

How do people use AirRater in Tasmania?

A user survey



QUESTIONS

We wanted to know more about how people use AirRater in Tasmania.



CONVERSATIONS

We surveyed AirRater users in Tasmania to find out how, when and why they use the app.



RESULTS

We found that AirRater is used in Tasmania to help people make decisions to protect their health when there is poor air quality and heat.

What is AirRater and why did we survey users in Tasmania?

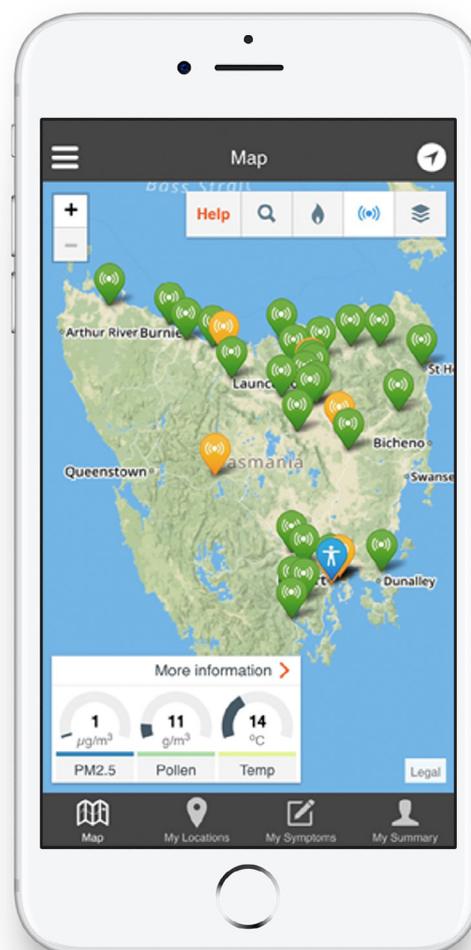
AirRater is a free smartphone app that was released in Tasmania in October 2015. It aims to help people reduce the health impacts of local environmental hazards by providing easy access to real-time information on air pollutants, pollen, fire locations and temperature.

We wanted to survey users to get feedback on how people are affected by environmental hazards in Tasmania, and whether they use the app to help make decisions to protect their health.

What did we do?

We sent a survey via Survey Monkey to 4994 AirRater users in February 2020. 657 people took the survey. We asked people about:

- » their personal health conditions
- » how they were affected by poor air quality and heat
- » whether poor air quality and/or heat affected their ability to go to work or school, and
- » their thoughts on AirRater.



Who were our participants?



91% of participants use the app to support their own health needs



45% of participants experience—or care for someone with—a lung condition, e.g. asthma



20% of participants were aged 65 years or over

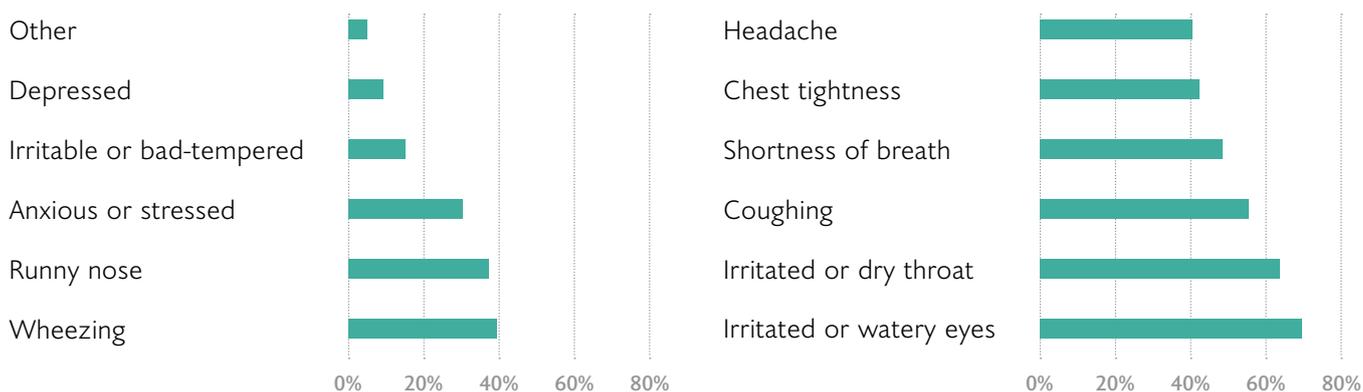


6% of participants experience—or care for someone with—a heart condition, e.g. heart disease

What did we find?

