

TOP-LINE REPORT

Final

2011
Provincial Government Client Survey

Prepared for:

BC Assessment

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

In early 2011, 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. The purpose of the research is to assess the level of satisfaction with services and products offered by BC Assessment. Residential and Non-residential clients are surveyed annually, while other BC Assessment clients are surveyed every 2 years. This report encompasses the results pertaining to Provincial Government clients who maintain a business relationship with BC Assessment. Comparisons to the previous survey (2009) are provided where applicable.

Representatives of BC Assessment and a research consultant originally developed the survey instrument in 2006 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 research includes a “composite score” designed to measure overall client satisfaction with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment.

1.2 Survey Objectives

The main goal of this research is to measure the level of satisfaction among Provincial Government clients that regularly use the services of BC Assessment. The specific objectives of the research are to:

- determine how often this group of clients are in contact with BC Assessment and what method of contact they most often use;
- identify the types of information or service that clients most often use or request;
- measure client satisfaction with the services and information that they use or request;
- gauge client satisfaction with the service provided by BC Assessment staff relating to various service measures;
- measure the level of satisfaction with the overall service clients receive from BC Assessment;
- solicit other comments or suggestions that clients have for the organization, including any other services they would like BC Assessment to offer; and
- where applicable, compare the results to those obtained in the 2009 survey of provincial government clients.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.3 Survey Highlights

The survey was administered using a “mixed mode” approach involving both telephone and online administration. Full survey administration was undertaken in April and May, 2011. To enhance the response, follow-up emails were forwarded to outstanding respondents, as well as personal telephone follow-up. Of the 43 (vs. 54 in 2009) completed surveys in 2011, 35 were done online and eight over the telephone.

Contact with BC Assessment

- Less than half (47% vs. 54% in 2009) of respondents are in contact with BC Assessment at least once a month, including 30% who made contact at least once a week.
- More than three-quarters of respondents in 2011 (78% v. 83% in 2009) indicated that the telephone was the method most often used to contact BC Assessment staff. After supplanting telephone contact as the primary method of communication in 2007, combined email contact further increased from 64% in 2009 to 73% in 2011.

Information and Services Requested

- Two-thirds of respondents (66% vs. 54% in 2009) said they requested assessment and related information, while requests for policies and legislation fell to 32% (vs. 44% in 2009).
- All other requests for information or service declined in 2011, with the exception of information on agriculture and forestry assessments.

Satisfaction with the Requested Services

- Similar to 2009, provincial government clients reported 100% satisfaction with six of seven service or information requests from BC Assessment in 2009.
- Provincial government clients indicated they were 100% satisfied (same as 2009) with the quality of service they received in 2011, including 50% who indicated that they were “very satisfied”.
- Staff received an agreement rating of 100% for five of the nine attributes of staff performance.
- In 2011, BC Assessment achieved an overall composite score of 98.5%.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.4 Conclusions

The survey results of BC Assessment provincial government clients indicate that satisfaction levels with the services provided remain very high, confirming the favourable results reported in previous surveys. Almost all clients participating in the survey are satisfied with the overall performance of BC Assessment and the organization's staff. Satisfaction ratings for various service and information requests made by clients reached 100% in most cases. Satisfaction with staff performance is also very positive, as provincial clients reported 100% satisfaction in five of nine measures of staff performance.

Satisfaction with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment again reached 100% in 2011, exceeding the 95% target established in the BC Assessment Service Plan. Additionally, BC Assessment's Composite Score designed to measure overall satisfaction with the information and services provided by the organization was 98.5% in 2011, down slightly from 2009. These results indicate a very high level of sustained performance for the organization.

Notable in 2011 was the increase in information requests for assessment data and information, and a general decline in requests for other information and services provided by BC Assessment. While telephone contact remained the method most often used to communicate with BC Assessment staff, email contact continues to increase as a method of communication.

SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Sample Selection

The survey design consisted of an online and telephone survey with provincial government clients who conduct business with BC Assessment on a regular basis. The database for the survey was provided by BC Assessment and included 80 eligible randomly selected clients from the provincial government, Crown Corporations, and other agencies that regularly use BC Assessment services and information.

2.2 Survey Approach

All clients were sent an introductory email advising them of the BC Assessment survey, and requesting their participation. Within one week of the initial email, each client was sent another email that included a link to the survey. BC Assessment's toll-free number and the contact information for the Manager, Customer Service were listed at the end of the survey for reference should clients have any questions. A total of 43 clients (54% of the valid sample) completed the survey in 2011.

2.3 Data Analysis and Reporting

The margin of error for a sample size of 43 is at most ± 10.2 percent, 19 times out of 20. In reporting the survey findings, unless otherwise stated, 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 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.

2.4 Response Characteristics

BC Assessment provided a list of potential contacts from among the various provincial government agencies and organizations that conduct business with BC Assessment. After editing and cleaning the data file, a total of 80 valid contacts were identified for the 2011 survey. Exclusions from the sample were the result of incorrect or invalid contact information, or records that were found to be duplicates. Tabled below is the number of completed surveys for both 2011 and 2009.

SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

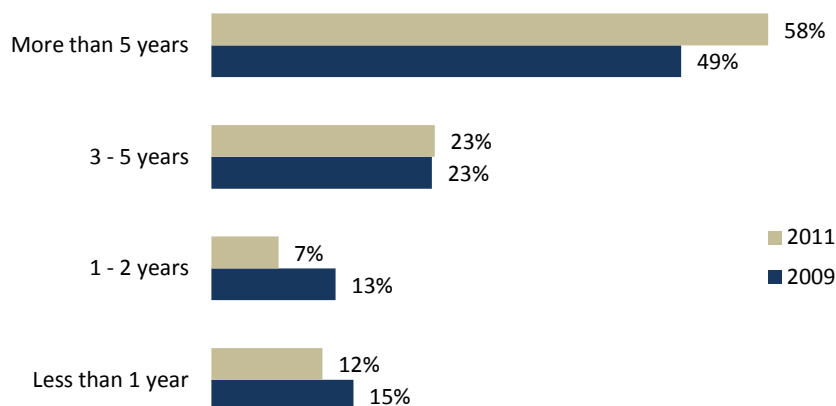
Table 1: Response by Client Organization

Client Organization	2011	2009
	Completions	Completions
Ministry of the Government	34	52
Commission, Board, Crown Corporation	9	2
Total	43	54

A total of 43 surveys were completed in 2011 for a valid response rate of 54% and a margin of error of ±10.2 percent, based on a 95% confidence level. These results are lower than in 2009, when 54 respondents from a sample of 79 provincial government representatives completed the survey. The vast majority of respondents (79%) were provincial government employees.

To provide some insight as to the experience respondents have working with BC Assessment, more than half (58%) have been in contact with BC Assessment for more than 5 years, up from 49% in 2009 (see Figure 1). A significantly smaller percentage of less experienced respondents maintained contact with BC Assessment in 2011. A more experienced respondent group typically improves the quality of the results.

