

TOP-LINE REPORT

2009  
Local Government Client Survey

Prepared for:

*BC Assessment*

Prepared by:  
Malatest & Associates Ltd.

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background

In spring 2009, BC Assessment commissioned R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. to conduct a survey of clients, including Provincial Government clients, Local Government clients, First Nations clients, and Residential and Non-residential property owners throughout British Columbia. The purpose of the research is to assess the level of customer satisfaction with services and products offered by BC Assessment.

As a public agency, BC Assessment is responsible for surveying customer satisfaction to meet service plan requirements. Residential and non-residential property owners are surveyed annually, while other BC Assessment client groups are surveyed every 2 years. This report encompasses the 2009 results of the Local Government Client Survey, with comparisons to 2007 where applicable.

Representatives of BC Assessment originally developed the survey instrument in 2004, with modifications in subsequent years. The main objective of the survey is to build on baseline measures of client satisfaction established in the original survey. To this end, the survey instrument incorporates a series of standardized questions related to various aspects of service delivery. The survey instrument was streamlined for 2009 and includes a “composite score” designed to measure overall satisfaction with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment.

In previous surveys, data collection was conducted by telephone with follow-up as necessary. For 2009, the survey was administered using a “mixed mode” approach involving both telephone and online administration. A “mixed mode” approach is considered effective in optimizing the number of completions among well-defined response cohorts. A survey field test was conducted in early March 2009 to measure timing and effectiveness of the survey. Full survey administration was undertaken between March 11 and May 26 2009. Survey administration was paused for several weeks on account of fiscal year-end requirements for local governments and the provincial election held in May, 2009.

### 1.2 Survey Objectives

The main goal of this research was to measure the level of satisfaction among local government clients with the services and information provided by BC Assessment. The specific objectives of the research were to:

- measure client satisfaction with specific aspects of the Assessment Roll;
- discover client perceptions of the various information codes of the Assessment Roll, including how accurate, easy to understand, and how useful they are;
- identify the level of awareness of clients with other property-related information that BC Assessment provides to local governments;

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- determine how many clients use other property-related information, and measure their level of satisfaction with the information they use;
- discover the levels of agreement among clients with the usefulness of the specific features of the Assessment LinkBC online service, as well as determine how easy it is to navigate, find what you are looking for, and whether it contains needed information;
- measure client satisfaction with other products and services provided by BC Assessment;
- measure the importance and satisfaction of the risk communication information provided by BC Assessment;
- measure client use of, and perceptions of, the Answer Book, as well as test preference for an online web-based version;
- gather information relating to client perceptions of the BC Assessment website, including ease of use, and type of information that clients seek from the website;
- identify the number of times per year that clients contact BC Assessment, methods of contact used, and whether the amount of contact is sufficient to meet client needs;
- measure client satisfaction with the level of service provided by BC Assessment staff;
- determine the overall level of satisfaction that clients have with the service provided by BC Assessment; and
- where applicable, compare the results to those obtained in the 2007 survey of local government clients.

### 1.3 Survey Highlights

The survey design consisted of 210 online and telephone completions with local government officials, representing 161 local governments and taxation authorities from across the province. The margin of error for this sample size is at most  $\pm 3.3\%$ , 19 times out of 20, and a valid response rate of 76%. For 2009, the survey was administered using a “mixed mode” approach involving both telephone and online administration. Of the 210 completed surveys in 2009, 96 were done online and 114 over the telephone.

#### **Customer Service**

- On the whole, satisfaction ratings with the Assessment Roll were up sharply (i.e., significantly), with no decreases reported for any of the 8 features. The top 3 satisfaction ratings in 2009 were for providing sufficient information (97% vs. 88% in 2007), accuracy of assessments of property values (94% vs. 84%) and timeliness for internal purposes (93% vs. 78% in 2007).
- Satisfaction with the overall quality of the Assessment Roll increased from 84% in 2007 to 93% in 2009, a substantial improvement over the past two years and broadly distributed across the five regions.

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- Overall, agreement levels for each Information Code and measure were higher in 2009, with two notable exceptions being the accuracy of equity codes (84% vs. 92% in 2007) and the accuracy of exemption/taxation codes (89% vs. 94% in 2007).
- With few exceptions, agreement with respect to the ease of understanding, accuracy and usefulness of the Information Codes was generally higher among respondents from smaller jurisdictions.
- In 2009, satisfaction levels increased for all “other” products and services provided by BC Assessment in 2009. Satisfaction with “other” BC Assessment products and services was somewhat higher among respondents from smaller local government jurisdictions.
- The number of local government clients who contacted BC Assessment “10 or more times” decreased (44% vs. 52% in 2007), while the number who have contacted BC Assessment “2 – 5 times” increased (33% vs. 27%) in 2009.
- Nearly all respondents (98% vs. 97% in 2007) said “yes” when asked whether the amount of contact with BC Assessment was sufficient to meet their needs.
- People most often use the telephone (62% vs. 80% in 2007) to contact BC Assessment, followed by email (34% vs. 18% in 2007).
- Clients who had contacted BC Assessment at least once in the past year (n=203) were asked to recall the last time that they made contact, and to rate their level of agreement with a series of staff service measures (9). The results show very high levels of agreement (at least 93%) with each of the nine quality indicators, and are consistent with the 2007 survey.
- More than 9 in 10 (96 % in both years) local government clients were satisfied with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment staff.
- Nearly all local government clients (97% vs. 91% in 2007) agreed that the service provided by BC Assessment met their needs, including 36% who said they “strongly agree”.
- Local government clients from small jurisdictions indicated 100% agreement (vs. 95% in 2007) that their needs were being met, compared to 95% of respondents in large jurisdictions (up from 88% in 2007).
- In 2009, based on the responses of 210 local government clients, BC Assessment achieved a “composite score” of **95.4%**, slightly exceeding the organization’s ≥95% performance target.

### *Other Property-related Information*

- In 2009, awareness of BC Assessment’s “other property-related information products” increased for three of the five products, including a notable increase for Weekly Data Advice (85% vs. 78% in 2007). The Assessment Link<sup>BC</sup> online service and the Data Advice Website achieved the highest levels of awareness in 2009.

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- Usage increased significantly for all five property-related information products, particularly the Weekly Data Advice service (81% vs. 39% in 2007). Similarly, user satisfaction was generally higher for all products in 2009, again most significantly with respect to the Weekly Data Advice service (96% vs. 76% in 2007).
- In all cases except custom reports, respondents from large jurisdictions indicated higher usage rates for each type of other property-related information product.
- Two-thirds of respondents (n=140) indicated that they use the Assessment LinkBC service. Usage dropped for each of the 8 features contained within the Assessment LinkBC service between 2007 and 2009.
- Roll Total Reports is the most widely used feature (65% vs. 84% in 2007), yet is also the feature that experienced the greatest drop in usage since 2007.
- Despite the drop in usage in 2009, local government clients indicated a high level of agreement that all features of the Assessment LinkBC online service are useful.
- More than 9 in 10 respondents (94% vs. 85% in 2007) who use the Assessment LinkBC service agreed that the site has the information they need, while just under two-thirds (64% vs. 54% in 2007) agreed that it was easy to find what they were looking for.

### **Communication**

- More than 8 in 10 (84% vs. 88% in 2007) respondents agreed that it was important BC Assessment keep them informed about the risks to roll stability associated with supplementary assessments and appeals.
- Overall, 88% (vs. 80% in 2007) of clients were satisfied with the risk communication information provided by BC Assessment in 2009. Satisfaction levels were up across all five regions.
- In 2009, 32% of respondents (down from 43% in 2007) indicated that they use the Answer Book document published by BC Assessment.
- Usage of the document is higher in large jurisdictions, where 38% (vs. 45% in 2007) of respondents indicated they use the document, compared to 30% (vs. 43% in 2007) in small jurisdictions.
- Among those who use it, more than 9 in 10 (94% vs. 95% in 2007) agreed that the Answer Book is useful. Agreement that the document is useful increased in all regions, except Thompson/North, which dropped significantly in 2009 (82% vs. 96% in 2007)

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### *Web Services*

- Nearly 9 in 10 local government clients (89% vs. 74% in 2007) indicated that they had visited the BC Assessment website in 2009. Use of the website is higher among respondents from larger jurisdictions (92% vs. 79% in 2007).
- Contact information (60% vs. 75% in 2007) and information from the Assessments and Sales by Address service (58% vs. 74% in 2007) are the two most sought after information products on the BC Assessment Website.
- In 2009, the number of local government clients seeking information on the website was down significantly for every information product offered, except information pertaining to the assessment process.
- More than 9 in 10 website visitors agreed (93% vs. 94% in 2007) that the BC Assessment website contained the information they needed, and it was easy to find what they were looking for (88% vs. 89% in 2007).

