

# **The Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus**

## **Final Report**

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May 2012

*From the hands of the fans to Bioware....*

## Executive Summary

This is the second, and final, report on the Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus initiative. The primary goal of the two surveys and reports is to assist Bioware in addressing the issues perceived as most pertinent by the general ME community with regard to the ending of Mass Effect 3.

The total number (2904) and geographic spread (66 countries) of responses is encouraging, and represents a genuine base of concerned but constructive feedback.

The following summarises the key findings and issues for note from the surveys and are arranged by their priority - highest to lowest - based on the outcomes from the two surveys. Respondents to the surveys support:

- greater control over the ending, with Shepard's past and present actions providing the direction. If this can be provided, then other perceived flaws and limitations in the ending may be more acceptable.
- changing the interaction with the Catalyst. This is an issue that elicits strong responses, and greater levels of interaction are highly desirable. While removal of the Catalyst was strongly supported, there was also strong support for interactions between the player and the Catalyst where these could be seen as directly affecting or determining the ending.
- prioritisation of issues according to how they relate to the player and central characters, particularly any Love Interest, rather than to the broader or background 'world' events and issues *per se*.
- taking into account the importance of issues in how they are addressed. The more important issues may need to be more actively modified; other issues could be addressed by supplying further information.
- genuine attempts to address the issues even if the ideal solutions are not possible. In the main, respondents appeared to be prepared to consider options that weren't absolute conditions, while expressing strong support for a definitive alternative, ie even if the ideal is not met.
- All other issues need to be considered. However, while all the remaining specific issues are important, the key remaining ones appear to be: conciliation of Geth and Quarians both as a narrative component and as relates to any resolution at the ending, ie synthetics and organics; resolution of the Normandy fleeing and how team members are on the Normandy at the end; clearer linking of War Assets to end goals; and closure for Shepard's companions at the end.

Our aim is to offer constructive, practical feedback that will assist Bioware to address the issues so many players feel are amiss about the current ME3 ending. In the end, we did this because we still believe in you. Obviously so do a lot of other people.

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## Acknowledgement

We would like to sincerely thank everyone who took the time to participate in this and the previous e survey. We would also like to acknowledge the support of, and thank those at the Bioware Social Network, the Retake ME3 Facebook page and the Hold The Line web site and everyone who helped get the word out generally via Facebook and Twitter. The kind words and encouragement from the Mass Effect player community helped drive us to complete this project, which grew far beyond its initial scope, into what we hope will now be a useful tool for Bioware in addressing the issues of concern to the ME3 community.

## Advice For The Time Challenged!

Please Read:

1. Executive Summary.
2. [Overview Of Findings](#).
3. [Discussion](#).
4. [Conclusion](#)

## 1. Introduction

This is the second, and final, report on the Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus initiative. This report presents the information obtained from the second survey, with reference to the results of the first survey as relevant, and as presented previously in the first Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus report.

The primary goal of the two surveys and reports is to assist Bioware in addressing the issues perceived as most pertinent by the general ME community with regard to the ending of Mass Effect 3. This project is not about presenting the views of the entire ME community with regard to liking or disliking the current ME3 ending.

This report is not intended to be a technical paper or scientific report, but an attempt to make sense of a broad ranging debate about what people don't like about the ME3 ending, and to transparently make some headway as to what approaches might be best to address them. Anyone interested in an in-depth analysis of our work, or working with the original survey data to draw their own conclusions can contact us, and we will endeavour to accommodate them.

While the survey and this report are based on attempting to reach a consensus on the issues concerning Mass Effect 3 users, we acknowledge that no amalgamation or summary of the breadth of issues will meet everyone's needs or necessarily prioritise the issues according to everyone's perceptions. Having said that, a basic premise for trying to reach a consensus is that one single clear voice is more likely to be heard and understood than a multitude of competing voices. Our goal was a pragmatic solution that can be realistically delivered. There is no value in an idealized solution that is highly unlikely to be, or cannot be implemented.

We have attempted to remain objective in developing, implementing, analysing and reporting on the surveys. But while we have striven to achieve this aim, we acknowledge that this report is our own responsibility, and if it fails to present the information in the way that each respondent would have hoped for, such was not our intent.

While this is the end of this project, we would welcome any feedback or criticism, positive or negative. Seek us under our BSN monikers in that forum.

## 2. Overview of Findings

From the two Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus surveys we believe we have been able to identify a number of key findings that should prove useful for Bioware in developing DLC/EC or any other projects set in the ME universe. If we had to encapsulate the responses into one single message, we believe this would be:

ME3 players want greater control over the ending, with Shepard's past and present actions providing the direction. As a corollary to this single message, we believe that if this can be provided, then other perceived flaws and limitations in the ending may be more acceptable.

The six major findings from the surveys are summarized below. They are arranged by their priority - highest to lowest - based on the outcomes from the two surveys.

### Finding 1: Player Control

There is consistent support across all the issues for greater player control in determining outcomes of situations and interactions, as compared to simply being provided information by way of explanation of any situation. This is the keystone issue that comes through from all aspects of the survey.

In addition, however, the balance between acceptance of passive information upload and desire for interactive control varies depending on the issue being addressed. For example, providing information was well supported for dealing with the issue of survival of companions, but was poorly supported for dealing with the Catalyst. But even in these instances support for options proving greater player control was strong, and to reiterate: the overall trend is very clearly: let the player via Shepard determine the results.

### Finding 2: The Catalyst

The results of the second survey confirmed the results of the first: the Catalyst is an issue that elicits strong responses, and greater levels of interaction are highly desirable. What became clear through the second survey is the degree of dissatisfaction with the current situation, and the strong support to remove it entirely.

However, and perhaps a little unexpectedly, while removal of the Catalyst was strongly supported, there was also strong support for interactions between the player and the Catalyst where these could be seen as directly affecting or determining the ending. In fact, the most support overall was shown for the option to challenge the Catalyst in order to change his decisions. But what is most abundantly clear is the desire to change the current situation.

### Finding 3: Relation to Player (Shepard)

A general trend detected is that the significance of issues is dependent more on how the issue relates to the player and central characters rather than to the broader or background 'world' events and issues *per se*. For example, the issue of the Normandy escaping and team mates on board were identified as more important than the destruction of the Mass Relays and predicament of the Victory Fleet.

A related and comparable trend is apparent with respect to the relationship of characters to the player, with (surprisingly) the attachment to the players character Love Interest even more marked than for Shepard, but both substantially higher than the attachment to the other companions. A message that indicates players care at least as much, and perhaps more, for their love interest character than 'themselves' within the game is powerful one.

### Finding 4: Degree Of Flexibility: room to move?

In the main, respondents appeared to be prepared to consider options that weren't absolute conditions, while expressing strong support for a definitive alternative. For example,

while there was strong support for removal of the Catalyst entirely, even among those who specifically strongly supported this option, they were also able to support, to varying degrees, options to improve the interactions if the Catalyst was kept. We think this is important message: even if the ideal is not met, players will look favourably on genuine attempts to address the issues.

#### Finding 5: Conciliation: Synthetics and Organics

The strong score for the importance of the conciliation of Geth and Quarians is noteworthy. Conciliation between synthetics and organics is a clear theme that threads through the trilogy (eg Saren's voluntary but doomed synthesis in ME1; options for re-writing the Geth heretics in ME2; and how the player deals with Legion and Tali confrontation in ME2). The importance respondents place on conciliation over the other issues - survival of the Council, destruction of the Collector Base and survival of the Rachni queen - is of direct relevance to the ME3 narrative structure, with a strong desire for resolution to be within the players control.

#### Finding 6: Relativity of Scores; small fires still burn

We believe that in responding to the issues, where respondents perceived that something was less in need of immediate repair, it may have been seen as less important based on perceptions of urgency rather than intrinsic importance. Basically, if it ain't broke so much, don't try and fix it so much. In this context, we would strongly caution a perception that low ratings mean low importance *per se*, but should be more correctly interpreted as low importance to fix. It does not mean 'We don't care about these issues.' We suspect that had these other issues been perceived as 'more broken' then they may well have been perceived as more important overall.

### **3. Purpose**

The purpose of this survey was to delve deeper into what we learned from the first survey ('Mass Effect 3 Ending: Towards A Consensus'), expanding on the general areas from the first survey which were highest ranked, and looking at the various facets of these issues. This survey was constructed in an attempt to learn more specifically which issues needed to be addressed in the upcoming down-loadable content (DLC), and critically how the respondents wanted them changed, or if at all. A summary of the first survey is provided at [Attachment 1](#).

As with the first survey, the objective was not to balance dissatisfied with satisfied, not because being satisfied with the current state of play with the ME3 ending is not a legitimate perspective, but because the purpose of this initiative is to identify specific issues and how respondents feel they should be addressed. Unlike the first survey which strictly focused on ranking the levels of dissatisfaction within the community, this survey allowed for respondents to indicate that various issues were 'fine as is' and did not need to be addressed by the upcoming DLC.

A recent Bioware Social Network (BSN) poll<sup>1</sup>, with 72,574 responses already indicates that 92% of people were unhappy with the current ending, 5.9% wanted the Normandy stranded on

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1 Poll : What would you do about the endings? Results accurate as of May 5, 2012.  
<http://social.bioware.com/633606/polls/28989/>

Earth or near Shepard, and 2.1% were happy with the current ending. Given such a clear result, showing a large percentage of the BSN community dissatisfied with the current ending, it seemed more useful to focus on discovering what it is about the ending that makes people upset rather than to repeat the BSN poll. This survey gave respondents the ability to express not just their level of concern about the various issues but also to express support for things they felt don't need to be changed, and their level of support for a range of options for addressing the issues they did want changed.

## 4. Survey Design

This survey was basically divided into two parts.

The first five questions were comprised of a single multiple choice question and four simple yes/no questions, and the questions appeared in a fixed order. The purpose of these questions was to gain some idea of the respondents level of experience and their background knowledge with Mass Effect; both as a series and in regard to their feelings towards the possibility of buying further games in the Mass Effect franchise.

The questions as they appeared in the first half of the survey were:

### Part 1 - Your History with the Mass Effect series

Q1. Did you complete Mass Effect?

- Yes and I kept my save game
- Yes but I lost my save game
- No

Q2. Did you complete Mass Effect 2?

- Yes and I imported my ME1 save game
- Yes but I didn't import my ME1 save game
- No

Q3. Did you complete Mass Effect 3?

- Yes and I imported my ME2 save game
- Yes but I didn't import my ME2 save game
- No

Q4. Would any of the following influence your decision to purchase ME4? (Yes/No)

- Shepard lives or dies
- Love interest or favorite companion lives or dies
- Other companions live or die

Q5. At this moment, do you think you will buy Mass Effect 4 if it comes out?

- Yes and I'll be pre-ordering
- Yes



- Yes but only when the price comes down
- Undecided. Will wait to see what DLC for ME3 fixes
- No

The second half of the survey was comprised of four questions, with one of them consisting of Part A and Part B. In this portion of the survey the questions contained multiple options and we anticipate these took significantly more time to complete. The order of the choices/options/issues within all of the questions was displayed in a randomized order, i.e. potentially a different order for any one individual that took the survey.

The questions looked at The Catalyst, Major Themes, Major Decisions, and the two part question ('Other Issues') that was an amalgamation of 'logic problems', 'narrative problems' and 'previous decisions' from the first survey. The four questions allowed the respondent five options to express the level of Agreement/ Disagreement or Importance/ Unimportance that they felt for each individual issue.

As previously mentioned the last question also allowed the 'logic problems', 'narrative problems' and 'previous decisions' to be rated in one of three ways:

- Fine as is,
- Provide more information to explain the situation, or
- change the situation so it makes more sense.

The 'Other Issues' questions were structured in this way in this section to enable respondents to rank the seven specific issues both by how they should be addressed, and by the degree of importance the respondent assigned them. This provided opportunity to analyze both response types and to look at the relationships between importance ratings and preferred approaches.

The questions as they appeared in the second half of the survey were:

#### Part 2 - The Catalyst

Question 6. Hypothetically if the Extended Cut DLC chose to address the catalyst in each of the following ways, please rate how receptive you would be to those changes.

Please make a selection for each of the five options, not just the one(s) that you would want to happen. This analysis will take into account the logic between the options, i.e. your highest scored choice will not be 'diluted' by the others.

(Please note: the 'modify the context' option conceptually could include 'Indoctrination Theory', but please note this option is NOT limited to that interpretation.)

Options for the following choices are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- Keep current interactions as is

- Allow for questions (more information only)
- Allow you to challenge (change decisions)
- Modify the context of the Catalyst so it does not determine the end\*
- Remove it entirely

### Part 3 - Major Themes

Question 7. Bioware is currently planning Extended Cut content for a DLC release sometime this summer. How important is it to you that Bioware addresses the following issues?

Options for the following choices are: Very Important, Important, Neutral, Unimportant, Very Unimportant

- Loyalty of teammates affects their chances of survival
- Previous/Current team members role/effect on the ending
- Paragon/Renegade choices result in different outcomes at end

Shepard's actions throughout the game directly and clearly influence success or otherwise of overall goals

### Part 4 - Major Decisions

Question 8. In view of DLC, how do you think Bioware should approach these issues?

Options for the following choices are: Very Important, Important, Neutral, Unimportant, Very Unimportant

- Saving Council /Letting them die
- Saving/Killing Rachni Queen
- Destroying/Keeping Collector Base
- Conciliation between Geth and Quarian through ME trilogy should directly affect the ME3 ending

### PART 5a - Other Issues

Question 9. Please give your opinion about what should be done about other issues in relation to the Mass Effect 3's ending.

Options for the following choices are: Fine as is, Provide more information to explain current situation, Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense

- Logic Problem: The Normandy escape (no way they would flee)
- Logic Problem: Team members from final mission on Normandy
- Logic Problem: Victory Fleet Stranded and/or starving
- Narrative Problem: The destruction of the Mass Relays
- Narrative Problem: Lack of closure for you/companions (can be good or bad)
- Narrative Problem: War assets don't matter (ME3 choices)

Previous Decisions: Survival of Companions from ME2 (if they were saved/loyal)

### Part 5b - Other Issues

Question 10. Please rate the same issues from Critical to Unimportant.

Options for the following choices are: Very Important, Important, Neutral, Unimportant, Very Unimportant

- Logic Problem: The Normandy escape (no way they would flee)
- Logic Problem: Team members from final mission on Normandy
- Logic Problem: Victory Fleet Stranded and/or starving
- Narrative Problem: The destruction of the Mass Relays
- Narrative Problem: Lack of closure for you/companions (can be good or bad)
- Narrative Problem: War assets don't matter (ME3 choices)
- Previous Decisions: Survival of Companions from ME2 (if they were saved/loyal)

## **5. Results**

The results from the survey are based on information obtained on respondent numbers, country of origin and the scores for, and arranged by, each question.

Throughout the survey we intermittently monitored the results to gain an overview of the level of volatility in the data. The strongest trends were established as early as 100 responses, and all the minor trends within about 500 responses. While there were fluctuations in percentages at subsequent times, generally these were in the order of magnitude of no more than 2-3%, and towards the end of the survey this reduced to 0.5% or less. This interim 'sampling' leads us to believe that the final results from the 2900 responses are robust and truly indicative of the overall views of those who have concerns with the ME3 ending.

### **5.1 Respondents**

A total of 2904 responses were recorded for the survey, of which all but 148 provided a complete set of rankings, ie scored each issue. As the number of incomplete surveys is small compared to the total, the incomplete responses were kept in the analyses as they still represent valid scores where entered. In addition, there were 34 duplicate entries. For these, the latest entry was retained and the earlier duplicate removed so as to avoid double counting. Of these there were six respondents who did not complete all rankings the second time around. For these the amended rankings were used, and the early rankings used to fill in the gaps.

The 2904 responses represent participants from 69 countries covering all continents. A complete list of the countries recorded is provided at Attachment 1. In addition, there were some 330 odd responses where the country of data entry could not be recorded.

On average, respondents took approximately five and a half minutes to fill in the survey. A small number of the recording times were deemed to be spurious, for example entries of over an hour. These were converted to 20 minutes, which appears to be the most likely maximum limit based on the frequencies of response times.

A total of 3336 visits to the survey site were recorded, meaning that 87% of those who visited the site took the trouble to complete the survey (allowing some leeway for multiple re-visits).

## **5.2 Responses to Questions**

This section presents the actual scores received through the survey, without inferential comment. In most cases percentages have been used to make comparisons between results clearer, and also to adjust for the slight discrepancies between the totals due to a small number of respondents not completing all questions. This discrepancy is less than 2% and is considered inconsequential in the interpretation of the results.

### **5.2.1 Q1 to Q3 - ME History**

The Mass Effect Game History questions were included to provide an overall background view of the commitment of respondents to the Mass Effect franchise. We have made no assumptions about the length of time respondents have been playing any of the ME games, simply focussing on whether or not they had played all the games and the degree of contiguity through import of saved games.

The clear majority of respondents (95%) finished both ME1 and ME2 and imported their saved games. One interesting finding is that a small number of respondents (1.6%) said that they had not completed ME3. We questioned the validity of these responses in a survey specifically focussing on the ending of ME3, but have not excluded them from the analyses as it was never a pre-condition of the survey that respondents had finished ME3, and because the representation is so small.

