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Scottish Government Stakeholder Survey 2010

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SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY 2010

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A total of 934 stakeholders of the Scottish Government (SG) completed the 2010 Stakeholder Survey (57% response rate). Follow-up interviews were carried out with 26 of the respondents. The key findings of the study are outlined below:

Satisfaction with the SG

- Over 8 out of 10 of respondents (81%) expressed satisfaction in their dealings with the Scottish Government over the previous 12 months.
- There was some variation in stakeholder satisfaction levels depending on the Ministerial Portfolio stakeholders engaged with the most. Justice and Communities stakeholders were most likely to be satisfied (93%), with Rural Affairs and Environment stakeholders the least (71%).
- Stakeholders working in local authorities were the most satisfied (85%) with those in private sector organisations the least (72%).
- Survey respondents were almost 8 times more times more likely to speak highly of the SG than be critical (62% versus 8%).

Perceived characteristics of the SG

- Just over half of all respondents (52%) said that SG officials 'Always' treated them as an equal. A large proportion also said that they demonstrated commitment to equalities in their action (42%).
- As with previous surveys the number of respondents who felt that the SG was 'joined up' was low with only 8% saying that this was 'Always' the case.

Communication with the SG

- Respondents were provided with a list of reasons for contact with the SG and asked to indicate the frequency of their contact in the previous 12 months. The most popular reason was to provide advice or information to the Government (93%), followed by responding to a consultation on a specific policy/project (92%).
- The main method used by stakeholders to communicate with SG officials was by email (89%), followed by face-to-face meetings (86%).

Critical Success Factors for Stakeholder Engagement

- The survey identified attributes which stakeholders viewed as important for SG officials to have, and which they needed to improve. These included: ensuring that policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence, understanding constraints facing stakeholders and providing timely and appropriate responses.
- Stakeholders provided a number of other suggestions on how engagement could be improved. These included earlier/more strategic dialogue and better join-up within the SG.

National Performance Framework and Scotland Performs

- Just over 7 out of 10 respondents (71%) said that they knew a great deal or fair amount about the SG's Purpose and National Outcomes. Stakeholders working for the Education and Lifelong Learning Ministerial Portfolio knew the most about this (87%).

- Local authority stakeholders were most likely to say that their working relationship had changed the most following the introduction of the Purpose and National Outcomes (56% said that it had changed a great deal or fair amount).
- Only 30% of respondents felt that the concordat had changed things a great deal or fair amount.
- The survey indicated the knowledge of Scotland Performs remains low, with around a quarter of respondents (26%) saying that they know a great deal or fair amount about it.

Future challenges

- In the future, stakeholders said that they would value earlier and more strategic dialogue with the SG.
- Stakeholders raised a number of issues in regards to the proposed spending cuts. Most viewed it as a significant challenge for both their organisation and the SG, whilst others viewed it as an opportunity. Some had views on changes of ways of working within the SG which could be made as a result of the spending reductions. These included reducing bureaucracy, and officials being more proactive in communicating and liaising with stakeholders on such issues.

2 INTRODUCTION

Background

2.1 When the last SG Stakeholder Survey was carried out in the summer of 2008, the government and public sector in Scotland had just entered a new era of outcome focused government. Following the elections of the SNP administration in May 2007, the then Scottish Executive was replaced by the Scottish Government and its nine departments by six Directorate-Generals. The new administration also introduced a single, overarching Purpose to focus resources on "creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth." Two years on and although still fully committed to the delivery of the Purpose, the government and public sector in Scotland now faces a period of uncertainty brought on by the global recession, and subsequent cutbacks in government expenditure by the UK Coalition Government.

2.2 During such challenging times, it is acknowledged that Scottish Government officials' engagement with stakeholders remains paramount to the successful delivery of government in Scotland. The predicted cuts in public spending will present unprecedented challenges for both the SG and its stakeholders in ensuring it delivers the Government's overall purpose.

2.3 The importance of SG officials' effective liaison with external stakeholders was one of the motivations for the Scottish Government's 2009 'Shaping Up Review'. The Review was commissioned by the SG's Strategic Board to understand how well the organisation was placed to deal with these future challenges, and to review progress 10 years after devolution. The report made a number of recommendations including ways in which it could engage better with stakeholders. Building on existing developments, the review recommended that each business area designate a named individual as their stakeholder relationship lead, as well as corporately roll out an SG wide stakeholder database.

2.4 The 'Shaping Up Review' also recommended that there needed to be increased focus by SG officials in all levels of their work around the Scottish Government's Purpose and Outcomes. Officials' engagement with stakeholders on this new approach to government is paramount to its overall success.

2.5 The Stakeholder Survey provides a unique insight into how stakeholders view officials during such a period of change, as well as how well officials have promoted the new approach to government to them. It also highlights areas for improvement which will ensure that through better stakeholder liaison the SG will become a more flexible organisation with a clear focus on delivering better results.

Research aims

2.6 The aim of the Stakeholder Survey 2010 was to collect data from a wide range of stakeholders to:

- Assess their views on how engagement, relationships and working practices with the SG can best contribute to achieving SG objectives, both currently and in the future.
- Highlight areas of 'best practice' and areas that need improvement in stakeholder engagement.
- Identify their levels of understanding of and commitment to the achievement of SG Purpose and outcomes.
- Measure the level of understanding of the outcome-focused approach to government.
- Inform future work associated with the 'Shaping Up Review'.

Definitional issues

The Scottish Government

2.7 It is important to note that the research is intended to deliver an assessment of Scottish Government officials, not ministers. Accordingly, throughout the report all references to 'Scottish Government' relate to the civil service only and not to members of the Cabinet nor their independent advisors. During the fieldwork for this project we highlighted this distinction in our research tools.

Stakeholders

2.8 For this survey we used a similar definition of stakeholders to that used in earlier surveys of 2004, 2005 and 2008:

> *"A key stakeholder includes individuals or bodies with expertise/interest in a specific policy, or cross-cutting policies, whose contribution should be sought by officials to ensure policies and services meet the diverse needs, priorities and expectations of the people of Scotland. Stakeholders include those committed to working with the Scottish Government on a reciprocal basis. Relationships could be time limited, and focus on the development or implementation of particular policies, or more long term and contribute to the strategic thinking on policy development. Key stakeholders include experts, delivery partners, single-issue bodies/interest groups, or particular individuals from stakeholder bodies which have corporate or departmental relationships with the Government. They might also include local authorities, NDPBs, and national level representatives or professional bodies."*

2.9 Individual members of the public and 'one-off stakeholders' (i.e. those for whom contact with the Government is likely to be limited to a one-off communication, rather than to an on-going relationship) were not included. Representatives of Scottish Agencies were also excluded, and the number of stakeholders from the NHS Boards was restricted to 29 representatives.

Structure of the report

2.10 Further information on the research methodology is presented in Chapter 3, with the next chapter providing a profile of the respondents such as the organisation they worked for, their location and the Ministerial Portfolio which their dealings with the SG most related to. The findings from this year's survey are then presented in Chapters 5 to 9. Stakeholders' overall satisfaction with the Scottish Government and their readiness to speak favourably or negatively about the organisation is outlined in Chapter 5. In the following chapter data on how stakeholders communicate with the SG is discussed. Chapter 7 continues to explore stakeholders' perception of officials and the key issues which impact on such relationship. Chapter 8 looks at stakeholders' awareness of the new approach, and whether it has made an impact on their work. Future challenges identified by stakeholders in their relationship with officials are discussed in Chapter 9, and concluding remarks about the findings from the 2010 survey are given in Chapter 10. Where appropriate, comparative data from previous surveys has been included in the report.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 The data from stakeholders was collected through a mixed method approach which included carrying out an on-line survey (934 respondents completed the survey) and follow-up semi structured interviews with 26 of these stakeholders. This mixed approach was used for the first time in 2008, and proved useful in exploring stakeholders' views in greater depth. To reduce the cost of the survey the 2010 exercise was carried out in-house by researchers based in the Scottish Government's Office of Chief Researcher (OCR), using a similar questionnaire to that used in 2008. In previous years, respondents had the opportunity to complete the survey either by phone or online but the 2010 survey could only be completed on-line. To ensure that as many stakeholders as possible completed the survey electronically, a number of checks were carried out to ensure that OCR had the correct email for every potential respondent.

Stakeholder Survey

The survey sample

3.2 In early 2010 officials in each of the SG Directorate-Generals (DGs) were requested to check and update the stakeholder contact list used for the 2008 survey. As email addresses had not been a mandatory field for previous surveys, business areas were asked to include an individual email address for each stakeholder. The OCR project team provided guidance to the DGs on the definition of stakeholders, and business areas were asked to check details. Returns from individual areas were then collated by OCR into a revised super-list. Further checks were then conducted to ensure that there were no duplicate entries, were up-to-date and that organisation/generic email addresses were not included. The number of individuals from each organisation was capped, with a maximum of 5 officials from local authorities being included. To check the accuracy of information, a letter was sent from the Permanent Secretary informing stakeholders of the survey. The letter also contained details of the email address we had on record for them, and they were requested to contact OCR if the information was incorrect. Three weeks later an email was sent to stakeholders again to check whether the email address we had on file was correct. For emails which were undeliverable, OCR contacted the individual/their host organisation by phone to check the address and to also ascertain whether the contact was still involved with the organisation.

Fieldwork

3.3 Stakeholders were given four weeks to complete the survey (9 June to 7 July 2010) and a total of 934 completed the exercise. The survey was sent to 1588 respondents, and achieved a response rate of 57%. This response rate was better than anticipated given that the survey was only available to complete online.

Questionnaire

3.4 To allow some comparison to be made with previous surveys, the questions were kept virtually the same as those for the 2008 survey. However it is worth noting that comparisons with data from previous years should be made with extreme caution due to changes in the way the data was collected in 2010. Earlier surveys had given respondents the option to complete the survey on-line or by phone. They had also been conducted by the research contractor Ipsos Mori, rather than in-house as the 2010 survey has been carried out. Although various assurances were given to stakeholders before and throughout the fieldwork period of SG officials carrying out this work, this involvement may have had an impact on the results obtained.

3.5 Questions developed for the 2008 survey on the new approach to government were included again to gauge how the principles had impacted in practice on stakeholders' engagement with the SG.

3.6 At the end of the survey respondents had the option to leave contact details if they were willing to be interviewed at a later date.

Analysis of the survey data

3.7 As in previous years prior to the full analysis of the findings, tables were generated in which responses to each of the surveys questions were analysed against a number of key variables including:

- Organisation type
- Organisation size
- Methods used to contact the Scottish Government
- Directorate-General in contact with

3.8 In addition to this basic analysis, z-scores were used to identify areas of relative strength and weakness in the Scottish Government's performance.

Follow-up interviews

3.9 To explore some of the issues highlighted in the survey in greater depth, 26 in-depth follow up interviews were carried out between 12 July and 6 August 2010. Drawing upon the key findings from the survey, a topic guide was developed for stakeholders who were dissatisfied with the SG, and another for those who were satisfied. All of the interviews were carried out by social researchers working in the SG, and were conducted by phone.

3.10 As in 2008, 15 of the interviews were carried out with stakeholders who expressed dissatisfaction with the SG. These interviewees were asked to provide further information on why they were dissatisfied, to discuss areas for improvement and to identify future challenges in their organisation's relationship with the SG.

3.11 The remaining interviews (11) were conducted with respondents who were satisfied with the SG. These interviewees were asked to provide their views about what the SG did well at, but also to identify areas for improvement.

Interpretation of the research findings

Quantitative data

3.12 Like most quantitative research, survey data is always subject to sampling error, making it necessary to allow for apparent differences in the data for different sub-groups being caused by chance – a reflection that the data is from a sample rather than a census.

3.13 Throughout the report, differences between sub-groups are commented upon *only* where sample sizes are sufficient and the apparent differences are statistically significant i.e. where we can be reasonably certain that they are unlikely to have occurred by chance.

3.14 Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories or multiple answers. Throughout the report, an asterisk (*) denotes any value of less than half a percent. Not all respondents answered all the questions listed in the survey, thus, column totals in the tables may not always add up to 934.

Qualitative data

3.15 The qualitative components of this study involved substantially fewer people than the quantitative element. However, it explores attitudes in much greater depth. The aim is not to generalise to the wider population in terms of the *prevalence* of attitudes (e.g. '10% of respondents think the Government is *never* joined up'), but rather, to identify and explore issues and themes relating to the subject being researched. The assumption is that issues and themes affecting the participants are a reflection of issues and themes in the wider population. Although the *extent* to which they apply to the wider population or specific sub-groups cannot be quantified, the value of qualitative research is in identifying the ranges of different issues involved and the impact they can have.