## 1.4 Conclusions

The results of the 2009 survey of BC Assessment local government clients indicate that the vast majority of clients are satisfied with the overall level of service provided by BC Assessment, and with the various information products and services. Satisfaction with the quality of the Assessment Roll increased significantly since 2007, as did agreement levels with respect to those features associated with the Information Codes. A common theme throughout is that satisfaction and agreement levels are somewhat higher among those clients employed in smaller local government jurisdictions.

BC Assessment staff received very favourable ratings for the customer service they provide local government clients. The survey examined nine aspects of customer service provided by staff, and each of these aspects received a rating of at least 93%. More importantly, agreement among local government clients was nearly unanimous that the services BC Assessment provides were meeting their needs. These results have contributed to an overall composite satisfaction score that exceeds the organizations 95% performance target.

Similar positive results were also reported for BC Assessment's "other" property-related information services. Awareness and usage increased for most of these product categories, as did satisfaction levels among local government clients. Curiously, usage of the Assessment LinkBC online service, one of BC Assessment's flagship products, decreased across all eight features, including Roll Reports the most popular of the features. Yet even though usage of this service may have declined in 2009, local government clients feel strongly that Assessment LinkBC is very useful and that the site contains the information they need, though sometimes difficult to find.

Perhaps it is not unusual that clients may feel a product or service is useful, and yet not necessarily use or need it. This may be the case with BC Assessment's Answer Book, which most agree is a useful document, yet only about 1 in 3 used it in 2007 (a significant



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drop from 2007). A similar paradox seems to emerge with the BC Assessment website, where the number of visits increased substantially in 2009, yet the number of local government clients seeking specific information products was down across the board. It is possible that clients may simply not be aware of the actual information products or services that they are using, which might suggest additional product branding may be needed to enhance familiarity with BC Assessment products and services.

## SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Survey Design and Sample Development

The survey design consisted of telephone interviews with a random sample of 210 local government and taxation authority clients served by BC Assessment (up from 201 in 2007). BC Assessment provided the consultant with a list of 356 local government officials who regularly conduct business with the organization. A total of 80 clients were identified as non-qualifiers or that their contact information was no longer applicable, resulting in a valid sample of 276 clients and a 76% response rate (vs. 70% in 2007). Respondents were screened to ensure that they were the person most involved in assessment and tax administration, and that they use data and information provided by BC Assessment. Representatives of 162 local government and taxation authorities participated in the survey.

### 2.2 Questionnaire Design and Survey Implementation

The objective of the survey is to build on baseline measures of client satisfaction established in previous surveys. Representatives of BC Assessment originally developed the survey instrument in 2004, with modifications in subsequent years. For 2009, the survey was streamlined and includes a “composite score” designed to measure overall client satisfaction with BC Assessment information and services.

The survey instrument was pre-tested before commencing the full survey, with interviews conducted in early March 2009. The full survey was conducted between March 11 and May 26, 2009 using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. Respondents received an email notification inviting them to participate in the survey project. Survey administration was paused for several weeks on account of fiscal year-end requirements for local governments and during the provincial election campaign held in May 2009.

Data were automatically entered into the computer as each interview progressed and an audit of the data was carried out to ensure accuracy. At the end of the survey, all respondents were given BC Assessment’s toll-free number for reference should they have any questions. Coding categories for open-ended questions were determined based upon all of the completed questionnaires, similar to previous surveys. To enhance the response, follow-up emails were forwarded to outstanding respondents, as well as personal telephone follow-up. Survey targeting was also implemented to ensure the broadest participation from among the 189 local government and taxation authorities in BC.

### 2.3 Data Analysis and Reporting

In reporting the survey findings, unless otherwise stated, all percentages used in the report are based on calculations excluding “Don’t know / Not applicable” responses. As well, throughout the survey, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or

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satisfaction with a number of issues. In each instance, the rating system used was a four-point scale, with 4 representing the highest positive rating and 1 the lowest rating. Percentages that are used to summarize the ratings are the sum of the positive ratings (4 + 3). Calculations of percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding to the nearest whole percentage. Since the survey questionnaire included some skip patterns, the number of respondents may vary from one question to another.

The report groups the 10 assessment regions (and 18 area offices) used by BC assessment into five regional classifications (i.e., combined regions). Using the combined region classification, the analysis can be interpreted with greater confidence. Throughout the report, variations among the combined regions are noted where applicable.

1. Vancouver Island - Vancouver Island, including the Capital (VI);
2. North of Fraser - Vancouver Sea-to-Sky and North of Fraser (NF);
3. South of Fraser - South of Fraser and Fraser Valley (SF);
4. Okanagan/Kootenay - Okanagan and Kootenays (O/K);
5. Thompson/North – Thompson/Cariboo and the North (T/N).

### 2.4 Sample Characteristics

Table 1 describes the demographic profile of the local government and taxation authority representatives who responded to the survey in 2009 and 2007, including a profile by the relative size of the jurisdiction for which the respondent worked (over).

In 2009, the total number of respondents from local governments with less than 5,000 residents dropped (40% vs. 47% in 2007), reflecting survey efforts to increase the number of completions with representatives from among the larger municipalities. The majority of respondents in 2009 are employed in their organization's Finance department (71%, same as 2007). In 2009, the number of respondents employed in local government Administration declined (16% vs. 23% in 2007), while the number of respondents employed in Engineering/Planning more than doubled (13% vs. 6%). In terms of time in their current position, survey respondents were generally more experienced than those in 2007. In 2009, the response by combined geographic region was very similar to that achieved in 2007.

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<b>Table 1: Sample Characteristics by Jurisdiction Size</b>							
Demographic		Total		Jurisdiction Size			
				< 5000		> 5000	
		2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007
<b>Size of Jurisdiction</b>		<b>n=207</b>	<b>n=197</b>	<b>n=82</b>	<b>n=92</b>	<b>n=125</b>	<b>n=105</b>
	Less than 5,000 residents	40%	47%	100%	100%	--	--
	5,000 - 9,999 residents	9%	7%	--	--	14%	13%
	10,000 - 29,999 residents	21%	18%	--	--	35%	33%
	30,000 - 49,999 residents	8%	7%	--	--	14%	13%
	50,000 - 99,999 residents	11%	10%	--	--	18%	19%
	100,000 residents or more	11%	11%	--	--	18%	21%
<b>Department</b>		<b>n=210</b>	<b>n=201</b>	<b>n=82</b>	<b>n=92</b>	<b>n=128</b>	<b>n=105</b>
	Administration	16%	23%	35%	38%	3%	10%
	Finance	71%	71%	63%	61%	76%	78%
	Engineering/ Planning	13%	6%	1%	1%	21%	12%
<b>Time in Current Position</b>		<b>n=210</b>	<b>n=201</b>	<b>n=82</b>	<b>n=92</b>	<b>n=128</b>	<b>n=105</b>
	Less than a year	8%	16%	7%	23%	8%	10%
	1 - 3 years	27%	22%	32%	23%	23%	21%
	4 - 6 years	19%	17%	15%	17%	22%	18%
	7 - 10 years	15%	13%	13%	11%	16%	15%
	More than 10 years	32%	32%	33%	26%	31%	36%
<b>Assessment Region</b>		<b>n=210</b>	<b>n=201</b>	<b>n=82</b>	<b>n=92</b>	<b>n=128</b>	<b>n=105</b>
	Vancouver Island	26%	23%	15%	16%	34%	30%
	North of Fraser	14%	15%	5%	9%	20%	19%
	South of Fraser	8%	8%	2%	2%	11%	13%
	Okanagan/Kootenay	24%	26%	34%	36%	17%	19%
	Thompson/North	28%	27%	44%	37%	18%	19%

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### 3.1 Assessment Roll Information (Q1 – Q10)

*Overall, satisfaction ratings with the Assessment Roll are up sharply over 2007*

Respondents were questioned about their level of satisfaction with various features and aspects of the Assessment Roll that were applicable to them. On the whole, satisfaction levels were up sharply (i.e., significantly), with no decreases reported for any of the 8 features. The top 3 satisfaction ratings (i.e., combined “very satisfied” and “satisfied”) were given for providing sufficient information (97% vs. 88% in 2007), accuracy of assessments of property values (94% vs. 84%) and timeliness for internal purposes (93% vs. 78% in 2007), which experienced the largest increase among the 8 indicators. Accuracy of property and mailing address information received the lowest satisfaction rating in 2009 (67% vs. 64% in 2007), an improvement nevertheless (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Satisfaction with Assessment Roll Features by Jurisdiction Size and Region \***

