.26	6.13	6.29		
12	Complaints management	4.84	5.05	4.86	4.80	4.95	4.93	5.10	5.07	5.31	5.38	5.41	5.60		
13	Critical incidents	5.02	4.68	4.70	4.47	4.63	4.69	4.70	5.09	5.28	5.31	5.31	5.35		
14	Lack of autonomy/ authority	4.41	4.56	4.51	4.36	4.25	4.57	4.49	4.46	4.69	4.64	4.68	5.15		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 2.2.3: LONGITUDINAL SOURCES OF STRESS (PART 3 OF 3)

Rank	Sources of Stress	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scales)	Trendlines (zoomed)
15	Interpersonal conflicts	4.88	4.77	4.56	4.52	4.54	4.52	4.61	4.55	4.82	4.58	4.55	4.89		
16	Financial management issues	5.05	5.29	5.12	4.97	4.97	4.65	4.56	4.98	4.82	4.43	4.44	4.82		
17	Inability to get away from school/community	4.41	4.78	4.70	4.42	4.47	4.36	4.41	4.38	4.68	4.44	4.61	4.58		
18	Declining enrolments	4.06	4.18	4.03	3.97	3.83	3.82	3.58	3.70	3.72	3.79	3.78	3.99		
19	Union/industrial disputes	2.69	3.71	3.33	2.81	2.62	2.67	2.67	2.75	3.16	2.87	2.72	3.47		

highest score | lowest score

I believe the hours spent on administering this pandemic have more adversely affected people's mental health than the pandemic itself - useless meetings, repetitive statistics [sic] demands, generic solutions have taken their toll. Support on demand would have been nice, instead we got mandated 'support' that often was not place appropriate.

- Female, combined government school, NT

The third year of the pandemic saw a shift in SL sources of stress. Teacher shortages was ranked as the third highest source of stress at 7.33, up nine places from 2021 (5.14). In 2022, SL reported the highest results for the following sources of stress, and the stress source is significantly higher than the 2019 results:

1. Teacher shortages, 7.33 in 2022 compared to 5.14 in 2019.
2. Mental health issues of staff, 7.20 in 2022 compared to 6.74 in 2019.
3. Student related issues, 7.16 in 2022 compared to 6.82 in 2019.
4. Lack of autonomy/ authority, 5.15 in 2022 compared to 4.69 in 2019.

TABLE 2.2.4: SOURCES OF CONCERN FOR STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Sources of concern for students:	% selected
Anxiety	93.7%
School refusal	72.1%
Depression	47.1%
Stress	42.0%
Self-harm	41.6%
Suicide ideation	31.8%
Smoking and/or vaping	31.4%
Victimisation	17.7%
Perfectionism	12.6%
Body image	9.3%
Alcohol and/or drug abuse	9.1%
Eating disorders	6.3%

TABLE 2.2.5: SOURCES OF CONCERN FOR STAFFS' MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Sources of concern for staff:	% selected
Burnout	98.3%
Stress	94.7%
Anxiety	82.8%
Depression	53.4%
Alcohol and/or drug abuse	7.9%
Self-harm	2.2%
Smoking	1.5%

Mental health issues of students (4th highest) and mental health issues of staff (5th highest), continue to be high sources of stress for SL, with SL reporting higher results in 2022 than any other year of the survey. SL were asked to select/write up to five of their sources of concern for the mental health issues of students and staff. The selection prevalence of these sources of concern do not reflect the intensity or number of times these sources effect SL, only that they are

main sources of concern. Anxiety, school refusal, and depression were the top three selected sources of concern for students' mental health issues (Table 2.2.4). Burnout, stress, and anxiety were the top three selected sources of concern for staff mental health issues (Table 2.2.5).

Note: A lower percentage of SL wrote the following as sources of concern for students' mental health: behavioural issues; trauma; gender and LGBTQI; domestic violence; social media; violence towards others; and poverty.

Note: A lower percentage of SL wrote the following as sources of concern for staffs' mental health: family issues; ill health; workload; COVID; conflict; domestic violence and burnout.

Partner, friends, colleagues (professional and personal relationships), and family members are the main sources of support for SL (Figure 2.2.1).

