



Department of
Justice

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Statistics and Research Branch

**Key Performance
Indicator:
Victim and Witness
Satisfaction Update**

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Produced by Statistics and Research Branch,
Department of Justice.

For further information write to:

**Statistics and Research Branch,
Massey House,
Stormont Estate,
Belfast BT4 3SX**

Telephone: 028 9052 7157

Fax: 028 9052 7532

Email: statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk

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1. Executive Summary

Background

In the Autumn of 2007, the Northern Ireland Office launched a 5 year strategy 'Bridging the Gap' with the aim of improving the criminal justice services to victims and witnesses of crime in Northern Ireland.

Performance against this strategy is formally monitored on an annual basis through inclusion of a key performance indicator question in the Northern Ireland Victim and Witness Survey (NIVAWS):-

'Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the contact you've had with the Criminal Justice System?'

Based on 65.3% of respondents to the initial administration of NIVAWS in 2008/09 reporting that they had been satisfied with the contact they had with the Criminal Justice System, a performance target was set to achieve a 69.5% level of satisfaction on this indicator by the 2011/12 survey.

The main purpose of this bulletin is to provide the 2010/11 update on performance against target in respect of this key indicator question and also to provide an update on performance in respect of three other global indicator questions being used to monitor performance against the strategy

Methodology

The 2010/11 survey was conducted independently by Ipsos MORI during January 2011 using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The target sample for the purposes of monitoring performance against the indicators comprised 1,057 victims and witnesses involved in cases which closed between January and June 2010.

Findings

Compared with 2008/09, the main findings to emerge for each of the indicator questions were as follows:-

Question 1: In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the information you were given about the Criminal Justice System process?

Finding: No significant change (64.6% satisfied in 2008/09; 68.4% satisfied in 2010/11)

Question 2: Thinking about from when you first reported this incident to now, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with how well you have been kept informed of the progress of your case?

Finding: No significant change (53.9% satisfied in 2008/09; 57.1% satisfied in 2010/11)

Question 3: In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way you were treated by staff in the Criminal Justice System?

Finding: Significant increase in the proportion of respondents satisfied (79.0% satisfied in 2008/09; 83.8% satisfied in 2010/11)

Question 4: Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the contact you've had with the Criminal Justice System? [Key Performance Indicator](#)

Finding: Significant increase in the proportion of respondents satisfied (65.3% satisfied in 2008/09; 71.0% satisfied in 2010/11)

Conclusion

At 71.0%, the level of satisfaction recorded in 2010/11 for the key performance indicator question (Question 4 above) exceeds the target level of 69.5% set for the year 2011/12.

2. Introduction

In the Autumn of 2007, the Northern Ireland Office launched a 5 year strategy, 'Bridging the Gap', with the aim of improving the criminal justice services to victims and witnesses of crime in Northern Ireland.

The strategy sets out a five year plan covering the period from 2007 to 2012. Its overall aim is to improve services to victims and witnesses and to increase overall satisfaction levels with those services, within the wider context of improving public confidence in the criminal justice system (CJS).

The strategy focuses on improvement objectives, designed to more effectively meet the needs of all victims and witnesses who come into contact with the criminal justice system, through the development of enhanced services in 5 key areas. Through the strategy, the criminal justice system seeks to:-

- (i) Provide victims and witnesses with easier access to information about the operation of the criminal justice system and sources of appropriate advice and support within it. It is hoped that this will encourage them to have confidence in reporting crimes and maintaining a positive engagement with the criminal justice system;
- (ii) Ensure that specific and timely information is provided to victims and witnesses in relation to their individual case as it progresses through the criminal justice process;
- (iii) Continue to work together, in a coherent and coordinated manner and in partnership with relevant voluntary agencies, to ensure that victims and witnesses are afforded a consistently high standard of service from all criminal justice agencies;
- (iv) Recognise, and be responsive to victims' and witnesses' individual needs to ensure that the most appropriate level of support can be provided before, during and after court proceedings; and
- (v) Afford victims and witnesses the opportunity to make their views known to those in the criminal justice system responsible for making decisions which impact on them and to contribute to the decision-making process, where this is appropriate.

Performance against this strategy is monitored on an annual basis through inclusion of some global performance indicator questions in the Northern Ireland Victim and Witness Survey (NIVAWS).

3. Methodology

NIVAWS is essentially modelled on WAVES – The Witness and Victim Experience Survey – which was the Home Office survey established to monitor performance against the equivalent indicator for England and Wales.