Feature	Satisfaction		Jurisdiction Size		Combined Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Providing sufficient information	97%	88%	98%	96%	96%	97%	100%	92%	100%
Being easy to understand	88%	88%	94%	84%	95%	96%	81%	88%	88%
Accuracy of assessment of property values	95%	84%	95%	95%	96%	92%	93%	96%	96%
Timeliness for internal purposes	93%	78%	94%	92%	96%	90%	93%	90%	93%
Ease of access to information in the database	82%	78%	86%	79%	80%	89%	87%	85%	76%
Accuracy of information in the database	88%	75%	94%	85%	86%	82%	86%	87%	95%
Accuracy of property and mailing addresses	67%	64%	73%	63%	74%	54%	71%	61%	71%
Up-to-date property ownership changes	79%	62%	79%	79%	85%	65%	86%	78%	79%

\* Combined satisfaction (4 + 3), where 4=“Very satisfied” and 1=“Very dissatisfied”

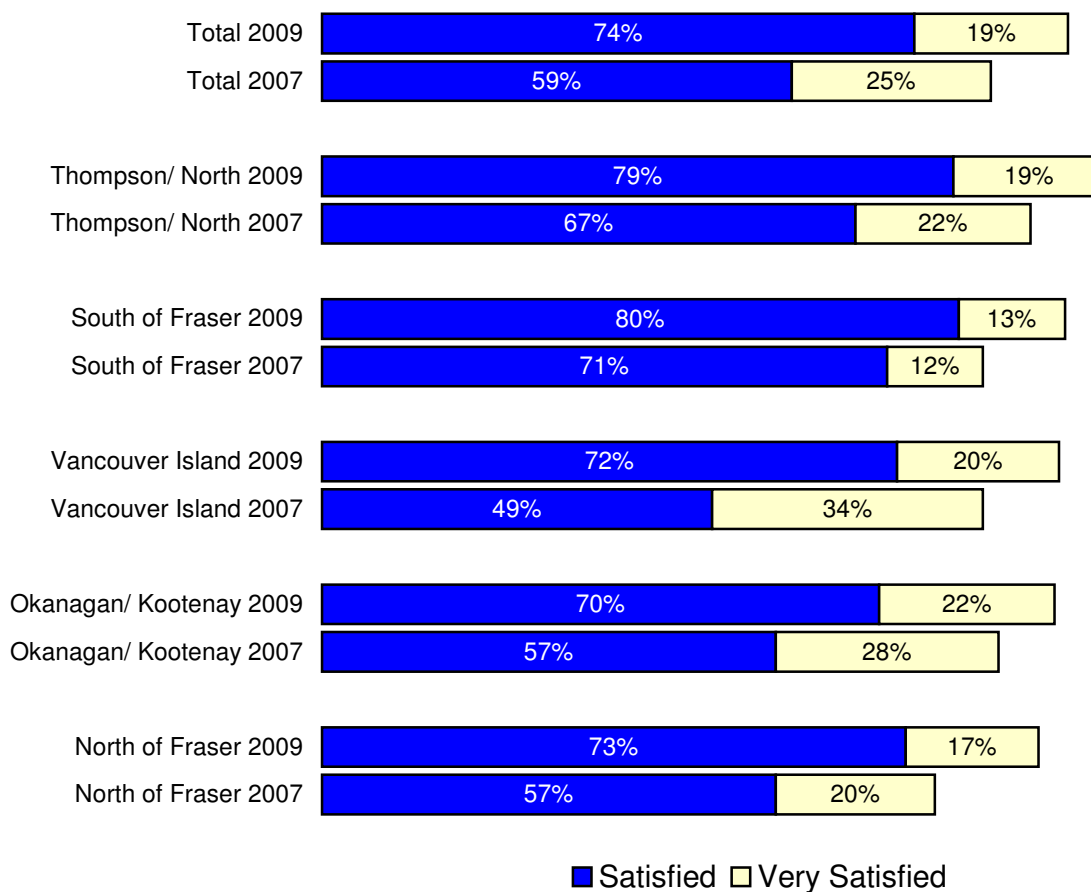
- Satisfaction ratings on a regional basis were generally consistent in 2009, with some variation. Compared with other regions, respondents in South of Fraser were less satisfied overall in their opinion that the assessment roll is easy to understand (81% vs. 82% in 2007), while just over half (54% in both years) of North of Fraser respondents were satisfied with the accuracy of property and mailing addresses, and currency of property ownership changes (65% vs. 41%).

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- Satisfaction with timeliness for internal purposes increased significantly across all regions in 2009, particularly in South of Fraser, where the satisfaction level surged to 93% (vs. 65% in 2007).

As illustrated in Figure 1, satisfaction with the overall quality of the Assessment Roll increased from 84% in 2007 to 93% in 2009, a substantial improvement over the past two years and broadly distributed across the five regions.

**Figure 1: Satisfaction with the Quality of the Assessment Roll by Region**



- In contrast to 2007, higher satisfaction levels with the overall quality of the Assessment Roll are not reserved for the smaller jurisdictions, where satisfaction

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among respondents in South of Fraser (93%, vs. 83% in 2007) and North of Fraser (90% vs. 77% in 2007) also increased substantially in 2009.

Among the 13 respondents (vs. 32 in 2007) who indicated they were dissatisfied with the quality of the Assessment Roll, when asked what needed to be done to increase their satisfaction, the following suggestions were offered (more than one response was permitted):

- “Improve accuracy of ownership/address information” (58% vs. 48% in 2007);
- “Have more frequent/quicker updates” (8% vs. 29% in 2007);
- “Provide more flexibility to analyze data/more friendly to use the online system” (8% vs. 13% in 2007); and
- “Easier method to update ownership changes” (8% vs. 3% in 2007).

### 3.2 Assessment Roll Information Codes (Q11 – Q28)

*Overall, agreement levels for each Information Code and measure are higher in 2009, with few notable exceptions*

Table 3 summarizes the use of the various Information Codes contained in the Assessment Roll, along with the perceptions of respondents regarding their ease of understanding, accuracy and usefulness of the codes. Note that the use of these codes varies by jurisdiction, with property class and exemption/taxation codes having the broadest application.

- Overall, agreement levels for each code and measure are higher in 2009, with a few notable exceptions being the accuracy of equity codes (84% vs. 92% in 2007) and the accuracy of exemption/taxation codes (89% vs. 94% in 2007).
- Agreement results for ease of understanding compare favourably to 2007, except with respect to understanding neighbourhood codes, which increased sharply to 97% from 78% in 2007.
- Greater variation emerged with respect to the accuracy of information codes in 2009, where exemption/taxation codes (89% vs. 94% in 2007) and equity codes (84% vs. 92%) resulted in lower levels of agreement among respondents in 2009. Agreement levels with respect to these two codes were lowest in South of Fraser (83% vs. 79% in 2007) and Thompson/North (83% vs. 97% in 2007) in 2009.
- Agreement that the information codes are useful was comparable or higher in 2009, other than a unanimous rating (100% vs. 83% in 2007) with respect to equity codes.

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**Table 3: Agreement with Attributes of the Assessment Roll Information Codes by Jurisdiction Size \***

Information Code	Agreement						Jurisdiction Size <5,000			Jurisdiction Size >5,000		
	Easy to Understand		Accurate		Useful		Easy to Understand	Accurate	Useful	Easy to Understand	Accurate	Useful
	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007						
Property Class (n=180)	95%	96%	95%	96%	97%	96%	99%	99%	99%	93%	93%	96%
Exemption/Taxation (n=139)	82%	82%	89%	94%	96%	97%	84%	92%	90%	81%	87%	99%
Actual Use (n=89)	85%	83%	84%	78%	94%	91%	94%	94%	100%	83%	81%	93%
Equity (n=32)	89%	92%	84%	92%	100%	83%	75%	100%	100%	92%	81%	100%
ALR (n=46)	91%	92%	92%	89%	95%	95%	100%	100%	100%	88%	90%	94%
Neighbourhood (n=40)	97%	79%	89%	89%	87%	82%	100%	0%	100%	97%	89%	87%

\* Combined agreement (4 + 3), where 4="Strongly Agree" and 1="Strongly Disagree"

- On the whole, jurisdictions with less than 5,000 residents find the information codes easier to understand than larger jurisdictions, other than equity codes.
- With few exceptions, agreement with respect to the accuracy and usefulness of the information codes is generally higher among respondents from smaller jurisdictions.