4 PROFILE OF SURVEY SAMPLE

- *Just over a third of respondents worked in the public sector (37%), followed closely by those working in the third sector/charities (33%).*
- *The majority worked for an organisation that employed 500 or fewer employees.*
- *Almost 6 out of 10 (59%) of the stakeholders who completed the survey delivered services on behalf of/in partnership with the SG.*
- *The Ministerial Portfolio area which stakeholders engaged with the most was Health and Well-being (26%), followed by Finance and Sustainable Growth (23%).*

4.1 This section of the report provides a profile of the respondents and the organisations that they work for.

Type of organisation worked for

4.2 Respondents were asked at the start of the survey to select which type of organisation they worked for. The largest organisation type was the Voluntary/Other third sector which comprised of 18% of respondents. Table 4.1. provides a percentage breakdown of the 14 organisation types which respondents worked for:

Table 4.1: Type of organisation worked for

Q What type of organisation is it that you work for?

	Percentage (rounded) N=899
Voluntary/Other third sector or voluntary bodies	18%
Local Authority	16%
Other	12%
Non-Departmental Public Body	11%
Interest Group/Representative Body	10%
Academic institution	8%
Registered Charity	7%
Private sector/business	7%
NHS/health organisation	5%
Central government department	3%
Scottish Government Agency	2%
Public/private sector partnership	1%
UK Government Agency	1%
A member of a Community Planning Partnership	0%

4.3 As the numbers of respondents in certain organisational groups were small, certain organisations were compressed into larger organisation types. The number of groups was collapsed from fourteen to four, with respondents who chose 'Other' being excluded from the amended calculations. The new groups comprised of the following:

(1) Local Authority (Local Authority)
(2) Private Sector/Business (Private Sector/Business)
(3) Public Sector Organisations (Non-Departmental Public Body, NHS/Health Organisation, SG Agency, UK Agency, Central Government Department, Academic Institution, Community Planning Partnership, and Public/private sector partnership)
(4) Third Sector/Charities (Interest Group/Representative Body, Voluntary/Other third sector or voluntary bodies, and Registered Charity).

4.4 Using the compressed organisation groups, the Public Sector was the largest grouping (37%) (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Type of organisation worked for using compressed organisation type

Q What type of organisation is it that you work for?

	%
Public Sector	37
Third Sector/Charities	33
Local Authority	21
Private Sector/Business	9

Location of organisation

4.5 Respondents were asked to provide the postcode of the office from which they worked. Almost 7 out of 10 respondents (67%) worked from an office based in an urban area (Table 4.3), with 79% of respondents within the Scottish central belt[1].

[1] For the purposes of this project the central belt was defined as local authorities which were one hour travel time from Edinburgh and Glasgow (Glasgow, Edinburgh, East Lothian, Mid Lothian, West Lothian, Fife, Stirling, Dundee, South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire). Respondents were placed into Local Authority areas using the postcode information they entered in the questionnaire.

Table 4.3: Location of office

Q What is the postcode of the office from which you work?

Base All respondents	**934**
	%
1 – Large Urban	**48**
2 – Other Urban	**19**
3 – Accessible small town	**2**
4 – Remote small town	**2**
5 – Accessible rural	**6**
6 – Remote rural	**2**
No location information given	**21**

Size of organisation

4.6 Table 4.4 shows that majority (65%) of the respondents worked for an organisation that employed 500 or fewer employees. Of this 21% of respondents worked for an organisation with 10 or fewer employees, while a similar proportion (20%) worked for an organisation with 11-50 employees. Thirty-three percent worked for organisations employing over 500 people.

Table 4.4: Number of employees in organisation

Q How many people would you say are currently employed by your organisation at all of its offices or branches?

Base: All Valid Responses (875)	**%**
10 or less	21
11-50	20
51-200	16
201-500	8
501-1,000	6
1,001-5,000	15
5,001+	12
Don't know	1

Length of service

4.7 As illustrated by Table 4.5, 34% of respondents had worked for their organisation for less than five years, 28% for five to 10 years and 38% for more than 10 years.

Table 4.5: Length of service

Q How long have you been with your organisation?

	2004	2005	2008	2010
Base: All Valid Responses	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*880*
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**
Less than 5 years	41	34	35	34
5 to 10 years	29	32	29	28
More than 10 years	30	34	36	38
Don't know/can't remember	*	-	-	-

Organisations' relationships with the Scottish Government

4.8 In terms of the stakeholder organisations' relationships with the Scottish Government, the responses show that nearly 60% deliver services on behalf of/in partnership with the Scottish Government while over one-third either campaign/lobby on specific issues or provide an advisory/consultancy role to the Scottish Government (table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Relationship with the Scottish Government

Q Which of the following best describes your organisation's relationship with the Scottish Government?

	2004	2005	2008	2010
Base: All respondents	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*934*
	%	***%***	***%***	***%***
Delivers services on behalf of/in partnership with, the Scottish Government**	49	57	65	59
Campaigns/lobbies on specific issues	30	30	38	34
Advisory/consultancy role to the Scottish Government	36	36	48	33
Advisory/consultancy role on behalf of the Scottish Government	11	11	24	13
Other	16	8	8	13
Delivers services to the Scottish Government	16	13	19	12
Don't know	1	1	1	0

*The sum of the columns is greater than 100% because respondents were able to select more than one role.

**In the 2004 and 2005 surveys, the question wording was '*Delivers services on behalf of the Executive*'

Funding of organisation

4.9 The majority of respondents (71%) indicated that their organisation was funded in part by the Scottish Government while a smaller proportion (18%) indicated that their organisation was funded wholly by the Scottish Government (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Funding

Q Is your organisation…?

	2004	2005	2008	2010
Base: All Valid Responses	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*675*
	% Yes	**% Yes**	**% Yes**	**% Yes**
Funded wholly by the Scottish Government	23	24	20	18
Funded in part by the Scottish Government*	52	60	47	71
Regulated by the Scottish Government	39	45	41	6
Previously funded by the Scottish Government through specific funding streams that have ended	n/a	n/a	24	5
Previously funded by local government through specific funding streams that have ended	n/a	n/a	12	-

Ministerial portfolio

4.10 Respondents were asked to select the Ministerial Portfolio which most of their engagement related to (Table 4.8). The largest area of engagement was Health and Wellbeing (26%), followed by Finance and Sustainable Growth (23%) and Education and Lifelong learning (20%).

Table 4.8: Ministerial Portfolio

Q Please select the ministerial portfolio that most of your engagement relates to?

Ministerial Portfolio Areas	% of respondents engaging with each area
Base: All valid responses (872)	
Health and Wellbeing (Inc Public Health & Sport and Housing & Communities)	26
Finance & Sustainable Growth (Inc Enterprise, Energy & Tourism and Transport, Infrastructure & Climate Change)	23
Education and Lifelong Learning (Inc Skills & Lifelong Learning and Children and Early Years)	20
Rural Affairs & the Environment	15
Justice (Inc Community Safety)	8
Office of the First Minister (Inc Culture & External Affairs and Parliamentary Business)	5
Don't know	3

5 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

- *Over 8 out of 10 stakeholders said that they were satisfied in their dealings with the SG over the previous 12 months.*
- *Stakeholders were almost 8 times more likely to speak highly of the SG than be critical of it (62% versus 8%).*
- *Respondents who worked for the Justice Minister Portfolio were more likely than average to be satisfied in their dealings with the SG.*
- *Local authority representatives were most satisfied (85% said that they were Very or Fairly Satisfied). Stakeholders from Private Sector organisations (72%) were the group least likely to express satisfaction.*

5.1 This section highlights stakeholders' overall satisfaction with the Scottish Government and their readiness to speak favourably or negatively about the organisation.

Overall satisfaction with the Scottish Government

5.2 Overall satisfaction levels with the Scottish Government remain positive, with 81% of respondents expressing satisfaction with their dealings with the organisation over the last 12 months. Less than 10% of respondents stated that they had been dissatisfied (Fairly or Very) in their dealings with the Scottish Government during the same period.

5.3 Although there are limitations in making direct comparison with the 2008 figures, the 2010 results suggest that the numbers who have said they are 'Very satisfied' (34%) in their dealings with the SG remains constant. Although not statistically significant the proportion who said that they are 'Fairly dissatisfied' increased from 4% in 2008 to 7% in 2010.

Table 5.1: Overall satisfaction with the Scottish Government

Q In the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the dealings you have had with the Scottish Government?

	2004	2005	2008	2010
Base: All valid responses	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*879*
	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	21	26	34	34
Fairly satisfied	51	50	50	47
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	15	10	10

Fairly dissatisfied	8	6	4	7
Very dissatisfied	3	2	2	2
Don't know	1	1	*	*

5.4 There was some variation depending on which Scottish Government Ministerial Portfolios stakeholders engaged with most often. Stakeholders engaging with Justice Minister Portfolio were more likely than average to be satisfied in their dealings with the SG (93% compared with an average of 81%). Rural Affairs and the Environment Ministerial Portfolio stakeholders were the least likely to say so with 71% saying that they were satisfied. It is worth noting that the number of Ministerial Portfolio stakeholders was not equal, with some DGs having only 46 respondents (Office of the First Minister) whilst others having 223 (Health and Wellbeing).

5.5 Broken down by organisation type, stakeholders working in Local Authorities were most satisfied with the Scottish Government (85% said that they were Very or Fairly Satisfied). Stakeholders from Private Sector Organisations (72%) were the group least likely to express satisfaction.

5.6 Stakeholders who deliver services on behalf of or in partnership with SG were the most positive about their engagement with the Scottish Government (83%). Those who provide services to the SG were the least satisfied (71%).

5.7 In the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about how the Scottish Government engages with them as a stakeholder. There were 641 responses to this question. Two-thirds of the comments were positive, 22% were negative, while 12% of respondents said that their overall experiences of engagement with the Scottish Government was mixed. Stakeholders' views on how officials engage with them will be explored further in later chapters.

5.8 Popular positive comments given included the helpfulness and openness of the staff they deal with, the professionalism of SG officials, and comments on how the SG's engagement and working relationships had improved.

We have a strong, positive and mutually respectful working relationship with the officials we deal with.

Scottish Government officials engage very well with my organisation. There is mutual respect, trust and sharing of essential information on key issues.

5.9 Although more varied, some of the more negative comments raised include dissatisfaction with levels of engagement, lack of join-up across the organisation and unhappiness with consultation exercises:

Our work and membership crosses several portfolios and it has proved difficult to find a way of engaging with the wider government machine.

Government still has not perfected the art of cross-departmental working and this makes it challenging for organisations who deal with cross-themed policy areas

There is a sense that while government is obliged to consult, it does not appreciate a critical friend. We question whether there is true consultation or if it is in fact simply going through the motions.

5.10 Many of those giving more mixed views about their levels of engagement with the SG reported that their experience was based upon individual officers and their level of competency and professionalism rather than the SG corporately:

Officials are willing and approachable but because we engage with civil servants at various levels there is a marked difference in professionalism, strategic thinking, skills of organisation and clarity of thought.

Although engagement has improved greatly over the past 18 months, its success very much relies on the professionalism of particular civil servants. This means that the process can be very fragile and is not consistent.

Advocacy

5.11 As in previous years, the survey explored stakeholders' advocacy of the Scottish Government. As Table 5.2 shows, the results are again very positive, with stakeholders almost eight times more likely to speak highly of the Government than to be critical of it (62% versus 8%).

5.12 Although not statistically significant the number of individuals who said that they would speak highly of the organisation was 5 percentage points higher than in 2008, with an increase of 4 points in those who would speak highly of the SG *without* being asked their opinion.

Table: 5.2 Advocacy of the Scottish Government

Q Which of these comes closest to describing how you would speak about the Scottish Government?

	2004	2005	2008	2010
Base: All valid responses	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*877*
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**
Speak highly of it without being asked your opinion	18	13	27	31
Speak highly of it but only if you are asked	22	26	30	31
Be neutral about it	38	39	32	30
Be critical of it if asked	14	15	7	7
Be critical of it without being asked	5	3	2	1
Don't know	3	3	2	1

6 COMMUNICATION

- *The most common reason for stakeholders to contact the SG was to 'seek information or advice' (95%).*
- *Email (89%) was the main method which stakeholders used to contact officials.*
- *To work out who they needed to speak with in the SG, 55% said that they asked amongst colleagues and/or professional networks, or that they just knew.*

6.1 This is the first of two chapters focusing on stakeholders' experience of day to day working with Scottish Government officials. This chapter explores the types of communications used by stakeholders when communicating with the SG and how they find out who the right official is to contact.

