



Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS).

Annual Client Survey.

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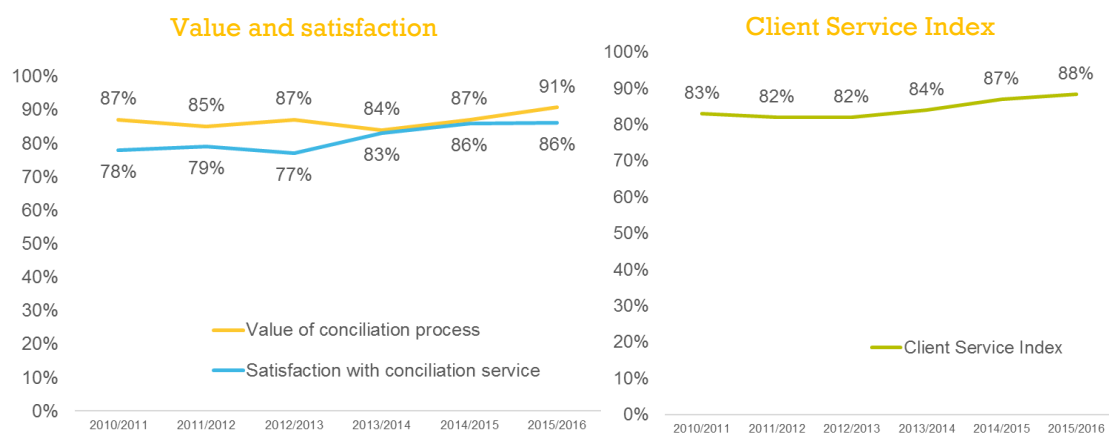
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Executive summary

Overall indicators of service quality

The Client Service Index has remained at a consistently high level in recent years – in 2015/16, the Index was 88%, similar to 2014/15 and showing a net gain since 2011/12. The measures that make up this Index were similarly strong in 2015/16:

- 91% of clients agree that conciliation is a valuable process – a proportion that has been increasing year-on-year since 2013/14 ; and
- 86% of clients were satisfied with the conciliation service, a figure that has similarly been growing year-on-year since 2012/13.



Before the conference

Overall, clients were very satisfied with the communications they received from ACCS before the conference. Satisfaction was high across all groups for aspects of communication such as relevance (86%), timeliness (86%) and provision of follow-up contacts (81%). As a result, most clients felt prepared for the conference on the day. Agents tended to feel more prepared than Workers and Employers (96%, 78% and 86% respectively).

The DVD and Brochure: Overall, the ACCS brochure is more commonly recalled and used than the DVD. Almost all Workers received the brochure (94%), fewer received the DVD (69%). Substantially fewer employers had received the brochure (16%) or DVD (8%). Almost all clients who received and read/watched the brochure/DVD were very satisfied with the materials.

The ACCS website: Relatively few clients used the ACCS website as a source of information before the conference – 13% overall comprising 24% of Workers, 5% of Employers and no Agents. Almost all of these clients who accessed the website were satisfied with the resource (92% satisfaction overall).

Calling and e-mailing ACCS: Overall, few Workers, Employers or Agents contacted ACCS by phone or email prior to the conference. One quarter of clients called ACCS (23%) and one seventh e-mailed (14%). Those clients who had reached out to ACCS in this way were generally very satisfied with the communication (87% satisfaction with phone, 90% satisfaction with e-mail).

During the conference

Almost all clients, regardless of client type were satisfied with the conference process. Overall, 81% of clients were satisfied with no variation seen between Workers, Employers and Agents.

Reception and video presentation: Almost all clients who attended a conference had some interaction with reception staff (88% Workers, 91% Employers, 92% Agents). These clients were uniformly very satisfied that reception services were polite and provided an overall high level of service.

Taking notice of the video presentation and perceptions of the quality of the material were more mixed. One third of Workers, Employers and Agents watched the video (27%, 29% and 33% respectively). Perceptions of the video were mixed in terms of accessibility, relevance and usefulness. The video presentation seems to have most resonance with Workers who perceived far higher levels of accessibility, relevance and usefulness compared with both Employers and Agents.

The conference itself: Clients were uniformly satisfied that the conference was well-structured (85%); ended with a clear explanation of the next steps (85%) and provided a good opportunity to put their point of view forward (83%). Satisfaction was not, however, uniformly high across each stage of the conference. High levels of satisfaction were seen for the introductory and concluding stages (93% and 87% across all clients). Satisfaction was however, lower for specific parts of the conference process, most notably joint discussions (73% satisfaction overall). Satisfaction with the Conciliation Officer was similarly high – 88% of clients overall were satisfied with no variation in satisfaction observed between Workers, Employers and Agents.

Satisfaction with conference



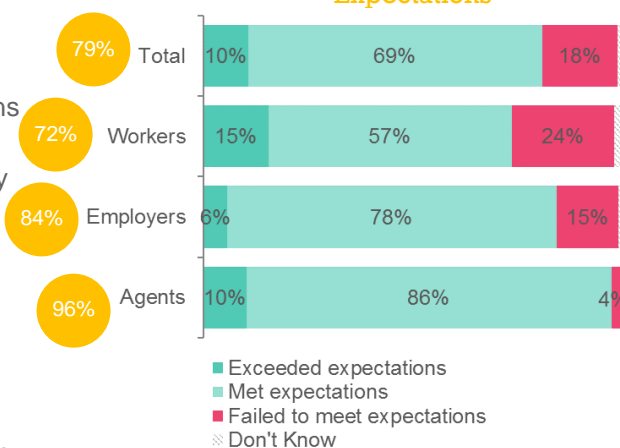
After the conference

ACCS is meeting the expectations of its clients. Overall, 79% of clients indicated that their expectations were met or exceeded (shown in net figure in the circles to the right). Meeting expectations was slightly lower for Workers than it was for Employers and Agents.

Satisfaction with the outcomes certificate was high amongst all clients – 85% for Workers, 90% for Employers and 98% for Agents.

Satisfaction with the actual outcome of the conference was generally lower than other satisfaction measures in the survey. Satisfaction with the outcome of the conference was 69% for Workers and 62% for Employers. It should be noted that Employers and Workers still reported very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of ACCS' services, regardless of the satisfaction with the outcome of the case. This encouragingly suggests that clients can differentiate the high-quality services of ACCS from the outcome of their case which is largely outside the control of ACCS.

Expectations



1. Introduction

1.1. Alternative dispute resolution

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is an umbrella term for processes, other than judicial decisions, in which an impartial person assists those in a dispute to resolve the issues between them.

ADR was developed as a response to a number of perceived deficiencies of the traditional court system which is often plagued by long delays, can be expensive, has a very formal atmosphere which can be intimidating and is adversarial. In comparison to traditional court based dispute resolution procedures, ADR is generally considered to have a number of advantages including being non-adversarial, cost effective, flexible, quick and convenient, informal and disputing parties can retain more control of the dispute resolution process¹².

ADR has received support from governments both internationally and within Australia at the commonwealth and state level. The development of public and private ADR services has received strong support from the Victorian Government. This support is motivated by a range of factors including:

- Improving citizens' access to dispute resolution processes;
- Improving citizens' involvement in dispute resolution processes;
- Reducing costs and delays in the court system; and
- Other social policy objectives such as enabling cost effective redress of disputes and enabling access to dispute resolution services for vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens³.

1.2. Workers Compensation in Victoria

WorkSafe Victoria is the body responsible under the workplace injury rehabilitation and compensation Act 2013 for:

- Helping avoid workplace injuries occurring;
- Enforcing Victoria's occupational health and safety laws;
- Providing reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for Employers; and
- Helping injured Workers back into the workforce

Workers who have sustained a work-related injury or illness make a claim which is assessed by WorkSafe. If a claim is rejected there are a number of processes that a claimant can request including a WorkSafe Agent review which involves undertaking a review of the decision by a senior person not involved in the original decision. If the claimant is still not satisfied with the decision, they are referred to the ACCS for conciliation⁴.

¹ Victorian Law Reform Commission (2008) Civil justice review report. Available online at <http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/projects/civil-justice/civil-justice-review-report>

² Field, C (2007) Alternative dispute resolution in Victoria: Supply-side research project, Research Report, Chris Fielding Consulting Pty Ltd.

³ Field, C (2007) Alternative dispute resolution in Victoria: Supply-side research project, Research Report, Chris Fielding Consulting Pty Ltd.

⁴ WorkSafe Victoria (2015) Workplace injury rehabilitation and compensation. Available online at <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/laws-and-regulations/accident-compensation>

1.3. ACCS dispute resolution

ACCS provides an independent service that uses the principles of Alternative Dispute Resolution to assist parties in resolving Workers compensation disputes in Victoria. The ACCS facilitates the non-adversarial resolution of disputes by involving all parties - Workers, Employers and WorkSafe Agents or Self-Insurers – in a fair, economical, informal, speedy and free process. The ACCS conciliation service is a key part of the Victorian workplace compensation scheme and, for most disputes, is a compulsory step before proceedings can be taken to court.

The process of conciliation helps to resolve disputes by sharing information, identifying issues in disputes, discussing them and trying to reach an agreement. Under Guidelines set by the Minister for WorkSafe Victoria, Conciliation aims to:

- Assist the parties to achieve enduring resolutions and agreements wherever possible;
- Be even handed and fair, and deal with matters on their merits;
- Maximise flexibility and informality;
- Facilitate early return to work opportunities;
- Enhance on-going Worker/Employer employment relationships;
- Be prompt and timely in the conduct of conciliation processes and in dealings with the parties; and
- Reduce cost implications for the parties involved and the scheme and ensure that matters do not unnecessarily proceed to the Courts.

Conciliation meetings are conducted by independent Conciliation Officers, who work under the Minister's Guidelines, a Code of Conduct, Protocols and a Service Charter developed by the Conciliation Service. Most Workers compensation disputes are resolved through Conciliation, rather than through court action⁵. Most disputes lodged for conciliation in 2013/14 were for medical and the like expenses (42.7%). In the same timeframe, there were 20076 disposals, 18039 new requests, 1120 re-opened matters and 3641 disputes were in progress. The number of disposals increased by 16.6% and cases in progress decreased by 20.3% compared with the previous year.

1.4. Research objectives

The overall objective of this research is to understand clients' (Workers, Employers, WorkSafe Agents and Self-Insurers) perceptions of the ACCS's dispute resolution processes by replicating previous ACCS surveys. This project will:

- Produce research which will support ACCS's further improvements to dispute resolution;
- Produce a report for publication highlighting clients' perceptions of dispute resolution;
- Build on knowledge of issues identified by current ACCS dispute resolution processes; and
- Provide an evidence base for further work which could be undertaken by ACCS, to strengthen dispute resolution processes.

⁵ Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (2015) What to expect: What is conciliation. Available online at <http://www.conciliation.vic.gov.au/conciliation-process/conferences/what-to-expect>

2. Methodology

2.1. Overview

This project involved a three stage approach, as initially described in the proposal submitted in October 2015, each stage and its objectives, activities and outputs are detailed below:

	Objectives	Activities	Outputs
 Project Initiation	Established a shared understanding of the project's goals, the steps required to attain these goals and the parties responsible for each step.	Review of existing questionnaires, data and reports. Establishment meeting.	Finalised project plan and amended as required based on discussion and review during the establishment meeting
 Data Capture	Captured data from ACCS clients, (Workers, Employers and Agents) for subsequent analysis and reporting.	Refined previous ACCS surveys. Programed questionnaire using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) scripting software. Quality checked script in a live environment.	Data from two waves of surveying in 2015/16. Total n=453 completed CATI surveys with data cleaned and collated in a single file, ready for analysis (n=203 Workers, n=200 Employers and n=50 Agents).
 Analysis and Reporting	Deliver this insights driven report for the ACCS to use and feed into future improvements in dispute resolution	Descriptive (uni- and bi-variate) analysis of the survey data including comparison to findings from previous ACCS surveys.	Draft and final reports including analysis, interpretation, conclusions and recommendations. In-person presentation including delivery of a PowerPoint file for future use by ACCS.

