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A document prepared for
Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

**Ships Agent Clients
2006 Satisfaction Survey
Research Report**

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June 2006

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SHIPS AGENT CLIENTS - SATISFACTION SURVEY FINDINGS

SURVEY SAMPLE

In total, 194 clients of AQIS Ships Agent Services were contacted by telephone to participate in the Customer Satisfaction Survey in 2006. Of these, 173 clients actually participated in the survey, giving an **overall response rate of 89%** - showing that there was an excellent response to the survey among Ships Agent clients.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Length of time dealing with AQIS

Most respondents who participated in the survey were long-time clients of AQIS. Six in ten (60%) respondents had dealt with AQIS for 10 years or more and almost nine in ten (87%) had dealt with AQIS for 3 years or more. This distribution in length of time dealing with AQIS is consistent with the survey sample of 2004.

Length of time	% 2004 (N = 135)	% 2006 (N = 173)
Less than 12 months	3	5
1 and less than 3 years	10	8
3 and less than 5 years	11	5
5-9 years	14	22
10 years or more	62	60
TOTAL	100	100

Regular AQIS contact office

Regular contact office	% (N=173)
WA - not Perth	20
Queensland - Far North/Cairns/Townsville	15
Queensland – Brisbane	13
NSW – Sydney	13
WA – Perth	13
NSW - not Sydney	13
SA – Adelaide	12
Victoria – Melbourne	11
NT – Darwin	9
Tas – Hobart	6
Victoria - not Melbourne	5
Tas - not Hobart	5
Canberra	5
Queensland - South Qld	5
SA - not Adelaide	4
NT - not Darwin	2
Total	151

Note: The percentages in the above table add to more than 100% as respondents were allowed to specify more than one office with which they have regular dealings.

The table above shows the main AQIS offices with which Ships Agent clients liaise. The primary contact offices in 2006 are far North Queensland and regional WA (i.e. not Perth), followed next by regional NSW (i.e. not Sydney), and the primary capital cities (i.e. Brisbane, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Darwin).

In total, Ships Agent clients are fairly spread in terms of the offices they have regular contact with and this has not changed considerably since the last survey (i.e. 2004). The largest difference in comparison to 2004 figures is that regional NSW has increased in representation to 13%, increasing 6% in the last two years.

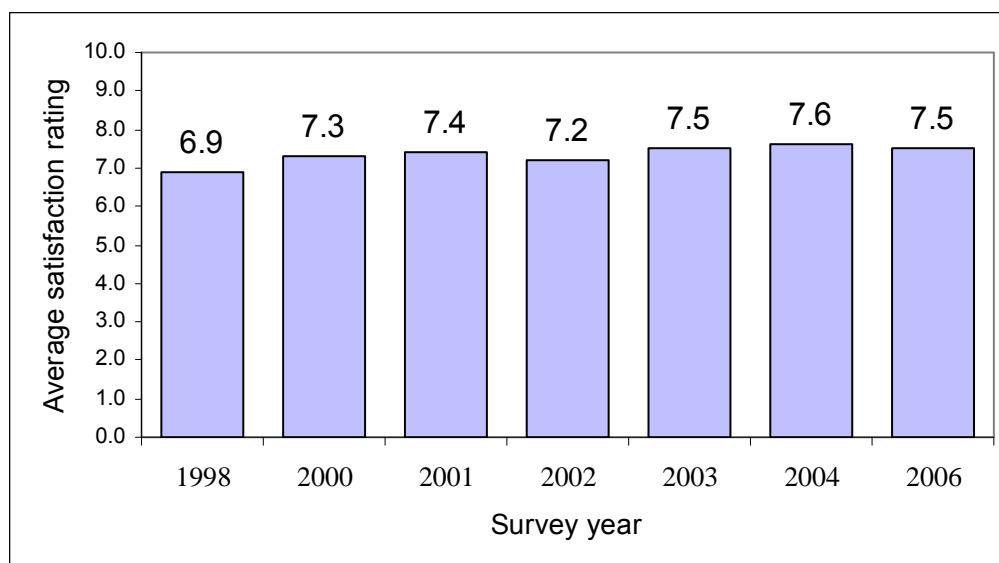
OVERALL SATISFACTION

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the service provided by AQIS on a scale of 1 to 10 – 1 being 'extremely dissatisfied', and 10 being 'extremely satisfied'. **The vast majority of Ships Agent clients were satisfied with the service provided to them by AQIS, with 91% giving it a rating of 6 or more out of 10.** Of these, 12% of respondents reported being extremely satisfied with AQIS service (i.e., 10 out of 10) and only 1% was extremely dissatisfied.

Level of overall satisfaction with AQIS service (on a scale of 1-10)	% (N=173)
1 (Extremely Dissatisfied)	1
2-5	8
6-9	79
10 (Extremely Satisfied)	12
TOTAL	100

Respondents' overall satisfaction with AQIS service was relatively high in 2006, with an **average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10**. When compared with historical data, the figure below shows that the trend for **Ships agent clients' overall satisfaction is positive**. **There has been a slow increase in overall satisfaction since 1998**. (The decrease of 0.1 in overall satisfaction between 2004 and 2006 is not statistically significant.)

Average rating of Overall Satisfaction with AQIS service (1998-2006)



Consistency in satisfaction across AQIS offices

The majority of Ships Agent clients indicated that they usually deal with a single AQIS office and only 28% said they deal with more than one AQIS office. Clients who dealt with more than one AQIS office were asked if their level of satisfaction was consistent across different offices - 79% (or 38 from 48 respondents) said that they **were consistently satisfied** across the different offices.

Changes in overall satisfaction over the last two years

Respondents were asked if their overall satisfaction with AQIS service has improved, deteriorated, or stayed the same over the last two years. The largest proportion of respondents (56%) said that their overall satisfaction had stayed the same over the last two years. **Approximately two from five (38%) said that their overall satisfaction had improved** while only approximately 1 from 17 said their satisfaction had deteriorated.

The proportion of respondents in 2006 reporting their satisfaction has stayed the same over the last two years increased by 13% since 2004. The proportion of respondents reporting improvement decreased by 7% since 2004 but this was balanced by the fact that the proportion reporting their satisfaction had deteriorated also decreased (down by 6% since 2004).

