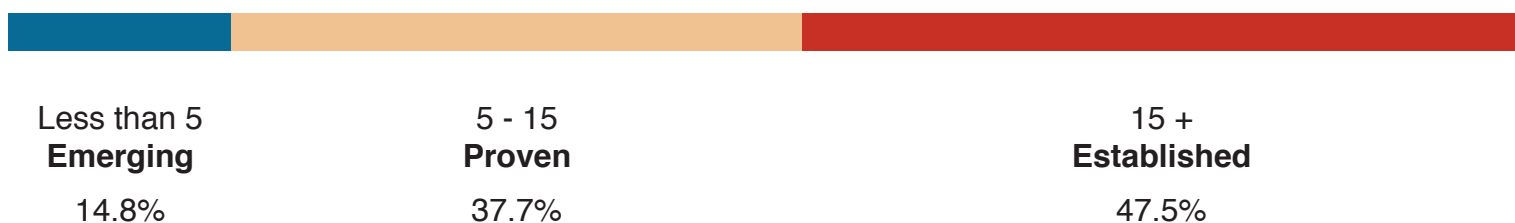


RESULTS

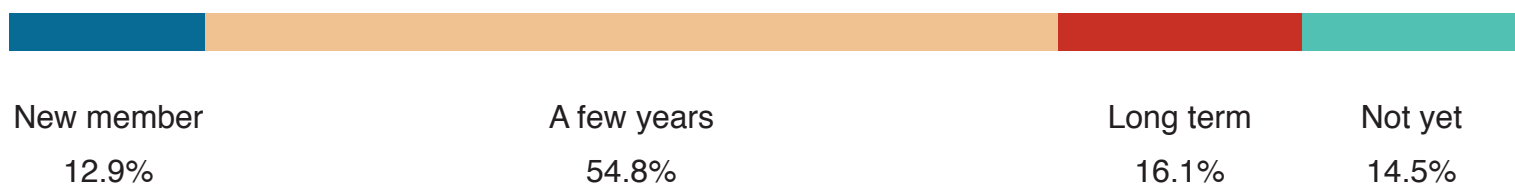
APDG Live Performance Committee
Survey 2017 **Theatre Companies and You**

61
Responses

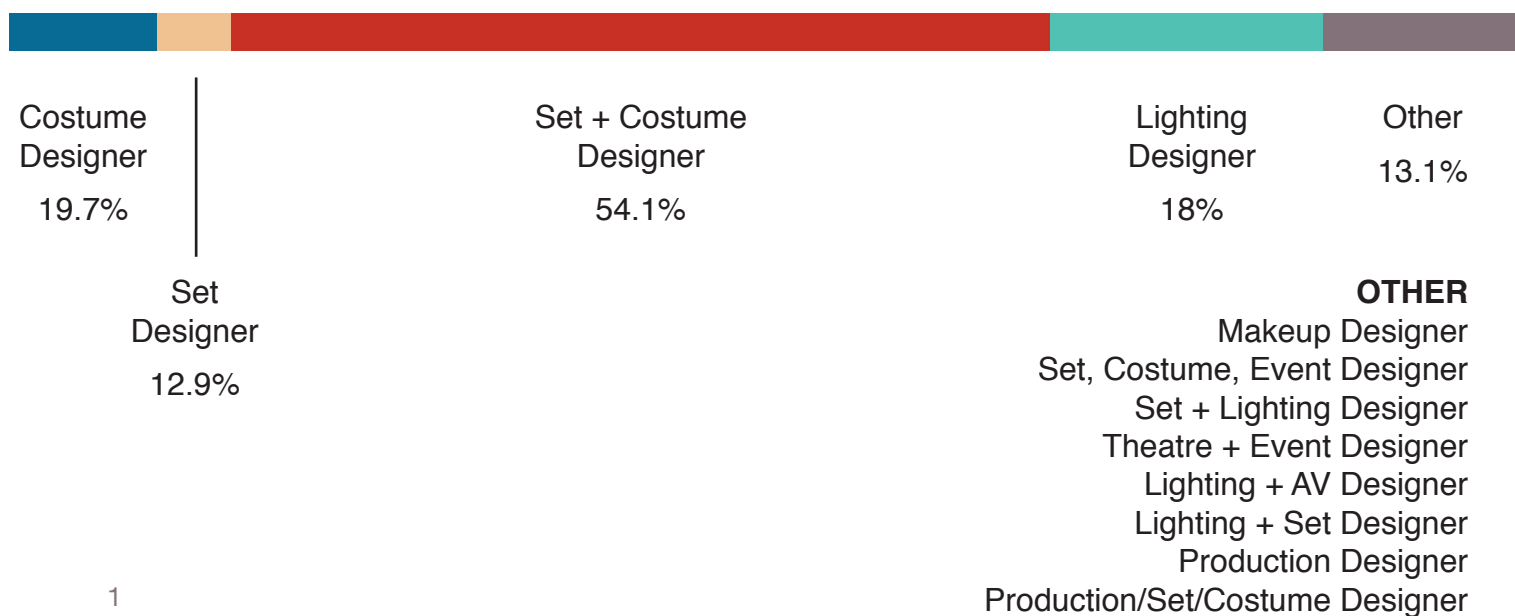
1 How many years have you been practising as a professional designer?



