

1. INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Background

Peel's Common Purpose Strategy describes a unified approach to service delivery that emphasizes the links among employee engagement, client satisfaction and trust and confidence in Peel. The underlying premise is that engaged employees are positioned to provide superior levels of service to citizens, and that this in turn produces high levels of trust and confidence in the Peel regional government.

Peel's goal over the medium term is to test these assumptions with empirical research. Because the Common Purpose Strategy is wide ranging, involving both employees and clients, it is difficult to investigate all its components in a single piece of research. The current project focuses on the client side: client perceptions of service quality and trust and confidence in government.

Peel has conducted a significant amount of client research in the past. This work has been done by individual programs, designed around the specific needs and issues of those programs. The findings of this earlier research provides guidance to specific programs, but it cannot be aggregated across Peel's client base as a whole, as the methods and questions employed differ from one project to another.

The Common Purpose Strategy requires a comprehensive, unified approach to employee and client research, and in this vein, a primary goal of the current project is to build a research method that embraces all of Peel's diverse programs and clients. It will provide a common denominator of client feedback to support the Common Purpose Strategy.

Objectives

- 1 Develop a baseline 'top of house' Client Satisfaction Index (CSI)
- 2 Gather baseline client satisfaction measures for specific services
- 3 Test the notion of universal drivers
- 4 Explore meaningful 'clusters' of services that share the same drivers
- 5 Understand clients' access experience and identify potential barriers
- 6 Explore if there are any differences in drivers by channel
- 7 Investigate attitudinal differences to service delivery among clients
- 8 Create a mathematical model for the relationship between client satisfaction and trust and confidence
- 9 Lay the groundwork to explore drivers for specific service processes
- 10 Enable future analysis of satisfaction scores for each ward.

Our clients

Clients of the Region of Peel are clearly all those who reside in Peel, but a working definition of “our clients” must consider several factors. First, it was decided to omit business clients from this initial study. A decision will be made later whether there is value in rolling the views of business clients and citizens into a single whole or whether they are best kept separate.

Considering just citizens who reside in Peel, services divide into two groups:

- Services that all citizens use such as water and roads. These includes all the services of the ETPS division with the exception of TransHelp.
- Services that are used by segments of the population with specific needs. These include most of the programs offered by the Health and Human Services Divisions.

Within each of these broad areas are a number of specific programs. The Common Purpose Strategy requires a system that balances all these programs appropriately. This will give an overall Corporate perspective on client satisfaction. A rational method of representing these many programs is on the basis of budget, as this reflects the resources that the Peel applies to each. The corporate results that are presented in this report weight the contribution of each program in proportion to its budget.

Design

The research design brings the foregoing definition of Peel’s clients to an operational level. The design includes:

1. A survey of the general population, with respondents selected at random from a standard database of Canadian residents representing users of Environment, Transportation and Planning Services (ETPS);
2. Surveys of Health and Human Services (HHS) clients, with respondents drawn from the current client population;
3. A survey of Long Term Care clients (LTC);
4. A survey for Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing residents (ESTH).

All 4 surveys contained parallel questions on core issues. Customized questions on specific services were developed in consultation with the Directors. Overall, the survey of the general population contained more detailed question on ETPS services and the Health and Human Services surveys contained additional questions on those areas.

The comprehensive surveys for the general population and HHS clients were administered by telephone. Potential participants were mailed a letter prior to the survey explaining its purpose. Those who did not wish to be contacted could opt out by phoning the Client Contact Centre, and approximately ten percent did so.

The LTC survey was printed on paper and delivered to residents, who mailed the completed document to ERIN Research in a return envelope. The ESTH surveys were administered on paper to residents in small group sessions that were lead by Region of Peel staff.

Surveys were conducted between early March and mid-June, 2008.

Sample

Figure 1 shows the balance among the four survey groups on the basis of budget. The number of clients interviewed in each group reflects this balance.

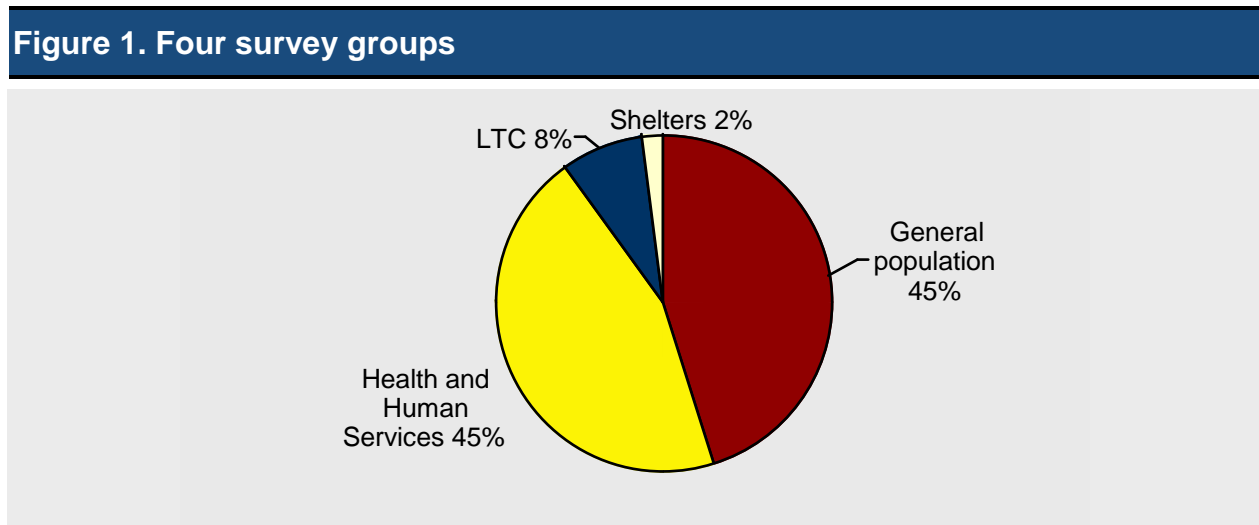


Table 1 shows the numbers of clients interviewed for each survey. The “raw number” is the actual number of individuals interviewed. The “weighted number” adjusts this in proportion to program budgets.

Table 1. Sample structure

Survey group	Raw number	Weighted number	Weighted percent
General population: ETPS services	1,527	1,369	45
Health and Human Services (HHS)	1,108	1,358	45
Long Term Care (LTC)	320	236	8
Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing (ESTH)	61	53	2
Total	3,016	3,016	100

Response rate

Response rates are calculated using the formula recommended by Statistics Canada. Response for the HHS and LTC surveys are higher than for the general population. The HHS and LTC clients have a more immediate and personal relationship with Peel services than do many citizens, and higher rates for these groups are to be expected.

The response of 31% for the general population is very good by current standards. All in all, the response indicates that the data provide a reliable foundation for understanding and action.

Table 2. Response rate	
Survey group	Response rate (percent)
General population: ETPS services	31
Health and Human Services (HHS)	57
Long Term Care (LTC)	48
Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing (ESTH)	na

Reporting of results

The majority of survey questions used 5-point response scales, where, for example, 1 indicates “Strongly disagree” and 5 indicates “Strongly agree”. When reporting results, it is often useful to give the average response, and readers tend to find the 5-point format difficult in this context.

The more intuitive 10-point format is used to report average scores. This 10-point scale corresponds to the 5-point scale used to answer the survey in the following manner:

	Strongly disagree									Strongly agree	
<i>Staff were knowledgeable and competent</i>	1	2	3	4	5						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
