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RPID Customer Satisfaction Survey to inform the Futures Programme

social research

RPID CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY TO INFORM THE FUTURES PROGRAMME

David Myers, Vanessa Chan, Steven Hope
Ipsos MORI Scotland

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and methodology

The Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID) commissioned Ipsos MORI Scotland to measure customer satisfaction with the services of the division and its partner organisations Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). The research findings will be used to inform the Scottish Government's Futures Programme[1] by identifying, with a view to retaining, those aspects of the service which work well, while also identifying areas for improvement. The findings will also create a baseline against which to measure customer satisfaction in the future.

The survey examined the following broad topics:

- the ways in which respondents currently make contact with RPID and its partners, and how they would prefer to do so in the future
- levels of satisfaction with information and services provided by RPID and its partners, and with specific aspects of those services
- respondents' views on the services RPID provides online at present, and the perceived usefulness of the offering of potential new online services
- aspects of respondents' online behaviours, in order to better understand potential barriers to the uptake of online services.

A total of 1,024 RPID customers were interviewed across two strands:

- 502 individuals were interviewed by telephone, with quotas set by region and business type, in order to provide a sample representative of the profile of the RPID customer database
- 522 individuals were interviewed online, using an almost identical questionnaire. This strand of the research was conducted to assess the feasibility of conducting future waves of the research online, in line with the Government's digital agenda. A total of 3,714 email invitations with unique links were sent to rural businesses for which RPID held an email address *and* which were not already sampled for the telephone survey. The response rate for the online survey was 14%.
- The profiles of both samples were compared in order to ensure that combined results could be reported, with both samples found to be similar. Results are reported on the entire sample of 1,024 respondents.

[1] The Futures Programme is an ICT-enabled business change programme. It is a three to five year change programme that will re-engineer the business and IT processes which underpin the delivery of rural payments and services, and deliver Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform. The programme will impact more than 600 staff and around 21,000 customers. The Futures Programme sits across partners within the Scottish Government (Agriculture, Food and Rural Communities: Rural Payments and Inspections Division (AFRC:RPID)), Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Contact with RPID and partner organisations

Three in ten respondents said that the Scottish Government is a source of news and information about rural and agricultural issues, with 28% of respondents citing RPID or the Scottish Government as their main source of such information. Farming and rural media is also an important source of news and information with over a fifth of respondents accessing information from the Scottish Farmer.

More than half of respondents said that they contact RPID and its partners for information or guidance to help them complete an application, or for advice relating to a specific application or payment.

Two thirds of respondents reported making contact with RPID and its partners through their local office in the last 12 months, with 57% using the Scottish Government website, 49% receiving information in the post, and around 25% using RPID head office and Rural Issues.

Thirty-four per cent of respondents cited their local office as their main source of information, with 28% mentioning the Scottish Government website. Of those respondents whose main source of information is their local office, just under half make this contact mainly by telephone, while 30% visit the office in person.

For future interaction with RPID and its partners, similar proportions of respondents were open to doing it through their local office (56%), by post (56%) and by text or email (55%).

Service standards

Overall, 64% of respondents were satisfied (21% very satisfied, 43% fairly satisfied) with the information and services provided by RPID and its partners, with 12% either very or fairly dissatisfied.

Respondents were found to be more likely to be satisfied with their dealings with staff and generally positive in terms of their impression of RPID and its partners overall.

However, they were found to be less satisfied (and more likely to be dissatisfied) with the amount of available information, the clarity of the information itself, the ease of finding information, and with aspects of the applications process.

Online services

The main barriers to online submission of Single Application Forms (SAFs) were force of habit or personal preference, and a dislike of computers or the internet. However, respondents were generally receptive towards various ways in which RPID could encourage customers to make use of the Rural Payments Online (RPO) system.

Those who already use the RPO system were generally positive about its look and feel, and ease of navigation, but felt that there was scope for improvement including in terms of the information provided on the site. Respondents were also generally positive towards the possibility of RPID and its partners offering new online services and online land mapping tools.

Respondents aged over 65 were least likely to feel that new online services would be useful. Indeed, one in three in this age group reported that they have no computer or internet access. However, a majority of respondents in this age group were receptive towards the possibility of new services and to ways of encouraging people to use the online offering, suggesting that this age group might still be open to using the RPO service.

Online behaviours

A large majority of RPID customers are online and use the internet for work, and most access the internet at least on a weekly basis. One in five respondents to the telephone survey never use the internet, two thirds of whom are aged over 65 years.

Of those who use the internet for work or personal use, 97% have a broadband connection, with almost identical proportions of respondents to both the telephone and online strands of the research having such an internet connection. Around two in three respondents use a desktop PC to access the internet for work purposes, while 55% do so with a laptop and 21% use a smartphone.

When asked how useful it would be for RPID and its partners to use social media to provide news and information, opinion was evenly split overall, as well as in both modes of the survey, as to whether this would be useful or not.

A test of broadband download and upload speeds in the online survey found only limited regional differences in download speeds, with similar levels of upload speed. Although the highest proportions of download speeds tended to be the 1.0-2.99mb/s and 5.0-9.99mb/s ranges, Argyll and the Western Isles stands out as being much more likely to have low download speeds. The majority of upload speeds were within the 0-0.99mb/s range. However, slow internet speed was cited as a major barrier to the use of the RPO system by only 6% of those who did not make an online SAF submission in the last 12 months.

Conclusions

The main ways that customers interact with RPID are by telephone or personal contact with their local RPID office. As part of the Scottish Government's digital agenda, the Futures Programme seeks to encourage more use of online services. Overall, respondents found the RPID staff they came into contact with to be both knowledgeable and helpful. While this is positive endorsement of RPID's staff, it may also act as a barrier to using online services, especially where there are other barriers to moving online. Knowing that helpful members of staff are on hand at their local office means that customers might have little incentive to use the online service, particularly in light of customers' reported problems with the complicated nature of the applications process.

In terms of the overall service offered by RPID, the availability and quality of information emerges as a persistent issue. Large minorities of respondents reported encountering problems with the clarity and ease of finding information about schemes, also with the ease of filling in application forms, and the quantity and clarity of guidance for filling-in forms. Improving in these areas could also help to draw more customers in to using the RPO system. Most customers were happy with RPO itself, but only 57% of users said that they found the RPO site easy to navigate, therefore it may be necessary to improve the way the website works for customers to use the site with more confidence.

When it comes to the potential for RPID to offer a greater variety of online services, it was found that those who were least likely to think such new services would be useful were a significant minority of people in the 65-and-over age bracket and were more likely to be users of the paper SAF system. However, while it may be impossible to encourage *all* customers in this group, the proportion of people in this age group who *are* willing to use online services suggests there is potential to draw some of them online.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 The Scottish Government commissioned Ipsos MORI to carry out a survey among customers of its Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID) and RPID's partner organisations: Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

1.2 The aim of this research was to conduct an independent customer survey to assess customer satisfaction of the RPID customer interface. This will provide the Division with information to help shape the Futures Programme and set a baseline to measure future customer satisfaction against.

1.3 The Futures Programme is part of wider public service reforms and fits with the Scottish Government's drive for more digital public services, which means RPID must look into ways to encourage more customers to use the Rural Payments Online (RPO) system for applications and to submit information.

1.4 The survey measured: satisfaction with RPID and its partners, and with various aspects of the service provided; areas where customers feel RPID can improve its service delivery; the ways in which customers interact with RPID and the ways in which they would prefer to have contact in the future; barriers to using online services and possible ways RPID can encourage people to take up such services; the usefulness of potential new online services and features; and aspects of customers' online behaviour.

Methodology

1.5 Interviews were conducted with business customers of RPID or its partners (FCS or SNH) sampled from the Scottish Government's customer and agent databases. The businesses were grouped into four categories: crofts (taken as properties with an area under ten hectares); farms (properties with an area of ten hectares or more); agents; and 'other' rural businesses (comprised of forestry, horticultural or environmental businesses, estates and community groups).

1.6 Fieldwork took place between 23 July and 13 August 2013. A total of 1,024 interviews were completed across two modes: telephone interviews were conducted with 502 respondents, with a further 522 surveys completed by respondents online. The telephone sample was drawn at random from the RPID customer database, and quotas were set in order to reflect the composition of the database and the desire to be able to analyse smaller groups of customers.

1.7 The online strand of the research was conducted as an experiment to determine whether it would be feasible to conduct such research online in future waves. Once the telephone sample had been drawn, all remaining RPID customers with a valid email address (3,714 in total) were sent a unique link to the online survey. Those who had not completed the survey were sent a reminder email one week before the end of the fieldwork period. A total of 520 online surveys were completed, giving a response rate of 14%.

1.8 The profile of responses to the online strand of the survey was found to be very similar to that of the telephone survey. Given that this is the case, the online experiment can be considered to have been successful, and because of this it was possible to combine the results of the two surveys.

1.9 The combined data from both strands of fieldwork were weighted to reflect the composition of the RPID customer database. The survey findings represent the views of a sample of customers, and not the entire population, so they are subject to sampling tolerances, meaning that not all differences will be statistically significant. Throughout the report, differences between sub-groups are commented upon only where these are statistically significant, i.e. where we can be 95% certain that they have not occurred by chance.

1.10 Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories or multiple answers. Throughout the report, an asterisk (*) denotes any value of less than half a per cent and a dash (-) denotes zero. For questions where the number of respondents is less than 30, the number of times a response has been selected (N) rather than the percentage is given.

Demographics

1.11 The geographic spread of respondents is shown in table 1.1 below. Data shown are the unweighted and weighted number of respondents in each region, as well as the overall percentage of respondents in each region, and across both modes of the survey.

Table 1.1: Respondents by region

	Argyll & Western Isles	Central	Grampian	Highland	Northern & Northern Isles	South Eastern	South Western	Southern
Unweighted total	128	207	132	112	133	139	93	80
Weighted total	143	218	129	112	150	109	93	70
Percentage	14%	21%	13%	11%	15%	11%	9%	7%
Telephone	12%	16%	12%	14%	13%	10%	12%	10%
Online	16%	26%	13%	8%	16%	11%	6%	4%

1.12 Sixty-four per cent of respondents were farmers, 18% were crofters, 7% were agents, 5% were estates, 2% forestry or horticultural businesses and 1% were environmental groups. Five per cent did not fall into any one of these categories.

1.13 A quarter of the farms, crofts or forestry/horticultural businesses mainly produced sheep or mixed produce, with one in five producing beef. One in ten produced cereals, with 5% producing general cropping and 3% producing dairy.

1.14 Two-thirds of respondents were in the 41-64 age group, with a quarter aged over 65 and 10% up to the age of 40. Three quarters of respondents were male, one quarter female.

1.15 Just over half said that they had received information on rural grants and support services in the last twelve months from any source, while 44% had not done so.

1.16 Ninety-five per cent of respondents had submitted a Single Application Form (SAF) in the last 12 months. Of those who had submitted a SAF, 85% had applied to the Single Farm Payment Scheme (SFPS), 59% to the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS), 52% to Land Managers Options (LMO), and 20% to Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities (RDC-RP). Just under three in five respondents said that they had submitted their SAF online, with two in five making a paper submission.

1.17 Online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to have applied to LMO (56% compared with 48%) or RDC-RP (24% versus 16%) in the last twelve months. Not surprisingly, online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents and overall, to have made an online SAF submission (72% compared with 44%, 58% overall); while telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents and overall to have made a paper submission (54% compared with 28% and 41% respectively).

1.18 Thirty-seven per cent of respondents said that they had made an application to rural schemes not covered by SAF; 62% said that they had not done so. Similar proportions of telephone and online respondents reported having made a non-SAF application in the last 12 month (35% and 39% respectively).

1.19 Four-fifths of respondents said that they use the internet for both work and personal use, with 6% saying that they do so for personal use only and 3% saying that they only use the internet for work. A fifth of telephone respondents said that they never use the internet.

2 CONTACT WITH RPID AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Summary

1. Most customers interact with RPID and its partners through their local office and the Scottish Government website. Customers mainly seek information or guidance relating to application processes, schemes and payments.

2. In future, customers still wish to receive information from RPID and its partners through the same methods – from their local office, by post, and from the Scottish Government website – but they are also open to receiving information via email or text.

2.1 The main ways customers interact with RPID are by telephone or personal contact with their local RPID office. As part of the Scottish Government's digital agenda, the Futures Programme seeks to encourage more use of online services. Slightly more than half of customers already use the Scottish Government website to access information and services offered by RPID and its partners, but it is important for RPID to seek to increase take-up of its online services.

2.2 Overall, RPID customers receive information on rural or agricultural issues from a broad spectrum of sources. Almost equal proportions mention the Scottish Government and its partner organisations (30% mentioning one or more) and media outlets (33%). Other sources are mentioned by 67% of respondents. RPID or the Scottish Government was the most-mentioned source of information, by 28% of respondents, while Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage were mentioned by only 2% and 1% of respondents respectively. The farming and rural media were important sources of information. Scottish Farmer was mentioned by 21% and the Press and Journal by 13%, with 13% mentioning unspecified farming-related publications. Trade bodies such as NFU Scotland were mentioned by 17% of respondents, and the Scottish Agricultural College/SRUC by 14%. The ten most-mentioned sources are shown in figure 2.1 below.

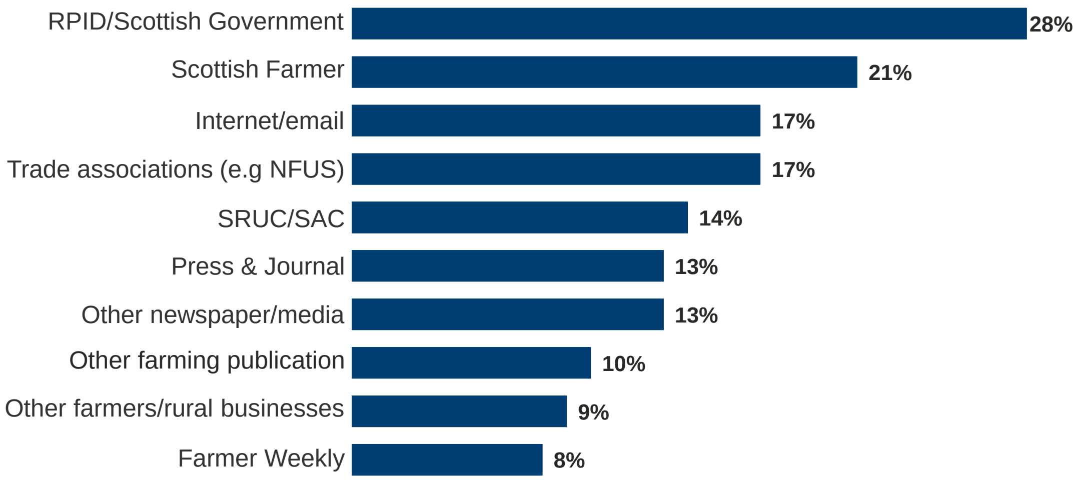
2.3 Agents (42%) and crofters (38%) were more likely than overall (28%) to receive information from RPID or the Scottish Government. Farmers were more likely to receive such information from publications like Scottish Farmer (26% versus 21%) and Farmers Weekly (11% compared with 8%). Getting information from trade bodies such as NFU Scotland was more common among farmers and other rural businesses than it was for crofters (18% and 24% respectively compared with 10% of crofters).

2.4 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to report receiving most of their information from RPID or the Scottish Government (43% compared with 15%) or to specify media sources such as Scottish Farmer (34% versus 8%), the Press and Journal (27% versus 1%) or Farmer Weekly (15% compared with 1%). However, online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to report unspecified media sources (22% compared with 3%) or farming publications (15% compared with 4%).

2.5 Agents, other rural businesses, and non-SAF applicants were more likely than overall to receive information from Forestry Commission Scotland (15%, 4% and 13% respectively, compared with 2% overall). Similarly, agents and non-SAF applicants (both 4%) were more likely than overall (1%) to have received information from Scottish Natural Heritage.

Figure 2.1: Sources used to receive most information on rural and agricultural issues

Q. From which sources would you say you receive most of your information about rural and agricultural issues?



Base: All respondents (1,024) Source: Ipsos MORI

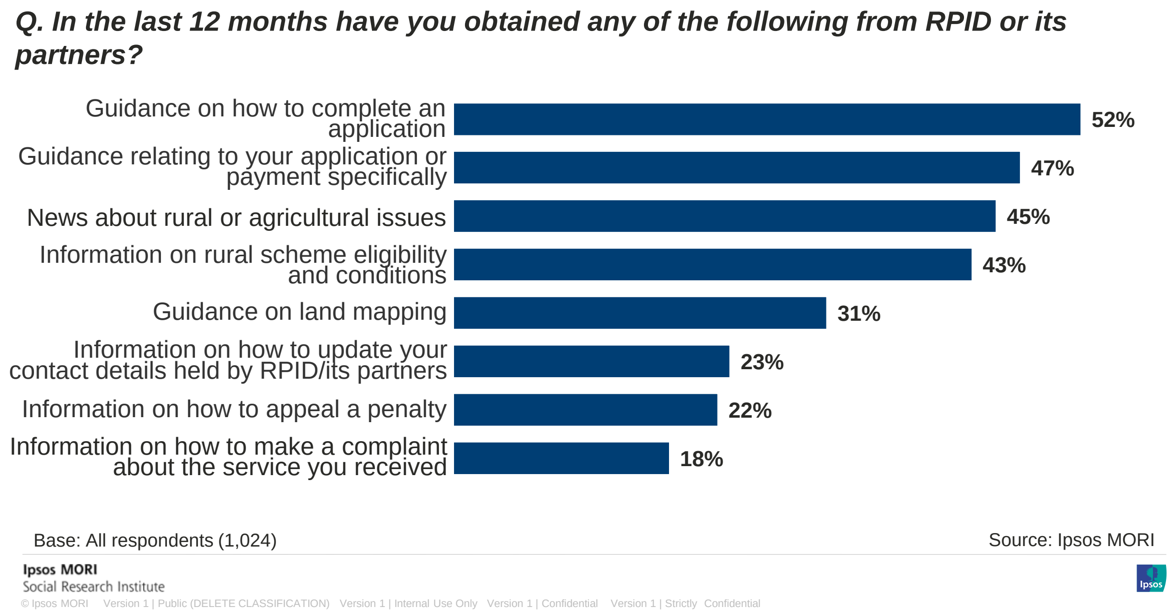
2.6 Respondents were asked about the specific types of information they had sought from RPID or its partner organisations. Around half of customers reported having obtained guidance on how to complete an application or guidance that specifically related to an application or payment from RPID in the last twelve months.