Like WAVES, NIVAWS is an interview based survey and is conducted using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The survey questionnaire which is extensive in scope covers victims' and witnesses' experiences of the entire criminal justice process from the point when they first came into contact with the system right through to the point of sentencing and beyond.

The NIVAWS questionnaire was developed specifically as a Northern Ireland version of WAVES, in collaboration with colleagues in the Home Office and in consultation with stakeholder bodies throughout the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland. Some modification was required to the WAVES format to incorporate differences between the criminal justice processes in Northern Ireland and in England and Wales.

The questionnaire design is such that respondents are initially required to relate their specific experiences with the various stages of the criminal justice process (e.g. while making a statement, waiting for the trial, giving evidence at court, claiming criminal injury compensation etc.).

Having done this, respondents are then asked to reflect on their overall experience of the criminal justice system and to rate their overall level of satisfaction with:-

- (i) the information they were given about the criminal justice system process;
- (ii) how well they had been kept informed about the progress of their case;
- (iii) the way they were treated by staff in the criminal justice system; and
- (iv) the contact they had with the criminal justice system (key performance indicator).

It is these latter summary satisfaction type questions, and in particular, the performance indicator question, which are the focus of attention in this bulletin (see relevant extract of questionnaire at pages i to ii of Appendix).

Ipsos MORI undertook the first administration of NIVAWS in 2008/09 and they were subsequently commissioned to undertake a further three sweeps of the survey covering the period 2009/10 up to 2011/12.

The results of the 2008/09 survey have provided a baseline against which to monitor progress in the area of service delivery to victims and witnesses. In relation to the key performance indicator question,

'Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the contact you've had with the criminal justice system?'

the 2008/09 finding was that 65.3% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with the contact they had. Using the same methodology as England and Wales (i.e. to achieve a statistically significant improvement), a performance target was set to achieve a 69.5% level of satisfaction by the 2011/12 survey.

4. Sample and fieldwork preparation

4.1 Respondent characteristics

The target group for the 2010/11 survey were victims and witnesses aged 18 or over involved in cases¹ which closed between January and June 2010.

For the purposes of monitoring progress against the performance indicator and to maintain consistency with WAVES, Ipsos MORI was commissioned to conduct 1,000 interviews with victims and witnesses involved in cases where there had been a trial/hearing, where the charges had been dropped and no court case had been held or where there had been a youth conference.

Additionally, and for the purpose of having complete coverage of victim and witness views of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland, Ipsos MORI had also been instructed to conduct interviews with a small sample of about 150 victims and witnesses involved in cases where the offender had received a formal police warning or caution. In common with England and Wales, these latter cases do not form part of the performance indicator and have therefore been excluded from the analysis outlined in this particular bulletin.

4.2 Sourcing and validation of victim and witness contact details

(i) Sourcing of victim and witness details

Victim and witness details for NIVAWS are sourced from Public Prosecution Service (PPS) records. In contrast to previous years, however, when this data was extracted directly from PPS maintained data systems, the data for the current year's survey was sourced by PPS from the Causeway system – the new integrated criminal justice recording system for Northern Ireland.

The type of information passed from PPS to Ipsos MORI for the purposes of conducting the 2010/11 survey included such details as name, address, telephone contact details, gender, date of birth and date of incident².

(ii) Validation of victim and witness details

On receipt of the victim and witness details from PPS, Ipsos MORI worked through a staged data validation exercise to remove (i) those 'leads' (i.e. victims and witnesses) who were ineligible to participate in the survey (as a result of status or offence type¹), (ii) any duplicate entries in respect of individual 'leads' (to avoid any particular individuals being selected for participation more than once) and (iii) any non-contactables (i.e. those 'leads' for whom there were inadequate or invalid address details. Technical information regarding the validation exercise is provided at page iv of Appendix.

¹ Exclusions from the survey included expert witnesses (e.g. police officers or other criminal justice officials), those involved in cases where the offender was another family member or a member of the same household, those involved in cases where there had been a fatality and those associated with cases involving certain types of offence (see table of eligible and ineligible offences at page iii of Appendix)

² All procedures for secure transmission, secure storage/processing and subsequent destruction of data were regulated in accordance with strict data sharing protocols between PPS and Ipsos MORI.

4.3 Fieldwork

At the end of the validation exercise, there were a total of 6,310 usable 'leads' remaining in the database.

These 6,310 leads were sent advance notification of the survey in the form of an opt-out letter. In addition to explaining the purpose of the survey, this letter gave potential respondents the opportunity to update their telephone contact details or, if they so wished, the opportunity to opt out of the survey. Around one in twenty respondents (5%) chose to opt out at this stage.

