

Code Administrators Performance Survey

System Operator-Transmission Owner Code (STC)

National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO)

Introduction

As part of its 2016 Code Governance Review Final Proposals (Phase 3) (CGR3), it was concluded that Ofgem should commission a standardised cross-code study to monitor and assess the performance of Code Administrators in their role in respect to each code that they administer.

The study is now in its third year and is designed to evaluate the service provided by Code Administrators in accordance with the principles of the Code Administration Code of Practice (CACoP) which aims to align processes across the industry codes and identify areas of best practice.

The study is not intended to take account of the relative funding of the Code Administrators (CA), or whether they offer value for money.

In 2019, the study has been repeated to monitor performance and identify any developments. Specifically, the survey will be used to:

- **Identify:** Organisations' interaction with codes and CAs; including awareness of CA responsibilities, confidence in dealing with codes, and expectations of the service which Code Administrators should be providing.
- **Measure:** Overall performance of CA on key metrics, including overall satisfaction, support, communications and modification process.
- **Assess:** Specific aspects of service delivery, including email, websites, meetings and accession process.

Throughout the report, we will show data for 2017, 2018 and 2019 and draw comparisons as appropriate.

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Method

A mixed mode programme of research was conducted with organisations interacting with industry codes. The scope of the research included:

- Telephone discussions with Code Administrators prior to commencing the research programme. The conversations were designed to establish any major changes in service provision, thus allowing Future Thinking the ability to contextualise results from the 2019 survey.
- A mixed mode quantitative survey (online and telephone) with 203 participants to measure experience and performance of code administrators – **16 participants answering about the STC** (17 June – 12 July 2019).

- 25 follow-up in-depth interviews to get an understanding of drivers of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (15 July – 8 August).

Throughout the report, results are shown:

At a total level (aggregated results for all codes)

At a total level for the STC (due to small base sizes, results are not broken down by subgroup)

Quotes from respondents included in the report are not intended to be representative of the range of views, but rather offer a range of opinions, feedback and suggested improvements.

*Where base sizes are small, this is shown by an * for bases less than 30 and ** for bases less than 15. This indicates that the data should be treated with more caution and is indicative only.*

Industry context

The current structure and perceptions of the energy industry in which organisations operate are seen to have an impact on interactions and attitudes towards Code Administrators and should be taken into account when interpreting survey results.

Organisations acknowledge that the codes are necessarily complex and that the environment is challenging but believe fundamental changes in their administration could help to simplify processes and introduce greater consistency.

A key area for desired change in 2019 is reviewing CACoP with the belief that it can better serve customers by unifying Code Administrators. There is appetite among customers for CACoP:

- to have its own website.
- to deliver greater guidance to CAs on uniformity of information provision.
- to enforce levels of consistency around support provided through the modifications process.
- to provide weekly cross-code round-ups of forthcoming changes and expected impact on organisations.

While customers recognise the differences between codes, and the level of complexity associated with each, there remains a belief that simplifying and unifying operational aspects of codes would greatly assist CAs and the service delivery to customers.

There is also a preference for Ofgem to work more closely with CAs at earlier stages of modifications to avoid delays and further complications.

These wider external factors can influence how organisations perceive the service provided by individual code administrators.

Executive summary – STC

Overall ratings for NGESO in relation to the STC are mixed:

- Forty four per cent (seven of 16 respondents) are satisfied with the overall service offered in relation to the STC.
- Four of sixteen respondents (25%) feel that the service provided in relation to the STC has improved in the last year.
- Eighty one percent (13 respondents) feel well informed about the STC

There are high levels of satisfaction around the support offered to organisations but also some dissatisfaction with elements around ease of interpreting information and emails being easy to understand or make it clear when action needs to be taken.


Organisation profiling

The level of expertise organisations have to deal with codes remains consistent with previous years. However, availability of resource in 2019 has slightly declined.¹

More generally, in 2019, there is some evidence of larger organisations indicating that they are having some resourcing challenges.


