

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

QUALITY OF SERVICE SURVEY 2007/8

1. Introduction

In order to monitor performance, a Quality of Service survey is undertaken on a monthly basis. Each month, a questionnaire is sent to a 10% random selection of the locations of incidents attended the previous month by fire stations throughout West Yorkshire.

The questionnaire is sent out by WYFRS, but is returned directly to an independent research company via a freepost envelope. The returned questionnaires are processed and the information obtained is analysed and a feedback report is sent to WYFRS.

The response rate is very good for a questionnaire of this nature. Out of approximately 720 questionnaires sent out in 2007/8, 211 domestic and 72 non-domestic were completed and returned, a total of 283, which is a response rate of just under 40%.

The questions in the survey cover such areas as:

- Satisfaction with the initial contact made with the Fire Service
- Service provided at the scene
- Information and advice given
- Follow-up contacts from the Fire Service after the incident
- Overall satisfaction with the service

2. Summary – Domestic (Incidents in the Home)

211 completed questionnaires were returned to the independent research company during 2007/8. The summary of the results is below:

- 98% of respondents said that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their initial contact on the telephone with the Fire Service
- 57% said that the Fire Service arrived at the incident quicker than expected and 40% said that the arrival time was as expected
- 99% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene

- 99% of respondents felt that WYFRS kept the effects of the incident to a minimum
- 80% of respondents received fire safety information at the scene, 58% were offered a Home Fire Safety Check and 41% received an advice booklet
- Overall 98% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the service they received from WYFRS; 94% (194 respondents) said that they were very satisfied and 4% (9) were fairly satisfied. 1% (2) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and less than 1% (1) were dissatisfied.
- In 2006/7, 88% (142 respondents) were very satisfied with the overall service they received and 9% (15) said that they were fairly satisfied, giving an overall satisfaction level of 97%.

3. Summary – Non Domestic Incidents

72 completed questionnaires were returned to the independent research company during 2007/8. The summary of the results is below:

- 94% of respondents said that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their initial contact on the telephone with the Fire Service
- 32% said that the Fire Service arrived at the incident quicker than expected and 62% said that the arrival time was as expected
- 98% of respondents felt that WYFRS kept the effects of the incident to a minimum
- 99% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene
- 63% of respondents received fire safety information at the scene and 22% received an advice booklet
- Overall a full 100% of respondents said that they were satisfied with the service they received from WYFRS; 89% (63 respondents) were very satisfied and 11% (8) were fairly satisfied.
- In 2006/7, 85% (56 respondents) were very satisfied with the overall service they received and 11% (7) said that they were fairly satisfied, giving an overall satisfaction level of 96%.

4. Interpretation of data

In an ideal world, respondents to the questionnaires would answer every question, but in practice they do not, answering some questions with a “don’t know”, overlooking questions, or simply declining to answer. For this reason, the data considered here is the ‘valid data’ i.e. the views of those respondents that expressed an actual opinion on a question.

As a result of the above, the number of respondents for individual questions can fall below the total of completed questionnaires. Where this fall is significant, an appropriate comment is made in the text.

Finally in this section, it is worth noting that the percentages for the different replies to a question might add up to a figure other than 100%. This is because the percentages have been rounded to whole numbers and have not been presented as their exact figures.

5. DOMESTIC QUESTIONNAIRE (Incidents in the Home)

211 completed questionnaires were returned to the independent research company during 2007/8.

The questionnaire was sent out to a random 10% selection of incidents, covering a range of incident types. Although two thirds of the questionnaires returned related to internal or building fires (140 of the 211), the remainder represented a wide range of other incidents, including flooding (given the severe weather of Summer 2007), external fires, the rescue of persons and the rescue of animals.

5.1 Initial Contact

The number of valid responses is smaller for these questions, as only 145 respondents contacted the Emergency Services themselves.

The questionnaire asks a number of specific questions about the qualities displayed by the FRS staff in the initial contact, with the following results:

Polite	99%
Helpful	96%
Efficient	98%
Reassuring	94%
Informative	92%

Based on the number of respondents who strongly agreed or tended to agree that the FRS personnel on the telephone displayed these qualities

This is an improvement upon 2006/7, when, although the results for the first four qualities were all 93% or higher, only 89% of respondents felt that the FRS staff on the telephone were informative.

Overall, 98% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their initial telephone contact with the Fire Service; 93% said that they were very satisfied and 5% were fairly satisfied.

This reflects the improvement since 2006/7, when 94% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their initial telephone contact with the Fire Service; only 88% said that they were very satisfied and 6% were fairly satisfied.

5.2 At the Scene

The number of valid responses is slightly smaller for these questions, as only 187 respondents were present at the scene at the time of the incident.

57% of these respondents felt that the Fire Service arrived at the incident quicker than expected and 40% said that the arrival time was as expected.

