

# NATIONAL RESILIENCE INDEX

AUSTRALIA 2021



driven

2021

# AUSTRALIA'S RESILIENCE INDEX SNAPSHOT

**5x**  
Protection

**85%+**

## Resilience is Protective

A High level of resilience (defined as a PR6 Resilience Score of **85%** or higher) is **5 times as protective** against mental illness such as depression and anxiety compared to low resilience.

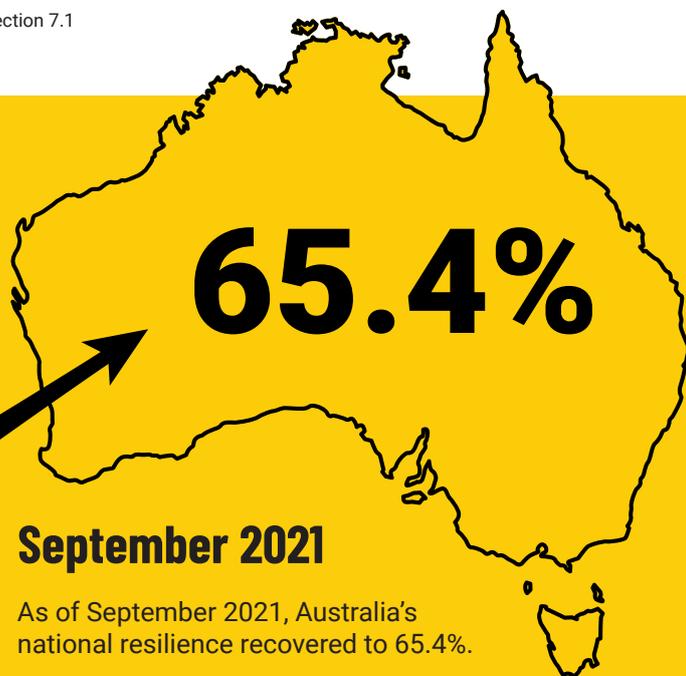
See section 7.1

### June 2021

In June 2021, Australia's national resilience fell to 62.8%, its **lowest level since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic**.

This level is 22.2 percentage points below the protective level of resilience of 85%.

**62.8%**



### September 2021

As of September 2021, Australia's national resilience recovered to 65.4%.

However, at 19.6% below the 85% protective level, there **remains national vulnerability**.

**9 in 10**

## People Are Not Protected

90.8% of Australians are **below** the 85%+ protective range of resilience, putting them at nearly **4 times greater risk** of depression and anxiety.

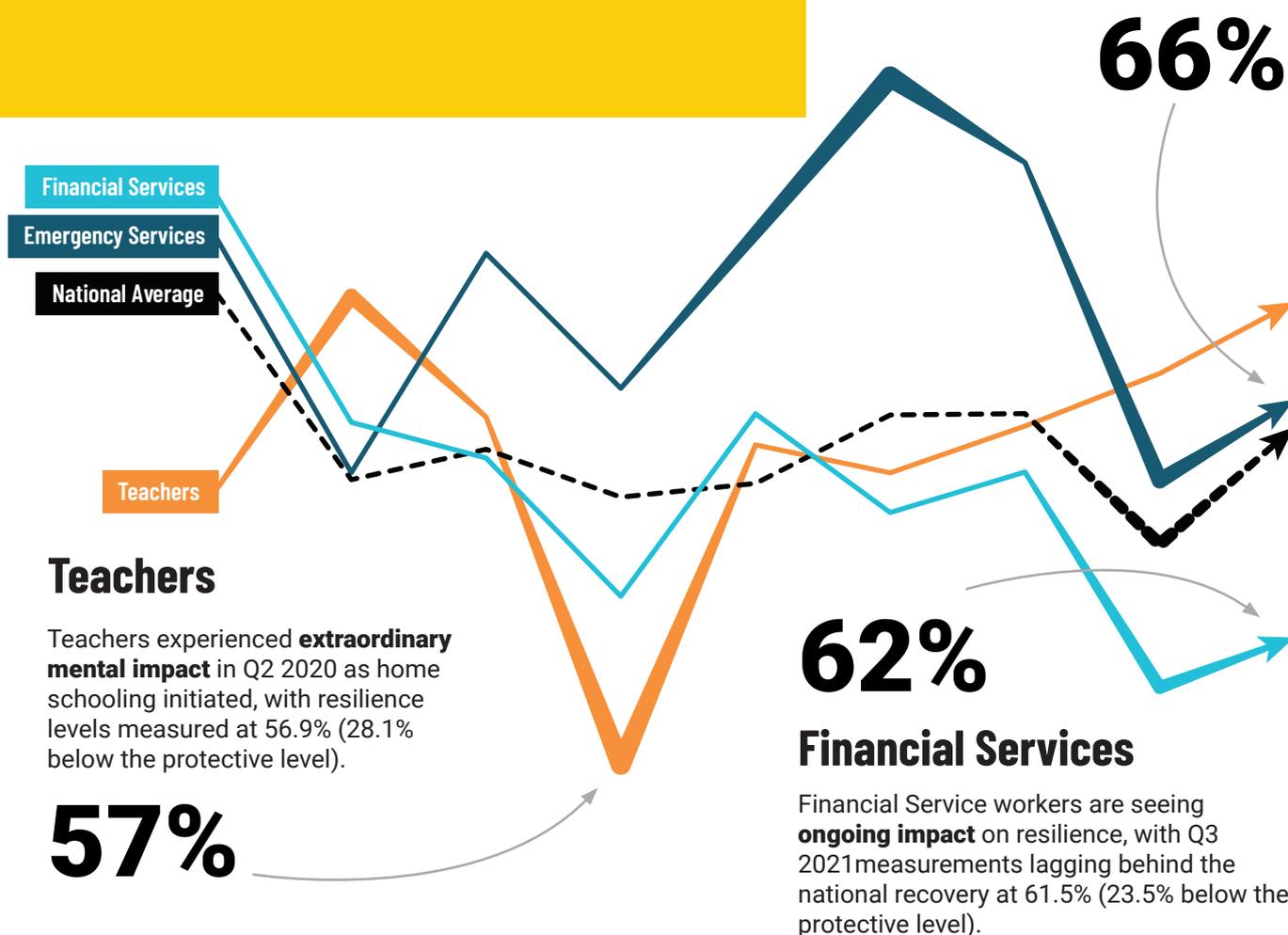


2021

# INDUSTRY RESILIENCE SNAPSHOTS

## It's Been a Rollercoaster

The last two years have seen wild ups and downs for different industries. This graph stretches from **Q3 2019** through to **Q3 2021**.



65%

Of leaders **saw a decline** in mental health through the COVID-19 pandemic.

73%

Leaders agree that **more investment** is needed in proactive mental health programs.



## \$6.4 Billion

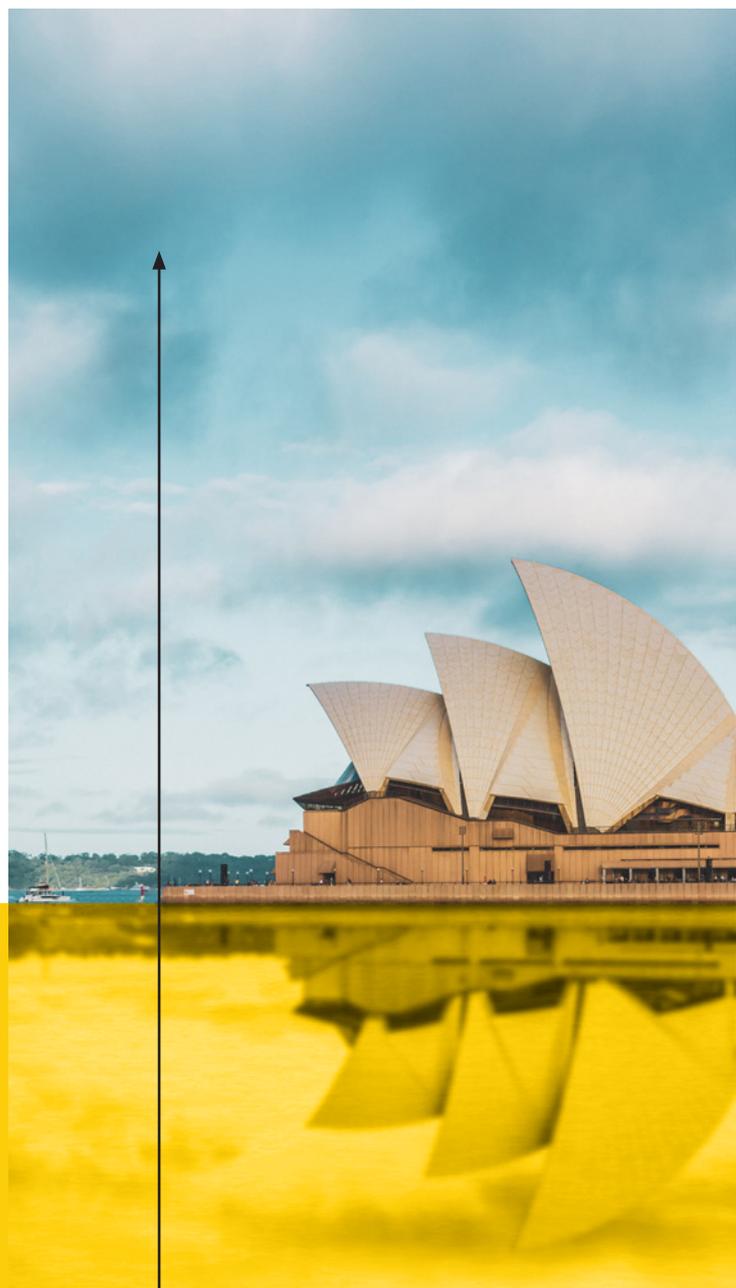
**Resilience training** for Australia's 13 million employed people can save \$6.4 billion each year (\$2,005 per person annually).





CALL TO ACTION:  
**RESILIENCE25by25**

Target a **25% improvement** in the national resilience level by **2025** to proactively reduce mental illness and save \$6.4 billion each year.



# GOALS

# FOR A RESILIENT AUSTRALIA

## BUSINESSES



### Incorporate Assessments

Understand your workforce and their needs, and track progress over time



### Adopt Resilience25by25

Get ahead of trends by investing in a clear and valuable target



### Embed Resilience

Train leaders, managers, champions, through to family members

## INDIVIDUALS



### Access Training

Take time to learn about your own resilience



### Become a Community Champion

Learn how to support resilience in others

## GOVERNMENTS



### Adopt a National Resilience Index

Track resilience regularly at a national level



### Increase Investment in Prevention

Support initiatives to achieve Resilience25by25



### Resilience in Education

Embed comprehensive resilience training in schools

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# FOREWORD

Perhaps the biggest misunderstanding of mental health is that most people naturally develop high resilience. In contrast, Driven's research shows that only 9% of people achieve a high enough level of resilience to be protective against mental illness.

9 out of 10 people are below the protective level of resilience.

This is the root cause of our ongoing difficulty in reducing rates of mental illness and suicide. If we are to change the tide of mental illness, we must invest in proactively building the skills that make people resilient.

We assess resilience using the Predictive 6 Factor Resilience Scale (PR6), a peer-reviewed resilience psychometric used in various research and commercial settings. The PR6 provides a percentage score indicating resilience from 0% (lowest), to 100% (highest). An individual scoring 85% or higher has strong protection against mental illness. We analysed 7,136 PR6 assessments. As of September 2021, Australia's national resilience level sits at 65.4%, nearly 20% below the protective level.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic started, as a nation we were closer to 70% – though the last two years have been difficult and resulted in a general decline in our collective capacity to be resilient. This National Resilience Index report maps our journey through the last two years. Through this, we hope to spark broader interest in developing a nation that could be said to be truly resilient – not only due to what we have endured, but also due to what we proactively invest in together.

Achieving this means we must evolve the public understanding of resilience, moving beyond old ideas of 'bouncing back' towards seeing resilience as a comprehensive set of critical life skills that we define within the six domains of resilience.

We propose a goal – **Resilience25by25**: a national movement to improve resilience by 25% by 2025. This is ambitious – though now, as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, is the time to be bold and rebuild stronger.

Doing so can save the nation \$6.4 billion per year in reduced mental illness costs. More importantly, we will be reducing the unnecessary suffering of hundreds of thousands of people – our friends, our children, our family members, our colleagues, ourselves.

As we look ahead to 2022 and beyond, we invite discussion and action. When it comes to this challenge, we all have contributions to make.



Jurie Rossouw  
CEO - Hello Driven  
[hellodriven.com](https://hellodriven.com)

# 1.



**Melbourne**  
Photo by Daniel Pelaez Duque on Unsplash

# 1.

# REPORT SUMMARY

This report analysed trends across 7,136 PR6 assessments, illustrating Australians' changing resilience levels from July 2019 through to September 2021 on a quarterly basis.

We explored the impact of the many challenging events Australians have experienced during the last two years, including the 2019–2020 bushfires and COVID-19. It also suggests future potential priorities for resilience and wellbeing measures for businesses, individuals, and governments.

The insights in this report are informed by:

- **7,136 PR6 assessments** taken by individuals through Driven's testing platform from July 2019 to September 2021
- **576 IPIP NEO Big 5** personality assessments also taken through Driven's testing platform, to determine at which level a strong protective effect appears to protect against depression and anxiety
- **Leadership surveys** conducted by Driven in August 2021 of key decision-makers and managers from organisations across Australia, collectively representing more than 77,000 employees.

Clinical and treatment data from psychology and counselling practices are excluded from this report.

## 1.1 DEFINING RESILIENCE

Traditionally, resilience has been defined as how we bounce back from difficult situations. However, this definition does not encompass the true scope of resilience and its many benefits.

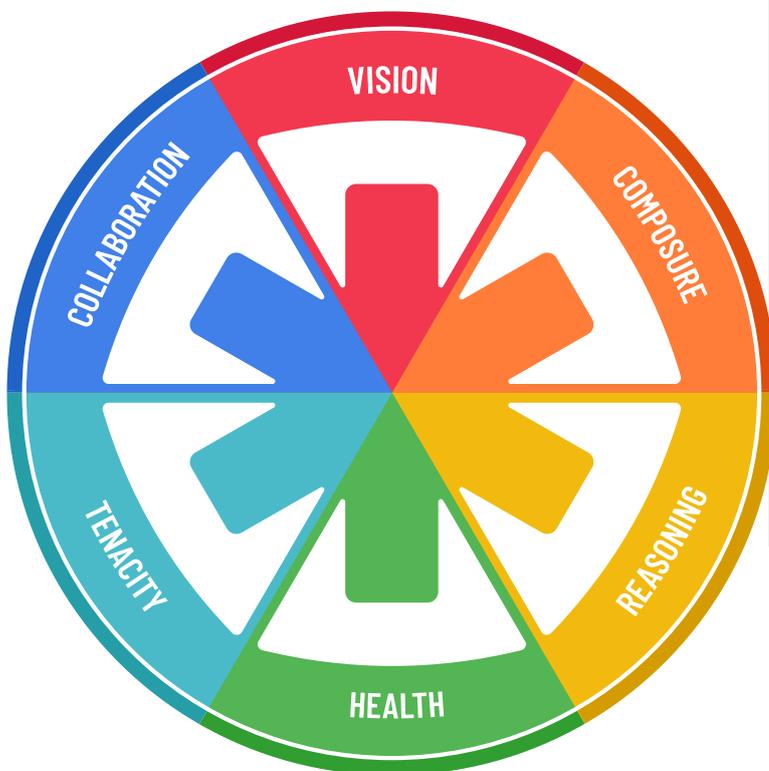
Increasingly, resilience – and its application in boosting achievement across the personal, corporate, academic, health, emergency services, defence, and sporting worlds – is showing more nuanced and powerful benefits. A definition of resilience is therefore proposed that more accurately reflects this emerging understanding – **advancing despite adversity**.