Change in overall satisfaction over last 2 years	% (N= 173)
Improved	38
Stayed the same	55
Deteriorated	6
Don't Know	1
TOTAL	100

Main factors contributing to *improvement* in satisfaction

Of those 38% of the 2006 sample (65 people) whose overall satisfaction had improved, the three most common factors to which improvement was attributed were:

- ❖ **Staff being more approachable and communicating better with clients (34%**; also reported by significant proportions in prior surveys – 2002, 2003 and 2004); and
- ❖ **More contact and a more personalized service (17%); and**
- ❖ **Improved efficiency (15%).**

Main factors contributing to <i>improvement</i>	% (N=65)
More approachable/better communication	34
More contact/personal service	17
Improved efficiency	15
Understand business/business needs	9
More Helpful	9
Team approach/more flexible	6
Staff are better trained	5
More professional	3
Don't know	2
TOTAL	100

Main factors contributing to *deterioration* in satisfaction

Only 6% of respondents (or 10 people) reported that their overall satisfaction had deteriorated over the last two years. Among the reasons given for the deterioration were, i) **not enough staff available when needed, and ii) unprofessional staff/service**. However, exact percentages are not reported here due to the very small sample sizes.

Changes that AQIS could make to improve levels of service

Respondents were asked (an open-ended question) about improvements that could be made to AQIS services. The table below shows the suggestions made. Approximately 1 in 5 clients made the following suggestions for improvement:

- ❖ Being more flexible and understanding (increased significantly since 2004, up by 9% to 19%); and
- ❖ Being more efficient/faster processing (increased significantly since 2004, up by 12% to 19%)

Approximately one in ten noted the following suggestions:

- ❖ Reduce fees/improve value for money;
- ❖ Having more staff; and
- ❖ Being more accessible/contactable.

However, it should also be noted that over **one in four respondents (27%)** said that no improvements were necessary.

Suggested changes to improve service	% (N = 173)
More flexible/understanding	19
More efficient/faster processing	19
Reduce fees/improve value for money	13
More staff	13
More accessible/contactable	11
Closer consultation with industry	7
Improve understanding of business/my business	6
Better trained/more knowledgeable staff/specialist knowledge	6
Consistent rule interpretation	5
More information/updates	5
Adopt a team approach/work with us	5
Better access to information/updates	2
Other	5
Don't know	5
None/no improvements/No changes necessary	27

Note: The percentages in the above table add to more than 100% as respondents were able to suggest more than one improvement

SATISFACTION WITH AND IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC AQIS SERVICE ATTRIBUTES

Respondents were asked to rate (i) the importance of, and (ii) their satisfaction with nine attributes of AQIS service on a 1-10 scale (1 being '*not at all important/extremely dissatisfied*', and 10 being '*extremely important/extremely satisfied*').

Asking clients to rate how important they perceive particular attributes of AQIS service to be, enables AQIS to identify the needs of each client group, and to improve services to these groups. It is, in effect, developing a *client values framework* for each client group. By measuring client satisfaction against these values, AQIS can identify areas of service that are fulfilling clients' needs, or areas of service that need to be improved.

According to respondents, all of the attributes of AQIS were considered important in 2006. The majority of attributes (6 from 9) were given an importance score of 8 and over. Respondents not only thought these attributes were important, but were also satisfied with these aspects of service – average satisfaction ratings ranging from 7.0 to 7.8 out of 10 for the top 6 importance rating attributes. **This shows that AQIS performed well on these six attributes and that AQIS is meeting the needs of this client group.**

Furthermore, there was generally a positive relationship between respondents' ratings of importance and satisfaction with the nine attributes of AQIS service. In other words, clients were more satisfied with areas that they considered more important. The weaker item in this respect was 'flexibility'. This attribute lagged slightly in the average satisfaction rating and also held the equal largest difference between satisfaction and importance rating.

Generally, as in 2003 and 2004, the **AQIS Ships Agent Client Service Area is 'on track' in 2006 – it understands client needs, knows what is important to this client group and generally provides it to them.**

Attribute of AQIS service	Average rating - Satisfaction	Average rating - Importance	Weighted Satisfaction Gap (i.e. 10 – Satisfaction X Importance)
Expectations are clear	7.6	8.5	20
Staff professionalism	7.8	8.8	19
Staff technical competence	7.6	8.4	20
Responsive to needs	7.5	8.4	21
Understand needs of business	7.3	8.2	22
Flexible	7.0	8.3	25
Adopting team approach	7.2	7.9	22
Timely & accurate invoices	6.6	7.9	27
Value for money	6.4	7.2	26

To identify the AQIS service attributes with the most fertile room for improvement (i.e. where improvement would be most valued by clients) a client centred analysis approach was utilised taking into account both client perceived performance (i.e., satisfaction) and client perceived importance.

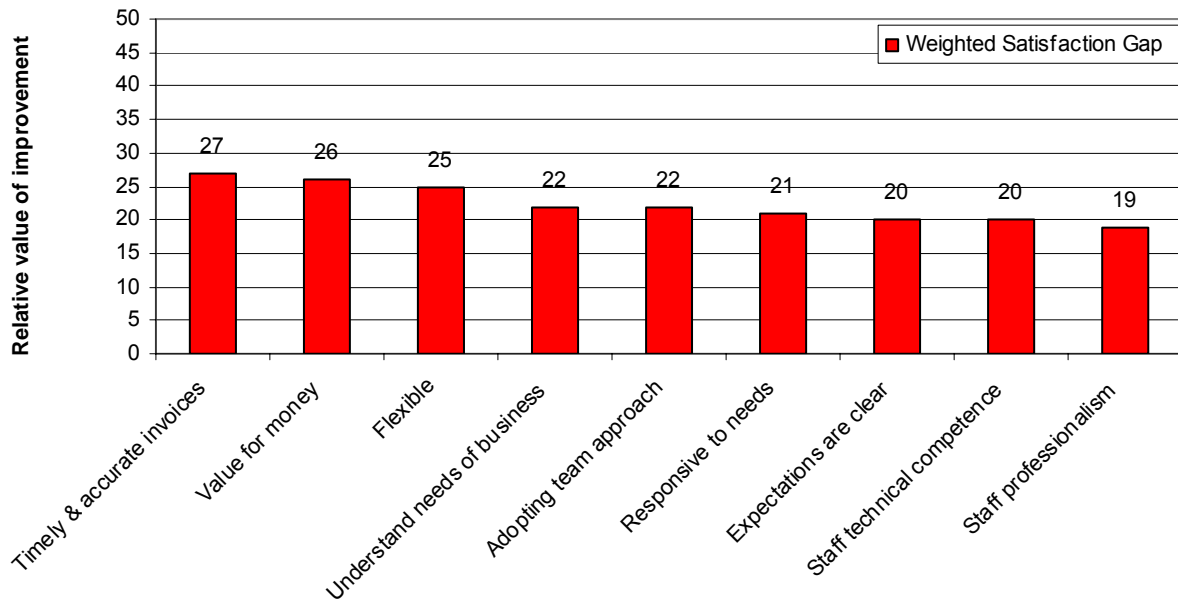
In summary, as presented in the last column of the table above we calculated the 'Importance Weighted Satisfaction Gap'. This figure is calculated by subtracting the 'Average Satisfaction Rating' from the 'Maximum Possible Satisfaction Rating' resulting in identification of the 'Satisfaction Gap' (a gap of zero would indicate a perfect satisfaction rating was recorded - i.e., $10 - 10 = 0$, while a satisfaction gap of nine would indicate the lowest satisfaction rating - i.e., $10 - 1 = 9$.)

