

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

## 2015 VA Memorial Products Survey



## National Report

Final Report  
November 2015



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## **Executive Summary**

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### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents a brief introduction to the Memorial Program Services Survey of Satisfaction with Memorial Products and an overview of the contents of this report.

# Executive Summary

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## Introduction

- This report presents findings from the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) 2015 Memorial Programs Service (MPS) Survey of Satisfaction with Memorial Products, representing the fifth national administration of the survey. The 2015 survey was sponsored by NCA's Office of Finance and Planning and conducted by ICF International, a global research consulting organization, under contract GS-23F-0199K.
- The MPS survey assesses customer satisfaction with products and services provided by the Memorial Program Service and measures process performance. The survey has been conducted annually since 2009, with the exception of 2010.
- The MPS survey was administered to next of kin and funeral directors from August 20, 2015, to October 9, 2015. Mailing data was extracted from NCA's Automated Monument Application System (AMAS) database and the Burial Operating Support System (BOSS).
- Surveys were mailed to 2,500 next of kin who had interred a loved one at a national, private, or State or Tribal Veterans Cemetery 3 to 9 months prior to the survey administration and had ordered an MPS product. Surveys were also mailed to 12,789 funeral directors who had worked with national, private, and State or Tribal Veterans Cemeteries during the designated period of time.
- The survey population included only those next of kin who interred a loved one 3 to 9 months prior to the survey date. This time period was deemed a period in which next of kin could accurately recall their experiences and a 90 day bereavement period was considered out of respect of the grieving process.
- Presented in the following section are key findings from this satisfaction survey. National results in this report represent a roll-up of all survey respondents. Detailed findings are presented in the main body of the report.

## Report Overview

- Survey findings are presented in seven chapters in this report. The first chapter, "Key Metrics" presents findings from surveys items that provide information on next of kin and funeral directors' overall satisfaction with NCA customer service.
- The remaining chapters present survey findings on specific areas of satisfaction for each patron group (next of kin or funeral directors).
- The survey examines the following attributes of customer service:

## Executive Summary

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- Determine who assists the next of kin with the application
- Determine the extent to which the next of kin was aware of the inscription policy
- Determine the perceived quality level of the marker and inscription
- Determine cycle delivery time
- Determine level of knowledge, satisfaction with, and quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) program and certificate, another product of MPS.

### Highlights of Findings

#### Overall Satisfaction Measures and Key Metrics

- Overall, 88.9 percent of all respondents (90.1% of next of kin and 88.2% of funeral directors) were very or somewhat satisfied with their experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services.
- 91.3 percent of all respondents (92.9% of next of kin and 90.7% of funeral directors) agreed or strongly agreed the overall quality of the VA headstones, markers, or medallions they received was excellent.
- 89.2 percent of next of kin agreed or strongly agreed that the overall quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) was excellent.
- 90.4 percent of all respondents (91.2% of next of kin and 90.0% of funeral directors) were very or somewhat satisfied with the process used to order headstones, markers, or medallions.

#### Information and Communication

- 93.9 percent of all respondents (92.9% of next of kin and 94.0% of funeral directors) were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the ease of finding the information they were looking for.

#### Quality of Products and Services

- 76.2 percent of all respondents (79.9% of next of kin and 74.7% of funeral directors) were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the amount of time it takes to receive VA markers, headstones, or medallions.
- 89.6 percent of respondents (93.8% of next of kin and 89.2% of funeral directors) indicated they were satisfied with the service received from the NCA customer service representative.

## **Overall Satisfaction Measures And Key Metrics**

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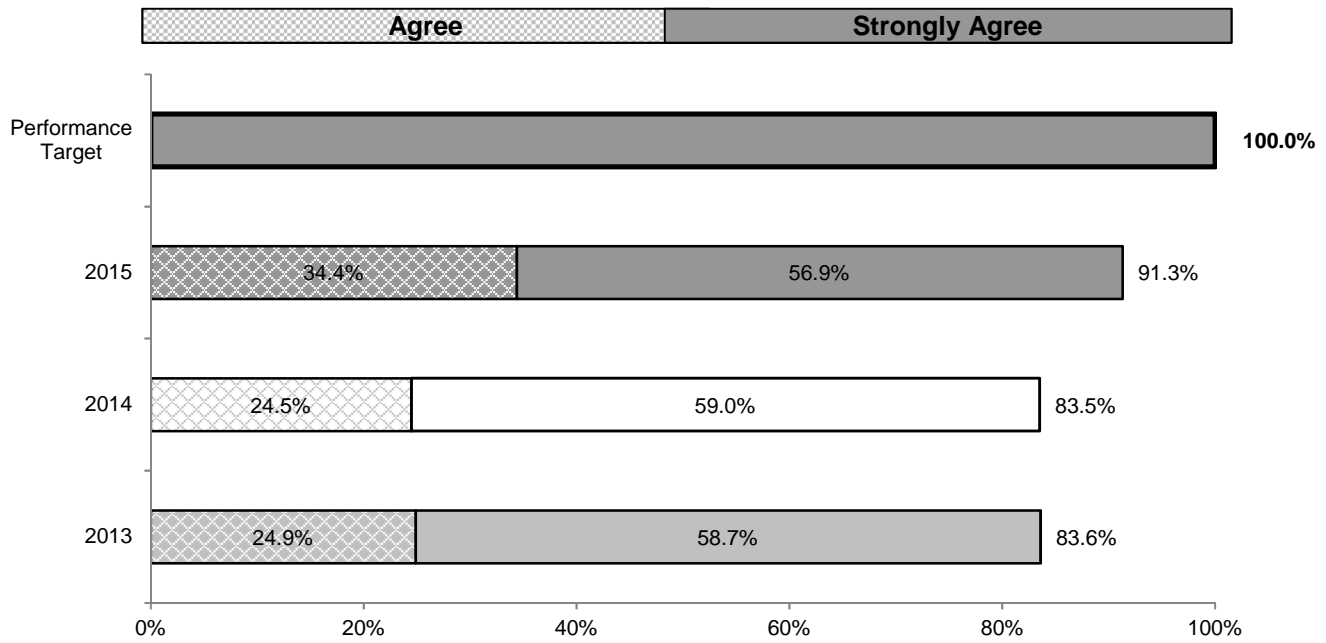
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin and funeral directors on overall measures of satisfaction and key metrics.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100%.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

**Question 20/21. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.**

### ALL RESPONDENTS



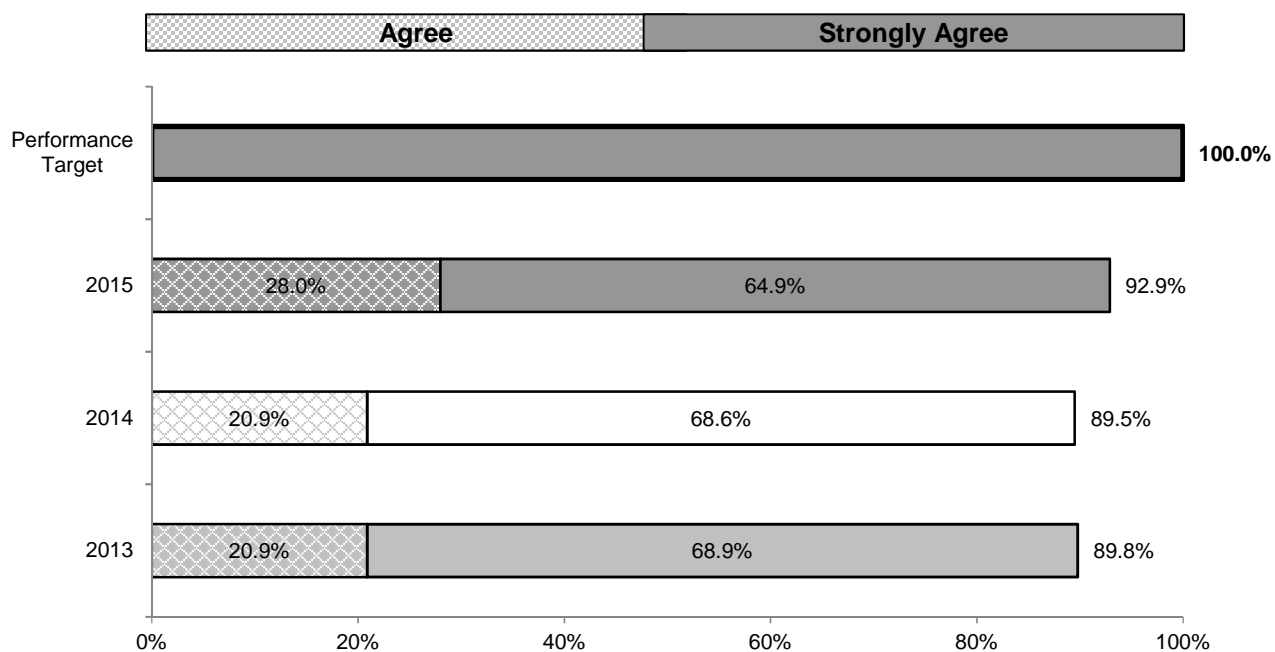
	Year	n	Strongly Agree	*Change Score	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
NCA	2015	3955	56.9%	-2.1%	34.4%	8.0%	0.6%	0.2%
	2014	3604	59.0%	0.3%	24.5%	15.9%	0.5%	0.1%
	2013	1896	58.7%		24.9%	14.9%	1.2%	0.2%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Strongly Agree" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 20/21. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Strongly Agree	*Change Score	Agree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Next of Kin	2015	1127	64.9%	-3.7%	28.0%	5.9%	0.8%	0.5%
	2014	1123	68.6%	-0.3%	20.9%	9.4%	0.6%	0.4%
	2013	1094	68.9%		20.9%	8.9%	1.0%	0.3%

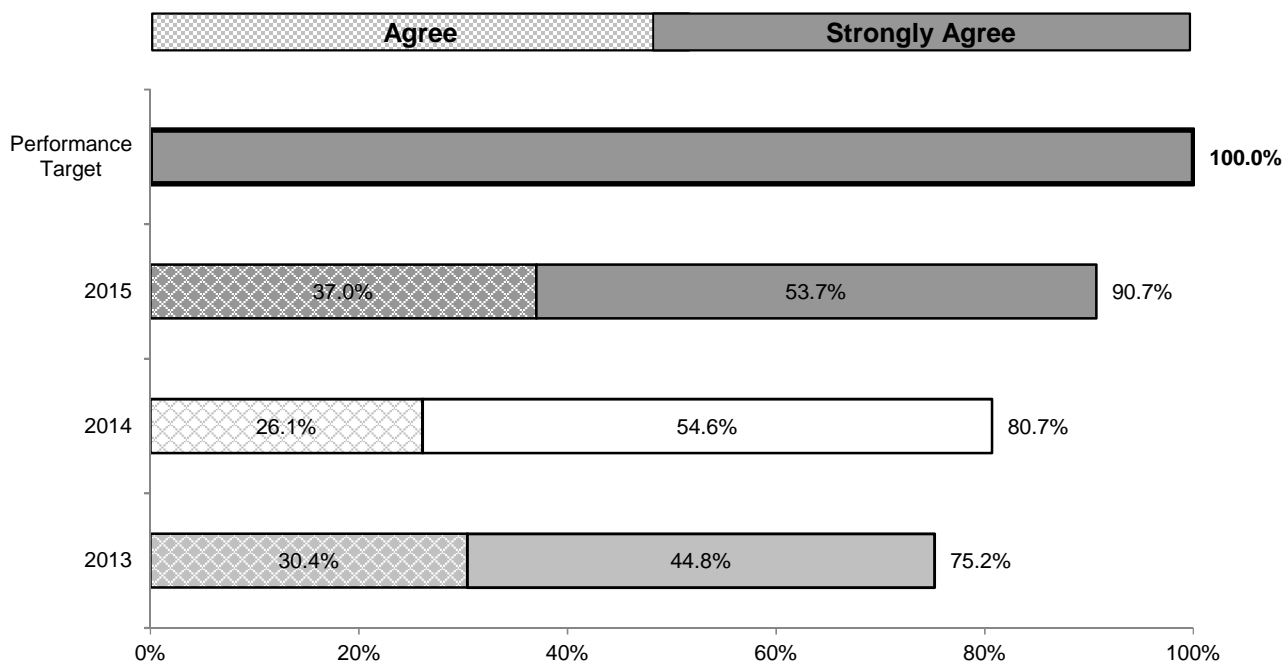
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Strongly Agree" categories for the row year and the previous year.



## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 20/21. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



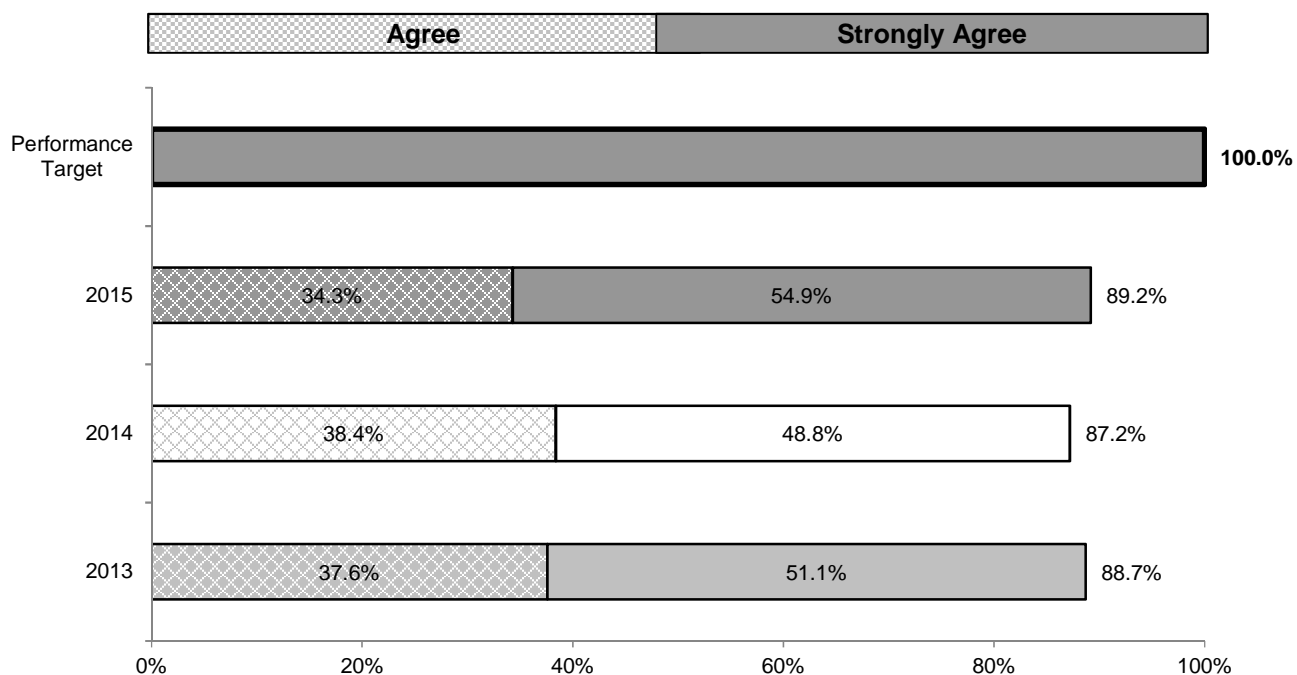
	Year	n	Strongly Agree	*Change Score	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Funeral Directors	2015	2828	53.7%	-0.9%	37.0%	8.8%	0.5%	0.0%
	2014	2481	54.6%	9.8%	26.1%	18.2%	0.5%	0.0%
	2013	802	44.8%		30.4%	23.2%	1.5%	0.1%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Strongly Agree" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

**Question 22. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) I received from the VA was excellent.**

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Strongly Agree	*Change Score	Agree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Next of Kin	2015	830	54.9%	6.1%	34.3%	9.6%	0.8%	0.2%
	2014	777	48.8%	-2.3%	38.4%	10.9%	1.4%	0.5%
	2013	784	51.1%		37.6%	9.9%	0.5%	0.8%

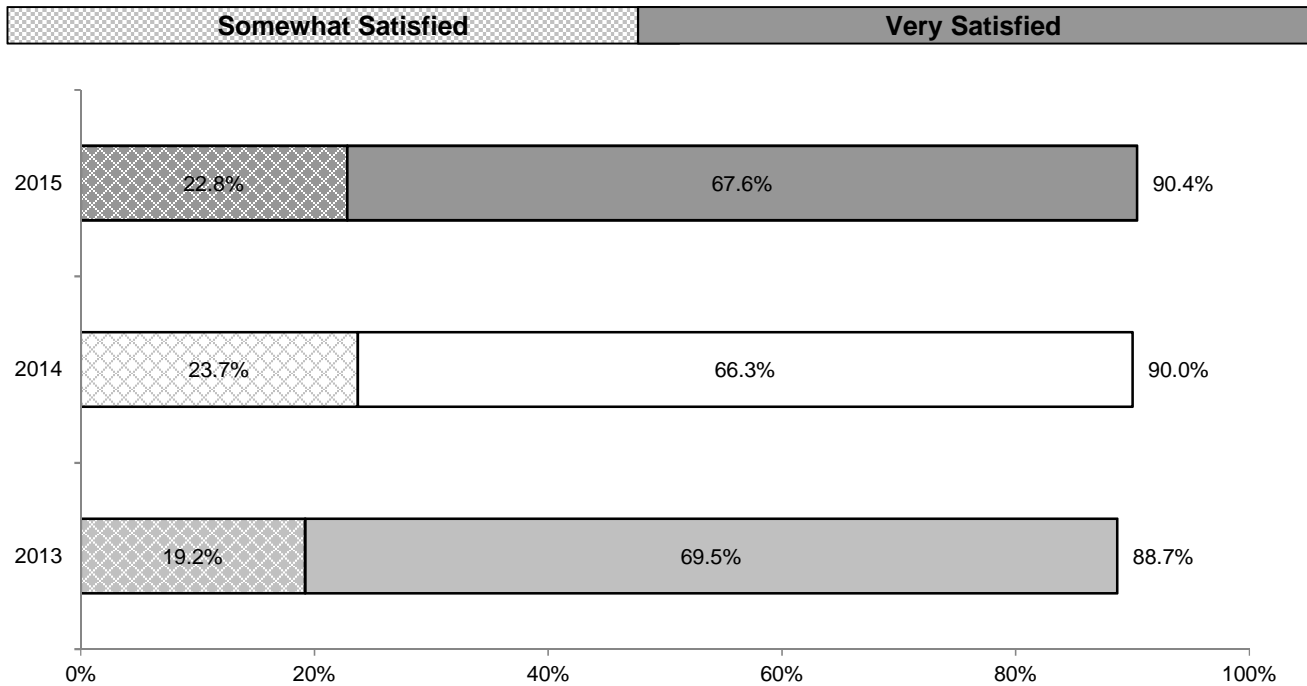
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Strongly Agree" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes - Requested and Received" or "Yes - Received, but not requested" to Question 21 (NoK) received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 7/4. How satisfied were you with the process you used to order the headstone(s), marker(s), or medallion(s)?

### ALL RESPONDENTS



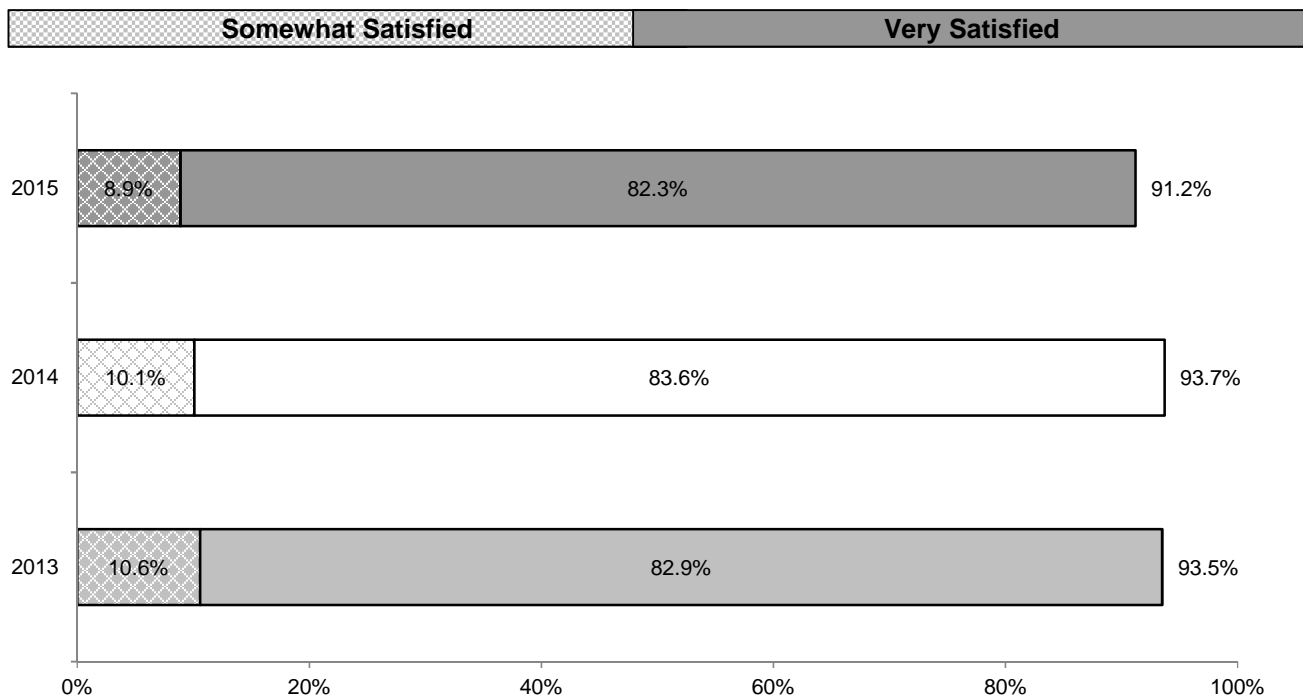
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
NCA	2015	3991	67.6%	1.3%	22.8%	6.3%	2.2%	1.2%
	2014	3860	66.3%	-3.2%	23.7%	6.0%	2.8%	1.2%
	2013	1932	69.5%		19.2%	6.7%	3.4%	1.3%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 7/4. How satisfied were you with the process you used to order the headstone(s), marker(s), or medallion(s)?

### NEXT OF KIN



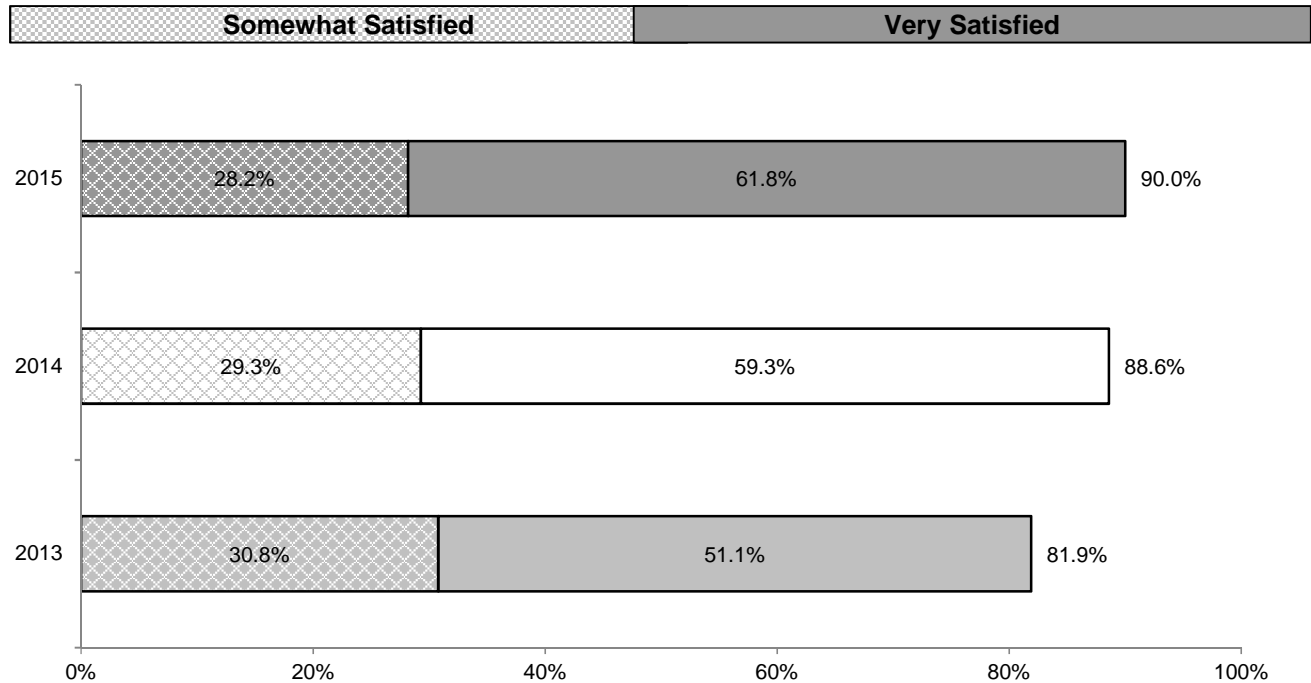
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Next of Kin	2015	1128	82.3%	-1.3%	8.9%	4.6%	2.1%	2.1%
	2014	1121	83.6%	0.7%	10.1%	2.9%	1.6%	1.8%
	2013	1114	82.9%		10.6%	2.5%	2.2%	1.7%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

**Question 7/4. How satisfied were you with the process you used to order the headstone(s), marker(s), or medallion(s)?**

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



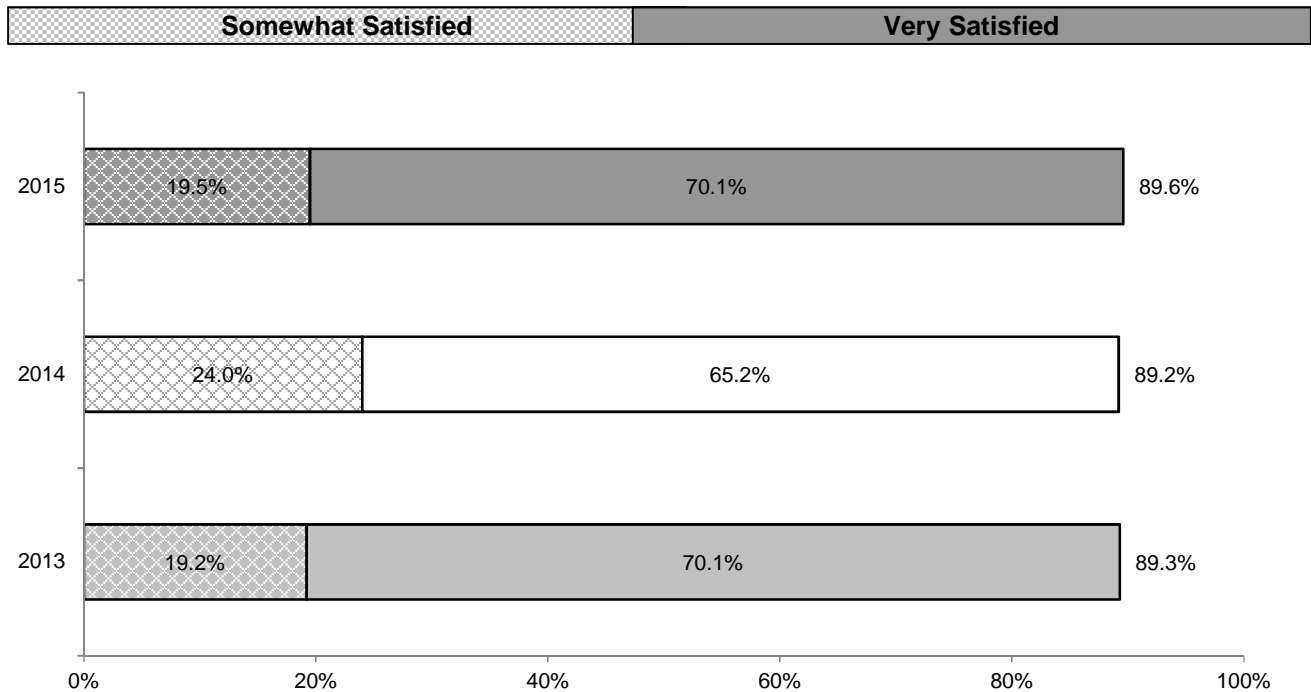
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	2863	61.8%	2.5%	28.2%	7.0%	2.2%	0.8%
	2014	2739	59.3%	8.2%	29.3%	7.2%	3.2%	1.0%
	2013	818	51.1%		30.8%	12.3%	4.9%	0.9%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 11/8. How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?

