



October 2014

Key Findings  
from the  
Annual User  
Survey  
2014

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## Introduction

This year, we received more responses to our annual survey than ever before: 334. This number comprised 61 MPs and 273 members of their staff. We have broken down the results to reflect the difference in opinion between the two groups, which in some cases is quite marked.

Last year, we surveyed MPs and their proxies: those members of staff that MPs nominate to manage their business costs and expenses. This year we widened the scope of the survey to include all MPs' staff. All staff who work for MPs are likely to have some interaction with IPSA, so we wanted to get the widest possible breadth of opinion on the support we provide and how we can improve.

## Key findings

Overall, this survey shows a clear improvement from a year ago. There are many positives for IPSA to take from this survey:

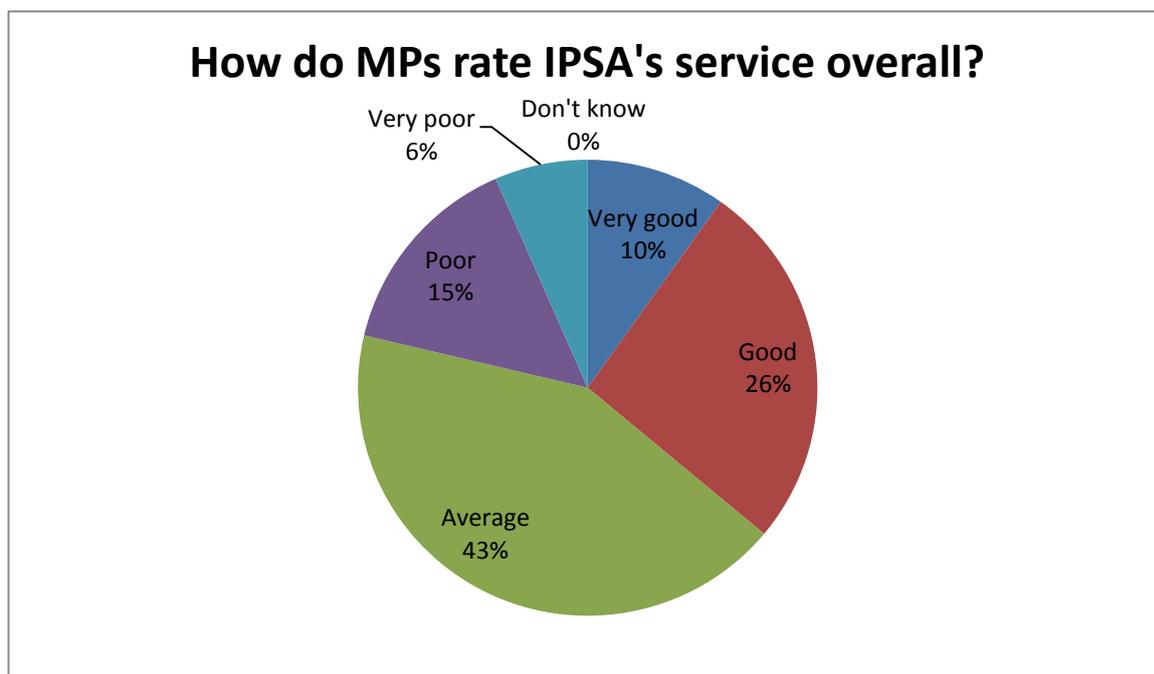
- IPSA's communications- MP Bulletins, letters and emails- are valued by both MPs and their staff.
- MPs and their staff are happier with the speed of response from IPSA when they have a query, and with the advice they receive from us, than they were last year.
- MPs' staff report that they are spending less time making expense claims than they did last year.
- Both MPs and their staff showed an increase in satisfaction with the speed in which their business costs and expenses claims are processed.

At the same time, we are anxious to do more.

- MPs and staff have reported lower levels of satisfaction with IPSA's website than in previous years.
- Satisfaction with IPSA's speed of response to emails and phone calls has risen, but there is still room for improvement.
- Satisfaction with IPSA's speed of repaying MPs has also risen, but some would like to get paid even quicker.
- Of those MPs who received an explanatory note from IPSA following a rejected claim, 51% said it was not clear. MPs and their staff have used the survey to call for more clarity in the explanations IPSA staff provide.
- A significant minority of MPs (39%) find the online expenses system difficult to use.
- For the first time we asked about IPSA's regulatory role, as opposed to our role providing practical support to MPs. The results were more negative than positive from MPs but more positive than negative from their members of staff.

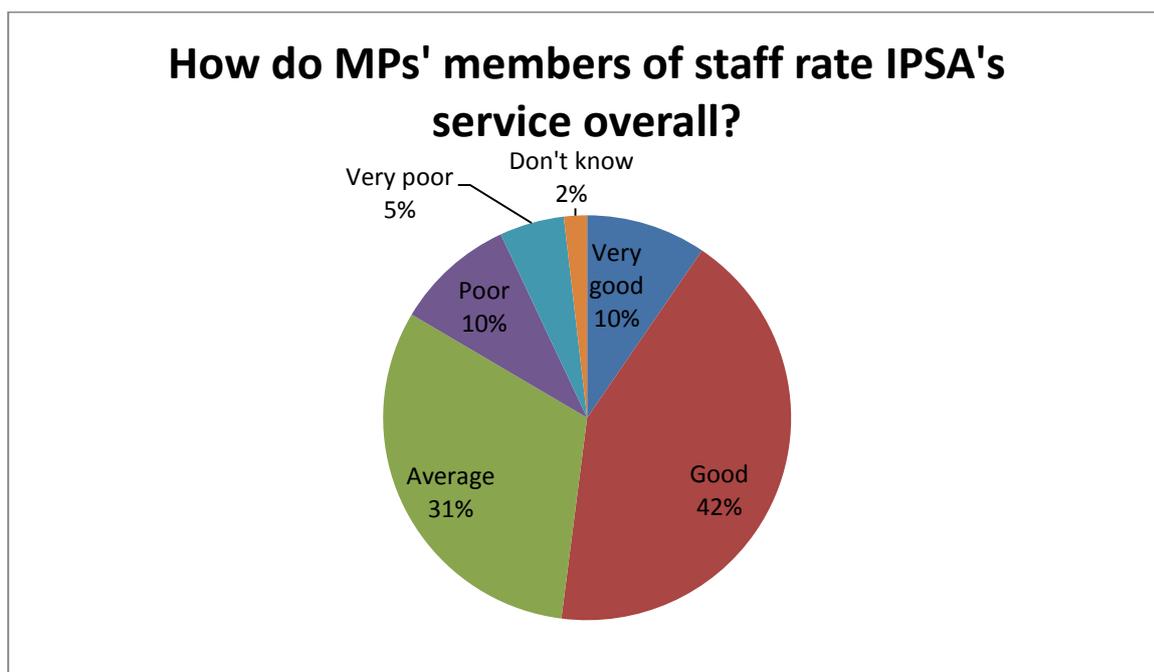
## An Overall Rating

For the first time in our survey, we asked MPs and their staff to rate IPSA's service over the past year overall.



