

POSTRS Customer Satisfaction Survey 2009

INTRODUCTION

In November 2009, the first customer satisfaction survey was undertaken to benchmark customer experiences and satisfaction levels with POSTRS, exactly one year after it was first launched to the public (in October 2008).

Details of the survey are included in the technical appendix at the end of this report.

The objectives of the survey were to:

- Provide a benchmark of satisfaction with the User and Enquirer experience
- Identify potential improvements to the User and Enquirer experience
- Provide statistical evidence of satisfaction levels for publication in the Annual Report

Throughout the report, findings are often shown for Enquirers (who made contact with POSTRS with an enquiry of some sort but who did not follow through to an actual case) and Users who made an actual complaint.

Author's note: be aware that the small sample sizes (particularly for Enquirers) make any statistical comparisons between Users and Enquirers to be unproven: comparisons and contrasts between the two groups are therefore illustrative only.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The survey has generated benchmark satisfaction ratings which highlight a series of challenges for POSTRS. These relate to:

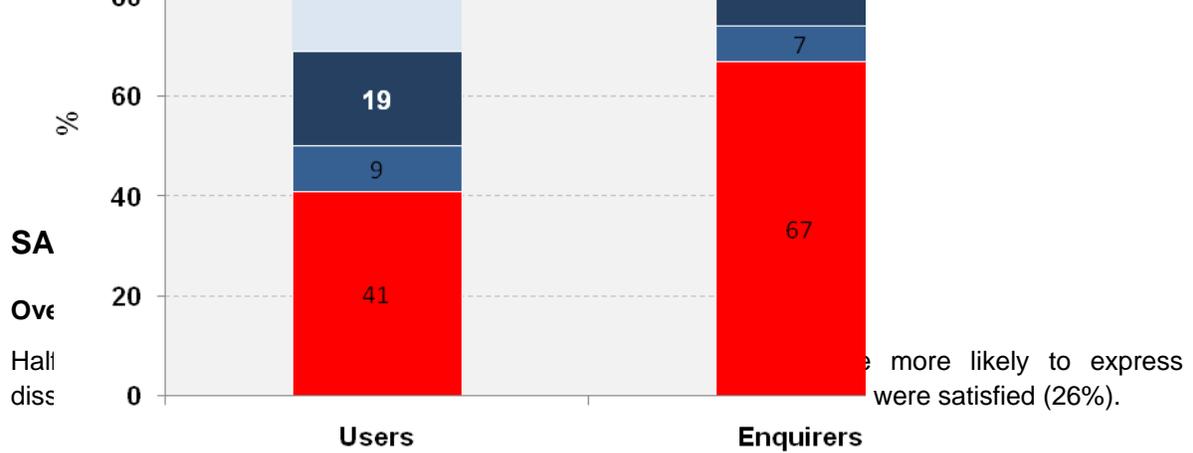
- Improvements to the 'first port of call' experience
- Enhancements to the information pack sent to enquirers
- Management of expectations of those contacting POSTRS
- Help customers understand the role of POSTRS

DEMOGRAPHICS

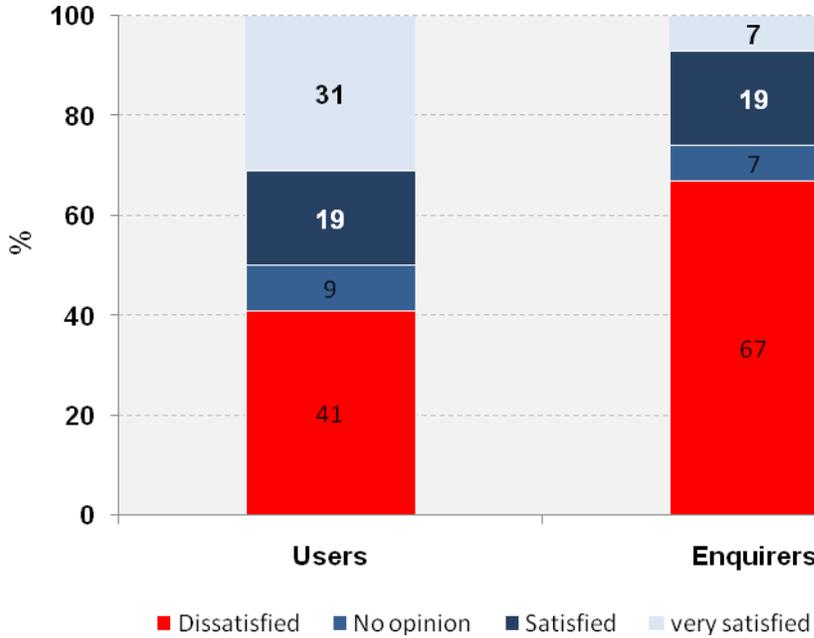
The demographic profile of those contacting POSTRS is skewed toward men, typically in their early 50's and owner-occupiers.

