



FAMILY COURT  
OF AUSTRALIA  
FEDERAL  
CIRCUIT COURT  
OF AUSTRALIA

Court User  
Satisfaction Survey

2015

## Foreword from the Chief Executive Officer



I am very proud to present this report containing an analysis of results from our last court(s) user satisfaction survey.

This initiative is one element of our integrated commitment to the International Framework for Court Excellence. The Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia can reasonably claim to be international leaders in the implementation of this framework, having each undertaken extensive internal assessments on all aspects of court and judicial administration.

As well, the Courts have repeatedly sought the views of court users and been open to feedback, and at times criticism, with respect to services. This openness to the public and to those people who rely on our Courts, has made us innovative, responsive and willing to embrace change.

It is striking data that over 77% of people attending our courts report overall satisfaction with their experience. This is an impressive result when we deal in family conflict, bankruptcy, migration, human rights matters – all of which can be highly adversarial and are matters acutely relevant to a person's life and future.

It is notable that the majority of people surveyed reported that our staff are knowledgeable, respectful and helpful. It is also a signal of public confidence in our courts, that the majority of those surveyed report that they were treated fairly in Court and that everyone was treated the same.

I have asked our Registry Managers and our other senior executives to carefully digest the results and to look to any improvements which we can reasonably make in 2016 while also preserving our considerable strengths.

**Richard Foster PSM FAIM**

Chief Executive Officer

Family Court of Australia  
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## 1. Executive summary

The Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia have adopted the International Framework for Court Excellence.<sup>1</sup> In the search for ‘excellence’, the court users’ perspective is central. One way to understand the views and experience of the court user is examination of results and feedback from user satisfaction surveys. A survey was conducted in 2011 nationally and then repeated by the courts in 2014. The results of the 2014 survey are presented in this report.

The survey process was undertaken with the support of the judiciary and senior management. The courts extend their appreciation to the students and volunteers who assisted with the survey and the registry operations staff who coordinated the process. We also extend our thanks to the litigants, lawyers and others who took the time to complete the survey.

The 2014 *Court User Satisfaction Survey* involved 13 family law registries and was aimed at users in both courts in respect of family law, and general federal law in the Federal Circuit Court. Volunteers, mostly students from university law faculties, interviewed 1437 court users. Legal practitioners were also invited to complete the survey online if they preferred and this provided a further 282 responses.

The questionnaire has qualitative and quantitative elements and consists of 43 substantive questions. Through this survey, the data include demographic details such as age, gender, income, language, education and marital status (for those other than lawyers and paralegals). These questions enabled the development of a profile of the interviewees and therefore a context for survey results. In the event, these demographic variables were not found to be significantly determinative of interviewees’ court experience.

The survey included other research variables which were influential upon the interviewee’s level of satisfaction with their court experience:

- role of the interviewee whether lawyer, applicant or respondent
- whether the interviewee was legally represented
- frequency of visits to the courts – first time, several times or regular visitor to the courts, and
- type and age of proceedings e.g. divorce proceedings, final/ interim orders or other matter.

The final part of the survey included questions to identify how satisfied interviewees were with their experiences attending the court buildings and engaging with the variety of court services and events.

**Overall, interviewees were very complimentary with 77 per cent expressing satisfaction with their visit to the courts**

Those who were most likely to be familiar with the courts and their procedures, that is, those for whom being at the courts was a part of their day-to-day role, were more likely to be satisfied with their experience overall. So, lawyers were generally more satisfied than either applicants or the respondents.

The results of the survey highlighted a number of areas in which the courts performed extremely well. These were:

- court buildings were easy to find and navigate
- felt safe in the courtroom or court environment, and
- treatment by staff was professional and respectful and queries were answered promptly.

<sup>1</sup> International Framework for Court Excellence 2nd Edition, 2013 (at [www.courtexcellence.com/](http://www.courtexcellence.com/)).

Despite the courts' overall high levels of satisfaction, there were several areas of potential improvement identified. These included:

- forms
- time the matter took
- start times
- clarity as to what was to happen on the day, and
- National Enquiry Centre.

Overall, taking account of the results across the board, the survey results consistently indicated that lawyers were the most satisfied, respondents least satisfied and applicants were somewhere in the middle. The only exception was in respect of the NEC where lawyers were the least satisfied group.

## Areas for improvement

### **Better management of expectations about day in court**

The survey responses indicated that there were several aspects of the experience of the interviewee in court on the day, which could be improved. More than a quarter of court users wanted to be better informed about when their particular matter would start and how long it would take. They wanted to understand what was expected of them and what the next steps would be.

### **Tailor information**

Another of the areas identified for improvement can be summarised as the way the courts communicate with court users and provide information and support. Court users, particularly the applicants and respondents, indicated they would like more simplified forms, more user friendly e-filing procedures and websites, improved access to the courts' telephone enquiry service and timely advice about what happens at court.

### **Better management of the respondent**

The survey results indicated that of all court users, respondents are least satisfied with their experiences at court. While this result is somewhat intuitive, given the nature of litigation, the courts could explore what action may be taken to improve the experience and perceptions of the respondent in family law proceedings.

Overall, the level of court user satisfaction indicated by the results from this 2014 survey is high particularly when one considers that people are in the courts at a low point in their lives (such as separation, family law dispute, migration and bankruptcy). The survey identified some issues of concern to court users and the courts have the opportunity to improve in those areas.

These 2014 survey results build on the 2011 results and will further the courts' understanding of court user views and experience.

## 2. Background and scope

This section outlines the background to the *Court User Satisfaction Survey*, the scope and objectives.

The Family Court of Australia and Federal Circuit Court of Australia are federal courts responsible for family law matters in all states and territories except Western Australia. The Federal Circuit Court also has general federal law jurisdiction which includes bankruptcy, migration, human rights, industrial law and other areas of federal law.

In order to assist the courts achieve their goals for delivering excellence in service for children, families, other parties and litigants, the International Framework for Court Excellence has been adopted.

The International Framework for Court Excellence (the Framework) was developed by an international consortium consisting of groups and organisations from Europe, Asia, Australia and the United States. The signatories who represent the International Consortium for Court Excellence include:

- Australasian Institute for Judicial Administration (Australia and NZ)
- The Federal Judicial Centre (USA)
- The National Centre for State Courts (USA), and
- The Subordinate Courts of Singapore.

The Consortium developed a framework of values, concepts and assessment models by which courts worldwide can voluntarily assess and improve access to justice and court administration.

Specifically, the Framework represents a resource for assessing a court's performance against seven detailed areas of court excellence and provides clear guidance for courts intending to improve their performance.

The seven key areas are:

1. Court leadership and management
2. Court planning and policies
3. Human, material and financial resources
4. Court proceedings and processes
5. Client needs and satisfaction
6. Affordable and accessible court services, and
7. Public trust and confidence.

One of the important aspects (area 5) is to gather information relating to the needs and perceptions of court users. Court users include, but may not be limited to, members of the public using the services of the courts (for example, applicant, respondent, witnesses and those seeking information or assistance from court staff) and professional partners (lawyers, paralegals/filing clerks, court experts and court interpreters).

Measures of the needs and perceptions of court users may address levels of satisfaction with the outcome of the court proceeding, and satisfaction with how the parties, witnesses and lawyers were treated by the judicial officers and court staff; the (perceived) expertise of the judicial officers and staff; and the fairness and clarity of court procedures and decisions. This information can be used to improve the quality and processes provided by the courts.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> International Framework for Court Excellence, 2nd Edition, p. 10.

One of the courts' central initiatives to better understand the needs and perceptions of court users has been the development of the user satisfaction survey. The first survey conducted by these courts, the Family Law User Satisfaction Survey, was conducted over the month of July in 2011 and the results were published in December 2011.

The search for excellence is an ongoing endeavour and the objective is to reach higher levels of client satisfaction with service delivery and to maintain this achievement over time. To this end, the courts conducted a second user satisfaction survey in late 2014 in order to measure current court user satisfaction and compare the results to those of 2011.

### Scope and objectives of the user survey

The *Court User Satisfaction Survey* measures the level of satisfaction of all court users including parties, witnesses, lawyers, experts, interpreters and other support people.

The scope of this survey did not include an evaluation of user satisfaction with judges' decisions.

The intention is that the survey will be conducted periodically as a tool for ongoing assessment of levels of satisfaction of court users. The aim is to build on what is learnt.

## 3. Survey methodology

This section outlines the 2014 survey methodology.

The *Court User Satisfaction Survey* combines both quantitative and qualitative research. The following outlines the process for its development and delivery, including the location and sample sizes. Recommendations for future measurement of client perceptions and satisfaction are also outlined.

### Process for the development of the *Court User Satisfaction Survey*

Questions for the 2011 survey were developed noting the key issues that the courts wanted to explore in respect of the needs and perceptions of court users. In addition, reference was made to previous Australian and international research and surveys of court users. Feedback was also sought from the judiciary and registries.

The 2011 foundation survey methodology and design were retained in the 2014 survey to allow a meaningful comparison between the results from the two surveys. While the 2011 survey questions were the basis for the 2014 survey, feedback from the 2011 process and the current concerns of the courts were also taken into account when developing the 2014 survey questions. The survey improvements included the following:

- the survey was extended to the general federal law jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court
- the 2014 survey identified users who were represented by lawyers and those appearing without a lawyer – the 2011 survey did not, and
- six new questions were included to directly target the experience of litigants without lawyers.

There are 43 substantive questions in the *Court User Satisfaction Survey 2014* (see Appendix A). A number of questions are intended to create a profile of the users and why they are at court. Other questions request the interviewees to rate their perceptions and experiences in attending court on the day. Several questions relate to broader experiences with the courts' technology services and as indicated above, six questions dealt with the particular experience of using the courts unaided by a lawyer. Additionally, within the survey there was scope for feedback on areas for improvement and comments.

The quantitative results that are presented as the percentage of interviewees have been rounded off to the nearest whole number or when appropriate, to the first decimal point.



## Process for gathering data

In 2011, data was gathered by one-on-one consultation with court users. Each consultation was based on the same set of survey questions about the demographics of the user and feedback on several issues about their day in court.

The data for the 2014 survey was largely collected by this same approach. For convenience the legal profession was also given the option to contribute their views by completing the survey anonymously online. The result was that 84 per cent of all survey questionnaires were completed by face-to-face interviews and 16 per cent were received electronically.

Predominantly the interviewers were volunteers, but in one or two small sites it was necessary to employ people to conduct the surveys. Over 100 volunteers (many were university students) from around the country assisted the courts with the interviews.

The *Court User Satisfaction Survey* took place across all locations over the month of August 2014.

The interviewees were people randomly approached and were court users attending at any location within the court building. For example, they could be attending a counter, court event or court hearing. If a user agreed to participate, the volunteer would undertake the survey and record the responses. The volunteers and court staff assisted with the input of responses online into the survey program 'SurveyMonkey'.

## Location and sample size

The sample size in the 2011 survey was 1322 court users. The target for 2014 was to collect 1000 surveys and the total sample size achieved for the 2014 survey was 1719, of which 1437 were face-to-face interviews.

The 2014 *Court User Satisfaction Survey* was undertaken at 13 registries. Additionally, the online survey responses included a further four locations.

Prior to the collection stage, each registry was provided with a quota for the minimum number of surveys to be collected in their location. Each quota was determined by dividing the targeted total number of interviewees (n = 1000) by the number of final order applications filed in each registry in the previous year. See Table 1 for registry quotas and resulting sample sizes.

By applying this method, a number of registries were given very small quotas of less than 50. Generally registries achieved their targets, with the exception of Brisbane and Newcastle. A number of registries exceeded their quotas by a significant proportion and it is therefore possible that the disproportionate number of responses received in some locations (Melbourne and Parramatta) has impacted the results overall.

Registry managers are asked to analyse the results for their particular locations and consider what specific improvements are needed in terms of services and facilities.

**Table 1 Sample size and quota for locations at which interviews were held**

Registry	Quota	Responses received
Adelaide	90	96
Brisbane	210	149
Cairns	20	34
Canberra	30	53
Dandenong	60	144
Darwin	10	16
Hobart	20	45
Launceston	20	21
Melbourne	230	441
Newcastle	70	64
Parramatta	100	399
Sydney	130	205
Townsville	20	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>1700</b>

## Analysing results

In the evaluation of the 2011 survey responses, the courts measured the users' needs and perceptions of facilities and services by means of the following process:

- for each qualitative question, there were six options which are listed below
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - Not applicable

*Disagreement indicates dissatisfaction and agreement indicates satisfaction with a particular service or facility.*

- the number of responses in which the 'Not applicable' option was selected was deducted from the total number of responses for each question (**This is A**)

*A respondent's view was considered relevant to the measurement of satisfaction only if the question was applicable to them.*

- for each question the number of 'Agree' and 'Strongly agree' responses were added together to provide the number of respondents who had indicated they were satisfied (**This is B**)
- the total number of satisfied responses (**B**) was divided by the total number of applicable responses (**A**) to derive a level (percentage) of satisfaction for each question
- a satisfaction level of 75 per cent or more was deemed to be a reasonable standard of performance. That is, if  $B/A \times 100 \geq 75\%$ , the survey respondents were deemed to be satisfied with that particular service or facility.

This process was retained for the 2014 survey.

## 4. Interviewee profile

This section outlines the profile of court users.

The following section provides an overview of the court users who responded to the *Court User Satisfaction Survey*. An understanding of their profile provides context for the findings of this report.

A comparison of the profile of interviewees between the surveys of 2011 and 2014 is provided in full detail at Appendix B.

Almost half the interviewees (49%) were applicants (32%) and respondents (17%) and a quarter (24%) were lawyers. Just under half the interviewees (49%) were at court for final or interim orders and just over one-in-five (22%) were present for divorce proceedings.

The interviewees either attended the Federal Circuit Court (56%) or Family Court (39%).

Over half the applicant and respondent interviewees (56%) had attended court several times with nearly a third (29%) attending for the first time. Fifteen per cent were more regular visitors to the court.

The demographic data collected for the applicant and respondent interviewees included age, gender, income, language, education and marital status.

Two-in-three (66%) of the applicant and respondent interviewees were aged between 31 and 50 years. Gender was evenly represented with males accounting for just over half (51%) and females just under half (49%).

The largest income group for the applicant and respondent interviewees was a family income of less than \$50 000 per annum (51%) and almost two-in-five (38%) were tertiary qualified.

Of the interviewees, seven-in-ten (70%) did not speak a language other than English at home. Of the remainder, 89 per cent provided information regarding the language(s) they spoke. These included 76 different languages with Arabic (17%) and Hindi (14%) being the most prevalent.

Almost four per cent of applicant and respondent interviewees identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI).

### 4.1 Type of roles

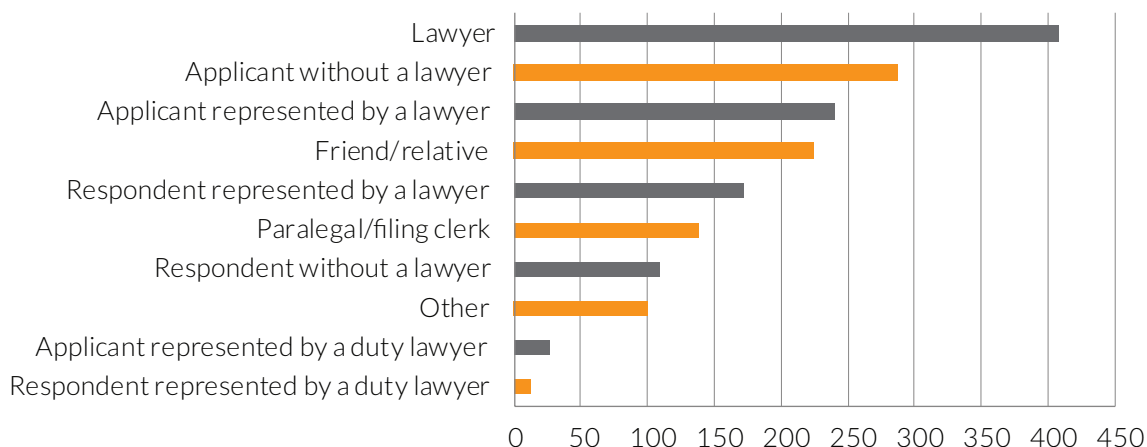
The court users interviewed were predominantly lawyers, applicants or respondents (see Figure 1). The percentages for different roles in this 2014 survey were very similar to those in 2011.