"We are a large company but we have some challenges. A lot of our employees are not in energy, so although we are large, when it comes to engagement, it is difficult."

SELF-REPORTED ORGANISATION'S SIZE



	No. of employees			
	0-49	50-249	250-999	1,000+
Total (203)	24%	15%	14%	45%
STC (16*)	25%	0%	19%	50%

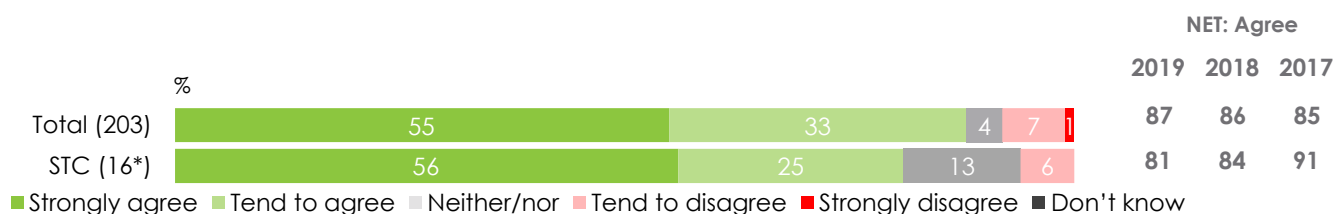
SELF-REPORTED ORGANISATION'S ENERGY MARKET EXPERIENCE



	0-5 years	6-9 years	10+ years
Total (203)	15%	7%	78%
STC (16*)	13%	19%	69%

*Low base

SELF-REPORTED SUFFICIENT ORGANISATIONAL EXPERTISE TO DEAL WITH CODES

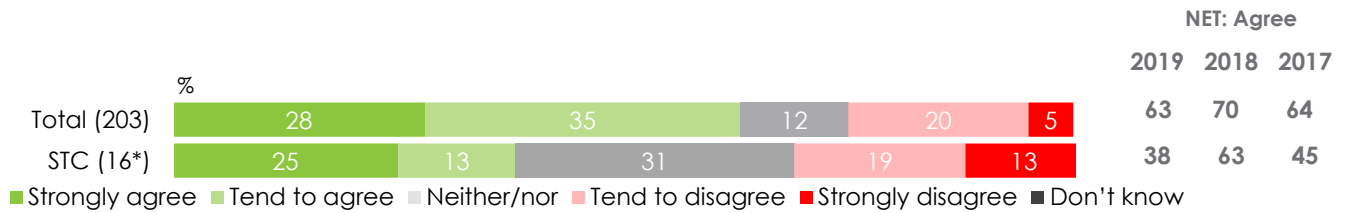


*Low base

Q1. To what extent would you agree or disagree that your organisation has sufficient expertise to enable you to deal with the codes you are responsible for or interact with? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

¹ There is a weak correlation between an organisation's self-reported level of resource and overall satisfaction with Code Administrators. However, this does not imply causation.

SELF-REPORTED ORGANISATION'S RESOURCE



*Low base

Q2. And to what extent would you agree or disagree that you have enough resource within your organisation to sufficiently deal with the codes you are responsible for or interact with? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

Challenges around availability of resource impact both small and large organisations; any support therefore has to reflect the organisation's individual circumstance rather than size.

Key findings

KPIS

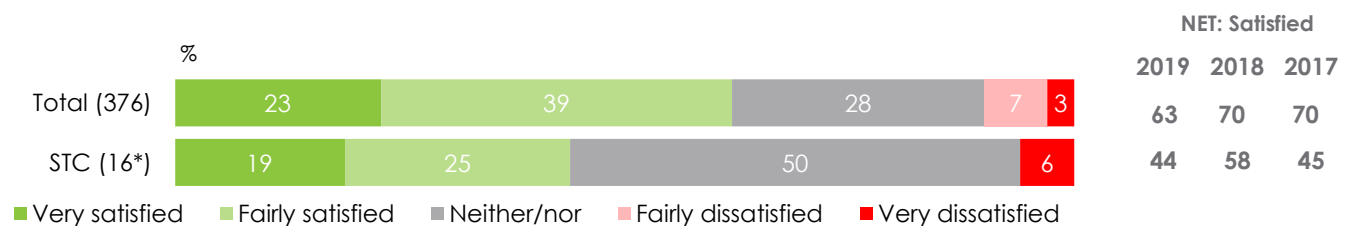
The survey collected four wide measures of satisfaction:

1. Overall satisfaction with the service provided to their organisation.
2. Satisfaction with the provision of support.
3. Satisfaction with support received when requested.
4. Perceived improvements from service received in the last year (introduced in 2018).

Despite indications that the service is improving, only a minority of the organisations are satisfied with the serviced provided in relation to the STC.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

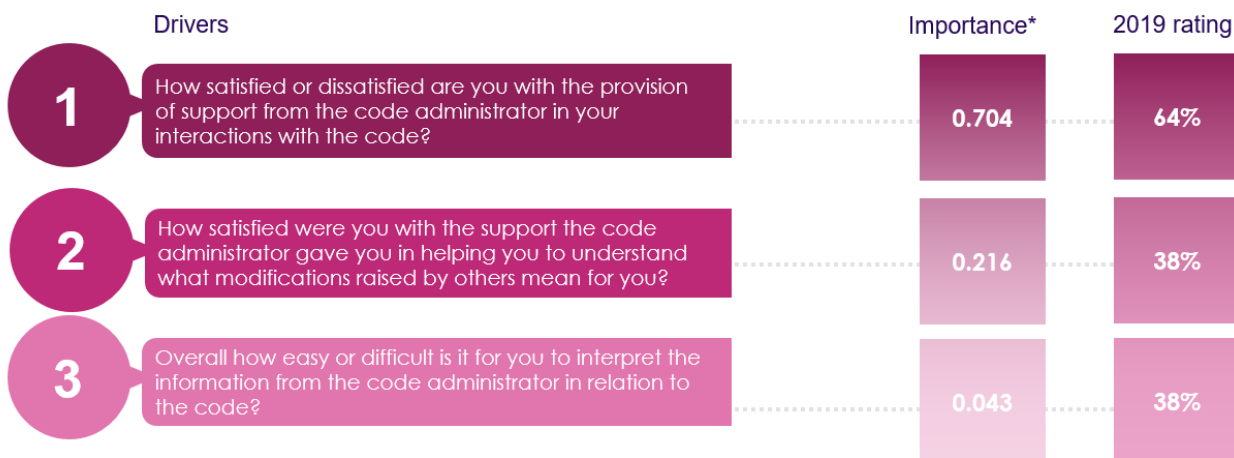
At an all organisational level, we see a shift in reported overall satisfaction, down from 70% in 2018 to 63% in 2019. We see a similar downward trend with organisations who interact with the STC, with only 44% (seven respondents) reporting being satisfied with the service that NGESO provide in relation to the STC, a similar proportion (50% - eight respondents) are neutral.



*Low base

Q10. Thinking about all aspects of your dealings with the code administrator in relation to <this/these> codes, overall how satisfied are you with the service provided to your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

To understand the aspects of service delivery that most impact overall satisfaction, key driver analysis (KDA) was conducted.² The aspects of service that have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction are:



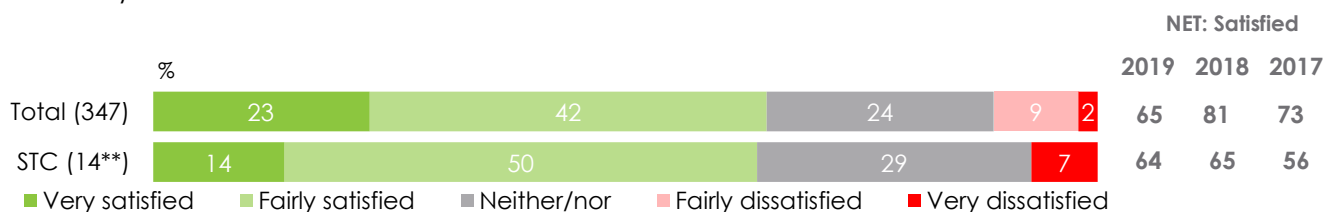
* The importance value will always have a value between -1 and +1, where, a large positive correlation means two ratings 'move together' and a negative correlation means the ratings move in the opposite direction. A correlation of 1 means an exact linear relationship (i.e. everyone gives the same rating for overall satisfaction as for provision of support.)

