

IPO Staff survey February 2021 End to end review of IP processes High level summary and analysis

Prepared by the Customer Insights Team



1. Context

This survey was carried out to gather staff perspectives in the IPO. This was done as part of the implementation of the recommendations of the Catherine Day report, specifically Action 3.18 which recommends carrying out an end to end review of the international protection process. As part of this review, a key aspect to be captured is the voice and experience of staff who work in these areas.

2. Approach

The survey issued to all staff in the IPO through a newsletter format from the head of the function and ran from 20 Jan to 4 Feb. A copy of the communication and the survey itself are available in Appendix 1 and 2. The survey was issued through the Department's Qualtrics platform, with analysis of the results also being done on Qualtrics.

The survey asked a mix of multiple choice and open text based questions. These are summarised in this report. For the text based questions, a classification model was used to identify the topics being discussed. Qualtrics inbuilt sentiment analysis tool then assigns an overall sentiment score to each topic for each text field. In this way, the topics that are discussed can be easily interpreted.

In our analysis of survey responses, we have investigated correlations between different questions. Where there are correlations we have specifically called these out. We have also called out cases where no correlation was found where we found this to be a useful insight. Many questions are not correlated, and we have not specifically called this out for the vast majority of questions.

When interpreting correlations between questions, it is important not to infer causal relations. In most cases the correlations are simply reflective of the fact that the questions are related to the same underlying effects, and are not completely independent from each other. However they are useful in understanding how different factors of employee experience are related and connected to each other.

3. General Insights

- 3.1. Below represents a high level analysis and synthesis of survey responses from IPO staff.
- 3.2. As we pointed out in our approach above, the survey was shared by email in a newsletter format. The email was opened by 94% of the recipients.

- 3.3. There were 99 responses from IPO staff. This is a **completion rate** of 60%. These high response rates are positive, and indicate a good level of engagement with the overall process.
- 3.4. 78% of staff in IPO have been there 5 years or less.
- 3.5. In IPO, 61% of staff are **satisfied** or extremely satisfies in their current role.
- 3.6. A significant majority of people in the organisation find the organisation **structure** and interactions, their **role** within it and the goals and **objectives** to be *extremely clear* or *somewhat clear*.
- 3.7. The majority of people felt they had sufficient training to carry out their roles.
- 3.8. 78% of people in IPO agreed that it is a **rewarding** place to work, with 54% agreeing that it is a **stressful** place to work.
- 3.9. The majority of people felt that they can share ideas on improvements, and that the standard and frequency of the communications from managers/the organisation is satisfactory.
- 3.10. In IPO 61% of respondents were confident that issues raised by staff would be addressed, but 27% were not confident of this.
- 3.11. A significant minority of people (14%) report never having team meetings. Weekly and monthly were the most common response on how frequently team meetings happen.
- 3.12. Frequency and format of team meetings had a wide spread of responses. This could indicate that practices differ from team to team.
- 3.13. The top 3 channels of communication across IPO are emails, phone calls and Skype Instant Messaging.
- 3.14. Overall, many people felt they had the right tools and IT equipment to carry out their roles. However significant numbers of people did not agree with this.

4. Length of time in organisation

- 4.1. There is a statistically significant relationship between "How long have you worked in your organisation?" and the following questions:
 - I am satisfied with the standard of information I receive from my organisation (strong relationship)
 - I have received enough training to effectively perform my role (strong relationship)
 - I am confident that if staff raise issues, they will be addressed
 - It is clear to me how my organisation is structured. (i.e. who does what)
- 4.2. This could indicate that longer serving staff are generally more familiar with how things work, with how to carry out their role and are more confident in raising issues if they arise.
- 4.3. There is **no statistically significant** relationship between "How long have you worked in your organisation?" and the following questions:
 - How satisfied are you in your current role?
 - My organisation is a rewarding place to work
 - My organisation is a stressful place to work
 - It is clear to me how my role contributes to the overall International Protection Process
 - It is clear to me how my organisation interacts with other parts of the DOJ

Q2 - How long have you worked in your organisation?

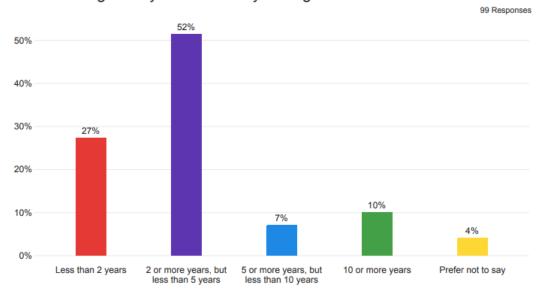
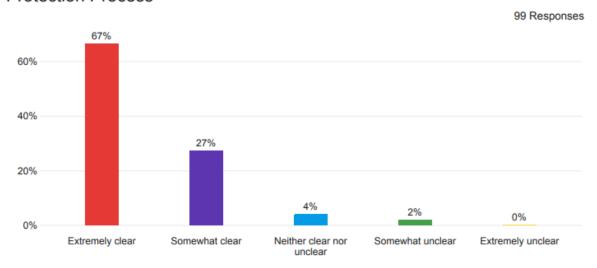