Base	102
Gender	%
Male	64
Female	36
Ethnicity	%
White	88
Other	12
Status	%
Owner occupier	91
Has some form of disability	26
Age	%
Up to 35 years old	8
36- 45	23
46-55	22
56-65	28
65 +	18
Average age	52

Most respondents (4 out of 5) had first contacted POSTRS more than three months ago, therefore their recollection of specific details of the response are likely to have faded somewhat.



How satisfied were you with the service provided by POSTRS?



Clearly then, the satisfaction levels present a real challenge to POSTRS. Satisfaction is an end-product of:

efficiency of process: This was experienced more by Users (who, as shown above, were the more satisfied). Comments included :-

“As I had an ongoing problem POSTRS were a delight to deal with - pleasant - v. efficient with a speedy result in the final analysis I was 100% impressed by their independent view - in my case totally fair.”

“Without POSTRS intervention I would have got nowhere with my justified complaint ... For your help, I thank you.”

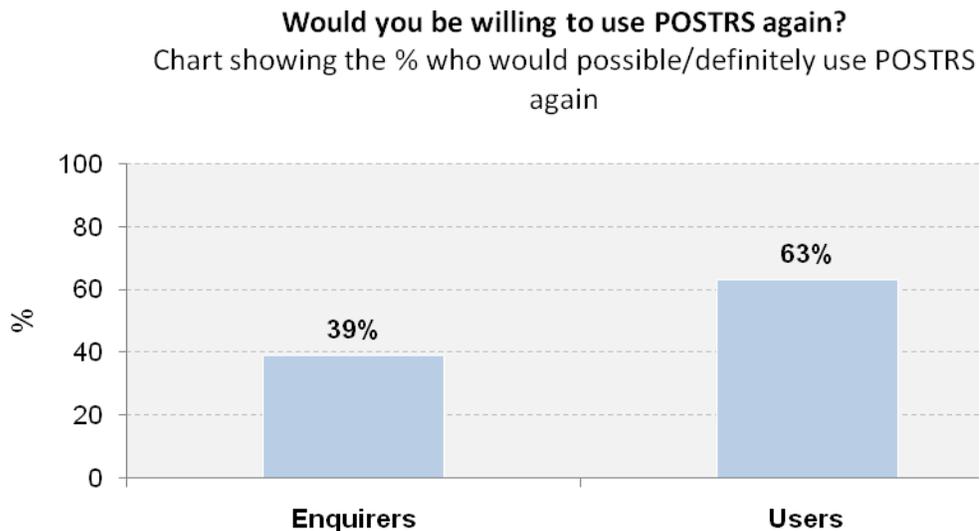
“My case was settled by POSTRS in a very prompt and professional manner and I would recommend the service to anyone.”

appropriate resolution/outcome: Enquirers were more likely to have had only one contact with POSTRS and usually felt that their issues were still unresolved.

a worthwhile exercise: Consumers need to feel that contacting POSTRS is likely to achieve a positive result for them.

