

COMPLAINANTS SATISFACTION RESEARCH SURVEY 2018-19

PREPARED FOR THE BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY



JUNE 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1

SATISFACTION WITH THE BSA'S OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF THE PROCESS

Overall, there is a slight increase in the proportion who agree or strongly agree that the BSA handled their part of the complaints process well (40% cf. 36% in 2017/18).

Satisfaction with the aspects of the BSA's management of the complaints process has declined (highlighted by an average result of 38% across three aspects cf. 46% in 2017/18 cf. 54% in 2016/17).

Outcomes of complaints are consistent over time – 80% of respondents complaints were not upheld in 2018/19 (cf. 85% in 2017/18 and 84% in 2016/17).

2

INFORMATION SOURCES

Almost all complainants (94%) in 2018/19 are aware of or have used a BSA resource (the BSA website, BSA Complaints Guide, relevant code of broadcasting practice (downloaded from the BSA website), or contact with the BSA via email, letter, telephone or the 0800 number). The BSA website remains the most utilised resource for information about the complaints process and for understanding broadcasting standards among complainants (84% cf. 91% in 2017/18).

3

INTERACTION WITH THE BSA

Overall, complainants are positive regarding the BSA's management of the complaints process. However, there is a drop in satisfaction with their interactions with the BSA – particularly the written correspondence.

While there has been a decline in satisfaction with the BSA's written correspondence (as well as the BSA website¹), this is due to an increase in those who find it adequate ('neither agree nor disagree') rather than dissatisfaction ('disagree' or 'strongly disagree'). Sentiment suggests complainants find the language used by the BSA in written correspondence to be overly complicated and confusing. Complainants are overall, very satisfied with the contact with BSA staff by phone. Delivery against all aspects of phone contact was rated 'agree' or 'strongly agree' by at least 89% of respondents.

The level of contact complainants have with the BSA remains 'about right' (as mentioned by 70% of complainant respondents). Three in ten (30%) would have liked at least a little more contact – predominantly throughout the whole process.

¹ Questions about the BSA website were asked prior to the refreshed BSA website being launched in 2019.

BSA DECISIONS

There has been a decline in the level of satisfaction with the BSA's decisions across most aspects. Despite lower satisfaction, the BSA's relative strength remains the clarity and ease of understanding their decisions (43% 'agree' or 'strongly agree' cf. 58% in 2017/18).

Perceived fairness of the BSA's decision remains a concern for complainants (79% 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that the decision the BSA made in relation to their complaint was fair), including those whose decision was upheld by the BSA (50% of complainants whose decision was upheld 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that the decision was fair).

When asked why they felt aspects of the BSA's decisions were unfair, there is an increasing proportion of complainants who comment that they perceive the standards are set are too low (mentioned by 32% of those who found the decision to be unfair cf. 18% in 2017/18 and 9% in 2016/17).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

AGREE THE PROCESS WAS HANDLED WELL	n=	2018/19	n=	2017/18	n=	2016/17	n=	2015/16
Total	50	40%	47	36%	44	41%	52	40%
First-time complainants [^]	30	47%	27	41%	29	45%	31	39%
Repeat complainants	20	30%	20	30%	14	29%	21	43%
Complaint upheld	8	50%	7	71%	7	71%	14	79%
Complaint not upheld	40	40%	40	30%	37	35%	38	26%
AWARENESS OF INFORMATION SOURCES	n=	2018/19	n=	2017/18	n=	2016/17	n=	2015/16
Any BSA resource	50	94%	47	96%	44	98%	52	92%
BSA website	50	84%	47	91%	44	82%	52	77%
BSA Guidance Sheet	50	64%	47	81%	44	59%	52	58%
Codes of broadcasting practice booklet	50	46% ▼	47	74%	44	61%	52	37%
Broadcaster	50	62%	47	68%	44	52%	52	60%
INTERACTIONS WITH BSA	n=	2018/19	n=	2017/18	n=	2016/17	n=	2015/16
Satisfaction with written correspondence (average of six attributes) – excl. N/A	47	65%	31-41	89%	40	80%	43	74%
Satisfaction with telephone correspondence (average of five attributes) – excl. N/A	9	96%	9-11	92%	11	90%	9	85%
Satisfaction with BSA website (average of three attributes) – excl. don't know	36	55%	39	72%	35	86%	37	75%
BSA DECISIONS – excl. N/A	n=	2018/19	n=	2017/18	n=	2016/17	n=	2015/16
The BSA decision clear and easy to understand	47	43%	45	58%	44	59%	52	64%
The decision the BSA made in relation to your complaint was fair	48	15%	45	13%	43	14%	52	22%
The order (if any) made to the broadcaster was fair	8	13%	7	14%	6	17%	14	23%
The BSA adequately explained the reasons for its decision	47	34%	45	40%	43	51%	-	-

[^] Note change in language 2015/16 measure. "Prior to this most recent complaint, had you ever made a formal complaint to a broadcaster about a broadcast before?" replaced "Was this the first formal complaint you have ever made about a broadcast?"
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2017/18