Code administrators performance survey

Master Registration Agreement (MRA)

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 Master Registration Agreement (MRA) administered by the Gemserv and all verbatim comments were provide in respect of the MRA and/or Gemserv, 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 (61 participants answering about the MRA)
- 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 MRA (due to small base sizes, results are not broken down by subgroup)

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

If MRA 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 are 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

Overall Gemserv performs well and is regarded in many aspects in line with the total for all codes:

- Across all key performance indicators, Gemserv is, on balance, rated positively.
- About seven in ten are satisfied with the service provided and with the provision of support. Almost four out of five are satisfied with the support received.
- Organisations receive information about the MRA from Gemserv one or twice a fortnight and although the majority feel this frequency is about right, one in five do not feel well informed about the code.
- There are a few areas in which Gemserv could further improve their service:
    - Helping organisations with interpreting information
    - Improving the website user experience and clarity of information

Organisation profiling

ORGANISATION'S SIZE

	No. of employees			
	0-49	**50-249**	**250-999**	**1,000+**
Total (204)	27%	17%	15%	38%
MRA (61)	26%	20%	21%	31%

ORGANISATION'S ENERGY MARKET EXPERIENCE

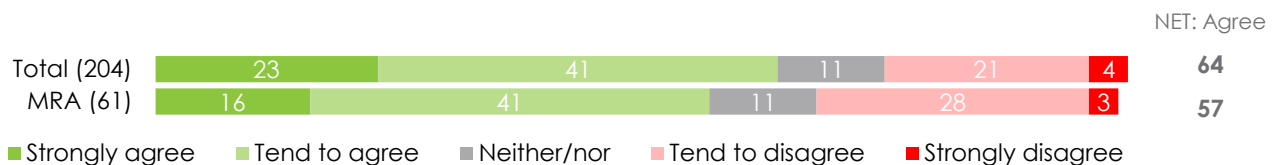|	**0-5 years**	**6-9 years**	**10+ years**
Total (204)	13%	10%	76%
MRA (61)	20%	11%	69%

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

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	NET
Total (204)	51	34	10	4	1	**85**
MRA (61)	46	39	13	2		**85**

■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree
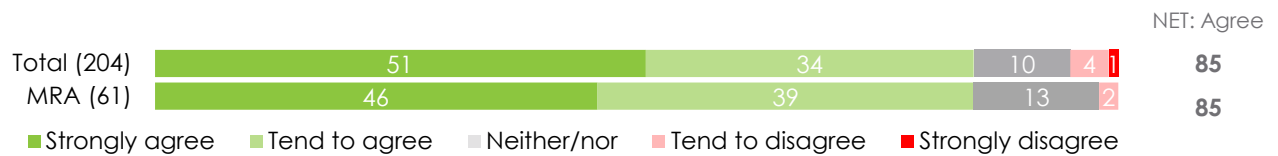
Q1. To what extent would you agree or disagree that your organisation has sufficient expertise to enable you to deal with the codes you are responsible for or interact with? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

ORGANISATION'S RESOURCE

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	NET
Total (204)	23	41	11	21	4	**64**
MRA (61)	16	41	11	28	3	**57**

■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree

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 %)

"The industry is set up in a way where all companies who enter the market are expected to be professional. There's no leaway for differing amounts of resource, expertise and time. We have to go through all the same accredititation as the larger companies. I would suggest a probation period for new companies that helps cover all of these issues may work. They can cover any expectations for new companies, if they need any help etc… it would make the industry stronger as smaller companies would be able to understand the industry better. "

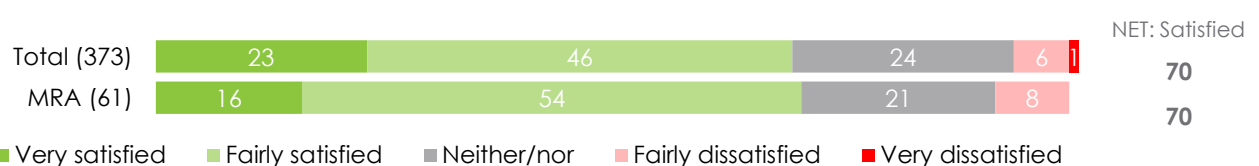*"Organise training for new commerce."*

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

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Seven in ten organisations are satisfied with Gemserv's service in regards to the MRA.