This is similar to the results for 2006/7, when 61% of respondents felt that WYFRS arrived quicker than expected and 34% as expected.

The questionnaire provides space for comments regarding the arrival time and the following provide a representative sample:

“Very fast”

“Arrived very quickly”

“Extremely prompt – arrived within five minutes!”

“Less than fifteen minutes in rush hour traffic on a Monday morning”

97% of the respondents said that they were kept informed of what was happening during the incident, with just 3% (5 respondents) saying that they were not kept informed.

This is a similar result to 2006/7, when 3% (4 respondents) felt that they had not been kept fully informed of what was happening.

The questionnaire asks a number of specific questions about the qualities displayed by the firefighters at the scene, with the following results:

Polite	98%
Helpful	98%
Informative	98%
Efficient	96%
Sensitive	95%

Based on the number of respondents who strongly agreed or tended to agree that the firefighters at the scene displayed these qualities

These are very high scores, as with the initial contact results, and they compare fairly well with user satisfaction in 2006/7, when the results for all five qualities were 94% or higher.

99% of respondents felt that WYFRS kept the effects of the incident to a minimum, with just 1% (2 respondents) saying that this was not the case. This is a slight improvement on last year, when 98% of the respondents felt that the Fire Service kept the effects to a minimum.

Overall, 99% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene, and only three respondents were non-committal or dissatisfied with the service. This is again a similar result to 2006/7, when 99% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene, and only 1% (2 respondents) were non-committal or dissatisfied with the service.

5.3 Information and Advice Given

80% of respondents received information at the scene, in the form of general safety advice. Of these 145 respondents, just three of them did not find the advice useful.

In 2006/7, 86% of respondents received general safety advice at the scene, and only one of them did not find the advice useful.

58% of respondents (113) had been offered a Home Fire Safety Check after the incident. Most accepted the offer, but 12 of these declined it, largely because they had already received one, as illustrated by the following examples:

“Had fire safety check a few weeks ago”

“Just had one recently”

“Previously had one when smoke alarms were fitted”

These are similar results to 2006/7, when 55% of respondents were offered a Home Fire Safety Check, with 15 of these respondents declining the check.

80% of respondents had acted upon the advice given at the scene and/or in the Home Fire Safety Check, with just 5% (9 respondents) not acting upon it, in this case largely for temporary reasons, as shown by the following:

“House not yet fit to be lived in”

“Waiting to go into property to carry out all repairs”

“Not back in our home as yet”

41% of respondents received a FRS advice booklet after the incident. However, all of these agreed that the information contained in the booklet was easy to understand, informative and relevant.

In 2006/7, only 30% of respondents received a booklet after the incident, though all of them agreed that the booklet was easy to understand, informative, helpful and relevant.

The increase in the number of respondents receiving an ‘After the Fire’ booklet reflects the improved focus of fire crews on provision of the booklet after the incident. The booklet has recently been revised and improved to additionally include ‘After the Flood’ information.

5.4 Domestic Questionnaire Summary

Overall, taking everything into account, 98% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the service they received from WYFRS; 94% (194 respondents) said that they were very satisfied with the service they received and 4% of respondents (9) said that they were fairly satisfied with the service received from WYFRS.

Two respondents expressed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction with the service they received and just one respondent was (very) dissatisfied.

This is an improvement upon 2006/7, when 88% (142 respondents) advised that they were very satisfied with the overall service they received and 9% (15) said that they were fairly satisfied.

The questionnaire asks for comments where householders were dissatisfied with any part of the service (even if satisfied overall) but only a small number of comments were made to this effect:

“999 service initially tried to fob me off”

“The hoses took a long time to get to the house”

“I was told I would get a new chip pan, but haven’t”

However, these dissatisfied comments are vastly outweighed by the comments made in respect of what the Fire Service did well. The following selections are good examples of these comments:

“Calm, quick and kept everybody informed of what was happening”

“Dealt with the fire, kept me calm and well informed”

“Everything was handled efficiently and politely. I cannot fault the service we received”

“They dealt with me and my family really well and it really felt like they cared”

“They kept the mess and damage to a minimum amount ”

“Everyone was very professional and helpful”

“Very caring, considerate attitude, excellent service”

6. NON-DOMESTIC INCIDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

72 completed questionnaires were returned to the independent research company during 2007/8.

The responses received covered a cross-section of commercial and industrial premises, together with a smaller number of schools, hospitals and care homes. Consequently, the number of people on site at the time of the incident covered a broad range, from 1 to over 1,000.

Although approximately half of the questionnaires returned related to internal or building fires (35 of the 72), the remainder represented a wide range of other incidents, including flooding (mostly because of the severe weather of Summer 2007), chemical incidents, external fires, and the rescue of persons.

