# Awareness of Services

## Quantitative Research

Research Study Conducted for
Ofgem

November 2004

# Contents

# Introduction

This report presents the findings of quantitative research conducted by MORI for Ofgem into awareness of the Priority Services Register and energy efficiency advice and assistance provided by energy companies.

## Methodology

Questions were placed on behalf of Ofgem on MORI's regular face-to-face General Public Omnibus survey. MORI interviewed a representative national quota sample of 1,977 people aged 15+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, in home, between 4 – 8 November 2004. Where available the results have been compared with the earlier survey conducted by MORI for Ofgem in September 2003 (which again involved placing questions on MORI's General Public Omnibus survey).

### Sample Design

The sample design is a constituency based quota sample. There are 641 parliamentary constituencies covering Great Britain. From these, we select one in three (210) to be used as the main sampling points on the MORI Omnibus. These points are specially selected to be representative of the whole country by region, social grade, working status, MOSAIC rurality, tenure, ethnicity and car ownership. Within each constituency, one local government ward is chosen which is representative of the constituency.

Within each ward or sampling point, we interview ten respondents whose profile matches the quota. The total sample therefore is around 2,100 (10 interviews multiplied by 210 sampling points).

| | |
|---|---|
| Gender: | Male; Female |
| Household Tenure: | Owner occupied; Council Tenant/HAT; Other |
| Age: | 15 to 24; 25 to 44; 45+ |
| Working Status | Full-time; part time/not working |

These quotas reflect the socio-demographic makeup of that area, and are devised from an analysis of the 1991 Census combined with more recent ONS (Office of National Statistics) data. Overall, quotas are a cost-effective means of ensuring that the demographic profile of the sample matches the actual profile of GB as a whole, and is representative of all adults in Great Britain aged 15 and over.

### Fieldwork

Fieldwork is carried out by MORI using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). All interviews are conducted face to face, in the home - one interview per household. No incentives are offered to respondents.

### Weighting and Data Processing

Data entry and analysis are carried out by an approved and quality-assured data processing company. The data are weighted using 6 sets of simple and interlocking rim weights for social grade, standard region, unemployment within region, cars in household, and age and working status within gender. This is to adjust for any variance in the quotas or coverage of individual sampling points so that the sample is representative of the GB adult population.

## Interpretation of the Data

It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population of customers who have had a free gas safety check, has been interviewed. In consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. A guide to statistical reliability is appended.

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 volume an asterisk (*) denotes values above zero but less than half a per cent.

## Publication of the Data

Our standard Terms and Conditions apply to this, as to all studies we carry out. Compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct and our clearing of any copy or data for publication, web-siting or press release which contains any data derived from MORI research is necessary. This is to protect our client's reputation and integrity as much as our own. We recognise that it is in no-one's best interests to have survey findings published which could be misinterpreted, or could appear to be inaccurately, or misleadingly, presented.

# Summary of Findings

- There has been no significant change in awareness of the Priority Services Register since last year; around a quarter of those eligible to be on the Priority Services Register (ie 65+ or with a disabled person or persons in the household) have heard of it.

- Awareness is highest in the South (32%) and lowest in the Midlands (17%)

***Q*** ***Have you heard of the Priority Services Register used by gas and electricity suppliers? British Gas calls it the Home Energy Care Register and ScottishPower calls it the Carefree Priority Service Register. The other companies call it the Priority Services Register. It is a register of elderly, disabled and chronically sick customers who are eligible for additional services such as special controls and adapters, repositioning meters, special passwords and free safety checks and advice from their suppliers.***

| | **2003** | **2004** | **Change** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Base: All aged 65+ or with disabled in household* | (768) | (747) | |
| | **%** | **%** | **+/- %** |
| Yes, heard of it | 24 | 26 | +2 |
| No, not heard of it | 76 | 74 | -2 |

*Source: MORI*

- Like last year, though, on prompting more are aware of the services that they might receive free of charge from their energy supplier than are aware of the Priority Services Register itself. Two in five (42%) of eligible respondents are aware of one or more of the services tested compared to 26% who are aware of the Priority Services Register.

- Indeed, a third of those who say they have not heard of the Priority Services Register say that they have heard of one or more of the services they might obtain. On the other hand, not all of those who say they have heard of the Priority Services Register say they have heard of the individual services themselves (71% name one or more service).

- In addition, awareness of the services is down this year. 42% are aware of one of more services compared to 53% a year ago. Awareness is down across the board, though the change is not significant in the case

of Minicom and Textphone services and restricting the time of day in which meter readers visit.

- The greatest decline in awareness is evident in the case of special passwords – down 10 points to just 15%.