Almost half (49%) of the interviewees were either applicants or respondents. Nearly a third of interviewees were applicants (32%) and just less than one-in-five were respondents (17%). The legal profession represented nearly a third (32%) of the interviewees with lawyers comprising just under a quarter (24%) and paralegals/filing clerks nearly one-in-12 (8%).

The remaining interviewees comprised of friends or relatives (13%) or 'other' (6%). 'Other' included witnesses, interpreters, support workers and students.

Of the applicant and respondent interviewees (848), almost half (47%) were without a lawyer. Equally, almost half were represented by a lawyer (48%) with the remaining five per cent being assisted by a duty lawyer.

**Figure 1 Role of the court user**



#### 4.2 Primary purpose of visit to court

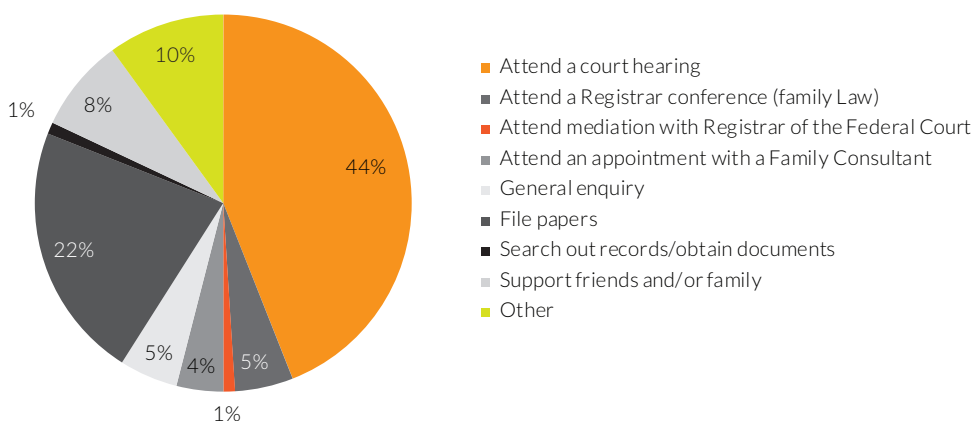
The primary purpose of interviewees visit to court was either to attend a court hearing or file papers (see Figure 2).

Almost half of the interviewees (44%) indicated that their primary purpose for attending court on that day was for a hearing and just over one-in-five (22%) indicated that they were there to file papers.

One-in-12 (8%) interviewees indicated they were present to support family and/or friends. Five per cent of those present indicated that they were at court to attend a conference with a registrar and another five per cent visiting had a general enquiry. Four per cent of interviewees attended the court for an appointment with a family consultant and one per cent to search records/obtain documents.

Nearly one-in-ten (10%) were there for ‘other’ reasons. The other reasons included: engage a justice of the peace; provide interpreting; give evidence; attend a duty lawyer; inspect files and subpoenaed documents; and, observe court proceedings.

**Figure 2 Primary purpose of visit to court**



#### 4.3 Type of matter heard

Interviewees were asked about the type of matter which brought them to the court. Approximately half (49%) were at court for final/interim orders. The remaining interviewees were at court for divorce proceedings (22%) or ‘other’ reasons (28%) (see Figure 3).

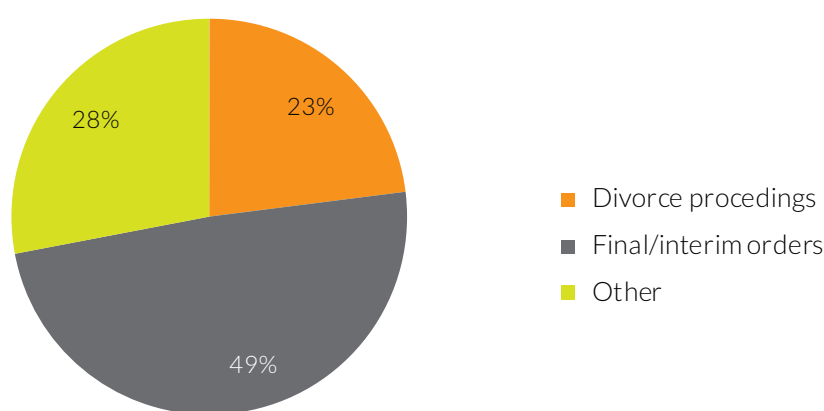
Lawyers indicated that they were predominantly present for final/interim orders (67%).

The results for the respondents varied significantly from those of the applicants. Applicants were likely to be at court for final/interim orders (44%) or divorce proceedings (34%). Respondents, on the other hand, were more likely to be at the court for final/interim orders (57%) and less likely for divorce proceedings (17%).

Those interviewees who attended the courts for final/interim orders were predominantly present for matters that involved children:

- Children issues – 55 per cent.
- Financial issues – 14 per cent.
- Both children/financial issues – 19 per cent.
- Other – 12 per cent

**Figure 3 Type of matter**



#### 4.4 Frequency of attendance at court

Over half the applicant and respondent interviewees (56%) have attended court ‘several times’ whereas, a third (29%) were first time visitors. Over one-in-seven (15%) had visited the courts many times. The breakup of percentages for the frequency of attendance in the 2014 survey was very similar to the 2011 survey (56%, 31% and 13% respectively).

The frequency of visits to the courts by the applicants interviewed was as follows:

- Several times – 55 per cent.
- First time – 32 per cent.
- Regularly – 13 per cent.

The frequency of visits to the courts by the respondents interviewed was as follows:

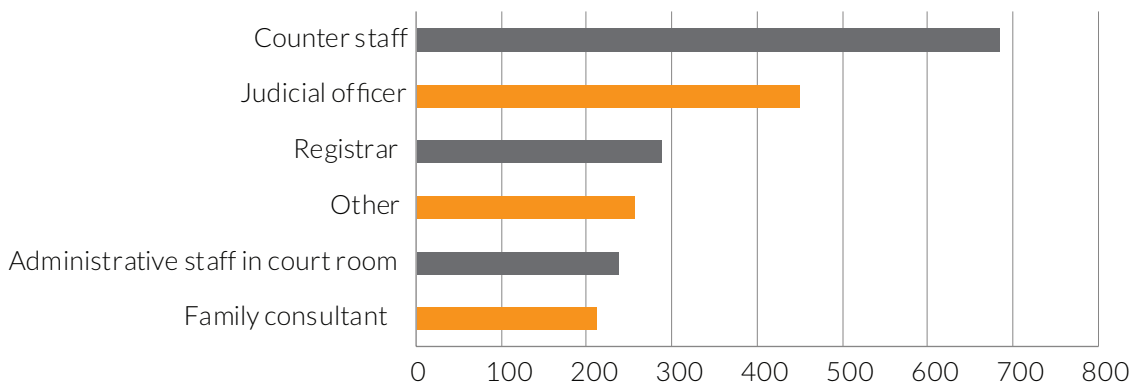
- Several times – 59 per cent.
- First time – 24 per cent.
- Regularly – 17 per cent.

#### 4.5 Court visited and who they saw

In respect of family law proceedings, the majority of interviewees had either attended the Federal Circuit Court (54%) or Family Court (40%). This result shows a shift from the 2011 results where 43 per cent attended the Federal Circuit Court and 44 per cent the Family Court. Two per cent indicated they were unsure which court they attended and four per cent had not visited either court. Unsure or neither may be for reasons such as preliminary enquiries, supporting a family member or friend or seeking the services of a justice of the peace.

Almost half of interviewees attending the courts (47%) had dealings with counter staff and almost a third (31%) saw a judicial officer. One-in-five of the interviewees (20%) saw a registrar, 16 per cent an administrative officer in a courtroom and 15 per cent a family consultant (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4 Who did the clients see**



The remaining interviewees (18%) indicated that they had seen ‘other’ people which included (but was not restricted to) their solicitors, barristers, duty lawyers, justices of the peace or had not yet seen anyone at the time of the interview.

The role of the interviewee determined who they had the most dealings with at the courts. Lawyers were predominantly dealing with judicial officers (54%), whereas the majority of dealings paralegals/filing clerks had were with the counter staff (87%).

**67% of family law practitioner interviewees practice/appear in the Federal Circuit Court and 26% in the Family Court.**

The most significant, but perhaps predictable difference between applicant and respondent interviewees represented by a lawyer or those without one was who they saw. Applicant and respondent interviewees without a lawyer were more likely to see counter staff (65%), whereas those represented by a lawyer were more likely to see a judicial officer (36%).

## 4.6 Interviewee demographics for applicants and respondents

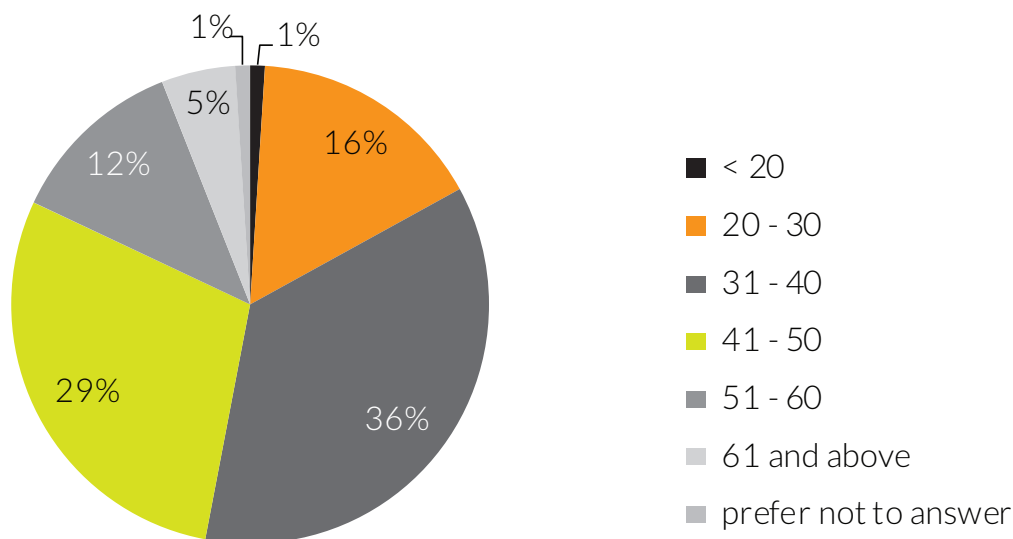
In order to better understand the applicant and respondent interviewees, several other factors were considered. These include age, gender, marital status, level of education, income, language spoken and any identification as ATSI. The sample of these interviewees was 49 per cent of those interviewed (being n = 848 out of 1719).

### 4.6.1 Age and gender

Just over half the applicant and respondent interviewees (51%) were male and just under half (49%) were female. In the 2011 survey male interviewees only accounted for 43 per cent.

The age groups of the applicant and respondent interviewees are represented in Figure 5.

**Figure 5 Age group of applicants and respondent interviewees**



#### 4.6.2 Education

Applicant and respondent interviewees were asked to provide their highest level of education which was as follows:

- Secondary – 41 per cent.
- University – 38 per cent.
- Trade – 20 per cent.
- Primary – 1 per cent.

#### 4.6.3 Marital status

The marital status of applicant and respondent interviewees was as follows:

- Separated – 37 per cent.
- Divorced – 21 per cent.
- Single – 20 per cent.
- Married – 14 per cent.
- De facto – 8 per cent.

#### 4.6.4 Income

The applicant and respondent interviewees were asked about their family income which gave the following results:

- Less than \$50 000 – 42 per cent.
- Between \$50 000 and \$80 000 – 20 per cent.
- Preferred not to answer – 18 per cent.
- Between \$80 000 and \$120 000 – 13 per cent.
- Over \$120 000 – 7 per cent.

### 4.6.5 Language spoken

Seventy three per cent of interviewees did not speak a language other than English at home. This was lower than the 2011 survey result, in which 84 per cent of interviewees indicated their first language was English. This might suggest increasing cultural diversity among court users.

**In 2011, interviewees who had a first language other than English spoken at home, were represented by 43 different languages. In 2014, interviewees spoke a total of 76 different languages at home.**

Of the 368 interviewees who answered the question, 327 provided a comment revealing the language(s) they spoke at home. Of those interviewees, 76 different languages were represented with Arabic (17%) and Hindi (14%) being the most common. Interestingly, results from the 2011 survey showed Chinese and Arabic as the most common languages (nearly 15% for each) and while Arabic remains the most represented from the 2014 survey, Chinese has dropped to nine per cent.

Italian (9%), Spanish (7%) and Mandarin (6%) were the next three most common languages.

### 4.6.6 Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander

Just less than four per cent of the applicant and respondent interviewees identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI). Table 2 provides the percentage of interviewees who identified as ATSI by registry.

**Table 2 Identified as ATSI – results by registry**

	Sample size	No. Identified as ATSI	% Identified as ATSI
Townsville	33	4	12.1%
Cairns	34	4	11.8%
Launceston	21	1	4.8%
Parramatta	399	15	3.8%
Dandenong	144	5	3.5%
Brisbane	149	5	3.4%
Newcastle	64	2	3.1%
Adelaide	96	2	2.1%
Sydney	205	4	2%
Canberra	53	1	1.9%
Darwin	16	0	0%
Hobart	45	0	0%
Melbourne	441	0	0%
<b>National total</b>	<b>1700</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2.5%</b>

### 4.7 Applicant and respondent profile

In order to provide context to the results, it is worth summarising some of the characteristics of the applicants and respondents interviewed (see Table 3).

The frequency of a court user’s attendance is similar regardless of whether they are applicants or respondents.



Both applicants and respondents are at court to attend a hearing. However, a respondent is 17 per cent more likely to be at court to attend a hearing than an applicant. Conversely, while both applicants and respondents attend the counter, applicants are 33 per cent more likely to do so.

Overall, respondents are at court for final/interim orders more than applicants. Applicants are also at court for final/interim orders but are significantly more likely to attend for divorce proceedings and filing papers.

The difference in users is important as it helps explain variations in the two groups' satisfaction levels as highlighted in Section 5.

**Table 3 Summary of key differences between applicants and respondents**

		Applicant	Respondent
Primary purpose of visit	Attend a court hearing	39%	56%
	File papers	36%	11%
	General enquiry	11%	3%
	Appointment with FC	2%	10%
	Registrar conference	2%	7%
No. of visits	Several times	55%	59%
	First time	32%	24%
	Regularly	13%	17%
Who they saw	Counter staff	51%	37%
	Judicial officer	26%	34%
Type of matter	Final/Interim orders	44%	57%
	Divorce proceedings	34%	17%

## 5. Overall satisfaction with the court experience

This section covers users' satisfaction with their overall experience (disregarding the outcome of their case).

Overall, general satisfaction with users' visit to court rated highly, which indicates that the courts satisfactorily meet user's needs and expectations. Seventy seven per cent of interviewees for which the overall satisfaction question was applicable (957 out of 1244) were satisfied with their visit to court. Of these, 23 per cent (285 out of 1244) strongly agreed that they were satisfied overall with their visit.

However, the results were not as good as the 2011 results when 86 per cent of clients (996 out of 1152) were satisfied and 35 per cent (400 out of 1152) strongly agreed they were satisfied overall.

This result excludes any consideration of satisfaction with judicial officer decisions, which was not evaluated as part of the user surveys in 2011 nor 2014.

Paralegals/filing clerks had the highest satisfaction rates (88%) followed by lawyers (84%) and respondents represented by a duty lawyer (80%). The first time visitor was more satisfied than the user who had attended court before. First time visitor's satisfaction rates are 83 per cent compared to 75 per cent for those who have attended more than once.

The qualitative and quantitative results were considered from the following perspectives in order to obtain further insights:

1. role such as lawyer, applicant or respondent
2. matter heard e.g. divorce proceedings, final/interim orders or other matter, and
3. how long ago the proceedings had been initiated.