Type of contact

6.2 To provide an indication of the type and regularity of contact stakeholders had with SG officials, respondents were provided with a list of reasons for contact and asked to indicate the frequency of their contact in the previous 12 months in regards to these issues (see Table 6.1). The most frequent type of contact was 'Seeking information or advice', with 95% of respondents saying that they frequently or occasionally had contacted an SG official on this matter. Other popular selections included:

- Providing advice or information to the Government (93%)
- Responding to consultation over a specific policy/project (92%)

6.3 Almost 90% of respondents had been in contact with the SG to receive information or guidance (89%) or to collaborate in the development and implementation of policy (88%). Contact was made less frequently with the Scottish Government regarding grant processing and the interpretation of legislation (54% and 45% respectively).

Table 6.1: Types of contact with the Scottish Government

Q How often have you had the following types of contact with the Scottish Government as a representative of (name of organisation) in the last 12 months?

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Don't know
Base: All valid responses (780)	%	%	%	%
Collaborating in the development & implementation of policy	38	50	8	4
Seeking information or advice	30	65	3	2

Responding to consultation over a specific policy/project	36	56	6	2
Receiving information on grant processing	12	42	24	22
Receiving assistance interpreting legislation	4	41	39	16
Providing advice or information to the Government	40	53	5	2
Receiving advice and support in delivering outcomes	14	55	21	10
Receiving information or guidance	26	63	7	4

Method of contact

6.4 Respondents were then asked to select the main method they used to interact with officials (Table 6.2). Almost 9 out of ten respondents used email to correspond (89%), followed by face to face meetings (86%).

6.5 As the table highlights, there has been an increase since 2008 in all of the methods used by stakeholders when corresponding with the Scottish Government. This increase could be explained by changes in the way the survey has been administered with it only being available on-line, allowing respondents more time to consider the various option/methods they use to interact with the SG. Any comparisons with previous years' data should be approached with extreme caution.

Table 6.2: Methods used to interact with the Scottish Government

Q And what are the main methods you use to interact with the Scottish Government?

	2004	**2005**	**2008**	**2010**
Base: All respondents	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*934*
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**
Email	87	88	84	89
Face-to-face meetings	73	69	75	86
Telephone conversations	69	73	67	78
Reports/propositions/submissions	33	33	29	64
Conference/event	25	25	23	53
Letters	44	44	32	44
Scottish Government website	n/a	n/a	19	39

Other written documents	**	**	**	28
Other	3	3	3	3
None	0	0	1	0

*The sum of the columns is greater than 100% because respondents were able to select more than one method.

** In the 2004 to 2008 surveys the category of 'other written documents' was included the 'reports' category.

Knowing who to contact in SG

6.6 Around half (55%) of those surveyed said that they either 'just know' or 'ask among colleagues and/or professional networks' when they need to find out who to speak to in the Scottish Government (see Table 6.3). Forty-four percent said that they ask an SG contact that they know already while around a third use the named official on correspondence or look up the website (34% and 29% respectively).

Table 6.3: Knowing who to contact in the Scottish Government

Q How do you find out who to speak to in the Scottish Government?

Base: All respondents 934	*%*
Ask amongst colleagues and/or professional networks	55
'Just know' - deal extensively with the SG	55
Ask an SG contact that I know already	44
Use named official on correspondence	34
Look up website	29
Telephone Scottish Government Central Enquiry Unit and ask	6
Other	2

*The sum of the columns is greater than 100% because respondents were able to select more than one method.

7 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

- The three key priorities for development of officials in their engagement with stakeholders were: better use of evidence in policy and decision making; timely and appropriate responses to issues; and understanding the constraints facing stakeholders.

- Stakeholders provided a number of other suggestions on how engagement could be improved. These included earlier/more strategic dialogue and better join-up within the SG.

- Other less pressing areas officials need to improve on include: being willing to take views on board; being clear about how much is open to change; involving stakeholders at an early stage in the development of policy; and being open to challenge.

7.1 The next section reports stakeholders' perceptions of the characteristics of SG officials, the critical successful factors in stakeholder engagement, and areas for improvement.

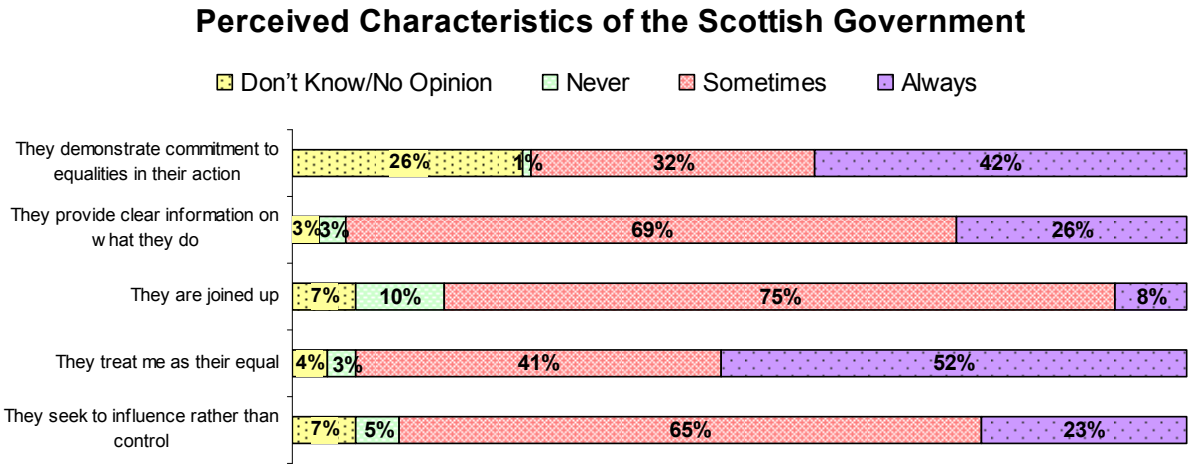
Stakeholder perceived characteristics of SG officials

7.2 Respondents were presented with a list of statements that might be used to describe an organisation, and were then asked to indicate to what extent each of these fitted with their impressions of the Scottish Government.

7.3 Just over half of all respondents (52%) said that SG officials 'Always' treated them as an equal (see Figure 7.1). A large proportion also said that they demonstrate commitment to equalities in their action (42%). However, as with previous surveys the number of respondents who felt that SG officials were 'joined up' was low with only 8% saying that this was 'Always' the case.

Figure 7.1: Perceived characteristics of the Scottish Government

Q Listed below are some words and phrases that could be used to describe the way that people in an organisation work. Can you please indicate to what extent these fit your impressions of the Scottish Government officials you work with most often.



Join-Up

7.4 The issue of poor join-up within the organisation has been flagged as an issue in all of the Stakeholder Surveys, with the responses to this survey highlighting that stakeholders feel that there has been little improvement in recent years. Open text comment boxes and the follow-up interviews provided respondents with the opportunity to highlight both negative and positive comments on their experiences of 'join-up' within the organisation.

7.5 As one respondent commented in response to the survey:

Sometimes we know more than colleagues which can be embarrassing for the civil servant you are working with at the time.

[Respondent to open text question]

7.6 The lack of join-up was seen by one stakeholder as not necessarily an obstacle to interaction but as:

a barrier to good interaction. You know it doesn't stop us, but it takes additional time that could be well spent on other things.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

7.7 Other interviewees acknowledged that their perceptions of the SG being joined up depended on their experience of individual officials, and there was a variety between DGs:

Some parts are joined up, some are not. But the SG is far too large and complex to be aware of the details of every department, so it is inevitable that parts are not joined up. I'd say it's as good as it can be.

[Academic Institution]

7.8 Another attributed the poor join-up to pragmatic reasons:

Everyone's got their own workstreams... they aren't necessarily aware of or think about the other people's workstreams.

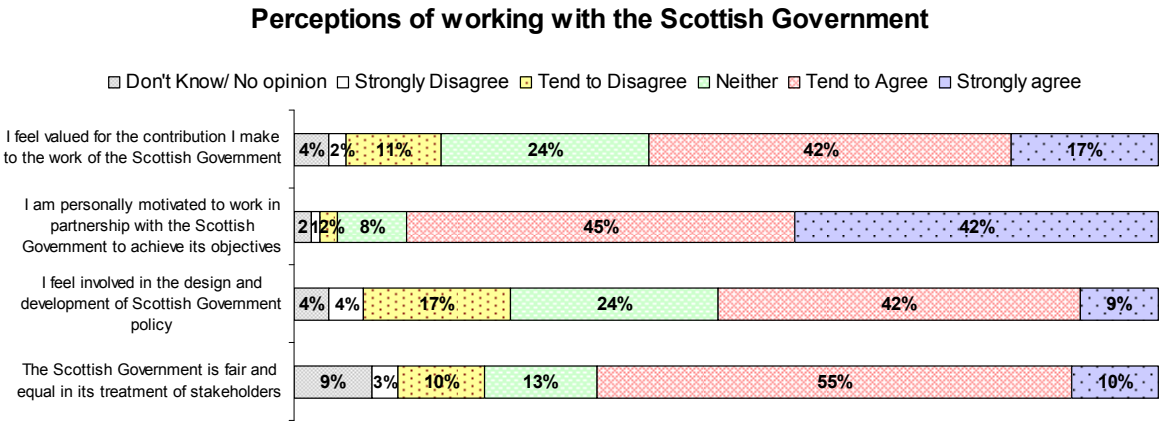
[Non-Departmental Public Body]

Perceptions of working with the SG

7.9 A further question in the survey asked stakeholders of their perceptions of working with the Scottish Government. They were presented with four statements about the SG and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with them. The responses to this question are highlighted in Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2: Perceptions of working with the Scottish Government

Q Listed below are a further 4 statements about the way in which the Scottish Government works with stakeholders. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each



7.10 The vast majority of respondents agreed with the statement 'I am personally motivated to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to achieve its objectives' (87%). Around 6 in 10 agreed with the statements 'I feel valued for the contribution I make to the work of the Scottish Government' and 'The Scottish Government is fair and equal in its treatment of stakeholders' (59% and 65% respectively). Just over half agreed that they feel involved in the design and development of Scottish Government policy, while just over a fifth (21%) disagreed with the statement.

Critical success factor

7.11 To understand the attributes stakeholders valued when working with officials, they were presented with a list of 11 behaviours and asked to select the most important ones in their dealings with SG officials (see Table 6.4). All of the attributes were viewed as important by stakeholders, but some were viewed as more important than others The most important attribute was 'Providing accurate and reliable information'.

Table 7.1: Perceived importance of critical success factors

Q18 Listed below are 11 attributes. Please indicate how important each of the following is to you in your dealings with Scottish Government officials.

Base: All valid responses (865)	**Essential**	**Very important**	**Important**	**Not important**	**Don't Know**
	%	%	%	%	%
Provides accurate and reliable information	73	23	4	-	-
Provides timely and appropriate responses	44	49	7	-	-
Is open to challenge	32	43	23	1	1
Is willing to take your views on board	35	49	16	-	-
Understands what you are trying to achieve	47	44	9	-	1
In policy making, is clear about how much is open to change	37	47	13	1	2
Involves you at an early stage in developing policy	39	39	16	3	2
Staff treat you with courtesy and respect	35	35	28	1	-
Staff are knowledgeable about their area of work	47	42	10	-	1
That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence	55	35	8	1	1
Understands constraints facing stakeholders	44	44	11	1	1

7.12 To illustrate this information more clearly, Figure 7.3 highlights the importance of each of the factors to stakeholders, with a positive score on the graph highlighting that stakeholders viewed this factor as important. A negative score highlighted that the factor was less important in comparison to the other attributes. The distribution of these attributes is similar to 2008 but highlights that the factors 'Providing accurate and reliable information' and SG officials 'Providing timely and appropriate responses are growing in importance.

Figure 7.3: Relative importance of the critical success factors

7.13 Respondents were then asked to rate how well SG officials were performing against each of these attributes, and these are outlined in Table 6.5.

Table 7.2: Actual performance of the Scottish Government on critical success factors

Q Listed below are the same 11 attributes. Please indicate what your experience is of the Scottish Government officials with whom you have most contact.

Base: All valid responses (866)	Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Provides accurate and reliable information	19	40	30	9	2	0	0
Provides timely and appropriate responses	11	31	33	18	6	1	0
Is open to challenge	7	25	30	25	8	1	4
Is willing to take your views on board	11	29	30	21	6	1	2
Understands what you are trying to achieve	13	31	31	16	6	1	1
In policy making, is clear about how much is open to change	6	26	29	25	7	1	6
Involves you at an early stage in developing policy	9	21	26	25	11	2	6
Staff treat you with courtesy and respect	34	38	19	7	0	1	0

Staff are knowledgeable about their area of work	17	36	31	13	2	1	0
That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence	9	28	32	18	6	1	6
Understands constraints facing stakeholders	8	24	31	24	9	1	3

7.14 The highest performing attribute was 'Having staff who treat you with courtesy and respect' with 91% of respondents rating SG officials as being good to excellent on this. As in previous years 'Involving you at an early stage in developing policy' was the attribute which respondents felt the SG performed less well on with only 56% viewing performance as good to excellent. A breakdown of these critical success factors since 2004 is given in Table 7.3. The table would suggest that stakeholders believe that performance has increased on 10 of the factors since them, with only 'Being willing to take your views on board' declining (2004 – 66%; 2010 – 61%).