Figure 1 Length of time in organisation

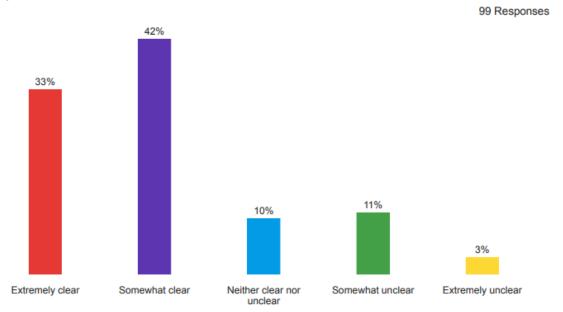
5. Key insights on organisational roles and structures

- 5.1. There is a positive correlation between "I have received enough training to effectively perform my role" with the following areas:
 - I have the right tools and equipment to perform my duties remotely as required
 - The IT applications supporting my work in the International Protection Process are effective
 - My organisation is a rewarding place to work
- 5.2. Training in how to use the existing tools and software is essential to ensuring they are used to their fullest extent, and that their capabilities are fully leveraged to support the work of the IPO. People who have not received sufficient training may be missing out on key tools/features to support them in their work.
- 5.3. People seem overall to be quite clear on how their own role contributes to the functioning of the International Protection Process, across the organisations. However, when it comes to understanding the goals and objectives of the wider organisation, the overall structure and how the organisation works and interacts with the wider Department, there are significant numbers of people who are not clear on this. Almost 1 in 4 people in IPO are neither "Extremely clear" nor "Somewhat clear" on how the IPO is structured.
- 5.4. When understanding how their organisation interacts with the wider Department, 2 in 5 people in IPO are neither "Extremely clear" nor "Somewhat clear" on this.

Q3_1 - It is clear to me how my role contributes to the overall International Protection Process

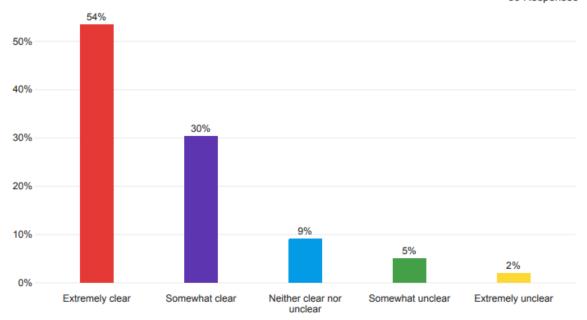


Q3_2 - It is clear to me how my organisation is structured. (i.e. who does what)



Q3_3 - The goals and objectives of my organisation are clear to me

99 Responses



Q3_4 - It is clear to me how my organisation interacts with other parts of the DOJ

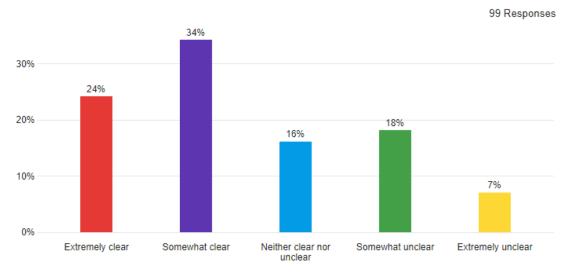


Figure 2 Charts on organisation

6. People's own roles

- 6.1. There is a positive correlation between "I have received enough training to effectively perform my role" and the following areas:
 - I have the right tools and equipment to perform my duties remotely as required
 - The IT applications supporting my work in the International Protection Process are effective
 - My organisation is a rewarding place to work
- 6.2. Training in how to use the existing tools and software is essential to ensuring they are used to their fullest extent, and that their capabilities are fully leveraged to support the work of the IPO. People who have not received sufficient training may be missing out on key tools/features to support their work.
- 6.3. "How satisfied are you in your current role" has positive correlations with the following areas:
 - How satisfied are you with the format of team meetings
 - How satisfied are you with the frequency of team meetings
 - I am confident that if staff raise issues, they will be addressed (strong positive correlation)
 - I am satisfied with the standard of information I receive from my organisation (strong positive correlation)
 - I am satisfied with the frequency of communication from my managers
 - It is clear to me who is responsible for making important decisions in my unit
 - I can share ideas to improve work processes with my managers
 - My organisation is open to new ways of doing things
 - My organisation is a rewarding place to work (strong positive correlation)
- 6.4. This indicates that the above areas are key factors in people's overall satisfaction levels with their roles. Three areas stand out in particular information sharing, the ability to raise issues openly, and the rewarding nature of the work. Unsurprisingly, people who are more satisfied overall in their role are more satisfied with the various different aspects of their work and organisation. However, in trying to improve the overall satisfaction levels of staff, these are key areas to focus on for improvements.
- 6.5. The majority of people are at least somewhat satisfied in their roles, however 2 in 5 in the IPO are not at least somewhat satisfied.
- 6.6. 16 people who were dissatisfied opted to leave additional comments as to why they were dissatisfied. The overall summary of this can be seen in *Figure 3*. The top 5 broad categories identified in these comments are:
 - Policy, legislation and processes in the IPO