This definition steps away from the traditional idea of resilience as returning to the status quo. Instead, it reflects society's shift towards valuing continuous growth and perseverance towards achieving one's goals, despite minor or major setbacks.

This idea of advancing despite adversity also helps clarify that resilience is a process that we can keep working on throughout our lives.

## 1.2 THE SIX DOMAINS OF RESILIENCE

The **PR6 – or Predictive 6 Factor Resilience Scale<sup>1</sup>** – is a psychometric resilience assessment developed by Driven through peer-reviewed research into the neuroscience of resilience. It identifies six key domains of resilience that make up groups of skills that enhance people’s capacity to be resilient. The PR6 domains are set out below.



**VISION** – A sense of purpose and goals, alongside a feeling of congruence that actions are moving towards something meaningful

**COMPOSURE** – Having an internal awareness, being able to regulate emotions, and being able to manage stress

**REASONING** – Problem-solving skills, being resourceful, anticipating challenges and planning ahead

**HEALTH** – Healthy nutrition, quality sleep and regular exercise, which in turn support brain Health

**TENACITY** – Being persistent, having realistic optimism, and bouncing back to regain motivation

**COLLABORATION** – Building strong support networks, communication skills, and making meaningful connections

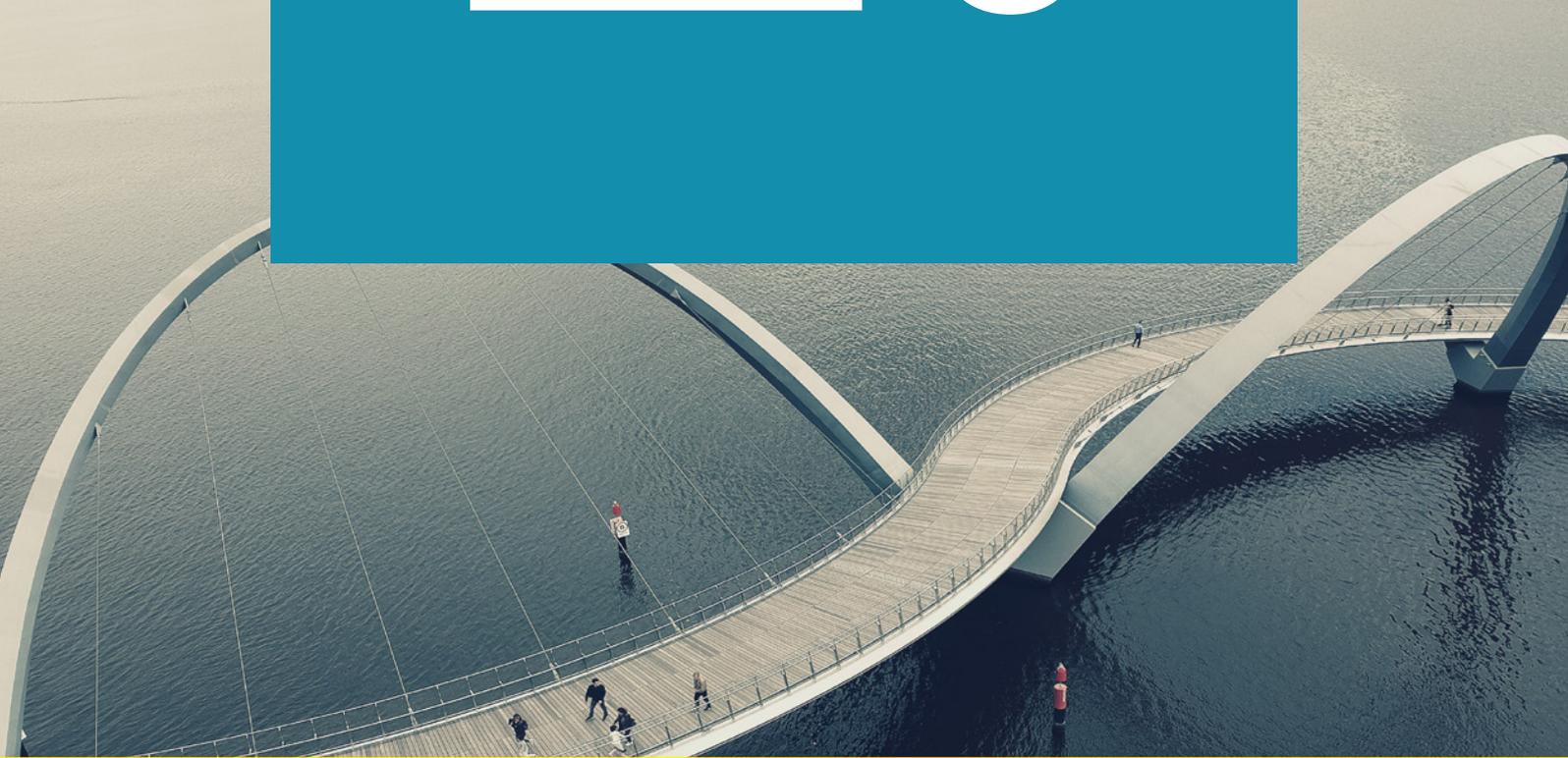
Each of these domains interacts to build overall resilience levels and people’s ability to advance despite adversity<sup>2</sup>. It is through these domains that the resilience of the Australian nation is investigated in this report to understand current trends and imperatives for action.

The PR6 is now used widely by organisations across the world to determine staff wellbeing. It is also used by psychologists for patient assessment and universities for research in resilience. Tens of thousands of PR6 assessments have been taken, helping to continuously build a robust data source to analyse resilience trends.

1 - Rossouw, P. J., & Rossouw, J. G. (2016). The Predictive 6-Factor Resilience Scale: Neurobiological Fundamentals and Organizational Application.

2 - Read more about the PR6 domains at <https://home.hellodriven.com/research/pr6-model/>

# 2.



**Perth**  
Photo by M.Fildza Fadzil on Unsplash

# 2.

## KEY FINDINGS

### 2.1 PROTECTIVE NATURE OF RESILIENCE

At a certain level, **resilience becomes highly protective against depression and anxiety.**

Specifically, at a **PR6 score of 85% or above**, there is a protective effect that appears to prevent mental illness – **providing a fivefold reduction of the risk of depression and anxiety** compared to a low level of resilience (50% or below). Currently, only 9.2% of Australians are in this protective range. As such, over 90% of Australians could potentially benefit from resilience training to shift them towards the high resilience levels that protect against depression and anxiety.

Our governments have been giving more focus to mental health in Australia. As we emerge from the pandemic, we now have an opportunity to reorient from crisis response to prevention. This is needed to help more people to enter this protective range.

To do this, resilience must be built into our workplaces, homes and learning environments at all levels. Developing resilience skills should be a natural part of the education system. This would build resilience into organisations and the rest of society, not only protecting society as a whole but also helping to rebuild stronger – while providing governments and businesses significant mental health cost savings.

### 2.2 CURRENT STATE

At an average PR6 resilience score of 65.4% in September 2021, **Australia is 19.6 percentage points below the 85% protective level of resilience.** Australia's national resilience reached its lowest level in June 2021, dropping to 62.8% since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most **strongly impacted** domain of resilience has been **Composure**, which represents skills involving **emotional regulation and stress management.** The lowest point was 59.6% in June 2021, over 25% below the protective level.

In essence, Australians seemed to have lost their Composure – their ability to regulate emotions and manage stress. While there are signs of recovery, there is much work to be done to be more resilient in the future.

## 2.3 THE VALUE OF RESILIENCE

Data modelling shows that concerted targeting of resilience training in the 13 million-strong workforce of Australia over the next four years could yield significant benefits. A 25% resilience improvement in a quarter of employees could **increase the percentage of people in this 85%+ protective range from 9.2% to over 60%**. This improvement has been shown to be possible through Driven's research into resilience training<sup>3</sup>.

Given the above, there appears to be a **compelling case for resilience training** to decrease depression and anxiety in Australia, as well as adopting a National Resilience Index to measure progress.

There are also significant potential cost savings. Achieving this resilience improvement in the Australian workforce could **save the Australian economy approximately \$6.4 billion each year** (approximately \$2,005 per person). This would significantly help to reduce the approximately \$60 billion annual cost of mental health in Australia<sup>4</sup>.

**\$6.4 Billion**

Annual saving through  
resilience training

**\$2,005**

Annual value per  
person trained



3 - Rossouw, J. G., Eriean, C. L., & Beeson, E. T. (2019). Building resilience through a virtual coach called Driven: Longitudinal pilot study and the neuroscience of small, frequent learning tasks. *International Journal of Neuropsychotherapy*, 7(2), 23–41. doi:10.12744/ijnt.2019.023-041

4 - [https://sharedvalue.org.au/productivity-and-profits-under-threat-unless-business-sector-leads-response-to-mental-health-crisis-in-australia/#\\_ftn2](https://sharedvalue.org.au/productivity-and-profits-under-threat-unless-business-sector-leads-response-to-mental-health-crisis-in-australia/#_ftn2)

# 3.



**Cairns**  
Photo by Manny Moreno on Unsplash

# 3.

# RESILIENCE ROADMAP

## 3.1 A NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION - RESILIENCE25BY25

Given the widespread benefits of improved resilience skills and potential savings of \$6.4 billion each year from resilience training, Driven's team of psychologists and resilience experts calls for businesses and government departments to improve the national resilience by 25% by 2025.

To achieve this, action is required across measurement, training, and community support. This can be implemented effectively by businesses, individuals, and government departments.

## 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESSES

Given the potential benefits for both employees and employers, there is a strong case for organisations to invest in proactive mental health programs.

Below are three actions businesses can take to contribute to national resilience.



Advantages range from **reducing psychological injury** claims through to a more **engaged** and **adaptive** workforce, which results in productivity gains as well as **cultural improvement**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESSES



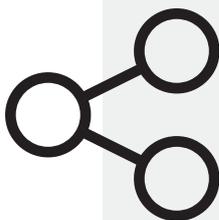
### Incorporate Assessments

In our surveys, we noted that few organisations (20.5%) currently employ assessments to determine staff wellbeing. Regularly employing a validated resilience assessment can provide important insights into where action is needed, and the impact over time of preventative programs on achieving a higher level of resilience protection (PR6 85%+). Assessments can drive cost-efficiency in ensuring programs are provided where needed, and ensure program success is quantified.



### Adopt Resilience25by25

Most large organisations already have reactive programs in place to assist with mental illness. Now is the time to shift towards implementing resilience training programs to achieve proactive enhancement of individuals' skills to prevent mental illness and psychological injury. Such a proactive focus has additional benefits in improving workplace culture, collaboration and staff connectedness, which enhance organisational innovation. Adopting a target of improving organisational resilience by 25% by 2025 therefore benefits both the organisation itself and contributes to national mental health.



### Embed Resilience at All Levels

Individual effort to learn more resilience skills **must** be balanced by organisational effort to create an environment that supports the mental health and wellbeing of employees. This includes leadership training to define resilience at a cultural level, extending training to managers to learn how to lead by example, through to peer champion training to embed a broader culture of resilience.

### 3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

The primary benefits of resilience and being proactive about mental health **lie ultimately with the individual**. After all, everyone has their own life experiences, and resilience training helps make life more meaningful and enjoyable – giving everyone the confidence to face the ups and downs along the way. Taking the personal initiative to use this type of training is what it takes to make it possible to lift Australia's national resilience.

Based on these points, it is recommended to:



*We know that resilience isn't just about taking action when we experience challenges, but what we're doing to prepare ourselves for these challenges when life is tracking along nicely. Building and maintaining your skills during these good times allows for greater capacity to learn and embed your skills, resulting in more protection when life throws you challenges.*



**David R Anthony**  
PhD, MAppPsych  
CEO & Co-Founder,  
Mantle Health



## Take the Time to Learn

If you have access to resilience training, take the time to invest in learning. Skills gained through such training can be protective far into the future. We need to keep exercising to stay physically fit; in the same way, we need to keep doing resilience training to stay mentally fit. You can use **resilience-building apps**, attend workshops, and more. Mentioning to your employer that you are interested in training is a great way to kick-start action.



## Become a Community Champion

Consider taking on training to learn how you can proactively support the mental health and resilience of those around you – colleagues, friends, family, children, etc. Knowing more about resilience and everyday language to protect mental health can enable you to help others more proactively. Courses are available in this space, such as the new **Resilience First Aid** certification aimed at building skills to support mental health proactively.



### 3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT

Australia is starting to see the seeds of investment in proactive resilience initiatives. For example, some local councils are beginning to look at resilience-building as a broader community project rather than an individual's problem.

The **Resilient Melbourne** strategy<sup>5</sup>, for example, was released in 2016. It aims to create a resilient environment and city on many different levels.

**Resilient Sydney**<sup>6</sup> then followed, bringing together all 33 metropolitan councils of Greater Sydney to collaborate on a strategy for city-wide resilience.

The Northern Beaches Council of Sydney is also developing the **Resilient Northern Beaches**<sup>7</sup> strategy, which proposes to “build the collective resilience of our community”, addressing all levels of the community, from individuals to businesses and systems.

These initiatives highlight the growing recognition of the importance of investing in resilience for strong, mentally healthy communities of the future.

National and state policy regarding proactive investment into mental wellbeing has a major impact on general wellbeing. As such, three recommendations are proposed for government departments:

5 - <https://resilientmelbourne.com.au/>

6 - <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/governance-decision-making/resilient-sydney>

7 - <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/resilient-northern-beaches>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT



### Adopt a National Resilience Index

Tracking resilience at a national level can provide a leading indicator to determine progress on building protective levels of resilience. Given current strains on healthcare systems, this can illustrate future relief and provide hope to overburdened healthcare workers, while also providing employers and individuals with a sense of combined purpose in working towards a national goal. Driven proposes the PR6 as the robust, peer-reviewed assessment model underpinning the National Resilience Index.



### Increase Investment in Prevention

Even though recent programs have shown more investment into mental health, such as Victoria's investment in a new mental health system<sup>8</sup>, most of these investments are still treatment-focused rather than preventative. Evidence is increasingly demonstrating that focusing on treatment alone does not reduce the recurring incidence of mental illness. Driven calls on government departments to provide stronger support for proactive and preventative systems that can result in primary prevention of mental illness.



### Resilience in Education

A solidifying understanding of the skills and techniques that build resilience provide an opportunity to codify a resilience program into a school curriculum. Providing this as a standardised form of education sets the stage for resilience embedded in future generations. This would be particularly valuable for regional areas that have less access to mental health resources and training.

# 4.



**Brisbane**  
Photo by Joshua Willson on Unsplash

## 4.

# AUSTRALIA'S RESILIENCE

The following sections explore Australia's national resilience levels at a quarterly level from 2019 through to 2021.

## 4.1 AUSTRALIA OVERALL

**Figure 1** below shows the overall results of Australians' PR6 levels to provide a view into Australia's overall resilience levels since the third quarter (Q3) of 2019 before COVID-19 ramped up, through to Q3 of 2021.

Our journey begins at a resilience level of 68.3% (near the 70% 'normal' resilience level, though below the protective resilience level of 85%), then showing a steep drop coinciding with the Australian bushfires occurring at the time. This indicates there was already a significant impact on national resilience levels from the bushfires.

From Q4 2019, PR6 levels increased, moving up to 64.9% by Q1 2020. However, this recovery was cut short from February to March 2020 as COVID reached Australian shores with lockdowns and social distancing measures initiated.

