

Code administrators performance survey

Independent Gas Transporter UNC (iGT UNC)

Gemserv

Introduction

As part of its 2016 Code Governance Review Final Proposals (Phase 3) (CGR3), it was decided that Ofgem should commission a standardised cross-code study to monitor and assess the performance of code administrators in their role in respect of each code that they administer.

The study evaluates the service provided by code administrators in accordance with the principles of the Code Administration Code of Practice (CACoP) which aims to align processes across the industry codes and identify areas of best practice.

This report looks specifically at the results for the Independent Gas Transporter UNC (iGT UNC) administered by the Gemserv and all verbatim comments were provided in respect of the iGT UNC and/or Gemserv respectively however they may be more widely applicable.

Method

A mixed mode programme of research was conducted with organisations interacting with industry codes consisting of:

- 15 depth interviews to inform questionnaire design
- A core survey with 204 participants to measure experience and performance of code administrators (34 participants answering about the iGT UNC)
- 22 follow-up depth interviews to get a more detailed understanding of drivers of satisfaction/dissatisfaction

Throughout the report, results are shown:

At a total level (aggregated results for all codes)

At a total for the iGT UNC (due to small base sizes, results are not broken down by subgroup)

*If iGT UNC results are significantly higher than the average, the total is shown in **green***

*If iGT UNC results are significantly lower than the average, the total is shown in **red***

Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this could be due to rounding or the exclusion of 'Don't know' or 'Not applicable' responses

Quotes from respondents included in the report and are not intended to be representative of the range of views, but rather offer a range of opinions, feedback and suggested improvements

*Where base sizes are small, this is shown by an * for bases less than 30 and ** for bases less than 15. This indicates that the data should be treated with caution*

Industry context

It is important that the structure and perceptions of the energy industry in which organisations operate are taken into account when interpreting survey results.

Organisations recognise that the energy market is going through a transitional phase and that the changes occurring may affect how they interact with codes. Highlighted changes include:

- Requirement for codes to be in line with European legislation

- Prevalence of new entrants into the market
- Attempts to streamline processes, such as the Code Administrators Code of Practice

Some feel that the market is getting more complex and there are occasions when Ofgem can add to the complications of processes associated with codes.

Codes are perceived as complex and typically very different, with some being more technical than others. Organisations highlight that increased cross-code coordination overall and simplifying operational aspects of codes would greatly assist them. For example, when changes to one code affect another, communications and associated processes should be in place for all the codes that will be impacted. There is also a call for a cross-code accession process (to avoid having to provide the same information to each code administrator).

Some organisations believe that industry-wide interventions could be initiated centrally to help streamline processes.

These external factors can influence how organisations perceive the service provided by code administrators. Nonetheless, they are generally considered to be performing well.


Executive summary

Gemserv performs well on most aspects of the service.


- Just over six in ten are satisfied with the service provided by the organisation, with only 3% of customers dissatisfied.
- Eight out of ten are satisfied with the provision of support.
- However, there are a few areas which Gemserv could further improve service:
 - Helping organisations with interpreting information
 - Helping to understand what modifications raised by others mean for its organisation
 - Improving the clarity of emails

Organisation profiling

ORGANISATION'S SIZE

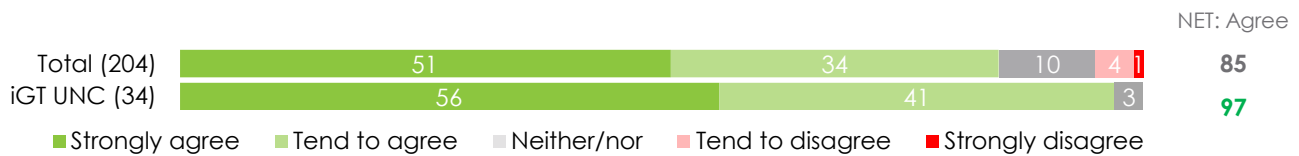
	No. of employees			
	0-49	50-249	250-999	1,000+
Total (204)	27%	17%	15%	38%
iGT UNC (34)	18%	12%	24%	41%