Due to the small base sizes, it is not possible to identify the key drivers for individual codes. The importance scores in the chart above are therefore based on the combined total for all codes and the 2019 current rating is specific to the STC.

At an overall level, the three key drivers of satisfaction continue to be around support and information. While provision of support is still the most important driver for satisfaction, it has become even more important (rising from 0.467 to 0.704 in 2019). It is however striking that the reported satisfaction around these key areas has dropped significantly at a total level as well as for the STC. There are opportunities to improve service around all the three key drivers of satisfaction. With service improvements to these core areas, it is likely that 2020 may see a positive lift in reported overall satisfaction.

SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION OF SUPPORT

After the strong uplift seen in 2018, 2019 sees a significant decline in reported satisfaction with provision of support from Code Administrators, and now stands at 65% (from 81% in 2018). Sixty four percent of organisations (nine out of 14 aware of support) are satisfied with the provision of support from NGESO).



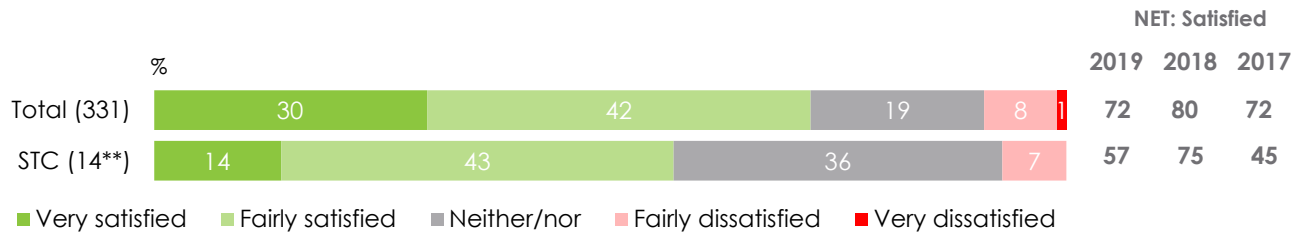
** Very low base

Q11a/Q11c. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the provision of support from the code administrator in your interactions with the <code>? Base: All responses for those aware of support (number of responses shown in brackets).

² KDA tests the strength of the correlation between ratings of core metrics against perceived level of satisfaction by which we can derive which factors have the greatest impact on overall attitudes – this is a subconscious measurement rather than a stated level of importance.

SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT RECEIVED WHEN REQUESTED

Again, we see a decline in satisfaction with support received when organisations request it. Overall, satisfaction is back to the 2017 level and stands at 72%. Fifty seven percent (eight of 14 respondents proactively seeking support) are satisfied with the support they receive from NGESO when requested on STC. Although we are unable to directly compare with 2018 (due to low samples), the decrease seen in 2019 is notable.

