

2014 Paranal Service Mode User Satisfaction Survey

ESO Periods 92 and 93

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Typically once per year the User Support Department of ESO launches a Paranal Service Mode User Satisfaction Survey campaign. This year was no different, with a campaign being undertaken in February/March 2014. In this case we took the opportunity to debut the newly revamped and updated survey, which now allows the possibility of anonymous responses. To close the loop, to thank all respondents, and to demonstrate that such feedback is important to us, here we provide the ESO User Community with a summary of the responses received, predominantly in the form of graphs. In addition, for those cases where respondents did identify themselves and did provide us with feedback we have contacted them by e-mail to address their particular comments.

Methodology and General Results

The ESO Service Mode Questionnaire is always available on-line for users to fill in but the typical rate of users doing so is less than 2 per month. However, experience shows that a targeted campaign of asking users to fill in the survey results in many more survey completions.

In February 2014, we took this approach, and asked Principal Investigators (PIs) of Service Mode runs scheduled for Paranal in Periods 92 and/or 93¹ (plus their then-active Phase 2 delegates) to complete the newly redesigned survey by a fixed deadline. We thus solicited a response from 440 PIs and their then-active Phase 2 delegates. In this way a total of 502 individuals were contacted via e-mail. A deadline was set for a bit less than two weeks from the date of contact.

A total of 155 responses were received by the deadline, representing *an almost 31% response rate*². This again illustrates that prompting the users for specific feedback closer in time to a specific phase of their interactions with ESO is a better approach for a healthier feedback and dialogue. Also, as in the past, we noticed a rapid decline in response rate after the initial contact was made (which is typical for such endeavours).

As a start, in Figure 1 we show the number of responses we received per instrument. In spite of the overall very good response rate the large number of instruments offered in Service Mode means that on average we received just over 15 responses per instrument.

¹ Over these two periods there were 453 programmes with at least one Service Mode run scheduled, for a total of 649 Service Mode runs. For comparison, over these same two periods there were 112 programmes with at least one Visitor Mode run scheduled, for a total of 254 Visitor Mode runs. Thus, the survey targets PIs (and their then-active delegates) representing 68% of the total time allocation for Periods 92 and 93 at Paranal.

² This is a very good response rate when compared to the average rates of customer satisfaction surveys (15-20%; cf. Primas et al., 2008, SPIE Proceedings Vol. 7016; DOI: 10.1117/12.789905).

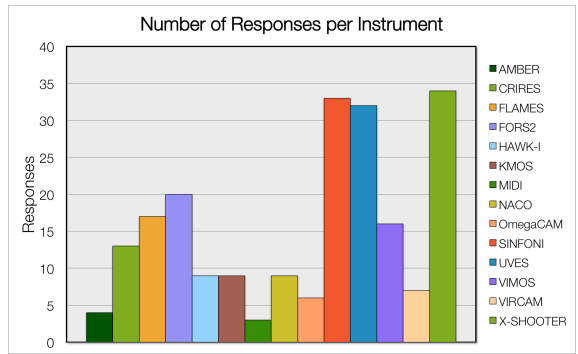


Figure 1: Responses per Instrument

In Figure 2 below we present a general overview of user satisfaction (in percentage of responses) with three general items:

- the overall support provided by the User Support Department (top)
- the help/advice provided during the Phase 2 process (bottom left), and
- the Phase 2 web documentation (bottom right).

