Kānoa
Regional Economic Development
& Investment Unit

North Island Weather Events Primary Producer Finance Scheme (NIWE PPFS)

2026 Annual Survey Report

October 2026

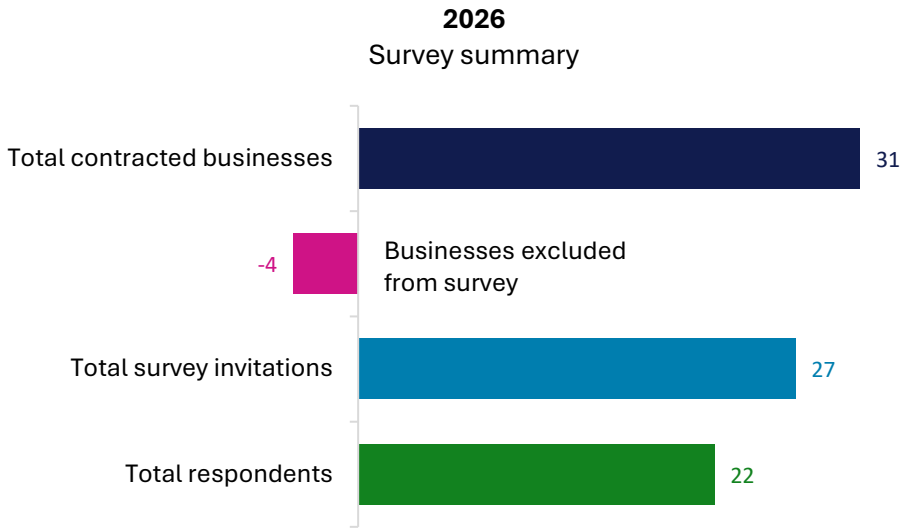
MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

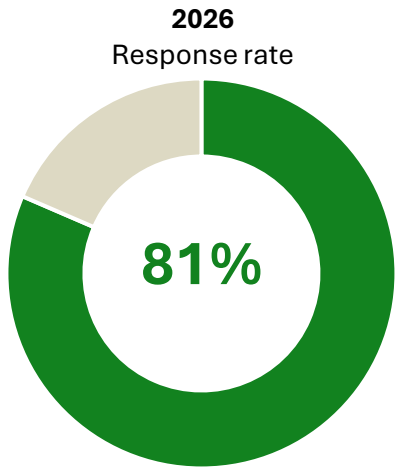
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

About the survey

The NIWE PPFS is a $240m fund that provided finance to primary producers affected by severe weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle). It opened in July 2023 and closed in June 2024, and was available to producers that could remain commercially viable but were unable to access finance from their bank or other lender.

An annual survey is a requirement of the fund's monitoring and evaluation framework, and 2026 is the third year the survey has been conducted. There are nine questions in the survey covering how funding has impacted business recovery, financial stability, operating levels, viability, resilience and employment.





Of the 31 businesses contracted under the NIWE PPFS, four were excluded from the 2026 survey because they were in liquidation, voluntary administration, or receivership.

The survey was sent to the remaining 27 businesses, and 22 responded, giving an 81% response rate.

Given the high coverage of the eligible survey population, the results should be considered broadly representative of participating businesses.

Summary of results

NIWE PPFS 2026 Annual Survey

NIWE PPFS loans continue to be viewed as highly important for business recovery and financial stability
Thirty-one businesses received NIWE PPFS loans to help them recover from the 2023 North Island weather events, but four were in liquidation, voluntary administration or receivership. Results of the 2026 annual survey show that almost all of the 22 respondents found their loans 'very important' or 'extremely important' to both business recovery and financial stability. A majority of respondents also reported that funding has been effective in helping their business engage or re-engage with commercial lenders.

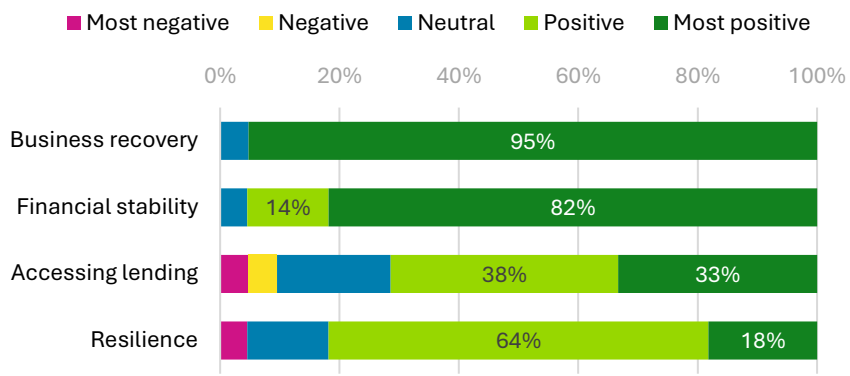
Resilience remains high
Most respondents continue to report that their business is more resilient to future weather events than before 2023. Reported resilience levels have remained consistently high across all three years of the survey.

