



**INFORMATION
COMMISSIONER'S
OFFICE**

**CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION SURVEY
– DATA PROTECTION**

October 2006

Contents	Page
1 Context and Objectives	3
2 Data Subjects - Survey Overview	3
3 Data Subjects – Summary and Implications	4
4 Data Subjects - Detailed Findings	6
a) Sample Profile	6
b) Enquiry/Complaint Profile	8
c) Contacting the ICO	9
d) Methods of Contacting the ICO	9
e) Expectations of Service	12
f) Overall Ratings	13
g) Detailed Service Attribute Ratings	15
h) Attitudes Towards the ICO	21
5 Data Controllers - Survey Overview	22
6 Data Controllers – Summary and Implications	23
7 Data Controllers - Detailed Findings	25
a) Sample and Enquiry Profile	25
b) Contacting the ICO	26
c) Expectations of Service	27
d) Overall Ratings	29
e) Detailed Service Attribute Ratings	30
f) Attitudes Towards the ICO	37

APPENDICES

Quantitative questionnaires

Qualitative discussion guides

1 Context and Objectives

In 2004 The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) commissioned Jigsaw Research to conduct a customer satisfaction survey among data controllers submitting written enquiries. The key objective of the research was to assess levels of satisfaction experienced by users of the data protection compliance department. In particular, the research was set up to assess:

- ▶▶ Satisfaction with service delivery and, in particular, to assess how well ICO staff were seen to perform
- ▶▶ Which communication channels were used and what user preferences were.

The research among data controllers actually took place in January / February 2005 and was followed in the late spring/early summer by a study among data subjects). The questionnaires for the two studies were kept as consistent as possible in order that comparisons between the two could be made.

When the 2005 studies were set up, the intention was always to track performance and to this end both studies have been repeated in 2006. This document reports on the 2006 data and outlines changes in performance over the previous 12 months. To facilitate this, the surveys were virtually identical to those conducted in 2005.

2 Data Subjects - Survey Overview

In order to meet the objectives a two-stage study was implemented.

Stage 1 was the main quantitative survey, comprising 202 telephone interviews with data subjects, each interview lasting around fifteen minutes. The sample comprised data subjects with cases that had been completed and closed in February - May 2006. Each individual was written to by the ICO to inform them about the study and to give them the opportunity to decline to take part. Relatively few (c3%, a reduction on 2005's 8%) removed themselves from the sample list, this leaving approximately 1,360 names from which to conduct 200 interviews.

Stage 2 comprised follow-up in depth telephone interviews with fifteen data subjects who had agreed to be re-contacted following the quantitative interview. These interviews were designed to provide greater depth of feedback, with a view to supplementing the harder quantitative data with more detail on issues that might be driving the data. There was a high level of interest in the study as 76% (84% in 2005) of those who took part in Stage 1 agreed to participate in this stage of the research.

The stage 1 interviews were conducted between June 21st and July 7th 2006, with the stage 2 interviews being conducted between July 10th and 21st 2006.

Both the quantitative questionnaire and the qualitative discussion guide are appended to this report.

3 Data Subjects – Summary and Implications

Reflecting the findings from 2005, the qualitative and quantitative interviewing clearly showed that when data subjects were asked about the “quality of service” provided by the ICO, their response included two elements:

- ▶▶ The actual delivery of service i.e. the time taken, the quality of response, the attitude of staff, etc.
- ▶▶ The outcome of the enquiry or complaint itself.

As part of the introduction to the interview we had asked respondents to focus on the service rather than the outcome, but it is clear that the data subjects found it difficult to separate the two when asked about the overall quality of service. Indeed the qualitative research revealed that data subjects saw the resolution of their issue as a key component of service.

We will see that there were high expectations of the ICO in terms of its powers and what it is able to do and when these expectations were not met, it was often seen as a service “failure”. Despite the link between outcome and overall quality perceptions, Customers were able to be more objective when asked to rate individual aspects of service and we will clearly see the stronger and weaker areas of performance.

In addition to the above, an important part of the context for the evaluation of service was the fact that 95% of data subjects categorised their contact with the ICO as a complaint as opposed to a request for information, with many of the complaints being relatively personal and/or emotional.

Overall, 44% of data subjects were satisfied with the **outcome** of their contact with the ICO, with 52% indicating that they were not satisfied. These two figures are broadly in line with those seen in 2005. These numbers were reflected in the ratings for overall **quality of service**, where 56% gave a rating of good, very good or excellent, this being in line with the 52% we saw in 2005. The proportion giving a rating of excellent or very good actually increased this year from 26% to 36%, this indicating that there have been some improvements to the service provided.

Of the 46% who gave a rating of fair or poor, the majority (28%) actually gave a rating of poor, this figure being similar to the proportion that were not at all satisfied with the outcome of their case (36%). Cross analysing the two measures confirmed the strong link/overlap between them.

While the proportion giving a rating of good or better for quality of service was relatively low, just over a third (38%) felt the service was better than other organisations, while only 20% felt that it was worse. This finding should be viewed relatively positively in light of the overall rating scores and it may be that respondents are slightly more objective when making comparisons with others and perhaps focus more on service delivery rather than outcomes.

In terms of individual attributes of service, the proportions giving a rating of good, very good or excellent varied across the different service areas:

- ▶▶ Delivery related attributes (ease of understanding, clarity of response, tone of letter, quality of spelling/grammar) were again well rated, with more than 70% giving a score of good, very good or excellent for these attributes. For tone/politeness of response and quality of spelling grammar, 80% or more gave one of these top three ratings.
- ▶▶ Content/understanding related attributes were rated lower with only 50% giving a rating of good, very good or excellent in relation to the extent to which the response answered their enquiry/complaint, 54% giving the same rating for the helpfulness of the response.
- ▶▶ Only 51% gave a rating of good, very good or excellent in relation to the speed of responding to the enquiry/complaint.

In comparison to 2005, none of the attributes measured scored lower than the previous year and a number showed strong improvement over 2005, particularly the delivery related aspects and keeping customers informed of progress.

A regression analysis performed on the data showed that the main variables driving the overall (quality of service) rating were:

- ▶▶ The extent to which the enquiry or complaint was answered
- ▶▶ The speed of the response

Unfortunately neither of these two attributes showed a significant improvement on the 2005 scores and we would suggest that unless the ICO can drive significant improvements in these areas, the overall rating for quality of service is unlikely to change.

In terms of actions in these areas, we would suggest the following:

- ▶▶ Improve speed of response if at all possible, giving customers a realistic estimate of how long their query may take. If the case is likely to take some time to resolve, ensure regular updates are provided in order that Customers do not feel that their complaint/enquiry has got lost in the system
- ▶▶ If a response is not what the Customer would see as definitive, then ensure there is sufficient explanation as to why that is the case. Where possible outline the next steps for the Customer and where appropriate indicate whether or not there is more that the ICO can do for them

While there were criticisms evident in relation to the speed of response and some concerns expressed that responses did not directly answer the questions asked, it was clear from both the qualitative and quantitative work that there was a high regard for the quality of the individuals working at the ICO. This is important for the ICO as without this level of goodwill towards staff, ratings would invariably be much lower.

4 Data Subjects - Detailed Findings

a) Sample Profile

Figure 1 below shows the demographic profile of the sample, both for 2006 and 2005. As we saw in 2005, in comparison to the UK population, the sample was skewed towards males, the upper socio-economic groups (ABC1) and those aged 30-59 years. Those registered disabled and from ethnic minorities were also represented in the sample, with the proportions being broadly in line with the UK as a whole.

The chart also shows that the profile year on year has remained relatively stable, but it is notable this year that there was an increase in the proportion of Data Subjects that were from socio-economic group DE, this comprising mainly unskilled and manual type occupations (as head of household).

Figure 1: Sample Profile



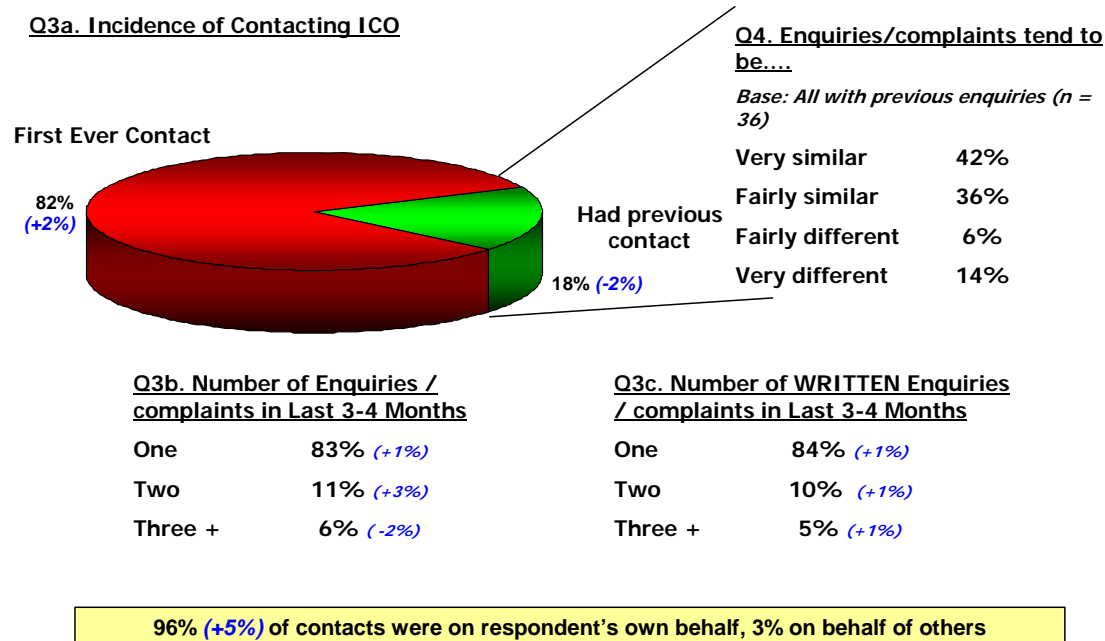
(7%) were registered disabled and (8%) from an ethnic minority

Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

Figure 2 below shows the contact profile of the sample. Changes in comparison to 2005 are shown in parentheses. As can be seen, there was little difference between the two years.

Figure 2: Contact Profile



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

The majority of the sample (82%, virtually the same as 2005) were contacting the ICO for the first time. Among the small number that had had previous contact, over three-quarters stated that their previous enquiries tended to be similar and it is possible that some of these previous enquiries were in fact separate or ongoing contacts in relation to the same enquiry/complaint. This possibility became evident in the qualitative research (both this year and last year) with a number of data subjects claiming they had to chase responses to previous enquiries or had to 'start again' when the case was referred to another individual or department. It may also be the case that some data subjects submitted the same enquiry more than once if they did not get the outcome they wanted.

Reflecting the fact that the majority of respondents were submitting their first ever enquiry/ complaint, the majority had only had one enquiry/complaint dealt with in the previous 3-4 months.

The majority of respondents (95%) classified their contact as a complaint, this figure being significantly higher than we saw in 2005 (80%). This change matches the change in the profile of enquiries/complaints as classified in the ICO database. In particular, the 2006 sample comprised more contacts categorised as Request for Assessment (56%, up from 32% in 2005) and Electronic Communications (38%, up from 22% in 2005). We will see later in this report that many data subjects are not happy with the outcome of their complaint and we would note that relative to other organisations, ICO invariably has a more challenging set of customers to deal with.

The complaints made were most commonly about a commercial company or bank (55%).

Other complaints were made about government departments, health sector, employers, the police/courts and local authorities.

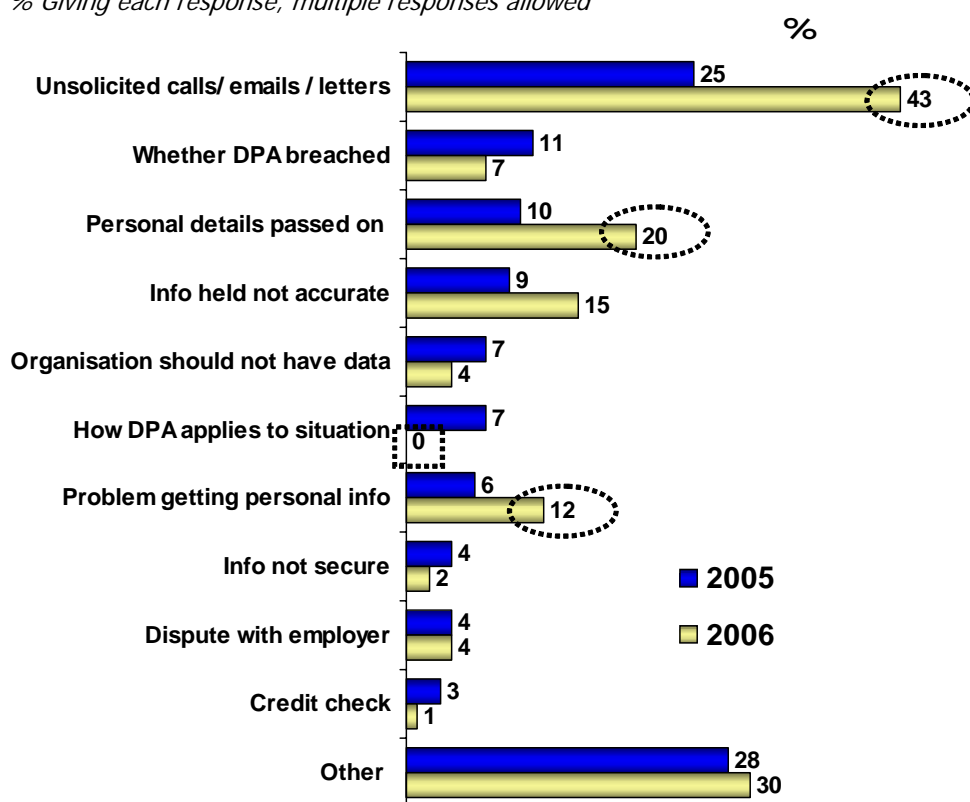
b) Enquiry/Complaint Profile

The range of enquiries/complaints was quite varied. The greatest number of enquiries/complaints were made about unsolicited calls, emails and letters (43%) and the significant increase on the 2005 figure reflects the universe data provided by ICO. Figure 3 below shows the full profile of the enquiries/complaints:

Figure 3: Enquiry/Complaint Profile

Q2. Description of Most Recent Enquiry(ies) / Complaints

% Giving each response, multiple responses allowed



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Also notable in the chart above are the significant increases in the proportions complaining about having personal details passed on or having problems accessing personal information. These increases reflect the higher number of Requests for Assessment seen this year.

In addition to the profile above, the qualitative research again uncovered a feeling of unease that organisations may or may not hold data on individuals but that the individual has great difficulty in finding out exactly what is held on them; or that a fee has to be paid to view the information. It was also clear that

many data subjects' complaints/enquiries were deemed to be very personal and therefore they became quite emotionally involved in the process and in their reaction to the outcome.

c) Contacting the ICO

Just over a quarter of those contacting the ICO knew how to get in contact (26%, down from 31% in 2005), this figure rising to 58% among those with previous contact (although care should be taken as this figure is based on a relatively small sample of 36 respondents). Some knowledge of where to go came from an individual's workplace i.e. their job entailed knowledge of the Data Protection (DP) and Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts or of the ICO itself.

For those who had to find out how to contact the ICO, just over a third found it very or extremely easy (37%, down from 46% in 2005) whilst a quarter did not find it an easy task. The re-launched website may help turn around the decline seen here. As was noted in 2005, ensuring that the main organisations referring people to ICO (CAB, telecoms providers, etc) can route people quickly to ICO will help to ensure consumers do not struggle to make contact. Routes to 'finding' the ICO varied and often included recommendations from the following organisations/methods:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Solicitor
- Trading Standards Officer
- Financial Services Authority
- Police
- Word of Mouth
- Google search on 'Data Protection'
- Local Member of Parliament
- Bank
- Telephony provider

d) Methods of Contacting the ICO

The sample comprised those who had submitted a written enquiry/complaint to the ICO. Around two-thirds (65%, up from 58% in 2005) had submitted their written enquiry/complaint by letter, just under a third (31%, down from 36%) by email, with the remainder unable to recall. However, for a third (33%, in line with 29% seen in 2005) the initial contact with the ICO was made by telephone, which then lead to a letter, email or fax.

Female respondents and those submitting a request for assessment were more likely to have used letters. Male respondents and those from socio-economic group AB were more likely to have used email.