- Efficiency and delivery of objectives
- Training
- Colleagues and collaboration (positive and negative comments)
- Leaders and managers (positive and neutral comments)

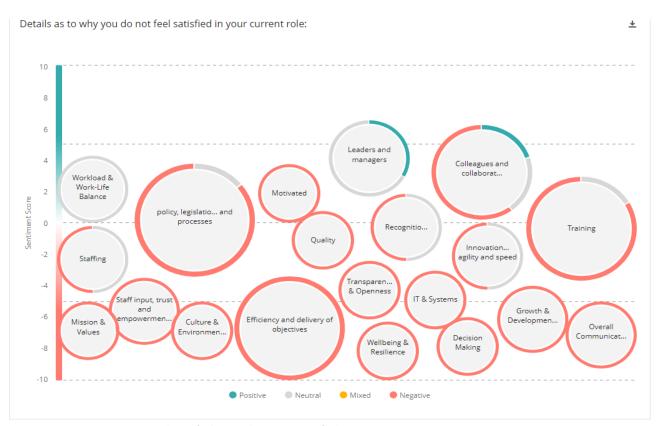


Figure 3 IPO Sentiment analysis of why people are not satisfied

6.7. Sample extracts of comments shared by people who said they were not satisfied in their role:

No basic training given outside of verbal assistance within the section. If you are a clerical officer you will not get any training which would provide any insight of the organisations policies.

Very little co operation between sections and certain sections not helpful in anyway.

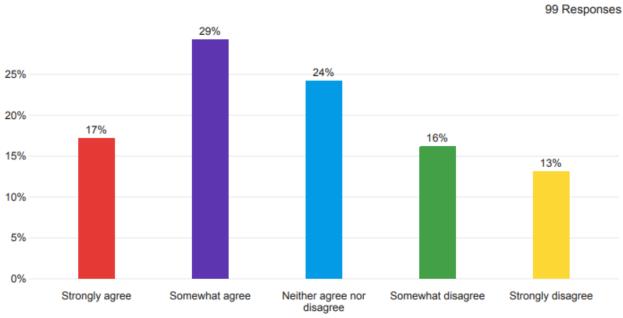
There's a high level of staff departures at CO and EO level through promotions and transfers. Staff are not replaced and remaining colleagues are firefighting many jobs.

I have no authority to do anything different to speed up an outcome or conclude an issue. Suggestions or ideas for improvements/streamlining the processes are not encouraged or discussed.

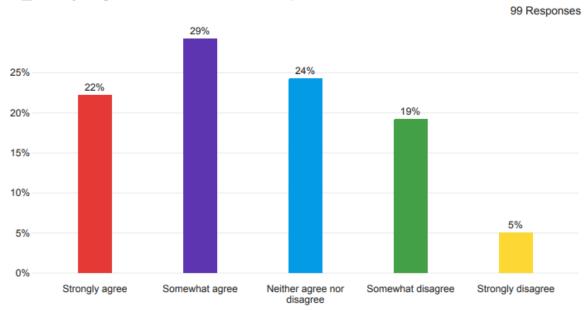
I work with an excellent team and I am very happy with the calibre of people I work with.

The work is meaningful and rewarding.

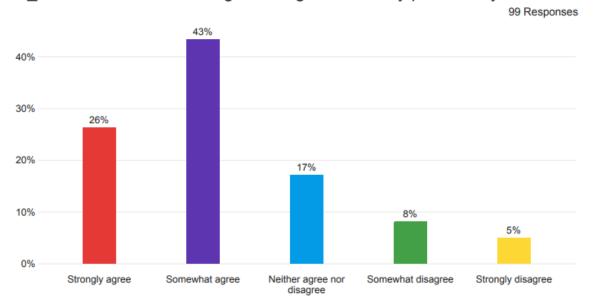
Q4_1 - My organisation is a rewarding place to work



Q4_2 - My organisation is a stressful place to work



Q4_3 - I have received enough training to effectively perform my role



Q5 - How satisfied are you in your current role?