### 3.3 Other Product and Service Satisfaction (Q46 – Q52)

***In 2009, satisfaction levels increased for all "other" products and services provided by BC Assessment***

Survey participants were asked about their satisfaction with a number of additional roll reports and other services provided by BC Assessment. As seen from the results identified in Table 4, satisfaction levels among respondents have increased for all "other" products and services, with one minor exception being the Grant/PILT Rolls, where agreement was virtually unchanged in 2009. Again, satisfaction with "other" BC Assessment products and services was somewhat higher among respondents from smaller local government jurisdictions in 2009, with the exception of non-market change reports.



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**Table 4: Satisfaction with Other Products and Services  
by Jurisdiction Size\***

Product/ Service	Satisfaction		Jurisdiction Size <5,000		Jurisdiction Size >5,000	
	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007
Completed Roll	100%	93%	100%	96%	99%	90%
Statutory Reports	99%	93%	100%	97%	97%	89%
Revised Roll	99%	92%	99%	96%	98%	88%
Supplementary Rolls	96%	89%	99%	89%	94%	90%
Grant/ PILT Rolls	87%	88%	86%	87%	88%	88%
Data Advice	90%	84%	93%	90%	88%	80%
Non-Market Change Reports	92%	79%	87%	85%	95%	73%

\* Combined satisfaction (4 + 3), where 4="Very satisfied" and 1="Very dissatisfied"

- Satisfaction levels with specific products and services varied somewhat by region. For instance, satisfaction with data advice offered by BC Assessment ranged from 80% in North of Fraser to 96% in Thompson/North in 2009. In addition, satisfaction with Grant/PILT Rolls ranged from 79% in North of Fraser to 100% in South of Fraser.

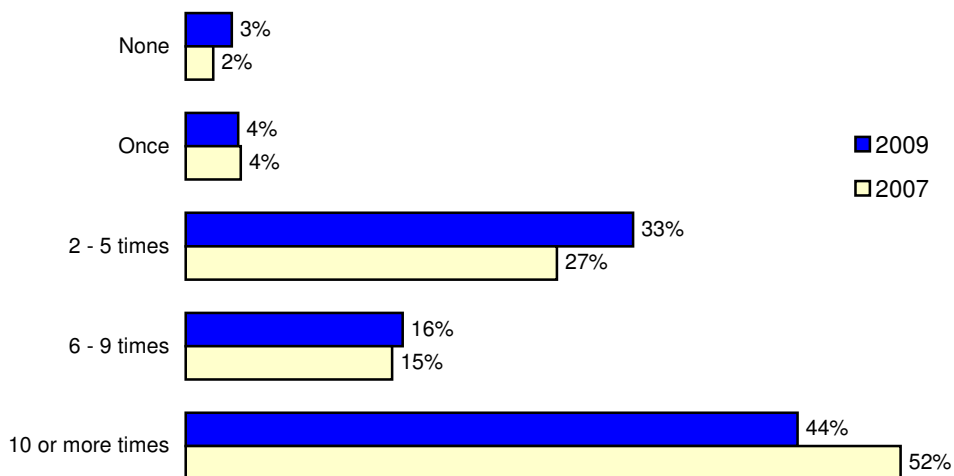
### 3.4 Contact with BC Assessment (Q66 – Q 71)

*The frequency of contact between local government officials and BC Assessment decreased in 2009*

Figure 2 shows the number of times that respondents have contacted a representative from BC Assessment over the past year. While the number who have contacted BC Assessment 10 or more times decreased in 2009 (44% vs. 52% in 2007), the number who have contacted BC Assessment 2 – 5 times increased (33% vs. 27%) in the past year.

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**Figure 2: Number of Contacts with BC Assessment in the Past Year**



- Respondents in South of Fraser (81% vs. 82% in 2007) were the most likely to contact BC Assessment at least 10 times in 2009, compared to those on Vancouver Island (47% vs. 55% in 2007), Okanagan/Kootenay (34% vs. 36% in 2007), and Thompson/North (36% vs. 41% in 2007) regions. Those who contacted BC Assessment more than 10 times in the past year decreased significantly in North of Fraser (55% vs. 77% in 2007).
- Respondents from large jurisdictions contact BC Assessment more frequently, as 59% vs. (67% in 2007) indicated they had made contact at least 10 or more times in the past year, compared to 48% (vs. 35% in 2007) from the small jurisdictions. Those who contacted BC Assessment between 2 – 5 times in the past year were highest in Thompson/North (42%) and lowest in South of Fraser (13%).

When asked whether the amount of contact with BC Assessment is sufficient to meet their needs, nearly all respondents (98% vs. 97% in 2007) said yes. In terms of the method of contact people most often use to communicate with BC Assessment, 62% (vs. 80% in 2007) indicated they use the telephone, followed by email at 34% (vs. 18% in 2007). Similarly when asked what method they most prefer to use when communicating with BC Assessment, 62% (vs. 73% in 2007) identified the telephone and 35% (vs. 25% in 2007) identified email. It would appear email is becoming a more popular method of contact between BC Assessment and local government clients.

Most respondents (87% vs. 80% in 2007) indicated that they knew who to contact at BC Assessment for information or service. When asked how they knew, local government officials offered the following explanations (includes multiple responses):

## SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

- “Previous experience/long-term contact” (53% vs. 48% in 2007);
- “Letter/visit/business card” (10% vs. 17% in 2007); and
- “General inquiry (10% vs. 4% in 2007).

Among those who did not initially know who to contact, 4 in 5 (81% vs. 92% in 2007) said they were directed to the correct person when they contacted BC Assessment (n=29).

### 3.5 Quality of Staff Service (Q72 – Q80)

Local government clients who had contacted BC Assessment at least once in the past year (n=203) were asked to recall the last time that they made contact, and to rate their level of agreement with a series of staff service measures (9). The results in Table 5 show very high levels of agreement (at least 93%) with each of the nine staff service quality indicators. In all cases, overall results are consistent with those from the 2007 survey, with no significant differences in the total positive results year over year. As well, the 2009 results are similarly positive between small and large jurisdictions, though on average agreement is somewhat higher among smaller jurisdictions. The one area of variation between small and large jurisdictions was among those who indicated staff went the extra mile, where 97% of respondents in small jurisdictions agreed with this statement, compared to 88% in large jurisdictions.

**Table 5: Agreement\* with BC Assessment Staff Service Quality Indicators by Jurisdiction Size and Region\*\***

Quality Indicator	Agreement		Jurisdiction Size		Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Staff were knowledgeable about products and services	99%	96%	100%	98%	100%	90%	100%	100%	100%
Staff were responsive to your enquiries	98%	95%	100%	96%	100%	86%	93%	100%	100%
The quality of advice you received was very good	96%	95%	99%	94%	98%	82%	100%	98%	98%
Staff were helpful explaining BC Assessment data	97%	94%	97%	96%	98%	86%	100%	98%	98%
You were able to get through without difficulty	95%	94%	97%	93%	96%	86%	88%	98%	96%
Staff promptly returned your phone calls or emails	96%	93%	100%	93%	98%	86%	94%	98%	98%
You were informed of everything you had to do	93%	93%	97%	91%	100%	86%	94%	100%	100%
Staff were knowledgeable about your particular needs	94%	93%	97%	92%	91%	86%	94%	96%	100%
Staff went the extra mile	92%	93%	97%	88%	93%	75%	87%	98%	96%

\* Combined agreement (4 + 3), where 4=“Strongly Agree” and 1=“Strongly Disagree”

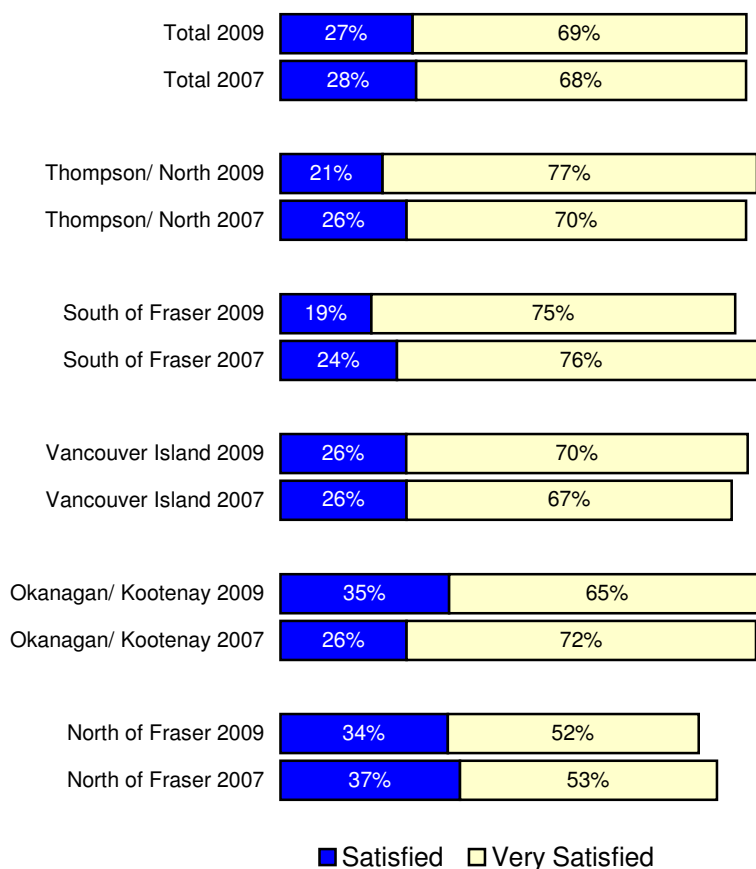
## SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

*\*\* Among those who had contacted BC Assessment in the past year*

- On the whole, agreement with these measures among respondents from the Lower Mainland – and particularly North of Fraser – was lower than that in other regions. In all cases, except North of Fraser and to a lesser degree South of Fraser, more than 9 in 10 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with each of the quality indicators.