ORGANISATION'S ENERGY MARKET EXPERIENCE

	0-5 years	6-9 years	10+ years
Total (204)	13%	10%	76%
iGT UNC (34)	12%	3%	82%

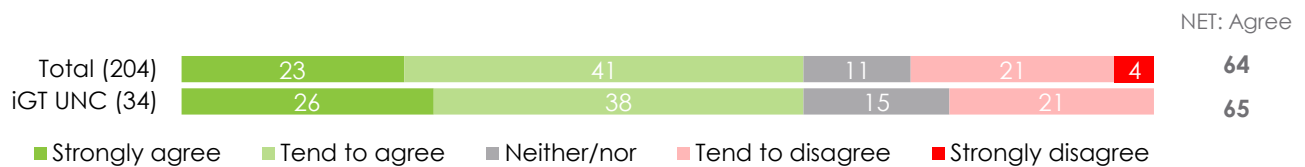
Across all codes, there are some broad differences between organisations of different sizes and their length of operation in the energy market. Individuals employed by small organisations (0-49 employees), or new entrants to the market (within the last 5 years) tend to express slightly lower levels of contentment throughout the survey across all codes. It is likely this is due to lack of resource and expertise, which are more frequently highlighted as issues by these groups. However, even those working for larger organisations say they sometimes face challenges when interacting with codes.

SUFFICIENT ORGANISATIONAL EXPERTISE TO DEAL WITH CODES



Q1. To what extent would you agree or disagree that your organisation has sufficient expertise to enable you to deal with the codes you are responsible for or interact with? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

ORGANISATION'S RESOURCE



Q2. And to what extent would you agree or disagree that you have enough resource within your organisation to sufficiently deal with the codes you are responsible for or interact with? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Key findings

KPIS

The survey collected three measures of satisfaction :

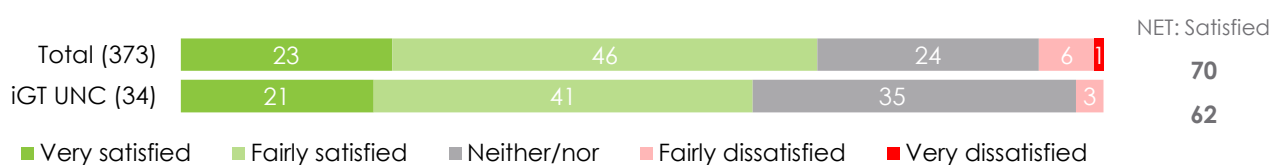
1. Overall satisfaction with the service provided to their organisation
2. Satisfaction with the provision of support
3. Satisfaction with support received when requested

Four out of five organisations are satisfied with Gemserv's provision of support and 73% are satisfied with the support received when requested. Just over six in ten are satisfied with the overall service from Gemserv concerning the iGT UNC.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Six in ten organisations are satisfied with Gemserv's service regarding the iGT UNC, only 3% are dissatisfied.