After calculating the Satisfaction Gap this figure was multiplied by the 'Average Importance Rating' providing an 'Importance Weighted Satisfaction Gap' as perceived by the client¹.

The Weighted Satisfaction Gap scores presented in the last column of the table above and in the figure below have a potential range from 1 to 90. **Higher scores indicate those service attributes which require most improvement from the point of view of improving overall client satisfaction.**

Formula: (Maximum Possible Satisfaction Rating - Average Satisfaction Rating) X Average Importance Rating.

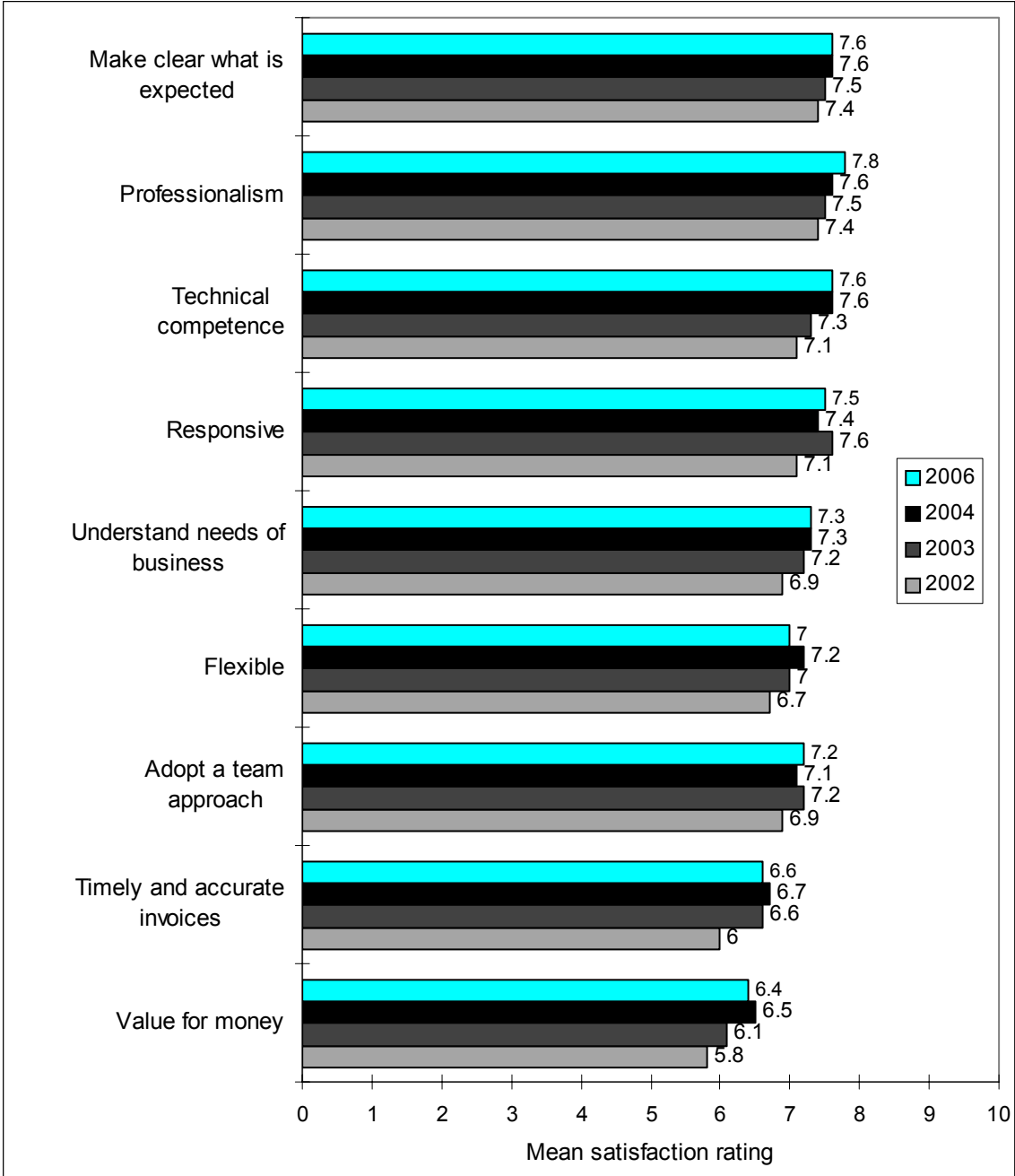
**Relative value of improvement across the nine (9) AQIS Service
Attributes**



The figure above illustrates the relatively small room for improvement for each of the individual service attributes. This is due to the already high levels of client satisfaction compared with importance ratings. **The attributes that if improved will be most appreciated by clients include Timely and accurate invoices, Flexibility and Value for money.** These three attributes are also noted as areas requiring improvement within the client suggestions for improvement to AQIS service reported on above.

Thus Ships Agent clients' satisfaction with AQIS services is generally moderate to high. The figure below shows historical data for average satisfaction ratings. **Results have remained consistent between 2004 and 2006.** No significant changes in satisfaction across specific service attributes took place between 2004 and 2006.

Average satisfaction rating with attributes of AQIS service 2002 to 2006



ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE AGAINST AQIS VALUES

Respondents were asked to rate 25 attributes of AQIS service provision, which represent five key values that underlie AQIS service standards. These values are as follows:

Value	Description
1. Professionalism of staff (6 attributes)	Doing the best job we can, serving out clients in a practical, diligent, rigorous and outcomes-focussed way;
2. Integrity of staff (3 attributes)	Behaving ethically, acting with honesty, loyalty and courage;
3. Openness of staff & the organisation (7 attributes)	Building trust, being frank, open to ideas, and accessible to staff and clients
4. Fairness of staff (7 attributes)	Ensuring that people get a fair go, that all are treated equitably and justly;
5. Respect of staff (2 attributes)	Respecting each other, our families, our clients, those with different ideas and those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Respondents were presented with 25 statements about the attributes, and were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point agreement scale (with an additional 'don't know' option) as follows: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly disagree.