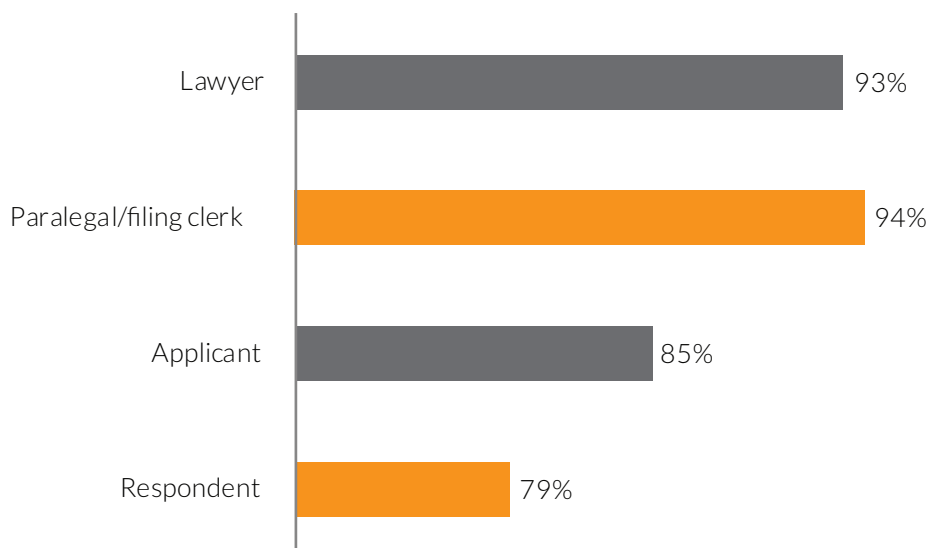
### Overall satisfaction of lawyers, applicants or respondents

Those who were most likely to be familiar with the courts and their procedures, that is, those for whom being at court was a part of their day-to-day role, were more likely to be satisfied with the experience. Lawyers and paralegals/filing clerks had the highest satisfaction rates (84% and 88% respectively) whereas applicants were slightly less satisfied overall (average of 76%) and respondents were least satisfied (average of 64%).

The fact that the respondent is not the initiating party is likely to be a major reason for the lower satisfaction levels and this lower satisfaction level for respondents is consistent with the 2011 results.

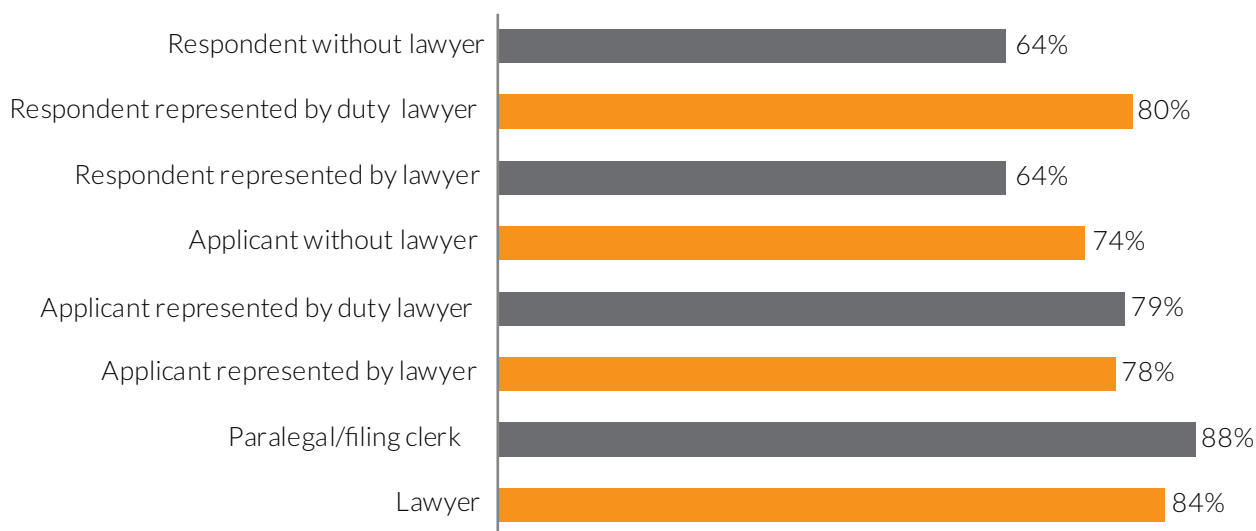
Interestingly, the lowest overall satisfaction rate was registered equally by the respondent **without** a lawyer and the respondent **with** a lawyer (both 64%). While applicants, regardless of legal representation, were generally more satisfied than respondents, an applicant with legal representation was marginally more satisfied than the applicant without a lawyer. See Figures 6 and 7 which compare the 2014 results with those of the survey in 2011.

**Figure 6 Overall satisfaction with visit to court considered by role in 2011**



**Figure 7 Overall satisfaction with visit to court considered by role in 2014**

(Note: More roles were introduced in 2014 to differentiate the legal representation of users.)



### Overall satisfaction for parties by type of proceedings

In 2011, the results showed that the type of matter heard impacted the client’s overall satisfaction with their visit to the courts. Divorce proceedings were more likely to result in higher satisfaction levels (92%). Orders and ‘other’ matters that are less predictable in time and outcome had relatively lower satisfaction levels (85% and 84% respectively). This result was not replicated in the 2014 survey results. Users who were attending court regarding a divorce were only marginally more satisfied overall (79%) than users who were attending for more complex applications and who were seeking orders (75%). However, regardless of the type of proceedings, the satisfaction level was at or above 75 per cent.

### Overall satisfaction based upon the age of the proceedings

According to the survey, the longer the matter had been going, the less the user was satisfied overall with their experience. This is demonstrated in the following table.

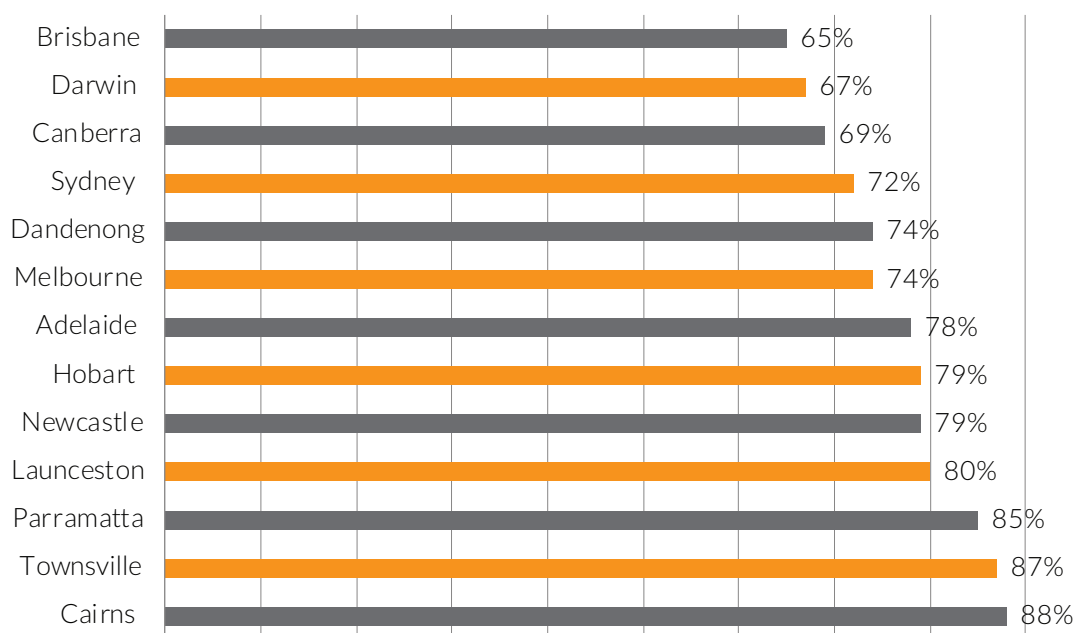
**Table 4 Level of satisfaction based on age of proceedings**

How long has the proceeding been on foot (Question 28)	Overall satisfaction with their visit to the court (Question 35: % of applicable responses with agree or strongly agree that they were generally satisfied.)
0–3 months	82%
3–6 months	77%
6–12 months	73%
1–2 years	78%
Over 2 years	66%

### Overall satisfaction by registry

The range in overall satisfaction levels for individual registries varied from 65 per cent in Brisbane to 88 per cent in Cairns. Six of the 13 registries were below 75 per cent, but of those, two were only marginally below at 74 per cent. Differences between registries in terms of specific aspects of the court experience are discussed in more detail in the next section.

**Figure 8 Overall satisfaction by registry**



### Feedback on what impressed the interviewee

Qualitative data was sought about what impressed the interviewee about their experience on the day. The results were highly complementary of staff. Users were also impressed by the building and how safe they felt.

Some specific comments from applicants were:

*"Court orders violated, services around the courtroom are excellent though."*

*"Ease of parking – The best 3 hour carpark."*

*"Just feel very happy that finally my hard work paid off. I've been acknowledged by the judge."*

*"I get to see my children the process is appreciated."*

*"Feel safe here. Not stressed. Happy with staff."*

*"This particular registry is good. Great layout. Well designed. Allows for privacy. Like the chickens."*

Some specific comments from respondents were:

*"Staff were punctual, polite, and knew how to answer my inquiry very quickly."*

*"the professionalism of all the staff from admin, right up to the judge."*

*"Judge was very fair. English is not very good but judge respected that. Judge's associate & other staff helped to correct any errors in the paperwork. Procedural advice from staff was very good."*

*"The facilities and the building – it was very comfortable"*

*"Security is awesome and judicial staff are fair and approachable. matters are heard quickly".*

## 6. Satisfaction with aspects of the court experience

This section covers satisfaction with various aspects of the court user experience including court building and facilities, client service, court processes, technology and information services.

The user satisfaction levels across the specific areas of court experience varied quite significantly. The results indicate that the courts' buildings and facilities and the staff who work at the courts are one of the courts' strengths. On the other hand, start times and waiting times at the courts as well as the user-friendliness of court forms and the NEC were shown to be relative weaknesses.

In summary, the areas where interviewees were most satisfied, that is where at least nine out of 10 interviewees agreed or strongly agreed with the experience, were:

- Felt safe in the courtroom or court environment (94% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Treated by staff professionally and respectfully and answered queries promptly (91% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Court building was easy to find and navigate (90% agreed or strongly agreed).

Despite the courts' overall high levels of satisfaction, several areas of improvement were identified. These were areas where equal to or less than 75 per cent of the interviewees agreed or strongly agreed and those included:

- Courts' websites easy to use and information found quickly (75% agreed or strongly agreed).
- The judicial officer listened and led the hearing well (74% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Clear what was to happen during attendance (73% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Understood what is to happen next in the matter (72% agreed or strongly agreed)
- Way in which case was handled was fair (66% agreed or strongly agreed)
- **Forms needed were clear and easy to understand** (63% agreed or strongly agreed)
- **Matter started on time** (59% agreed or strongly agreed).
- **Matter took the time you were expecting** (55% agreed or strongly agreed).
- **NEC was helpful and professional** (71%) and quick and responsive (52% agreed or strongly agreed).

In 2011, only the specific areas in **bold** above rated less than 75 per cent.

The second part of the *Court User Satisfaction Survey* measured the quantitative and qualitative satisfaction levels of various aspects of the court experience. The areas evaluated were:

**Court buildings and facilities** – the ease of finding them, and their way around them, how safe they felt in court and whether there was sufficient facilities e.g. seating.

**Client service** – whether provided by staff, registrars, consultants or judicial officers – all aspects from how they were treated, timeliness of attendance to their queries, whether they answered enquiry directly and general satisfaction.

**Court processes** – covered three areas being forms, ease of understanding procedural advice from staff and whether payment facilities are easy to use.

**Day at court** – evaluated the adequacy of the notice required, clarity of expectations about what was to happen during their visit to court, next steps and the time the matter took.

**Hearing in the courtroom** – about whether the case was handled fairly, whether they were treated the same as everyone else, if matter started on time and if the judicial officer listened and led the hearing well.

**Technology and information services** – questions regarding the effectiveness of the websites, CCP and NEC.

The results from the research findings on the satisfaction levels of these aspects of service are presented in this section. Each of the aspects of service will also be evaluated from the following perspective:

- role of the user
- type of proceedings, and
- frequency of visit.

### 6.1 The court buildings and facilities

This section explored the following issues:

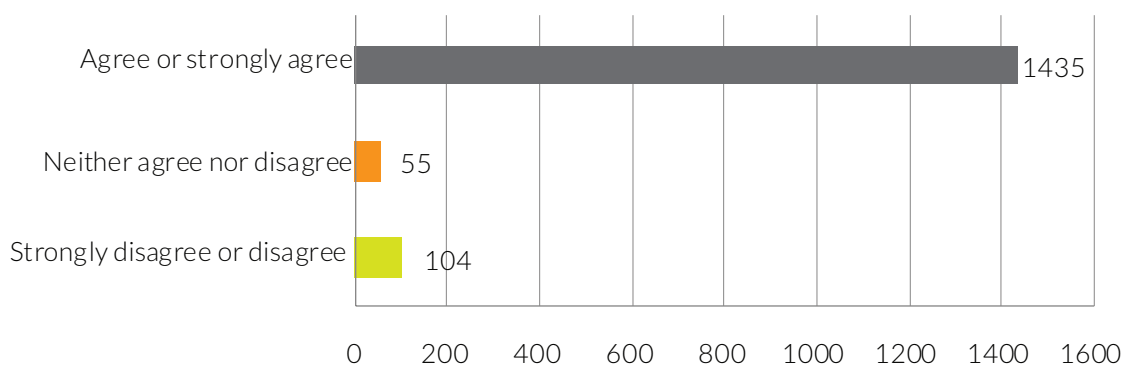
- Finding the court building was easy.
- Finding your way around the court was easy.
- You felt safe in the court environment.
- You felt safe in the courtroom.
- The court facilities were sufficient e.g. seating areas.

The results from the qualitative and quantitative data indicated that court users were very satisfied with the ease of finding court buildings and their safety in the courts. The court building and facilities is an area of strength, with overall satisfaction levels being between 82 per cent and 94 per cent. This result was similar in 2011 when satisfaction levels for this dimension of the survey were predominantly over 90 per cent.

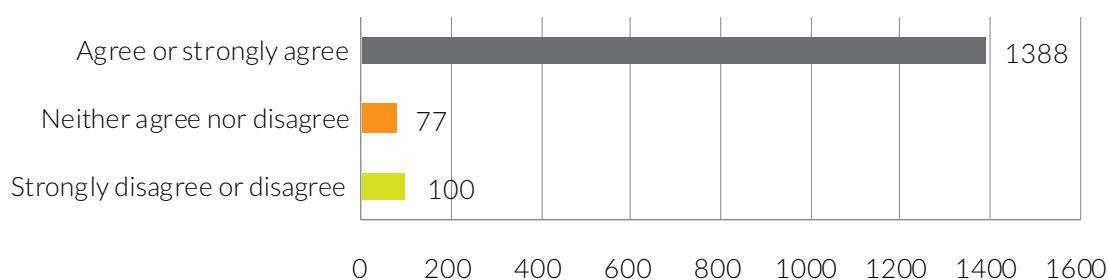
#### Finding the court building and your way around the Court

Ninety per cent of interviewees agreed or strongly agreed that finding the court building was easy (see Figure 9). ‘Finding your way around the court’ was also considered easy by most interviewees, as 89 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (see Figure 10).

**Figure 9 Finding the court building was easy**



**Figure 10 Finding your way around the court was easy**



The interviewees who identified as ATSI were less satisfied, with only 75 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that finding the court building was easy. Similarly, 78 per cent of interviewees who identified as ATSI agreed or strongly agreed that finding their way around the court was easy.