Operating levels and viability continue to improve
Average operating levels and business viability have increased each year since the survey began in 2024. Most respondents now report operating levels and viability above 75% of pre-weather event levels.

Employment levels remain relatively strong
A majority of respondents continue to report employment levels above 75% of pre-event levels, although employment outcomes in 2026 were less positive than in 2025.

Recovery continues, but experiences vary
While overall results remain positive, a small number of responses suggest that experience varies for some businesses. Open-ended comments indicate that many businesses regard NIWE PPFS support as critical to their survival and recovery, but challenges include debt servicing costs, environmental impacts, and exposure to future weather and market risks.

Summary of 2026 results
Likert scale questions



80%	80%	79%
Average Operating Level*	Average Employment Level*	Average Viability

*Compared to before 2023 weather events

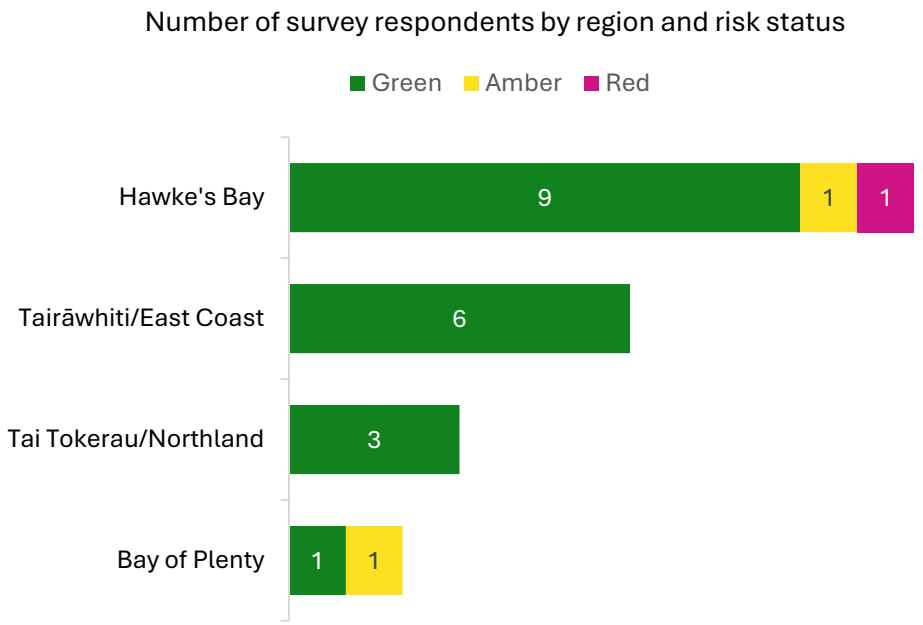
Organisations responding

Question 1

22 organisations responded to the 2026 survey, the same number as 2025. The survey population in 2026 is smaller than 2025, due to the exclusion of four businesses now in liquidation, voluntary administration, or receivership.

Respondents represented funded businesses from Hawke's Bay, Tairāwhiti, Tai Tokerau, and Bay of Plenty, with the largest concentration in Hawke's Bay. All respondent organisations were operating in the horticulture and/or agriculture sectors.

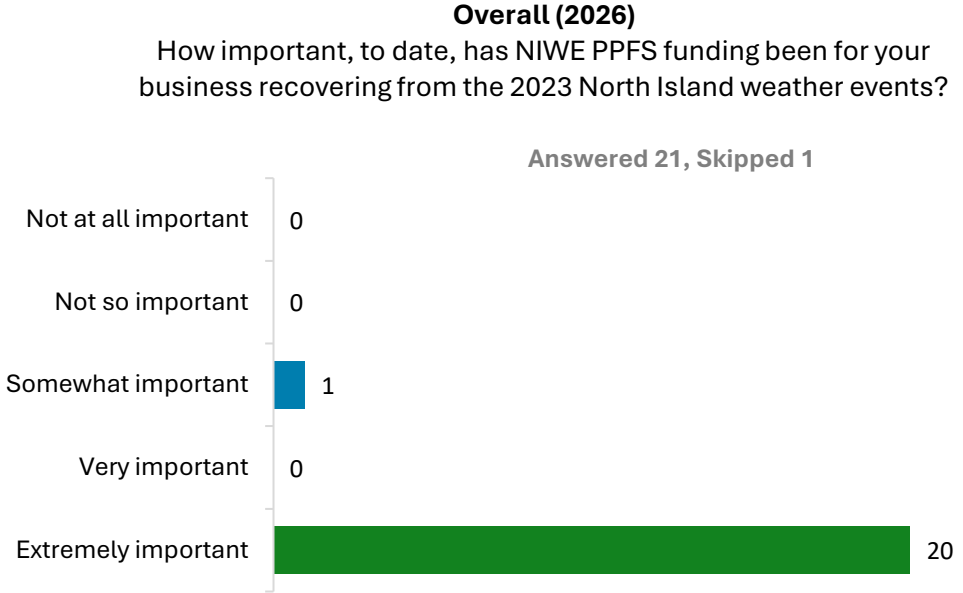
Most respondents (19 of 22) reported a green risk status, with three reporting amber or red. This indicates that survey findings mostly reflect the experiences of funding recipients whose businesses are progressing as expected.