### ALL RESPONDENTS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
NCA	2015	750	70.1%	4.9%	19.5%	5.2%	3.3%	1.9%
	2014	728	65.2%	-4.9%	24.0%	4.5%	4.7%	1.5%
	2013	615	70.1%		19.2%	5.7%	3.4%	1.6%

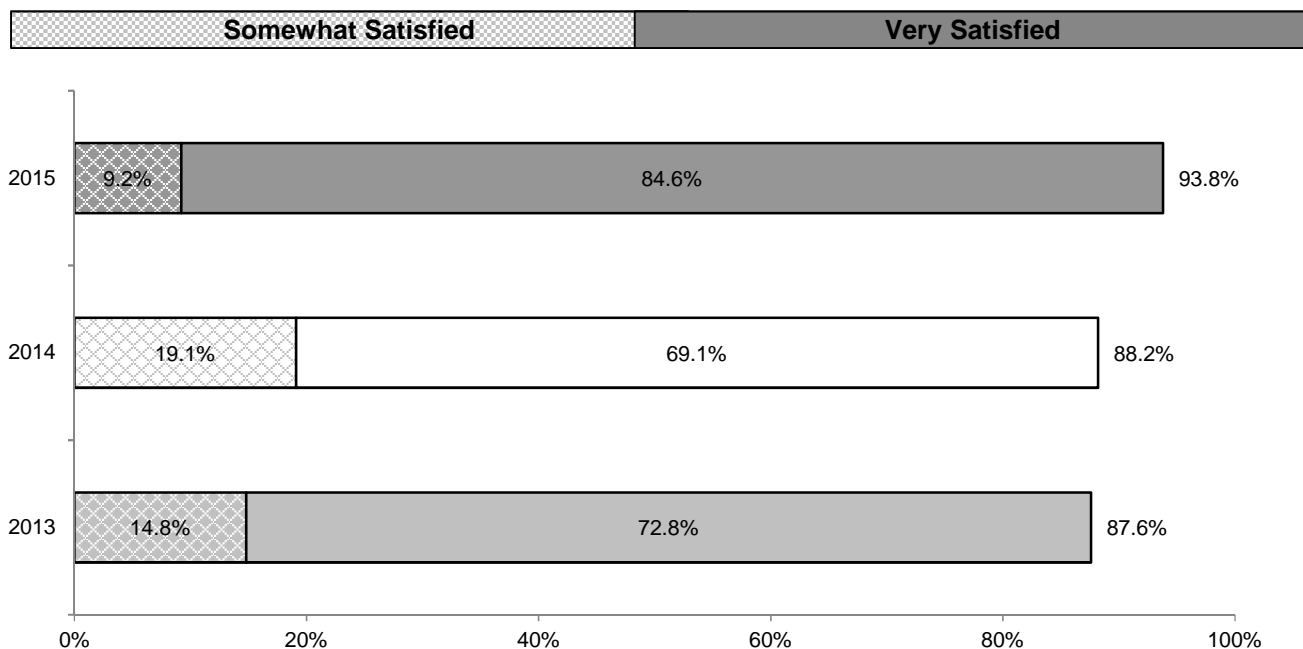
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 11/8. How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Next of Kin	2015	65	84.6%	15.5%	9.2%	3.1%	3.1%	0.0%
	2014	68	69.1%	-3.7%	19.1%	2.9%	7.4%	1.5%
	2013	81	72.8%		14.8%	3.7%	3.7%	4.9%

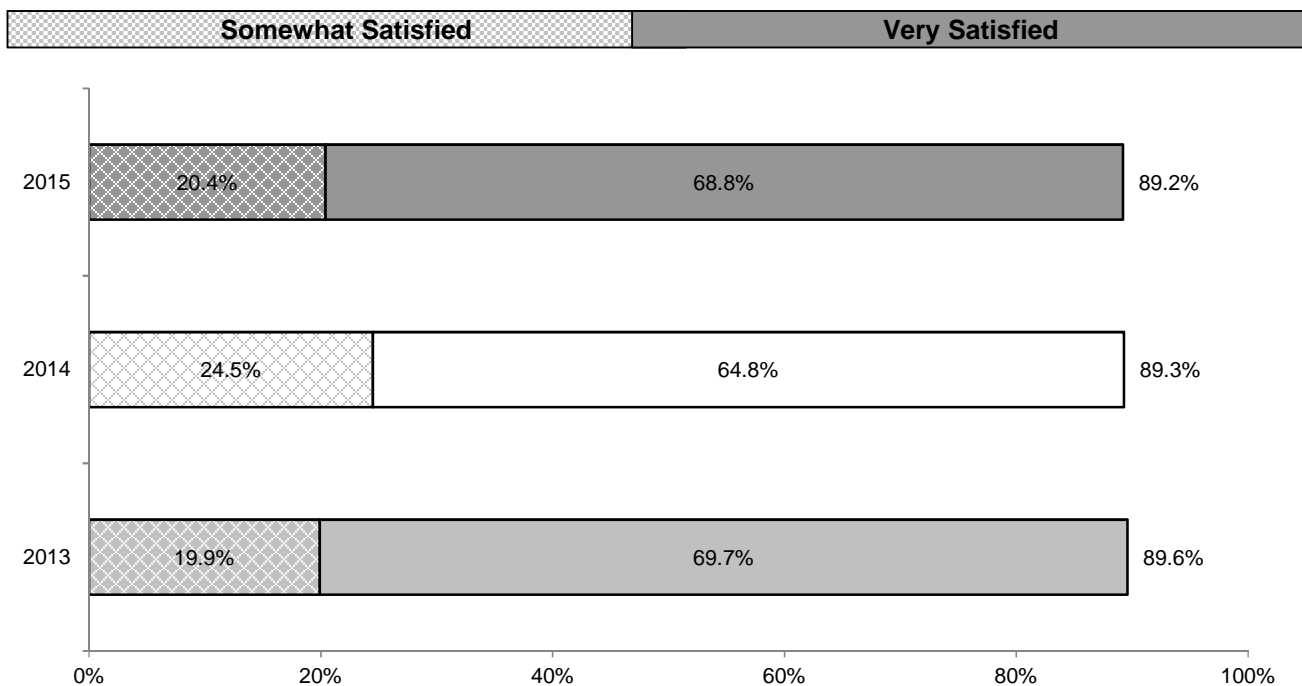
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

**Question 11/8. How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?**

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	685	68.8%	4.0%	20.4%	5.4%	3.4%	2.0%
	2014	660	64.8%	-4.9%	24.5%	4.7%	4.4%	1.5%
	2013	534	69.7%		19.9%	6.0%	3.4%	1.1%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

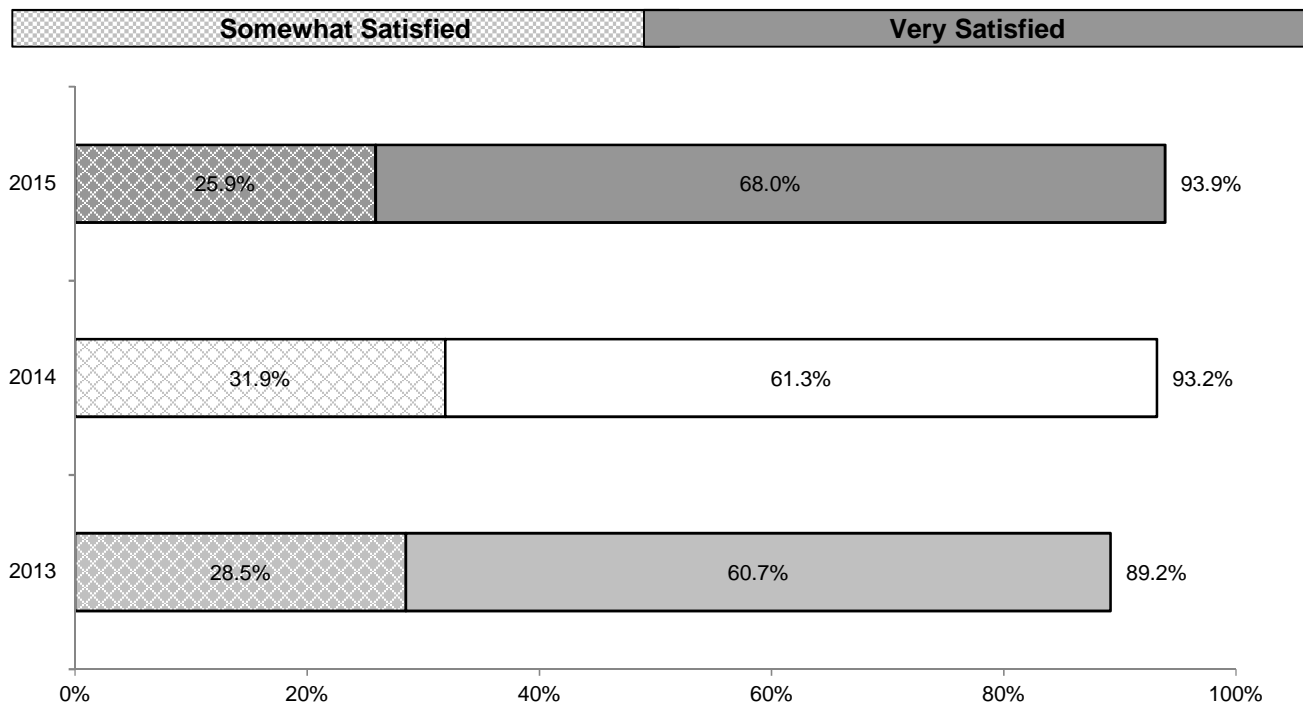
Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.



## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 14/11. How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?

### ALL RESPONDENTS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
NCA	2015	1378	68.0%	6.7%	25.9%	4.2%	1.5%	0.4%
	2014	1288	61.3%	0.6%	31.9%	5.0%	1.1%	0.7%
	2013	501	60.7%		28.5%	6.8%	3.2%	0.8%

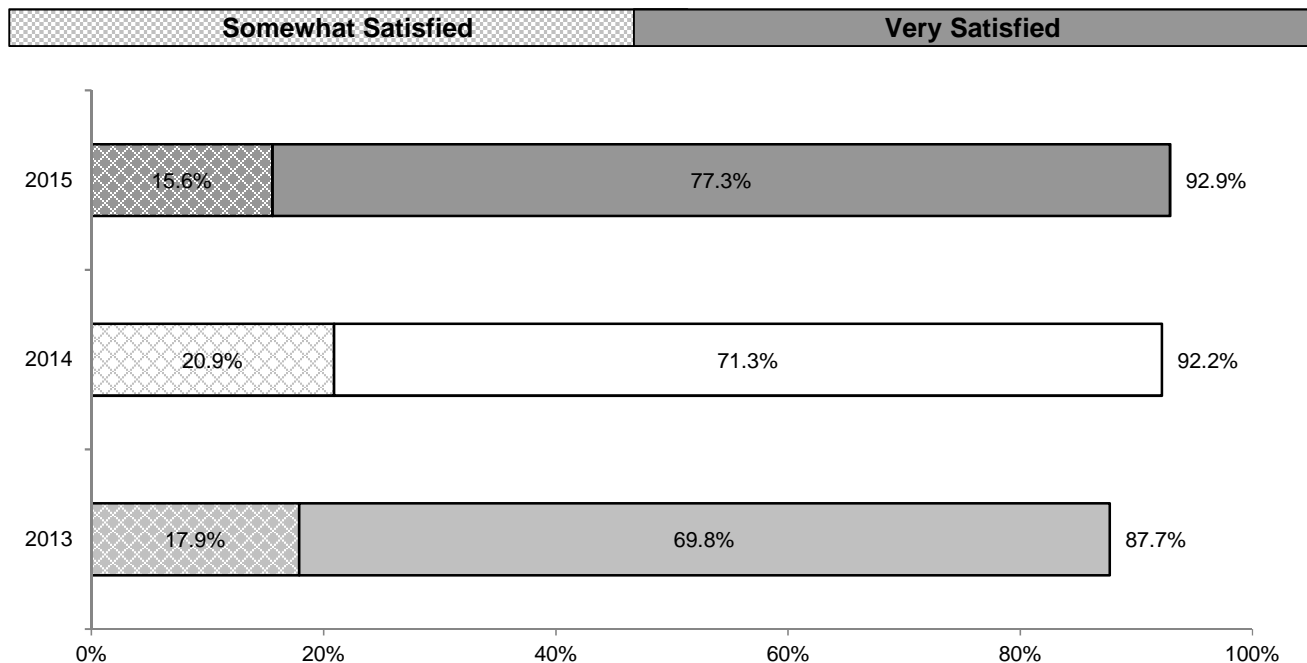
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 14/11. How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Next of Kin	2015	128	77.3%	6.0%	15.6%	1.6%	3.9%	1.6%
	2014	115	71.3%	1.5%	20.9%	4.3%	1.7%	1.7%
	2013	106	69.8%		17.9%	5.7%	3.8%	2.8%

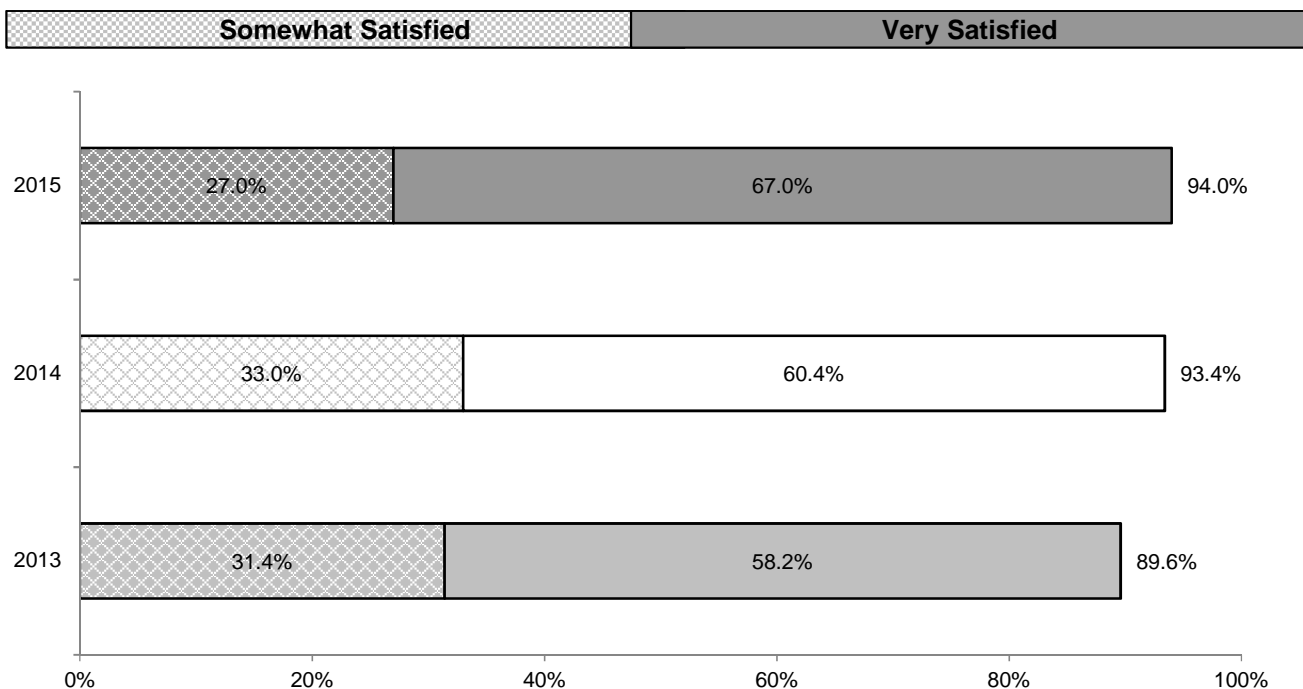
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 14/11. How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	1250	67.0%	6.6%	27.0%	4.5%	1.2%	0.3%
	2014	1173	60.4%	2.2%	33.0%	5.0%	1.0%	0.6%
	2013	395	58.2%		31.4%	7.1%	3.0%	0.3%

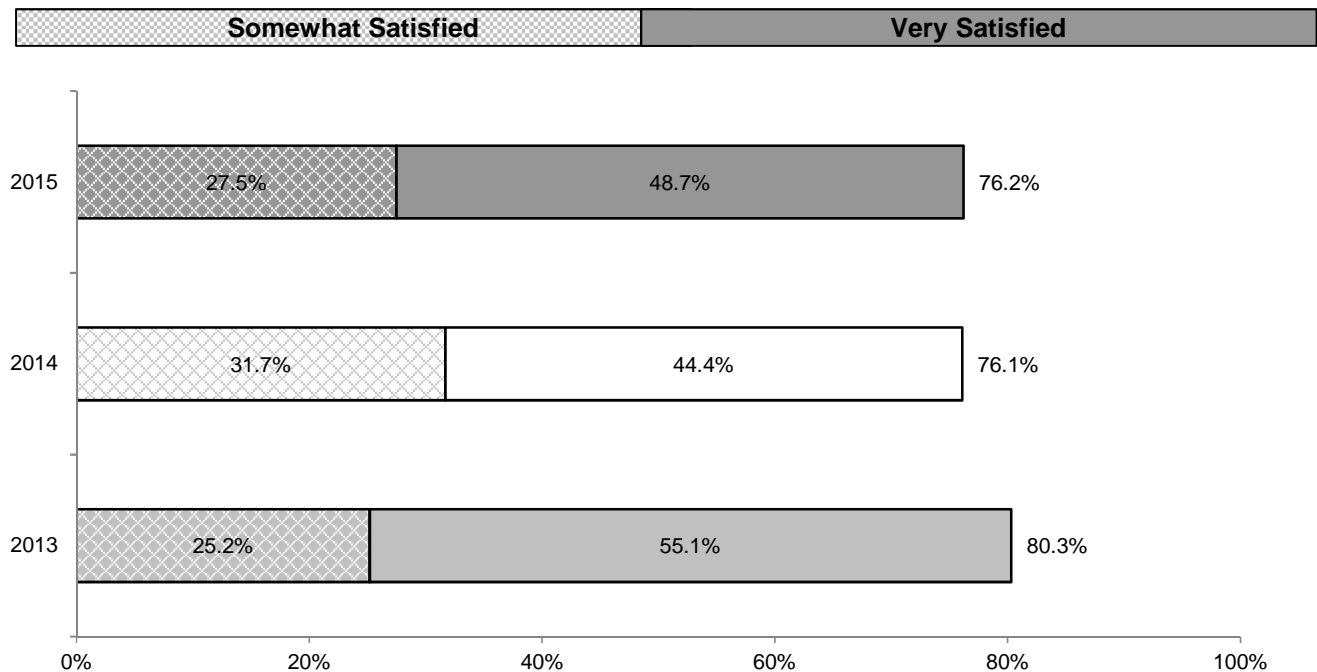
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 18/15. How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to receive the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### ALL RESPONDENTS



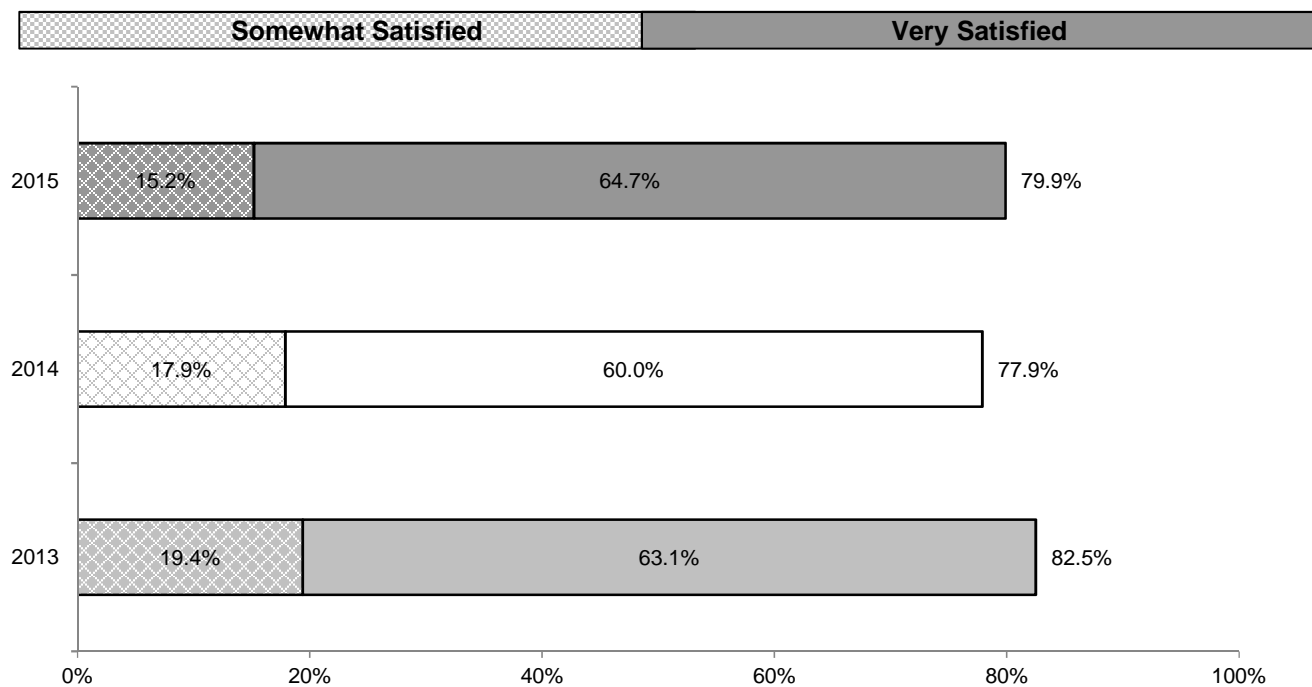
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
NCA	2015	3938	48.7%	4.3%	27.5%	16.4%	5.2%	2.3%
	2014	3586	44.4%	-10.7%	31.7%	14.8%	6.6%	2.6%
	2013	1772	55.1%		25.2%	10.6%	5.9%	3.2%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 18/15. How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to receive the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### NEXT OF KIN



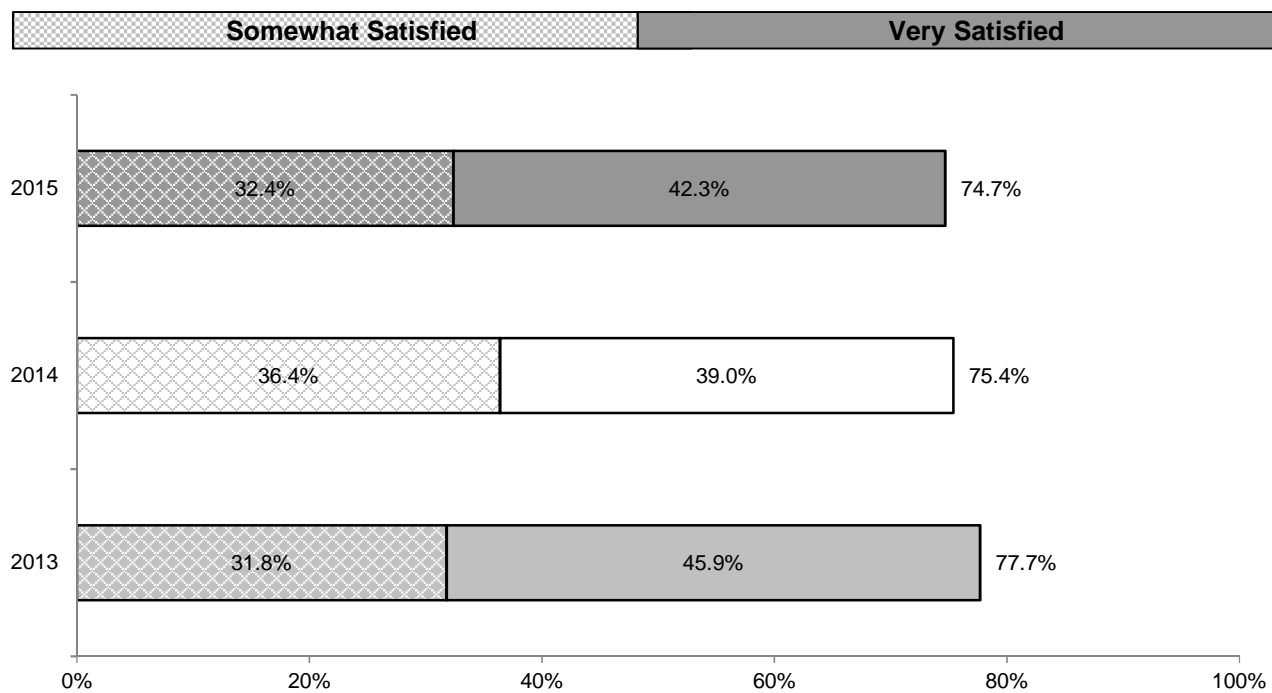
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Next of Kin	2015	1129	64.7%	4.7%	15.2%	10.5%	5.4%	4.2%
	2014	911	60.0%	-3.1%	17.9%	10.8%	7.0%	4.3%
	2013	952	63.1%		19.4%	8.2%	4.9%	4.3%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 18/15. How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to receive the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



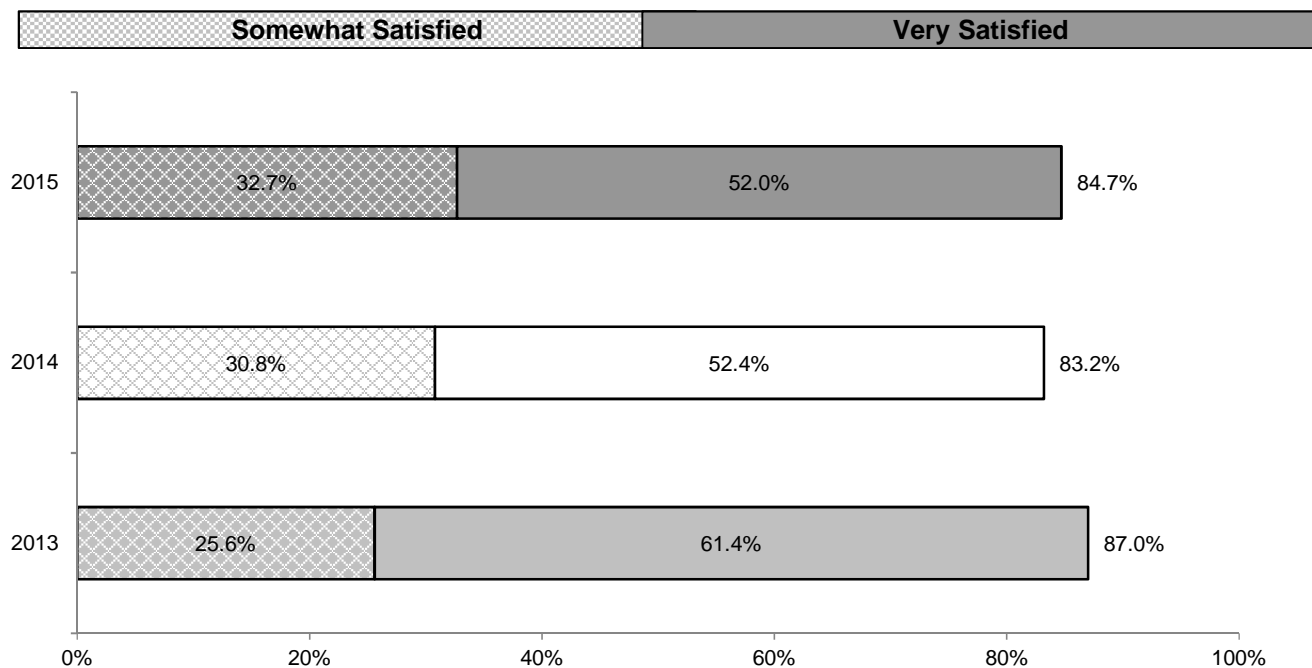
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	2809	42.3%	3.3%	32.4%	18.8%	5.1%	1.5%
	2014	2675	39.0%	-6.9%	36.4%	16.1%	6.4%	2.0%
	2013	820	45.9%		31.8%	13.4%	7.1%	1.8%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 19. How satisfied are you with the timeliness in which problems have been corrected?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	843	52.0%	-0.4%	32.7%	9.3%	3.8%	2.3%
	2014	815	52.4%	-9.0%	30.8%	11.2%	4.0%	1.6%
	2013	402	61.4%		25.6%	7.2%	4.2%	1.5%

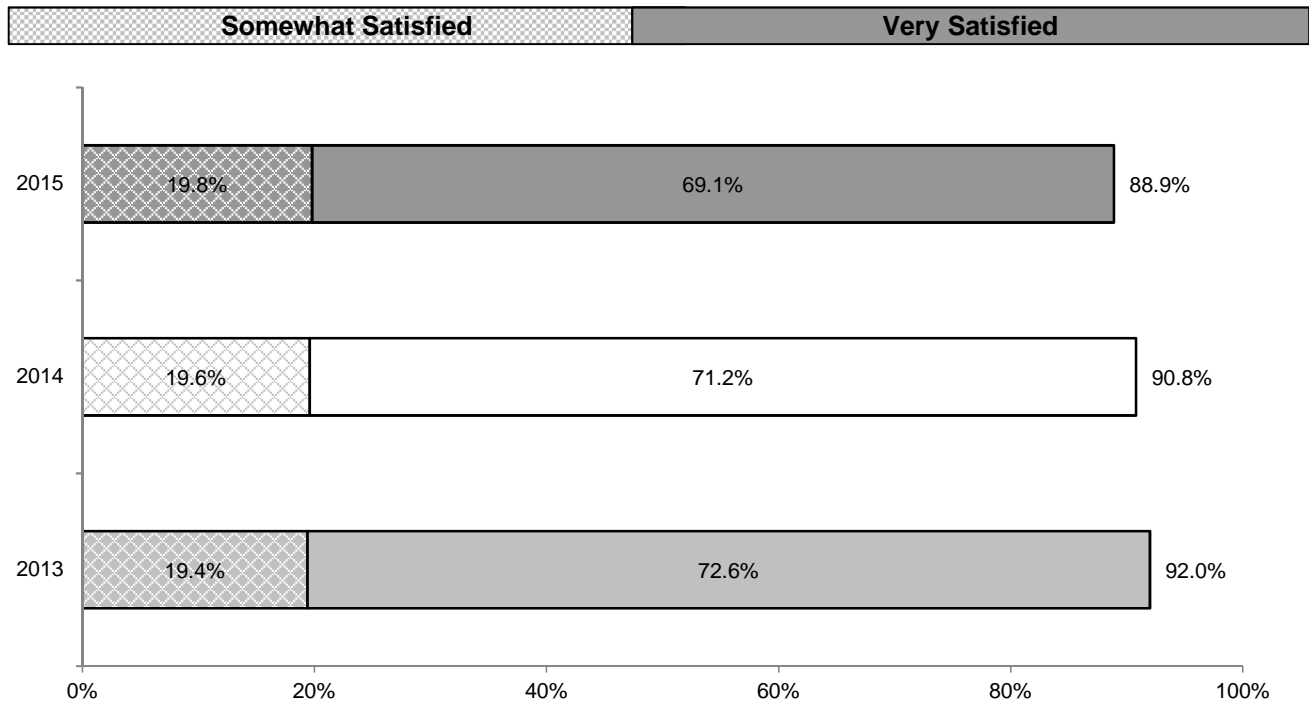
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 16 (FD) received this question.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 23/25. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services?

### ALL RESPONDENTS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
NCA	2015	3209	69.1%	-2.1%	19.8%	8.8%	1.5%	0.8%
	2014	3099	71.2%	-1.4%	19.6%	6.9%	1.5%	0.8%
	2013	1911	72.6%		19.4%	5.5%	2.0%	0.6%

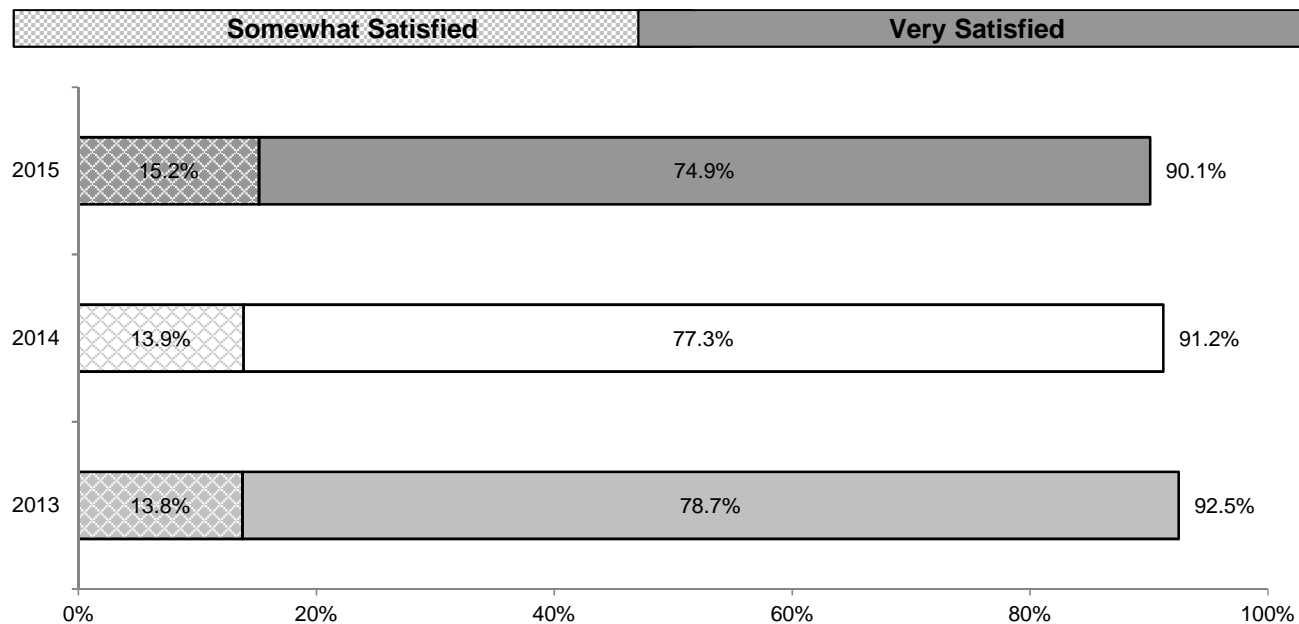
\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.



## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 23/25. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services?

### NEXT OF KIN



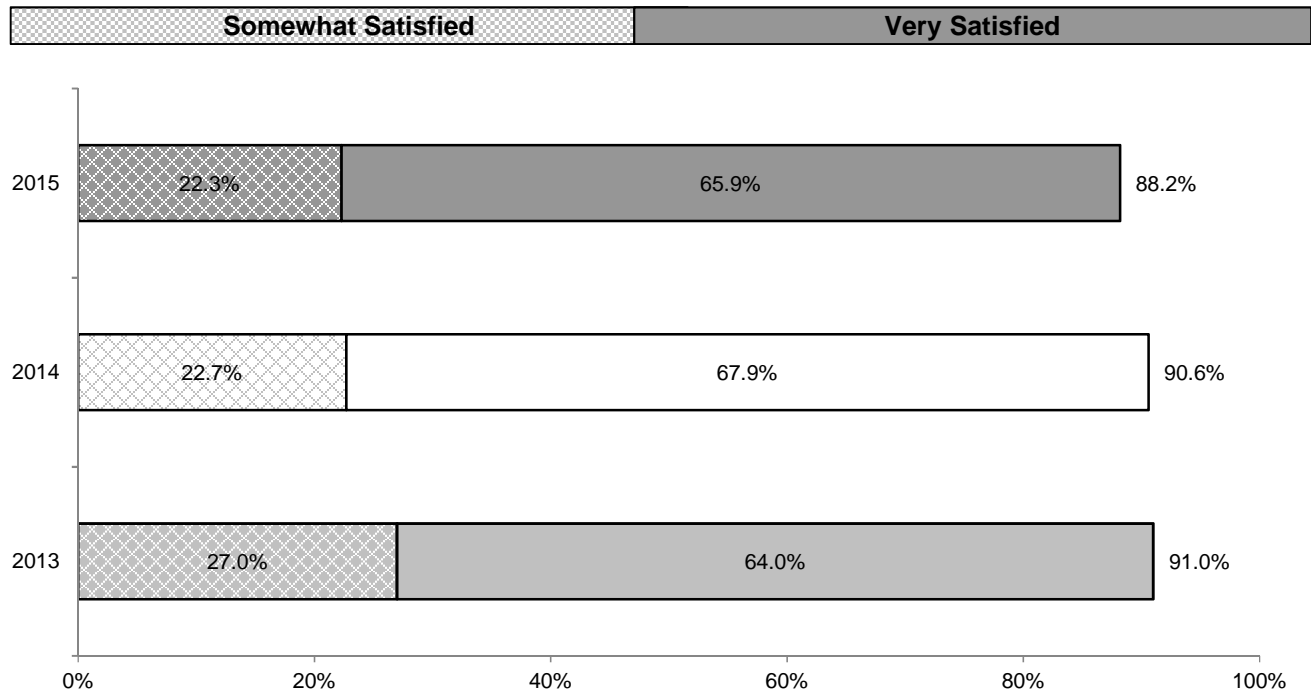
	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Next of Kin	2015	1116	74.9%	-2.4%	15.2%	6.8%	1.7%	1.3%
	2014	1100	77.3%	-1.4%	13.9%	5.5%	2.4%	0.9%
	2013	1096	78.7%		13.8%	4.4%	2.0%	1.1%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURES & KEY METRICS

Question 23/25. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Very Satisfied	*Change Score	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Funeral Directors	2015	2093	65.9%	-2.0%	22.3%	9.8%	1.4%	0.6%
	2014	1999	67.9%	3.9%	22.7%	7.6%	1.1%	0.8%
	2013	815	64.0%		27.0%	7.0%	2.0%	0.0%

\*The change scores represent the difference between the "Very Satisfied" categories for the row year and the previous year.

## **Satisfaction with Headstone/Marker/Medallion Ordering Process**

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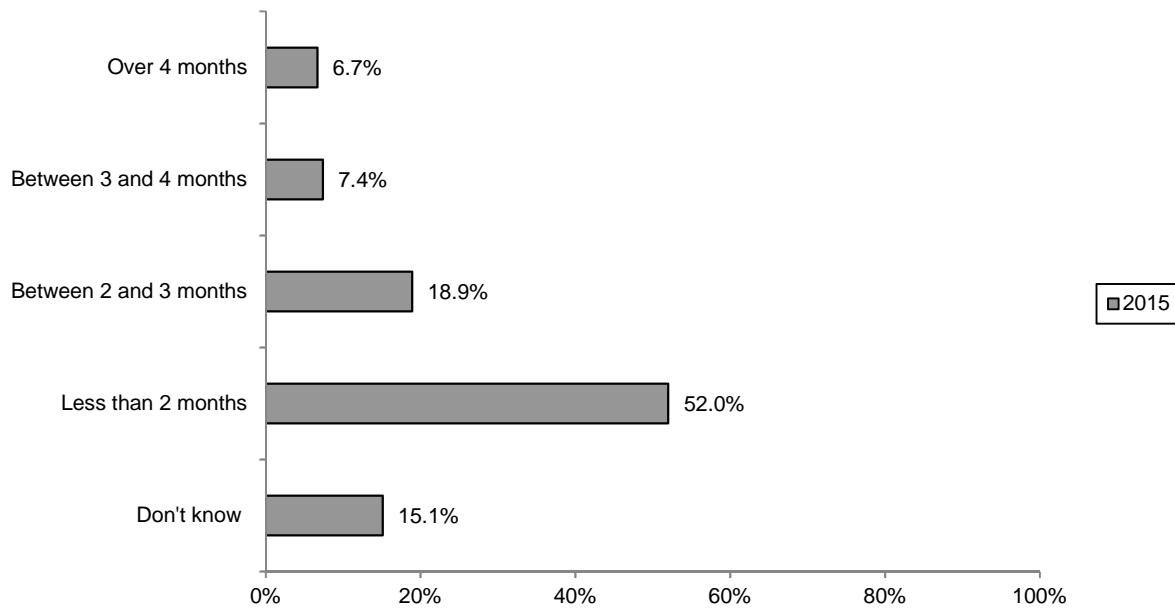
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin and funeral directors on their satisfaction with VA customer service in the ordering process of headstones, markers, and medallions.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100.

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 17/14. About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive?

### ALL RESPONDENTS

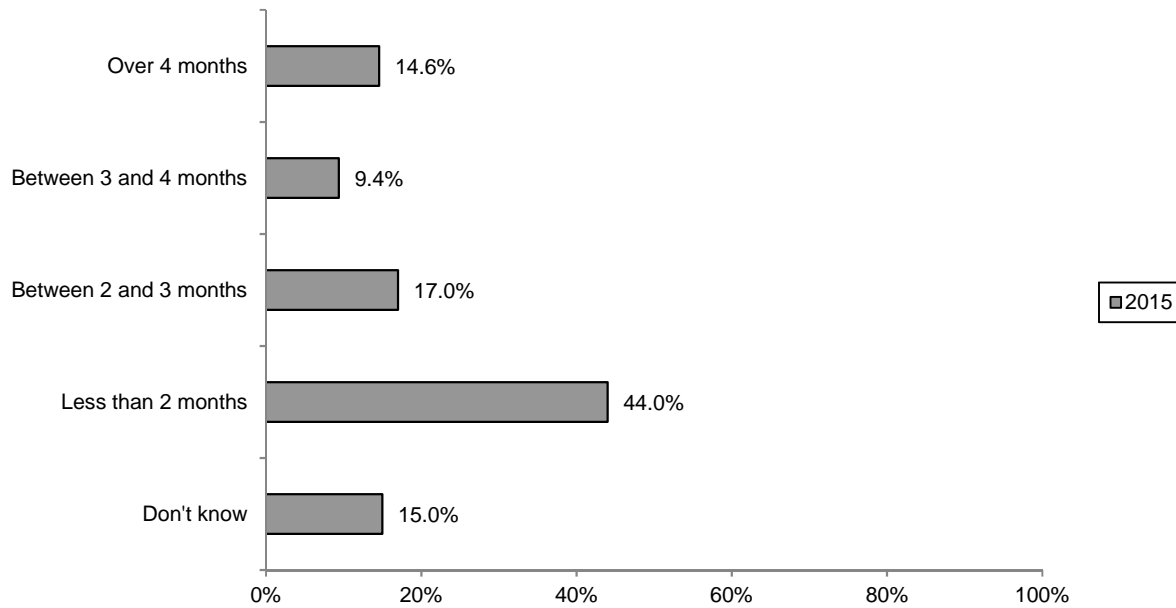


	Year	n	Don't know	Less than 2 months	Between 2 and 3 months	Between 3 and 4 months	Over 4 months
NCA	2015	3956	15.1%	52.0%	18.9%	7.4%	6.7%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 17/14. About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive?

### NEXT OF KIN

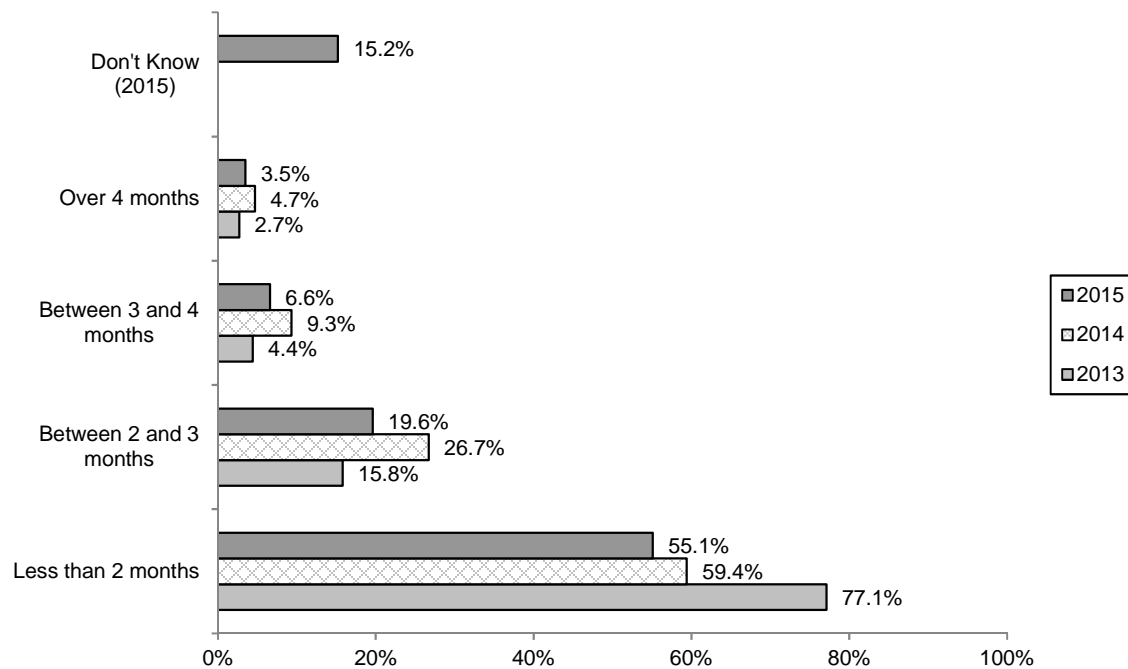


	Year	n	Don't Know	Less than 2 months	Between 2 and 3 months	Between 3 and 4 months	Over 4 months
Next of Kin	2015	1125	15.0%	44.0%	17.0%	9.4%	14.6%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 17/14. About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive? / About how long after ordering VA markers do they typically arrive?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

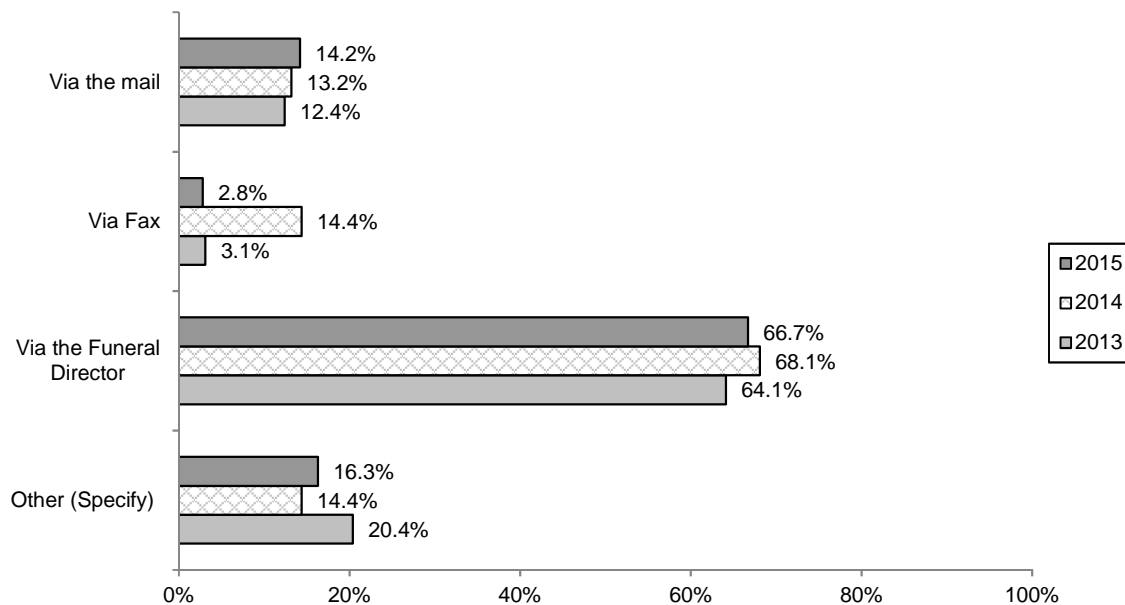


	Year	n	Don't Know (2015)	Less than 2 months	Between 2 and 3 months	Between 3 and 4 months	Over 4 months
Funeral Directors	2015	2831	15.2%	55.1%	19.6%	6.6%	3.5%
	2014	2648		59.4%	26.7%	9.3%	4.7%
	2013	804		77.1%	15.8%	4.4%	2.7%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 6. How did you order the headstone, marker, or medallion? (Mark only one)

### NEXT OF KIN



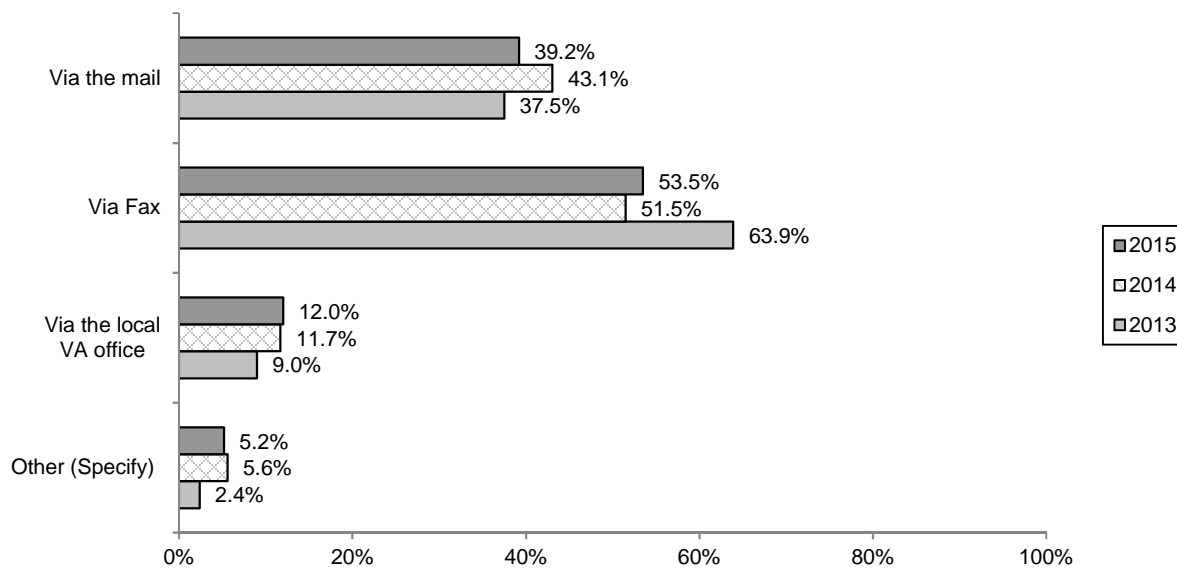
	Year	n	Via the mail	Via Fax	Via the Funeral Director	Other (Specify)
Next of Kin	2015	1094	14.2%	2.8%	66.7%	16.3%
	2014	1079	13.2%	14.4%	68.1%	14.4%
	2013	1111	12.4%	3.1%	64.1%	20.4%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 3. How do you typically order VA headstones, markers, or medallions?

(Mark all that apply)

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



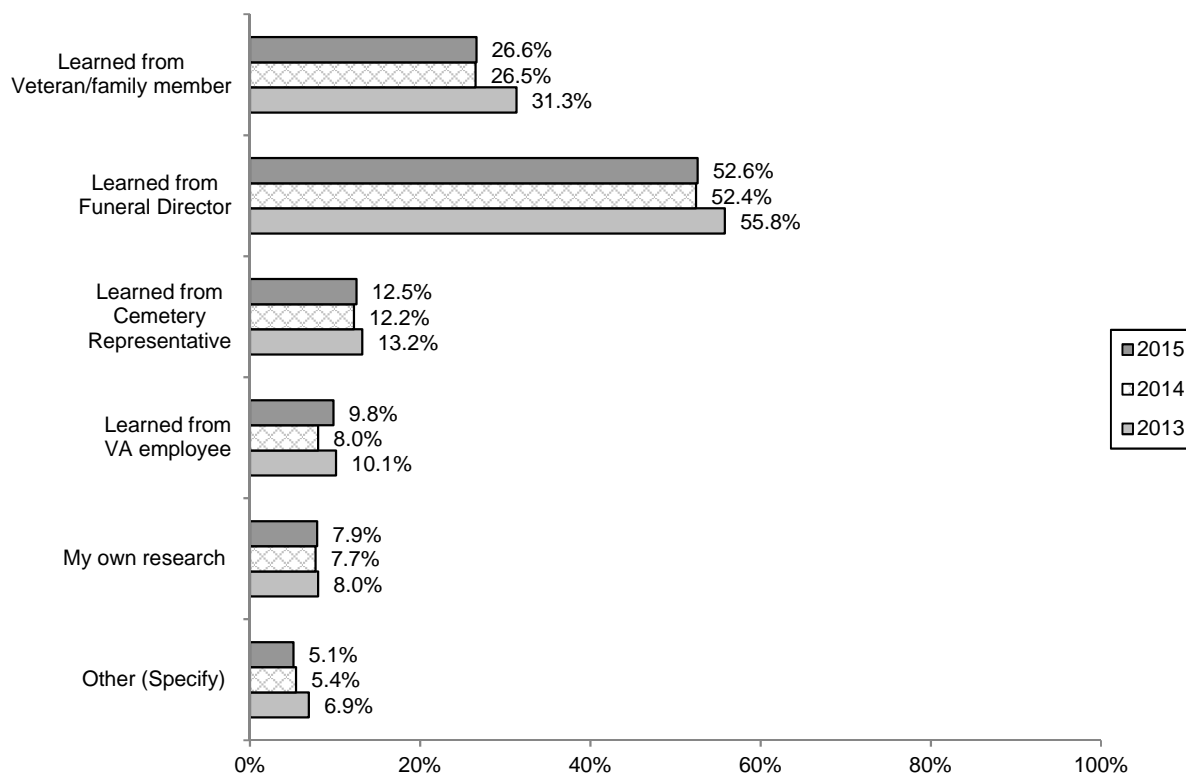
	Year	n	Via the mail	Via Fax	Via the local VA office	Other (Specify)
Funeral Directors	2015	2846	39.2%	53.5%	12.0%	5.2%
	2014	2729	43.1%	51.5%	11.7%	5.6%
	2013	822	37.5%	63.9%	9.0%	2.4%



## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

**Question 1. How did you learn about the headstone, marker, medallion benefit provided by the VA? (Mark all that apply)**

### NEXT OF KIN

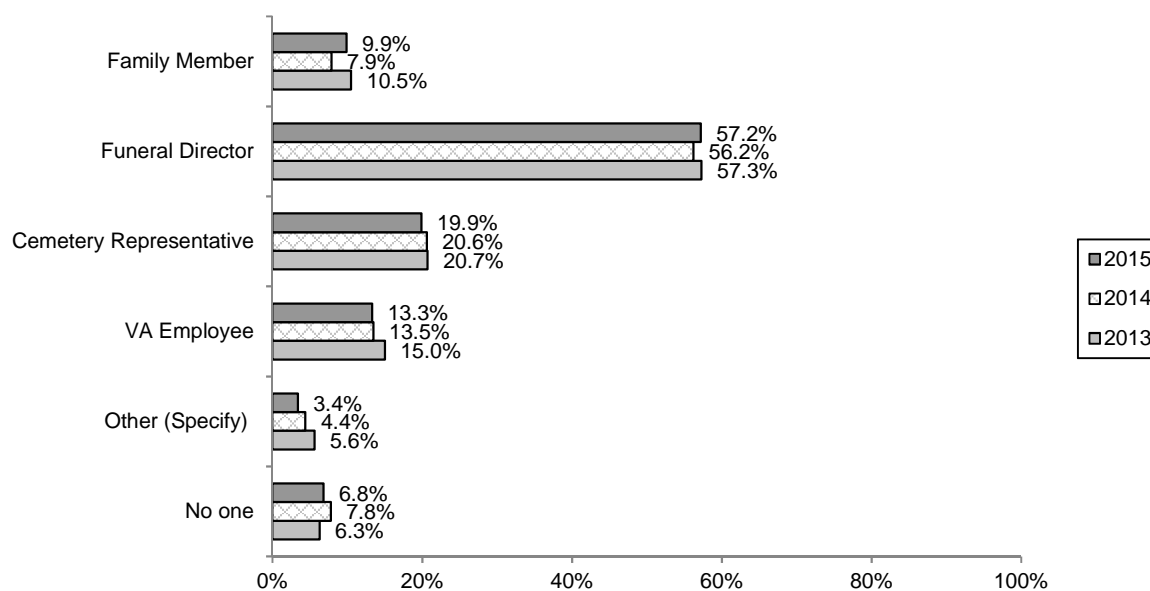


	Year	n	Learned from Veteran/family member	Learned from Funeral Director	Learned from Cemetery Representative	Learned from VA employee	My own research	Other (Specify)
Next of Kin	2015	1140	26.6%	52.6%	12.5%	9.8%	7.9%	5.1%
	2014	1139	26.5%	52.4%	12.2%	8.0%	7.7%	5.4%
	2013	1120	31.3%	55.8%	13.2%	10.1%	8.0%	6.9%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 5. Who helped you with ordering the headstone/marker/medallion? (Mark all that apply)

### NEXT OF KIN

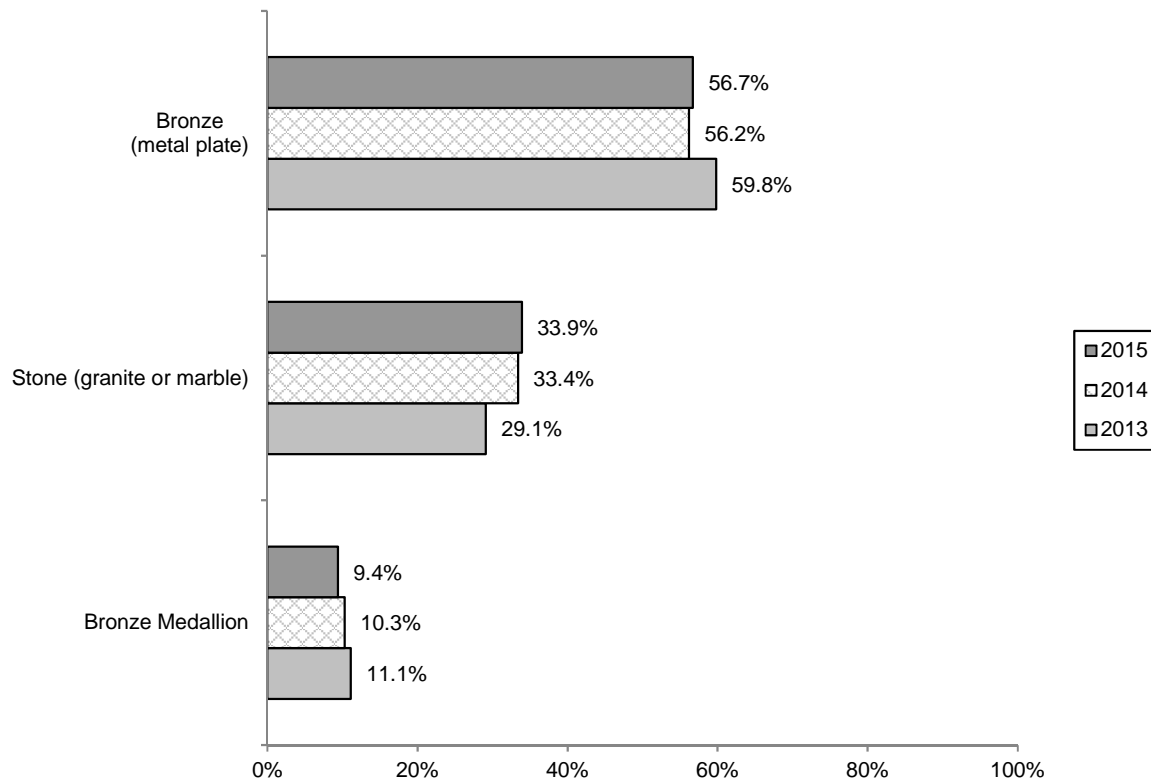


	Year	n	Family Member	Funeral Director	Cemetery Representative	VA Employee	Other (Specify)	No one
Next of Kin	2015	1137	9.9%	57.2%	19.9%	13.3%	3.4%	6.8%
	2014	1135	7.9%	56.2%	20.6%	13.5%	4.4%	7.8%
	2013	1124	10.5%	57.3%	20.7%	15.0%	5.6%	6.3%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 2. What type of headstone, marker, or medallion did you order?

### NEXT OF KIN

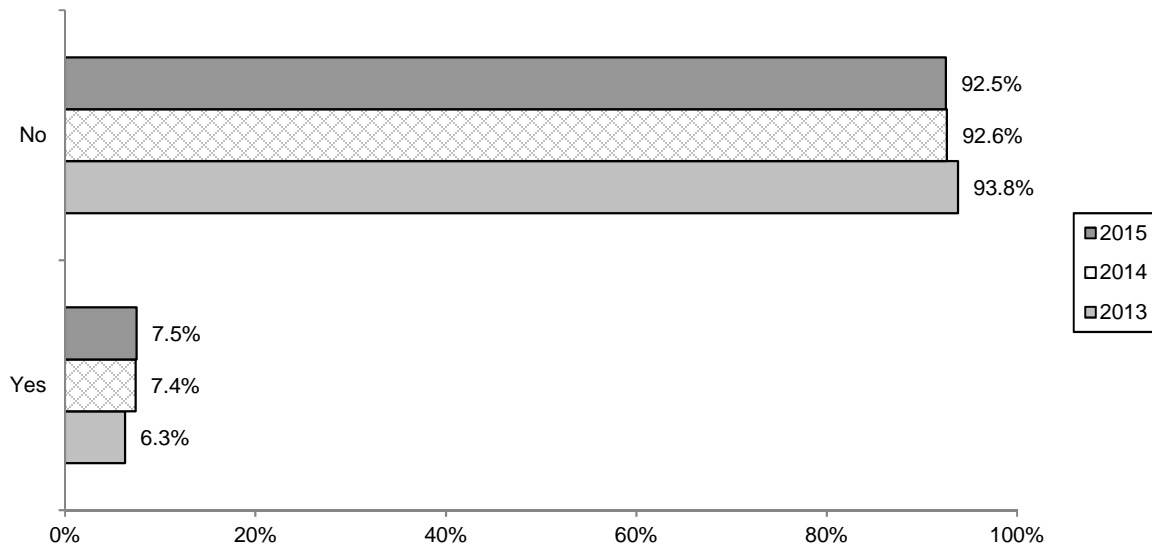


	Year	n	Bronze (metal plate)	Stone (granite or marble)	Bronze Medallion
Next of Kin	2015	1090	56.7%	33.9%	9.4%
	2014	1083	56.2%	33.4%	10.3%
	2013	1061	59.8%	29.1%	11.1%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

**Question 3. Did you have any problems while affixing the Bronze Medallion to the headstone or markers?**

### NEXT OF KIN



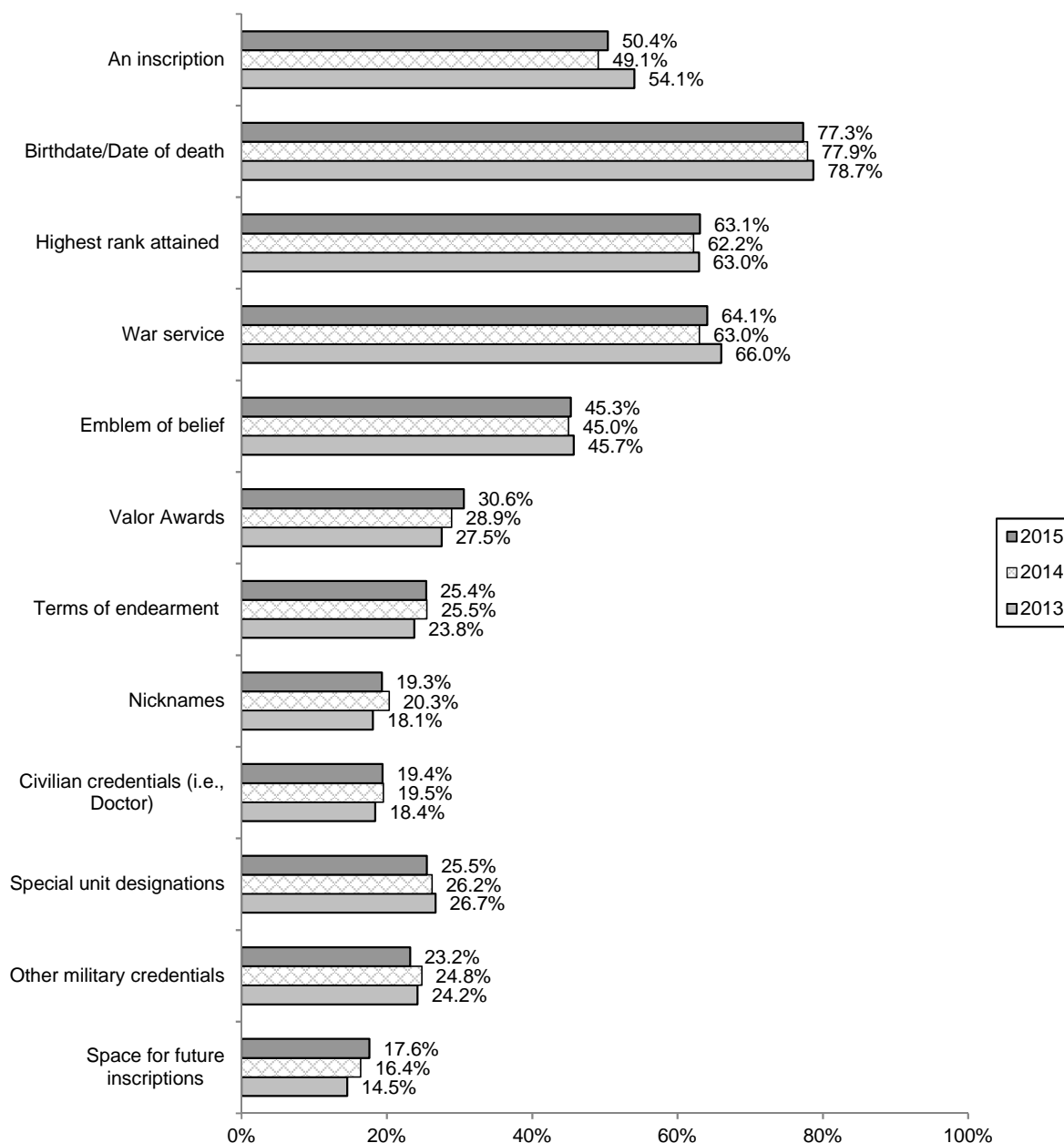
	Year	n	No	Yes
Next of Kin	2015	80	92.5%	7.5%
	2014	81	92.6%	7.4%
	2013	128	93.8%	6.3%

Only respondents that indicated "Bronze Medallion" to Question 2 (NoK) received this question.