Figure 1: Length of Time in Contact with BC Assessment



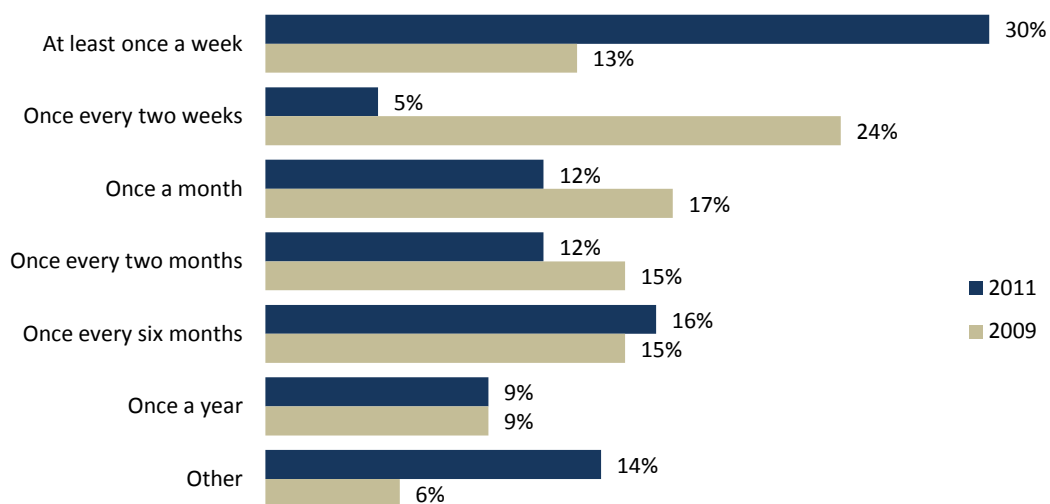
SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Contact with BC Assessment

Less than half (47%) of provincial government clients are in contact with BC Assessment at least once per month

As shown in Figure 2, less than half (47% vs. 54% in 2009) of respondents contact BC Assessment at least once a month, including 30% who made contact at least once a week, a sharp increase from previous years. The “other” responses that did not identify a specific frequency included clients who contacted BC Assessment during certain periods, such as particular reporting cycles (e.g., appeals period).

Figure 2: Frequency of Contact with BC Assessment



As detailed in Table 2, more than three-quarters of respondents in 2011 (78% v. 83% in 2009) indicated that the telephone was the method most often used – combined first and second – to contact BC Assessment staff. Contact by telephone, however, continues to decline among provincial government representatives. After supplanting telephone contact as the primary method of communication in 2007, combined email contact further increased from 64% in 2009 to 73% in 2011. In-person communication declined sharply in 2011, while other methods of electronic contact increased.

SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

Method	Combined Total*		First Method		Second Method	
	2011	2009	2011	2009	2011	2009
Telephone	78%	83%	35%	35%	43%	48%
Email	73%	64%	49%	44%	24%	20%
In-person	19%	34%	5%	15%	14%	19%
BC Assessment Website	19%	13%	7%	2%	12%	11%
Other (BC Online / e-Value)	7%	4%	2%	4%	5%	--

* Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses

3.2 Services / Information Used or Requested

The vast majority of information/service requests involve assessment data and information on policies and legislation

Clients were asked what service or information they use or request most often from BC Assessment. Based on their combined responses (i.e., services/information used first, second and third most often), assessment information and information on policies and legislation continues to account for the vast majority of client requests. Indeed, two-thirds (66% vs. 54% in 2009) of all client requests involved assessment information and data advice. Except for information on agriculture and forestry assessments, all other requests for information or service declined in 2011.

Service / Information	Combined Total*		First (n=38)		Second (n=20)		Third (n=7)	
	2011	2009	2011	2009	2011	2009	2011	2009
Assessment information / Specific assessments / Data advice	66%	54%	55%	39%	60%	40%	86%	27%
Policies and legislation	32%	44%	21%	29%	20%	27%	0%	36%
Advice / Assistance in preparing reports / Information releases	8%	19%	8%	8%	5%	13%	14%	18%

SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

Financial and performance information	3%	10%	0%	8%	--	--	0%	9%
Agricultural and forestry assessment	5%	2%	3%	2%	10%	0%	--	--
Legal services	8%	12%	5%	10%	5%	7%	--	--
Appeal process / Interpretation of Board / Panel decisions	8%	4%	8%	0%	0%	7%	--	--
Service plan report	0%	4%	0%	2%	0%	3%	--	--
Other (incl. Exempt Status 2007)	0%	8%	0%	4%	0%	3%	0%	9%

* Totals based on all responses for each service/information; totals may not add due to rounding

3.3 Satisfaction with Requested Services

100% satisfaction was achieved for six of the seven services and information requested from BC Assessment in 2011

As shown in Table 4, clients reported 100% satisfaction with six of seven service or information requests from BC Assessment in 2009. These results are fractionally lower than the 2009 survey, owing to less than unanimity for assessment information in 2011. It should also be noted that the number of clients requesting services/information is small, other than requests for the top two services/ information (i.e., Assessment information and Policies and Legislation).