2.7 Forty-five per cent had obtained news about rural or agricultural issues from RPID or its partners, while 43% obtained information on eligibility and conditions for rural schemes. Overall results are shown in figure 2.2 below.

2.8 A quarter of respondents reported that they have not obtained any information from RPID or its partners in the past 12 months.

2.9 Other rural businesses and agents were more likely than overall to obtain information on rural scheme eligibility and conditions - 74% and 71% respectively, compared with 43%. Other rural businesses and agents were also more likely than overall to obtain information on their specific payment or application (69% and 67% respectively, versus 47%), and to look for guidance on how to complete an application (both 66%, compared with 52%).

Figure 2.2: Information or guidance obtained from RPID or its partners



2.10 Paper SAF applicants were more likely than overall to obtain information on how to appeal a penalty (28% versus 22%) and on how to make a complaint about the service they had received from RPID or its partners (23% compared with 18%).

2.11 Online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to have sought news about agricultural news or issues (50% compared with 40%) or information on rural scheme eligibility and conditions (50% compared with 36%), while telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to have sought information on how to appeal a penalty (33% compared with 11%), information on updating contact details (29% compared with 18%) or information on how to make a complaint (27% compared with 9%).

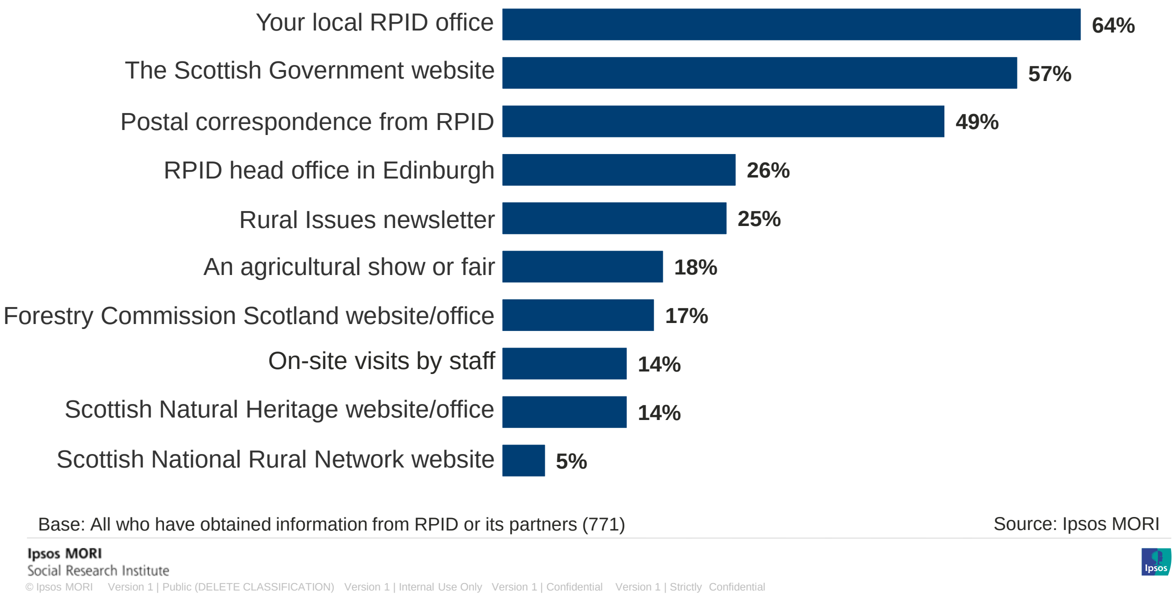
2.12 The most-reported means for obtaining these types of information were from customers' local RPID office (64%) and the Scottish Government website (57%). Around half (49%) of respondents did so in the form of postal correspondence from RPID, while one in four obtained information from the RPID head office or the Rural Issues newsletter. Overall results are shown in figure 2.3 below.

2.13 Seventeen per cent of respondents said that they had obtained such information from the Forestry Commission Scotland office or website, while 14% did so from the Scottish Natural Heritage office or website.

2.14 Of those respondents who had obtained information from more than one source, around one-third (34%) said that they obtained most of their information from their local RPID office or from the Scottish Government website (31%).

Figure 2.3: All methods used to obtain information from RPID or its partners

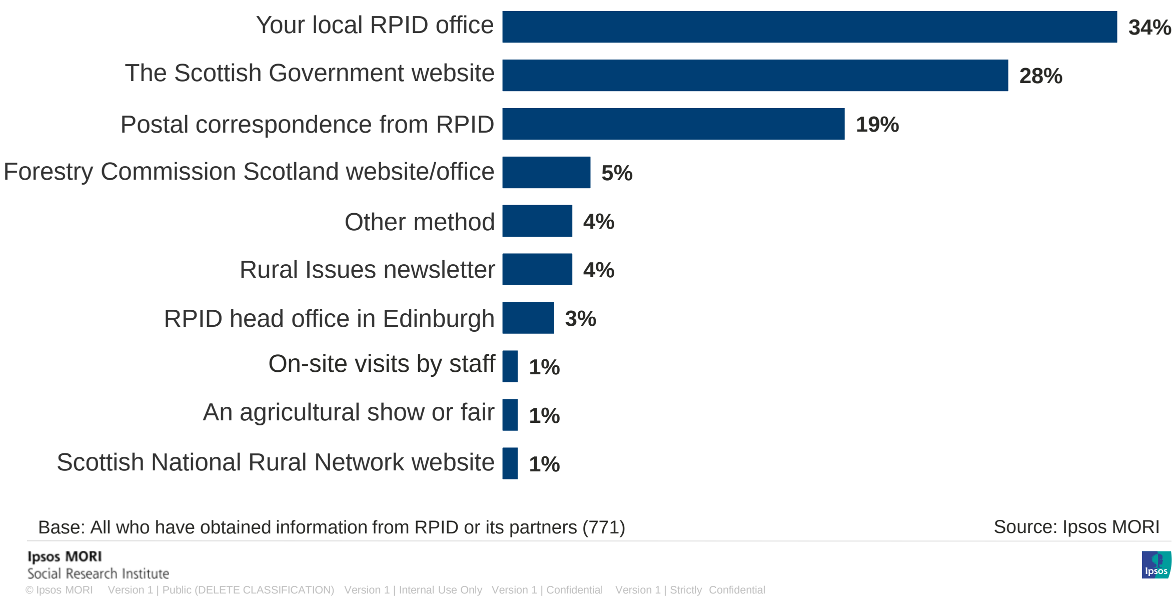
Q. Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you obtained this information from…?



2.15 Overall, respondents' main sources of information from RPID and its partners were their local RPID office (34%), the Scottish Government website (28%), or from postal correspondence from RPID (19%). The Forestry Commission Scotland or Scottish Natural Heritage office or website was reported as the main source of information by 5% and 1% of respondents respectively. See figure 2.4 below.

Figure 2.4: Main method used to obtain information from RPID or its partners

Q. From which method would you say you have obtained most of your information from RPID or its partners?



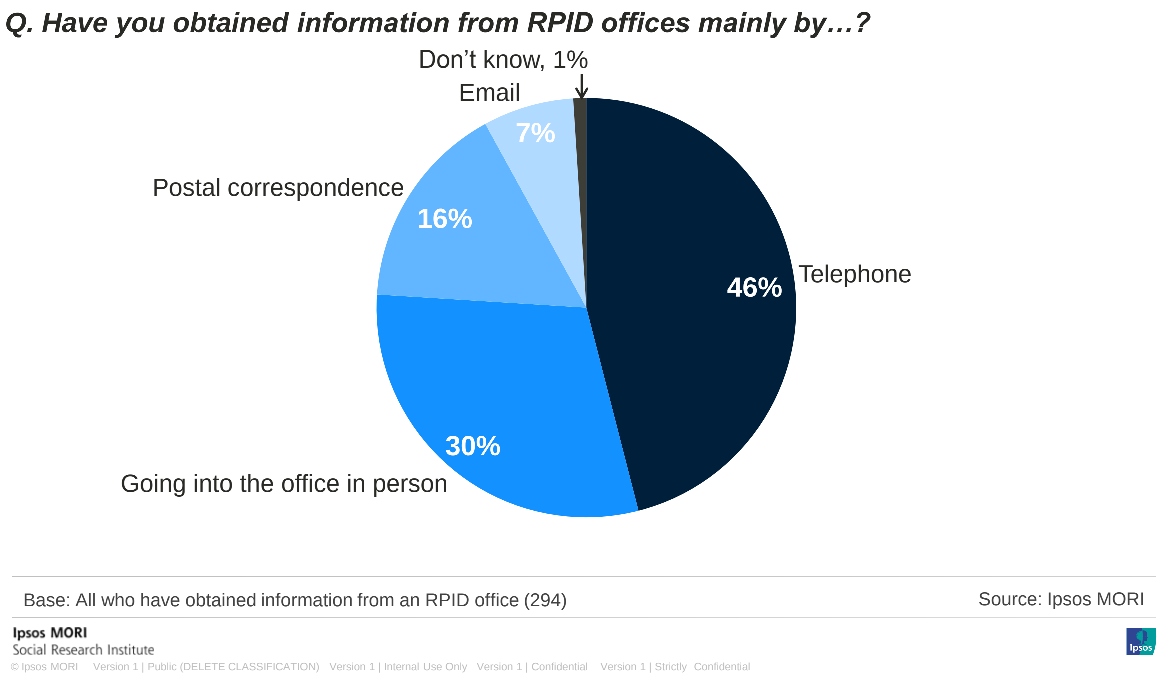
2.16 Respondents who had submitted a paper SAF application were more likely than overall to say that their local RPID office was their main source of information (43% versus 34%) while online SAF applicants (38%), male respondents (30%) and those in the 25-40 age group (39%) were more likely than overall to say their main source of information was the Scottish Government website.

2.17 Online respondents' main source of information was the Scottish Government website (36%, compared with 25% of telephone respondents), while telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to report postal correspondence from RPID as their main source of information (25% compared with 8%).

2.18 Those dissatisfied with RPID (21%), other rural businesses (19%), agents (18%) and those in the Southern region (14%) were more likely than overall (5%) to report the Forestry Commission Scotland website or office as their main source of information. Respondents in the Northern & Northern Isles region were more likely than overall to report this of the Scottish Natural Heritage website or office (3% compared with 1%).

2.19 Of respondents whose main source of information was their local RPID office, almost half (46%) mainly contacted the office by telephone, with 30% visiting the office in person. Smaller proportions mainly obtained information from postal correspondence (16%) or by email (7%), as shown in figure 2.5 below.

Figure 2.5: Main method used to obtain information from RPID local offices



2.20 Farmers (46%), respondents in the 41-64 age group (56%) and online SAF applicants (56%) were more likely than overall to contact RPID by telephone; while crofters (49%), respondents in the Northern and Northern Isles region

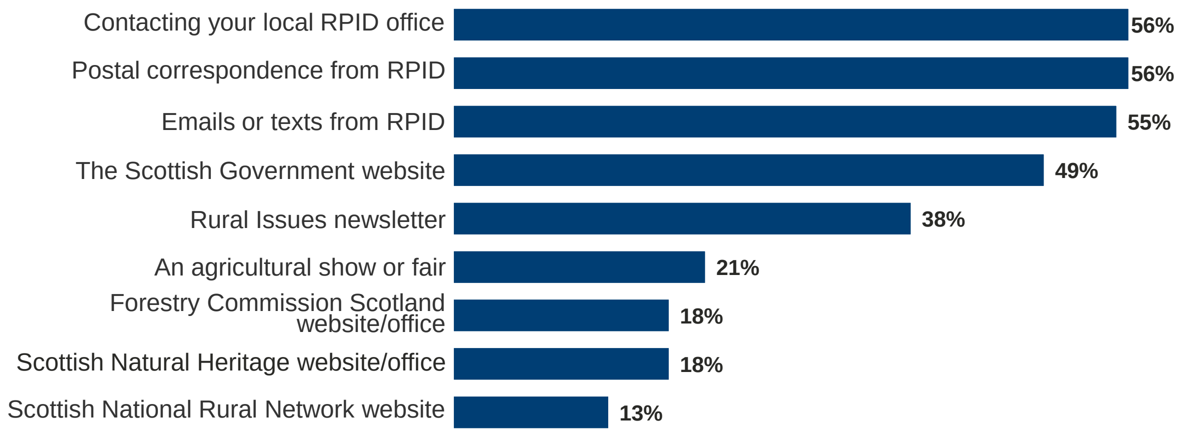
(48%), those in the over 65 age group (44%), and paper SAF applicants (40%) were more likely than overall to visit their local office in person.

2.21 Respondents to the telephone survey were more likely than online respondents and overall to report going to the local office in person (37% compared with 25% and 30% respectively). Conversely, telephone respondents were less likely than overall to obtain information from their local office by email (3% compared with 7%).

2.22 Respondents were asked which methods they would prefer to use to obtain information from RPID and its partners in the future. Similar proportions of respondents said that they would like to obtain information from their local office (56%), through postal correspondence from RPID (56%), by emails or texts from RPID (55%), while around half said they would like to receive information from the Scottish Government website, with 38% mentioning the Rural Issues newsletter. Overall results are shown in figure 2.6 below.

Figure 2.6: Preferred methods for obtaining information from RPID or partners

Q. In future, which, if any, of the following methods would you prefer to obtain information from RPID or its partners?



Base: All who have obtained information from RPID or its partners (771) Source: Ipsos MORI

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2.23 The offices or websites of both Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage were mentioned by a similar proportion of respondents (18% in each case).

2.24 Receiving information by email or texts from RPID or from the Scottish Government website was more likely than overall to be a preference amongst agents (68% and 63% respectively for email and text), online SAF applicants (65% and 59%), and those aged 25-40 (77% and 62%) and 41-64 (58% and 53%). Young farmers (those aged under 40) were more likely than overall to express a preference for information by text or email (73% versus 55% overall).

2.25 Agents (67%) and respondents who are satisfied with RPID (64%) were more likely than overall to express a preference for receiving information from their local office. Farmers (62%), paper SAF applicants (70%), and those in the South Western (71%) and Southern (69%) regions were more likely than overall to wish to receive information by post.

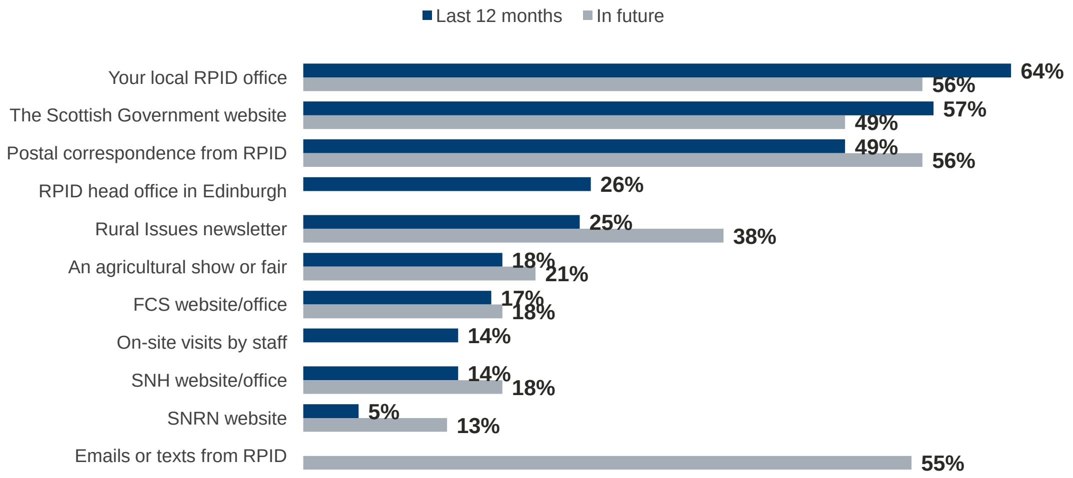
2.26 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to wish to receive information by post (73% compared with 40%), or from their local office (66% compared with 47%); while online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to prefer to obtain information by emails or texts from RPID (59% compared with 51%).

2.27 Agents (50%), other rural businesses (38%), non-SAF applicants (43%), and respondents in the Southern region (29%) were more likely than overall to wish to receive information from the Forestry Commission Scotland website or office. Similarly, agents (38%), other rural businesses (34%), non-SAF applicants (43%) and those in the Southern region (31%) were more likely than overall to say that they wished to receive information from the Scottish Natural Heritage website or office.