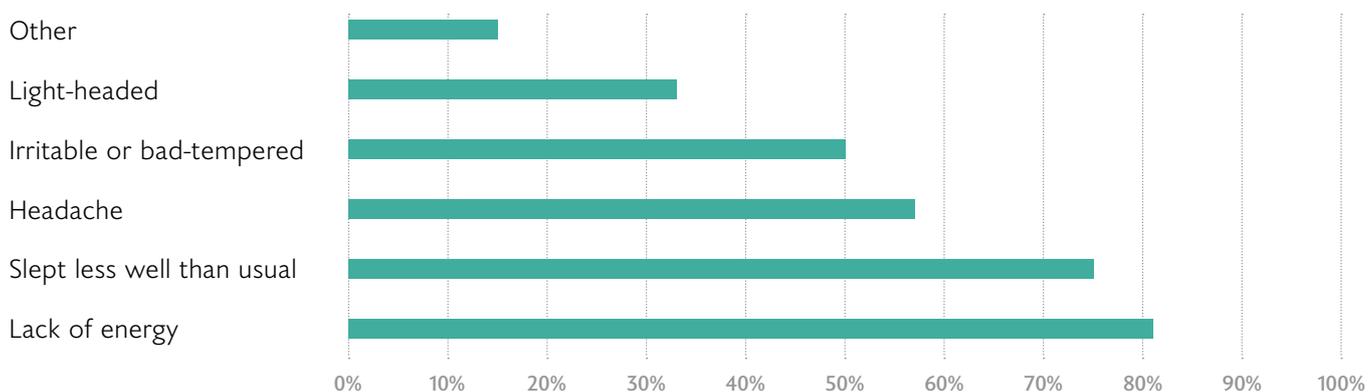
Poor air quality effects

A majority of respondents were affected by poor air quality, but only one in five missed school or work because of their symptoms. 63% of respondents had been affected by poor air quality caused by smoke. Of those who experienced symptoms, over half reported experiencing irritated eyes, an irritated throat and/or coughing. Most respondents sought medical advice because of their symptoms. Despite this, most respondents affected had never missed work or school because of their symptoms.