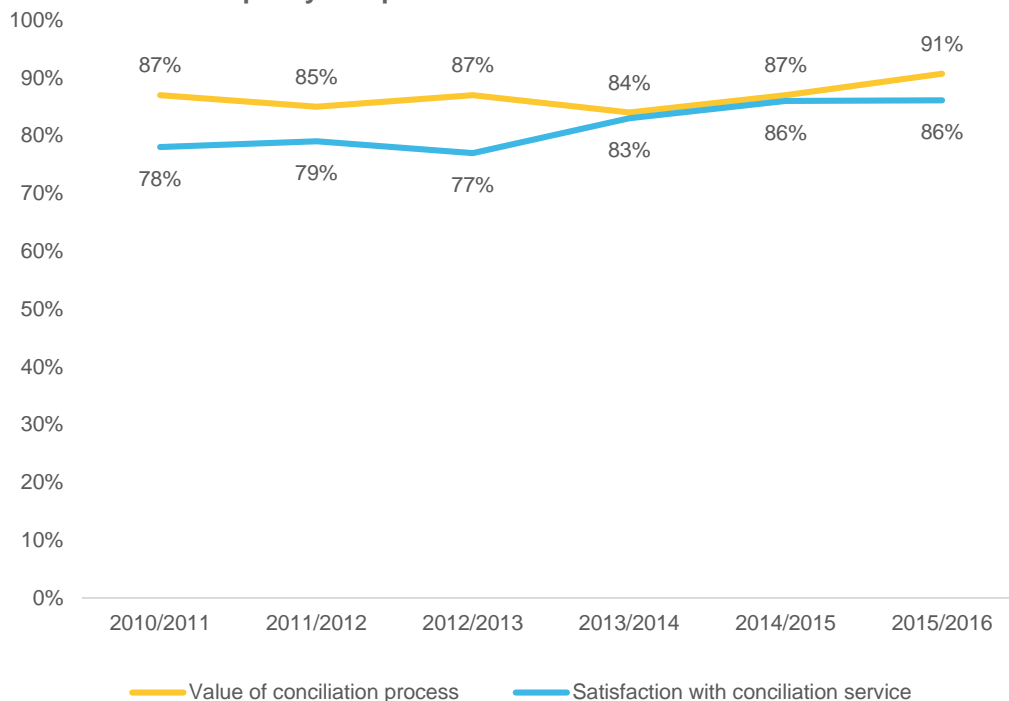
3. Key Performance Indicators

Two key questions were asked of all participants that measure and track levels of ACCS' service quality: satisfaction with the conference process and overall perceived value of conciliation.

The overall satisfaction and perceived value measures have made small net gains since 2010, when data collection began. In 2016, around nine in ten clients were satisfied with the conference process (86%) and perceived value in their experience of conciliation (91%).

Since the previous wave of research in 2014/2015, the proportion of those believing the process to be valuable has increased slightly, from 87% to 91%. The proportion of those satisfied with the service has remained consistent between the two waves, at 86%. While neither of these results are statistically significant – the findings for 2015/16 indicate that ACCS has maintained or even slightly enhanced its very high level of client service.

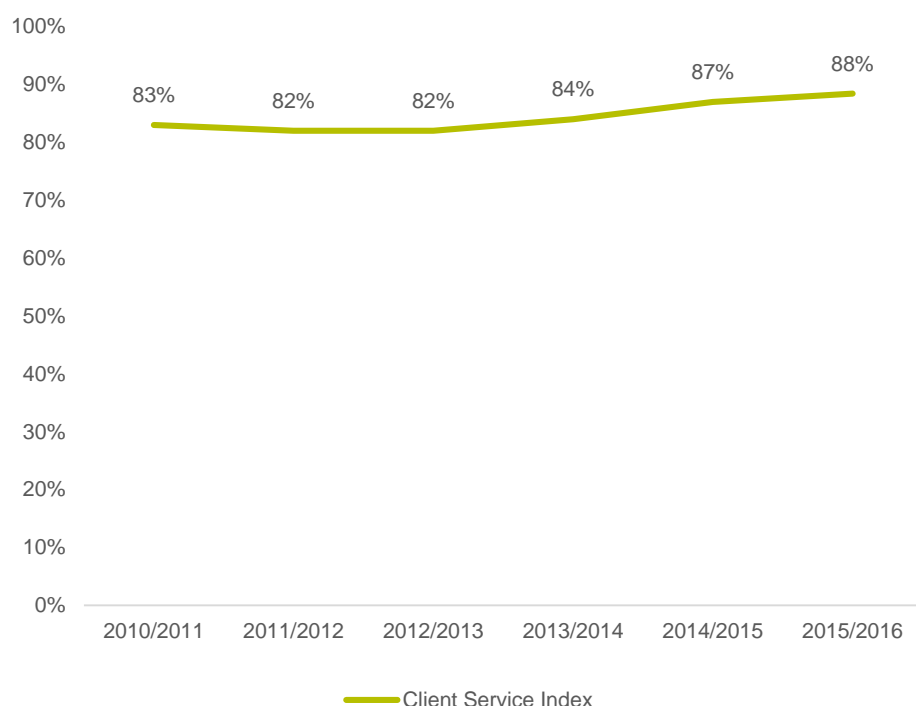
Figure 1: Service quality and perceived value of the conciliation service



Base: All respondents (n=453)
WQ44/EQ44/AQ36 Weighing up your entire conciliation experience and regardless of the outcome, do you agree or disagree that conciliation is a valuable process?
WQ41/EQ41/AQ33 Weighing up your entire conciliation experience and regardless of the outcome, how would you rate the service you received?

A key metric that is derived from the survey data is the 'Client service Index'. This Index is derived by considering the total satisfaction and value percentages together⁶. In 2015/16, the Index was 88%. This figure is similar to 2014/15, though a gradual year-on-year increase in the Index has been apparent since 2011/12.

Figure 2: Client Service Index



Base: All respondents (n=453)

The table below highlights the breakdown of the Client Service Index by ACCS' three key client groups. Levels of satisfaction, perceived value and the overall Index varied slightly between Workers, Employers and Agents. However, none of these differences between groups was statistically significant, indicating that ACCS is providing uniformly high levels of service to all key client groups.

Table 1: Service quality and perceived value of the conciliation service by audience

	Total (%)	Workers (%)	Employers (%)	Agents (%)
n =	453	203	200	50
Value of conciliation process ⁷	91%	88%	92%	96%
Satisfaction with conciliation service ⁷	86%	87%	84%	92%
Client Service Index	88%	88%	88%	94%

Question wording are contained in Appendix 1

⁶ (Top-two box Value + Top-two box satisfaction) / 2
⁷ (Top two box % rating)

4. Qualitative indicators

All participants were asked a set of open ended questions that followed the 'Key Performance Indicator' measures of satisfaction and value. These questions were asked in both the positive (i.e., 'why was the service good') as well as the negative (i.e., 'why was the service poor'). Verbatim responses were transcribed and coded. The findings are reported below.

4.1. Quality of service

All clients were asked to expand on why they rated ACCS' service as good or poor.

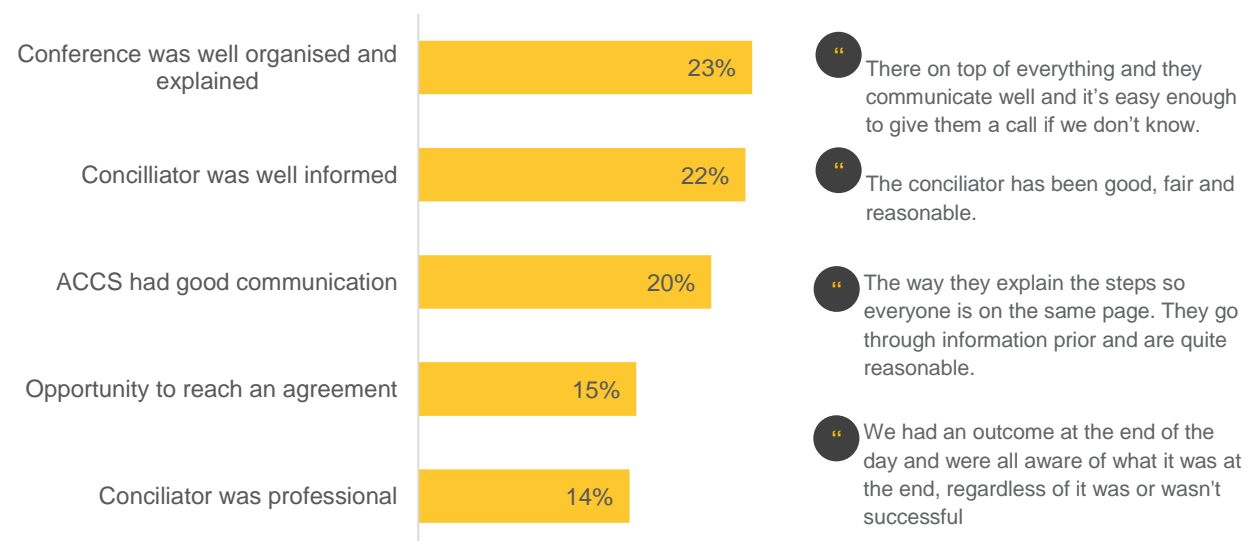
Perceptions of good service

Almost all clients stated that they perceived ACCS' service to be either good or very good (86%).

The primary reasons for perceptions of a good service based on coded verbatim responses related to how the conference was well organised and processes explained (23% of clients indicating a good rating); the knowledge of the conciliator (22%) and the good communication from ACCS overall (20%). Being provided the opportunity to reach an agreement and the professionalism of the conciliator was also mentioned quite frequently.

The chart below shows the top five coded reasons why clients perceived good levels of service from ACCS (multiple responses were accepted for this question). Some verbatim comments from clients are shown to the right.

Figure 3: Perceptions of good service, coded findings



WQ42/EQ42/AQ34 Why was the service good? OE

Base: All clients who indicated that the service was good or very good (n=390)

A word cloud is a visual representation of text data, used to depict keyword metadata, or to visualize free form text. The tags are single words, and the importance of each tag is shown by the size of the text – i.e., frequently mentioned words are larger than less frequently mentioned words. This format is provided so that ACCS can quickly understand the most prominent terms used by satisfied clients to describe their perceptions of ACCS' services.

Figure 4: Perceptions of good service, word cloud



Perceptions of poor service

Only 5% of clients have a poor or very poor rating to ACCS' services (n=22). This sample size is too small to provide a meaningful code frame or word cloud. Instead, a set of illustrative verbatim quotes is provided below to guide ACCS on the reasons why a very small number of the service's clients are not satisfied.

Common themes that arose from brief thematic analysis of these comments suggested that primary areas of dissatisfaction related to:

- Perceptions that ACCS did not provide sufficient information or follow up (noting that good communication was a positive aspect of service for many clients as noted above); and
- Perceptions that ACCS lacked the power that some clients expected to progress a case to their satisfaction.



We were not contacted from ACCS. We were only contacted by the insurer. No consideration to our timeline of whether we could get in there or not.



There was no communication prior to it. I rang to ask questions, they said they'd get back to me and they didn't. Only met the person 5 minutes before the case which wasn't enough time.



The amount of people I was passed around to ... four different people for one case.



Well I had to drive the issues most of time and most of the time I felt they were side stepping. I found that ACCS has no power to press the case



There was no outcome ... there was no follow up from the conciliator. There should have been a bit more contact from the conciliator rather than me. They should've rang up and see what documents were wanted.

