

Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners



Report On Customer Service

June 2014

REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE
Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
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REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

INVENTORY OF EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS SERVED

The Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (TBVME) external customer base includes the following:

1. The Public

The mission of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary services for the people of Texas.

2. Veterinarians

The TBVME has a responsibility to assist veterinarians in practicing quality veterinary medicine by keeping them informed of rules and regulations applicable to their practice through the agency website, the publication of the agency's *Board Notes*, and written, telephonic and electronic communication. In addition, the board provides a peer assistance program for veterinarians and members of their staff who need assistance due to drug and alcohol abuse.

3. The Legislature

The Legislature, in its capacity of protecting the public and acting in the interest of its constituents, must be kept informed of issues involving the quality practice of veterinary medicine where legislative action may be the best course of action.

4. Complainants and Licensees

Individuals who believe they have not received quality veterinary care may file a complaint with the agency. The agency has a responsibility to both the complainant and the licensee to conduct an impartial investigation, ensuring that actions taken against licensees are just, and, where possible, increase the licensees' ability to practice quality medicine.

CUSTOMER SERVICE RELATED STRATEGIES

TBVME's responsibilities to both members of the public and the veterinary community are reflected in strategies set out in the General Appropriations Act. For the 2014-2015 biennium, those strategies are:

- A.1.1 – Operate Licensure System
- A.1.2 – Texas On-line
- A.2.1 – Complaints and Action
- A.2.2 – Peer Assistance
- B.1.1 – Licensing Indirect Administration
- B.1.2 – Complaints and Action Indirect Administration

The customer service survey was based on the following strategies:

A.1.1 – Operate Licensure System.

TBVME's responsibilities for service to licensees includes the examination of new graduates and veterinarians from other states and licensure of those who meet Texas requirements. Once a license is issued, the board's responsibilities extend to license renewal, providing information about current laws and rules governing the profession, answering questions and clarifying issues. Most information is provided through the agency's newsletter *Board Notes*, email, phone calls, correspondence, and the agency's website.

A.2.1 – Complaints and Action.

Individuals, both members of the public and of the veterinary community, who believe that a veterinarian has failed in some way to meet their professional responsibility, may file a complaint with TBVME. The complainant may expect the board to review and investigate each complaint to determine if the veterinarian has violated board rule and/or state law. When the initial contact is made with the board, generally by phone or email, the individual will receive a complaint form and brochure which outlines the complaint process. Once the complaint has been filed, the veterinarian is notified and provided with a summary of the allegations. If circumstances require, additional information may be requested. Board staff also contacts the complainant to acquire further information, if needed, and to allow the individual to provide any documentation they may wish the board to consider. The complainant and licensee receive periodic updates on the status of the complaint, generally once every 45 days.

The complaint review process consists of a review and investigation of the complaint by an agency staff member. The complaint is also reviewed by the Director of Enforcement and the Executive Director. Complaints involving medical or practice issues are also reviewed by two veterinary board members. If a violation is thought to have occurred, both the complainant and the licensee are invited to attend an informal conference. Complaints involving medical issues are heard by a committee made up of the two reviewing veterinary board members and a public board member. Complaints not involving medical issues are heard by an agency staff committee. If either committee finds a violation, disciplinary action is determined and an agreed order written and presented to the licensee to settle the case. If the licensee signs the agreed order, it is referred to the full board for approval and acceptance. If no agreement can be reached, the matter may be scheduled for a hearing before the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

A.2.2 – Peer Assistance

The board's peer assistance program is administered under contract by the Professional Recovery Network (PRN). Most communication to and from the board office is with the Program Director.

The board encourages individuals to enter the peer assistance program voluntarily, but the board may also direct individuals to enter the program as needed. Individuals directed to participate by the board will have their status reported to the board periodically. The board does not monitor the participation of those individuals who enter the program voluntarily.

INFORMATION GATHERING METHODS

During this biennium, the Board obtained stakeholder feedback from a stakeholder survey hosted by the SurveyMonkey website from March 24, 2014 through May 16, 2014 and was linked through the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners website. The link to the survey was also sent to licensees and complainants who the Board has an email address (approximately 73% of our licensees), and lastly the link was also provided on our agency Facebook page. The survey was taken a total of 306 times.

The survey asked the responding individual to rate the board’s processes and staff interaction based on statements. Each statement could be rated as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.” Individuals were also invited to share ideas for improvements. A survey line with no response was regarded as not applicable.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The Board reviewed three primary areas of operation, licensing, enforcement, and the agency’s website. Following is an overall review of each area. All percentages indicate percentage of individuals who indicated a positive experience.

Licensing

Licensees were asked to rate statements regarding their satisfaction with the agency’s functions and staff in relation to the State Board Examination (SBE) Application Process, the administration of the State Board Examination, and the agency’s license renewal process.

SBE

All individuals seeking licensure in Texas must pass the agency’s State Board Examination (SBE). Applicants must submit an application and documentation to establish their successful completion of required education and the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE).