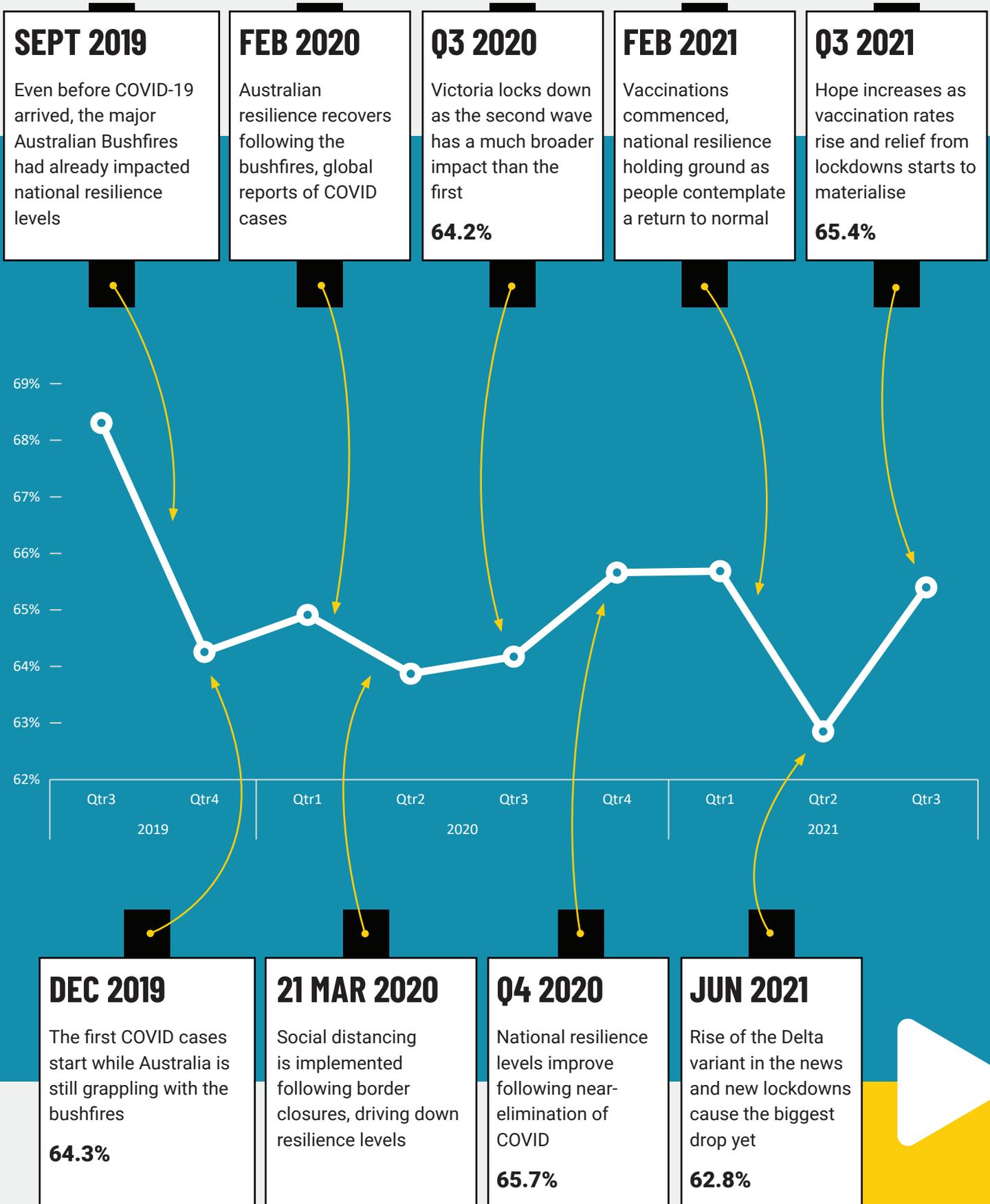
Through the second wave and further Victorian lockdowns, a general sense of victory over the virus seemed to take hold through Q3 and Q4 2020, with the easing of social distancing and many returning to social activities. This recovery in resilience continued into Q1 2021 as initial vaccinations commenced.

However, as news of the Delta strain ramped up worldwide and reached Australia, followed by new lockdowns and social frustrations around vaccination availability, resilience levels fell further. **In June 2021, at 62.8%, Australia's national resilience fell to its lowest level since the start of the pandemic**, 22.2% below the protective level. Also, although not indicated in the graph, the Q2 2021 resilience level of 62.8% is the lowest overall national resilience score recorded since PR6 resilience data began being collected in 2016.

Q3 2021 finally sees an increase in resilience as Australians begin to regain some normality and hope as vaccines are implemented. However, **national vulnerability remains with lingering impact from the last two years** that will take investment to overcome. Regardless, our starting national resilience was already below the 85% protective level, indicating the need to rebuild stronger.

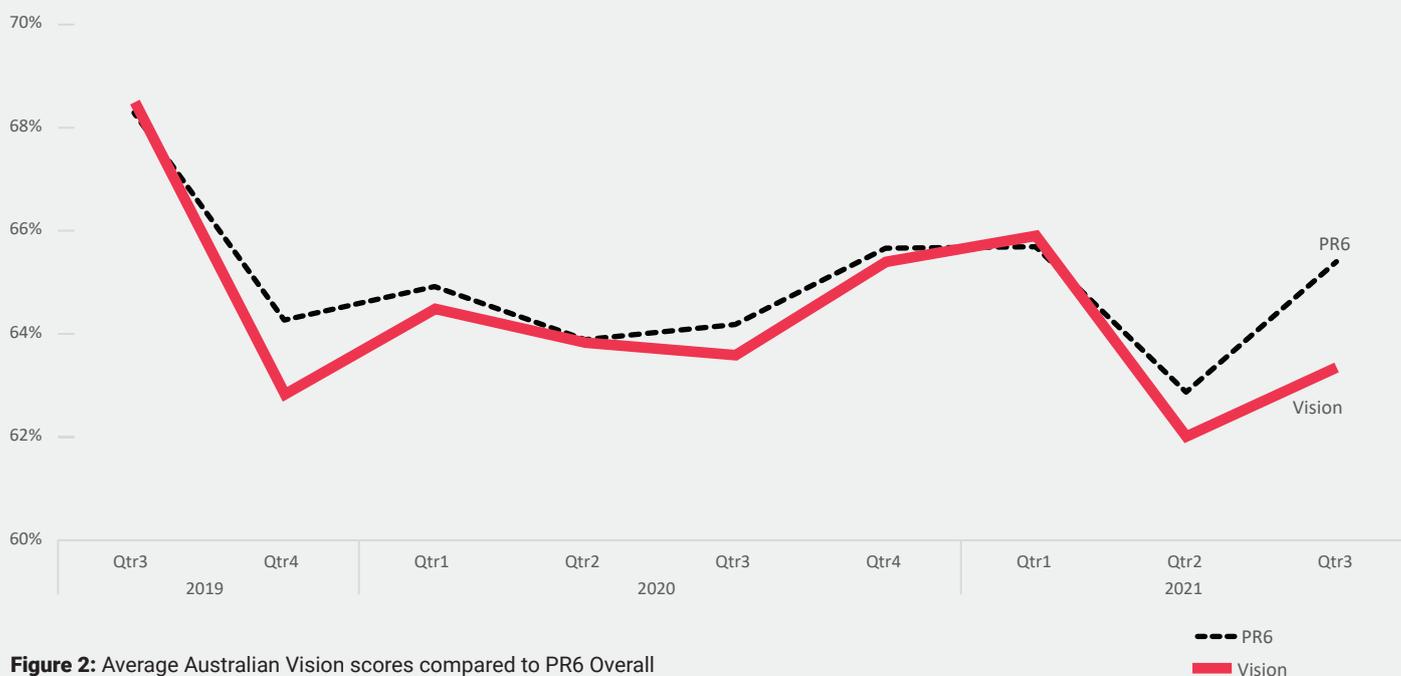


Figure 1: Overall Australian PR6 Resilience Levels 2019–2021



## 4.2 AUSTRALIAN VISION LEVELS

Vision is the resilience domain of purpose and goals, the feeling of congruence, and actions moving towards something meaningful.



**Figure 2:** Average Australian Vision scores compared to PR6 Overall

As shown in Figure 1, the Australian bushfires impacted Australia's resilience levels at the end of 2019.

Looking at results in the red line, which represents the domain of Vision (the feeling of working towards meaningful goals), we see an even greater drop in that last quarter of 2019. This potentially indicates a particularly strong impact from the bushfires on the abilities of Australians to have high levels of Vision. This is understandable, since emergencies usually force a focus on immediate survival needs rather than longer-term goals.

Later, while some recovery is underway in both overall resilience and the domain of Vision during Q1 2020, subsequent business impacts and employment uncertainty likely contributed to a decrease through to Q3 of 2020. This is consistent across overall resilience and the Vision domain, as the graphs follow a similar pattern.

As businesses start to reopen towards the end of 2020 and into Q1 2021, a strong rebound in

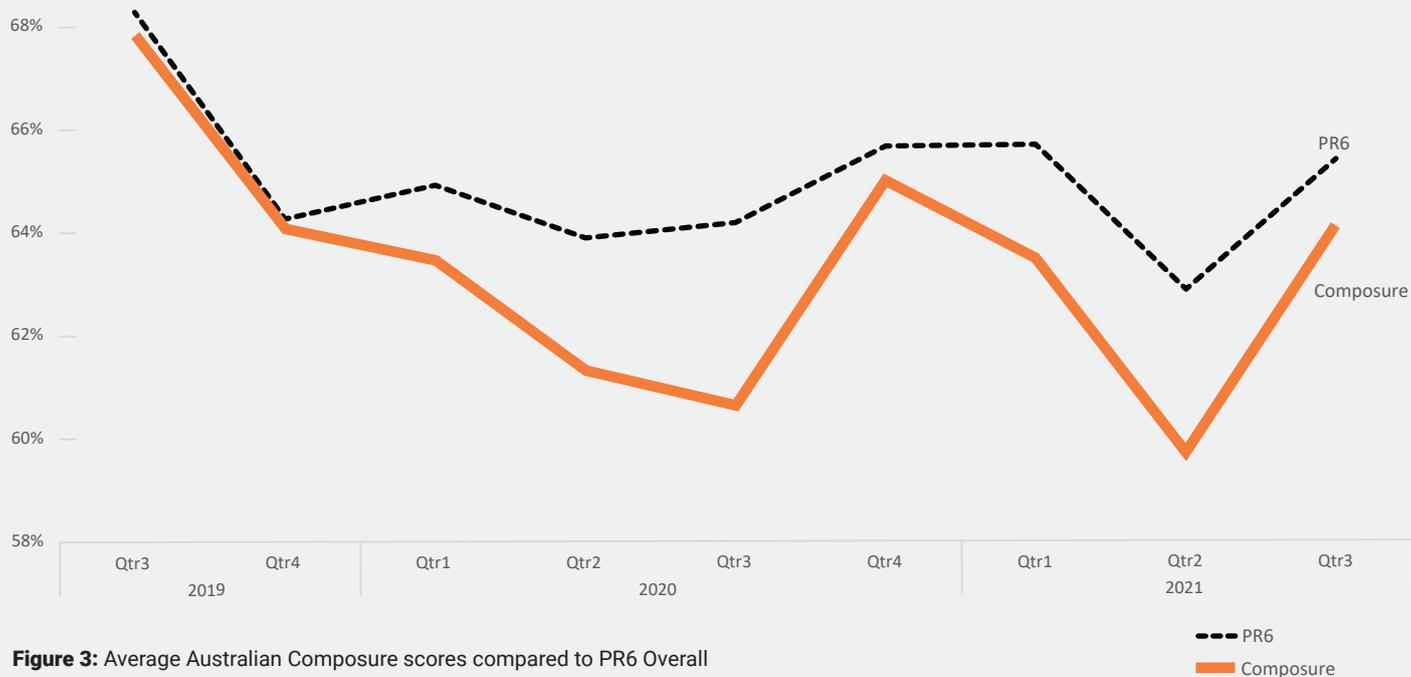
overall resilience and Vision takes place, with Vision surpassing the overall resilience level. This is expected given a potential link between occupations and a personal sense of purpose and place in the world – hope perhaps being restored.

In early 2021, given new lockdowns without the extension of the JobKeeper scheme, we see a dramatic drop from Q1 2021 to Q2 2021, likely due to increasing uncertainty on what this would mean for businesses and future employment. As of Q3 of 2021 we see a slower recovery of Vision compared to the overall recovery, indicating a lingering uncertainty about the future.

**At 63.3% in Q3 2021, the national Vision score sits 21.7 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

## 4.3 AUSTRALIAN COMPOSURE LEVELS

Composure is the resilience domain of emotional regulation, internal awareness, and stress management skills.



**Figure 3:** Average Australian Composure scores compared to PR6 Overall

Figure 3 illustrates the dramatic difference between the levels of Composure compared to the overall PR6 resilience scores, demonstrating that of all the domains of resilience, Composure saw the strongest decline over the period studied. It plummeted from 67.9% in Q3 2019 to only 59.6% in Q2 2021.

This indicates that nationally there was a reduction in people's ability to manage emotion, likely due to the increased sense of fear and anxiety regarding COVID. This would have contributed to symptoms of depression as hopefulness about the future was impacted between the end of 2019 and Q3 2020. Such a trend also reflects findings of studies into changing anxiety levels across other parts of the world, including various OECD reports focused on Europe<sup>9</sup>.

In Q4 2020, a strong resurgence in Composure occurred as states opened back up and a sense of normality began to return. However,

six months later in Q2 2021, people seemed to have even less capacity than before to weather another round of lockdowns.

This phenomenon suggests that there still existed a level of vulnerability within individuals as they started to gain hope for recovery; thus, the prospect of further lockdowns had an even stronger mental impact than before.

In Q3 2021, Composure saw a strong rebound as the country began to transition out lockdown – mirroring the resurgence at the end of Q4 2020. Composure is still more affected than most domains, highlighting the significant impact of the last two years.

**At 64.1% in Q3 2021, the national Composure score sits 20.9 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

9 - Estimate of economic costs in Europe Change in population reporting anxiety in March-April 2020 compared to a previous year, in select countries. Sources: OECD (2018). Health at a Glance: Europe; OECD (2020 forthcoming), Health at a Glance

## 4.4 AUSTRALIAN REASONING LEVELS

Reasoning is the resilience domain of problem-solving, being resourceful, anticipating challenges and planning ahead.

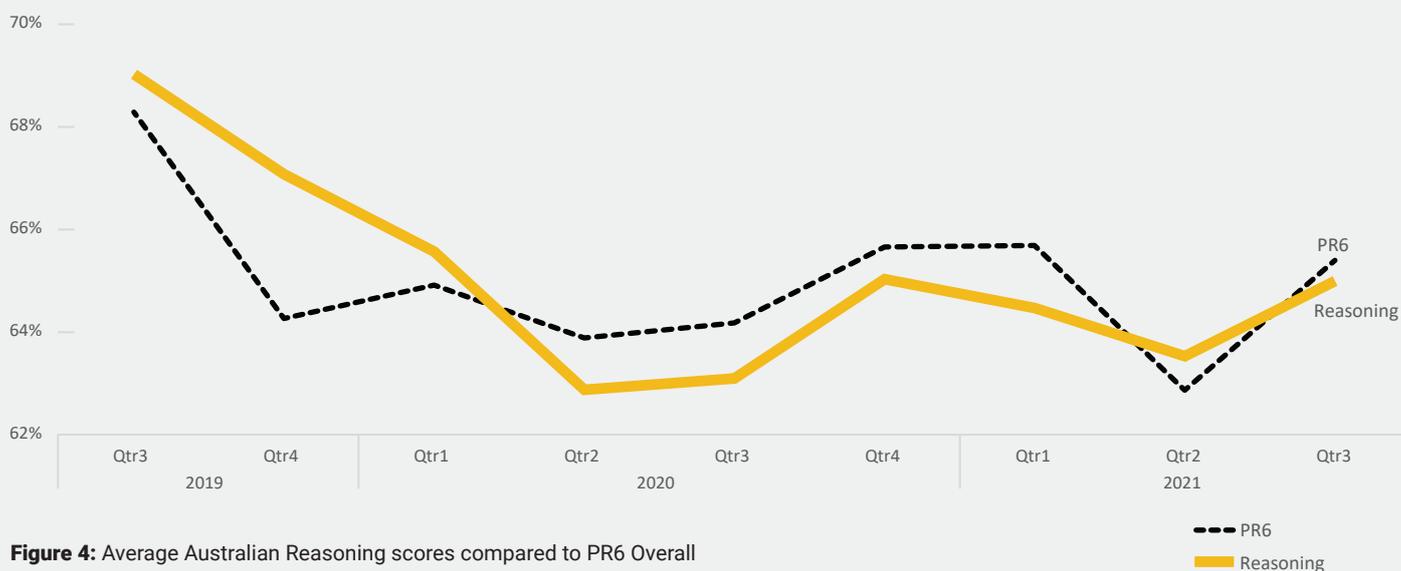


Figure 4: Average Australian Reasoning scores compared to PR6 Overall

In contrast to the Vision and Composure, Reasoning seems to have initially had some resistance to levels dropping, and thus it seems the domain least impacted by the 2019 bushfires.

