

March 2018

2017 Stakeholder Survey

Results

Food Standards Australia New Zealand ran a stakeholder satisfaction survey from April through to 21 June 2017. The survey replicated a 2014 stakeholder survey, with the addition of a number of open-ended questions about the website.

The survey was promoted through our social media channels, Food Standards News and in direct emails to subscribers and FSANZ committee members.

We received 537 responses to the survey (724 in 2014).

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Background

In 2007–08, FSANZ identified stakeholder relations as a focus for planning. Since then, a number of stakeholder studies have been conducted. The design and sampling of each of these has been tailored to address issues of concern at the time.

In 2007–08, FSANZ sought the views of our committee members about their perceptions of our statutory functions and satisfaction with our performance. The results of the surveys with committee members led to follow-up studies, involving one-on-one interviews with opinion leaders conducted in 2009. This work helped to inform work on reputation management and, in turn, our communication, scientific and stakeholder engagement strategies.

A further targeted study of opinion leaders from the consumer and public health groups was conducted in 2012 to give an indication of progress in addressing areas of concern raised by these groups in the 2009 interview research.

Overall, the results of studies conducted so far have been positive, with a generally high degree of satisfaction by stakeholders with our engagement with them. However, a number of issues have been identified along the way, including confusion or disagreement about our role and responsibilities.

Method

FSANZ developed the 2014 and 2017 questionnaire using themes explored in previous stakeholder research. The questionnaire covered the following topics:

- overall satisfaction with FSANZ
- FSANZ's performance in particular areas
- perceived changes in FSANZ's performance over the last two years
- knowledge of FSANZ's roles and responsibilities.

Respondents were also asked where they normally live, and which stakeholder group they represent.

General findings

The percentage of Australian respondents (83%) in the 2017 survey was the same as the 2014 survey. The percentage of New Zealand respondents was down slightly (9% as opposed to 10% in 2014).

The majority of people who responded to the question about how they found out about the survey said email (238 respondents).

As with the 2014 survey most respondents identified as industry (51 per cent in 2014 and 52 per cent in 2017). Government (federal, state and territory and local government) were the second highest group (22%). In total, 8% people identified as being private consumers. The remaining respondents in the 2017 survey identified as being public health representatives,

academics, representatives of consumer advocacy organisations and farmers. However these groups represented the smallest number of respondents.

Satisfaction with performance

Of the people responding to the general question on satisfaction with FSANZ's overall performance there was an increase in the percentage of stakeholders reporting as satisfied or very satisfied (71% versus 68%).

In the 2017 survey we added very satisfied as a possible response for each question of the follow up questions.

While the number of total respondents was smaller in 2017 the number of people who answered the questions increased and on many measures the percentage of respondents who were satisfied or very satisfied also increased (these are in **bold** below).

Measure	2014 (satisfied %) and #respondents	2017 (satisfied or very satisfied %) and #respondents
Being proactive in response to emerging issues	60 358	63 488
Responding to enquiries	45 269	47 487
Develop effective food standards	65 390	69 488
Coordinating food incidents	70 417	74 488
Making decisions based on the evidence available	69 412	69 488
Being objective	67 403	69 488
Getting things done in a timely manner	45 270	49 488

Measure	2014 (satisfied %) and #respondents	2017 (satisfied or very satisfied %) and #respondents
Being trustworthy	76	78
	450	488
Communicating with our stakeholders	73	74
	435	488
Our use of social media	47	36*
	154	
Explaining our decision	65	61
		488

*Note 162 responded NA to this question in 2017 and 256 said NA in 2014

In 2014 and 2017 respondents were also asked about whether they believed there had been an improvement in some of our functions (along with trustworthiness) in the past two years. The table below reflects the percentage of respondents who said better or much better as well as the percentage who said about the same. The second column for each year represents the percentage of respondents who said about the same as two years ago.