Percent of Satisfied Customers		
<u>Application Process</u>	<u>Agency Staff</u>	<u>Examination Process</u>
81%	88%	73%

License Renewal

Licensees are required to renew their license annually. In previous years, the agency has mailed each licensee a renewal form that they were required to complete and return with the appropriate fees. Beginning in 2006, the agency sent only a post card reminding licensees of the due date for renewal and asking that they access Texas On-line to renew their license. Licensees are given the option of contacting the agency to request a paper copy of the renewal application if they cannot or prefer not to utilize the on-line renewal system. Respondents to the survey were asked the following:

- if they had renewed their license through the on-line renewal system for renewal year 2014; and
- do they plan to renew their license through the on-line renewal system during the next renewal cycle in 2015;

Renewal License Percentages	
<u>Utilized the on-line renewal system for 2014</u>	<u>Plan to utilize the on-line renewal system for 2015</u>
89%	50%

Enforcement

The Board's Enforcement division performs four primary functions: receiving complaints, investigating and resolving complaints; conducting special investigations; and conducting compliance inspections. Each investigator spends a minimum of one to two hours each day answering questions regarding the rules and laws that govern veterinary medicine. Members of the public who have filed a complaint with the board were asked to rate their perception of the complaint process. Licensees were also asked to rate the board's complaint process as well as other general contact with the board, including information seeking and compliance inspections.

The customer service satisfaction ratings in this section of the survey tend to be directly related to the outcome of a complaint. For example, a complainant whose complaint is found to be groundless will generally express dissatisfaction with the agency's performance, while the licensee in whose favor the ruling was made will usually express satisfaction. When a violation is found against the licensee, the opposite is true.

Complaint Process

Percent of Satisfied Customers	
	Licensees
Initial Board Contact	74%
Agency Staff	90%
Resolution Time	52%

Agency Publication

The Board produces *Board Notes* up to three times each year. The material included in the publication is intended to provide information to licensees and assist them in remaining up-to-date with regard to the laws and rules that impact their licenses. Survey participants were asked to rate the publication on the helpfulness of its content.

Percent of Satisfied Customers	
Overall Helpfulness of Publication	79%

Preferred Format of Publication	
Paper	18%
Email	74%
Website	8%

Agency Website

Survey participants were asked to rate the agency's website on organization and relevancy of information.

Percent of Satisfied Customers	
Ease of downloading information	63%
Ease of locating information	76%
Helpfulness of information	83%

General Contact

Survey participants were asked to rate their satisfaction related to telephone and e-mail communication with the agency.

Telephone Communication

Percent of Satisfied Customers	
Timeliness of service	86%
Agency staff helpfulness	92%
Agency staff professionalism	94%
Overall quality of telephone communication	92%

E-mail Communication

Percent of Satisfied Customers	
Timeliness of service	80%
Response(s) clear and thorough	82%
Overall quality of e-mail communication	86%

Customer Improvement Suggestions

The Board received fifty-five (55) comments from respondents. Several comments addressed the desire to have additional information made available on how to appeal a decision by the Board, additional information on the complaints and disciplinary actions taken against veterinarians, additional and clearer information on continuing education requirements, and how to reinstate a license since it is a different process than that for someone obtaining their initial license. Some comments addressed the belief that there should be a different standard for those veterinarians practicing veterinary medicine in an animal shelter as compared to a veterinarian in private practice. Several comments praised the agency staff on their prompt telephone service and ability to answer questions clearly. One commenter stated “I am grateful for the opportunity to give feedback to the staff at the office of the TBVME. All of my contact with the office concerned my application process for a Texas License. I have Licenses in Michigan and Colorado as well and there is no comparison between the Texas office in terms of ease of access, quality of help & information, efficiency and professionalism between those offices and yours. Excellent job.”

Variations Impacting Outcome

The Board has undergone changes in processes during the last two years due to legislative mandates and changes made during the normal course of business. These changes have had an impact on our customers’ perspectives. These changes will, in time, have a positive impact on consumer perceptions. Following is an outline of those changes which have had the most impact for our customers.

- Automated license renewal process
- Proof of Continuing Education
- Prohibition to practice veterinary medicine with a delinquent license
- Investigation and prosecution of cases of unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine
- Investigation of criminal convictions of licensees
- Addition of the regulation of Equine Dental Providers

CUSTOMER RELATED PERFORMANCE MEASURE RESULTS

Percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services:

2012: 68%
2014: 80%.

Percentage of surveyed customer respondents identifying ways to improve service delivery:

2012: 20%
2014: 23%

Number of Customers Surveyed:

	FY12	FY14¹
Licensees	2,420	N/A
Complainants	<u>351</u>	N/A
Total:	2,721	N/A

Number of Customers Served:

	FY13	FY14²
Licensees	8,136	8,412
Complainants	<u>436</u>	<u>124</u>
Total:	8,572	8,536

Number of Customers Identified:

	FY13	FY14²
Licensees	8,136	8,412
Complainants	<u>436</u>	<u>124</u>
Total:	8,572	8,536

Number of Customer Groups Inventoried:

Total number of customer groups identified: 4

¹ This number is not available as the survey was conducted online with information about the survey provided by email to all known stakeholders and posted on the agency website and Facebook page.

² FY14 reflects only the first and second quarter statistics.

CUSTOMER RELATED PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Outcome Measures

1. Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Rendered.

Short Definition:

Total number of surveyed customer respondents who expressed an overall satisfaction with TBVME services, divided by the total number of surveyed customer respondents.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure is used as one facet in determining the percentage of TBVME customers that are satisfied with the agency's customer service.

Source/Collection of Data:

TBVME develops and mails a survey to agency customers as well as placing the surveys on the agency website. The results are tabulated from those surveys which are returned.

Method of Calculation:

Respondents were asked to rate the statements provided as "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neutral," "Disagree," or "Strongly Disagree." To determine satisfaction percentages, responses were grouped into three categories. "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" were interpreted as satisfied, "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were interpreted as unsatisfied, and "Neutral" responses were interpreted as no formed opinion. To calculate percentage of "satisfied" customers, the agency divided the number of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses by the number of total responses received and multiplied the result by 100.