ENDORSEMENT OF POSTRS

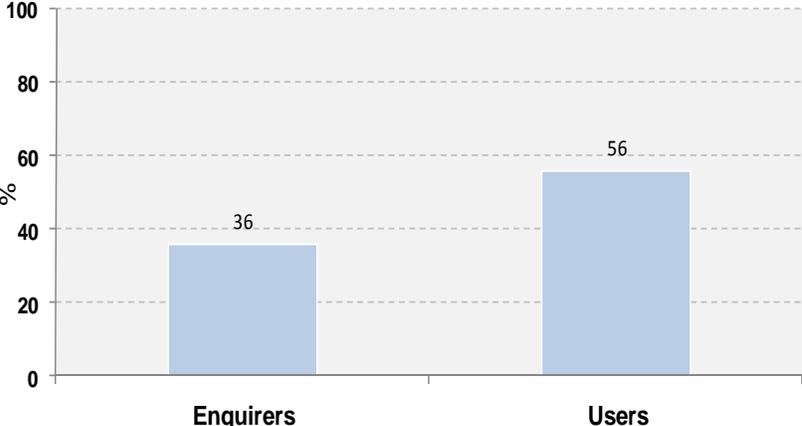
Most people who have gone through the process would use POSTRS again – indeed 44% of Users said they would **definitely** do so. Enquirers are less convinced, probably because their enquiries had not led to a specific claim and POSTRS was therefore not tested to any extent. 1 in 3 Enquirers said they would use POSTRS again, and only a third of these (1 in 10 overall) were **definitely** likely to do so.



LEVEL OF RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation levels are very similar to perceived future usage: after all, people are only likely to recommend a service that they would use again personally.

From your experience, would you be willing to recommend POSTRS to others?



The chart shows the % who would possibly/definitely recommend POSTRS to others

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

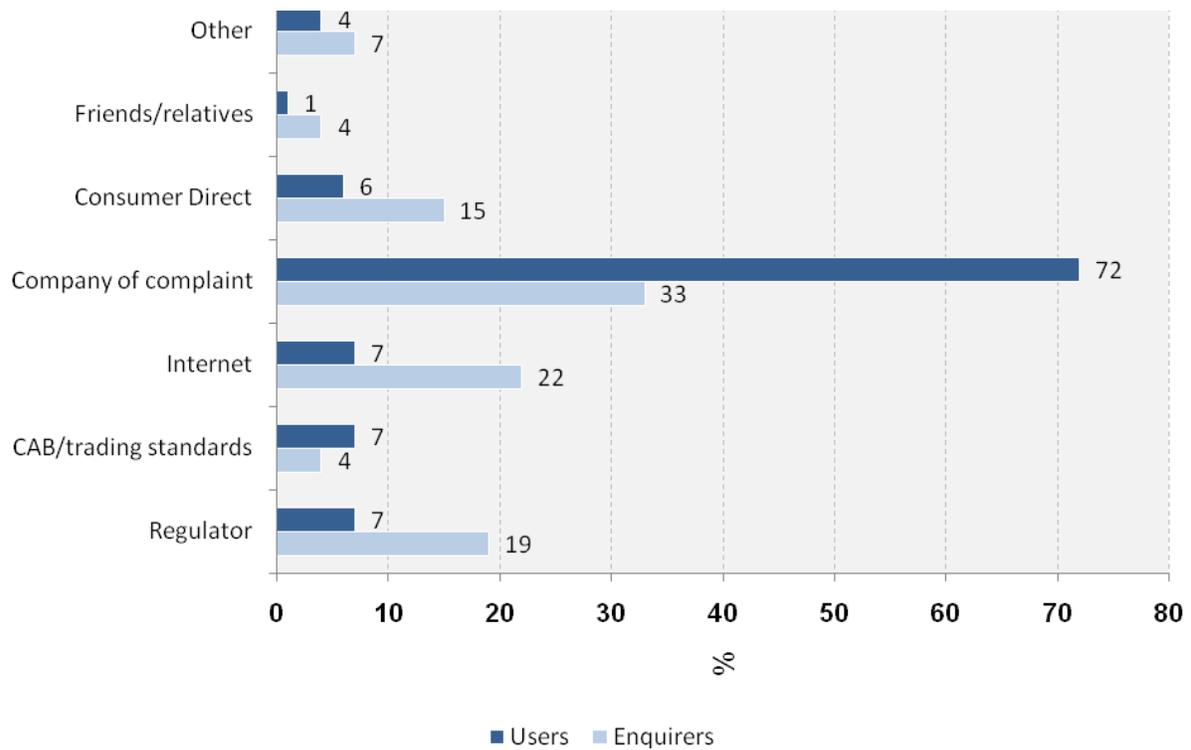
Initial Source of Awareness

Most Users first heard about POSTRS from the company they were complaining about.