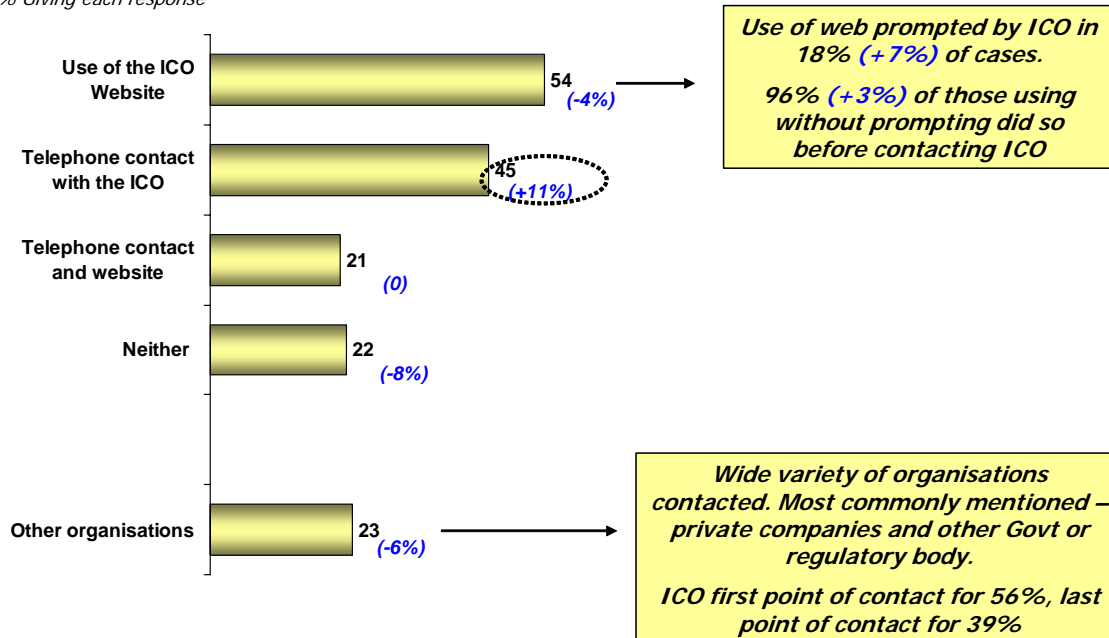
On average, data subjects had to submit 2.8 letters/emails in relation to their enquiry/complaint, this figure being the same as 2005. Multiple correspondence was required for various reasons; the ICO needed to have more information, the enquirer needed to find out more or had their own questions, the ICO submitted a standard form for the enquirer to complete prior to work beginning on the case. In some cases enquirers had to follow up with correspondence to chase replies or ask for more complete answers either because they did not understand or did not agree with the response itself.

Figure 4 below outlines the channels and parties involved in the enquiries/complaints. Changes from the 2005 figures are shown in parentheses, with significant shifts circled.

Figure 4: Channels and Parties Involved

Q7/10. Did the enquiry(ies) / Complaints Involve....

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

In addition to their written contact, over three-quarters (78%) either made use of the ICO website or had some form of telephone contact with the ICO, with one in five (21%, same level as 2005) using both of these channels in relation to their enquiry/complaint. Of note in the above is the increase in telephone contact (from 34% to 45%), this highlighting the need for the ICO to not only offer multi-channel access, but also do all it can to ensure consistency across the channels.

Almost one in five of those using the website did so because the ICO itself had referred them to it, this being a significant increase on last year. However, among those that looked at the website without being prompted, the vast majority (96%) looked at the website **before** contacting the ICO. It became clear in the qualitative stage that for a number of respondents, the website was used as a means of working out who they needed to contact.

As seen in 2005, telephone contact was more prevalent among female respondents and those whose enquiry/complaint was classified as a 'request for assessment'. Not surprisingly, telephone contact was also more prevalent where cases took longer to resolve or involved more pieces of correspondence.

Each contact channel was liked or disliked for various reasons. The following summarises (from the qualitative stage) how and why each channel was used:

Telephone

The telephone was preferred in instances where a quick answer was needed or where the enquirer/complainant felt their case was urgent. There was a degree of comfort in talking to an individual at the ICO, partly because this is just how some people prefer it, but it was also seen as being direct and individuals could feel happy that their problem was being acknowledged or dealt with immediately. This channel also allowed customers to establish or confirm who and where to write to. For a number of data subjects, the initial contact by phone led to the ICO asking them to write down their enquiry before it could be answered.

Letters

Letters were seen as a safe channel and could be kept for future reference (or 'proof'). There was extra security with this method as letters could be sent recorded/registered delivery; this gave the enquirer peace of mind that their letters reached their destination and proof could be produced if necessary.

Email

There was a similar attitude to emails as there was to letters. Although there was a degree of comfort that emails would generally reach their destination and individuals appreciated the ability to send emails via the website, email was not seen as being as foolproof/traceable as letters.

Website

The website generally received positive feedback from users who found it easy to locate, a good site for finding out information, relatively easy to navigate and appreciated the fact that the information was free and made the forms easy to find and download. As might be expected, the less experienced web users found the site more daunting and struggled to locate the information they required.

We saw earlier that the profile of customers was relatively upmarket and a number of respondents in the qualitative stage felt that their knowledge was sufficient for them to be able to go straight to the detailed legislation without having to work their way through simple / basic explanations of the Act.

In addition to contact with the ICO, other organisations were also contacted by just under a quarter of respondents (23%, down from 29% in 2005) in the course of trying to solve problems/find out information. A wide variety of organisations were contacted. The ICO was the first point of contact for 56% of respondents and the last point of contact for just over a third (39%).

e) Expectations of Service

Before looking in detail at how data subjects viewed the service provided by the ICO, it is useful to examine the expectations they had. These expectations were covered in the qualitative follow-on interviews. As might be expected given the high number of first time enquirers, there was little change in expectations from 2005 and text from last year's report has been repeated here to reflect this.

Where expectations existed, they again tended to be relatively high in terms of what the ICO could and should deliver. They often saw the organisation as having the authority and powers to circumvent the FOI/DP Acts in order to fully investigate and rule on cases and as such, would also have the power to impose fines, prosecute and reprimand offenders. In order to do this, it was perceived to be able to access private files and any other data held by those being investigated.

A further expectation was that the ICO would have the power to instruct companies to amend records, e.g., change credit ratings, stop nuisance calls immediately, etc.

As seen in 2005, there was also the expectation that any advice or guidance would be clear and (where appropriate) provide them with the next steps they needed to take.

There were also high expectations in terms of the quality of staff and service. It was anticipated that all staff would have a minimum level of knowledge that would help them answer simple queries or to direct calls/letters/emails to the most appropriate team/individual for more complex issues. Basic knowledge was expected to cover a broad awareness of what the law states, what can be done and what routes to take. Staff were expected to be generally courteous and show interest in enquirers' issues by being prompt with replies and passing on enquiries to the appropriate teams.

It was not expected that, for phone enquiries, the person who answers the phone at the ICO would be knowledgeable enough to deal with all enquiries. However, it was expected that if their call had to be passed on, the caller would not have to re-iterate what had just been said and that all relevant details would be passed on. This was also true, probably more so, for written enquiries or when a case had been transferred prior to its completion.

The ICO 'suffers' from having high expectations as enquirers often saw it as the last resort to help them sort out their problems. They are expected to be helpful and supportive of enquirers through being courteous, acknowledging queries promptly and returning calls and letters speedily – even if it is just to inform the enquirer that the case is still in progress, but with an approximate timeline of when an answer/next correspondence should take place.

A number of enquirers, having been referred by a third party, had little or no expectations. More often than not they had been told to go to the ICO and their knowledge was little more than an understanding that they had been directed to the right place.

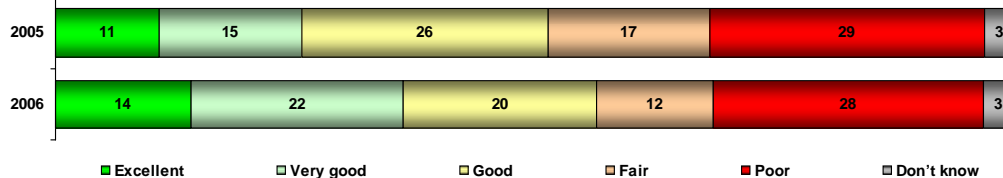
f) Overall Ratings

Figure 5 below shows the overall ratings given by data subjects in relation to their most recent enquiry/complaint. The data is shown for both 2006 and 2005.

Figure 5: Overall Ratings

Q17a. Overall Rating of Quality of Service

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Overall, the quality of service from the ICO was rated good, very good or excellent by just over half the sample (56%), this being broadly in line with the 2005 data. Just over a third (36%) gave a rating of either very good or excellent, this being a significant increase on the 26% seen in 2005. However, as can be seen above, 28% gave a rating of poor, this proportion not moving from the level seen in 2005.

In summary, we would say that there have certainly been improvements in the service provided, but there remains a core of data subjects that do not feel that they have received good service. Inevitably some of this is driven by the outcome of the complaint/enquiry submitted and we will examine this link below. What we would say, however, is that while the outcome does influence the overall rating above, data subjects are still able to provide objective feedback on particular aspects of service such as the quality of the letters.

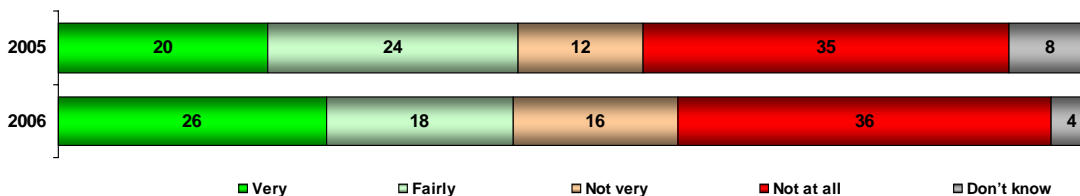
The ratings above are relatively low when compared to other (typical) customer satisfaction studies, but the scores need to be set against the context of the majority of contacts being complaints (95%) and the high expectations that respondents had in relation to what the ICO can and can't do for them.

The chart below shows that some 52% of respondents were not happy with the outcome of their enquiry/complaint.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with Outcome

Q19. Satisfaction with Outcome

% Giving each response



Cross analysing the two questions above showed that the vast majority of those satisfied with the outcome of the complaint/enquiry were happy with the service received and that around two-thirds of those not happy with the outcome rated the service as only fair or poor. Both the qualitative and the

quantitative findings clearly showed the link between the outcome and overall perceptions of service and indeed many saw that part of the service was to “solve the problem”.

Despite the relatively low ratings overall, over a third of respondents (38%, broadly in line with the 34% seen in 2005) rated the service from the ICO as being better than other organisations, with a fifth (20%) rating it worse.

As part of the qualitative follow-on interviews we asked respondents (where appropriate) to explain reasons for their dissatisfaction. Whilst the ICO was generally acknowledged to reply to enquiries in a clear and easy to understand way, data subjects were often surprised and frustrated with the perceived incomplete or inconclusive nature of their interactions. This frustration was largely due to the high expectations data subjects held; the ICO was regarded as the organisation that would put an end to their problems by putting pressure on ‘offending’ individuals or organisations.

Examples of instances where the ICO was felt to have not lived up to expectations included:

- ▶▶ A sense of frustration and disappointment that the ICO was not perceived to have authority to prosecute, which led to questions about its purpose and use to data subjects
 - *“They have no power, they are a waste of money”*
- ▶▶ Being referred to the legislation and being asked to resolve the issue with the ‘offender’ when they felt this was something that the ICO should do
 - *“I’m a layman, I can’t review the acts they refer me to”*
- ▶▶ A feeling that the ICO was expecting the data subject to do a lot of the investigative work
 - *“They should do more of the legwork in finding out information about the company. It is hard to get all the information they need on the form from the organisation. It is a lot of effort and it will put people off complaining”*
- ▶▶ The ICO not responding quickly enough, having to chase for progress reports

The result of these unmet expectations was that some data subjects questioned why the ICO exists. Staff were praised but when expected answers/actions were not forthcoming, their ability and understanding came under question.

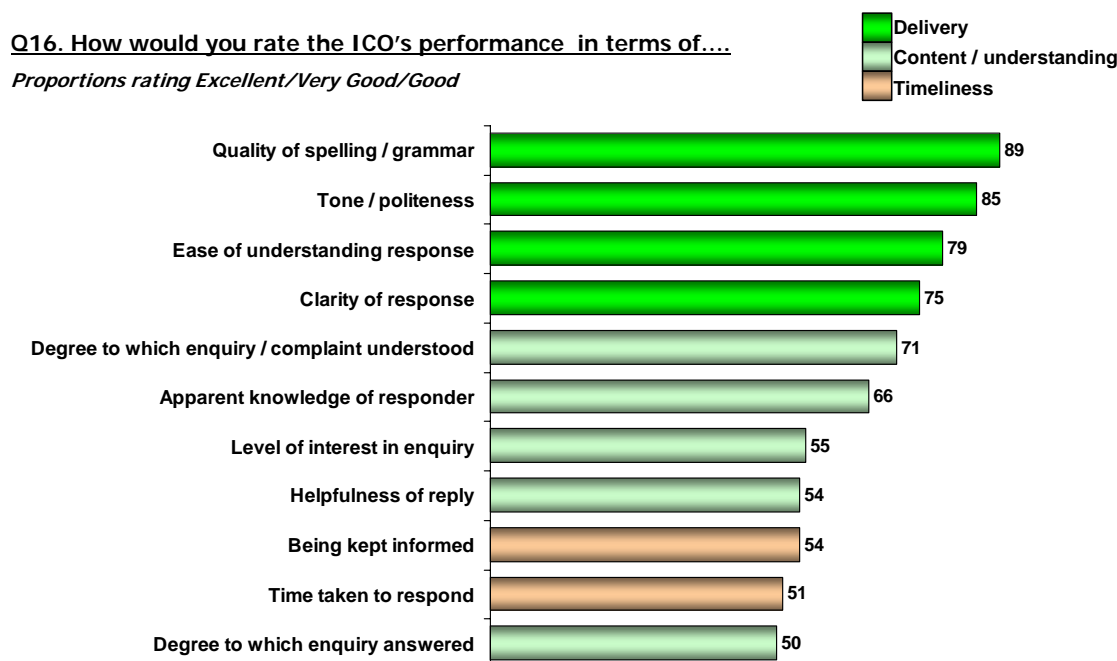
The following section will now look in more detail at perceptions of individual aspects of service.

g) Detailed Service Attribute Ratings

Data subjects were asked to rate the ICO on a range of performance attributes. Figure 7a below summarises the performance scores by showing the proportions that gave a rating of good, very good or excellent for each of the attributes. The attributes are colour coded and split into three sections:

- ▶▶ Delivery – whether the response was well written and clear
- ▶▶ Content/Understanding – the extent to which the response was understood and answered by the ICO
- ▶▶ Timeliness – how long the process took and whether the enquirer was kept informed

Figure 7a: Detailed Service Attribute Ratings



The chart above clearly shows that attributes relating to the content/understanding and timeliness of responses were rated lower than aspects relating to the basic delivery of the response. As part of the analysis, a multiple regression was run on the overall satisfaction question to determine which of the attributes shown in figure 7 drove the overall score. The two attributes that emerged as the key drivers, were also two of those given the lowest rating:

- ▶▶ The degree to which the response answered the enquiry / complaint
- ▶▶ The time taken to respond

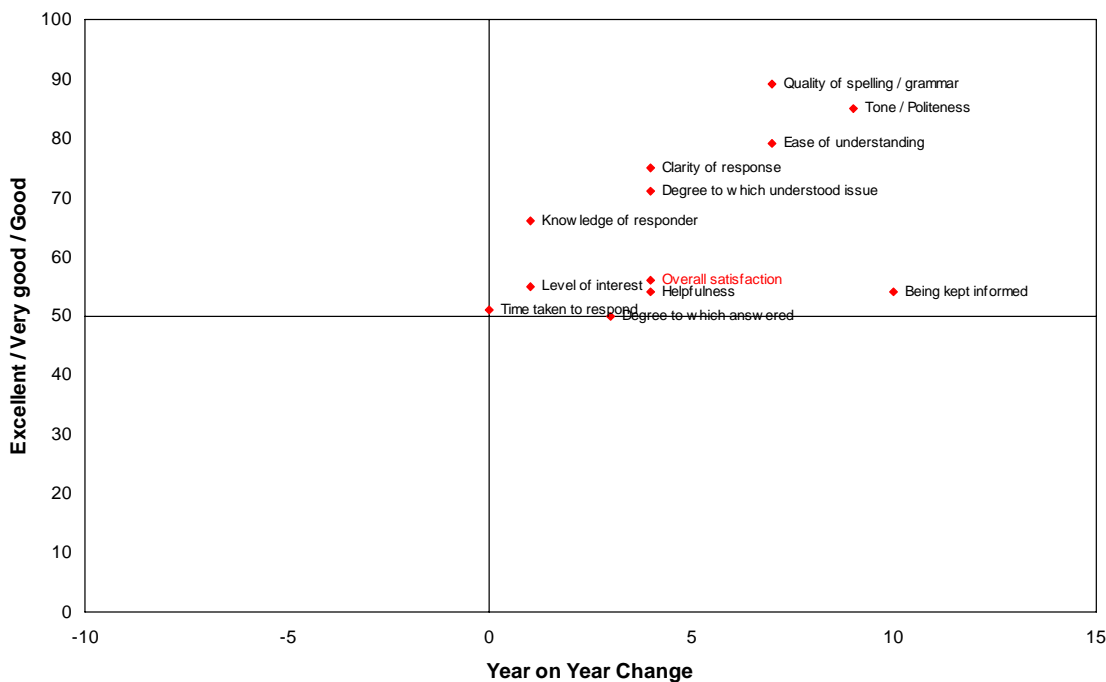
We saw earlier that many respondents equated responding to the enquiry/complaint with the ICO “solving the problem”. Given the importance of this aspect of service, if the ICO is unable to rule in favour of the

data subject it should clearly outline why this is the case as otherwise it could be interpreted as a service ‘failure’.