Overall, it is clear that the respondents have a long term commitment to the ME series.

### **5.2.2 Q4 and Q5 – ME Future Intent**

Question 4 was designed to gauge future interest in the ME game universe, both individually and as a group. We decided to provide the questions on the influence of Shepard living and dying as this issue is a topic of intense and prolonged debate and speculation in the online forums with regard to any future iteration of the ME world, whether via DLC, EC or other. We included the additional questions in relation to the Love Interest and Other Companions as a comparison for the Shepard responses.

In terms of affecting intent to purchase any ME4 material, 62% of respondents said Shepard living or dying would influence their decision, while 64% said Love Interest, and 52% other companions would be an influence.

The question regarding intent to buy ME4 if it came out was to gauge the current level of anticipation and pre-commitment to the ME franchise, assuming any future paid expansion or stand alone ME based game. As the proposed DLC/EC has been communicated by Bioware as free,

the ME4 question was framed to seek responses regarding intent beyond that free future content. Results are shown in Figure 1, below.

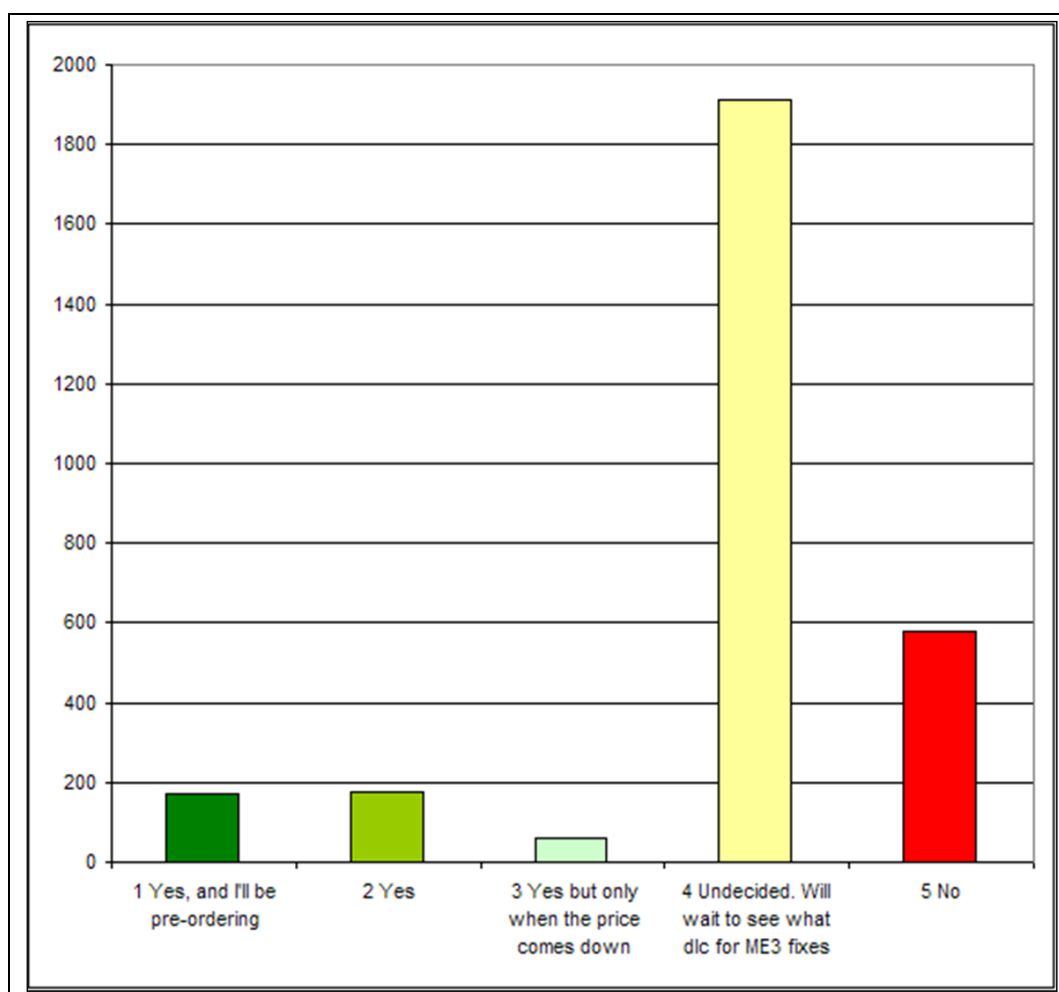


Figure 1. Q5: At this moment, do you think you will buy Mass Effect 4 if it comes out?

With respect to the question of whether respondents would buy ME4 if it came out, almost two thirds of respondents (65%) indicated that they were undecided and waiting to see what the DLC delivers, 21% said no, and 14% said yes (including Pre-ordering and When The Price Comes Down).

An issue identified with regard to this question is that the 'undecided' option contained the rider: 'depending on the outcome of the dlc.' There was no simple 'undecided' option for respondents. On this basis, we acknowledge that there is no way to determine how many respondents may have seen themselves as undecided independent of the DLC issue. There was only one respondent who indicated that this was an issue via a general feedback post in the Bioware Social Network (BSN) forum.

### 5.2.3 Q6 – The Catalyst

The questions in the Catalyst section were framed with the results of the first survey in mind.

The first survey identified that The Catalyst is a strongly felt and polarising issue. Of the three options presented in the first survey, respondents ranked 'The Catalyst itself (I don't like it at all)' as first choice in over 60% of cases, almost 30% ranked it third, and only 10% ranked it second. The choice with the highest number of second choices (over 55%) was 'Want to challenge the catalyst (different choices)'. The other option was 'Want to ask the catalyst more questions (argue his logic)'.

For the second survey the various options could be rated individually, clarifying the degree of support for omitting the Catalyst entirely or of keeping the current situation, independent of the other options. We felt that given the importance of the interaction with the Catalyst, further options should be included; expanding the range of perceptions and the importance of player control.

'Modify the context of the Catalyst so it does not determine the end' included an explanatory note: that it could conceptually include 'Indoctrination Theory', but was not limited to that interpretation. This was to ensure that the question encompassed the Indoctrination Theory prevalent on the forums, without constraining the interpretation to only that specific potential game mechanic.

As presented in Table 1 and Figure 2, below, the highest score for Strongly Disagree was for the Keep As Is option, with 81% of respondents, with an additional 16% choosing Disagree, for a combined total of 97% of respondents disagreeing with the option to 'Keep As Is'.

The highest scores for Strongly Agree were for the 'Allow you to challenge (change decisions)' with 62% and for 'Remove it entirely' at 59%. Combining the Agree with the Strongly Agree choices, the percentages supporting were 88% for Allow to challenge, 78% for Modify The Context, 74% for Remove Entirely and 59% for Allow For Questions.

Scores for the 'Allow For Questions' option were the most evenly distributed and had the second highest combined total of Disagree/ Strongly Disagree, with 26%.

Table 1. Raw Scores for Q6 The Catalyst

	Q6_Keep current interactions as is	Q6_Allow for questions (more information only)	Q6_Allow you to challenge (change decisions)	Q6_Modify the context of the Catalyst so it does not determine the end*	Q6_Remove it entirely
1 Strongly Agree	44	939	1783	1367	1698
2 Agree	54	728	729	866	426
3 Neutral	151	450	228	424	522
4 Disagree	283	353	60	105	124
5 Strongly Disagree	2313	382	59	98	107
<b>Total</b>	<b>2845</b>	<b>2852</b>	<b>2859</b>	<b>2860</b>	<b>2877</b>

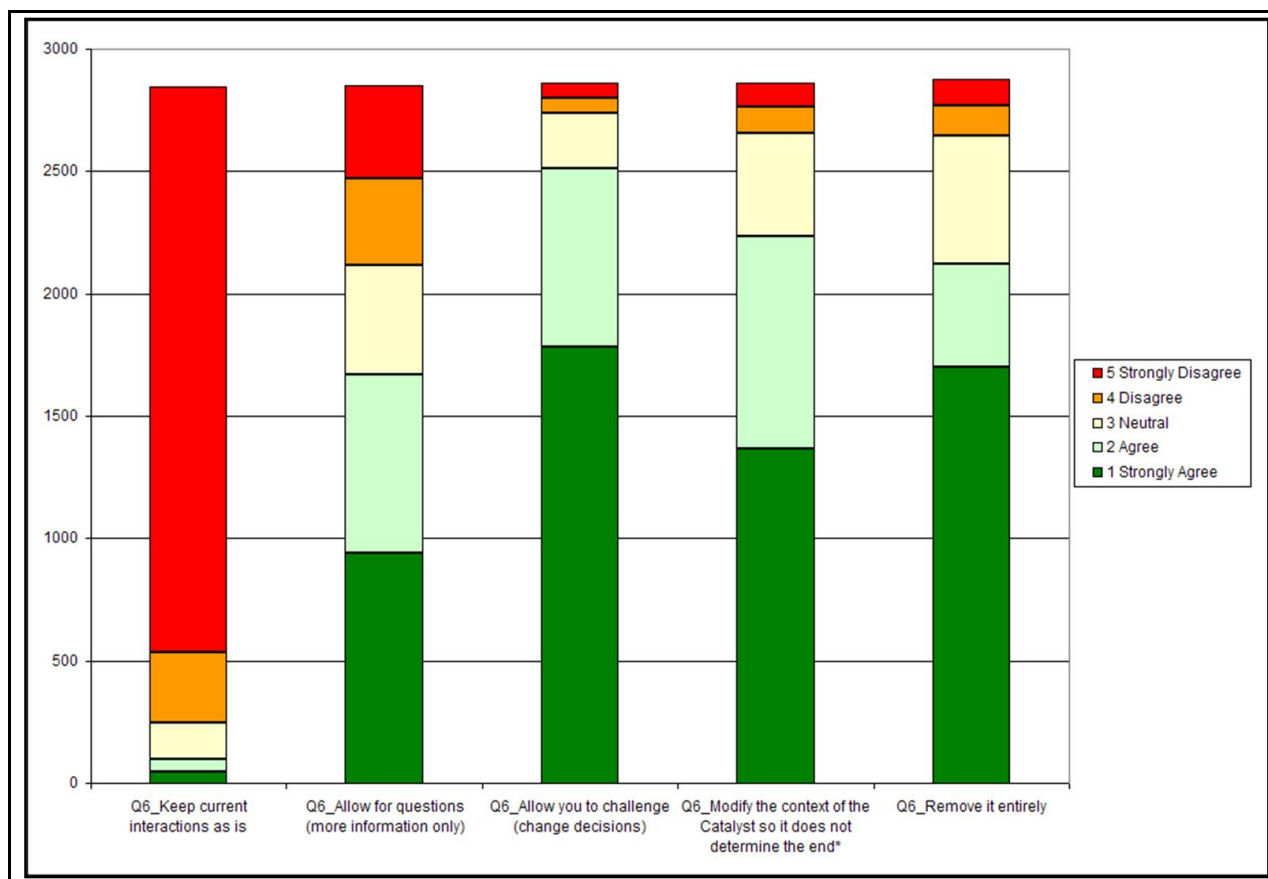


Figure 2. Summary chart of scores for all options in Question 6 – The Catalyst.

#### 5.2.4 Q7 – Major Themes

The four questions in this section were all related to key themes within the Mass Effect universe. Two of the questions pertain to Shepard: ‘Paragon/Renegade choices result in different outcomes at end’, and ‘Shepard's actions throughout the game directly and clearly influence success or otherwise of overall goals’, while the other two relate to team mates: ‘Loyalty of team mates affects their chances of survival’, and ‘Previous/Current team members role/effect on the ending’. The results are presented in Figure 4, below.

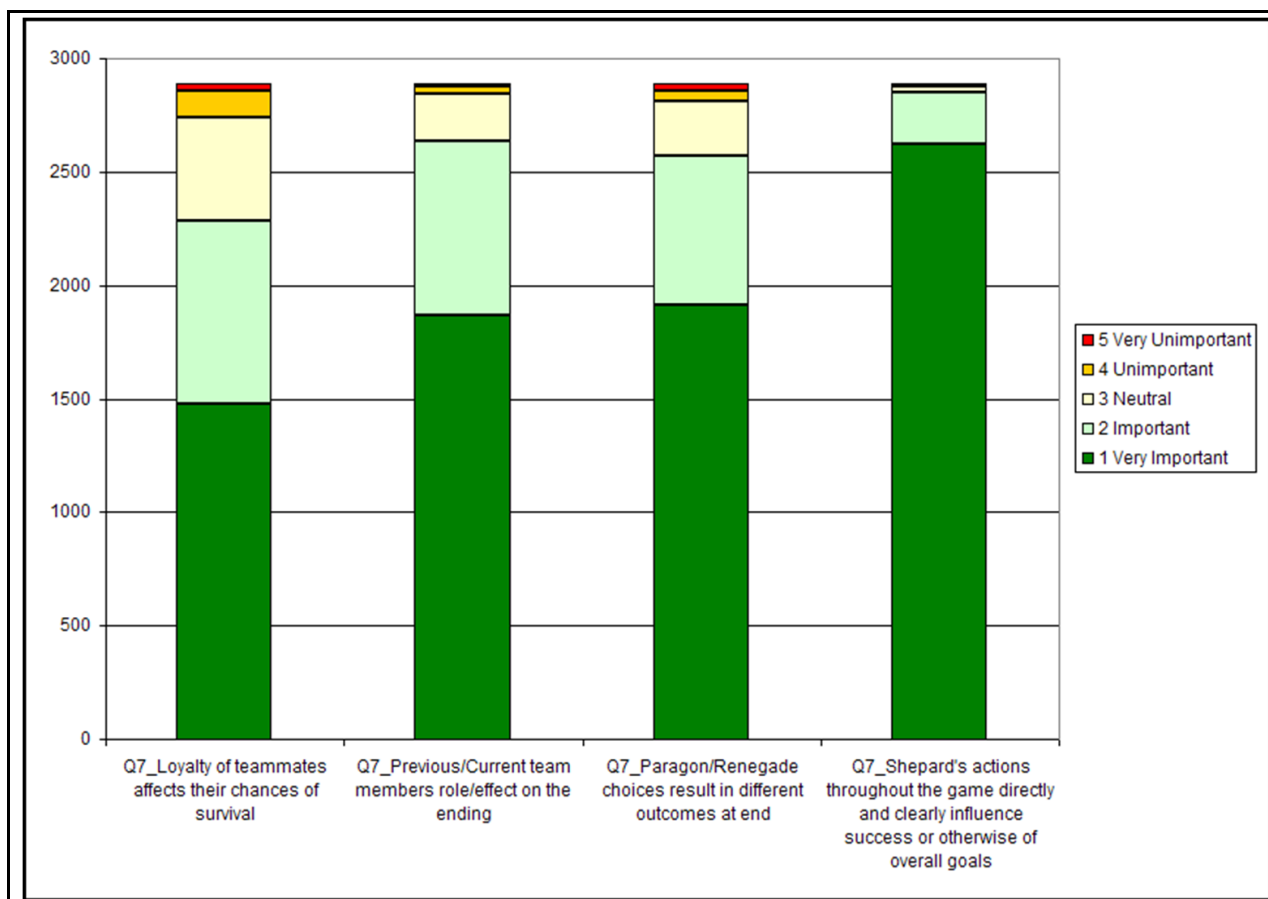


Figure 4. Summary chart of scores for all options in Question 7 – Major Themes.

An overwhelming majority (91%) of respondents scored 'Shepard's Actions' as Very Important, and a combined importance of 98.5% this issue is clearly the most important of these four.

The other Shepard related option – 'Paragon/Renegade Influence' - had the second highest number of Very Important responses, with 66%, and rated 89% for combined importance (ie Very Important + Important), which is 2<sup>nd</sup> highest for the combined score.

The 'Team Mates Role In The Ending' option scored 3<sup>rd</sup> highest for Very Important with 65%, but its combined importance of 91% edged out 'Shepard related Paragon/Renegade Influence' which only received 89%.

The issue of 'Loyalty of team mates affects their chances of survival' scored lowest for Very Important with 51% and also for combined importance, scoring 79%. This option also had the highest proportion of Neutral scores with 16%.

### 5.2.5 Q8 – Major Decisions

The issues grouped in Question 8 related to key decisions made by the player that affected the larger landscape of the ME universe; potentially carrying through from Mass Effect 1 and 2 to impact in ME3. The results are presented in Figure 5, below.



The issue deemed most important is clearly 'Geth/Quarian Conciliation' with a score of 74% for Very Important, and a combined importance score of 93%. Less than 1% of respondents thought this issue unimportant.

The 'Collector Base' and 'Rachni Queen' issues had similar scores for both Very Important and combined Very Important and Important scores: 'Collector Base' 52% and 85% combined, and 'Rachni Queen' 48% and 83% combined respectively.

Saving The Council received comparatively less support, scoring 38% Very Important and 73% combined importance, but clearly is still considered an important issue.

There is a trend of decreasing importance as you compare the categories, going from Geth-Quarian Conciliation > Collector Base > Rachni Queen > Council.