Table 7.3: Change in performance on Critical Success Factors since 2004

	Good to excellent				**Poor to very poor**			
	2004	**2005**	**2008**	**2010**	**2004**	**2005**	**2008**	**2010**
Base: All respondents	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	*866*	*824*	*1,099*	*811*	866
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Providing accurate and reliable information	74	74	82	89	5	6	3	2
That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence	n/a	n/a	63	69	n/a	n/a	9	7
Having staff who are knowledgeable about their area of work	n/a	78	83	84	n/a	5	4	3
Understanding constraints facing stakeholders	55	47	61	63	17	19	11	10
Understanding what you are trying to achieve	68	65	73	75	12	12	7	7
Involving you at an early stage in developing policy	52	58	57	56	17	14	12	13
In policy making, being clear about how much is open to change	51	51	59	61	18	15	10	8
Having staff who treat you with courtesy and respect	91	91	93	91	3	2	1	1
Being open to challenge	n/a	n/a	58	62	n/a	n/a	12	9
Providing timely and appropriate responses	66	61	71	75	10	11	9	7
Being willing to take your views on board	66	62	69	61	10	12	7	8

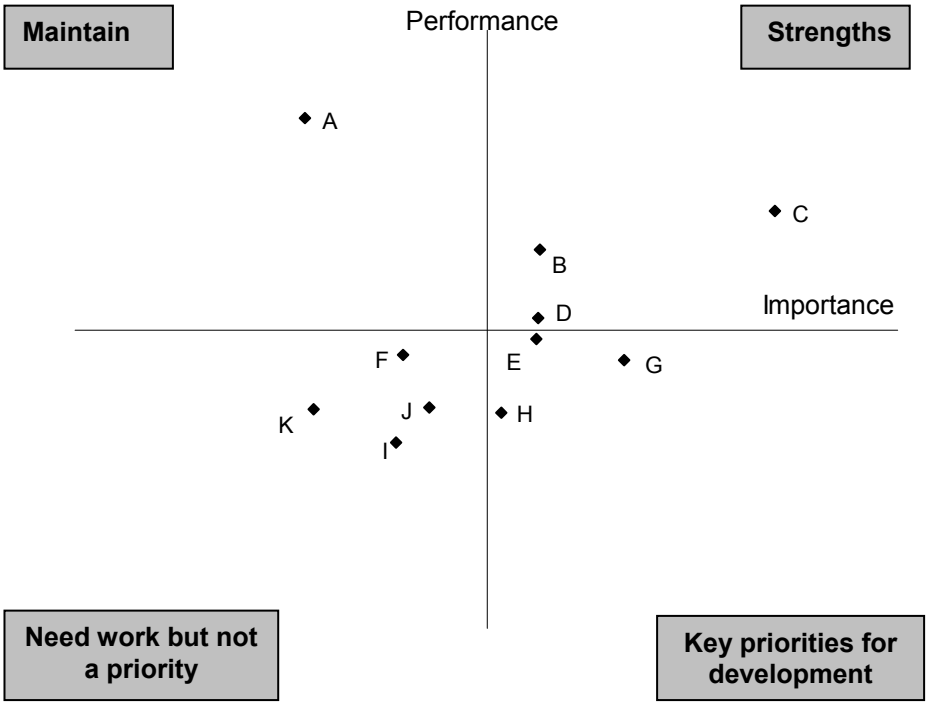
Opportunities for improvement

7.15 To illustrate more clearly the attributes of officials which stakeholders viewed as most important, compared with stakeholders rating of officials' actual performance in regards to these attributes, an additional score was calculated (z-score). This score had been plotted on to an axis (Figure 7.4) and shows the relationship between the attributes' importance, and stakeholders' ratings of the SG's performance against each[2].

7.16 In this analysis, factors that are more important than average or on which the Scottish Government is performing better than average attain positive z-scores. Conversely, factors viewed as being less important than average or on which the Scottish Government is performing less well than average have negative scores.

7.17 In this type of analysis, the ideal would be to achieve high performance on attributes that have the highest levels of importance, placing these factors in the top-right quadrant of the chart (Strengths). High performance on relatively less important factors would be in the top-left (Maintain) and relatively poor performance on less important factors would appear in the bottom-left (Need work but not a priority).

Figure 7.4: Critical success factors: importance versus performance



[2] The scores for each attribute given in Tables 6.4 and 6.5 were standardised by converting the mean of each of the scores given to a z-score. Importance and performance were rated on a four point and six point scale respectively. A z-score expresses each item in a numerical series in terms of the series mean and standard deviation to tell us which have scored higher or lower than average. The z-score for any item in a series is calculated as the value minus the mean of the series, divided by the standard deviation of the series a to z $z_x = \frac{\left(x - \overline{x_{atoz}}\right)}{\sigma_{atoz}}$

A	Having staff who treat you with courtesy and respect
B	Having staff who are knowledgeable about their area of work
C	Providing accurate and reliable information
D	Understanding what you are trying to achieve
E	Providing timely and appropriate responses
F	Being willing to take your views on board
G	That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence
H	Understanding constraints facing stakeholders
I	Involving you at an early stage in developing policy
J	In policy making, being clear about how much is open to change
K	Being open to challenge

7.18 One important feature of this chart is that it highlights the *relative priority that needs to be attached to improving performance on each factor*. In general, the aim would be prioritise those aspects that are most important and showing the poorest performance – those that appear in the bottom-right quadrant (Key priorities for development).

7.19 These factors are ensuring that 'policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence', 'Understanding constraints facing stakeholders', and 'Providing timely and appropriate responses'. Material from the follow-up interviews highlighted some stakeholders views on the SG's performance on three key priority attributes for development, which is outlined below:

Key priority for development: use of evidence in policy and decision making

7.20 As in previous years having policy and decisions based upon sound evidence was viewed as important by stakeholders with the SG's actual performance not as strong compared with other factors. The issue was explored in greater depth in the follow-up interviews. Many of the interviewees felt that evidence was often used too selectively by government officials:

> *I tend to find that the evidence gets explored when there's particular enthusiasm to do it and that tends probably to be a more political driver to it then a policy driver.*
>
> *[Voluntary/Third Sector]*

7.21 Some of the respondents linked officials' use of evidence to the consultation exercises they were often requested to take part in. Although they valued the opportunity to take part in such consultations, many were concerned about how officials chose which information to use. One commented on their involvement with such exercises:

> *I think it tends to question the credibility of the SG. I think at times you think well what is the point if decisions are going to be made on that basis. Well then I think it probably can lead to more of a sense that there is no great value in that engagement because decisions will be from elsewhere.*
>
> *[Local Authority]*

7.22 When evidence was drawn upon from further afield, some stakeholders felt that officials used a limited selection of sources and contacts:

I think they go to their own internal trusted groups and you know we all get into group think and I think government is no different.

[Private Sector/Business]

7.23 One interviewee suggested that evidence was more likely to be drawn upon if such information was collected routinely:

I think at a macro level when it comes to high level national policies then there is probably a reasonable evidence base which is supported by, whether its economic data or whether its population or demographic data…I think when you move into individual policy areas sometimes at a lower level the basis upon which policies are created, I think is much more questionable.

[Local Authority]

7.24 Another suggested that although SG officials were good at highlighting that policy was evidence based they felt that it was often too superficial:

Whilst there is lip service paid to evidence, and research I feel that it is more driven by the need to find a quick solution, or that's a hope in the outset.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

7.25 Officials also need to pay better attention to the quality of the information they used, as one respondent commented:

In other words I think the quality, and depth of evidence, and reliability of evidence isn't always as sound as it should be.

[NHS/Health organisation]

7.26 One interviewee felt that evidence did not need to be complex, and that the new approach to government in Scotland had encouraged evidence based policy making:

I think [an] evidence base is essential but sometimes evidence doesn't need to be demonstrated in a very complex way. It can be demonstrated in quite a simple way by getting key indicators to say that people's lives are better, their lives have improved, poverty has reduced etc etc etc..

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

7.27 Although most raised concerns about limitations in how the SG used evidence, one respondent commented:

I think that they are very more evidence based than they ever were and on a daily basis are getting a lot better.

[Private Sector/Business]

Key priority for development: timely and appropriate responses

7.28 Whilst the distribution of critical success factors remained (Figure 7.4) similar to 2008, the factor of 'Providing timely and appropriate responses' moved into the 'Key priorities for development' quartile. Although there has been an increase in the number of respondents rating the SG's performance as 'Good to Excellent' in regards to this factor, the issue has grown in importance for stakeholders. Many interviewees felt that some SG officials took too long in responding to issues, and were too inflexible when responding to stakeholders which is highlighted by this interviewee's experience:

…so you speak to somebody and there's that slight sort of shrug and glazed eye and oh that's not me that would be the people across in rural affairs, I'll forward your enquiry on and then 4 weeks later you may or may not get an answer depending on whether someone in rural affairs has got back or not. That's all very well for you, that's how the civil service operates and how the SG operates but to me, I'm an external person and quite frankly one civil servant to me is as good as another.

[Interest Group/Representative Body]

7.29 Another felt that the SG's performance had got worse in regards to this matter:

I just think things in the public sector always take a long time anyway but I think it is gone beyond a joke quite how long it has taken to point out that there are errors or contradictions.

[Interest Group/Representative Body]

7.30 The ease of access to officials was appreciated by one stakeholder but they also expressed frustration at delay in responses:

I'm very grateful for the ease with which we can approach the civil servants, but I think what I find very frustrating thereafter is the unwillingness to do anything, which is frightening because everyone else seems keen to get things done, and it seems a total impasse.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

7.31 Such delays were attributed by one respondent to lack of sufficient professional expertise within the organisation:

The main source of my frustration is the delay, and I would add that I don't think the Scottish Government has the capacity, the right resources, for quite significant finance and HR and IT issues that are part of any big merger…Generally, you get put on projects and haven't necessarily got the professional expertise that's required.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

Key priority for development: understanding the constraints facing stakeholders

7.32 Linked to these issues 'Understanding the constraints facing stakeholders' was identified as another key priority for development by the SG. During the interviews some stakeholders mentioned the tight and unrealistic demands placed on stakeholders for consultation exercise. At the time of interview one interviewee had just been requested to input into a consultation exercises with a tight deadline:

I would say that there is a huge turnaround and this is not the first time I have had consultations coming out over the summer vacations with a 2 week turnaround.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

7.33 After having been involved in such exercises, some stakeholders often did not know what happened to their submissions. For these respondents acknowledgement and feedback of their involvement would have been appreciated:

Sometimes there is a working group on x and y, and you put all this effort into x and y, and x and y gets put in a filing cabinet and that's the end of it. You don't know why that's happened…. It's sometimes a year later, you look back and you wonder what's happened there

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

7.34 The demands placed on stakeholders in participating in SG tendering exercises was identified by a number of respondents. They felt that officials often did not understand the burden placed on them in putting together tenders and completing what they saw as unnecessary paperwork:

Well, I think my honest view of them is that it's a box ticking exercise. They have to do that. But it's regardless of, you know, if they came and sat in my seat, and they looked at what they had to do, and then I said to them, well that's fine, this week you've done that tender, so you've made no money at all, so I actually can't pay you one week of your salary, I think they'd have a different view. But clearly they come from a different kind of place.

[Private Sector Organisation]

7.35 The analysis of the critical success factor by importance and performance also highlighted other factors which the Scottish Government needs to work on but which were viewed as less of a priority (those in the bottom left quartile of Figure 7.4):

- Being willing to take your views on board
- In policy making, being clear about how much is open to change
- Involving you at an early stage in developing policy
- Being open to challenge

7.36 The interviews again provided further insight into stakeholders' views of the Scottish Government's performance on these attributes which are outlined in the section below.