The chart below shows how each of the same attributes has changed since 2005. The position of each attribute on the chart is explained as follows:

- ▶▶ The position of the attribute on the vertical axis is taken from the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent, so again we see all the delivery aspects higher up on the axis.
- ▶▶ The position of the attribute on the horizontal axis shows how the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent has changed since 2005. So, for example, being kept informed has improved by 10% and time taken to respond has remained unchanged.

Figure 7b: Individual Attribute Ratings – Performance vs. 2005



The first thing to note in the above chart is that none of the attributes have declined since 2005. This reflects the overall satisfaction score seen earlier where the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent had remained stable and the proportion giving a rating of very good or excellent had improved.

Also of note in the above, the two key attributes of time taken to respond and degree to which the complaint/enquiry was answered have not improved significantly since 2005. Any significant change in overall satisfaction will require definite improvements in these areas or at least responses to be clearer as to why the advice from the ICO is as far as it can go.

We will see later that overall time taken to respond has increased since 2005, but it is notable that more data subjects feel that the ICO is good at keeping them informed of progress.

The other main improvements have been in the delivery areas (tone of letter, spelling and grammar, ease of understanding). It is clear from this that changes made following the 2005 survey has lead to improvements.

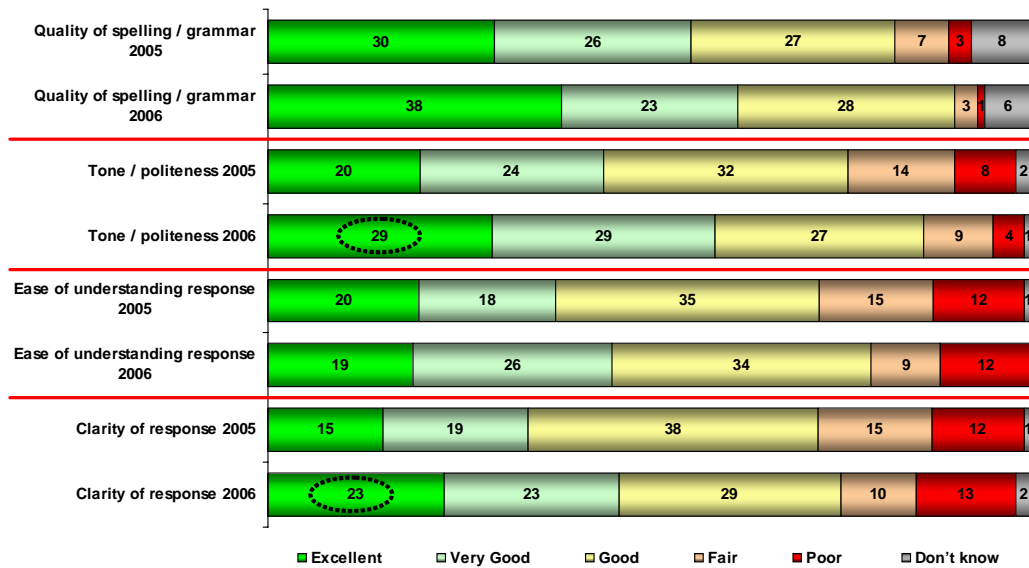
Delivery

Figure 8 below shows the full range of responses in relation to the aspects of service related to the delivery of the response, both for 2005 and 2006.

Figure 8: Rating of Delivery Attributes

Q16. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of....

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

As noted earlier, these attributes were the ones that received the highest ratings. The chart shows that not only has the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent improved, but there were some significant shifts within those top three scores, with the proportions giving a rating of excellent or very good also improving. The only slight concern in the above is that there remain significant minorities giving fair or poor ratings for ease of understanding and clarity of response, particularly in dealing with requests for assessment.

Although the ICO performed strongly on delivery aspects and the quality of their staff, the qualitative interviews showed (as they did last year) that data subjects were more likely to look towards the substance and quality of answers. Key for them was knowing what the reply meant for them and what their next steps should be. However, we know from experience that aspects such as tone and spelling are expected to be of the highest standard and that any deterioration in this area would lead to problems. If

data subjects start to question the quality of the delivery, then they invariably start to question the content also as poor grammar or an inappropriate tone can bring the professionalism of the response and the organisation into question.

Data subjects generally felt that they were given individual replies. Letters appeared to be personalised and not standard, which was appreciated as it gave the impression that their complaint/enquiry had been dealt with properly and not just given a standard response.

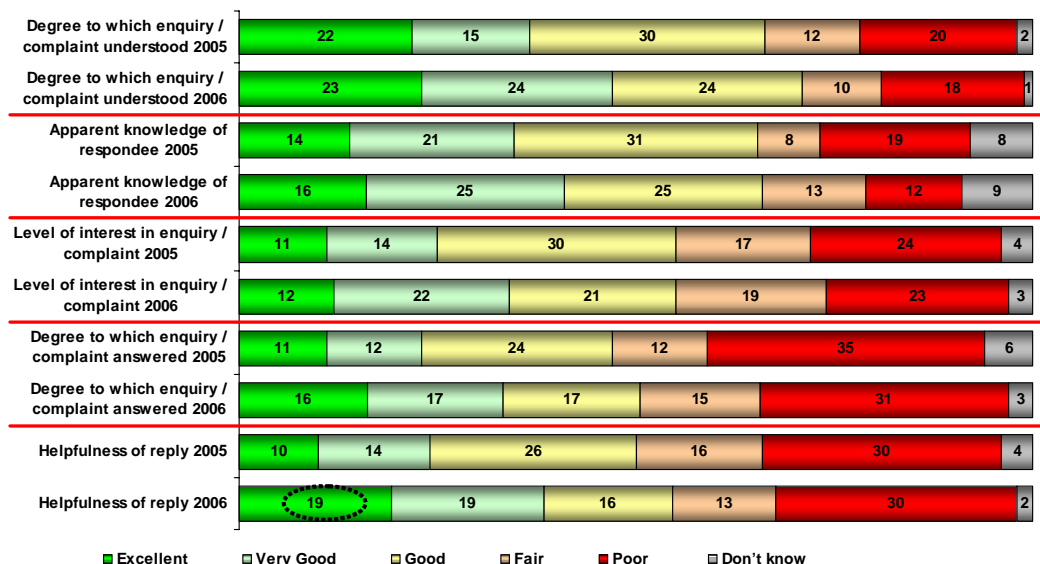
Content / Understanding

Figure 9 below shows the full range of responses in relation to the aspects of service related to the content and understanding of the response, again showing the data from both 2006 and 2005.

Figure 9: Rating of Content/Understanding Attributes

Q16. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of....

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

In comparison to the delivery aspects, these attributes had significantly higher proportions giving a response of fair or poor, with just under a third giving a poor rating for the helpfulness of the reply and the degree to which the enquiry/complaint was answered.

The proportions giving a rating of either fair or poor has not changed for any of the above attributes since 2005. Some of this is invariably linked to the lack of change in satisfaction with the outcome, but again highlights the need for the ICO to be very clear in terms of:

- » What they (ICO) can and can not do for the Customer

- ▶▶ Why they are unable to take further action (if that is the case)
- ▶▶ The next steps that are open to the Customer

The qualitative interviews revealed that staff were generally felt to show interest in data subjects' enquiries and were largely sympathetic in terms of trying to understand and show concern. However, despite this, they were often unable to resolve issues because they were not perceived to have the right powers to investigate or prosecute.

Data subjects were reassured when they felt the staff had done their utmost to gather together all information and evidence. Comfort was gained by them being fully in possession of all the facts and therefore able to review everything and come to proper conclusions. Within the working context, staff were often felt to be in possession of the right levels of knowledge and experience.

A further issue raised in the qualitative interviews was in relation to the forms that were sent out following initial correspondence (mainly by telephone) in that they were somewhat cumbersome and time-consuming to complete.

- ▶▶ *"I left some bits blank as I didn't know what to write"*
- ▶▶ *"It took me ages to fill in... I hoped I hadn't done it all for nothing"*

Timeliness

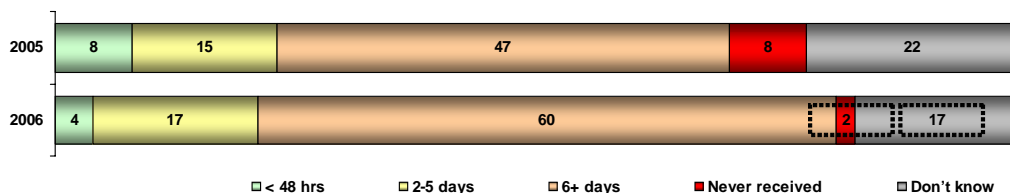
As noted earlier, satisfaction with the time taken to respond to enquiries/complaints was one of the two main drivers of overall satisfaction with the service from the ICO.

Figure 10a below shows that around a fifth received an initial acknowledgement of their enquiry/complaint within five days but most replies took at least six days. There was a significant drop in the proportion claiming not to receive an initial acknowledgment, but this may have been driven by the increase in the overall time taken to deal with cases; in 2005 a number of those not receiving an acknowledgment were actually cases that were completed relatively quickly.

Figure 10a: Speed of Initial Acknowledgement

Q14. Speed of Initial Acknowledgement

% Giving each response



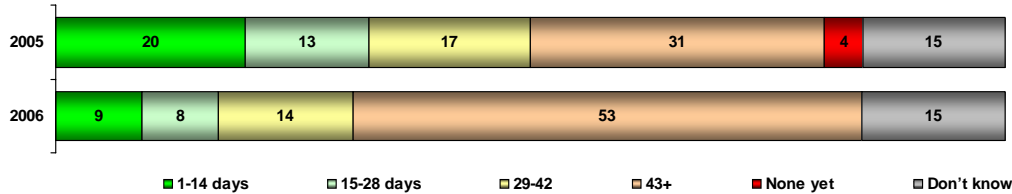
Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Figure 10b below shows that response times have declined significantly since 2005, with half (53%) now taking more than six weeks to resolve. In 2005, around a third were being resolved within a month, but this year only one in six were resolved in that time. We saw earlier that there had been a significant increase in the number of requests for assessment and this shift has been the main driver of the increase. Each of these cases is taking an average of more than six months to complete.

Figure 10b: Speed of Response

Q15a/b. Time Taken for Final Response

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

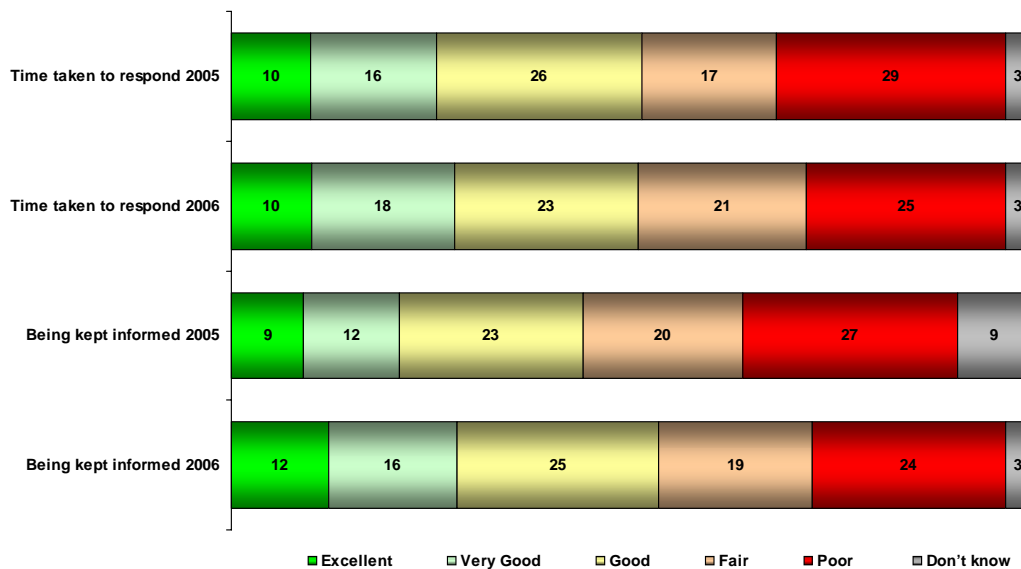
Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

Despite the increase in the time taken to resolve cases, it was also the case that data subjects this year expected cases to take longer than those in 2005. To some extent this again reflects the nature of the cases. The net impact of these two changes (to expected and actual time) was that the overall rating for the time taken remained the same as seen in 2005 as can be seen below in figure 11 below which shows the full range of responses in relation to the rating of speed of service aspects.

Figure 11: Rating of Timeliness Attributes

Q16. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of...

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 202)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

As noted earlier, there was an improvement in the rating for being kept informed which we know from the qualitative stage is important when cases are taking a long time to process.

Despite the low ratings, there was an appreciation in the qualitative follow-up interviews that Government departments were likely to be inundated with requests and so it was acknowledged that some (more complex) enquiries might need to take longer than expected or wanted. However, feelings and attitudes could be tempered by the ICO making efforts to keep the individual informed of progress on their case. If they are given an indication of how long their case may take, and reasons why, this can help allay fears that their case has been 'forgotten' and they are not being left in limbo.

Data subjects generally felt that the length of time it took to respond to queries/ complaints was roughly in line with their expectations, although not always in line with their needs i.e. they would have liked it quicker, but assumed it would take time. Next day replies were not expected from Government departments because of the volume of work they are perceived to undertake. However, an acknowledgment of receipt of correspondence was expected, along with an indication of how long their case would take to solve.

A criticism picked up this year that we did not see in 2005 was data subjects not appreciating being told about backlogs.

h) Attitudes Towards the ICO

Data subjects were asked to rate a series of attitudes towards the ICO. Overall, the ICO scored reasonably well on the following:

- Advice was fair and impartial (68% strongly agree/agree, 74% in 2005)
- Have high level of trust in advice (56% strongly agree/agree, 60% in 2005)
- Staff are efficient (66% strongly agree/agree, 58% in 2005)

None of the year on year changes above are statistically significant, but it would be hoped that the drops in the first two attributes are not repeated in 2007.

Despite the reasonably positive results, however, there did appear to be some inconsistency in the advice that data subjects were being given – a fifth (22%, in line with the 26% seen in 2005) said they were given different advice/answers to the same query and 23% did not have a high level of trust in the advice they were given.

Reflecting the variation in satisfaction with the outcome, opinions were mixed as to whether the ICO does a good job protecting the privacy of the individual; 43% agreed with the statement (48% in 2005), but 34% disagreed (31% in 2005). As noted earlier, where the ICO is unable to rule in favour of a data subject, they should clearly state why this is the case. This may help correct some perceptions, although the qualitative research showed that there will always be some members of the public that question the role of the ICO if they are not able to help solve what they perceive to be clear breaches of their privacy.