Data Limitation:

The agency has no control over the number of customers who complete the survey. In addition, the term "overall satisfaction" is subjective. It should be noted that, as with all regulatory agencies, many answers to survey questions are dependent upon the type of involvement with the customer. In situations involving the agency's investigation of a complaint, the outcome of the investigation will generally dictate the respondent's satisfaction. For example, if a complaint is found to be without merit, a complainant will generally rate the agency's services as unsatisfactory. The same is true for licensees where a violation is found.

Calculation Type:

Non-cumulative.

New Measure:

No

Desired Performance

80 % satisfaction of identified customers

2. Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery.

Short Definition:

Total number of surveyed customer respondents who have identified ways to improve service delivery, divided by the total number of surveyed customer respondents.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure is used as one facet in identifying possible improvements to the agency's service delivery.

Source/Collection of Data

TBVME develops and mails a survey to agency customers as well as placing the surveys on the agency website. The results are tabulated from those surveys which are returned.

Method of Calculation:

Numerator – Total number of TBVME customers who responded to the survey.

Denominator – Total number of TBVME customers who responded to the survey with comments.

This performance measure is calculated by dividing the numerator by the denominator and multiplying by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitation:

The agency has no control over how many TBVME customers will complete the survey. Additionally, the definition of "improvement" is open to interpretation. One individual's suggestion of an "improvement" may not be perceived as an improvement by another customer. For example, one customer may prefer to receive information from the agency only in paper format, while another customer may prefer to receive the same information via email.

It is the agency's intention to conduct a survey of customer service in each even-numbered year of the biennium.

Calculation Type:

Non-cumulative.

New Measure:

No

Desired Performance

15% of surveyed customers

Output Measures

1. Number of Customers Surveyed

Short Definition:

Total number of TBVME customers surveyed in a reporting period.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure is an indication of the agency's efforts to collect information from the public and its licensees about the agency's customer service.

Method of Calculation:

The agency determined that utilizing the SurveyMonkey service would be the most cost efficient way to survey its stakeholders. The agency sent an e-mail informing licensees and complainants of the survey.

Data Limitation:

Not every TBVME customer is surveyed. Due to the costs associated with surveys (printing, mailing, etc.) the agency elected to utilize SurveyMonkey as a more cost effective means of distributing the survey. The distribution method when this service is utilized is limited to email, posting on the agency website, and posting on the agency's Facebook page. Due to not having email addresses for all TBVME customers, we were unable to distribute the survey to every TBVME customer. TBVME has no control over who will become TBVME customers.

Calculation Type:

Non-cumulative

New Measure:

No

Desired Performance

100% of identified surveyed population

2. Number of Customers Served

Short Definition:

Total number of TBVME customers identified in a reporting period.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure is an indication of the agency's workload (i.e., the greater the number of customers, the greater the agency's workload).

Method of Calculation:

TBVME manually calculates the approximate number of customers served during a reporting period. This information is obtained from the agency's Sugar CRM licensee database, which contains data for all licensees and complainants.

Data Limitation:

TBVME has no control over the number of customers who will want TBVME services. The types of groups of customers are somewhat specific as a result of the agency's enabling legislation.

Calculation Type:
Non-cumulative.

New Measure:
No.

Desired Performance
100% of identified surveyed population

Efficiency Measures

1. Cost Per Customer Surveyed.

Short Definition:

Total funds expended (including those encumbered) for the cost to survey the agency's customers, including costs of mailing the survey and costs of personnel time to develop the TBVME Customer Service Survey and evaluate the data collected. The total cost is divided by the number of customers surveyed.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure reflects the cost to the agency to conduct a customer service survey.

Source/Collection of Data:

Funds expended would include all direct costs attributable to the survey. These direct costs are identified in the agency's operating budget and, where applicable, will include: percent of exempt and classified salaries according to estimated time spent in this function, consumable supplies, computer expenses, training and education, capitalized equipment, and other operating expenses.

Method of Calculation:

The amounts identified will be divided by the total number of customers surveyed to determine the cost of each individual survey mailed.

Data Limitation:

TBVME has no control over the number of customers who will want TBVME services. The types of groups of customers are somewhat specific as a result of the agency's enabling legislation.

Calculation Type:
Non-cumulative.

New Measure:
No.

Desired Performance
< \$1.00 per customer surveyed.

Explanatory Measures

1. Number of Customers Identified.

This explanatory measure is the same as the Output entitled “Number of Customers Served.”

2. Number of Customer Groups Inventoried

Short Definition:

Total number of customer groups identified in a reporting period.

Purpose/Importance:

This measure reflects the diversity of agency customers and gives an indication of the agency’s workload.

Source/Collection of Data:

The number of customer groups is determined by reviewing the external customer groups that might exist within each budget strategy listed in the agency Strategic Plan.

Method of Calculation:

TBVME keeps an electronic database of its customer groups.

Data Limitation:

The types and groups of customers are somewhat specific as a result of the agency’s enabling legislation.

Calculation Type:

Non-cumulative.

New Measure:

No.

Desired Performance

100% of identified surveyed population

COMPACT WITH TEXANS

AGENCY MISSION

The mission of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary services for the people of Texas.

AGENCY PHILOSOPHY

The Board and its staff will act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency and openness. We affirm that protection from less than quality veterinary services is a public and private trust. We approach our activities with a deep sense of purpose and responsibility. The public and regulated community alike can be assured of a balanced and sensible approach to regulation.

