



# **Greater Manchester Criminal Justice Board Report on Staff Engagement January 2010**

## **PSA Delivery Agreement 24**

Deliver a more effective, transparent and responsive  
Criminal Justice System for victims and the public

### **Priority Action 2**

Increase levels of public confidence in the  
fairness and effectiveness of the CJS

#### **Indicator 3**

Public Confidence  
Staff engagement



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Hyperlinks – use ‘control + click’ to activate electronic links to more detailed results  
(available from Monday June 7th)

## **Acknowledgements**

### **Project Leader**

Chris Noah. Deputy Director - GMPT

### **Project Team**

Katherine Abbott. Performance Manager – GMCJB  
Debbie Edwards. Support Team Leader - HMCS GM  
Luna Frank-Riley. Diversity Manager – HMPS GM  
Melanie Kettle. PR & Communications Manager - GMPT  
Kathy Latchford. Branch Business Manager - CPS GM  
Kathryn Rothwell. Relationship Manager - LSC GM  
Annabel Straw & Joanna Taylor. Citizen Focus Team Manger - GMP  
Marilyn Taylor. Community Development Officer - VS&WS GM  
Jamie Wall. Communications Officer - GMCJB  
Lesley Wilby. Head of Performance HMCS GM

### **Consultancy Support**

Dee Fargus. [dee@fargus.co.uk](mailto:dee@fargus.co.uk)  
Peter Fargus. [peter@fargus.co.uk](mailto:peter@fargus.co.uk)



## **Introduction**

This document reports the results of Manchester CJB's measurement of Staff engagement and confidence in the Criminal Justice System as at January 2010

This was carried out by an electronic survey sent to Staff asking how they rated the Local Criminal Justice System in terms of their:

- assessment of its effectiveness
- confidence in how fair it is
- levels of understanding of the component Agencies
- confidence that Agencies are doing a good job

Within each Agency, copies of the survey were sent either to a representative sample of Staff, or to all Staff, depending on the size of the Agency.

The aim was to establish a baseline set of metrics which can be used to compare changes in sentiment over a period of 18 – 24 months.

This document summarises the results of the survey and provides [links to files](#) which provide more detail. If the report is in 'hard copy' form, more detailed information is available on request.

## **Responses from Agencies**

The responses from individual Agencies together with two sets of 'all CJS' response groups (cuts), - Length of Service and Role - can be seen over page.

In the case of individual Agencies we view results to be within 5% to 10% (depending on individual Agency response rates) of the result if 100% of the population within each Agency had responded.

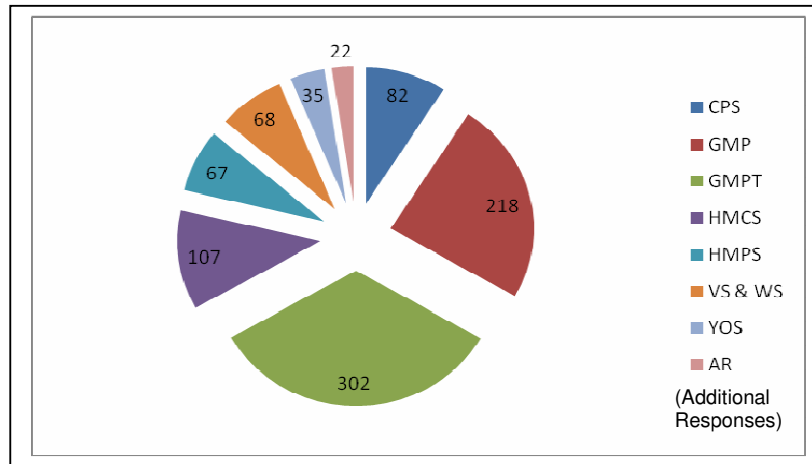
For this reason, as a 'rule of thumb', when looking at detailed results by Agency, only those with a difference of 7% or more have been taken into consideration.

For the cuts relating to 'Role' we found it difficult to compare the different levels of seniority between Agencies and so the resulting classifications given over page, and associated responses within the body of this report, should be treated with caution. In order to see the basis of our classifications click [here](#) (control + click)

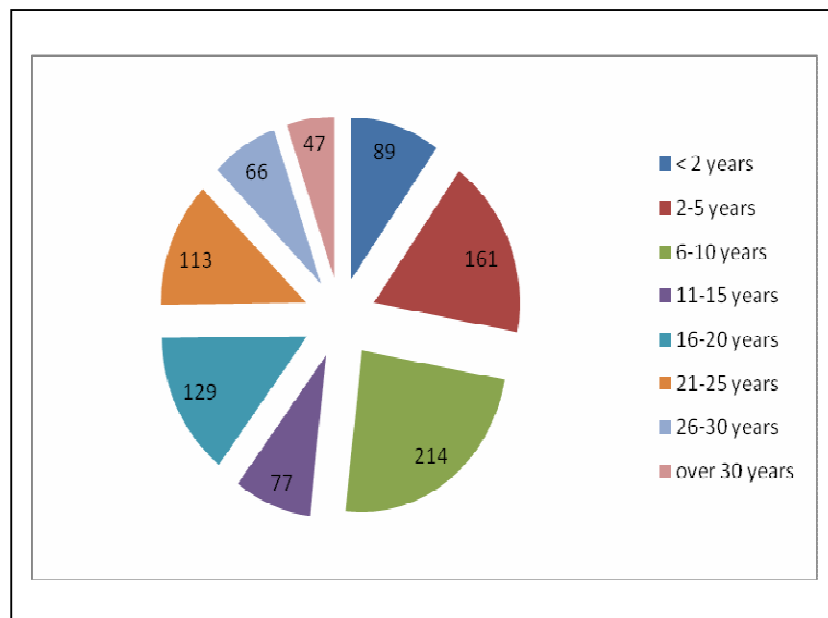
For cuts relating to Length of Service we lack individual Agency headcount data and so cannot be sure the results are fully representative. However intuitively they look to be correct and we have retained these in the report.