The telephone interviews, which were carried out by trained interviewers, were conducted between 5th and 29th January 2011. In conducting the fieldwork, Ipsos MORI made every effort to maximise response rates by implementing a calling strategy whereby up to 15 calls would be made in an attempt to get a definite call outcome and calling patterns were structured so that attempts were made at different times of the day and on different days of the week.

4.4 Sample

The resultant sample for the 2010/11 survey comprised 1,158 respondents. Of these 1,057 fell into the performance indicator target group (i.e. had been involved in cases where there had either been a trial/hearing, where the charges had been dropped and no court case had been held or where there had been a youth conference) while the remainder (n=101) fell into the additional respondent group (i.e. had been involved in cases which had been concluded by the offender receiving a formal police caution or warning).

The numbers in the two respondent groups diverge somewhat from the numbers requested in the original survey specification (i.e. 1,000 interviews to be conducted with victims and witnesses falling into the performance indicator target group and 150 to be conducted with those falling into the additional respondent group). Whether a respondent belonged to the performance indicator group or the additional respondent group was defined by their responses to the questionnaire.

As in previous years Ipsos MORI used a random probability methodology to select the sample. This was achieved by incrementally uploading and exhausting batches of cases from the pool of eligible leads. In 2008/09 and 2009/10, this approach resulted in 1,000 interviews being conducted with the performance indicator target group and 124 (2008/09) and 125 (2009/10) respectively being conducted with the additional respondent group. In 2010/11, however, as the incidence of respondents in the additional respondent group was lower than had been the case in 2008/09 and 2009/10, the random probability methodology employed culminated in excess of 1,000 interviews being conducted with the performance indicator group (i.e. 1,057) and just 101 being conducted with the additional respondent group.

5. Survey Findings

As the specific focus of this statistical bulletin is to provide an update on performance against target, only those findings relating to the base year (i.e. 2008/09) and the current year (2010/11) are included.

More detailed reports outlining the full range of the 2010/11 survey findings and how they compare with the findings for previous years will be prepared in due course.

5.1 Weighting of survey results

Given that the make-up of the resultant interviewed sample in 2010/11 (49% victims; 51% witnesses) was slightly different from that of the original eligible sample (44% victims; 56% witnesses), it was necessary to apply weighting for analysis of the overall data (i.e. the findings for victims and witnesses combined as a single group) to adjust for the over-representation of victims and the under-representation of witnesses. This was achieved by applying a weighting of 0.9 for victims and a weighting of 1.1 for witnesses on global indicators to replicate the proportions of the original eligible sample.

5.2 Findings

For all four questions which are the focus of attention in this bulletin, survey respondents were asked to report their level of satisfaction on a 7 point scale, ranging from 'completely satisfied' to 'completely dissatisfied': an additional 'don't know' response option was included to facilitate those respondents unable to rate their level of satisfaction.

The survey findings in respect of each of the questions are reported at two levels:-

- (i) Firstly, in terms of the proportion of respondents reporting satisfaction (i.e. the proportion who answered 'completely', 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied) with the performance of the CJS in each of the areas, the 2010/11 findings are compared with the 2008/09 findings; this is done at victim/witness level as well as at overall level.
- (ii) Secondly, separate breakdowns are provided for 2008/09 and 2010/11 to show the proportion of respondents overall (i.e. victims and witnesses combined) selecting each of the 8 distinct response options.

Question 1:

'In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the information you were given about the Criminal Justice System process?'

Overall, 68.4% of respondents who participated in the 2010/11 survey reported being satisfied with the information they had been given about the Criminal Justice System process (Figure 1a). Compared with the 64.6% of respondents who expressed satisfaction in 2008/09, this apparent increase was nonetheless not statistically significant.

Similarly, separate analyses for victims and for witnesses showed no significant change since the earlier survey (see also Figure 1a).

Figures 1b and 1c provide a detailed breakdown of the overall response profile (i.e. for victims and witnesses combined) for 2008/09 and 2010/11 respectively.

