

# **Independent Review of Quality Arrangements under the MoJ Language Services Framework Agreement**

***Contract Reference: 3640 Professional Services***

**Survey Analysis – Justice system and end users**

Ministry of Justice

November 2014

Matrix Knowledge formally joined the global consultancy group Optimimity Advisors in September 2014. As its European arm, the newly combined business trades as Optimimity Matrix to run the public policy arm of Optimimity Advisors' global operations." For more info go to: [www.optimimitymatrix.com](http://www.optimimitymatrix.com). Optimimity Matrix and Matrix Knowledge are trading names of TMKG Limited (registered in England and Wales under registration number 07722300) and its subsidiaries: Matrix Decisions Limited (registered in England and Wales under registration number 07610972); Matrix Insight Limited (registered in England and Wales under registration number 06000446); Matrix Evidence Limited (registered in England and Wales under registration number 07538753); Matrix Observations Limited (registered in England and Wales under registration number 05710927); and Matrix Knowledge Group International Inc. (registered in Maryland, USA under registration number D12395794).

**Disclaimer** In keeping with our values of integrity and excellence, Optimimity Matrix has taken reasonable professional care in the preparation of this document. Although Optimimity Matrix has made reasonable efforts, we cannot guarantee absolute accuracy or completeness of information/data submitted, nor do we accept responsibility for recommendations that may have been omitted due to particular or exceptional conditions and circumstances.

**Confidentiality** This document contains information which is proprietary to Optimimity Matrix and may not be disclosed to third parties without prior agreement.

Except where permitted under the provisions of confidentiality above, this document may not be reproduced, retained or stored beyond the period of validity, or transmitted in whole, or in part, without Optimimity Matrix's prior, written permission.

© TMKG Ltd, 2014

## Contents

1.0	Introduction .....	5
1.1	Information about the respondents.....	5
1.2	Quality assessment of current interpretation / translation provided by Capita TI .....	8
1.3	Allocation of jobs.....	19
1.4	Monitoring, evaluation and quality maintenance procedure .....	23
2.0	Respondents' Recommendations.....	25

## Table of Figures

Figure 1:	'What type of organisation do you work for?' (N=82) .....	5
Figure 2:	'How familiar are you with the quality requirements (qualifications and experience) for interpreters working in the UK justice system?' (N=42).....	6
Figure 3:	'Please explain how you are involved with the MoJ language services?' (N=35) .....	7
Figure 4:	Please rank the importance, in your opinion, of the following criteria for an interpreter / translator of acceptable quality on a scale of 1 to 5. (N=51) .....	8
Figure 5:	'How familiar are you with the different tiers of face to face interpreters and the differences between them?' (N=13).....	9
Figure 6:	'Do you match the type of case, in terms of difficulty of interpretation work, with the tier of the interpreter you request (i.e. do you request a certain tier in order to ensure adequate quality for the job)?' (N=12) .....	10
Figure 7:	'When booking an interpreter with Capita TI, do you generally get the interpreter with the tier you request?' (N=12).....	11
Figure 8:	'If you did not get the interpreter tier you requested, to what extent did you experience any problems related to the quality of the interpretation?' (N=11).....	12
Figure 9:	'For respondents who are working in courts and are responsible for booking interpreters: How often do you consult the judge for approval when a tier 3 interpreter is offered for interpretation in court proceedings?' (N=12).....	12
Figure 10:	'How would you rate the quality of the interpreters / translators in the justice system in the following periods?' (N=36, 35) .....	14
Figure 11:	'To what extent do you agree that the overall quality of interpreters/translators has improved since the Framework Agreement came into force (i.e. January 2012)?' (N= 37).....	15
Figure 12:	'In your opinion do the interpreters and translators appointed through the Framework Agreement provide a quality of service which safeguards the fairness of proceedings?' (N=35) 15	
Figure 13:	'Have you experienced any problems with regards to quality with face to face interpretation (tier 1,2,3 or rare) provided through the Framework Agreement (i.e. since January 2012)?' (N=34) .....	16

Figure 14: 'Have you experienced any problems with regards to quality with Interpretation for deaf and deafblind, Telephone interpretation and/or Translation provided through the Framework Agreement (i.e. since January 2012)?' (N=31) ..... 16

Figure 15: 'What do you think are the causes for the problems regarding quality?' ..... 17

Figure 16: 'Do you have experience with interpreters / translators working off-contract (those that are not contracted by Capita TI)?' (N=30) ..... 17

Figure 17: 'When you work with interpreters / translators off-contract, how do you ascertain that you receive the appropriate quality?' (N=17) ..... 18

Figure 18: 'Have you experienced problems with the quality of language services provided by interpreters/translators working off-contract?' (N=18) ..... 18

Figure 19: 'To what extent do you agree that the interpretation/translation work in your organisation can be provided by different skill levels (i.e. tiers) of interpreters / translators?' (N=29) ..... 19

Figure 20: 'Under the Framework Agreement different levels of qualifications, skills and experience determine at which level interpreters / translators can practise. Do you agree with this 'Tiered' approach?' (N=30)..... 20

Figure 21: 'In your opinion, into how many levels should interpreters / translators be separated (according to their qualification and experience) considering the requirements for each sector?' (N=29) ..... 20

Figure 22: In your opinion, which (if any) types of interpreters/translators would you advise to separate into tiers? (multiple answers possible) ..... 21

Figure 23: How/where, in your opinion, can interpreters and translators gain more work experience? (N=26)..... 22

Figure 24: In your opinion, is there a need for continuing professional development for interpreters/translators provided by Capita TI? (N=28) ..... 23

Figure 25: Are you aware of any complaints procedures currently in place regarding the quality of interpreters / translators provided though the Framework Agreement? (N=27) ..... 23

Figure 26: How satisfied are you with the complaints procedure regarding the quality of interpretations / translations that is currently provided under the Framework Agreement? (N=18) ..... 24

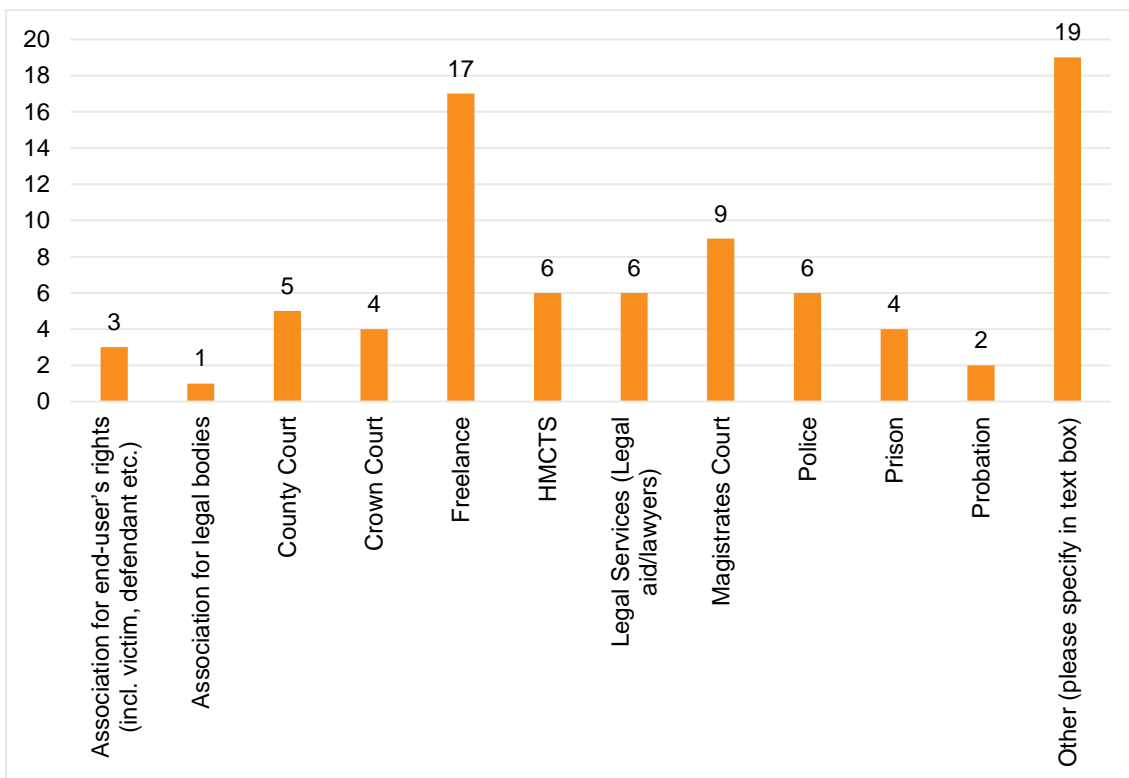
## 1.0 Introduction

As part of the data collection, an online survey was undertaken targeting justice sector and end users familiar with the interpretation and translation service in the UK justice system. The main objective of the survey was to gather evidence of and stakeholder input on the current state of play regarding the quality of interpretation and translation in the justice system, the relevant quality / experience requirements for interpreters / translators and current procedures for monitoring, evaluating and maintaining the quality of interpretation and translation.

The survey was put online from the week commencing 31 March 2014 until 24 April 2014. An invitation email was sent out to 92 contacts. The MoJ sent a reminder to encourage a higher response rate. In total, 82 responses were collected, though the number of responses varied significantly per question. A breakdown of respondents is presented in the table below.

