

# **HMRC Customer Contact Centres Survey 2010/11 Report**

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## **HMRC Customer Contact Centres Survey 2010/11 Report**

### **Executive summary**

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#### **Background and method**

HMRC Contact Centres provide a national telephone service for dealing with enquiries from HMRC customers. Every year approximately 60 million calls are received by the Department by people who are seeking help or information about their tax affairs or entitlement to tax credits and benefits. As Contact Centres are at the frontline of HMRC service delivery their work is key to the Department's vision of improved customer experience.

HMRC Contact Centres operate over 17 sites in the UK and deliver 16 dedicated customer helplines. Contact Centres are open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 4pm Saturday at least 362 days a year. For the purpose of this report when referring to the overall sample this includes all sites and lines of business that were sampled. Also for most of the key measures results are reported separately for the three main lines of business; tax credits, taxes and child benefit.

All data reported in the document represents customer perceptions only. The main aim of this research project is to measure customer experience and service delivery in HMRC Contact Centres by using survey data. The data will be used to improve customer contact centre services and to use the data to inform HMRC of the impact that changes to the service have on these customer perceptions.

The survey commenced on 27 September 2010 and covers all lines of business and Contact Centres. The survey was commissioned to research agency TNS-BMRB until October 2013. This paper reports the results for the first six months of the survey data between 27 September 2010 and 31 March 2011.

#### **Findings**

##### **Overall results**

Over the first six months of the survey, 82% of customers rated their overall experience of calling a helpline as very good or fairly good. Similarly 85% were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the outcome of their call.

The type of product which customers were contacting the helpline about had an impact on the rating received. Tax credits customers had a pattern of results similar to the overall sample. Child benefit helplines received better ratings whilst taxes helplines had poorer ratings than the overall sample.

##### **Getting in touch with the helpline**

The lowest ratings on the survey were received for a question "how easy/difficult it was to contact a helpline" and approximately 69% of customers stated they found it very easy or fairly easy to get in touch with the helpline. The survey asked all customers how many times they had to call before getting through to the Contact Centre and how many minutes they had to wait before their call was answered.

Nearly a third (30%) of customers said they had to call more than once to get through to the Contact Centre and 25% of customers said they had to wait 10 minutes or more to get through to a Contact Centre adviser.

The child benefit helpline had comparatively more favourable results than other helplines as 81% of child benefit customers said they had their call answered on the first attempt compared to 67% of the overall sample.

### **Reasons for calling the helpline**

The survey asked customers why they called the helpline. By far the most common reason for calling the helpline was to ask a question (64%). Thirty-nine per cent of the sample called about a specific/ongoing issue and 37% called to notify HMRC of a change in personal circumstances. Other reasons for calling included; to find out information, to correct an error or to make an application.

### **First contact resolution**

Overall 79% of callers stated the helpline was either very good or fairly good at getting things right the first time. Sixty-eight per cent of the overall sample stated they had their call resolved on the first point of contact. Customer's ratings when a call was perceived to be resolved the first time were significantly<sup>1</sup> higher for child benefit customers (87%) and tax credits customers (82%) than taxes customers (71%). There were indications<sup>2</sup> that customers calling on behalf of a business provided higher positive responses than other caller types.

Customers who stated they were calling for the first time were likely to have their query answered straight away (85% probability). These customers also tended to be happiest with their overall customer experience. When customers stated they had to call in several times previously then the chances of having the call resolved decreased. For example a customer calling in on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> time about a query only had a 47% probability of having their call resolved by the helpline.

The main reasons reported by customers for calling the helpline more than once included:

- To discuss a complicated issue.
- Address a perceived mistake by HMRC.
- Checking progress as the customer had not heard from HMRC.
- The customer did not have all the information they needed when they last called.

### **Contact Centre advisers**

The customer experience relating to HMRCs Contact Centre advisers were very favourable. For example 90% of customers stated it was very easy or fairly easy to understand the information provided by the Contact Centre adviser and 88% believed that the adviser had the right level of expertise.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "significantly" indicates that when comparing the results of different helplines the results were statistically significantly different. The test used was Chi Squared

<sup>2</sup> There is no statistically significant difference but the results show some marked differences in percentages.

Overall 96% of callers felt that the Contact Centre adviser treated them very well or fairly well. Customers were asked an open ended question, to obtain reasons (positive and negative) why they felt the adviser treated them well/poorly. There were many more positive statements than negative statements provided. Customers stated that advisers were helpful (24%), polite/courteous (21%) and dealt with their query quickly (13%). Although staff generally received very positive responses to this question, when customers were asked about potential improvements to the service 12% of all customers identified they would like to see better trained/more knowledgeable staff.

### **Conclusions**

The overall results provide positive feedback on Contact Centre performance. However, there is considerable variation in responses to different questions. Contact Centre advisers received some of the best customer ratings although some customers did suggest they would like to see better trained and/or more knowledgeable staff. First contact resolution and getting in touch were two areas with the lowest performance.

Work has already commenced to improve Contact Centres ability to 'get things right first time'. The results and feedback from the survey have been used to identify the main reasons why customers don't feel that HMRC get it right first time. This information is being used to inform the development of new service delivery initiatives. We are working on enhancements to the current Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) processes to help customers find the information they need as quickly as possible - and often without the need to speak to an adviser.

Moving forward the survey and subsequent reports will allow Contact Centres to measure customer experience throughout Spending Review 2010. It will also allow HMRC to review processes in order to improve the end to end customer journey.

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## **1. Background information**

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### **1.1 Background**

HMRC Contact Centres provide a national telephone service for dealing with enquiries from HMRC customers. Every year approximately 60 million calls are received by the Department by people who are seeking help or information about their tax affairs or entitlement to tax credits and benefits. As Contact Centres are at the frontline of HMRC service delivery their work is key to the Department's vision of improved customer experience.

HMRC regards the customer as central to their business objectives and strategy. Consequently HMRC aims to build upon and use our knowledge of how our customers currently feel about their dealings with us. This will help us understand where we need to direct improvements. We also need to track customer experience over time so that we can evaluate how we are progressing towards becoming a more customer focused organisation. HMRC Contact Centres operate over 17 sites in the UK, and deliver 16 dedicated customer helplines. Several million customers use these helplines every year. The Contact Centres operate within an environment with peaks around key deadlines, for example Self Assessment filing and Tax Credit renewals. Contact Centres are open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 4pm Saturday at least 362 days a year.