AGENCY SERVICES

Licensing and Examination

The licensing and examination program ensures that only those persons who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed the minimum qualifications required to be a licensed veterinarian in the state of Texas enter the practice and provide veterinary services to Texas' citizens. Under this program, licensed individuals are required to renew their license annually and, upon request, provide proof of continuing education.

Enforcement

The enforcement program is designed to protect consumers of veterinary services and ensure veterinarians comply with the Veterinary Licensing Act through the investigation of complaints, compliance inspections as well as through investigating the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

Peer Assistance

The Peer Assistance program, authorized by Chapter 467 of the Health and Safety Code, assists veterinarians and veterinary students who are impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness. Participation may be voluntary or required by board order; the program is administered under contract through the Texas Veterinary Medical Association, and is approved by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

The Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is committed to providing superior services to our customers, the citizens of Texas. Each customer can expect:

- Easy access to agency services;
- Consumer friendly processes;
- Agency staff that are courteous, knowledgeable, and responsive to their needs;
- Answers to questions and requests for information provided in a timely manner; and
- Services provided in an efficient manner that meets the customer's needs and yet remains fiscally responsible.

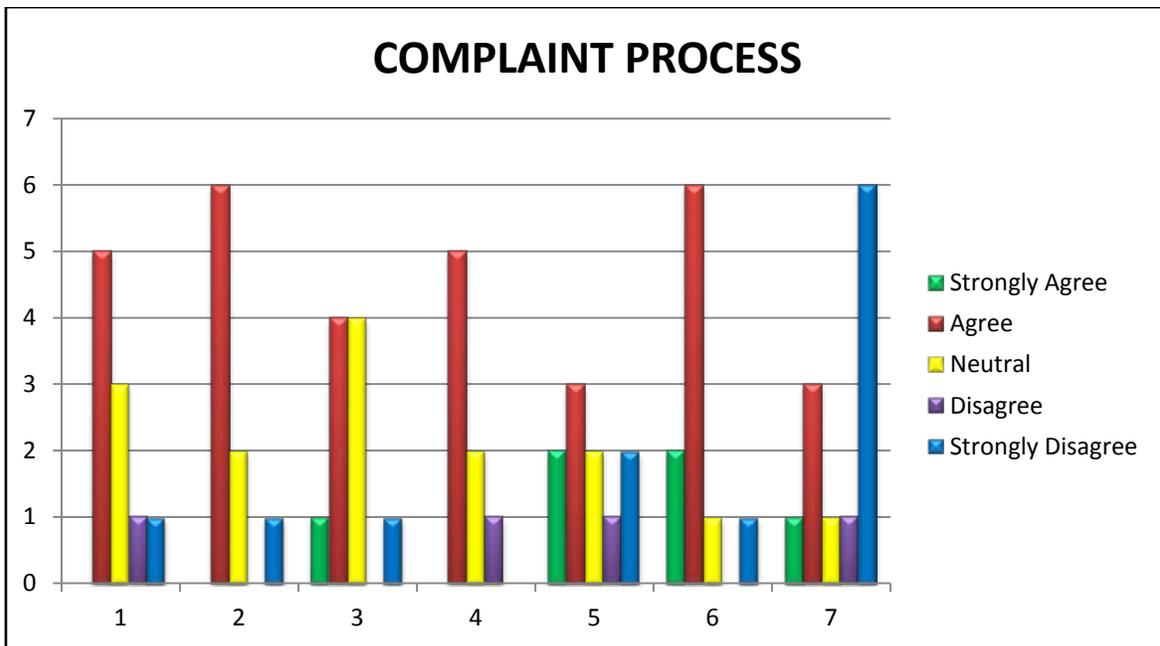
Concerns regarding agency services and customer service issues should be directed to the agency's customer service representative as follows:

Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
Attention: Customer Service Representative
333 Guadalupe Street Tower III Suite 810
Austin, Texas 78701
Phone: 512.305.7555 Fax: 512.305.7574
email: vet.board@tbvme.state.tx.us

SURVEY SUMMARY

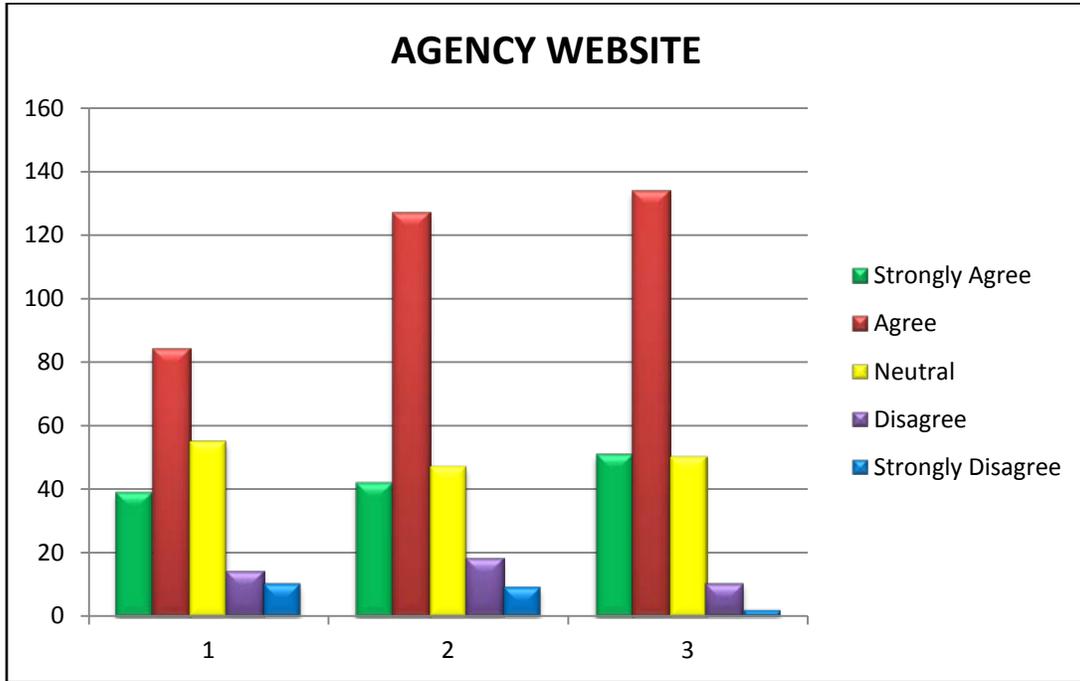
COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. The instructions and form for filing a complaint were clear and concise.
2. Board enforcement staff provided sufficient guidance to allow me to provide the necessary information.
3. Board enforcement staff were knowledgeable and professional.
4. I was able to speak with an investigator and have my questions answered.
5. The Board strives to resolve complaints within 160 days of receipt. My complaint was resolved within this timeframe.
6. I received periodic updates on the status of my complaint.
7. If an informal conference was held, I was able to present information I felt was relevant to the situation.