### 1.1 Information about the respondents

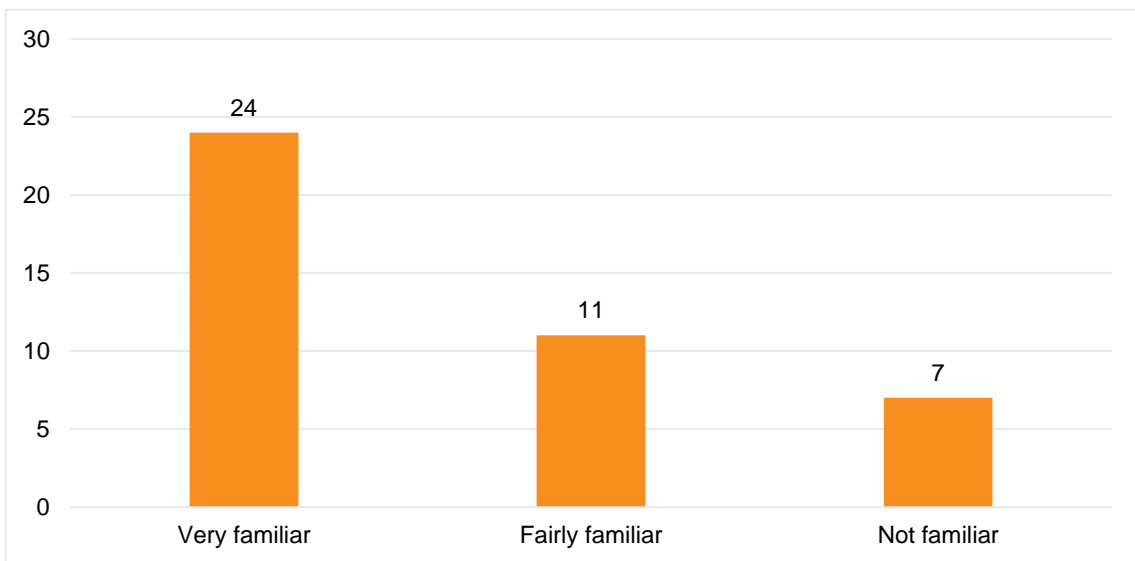
Figure 1: 'What type of organisation do you work for?' (N=82)



Most of the respondents worked for the Magistrates Court (9), followed by HMCTS, Legal Services and the Police, which were equally represented with 6 respondents respectively working for these entities. Five respondents worked for the Country Court. Four respondents worked for the Crown Court and Prison respectively, while 3 respondents worked for the association for end-user's rights. Finally, 2 respondents represented Probation services, and 1 respondent worked for the

association for legal bodies. It has to be noted that 19 respondents (40%) felt that none of the response categories represented their organisation appropriately, so that they chose the “Other” response option. These respondents largely indicated to be freelance interpreters, which suggests that survey recipients have forwarded the survey questionnaire to other parties. **These responses have been excluded from the survey analysis going forward in this analysis report**, as the survey was targeted only at the “demand” side of interpretation services, i.e. justice sector and end users.

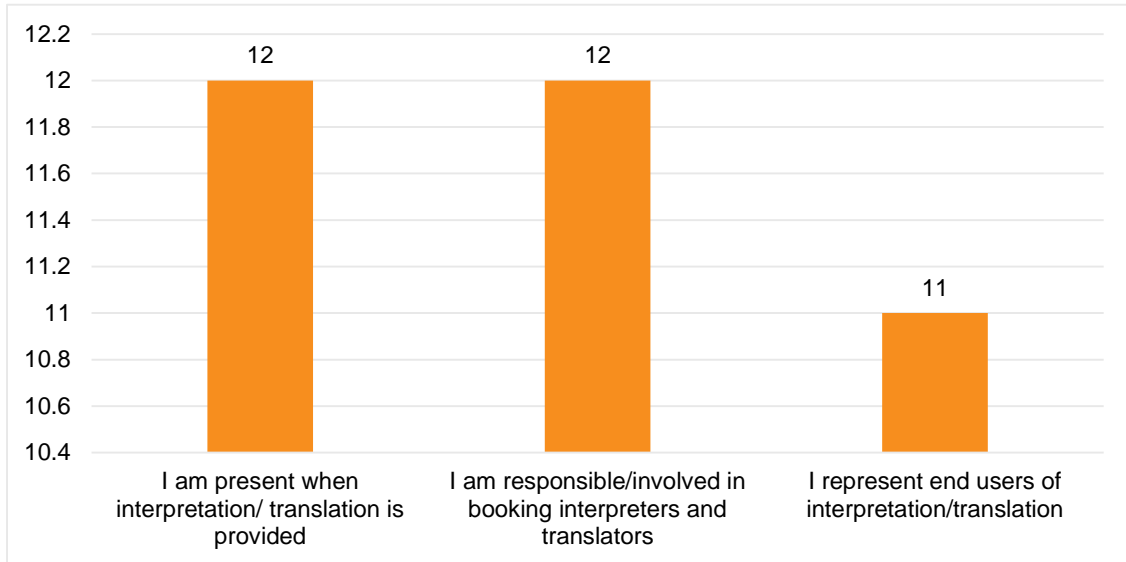
**Figure 2: ‘How familiar are you with the quality requirements (qualifications and experience) for interpreters working in the UK justice system?’ (N=42)**



The majority (24) of respondents to this question indicated that they were “very familiar” with the quality requirements (qualifications and experience) for interpreters working in the UK justice system, followed by 9 respondents who indicated they were “fairly familiar” with the quality requirements. The 7 respondents who indicated that they were “not familiar” with these requirements worked for the HMCTS (2 respondents), Prison (2 respondents), Probation (1 respondent), the Association for end-user’s rights (1 respondent) and the Police (1 respondent).

When asked to explain how respondents are involved with the MoJ language services, responses were split between individuals being present when interpretation or translation is provided (12 respondents), respondents being responsible or involved in booking interpreters and translators (12 responses), and representing end users of interpretation / translation (11 responses) (See Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: 'Please explain how you are involved with the MoJ language services?' (N=35)



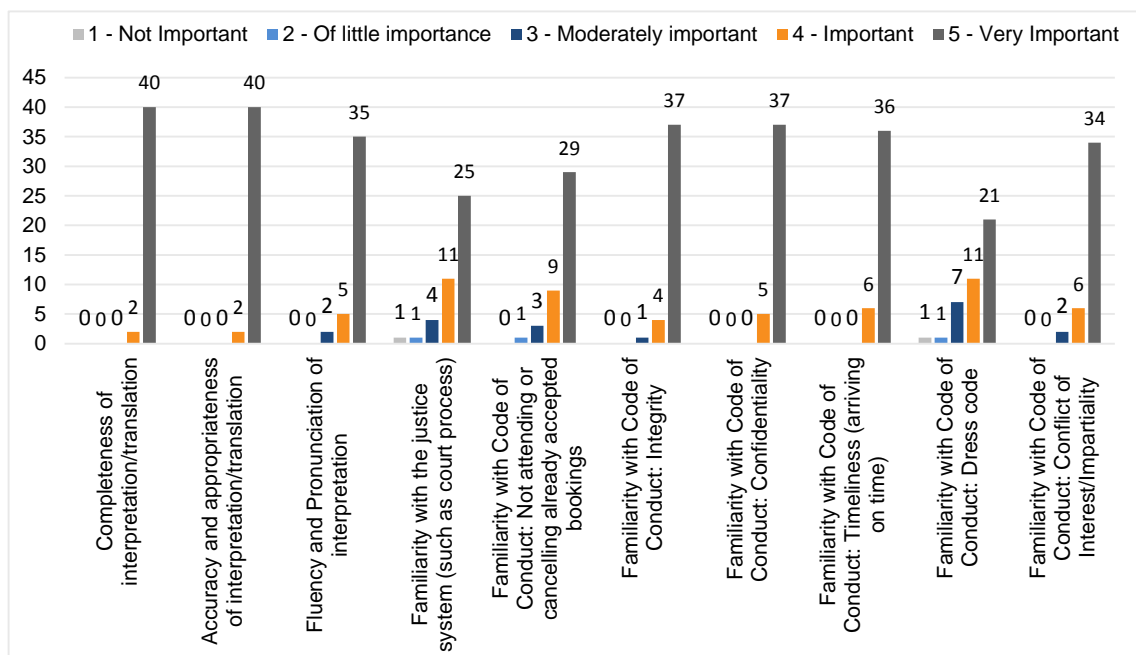
## 1.2 Quality assessment of current interpretation / translation provided by Capita TI

### Quality Criteria

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following criteria for an interpreter / translator of acceptable quality on a scale of 1-5, meaning 1 is not important and 5 is very important. The criteria to be ranked included:

- Completeness of interpretation/translation
- Accuracy and appropriateness of interpretation/translation
- Fluency and Pronunciation of interpretation
- Familiarity with the justice system (such as court process)
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Not attending or cancelling already accepted bookings
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Integrity
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Confidentiality
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Timeliness (arriving on time)
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Dress code
- Familiarity with Code of Conduct: Conflict of Interest/Impartiality

**Figure 4: Please rank the importance, in your opinion, of the following criteria for an interpreter / translator of acceptable quality on a scale of 1 to 5. (N=51)**