The more casual Enquirers may also have been told about POSTRS from the postal service provider, but they were also likely to have sourced POSTRS from online browsing, via the Regulator or Consumer Direct.

With such a new body, it is not surprising that consumers are not likely to have learned about POSTRS via word of mouth from other people as yet.

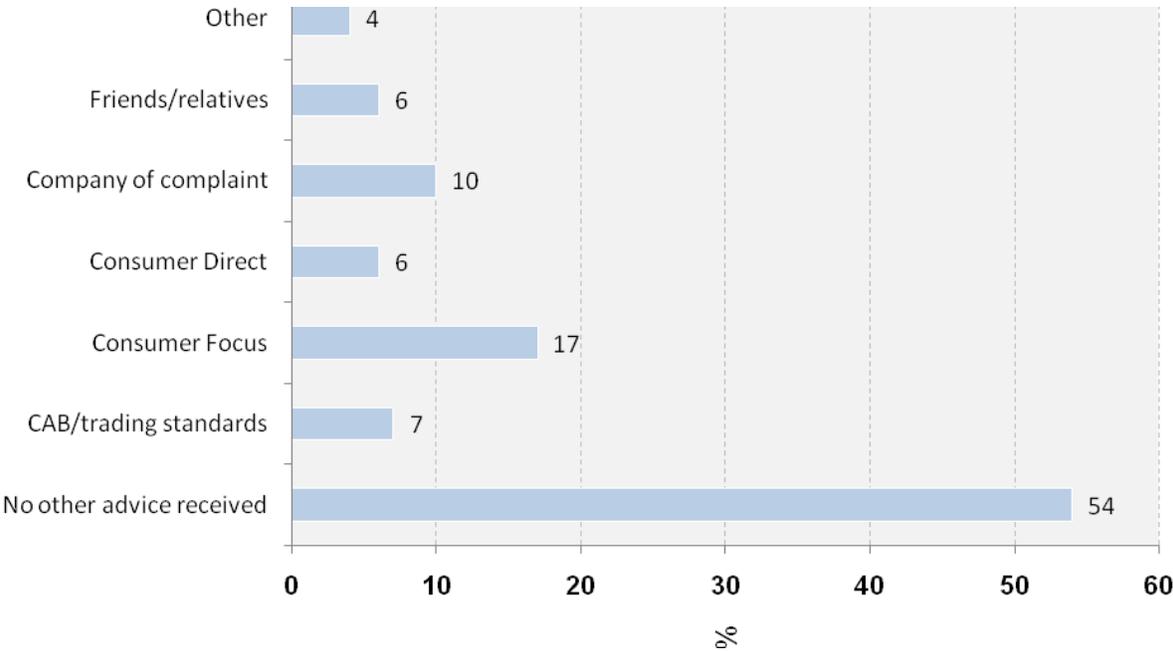
How did you originally hear about POSTRS (Base: 99)



Advice received prior to contacting POSTRS

Half did not obtain any advice from elsewhere before contacting POSTRS. For those who did do so, Consumer Focus had a significant role to play (although interestingly Consumer Focus does not feature as an initial source of awareness for POSTRS). Consumer Focus is much more likely to be contacted for advice than either the CAB or Consumer Direct.

