

**Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Agency**

**Evaluation of EOWA 2003 service delivery**

**Report of findings**

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## **1. Project objective**

The objective of this project was to conduct an external and therefore, independent evaluation of clients' perceptions of EOWA's 2003 service delivery to quantify the outcomes of EOWA's new service delivery model that has been implemented as a result of the Unfinished Business Review. Specifically, the intention was to evaluate

- (i) Client awareness of specific services provided by EOWA
- (ii) Utilisation of these services
- (iii) Perceived effectiveness of services in relation to process (perception of quality, EOWA staff competence), impact (eg., perceptions of the impact it has had on strategy development and implementation), and outcome (eg., perceptions of the influence of EOWA services on organisational outcomes in relation to gender equity).

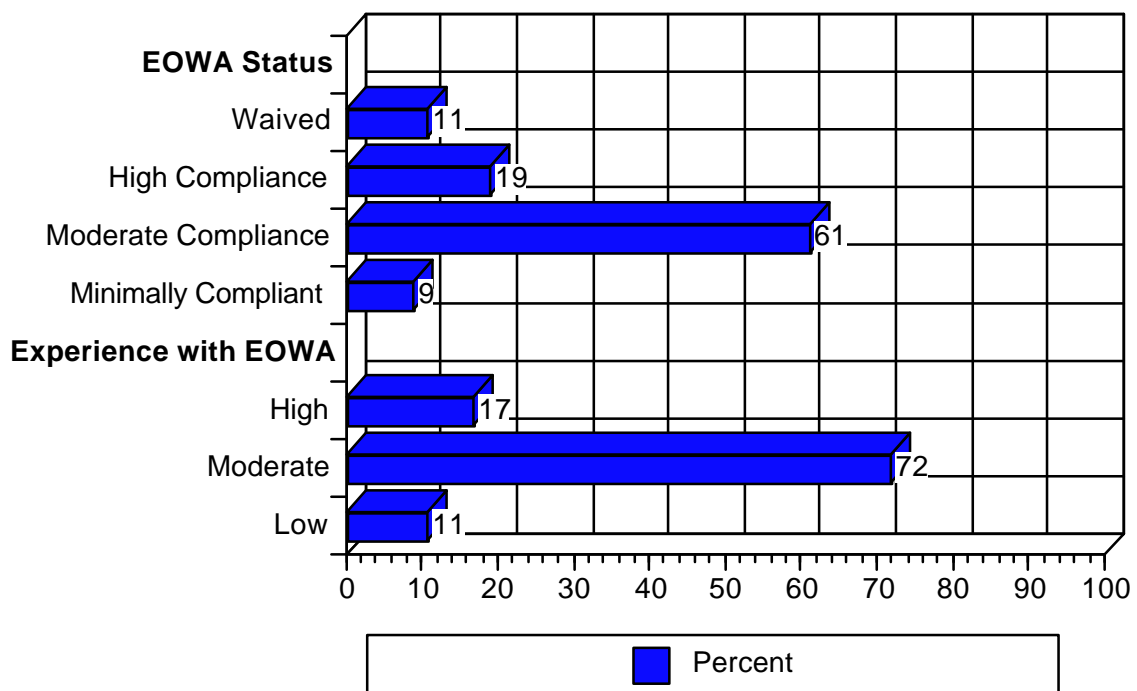
## **2. Methodology**

A telephone survey was conducted of a random sample of approximately 10% (272) of the EOWA client base. These details and the relevant contact person were obtained from EOWA.

Those who are selected in this process were sent an email to inform them (i) that they have been selected at random; (ii) what the purpose of the project was and what issues will be covered; (iii) how long the survey will take (20 to 30 minutes); and (iv) when, and by whom, they will be contacted. Overall, the response to participating in the survey was highly positive.

Characteristics of the sample are shown in Figure 1. The sample closely matches the overall client base in terms of the proportions in the various compliance categories. Participants were asked to rate their overall level of knowledge of EOWA. The overwhelming majority reported they had a moderate level of knowledge.