2 How long have you been an APDG member?

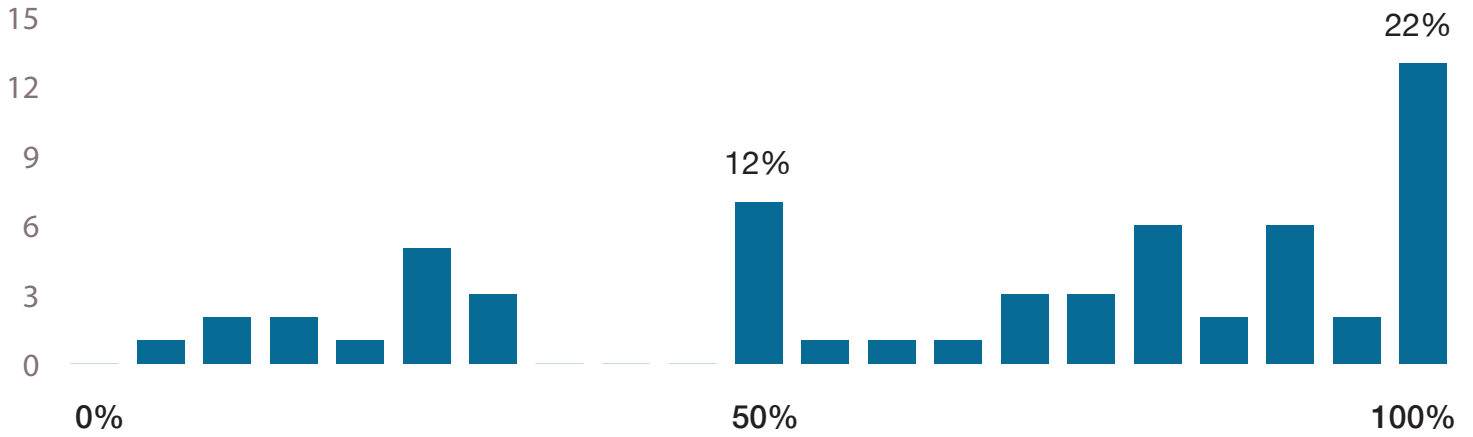


3 What kind of designer do you identify as?

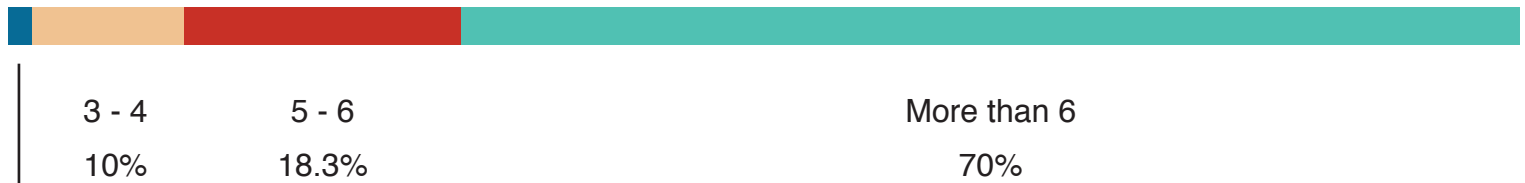


4 Approx. how much of your income would be derived from your professional theatre design work?

Most designers (78%) reveal that they have other sources of income other than their professional theatre work, with 20.3% earning less than half of their income in this way.



5 How many productions to gain a fair income?



1 - 2
1.7% A substantial majority of designers (70%) stated that they would need to design more than 6 productions a year to gain a fair income, with an additional 18.3% needing to design 5 – 6 productions.

OBSERVATIONS

1. Given the probability that these numbers of productions would be difficult to achieve it is not surprising that most designers need to augment their income from other sources. See Question 4 above.

2. The individual respondent who nominated they could make an income from 1-2 productions per year is an *established* designer (15 + years).

6 How are you most often employed by companies? (tick all that usually apply)

How	Responses
Full-time PAYG on staff within the company for a fixed or open term.	10 = 17.5%
Casual or Part-time PAYG under contract with the company for a specific project.	21 = 36.8%
Sole trader or independent contractor under contract with the company for a specific project.	41 = 71.9%
Contracted as your own company or partnership.	9 = 15.8%
Contracted as a member of a co-operative.	6 = 10.5%
No formal arrangement or contract.	8 = 14.0%
A volunteer or work experience position.	2 = 3.5%
Something else.	0

Half of all surveyed are commonly paid in different ways on different projects.

Of the half that are usually paid the same way, 53% are independent contractors or sole traders. This is also the overall majority at 72%.

Second most common arrangement is casual PAYG at 36.8%. More detail in questions 10 and 11.

A small proportion of designers (17.5%) are on salary in companies as fulltime or fixed term staff, or (15.8%) usually or sometimes contracting as their own company.

7 Regardless of how you answered above, how do you ideally see yourself in relation to the company employing you? (tick all that usually apply)

How	Responses
As having a close co-creative relationship as part of the company.	12 = 21.1%
As an engaged partner, independent but strongly connected.	31 = 54.4%
As an independent artist/contractor affiliated with the company.	34 = 59.6%
As fully responsible and accountable to the company.	6 = 10.5%
Unsure of my relationship - it changes or is unclear.	4 = 7.0%
As a wholly independent contractor, and the company is my client.	3 = 5.3%
Other (quoted): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different companies/ different relationship As an independent artist/contractor affiliated with the individual project of the company (I work in Film not Theatre). My relationship with the company is dependant on the director/choreographer's relationship to the company. 	

Surveyed designers confirmed their close working connection to the company that employs them with 86% indicating they would like to work as engaged partners and/or affiliated with the company.

21% see themselves at least some of the time in a close co-creative relationship with the company, with this response increasing the more senior the designer. A similar pattern plays out for those who responded that they are fully accountable to the company.

All those who responded that they were unsure of the relationship were in the category of *proven* designers.

8 What factors influence your relationship with the company employing you? (tick all that apply)

How	Responses
Individual or personal relationships between you and company member/s.	47 = 82.5%
Informal company culture – the degree to which the company is more or less inclusive or welcoming.	41 = 71.9%
Formal company strategies that define your relationship to the company, eg contracts, employment policies.	26 = 45.6%
Your own preferences to be more or less engaged.	22 = 38.6%
Other (quoted): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every company is different. Sometimes I'm involved conceptually when the project is being developed. Sometimes I'm hired for my opinion and sometimes I'm a hired gun to simply supply what is requested regardless of my input. • "company" meaning artistic team? executive team? administrative teams? workshop? production management? relationship to all these are far more varied. However, a significant factor of influence is often my existing professional relationship with the director who has engaged me as part of their creative team. 	

The data suggests, 'it's who you know'. 82.5% of respondents indicate that it's personal relationships that determine their relationship to a company. The second biggest factor is still the people in a company with 71.9% indicating that the informal company culture is a major factor.

Formal company strategies play a significant role with 45.6% nominating this as a key factor in their relationship with the company. It's notable that only 1 person indicated this was the only factor, and this was an *emerging* designer.