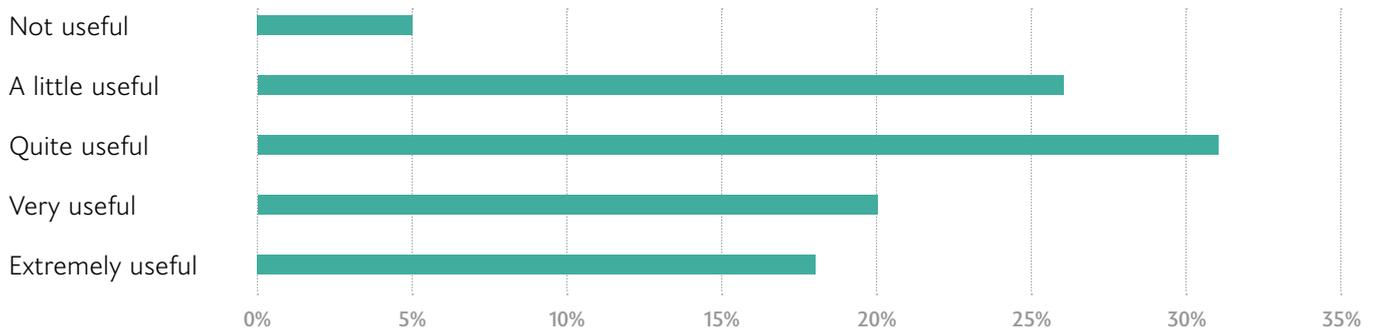
Heat effects

Heat affected the health of about half of users, some of whom missed work because of their symptoms. Almost half of respondents had been affected by heat, and one in five of those affected had missed work because of their symptoms. Of those respondents who experienced symptoms, over half reported a lack of energy, poorer sleeps and/or headaches. A small number of respondents saw a doctor because of their symptoms.



Usefulness of AirRater

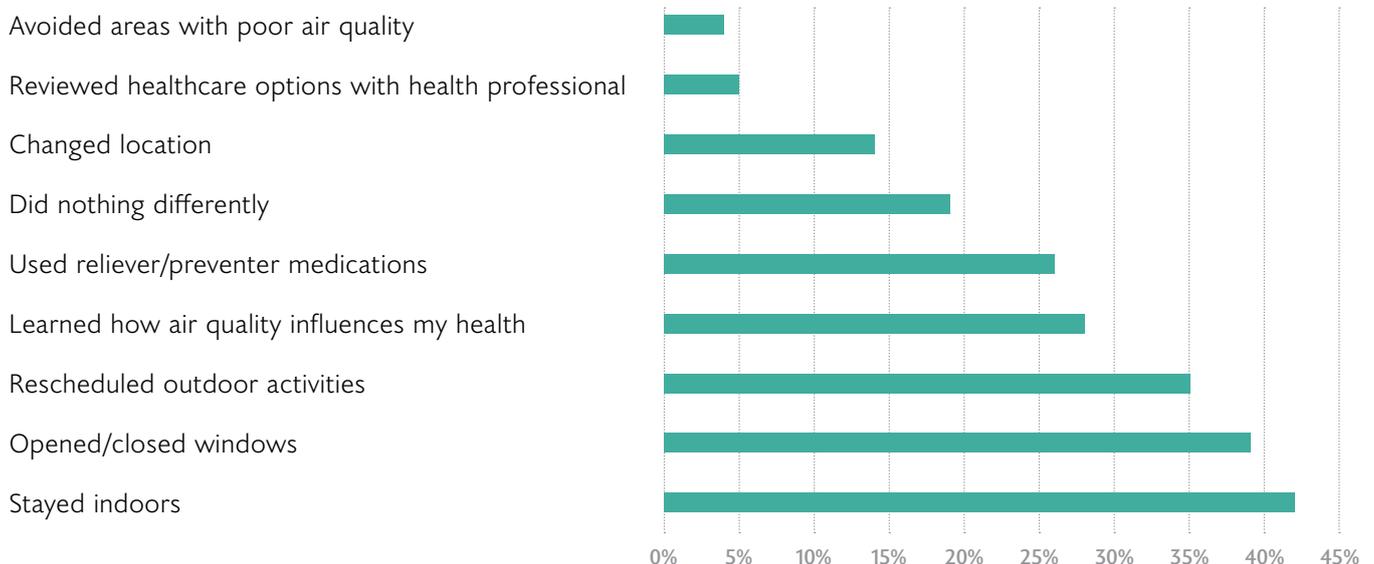
A majority of respondents told us the app is useful. Around two in five respondents indicated the app was either very useful or extremely useful. A third found it quite useful.



Behaviour change and AirRater

A majority of respondents used the app to help them make decisions to protect their health.

Almost half stayed indoors to avoid poor air quality and/or heat. People with a lung condition were slightly more likely than others to make decisions to protect their health.



What's next?

The feedback we receive from users in different locations helps us to understand different experiences of and responses to environmental hazards, such as poor air quality, pollen and extreme temperatures.

We will use this feedback to review AirRater and make sure the app is as useful as it can be, so that people continue to be supported to make decisions to protect their health.

Acknowledgements

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