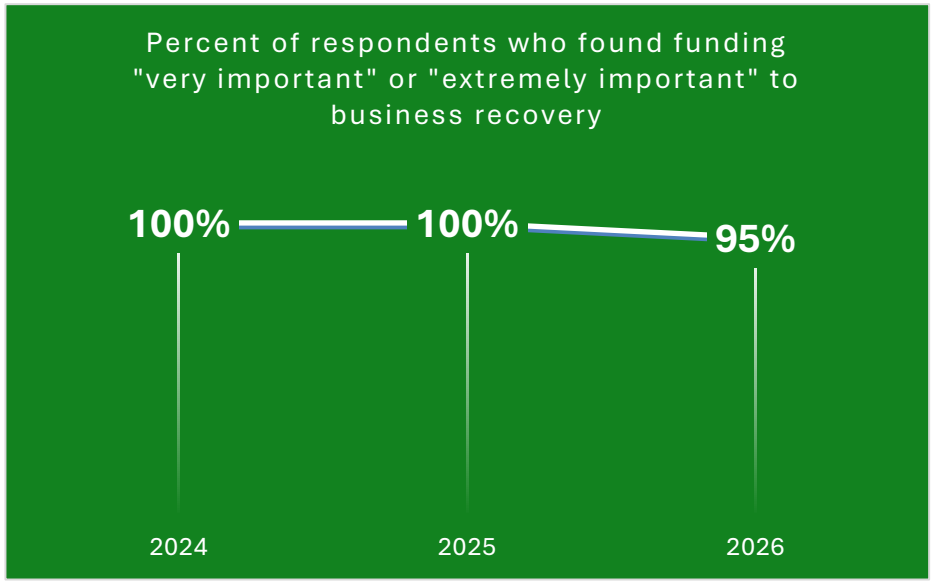


Overall

Question 2

In response to how important funding has been for business recovery from the 2023 weather events, nearly all respondents in 2026 found it **extremely important**. This is similar to previous years, though the proportion of respondents who found funding very important or extremely important has dipped slightly in 2026. Despite this small decrease, the results for this question continue to demonstrate an overwhelmingly positive view of the funding's contribution to business recovery.

