

Newsletter September 2008

Welcome to the second New Zealanders' Experience newsletter. In this edition, we look at plans for Kiwis Count 2009, our new Contact Centre Community of Practice and the Common Measurements Tool. We also look at some international approaches to measuring satisfaction and improving public services.

Kiwis Count 2009

In April this year we published the results of Kiwis Count 2007, the first all-of-government satisfaction survey to ask New Zealanders about their experiences and perceptions of public services. The results were very encouraging and showed that, overall, public services are performing well, although there is still plenty of room for improvement. However, the real achievement of Kiwis Count was to provide a detailed baseline for satisfaction and trust in public services, against which we can track service improvements in the future.

We will be running the Kiwis Count survey again in late 2009, with the results available in 2010. Planning for Kiwis Count 2009 is already underway and we will be consulting with agencies on this over the next few months.

We will not be making major changes to Kiwis Count because we need to ensure comparability with the 2007 survey. Also, the survey had an excellent response rate of over 60% and we want to achieve this again. However there is an opportunity to make some improvements.

For example, we will be asking agencies about the list of public services used as a prompt for New Zealanders and whether any of these should be changed. We are also interested in how we should report the results of the 2009 survey so that agencies are best able to use them.

For more information about Kiwis Count 2007, including factsheets on all the Kiwis Count service groupings, visit the SSC website:

www.ssc.govt.nz/kiwis-count-research-survey

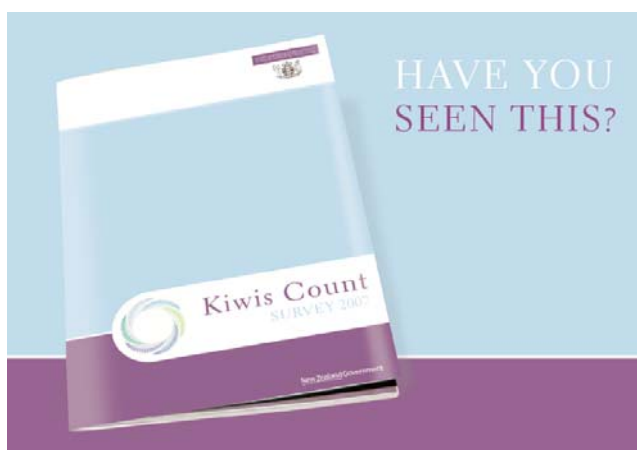
What is the New Zealanders' Experience research programme?

The New Zealanders' Experience research programme is about improving New Zealanders' experiences of State Services. Finding out what New Zealanders think about their state services is an essential starting point for making improvements. New Zealanders' Experience is a multi-year research programme run by the State Services Commission, with several inter-related projects, all aimed at providing evidence to inform improvements to services. You can find out more about the research projects on the SSC website:

www.ssc.govt.nz/nzers-experience

Contact Centre Community of Practice

The real value of the New Zealanders' Experience research programme lies in agencies using the results to improve their services. The Kiwis Count survey identified the telephone as the second most common method of contact, yet it had lower satisfaction ratings than other contact methods. Following discussions with contact centre managers over the past few months, we are setting up a Contact Centre Community of Practice - a forum for contact centre managers and their senior leaders to network and to share ideas and good practice



for improving services. The Community of Practice will hold its first meeting on 22 October in Wellington. This will be a facilitated session to identify issues for future meetings and develop a work programme. Invitations to this meeting will be sent out shortly, or please contact Mereama.Chase@ssc.govt.nz for further information.

Common Measurements Tool Update

Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Education and the Department of Labour have all recently signed up to use the Common Measurements Tool, bringing the total number of agencies signed up to thirteen. The Common Measurements Tool was launched in April 2008 and provides a set of survey questions for agencies to measure satisfaction with their own services. The common questions allow results to be compared with the national picture, with other agencies and internationally. And most importantly, it will help agencies target improvements where they can have the greatest impact on satisfaction. All State Services agencies are able to use the Common Measurements Tool free of charge: they just need to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with SSC. For more information, see the SSC website:

www.ssc.govt.nz/common-measurements-tool

Visit to Canada

Our approach to measuring New Zealanders' satisfaction with public services is based on tools and methods developed in Canada and we have established a productive working relationship with Canada's Institute of Citizen-Centred Service (ICCS). Recently, two SSC officials travelled to Canada to find out more about implementing the Common Measurements Tool. They visited the ICCS to see firsthand the Canadian versions of the tools that we have been using and to look at its benchmarking service. They also visited several public service agencies including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Region of Peel and the Government of Ontario to discuss their service improvement strategies. They learnt that in Canada, customer satisfaction is not viewed in isolation but integrated within a service policy framework. The Canadians emphasised the importance of focusing on service improvements, and establishing and monitoring service standards.

International developments

Canada

Canada has just published its fifth public service satisfaction survey, Citizens First 5. The survey shows that Canadian citizens' ratings of government services are improving over the long term. It also shows that Canadians are increasingly using multiple channels to access services and confirms the importance of the drivers of satisfaction in making improvements to services. For more information visit: www.iccs-isac.org

Singapore

The Singaporean government has recently purchased licences to use the Canadian tools for measuring satisfaction with public services and contacted the State Services Commission to find out more about how we had used them. They were very interested to hear about the Kiwis Count survey and how we are using the Common Measurements Tool. If Singapore uses these tools, this will provide us with some further opportunities for international benchmarking.

Australia

There has also been interest from Australia in the New Zealanders' Experience programme. In our last newsletter we reported that we have been asked to set up a senior officials working group to look at how our approach to measuring satisfaction with public services might be applied in Australia. This could provide some very useful opportunities for benchmarking across the Tasman. The working group will be considered further at the next Australian Public Service Commissioners conference in October.

United Kingdom

The UK government recently published a report which sets out a vision and framework for transforming public services and identifies three key characteristics of world-class services: empowering citizens, fostering a new professionalism and strong strategic leadership. The report 'Excellence and fairness: achieving world class public services' is available from the Cabinet Office website: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/work_areas/public_services.aspx

Further information

You can find this newsletter and further information about the New Zealanders' Experience research programme on our website:

www.ssc.govt.nz/nzers-experience

or email:

newzealanders.experience@ssc.govt.nz

