

Customer Satisfaction Research 2014

We published our [customer satisfaction research methodology](#) in 2013 outlining our intention to measure customers' satisfaction with the service that LGO provides to them when considering their complaint, and to separately measure customer satisfaction with the decision reached on their complaint. This approach recognises that customer satisfaction with our service is inevitably influenced by the outcome of the complaint. From April 2014 all our customers have the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey once they have received a decision on their complaint. The results of this research will be published soon, and on a quarterly basis.

The research we publish today measures satisfaction with the LGO's service during the complaint process. BMG Research, an independent research company, was commissioned to carry out telephone interviews with 820 customers who were yet to receive a decision on their complaint. The interview focused on customers' experience of the accessibility and visibility of the LGO's service, the satisfaction with their contact and service provided by the LGO, to date.

The research findings have been considered by the LGO Board (the Commission), management team and by staff at a series of Good Practice Seminars. Whilst the research shows that perceptions of the LGO and complaint process are generally positive, there are some areas which need improvement in the perceptions of our customers.

We know that customers have already spent a considerable amount of time trying to resolve their complaint with their local council or care provider before coming to us (on average, nine months) so understand that the longer the complaint remains unresolved the less satisfied a person becomes. To help address this, we will work with the bodies in our jurisdiction to support effective complaint resolution at the local level, and ensure that signposting to the ombudsman is clear, effective and timely.

The research shows the importance of managing our customer's expectations from the outset, both about our powers and our processes. Providing a timely and responsive service is a key part of this. Last year we completed 68% of our investigations within 13 weeks, up from 45% in 2011/12. We have increased our target this year to ensure we are continuously improving our service, whilst ensuring we always take appropriate time to fully consider the facts of a complaint. We will continue to clearly outline the complaint process to our customers, including likely timeframes, when they first make contact with us, and keep people up to date and informed about their complaint's progress and its likely outcome.

Our customers should feel that their complaint is understood and that we demonstrate an understanding of how the problem they are experiencing is affecting them. These factors impact on our customers' confidence of the LGO's handling of their complaint. We are confident that our staff understand the complaints they deal with and often have expert knowledge of the matter they are investigating. However, demonstrating this understanding to our customers by defining their complaint in the terms that they recognise should improve our customers' satisfaction with our service.

We are continuing to identify the good practice we can share across the organisation to ensure that more of our customers experience an excellent service when they bring a

complaint to us and have planned a workshop with our senior managers in November to consider the steps we can take in response to our customers' feedback.