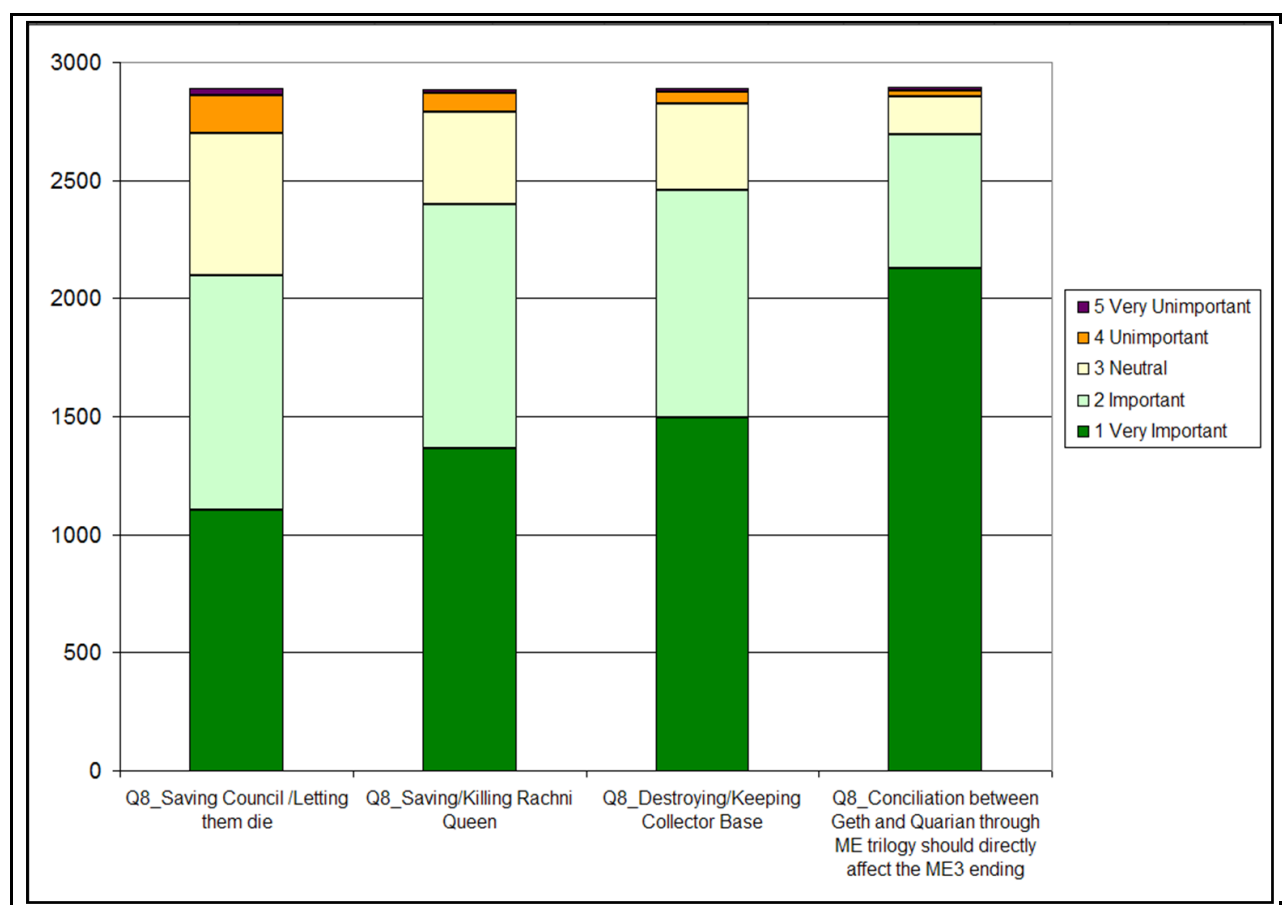


Figure 5. Summary chart of scores for all options in Question 8 – Major Decisions.

## 5.2.6 Q9 Part 5a – Other Issues - Approaches

The remaining issues from the first survey were re-examined in this survey to get a better understanding of their perceived importance, and to identify possible approaches to dealing with them. This section shows the scores for the seven options, which were randomized to prevent a fixed order potentially influencing results.

In the first survey issues were assigned to broader group headings: Logic Problems, Narrative Problems and Previous Decisions.

For the second survey we decided to indicate the original group it belonged to in the issue heading, eg 'Narrative Problem: The destruction of the Mass Relays', and randomize the order in which the issues were listed.

The options for the approaches provided ran the range from 'Fine as it is' to 'Provide more information to explain current situation' and lastly 'Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense' in increasing order of magnitude of change required. The results are summarised in Figure 6 below.

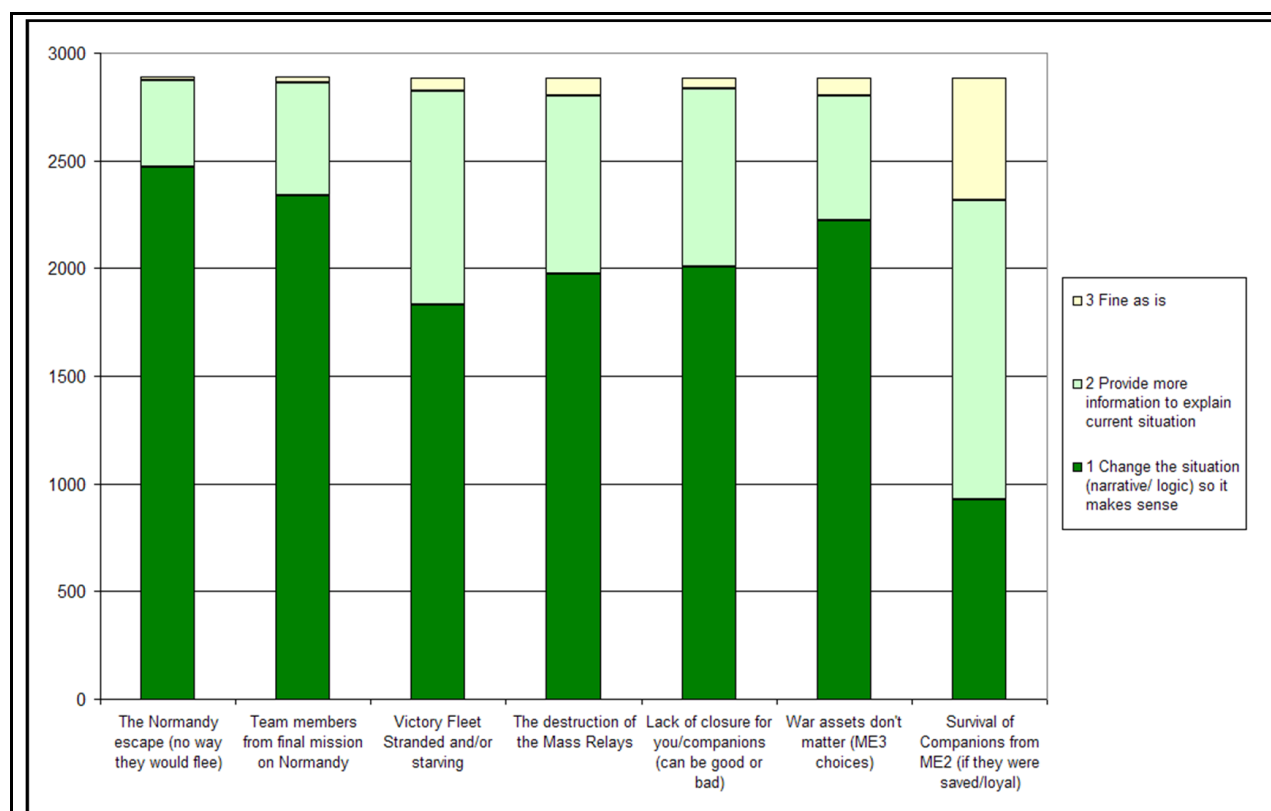


Figure 6. Summary of Q9 Other Issues; options for addressing the issues.

The two issues with the highest scores for 'Change The Situation' were 'Normandy escape' and 'Team Members on Normandy', with 86% and 81% respectively. The remaining scores for both these issues were largely recorded for 'Provide More Information' with 14% and 18% respectively.

'War Assets' scored next highest for 'Change The Situation' with 77%. The remaining scores were largely 'Provide More Information' (20%) and only 3% identified 'Fine As Is' as the preferred option.

'Destruction Of The Mass Relays' and 'Lack Of Closure' scored similarly, recording 69% and 70% respectively for 'Change The Situation' and both 29% for 'Provide More Information'; 'Fine As Is' scored 3% and 2% respectively.

The 'Victory Fleet Stranded' issue scored second lowest, but still had 60% of respondents choosing 'Change The Situation' as the preferred option. The remaining 34% recorded 'Provide More Information' as the preferred option, and interestingly – considering this has the lowest 'Change The Situation' score – only 2% of respondents choose 'Fine As Is'.

The 'Survival of Companions' issue scored highest for 'Provide More Information' with 48% (the only issue to score most heavily for this option) while 'Change The Situation' scored 32% and 'Fine As Is' 20% (highest score for this option for all issues).

### 5.2.7 Q10 – Part 5b - Other Issues – Importance

The issues in Question 10 are the same as in Question 9, but here respondents had to score the issues for their perceived importance. The results are summarised in Figure 7 and Table 2, below.

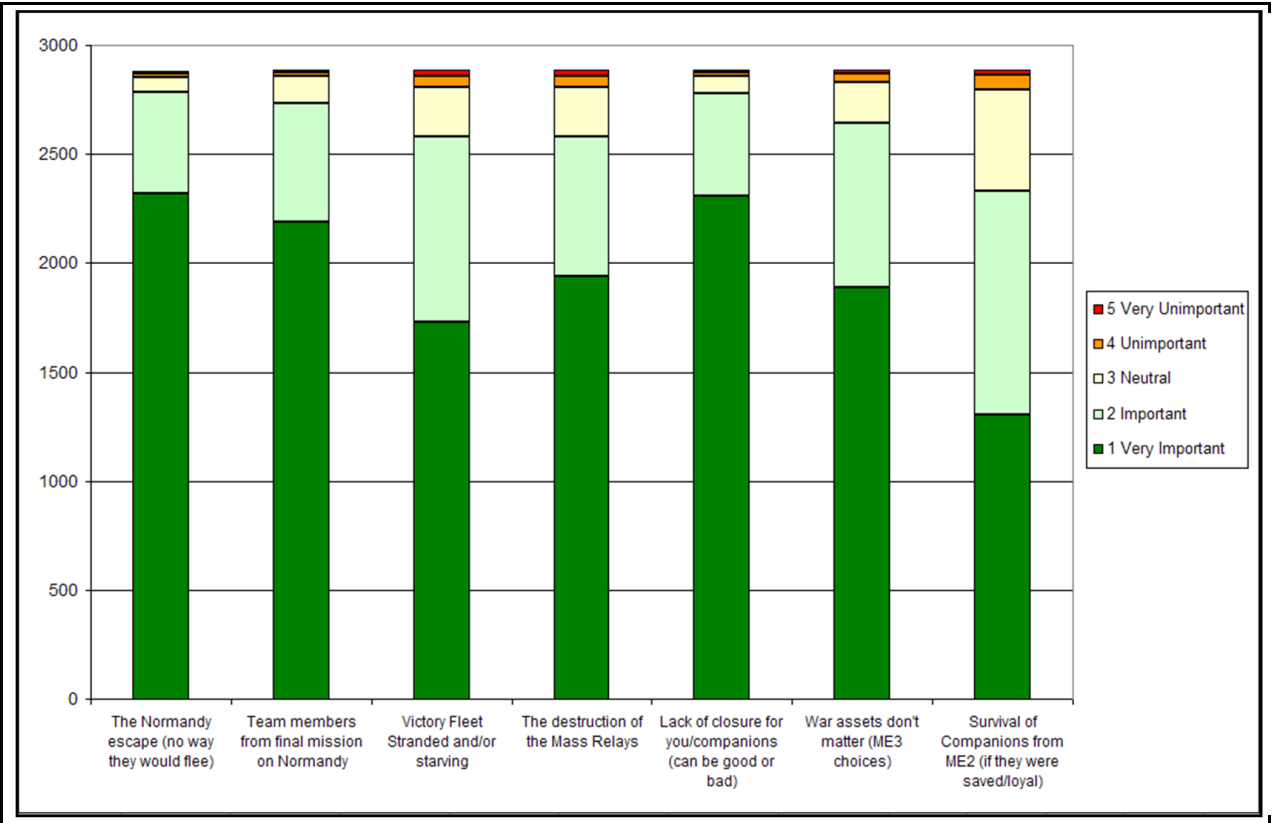


Figure 7. Summary of Q10 Other Issues; importance of the issues.

Table 2. Percentage scores for Question 10 – Importance Results

	Normandy escape	Team members on Normandy	Victory Fleet Stranded	Destruction of Mass Relays	Lack of closure for you/companions	War assets don't matter	Survival of Companions from ME2
<b>1 Very Important</b>	80.6	75.8	59.9	67.3	80.1	65.5	45.1
<b>2 Important</b>	16.0	19.0	29.4	22.2	16.3	26.1	35.7
<b>3 Neutral</b>	2.4	4.3	7.9	7.8	2.6	6.5	16.1
<b>4 Unimportant</b>	0.6	0.7	1.8	1.8	0.7	1.3	2.3
<b>5 Very Unimportant</b>	0.4	0.2	0.9	1.0	0.3	0.7	0.8

The 'Normandy escape (no way they would flee)' and 'Lack of closure for you/companions (can be good or bad)' were the highest scoring issues for Very Important, with 81% and 80% respectively. These two issues also received the highest scores combined importance scores with 97% and 96% respectively.

The next highest score for Very Important was 'Team members from final mission on Normandy' which scored 76% for Very Important and 95% for combined importance scores.

The 'Destruction of the Mass Relays' and 'War assets don't matter (ME3 choices)' had very similar scores, with 67% and 66% respectively for Very Important, and 90% and 92% for combined importance.

The second lowest score for Very Important was recorded for 'Victory Fleet Stranded and/or starving', with 60%, although the combined result was still high at 90%.

The lowest Very Important score was recorded for 'Survival of Companions from ME2 (if they were saved/loyal)' with 46% and 81% for the combined importance scores.

All issues were considered important, with none scoring less than 80% combined importance.

### 5.2.8 Other Issues – Approaches and Importance.

Figure 8 (below), cross-references the level of support for a particular approach (Q9) and the importance perceived for that issue (Q10), and provides an overall ranking of the scores. The 'combined importance' is calculated by adding the votes for 'very important' and the votes for 'important'.

There is a clear relationship between the combined importance and the type of approach preferred, with the highest six combined importance scores all being for Change The Situation. These issues have a noticeably higher score overall compared to the other issue and option combinations.

'Survival of ME2 Companions' received a somewhat split vote with 'Provide More Information' edging out 'Change The Situation', this being the only issue where this occurs. This is also the only issue to score 'Fine As Is' to any degree for combined importance.

Three additional scores were recorded for 'Fine As Is' but these are not shown on the graph as they were very low (less than 21).

Further details on the results for each issue ranked for importance against each approach option are provided in [Attachment 4 - Details of Other Issues – Options and Importance.](#)

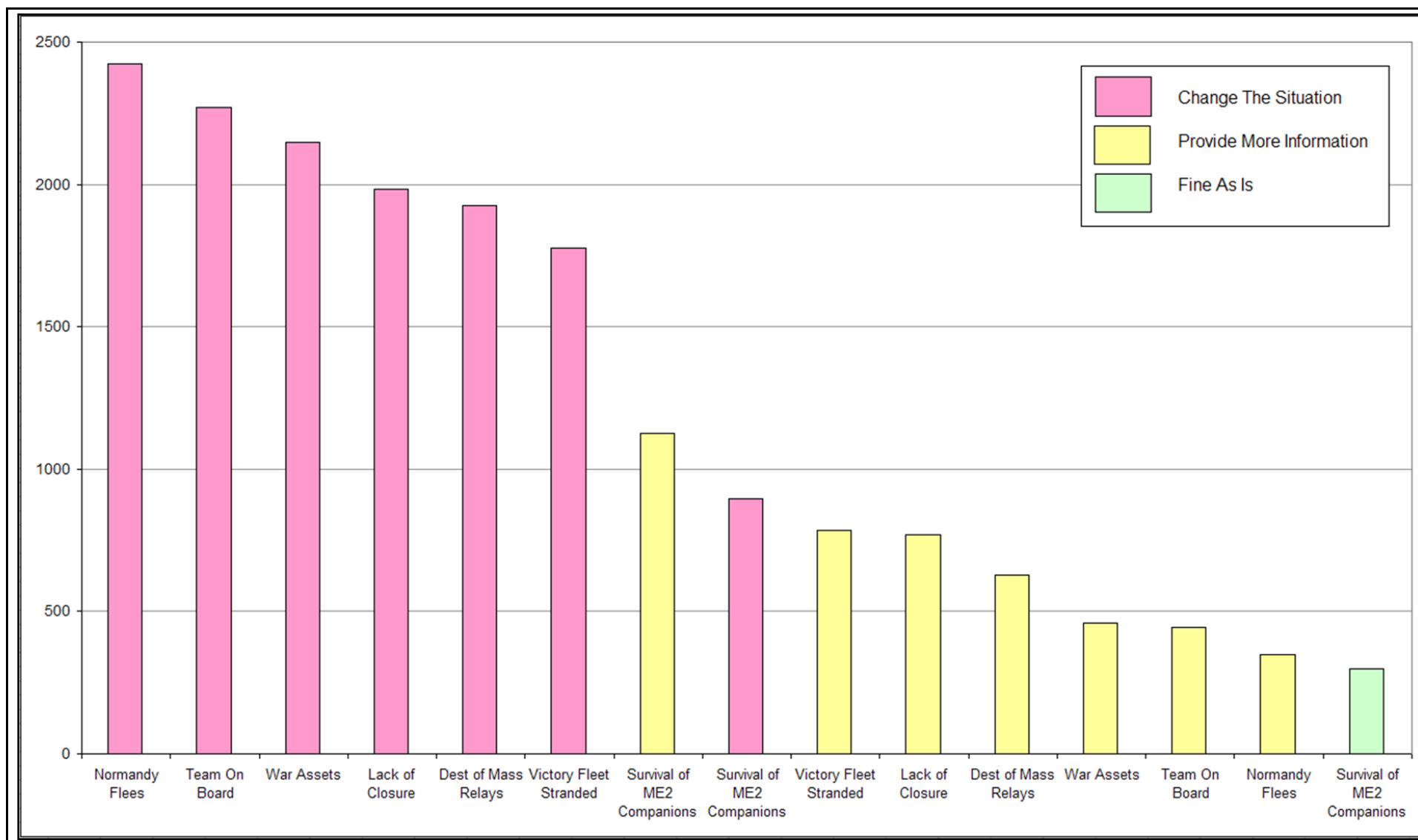


Figure 8 Overall ranking of combined importance scores for all issues (coloured by option to address) (NB scores with a combined importance of less than 1% removed for clarity)

## 6. Inter-relationships: Two Examples

We have not provided details for each of the inter-relationships between issues due to the sheer number of analyses, tables and graphs that would be required, and our desire to focus on the broad findings and results.