Need work on: being willing to take your views on board

7.37 One interviewee felt that although some officials were willing to consult with stakeholders they failed to view them in a more customer orientated way:

> *I would say that apart from superficial courtesy, which I don't deny there was, they don't really seem to treat the stakeholders as their employers which in effect they are, or at least their equals - they have a patronising attitude.*
>
> *[Interest Group/Representative Body]*

7.38 This was attributed by one interviewee to officials being more concerned about their career rather than the views of others:

> *I have a suspicion, and it may be unfair, that certain people, certain civil servants are more concerned about their own careers at times than they are the subject matter. In other words, 2 years in this job, I just want to keep my nose clean. I've dealt with civil servants on other things, and I've dealt with civil servants abroad, and I've never met such apathy towards change as I've seen recently.*
>
> *[Interest Group/Representative Body]*

Need work on: in policy making being clear about how much is open to change

7.39 Drawing upon their involvement with consultation exercises one interviewee expressed frustration about spending time providing information to officials which was never used:

> *I am not quite sure how the government makes its policy because quite often… we put forward these suggestions but the Minister or whoever, wanted to do something completely different. So you feel like, I find it hard to believe that Ministers make decisions in complete vacuums. There must be somebody that is giving them advice, and it must be based on a proposal. They don't just wake up and make decisions. There is a lack of transparency of how those policies are made.*
>
> *[Local Authority]*

7.40 This apparent lack of openness in policy-making was picked up by another respondent:

> *I think policy making - or at least my perception is - that sometimes policy development can happen behind closed doors and I also think that it can happen by engaging a limited number of organisations or stakeholders.*
>
> *[Voluntary/Third Sector]*

7.41 One interviewee complained that they never received feedback from the SG on whether their submissions were used:

I put things forward, they are noted, end of story. It might be taken up, it might be rejected, but we don't get any feedback as to what the reaction of the Government is.

[Registered Charity]

7.42 The belief that policy making and consultation was a one-way process was highlighted by another:

I think it feels like it's very distant. It feels like there is an attempt or at least a presentation in an engagement in policy making but on the whole we would tend to think that it is something that's done to us rather than with.

[Local Authority]

7.43 Others viewed the process as being dependent on the individual involved, mentioning that some officials were better than others:

I think again it depends and comes down to individuals. I know sometimes we have worked with officers in Government who have been very open to us saying feed us information and change and we will present the truth, but we have also had clear examples of where the voluntary sector and some of our own stakeholders views have been blocked because individual officers have had the perception that that is not the case.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

Need work on: involving you at an early stage in developing policy

7.44 As previous examples have highlighted effective and appropriate consultation is valued by some of the interviewees. Feedback on how the information they provide is used is also valued, and viewing information provision by stakeholders as an on-going process rather than as a one-off exercise was also seen as important. One respondent drew on their experience of being involved too late in the development of policy, and that certain officials should plan better and get respondents involved earlier on.

I think, you know, these days you just have to be pretty efficient, and I think the challenge is persuading people, actually it's a really good use of time to get a couple of hours out at the very beginning, rather than an hour here and an hour there, and hour somewhere else, once the project's going. I think it's much better to get it all at the beginning.

[Private Sector]

Need work on: being open to challenge

7.45 The final attribute which it was felt that officials needed to work on further was 'Being open to challenge'. Some of the interviewees commented that it was

important for them to effectively challenge officials when they felt that their expertise was not being drawn upon effectively. One stakeholder felt that whilst some officials were willing to listen to their concerns and criticisms:

…other people really couldn't care and what they're interested in is going to their desk in the office, doing their 9 to 5, keeping their nose clean and going home again.

[Interest Group/Representative Body]

7.46 Another spoke of an incident with a senior civil servant with whom they had challenged about the number of working groups set-up by the Scottish Government:

[It]…didn't go down at all well. And, do you know what, that was reported on within government. I know, because it came back to me in another way.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

8 NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND SCOTLAND PERFORMS

- *Just over 7 out of 10 respondents (71%) said that they knew a great deal or fair amount about the SG's Purpose and National Outcomes. Stakeholders engaging mainly with the Education and Lifelong Learning Ministerial Portfolio knew the most about this (87%).*
- *Local authority stakeholders were most likely to say that their working relationship had changed the most following the introduction of the Purpose and National Outcomes (56% said that it had changed a great deal or fair amount).*
- *Only 3 out of 10 of respondents felt that the Concordat had changed things a great deal or fair amount.*
- *The survey indicated the knowledge of Scotland Performs remains low, with around a quarter of respondents (26%) saying that they know a great deal or fair amount about it.*

8.1 The following section looks at stakeholders' awareness of the National Performance Framework.

The Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes

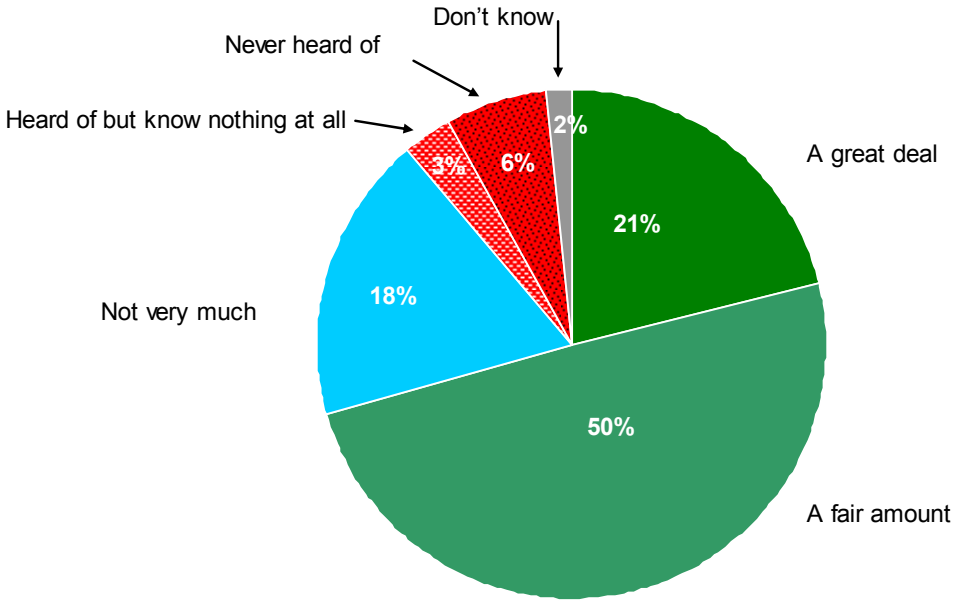
8.2 In 2007 the Scottish Government introduced an outcome-focused approach to government through its National Performance Framework. Soon afterwards the Scottish Government and local authorities agreed a Concordat to deliver these outcomes in partnership.

8.3 The survey included a number of questions to assess stakeholder awareness of the approach and how well SG officials had implemented it.

8.4 The proportion of respondents who said they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes had reduced from 78% in 2008 to 71% in 2010. The proportion of respondents saying they knew nothing at all or had never heard of them increased from 6% in 2008 to 9% in 2010 (Figure 8.1). However, neither of these changes was statistically significant.

Figure 8.1 Awareness of Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes

Q. Overall, how much, if anything, do you know about the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes? Would you say …



8.5 Awareness of the Purpose and Outcomes was higher than average among stakeholders representing local authorities (88% of this group knew a great deal or a fair amount) and the wider public sector (73%). There were no significant difference between urban and rural stakeholders.

8.6 In terms of differences by Ministerial portfolio area, stakeholders engaging mainly with Education and Lifelong Learning, Finance and Sustainable Growth and Justice were most likely to know a great deal or a fair amount about the Purpose and Outcomes (87%, 77% and 69% respectively).

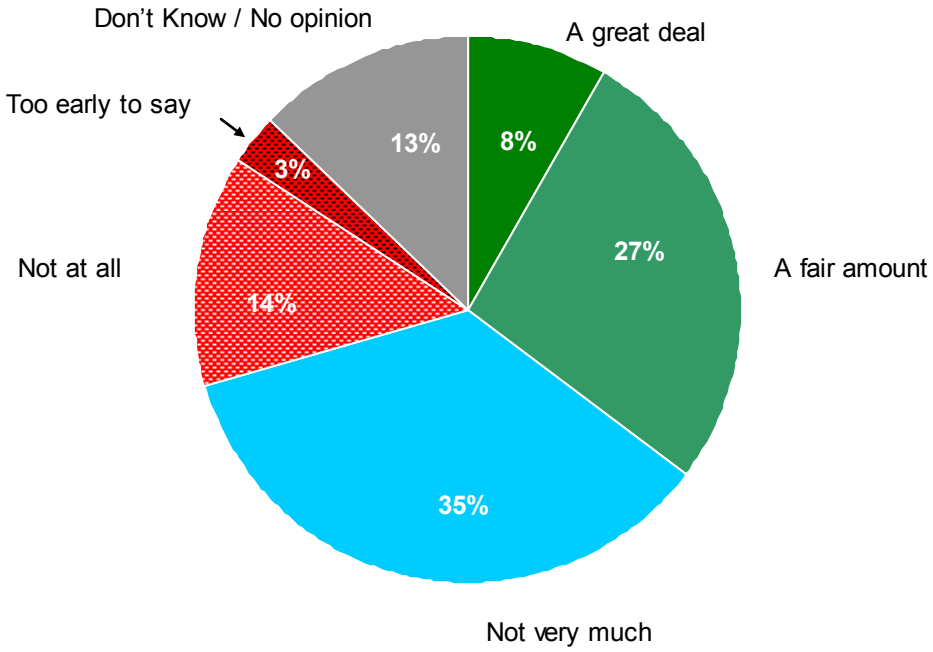
8.7 Asked how well they felt the Scottish Government had communicated the importance of its Purpose and National Outcomes, 47% said very or fairly well, while 28% said not very well. A further 5% said it had not communicated the Purpose and Outcomes at all.

8.8 Local authority stakeholders were more likely than average to say the Scottish Government had communicated the importance of the Purpose and National Outcomes fairly or very well (77%). In contrast, 62% of stakeholders working in the private sector suggested that the Scottish Government had communicated the importance of the Purpose and National Outcomes not very well or not at all.

8.9 As figure 8.2 shows, stakeholders were divided over the extent to which the Purpose and Outcomes had changed their working relationships with the Scottish Government. Around a third (35%) said it had changed relationships a great deal or a fair amount, while 49% said there had been no, or not very much change.

Figure 8.2: Impact of Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes

Q. To what extent would you the Government's Purpose and National Outcomes has changed working relationships between your organisation and Scottish Government officials?



8.10 Stakeholders representing local authorities were among those more likely to say that their working relationships with the Scottish Government had changed a great deal or a fair amount (56%). This is a reduction from 2008 when 64% of local authority stakeholders believed the National Performance Framework would change relationships a great deal or a fair amount. However, this difference was not statistically significant.

8.11 All of those stakeholders who said that the Purpose and National Outcomes had changed their relationship with the Scottish Government were asked to say what specifically had changed in an open text field. The majority of responses were positive (84%) with 6% being more negative and 10% neutral or mixed. Figure 8.3 presents the top ten positive coded responses in order of frequency. Looking at the most common responses, there was a perception that the Purpose and Outcomes provide a clearer sense of direction, promote more of a partnership approach and clarifies the Government's priorities.

Figure 8.3: Ways in which the Purpose and National Outcomes have changed stakeholder's relationship's with the Scottish Government

Q. In what ways has it changed your working relationship?

8.12 These views were explored in greater detail in the follow-up qualitative interviews. Some of these stakeholders shared the view that the National Performance Framework had improved clarity of purpose:

I don't think it has changed our relationship. I think it has made it clearer to understand exactly where we should be going… It is much easier to understand, what needs to be changed and what the outcomes are in relation to aspirations and objectives.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

It has not changed the relationship. It was already good but it did make us think more strategically. It improved understanding and clarified things.

[Academic sector]

8.13 Others welcomed the specific aspects of this streamlining, such as the reduction in perceived Scottish Government interference in local implementation:

We are being left to determine how to do it ourselves but we are being measured against the outcome and I think that is really, really important because in the past there was too much interference in what we were actually doing and no interest at all in the outcome.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

8.14 The main concerns about the National Performance Framework suggested that it had either added to bureaucracy, or that outcomes were abstract and there was a lack of coordination between the Framework and the activities of organisations:

I think it could have helped simplify and it simply hasn't done that. It's felt like a layer on top of the complication.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

A lot of these performance measures … have been put in there for the right reasons, but actually they end up having side effects or unintended consequences which actually just swamp us in bureaucracy that I think frustrates everybody involved.

[Private Sector]

I think at a national and even a local authority level that the use of outcomes can become very abstract and very disconnected from service delivery particularly where your involved in potentially some corporate functions which do not have a direct and immediately obvious correlation with a particular outcome.