Figure 1a Proportion of respondents satisfied with the information they had been given about the CJS process: 2008/09 & 2010/11

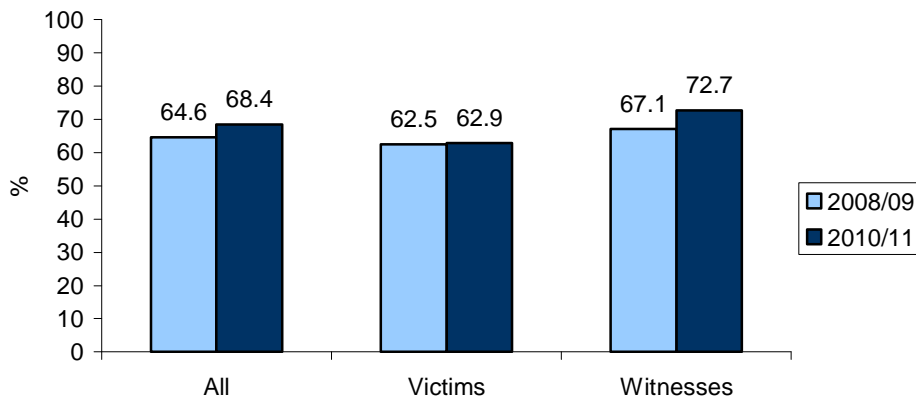


Figure 1b Level of satisfaction with the information they had been given about the CJS process: 2008/09

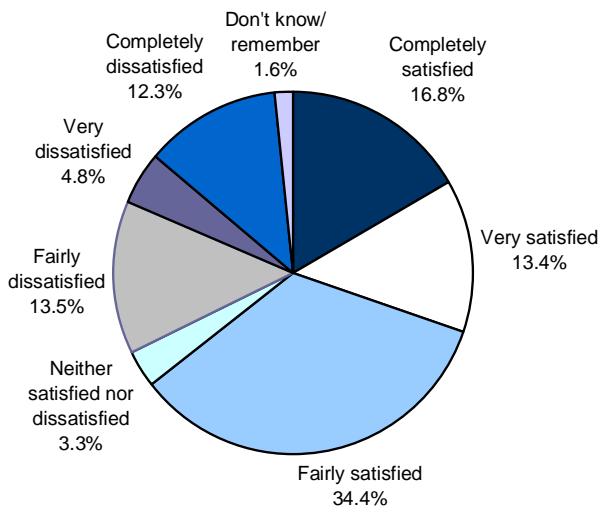
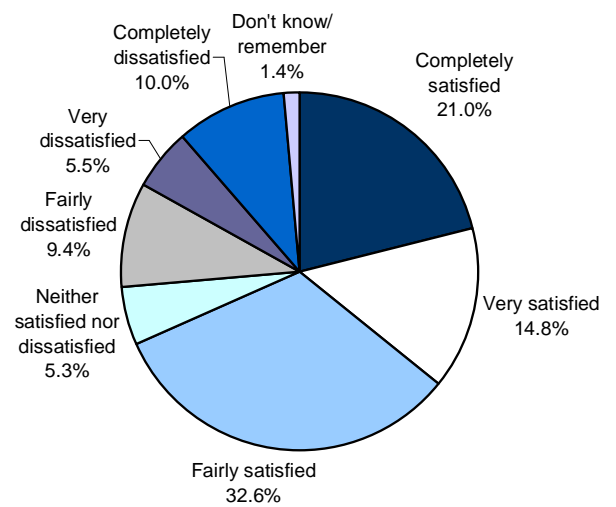


Figure 1c Level of satisfaction with the information they had been given about the CJS process: 2010/11



Question 2:

‘Thinking about from when you first reported this incident to now, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with how well you have been kept informed of the progress of your case?’

The proportion of respondents who reported being satisfied with how well they had been kept informed about the progress of their case did not show significant change across both surveys (53.9% in 2008/09 compared with 57.1% in 2010/11)(Figure 2a).

Similarly, changes at victim/witness level were not statistically significant (see also Figure 2a).

Figures 2b and 2c provide a detailed breakdown of the overall response profile (i.e. for victims and witnesses combined) for this question for 2008/09 and 2010/11 respectively.

Figure 2a Proportion of respondents satisfied with how well they had been kept informed about the progress of their case: 2008/09 & 2010/11

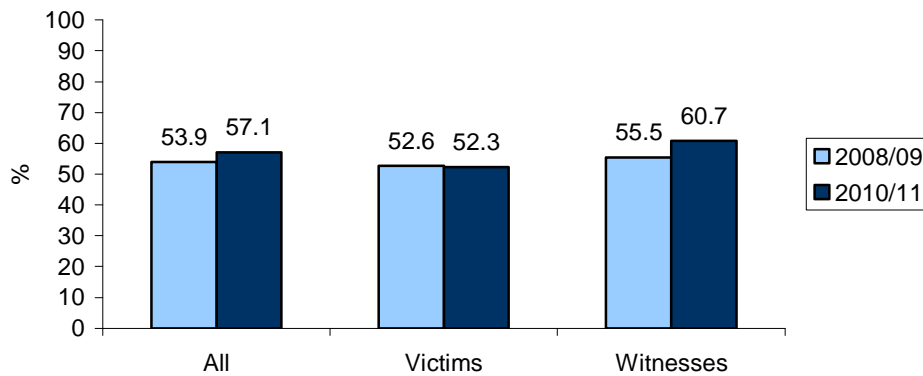


Figure 2b Level of satisfaction with how well kept informed about progress of case: 2008/09