Professionalism of staff

Three areas of staff professionalism were rated highly by Ships Agent clients in 2006. Approximately eight in ten (or more) clients agreed that staff are:

- ❖ **Professional (94% agreed);**
- ❖ **Well trained (89% agreed); and**
- ❖ **Help clients find solutions (77%).**

In addition, the vast majority (78%) *did not agree* that AQIS's aim was to raise revenue.

There was moderate agreement that:

- Tasks AQIS performs are value for money (65%); and
- Staff adequately explain the QA/CA/Co-regulation options (52% agreed and almost two in five - 37% - disagreed).

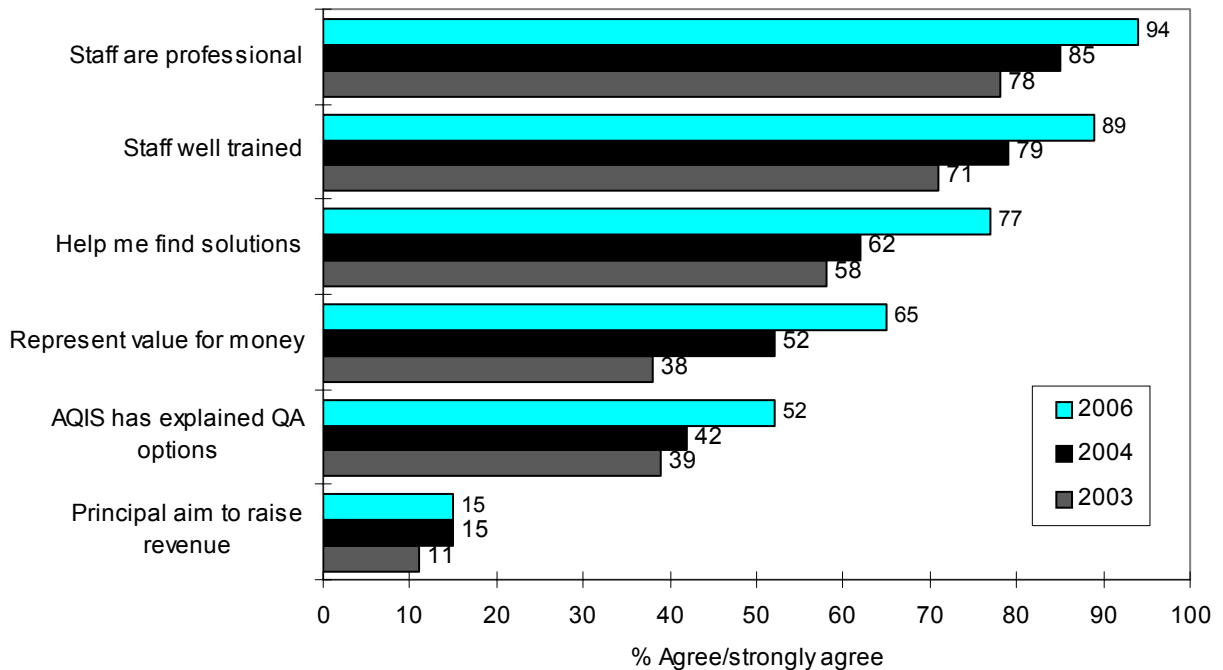
The trend in ratings of professionalism statements since 2003 has been positive and strong. It is noted however that only one change since 2004 is statistically significant:

- ❖ 'Tasks AQIS performs are value for money' – agreement increased from 52% in 2004 to 65% in 2006.

While not statistically significant, the increases in agreement with the other four positive statements since 2004 are very encouraging and positive (they vary between 9% and 15%, see figure below).

Professionalism statements	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neither / Don't know	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Staff are professional	94	3	3
Staff well trained	89	6	5
Helps me find solutions	77	11	12
Tasks AQIS performs are value for money	65	13	22
Adequately explained QA/CA/Co-reg optns	52	11	37
Aim of AQIS is to raise revenue	15	7	78

Ratings of Staff Professionalism 2003 to 2006



Integrity of staff

Three quarters of **respondents (75%) agreed that there is consistent rule interpretation among staff**. This figure has improved (though not significantly) since 2004 (up by 11%). It is noted that disagreement with this statement remained unchanged since 2004 (22% in 2004 and 21% in 2006).

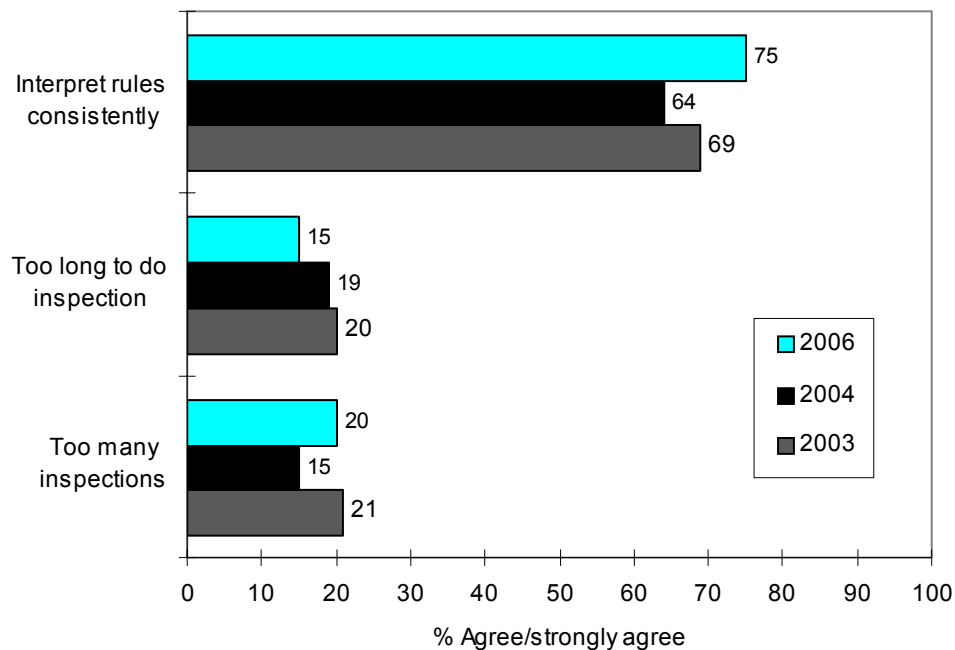
Less than one in five agreed that AQIS takes too long to do inspections, and that AQIS conducts too many inspections. These agreement levels are similar to those reported in 2004.