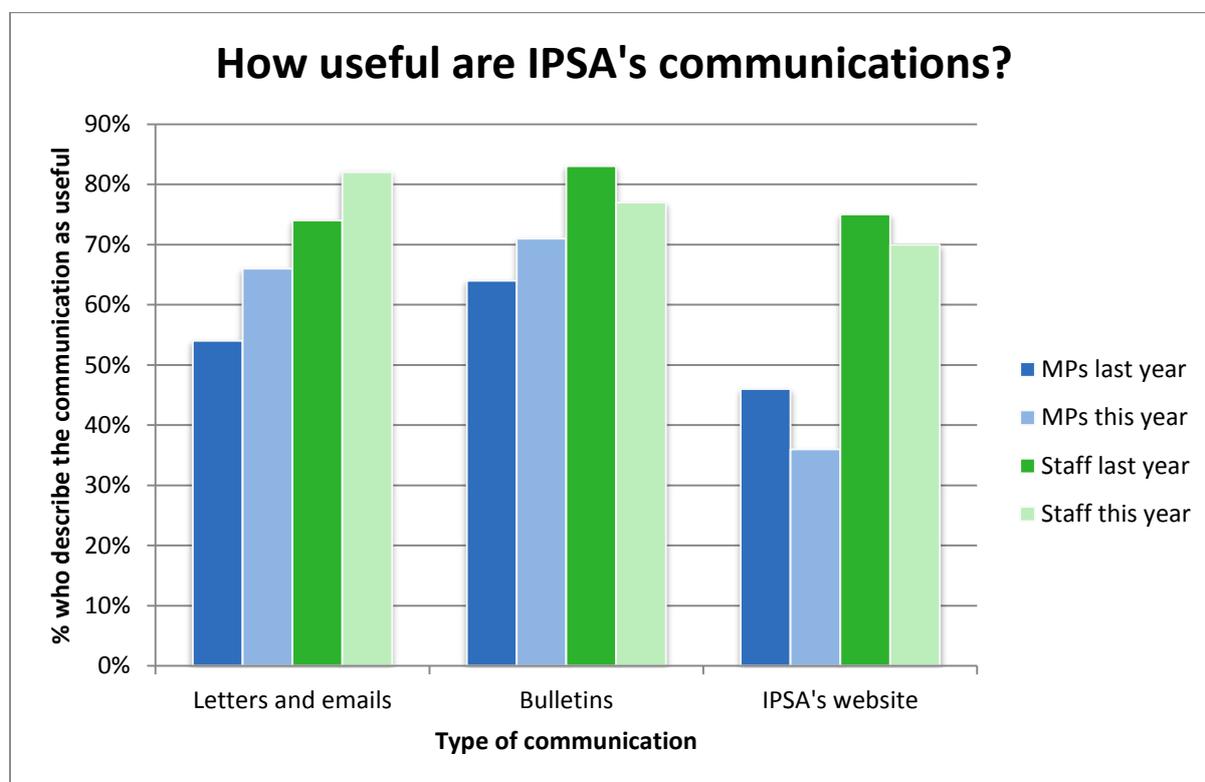
Among MPs, 36% of those surveyed rated IPSA's service as good or very good, while 43% rated the service average. 21% rated it poor or very poor.

Among MPs' staff, the results were better. 52% of those surveyed rated IPSA's service as good or very good, while 31% rated the service average. 15% rated it poor or very poor.



## Advice and guidance from IPSA

MPs and their staff have rated IPSA's letters and emails more positively than they did this time last year, but have rated our website more negatively.



### Usefulness of information provided by IPSA (IPSA initiated contact)

#### Letters and emails

- When asked to rate the usefulness of the letters and emails sent to them by IPSA, 66% of MPs described them as useful, up from 54% last year.
- MPs' staff were even happier: 82% of them described the letters and emails as useful, up from 74% last year.
- Dissatisfaction is also down from both MPs and their staff: 29% of MPs rated information we provide through letters and emails as not useful, down from 34% last year. Among MPs' staff, 10% said they were not useful, down from 16% last year.

#### Bulletins

IPSA regularly emails Bulletins to all MPs and their staff.

- When asked to rate the usefulness of these Bulletins, 71% of MPs described them as useful, up from 64% last year. Dissatisfaction is also down: 26% of MPs said they were not useful, compared to 33% last year.
- Again, MPs' staff were more positive: 77% described the Bulletins as useful. However this was down from 83% last year. Dissatisfaction stayed much the same: 14% of staff said they were not useful, whereas last year the figure was 13%.

*IPSA's website*

- MPs were not positive about IPSA's website. 36% of MPs described it as useful, down from 46% last year. 49% of them described it as not useful; this figure was 48% last year.
- However, MPs' staff were more positive, but again the results had fallen from last year. 70% said the website was useful, down from 75% last year. Dissatisfaction stayed much the same: 23% this year compared to 24% last year.

"Make sure that information is clear and says the same in different places."

MP

*Speed of IPSA's response*

MPs and staff were asked how satisfied they are with the speed of response from IPSA when they contact us. Satisfaction levels have risen, which matches an improvement in IPSA's response times to letters, emails and phone calls.

*Letters and emails*

- MPs' satisfaction has risen- it is now at 41%, up from 28% last year. At the same time, the proportion of MPs saying they are dissatisfied has dropped to 36%, down from 53% last year.
- Satisfaction has also risen among MPs' staff: 47% said they were satisfied, up from 41% last year. 24% of staff are dissatisfied, down from 30% last year.

In 2013-14, we answered 92.9% of emails within our target of 5 working days. In the first quarter of this financial year (2014-15), our speed of response has increased: we have answered 96.5% of emails within 5 working days.

*By phone*

- MPs' satisfaction with the speed of response when contacting IPSA using our Information Line has risen. 46% of MPs are satisfied, up from 39% last year. 27% of MPs are dissatisfied, down from 39% last year.
- Staff are more satisfied than MPs with the speed of response when using the Information Line. 63% of staff are satisfied, down from 68% last year. Dissatisfaction is slightly down, from 19% last year to 16% this year.