HMRC commissioned the research agency TNS-BMRB to conduct a customer experience survey of Contact Centres, firstly to collect customer perceptions of Contact Centre performance and secondly to use the information effectively to improve performance. All data reported in the document represents customer perceptions only.

### **1.2 Objectives**

The overall aim of this project is to measure customers' experience of HMRC Contact Centres. Measuring customer experience will provide information to improve the Contact Centre services and to inform HMRC of the impact that changes to the service have on these customer perceptions. The research will also be used to inform HMRC of the impact of changes in service on customer perceptions, with a view to improving service delivery.

The specific objectives of the research are:

- Monthly tracking of HMRC customers' experience of dealing with the Contact Centres.
- Provide a performance baseline and measure progress against baseline.
- Utilise results to understand how to improve the service we provide to our customers.
- Provide a representation of telephone calls handled across the Directorate at an aggregate level, by site and by type of helpline.
- Measure customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction with service and enable further quantitative analysis as to reasons why.

- Measure customers' expectations and outcomes of their Contact Centre experience.
- Provide an analysis by customer demographics and summarise their reasons for contacting HMRC via the helplines.
- Measure resolution of customer issues at the first point of contact.

### **1.3 Research method**

HMRC Contact Centres commissioned a new survey provider in 2010. The survey was designed to improve the understanding of HMRC Contact Centre customers. The survey uses a random probability methodology and covers all 16 lines of business and all 17 sites. The survey employs Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technique and each interview with customers lasts approximately eight minutes.

### **1.4 Survey sampling and timing**

Six months of fieldwork was undertaken between 27 September 2010 and 31 March 2011. Callers to the HMRC Contact Centres were asked whether or not they would take part in the survey during one of 89 one hour sampling slots during the six month period.

Sampling took place over all 17 sites and 16 lines of business, the three major lines of business being taxes, tax credits and child benefit. Sampling slots were one hour in length and located entirely within a single Contact Centre. Advisers asked customers whether they would be willing to take part in the survey at the beginning of every call they handled during the time slots. If callers were not willing to participate, advisers recorded this outcome as well as a reason for the customer not wanting to participate.

The sampling slots were worked out based on call volumes of each site and lines of business. The sampling probability of each Contact Centre day was a function of the expected volume of calls which was taken from call volume data covering April 2009 to March 2010 inclusive. Sampling took place in a two-stage process, firstly selecting 200 Contact Centre days and then, for each day, selecting one hour from the working hours available that day. The number of slots per month ranged between one and two depending on the size of the site. Nearly all sites were sampled at least once during the month.

Over the six month period there were 55,404 calls made to Contact Centres during the timeslots selected for sampling. Out of these calls 37,472 customers (68% capture rate) were asked to take part and 19,492 of customers agreed to participate in the survey (35% participation rate).

A total number of 2,196 callers were interviewed over the six month period. Further breakdown of the profiles of the sample is available in Appendix A.

### **1.5 Capture rates**

In the early stages of the survey there were some issues around capturing customers to take part in the survey. The Contact Centre Customer Service Team increased

capture rate throughout the six month period by a communication and awareness program. The overall capture rate for the period was 68%.

## 1.6 Weighting

All results and data used in the report have been weighted to reflect adjustments for the slight variation in sampling probabilities and remove any design bias.

## 1.7 Reporting conventions

For the purpose of this report the following conventions have been used in charts and tables:

- Percentages for single-response questions do not always add up to exactly 100% due to the effect of rounding.
- 'Don't know' answers have been included in most charts and tables where this is relevant. Not applicable (N/A) answers are not included.
- Charts sometimes combine the top two points of answer scales into one measure (e.g. strongly agree and agree). The text and tables indicate where scales have been combined. When adding statistics for two categories the result may not match the correct figure because of the effect of rounding.
- Base sizes are shown below all charts. These show the number of responses provided to each question.
- Where differences between two sets of results are statistically significant, this is indicated in the report.
- Where comparisons are made across lines of business, results should be treated with caution due to small sample sizes. In particular the child benefit line of business has a relatively small sample size compared with taxes and tax credits.

## 1.8 Terminology

For the purpose of the report the following terminology has been used and adopted as follows:

- **Caller type-** refers to whether the customer is a business, individual or financial agent e.g. tax accountant.
- **Helpline-** a telephone service provided to offer advice and information relating to a particular HMRC product.
- **Lines of business-** The collective different helplines which deal with different types of calls according to the type of query. For example one of the helplines is the VAT and Excise, which deals with queries on these topics.
- **First contact resolution-** Customers who have their query answered in full the first time they call the helpline.
- **Positive ratings-** Where question responses are on a five point scale the positive rating refers to the % of customers who provided one of the two positive response ratings rather than a neutral or negative response. For example where customers are asked to rate their recent experience of calling the helpline, it includes customers who stated the experience was very good or fairly good.



## 2 Survey results

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### 2.1 Customer experience

#### 2.1.1 Overall rating of the customer experience

Customers were asked to rate their overall experience of calling the helpline on a five point scale ranging from very good to very poor. Overall, 82% of customers provided positive responses, 53% rated their experience as very good and 29% fairly good.

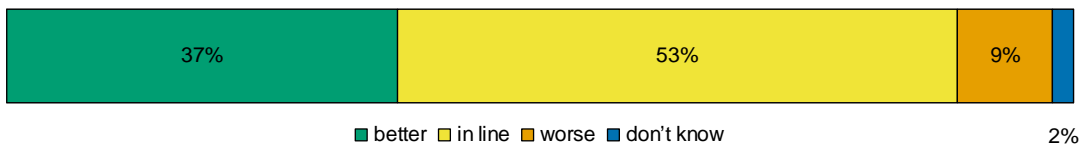
Figure 1: Overall results, how would you rate your experience of calling the helpline



Base: 2,196

Overall a large proportion of customers calling the HMRC helpline stated they thought their experience was either in line with or better than they had expected. Over 50% of callers stated their experience of calling the helpline was in line with their expectations, whilst 37% considered their experience to be better than expected.

