

CISAS ANNUAL REPORT 2008



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Welcome and operational overview

I am very pleased to report that 2008 was a year of unprecedented growth in the use of CISAS with valid applications up 62% when compared to 2007.

Following the organisational changes made in 2007 with the creation of IDRS Ltd (IDRS) and the subsequent move into modern offices on the City Road in London. CISAS was able to continue to grow and adapt to the needs of its users, ensuring a consistency in delivery of the service.

I also had the pleasure of being appointed the IDRS Customer Relations Manager in July 2008. This role, which was a new addition to the management team, allows for a greater degree of separation in the business. This separation ensures that the Service Delivery Manager, Yvette Yates, who is responsible for the day to day delivery

of the CISAS service and oversight of case work is kept free of any possible influence from CISAS member companies.

Part of my role is to work with the CISAS members so that any complaint trends and issues are identified and fed back into the organisations, so that they can learn and improve. My own ultimate goal is to ensure that CISAS delivers an improved "Customer Experience" to the member companies and maintains good value for money. Of course, I must also ensure that IDRS remains independent of the organisations to which it provides services. We are all working with integrity and impartiality to resolve disputes in a fair and reasonable manner.

As in previous years we undertook a customer satisfaction survey. This is the third time we have conducted the survey and we improved the questionnaire and survey process in 2007. This year's survey still provides directly comparable data to the 2007 survey and, as ever, the results have been used to identify those areas where extra attention is required by CISAS. The detailed report can be found on pages 10-23.

Last year also saw continued development of all IDRS staff, including those on the CISAS Team, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to provide the very best service to users of our services. One part of this development was Disability Awareness training under the auspices of the Royal National Institute for the Blind. We have also partnered with Language Line, the UK's leading provider of interpretation and translation services for documents and telephone services.

By developing our staff and working with organisations such as Language Line we can ensure that the CISAS service remains easily accessible to as many potential users as possible.



Report from the Senior Adjudicator – Mair Coombes-Davies

The UK is now in the middle of a deep recession. What affect this will have on the telecommunications industry and in particular how it will impact consumer / provider relationships we will have to wait and see. Certainly as money becomes tighter the likelihood of disputes may increase. Therefore, it is important that providers ensure that procedures in respect of debt recovery are seen to be reasonable and implemented fairly, and that consumers are made fully aware of the liabilities and responsibilities they are taking on when taking out contracts for telecommunication services.

During 2008 the good news was that despite an overall increase in claims received from consumers by CISAS (which was in step with the growth in demand for CISAS) many of the past areas of concern were being reduced.

In previous reports there was often a pattern to complaints, such as questionable cash-back deals where an offer was made that literally proved to be too good to be true and many consumers were left with expensive contracts they did not want. Complaints on Trojan viruses also all but disappeared.

It is also to be welcomed that the number of cases where no defence was filed by the provider reduced. That tends to indicate that providers were taking all complaints seriously.

However, what did not disappear were complaints which had, at their core, poor and misleading responses emanating from customer contact centres. Such problems may not be unique to the telecommunications market. None the less they cause considerable frustration and anger to consumers who feel they are “fobbed off”, who have been made promises “that are never kept”, who are “not taken seriously”, who have been told things which are never confirmed in writing and so on.

It is appreciated that for modern businesses to be efficient and competitive old fashioned letters and documentation that address the specific concerns and complaints (rather than standard bland responses generated by computer) are time consuming and expensive. However such letters can show respect for the customer, show that their complaints are taken seriously and can often have the benefit of resolving problems earlier in the process.

On the customer side, all too many applicants to CISAS make financial claims which are not supported or justified. Customers might benefit more by making more moderate claims that can be justified than inflated claims which cannot.

One issue that has been cropping up recently are problems associated with moving house. Before moving the customers had enjoyed trouble free broadband service only to find that at their new address the service was anything but trouble free. A more understanding approach by providers to the difficulties experienced by customers in those circumstances would be welcome; particularly where providers clearly cannot supply the same level of broadband service and speed but expect to charge the same. This appears to the consumer unfair.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the CISAS case handling team for the considerable support they provide to the independent Panel of Adjudicators in carrying out their task.



Report from the Independent Reviewer – Ros Gardner

I was delighted to be appointed as the first Independent Complaint Reviewer for IDRS Ltd in January 2008 (IDRS provides the CISAS service).

This appointment demonstrates the commitment of the Chair and Managing Director and their team to transparency, efficiency and support for the complainant. The concept of a review by someone who is external to the operational structure is encouraged by all best practice and provides psychological reassurance to the complainant who remains dissatisfied after consideration by the senior personnel within the organisation.

The external review allows a more objective view of how the complaint has been handled and helps identify areas where service delivery could be improved. This allows the customer who remains dissatisfied with IDRS to have their complaint looked at again. It allows some elements of their complaint against the IDRS office to be upheld; if appropriate.

Each complaint I review also supports IDRS as it provides an external look at service delivery. The Independent Review can fulfil some key functions:

- Provide resolution to the complainant
- Make individual recommendations on the investigation
- Identify and analyse training needs, and develop and deliver appropriate programmes

My remit is limited to a review of any elements of maladministration during the conduct of a complaint investigation. I have no remit to amend, alter or influence the decision taken by any adjudicator or arbitrator.

Areas of maladministration that fall within my remit include:

- Excessive delays
- Poor or misleading advice
- Staff behaviour, including discourtesy
- Failure to follow IDRS own procedures
- Not answering the complaint fully and promptly
- Failure to apologise for mistakes

The recommendations that I make to the IDRS office can also help improve service delivery within the operation.

During this year I received one complaint in relation to a CISAS case. I outline a brief résumé of it below:

CISAS Case 1

The complaint related to IDRS's handling of a complaint made after the conclusion of a case. The complaint was:

- An extension of the deadline for the telecommunications provider should not have been given;
- The Adjudicator had used emails sent by the complainant without his approval;
- The comments from the Adjudicator to IDRS regarding the use of emails, was inaccurate.

I upheld the second and third elements of the complaint and made recommendations to IDRS regarding their complaint-handling processes.

I have also conducted a review of complaint handling within IDRS this year and have produced a range of recommendations. I look forward to working with IDRS to implement these and so improve the experience of their stakeholders.

Statistical Review

Statistics provide users and commentators with an interesting and valuable overview on how services perform. At CISAS we keep three main types of statistics:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – KPIs are agreed with Ofcom on an annual basis. They provide the reader with a snapshot of how we perform to factors which Ofcom see as important performance measures. Our KPIs for 2008 are reported on page 7, but we also provide monthly figures to Ofcom, which are published on the CISAS website.
2. Service related – service related statistics which can be found on pages 8 & 9 are the basis of much interest from all parties involved in the service. For example, we report on the amount claimed in compensation, how much is actually awarded, and what the main reasons are for making an application. Our service related statistics are reported below, and many are reported on a monthly basis on the CISAS website.
3. Customer Satisfaction – We undertake an annual customer satisfaction survey and are pleased to include our fourth report on pages 10-23. This report gives us a vital insight in to what enquirers (people who contact us for information but then do not actually make an application to use the service) and users (people who use the service) think of CISAS and the services we provide.

PLEASE NOTE: All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. The rounding process may then result in totals not equalling 100%.

Key Performance Indicators

The following KPIs were agreed with Ofcom in December 2006 and CISAS is required to report on a monthly basis to them. CISAS also reports our annual performance against these KPIs in this report. Our performance during 2008 is detailed below.

KPI One: Percentage of cases concluded within 6 weeks of application from the customer

Achievement: In 2008, 87% of cases were completed ("completed" means issuing a final decision) within six weeks of the application being made by the consumer. Whilst we failed to meet our overall goal for the year (of 88%), we did achieve an improvement of 7% over 2007, where the total was 80%. The number of cases we dealt with during 2008 increased by 62% and that placed significant pressure on the resources needed to accomplish this target. Continuing the performance improvement trend in 2009 would allow us to exceed the target.

CISAS Target for 2009: 88%.

KPI Two: Percentage of case concluded more than 8 weeks after receipt of the application from the customer

Achievement: Only 6% of cases were completed more than 8 weeks after the application was made by the consumer. This means that our target of no more than 10% was beaten by 4% and it also indicates that despite the increase in cases during 2008 when compared to 2007. This figure has remained the same at 6%.

CISAS Target for 2009: 10%, allowing for exceptional circumstances only.

KPI Three: Percentage of calls answered by CISAS staff within 2 minutes

Achievement: Virtually all calls (100%) are answered within 2 minutes by CISAS staff. The 2 minutes includes an allowance for the caller to listen to a pre-recorded information message about CISAS which lasts 1 minute 41 seconds and gives options to the caller on whether to record a message, request information or speak to a CISAS staff member. After the message or on selection by the customer, the average time for the staff to answer any call is 10 seconds.

CISAS Target for 2009: 95% (allows for occasions where staff are not available due to internal training and for peak periods)

KPI Four: Percentage of written correspondence receiving a response within 5 working days

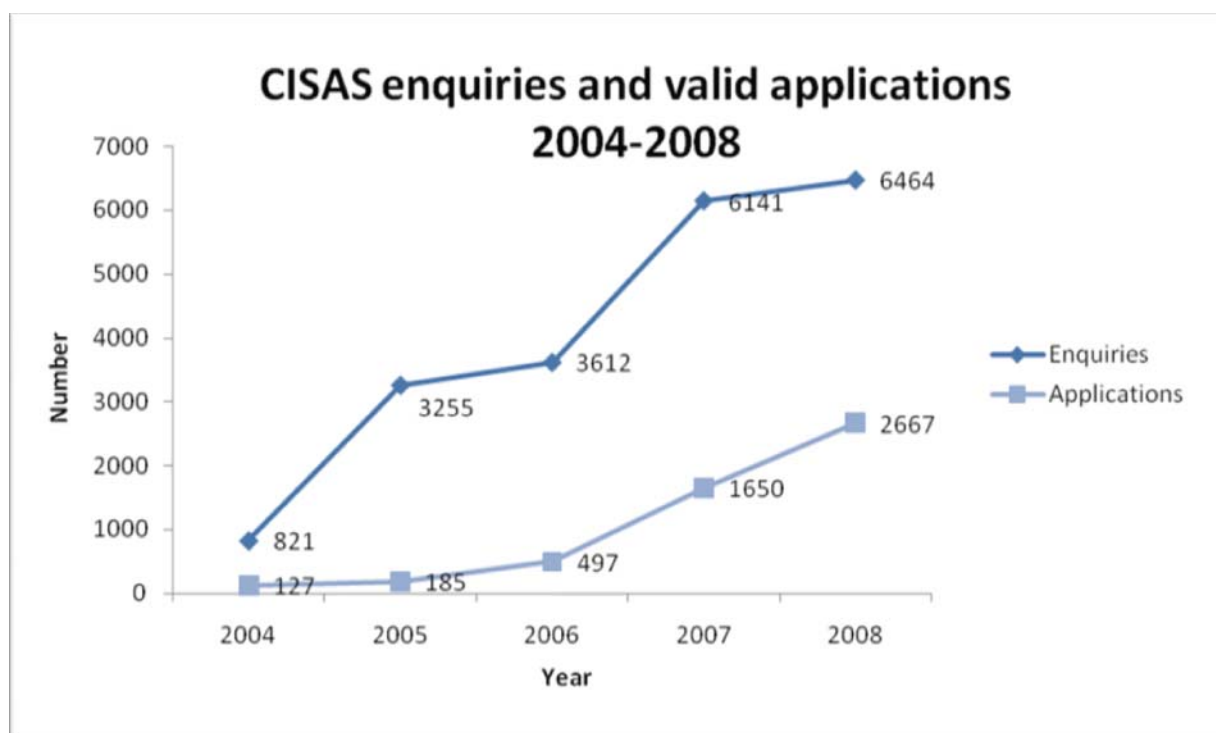
Achievement: For CISAS 94% of written correspondence is turned around within 5 working days. This exceeds our target by 4% and shows only a reduction of 1% since 2007, where the figure was 95%.