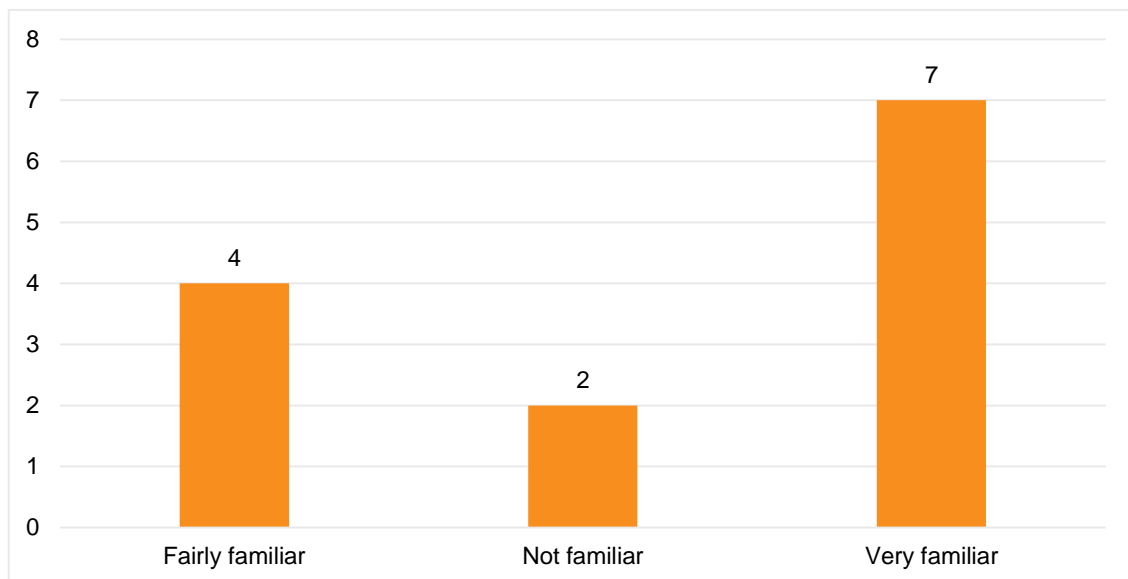


Most respondents found that “Completeness of interpretation / translation” as well as “Accuracy and appropriateness of interpretation / translation” were the two most important criteria for an interpreter / translator of acceptable quality (40 responses respectively). These were closely followed by “Integrity” and “Confidentiality” (37 responses respectively), “Fluency and pronunciation of interpretation” (35 responses), “Timeliness” and “Impartiality” (36 and 34 responses respectively). “Familiarity with the Justice system” and “Dress code” were the two options that received the lowest number of responses (25 and 21 responses respectively).

### The Tiering system from a “booking” perspective

Respondents were also asked how familiar they are with the different tiers of face to face interpreters and the differences between them.

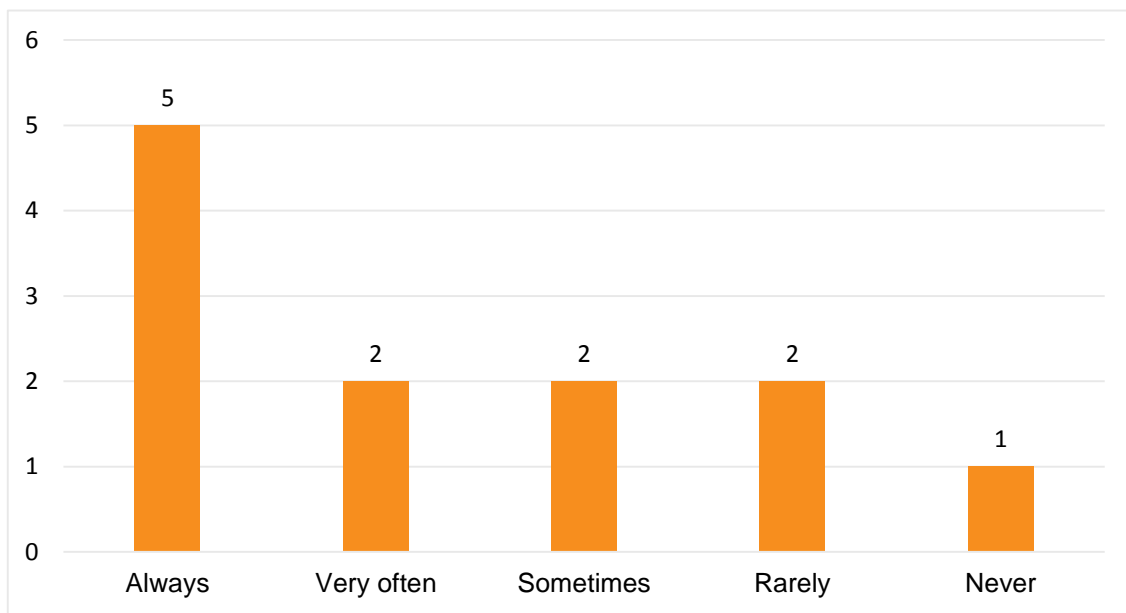
**Figure 5: ‘How familiar are you with the different tiers of face to face interpreters and the differences between them?’ (N=13)**



Only 13 respondents provided an answer to this question, of which 7 indicated that they were very familiar with the different tiers of face to face interpreters (respondents were working for the Magistrates Court (2), the Association for end-user’s rights (2), Crown Court (1), County Court (1), HMCTS (1)), and 4 respondents indicated they were fairly familiar with the different tiers (1 respondents from the Crown Court, 1 respondent from the Magistrates Court, 1 respondent from the County Court and 1 respondent from Prison). The two respondents who indicated that they are not familiar with the tier system worked for HMCTS and the County Court. It can be assumed

that the vast majority of survey respondents did not respond to this question as they might not be familiar with the tier system, so responses to this question have to be interpreted with care. Respondents were asked whether they match the type of case, in terms of difficulty of interpretation work, with the tier of the interpreter they request (i.e. do they request a certain tier in order to ensure adequate quality for the job).

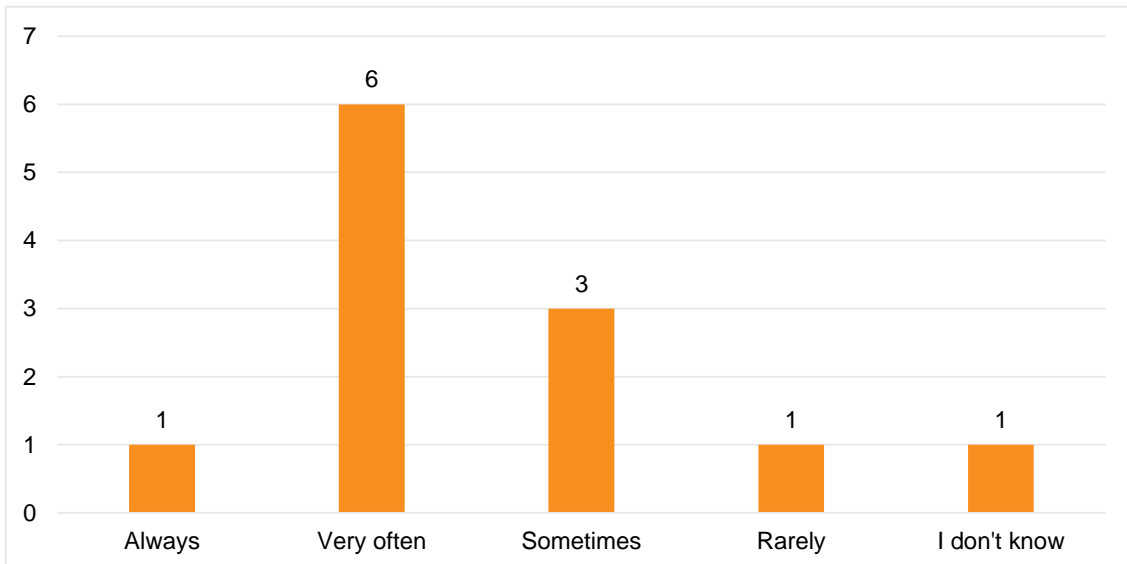
**Figure 6: ‘Do you match the type of case, in terms of difficulty of interpretation work, with the tier of the interpreter you request (i.e. do you request a certain tier in order to ensure adequate quality for the job)?’ (N=12)**



Only 12 respondents answered this question. Of these respondents, 5 indicated that they always match the type of case with the tier of the interpreter they request (2 respondents working for the County Court, and 1 respondent working for the Crown Court, Prison and Association for end-user’s rights respectively), while 2 respondents respectively indicated that they proceed like this “very often”, “sometimes” or “rarely”. The one respondent who indicated “never” to this question worked for the HMCTS.

Respondents were further asked whether, when booking an interpreter with Capita TI, they would get the interpreters with the Tier requested. Only 12 respondents replied to this question (see Figure below).