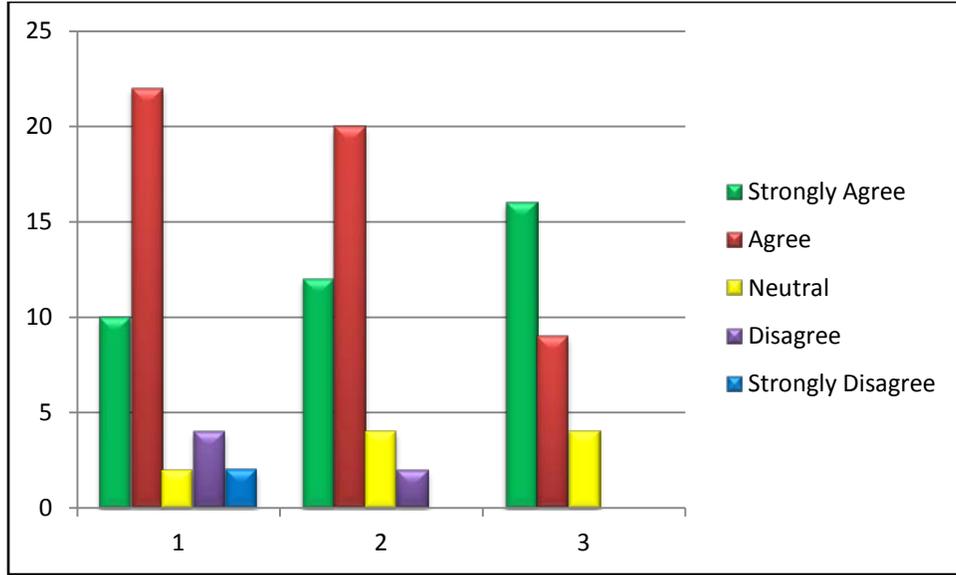
AGENCY WEBSITE

1. Ease of downloading information from the agency website.
2. I was able to easily find the information I was looking for.
3. The information on the website is helpful to me.



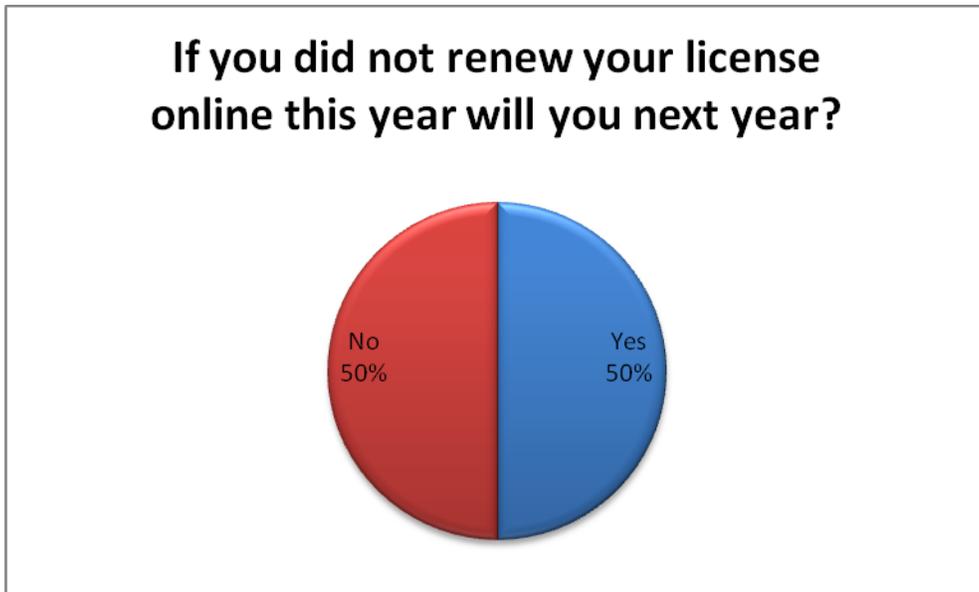
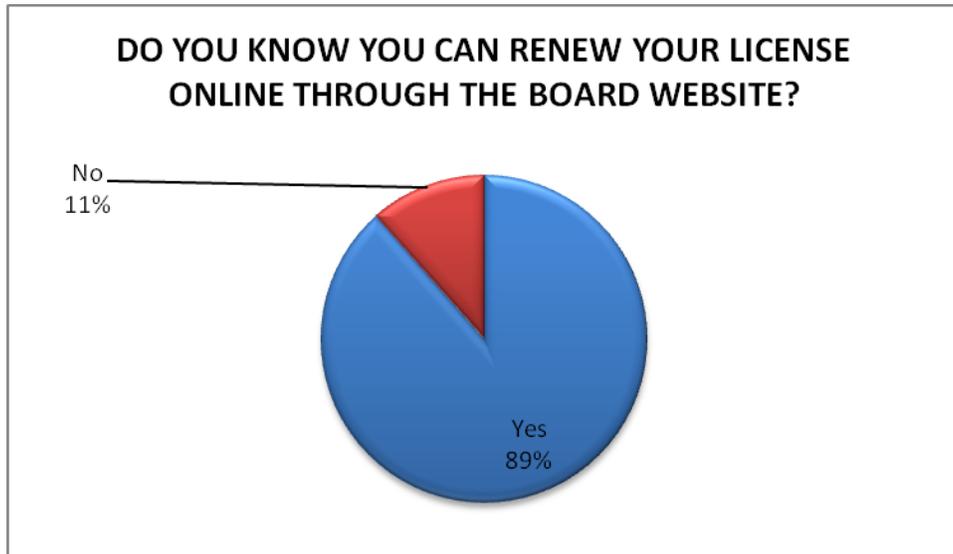
LICENSE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. The application and instructions were clear and concise.
2. Board staff were knowledgeable and professional.
3. I was given access to my grade on or before the tenth day after the exam period ended.