2.28 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to prefer to obtain information from the SHN website or office (24% compared with 12%) or the FCS website or office (23% compared with 14%).

Figure 2.7: Current and preferred methods for obtaining information from RPID or partners

Q. In the last 12 months have you obtained this information from…?
Q. In future, which, if any, of the following methods would you prefer to obtain information from RPID or its partners



Base: All who have obtained information from RPID or its partners (784); All respondents (1,024) Source: Ipsos MORI

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2.29 As figure 2.7 above shows, there is some difference between the ways in which customers currently receive information from RPID and its partners and the ways in which they would like to do so in future. Respondents seem to express more of a preference for information being sent to them by post, text or email, or in the Rural Issues newsletter, while they are less likely to wish to use their local office or the Scottish Government website.

Key points

2.30 The types of information most commonly requested by respondents related to guidance on completing an application, or relating to their own specific application or payment. It may be that such requests are highly specific to the needs of each individual customer and, as such are a driver of the type of contact which customers will use: if a customer does not understand questions on a form this will steer them towards contacting a local office in person or by telephone, since a set of Frequently Asked Questions on the Scottish Government website may not necessarily help the customer with the specific difficulty they are experiencing. Similarly, those who seek information on eligibility or the conditions that apply to schemes may feel that they need to speak to a member of staff in order to seek proper clarification or assurances from another person. Conversely, those who are looking for news about rural or agricultural issues may be more prepared to go to a website because they can do this at their convenience.

2.31 For future communication, more than half of respondents (59% of online and 51% of telephone respondents) mentioned that they would be happy to receive text or email communications from RPID. This would suggest that as part of the Scottish Government's digital agenda, RPID could reduce postal correspondence with its customers and move to electronic communication. This would reduce printing costs for standard letters, and electronic versions of leaflets and brochures would also be easier to produce and be beneficial for the environment. The majority of contact seems to still be by telephone, with information posted to customers, but this could gradually be changed to a default of responding by email with links to online sources.

3 SERVICE STANDARDS

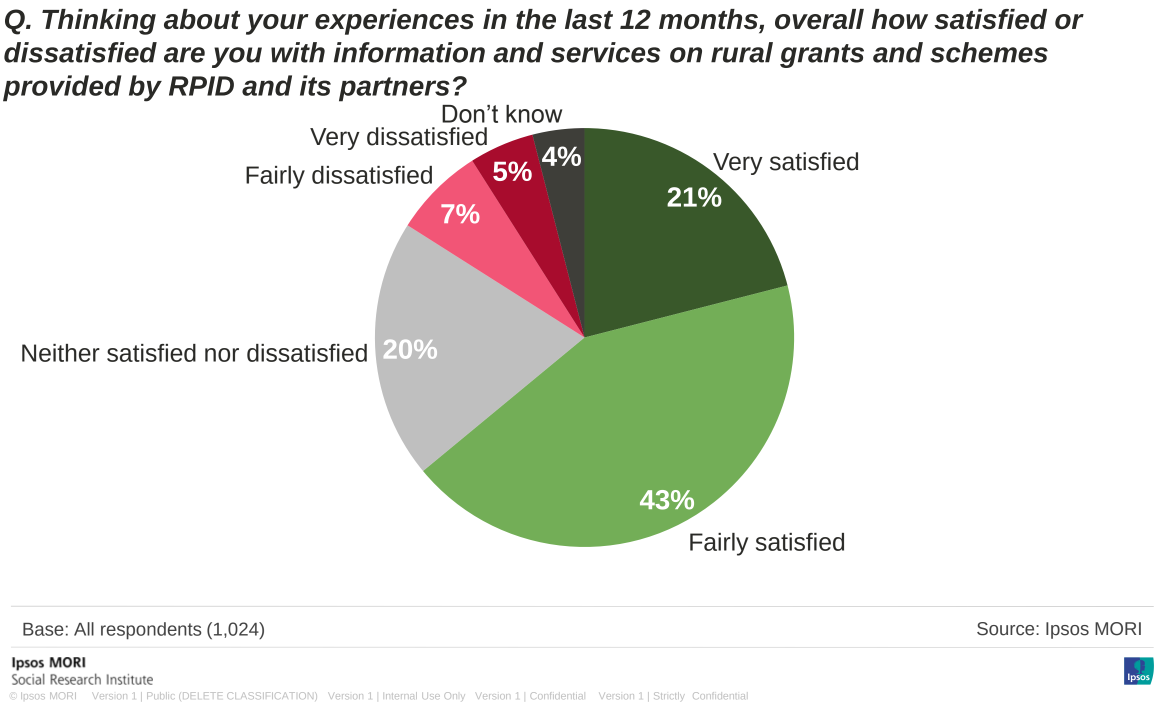
Summary

1. Overall, two-thirds of respondents are satisfied with RPID and its partners, with only 12% dissatisfied, and the majority of respondents agree that RPID is helpful and trustworthy.

2. Respondents' main problems over service arose from having difficulty finding information and information that was unclear, as well as finding forms difficult to complete and having problems with the quantity and clarity of guidance for completing forms.

3.1 When asked about their overall level of satisfaction with the information and services provided by RPID and its partners over the last twelve months, 64% of respondents said that they were satisfied (21% very satisfied and 43% fairly satisfied), compared with 12% dissatisfied. This gives a net satisfaction rating of 52%. One in five respondents said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 4% answered 'don't know'. See also figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Satisfaction with information and services provided by RPID and its partners in the last 12 months



3.2 Of those respondents who had applied to individual schemes through their SAF, similar proportions of those who applied to the Single Farm Payment Scheme (SFPS) and the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS) were satisfied with information and services provided by RPID and its partners (68% in both cases), and dissatisfied (9% for both). A similar proportion (67%)

of those who had applied to the Land Managers Options (LMO) scheme was satisfied, while a slightly higher proportion was dissatisfied (12%). Among those who had applied to the Rural Development Contracts – Rural Priorities (RDC-RP), 63% said that they were satisfied, but a higher proportion (20%) was dissatisfied.

3.3 Farmers (67%) and paper SAF applicants (69%) were more likely than overall to say that they were satisfied. Other rural businesses (28%), agents (22%) and those aged 25-40 (19%) were more likely than overall to report being dissatisfied.

3.4 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to report being very or fairly satisfied (24% and 47% compared with 18% and 39% respectively), while online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to say that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (26% compared with 14%).

3.5 Of those customers who had sought information on how to appeal a penalty, 77% reported that they were satisfied (25% very satisfied and 52% fairly satisfied), with 10% dissatisfied.

3.6 Respondents who reported dissatisfaction were asked what their main reasons were. The most-reported reasons were: not enough information available (reported by 29% of respondents); reasons relating to the length of the application process or form (25%); and information or guidance not being clear or accessible (21%). Sub-group differences were not generally apparent, with the exception that paper SAF applicants were more likely than overall to say that there was not enough information available (47% versus 29%). Overall results are shown in figure 3.2 below.

"I don't know if I'm entitled to grants or not because I'm not using the internet."

"Information should be sent by post for people who are not online."

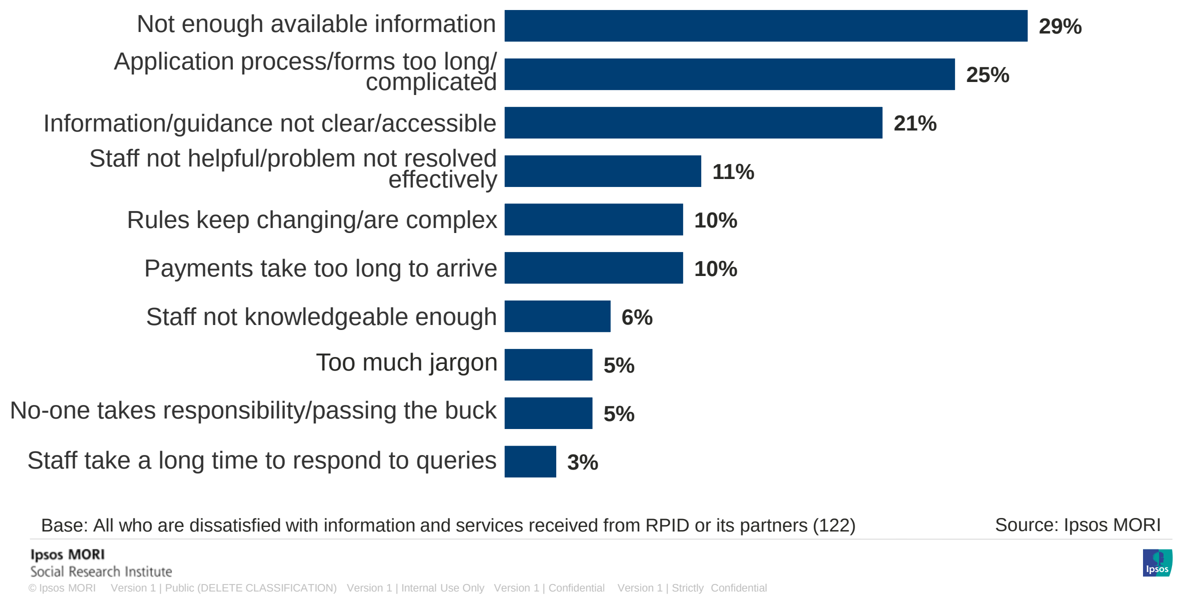
"Application forms are far too time consuming and not easy for the average person. If your application is legitimate, the process should be smooth and easy, not having to refer to a guidance 'book' to fill in a form correctly."

"It is very difficult to find specific information and the guidelines are changed without any prior warning - particularly with reference to Forestry grant availability."

3.7 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to report that there was not enough information available (39% compared with 21%), information was not easy to find (23% compared with 3%), the rules keep changing or are complex (17% compared with 5%), or too much jargon (10% compared with 1%).

Figure 3.2: Main reasons for dissatisfaction with information and services provided by RPID or its partners

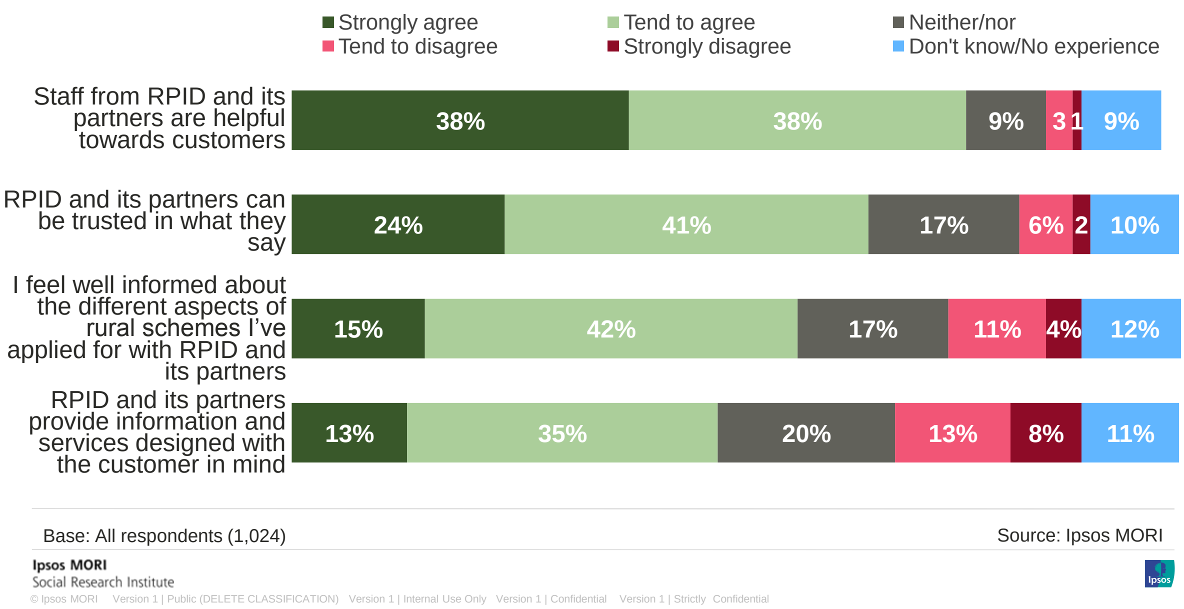
Q. What are your main reasons for saying that you are dissatisfied with information and services provided by RPID or its partners?



3.8 Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with four statements about aspects of the service provided by RPID and its partners. Overall results are shown in figure 3.3 below. Seventy-seven per cent of respondents agreed with the statement 'Staff from RPID and its partners are helpful towards customers', while only 5% disagreed.

Figure 3.3: Customer views on aspects of service provided by RPID and its partners

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



3.9 Customers who were satisfied with RPID (91%) and those in the South Eastern region (87%) were more likely than overall to agree with the statement, while telephone respondents (80%) were more likely than online respondents (73%) to agree. Those who were dissatisfied with RPID were more likely than overall to disagree (22%).

3.10 Other subgroups differed in the *extent* to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Telephone respondents (46%) were more likely to strongly agree than online respondents (31%), and those who submitted a paper SAF (46%) were more likely than those who made an online SAF submission (34%) to strongly agree. Other rural businesses (54%) were more likely than farms (37%) and crofts (35%) to tend to agree with the statement. Respondents who were dissatisfied with RPID were more likely than those who were satisfied with RPID to neither agree nor disagree (13% compared with 1%), to tend to disagree (13% versus 1%) or to strongly disagree (9% compared with less than 1%) with the statement.

3.11 Two-thirds of customers agreed that 'RPID and its partners can be trusted in what they say', versus only 8% who disagreed. Again, telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to agree (72% compared with 59%). Those who submitted a paper SAF were more likely to agree than those who made an online submission (71% versus 63%), while online SAF applicants were more likely to disagree than those who made a paper submission (10% versus 5%).

3.12 Importantly, those who were satisfied with RPID were more likely to agree (84%) that 'RPID and its partners can be trusted in what they say' and those who were dissatisfied were more likely than overall to disagree (32%). Among those who had sought information on how to appeal a penalty, 79% agreed and 8% disagreed. This suggests that there is an important relationship between good customer experience and customers' trust in the organisation.

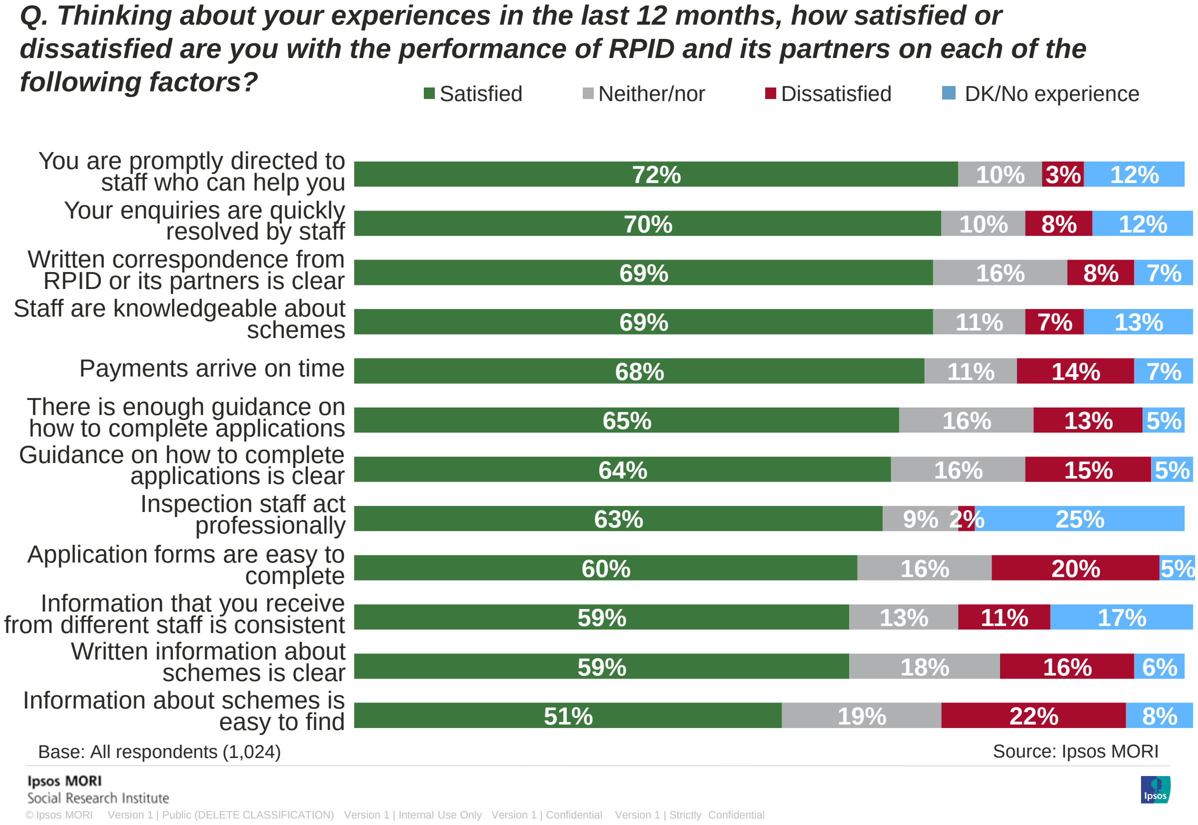
3.13 Fifty-six per cent of respondents agreed that they are well informed about the different aspects of the rural schemes they have applied for with RPID and its partners, while 16% disagreed. Telephone respondents were again more likely than online respondents to agree with this statement (65% compared with 48%). Those who are satisfied with RPID (76%), in the South Eastern and Southern regions (72% and 70% respectively), and farmers (60%) were more likely than overall to agree that they were well informed. Those dissatisfied with RPID (60%), agents (26%) and respondents in the 25-40 age group (25%) were more likely than overall to disagree. There would seem, then, to be a relationship between satisfaction in the organisation and feeling informed.

