

Evaluating the impact of local authority assured trader schemes

Introduction

1. The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide Trading Standards Services with suggested questions that can be used to facilitate an evaluation of the impact of their assured trader scheme. The questionnaire could also be used for purposes such as:
 - a. Producing data which helps promote your scheme to businesses and consumers, or to secure ongoing support from elected members
 - b. Providing feedback that enables you to identify areas for improvement/development of your scheme
 - c. Providing year on year comparison to show trends, and
 - d. Serving as part of the business re-audit/monitoring process for scheme operators.
2. The questionnaire comprises separate sections containing questions targeted at member businesses, non-member businesses, consumers, and both businesses and consumers, respectively. We would recommend that the relevant sections be sent out to the targeted groups separately.
3. Local authorities retain the flexibility to amend or add supplemental questions. Local authorities may also attach information on respective assured trader schemes to the questionnaire.
4. The questions may also be added to existing frameworks, such as service user satisfaction surveys, consultation processes, business surveys and so on.

Please circle the most appropriate response

To business (members)

1. Has membership of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme helped you retain existing customers?

Yes No Unable to say

2. Has membership of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme helped you to attract new customers leading to an overall increase in the number of customers?

Yes No Unable to say

If yes, please provide a rough estimate of the increase

Under 10% 11% - 20% 21% - 30% over 30%

3. Has membership of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme enabled you to handle customer complaints more effectively?

Yes No Unable to say

If yes, please explain how.

4. Have you experienced the dispute resolution procedures via a [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme member and/or local trading standards?

Yes No Unable to say

If yes, please state if you found the procedures

(a) Very effective (b) Effective (c) Fairly effective (d) Not effective

5. Do you find the training/access given on legislative changes by the trading standards officers beneficial?

Yes No Unable to say

6. What do you feel are the main benefits of membership of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme to your business?

7. How do you help to promote the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme?
- (a) By leaflets (b) By posters (c) verbally
 (d) Through public announcements (e) others
8. Has membership of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme led to increased administrative costs?
- Yes No Unable to say
- If yes, please indicate whether these were
- (a) One off implementation costs such as new documentations, remedial procedures, complaint systems
 (b) Ongoing costs to ensure compliance with the scheme such as staff, training
 (c) Both (a) and (b)
9. What if any are the other onerous aspects of membership of the [insert local authority name] scheme.
10. Please provide suggestions for improvements to your local trader scheme.

To all businesses (non-members)

11. Do you think the scope of the [insert local authority name] scheme covers your business?
- Yes No Unable to say
12. Were you aware of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme prior to receiving/completing this questionnaire/survey?
- Yes No Unable to say

If yes, what would encourage you to become a member?

To consumers

13. Were you aware of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme prior to receiving/completing this questionnaire/survey?
- Yes No Unable to say

If yes, how did you become aware of the scheme?

- (a) Previous use (b) website (c) newspaper (d) word of mouth
 (e) Leaflet (f) poster (g) other ...please give details.

14. Have you ever bought goods or services from a member of the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme?

- Yes No Unable to say

If yes, to what extent did the fact that the business is a member of [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme influence your decision to use that business?

- (a) Strongly (b) Slightly (c) Not at all (d) Can't remember

15. Would you be more inclined to buy products/services from a member of an assured trader scheme than from a non-member?

- (a) Yes (b) No (c) I don't know (d) I am indifferent

16. Would you use the [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme to help you find a business in the future?

- (a) Yes (b) No (c) I don't know (d) I am indifferent

17. What do you understand to be the main benefits of using a member of [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme?

To all businesses and consumers

18. Please circle whether you find it essential [E], desirable [D] or unnecessary [U] for the following checks to be carried out before a business can join an assured trader scheme.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| (a) Complaints history | [E] | [D] | [U] |
| (b) Visit to shop/premises | [E] | [D] | [U] |
| (c) References | [E] | [D] | [U] |
| (d) County Court Judgements (CCJ) | [E] | [D] | [U] |
| (e) Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) | [E] | [D] | [U] |

19. Please list businesses/trades you would like to find on [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme?

20. Would you nominate a business for membership on [insert local authority name] assured trader scheme?

Yes

No

Unable to say

If yes, please state the name and contact details of the business.