As illustrated in Figure 3, more than 9 in 10 (96 % in both years) local government clients were satisfied with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment staff with whom they had most recently dealt.

**Figure 3: Satisfaction with Most Recent Service Provided by BC Assessment Staff by Region**



- Overall, client satisfaction with the most recent service as provided by BC Assessment staff ranged from 86% in North of Fraser to 100% in Okanagan/ Kootenay. Satisfaction in South of Fraser dropped from 100% in 2007 to 94% in 2009.

## SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Just 8 (vs. 9 in 2007) respondents indicated some dissatisfaction with the service provided by BC Assessment staff during their last contact. When asked what could be done to improve their level of satisfaction, the three suggestions most often provided included (more than one response was permitted):

- “Staff need to be more knowledgeable/organized” (4 vs. 0 in 2007)
- “Improve timeliness of response to inquiries/ communications” (1 vs. 5 in 2007);
- “Provide accurate information” (1 vs. 2 in 2007).

Overall, 15% (vs. 21% in 2007) of respondents said they have regular meetings with BC Assessment area staff, and of those respondents, 97% (vs. 100% in 2007) found them to be useful. Those who reported having regular meetings ranged from 23% in North of Fraser to 12% in Thompson/North.

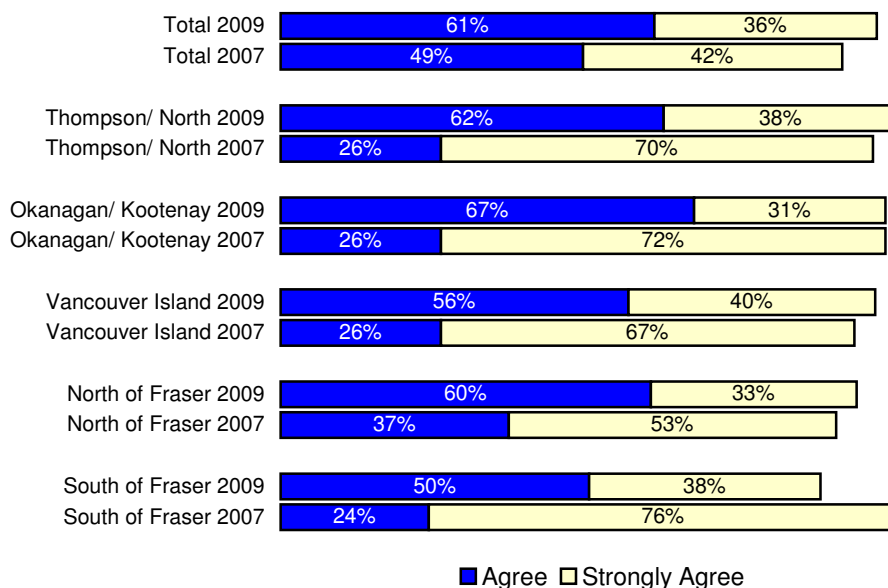
### 3.6 Quality of Service vs. Client Expectations (Q85 – Q86)

***Nearly all local government clients (97% vs. 91% in 2007) agreed that the service provided by BC Assessment met their needs***

Respondents were asked to take all things into account and indicate to what extent they agree that BC Assessment provides them with the quality of service their Taxation Authority requires. As illustrated in Figure 4, nearly all respondents (97% vs. 91% in 2007) agreed that the service provided by BC Assessment met their needs, including 36% (vs. 42% in 2007) who said they “strongly agree”.

## SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

**Figure 4: Agreement that Quality of Service Needs are Being Met by Region**



- Whereas overall agreement increased in all regions (except South of Fraser) in 2009, the number of respondents who “strongly agreed” that their needs are being met dropped across all five regions, as compared to 2007.
- Respondents from small jurisdictions indicated 100% agreement (vs. 95% in 2007) that their needs were being met in 2009, compared to 95% (vs. 88% in 2009) of respondents in large jurisdictions.

Of the 7 respondents (vs. 19 in 2007) who disagreed that BC Assessment is providing the quality of service they require, each was asked what BC Assessment would need to change to meet the service expectations of their local government. The suggestions most often provided were (more than one response was permitted):

- “Increase accuracy of the Roll/data” (4 respondents vs. 10 in 2007);
- “Update systems/ allow access to BC Assessment systems” (1 vs. 3); and
- “Provide better, more personal service” (1)

## SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

### 3.7 Composite Score (Q72 - Q81)

***BC Assessment achieved an overall composite score of 95.4% in 2009!***

As part of the 2009 survey, BC Assessment identified a “composite score” designed to measure overall client satisfaction with BC Assessment. The measure is an aggregated total of all positive responses (4 + 3) divided by the total number of responses (1...4) for Questions 72 - 81. In 2009, based on the responses of 210 local government clients, BC Assessment achieved a “composite score” of **95.4%**, slightly exceeding the organization’s ≥95% performance target.

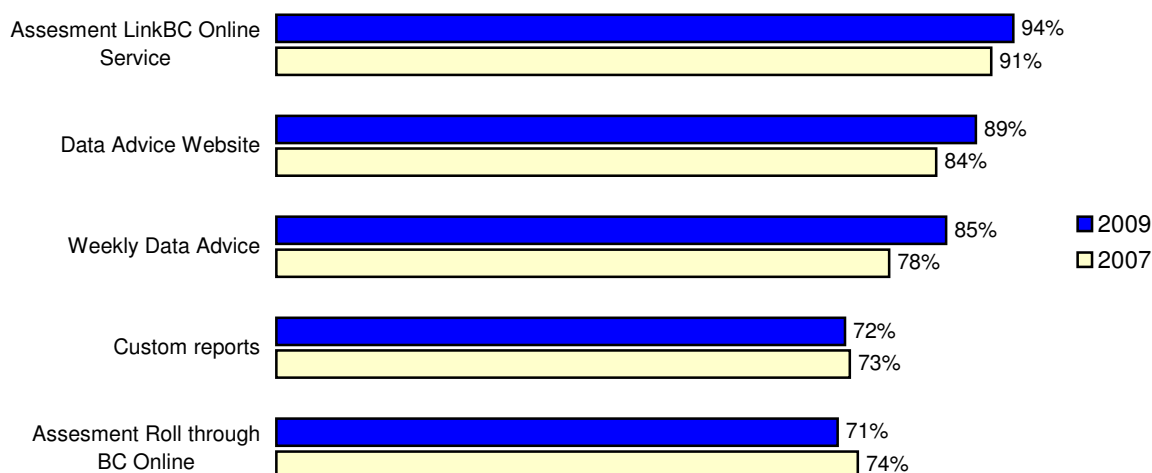
## SECTION 4: OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED INFORMATION

### 4.1 Awareness, Use and Satisfaction with Other Property-Related Information (Q29 – Q38)

**Overall, awareness of BC Assessment's other property-related information products increased in 2009**

Survey participants were asked about their awareness of other types of property-related information products as provided by BC Assessment. As illustrated in Figure 5, the highest levels of awareness were for the Assessment LinkBC online service and the Data Advice Website. Compared to 2007, awareness among local government representatives increased for three of the five information products, including a notable increase for weekly data advice (85% vs. 78% in 2007).