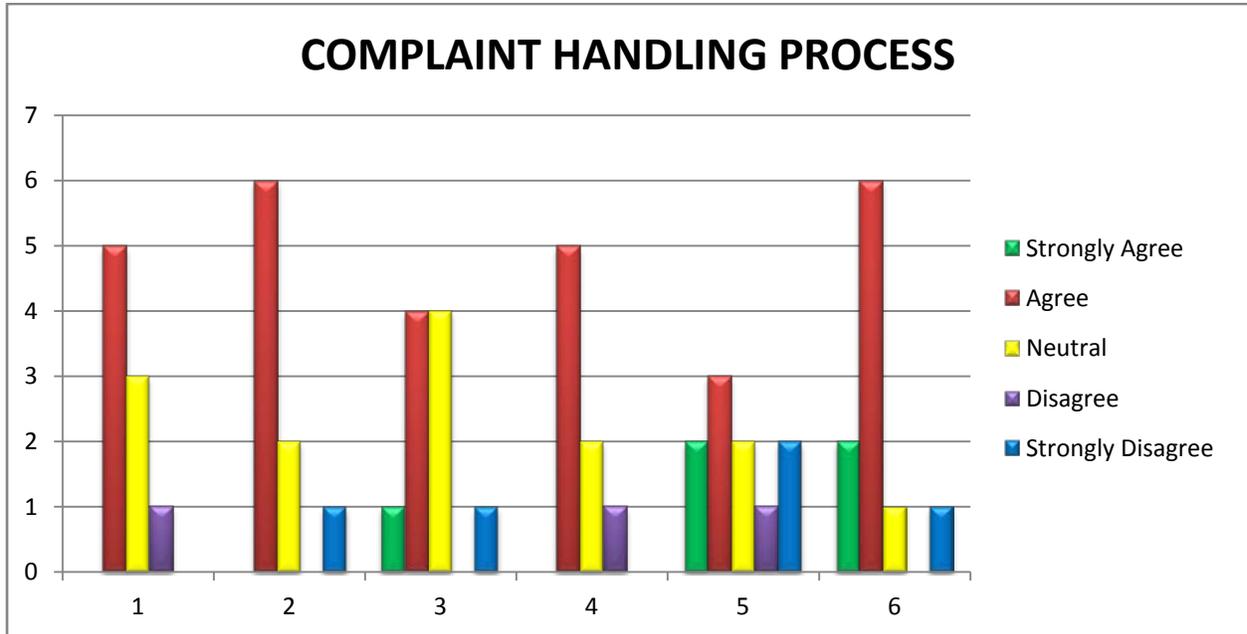
RENEWING YOUR LICENSE

1. Did you renew your license online in 2014?
2. If you did not renew your license online this year, will you next year?



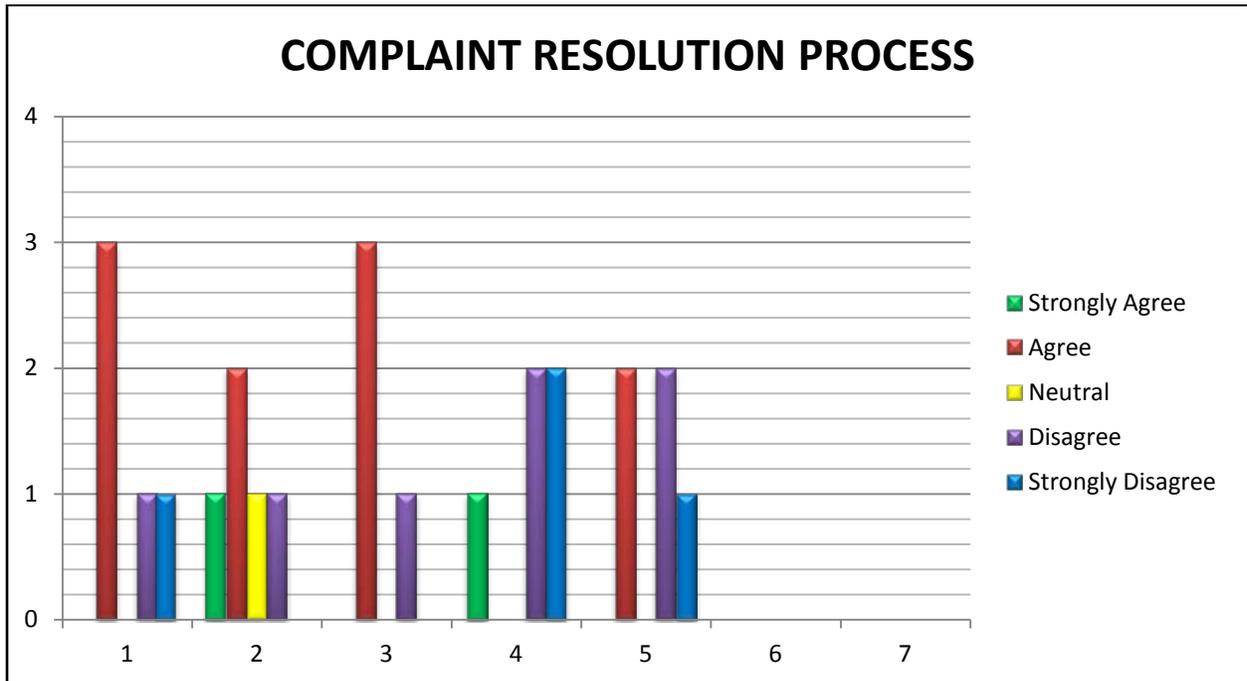
COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCESS

1. The instructions and form for filing a complaint were clear and concise.
2. Board enforcement staff provided sufficient guidance to allow me to provide the necessary information.
3. Board enforcement staff were knowledgeable and professional.
4. I was able to speak to an investigator and have my questions answered.
5. The Board strives to resolve complaints within 160 days of receipt. My complaint was resolved within this timeframe.
6. I received periodic updates on the status of my complaint.