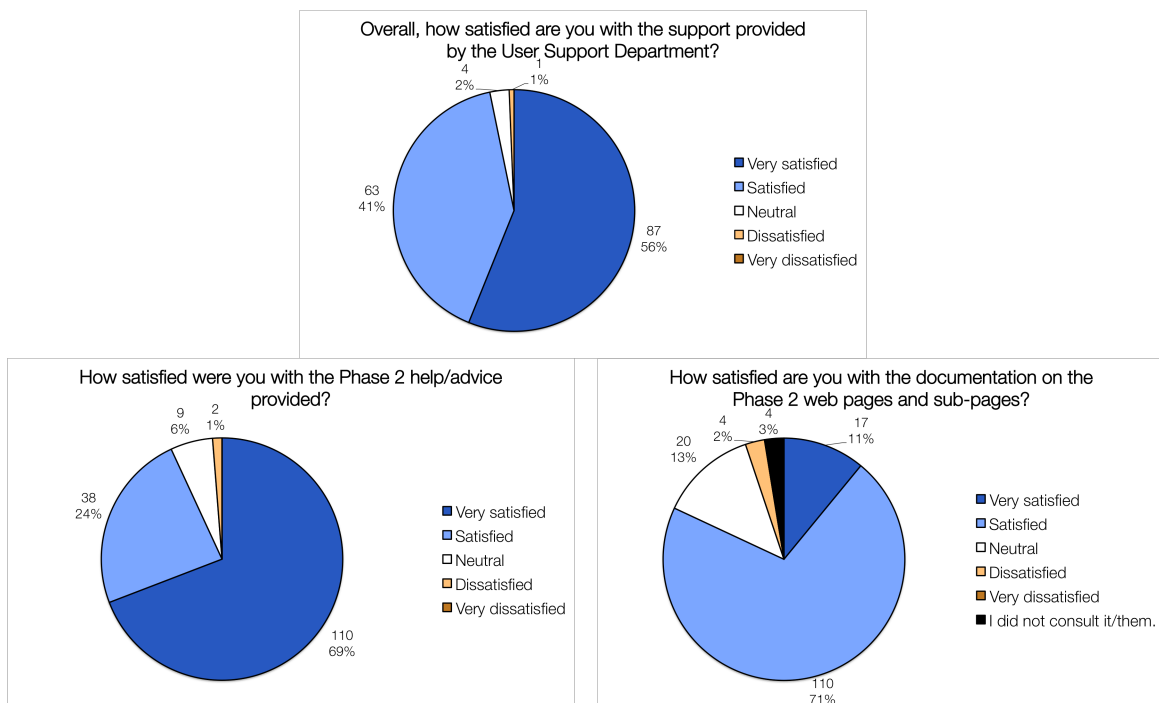


Figure 2: User satisfaction levels with support provided by the User Support Department. In each case we display both the number of responses and the percentage of the total (see text).

Note that the sum of the responses to the question about one's satisfaction with the help/advice provided exceeds the total number of survey responses. However, there is no reason to expect, a priori, that these two numbers should be equal. This is because the responses to this question come from a subset of respondents (those that actually received help/advice at Phase 2), each of which may have received help/advice from

multiple instruments. Indeed, on average each person who was provided with help/advice from their Support Astronomer received it for 1.2 instruments.

In addition, note that in Figure 2 and subsequent figures the percentages as computed by Excel are rounded values which can lead to cases where two identical values result in different percentages (e.g. Figure 2, lower right), or ratios of responses that do not produce the same ratio when expressed as a percentage (e.g. Figure 2, top).

Seeking Help, Run Information, and Run Problem Resolution

Amongst the respondents 40 indicated that they had contacted ESO for non-Phase 2 related reasons within the previous 6 months. Of these, 88% contacted ESO via an e-mail to usd-help@eso.org, with the remainder distributed between other methods (e.g. clicking on 'Ask for help' within the ESO User Portal). In Figure 3 we show the degree to which these respondents were satisfied with various aspects of the resulting exchange with ESO.