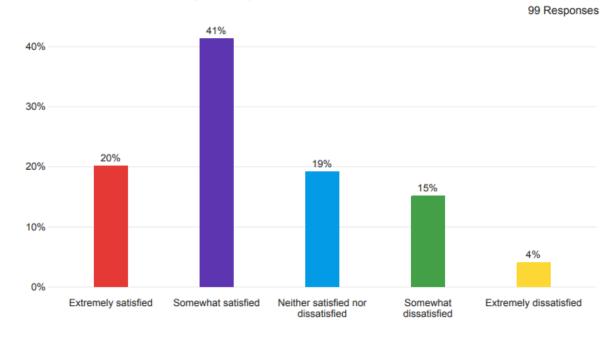




Figure 4 Charts on people's role

7. Key insights on communications and team meetings in each organisation

- 7.1. Over 75% of people (IPO and IPAT) feel they can share ideas on improvements with their managers. However 1 in 6 people in IPO do not feel that they can.
- 7.2. Half of the IPO respondents feel the IPO is open to new ways of doing thing.
- 7.3. Around 1 in 3 in IPO are not happy with the frequency of communications form managers. There is some variability in people's perceptions of the standards of the communications.
- 7.4. There is a lot of variability around people's perceptions around how issues are addressed when raised. This may mean that different teams or areas have different experiences, but this would require further investigation. Granular details on grades and teams were consciously NOT collected for this survey in order to give people the safety to openly contribute. This does however indicate that there is good practices in some teams, and better cross team communication could help to spread these good practices.
- 7.5. When looking at people who were not satisfied with team meetings, the main issues highlighted were that meetings were infrequent, often got cancelled or simply did not happen. Another issue highlighted was that meetings were often one directional it was a chance for managers to update their teams, but that open discussion or raising of new issues was not encouraged. See summary in *Figure 6*
- 7.6. There is a strong statistically significant relationship between the frequency of team meetings and people's satisfaction with the frequency of communications from their managers. This is as you would expect, but highlights that more frequent meetings should lead to higher satisfaction with frequency of communication. For areas where team meetings do not happen, or happen infrequently, this would be a quick and easy change to implement.
- 7.7. Around 20% of people are dissatisfied with the frequency of team meetings. From the comments it would appear that this is due to too few meetings, but there is a possibility that some people feel they are too frequent.

- 7.8. 23 people who were dissatisfied with any of the aspects of communications surveyed opted to leave additional comments as to why they were dissatisfied. The overall summary of this can be seen in *Figure 5*. The top 2 broad categories identified in these comments are:
 - Communication with management (positive, negative, neutral and mixed)
 - Transparency and openness of communications (positive and negative)

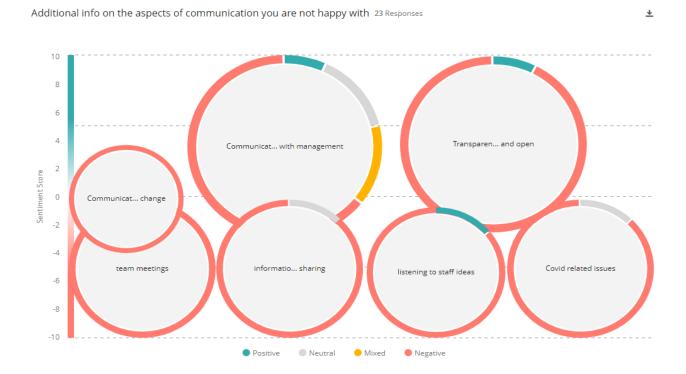




Figure 5 IPO Sentiment analysis of communications comments Note: Both charts show the same data, just presented differently

7.9. Sample extracts of comments on communications and team meetings:

in regards to HEO relationship our HEO is very fair and helps when needed but we can see the stress our HEO is under

There is poor communication between teams and sometimes a lack of awareness about what other teams do.

Team meetings used to be held monthly, then went out to bi-monthly, then randomly, now only when the manager has something to tell us on where some announcement is filtering down.

From my experience, it is quite difficult to make an impact in the IPO or find ways to improve it. The channels of communication, whilst clear, strictly follows the chain of command. This seems to work well for most operational needs. However, it fails us when we might benefit from a clearer line of communication between the top and bottom of our organisation.

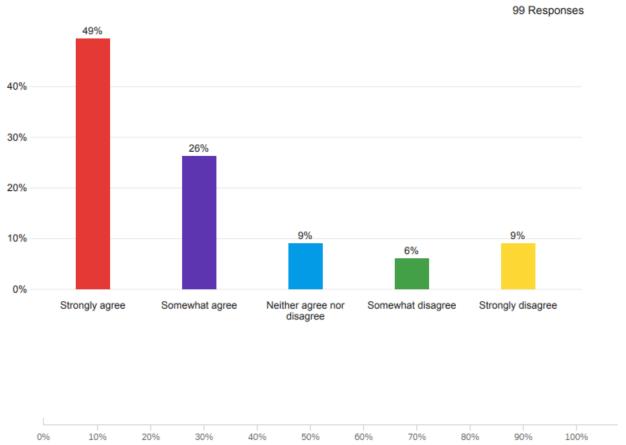
team meetings are for the most part helpful and instructive. However, sometimes I feel that the focus is purely operational and that policy decisions which affect us all are kept within the remit of senior management

Meetings do not happen when my manager has no 'news' from their manager. They should happen regardless so staff's own issues if any could be discussed.