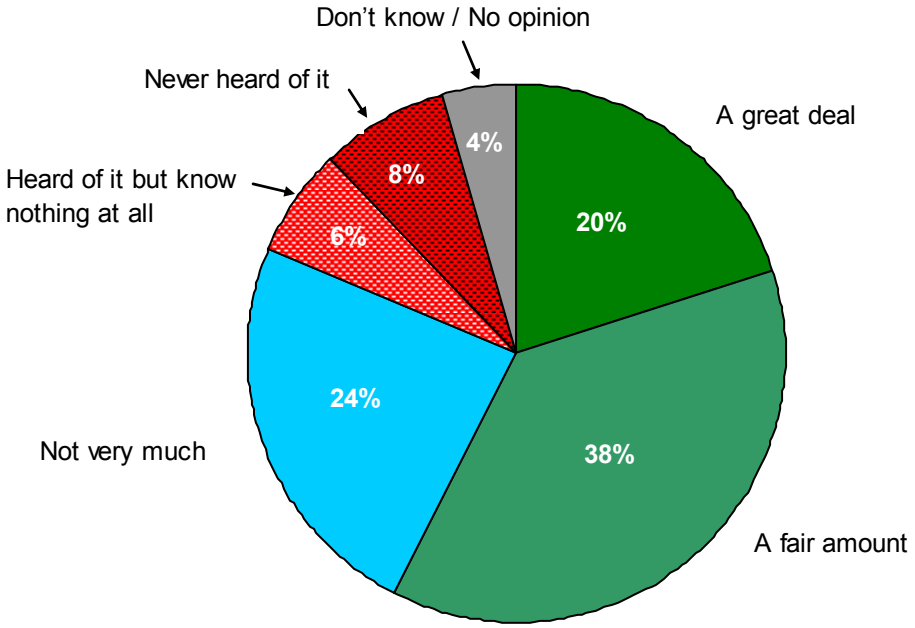
[Local Authority]

The Local Government Concordat

8.15 Just under three in five respondents (58%) said they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the local government concordat. Meanwhile, 24% said they didn't know much about it and 6% said they had heard of it but knew nothing about it. A further 8% had *never* heard of the concordat (Figure 8.4).

Figure 8.4: Knowledge of the local government concordat

Q. How much, if anything, would you say you know about the Concordat? Would you say



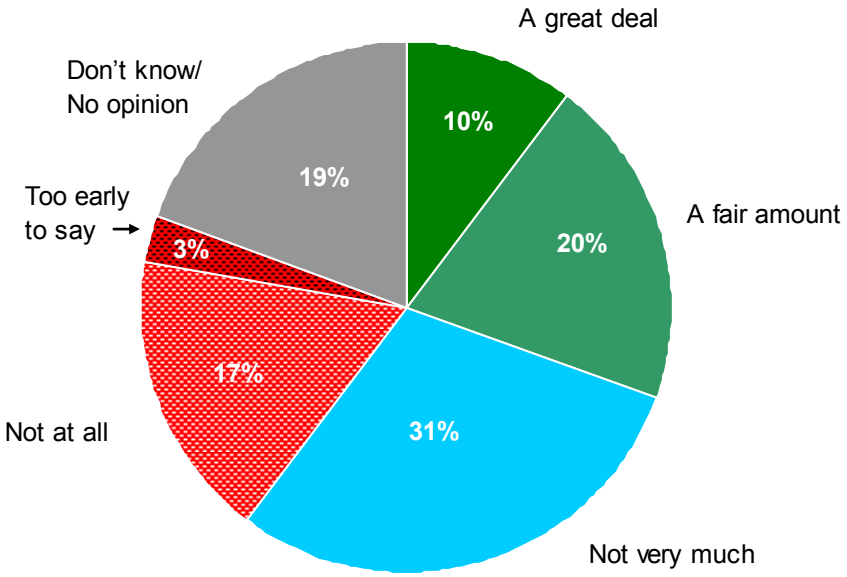
8.16 Knowledge of the Concordat was highest among local authority representatives (94%). This compares to 22% of private sector stakeholders and 54% across other public sector stakeholders. There were no significant differences between urban or rural stakeholders.

8.17 There were few notable differences between stakeholders depending on which Ministerial portfolio they engaged with most. Those least likely to know a great deal or a fair amount about the Concordat were those who had the majority of their contact with the Office of the First Minister (37%) and Rural Affairs and the Environment (25%).

8.18 All stakeholders who were aware of the Concordat were asked to what extent it had changed their working relationships with the Scottish Government. As in the case of the National Performance Framework, opinion was divided. Thus whereas 30% felt it had changed things a great deal or a fair amount, 48% felt it had little or no impact (Figure 8.5). These proportions compare to 41% believing the Concordat would change things a great deal or fair amount, and 34% feeling it would have little or no impact in the 2008 Stakeholder Survey. Again, the difference between the two surveys was not statistically significant.

Figure 8.5: Perceived impact of the concordat on stakeholders' relationships with Scottish Government

Q To what extent do you feel that the Concordat arrangements have changed working relationships between yourselves and Scottish Government officials? Would you say…



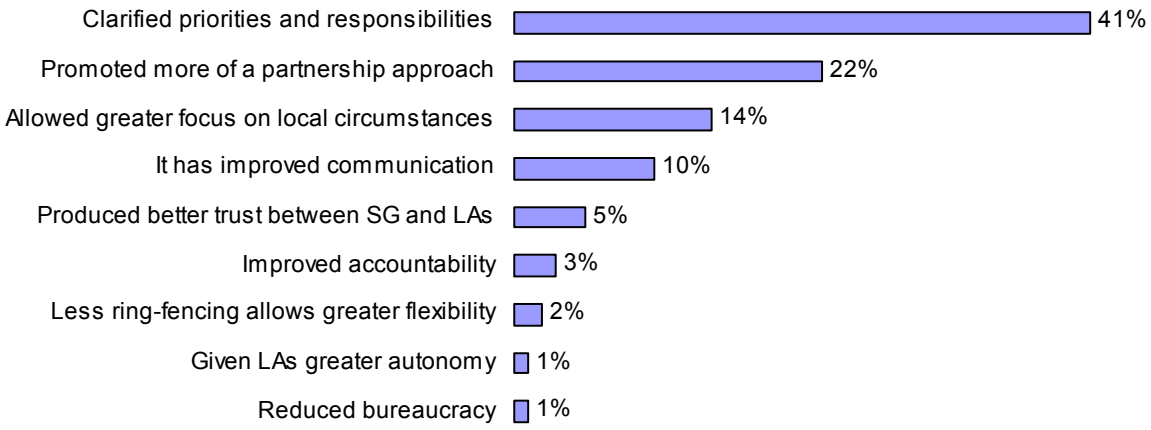
8.19 Local authority representatives were more likely than average to say that the Concordat had changed their working relationship with the Scottish Government (71%). Of these, 27% said it had changed things a great deal and 44% a fair amount. This compares to 47% who believed the Concordat would change things a great deal in the 2008 Stakeholder Survey. This difference was not statistically significant.

8.20 All stakeholders whose relationships with the Government had changed were again asked to specifically describe this. For the most part, the findings were

positive, with stakeholders suggesting that the new arrangements had clarified roles and responsibilities, promoted better partnership working, and enabled more of a focus on local circumstances (Figure 8.6).

Figure 8.6: Ways in which the concordat has changed stakeholders' relationships with Scottish Government

Q. And in what way do you think it has changed your working relationship?



8.21 In the follow-up interviews there were some concerns from the voluntary and third sector stakeholders about specific aspects of the Concordat, such as the end of ring-fencing and central government prioritisation of policy areas or attribution:

For a national organisation like us you know gives us particular challenges because we don't have particular relationships with a particular local authority where we're based.

[Respondent to open text question]

I think things like Single Outcome Agreements are a very good idea but in terms of being able to demonstrate whether that makes a difference on the ground … I think there are some questions that need to be asked and there will be some learning.

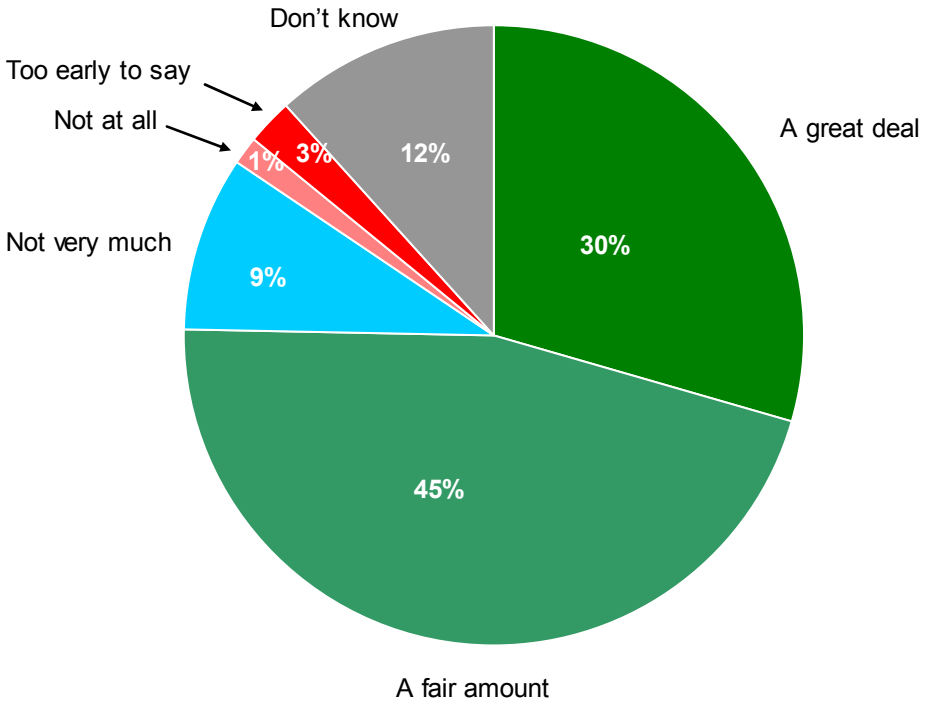
[Voluntary/Third Sector]

Partnership working outwith local government

8.22 The Scottish Government has expressed a commitment to working in partnership with *all* of its stakeholders, not just those in local government. Accordingly, in the survey, stakeholders with a non-local government background were asked to what extent they felt their organisation could contribute to helping the Scottish Government achieve its Purpose and National Outcomes. As figure 8.7 shows, three quarters felt they could contribute a great deal or a fair amount, while 10% felt there was little or nothing they could contribute. A further 3% felt it was too early to comment.

Figure 8.7: Non-local authority stakeholders and contribution to Purpose and National Outcomes

Q. To what extent do you feel your organisation contributes to helping the Scottish Government to achieve their Purpose and National Outcomes? Would you say…



8.23 There were few notable sub-group differences in these findings, but stakeholders from the local authorities, public sector organisations and the third sector most felt they could offer a great deal or a fair amount (100%, 81% and 84% respectively). Only 59% of private sector stakeholders felt they could contribute a great deal or a fair amount. Those stakeholders who liaised most with the Ministerial Portfolio of Education and Lifelong Learning were most likely to feel they could contribute a great deal or a fair amount (88%).

8.24 In the follow-up interviews, stakeholders welcomed the clarity of the National Performance Framework in stating what their contribution was:

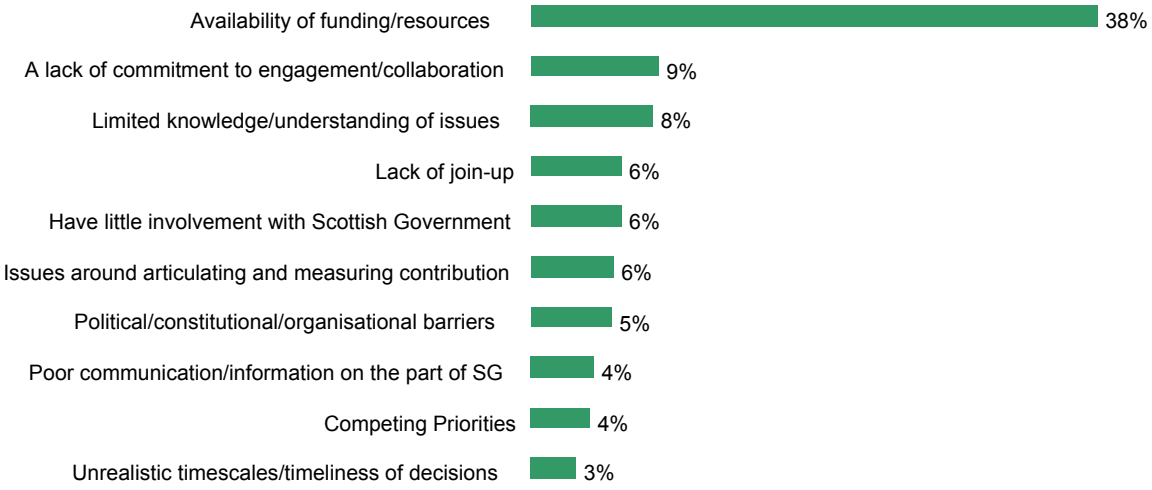
I think it's very well focused in fact. I like very much the way I can say to you now that I'm delivering against outcomes 9,11 and 15. I know what they are, I know what I have to do to deliver on those.
[Non-Departmental Public Body]

8.25 Non-local authority stakeholders were further asked about any barriers which limit the extent to which they can contribute to the Government's Purpose and Outcomes. A very wide range of barriers were mentioned but the most common response related to a lack of resources, mentioned by 38% (see

figure 8.8). The next most common responses were a lack of commitment to engagement or collaboration and limited knowledge or understanding of the issues on the part of the Scottish Government (9% and 8% respectively).

