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 concluded that Ofgem should commission a standardised cross-code study to monitor and assess the performance of Code Administrators in their role in respect to each code that they administer.

The first study was conducted in 2017 and intended to evaluate 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.

The study was not intended to take account of the relative funding of the Code Administrators (CA), or whether they offer value for money.

In 2018, the study has been repeated to monitor performance and identify any developments. Specifically, the survey has been developed to:

- **Identify:** Organisations' interaction with codes and CAs; including awareness of CA responsibilities, confidence in dealing with codes, and expectations of the service which Code Administrators should be providing
- **Measure:** Overall performance of CA on key metrics, including overall satisfaction, support, communications and modification process
- **Assess:** Specific aspects of service delivery, including email, websites, meetings and accession process.

Method

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

- A total of five in-depth interviews to inform questionnaire design (14-20 Feb 2018)
- A core survey with 216 participants to measure experience and performance of code administrators – **34 participants answering about the iGT UNC** (27 Mar – 11 May)
- 25 follow-up in-depth interviews to get an understanding of drivers of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (18 May – 20 Jun)

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)

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

Organisations still acknowledge that codes are inherently difficult to navigate with some more technical than others. While the environment is challenging:

- Organisations do expect the governance of codes to be stringent
    - They believe that this is essential as it protects business, and smaller organisations in particular
- There is recognition that complexities associated with an individual code impact the way each code administrator operates

Perception that Ofgem could play a much bigger role in providing guidance and protection for business; this is driven by a view that the market does not always lend itself to a level playing field:

- Concerns around some businesses submitting tactical modifications for their own commercial gain
- View that smaller organisation more likely to be impacted as they have limited resource for personnel to attend meetings and to raise such modifications

Executive summary – iGT UNC

Gemserv generally performs well on most aspects of the service

- Consistent with 2017, just over six in ten are satisfied with all aspects of their dealings with the CA in relation to iGT UNC
- Just over one in ten feel the service has improved over the last year
- Around three-quarters are satisfied with the provision of support

However, there are a few areas which Gemserv could further improve service:

- *Keeping organisations informed about the code*
- Making it easier for organisations to interpret information
- Making it easier when emails require action
- *Helping organisations to understand what modifications raised by others mean for them*

Organisation profiling

The level of expertise organisations have to deal with codes remains consistent with 2017. It is encouraging that there is a directional improvement around availability of resource.

The means to deal with the codes and their requirements is linked to the size and experience of the company. However, compared to 2017, smaller businesses are reporting greater confidence in their ability to deal with codes.

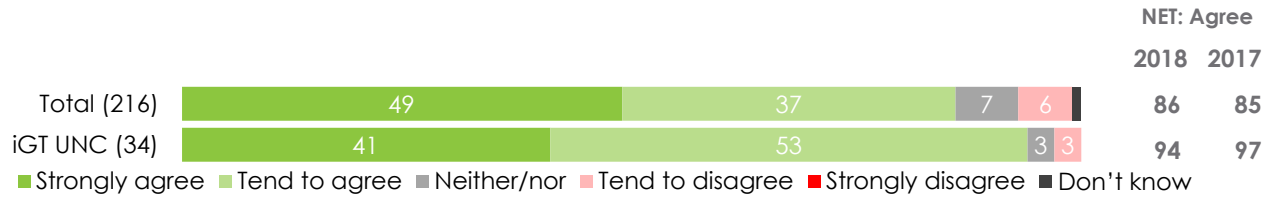
ORGANISATION'S SIZE

	No. of employees			
	0-49	**50-249**	**250-999**	**1,000+**
Total (216)	18%	16%	14%	47%
iGT UNC (34)	15%	15%	26%	44%

ORGANISATION'S ENERGY MARKET EXPERIENCE

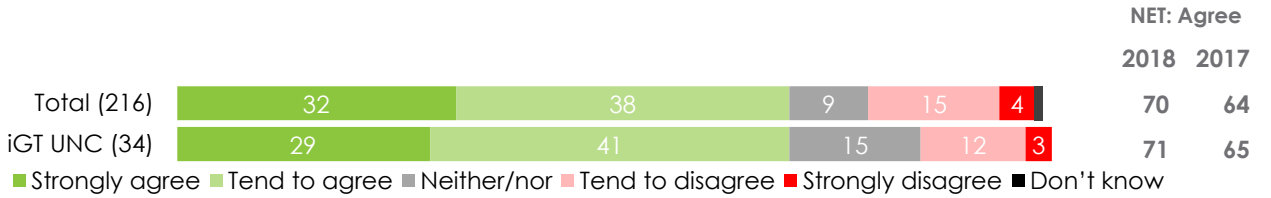
	0-5 years	6-9 years	10+ years
Total (216)	16%	6%	76%
iGT UNC (34)	21%	9%	71%

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 %)

Smaller organisations indicate that they often deal with multiple codes, which can make it challenging to know the intricate detail of the iGT UNC, or other codes they may deal with.