For the cuts relating to ethnic minority Staff, lack of individual Agency headcount data also makes it difficult to assess statistical significance. For this reason responses have been omitted from this report, but are available on request.

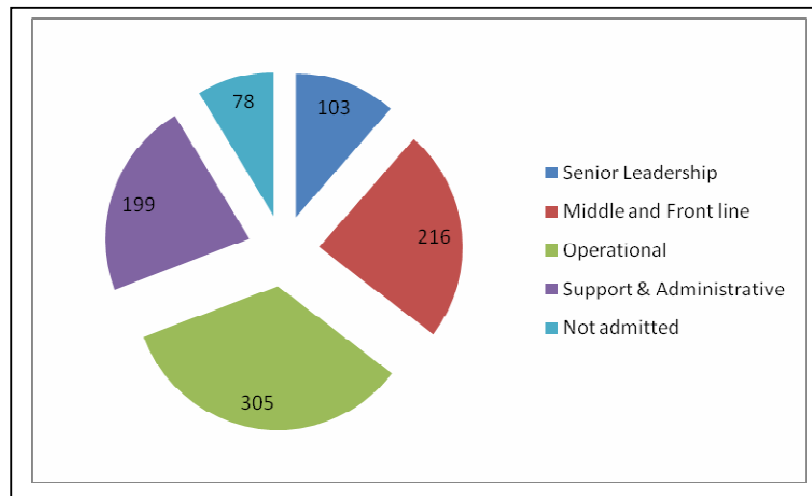
**Responses by Agency**



**Responses by Length of Service**



**Responses by Role**





## **Structure of the survey**

The structure of the survey included:

- An introductory message from the Greater Manchester Criminal Justice Board
- A guarantee of confidentiality
- Instructions on how to complete the questionnaire
- Core items focusing on:
  - CJS fairness,
  - CJS effectiveness,
  - Understanding of component Agencies and
  - Whether respondents felt the Agencies were doing 'a good job'.

The core items had a five-point scale ranging from strongly favourable to strongly unfavourable, or equivalent, plus an option to indicate 'do not know'

- Items asking for 'freeform comments'

A list of the core and freeform items may be found as an appendix to this report.

- Additional items requested by individual Agencies which covered issues specific to an Agency.
- Items asking respondents to describe themselves and their role for purposes of identifying differences in viewpoint between differing groups of Staff.

## **Analysing the survey**

The results of the survey were analysed as follows:

- By each Agency and then by:
  - Length of service (with Age)
  - Role

The reports in this document are based on the average scores for each cluster of items covering effectiveness, fairness, understanding and 'doing a good job'. Results are reported over the next pages graphically and with commentary.

We also carried out analyses for the following 'cuts' but, for reasons explained previously, the results are not included in this report:

- Gender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion / Belief

In order to simplify the presentation of results the 5 + 1 point scales were reduced to four points.

Communications issues depicted in pink.

- Don't know
- Poor or no knowledge



Unfavourable responses depicted in red

- Strongly disagree and disagree
- Not at all or not very confident



Neutral responses, depicted in yellow

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Fair knowledge



Favourable responses, depicted in green:

- Strongly agree and agree
- Very confident and fairly confident
- Excellent and good

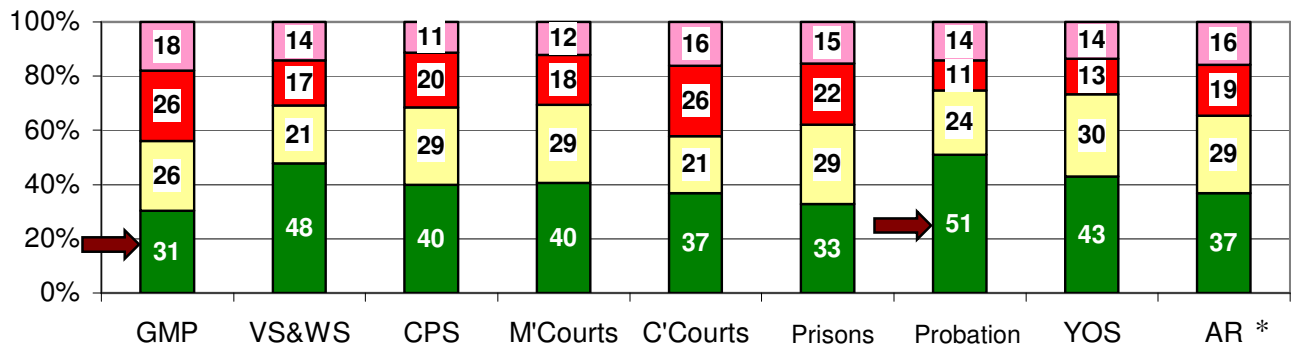


**Results: Effectiveness by Agency**

The results for the average of all 'effectiveness' items are shown below. Figures are percentages.

For detailed results item by item, when using the electronic version, click [here](#) or request additional hard copy information.

Staff ratings on the effectiveness of the CJS are not high, ranging from 31% favourable (Police) to 51% favourable (Probation).



\* Additional Respondents

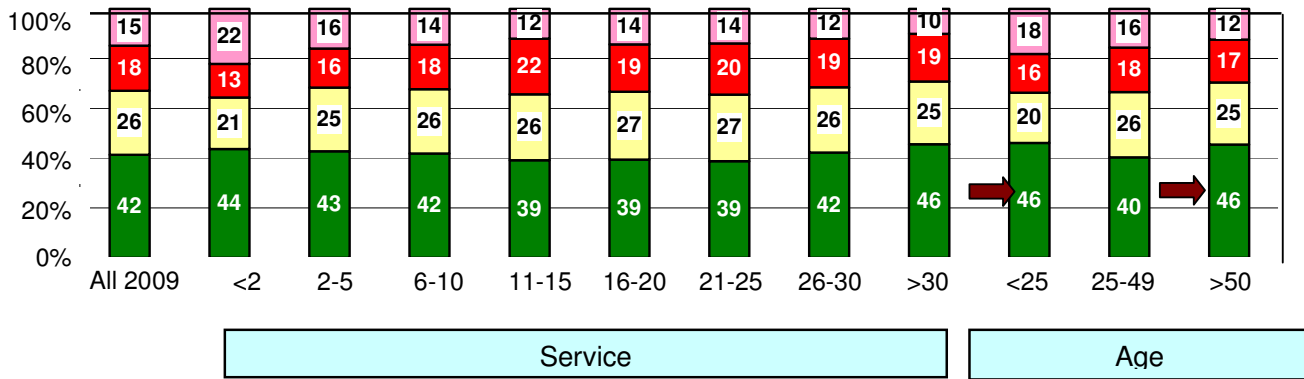


A large part of this apparently poor result is due to high levels of 'neutral' or 'don't know' ratings - the combination of 'neutral' and 'don't know' for the Police amounts to 46% of the responses.