We also measure our speed of response when answering telephone calls. In 2013-14, we answered 66.1% of calls to our Information Line within our target of 20 seconds. In the first quarter of this financial year (2014-15), our speed of response has markedly increased: we have answered 81.3% of calls within 20 seconds. This trend of improvement should continue as, in June this year, we opened the Information Line all day, rather than just in the afternoons. This move, which was welcomed by both MPs and staff in the Survey, should

“Opening times changes are hugely important. Thank you”

MP

mean that demand for the Information Line is spread more evenly throughout the day so our operators will be able to answer more calls faster.

### Helpfulness of contact with IPSA (MP or MP’s office initiated contact)

We know that advice on the Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses is a very important aspect of the support that we provide to MPs and staff. MPs and staff are particularly pleased with advice given over the phone and increasingly satisfied with advice given by email.

#### Letters and emails

- When asked how helpful their contact with IPSA was, when they initiated contact by letter or email, 49% of MPs said it was helpful (up from 38% last year), while 38% said it was not helpful (down from 40% last year).
- Among staff, 66% said letter and email advice was helpful, down from 69% last year. Just 22% said it was not useful, much the same as the 23% who said the same last year.

#### Phone

- MPs described the advice they received over the phone as more helpful than last year: 71% said it was useful, compared to 59% last year. Only 23% of MPs said the advice was not helpful, down from 31% last year.
- 78% of MPs’ staff described their contact over the phone with IPSA as helpful, down from 86% last year. Only 14% said it was not helpful, compared to 12% last year.

#### Face-to-face meeting with IPSA

Just 21% of MPs and 11% of staff we questioned have had a face-to-face meeting with IPSA in the last year. Of those that have:

- 77% of them said it was helpful (62% of the MPs and 84% of the staff who have had one)

#### How can IPSA improve?

IPSA asked MPs and their staff how we could improve the information and guidance we offer to them. Of the 118 responses to this question, the most common were:

“Opportunity for face-to-face meetings?”

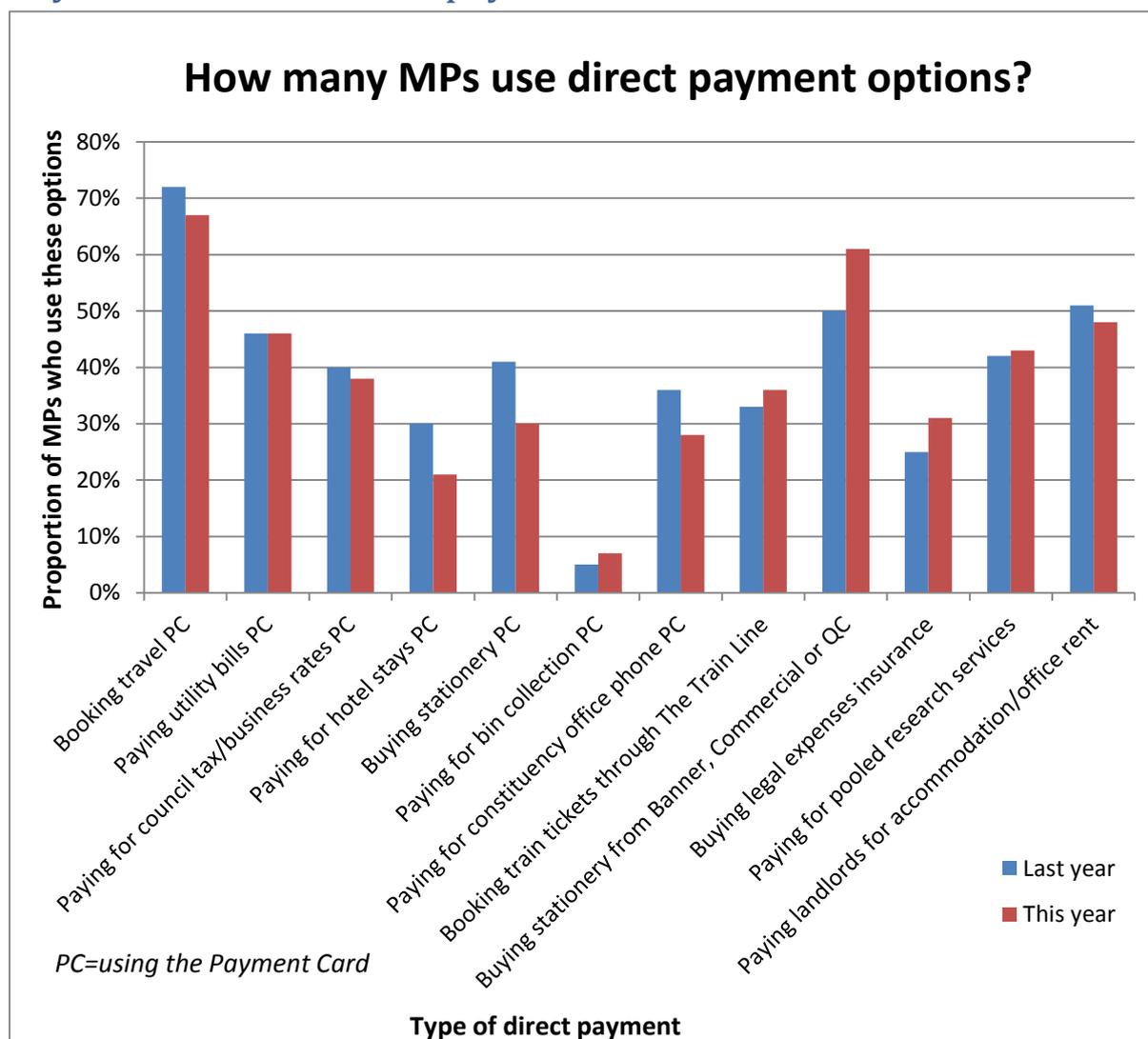
MP

Response	Percentage of all responses
Respond to emails quicker	14%
Give more accurate, consistent and clear information	13%
Thanks to IPSA for extended Information Line hours	13%
Website improvements: calls for improved search function, easier navigation and clearer structure	8%
Assign a named person to deal with queries, rather than the generic email address	7%
Extend the Information Line opening hours further, e.g. to weekends or evenings, or open longer at particularly busy times	5%

“[Communication could improve] by [having] a named contact, who would have access to information about how the individual Member's office, staff, accommodation etc works. This would save much repetition and might help IPSA provide more accurate advice.

**MP's staff member**

## Payment card and direct payments



MPs are provided with a payment card by IPSA to pay for many costs directly. They can also buy train tickets, stationery and much more online through specific websites where IPSA pays the bill directly. In our survey, we asked MPs and their staff which direct payment options they used. The payment card and direct payment options for MPs business costs are widely used; only 7% of MPs said they did not use any direct payment options, down slightly from 8% in 2013.