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

**Question 15. When you were applying for the headstone, marker, or medallion, were you aware that the following items could be added to the headstone, marker, or medallion?**

### NEXT OF KIN

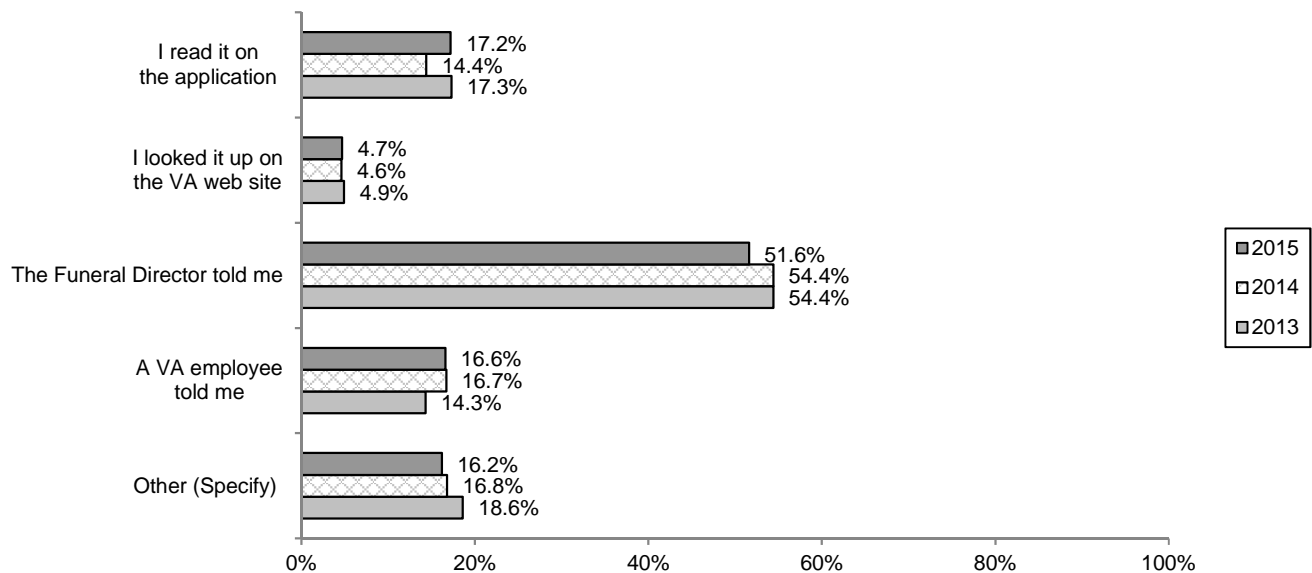


	Item	2015		2014		2013	
		n	% Yes	n	% Yes	n	% Yes
Next of Kin	An inscription	995	50.4%	973	49.1%	950	54.1%
	Birthdate/Date of death	1029	77.3%	1007	77.9%	1042	78.7%
	Highest rank attained	997	63.1%	963	62.2%	1023	63.0%
	War service	985	64.1%	961	63.0%	1001	66.0%
	Emblem of belief	943	45.3%	913	45.0%	971	45.7%
	Valor Awards	923	30.6%	882	28.9%	941	27.5%
	Terms of endearment	929	25.4%	907	25.5%	950	23.8%
	Nicknames	917	19.3%	896	20.3%	946	18.1%
	Civilian credentials (i.e., Doctor)	902	19.4%	871	19.5%	924	18.4%
	Special unit designations	920	25.5%	882	26.2%	940	26.7%
	Other military credentials	922	23.2%	884	24.8%	941	24.2%
	Space for future inscriptions	919	17.6%	892	16.4%	780	14.5%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

**Question 16. If you were aware of the availability of an inscription, how did you learn about what could be included in the inscription? (Mark all that apply)**

### NEXT OF KIN

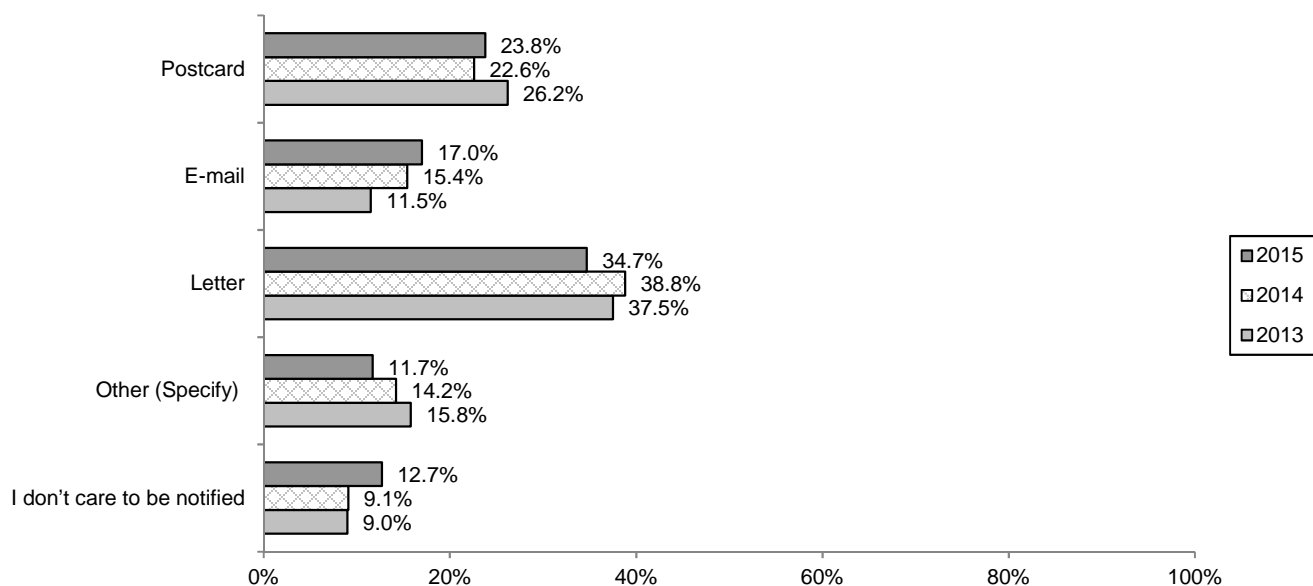


	Year	n	I read it on the application	I looked it up on the VA web site	The Funeral Director told me	A VA employee told me	Other (Specify)
Next of Kin	2015	699	17.2%	4.7%	51.6%	16.6%	16.2%
	2014	713	14.4%	4.6%	54.4%	16.7%	16.8%
	2013	715	17.3%	4.9%	54.4%	14.3%	18.6%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 19. How would you have preferred to be notified about the delivery status of your headstone, marker or medallion?

### NEXT OF KIN

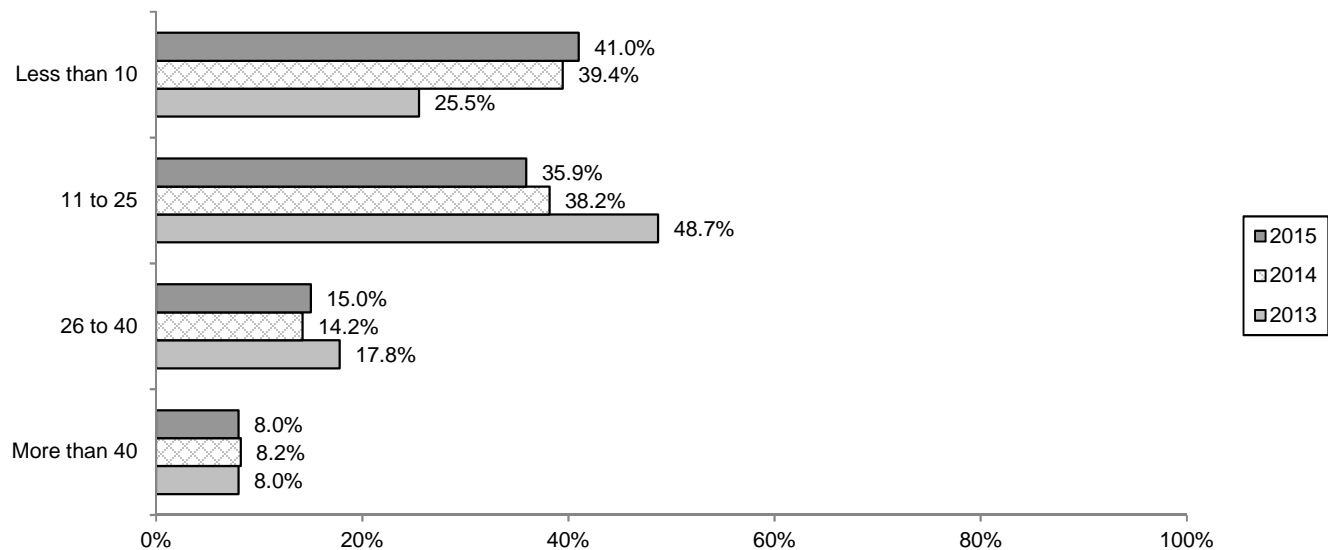


	Year	n	Postcard	E-mail	Letter	Other (Specify)	I don't care to be notified
Next of Kin	2015	1022	23.8%	17.0%	34.7%	11.7%	12.7%
	2014	1002	22.6%	15.4%	38.8%	14.2%	9.1%
	2013	984	26.2%	11.5%	37.5%	15.8%	9.0%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

**Question 1. On average, about how many VA headstones, markers, and medallions do you/your company order in a year?**

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



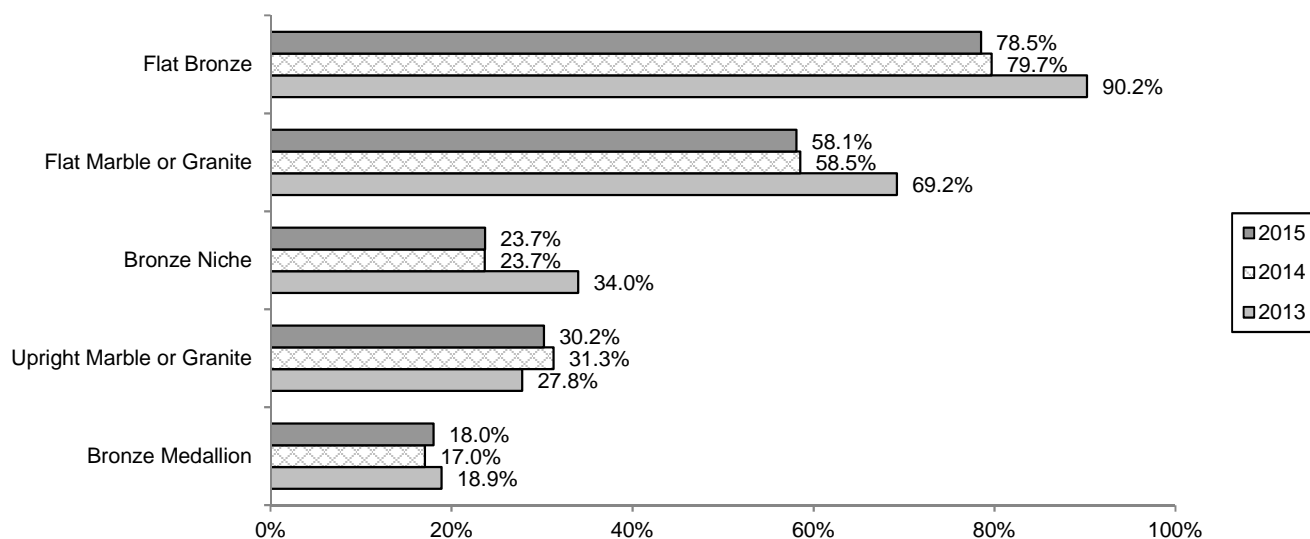
	Year	n	Less than 10	11 to 25	26 to 40	More than 40
Funeral Directors	2015	2912	41.0%	35.9%	15.0%	8.0%
	2014	2804	39.4%	38.2%	14.2%	8.2%
	2013	821	25.5%	48.7%	17.8%	8.0%



## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 2: Please indicate the type/types of VA headstones/markers/medallions you/your company ordered. (Mark all that apply)

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

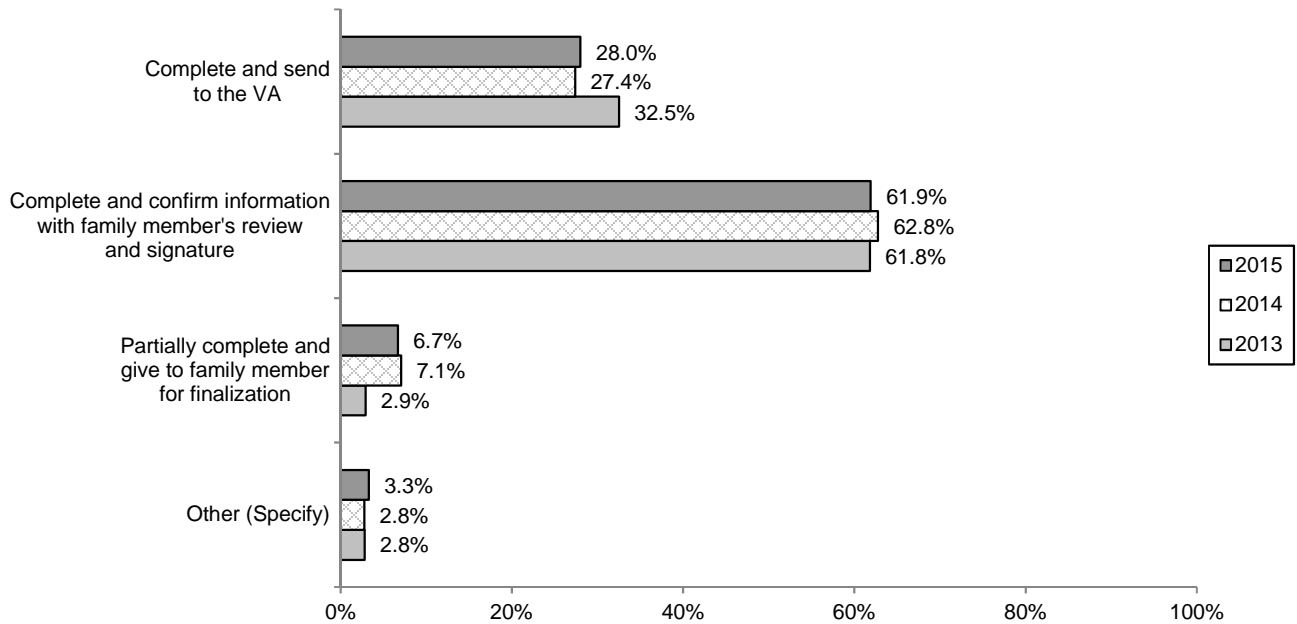


	Year	n	Bronze Medallion	Upright Marble or Granite	Bronze Niche	Flat Marble or Granite	Flat Bronze
Funeral Directors	2015	2859	18.0%	30.2%	23.7%	58.1%	78.5%
	2014	2741	17.0%	31.3%	23.7%	58.5%	79.7%
	2013	824	18.9%	27.8%	34.0%	69.2%	90.2%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 12. When completing an application for a VA headstone, marker, or medallion, do you typically: (Mark all that apply)

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

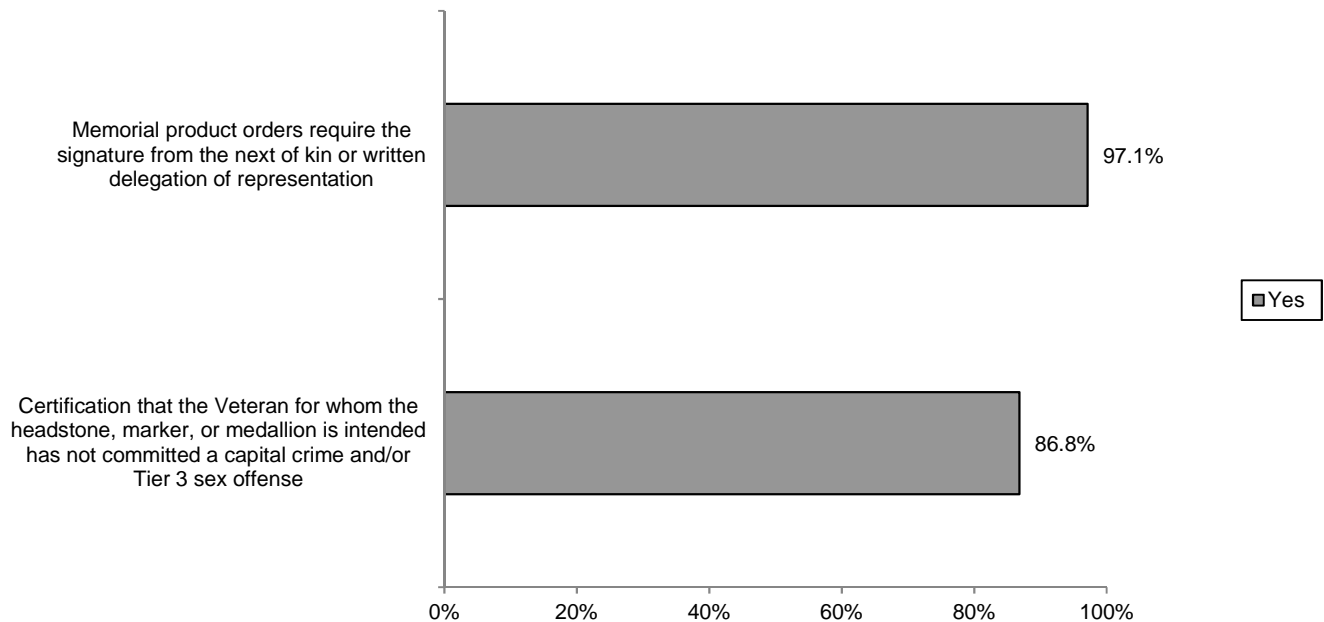


	Year	n	Complete and send to the VA	Complete and confirm information with family member's review and signature	Partially complete and give to family member for finalization	Other (Specify)
Funeral Directors	2015	2779	28.0%	61.9%	6.7%	3.3%
	2014	2698	27.4%	62.8%	7.1%	2.8%
	2013	796	32.5%	61.8%	2.9%	2.8%

## SATISFACTION WITH HEADSTONE/MARKER/MEDALLION ORDERING PROCESS

Question 13. Are you aware of the following requirements?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS (2015)



	Response	n	% Yes	% No
Funeral Directors	Memorial product orders require the signature from the next of kin or written delegation of representation	2798	97.1%	2.9%
	Certification that the Veteran for whom the headstone, marker, or medallion is intended has not committed a capital crime and/or Tier 3 sex offense	2834	86.8%	13.2%

## **Satisfaction with Information on VA Website**

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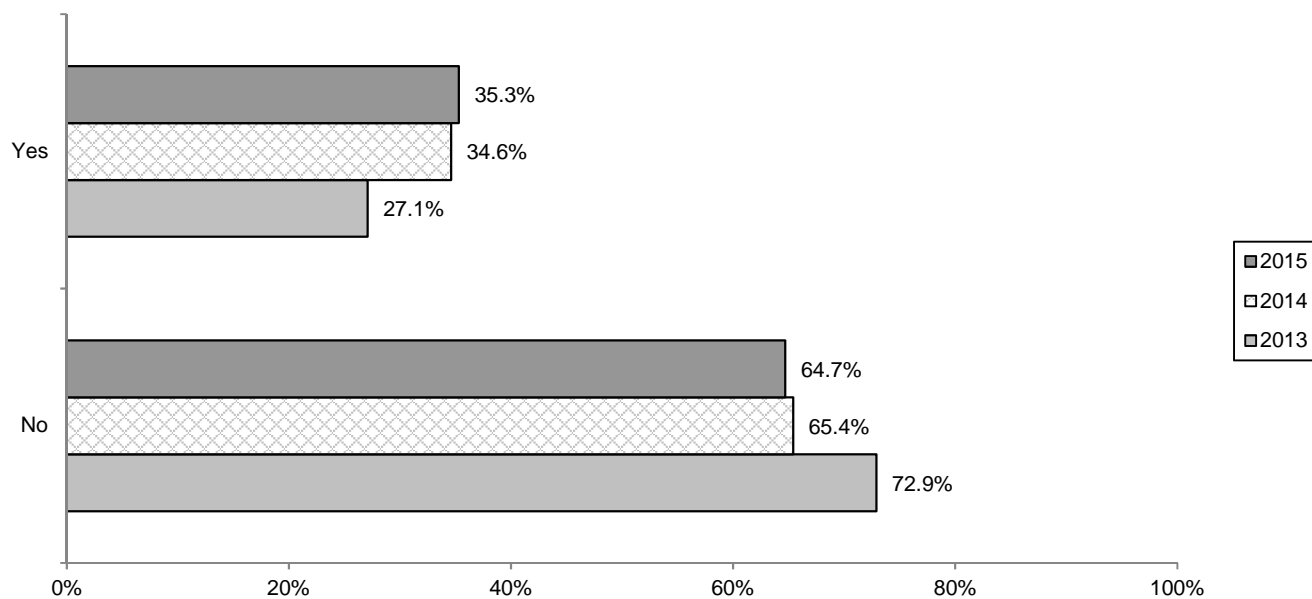
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin on their satisfaction with the information they receive through the VA Website.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100.

## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 12/9. Did you visit the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker or medallion?/ Have you visited the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### ALL RESPONDENTS

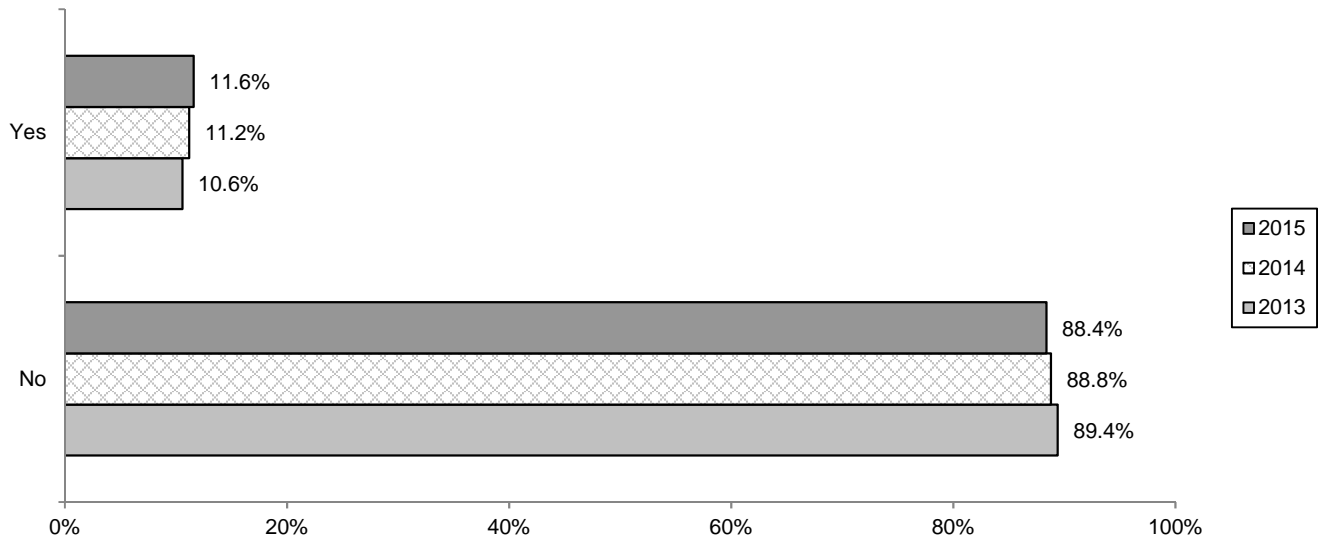


	Year	n	Yes	No
NCA	2015	3963	35.3%	64.7%
	2014	3829	34.6%	65.4%
	2013	1919	27.1%	72.9%

## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 12/9. Did you visit the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker or medallion?/Have you visited the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### NEXT OF KIN

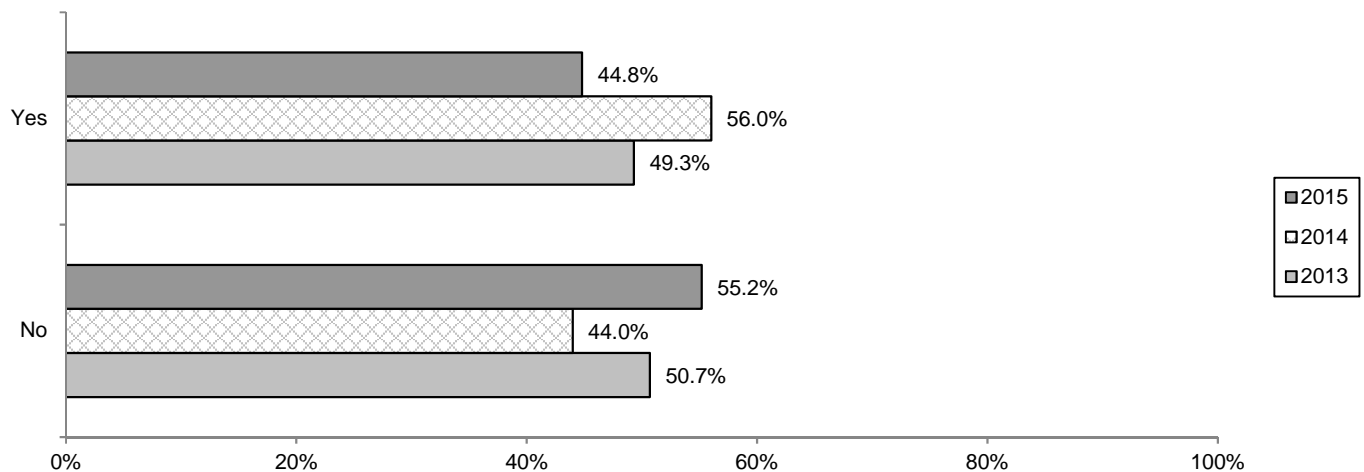


Next of Kin	Year	n	Yes	No
	2015	1138	11.6%	88.4%
	2014	1103	11.2%	88.8%
	2013	1099	10.6%	89.4%

## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 12/9. Did you visit the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker or medallion?/Have you visited the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

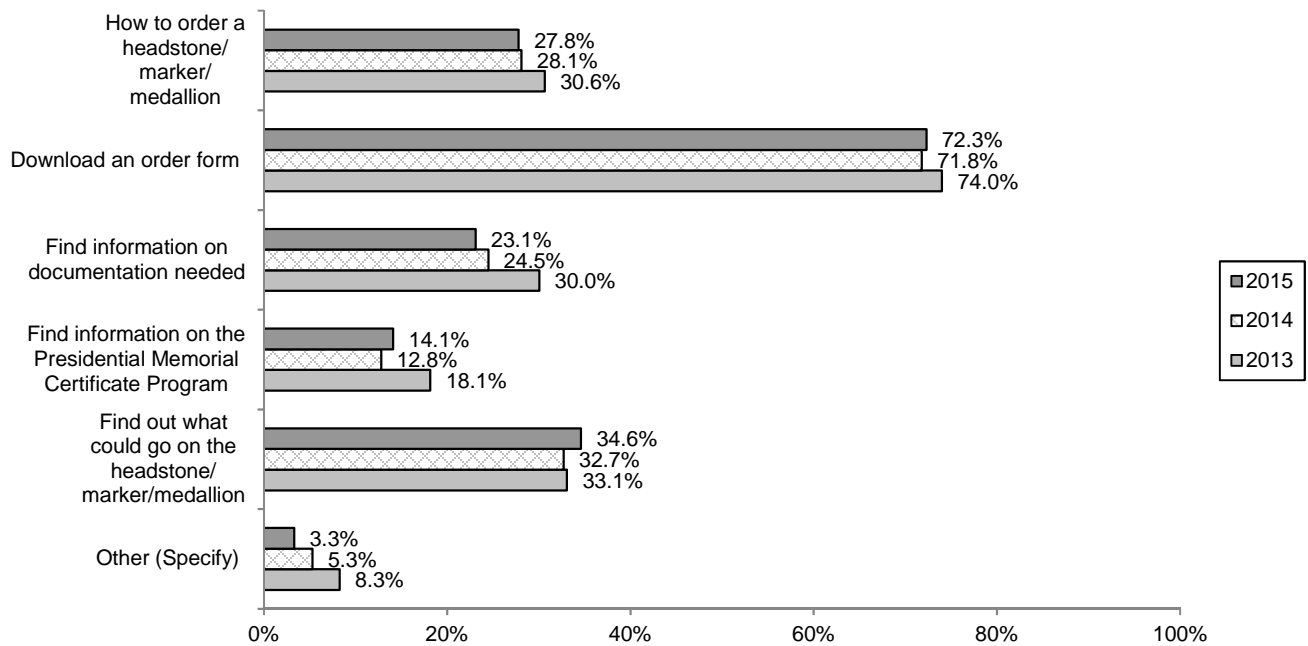


	Year	n	Yes	No
Funeral Directors	2015	2825	44.8%	55.2%
	2014	2726	56.0%	44.0%
	2013	820	49.3%	50.7%

## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 13/10. What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)

### ALL RESPONDENTS



	Year	n	How to order a headstone/ marker/ medallion	Download an order form	Find information on documentation needed	Find information on the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program	Find out what could go on the headstone/ marker/medallion	Other (Specify)
NCA	2015	1361	27.8%	72.3%	23.1%	14.1%	34.6%	3.3%
	2014	1283	28.1%	71.8%	24.5%	12.8%	32.7%	5.3%
	2013	496	30.6%	74.0%	30.0%	18.1%	33.1%	8.3%

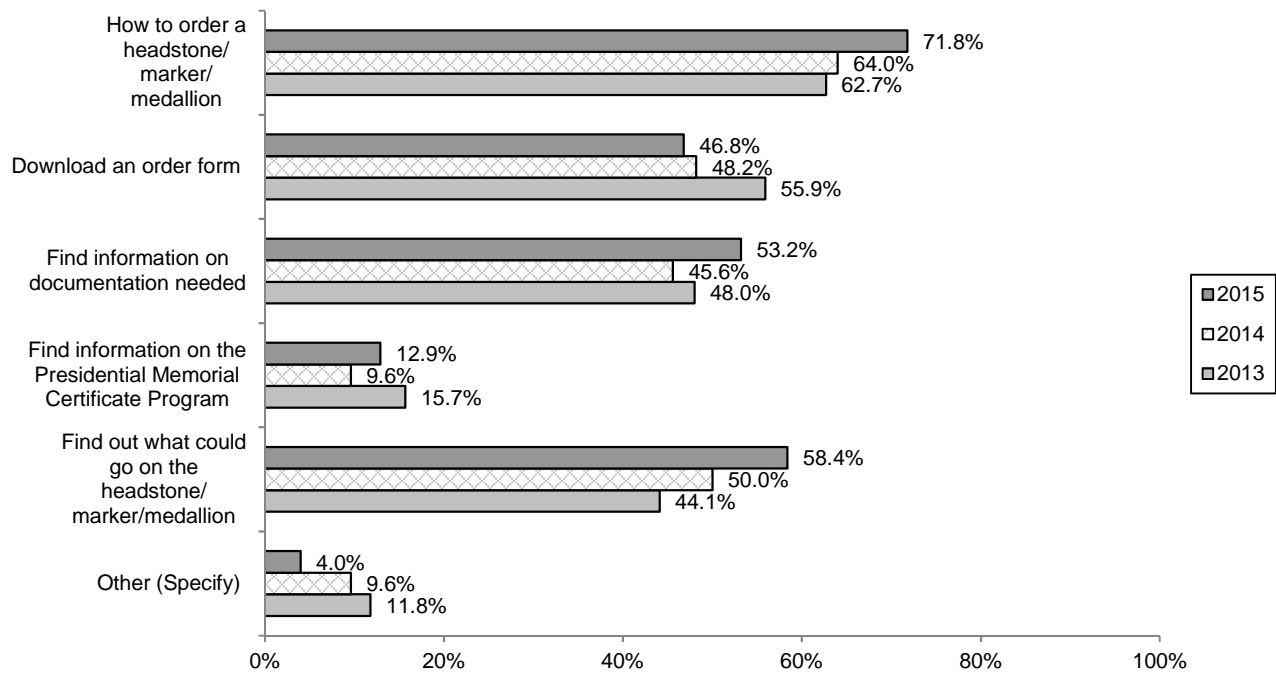
Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.



## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 13/10. What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)

### NEXT OF KIN



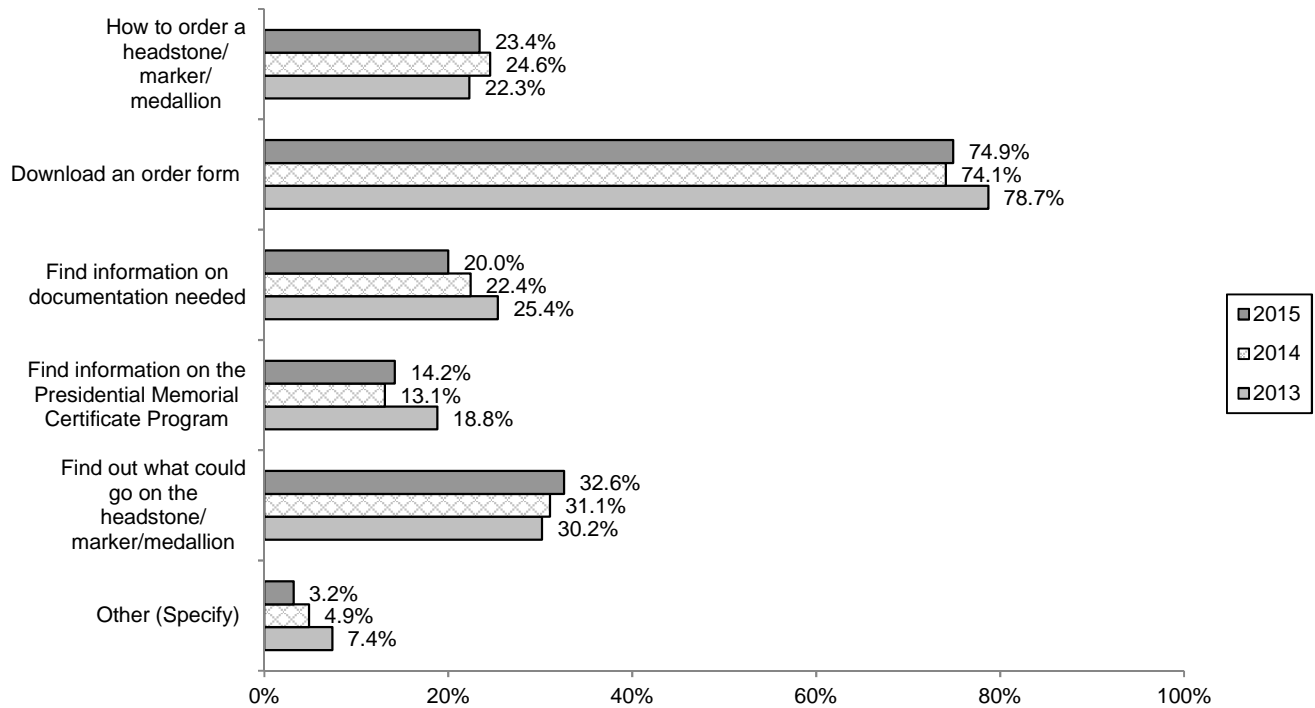
	Year	n	How to order a headstone/ marker/ medallion	Download an order form	Find information on documentation needed	Find information on the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program	Find out what could go on the headstone/ marker/medallion	Other (Specify)
Next of Kin	2015	124	71.8%	46.8%	53.2%	12.9%	58.4%	4.0%
	2014	114	64.0%	48.2%	45.6%	9.6%	50.0%	9.6%
	2013	102	62.7%	55.9%	48.0%	15.7%	44.1%	11.8%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.

## SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ON THE VA WEBSITE

Question 13/10. What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	How to order a headstone/marker/medallion	Download an order form	Find information on documentation needed	Find information on the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program	Find out what could go on the headstone/marker/medallion	Other (Specify)
Funeral Directors	2015	1237	23.4%	74.9%	20.0%	14.2%	32.6%	3.2%
	2014	1169	24.6%	74.1%	22.4%	13.1%	31.1%	4.9%
	2013	394	22.3%	78.7%	25.4%	18.8%	30.2%	7.4%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 12/9 received this question.

## **Satisfaction with 800 Number Assistance**

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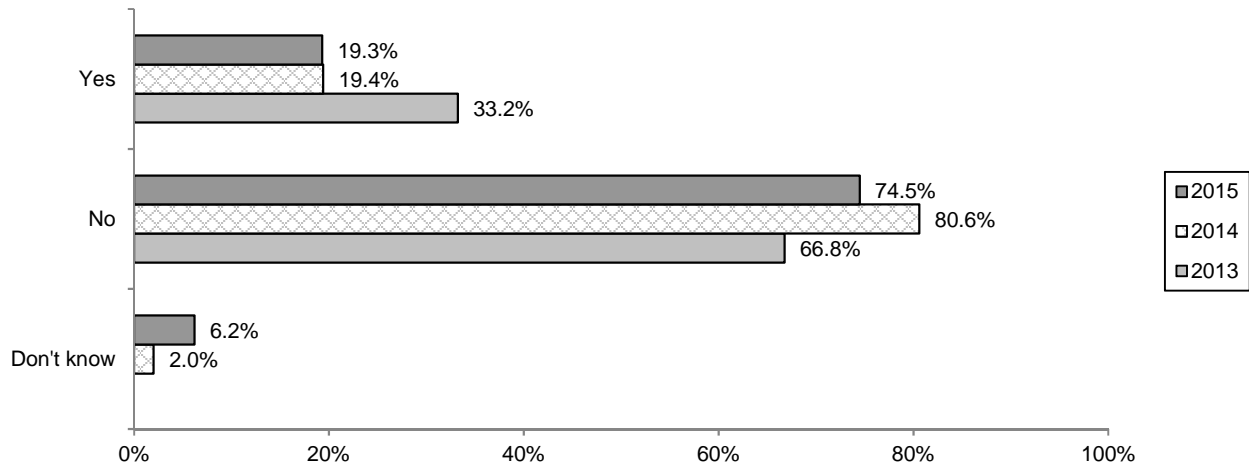
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin and funeral directors on their satisfaction with information and assistance received from VA's 800 number.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100.

## SATISFACTION WITH 800 NUMBER ASSISTANCE

**Question 8/5. Did you call the NCA Applicant Assistance number (1-800-697-6947) for assistance with a headstone, marker, or medallion?**

### ALL RESPONDENTS

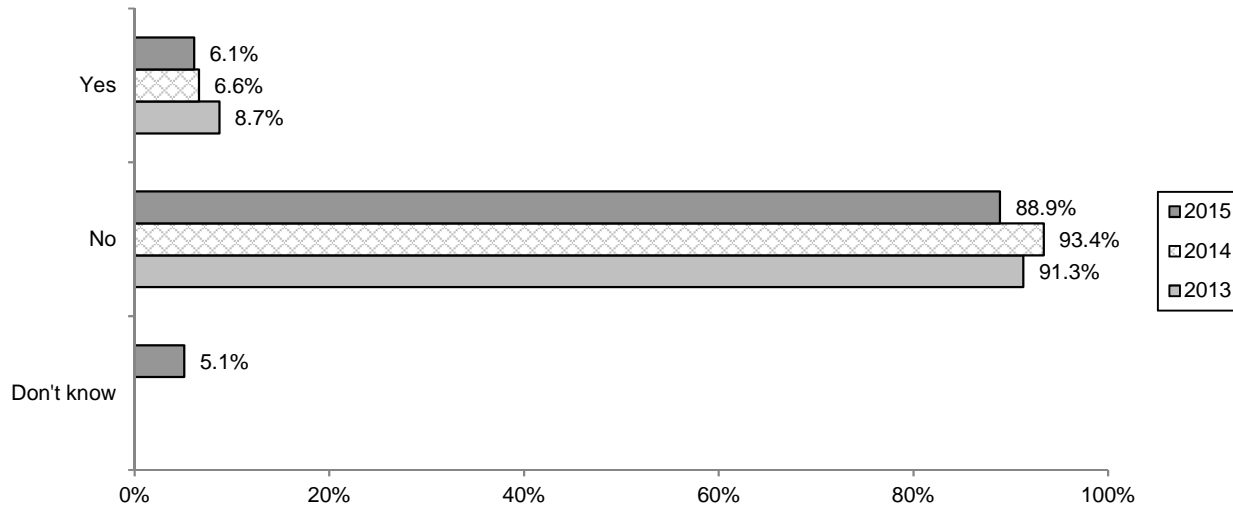


	Year	n	Yes	No	Don't know
NCA	2015	3978	19.3%	74.5%	6.2%
	2014	3849	19.4%	80.6%	2.0%
	2013	1934	33.2%	66.8%	0.0%

## SATISFACTION WITH 800 NUMBER ASSISTANCE

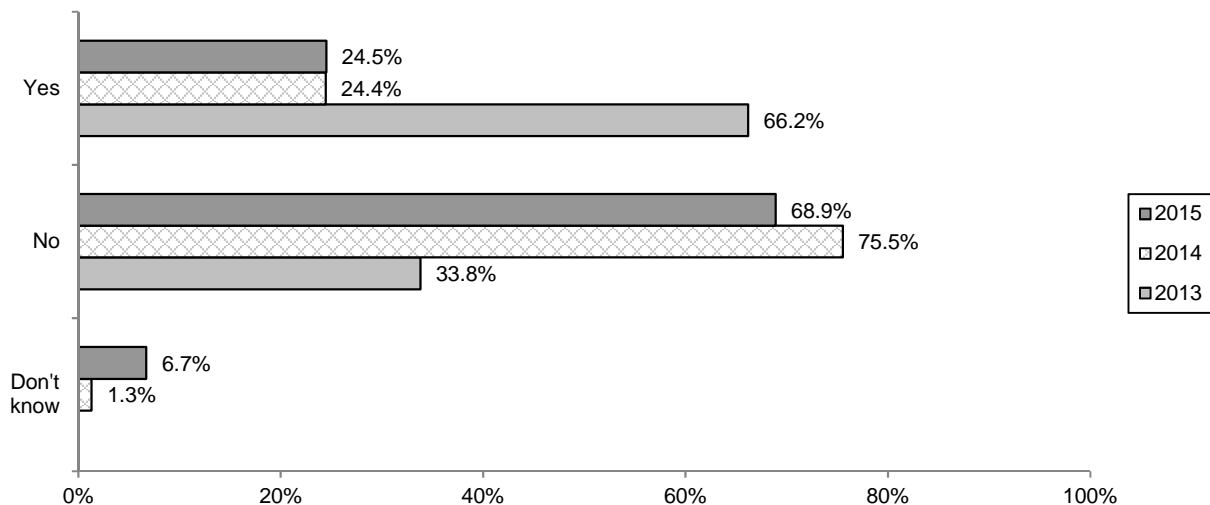
**Question 8/5. Did you call the NCA Applicant Assistance number (1-800-697-6947) for assistance with a headstone, marker, or medallion?**

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Yes	No	Don't know
Next of Kin	2015	1122	6.1%	88.9%	5.1%
	2014	1098	6.6%	93.4%	0.0%
	2013	1109	8.7%	91.3%	0.0%

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

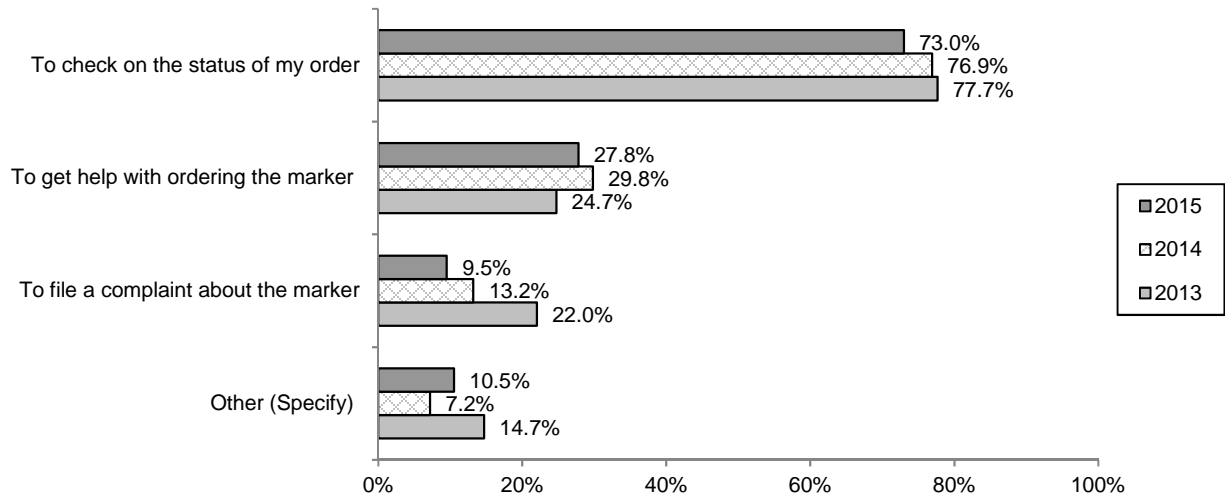


	Year	n	Yes	No	Don't know
Funeral Directors	2015	2856	24.5%	68.9%	6.7%
	2014	2751	24.4%	75.5%	1.3%
	2013	825	66.2%	33.8%	0.0%

## REASONS FOR CALLING 800 NUMBER

Question 10/7. Why did you call the NCA?(Mark all that apply)

### ALL RESPONDENTS



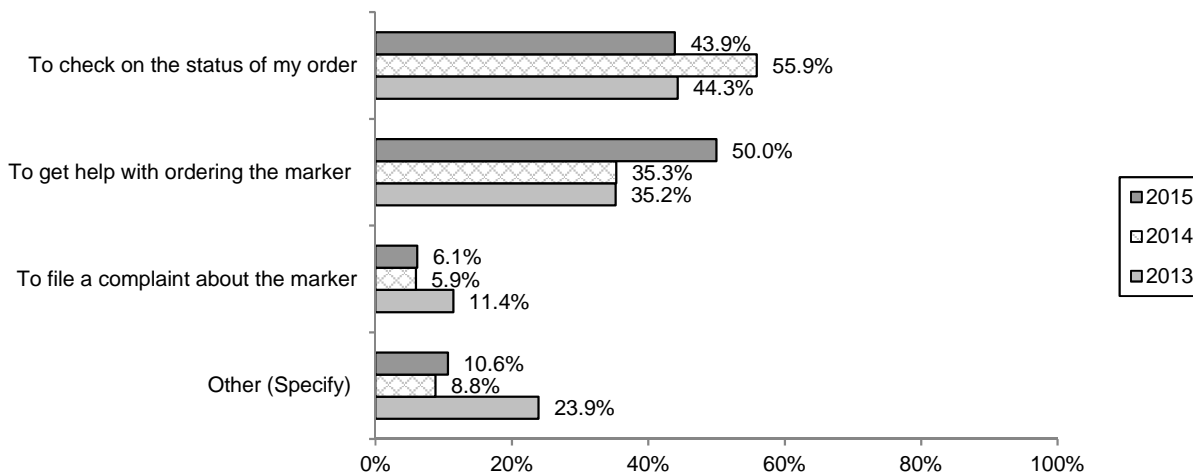
	Year	n	To check on the status of my order	To get help with ordering the marker	To file a complaint about the marker	Other (Specify)
NCA	2015	745	73.0%	27.8%	9.5%	10.5%
	2014	726	76.9%	29.8%	13.2%	7.2%
	2013	627	77.7%	24.7%	22.0%	14.7%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

## REASONS FOR CALLING 800 NUMBER

Question 10/7. Why did you call NCA? (Mark all that apply)

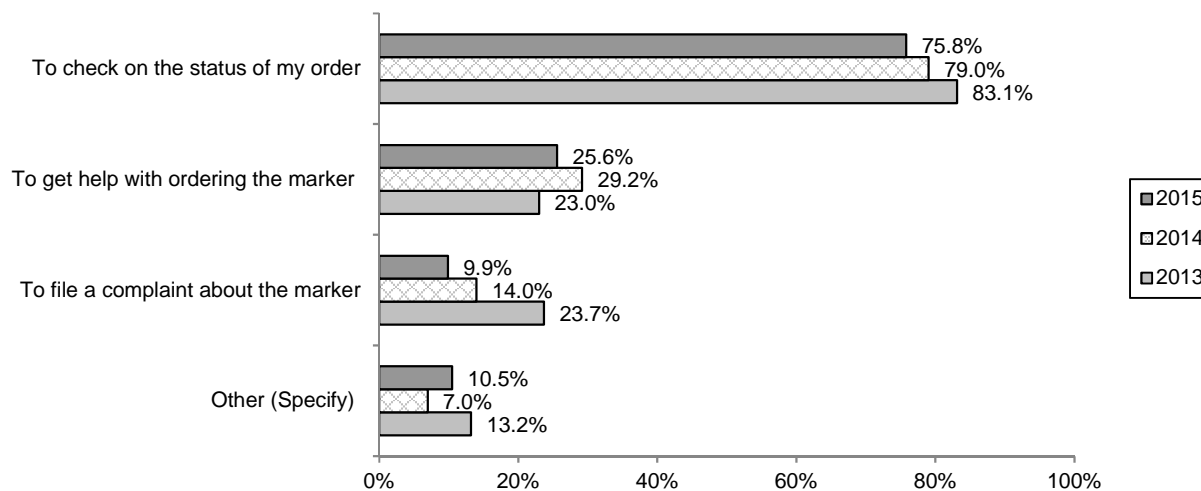
### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	To check on the status of my order	To get help with ordering the marker	To file a complaint about the marker	Other (Specify)
Next of Kin	2015	66	43.9%	50.0%	6.1%	10.6%
	2014	68	55.9%	35.3%	5.9%	8.8%
	2013	88	44.3%	35.2%	11.4%	23.9%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



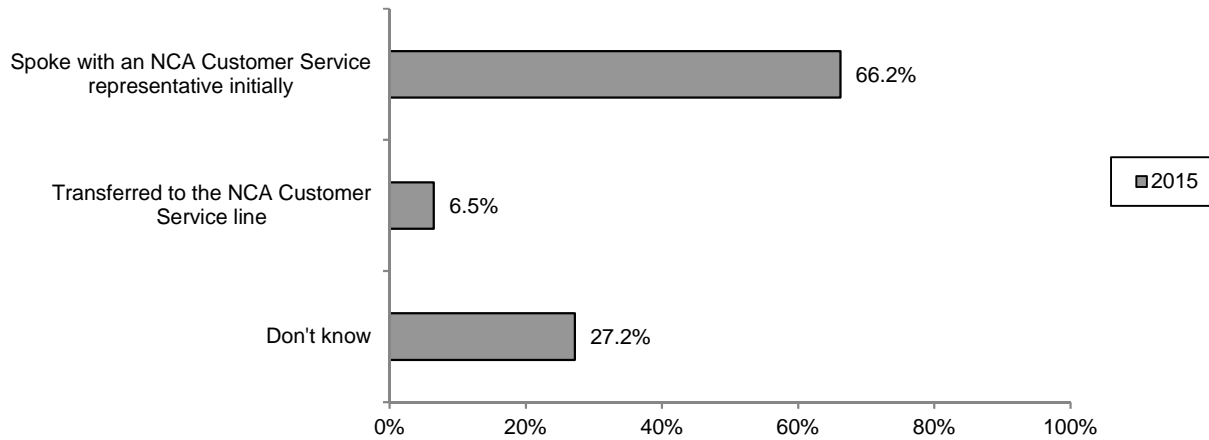
	Year	n	To file a complaint about the marker	To get help with ordering the marker	To check on the status of my order	Other (Specify)
Funeral Directors	2015	679	9.9%	25.6%	75.8%	10.5%
	2014	658	14.0%	29.2%	79.0%	7.0%
	2013	539	23.7%	23.0%	83.1%	13.2%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

## TRANSFER QUESTION

**Question 9/6. Did you speak with an NCA Customer Service representative initially, or were you transferred to NCA by a VA Customer Service representative?**

### ALL RESPONDENTS



	Year	n	Spoke with an NCA Customer Service representative initially	Transferred to the NCA Customer Service line	Don't know
NCA	2015	749	66.2%	6.5%	27.2%

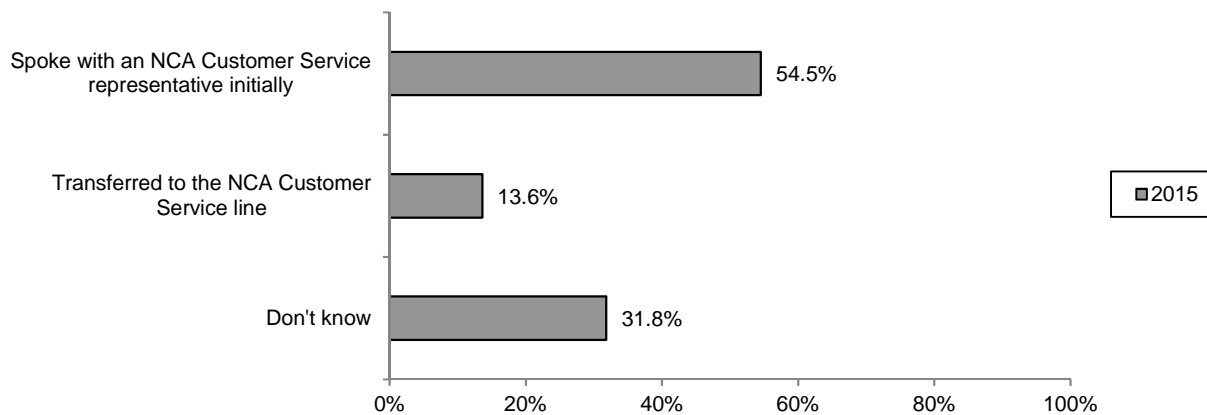
Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.



## TRANSFER QUESTION

**Q9/6. Did you speak with an NCA Customer Service representative initially, or were you transferred to NCA by a VA Customer Service representative?**

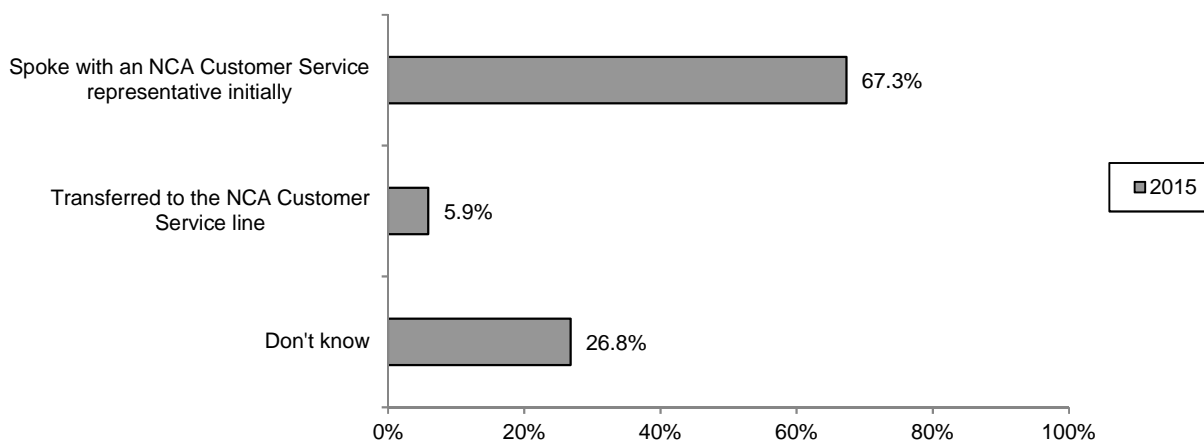
### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Spoke with an NCA Customer Service representative initially	Transferred to the NCA Customer Service line	Don't know
Next of Kin	2015	66	54.5%	13.6%	31.8%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Spoke with an NCA Customer Service representative initially	Transferred to the NCA Customer Service line	Don't know
Funeral Directors	2015	683	67.3%	5.9%	26.8%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" or "Don't Know" to Question 8/5 received this question.

## **Satisfaction with Quality of Products and Services**

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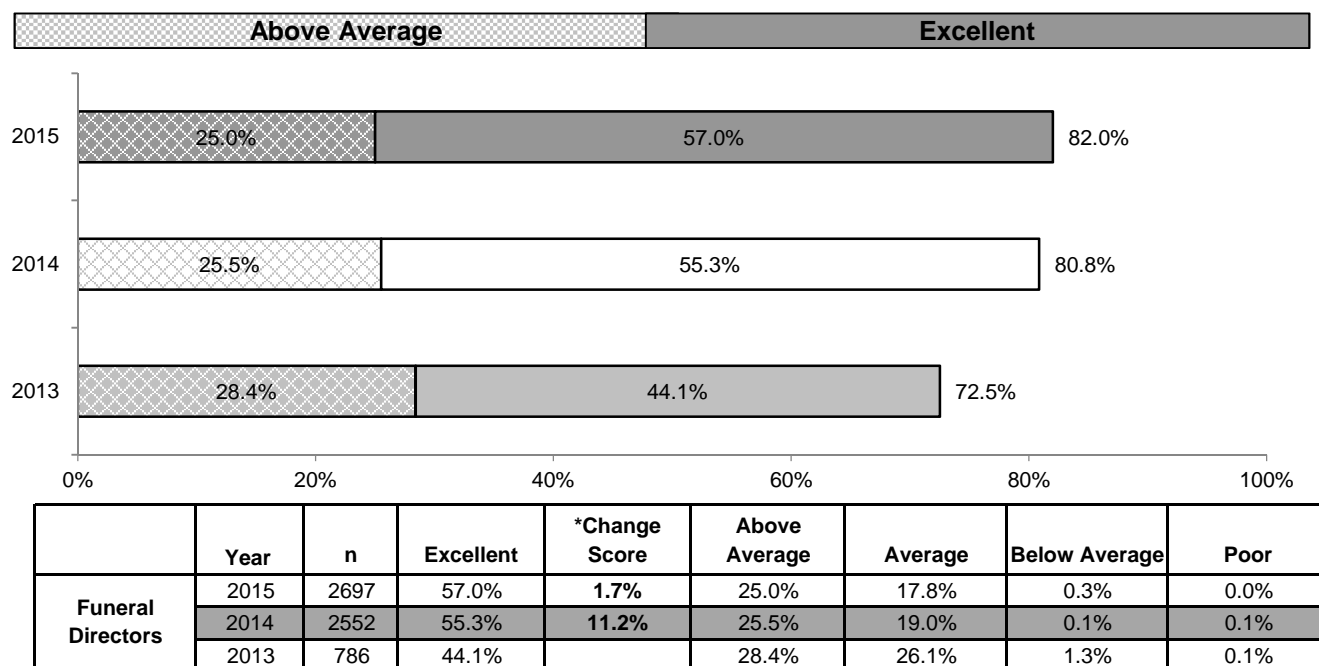
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin and funeral directors on their satisfaction with the quality of Memorial Program Service products including the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC), delivery of markers, and unexpected costs.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100%.

## SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

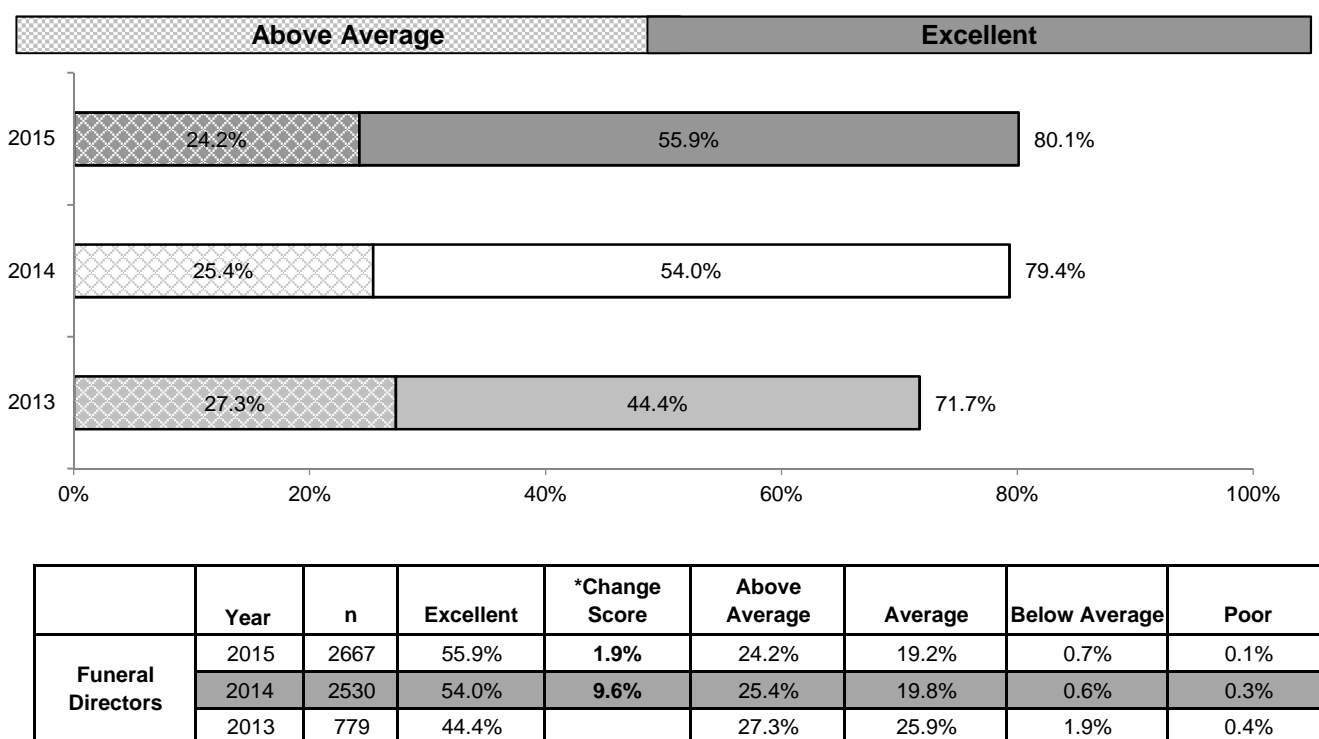
Question 20a. How would you rate the cut of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those in previous years?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



Question 20b. How would you rate the polish of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those in previous years?

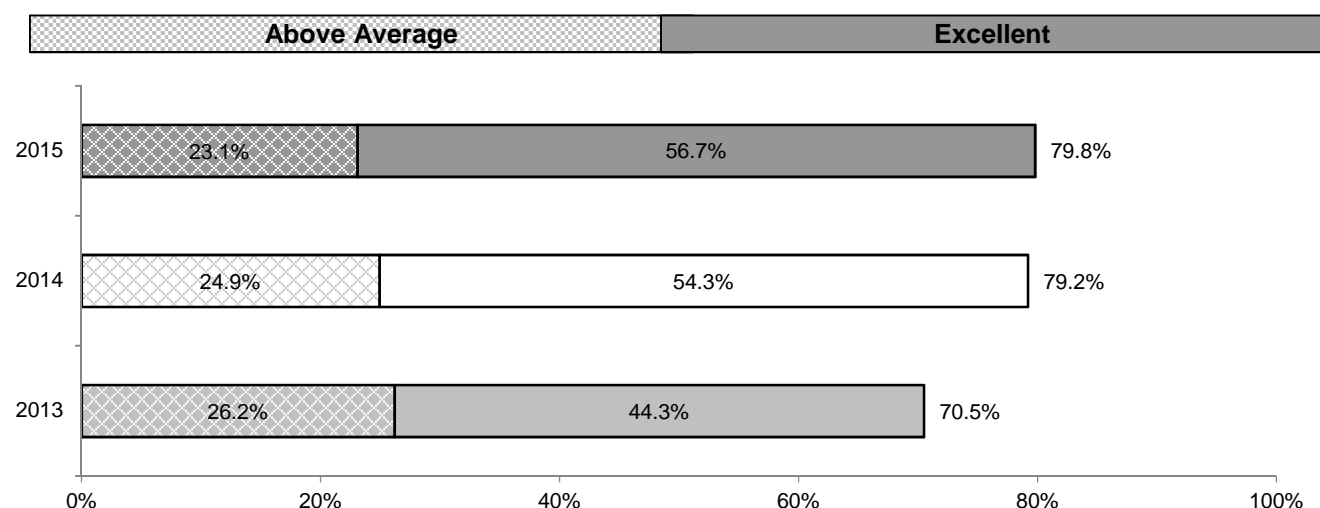
### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



## SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

Question 20c. How would you rate the color of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those in previous years?

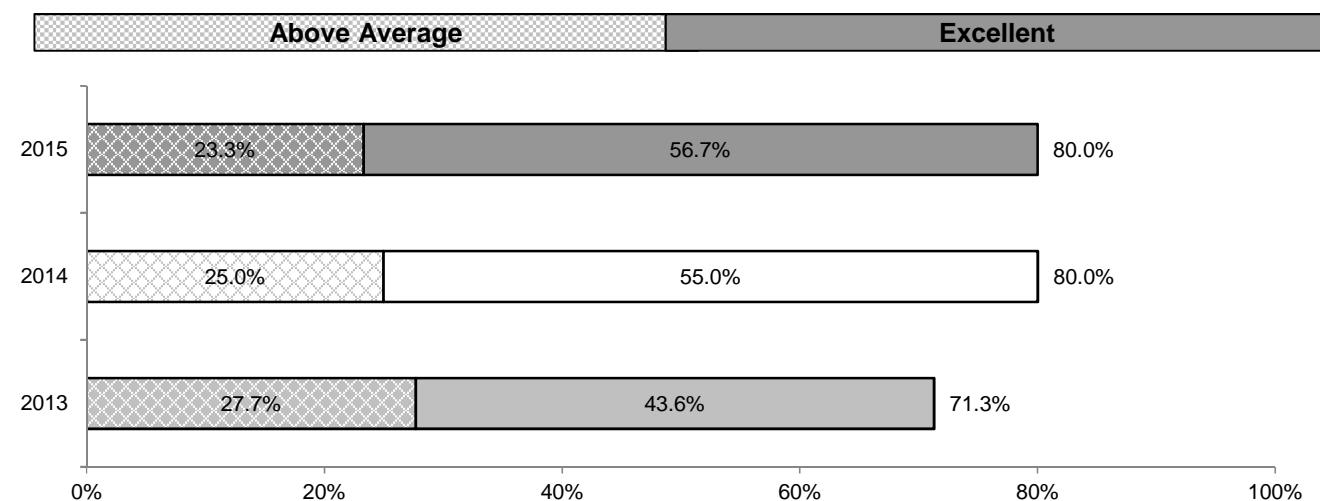
### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Excellent	*Change Score	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
Funeral Directors	2015	2671	56.7%	2.4%	23.1%	19.8%	0.3%	0.0%
	2014	2534	54.3%	10.0%	24.9%	20.4%	0.3%	0.1%
	2013	787	44.3%		26.2%	28.0%	1.3%	0.3%

Question 20d. How would you rate the finish of the stone of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those in previous years?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

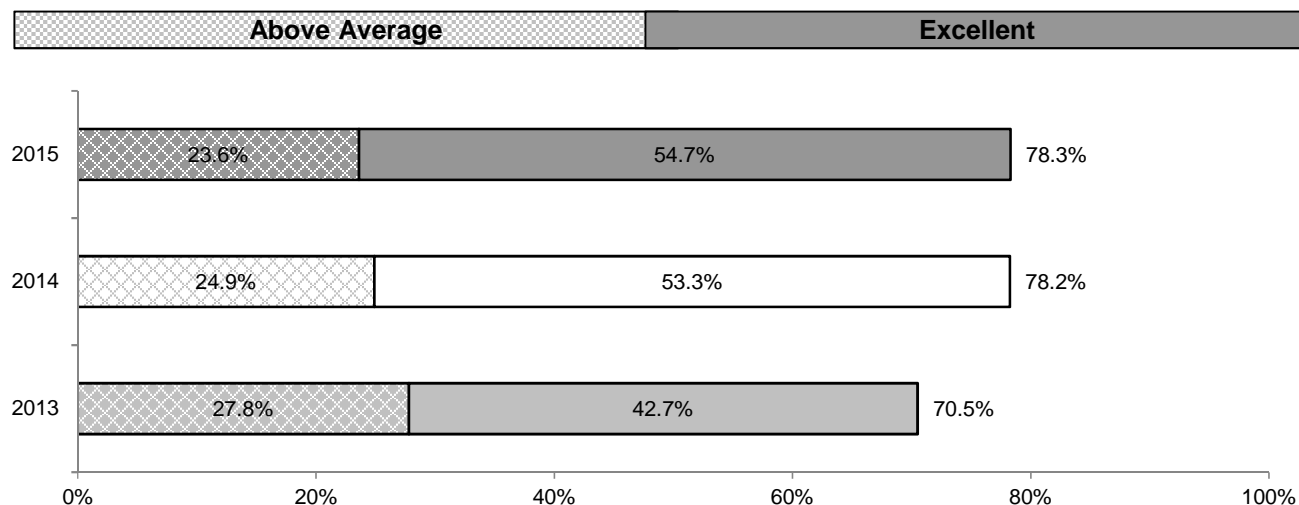


	Year	n	Excellent	*Change Score	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
Funeral Directors	2015	2668	56.7%	1.7%	23.3%	19.5%	0.5%	0.0%
	2014	2498	55.0%	11.4%	25.0%	19.2%	0.7%	0.1%
	2013	784	43.6%		27.7%	26.4%	2.2%	0.1%

## SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

Question 20e. How would you rate the depth of inscription (stone only) of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those in previous years?

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Excellent	*Change Score	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
Funeral Directors	2015	2413	54.7%	1.4%	23.6%	21.0%	0.6%	0.1%
	2014	2285	53.3%	10.6%	24.9%	20.9%	0.7%	0.1%
	2013	709	42.7%		27.8%	27.1%	2.3%	0.1%

## **Satisfaction with Delivery of Headstone, Marker or Medallion**

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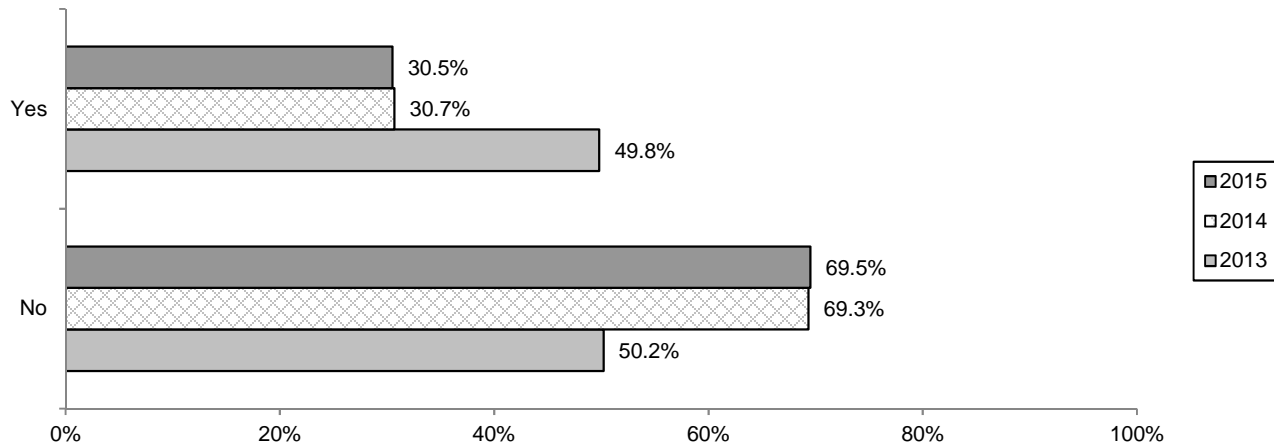
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from funeral directors on their satisfaction with various Memorial Program Service products. Satisfaction ratings are provided for headstones, markers, or medallions.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100.

## SATISFACTION WITH DELIVERY OF HEADSTONE, MARKER OR MEDALLION

**Question 16. Have you/your company ever had problems with a delivered headstone, marker or medallion?**

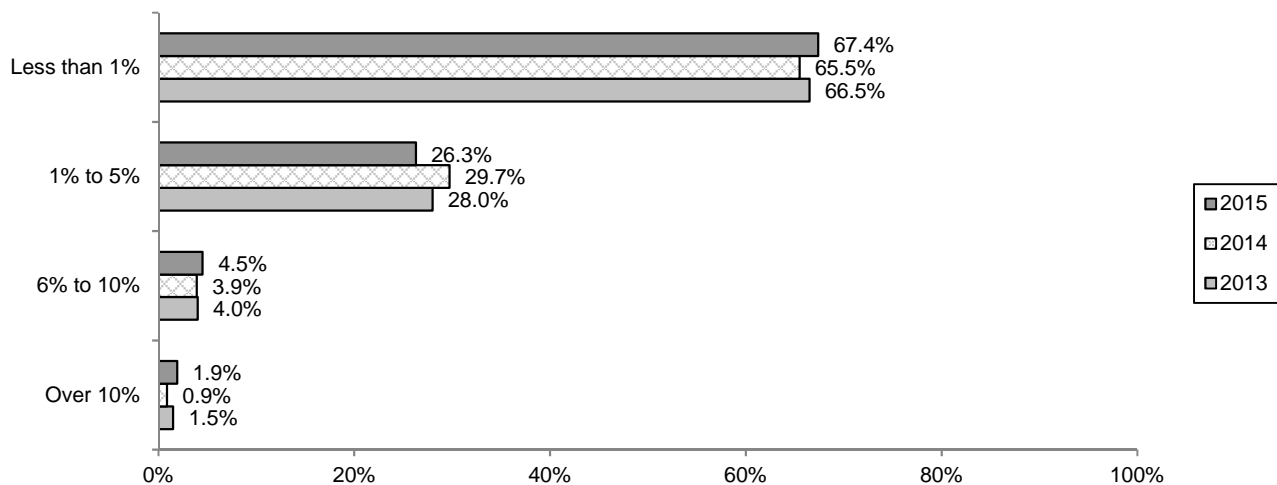
### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Yes	No
Funeral Directors	2015	2818	30.5%	69.5%
	2014	2703	30.7%	69.3%
	2013	819	49.8%	50.2%

**Question 17. About what percentage of the markers that you receive have problems?**

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



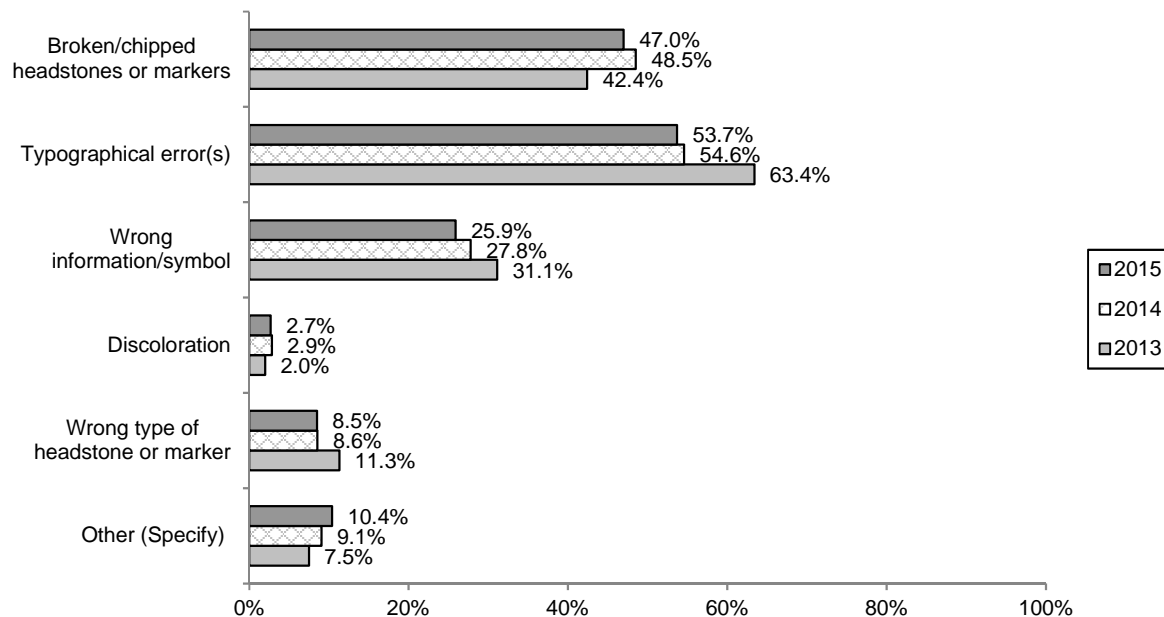
	Year	n	Less than 1%	1% to 5%	6% to 10%	Over 10%
Funeral Directors	2015	852	67.4%	26.3%	4.5%	1.9%
	2014	817	65.5%	29.7%	3.9%	0.9%
	2013	400	66.5%	28.0%	4.0%	1.5%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 16 (FD) received this question.

## SATISFACTION WITH DELIVERY OF HEADSTONE, MARKER OR MEDALLION

**Question 18. What types of problems have you experienced with VA furnished headstones and markers? (Mark all that apply)**

### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Broken/chipped headstones or markers	Typographical error(s)	Wrong information/symbol	Discoloration	Wrong type of headstone or marker	Other (Specify)
Funeral Directors	2015	838	47.0%	53.7%	25.9%	2.7%	8.5%	10.4%
	2014	806	48.5%	54.6%	27.8%	2.9%	8.6%	9.1%
	2013	399	42.4%	63.4%	31.1%	2.0%	11.3%	7.5%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 16 (FD) received this question.



## **Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)**

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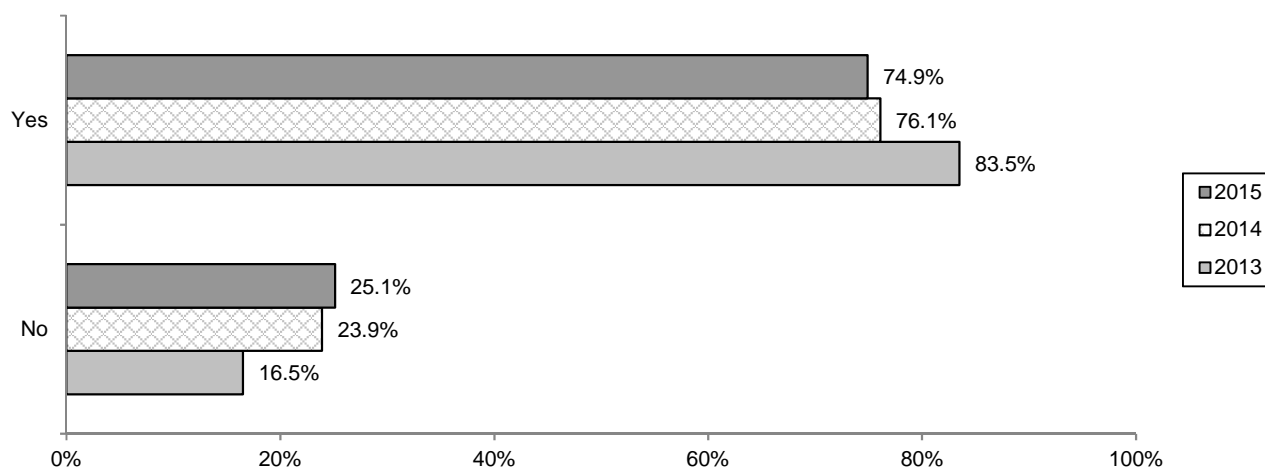
### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents survey findings from next of kin on their satisfaction with the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC).
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100.

## SATISFACTION WITH PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

### Question 22. Are you aware of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) Program?

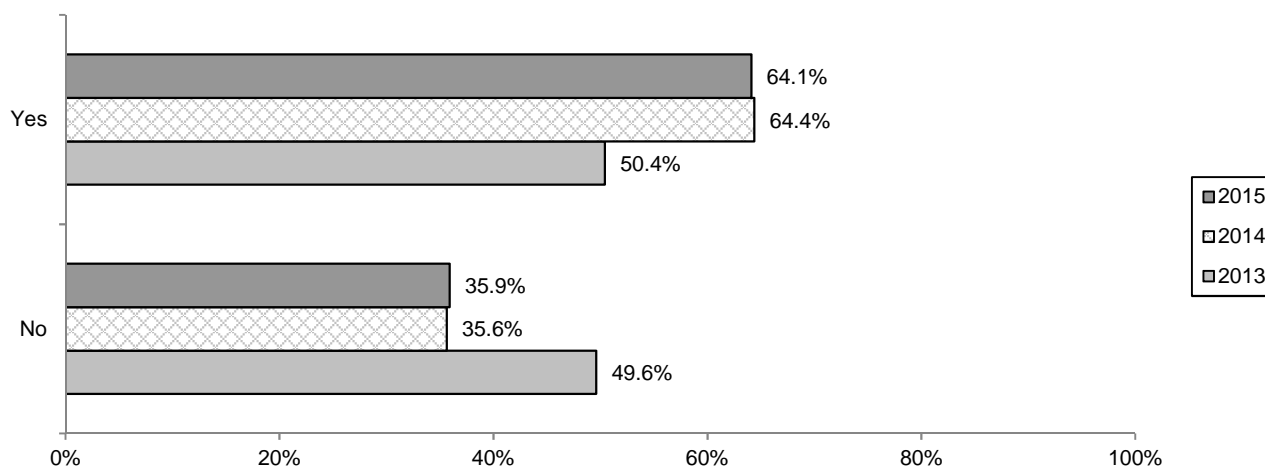
#### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



	Year	n	Yes	No
Funeral Director	2015	2858	74.9%	25.1%
	2014	2720	76.1%	23.9%
	2013	820	83.5%	16.5%

### Question 23. Do you typically inform your clients about the program?

#### FUNERAL DIRECTORS



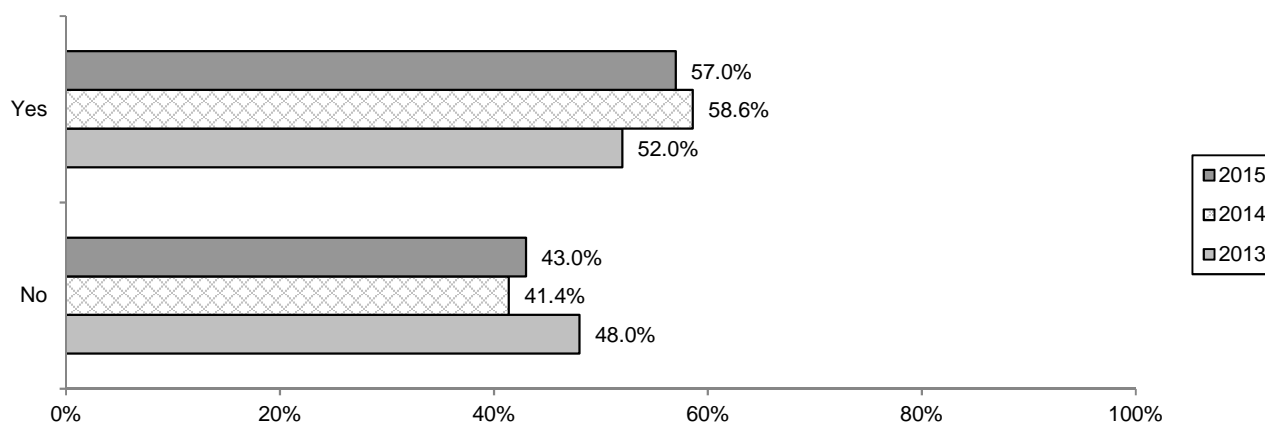
	Year	n	Yes	No
Funeral Director	2015	2074	64.1%	35.9%
	2014	2018	64.4%	35.6%
	2013	631	50.4%	49.6%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 22 (FD) received this question.

## SATISFACTION WITH PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

### Question 24. Do you typically order the certificate(s) for your client?

#### FUNERAL DIRECTORS

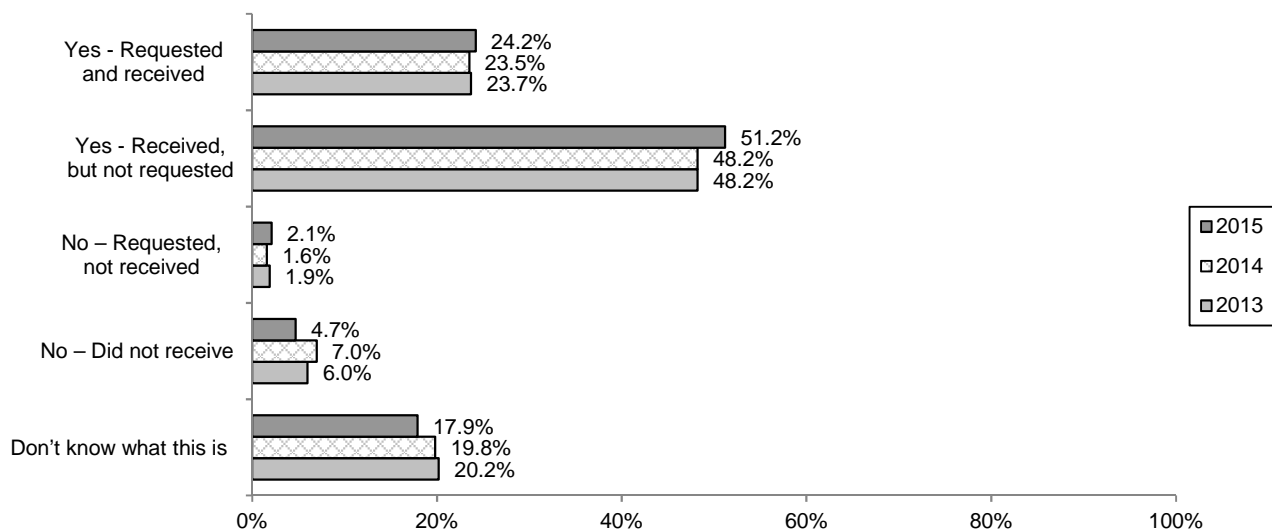


	Year	n	Yes	No
Funeral Director	2015	2072	57.0%	43.0%
	2014	2013	58.6%	41.4%
	2013	641	52.0%	48.0%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 22 (FD) received this question.

### Question 21. Did you order and/or receive a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)?

#### NEXT OF KIN

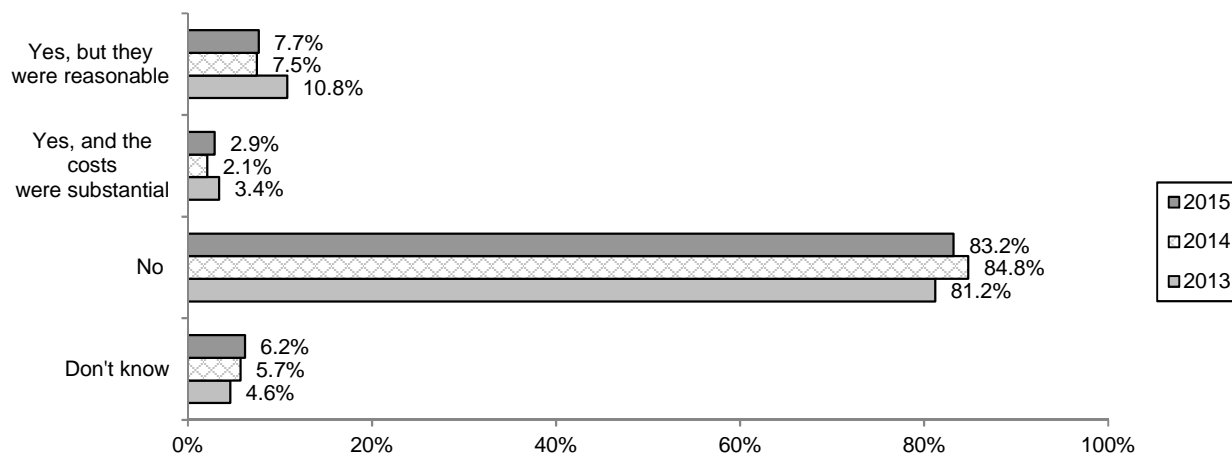


	Year	n	Yes - Requested and received	Yes - Received, but not requested	No - Requested, not received	No - Did not receive	Don't know what this is
Next of Kin	2015	1108	24.2%	51.2%	2.1%	4.7%	17.9%
	2014	1092	23.5%	48.2%	1.6%	7.0%	19.8%
	2013	1075	23.7%	48.2%	1.9%	6.0%	20.2%

## ADDITIONAL UNEXPECTED COSTS

**Question 24. Were you required to pay any unexpected fees regarding your government headstone/ marker/ medallion?**

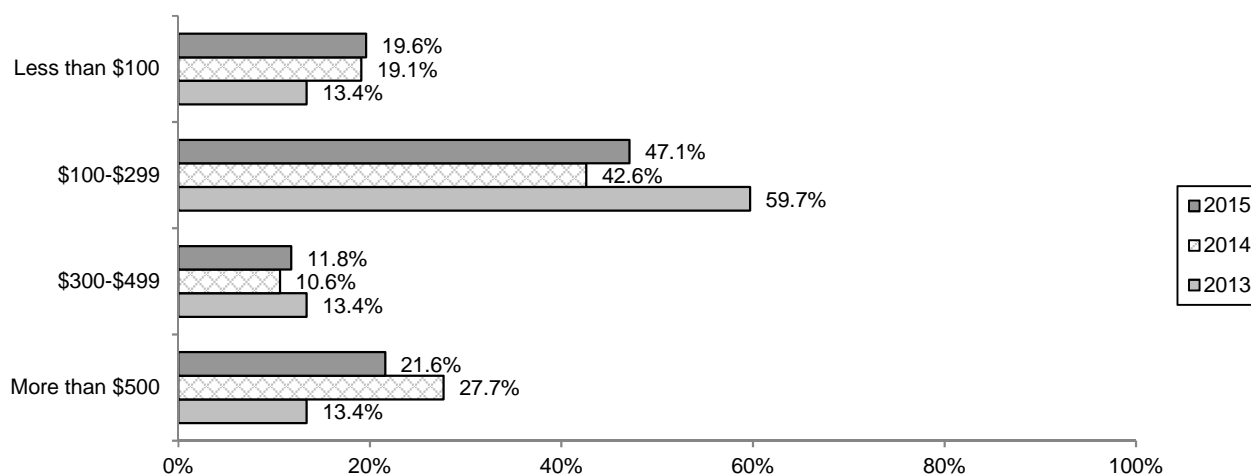
### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Yes, but they were reasonable	Yes, and the costs were substantial	No	Don't know
Next of Kin	2015	1124	7.7%	2.9%	83.2%	6.2%
	2014	1096	7.5%	2.1%	84.8%	5.7%
	2013	1100	10.8%	3.4%	81.2%	4.6%

**Question 25. If you ordered a Bronze marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?**

### NEXT OF KIN



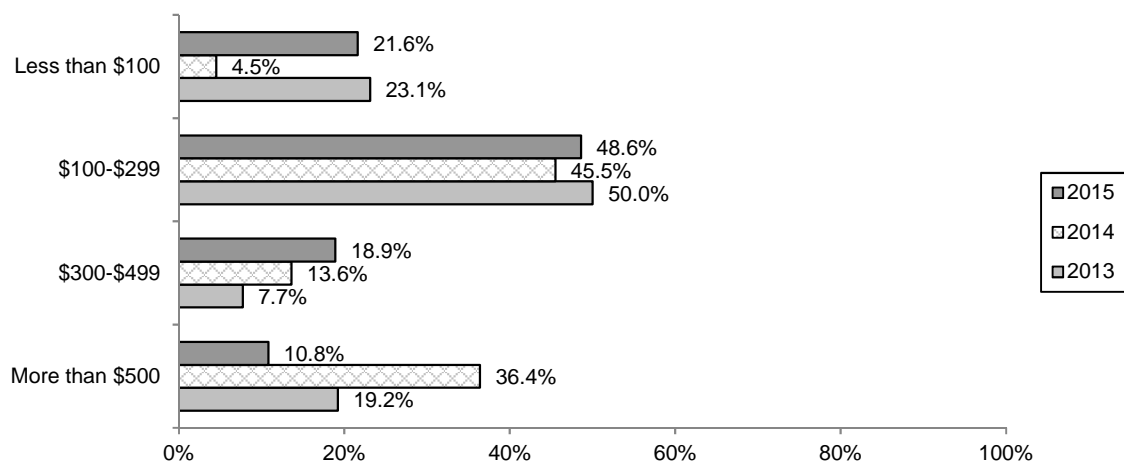
	Year	n	Less than \$100	\$100-\$299	\$300-\$499	More than \$500
Next of Kin	2015	51	19.6%	47.1%	11.8%	21.6%
	2014	47	19.1%	42.6%	10.6%	27.7%
	2013	68	13.4%	59.7%	13.4%	13.4%

Only respondents who ordered a Bronze marker and that indicated "Yes, but they were reasonable" or "Yes, and the costs were substantial" to Question 24 (NoK) received this question.