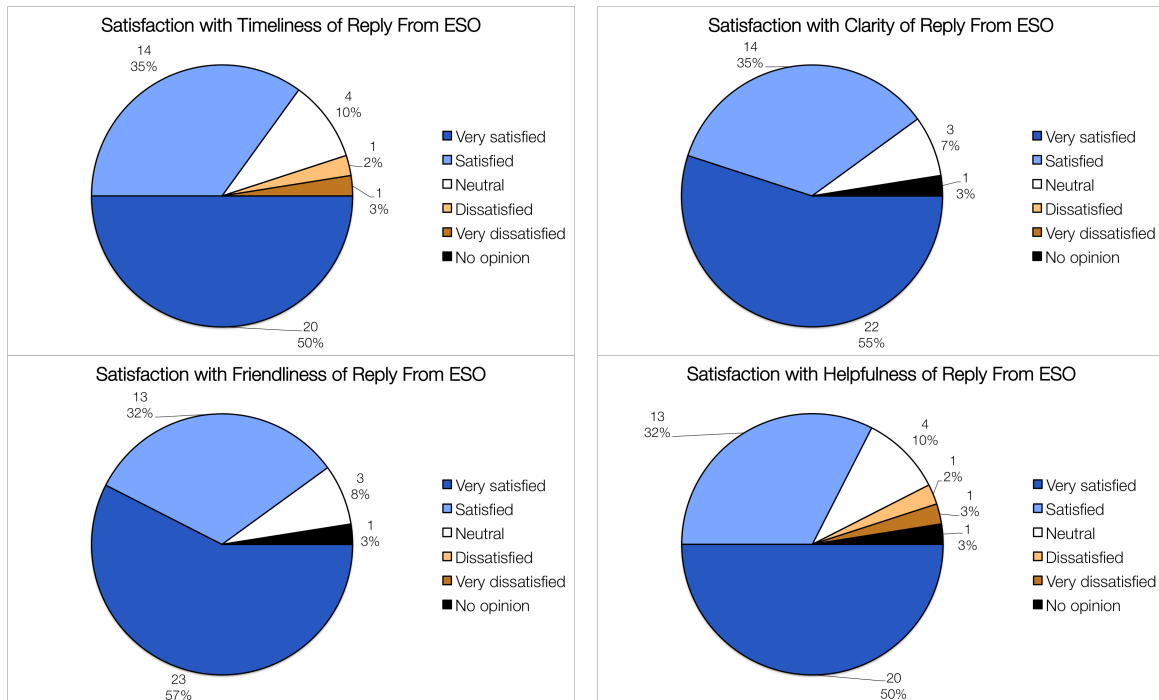


Figure 3: User satisfaction with non-Phase 2-related help from ESO.

Some 111 (72%) of the respondents checked on-line for information regarding the progress of their observational programmes. The survey asked those that did check for that information how much they agreed with four statements about that information. The outcome of those questions is presented in Figure 4.

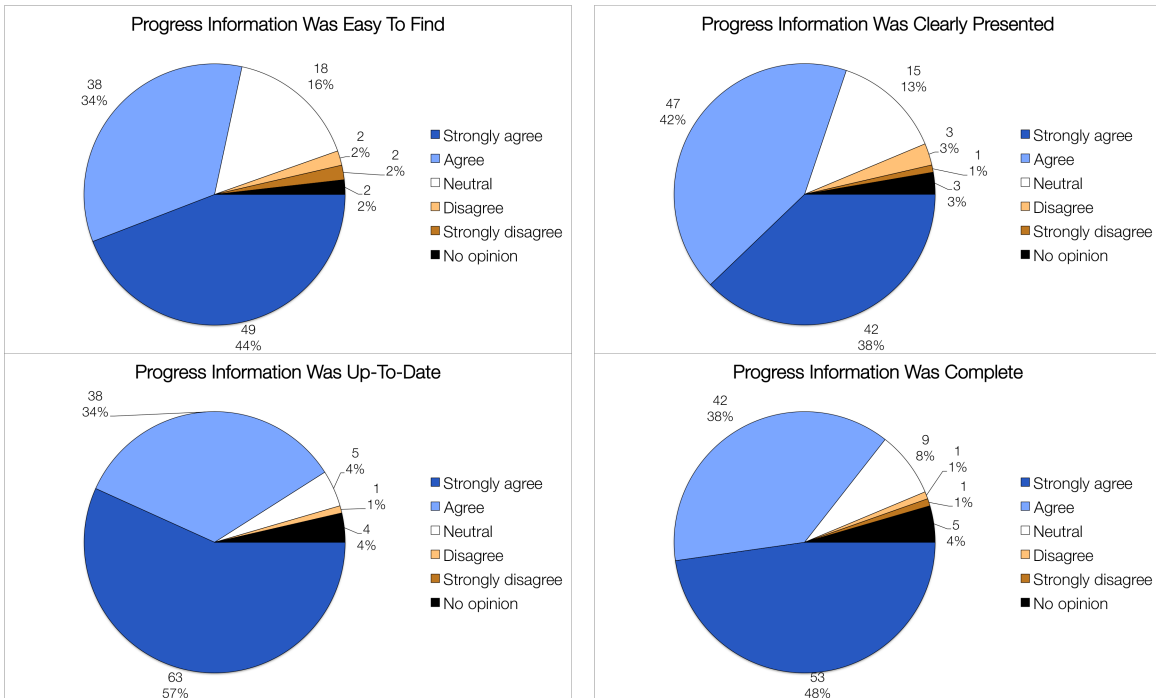


Figure 4: User's opinions of the on-line run progress information.

Finally, we asked if the survey participant was alerted to any problems with their Service Mode observations during the period. For those that said that they had been contacted (52 of the 155 respondents) we then asked to what extent they agreed with two statements describing the contact and the problem resolution. The answers are presented in Figure 5.