Key findings

KPIS

The survey collected four wide measures of satisfaction:

1. Perceived improvements from service received in the last year (new for 2018).
2. Overall satisfaction with the service provided to their organisation.
3. Satisfaction with the provision of support.
4. Satisfaction with support received when requested.

Organisations rate iGT UNC highly across all KPIs. There is little dissatisfaction reported across the measures and around three-fifths say they are satisfied with the overall service. Similarly, three-quarters are satisfied with the provision of support from Gemserv in respect of their interactions with the iGT UNC.

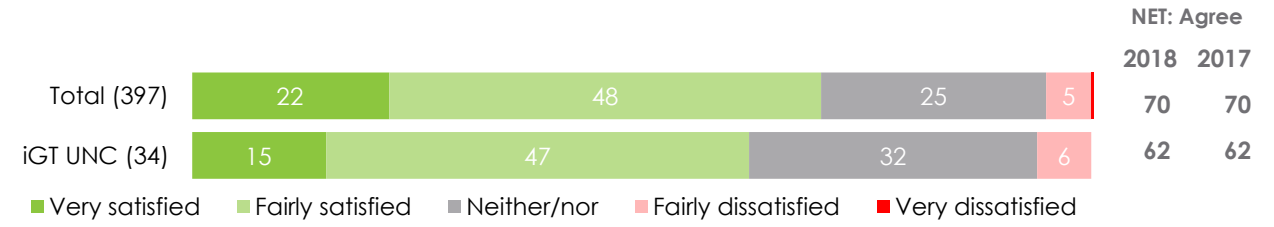
PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENT

A high proportion of organisations feel the service received in relation to their code has not changed (57%). For iGT UNC, half of organisations indicate that service levels have not changed from last year, and 12% feel it has improved.

Q29b. Thinking about the service that you have received in relation to the <code> in the last year, would you say it has improved, remained the same or got worse? (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

OVERALL SATISFACTION

At an all code level, seven in ten say they are satisfied with the service provided by their Code Administrator. In line with last year, six in ten organisations are satisfied with Gemserv's service regarding the iGT UNC, only 6% are dissatisfied.

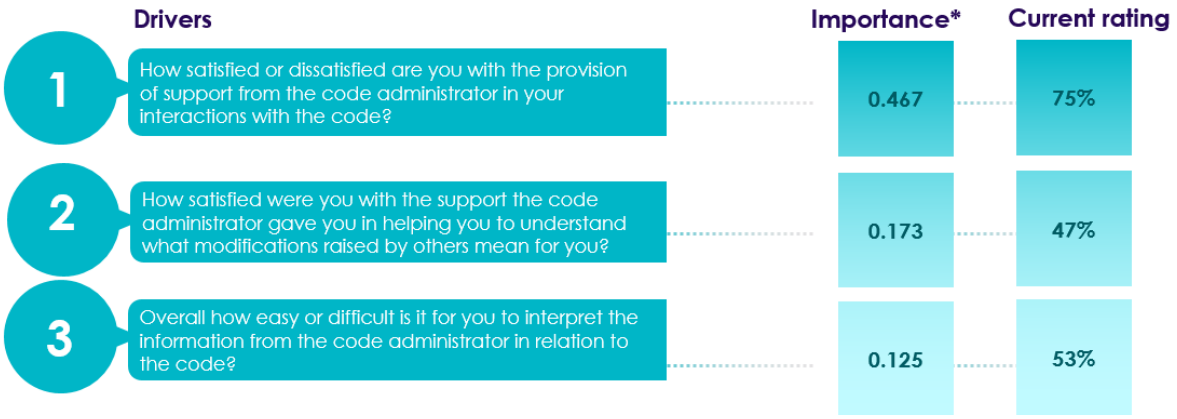


Q10. Thinking about all aspects of your dealings with the code administrator in relation to <this/these> codes, overall how satisfied are you with the service provided to your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of respondents in brackets) (results in %)

Some indicated that the link between the UNC and iGT UNC should be differentiated.