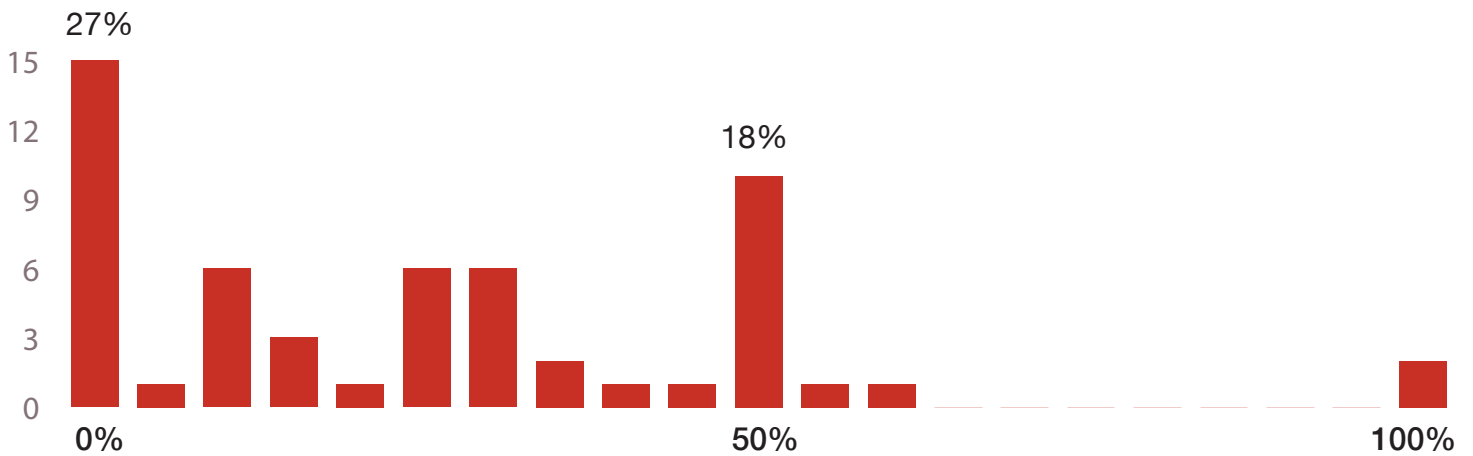
TAX

9 Do you ever subcontract or delegate your work to others?

Overall the response indicated that designers do not usually subcontract or delegate work.

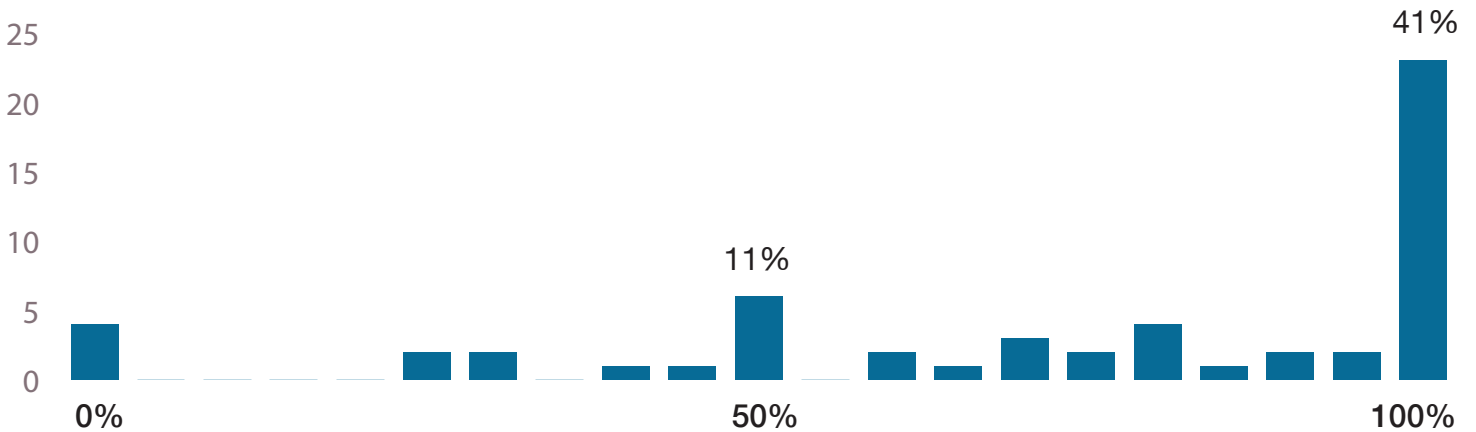
More than a quarter of designers surveyed never contract out or delegate work to others. 30% subcontract up to, and including, a quarter of the time. A further 35% subcontract up to, and including, half of the time.

Established designers account for those who delegate more than half the time.



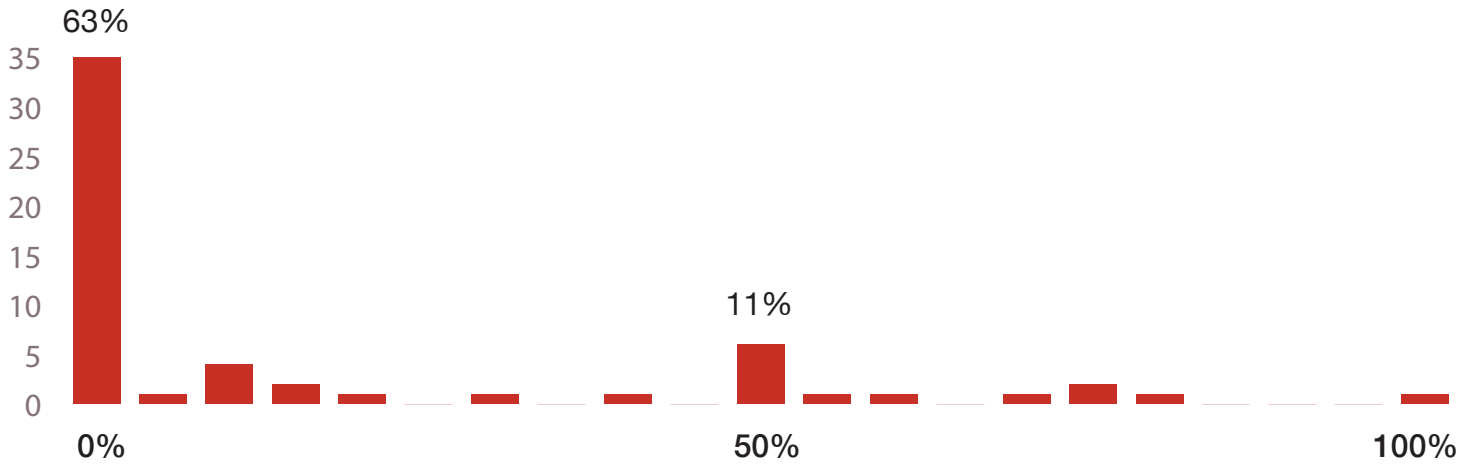
10 Are you paid for time worked as a fee?