CISAS Target for 2009: 90%

KPI Five: Unit cost as an indication of improved efficiency: 100% of total costs divided by the number of valid applications

Achievement: In 2006, our unit cost, based on 100% of total costs attributable to CISAS members, divided by the number of valid applications, was £274.19. In 2007 this figure reduced by £4.50 per case to £269.69. In 2008 our unit cost was further reduced by £35.86 per case to £233.83, reflecting the greater use of the service during the year and the effects of the increased number of cases using the "early settlement procedure".

Service statistics



During the year we handled 6,464 enquiries, an increase of 5% when compared to 2007. Last year we received 2667 valid applications, an increase of 62% on 2007. The graph above shows how enquiries and valid applications to CISAS have grown rapidly over the past five years.

The conversion rate of enquiries to valid applications continued its upward trend during 2008, with a conversion rate of 41% being achieved. This is a year-on-year increase from a low of 5% in 2005, 14% in 2006, and 27% in 2007. This continues to provide real evidence that signposting is improving, with consumers more likely to come to CISAS at the right time than in previous years. However, we are still rejecting applications at an alarming rate, with 1169 rejected in 2008. However, the ratio between valid and rejected applications has improved slightly at 44%. In 2007 CISAS rejected 800 applications, 48%.

The main reason for rejection is common year-on-year.

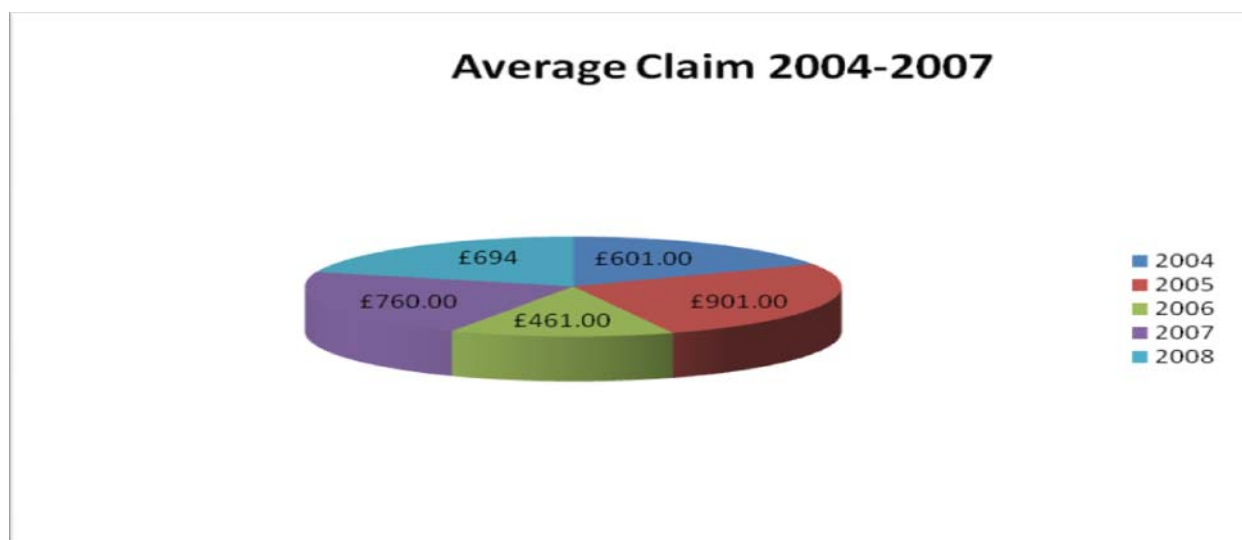
- Consumers apply to CISAS too early and do not give the company a chance to deal with their complaint in line with its published complaints procedures. These procedures can be found within the company's code of practice (the code), which is approved by Ofcom and sets out how they deal with complaints.

Other statistics are shown below. They are taken from valid applications only and do not include data taken from the 1169 applications rejected as being out of scope.

- Of the 2,667 valid applications made during 2008, 82% led either to a decision made in the consumer's favour or a settlement being agreed between the consumer and the company before the adjudicator was appointed. This is the same rate as was experienced during 2007.
- Of the 1044 cases which proceeded to a decision from an adjudicator, 61% were found in favour of the consumer. This is a decrease of 7% on 2007.
- Of the 1044 cases that proceeded to a decision from an adjudicator, the consumer provided us with written acceptance of the decision 63% of the time. This is a decrease of 5% on 2007.
- On average, the consumer took 12 days to confirm whether or not they accepted the decision, 3 days less than in 2007.
- Of the 2,667 valid applications made, 752 (28%) were made online. This is an increase of 564

applications on 2007. This represents an increase of 25% in total compared to 2007.

- No applications were made in Welsh, in Braille or by text phone.
- The most common reasons for complaint against a member, where specified by the consumer, were
 - Charging 25%
 - Billing 26%
 - ISP Service 22%
 - Disconnection / reconnection 2%
 - Loss of service 4%
 - Terms and conditions 8%
 - Customer service 7%
- The following breakdown shows what remedies consumers asked for (the total percentage equals more than 100% because it is possible to seek a mixture of outcomes. Figures are taken from cases where a decision was made by the adjudicator):
 - Compensation plus an apology – 61% (24% in 2007)
 - Compensation plus an explanation – 46% (18% in 2007)
 - Compensation plus other action – 53% (23% in 2007)
 - Compensation only – 13% (35% in 2007)
- On 218 occasions the consumer did not request compensation at all – in 2007 the figure was 328.
- More than £1.6m in compensation was claimed under CISAS during 2008. This figure was more than 50% up on the amount claimed in 2007. The chart below shows the compensation claims for each year from 2004 to 2007.
- The average amount claimed in 2008 was £694 which was a decrease of £66 compared to 2007, when the average claim was £760, although it is still above the lowest average of £461 set in 2006.



- The total amount awarded as compensation by adjudicators in 2008 was £172,733. This is an average award of £270, an increase of £110 on 2007. This demonstrates that, on average, consumers received about 10% of their claim. In 2007 the average figure was 21%.
- The consumer and the company settled the claim by mutual agreement in 1544 cases (52%), prior to the appointment of the adjudicator. This is an increase of 5% on the previous year.
- Only 4% of applications made included a deadlock reference number from the company, a decrease of 2% when compared to 2007, when 6% of applications included a deadlock reference.

2008 Customer Perception Survey

As in previous years we conducted a customer perception survey and commissioned an independent research company to conduct a survey of both enquirers and users of the CISAS service during 2008.

The 2008 survey was conducted in two parts, during August and September 2008 we surveyed those who had either made an enquiry about or had used CISAS during the first half of 2008. Then between January and March 2009, all users and enquirers from the second half of 2008 were invited to complete the survey. A total of 1037 questionnaires were returned from a total of 6231 users and enquirers surveyed; this was an overall response rate of nearly 17%.

During 2008 a new way electronic way of conducting the survey was trialled, with 2070 survey invitations being sent via email. However the return rate for these surveys was considerably less than the survey invitations that were sent via post. Only 12.75% of users sent a survey form by email returned a completed survey and just 3.4% of enquirers. The return rates for those who were sent an invitation using the postal system was 46.7% from users and 11.9% from enquirers, nearly 4 times as many.

Method

The survey was sent to 6231 CISAS customers who had either made contact or had used CISAS during 2008. For clarification, a user is classified as "someone who has made an application to use CISAS and has had their application accepted". An enquirer is "someone who has contacted CISAS either to request an information pack or ask a question, but had not made a valid application to use CISAS at the time the survey was conducted".

If CISAS held a contact email address for a user or enquirer then the survey was sent to them in this way. If no email contact details were held then the survey was sent to them using the postal system.

Sample Profile

The demographic profile of responders to the survey is shown below, comparing the 2007 survey profile with Users and Enquirers from this year's survey.

(NB All figures are quoted as a % and have been rounded to the nearest whole number)

	2007 Survey	2008 Survey
Gender		
Male	58	59
Women	41	41
Age		
Under 35	18	15
36 – 45	22	18
46 – 55	25	23
56 - 65	21	26
Over 65	12	18
Disability		
No Disability	77	85
Impaired Mobility	9	7
Impaired Hearing	3	2
Impaired Sight	2	2
Other Disability	3	4
Tenure		
Owner Occupier	73	79
Private Tenant	11	11
Local Authority Tenant	7	7
Other	6	3
First Language		
English	89	94
Other	12	6
Ethnicity		
White / White British	79	87
Black / Black British	5	4
Asian / Asian British	6	5
Other	5	2

Sources of Advice and Information

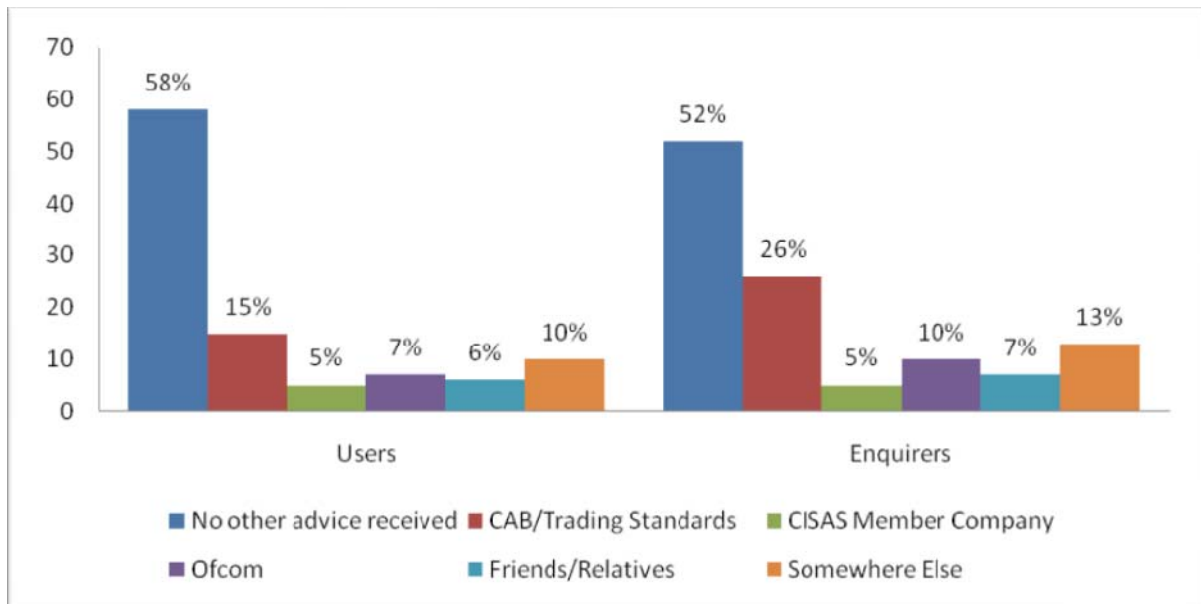
The Citizens Advice Bureaux and Trading Standards continue to be the main sources of advice to consumers before they contact CISAS. In 2008 26% of enquirers first heard about CISAS from one or other of these two bodies, a slight drop from 28% of enquirers in 2007.