Figure 2: Recent experience of calling the helpline compared with expectations



Base: 2,196

Customers provided good ratings for satisfaction of the outcome of their call with 85% providing positive responses (60% very satisfied, 25% satisfied).

Figure 3: Satisfaction with outcome of the call



Base: 2,196

#### 2.1.2 Conclusions

Overall the results for customer experience were good. The following sections of this report look at the other factors of customer experience such as getting in touch with the helpline and first contact resolution. It is important to look at different aspects of

the Contact Centre experience to understand what is driving the results. The sections that are covered in more depth are as follows:

- Getting in touch with the helpline.
- Reasons for calling the helpline.
- First contact resolution.
- Contact Centre advisers.
- Recommendations for improvement.

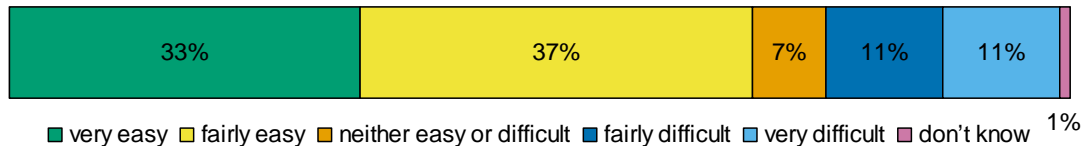
## 2.2 Getting in touch with the helpline

### 2.2.1 Overall ease of getting in touch

Customers tended to rate how easy it was to get in touch with the Contact Centre less favourably than their overall experience of calling the helpline. Overall 69% of customers gave a positive response. A third (33%) of customers considered it was very easy to get in touch, whilst 37% considered it was fairly easy to get in touch. (Combining category responses such as fairly easy and very easy does not match the exact percentage because of the effect of rounding).

Although the majority of the ratings were positive, 22% of the customers provided a negative response when asked about getting in touch. Eleven percent provided a response stating it was very difficult to get in touch with the helpline.

Figure 4: Ease of getting in touch



Base: 2,196

Two questions in the survey examine in depth further aspects around ease of getting in touch with HMRC:

- The number of calls made by the customer before getting through to the helpline.
- Call waiting times.

### 2.2.2 The number of times called before getting in touch

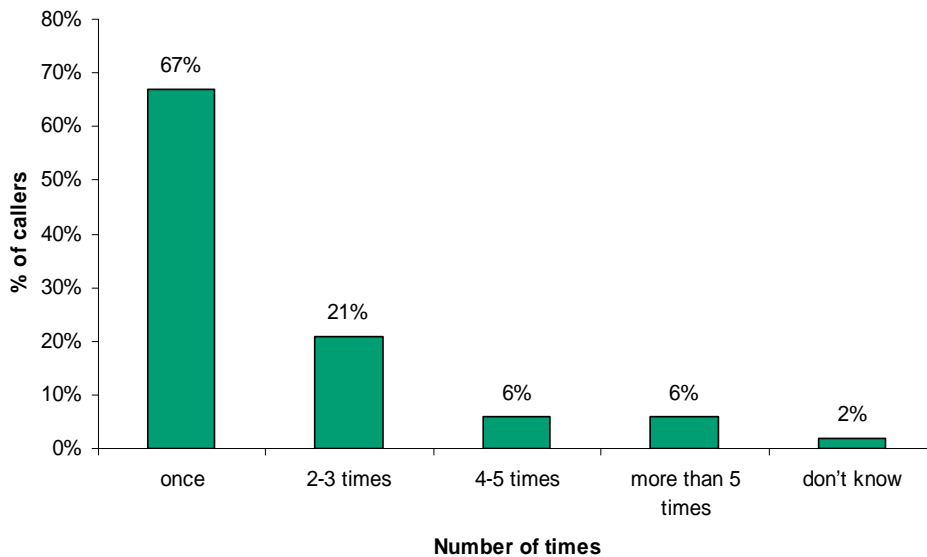
Customers were asked how many times they had to call the helpline before getting through

The results show:

- 67% of callers stated they only had to call once.
- 21% of callers stated they had to call two to three times before they could get through to the helpline.

- 12% of callers stated they had to call more than three times before they could get through to the helpline.

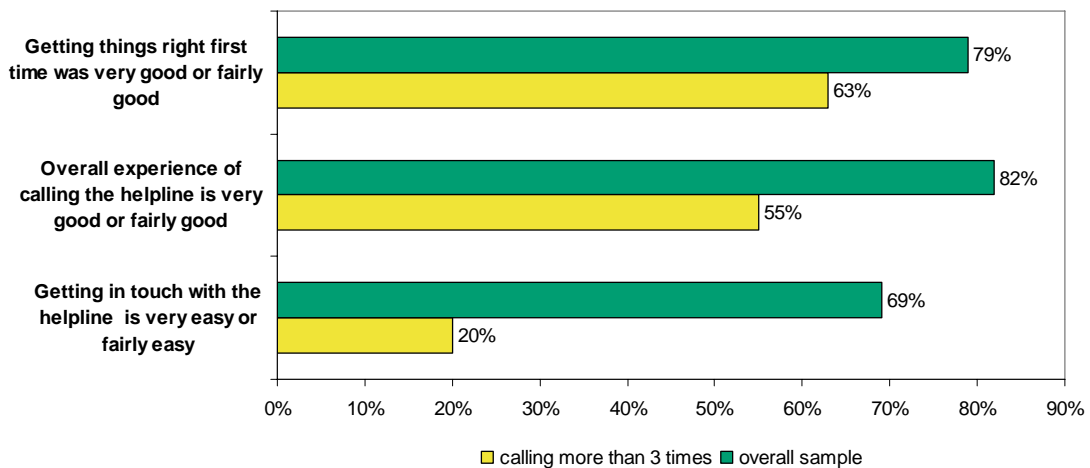
Figure 5: How many times the customer calls to get through to the helpline



Base: 2,196

Further analysis was undertaken to compare customer ratings of those who stated they had to call more than three times with customer ratings of the overall sample (figure 6 below). Response times were also examined to see if there were significant differences between those customers who stated they called fewer than three times or those customers who stated they called more than three times.