5 Data Controllers - Survey Overview

In order to meet the objectives a two-stage study was implemented.

Stage 1 was the main quantitative survey, comprising 128 telephone interviews with data controllers and each interview lasted around fifteen minutes. The sample comprised controllers that had submitted written enquiries between February and May 2006. Each individual was written to by the ICO to inform them about the study and to give them the opportunity to decline to take part. Around 5% declined (a fall on the 10% seen in 2005), which resulted in c280 contact names for the survey. A high co-operation rate among the target audience allowed us to achieve the 128 interviews, although we would have ideally liked to have conducted 200 interviews as we did in 2005.

Stage 2 comprised follow-up in depth interviews with fifteen data controllers who had agreed to be re-contacted following the quantitative interview. These interviews were designed to provide greater depth of feedback, with a view to supplementing the harder quantitative data with more detail on issues that might be driving the data. There was a high level of interest in the study as 86% of those who took part in Stage 2 agreed to participate in this stage of the research. This was much higher than 2005, but we will see that declines in performance may have led to controllers feeling strongly about fully expressing their opinions.

The stage 1 interviews were conducted between June 21st and 28th 2006, with the stage 2 interviews running from July 10th to 21st 2006.

Both the quantitative questionnaire and the qualitative discussion guide are appended to this report.



6 Data Controllers – Summary and Implications

In comparison to the 2005 sample, the data controllers this year were less likely to be first time enquirers, this meaning that a higher proportion at least had some expectations of the level of service they would receive. There were no other significant differences between the 2006 and 2005 samples, although we would note that the number of contacts we were provided with was less than in 2005.

Service expectations appeared to be higher this year, with new or inexperienced enquirers looking for definitive answers to their enquiry and the more experienced users looking for confirmation that their interpretation / decision was correct.

At an overall level, the findings were somewhat disappointing with 65% of enquirers giving a rating of good, very good or excellent for the service received, this being an 11% drop on the 2005 score. This drop in the overall measure was mirrored elsewhere in the data and is not a surprising decline given that ICO reduced the service delivery to this audience in order to focus attention on other audiences and issues.

Despite the overall decline, 35% of data controllers (down from 46%) still felt that the service delivery from the ICO was better than other organisations, with 23% feeling that service quality was worse.

The main issues driving the fall in the overall rating were significant declines in both the speed of response and the helpfulness of the response.

- ▶ In 2005, the average enquiry was taking just under three weeks to complete, whereas in 2006 this had increased to almost seven weeks, with two fifths of customers waiting more than a month to get a response. As a result of this, 35% gave a rating of poor for the speed of response and the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent fell from 54% to 40%.
- ▶ Only two-thirds of data controllers felt that the response they received was helpful and answered their enquiry, with the proportions giving a rating of good, very good or excellent falling by 11% and 8% respectively. The main concerns here were that some responses left questions unanswered and others were frustrated if they were simply referred back to the Act.

While there were criticisms evident in relation to the speed of response and some concerns expressed that responses did not directly answer the questions asked, it was clear from both the qualitative and quantitative work that there is a high regard for the quality of the individuals working at the ICO.

In terms of actions to take, the data suggests the following:

Where possible, the response should clearly demonstrate that the specific issues raised have been addressed and it should also explain how the response relates to their specific situation.

In providing responses, those at the ICO should be aware that providing guidance as opposed to a definitive response (such as yes or no, make sure you do x, y, z, etc) does impact on service perceptions. Many of the enquirers have no previous experience of the ICO and often expect very clear-cut, black and white answers, particularly as they see the ICO as the regulator as well as the advisor.

As noted, speed of response is a key issue and the ICO should either seek to improve turnaround times or aim to manage expectations as well as possible.

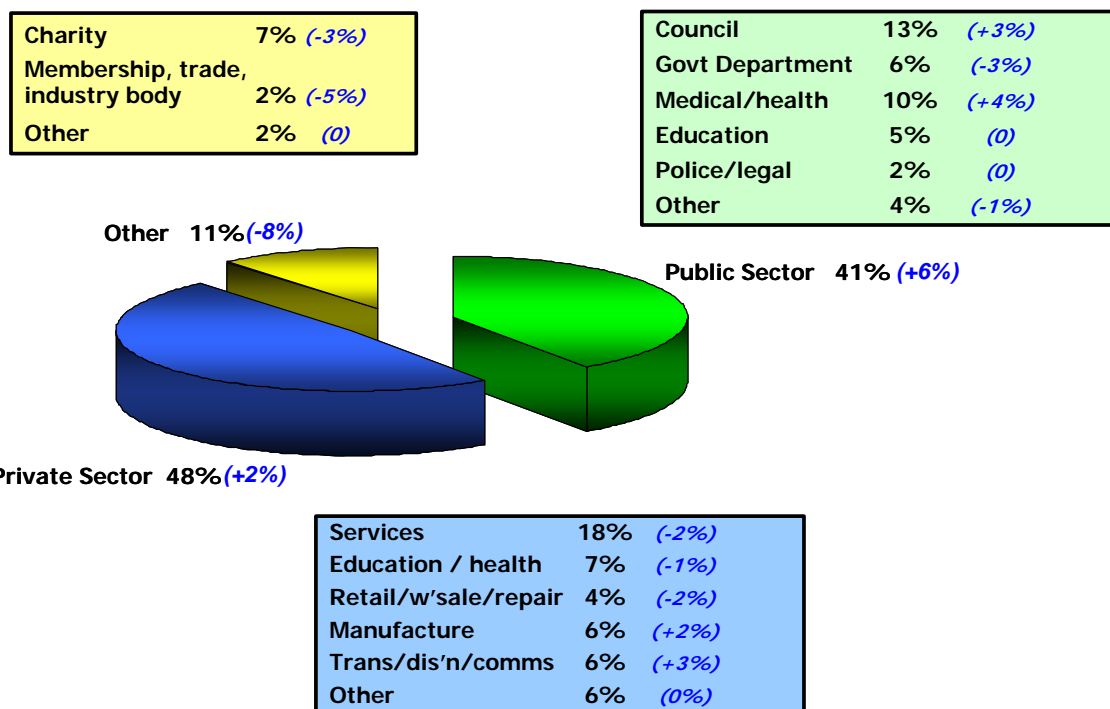


7 Data Controllers - Detailed Findings

a) Sample and Enquiry Profile

The chart below shows that the enquirers were drawn from a wide variety of organisations and companies, encompassing both the public and private sector. Changes from the 2005 survey are shown in parentheses.

Figure 12 – Organisation Profile



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

In addition to being drawn from a variety of organisation types, the level of contact with the ICO varied quite considerably. In particular, 33% of enquirers had not had any previous contact with the ICO, while a further 46% were only in contact 1-3 times a year. It should be noted, however, that the number of first time enquirers had dropped significantly (from 51%) meaning that a higher proportion of this year's sample would have had some expectations of service delivery based on previous experience. Within the sample there were a small number of individuals in relatively frequent contact (8% in contact at least monthly, 13% in contact once every 2-3 months, both figures being broadly the same as 2005).

The majority of the enquiries submitted related to how the DPA applied to a specific situation, with the enquiries including subjects such as:

- ▶▶ How data needs to be handled if being transferred/moved/re-formatted or if access needs to be given to new controllers
- ▶▶ Requirements/obligations in regard to CCTV

- ▶▶ Clarification on applicability of the Act
- ▶▶ How publicly available data needs to be handled if used for marketing / promotion
- ▶▶ Issues relating to holding and accessing employee data
- ▶▶ Availability of standard text or training/guidance notes
- ▶▶ How to register for TPS and similar schemes
- ▶▶ Script content for call centres

The main concern in most cases was around correct interpretation of the law, this allowing them to make correct decisions and maintain their reputation with customers, shareholders, etc.



b) Contacting the ICO

Just under a half of enquirers (47%) knew how to get in contact in relation to their enquiry, this rising to 53% among those who had had previous contact with the ICO. The number knowing how to get in contact rose significantly this year (up from 34%), this reflecting the reduction in the number of first time enquirers.

Among those that did not know how to get in contact, the majority felt that it was easy to find out whom to contact, with only 11% stating that it was not easy.

While not asked explicitly, it is apparent from the data that many enquirers would have used the website as a starting point for their enquiry. Overall, some 83% of enquirers had used the website as part of their enquiry, with only 9% having done this at the suggestion of the ICO. The qualitative follow-up interviews indicated that a number of enquirers would have submitted enquiries via the website (possibly because they had not been able to find the information they were looking for).

In addition to the use of the website, 45% of enquirers (40% in 2005) had also had telephone contact in relation to their enquiry(ies). It is clear that use of multiple channels (web, phone, email) is relatively common, dictating the need for the ICO to have an integrated and seamless service across the channels.

Each contact channel was liked or disliked for various reasons. The following summarises (from the qualitative stage) how and why each channel was used:

Telephone

The ICO Helpline was generally viewed positively as a means of obtaining a quick response to a simple query and, in general, data controllers found the staff courteous and helpful. One of the main benefits of this channel was the ability to clarify issues. There were some comments around the benefits of having named individuals to contact as we know from the 2005 study that over time, relationships could be built up that would lead to a more personalised service.

Letters

Letters were generally used in the more complex cases when a “paper trail” was felt to be needed. The slowness of the channel meant that most written contact was conducted via email.

Email

As with letters, having communication in writing provided a level of reassurance for controllers and allowed them the opportunity to confirm telephone conversations if needed. The speed of email was also appreciated, although this tended to lead to an expectation that response times would be relatively quick.

Website

The website generally received positive feedback, particularly from the more experienced users. It was seen as a comprehensive resource that was a good first port of call. The depth of content was particularly appreciated, although some of the more experienced users still felt it could be difficult to locate the information required. The less experienced users often found navigation difficult and would have appreciated a simpler and more logical layout that would have directed them to the information they needed.

In terms of the channel used to contact the ICO, 80% of enquirers (83% in 2005) had used email as opposed to a written letter to submit their enquiry. Three-fifths (59%) of enquiries required just a single email/letter, with a further 26% needing two and 13% needing three or more emails/letters. In comparison to 2005, there was a slightly higher level of communication evident, with an average of 1.7 pieces of correspondence being sent in, up on the 1.5 seen last year.

Only 16% of enquirers had contacted other organisations in relation to their enquiry and (thus) for the majority (86%) of enquirers, the ICO was their first port of call.

c) Expectations of Service

Expectations of the service offered by the ICO varied and tended to depend on a) the understanding/level of confidence of the enquirer and b) whether they had enquired in the past. Invariably there was a crossover between these two aspects and while expectations were high across all groups, those with less experience of the DPA and no previous contact with the ICO were often likely to expect a definitive response from the ICO e.g. a yes / no response or a response outlining what it is they needed to do.

The more experienced enquirers tended to have come to a conclusion themselves about the situation they were facing and typically wanted the ICO to “rubber stamp” or underwrite their decision. Again, they were often looking for a black and white answer, although some were aware of the position the ICO was in and appeared more understanding when responses were somewhat open.

Where a response was seen to be incomplete, enquirers could become somewhat frustrated as for them, compliance was a key issue. They wanted to keep within the law and ensure that their interpretation of a response would not land them in trouble later on.

Given the above and the lower level of first time enquirers, the qualitative feedback tended to suggest that expectations were higher than 2005, with a number commenting that the ICO have had time to make improvements on the service offered. It may be the case that some of the controllers were aware of the structural changes made in 2005 and expected things to have improved as a result.

Enquirers generally expected the ICO to provide a high quality, professional service that demonstrates both their expertise in relation to the Act, but also an understanding of the sector and issues under consideration. Building on this, they were looking for responses to deal specifically with their enquiry and not be what was referred to as “a cut and paste job”.

In addition to the above, enquirers were also looking for consistency of response. A number cited examples of where they had been given different responses by different people or different people in their organisation had received different responses from the ICO. While there may be an issue of consistency within the ICO, we would also note that enquirers may not be consistent with the questions they are asking, leading to different responses being given. Clearly this is a tricky issue to manage, but it does put an onus on the ICO to fully understand (as far as possible) the specifics of the enquiry.

d) Overall Ratings

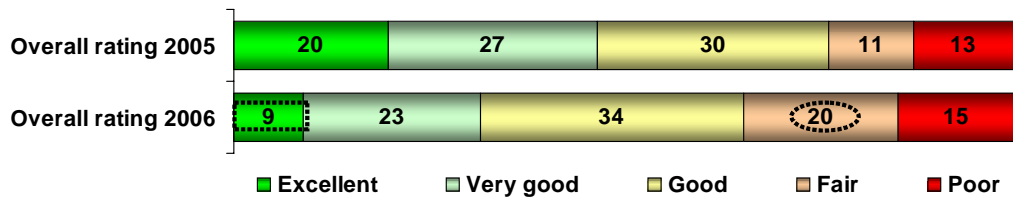
Overall Measures

Two overall measures of performance were included in the study and the data for these two questions is shown below for both 2006 and 2005:

Figure 13: Overall Performance Measures

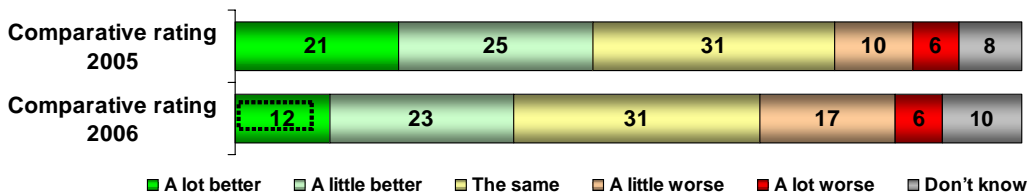
Q15. Overall Rating of Quality of Service

% Giving each response



Q17. How ICO Compare to Other Organisations

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

Overall some 65% of enquirers felt that the quality of service was good, very good or excellent, this figure being significantly lower than 2005 when 76% gave the same rating. Given the relatively positive scores seen in 2005, it is disappointing to see the drop in performance, but we are aware from discussions with the ICO that the decline reflects the fact that the service given to controllers has indeed been reduced.

When comparing the service with that received elsewhere, 35% (down from 46%) felt that the ICO delivered a better service, with 23% (up from 16%) feeling that it was worse than elsewhere. When responding to this second question it is clear that some account is being taken of the type of issues being dealt with as one might have expected lower ratings given the overall quality of service scores. The decline from 2005 mirrors the decline in the overall quality rating and it would be hoped to reverse both declines in 2006/7 or at least not slip further.

Of note was the fact that a third of those giving a rating of fair/poor still felt that the service was as good or better than that received elsewhere, indicating that there is a group of people who are either generally critical and/or have high service expectations. This is not to say that this group should be discounted, but

they should be borne in mind if performance targets are set (essentially we would not expect the ICO to reduce the 15% giving a rating of poor to 0%).

As might be expected, overall ratings tended to be more positive where the process was both simple (single email or letter) and relatively quick.

The main reasons cited for the response being rated as poor were as follows:

- ▶▶ Replies that were felt to be either vague or inconclusive, not allowing the controller to clearly see the next steps for them to take
 - ▶▶ *“We waited and waited, but it didn’t help us – it wasn’t directional”*
 - ▶▶ *“They came back to me and virtually said ‘this is what the Law says, how you interpret it is up to you”*
- ▶▶ There were some concerns (among the more informed / experienced) that the level of knowledge among the ICO staff was not as high as they would have liked
 - ▶▶ *“I sometimes think I know more than them”*
 - ▶▶ *“I’m confident I know more than them – I just need to get them to check what I’m doing but they just come back and refer me to a specific part of the legislation”*
- ▶▶ Some also felt that responses could be too simplistic and/or standard responses that did not fully address their issue

The key for controllers was to remain compliant and frustrations crept in when they felt that the response opened them up to the risk of breaching the Act.