Figure 1  
EOWA Status of the Organisation (n = 272)  
and Experience of interviewee with EOWA

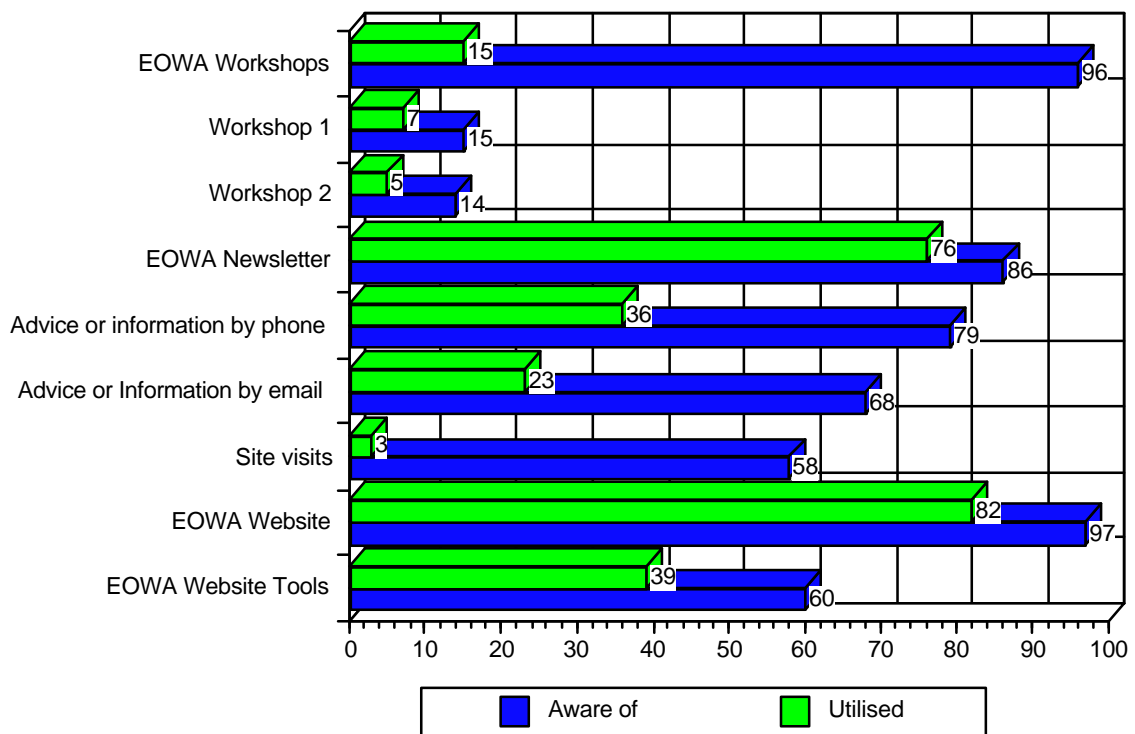


### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Awareness of the utilisation of specific educational services and products.

Participants were first asked whether they were aware of a range of services and products available from EOWA. For each that they said they were aware of, they were then asked if they or anyone else in their organisation had used or had had any contact with any of them in the past 12 months. Findings are summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2  
Awareness and utilisation of specific educational services and products