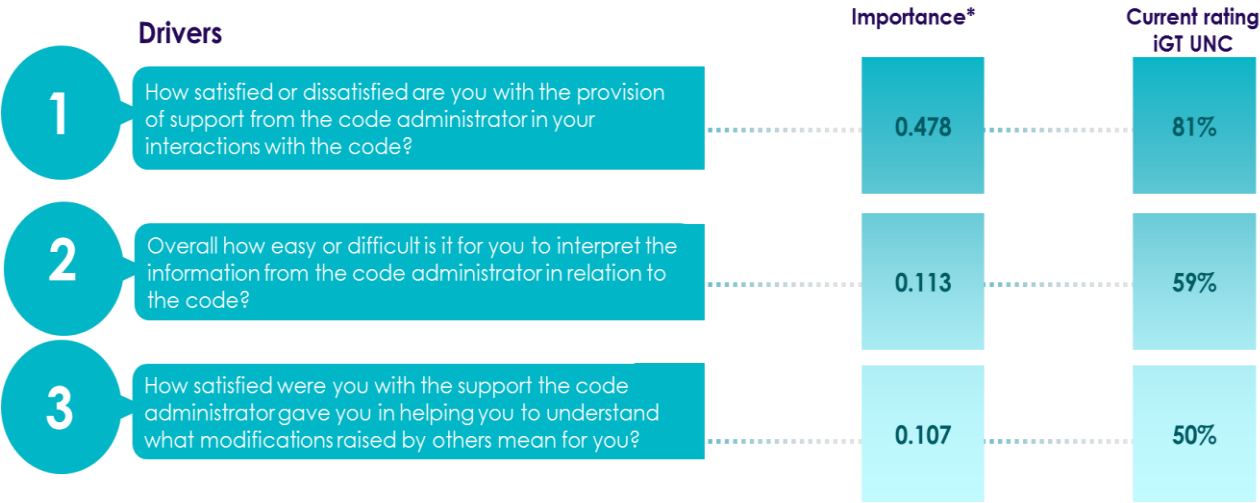
Several mentioned that changes to the UNC had to be mirrored by the iGT UNC. It was felt that there was little cross-code coordination of the process and customers had to manage the process themselves. Streamlining processes across the two codes would improve the experiences of organisations dealing with related modifications.



Q10. Thinking about all aspects of your dealings with the code administrator in relation to <this/these> codes, overall how satisfied are you with the service provided to your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

"99% of the time it is wonderfully well run. They do a really really good job."

To understand the aspects of service delivery that most impact overall satisfaction, key driver analysis (KDA) was conducted.¹ The aspects of service that have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction are:



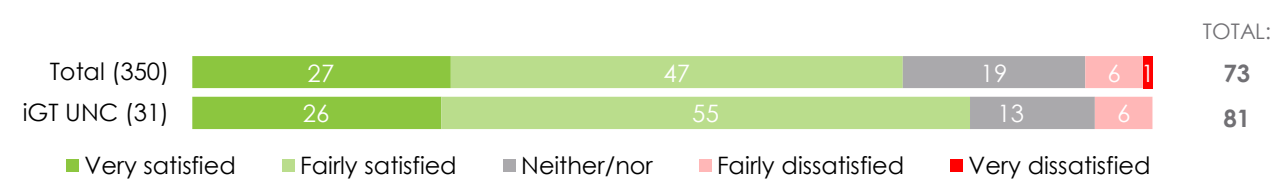
* The importance value will always have a value between -1 and +1, where, a large positive correlation means two ratings 'move together' and a negative correlation means the ratings move in the opposite direction. A correlation of 1 means an exact linear relationship (i.e. everyone gives the same rating for overall satisfaction as for provision of support.)

Due to the small base sizes, it is not possible to identify the key drivers for individual codes. The importance scores are based on the combined total for all codes and the current rating is specific to the iGT UNC.

SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION OF SUPPORT

Generally, organisations acknowledge the need for comprehensive detail, however additional support in interpreting this information is appreciated, particularly for small organisations or those new to the market. iGT UNC customers feel that Gemserv does its job well but could be more active in tailoring its service to individual organisations.

Just over eight in ten Gemserv customers say they are satisfied with the provision of support.



Q11a/Q11c. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the provision of support from the code administrator in your interactions with the <code>? Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

There is a perception among some organisations that Gemserv needs to broaden its knowledge around the UNC in order to provide sufficient support to customers.

“Gemserv needs more understanding of UNC change. There needs to be more cross code knowledge.”

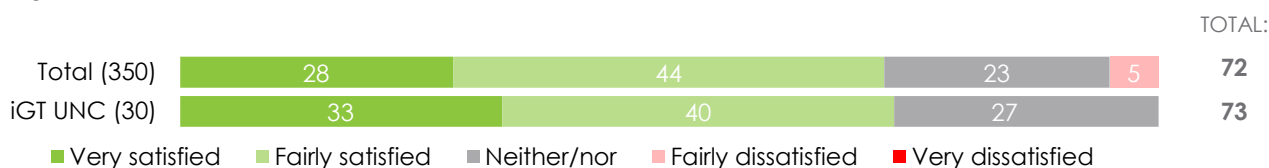
Greater support around interpretation is also highlighted as an area to improve on.