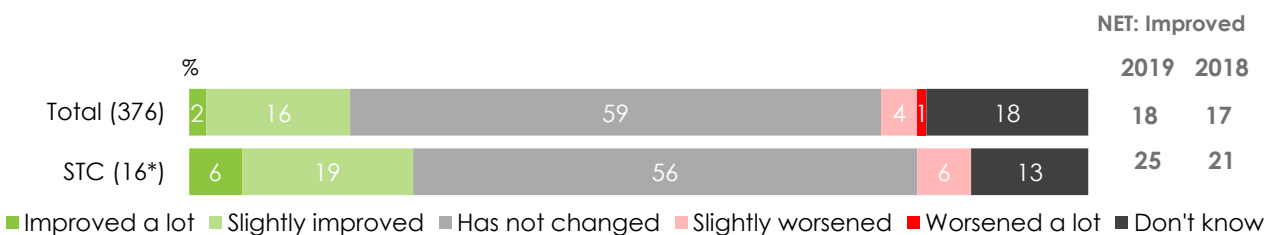


** Very low base

Q13/Q13b. And when you request support from the code administrator in relation to the <code> how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support you receive? Base: All responses for those proactively seeking support (number of responses shown in brackets).

PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENT

At an overall level, organisations tend to believe that the service they receive has not changed over the last year. For STC, 56% (nine respondents) feel it has remained unchanged and four respondents out of 16 (25%) indicate that the service has improved over the last year.



Q29b. Thinking about the service that you have received in relation to the <code> in the last year, would you say it has improved, remained the same or got worse? All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

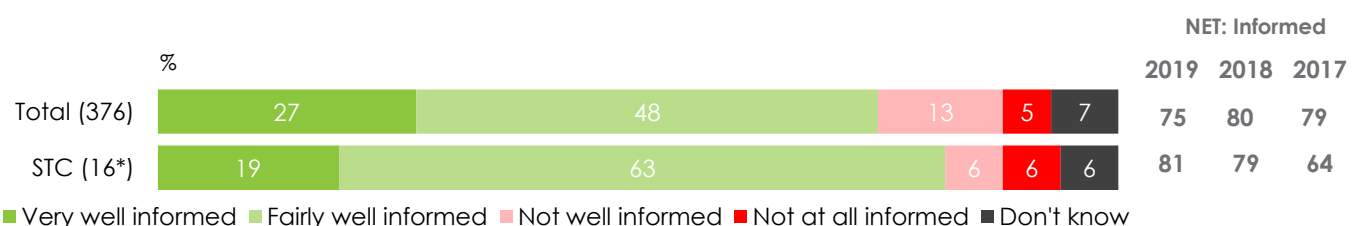
Perceptions of information provision

On average, organisations claim to receive information about the STC from NGESO twice a month and the majority believe the frequency is right.

KEPT INFORMED ABOUT THE CODE

Typically, organisations believe that Code Administrators keep them well informed about the codes; we however see a very slight decline in those feeling very or fairly informed (from 80% in 2018 to 75% in 2019).

Eighty one percent of organisations (13 respondents) feel well informed about the STC.



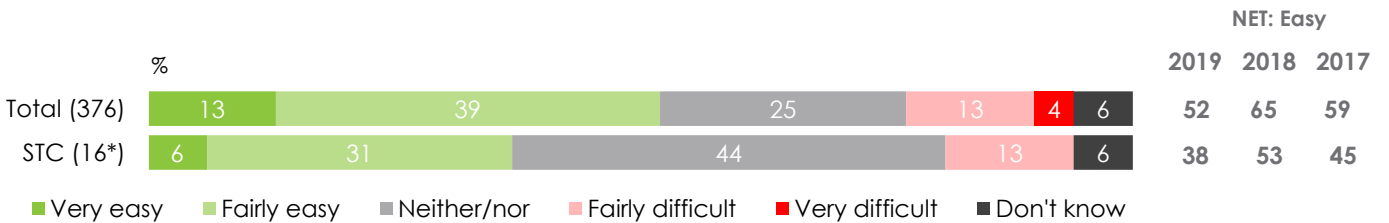
*Low base

Q14/Q14b. How well do you feel your code administrator keeps you informed about the <code>? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

EASE OF INTERPRETING INFORMATION

After the positive uplift seen in 2018, reported ease of interpreting information has declined. Overall, around half of organisations feel it is easy to interpret information from Code Administrators in relation to their codes.

Thirty-seven percent say interpreting STC information is easy (six respondents), 44% are neutral and a further 13% are dissatisfied.



