



2010 Member Survey Report

**Queensland Council
of Social Service**

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Executive Summary

129 of QCOSS' members and stakeholders completed a comprehensive survey in July and August 2010. The response rate is approximately 15% of the 850 or so people who were invited to respond. About 17% of QCOSS' members responded. The number of responses represents an increase from 119 responses received in 2009.

QCOSS' overall performance as a peak body continued to be highly rated, with 76% (95 respondents) of respondents giving positive responses, down from 84% in 2009. 11.3% (14 respondents) said QCOSS was not effective and 12.1% (15 respondents) said they did not know.

Perceptions that QCOSS is improving over time were lower than last year, with almost 29% of respondents stating that QCOSS was more effective than it was 12 months ago, 36% saying it remained the same and 10% saying it was less effective.

QCOSS' engagement with stakeholders attracted 70% positive responses (much the same as last year) and 12% negative (up from 9%).

Awareness of QCOSS' policy and advocacy work continues to increase over time, particularly awareness of its advocacy for fair and sustainable policy ((89% awareness), its social policy forums (87%) and its Budget submission (81%).

The best known aspect of QCOSS' sector development work was its work to raise the profile of the sector, including development of the Charter – 87% of respondents had some knowledge or good knowledge of this. the same proportion were aware of QCOSS' work to influence government funding policy and practice, while 84% were aware of the pay equity campaign.

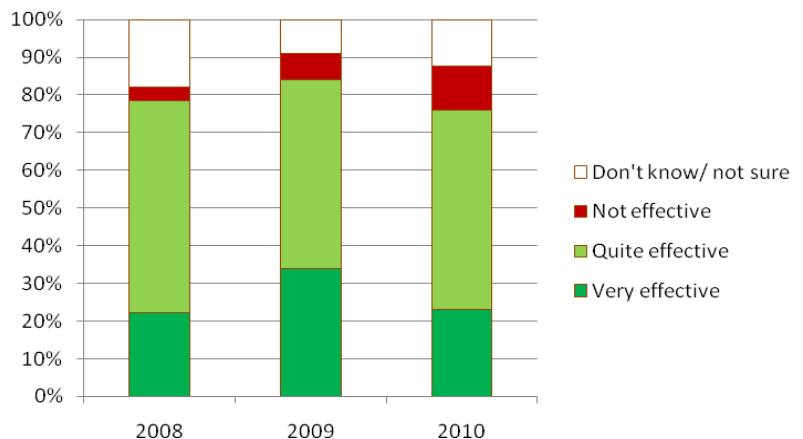
Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of the effectiveness of QCOSS' work in a number of areas. There were more "Don't know" responses this year than last year, slightly reducing the proportions who perceived the work as effective.

Areas of work rated most effective included:

- representing issues concerning the community sector to government (75% reported QCOSS was quite effective or very effective)
- representing issues concerning disadvantaged people to government (71%)
- developing well-articulated policy positions (71%).

The proportion of respondents stating that QCOSS had a positive influence on government policy dropped from 73% in 2009 to 58% in 2010.

QCOSS' overall performance as a peak body



When asked how effectively QCOSS had engaged with specific parts of the sector – Indigenous organisations, multi-cultural organisations and rural and remote organisations – about 40% of all respondents did not know.

Responses were received from:

- seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (this sample is too small to provide a separate analysis of responses, especially as there was strong variation in the responses)
- 22 multi-cultural organisations
- 19 rural and remote organisations (16 rural and 3 remote).

Respondents from multi-cultural organisations were slightly less positive about QCOSS' engagement with their sector than last year, and less positive overall about QCOSS' performance.

Rural and remote organisations were much less positive about QCOSS' rural and remote focus than last year – 42% reported that QCOSS was not effective in this. However they tended to be about as positive about QCOSS' overall performance as the whole of the respondent group.

Feedback on QCOSS' products and services remained positive among those who accessed them, particularly:

- the weekly e-news
- the sector development e-news
- QCOSS website
- QCOSS seminars and events
- networking opportunities
- advice, support and responses from QCOSS staff.

1. Introduction

The aim of the member and stakeholder survey project is to inform the QCOSS Board, management and staff about:

- a) progress against the organisation's strategic outcomes
- b) satisfaction of members and stakeholders with the standard of service being delivered by the organisation.

The 2010 QCOSS member and stakeholder survey adapted the survey tool used in the previous three years. The tool was designed to measure achievement of current strategic outcomes and priorities, while providing some comparisons with survey responses from previous years.

1.1 Survey methodology

QCOSS Director Jill Lang emailed all QCOSS members inviting them to participate in the survey in July 2010. The survey was also promoted several times in the QCOSS weekly e-news, which has 850 subscribers. These communications linked people with the survey on the QUT website which they could fill out electronically, or invited them to request a hard copy.

In addition, QCOSS made the survey available in hard copy to all participants at the 2010 QCOSS conference in August, where 20 people completed it.

QCOSS received 129 responses, an increase from the past two years – 100 completed it in 2009 and 112 in 2008. Almost 75% of respondents were QCOSS members, representing almost 16.5% of the current membership. Approximately 25% of respondents were not QCOSS members.

The survey data was collected and collated by the Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Non-profit Studies at the Queensland University of Technology. Judith Hunter from 99 Consulting did further analysis and compiled this report.

1.2 Respondent profile

The respondents came from across Queensland, with strong representation from regional and rural organisations as shown in Figure 1. The proportion of respondents from metropolitan areas was lower than their proportion of QCOSS' membership, while regional respondents were over-represented based on their proportion of QCOSS membership.

Figure 1: Respondents' geographic profile

Location	Proportion of survey respondents
Metropolitan	46.8%
Regional	38.1%
Rural	12.7%
Remote	2.4%
Not stated	2.4%

Respondent organisations ranged widely in size, as shown in Figure 2, with very small, medium and corporate organisations over-represented compared with their weighting

within QCOSS' membership. The "not applicable" category refers mainly to individual members, who were under-represented in the survey respondents.

Figure 2: Respondents' organisational size profile

Size	Proportion of QCOSS members	Proportion of survey respondents
Organisation with no income or income less than \$100,000	9.4%	10.2%
Very small (annual income \$100,000 - \$500,000)	13%	28.7%
Small \$500,000 - \$1.5 million)	28.9%	16.7%
Medium \$1.5 million - \$5 million)	15%	25%
Large (\$5 million - \$20 million)	7.8%	8.3%
Very large (over \$10 million)	0.7%	2.8%
Corporate (state-wide, multi-site large organisations)	3.7%	8.3%
Not applicable (individuals and associates) or not stated	21.5%	16.2%

Responses were received from seven Indigenous organisations (5.6% of respondents) and 22 multi-cultural organisations (17.5% of respondents). This allows some analysis of satisfaction for multi-cultural organisations but no meaningful analysis for Indigenous stakeholders due to the small size of the sample.

Other relevant factors in the profile of respondents include:

- 74.8% of respondents were QCOSS members
- the greatest proportion of respondents had been associated with QCOSS for 1-5 years (44.4%) or 6-10 years (18.3%). About 17% had been associated with QCOSS for less than one year, and almost 8% of respondents had been associated with QCOSS for more than 20 years.
- 70% of respondents were from not for profit community and/or health organisations 8% were from peak bodies and 8% from government.

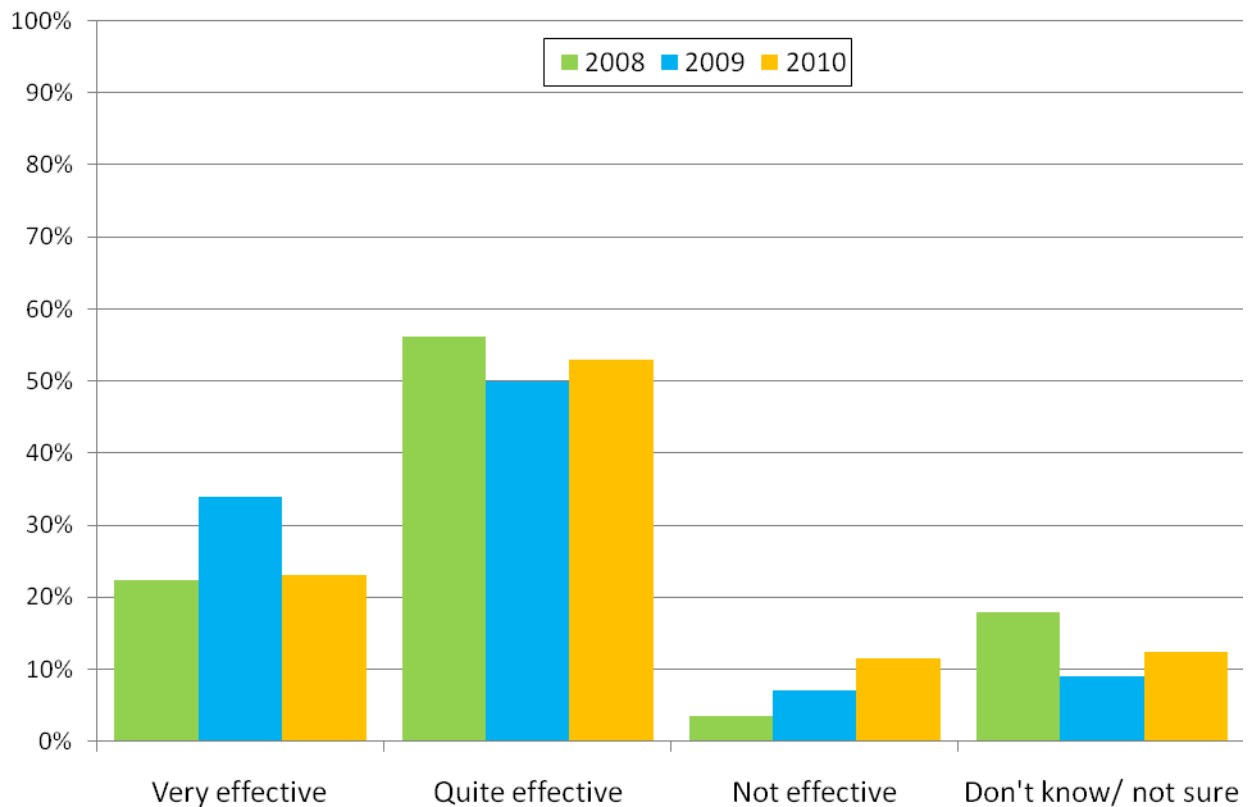
2. Survey Findings

2.1 Satisfaction with QCOSS performance

The 2010 survey included three questions looking at QCOSS' overall performance.