“More support in telling smaller suppliers what is most important to them. For example, interpreting the jargon, summarising what’s important, what we need to do and when.”

¹ KDA tests the strength of the correlation between ratings of core metrics against perceived level of satisfaction by which we can derive which factors have the greatest impact on overall attitudes – this is a subconscious measurement rather than a stated level of importance.

SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT RECEIVED WHEN REQUESTED

Most organisations (73%) are satisfied with Gemserv's response when they request information. No organisations are dissatisfied.



Q13/Q13b. And when you request support from the code administrator in relation to the <code> how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support you receive? Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

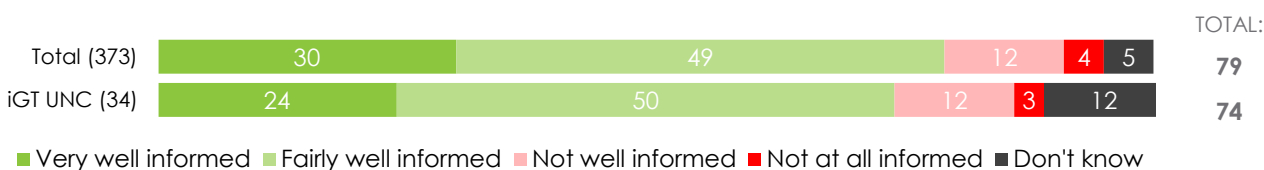
Perceptions of information provision

On average, organisations receive information about the iGT UNC from Gemserv 1-2 times a week and for the majority (83%), this frequency is about right.

KEPT INFORMED ABOUT THE CODE

At an overall level, there is correlation between the experience and size of an organisation and perceptions of being informed about the codes. This demonstrates that resource and familiarity tend to produce a more comfortable position in which to deal with associated code processes.

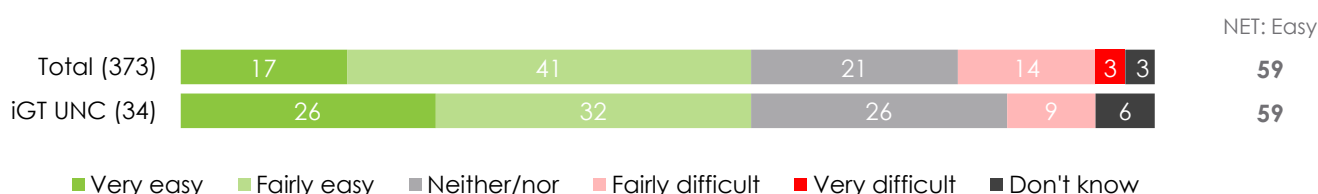
About three in four organisations say that Gemserv makes them feel 'very' or 'fairly' well informed about the iGT UNC.



Q14/Q14b. How well do you feel your code administrator keeps you informed about the <code>? Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

EASE OF INTERPRETING INFORMATION

At an overall level, those with more experience of industry codes find it easier to interpret related information. While organisations face some challenges with interpretation across all codes, they acknowledge that it may be difficult to simplify information due to the complexities of the code itself. Around six in ten find it easy to interpret information coming from Gemserv.



Q15/Q15b. Overall how easy or difficult is it for you to interpret the information from the code administrator in relation to Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

Interpretation of information needs to be easy for organisations across all contact points.

"Make it clearer whether the changes apply to domestic or non-domestic suppliers. My company is non-domestic so some of the information is irrelevant. Perhaps flag it in the heading."

Perceptions of direct services

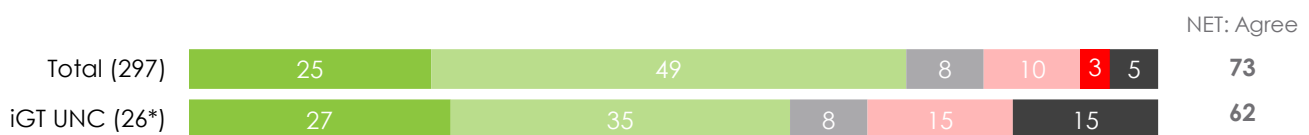
EMAIL

Generally, organisations prefer to receive information via email so they do not have to manually search through websites to keep track of developments. It helps them to stay on top of changes to the code and provides a ready-made audit trail they can reference.