> *"I think different codes require different level of services. So for example the IGT UNC, there are only a small number of participants, because of what the code covers. They are not customer facing and there's no way to increase competition there."*

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.)

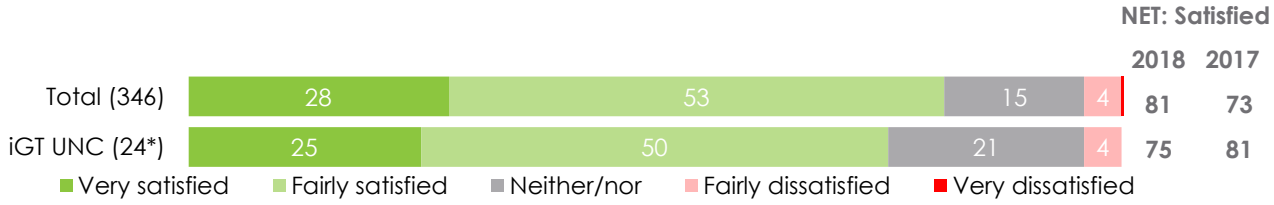
Due to the small base sizes, it is not possible to identify the key drivers for individual codes. The importance scores above are based on the combined total for all codes and the current rating is specific to the iGT UNC.

At an overall level, the three key drivers of satisfaction continue to be around support and information. There are opportunities to improve service around two of the three key drivers. With service improvements to these core areas, it is likely that there will be a positive lift in reported overall satisfaction.

SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION OF SUPPORT

More generally, Code Administrators are perceived as having improved the provision of support to small businesses from the previous year. There is a significant increase in reported satisfaction from 2017; smaller organisations tended to be less satisfied than larger organisations. It is however worth noting that although the gain for the smaller organisations is highly significant, larger organisations still report greater satisfaction.

Three quarters of Gemserv customers say they are satisfied with the provision of support in relation to the iGT UNC.



*Low base

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) (%)

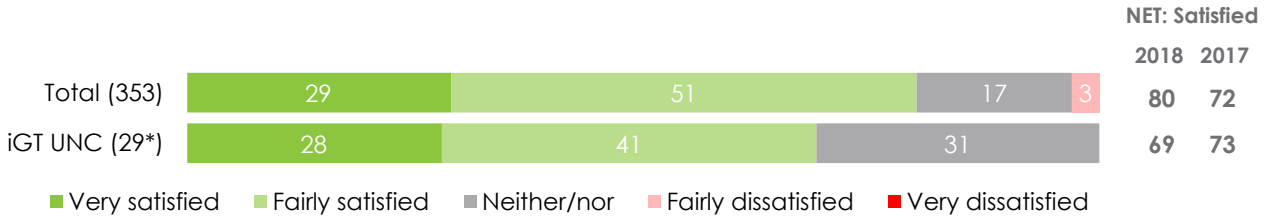
[1] KDA tests the strength of the correlation between ratings of core metrics against perceived level of satisfaction by which we can derive which factors have the greatest impact on overall attitudes – this is a subconscious measurement rather than a stated level of importance.

Customers highlighted overall support and knowledge as a positive, however communications need to improve.

"Gemserv have lots of great subject matter experts but need to improve their communication expertise. This would help ensure that the website is up to date, would improve their online communication and provide a more professional service."

SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT RECEIVED WHEN REQUESTED

Over two thirds of organisations (69%) are satisfied with Gemserv's response when they request information. Encouragingly, no organisations are dissatisfied, however you have 31% who are neutral about this aspect of service.