3.14 Only around half of respondents (48%) agreed that RPID and its partners provide information and services designed with the customer in mind, while 21% disagreed. Again, overall satisfaction appears to have a relationship with how respondents answer this question: 66% of those who are satisfied with RPID agreed, while 70% of those dissatisfied with RPID were in disagreement with the statement.

3.15 The majority of telephone respondents (57%) agreed with the above statement, compared with 40% of online respondents. Respondents in the South Eastern region (58%) were more likely than overall to agree, while those in Grampian (28%) were more likely than overall to disagree. Farmers (52%), respondents in the 65+ age group (55%) and paper SAF applicants (56%) were more likely to agree; while agents (45%), other rural businesses (40%), and non-SAF applicants (42%) were more likely to disagree.

3.16 Respondents were asked to gauge their satisfaction with twelve factors of the service offered by RPID and its partners, shown in figure 3.4 below. The majority of respondents were found to be satisfied with each of the twelve factors, with respondents most likely to report being satisfied with factors involving contact with staff or RPID itself: being promptly directed to staff who can help (72% satisfied); enquiries being resolved quickly by staff (70%), written correspondence with RPID or its partners is clear (69%); and staff being knowledgeable about schemes (69%) scored most highly in terms of customer satisfaction, with small proportions dissatisfied (5%, 8%, 8% and 7% respectively). Respondents were also more satisfied with inspection staff acting professionally (63% versus 2% dissatisfied) and receiving consistent information from different members of staff (59% versus 11%).

Figure 3.4 Satisfaction with RPID and partners on aspects of service



3.17 However, factors with the lowest satisfaction ratings were those which concerned information. Only 51% of respondents said that they were satisfied that information about schemes was easy to find, with 22% reporting that they were dissatisfied; 59% were satisfied that such information was clear, while 16% said that they were dissatisfied with this.

3.18 Seventy per cent of those who were dissatisfied with RPID, and 44% of customers who have not submitted a SAF in the last year, said that they were dissatisfied with the ease of finding information about schemes, compared with 22% overall; while other rural businesses (33%) were also more likely than overall to express dissatisfaction with this.

3.19 Similarly, 61% of those dissatisfied with RPID and 34% of those who did not submit a SAF in the last year were more likely than overall (16%) to report dissatisfaction with the clarity of information about schemes, as were agents and other rural businesses (28% and 24% respectively). On the other hand, farmers, paper SAF applicants (both 65%) and those satisfied with RPID (76%) were more likely than overall to say that they were satisfied.

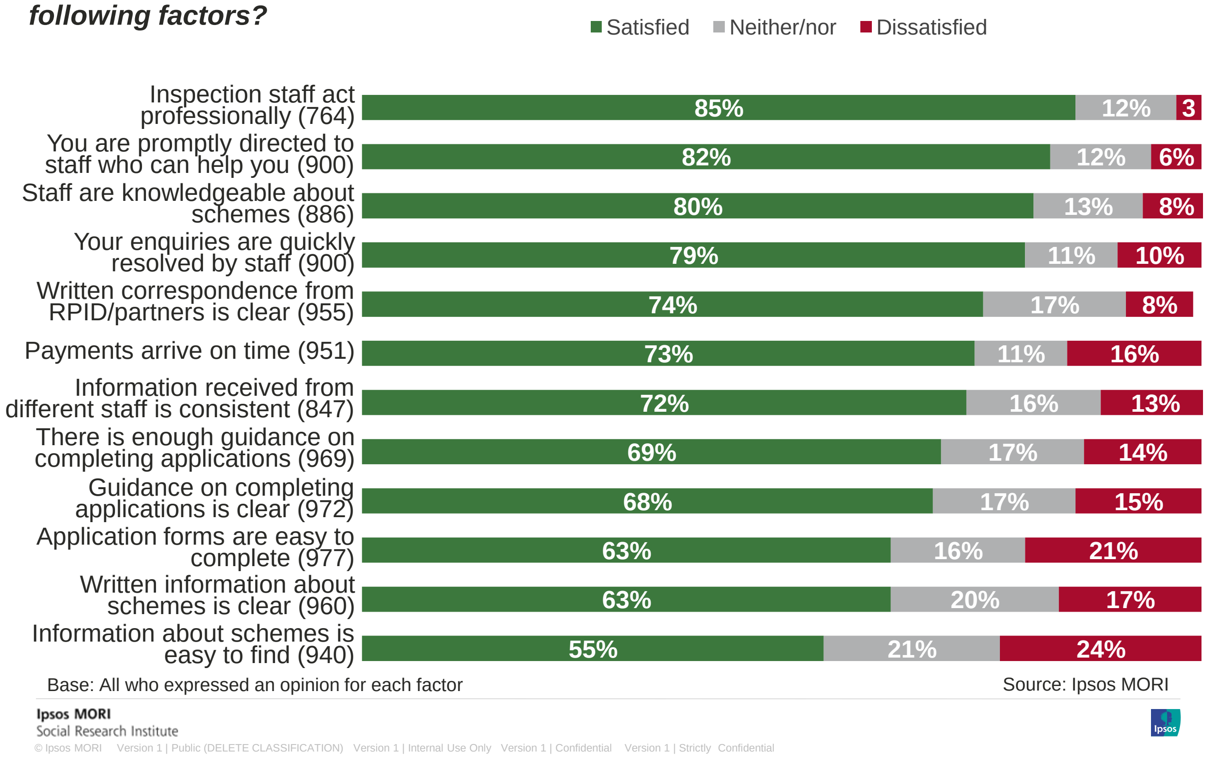
3.20 Three in five respondents noted that they were satisfied with the ease of completing applications, compared with one in five who were dissatisfied. Again, the highest levels of *dissatisfaction* were reported by those who were dissatisfied with RPID overall (55%) and those who had not submitted a SAF in the last year (41%); while sizeable proportions of agents (36%), other rural businesses (33%) and crofters (26%) also reported dissatisfaction with this factor.

3.21 Overall, respondents to the telephone survey were more likely to be satisfied with each of the twelve factors than online respondents.

3.22 Removing respondents who answer ‘don’t know’ or who have no experience of each factor means satisfaction is slightly higher for each, as shown in figure 3.5 below. As can be seen, the level of satisfaction with those who have experienced each aspect of the service provided by RPID and its partners is generally positive, particularly in terms of interactions with staff. However, opinion is more divided over the quantity and clarity of guidance on completing application forms, on the ease of completing the forms themselves, and the clarity and ease of locating information about schemes.

Figure 3.5: Satisfaction with RPID and partners on aspects of service among those who have experienced each and gave an opinion

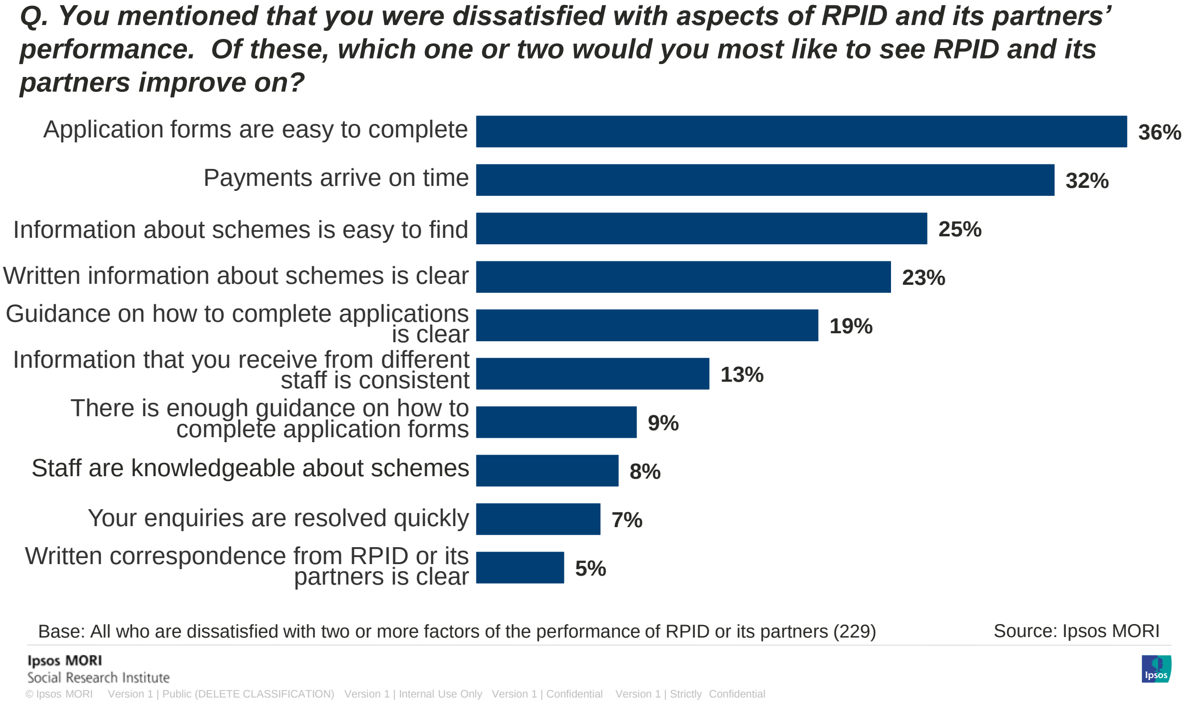
Q. Thinking about your experiences in the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of RPID and its partners on each of the following factors?



3.23 Respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with two or more factors were asked which one or two they would most like to see RPID and its partners improve upon, with overall results shown in figure 3.6 below. The most frequently mentioned factors reflect the recurring areas of dissatisfaction: application forms being easy to complete (36%), payments arriving on time (32%), ease of finding information on schemes (25%), clarity of written information about schemes (23%) and clarity of guidance on how to complete applications (19%).

3.24 Those dissatisfied with RPID were more likely to want improvements to the ease of finding information about schemes (30%), than those who were satisfied with RPID (14%); while those satisfied with RPID were more likely than overall to say that they would look for improvement in the ease of completing application forms (48% versus 36%). Agents were more likely than overall to want improvement to the timely arrival of payments (49% versus 32%), receiving consistent information from different members of staff (31% compared with 13%), and the knowledge of staff about schemes (17% versus 8%).

Figure 3.6: Factors which dissatisfied respondents would like to see RPID and its partners improve upon



3.25 The importance of accessible and high quality information is also confirmed by statistically analysing the relationship between overall satisfaction with RPID and satisfaction with, or agreement with statements about, the various aspects of service provision. Analysing all possible combinations of variables we find the highest levels of overall satisfaction among respondents who **agree** that "I feel well informed about the different aspects of rural schemes I've applied for with RPID and its partners" ***and*** **agree** that "RPID and its partners provide information and services designed with the customer in mind" ***and*** are **satisfied** that "information about schemes is easy to find". Among respondents who meet each of these three criteria (n=316), 95% are satisfied.

3.26 The converse is also true. The lowest levels of satisfaction are among respondents who **do not agree** (including neither agree nor disagree) that they are well informed ***and*** **do not agree** that "RPID and its partners provide information and services designed with the customer in mind" ***and*** **are not satisfied** (including neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) that payments arrived on time. Among these respondents (n = 53), only 11% are satisfied.

3.27 Ipsos MORI looked at benchmarking customer satisfaction with RPID and its partners against land management customers' satisfaction with Natural England which is a comparable UK body; however, it is important to note that not all of the issues covered in Ipsos MORI's surveys for both bodies are *directly* comparable. Where possible, comparisons are made where factors are similar to each other, and where a similar question is asked; it would not be possible, for example, to compare agree/disagree questions with satisfaction questions.

3.28 Three-quarters of Natural England customers said that they were very or fairly satisfied with the speed or accuracy of payments. This compares with 73% of RPID customers who were satisfied that their payments arrive on time. Thirteen per cent of Natural England customers said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (compared with 11% of RPID customers), and 9% of Natural England customers who were dissatisfied (compared with 14% of RPID customers).

3.29 Sixty-nine per cent of Natural England customers said that they were satisfied with the quality of information or correspondence, while 25% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and only 4% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the clarity of RPID's written correspondence is at similar levels: 74% are satisfied, with 17% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 8% dissatisfied.

3.30 Sixty-eight per cent of Natural England's customers were satisfied with the efficiency with which staff deal with enquiries, while 7% were dissatisfied and 21% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Again, RPID and its partners have a similar level of satisfaction amongst their customers, with 70% satisfied that their enquiries are quickly resolved by staff, with 8% dissatisfied and 10% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

3.31 A similar proportion of Natural England customers (68%) said that they were satisfied with the consistency of advice that they receive, with 6% dissatisfied and 22% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. RPID compares slightly less favourably, with 59% of customers saying that they are satisfied that the information they receive from different members of staff is consistent, with 11% dissatisfied and 10% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

3.32 However, 72% of RPID customers said that they were satisfied that they were promptly directed to staff who can help them, with only 3% dissatisfied and 10% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This compares well with Natural England, where 60% said that they were satisfied with the ease of getting hold of someone who can help. Eleven per cent of Natural England customers said that they were dissatisfied with this, and a quarter was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

3.33 Eighty-six per cent of Natural England customers agreed that Natural England was helpful towards the people it deals with, while 6% disagreed and 8% neither agreed nor disagreed. A smaller proportion, though nonetheless significant majority (76%) of RPID customers agreed that *staff* from RPID and its partners were helpful towards customers, while 4% disagreed and 9% said that they neither agree nor disagree.

3.34 Similarly, 74% of Natural England customers agreed that Natural England could be trusted in what it says, compared with 65% of RPID customers agreeing that RPID could be trusted in what it says. Twelve per cent of Natural England customers disagreed, compared with 8% of RPID customers; while 17% and 10% for each body respectively, said that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Key points

3.35 Overall, two thirds of respondents said that they were satisfied with RPID and its partners, with only 12% dissatisfied. The main reasons for dissatisfaction were a lack of information, or information not being easy to find, unclear guidance, and problems relating to the length or complexity of the applications process. Despite such problems being mentioned by a small proportion of respondents, these are areas which RPID and its partners can look to improve in the future.

3.36 Overall, respondents generally agreed that RPID is a helpful organisation towards customers, can be trusted in what they say, and that they are well informed about aspects of the schemes to which they apply. Just under half of respondents felt that information and services were designed with the customer in mind, with one fifth disagreeing.

3.37 In terms of individual aspects of the service provided by RPID and its partners, a majority were satisfied with each aspect. However, the highest dissatisfaction was found with: the ease with which customers could find information; the ease with which customers can complete application forms; the clarity of written information about schemes; the clarity of guidance for application forms; and the arrival of payments on time. While many aspects may be outwith the control of RPID, there may be scope to improve the clarity of information and the ease of finding it. There may also be scope to improve application forms and since this is an issue for a significant proportion of customers, this may also be an aspect of the online system that can be promoted. These are factors which can have a positive influence on encouraging customers to use the online system over continuing to use the paper-based system.

3.38 When comparing levels of satisfaction among customers of RPID and its partners and Natural England, while not all factors measured were directly comparable, there are areas of similar performance. Consistency of information was found to be an area of lower satisfaction among RPID customers, while RPID customers were more satisfied with being transferred to a member of staff who is able to help. Slightly lower proportions of RPID customers felt that RPID and its partners were helpful towards customers and could be trusted in what they say, compared with those of Natural England, although the majority did still respond positively in general.

4 ONLINE SERVICES

Summary

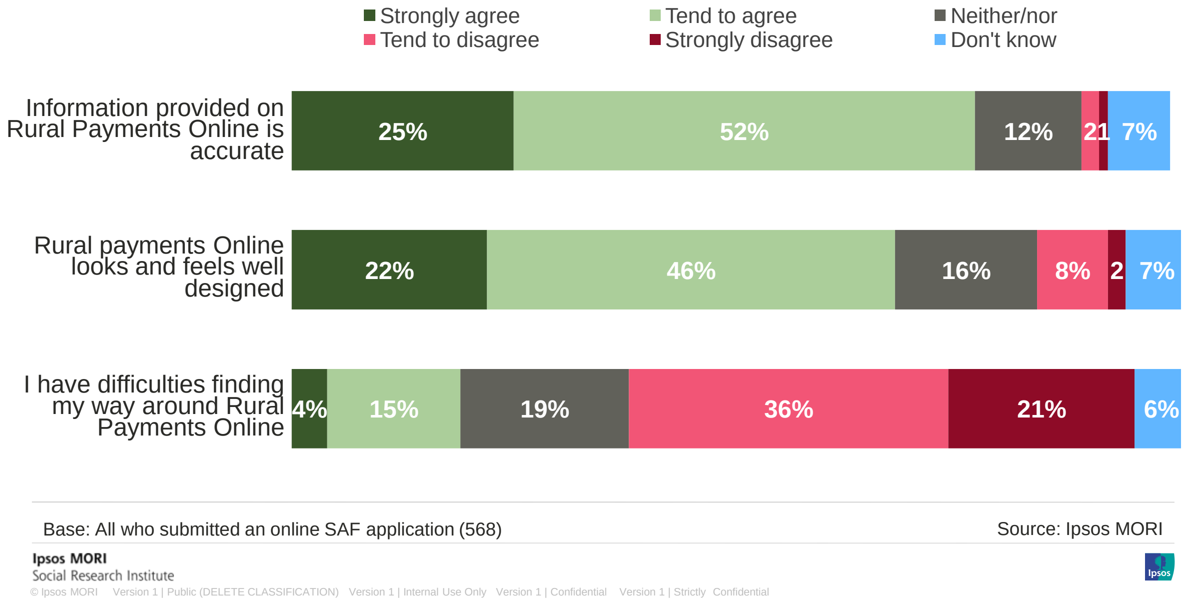
1. Force of habit and dislike of the internet or computers were respondents' main barriers to the use of online services. But respondents were generally positive about ways in which RPID could encourage more customers to take up online services.