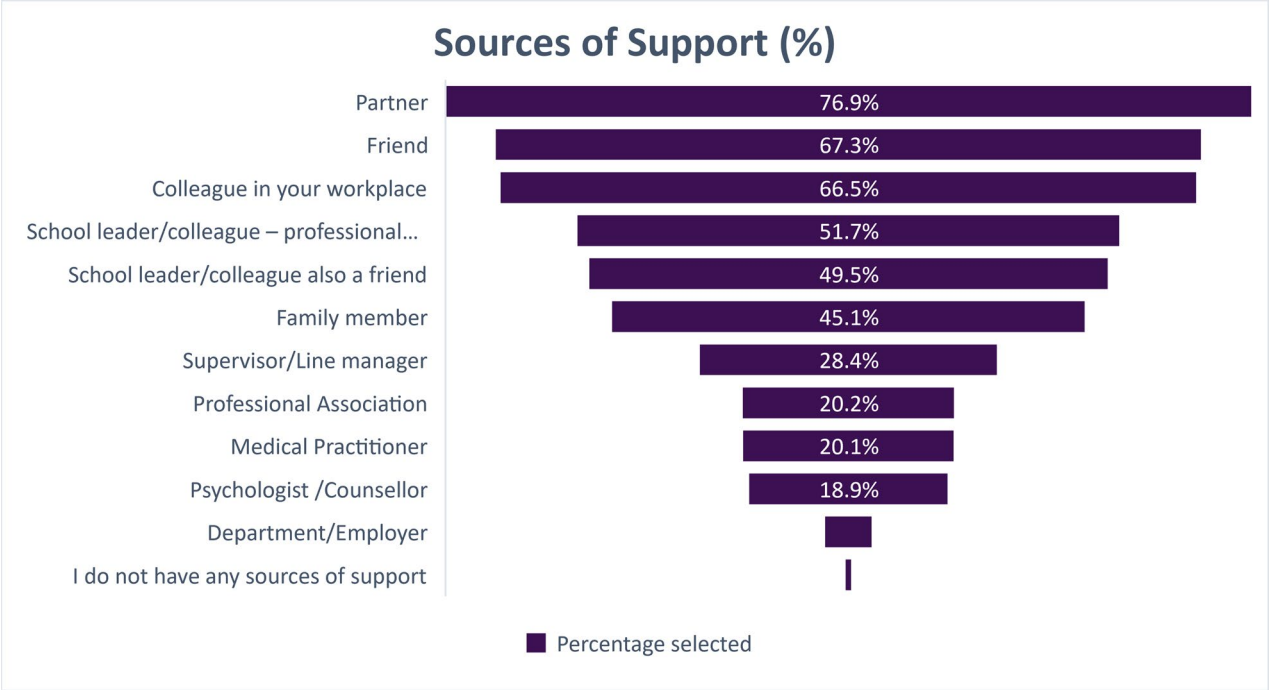


FIGURE 2.2.1: SCHOOL LEADERS SOURCES OF SUPPORT

> … It is not ok to be regularly psychologically, physically, verbally hurt by students with little consequences and no proactive strategies or systems in place. Student disability, learning difficulty, mental health have all risen as has the criteria for student support making it impossible to access.
>
> - Female, primary government school, SA

3 COPSOQ and Offensive Behaviour

The following section reports the results from the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ-II) [1]. This questionnaire is regarded as the "gold standard" in occupational health and safety self-report measures.

The structure of the COPSOQ-II consists of higher order domains and contributing sub-domains/scales. These have been found to be very robust and stable measures, by both ourselves [23] and others [24-34]. The following section outlines the scales of what each domain measures. We then report the key findings across all domains before reporting each domain and its subscales in detail. The domains are Demands at Work; Work Organisation and Job Contents; Interpersonal Relations and Leadership; Work-Individual Interface; Values at the Workplace; Health and Wellbeing; and Offensive Behaviour.

Cohen's d is the difference between two mean sores (school leaders compared to the general population) divided by the standard deviation of the general population [1]. Effect size calculations standardise the difference between the scores, providing consistent interpretation of results across multiple domains. All COPSOQ domain scores are transformed to 0-100 aiding comparisons across domains.

We have used the following colour key and descriptive classifications for effect size, with arrows indicating whether it is higher or lower than the general population:

Cohen's *d*	Effect Size	Colour
between 0 and 0.01	Very small	
between 0.01 and 0.2	Small	
between 0.2 and 0.5	Medium	
between 0.5 and 0.8	Large	
between 0.8 and 1.2	Very large	
greater than 1.2	Huge	

3.1 OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR

In 2022, the highest percentage of SL reported being subjected to Physical Violence (44.0%) since the survey's inception, 11.3 times more prevalent than the general population, with (Table 3.1.1):

- 10.1% of SL were subjected to Physical Violence from parents.
- 41.6% of SL were subjected to Physical Violence from students.

The second highest percentage of SL reported being subjected to Threats of Violence (48.8%) in 2022 since the survey's inception, 6.3 times more prevalent than the generation, with (Table 3.1.1):

- 32.2% of SL were subjected to Threats of Violence from parents.
- 37.6% of SL were subjected to Threats of Violence from students.

TABLE 3.1.1: 2022 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR, THE FREQUENCY, AND BY WHOM

	Overall	School leaders (%) subjected to Offensive Behaviour				From whom				
	Yes	Yes, a few times	Yes, monthly	Yes, weekly	Yes, daily	Colleagues	Manger or superior	Subordinates	Parents	Students
Sexual Harassment	2.4%	1.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.8%	0.2%	1.0%	0.9%	1.1%
Threats of Violence	48.8%	33.2%	3.3%	5.2%	1.7%	0.7%	0.3%	1.2%	32.2%	37.6%
Physical Violence	44.0%	31.5%	6.2%	5.1%	1.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	10.1%	41.6%
Bullying	33.7%	25.1%	4.0%	3.0%	1.6%	7.2%	6.8%	12.1%	18.8%	4.5%
Unpleasant Teasing	10.5%	8.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	3.0%	1.4%	3.6%	3.0%	3.3%
Conflicts and Quarrels	59.9%	46.3%	7.6%	4.8%	1.2%	20.6%	7.5%	30.6%	36.2%	16.1%
Gossip and Slander	49.7%	37.5%	0.9%	4.9%	1.2%	13.7%	2.7%	22.6%	30.7%	7.5%
Cyber Bullying	30.8%	26.8%	2.7%	1.1%	0.2%	1.3%	0.3%	3.3%	26.9%	5.7%

In 2020, the first year of the pandemic, for the first time, we saw a drop in Physical Violence, Threats of Violence, Bullying, and Gossip and Slander. There seemed to be a greater appreciation of our educators amongst the school community.