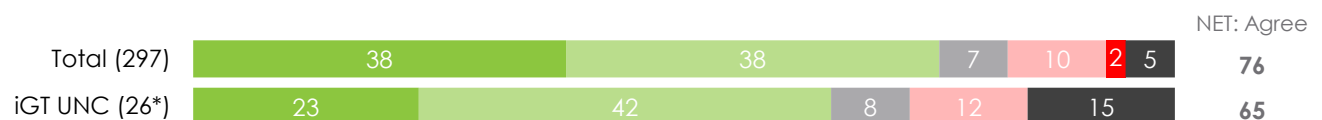
Across all codes, some emails are considered too content heavy and the volume of information can be hard to digest for those with limited resource. Organisations mention difficulties in identifying which emails require immediate action or contain information that is relevant to them. This can lead to important information being missed. There is appetite for a more tailored service, such as mailing lists that are specific to company type (such as generators or suppliers) or company size.

Gemserv's emails in relation to the iGT UNC are, on balance, perceived to be easy to understand (62% agree) and make it clear when action needs to be taken (65% agree). Gemserv could improve these scores by simplifying and tailoring information for different types of organisations.

'The emails I receive are easy to understand'



'The emails I receive make it clear when action needs to be taken'



■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those receiving information from code administrator (in brackets) (%)

The comments from organisations highlight a greater need for clarity within email communications. One organisation indicated that they have to rely on a third party to interpret information provided by Gemserv.

"Provide more email updates, instead we have to rely on a third party."

"I think maybe email communications should be validated to ensure all the information is contained within the communication."

WEBSITES

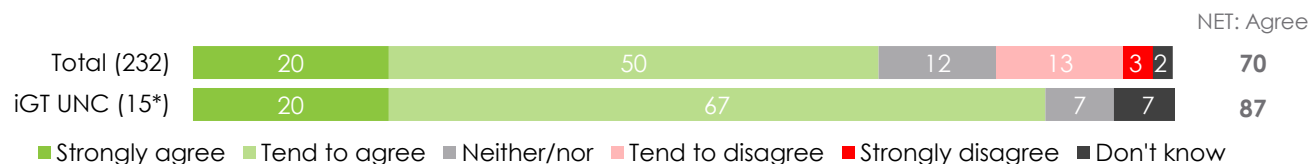
At an overall level, those accessing specific code websites more regularly find them easier to navigate, while those less familiar feel it can be difficult to find the information they are looking for. Code administrator websites are thought to vary in quality and some are not updated as frequently as others.

Ratings of Gemserv's iGT UNC website are high and there are no negative ratings. Nearly nine in ten consider the information on the website easy to understand, and almost three-quarters of Gemserv's customers agree that the website keeps them sufficiently informed of any changes or modifications to the code.

'I am able to easily find information on the website'



'The information on the website is easy to understand'



Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those using code administrator website (in brackets) (%)

While organisations are generally very positive about the Germsev website, there are some aspects that are highlighted as in need of improvements.

"They do a pretty good job. Maybe they could have a slightly better website, make it slightly easier to use."

"The website is okay, it's not particularly clear what applies to which size of supplier. It could do with better descriptions of the codes. They could do a search function for the size of supplier."

"Update the website."

MEETINGS

Overall, meetings and workshops are perceived as well run and useful. Introductory sessions are valuable for new entrants, chairs are generally impartial and effective, and organisations find it easy to contribute. Organisations indicate that code administrators try to encourage attendance from stakeholders.

However, organisations say it can be difficult to attend all meetings due to resource and financial constraints. Meetings are perceived as mainly London centric, which can be problematic for those not based in the capital.

Teleconference facilities can be problematic due to audio problems (hearing and being heard), and confusion about who is talking.