A small percentage of clients did not agree that finding their way to and around the court was easy. Generally, the comments indicated a level of dissatisfaction with the lack of availability of parking and poor signage or directions. In general a few of the comments stated:

*“A bit daunting – not clear information for non-regular visitors.”*

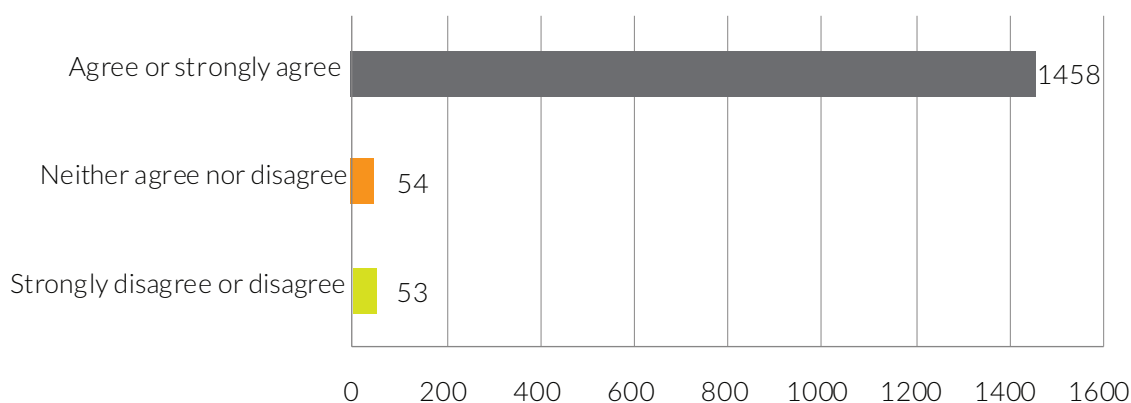
*“Dyslexic so everything is hard to find.”*

*“Building not marked so actual buildings – no signage so went to children’s court by mistake.”*

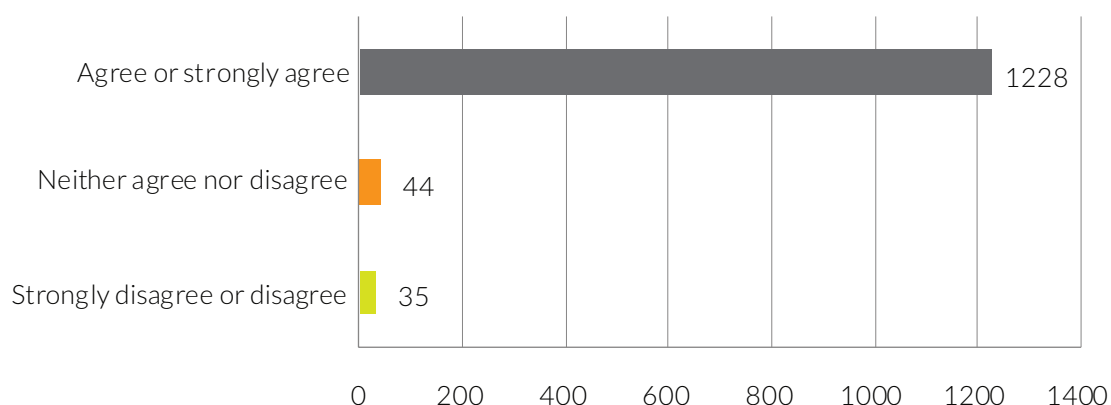
### Feeling safe in the court environment and courtroom

Given the nature of the family law matters, feeling safe in the court environment and courtroom is important. The courts have generally succeeded in providing users with an environment where they feel safe. Over 93 per cent of the interviewees felt safe in the court environment and in the courtroom (see Figures 11 and 12).

**Figure 11 You felt safe in the court environment**



**Figure 12 You felt safe in the courtroom**



Of the interviewees, lawyers felt the most safe both in the court environment and courtroom (95% and 97% respectively). Applicants also felt safe (95% and 93% respectively) with respondents’ feelings of safety being slightly lower than the others but remaining extremely high (91% and 93% respectively).

Applicants and respondents without a lawyer felt equally as safe in the court environment as those with a lawyer (95% respectively). Applicants and respondents without a lawyer felt slightly safer in the courtroom (93%) than those who were represented (91%).

**Applicants and respondents without lawyers didn't feel any less safe than those with a lawyer.**

The type of matter heard made only a slight difference to feelings of safety. Interviewees involved in divorce proceedings felt the safest in the court environment and courtroom (96% respectively), followed by those seeking final/interim orders (91% and 94% respectively) and those attending for other matters (93% respectively).

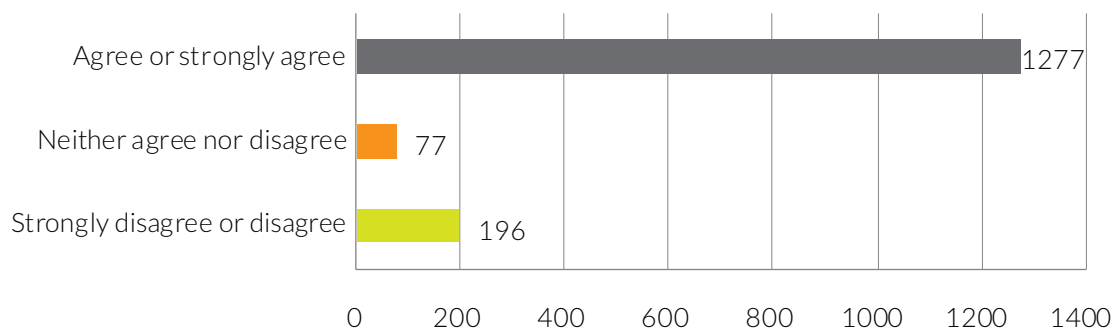
Male interviewees (96%) felt safer than females (90%) in the court environment although once in the courtroom the variation had reduced (94% and 92% respectively).

Interviewees who identified as ATSI felt less safe than other interviewees, both in the court environment (88%) and the courtroom (84%).

### The sufficiency of court facilities

In respect of the sufficiency of facilities such as seating areas, the satisfaction level of interviewees was also high at 82 per cent (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13 There were sufficient facilities**



The interviewees provided over 500 comments in relation to the court buildings and facilities. They included but were not restricted to ambiance, waiting room and courtroom facilities, refreshments and car parking.

A significant number of interviewees identified the facilities as the best thing about their experience at the courts, many citing the cleanliness and ambiance as the primary factor. Their comments included:

*"Like the chickens."<sup>3</sup>*

*"Clean modern building."*

*"The ambiance of the new building is nice."*

*"Salvation army tea ladies make for a more comfortable environment."*

*"Very homey, makes you feel like you're in a room that isn't daunting."*

*"Courtroom is comfortable and welcoming."*

While, as previously stated, the building and facilities were an area of strength, a significant number of the comments highlighted the lack of seating and private areas or meeting rooms (to allow for private discussions with lawyers) as an opportunity for improvement. A proportion of interviewee comments also included issues with car parking and the desire for coffee/tea facilities and vending machines:

<sup>3</sup> The Parramatta registry has a large forested glass atrium which houses chickens and a Chinese pheasant



*“Break up lobby so people don’t need to eyeball one another.”*

*“Extra tables/meeting places outside the court to facilitate settlement discussions.”*

*“More seating, so to not have involvement with lots of people standing and trying to speak about their issues with their representation.”*

*“Often not enough seating in courtrooms.”*

*“Lack of facilities at court such as coffee etc. When you are waiting for a long period of time you can’t leave the precinct for a hot drink or food.”*

*“Parking inadequate.”*

Results varied significantly by registry (see Table 5) and should any changes be considered to the facilities, these should be addressed at a location level.

**Table 5 Sufficient facilities – results by registry**

	Response count	Disagree or strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree or strongly agree
Adelaide	88	2%	7%	91%
Parramatta	366	7%	2%	91%
Cairns	30	10%	3%	87%
Sydney	190	9%	5%	86%
Canberra	52	15%	4%	83%
Brisbane	126	13%	5%	82%
Melbourne	379	11%	7%	82%
Hobart	41	20%	0%	80%
Townsville	29	14%	7%	79%
Dandenong	125	18%	7%	75%
Newcastle	57	30%	3%	67%
Darwin	14	29%	14%	57%
Launceston	14	43%	7%	50%
Wollongong	15	60%	0%	40%

## 6.2 Client service

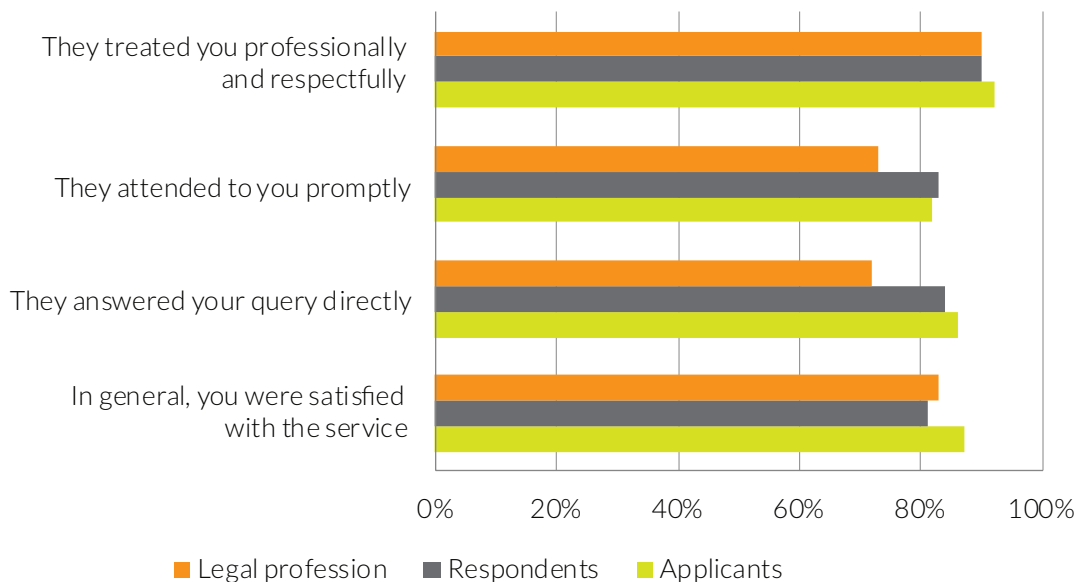
This section explored the following service issues:

- They treated you professionally and respectfully.
- They attended to you promptly.
- They answered your enquiry directly.
- In general, you were satisfied with the service provided.

The data confirms that client service is a strength of our courts’ systems.

The results indicated that users were generally very satisfied with the service provided by staff, registrars, family consultants and judicial officers. The key users: lawyers, applicants and respondents, were all very satisfied. However, the legal profession (lawyers and paralegals/filing clerks) were considerably less satisfied with the promptness of attendance and with their enquiry being answered directly, than applicants and respondents (see Figure 14).

**Figure 14 Satisfaction with client service**



Ninety one per cent of interviewees agreed or strongly agreed that they were treated professionally and respectfully (91%), that they were attended to promptly (81%), that their enquiries were answered directly (87%), and in general were satisfied with the service provided (85%).

While these results were extremely good, the 2011 survey results were slightly more positive. Across the four categories of client service experience, the 2014 results were on average six per cent lower than in 2011.

There were in excess of 200 positive comments about staff and around 90 per cent of those positive comments were in response to what impressed interviewees the most about their experience with the courts. Some of these comments included:

- “The registry staff are very polite, professional and welcoming.”*
- “The staff are extremely knowledgeable when it comes to various procedures and documents.”*
- “Security staff are professional and terrific.”*
- “Felt stressed and apprehensive about coming but staff made me feel more relaxed and supported.”*
- “Easily understood assistance.”*
- “Once you get to see someone it’s very efficient.”*
- “Prompt and informative.”*

There were also a percentage of qualitative results that expressed a level of frustration with the service from registry staff and the judiciary:

- “Too rushed to help me and answer questions, many people waiting and a long time sitting waiting to be served.”*
- “Being self-represented, you feel like a second class citizen.” (applicant without a lawyer)*

*“Long waits.”* (respondent represented by lawyer)

*“Sometimes the registry staff are very rude.”* (lawyer)

*“Need more staff.”* (paralegal)

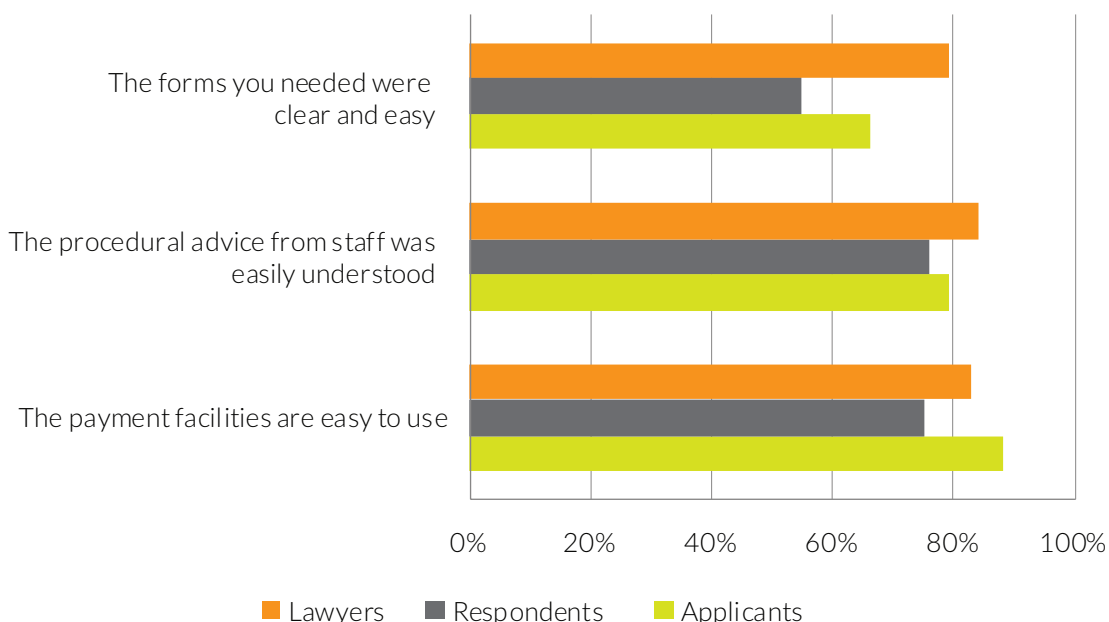
### 6.3 Court processes

This section addressed three areas of interest being court forms, procedural advice from staff and payment facilities:

- the forms needed were clear and easy to understand
- the procedural advice from staff was easily understood, and
- the payment facilities are easy to use.

Overall, interviewees were most satisfied with the payment facilities and procedural advice from staff. There was less satisfaction with the forms (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15 Court processes**



The results for the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court were the same for procedural advice (81% satisfaction respectively) and payment facilities (84% respectively), with a three per cent variance in results for clarity and ease of understanding court forms (Family Court 71% and Federal Circuit Court 68%).

#### The clarity and ease of understanding of court forms

The satisfaction with court forms was relatively lower than other areas evaluated. Sixty three per cent of interviewees agreed or strongly agreed that the forms were clear and easy to understand compared to 73 per cent in 2011. The results in 2014 were consistent irrespective of whether the forms were in respect of orders or divorce proceedings (67%). Overall, this is identified as an area of continuing concern to court users especially those not represented by a lawyer.

The results significantly varied depending on if interviewees were a lawyer, applicant or respondent and satisfaction reduced markedly when applicants and respondents did not have a lawyer (see Figure 15):

- Lawyers – 79 per cent.
- Applicants – 66 per cent (represented by lawyer 70% and without a lawyer 63%).
- Respondents – 55 per cent (represented by lawyer 58% and without a lawyer 47%).

Interviewees provided around 120 comments on court forms. Ninety five per cent of those comments were about the difficulties they faced when completing the forms with many requiring assistance from lawyers, family or friends:

*"I'm here today to file divorce papers – they were hard to fill in. That's why I got help from lawyers to fill in."*

*"Instructions not clear in regard to document preparation."*

*"Some of the legal terms are hard to understand. Need to be strong in English. If you're not exposed to that it's hard."*

*"Forms were hard to understand and complex."*

*"Completing affidavits has been hard. Could be more plain language."*

Qualitative results also highlighted some areas for improvement such as a lack of clarity about which forms to use, the dislike of formatting and the fact that they are always changing. The forms most often identified as causing problems for court users were divorce applications, affidavits and financial statements.

### **The procedural advice from staff was easily understood**

Overall, 76 per cent of interviewees (compared to 86% in 2011) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that the procedural advice from staff was easily understood with lawyers being the most satisfied group, followed by applicants and respondents:

- Lawyers – 84 per cent.
- Applicants – 79 per cent (represented by lawyer 80% and without a lawyer 79%).
- Respondents – 76 per cent (represented by lawyer 78% and without a lawyer 71%).

The procedural advice appears to be quite well understood whether the matter was divorce proceedings, final/ interim orders or other matters (79% – 85%). Procedural advice in relation to final/interim orders was however less likely to be understood (79%) than that for divorce proceedings (85%).

Interviewees were equally as satisfied with the procedural advice if they were visiting for the first time (80%) or had visited several times or regularly (81% respectively).

There were a significant proportion of the qualitative results that provided some insight into why a large number of interviewees struggled with understanding the procedural advice provided by staff:

*"Don't understand some legal words."*

*"The language and terms used are confusing."*

*"Mumbo jumbo."*

*"Sometimes the words are hard to understand."*

*"Legalese is not English."*

*"Can't understand what they are asking for."*

### The payment facilities are easy to use

Overall, interviewees indicated that they were very satisfied (84%) with the ease of use of the courts' payment facilities. The frequency of attendance, type of proceedings and which court they visited, only showed a 10 per cent variation in satisfaction on this dimension (80% – 90%).