However, there was a continued downward trend, and at a sharper rate, as COVID started to make global headlines around Q1 2020. This led to a low point of 62.8% in Q2 2020 as panic buying set in and people's sense of preparedness for the future was thrown into question by a situation that fewer people were prepared to navigate effectively.

Reflective of the patterns across other domains, some recovery was made in Q4 2020, however at 65%, the recovery is not as strong as across other domains (with the exception of Composure).

Interestingly, the drop in Q2 2021 to 63.5% was not as low as the 62.8% in Q2 2020, perhaps indicating some level of feeling more prepared for the challenges ahead. In anecdotal social observations at this time, this was reflected in trends such as a reduction in buying patterns, as the Q2 2021 lockdown did not induce the same

type of panic buying as Q2 2020 – even though cases were much higher.

Q3 2021 sees a rebound to the same Reasoning scores as Q4 of 2020, suggesting that people are repeating similar patterns of recovery as before. As the year comes to a close, Australians appear to be planning for next year and feeling more prepared.

**At 65.0% in Q3 2021, the national Reasoning score sits 20 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

## 4.5 AUSTRALIAN COLLABORATION LEVELS

Collaboration is the resilience domain of human connection, social support networks, and good communication skills.

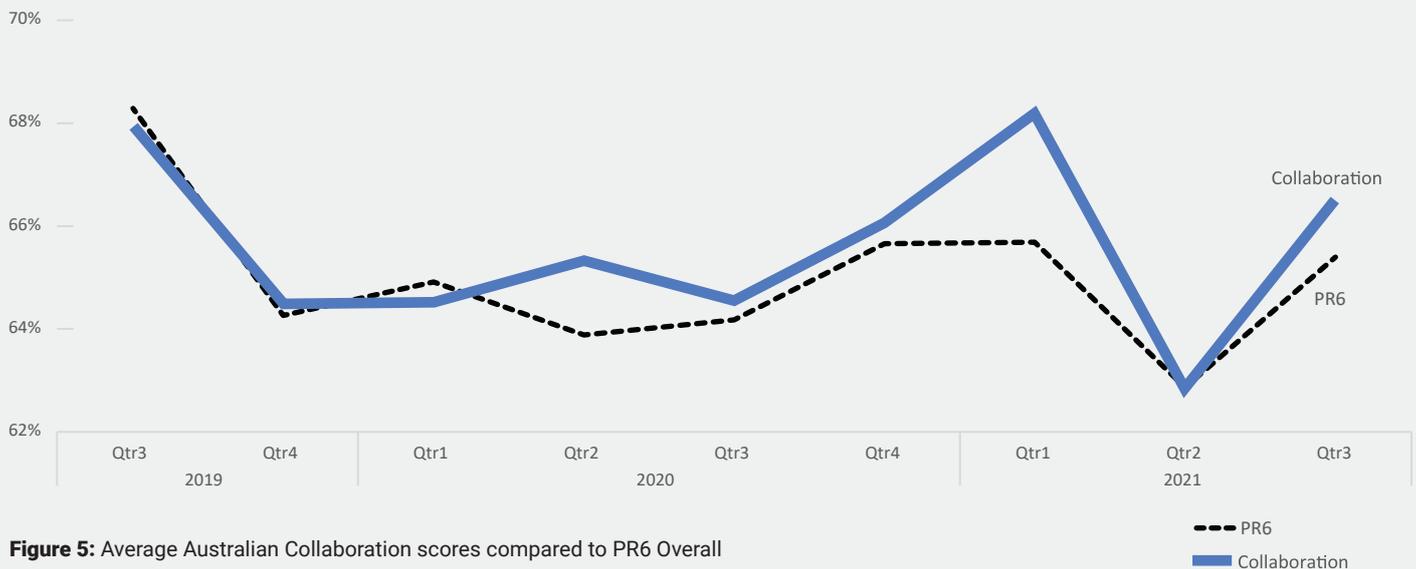


Figure 5: Average Australian Collaboration scores compared to PR6 Overall

Given that Collaboration is the domain relating to human and social connection, it is unsurprising that social distancing and lockdowns reduced the connectedness of individuals during the pandemic. This effect was evident as we see Collaboration scores drop from 68% in Q3 2019 down to 64.5% by Q4, and only slightly improving into Q1 2020 at 64.5%.

Given the general push for increased virtual connection as many worked from home, there was a slight recovery in Collaboration into Q2 2020 – perhaps as people became increasingly confident navigating and using online Collaboration tools. However, there was no significant recovery in Collaboration scores until Q4 of 2020 at 66.1%, when in-person socialising returned.

This further improved through to Q1 of 2021, rebounding even stronger at 68.5% than the pre-COVID level of 68%. Then again, however, a sharp decline is observed in Q2 2021 to 62.8% as new lockdowns commenced.

This decline is followed by another sharp rebound in Q3 2021, as Australians started seeing the promise of a more permanent return to social activities as vaccinations became more broadly available.

**At 66.5% in Q3 2021, the national Collaboration score sits 18.5 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

“

*A dialogue includes at least two persons showing positive interest and willingness to listen to each other. The goal is to understand the other person even if there is disagreement. This is at the heart of Collaboration. A monologue is ok when you give information, but it is not ok for Collaboration.*

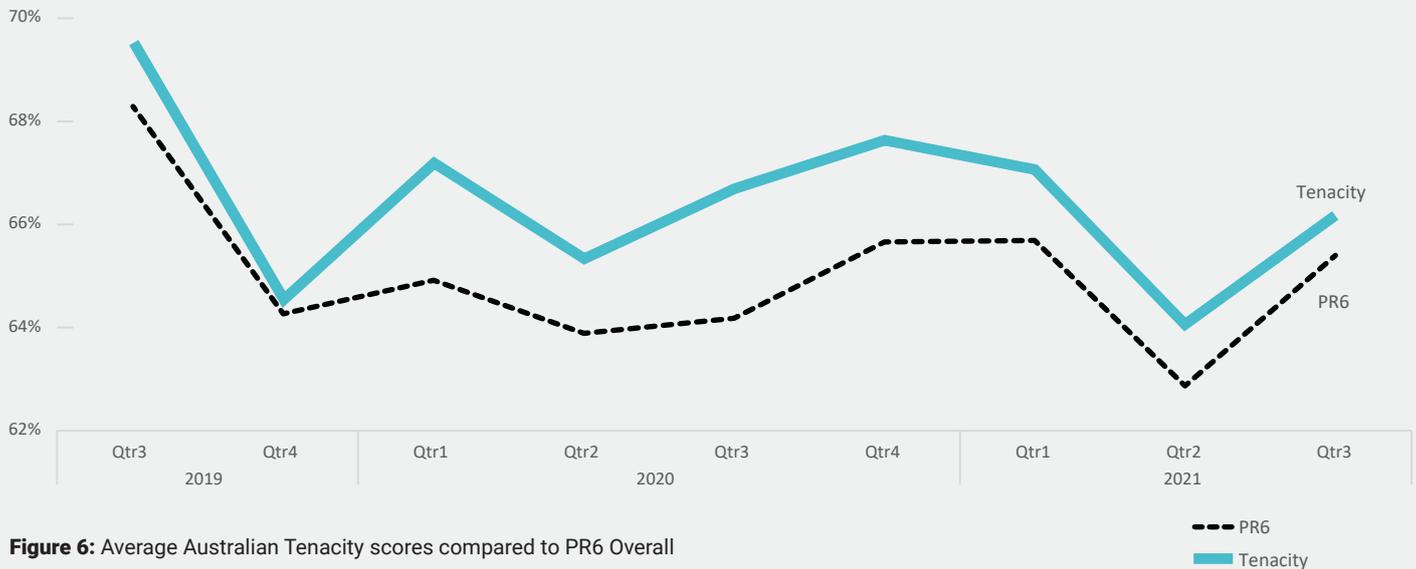
*In a dialogue oriented organisation managers need to have some personal knowledge of their staff members. It creates trust and increases growth of a collaborative culture.*



**Jörgen Herlofson**  
BA, MD, Psychiatrist, Licenced  
Psychotherapist

## 4.6 AUSTRALIAN TENACITY LEVELS

Tenacity is the resilience domain of persistence, having realistic optimism, and bouncing back to regain motivation.



**Figure 6:** Average Australian Tenacity scores compared to PR6 Overall

Following a sharp drop in national Tenacity levels from 69.5% down to 64.5% between Q3 and Q4 2019, there was a strong bounce back in Q1 2020 to 67.2% following the bushfires.

Throughout 2020 Tenacity saw less impact overall compared to other domains, perhaps showing a general willingness to persist through the pandemic and see things through. This hope remained high until around Q1 of 2021 as Australia generally seemed to have managed the pandemic well.

However, the appearance of the Delta strain in Q2 2021 saw Tenacity drop to 64%, the furthest since Q3 2019, indicating that the third COVID wave has taken more wind out of people's sails as the hope of an end decreased. People faced a feeling that perhaps this is the new normal.

This drop is followed by a strong increase during Q3 2021, suggesting a renewed sense of optimism as a return to stability became more apparent following strong vaccination uptake.

**At 66.1% in Q3 2021, the national Tenacity score sits 18.9 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

## 4.7 AUSTRALIAN HEALTH LEVELS

Health is the resilience domain of investment in physical wellbeing, including regular exercise, quality sleep, and healthy nutrition.



**Figure 7:** Average Australian Health scores compared to PR6 Overall

The bushfires of Q4 2019 seemed to strongly impact national Health levels, perhaps due to extended periods of smoke in the air. This saw a significant decline to 64.2% during Q4 of 2019.

Recovery was on the way up during Q1 2020; however, lockdowns in Q2 2020 then saw an effect on health levels dropping again to 64.1%, with COVID measures including the closure of gyms and many social avenues that people had for exercise. It is also possible that panic buying resulted in disruption for the nutrition habits of many, while working from home reduced the natural, incidental exercise many had through a daily commute.

Q3 2020 increased to 66.2% as people pursued new routines to exercise at home and started to deal better with the stresses of the pandemic, facilitating some level of rebound.

This remained somewhat higher until Q2 2021, when new lockdowns saw a reduction of health levels to the lowest point over the last two years.

Q3 2021 recorded a substantial recovery of Health scores – reaching the highest level since 2019. Australians may have a renewed sense

of investment in Health, taking the shift back to regular routines as a chance to implement healthy habits.

**At 66.8% in Q3 2021, the national Health score sits 18.2 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

“

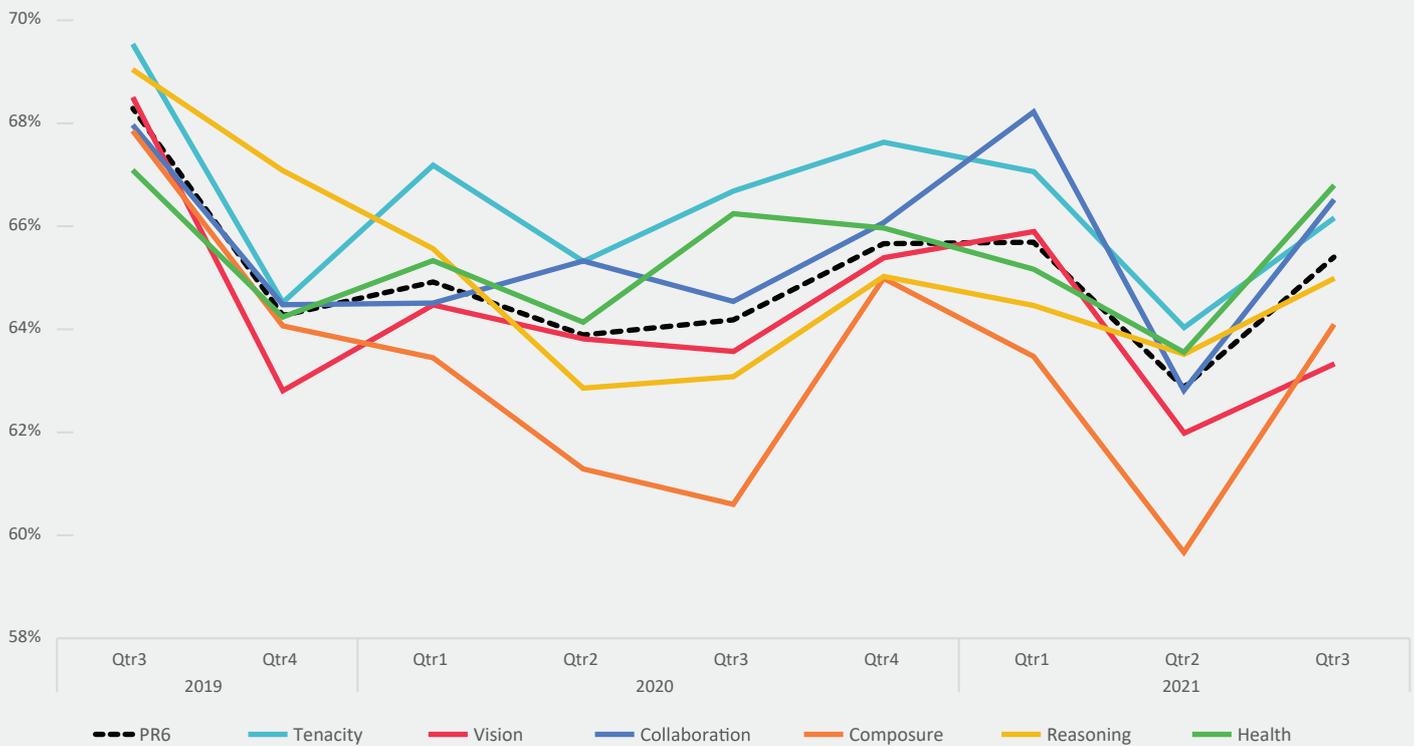
*Focus on the Health domain is vitally important simply because any deficit might make us lose energy. Good brain health depends on us paying attention to basic, daily habits of nutrition, exercise, recovery and sleep. Don't forget recovery promoting short breaks during long lasting performance activities such as work.*



**Jörgen Herlofson**  
BA, MD, Psychiatrist, Licenced  
Psychotherapist

## 4.8 COMPOSITE VIEW - ALL DOMAIN SCORES

All six domains are shown in Figure 8 below, illustrating our overall journey through the last two years and the impact seen.

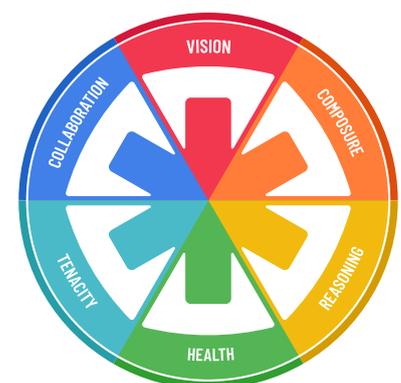


**Figure 8:** Average Australian Composite scores compared to PR6 Overall

There is a relatively similar pattern of resilience highs and lows across all six PR6 domains from Q3 2019 to Q3 2021, indicating a reasonably cohesive response to major events throughout the period, from bushfires around the start of the graph to COVID-related spikes and social containment measures.