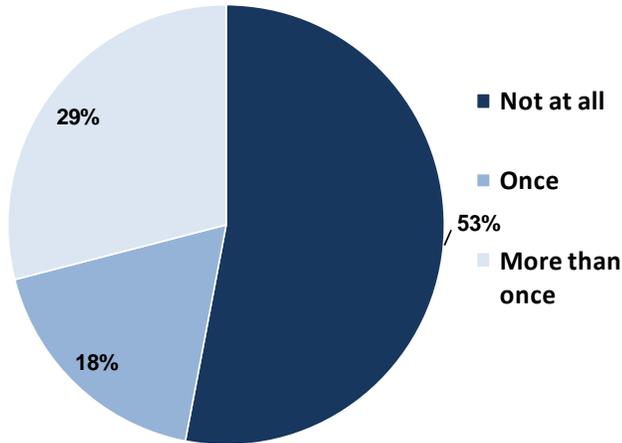
Before contacting POSTRS, did you receive any advice from anywhere else? (Base 99)



THE ROLE OF THE WEBSITE

Respondents were asked whether they had looked at the POSTRS website before initially contacting POSTRS. Almost half (47%) did look at the website:

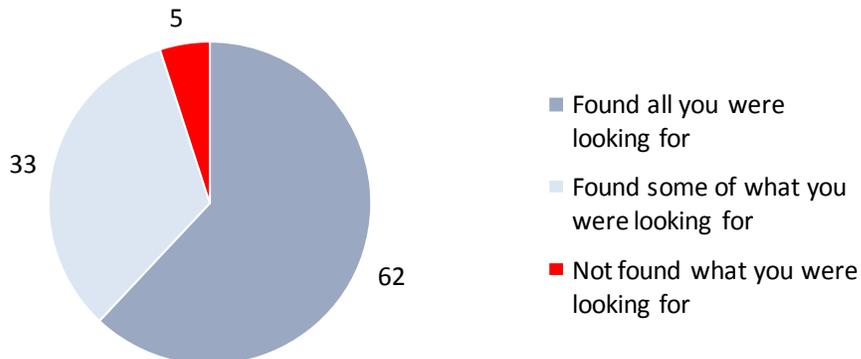
Did you look at the POSTRS website before you initially contacted POSTRS? (Base 99)



The website clearly delivers what people are looking for i.e.

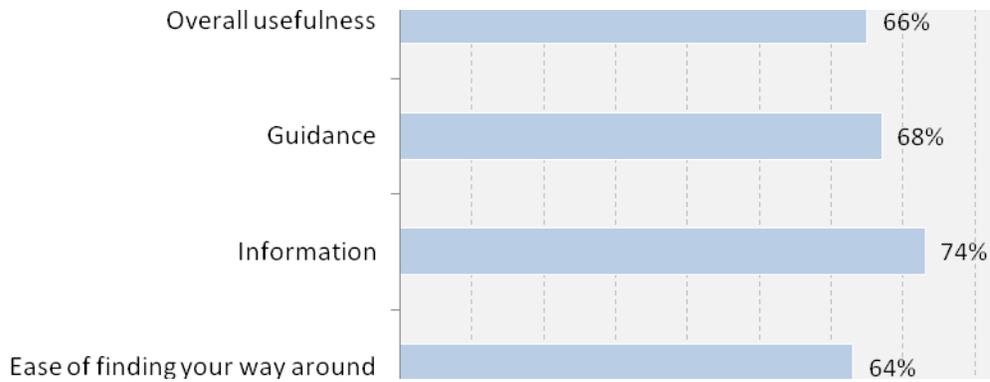
to find out about POSTRS	(40%)
for advice/how to....	(33%)
check on procedures	(22%)
for contact details	(18%)
check on timescales	(2%)

If you looked at the website, did you find what you were looking for? (Base 42)