NET: Satisfied

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	NET
Total (373)	23	46	24	6	1	**70**
MRA (61)	16	54	21	8		**70**

■ Very satisfied ■ Fairly satisfied ■ Neither/nor ■ Fairly dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied
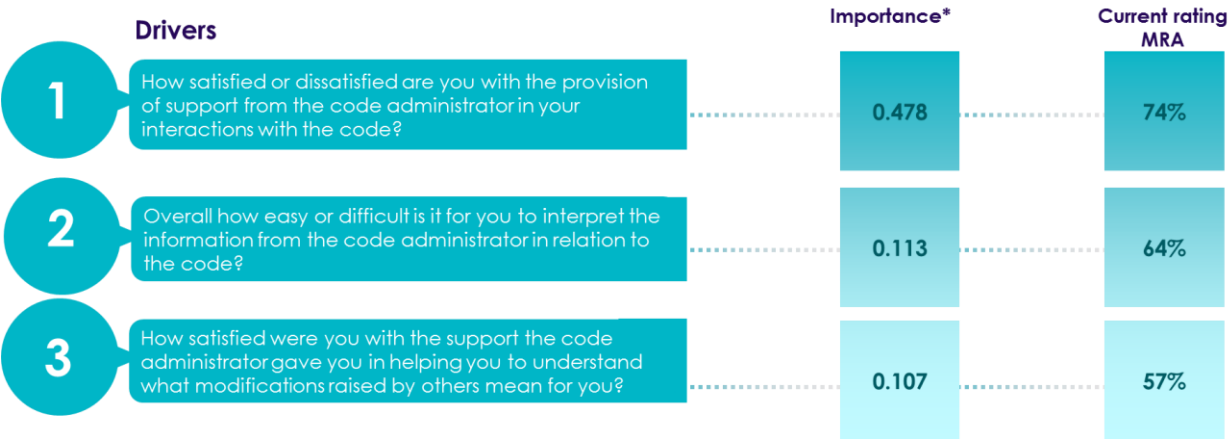
Q10. Thinking about all aspects of your dealings with the code administrator in relation to <this/these> codes, overall how satisfied are you with the service provided to your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Organisations highlight a range of areas of service Germserv could improve on.

"Improve the speed of things. It's mostly quite slow. If things were done more quickly it would be beneficial."

"I'm quite happy and satisfied with the service."

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:

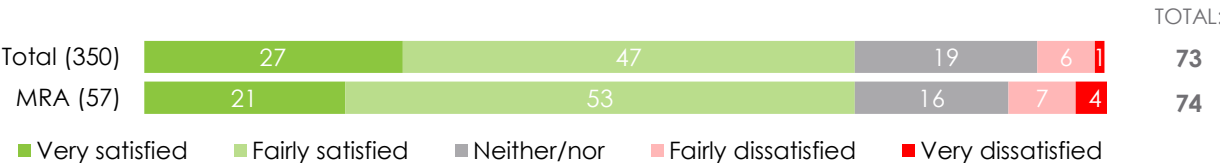| Drivers		Importance*	Current rating MRA
1	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the provision of support from the code administrator in your interactions with the code?	0.478	74%
2	Overall how easy or difficult is it for you to interpret the information from the code administrator in relation to the code?	0.113	64%
3	How satisfied were you with the support the code administrator gave you in helping you to understand what modifications raised by others mean for you?	0.107	57%

* 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 MRA. Gemserv receives a high overall satisfaction rating but improvements could be made to some aspects of service such as information clarity and the website.

SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION OF SUPPORT

Generally, organisations acknowledge the need for comprehensive detail from administrators. However additional support in interpreting this information is appreciated, particularly for small organisations or those new to the market.

Around three-quarters of Gemserv customers say they are satisfied with the provision of support.