WQ43/EQ43/AQ35 Why was the service poor? OE

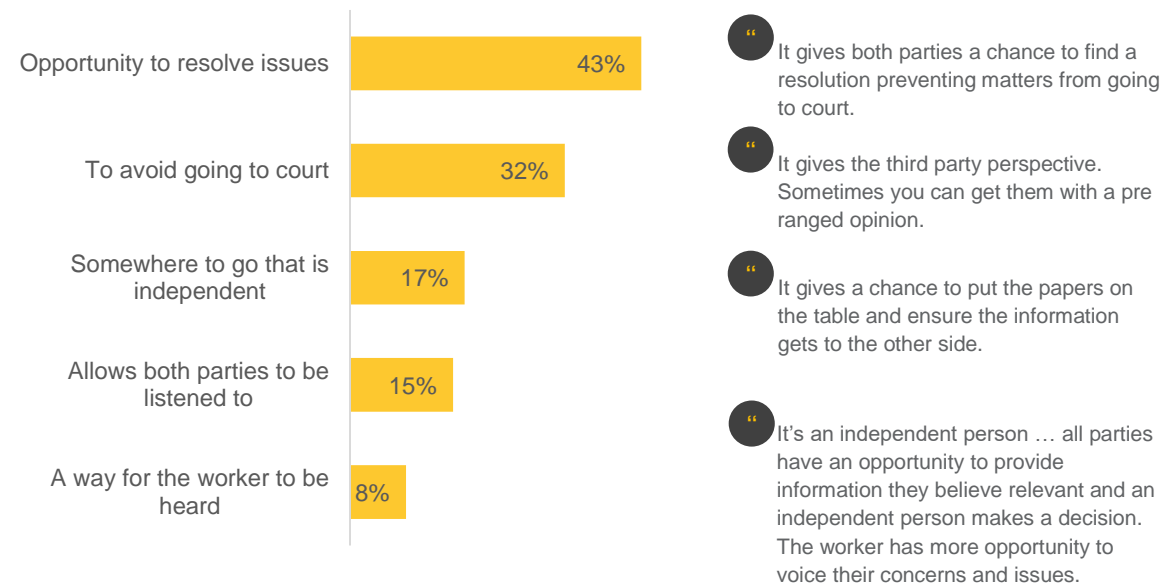
4.2. A valuable service

All clients were asked to expand on why perceived conciliation to be a valuable or not valuable. .

Perceptions of good value

The primary reasons for perceptions of value based on coded verbatim responses related primarily to how the Service gives clients the opportunity to resolve issues arising as part of a dispute (43%). Keeping disputes out of the court system was also seen as a valuable aspect of conciliation (32%). The independent and even-handed nature of ACCS' conciliation as a service was also mentioned.

Figure 5: Perceptions of good value, coded findings



WQ45/EQ45/AQ37 Why is it valuable? OE

Base: All clients who indicated that conciliation was valuable or very valuable (n=411)

Perceptions of poor value

As was the case for the good/poor service measure, an insufficient number of clients perceived conciliation to provide low value to be able to generate a code frame or word cloud for the corresponding open-ended question (n=18). Instead, a selection of verbatim comments has been provided below for ACCS' reference.

Similar to some negative comments around the good/poor service question, a very small number of clients perceived that the value of conciliation was diminished by a lack of power or decision-making on the part of the conciliator. A new theme arose in relation to negative perceptions of ACCS: a similarly small number of clients perceived that the process was unfairly weighted towards the 'power' of the insurer to serve their own interests.



The conciliator is not allowed to do anything, to come in for a discussion and basically be told what's going to happen, could not discuss, waste of time



Only because as an employer a lot of the cases it doesn't really matter if we go or not.



I don't believe that it's a fair process. I believe that the insurance companies always get their way, so it's a waste of time.



Because from what I heard from other people that I have spoken to they hardly achieved anything, seems like a waste of time. All the end of the day the insurance company will take their own side and the side of the employers.



The conciliation officer should be able to make a judgment instead of the two parties coming to an agreement. He had to go through the courts and waste of more time and thinks it's not good to try conciliate.

WQ46/EQ46/AQ38 Why is it not valuable? OE

5. Client journey snapshot

Workers

While only six in ten (61%) Workers were satisfied with the outcome of their case, they were largely satisfied in all other areas of the conciliation process. This suggests that ACCS' clients are able to differentiate the levels of service that ACCS provides from the outcome of a conciliation which is technically outside of the control of ACCS.

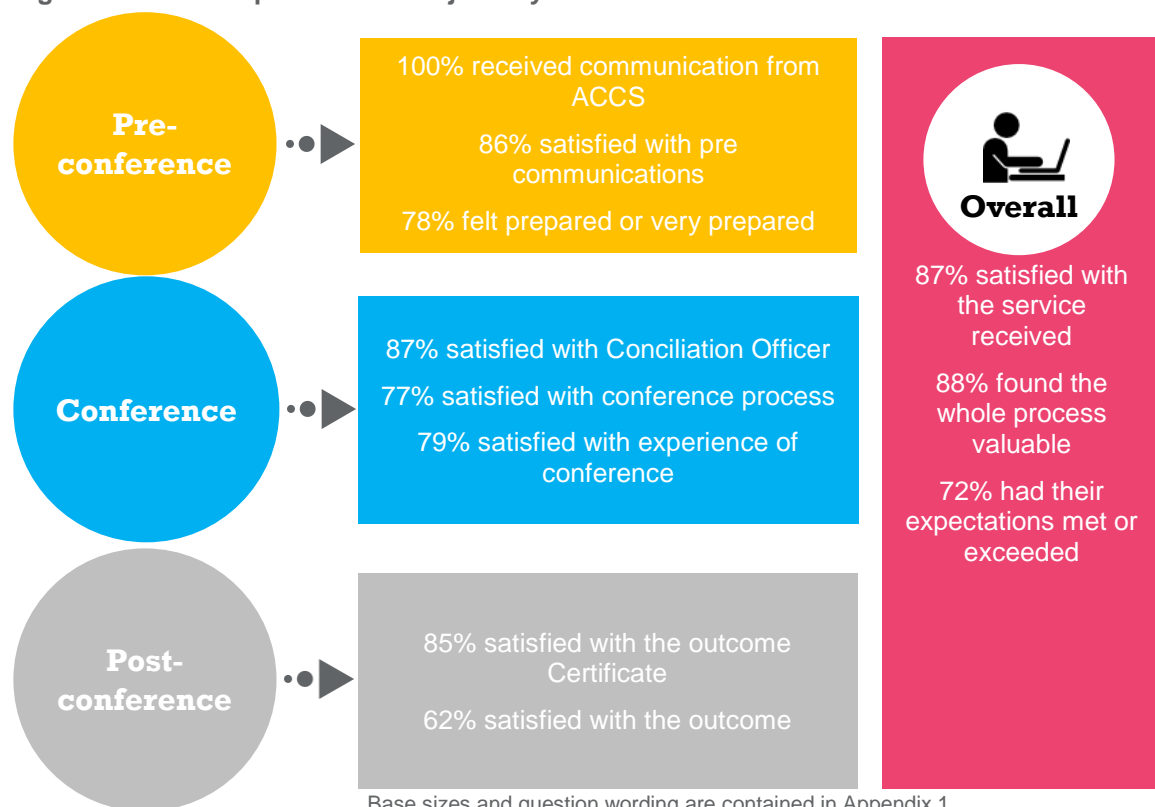
Prior to the conference, all Workers (100%) received communication from ACCS. Of these, nearly nine in ten (86%) were satisfied with the information they received. As a result, eight in ten (78%) felt prepared before they entered the conference.

In regards to the conference itself, almost all Workers (87%) were satisfied with the conduct of the Conciliation Officer. When Workers set aside the outcome of the case, eight in ten (79%) were satisfied with their experience of the conference. Overall, a similar proportion (77%) were satisfied with the conciliation process as a whole.

Following the conference, over eight in ten Workers (85%) were satisfied with the outcome Certificate they received. However, only six in ten (62%) were satisfied with the outcome of the conference. As is noted above, this lower level of satisfaction is not indicative of satisfaction with ACCS' services, given that some Workers will inevitably receive an outcome that they perceive to be unfavourable.

Overall, the vast majority believed the service they received was either very good or good (87%), and either strongly agreed or agreed that the conciliation was a valuable process for them (88%). Three quarters of Workers (72%) felt their expectations of the process were either met or exceeded.

Figure 7: Snapshot of Client journey - Workers



Employers

Overall, the vast majority of Employers were satisfied with most areas of the conciliation process. Areas where satisfaction was slightly lower included the communications received prior to the conference (75%). It may also be of note that a very slightly lower proportion of Employers claimed to have received information from ACCS before the conference (97% compared with all Agents and Workers).

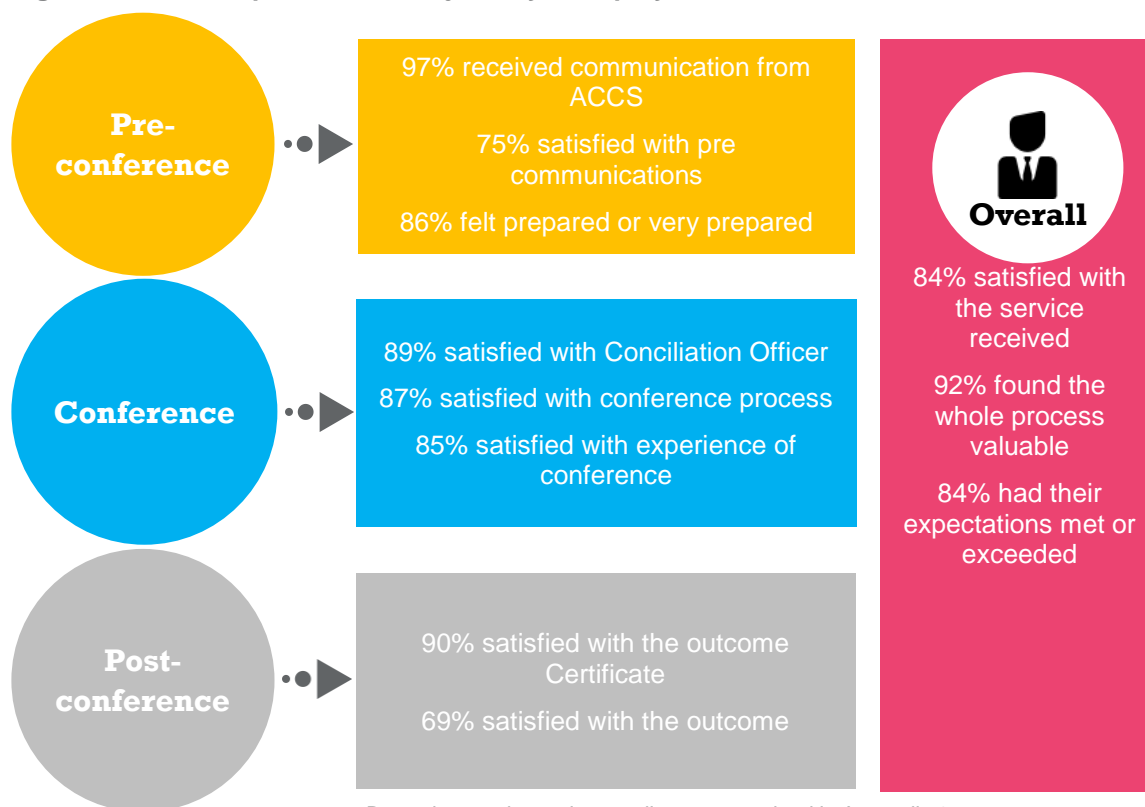
Despite this potential gap in information provision, eight in ten Employers (86%) felt they were prepared before they entered the conference – a proportion very similar to that for Workers.

In regards to the conference itself, nine in ten Employers (89%) were satisfied with the Conciliation Officer. Employers were similarly satisfied with their experience within the conference process (85%). Further, the majority of Employers were satisfied with the conference process as a whole (87%).