**Figure 5: Awareness of Other Property-related Information**



Awareness of these information products and services varies by region, with respondents from those regions outside of the Lower Mainland generally more aware than those from other regions. An exception to this is the South of Fraser region where only 56% (vs. 76% in 2007) indicated that they were aware of the Assessment Roll through BC Online service. Interestingly, all respondents (100% vs. 94% in 2007) from the South of Fraser indicated their awareness of the Data Advice Website service. Respondents in the Thompson/North were the least aware (61%) of the custom reports offered by BC Assessment.



## SECTION 4: OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED INFORMATION

**Usage increased significantly for each of the five property-related information products, particularly the weekly data advice service**

Use of and satisfaction with other property-related information products and services are listed in Table 6. In 2009, usage increased significantly for each of the five information products, and particularly for the weekly data advice service, where usage more than doubled to 81% (up from 39% in 2007). Similarly, user satisfaction generally was higher for all products in 2009, again most significantly with respect to the weekly data advice service. It would appear that BC Assessment's efforts to promote the use of these products is proving effective among local government officials.

**Table 6: Use of and Satisfaction with Other Property-related Information by Region**

Information	Use*		Satisfaction**		Use by Region				
	2009	2007	2009	2007	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Data Advice Website	66%	60%	94%	92%	80%	63%	77%	58%	56%
Assessment LinkBC online service	72%	58%	81%	82%	83%	70%	69%	73%	64%
Assessment Roll access by folio through BC OnLine	54%	41%	93%	94%	54%	68%	56%	49%	52%
Custom reports	48%	30%	99%	95%	36%	50%	58%	64%	40%
Weekly Data Advice	81%	39%	96%	76%	75%	80%	88%	86%	80%

\* Usage figures are expressed as a percentage of all survey respondents

\*\* Combined user satisfaction (4 + 3), where 4="Very satisfied" and 1="Very dissatisfied"

- In all cases except custom reports, respondents from larger jurisdictions indicated higher usage rates for each type of other property-related information product than did those from small jurisdictions. In particular, respondents from large jurisdictions (81% vs. 65% in 2007) are significantly more active users of the Assessment LinkBC Online service than those from small jurisdictions (58% vs. 51% in 2007). Respondents from large jurisdictions (88% vs. 69% in 2007) are also significantly more active users of the data advice website than those from small jurisdictions (69% vs. 51% in 2007).

## SECTION 4: OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED INFORMATION

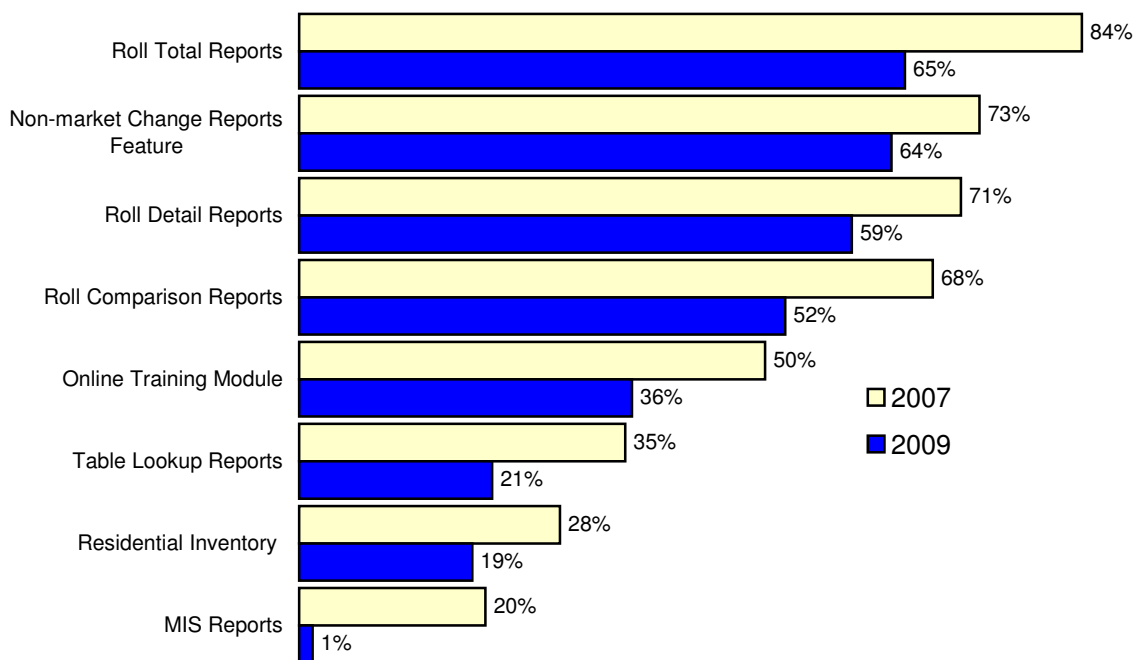
### 4.2 Use of Assessment LinkBC Features (Q39A – Q39H)

*For each feature contained within the Assessment LinkBC service, usage dropped significantly between 2007 and 2009*

A total of 140 respondents (117 in 2007) indicated that they use the Assessment LinkBC service, and were asked a series of questions about their use of specific features of the service, and how useful they felt these features were to them. For each of the 8 features contained within the Assessment LinkBC service, usage dropped between 2007 and 2009.

Use of specific features of Assessment LinkBC is illustrated in Figure 6. While Roll Total Reports is the most widely used feature (65% vs. 84% in 2007), it is also the feature that experienced the greatest drop in usage since 2007, alongside MIS report usage.

**Figure 6: Use of Assessment LinkBC Features**



## SECTION 4: OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED INFORMATION

Table 7 further illustrates the use of the specific Assessment LinkBC features by jurisdiction size and region. Unlike 2007, usage of the specific features by jurisdiction size varied more significantly, particularly table lookup reports and roll detail reports. Similarly, usage by region was also uneven, with no particular feature exhibiting any consistency across regions.

Table 7: Use* of Assessment LinkBC Features by Jurisdiction Size and Region									
Feature	Use		Jurisdiction Size		Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Roll Total Reports	65%	84%	70%	63%	61%	71%	89%	69%	57%
Non-Market Change Reports	64%	73%	63%	64%	61%	67%	89%	69%	54%
Roll Detail Reports	59%	71%	49%	64%	70%	57%	89%	59%	40%
Roll Comparison Reports	52%	68%	51%	53%	51%	57%	67%	47%	51%
Online Training Module	36%	50%	33%	37%	44%	38%	33%	22%	37%
Table Lookup Reports	21%	35%	53%	20%	23%	24%	0%	19%	23%
Residential Inventory	19%	28%	16%	20%	12%	19%	22%	34%	11%
MIS Reports	1%	20%	2%	1%	0%	0%	11%	3%	0%

\*Among those who used Assessment LinkBC

Respondents who used the specific features of the Assessment LinkBC online service were asked to what extent they agreed that the specific features were useful. As seen in Figure 7, despite the drop in usage identified above, respondents indicated a high level of agreement that all features of the Assessment LinkBC online service are useful. These results are consistent with those achieved in 2007, including significant increases in agreement regarding table lookup reports (93% vs. 78% in 2007), roll detail reports (99% vs. 89% in 2007), and the online training module (85% vs. 64% in 2007).

## SECTION 4: OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED INFORMATION

**Figure 7: Agreement with Usefulness of Assessment LinkBC Features**

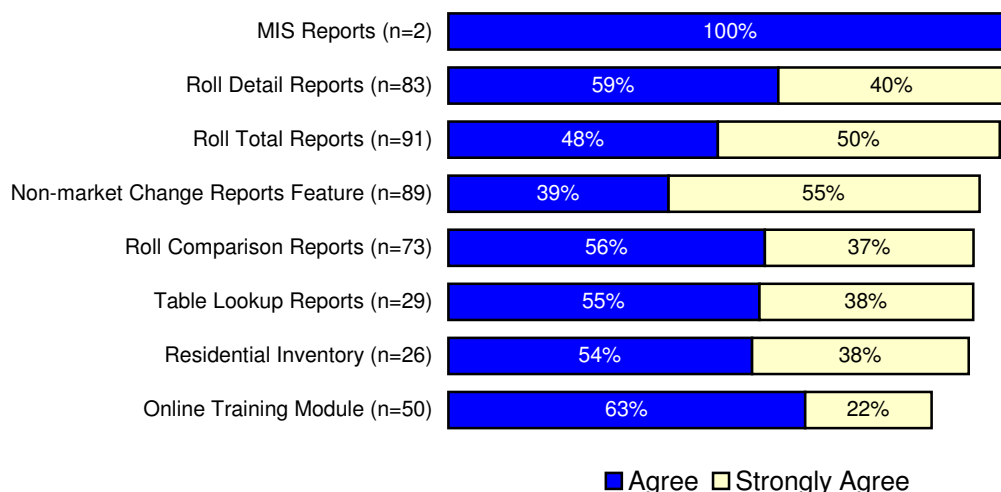


Table 8 shows the level of agreement with certain attributes of Assessment LinkBC. The vast majority (94% vs. 85% in 2007) of respondents who use the service agreed that the site has the information they need, while just under two-thirds (64% vs. 55% in 2007) agreed that the site is easy to navigate, and that it was easy to find what they were looking for (64% vs. 54% in 2007). Respondents from among the large jurisdictions were less inclined to agree with these attributes than their counterparts in the smaller jurisdictions.