Comparing 2022 to 2021 Offensive Behaviours (Table 3.1.2):

- Threats of Violence increased by 4.5% points.
- Physical Violence increased by 4.6% points.
- Bullying increased by 0.5% points.
- Unpleasant Teasing increased by 2.7% points.
- Conflict and Quarrels increased by 1.8% points.
- Gossip and Slander increased by 4.3% points.
- Cyber Bullying increased by 0.2% points.

However, it appears that as we resumed in-school learning, that appreciation for the services that our educators provide is all but forgotten. Sadly, the trend in growth for Offensive Behaviour has returned, with more SL being subjected to Physical Violence than ever before. 2022 also saw the second highest percentage of SL being subjected to Threats of Violence in the last twelve years.

> There is little optimism in schools at the moment. Students and their families are getting more complex, there are not enough resources and supports to go around to cater to this complexity, especially in regional/remote schools, or schools with high levels of disability or poverty. Violence in schools is increasing and staff are burning out. Throwing more money at staff is not the answer. Conditions need to be better.
>
> - Female, primary government school, WA

TABLE 3.1.2: LONGITUDINAL PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS SUBJECTED TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Sexual Harassment	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%	2.0%	1.9%	2.8%	2.8%	3.2%	3.0%	2.4%	2.8%	2.4%		
Threats of Violence	37.9%	37.4%	37.7%	35.8%	41.1%	43.7%	44.8%	44.8%	51.0%	43.2%	44.3%	48.8%		
Physical Violence	27.3%	27.9%	28.8%	27.0%	31.3%	33.6%	36.6%	36.9%	42.2%	36.6%	39.4%	44.0%		
Bullying	34.1%	34.0%	33.2%	32.0%	36.0%	35.9%	35.5%	35.0%	37.6%	33.1%	33.2%	33.7%		
Unpleasant Teasing	7.0%	6.5%	6.9%	6.0%	7.6%	7.2%	8.4%	6.9%	9.1%	7.7%	7.8%	10.5%		
Conflicts and Quarrels	61.8%	61.6%	59.2%	58.0%	58.4%	56.8%	57.7%	58.6%	57.5%	58.8%	58.1%	59.9%		
Gossip and Slander	46.5%	48.0%	46.4%	44.4%	48.8%	48.1%	51.1%	50.0%	50.9%	43.2%	45.5%	49.7%		
Cyber Bullying										28.9%	30.6%	30.8%		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 3.1.3: 2022 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR BY STATE

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Sexual Harassment	2.5%	1.3%	2.5%	1.3%	2.2%	9.8%	4.1%	2.9%
Threats of Violence	46.2%	38.8%	53.7%	41.3%	55.5%	75.6%	69.4%	55.9%
Physical Violence	43.9%	31.3%	46.9%	36.7%	55.0%	73.2%	71.4%	38.2%
Bullying	37.0%	27.9%	31.5%	36.0%	33.2%	36.6%	51.0%	29.4%
Unpleasant Teasing	10.6%	9.4%	8.1%	13.3%	11.8%	9.8%	14.3%	8.8%
Conflicts and Quarrels	60.1%	53.1%	65.7%	70.7%	59.8%	51.2%	61.2%	73.5%
Gossip and Slander	52.4%	38.8%	56.7%	56.0%	47.6%	43.9%	59.2%	38.2%
Cyber Bullying	31%	25%	39%	30%	27%	34%	24%	26%

TABLE 3.1.4: 2022 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO BOTH PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AND/OR THREATS OF VIOLENCE FROM PARENTS OR STUDENTS

	Parents	Students
NSW	33.1%	46.6%
VIC	27.9%	32.8%
QLD	41.9%	51.7%
SA	26.0%	43.3%
WA	30.6%	57.2%
ACT	39.0%	80.5%
NT	42.9%	75.5%
TAS	35.3%	55.9%

We live in a different world than 5 years ago. The system is designed for the old world. I am now dealing with high levels of playground violence, high rates of severe mental health, violence against teachers and parents who can't accept their child being reprimanded or punished when their child had engaged in violence in a school where this didn't used to happen…

- Female, primary government school, WA

TABLE 3.1.5: 2022 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR BY SCHOOL SECTOR