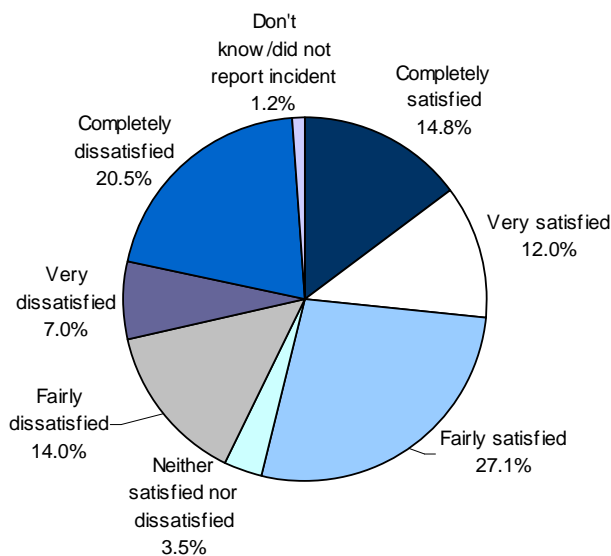
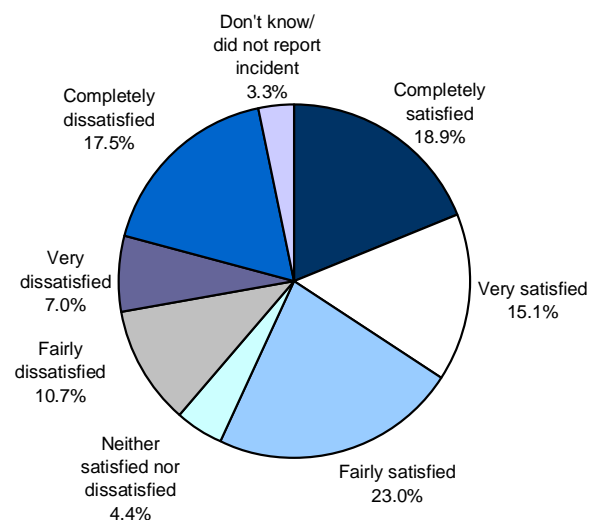


Figure 2c Level of satisfaction with how well kept informed about progress of case: 2010/11



Question 3:

'In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way you were treated by staff in the Criminal Justice System?'

The proportion of respondents to the 2010/11 survey who reported being satisfied with the way they were treated by staff in the Criminal Justice System was 83.8%. This represented a statistically significant increase on the proportion who reported being satisfied in the 2008/09 survey (79.0%) (Figure 3a).

Separate analyses by victim/witness status, however, did not show significant change for either respondent group (see also Figure 3a).

The more detailed response profile for victims and witnesses combined in respect of this question for both the 2008/09 and 2010/11 surveys is shown in Figures 3b and 3c respectively.

Figure 3a Proportion of respondents satisfied with the way they were treated by staff in the CJS: 2008/09 & 2010/11

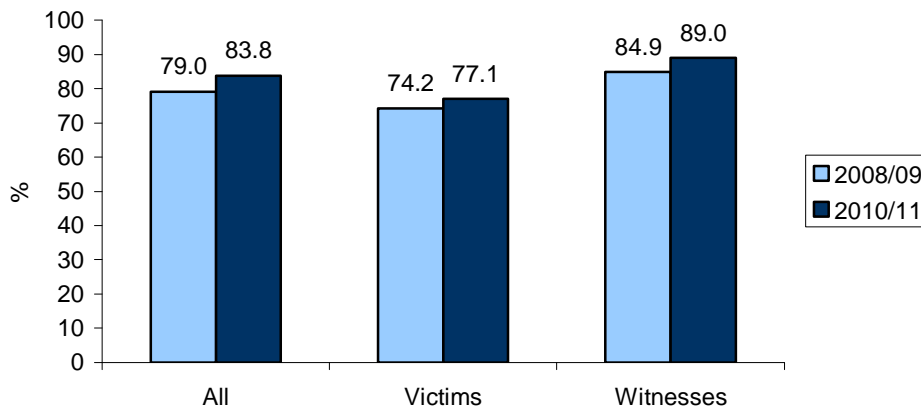


Figure 3b Level of satisfaction with the way treated by staff in the CJS: 2008/09