A third of consumers were directed to CISAS after contacting the regulator (Ofcom) and this is the same rate as was experienced during 2007.

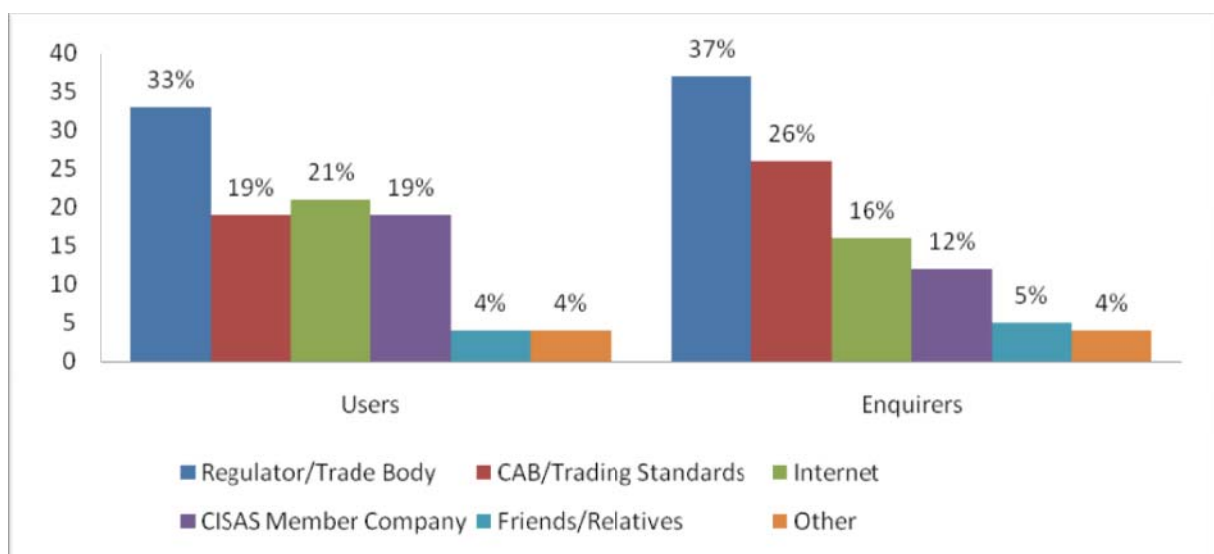
The least likely source of referral was the consumer's own communications provider; only 19% of users and 12% of enquirers were so advised.

Over half of consumers who contacted CISAS took no third party advice before contacting CISAS; demonstrating increased use of the internet and the CISAS website to identify their options and how best to proceed with their complaint. About 1 in 5 users of CISAS stated that they had first found out about CISAS from using the internet and browsing online.

Before contacting CISAS, did you receive advice from anywhere else?



How did you originally hear about CISAS?



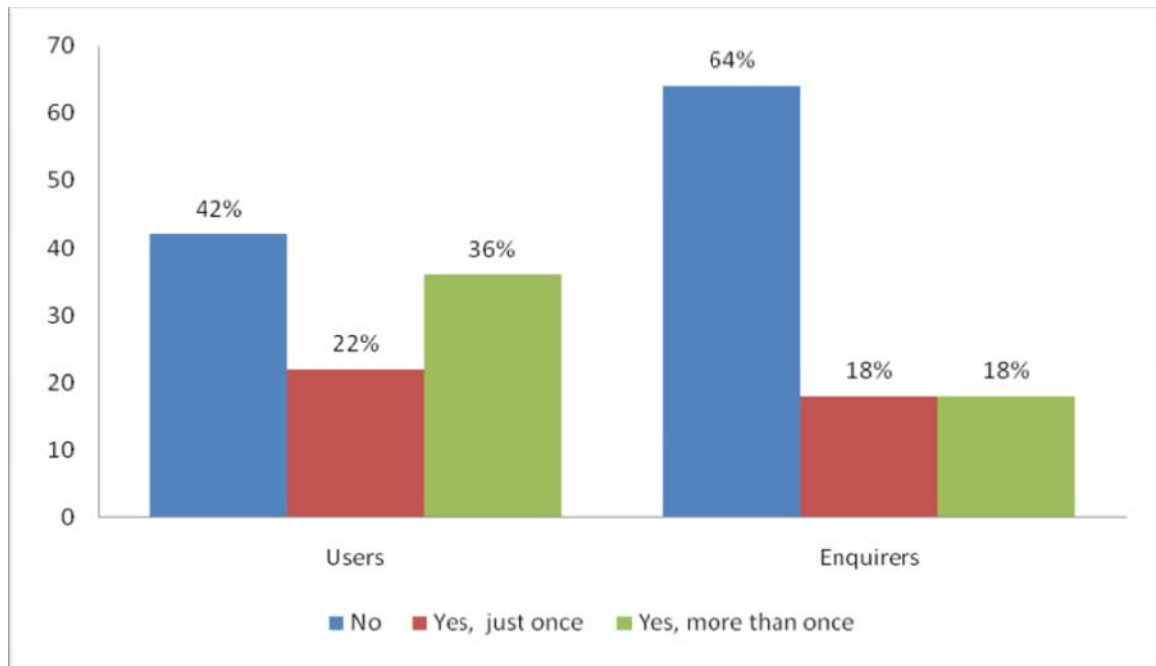
Use of CISAS Website

As previously mentioned 21% of users and 16% of enquirers previously heard about CISAS from browsing the internet, demonstrating the power of this medium as an information and reference tool.

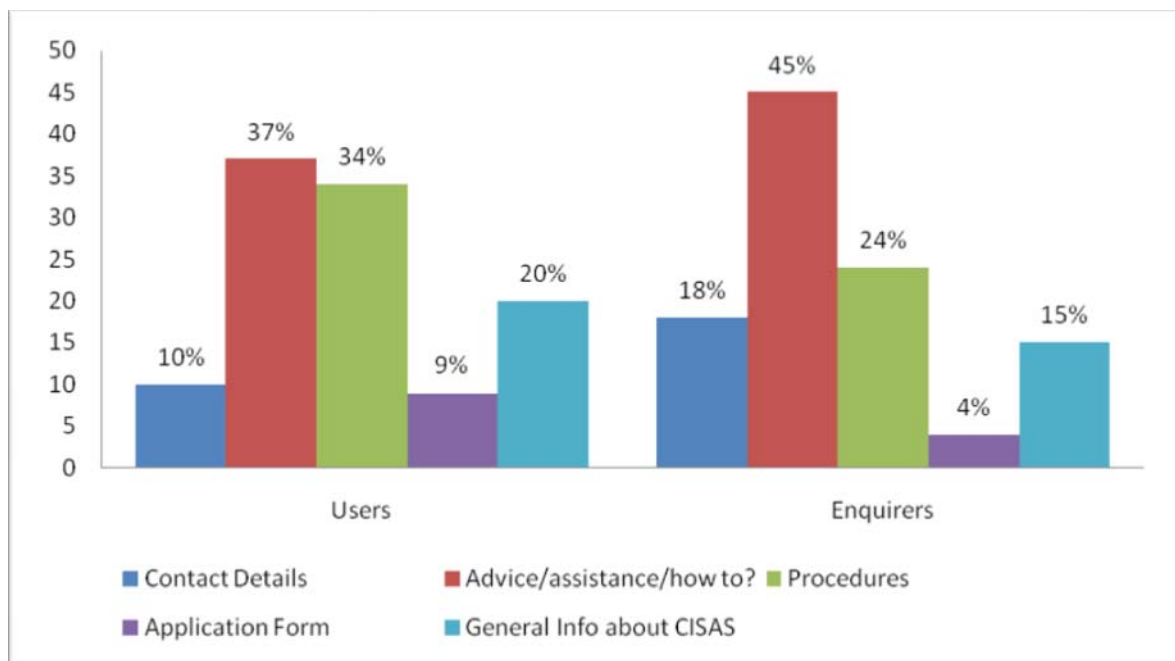
Users in particular were likely to have visited the website with almost two thirds (64%) indicating that they had visited the CISAS site. About 36% of users stated that they had visited the website more than once to gain further information.

Conversely, almost two thirds (64%) of enquirers did not look at the website before contacting CISAS.

Did you look at the CISAS website before you initially contacted CISAS to make your complaint?



What were you looking for from the website?



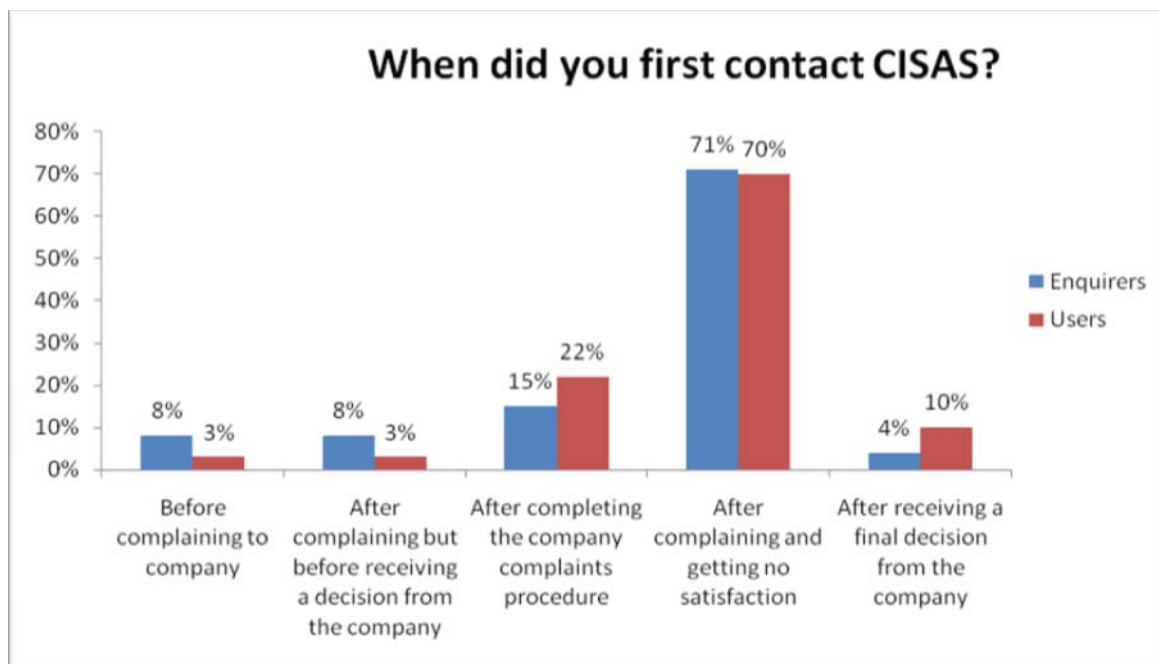
How would you rate the website on the following criteria?