	Government	Catholic	Independent
Sexual Harassment	2.8%	0.0%	2.1%
Threats of Violence	56.0%	26.8%	16.0%
Physical Violence	51.8%	21.5%	10.4%
Bullying	35.5%	25.4%	27.8%
Unpleasant Teasing	11.2%	6.1%	7.6%
Conflicts and Quarrels	60.4%	61.0%	64.6%
Gossip and Slander	51.0%	42.5%	52.1%
Cyber Bullying	32.3%	26.8%	20.8%

TABLE 3.1.6: 2022 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED BEING SUBJECTED TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR BY SCHOOL TYPE

	Primary	Secondary	Combined	Special
Sexual Harassment	1.6%	2.8%	3.5%	5.0%
Threats of Violence	45.5%	56.4%	35.1%	68.0%
Physical Violence	42.4%	51.3%	22.5%	74.0%
Bullying	28.4%	40.4%	37.7%	36.0%
Unpleasant Teasing	7.6%	14.7%	8.7%	20.0%
Conflicts and Quarrels	57.3%	65.6%	64.9%	60.0%
Gossip and Slander	47.1%	50.6%	57.6%	51.0%
Cyber Bullying	29.6%	37.8%	25.1%	18.0%

> The stress I mainly feel is from the system/ governing body and in particular the 'administration or enterprise side'. The second part is this increasing expectation that schools are to be parents or to fill the gaps in order to keep an equilibrium for society in future generations. The amount of students particularly boys who are disrespectful - angry; violent and abusive in language. …
>
> - Female, primary Catholic school, NSW

3.2 2022 WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR - COPSOQ II RESULTS

COVID-19 continues to influence SL health and wellbeing. The third year of the pandemic saw a great shift in how the government, public health policies, and schools governing bodies, managed the pandemic. With in-school learning resuming in 2022 across the country, schools operated according to the health rules implemented by the school's governing body and the state government.

School changes in operation were announced in advance, allowing SL to implement and manage their operating protocols, inform their communities of the changes, and manage expectations more effectively. (Table 2.2.1 Note: Appendix A: COPSOQ Scales and Definition provides background, domain and scale information relating to COPSOQ II.)

Compared to the general population, the scales of most concern for SL are Quantitative Demands; Cognitive Demands; Emotional Demands; Demands for Hiding Emotions; Work-Family Conflict; Burnout; Sleeping Troubles; and Stress.

2022, A YEAR OF HIGHER JOB DEMANDS AND LOWER JOB RESOURCES

Berthelsen, Hakanen [35] showed COPSOQ II scales reflect job demands and job resources [4].

SL reported increased job demands and strain symptoms; decreases in leadership resources, interpersonal resources, task resources, and positive work attitudes has negatively impacted the overall workability of SL. SL reported the lowest results for General Health Perception in 2022 (Table 3.2.3. to Table 3.2.7)

SL reported the highest results for the following job demands contributing scales (unless stated otherwise):

- Quantitative Demands (64.76)
- Work Pace (76.61)
- Emotional Demands (74.84)
- Work-Family Conflict (second highest recorded result at 72.04)
- Role Conflict (55.70)

SL reported the highest results for the following strain contributing scales:

- Stress (49.51)
- Burnout (59.94)
- Sleeping Troubles (49.03)

> The role of the principal is unsustainable. Being experienced, I am concerned about newly appointed leaders in coming to terms with the wide range of demands which are unrealistic.
>
> - Female, secondary government school, SA

SL reported the lowest results for the following leadership resources contributing scales:

- Justice (61.25)
- Recognition (63.16)
- Predictability (54.16)

SL reported the lowest result for the following interpersonal resources contributing scale:

- Mutual Trust between Employees (69.45)

SL reported the lowest results (unless stated otherwise) for the following task resources contributing scales:

- Role Clarity (76.62)
- Variation (second lowest recorded result at 63.76)
- Possibilities for Development (79.77)
- Influence (54.64)

SL reported the lowest results for the following positive work attitude contributing scales:

- Job Satisfaction (70.01)
- Commitment to the Workplace (70.66)

I am rethinking my journey in education and having been a Principal Class Officer for 18 years… I have battled to maintain a focus on instructional leadership but it is near in impossible given the exploding demands of families and the administrative red tape required by the DET. It is excessive and exhausting. In 2023, I look forward to continuing to support kids in their learning as a classroom teacher once again.

- Female school leader, prefer not to say

TABLE 3.2.1: 2022 SCHOOL LEADERS COMPARATIVE EFFECT SIZE AGAINST THE GENERAL POPULATION (PART 1 OF 2) – TABLE CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE

		School leader	General population		Difference		
Domain	Scales	M	M	SD	M difference	Cohen's *d*	Effect size
Demands at Work	Quantitative Demands	64.76	40.20	20.50	24.56	⇧ 1.20	very large
	Work Pace	76.61	59.50	19.10	17.11	⇧ 0.90	very large
	Cognitive Demands	87.11	63.90	18.70	23.21	⇧ 1.24	huge
	Emotional Demands	74.84	40.70	24.30	34.14	⇧ 1.40	huge
	Demands for Hiding Emotions	86.47	50.60	20.80	35.87	⇧ 1.72	huge
Work Organisation and Job Contents	Influence	54.64	49.80	21.20	4.84	0.23	medium
	Possibilities for Development (skill discretion)	79.77	65.90	17.60	13.87	⇧ 0.79	large
	Variation	63.76	60.40	21.40	3.36	0.16	small
	Meaning of Work	83.51	73.80	15.80	9.71	⇧ 0.61	large
	Commitment to the Workplace	70.66	60.90	20.40	9.76	0.48	medium
Interpersonal Relations and Leadership	Predictability	54.16	57.70	20.90	-3.54	-0.17	small
	Recognition	63.16	66.20	19.90	-3.04	-0.15	small
	Role Clarity	76.62	73.50	16.40	3.12	0.19	small
	Role Conflict	55.70	42.00	16.60	13.70	⇧ 0.83	very large
	Quality of Leadership	53.08	55.30	21.10	-2.22	-0.11	small
	Social Support from Internal Colleagues	64.18	57.30	19.70	6.88	0.35	medium
	Social Support from External Colleagues	53.02	57.30	19.70	-4.28	-0.22	medium
	Social Support from Supervisors	50.20	61.60	22.40	-11.40	⇩ -0.51	large
	Social Community at Work	78.59	78.70	18.90	-0.11	-0.01	very small

Cohen's *d* is compared against the general population. Effect size indicator: large very large huge

TABLE 3.2.2: 2022 SCHOOL LEADERS COMPARATIVE EFFECT SIZE AGAINST THE GENERAL POPULATION (PART 2 OF 2)

		School leader	General population		Difference		
Domain	Scales	M	M	SD	M difference	Cohen's *d*	Effect size
Work-Individual Interface	Job Insecurity	9.34	23.70	20.80	-14.36	-0.69	large
	Job Satisfaction	70.01	65.30	18.20	4.71	0.26	medium
	Work-Family Conflict	72.04	33.50	24.30	38.54	1.59	huge
	Family-Work Conflict	8.47	7.60	15.30	0.87	0.06	small
Values at the Workplace	Mutual Trust Between Employees	69.45	68.60	16.90	0.85	0.05	small
	Trust Regarding Management	67.29	67.70	17.70	-0.41	-0.02	small
	Justice	61.25	59.20	17.70	2.05	0.12	small
	Social Inclusiveness	79.75	67.50	16.30	12.25	0.75	large
Health and Wellbeing	General Health Perception	57.14	66.00	20.90	-8.86	-0.42	medium
	Burnout	59.94	34.10	18.20	25.84	1.42	huge
	Sleeping Troubles	49.03	26.70	17.70	22.33	1.26	huge
	Stress	49.51	21.30	19.00	28.21	1.48	huge
	Depressive Symptoms	31.03	21.00	16.50	10.03	0.61	large
	Somatic Stress	26.25	17.80	16.00	8.45	0.53	large
	Cognitive Stress	32.73	17.80	15.70	14.93	0.95	very large
	Self-efficacy	73.92	67.50	16.00	6.42	0.40	medium

Cohen's *d* is compared against the general population. Effect size indicator: large very large huge

TABLE 3.2.3: LONGITUDINAL RESULTS FOR THE DEMANDS AT WORK DOMAIN

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Demands at Work	Quantitative Demands	59.35	58.98	58.66	58.17	59.74	59.16	61.05	60.44	58.98	55.82	57.36	64.76		
	Work Pace	69.94	70.35	70.26	69.48	70.87	70.41	70.86	71.24	71.09	68.98	69.35	76.61		
	Cognitive Demands	82.38	82.78	83.04	82.80	83.91	84.30	84.41	84.73	84.60	84.54	84.56	87.11		
	Emotional Demands			68.59	67.82	69.56	69.88	70.82	71.48	71.27	70.79	70.85	74.84		
	Demands for Hiding Emotions	82.39	82.95	82.82	81.95	83.54	83.72	84.84	84.97	84.60	84.49	84.51	86.47		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 3.2.4: LONGITUDINAL RESULTS FOR THE WORK ORGANISATION AND JOB CONTENTS DOMAIN

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Work Organisation and Job Contents	Influence	56.82	58.41	58.88	58.92	57.56	57.36	57.15	57.76	57.12	58.74	58.30	54.64		
	Possibilities for Development (skill	80.07	82.21	81.96	81.87	82.46	81.92	80.93	82.21	81.36	81.32	80.73	79.77		
	Variation	66.64	67.28	66.83	67.12	66.23	65.49	65.48	65.33	64.46	63.83	62.92	63.76		
	Meaning of Work	85.50	86.20	85.84	85.91	86.51	85.61	84.89	85.44	84.62	84.41	84.48	83.51		
	Commitment to the Workplace	72.40	73.04	73.45	73.85	73.04	72.40	71.84	73.08	73.54	74.25	73.40	70.66		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 3.2.5: LONGITUDINAL RESULTS FOR THE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AND LEADERSHIP DOMAIN