It should be feasible to reduce these types of response by better two-way communication. However it does not follow that subsequent responses would necessarily migrate to the 'favourable range'.

**Results: Effectiveness by length of service / age**

The favourable responses have a narrow range from 39% to 42% with the exception of younger members of Staff (46%) and older members of Staff (46%).

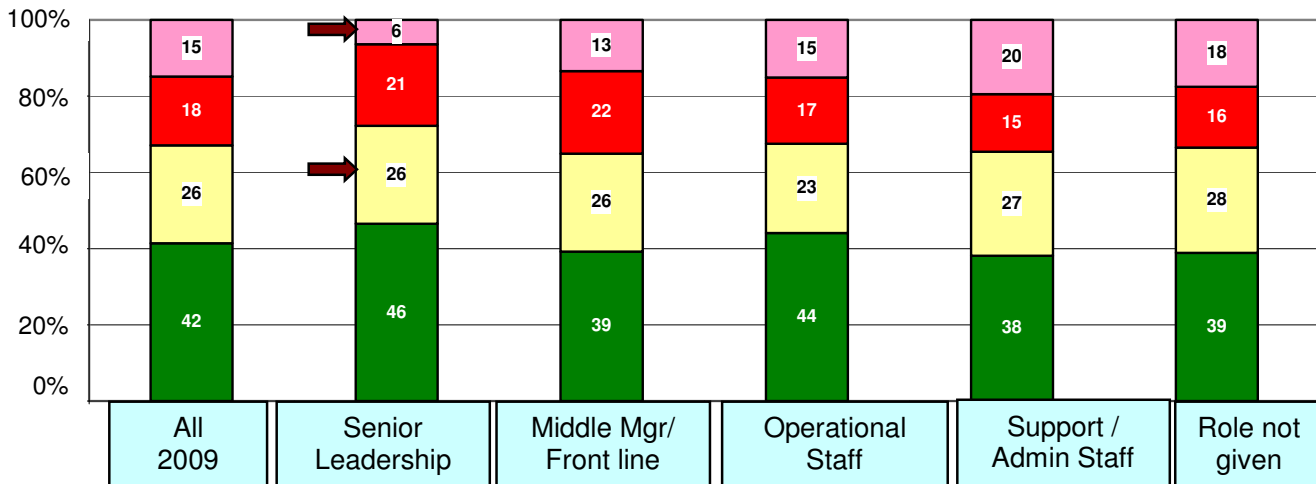


These scores are also notable for the range of 'neutral' responses plus 'don't knows' the combination of which represents a range of between 37% (age over 50 years) and 43% (service < two years).

These results, not surprisingly, show those younger members of staff with less experience are more undecided.

**Results: Effectiveness by role**

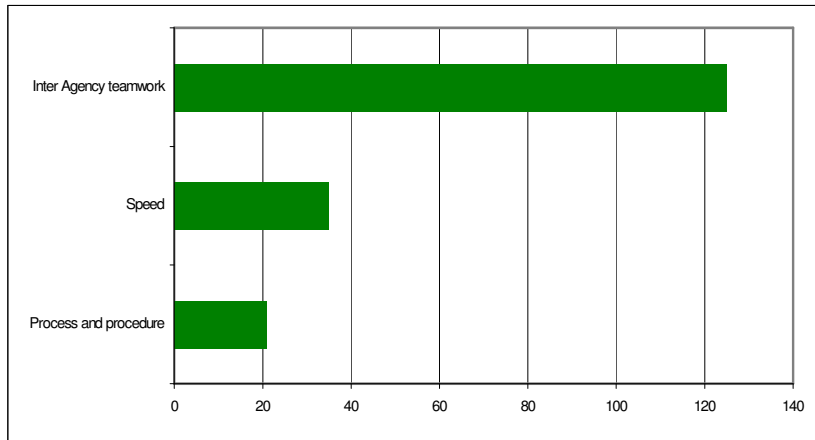
The levels of uncertainty remain throughout this cut with even the senior leadership combination showing levels of 32% (26% + 6%)



**Results: Comments on effectiveness - Favourable**

The highest number of favourable comments related to ‘inter-agency teamwork’. This appears to be a development that Staff would like to encourage.

A list of all comments on effectiveness is available on request or, when using the electronic version, may be seen by clicking [here](#) (see worksheet 1).

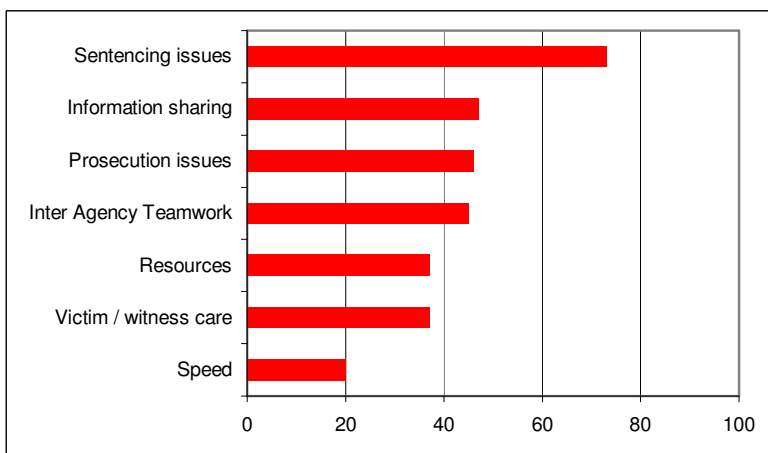


**Results: comments on effectiveness – Unfavourable**

Respondents were critical of:

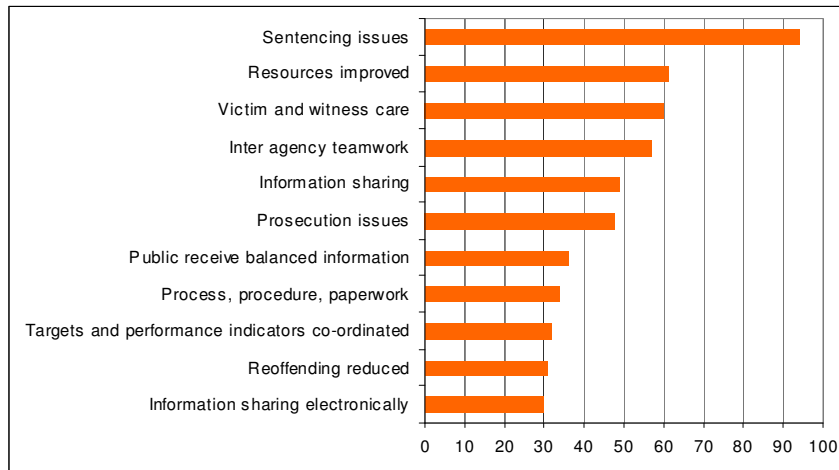
- The speed and effectiveness of the prosecution process and also subsequent sentencing.
- Inter-agency teamwork and information sharing.
- Lack of resources.
- Victim and witness care / support were also well to the fore.

A list of all comments concerning lack of effectiveness is available on request or, when using the electronic version, may be seen by clicking [here](#) (worksheet 2).

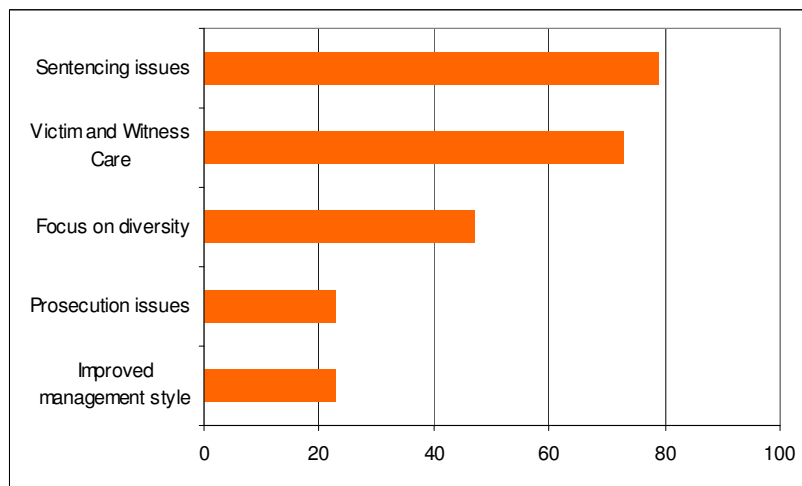


## Results – comments on how to improve

Respondents were asked to comment on the improvements they would like to see in order to improve the effectiveness of the CJS. Issues commented on 20 times or more are listed below: for the full range of comments click [here](#) or request additional information.



Additionally respondents were asked what needs to be done to improve the fairness of the CJS. Those issues appearing 20 times or more are listed below.



The most frequently cited issues were prosecution and sentencing; better availability / management of resources; victim and witness care; better inter – agency teamwork and information sharing, and improved more focus on diversity. Management style was also mentioned.

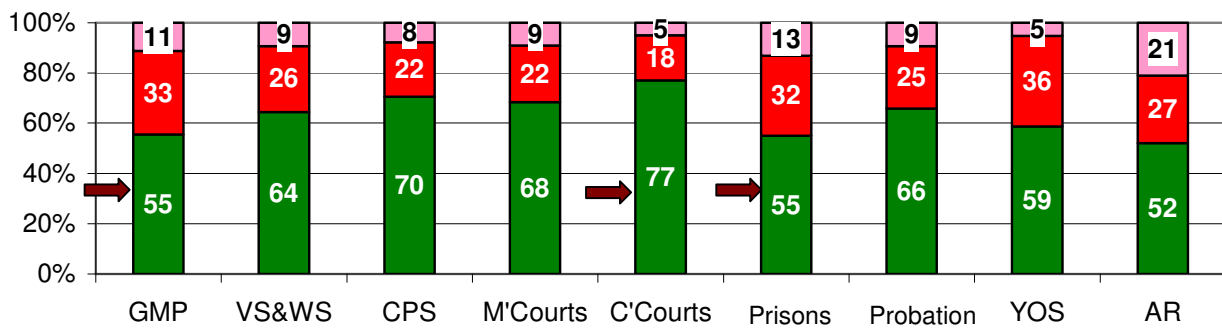
**Results: Fairness by Agency**

The results for the average of all ‘fairness’ items are shown below. For detailed results item by item click [here](#) or request additional hard copy information.

Staff ratings on the fairness of the CJS are much higher than those for effectiveness, ranging from 55% favourable (Police and Prisons) to 77% favourable (Crown Courts).

However there is notable set of respondents in all Agencies who see the CJS as unfair.

Written comments indicate that these are due to a perception that Victims are not getting the support they deserve. The comments are not directed at the Victim Support and Witness Service, more the system as a whole.