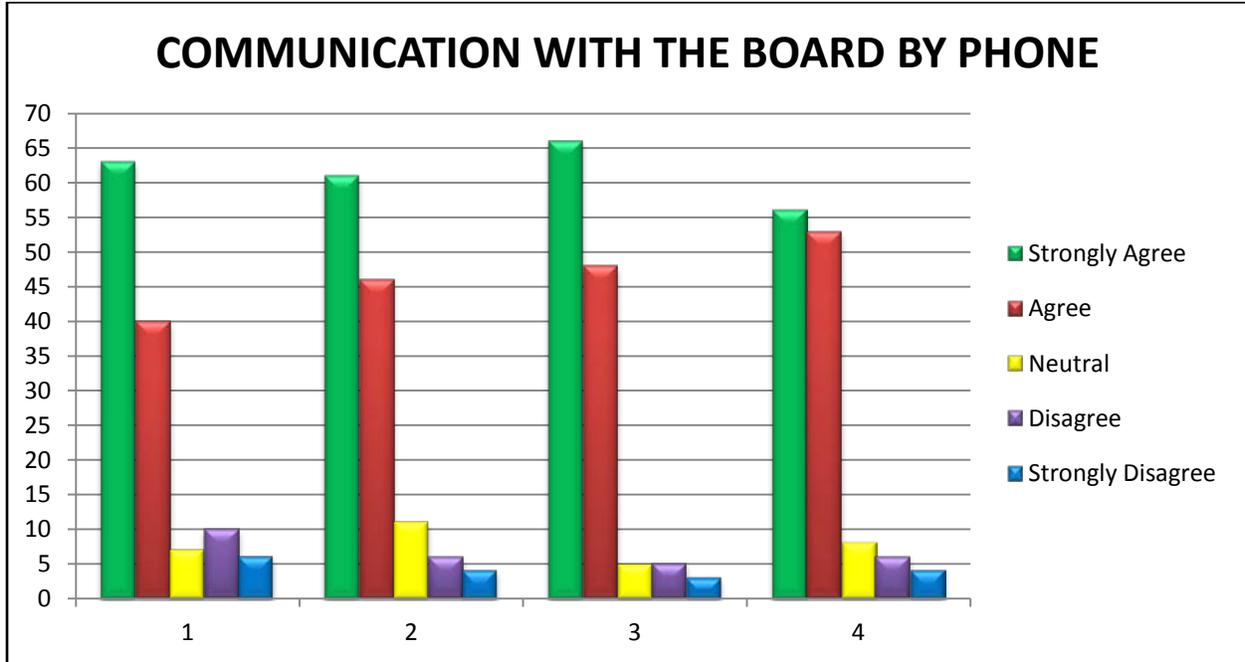
COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

1. I was provided with clear and concise instructions on the information needed by the Board to resolve the complaint.
2. Board staff were knowledgeable and professional.
3. I was able to speak with an investigator and have my questions answered.
4. The Board strives to resolve complaints within 160 days of receipt. My complaint was resolved within this timeframe.
5. I received periodic updates on the status of my complaint.
6. If an informal conference was held, I was able to present information I felt was relevant to the situation.
7. If the Board did not find in my favor, I was provided with information on appealing the decision.