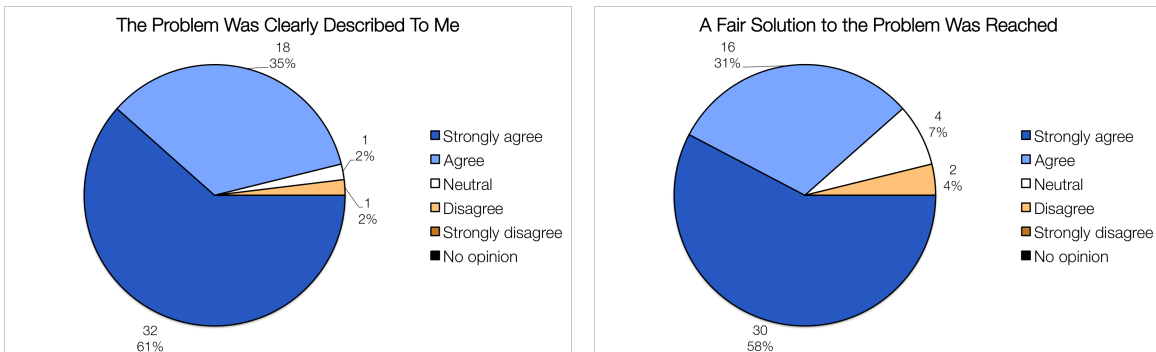


Figure 5: Opinions about Service Mode problem notification and resolution.

P2PP and Other Observation Preparation Tools

Below, we show details of the feedback received on different aspects of the Phase 2 Proposal Preparation tool (P2PP) and other, instrument-specific, observation preparation tools. By design all 155 survey participants answered the P2PP questions.

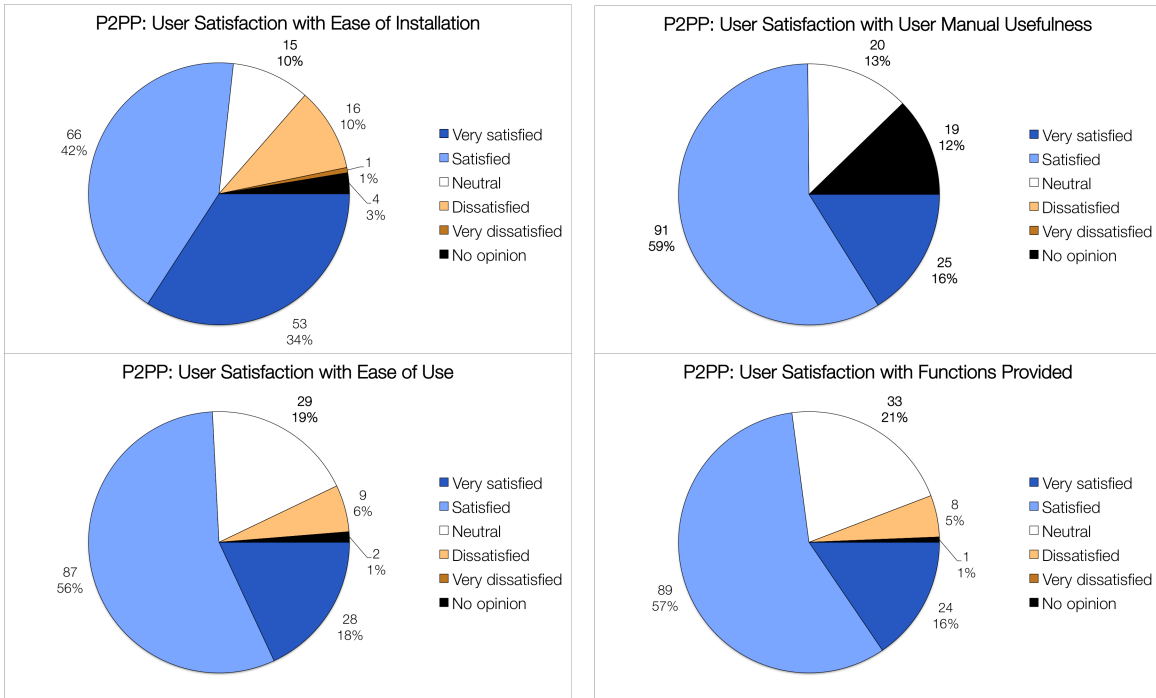


Figure 6: User feedback on aspects of the P2PP tool.