Service or Information	Total Satisfaction*		Very Satisfied		Satisfied	
	2011	2009	2011	2009	2011	2007
Assessment information / Specific assessments / Data advice (n=24)	92%	100%	54%	47%	39%	61%
Policies and legislation (n=12)	100%	100%	58%	61%	42%	44%
Advice / Assistance in preparing reports / Information releases (n=3)	100%	100%	--	80%	100%	20%
Financial and performance information (n=1)	100%	100%	100%	40%	--	60%

SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

**Table 4: Satisfaction with Service Requests
from BC Assessment**

	Total Satisfaction*		Very Satisfied		Satisfied	
Agricultural and forestry assessment (n=2)	100%	100%	50%	100%	50%	--
Legal services (n=3)	100%	100%	100%	67%	--	33%
Appeal process / Interpretation of Board / Panel decisions (n=2)	100%	100%	--	50%	100%	50%
Service plan report (n=1)	--	100%	--	50%	--	50%
Other (incl. Exempt Status 2007) (n=1)	--	100%	--	33%	--	67%

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

When asked if there was a better way for BC Assessment to deliver services and information, nearly three-quarters of respondents (74% vs. 82% in 2009) said that the current delivery method works well. A small number (n=4) of provincial government clients felt BC Assessment could improve the delivery of services and information, and offered the following comments and suggestions:

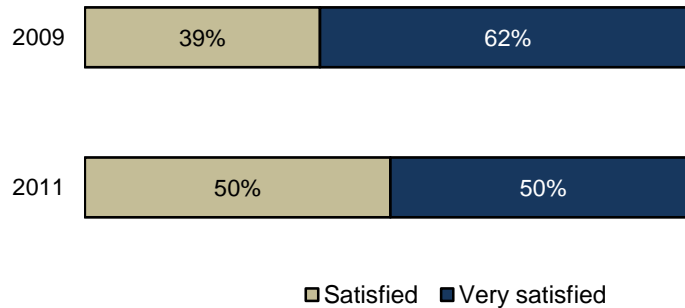
- *Continue the trend to provide information and data electronically.*
- *More public access to BCA information online.*
- *More user friendly website.*
- *Provide a centralized single point contact for complaints that are outside of the appeal system.*

**100% of clients were satisfied with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment
for the second consecutive time**

Clients were asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment. As shown in Figure 3, 100% of provincial government clients indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of service they received in 2011, though the percentage who indicated they were "very satisfied" declined. This is the second time in which no respondent felt "dissatisfied" with the quality of service provided by BC Assessment.

SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

Figure 3: Satisfaction with the Quality of Service



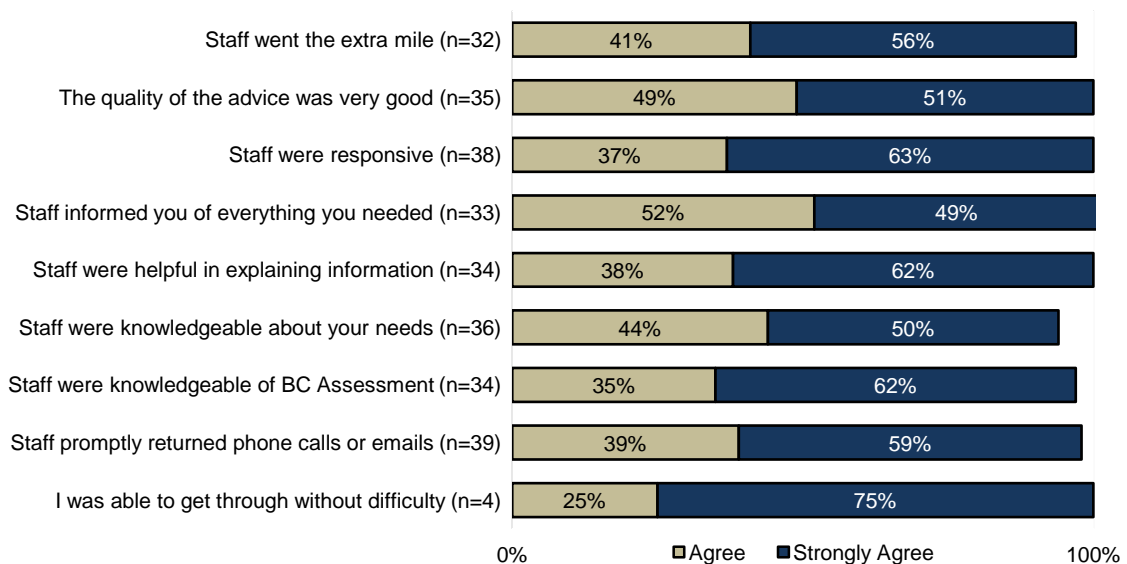
Totals may exceed 100% due to rounding

3.4 Satisfaction with Staff Performance

At least 94% of clients agreed with all nine quality attributes of staff performance

In order to gauge client satisfaction with the service provided by BC Assessment staff, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with nine quality attributes of staff performance. Staff received an agreement rating of 100% for five of the nine attributes, the majority of which strongly agreed with most measures (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Satisfaction with the Quality Attributes of BC Assessment Staff



SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

Among the few clients who disagreed with a particular measure of service quality, the following comments were provided:

- *General lack of understanding of impacts on customers, plus a lot of new staff at BCA.*
- *I work for a large Crown Corporation with unique assessment and taxation issues. Many BCA staff are not familiar with the legislation, etc. applicable to our corporation leading to errors, etc. on property assessments. Perhaps, a key person could be assigned to manage/oversee all issues and concerns for us.*
- *Understanding their clients, their processes and their needs.*
- *Return phone calls or emails within 24 hours.*

3.5 Composite Score (Q13 – 21, Q31)

BC Assessment achieved an overall composite score of 98.5% in 2011

As part of the 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 13 – 21 plus Question 31. In 2011, the composite score achieved based on responses from provincial government clients was 98.5%, down slightly from 2009.

Respondents were asked for general comments or suggestions for BC Assessment. On the whole, the comments provided are positive and reflect a genuine appreciation for the services offered by BC Assessment staff.

- *BC Assessment's Legal and Policy people are outstanding, as are high level quantitative people. Low level quantitative people need to develop customer service and understand the reciprocal relationship with government.*
- *Every office does things differently which does not always help the clients in accessing information or support.*
- *I have been consistently very pleased with the excellent service we receive from BC Assessment.*
- *Involving clients in business process change and data clean up.*
- *Its a pleasure to work with such helpful, smart, professional folks.*
- *Need a centralized mechanism in BCA to handle, monitor and review non-appeal complaints.*

SECTION 3: SURVEY RESULTS

- *Need to work on customer service with general public...number of complaints from people saying that BCA does not explain things to them has increased.*
- *Staff on the whole are responsive and helpful.*
- *They may need some more staff. There are times when I feel that they are short staffed for some of the issues they have raised.*
- *We have had a long history with BC Assessment. The utility of the BC online with the computer system has never been successful in finding addresses. We need to get more specific amount of data to make the inquiries. Other than the online issue, I am very satisfied.*

Appendices

APPENDIX A: STATISTICAL TABLES (pdf)

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT (pdf)