Interpersonal Relations and Leadership

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Predictability	61.86	62.91	62.24	59.00	60.03	59.03	57.71	58.94	59.01	57.27	57.18	54.16		
Recognition	67.97	67.23	66.44	64.86	65.76	65.47	64.82	66.29	66.15	66.39	65.56	63.16		
Role Clarity			80.07	79.35	80.14	79.57	78.59	80.00	81.33	78.83	78.40	76.62		
Role Conflict	49.44	49.93	48.17	47.22	49.36	50.21	51.88	50.64	50.27	48.26	49.46	55.70		
Quality of Leadership			52.92	52.46	54.59	55.62	53.35	54.73	53.52	53.37	52.64	53.08		
Social Support from Internal Colleagues		59.20	60.12	60.17	60.15	60.72	60.66	62.30	62.26	64.32	64.24	64.18		
Social Support from External Colleagues		49.94	50.44	50.44	51.53	50.58	51.27	51.89	50.86	52.83	53.24	53.02		
Social Support from Supervisors	51.53	49.38	46.77	46.68	48.21	49.35	48.20	49.38	48.93	51.86	50.81	50.20		
Social Community at Work	79.42	78.44	78.98	78.53	78.74	78.15	78.18	78.68	78.41	79.10	78.51	78.59		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 3.2.6: LONGITUDINAL RESULTS FOR THE WORK-INDIVIDUAL INTERFACE AND VALUES AT THE WORKPLACE DOMAINS

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Work-Individual Interface	Job Insecurity								8.43	7.85	8.73	7.95	9.34		
	Job Satisfaction	71.80	73.27	74.09	74.05	74.25	74.12	72.76	73.29	74.33	74.84	73.98	70.01		
	Work-Family Conflict	72.13	70.69	69.61	68.25	68.96	68.52	69.08	67.26	66.72	63.44	64.32	72.04		
	Family-Work Conflict	8.63	8.89	9.61	9.52	9.37	8.99	9.00	8.91	9.14	8.39	8.38	8.47		
Values at the Workplace	Mutual Trust between Employees	71.99	70.74	71.68	72.16	71.83	70.66	70.80	72.01	71.80	72.05	72.41	69.45		
	Trust Regarding Management	75.62	74.60	74.33	70.98	72.53	72.28	71.80	72.76	71.61	71.50	70.57	67.29		
	Justice	73.64	73.40	73.73	68.76	69.99	69.47	68.60	70.56	68.17	64.32	63.28	61.25		
	Social Inclusiveness	77.50	79.12	79.42	79.40	80.92	80.95	80.62	81.49	81.08	80.60	80.35	79.75		

highest score lowest score

TABLE 3.2.7: LONGITUDINAL RESULTS FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING DOMAIN

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trendlines (scaled)	Trendlines (zoomed)
Health and Wellbeing	General Health Perception	61.71	59.63	59.95	59.79	60.20	59.88	58.91	59.24	58.71	59.50	58.88	57.14		
	Burnout	55.51	55.96	54.23	53.84	54.51	55.19	55.76	54.67	54.04	56.59	57.16	59.94		
	Sleeping Troubles	43.57	45.96	46.02	45.07	46.03	46.60	47.17	45.72	43.76	46.58	46.03	49.03		
	Stress	46.07	45.87	45.11	44.36	44.92	45.17	44.75	43.58	42.30	44.81	45.46	49.51		
	Depressive Symptoms	27.95	27.52	27.11	26.67	27.42	26.90	25.81	26.08	23.54	25.32	25.30	31.03		
	Somatic Stress	22.37	22.29	22.25	21.63	22.43	22.59	22.69	22.68	21.41	22.88	22.88	26.25		
	Cognitive Stress	28.23	27.92	27.76	26.75	27.89	27.38	27.67	27.11	26.63	27.15	28.24	32.73		
	Self-efficacy	69.38	72.32	72.23	74.46	74.31	74.03	72.62	73.33	74.16	74.75	74.72	73.92		

highest score lowest score

4 Red Flag Emails: Triggers and Comparisons

Survey participants who triggered one or any combination of the risk measures (composite psychosocial risk score (CPRS), Quality of Life (aQoL), and self-harm) received a Red Flag email (see Appendix B: Red Flag Triggers for further details). This email notifies the participant which risk measure they have triggered, a suggestion to seek assistance, and a link to services which are available to them.

An alarming **47.8%** of school leaders triggered a Red Flag email in 2022. This is **an increase of 18.7%** points compared to 2021, which had 29.1% of SL triggering Red Flag emails. 51.8% of government SL triggered Red Flag emails, compared to 35.3% of Catholic, and 27.7% of Independent SL.

The following findings are for Red Flag notifications from Table 3.2.1 and Table 3.2.1:

- 47.8% of all SL triggered a Red Flag, an increase of 18.7% points from 2021.
- 38.8% of all SL triggered a CPRS (occupational risk) Red Flag, an increase of 20.9% points from 2021.
- 21.9% of all SL triggered AQoL Red Flag, an increase of 4.6% points from 2021.
- More female SL triggered Red Flag email than their male counters, 48.2% versus 46.7%.
- More special school SL (56.3%) triggered Red Flag emails than their secondary (52.3%), primary (46.1%), and combined (41.1%) counterparts.