Figure 9 & 10 compare respondent desire to keep or remove the Catalyst against:

- (i) The importance they place on the Q9/Q10 issues
- (ii) Whether or not they intend to purchase ME4 (Q5)

We feel focusing on the Catalyst as the most important overall issue is supported by the responses in both surveys. Analysis of the Catalyst results shows its importance in a number of general trends regarding satisfaction with ME3 in whole or in part.

### 6.1 Example 1: Catalyst

There are distinct relationships between the two opposing options for the Catalyst, ie 'Keep As Is' and 'Remove Catalyst'. As could be expected, the relationships are inverse comparing one against the other.

For all the Q9/Q10 issues, there is a direct relationship between the degree of importance for all the issues and the degree of agreement with 'Remove Catalyst'. The relationship to intent ('agreement') to purchase ME4 on the other hand is an inverse relationship, as shown diagrammatically in Figure 9, below.

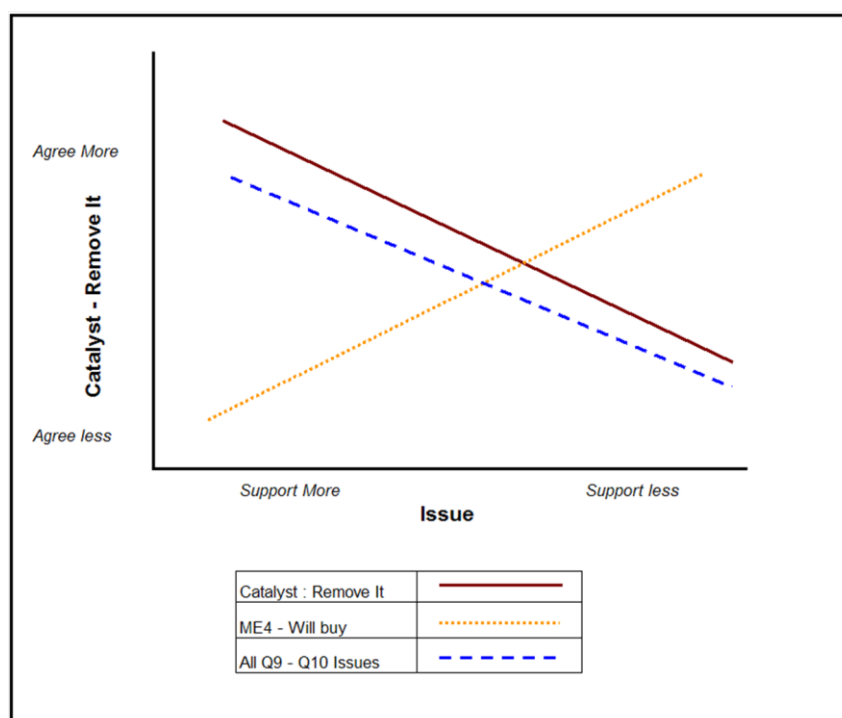


Figure 9 – Catalyst – Remove It Option: Diagrammatic representation of relationship to hypothetical ME4 purchase(Q5) and Q9 Issues

With regard to the Keep As Is Catalyst option, the relationships are reversed, as shown in Figure 10 below (approximate models only).

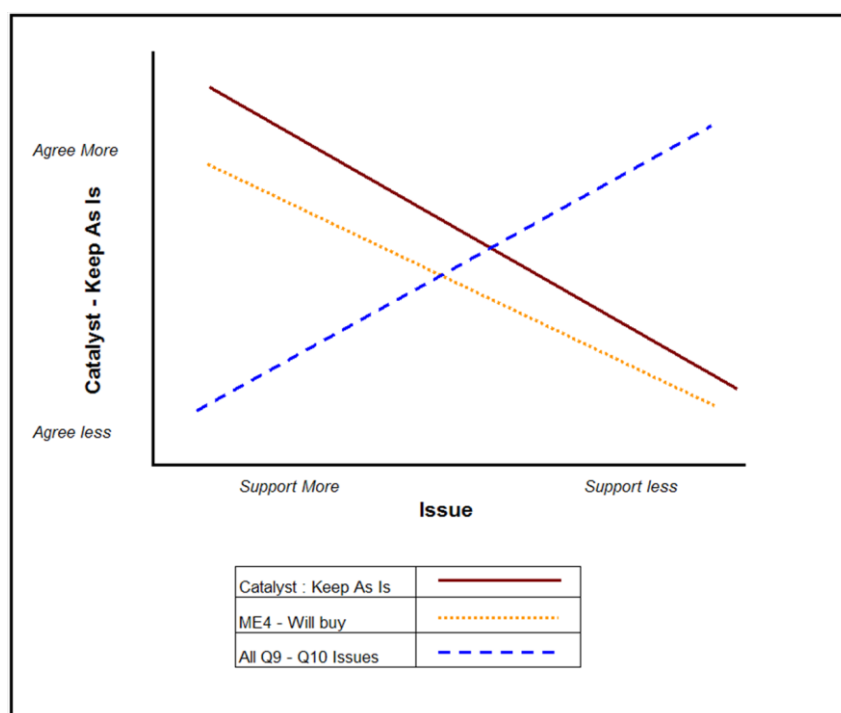


Figure 10 – Catalyst – Keep As Is Option: Diagrammatic representation of relationship to hypothetical ME4 purchase(Q5) and Q9 Issues

The relationships shown in Figures 9 and 10 hold for each of the Other Issues in Question 9 and Question 10, namely: Normandy Escape; Team Members; Fleet Stranded; destruction of the Mass Relays; Lack of Closure for Companions; and War Assets. The strength of the inter-relationship between the Catalyst and 'Survival of Companions from ME2' however is less consistent.

There is a clear trend in the intent to buy ME4 being roughly inversely proportional to attitude to the Catalyst, ie the more dissatisfied with the current Catalyst ending, the less committed respondents are to any future ME4.

Further details (score tables and illustrative graphs) are provided in [Attachment 5 - The Catalyst: A Specific Illustrative Example](#).

## 6.2 Example 2: Geth and Quarian Conciliation

The 'Geth and Quarian Conciliation' issue provided the strongest support response for the issues in Question 8 – Major Decisions. We have chosen this issue on the basis of the strength of the responses to be the other illustrative example of common trends. Figure 11 below illustrates diagrammatically the trend of the three options for the Geth-Quarian Conciliation plotted against the decreasing importance of the Q9/Q10 issues. A specific example of scores for one issue is presented in Table 3, below.



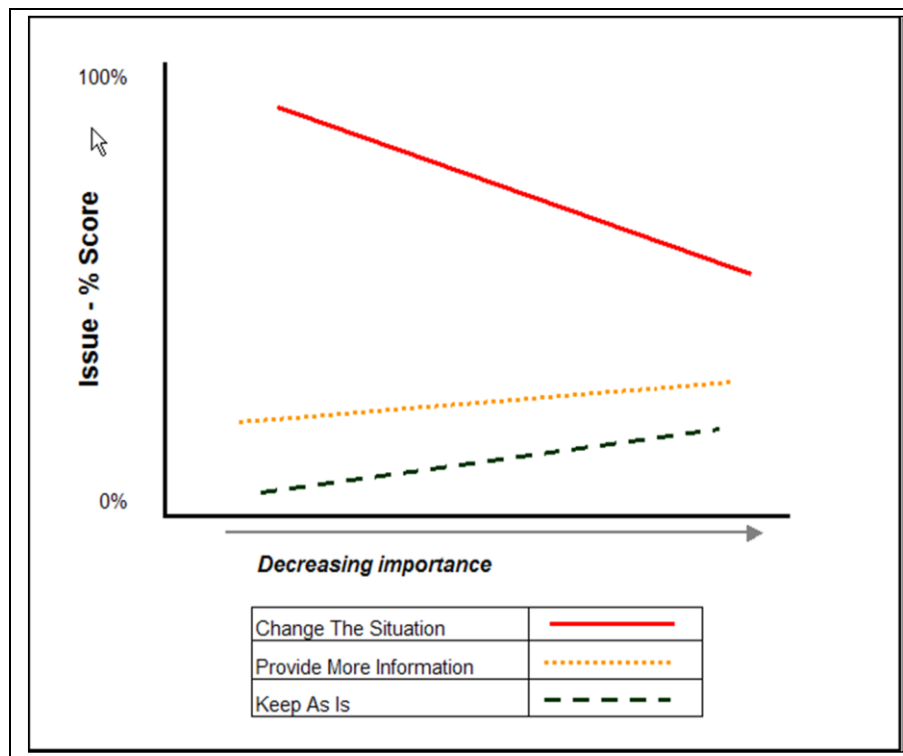


Figure 11. Geth-Quarian Conciliation :Diagrammatic representation of relationship to hypothetical Q9/Q10 Issues

Table 3. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Normandy Escape

	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
Normandy Escape	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	88	81	72	50	75
% Provide More Information	11	18	26	42	17
% Fine As Is	1	1	2	9	8
Score Total	2122	562	163	24	12

Two major trends are illustrated in the figure and table above.

The general trend to note is that the percentage score for 'Change The Situation' decreases with decreasing importance (ie relationship is proportional), while the 'Provide More Information' and 'Keep As Is' options increase (ie the relationship is inversely proportional). The strength of this trend varies between the individual Q9/Q10 issues, however the general pattern occurs throughout.

The responses appear to indicate that the majority of respondents conceptually approached Change The Situation as a distinct category and found greater similarities between the More Information and Fine As Is categories. In addition, as issues increase in importance, players are more likely to require alterations in currently established narrative to address the situation.

This example should be viewed as complimenting the responses presented for the cross referencing of the individual issues in [Section 5.2.8 Other Issues – Approaches and Importance](#).

Details (score tables and illustrative graphs) are provided at [Attachment 6 - Geth - Quarian Conciliation X Other Issues](#).

## 7. Discussion

### 7.1 Respondents

The total number (2904) and geographic spread (66 countries) of responses is large enough and covers a broad enough respondent base to be considered a viable sample set.

It is acknowledged that this sample cannot be assumed to be a 'random' sample in the statistical sense, and is inherently biased due to the need to elicit respondents from the Bioware Social Network Forums, Retake ME3 Facebook site and the Hold The Line web site forums. However, as stated in the original purpose, the survey was not an attempt to randomly source pro and con views re the ME3 ending, but to assemble and analyse the reasons why users are dissatisfied with the current ME3 ending. This survey also provided respondents with the ability to indicate their support for the game in its present condition if they so desired, so it was not by its nature exclusionary. In this context, we believe that the sample of respondents is fit for purpose.

### 7.2 Major Themes

As noted in [Section 5.2.4 Q7 – Major Themes](#) above, the four questions in this section were all related to key themes within the Mass Effect universe as relates to Shepard and the team mates. As such they could be considered the most 'player' centric group of issues and intrinsically related to the key concept behind role playing games; in fact virtually by definition.

Support for 'Shepard's actions directly influencing overall goals' is overwhelming. Player's clearly want stronger narrative links between 'Shepard's actions' and the results within the game.

The strong scores for the 'Paragon/Renegade' and 'Team members role in the ending' also confirm the desire for decisions and actions of the player to determine the outcomes at the end.

What is interesting is the comparative lower scoring as 'Very Important' for the 'Loyalty of team mates affects their chances of survival' issue. The 'loyalty' mechanic was clearest in ME2 and has been strongly supported in discussions in the forums. The fact it still scored 83% combined importance show that this issue is a lesser light only by way of the fact that the other three issues concern player control more directly.

### 7.3 Major Decisions

The issues in section [5.2.5 Q8 – Major Decisions](#) are related to key decisions made by the player that significantly affect the ME universe, carrying through from ME2 to ME3.

While all four issues were scored by the clear majority of respondents as Important or Very Important, there was considerable variation in the strength of scoring.

The very strong support for 'Geth and Quarian conciliation' is noteworthy because of its strong relationship to the Organic versus Synthetic theme that is seen throughout the series; specifically with regard to the Synthesis ending. This issue is a vital component of ME3's narrative structure and needs to remain within the players control. That this 'conflict' is also directly cited by the Catalyst as the key explanation for the ending of the entire trilogy is especially jarring. The central argument of the catalyst is based on a proposition that conciliation is not possible between organic and synthetic life. As has been the topic of much discussion on the forums, this proposition is unfounded within the narrative of the game up to that point, and is actually refuted by the actions of the player within the game itself. The end of the game needs to account for, and be directed, by that choice.

The other three issues did not score as highly but still managed at least 73% combined importance. This may, at least in part be attributed to them being a larger part of the ME2 narrative rather than ME3's. The Council, Collector Base and the Rachni Queen exist within the narrative of ME3 but have little direct effect on how ME3 plays out. Even so, these events impact the narrative of ME3 and have actual (though small) effects on the course of the game. In comparison the 'Geth and Quarian Conciliation' has no connection to what respondents see as matters the most: the Catalysts rationale for its genocidal actions.

## **7.4 The Catalyst**

The combined importance of 'Allowing Shepard's actions to influence success or otherwise of goals', and the combined disagreement(disagree + strongly disagree) with 'Keeping(the Catalyst) As Is' were the strongest of any of the responses, for any issue. The obvious message is: change it; give us back control.

But interestingly, there is a wide range of options available for how Bioware should address this issue. While there is a slight majority for 'Strongly Agree' to remove the Catalyst entirely, the combined agreement(Agree + Strongly Agree) shows a slight but clear majority for allowing challenges to the Catalyst as the preferred option.

The first survey identified that the Catalyst was a polarising issue. The results of this follow up survey indicate that while feelings are indeed strong, there is some level of acceptance for several different approaches to 'fix' the current interactions. The clear majority supports the more active options: 'Remove the Catalyst', 'Modify the context' and 'Challenge the Catalyst'. The more passive option – 'Allow for questions' – has considerably less support.

The key inferences from the Catalyst results overall appear to be:

- Absolutely change the interactions with the Catalyst;
- If it can't, or won't be removed, allow players to challenge the existing interactions(to change decisions), or, modify the context of the Catalyst so it doesn't determine the ending;

- Additional conversation options are always a good thing but without taking into account the ability to change the direction of the ending, this alone would not be a satisfactory solution.

Respondents felt very strongly that the current situation with the Catalyst needs to be changed, if complete removal of the Catalyst is not possible, there are several options that would still satisfy a majority of the ME3 community

## 7.5 Other Issues

The two issues deemed most in need of change are two sides of the same coin: 'The Normandy Escape' and 'Team mates appearing on the Normandy'. We identified both as 'logic problems' in the surveys and we believe the logical dissonance of expected NPC behaviour and overall narrative coherence loom large in both these issues.

The 'Lack of closure for you and your companions – whether good or bad' also scored highly in combined importance. 'Changing the situation' is preferred approximately 2 : 1 over 'providing information'. The related issue of Survival of Companions from ME2 is the one issue where providing further information is the most supported option.

'War Assets Don't Matter (ME3 Choices)' received nearly as much support for change as the two Normandy issues. We did not attempt to further define aspects of this issue in the surveys, but the discussion forums have identified two related issues: (i) the apparent inability to achieve all possible endings based on single player assets alone; and (ii) the lack of clear narrative structure to support the acquisition of assets and how that translates into narrative based actions, ie a story line that provides the context for the outcomes, as opposed to a perceived on /off switch based on a total asset threshold.

