
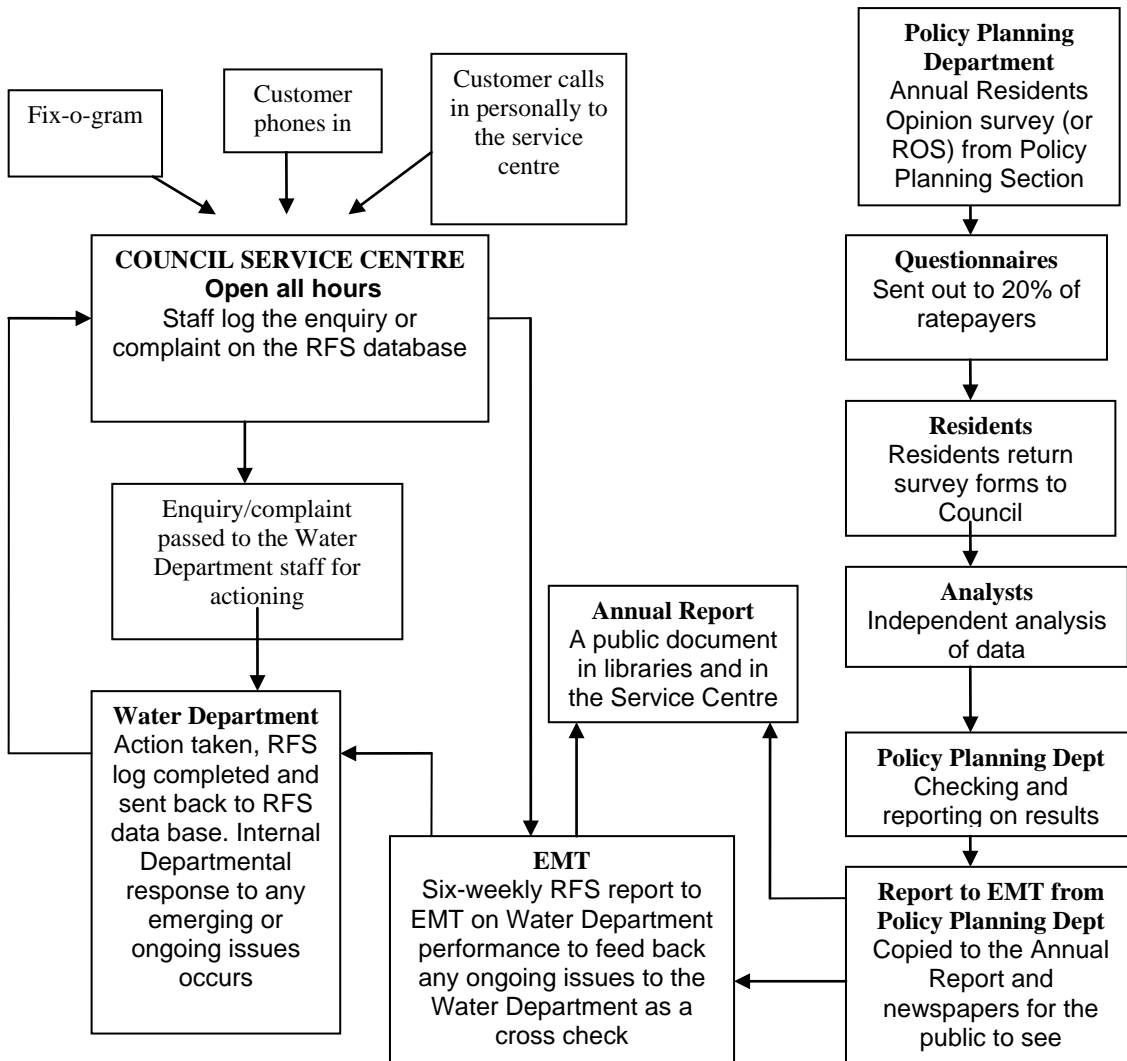


<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Consumer communication and feedback</i></p>	<p><b>Consumer Acceptability Case Study: Dunedin City Council, New Zealand</b></p>	
<p><b>Region:</b> Otago</p>	<p><b>Water Supplier:</b> Dunedin City Council</p>	<p><b>Size:</b> Number of employees: 30</p>
<p><b>Country:</b> New Zealand</p>		<p>Number of consumers 120,000</p>
<p><b>Important Notes to users:</b> <i>This document provides practical experiences in water quality management which may be of interest to other water suppliers. The information is provided in good faith but users must ensure that any action taken based on this is assessed in the context of their own local situation and particularly any national or regional legal requirements.</i></p>		
<p><b>Summary</b> Consumer trust depends not only on the consistent delivery of good safe water but also how they perceive its quality. Consumer acceptability data can be extremely valuable in many steps in the development and implementation of a WSP. This case study provides an example of where a water supplier in New Zealand operates a Service Centre to respond quickly to customer complaints and assesses levels of consumer acceptability through analysis of complaint data and questionnaires.</p>		
<p><b>Detailed information</b></p> <p>Dunedin City Council, a water supplier in Otago, New Zealand, has had a customer acceptability and survey process in place for many years. A summary of the overall process is shown in Figure 1. Central to communication with customers is the Council Service Centre which assists customers with enquiries, complaints and reports of defective services e.g. a broken or leaking water main or discoloured drinking water. Customers can phone or call in or can send a “Fix-o-Gram” free of charge to describe and report their problem. The customer enquiry is entered on the Request for Service Database (RFS) database and is passed on to the Water Department to follow up and respond.</p> <p>This easily accessible channel for customer complaints is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and acts as a well-structured and dynamic customer acceptability system in that several reports or complaints about one problem are quickly picked up and forwarded to the water department staff for action. Six-weekly reports on trends and issues are generated from the RFS data base and forwarded to the Executive Management Team (EMT) for the Water Department for appraisal.</p> <p>In addition to the services provided by the Council Service Centre, a selection of customers is sent a questionnaire on levels of service in relation to water supply. This is a statistically designed survey which is adapted to suit the changing population characteristics of each area to ensure as valid a result as possible. The results of the survey are analysed and collated by a professional company independent of the Council, and reported in the Dunedin City Annual Report against performance target. Copies of the Annual Report are available at the Council Service Centre and are also printed in the local newspaper.</p> <p>The two customer acceptability channels are related in that the Customer Services Sections and the centralised RFS logging system are there to satisfy customer acceptability issues on a day-to-day basis and gather data on the wider level of customer acceptability. In this way customer acceptability is maintained at high levels at all times over the whole city.</p>		



**Key**

RFS: Request for Services  
 EMT: Executive Management Team  
 ROS: Residents Opinion Survey

**Figure 1 Communication with customers: Dunedin City Council, New Zealand**

**Typical resources used:**

Customer services department, survey analysts, policy and planning department to send out surveys.

**Contact for further information:**

To be confirmed

**Document status:**

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