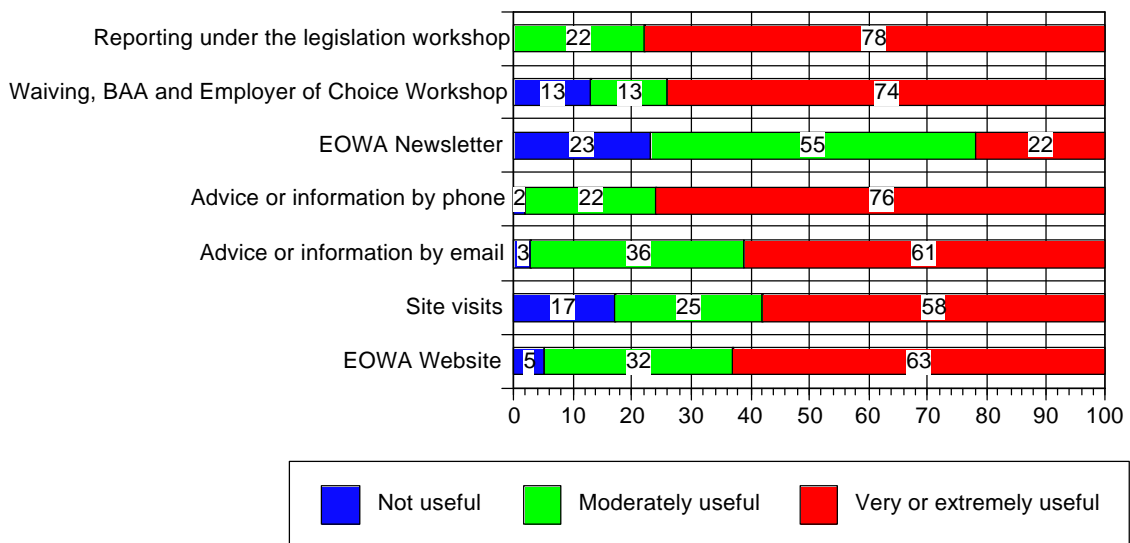


As can be seen, there is an extremely high level of knowledge of EOWA services and products, and the utilisation rate is very high for the Newsletter and the Website. (Note that the reason for the relatively low level of knowledge indicated for the two workshops is that a positive response to this was only listed if participants provided specific details on the workshops). 85% were also aware of the EOWA Business Achievement Awards and 68% were aware of the EOWA Employer of Choice for Women citations.

### 3.2 Views about the usefulness of the educational services and products.

For those services and products participants indicated they had used, they were then asked to rate their usefulness to them personally. Ratings were made on a five-point scale: 1 = “not useful at all”; 2 = “not very useful”; 3 = “moderately useful”; 4 = “very useful”; 5 = “extremely useful”. For the purposes of summarising the findings, the two bottom and the two top rating categories have been combined (this procedure has been adopted throughout the report). Findings are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3  
Rating of usefulness of specific educational services and products (for respondents who have utilised their service or product)



As can be seen from the findings, the overwhelming majority of participants rated the services and products as either being “moderately”, “very” or “extremely useful”. The usefulness of the two workshops and advice or information by phone were rated very highly indeed. Further, 98% of

participants considered the EOWA website to be easy to find what they want.

### **3.3 Views about the report clients are required to submit to EOWA.**

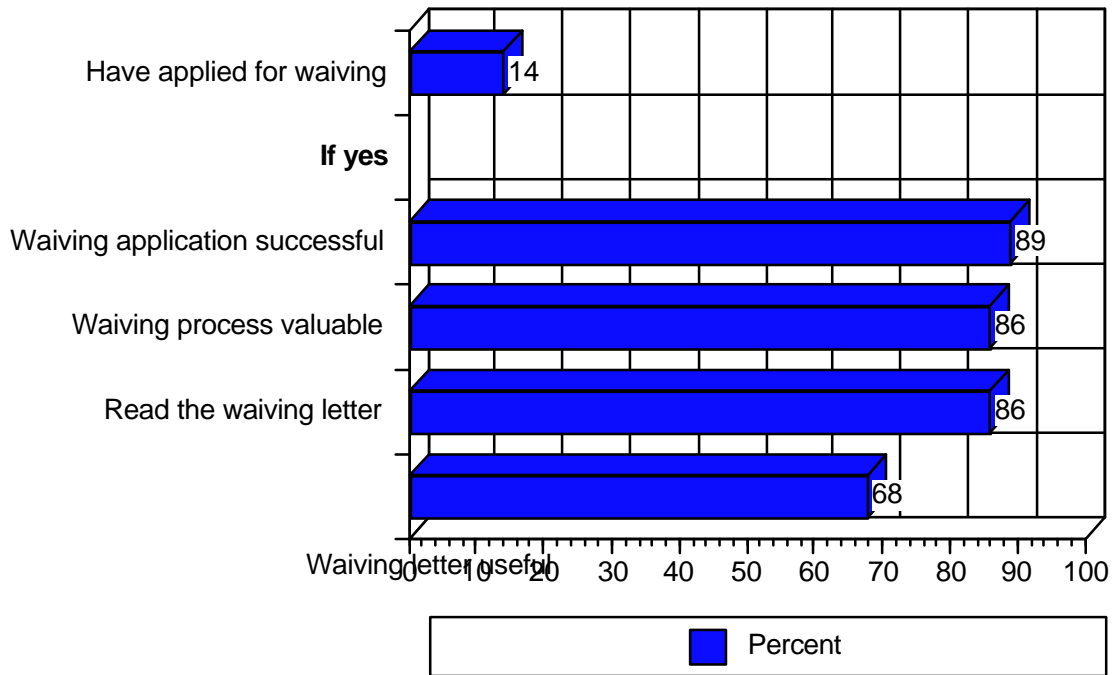
A high, 70% of participants reported that they used the public report form suggested by EOWA as a template to prepare their report. As can be seen from the findings presented in Figure 4, 71% indicated that the report was either “moderately”, “very” or “extremely easy” to compile.