*Low base

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) (%)

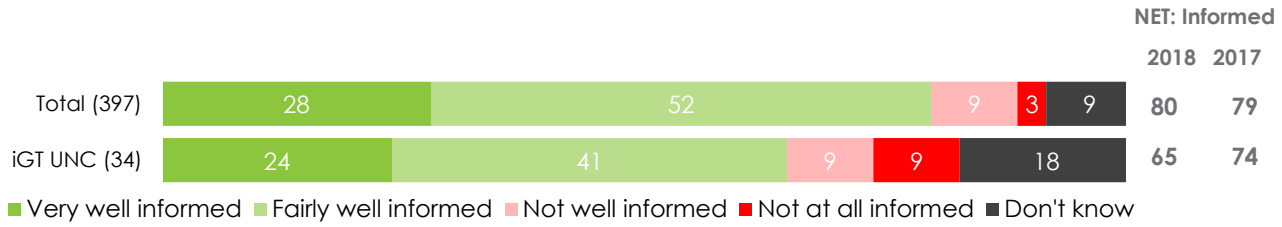
Perceptions of information provision

On average, organisations receive information about the iGT UNC from Gemserv 1-2 times a week and for the majority (82%), this frequency is about right.

KEPT INFORMED ABOUT THE CODE

Although customers agree that they are kept informed, there are some concerns around CA resourcing and the view that some CA teams are stretched. As we observed last year, there is still a view that those who are less familiar with the codes struggle to interpret the information received. So while the obligation to provide information is being met, there is a need to continue to simplify and to target communications.

Around two thirds of organisations say that Gemserve keeps them 'very' or 'fairly' well informed about the iGT UNC. A slight decrease from last year.

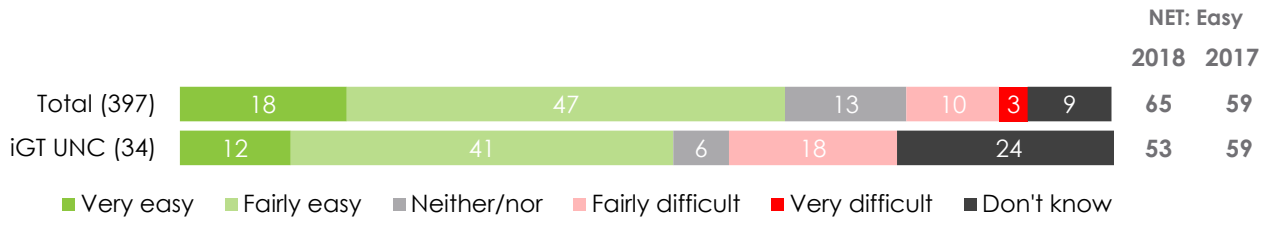


Q14/Q14b. How well do you feel your code administrator keeps you informed about the <code>? Base: All responses for those involved with code (in brackets) (%)

EASE OF INTERPRETING INFORMATION

More generally, those with more personal experience of codes and in organisations with 250+ employees are more likely to find interpreting information easier. However, encouragingly, there has been a positive uplift in reported ease among those within smaller organisations and those in the energy market for 5 years of less.

Around half find it easy to interpret information coming from Gemserv in relation to the iGT UNC. One in six organisations indicate that information is difficult to interpret.



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) (%)

Perceptions of direct services

EMAIL

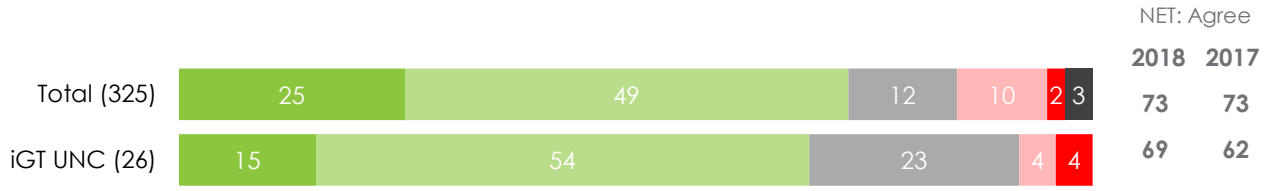
Overall, information is easily accessible via email – it is the most used both by CAs to provide information and by organisations to seek information. Communication by email means there are regular updates of information and organisations can stay on top of changes to the code. Organisations also prefer using email as it ensures there is an audit trail.

Email can however be overwhelming as CA communications are only one of many; this is especially so when several emails related to a code are sent in a single day. Furthermore, when emails do not include the key take outs, core messages can get lost.