Following the conference, almost all (90%) were satisfied with the outcome Certificate they received. Seven in ten (69%) were satisfied with the outcome of the conference. This outcome-based measure is lower than other service-quality measures as some Employers will have received an outcome that they saw as unfavourable to them.

In terms of overall service quality: The majority of Employers stated that the service they received was either very good or good (84%). Almost all either strongly agreed or agreed that the conciliation was a valuable process for them (92%). ACCS either met or exceeded expectations for eight in ten Employers (83%).

Figure 8: Snapshot of Client journey – Employers



Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

Agents

Overall, the vast majority of Agents were satisfied with all areas of the conciliation process.

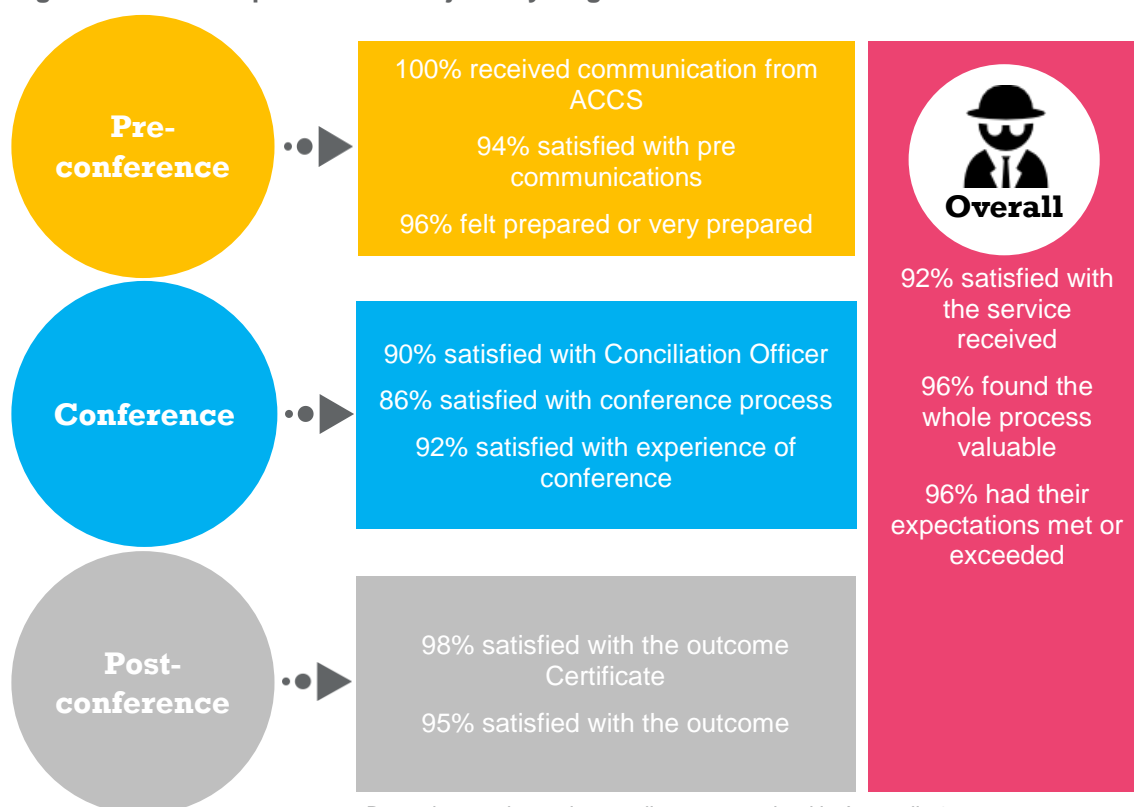
All Agents (100%) received communications from ACCS in the lead-up to the conference. A relatively large proportion were satisfied with the information they received (94%) and nearly all (96%) felt they were prepared before they entered the conference.

In regards to the conference itself, most Agents (90%) were satisfied with the Conciliation Officer who ran the conference they attended. When Agents set aside the outcome of the case, nearly all (92%) were satisfied with their experience within the conference. Over eight in ten (86%) Agents were satisfied with the conference process as a whole.

Following the conference, nearly all Agents were satisfied with the outcome Certificate (98%), and were satisfied with the outcome of the conference (95%). This satisfaction with the outcome of the conference is notably higher than that of Workers or Employers, whose levels of satisfaction were closer to 60-70%. This elevated level of satisfaction perhaps warrants further discussion to identify the drivers of difference for this measure. Possibilities include a lesser vested interest in outcomes for Agents compared with Workers or Employers. Alternatively, Agents may have a better understanding that an outcome will most likely favour one party or another compared with other client types.

Overall, the majority of Agents (92%) believed the service they received was either very good or good, and almost all Agents (96%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the conciliation was a valuable process. Almost all Agents (96%) had their expectations of the conciliation process met or exceeded.

Figure 9: Snapshot of Client journey - Agents



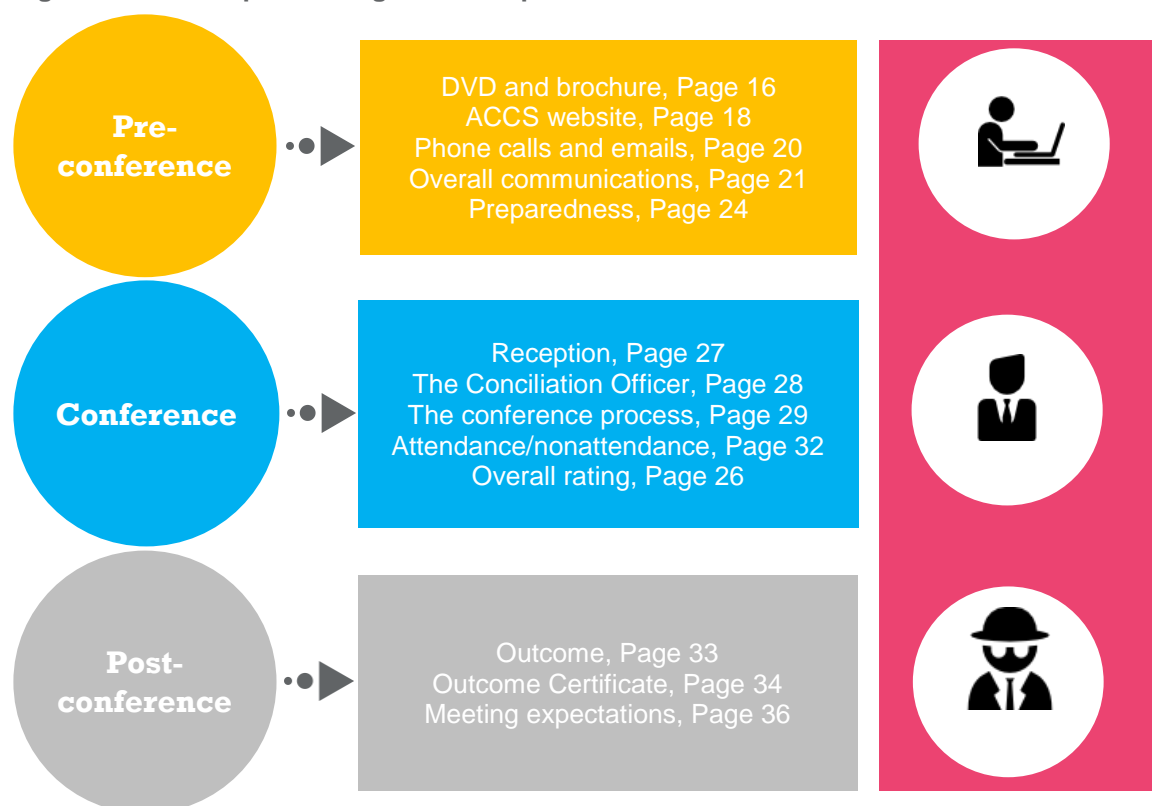
Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

6. Detailed findings

This section maps the journey of clients through the three key stages of conciliation at ACCS:

- Before the conference including communications and preparation for conciliation;
- The day of the conference itself including experience of reception, the Conciliation Officer and the conference process;
- After the conference including consideration of the outcome itself and follow up such as the outcome Certificate.

Figure 10: Map of findings in this report



6.1. Before the conference

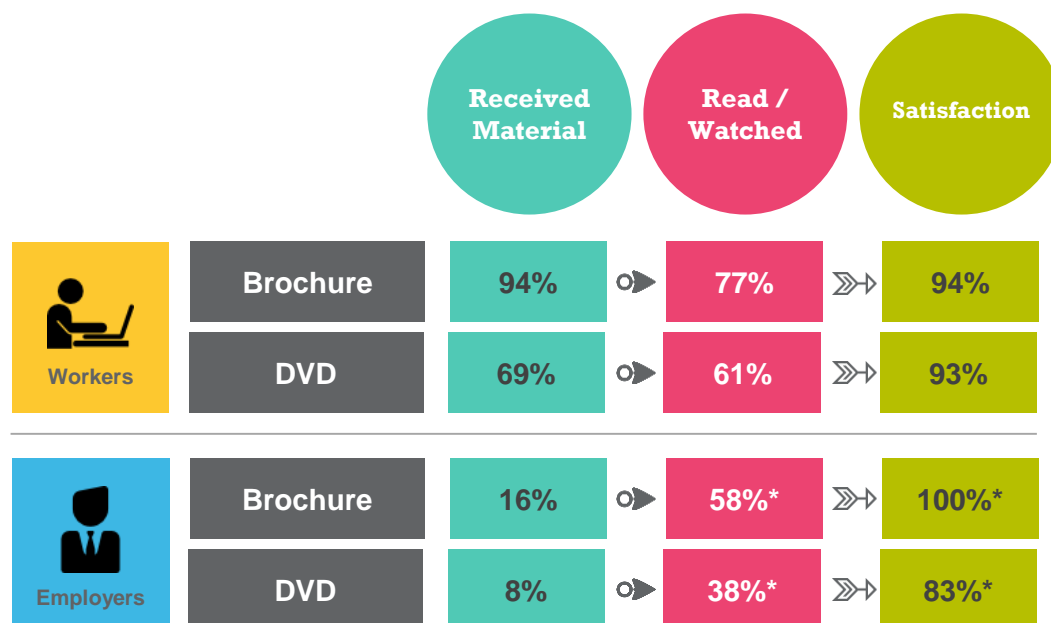
DVD and brochure

Overall, the ACCS brochure is more commonly recalled and used than the DVD, with more Workers reading the brochure (77%) than watching the DVD (61%). Similarly, a greater proportion of Employers recalled/received the brochure compared with the DVD (16% compared with 8%).

Almost all of those Workers that use both the brochure and/or DVD were satisfied with the product (94% and 93% respectively). These results were similar for Employers (satisfaction with brochure 100%, DVD 83%) however due to many Employers not receiving these materials, sample sizes of those who utilised them are very low (Brochure n=12, DVD n=5). These findings therefore should be interpreted with caution.

Workers are more likely to receive both the brochure (94%) and DVD (69%) compared to Employers (16% and 8% respectively). Workers who receive these materials were also more likely to have read or watched the DVD/brochure compared with Employers (brochure 77% vs 58%, DVD 61% vs 38%).

Figure 11: Usage of 'Going to Conference' DVD and Brochure





Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

*Note small base size >n=30.

Workers and Employers provided more specific information about the quality of the DVD and brochure. Only findings for Workers are provided here due to the very small sample size of Employers who received either resource (noted on the previous page).

Quality of ACCS communications was assessed for the timeliness of receipt, clarity/ease of understanding, perceived relevance to the Workers' case, and usefulness to prepare for the conference. Exceptionally high ratings were given by Workers for all aspects of ACCS communications (all in excess of 90% net satisfied). These detailed assessments of the different aspects of the communications align with the very high levels of satisfaction with these communications overall.