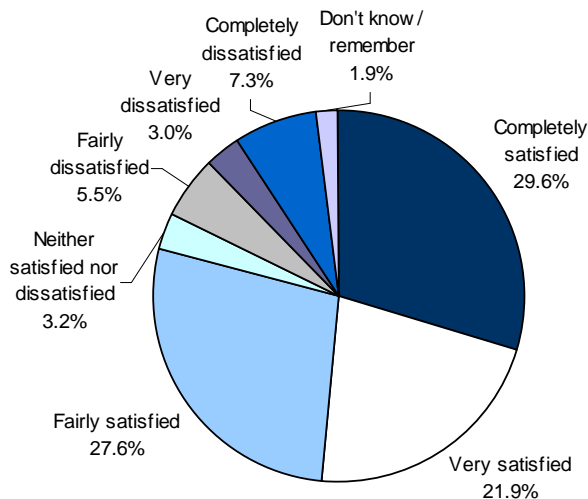
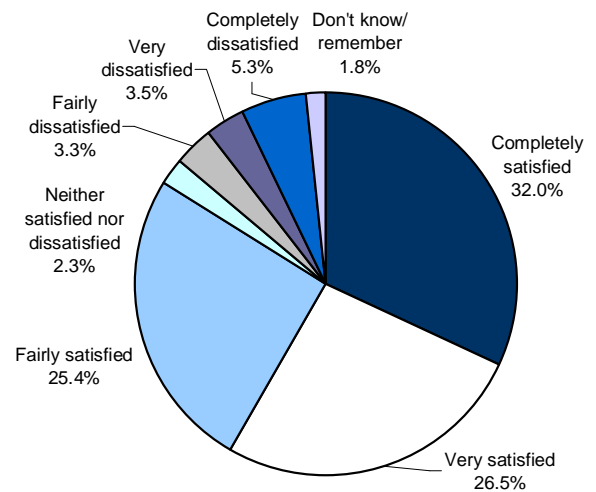


Figure 3c Level of satisfaction with the way treated by staff in the CJS: 2010/11



Question 4 (Key Performance Indicator Question):

‘Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the contact you’ve had with the Criminal Justice System?’

The performance target set for this indicator was to achieve a statistically significant increase by 2011/12 in the proportion of victims and witnesses satisfied with the contact they had with the Criminal Justice System. ‘Satisfied’ is defined as those reporting themselves ‘completely’, ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied.

As previously outlined, based on the baseline satisfaction level of 65.3% established in the 2008/09 survey, a satisfaction level of 69.5% is required in order to meet the performance target.

The 71.0% level of satisfaction recorded in the 2010/11 survey represented a statistically significant increase in satisfaction compared with the baseline year (65.3%) and exceeds the target level of 69.5% set for the year 2011/12 (Figure 4a).

While there were increases in 2010/11 in the proportions of both victims and witnesses who reported satisfaction with the contact they had with the Criminal Justice System, the extent of the increase was statistically significant for witnesses but not for victims (Victims: 61.8% in 2008/09, 63.9% in 2010/11; Witnesses: 69.5% in 2008/09, 76.5% in 2010/11) (see also Figure 4a).

A detailed breakdown of the overall response profile (i.e. for victims and witnesses combined) for this question for both 2008/09 and 2010/11 is provided in Figures 4b and 4c respectively.

Figure 4a Proportion of respondents satisfied with the contact they had with the CJS: 2008/09 & 2010/11