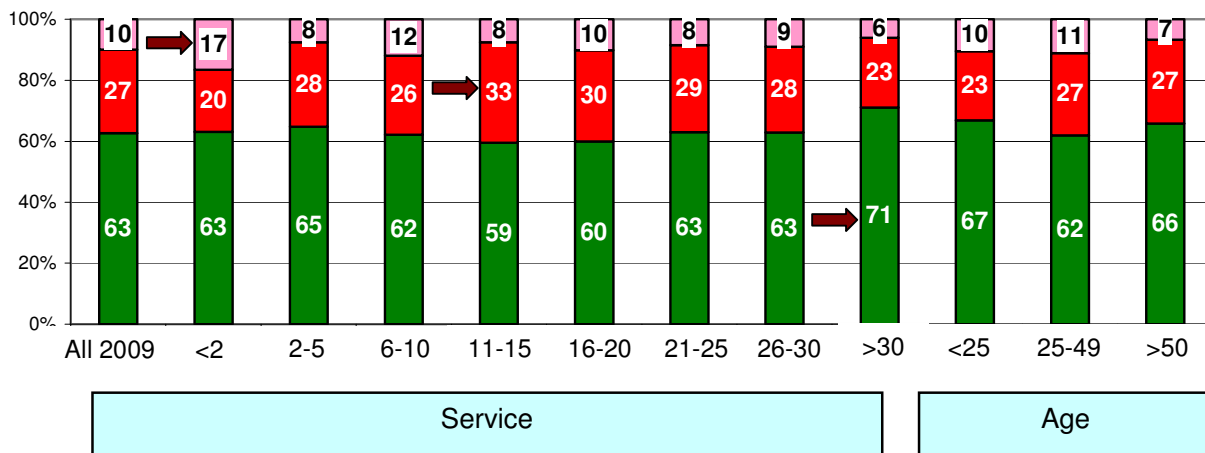
**Results: Fairness by length of service / age**

This cut demonstrates that there is concern throughout the age ranges and levels of service about the fairness of the CJS.

More favourable sentiment (71%) comes from members of Staff with over 30 years service.

Staff with under two years service show higher ‘don’t know’ scores (17%).

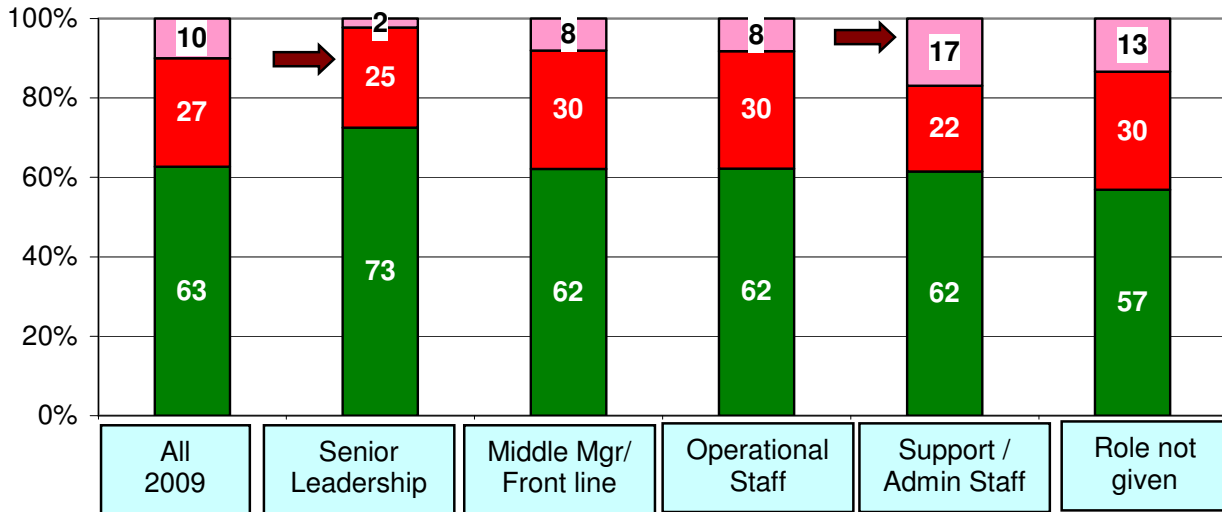
Those showing the most concern (33%) are members of Staff with 11-15 years service



**Results: Fairness by role**

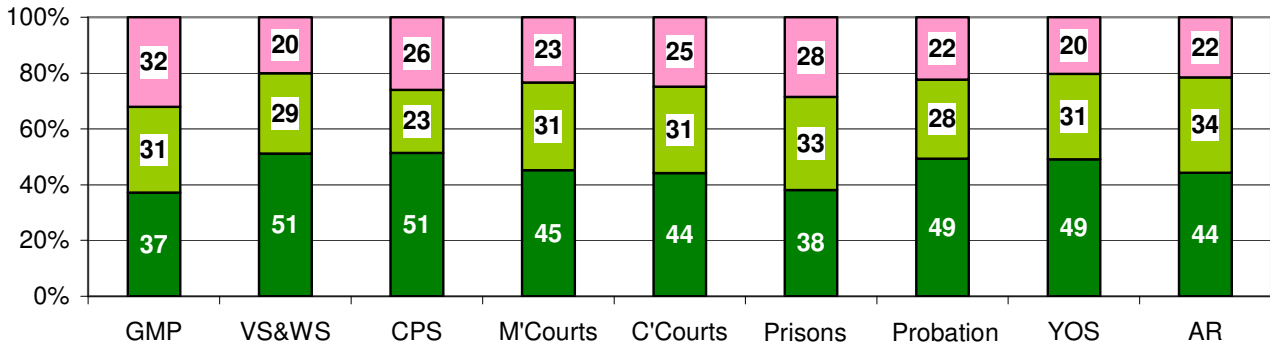
Although senior leadership have a more favourable viewpoint when compared to other groups of Staff, there are still 25% who feel that the system is unfair.

Admin and support Staff have a less unfavourable viewpoint but this is due to lack of knowledge (17%).



**Results: Understanding by Agency**

The results for the average of all ‘understanding’ items are shown below. Respondents were asked about levels of understanding of both their own Agency and of others. For detailed results item by item click [here](#) or request additional hard copy information.