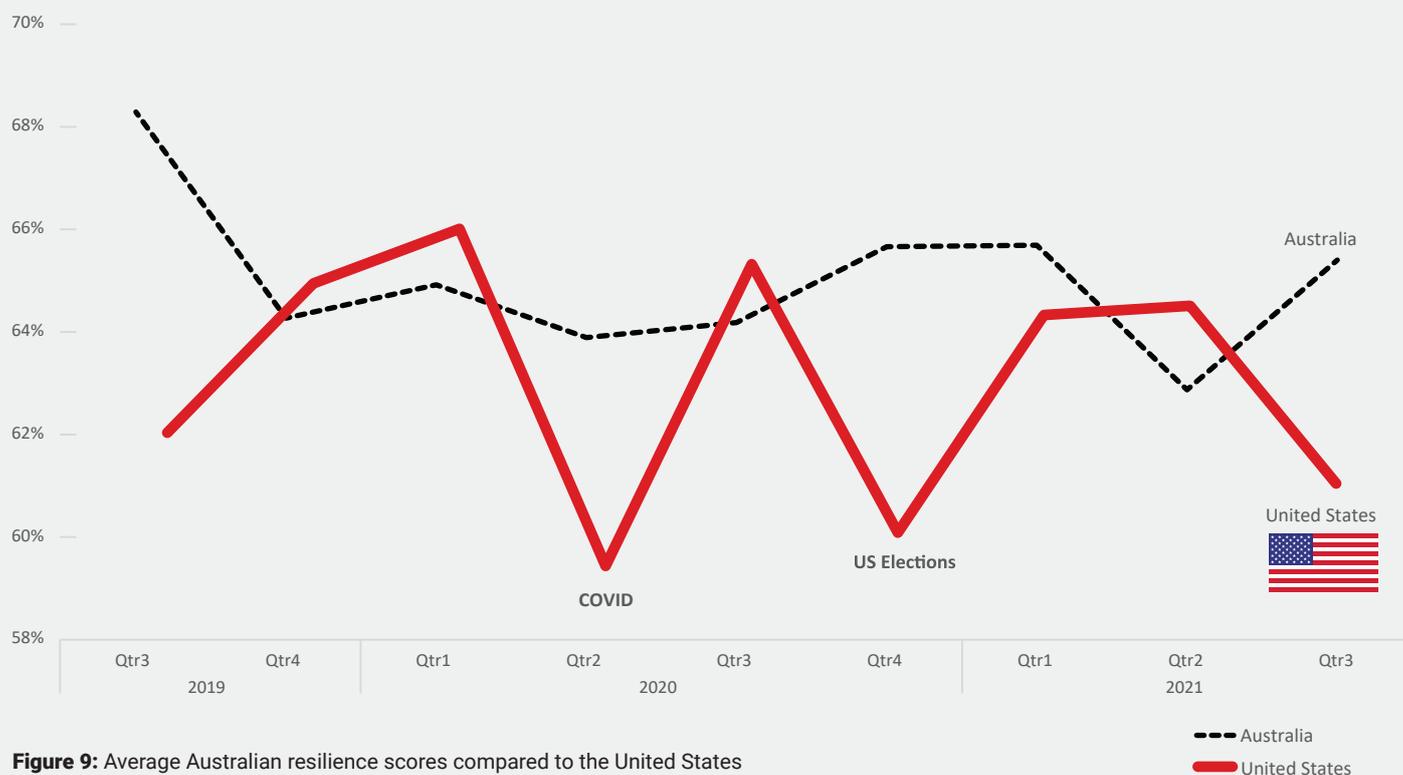
As indicated in the analysis on Composure and as evident from the orange line above, it has been the domain of resilience most strongly tested over these past two years.

**While we regain our Composure, Vision remains low overall, reflecting uncertainty about the future.**



## 4.9 AUSTRALIA VS USA

Each country has their own challenges. Here we see Australia's journey compared to the United States through the last two years.



The starting resilience of the USA at 62.2% in Q3 2019 was already somewhat suppressed and significantly below the Australian resilience level of 68.3%. This initial low level then rose through to 66.4% in Q1 2020. In contrast, Australia's levels started off higher but dropped to 64.3% in Q4 2019 at the time of the Australian bushfires.

Moving into Q2 2020, US resilience levels dropped significantly, down to 59.5%. During this time, COVID began to have a clear impact on many. It is also the first time panic buying set in, with stress compounded overall as many people faced unemployment and high uncertainty.

The ups and downs are much more marked in the US than in Australia, reflecting factors like major political events. Indeed, a rebound in US resilience levels in Q3 2020 to 65.6% was followed by another large drop to 60.2% in Q4 2020 as a tense presidential election gripped

the nation during a major increase in COVID cases. Following the election, resilience levels rebounded around the time COVID case numbers were brought under control for the time being.

Q3 of 2021 saw another flip between Australia and the USA – Australia producing an upward trend from 62.8% to 65.4%, while the USA dropped from 64.8% to 61.2%.

This comparison highlights how each country has its own challenges and its own resilience response to how people come together. It also shows that Australia may be gaining a comparatively stronger sense of confidence, perhaps following a strong national vaccination campaign.

**At 61.2% in Q3 2021, the USA sits 23.8 percentage points below the protective level of 85% PR6 resilience.**

5.

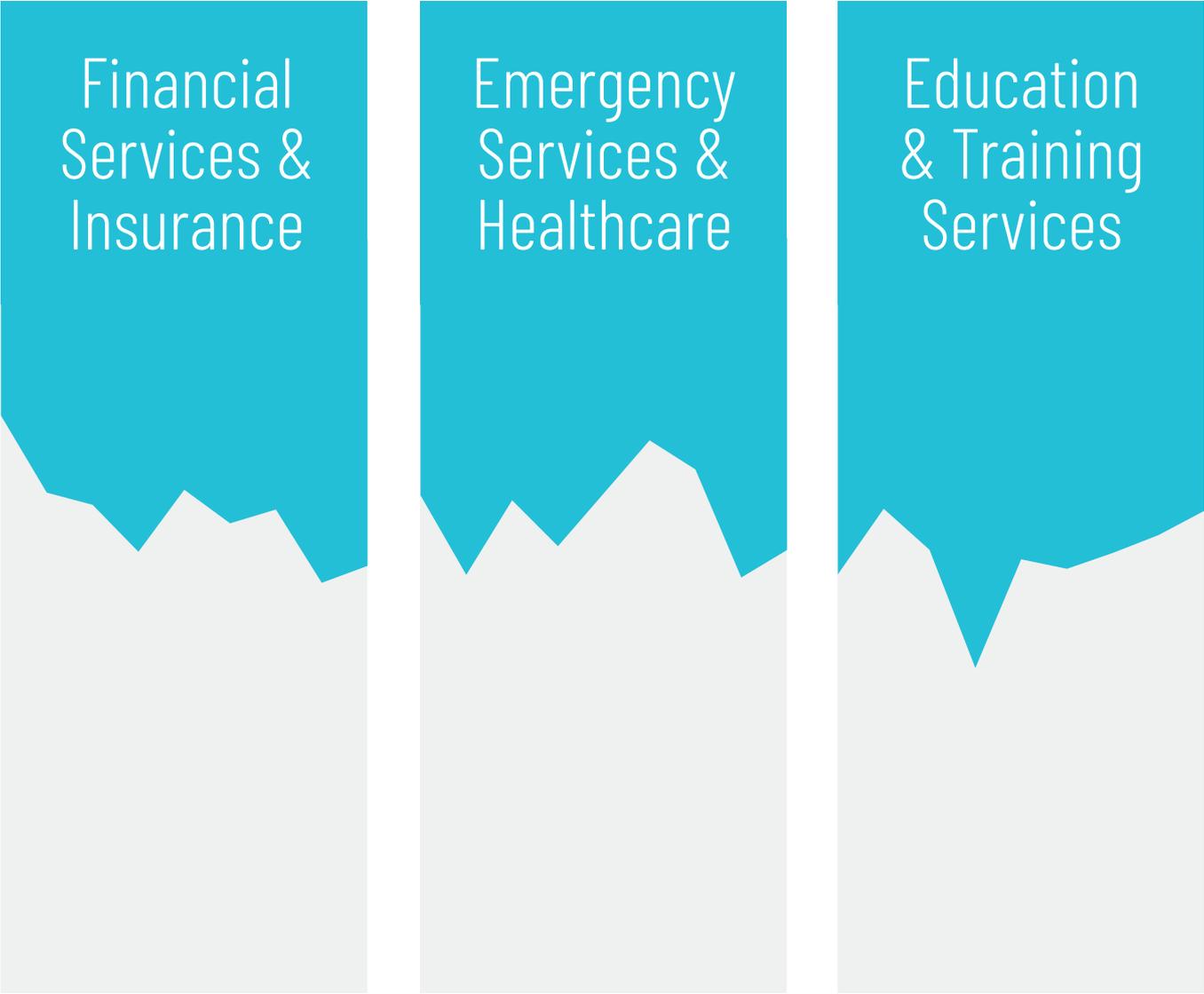
**Adelaide**  
Photo by Kina To on Unsplash



# 5.

# INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

As part of the analysis of Australian PR6 resilience results, overall resilience scores across three sectors were looked at to provide a snapshot into the impacts on some key Australian industries:



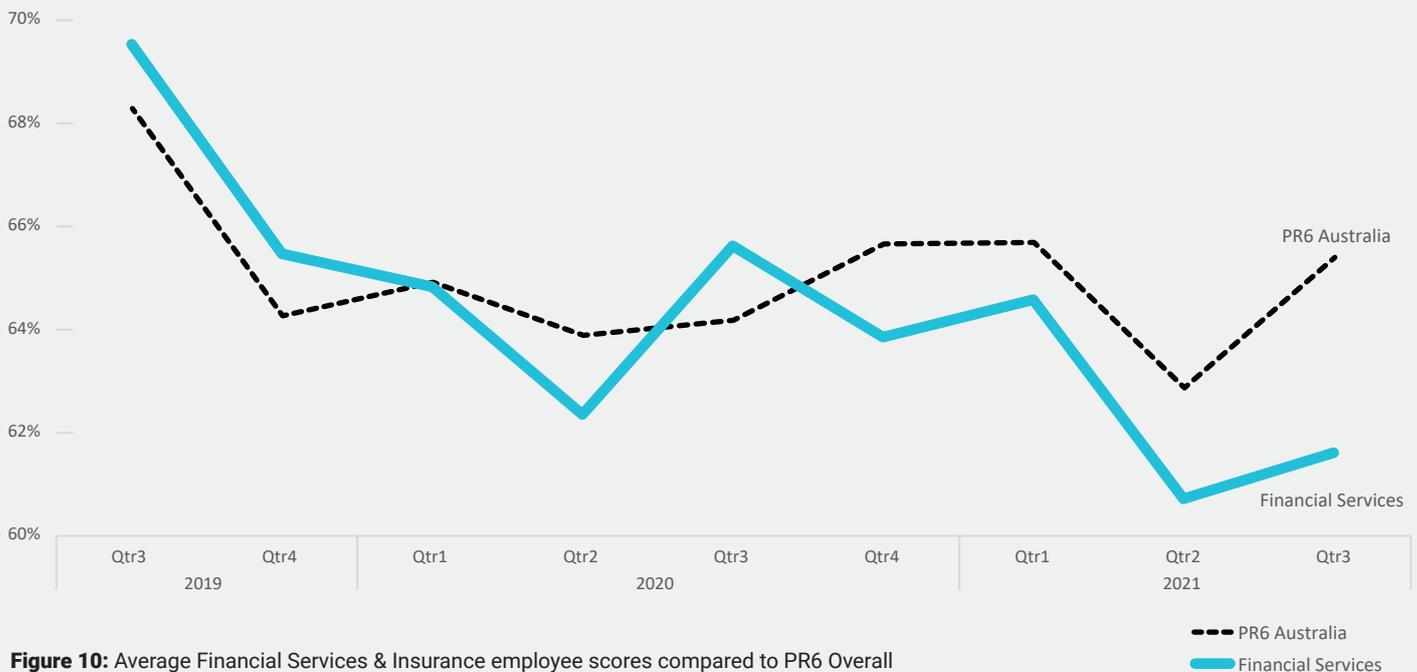
Financial  
Services &  
Insurance

Emergency  
Services &  
Healthcare

Education  
& Training  
Services

## 5.1 FINANCIAL SERVICES & INSURANCE

Figure 10 below compares the average PR6 scores of employees in financial services to the average PR6 scores in Australia.



**Figure 10:** Average Financial Services & Insurance employee scores compared to PR6 Overall

At 69.6% and prior to the latest Australian bushfires, the financial services industry started with the highest levels of resilience in Q3 2019 of all three industries analysed. It also displayed the lowest levels at the end when compared to all three industries.

Then, along with the rest of the nation, there was a drop down in Q4 2019 – this time to 65.5% (still a little higher than the overall population at 64.3%).

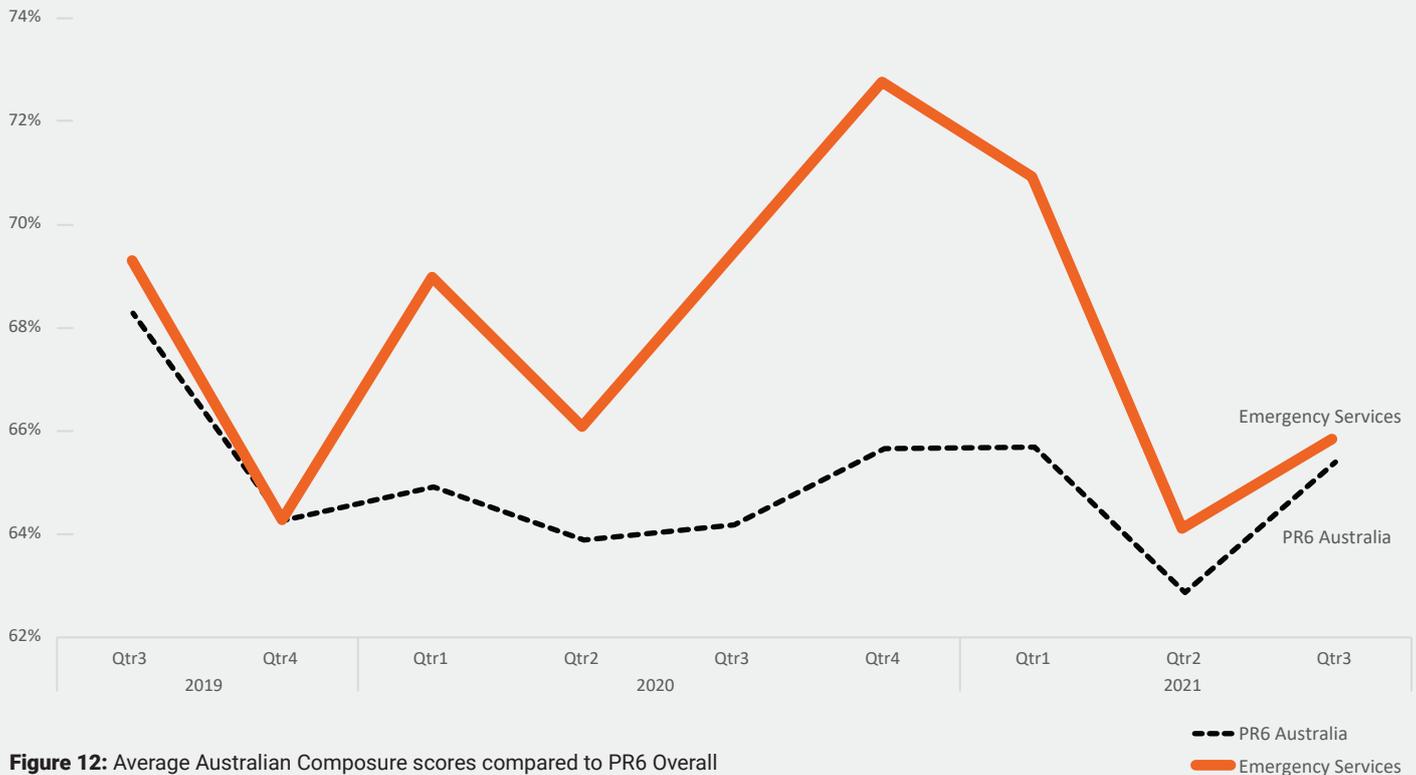
This slide then continues down to 62.3% in Q2 2020, with a shift to full-time work-from-home arrangements potentially impacting workers in various ways through social isolation, having to face supporting children through online schooling, and general uncertainty.