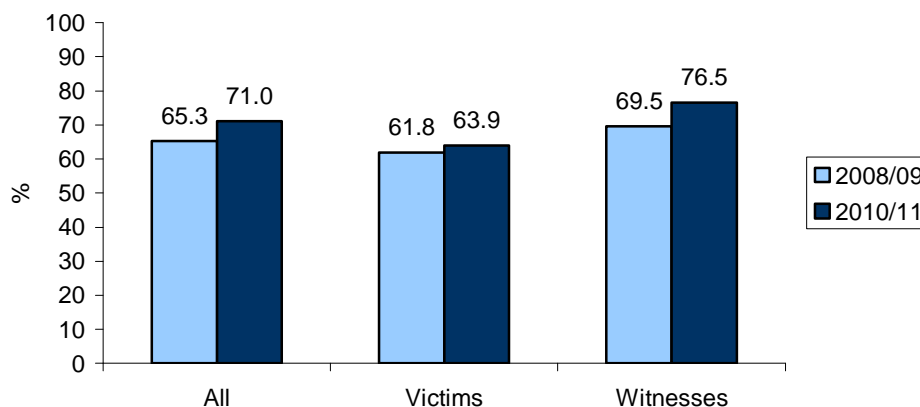


Figure 4b Level of satisfaction with the contact with the CJS: 2008/09

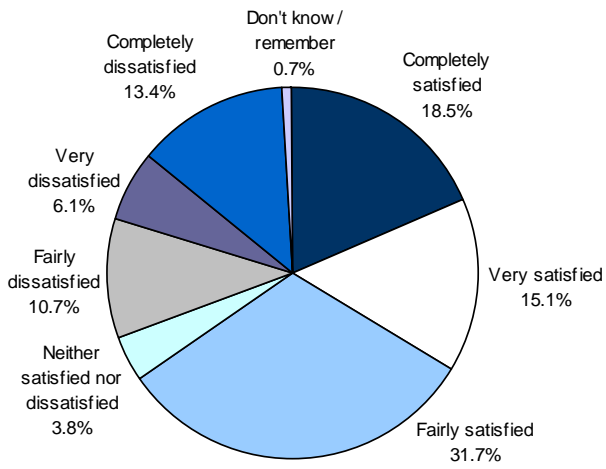
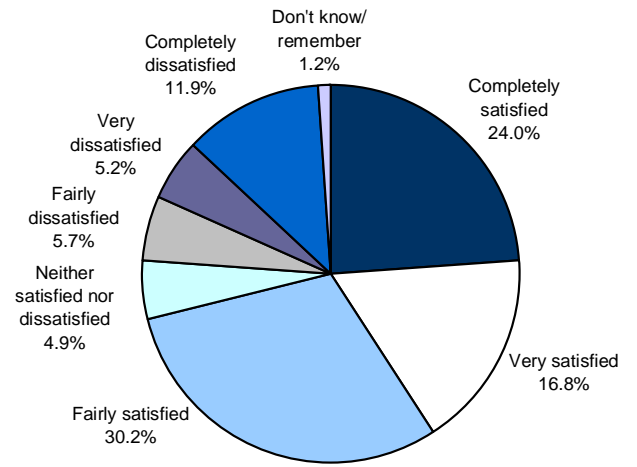


Figure 4c Level of satisfaction with the contact with the CJS: 2010/11



(Tables providing the detailed response breakdowns for each of the 4 questions are provided at pages v to vi of Appendix)

Appendix:

Relevant Extract from NIVAWS Questionnaire:

Eligible and Ineligible Offence Categories:

Number of 'Leads' at Each Stage of Data Validation
Exercise: 2010/11

Detailed Response Breakdowns for Each Question

Relevant Extract from NIVAWS Questionnaire

VIEWS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

ASK OF ALL RESPONDENTS

The next series of questions ask about your views of the Criminal Justice System (or CJS) as a whole: Police, Public Prosecution Service, Courts, and Prison and Probation Services. In answering these questions just think about those you've had contact with.

Q174	In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the <u>information</u> you were given about the criminal justice system process? NOTE: Ask whether that is 'completely', 'very', or 'fairly' satisfied/dissatisfied once they have replied		
	Completely satisfied	1	
	Very satisfied	2	
	Fairly satisfied	3	
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	
	Fairly dissatisfied	5	
	Very dissatisfied	6	
	Completely dissatisfied	7	
	Don't know	98	

Q175	Thinking about when you first reported this incident to now, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with how well you have been kept informed of the progress of your case? NOTE: Ask whether that is 'completely', 'very', or 'fairly' satisfied/dissatisfied once they have replied		
	Completely satisfied	1	
	Very satisfied	2	
	Fairly satisfied	3	
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	
	Fairly dissatisfied	5	
	Very dissatisfied	6	
	Completely dissatisfied	7	
	Don't know	98	
	Did not report the incident	9	

Q176	In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way you were treated by staff in the criminal justice system? NOTE: Ask whether that is 'completely', 'very', or 'fairly' satisfied/dissatisfied once they have replied		
	Completely satisfied	1	
	Very satisfied	2	
	Fairly satisfied	3	
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	
	Fairly dissatisfied	5	
	Very dissatisfied	6	
	Completely dissatisfied	7	
	Don't know	98	