The survey included a question in relation to the courts consideration of moving away from accepting cash and cheques for payments. Almost 80 per cent of interviewees indicated that this would have either no impact or would be of some benefit.

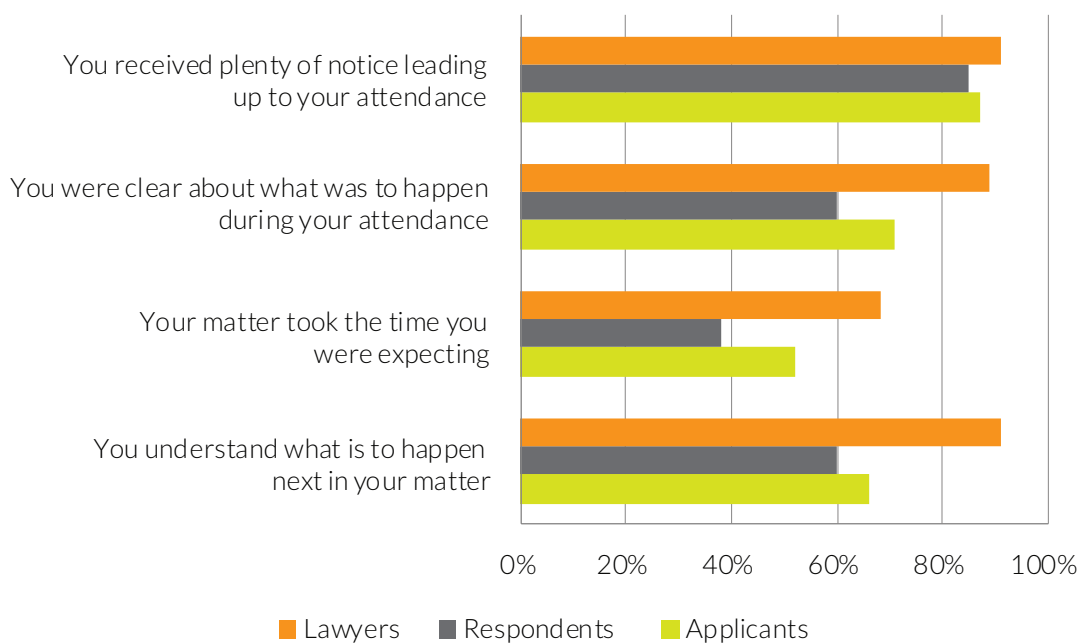
### 6.4 About the day at court

This section explored the following issues in relation to the day at court:

- You received plenty of notice leading up to your attendance.
- You were clear about what was to happen during your attendance.
- Your matter took the time you were expecting.
- You understood what is to happen next in their matter.

The satisfaction levels with these issues varied substantially. This is highlighted in Figure 16.

**Figure 16 About the day at court**



### Notice leading up to their day at court

In relation to their day in court, interviewees were most satisfied with the notice they received leading up to their attendance. Eighty eight per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they received plenty of notice leading up to their attendance. Lawyers were most satisfied, followed by applicants and then respondents:

- Lawyers – 91 per cent.
- Applicants – 87 per cent (represented by lawyer 88% and without a lawyer 86%).
- Respondents – 85 per cent (represented by lawyer 85% and without a lawyer 81%).

There were very few comments in relation to the amount of notice given and approximately 75 per cent of those identified concerns:

*“Don’t always get sufficient notice – court dates get changed without consulting solicitor, can clash with other matters.”*

*“Was not told early enough about a hearing being cancelled. Had already taken a day off work.”*

*“Only a weeks notice.”*

### **Clarity about what was to happen during attendance**

Only 73 per cent of interviewees had any clarity around what was to happen during their attendance at the court. Again, there was a disparity in the expectations amongst court users.

Lawyers were the most satisfied group of interviewees, followed by applicants and then respondents, who were almost 30 per cent less satisfied than lawyers and over 10 per cent less satisfied than applicants:

- Lawyers – 89 per cent.
- Applicants – 71 per cent (represented by lawyer 76% and without a lawyer 63%).
- Respondents – 60 per cent (represented by lawyer 68% and without a lawyer 45%).

The increase in frequency of attendance of interviewees, not surprisingly, led to improved clarity around what was to happen during their attendance with only 69 per cent of those attending for the first time agreeing that they were clear, followed by those who had attended several times (74%) and regular attendees (76%).

Interviewees who identified as ATSI were less satisfied with only 61 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were clear about what was to happen during their attendance.

### **Expectations of time a matter will take**

Expectations in respect of the time a matter would take were consistently not being met by the courts. The clients often don’t know how long they’ll be at the Court with the expectations of the interviewees only being met on 55 per cent of occasions. The 2011 result on this dimension was better by 10 per cent.

When further analysed by role, lawyers were highly satisfied (91%) with the time taken. On the other hand, applicants had a significant level of dissatisfaction with only 52 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that their matter took the time they were expecting. Respondents were even more dissatisfied with only 38 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing. Applicants represented by lawyers had a lower level of dissatisfaction (54%) than those without a lawyer (48%). This was also the case for respondents (41% and 30% respectively).

When the expectation of how long a matter will take was considered from the perspective of how frequently parties attended court, more than two-in-three first time visitors (71%) were satisfied that the matter took the time they were expecting. Whereas, only half of the several time visitors (50%) and regular users (55%) were satisfied that the matter took the time they were expecting.

Interviewees involved in divorce proceedings were more satisfied (60%) with the time a matter took than those involved in other matters (54%) or those seeking final/interim orders (51%).

### **Clarity about what was to happen next in your matter**

Seventy two per cent of interviewees agreed that they understood what was to happen next in their matter, which was less than in 2011 when it was 80 per cent.

The percentage of lawyers, applicants and respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that they understood what was to happen next in their matter varied significantly:

- Lawyers – 91 per cent.
- Applicants – 66 per cent (represented by lawyer 70% and without a lawyer 62%).
- Respondents – 60 per cent (represented by lawyer 64% and without a lawyer 55%).

The more frequently an interviewee attended, the more they understood what was to happen next in their matter. Seventy four per cent of those interviewees who attended regularly agreed or strongly agreed that they understood what was to happen next whereas those who had attended several times had slightly less understanding (72%) as did those attending for the first time (67%).

Interviewees who spoke a language other than English at home and those who identified as ATSI, had less understanding of what was to happen next in their matter (67% and 68% respectively).

The qualitative data provides some insight into the interviewee’s experience:

*“I have no idea what is happening.”*

*“Unclear what will happen next has taken a long time.”*

*“No information available.”*

*“Unsure what the next stage of matter is.”*

Ways in which the courts might provide improved clarity around what will happen during clients’ attendance at court, the time expected and what will happen next for them are areas for potential improvement and are further discussed in Section 9. This area was identified as an opportunity for improvement in the 2011 survey.

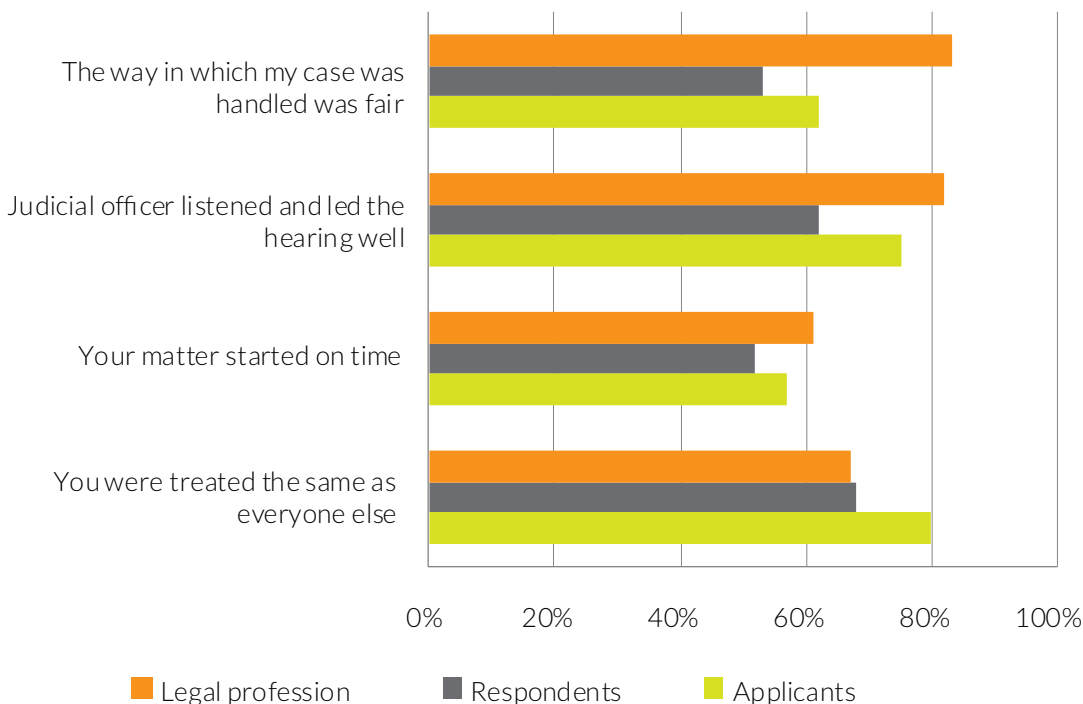
## 6.5 About your hearing today (in the courtroom)

This section addressed the following issues:

- The way in which my case was handled was fair.
- The judicial officer listened and led the hearing well.
- Your matter started on time.
- You were treated the same as everyone else.

Just over half of those interviewed did not have a hearing on the day of the survey and therefore were unable to comment on these issues. Figure 17 presents the ratings for each question by key user role.

**Figure 17 About your hearing (in the courtroom)**



**Way in which the case was handled was fair**

Sixty six per cent of the interviewees considered the way their case was handled was fair. In 2011, the survey results indicated that 79 per cent of interviewees with hearings reported that their case had been handled fairly. The satisfaction level for those attending a hearing was the same for both the Federal Circuit Court and the Family Court at 66 per cent.

While the overall satisfaction level was 66 per cent, there were underlying differences in satisfaction depending on the role type of the attendees at the hearing:

- Lawyers – 83 per cent.
- Applicants – 62 per cent (represented by lawyer 61% and without a lawyer 62%).
- Respondents – 53 per cent (represented by lawyer 55% and without a lawyer 46%).

Those interviewees who had attended for the first time were more likely to agree or strongly agree that the way in which the case was handled was fair (74%) as opposed to those who had attended several times or regularly (66% respectively).

Interviewees who identified as ATSI reported the lowest level of satisfaction. Only 60 per cent felt that the way their case had been handled was fair.

There were over 50 comments made by interviewees who had a negative perception of fairness:

- *“Judge treated the unrepresented party unfairly.”*
- *“Not fair on father.”*
- *“Registrar biased and unfair.”*
- *“Feel applicant is treated unfairly.”*
- *“Biased towards the mother ignore his side.”*



However, almost one-in-four comments (24%) related to interviewees who had a positive perception of fairness:

*“Judicial officer appeared fair and non-judgemental.”*

*“Registrar was fair.”*

*“The judicial officer was fair.”*

### **Judicial officer listened and led the hearing well**

Overall, the interviewees were satisfied that the judicial officer listened and led the hearing well (74%). This is lower than the 84 per cent satisfaction result recorded in 2011. In 2014, lawyers were the most satisfied, followed by applicants and respondents:

- Lawyers – 82 per cent.
- Applicants – 75 per cent (represented by lawyer 76% and without lawyer 72%).
- Respondents – 62 per cent (represented by lawyer 66% and without lawyer 63%).

There was only a two per cent variance between those interviewees who had attended for the first time (73%), those who attended regularly (74%) and those who had attended several times (75%).

The interviewees involved in divorce proceedings (77%), final/interim orders (74%) or ‘other’ matters (72%) were also similarly satisfied by how the judicial officer listened and led the hearing.

Qualitative data indicated the following around the area of leading of hearings and listening:

*“Judge was cursory, failed to review evidence and disregarded information until final hearing.”*

*“Poor quality judicial performance – intemperate, slow, inconsistent practices, rude, petty, disorganised.”*

*“Judicial officer did not know what the case was about and didn’t read documentation submitted.”*

*“Judicial officers commonly will not allow you to present full details of the matter due to time pressures.”*

There were almost as many interviewees who had a positive experience with judicial officers listening and leading hearings:

*“Impressed with the way in which judges involved parties in the proceedings.”*

*“Happy with judge – explains things well to ensure you understand.”*

*“Judge listened.”*

*“Judge took time to understand the issues.”*

### **Your matter started on time**

There was a higher level of dissatisfaction with the start time of matters with only 59 per cent of interviewees (including lawyers) having agreed or strongly agreed that their matter started on time. This result is below that in 2011 when it was 66 per cent. The perception that the courts do not start on time continues to be of concern to some court users.

When considering the role of the interviewee, the level of satisfaction with the start time of matters was greatest for lawyers (61%), followed by applicants (57%) and then respondents (52%). There was less variance when considering the frequency of the visits to court and type of matter heard. First time visitors were more satisfied (61%) than several time visitors (59%) and regular visitors (56%). Divorce proceedings resulted in higher levels of satisfaction with start time (61%) than final/interim orders (56%).

Interviewees attending a hearing in the Federal Circuit Court were slightly less satisfied with the start time of their matter (56%) than those in the Family Court (61%).

## Treated the same as everyone else

Of the interviewees who attended a hearing on the day, 80 per cent (compared to 88% in 2011) were satisfied that they were treated the same as everyone else.

Lawyers agreed or strongly agreed that they were treated the same as everyone else followed by applicants and then respondents:

- Lawyers – 86 per cent.
- Applicants – 80 per cent (represented by lawyer 81% and without a lawyer 77%).
- Respondents – 68 per cent (represented by lawyer 76% and without a lawyer 64%).

Frequency of attendance made very little difference to interviewees' degree of satisfaction with several time visitors being the most satisfied (81%) followed by regular visitors (78%) and those attending for the first time (77%). Interviewees attending the Federal Circuit Court felt equally satisfied with being treated the same as those attending the Family Court (80% in each court).

Male interviewees were less likely to be satisfied that they were being treated the same as everyone else (74%) than the female interviewees (82%).

The starting time of matters is the main opportunity for improvement in this area of the survey. Handling cases fairly, listening and leading in the courtroom and having clients feel that they are treated the same as everyone else may be considered by the courts and are further discussed in Section 9.

## 6.6 About the technology and information services

This section explored the following issues:

- You found the courts' website easy to use.
- You found the information needed quickly.
- You found the courts' Commonwealth Courts Portal of assistance.
- The NEC was helpful and professional.
- The NEC was quick and responsive.

While the survey concentrated on three main areas of technology: the courts' websites; the Commonwealth Courts Portal; and the National Enquiry Centre (NEC), there were a number of common themes provided by interviewees in their comments that related to other technology services:

*"Access to computer at court and printer."*

*"Print service for solicitors."*

*"Not enough computers."*

*"Perhaps touch screen computer, so you can enter your name and find out where you are for the day."*

*"Interviewee hopes there is an iPad where she can enter a reference no. and there will be a location service on it to find the different courts."*

*"Electronic noticeboard for listings. Too much paper."*

*"Free wifi."*

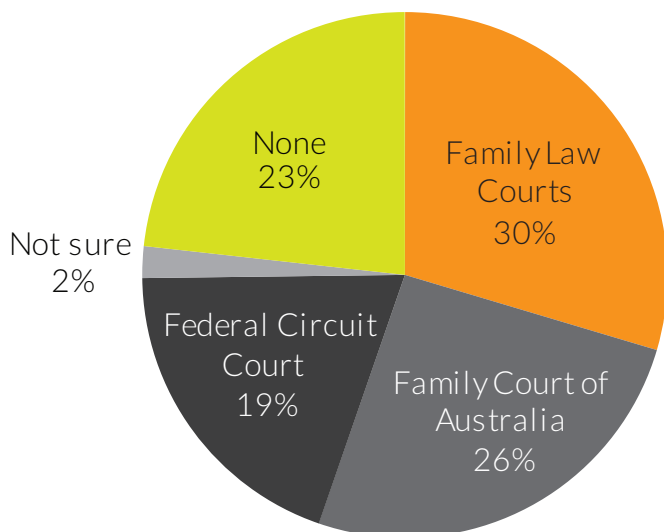
*"Should have free wifi so people can look up things on their smart phone while at the court."*

Subject to available funding, additional technology such as computer access, printer services, electronic listings and wifi, could be considered as areas for improvement in the future.