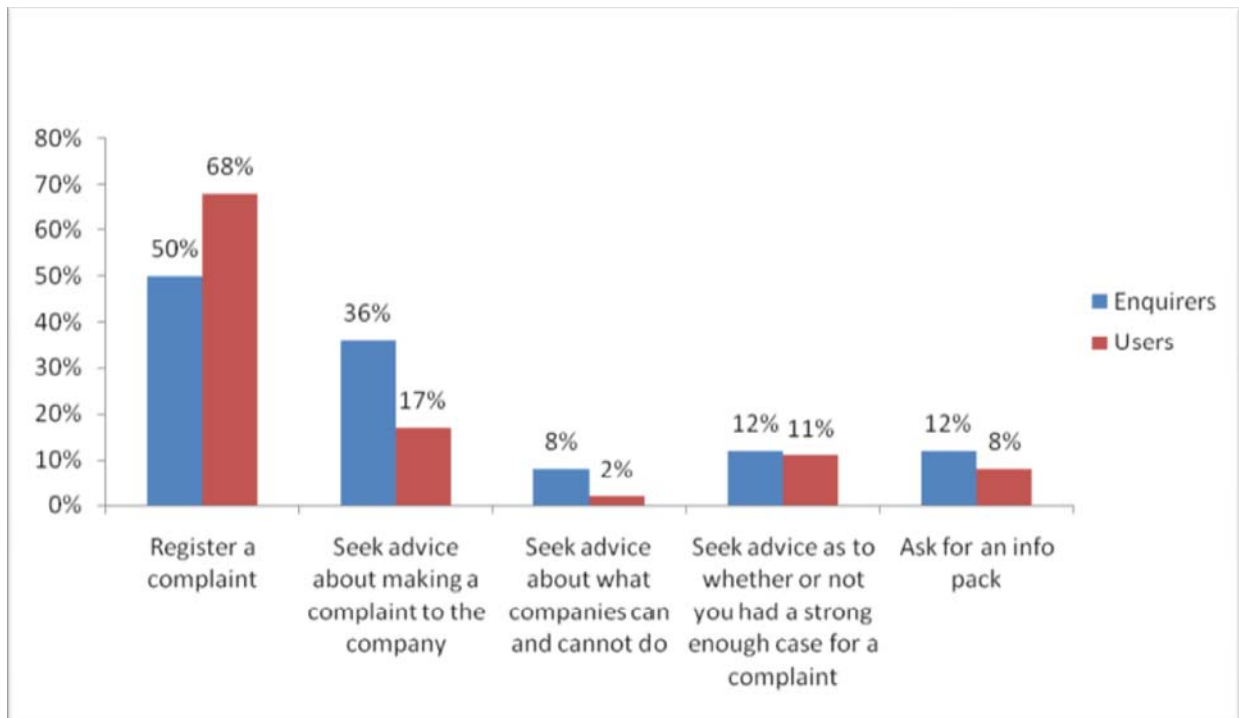
First Contact with CISAS

There is a noticeable difference between enquirers and users with regard to the point at which they first contact CISAS. Approximately 8% of enquirers contacted CISAS before getting in touch with their company. It is very likely that users – by looking at the website in advance – were more informed about the complaints process and appropriateness of timing than casual enquirers who contact CISAS without going through the formality of the company’s own complaints procedure.

Overall the majority of consumers contact CISAS when they feel the need for extra ‘clout’ to pursue their claim or grievance against the company in question, and before the matter was considered closed by the company.



Why did you contact CISAS initially?

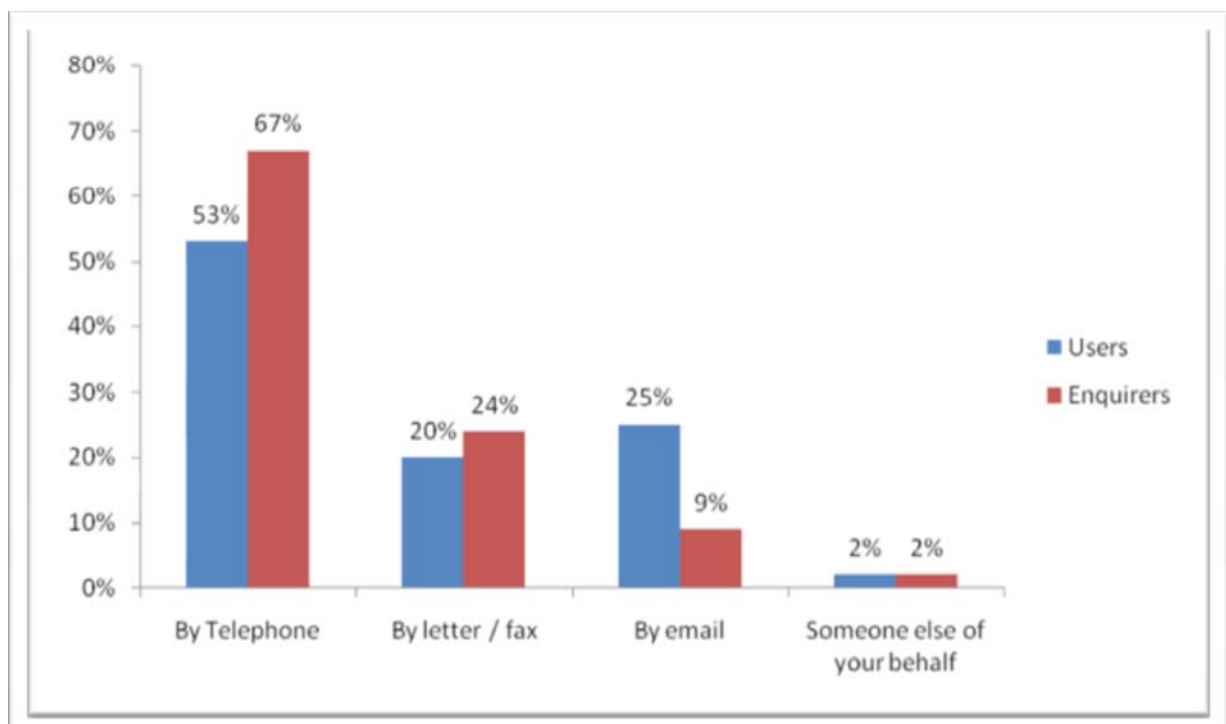


Means of Contact

Telephone is still the most likely means of contact, particularly for enquirers who are likely to be seeking instant advice or reassurance, as suggested above. Users on the other hand, in keeping with their higher incidence of website usage, may well communicate by email in the first instance.

The use of hard copy letter or fax has remained fairly static since the increase seen during 2007.

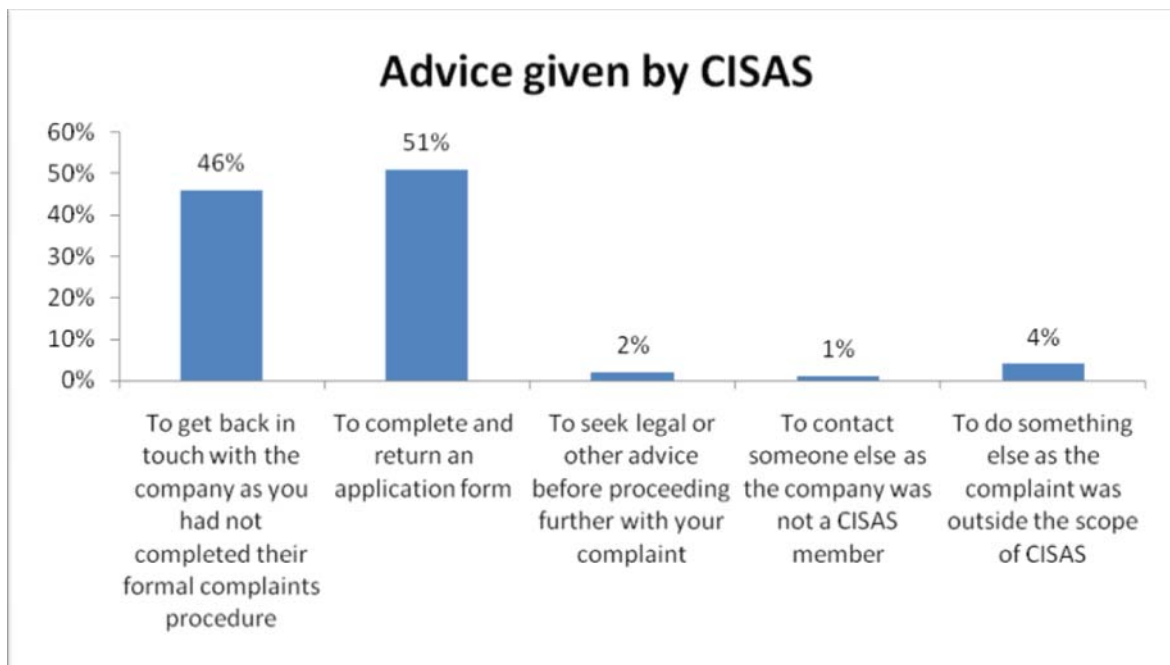
How did you first make contact with CISAS?



Advice given by CISAS

The figures below demonstrate a continuation of the trend for first contact with CISAS becoming more appropriate and effective: the proportion of 'premature' enquirers has declined from 61% in 2006, 53% in 2007, and was 46% in 2008.

What advice were you given by CISAS?



Those who were advised to go back to their company or seek advice elsewhere did actually do so with varying levels of success:



A small minority of enquirers – 20% - did not return an application form when they were advised to complete one. Their reasons for going no further with their complaint were:

The CISAS procedures seemed too difficult	32%	(35% in 2007)
Lack of confidence that CISAS could fix the problem	3%	(25% in 2007)
Lack of confidence that the effort would be worthwhile	16%	(17% in 2007)
Lack of confidence that the complaint would be successful	12%	(12% in 2007)
Doubts about the independence of CISAS	6%	(11% in 2007)
Resolved my complaint with the company	27%	(figure not captured in 2007)

The Application Experience

Of those who made an application to CISAS the majority provided sufficient information and supporting documents to allow the case to proceed immediately.

If you made an application to CISAS were you ever contacted for more information about your case?