Resilience levels increased back up to 65.6% in Q3 2020 as normality started to return through to Q1 2021. However, the new lockdowns in Q2 2021 seemed to cause a significant drop, and by Q3 there was still a strong lingering impact.

**At 61.6% in Q3 2021, the financial services industry sits 23.4 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

## 5.2 EMERGENCY SERVICES & HEALTHCARE

Figure 12 below compares the average PR6 scores of employees in emergency services and healthcare to the average PR6 scores in Australia.



In the latter half of 2019, around the time of the Australian bushfires, the steep drop from a resilience level of 69.3% to 64.3% could be attributed to firefighters being part of the cohort studied in this instance. Interestingly though, it also mirrors the overall national drop in resilience through Q4 2019 (likely again due to the enormous impact of the fires).

Then, although there was a robust initial rebound in resilience levels to 69% for emergency services and healthcare employees in Q1 2020, the impact of initial COVID cases and the expectation of high workloads in healthcare coincides with the subsequent drop down to 66.1% in Q2 of 2020.

**“** Working in emergency services and healthcare involves a higher exposure to intense stress than most occupations. COVID has caused daily exposure to illness, the real possibility of death, staffing shortages, and more. Helping these professionals build resilience is lifesaving for them and the people they serve.



**Mike Taigman**  
MA, FAEMS  
Improvement Guide, FirstWatch  
Assistant Professor UCSF and UMBC



Q3 and Q4 of 2020 saw a very strong increase in resilience levels up to 72.8%, the highest result seen across all results in this report.

This could potentially be attributed to the COVID-related load on the healthcare system being less than expected. It also became clear Australia was doing much better than other countries, even having days of zero local transmissions.

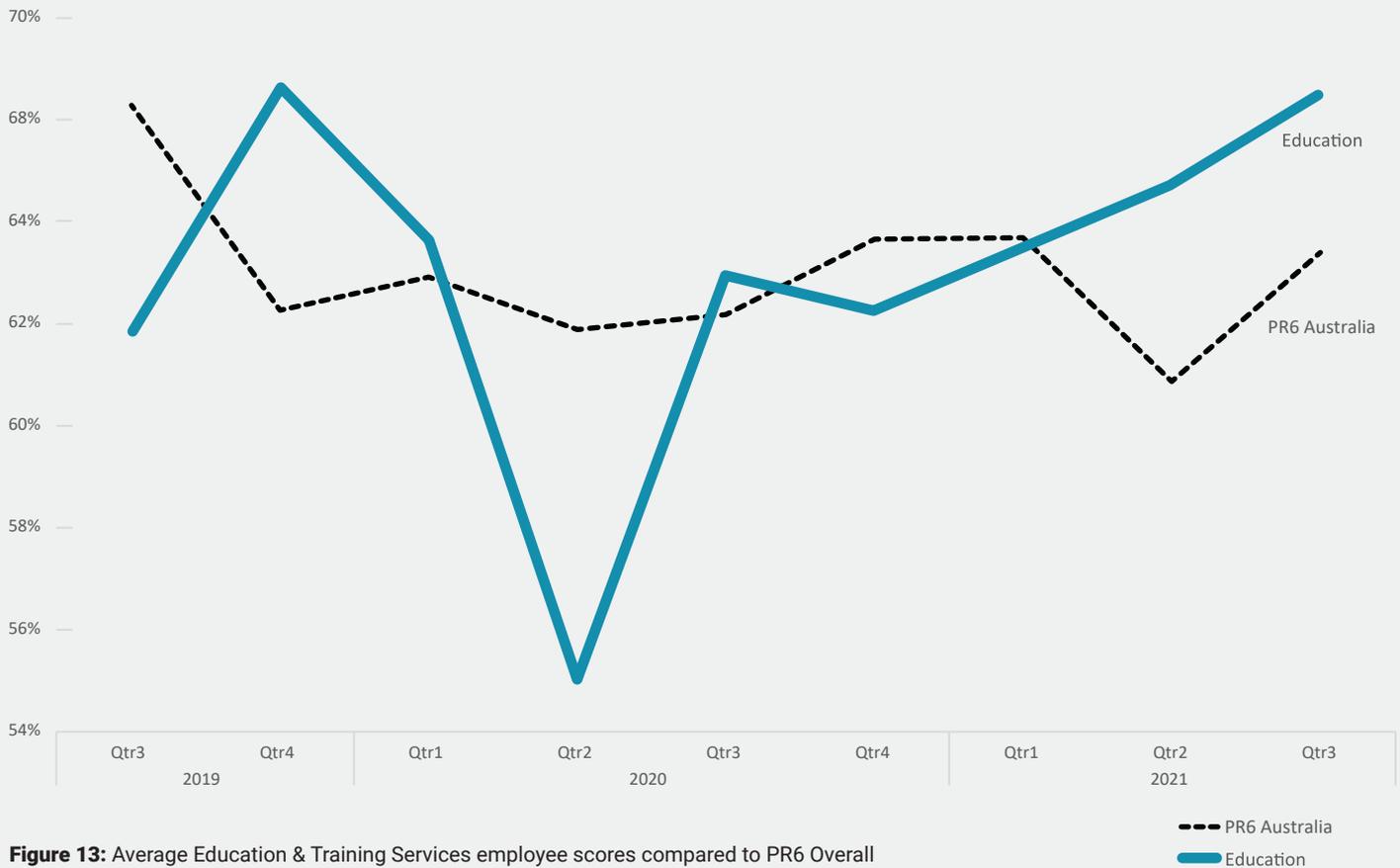
**Resilience levels saw a significant drop in Q2 2021**, when the Delta strain arrived, quickly ushering in a sense that it would be impossible to avoid a heavier strain on the healthcare system and staff this time. It could also be attributed to general social unrest relating to lockdowns potentially affecting the resilience levels of those in the police force as well – also part of this cohort.

Q3 2021 saw a rebound in scores that reflected the national recovery. While this is still a higher score than the population average for this quarter, the rate of improvement has less momentum than the national index. This may reflect less pressure on the healthcare system but a slow recovery as the system deals with the transition out of lockdown.

**At 65.8% in Q3 2021, the emergency services & healthcare industry sits 19.2 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

## 5.3 EDUCATION & TRAINING SERVICES

Figure 13 below compares the average PR6 scores of employees in education and training services (mainly teachers) to the average PR6 scores in Australia.



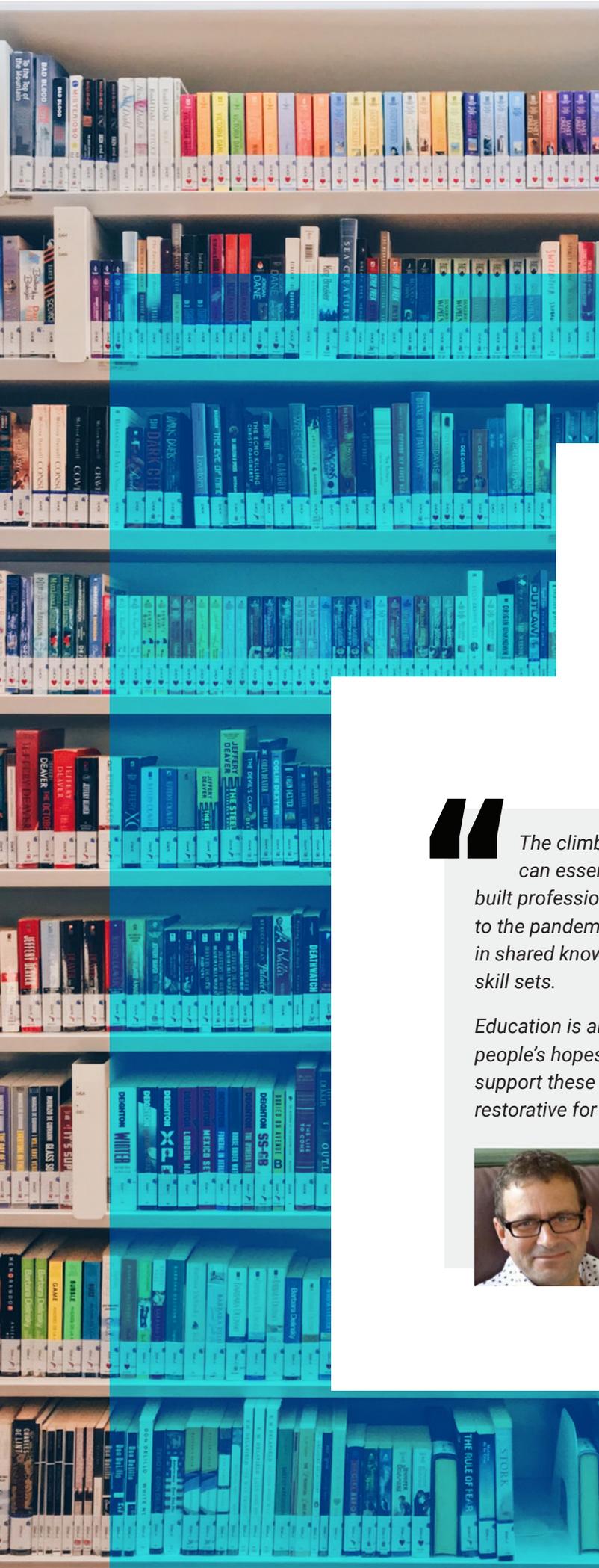
**Figure 13:** Average Education & Training Services employee scores compared to PR6 Overall

At 63.9% in Q3 2019, those in education and training started off already below the national resilience level even before the bushfires and COVID. Despite this low start, resilience levels improved to 68.8% by the end of Q4 2019.

We then see resilience levels start to drop heading into Q1 2020, and then - when the impacts of COVID started with the Q2 lockdowns - the extreme uncertainty and disruption for teachers caused a major drop down in resilience levels to 56.9%.

This is far below the national average and the lowest resilience level seen in the entire report. This is not surprising given the significant upheaval such unprecedented school closures brought.

In Q3 of 2020, however, significant recovery occurs, which slowly continues through all the way to Q3 in 2021.



This again is interesting in that it is the only pattern of resilience that is opposite to all others in this report, both in terms of continuing to rise, and being at odds with the overall pattern of resilience across the Australian population. It would seem teachers might indeed be some of our most resilient.

Perhaps also influencing this is a broader feeling of readiness for coming lockdowns as teachers become more confident with digital learning tools following 2020 and have seen they are capable of adapting their delivery.

**At 68.6% in Q3 2021, the education and training industry sits 16.4 percentage points below the protective level of 85%.**

“

*The climb in resilience from the educational data set for teachers can essentially be explained by the nature of education itself. We built professional learning communities that shared best practice prior to the pandemic. There is a body of research to show that collaboration in shared knowledge and support on the ground creates gains in teacher skill sets.*

*Education is an optimistic enterprise, as we are working with young people's hopes and dreams. The function of education is to seek to support these aspirations in our youth, and that is why this work is so restorative for both teachers and students; it values every heart beat.*



**John Dainutis**

Area Executive Director, Western Melbourne  
South Western Victoria Region, Schools and Regional Services  
Department of Education and Training

# 6.



**Hobart**  
Photo by Jonathon Young on Unsplash

# 6.

# LEADERSHIP SURVEY

In August 2021, a survey was conducted with key decision-makers and individuals in leadership roles across Australian organisations representing over 77,000 employees.

This survey explored their views on the impact of COVID during the 24 months from July 2019 to July 2021, as well as their views on future priorities for resilience and wellbeing measures.

Key results show recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and strong agreement on the need for more preventative action as a high priority.

Thoughts shared by leaders during the survey:

*“...there needs to be training on how to get clarity on expectations, say no, set boundaries and increase emotional agility. Empower people to get some control back.*”

*“Resilience training helps create a support network and tools to help me recognize when I might need extra help.*”

*“There is always room for more meaningful dialogue and accessible tools e.g. apps that are inspiring, encouraging and fun.*”



*Do you feel that the mental health of staff in your organisation has declined since COVID began?*



**12%**

Strongly Agree

**53%**

Agree

**18%**

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

**18%**

Disagree

**0%**

Strongly Disagree

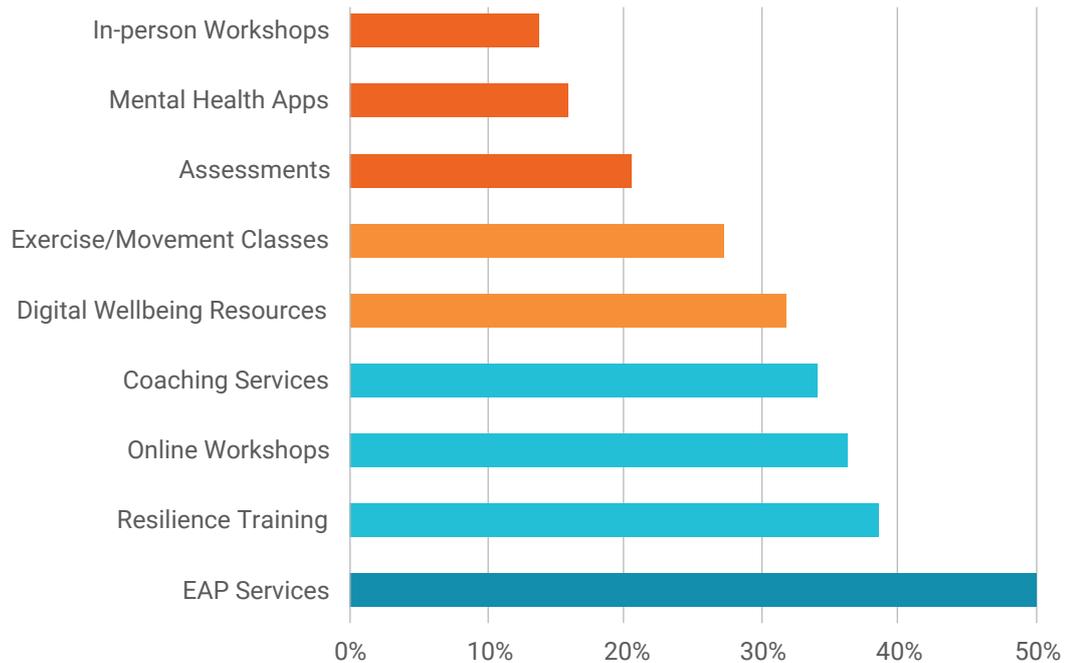
**Figure 14:** Leadership survey – Do you feel that the mental health of staff in your organisation has declined since COVID began?

## 6.1 IMPACT OF COVID ON STAFF MENTAL HEALTH

When asked about the extent to which COVID has had a negative impact on staff mental health over the last two years, **65% of those surveyed agreed that they had noticed a decline** in the mental health of staff (with 53% agreeing and 12% strongly agreeing).