6.1 Initial Contact

The number of valid responses is smaller for these questions, as in seven of the incidents, the emergency services were contacted through an automatic fire alarm and in fifteen cases, the question was not answered.

The questionnaire asks a number of specific questions about the qualities displayed by the FRS staff in the initial contact, with the following results:

Polite	96%
Helpful	93%
Efficient	93%
Reassuring	83%
Informative	89%

Based on the number of respondents who strongly agreed or tended to agree that the FRS personnel on the telephone displayed these qualities

These scores compare well with user satisfaction in 2006/7, when the results for the first three qualities were all 94% or higher.

The qualities in which most improvement could be made are in reassurance and being informative.

In the former area, although only 83% agreed that the FRS control staff on the telephone were reassuring, a further 13% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and only 4% (2 respondents) actually disagreed that they were reassuring.

Although 89% agreed that the FRS control staff were informative, most of the remaining respondents (9%) were non-committal on whether they were informative, with only 2% (1 respondent) actually disagreeing.

However, overall, 86% of respondents were very satisfied and 8% were fairly satisfied with their initial telephone contact with the Fire Service, with the remaining 6% (3 respondents) being non-committal on the subject.

In 2006/7, 71% of respondents were very satisfied and the remaining 29% were fairly satisfied with their initial telephone contact with the Fire Service, resulting in a satisfaction level of 100% overall.

6.2 At the Scene

The number of valid responses is fairly high for these questions, as either the respondent or a colleague was present at the scene in 65 of the incidents.

32% of these respondents felt that the Fire Service arrived at the incident quicker than expected and 62% said that the arrival time was as expected.

In 2006/7, 23% of respondents felt that WYFRS arrived quicker than expected and 73% felt that the arrival time at the incident was as expected.

95% of the respondents said that they were kept informed of what was happening during the incident, with just 5% (3 respondents) saying that they were not kept informed.

This is a very similar result to 2006/7, when 6% (3 respondents) felt that they had not been kept fully informed of what was happening.

The questionnaire asks a number of specific questions about the qualities displayed by the firefighters at the scene, giving the following results:

Polite	97%
Helpful	97%
Informative	97%
Efficient	97%
Sensitive	93%

Based on the number of respondents who strongly agreed or tended to agree that the firefighters at the scene displayed these qualities

These are very high scores and they compare well with user satisfaction in 2006/7, when the results for the first four qualities were 94% or higher.

Although only 93% agreed that the firefighters at the scene were sensitive, the remaining 7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that they were sensitive. This represents a good improvement on 2006/7 when only 84% felt that the firefighters were sensitive, with 16% being non-committal.

98% of respondents felt that WYFRS kept the effects of the incident to a minimum, with just 2% (1 respondent) saying that this was not the case. Last year, 96% of the respondents felt that the Fire Service kept the effects to a minimum.

Overall, 94% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied and a further 5% that they were fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene. Only one respondent was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

This result is an improvement upon the 2006/7 result, when 86% of respondents said that that they were very satisfied and a further 12% that they were fairly satisfied with the service provided at the scene.

6.3 Information and Advice Given

63% of the respondents received information at the scene, in the form of general safety advice. All of these found the advice helpful and had adopted the advice given.

In 2006/7, a similar percentage of respondents (67%) had received general safety advice at the scene and all of them agreed that the advice was helpful.

Only 22% (15 respondents) received an FRS advice booklet after the incident. However, all of these agreed that the information contained in the booklet was easy to understand and that it was informative, helpful and relevant.

In 2006/7, a similar proportion of respondents received a booklet after the incident, with all of them agreeing that the booklet was easy to understand, 92% of them that it was informative and helpful, and 86% of them that it was relevant.

6.4 Non-Domestic Questionnaire Summary

Overall, taking everything into account, 100% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the service they received from WYFRS; 89% (63 respondents) said that they were very satisfied with the service they received and 11% of respondents (8) said that they were fairly satisfied with the service received from WYFRS.

This result is an improvement upon 2006/7, when 85% (56 respondents) advised that they were very satisfied with the overall service they received and a further 11% (7) said that they were fairly satisfied.

The questionnaire asks for comments where users were dissatisfied with any part of the service (even if satisfied overall) but only a small number of comments were made to this effect:

“Slow arriving at scene and getting water supply to fire”

“The amount of the bill” (*presumably in respect of a special service call*)

However, these dissatisfied comments are vastly outweighed by the comments made in respect of what the Fire Service did well. These comments are highlighted by the following selections:

“A very professional job”

“Dealt with a potential panic situation and kept any worries or fears to an absolute minimum – extremely well handled”

“Attended the scene very quickly and soon had the fire under control”

“Kept us well informed of what they were doing and why – all were superb in saving our building”

“They carried out what was required in a professional manner, dealing with the situation quickly, and were informative at all times”