Figure 6: Getting through to the helpline and responses to key questions



Base size: Calling more than 3 times = 242, overall sample = 2,196

- Customers who said they called more than once had significantly worse responses than customers who said they called once only.
- For the customers who said they had to call three or more times, 63% of callers stated that the Contact Centre was very good or fairly good at getting

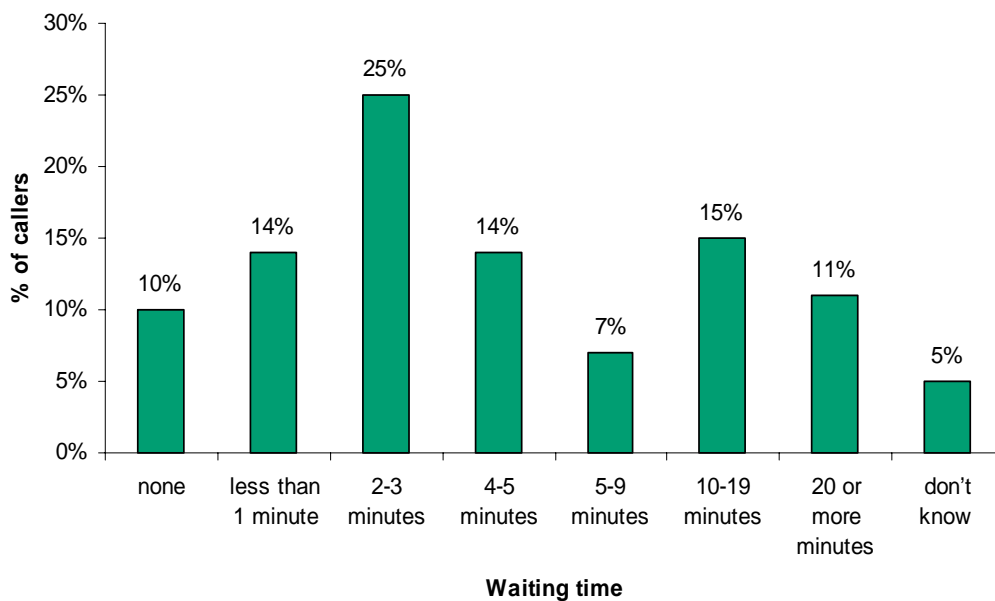
things right the first time compared with 79% of customers from the overall sample.

- For customers who said they called three or more times, 55% of callers stated their experience of calling the helpline was very good or fairly good compared with a 82% positive response rate from customers in the overall sample.
- For customers who stated they called three or more times, 20% of callers stated that it was very easy or fairly easy to get through to the helpline compared with 69% of customers in the overall sample.

### 2.23 Call waiting times

Callers were asked for their estimates of how many minutes they had to wait until they were able to speak to a Contact Centre adviser. Whilst nearly a quarter (24%) of customers stated they had to wait less than a minute, a third (33%) of callers stated they had to wait more than five minutes to get through to the helpline, with 11% of customers stating they had to wait for more than 20 minutes. The median waiting time falls within the four to five minute category.

Figure 7: The time a customer waits to get through to the helpline

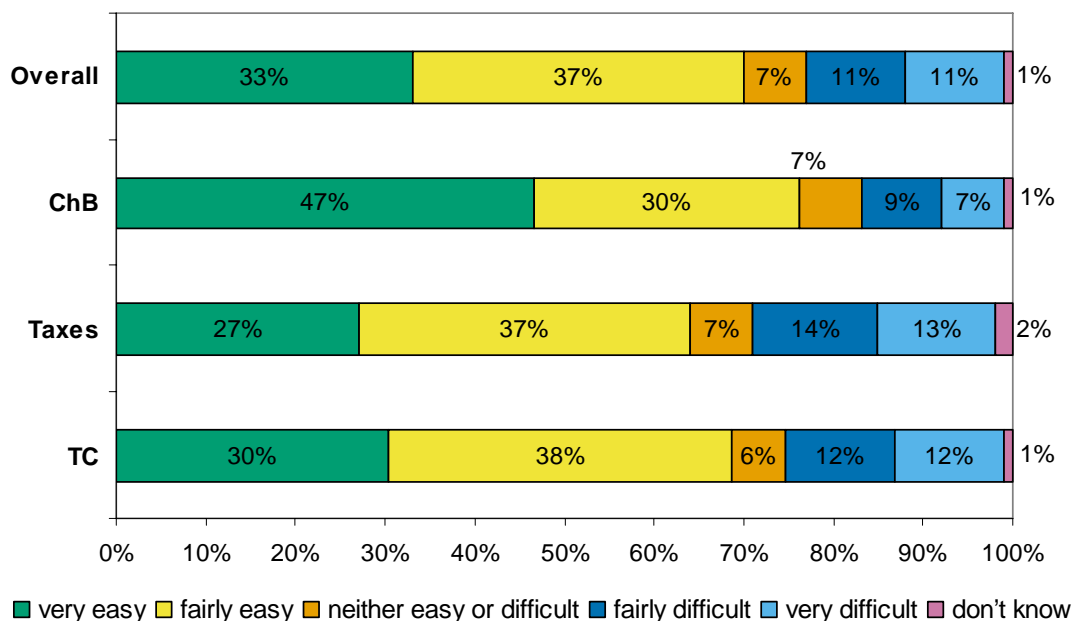


Base: 2,196

### 2.24 Getting in touch by lines of business

Broken down by line of business the child benefit helpline gave significantly more positive ratings for ease/difficulty in getting in touch than tax credits or taxes, with child benefit having 76% positive responses compared with 64% in taxes, and 68% in tax credits.

Figure 8: How easy/difficult to get in touch with helpline by lines of business



Base sizes: Overall = 2,196

Child benefit = 148, Taxes = 653, Tax credits = 881

## 2.25 Results by caller type

Results were also analysed by caller type to provide some indication of whether there were any differences in their perception of the helpline. Caller types are divided into three groups; individuals 1,889 (86%), agents 86 (4%) and business 221 (10%). There was an indication that businesses and agents were more likely to rate it as very easy and fairly easy to get in touch with the helpline than individuals.