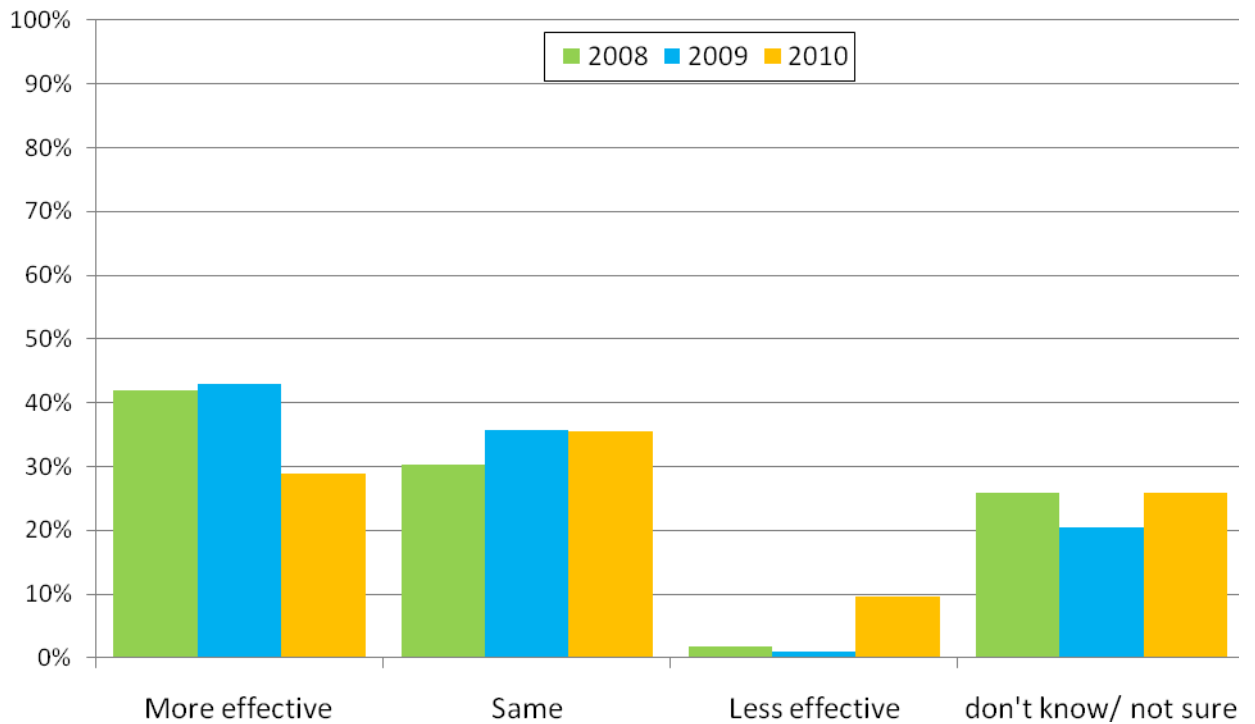
Respondents were asked to rate the overall performance of QCOSS as a peak body. 76.6% of respondents (95 people) gave positive responses (quite effective or very effective), down from 84% in 2009. 11.3% of respondents (14 people) were negative about QCOSS' overall performance, compared with 7% in 2009. 12.1% (15 people) selected "don't know/ not sure".

Figure 3: Overall performance of QCOSS as a peak body



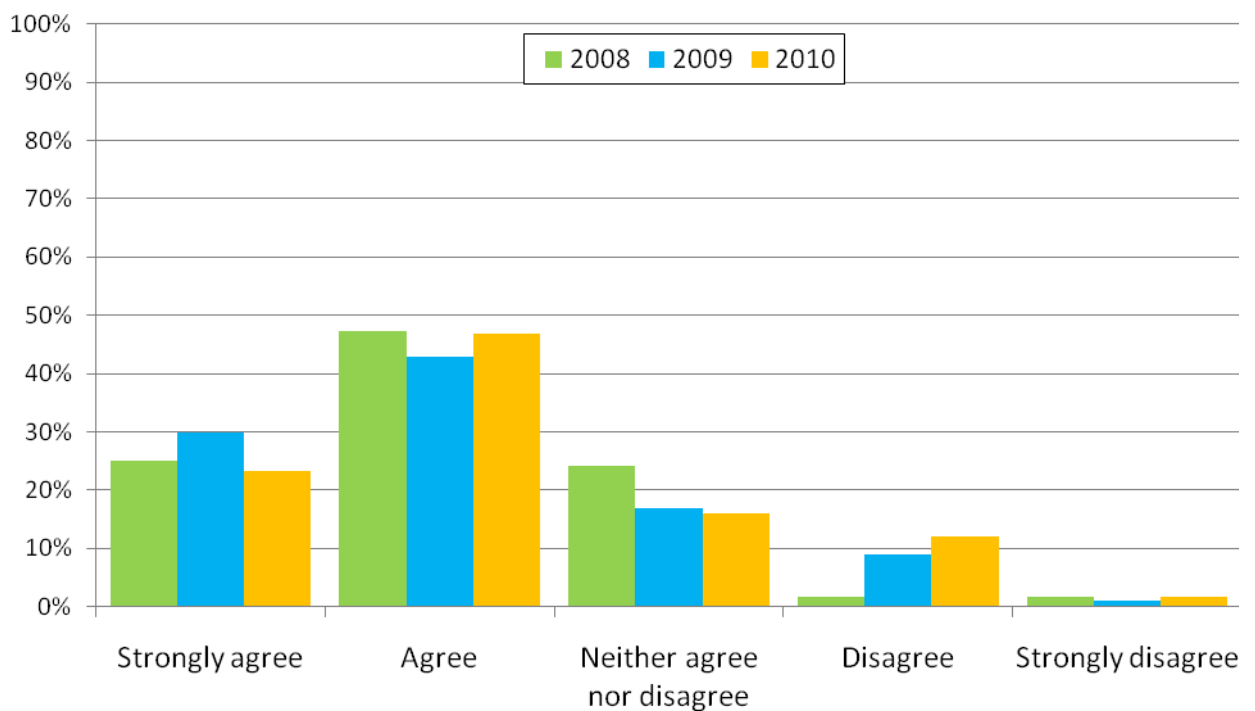
Respondents were asked to rate QCOSS' performance as a peak body compared with one year ago, a question repeated from previous years. Most respondents stated that QCOSS' effectiveness was the same or better than last year. However there was an increase in respondents stating QCOSS was less effective than a year ago, up to 9.7% this year compared with 1% in 2009. 26% of respondents did not know or weren't sure, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Overall performance of QCOSS as a peak body compared with a year ago



A third overarching question asked respondents to rate their agreement with the statement: "QCOSS has engaged effectively with members and stakeholders". Overall, 70% of respondents were positive, while 14% were negative. This is roughly consistent with previous years.

Figure 5: Effective engagement with members and stakeholders



2.1.1 Effectiveness in goal achievement

Respondents were asked to rate QCOSS' effectiveness in achieving specific goals.

As Figures 6-9 show, results varied for these goals. Strong results for these questions in 2009 followed successes in the wages campaign; in leading the push for increased funding to cover increased wages, in the interpreters funding campaign and in playing a key role in developing and promoting the Queensland Compact. Campaigns in the past 12 months have been lower profile, which may account for a decline in perceived effectiveness and an increase in "Don't Know" responses across the board. In addition the discontinuation of funding for the regional sector development workers is likely to have had an impact.

QCOSS' advocacy work – representing both the sector and people who are disadvantaged – was highly rated by respondents:

- almost 75% of respondents said QCOSS was effective in representing community sector issues to government (down from 79% in 2009)
- about 71% of respondents said QCOSS was quite effective or very effective in representing issues concerning disadvantaged people to government (down from 76.5% in 2009).

Elements of QCOSS' policy work rated well, although respondents were less positive about this work than they were in 2009. For example:

- 71% said QCOSS developed well articulated policy positions (down from 74% in 2009)
- about 67% said QCOSS had a positive influence on community debate (down from 72% in 2009)
- almost 68% were positive about QCOSS' effectiveness in providing opportunities for engagement in policy development, about the same as last year.
- 58% said QCOSS had a positive influence on government policy (down from 73% last year).

As with previous years, the lowest ratings were recorded for QCOSS' effectiveness in representing issues to the wider community:

- more than 51% of respondents stated that QCOSS was effective in representing issues relating to disadvantaged people to the wider community (down from 61% in 2009), while 23% stated QCOSS was not effective and 25% did not know.
- almost 50% said that QCOSS was effective in representing sector issues to the wider community, down from 59% last year.

Responses of "Don't Know/ Not Sure" ranged from 19% (representing community sector issues to government) to 29% (representing community sector issues to the wider community). Overall, there were more "Don't Know" responses this year than last year.