MPs<sup>1</sup> reported much the same usage levels of direct payment options as last year:

- Use of their payment card:
  - 67% used it for booking travel, down from 72% last year
  - 46% used it to pay utility bills, no change from last year

<sup>1</sup> This refers to MPs only and not their staff, as the majority of MPs' staff do not have access to direct payment facilities.

- 38% used it to pay for council tax or business rates, slightly down from 40% last year
- 21% used it to pay for hotel stays, down from 30% last year
- 30% used it to buy stationery, down from 41% last year
- 7% used it to pay for bin collection, up from 5% last year
- 28% used it to pay for their constituency office phone, down from 36% last year
- 36% of MPs booked train tickets directly on the TrainLine website, up from 33% last year
- 61% of MPs bought stationery directly from Banner, Commercial or QC, up from 50% last year
- 31% bought their legal expenses insurance directly from Jelf, up from 25% last year
- 43% of MPs paid directly for pooled research services, e.g. the PRU or POLD, slightly up from 42% last year
- 48% made direct payments to landlords for accommodation or office rent, down from 51% last year

An increasing number of MPs are using the direct payment options available to them. As of July, when this survey was carried out, 78% of all expenses incurred by MPs could be paid directly. In Q1 of the 2014-15 financial year, 67% of MPs' costs and expenses that could be paid directly, were paid directly. This figure is up from 65% for the 2013-14 financial year. The survey thus shows a slight underreporting by MPs in their use of direct payments.

Since carrying out this survey, we have opened up the payment card so MPs can now use the card to pay for all costs and expenses allowable under the Scheme.

IPSA asked MPs and their staff how we could help them to make the most of the payment card and direct payment options. Of the 126 responses to this question, the most common were:

"It is really helpful to be able to use the card and if IPSA could open it up to more services that would be really helpful"

MP's staff member

Response	Percentage of all responses
Provide a full list of costs and expenses that can be paid using the payment card/direct payment	13%
Give MPs the ability to set up Direct Debits to suppliers e.g. utility companies or BT. The lowest tariffs are often only for those paying for Direct Debit.	5%
Provide training to staff and/or MPs	5%

We also asked if there were other services that MPs and staff would like to be able to pay for using the payment card or direct payment. Their suggestions were:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cellhire</li> <li>• Surgery adverts</li> <li>• Parli-Training</li> <li>• Contents insurance</li> <li>• Mobile telephone bill</li> <li>• Dods reference books</li> <li>• Hansard</li> <li>• Council tax (some mentioned that their local Council doesn't accept credit cards)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refreshments in the House of Commons</li> <li>• Langfords Printing Services</li> <li>• Parking at office</li> <li>• Gallery News (lobby read out)</li> <li>• Office furniture</li> <li>• Stationery from Staples</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Completing claims

There is some mismatch in terms of the amount of time that MPs and their staff spend making expense claims. Most MPs and staff feel that they spend about the same time, or even less time than when they were asked last year. When asked to put a figure on it however, most MPs choose a larger number of hours than they did last year. And this figure appears to be an overestimation compared to the amount of time IPSA has logged them using the online expenses system.

When asked how many hours a month they spend making claims, MPs report that they spend more time than last year, while MPs' staff report that they spend less time.

### Hours per month spent making costs and expenses claims

The median amount of time that MPs report they spend making claims is 5 hours per month, compared to 2 hours per month in 2013.<sup>2</sup>

61% of MPs report that per month, they spend 5 hours or fewer making claims, compared to 83% who reported this in 2013.

Only 3% of MPs claim that they spend 20 hours or more each month making claims, compared to 2% who reported this last year.

Among staff, the median amount of time they report they spend making claims is 4 hours per month, compared to 6 hours per month in 2013.

60% of MPs' staff report that they spend 5 hours or fewer per month making claims, an increase on last year when 44% reported this.

Only 10% of MPs' staff report that they spend 20 hours or more per month making claims, down from last year when 16% reported this.

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<sup>2</sup> We report the median amount of time reported, in line with the 2011 NAO survey and our subsequent MP surveys.

*How this compares to last year, according to MPs and their staff*

The Survey asked MPs and their staff directly how they felt the amount of time they spend making claims compared to that a year ago.

Excluding those who said the question wasn't relevant, most MPs - 52% - said they spent about the same amount of time making claims. 38% of MPs said they spent less time making claims and only 10% said they spent more time making claims.

Among staff, the picture was even more positive. Excluding those who said the question wasn't relevant, 47% of MPs' staff said they spent about the same amount of time making claims as last year. 46% of MPs' staff said they spent less time making claims and only 7% said they spent more time making claims.

**Time recorded on Expense@Work**

We can also compare what MPs and their staff reported about their time spent making claims with the time we have recorded that they spend on our online system, Expenses@Work.

The average MP or their proxy spent 31 minutes 51 seconds per week on the Expenses@Work system in the last financial year (2013-14). So far this financial year, that amount of time has gone down slightly: the average MP or their proxy spent 30 minutes 23 seconds per week on the system.

Of course, time spent on the Expenses@Work system is not the only time that MPs or their staff will spend making claims for business costs and expenses. They will spend time collating and sending in their receipts to IPSA, reconciling their payment card and checking expenses against the Scheme, amongst other things.

**The online expenses system: ease of use**

This year for the first time, we asked MPs and their staff how easy they find the online expenses system to use. Here there was a marked difference between MPs and their staff.

MPs were fairly evenly split: 33% said they find it easy and 39% said they find it difficult, with 25% in the middle.

MPs' staff were more positive: more than half (51%) of them said they find it easy to use. Only 17% find it difficult, with 14% saying they find it neither easy nor difficult.

**Changes wanted to the online expenses system**

We asked MPs and their staff what changes they would like to see to the online expenses system. Of the 153 responses to that question, these were the most common answers:

“The improvements to the online system are welcome but there are still too many screens to click through.”

MP

Response	Percentage of all responses
The online expenses system is slow, cumbersome or not user friendly – it could be easier to use	24%
Make it simpler to run reports on spending in each budget and provide training in how to run these reports	8%
Change/improve the categories to explain the difference between them and make it simpler to decide which category to choose	6%

Some of the other constructive suggestions and comments that MPs and staff made about the online expenses system included:

- Should have an easier inputting screen e.g. allowing people to input dates directly, not through the calendar
- “Saved” options take a long time to load
- Should have a simple summary of expenses paid and those still pending
- The travel section is repetitive and requires scrolling across the page
- Shouldn’t have to enter the postcode every time for ‘regular’ mileage claims
- Mileage claims require far too much information

### Explanatory notes when returning claims

When there are mistakes in claims or when extra information is needed in order to validate a claim, IPSA validators write an explanatory note to get the information they need or explain a decision. This note is then sent back to the MP.