## 2.3 Reasons for calling

### 2.31 The overall sample

The questionnaire asked customers why they had contacted the helpline. Customers were able to provide more than one reason for calling, hence any percentages reported will not add up to 100 per cent. Table 1 below, lists the reasons why people called the helpline. The most common reason for calling, from nearly two-thirds of respondents, was to ask a question, whilst 39% of the customers called regarding a specific/ongoing issue. Some 37% of those interviewed stated they called to notify HMRC of a change in personal details/circumstances, whilst 22% called to find out where to find information and nearly 20% called to correct an error.

Table 1: Reasons for calling the helpline

Reason for calling	Numbers	Percentages
To ask a question	1413	64%
Regarding a specific/ongoing issue	866	39%
To notify HMRC of a change of personal circumstances/details	806	37%
To find out where to find information	493	22%
To correct an error	412	19%
To make an application	309	14%
To query a bill	286	13%

To ask for a form	274	13%
To make a transaction	130	6%
To check details/information	40	2%
Other	7	Less than 1%

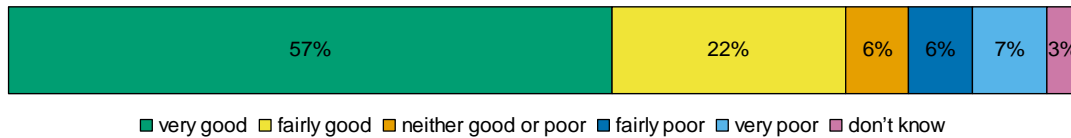
Base: 2,196

## 2.4 First contact resolution

### 2.41 Overall rating

Customers also provided general ratings of how good they found the helpline at getting things right the first time. The overall question measures customer perceptions of first contact resolution. Results show that 79% of customers rated first contact resolution positively, with 57% stating that the helpline was very good at getting things right first time (Figure 9).

Figure 9: First contact resolution

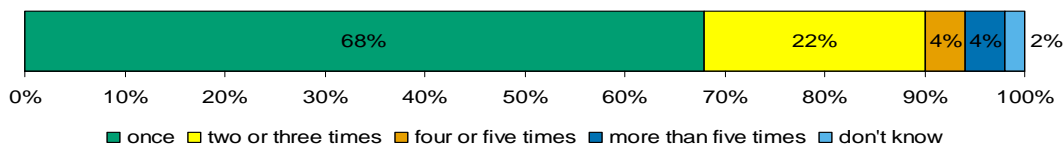


Base: 2,196

### 2.42 Number of calls made

To further test first contact resolution an additional question asked respondents how many times the customer had spoken to a helpline adviser about their issue. Around two thirds (68%) of people interviewed stated they had their call resolved at the first point of contact. Twenty-two per cent of respondents stated they had to call two or three times, whilst eight per cent had to call four or more times on a particular matter. Eighteen percent of those interviewed stated that their query had not yet been resolved.

Figure 10: Percentage of customers calling the helpline a certain number of times about a particular issue



Base: 2,196

### 2.43 Reasons for calling in more than once

Customers were asked to describe why their call was not resolved at the first point of contact. Customers were able to provide more than one answer hence any percentages reported will not add up to 100 per cent. The most common reported response from customers was that they had a complicated issue to resolve (39%).

Other common reasons for multiple contacts included progress chasing (29%) and requesting further information (25%).

*Table 2: Why callers needed to talk to a Contact Centre adviser more than once about the particular matter*

Reason for calling more than once	Total	Percentage of TOTAL responses
Complicated issue	261	39%
Have not heard back/had a reply from HMRC	195	29%
Caller did not have all the information they needed when they last called	167	25%
HMRC made a mistake	148	22%
Caller made a mistake	30	4%
Problem not resolved	29	4%
Caller was told to call back. Helpline called customer back	21	3%
Told to call/put through to another department/helpline	14	2%
Had problems getting through/waited too long	8	1%
Other	43	6%
Don't know	40	6%
TOTAL of all responses	948	

*Base: 667. Multiple response question*

Participants who had called the helpline four or more times were twice as likely as callers who had called two to three times to state that the reason was because they had not heard back or had a reply from HMRC.

## 2.44 Call resolution

All callers were asked if their call had now been resolved. Results showed that 85% of customers who stated they had called in once about their query said they had their call resolved. When customers had to call in more times about a particular issue then the probability of having their call resolved decreased the more times customers called in. For example when a customer stated they had to call in on the fourth and fifth time they only had a 47% percent chance of having their call resolved. There is a slight reversal in this trend when people call in for five or more times.

*Table 3: Probability of having call resolved according to number of times called*

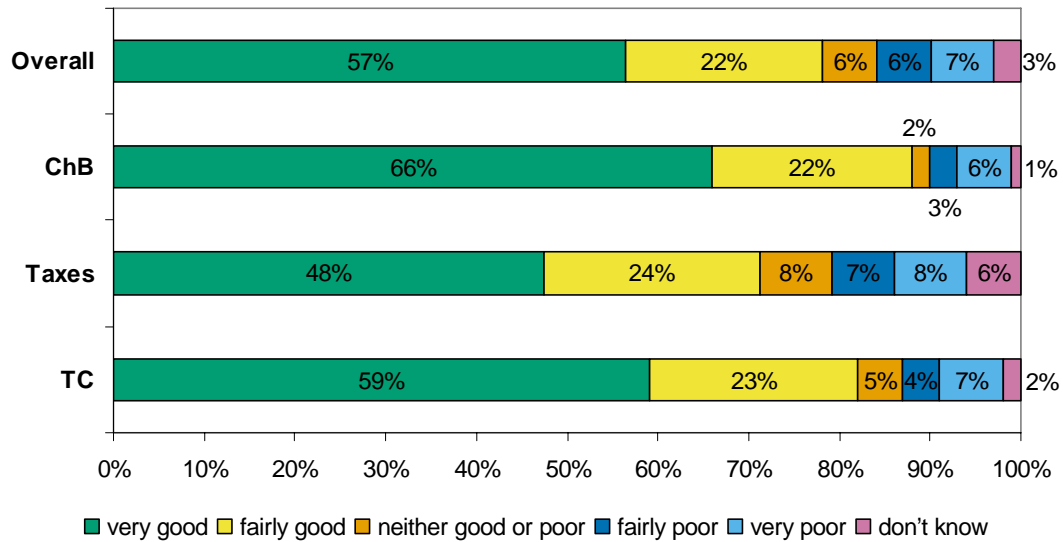
Number of times called	Probability of having call resolved
Once	85%
2-3 times	71%
4-5 times	47%
More than 5 times	58%

*Base: 2,196*

## 2.45 First contact resolution by lines of business

All three lines of business had significantly different results for customer ratings of how they found the helpline at getting things right first time. A breakdown of results by line of business shows that child benefit (87%) and tax credits (82%) had significantly better results for customer positive ratings on this question than taxes (71%).