## The courts' websites

The websites used by interviewees is at Figure 18.

**Figure 18 Websites used\***



Seventy six per cent of interviewees found the websites easy to use, with almost three quarters (73%) finding the information they needed quickly. Lawyers were the group most satisfied with how easy the websites were to use (86%) and to find the information they needed quickly (83%). The applicants and respondents were less satisfied with using the websites (71% and 61% respectively). They also found it more difficult to find the information needed quickly (67% and 59% respectively).

Some comments regarding the courts' websites indicated that for some court users, it was difficult to find what they required and the sites were not particularly user friendly:

*"Had to trawl through to find necessary items."*

*"Too difficult to use."*

*"It was a little bit difficult to navigate. Information was found but not quickly."*

*"Site is a bit 'busy' – so much information! I suggest getting a non-court person to start all over and make it all very easy to understand."*

*"Wasn't clear what the filing fee was online."*

*"Some forms difficult to find online."*

*"Website needs to be more user friendly. Not easy for regular people to find correct form and uploads did not work. Website is clunky and needs work."*

The courts' websites represents an ongoing area for potential improvement for applicants and respondents and are further discussed in Section 9.

\*Since this survey was conducted the Family Court and Federal Circuit Court websites have been redesigned and launched and the Family Law Courts website has been decommissioned. The content from the Family Law Courts website has been moved to the Family Court and/or Federal Circuit Court site accordingly.

## Usage rates and satisfaction levels with the Portal

The Commonwealth Courts Portal was launched in 2007. In recent years, the courts have worked strategically to increase the rates of electronic filings.

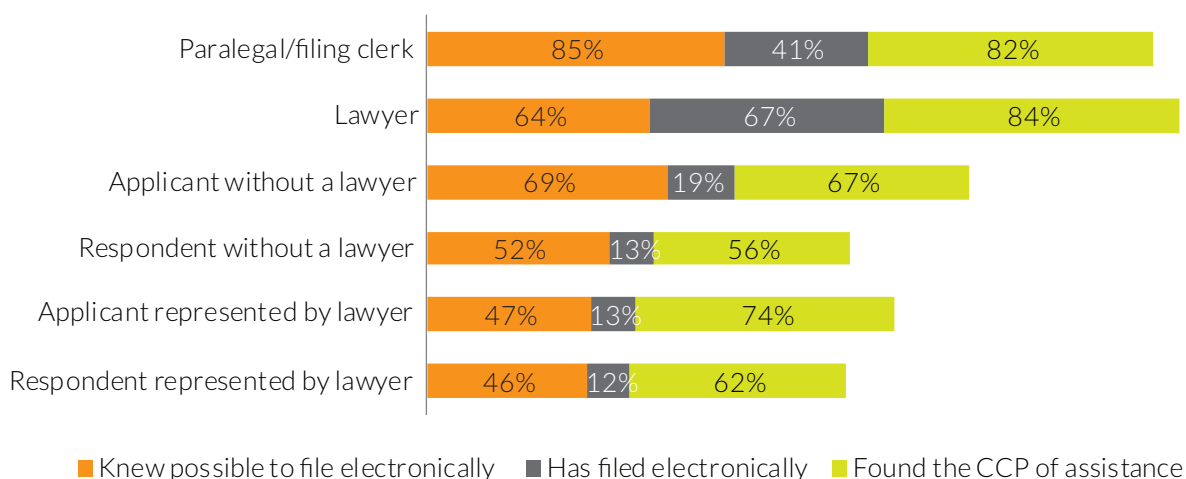
Sixty four per cent of interviewees knew that it was possible to file documents electronically however only 27 per cent have done so (this question was not asked in 2011). This is an issue the courts need to consider further if the strategic objective is to have all, or almost all, parties filing online.

Paralegals/filing clerks were the most aware that documents can be filed electronically (85%), followed by lawyers (64%), applicants (58%) and respondents (48%). Applicants and respondents without lawyers (64%) are more likely to be aware that documents can be filed electronically than those with a lawyer (46%). Lawyers are most likely to have filed on the Portal (67%), followed by paralegals/filing clerks (41%), applicants (16%) then respondents (12%).

Of those interviewees who file documents electronically (27%), 78 per cent found the Portal of assistance and this is comparable to 77 per cent of interviewees in 2011. In both surveys, members of the legal profession (lawyers and paralegals/filing clerks) found the Portal of most assistance:

- Lawyers – 84 per cent.
- Paralegals/filing clerks – 82 per cent.
- Applicants – 69 per cent.
- Respondents – 61 per cent.

**Figure 19 Usage rates and satisfaction by role**



Interviewees in some age groups filed court documents electronically through the Portal more than others:

- <20 – 23 per cent.
- 20 to 30 – 25 per cent.
- 31 to 40 – 23 per cent.
- 41 to 50 – 17 per cent.
- 51 to 60 – 21 per cent.
- 61 and above – 14 per cent.

Interviewees who identified as ATSI and those who spoke a language other than English at home, had comparatively low levels of electronic filing rate through the Portal at 14 per cent and 16 per cent respectively.

There were over 200 comments made about the Portal. Around 15 per cent of the comments were very complementary. For example:

*“Very easy, very quick.”*

*“Portal is great – especially to constantly check on cases.”*

*“Portal is great. Fantastic step forward. Overall very good.”*

*“Very good system that allows you to access your whole file. Cost effective as can assist to manage without having to pay solicitor.”*

The remaining 85 per cent of comments identified areas for improvement and focused on five main themes:

- Easier to come into registries to make sure documents are acceptable for filing.
- The portal is not user friendly.
- Not all forms are available to be e-filed.
- Need to improve fee payment.
- Preference for uploading forms for some users however there is a restriction on document size.

Some of the comments were:

*“Online facility doesn’t allow for all documents.”*

*“Seems very limited as to what documents you can file etc.”*

*“Hard to fix mistakes.”*

*“Allow to file more on CCP without having to fill out online eg scan and upload.”*

*“The portal is very slow, can take around half an hour to submit simple doc. Forms are difficult to navigate and have to ring up IT often and start over.”*

*“Could be easier for people who are not good with technology.”*

*“Not very easy for first time user.”*

## **Usage rates and satisfaction levels with the NEC**

Only 32 per cent of interviewees have used the NEC. Of those, 71 per cent found it helpful and professional, which is slightly higher than the figure in 2011 of 66 per cent. However, only 52 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that the NEC was quick and responsive and this is slightly lower than the 56 per cent satisfaction rating in 2011.

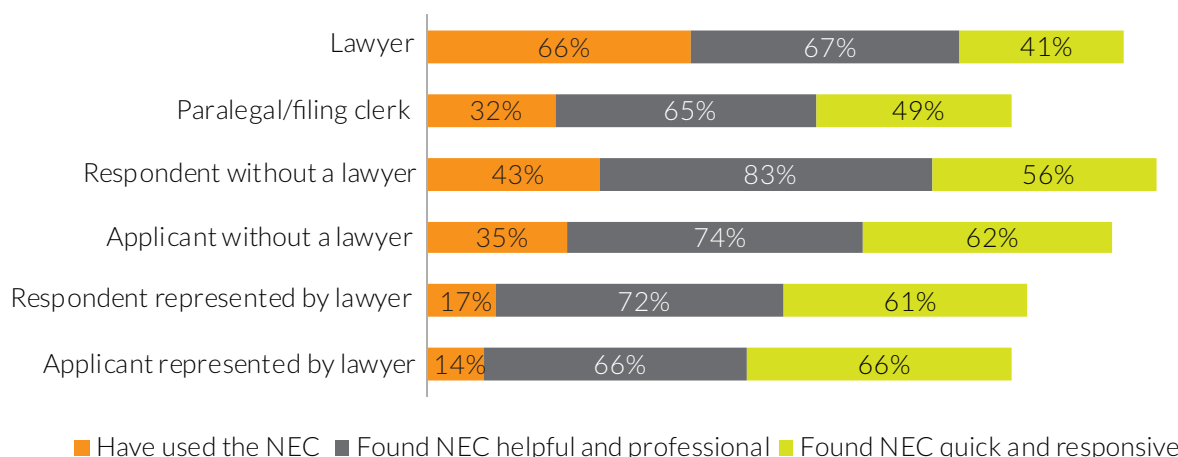
While lawyers were the greatest users of the NEC (66%), they also had the greatest level of dissatisfaction, with only 67 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that they found the NEC helpful and professional, compared to 57 per cent in 2011. Forty two per cent of lawyers in 2014 reported that the NEC service was quick and responsive, compared to 38 per cent in 2011. Although there was therefore some improvement since the last survey, this service delivery continues to be of concern to lawyers.

Respondents without a lawyer were the next largest group of users of the NEC (43%) followed by applicants without a lawyer (35%). Respondents without lawyers found the NEC helpful and professional (83%) as did applicants without lawyers (74%). Applicants and respondents represented by lawyers on the other hand were less satisfied (66% and 56% respectively).

Thirty two per cent of paralegals/filing clerks used the NEC and as with the lawyers, they found using the NEC unsatisfactory at times. Sixty five per cent of these interviewees agreed or strongly agreed that the NEC was helpful and professional and only forty nine percent found it quick and responsive.

Respondents and applicants represented by lawyers were the interviewees who used the NEC the least (17% and 14% respectively), presumably relying on their lawyer to do the communicating with the courts.

**Figure 20 Usage rates and satisfaction with the NEC by role**



Interviewees provided around 180 comments about the NEC. Almost ninety per cent of those comments raised areas of potential improvement and the vast majority were about wait times. There were also a number that stated that while they found staff to be professional and polite, they provided incorrect information:

*“Extremely frustrating. Cannot get through quickly. Always get voicemail. Quicker to walk to court to speak with a person.”*

*“Use solicitor’s priority line which is quicker but only open central hours.”*

*“This is something I use as an absolute last resort only in cases of desperation as it is of little use. They don’t have any useful answers, they have clearly been trained not to transfer your call to the person you want to speak to and messages left with them either don’t get responded to or don’t reach the relevant person.”*

*“They cannot provide any useful information but refuse to put you through to someone who can.”*

*“Really slow and very unresponsive.”*

*“Very lovely and helpful but give incorrect advice.”*

## 7. Clients without lawyers

This section analyses how the court user perceptions and experiences were influenced by whether they were legally represented.

It is reasonable to expect that court user perceptions of court processes will be affected by whether the user is managing their own case or a lawyer is representing them in the proceedings.

The 2014 survey provided an opportunity for the courts to test this expectation and increase understanding of the background and experiences of the client who proceeds through the courts without a lawyer.

To this end, the 2014 survey included six questions directed specifically to those clients who were an applicant without a lawyer or a respondent without a lawyer. These additional questions were supported by advice from a committee chaired by Justice Le Poer Trench of the Family Court of Australia and Judge Scarlett of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.

While the response rates varied for these targeted questions, they each provided a significant sample size. These responses were then analysed and considered against other variables for the role types of applicant without a lawyer and respondent without a lawyer.

The data provided insight into the specific needs and perceptions of users who are not legally represented in the process. For example:

- the cost of lawyers may not be the only reason a client is at court without a lawyer
- whether a client has a lawyer varies according to why they are at the court that day, and
- almost one third of clients without lawyers have obtained legal advice previously.

### Legal representation by location

Legal representation of clients was considered by location in order to provide additional context for the results. Table 6 provides the percentage of the applicant or respondent responses received for each registry that were with or without lawyer.

**Table 6 Percentage of responses for applicant and respondent roles by legal representation by registry**

Registry	Applicants without lawyer	Applicants with lawyer	Respondents without lawyer	Respondents with lawyer
Cairns	13	87	11	89
Townsville	25	75	62	38
Parramatta	57	43	41	59
Launceston	38	62	0	100
Newcastle	23	77	18	82
Hobart	37	63	42	58
Adelaide	42	58	24	76
Melbourne	71	29	44	56
Dandenong	35	65	20	80
Sydney	53	47	33	67
Canberra	60	40	40	60
Darwin	25	75	0	100
Brisbane	58	42	49	51

### Why is the client not represented by a lawyer?

In considering the data, it is noted that an interviewee may have selected more than one reason for why they were not legally represented at the time of the survey.

Not surprisingly, the most commonly selected reason clients gave for not being legally represented, was that they could not afford a lawyer (57%). A further 23 per cent of interviewees indicated they were not legally represented because they did not qualify for legal aid.

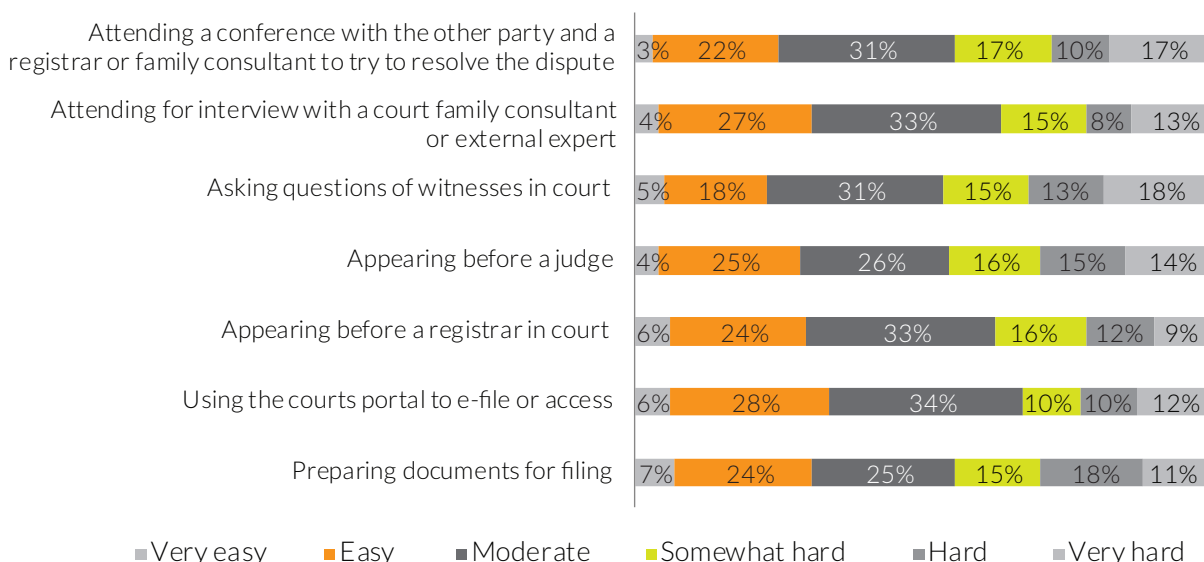
However, 41 per cent of responses indicated a preference for presenting their own case. Numerous comments reflected the view that the client did not believe a lawyer was necessary and this was often clarified by the statement that theirs was an easy or straight forward case. A number of comments were around bad experiences with lawyers in the past and this was described as a lack of trust, inefficiency or dissatisfaction with the way the lawyer had managed their case.

The family income data from the survey showed that of those users who identified their family income was less than \$50,000 per year, almost four in five were either applicants or respondents. Of those applicants and respondents in the lowest income bracket, more had a lawyer (55%) than didn't (45%). The results clearly indicated that income level is not the sole determinant of whether an applicant or respondent engages a lawyer.

## What did the client without a lawyer find most difficult?

In terms of what aspects of the process caused clients without lawyers most concern, they reported that they found it most difficult to ask questions of witnesses in court. However, several other aspects of the process, including appearing before a judge or attending a dispute resolution conference, were also reported as difficult for a significant number of clients. They appeared to find electronic filing and access easiest. Figure 21 shows these results in detail.

**Figure 21 What the client without a lawyer found difficult**



## Other client without lawyer results

### Which court were they attending and had they attended court before

Of the 800 interviewees who indicated their role was applicant or respondent (of any type), 55 per cent were in the Federal Circuit Court (family law) and 43 per cent were attending the Family Court. Forty four per cent (25% Federal Circuit Court and 19% Family Court) of these users were without a lawyer and 54 per cent (30% Federal Circuit Court and 24% Family Court) were legally represented. The number of interviewees who identified that they were attending the Federal Circuit Court for general federal law was too small to properly examine in this section and this is dealt with separately in Section 8.

Approximately half the clients without lawyers had been involved in court action before and half had not.