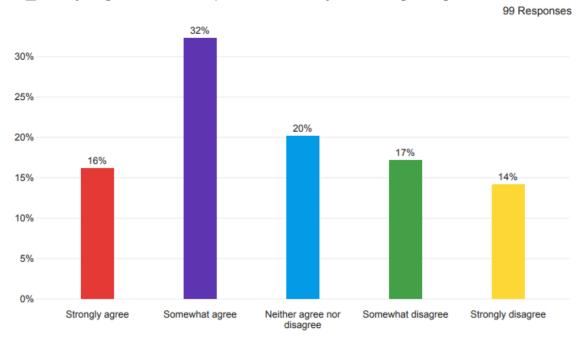


Figure 6 Analysis of comments on team meeting

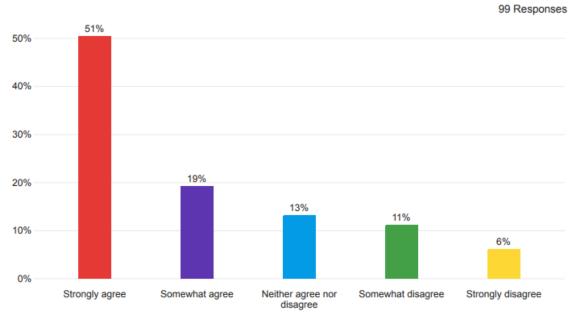
Q7_1 - I can share ideas to improve work processes with my managers



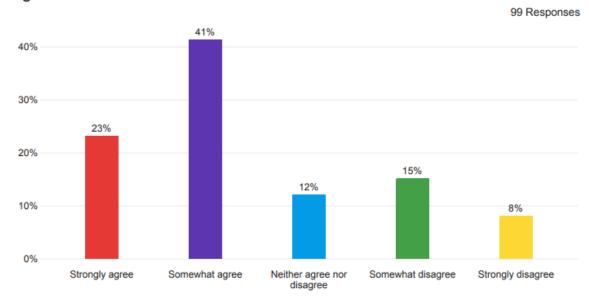
Q7_2 - My organisation is open to new ways of doing things



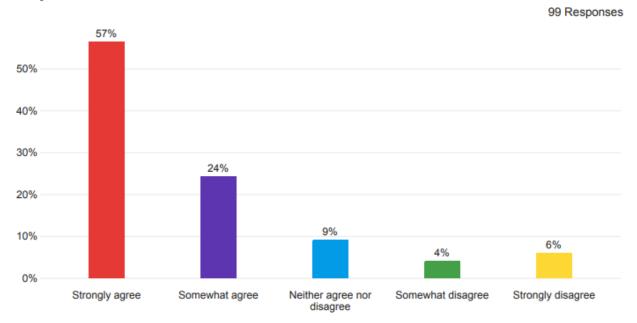
Q7_3 - I am satisfied with the frequency of communication from my managers



Q7_4 - I am satisfied with the standard of information I receive from my organisation



Q7_5 - It is clear to me who is responsible for making important decisions in my unit



Q7_6 - I am confident that if staff raise issues, they will be addressed

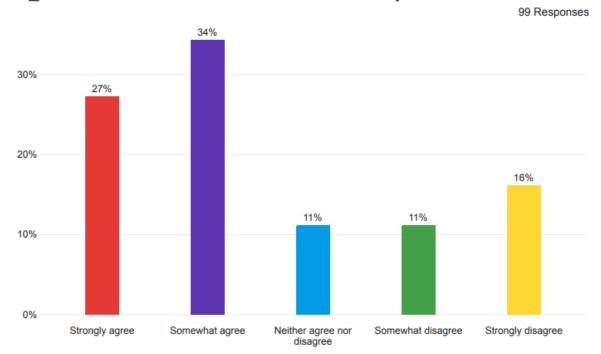


Figure 7 Charts on communications

Q12 - Please pick the top 3 communication channels in use in your organisation:

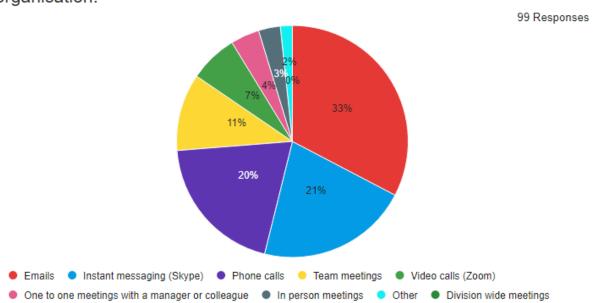
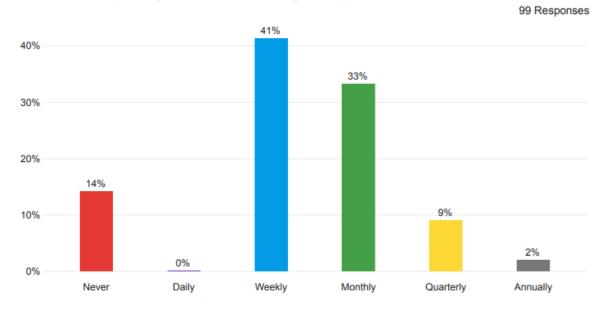


Figure 8 Communication channels in use

Q9 - How frequently do team meetings happen?



Q10 - Please answer the following questions on team meetings:

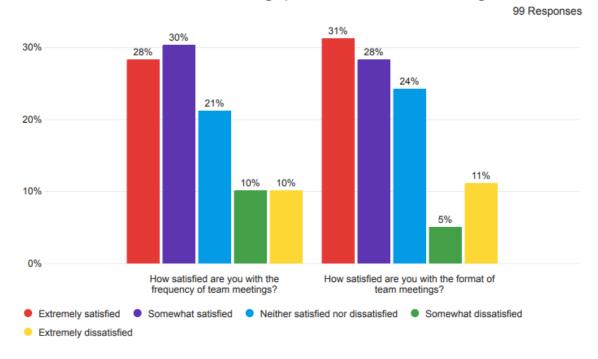


Figure 9 Charts on team meetings

8. Key insights on IT, tools and software

- 8.1. 60% of people in IPO feel that they have the right IT applications to support their work and also to support them in working remotely.
- 8.2. Around 40% of people do not agree that they have the right tools and equipment to carry out their roles remotely.
- 8.3. We asked people if they had any comments about the IT systems available to them. 56 people opted to respond. The 5 broad topics that people mentioned are:
 - General state/condition of the IT systems
 - Efficiency of systems and related processes
 - Remote working (including use of own equipment)
 - Paper based processes
 - Using multiple unconnected systems
- 8.4. In the comments, people spoke highly about the IT helpdesk the staff are friendly, helpful and professional and would try to help however they can.
- 8.5. In the comments, it came across quite strongly that having to use many disconnected IT systems was a disadvantage, especially when older Lotus Notes systems might crash frequently. Additionally, the paper based nature of many aspects of work was seen as an impediment to fully leveraging IT capabilities.

Q14 - Please rate the following statements about the tools and software available...

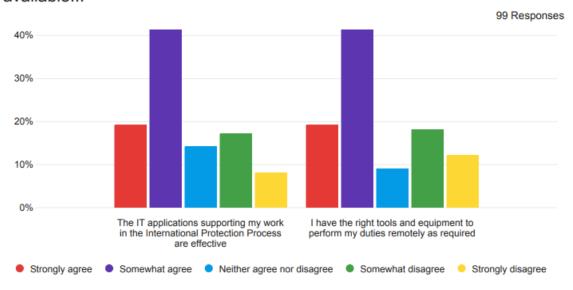


Figure 10 Charts on tools and software

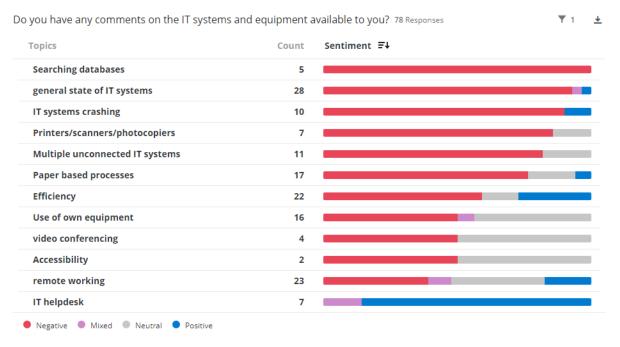


Figure 11 Analysis of comments on IT

8.6. Sample extracts of comments on the IT systems:

The current IT systems are 20 years out of date. They are neither intuitive nor clear in their processes. I waste a lot of time each day waiting for the system to unfreeze. Time is wasted with between units as when you call someone to discuss a case either or both of your computers can suddenly freeze and now 2 units are wasting time.

Archaic systems with duplication rife, Lotus notes (various applications on this), aisip and spreadsheets used extensively all coupled with paper files. Serious overhaul needed.

It can be a cumbersome system but it generally holds all the information that you need.

Training should be available to new and existing staff to ensure that the systems are used efficiently and so that good procedures are followed for inputting data

Anytime I have an IT issue I always find the helpdesk incredibly efficient and pleasant to deal with.