The other two issues used in the survey – 'Destruction of the Mass Relays' and the 'Victory Fleet Stranded and/or Starving': received approximately 2 : 1 support for narrative changes over additional information. This compares with approximately 4 : 1 support for narrative changes in the two Normandy issues.

Overall, taking into account both importance and desired approaches, fixing the two Normandy issues are clear priorities. We can only speculate as to how much addressing these issues might 'ease the burden' on expectations for the types of changes required for the other issues, but given the overall way that respondents appear to have been prepared to consider non-ideal solutions throughout the survey, we would hazard a guess and suggest that narrative change for the few high priority issues would probably make less interventionist solutions more acceptable for the lower priority issues.

## 8. Conclusion

The message from the clear majority of respondents is obvious: please give control back into the players' hands. Every issue and option that was provided points directly to that as the single over-arching issue.

While this message was loud and clear, another message also came through: we are willing to compromise. However, this willingness to consider non-optimal solutions is predicated on two conditions:

- (i) match the degree of fix to the degree of importance, ie perceived need for fixing;
- (ii) make sure the player is central in an active wherever possible.

For a situation as complex as this, reaching a literal consensus, ie 100% agreement from all, is impossible. While acknowledging that not all voices said exactly the same things, and some ran counter to the clear majority (and we sincerely thank those folk who chose to do so), we are satisfied that we have reached a clear majority view, and that the results and findings summarised in this report are a meaningful.

Overall, the trends in the responses appear to be robust and consistent, leading us to believe that no matter how many additional issues were added to the survey it would have reinforced the current results, without altering them significantly. We trust the results presented in this report will be useful to Bioware.

Finally, for all of its undoubted flaws and limitations, we are proud of this work – and proud of the people who bothered to spend time to do the surveys and who have supported and encouraged us to complete it.

## A Final Note From The Authors to Bioware

Why should we care so much about the ending? Ostensibly the answers are: time and money. Players invest their time and money in games to gain an enjoyable, and they hope, worthwhile experience. But that's not what the reactions are all about, or even arguably about at all. The reaction is based on a sense of betrayal; rightly or wrongly, this perception exists in a significant portion of the ME fanbase.

Fan reaction can be summed up as saying: We believe in the ME universe. We believe in Shepard's story. We believe in you. Right up to the point of disbelief. The ending. This sense of betrayal occurs at two levels: the personal, in-game level; and the belief of being part of something significant beyond the immediate 'game world'.

At a personal level, any narrative that is not rooted firmly in mundane life requires the suspension of disbelief by the participant: whether they are reading, watching, or playing. Lose that and you have lost your audience. Completely. The current ending shatters this suspension of disbelief. The higher you fly the further you fall.

At one time movies were considered a gimmick, it was widely believed that they could never reach the narrative heights that a novel could. Fast forward 100 years and video games are held in a similar regard to early cinema. Years from now the mass effect series may be seen as a turning point when both developers and fans both aspired for something more, something significant. Mass Effect may only be a game, but at one time Citizen Kane was just a movie. As fans, our issues with the narrative are not automatically less relevant due to the fact that we are talking about a video game; it is as relevant as if we were discussing any other medium.

We believe that Bioware are (or were until the current ending) on the cusp of defining a watershed moment; the one when 'games' seriously cross into the arena of 'novel', and 'movie', where well crafted serious narrative is melded with interactive entertainment into something both enjoyable and meaningful for human experience. Into art.

Sounds grandiose? Not at all. Great writing and screen play scripting does that. No single work of craft or art is flawless, and no-one would claim that of the ME games, but despite the flaws, great works take hold of you emotionally and make you think – and bring you squarely to face what it is to be human.

At some point this watershed will be crossed, video games will be talked about in the same breath as great books, great movies. Make no mistake, It will happen and looking back, Bioware may regret letting the opportunity to lead slip away. This was – and still could be – a clear opportunity to make that definitive play here, and now. We believe *that* is a choice worth taking.

## Attachment 1: Summary of First Survey

The first Mass Effect 3: Towards A Consensus survey was conducted between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012. The survey had 2076 participants from 66 different countries, representing 2066 individuals who participated.

The main findings from the survey and analyses of the results were:

- The geographic spread and number of respondents indicates that concern is broadly spread among the Mass Effect community with regard to the current ending for Mass Effect 3;
- There is a demonstrable level of understanding of the issues, and a commitment to pursue this understanding further;
- Most concern is centred on the broad issues expressed in the Major Decisions Irrelevant and Major Themes Forgotten issues. This is supported by the Previous Decisions issue group having the highest 1<sup>st</sup> rank score.
- Notwithstanding the point immediately above, the fact that each issue scored approximately 10% or higher 1<sup>st</sup> ranking scores supports an interpretation that while the major generic themes mentioned appear to be of most concern, each of the issues identified remains a concern for a reasonable proportion of the respondents.
- The Catalyst overall is a polarising issue, with most respondents ranking the individual 'The Catalyst Itself (I don't like it at all)' and the 'Catalyst Itself' issue group both as the most polarised rankings, ie strong tendency to rank 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>.

Based on the results of this poll and the analysis report, it was proposed to identify what realistic steps could be taken to address the major issues highlighted through the survey. To this end, it was proposed to:

1. Develop a survey based on the results presented in this report to specifically seek feedback from Mass Effect users on options for best addressing these issues;
2. provide an analysis and follow up report on that survey that specifically provides realistic solutions;
3. present these options as a realistic framework for Bioware to consider as means to address these issues within their operational parameters.

Given the need to provide timely information if it was to be used at all, these next steps were planned to be implemented a.s.a.p. and the final report presented to Bioware by the end of the second week in May, or earlier if possible.

## Attachment 2: Survey 'Hits' Information

### Survey Site Addresses:

shortened link -- <http://bit.ly/I3KOq0>

actual link -- [http://kwiksveys.com/?s=LCMDFO\\_88a65853](http://kwiksveys.com/?s=LCMDFO_88a65853)

### Site 'hits' per day

Date	24-Apr	25-Apr	26-Apr	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr	1-May	2-May	3-May	4-May	5-May
Clicks	47	680	220	230	268	446	258	274	235	223	211	165

### Referring Sites

2368	Social.bioware.com
523	Facebook.com
229	Email Clients, IM, AIR Apps, and Direct
85	t.co
70	Holdtheline.com
36	m.facebook.com
15	Twitter.com
4	Pascallaniel.com
2	Retakemasseffect.org
2	Bit.ly
1	Masseffect.bioware.com
1	TweetDeck

### Various Interesting Facts

2,328 .PDFs downloaded from Mediafire.com

209,317 files served from Photobucket.com

7,218 copies of the report served on photobucket

2.61mb/report = 18.84 GB served



## Attachment 3: Country Of Origin

Country	Survey Hits
United States ( US )	1,321
United Kingdom ( GB )	298
Canada ( CA )	178
Germany ( DE )	157
Australia ( AU )	127
Sweden ( SE )	82
Poland ( PL )	53
Norway ( NO )	44
Finland ( FI )	43
Netherlands ( NL )	43
Greece ( GR )	41
France ( FR )	37
Denmark ( DK )	33
Hungary ( HU )	30
Brazil ( BR )	28
Italy ( IT )	28
Israel ( IL )	25
Spain ( ES )	25
Romania ( RO )	23
Ireland ( IE )	23
Portugal ( PT )	21
Croatia ( HR )	19
Russian Federation ( RU )	18
Austria ( AT )	18
Czech Republic ( CZ )	17
Belgium ( BE )	14
Bulgaria ( BG )	14
New Zealand ( NZ )	13
Serbia ( RS )	11
Mexico ( MX )	10
Lithuania ( LT )	9
Chile ( CL )	8
Slovakia ( SK )	8
South Africa ( ZA )	7

Argentina ( AR )	7
Philippines ( PH )	7
Indonesia ( ID )	6
India ( IN )	6
Singapore ( SG )	6
Switzerland ( CH )	5
Slovenia ( SI )	5
China ( CN )	4
Latvia ( LV )	4
Estonia ( EE )	4
Taiwan ( TW )	3
Turkey ( TR )	3
Iceland ( IS )	3
United Arab Emirates ( AE )	3
Montenegro ( ME )	3
Ukraine ( UA )	3
Malaysia ( MY )	3
Korea, Republic of ( KR )	3
Venezuela ( VE )	2
Jersey ( JE )	2
Thailand ( TH )	2
Viet Nam ( VN )	2
Sri Lanka ( LK )	2
Isle of Man ( IM )	2
Faroe Islands ( FO )	1
Kazakhstan ( KZ )	1
Japan ( JP )	1
Hong Kong ( HK )	1
Honduras ( HN )	1
Brunei Darussalam ( BN )	1
Colombia ( CO )	1
Paraguay ( PY )	1
Cyprus ( CY )	1
Uruguay ( UY )	1
Others	331

## Attachment 4: Details of Other Issues – Options and Importance

This section cross-references the level of support for a particular approach (Q9) and the importance perceived for that issue (Q10), and summarises the results.

### The Normandy escape (no way they would flee)

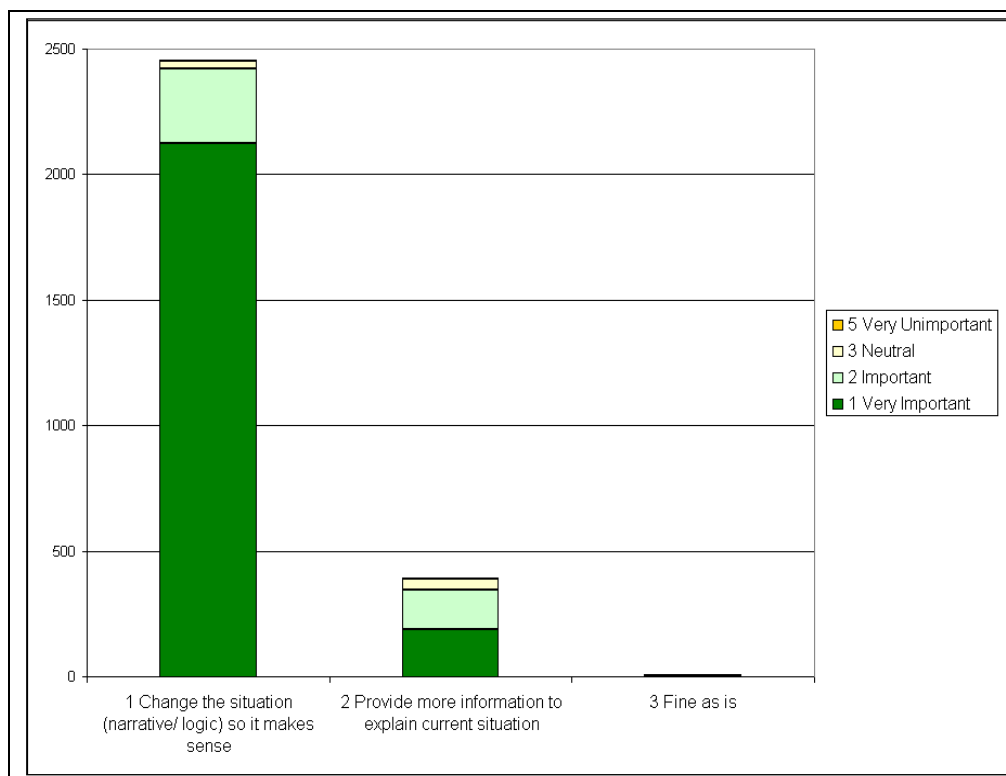


Figure 8. Scores For Normandy Escape: Importance Per Option

Table 3. Scores For Normandy Escape: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine as is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1 Very Important	2123	86.4	188	47.7	4	57.1
2 Important	300	12.2	159	40.4	2	28.6
3 Neutral	27	1.1	43	10.9	0	0.0
4 Unimportant	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 Very Unimportant	7	0.3	4	1.0	1	14.3
Score Total	2457		394		7	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of nearly 7 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information' .

The 'Change The Situation' option ranks highest overall and for this option. Support for 'Provide More Information' ranks it 14<sup>th</sup> overall and 7th (lowest) within this option.

#### Team members from final mission on Normandy

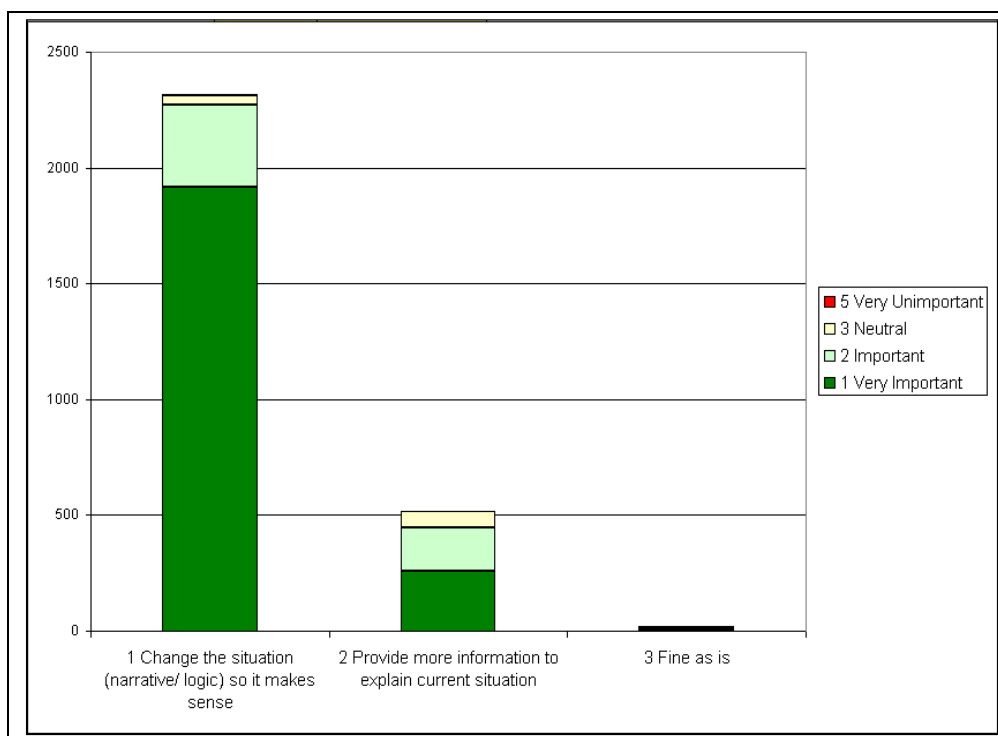


Figure 9. Scores For Team Members on Normandy: Importance Per Option

Table 4. Scores For Team Members on Normandy: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1 Very Important	1918	82.7	257	49.6	5	23.8
2 Important	353	15.2	187	36.1	7	33.3
3 Neutral	43	1.9	73	14.1	7	33.3
4 Unimportant	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 Very Unimportant	4	0.2	1	0.2	2	9.5
Score Total	2318		518		21	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 5 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'.

The 'Change The Situation' issue ranks 2nd highest overall and for this option. Support for 'Provide More Information' ranks 13<sup>th</sup> overall and 6th (second lowest) within this option.

### Victory Fleet Stranded and/or starving

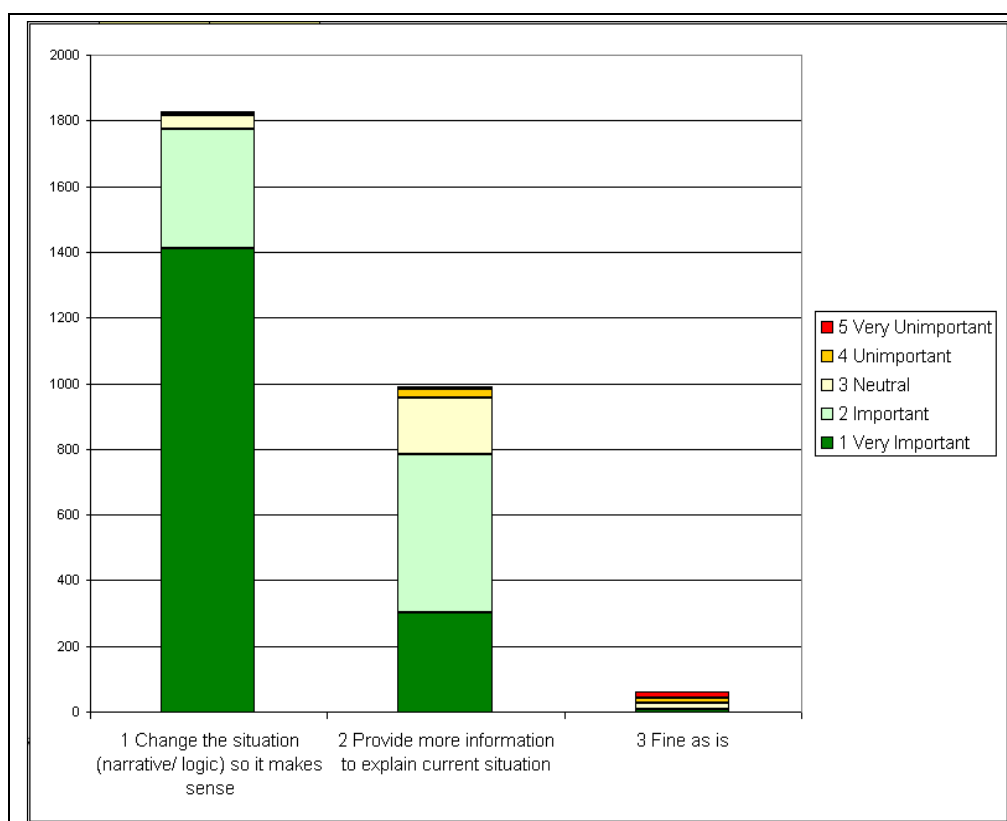


Figure 10. Scores For Victory Fleet Stranded: Importance Per Option

Table 5. Scores For Victory Fleet Stranded: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1 Very Important	1411	77.2	304	30.7	6	10.0
2 Important	364	19.9	481	48.6	3	5.0
3 Neutral	42	2.3	170	17.2	16	26.7
4 Unimportant	6	0.3	29	2.9	18	30.0
5 Very Unimportant	5	0.3	5	0.5	17	28.3
Score Total	1828		989		60	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 2.3 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'.