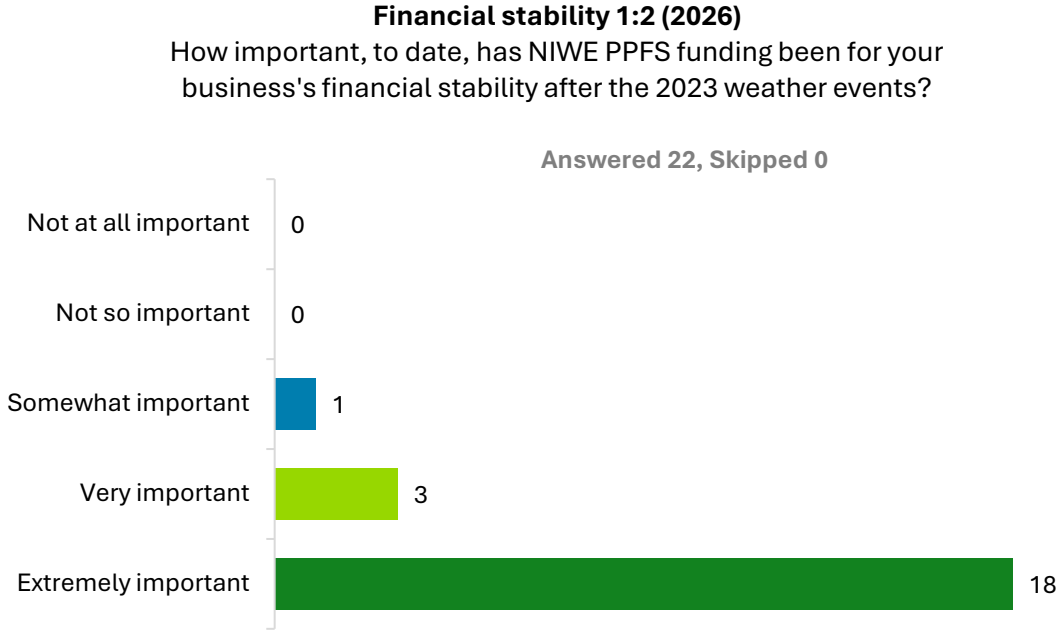


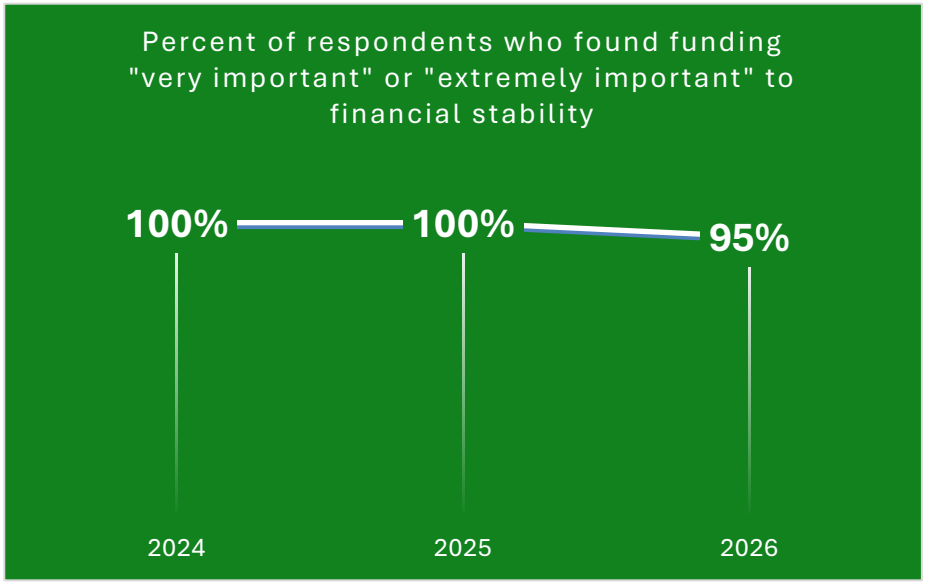


Financial stability (1 of 2)

Question 3

In response to how important funding has been to financial stability after the 2023 weather events, almost all respondents in 2026 found it **very important** or **extremely important**. This is similar to previous years, but like the business recovery question the proportion of respondents who found funding very important or extremely important has dipped slightly from 2024 and 2025. Regardless, the results for this question also show an overwhelmingly positive view of the funding's contribution to financial stability.

