

2013 Environmental Body Satisfaction Survey

Overview

1. Introduction

We conduct our stakeholder satisfaction survey every year to give Environmental Bodies (EBs) an opportunity to provide us with feedback, thoughts and opinions on the quality and performance of the services we provide.

This year we made some changes to the survey to reduce its length and to ensure we were asking the right questions in the right way to show our improvements and progress. This document provides an overview of our findings from the survey.

We have also developed a report showing all of the responses in chart format and an action plan to address some of the key issues that have been fed back to us. The action plan is available on our website along with the full charts report.

2. Overview

The survey is an important tool that allows us to form an understanding, and gauge the level, of satisfaction with the quality of our services and EBs perception of our work. Following an analysis of the results, we are then able to target our resources effectively by identifying areas for improvement.

The principle aim of the survey is to gather information to help us to independently assess the level of satisfaction EBs have had with our services over the last 12 months. Following an analysis of these results, we are then able to identify any trends or areas of concern in order to be able to develop an action plan to facilitate an improvement in our performance.

In line with our drive for improving quality this year we shifted from asking about 'good' and 'satisfactory' levels of performance and moved our assessment to excellence and quality. To achieve this objective we added a number of new questions to this year's survey.

However, some questions were retained from the 2012 survey and these have been asked in the same way in order to provide comparative data which allows us to track our performance.

While we have retained a degree of continuity with previous year's surveys, from an assessment perspective, this year's survey is transitional to allow us to move towards a focus on quality and excellence. Data from this survey will provide a benchmark for future surveys, allowing questions focussing on 'good' and 'satisfactory' levels of performance to be removed.

The most significant change in methodology for the 2013 survey relates to the interpretation of the question ratings provided by EBs. In 2010 we changed the method used to gather information from EBs to ensure we could compare results on a like for like basis we regarded 'neutral' responses as being positive. This year we have only taken scores of 4 and 5 to be positive and reported scores of 3 as neutral.

This new approach supports our shift towards concentrating on excellence and quality, provides greater opportunities to identify areas for improvement and ensures greater transparency.

The overall level of satisfaction reported for 2013 is 67% (2012: 84%). The results also indicate that there has been a significant shift towards neutral response by EBs.

The 2013 survey was delivered in what has been a transitional year for the organisation following our structure changes and the departure of a number of members of staff.

As a result of these and other changes within the organisation we have seen a decrease in satisfaction levels. This was perhaps not surprising given the significant amount of change that we have managed in a short period of time.

3. Open feedback

In the second part of the survey we asked EBs to provide suggestions as to how our regulatory services might be improved. Some common themes in the suggestions received were that our guidance should be simplified, including use of plain language, examples and diagrams and more generally that bureaucracy and the requirement to provide information on forms should be reduced wherever possible. It was also suggested that a clearer, more concise explanation of our role, purpose and reporting lines should be provided.

With regard to the enrolment process, only a very limited number of comments were made, but it was suggested that compulsory training be considered for larger EBs as the enrolment process is complex and was much more easily understood as a result of attending training.

It was also suggested that we should provide a named officer responsible for each EBs enrolment. It would appear that there is perhaps a lack of appreciation of the size of ENTRUST as an organisation and this as well as the responsibilities of members of staff will be better communicated on our new website.

Feedback provided regarding the project approval process was similar to that for enrolments, with the suggestion of EBs being allocated a named officer being made on more than one occasion.

It was also highlighted that it was felt that too much information is asked for at the project approval stage, much of which is difficult to quantify, or not relevant. EBs also suggested that they be provided with a timeline once their project has been approved detailing what information is required and when.

These issues will be considered as part of an ongoing review of Registrations Team processes, including 'value for money' questions asked prior to project approval and the move towards assessing the actual value delivered by projects post-completion.

Most EBs were unable to suggest improvements to the compliance inspection process and positive comments were received about a named Compliance Inspector giving very useful advice. Building on this we continually look to develop our working practices and, as part of a review of our operational processes, we will be implementing a number of changes to our inspection process. These include establishing a more thorough inspection preparation procedure and maximising opportunities to provide verbal feedback to EBs. We will also be looking at how inspection recommendations and findings can be more effectively followed up to ensure they are understood and that any corrective action taken is effective.

4. Themes

Having reviewed the findings and feedback from the survey we have identified a number of key themes which form the basis of our action plan.

1. Consolidation of our Guidance Manual

EBs indicated that our Guidance Manual is not comprehensive or easy to understand. To resolve this we will first combine all previously issued guidance notes into the existing manual so that all information is held in one place. We will then complete a full review of the manual introducing diagrams where these help to clarify a section and avoiding overly technical language.

2. Improvement of our enrolment and registration process

EBs have indicated that our EB enrolment and project registration processes are complicated and not easily understood. We will conduct a process review of this area to identify and implement improvements.

3. Improvements to our enforcement process

EBs have told us that they sometimes do not understand the reasons for our enforcement action and that our explanations are not always clear. We will conduct a process review of this area to identify and implement improvements.

4. Improvements to our systems

Stakeholders have indicated that our current website is difficult to navigate and that it is hard to locate information. Also, there is an indication that some users find ENTRUST online (EOL) does not help to reduce their administrative burden and at times they have found it difficult to complete forms due to a lack of clarity regarding the data entry format requirements.

We completed our website redesign project in December 2013 and this has now launched. We will be seeking users feedback on whether the new site is easier to use and navigate.

We will also review EOL and its prompts to see if clearer information can be provided. We will also remove unnecessary jargon and technical language.

5. Improvements to our e-bulletin

Satisfaction levels with our e-bulletin have declined over the past year, although generally stakeholders feel it is a good way of communicating information about ENTRUST and the LCF. In August 2013 we implemented a revised approach to the ebulletin, with an increased focus on updates specific to EBs. We will continue to review this approach to ensure the ebulletin remains fit for purpose.

6. Networking events for EBs

We previously received feedback from EBs that opportunities to network with other EBs would be beneficial, specifically around common project themes and issues. We have since had feedback from the networking events that we have run that it would have been useful to have an agenda and more of a focus. To ensure networking opportunities are made available, and provide the right content, we are incorporating networking into our training strategy and programme of events for 2014/2015.

7. Improvements to the EB satisfaction survey

A number of improvements to the survey were identified through the analysis of the survey results. We plan to change the timing of the survey for 2014 to enable outputs to be incorporated into our Corporate Plan process and we will also provide EBs with an opportunity to provide their details where they have requested further information on a particular area.

8. Improvements to the EB satisfaction survey

Response rates for the 2013 survey were significantly lower than for the 2012 survey. To improve on these in the 2014 survey we will reduce the time it takes to complete the survey and will implement a communications plan for launching the survey and sending reminders for completion.

The action plan including timescales for completion and the full charts report are available [on our website](#).