Overall, there were no major changes in perceived staff integrity since 2004 and current levels of perceived integrity are moderate to high.

Some room for improvement in satisfaction exists.

Integrity statements	% Agree/Strongly Agree	% Neither / Don't know	% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Staff interpret rules & regulations consistently	75	4	21
Too many inspections	19	15	66
Staff take too long to do inspection	15	14	71

Ratings of Staff Integrity 2003 to 2006



Openness of staff and of the organisation

The openness of AQIS staff, and the organisation as a whole, was rated highly by Ships Agent clients. **Almost nine in ten respondents agreed that:**

- ❖ AQIS's expectations are clear;
- ❖ They can contact AQIS when they need to;
- ❖ AQIS staff listen to them;
- ❖ Their requests for assistance are dealt with promptly; and
- ❖ AQIS are open about how they operate.

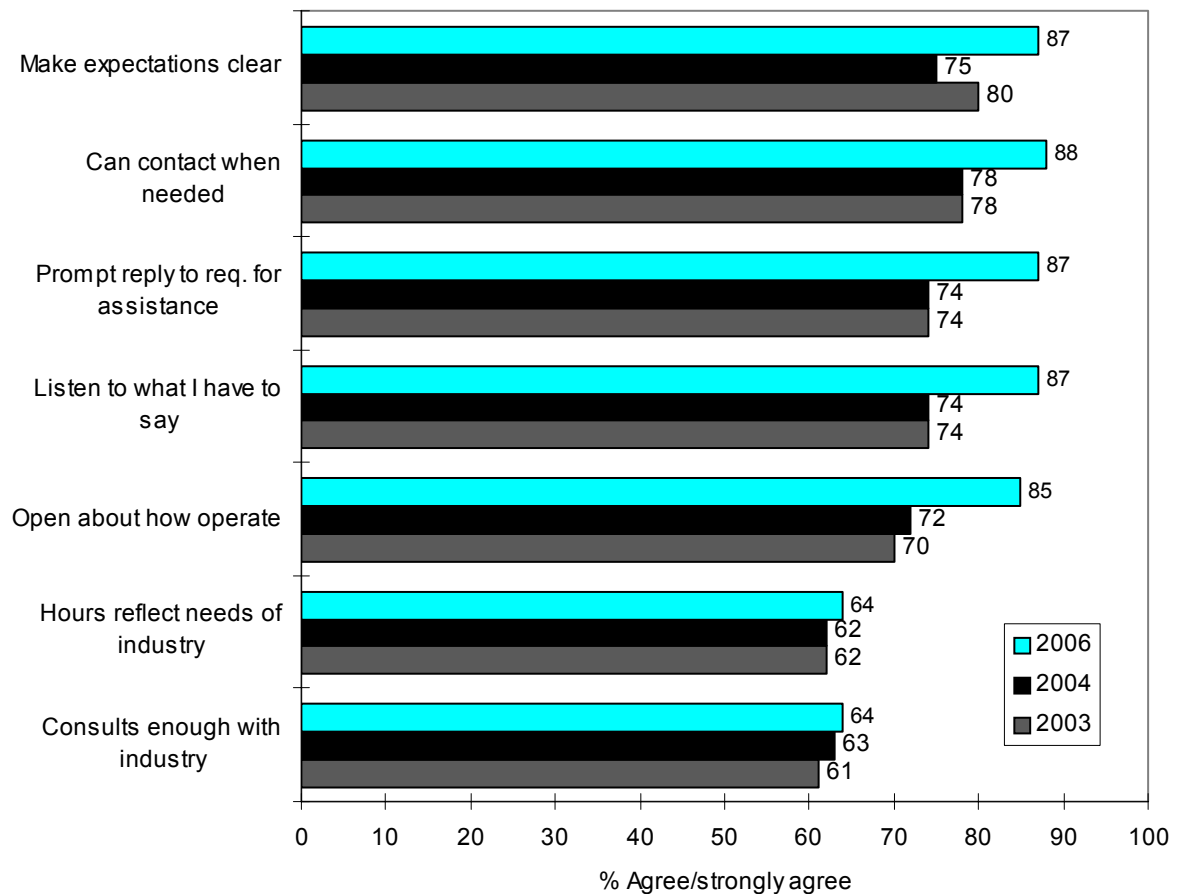
Further, there were **notable improvements** (bordering on statistical significance) in the perception of the openness of AQIS since 2004 with increases **in the order of 10% (and more) for the top five statements** covered above.

In contrast to the very high positive agreement ratings for the statements above, while still positive, agreement was much lower for the statements concerning hours of operation reflecting Industry needs and AQIS consulting enough with Industry:

- Less than two thirds of respondents agreed that AQIS hours of operation reflect Industry needs (three in ten Ships Agent clients actually disagreed); and
- Less than two thirds of respondents agreed that AQIS consults enough with industry (one in five disagreed).

Openness statements	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neither/ Don't know	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Expectations are clear	87	5	9
Can contact AQIS when needed	88	4	8
Respond promptly to requests for assistance	87	7	6
Listens	87	9	4
Open about how they operate	85	6	9
Hours of operation reflect needs	64	5	31
Consults enough with industry	64	16	20

Ratings of Staff Openness 2003 to 2006



Fairness of staff

The fairness of staff was rated moderately by Ships Agent clients in 2006, and consistent with findings reported thus far, the trend in ratings over time has been positive. In 2006:

- ❖ Almost nine in ten respondents *agreed* that AQIS staff promptly reply to client's requests for information (86%);
- ❖ Two thirds of clients *agreed* that AQIS takes the needs of business into account (66%); and
- ❖ More than half of clients agreed that AQIS makes a positive contribution to business success (53%) while a quarter disagreed.

In addition, three in five disagreed with the following negative statements:

- ❖ Staff apply rules & regulations too strictly; and that
- ❖ AQIS should devote more time to assistance/less to policing/regulating.

Fairness items concerning charges and costs were also viewed moderately by Ship's Agent clients:

- ❖ Just over four in ten (44%) clients agree that charge rates are too high while an equivalent proportion disagree; and
- ❖ The majority disagreed that industry should meet all of AQIS's costs (58% disagreed and 29% agreed).