Yes 40%
No 60%

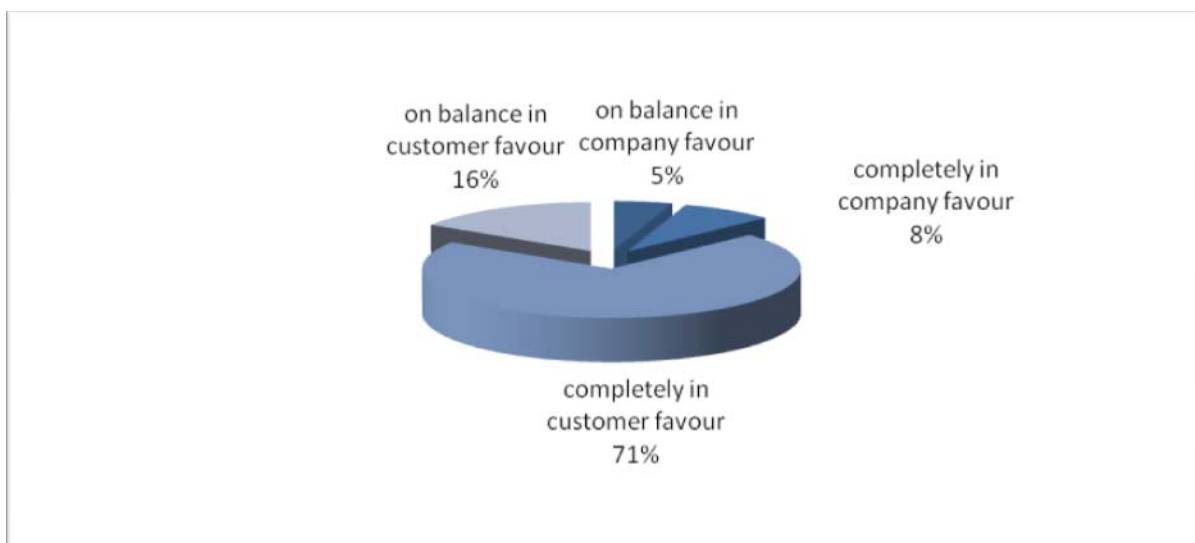
CISAS usually went on to accept the case (in 84% of instances). Where this happened, the reported frequency of the company offering to settle the case was high – at 76%. And in most cases (88%) that offer was accepted by the customer. This is at about the same levels as experienced during 2007 and demonstrates the usefulness of the CISAS application form “framing” the complaint in such a way that the company can see what the problem is and what the customer wants to happen in order to put things right.

Then using the CISAS “early settlement procedure” the customer can ask CISAS to put the case on “hold” until the agreed settlement is received. If they do not receive the agreed settlement then we will reopen the case and appoint an adjudicator to decide the case.

The Outcome

The outcome was nearly always in the customer’s favour – only 1 in 8 lost a case to the company they were in dispute with.

What was the outcome of the adjudication?



Where an adjudicator decided the case, satisfaction levels are more measured: (of those answering the question) just over half expressed any degree of satisfaction with the outcome and nearly 1 in 3 was very unhappy with the outcome.

How satisfied were you with the adjudicator’s decision?

Very satisfied	36%
Quite satisfied	16%
Neither/nor	2%
Fairly dissatisfied	17%
Very dissatisfied	30%

Satisfaction with Service and Contact

Evaluation of Staff Contact

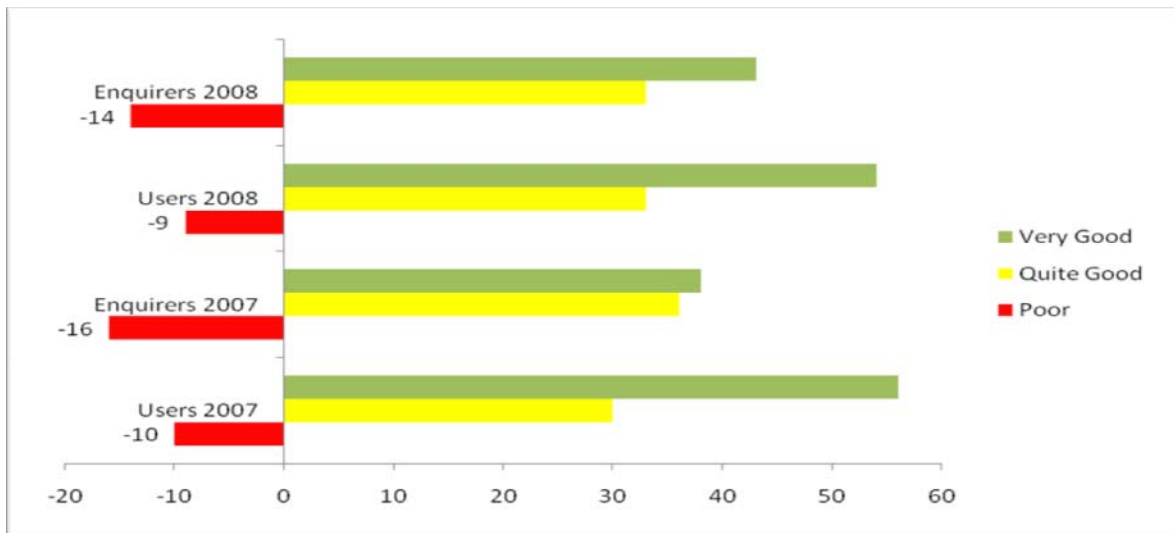
The CISAS staff are rated very highly by customers, as shown in the scores below. It is interesting to note that users – most of whom went on to achieve satisfactory outcomes – rate staff much more highly than enquirers and this has been consistently so over the years.

Figures in the summary charts do not add up to 100% because the 'no opinions' have been excluded from the charts.

How would you rate the following aspects of your contact with CISAS?

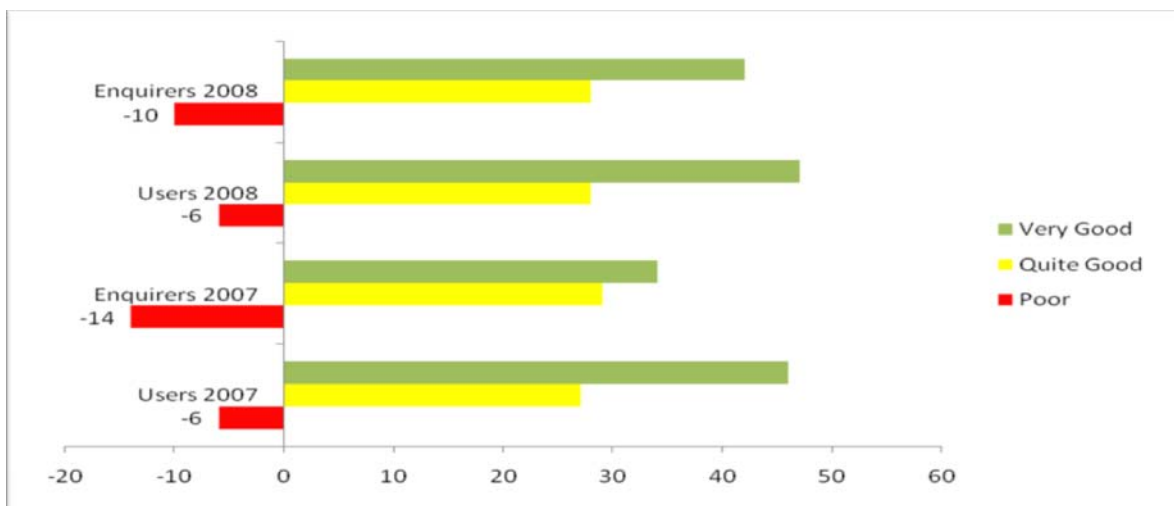
i. Speed of response

Fewer enquirers are rating 'speed of response' to be poor this year, although fewer enquirers rated CISAS to be 'very good' on this dimension. Users however continued to be significantly more positive about the speed of response received.



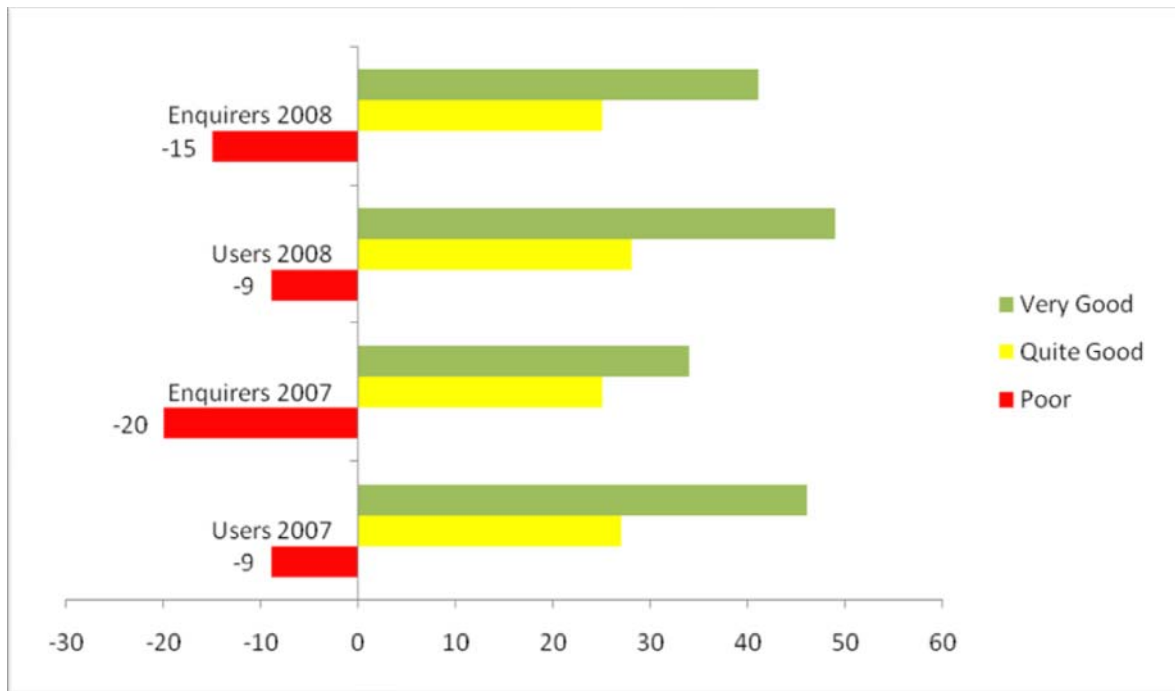
ii. Friendliness of the staff

Perceptions of the friendliness of staff have generally stabilised after the increase seen during 2007. However it is pleasing to note that there has been a significant decrease in the number of enquirers perceiving the friendliness as Quite Poor down from 14% to 10%.



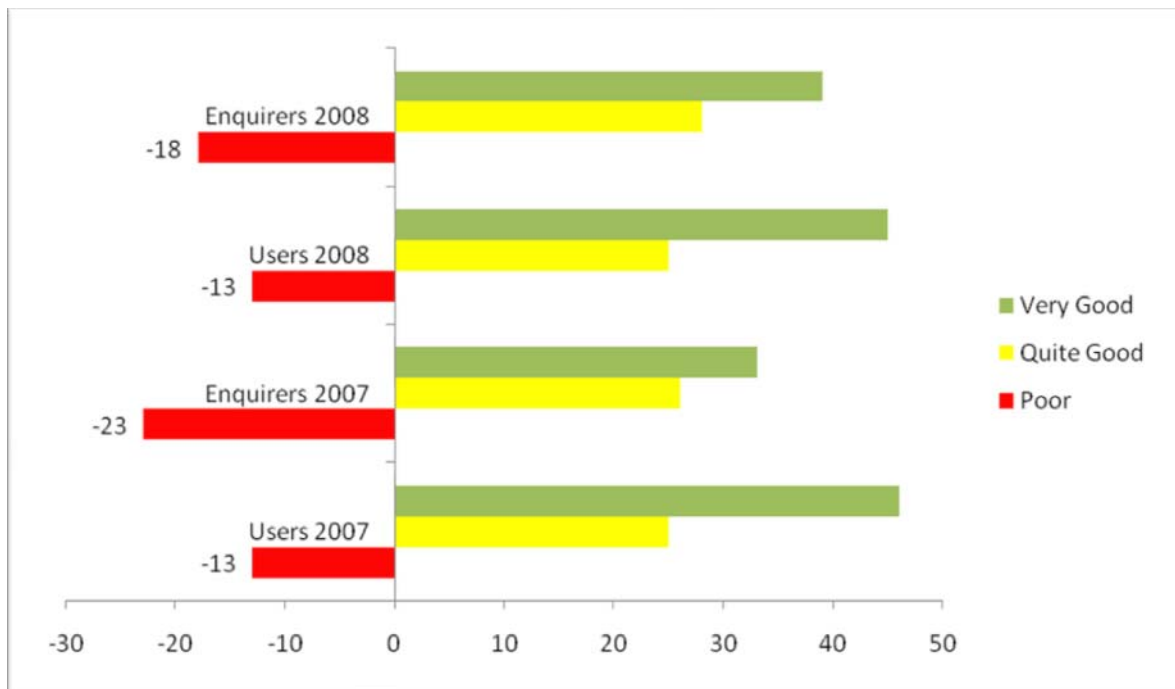
iii. Helpfulness of the Staff

66% of enquirers rated staff as helpful, which may to a certain degree reflect their ability to offer a solution to enquirers: those who actually used CISAS had a stronger perception (76%) of helpfulness.