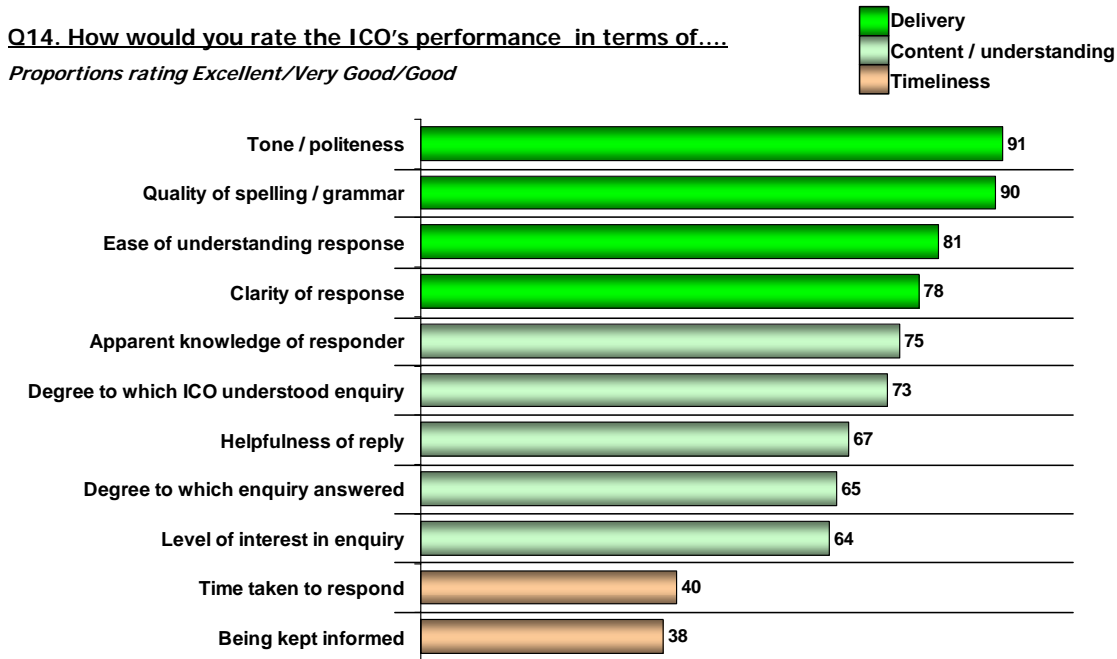
e) Detailed Service Attribute Ratings

Data controllers were asked to rate the ICO on a range of performance attributes. Figure 14 below summarises the performance scores by showing the proportions that gave a rating of good, very good or excellent for each of the attributes. The attributes are colour coded and split into three sections:

- ▶▶ Delivery – whether the response was well written and clear
- ▶▶ Content/Understanding – the extent to which the response was understood and answered by the ICO
- ▶▶ Timeliness – how long the process took and whether the enquirer was kept informed

The chart below shows the proportions giving a rating of good, very good or excellent for each of these attributes.

Figure 14: Detailed Service Attribute Ratings



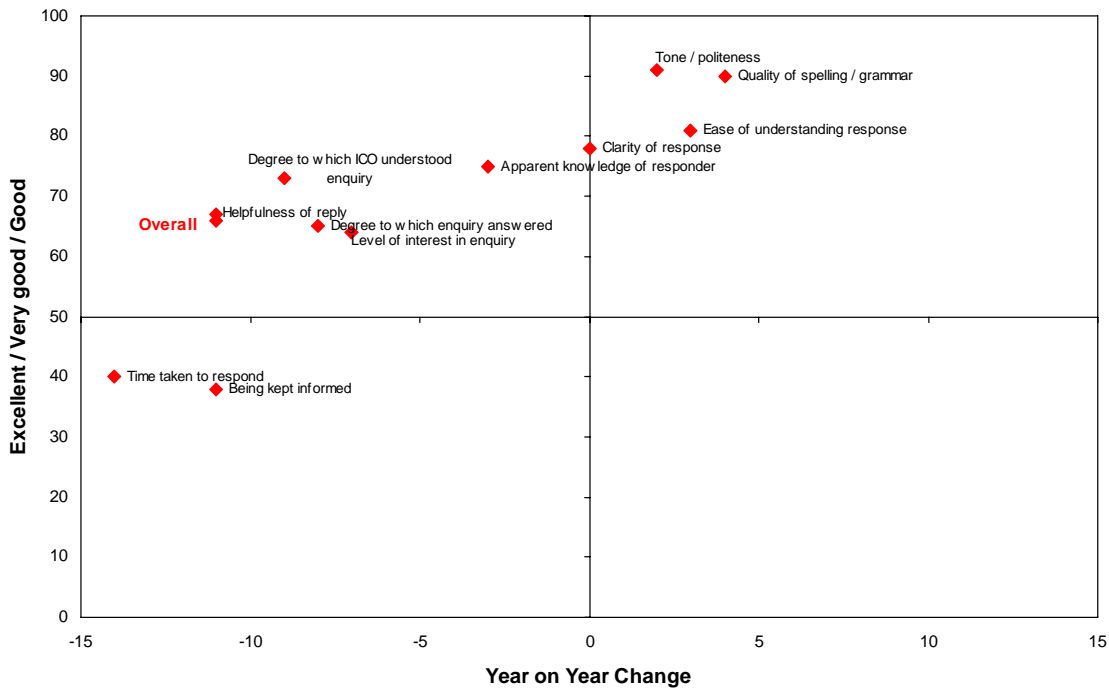
Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

The chart clearly shows wide variation in the perceived performance of the ICO with 90% or more giving a positive rating for the quality of the written response (in terms of tone and spelling/grammar), but only two-fifths giving the same rating for attributes relating to the time taken. The pattern of strong delivery, but poor timeliness is seen in the data subjects survey as well as the research among the FOI audiences, but the differential between the two aspects is greatest among this audience.

The chart below shows how each of the same attributes has changed since 2005. The position of each attribute on the chart is explained as follows:

- ▶ The position of the attribute on the vertical axis is taken from the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent, so again we see all the delivery aspects higher up on the axis.
- ▶ The position of the attribute on the horizontal axis shows how the proportion giving a rating of good, very good or excellent has changed since 2005. So, for example, the overall satisfaction measure has fallen by 11%, whereas clarity of response is unchanged.

Figure 15: Detailed Service Attribute Ratings – Performance vs. 2005



In contrast to the data subjects, the chart above shows a more negative picture with a number of attributes falling significantly over the last year and no attributes showing a significant improvement. The fall in the overall rating of service quality (down 11%) is mirrored by falls in a number of key attributes, most notably time taken to respond (down 14%) and helpfulness of reply (down 11%).

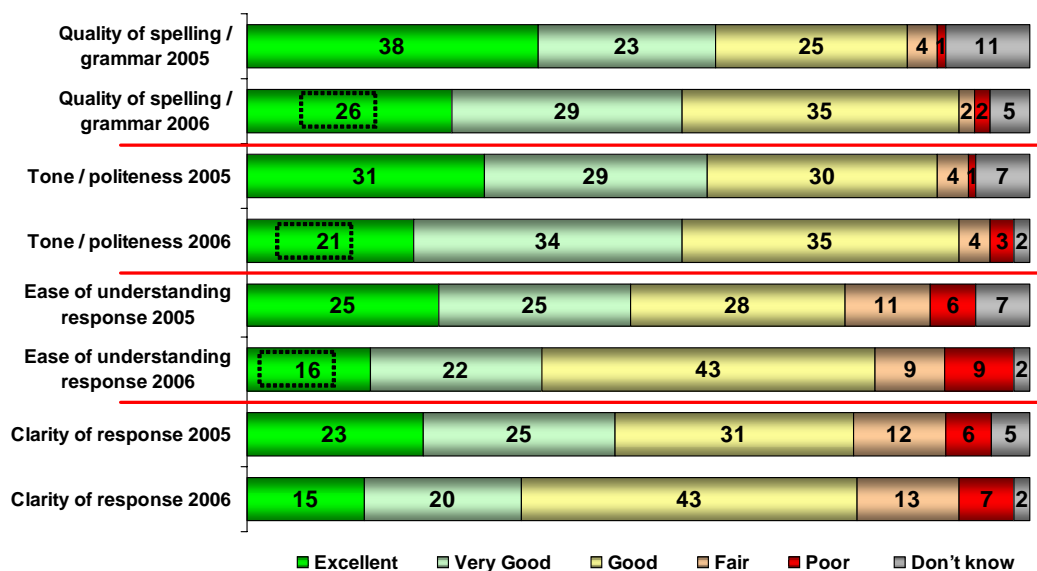
Delivery

The chart below shows the ratings for the four variables included under this heading, with both 2006 and 2005 data being included:

Figure 16: Rating of Delivery Attributes

Q14. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of...

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

While the proportions giving ratings of good, very good or excellent remained broadly stable, it is evident that significantly fewer data controllers gave one of the top two ratings of very good or excellent in relation to ease of understanding and clarity of response. Given the falls in perceived performance in other areas of service, we would not necessarily interpret the above as an absolute decline in performance, but more of a knock-on caused by the decline in aspects such as the helpfulness of the reply and the time taken to deal with the enquiry.

In the follow-up interviews, it was again made clear by data controllers (as it was in 2005) that issues such as quality of spelling/grammar and tone/politeness are less important to enquirers than getting a satisfactory response, but they are areas where the ICO is expected to perform to a high standard.

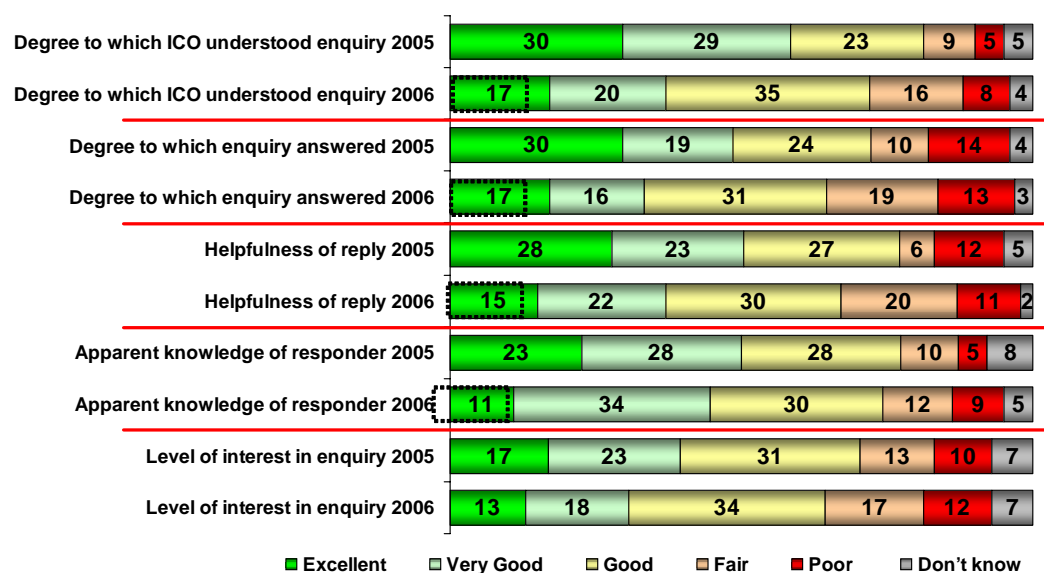
Content / Understanding

The chart below shows the ratings for the five variables included under this heading, with both the 2006 and 2005 data being included:

Figure 17: Rating of Content/Understanding Attributes

Q14. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of....

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

As detailed earlier, the performance ratings in this area experienced a decline in comparison to the 2005 data, with there being notable falls for:

- ▶ Helpfulness of reply – the proportion rating good, very good or excellent fell by 11% and within that the proportion giving a rating of very good or excellent fell by 14%
- ▶ Degree to which the enquiry was answered – the proportion rating good, very good or excellent fell by 8% and within that the proportion giving a rating of very good or excellent fell by 16%

As noted earlier, enquirers wanted to remain compliant and needed to have trust and confidence in what they had been told. Frustrations and criticisms crept in when:

- ▶ Responses were seen to be either vague or incomplete
- ▶ The response simply referred to parts of the Act, when the purpose of the enquiry was to get interpretation on the Act (although reference to guidance notes was often appreciated)

Part of the frustration was often driven by enquirers seeing the ICO as the regulator in relation to the Act, which in turn lead them to believe that a definitive answer should be given. There were also instances

where enquirers claimed that different responses were given by the ICO to the same enquiry (although it should be noted that we do not know how these enquiries were submitted and whether the detail or emphasis on particular issues varied).

As noted earlier, enquirers were looking for the response to address their specific issues or circumstances and (ideally) give them a very clear picture as to what it is they can or can't do. We appreciate that it is not always possible for the ICO to be 100% definitive in a response and it may be worth pointing this out to enquirers in order that they do not see the response as incomplete.

Timeliness

We saw earlier that aspects related to the time taken for a response were both the weakest area of performance and the area where the biggest declines over the last year had occurred.

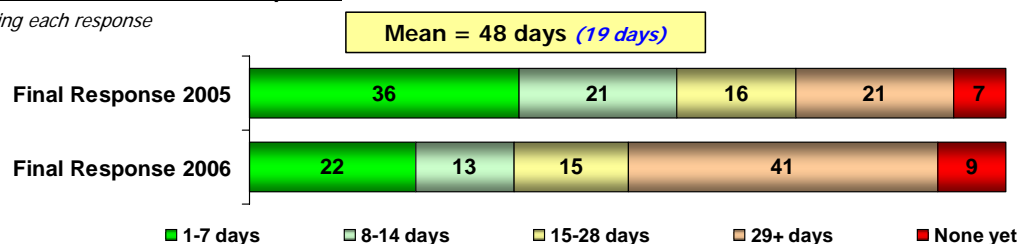
Just under half (49%) of the controllers were receiving an acknowledgment to their enquiry within 5 days, but just under a third (30%, up from 13% in 2005) were having to wait 6 or more days.

In addition to the initial acknowledgement taking longer this year, the time taken for a final response also worsened as can be seen below:

Figure 18: Time Taken To Respond to Enquiries

Q13. Time Taken for Final Response

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

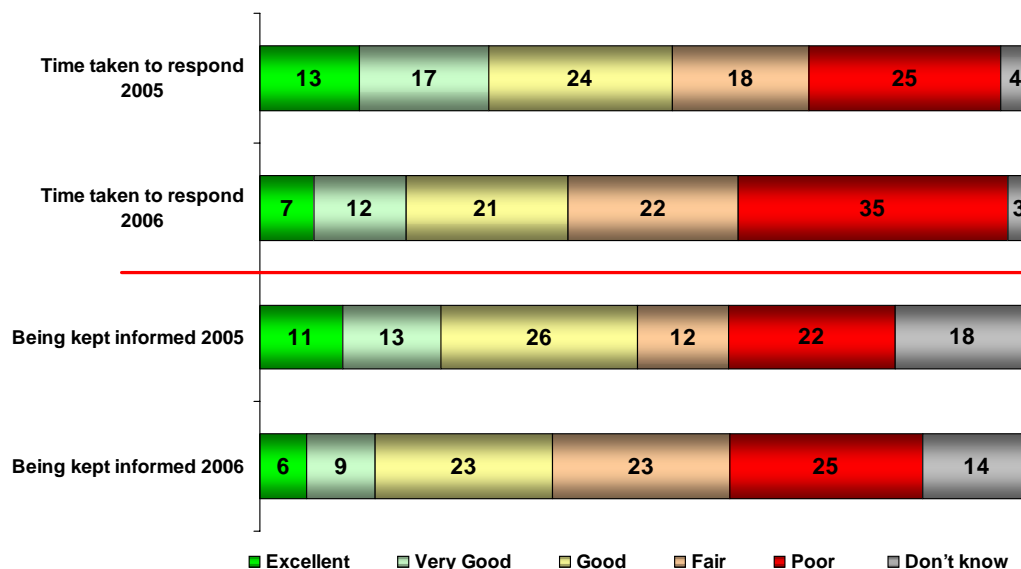
On average, responses to written enquiries were taking around seven weeks, significantly longer than the average of just under three weeks that was evident in 2005. The most notable change in the data above is that two-fifths of data controllers had to wait a month or more to get a response. While we need to exercise some caution with base sizes, the data suggested that public sector Customers had to wait longer than their private sector counterparts. One potential issue here is that some of the public sector controllers may also have been dealing with the ICO in relation to the Freedom of Information Act. A separate report shows that response times for FOI are generally longer and there may be some crossover here, but with the service to controllers having been reduced by the ICO we would suggest that the changes we are seeing are mainly Data Protection driven.

Not surprisingly given the above data, the figures below show that this area was the most poorly rated by enquirers:

Figure 19: Rating of Timeliness Attributes

Q14. How would you rate the ICO's performance in terms of....

% Giving each response



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

The chart above shows that over a third of data controllers (35%) gave a rating of poor in relation to the time taken to respond, this being 10% higher than seen in 2005. As noted earlier, this reflects changes made by the ICO over the last year when service levels given to this audience were reduced in order to focus on other audiences/issues. Clearly a decision needs to be made as to whether the reduced service levels continue.