Figure 6: Perceived effectiveness – influence on government and community

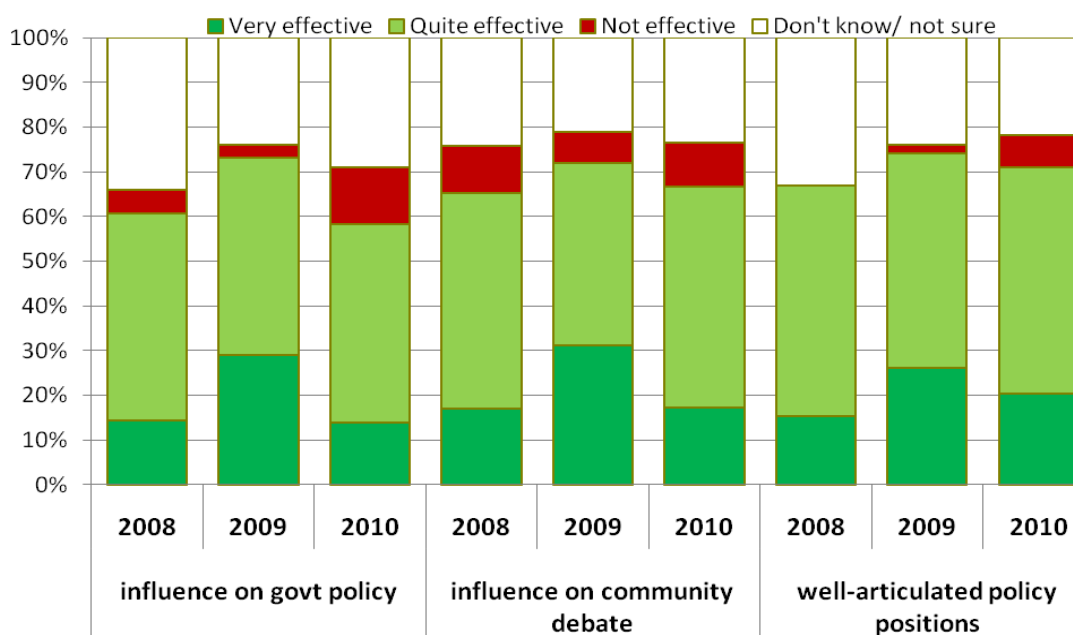


Figure 7: Perceived effectiveness – representing sector issues

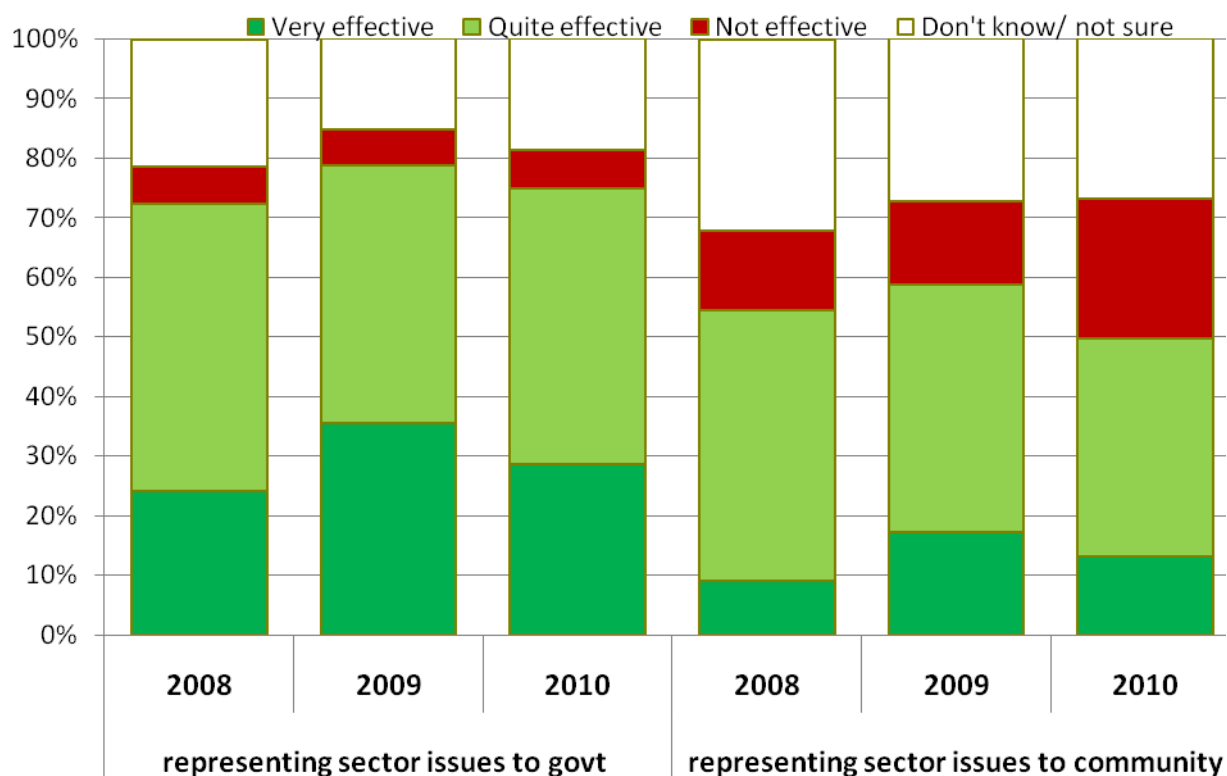


Figure 8: Perceived effectiveness – representing issues for disadvantaged people

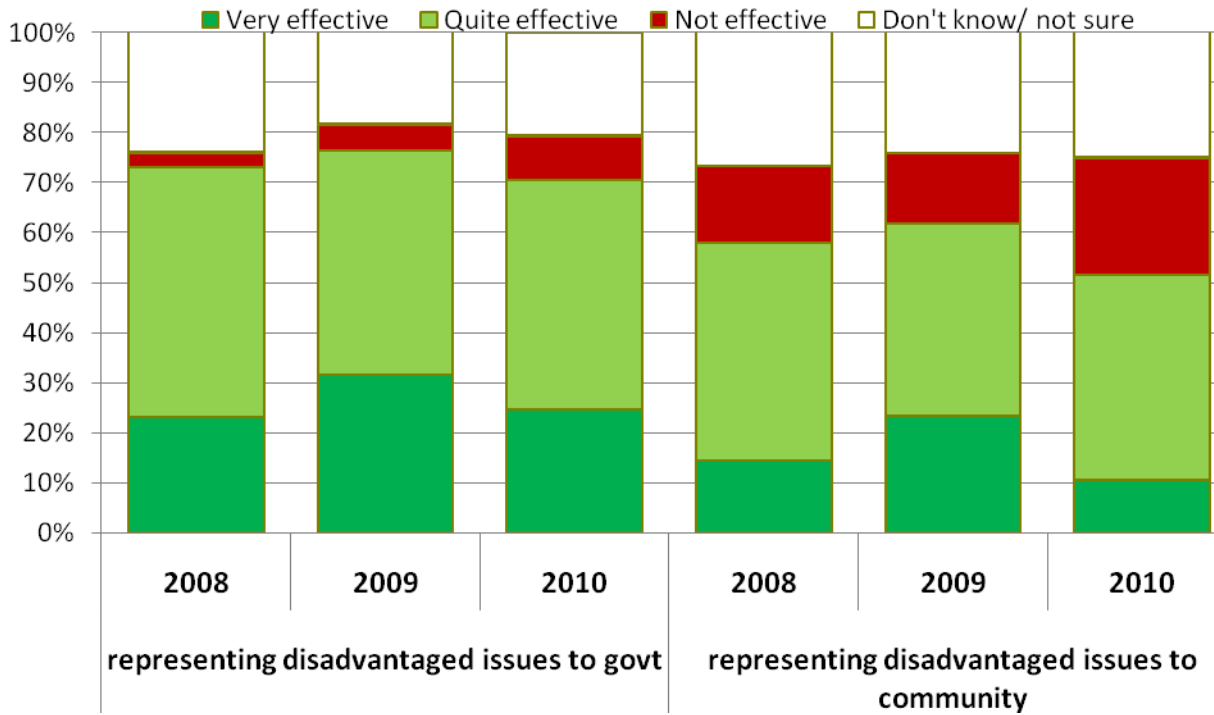
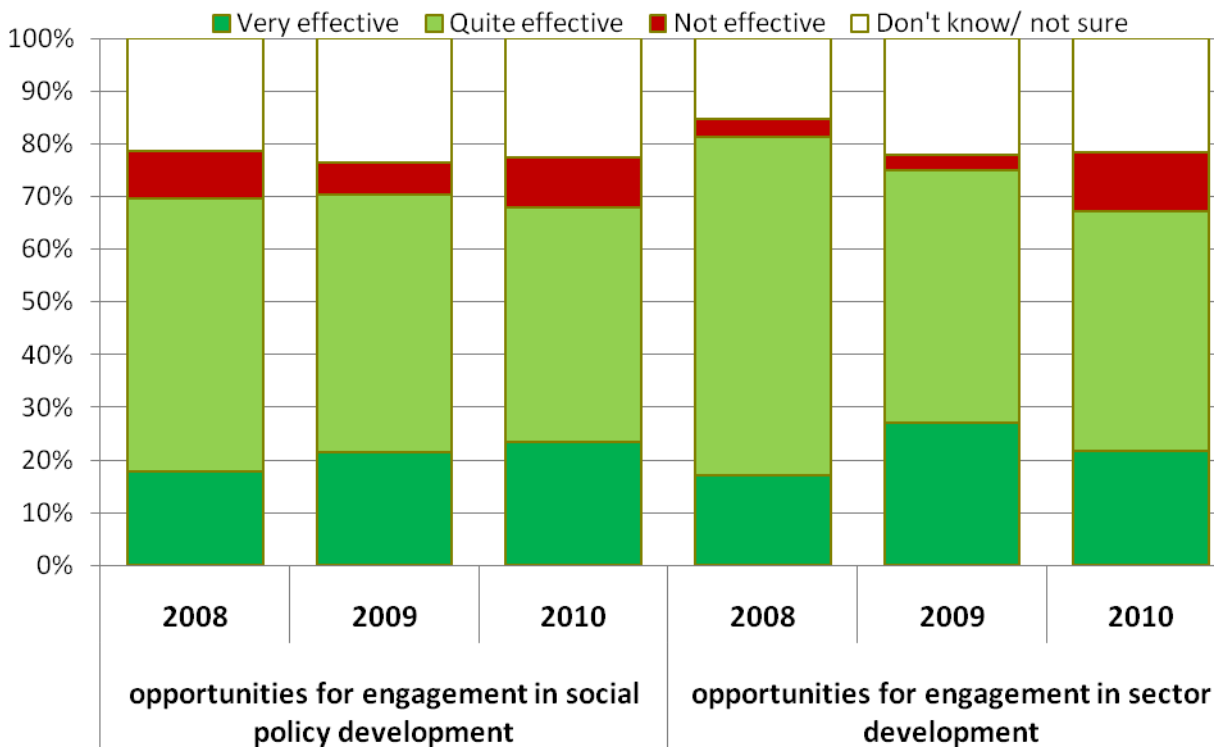


Figure 9: Perceived effectiveness – opportunities for engagement



2.1.2 Qualitative feedback

The survey sought qualitative feedback on QCOSS' strengths and opportunities through two open-ended questions. Verbatim responses are provided in Appendix 3.

Themes emerging in responses to the question relating to QCOSS' strengths included:

- advocacy and a voice for the sector
- credibility
- providing forums for discussion of ideas
- engagement
- communication with the sector
- staff, leaders and committee
- breadth of involvement in issues
- networking
- relationships with government
- state-wide voice and presence.

The questions about how QCOSS could be more effective elicited a range of responses with the following key themes emerging:

- a stronger focus on supporting and engaging with regional, rural and remote organisations and issues relating to regional areas
- greater awareness of the diversity of the sector, including acknowledging the needs of small organisations
- more targeted, concise communication
- a higher public profile and greater engagement with the community through media, advertising and public forums.

2.3 Strategic plan review suggestions

The survey also asked respondents for suggestions for strategic priorities to be included in QCOSS' strategic plan currently under review.

Suggestions for policy/ advocacy focal areas included:

- advocacy to increase funding for prevention and early intervention
- more advocacy to end disadvantage and poverty, including advocacy for a whole-of-state end poverty plan and development of a long term vision for Queensland
- a positive, innovative approach to address disadvantage and other specific issues
- engagement with and advocacy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities
- more research into poverty and disadvantage to understand the issues and lived experience
- awareness raising about the impact of disadvantage among both government and the broader community
- more sophisticated gender and diversity analysis of issues such as homelessness
- greater understanding of cost of living pressures on people; and development of responses to address them
- encouragement of partnerships, within the sector and with the private sector and government
- support sectors to advocate together
- a greater focus on specific issues including:
 - mental health
 - housing affordability
 - responding to homelessness
 - education
 - employment
 - dental care
 - transport
 - aged care.

Suggestions for priorities for sector development raised by more than one respondent included:

- training and development in the sector
- focus on regional areas
- support for smaller agencies
- funding / full cost of service delivery
- increased focus on the health sector.

2.3 Knowledge of QCOSS work

2.3.1 Sector development initiatives

The survey asked respondents to rate their knowledge of the following QCOSS sector development projects:

- (a) QCOSS' participation in the Community Services Futures Forum - a coalition of over 40 state-wide human services, peak organisations, service providers and networks across the whole of Queensland
- (b) QCOSS' work to raise the profile of the sector - including the development of the Community Services Sector Charter as a tool to promote the value and the contribution of the sector.
- (c) QCOSS work through the Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU) providing professional support and development to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Childcare Centres
- (d) QCOSS' involvement in the Compact Governance Committee – which consists of representatives from the sector and from government to provide oversight to the implementation of the Compact
- (e) QCOSS' work to shape government funding policy and practice – including its work on the Common Service Agreement
- (f) QCOSS' work to reduce red tape – including work around generic output measures and streamlined reporting through OASIS and other ongoing work to raise sector issues related to administrative and compliance burden
- (g) QCOSS Director Jill Lang's participation in the Taskforce to develop a National Compact for the not for profit sector
- (h) Pay Equity campaign coordination, workshops, resources and advocacy to government for full funding of pay increases
- (i) The management and re-development of the Community Door website to provide online resources to support organisational development
- (j) Participation of QCOSS providing input into improving responses to homelessness through the SAAP Networking Strategy.