### Had they received legal advice previously and was it helpful

Almost 70 per cent of the interviewees, who answered Question 9 (see Appendix A for details) regarding previous legal support, had obtained legal advice previously. Of those, 67 per cent had consulted a private lawyer and a further 49 per cent had consulted a community legal service or state legal aid lawyer. (A quarter of clients indicated they had contacted both types of service.) The data suggests that most clients received some degree of legal support during their proceedings.

About three quarters of the applicable interviewees had found these previous legal services helpful. Forty per cent of interviewees included comments about these services which ranged from 'excellent and helpful' to complaining about the lawyers being disinterested, expensive, ill prepared or not listening. A strong flavour from the comments was that the previous legal advice had been of assistance in the initial stages in explaining the process, providing an understanding of what to expect and outlining the available legal options.



## Was legal representation affected by the type of proceedings

When attending for divorce proceedings, only 28 per cent of the 233 applicants and respondent interviewees had lawyers and 72 per cent were without a lawyer. However, for final and interim proceedings the picture was very different. Only 33 per cent of those seeking these orders were applicants without lawyers and respondents without lawyers, whereas 67 per cent were legally represented. For those interviewees without a lawyer attending for final or interim proceedings, they were much more likely to be the applicant (61%) than the respondent (39%).

## Did legal representation impact overall satisfaction

The overall level of satisfaction with the court experience did not seem to be greatly affected by whether the litigant was represented or not. The applicants without lawyers were marginally less satisfied (74%) than the applicants who were legally represented (78%). Respondents with or without a lawyer reported the same levels of satisfaction with their experience on the day. As identified in Section 5, the survey indicated that the overall satisfaction level of respondents, of any type, was relatively low (65%).

Section 6 dealt with the satisfaction levels of parties with and without lawyers against specific aspects of the court experience.

Some interesting comments about the experience of the clients without lawyers were:

*“Felt as though different judges made the process easier or more difficult.”*

*“A little difficulty understanding the judge. Judge talked very fast, had to get judge to repeat.”*

*“Feel intimidated, court jargon and scared in front of judge.”*

*“Court could do more for people who represent themselves, the system seems to favour the people who do the wrong thing.”*

*“The reports of a Family Consultant are a waste of time. Real expert evidence from a psychiatrist is virtually ignored and more emphasis put on Family Reports and child spending time with each parent rather than child’s safety.”*

*“Not enough conference rooms for child dispute conferences and registrars conferences to allow clients to speak confidentially and isolate them from the other side’s family members.”*

*“Technical and traumatic process, so hard being unrepresented doing voluminous paper work.”*

*“Process is quite difficult to understand. Hard to grasp the requirements.”*

## 8. The results for Federal Circuit Court of Australia – General Federal Law

This section summarises the survey results for court users in the general federal law jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court.

The 2011 user survey was a family law survey only. In 2014, the courts extended the survey questionnaire to capture the experiences of court users in the general federal law jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court.

Of the total 1719 interviewees for the 2014 *Court User Satisfaction Survey*, 59 interviewees (or about three %) indicated that they were attending the court for proceedings in general federal law. Given this small sample size, the data on satisfaction levels for general federal law court users may be considered with caution and any particular result might generally be considered statistically insignificant.

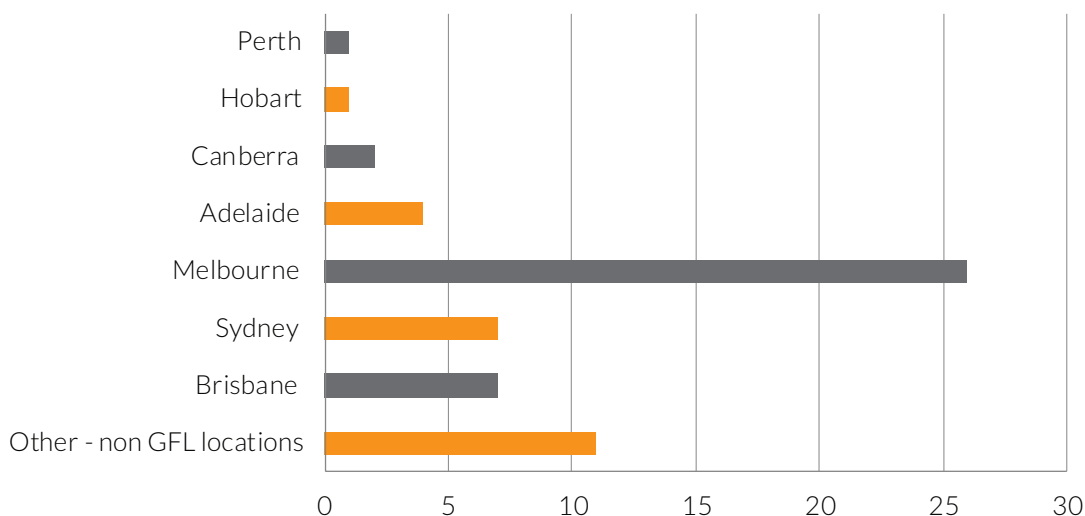
The general federal law jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court accounts for approximately 10 per cent of the Court’s filings. In the 2013–14 financial year this was 8665 applications, of which applications in bankruptcy and migration comprise almost 90 percent of the total workload. There are general federal law registries in each of the eight Australian state and territory capitals and these registries are administered by the Federal Court of Australia.

Thirty seven per cent of general federal law applicable interviewees (26 interviewees) indicated they were attending for either bankruptcy or migration issues.

Twenty four ‘Other’ responses indicated the interviewee was involved in family law proceedings, and not general federal law matters. This means that the actual number of general federal law users who completed the survey was in all probability, well below 59.

Figure 22 below shows the locations at which the general federal law responses were received. Almost 20 per cent of the general federal law responses were received in registries where there is no general federal law work conducted. This supports the conclusion that a significant number of court users are confused about the federal courts and their respective jurisdictions, as well as court terminology and how the courts categorise proceedings or otherwise, the survey questions were not precise and probing enough to accurately identify the general federal law court users.

**Figure 22 Location for GFL responses**



With this caution relating to the small sample size, the general federal law users' responses indicated the following:

- 82 per cent of applicable interviewees were generally satisfied with their visit to the court and only five per cent indicated they were not satisfied
- over 50 per cent were attending a court hearing and 23 per cent were filing papers
- almost 40 per cent were lawyers and a further 14 per cent were paralegals or filing clerks
- only 14 per cent were either applicants without a lawyer or respondents without a lawyer. In comparison to family law, the percentage of interviewees without a lawyer was almost double
- 44 per cent of general federal law interviewees were attending counters and 54 per cent were meeting a registrar or judicial officer
- 57 per cent of proceedings were less than six months old and 24 per cent were older than one year
- interviewees were generally very satisfied with the people they met, including staff, registrars, judicial officers
- more than three quarters of the applicable interviewees agreed that the forms were easy to use and the procedural advice they received was easy to understand, and
- a very significant proportion of applicable interviewees were happy about their day at court and their experiences in the courtroom, however, a high proportion of interviewees marked these dimensions as 'not applicable' and this further diminished the sample size and the reliability of the results for interviewees in the general federal law jurisdictions.

The inclusion of general federal law can be further developed for future surveys and in particular, the small sample and the confusion about whether proceedings relate to family or federal law, both need to be redressed in order to produce a more useful and comprehensive report to the Federal Circuit Court on this aspect of its workload.

## 9. Areas for improvement in delivering services

**This section covers areas for improvement identified by the results of the *Court User Satisfaction Survey*, including a comparison with the major concerns identified in the 2011 survey.**

The key areas for improvement are generally based on results where the satisfaction level of the applicable interviewees was below 75 per cent. These outcomes have been identified as requiring further consideration by the courts.

The results from the 2014 survey were overall very positive. On many dimensions, the perspective of the clients was that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their court experience.

The 2014 survey does identify several areas of performance and service delivery that may require improvement. Broadly speaking these areas are:

- better management of client expectations about the day in court
- tailoring of information, and
- better management of the experience of respondents.

Additionally, while the 2014 outcome was good, it was not as good as the outcome overall in 2011.

## Better management of expectations about day in court

In respect of the users' day in court, there were several key areas identified for improvement. These were:

- better management of expectations of what will happen next, particularly in respect of the expectations of the respondent and applicant
- better management of expectations of the time a matter will take in respect of the expectations of the respondent and applicant
- better management of the perceptions of the applicant and respondent about how their case was handled, and
- better management of start times for all user roles including lawyers.

All these issues were identified as areas for improvement following the 2011 survey and in each of those, the result in 2014 was worse. The reduction in satisfaction levels between the two survey result sets was in the range of 7 to 13 per cent.

## Tailor information

Another group of issues relates to the way the courts tailor their communication to court users and provide the information needed by users to navigate the courts' processes. These were:

- better information about what was to happen at court, particularly in respect of the applicant and respondent
- simplify court forms for respondents and applicants
- improve the user friendliness of the websites from the perspective of respondents and applicants
- increase client awareness of the ability to file electronically – if clients had used the CCP they were happy with its operation, and
- increase awareness of the NEC and improve its responsiveness.

## Better management of the respondent

The survey results showed that the respondent is the least satisfied with their experience. Their satisfaction levels frequently measured below 75 per cent, notwithstanding that for other users, and overall, the results were good. In some areas, the respondent appears to be substantially dissatisfied.

On most specific qualitative dimensions, the satisfaction levels of the respondent without a lawyer were significantly lower than the respondent with a lawyer or the applicant with or without a lawyer.

In order to improve the respondents satisfaction levels, the courts may investigate the results further. It may be there is a need to tailor language, services and information to better meet the respondents' needs and expectations. A particular focus could be the areas in which their satisfaction levels were below 50 per cent. For example, the ease of completing forms, their understanding of what to expect from their day in court and their perception that the way their case was handled was not fair. Alternatively, and as noted earlier in this report, it may be that the nature of litigation is such that the respondent is always likely to be less satisfied and that the courts cannot necessarily correct that phenomenon in the service support improvements.

## Performance was positive but less positive than in 2011

The survey results overall indicated that the courts were meeting the needs of most users.

However, even if interviewees were positive in their responses, they appeared to be less positive in 2014 than they were in 2011. This is illustrated by the statistics contained in Appendix B.

Responses to the survey contained some comments which clarified what in particular clients were not happy with. Most of the negative comments were about lengthy wait times, lack of signage, poor information and communication from staff, lack of interview rooms and privacy, general lack of seating in both public waiting areas and within courtrooms, lack of food and beverages, poor parking and child minding facilities and too few staff and judges. These were common to the 2011 survey, but were expressed more frequently in the 2014 survey and meant that clients were more likely to report they were satisfied rather than highly satisfied as in 2011.

While a number of the negative comments addressed court processes, predominantly they related to amenities and services. Accordingly, the next step will be for registry managers to analyse local performance and consider site specific improvements.

## 10. Areas for improvement in survey methodology

The intention in designing the 2014 survey was to have sufficient commonality between the questions and methodology used in 2011 to allow a meaningful comparison of results. However, it was nonetheless necessary to make some changes to the 2014 survey and the rationale and details were described in Section 3.

The results from the 2014 suggest further refinements should be considered for the next user satisfaction survey and stated broadly, these are as follows:

**Sample size for Federal Circuit Court** – general federal law sample size must be increased if there is to be a meaningful analysis

**Survey type** – consider if the next survey should be both face-to-face and electronic and if so, what is the optimal design. These formats do not work equally well for all purposes.

**Lawyers** – would it improve the outcome if lawyers were surveyed separately? Numerous questions are not particularly relevant to lawyers and there would be additional questions that might be more useful in gauging lawyer perceptions and needs.

**Interviewers** – what type of interviewer would achieve the best and clearest results? In assessing survey responses, it was noted that many comments are ambiguous and could have been clarified by an interviewer who understands the courts and their processes. The ‘not applicable’ rate was at times too high, given many comments indicated the question actually was applicable.

**Optimise feedback** – consider requesting interviewees to volunteer confidential contact details in order to complete surveys (i.e. for those called into court or other events) or clarify comments

**The questions** – ensure all the questions are useful, clear and free of jargon. Questions 23, 22 and 25 are a few which fail the test. The 2014 survey was regarded by many as too long for a face-to-face interview when users were anxious to ‘get on with the business’ or ‘get away’.

## Court User Satisfaction Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey on-line. The Courts value the work of the legal profession and are very interested in your views as regular court users.

This survey includes some questions which are designed for face to face interviews at Registry. Therefore, you do not need to complete Questions 2 to 4 (as you are responding on-line).

Just skip those questions please.

Please be assured that all survey responses are anonymous. This feedback will guide us in relation to planning improvements. This survey should only take about 10 minutes or less.

### 1. Registry:

### 2. Interviewer Name: (Questions 2 to 4 are only for face to face interviews and need not be completed if you are responding on-line)

### 3. Interview Details:

Date & Start Time      DD    MM    YYYY    HH    MM    AM/PM

/  /  :

### 4. What was the primary purpose of your visit to court?

- Attend a court hearing
- Attend a Registrar conference (family law)
- Attend mediation with a Registrar of the Federal Court (not family law)
- Attend an appointment with a Family Consultant
- General enquiry
- File papers
- Search Out Records/Obtain Documents
- Support family and/or friends
- Other (please specify)

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 5. Which court did you attend (or for practitioners, in which Court(s) do you practice/appear)?

- Federal Circuit Court (FCC) - Family Law
- Federal Circuit Court (FCC) - General Federal Law
- Family Court
- Unsure
- None of the above

## 6. What is your role?

- Lawyer
- Paralegal/Filing Clerk
- Applicant represented by a lawyer
- Applicant represented by a duty lawyer
- Applicant without a lawyer (Please complete Question 7 to 12)
- Respondent represented by a lawyer
- Respondent represented by a duty lawyer
- Respondent without a lawyer (Please complete Question 7 to 12)
- Friend/relative
- Other

If you answer Lawyer or Paralegal/Filing Clerk and your attendance relates to family law, please skip to Q24 If you answer Lawyer or Paralegal/Filing Clerk and your attendance relates to general federal law, please skip to Q26

## 7. (Questions 7 to 12 are ONLY for clients who indicated in Question 6 that they are an applicant without a lawyer or respondent without a lawyer. Otherwise skip to Question 13)

### We are interested in the reasons why you are not legally represented?

- Unable to afford legal representation
- Ineligible for legal aid
- Prefer to present your own case

Other (please specify)

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 8. Have you been involved in a court action before?

Yes

No

## 9. We are interested to understand whether you have obtained legal advice or representation at any stage previously?

Yes

No

## 10. If yes, we are interested to understand, what service(s) you accessed and where you obtained assistance:

A private lawyer

A community Legal Service.

A pro-bono legal assistance service.

A State or Commonwealth Legal Aid Service.

Other (please specify)

## 11. Can you comment on whether this service or these services were helpful to you.

Yes

No

Please make any comments you can about how these services assisted you in managing or resolving your dispute.



# Court User Satisfaction Survey

**12. We are interested in your experience as someone representing yourself. Please indicate how difficult the following aspects have been for you while representing your case.**

	Very Easy	Easy	Moderate	Somewhat Hard	Hard	Very Hard
Preparing documents for filing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using the courts portal to e-file or access documents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appearing before a registrar in court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appearing before a judge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking questions of witnesses in court, ie cross examination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending for interviews with a court family consultant or an external expert for the purpose of preparing a report for the court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending a conference with the other party and a Registrar/Family Consultant to try to resolve your dispute.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please comment below.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

We would welcome your comments about why these or any other aspects of representing your case may have been difficult for you.