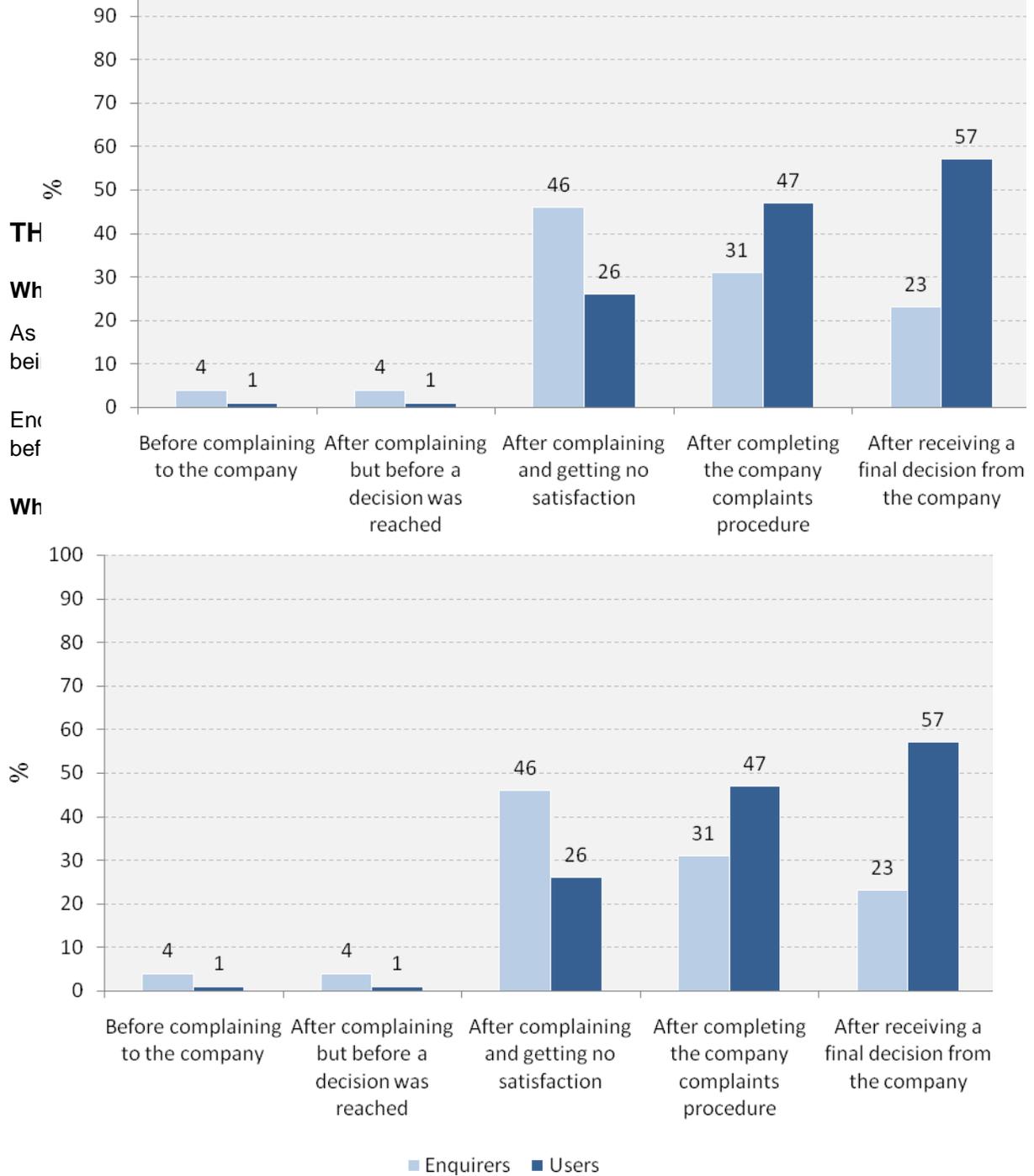
Most found the website to be user-friendly and informative, as shown on the chart below.

**How would you rate the website on the following criteria? (Base 40)
% saying quite good/very good**



Half of those accessing the website did so more than once, but this was to:-

- re-read the details a second time
- get further information and advice
- double check details
- download forms



Why contact POSTRS?

Having established that Enquirers are less likely to have completed the formal complaints procedure with the company concerned, it is interesting to see that whilst a significant proportion were seeking advice on their rights, the majority were in fact making [premature] complaints to POSTRS. This helps to set the low satisfaction score in context, as clearly their expectations of an outcome were unrealistic and POSTRS would not have been in a position to adjudicate.

When you contacted POSTRS initially, why was this? (Base: 97)

	Enquirers	Users
Base:	25	69
	%	%
Register a complaint	82	64
Seek advice about making a complaint	11	10
Seek advice about what companies can/can't do	11	0
See if they have grounds for complaint	21	19
Ask for an information pack	11	6
Other reason	7	9

Indeed, fewer than half of the Enquirers were advised to return a complaint application form to POSTRS.

