

User Satisfaction Survey 2009 Summary



1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Observatory has recently completed its fourth annual User Satisfaction Survey, which was conducted on-line. The response rate was 29% (294 responses), compared to 27.6% (303 responses) in 2007 and 38.3% (448 responses) in 2008.
- 1.2. The overall response rate declined from last year, although it is still regarded as a good response rate. This is most likely to be the result of delays in sending the survey to contacts provided by AWM, following delays in AWM passing those contacts to the Observatory.

2. Survey findings

- 2.1. Overall satisfaction with the Observatory has improved, rising from a mean rating of 3.00 (out of 4) in 2008 to 3.11 in 2009.

Key performance indicators	2006	2007	2008	2009	2009 target
Overall user satisfaction with the Observatory	2.91	3.03	3.00	3.11	3.00
User satisfaction with State of the Region report	3.04	3.15	3.13	3.13	3.20

“Great team, great service and great products - enjoy working with you.” Senior Practitioner, Natural England

- 2.2. The KPI target of 3.20 for the overall user satisfaction with the State of the Region Report was narrowly missed, but the target was more ambitious than last year’s (3.00). It is however pleasing to see that this measure has remained stable despite the substantial changes to the State of the Region process in 2008. We will now seek to improve over 2009/10.
- 2.3. The reputation of the Observatory continues to improve with 92.6% of respondents giving a “good” or “excellent” rating, compared to 90.4% in 2008.

2.4. Overall measures of awareness, reputation and satisfaction have all increased significantly from last year, as have the number of people giving the highest ratings. Despite the increase in awareness, nearly a third of respondents felt their awareness was more limited (scoring “1” or “2”), suggesting that communication of Observatory activities could be further improved. The communications team will take this forward. The team will review the results of the survey particularly related to communications at their team meetings in September, and improve the services on offer as required.

Awareness of, reputation of and satisfaction with the Observatory

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Awareness	2.52	2.64	2.66	2.87
Reputation	3.00	3.05	3.05	3.19
Satisfaction	2.91	3.03	3.00	3.11

Rated on a score 1 - 4 and averaged

- 2.5. As in 2008, more respondents stated that they use the Observatory website at wmro.org more than any other service offered, increasing to 88.4% from last year’s figure of 85.7%. ‘Our Research’ outputs (including skills, inclusion, economic research and cultural research) and State of the Region report were also used by the majority of respondents (82.4% and 74.3% respectively), with usage increasing from last year.
- 2.6. Awareness of most website services increased from 2008, for example, last year two thirds of respondents did not know the resource catalogue existed, compared to only 10% this year. This follows targeted promotion of the catalogue in 2008. However, awareness of website services such as the Register of Consultants and RSS feeds could be improved, as over 40% of respondents were unaware of them.
- 2.7. The ‘Our Research’ section of the website was cited as the most used, with 75.4% stating that they had used the Observatory’s published research (an increase of 6.4% on last year).
- 2.8. ‘Our Research’ was also rated the most important service by users, achieving the greatest rating for importance (3.36). This was followed by the Data Groups (3.20), the website (3.13) and State of the Region (3.06). Least importance was given to the annual conference (2.61) and Observations (2.11).

- 2.9. Users were most satisfied by 'Our Research' (3.25), ahead of the website (3.18), the State of the Region report (3.13) and the data groups (3.04). Satisfaction was lowest with Observations (2.45) and research gaps (2.52). The fall of State of the Region from first to third place this year reflects the increasing breadth and visibility of the "Our Research" theme, where research outputs are being produced from a number of work programmes, such as the Regional Skills Assessment and Measuring the Scale of the Challenge.
- 2.10. The Regional Skills Assessment was rated most important (3.44) by users compared to other research outputs (excluding State of the Region) from the 'Our Research' category. As with previous years, the impact on respondent's work is lower than their satisfaction with most of the outputs. Economic recession monitoring work was rated as having the most impact (2.81) and cultural research the least (2.06). Our commitment to Investors in Excellence will help us to monitor our impact more effectively and ensure our work has the desired impact.
- 2.11. Users indicated that communications from the Observatory were of high quality, but time constraints sometimes limited their reading of them. The Economy and Labour Force newsletter was most popular with respondents (scoring 3.1 for quality), and the Environment newsletter least popular (scoring 2.9 for quality).
- 2.12. The majority of respondents (52.5%) rated the Observatory's events to be relevant or highly relevant to their work. However a significant proportion rated the events as less or not relevant to them, indicating that more work is needed to align events to delegates' needs. A number of suggestions for future events were provided as feedback and will be followed up.
- 2.13. The majority of respondents continue to work in the public sector (71.1%) but the proportion of responses from the private and voluntary and community sector have decreased. Those working at a regional level accounted for 51.9% of respondents, an increase on the previous year (47.8%).
- 2.14. Overall the results of the 2009 User Satisfaction Survey are very encouraging. The survey also highlights a number of areas for improvement, which Observatory staff will take forward over the coming year.