Figure 11: Ratings of first contact resolution by lines of business



Base: 2,196

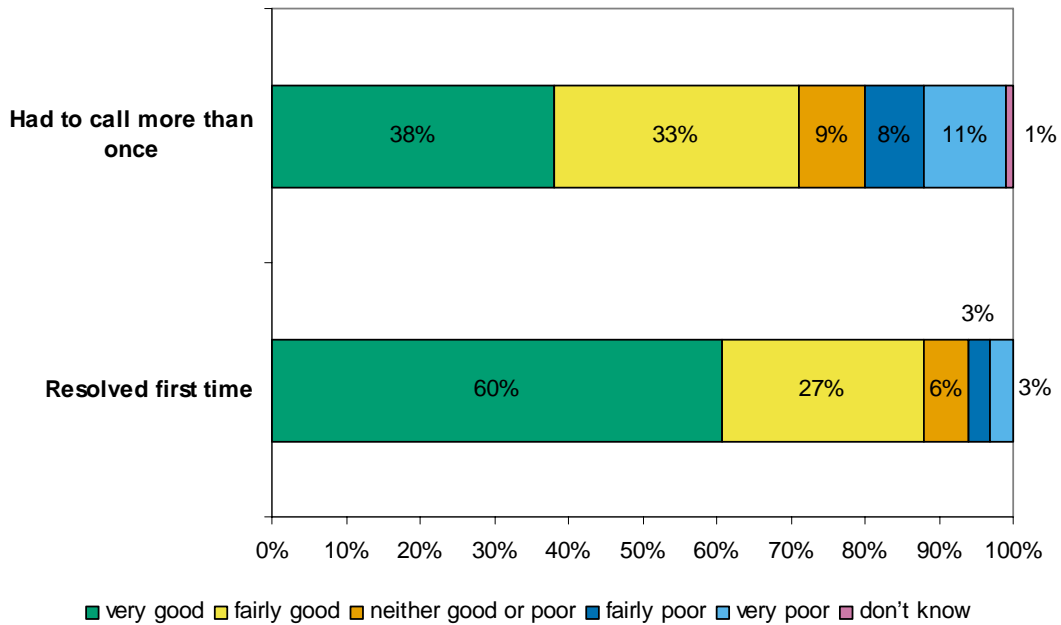
## 2.46 First contact resolution and customer ratings

Customers who stated they had their call resolved first time and those who stated they did not were compared to see if their perceptions of other key areas of experience were different.

Figures 12-14 display results for three questions. For all three questions, customers who considered their call was resolved on first contact reported higher ratings than those who did not.



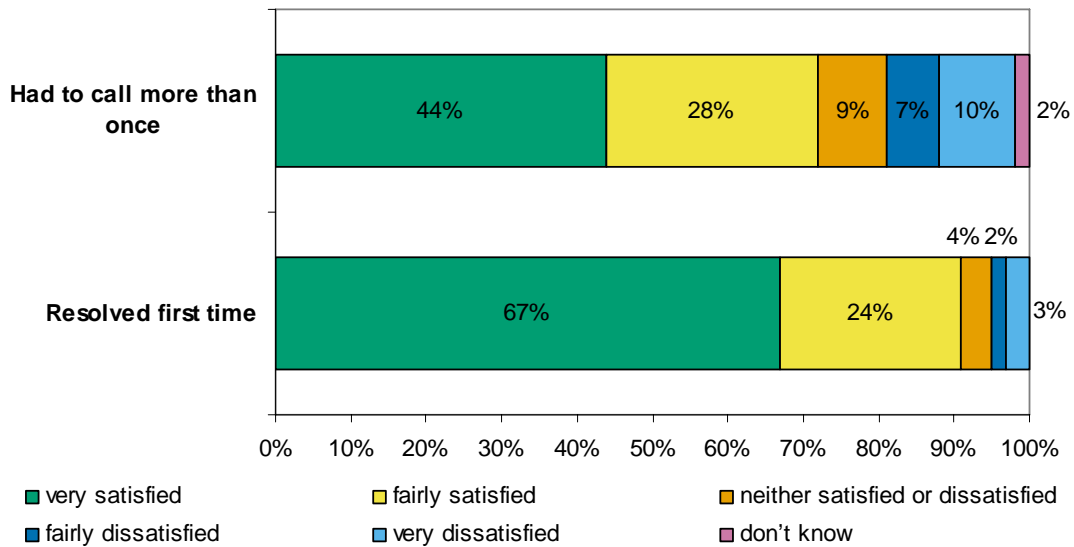
Figure 12: Overall customer experience and first contact resolution



Base sizes: Calling in once = 1,494, Calling in more than once = 667

Eighty eight percent of customers who considered that their call was resolved first time rated their overall experience of calling the helpline positively. This compared with only 71% of customers who didn't consider their call was resolved the first time.