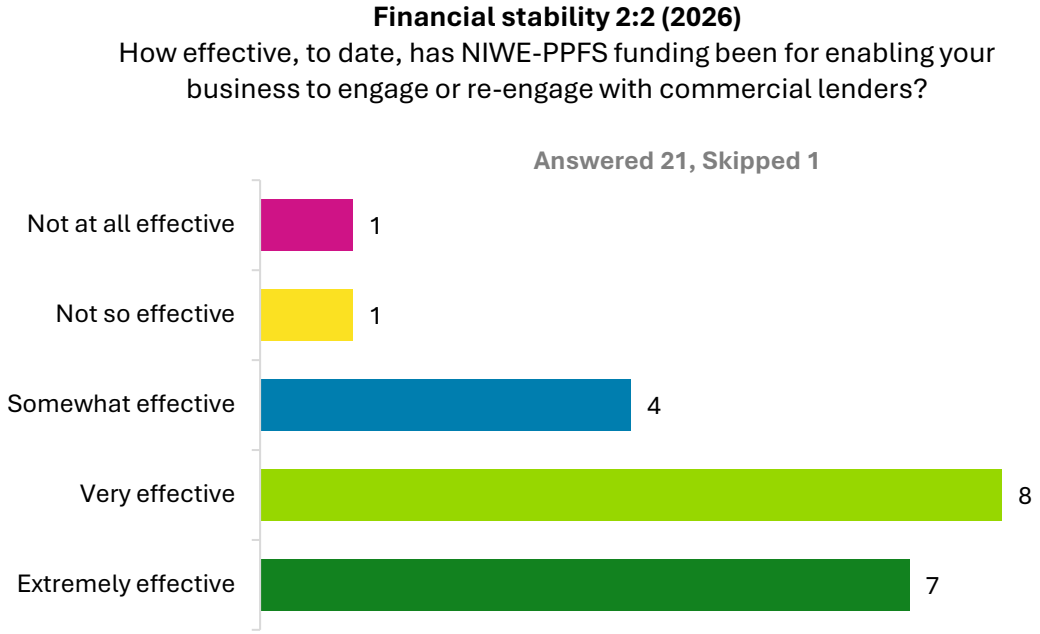


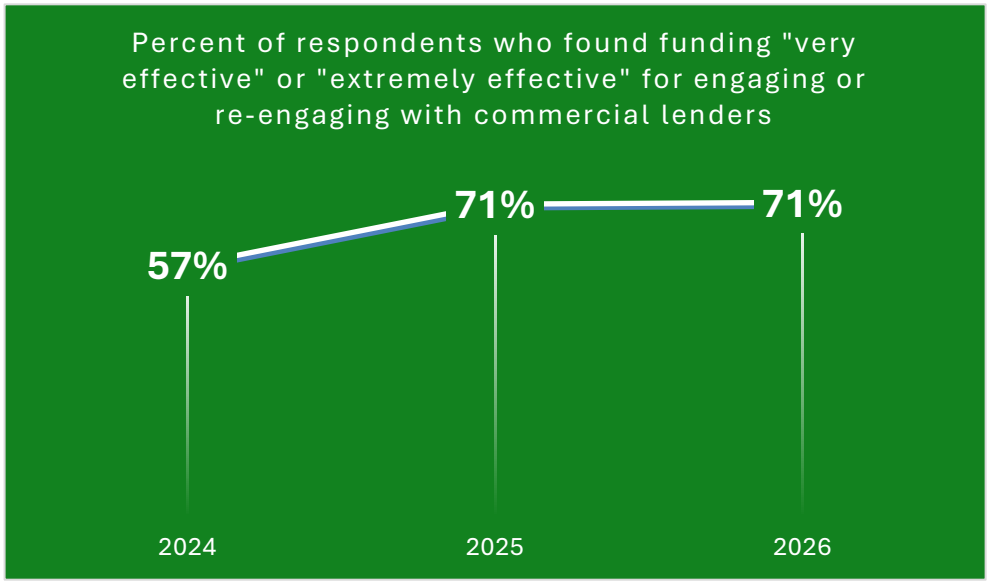


Financial stability (2 of 2)

Question 4

A key intent of the NIWE PPFS was to enable funding recipients to engage or re-engage with commercial lenders. Survey results show that funding continues to support this outcome. The proportion rating it **very effective** or **extremely effective** remains strong and has increased substantially on 2024. Results also show that experiences vary, with two businesses reporting that funding has not been effective for engaging with commercial lenders.