For the first time, the Annual Survey of MPs asked about these returned claims and explanatory notes. 69% of those questioned had had at least one claim returned to them with an explanatory note.

Of those that had received an explanatory note, 49% of MPs and 65% of MPs’ staff said it was clear.

We asked MPs and their staff if they had any comments to make about the explanatory notes IPSA sent them when returning a claim. Of the 117 responses we received, these were the most common answers:

“The report system is useful but I could do with some training to make the most of it”

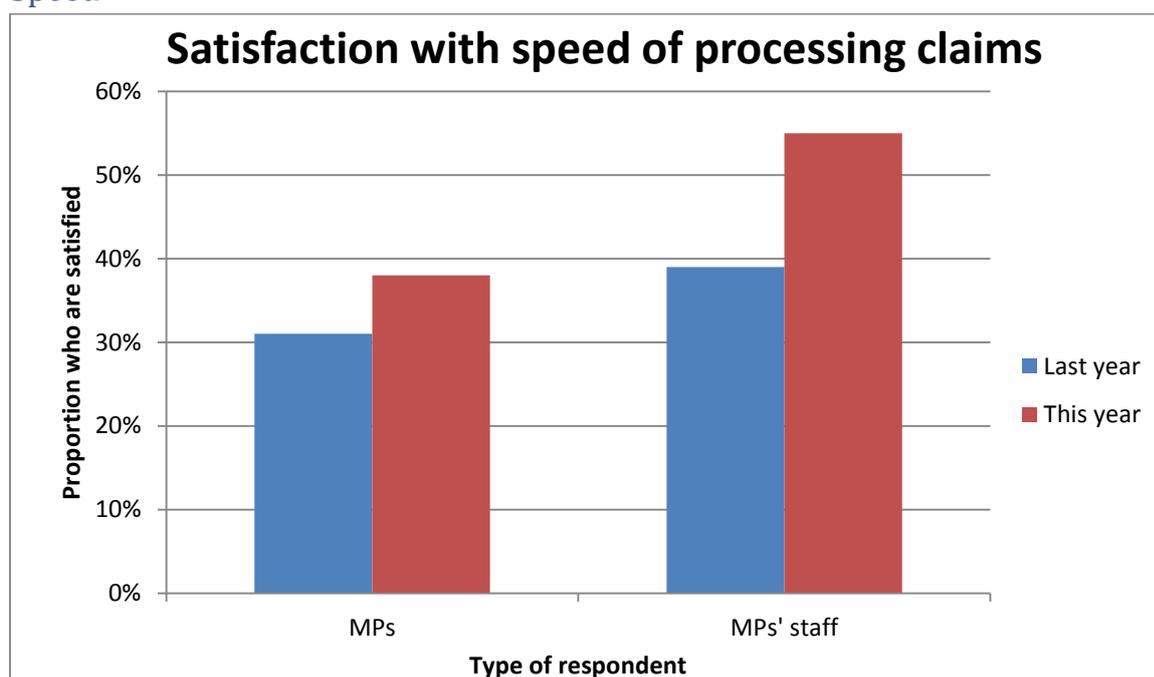
MP’s staff member

Response	Percentage of all responses
<i>No comments or 'notes are clear'</i>	22%
Reasons for a claim being rejected should be clearer; requires more specific detail	18%
There is a lack of consistency in IPSA's explanatory notes; MP or staff member has had contradictory advice in advice and through explanatory notes, or some claims accepted then identical claims rejected	9%
A clear notification should be sent to both the MP and the proxy, with a claim number, when a claim is returned by IPSA	5%

## Processing of claims by IPSA

We asked MPs and their staff about how IPSA processes claims for business costs and expenses. We asked respondents to tell us how satisfied they were with the speed and quality of the processing of claims.

### Speed



In terms of the speed with which business costs and expenses claims are processed, MPs and their staff both showed an increase in satisfaction and a decrease in dissatisfaction. Staff reported that they were more satisfied than MPs.

38% of MPs were satisfied with the speed, up from 31% last year. 40% of MPs were dissatisfied, down from 52% last year.

55% of staff were satisfied with the speed, up from 39% last year. Only 18% of staff were dissatisfied, down from 38% last year.

According to statistics held by IPSA, the average claim took 9 days from receipt of evidence for a claim to reimbursement in the last financial year (2013-14). In the first quarter of this financial year, the average claim has taken 9.5 days to be processed. The IPSA target for claims to be reimbursed is 12 working days.

“It’s usually done within the 14 days it is suggested it will take but sometimes it isn’t”

MP’s staff member

## Quality

In terms of the quality of processing their costs and expenses claims, 46% of MPs were satisfied, while 24% were dissatisfied. Staff were more favourable: 58% were satisfied and only 11% were dissatisfied.

In last year’s survey we asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with:

- The accuracy of reimbursement of claims to them
- How IPSA handles any queries about their claims
- How IPSA handles collection of repayments from them

As ‘How IPSA handles any queries about their claims’ is the most relevant comparator, the results from that question in 2013 were:

27% of MPs responded that they were satisfied with how IPSA handles queries, while 47% were dissatisfied.

Staff were more favourable, with 58% responding that they were satisfied with how IPSA handles queries and only 19% were dissatisfied.

In this year’s survey, MPs and staff were asked to explain why they rated the speed and quality of IPSA’s service in relation to processing claims as they did. Of the 174 responses to this question, the most common were:

Response	Percentage of all responses
Some payments take too long and their speed of processing varies between different expense types	41%
MPs or staff are having to deal with a shortfall in funds while waiting to be reimbursed	13%

## IPSA's payroll support

We asked about payroll tools which are part of the online expenses system provided to MPs and their staff. Results for these questions were mixed, partly because many MPs do not use the budget staffing report, online timesheets and flexible job description tool. But there is some dissatisfaction, suggesting room for improvement.

### Staffing budget report

57% of MPs were satisfied with the staffing budget report and only 12% were dissatisfied. Last year, satisfaction among MPs and staff combined was 61% and dissatisfaction was at 17%.

### Online timesheets

27% of MPs were satisfied with online timesheets, as part of the online expenses system, 8% were dissatisfied, with almost half (48%) of MPs saying they do not use this tool. Last year, satisfaction among MPs and staff combined was 31%, dissatisfaction was at 13% and 43% said they do not use this tool.