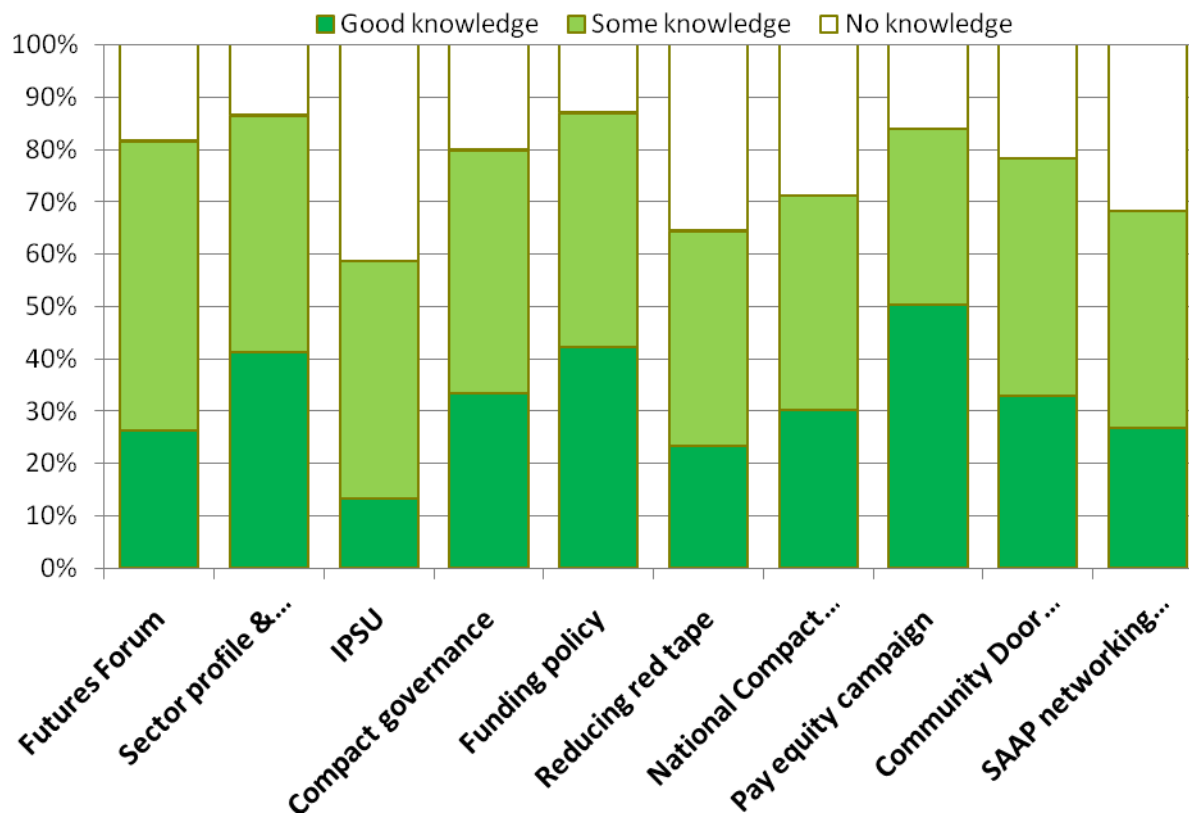
Awareness of Compact governance and funding policy had increased compared with 2009, while awareness of all other initiatives decreased or stayed the same. The fact that almost 17% of respondents had been involved with QCOSS for less than one year may have influenced awareness levels.

The best known project was QCOSS' work to raise the profile of the sector including development of the Charter, with 87% of respondents having some or good knowledge of this. QCOSS' work to shape government funding policy and practice was also known by 87% of respondents. The pay equity campaign was also well known, with 84% of respondents reporting "some" or "good" knowledge of this initiative. QCOSS' participation in the Futures Forum was also well known.

Least known was the work of the Indigenous Professional Support Unit, with over 40% of respondents stating they had no knowledge of IPSU's work. QCOSS' work on the SAAP networking strategy was unknown by over 32% of respondents. Like IPSU's work, this initiative relates to a segment of the sector rather than across the board, and is less likely to be known by those not directly affected. QCOSS' work to reduce red tape was not known by 36% of respondents.

Figure 10 shows respondents' knowledge of the full range of sector development initiatives.

Figure 10: Respondents' knowledge of sector development initiatives



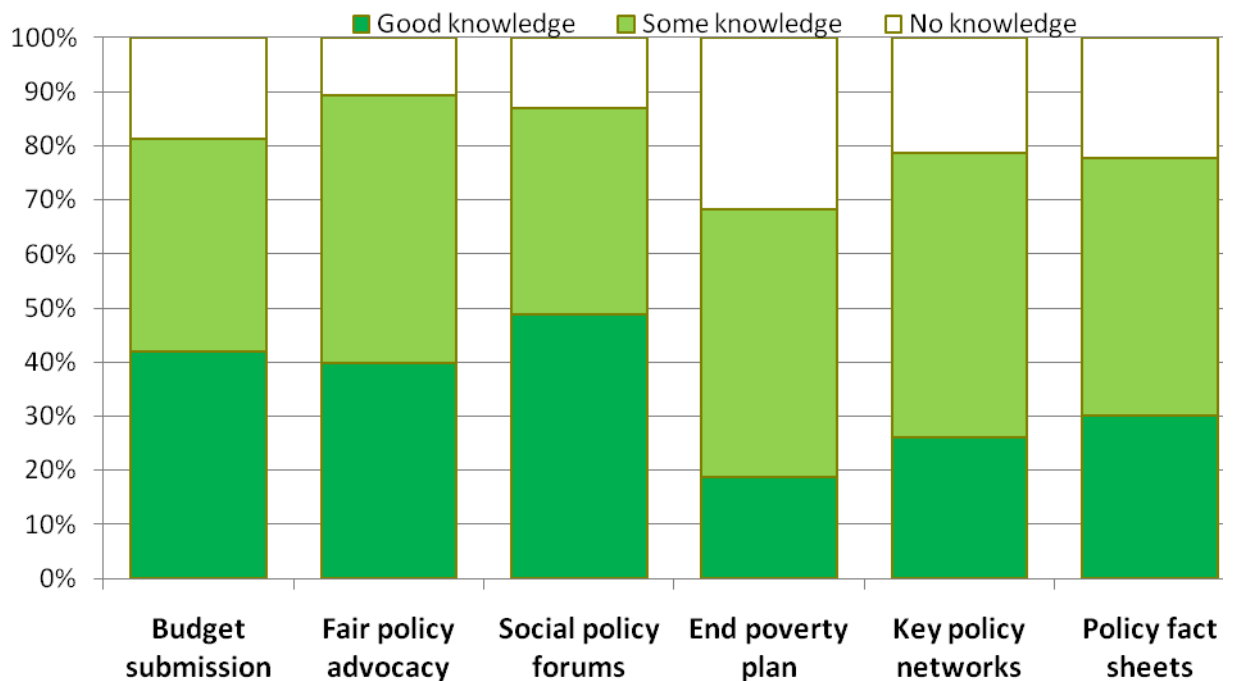
2.3.2 Policy/advocacy initiatives

The survey asked respondents to rate their knowledge of the following QCOSS policy/advocacy initiatives:

- Development of an annual social policy submission to the State budget
- Advocacy of fair and sustainable policy through various other social policy submissions, advisory mechanisms, workshops, forums, reference groups, breakfasts, etc.
- QCOSS forums through the state seeking member and stakeholder input on policy issues and solutions
- Development and advocacy of an end-poverty plan for Queensland particularly around Anti-Poverty Week
- Participation in and development of key policy networks on issues such as homelessness and energy pricing
- Social policy fact sheets and policy position papers.

Awareness of almost all of these initiatives has increased over the past four years, with awareness of key policy networks the only area to drop from 2009 to 2010. Greatest awareness was for advocacy of fair and sustainable policy (89.4%), social policy forums (87%) and the Budget policy submission (81.4%). Lowest awareness was for QCOSS' end poverty plan (68.3%).

Figure 11: Respondents' knowledge of advocacy/ policy initiatives



2.4 Specialist Groups

Over recent years, QCOSS has worked on improving responsiveness to regional, rural and remote organisations and particular sectors including Indigenous and multicultural organisations. The questionnaire provided an opportunity to test satisfaction with QCOSS' increased focus on these groups.

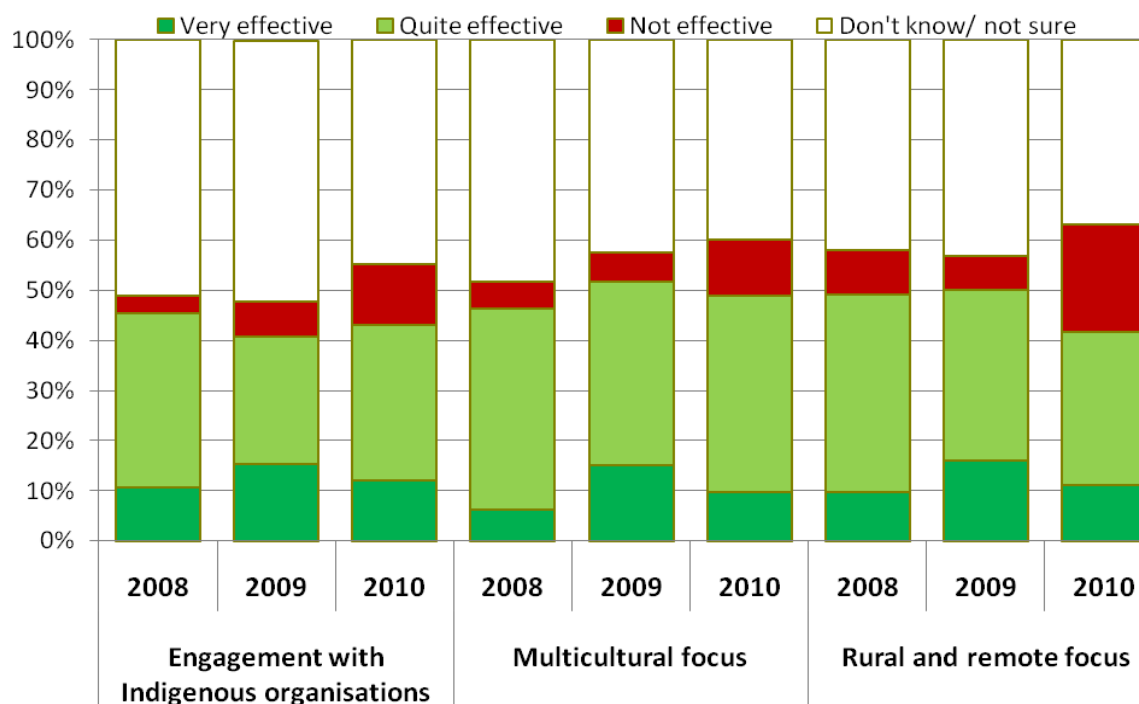
The survey asked respondents to rate QCOSS' effectiveness in achieving the following goals:

- developing strategies for engagement with Indigenous organisations
- developing a rural and remote focus
- developing a multicultural focus.

Overall, 36-44% of the survey respondents refrained from answering these questions stating that they did not know or were not sure.

As Figure 12 shows, there was a slight improvement in positive responses about QCOSS' engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. There was a decrease in positive responses about QCOSS' multicultural focus and rural and remote focus.