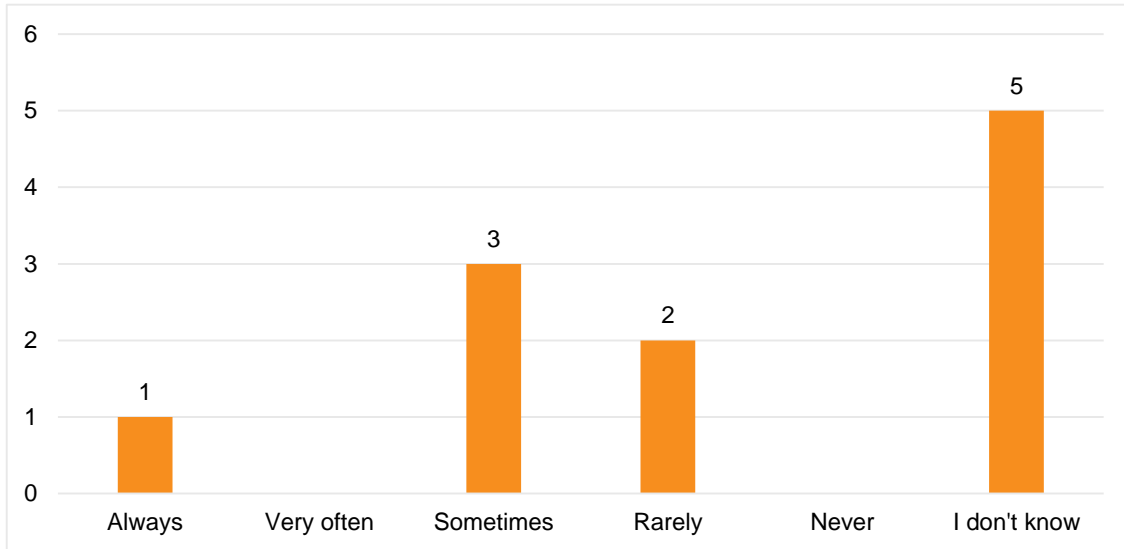
**Figure 7: 'When booking an interpreter with Capita TI, do you generally get the interpreter with the tier you request?' (N=12)**



Most respondents to this question (6 respondents working for the Crown Court, Magistrates Court County Court and the Association for end-user's rights) indicated that they generally get the interpreter with the tier they request when booking an interpreter with Capita TI, while 3 respondents indicated that this is "sometimes" the case. Only one respondent (working for the Prison) confirmed to always get the interpreter with the tier requested when booking with Capita TI.

Moreover, respondents were asked whether they experienced any problems related to the quality of the interpretation if they did not get the interpreter tier they requested.

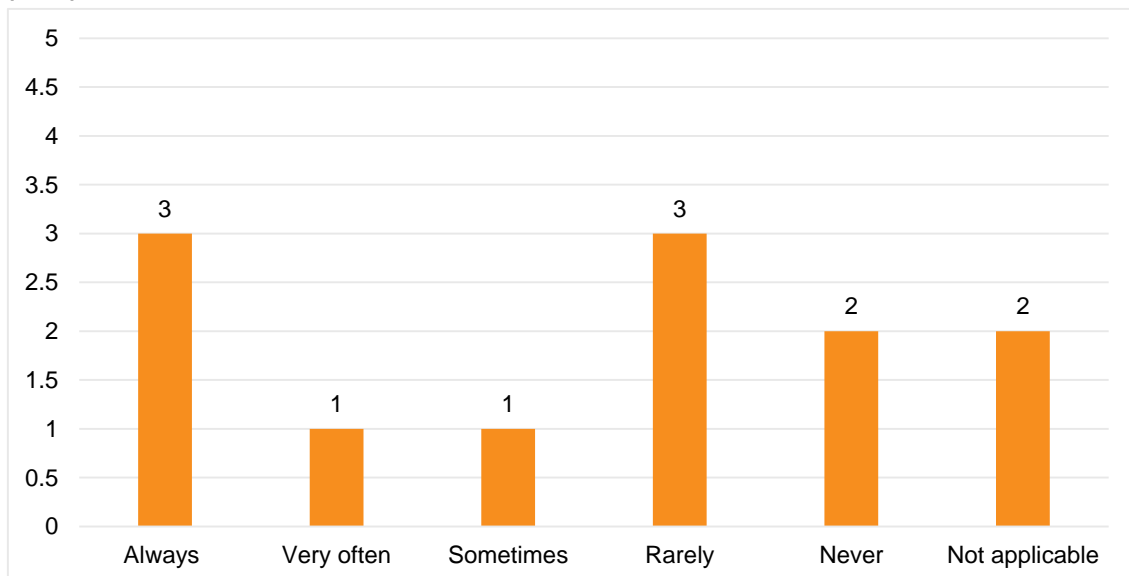
**Figure 8: 'If you did not get the interpreter tier you requested, to what extent did you experience any problems related to the quality of the interpretation?' (N=11)**



The findings suggest that problems related to the quality of interpretation can exist – though the response rate to this question is very low (11 responses), while 5 respondents indicated that they did not know about any issues related to the quality. Only three respondents provided further comments, but did not provide any indications what kind of quality issues they were dealing with.

Respondents working in court who were responsible for booking interpreters were asked how often they consult the judge for approval when a tier 3 interpreter is offered for interpretation in court proceedings. Only 12 responses were collected for this question, while the vast majority of respondents did not reply.

**Figure 9: 'For respondents who are working in courts and are responsible for booking interpreters: How often do you consult the judge for approval when a tier 3 interpreter is offered for interpretation in court proceedings?' (N=12)**

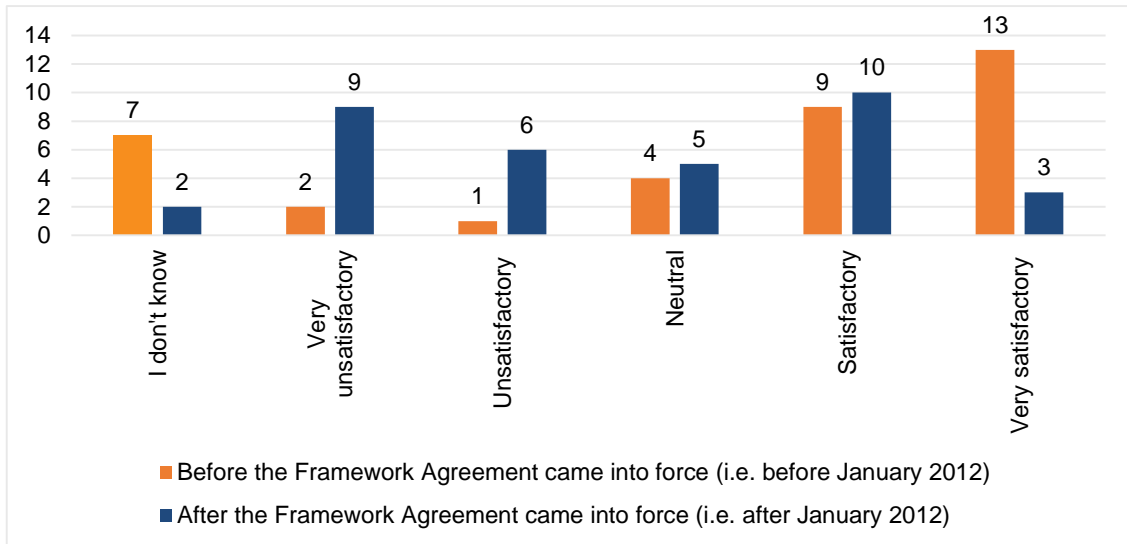


Responses to the question in Figure 9 were very mixed. Respectively 3 respondents stated to “always” consult the judge for approval when a tier 3 interpreter is offered for interpretation in court proceedings, while another 3 stated to “rarely” and 2 to “never” consult a judge in this case.

Given the limited number of respondents replying to this question and the mixed nature of responses, no overall conclusions can be drawn.

### Quality of language services before/after the Framework Agreement came into force

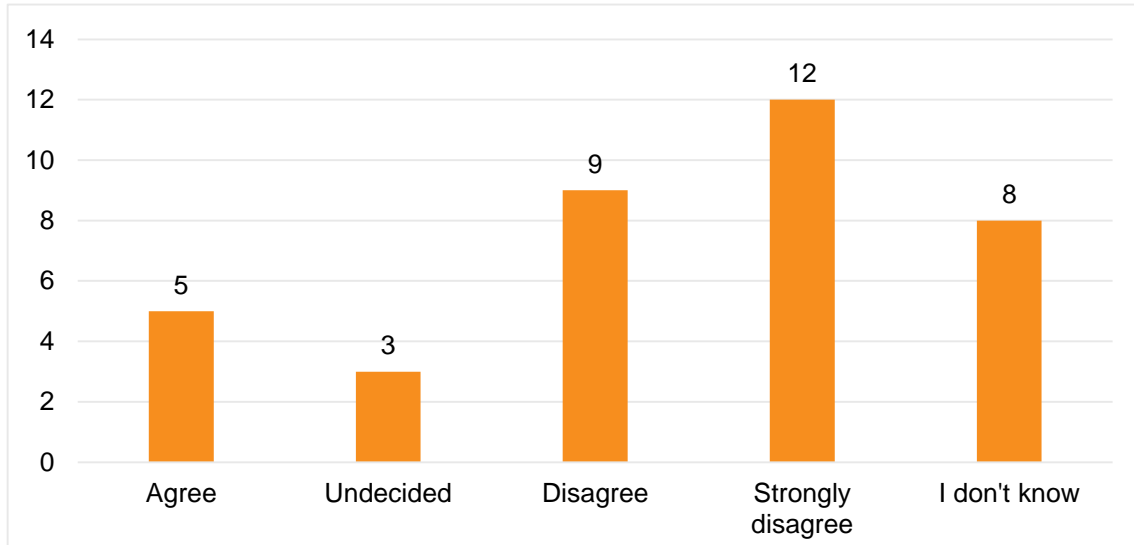
Figure 10: 'How would you rate the quality of the interpreters / translators in the justice system in the following periods?' (N=36, 35)



The question in Figure 10 asked respondents to rate the quality of interpreters in the justice system before and after the Framework Agreement (FA) came into force in January 2012. A lot of respondents felt the quality of interpreters was satisfactory (9) or very satisfactory (13) before the FA came into force. However, only 3 respondents rated the quality of interpreters / translators in the justice system as 'very satisfactory' after the FA came into force, while 10 respondents felt the quality was 'satisfactory'. Similarly, before the FA came into force, only 1 respondent rated the quality of interpreters as unsatisfactory or worse (2), but after the agreement this figure rose to 6 respondents and 9 respondents respectively.