The 'Change The Situation' issue ranks 6<sup>th</sup> overall and 6<sup>th</sup> (second lowest) for this option. 'Provide More Information' it ranks 9<sup>th</sup> overall and 3rd for this option.

### The destruction of the Mass Relays

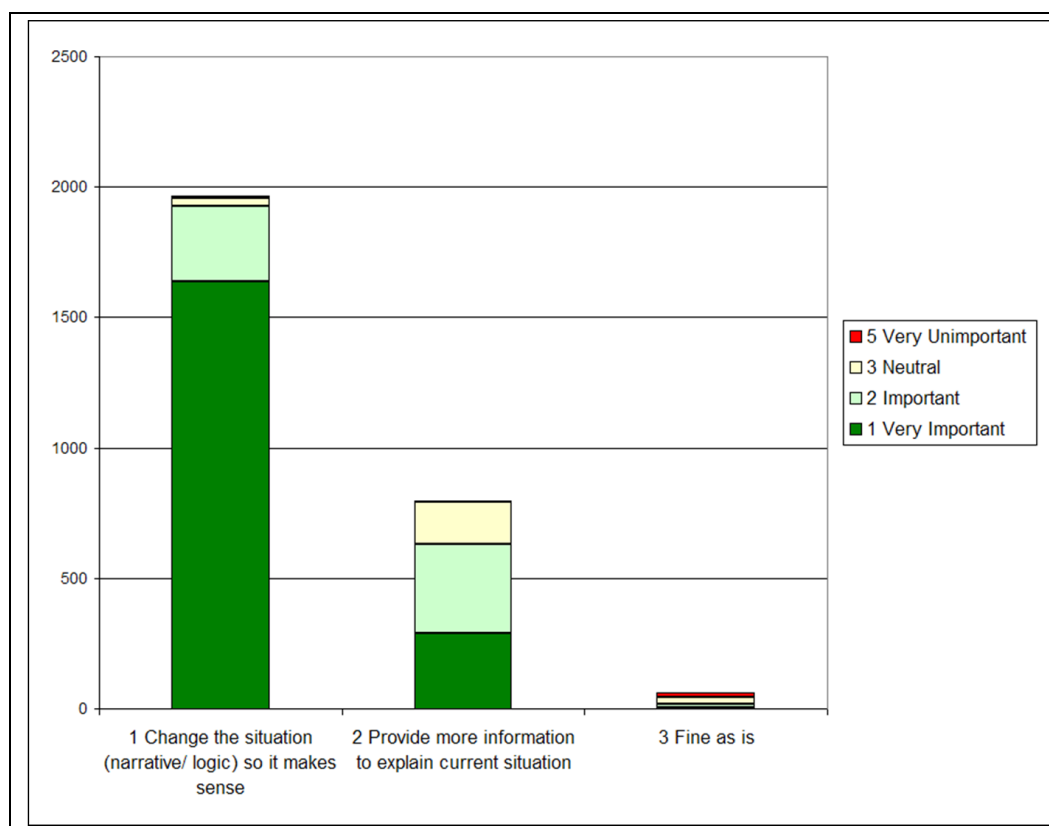


Figure 11. Scores For Destruction of Mass Relays: Importance Per Option

Table 6. Scores For Destruction of Mass Relays: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
<b>1 Very Important</b>	1637	83.3	291	36.5	5	8.1
<b>2 Important</b>	289	14.7	338	42.4	13	21.0
<b>3 Neutral</b>	33	1.7	165	20.7	26	41.9
<b>4 Unimportant</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>5 Very Unimportant</b>	7	0.4	3	0.4	18	29.0
<b>Score Total</b>	1966		797		62	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 3 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'.

The 'Change The Situation' option ranks 5<sup>th</sup> overall and for this option. 'Provide More Information' ranks 11<sup>th</sup> overall and 4th for this option.

## Lack of closure for you/companions (can be good or bad)

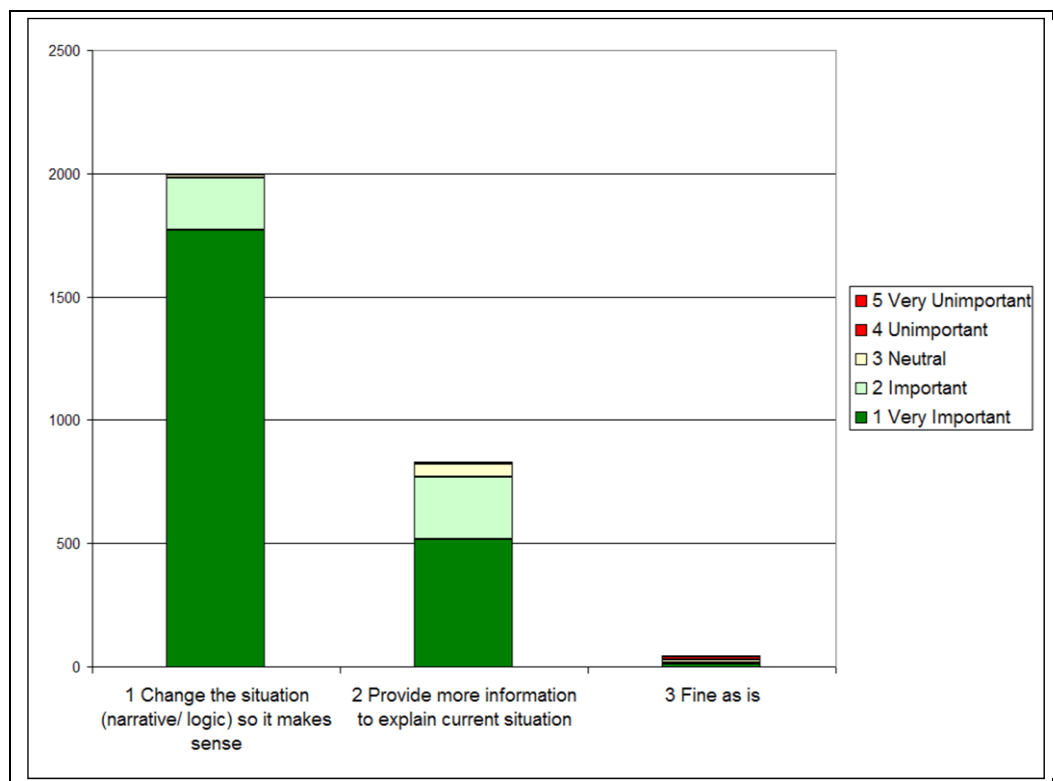


Figure 12. Scores For Lack of Closure: Importance Per Option

Table 7. Scores For Lack of Closure: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1 Very Important	1773	88.7	518	62.5	11	23.9
2 Important	210	10.5	253	30.5	6	13.0
3 Neutral	11	0.6	51	6.2	13	28.3
4 Unimportant	1	0.1	6	0.7	12	26.1
5 Very Unimportant	4	0.2	1	0.1	4	8.7
Score Total	1999		829		46	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 2.6 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'.

The 'Change The Situation' option ranks 4<sup>th</sup> highest overall and for this option. 'Provide More Information' ranks 10<sup>th</sup> overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> for this option.

## War assets don't matter (ME3 choices)

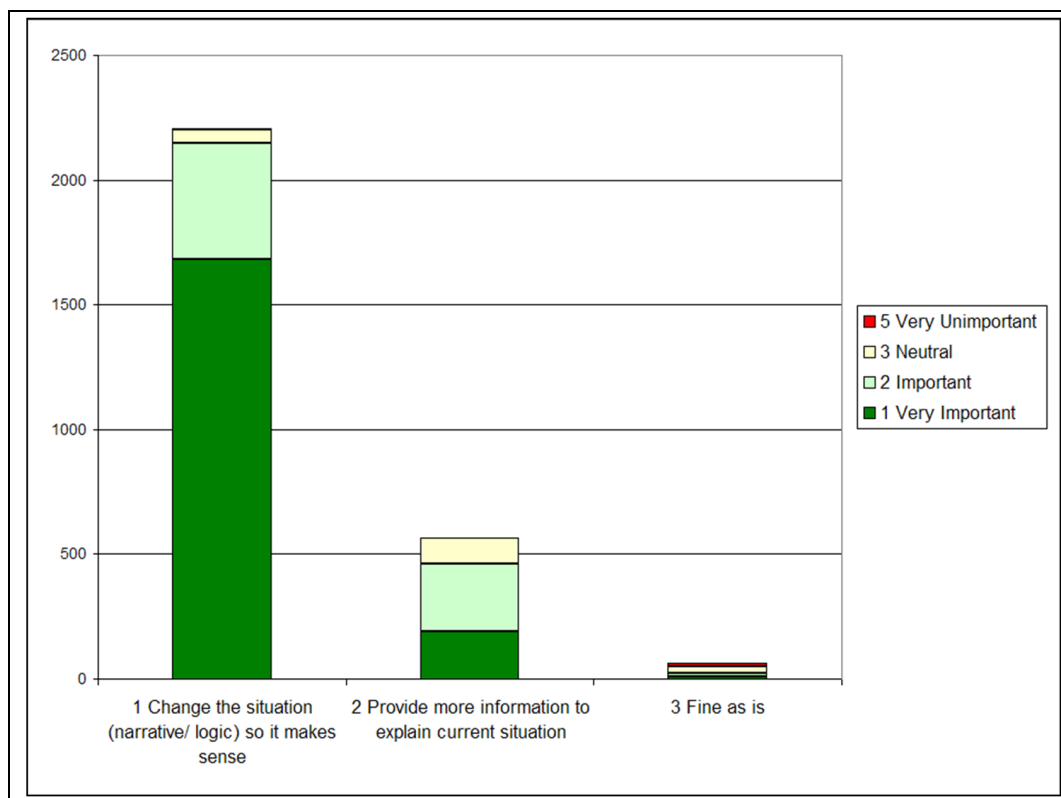


Figure 13. Scores For War Assets Don't Matter: Importance Per Option

Table 8. Scores For War Assets Don't Matter: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1 Very Important	1680	76.1	192	33.9	10	15.9
2 Important	468	21.2	269	47.5	11	17.5
3 Neutral	54	2.4	105	18.6	29	46.0
4 Unimportant	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 Very Unimportant	6	0.3	0	0.0	13	20.6
Score Total	2208		566		63	

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 4.7 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'.

The 'Change The Situation' option ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and for this option. 'Provide More Information' ranks 12<sup>th</sup> overall and 5<sup>th</sup> for this option.

#### Survival of Companions from ME2 (if they were saved/loyal)

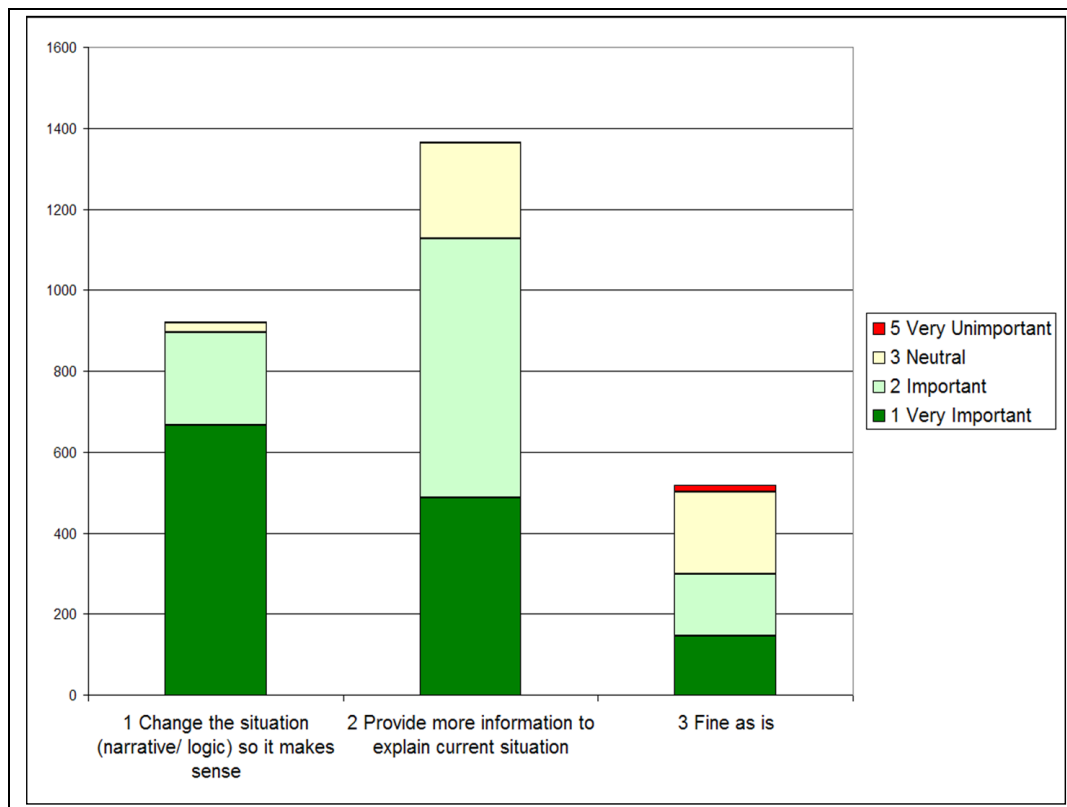


Figure 14. Scores For Survival of Companions: Importance Per Option

Table 9. Scores For Survival of Companions: Importance Per Option

	1 Change the situation (narrative/ logic) so it makes sense		2 Provide more information to explain current situation		3 Fine As Is	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
<b>1 Very Important</b>	666	72.2	487	35.7	145	27.9
<b>2 Important</b>	229	24.8	640	46.9	153	29.5
<b>3 Neutral</b>	24	2.6	236	17.3	204	39.3
<b>4 Unimportant</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>5 Very Unimportant</b>	3	0.3	2	0.1	17	3.3
<b>Score Total</b>	922		1365		519	

This issue was the most evenly scored, and unusual in that the highest score was for Provide More Information with 40%, while 32% selected Change The Situation and 11% selected Fine As Is. Every other issue has 'Change The Situation' scoring highest.

'Change The Situation' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 0.8 : 1 compared with 'Provide More Information'. 'Provide More Information' had a combined importance ratio (Very Important + Important) of 3.8 : 1 compared with 'Fine As Is'.



The results indicate more support for 'Provide More Information' as an option for this issue than for any other, and this ranks 7<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> for this option. 'Change The Situation' ranks 7<sup>th</sup> (ie lowest ranked) for that option, and 8<sup>th</sup> overall. 'Fine As Is' for 'Survival of Companions' is higher than for any other issue, however its overall rank is only 15th.

## Attachment 5: The Catalyst: A Specific Illustrative Example

Figures X to X below illustrate the slopes for the options. Percentage scores and actual number of respondents is provided in the relevant tables. Please note that the figures in red for the actual number of respondents indicate where the figure is less than 5% of the total. Caution is advised in interpreting these figures in isolation. A descriptive summary of the major points is provided after these figures.