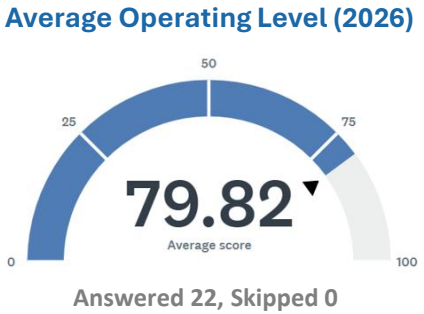


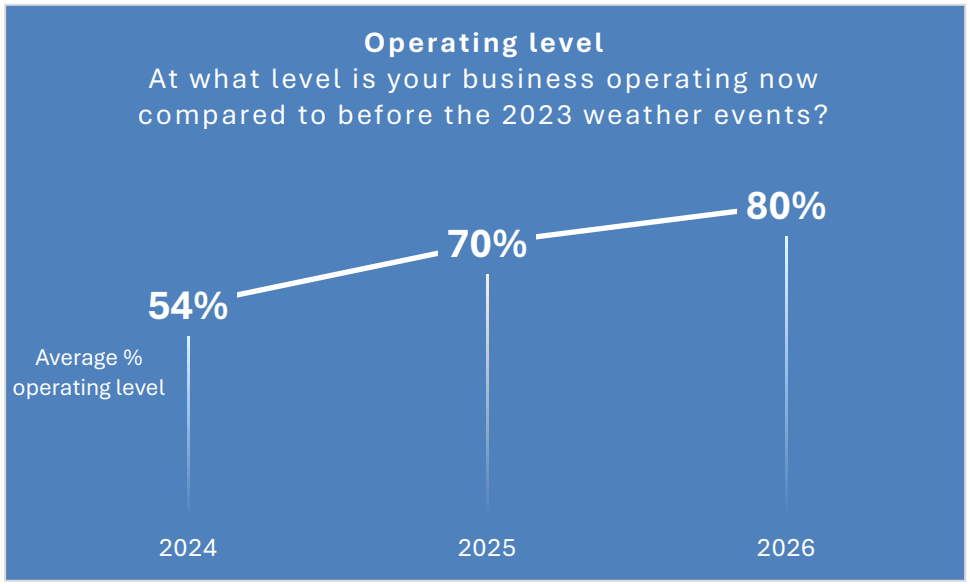


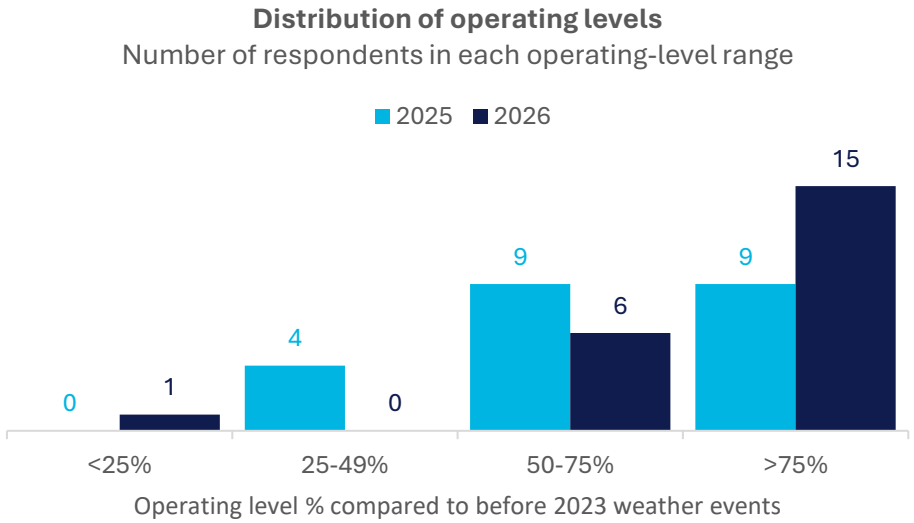
Operating level

Question 5

Survey recipients are asked what level their business is operating at now, compared to before the 2023 weather events. Average operating levels have increased steadily over the three years of the survey, and more respondents are now operating at over 75% of pre-event operating levels than in 2025. One respondent reported operating at under 25%, but the overall results are consistent with businesses continuing to recover over time.





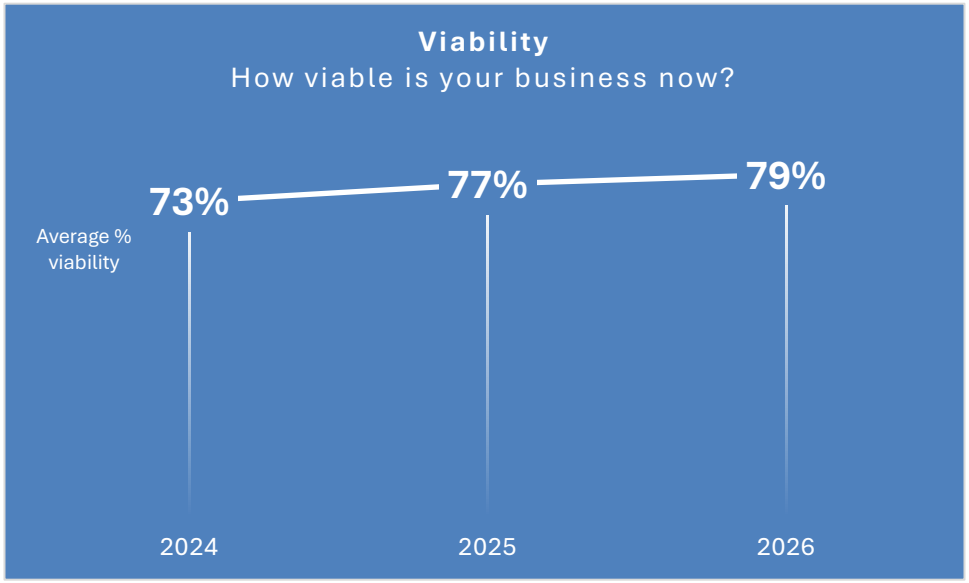


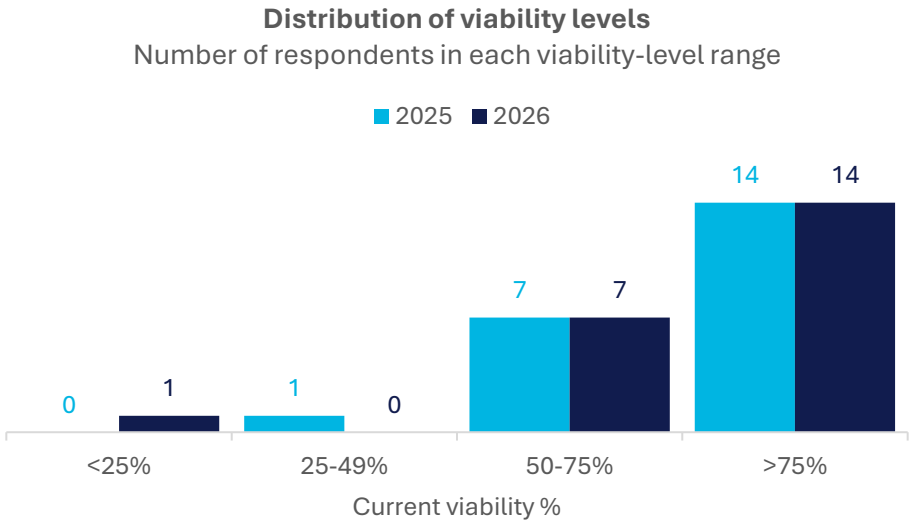
Viability

Question 6

Survey recipients are asked how viable their business is now. Results indicate that business viability has strengthened since the survey began, with average viability increasing each year since 2024. A majority of respondents continue to report viability above 75%, and this has remained stable between 2025 and 2026. One business reported viability of less than 25%.