Worryingly, the following states/territories had more than 50% of their SL trigger a Red Flag:

- NSW, with 55.7% of SL at risk.
- WA, with 52.2% of SL at risk.
- ACT, with 58.5% of SL at risk.
- NT, with 57.4% of SL at risk.

Comparatively, a lower percentage of Victorian SL triggered a Red Flag, at 33.0%; this is still significantly higher than the 26.0% from 2021.

More SL across the board are at risk and have triggered Red Flags. With large increases in occupation risk (CPRS), this is not surprising given the increase in job demands and decrease in job resources, as outlined in section 3.2 above.

> I am leaving earlier than expected due to stress, the sense of frustration at being moved away from educational leadership and into management conversations, parental concerns, staff fatigue and my own burnout.
>
> - Female, combined Independent school, NSW

TABLE 3.2.1: PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS WHO TRIGGERED A RED FLAG, AND THE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF THE TRIGGERS BY GENDER AND SCHOOL TYPE

	Gender			School type			
	All	Female	Male	Primary	Secondary	Combined	Special
Red Flag	47.8%	48.2%	46.7%	46.1%	52.3%	41.1%	56.3%
No Red Flag	52.2%	51.8%	53.3%	53.9%	47.7%	58.9%	43.8%
AQoL	7.6%	7.4%	8.1%	6.8%	6.7%	11.2%	9.4%
AQoL + CPRS	11.0%	11.0%	10.0%	9.7%	12.4%	10.3%	12.5%
AQoL + CPRS + self-harm	2.4%	1.7%	2.7%	2.3%	2.8%	3.6%	1.0%
AQoL + self-harm	0.9%	0.6%	1.2%	0.9%	0.2%	2.7%	0.0%
CPRS	24.9%	26.7%	23.1%	25.3%	29.5%	12.1%	32.3%
CPRS + self-harm	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.4%	1.0%
Self-harm	0.5%	0.3%	0.8%	0.3%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%

TABLE 3.2.2: PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEADERS WHO TRIGGERED A RED FLAG, AND THE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF THE TRIGGERS BY STATE/TERRITORY

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Red Flag	55.7%	33.0%	48.6%	44.1%	52.2%	58.5%	57.4%	37.5%
No Red Flag	44.3%	67.0%	51.4%	55.9%	47.8%	41.5%	42.6%	62.5%
AQoL	11.7%	4.0%	7.1%	11.0%	4.9%	2.4%	4.3%	0.0%
AQoL + CPRS	10.9%	6.2%	12.3%	7.6%	17.3%	7.3%	17.0%	12.5%
AQoL + CPRS + self-harm	3.0%	1.3%	4.3%	2.1%	0.9%	2.4%	4.3%	0.0%
AQoL + self-harm	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	3.1%
CPRS	28.1%	20.4%	23.1%	20.7%	28.8%	39.0%	27.7%	21.9%
CPRS + self-harm	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%	4.9%	2.1%	0.0%
Self-harm	0.9%	0.3%	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%

5 Appendices

5.1 APPENDIX A: COPSOQ SCALES AND DEFINITION

The Demands at Work:

- **Quantitative Demands** assesses how much one must achieve in one's work. They can be assessed as an incongruity between the number of tasks and the time available to perform the tasks in a satisfactory manner.
- **Work Pace** assesses the speed at which tasks must be performed. It is a measure of the intensity of work.
- **Cognitive Demands** assesses demands involving the cognitive abilities of the worker. This is the only subscale of Demands where higher scores are better.
- **Emotional Demands** assesses when the employee must deal with or is confronted with other people's feelings at work or placed in emotionally demanding situations. Other people comprise both people not employed at the workplace (e.g., parents and students) and people employed at the workplace (e.g., colleagues, superiors or subordinates).
- **Demands for Hiding Emotions** assesses when an employee must conceal her or his own feelings at work from other people. Other people comprise both people not employed at the workplace (e.g., parents and students) and people employed at the workplace (e.g., colleagues, superiors, or subordinates). The scale shows the amount of time individuals spend in surface acting (pretending an emotion that is not felt) or down-regulating (hiding) felt emotions.

Work Organisation and Job Contents:

- **Influence at Work** assesses the degree to which the employee can influence aspects of work itself, ranging from planning of work, to the order of tasks.
- **Possibilities for Development** assesses if the tasks are challenging for the employee and if the tasks provide opportunities for learning, and thus opportunities for development, not only in the job but also on a personal level. Lack of development can create apathy, helplessness, and passivity.
- **Variation of Work** assesses the degree to which work (tasks, work process) is varied, that is if tasks are or are not repetitive.
- **Meaning of Work** assesses both the meaning of the aim of work tasks and the meaning of the context of work tasks. The aim is "vertical": that the work is related to a more general purpose, such as providing students with a good education. Context is "horizontal": that one can see how one's own work contributes to the overall product of the organisation.
- **Commitment to the Workplace** assesses the degree to which one experiences being committed to one's workplace. It is not the work by itself or the work group that is the focus here, but the organisation in which one is employed.