						TOTAL:
Total (350)	27	47	19	6	1	**73**
MRA (57)	21	53	16	7	4	**74**

■ Very satisfied ■ Fairly satisfied ■ Neither/nor ■ Fairly dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Organisations give specific areas that Gemserv could support them better on. They also highlight a need for greater cross-code working; this was also mentioned by customers interacting with the other codes.

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[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.

"More diligence in getting accurate papers issued."

"Little bit more visibility. They're inconsistent, they've stopped producing a monthly newsletter, but they could communicate more proactively."
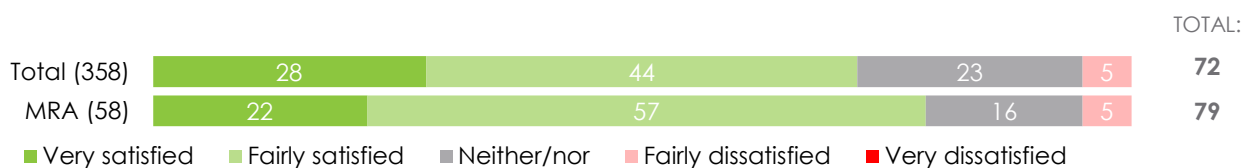
"Share in industry knowledge in a jargon free way. When you say MRA and things like that people don't twig what they actually mean."

"We need someone who is our main point of contact."

"Reach out more… Some, like Elexon, have operational support managers and we interact with them quarterly. Other code administrators do not have the time to reach out. Bigger companies have much larger teams to do it - I know because I used to do it."

SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT RECEIVED WHEN REQUESTED

Satisfaction with the support received when requested from Gemserv is high. Some organisations mention that it can take a long time to receive a response from Gemserv with regards to MRA queries. However, Gemserv is happy to direct organisations to relevant information where possible.

TOTAL:

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Total (358)	28	44	23	5		**72**
MRA (58)	22	57	16	5		**79**

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Customers suggest a range improvements to support given by Gemserv.

"More communication and potentially account managers."

"I would also like a bit quicker response to emails. I don't find their helpdesk quite as proactive and quick as a lot of the other codes. Some of them respond in very different time scales."
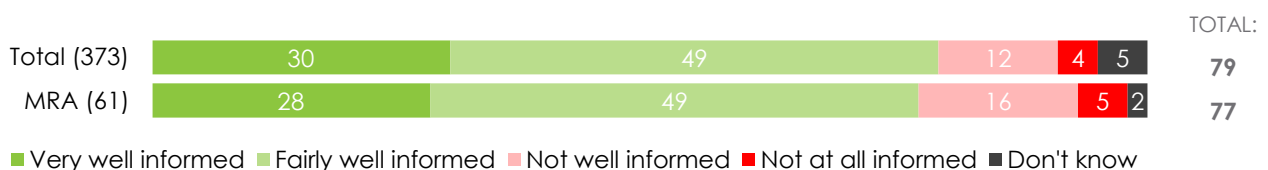
Perceptions of information provision

On average, organisations receive information about the MRA from Gemserv once or twice a fortnight and for the majority (84%), 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.

Gemserv performs well in this area: 77% say they feel 'very' or 'fairly' well informed about the MRA. There is still room for improvement as one in five do not feel well informed.

TOTAL:

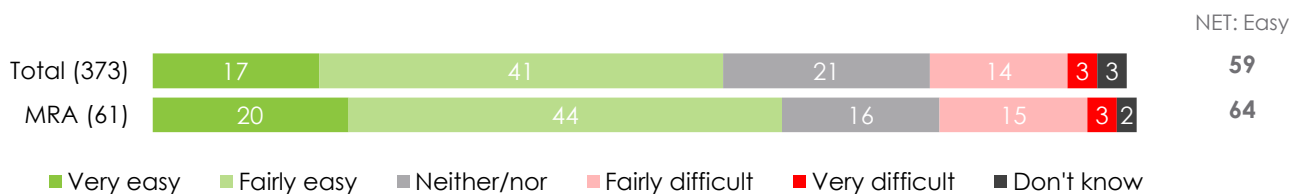|	Very well informed	Fairly well informed	Not well informed	Not at all informed	Don't know	
Total (373)	30	49	12	4	5	**79**
MRA (61)	28	49	16	5	2	**77**

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

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.