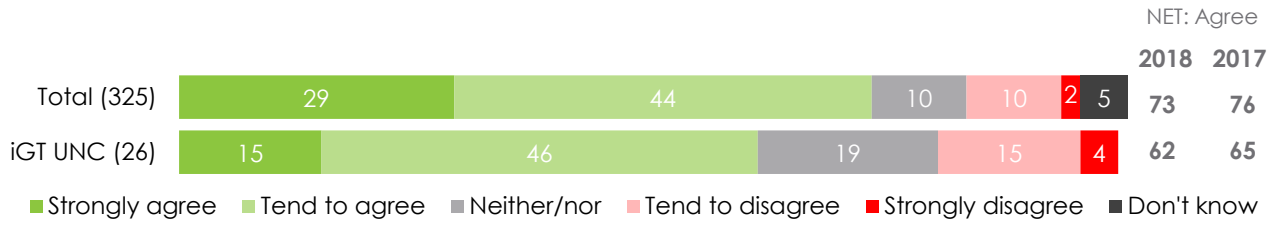
The volume of emails can make it difficult for organisations to identify which messages contain vital information, which ones need immediate action or prioritisation against those providing more general updates.

Gemserv's emails in relation to the iGT UNC are, on balance, perceived to be easy to understand (69% agree) and make it clear when action needs to be taken (62% agree). One in five disagree that emails make it easy when emails have to be actioned. As with other codes, 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'



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) (%)

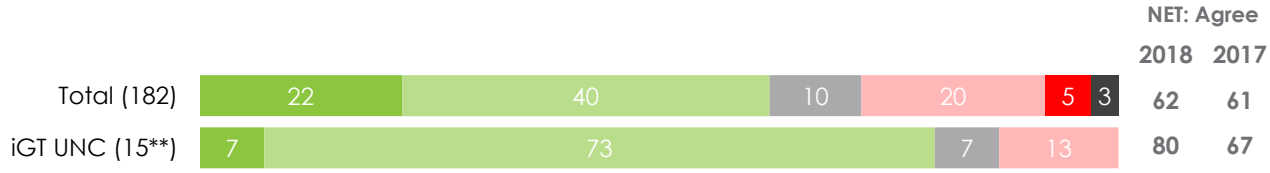
WEBSITES

Generally, customers value having information on websites, they use them to keep up to date with various code changes. Information included on websites can be insightful, providing businesses with the depth of understanding they require to navigate codes.

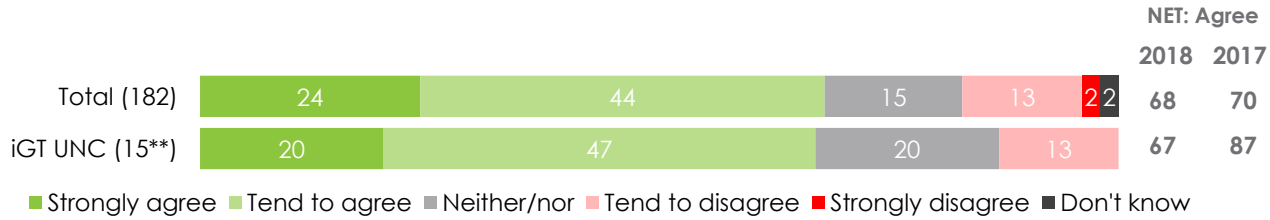
There are some highlighted concerns around the ability for customers to easily navigate websites, and limited signposting. Overall, there is a decline in the proactive use of websites (52% in 2017 vs 28% in 2018). While customers perceive websites as not fit for purpose use may decline further.

Ratings of Gemserv's iGT UNC website are high. Eight in ten of those who use websites consider the information on the website easy to find, and two thirds say it is easy to understand. Reported ease to understand information is slightly lower on last year.

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



'The information on the website is easy to understand'



***Very low base*

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) (%)

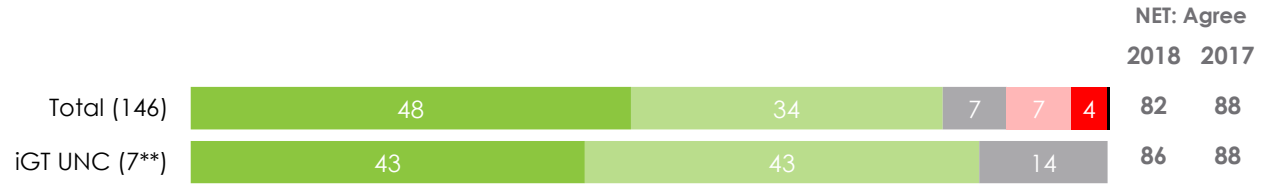
While organisations are positive about the Germserv iGT UNC website, there are some aspects that are highlighted as in need of improvements.