2. Among those who currently use online services, issues were similar to general areas of dissatisfaction: information which was both difficult to find and unclear, finding forms difficult to complete, and having problems with the quantity and clarity of guidance for completing forms.

4.1 Respondents who had submitted their SAF online were asked if they agreed or disagreed with three statements regarding their experience of using the Rural Payments Online (RPO) system. Overall, respondents' views of the RPO system were positive, as can be seen in figure 4.1. Seventy-eight per cent of online SAF applicants agreed that information provided on RPO is accurate (3% disagreed); 67% agreed that RPO looks and feels well designed (10% disagreed); however, only 57% disagreed that they have difficulty navigating RPO (18% agreed).

Figure 4.1: Views on aspects of the Rural Payments Online system

Q. Thinking about your experience of using the Rural Payments Online system, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



4.2 Online applicants who are satisfied with RPID were more likely than overall to agree that information is accurate (83% compared with 78%). While online SAF applicants who are dissatisfied with RPID were more likely than overall to disagree (12% compared with 3% overall) that the information provided on RPO is accurate.

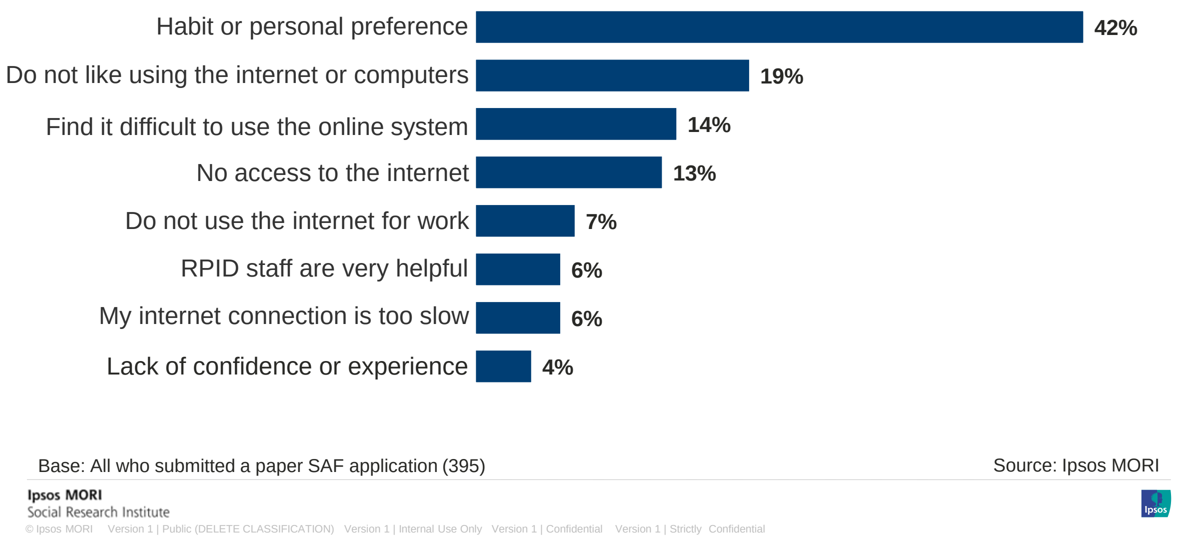
4.3 Respondents in the South Eastern region (77%), those satisfied with RPID (76%), and farmers (72%) were more likely than overall to agree that RPO looks and feels well designed; while those dissatisfied with RPID (39%), agents (33%), other rural businesses (21%), and those in the Southern region (25%) were more likely to disagree, compared with 10% overall.

4.4 While just under a fifth (18%) of online SAF applicants agreed that they have difficulty navigating RPO, those who are dissatisfied with RPID were, with 33% agreeing that it is difficult to navigate, almost twice as likely to report this. Young farmers (78%), respondents in the 25-40 age group (70%), those in Grampian (68%), and users who are satisfied with RPID (66%) were more likely than overall to agree that RPO is easy to navigate.

4.5 Those who submitted a paper SAF were asked why they did not make an online submission. Two in five cited habit or preferring to do things in person or on paper, while 28% said that they did not like using computers or the internet. Seventeen per cent mentioned that they had no internet access, while 14% reported that they find websites or online applications difficult to use. Overall results are shown in figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Reasons for choosing not to submit a SAF online

Q. You mentioned earlier that you have not submitted your SAF online. What are your main reasons for not doing this?



"Taking the forms in means that if there are any issues we have a query about we can speak to staff and get the answer there and then. Online would not give that opportunity."

"The rules change every year i.e. eligible land. When I submit in person I can take digital pictures of tracks or features and ask if they are eligible. SAF staff welcome this chance to help me. Staff will have checked over 100 forms before. I go in always on the last day and by then they are alert to issues."

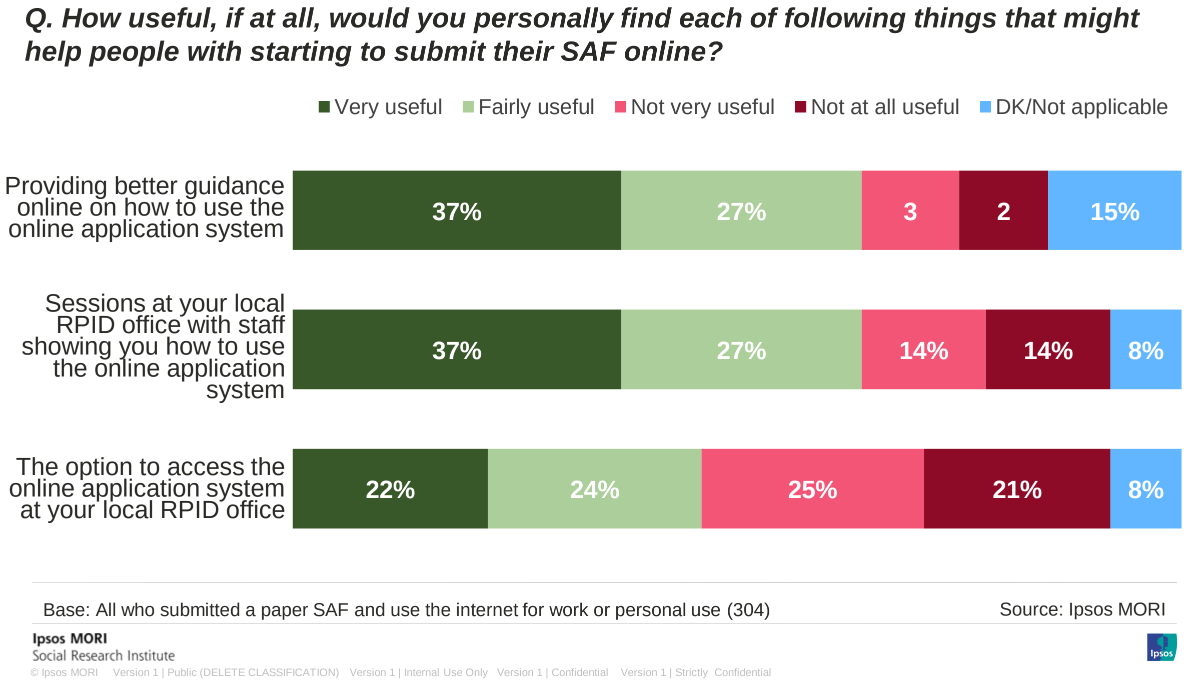
“The less I do online the better. I prefer people to machines.”

4.6 Overall, there were few significant differences between subgroups. Respondents in the 65+ age group were more likely than overall to say that they had no internet access (27% versus 13%), that they do not like using the internet or computers (26% compared with 19%), or that they do not use the internet for work (15% versus 7%). Those in the Southern region (23%) and crofters (17%) were more likely than overall to report that they had no internet access, and crofters, reflecting the lack of internet access, were also more likely than overall to say that they do not use the internet for work (13%).

4.7 Not surprisingly, telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to cite dislike of the internet or computers (28% compared with 3%), no internet access (17% versus 4%), or not using the internet for work (11% compared with 1%).

4.8 Paper SAF applicants who use the internet for work and/or personal use were asked how useful they would find three services which could potentially encourage people to complete an online SAF application. As figure 4.3 shows, respondents’ views were mainly positive, although opinion was divided in terms of having a facility for customers to access the online application system at their local office.

Figure 4.3: Services which could encourage use of the online SAF system



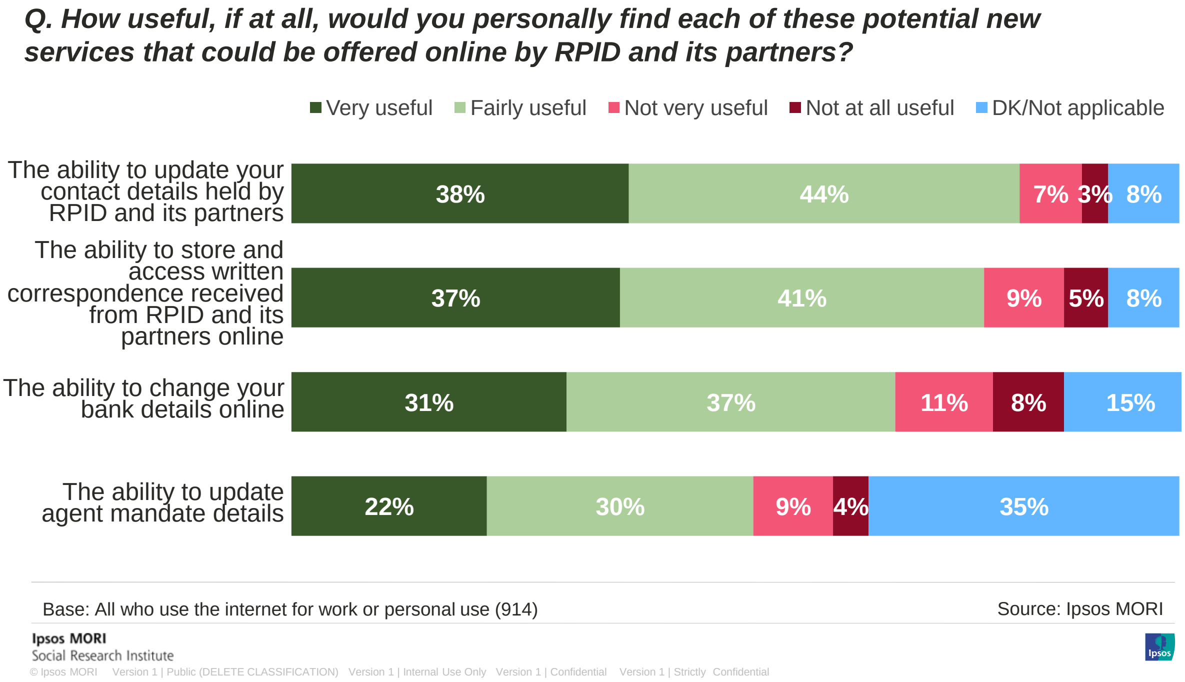
4.9 Respondents in the Argyll & Western Isles region, those in the 65+ age group (both 54%), crofters (47%) and those who are satisfied with RPID (42%) were more likely than overall (37%) to say that providing better guidance online would be very useful. However, telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents and overall to think that this would not be at all useful (14% compared with 5% and 10% respectively).

4.10 Those in Argyll & Western Isles region were also more likely than overall to think that sessions at local RPID offices with staff showing how to use the online application system would be very useful (60% versus 37% overall), while those in the Central region were more likely to think this would be not very useful (24%, compared with 14% overall).

4.11 Opinion was divided over the option to access the online application system at local RPID offices. Those aged over 65 and female respondents were more likely than overall to feel that such a service would be useful (59% and 58% respectively, compared with 46%); while 51% of those aged 41-65 felt that it would not be useful, compared with 46% overall. Respondents to the telephone survey were more likely than online respondents to feel that this would be useful (52% compared with 39%).

4.12 Respondents who use the internet for work or personal use were asked how useful they would find four potential new services which RPID and its partners could offer online. The majority of respondents felt that each potential service would be useful, as can be seen in figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: Possible new online services



4.13 More than four in five said that the ability to update their contact details online would be a good potential new service, while one in ten thought this would not be useful. Agents (92%), those in the Argyll & Western Isles region (91%), and respondents who submitted an online SAF (85%), non-RPO users who use the internet (85%), and those satisfied with RPID (85%) were all more likely than overall to think that this would be useful. Respondents who are dissatisfied with RPID (19%), online RPO users (14%), paper SAF applicants (14%) and respondents in the Central region (14%) were all more likely than overall to feel that this would not be a useful service.

4.14 Seventy-eight per cent of respondents said they thought it would be useful to be able to store and access written correspondence received from RPID and its partners online; 13% said this would not be useful. Online SAF applicants and non-RPO users who use the internet (both 82%) were more likely than overall to see this as a useful service. Respondents in the Argyll & Western Isles region (22%) and RPO users who use the internet (17%) were more likely than overall to regard this as not useful.

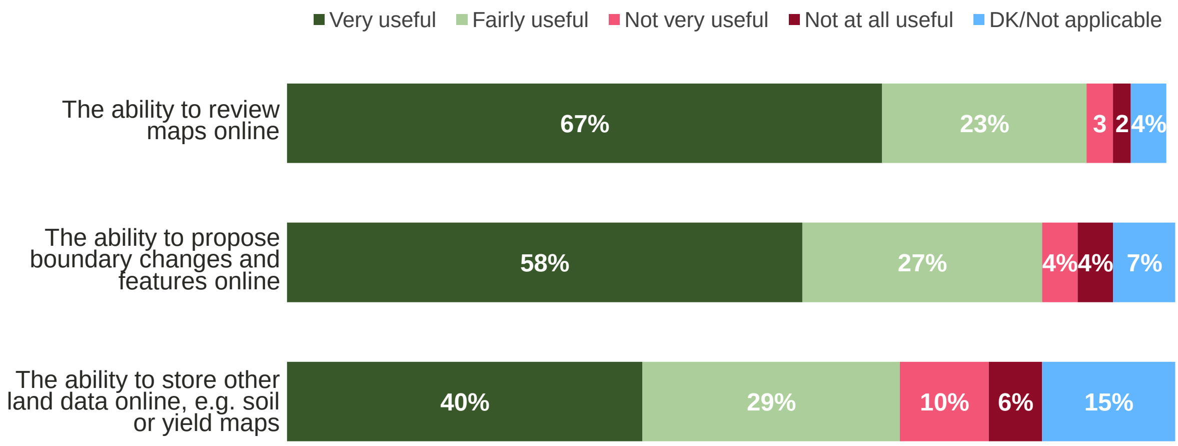
4.15 Two-thirds of respondents felt that the ability to change their bank details online would be a useful potential service, with 19% saying that this would not be useful. Those in the 25-40 age group (78%), online SAF applicants (74%), non-RPO users who use the internet (74%), and crofters (73%) were all more likely than overall to find this useful. Those who are dissatisfied with RPID (29%), RPO users who use the internet (27%) and paper SAF applicants (27%) were more likely than overall to say that this would not be useful.

4.16 Just over half of respondents (52%) said that they would find the ability to update agent mandate details useful, while 13% found this not useful. 29% said that this feature would not apply to them. Agents (92%), other rural businesses (80%), and respondents in the Grampian region (63%) were all more likely than overall to say that this would be a useful service.

4.17 All respondents who use the internet (n=921) were also asked about their views on the usefulness of three online land mapping tools. As figure 4.5 shows, opinion was generally positive towards these possible new services.

Figure 4.5: Possible online land mapping tools

Q. How useful, if at all, would you personally find each of these potential new services that could be offered online by RPID and its partners?



Base: All who use the internet for work or personal use (914) Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute

4.18 Nine in ten said that the ability to review maps online would be a useful service, while 5% felt it was not useful. Agents were more likely than overall to find this feature useful (97%, with 80% saying that it would be very useful), as were online SAF applicants (93%). Farmers over the age of 40 (17%) and paper SAF applicants (11%) were more likely than overall to say this would not be useful.

4.19 Eighty-five per cent of respondents said that the ability to propose changes to boundaries and features online would be useful, with 8% saying it was not useful. Again, agents (95%) and online SAF applicants (88%) were more likely than overall to feel that this service would be useful, and paper SAF applicants and female respondents (both 14%) more likely than overall to feel that this would not be useful. These percentages for paper customers suggest there is a relative small hard core of people who are unlikely to be drawn by any online services.