71.4% of designers are paid as a fee on more than half of their projects.



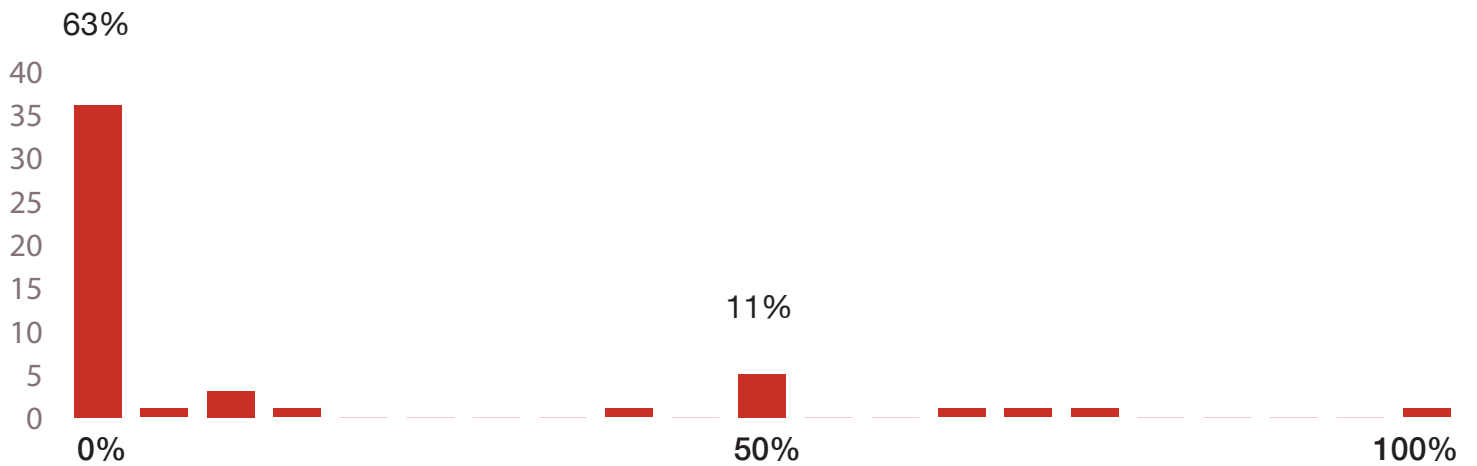
11 Are you paid for time worked as a wage?

Most designers (79%) are rarely or never paid as a wage.



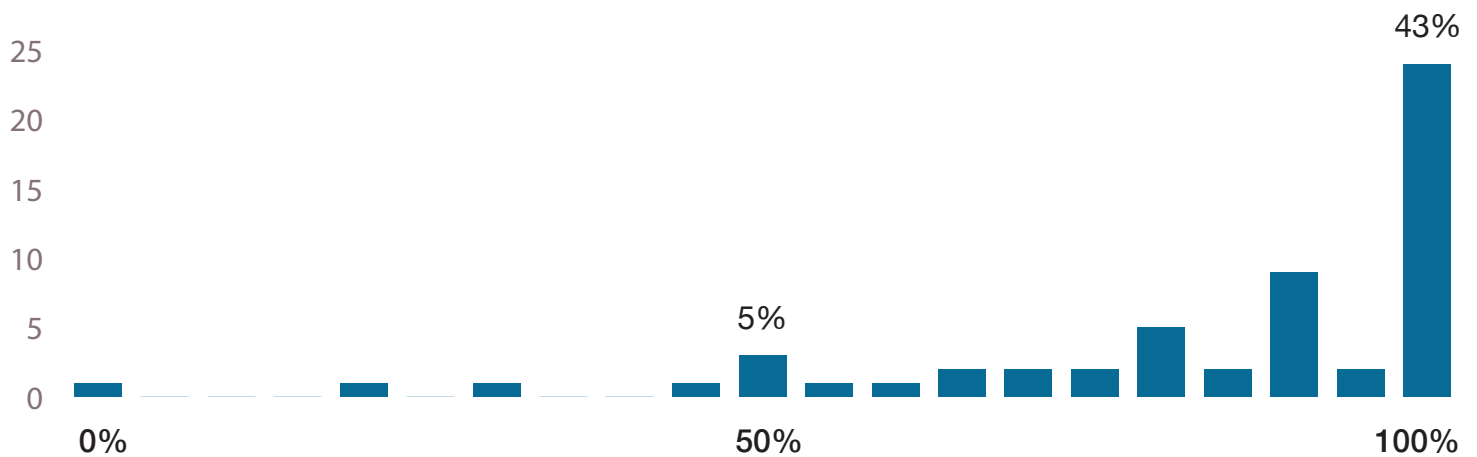
12 Are you paid for time worked as a commission?

Most designers (79%) are rarely if ever paid by commission.