9. Key insights on final 3 comment areas

- 9.1. The final 3 questions of the survey were:
 - What is working well in your job?
 - What is not working well in our job?
 - Have you any other comments you would like to share?
- 9.2. The sentiment and topic analysis of these 3 comment questions are outlined in the following figures. Sample comment extracts are also included, which are deemed to be generally representative of the overall comments, or specifically presenting a unique or new insight.
- 9.3. All comments were reviewed and grouped to identify common themes. Sentiment scores were assigned (negative numbers indicating a negative comment, positive numbers indicating a positive comment). The size of each topic "bubble" on the chart indicates how frequently that topic came up. The colour coding on each topic bubble gives an indication of whether people had negative, positive, neutral or mixed comments on the topic.
- 9.4. There is a large amount of useful information within these 3 open text questions. In many cases, people shared specific ideas on improvements and on how to improve. Most of these will feed directly into overall recommendations arising out of all work under Action 3.18 (conduct an end to end process review).
- 9.5. The comments are not shared in full in this report, as information was provided by people anonymously and with the expectation of privacy. The sample comments included have been chosen to give an overall impression of what people shared. In some cases they have received very minor edits for clarity and brevity, but for the most part appear as people wrote them.
- 9.6. Overall, the comments contained significant amounts of feedback which is directly relevant to IPO management, and so the feedback will be shared with them once all comments have been reviewed to ensure no identifiable information is present.

Q1 - What organisation do you work in?: IPO 🕶 🕇



Figure 12 Analysis of comments on what is working well

Q1 - What organisation do you work in?: IPO 🕶 🕇



Figure 13 Analysis of comments on what is not working well

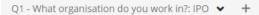




Figure 14 Analysis of "any other comments you would like to share"



9.7. Sample extracts of comments on what is working well:

Our work processes work very well and the office culture is positive.

Looking at the International Protection process the Preliminary stage and the issuance of decision letters works well in the IPO. Backlogs were cleared quickly. Customer Services provide an excellent service and deal with all applicant or legal queries quickly and efficiently.

The focus on attention to detail, generating robust decisions, and agile policy and practice responses to change when new issues arise e.g. court decisions

I have worked in a couple of civil service offices and the knowledge, commitment and professionalism of the IPO staff is second to none. I find that everybody is dedicated, and everybody knows what their job entails, and whom to ask if anything arises.

Communications between colleagues and with AP. Colleagues and management are approachable, willing to help out and offer guidance. It is a nice place to work.

Good communication from management who are open to suggestions in terms of improvements.

9.8. Sample extracts of comments on what is not working well:

The lack of staff, particularly at HEO level. The workload is heavy and pressurised and additional staff is necessary.

Work load continues to increase while staff levels remain static. Manager has far too much on their plate and is constantly being asked to carry out additional work thereby causing delays in getting certain matters finalised and causing undue delays.

The amount of questionnaires and documentation that needs to be translated, scanned & attached to the files is slowing the whole process down.

There is too much back and forwards when dealing with cases, between Panel Members, EO

Mentors and HEOs, partly because the Act does not take into account that we are all one in the

process, not just interviewers and separate decision makers

inter-teams communication [is not working well]. I have noticed a lot of communication is based on who has a "contact".

I find the systems in place since transformation somewhat cumbersome - there are several different areas within Transparency dealing with different things. This adds an extra layer

9.9. Sample extracts of "other" comments:

In my section everybody is working well as part of a team

Management are trying their best to help in these trying times, but I personally have had to step into the role of trainer, and also taking on duties that would be considered an EO's position

Channels between the very top and bottom of our organisation could be improved. It would be great if there was a way for staff at any level to engage with improving the IPO, for example, with some sort of forum

I think there is an uneven distribution of workload in the IPO, across teams but also within teams.

10. Conclusion and next steps

- 10.1. This survey report will be shared with all staff and management of the IPO and with the Programme Board of the Catherine Day Implementation Working Group.
- 10.2. This survey formed part of an overall piece of work to look at user perspectives and experiences. Similar surveys were carried out with staff of the IPAT, with IPO Legal Panel Members and with IPAT Tribunal Members. These surveys were augmented by workshops and focus groups with each group. Overall there are 8 individual reports analysing each of these pieces of work.
- 10.3. These 8 reports have been looked at as a whole, and the insights within them used to develop one overall set of recommendations for improvements. In many cases, recommendations are based directly on or lead from ideas that people shared throughout the work. These recommendations will be based on what people shared about their experiences and their roles within the International Protection process, and so for the most part focus on what will improve the experience of working in the International Protection process.
- 10.4. These recommendations have then been cross-referenced with the overall recommendations arising from the overall body of work reviewing the end to end process review of the International Protection Process. Ultimately, this will result in one overall set of recommendations, supported by multiple strands of analysis and research. These recommendations will then be submitted to the Programme Board for consideration, approval and decisions on how to implement.