## ADDITIONAL UNEXPECTED COSTS

**Question 26. If you ordered a Granite/Marble headstone or marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?**

### NEXT OF KIN

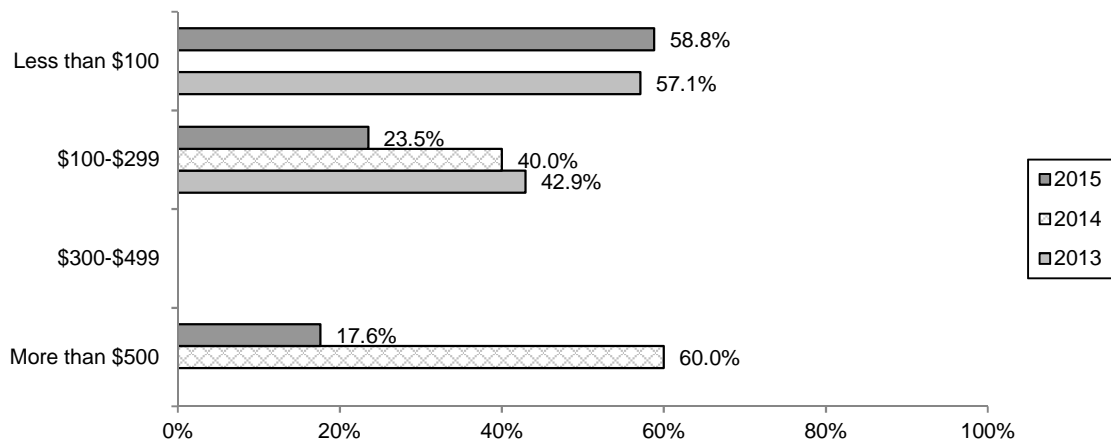


	Year	n	Less than \$100	\$100-\$299	\$300-\$499	More than \$500
Next of Kin	2015	37	21.6%	48.6%	18.9%	10.8%
	2014	22	4.5%	45.5%	13.6%	36.4%
	2013	27	23.1%	50.0%	7.7%	19.2%

Only respondents who ordered a Granite/Marble headstone or marker and that indicated "Yes, but they were reasonable" or "Yes, and the costs were substantial" to Question 24 (NoK) received this question.

**Question 27. If you ordered a Bronze Medallion, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?**

### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Less than \$100	\$100-\$299	\$300-\$499	More than \$500
Next of Kin	2015	17	58.8%	23.5%	0.0%	17.6%
	2014	5	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%	60.0%
	2013	7	57.1%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Only respondents who ordered a Bronze medallion and that indicated "Yes, but they were reasonable" or "Yes, and the costs were substantial" to Question 24 (NoK) received this question.

## **Appendix A**

### **Respondent Characteristics**

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#### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

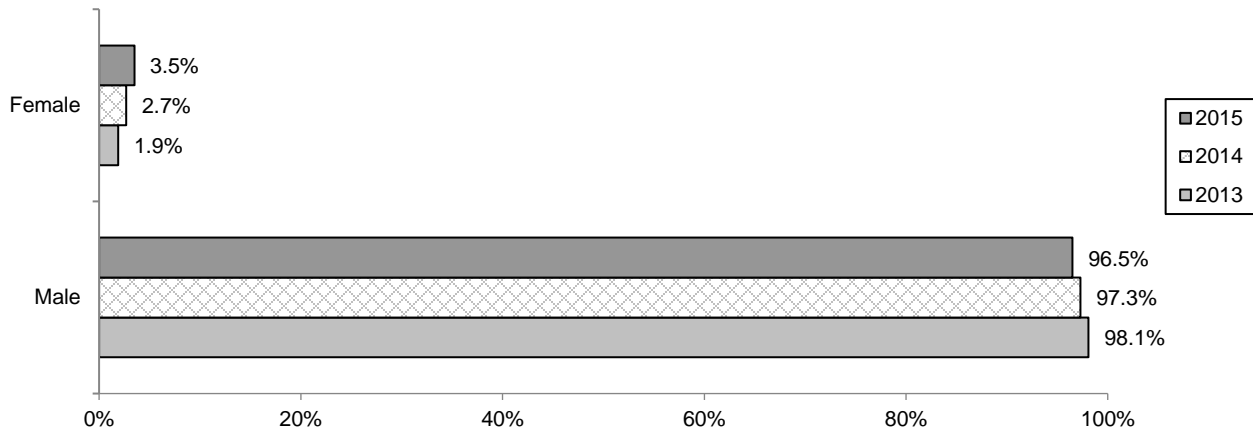
- This section presents survey findings from next of kin on demographics. Responses are provided on gender, race, and relationship to the next of kin's loved one.
- Note that due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100%.

## Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics

### Next of Kin

Question 28. What was the gender of your loved one?

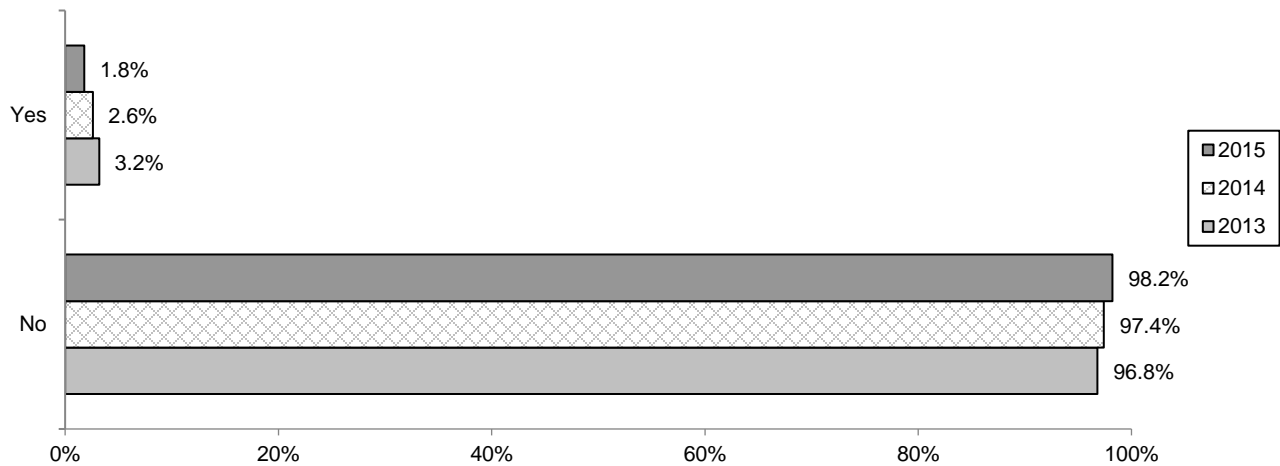
#### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Female	Male
Next of Kin	2015	1135	3.5%	96.5%
	2014	1111	2.7%	97.3%
	2013	1113	1.9%	98.1%

Question 29. Was your loved one Hispanic or Latino?

#### NEXT OF KIN

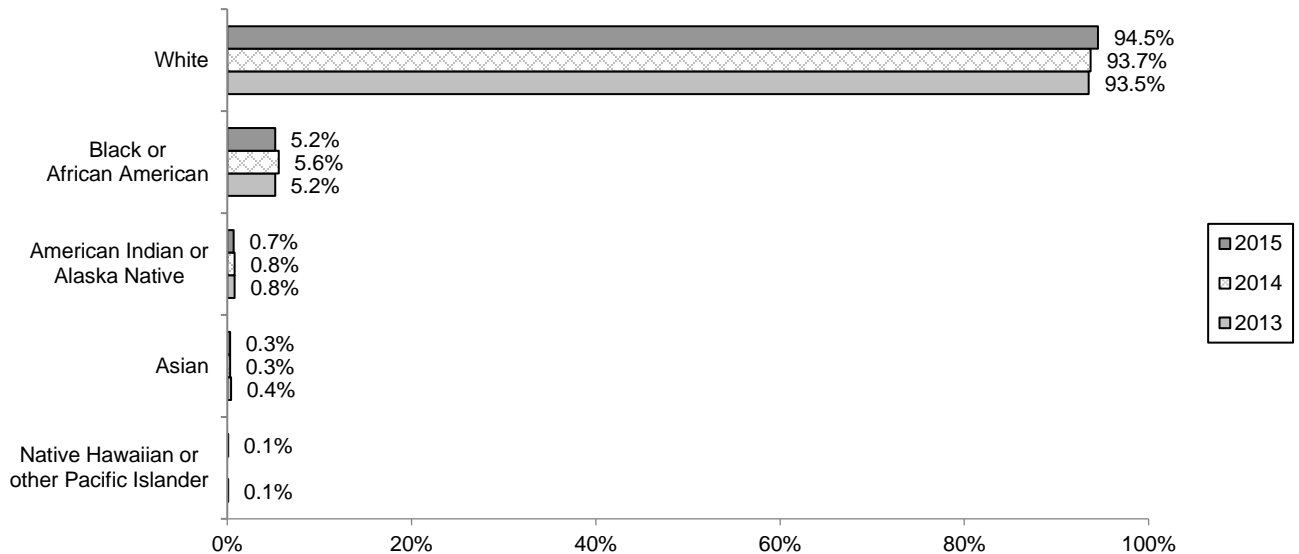


	Year	n	Yes	No
Next of Kin	2015	1118	1.8%	98.2%
	2014	1102	2.6%	97.4%
	2013	1142	3.2%	96.8%

## Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics

### Next of Kin

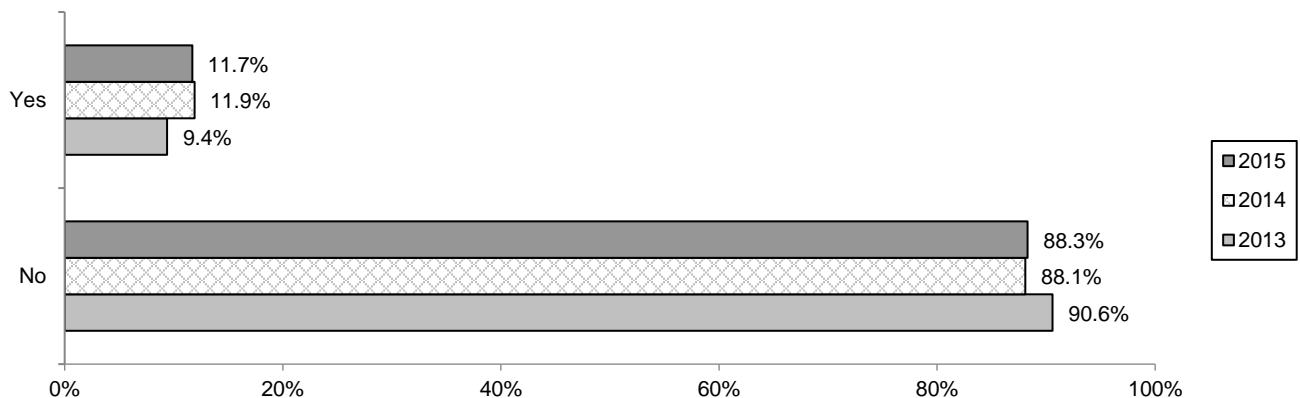
#### Question 30. What was the race of your loved one? (Mark one or more)



	Year	n	White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
Next of Kin	2015	1122	94.5%	5.2%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%
	2014	1111	93.7%	5.6%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%
	2013	1114	93.5%	5.2%	0.8%	0.4%	0.1%

#### Question 31. Are you a Veteran (served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, either in the regular military or a National Guard or Reserve Unit)?

##### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Yes	No
Next of Kin	2015	1112	11.7%	88.3%
	2014	1118	11.9%	88.1%
	2013	1101	9.4%	90.6%

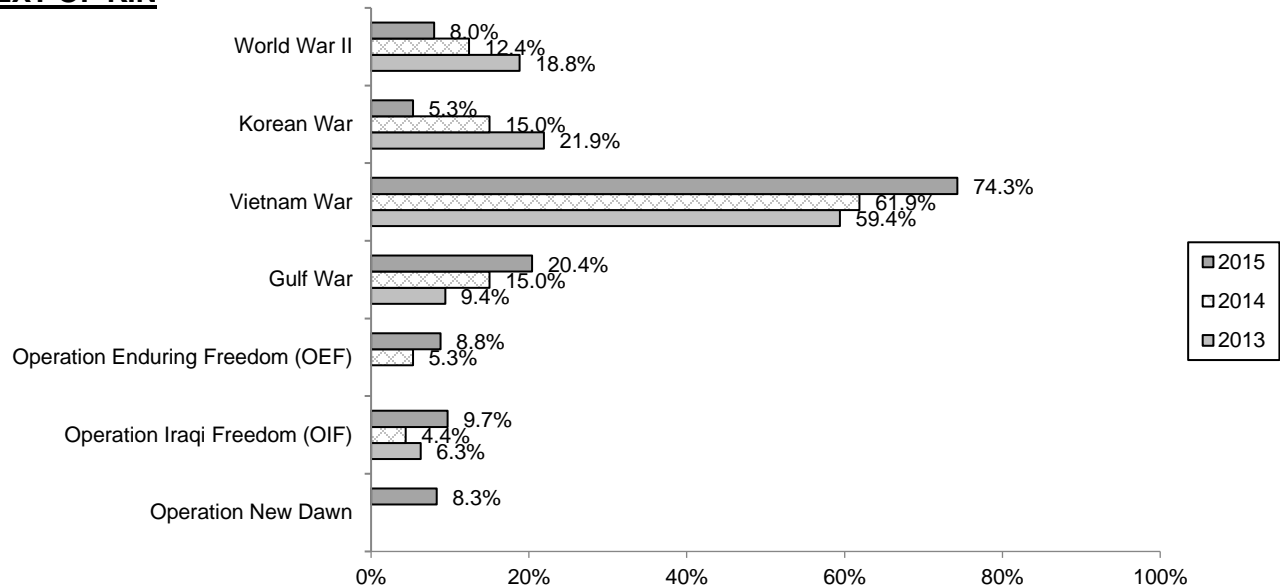


## Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics

### Next of Kin

**Question 32. Which of the following war eras did you serve in? (Mark all that apply)**

#### NEXT OF KIN



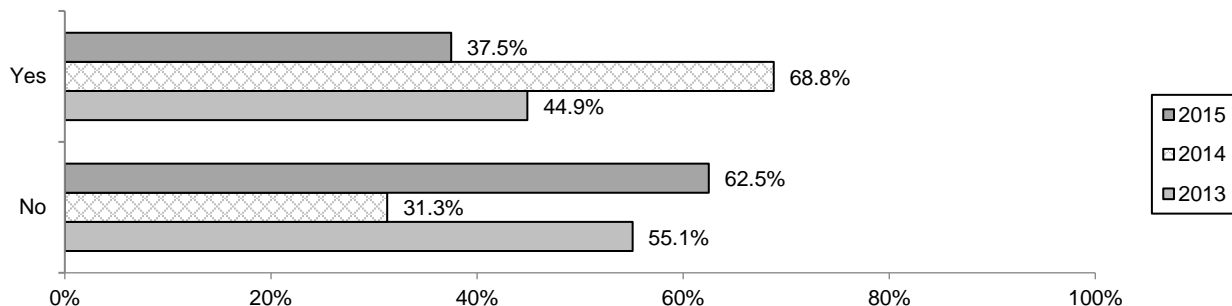
	Year	n	World War II	Korean War	Vietnam War	Gulf War	Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)	Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)	Operation New Dawn
Next of Kin	2015	113	8.0%	5.3%	74.3%	20.4%	8.8%	9.7%	8.3%
	2014	113	12.4%	15.0%	61.9%	15.0%	5.3%	4.4%	0.0%
	2013	32	18.8%	21.9%	59.4%	9.4%	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%

\*Percentages do not add up to 100% because multiple responses were allowed.

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 31 (NoK) received this question.

**Question 35. Are you aware that Veterans who are married to Veterans are entitled to individual gravesite headstone/marker/medallion benefits?**

#### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Yes	No
Next of Kin	2015	16	37.5%	62.5%
	2014	32	68.8%	31.3%
	2013	49	44.9%	55.1%

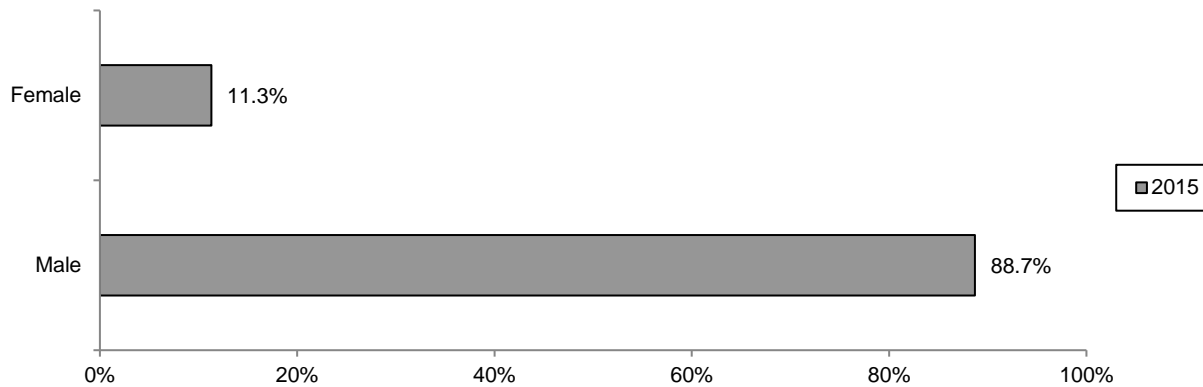
Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Questions 31 and 34 (NoK) received this question.

## Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics

### Next of Kin

#### Question 33. What is your gender?

##### NEXT OF KIN

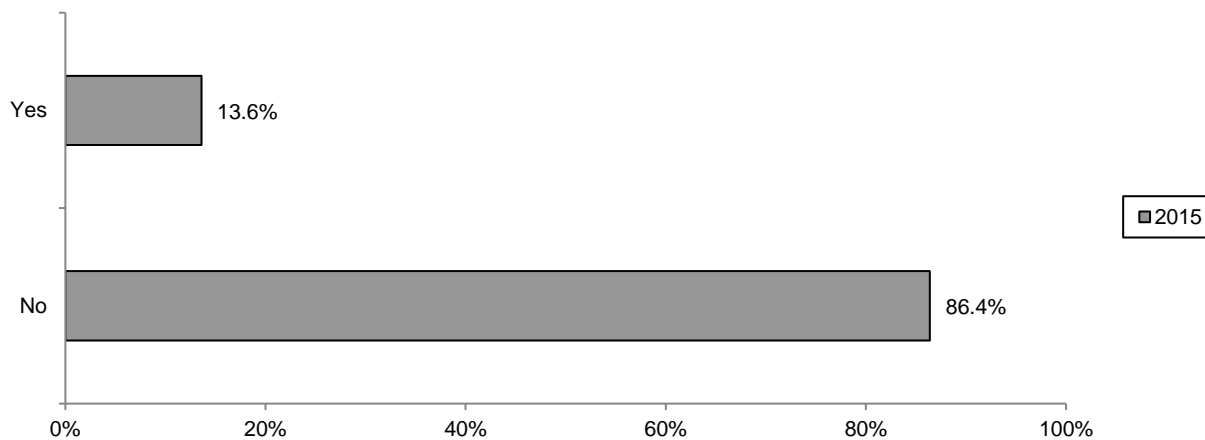


	Year	n	Female	Male
Next of Kin	2015	124	11.3%	88.7%

Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 31 (NoK) received this question.

#### Question 34. Was your loved one your spouse?

##### NEXT OF KIN



	Year	n	Yes	No
Next of Kin	2015	125	13.6%	86.4%

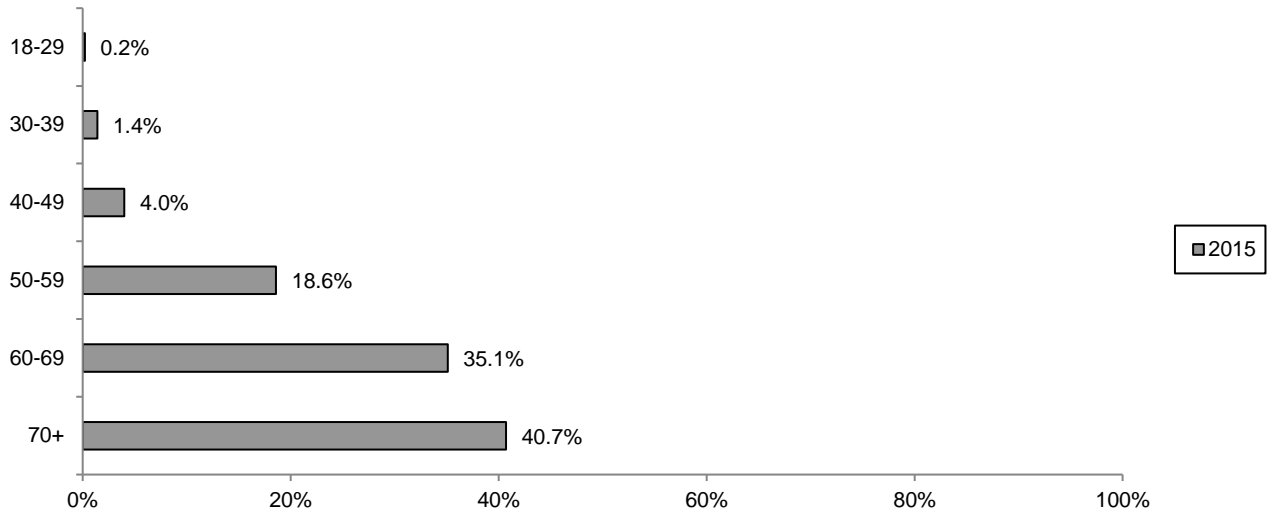
Only respondents that indicated "Yes" to Question 31 (NoK) received this question.

## Appendix A: Respondent Characteristics

### Next of Kin

**Question 36: Please select your age group:**

#### **NEXT OF KIN**



	Year	n	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Next of Kin	2015	1124	0.2%	1.4%	4.0%	18.6%	35.1%	40.7%

## **Appendix B: Methodology and Survey Instruments**

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### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- Presented within this appendix is a detailed description of the methodology used to develop and administer the 2015 Memorial Products Survey.
- Details about the survey development, the sampling procedure, and the mailing protocol are included.
- Also included in this appendix is information about the overall survey response rate.
- Finally, this chapter summarizes the types and number of calls received in the toll-free assistance line established to respond to survey respondents' questions or concerns about the study.

## **Appendix B**

### **Methodology and Survey Instrument**

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#### **Project Background**

- To better assess satisfaction with services provided by VA's Memorial Products Service and to measure process performance, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Office of Finance and Planning contracted with ICF, a national research organization, to conduct the 2015 Satisfaction with VA Memorial Products Survey. The 2015 survey represents the sixth national administration of this satisfaction survey and the second time a web survey option was offered to respondents.
- This year, two new questions were added to the Next of Kin survey. One asked whether a next of kin was transferred to NCA when calling VA, and another asked for the next of kin respondent's age category. The question on unconventional terms of endearment was deleted from the funeral directors and the next of kin surveys. Several questions were revised:
  - A question on calling the NCA Application Assistance toll-free numbers was modified by providing the telephone number in the question and by adding an "I don't know" response option
  - A question on why the respondent called the toll-free number was modified to make the answer options consistent between the funeral director and next of kin questionnaires
  - The text of a question on the respondent's satisfaction with the service received from the customer service representative via the toll-free number was modified slightly
  - The response options for a question on how long the respondent had to wait to get the memorial product was made consistent between the next of kin and funeral directors questionnaires
  - The response options for a question on the overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion were changed, and the question was re-worded
  - The instructions for additional open-ended comments were modified slightly.
- The MPS survey was administered to next of kin and funeral directors from August 21, 2015, to October 9, 2015. Mailing data was extracted from NCA's Automated Monument Application System (AMAS) database and the Burial Operating Support System (BOSS) for those who were rendered products and services from August 20, 2015 to October 9, 2015.
- Surveys were mailed to 2,500 next of kin who had interred a loved one at a national, private, or State or Tribal Veterans Cemetery 3 to 9 months prior to the survey administration.

## **Appendix B**

### **Methodology and Survey Instrument**

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Surveys were also mailed to 12,789 funeral directors who had worked with national, private, and State or Tribal Veterans Cemeteries during the designated period of time.

- The survey population included only those next of kin who interred a loved one 3 to 9 months prior to the survey date. This time period was deemed a period in which next of kin could accurately recall their experiences and a 90 day bereavement period was considered out of respect of the grieving process.
- This appendix presents the detailed methodology used to conduct the 2015 Survey of Satisfaction with State and Tribal Veterans Cemeteries. It is presented in the following sections:

#### **Survey Development**

- Sampling
  - Mailing Protocol and Schedule
  - National Response Rates
  - Toll-free Assistance Line
- A break-out of response rates can be found in Appendix E.

#### **Survey Development**

Areas addressed by the VA's Memorial Products Survey include:

- Determine who assists the next of kin with the application
- Determine the extent to which the next of kin was aware of the inscription policy
- Determine the quality level of the marker and inscription
- Determine cycle delivery time
- Determine the level of customer service for the call center
- Determine level of knowledge, satisfaction with, and quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) program and certificate.

#### **Sampling**

- ICF developed a sampling plan that determined the sample size needed from next of kin to collect data on each of VA's Memorial Products. A representative random sample of next of

## Appendix B

### Methodology and Survey Instrument

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kin was drawn to yield valid national data at the 95 percent confidence level, assuming a 60 percent response rate.

- For funeral directors, we first developed three sampling frames composed of funeral directors who (1) assisted with interments at National Veteran Cemeteries from 6-12 months prior to the survey; (2) assisted with interments at State and Tribal Veteran Cemeteries during that same period; and (3) who assisted with obtaining memorial products for interments during that period. The three sampling frames had a great degree of overlap because many of the funeral directors assisted with multiple interments. We then eliminated duplicates within each frame, and across the three frames. We mailed each funeral director three surveys contained in one physical survey booklet: the National Veteran Cemeteries Satisfaction Survey, the State and Tribal Veterans Cemetery Survey, and the Memorial Products Services Satisfaction Survey.
- Based on this approach, ICF sent surveys to 2,500 next of kin who had a recent experience with VA's Memorial Products in the past year. ICF sent surveys to 12,789 funeral directors with experience with VA cemeteries or services during the administration period for the 2015 survey.

#### Mailing Protocol and Schedule

- The mailing protocol consisted of five mailings to the samples of survey participants. Survey packets mailed to next of kin having addresses in Puerto Rico contained letters and surveys in Spanish.

Memorial Products Survey	NEXT OF KIN SURVEYS DEVELOPED BY LANGUAGE FORM	
	Next of Kin	Funeral Directors
English	2,492	12,619
Spanish	8	170
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>12,789</b>

- The questionnaires were sent stamped "Address Service Requested," to assist in locating respondents who had moved.
- The mailings took place according to the following schedule:

## Appendix B

### Methodology and Survey Instrument

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SCHEDULE FOR SURVEY MAILING TASKS	
Task 1 – Pre-notification letter	8/20/2015
Task 2 – First questionnaire	8/26/2015
Task 3 – First reminder postcard	8/31/2015
Task 4 – Second questionnaire	9/21/2015
Task 5 – Second reminder postcard	9/24/2015
<b>Fieldwork completed</b>	<b>10/9/2015</b>

- A pre-notification letter informing respondents of the survey and informing them that they will receive a mailed survey questionnaire in approximately one week
- A copy of the questionnaire and a return envelope, along with a cover letter signed by the Director, Memorial Programs Service for NCA, requesting their participation
- A reminder/thank-you postcard
- A second copy of the questionnaire, a return envelope, and a cover letter mailed to those who had not yet responded within four weeks of the first survey mailing
- A reminder/thank-you postcard following the second mailing.