Also, 60% of participants indicated that they used the report in their own organisation. This is very high given the fact that the development of this report is mandated and is not voluntary. Further, 60% indicated that the reporting process was useful in helping them to deliver improved outcomes for women in their organisation, and 48% indicated that the report was useful in helping them with their overall business strategy and planning. Again, this figure can be considered very high given the nature of the report and the reason why it was developed. Extrapolating these findings to the entire population of reporting companies, it means that approximately 1200 companies derive some business benefit from this mandatory reporting process.

### **3.4 Views about waiving**

As can be seen from Figure 5, 14% of companies had applied to be waived and 89% had been successful. A very high 86% found the waiving process valuable to them and 68% reported that the waiving letter was useful.

Figure 5  
Views about waiving

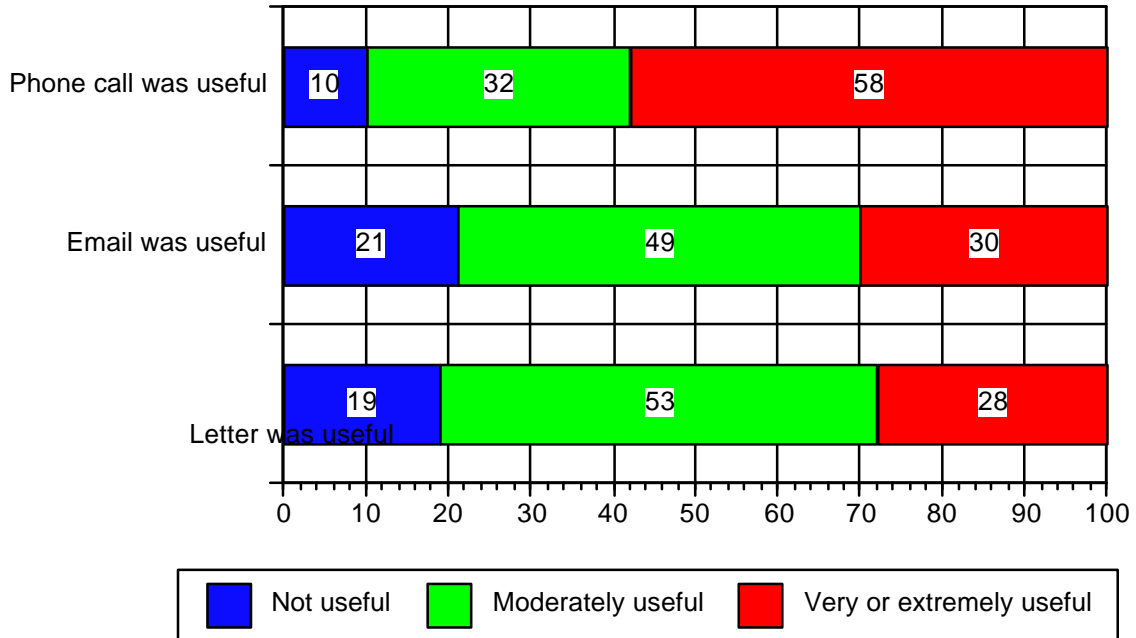


### 3.5 Views about communicating level of compliance

Companies that were assessed as having complied with the legislation were asked a series of questions about this communication process. 65% had spoken to someone at EOWA in relation to their report, 75% had received a related email and 77% had read the compliance letter sent to their organisation.

Findings presented in Figure 6 show how useful respondents rated each of these methods of communication. As can be seen the direct contact of a phone call was rated most highly, with a very high 90% reporting it as being “moderately”, “very” or “extremely useful”.