Since the numbers of responses per observing preparation tool other than P2PP is rather limited (see Table 1), any presentation of individual-tool responses on documentation, ease of use, or functionality would suffer from small number statistics. Thus, we present in Figure 7 plots in which all such tools are combined.

Observing Preparation Tool	Number of responses
CalVin	4
FIMS	7
FPOSS	17
GuideCam	12
KARMA	9
NAOS-PS	9
SADT	8
VisCalc	3
VMMPS	7

Table 1: Responses for observation preparation tools.

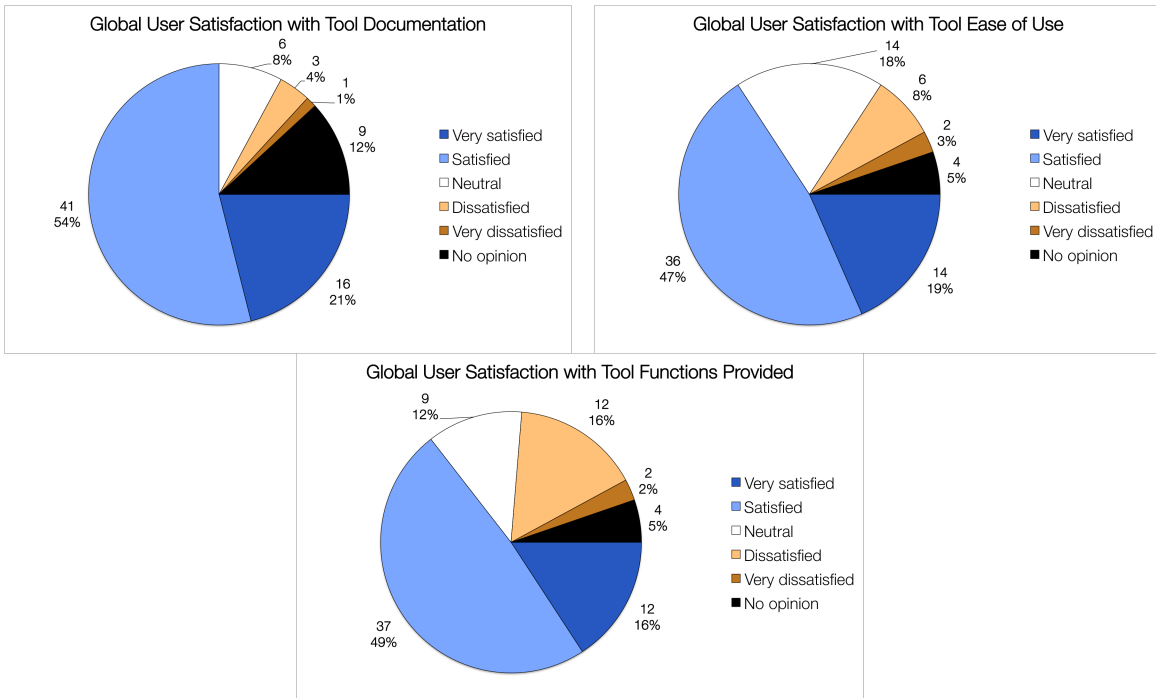


Figure 7: Combined user satisfaction with the tools listed in Table 1.

The single largest contribution to the 12 “dissatisfied” replies to the tool functionality question is the 4 received for FPOSS (which represents about one quarter of the FPOSS replies). The remaining 8 such replies are spread over six other observation preparation tools, hence truly representing small number statistics.

Finally, we asked survey participants the question, “How satisfied are you with the ETCs you have used?” The responses are shown in Figure 8.

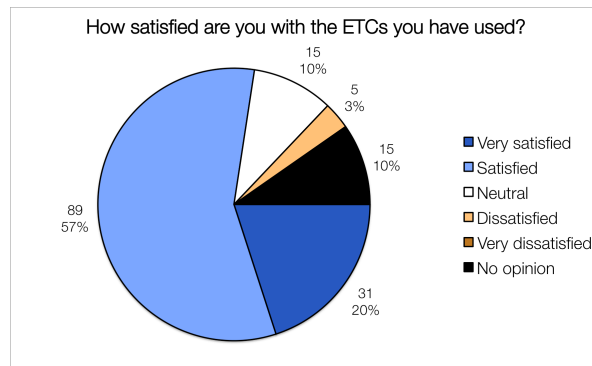


Figure 8: User satisfaction with the Exposure Time Calculators.