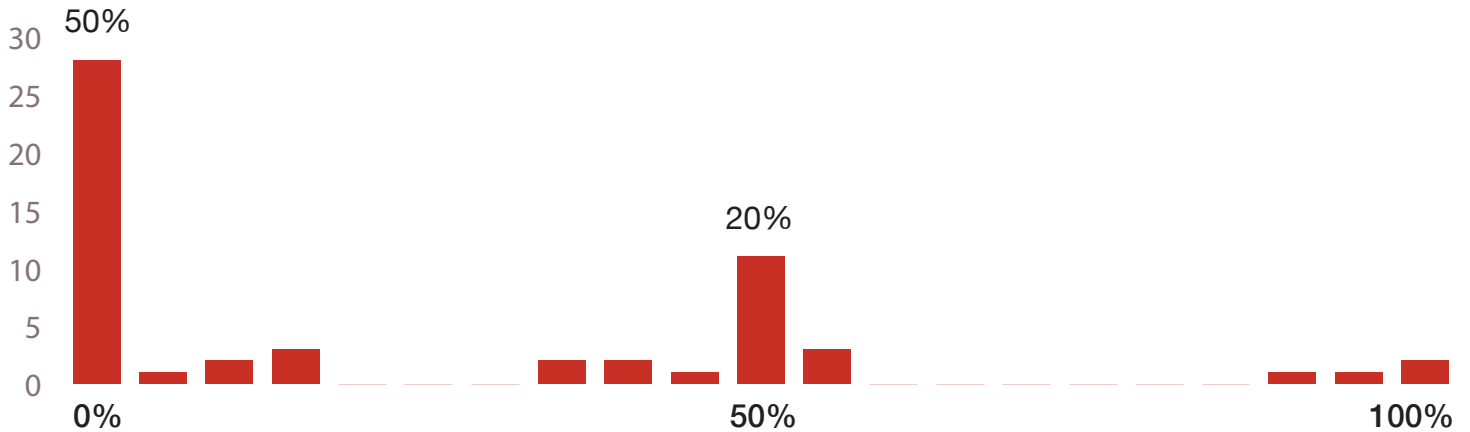
13 Do you provide most of the tools/equipment required to complete your work?

82% of designers commonly provide most of their tools and equipment (more than two-thirds of the time).



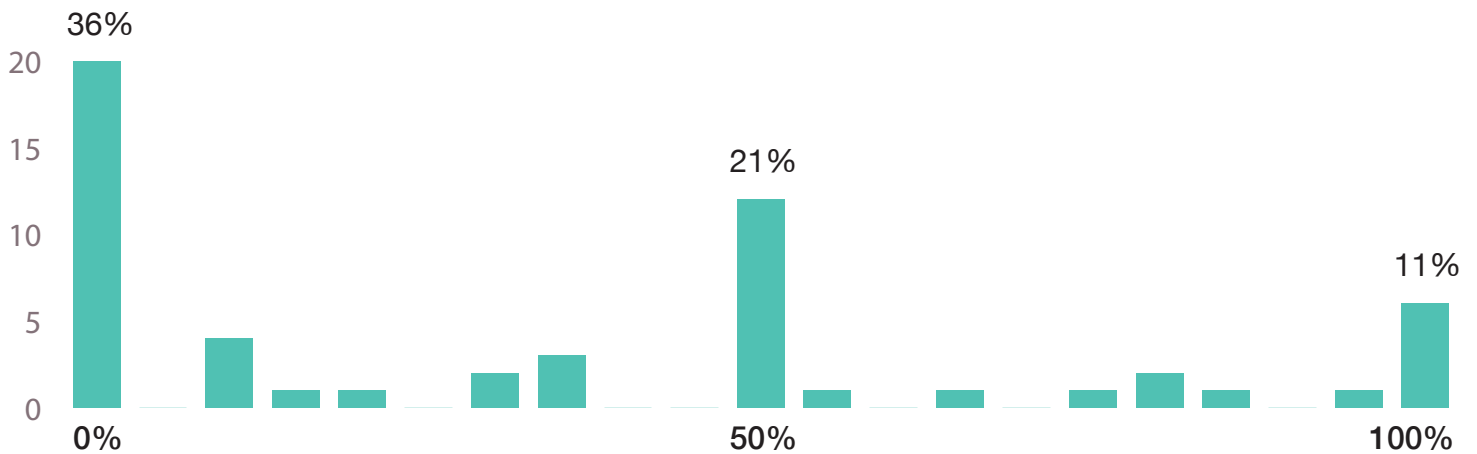
14 Do you receive an allowance or reimbursement for the cost of equipment/tools?

Only 12.5% of designers regularly receive an equipment or tools allowance or reimbursement (more than half of the time). Notably, none of these are *emerging* designers. It is possible that designers claiming regular reimbursement are claiming for design materials rather than tools/equipment.



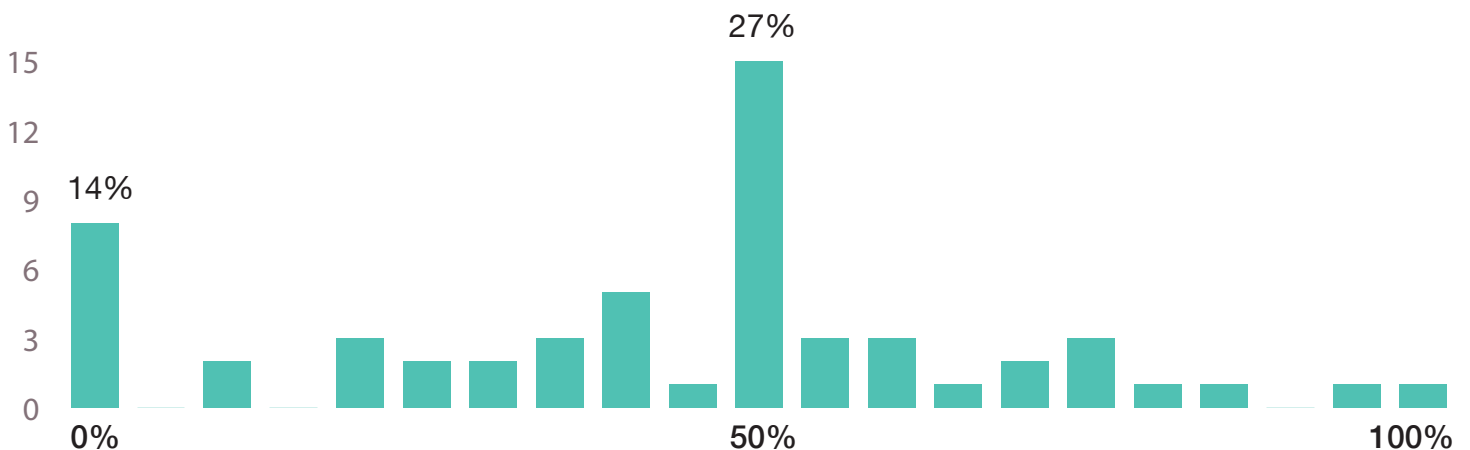
15 Are you legally responsible for your work, and would you be liable for the cost of rectifying any defect?