**13. What is your age?**

- < 20
- 20 to 30
- 31 to 40
- 41 to 50
- 51 to 60
- 61 and above
- Prefer not to answer

**14. What is your postcode?**

**15. What is your gender?**

- Female
- Male
- X= Indeterminate, Intersex, Unspecified

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 16. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- Yes
- No

## 17. If yes, please specify that language?

## 18. Do you identify as ATSI?

- Yes
- No

## 19. If yes, as?

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

## 20. What is your highest level of education?

- Primary
- Secondary
- Trade
- University

## 21. What is your family income?

- < than \$50k per year
- \$50-80k per year
- \$80-120k per year
- > than \$120k per year
- Prefer not to answer

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

**22. (If you are attending about a Federal Circuit Court - General Federal Law Matter please skip to Question 26)**

**Question 22 to 25 are for family law client only (either Family Court or Federal Circuit Court)**

**What is your current marital status?**

- Married
- Divorced
- Separated
- De facto
- Single

**23. How many children do you have?**

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

**24. What type of matter brought you to the court?**

- Divorce proceedings
- Final/interim orders
- Other (please specify)

**25. If you are here Final/interim orders, what type of orders are you seeking?**

- Children issues
- Financial issues
- Both children/financial issues
- Other (please specify)

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 26. This question is for clients attending the Federal Circuit Court - General Federal Law ONLY

### What type of matter brought you to the Court?

- Admiralty
- Appeal
- Bankruptcy
- Corporations
- Human Rights
- Intellectual Property
- Migration
- Native Title
- Taxation
- Trade Practices
- Workplace Relations

Other (please specify)

## 27. (The remainder of the questions are for all clients)

### Who did you see?

- Counter staff
- Administrative staff in the court room
- Registrar
- Family Consultant
- Judicial Officer
- Other (please specify)

## 28. Approximately how long has this proceeding been on foot since the filing of the initial application?

- 0 to 3 months
- 3 to 6 months
- 6 to 12 months
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 years or more

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 29. How many times have you visited the court?

- First time
- Several times
- Regularly (e.g. many times per year)

Thank you for that information. Now we wish to ask you a few questions about your experience at the court.

## 30. About the court building and facilities

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Finding the court building was easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding your way around the court was easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt safe in the court environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt safe in the courtroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There were sufficient facilities e.g. seating areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why)

## 31. About the people you met (staff, registrars, consultants, judicial officers etc.)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
They treated you professionally and respectfully	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They attended to you promptly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They answered your enquiry directly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, you were satisfied with the service provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree or answer not applicable, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why.)

## 32. About the court process

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
The forms you needed were clear and easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The procedural advice from staff was easily understood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The payment facilities are easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree or answer not applicable, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why.)

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 33. About the day at court

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
You received plenty of notice leading up to your attendance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You were clear about what was to happen during your attendance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your matter took the time you were expecting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You understand what is to happen next in your matter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree or answer not applicable, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why.)

## 34. About your hearing (in the courtroom)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
The way in which my case was handled was fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Judicial Officer listened and led the hearing well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your matter started on time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You were treated the same as everyone else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree or answer not applicable, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why.)

## 35. Overall (and disregarding the outcome of your case)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
You were generally satisfied with your visit to the court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree, it would be helpful to us if you could indicate in the comments why.)

## 36. What, if anything, impressed you most about your experience with the courts?

## 37. What, if anything, would have improved your experience with the courts?

And finally, a few questions on the technology and other services

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 38. Which of the following websites have you used?

- Family Law Courts (www.familylawcourts.gov.au)
- Family Court (www.familycourt.gov.au)
- Federal Circuit Court (www.federalcircuitcourt.gov.au)
- Not sure
- None

Any other website (please specify)

## 39. About your experience with the website(s)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
You found the Courts' website easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You found the information needed quickly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree, it would be helpful to us to indicate why.)

## 40. Have you filed court documents electronically through the Commonwealth Court Portal?

- Yes
- No

Comments:

## 41. Do you know it is possible to file documents electronically?

- Yes
- No

## 42. If you have filed documents electronically

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
You found the Courts' Commonwealth Portal of assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree, it would be helpful to us to indicate why.)

## 43. Have you used the courts' national telephone service (National Enquiry Service on 1300 352 000)

- Yes
- No

# Court User Satisfaction Survey

## 44. If you have

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
You found the National Enquiry Centre helpful and professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You found the National Enquiry Centre quick and responsive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if you disagree, it would be helpful to us to indicate why.)

## 45. Do you have any other general comments about the courts' technology services.

## 46. The courts are considering moving away from accepting cash and cheques to be replaced by more credit/debit card payment options at the counter, phone, and online.

### How would that change affect you?

significantly inconvenience	some inconvenience	no impact	some benefit	significantly benefit
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

## 47. Many thanks for assisting us with this survey.

### Signed (Interviewer)

### End Time:

Time  HH :  MM  AM/PM



## Appendix B

Comparison between 2011 and 2014 results on Questions that were very similar, if not identical, in the two surveys.

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
Registry location	Adelaide	130	Adelaide	96
	Brisbane	224	Brisbane	149
	Cairns	39	Cairns	34
	Canberra	56	Canberra	53
	Dandenong	132	Dandenong	144
	Darwin	11	Darwin	16
	Dubbo	0	Dubbo	1
	Hobart	33	Hobart	45
	Launceston	20	Launceston	21
	Melbourne	255	Melbourne	441
	Newcastle	43	Newcastle	64
	Sydney	203	Sydney	205
	Parramatta	164	Parramatta	399
	Townsville	22	Townsville	33
Wollongong	0	Wollongong	13	
Primary purpose of their visit	1. Court hearing	47%	1. Court hearing	44%
	2. Conference	7%	2. Registrar Conference(family law)	5%
			3. Mediation with Registrar Fed Court (not family law)	1%
			4. Appointment with a Family Consultant	4%
	3. General enquiry	3%	5. General enquiry	5%
	4. File papers	22%	6. File papers	22%
			7. Search Records/Obtain Documents	1%
	5. Support family / friends	11%	8. Support family / friends	8%
	6. Other	10%	9. Other	10%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
<b>Which court</b>	1. Federal	43%	1. Federal Circuit Court – Family Law Division	<b>52%</b>
	2. Family Court	<b>44%</b>	2. Federal Circuit Court – General Federal Law Division	3%
	3. Both	3%	3. Family Court	39%
	4. Unsure	2%	4. Unsure	1%
	5. Neither	8%	5. None of the above	4%
<b>Role</b>	1. Lawyer	24%	1. Lawyer	24%
	2. Paralegal/Filing Clerk	8%	2. Paralegal/Filing Clerk	8%
	3. Applicant	<b>32%</b>	<b>Total Applicants</b>	<b>33%</b>
			3. Applicant represented by a lawyer	14%
			4. Applicant represented by a duty lawyer	2%
	4. Respondent	15%	5. Applicant without lawyer	17%
			<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>17%</b>
			6. Respondent represented by a lawyer	10%
	5. Friend/relative	12%	7. Respondent represented by a duty lawyer	1%
			8. Respondent without lawyer	6%
9. Friend/relative			13%	
6. Other Interested Party			3%	
7. Other	6%	10. Other	5%	
<b>Age</b>	1. < 20	1%	1. < 20	1%
	2. 20 to 30	17%	2. 20 to 30	20%
	3. 31 to 40	<b>32%</b>	3. 31 to 40	<b>29%</b>
	4. 41 to 50	27%	4. 41 to 50	24%
	5. 51 to 60	13%	5. 51 to 60	16%
	6. 61 and above	8%	6. 61 and above	8%
	7. Prefer not to answer	2%	7. Prefer not to answer	2%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
Gender	1. Male	42%	1. Male	45%
	2. Female	<b>58%</b>	2. Female	<b>55%</b>
			3. Indeterminate, Intersex, Unspecified	0.1%
Is English first language	1. Yes	<b>84%</b>	1. Yes	<b>73%</b>
	2. No	16%	2. No	27%
Top two languages	Chinese (15%) Arabic (14%)		Arabic (17%) Hindi (14%)	
Identify as ATSI	1. Yes	5%	1. Yes	3%
	2. No	<b>95%</b>	2. No	<b>97%</b>
Highest level of Education	1. Primary	1%	1. Primary	(0.5%)
	2. Secondary	39%	2. Secondary	35%
	3. Trade	15%	3. Trade	16%
	4. Tertiary	<b>45%</b>	4. University	<b>49%</b>
Family Income	1. < than \$50k per year	<b>39%</b>	1. < than \$50k per year	<b>33%</b>
	2. \$50 – 80k per year	19%	2. \$50 – 80k per year	19%
	3. \$80 – 120k per year	11%	3. \$80 – 120k per year	14%
	4. > than \$120k per year	7%	4. > than \$120k per year	13%
	5. Prefer not to answer	24%	5. Prefer not to answer	21%
Current Marital status	1. Married	21%	1. Married	22%
	2. Divorced	19%	2. Divorced	18%
	3. Separated	<b>29%</b>	3. Separated	<b>28%</b>
	4. De facto	10%	4. De facto	11%
	5. Single	21%	5. Single	21%
Type of proceedings	1. Divorce proceedings	25%	1. Divorce proceedings	22%
	2. Final/interim orders	<b>54%</b>	2. Final/interim orders	<b>49%</b>
	3. Other	21%	3. Other	28%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
If final/interim proceedings, what issues	1. Children issues	64%	1. Children issues	55%
	2. Financial issues	17%	2. Financial issues	14%
	3. Children/ financial issues	17%	3. Both children and financial issues	19%
		2%	4. Other	12%
	4. Other			
Who did you see	1. Court/Counter staff	38%	1. Counter staff	47%
			2. Administrative staff in the courtroom	16%
	2. Registrar	13%	3. Registrar	20%
	3. Family Consultant	8%	4. Family Consultant	15%
	4. Judicial Officer	35%	5. Judicial Officer	31%
	5. Other	16%	6. Other	18%
	Note: Interviewees could choose more than one response		Note: Interviewees could choose more than one response	
How many times have you been in court	1. First time	31%	1. First time	26%
	2. Several times	56%	2. Several times	48%
	3. Regularly (e.g. many times per year)	13%	3. Regularly (e.g. many times per year)	27%
<b>About the court building and facilities</b>				
Finding the court building was easy	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	3%	Disagree	5%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	3%
	Agree	39%	Agree	46%
	Strongly agree	52%	Strongly agree	43%
	N/A	1%	N/A	1%
Finding your way around the court was easy	Strongly disagree	0.5%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	5%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	5%
	Agree	46%	Agree	50%
	Strongly agree	46%	Strongly agree	37%
	N/A	0.5%	N/A	2%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
<b>You felt safe in the court environ</b>	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	1%	Disagree	2%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	3%
	Agree	42%	Agree	<b>47%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>52%</b>	Strongly agree	45%
	N/A	1%	N/A	2%
<b>You felt safe in the courtroom</b>	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	1%	Disagree	1%
	Neither agree or disagree	2%	Neither agree or disagree	3%
	Agree	32%	Agree	<b>40%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>44%</b>	Strongly agree	38%
	N/A	20%	N/A	17%
<b>There were sufficient facilities e.g. toilets, refreshments</b>	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	8%	Disagree	10%
	Neither agree or disagree	4%	Neither agree or disagree	5%
	Agree	<b>39%</b>	Agree	<b>47%</b>
	Strongly agree	45%	Strongly agree	34%
	N/A	2%	N/A	1%
<b>About the people you met (staff, registrars, consultants, judicial officers etc.)</b>				
<b>They treated you professionally and respectfully</b>	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	3%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	4%
	Agree	40%	Agree	<b>46%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>51%</b>	Strongly agree	41%
	N/A	3%	N/A	5%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
They attended to you promptly	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	5%	Disagree	8%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	7%
	Agree	40%	Agree	<b>44%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>44%</b>	Strongly agree	31%
	N/A	4%	N/A	7%
They answered your enquiry directly	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	4%
	Neither agree or disagree	4%	Neither agree or disagree	7%
	Agree	39%	Agree	<b>43%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>44%</b>	Strongly agree	34%
	N/A	10%	N/A	11%
In general, you were satisfied with the service provided	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	3%	Disagree	5%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	7%
	Agree	42%	Agree	<b>44%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>46%</b>	Strongly agree	36%
	N/A	4%	N/A	6%
<b>About the Court process</b>				
The forms you needed were clear and easy to understand	Strongly disagree	3%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	8%	Disagree	10%
	Neither agree or disagree	8%	Neither agree or disagree	11%
	Agree	<b>34%</b>	Agree	<b>38%</b>
	Strongly agree	19%	Strongly agree	15%
	N/A	28%	N/A	23%
The procedural advice from staff was easily understood	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	4%	Disagree	4%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	<b>38%</b>	Agree	<b>42%</b>
	Strongly agree	24%	Strongly agree	20%
	N/A	28%	N/A	24%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
The payment facilities are easy to use	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	2%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	7%
	Agree	27%	Agree	32%
	Strongly agree	18%	Strongly agree	16%
	N/A	<b>47%</b>	N/A	<b>42%</b>
<b>About The Day in Court</b>				
You received plenty of notice leading up to today	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	3%	Disagree	3%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	4%
	Agree	31%	Agree	<b>41%</b>
	Strongly agree	<b>32%</b>	Strongly agree	25%
	N/A	29%	N/A	25%
You were clear about what was to happen today	Strongly disagree	3%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	8%	Disagree	9%
	Neither agree or disagree	7%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	<b>31%</b>	Agree	<b>37%</b>
	Strongly agree	26%	Strongly agree	20%
	N/A	25%	N/A	22%
Your matter took the time you were expecting	Strongly disagree	4%	Strongly disagree	6%
	Disagree	11%	Disagree	15%
	Neither agree or disagree	9%	Neither agree or disagree	12%
	Agree	26%	Agree	<b>28%</b>
	Strongly agree	19%	Strongly agree	12%
	N/A	<b>31%</b>	N/A	27%
You understand what is to happen next in your matter	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	5%	Disagree	9%
	Neither agree or disagree	7%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	<b>32%</b>	Agree	<b>36%</b>
	Strongly agree	24%	Strongly agree	18%
	N/A	30%	N/A	25%

Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
<b>About the Hearing</b>				
<b>The way in which my case was handled was fair</b>	Strongly disagree	3%	Strongly disagree	4%
	Disagree	3%	Disagree	8%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	8%
	Agree	20%	Agree	27%
	Strongly agree	18%	Strongly agree	11%
	N/A	<b>51%</b>	N/A	<b>42%</b>
<b>The Judicial Officer listened and led the hearing well</b>	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	5%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	7%
	Agree	20%	Agree	29%
	Strongly agree	21%	Strongly agree	15%
	N/A	<b>50%</b>	N/A	<b>41%</b>
<b>Your matter started on time</b>	Strongly disagree	3%	Strongly disagree	4%
	Disagree	9%	Disagree	12%
	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	20%	Agree	26%
	Strongly agree	15%	Strongly agree	10%
	N/A	<b>47%</b>	N/A	<b>39%</b>
<b>You were treated the same as everyone else</b>	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	4%
	Neither agree or disagree	3%	Neither agree or disagree	6%
	Agree	23%	Agree	32%
	Strongly agree	22%	Strongly agree	17%
	N/A	<b>48%</b>	N/A	<b>39%</b>
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>				
<b>You were generally satisfied with your visit to the court</b>	Strongly disagree	3%	Strongly disagree	3%
	Disagree	4%	Disagree	5%
	Neither agree or disagree	5%	Neither agree or disagree	11%
	Agree	<b>45%</b>	Agree	<b>45%</b>
	Strongly agree	30%	Strongly agree	19%
	N/A	13%	N/A	17%



Questions 2011			Questions 2014	
Experience with technology and information services				
You found the Courts' website easy to use	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	4%	Disagree	6%
	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	28%	Agree	<b>38%</b>
	Strongly agree	18%	Strongly agree	15%
	N/A	<b>43%</b>	N/A	31%
You found the information needed quickly	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	5%	Disagree	8%
	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	9%
	Agree	26%	Agree	<b>36%</b>
	Strongly agree	18%	Strongly agree	14%
	N/A	<b>43%</b>	N/A	31%
You found the Courts' Commonwealth Portal of assistance	Strongly disagree	1%	Strongly disagree	1%
	Disagree	2%	Disagree	3%
	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	5%
	Agree	17%	Agree	19%
	Strongly agree	13%	Strongly agree	11%
	N/A	<b>61%</b>	N/A	<b>61%</b>
You found the National Enquiry Centre helpful and professional	Strongly disagree	2%	Strongly disagree	2%
	Disagree	4%	Disagree	6%
	Neither agree or disagree	7%	Neither agree or disagree	6%
	Agree	15%	Agree	23%
	Strongly agree	10%	Strongly agree	11%
	N/A	<b>61%</b>	N/A	<b>53%</b>
You found the National Enquiry Centre quick and responsive	Strongly disagree	4%	Strongly disagree	6%
	Disagree	6%	Disagree	11%
	Neither agree or disagree	6%	Neither agree or disagree	6%
	Agree	14%	Agree	17%
	Strongly agree	8%	Strongly agree	8%
	N/A	<b>62%</b>	N/A	<b>52%</b>