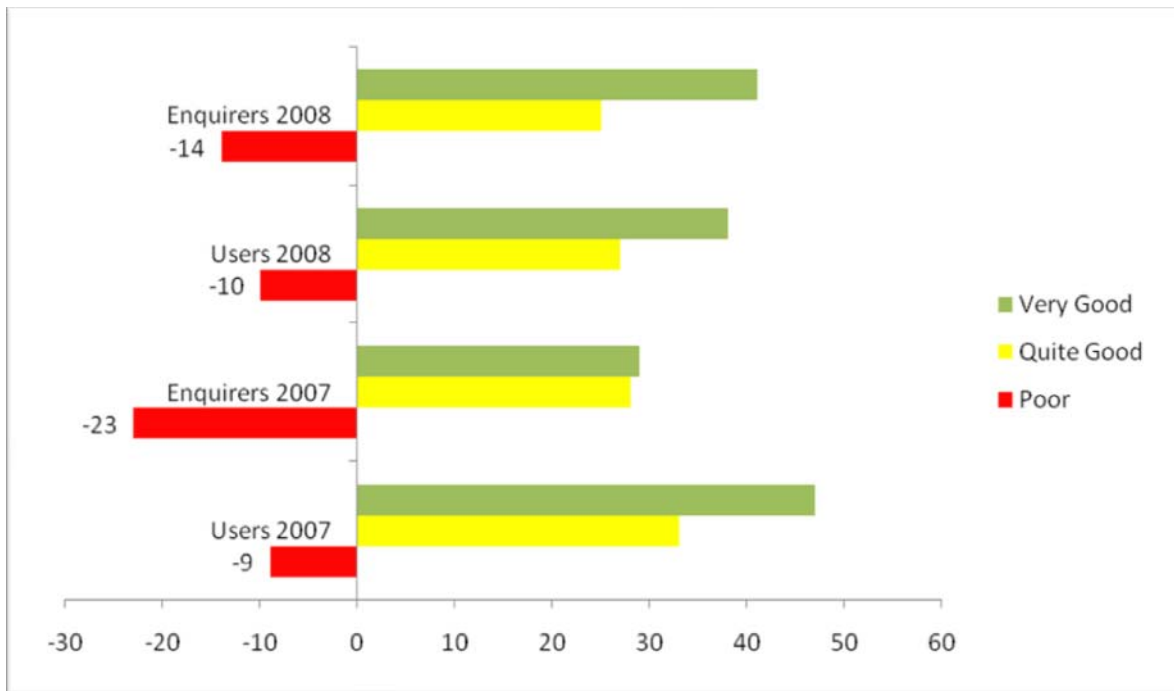
iv. Staff Ability to understand your problem

This dimension suggests that a sizeable proportion of enquirers were frustrated by the response received from CISAS when they were contacted. But it is pleasing to see a significant reduction in this figure for 2008 when compared to the previous year.



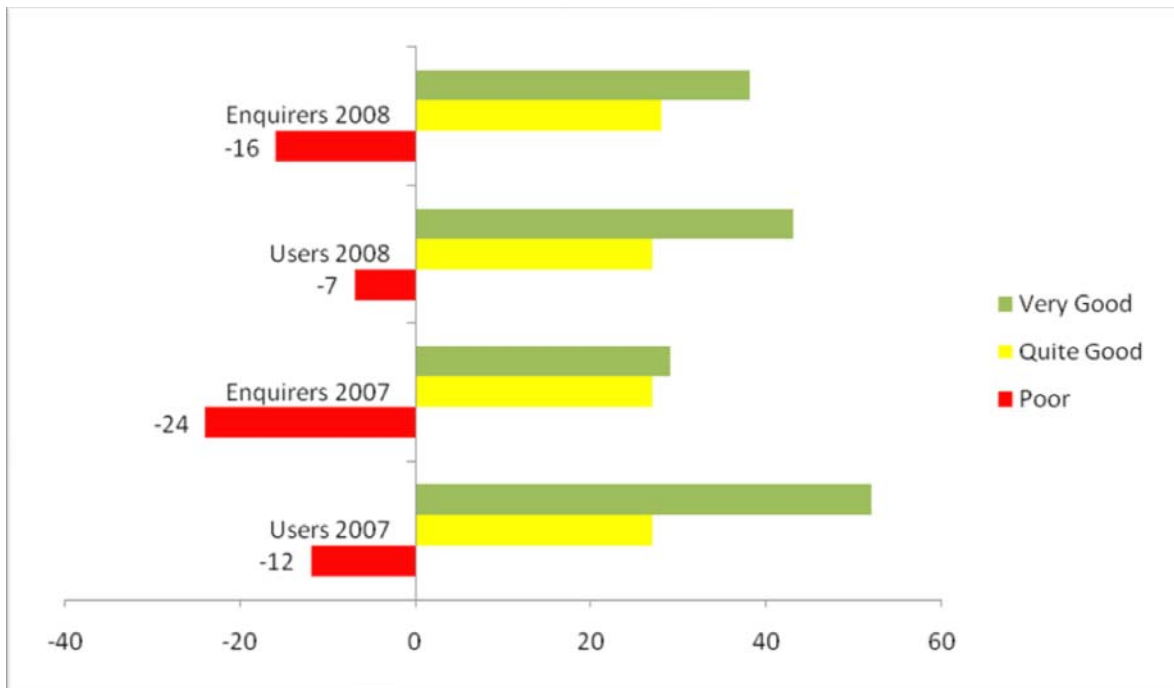
v. Explanation of CISAS powers

On this dimension also, there appears to be an improvement in satisfaction levels among enquirers, with about two thirds of enquirers rating CISAS positively. There was little change in users' views.



vi. Timeliness and comprehensiveness of information provided

Again, improvements have been seen in the satisfaction levels of enquirers in all areas.



Overall Evaluation of CISAS

Who did most to help resolve the problem?

As experienced in 2007, the Users, who by definition have been through a resolution process with CISAS, believe strongly that CISAS did most to help resolve their problem: 81% mentioned CISAS as the most effective body. For Enquirers, there remains a significant feeling of 'unfinished business': 36% felt that CISAS helped to resolve the problem but for almost 1 in 3 (30%), the problem was never resolved.

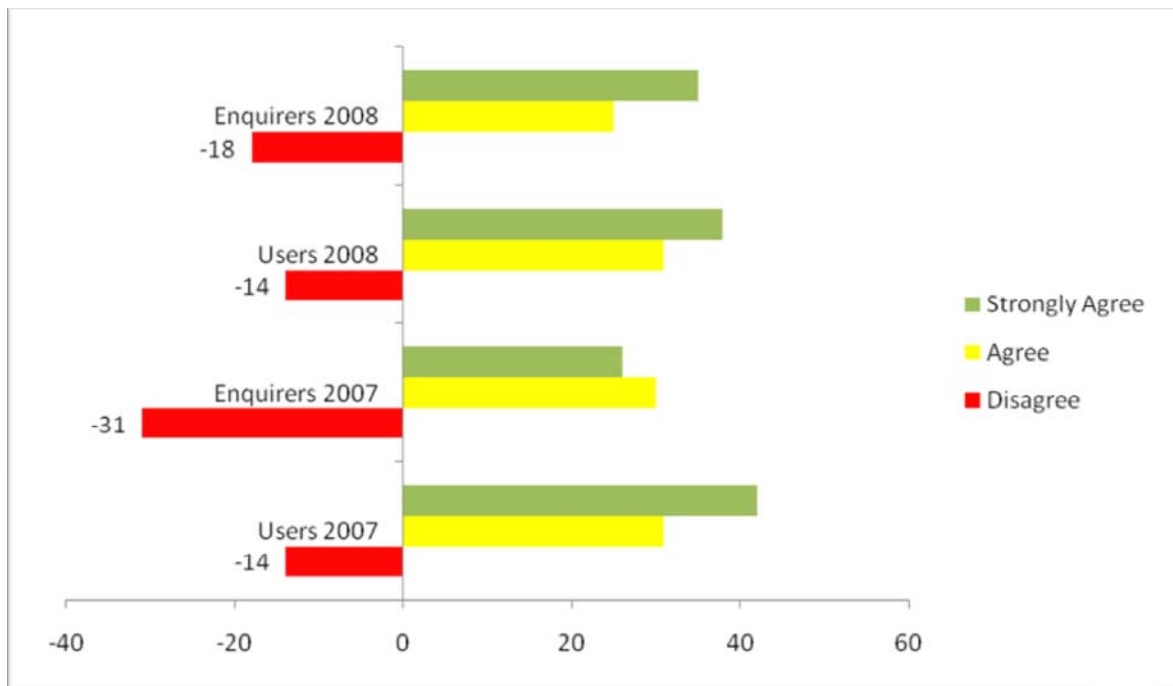
Which body do you feel did most to help resolve your problem?			
	2006	2007	2008
	Enquirers	Enquirers	Enquirers
	%	%	%
CISAS	56	39	36
The company you complained about	27	15	17
An adviser/other agent	17	10	9
Nobody – the problem was not resolved		36	30

Impact of CISAS on the complaint process.

Respondents were asked to say whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements relating to the effectiveness of the service.