4.20 Just over two-thirds (69%) of respondents thought that the ability to store other types of land data online would be useful, while 16% held the opposite view. Respondents who did not submit a SAF application (86%) and agents (80%) were more likely than overall to feel that this would be useful, while those in the South Eastern region (25%) and paper SAF applicants (21%) were more likely than overall to say that this would not be useful.

Key points

4.21 The main 'barrier' to online submission of SAFs was force of habit or a preference for using a paper method, followed by dislike of the internet or computers. While RPID cannot necessarily change people's attitudes towards modern technology, respondents were asked about ways in which RPID could facilitate higher usage of the RPO system. The provision of better guidance on how to use the online application system was thought to be useful by two thirds of respondents, as was the possibility of coaching sessions from staff at local offices. Therefore these would seem to be reasonable avenues by which RPID can help its customers to move from paper to online submissions.

4.22 Those respondents who already use the RPO system were positive about the look and feel of the site and its navigability, and felt that information provided on the RPO site was accurate. Respondents were also positive about the range of potential new services which RPID could offer in future. The option which received the most negative views concerned the ability to change bank details online, which could possibly be driven by concerns over information security. Respondents were also positive about potential online land mapping tools.

4.23 Although customers aged over 65 years and those who had submitted a paper SAF were more likely to think that potential new services would not be useful, even among these groups, a majority felt that such new services *would* be useful. This suggests that these services have the potential to both improve services for existing online users and act as a further incentive to draw non-users towards the online service.

4.24 However, around a third of those aged 65-and-over said that they have no internet access and/or do not like the internet or computers. Access through local offices (and the support that this might also provide) would help to address the fundamental problem of internet access. It may still be more difficult for RPID to convince such customers to access online services but it seems likely that for many of these older customers, responsibility for the day-to-day running of the business will inevitably pass to younger family or staff members.

5 ONLINE BEHAVIOURS

Summary

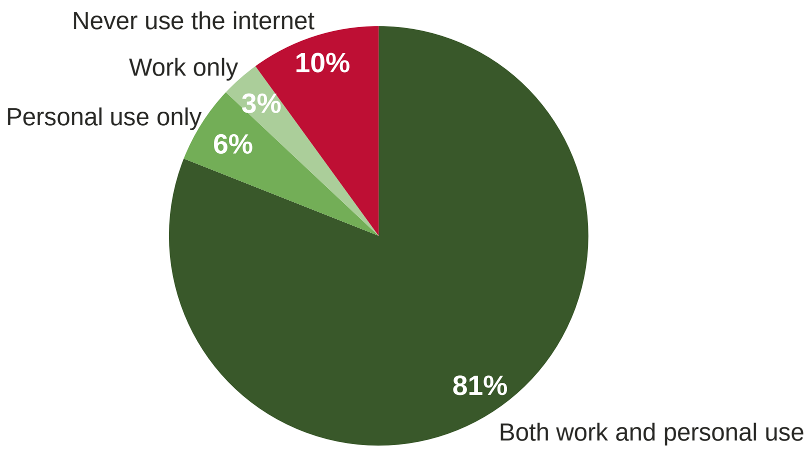
1. The majority of respondents from both parts of the sample have broadband access, and use the internet on a daily or weekly basis, and use it for work purposes.

2. A test of internet download and upload speeds in the online survey found little difference in speeds amongst the sample group, across Scotland.

5.1 The final part of the survey looked at aspects of the online behaviour of those respondents who use the internet for work or personal use. As shown in figure 5.1 below, four-fifths of respondents said that they use the internet for both work and personal use, with 6% saying that they do so for personal use only and 3% saying that they only use the internet for work. One in ten said that they never use the internet.

Figure 5.1: Purpose of internet use

Q. Do you currently use the internet for work purposes only, for your own personal use only, or for both these reasons?



Base: All respondents (1,024) Source: Ipsos MORI

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Social Research Institute
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5.2 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to say that they only use the internet for personal use (8% compared with 4%), while online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to report using the internet for both work and personal use (94% compared with 68%). A comparison of all respondents' internet usage with that of respondents to both modes of the survey is shown in table 5.1 below.

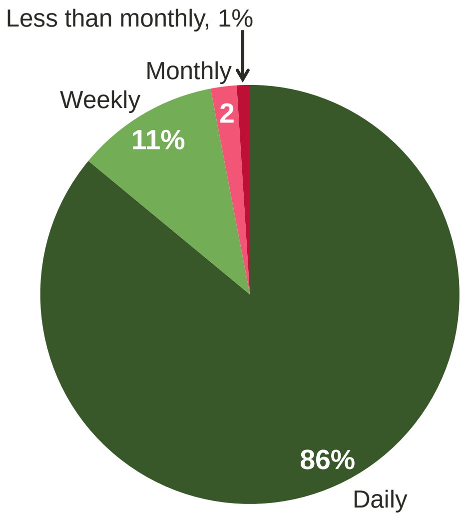
Table 5.1: Purpose of internet use

	All	Telephone	Online
Work and personal use	81%	68%	94%
Personal use only	6%	8%	4%
Work use only	3%	4%	2%
Never use the internet	10%	21%	-
Base	*1,024*	*502*	*522*

5.3 The majority (86% overall) reported using the internet daily, and 11% weekly, as can be seen in figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2: Frequency of internet use

Q. How often do you use the internet either for work or personal use?



Base: All who use the internet for work or personal use (914) Source: Ipsos MORI

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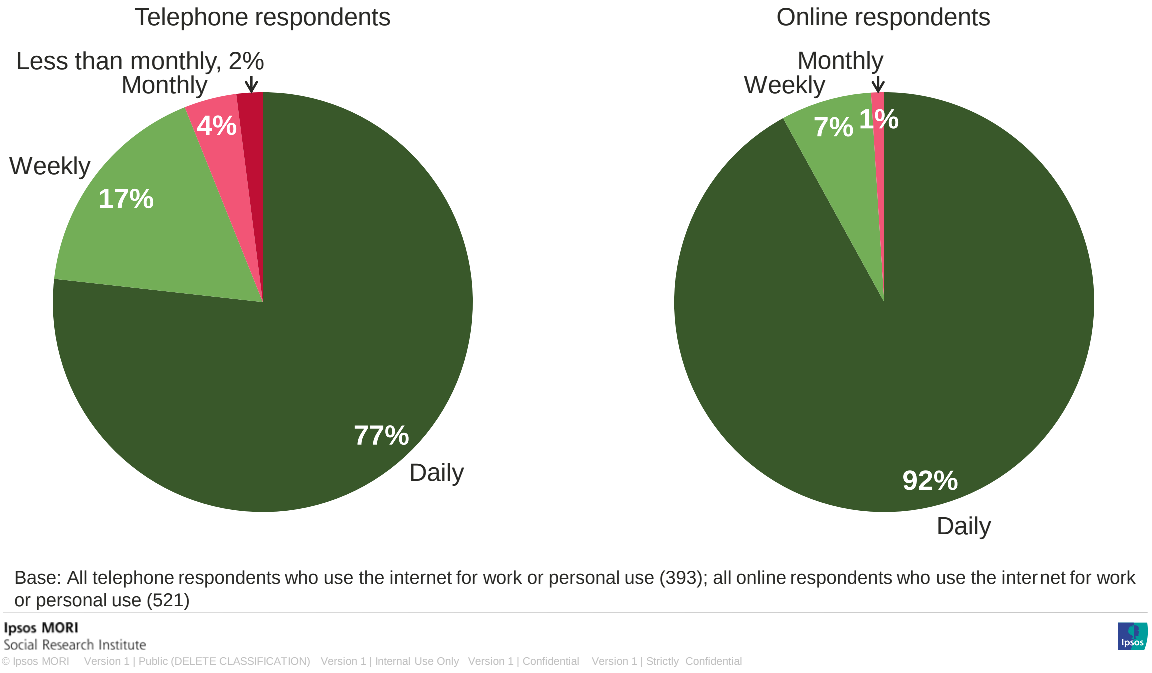
5.4 As can be seen in figure 5.3 below, over 90% of respondents from both samples use the internet for either work or personal use (n=393 telephone respondents and 521 online) on at least a weekly basis.

Figure 5.3: Frequency of internet use

Q. How often do you use the internet either for work or personal use?



5.5 Agents (96%), other rural businesses (95%), respondents in the Highland region (96%) and online SAF applicants (92%) were more likely than overall to report using the internet on a daily basis, while respondents in the Southern region (22%), paper SAF applicants (20%), and farmers (14%) were more likely than overall to say they did so weekly. Frequency of internet use across the whole sample and both survey modes is shown in table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Frequency of internet use

	All	**Telephone**	**Online**
Daily	86%	76%	92%
Weekly	11%	17%	7%
Monthly	2%	4%	1%
Less than monthly	1%	2%	*
Base	*914*	*393*	*521*

5.6 In terms of the types of internet connection used by respondents, 97% said that they used a broadband connection, compared with 3% who use a dial-up connection. In addition, 19% have 3G mobile access.

5.7 Of those respondents who use the internet at work, 65% reported using a desktop PC, 54% said that they use a laptop, 22% used a Smartphone, and 15% mentioned using a tablet device. Only a small number of respondents reported using the internet for personal use only. Taking all internet users together, device usage overall is similar to that of those who use the internet at work, as shown in table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3: Devices used to access the internet

	Work	**Personal**	**Work or personal**
Desktop computer/PC	65%	45%	64%
Laptop	54%	66%	55%
Smartphone	22%	12%	21%
Tablet	15%	8%	14%
Base	*850*	*64*	*914*

5.8 Online respondents were more likely than telephone respondents to report using a laptop (67% compared with 59%), Smartphone (27% compared with 13%) or tablet device (17% compared with 10%).

5.9 Respondents were then asked which browsers they mainly use to access the internet. Fifty-four per cent reported using Internet Explorer, with 41% using Google Chrome, 17% using Mozilla Firefox and 11% using Safari.

5.10 Respondents from other rural businesses (65%) were more likely than overall to use Internet Explorer, while agents (27%) and respondents in the Central region (22%) were more likely to use Mozilla Firefox.

5.11 Telephone respondents were more likely than online respondents to use Google Chrome (45% compared with 37%), while the reverse was true of Internet Explorer (60% compared with 45%), Mozilla Firefox (20% compared with 13%) and Safari (16% compared with 4%).

5.12 Respondents were asked about the frequency with which they engaged in various online behaviours. Overall results are in table 5.4 below. Forty-three per cent of respondents said that they looked for information on comparing products or suppliers on a weekly basis, with a further 13% doing so daily and 25% monthly. Those in the Southern region (39%) and agents (38%) were more likely than overall to report doing this on a monthly basis.

Table 5.4: Frequency of online behaviours

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	Never
To go on social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter	20%	13%	3%	7%	56%
To do your banking online	16%	39%	12%	4%	29%
To look for information on comparing products and suppliers	13%	43%	26%	13%	4%
To buy things online	5%	35%	34%	18%	8%
To look for online information provided by government, council or NHS	4%	21%	35%	29%	11%
To use an online service provided by government, council or NHS	2%	13%	42%	35%	8%

5.13 Just over one-third of respondents said that they bought things online weekly (35%) or monthly (34%), while 18% said that they do so less frequently than monthly. Only 5% said that they do this on a daily basis. Other rural businesses (44%) were more likely than overall to report that they do this monthly. Those in the Southern and Central regions (27% and 23% respectively) were more likely to buy things online less than monthly, than overall.

5.14 Just over one-third of respondents said that they look online for information provided by government, the council or the NHS on a monthly basis, with 21% doing so weekly and 29% less than monthly. Other rural businesses (41%), agents (39%) and those in the South Eastern region (31%) are more likely than overall to look for such information on a weekly basis. Indeed, agents (16%) and other rural businesses (10%) are more likely to do this on a daily basis than overall (4%), while crofters (35%) are more likely than overall to do so less than monthly.

5.15 Two-fifths (42%) of respondents said that they use online services provided by government, council or NHS (such as VAT submission or tax returns) on a monthly basis; 35% said that they do so less than monthly, and a further 13% do this weekly. Crofters (50%) were more likely than overall to do this less than monthly, while farmers (47%) were more likely than overall to use such services monthly. Other rural businesses (20%) were more likely than overall to do this on a weekly basis.

5.16 Thirty-nine per cent of respondents said that they did banking online on a weekly basis, with 16% daily and 12% monthly. Young farmers (56%), those in the 25-40 age group (55%) and those in the Highland region (49%) were more likely than overall to do online banking weekly.

5.17 The data seem to suggest that there is a shared set of characteristics among those respondents who do not use these online services. Twenty-nine per cent of respondents said that they never use online banking; 45% of paper SAF applicants, 34% in the 65-and-over age group, and 32% of farmers do not do their banking online.

5.18 Eleven per cent of respondents say that they do not look online for information provided by government or public bodies; 21% of those who submitted a paper SAF, 19% of the 65-and-over age group and 13% of farmers also fall into this category. Similarly, 8% of all respondents do not use government or public body-provided online services; this proportion increases to 14% of: paper SAF applicants; respondents in the 65-and-over age group; and crofters.

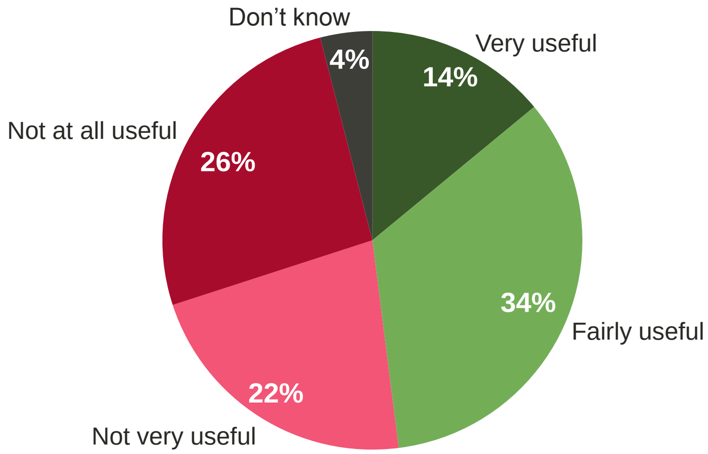
5.19 Eight per cent of respondents said that they do not buy things online; 16% of paper SAF applicants, 13% of the 65-and-over age group and 10% of farmers were more likely than overall to say that they never do this.

5.20 One in five respondents said that they use social media on a daily basis (n=405), with a further 13% doing so weekly; however, 56% said that they do not use social media. Those aged 25-40 (34%), young farmers (32%), women (27%), online respondents (24%) and online SAF applicants (23%) were more likely than overall to report using social media daily. It is possible that there is a degree of overlap between respondents in these subgroups. Respondents in the 65+ and 41-64 age groups (75% and 55% respectively), telephone respondents (62%), farmers (62%) and men (59%) were more likely than overall to say that they never use social media, as were those in the Southern and South Eastern regions (70% and 66% respectively).

5.21 Respondents who use social media were asked how useful it would be if RPID were to provide information and news via sites such as Facebook and Twitter in the future, with opinion divided as to whether or not this would be useful. Overall results are shown in figure 5.4 below. Agents (68%) were more likely than overall to think that such a service would not be useful, while farmers over the age of 40 and those satisfied with RPID were more likely than overall to say that it would be useful (both 53%).

Figure 5.4: Usefulness of provision of news and information via social media

Q. RPID and its partners are considering providing information and news via social media such as Facebook and Twitter in future. How useful, if at all, would you find this?



Base: All social media users (405) Source: Ipsos MORI

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5.22 Finally, respondents of the online survey were asked to complete a speed test in order to measure both the download and upload speeds of their internet connection. The purpose of this was to determine if there was a relationship between geographical location and connection speed. It was thought that slow connection speeds may have been a barrier to the use of RPID and its partners’ online services; however, these results would seem to indicate otherwise.

5.23 Respondents were given a link to a speed test site, and upload and download speeds were tested. Respondents were then able to record the respective speeds in either mb/s or kb/s. Only small numbers recorded speeds in kb/s, so results for those who reported in mb/s are presented by region in tables 5.5 and 5.6 below.

Table 5.5: Download speeds by region (mb/s)

Download speed (mb/s)	Overall	Argyll & Western Isles	Central	Grampian	Highland	Northern & Northern Isles	South Eastern	South Western	Southern
<1.0	17%	31%	16%	6%	17%	16%	17%	19%	-
1.0-2.99	32%	25%	42%	27%	25%	32%	22%	41%	35%
3.0-4.99	16%	9%	8%	34%	11%	11%	25%	12%	27%
5.0-9.99	24%	26%	21%	17%	33%	31%	21%	17%	26%
>10.0	12%	11%	6%	14%	11%	13%	5%	12%	12%
Not stated	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	-	-	-	-
Base	*417*	*54*	*104*	*64*	*35*	*56*	*60*	*26*	*18*

Table 5.6: Upload speeds by region (mb/s)

Download speed (mb/s)	Overall	Argyll & Western Isles	Central	Grampian	Highland	Northern & Northern Isles	South Eastern	South Western	Southern
<1.0	83%	80%	83%	83%	82%	87%	81%	84%	94%
1.0-2.99	8%	15%	6%	9%	8%	4%	8%	8%	6%
3.0-4.99	1%	-	1%	-	3%	1%	-	-	-
5.0-9.99	2%	3%	1%	3%	-	1%	2%	4%	-
>10.0	5%	2%	7%	3%	7%	9%	7%	4%	-
Not stated	1%	2%	2%	2%	-	-	2%	-	-
Base	*415*	*54*	*104*	*64*	*35*	*54*	*60*	*26*	*18*

5.24 In terms of download speeds, there was found to be little in the way of significant differences in regional variation, with the main points of difference being a higher than overall likelihood of 0-0.9mb/s in Argyll & Western Isles (31% versus 17%); higher than overall likelihood of 1.0-2.99mb/s in Central (42% versus 32%); and higher than overall measure of 3.0-4.99mb/s in Grampian (34%) and South Eastern (25% versus 16% overall).