Measure	2014	2014	2017	2017
	(better or much better %)	(about the same %)	(better or much better %)	(about the same %)
Bring proactive in response to emerging issues	33.9	45	36	43
	189		474	
Develop effective food standards	28.7	51	34	46
	158		474	
Coordinating food incidents and recalls	33.45	41	41	37
	187		474	
Making decisions based on the evidence available	26.57	54	30	51
	148		474	

Being trustworthy	24.01	58	28	56
	134		474	
Communicating with our stakeholders	40.65	42	46	37
	226		474	
Explaining our decisions	33.09	48	34	47
	184		474	

Roles and responsibilities

There are still a worryingly high number of respondents who believe FSANZ's role is broader in the system than is dictated by our legislation.

Respondents were asked which of the following FSANZ had responsibility for. As with the 2014 survey, a large number of respondents believed we have responsibility for enforcing food laws.

The rows in bold represent areas in which FSANZ has no role.

Responses

Roles	2014 Number of respondents and % total survey respondents	2017 Number of respondents and % total survey respondents
Coordinate surveys	267 (36%)	244 (45%)
Develop binational standards	473 (65%)	428 (79%)
Dealing with consumer complaints about food	182 (25%)	125 (23%)
Develop codes of practice for industry	375 (51%)	313 (58%)
Provide nutrition and dietary advice for consumers	193 (26%)	140 (26%)
Prepare interpretative guides for enforcement agencies	419 (57%)	375 (69%)
Develop policy guidelines	461 (63%)	382 (71%)

Roles	2014 Number of respondents and % total survey respondents	2017 Number of respondents and % total survey respondents
Mandate labelling information for consumer values	342 (43%)	283 (52%)
Coordinate food recalls	433 (59%)	362 (67%)
Take action when a food manufacturer breaks the law	234 (32%)	160 (29%)
Advise industry on compliance with the Code	423 (58%)	350 (65%)
Coordinate food recalls in New Zealand	276 (38%)	215 (40%)
Increase public awareness of food standards and labels	442 (61%)	392 (72%)
Ban sale of food if there is sufficient public outcry	169 (23%)	121 (22%)
Test food for safety and composition	252 (34%)	203 (37%)
Monitor and control food imports and exports	244 (33%)	155 (28%)

Website open questions analysis

Comments on the website questions were analysed to determine whether they were positive negative or neutral:

- 153 responses were positive
- 129 were negative
- 43 responses were neutral.

Of the positive comments more than 80 related to ease of use and navigation. Many of the positive comments related to the depth of information, and how useful the information was.

Of the negative comments more than 73 related to navigation, design or user friendliness. Many of the other negative comments related to density of the website.

The relatively balanced split between negative and positive comments regarding navigation, ease of use and other matters may reflect what we know from our analytics i.e. that about half of our visitors are returning visitors who are likely to have some familiarity with the site.

Question 2: What would be the most valuable improvement? (248 responses)

- 68 people said the content could be improved with many providing comments. These comments were extremely varied.
- 58 respondents said the search function could be improved.
- 53 respondents said “code”. Many of these comments related to the fact that the Code links to the Federal Register of Legislation website.
- 16 respondents said the navigation could be improved and 13 people said the design could be improved.
- 11 people made comments that are difficult to interpret using either the words “food safety”, or “user guides”; 4 people asked for a mobile friendly website.
- 49 respondents said nil.

Responses that suggested changes have been analysed to identify possible improvements.

Q3: Finally, can you help us identify particular things on the website you've found difficult to understand or use? (210 responses received)

- 57 said nil
- 40 respondents mentioned the Code.
- 49 mentioned content and structure
- 31 mentioned the search function
- 17 mentioned design and navigation
- 8 mentioned the NPC and NUTTAB.

Conclusion

Overall the survey responses confirm that the level of satisfaction in FSANZ's performance is high, with slight increases in satisfaction on our performance since the last survey. However confusion about the system remains an issue and remains a key area of focus for the FSANZ communication strategy. The website responses also broadly reflected findings from our website user testing and stakeholder workshops. Some of the issues identified e.g. search function will be improved in the rollout of SharePoint 2016. The CASE section is also applying better key words and “best bets” to content as it is reviewed. CASE is also reviewing navigation, style and design to identify improvements; some of these are likely to be implemented before the end of the financial year depending on available resources.