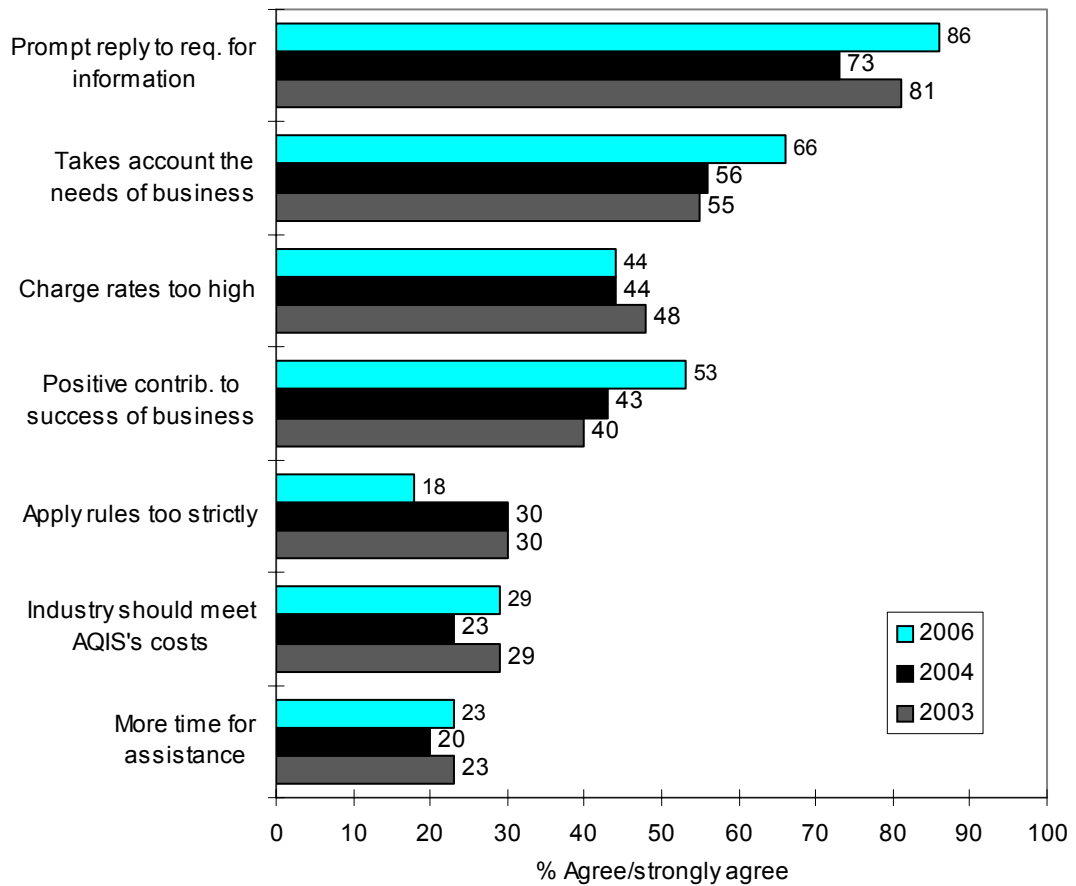
Notable **improvements in comparison to 2004 ratings occurred** across six of the seven fairness statements including increases in agreement with positive statements and increases in disagreement with negative statements **in the order of 10%** (and more). One of the five notable improvements was statistically significant, indicating a real positive trend (i.e. agreement that staff apply rules and regulations too strictly decreased while disagreement increased significantly). Perception concerning whether industry should meet all of AQIS's costs was the one statement where opinion remained relatively stable.

In summary, perceived fairness ratings of AQIS staff and of the organisation as a whole are average to high and have improved since 2004. It is recommended that AQIS continue to focus on improving client perceptions regarding:

- ❖ How it positively contributes to the success of clients business;
- ❖ How it takes the needs of its clients into account; and
- ❖ The level of charge rates and value for money.

Fairness statements	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neither/ Don't know	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Responds promptly to requests for information	86	6	8
Take needs of business into account	66	17	17
Charge rates too high	44	15	41
Makes positive contribution to business success	53	22	25
Staff apply rules & regulations too strictly	18	21	60
Industry should meet all of AQIS's costs	29	13	58
Should devote more time to assistance/less to policing/regulating	23	18	59

Ratings of Staff Fairness - 2003 to 2006



Respect

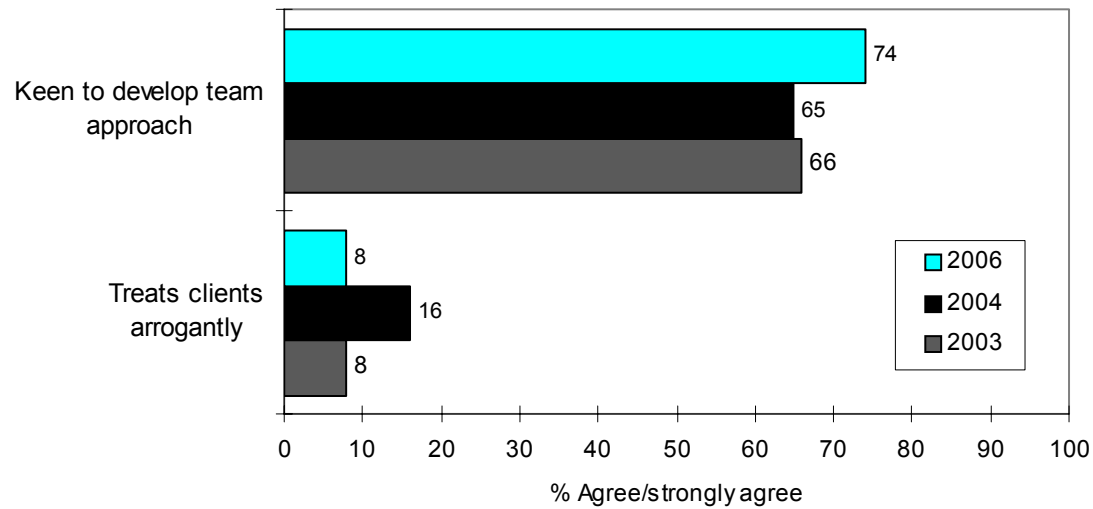
Respondents rated AQIS staff respect highly in 2006.

Only 8% of the Ships Agent clients completing the survey in 2006 agreed that AQIS staff treat them arrogantly while 85% disagreed. While not a significant decrease, the proportion agreeing that AQIS staff treat them arrogantly in 2006 was half that recorded in 2004.