Most organisations find it easy to interpret information from Gemserv regarding the MRA (64%).

NET: Easy

	Very easy	Fairly easy	Neither/nor	Fairly difficult	Very difficult	Don't know	NET: Easy
Total (373)	17	41	21	14	3	3	59
MRA (61)	20	44	16	15	3	2	64

■ Very easy ■ Fairly easy ■ Neither/nor ■ Fairly difficult ■ Very difficult ■ Don't know

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

"Try and make it less complicated. It's a huge document so it's very time consuming and complicated to get though."

"Explain it more clearly. We need more clarification."

"A lot of technical subjects, if there was more clarity/explanation that would be great."

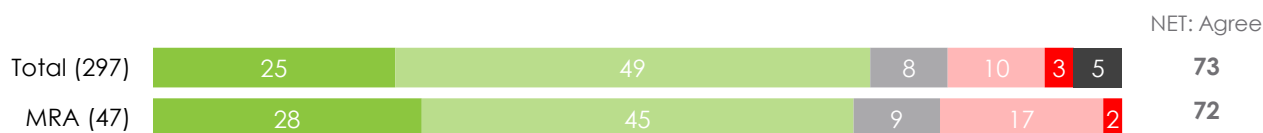## *Perceptions of direct services*

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.

There is a relatively high level of agreement that Gemserv's emails are easy to understand (72%) and make it clear when action needs to be taken (79%). Gemserv could improve customer experience by simplifying and tailoring information for different types of organisations.

'The emails I receive are easy to understand'

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (297)	25	49	8	10	3	5	73
MRA (47)	28	45	9	17		2	72

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

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (297)	38	38	7	10	2	5	76
MRA (47)	38	40	4	11	6		79

■ 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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

"Clearer email circular."

"They have a relationship with the contract manager and don't send information out to anyone else, whereas other companies are a bit more liberal with their circulation lists."
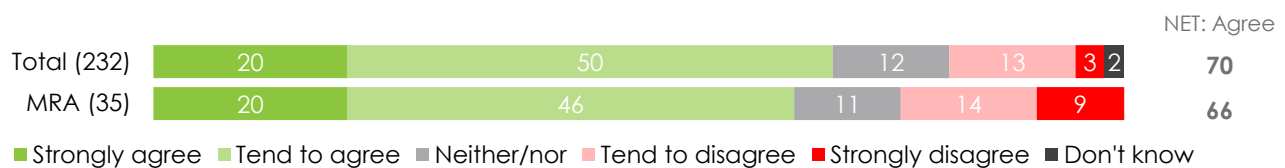
WEBSITES

At an overall level, those accessing specific code websites more regularly , 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.

Around seven in ten agree that Gemserv's website keeps them significantly informed of any changes or modifications to the code. However, there is some dissatisfaction expressed *with* Gemserv's website: more than a quarter (26%) disagree that they are able to easily find information and 23% disagree that the information on the website is easy to understand.

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (232)	17	44	11	20	6	2	**61**
MRA (35)	17	40	17	17	9		**57**

'The information on the website is easy to understand'

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (232)	20	50	12	13	3	2	**70**
MRA (35)	20	46	11	14	9		**66**

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

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Improving website accessibility could help those less familiar with the code to navigate it to find the information they are looking for more easily.

"Stop using the huddle site as a means of communication."

"The website has not been up to date for a number of years."

"The website is not very user friendly and find it difficult to locate materials."

"Huddle can be quite cumbersome. As they email us with 'This document has been added...' it can be hard to know what it's about. You then have to go onto the site, log in, find the document, download it and read it which isn't very user friendly. Sometimes, for example, I may not have internet access so I cannot read the documents. They should also have an easier way to do it, just like the other codes do."