What advice were you given by POSTRS the first time you contacted them?

	All
Base:	99
	%
To get back in touch with the company because you had not exhausted their complaints procedure	32
To seek advice as the complaint was outside the scope of POSTRS	18
To contact someone else because the company was not a member of POSTRS	4
To return a completed complaint application form	46
To seek legal advice before proceeding	4

Most of those who were advised to go back to their company of complaint did do so (85%), but with very little satisfaction. (Of the 12 respondents who went back to the company, only 1 person had their complaint resolved to their satisfaction).

Of those who were advised to return an application form to POSTRS, just over half (59%) did so, but fewer than half of these were acceptable to POSTRS (typically because the complaint was too old.)

The reasons for not returning an application form to POSTRS were based on a perception that the hassle factor involved was not likely to be worth the outcome, and a lack of confidence that they would win their case.

Overall, as many as three out of four Enquirers (74%) felt that nobody had helped them resolve their problem

Who do you feel did the most to try to resolve your problem?

Base: all answering	27
	%
POSTRS	11
The company you complained about	7
An adviser/other agent	7
Nobody – the problem was not resolved	74

CONTACTING POSTRS

The most common way of getting in touch with POSTRS is by letter (46% doing so) – especially for those who were only enquiring about their options in relation to a complaint. Users on the other hand were more likely to have first contacted POSTRS by e-mail – no doubt many of these would have followed a logical route from the website enquiry that many had made in the first instance. (Overall, 37% contacted POSTRS through this route). Less than 1 in 5 consumers (18%) contacted POSTRS by telephone in the first instance.

Most people (three out of four) found it relatively easy to get in touch with POSTRS. Nonetheless, 11% said they found it difficult, and those with problems tended to be the telephone callers: for these, there is a need for POSTRS to improve their first call response to callers.

THE CASE PROCESS (USERS)

The acceptance of the case by POSTRS was not perceived to have had any influence on the postal service provider to settle the case: only 18% reported that the postal service provider offered to settle once they knew that POSTRS had been contacted. For that small proportion, half (52%) did accept the postal services provider’s offer.

Most cases (88%) involved an adjudicator, and although most customers were dissatisfied with their decisions, these were accepted begrudgingly. Most customers – 64% overall – accepted the adjudicators decisions.

Overall, the outcome of the POSTRS case was typically not in the customer's favour:

What was the outcome of your POSTRS case?

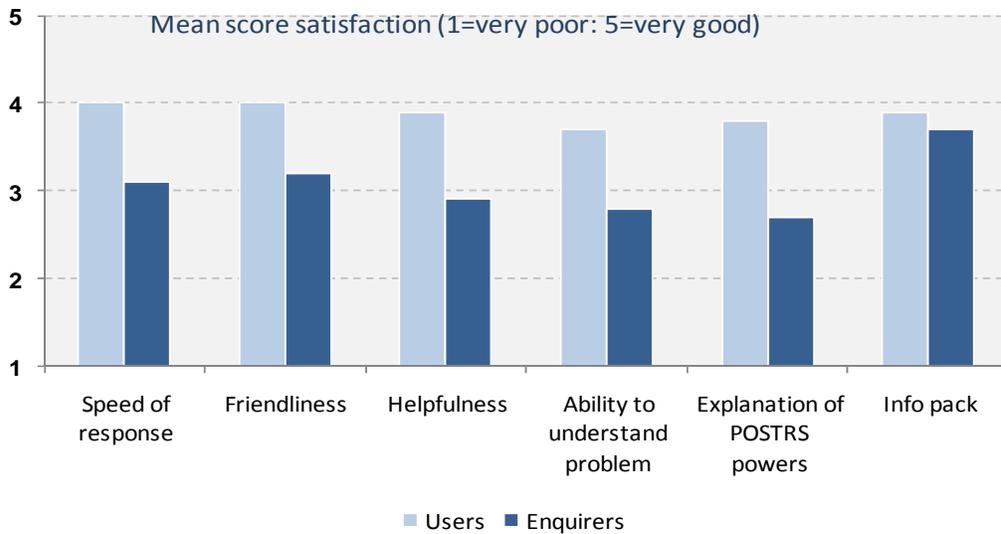
Base: 66	%
Resolved completely in the customer's favour	29
Resolved on balance in customer's favour	15
Resolved, on balance, in the company's favour	17
Resolved completely in the company's favour	41