In the qualitative follow-up interviews there were some strong criticisms of the time taken, many of which centred on the need of the controllers to respond quickly themselves to issues they were dealing with. Below is a selection of the comments made by data controllers:

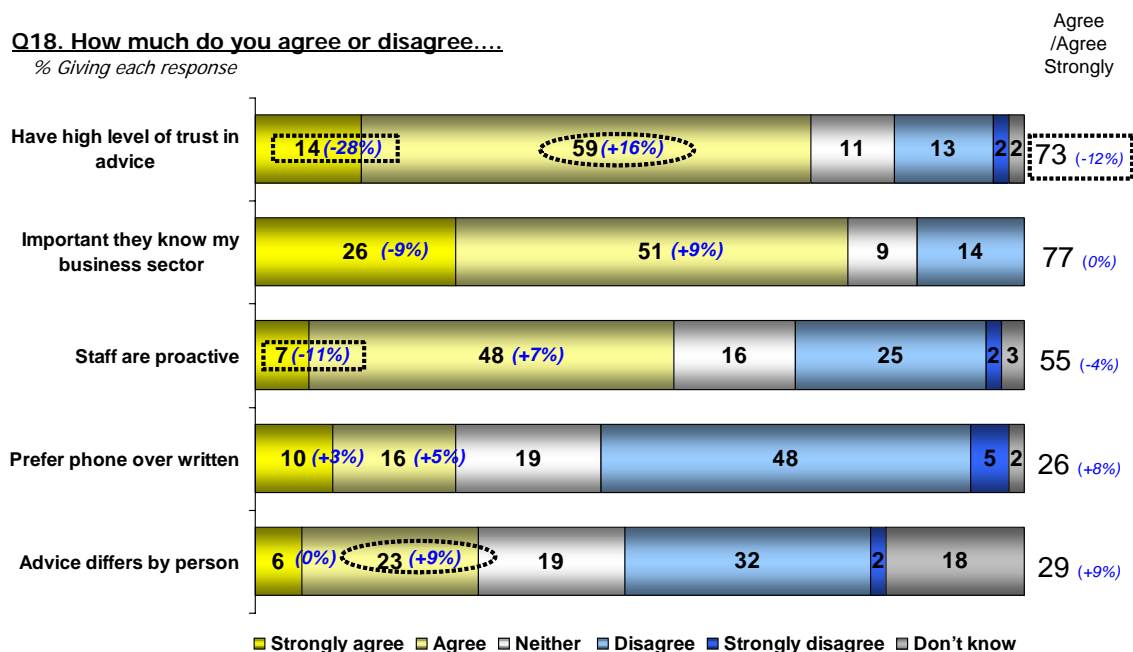
- ▶▶ *“Private organisations would not get away with the time delay”*
- ▶▶ *“The Civil Service don’t work on the same deadlines – maybe they should incentivise them to reply more quickly”*
- ▶▶ *“One month is too long for businesses”*
- ▶▶ *“2 weeks is excessive for a response. I would expect it to take 3-7 days maximum”*

One of the main concerns for data controllers is that without a timely response from the ICO, they were left in a position of having to make a decision “blind” which may lead them into being non-compliant.

f) Attitudes Towards the ICO

At the end of the interview a number of attitudinal questions were asked of enquirers, the results of which are shown below for 2006, with the change in the proportion agreeing shown in parentheses on the right.

Figure 20: Attitudes towards the ICO



Base: Total Sample (n = 128)

Where figures do not add up exactly to the total, this is due to rounding.

While a relatively high proportion (73%) had a high level of trust in the advice they were given, there was a significant drop compared to last year, this drop mirroring declines seen earlier for aspects such as the helpfulness of the advice and the degree to which enquiries were answered. This is certainly an area that needs addressing as we know that data controllers are an important audience, particularly those that work closely with the ICO on interpreting the Act, building a better understanding of how it applies to a variety of situations. A further concern in this area is the increase in the proportion of data controllers that claim that advice differs by person, this rising from 20% to 29%.

As we saw in 2005, a high proportion felt that it was important that staff at the ICO knew about their business sector as this gave them a greater level of confidence in the responses they received.

The data also shows that, while still at a low level, there was an increase in the proportion that preferred phone contact over written contact. This increase may be as a result of the increase in the time taken to receive a response to their enquiry i.e. they feel that they would get a quicker response by phone.



APPENDICES

Quantitative questionnaires

Qualitative discussion guides



JIGSAW RESEARCH LIMITED

13-14 Margaret Street, London, W1W 8RN

Tel: 020 7291 0810

September 10, 2009

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Quantitative Questionnaire

DATA PROTECTION / DATA SUBJECTS

99027

Interviewer Name: _____ I.D. No. _____

Respondent Name: _____

Respondent Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone No: _____

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION

I declare that this interview has been conducted strictly in accordance with your specifications within the MRS Code of Conduct and with a person totally unknown to me.

Signed (**INTERVIEWER**): _____ Date _____

CATEGORY (TO BE TAKEN FROM THE SAMPLE) – QUOTA TO BE SET

Request for assessment	1
General Enquiries	2
Electronic Communications	3
Compliance request	4

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is _____, calling on behalf of Jigsaw Research, an independent market research agency based in London. We have been given your contact details by the Information Commissioner’s Office who I believe wrote to you recently in relation to a research study we are conducting on their behalf. We have been asked to carry out a short interview regarding the service levels they provide to the public in relation to dealing with complaints or enquiries that involve the Data Protection Act. Could I ask you a few questions?

IF YES, CONTINUE

IF NO, ARRANGE A TIME FOR CALLBACK IF POSSIBLE

S1 Firstly, can I just confirm that you have had some contact with the Information Commissioner’s Office in the last three months in relation to a Data Protection Issue?

NOTE: IF RESPONDENT UNSURE, EXPLAIN THAT THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE IS THE GOVERNMENT BODY THAT DEALS WITH THE DATA PROTECTION ACT

- Yes have had contact 1 CONTINUE
- No have not had contact 2 CLOSE

SAY: Throughout the interview I would like you to give your answers in relation to the **service** provided by the Information Commissioner’s Office rather than the outcome of the complaint or enquiry or the Data Protection Act itself.

I would also like to stress that all answers should be given in relation to contact that you have had in the last 3 months that relate to enquiries or complaints you have submitted either by email, letter or fax or by using a form.



MAIN

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF ENQUIRY(IES)
--

ASK ALL

Q1a. Firstly, has your recent contact with the Information Commissioner's Office been to find out information or has it been in relation to a complaint or complaints you were making? **SINGLE CODE**

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Information | 1 |
| Complaint | 2 |
| Both | 3 |
| Neither..... | 4 |
| Don't know | 5 |
| Refused..... | 6 |

ASK Q1b IF COMPLAINT OR BOTH (CODES 2 OR 3) AT Q1a

Q1b. And who have you needed to make a complaint about? **CODE AS MANY AS APPLY**

- | | |
|--|---|
| Employer | 1 |
| Bank or financial institution | 2 |
| Credit scoring or credit reference agency..... | 3 |
| Government department (Inland Revenue, Dept for Work and Pensions, HM Customs, etc.) | 4 |
| Health sector (local health authority, hospital, G.P., Doctor, Dentist, clinic, etc) | 5 |
| Police, courts, prison service, probation service, etc..... | 6 |
| Education sector (local education authority, school, University, college)..... | 7 |
| Local authority, local council | 8 |
| Commercial company | 9 |
| Charity | 0 |
| Club, organisation or membership body | 1 |
| Other (WRITE IN)..... | 2 |
| <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> | |
| Don't know | 1 |
| Refused..... | 2 |

NOTE TO SCRIPTWRITER – FOR THE REST OF THE INTERVIEW WE WILL NEED TO TAILOR THE QUESTIONS BASED ON WHETHER THE RESPONDENT WAS MAKING AN ENQUIRY, A COMPLAINT OR BOTH. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE TAKEN FROM Q1a AND WE WILL NEED TO INSERT TEXT IN SUBSEQUENT QUESTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

Q1c. Was your recent contact with the Information Commissioner’s Office on your own behalf or on behalf of someone else? **SINGLE CODE.**

- Own behalf 1
- On behalf of someone else 2
- Both 3

- Don't know 4
- Refused 5

IF ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE OR BOTH (CODES 2 OR 3) AT Q1c ASK Q1d

Q1d. And who was the contact on behalf of? **CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

- Family member 1
- Friend 2
- Other (e.g. someone they look after, someone attending a group or class they run, etc) **WRITE IN ANSWER GIVEN**..... 3
- _____

- Don't know 4
- Refused 5

ASK ALL

Q2. Can you **briefly** describe what the written _____ [INSERT enquiry or enquiries / complaint or complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) you have submitted to the Information Commissioner’s Office in the last 3 months have been about.

INTERVIEWER – TYPE IN ANSWER VERBATIM AND GO BACK AND PRECODE AT THE END. DO NOT READ OUT.

INTERVIEWER – CODE CLOSEST RESPONSE. CODE AS MANY AS APPLY

Q2 CODE LIST

- Received unsolicited call/email/letter 1
- Enquiry about credit check / being refused financial product 2
- Issue with personal details being passed on 3
- Dispute with employer / former employer 4
- A problem with getting a copy of your personal information 5
- Your information was inaccurate..... 6
- Your information was not kept securely 7
- Wanted to know if Data Protection Act had been breached 8
- How Data Protection Act applies to specific situation 9
- Did not think that their data should be being held by a company or organisation..... 10
- Did not think the data being held on them was relevant or adequate (even though it was correct or accurate) 11
- Other 12

Q3a. And has your contact in the last 3 months been the first time you have had contact with the Information Commissioner's Office? **SINGLE CODE.**

- Yes, first ever contact..... 1
- No, have been in contact before 2
- Don't know 9

Q3b. And in the last three months, how many different _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) have you submitted to the Information Commissioner's Office? **WRITE IN NUMBER.**

_____ 1

Don't know 1

IF 2 OR MORE AT Q3b THEN ASK Q3c

Q3c. And how many of those were written _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)? **WRITE IN NUMBER.**

_____ 1

Don't know 1

RESPONDENT CLASSIFICATION FOR LATER QUESTIONS

IF RESPONDENT HAS SUBMITTED ONLY 1 ENQUIRY/COMPLAINT AT Q3b or Q3c, CLASSIFY AS 'SINGLE ENQUIRER'. OTHERWISE CLASSIFY AS MULTIPLE ENQUIRER.

ASK Q4 IF CODE 2 AT Q3a

Q4. And thinking about all of the _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) you have ever submitted, have they tended to be.....? **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- Very similar 1
- Fairly similar 2
- Fairly different or 3
- Very different types of enquiry 4
- DO NOT READ
- Don't know 5

ASK ALL. IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q5a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q5b

Q5a With regard to written _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) over the last 3 months did you typically know how to get in contact with the Information Commissioner’s Office or did you need to find out? **SINGLE CODE**

Q5b And did you already know how to get in contact with the Information Commissioner’s Office or was this something you had to find out before contacting them? **SINGLE CODE**

- Already knew..... 1
- Had to find out..... 2
- Varies/both (**ONLY FOR THOSE ANSWERING Q5a**) 3
- Don’t know/can’t remember 4

**Q6a/b ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD TO FIND OUT OR VARIES AT Q5a/b (CODE 2/3)
IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q6a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q6b**

Q6a And typically how easy was it to find out how to get in contact, would you say it was... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

Q6b How easy was it to find out how to get in contact, would you say it was.....**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- Extremely easy..... 1
- Very easy 2
- Fairly easy 3
- Not very easy 4
- Not at all easy 5
- Don’t know/can’t remember 6



ASK ALL.**IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q7a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q7b**

- Q7a Have any of your written _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) in the last 3 months involved receiving help or advice from other companies, organisations, employers or Government departments?
IF YES ASK. Who else gave you help or advice? MULTICODE
- Q7b Did your recent _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) involve receiving help or advice from any other companies, organisations, employers or Government departments?
IF YES ASK. Who else gave you help or advice? MULTICODE
- | | |
|---|---|
| No other contact/ no-one | 1 |
| Employer | 2 |
| Private / commercial company | 3 |
| Local Education Authority (LEA) | 1 |
| Department of HEALTH | 2 |
| Department for WORK AND PENSIONS | 3 |
| Department for TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI) | 4 |
| Inland Revenue | 5 |
| Customs and Excise | 6 |
| DVLA | 7 |
| Child Support Agency (CSA) | 8 |
| Other Government Department | 9 |
| Local MP | 0 |
| Local Authority/Council | X |
| Social Services..... | 1 |
| Educational establishment | 2 |
| Health organization e.g. hospital, G.P/ doctor. | 3 |
| The Police | 4 |
| The Prison Service/ probation service | 5 |
| Trade Union | 6 |
| Industry or Trade Organisation | 7 |
| Solicitor / lawyer / barrister..... | 8 |
| Consultant / adviser | 9 |
| Trading Standards Office | 1 |
| Citizen's Advice Bureau | 2 |
| Credit reference agency (e.g. Experian, Equifax)..... | 3 |
| Bank or building society | 4 |
| Other regulatory body | 1 |
| Other (WRITE IN)..... | 2 |
| Don't know/cant remember | X |
| Refused..... | V |

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q8a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q8b

- Q8a Was the Information Commissioner's Office typically the first organisation you contacted in relation to your -
_____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)?
- Q8b Was the Information Commissioner's Office the first organisation you contacted in relation to your _____
[INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 Varied (MULTIPLE ENQUIRERS ONLY) 3
 Don't know 3

IF NO OR IT VARIED, THEN ASK Q9a/b**IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q9a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q9b**

- Q9a Were they typically the last organisation you contacted?
- Q9b Were they the last organisation you contacted?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 Don't know 3

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10b

- Q10a Have any of your written _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS
APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) sent in the last 3 months also involved telephone conversations with staff at
the Information Commissioner's Office?

- Q10b Did your recent _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM
Q1a) involve any telephone conversations with staff at the Information Commissioner's Office?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 Don't know/cant remember 3

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10c. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10d

- Q10c And have any of those _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS
APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) also involved searching the Information Commissioner's Office website?

- Q10d Did your recent _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM
Q1a) involve searching the Information Commissioner's Office website?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 Don't know/cant remember 3

IF YES AT Q10c/d

- Q10e And was that suggested by someone from the Information Commissioner's Office?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 Don't know/cant remember 3

IF NO OR DON'T KNOW AT Q10e ASK Q10f

Q10f Did you visit the website before contacting the Information Commissioner's Office?

- Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't know/cant remember 3

SECTION 2 – SPECIFICS RELATING TO ENQUIRY(IES)

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION, THE QUESTION WORDING WILL BE DRIVEN BY THE CLASSIFICATION. IF THE RESPONDENT IS A MULTIPLE ENQUIRER THEN THEY WILL BE ASKED THE a) VERSION I.E. Q11a, Q12a, Q13a, ETC. THE SINGLE ENQUIRERS WILL BE ASKED THE b) VERSION OF THE QUESTION I.E. Q11b, Q12b, Q13b ETC.

ASK ALL

Q11a Typically how did you first make contact with someone at the Information Commissioner's Office?

SINGLE CODE. READ OUT IF NEEDED.Q11b How did you first make contact with someone at the Information Commissioner's Office? **SINGLE CODE. READ OUT IF NEEDED.**

- Email 1
 By post (letter or form) 2
 Phone 3
 Fax 4
DO NOT READ OUT
 Don't know/can't remember 4

IF PHONE AT Q11a/Q11bASK Q12a/Q12b

Q12a And when you submit _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) in writing, do you tend to send them by email, by post or by fax? **SINGLE CODE**

Q12b And when you submitted your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)in writing, did you do this by email, by post or by fax? **SINGLE CODE**

- Email 1
 Post (letter or form) 2
 Fax 3
DO NOT READ OUT
 Don't know/can't remember 4

ASK ALL

Q13a Typically how many separate pieces of written correspondence did you send in relation to each individual _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)?

Q13b How many separate pieces of written correspondence did you send in relation to this recent - _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)?