### Flexible Job Description Tool

We asked about the Flexible Job Description Tool, a new function introduced to the online expenses system in June 2014. Understandably only 41% of respondents had used this tool. Of those that had, 41% of MPs and 55% of staff were satisfied with the tool, while 21% of MPs and 17% of staff were dissatisfied with it.

"The JD tool could be improved if you were able to pick and choose responsibilities from different job titles - staff often cross over the roles and the JD needs to reflect this."

MP's staff member

We asked MPs and staff how IPSA could improve the payroll support it provides. Of the 122 responses we received, the most common were:

Response	Percentage of all responses
IT difficulties: staff and MPs want to use Google Chrome, not to have to reset passwords so often and to have the payroll tools integrated with the other IPSA IT systems	15%
Issues with the Flexible Job Description Tool: some staff saying it is not fit for purpose as different MPs want different job descriptions for their staff ('How can you make an MP an employer and then say they must choose from a JD someone else provides?'), calls for more flexibility in terms of job descriptions and job titles	7%

## MPs' use of business costs and expenses

We asked MPs if they had decided **not** to claim for any expenses which they believe they could have been reimbursed. 93% said they had not claimed for expenses in the last 12 months, compared to the 92% of MPs who said the same thing last year.

The most common reasons that MPs gave for not claiming were:

Reason	Percentage of MPs who gave this reason
It was only a small claim	27%
I was concerned about the claim being published	18%
It would take too long	10%
The claim process was too complicated	9%
I was worried the claim would be rejected	8%
I wasn't sure if it was claimable	8%

In addition, many MPs said they did not claim because of a combination of the above reasons. Another reason given was that some MPs said they didn't want to claim for certain

I do not claim for many items, partly because I do not agree with charging evening meals, partly because items are too small to worry about.

MP

things. More than one MP said they didn't agree with getting expenses for meals, or felt the claim would be ridiculed despite being legitimate.

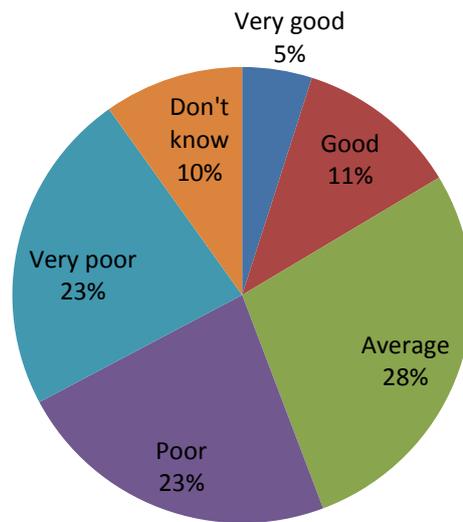
## IPSA's regulatory role

For the first time in our survey, we asked MPs and their staff to rate IPSA's regulatory role, as distinct from the day to day support we provide to MPs.

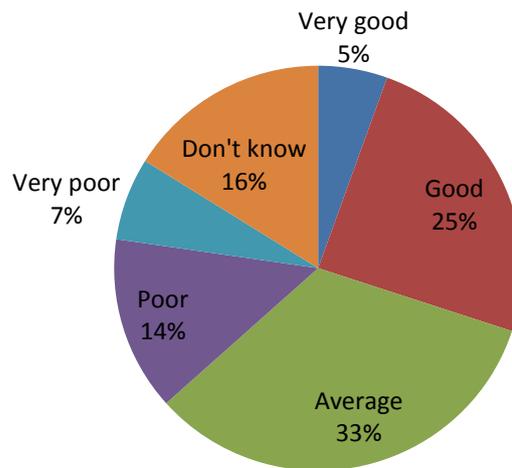
Among MPs, the results were poor. 46% of MPs rated IPSA's regulatory role as poor or very poor. 28% rated it average and 16% rated it good or very good.

Among MPs' staff, the results were more positive but still mixed: 30% rated it good or very good, 33% rated it average and 21% rated it poor or very poor.

### How do MPs rate IPSA's regulatory role?



### How do members of MPs' staff rate IPSA's regulatory role?



## ANNEX A – IPSA’S RESPONSE

We are very grateful for all of the responses to the user survey which we conducted in July 2014. There are clear signs that MPs and staff think there have been improvements in the support we offer, but, of course, there remains more for us to do.

In response to feedback and requests from MPs and staff, we have recently introduced seven measures to improve the support we offer MPs and their offices:

- we extended the opening hours of the MP support phone line from 10-5, Monday to Friday
- we opened the payment card so it can be used to pay for any cost valid under the Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses
- we are issuing financial statements to all MPs, to help their financial planning and budgeting
- we refreshed our how-to guides and are offering training to all MPs and their staff
- we are holding drop-in sessions to talk to MPs and staff about any part of the rules or the costs and expenses system
- we removed the need for MPs to register their car with us before claiming for mileage
- we produced a quick guide to the Scheme.

In addition to these seven initiatives, there were five other areas in the survey that MPs and their staff wanted us to think about: the speed of answering emails and phone calls, the speed of payments, how we respond to queries from MPs, IPSA’s website and the ease of use of the online systems.

### Speed of response to emails and phone calls

One of the requests was for us to respond to emails more quickly. At the moment we have a target of responding to all emails with a substantive reply within 5 working days. We currently respond to 96% in that time.

We certainly want to improve the timeliness of our email replies. Last month we replied to 53% within 1 day, compared with 37% a year ago.

On the phones, we have improved the speed of answering, while also opening the phones for longer. Currently, we are answering 81% of calls in 20 seconds, compared to 66% last year.

That shows a real improvement. Through more training and process improvements, rather than by recruiting more staff, we will build on this improved performance over the coming year.

### Speed of payments

Another request was for us to process payments more quickly. We have a target of making payments within 12 working days. For over a year, we have been running at an average time for reimbursing claims of around 9 days. Last month MPs received reimbursement within an average of only 6 days.

We will continue to work to streamline the process of receiving claims, checking the claims and the evidence, and then processing the payment.

The best way for MPs not to have to wait for reimbursement is to take advantage of direct payments options we make available or to use the payment card, meaning MPs do not have to use their own money up front.

### How we respond to queries from MPs

We recognise the importance of getting clear information and advice to MPs. We know that many MPs value the support we provide on the telephone support line. But there is more we can do to improve the support we offer.

We are therefore implementing a thorough programme of training focused on understanding and meeting the needs of MPs in their interactions with IPSA.

### IPSA's website

Towards the end of 2013 we refined and simplified our website. But it is clear from the responses we received that more work is needed.