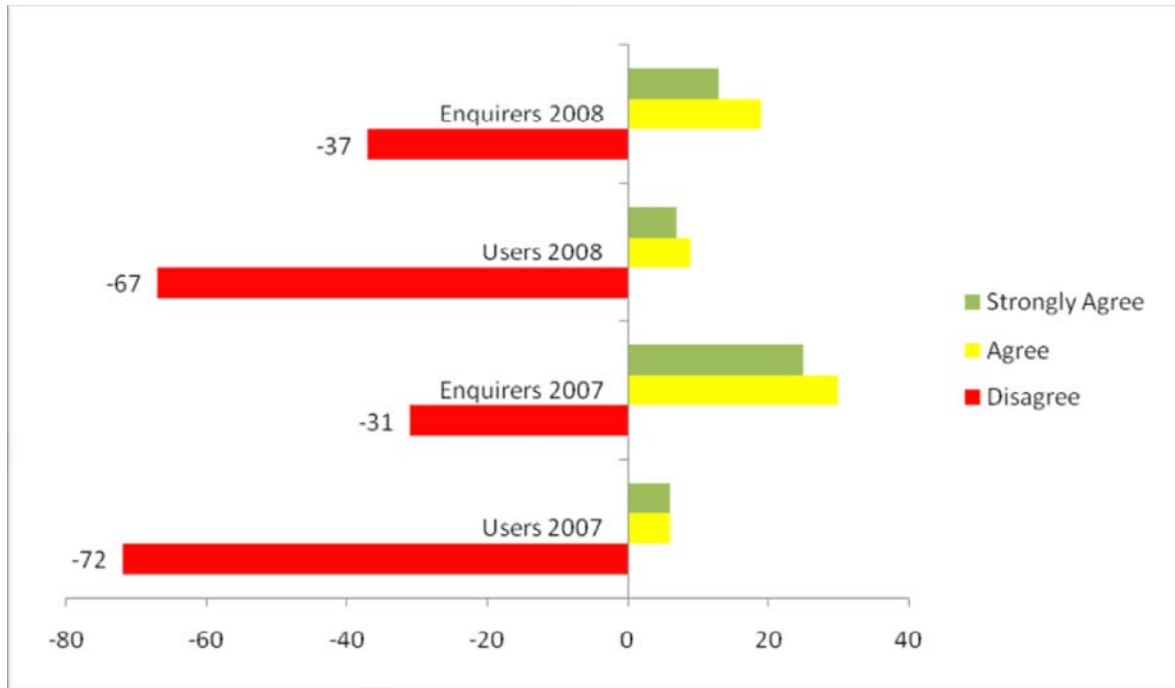
i. **CISAS were very helpful – they gave me advice which helped me with my problem**

Users are particularly cognisant of the role exerted by CISAS in solving their problem: Enquirers however were more likely to have had issues or problems with which CISAS was not able to help.



ii. It is impossible to say – I have no idea whether CISAS made any difference or not

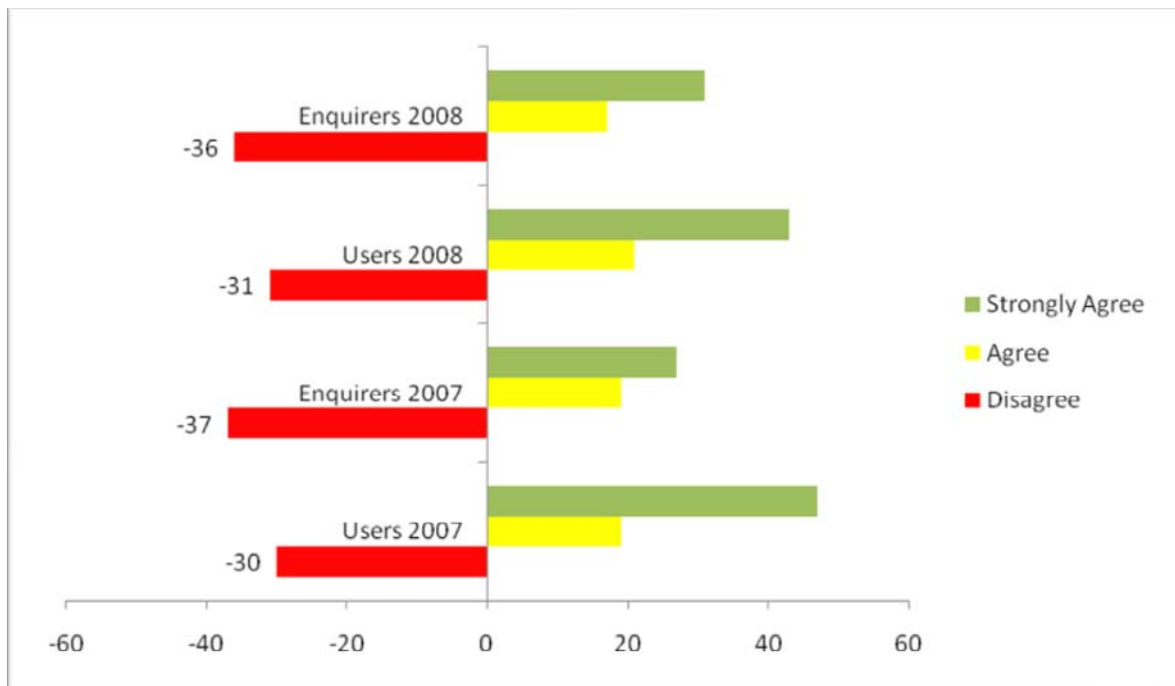
As would be expected, the reactions to this statement mirror those above: Users are very aware that CISAS made a difference.



iii. Once my company knew I had contacted CISAS it settled my complaint quickly

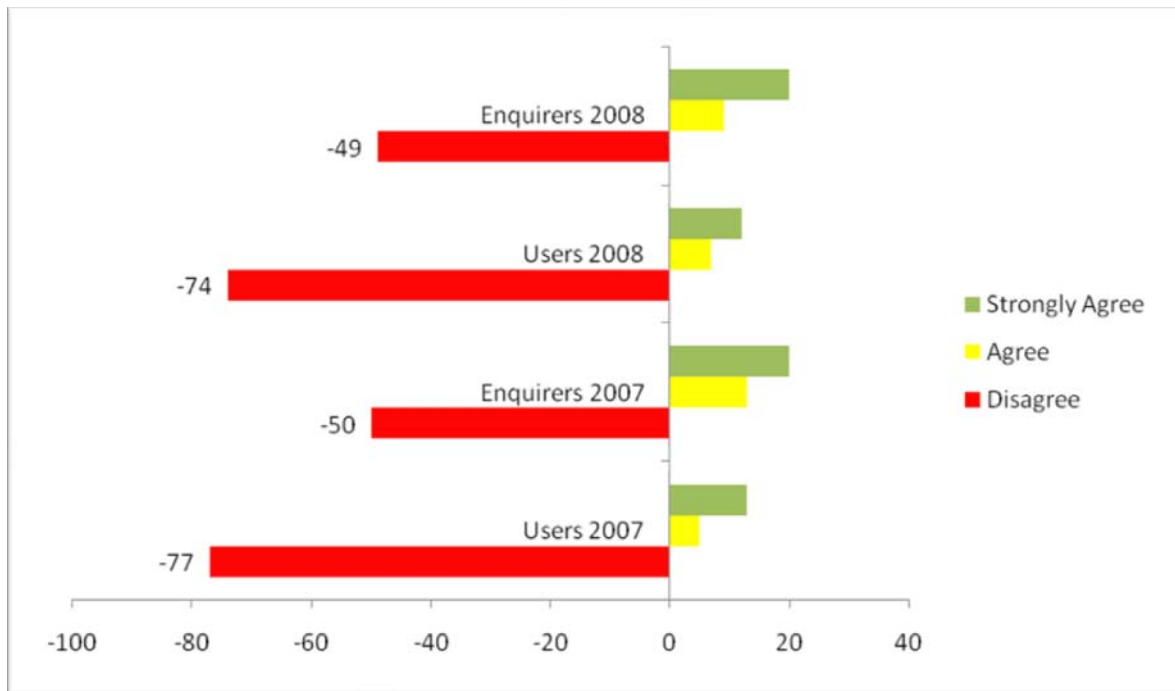
Clearly, for about 1 in 3 who contacted CISAS this action did not necessarily precipitate speedy action on the part of the company concerned.

Fewer than half of Enquirers in 2008 noticed an impact on their company’s response as a result of them contacting CISAS.



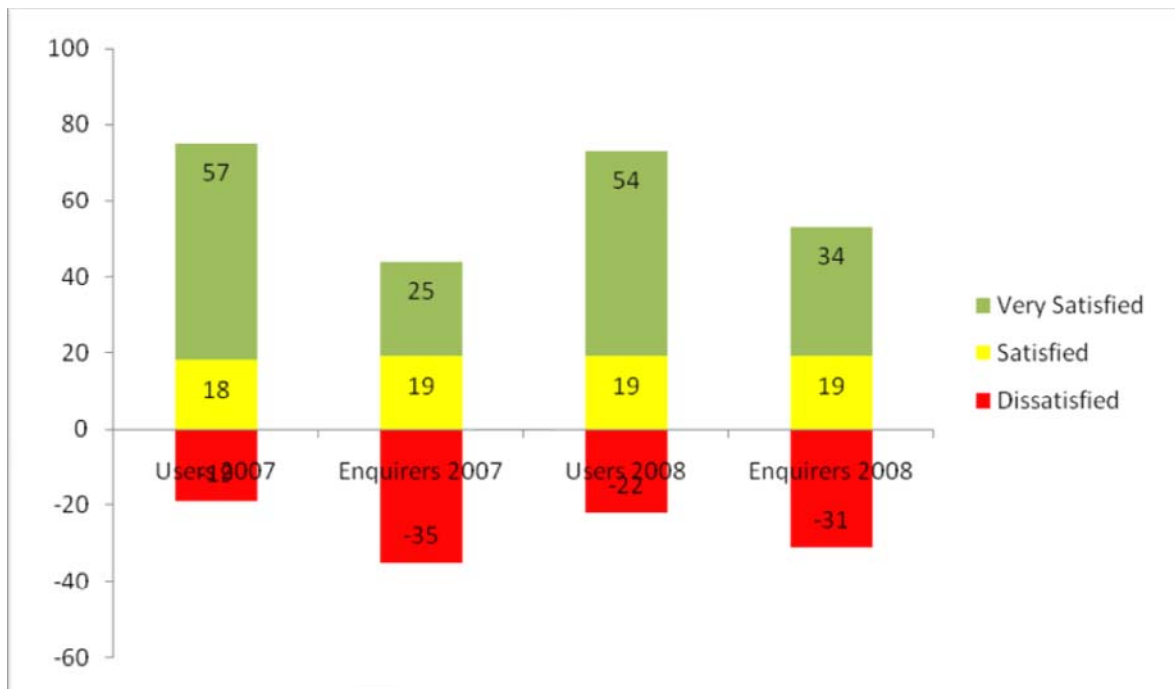
iv. CISAS had no effect at all – the company still refused to give me what I wanted

As the flip side to the above statement, reactions reinforce the perceived lack of impact that CISAS made to their case.



Overall Satisfaction with CISAS

Overall, levels of satisfaction with the standard of service from CISAS have increased slightly during 2008 among Enquirers: taking the year as a whole, 31% were dissatisfied compared to 35% last year. Also, over 1 in 3 of Enquirers was very satisfied with service provided by CISAS compared to 1 in 4 during 2007.