"Website needs to be improved by increasing clarity on where things are located."

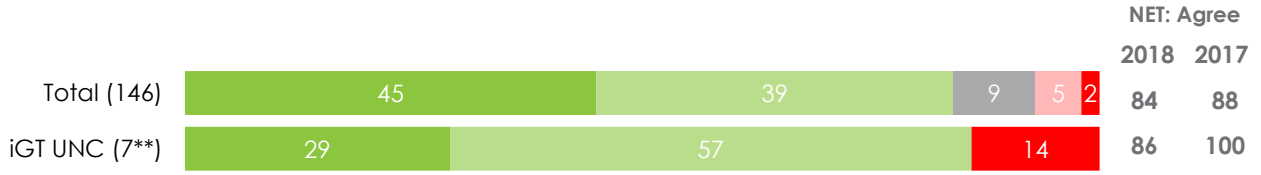
MEETINGS

At an overall level, 37% have attended a meeting or workshop in relation to the code they interact with. One in five (21%) have attended an iGT UNC meeting. Of the seven people attending a meeting most agree that facilities are fit for purpose and the materials that they receive prior to the meeting provide them with enough information about the objectives.

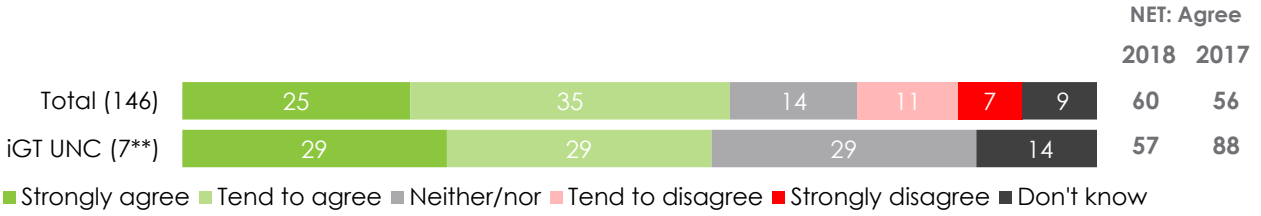
'It is easy for me to actively participate in the discussion'



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



'Teleconference facilities are fit for purpose'



***Very low base*

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) (%)

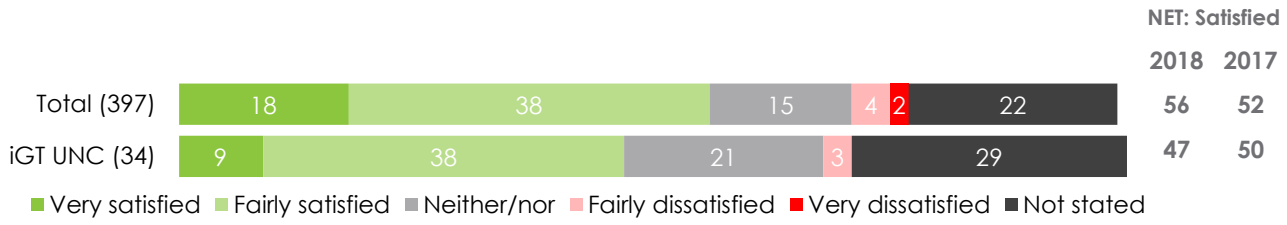
RAISING MODIFICATIONS

Of the organisations interviewed, four (12%) had raised modifications in relation to iGT UNC. Of those raising a modification, all said the process of raising a modification was easy and they were satisfied with the support Gemserv gave in the development of their proposal.

UNDERSTANDING MODIFICATIONS

Just under half (47%) of organisations were satisfied with how Gemserv helped them to understand modifications. While only a few are dissatisfied, 21% give a neutral response.

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) (%)

"We have a team internally that interface with code administrators and they have to rewrite any modifications into plain English for anyone working in Operations or Customer facing. Avoid jargon!"

ACCESSION PROCESS

Twelve 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, five found the process easy, one found the process difficult, two neither easy nor difficult and four had no direct involvement with the process.

Conclusions

Gemserv generally performs well on most aspects of service provision in relation to the iGT UNC. There is however scope to improve some aspects of service provision:

- Keeping organisations informed about the code
- Making it easier for organisations to interpret information
- Making it easier when emails require action
- Helping organisations to understand what modifications raised by others mean for them