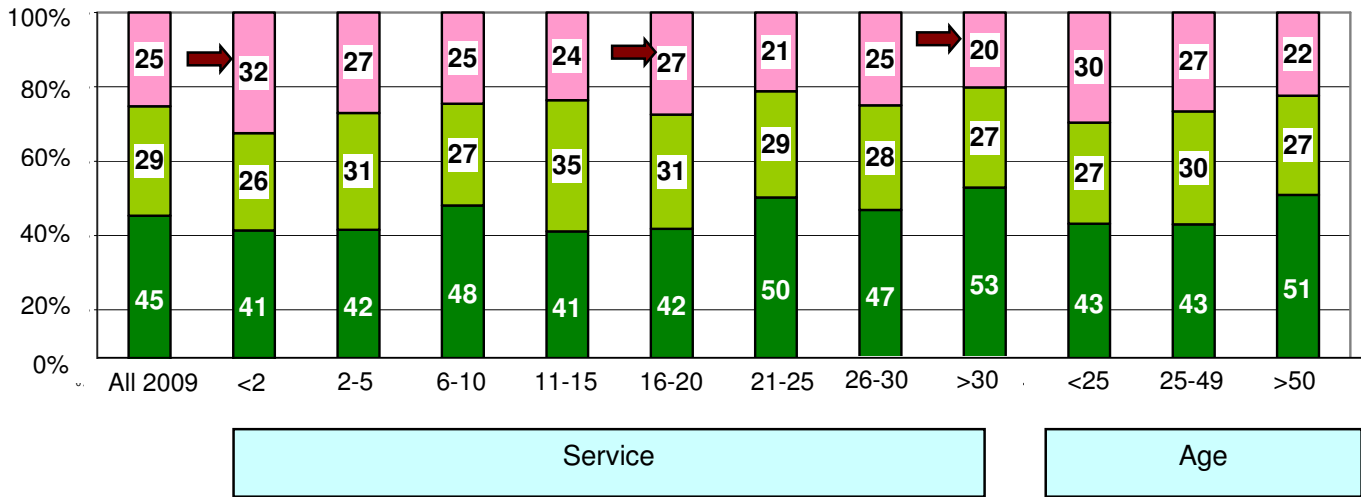
It is clear from these results that, overall, about a quarter of respondents judge they do not have enough understanding of the workings of other Agencies.

This could be reduced by one-way communication where it is simply facts that are needed, and two – way communication where explanation and debate are more appropriate.

**Results: Understanding by length of service / age**

Those younger members of Staff with less the two years experience clearly have less understanding (32%).

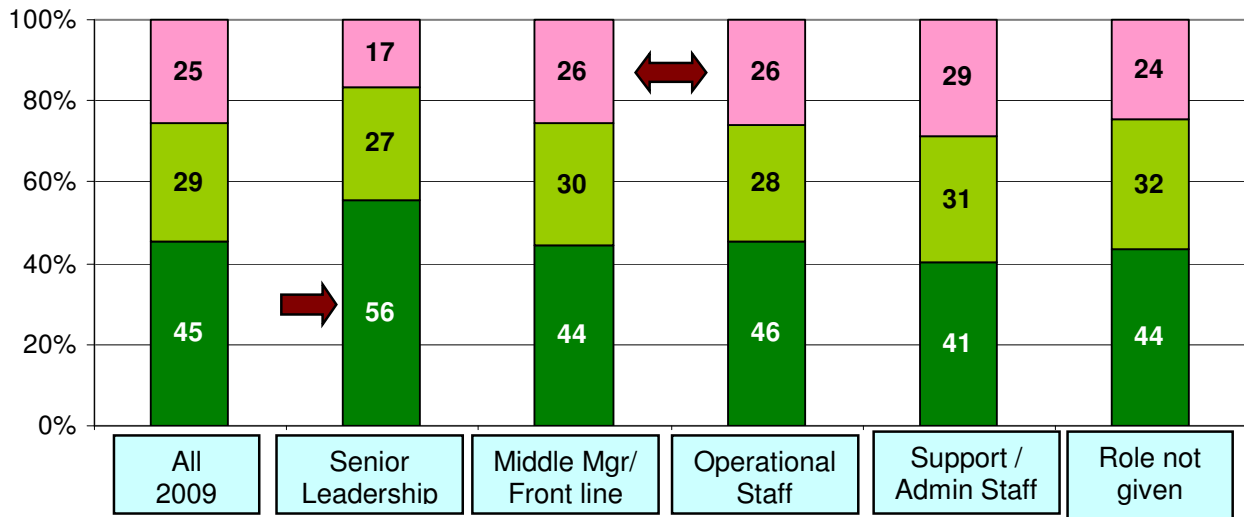
However there is a notable lack of understanding throughout from 20% ‘don’t know’ (over 30 years service) through 27% (16-20 years service) to 32% for those with under 2 years service.



**Results: Understanding by role**

Not surprisingly senior leadership show the most understanding (56%). What is concerning is that the middle and front line leadership appear to have no more understanding than Staff reporting to them.

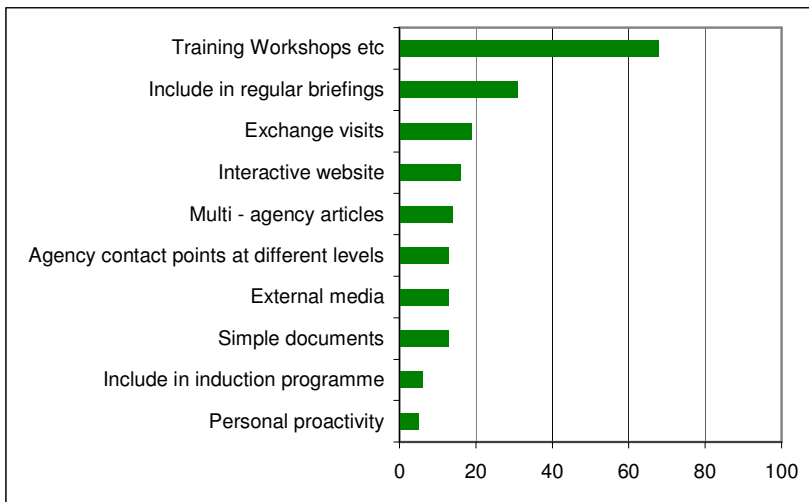
This could be one of the reasons that sharing of information is perceived to be less common than Staff in general would like.