5.25 Moreover, crofts (22%) and farms (19%) were more likely than agents (5%) to report download speeds of 0-0.9mb/s, while farms were also more likely than agents to report download speeds of 1.0-2.99mb/s (36% versus 18%).

5.26 No statistically significant regional variations were found in terms of upload speeds, with at least four-fifths nationally and in each region reporting speeds of 0-0.9mb/s. Again, the most significant differences were found between business type. Farmers (89%) and crofters (80%) were more likely than agents (63%) to report upload speeds of 0-0.9mb/s; while agents (8%) were more likely than other rural businesses (2%) and farmers (<1%) to report upload speeds of 10.0-19.9mb/s.

Key points

5.27 Ninety per cent of RPID customers surveyed are online, with 84% overall (72% of telephone respondents and 96% of online respondents) reporting that they use the internet for work purposes.

5.28 The majority of respondents have internet access via broadband, only a small percentage using dial-up, and a fifth have 3G mobile access. Broadband speeds tested in the online survey were found to be broadly similar across the country.

5.29 Only 6% of those who had submitted a paper SAF cited a too-slow internet connection as a barrier to using the online SAF system, with little in the way of regional variation. This would appear to suggest, then, that internet speed in itself is not a major barrier to customers' use of online services, and that the personal preferences of a significant minority of people is the major factor which must be considered.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The main ways customers interact with RPID are by telephone or personal contact with their local RPID office. As part of the Scottish Government's digital agenda, the Futures Programme seeks to encourage more use of online services. As is shown in Chapter 3, respondents found the RPID staff they came into contact with to be both knowledgeable and helpful. While this is positive endorsement of RPID's staff, it may also act as a barrier to using online services, especially where there are other barriers to moving online. Knowing that helpful members of staff are on hand at their local office means that RPID customers might have little incentive to use the online service, particularly in light of customers' reported problems with the complicated nature of the applications process.

6.2 In terms of the overall service offered by RPID, the availability and quality of information emerges as a persistent issue. Large minorities of respondents reported encountering problems with the clarity and ease of finding information about schemes, also with the ease of filling in application forms, and the quantity and clarity of guidance for the filling-in of forms. Improving in these areas could also help to draw more customers in to using the RPO system. Most customers were happy with RPO itself, but only 57% of users said that they found the RPO site easy to navigate, therefore it may be necessary to improve the way the website works in order for customers to use the site with more confidence.

6.3 When it comes to the potential for RPID to offer a greater variety of online services, it was found that those who were least likely to think such new services would be useful were a significant minority of people in the 65-and-over age bracket and were more likely to be users of the paper SAF system. However, while it may be impossible to encourage *all* customers in this group, the proportion of people in this age group who are willing to use online services suggests that there may be the potential to draw at least *some* of them in to using online services.

Appendix 1 – Technical details

Assembling the sampling frame

The Scottish Government wanted to be able to analyse the survey results geographically, and also to structure the sample to limit the number of agents included in the survey and to ensure a robust number of interviews with crofters. To achieve this sample structure, a number of information sources needed to be combined and any ineligible contacts, overlap and duplication removed.

We were provided with customer files to allow our samples to be drawn. These were:

- A file of all Agents, which was filtered to leave only those with a current mandate. This allowed us to obtain valid records for agents active in 2012.
- A file of 'SAF 2012 customers'. This had to be cross-referenced with 'SAF 12 application submitted by agent' using BRN number and looking at the 'submitted by agent' column. Customers who had submitted an application through an agent were excluded from the sample.

Although the intention was to stratify the sample by region, this flag was missing from the 'SAF 2012 customers' spreadsheet but was added by matching in the area office from other spreadsheets and then aggregating area offices to regions.

Survey quotas

The achieved sample of 500 interviews for the telephone survey was to be structured along the following lines:

- A broadly even spread of interviews across the 8 regions. The area office to region breakdown is as follows:

Region	Area office
Northern & Northern Isles	Golspie Thurso Kirkwall Lerwick
Highland	Inverness Portree
Argyll & Western Isles	Benbecula Stornoway Oban
Grampian	Elgin Inverurie
Perth (Central)	Perth
South Western	Ayr Hamilton
Galashiels (South Eastern)	Galashiels
Dumfries (Southern)	Dumfries

- and the following breakdowns by customer type:
    - 10% (50 interviews) agents
    - 15-20% (75-100 interviews) with crofters, although since crofters are not specifically identified on the RPID databases, farm size was used as a proxy. Crofters were targeted by setting a quota on farmers with holdings of less than 10 hectares. Not all farms under 10 hectares would be crofters but farm size was the best measure available for sampling. The survey questionnaire verified whether businesses in this group were crofts or not. To obtain the count of holdings under 1-hectares, the following fields were combined:

      scot_lfa_hectarage   scot_nlfa_hectarage   other_lfa_hectarage   other_nlfa_hectarage

    - 10-15% Rural Priorities applicants (50-75 interviews). The purpose of this quota was to try to capture environmental and forestry businesses in the survey. Farmers can also apply for this grant, but as with crofters, this was the best measure available for these businesses at the sampling stage.
    - 60% of customers (300 interviews) who do not fall into one of the previous categories.

The leeway in some of the sample quotas reflected the use of proxies in defining the categories of interest.

Issued sample
In quota surveys, the main source of potential savings accrue from the fact that interviewers do not make repeated attempts to contact and interview a relatively small number of selected respondents. Instead, working from a large pool of potential respondents, interviewers contact and attempt to interview respondents according to quotas that reflect the structure of the population or, as in this case, the desired structure of the final sample.

Having structured the SG databases into the quota groups identified above, 6,478 contacts were selected and provided to the telephone centre for interviewing. This gave an average of 12 leads for each achieved interview required.

Survey fieldwork was carried out over the period from 23 July to 13 August and the target numbers of interviews, both overall and within quota groups, was achieved.

Respondent selection
The Government's files of agents and customers contain a named contact and these people were the only eligible respondent for each business.

Questionnaire and interview length
The survey questionnaire was designed by research staff at Ipsos MORI in consultation with research and policy staff at the Scottish Government to ensure that the survey met the Government's information requirements. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached as Appendix 2.

The survey had been budgeted on the basis of a 15-minute interview and the final average interview length was 15 minutes and 1 second.

Online survey
The Scottish Government was keen to test the potential to conduct the survey online, reflecting a general move towards conducting business online and because an online survey offers the potential to reduce the cost of the survey in future waves.

Ideally, the online survey would have been conducted as part of a true experiment with contacts randomly assigned between telephone and online sample groups. However, there was an over-riding need to ensure that the main survey – the telephone survey – was conducted in a way that would provide reliable results for the Government, so this was given priority. This meant that when the telephone sample was being selected, no consideration was given to whether a contact had a valid email address and could have been used for the online test. In fact, 2,458 telephone contacts also had an email address. Only a sample that was not selected for the telephone survey but which had a valid email address, were used for the online test.

The survey questionnaire developed for the online test was re-scripted for the online test. Apart from minor modifications required for the online delivery of the questionnaire, the two surveys were identical except that the online survey collected some additional information to capture details of the upload and download speeds achieved by each respondent. The online script instructions are shown in blue text in Appendix 2.

A total of 3,714 leads were issued, with the expectation that we might achieve around 300 completed surveys. No geographic or customer type controls were set for the online survey. In essence, each person was invited to participate and the resulting sample would be an important determinant of the ability of this type of survey to generate a broadly representative sample.

Each contact was emailed a link to the online survey. The link was unique to that person.

Survey fieldwork and response rates
The online survey took place alongside the telephone survey with contacts sent one reminder, a week before the survey was scheduled to close. At the end of the fieldwork period a total of 520 questionnaires had been completed giving an unadjusted response rate of 14%.

Profile of telephone and online respondents
To assess the extent to which the online survey provided a valid alternative to the telephone survey it is necessary to compare the unweighted profile of online respondents with the weighted profile of telephone respondents, bearing in mind that the telephone sample was designed to boost certain customer groups. This disproportionate sampling needs to be corrected back to the population profile before comparing with the online sample where no quota controls were set. This means that the weighted telephone sample should be the same as the population profile on quota variables.

In terms of key demographic information we found that the two samples were broadly similar, with some over- and under-representation. The extent of weighting implied by this is well within the normal range, with the largest weights (correcting under-representation) of 1.75 in the Southern region and the smallest (correcting over-representation) of 0.79 in the South Eastern region.

Region	**Population**	**Online (unweighted)**
Northern & Northern Isles	15	14
Highland	11	9
Grampian	13	14
Argyll & Western Isles	14	13
Central	21	26
South Western	9	6
South Eastern	11	14
Southern	7	4

Most of the differences in regional profile would not be statistically significant, with the exception of the Central and South Western areas, which are more likely to have good internet access. Having said that, the areas most likely to have poor internet access – Northern and Northern Isles, Highland, and Argyll and the Western Isles – are not significantly under-represented.

Business type	**Telephone**	**Online**
Croft	26	22
Farm*	61	50
Agent	6	9
Forestry or horticultural business	1	3
Estate	3	7
Environmental Group	1	1
Community Group	0	*
Something else*	2	7

Farms make up a larger proportion of telephone sample (after weighting) than do online respondents (before weighting) but broadly the two profiles are consistent.

In terms of non-quota variables, where we do not have population statistics for comparison, the two modes, there are some complementary differences between the modes. Online respondents are, for example, more likely to have sought information on rural grants and support services in the past 12 months – 62% compared with 46% of telephone respondents. But they are just as likely to have submitted a Single Application Form (96% and 95% respectively), although online respondents are much more likely to have submitted their form online (72%) than are telephone respondents (44%).

Within their most recent SAF, the two respondent groups applied for a broadly similar mix of schemes, although applications for Land Managers' Options and Rural Priorities were higher among online respondents than telephone respondents.

Schemes applied for	Telephone	Online
Single farm payment	88	83
Land managers' options*	48	56
Less-favoured area support	61	57
Rural development contracts – rural priorities*	16	24
None of these	2	2

Both groups were equally likely to apply for rural schemes not covered by SAF, with 35% of telephone respondents and 39% of online respondents making an application.

Importantly, the respondents' role in the business was very similar across the two groups. This is important since the online option gives a little less control over who completes the survey. Indeed, if anything the online survey seems more likely to be completed by owners / tenants whereas the telephone survey has a higher proportion of respondents who are a relative of the owner/tenant, although the difference is modest.

Respondent type	Telephone	Online
Owner	45	49
Tenant	21	20
Business partner	20	23
Manager	3	5
Relative of owner / tenant	7	2
Other employee	1	0
Something else	1	1

By definition, online respondents are all internet users, with 94% using the internet for both work and personal use, compared with only 68% of telephone respondents. Over a fifth (21%) of telephone respondents said they never use the internet.

However, this does not have such significant consequences for the age and sex profiles of respondents.

Age group	Telephone	Online
16-40 years	10	9
41-64 years	60	69
65 years and over	29	21
Refused	*	1
Male	79	75
Female	21	25

There are undoubted differences in how respondents go about obtaining information, with the internet a much more prominent feature of online respondents' routes for sourcing information than it is for telephone respondents. Telephone respondents are also more likely to visit offices in person than are online respondents (37% and 25% respectively).

Should the two samples be treated as one?
The only circumstance in which the two samples should not be combined is if it is concluded that one is acceptable as a representative subset of the population and the other differs so substantially that it must be considered fundamentally biased. The other circumstances all argue in favour of combining the samples. These would be that both can be considered representative or that both might be biased but can be considered broadly representative with appropriate weighting.

Our opinion, taking account of the similarities and differences between the samples, is that where they differ, the differences are consistent with the survey methods and are more likely to be complementary. For instance, with a sampling ratio of 12:1, the telephone survey has the potential to suffer from availability bias. This means that potential respondents who are not available – out working – when the interviewer calls are more likely to be passed over and interviews obtained with respondents at home or in the office when the interviewer calls. Online survey helps to counter this by always being 'available' when the respondent is available.

Given the similarities and differences we considered neither survey to be fundamentally biased and judged that combined, and weighted to reflect the population characteristics available to us, they provided a better indication of customers' views than either would on its own.

Appendix 2 – Survey questionnaire

RPID CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

[CATI]
Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is …… from Ipsos MORI, the research organisation.

We are carrying out a survey for the Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID) – that is the team that handles applications for rural grants such as the Single Farm Payment. The survey focuses on people's experiences of accessing information and submitting applications for grants. The findings will be used by the Government to improve these areas in future.

As someone who has submitted a Single Farm Application (SAF) in the past, your views are important and we would appreciate it if you could spare 15 minutes to take part in the survey.

Q.
Would you be willing to take part?
1. Yes, now
2. Yes but inconvenient now
3. No

[ONLINE]

Thank you for logging on to this survey about information and services provided by RPID and its partners.

The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. You can leave the questionnaire at any time and return to it later by clicking on the link in the e-mail sent to you. Please complete the survey by 13th August.

All the information you provide will be kept in the strictest confidence, and used for research purposes only. It will not be possible to identify any particular individual in the results.

DEMOGRAPHICS

DEM1A
[ALLOCATE REGION FROM SAMPLE
SINGLE CODE]
1. Northern and Northern Isles
2. Highland
3. Grampian
4. Argyll & the Western Isles
5. Central
6. South Western

7. South Eastern
8. Southern
DEM1B
[ASK IF REGION MISSING FROM SAMPLE]
[CATI] Firstly, can I just check where your nearest local RPID area office is? PROMPT IF NECESSARY SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Firstly, can we just check where your nearest local RPID area office is? Please select one answer only.
1. Ayr
2. Benbecula
3. Dumfries
4. Elgin
5. Galashiels
6. Golspie
7. Hamilton
8. Inverness
9. Inverurie
10. Kirkwall
11. Lerwick
12. Oban
13. Perth
14. Portree
15. Stornoway
17. Thurso
18. Don't know

[DEM1B CODES INTO REGION QUOTA:
NORTHERN AND NOTHERN ISLES = CODES 6, 10, 11 OR 17
HIGHLAND = CODES 8 OR 14
GRAMPIAN = CODES 4 OR 9
ARGYLL & WESTERN ISLES = CODES 2, 12 OR 15
CENTRAL = CODE 13
SOUTH WESTERN = CODES 1 OR 7
SOUTH EASTERN = CODE 5
SOUTHERN = CODE 3]

DEM2
[CATI] In the last 12 months, have you obtained any information on rural grants or support services from any source? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] In the last 12 months, have you obtained any information on rural grants or support services from any source? Please select one answer only.
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

DEM3
[CATI] Have you submitted a Single Application Form (SAF) in the last 12 months? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Have you submitted a Single Application Form (SAF) in the last 12 months? Please select one answer only

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t know

DEM4
[ASK IF QDEM3=1/ELSE SKIP TO QDEM6]
[CATI] In your most recent SAF, did you apply to any of the following…? MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] In your most recent SAF, did you apply to any of the following schemes? Please select all that apply.
1. Single Farm Payment Scheme (SFPS)
2. Land Managers Options (LMO)
3. Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS)
4. Rural Development Contracts - Rural Priorities (RDC-RP)
5. None of these
6. Don’t know

DEM5
[ASK IF QDEM3=1/ELSE SKIP TO QDEM6]
[CATI] And for your most recent SAF, did you submit an online application or a paper application? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] And for your most recent SAF, did you submit an online application or a paper application? Please select one answer only.
1. Online application
2. Paper application
3. Don’t know

DEM6
[CATI] In the last 12 months, have you made an application to any other rural scheme that is not covered by SAF? This can include things such as the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grant Scheme, Scottish Beef Scheme or LEADER. SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] In the last 12 months, have you made an application to any other rural scheme that is not covered by SAF? This can include things such as the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grant Scheme, Scottish Beef Scheme or LEADER. Please select one answer only.
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t know

[IF DEM2=2 OR DK AND DEM3 =2 OR DK AND DEM6=2 OR DK THEN DIRECT TO SCREEN SHOWING: In that case, you are not eligible to take part in the survey. Thanks for your time.
END INTERVIEW
ELSE CONTINUE]

DEM7
[ASK IF QDEM6=1/ELSE SKIP TO QDEM8]
[CATI] How many applications to other schemes have you made in the last 12 months? Please do not count your SAF application in this number. WRITE IN

[ONLINE] How many applications to other schemes have you made in the last 12 months? Please do not count your SAF application in this number. Please write in number below.
X. Don't know
DEM8
[CATI] Moving on slightly, can I just check whether [INSERT ORGANISATION NAME FROM SAMPLE] is a…? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Moving on slightly, which of the following best describes [INSERT ORGANISATION NAME FROM SAMPLE]? Please select one answer only.
1. Croft
2. Farm
3. An agent
4. Forestry or horticultural business
5. Estate
6. Environmental group
7. Community group
8. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