Only 23% of designers feel that they are in most case (more than half the time) legally liable for the quality of their work and rectifying any defects. The range of response here may indicate uncertainty on this issue.



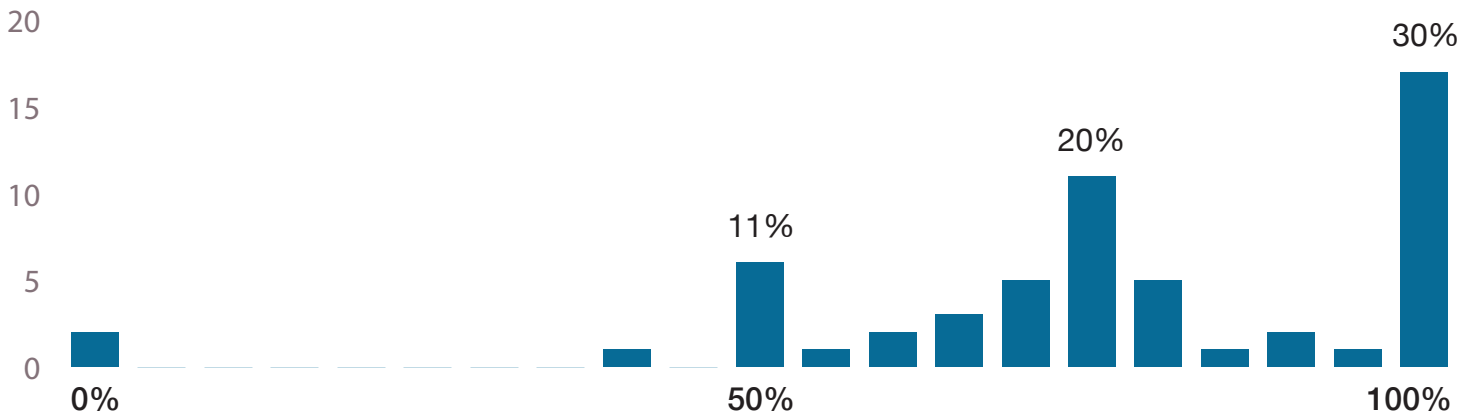
16 Does your employer direct the way in which you work?

Only 28% of designers feel that their employer substantially directs their work more than half of the time. This may reflect designers' desire to promote their own individuality, see Q:17. To discuss: Possibly better to express this as: 58% of designers feel that their employer directs the way they work up to, and including, half of the time (considering 14% indicated none of the time). *Established* designers tended to indicate lower on the scale.



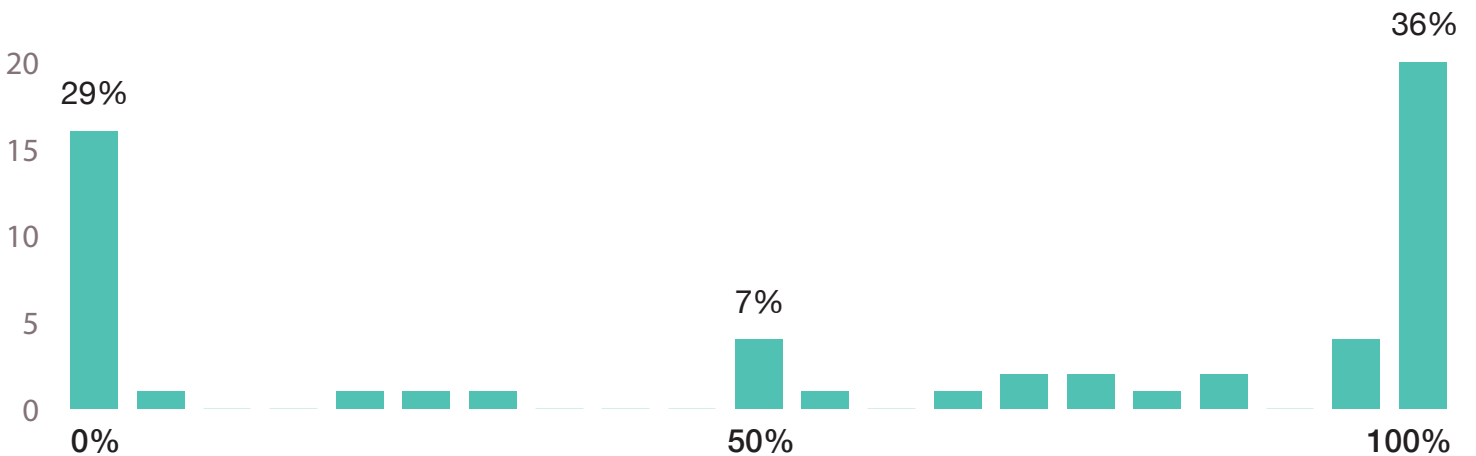
17 Are you free to work in the way you want to work, subject to the terms of your contract?

75% of designers feel they are mostly (more than two thirds of the time) able to work the way they want to.