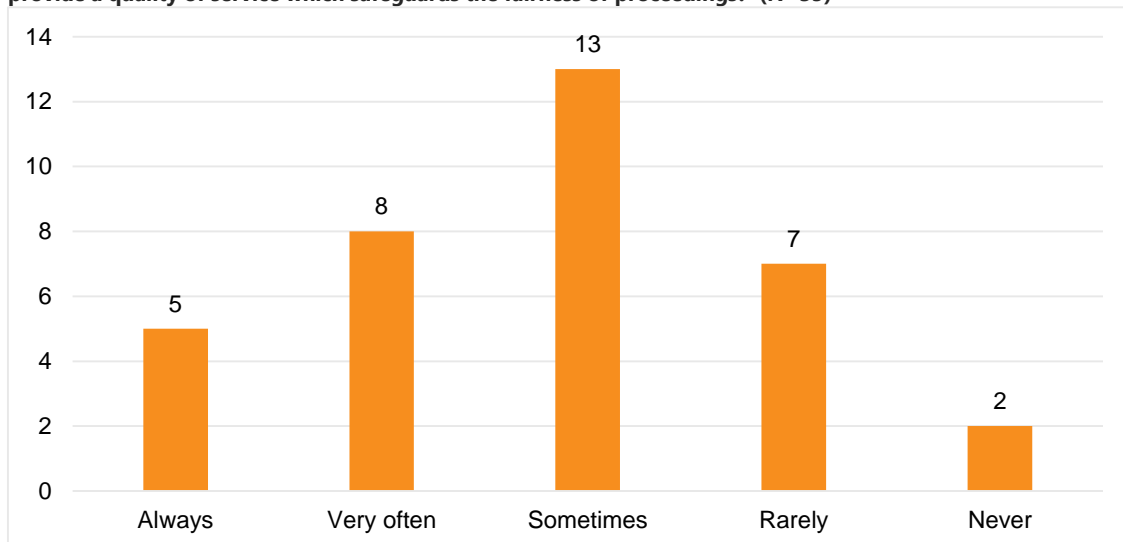
Thus, respondents seemed to perceive a change in quality of interpreters before and after the FA came into force. This conclusion is reaffirmed by the next Figure, asking respondents whether they agree that the overall quality of interpreters/translators has improved since the Framework Agreement came into force.

**Figure 11: 'To what extent do you agree that the overall quality of interpreters/translators has improved since the Framework Agreement came into force (i.e. January 2012)?' (N= 37)**



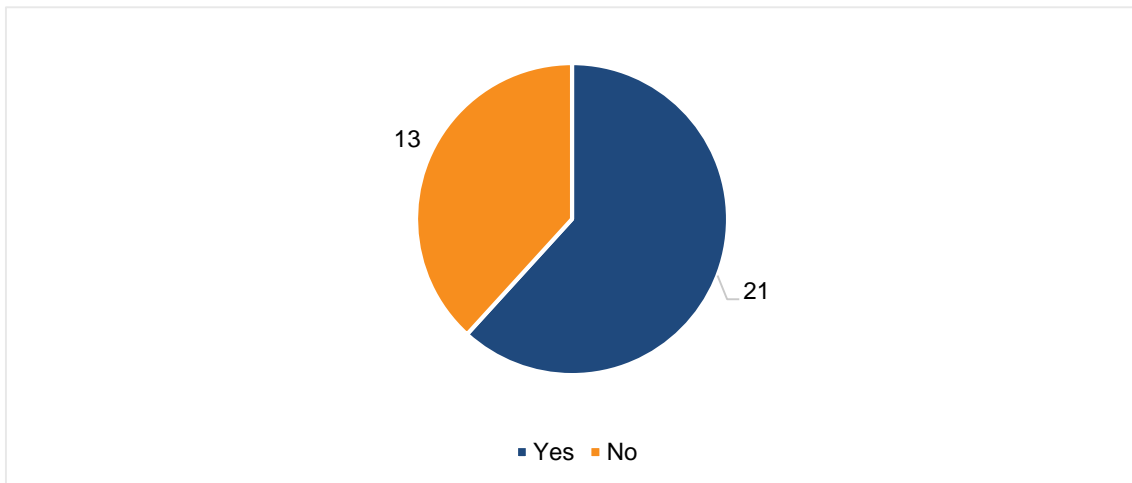
Keeping in line with the results to the question in Figure 10, the question in Figure 11 found that respondents largely disagreed that the overall quality of interpreters had improved since the FA came into force. Only 5 respondents agreed there had been quality improvement. Many of the comments left by respondents referred to concerns over the use of unregistered or unqualified interpreters.

**Figure 12: 'In your opinion do the interpreters and translators appointed through the Framework Agreement provide a quality of service which safeguards the fairness of proceedings?' (N=35)**



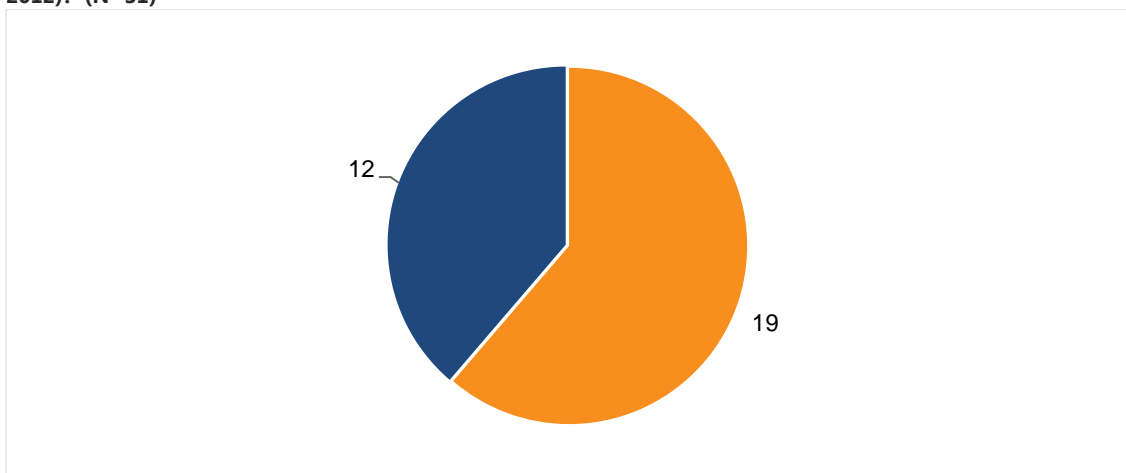
The answers to the question in Figure 12 concerned whether respondents felt interpreters appointed through the FA provided a quality of service which would safeguard the fairness of proceedings. Only 13 respondents felt this was always or very often the case.

**Figure 13: 'Have you experienced any problems with regards to quality with face to face interpretation (tier 1,2,3 or rare) provided through the Framework Agreement (i.e. since January 2012)?' (N=34)**



Around two thirds of respondents (21) to the question in Figure 13 reported they had experienced problems with the quality of face to face interpretation provided through the FA.

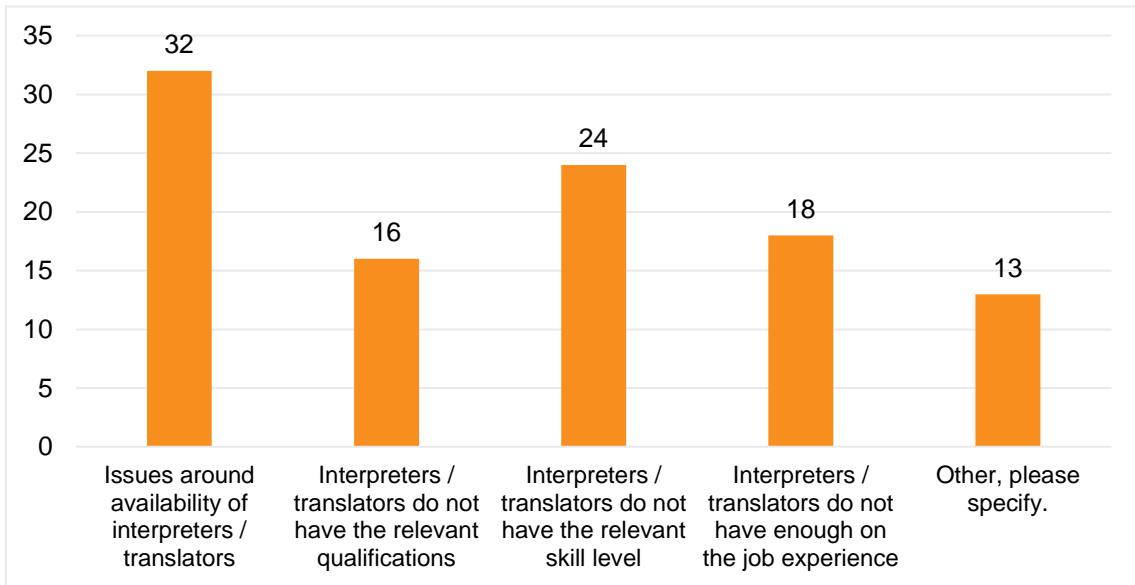
**Figure 14: 'Have you experienced any problems with regards to quality with Interpretation for deaf and deafblind, Telephone interpretation and/or Translation provided through the Framework Agreement (i.e. since January 2012)?' (N=31)**