Figure 12: Specific measures for Workers, DVD and brochure


Workers 	 DVD	Timeliness	Understanding	Relevance	Usefulness	Satisfaction
		96%	94%	92%	92%	93%
	 Brochure	Timeliness	Understanding	Relevance	Usefulness	Satisfaction
		96%	95%	95%	91%	94%

Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

Overall, Workers' use of the DVD has declined over time. For example, in 2010/11, nearly all Workers received the DVD (87%) and most had watched it (70%). Fast-forward to 2015/16 and only 69% of Workers received the DVD and only 61% had watched it. Given the very high ratings that Workers who watched the DVD gave the communications, ACCS could consider placing greater emphasis on bringing the DVD (or an online equivalent) to the attention of Workers.

Only partial data was available for receipt and use of the brochure. Receipt of the brochure appears to have increased in the last three years to 94% in 2015/16. However, readership of the brochure appears to have shown a decline from 87% to 77%.

Table 2: Workers usage of DVD and brochure over time

		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
DVD	Received	87%	86%	81%	76%	57%	69%
	Watched	70%	70%	58%	70%	68%	61%
Brochure	Received	-	-	-	84%	68%	94%
	Read	-	-	-	87%	82%	77%

WQ26
WQ27

Did you watch the DVD?
Did you read the brochure?

ACCS website

Overall, the ACCS website is not a common source of information or guidance for clients. Overall, one in ten (13%) had accessed the site before the conference. Within the different ACCS client groups, use of the website varied widely. Workers were by far the most common users of the site (24%). A very small number of Employers used the site (5%). No Agents used the site at all (0%) – this is not necessarily a negative finding as Agents most likely do not require the information listed on the ACCS site given their role as professionals who frequently work with ACCS.

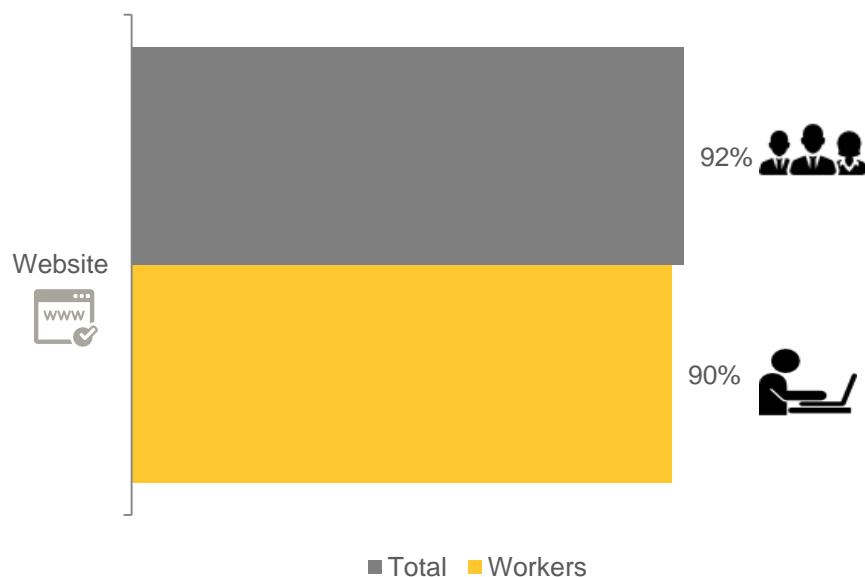
Table 3: Accessing the ACCS website

	Total (n=453)	Workers (n=203)	Employers (n=200)	Agents (n=50*)
Used the ACCS website	13%	24%↑	5%	0%↓

WQ28/EQ32/AQ33: Did you access the ACCS website at any stage?

Almost all of these clients who accessed the website were satisfied with the resource. Overall, 92% of all clients were satisfied including 90% of Workers (too few Employers visited the website to be included in this analysis). Like the DVD, this high level of satisfaction with a relatively under-utilised resource suggests an opportunity to bring the availability of the website to the attention of clients.

Figure 13: Satisfaction with website overall



WQ30/EQ34/AQ24: How satisfied were you with... Overall satisfaction with the website?



Bases: Total (n=59), Workers (n=49)

*Note small base size >n=30.

Workers and Employers provided more specific information about different aspects of the website. As was the case for the DVD and brochure, only findings for Workers are provided here due to the very small sample size of Employers who visited the website.

The quality of ACCS website was assessed in terms of ease of navigation and quality of content. Very high ratings were given by Workers for these aspects of the ACCS website (84% net satisfied and 80% satisfied).

Table 4: Specific measures for Workers, ACCS website

 Workers	 Website	Satisfaction with navigation	Satisfaction with content	Overall satisfaction
		84%	80%	90%

Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

Calls and emails

Overall, few Workers, Employers or Agents contacted ACCS by phone or email prior to the conference. One quarter of clients called ACCS (23%) and one seventh e-mailed ACCS (14%).

Workers were generally more likely than other clients to have called ACCS (37% compared with 23% overall). Agents, on the other hand, were more likely to have been in touch via e-mail (38% compared with 14% overall). Employers were generally less likely to have made any contact using any media, suggesting a certain level of disengagement pre-conference.

Table 5: Initiated Contact by client type

	Total (n=453)	Workers (n=203)	Employers (n=200)	Agents (n=50)
Called an ACCS staff member	23%	37%↑	6%↓	34%
Emailed an ACCS staff member	14%	19%	3%↓	38%↑

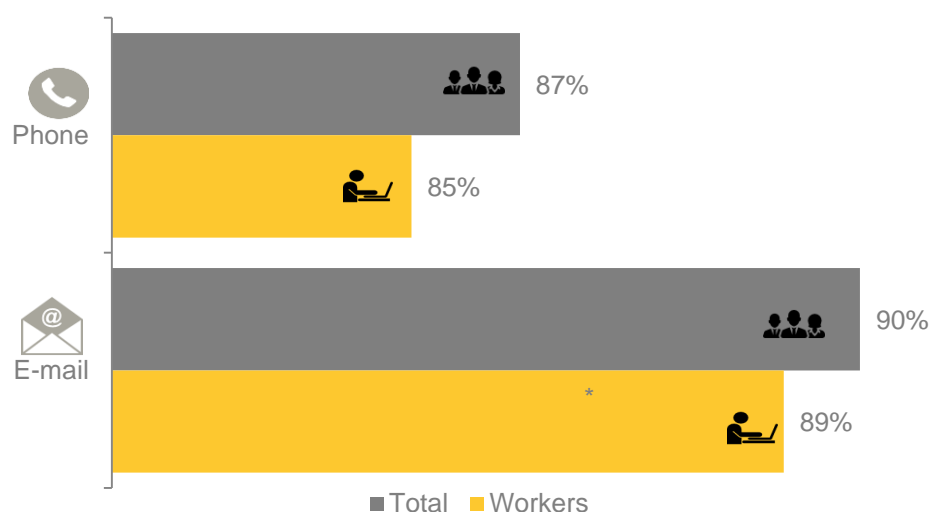
WQ35/ EQ31/ AQ25

Did you at any stage prior to the conference/outcome, initiate contact with ACCS by...

Most of those who called or emailed ACCS were satisfied. At a total level, the majority of those who contacted ACCS via phone or email were either very satisfied or satisfied with their experience (87% and 90% respectively). Specifically, the proportion of Workers who were satisfied when contacting ACCS by phone and e-mail was similarly high (85%, 89% respectively).

Satisfaction with ACCS' email and phone communication was similarly high for Agents and Employers. Specific findings for these client groups are not presented here due to very low sample sizes.

Figure 14: Satisfaction with initiated contact



WQ37

WQ34

Base (phone/email)

And how satisfied were you with your initiated contact with ACCS by phone or email?

How satisfied were you with ... Overall satisfaction with the website

Total (n=104 & 63); Workers (n=75 & 38)

Communication overall: Main findings

All clients were asked to rate specific aspects of ACCS pre-conference communications across all media. As was the case for specific ratings of ACCS' communications before the conference, clients were extremely satisfied with:

- The relevance of the information provided overall (86% net satisfied);
- The timeliness with which the information was delivered (86%);
- The provision of contacts should the client require follow up (81%);
- The usefulness of the information provided (77%).

Overall satisfaction across all measures for all clients was 82%. Different client types provided similarly high ratings for ACCS communication overall. Some difference was noted between client groups

- Agents were the most satisfied with the pre-conference communications including overall satisfaction (94% compared with 82% overall) the provision of contacts for follow up (94%, 81%) and the usefulness of the communication (90%, 77%);
- Employers were less satisfied with the usefulness of the communication compared with all clients (68%, 77%).

Table 6: Communication overall by client type

	Total (n=446)	Workers (n=203)	Employers (n=193)	Agents (n=50)
Relevance	86%	89%	82%	92%
Timeliness	86%	86%	85%	90%
Contacts	81%	80%	78%	94%↑
Usefulness	77%	83%	68%↓	90%↑
Overall satisfaction	82%	86%	75%	94%↑

Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

Communication overall: Driver analysis

Colmar Brunton undertook a 'Driver Analysis' of clients' responses to questions relating to satisfaction with ACCS' communication. Variation in overall satisfaction with communications was considered in light of satisfaction levels for specific elements of communications such as usefulness and relevance. The aim of this analysis was to identify the specific factors that 'drive' overall satisfaction (or indeed dissatisfaction). Put another way – which specific factors are most closely related to overall satisfaction and therefore should be the focus on quality improvement for ACCS?

The findings of this analysis show:

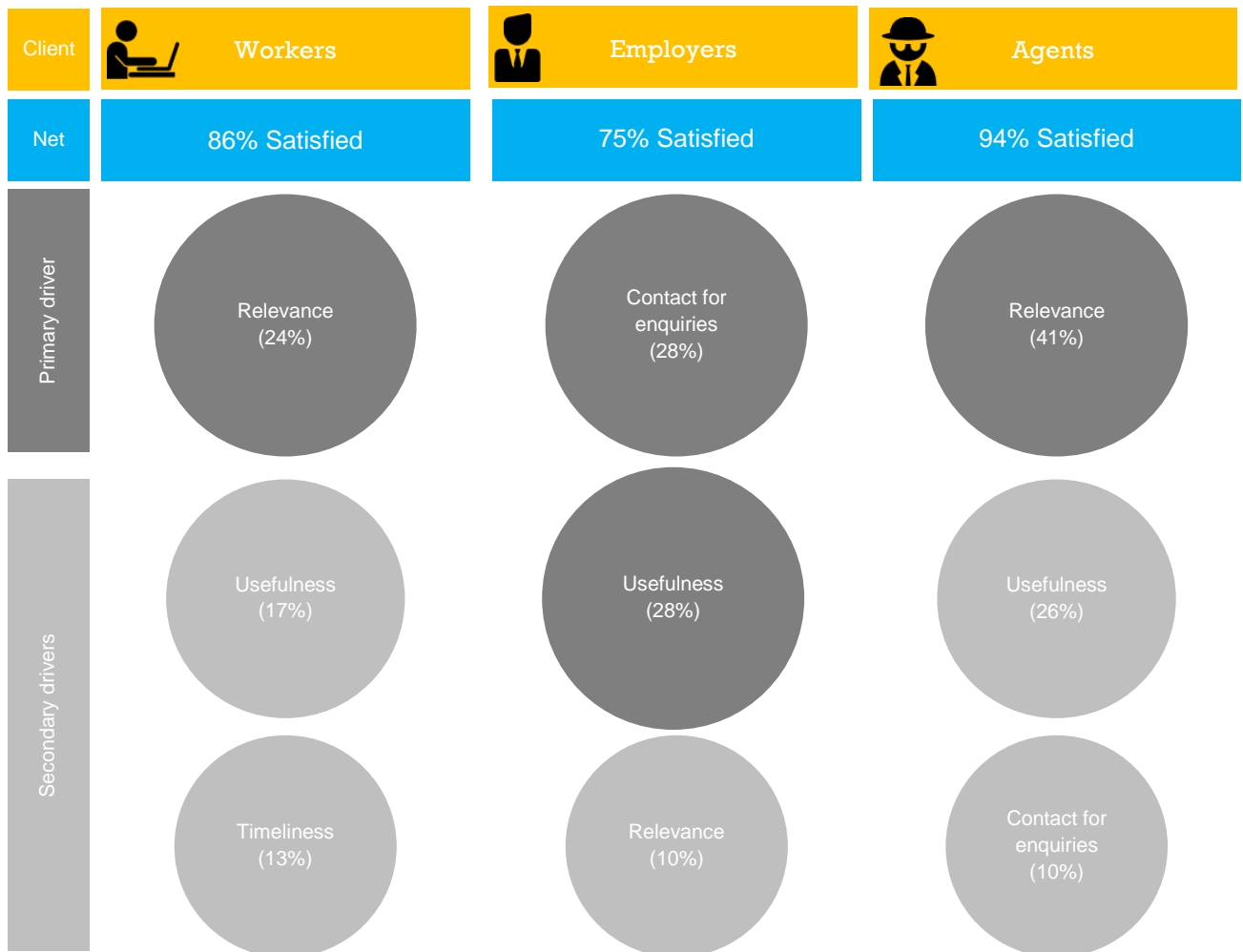
- **Workers:** The greatest driver of satisfaction with ACCS' communication was its perceived relevance to their case (24% contribution to overall satisfaction)⁸. Weaker drivers were usefulness of the communication (17%) and timeliness (13%). This is to say that Workers do not value useful or timely information. Rather, that information that is relevant and therefore presumably tailored to the Workers' situation was of greatest importance.