**Comments on increasing understanding**

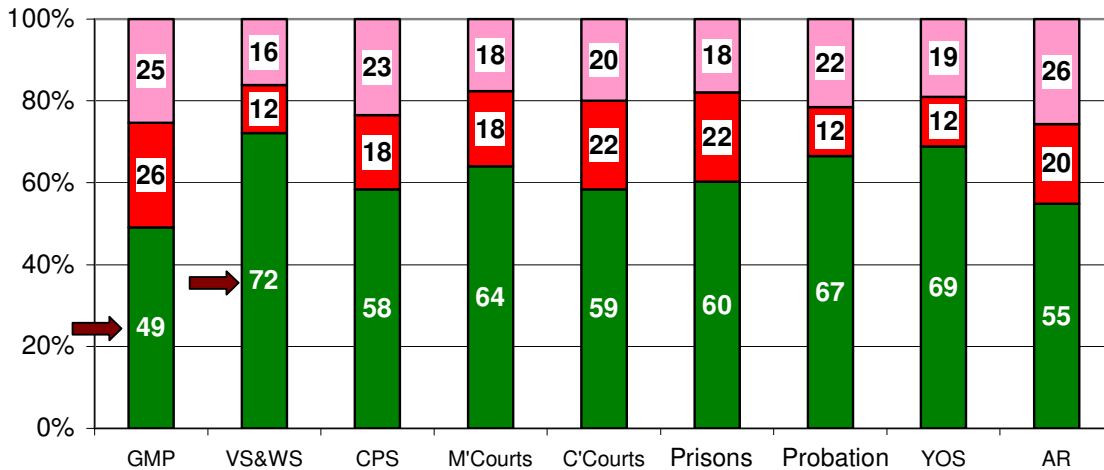
The most common suggestion concerning how to increase understanding was through the use of training workshops. Unless it is feasible to add relevant information to existing workshops this is likely to be an expensive solution.

There are other options such as regular briefings that are likely to have more impact and be less costly to organise. To access the full range of comments on ‘understanding’ click [here](#)



### Results: 'Doing a good job' by Agency

The results for the average of all 'doing a good job' items are shown below. For detailed results item by item click [here](#) or request additional hard copy information.



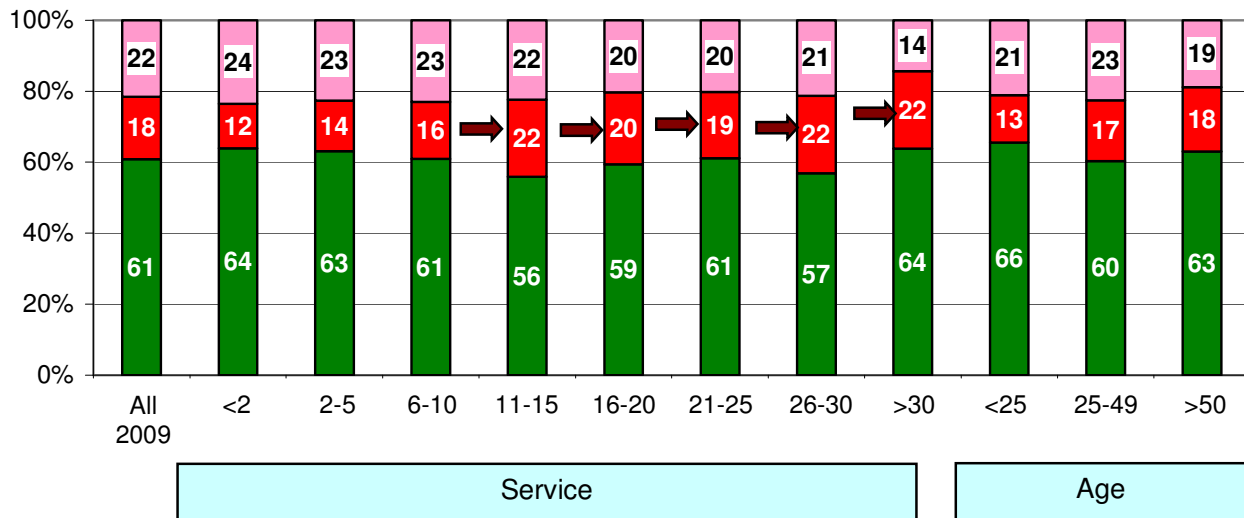
Looking at detailed results, the majority of respondents judged that their own Agency is doing a good job, but have not rated the other Agencies favourably.

It is not clear whether this favourable response is a true reflection how they judge their Agency or a defensive mechanism (typically, when responding to surveys, if they are concerned about the results of a survey, team members rate their team and manager(s) more highly). Nevertheless, the overall results are encouraging (55% to 72%) with the possible exception of the Police (49%). Victim Support and Witness Service (72%) gets the 'thumbs up'.

Around 20% of respondents feel that they do not have enough knowledge to make a judgement. This could possibly be resolved by wider communication of CJS - wide key performance indicators.