- Free gas safety checks continue to be the service that respondents are most aware of – 24%

- Awareness of the services is highest among ABC1s (48%) and lowest among DEs (38%)

***Q Are you aware that people aged 65+ years and people with a long-term illness or disability can get the following services free of charge from your gas and electricity suppliers?***

| | **2003** | **2004** | **Change** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Base: All aged 65+ or with disabled in household* | (768) | (747) | |
| | **%** | **%** | **+/- %** |
| Free gas safety checks | 31 | 24 | -7 |
| Advice on energy efficiency, appliance safety etc | 27 | 22 | -5 |
| Provision of bills in large print, braille and/or audio tape | 27 | 21 | -6 |
| Special identification password service – to be used by supplier representatives if they visit or call your home | 25 | 15 | -10 |
| Reading the meter once a quarter to ensure more accurate bills | 18 | 13 | -5 |
| Special controls and adapters for appliances and meters – to help with accessibility and ease of use | 17 | 11 | -6 |
| Minicom and Textphone services | 12 | 10 | -2 |
| Restricting the time of day in which meter readers visit | 11 | 9 | -2 |
| Repositioning meters to a more convenient location | 12 | 7 | -5 |
| Redirecting of bills to a third party | 10 | 6 | -4 |
| None of these | 35 | 46 | +11 |
| Don't know | 12 | 12 | 0 |
| Any five services | 16 | 9 | -7 |
| Any four services | 23 | 13 | -10 |
| Any three services | 31 | 22 | -9 |
| Any two services | 41 | 30 | -11 |
| Any one service | 53 | 42 | -11 |

*Source: MORI*

- Just over half of all adults are aware that they can obtain energy efficiency help and advice from their energy supplier. This is true regardless of whether they are in receipt of benefits or not.

- Just short of one in five of all adults (18%; 21% of those on benefit) say they have ever received any such help or advice from their supplier.

- Again, awareness of energy efficiency help and advice is highest among ABs (68%) and among higher income groups (71% of those with an annual household income of over £30,000). It is lowest among DEs (49%) and low income groups (45% of those with an annual household income of less than £9,500).

- Among those who are aware of the Priority Services Register, the figure rises to 74%, which suggests that this group is more generally aware of what is available to them.

***Q*** ***Are you aware that you can get help and advice from your supplier to improve the energy efficiency of your home?***

***Q*** ***Have you ever received any help or advice from your supplier to improve the energy efficiency of your home?***

| | **All** | **All in Receipt of Benefit** |
|---|---|---|
| *Base: All respondents* | (1,977) | (766) |
| | **%** | **%** |
| Aware | 56 | 55 |
| Received advice/help | 18 | 21 |

*Source: MORI*

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*Janette Henderson*

# Appendices

## Statistical Reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population", so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the "true" values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval".

**Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels**

| | 10% or 90% | 30% or 70% | 50% |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Interviews** | | | |
| 1,977 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 747 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 348 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| 200 | 4 | 6 | 7 |
| 100 | 6 | 9 | 10 |

*Source: MORI*

For example, with a sample of 1,977 where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of plus or minus 2 percentage points from the sample result.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the differences between the two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table overleaf:

| | Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **10% or 90%** | **30% or 70%** | **50%** |
| **Size of the samples compared** | | | |
| 747 (aged 65+/disabled 2004) and 768 (aged 65+/disabled 2003) | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| 928 (male) and 1051 (female) | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 443 (AB) and 570 (DE) | 4 | 6 | 6 |

*Source: MORI*

# Sample Profile

**Table Heading**

| | Weighted | Unweighted |
|---|---|---|
| *Base: All respondents* | *(1,976)* | *(1,977)* |
| | % | % |
| All | 100 | 100 |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 49 | 47 |
| Male | 51 | 53 |
| Age | | |
| 15-34 | 34 | 28 |
| 35-54 | 34 | 34 |
| 55-64 | 13 | 16 |
| 65+ | 19 | 22 |
| Social Class | | |
| AB | 24 | 22 |
| C1 | 27 | 28 |
| C2 | 21 | 21 |
| DE | 28 | 29 |
| Long term illness/disability | | |
| Respondent | 14 | 16 |
| Other household member | 9 | 9 |
| Region | | |
| North | 34 | 37 |
| Midlands | 31 | 29 |
| South | 35 | 34 |
| Work status | | |
| Full-time/part-time | 55 | 48 |
| Not working | 45 | 52 |
| Annual h/h income | | |
| Under £9,500 | 16 | 19 |
| £9,500 – £17,499 | 17 | 19 |
| £17,500 – £29,999 | 15 | 14 |
| £30,000 + | 23 | 19 |
| Benefits received | | |
| Child tax credit | 14 | 13 |
| Council tax credit | 11 | 14 |
| Income support | 8 | 11 |
| Housing benefit | 8 | 11 |
| Working tax credit | 7 | 6 |
| Disability living allowance | 6 | 7 |
| State pension credit | 6 | 7 |
| Attendance allowance | 2 | 2 |
| Income-based job seekers allowance | 1 | 2 |
| Disablement pension | 1 | 1 |
| None of these | 63 | 60 |

*Source: MORI*

# Computer Tables