Figure 12: Perceived effectiveness in engaging/ focusing on target groups



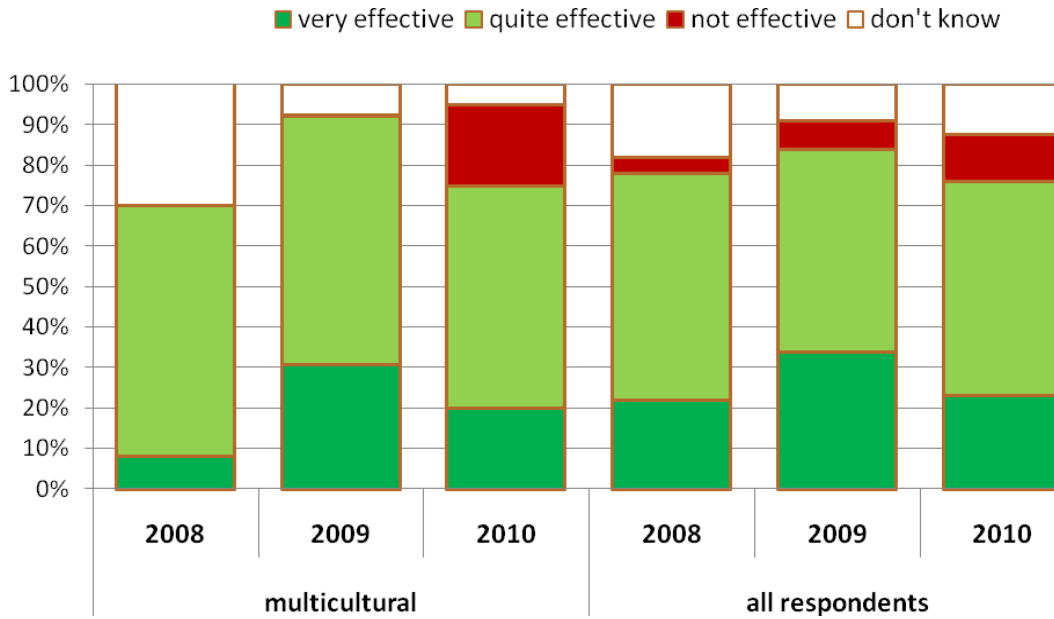
A breakdown of responses from multicultural and rural, remote and regional organisations is provided below. Only seven responses were received from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondent organisations – not enough to draw any broader conclusions about perceptions within the Indigenous sector.

2.4.1 Multi-cultural organisations

Twenty two respondents to the survey characterised themselves as multi-cultural organisations (up from 13 in 2009). This is a small sample, and may not indicate wider perceptions.

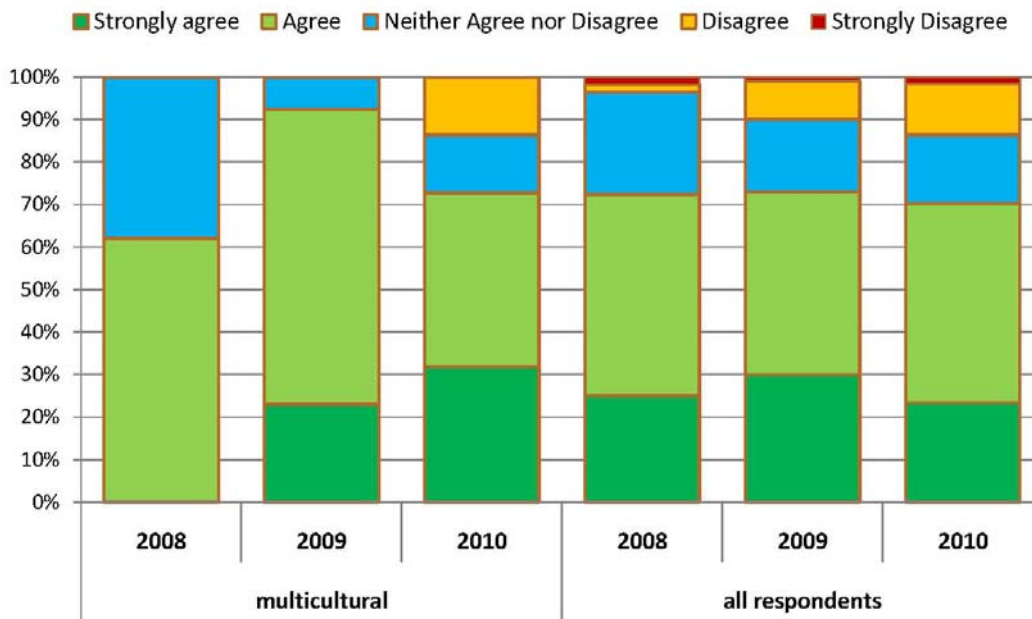
Comparisons with the overall respondents indicate that respondents from multi-cultural organisations were as positive about QCOSS' effectiveness as a peak body as other respondents. However positive responses dropped from 92.3% of respondents from multi-cultural organisations in 2009 to 75% in 2010.

Figure 13: overall effectiveness of QCOSS as a peak body



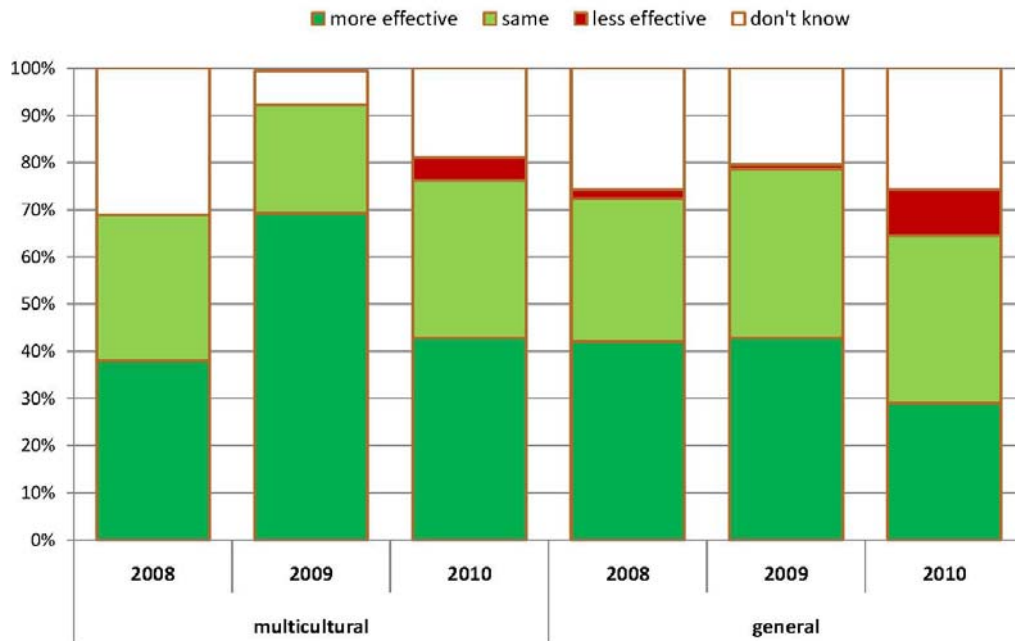
As shown in Figure 14, respondents from multi-cultural organisations were slightly more positive about QCOSS' engagement with members and stakeholders than the total group of respondents. However there was a significant decrease in positive responses from 2009.

Figure 14: effective engagement with members and stakeholders



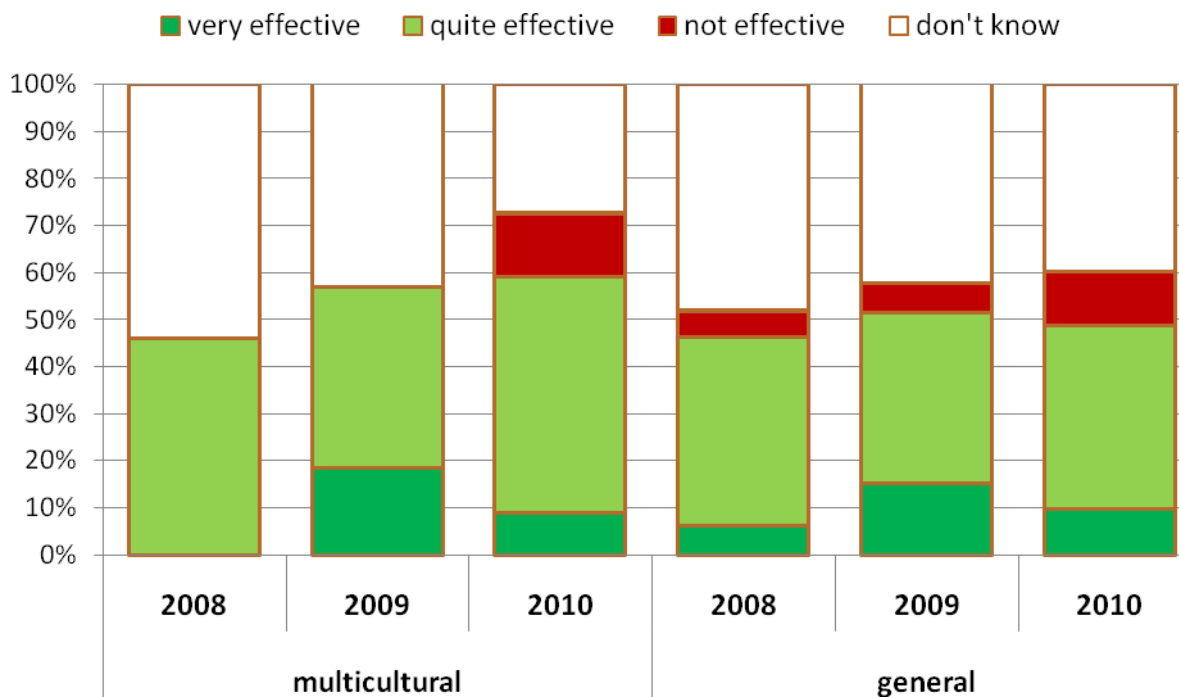
While respondents from multi-cultural organisations were more positive about QCOSS' performance compared with 12 months ago than the whole group of respondents, this area also declined compared with 2009, as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15: QCOSS performance compared with 12 months ago



Satisfaction with QCOSS' multi-cultural focus from multi-cultural respondents improved slightly from the previous years as shown in Figure 16, with 59% of multi-cultural organisations responding to this question stating that QCOSS had been quite effective or very effective. 13.6% of respondents from multi-cultural organisations (3 people) said that QCOSS had not been effective, compared with none in 2006. Overall multi-cultural organisations were more positive about this question than the whole group.

Figure 16: effective multi-cultural focus

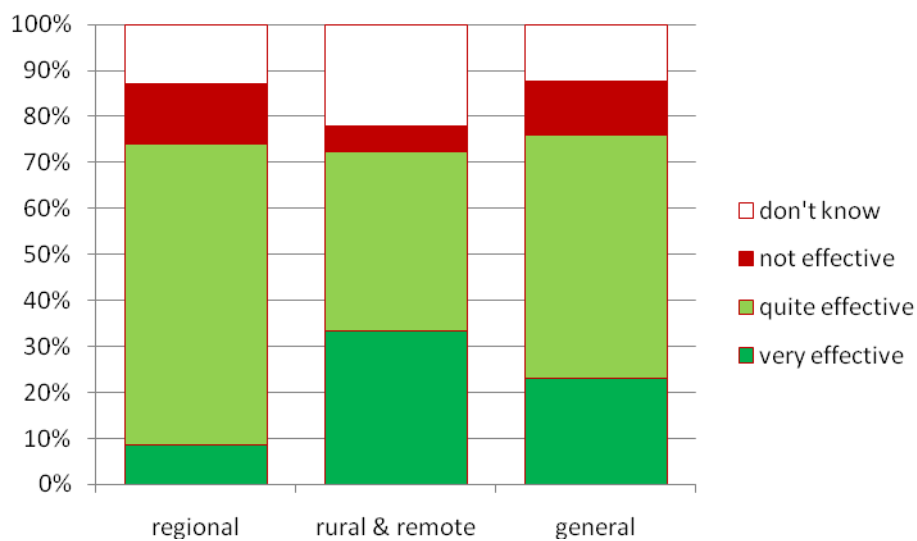


2.4.2 Regional, rural and remote organisations

Nineteen respondents nominated themselves as rural and remote organisations (16 rural and three remote), up from 12 last year. 48 were regional organisations, also up from last year. Rural and remote categories have been grouped together in this report. The following graphs compare satisfaction levels for regional respondents, rural and remote respondents and overall (general) respondents.