DEM9
[ASK IF QDEM8=1, 2 OR 4/ELSE SKIP TO QDEM11]
[CATI] And which of the following best describes what you produce? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] And which of the following best describes what you produce? Please select one answer only.
1. Beef
2. Sheep
3. Cereals (wheat, barley, oats and oilseed rape)
4. General cropping (silage, hay, grass, forage crops, potatoes and root vegetables)
5. Horticulture (fruit and vegetables for human consumption)
6. Dairy
7. Pigs
8. Poultry
9. Mixed – by that we mean where no single product accounts for two-thirds of the farm value
10. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

DEM10
[ASK IF QDEM8=1, 2 OR 4/ELSE SKIP TO QDEM11]
[CATI] And which of the following best describes your main role or job title in [INSERT OGANISATION NAME FROM SAMPLE]? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] And which of the following best describes your main role or job title in [INSERT OGANISATION NAME FROM SAMPLE]? Please select one answer only.
1. Owner
2. Tenant
3. Business Partner
4. Manager
5. Relative to farm owner/tenant
6. Other employee
7. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

DEM11
[CATI] INTERVIEWER CODE SEX, DO NOT ASK. SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Please select the option that applies to you.
1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to say

DEM12
[CATI] Which of the following age groups applies to you? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Which of the following age groups applies to you? Please select one answer only.
1. 16-24
2. 25-40
3. 41-64
4.65 and over
5. Prefer not to say

DEM13
[CATI] Can I just check whether you currently use the internet at all these days, either for work or for your own personal use? PROBE FULLY AND CODE ACCORDINGLY
[ONLINE] Do you currently use the internet for work purposes only, for your own personal use only or for both of these reasons? Please select one answer only.
1. No, never use the internet [DO NOT SHOW THIS OPTION IN ONLINE SCRIPT]
2. Work only
3. Personal use only
4. Both work and personal use
5. Don’t know

CONTACT WITH RPID OR PARTNER INTERFACES

CON1
[CATI] Moving on slightly, from which sources would you say you receive most of your information about rural or agricultural issues? DO NOT PROMPT MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS WRITE-IN ANSWER] Moving on slightly, from which sources would you say you receive most of your information about rural or agricultural issues? Please write in your answer below.
Government & partner organisations
1. RPID/Scottish Government
2. Forestry Commission Scotland
4. Scottish Natural Heritage
5. Scottish National Rural Network
Media
6. Television
7. Radio
8. Press & Journal
9. Scottish Farmer
10. Farmer Weekly

Other sources
11. Scottish Agricultural College (SAC/SRUC)
12. Farm agent or professional advisor
13. National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS)/Scottish Beef and Cattle Association (SBA)/CONFOR(forestry group)/other trade association
14. Other farmers/businesses or organisations like mine (e.g. estate, community group)
15. Other PLEASE WRITE IN
16. Do not get this information
17. Don't know

[SHOW ON SEPARATE SCREEN]
The next few questions focus specifically on information and support services available from RPID and its delivery partners. Just to remind you, RPID is the division within the Government that handle rural grant applications. Its partners include organisations such as the Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.

CON2
[CATI] In the last 12 months, have you obtained any of the following from RPID or its partners…? READ OUT MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] In the last 12 months, have you obtained any of the following from RPID or its partners? Please select all that apply.
1. News about rural or agricultural issues
2. Information on rural scheme eligibility and conditions
3. Guidance on how to complete an application
4. Guidance on land mapping
5. Guidance relating to your application or payment specifically
6. Information on how to update your contact details held by RPID or its partners
7. Information on how to appeal a penalty
8. Information on how to make a complaint about the service you have received from RPID or its partners
9. Some other type of information not covered previously PLEASE SPECIFY
10. Have not obtained any information from RPID or its partners.

CON3
[ASK IF CON2=ANY COMBINATION 1-9/ELSE SKIP TO CON6]
[CATI] Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you obtained this information from… READ OUT MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you obtained this information from… Please select all that apply.
1. the Scottish Government website
2. your local RPID office
3. RPID head office in Edinburgh
4. postal correspondence from RPID
5. the Forestry Commission Scotland website or office
6. the Scottish Natural Heritage website or office
7. an agricultural show or fair, for example the Royal Highland show
8. Rural issues newsletter
9. Scottish National Rural Network website

10. On-site visits by staff
11. Some other way not covered previously WRITE IN

CON4
[ASK IF CON3=MULTICODE/ELSE SKIP TO CON5
ONLY SHOW ITEMS CODED AT CON3]
[CATI] And of the methods you just mentioned, from which one would you say you have obtained most of your information from RPID or its partners? PROMPT IF NECESSARY SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] And of the methods you just selected, from which one would you say you have obtained most of your information from RPID or its partners? Please select one answer only.
1. the Scottish Government website
2. your local RPID office
3. RPID head office in Edinburgh
4. postal correspondence from RPID
5. the Forestry Commission Scotland website or office
6. the Scottish Natural Heritage website or office
7. an agricultural show or fair, for example the Royal Highland show
8. Rural issues newsletter
9. Scottish National Rural Network website
10. On-site visits by staff
11. WRITE IN ANSWER FROM CON3

CON5
[ASK IF CON3 = SINGLE CODE 2 OR 3 OR IF CON4=2 OR 3/ELSE SKIP TO CON6]
[CATI] And have you obtain information from RPID offices mainly by…? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] And have you obtain information from RPID offices mainly by…? Please select one answer only.
1. Telephone
2. Going into the office in person
3. Email
4. Postal correspondence
5. Don’t know

CON6
[CATI] In future, which, if any, of the following methods would you prefer to obtain information from RPID or its partners? READ OUT MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] In future, which, if any, of the following methods would you prefer to obtain information from RPID or its partners? Please select all that apply.
1. the Scottish Government website
2. emails or texts from RPID
3. contacting your local RPID office
4. postal correspondence from RPID
5. the Forestry Commission Scotland website or office
6. the Scottish Natural Heritage website or office
7. an agricultural show or fair, for example the Royal Highland show
8. Rural issues newsletter

9. Scottish National Rural Network website
10. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

SERVICE STANDARDS

SER1
[CATI] Thinking about your experiences in the last 12 months, overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with information and services on rural grants and schemes provided by RPID and its partners? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Thinking about your experiences in the last 12 months, overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with information and services on rural grants and schemes provided by RPID and its partners? Please select one answer only.
1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know

SER2
[ASK IF SER1=4 OR 5/ELSE SKIP TO SER3]
[CATI] What are your main reasons for saying that you are dissatisfied with information and services provided by RPID or its partners? DO NOT PROMPT PROBE FULLY MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS WRITE-IN ANSWER] What are your main reasons for saying that you are dissatisfied with information and services provided by RPID or its partners? Please write in your answer below.
Issues with applications & process
1. Application process/forms too long/complicated/too much paperwork
2. Rules keep changing/complex
3. Too many schemes
Issues with payments
4. Payments take too long to arrive
5. Payments do not arrive on time
6. Payment amounts are wrong
Issues with information/guidance/correspondence/feedback
7. Information/guidance provided not clear and accessible
8. Information not easy to find
9. Not enough information available
10. Too much jargon
11. Correspondence/letters received from RPID difficult to understand/not clear
12. Lack of feedback on inspections
Issues with staff
13. Staff not knowledgeable enough
14. Staff not helpful/do not resolve my problem effectively
15. Staff take a long time to respond to queries
16. Difficult to get hold of the right person to answer my query
17. Mistakes made by staff
18. No one takes responsibility/passing the buck
Other issues

19. Something else WRITE IN
20. Don’t know

SER3
[RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Please select one answer only for each row.
[ROW ITEMS]
a. RPID and its partners provide information and services designed with the customer in mind
b. I feel well-informed about the different aspects of rural schemes I’ve applied for with RPID and its partners
c. Staff from RPID and its partners are helpful towards customers
d. RPID and its partners can be trusted in what they say
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1. Strongly agree
2. Tend to agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Tend to disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don’t know
7. No experience of this

SER4
[RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] And, thinking about your experiences in the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of RPID and its partners on each of the following factors? REAOUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] And, thinking about your experiences in the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of RPID and its partners on each of the following factors? Please select one answer only for each row.
a. Information about schemes is easy to find
b. Written information about schemes is clear
c. You are promptly directed to staff that can help you
d. Staff are knowledgeable about schemes
e. Your enquiries are quickly resolved by staff
f. Information that you receive from different staff is consistent
g. Applications forms are easy to complete
h. There is enough guidance available on how to complete applications
i. Guidance on how to complete applications is clear
j. Payments arrive on time
k. Written correspondence from RPID or its partners is clear
l. Inspection staff act professionally
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know
7. No experience of this

SER5
[ASK IF AT LEAST THREE ITEMS AT SER4=4 OR 5/ELSE SKIP TO BAR1
ONLY SHOW ITEMS THAT AT SER5=4 OR 5]
[CATI] You mentioned that you were dissatisfied with RPID and its partners' performance on INTERVIEWER READ OUT ITEMS SHOWN BELOW
Of these factors, which one or two would you most like to see RPID and its partners improve on? CODE UP TO 2
[ONLINE] You mentioned that you were dissatisfied with RPID and its partners' performance on the factors shown below. Of these, which one or two would you most like to see RPID and its partners improve on? Please select up to 2 answers.
1. Information about schemes is easy to find
2. Written information about schemes is clear
3. You are promptly directed to staff that can help you
4. Staff are knowledgeable about schemes
5. Your enquiries are quickly resolved by staff
6. Information that you receive from different staff is consistent
7. Applications forms are easy to complete
8. There is enough guidance available on how to complete applications
9. Guidance on how to complete applications is clear
10. Payments arrive on time
11. Written correspondence from RPID or its partners is clear
12. Inspection staff act professionally

BARRIERS TO USING ONLINE RPID OR PARTNER OFFERING

BAR1A
[ASK IF DEM5=2/ELSE SKIP TO BAR2]
[CATI] You mentioned earlier that you have not submitted your SAF online. What are your main reasons for not doing this? DO NOT PROMPT PROBE FULLY MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS WRITE-IN ANSWER] You mentioned earlier that you have not submitted your SAF online. What are your main reasons for not doing this? Please write in your answer below.
1. My internet connection is too slow
2. No access to the internet
3. Do not like using the internet or computers
4. Do not use the internet for work
5. Habit/used to/prefer doing things in person/telephone/paper
6. RPID staff are very helpful/have good relationship with them
7. Not aware that I could do these things online
8. Find it difficult to use website/online application system
9. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY
Don't know

BAR2
[ASK IF DEM5=2 AND DEM13=2-4/ELSE SKIP TO RPO1
RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] I'm now going to read out some things that might help people with starting to submit their SAF online. I'd like you to tell me how useful, if at all, you would personally find each. READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] Below are some things that might help people with starting to submit their SAF online. Please indicate how useful, if at all, you would personally find each. Please select one answer only for each row.
[ROW ITEMS]
a. Sessions at your local RPID office with staff showing you how to use the online application system
b. Providing better guidance online on how to use the online application system
c. The option to access the online application system at your local RPID office
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1. Very useful
2. Fairly useful
4. Not very useful
5. Not at all useful
6. Don't know

ONLINE SERVICES

RPO1
[ASK IF DEM5=1/ELSE SKIP TO RPO2
RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] You mentioned earlier that you submitted your most recent SAF online. Thinking about your experience of using the Rural Payments Online system, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] You mentioned earlier that you submitted your most recent SAF online. Thinking about your experience of using the Rural Payments Online system, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Please select one answer only for each row.
[ROW ITEMS]
a. Rural Payments Online looks and feels well designed
b. I have difficulties finding my way around Rural Payments Online
c. Information provided on Rural Payments Online is accurate
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1. Strongly agree
2. Tend to agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Tend to disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know

RPO2
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT

RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] I'm now going to read out some potential new services that could be offered online by RPID and its partners. I'd like you to tell me how useful, if at all, you would personally find each. READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] Below are some potential new services that could be offered online by RPID and its partners. Please indicate how useful, if at all, you would personally find each. Please select one answer only for each row.
[ROW ITEMS]
a. The ability to update agent mandate details
b. The ability to update your contact details held by RPID and its partners
c. The ability to change your bank details online
d. The ability to store and access written correspondence received from RPID and its partners online
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1.Very useful
2. Fairly useful
4. Not very useful
5. Not at all useful
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable to me

LAND MAPPING

LAN1
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT
RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] We are also interested in your views about some online mapping tools that could be provided in future. How useful, if at all, would you personally find… READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] We are also interested in your views about some online mapping tools that could be provided in future. How useful, if at all, would you personally find each of the following functionalities? Please select one answer only for each row.
[COLUMN ITEMS]
a. The ability to review maps online
b. The ability to propose changes to boundaries and features online
c. The ability to store other land data online – for example soil maps or yield maps
[ROW ITEMS]
1. Very useful
2. Fairly useful
3. Not very useful
4. Not at all useful
5. Don't know
6. Not applicable to me.

ONLINE HABITS

[SHOW ON SEPARATE SCREEN]
To help us improve online information and services on rural grants and subsidies, the next few questions are about how you use the internet in general.

ONL1
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT]
[CATI] Which of the following types of internet connections do you have access to? READ OUT MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] Which of the following types of internet connections do you have access to? Please select all that apply.
1. Broadband connection
2. Dial-up connection
3. 3G access using mobile phone networks
4. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

ONL2A
[ASK IF DEM13=2 OR 4/ELSE SKIP TO ONL2B]
[CATI] What devices do you mainly use to access the internet for work purposes? MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] What devices do you mainly use to access the internet for work purposes? Please select all that apply.
1. Desktop computer/PC
2. Laptop
3. Smartphone
4. Tablet
5. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

ONL2B
[ASK IF DEM13=3/ELSE SKIP TO ONL3]
[CATI] What devices do you mainly use to access the internet? MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] What devices do you mainly use to access the internet? Please select all that apply.
1. Desktop computer/PC
2. Laptop
3. Smartphone
4. Tablet
5. Something else PLEASE SPECIFY

ONL3
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT]
[CATI] Which browser do you mainly use to access internet websites? PROMPT IF NECESSARY MULTICODE OK
[ONLINE] Which browser do you mainly use to access internet websites? Please select all that apply.
1. Internet Explorer
2. Mozilla Firefox

3. Google Chrome
4. Safari
5. Other type of browser PLEASE SPECIFY
6. Don't know

ONL4
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT]
[CATI] How often do you use the internet either for work or for personal use? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] How often do you use the internet either for work or for personal use? Please select one answer only.
1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Less than monthly

ONL5
[ASK IF ASK IF DEM13=2-4/ ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR FOLLOWUP FOR ONLINE SCRIPT
RANDOMISE ORDER OF ROW ITEMS]
[CATI SCRIPT TO SHOW EACH ROW ITEM ONE AT A TIME] Thinking about the last 12 months, how often, if at all, have you used the internet for the following purposes? READ OUT SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE SCRIPT SHOW AS GRID QUESTION] Thinking about the last 12 months, how often, if at all, have you used the internet for the following purposes? Please select one answer only for each row.
[ROW ITEMS]
a. To look for information on comparing products or suppliers
b. To look for online information provided by government, council or NHS
c. To use an online service provided by government, council or NHS – for example to submit VAT or tax returns to HMRC or vehicle licensing
d. To buy things online
e. To do your banking online
f. To go on social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter
[COLUMN ITEMS]
1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Less than monthly
5. Never

ONL6
[ASK IF ONL5 ITEM F=1-4/ELSE SKIP TO VAL1 FOR CATI SCRIPT OR SKIP TO ONL7 FOR ONLINE SCRIPT]
[CATI] RPID and its partners are considering of providing information and news via social media such Facebook and Twitter in future. How useful, if at all, would you find this? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] RPID and its partners are considering of providing information and news via social media such Facebook and Twitter in future. How useful, if at all, would you find this? Please select one answer only.
1. Very useful
2. Fairly useful
3. Not very useful
4. Not at all useful
5. Don't know

ONL7
[ONLY ADD TO ONLINE SCRIPT
WRITE IN]
To help us obtain evidence on internet speed levels in rural Scotland, it would be helpful if you could click on the link below to do a test of your internet connection speed.

Please enter the results below.

Download speed		mb/s	kb/s
Upload speed		mb/s	kb/s
Prefer not to do speed test			

[ONLY SHOW FOLLOWING MESSAGE FOR CATI SCRIPT]
Thank you very much for taking part in the survey. We may re-contact you for quality control purposes in the next few weeks.

FOLLOWUP
Finally, because your views are important, the Scottish Government may want to carry out follow-up research among some of its RPID customers. The follow up research may be carried out by telephone, email, postal questionnaire or focus groups and will explore issues relating to how information and services provided by RPID can be improved.

[CATI] Would you be willing to be re-contacted sometime in the next 18 to 24 months for this type of follow-up research? SINGLE CODE
[ONLINE] Would you be willing to be re-contacted sometime in the next 18 to 24 months for this type of follow-up research? Please select one answer only.
1. Consent given
2. Consent refused

FOLLOWUP2
[CATI] Can I just take the telephone number you would prefer to be reached on in future regarding follow-up research? WRITE IN
[CATI DEM13=2-4] And could I take your email address that you would prefer to be reached on in future regarding follow-up research? WRITE IN
[ONLINE] Please provide your preferred telephone contact number and email addresses for the Scottish Government to reach you on regarding follow-up research in future.
Preferred telephone contact number:
Preferred emailed address:

Once again, thanks very much for giving up your time to take part in the survey; your help is much appreciated.

*****************END OF SURVEY SCRIPT***********************

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