*Low base

Q15/Q15b. Overall how easy or difficult is it for you to interpret the information from the code administrator in relation to Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

Perceptions of direct services

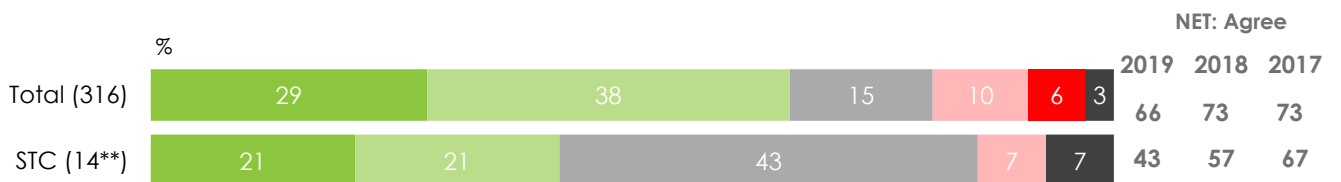
EMAIL

Organisations continue to be reliant on receiving information via email. It is generally perceived as accessible and provides a traceable audit trail. While organisations highlight some innovations that have made email communications from Code Administrators more manageable, there is a view that more can be done to streamline information sent via email.

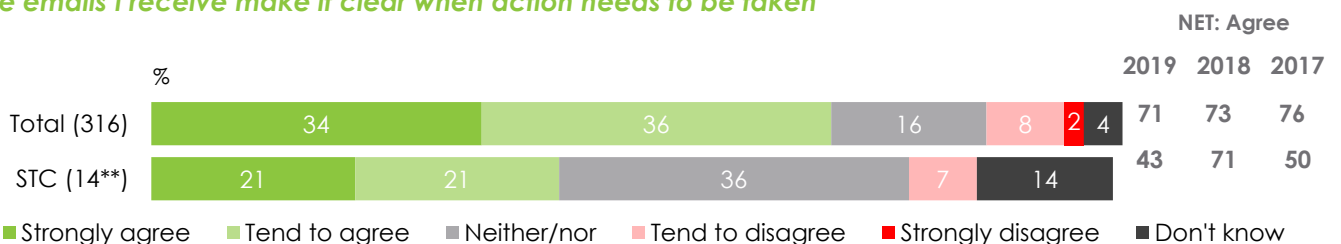
Organisations value email communications that are succinct, clear and give direction on the action (if any) that they may need to take as a result. Some organisations called for more dynamic provision of information; with email used to provide topline information and complementing digital platforms used as repositories for more detailed information.

Forty three percent (six respondents from 14 receiving emails) believe NGESO's emails in relation to the STC are easy to understand and a similar proportion think the emails make it clear when action needs to be taken – a downward trend on both KPIs.

'The emails I receive are easy to understand'



'The emails I receive make it clear when action needs to be taken'



**Very low base

Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those receiving information from code administrator (number of responses shown in brackets).

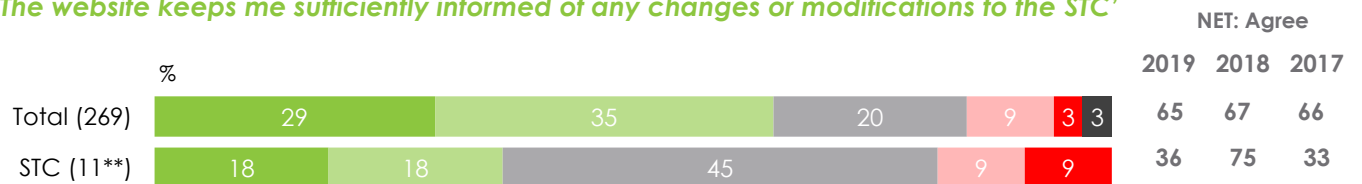
WEBSITES

Websites remain important for most organisations. They are seen as a vital resource for keeping up to date with various code changes and general information related to the code. Information included on websites can be insightful, providing businesses with the depth of understanding they require to navigate codes.