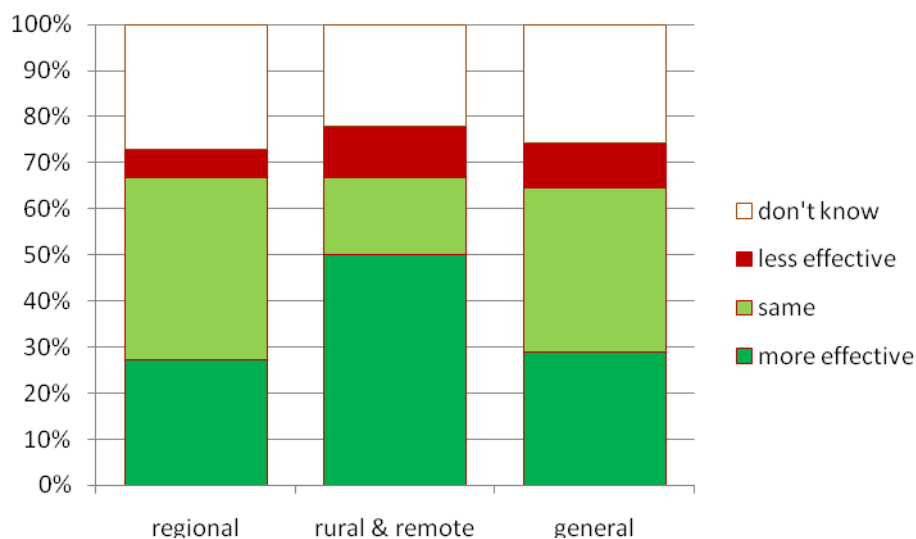
About 72% of rural and remote respondents, and almost 74% of regional respondents, were positive about QCOSS' overall performance, stating that QCOSS was either very effective or quite effective as a peak body, compared with 76% of the total sample. Just under 6% of the rural and remote and 13% of the regional respondents said that QCOSS was not effective.

Figure 17: Overall performance as a peak body



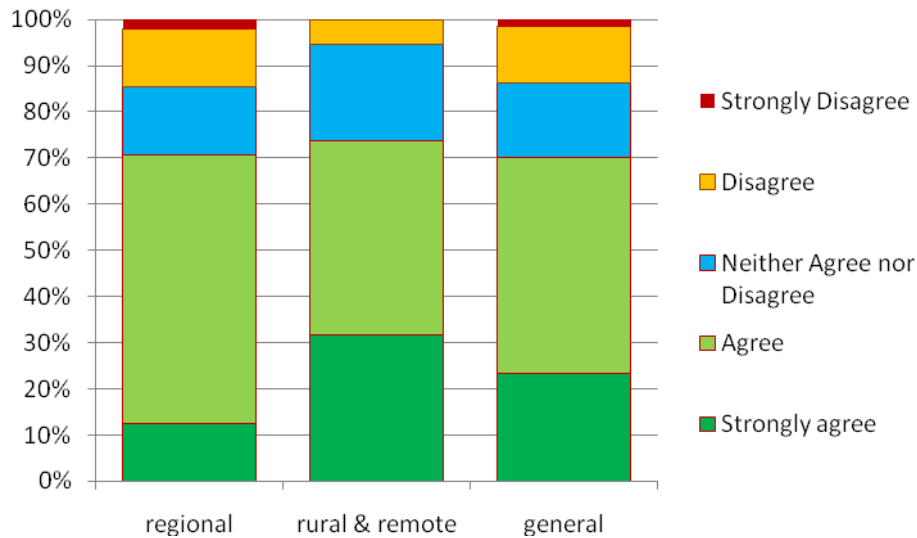
Remote and rural respondents were significantly more positive about the improvement in QCOSS' performance as a peak body over the past 12 months than the overall group, with 50% of rural and remote respondents stating that QCOSS' performance had improved compared with 29% of the whole group and 27% of regional respondents.

Figure 18: Overall effectiveness of QCOSS compared with 12 months ago



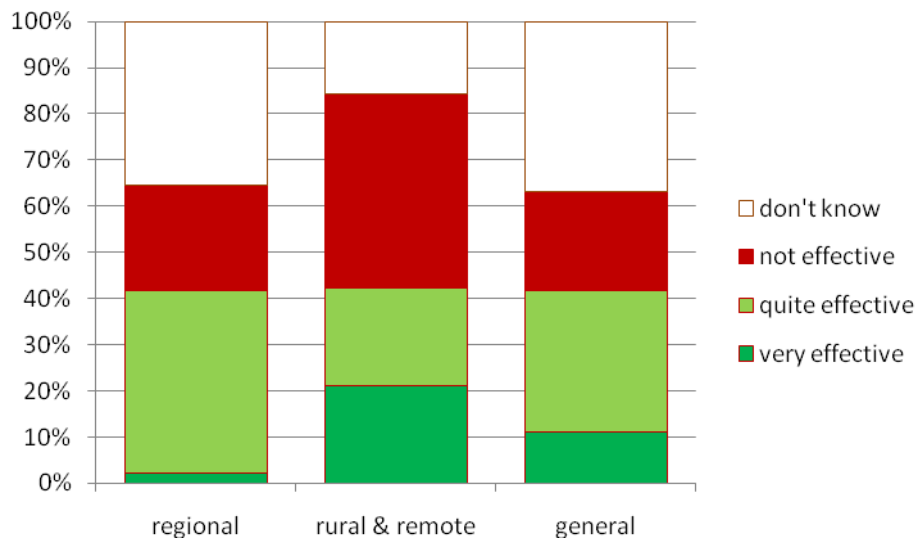
Perceptions about QCOSS' engagement with members and stakeholders were similar between the regional, rural and remote respondents and the broader population, although rural and remote organisations were more likely to strongly agree that QCOSS had engaged effectively, as seen in Figure 19 below. No remote and rural organisations disagreed that QCOSS engages effectively, compared with 14.6% of regional respondents and 14% of overall respondents.

Figure 19: QCOSS engages effectively with members and stakeholders



Rural and remote respondents were more negative than other respondents about QCOSS' effectiveness in developing a rural and remote focus, with 42% (eight respondents) stating that QCOSS had not been effective in this goal. 21% stated QCOSS had been very effective and 21% said it had been quite effective.

Figure 20: effective rural and remote focus



2.5 QCOSS products and services

2.5.1 Frequency of use

The survey assessed usage of QCOSS products and services, and satisfaction with these.

As shown in Figure 22 below and overleaf, the following products and services were well-used:

- weekly email bulletin – more than 77% of respondents accessed this during the year including almost half of these who used it more than 12 times in the past 12 months.
- seminars / training/ events – 75% of respondents accessed these
- QCOSS website – over 85% of respondents accessed the website during the year (up from 77% in 2009)
- networking opportunities – 62% accessed, the same proportion as last year

Less well-used were:

- Fair Queensland quarterly magazine – 56% of respondents accessed this service during the year (down from 60% in 2009)
- QCOSS staff support, advices and responses – accessed by 52% of respondents.
- QCOSS website job advertisements – accessed by 46% of respondents
- free event promotion on the QCOSS website – accessed by 46% of respondents
- members' discounts on QCOSS products and events – used by 20%.