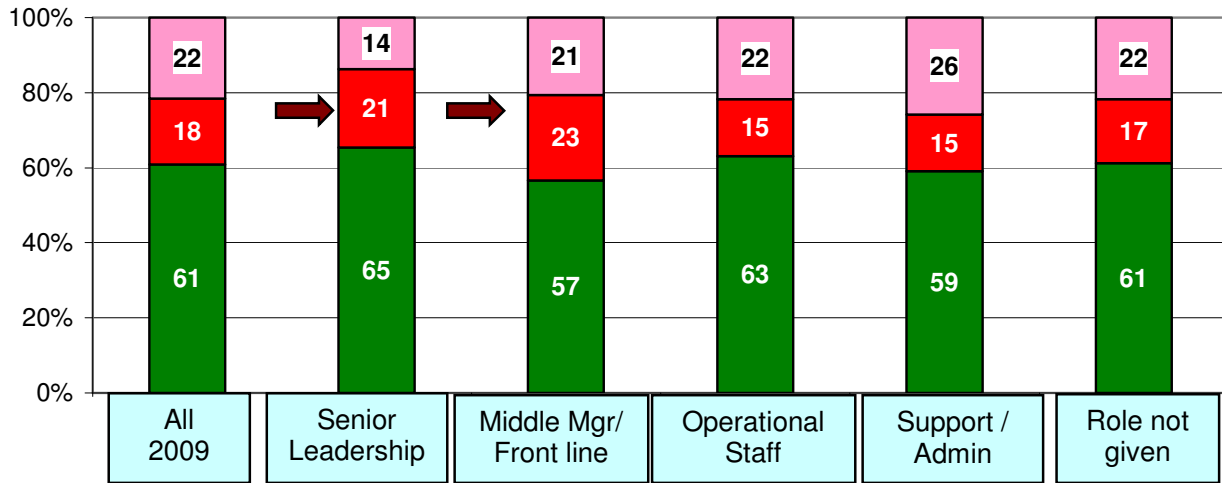
### Results: 'Doing a good job' by length of service /age

This cut tells us that those with more years service respond less favourably.



**Results: 'Doing a good job' by role**

The unfavourable responses from senior, middle and front line leadership are of note here together with the levels of 'don't know' responses.





## **Conclusions**

- Agency Staff believe their own operations to be effective, but not the others
- Almost a quarter of respondents (24%) indicate that they do not have enough understanding of other Agencies.
  - Support and Administrative roles have the least understanding.
  - Middle and Front Line Leaders have no more understanding of other Agencies than the Staff they lead.
- Middle and Front Line Leaders are critical about other agencies and CJS effectiveness
- Staff with less experience have less understanding, but more positive attitudes.
- Staff with more experience are also more critical, with the possible exception of long serving Staff
- A key issue appears to be the rights of the victim versus the rights of the offender but Victim Support and Witness Service gets the 'thumbs up'.
- There is strong support for inter-agency teamwork including improved sharing of information

## **Recommendations: information content and priorities**

In order to increase understanding of the CJS we recommend that information on the following should be created / emphasized:

- Our role in the CJS : process flowchart
- Sharing information across the CJS
- Fundamentals of sentencing
- How the prosecution process works
- Principles of victim / witness care within the CJS
- Principles of equality and fairness within the CJS

Continued.....



In order to emphasize inter-agency teamwork we recommend that we should:

- Better communicate 'all CJS' local performance indicators
- Emphasize win-win Agency targets
- Acknowledge and resolve conflicting targets

With respect to priorities we recommend:

- An equal focus for each Agency
- That improving the understanding of the CJS by middle and front line leadership is critical
- After the middle and front line leadership, those with less than 2 years service should have priority

### **Recommendations: communications channels**

We believe that some aspects of the lack of understanding can be addressed by 'one-way' communications. For example:

- Information concerning how cases are processed through the CJS can be described and discussed through flowcharts / articles and delivered, stored and accessed both electronically and by hard copy.
- Websites can be linked to enable easy access to multi-Agency information

However there are other aspects which require discussion and debate before a shift in understanding and sentiment can be expected. For example:

- Why some information is not / can not be shared
- Why victims appear to receive less support than offenders

In these cases the appropriate communications channels would be two - way:

- Agency induction programmes
- Management training workshops
- Exchange visits
- Disciplined and regular briefing sessions (middle and first line leaders would be expected to understand briefings from senior management before cascading the information and discussion to the front line).



## **Appendix – the range of items used**

### **Items focusing on effectiveness**

- The police are effective at catching criminals
- The CPS is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime
- Cases in criminal courts are dealt with promptly
- The Probation Service is effective at protecting the public
- The Probation Service is effective at reducing the risk of re-offending
- The Prisons are effective at rehabilitating offenders who have been convicted of a crime
- Victim Support is effective in supporting victims of crime
- The Witness Service is effective in preparing & supporting victims & witnesses through the court process
- The Criminal Defence Service provides an effective service to people under investigation or facing criminal charges
- Youth Offending Services respond comprehensively to the needs of young offenders
- The Local Criminal Justice Board effectively co-ordinates criminal justice in Greater Manchester
- The local Office for Criminal Justice Reform provides an overall framework and guidance to facilitate reform.
- The Criminal Justice System is working as a joined up unit
- The Criminal Justice system reduces crimes
- The CJS as a whole is effective
- What do you think is particularly effective about the CJS?
- What do you think is particularly ineffective about the CJS?
- What improvements to the CJS would you like to see?

### **Items focusing on fairness**

- The CJS takes into account the views of victims
- The CJS takes into account the views of witnesses
- The CJS gives victims the support they need
- The CJS gives witnesses the support they need
- The CJS treats those who have been accused of a crime fairly, as 'innocent until proven guilty'
- Defendants are treated fairly within the CJS
- Minorities groups are treated fairly within the CJS
- Women are treated fairly within the CJS
- When handing out sentences, the CJS takes into account the circumstances surrounding the crime
- The CJS achieves the correct balance between the rights of the offender and the rights of the victim
- The CJS as a whole is fair
- What improvements need to be made to increase staff confidence in the fairness of the CJS?



### **Items focusing on understanding**

What is your level of understanding of the following agencies within the CJS

- Police
  - The Crown Prosecution Service
  - Magistrates Courts
  - Crown Courts
  - The Probation Service
  - Youth Offending Services
  - The Prison Service
  - Victim Support & Witness Service
  - Legal Services Commission
  - Local Criminal Justice Board
  - Office for Criminal Justice Reform
- 
- What improvements need to be made to increase your understanding of the other Agencies in the CJS?

### **Items focusing on 'doing a good job'**

Thinking about each of the Agencies which make up the Criminal Justice System, how confident are you that they are doing a good job?

- Police
- The Crown Prosecution Service
- Magistrates Courts
- Crown Courts
- The Probation Service
- Youth Offending Services
- The Prison Service
- Victim Support & Witness Service
- Legal Services Commission
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Office for Criminal Justice Reform