Three in four (74%) respondents agreed that AQIS is keen to develop a team approach with the Industry.

Respect statements	% Agree/Strongly Agree	% Neither/Don't know	% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Keen to develop team approach	74	14	12
Treats clients arrogantly	8	7	85

Ratings of Staff Respect 2003 to 2006



BROAD AQIS ISSUES

Primary role and function of AQIS

Primary role & function of AQIS	% (N = 173)
Protect Australia from incoming pests/diseases	80
Facilitate/administer imports	5
Monitor quality of imports	4
Ensure compliance	4
Other	4
Don't know	2
Responsible for regulations	1
Monitor quality of exports	1
Represent Australia's interest overseas	1
TOTAL	100

Note: The percentages in the above table may add to more than 100 due to rounding.

Four from five Ships Agent respondents (80%) felt that AQIS's main role is to protect Australia from incoming pests and/or diseases. This figure has increased notably since 2004 (by 16%).

Value of AQIS Label

Value of AQIS label	% (N = 173)
High value	35
Some value only	15
Low value	4
No value at all	7
Don't know/Depends	2
Not involved in exports	37
TOTAL	100

Respondents were asked, "If you are involved in export in any way, how much value if any do you see in having an AQIS label on or AQIS clearance of your products when it comes to accessing overseas markets?".

Just less than two thirds of respondents (63%) were involved in exports, and of these, approximately four from five (79%) felt that the AQIS label *does* add *high* or at least *some value* when it comes to accessing overseas markets. These findings are not significantly different to those reported in 2004.

FEES/CHARGES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Rating value for money of AQIS services

Rating of value for money (on a scale of 1 – 10)	% (N = 173)
1 (Very poor value for money)	1
2-5	31
6-9	63
10 (Very good value for money)	5
TOTAL	100

Respondents were asked to rate the value for money of AQIS services on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 = *very poor value for money*, and 10 = *very good value for money*).

Two thirds of respondents (68%) gave AQIS service value for money a rating of 6 or higher out of 10. However, a significant proportion (32%) still rated value for money as 5 or less.

The average rating of value for money among Ships Agent clients in 2006 was 6.5 out of 10. This is a result towards "good value for money" and has remained unchanged since 2004.

Changes to AQIS charges over the last 12 months

Changes to AQIS charges?	% (N = 173)
Increased	43
Stayed the same	32
Decreased	1
Both increased and decreased	1
Don't know	23
TOTAL	100

When asked if AQIS charges had changed over the last 12 months, more than two from five (43%) respondents reported that charges *had* increased and a third (32%) said that charges had stayed the same. A significant proportion of Ships Agent clients (23%), were also unsure about changes to AQIS charges.

In comparison to 2004, **a significantly larger proportion of respondents reported charges increased over the last twelve months** (19% more so than in 2004, when 24% reported increased charges). Considering that average value for money ratings and perceptions concerning other charge rate and cost related issues (all reported on above) have remained consistent or improved since 2004, this **indicates clients perceive real improvement in AQIS service.**

Clients reporting increased charges over the last twelve months were more likely to agree that charge rates are too high and more likely to be less satisfied with value for money.

AQIS SERVICE CHARTER

Awareness of AQIS Service Charter

Aware of AQIS Service Charter	% (N = 173)
No	82
Yes	16
Can't say	2
TOTAL	100

Respondents were asked whether or not they were aware that AQIS has a Service Charter. **Most Ships agent clients (82%) were unaware of the AQIS service charter.** Only around 1 in 6 respondents (16%) said that they were aware of the charter – this has decreased significantly by 8% since 2004.

It is apparent that if AQIS wants Ships Agent clients to be aware of the charter, the Client Service Area needs to communicate more consistently with clients about the AQIS Service Charter.

Awareness of Service Standards in the Charter

Of those (27 Ships agent) that were aware of the Charter, approximately half *were aware* of the actual Standards therein (however the exact percentage is not reported here due to the small sample size).

How often Service Standards are met

All clients were then read out three of the service standards contained within the Service Charter and asked to what extent AQIS had met each standard over the last 12 months. The findings are shown in the table overleaf.

How often Service Standard met	"Replies to your correspondence within 20 working days of receipt with an answer to your query or at least letting you know when you can expect an answer" (N = 173) %	"Answers your telephone calls or messages promptly during normal office hours" (N = 173) %	"Responds to your requests for printed information within 5 working days of receipt" (N = 173) %
Always	76	69	60
Often	11	19	17
Sometimes	5	10	11
Rarely	1	1	1
Never	1	0	0
Don't know	6	1	11
TOTAL	100	100	100
Always + Often			
2003	80	77	72
2004	88	84	80
2006	87	88	77

In 2006, more than three in four Ships Agents clients said AQIS 'always' or 'often' met each of the three service standards over the past 12 months (shown in the last row of the table above) – a very positive result.

The likelihood of AQIS meeting the three service standards remained relatively unchanged since 2004.

It is noted that the proportion of respondents saying that they 'don't know' whether AQIS 'replies to correspondence' and 'responds to requests for printed information' was 6% and 11% respectively in 2006. If we utilise responses only from respondents who provided an answer (other than 'don't know'), in other words utilise responses only from those for whom the question was applicable, the extent to which AQIS meets each standard is actually higher. The data show that the frequency for meeting the two standards (when based only on clients who could answer the question) was actually 93% for 'replies to correspondence...' and 87% for 'responds to requests for printed information...'.

In summary, service standards continue to be met a great deal of the time for most of the clients.

INDUSTRY CONSULTATION

Awareness of Peak Organisations that consult with AQIS

Awareness of organisations that consult with AQIS among Ships Agent clients has remained unchanged since 2004. In 2006, 48% of Ships Agent clients were aware of Peak Industry Organisations compared to 46% in 2004.

Awareness of Peak Industry Organisations	% (N = 173)
Yes	48
No	49
Can't say	3
TOTAL	100

Membership of Peak Industry Organisations

Of those Ships Agent clients who are aware of Peak Industry Organisations representing their interests, four from five (82%) are currently members of this peak body. The proportion of clients reporting membership was a little higher in 2006 compared to 2004 however exact differences are not included due to the relatively small sample size.

Currently a member of peak industry body	% (N = 83)
Yes	82
No	18
TOTAL	100

AQIS PRODUCTS

AQIS Bulletin

Three in ten Ships Agent clients (31%) reported receiving the AQIS Bulletin. This figure has increased (though not significantly) since 2004 by 5%.