**Table 8: Agreement\* with Attributes of the Assessment LinkBC Online Service by Jurisdiction Size and Region \*\***

Feature	Agreement		Jurisdiction Size		Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Had the information you needed	94%	85%	100%	91%	93%	81%	100%	97%	97%
Easy to navigate	64%	55%	73%	60%	60%	69%	56%	71%	62%
Easy to find what you were looking for	64%	54%	73%	60%	65%	63%	67%	68%	60%

\* Combined agreement (4 + 3), where 4="Strongly Agree" and 1="Strongly Disagree"

\*\*Among Those Who Used Assessment LinkBC

- Agreement with the three attributes was up across all regions in 2009, with substantial increases reported in South of Fraser, Okanagan/Kootenay and Thompson/North. For instance, 100% of respondents in South of Fraser agreed (vs. 67% in 2007) that the service contained the necessary information, while 67% agreed that it was easy to find (vs. 44% in 2007). Similar results were reported in Okanagan/Kootenay and Thompson/North.

## SECTION 5: COMMUNICATION

### 5.1 Risk Communication Information (Q53 - Q54)

More than 8 in 10 (84% vs. 88% in 2007) respondents agreed that it was important BC Assessment keep them informed about the risks to roll stability associated with supplementary assessments and appeals to the Property Assessment Appeal Board. As illustrated in Figure 8, agreement levels dropped or remained flat across all regions in 2009, except Vancouver Island. In addition, those who felt that it was “very important” being informed about risks dropped significantly across all regions.

**Figure 8: Importance of Being Informed About Risks to Roll Stability by Region**

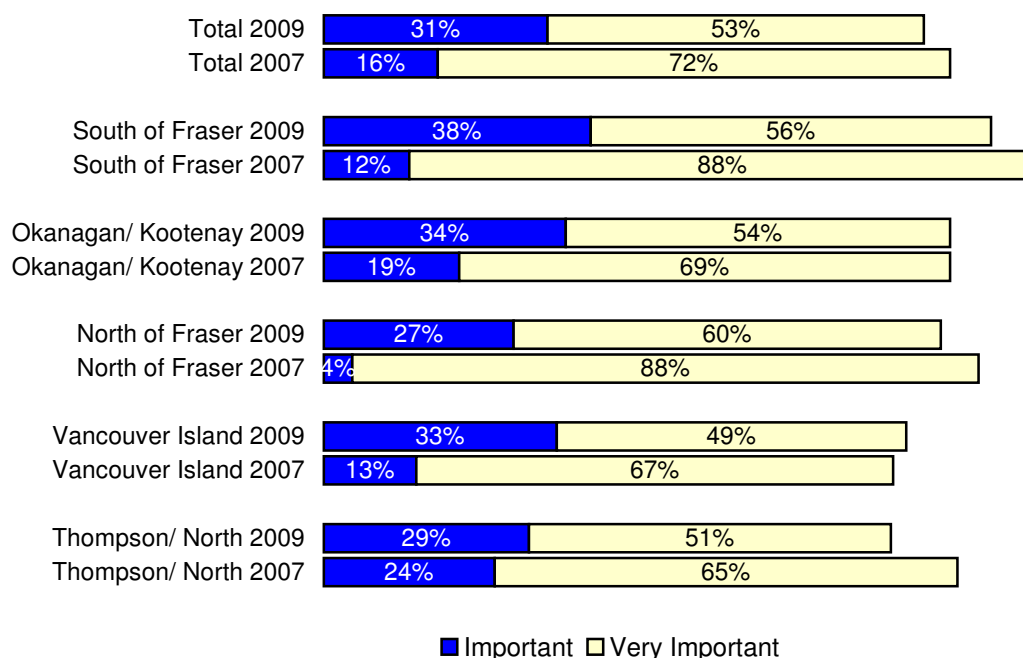
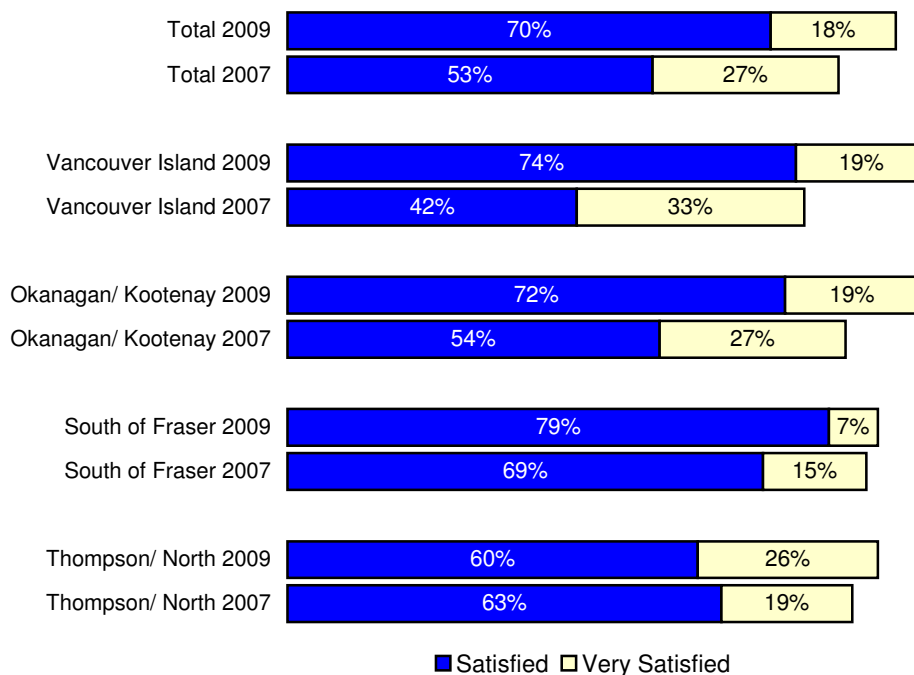


Figure 9 illustrates the level of satisfaction with the risk communication information provided by BC Assessment. Overall, 88% (vs. 80% in 2007) of clients were satisfied with the risk communication information provided by BC Assessment in 2009. Satisfaction levels were up across all five regions, including significant increases on Vancouver Island (93% vs. 75% in 2007) and Okanagan/Kootenay (91% vs. 81% in 2007).

## SECTION 5: COMMUNICATION

**Figure 9: Satisfaction with Risk Communication Information by Region**



When asked what BC Assessment could do to improve satisfaction with the risk communication information, the most common suggestions for improvement among the 18 (vs. 25 in 2007) respondents who expressed dissatisfaction were (more than one response was permitted):

- “Improve timeliness of information/ frequent updates/ more communications with local offices” (7 vs. 10 respondents in 2007);
- “Provide more background information” (4 vs. 0 in 2007); and
- “Provide more risk communication information/ analysis of risk” (2 vs. 7 in 2007).