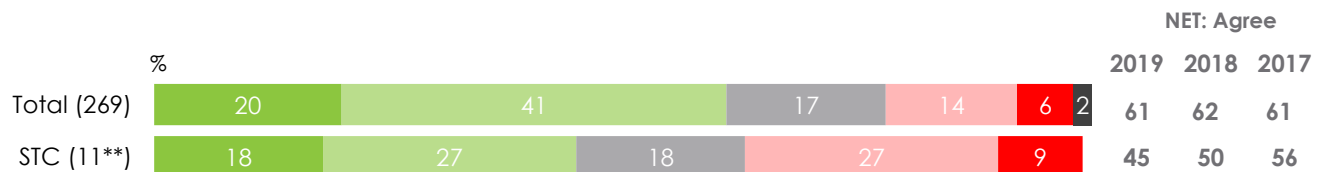
Customers feel it is critical that information that is on websites is kept up to date and is also easy to find. This continues to be an area that most Code Administrators need to work on; at an overall level, 61% indicate they are able to easily find information on the website.

There are just eleven people who have used the NGESO website in relation to the STC. Thirty six percent say that the website keeps them sufficiently informed of any changes or modifications to the STC (four out of 11 respondents using the website), with 45% neutral and a further 18% being dissatisfied. There is some dissatisfaction around the ease of finding information and ease of understanding the information.

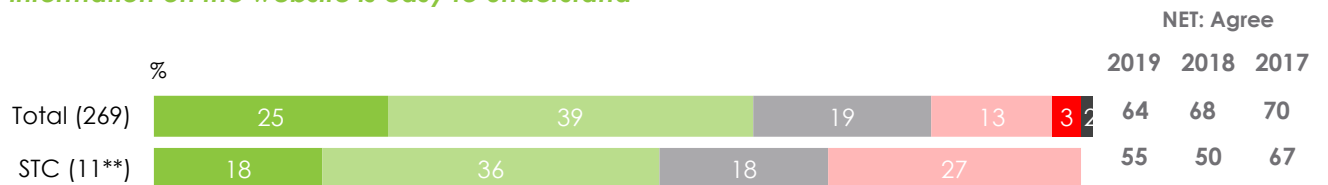
'The website keeps me sufficiently informed of any changes or modifications to the STC'



'I am able to easily find information on the website'



'The information on the website is easy to understand'



■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

**Very low base

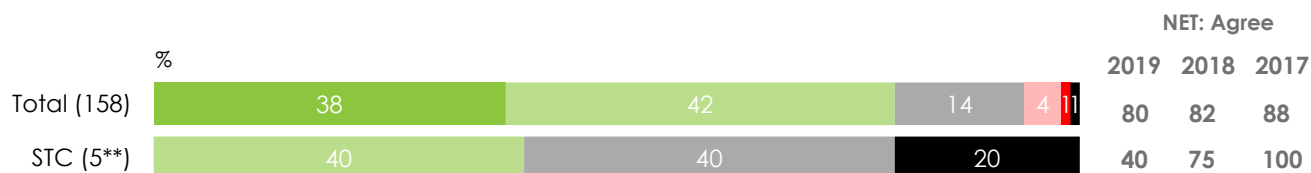
Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those using code administrator website (number of responses shown in brackets).

MEETINGS

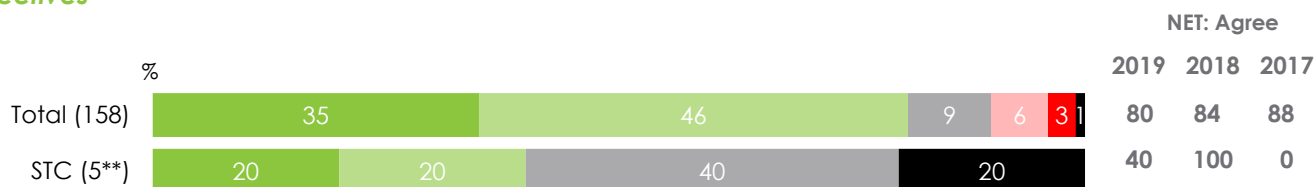
At an overall level, 42% have attended a meeting or workshop in relation to the code they interact with.