At an overall level, 43% have attended a meeting or workshop in relation to the code they interact with, this is 24% with regards to the iGT UNC. All of those who have attended a iGT UNC meeting agree that meeting facilities are fit for purpose and the materials that they receive prior to the meeting provide them with enough information about the objectives.

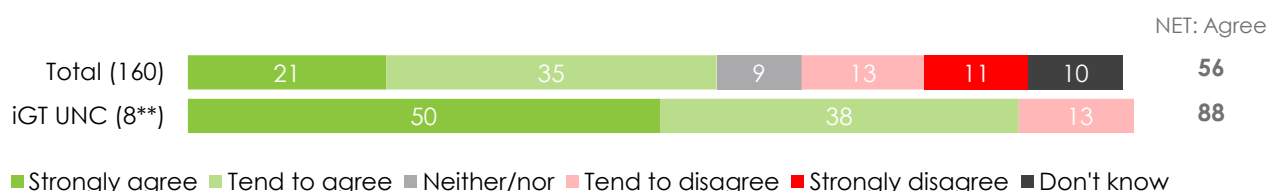
'It is easy for me to actively participate in the discussion'



'The materials that I receive prior to the meeting(s) provide me with enough information about the objectives'



'Teleconference facilities are fit for purpose'



Q22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those attending meetings (in brackets) (%)

As seen with websites, whilst organisations are very positive about the various aspects of meeting, they still offer some suggestions to improve this aspect of service.

"Teleconference facilities. When you dial in the quality is very bad."

"Teleconferencing needs improving. The microphone doesn't always work which can be difficult when dialling in – the volume goes in and out. It's difficult whether if you're in the room or on the phone."

"Make sure they have enough resources when they have more attendees; sometimes it can be oversubscribed and actions can sometimes be unclear."

RAISING MODIFICATIONS

Of the people interviewed, five people (15%) said they had raised modifications in respect of the iGT UNC within the last 12 months.

Of those raising a modification, four said the process of raising a modification was easy and they were satisfied with the support Gemserv gave in the development of their proposal.

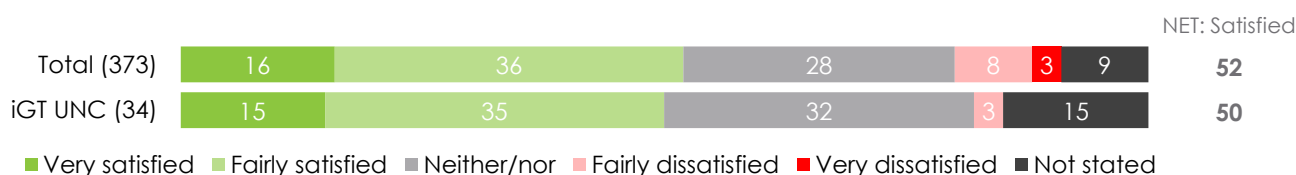
"The timing it takes to get anything done: it just takes such a long time from things getting raised to making a decision, it takes a phenomenally long time."

"Making sure proposed modifications are completed on time."

"Provide more of a hand holding in developing modification proposals."

UNDERSTANDING MODIFICATIONS

Half of organisations were satisfied with how Gemserv helped them to understand modifications. Those party to the iGT UNC consistently highlight the need for information on changes to be more tailored to their organisation and more coordination with the UNC.



Q28. How satisfied were you with the support the code administrator gave you in helping you to understand what modifications raised by others mean for your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

"It would be useful to have a clear release date summary (when they go live, there is a release date). If these could have a clear place on the website that would be great."

ACCESSION PROCESS

Seven people are employed by organisations who became party, or began the process to become party to, the iGT UNC in the last five years. Of these, two found the process easy, one found the process difficult, one neither easy nor difficult and three had no direct involvement with the process.

Conclusions

- Gemserv performs well on most aspects of service provision in relation to the iGT UNC
- There is scope to improve the ease of interpreting information from Gemserv in relation to the iGT UNC. Improving this aspect of service may increase overall satisfaction with the service and increase clarity of emails
- More help for organisations to understand what modifications raised by others mean for them could also be improved