### Remove The Catalyst

Table 1. Percentage and Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Remove The Catalyst

Purchase ME4?				
	%Yes	%Undecided	%No	Score
1 Strongly Agree	6	67	27	1696
2 Agree	14	73	13	426
3 Neutral	23	69	8	522
4 Disagree	43	48	9	123
5 Strongly Disagree	59	33	8	107

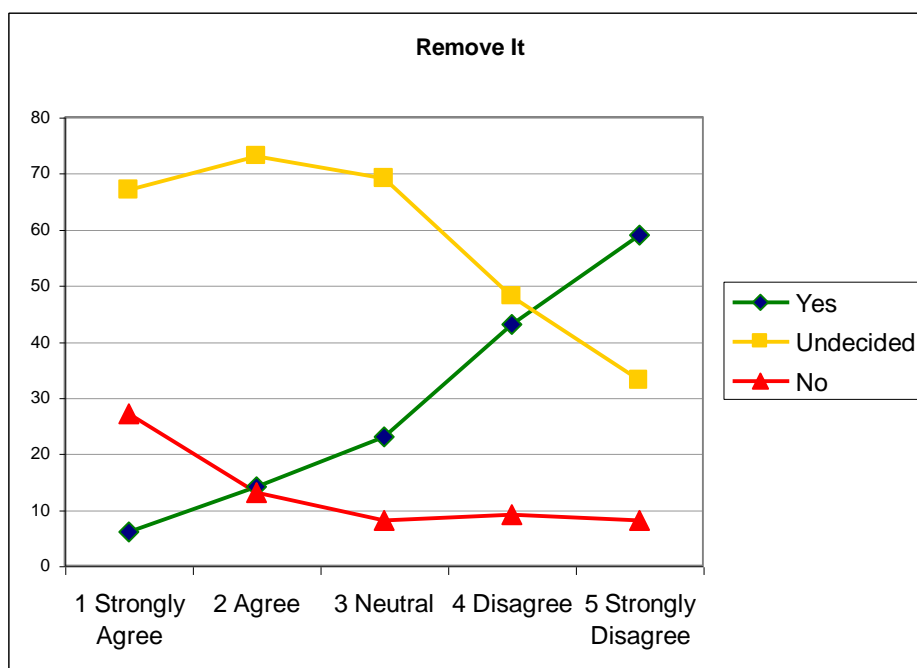


Figure 1. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Remove The Catalyst

## Modify The Context

Table 2. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Modify the Context of the Catalyst

Purchase ME4?				
	%Yes	%Undecided	%No	Score
<b>1 Strongly Agree</b>	11	70	19	1366
<b>2 Agree</b>	14	68	18	865
<b>3 Neutral</b>	20	61	19	424
<b>4 Disagree</b>	29	45	26	105
<b>5 Strongly Disagree</b>	18	44	38	98

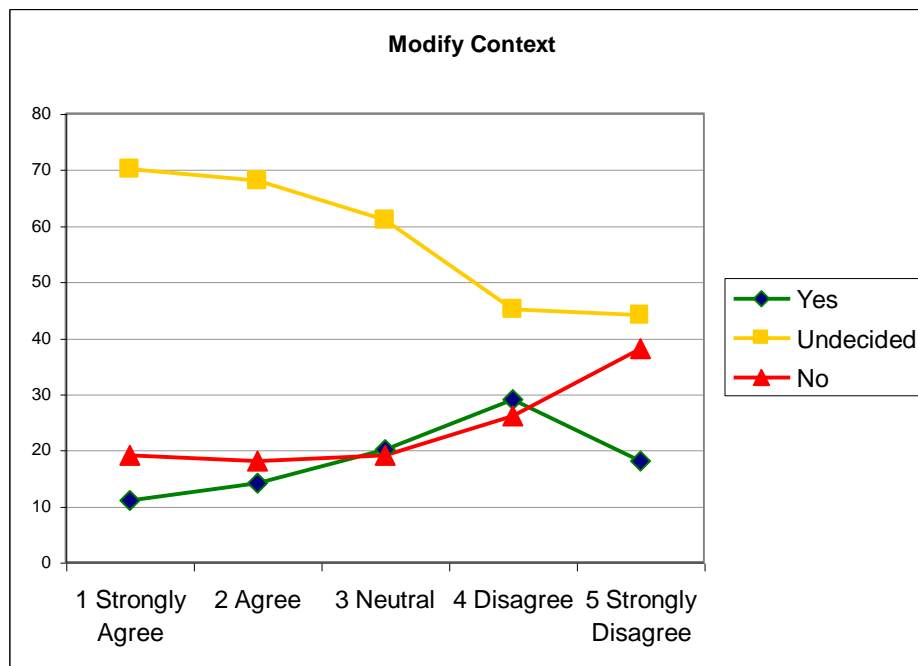


Figure 2. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Modify the Context of the Catalyst

## Challenge Decisions

Table 3. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Challenge the Decisions of the Catalyst

Purchase ME4?				
	%Yes	%Undecided	%No	Score
<b>1 Strongly Agree</b>	13	68	19	1783
<b>2 Agree</b>	13	67	20	727
<b>3 Neutral</b>	20	57	23	228
<b>4 Disagree</b>	31	52	17	<b>60</b>
<b>5 Strongly Disagree</b>	20	44	36	<b>59</b>

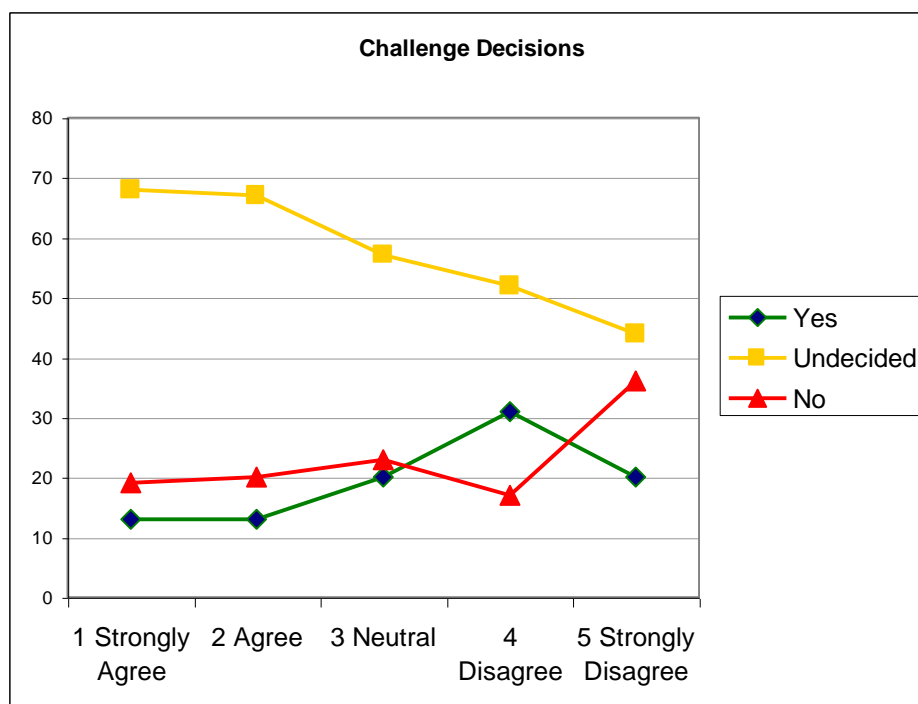


Figure 3. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Challenge the Decisions of the Catalyst

## Ask Questions Only

Table 4. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Ask Questions (to gain information only) of the Catalyst

Purchase ME4?				
	%Yes	%Undecided	%No	Score
<b>1 Strongly Agree</b>	20	63	17	938
<b>2 Agree</b>	17	65	18	728
<b>3 Neutral</b>	11	68	21	450
<b>4 Disagree</b>	9	73	18	353
<b>5 Strongly Disagree</b>	4	66	30	381

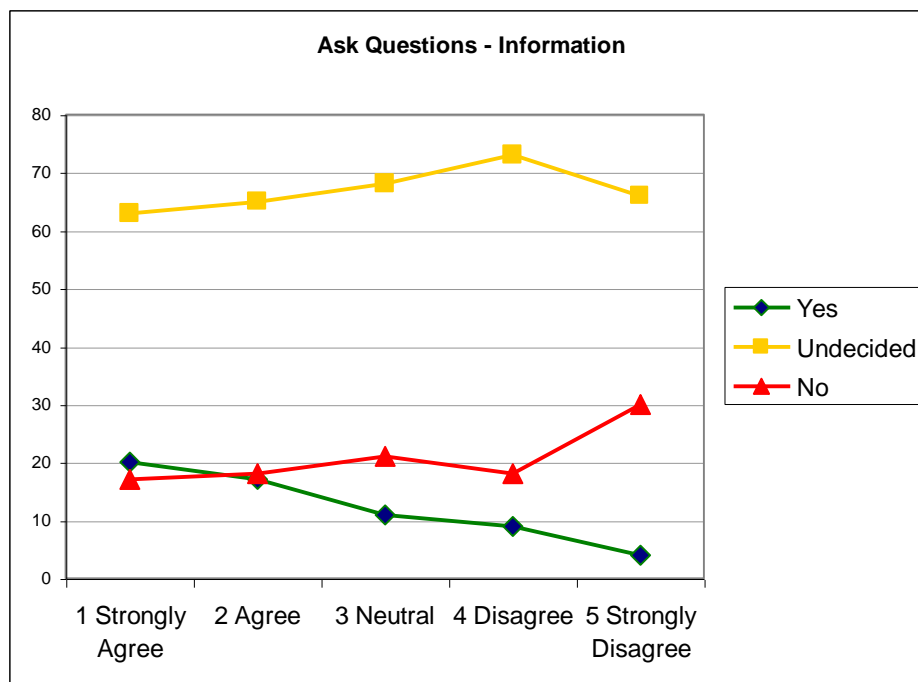


Figure 4. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Ask Questions (to gain information only) of the Catalyst

## Keep As Is

Table 5. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Keep As Is the current interactions with the Catalyst

Purchase ME4?				
	%Yes	%Undecided	%No	Score
<b>1 Strongly Agree</b>	43	43	14	<b>44</b>
<b>2 Agree</b>	55	41	4	<b>54</b>
<b>3 Neutral</b>	41	52	7	150
<b>4 Disagree</b>	35	58	7	283
<b>5 Strongly Disagree</b>	8	69	23	2312

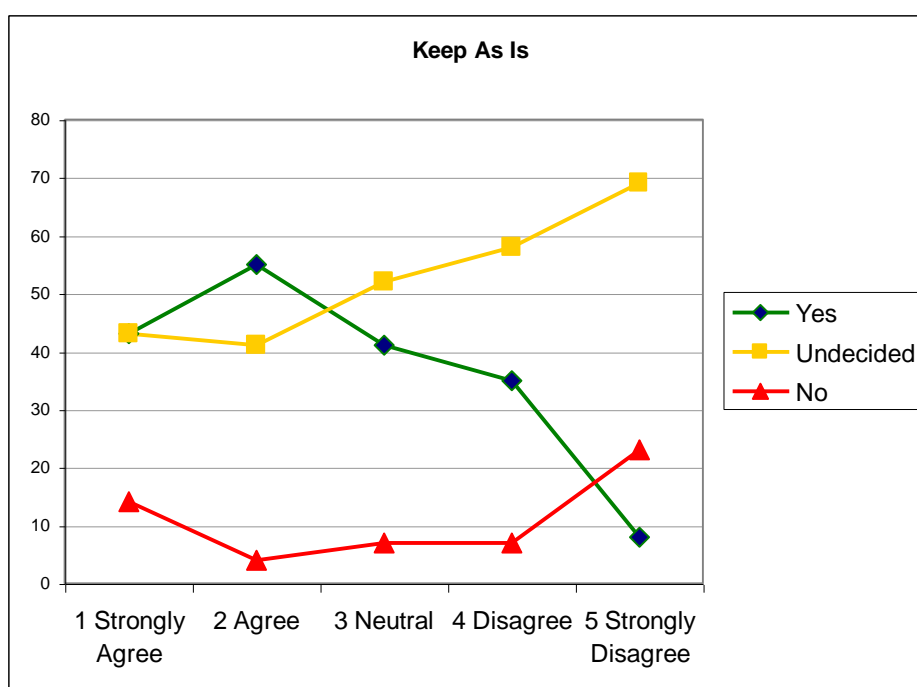


Figure 5. Percentage Score of Intent re ME4 plotted against degree of agreement to Keep As Is the current interactions with the Catalyst

## Summary

With respect to Figures 17 to 21, there is a direct, or positive, relationship between agreement and percentage score for Undecided for 'Remove It', 'Modify Context' and 'Challenge Decisions', with the strength of the relationship weakening in the same direction, ie from Remove to Challenge. The relationship is inverse for 'Keep As Is' (Figure 21) and appears to be of similar strength to Modify and Challenge (but as noted is the inverse of those). The 'Ask Questions' option (Figure 20) exhibits a much flatter slope and can arguably be seen as a slight inverse relationship, or flat.

The 'Undecided' option scores highest against all the Catalyst options. As the Undecided option within Q5 ME4 question scores far more heavily than any other choice, this could be expected. It is interesting however, that the trend of the Undecided scores varies with the degree of agreement when compared between the five Catalyst options, and moreover the strength of the relationship trends the same way.

## Attachment 6: Geth - Quarian Conciliation X Other Issues

The 'Geth-Quarian Conciliation' issue provided the strongest support response for the issues in 'Question 7 – Major Decisions'. We have chosen this issue on the basis of the strength of the responses to be the final illustrative example of common trends.

It is apparent that the more important an issue is perceived, the more likely it is to be highly scored for more interventionist approaches. The three options presented for the Q9/Q10 'Other Issues' are cross-referenced to the 'Geth-Quarian Conciliation' issue below to illustrate this trend. This example should be viewed as complimenting the responses presented for the cross referencing of the individual issues in Section 5.2.8 Other Issues – Approaches and Importance.

The results of the 'Geth–Quarian Conciliation' scores cross referenced to each of the 'Other Issues' in Q9/Q10 are presented below in Tables 1 to 7 and Figures 1 to 7. Percentage scores and actual number of respondents is provided in the relevant tables. Please note that the figures in red for the actual number of respondents indicate where the figure is less than 5% of the total. Caution is advised in interpreting these figures in isolation. A descriptive summary of the major points is provided after these figures.



## Normandy Escape

Table 1. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Normandy Escape

	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
Normandy Escape	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	88	81	72	50	75
% Provide More Information	11	18	26	42	17
% Fine As Is	1	1	2	9	8
Score Total	2122	562	163	24	12

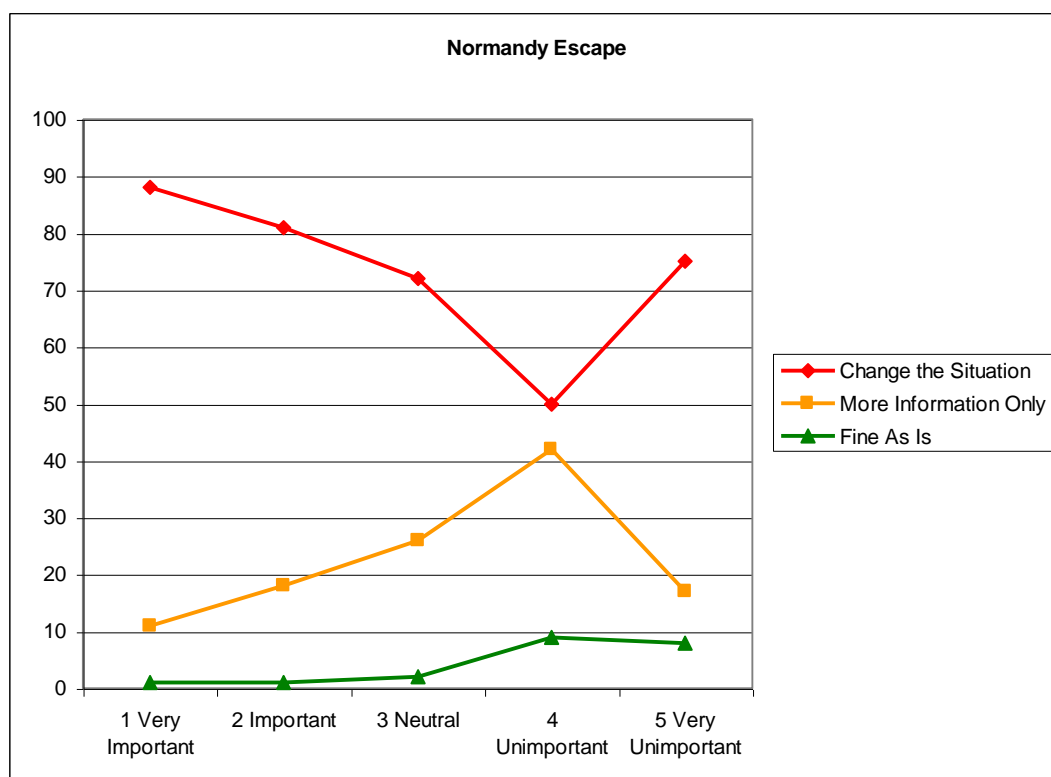


Figure 1. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Normandy Escape

## Team Members On Normandy

Table 2. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Team Members on Normandy

	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
Team Members	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	84	74	68	54	50
% Provide More Information	15	25	31	38	33
% Fine As Is	1	1	1	8	17
Score Total	2120	561	164	24	12