## SECTION 5: COMMUNICATION

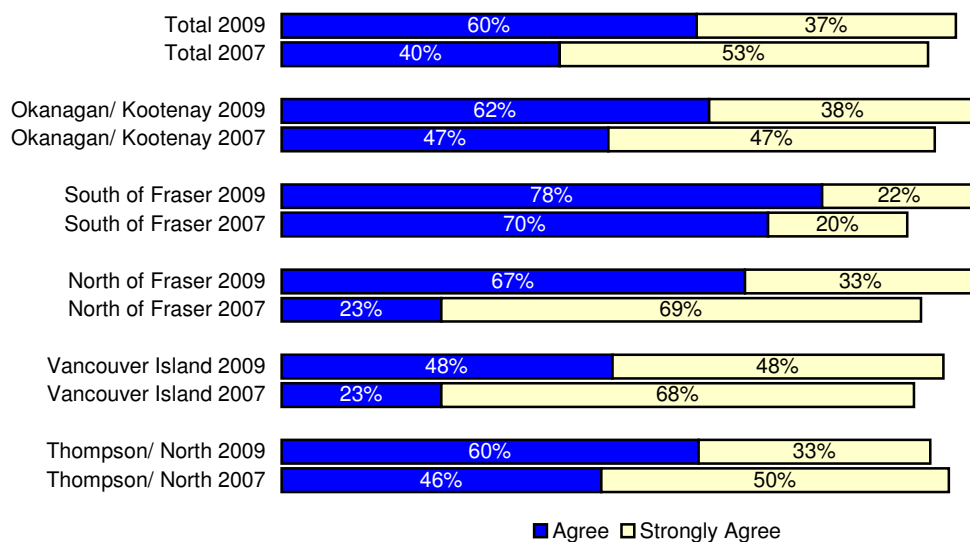
### 5.2 Answer Book (Q56 – Q60)

*In 2009, 32% of respondents (down from 43% in 2007) indicated that they use the Answer Book document published by BC Assessment*

BC Assessment publishes an Answer Book to assist clients in understanding the role of the organization and how it conducts its business. In 2009, 35% of respondents (down from 43% in 2007) indicated that they use the Answer Book document. Answer Book usage is highest in the South of Fraser (60% vs. 59% in 2007), dropping off to 30% and lower in Thompson/North (30% vs. 45% in 2007) and Okanagan/Kootenay (27% vs. 33% in 2007). Usage of the document is higher in larger jurisdictions, where 38% (vs. 45% in 2007) of respondents indicated they use the document, compared to 30% (vs. 43% in 2007) in smaller jurisdictions.

As illustrated in Figure 10, the large majority of respondents (97%, vs. 93% in 2007) who use the document agreed it is easy to understand. Other than Thompson/North (93% vs. 96% in 2007), agreement that the Answer Book is easy to understand increased in all regions in 2009.

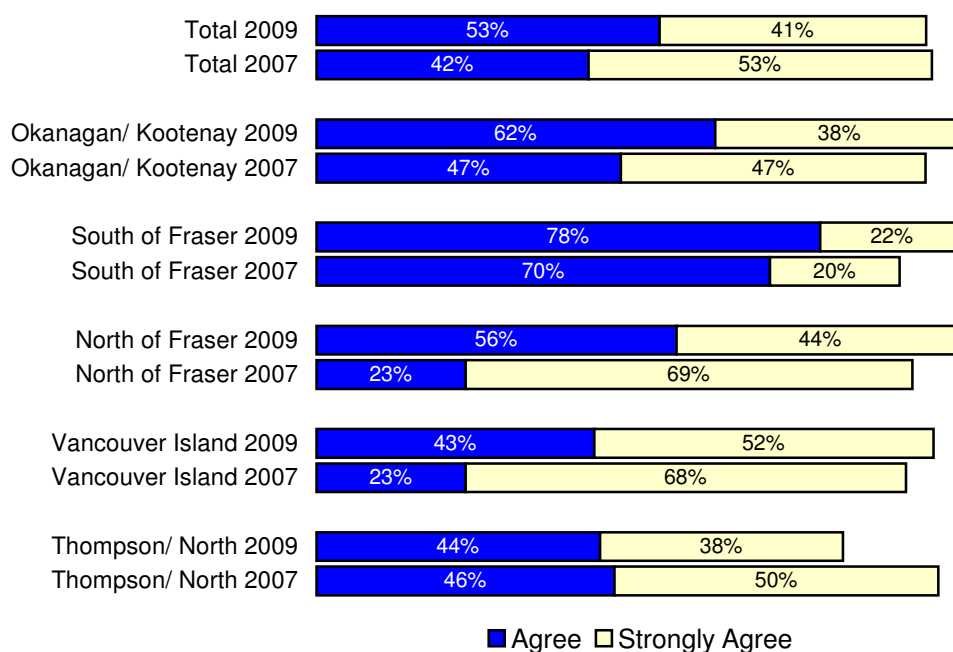
**Figure 10: Agreement that the Answer Book is Easy to Understand by Region**



## SECTION 5: COMMUNICATION

As illustrated in Figure 11, more than 9 in 10 (94% vs. 95% in 2007) agreed that the Answer Book is useful among those who use it. Again, agreement that the document is useful increased in all regions, except Thompson/North, which dropped significantly in 2009 (82% vs. 96% in 2007). Agreement that the Answer Book is useful was higher in larger jurisdictions (96% vs. 98% in 2007) than smaller jurisdictions (91% vs. 92% in 2007).

**Figure 11: Agreement that the Answer Book is Useful by Region**



- When asked if they preferred a hard copy of the Answer Book or an online web-based format, of those who expressed a preference (68 vs. 79 in 2007), two thirds (66% vs. 85% in 2007) said that they preferred a hard copy, while 34% (vs. 15% in 2007) preferred a web-based version.
- When respondents were asked what BC Assessment could do to make the document more useful, one (1) local government representative suggested “updates to the Answer Book could be provided more regularly”.



## SECTION 6: BC ASSESSMENT WEB SERVICES

### 6.1 Use of BC Assessment Website (Q61 – Q65)

*Nearly 9 in 10 local government clients indicated that they had visited the BC Assessment website in 2009*

Nearly 9 in 10 local government clients (89% vs. 74% in 2007) indicated that they had visited the BC Assessment website in 2009, a significant increase since 2007. Use of the website is higher among respondents from larger jurisdictions (92% vs. 79% in 2007) than those from smaller jurisdictions (83% vs. 68% in 2007). Usage increased across all regions in 2009, ranging from 97% in North of Fraser (vs. 77% in 2007) to 81% (vs. 72% in 2009) in Thompson/North.

As in previous years, contact information (60% vs. 75% in 2007) and information from the assessments and sales by address service (58% vs. 74% in 2007) are the two most sought after information products on the BC Assessment Website. What is interesting in 2009 is that the percentage of local government clients seeking information is down significantly for every information product offered, except information pertaining to the assessment process. (Upon reviewing the actual number of respondents seeking information on the website in 2009, the data reveal that fewer respondents overall were seeking these individual products than in 2007.)

**Table 9: Information Sought Most Often on the BC Assessment Website by Jurisdiction Size and Region\*\***

Information	Total*		Jurisdiction Size		Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
BC Assessment contact information	60%	75%	64%	57%	54%	59%	69%	57%	65%
Assessments and Sales by Address	58%	74%	52%	61%	54%	55%	77%	60%	57%
Fact Sheet	29%	49%	13%	37%	29%	41%	39%	24%	22%
Appeal information	25%	47%	64%	57%	19%	38%	54%	19%	22%
Related Links	25%	45%	18%	29%	21%	31%	31%	24%	24%
Products and services information	28%	44%	18%	33%	35%	41%	15%	26%	20%
Assessment process	32%	31%	30%	33%	29%	38%	39%	24%	37%
BC Assessment legislation	19%	30%	8%	24%	10%	52%	7%	14%	13%
Legal updates	11%	29%	5%	14%	13%	10%	7%	14%	7%

## SECTION 6: BC ASSESSMENT WEB SERVICES

**Table 9: Information Sought Most Often on the BC Assessment Website by Jurisdiction Size and Region\*\***

Tax Levy Bylaw	17%	25%	18%	17%	13%	31%	15%	14%	15%
BC Assessment policies	16%	19%	11%	18%	19%	35%	15%	10%	7%

\* Totals may exceed 100% due to multiple responses

\*\* Among those who had visited the BC Assessment website

- Jurisdiction size appears to have influenced the type of information sought by respondents on the BC Assessment website. Large variations by jurisdiction size emerged in 2009 with regard to several information products, including fact sheets, related links, products and services, legislation and policies, and legal updates.

### 6.2 Service Measures for the BC Assessment Website

Similar to 2009, more than 9 in 10 website visitors agreed that the BC Assessment website contained the information they needed (93% vs. 94% in 2007), that it was easy to navigate (87% vs. 92% in 2007), and it was easy to find what they were looking for on the site (88% vs. 89% in 2007).

**Table 10: Agreement with Attributes of the BC Assessment Website by Jurisdiction Size and Region \***

Quality Indicator	Agreement*		Jurisdiction Size		Region				
	2009	2007	<5,000	>5,000	VI	NF	SF	O/K	T/N
Had the information you needed	93%	94%	89%	96%	98%	90%	93%	95%	90%
Easy to navigate	87%	92%	86%	87%	88%	83%	92%	86%	89%
Easy to find what you were looking for	88%	89%	86%	89%	86%	86%	100%	83%	91%

\* Combined agreement (4 + 3), where 4="Strongly agree" and 1="Strongly disagree"

- Agreement by jurisdiction size was slightly lower among smaller jurisdictions in 2009, particularly with respect to the website containing the necessary information, (89% vs. 92% in 2007).

## Appendices

APPENDIX A: STATISTICAL TABLES (pdf)  
APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT (pdf)