Appendix 1 – Staff survey extract

This has been extracted from Qualtrics, formatting as below is not reflective of the formatting in the version issued to staff. The version that issued to staff was tested and reviewed for usability on a range of devices.

IP end to end review - staff survey

Start of Block: Please answer the following questions about your role This survey is being carried out to gather staff perspectives relating to the International Protection Process end-to-end review. This action arose from the recommendations of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process (often referred to as the "Catherine Day Report"). The review team are eager to get your input, and this survey is one of the key ways in which they are doing this. The survey should take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete. You will only be able to submit one response. responses are completely anonymous - we cannot link responses back to any individual. The information provided is stored on a Department of Justice licensed piece of software. information will be used to shape what areas we need to look at in most detail, and to bring the review team's attention to things that may not be on the radar which need to be considered. Should you have any queries, or wish to discuss any matter with the review team, please contact the team by email at BusinessChange@justice.ie Q1 What organisation do you work in? ▼ IPO (1) ... IPAT (2) Q2 How long have you worked in your organisation? ▼ Less than 2 years (286) ... Prefer not to say (290)

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Q3 Please rate the following statements about roles and structures in your organisation

	Extremely clear (1)	Somewhat clear (2)	Neither clear nor unclear (3)	Somewhat unclear (4)	Extremely unclear (5)
It is clear to me how my role contributes to the overall International Protection Process (1)	0	0	0	0	0
It is clear to me how my organisation is structured. (i.e. who does what) (2)	0	0	0	0	0
The goals and objectives of my organisation are clear to me (3)	0	0	0	0	0
It is clear to me how my organisation interacts with other parts of the DOJ (4)	0	0	0	0	0
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Q4 Please rate the following statements in relation to your own role:

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
My organisation is a rewarding place to work (1)	0	0	0	0	0
My organisation is a stressful place to work (2)	0	0	\circ	0	\circ
I have received enough training to effectively perform my role (3)	0	0	0	0	0
Q5 How satisfied	are you in your cu	ırrent role?			
O Extremel	y satisfied (20)				
O Somewha	at satisfied (21)				
O Neither s	atisfied nor dissat	isfied (22)			
O Somewha	at dissatisfied (23)			
O Extremel	y dissatisfied(24)				

Display This Question:		
If Q5 = Somewhat dissatisfied		
Or Q5 = Extremely dissatisfied		
4		



Q6 Please give more detail as to why you do not feel satisfied in your current role?	?
	_
	_
	_
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Q7 Please rate the following statements on communication in your organisation

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
I can share ideas to improve work processes with my managers (1)	0	0	0	0	0
My organisation is open to new ways of doing things (2)	0	0	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the frequency of communication from my managers (3)	0	0	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the standard of information I receive from my organisation (4)	0	0	0	0	0
It is clear to me who is responsible for making important decisions in my unit (5)	0	0	0	0	0
I am confident that if staff raise issues, they will be addressed (6)	0	0	0	0	

Display This Question:

If Q7 [Somewhat disagree] (Count) >= 1

Or Q7 [Strongly disagree] (Count) >= 1



Q9 How frequent	tly do team meet	ings happen?			
▼ Never (1) A	nnually (6)				
Q10					
Please answer th	e following ques	tions on team m	eetings:		
	Extremely satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat dissatisfied (4)	Extremely dissatisfied (5)
How satisfied are you with the frequency of team meetings? (6)	0	0	0	0	0
How satisfied are you with the format of team meetings? (7)	0	0	\circ	0	\circ
Display This Questi	ion:				
	nely dissatisfied] (
Or Q10 [Some	ewhat dissatisfied]	(Count) >= 1			
Q11 Please provi with:	de more informa	ition on the aspe	ects of team meet	ings which you ai	re not satisfied
			·		

Q12 Please pick the top 3 communication channels in use in your organisation:
Emails (1)
Phone calls (2)
Instant messaging (Skype) (3)
Video calls (Zoom) (4)
Team meetings (5)
Division wide meetings (6)
In person meetings (7)
One to one meetings with a manager or colleague (8)
Other (9)
Display This Question:
If Q12 = Other
*
Q13 Please list the other communication channels in use:

Page Break

Q14 Please rate the following statements about the tools and software available to you to carry out your role

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
The IT applications supporting my work in the International Protection Process are effective (1)	0	0	0	0	0
I have the right tools and equipment to perform my duties remotely as required (2)		0	0	0	0
X Q15 Do you have	e any comments o	n the IT systems	s and equipment a	vailable to you?	

Q16 In this final section please consider what is working well and what is not working area. Things to reflect on could include: Work practices Work processes (AISIP, IPO Live, Outlook etc) Work loads Office culture Legislative framew policies Relationships with other areas of the Department	IT systems
*	
Q17 What is working well in your job?	
*	
Q18 What is not working well in your job?	
*	
Q19 Have you any other comments you would like to share?	