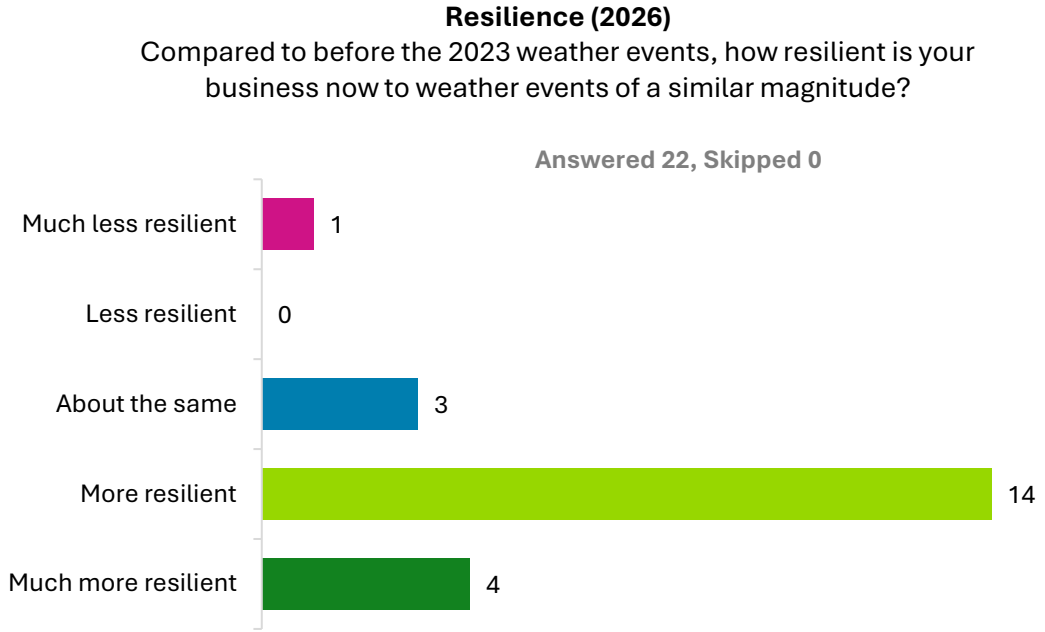


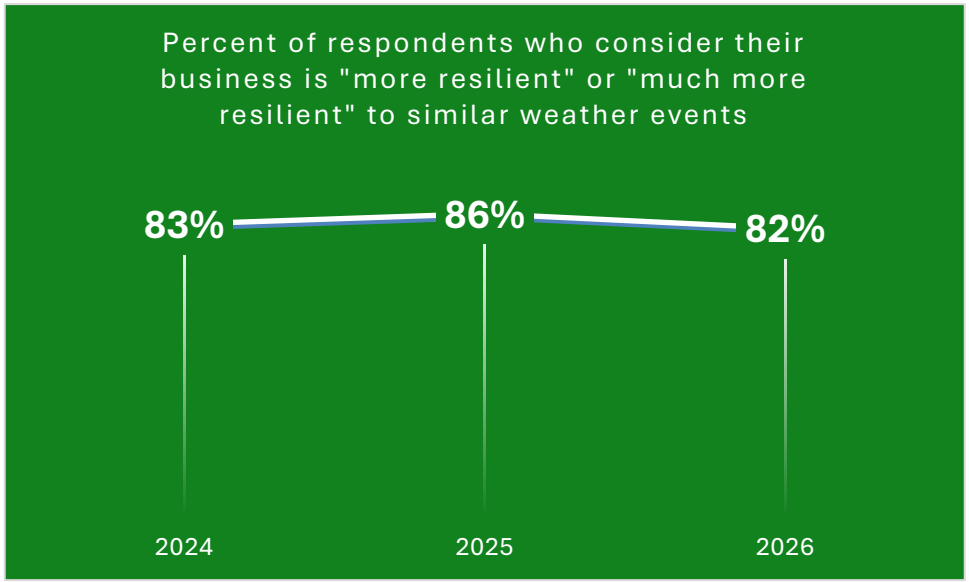


Resilience

Question 7

Survey recipients continue to report high levels of resilience relative to before the 2023 weather events. The proportion reporting they are **more resilient** or **much more resilient** has remained consistently high across all three survey years, suggesting that resilience improvements have been sustained over time. One respondent reported being much less resilient, highlighting the mixed recovery experiences for some businesses.