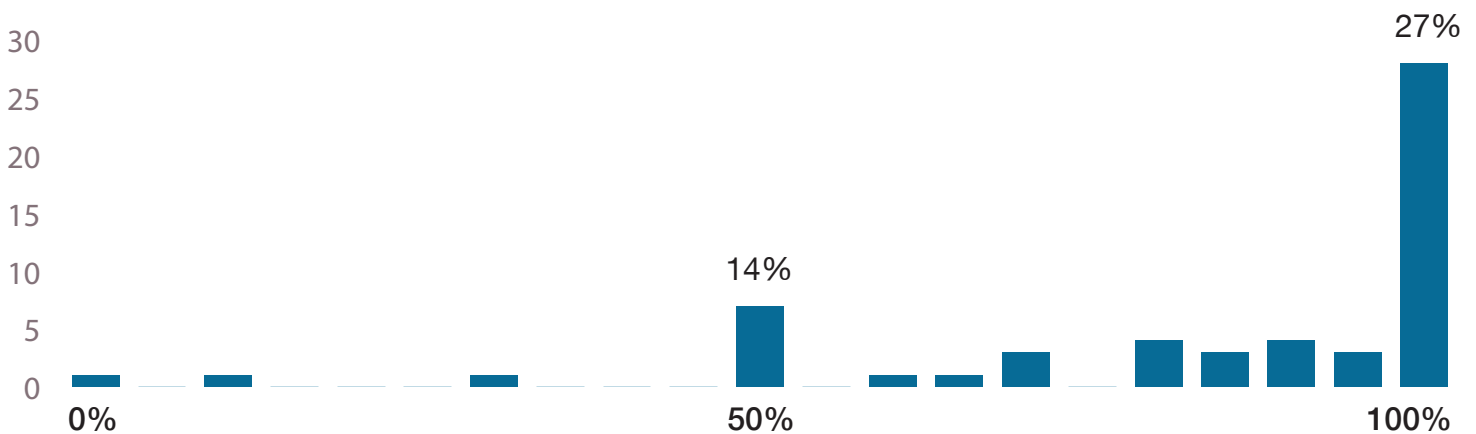
18 Are you operating your own business?

There is division in the response to this question with peaks at either end of the scale. 58% say they are operating a business more than half the time, while 35% indicate it's less than half the time. 7% sit on the half way line. All *emerging* designers indicate they are operating a business 95-100% of the time.



19 When under contract are you free to accept or refuse additional work?

80% of designers feel that they are able to accept or reject additional work when they are under contract most (more than two thirds) of the time. The only person who indicated none of the time explains they work in film, not theatre.



INSURANCES

20 Designers (other than those who have their own company) have by custom and precedent been included in the employer’s Legal Liability, Professional Indemnity and Workers Compensation insurance policies.

Do you feel that it is appropriate for this customary protection to continue?



Overwhelmingly (93%) designers feel that they should be covered by the employer.

21 Would you prefer to be:

Statement	Responses
More or completely independent with no insurance covers provided by your employer?	3 = 5.4%
Less independent but included in the company’s insurances.	42 = 75.0%
Unsure	11 = 19.6%

75% designers would be prepared to sacrifice some independence to be covered by the company’s insurances.

This might appear to be contradictory to responses in Question 7 where the majority indicated they would prefer to operate “As an independent artist/contractor affiliated with the company.” (59.6%). However, the lowest rated answer was “As a wholly independent contractor, and the company is my client.” (5.3%). This suggests a desire for connection to the company while maintaining a degree of independence.

This also indicates a need for clarity as to what degree of connection/responsibility classifies as ‘independent’ while still warranting insurance coverage from a company.

22 Do you feel that it is appropriate that companies should apply the same insurances cover to the designer as to the performers?



Overwhelmingly 91% designers feel that they should be covered by the same insurances offered by the company to performers.

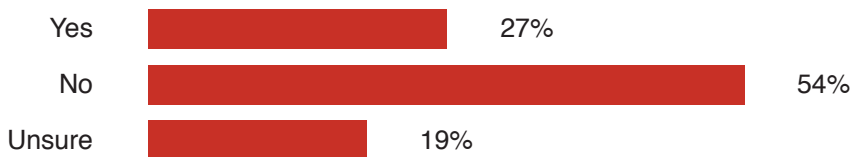
23 A PAYG contract makes explicit the company’s obligations to the designer in relation to insurance covers. Would you accept or ask for PAYG payment, knowing that you are protected by the company’s insurances?



82% of designers would work under a PAYG contract to be covered by the company’s insurances.

If providing insurance cover to designers made the designer’s relationship to the company more as an employee than a contractor, would you approve or not approve of any of the following:

24 A The company setting specific work hours and time commitments.



Just over half designers (54%) would not approve of the company setting specific work hours for them as an ‘employee’.

25 B The company providing pro-rata holiday pay and sickness leave.



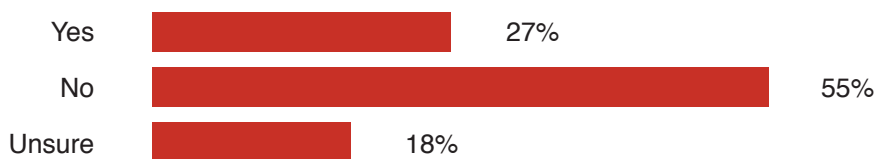
77% of designers approve of the company paying leave allowances to them as an ‘employee’.

26 C Losing flexibility about deduction of tax.



Designers were very unsure about whether they would be prepared to trade off tax flexibility as an ‘employee’, with one third in favour, one third not in favour and one third unsure.

27 D The company giving specific instructions on what work needs to be done, and where or how certain parts of the process are to be performed.



Slightly more than half (55%) of designers would not approve of their employer giving them specific work instruction as an 'employee'. This is not completely clear-cut though.

Which, if any of the following Insurances do you have?

28 A Workers Compensation



Established designers were the majority with Workers Compensation (16% of total response).

29 B Death and Disability (Life Assurance)



The more senior the designer, the more likely they are to have Life Assurance, with only 1 *emerging* designer holding this insurance.

30 C Income Protection



As with B above, the more senior the designer the more likely they are to have Income Protection. Only 1 *emerging* designer and 1 *proven* designer hold this insurance.

31 D Professional Indemnity



The pattern continues, the more senior the designer the more likely they are to have Professional Indemnity. No *emerging* designers hold this insurance.

32 E Public Liability



Emerging are a 50/50 split, while *proven* designers are 70/30 split towards 'No'. More *established* designers hold Public Liability than don't.

33 F Motor Vehicle Insurance



The balance is even across career groups. Further questioning may be needed to understand who out of the 'No' responses owns a car or not. This may have skewed these results.

34 G Home and Contents Insurance



The majority of *established* and *emerging* designers hold Home and Contents Insurance, while it is the minority for *proven* designers.