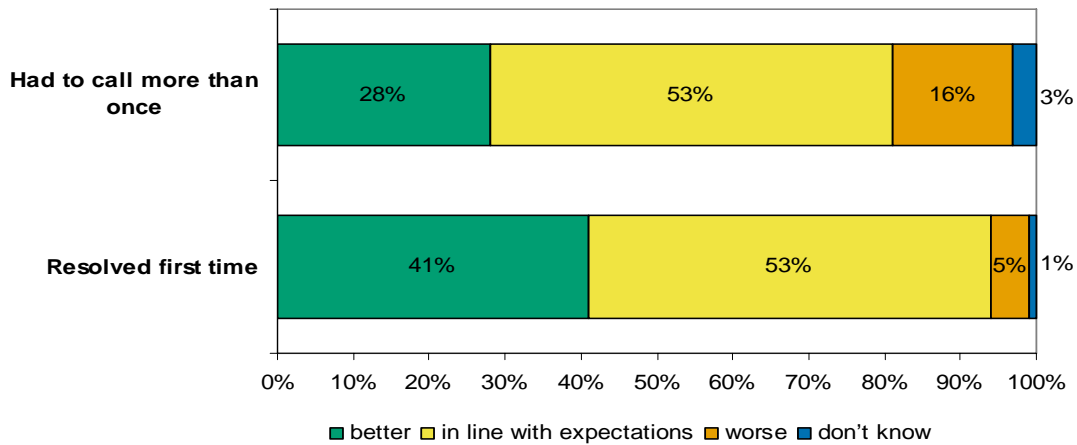
Figure 13: Customer satisfaction with outcome and first contact resolution



Base sizes: Calling in once = 1,494, Calling in more than once = 667

Ninety one percent of customers who considered they had their call resolved the first time were also satisfied with the outcome of their call, whilst fewer (72%) customers who stated they had to call more than once were satisfied with the outcome of their call.

Figure 14: Customer expectations and first contact resolution



Base sizes: Calling in once = 1,494, Calling in more than once = 667

In Figure 14 two groups of customers rate how their call compared with their expectations of the call. The two groups were customers who stated they called in more than once and customers who stated their call was resolved first time. Customers who stated their call was resolved first time were more likely to state that the call was better than expected (41%) compared to customers who called in more than once (28%).

## 2.5 The Contact Centre advisers

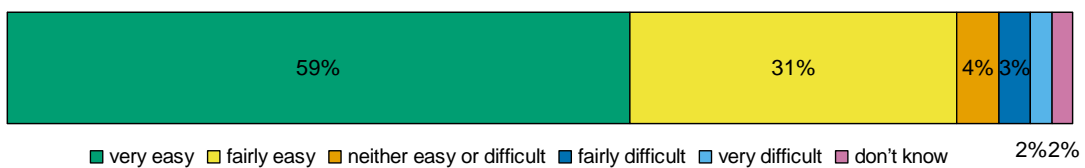
The survey includes a number of questions which rate customer perception of Contact Centre adviser performance including:

- Ease of understanding the information provided.
- Ease of understanding what the customer should do next.
- Whether the adviser had the right level of expertise to answer the questions.
- How well the adviser treated the customer.
- How far the customer thought the adviser understood their query.

### 2.51 Ease of understanding the information

Customers were asked to rate how easy they found it to understand the information provided by helpline advisers on a five point scale ranging from very easy to very difficult.

Figure 15: Ease of understanding the information provided



Base: 2,196

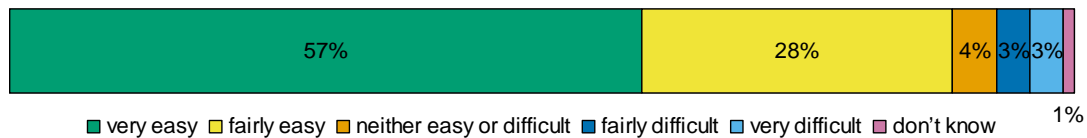
Ninety percent of customers reported that it was easy to understand the information provided with 59% of customers stating it was very easy and 31% stating it was fairly

easy. Ninety percent of customers gave positive responses that the Contact Centre adviser understood the query.

### 2.52 Ease of understanding what to do next

Customers were asked if they knew what they needed to do next to resolve their query and generally provided a very positive response. More than four in five people (85%) stated it was easy to understand what they had to do next (Figure 16). With 57% stating it was very easy and 28% reporting it was fairly easy.

Figure 16: Customer understanding of what to do next

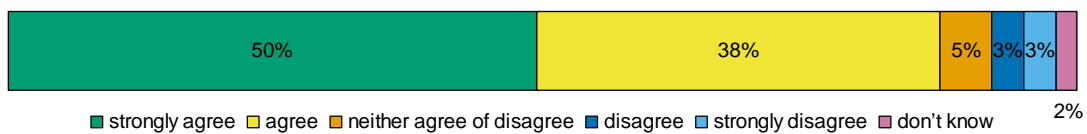


Base: 2,196

### 2.53 Having the right level of expertise

Customers were asked to report if the adviser they spoke to on the helpline had the right level of expertise. Overall results were positive with 88% of customers agreeing with this statement. Half of the customers (50%) stated that they strongly agreed advisers had a high level of expertise whereas 38% of customers agreed.

Figure 17: The Contact Centre adviser had the right level of expertise

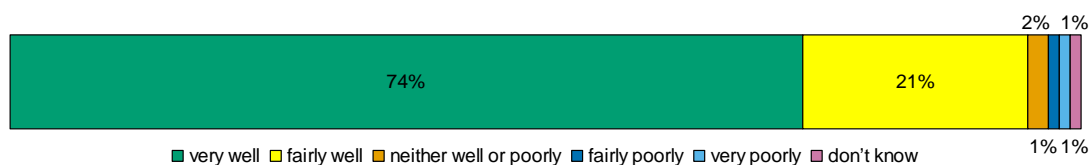


Base: 2,196

When findings were split across the three main lines of business, the majority of results relating to Contact Centre advisers were similar across the different lines of business. However there was an indication that positive responses were slightly higher for child benefit customers than other lines of business.

### 2.54 How the adviser treated you

Figure 18: How well or poorly the Contact Centre adviser treated you



Base: 2,196

Ninety six percent of customers stated they were happy with how the adviser treated them, with a large percentage (74%) stating they felt they were treated very well and 21% that they were treated fairly well.

Participants were asked an open ended question, to obtain reasons (positive and negative) why they felt the adviser treated them well/poorly. The reasons given were much more likely to be positive than negative.

