

2016 Environmental Body Satisfaction Survey

Overview

1. Introduction

In line with best practice, we undertake an annual satisfaction survey in May each year, which provides Environmental Bodies (EBs) with an opportunity to submit their feedback, thoughts and opinions on the quality and performance of our services.

Alongside our other stakeholder feedback surveys (which include the Compliance Inspection feedback and the Helpline feedback surveys), the EB Satisfaction Survey acts as an annual benchmark of how our stakeholders perceive and understand the quality of the services we provide when regulating the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). Following an analysis of the results, we are then able to target our resources more effectively.

Since 2013, we have refined the questionnaire, building on the results and feedback from previous surveys and responding to different areas of business need, whilst retaining key benchmarking measures to ensure we can compare our performance year on year.

We have carefully analysed the results of the survey and have developed an action plan to address those areas and issues, which stakeholders consider we should improve.

2. Overview

The principle aims of the satisfaction survey are to:

- Gather information to help us to assess the level of satisfaction EBs have with our services over the last twelve months;
- Analyse the results to enable us to identify any trends or areas of concern;
- Develop an action plan to facilitate an improvement in the quality of our services and our performance as a Regulator; and
- Be open and transparent about the outcomes of the survey by publishing them together with details about the identified actions on our website.

In 2016 we refined the questions, making updates to the training, enforcement and website questions as per the 2015 EB Satisfaction Survey action plan. In particular, the questions relating to training were updated in light of the bespoke training survey which was sent to EBs in Autumn 2015.

We further reviewed the questionnaire and considered it appropriate to include new question areas which covered:

- Awareness of, and feedback regarding, our updated Guidance Manual;
- Receipt of, and satisfaction with, our Form 4 email communications; and
- Awareness of, and receipt of information regarding, the Government's consultation on reform of the LCF.

We continued to only ask questions of respondents where they indicated these are relevant to their experience of us and the LCF. For example, only those EBs who indicated that they had a compliance inspection within the year were asked the compliance questions. This was first incorporated into the 2015 survey.

All EB main contacts for whom we hold an email address were contacted by email on 13 May 2016 and invited to complete the survey by 26 June 2016. The survey was also prominently featured on our website, through our Twitter feed and in our June 2016 newsletter. The survey was open for two weeks longer than in 2015.

3. Summary of the findings

In 2016 we received 133 surveys. This was a significant decline on the 2015 response rate of 221 surveys (40 per cent decrease) and a decline on the 2014 response rate when 173 surveys were returned. The decline in the response rate to the EB Satisfaction Survey was disappointing; however we continue to have strong response rates for the Compliance Inspection feedback and the newly introduced Helpline surveys. Whilst we have no quantitative evidence regarding the decline in the response rate, drawing on anecdotal feedback we believe there was fatigue within the sector in the period following reform of the LCF and this may have impacted on engagement with the survey.

The overall level of satisfaction reported for 2016 was 81 per cent (2015: 83 per cent). This rating is calculated across the overall survey results as a percentage of questions requiring a response from 1-5 which were responded to positively, with a rating of 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree). Although we have witnessed a small decline, the survey responses remain very positive with overall satisfaction still significantly higher than three years ago and more than eight out of ten of our stakeholders remain satisfied with our services.

While we are pleased that satisfaction remains high, we also note that there were slight declines in two of the three core questions that we ask, although results remain high for all three measures.

In 2016:

- 84 per cent agree that 'ENTRUST staff are very professional when dealing with me and my EB' (2015: 85 per cent);
- 85 per cent agree that they 'understand the role that ENTRUST undertakes as Regulator of the LCF' (2015: 85 per cent); and
- 75 per cent agree that 'overall ENTRUST provides high quality services' (2014: 78 per cent).

With these results in mind we have used the findings from the survey to focus on a number of areas for improvement which have formed the basis for our action plan for 2016.

4. Feedback

In the second part of the survey, we asked EBs to provide feedback about our performance or suggestions as to how our regulatory services might be improved. 47 respondents (35 per cent of the sample) left additional, open ended feedback. Of these, almost half requested a response to their feedback and provided their contact details.

From our analysis much of this additional feedback was positive, in particular for ENTRUST staff who were praised as "always very helpful", "knowledgeable and helpful", "professional, friendly and helpful" and "incredibly helpful and approachable".

However, we received some mixed comments relating to perceived inconsistencies with advice received from ENTRUST, differences between funders and the different criteria they apply, which EBs found confusing. Additionally one EB had concerns regarding the updated guidance manual, which on discussion between ENTRUST and the EB, along with other stakeholders ensured we were able to provide the relevant clarifications to our guidance. A small number of EBs commented on confusion and difficulty regarding the Form 4. Finally, there were a number of comments specific to the Individual EBs circumstances. These have all been responded to if the EB provided contact details.

The action plan including timescales for completion and the full charts report are available on our website