"Clearer instructions for logging on to the MRA website and improve navigation."

"The change tracker on website is not clear as to what the current status of the change is. The amount of time it takes to update the change tracker in regards to when the decisions have been made is slow. MRASCo seem to be reluctant to send information. It's up to us to find it instead of being informed."

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.

The proportion of those who have attended a meeting or workshop about the MRA in the last 12 months is lower than average at 23%. At an overall level, 43% have attended a meeting or workshop in relation to the code they interact with. Ratings of the different aspects of Gemserv's meetings are positive. The aspect where improvements could be made relate to teleconference facilities.

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

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (160)	44	44	3	8	1		88
MRA (14*)	57	36		7			93

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

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (160)	41	47	7	4	2		88
MRA (14*)	50	36	7		7		86

'Teleconference facilities are fit for purpose'

NET: Agree

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither/nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NET: Agree
Total (160)	21	35	9	13	11	10	56
MRA (14*)	14	50		21	7	7	64

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

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

"In terms of the meetings, make them relevant, and if there's an agenda, make sure points are all met. Sometimes points are skimmed; there's been points I wanted to specifically go through that haven't been."

"Better support for smaller parties who may or may not be actively engaged in the meetings. If you don't attend the meetings it's hard to stay in the loop especially if you're a small organisation."
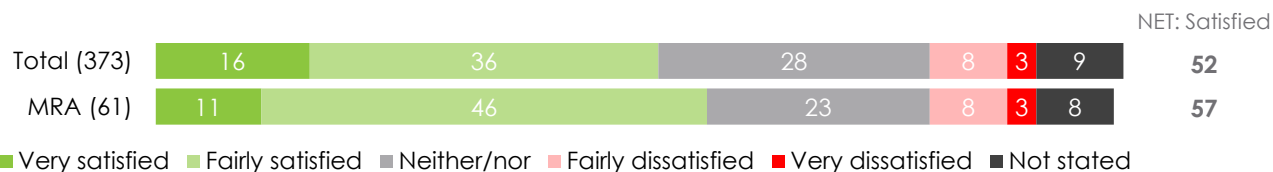
RAISING MODIFICATIONS

Seven per cent have raised modifications in respect of the MRA within the last 12 months.

Of those raising a modification, all of them said the process of raising a modification was easy and are satisfied with the support *Gemserv* gave in the development of their proposal.

UNDERSTANDING MODIFICATIONS

Just over half of organisations (57%) are satisfied with Gemserv's efforts to help them understand MRA modifications. However, 11% were dissatisfied with the support received.

NET: Satisfied

							NET: Satisfied
Total (373)	16	36	28	8	3	9	**52**
MRA (61)	11	46	23	8	3	8	**57**

■ Very satisfied　■ Fairly satisfied　■ Neither/nor　■ Fairly dissatisfied　■ Very dissatisfied　■ Not stated

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 (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

"The modifications register is never up to date to ensure I receive updates on modifications."

"Greater openness. Change proposals and associated correspondence should be published on the website. Stop the use of Huddle software."

"Modifications are dealt with efficiently but there could be more synergy between the code administrators, although they are getting there. For example, we receive a Central Modifications Register from MRASCo which details all changes across all the codes so they can see the impact of any changes across the board."

ACCESSION PROCESS

18 people are employed by organisations who became party, or began the process to become party to, the MRA in the last five years. Of these, four found the process easy, three found the process difficult, the rest said neither easy nor difficult or had no direct involvement in the process.

Conclusions

- Gemserv performs well on most aspect of service provision in relation to the MRA – in line with the average for all codes

- There is scope to improve the ease of interpreting information for organisation and around one in five do not feel well informed about the code. Improving these aspects may increase overall satisfaction with the service Gemserv is providing in relation to the MRA

- Ratings of Gemserv's direct services are, on balance, positive and in line with the average but clarity of information and accessibility are identified as areas for improvement. There are however two areas for improvement:
  - Ease of finding information on the website is not rated as highly
  - Teleconferencing facilities are not rated as highly as other aspects of meetings