--	--

Don't know/can't remember 1

ASK Q13c IF 2 OR MORE AT Q13a OR Q13b

Q13c Why did you need to send in more than one piece of written correspondence? **INTERVIEWER - TYPE IN ANSWER VERBATIM AND GO BACK AND PRECODE AT THE END. DO NOT READ OUT.**

CODE LIST FOR Q13c

- They needed me to supply more information 1
- They needed me to fill in a form (for further details) 2
- I needed more information from them / response lead to new questions I needed answers to 3
- Response not complete 4
- Did not understand response 5
- Disagreed with response 6
- Response was taking too long / chased them to see what was happening 7
- Don't know / cant remember X



--

ASK ALL

Q14a And typically how quickly did you get an initial acknowledgement of any written _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)? **CODE CLOSEST ANSWER. SINGLE CODE**

Q14b Did you receive an initial acknowledgement of your written _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)? **IF YES, ASK** How long did it take to get the acknowledgement? **CODE CLOSEST ANSWER. SINGLE CODE**

- Within 24 hours 1
- Within 48 hours 2
- Between 2 and 5 days 3
- Longer than 5 days 4
- Never receive(d) one 5
- Don't Know (DO NOT READ OUT)..... 6

Q15a And on average, how long did it take from start to finish to get answers to your written _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)? **WRITE IN**

Q15b. From start to finish, how long did it take to answer your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)? **WRITE IN**

Months	Weeks	Days

- Enquiry not resolved (FOR Q15b ONLY) 1**
- Don't know 2

IF NOT RESOLVED AT Q15b, ASK Q15c. OTHERS TO Q15d

Q15c. How long ago did you submit the _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) to the Information Commissioner's Office? **WRITE IN**

Months	Weeks	Days

- Don't know 1

ASK ALL

Q15d Given the nature of your _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a), what do you think is a reasonable amount of time for the Information Commissioner’s Office to take to give you a response? **WRITE IN**

Months	Weeks	Days

RESPONDENT TO ANSWER EITHER Q16a IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER OR Q16b IF SINGLE ENQUIRER

Q16a. I’d now like you to think about the emails and letters you have received back from the Information Commissioner’s Office in relation to your _____ [INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) in the last 3 months. I’m going to read out a number of aspects to do with the replies and as I read each one I’d like you to tell me whether you think the performance of the Information Commissioner’s Office has generally been Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair or Poor. **SINGLE CODE**

So firstly how would you rate.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** And how would you rate.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor Don't Know

- The degree to which they understood your _____ (INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The clarity of the responses..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- Ease of understanding of the responses 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The degree to which the replies answered your _____ (INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- Overall helpfulness of replies..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- Apparent level of knowledge of the people who replied to you 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The tone and politeness of the responses..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The quality of spelling and grammar..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The time it took to provide responses to your _____ (INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The level of interest shown in your _____ (INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
- The extent to which you were kept informed about the progress of your _____ (INSERT enquiries / complaints / enquiries or complaints AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a)..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6

Q16b. I'd now like you to think about the emails and letters you have received back from the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to your most recent written _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a). I'm going to read out a number of aspects to do with the replies and as I read each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think the performance of the Information Commissioner's Office was Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair or Poor. SINGLE CODE

So firstly how would you rate.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** And how would you rate.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor Don't Know

- The degree to which they understood your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The clarity of the response..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- Ease of understanding of the response 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The degree to which the reply answered your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- Overall helpfulness of reply..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- Apparent level of knowledge of the person who replied to you 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The tone and politeness of the response..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The quality of spelling and grammar..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The time it took to provide a response to your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The level of interest shown in your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6
- The extent to which you were kept informed about the progress of your _____ [INSERT enquiry / complaint / enquiry or complaint AS APPROPRIATE FROM Q1a) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6



ASK ALL

Q17a. Overall, how would you rate the quality of service provided to you by the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to enquiries or complaints submitted in writing?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

- Excellent..... 1
- Very Good 2
- Good..... 3
- Fair 4
- Poor..... 5
- Don't Know (DO NOT READ OUT)..... 6

ASK ALL

Q17b. And how would you compare the quality of service provided by the Information Commissioner's Office with that of other organisations you have dealt with generally. Would you say their service is.... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- A lot better 1
- A little better 2
- About the same 3
- A little worse 4
- A lot worse 5
- DO NOT READ**
- Refused..... 6
- Don't know 7

Q18. I'd like to read out some statements that people have made about dealing with the Information Commissioner's Office. For each one, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with that statement.

So firstly how much do you agree or disagree.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** Do you ... **READ SCALE**

And what about.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
You often get different advice from different people	1	2	3	4	5	6
The staff are efficient in dealing with enquiries and complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6
I have a high level of trust in their advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
They do a good job in protecting the public's privacy	1	2	3	4	5	6
I would much prefer to deal with Information Commissioner's Office over the phone rather than in writing	1	2	3	4	5	6
The advice I received was fair and impartial	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q19 While we have focused on the service provided by the Information Commissioner's Office, how satisfied were you with the actual outcome of your recent enquiries or complaints, were you....

READ OUT

Very satisfied.....	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Not very satisfied.....	3
Not at all satisfied.....	4
Don't Know (DO NOT READ OUT).....	6

SAY: Finally I would just like to ask you a few questions about yourself. These are purely to help us in our analysis:

P1. GENDER (DO NOT ASK, CODE AS APPROPRIATE)

Male	1
Female	2

P2. Which of the following age bands are you in?

29 or under	1
30-39	2
40-49	3
50-59	4
60 or over	5
DO NOT READ	
Refused.....	6

P3. And are you.....READ OUT?

Employed full time (30+ hours per week)	1
Employed part time (8-29 hours per week).....	2
Self employed	3
Retired.....	4
Student.....	5
Homemaker.....	6
Non-working	7
DO NOT READ	
Refused.....	8

P4. And what is the occupation of the main income earner in the household? WRITE IN. PROBE FULLY AND CODE SOCIAL GRADE AS APPROPRIATE.

- AB..... 1
- C1..... 2
- C2..... 3
- DE 4

P5 Are you registered disabled?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don't know / refused 3

P6 Are you from an ethnic minority

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don't know / refused 3



P7 We may be conducting some follow-up work in the near future. If the work goes ahead, would you be willing to be re-contacted.

Yes 1
No..... 2

THANK AND CLOSE



That's the end of the interview. If there are any other comments you would like to make about the service provided by the Information Commissioner's Office you can email the following address informationcommissioner@jigsaw-research.co.uk

I would just like to confirm that my name is.....and I have been calling on behalf of Jigsaw Research in London, and that all your responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. Should you wish to verify this information in anyway I can provide you with either the name and telephone number of the executive in charge of this project or alternatively you can call Freephone Market Research Society on 0500 396999 who will be able to confirm our status as a legitimate market research agency.

IF REQUIRES EXECUTIVE NAME AND NUMBER

Mark Yeomans on 020 7291 0810



JIGSAW RESEARCH LIMITED

13-14 Margaret Street, London W1W 8RN
Tel: 020 7291 0810 Fax: 020 7291 0811

September 10, 2009

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY Quantitative Questionnaire DATA PROTECTION / DATA CONTROLLERS 99027

Interviewer Name : _____ I.D. No. _____

Respondent Name : _____

Respondent Address : _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone No: _____

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION

I declare that this interview has been conducted strictly in accordance with your specifications within the MRS Code of Conduct and with a person totally unknown to me.

Signed (**INTERVIEWER**): _____ Date _____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is _____, calling on behalf of Jigsaw Research, an independent market research agency based in London. We have been given your contact details by the Information Commissioner's Office who I believe wrote to you recently in relation to a research study we are conducting on their behalf. We have been asked to carry out a short interview regarding the service levels they provide. Could I ask you a few questions?

IF YES, CONTINUE

IF NO, ARRANGE A TIME FOR CALLBACK IF POSSIBLE

S1 Firstly, can I just confirm that you have had some contact with the Information Commissioner's Office in the last three months in relation to a Data Protection Issue?

- Yes have had contact 1 CONTINUE
- No have not had contact 2 CLOSE

SAY: Throughout the interview I would like you to give your answers in relation to the **service** provided in responding to your enquiry or enquiries rather than the Data Protection Act itself. I would also like to stress that all answers should be given in relation to contact that you have had in the last 3 months that relates to enquiries you have submitted either by email or by letter.



MAIN

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF ENQUIRY(IES)
--

Q1a. Firstly, are you working for... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| A public sector organisation (e.g. Government, local council, hospital) | 1 ASK Q1b |
| A private sector or commercial company..... | 2 ASK Q1d |
| Some other form of organisation or not for profit company | 3 ASK Q1c |
| DO NOT READ | |
| Don't know | 4 SKIP TO Q2 |
| Refused..... | 5 SKIP TO Q2 |

Q1b FOR PUBLIC SECTOR ONLY (CODE 1 AT Q1a)

Q1b. And more specifically who do you work for? **DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE AS APPROPRIATE.**

- | | |
|---|---|
| Government Department (e.g. Department of Health, Inland Revenue, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), etc) | 1 |
| Council (e.g. County council, town council, local borough council, etc) | 2 |
| Police, courts, probation service or other crime related establishment..... | 3 |
| School, college, university or other educational establishment | 4 |
| Doctor, dentist, hospital or other health/medical establishment | 5 |
| Other (WRITE IN)..... | 6 |
| <hr/> | |
| Don't know | X |
| Refused..... | V |

SKIP TO Q2

Q1c FOR OTHER SECTOR (CODE 3 AT Q1a)

Q1c. And more specifically what type of organisation do you work for? **DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE AS APPROPRIATE.**

- | | |
|--|---|
| Charity..... | 1 |
| Membership organisation / trade body / industry body | 2 |
| Other (WRITE IN)..... | 3 |
| <hr/> | |
| Don't know | X |
| Refused..... | V |

SKIP TO Q2

Q1d. And more specifically what is the company’s main line of business?

WRITE IN AND CODE

MANUFACTURING ETC.

Agriculture/forestry/fishing 1
 Manufacturing/mining/quarrying..... 2
 Energy and water 3
 Construction (including trades)..... 4

RETAIL/WHOLESALE/DISTRIBUTION/ETC

Retail/wholesale/repairs 5
 Hotels/restaurants/leisure 6
 Transport/distribution/storage and communications 7

SERVICES

Financial, estate agency, renting, other business services 8
 Education/health and other services 9
 Solicitor, lawyer, barrister..... 0

DON'T KNOW 1
 REFUSED 2

Q2. Can you **briefly** describe what the email or letter enquiry or enquiries you have submitted to the Information Commissioner’s Office in the last 3 months have been about.

INTERVIEWER – TYPE IN ANSWER VERBATIM AND GO BACK AND PRECODE AT THE END. DO NOT READ OUT.



Q2 CODE LIST

Notifying the Information Commissioner’s Office
 about the use of (personal) data 1
 Advice on what need to tell customers/clients/users about
 data that is being held 2
 How to respond to someone who wants access to their personal
 data that the respondent holds 3
 Whether able to release or transfer data to a third party 4
 Whether Data Protection Act has been breached 5
 What need to take into account in relation to new system
 or procedure 6
 How Data Protection Act applies to specific situation..... 7
 OTHER..... 8

Q3a. On average, how frequently do you contact the Information Commissioner’s Office with specific enquiries, either written or by phone? **CODE CLOSEST. SINGLE CODE.**

- Recent contact was first ever contact 1
- Once a week or more..... 2
- Once every fortnight..... 3
- Once a month..... 4
- Once every 2 or 3 months (4-6 times a year) 5
- Once every 4 – 6 months (2-3 times a year) 6
- Once a year 7
- Less than once a year..... 8
- Don't know 9

IF CODES 2-9 AT Q3a, THEN ASK Q3b/Q3c

Q3b. And in the last three months, how many different enquiries have you submitted to the Information Commissioner’s Office? **WRITE IN NUMBER.**

Don't know 1

IF 2 OR MORE AT Q3b THEN ASK Q3c

Q3c. And how many of those were written enquiries sent in either by email or by letter? **WRITE IN NUMBER.**

Don't know 1

RESPONDENT CLASSIFICATION FOR LATER QUESTIONS

IF RESPONDENT IS CODE 1 AT Q3a OR HAS SUBMITTED ONLY 1 ENQUIRY AT Q3b OR Q3c, CLASSIFY AS ‘SINGLE ENQUIRER’

IF RESPONDENT HAS SUBMITTED 2 OR MORE ENQUIRIES AT Q3c, CLASSIFY AS ‘MULTIPLE ENQUIRY’ (ALSO CLASSIFY ‘DON’T KNOW’ RESPONDENTS AS MULTIPLE ENQUIRER, SO THAT ALL RESPONDENTS ARE CLASSIFIED)

ASK Q4 IF CODES 2-6 AT Q3a

Q4. And when you email or write to the Information Commissioner's Office with an enquiry, do the enquiries tend to be.....? **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- Very similar 1
- Fairly similar 2
- Fairly different or 3
- Very different types of enquiry 4
- DO NOT READ
- Don't know 5

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q5a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q5b

Q5a With regard to email or letter enquiries sent in the last 3 months did you typically know who to get in contact with at the Information Commissioner's Office or did you need to find out who was the most appropriate person? **SINGLE CODE**

Q5b And did you already know how to get in contact with the Information Commissioner's Office or was this something you had to find out before contacting them? **SINGLE CODE**

- Already knew..... 1
- Had to find out..... 2
- Varies/both (**ONLY FOR THOSE ANSWERING Q5a**) 3
- Don't know/can't remember 5

Q6a/b ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD TO FIND OUT OR VARIES AT Q5a/b (CODE 2/3)**IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q6a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q6b**

Q6a And typically how easy was it to find out who to contact, would you say it was... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

Q6b How easy was it to find out who to contact, would you say it was.....**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- Extremely easy..... 1
- Very easy 2
- Fairly easy 3
- Not very easy 4
- Not at all easy 5
- Don't know/can't remember 6

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q7a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q7b

Q7a Have any of your letter or email enquiries sent in the last 3 months involved contact with any other organisations or Government departments?
 IF YES ASK. Which other organisations or Government Departments have you been in contact with?
 MULTICODE

Q7b Did your recent enquiry involve contact with any other organisations or Government departments?
 IF YES ASK. Which other organisations or Government Departments were you in contact with?
 MULTICODE

NO	0
YES...	
Local Education Authority (LEA)	1
Department of HEALTH	2
Department for WORK AND PENSIONS	3
Department for TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI)	4
Inland Revenue	5
Customs and Excise	6
Other Government Department	7
Local MP	8
Local Authority/Council	9
Social Services.....	0
The Police	1
Trade Union	2
Industry or Trade Organisation	3
Solicitor / lawyer / barrister.....	4
Consultant / adviser	5
Other (WRITE IN).....	6
<hr/>	
Don't know/cant remember	X
Refused.....	V



IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q8a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q8b

Q8a Was the Information Commissioner’s Office typically the first organisation you contacted in relation to your enquiries?

Q8b Was the Information Commissioner’s Office the first organisation you contacted in relation to your enquiry?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Varied (MULTIPLE ENQUIRERS ONLY) 3
- Don’t know 3

IF NO OR IT VARIED, THEN ASK Q9a/b

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q9a. IF SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q9b

Q9a Were they typically the last organisation you contacted?

Q9b Were they the last organisation you contacted?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don’t know 3

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10a. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10b

Q10a Have any of your letter or email enquiries sent in the last 3 months also involved telephone conversations with staff at the Information Commissioner’s Office?

Q10b Did your recent enquiry involve any telephone conversations with staff at the Information Commissioner’s Office?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don’t know/cant remember 3

IF MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10c. if SINGLE ENQUIRER ASK Q10d

Q10c And have any of those enquiries also involved searching the Information Commissioner’s Office website?

Q10d Did your recent enquiry involve searching the Information Commissioner’s Office website?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don’t know/cant remember 3

IF YES AT Q10c/d ASK Q10e

Q10e And was that suggested by someone from the Information Commissioner’s Office?

- Yes 1
- No..... 2
- Don’t know/cant remember 3

IF NO OR DON'T KNOW AT Q10e ASK Q10f

Q10f Did you visit the website before contacting the Information Commissioner's Office?

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Don't know/cant remember 3

SECTION 2 – SPECIFICS RELATING TO ENQUIRY(IES)

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION, THE QUESTION WORDING WILL BE DRIVEN BY THE CLASSIFICATION. IF THE RESPONDENT IS A MULTIPLE ENQUIRER THEN THEY WILL BE ASKED THE a) VERSION I.E. Q11a, Q12a, Q13a, ETC. THE SINGLE ENQUIRERS WILL BE ASKED THE b) VERSION OF THE QUESTION I.E. Q11b, Q12b, Q13b ETC.