Figure 8.8: Barriers to contributing to the Government's Purpose and Outcomes

Q. And what barriers, if any, limit the extent to which you can contribute to the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes?



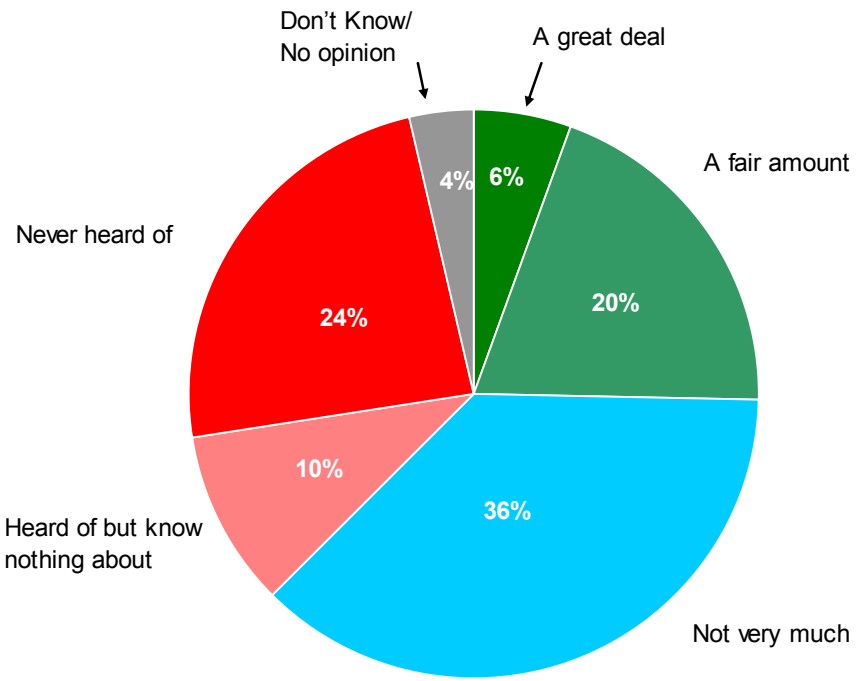
Scotland Performs

8.26 The survey indicated that knowledge of Scotland Performs was still generally low among stakeholders. As in 2008, only around a quarter of respondents said that they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the website (Figure 7.9). The proportion saying they knew nothing about it or had never heard of it reduced from 43% in 2008 to 34%, a statistically insignificant difference.

8.27 Stakeholders from local authorities and the wider public sector were most likely to know about Scotland Performs (37% and 33% respectively). Only 5% of stakeholders from the private sector knew a fair amount or a great deal about it. There were no significant differences in stakeholder's knowledge based on which Ministerial portfolio they had the majority of contact with.

Figure 8.9 Stakeholder's knowledge of Scotland Performs

Q. How much do you know about Scotland Performs? Would you say you know…?



8.28 In the follow-up interviews, stakeholders explained how they had become aware of Scotland Performs through general engagement with the implementation of the National Performance Framework:

Just through being aware of the development of policy. Being aware of the development of the framework and subsequently the implementation of the framework.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

8.29 Others expressed an interest in the site, but were not aware of it until they had engaged in the Stakeholder Survey:

It's funny, I'd actually be quite interested in it, but no-one kind of guides me to it, no-one refers me to it, no-one says you should be looking at this. Which seems to me to be kind of an omission if, you know, there's a lot of time and effort being put into this… I mean as a taxpayer and a voter and everything else, you know, I'm kind of keen to see how the government is performing.

(Private Sector)

8.30 In terms of some improvements to Scotland Performs, some stakeholders would welcome more local-level information being available:

One of my comments would be that it would be helpful if it could be translated to the local level, so instead of just a National one, it would also be good to see how Edinburgh Performs and Glasgow Performs.

[Voluntary/Third Sector]

9 RESPONDING TO FUTURE CHALLENGES

- *In the future, respondents said that they would value earlier and more strategic dialogue with the SG.*
- *Stakeholders raised a number of issues in regards to the proposed spending cuts. Most viewed it as a significant challenge for both their organisation and the SG, whilst others viewed it as an opportunity. Some had views on changing ways of working within the SG which could be made as a result of the spending reductions. These included reducing bureaucracy, and officials being more proactive in communicating and liaising with stakeholders on such issues.*

9.1 This chapter explores stakeholders' views on how the Scottish Government can improve its engagement with them over coming years. It draws upon comments made in the open text sections of the survey, and also in the follow-up interviews.

Improving engagement

9.2 As with previous years, the survey concluded with a question on ways in which the SG could improve engagement with stakeholders. There was a variety of different responses to this open-text question and to assist with analysis responses have been categorised into common priorities. The chart below (Figure 9.1) outlines the top eleven priorities identified, with the percentage of responses next to it in the chart.

Figure 9.1: Priorities for improving the SG's engagement with stakeholders

9.3 In their response to this question, respondents gave suggestions on how earlier and more strategic dialogue could be achieved. This included :

…not relying on consultations. Not to be defensive – but work in partnership. Job is not to withhold information but share it. Equal treatment of different stakeholders.

9.4 The overreliance on consultations was also highlighted by another respondent who felt that there should be

…more focus on the national outcomes and less on consultations and conversations on minor issues.

9.5 Another felt that stakeholders should play a more strategic role when developing policy making which was not just about consultation:

…be more inclusive in policy making and legislative change rather than concentrating on consultation. Stakeholders need to be able to shape change rather than be consulted on change.

9.6 There was also concern that the SG drew upon the expertise of a limited range of 'favourite' stakeholders, as this respondent suggested:

…be proactive in identifying organisations who have something to offer rather than going to the same old ones who are sometimes not really that representative but are good at marketing themselves to government.

9.7 Another theme identified as an area for improvement was 'join-up' (12%). Again sections of Chapter 6 have already highlighted some of stakeholders' concerns around join-up but some suggestions to improve it including the SG being:

...clearer with its own staff what is expected in terms of collaborative working and reward good practice

9.8 Some respondents mentioned areas of the SG which they felt were already joined up well with other parts, as one stakeholder noted:

…links with individual Directorates work well where established contact-points and relationships exist.

9.9 Other popular themes identified included 9% feeling that the SG needs to respect and listen to other organisations/stakeholders. A similar proportion (8%) said that the SG needs to engage stakeholders more in discussions, better communication/feedback, having a better understanding of other organisations and be more open/transparent.

Future challenges

9.10 The survey and the follow-up interviews also collected information from stakeholders on other issues they felt would present future challenges in their relationship with Scottish Government officials. Suggestions of how the SG

should respond to these changes in regards to stakeholder liaison were also collected. Perhaps not surprisingly many respondents cited the reduction in public spending as a major issue. As one interviewee put it, over the next few years there was likely to be

…a conflict between expectations and available resources.
[Non-Departmental Public Body]

9.11 Whilst acknowledging that cuts in budget would have a major impact on their organisation and the SG, another respondent commented:

… I see the financial situation as an opportunity, as well as a challenge. *[Voluntary/Third Sector]*

9.12 There was a concern felt by some that such challenges may negatively impact on the progress which the Scottish Government had made in recent years in establishing better stakeholder engagement:

There has been a very good sense of openness on the part of civil servants towards our sector and engaging with outside stakeholders and that would be a real shame if the pressures that we're all gonna be coming under in the next few years meant that that were to be compromised and that you know civil servants were to batten down the hatches and look after their own interests. That would be very retrograde and would make things worse when they're already gonna be bad.
[Interest Group/Representative Body]

9.13 This sentiment was reiterated by a respondent from local government who commented in the survey that enhanced communication between the SG and stakeholders was one way of ensuring that such positive relationships still continued:

In the face of black budgets to come, the improved relationship which has been built up over the past two years, needs to be sustained by regular and honest dialogue. Local government needs to know as soon as funding decisions are taken and encourage civil servants to reach earlier decisions. A consistent communication strategy would help.

9.14 Receiving regular updates from officials on future spending priorities was viewed as important, particularly in allowing stakeholders to plan:

…we understand that we are going through a period of change and nothing is clear however, an indication of some of the thought processes would be useful. We wouldn't necessarily give that out but it would help us to support our organisation through this period of challenge and also help us plan ahead.
[Voluntary/Third Sector]

9.15 Officials getting to know their stakeholders even better, and also understanding how such partners could assist them in delivering the Scottish Government's objectives was raised by another interviewee. They felt that the SG needed to cut down on non-essential activities and concentrate more:

…on how other organisations' work can benefit their policy objectives and how Scotland can be part of something bigger. This could be supported by early stage mapping of different organisations' missions and interests to inform decisions about where Scottish Government can rely on others to take a lead role.

[Respondent to open text question]

9.16 Another felt that it was good opportunity for the SG to review some of the other bureaucracy associated with the civil service:

…if you have got fewer staff and fewer resources, the best way to deal with that is not to have yet more paperwork, rather it is to streamline what there is

[Local Authority]

9.17 One interviewee felt that the current situation provided an ideal opportunity for a more detailed analysis of the purpose of the civil service to be carried out

I think Government needs to resolve whether the civil service is an enabler of policy implementation or an expert in service delivery.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

9.18 This same interviewee felt that there was a mismatch in the skills of some staff and the post they held:

…So you have a range of civil servants who've got very good portfolio management skills but who do not necessarily have the expertise in which to implement that policy at an operational level.

[Non-Departmental Public Body]

9.19 As with previous surveys the issue of staff movement was an area of concern for some respondents. Having continuity in the staff they dealt was valued by some as is reflected by this comment:

It's difficult to build relationships and develop good understanding when people change jobs so often. In the sector I work, many of the key industry representatives have been in post for over 3 years. Chopping and changing every two to three years may be good for personal development, but doesn't add much value to the job.

[Respondent to open text question]

9.20 With the anticipated reduction in size of the public sector over coming years, it will be interesting to see how this impacts on the composition of the SG's workforce, and the effect this will have on stakeholder engagement levels. The changes may result in employees staying in particular posts longer,

alternatively it could lead to greater mobility in the organisation with work streams being closed down and staff moving to new areas. As responses from some of the stakeholders highlight, these respondents do value dealing with staff who have sufficient subject expertise and with whom they can establish long-standing working relationships with.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The findings highlight that the Scottish Government has been able to retain the high levels of satisfaction it has built up with stakeholders over the last five years. Most hold the SG in high regard as is illustrated by the finding that almost eight times as many respondents said that they would speak highly of the SG than be critical of it. The SG also scores highly in providing accurate and reliable information to stakeholders, and also treating them as an equal.

10.2 Overall there appears to a good level of awareness of the National Performance Framework, with a large proportion of respondents saying that they know a great deal or fair amount about the Framework. However, as responses to the survey and follow-up interviews highlight certain stakeholder groups know little about the framework. There is also a sizeable proportion of stakeholders who feel that this approach has had little impact on their relationship with SG officials. The continued challenge for SG officials is to ensure that they link their work objectives to the Framework, and for them to ensure that stakeholders also do this too.

10.3 It is interesting to note that many of the same issues which were flagged as poorly performing when the first Scottish administration Stakeholder Survey was carried out in 2004 still remain. Reflecting the difficulties many large organisations face in linking together parts of their operations, the SG is not rated highly in regards to join-up. Some feel that it needs to continue making improvements in how its draws upon evidence in policy making. The findings suggest that the SG needs to work better at this both collectively and corporately. Stakeholders view the organisation as being too disjointed; it needs to do better at drawing upon their expertise, and present a more coherent corporate identity. Although stakeholders are generally positive about the service which is provided by the Scottish Government, issues such as officials dealing with requests in a timely manner are seen as important. With the realignment of the organisation in coming years stakeholders raised some concern that performance would decline. A possible way to address this could be through a staff awareness campaign highlighting the importance of responding to requests quickly and managing information better. The introduction of a maximum response time for officials dealing with such requests could also help address stakeholders' concerns.

10.4 Stakeholders did raise specific issues around future spending and the future structure of the SG and how these could potentially impact on their relationship with the SG. There were clear messages for the Scottish Government on that it should communicate these changes to stakeholders clearly and early.

10.5 Issues around the movement of staff in the organisation was also discussed, with some stakeholders commenting on the lack of specialist knowledge of staff they liaised with. They valued working with officials who had appropriate knowledge and expertise, and them remaining in post for longer periods of time so that stronger working relationships could be established. A mismatch of staff with project management expertise being placed in specialist policy

posts and the impact this may have on stakeholder relations was also identified. This finding will be useful in the development of the Scottish Government policy of flexible staff resourcing which was one of the recommendations of the Shaping Up Review.