## Appendix B

### Methodology and Survey Instrument

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#### National Response Rates

- Nationally, the Memorial Product Survey yielded a response rate of 28.0% (47.9% for next of kin and 24.0% for funeral directors).

MEMORIAL PRODUCTS SURVEY RESPONSE RATES			
	Next of Kin	Funeral Directors	Total
<b>Total Sample</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>12,789</b>	<b>15,289</b>
Deceased	2	0	2
Undeliverable	77	470	547
<b>Total Eligible Questionnaires</b>	<b>2,421</b>	<b>12,319</b>	<b>14,740</b>
<b>Total Returned Surveys</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>4,121</b>
<b>Total Response Rate (Returned/Eligible)</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>

- Eligible questionnaires are those that were returned completed and those that were not returned.
- Undeliverable questionnaires were those that were returned undeliverable, blank, incomplete, were returned with an indication that the recipient was deceased, or unable to complete the questionnaire.
- The tables below present survey returns by web and by mail, followed by information about the overall response rates for this survey.

## Appendix B

### Methodology and Survey Instrument

<b>MEMORIAL PRODUCTS SURVEY RETURNS</b>				
	<b>Next of Kin</b>		<b>Funeral Directors</b>	
Web Completes	273	23.5%	782	26.4%
Paper Completes	887	76.5%	2,179	73.6%
<b>Totals Returned Surveys</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### **Toll Free Assistance Line**

- To facilitate response during the survey administration period, ICF maintained a survey-specific, dedicated, toll-free line and provided a menu of options optimally designed to serve respondent needs. These options provided respondents the opportunity to speak with a live agent regarding any questions they might have with the survey, to leave a voicemail, to call in to complete an interview at their convenience, or to seek technical support if they experienced challenges completing the web survey.
- Project staff answered telephone calls during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. ET-6:00 p.m. ET). A voice messaging system was available to receive messages after regular business hours. Project staff attempted to return calls left on the voicemail system within 24 hours.
- Overall, during the survey administration period 1,784 respondents called the help line with questions pertaining to the three 2015 NCA Customer Satisfaction Surveys.
- The majority of calls received pertained to one of the following
  - Completed – Due to the truncated fielding, many respondents received reminder postcards and second mailings prior to ICF receiving their completed surveys. Agents staffing the phone line were able to check the respondent's completion status and advise the respondent over the phone on whether they should complete the survey again.
  - Refusals – Respondents called the help desk to indicate that they did not wish to participate in the survey. These respondents were marked as a refusal in the sample and did not receive further mail communications.
- Other calls consisted of a variety of questions (e.g., "Who is ICF?" "What is the difference between a National and State/Tribal Veterans Cemetery?", etc.), requests to change addresses, and requests to complete the survey over the phone.

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

## VA Memorial Products: 2015 Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey (Headstones/Markers/Medallions and Presidential Memorial Certificates)



VA may not conduct, sponsor, or require the respondent to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. All responses to this collection are voluntary. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time necessary for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The information collected is intended to be used in making improvements in services within the National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs and for associated administrative purposes. Failure to furnish the requested information will have no adverse effect on any VA benefit to which you may be entitled.

The information you supply will be confidential and protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 522a) and the VA's confidentiality statute (38 U.S.C. 5701) as implemented by 38 CFR 1.526(a) and 38 CFR 1.576(b). Disclosure of information involves releases of statistical data and other non-identifying data for the improvement of services within the National Cemetery Administration and for associated administrative purposes. Please send any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to VA Clearance Officer (005G2), 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington DC 20420. SEND COMMENTS ONLY. DO NOT SEND THIS FORM OR REQUESTS FOR BENEFITS TO THIS ADDRESS.

### Marking Instructions

#### **The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.**

Please read each question carefully and respond by filling in the oval of the response that most closely represents your opinion.

- Use pencil or pen. Make heavy dark marks that fill the ovals completely. If you wish to change an answer, erase cleanly (pencil) or put an "X" over the incorrect response (pen).
- Fill in one answer oval for each question unless it tells you to "mark all that apply."
- When you are finished, please place the questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and put it in the mail.

#### **Correct Mark**



#### **Incorrect Marks**



**If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Survey Helpline at:  
1-844-403-3937**



1. How did you learn about the headstone, marker, or medallion benefit provided by the VA? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Learned from veteran/family member
- ☐ Learned from Funeral Director
- ☐ Learned from Cemetery Representative
- ☐ Learned from VA employee
- ☐ My own research
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of headstone, marker, or medallion did you order?

- ☐ Bronze (metal plate) -> Go To #5
- ☐ Stone (granite or marble) -> Go To #5
- ☐ Bronze Medallion

3. Did you have any problems while affixing the Bronze Medallion to the headstone or markers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No -> Go To #5
- ☐ Have not affixed medallion yet -> Go To #5

4. Please explain the difficulty you faced in affixing the medallion to a headstone or marker.

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5. Who helped you with ordering the headstone/marker/medallion? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Family member
- ☐ Funeral Director
- ☐ Cemetery Representative
- ☐ VA Employee
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No one

6. How did you order the headstone, marker, or medallion? (Mark only one)

- ☐ Via the mail
- ☐ Via Fax
- ☐ Via the Funeral Director
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. How satisfied were you with the process you used to order the headstone, marker, or medallion?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied

8. Did you call the NCA Applicant Assistance number (1-800-697-6947) for assistance with a headstone, marker, or medallion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No -> Go To #12
- ☐ Don't Know

9. Did you speak with an NCA Customer Service representative initially, or were you transferred to NCA by a VA Customer Service representative?

- ☐ Spoke with an NCA Customer Service representative initially
- ☐ Transferred to NCA
- ☐ Don't know

10. Why did you call NCA? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ To check on the status of an order
- ☐ To get help with ordering a marker
- ☐ To file a complaint about a marker
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied



**12. Did you visit the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No → **Go To #15**

**13. What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)**

- ☐ How to order a headstone/marker/medallion  
☐ Download an order form  
☐ Find information on documentation needed  
☐ Find information on the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program  
☐ Find out what could go on the headstone/marker/medallion  
☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?**

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

**15. When you were applying for the headstone, marker, or medallion, were you aware that the following items could be added to the headstone, marker, or medallion:**

	Yes	No	Don't Know
An inscription	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Birthdate/Date of death	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Highest rank attained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
War service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emblem of belief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Valor Awards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Terms of endearment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nicknames	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Civilian credentials (i.e., Doctor)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Special unit designations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other military credentials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Space for future inscriptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**16. If you were aware of the availability of an inscription, how did you learn about what could be included in the inscription? (Mark all that apply)**

- ☐ I read it on the application  
☐ I looked it up on the VA web site  
☐ I was informed by the Funeral Director  
☐ I was informed by a VA employee  
☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**17. About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive?**

- ☐ Less than 1 month  
☐ Between 1 and 2 months  
☐ Between 2 and 3 months  
☐ Between 3 and 4 months  
☐ Over 4 months  
☐ Don't Know

**18. How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to receive the headstone, marker, or medallion?**

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

**19. How would you have preferred to be notified about the delivery status of your headstone, marker or medallion?**

- ☐ Postcard  
☐ E-mail  
☐ Letter  
☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ I don't care to be notified

**20. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.**

- ☐ Strongly Agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly Disagree

21. Did you order and/or receive a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)?

- ☐ Yes - Requested and Received  
☐ Yes - Received, but not requested  
☐ No - Requested, not received -> Go To #23  
☐ No - Did not Receive -> Go To #23  
☐ Don't know what this is -> Go To #23

22. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) I received from the VA was excellent.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neither agree nor disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

23. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services?

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

24. Were you required to pay any unexpected fees regarding your government headstone, marker or medallion?

- ☐ Yes, but they were reasonable  
☐ Yes, and the costs were substantial  
☐ No -> Go To #28  
☐ Don't know -> Go To #28

25. If you ordered a Bronze marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?

\$

0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

26. If you ordered a Granite/Marble headstone or marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?

\$

0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

27. If you ordered a Bronze Medallion, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?

\$

0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

28. What was the gender of your loved one?

- ☐ Female  
☐ Male

29. Was your loved one Hispanic or Latino?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

30. What was the race of your loved one?  
(Mark one or more)

- ☐ White  
☐ Black or African American  
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native  
☐ Asian  
☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander



**31. Are you a Veteran (served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, either in the regular military or a National Guard or Reserve Unit)?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No → Go To #36

**32. Which of the following war eras did you serve in?**

*(Mark all that apply)*

- ☐ World War II  
☐ Korean War  
☐ Vietnam War  
☐ Gulf War  
☐ Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)  
☐ Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)  
☐ Operation New Dawn

**33. What is your gender?**

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

**34. Was your loved one your spouse?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No → Go To #36

**35. Are you aware that Veterans who are married to Veterans are entitled to individual gravesite headstone/marker/medallion benefits?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**36. Please select your age group:**

- ☐ 18-29  
☐ 30-39  
☐ 40-49  
☐ 50-59  
☐ 60-69  
☐ 70+

**37. Do you have any additional comments concerning how the VA Memorial Programs Service could improve its services and programs? If your comment is in response to a specific question, please reference the question number.**

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**Note:** If you would like to be contacted by NCA, please write your name and contact information (address or telephone number):

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Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. **PLEASE** mail this completed questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope as soon as possible. If you have any questions about this research, you may call us at 1-844-403-3937.

2015 VA Memorial Programs Service Survey,  
 c/o ICF International  
 980 Beaver Creek Drive  
 Martinsville, VA 24112

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

## 2015 FUNERAL DIRECTOR SATISFACTION SURVEY

*(National Cemeteries, VA Memorial Products, and State/Tribal Veterans Cemeteries)*



VA may not conduct, sponsor, or require the respondent to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. All responses to this collection are voluntary. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time necessary for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The information collected is intended to be used in making improvements in services within the National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs and for associated administrative purposes. Failure to furnish the requested information will have no adverse effect on any VA benefit to which you may be entitled.

The information you supply will be confidential and protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 522a) and the VA's confidentiality statute (38 U.S.C. 5701) as implemented by 38 CFR 1.526(a) and 38 CFR 1.576(b). Disclosure of information involves releases of statistical data and other non-identifying data for the improvement of services within the National Cemetery Administration and for associated administrative purposes. Please send any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to VA Clearance Officer (005G2), 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington DC 20420. SEND COMMENTS ONLY. DO NOT SEND THIS FORM OR REQUESTS FOR BENEFITS TO THIS ADDRESS.

### Marking Instructions

#### **The survey will take about 20-30 minutes to complete.**

Please read each question carefully and respond by filling in the oval of the response that most closely represents your opinion.

#### **Correct Mark**



#### **Incorrect Marks**



- Use pencil or pen. Make heavy dark marks that fill the ovals completely. If you wish to change an answer, erase cleanly (pencil) or put an "X" over the incorrect response (pen).
- Fill in one answer oval for each question unless it tells you to "mark all that apply."
- When you are finished, please place the questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and put it in the mail.

**If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Survey Helpline at:  
1-844-403-3937**







## MEMORIAL PRODUCTS SERVICE SATISFACTION SURVEY

**IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ BEFORE PROCEEDING:** Please complete the following questions if your funeral home has ordered NCA memorial products (headstones, markers, medallions, niche covers, or Presidential Memorial Certificates) within the past 12 months. If your funeral home has **NOT** ordered any of the above within the past 12 months, please go to the State or Tribal Veterans Cemeteries Satisfaction Survey section on Page 9.

1. On average, about how many VA headstones, markers, and medallions do you/your company order in a year?

☐ Less than 10  
☐ 11 to 25  
☐ 26 to 40  
☐ More than 40

2. Please indicate the type/types of VA headstones/markers/medallions you/your company ordered. (Mark all that apply)

☐ Flat Bronze  
☐ Flat Marble/Granite  
☐ Bronze Niche  
☐ Upright Marble/Granite  
☐ Bronze Medallion

3. How do you typically order VA headstones, markers, or medallions?

(Mark all that apply)

☐ Via the mail (to National VA)  
☐ Via fax (to National VA)  
☐ Via the local VA office  
☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. How satisfied are you with the process you typically used to order headstones, markers, and medallions?

☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

5. Did you call the NCA Applicant Assistance number (1-800-697-6947) for assistance with a headstone, marker, or medallion?

☐ Yes  
☐ No → Go To #9  
☐ Don't Know

6. Did you speak with an NCA Customer Service representative initially, or were you transferred to NCA by a VA Customer Service representative?

☐ Spoke with an NCA Customer Service representative initially  
☐ Transferred to NCA  
☐ Don't know

7. Why did you call NCA?

(Mark all that apply)

☐ To check on the status of an order  
☐ To get help with ordering a marker  
☐ To file a complaint about a marker  
☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

8. How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?

☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

9. Have you visited the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?

☐ Yes  
☐ No → Go To #12

10. What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)

☐ How to order a headstone/marker/medallion  
☐ Download an order form  
☐ Find information on documentation needed  
☐ Find information on the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program  
☐ Find out what could go on the marker  
☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_



11. How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

12. When completing an application for a VA headstone, marker, or medallion, do you typically: (Mark only one)

- ☐ Complete and send to the VA  
☐ Complete and confirm information with family member's review and signature  
☐ Partially complete and give to family member for finalization  
☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Are you aware of the following requirements:

Yes

No

Memorial product orders require the signature from the next of kin or written delegation of representation ☐ ☐

Certification that the Veteran for whom the headstone, marker, or medallion is intended has not committed a capital crime and/or Tier 3 sex offense? ..... ☐ ☐

14. About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive?

- ☐ Less than 1 month  
☐ Between 1 and 2 months  
☐ Between 2 and 3 months  
☐ Between 3 and 4 months  
☐ Over 4 months  
☐ Don't Know

15. How satisfied are you with the amount of time it takes to receive VA markers?

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

16. Have you/your company ever had problems with a delivered headstone, marker, or medallion?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No -> Go To #20

17. About what percentage of the markers that you receive have problems?

- ☐ Less than 1%  
☐ 1% to 5%  
☐ 6% to 10%  
☐ Over 10%

18. What types of problems have you experienced with VA furnished headstones and markers? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Broken/chipped headstones/markers  
☐ Typographical error(s)  
☐ Wrong information/symbol  
☐ Discoloration  
☐ Wrong type of headstone or marker  
☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

19. How satisfied are you with the timeliness in which problems have been corrected?

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

20. Generally, how would you rate the quality of the VA headstones or markers received compared to those received in previous years in the following areas?

	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Extremely poor
Cut. ....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Polish. ....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Color. ....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finish. ....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depth of the inscription	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(Stone only) .....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**21. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.**

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**22. Are you aware of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) Program?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No → **Go To #25**

**23. Do you typically inform your clients about the program?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**24. Do you typically order the certificate(s) for your client?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**25. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with these VA memorial products and services?**

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied

**26. Do you have any additional comments concerning how the VA Memorial Programs Service could improve its services and programs? If your comment is in response to a specific question, please reference the question number.**

**Note:** If you would like to be contacted by NCA, please write your name and contact information (address or telephone number):

## **Appendix C: Users Guide**

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### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This section presents an explanation of how to understand and interpret the graphs and tables used in this report:
  - Stacked bar graphs and data tables are used to illustrate the results of survey items with a continuous response scale (e.g. “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”).
  - Standard bar graphs are used to illustrate the results of survey items with a nominal response scale (i.e., categorical responses).
  - Element of comparison graphs combine results from two survey items in a single bar graph in order to provide a more detailed look at survey results.
- This appendix should be used in conjunction with the graphs and tables presented throughout this report.

## Appendix C: Users Guide

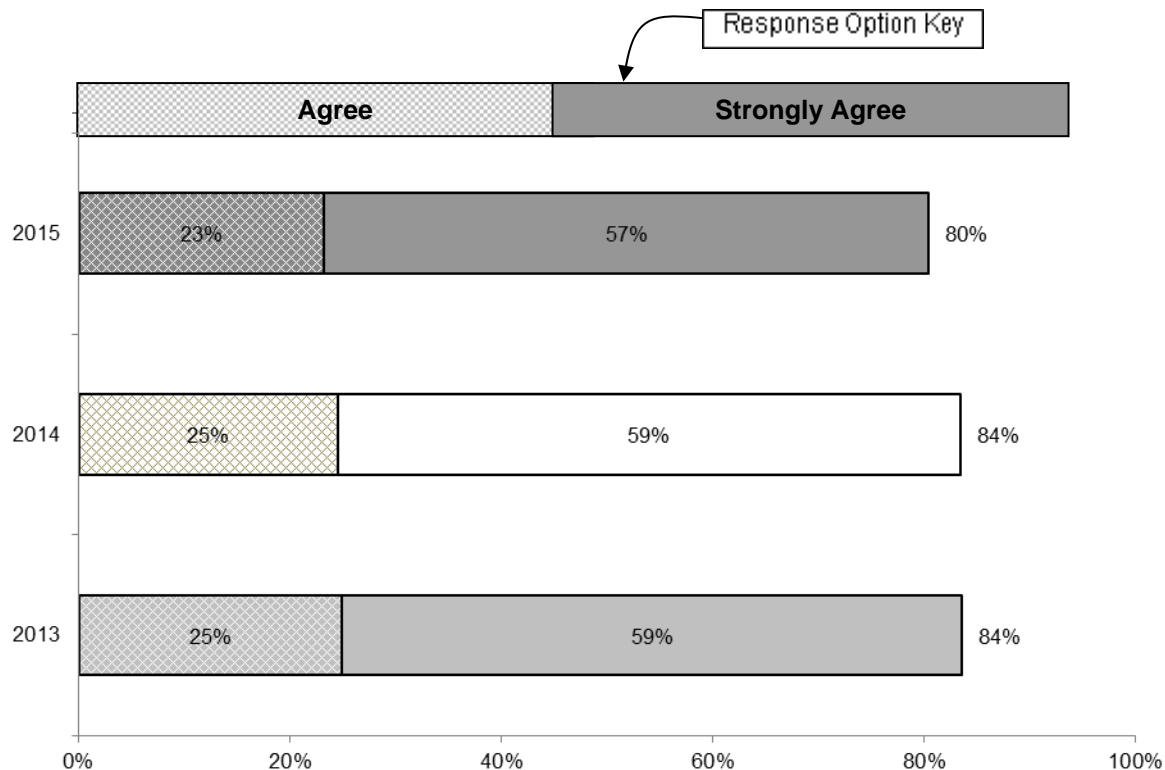
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### QUESTION NUMBERS

Questions that were asked of both Funeral Directors and Next of Kin are presented together with All Respondent graphs followed by the sample type's respective graph. When presented together, the first number presented for the question is the question number for the Next of Kin, the second is the question number for the Funeral Directors.

### STACKED BAR GRAPHS

Stacked bar graphs are used in this report to illustrate the results of survey items with a continuous response scale (e.g., “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”). The graphs depict the frequency of positive responses to an item, while maintaining the distinction between the degree of endorsement (e.g., “agree” and “strongly agree”). In each stacked bar graph, the percentage of participants responding positively to the item is depicted across all NCA survey participants. Neutral and negative response options are not depicted. A sample stacked bar graph is presented below with labels to aid in interpretation of the graph.



Survey years are located to left of the graph. When data are available, the graph will display data from the current year and the previous two years. A response option key is located at the top of the graph.

This key lists the positive response options to the item (e.g., “agree” and “strongly agree”) and depicts the type of shading for each of the two response options. Although the specific response options differ by item, moderate endorsement of the item is always indicated by the patterned section of the bar, while strong endorsement is always indicated by solid shading of the bar. The total length of the bar represents the percentage of participants who responded positively to the item (i.e., the sum of both moderate and strong positive responses). For example, in the above graph 23% of all respondents selected “agree” in 2014 and 57% selected “strongly agree”, so in total, 80% of participants responded positively to this item.

When an NCA performance target exists for an item, the performance target is presented just below the response option key. This is meant to aid with the comparison between NCA’s performance target on the item and the actual satisfaction survey data. Note that performance targets exist for only a subset of the items on the survey; thus, all stacked bar graphs do not depict a performance target.

## DATA TABLES

Accompanying each stacked bar graph is a data table that presents detailed item-level results for the current year and the previous year (when available). The total number of respondents (n) and the percentage of respondents selecting each possible response option are provided.

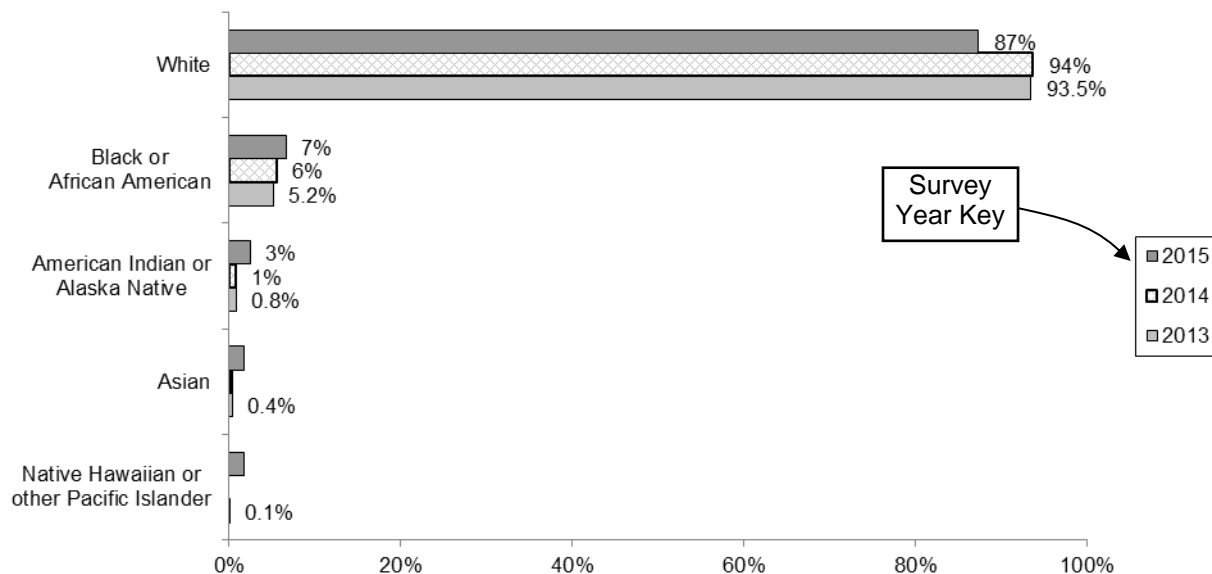
	Year	n	Strongly Agree	*Change Score	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
NCA	2015	3685	57.2%	-1.8%	23.2%	16.1%	2.2%	1.2%
	2014	3604	59.0%	0.3%	24.5%	15.9%	0.5%	0.1%
	2013	1896	58.7%		24.9%	14.9%	1.2%	0.2%

Change scores represent the difference between the percentages of participants selecting the most positive response option (e.g., “strongly agree”, “very satisfied”) for the row year versus the previous year. For example, in the above table 57.2% of respondents selected “strongly agree” in 2015, while 59.0% selected this option in 2014. The change score was calculated as follows:  $57.2\% - 59.0\% = -1.8\%$ . The 2014 change score represents the difference between the percentage of respondents selecting “strongly agree” in 2014 and in 2013.

Positive change scores indicate an improvement since the previous year, while negative change scores indicate a decline in the percentage of participants who selected the most positive response option.

## STANDARD BAR GRAPHS

While stacked bar graphs are used for all items that are assessed on a continuous scale (e.g., “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”), standard bar graphs are used for all items assessed on a nominal scale (i.e., categorical responses such as relation to the deceased or types of communication).



Standard bar graphs list all possible response options along the vertical axis. If available, data are presented for the current year and the two previous years. The shading selection to designate each year's data is presented in the survey year key. In the above example, 2015 data are represented by the dark gray bars, 2014 data is represented by the patterned bars, and 2013 data are represented by the light gray bars. Thus, 87% of respondents selected option "White" in 2015, 94% selected "White" in 2014, and 93.5% selected "White" in 2013.

The graph above depicts an example item in which respondents could select only one option, so that for each year, data will sum to approximately 100% across the possible response options (the total may vary slightly due to rounding). Items on which respondents were instructed to "mark all that apply" may also be depicted with standard bar graphs, but responses will likely sum to greater than 100%. Despite this difference, the graphs can be interpreted in the same manner.

Data tables are not provided for these items because the standard bar graphs depict the full range of response options, unlike the stacked bar graphs that present only the positive response options. Since a data table is not provided, the total number of respondents for each of the three years is presented at the bottom of the graph.

## **Appendix D: Question Locator**

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### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- Appendix D provides a reference chart that lists each survey item and the corresponding report page number where its survey data can be found



## Appendix D: Question Locator

### Questions for All Participants

Question #		Question Text	Report Page #
NK	FD		
7	4	How satisfied were you with the process you used to order the headstone(s), marker(s), or medallion(s)?	10-12
8	5	Did you call the NCA Applicant Assistance number (1-800-697-6947) for assistance with a headstone, marker, or medallion?	51, 52
9	6	Did you speak with an NCA Customer Service representative initially, or were you transferred to NCA by a VA Customer Service Representative?	55, 56
10	7	Why did you call NCA? (Mark all that apply)	53, 54
11	8	How satisfied were you with the service you received from the NCA Customer Service representative?	13-15
12	9	Did you visit the VA web site for information about ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion?	44-46
13	10	What type of information were you looking for? (Mark all that apply)	47-49
14	11	How satisfied were you with the ease of finding the information you were looking for?	16-18
17	14	About how long after ordering the headstone, marker, or medallion did it arrive?	27-29
18	15	How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to receive the headstone, marker, or medallion?	19-21
20	21	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the headstone, marker, or medallion I received from the VA was excellent.	6-8
23	25	Overall, how satisfied were you with your experiences with the VA Memorial Programs Service products and services?	23-25
37	26	Do you have any additional comments concerning how the VA Memorial Programs Service could improve its services and programs? If your comment is in response to a specific question, please reference the question number.	Comments

## Appendix D: Question Locator

### Questions for Next of Kin (Questions 1-36)

Question #	Question Text	Report Page #
1	How did you learn about the headstone, marker, or medallion benefit provided by the VA?	32
2	What type of headstone, marker, or medallion did you order?	34
3	Did you have any problems while affixing the Bronze Medallion to the headstone or markers?	35
4	IF YES, Please explain the difficulty you faced in affixing the medallion to a headstone or marker.	Comments
5	Who helped you with ordering the headstone/marker/medallion?	33
6	How did you order the headstone, marker, or medallion?	30
15	When you were applying for the headstone, marker, or medallion, were you aware that the following items could be added to the headstone, marker, or medallion:	36
16	If you were aware of the availability of an inscription, how did you learn about what could be included in the inscription? (Mark all that apply)	37
19	How would you have preferred to be notified about the delivery status of your headstone, marker or medallion?	38
21	Did you order and/or receive a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)?	66
22	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The overall quality of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) I received from the VA was excellent.	9
24	Were you required to pay any unexpected fees regarding your government headstone, marker or medallion?	67
25	If you ordered a Bronze marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?	67
26	If you ordered a Granite/Marble headstone or marker, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?	68
27	If you ordered a Bronze Medallion, what unexpected amount were you required to pay?	68
28	What was the gender of your loved one?	A-1
29	Was your loved one Hispanic or Latino?	A-1
30	What is the race of your loved one?	A-2
31	Are you a Veteran (served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, either in the regular military or a National Guard or Reserve Unit)?	A-2
32	Which of the following war eras did you serve in? (Mark all that apply)	A-3
33	What is your gender?	A-4
34	Was your loved one your spouse?	A-4
35	Are you aware that Veterans who are married to Veterans are entitled to individual gravesite headstone/marker/medallion benefits?	A-3
36	Please select your age group:	A-5

## Appendix D: Question Locator

### Questions for Funeral Directors (Questions 1-24)

Question #	Question Text	Report Page #
1	On average, about how many VA headstones, markers, and medallions do you/your company order in a year?	39
2	Please indicate the type/types of VA headstones/markers/medallions you/your company ordered. (Mark all that apply)	40
3	How do you typically order VA headstones, markers, or medallions? (Mark all that apply)	31
12	When completing an application for a VA headstone, marker, or medallion, do you typically: (Mark only one)	41
13	Are you aware of the following requirements:	42
16	Have you/your company ever had problems with a delivered headstone, marker, or medallion?	62
17	About what percentage of the markers that you receive have problems?	62
18	What types of problems have you experienced with VA furnished headstones and markers? (Mark all that apply)	63
19	How satisfied are you with the timeliness in which problems have been corrected?	22
22	Are you aware of the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) Program?	65
23	Do you typically inform your clients about the program?	65
24	Do you typically order the certificate(s) for your client?	66

## **Appendix E: Response Rates and Data Confidence**

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### **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

- This appendix provides detailed information about the response rates and confidence intervals next of kin and funeral directors in the 2015 Memorial Products Survey.

## Appendix E: Response Rates and Data Confidence

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The table below presents response rates and confidence intervals for the next of kin and the funeral directors included in the 2015 Survey of Satisfaction with VA Memorial Products. A description of each of these terms is provided below.

MEMORIAL PRODUCTS SURVEY RESPONSE RATES			
	Next of Kin	Funeral Directors	Total
<b>Total Sample</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>12,789</b>	<b>15,289</b>
Deceased	2	0	2
Undeliverable	77	470	547
<b>Total Eligible Questionnaires</b>	<b>2,421</b>	<b>12,319</b>	<b>14,740</b>
<b>Total Returned Surveys</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>4,121</b>
<b>Total Response Rate (Returned/Eligible)</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>
<b>Confidence Interval</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

### National Response Rates

Nationally, the Memorial Product Survey yielded a response rate of 28.0% (47.9% for next of kin and 24.0% for funeral directors).

### Confidence Intervals

Next of kin data in this report represent information gathered from a sample that can be generalized to the entire next of kin population. A confidence interval is calculated to determine the range around each sample mean. The 95% confidence intervals are based on satisfaction measure of 80%. For higher satisfaction measures (e.g. 90%), the 95% confidence interval will be slightly smaller. For satisfaction measures closer to 50%, the 95% confidence interval will be slightly larger.

For example, if 80% of next of kin reported satisfaction with the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) they received, with a confidence interval of  $\pm 2.3\%$ , it can be assumed with 95% confidence that the PMC satisfaction for the entire next of kin population is 77.7% and 82.3%.

## **Appendix E: Response Rates and Data Confidence**

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All unique funeral homes were mailed a survey. Had all funeral homes returned the survey, this would be a complete census of the population and would have a confidence interval of 0. Since not all funeral homes returned the survey, we calculate a confidence interval based on the sample of funeral homes that responded to the survey. Undeliverable questionnaires were those that were returned undeliverable, blank, incomplete, were returned with an indication that the recipient was deceased, or unable to complete the questionnaire.