PERCEPTIONS OF POSTRS SERVICE DELIVERY

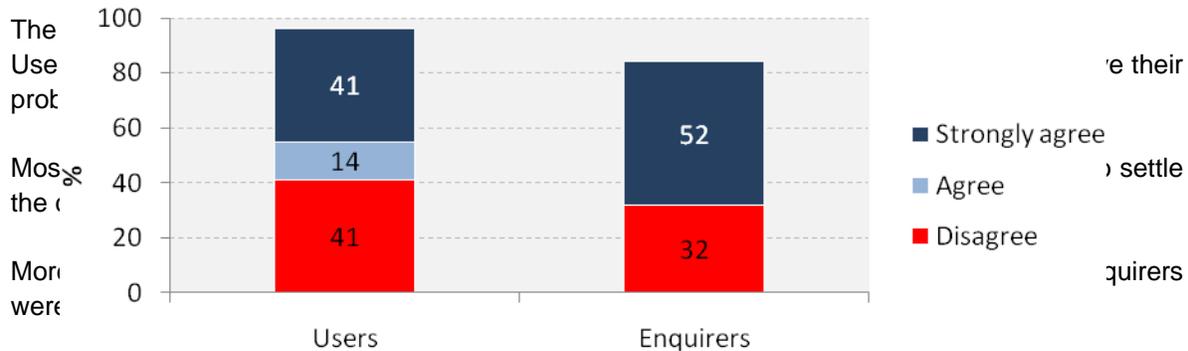
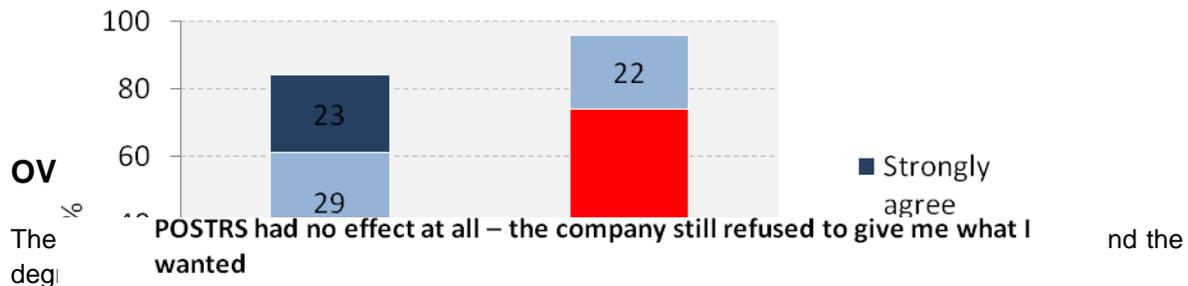
Impressions of Service Delivery

Both Users and Enquirers were asked to rate various aspects of their contact with POSTRS. Enquirers actually had very limited contact with POSTRS, therefore it is not surprising to see that their feedback is non-committal/neutral. Users, on the other hand, were more equipped to respond to the attributes below. As the chart shows, their typical scores were 'quite good' [4].

How would you rate the following aspects of your contact with POSTRS? (Base: 93)



me with my problem



Technical Appendix

474 questionnaires were mailed out in November 2009 to users and Enquirers of the POSTRS service. The cut-off date for analysis purposes was January 6th 2010 by which time 102 questionnaires had been returned. This represented a response rate of 27% for Users and 14% for Enquirers. The breakdown of response is shown in the table below.

	Users	Enquirers
Mailed out	262	212
Returned	72	30
Response rate	27%	14%

Users and Enquirers were defined in terms of POSTRS database and were taken from exclusive database sources. They were not defined on the basis of response to any question within the survey.

Tables in the report are based on the number of respondents answering the particular question. These vary slightly from one question to another because of the self-completion nature of the questionnaire.