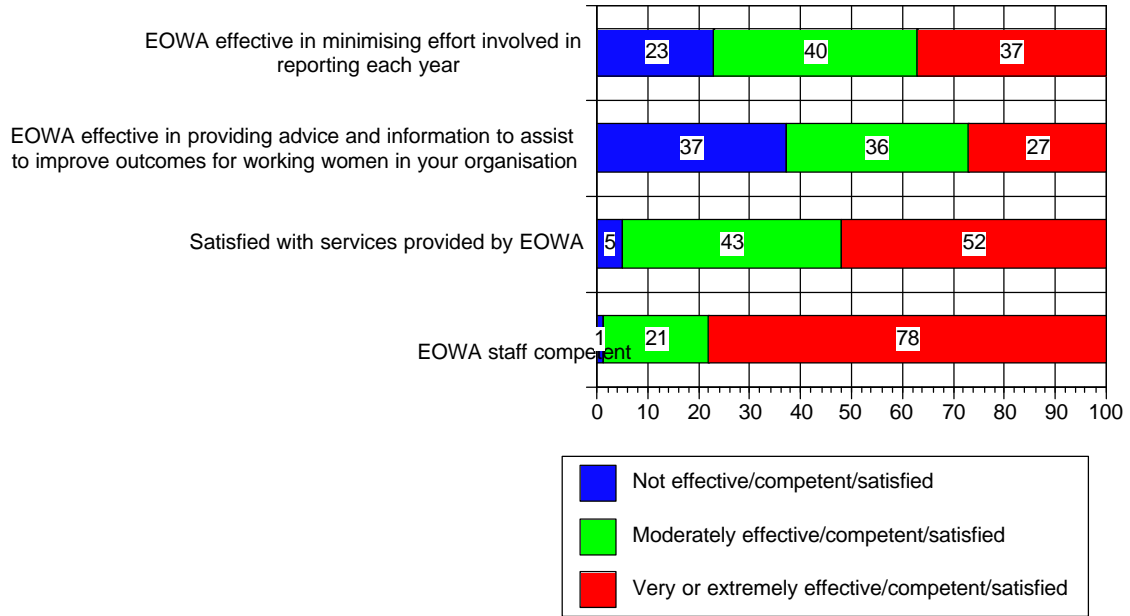
Figure 6  
Views about communication in relation to compliance



### 3.6 Overall views about the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

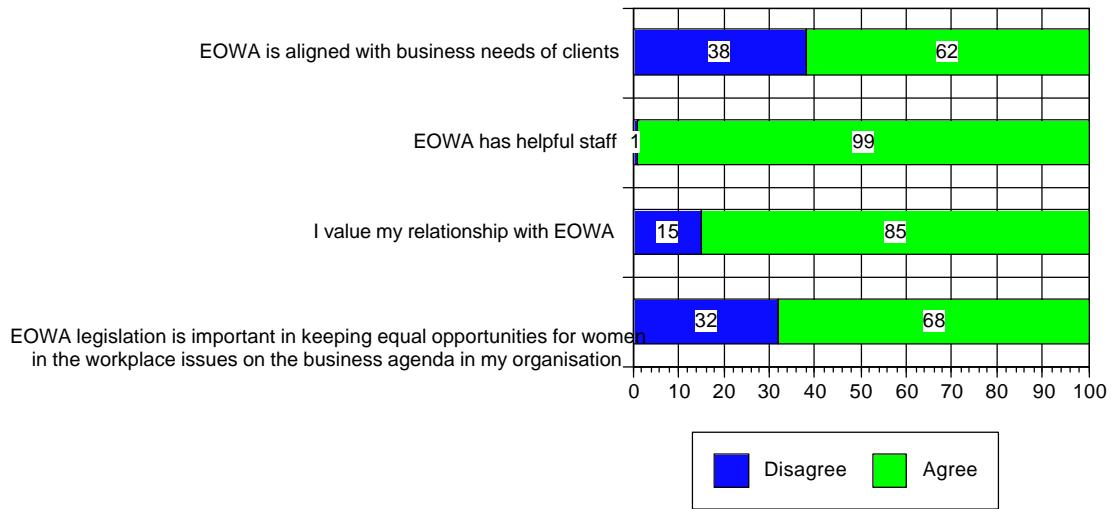
A series of questions was asked to enable an overall assessment to be made of the quality of services provided by EOWA and of the impact it is having on the business community. Findings are summarised in Figures 7 and 8 below. An extremely high number of participants were satisfied with the services provided by EOWA (95%) and rated staff to be competent (99%). These figures are especially high when considered against industry standards on customer satisfaction – companies that achieve ratings of above 80% on these dimensions are considered to be providing outstanding customer service.