10.6 Although drawing upon a smaller sample, the findings show that private sector respondents were less positive about the SG than other organisational groups. One possible explanation for this could be their involvement with procurement exercises. Some of the private sector stakeholders interviewed were clearly dissatisfied by such exercises they had been involved with. Although such processes are regulated predominantly by Europe, there was a perception that officials often did not understand the burden placed on organisations in putting together tenders. There was concern again in regards to the timely communication of outcomes from these exercises.

10.7 As the researchers who carried out this exercise found, there is still a varied level of knowledge amongst SG officials of who their key stakeholders are. The introduction of a stakeholder database will ensure that the SG has a more dynamic record of stakeholders, which will also enable them to be contacted quickly and efficiently. It will also assist with the effective communication between SG officials and stakeholders over the challenging years ahead.

11 ANNEX A : SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY 2010 - QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE ABOUT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NOT MINISTERS

1.1.1 Screening

Q1 Have you had contact with the Scottish Government in the last 12 months?

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	CLOSE

1.1.2 Demographics

The first few questions are about yourself and about the organisation you represent. Some of the questions about your organisation may seem very basic and the answers obvious. However, we need to ensure that the information we gather is completely accurate so that we are able to group organisations together for analysis purposes.

Q2 What is your position in your organisation?

PLEASE WRITE IN

Q3 How long have you been with your organisation?

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Less than five years	1
Between five and ten years	2
More than 10 years	3
Don't know/can't remember	4

Q4 What type of organisation is it that you work for? Is it a…

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

Non-Departmental Public Body	1	
Local Authority	2	
Voluntary/Other third sector or voluntary bodies	3	
Interest Group/Representative Body	4	
Registered Charity	5	
Private sector/business	6	
NHS/health organisation	7	
Scottish Government Agency	8	CLOSE
Central government department	9	
Academic institution	10	
Public/private sector partnership	11	
UK Government Agency	12	
A member of a Community Planning Partnership	13	
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN AND CODE ' ')	14	
Don't know	15	

ASK ALL

Q5 What is the postcode of the office from which you work?

PLEASE WRITE BELOW

Q6 Which of the following would you say best describes your organisation's relationship with the Scottish Government?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

a)	Campaigns or lobbies on specific issues	1
b)	Delivers services on behalf of or in partnership with the Scottish Government	2
c)	Delivers services to the Scottish Government	3
d)	Advises or consults on behalf of the Scottish Government	4
e)	Advises or consults to the Scottish Government	5
	Something else (PLEASE WRITE IN AND CODE ' ')	6
	Don't know	7

Q7 Is your organisation…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

		YES	No	Don't know
a)	Funded wholly by the Scottish Government	1	2	3
b)	Funded in part by the Scottish Government	1	2	3
c)	Regulated by the Scottish Government	1	2	3
d)	Previously funded by Scottish Government through specific funding streams that have ended	1	2	3
e)	Previously funded by local government through specific funding streams that have ended	1	2	3

Q8 How many people would you say are currently employed by your organisation at all of its offices or branches?

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

<10	1
11-50	2
51-200	3
201-500	4
501-1,000	5
1,001-5,000	6
5,001+	7
Don't know	8

Q9 To which policy/subject area does most of your engagement with the Scottish Government relate?

PLEASE WRITE IN

Q10 Please select the ministerial portfolio that most of your engagement relates to?

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Office of the First Minister (Inc Culture & External Affairs and Parliamentary Business)
Health and Wellbeing (Inc Public Health & Sport and Housing & Communities)
Finance & Sustainable Growth (Inc Enterprise, Energy & Tourism and Transport, Infrastructure & Climate Change)
Education and Lifelong Learning (Inc Skills & Lifelong Learning and Children and Early Years)
Justice (Inc Community Safety)
Rural Affairs & the Environment
Don't know

1.1.3 General perceptions of the Scottish Government

The following questions are about your general impressions of the Scottish Government.

AGAIN, PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE ABOUT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NOT MINISTERS

Q11 Do you have any general comments about the way in which the Scottish Government engages with you as a key stakeholder?

PLEASE WRITE IN

Q12 In the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the dealings you have had with the Scottish Government?

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know	6

Q13 Which of these comes closest to describing how you would speak about the Scottish Government? Would you…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Speak highly of it without being asked your opinion	1
Speak highly of it but only if you are asked	2
Be neutral about it	3
Be critical of it if asked	4
Be critical of it without being asked	5
Don't know	6

1.1.4 Successful stakeholder relations

The next few questions are about specific aspects of working with the Scottish Government. Just to remind you again,
THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE ABOUT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NOT MINISTERS

Q14 How often have you had the following types of contact with the Scottish Government as a representative of your organisation in the last 12 months?

PLEASE SELECT ONE OPTION FROM EACH ROW

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Don't know
Collaborating in the development & implementation of policy	1	2	3	4
Seeking information or advice	1	2	3	4
Responding to consultation over a specific policy/project	1	2	3	4
Receiving information on grant processing	1	2	3	4
Receiving assistance interpreting legislation	1	2	3	4
Providing advice or information to the Government	1	2	3	4
Receiving advice and support in delivering outcomes	1	2	3	4
Receiving information or guidance	1	2	3	4

Q15 And what are the main methods you use to interact with the Scottish Government?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

Face to face meetings	1
Letters	2
Reports/proposals/submissions Other written documents	3
Emails	4
Telephone conversations	5
Conference/event	6
Scottish Government website	7
Other (please specify)	8
None of these	9
Don't know	10

Q16 How do you find out who you need to speak to in the Scottish Government?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

Ask amongst colleagues and/or professional networks	1
'Just know' - deal extensively with the SG	2
Look up website	3
Go through established contacts	4
Telephone Scottish Government Central Enquiry Unit and ask	5
Use named official on correspondence	6
Ask an SG contact that I know already	7
Other (please specify)	8
None of these	9

Q17 Listed below are some words and phrases that could be used to describe the way that people in an organisation work. Can you please indicate to what extent these fit your impressions of the Scottish Government officials you work with most often.

PLEASE SELECT ONE OPTION FROM EACH ROW

		Always	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know/ No opinion
a)	They seek to influence rather than control	1	2	3	4
b)	They treat me as their equal	1	2	3	4
c)	They are joined up	1	2	3	4
d)	They provide clear information on what they do	1	2	3	4
e)	They help me achieve my aims	1	2	3	4
f)	They demonstrate commitment to equalities in their action	1	2	3	4

ASK ALL

Q18 Listed below are 11 attributes. Please indicate how important each of the following is to you in your dealings with Scottish Government officials.

PLEASE SELECT ONE OPTION FROM EACH ROW

	Essential	Very important	Important	Not important	Don't know
Provides accurate and reliable information	1	2	3	4	5
Provides timely and appropriate responses	1	2	3	4	5
Is open to challenge	1	2	3	4	5
Is willing to take your views on board	1	2	3	4	5
Understands what you are trying to achieve	1	2	3	4	5
In policy making, is clear about how much is open to change	1	2	3	4	5
Involves you at an early stage in developing policy	1	2	3	4	5
Staff treat you with courtesy and respect	1	2	3	4	5
Staff are knowledgeable about their area of work	1	2	3	4	5
That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence	1	2	3	4	5
Understands constraints facing stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5

Q19 Listed below are the same 11 attributes. Please indicate what your experience is of the Scottish Government officials with whom you have most contact.

PLEASE SELECT ONE FROM OPTION FROM EACH ROW

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
Providing accurate and reliable information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing timely and appropriate responses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is open to challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Willing to take your views on board	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Understands what you are trying to achieve	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In policy making, being clear about how much is open to change	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Involving you at an early stage in developing policy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff who treat you with courtesy and respect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff that are knowledgeable about their area of work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
That policy and decisions are based upon sound evidence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Understands constraints facing stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q20 Listed below are a further 4 statements about the way in which the Scottish Government works with stakeholders. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each

PLEASE SELECT ONE OPTION FROM EACH ROW

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Neither	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/ No opinion
The Scottish Government is fair and equal in its treatment of stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel involved in the design and development of Scottish Government policy	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am personally motivated to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to achieve its objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel valued for the contribution I make to the work of the Scottish Government	1	2	3	4	5	6

1.1.5 Stakeholders and the Scottish Government

In 2007 the Scottish Government set out a new Performance Framework based on a stated Purpose of Government, associated targets and national outcomes.

Q21 Overall, how much, if anything, do you know about the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes? Would you say …

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Heard of but know nothing at all	4
Never heard of	5
Don't know/No opinion	6

ASK ALL WHO SAY A GREAT DEAL > HEARD OF BUT KNOW NOTHING

Q22 And how well do you feel the Scottish Government has communicated the importance of the Purpose and National Outcomes? Would you say…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

Very well	1
Fairly well	2
Not very well	3
Hasn't communicated at all	4
Don't know/No opinion	5

Q23 To what extent do you feel the introduction of the Government's Purpose and National Outcomes has changed the working relationships between yourselves and Scottish Government officials? Would you say…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Not at all	4
Too early to say	5
Don't know/No opinion	6

ASK ALL WHO SAY A GREAT DEAL OR FAIR AMOUNT

Q24 In what way has the introduction of the Government's Purpose and National Outcomes changed your working relationships?

PLEASE WRITE IN

ASK ALL

In November 2007, the Scottish Government signed a Concordat with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities setting out the terms of a new relationship between national and local government in Scotland. Under the Concordat each Community Planning Partnership has agreed a Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government based on 15 national outcomes reflecting local circumstances and priorities.

Q25 How much, if anything, would you say you know about the Concordat? Would you say …

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Heard of but knew nothing at all	4
Never heard of it	5
Don't know/No opinion	6

Q26 To what extent do you feel that the Concordat arrangements have changed working relationships between yourselves and Scottish Government officials? Would you say…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Not at all	4
Too early to say	5
Don't know/No opinion	6

ASK ALL WHO SAY A GREAT DEAL OR FAIR AMOUNT

Q27 And in what way do you think it has changed your working relationships?

PLEASE WRITE IN

1.1.1

1.1.2 The Value of Stakeholder Relations

ASK ALL NON-LOCAL AUTHORITY STAKEHOLDERS

Q28 To what extent do you feel your organisation contributes to helping the Scottish Government to achieve their Purpose and National Outcomes? Would you say…

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Not at all	4
Too early to say	5
Don't know	6

Q29 And what barriers, if any, limit the extent to which you can contribute to the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Outcomes?

PLEASE WRITE IN

ASK ALL

In 2008, the Scottish Government launched the Scotland Performs website, which allows people to measure the impact of Government policies.

Q30 How much do you know about Scotland Performs? Would you say you know ...

PLEASE SELECT ONE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Heard of but know nothing about	4
Never heard of	5
Don't know/no opinion	6

Q31 Finally, thinking about all the topics covered in the survey, if you could suggest one way in which the Scottish Government could improve the ways in which they work with and involve other organisations, what would it be?

PLEASE WRITE IN

Q32 On a scale of 1 to 10, please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the quality of your relationship with the Scottish Government (where 1 is not at all satisfied and 10 is extremely satisfied).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Q33 Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Over the next few weeks, we will be conducting telephone interviews with a small number of stakeholders to explore in more depth some key issues arising from this research. Would you be willing to help with that research? If yes, please leave your contact details in the box below.

12 ANNEX B: SATISFACTION WITH SG

Satisfaction with SG by organisation's relationship

Relationship with SG	Very satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Campaigns or lobbies on specific issues	105 (33.4%)	145 (46.2%) **79.6%**	39 (12.4)	18 (5.7%)	7 (2.2%)
Delivers services on behalf of or in partnership with SG	189 (34.9%)	258 (47.7%) **82.6%**	50 (9.2%)	36 (6.7%)	8 (1.5%)
Delivers services to the SG	34 (31.5%)	43 (39.8%) **71.3%**	16 (14.8%)	12 (11.1%)	3 (2.8%)
Advises or consults on behalf of the SG	43 (35.8)	52 (43.3%) **79.1%**	12 (10%)	9 (7.5%)	4 (3.3%)
Advises or consults to the SG	102 (33.6%)	140 (46.1%) **79.7%**	37 (12.2%)	19 (6.2%)	6 (2.0%)
Don't Know	2 (50.0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	30.5	49.2	14.1	4.7	1.6

Organisation funded by the SG

Organisation status	Very satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Funded wholly by the SG	36 29.5	61 50 **79.5%**	10 8.2	14 11.5	1 .8
Funded in part by SG	170 35.9%	228 48.1% **84%**	46 9.7%	25 5.3%	5 1.1%
Regulated by the SG	9 21.4%	24 57.1% **78.5%**	6 14.3%	2 4.8%	1 2.4%
Previously funded by the SG through specific funding	7 23.3%	18 60% **83.3%**	2 6.7%	3 10%	0 0
Previously funded by local government through specific funding	2 66.7%	1 **33.33%**	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

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