35 If you don't have any/some of these insurances, what are the barriers to you obtaining cover? (tick all that apply)

Statement	Responses
Cost - too expensive	40 = 75%
Organisational - too difficult/confusing to arrange	16 = 30%
Not interested.	11 = 21%
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting around to it. • I'm covered - people would be worried about the cost. • Companies cover some of these. • Different reasons for different insurances - however, primarily, its not something often talked about or reminded. • Don't understand what the standard requirement is or usually covered under employer if it is required. 	

For 75% designers the main barrier to obtaining insurance cover is the cost, although 30% also find the process of obtaining insurance confusing or difficult.

5/6 (83%) of *emerging* designers responded that the cost was too high, 19/21 (90%) of *proven* designers, and 16/28 (57%) of *established* designers. Proven designers dominated the field in not having the above insurances. Proven and emerging designers shared equal ratio of those that thought insurances were too difficult to organise (33%).

36 If companies required you to hold insurances that you do not have...

Statement	Responses
I would take out the cover as directed by the company	12 = 21%
I would not agree to a contract requiring my own cover	7 = 13%
I would accept the contract but would not take out insurance cover	0 = 0%
I would negotiate cover	28 = 50%
Uncertain how to act	9 = 16%

50% designers stated that they would negotiate cover if required by a contract. Only 21% said they would take out their own cover. 13% would not accept the contract at all. There appears to be at least some confidence among designers to work with companies to arrange cover through the production. How this is done, or best-practice, is not known however.

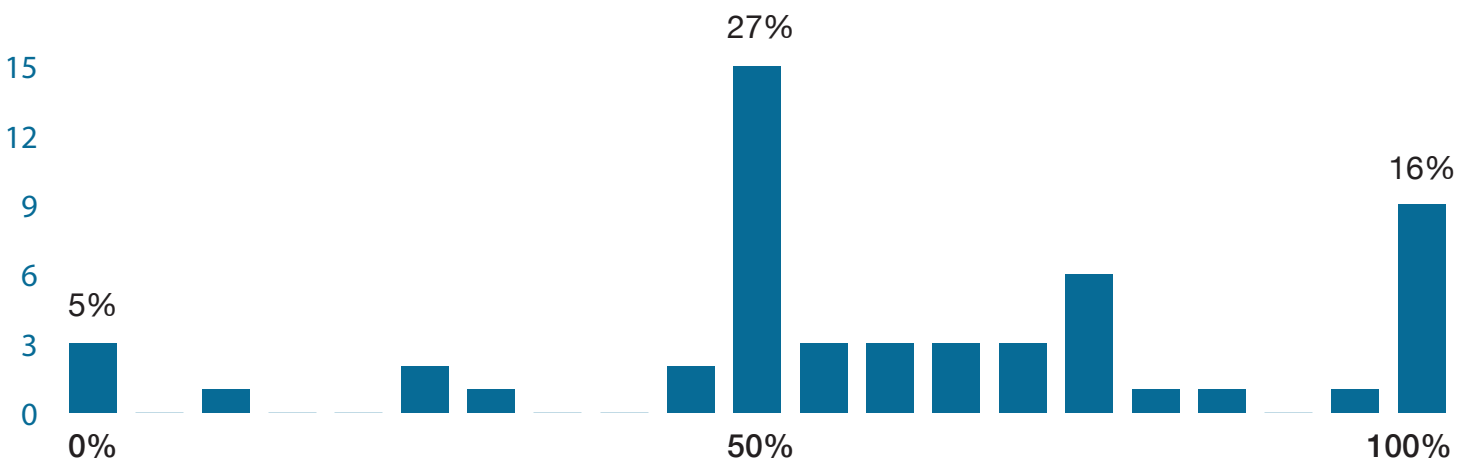
37 Do you feel that the cost of the insurances cover should be...



Overwhelmingly (86%) feel that the cost of insurance should not be considered part of their fee.

38 How concerned are you with the issues of liability in relation to workers compensation, professional indemnity or public liability?

48% designers are somewhat concerned (rated 3-6.5) about issues of liability in relation to workers compensation, professional indemnity or public liability, with 37% registering considerable concern (rated 7 and above). *Established* designers showed the relative higher level of concern with *proven* designers an even spread and *emerging* designers sitting in the middle. Discuss: Does this mean that emerging designers are simply not engaged/not yet engaged with this issue?



39 Would you support the APDG in seeking legal advice on these matters?

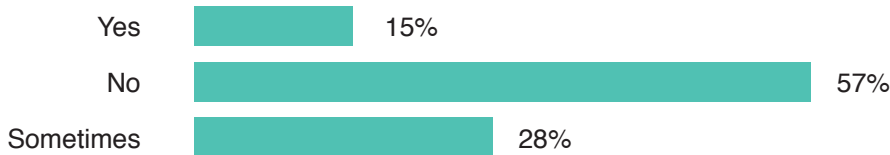


40 Are you aware that, unless you operate as a company, your employer is required by law to pay you superannuation?



Most designers (81%) understand that their employer is obligated to pay superannuation. 19% still do not understand this basic right.

41 Have you recently had any problems with companies paying superannuation?



43% of designers have had, or sometimes have had problems with companies paying superannuation. Proportionally, the majority of these designers are *emerging* or *proven*.

42 Has a company ever proposed that superannuation be included in your fee rather than additional to your fee?



61% designers have had companies proposing to include superannuation **in** the fee rather than additional to it.

43 Further comments....

<p>I started my company to avoid the contract negation issue that workers comp created. It was dragging out contract negotiations for many months. The company I run has many more expenses but is much easier than dealing with the aforementioned contract negotiations</p>
<p>Thank you for conducting this survey - the problems raised here have been concerning me and many of my colleagues in the recent months.</p>
<p>I like these surveys btw</p>
<p>Some of these questions were quite tricky to answer!</p>
<p>I operate as sole trader, not as a company. I may have answered a question incorrectly on this basis.</p>
<p>The question regarding how many theatre projects was confusing as I design for Film /Advertising. Also, some of my jobs are 3 days long and some 133 so impossible to estimate how many projects I need for the years income.</p>
<p>There is a misunderstanding between the design and the implementation of a design when it comes to insurance and liability issues - creating some sense of clarity around this would be highly beneficial.</p>
<p>Thanks folks! It's great to know you are on the case.</p>
<p>I have never been paid super by theatre companies who engage me despite performers being covered</p>