Figure 7  
Views about the effectiveness and competence of EOWA and overall rating of satisfaction with EOWA



Ratings for the questions in Figure 8 were made on a four-point disagree/agree scale (1 = “Strongly disagree”; 2 = “Disagree”; 3 = “Agree”; 4 = “Strongly agree”). For the purposes of presentation, the two disagree and the two agree categories have been combined. Again the quality of staff and customer service provided by EOWA is considered to be very high. Given the nature of the relationship between EOWA and its clients in terms of compliance and reporting, a finding that 62% agreed that EOWA is aligned with the business needs of its clients is very high.

Figure 8  
Overall views about EOWA and its impact



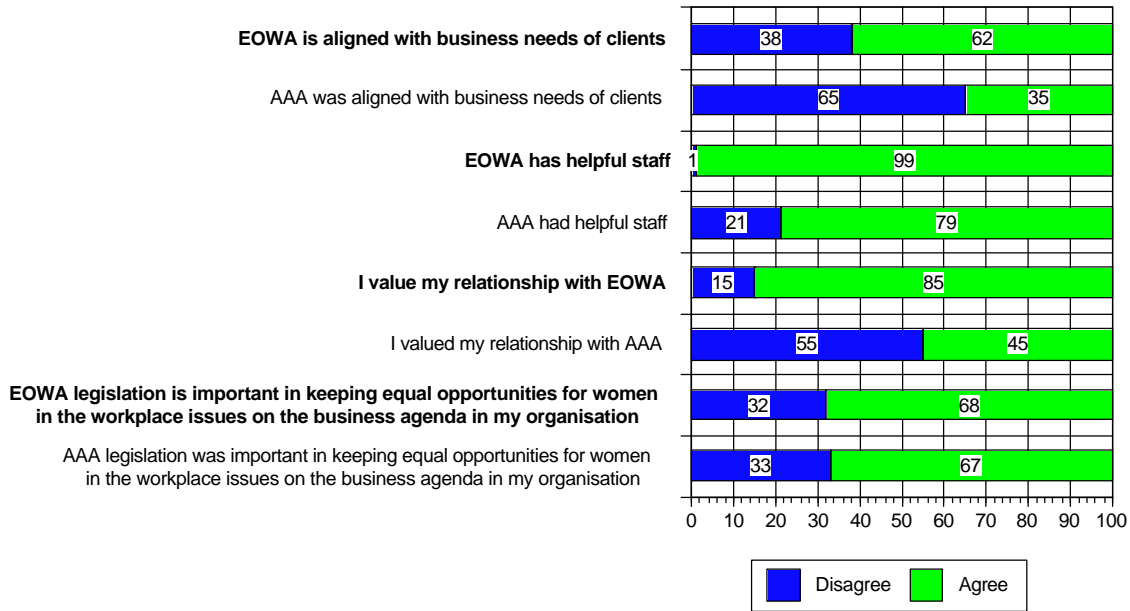
### 3.7 Comparisons between the original Affirmative Action Agency and EOWA.

40% of participants had had personal experience of reporting under both the old and new acts. This group was asked the same questions listed in the previous section in relation to the Affirmative Action Agency. Figures 9 and 10 below show comparisons between the two agencies. It needs to be kept in mind when interpreting these findings that there are limitations to the utilisation of retrospective data. Be that as it may, there are some highly significant differences in perceptions which are consistent with the view that the current agency provides more effective customer service and has had greater impact. Differences are particularly evident in Figure 9 for staff competency and service satisfaction. Differences are particularly evident in Figure 10 for alignment with business needs of clients (62% vs 35%) and the value placed on the relationship with EOWA (85% vs 45%).

Figure 9  
 Comparison between the AAA and EOWA on effectiveness, competence  
 of staff and overall satisfaction



Figure 10  
Overall views of AAA and EOWA



#### 4. Conclusions

This independent external evaluation of the services and products provided by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency presents a very positive picture indeed. Overall, it indicates that:

1. There is a high level of awareness and utilisation of specific services.
2. Services utilised by clients are generally rated to be highly useful, especially the workshops, the advice or information provided on the phone and the website.
3. Although some companies still report difficulties with the reporting process, this is rated as much improved from the previous Act.
4. A highly significant number of companies indicated that the reporting process helped to improve outcomes for women and in their overall business strategy and planning.
5. Overall, EOWA was rated as providing outstanding customer service and to have extremely helpful and competent staff.

6. A significant number valued their relationship with EOWA and found it to be aligned with the business needs of clients.