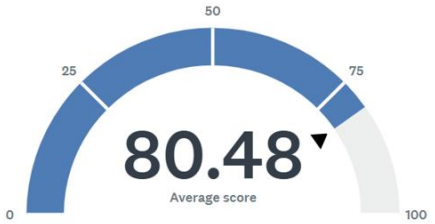


Employment

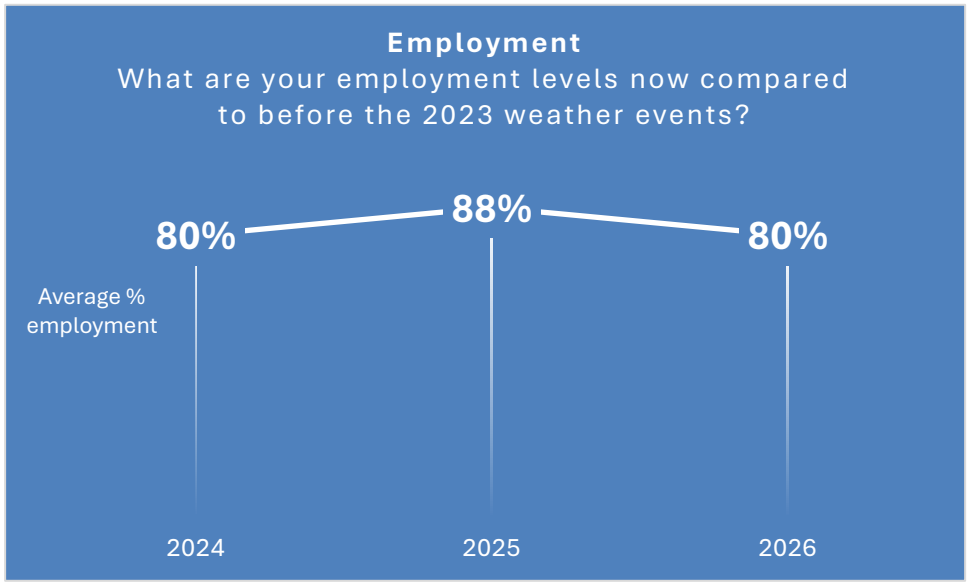
Question 8

Most respondents continue to report relatively high employment levels when compared with those before the 2023 weather events. A majority of businesses indicated their employment levels are above 75% of pre-event levels. However, 2026 results are less positive than in 2025, and two respondents reported employment levels below 25%, again highlighting that experiences vary for some businesses.

Average Employment Level (2026)

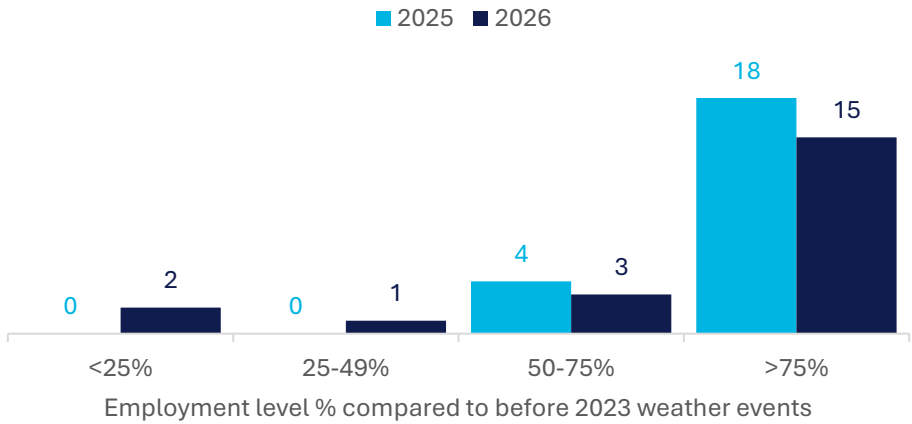


Answered 21, Skipped 1



Distribution of employment level

Number of respondents in each employment level range



Additional comments

Question 9

Answered 17, Skipped 5

The final question asks survey recipients for any other comments. A sample of comments received is shown on this page.

Funding was critical to recovery
Overall comments were mostly positive - many respondents said NIWE PPFS funding was essential to business survival and recovery following the 2023 weather events, and to rebuilding productive capacity.

Recovery is continuing
Respondents generally reported ongoing progress, although some noted that full recovery and a return to pre-event production levels will take more time.

Challenges remain
Some businesses continue to face debt pressures, higher borrowing costs, environmental impacts, and exposure to weather and market risks.

"We greatly appreciate the financial help from NIWE, and without it, would have had to make many staff redundant and likely sold the business at a loss by now. However with the huge increase in operating costs (i.e. fuel, fertiliser etc.) we are worried about the interest component coming into effect."

"This funding has really help(ed) get this property back to a functioning farm after the massive effect of Gabrielle."

"The funding is the only reason we're still orcharding. We've been able to build back better. We're fully replanted as of July 2026 and will have our production volumes back to pre cyclone levels in 2-3 seasons. We are very thankful for the support through this difficult time."

"We would not have survived without this support. It's still going to take us a while to climb out but we're doing well."

"Without the support of the NIWE loan we wouldn't be anywhere near back to full production on this farm. There are still ongoing challenges with soil fertility and weeds from the silt that covered much of the farm."

"It's been incredibly helpful to get me up and running again ."

"The facility has been a life saver for my business."

"Redevelopment of impacted areas has taken longer than anticipated due to tree availability and market conditions."

"The loan to build a climate resilient nursery is fantastic but it's a debt on top of the lost plants we have to replace at our cost with no financial help or ability to borrow to become fully operational."

"We would not have survived without the NIWE loan. Our viability now is ok, but the risk is of another major event - market, weather, financial crisis. We have too much debt and so our recovery is somewhat fragile. All is well so long as production and trading conditions are fairly normal."