## What mental health programs do you currently have in place?



**Figure 15:** Leadership survey – What mental health programs do you currently have in place?



*Business owners and leaders play a critical role in ensuring their policies and practices promote and protect staff mental health. To do this, organisations must identify and address the unique triggers in their workplace that have the potential to affect the mental health of staff. This includes consideration of work and role design factors, such as role clarity and job control, operational factors including exposure to occupational violence and long working hours and environmental factors such as dangerous physical conditions.*



**Dr Shannyn Hammel**  
Organisational Psychologist

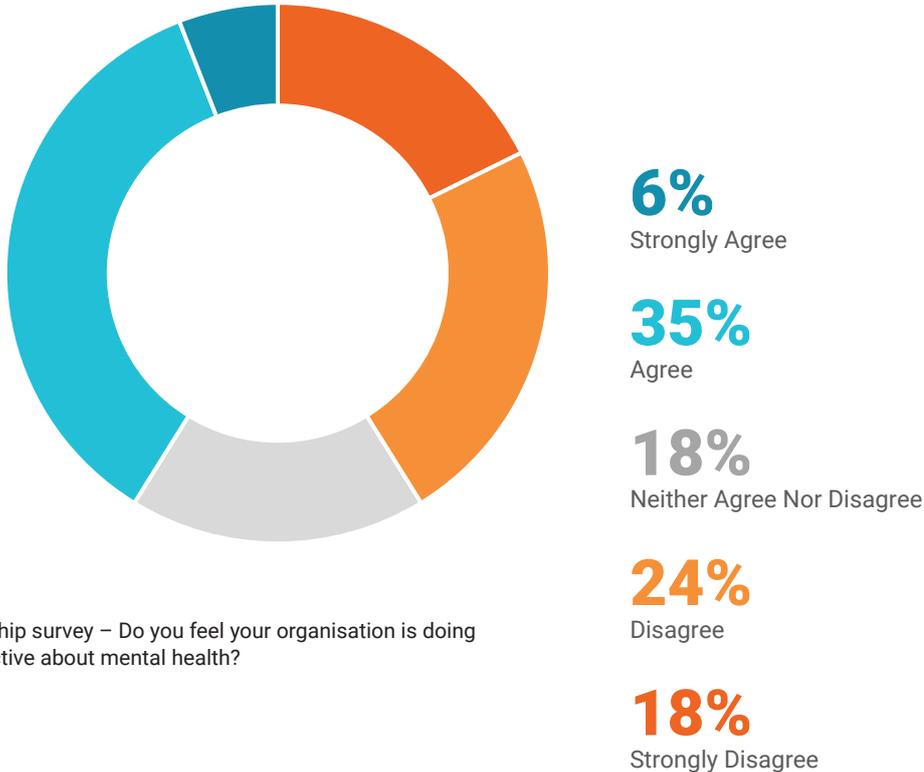
## 6.2 CURRENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PLACE

We explored what resilience initiatives organisations currently have in place for their staff.

As expected with the lockdowns, there was much lower usage of in-person workshops (13.6%). In comparison, many organisations reported implementing Resilience Training (38.6%) and most had Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services (50% of all organisations, **100% of those with staff of 1,000 or more**).



*Do you feel your organisation is doing enough to be proactive about mental health?*



**Figure 16:** Leadership survey – Do you feel your organisation is doing enough to be proactive about mental health?



*We know that a legitimate focus on preventative programs is what is required to truly improve the way we do mental health at team and organisational levels. Subsequently, the importance of promoting and adopting a proactive approach to building and maintaining mental health in teams ultimately rests with how the leader models the right behaviours themselves, and takes an individualised approach to supporting each of their staff to build and maintain the areas important to them.*



**David R Anthony**  
PhD, MAppPsych  
CEO & Co-Founder,  
Mantle Health

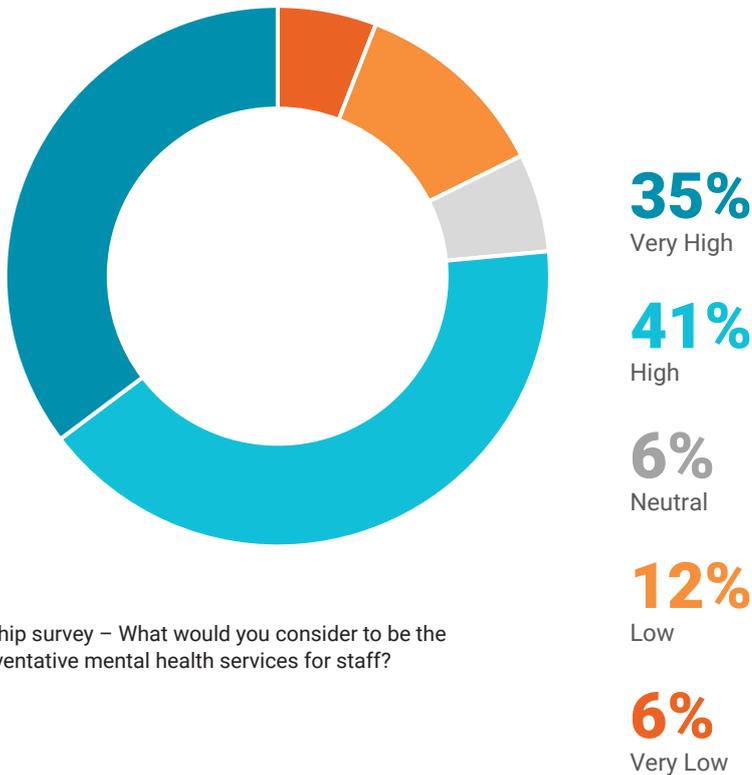
## 6.3 ORGANISATIONS BEING PROACTIVE

Leaders were also asked whether they feel their organisations are doing enough to be proactive about mental health.

There was a fairly **even split** between 41% that agree or strongly agree that their organisation is doing enough, and 41% that disagree or strongly disagree with that statement. There is a somewhat stronger sentiment in those strongly disagreeing, highlighting some concern about future initiatives being prioritised.



*What would you consider to be the priority level of preventative mental health services for staff?*



**Figure 17:** Leadership survey – What would you consider to be the priority level of preventative mental health services for staff?

## 6.4 PRIORITY OF PROTECTING STAFF MENTAL HEALTH

Considering future priorities of staff mental health, **76% of surveyed decision-makers and leaders in Australia see it as a high or very high priority** to invest in more proactive programs to protect staff mental health in the future.

Here we see a broad agreement that the future of mental health initiatives needs to incorporate more proactive components. As we've seen, especially in larger organisations, the reactive component (EAP, access to psychology services) is covered and in place. Now is the time for organisations to shift towards initiatives that

shift away from a deficit approach (reacting when things go wrong) to emphasise instead a strength-based approach (championing and enhancing resilience and wellbeing).

This is the primary shift – moving from crisis response towards prevention. The benefit is not only in improving business outcomes, but more fundamentally in building a supportive culture that inspires loyalty and belonging. This type of approach will grow in importance as we see more mobility in staff following higher resignation rates and competitiveness in talent retention.

# 7.



**Sydney**  
Photo by Kevin Bosc on Unsplash

## 7.

# THE PROTECTIVE EFFECT OF RESILIENCE

In Australia, treatment and early intervention in mental illness – rather than prevention – seems to be the general approach of organisations and health systems.

This is especially the case for larger organisations, where **100% of those we surveyed with over 1000 employees have employee assistance programs in place**. However, while these services are important in assisting at lower points in mental health, their focus is primarily on treatment rather than prevention.

A strong case for investment in resilience lies in its ability to protect against mental illness. While various studies have pointed to this effect, our analysis showed a similar protective ability particularly in relation to anxiety and depression.

“

*Our biology has incredible capacity to experience significant disruption, and mobilise assets toward recovery. The human form is sophisticated, complex and capable of superior higher order functioning. Our lifestyle and quality of thought diminishes our assets, creating biases and distortions that impact our ability to live life well.*

*This pandemic has taught us that the focus on symptomology is not enough for human recovery, and we are being called to action to lift our game plan. Resilience does not solely develop on its own; adversity and hardship do not raise our resources to manage life's disruptions. Resilience is a skill set and it is taught. We are at the beginning of a paradigm shift where the teachable concepts of resilience, led by neuroscience, will lead us into optimal growth and collaborative mindsets of health.*



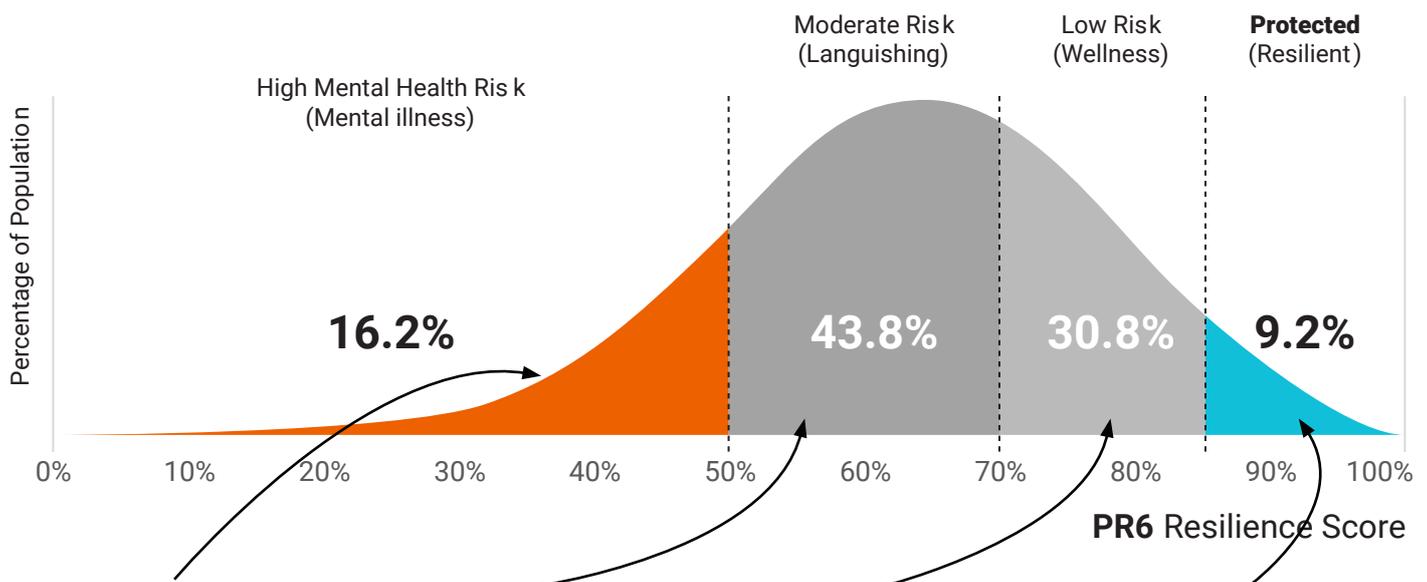
**Ms Maria Ruberto**  
AAPI, MIAAN  
Director, Psychologist  
Salutegenics Psychology

## 7.1 ANXIETY & DEPRESSION RISK ANALYSIS

Our research included a comparison of PR6 resilience scores to symptoms of anxiety and depression through the IPIP NEO Big 5 assessment<sup>10</sup> in a cohort of 576 individuals.

Regression analysis revealed a strong relationship where an increase in PR6 resilience coincided with decreased mental illness symptoms.

Our analysis identified **four groups**.



### Low Resilience

PR6 Score of 50% and below

**16.2% of individuals**

Most likely to experience anxiety

Most likely to experience depression

Generally characterised as being at higher risk of mental illness.

### Below Average

PR6 Score of between 50% and <70%

**43.8% of individuals**

1.5 times less likely to experience anxiety

1.7 times less likely to experience depression

At moderate risk of mental illness, this range is often referred to as 'languishing'.

### Above Average

PR6 Score of between 70% and <85%

**30.8% of individuals**

2 times less likely to experience anxiety

2.2 times less likely to experience depression

Generally stronger in resilience and attaining a sense of wellness, though still some risk remains.

### Protected (Resilient)

PR6 Score of 85% or above

**9.2% of individuals**

**5 times less likely to experience anxiety**

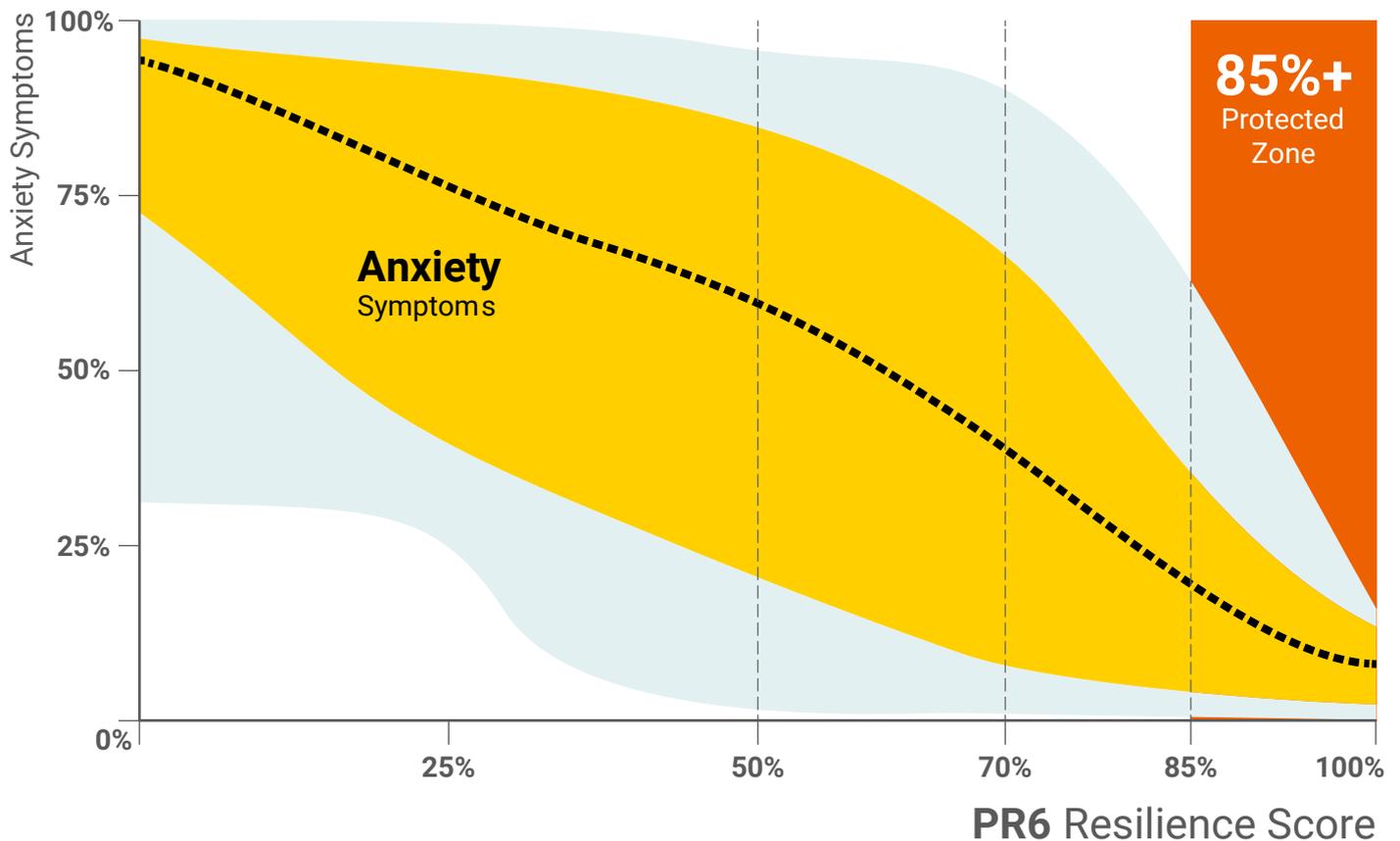
**5 times less likely to experience depression**

In this range, we can say individuals are resilient and indeed are protected from mental illness.