Receive AQIS Bulletin	% (N = 173)
No	65
Yes	31
Don't know	4
TOTAL	100

Amongst those who do receive it, readership of the Bulletin was high: **59%** of those who do receive it **read every edition** and a further 15% read it every few months. Furthermore, most of those who receive it also read most of it: **72% read half or more of the Bulletin.**

Finally, **most of those who receive it (85%) judge it to be useful:**

- ❖ 21% say it is very useful; and
- ❖ 64% say somewhat useful.

Only about 1 in 9 (11%) feel it is 'of little use' or 'no use at all'.

Website Visitation

Just over seven in ten Ships Agent clients reported visiting the AQIS website in 2006. This figure has remained unchanged since the last survey in 2004.

Have you visited the AQIS website	% (N = 173)
Yes	73
No	27
TOTAL	100

Just over two in five of those who have visited the website (43%) do so at least monthly:

- ❖ 11% visit weekly;
- ❖ 32% visit monthly;

- ❖ 48% visit only once or twice a year; and
- ❖ 7% only visit if they know there's something new there.

The vast majority of those who visit the website (91%) also judge it to be useful:

- ❖ 36% say it is very useful; and
- ❖ 55% say somewhat useful.

Only 6% feel the website is of little use.

Finally, those who visited the AQIS website were asked which areas they regularly visit. The answers are outlined below and show that most website usage concerns the shipping vessels, forms/guidelines and cargo website areas.

❖ Shipping vessels.....	47%
❖ Forms/guidelines	22%
❖ Cargo	13%
❖ General Information/browsing	5%
❖ Live animals/reproductive material	4%
❖ Rules/regulations/restrictions	4%
❖ Icon/database (NFI)	3%
❖ Food	2%
❖ Import conditions/schemes/information.....	2%
❖ Publications/notices/reports/updates	2%
❖ Timber/wood packaging	2%
❖ Quarantine information	2%
❖ Training/courses	1%
❖ Permits/permit application	1%
❖ Chemical fertiliser.....	1%
❖ Permits/permit application	1%
❖ Other.....	8%
❖ Don't know	6%

Note: The percentages above add to more than 100% as respondents were allowed to specify more than one area of the website usually visited.

SPECIAL INTEREST ISSUES

Consideration of QA/Co-regulation or Compliance Agreement

Respondents were asked if they would consider using a Quality Assurance/Co-regulation or Compliance Agreement system, if it were an option, rather than a direct inspection system. **Just over half (54%) said that they would. These figures are similar to 2004 levels.** Three in ten (30%) said that they would *not* consider using a Quality Assurance/Co-regulation or Compliance Agreement system if it were an option.

Would consider using a Quality Assurance/Co-regulation or Compliance Agreement system	% (N = 173)
Yes	54
No	30
Don't know	16
TOTAL	100

Consideration of using electronic data entry system

Respondents were also asked, if it reduced AQIS shipping charges, whether they would be prepared to enter data from the Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report for Vessels (Pratique Form) themselves.

Two thirds (66%) of respondents said that they *would* be prepared to do this. The proportion of Ships Agent clients who were unwilling to carry out this task themselves was just over one in four. These figures have remained consistent since 2004.

Would consider using electronic system to enter Quarantine Per-Arrival Report for Vessels (Pratique Form)	% (N = 173)
Yes	66
No	28
Don't know	6
TOTAL	100

Pratique Form

Clients were asked to rate their understanding of, and satisfaction with, the Quarantine Pre Arrival Form for Vessels (Pratique form) and the requirements to notify AQIS if situations declared on the APAR (Pratique) form changed.

The table below shows that **the vast majority of clients said that they understood the form (92%) and the requirements to notify AQIS if situations on the form change (94%).** In addition, **the majority (81%) are satisfied with the way AQIS communicates changes to procedures and forms.**

The results are indicative of a client group that understands the Quarantine Pre Arrival Form for Vessels (Pratique) form and is largely satisfied with the way AQIS communicates changes to procedures and forms.

Ratings concerning all three statements have increased (though not significantly) since 2004 by approximately 10% points in agreement.

Shipping Agent service issue statement	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neither/ Don't know	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Understand the Quarantine Pre Arrival Form for Vessels (Pratique) form	92	4	4
Understand the requirements to notify AQIS if situations declared on the QPAR (Pratique) Form change.	94	4	2
Satisfied with the way AQIS communicates changes to procedures and forms	81	6	13

Ballast Water Management issues

Ships Agent clients were also asked to rate their understanding of, and satisfaction with, the Ballast Water Management requirements.

Nine in ten respondents (90%) said that they understood the requirements, and most (78%) were satisfied with the way it was introduced.

However, **fewer than half (47%) said that they understood the computerized Ballast Water decision support system** and a significant proportion (one third) indicated that they did not understand this system.

These figures are similar to those recorded in 2004. In summary, **AQIS may be able to increase client satisfaction by educating these clients further about the computerized system.**

Shipping Agents service issue statement	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neither/ Don't know	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Understand the mandatory Ballast Water management requirements	90	5	5
Satisfied with the way AQIS introduced the Ballast Water Management requirements	78	16	6
Understand the computerized Ballast Water decision support system	47	19	33

CLIENT COMMENTS

Ships Agent clients were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments at the end of the survey and 20% of clients did so. The majority of comments were suggestions for improvement and/or criticism of the current AQIS situation, however a significant proportion were positive comments

The fact that (of the comments provided) no criticism or suggestion for improvement was particularly popular indicates that there is no major area that is perceived as inadequate or underperforming by Ships Agent clients.

A summary of all comments is presented in the table below. These points have all been covered in various sections of the current report, and indicate that all relevant aspects considered important to Ships agent clients have been examined.

Due to the small sample size of respondents providing comment no further interpretation is provided.

Additional comments made by Ships Agent clients	% (N = 35)
Positive comment – Happy/you are doing a good job	17
AQIS needs more consistent rule interpretation	17
Need more flexible hours/contact outside business hours	14
Faster turn around times/takes too long for items to get through	14
Positive comment – Helpful/easy to deal with/responsive	13

Additional comments made by Ships Agent clients	% (N = 35)
Fees are too high/need flexible fee structure	9
Not enough flexibility/negative bureaucratic attitude/ Over regulated	6
More/better/less confusing guidelines	6
Need more awareness of the market place	6
Positive comment – Professional	6
Don't understand business/my business	4
Other positive comments	6
Other	14
Other negative comments	15

Note: The percentages in the above table add to more than 100% as respondents were able to suggest more than one improvement