We are going to tackle this in two stages. First, we are developing a dedicated IPSA website for the General Election. This will include information for new, departing and returning MPs and their staff. As we develop this site, we will ask a group of MPs' staff to help us make sure it meets the needs of those who will use it.

Second, we will gather feedback from this General Election website and then set about refreshing the rest of the IPSA website in 2015.

### The ease of use of the online system

We upgraded our online system in the Spring to take account of previous feedback. This upgrade focussed on the look and feel of the site and on improving the budgeting reports and tools.

We are now working on two further issues: the compatibility of our system with internet browsers, other than Internet Explorer, and the specific information we give to MPs when returning a claim.

Our timesheet application is now compatible with the latest versions of all major browsers and we are holding talks with the providers of the expenses system about increasing compatibility with other browsers.

We have also heard the request that, when we email MPs to return a claim to them, we should quote the claim reference number in the email. It makes sense to do so and from now on, we will do just that.

We take your feedback seriously. It helps us to improve the support we provide to all MPs and their staff. Thank you for the time you took to complete the survey.

If you have any other ideas or suggestions about the support IPSA provides, you can get in touch anytime on 020 7811 6400 or [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

## ANNEX B – PERSONAL DATA

The survey did not ask respondents for their personal details and, therefore, the responses to the survey were anonymous. Individuals could not be identified from the responses, unless any personal data was entered into the free text fields.

At the beginning of the survey, MPs and their proxies were informed that the survey would be conducted anonymously and that we may disclose quantitative or qualitative data, including in response to a Freedom of Information request. Where any of the data might identify an individual, respondents are aware that we would withhold that information

## ANNEX C – SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey was built using Snap Surveys (Snap) software and available online. A link to the survey was included in an email of 2 July to MPs and their staff from IPSA Chief Executive Marcial Boo, inviting them to take part in the survey. Four further reminder emails were sent during the next three weeks. This collected a total of 334 responses; 61 from MPs and 273 from members of staff.

The survey was closed after three weeks and the results downloaded and imported into the Snap software. The survey analysis took place both in Snap and in Excel.

In addition to quantitative analysis on 16 questions, responses to 10 free text fields were analysed qualitatively.

## ANNEX D – FULL SURVEY DATA

The figures given in bold are overall figures. The figures in brackets are given in the form: (MPs result/Staff result)

1. Are you an MP or a member of staff?

MP	Member of staff
<b>18%</b>	<b>82%</b>

2. Overall, how would you rate IPSA's service over the last year?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Very good	<b>10%</b> (10%/10%)
Good	<b>40%</b> (26%/42%)
Average	<b>34%</b> (43%/32%)
Poor	<b>11%</b> (15%/10%)
Very poor	<b>5%</b> (7%/5%)
Don't know	<b>2%</b> (0%/2%)

### Advice and Guidance from IPSA

3. In the last year, how helpful was your contact with IPSA?

	Very helpful	Fairly helpful	Not very helpful	Not at all helpful	I haven't used this method of communication
By e-mail	<b>17%</b> (10%/18%)	<b>46%</b> (39%/48%)	<b>19%</b> (28%/17%)	<b>7%</b> (16%/5%)	<b>11%</b> (7%/12%)
By phone	<b>30%</b> (28%/30%)	<b>47%</b> (43%/48%)	<b>9%</b> (18%/7%)	<b>7%</b> (5%/7%)	<b>8%</b> (7%/8%)
Face to face meeting	<b>6%</b> (5%/7%)	<b>4%</b> (8%/3%)	<b>2%</b> (5%/1%)	<b>1%</b> (3%/0%)	<b>87%</b> (79%/89%)

4. How useful is the information we provide through the following channels?

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
Letters and emails to MPs	<b>20%</b> (15%/21%)	<b>59%</b> (51%/61%)	<b>11%</b> (26%/7%)	<b>3%</b> (3%/3%)	<b>8%</b> (5%/9%)
MP Bulletins	<b>21%</b> (7%/24%)	<b>55%</b> (64%/53%)	<b>13%</b> (21%/11%)	<b>3%</b> (5%/3%)	<b>8%</b> (3%/9%)
IPSA's website	<b>14%</b> (8%/16%)	<b>49%</b> (28%/54%)	<b>23%</b> (38%/19%)	<b>6%</b> (11%/4%)	<b>8%</b> (15%/7%)
The Guide to MPs'	<b>18%</b> (15%/18%)	<b>52%</b> (46%/53%)	<b>14%</b> (25%/12%)	<b>4%</b> (5%/4%)	<b>13%</b> (10%/13%)

Business Costs and Expenses					
IPSA's how to guides	<b>13%</b> (7%/15%)	<b>46%</b> (36%/48%)	<b>14%</b> (23%/12%)	<b>5%</b> (11%/3%)	<b>22%</b> (23%/22%)

5. In the last year, how satisfied have you been with the speed of response when contacting IPSA?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	I haven't used this method of communication
By e-mail	<b>12%</b> (8%/13%)	<b>34%</b> (33%/34%)	<b>17%</b> (18%/16%)	<b>17%</b> (21%/16%)	<b>9%</b> (15%/8%)	<b>11%</b> (5%/12%)
By phone	<b>23%</b> (16%/25%)	<b>37%</b> (30%/38%)	<b>15%</b> (20%/14%)	<b>10%</b> (16%/9%)	<b>8%</b> (11%/7%)	<b>8%</b> (7%/8%)

6. As a result of your comments last year, our Information Line is now open from 10am-5pm, Monday to Friday. How else could IPSA improve the information and guidance we offer to you?

*118 responses to this question, from 25 MPs and 93 members of staff.*

### **Payment cards and direct payment**

7. Which of the following payment options have you used? [Please tick all that apply]

	Percentage who ticked this option
Payment card for travel	<b>57%</b> (67%/55%)
Payment card for utility bills	<b>35%</b> (46%/33%)
Payment card for council tax and business rates	<b>29%</b> (38%/27%)
Payment card for hotels	<b>23%</b> (21%/23%)
Payment card for stationery	<b>32%</b> (30%/33%)
Payment card for refuse collection	<b>7%</b> (7%/7%)
Payment card for constituency office landline	<b>31%</b> (28%/32%)
Travel booked through trainline.com	<b>36%</b> (36%/36%)
Stationery ordered directly with Banner, Commercial or QC	<b>66%</b> (61%/67%)
Legal expenses insurance (obtained through Jelf)	<b>30%</b> (31%/29%)
Pooled research services (e.g. PRU, POLD, PRS, ERG)	<b>40%</b> (43%/39%)
Direct payments to landlords for accommodation or office rent	<b>44%</b> (48%/44%)
None of the above	<b>14%</b> (7%/15%)

8. Which of the following statements describes your understanding of payment cards or direct payments and the payment options listed in question 7?