Interpersonal Relations and Leadership:

- **Predictability** assesses the means to avoid uncertainty and insecurity. This is achieved if employees receive the relevant information at the right time.
- **Recognition (Reward)** assesses the recognition by the management of your effort at work.
- **Role Clarity** assesses the employee's understanding of her or his role at work (e.g., content of tasks, expectations to be met and her or his responsibilities).
- **Role Conflicts** assesses conflicts which stem from two sources. The first source is about possible inherent conflicting demands within a specific task. The second source is about possible conflicts when prioritising different tasks.
- **Quality of Leadership** assesses the next higher manager's leadership in different contexts and domains.
- **Social Support from Colleagues Inside and Outside the School** assesses school leaders' impressions of the possibility to obtain support from colleagues if one should need it.
- **Social Community at Work** assesses whether there is a feeling of being part of the group of employees at the workplace (e.g., if employee's relations are good and if they work well together).

Work-Individual Interface:

- **Job Insecurity** deals with school leaders' worries with job security, whereby the lower the result the higher the job security.
- **Job Satisfaction** deals with school leaders' experience of satisfaction with various aspects of work.
- **Work-Family Conflict** deals with the possible consequences of work on family/personal life. The focus is on two areas, namely conflict regarding energy (mental and physical) and conflict regarding time.
- **Family-Work Conflict** deals with the possible consequences of family/personal life on work. The focus is on two areas, namely conflict regarding energy (mental and physical) and conflict regarding time.

Values at the Workplace:

- **Trust Regarding Management (Vertical Trust)** assesses whether the employees can trust the management and vice versa. Vertical trust can be observed in the communication between the management and the employees.
- **Mutual Trust between Employees (Horizontal Trust)** assesses whether the employees can trust each other in daily work or not. Trust can be observed in the communication in the workplace; e.g., if one freely can express attitudes and feelings without fear of negative reactions.
- **Justice** assesses whether workers are treated fairly. Four aspects are considered: first, the distribution of tasks and recognition; second, the process of sharing; third, the handling of conflicts; and fourth the handling of suggestions from the employees.
- **Social Inclusiveness** assesses an aspect of organisational justice: how fairly people are treated in the workplace in relation to their gender, race, age and ability.

Health and Wellbeing:

- **General Health** is the person's assessment of her or his own general health. It is one global item, which has been used in numerous questionnaires, and has been shown to predict many different endpoints including mortality, cardiovascular diseases, hospitalisations, use of medicine, absence from work, and early retirement.
- **Burnout** assesses the degree of physical and mental fatigue/exhaustion of the employee.
- **Stress** assesses a reaction of the individual, or the combination of tension or strain, resulting from exposure to adverse or demanding circumstances. As elevated stress levels over a longer period are detrimental to health, it is necessary to determine long-term, or chronic stress.
- **Sleeping Troubles** assesses sleep length, determined by factors such as over or under sleeping, waking up, interruptions, and of quality of sleep.
- **Somatic Stress** is assessed as a physical health indicator of a sustained stress reaction of the individual.
- **Cognitive Stress** assesses cognitive indicators of a sustained stress reaction of the individual.
- **Depressive Symptoms** assesses various factors which together indicate depression.
- **Self-efficacy** assesses the extent of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. Here self-efficacy is understood as global self-efficacy, not distinguishing between specific domains of life.

Offensive Behaviour:

- **Sexual Harassment** is exposure to unwanted and undesired sexual attention in the workplace.
- **Threats of Violence** is the exposure to a threat of violence in the workplace.
- **Physical Violence** is the exposure to physical violence in the workplace.
- **Bullying** is the repeated exposure to unpleasant or degrading treatment in the workplace, and the person finds it difficult to defend themselves against it.
- **Unpleasant Teasing** is the exposure to unpleasant teasing in the workplace.
- **Conflicts and Quarrels** is being involved in conflicts and quarrels in the workplace.
- **Gossip and Slander** is the exposure to gossip and slander in the workplace.
- **Cyber Bullying** is the exposure of work-related harassment on social media, email or text.

5.2 APPENDIX B: RED FLAG TRIGGERS

From the outset of this project, one aim of the survey was to produce an immediate alert to individuals reporting signs of concerning stress levels. We call these Red Flag emails. Following the publication of a new study into occupational risks by Adrienne Stauder and colleagues [36], a trigger

for composite psychosocial risk score (CPRS) was added to the 2018 survey.

The Red Flag email used the following trigger algorithms:

1. Self-harm risk – participants who reported they had thoughts of hurting themselves over the course of the previous week;
2. Quality of Life risk (AQoL) – composite AQoL psychosocial quality of risk score fell into the "high" or "very high" risk groups;
3. CPRS – a trigger threshold mechanism that reduces scores for each strain and resource variable to "High Risk" vs "Not High Risk". For variables where lower scores indicate better working conditions (generally, but not always, strain variables) a score of $\geq 75/100$ is the threshold for concern, and coded high risk. On the other hand, where lower scores indicate worse working conditions (all resource and two strain variables) a score of $\leq 25/100$ is the threshold for concern, and coded high risk. The aggregate of high-risk scores is obtained for everyone, with benchmarks triggers for "high" or "very high" risk for each individual; and
4. Any combination of the three triggers.

6 References

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