Likelihood of Recommendation

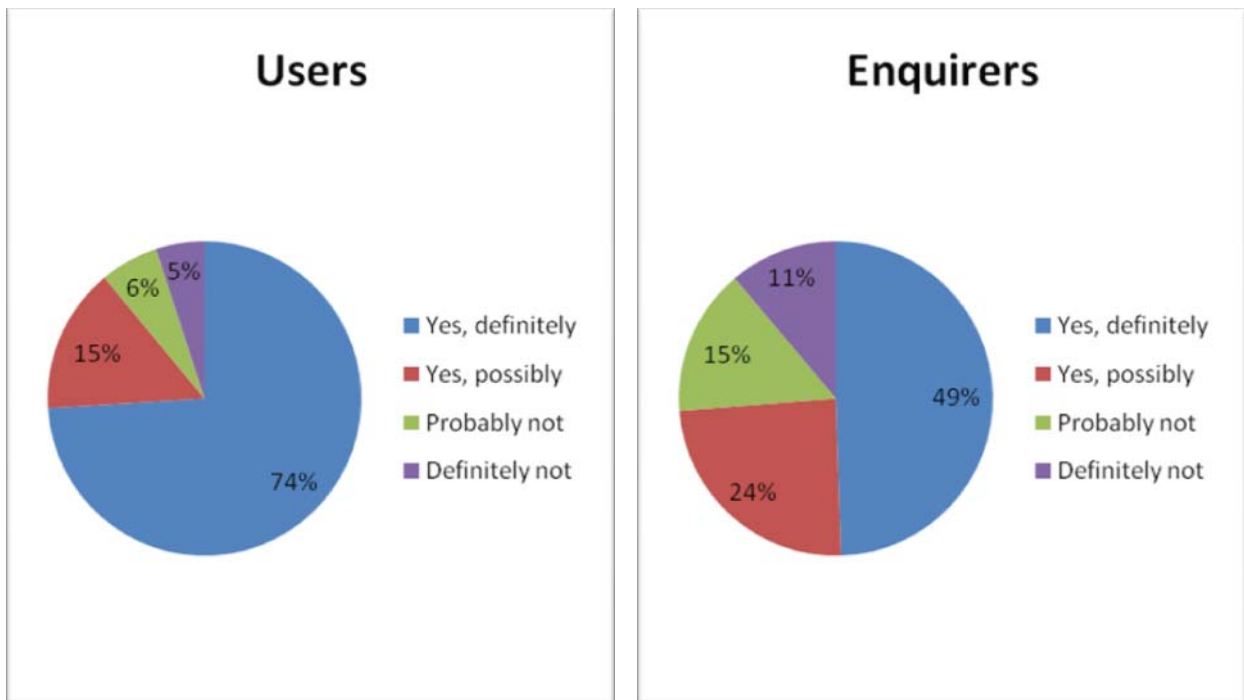
Among Users, 73% would definitely be willing to recommend CISAS to others. (Only 13% said that they probably or definitely would not do so).

Enquirers are more ambivalent about the likelihood of recommending CISAS: 46% would definitely do so, compared to 30% who would not.

Willingness to use CISAS again

Willingness "to use CISAS again" generally reflects the rating of satisfaction levels to a large degree: whereas most Users would contact CISAS with any future needs, 26% of Enquirers would not do so.

Would you be willing to use CISAS again?



Case Studies

Case Studies can be found on the CISAS website and are updated on a regular basis. They are a valuable reference tool and used by both CISAS member companies and users of the CISAS service.

Please click on the following link to navigate to the case studies index.

http://www.cisas.org.uk/case_study.asp

Customer Complaints

The very purpose of CISAS is to deal with complaints that a CISAS member has been unable to resolve with their customers. This means that a number of CISAS users are angry and / or frustrated by the time they reach us. It would therefore be a very unfortunate if by using the CISAS service they were left feeling even more frustrated.

For this very reason and in support of our continuous improvement culture we record all complaints received by CISAS. We investigate complaints in two distinct contexts. In relation to the service received from us whilst using CISAS and in relation to the decisions made by a CISAS adjudicator.

It is therefore pleasing to note that of the 2667 valid applications that CISAS received during 2008, only 9 resulted in CISAS receiving a complaint regarding the level of service the user received during their case. That equates to a complaint rate of 0.3%.

We also received 43 complaints regarding the decision of the CISAS adjudicator in the complainant's case. That equates to a complaint rate of 1.6%. It should be noted that making such a complaint will not change the decision in a case.

Of the 52 complaints received during 2008 all except one was resolved using our internal complaints process. Our Independent Reviewer conducted a complete review of the remaining complaint. A short case summary of that complaint can be found on page 5 of this report.

Customer Comments

Below are some examples of the positive feedback that CISAS has received from users of the service in 2008:

"Thank you very much for any part you played in the outcome."

"I would just like to say that I have found your service and support very helpful. Your online application facility is very easy to use and your communication has been very prompt and clear. We have been very impressed."

"Thank God there are bodies such as the CISAS that can bring these disgraceful companies that have no intention whatsoever of honouring their promises to heel. If i was anywhere near you I would buy you a drink fella!"

I trust that my dispute with them is now over and it only remains for me to say a big 'thank-you' to you and your colleagues for all your help in resolving the issue and finally bringing the matter to rest. It is a great weight off my mind and I am so grateful that your organisation exists.

"I have informed all our friends and relatives of the care and quality as well as the effectiveness of following your procedures. Your courteous and efficient staff deserves praise. Very many thanks for the good outcome."

"I have been very impressed with the efficiency of the CISAS process and the manner in which CISAS has handled my complaint and my telephone enquiries."

"Many thanks to staff at CISAS who brought this matter to conclusion. I have been impressed with your service and have no doubt the matter would not have been settled without your intervention."

"Many thanks again for your help in resolving this matter. I have very much appreciated CISAS's efficiency and professionalism."

"I have to say, you guys rock! I am so glad that I used your service"

"So i phoned trading standards who told me they don't deal with broadband complaints anymore and there's a organisation called CISAS that do it all.....and boy do they!"

"We wanted to thank you and your colleagues at CISAS for helping us to resolve the dispute we had with the company. We are so relieved after months of fruitless communication!"

"MANY, MANY thanks for your prompt and excellent service."

"Until I contacted CISAS I was getting nowhere."

"CISAS is a source of joy to me at the end of the day simply because I can say, at least, an Institution works very well"

"I was glad to be able to contact someone who could look at the case objectively. I had felt as though I had no voice and was being pushed around by two companies who seemed not to value customers/customer service. Being able to tell someone about the problems I was encountering was such a relief."

Membership News

Membership has continued to grow throughout 2008 and CISAS now has more than 240 members covering all aspects of the consumer communications market.

A full list of members is shown below:

Numbers:

011 Communications – 0800 Reverse – 0800 Dial – 186k – 4theNET Internet – 5 Rings Telecom

A

Abica – ADSL24 Internet - Adweb – Advanced Information Systems – Aerofone UK – Af-it - Alban Telecom – Allcom Communications - AOL Talk & AOL Broadband provided by TPH Services Sarl – AOL UK – Ask4 - Atlas Internet – Audanet.com – Avanti Broadband - Avanti Mobile (UK)

B

Beunlimited – BlackBIT - Blue Carrots – BlueCherry Telecom - Blue Ridge Telecom – Blyk – Breathe – Brightfilter Ltd – Brightsolid - Brightstar – Brightview – BroadbandBilling – Budget Numbers – Bulldog – Bush Internet - Byetel

C

C2 Internet – CAN Networks – Chess – Clara.net – Clarion Communication – Cleartone Comms – Clarity Telecom – Colloquium - Community Internet – CommsSolutions - Concept 2000 – Concept Coders – Continental Telecom – Converged Communications Solutions – Cosmic Unified Communications - Crowthorne Associates – CT Networks

D

Dark Group – Datanet – Datatel Networks - Directonline – Domain Names GB – Doncaster Telecom – Drogon Systems

E

EARS – Easyair t/a Openair – Easy-Dial – Eden Business Support – Edge Telecommunications – EFH Broadband – Elite Calls – Elite Calls UK - EliteUKServe – EMtel - Entanet – Eunixa – EurlISP – Exa Networks – Excel Telecom – Exponential-e – Ezee DSL – eZe Talk

F

Farmers Weekly Interactive – Fast4 – Fast.co.uk – Fastnet – Fidonet Registration Services – Firefly – First Option Telecom - FOS.net – FON – Force9 – Freedom2Surf – Freedom Names - Free-Online – Fused Networks – Fusion Media Networks

G

Ghost Telecom t/a FooCall - Global Internet – Gould Electronics– Gradwell Dotcom – Gravity Internet – Greenbee Telecoms – GreenNet – Griffin Internet

H

Hobbs Parker 2000 – Hotlinks Internet Services

I

Incom Business Systems – Inet Carrier Services (Voipfone) – Intercity Mobile Commuincations – Internet Central – Internet for Business - Internet Phone Company – Internet Services (EU) – Interoute – Inuk Network – IP Integration - IP Support – IPSISP

J

Jungle247 – Just the Name

K

KeConnect Systems – Kencomp Internet – Keytel Media – Kijoma Solutions

L

Lawyers On Line - Link Connect – Live Connections

M

Macunlimited – Madasafish – Mailbox Internet - Magrathea Telecommunications – Mapesbury Communications – Maple Telecom – Maxim Solutions – Metronet – Midus Commuincations - Mistral Telecom – Modern Communications

N

Namesco – NASCR – Netcetera – Net Connex Broadband – Netcom UK – Netmatters – Netplan Internet Solutions – Net Payments – Net Primates - Netservers – NetServices – Netway 2000 – NewNet – Nildram - NJP Services – Norfolk Internet – now broadband

O

OA5.com – On-Line Marketing & Sales t/a Swift Internet – Optic Communicaitons – Orange Home UK – Orange PCS – Orbis Telecom – OrbitalNet

P

PageOne – Pay as You Host – Phonecard Services – Pipex Internet – Platinum Telecom – Playloder – Plusnet – Polestar – Port995 – Poundbury Systems - Proweb (UK) – PUMA Telecom

R

Radio Contact Services – RCG Global Networks - Ready Technology – Reves Lund & Co -Rely Telecom – Resound – RM Education – Rural Communications Solutions

S

SAQ – Scotnet– Shiftall – Shimmer Telecom – SIM4Travel - Sky Blue Telecom – Skycom – Skymarket – Solution1 - Solutions 11 – Solutions Inc. t/a Solutions255 – Solutios – Sota Solutions -Spectrum Comms – Storacall Technology t/ X-on - Straight Away – Stripe 21 – Sunstone Telecom – SurfAnytime – Switch Telecom

T

Tagadab - Talk Numbers – TalkON – Talking Platforms – Talk Plus Telecom - TALLYCoST – Tarrif Reduction Services – Telabria - Telapliant – Telecoms World - Tellnet – TeING – The hornets.net – TIC-Com – Tiscali – T-Mobile – topletter – Trojan Communications – Truphone

U

Urban Winmax – UKBroadband – UKFast.Net – UKS – Universal Telecom – Utility Solutions t/ First Option Telecom - UTV Internet

V

VCOMM UK – Velofone – Vianetworks – Video Networks – Virgin media – Vispweb – Vivaciti Broadband – Voicenet Solutions – VoIP Unlimited - Vostron

W

Waitrose.com – Wensum.net – Wessex Broadband – West Dorset – West Somerset Internet – Whole – Wish Solutions

X

XIFOS – XILO - XTEC Communications

Y

Yacal – Yahoo! UK – Yello Telecommunications Management – Yellow Call – Yesmate

Z

Zen Internet

Membership of CISAS continues to grow. An up-to-date list of members is available on the CISAS website at <http://www.cisas.org.uk/Members.asp>