Only five individuals had attended a meeting or workshop about the STC.

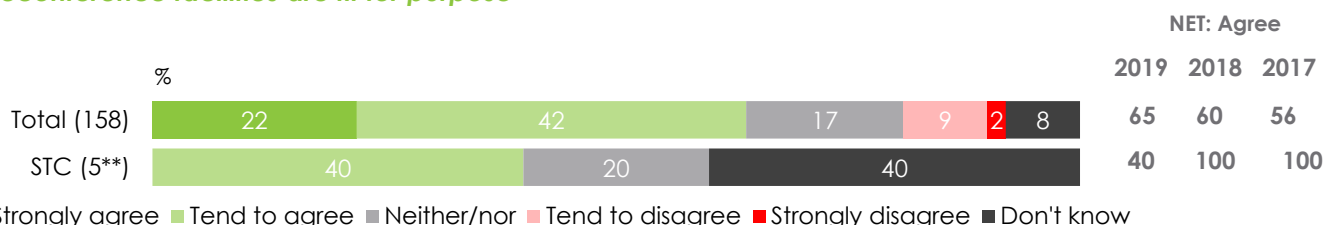
'It is easy for me to actively participate in the discussion'



'The materials that I receive prior to the meeting(s) provide me with enough information about the objectives'



'Teleconference facilities are fit for purpose'



■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

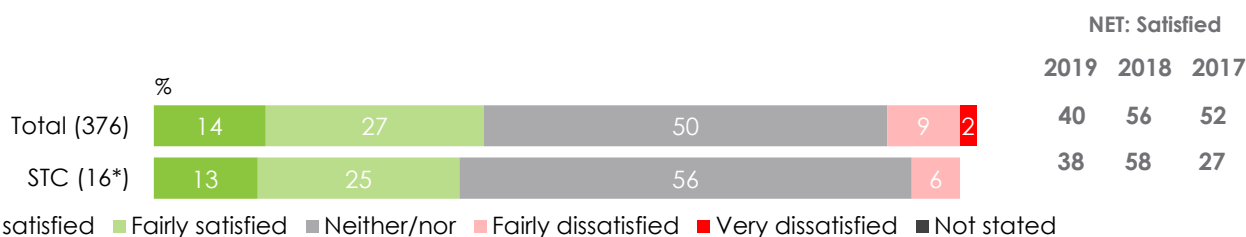
**Very low base

Q22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following in relation to the <code/codes>? Base: All responses for those attending meetings (number of responses shown in brackets).

RAISING AND UNDERSTANDING MODIFICATIONS

On average 9% have raised modification with respect to a code within the last 12 months. There were no individuals who had raised a modification in respect to the STC.

When it comes to understanding STC modifications, 38% (six respondents) of organisations were satisfied with the support they received from NGESO, with 56% being neutral and 6% dissatisfied.



■ Very satisfied ■ Fairly satisfied ■ Neither/nor ■ Fairly dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied ■ Not stated

*Low base

Q28. How satisfied were you with the support the code administrator gave you in helping you to understand what modifications raised by others mean for your organisation? Base: All responses for those involved with code (number of responses shown in brackets).

ACCESSION PROCESS

Only two individuals (out of 16 participating) are employed by organisations who became party, or began the process to become party to the STC in the last five years.

Conclusions

Overall, organisations are positive about some aspects of the service that NGESO provides in relation to the STC.

- 81% feel well informed about the STC.
- Provision of information is highly rated.
- 25% feel the service has improved over the last year.

However, just 44% are satisfied with the overall service provided in relation to the STC.

There is scope to improve some aspects of service.

- Emails are an area identified as being in need of some attention particularly around the ease of understanding the information and making it clear when actions need to be taken.