⁸ These percentage figures show the amount of overall satisfaction that can be attributable to each factor. For example, this figure shows that 24% of overall satisfaction for Workers can be accounted for by perceived relevance. It is rare for a Driver Analysis such as this one to account for 100% of overall variance – there are typically factors that explain variance in satisfaction that are not covered in the questionnaire. In this instance, the Driver Analysis is considered 'strong' as it accounts for up to 80% of variance in overall satisfaction.

- **Employers:** In the case of Employers, the greatest driver of satisfaction was the provision of contact details for follow up and further enquiries (28% contribution). The usefulness of the communication was a similarly high driver of satisfaction (also 28%) followed by relevance (10%).
- **Agents:** Like Workers, the greatest driver of satisfaction for Agents was the relevance of the information provided (41%, the strongest of all drivers) suggesting a need to provide Agents with information that is very specific to each case. The usefulness of the information was a moderate driver of satisfaction (26%) and the provision of contacts for follow up was a relatively weak driver (10%).

These drivers are summarised in the figure below. The top three (and therefore strongest) drivers of satisfaction are shown.

Figure 15: Top three drivers of satisfaction with pre-conference communication



Communication overall: Performance and importance quadrants

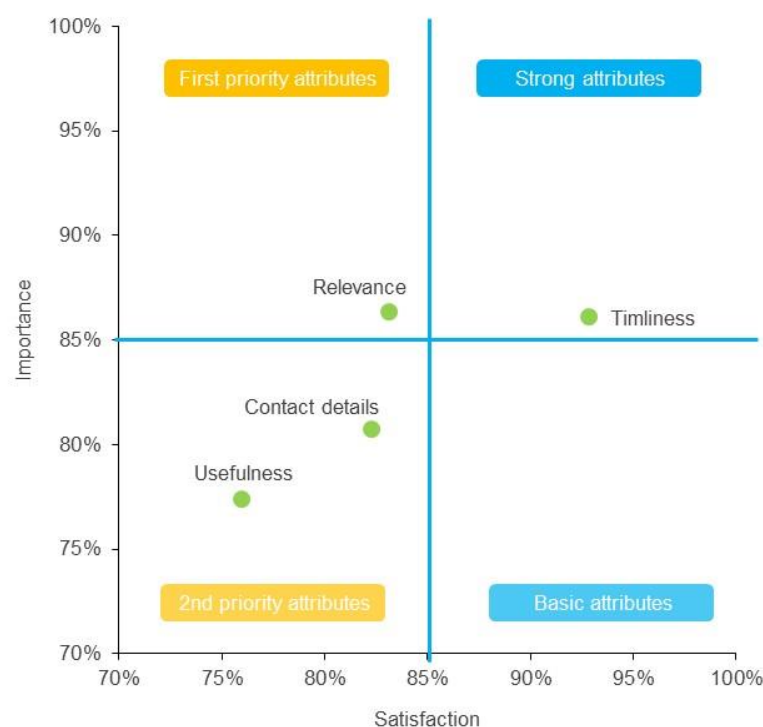
Data was further analysed by mapping elements of ACCs' communications into a matrix of performance vs. importance scores. This matrix allows ACCS to determine which attributes of communication are most important to clients; and correspondingly, the attributes clients are most satisfied with. This provides ACCS with an indication of attributes that are:

- **First Priority:** Attributes of communication in this area need the greatest attention. They are attributes which are of high importance for clients, but were rated lower in terms of satisfaction.
- **Second Priority:** These attributes of communication show both lower importance but also lower satisfaction. Attention may be needed, though as a second priority.
- **Strong:** Attributes of communication which fall into this quadrant are high in importance for clients and are also attributes for which they are highly satisfied. These are areas that ACCS should seek to maintain.
- **Basic/ Expected:** Clients are highly satisfied with these attributes of communication, but they are not as important as other areas. ACCS may wish to transfer resources from these areas to areas that are more critical to clients.

Only a small number (four) of attributes of communication were listed in the questionnaire using this importance/satisfaction structure. Of these:

- **Relevance:** Providing relevant, tailored information was determined to be a first priority attribute. This attribute of communication was seen as being relatively important, but also was given relatively low satisfaction scores;
- **Timeliness** in providing information was seen to be a strong attribute for ACCS – an area of importance where ACCS is performing relatively well;
- **Provision of contact details** was seen as a second priority attribute – something that was relatively unimportant and with lower satisfaction. 'Usefulness' also fell in this quadrant which may appear unusual. However, it is possible that the very general nature of this attribute led to placement in the 'secondary priority' space.

Figure 16: Performance and importance quadrants



Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

The reader should note that the importance/performance matrix above is based on clients ratings of aspects of communication *relative to each other*. To say that clients gave lower ratings to the usefulness of ACCS communications does not mean that clients did not perceive usefulness of communications overall, rather that this attribute was rated lower than other attributes such as timeliness. (In fact, 77% of clients perceived ACCS' communications to be useful – a relatively high proportion given the types of rating this aspect of service tends to receive for public services.)

Further, the figure above does not show the entire range of possible proportions of importance/satisfaction. The axes begin at 70% instead of 0% which would be the lowest possible proportion. This design is intentional and is used to show the *spread* of attributes relative to each other. If the scale started at 0%, all attributes would be clustered together and difficult to differentiate.

Feelings of preparedness

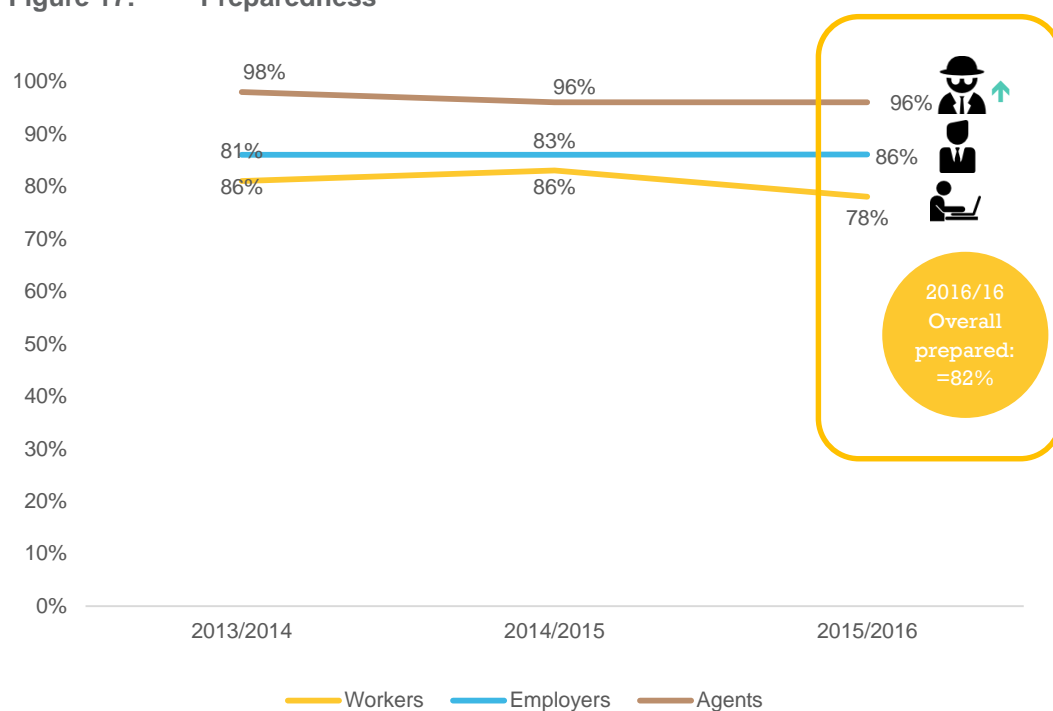
All clients were asked how prepared they felt on the day of the conference based on pre-conference communication from ACCS and other activities undertaken by the client themselves.

In 2015/16, most clients recalled that they felt prepared at the time of the conference. Across all client groups, 82% felt prepared in 2015/16. Feelings of preparedness were not evenly distributed across client types. Agents were more likely to feel prepared on the day of the conference compared with other client types. As noted previously, this difference might be expected given the professional and ongoing relationship that exists between ACCS and the Agent. Workers were least likely to feel prepared at 78%.

Over time, feelings of confidence have fluctuated slightly for Agents and Employers with no significant differences observed year on year.

A difference was observed for Workers between 2015/16 and previous years whereby feelings of preparedness declined from 86% to 78%.

Figure 17: Preparedness



Base:
WQ240/EQ20/AQ20:

Workers (n=203), Employers (n=200), Agents (n=50), Total, (n=453)
How prepared did you feel before entering the conference?