INTRO FOR MULTIPLE ENQUIRERS

SAY: I would now like to ask you about the responses you have had to written enquiries in the last 3 months.

INTRO FOR SINGLE ENQUIRERS

SAY: I would now like to ask you about the responses you have had to your recent written enquiry.

Q11a Typically how many separate emails or letters did you send in relation to each individual enquiry?

Q11b How many separate emails or letters did you send in relation to this recent enquiry?

--	--

Don't know/can't remember 1

Q12a And typically how quickly did you get an initial acknowledgement of your enquiry? **CODE CLOSEST ANSWER. SINGLE CODE**

Q12b Did you receive an initial acknowledgement of your enquiry? **IF YES, ASK** How long did it take to get the acknowledgement? **CODE CLOSEST ANSWER. SINGLE CODE**

- Within 24 hours 1
- Within 48 hours 2
- Between 2 and 5 days 3
- Longer than 5 days 4
- Never receive(d) one 5
- Don't Know (DO NOT READ OUT)..... 6

Q13a And on average, how long did it take from start to finish to get answers to your written enquiries?

Q13b. From start to finish, how long did it take to answer your enquiry? **WRITE IN**

Months	Weeks	Days

Enquiry not resolved (FOR Q13b ONLY) 1
 Don't know

IF NOT RESOLVED AT Q13b, ASK Q13c. OTHERS TO Q14

Q13c. How long ago did you send the enquiry to the Information Commissioner's Office? **WRITE IN**

Months	Weeks	Days

Don't know 1

Q14a. I'd now like you to think about the emails and letters you have received back from the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to your written enquiries in the last 3 months. I'm going to read out a number of aspects to do with the replies and as I read each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think the performance of the Information Commissioner's Office has generally been Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair or Poor. **SINGLE CODE**

So firstly how would you rate.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** And how would you rate.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
The degree to which they understood your enquiries.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The clarity of the responses.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ease of understanding of the responses	1	2	3	4	5	6
The degree to which the replies answered your enquiries	1	2	3	4	5	6
Overall helpfulness of replies.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Apparent level of knowledge of the people who replied to you	1	2	3	4	5	6
The tone and politeness of the responses.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The quality of spelling and grammar.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The time it took to provide responses to your enquiries	1	2	3	4	5	6
The level of interest shown in your enquiries.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The extent to which you were kept informed about the progress of your enquiries.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q14b. I'd now like you to think about the emails and letters you have received back from the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to your most recent written enquiry. I'm going to read out a number of aspects to do with the replies and as I read each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think the performance of the Information Commissioner's Office was Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair or Poor.
SINGLE CODE

So firstly how would you rate.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** And how would you rate.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
The degree to which they understood your enquiry	1	2	3	4	5	6
The clarity of the response.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ease of understanding of the response	1	2	3	4	5	6
The degree to which the reply answered your enquiry.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Overall helpfulness of reply.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Apparent level of knowledge of the person who replied to you	1	2	3	4	5	6
The tone and politeness of the response.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The quality of spelling and grammar of the email.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The time it took to provide a response to your enquiry.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The level of interest shown in your enquiry	1	2	3	4	5	6
The extent to which you were kept informed about the progress of your enquiry	1	2	3	4	5	6

ASK ALL

Q15. Overall, how would you rate the quality of service provided to you by the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to enquiries submitted by email or letter?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Excellent.....	1
Very Good	2
Good.....	3
Fair	4
Poor.....	5
Don't Know (DO NOT READ OUT).....	6

IF RESPONDENT IS MULTIPLE ENQUIRER ASK Q16, OTHERS TO Q17

Q16. And in comparison to a year ago, would you say their quality of service is.... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

A lot better	1
A little better	2
About the same	3
A little worse	4
A lot worse	5
DO NOT READ	
Refused.....	6
Don't know	7

ASK ALL

Q17. And how would you compare the quality of service provided by the Information Commissioner's Office with that of other organisations you have dealt with generally. Would you say their service is.... **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- A lot better 1
- A little better 2
- About the same 3
- A little worse 4
- A lot worse 5
- DO NOT READ**
- Refused 6
- Don't know 7

Q18. I'd like to read out some statements that people have made about dealing with the Information Commissioner's Office. For each one, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with that statement.

So firstly how much do you agree or disagree.....**READ OUT FIRST STATEMENT.** Do you ... **READ SCALE**

And what about.... **READ OUT OTHER STATEMENTS**

RANDOMISE ORDER

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
You often get different advice from different people	1	2	3	4	5	6
The staff are proactive in dealing with enquiries	1	2	3	4	5	6
I have a high level of trust in their advice	1	2	3	4	5	6
It's important to deal with people who know about the type of organisation I work for	1	2	3	4	5	6
I would much prefer to get advice over the phone than by letter or email	1	2	3	4	5	6

That's the end of the interview. If there are any other comments you would like to make about the service provided by the Information Commissioner's Office you can email the following address informationcommissioner@jigsaw-research.co.uk

I would just like to confirm that my name is.....and I have been calling on behalf of Jigsaw Research in London, and that all your responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. Should you wish to verify this information in anyway I can provide you with either the name and telephone number of the executive in charge of this project or alternatively you can call Freephone Market Research Society on 0500 396999 who will be able to confirm our status as a legitimate market research agency.

IF REQUIRES EXECUTIVE NAME AND NUMBER

Mark Yeomans on 020 7291 0810

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

DATA SUBJECTS

IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

JIGSAW RESEARCH 99027

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this section is to set the scene for the interview, gaining an understanding of who the respondent is and why they were in contact with the ICO.

- Explain purpose of research
- Explain Jigsaw acting on behalf of ICO (may even need to explain that contractually Jigsaw are tied not to disclose or use the information for any other purpose); confidentiality/MRS code

*Stress that the purpose of the interview is to talk about service levels provided by the ICO and **not** the actual legislation and policies themselves, or the outcome of their case.*

2. NATURE OF ENQUIRY/COMPLAINT

Purpose of this section is to understand the enquiry(ies) or complaint(s) made by the respondent. This will act as a context for their expectations and experiences with the ICO. We will aim to take data from the quantitative interview in order that we have a sense of their opinions.

- Was the recent contact your first time in contact with the ICO? IF NOT How many times have you been in contact before and how long ago?
- Please can you briefly describe the nature of the most recent enquiry(ies) or complaint(s) you made to the ICO?
 - What was (were) the enquiry(ies) or complaint(s) about? Would you describe your enquiry(ies) or complaint(s) as simple or complex? Was the ICO (typically) the first/last organisation you contacted? IF OTHERS Who else were you in contact with and why?
 - NOTE – ensure we understand whether the contact was in relation to a complaint or an enquiry.
 - Was whole enquiry/complaint conducted via e-mail/letter or did you talk to the ICO over the phone and/or use their website? Ask respondent to explain the process they went through and why particular channels used.
 - Did the enquiry/complaint involve more than one piece of correspondence and/or did it involve the respondent filling out a form. IF YES, why did they need to send in more than one piece of correspondence and/or a form?

3. EXPECTATIONS PRIOR TO CONTACT

Before looking at exactly what happened, it is useful to assess expectations in order to determine whether the service received came as a surprise and whether certain aspects are out of line with experiences with other Government bodies.

- Thinking of the entire enquiry(ies) / complaint (s) from start to finish, before writing to the ICO, what were your expectations of how the enquiry(ies) / complaint(s) would be handled?
 - (Type of) Person who you thought you would get through to (for example, did they think the person dealing with their enquiry/complaint would be an expert on their issue or area of concern, did they think the person would have an influence on policy, what level of seniority/experience did they expect)?
 - How long it would take to get a) an initial response that the enquiry(ies) / complaint(s) had been received, b) a response to your enquiry(ies) / complaint(s).
 - Number of people it would take to answer enquiry(ies) / complaint(s)?
 - What sort of response you would get from them and what they would do in relation to the enquiry/complaint?
 - What did you expect you would have to do in relation to the enquiry/ complaint (provide information, fill in forms, etc)?
 - How would you describe what you expected in terms of the following:
 - Helpfulness?
 - Level of detail/knowledge in the response?
 - Clarity of the response
 - Tone of the response
 - Anything else to do with the actual person or people dealing with the enquiry(ies) / complaint(s)?

EXPERIENCE / IMPROVEMENTS

Purpose of this section is to run through recent contact. Responses would be probed fully and respondents would be asked for suggested improvements where any dissatisfaction exists.

- How did you know who and where to write to? (Did they initially contact them by phone?)
 - How easy / difficult was getting through to someone that could deal with your enquiry // complaint understood your issue(s)?
 - How, if at all, could this element be improved?
- IF IN CONTACT BY TELEPHONE How well were you dealt with over the phone? FOR ANY AREA OF DISSATISFACTION ASK What could be done to improve the response? What would you recommend they change or do?
 - Politeness of staff
 - Understanding of your situation
 - Helpfulness of staff
 - Clarity and usefulness of explanations and guidance (even if only to inform respondent how to submit enquiry)
 - Was it explained how the law could or could not help in their situation?
- How long did it take to get a written response from the ICO?
 - Was this a full reply or a reply telling you when a final reply would be sent? Were you happy with this?
- How long did it take to receive a final response from the ICO? How satisfied were you with this. What would you ideally have liked/expected?

- How would you describe the response(s) you received? FOR ANY AREA OF DISSATISFACTION ASK What could be done to improve the response? What would you recommend they change or do?
 - Tone of written response?
 - Clarity/use of abbreviations/acronyms/jargon/legal terms/ etc?
 - Spelling and grammar?
 - Whom the reply had come from?
 - How well they understood your:
 - Enquiry / complaint,
 - response requirements
 - Degree to which response answered your enquiry / complaint?
 - Ensure here that we understand exactly what they were looking for the ICO to do for them and how that relates to the response given – the ICO can only advise on the law and how it impacts their situation and so (for example) they cannot deal with poor service from a company or sort out a problem for the respondent.
 - Extent to which the response allowed you to take action
 - Perceived level of knowledge of person answering enquiry / complaint?
 - How much trust do you have in the response? Why is that?

WEBSITE (IF USED)

- How would you rate the website in terms of:
 - Content – quantity, clarity, usefulness
 - Ease of navigation

OVERALL

- Overall, how satisfied would you say you were with the whole experience? Why? How would you describe the overall level of service provided by the ICO?
- Would you recommend others in a similar situation to contact the ICO, based on the service they provide to customers?
- How would you compare it to other organisations you deal with, either public or private sector? Is this a valid comparison to make? Why? Why not?

- Do you now consider your most recent enquiry / complaint resolved as far as possible by the ICO? Why? Why not?
- What suggestions would you make to the ICO in order to help them improve the service they provide to people like yourself? Anything else?



Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

JIGSAW RESEARCH 99027

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this section is to set the scene for the interview, gaining an understanding of who the respondent is and why they were in contact with the ICO both recently and in general (if regular contact is part of their job).

- Purpose of research
- Confidentiality/MRS code
- Detail of occupation or role in relation to contact with ICO.

*Stress that the purpose of the interview is to talk about service levels provided by the ICO and **not** the actual legislation and policies themselves.*

2. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ICO/NATURE OF ENQUIRY

Purpose of this section is to understand the most recent and other enquiries made by the respondent. This will act as a context for their expectations and experiences with the ICO. We will aim to take data from the quantitative interview in order that we have a sense of the relationship, but the aim here is to build a more detailed picture of the nature of that relationship.

- How frequently do you contact the ICO generally with specific queries? Was the most recent contact your first time?
- Please can you briefly describe the nature of the most recent enquiry(ies) you made to the ICO?
 - What was (were) the enquiry(ies) about? Would you describe your enquiry(ies) as simple or complex? Was the ICO (typically) the first/last organisation you contacted? IF OTHERS Who else were you in contact with and why?
 - IF REGULAR ENQUIRER Is this typical of the type of enquiries you normally address to the ICO? If not, what if anything would be typical?
 - IF REGULAR ENQUIRER Do you generally contact the ICO via telephone, letter or e-mail?
 - Thinking of the last enquiry, was whole enquiry conducted via e-mail/letter or did you use a combination of contact channels?
 - Why did/do you choose e-mail/letter to contact the ICO (as opposed to telephone)?
 - IF REGULAR ENQUIRER Do you tend to talk to the same individual or small team of individuals?

3. EXPECTATIONS PRIOR TO CONTACT

Before looking at exactly what happened, it is useful to assess expectations in order to determine whether the service received came as a surprise and whether certain aspects are out of line with experiences with other Government bodies.

- Thinking of the entire enquiry(ies) from start to finish, before writing to the ICO, what were your expectations of how the enquiry(ies) would be handled? IF REGULAR ENQUIRER How did this differ from your expectations when writing to the ICO previously?
 - (Type of) Person who you thought you would get through to (for example, did you think the person dealing with your enquiry would know their sector/business, did you think the person would have an influence on policy, what level of seniority/experience did you expect)?
 - How long it would take to get a) an initial response that the enquiry(ies) had been received, b) a response to your enquiry(ies).
 - Number of people it would take to answer enquiry(ies)?
 - Whether enquiry(ies) would/could be completely answered by The ICO?
 - Did you expect very clear answers as to what to do or did you simply expect general guidance?
 - How would you describe what you expected in terms of the following:
 - Helpfulness?
 - Level of detail/knowledge in the response?
 - Clarity of the response
 - Tone of the response
 - Anything else to do with the actual person or people dealing with the enquiry(ies)?
- Did you have any dealings with other government departments prior to contacting the ICO? IF YES: Which ones and how did your experience of the ICO compare with them?

EXPERIENCE / IMPROVEMENTS

Purpose of this section is to run through recent experiences. Responses would be probed fully and respondents would be asked for suggested improvements where any dissatisfaction exists.

NOTE – QUESTIONS WILL NEED TO BE TAILORED TO DEALING WITH EITHER SINGLE OR MULTIPLE ENQUIRIES AS APPROPRIATE.

- How did you know who and where to write to? Did you initially contact them by phone?
 - How easy / difficult was getting to the right person?
 - How, if at all, could this element be improved?
- IF IN CONTACT BY TELEPHONE How well were you dealt with over the phone? FOR ANY AREA OF DISSATISFACTION ASK What could be done to improve the response? What would you recommend they change or do?
 - Politeness of staff
 - Understanding of your situation
 - Helpfulness of staff
 - Clarity and usefulness of explanations and guidance (even if only to inform respondent how to submit enquiry)
- How long did it take to get a written response from the ICO?
 - Was this a full reply or a reply telling you when a final reply would be sent? Were you happy with this?
- How long did it take to receive a final response from the ICO? How satisfied were you with this. What would you ideally have liked/expected?

- How would you describe the response(s) you received? FOR ANY AREA OF DISSATISFACTION ASK What could be done to improve the response? What would you recommend they change or do?
 - Tone of written response?
 - Clarity/use of abbreviations/acronyms/jargon/legal terms/ etc?
 - Spelling and grammar?
 - Whom the reply had come from?
 - How well they understood your:
 - enquiry,
 - situation/business sector (and does this matter to you?)
 - response requirements
 - Degree to which response answered your question(s)?
 - Extent to which the response allowed you to take action
 - Perceived level of knowledge of person answering enquiry?
 - How much trust do you have in the response? Why is that?

REGULAR ENQUIRERS

- In general how would you describe the performance of the ICO in relation to the following? FOR ANY AREA OF DISSATISFACTION ASK What could be done to improve the service? What would you recommend they change or do?
 - How consistent are they in the responses they give to you? IF VARIES How do the responses vary?
 - How would you describe the overall relationship you have with the ICO? Are they proactive, collaborative, supportive, etc?
 - How well do they understand your role and how you need to operate?

WEBSITE

- Have you used the ICO website. IF YES How would you rate the website in terms of:
 - Content – quantity, clarity, usefulness
 - Ease of navigation

OVERALL

NOTE – QUESTIONS WILL NEED TO BE TAILORED TO DEALING WITH EITHER SINGLE OR MULTIPLE ENQUIRIES AS APPROPRIATE.

- Overall, how satisfied would you say you were with the whole experience? Why? How would you describe the overall level of service provided by the ICO to enquirers?
- Would you recommend others in a similar situation to contact the ICO, based on the service they provide to customers?
- How would you compare it to other organisations you deal with, either public or private sector? Is this a valid comparison to make? Why? Why not?
- Do you now consider your most recent enquiry resolved as far as possible by the ICO? Why? Why not?
- What suggestions would you make to the ICO in order to help them improve the service they provide to enquirers like yourself? Anything else?