	Percentage who ticked this option
I know about payment options and I am using all the options suitable to me	<b>40%</b> (46%/39%)
I do know about some of these options, but not all of them	<b>34%</b> (31%/35%)
I do know about payment options but I need further help	<b>8%</b> (7%/8%)
I did not previously know about any of these payment options	<b>2%</b> (2%/2%)
I do not wish to use any payment card or direct payment options	<b>3%</b> (5%/3%)
None of the above	<b>12%</b> (10%/13%)

9. Over 70% of MPs' business costs and expense claims can now be paid direct to suppliers, or by using the payment card. How can IPSA help you to make the most of the payment card and direct payment options? Are there any other services you would like to pay for directly in this way?

*126 responses to this question, from 33 MPs and 93 members of staff.*

10. In the last year, on average how many hours per month have you spent making claims for business costs and expenses?

	MPs	Members of staff
Median number of hours per month	5	4
Percentage who stated 5 hours or fewer	61%	60%
Percentage who stated 20 hours or more	3%	10%

11. How does this compare to the amount of time you were spending making claims a year ago?

	Percentage who ticked this option
A lot less time now	<b>8%</b> (7%/8%)
A little less time now	<b>26%</b> (30%/25%)
About the same amount of time now	<b>36%</b> (49%/33%)
A little more time now	<b>4%</b> (8%/3%)
A lot more time now	<b>2%</b> (2%/2%)
Not relevant	<b>24%</b> (5%/29%)

12. How easy do you find the online expenses system to use?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Very easy	<b>7%</b> (3%/7%)
Fairly easy	<b>41%</b> (30%/44%)
Neither easy nor difficult	<b>16%</b> (25%/14%)
Fairly difficult	<b>14%</b> (21%/12%)

Very difficult	<b>7%</b> (18%/5%)
Don't know	<b>16%</b> (3%/18%)

13. Do you find it useful to be able to produce reports detailing how much you have spent in various budgets on the online expenses system?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Yes, this is useful	<b>58%</b> (62%/57%)
No, this is not useful	<b>6%</b> (7%/6%)
Don't know	<b>3%</b> (2%/4%)
I haven't used the reporting function	<b>33%</b> (30%/33%)

14. What changes would you like to see to the online expenses system?

*153 responses to this question, from 43 MPs and 110 members of staff.*

#### **Processing of claims by IPSA**

15. If we have returned a claim to you in the last year, were our explanatory notes clear?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Yes	<b>43%</b> (39%/43%)
No	<b>26%</b> (41%/23%)
I have not had any claims returned to me by IPSA	<b>31%</b> (20%/34%)

16. Do you have any comments to make about the explanatory notes IPSA sends you when returning a claim?

*117 responses to this question, from 34 MPs and 83 members of staff.*

17. How satisfied are you with IPSA's current service in relation to processing your claims?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not relevant
Speed of processing	<b>9%</b> (5%/10%)	<b>43%</b> (33%/45%)	<b>14%</b> (21%/12%)	<b>16%</b> (30%/12%)	<b>7%</b> (10%/6%)	<b>12%</b> (2%/14%)
Quality of service	<b>14%</b> (10%/14%)	<b>43%</b> (36%/44%)	<b>18%</b> (26%/16%)	<b>9%</b> (16%/7%)	<b>5%</b> (8%/4%)	<b>12%</b> (3%/14%)

18. Please explain why you have rated the speed and quality of the service this way

*174 responses to this question, from 39 MPs and 135 members of staff.*

#### **IPSA's payroll services**

## 19. How satisfied are you with the following payroll services?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	I haven't used this service
Staffing budget report	<b>19%</b> (21%/	<b>33%</b> (36%/	<b>13%</b> (18%/	<b>5%</b> (10%/	<b>2%</b> (2%/	<b>27%</b> (13%/
Online timesheets	<b>8%</b> (7%/8%)	<b>21%</b> (20%/21%)	<b>10%</b> (18%/8%)	<b>6%</b> (5%/6%)	<b>5%</b> (3%/5%)	<b>51%</b> (48%/51%)
Flexible Job Description Tool	<b>6%</b> (3%/6%)	<b>16%</b> (16%/15%)	<b>12%</b> (18%/11%)	<b>4%</b> (5%/4%)	<b>3%</b> (5%/3%)	<b>59%</b> (52%/61%)

## 20. How could IPSA improve the payroll services it provides?

*122 responses to this question, from 23 MPs and 99 members of staff.*

**And Finally**

## 21. In the last 12 months, have you ever decided not to claim for any expenses for which you believe you could have been reimbursed?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Yes	<b>61%</b> (93%/54%)
No	<b>39%</b> (7%/46%)

## 22. Which of the following were your reasons for not claiming a business cost or expense?

	Percentage who ticked this option
The claim process was too complicated	<b>8%</b> (5%/9%)
It was only a small claim	<b>27%</b> (25%/27%)
It would take too long	<b>10%</b> (11%/10%)
I wasn't sure if it was claimable	<b>6%</b> (2%/8%)
I wasn't sure what amount I could claim for	<b>2%</b> (5%/1%)
I was concerned about the claim being published	<b>19%</b> (19%/18%)
I was worried the claim would be rejected	<b>6%</b> (0%/8%)
Not applicable	<b>2%</b> (0%/2%)
Other	<b>22%</b> (33%/17%)

## 23. If you selected 'other', please provide further details here.

*52 responses to this question, from 23 MPs and 29 members of staff.*

## 24. As well as administering the system to pay your salaries and expenses, IPSA has a wider regulatory role to provide reassurance to the public that MPs are remunerated fairly and

transparently. Thinking about IPSA's **regulatory** role, how would you rate our performance over the past year?

	Percentage who ticked this option
Very good	<b>5%</b> (5%/5%)
Good	<b>22%</b> (11%/25%)
Average	<b>32%</b> (28%/33%)
Poor	<b>16%</b> (23%/14%)
Very poor	<b>10%</b> (23%/7%)
Don't know	<b>15%</b> (10%/16%)

25. Please explain why you have rated IPSA's regulatory role in this way.

*175 responses to this question, from 46 MPs and 129 members of staff.*

26. Do you have anything else you'd like to add? Remember, the survey software anonymises all responses so please call us if you would like to talk about a specific query or problem.

*109 responses to this question, from 29 MPs and 80 members of staff.*