



**Executive Summary 2007/08
Magistrates Survey**

October 2008

Executive summary

Key messages

- There has been an 11 point increase in overall satisfaction to 94 per cent since 2007, with one in six magistrates being very satisfied. Net satisfaction (satisfied and very satisfied less dissatisfied and very dissatisfied) is strong at 86 per cent for 2008.
- The survey is a representative sample of all magistrates' views in the Thames Valley.
- The response rate has improved for the third year in a row.

Standard delivery reports (SDRs) to Courts

- Improved timeliness by report writers is recognised by magistrates with overall satisfaction rising 30 percentage points to 74 per cent.
- The quality of SDRs is suffering because of the composition method and processes to ensure timeliness.
- To improve this, Thames Valley Probation (TVP) is introducing a SDR quality assurance system using magistrate's feedback about the quality of individual reports.

Fast delivery reports (FDRs) to Courts

- Satisfaction with FDR availability has recovered strongly over the last three years to a current rate of 79 per cent.
- Circumstances when an FDR is unsuitable are not well enough understood by all magistrates.
- Through court duty officers, TVP will continue providing magistrates with authoritative guidance about a complex issue.

Oral reports to Courts

- Satisfaction has improved in this second round of surveys to 74 per cent.
- Demand for oral and FDR reports is strong as a key aid to speedier justice.
- To improve, during 2009 TVP will audit the use and quality of oral reports across the Thames Valley with a view to strengthening current guidance.

TVP's overall service to Courts

- TVP staff are judged to be more confident and competent, with very high satisfaction rates. However, one in five magistrates is dissatisfied with TVP's management of community orders. The lack of feedback about offender progress and interventions other than drug rehabilitation requirements (DRRs) is of particular concern.
- TVP will review and improve how magistrates are provided with information about aspects of organisational effectiveness.

Delivery of interventions to offenders

- Virtually all respondents (93 per cent) were satisfied with the usefulness of accredited programmes and with the supervision of offenders in attendance.
- The perceived value of DRRs rose 4 points to 89 per cent between the 2007 and 2008 surveys.
- Nearly nine in 10 magistrates were satisfied with the management of unpaid work and curfews, with requests for more feedback.

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Thames Valley Probation
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