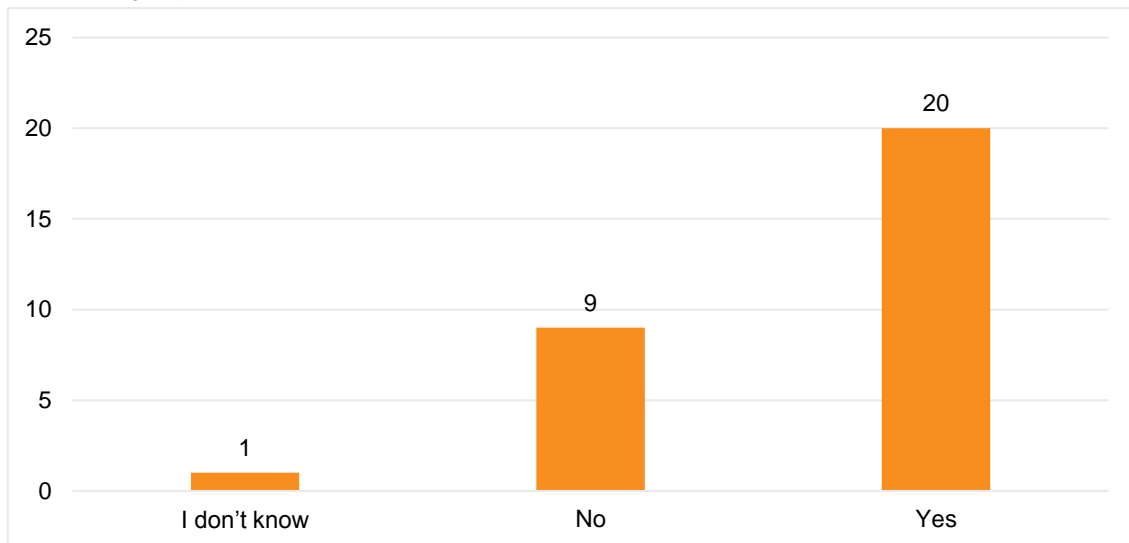
In comparison to reports related to problems with face-to-face interpretation, relatively fewer respondents experienced problems relating to quality with interpretation for the deaf and deafblind, telephone interpretation and/or translation provided through the FA. However problems were still reported by nearly half of respondents (12).

**Figure 15: 'What do you think are the causes for the problems regarding quality?'**



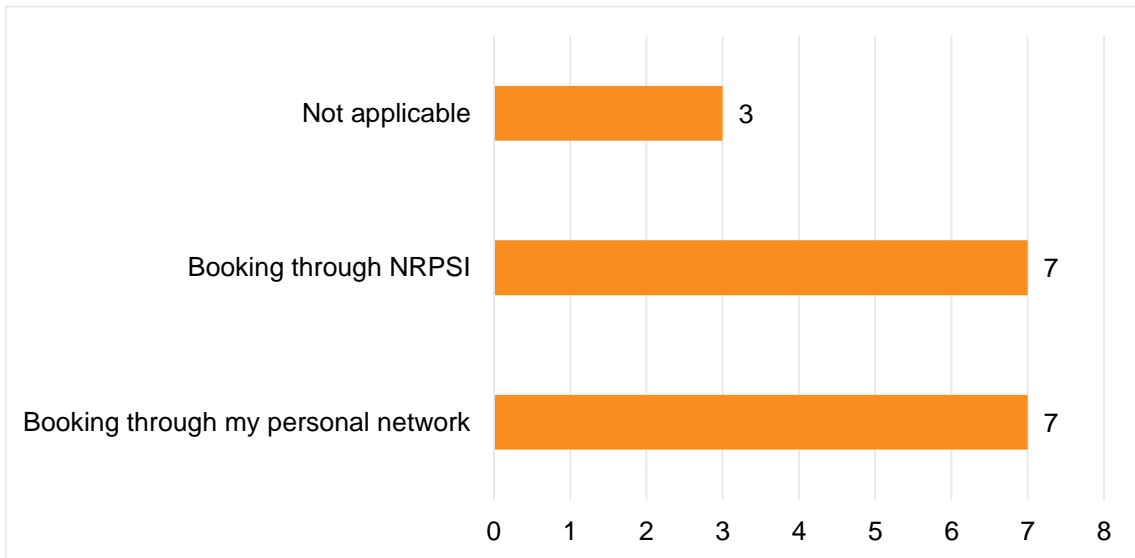
When asked for the causes of problems regarding quality, respondents were able to select more than one reason. The two most common causes given related to the availability of interpreters (32) and interpreters not having the relevant skills (24). Not having relevant qualifications (16) and not enough on the job experience were reported less frequently (18).

**Figure 16: 'Do you have experience with interpreters / translators working off-contract (those that are not contracted by Capita TI)?' (N=30)**



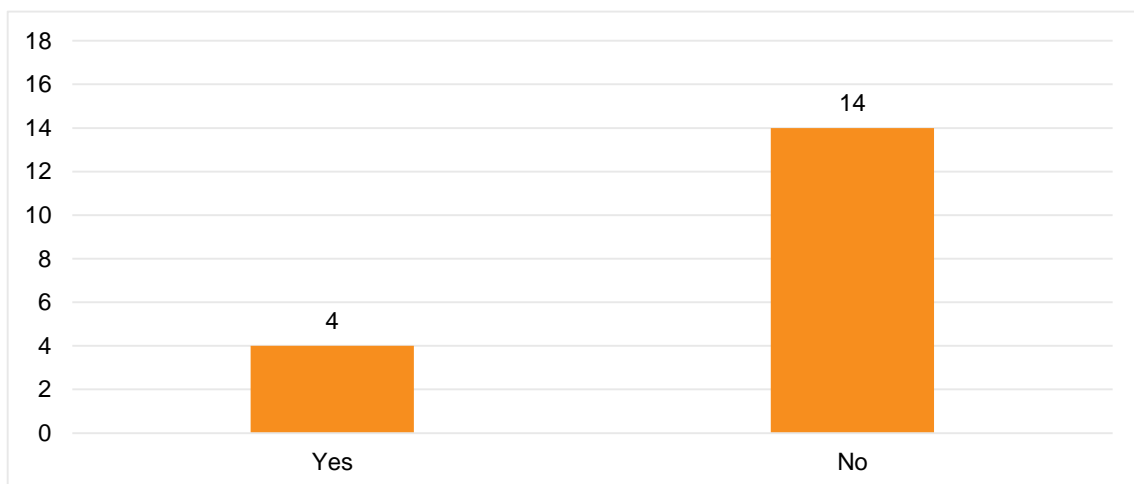
Most respondents (20) stated that they have experiences with interpreters working off-contract (i.e. those interpreters / translators not registered with Capita TI).

**Figure 17: 'When you work with interpreters / translators off-contract, how do you ascertain that you receive the appropriate quality?' (N=17)**



Those respondents working with interpreters / translators off-contract stated that they either book through the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), or that they book through their personal networks.

**Figure 18: 'Have you experienced problems with the quality of language services provided by interpreters/translators working off-contract?' (N=18)**



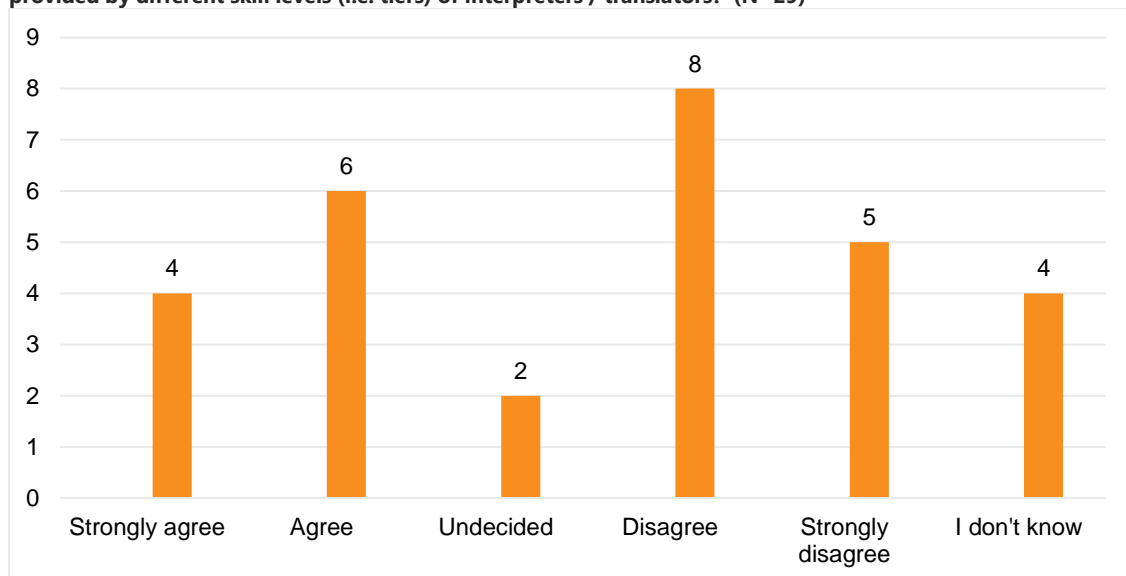
When asked whether the respondents had experienced problems with the quality of language services provided by interpreters / translators working off-contract, the majority of respondents indicated that this was not the case.

