

# Trading Standards impact

## Results of the survey of local authority Trading Standards Services (TSS)

The survey was emailed to heads of TSS on 12 March 2010 and the survey ran until 31 March 2010.

### Response rate

62 TSS answered some or all of the questions. Regional breakdown: East Midlands, 2; East of England, 1; London, 13; North East, 3; North West, 4; Scotland, 12; South East, 5; South West, 6; Wales, 7; West Midlands, 3; Yorkshire and Humber, 3; Not specified, 3.

### Awareness of the Trading Standards impact work

95 per cent of respondents were aware of the Trading Standards impact report and/or its findings.

### Use of the national impact figures (that is, consumers save £347m annually, £6 saved for every £1 spent)

77 per cent had used the national impact figures or planned to use them in the future

- 48 per cent had used the national impact figures.
- a further 29 per cent planned to use them in the future.

Of those TSS that had used the national figures: 97 per cent had used them for internal reporting purposes (e.g. to council leaders and management).

- 93 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

Of those TSS that had used the national figures: 57 per cent had used them for external reporting purposes (e.g. press releases, public awareness).

- 71 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

Of those TSS that had used the national figures: 63 per cent had used them for internal decision making (e.g. planning and prioritisation of work).

- 89 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

### **Use by TSS of the OFT methodologies and calculator to evaluate their own impact**

66 per cent had evaluated, or planned to evaluate, their own impact using the OFT tools

- 20 per cent had evaluated their own impact using the OFT tools.
- 8 per cent were part of the OFT sample group and so had had their impact calculated for them.
- A further 38 per cent planned to evaluate their impact using the OFT tools in the future.

Of those who had used the OFT calculator, 85 per cent considered it easy to use.

Of those TSS that had evaluated their impact: 82 per cent used the results for internal reporting purposes (e.g. reporting to council leaders and management).

- 93 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

Of those TSS that had evaluated their impact: 65 per cent had used them for external reporting purposes (e.g. press releases, public awareness).

- 81 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

Of those TSS that had evaluated their impact: 71 per cent had used them for internal decision making (e.g. planning and prioritisation of work).

- 92 per cent of these TSS reported that the figures were useful for this purpose.

### **Direct outcomes reported by TSS:**

- 'It is a very simple figure which everyone can relate to. It is easy to use and has a visible impact when used as part of a presentation. TS were awarded team of the year for doorstep crime this year and this was quoted in the application.'
- 'Better senior management awareness. Taken more seriously in the Authority over budget setting issues. Useful in the Authority's 'Value for Money' assessment project.'
- 'Better councillor awareness. Understanding by staff of their worth. Better engagement with strategic directors and other senior managers. Avoidance of cuts and in fact increased resources.'
- 'Believe that this has reinforced the value of our work in the eyes of elected Members.'
- 'Better councillor awareness of benefits, and empirical justification for service.'
- 'Councillors and senior officers have been interested.'
- 'This has and will be reported as a key Business Metric internally, including to Councillors. It has helped to raise the profile of and demonstrate the value of this part of our work.'
- 'Being able to demonstrate the effect of our work (useful to have the figure in the 'back pocket' to use).'
- 'Illustrates impact more effectively than just text or anecdotal evidence.'
- 'It's difficult to say that this particular initiative achieved any specific improvement. It may have helped as a top-line figure, but more sceptical members of our committee did express doubts about the process and assumptions.'
- 'Our figures were put to our portfolio holder and director who expressed interest in them.'