Figure 22a: Frequency of use of QCOSS products and services

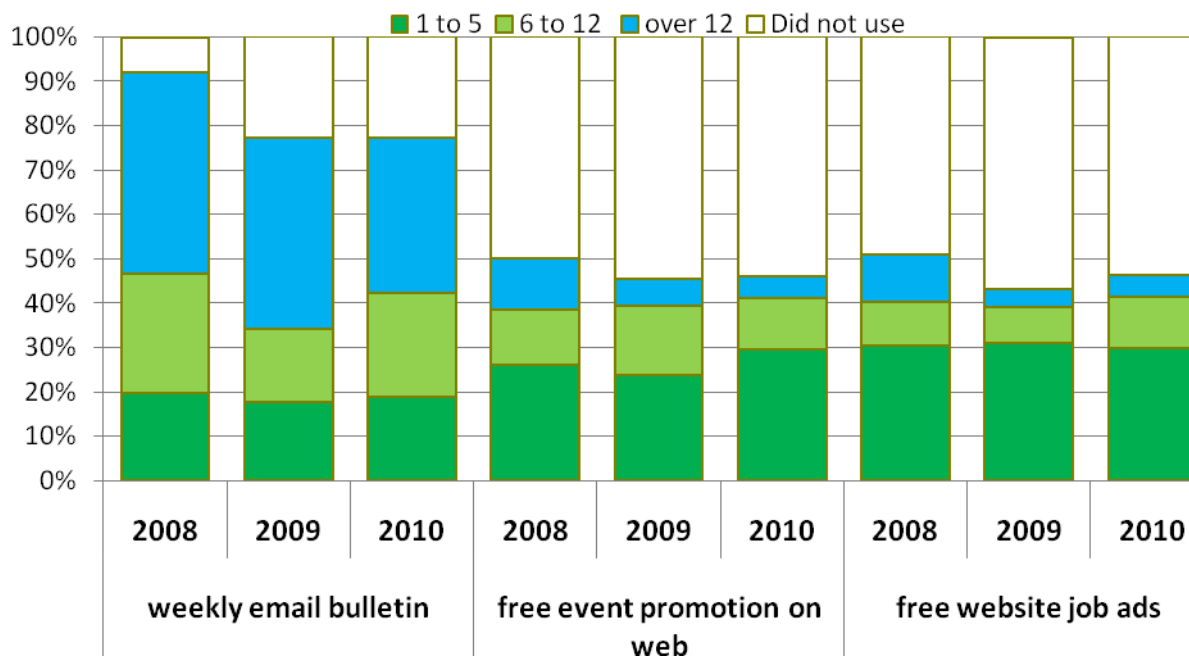


Figure 22b: Frequency of use of QCOSS products and services

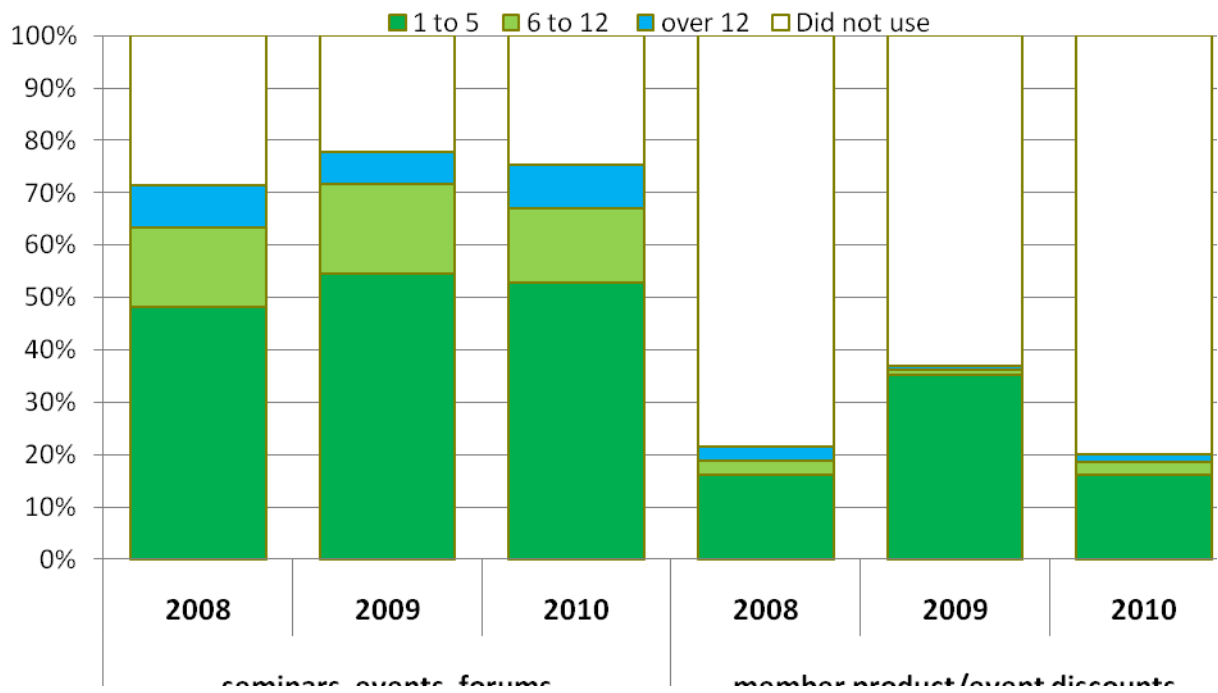


Figure 22c: Frequency of use of QCOSS products and services

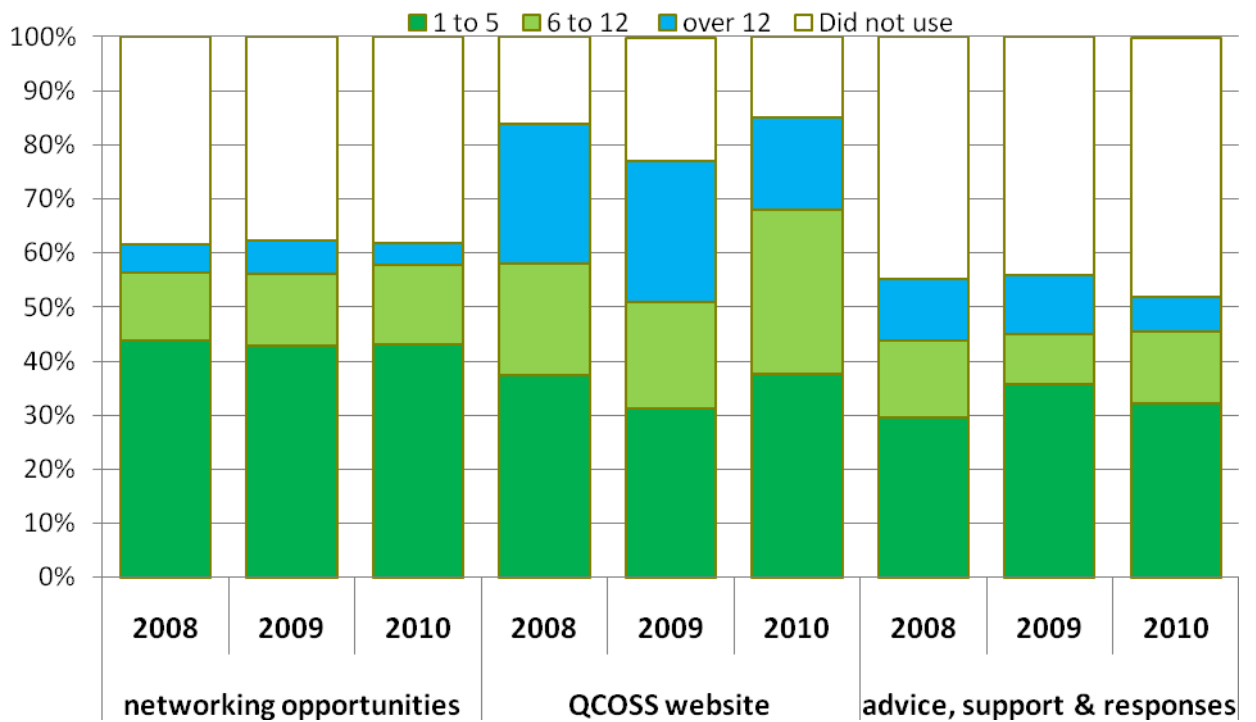
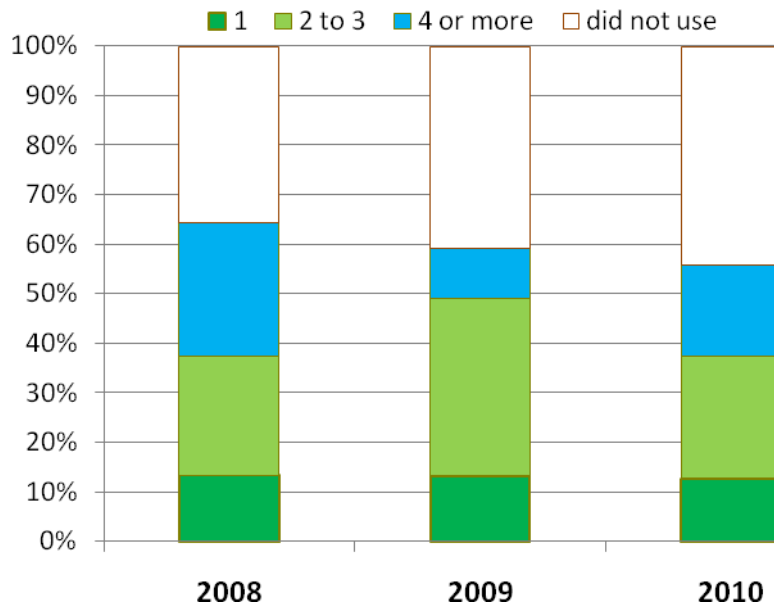


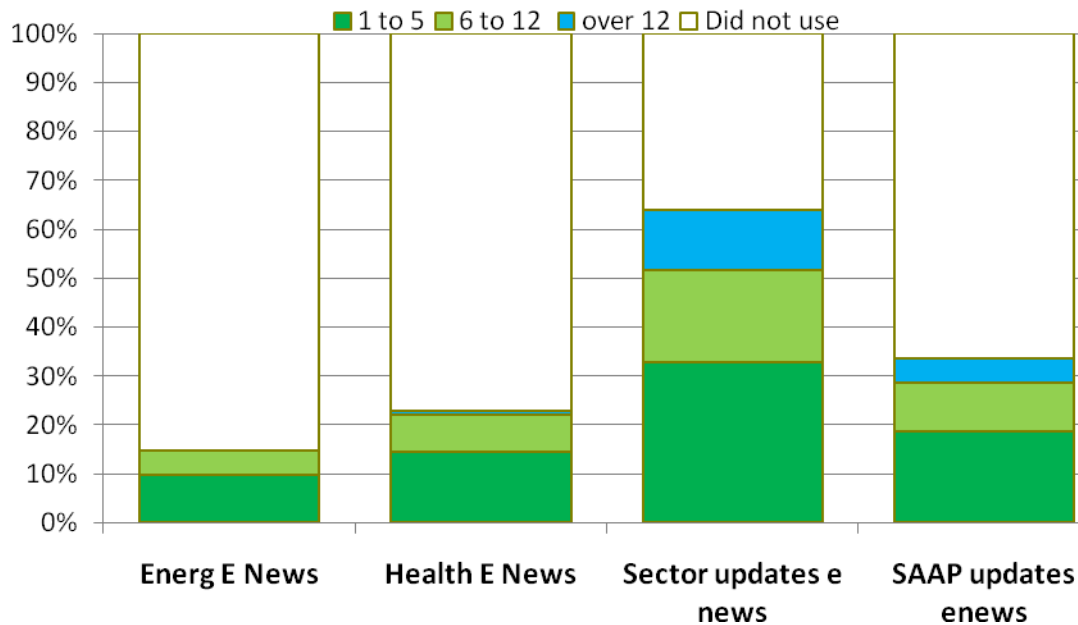
Figure 22d shows frequency of use of FQ magazine, with the scale amended to reflect the magazine's quarterly publication.

Figure 22d: Frequency of use: FQ Magazine



Usage of new tools including e-newsletters for the energy and health campaigns, sector development and the SAAP networking strategy were less well used than many of the longer-established tools, however the sector updates e-news was accessed at least once by 64% of respondents.

Figure 22e: Frequency of use: specialist e-updates



2.5.2. Satisfaction with products and services

Satisfaction with QCOSS products and services was fairly high across the board for respondents who had accessed them.

The highest level of satisfaction among users of the product and services related to:

- the weekly email bulletin with 87% of those who used it satisfied or very satisfied
- QCOSS staff responses to queries, and QCOSS staff advice and support, both rating over 86% satisfaction among those who used them
- QCOSS website – 80% of users satisfied or very satisfied (down from 87% last year)
- QCOSS seminars and events – 80% of users satisfied or very satisfied
- Sector updates e-news, with 81% of those who had accessed it reporting satisfaction.

Satisfaction with the quarterly Fair Queensland magazine dropped significantly, from over 81% of those who accessed it in 2009 to 60% in 2010. Similarly satisfaction with networking opportunities dropped from 82% to 70%.