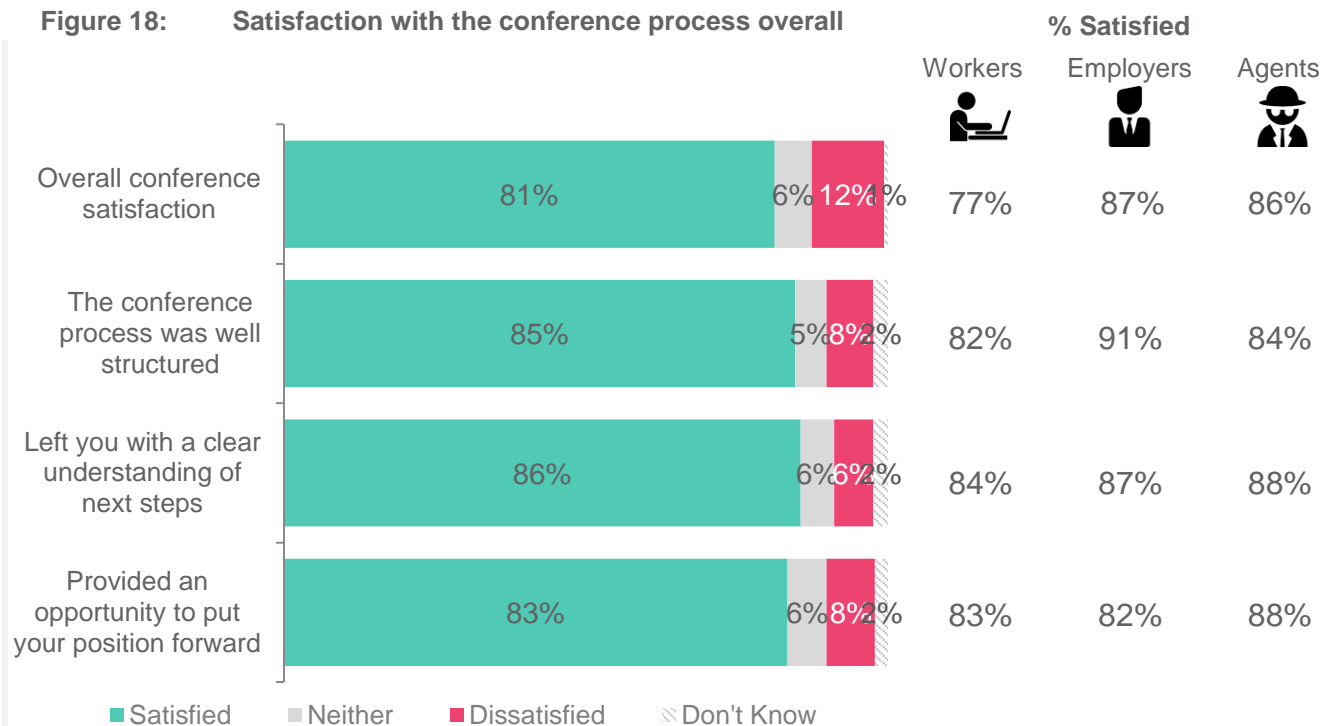
6.2. During the conference

Overall ratings of the conference

The majority of clients who attended a conference were satisfied with their overall experience (81%). Satisfaction was high for all aspects of the conference, including the process being well structured (85%), leaving with a clear understanding of what steps to take next (86%) and being provided an opportunity to put their position forward (83%).

Minor variations in satisfaction with the conference were seen for Agents, Employers and Workers. However, none of these differences were significant suggesting a uniformly high level of service provision on the day of the conference for all parties.

Figure 18: Satisfaction with the conference process overall



WQ18/EQ17/AQ13
Base:

How satisfied were you that....
Total (325); Workers (n=184); Employers (n=91); Agents (n=50) * Low base size (<n=30)
























Reception and waiting area

A typical first experience of clients on conference day is entering reception. Clients may interact with reception staff and view a video presentation about conciliation. Agents, employers and Workers were asked to rate their satisfaction with these elements of the ACCS reception service.

Overall, levels of interaction with the receptionist was fairly constant across client types. Between 88% and 92% of Workers, Agents and Employers spoke with the receptionist. Noticing and watching the presentation was similarly very constant across client groups ranging 27%-33% who saw the presentation (substantially lower than the proportion who spoke with the receptionist).

All clients were satisfied with the services of the receptionist including politeness (ranging 93%-100% net satisfied) and overall experience (ranging 92%-97%). Perceptions of the quality of the video was more varied. Workers were more inclined to agree that the presentation was easy to understand, relevant and useful (80%, 74% and 74% respectively) compared with employers (58%, 53% and 37%). Agents were similarly likely to agree that the presentation was easy to understand (92%) though saw less relevance or usefulness (67%, 50%).

Figure 19: Ratings of receptionist and video presentation

Workers 	 Reception	Interacted with receptionist	Receptionist was polite	Overall experience of receptionist	
		88% (of these) 	97%	95%	
	 Presentation	Viewed video	Easy to understand	Relevant	Useful
		27% (of these) 	80%	74% 	74% 
Employers  *	 Reception	Interacted with receptionist	Receptionist was polite	Overall experience of receptionist	
		91% (of these) 	93%	92%	
	 Presentation	Viewed video	Easy to understand	Relevant	Useful
		29% (of these) 	58% 	53% 	37% 
Agents  *	 Reception	Interacted with receptionist	Receptionist was polite	Overall experience of receptionist	
		92% (of these) 	100%	97%	
	 Presentation	Viewed video	Easy to understand	Relevant	Useful
		33% (of these) 	92% 	67% 	50% 

*Note small base size >n=30.

Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

The Conciliation Officer

All clients who attended a conference were asked to rate their satisfaction with different aspects of the services provided by the Conciliation Officer. These service components included professionalism, politeness, preparedness and knowledge of the content of the conference.

Almost across the board, all clients were very satisfied with the service provided by the Conciliation Officer. Overall net satisfaction scores for Workers, Employers and Agents was 87%, 89% and 90% respectively. Across all clients, this equates to 88% net satisfaction.

Uniformly high levels of satisfaction were apparent for the way that the Officer:

- Greeted the client in a polite and professional way (98%);
- Adequately explained his/her role at the start of the conference (94%);
- Was organised/prepared throughout the conference (92%);
- Maintained control of the conference process (91%);
- Listened to what the client had to say (88%); and
- Was independent, fair and even handed (85%).

The lowest rating was provided for the level of knowledge of the law and their explanation of this component of the conference. Overall levels of satisfaction with this aspect of service were still relatively high across all clients (84%). However, satisfaction with this aspect of service was particularly low for Agents (72%). This difference is not statistically significant, which is possibly the result of a relatively small number of Agents included in the survey. This difference in satisfaction may, nonetheless, warrant further investigation with Agents.

No significant differences in satisfaction were observed between client types for any aspects of the Conciliation Officer's service.

Table 7: Satisfaction with the Conciliation Officer

	Total (n=325)	Workers (n=184)	Employers (n=91)	Agents (n=50)
Greeted you in a polite and professional way	98%	98%	98%	96%
Adequately explained his/her role	94%	95%	97%	88%
Was organised/prepared	92%	91%	95%	88%
Maintained control of the conference process	91%	92%	91%	86%
Listened to what you had to say	88%	87%	88%	94%
Was independent, fair and even handed	85%	85%	85%	86%
Knew the law or explained how it applied to your matter	84%	84%	87%	72%
Overall satisfaction	88%	87%	89%	90%

Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

The conference process

All clients who attended a conference were also asked about their satisfaction with the different parts of the conference structure and functioning. In general terms, this line of questioning can be categorised into items relating to the different stages of the conference (introduction, summary of agreement etc.); and the quality of the running of the conference (gaining a clear understanding of the next steps, having an opportunity to 'have a say' etc.).

Clients were also asked about their overall satisfaction with the conference. As has been the case with almost all services provided by ACCS, satisfaction was high regardless of client type. Overall net satisfaction was 81% across all client types. No significant differences were observed when comparing satisfaction levels of individual client groups to the total population. It may be of note that Workers' net satisfaction was lower than that of employers (77% and 87% respectively).

In terms of the stages of the conference, the highest satisfaction levels were observed for induction, explanation of the next steps and private discussions (93%, 87% and 82% net satisfaction overall). Parts of the conference where net satisfaction dipped below 80% were the summary of the conference agreement and joint discussion (76% and 73%).

When compared against the total, no differences were observed between client groups for satisfaction with the conference process. However, as was the case for overall satisfaction, Workers were often less satisfied with these aspects of the conference process compared with employers. For example, 69% of workers were satisfied with the summary of conference or agreement compared with 85% of employers.

Table 8: Satisfaction with the conference process

	Total (n=325)	Workers (n=184)	Employers (n=91)	Agents (n=50)
Stages				
Introduction stage	93%	93%	96%	86%
Explanation of next steps	87%	86%	89%	86%
Private discussion	82%	80%	90%	76%
Summary of conference or agreement	76%	69%	85%	84%
Joint discussion	73%	68%	78%	82%
Quality				
Clear understanding of next steps	86%	84%	87%	88%
Conference process was well structured	85%	82%	91%	84%
Opportunity to put point forward	83%	83%	82%	88%
Overall				
With the conference process overall	81%	77%	87%	86%

Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

In terms of the quality of running the conference, high levels of satisfaction were seen across all client types. More than eight in ten clients overall were satisfied with

- Gaining a clear understanding of next steps (86%);
- The conference process was well structured (85%); and
- Being given the opportunity to put their point forward (83%).

No significant differences were observed for the satisfaction levels of Workers, Agents and Employers for these questions. Differences were not observed between client groups either (for example, the differences in satisfaction between Workers and Employers described on the last page).

Colmar Brunton undertook a 'Driver Analysis' of clients' responses to questions relating to satisfaction with the conference. This driver analysis used the same technique as the analysis undertaken for ACCS' communication described on Page 22.

The findings of this analysis show:

- **Workers:** The greatest driver of satisfaction with the conference was that the conference was well structured (19% contribution to overall satisfaction). Another relatively strong driver was having the opportunity to put the Worker's point of view forward (18%). A weaker driver was the explanation of the next steps for the Worker (9%).
- **Employers:** A similar pattern was observed for Employers whereby a well-structured conference was a relatively strong driver of satisfaction, followed by having the opportunity to state the employer's position and an understanding of the next steps (38%, 5% and 5% contribution respectively). While the rank order of contribution was the same for Employers and Workers, 'opportunity to state position' was a stronger driver for Workers than it was for Employers.
- **Agents:** A well-structured conference was also the strongest driver for Agents (24%). However, for these clients, knowing the next steps post-conference was a stronger driver of satisfaction compared with Workers and Agents (22%). The opportunity to put the insurers' position forward was a very weak driver of satisfaction for Agents (2%), weaker than both Workers and Employers.

The fact that all client groups seem to place greatest value on 'well-structured' conferences suggests that their greatest desires on the day are for a predictable, understandable and organised process. This need even seems to surpass the drive to put forward a point of view or understand what happens next. This suggests a need for ACCS to plan and implement the conference in the most consistent and logically structured manner possible.

Figure 20 Drivers of satisfaction with the conference process and conference overall



Impact of attendance on ratings

Almost all (91%) Workers attended the conference, whereas only half (46%) of Employers did. Nonetheless, the majority of both Workers (77%) and Employers (87%) who attended the conference were satisfied with the process overall.

Whether or not a client attended the conference did appear to have an impact on satisfaction with the outcome of the conference. For example, 60% of workers who attended the conference were satisfied with the outcome compared to 79% satisfaction for those that did not attend a conference. This is quite probably due to a matter being settled outside of ACCS without the need for a conference.

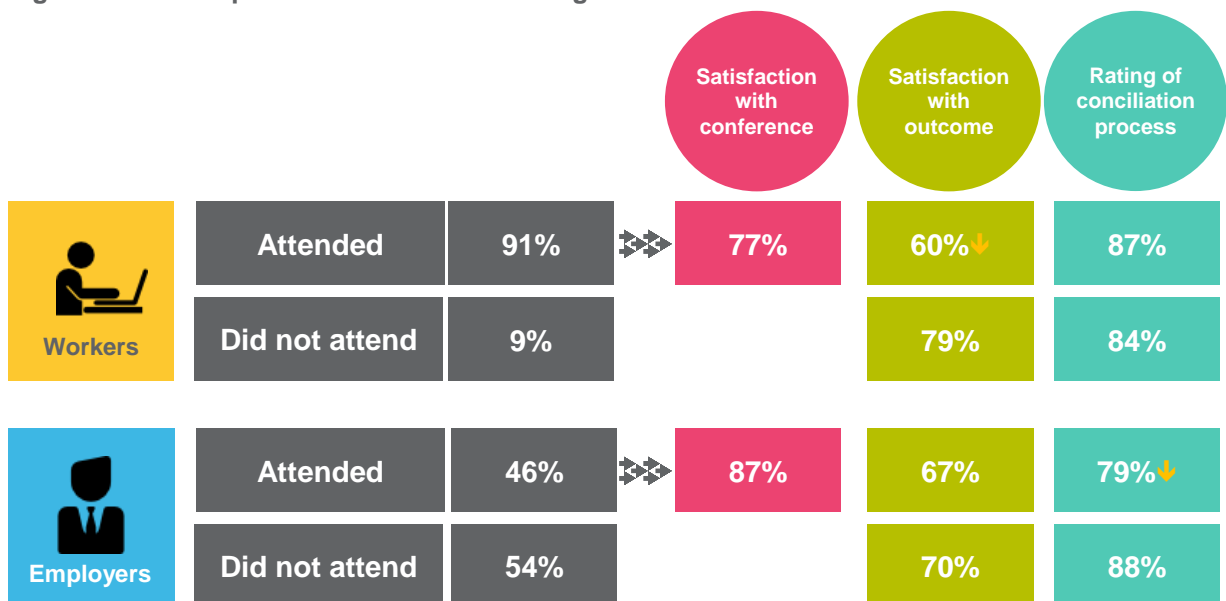
The same effect was not apparent for employers where very similar levels of satisfaction with the outcome was seen for those who did and did not attend (67%, 70%).