### 1.3 Allocation of jobs

#### Differences in quality requirements across the justice sector

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that interpretation or translation work can be provided by different skill levels (i.e. tiers) of interpreters / translators (See Figure below).

**Figure 19: 'To what extent do you agree that the interpretation/translation work in your organisation can be provided by different skill levels (i.e. tiers) of interpreters / translators?' (N=29)**



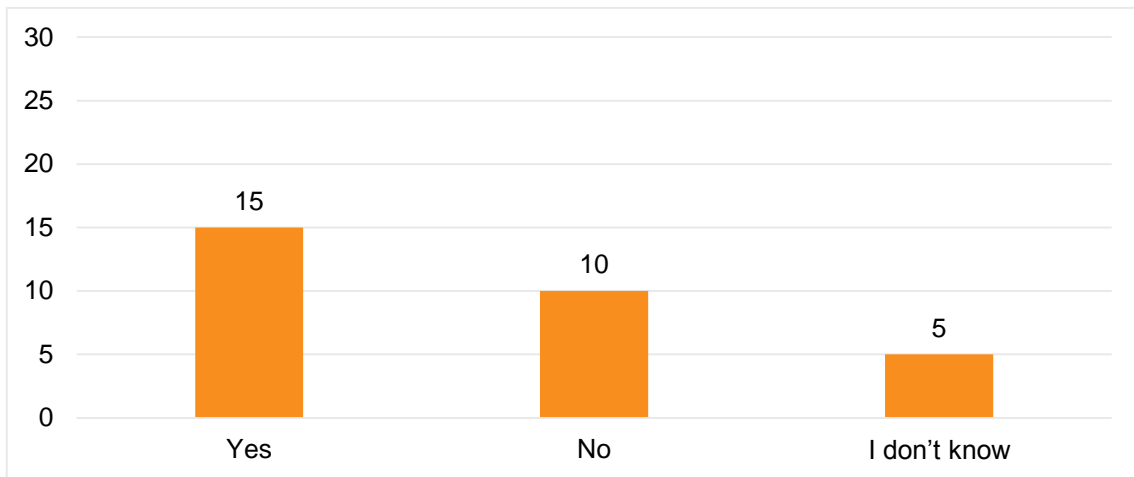
Respondents were divided in their opinion whether interpretation / translation work in their organisation can be provided by different skill levels (i.e. Tiers) of interpreters / translators. Most of the respondents disagreed (8) or strongly disagreed (5) with this statement – these were mainly respondents from the County and Crown Courts, HMCTS, legal services and the Police.

Just 10 respondents agreed (6) or strongly agreed (4) that a provision of work by different tiers was possible (respondents mainly represented the Magistrates Court, HMCTS, and individuals represented the Police, Prison and Probation).

### Tiering system

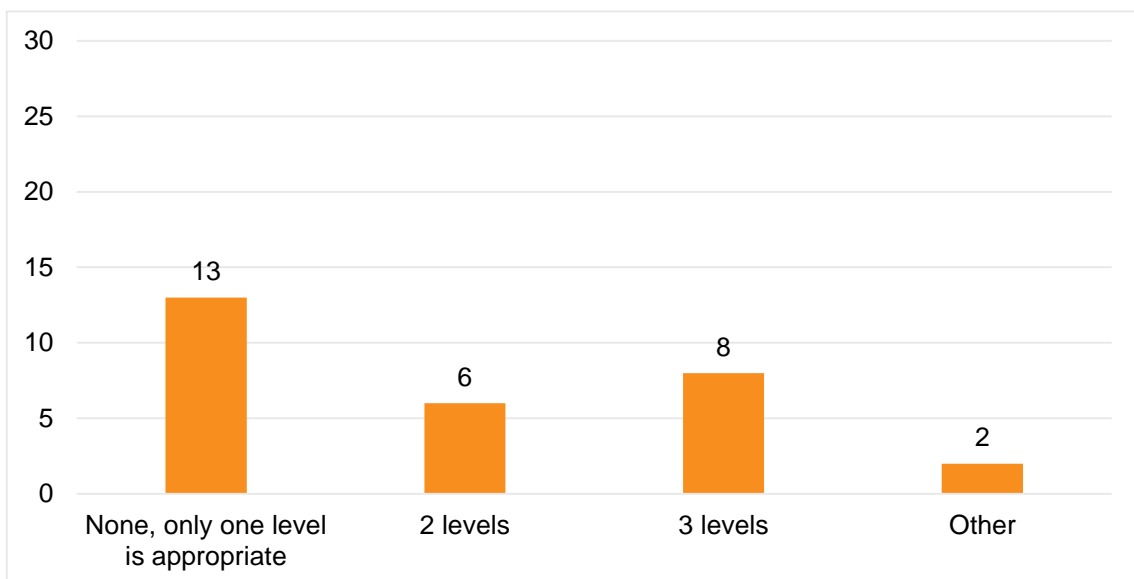
Respondents were further asked to whether they agreed with the “Tiered” approach taken by the Framework (See Figure 20).

**Figure 20: ‘Under the Framework Agreement different levels of qualifications, skills and experience determine at which level interpreters / translators can practise. Do you agree with this ‘Tiered’ approach?’ (N=30)**



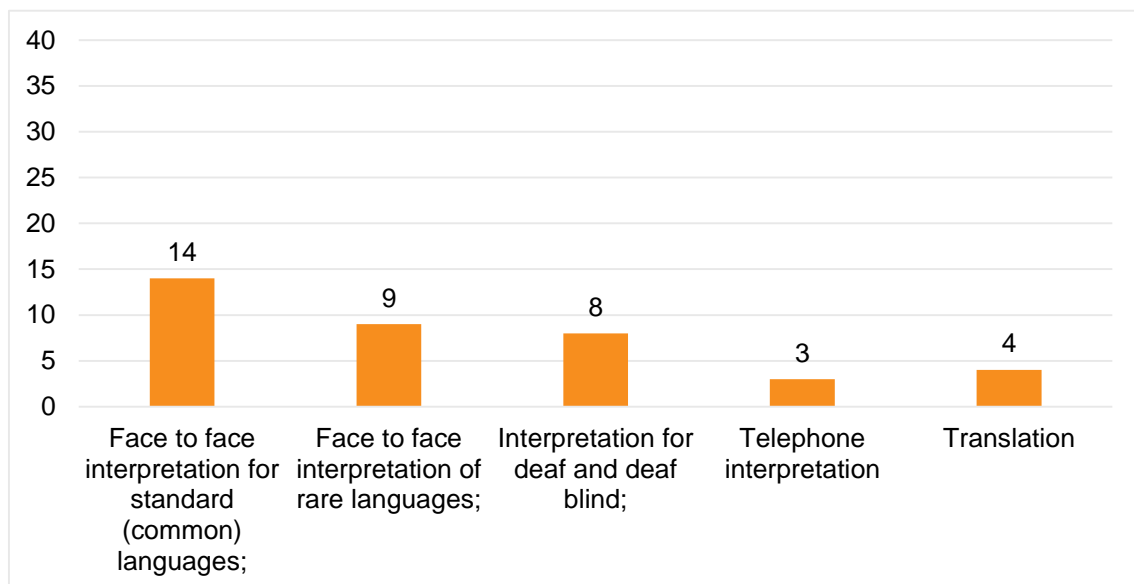
Most respondents seemed to agree with the tiered approach currently in place (15 respondent indicated ‘Yes’, compared to 10 respondents who indicated ‘No’ and 5 respondents who did not have an opinion).

**Figure 21: ‘In your opinion, into how many levels should interpreters / translators be separated (according to their qualification and experience) considering the requirements for each sector?’ (N=29)**



Most respondents (13) were of the opinion that interpreters / translators should **not be separated in any levels** according to their qualifications and experience, considering the requirements for each sector, which is somewhat contradicting the results of the previous question (Figure 20) where the majority of respondents agreed with a tiered approach. Respondents to the question presented in Figure 21 who felt that only one level of interpreters is appropriate mainly represented legal services (3), Crown Court (3), HMCTS (2) and individuals working for the Police, Prison and Probation. Respondents who thought that 3 tiers would be appropriate are working for the Magistrates Court (3) and HMCTS (2), and individuals are representing the Crown and County Courts as well as the Police. Thus, no real differentiation can be made between the type of respondents in favour or against a tiered system.

