

## **Tribunal Service Customer Satisfaction Survey: pre-announcement note of the full publication of 2008-09 results and changes to the methodology for 2009-10**

### **Background**

The Tribunals Service Customer Satisfaction Survey was first introduced as a pilot between October and December 2007, interviewing those people who had attended a hearing. The aim of the survey was to provide some information on the quality of our administrative service, by asking respondents how satisfied they were with the service they received and for them to provide details of their expectations.

In 2008-09, the survey was carried out over four quarters using separate samples of individuals, but using a consistent methodology. Participants were chosen at random and were interviewed using Computer Aided Telephone interviewing techniques. Around 3,700 people who had a hearing were interviewed.

The full 2008-09 report will be published in February 2010. We will publish 2009-10 full results in the Autumn of 2010, as Official Statistics

### **Change to Methodology**

In both the 2007 and in the 2008-09 survey, respondents were asked about the level of satisfaction that they had with the Tribunals Service in relation to the processes and procedures. The question is asked near the beginning of the survey and provides a “spontaneous response” on customer satisfaction.

The precise question is:

*“Now thinking about the administrative process and procedures involved with your case and not the final outcome, how satisfied are you with the overall service you received from the Tribunals Service?”*

And respondents provided a rated response from “Very satisfied” to “Very dissatisfied”.

In 2007, based on one quarter's data, 68%<sup>1</sup> of those who had a hearing were satisfied with their overall experience with the Tribunals Service, and this was 65% (across four quarters) in 2008-09.

The question on customer satisfaction is asked directly after one asking the respondent about the outcome of the hearing. There was found to be a strong correlation between the outcome of the hearing and overall perception of service. In 2008-09, 80% of “successful” respondents were satisfied, compared to 45% of those who were “unsuccessful”.

Thus, in the last quarter of 2008-09 and in the first quarter of 2009-10 a further question on customer satisfaction was asked later in the survey. This question was worded the same as earlier, but was asked after respondents had answered questions on 15 key elements of service delivery. There was found to be a higher

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<sup>1</sup> It should be remembered that a sample, and not all Tribunals Service customers, have taken part. Thus the responses are subject to sampling tolerances. For example, for a response of 68%, we are 95% confident that the true value lies between 66% and 70% (+ or – 2%).

level of satisfaction when respondents were asked at that point to consider the administrative elements of service for which the Tribunals Service were responsible. Overall levels of satisfaction recorded using this “considered” method were 73% in Quarter 4 of 2008-09 and 70% in Quarter 1 of 2009-10: respectively 8% and 3% higher than when the response was sought early in the survey, immediately after asking about the success of the appeal.

Both “spontaneous” and “considered” questions provide different measurements of satisfaction and different understandings of the customer experience. Thus, both measures will be retained in this year’s (2009-10) survey (the “spontaneous” question allows for a longer time series to be considered and both sets of results presented). However, it has been agreed that the question that will be used to inform the target on customer satisfaction will be the “considered” approach. This is because the response is less likely to be affected by the outcome of the hearing, and it allows respondents to consider only the administrative service of the Tribunals Service. This approach has been subject to Peer Review and agreement with the Ministry of Justice Chief Statistician. The Tribunals Service will announce target levels early in the New Year.