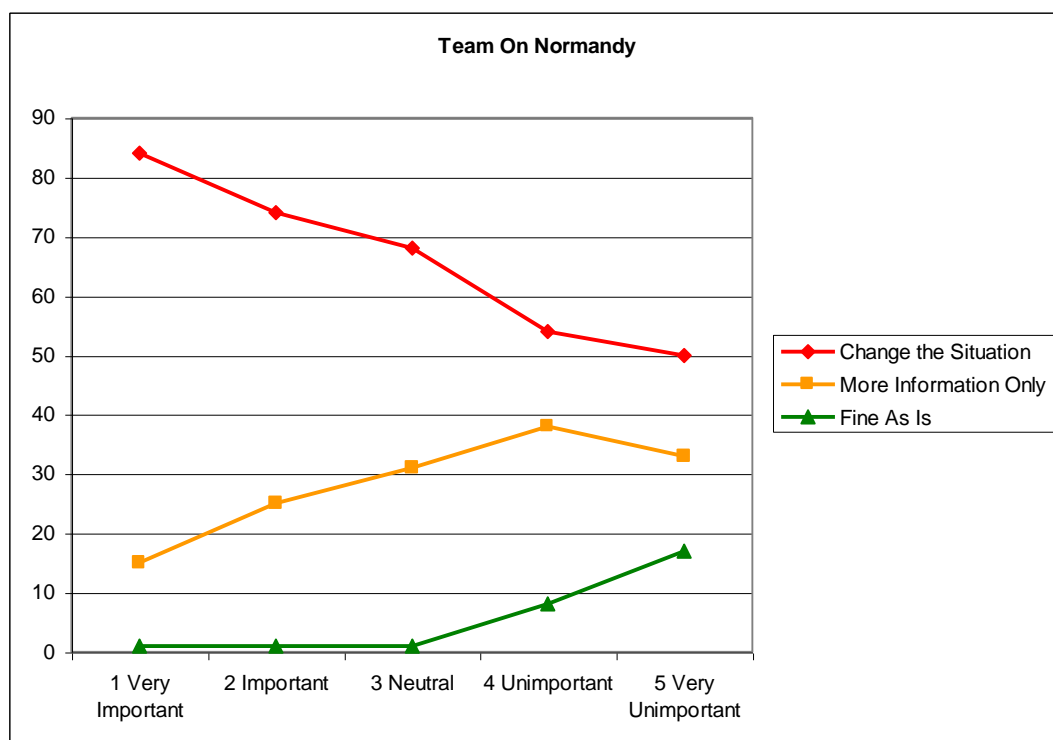


Figure 2. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Team Members on Normandy

## Victory Fleet Stranded

Table 3. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Victory Fleet Stranded

Fleet Stranded	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	68	53	43	46	50
% Provide More Information	30	44	52	38	33
% Fine As Is	2	3	5	16	17
Score Total	2120	560	164	24	12

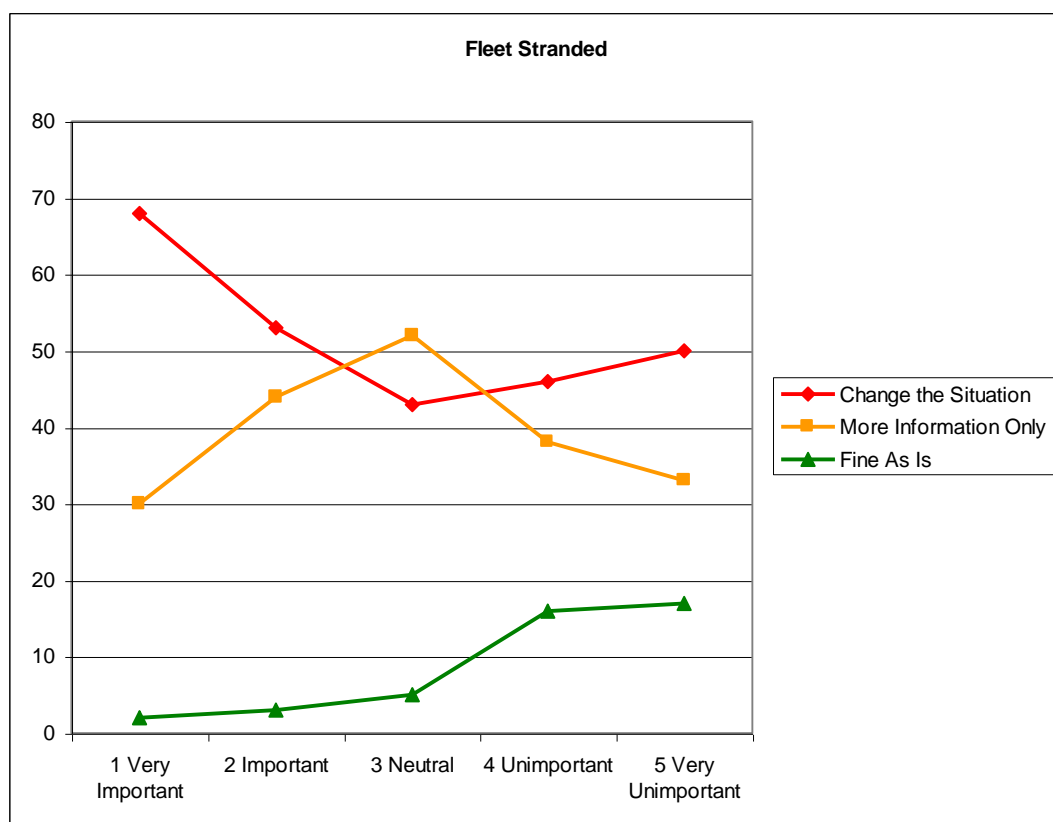


Figure 3. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Victory Fleet Stranded

## Destruction of Mass Relays

Table 4. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Destruction of Mass Relays

	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
Mass Relays Destroyed	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	73	57	51	37	50
% Provide More Information	25	38	39	46	17
% Fine As Is	2	5	10	17	33
Score Total	2119	561	164	24	12

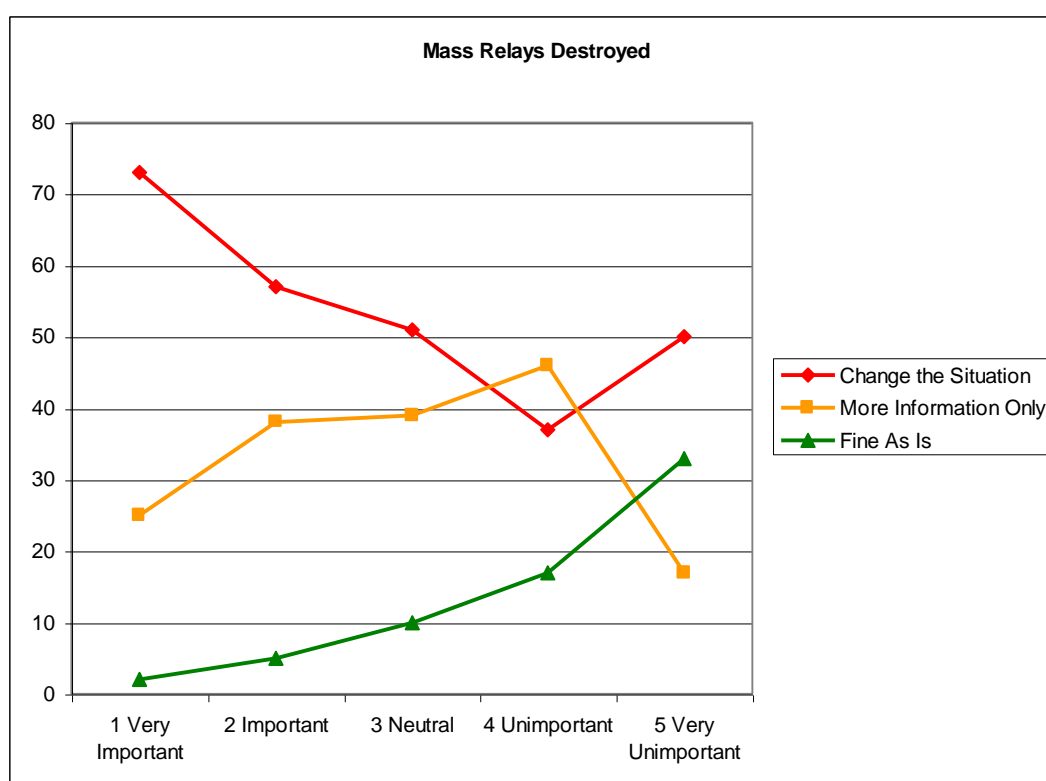


Figure 4. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Destruction of Mass Relays

## Lack of Closure for Companions

Table 5. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Lack of Closure for Companions

Lack of Closure: Companions	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	73	62	53	50	42
% Provide More Information	26	36	41	42	42
% Fine As Is	1	2	6	8	16
Score Total	2122	557	163	24	12

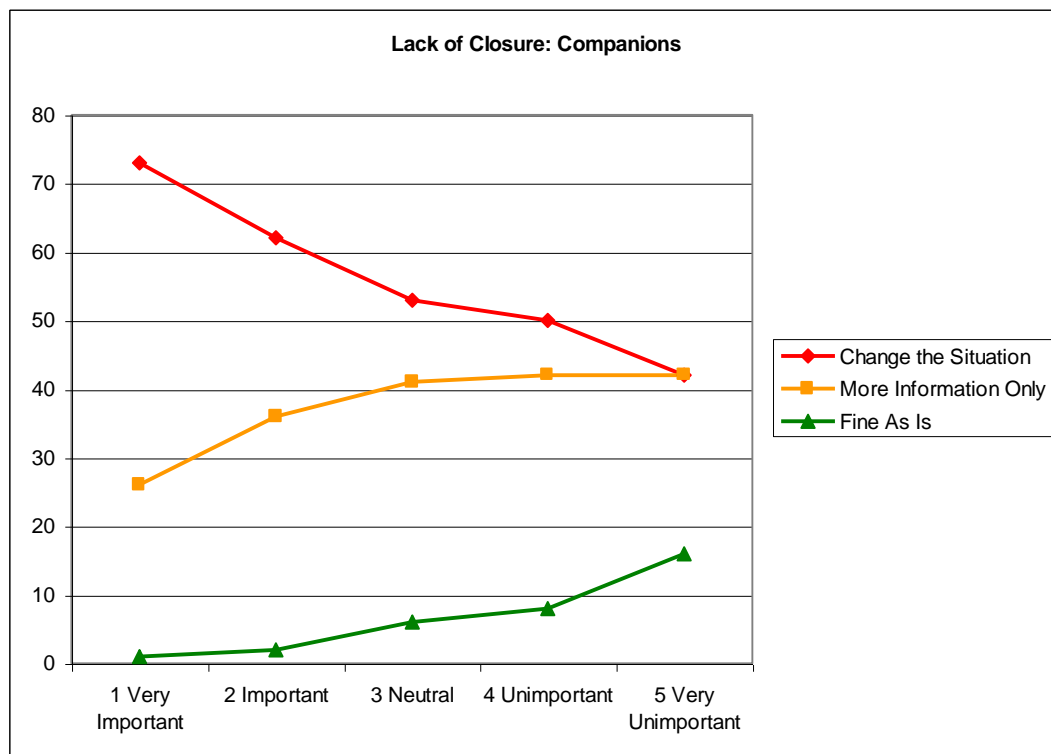


Figure 5. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Lack of Closure for Companions

## War Assets Don't Matter

Table 6. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against War Assets Don't Matter

	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
War Assets	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	80	70	65	67	58
% Provide More Information	18	26	29	21	25
% Fine As Is	2	4	6	12	17
Score Total	2117	560	164	24	12

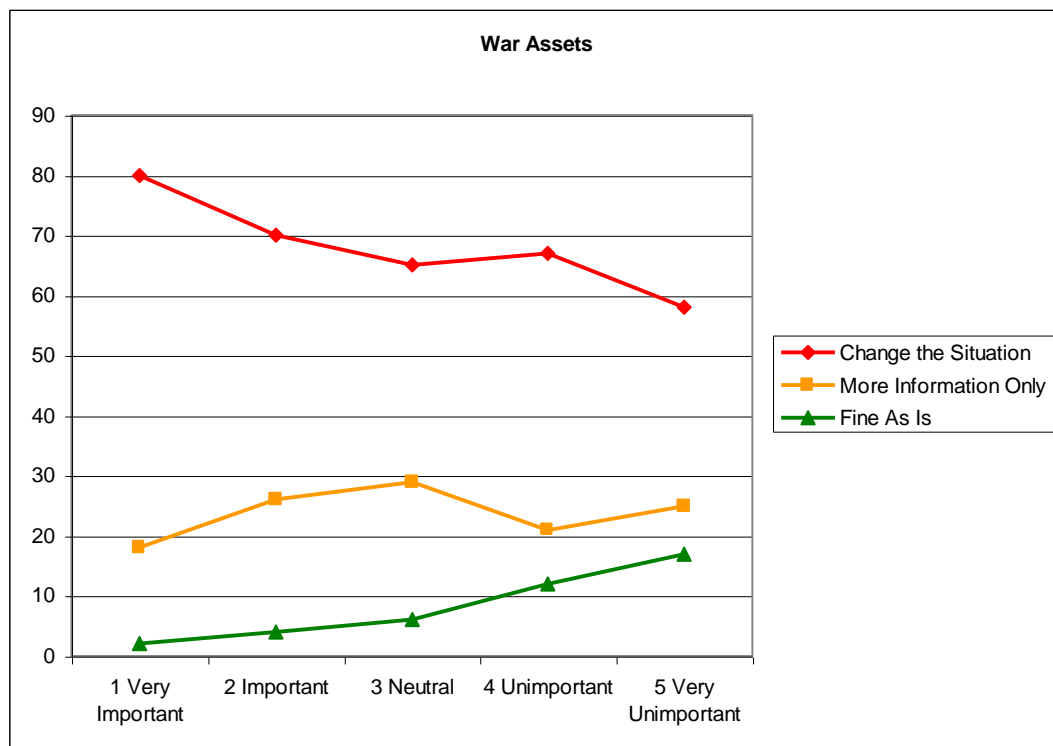


Figure 6. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against War Assets Don't Matter

## Survival of Companions

Table 7. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Survival of Companions

Survival of Companions	Geth - Quarian Conciliation				
	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Neutral	4 Unimportant	5 Very Unimportant
% Change the Situation	36	21	22	25	8
% Provide More Information	47	54	52	33	58
% Fine As Is	17	25	26	42	34
Score Total	2119	559	163	24	12

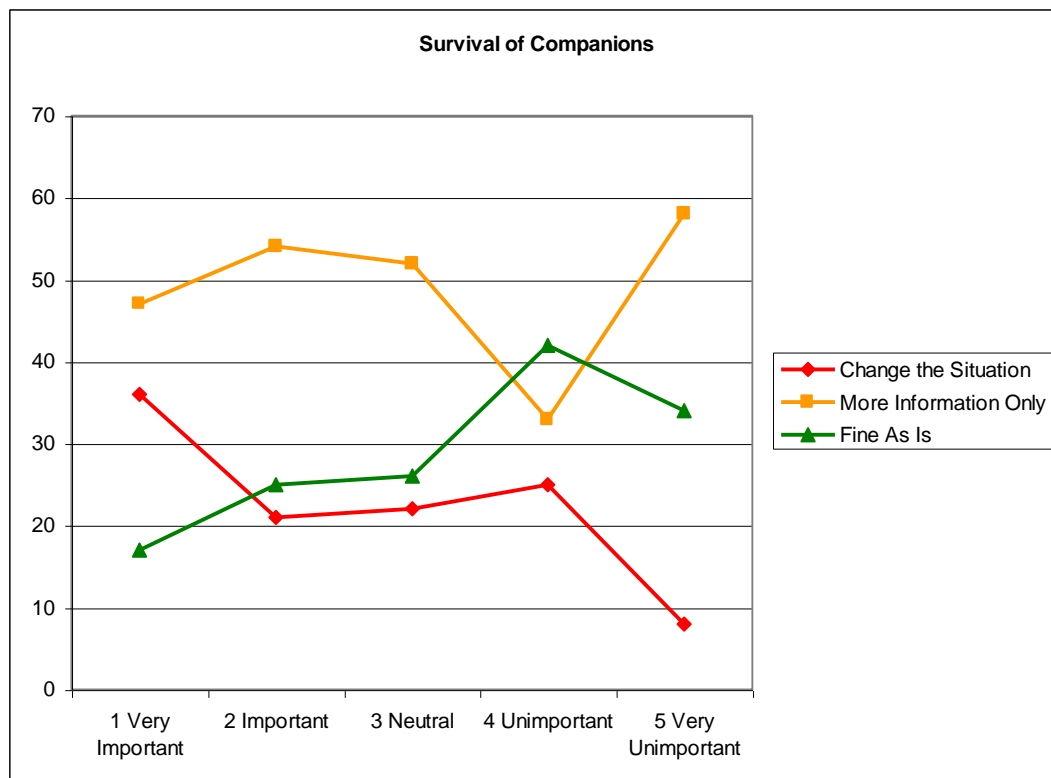


Figure 7. Percentage score of Conciliation importance against Survival of Companions

## Summary

Two major trends are illustrated in the figures and associated tables above. However, it is worth noting again that the figures in red font in the tables are so small compared to the total numbers of responses, that caution must be advised in interpreting them.

The first general trend to note is the coming together of the lines in moving from 'Very Important' to 'Very Unimportant'. The widest gap between the 'Change The Situation' line and the others occurs almost invariably at the far left, ie the 'Very Important' category. The gap tends to be narrower but still prominent for the Important category and narrows further at the Neutral category. Unfortunately the low numbers consistently scored for the Unimportant and 'Very Unimportant' categories make clear interpretation risky, however the trend appears to be robust and generally consistent, with some exceptions, eg the cross over in the 'Fleet Stranded' graph.

The other trend is the tendency for the 'Change The Situation' line to have an inverse relationship with both the 'More Information Only' and the 'Fine As Is' trend lines. In designing this question, we had thought to have three more or less equally 'separated' categories. The responses are fairly clear in demonstrating that the majority of respondents conceptually approached 'Change The Situation' as a distinct category and found greater similarities between the 'More Information' and 'Fine As Is' categories.