A similar lack of difference was seen for overall rating of the conference process for workers. No significant difference in overall satisfaction was seen for workers who did and did not attend (87%, 84%).

However, a difference was seen for service ratings for employers who did attend the conference (79%) which is lower than the rating given by those that did not (88%).

The drivers behind these differences (and lack of differences) in rating and satisfaction are unclear and may require further exploration.

Figure 21: Impact of attendance on ratings



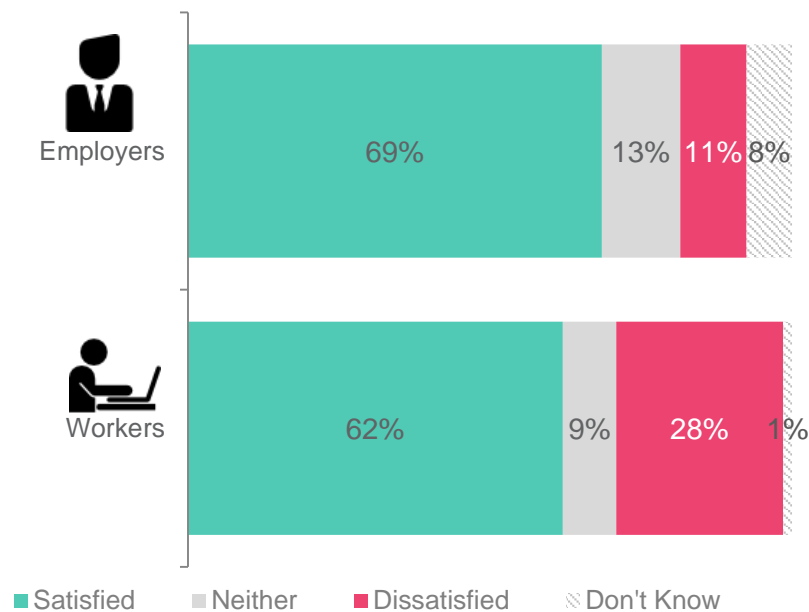
Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

6.3. After the conference

Satisfaction with outcome

Satisfaction with the outcome of the conference was generally lower than other satisfaction measures in the survey. This is not surprising given that an outcome can generally favour either party, thus leading to potential disappointment for the other. Net satisfaction with the outcome of the conference was 69% for Workers and 62% for Employers. Note that these two proportions are not significantly different.

Figure 22: Satisfaction with outcome



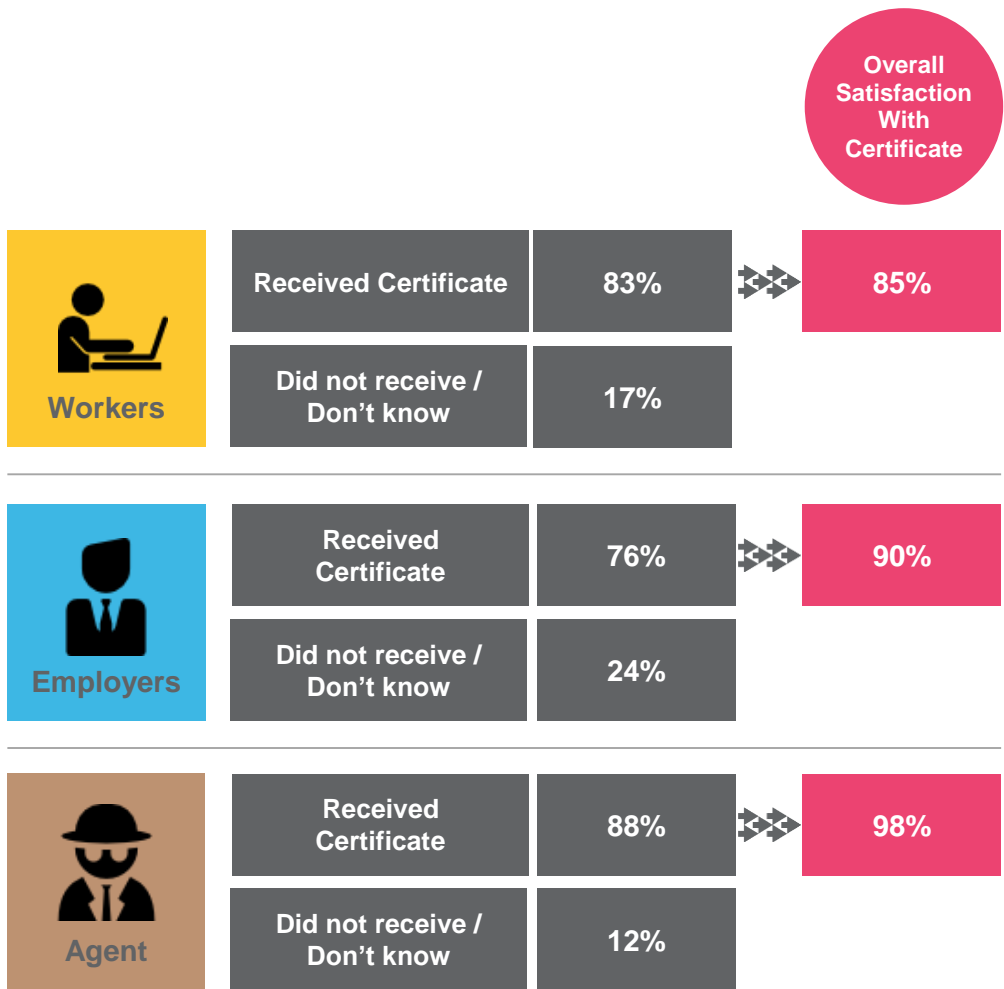
Base: Workers (n=203); Employers (n=200)
WQ47/EQ47 How satisfied were you with the outcome of the conciliation process?

Outcome Certificate

The majority of those involved in a conference received an outcome Certificate. Agents were more likely to recall receiving an outcome Certificate (88%), followed by Workers (83%) and Employers (76%).

The majority of those who received an outcome Certificate were satisfied with the document. Satisfaction was slightly higher for Agents (98%) compared with other client types. Satisfaction with the Certificate was similar for Employers and Workers at 90% and 85% respectively.

Figure 23: Satisfaction with Outcome Certificate



Base sizes and question wording are contained in Appendix 1

All clients who received the Certificate were asked about their satisfaction with specific elements of the document. For example: how easy the document was to understand, the timeliness of delivery, perceived relevance etc. Across all clients, relatively high levels of satisfaction were evident for:

- The ease with which the client could understand the content of the Certificate (net 92% satisfied);
- The timeliness with which ACCS provided the Certificate (90%);
- The perceived relevance of the information to the client (89%);
- The extent to which the Certificate reflected the outcome of the conference (86%); and
- Details of the next steps to be taken (81%).

Slightly lower levels of satisfaction were noted for details of follow-up procedures post conference – net 73% satisfaction. This finding, in conjunction with the lower ranking of satisfaction relating to ‘next steps’ (above) may flag a perceived information gap relating to potential courses of action after the conclusion of the conference. It may well be the case that there are no further actions to be taken, even if one is desired; at least not one that involves ACCS. Nonetheless, consideration of strengthening information relating to ‘next steps’ and ‘follow up’ at ACCS or other relevant organisation may be warranted.

Agents generally expressed higher levels of satisfaction with the Outcome Certificate compared with ACCS clients as a whole. As has already been noted on the previous page, overall satisfaction with the Certificate was higher for Agents (98% vs. 88% total). Further, specifically, Agents were more satisfied with:

- Ease of understanding the Certificate (100% compared with 92% total);
- Timeliness of receiving the Certificate (100%, 90%);
- Reflection of the outcome of the conference (98%, 86%);
- Details of the next steps (93%, 81%).

Table 9: Specific aspects of outcome Certificate

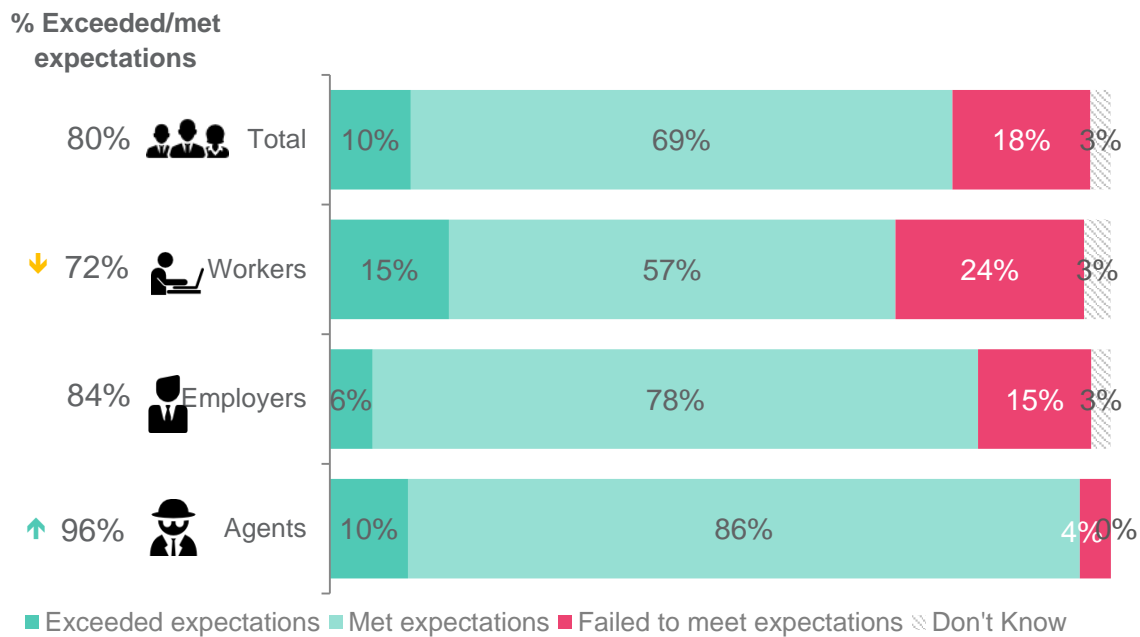
	Total (n=358)	Workers (n=168)	Employers (n=146)	Agents (n=44)
Ease of understanding	92%	88%	94%	100%↑
Timeliness of receiving	90%	91%	86%	100%↑
Relevance of the information	89%	95%	92%	85%
Clearly reflecting the outcome	86%	83%	86%	98%↑
Details of next steps	81%	78%	80%	93%↑
Details of follow up procedures	73%	74%	73%	64%
The Certificate overall	88%	85%	90%	98%↑

Question wording is contained in Appendix 1

Meeting expectations

At a total level, expectations were met or exceeded for eight in ten clients (80%). Agents were more likely to indicate that their expectations met compared with the total population of clients (86%). Workers, on the other hand, were less likely to have had their expectations met (72%). The proportion of employers with met expectations sat in between these two other client groups (84%).

Figure 24: Meeting and exceeding expectations



WQ40/EQ40/AQ32

Base:

Thinking about your overall conciliation experience, would you say your expectations have been exceeded, met or not met?

Total (n=453) Workers (n=203); Employers (n=200); Agents (n=50)