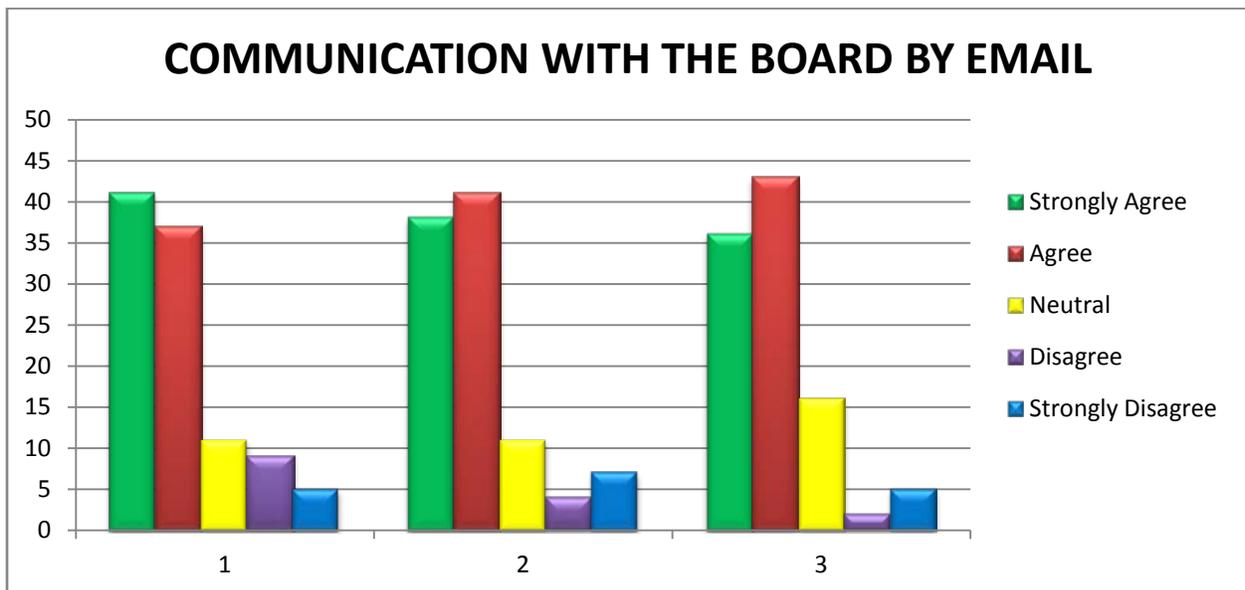
COMMUNICATION WITH THE BOARD BY PHONE

1. Timeliness of services and information was provided to you within one to two business days.
2. Helpfulness and willingness to listen to you.
3. Professionalism.
4. Overall quality of communication by phone.



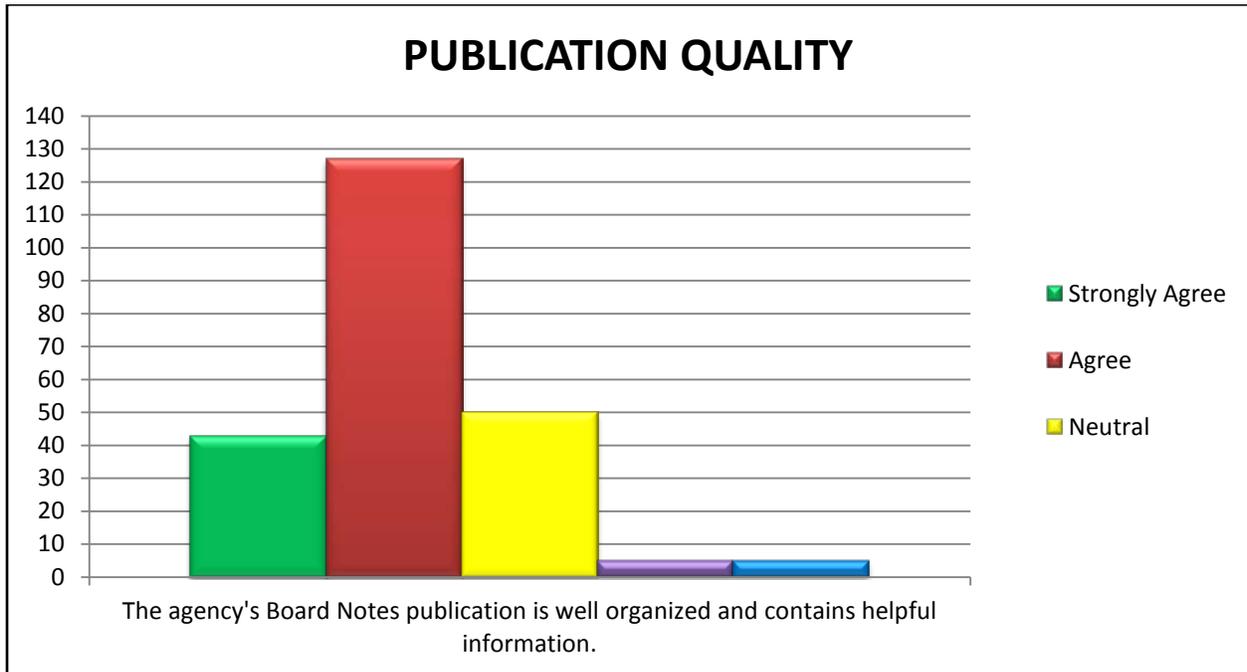
COMMUNICATION WITH THE BOARD BY EMAIL

1. Timeliness of services and information was provided to you within two business days.
2. The Board's response by e-mail was clear and thorough.
2. Overall quality of communication provided by e-mail.



TBVME PUBLICATION

The agency's *Board Notes* publication is well organized and contains helpful information.



Please indicate how you would prefer to receive the *Board Notes*.