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR QUESTION

Q177	Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the <u>contact</u> you've had with the criminal justice system? NOTE: Ask whether that is 'completely', 'very', or 'fairly' satisfied/dissatisfied once they have replied		
	Completely satisfied	1	
	Very satisfied	2	
	Fairly satisfied	3	
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	
	Fairly dissatisfied	5	
	Very dissatisfied	6	
	Completely dissatisfied	7	
	Don't know	98	

Eligible and Ineligible Offence Categories for the Purposes of NIVAWS

Offences eligible for inclusion	Offences ineligible for inclusion
Violence against the person	Drugs offences
Theft/handling stolen goods	Sexual offences
Burglary	Crimes involving a fatality
Robbery	Domestic violence
Criminal damage	Motoring offences
Offences against the state	Fraud and forgery
	All other offences

Number of 'Leads' at Each Stage of Data Validation Exercise: 2010/11

Number of leads remaining at each stage of data validation exercise	
Total leads provided in original PPS database (i.e. includes duplicates, ineligible offences, non contactables etc.):	14,316
Total eligible leads (i.e. with duplicates and ineligible offences excluded):	
- Victims	3,790
- Witnesses	4,776
Total 'clean' leads (i.e. with 'non-contactables' excluded):	
- Victims	2,795
- Witnesses	3,515
Total leads issued with opt-out letter:	
- Victims	2,795
- Witnesses	3,515
Total leads receiving telephone call:	
- Victims	2,347
- Witnesses	2,922

Detailed Response Breakdowns for Each Question

Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the information you were given about the criminal justice system process?

	2010/11			2008/09
	Victim	Witness	Total	Total
Completely satisfied	17.8	23.5	21.0	16.8
Very satisfied	15.2	14.5	14.8	13.4
Fairly satisfied	29.9	34.7	32.6	34.4
% satisfied	62.9	72.7	68.4	64.6
% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2.9	7.2	5.3	3.3
Fairly dissatisfied	10.2	8.8	9.4	13.5
Very dissatisfied	8.0	3.5	5.5	4.8
Completely dissatisfied	15.4	5.9	10.0	12.3
% dissatisfied	33.6	18.2	24.9	30.5
% don't know/remember	0.6	2.0	1.4	1.6
Base=100%	512	545	1,060	996

Thinking about from when you first reported this incident to now, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with how well you have been kept informed of the progress of your case?

	2010/11			2008/09
	Victim	Witness	Total	Total
Completely satisfied	16.6	20.7	18.9	14.8
Very satisfied	15.2	15.0	15.1	12.0
Fairly satisfied	20.5	25.0	23.0	27.1
% satisfied	52.3	60.7	57.1	53.9
% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3.9	4.8	4.4	3.5
Fairly dissatisfied	10.7	10.6	10.7	14.0
Very dissatisfied	8.2	6.1	7.0	7.0
Completely dissatisfied	22.9	13.4	17.5	20.5
% dissatisfied	41.8	30.1	35.2	41.5
% don't know/remember	1.4	1.5	1.4	0.8
% Did not report the incident	0.6	2.9	1.9	0.4
Base=100%	512	545	1,060	996

In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with way you were treated by staff in the criminal justice system?

	2010/11			2008/09
	Victim	Witness	Total	Total
Completely satisfied	26.8	36.0	32.0	29.6
Very satisfied	24.6	27.9	26.5	21.9
Fairly satisfied	25.8	25.1	25.4	27.6
% satisfied	77.1	89.0	83.8	79.0
% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3.1	1.7	2.3	3.2
Fairly dissatisfied	4.3	2.6	3.3	5.5
Very dissatisfied	5.1	2.2	3.5	3.0
Completely dissatisfied	8.4	2.9	5.3	7.3
% dissatisfied	17.8	7.7	12.1	15.8
% don't know/remember	2.0	1.7	1.8	1.9
Base=100%	512	545	1,060	996

Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the contact you've had with the criminal justice system?

	2010/11			2008/09
	Victim	Witness	Total	Total
Completely satisfied	19.7	27.3	24.0	18.5
Very satisfied	16.2	17.2	16.8	15.1
Fairly satisfied	27.9	31.9	30.2	31.7
% satisfied	63.9	76.5	71.0	65.3
% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4.1	5.5	4.9	3.8
Fairly dissatisfied	8.2	3.9	5.7	10.7
Very dissatisfied	6.4	4.2	5.2	6.1
Completely dissatisfied	16.2	8.6	11.9	13.4
% dissatisfied	30.9	16.7	22.9	30.2
% don't know/remember	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.7
Base=100%	512	545	1,060	996