Figure 23a: User satisfaction with QCOSS products and services

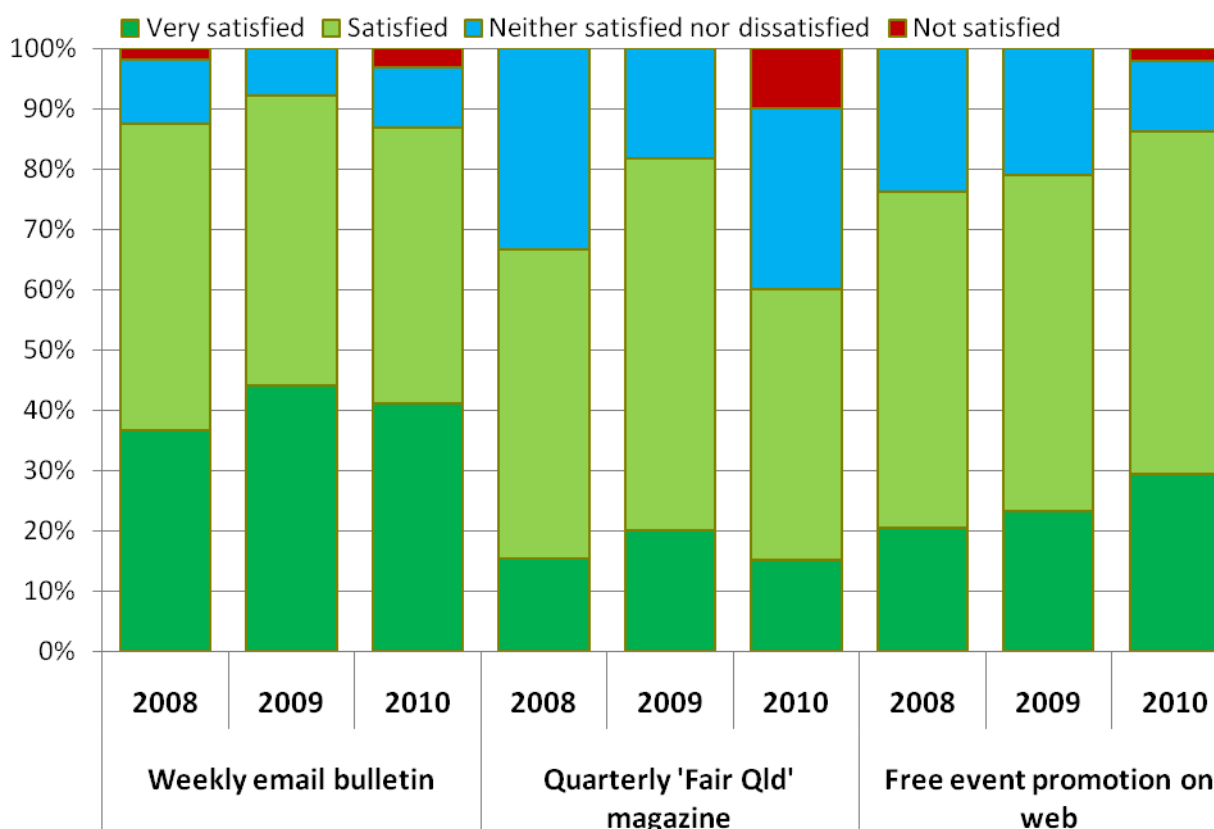


Figure 23b: User satisfaction with QCOSS products and services

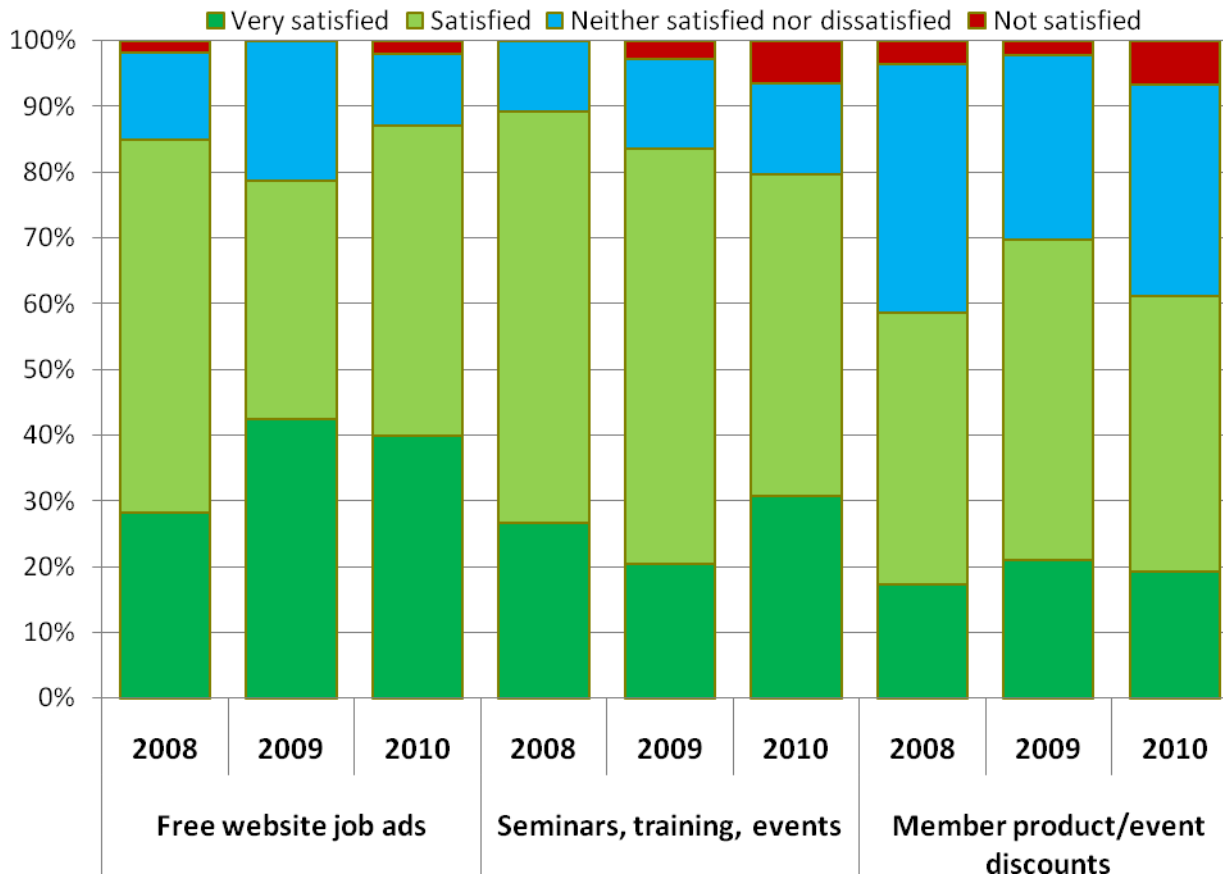


Figure 23c: User satisfaction with QCOSS products and services

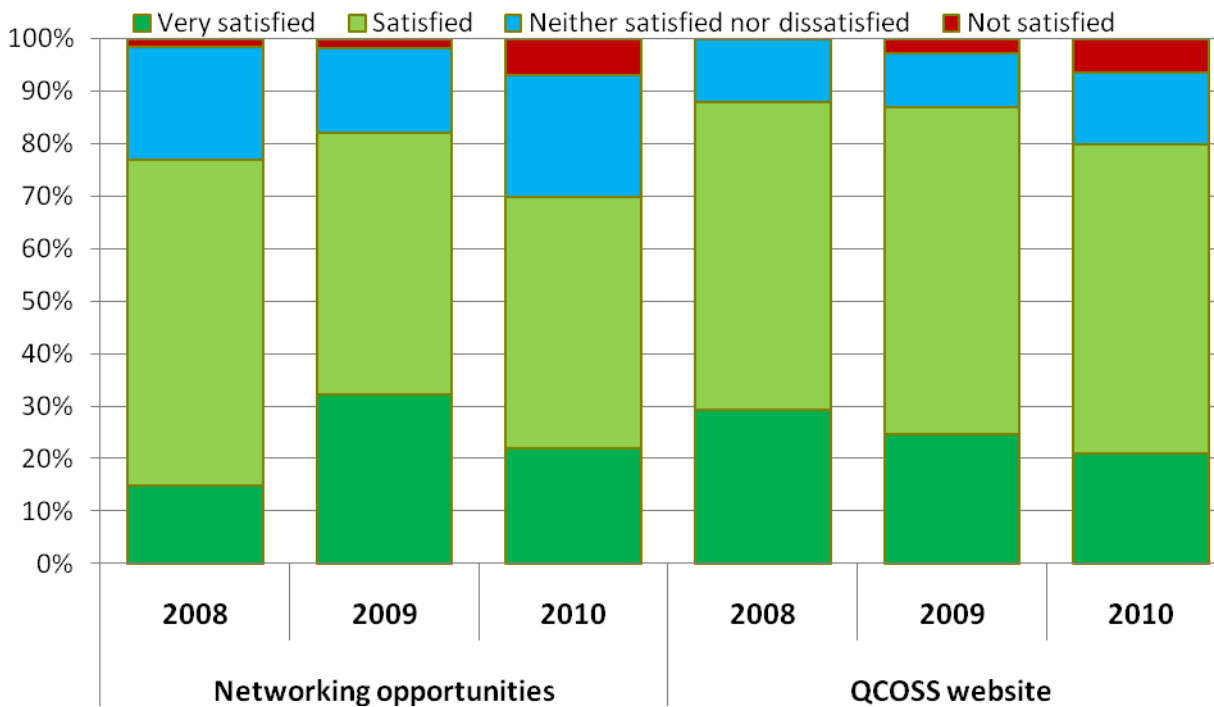


Figure 23d shows satisfaction with new tools for specific audiences and purposes. Access of these tools tended to be low apart from the Sector updates e-news, which also rated the highest levels of user satisfaction.

Figure 23d: User satisfaction with QCOSS products and services

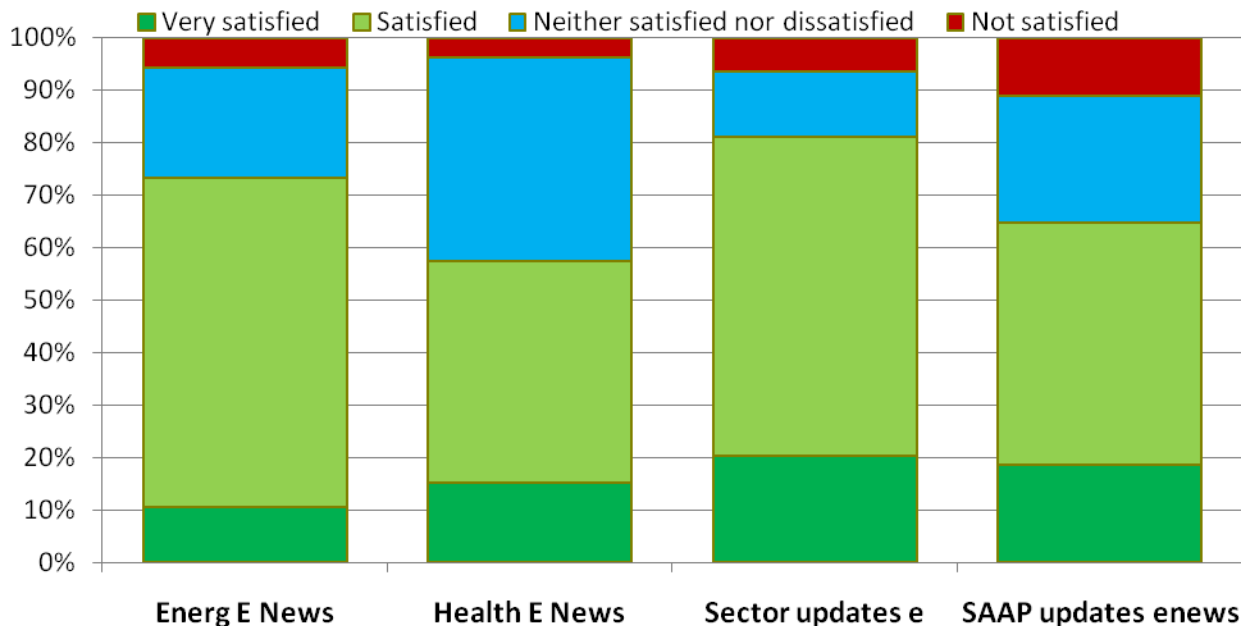


Figure 23e shows results for questions assessing the quality of QCOSS staff responses to queries, and staff advice and support. Both rated very highly among those who accessed them, with over 86% satisfied or very satisfied with both. Comparisons are not available with previous years when this question was different.

Figure 23e: Satisfaction with QCOSS products and services