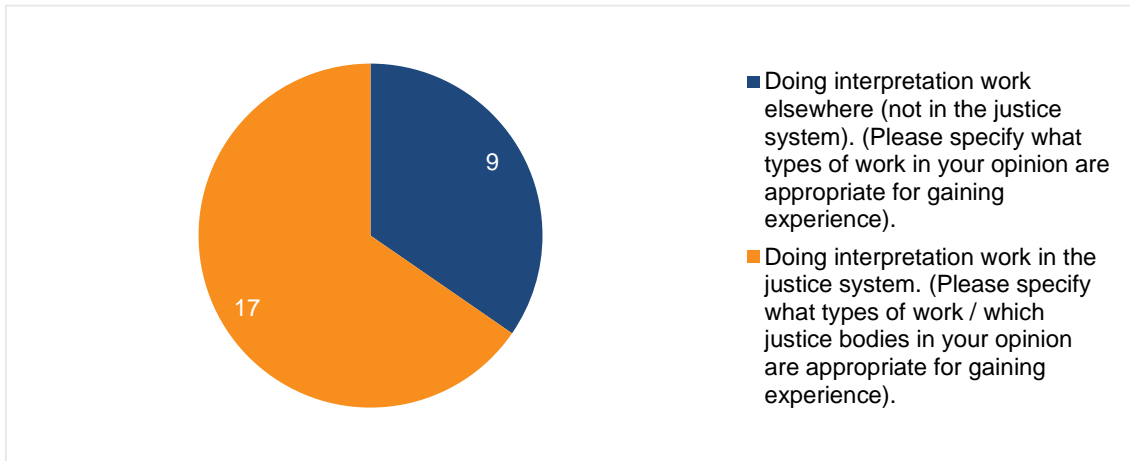
**Figure 22: In your opinion, which (if any) types of interpreters/translators would you advise to separate into tiers? (multiple answers possible)**



When asked which types of interpreters / translators could be separated into tiers, respondents could choose multiple answers. The option that received most responses was 'Face to face interpretation for standards (common) languages' (14 responses), followed by 'Face to face interpretation of rare languages' (9 responses) and 'Interpretation for deaf and deaf blind' (8 responses). The answer option with least responses was 'Telephone interpretation' (3 responses).

### Gaining experience

Figure 23: How/where, in your opinion, can interpreters and translators gain more work experience? (N=26)



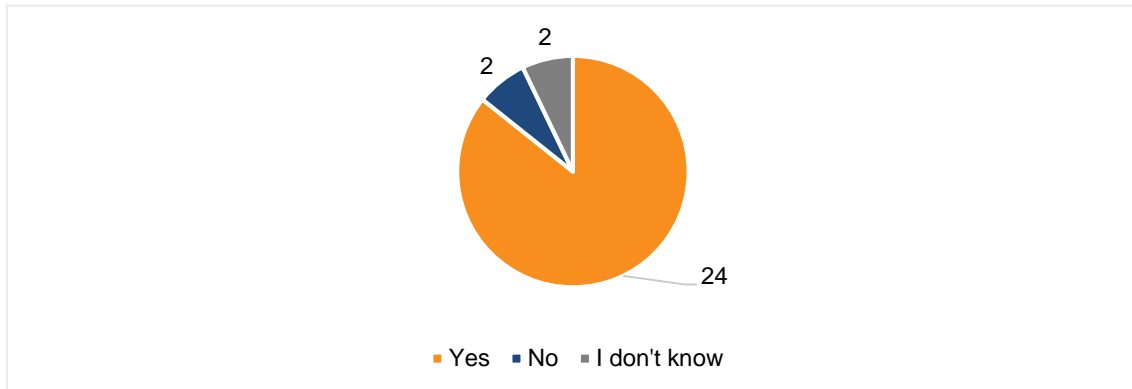
Most respondents were of the opinion that the best way for interpreters and translators to gain more work experience would be by doing interpretation work in the **justice system**. Ideas around the types of work / justice bodies that are appropriate for gaining experience included:

- Working alongside/shadowing experienced interpreters;
- Sit in Magistrates Courts and Tribunals as observers in order to become familiar with the systems.

## 1.4 Monitoring, evaluation and quality maintenance procedure

### Continuous Professional Development

**Figure 24: In your opinion, is there a need for continuing professional development for interpreters/translators provided by Capita TI? (N=28)**

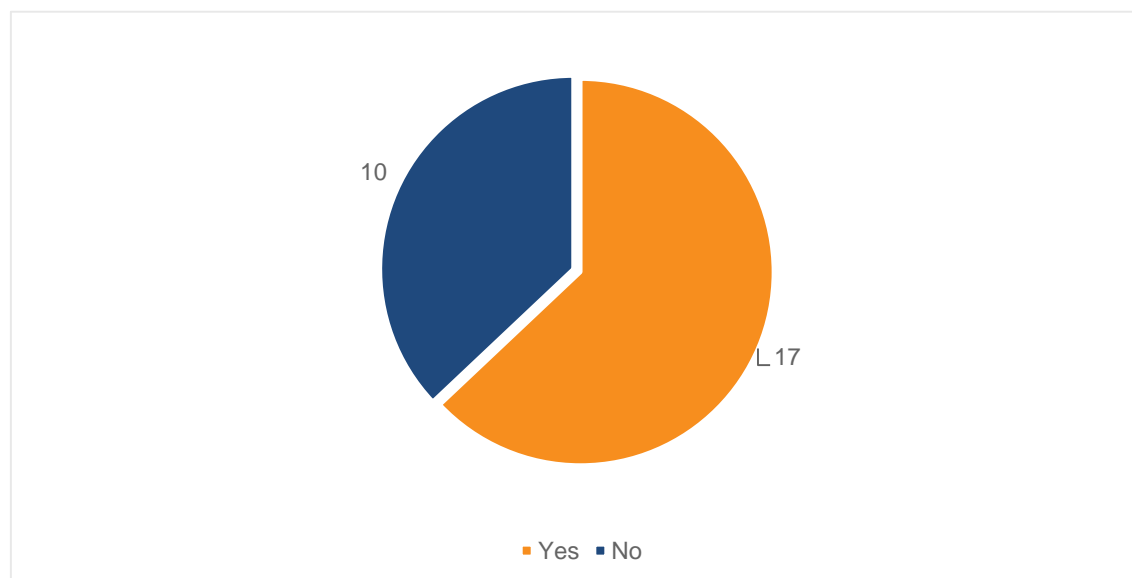


A great majority of respondents agreed that there is a need for continuing professional development for interpreters / translators provided by Capita TI.

### Complaints Procedure

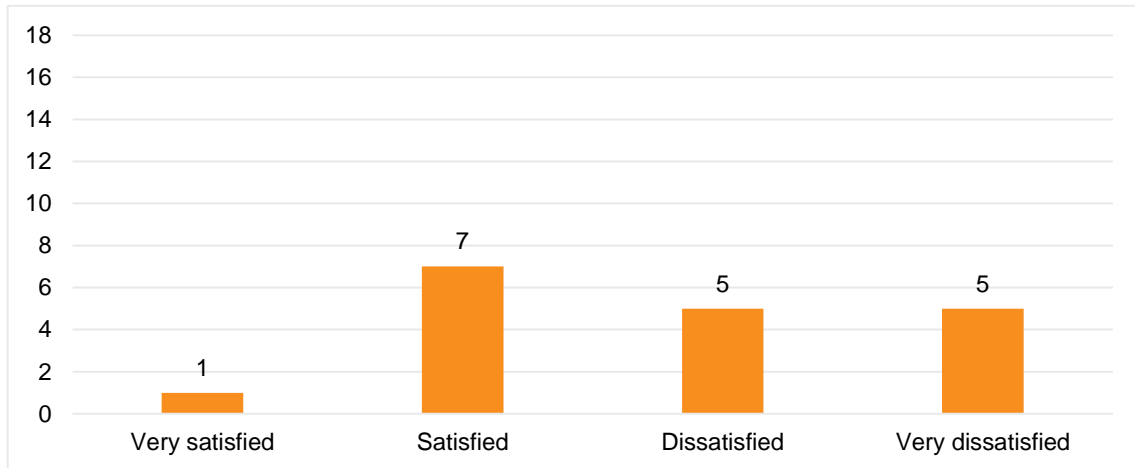
When being asked whether they are aware of any complaints procedures currently in place regarding the quality of interpreters / translators provided through the Framework Agreement, most respondents (17) indicated that they were aware of such complaints procedures.

**Figure 25: Are you aware of any complaints procedures currently in place regarding the quality of interpreters / translators provided though the Framework Agreement? (N=27)**



However, respondents were of mixed opinions with regard to their satisfaction with the current complaints procedure regarding the quality of interpretations / translations that is currently provided under the Framework Agreement, as is indicated by the graph below:

**Figure 26: How satisfied are you with the complaints procedure regarding the quality of interpretations / translations that is currently provided under the Framework Agreement? (N=18)**



Those respondents that were dissatisfied mainly represented the HMCTS, County Court and Magistrates Court, while those respondents who indicated they were satisfied with the current complaints procedures mainly come from the Crown Court. However, only a few respondents explained why they are dissatisfied with the current complaints procedure and mainly stated that they felt complaints were either not made, or – in the few cases that they were made – they were not adequately addressed.



## 2.0 Respondents' Recommendations

Survey respondents were asked to make recommendations for the future regarding the provision of language services in the justice system.

Only very few recommendations were made by respondents, including the following:

- More training for interpreters on specific areas in the justice system should be provided;
- More opportunities for interpreters to gain practical experience should be granted;
- There should be more communication by the MoJ with end users.