Of the customers who stated the adviser treated them well the most common positive reason given was that staff were helpful (24%). Twenty-one percent of participants stated that the staff were polite and had a nice manner. Despite the majority of responses being positive participants did state that they had problems getting through to the helpline and also mentioned that staff sometimes couldn't resolve their problem: The most common negative response from customers being that staff couldn't help/answer the query (2%).

## 2.6 Recommendations for improvement

Customers were asked to state how they would like to see the helpline service improved. Approximately 38% of those interviewed stated that they didn't see any need for improvements. The top eight recommendations are displayed in Table 4 below:-

*Table 4: Improvements to the helpline suggested by customers*

Recommended improvement	Numbers	Percentage of total sample
No improvement	826	38%
Improve time taken to get through to a member of staff	664	30%
Better trained/more knowledgeable staff	270	12%
Not to be put on hold before speaking to an adviser	90	4%
Greater consistency of information between Contact Centre advisers	87	4%
Remove automated messages at the start of calls	80	4%
Other	82	4%
Don't know	158	7%

*Base: 2,196. Multiple response question*

Around 30% of the sample would have liked to see an improvement in the time taken to get through to staff. A total of 270 respondents, 12%, suggested they would like to see better trained or more knowledgeable staff.

A couple of the recommended improvements related to call routing and automated messages. For instance approximately 4% would like to see removal of automated messages and 4% do not want to be put on hold before speaking to an adviser.

### 2.61 Recommendations by lines of business and type of customer

When the recommendations were split by line of business, more taxes helpline customers suggested that HMRC provide better trained staff rather than the child benefit helpline. Also there was an indication that agents were more likely to state they would like to see better trained staff than individuals or business customers. Child benefit customers were more likely to state there was no need for improvement to the service than customers from other lines of business.

### 3 Conclusions

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Overall the results from the survey have been positive and the overall ratings of the customer experience remained constant over the 6 month period. At present the results indicate that first contact resolution and getting in touch were two areas with comparatively lower performance. Results suggest that both first contact resolution and the number of times a customer had to call the Contact Centre have an impact on overall customer experience. Work is also ongoing to reduce the need for the customer to contact us and increasing the percentage of calls handled via telephony self service and online.

The general pattern of first contact resolution shows that the more times a customer states they make contact the less likely they are to have their call resolved. Data from the survey shows that the main reasons for multiple calls are complicated situations, HMRC mistakes, not having a reply from HMRC and not having the right information to hand. These are four areas that HMRC have started to investigate to determine whether there are any patterns or key themes emerging which can be addressed. This information will be used to inform the development of new service delivery initiatives.

The evidence provided shows that the Contact Centre advisers are highly regarded by customers. Contact Centre advisers received very positive responses for all of the individual questions. However, customers did highlight they would like to see more knowledgeable/better trained staff.

Moving forward the survey and subsequent reports will allow Contact Centres to measure Customer Experience throughout Spending Review 2010. It will also allow HMRC to review processes in order to improve the end to end customer journey.

## Appendix A: un-weighted sample profile

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Table A1: Income distribution of sample

Income	% in sample
Up to £6,420	9%
£6,421- £9,999	8%
£10,000-£19,999	20%
£20,000-£29,999	13%
£30,000-£39,999	8%
£40,000-£50,000	6%
Over £50,000	9%
Refused	11%
Don't know	16%
Total	100%

Base: 2,196.

Table A2: Ethnicity of sample

Ethnicity	% in sample
White	90%
Mixed	1%
Asian/Asian British	3%
Black/Black British	4%
Chinese	1%
Refused	1%
Total	100%

Base: 2,196.

Table A3: Gender

Gender	% in sample
Male	42%
Female	58%

Base: 2,196.

Table A4: Employment status of sample

Employment status	% in sample
Working > 30 hours	36%
Working 8-29 hours	20%
Working < 8 hours	1%
Self employed	11%
Not paid/looking after home	10%
Full time student	2%
Unemployed	8%
Retired	12%
Temporary/permanently sick	1%
Total	101%

Base: 2,196.

Table A5: Age profile of the sample

Age profile	% in sample
Refused	2%
19 or under	1%
20-29	17%
30-39	28%
40-49	24%
50-59	13%
60-64	7%
65-69	5%
70-79	3%
80 or over	0%
Total	100%

Base: 2,196.

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## Appendix B: Survey capture and interviews achieved

Table B1: Survey outcomes

	Number	Percentage (total)	Percentage (effective total)
<b>Total sample issued</b>	4,026	100%	N/A
Bad sample / wrong number	570	14%	
<b>Total effective sample</b>	3,456	86%	100%
Total interviews conducted	2,196	55%	64%
Refusals	519	13%	15%
No contacts	741	18%	21%

Table B2: Number of interviews conducted by line of business

Line of business	Number of interviewers
Taxes	856
Tax Credits	780
Child Benefit	139
OSH	90
VAT & Excise	86
NI	58
CIS	46
Employers Helpline	41
Taxes DMB	29
Debit Card	19
eCS	15
TC DMB	13
HiPG	10
CTF	5
Stamps	5
Orderline	4

Table B3: Number of interviews conducted by site

Site	Number of interviews
Bathgate	318
Sunderland	257
Cardiff	208
Dundee	179
Newcastle	173
Liverpool	152
East Kilbride	147
Peterlee	130
Glasgow	86
Longbenton	85
Lillyhall	81
Merry Hill	80
Manchester	76
Bradford	71
St Austell	61



Portsmouth	52
Belfast	40

*Table B4: Number of interviews conducted by site and capture rates for the 6 monthly period*

Site	Call volumes	Capture rate
<b>Overall</b>	60639	70%
Bathgate	12501	69%
Sunderland	4315	69%
Cardiff	5136	71%
Dundee	5536	72%
Newcastle	5417	70%
Liverpool	4432	62%
East Kilbride	3671	68%
Peterlee	4859	50%
Glasgow	1625	70%
Longbenton	4797	84%
Lillyhall	792	77%
Merry Hill	1817	85%
Manchester	1655	66%
Bradford	1641	70%
St Austell	1234	74%
Portsmouth	647	79%
Belfast	564	76%