**Figure 18:** Population Risk Analysis based on PR6 relation to Depression and Anxiety Symptom Severity

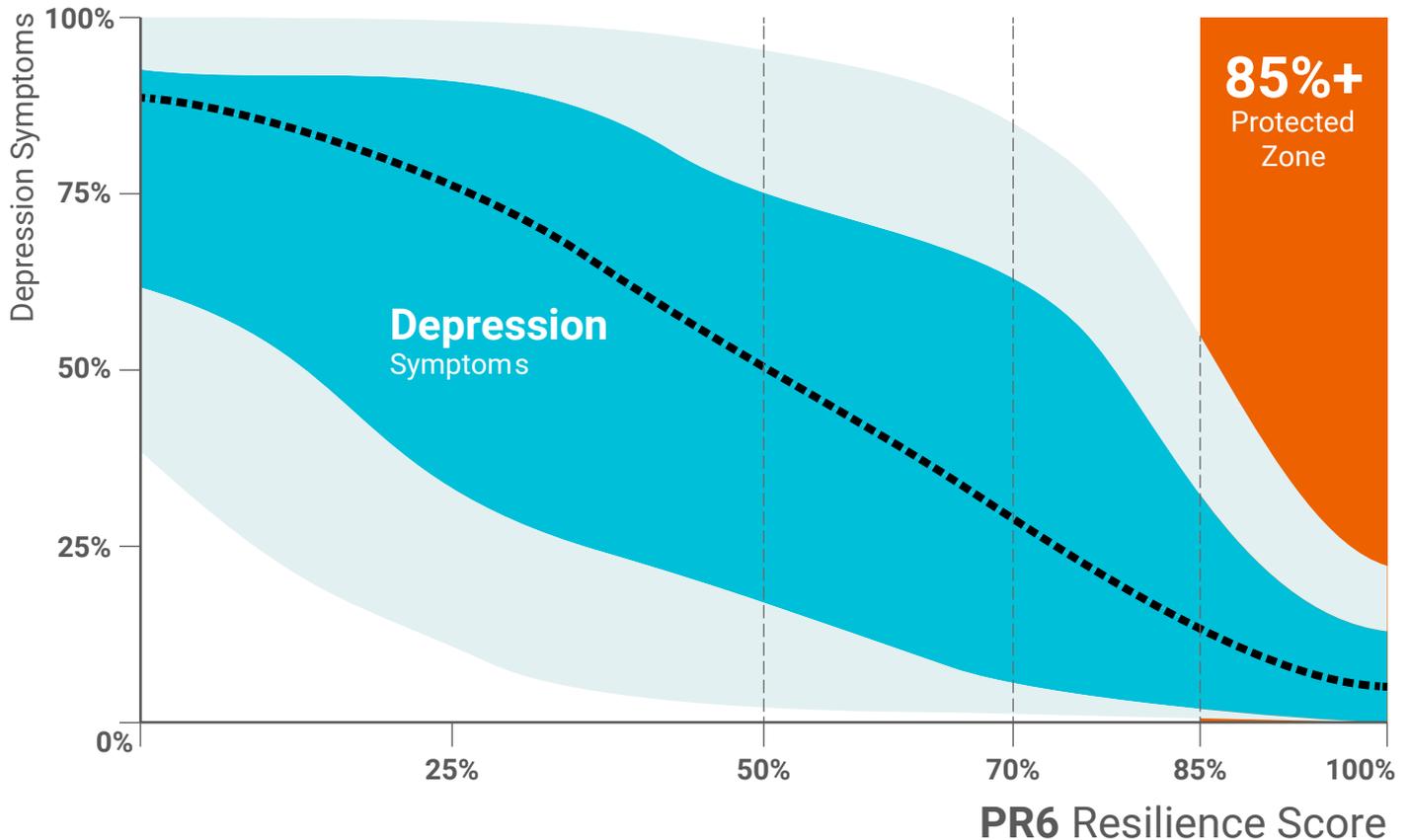
Charting the severity of anxiety symptoms to PR6 resilience scores in Figure 17 shows a clear trend of how resilience offers protection against anxiety. The dotted black line indicates the average scores, with yellow indicating correlations and the grey area indicating outliers.

Here we can clearly see how in the 85%+ range there is a **steep drop in anxiety symptoms, indicating the protective effect of high resilience.**



**Figure 19:** Relation of Anxiety Symptoms to PR6 Resilience Scores

This result is mirrored in the severity of depression symptoms in Figure 20, where – once again – we see a steep drop in symptoms severity as the PR6 resilience score exceeds 85%.



**Figure 20:** Relation of Depression Symptoms to PR6 Resilience Scores

Overall, the % of people experiencing anxiety symptoms was slightly higher than those experiencing depression symptoms. Still, there were similar patterns of protection – the higher the resilience, the lower the incidence of either depression or anxiety symptoms.

From this, we note that a basic level of resilience – that is, either below average or above average resilience, or PR6 scores between 50% and 85% – provides some level of protection against anxiety and depression.

However, it is primarily in the high range of resilience – at PR6 85% resilience and above – that a **true protective effect against these types of mental illness can occur.**

The nature of this protection can be found in an improved ability to mentally process and respond to everyday experiences, contributing to a sense of hope and confidence about the future, alongside belief in personal self-worth and the ability to overcome challenges.

...it is primarily in the **high range** of resilience –

at **PR6 85%**  
resilience and above

– that a **true protective effect** against these types of mental illness can occur.

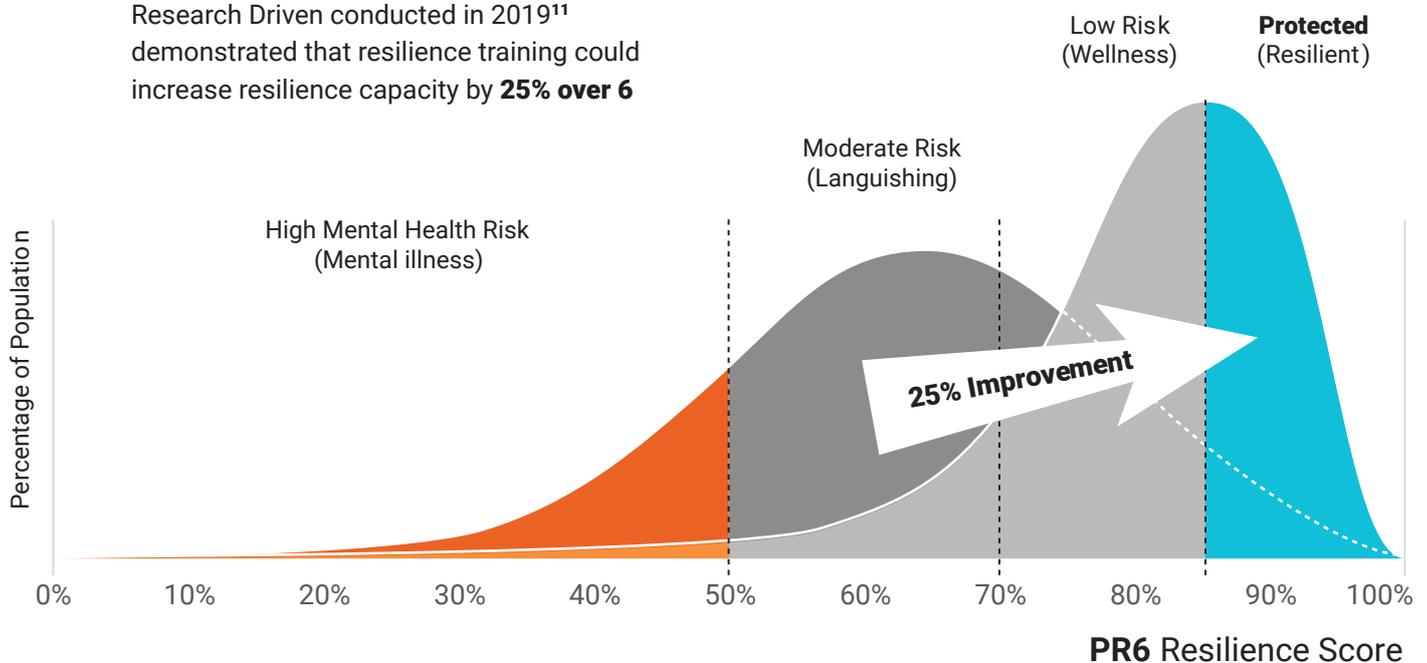
## 7.2 HOW 9 OUT OF 10 AUSTRALIANS COULD BENEFIT FROM RESILIENCE

With only 9.2% of Australian individuals within the high resilience group yet the data demonstrating the potential mental health benefits of increasing to this level, there is a clear case for helping more individuals develop resilience skills. In effect, **9 out of 10 individuals could benefit from learning more resilience skills.**

Research Driven conducted in 2019<sup>11</sup> demonstrated that resilience training could increase resilience capacity by **25% over 6**

**months.** Modelling then shows that a 25% improvement in an individual's overall resilience score can significantly shift the percentages of people at the different levels of resilience.

This is shown at a conceptual level in Figure 19 below, where a 25% improvement in the population could cause a large improvement by shifting many people out of the high and moderate risk zones, with significant gains in the low risk and protected zones, building on previous models suggested by others such as Huppert et al<sup>12</sup>.



**Figure 21:** The effect of a broad improvement in resilience

A broad 25% improvement in resilience for an organisation, for example, could **increase the 9.2% of people in the high resilience group to over 60%.**

This is achievable, especially within organisations, and the benefits are significant – not only in terms of reducing mental illness, but more broadly in the **improvement in organisational culture and retention.**

11 - Rossouw, J. G., Eriean, C. L., & Beeson, E. T. (2019). Building resilience through a virtual coach called Driven: Longitudinal pilot study and the neuroscience of small, frequent learning tasks. *International Journal of Neuropsychotherapy*, 7(2), 23–41. doi:10.12744/ijnp.2019.023-041

12 - Huppert, F. A. (2009). Psychological well-being: Evidence regarding its causes and consequences. *Applied psychology: health and well-being*, 1(2), 137-164.

## 7.3 QUANTIFYING THE VALUE OF INCREASED RESILIENCE

Driven's work has shown that resilience improvement is possible through active training. This can be achieved both through digital programs, as well as coaching programs, workshops, and resilience champions.

The more resilience skills can be proactively increased, the greater the expected reduction in the formation of mental illness, as well as a reduction in the burden on the healthcare system. This is important given that psychological injury is an increasing proportion of workplace incident claims, **rising from 14% in 2016 to 21% in 2021**<sup>13</sup>.

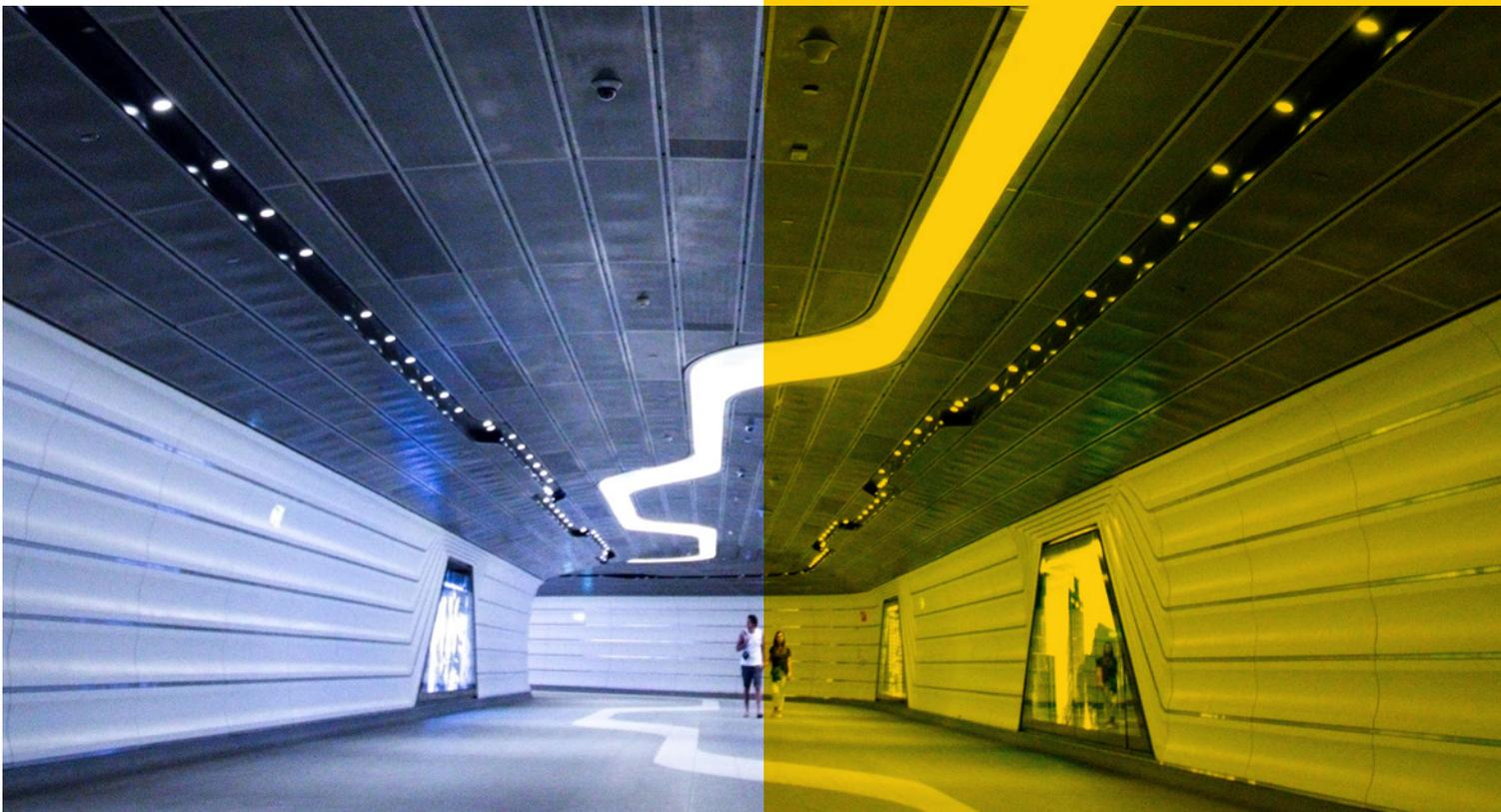
In fact, the 2018 KPMG and Mental Health Australia report *Investing to save: The economic benefits for Australia of investment in mental health reform*<sup>14</sup> estimated the costs of mental ill-health in the workplace at an average of

\$3,200 per employee with mental illness, and up to \$5,600 for an employee with severe mental illness.

Utilising these metrics, alongside the incidence of symptoms of mental illness for the low and below average groups, the modelling shows that resilience training for 25% of Australia's 13 million employed people can **save approximately \$6.4 billion each year**.

**This indicates an average of \$2,005 saved per person trained in resilience.**

Resilience training represents a **practical pathway** towards reducing mental illness and psychological injury through proactively increasing individual resilience capacity, providing clear wellbeing benefits while also providing significant cost savings.



13 - icare and State Insurance and Care Governance Act 2015 Independent Review, 2021

14 - <https://mhaustralia.org/publication/investing-save-kpmg-and-mental-health-australia-report-may-2018>

# 9 in 10



people are below the protected  
range of **85%+ resilience**



Join the movement to improve  
resilience by **25% by 2025**

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**driven**

**Driven is a global research and technology organisation based in Sydney, Australia,** that focuses on scientific and scalable preventative Health methodologies to improve personal resilience.

These methodologies can be applied in a range of settings – for individual use, in workplaces, in high stress environments (first responder organisations) and in places of learning (schools and universities etc). Our Vision is to be the global leading facilitator of resilience in people, and to build **thriving organisations and communities**.

We take a comprehensive view of resilience, looking into the practical skills and mindsets to achieve long-term wellness. In addition, our focus on scientific research and validation has established us as a world-leader in integrating assessments, training, and technology to create **lasting behavioural change**.

We work with leading companies, first responder groups, schools, and thousands of individuals around the world. Our driving force is to help people get the most out of life through a proactive approach to mental and physical wellness.

**Driven recently launched Resilience First Aid (resiliencefirstaid.com)** – a certification program aimed specifically at improving the preventative skills in championing resilience at a community level. This program builds skills in managers, co-workers, peer support staff, and anyone looking to better support mental health using a strength-based approach in others.

For information on Driven's resilience training, research and science – including peer-reviewed assessments to drive insights and action for maximum impact through the PR6 predictive resilience assessment – visit:

**hellodriven.com**

