

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND BOARD**  
**STAFF SURVEY – FINAL REPORT**

**Purpose**

1. To provide HSB with a brief overview of the headline results from the 2008 Employee Survey and the subsequent actions taken by the agency.

**Methodology**

2. Approximately half of the 1,000 employees were invited to take part by completing the survey online. The remainder were provided with a paper self completion questionnaire and reply-paid envelope addressed to Ipsos MORI.

3. The survey was conducted between 27th February and 9th April 2008. A total of 504 employees completed the survey. This represents a response of approximately 50%, compared to 56% in 2005, but was above average for public sector organisation staff surveys. By comparison, the typical response rate in this sector is around 40% [Source: Ipsos MORI].

4. Ipsos MORI's executive summary is attached at Annex A.

**Key Findings**

5. Overall results from the 2008 Employee Survey are positive with the agency generally ahead of the sector comparisons and the 2005 survey. This is most significant in the responses to employee engagement with the agency's aims, and advocacy where the results are almost universally positive; 92% of staff are committed to achieving the agency's aims and objectives compared to an overall norm of 75%. The contrast between the number of staff who said they understood the agency's mission statement and aims the agency (91%) and the overall norm (61%) is even more stark.

6. When asked about delivery of Historic Scotland's services 72% of staff would speak highly to people outside the agency (up from 63% in 2005) compared to the Ipsos MORI norm of 46%.

7. It is clear that the agency has made good progress in the three years since the last survey. That said there are some wide variances from group to group and between bands F and above and employees in bands A to E.

8. There are three main areas that stand out as general concerns among employees:

- Lack of working together across the agency.
- A need to improve involving employees in the change management process.
- A perceived lack of engagement by the Senior Management team.

Taking a closer look at two of these:

## Cross Agency Relations

9. In answer to the question how good is HS at working as a team 33% of staff said good (29% in 05) and 34% said poor (35% in 05). However, when asked about internal relations between groups only 14% said it was effective. This suggests that the issue may be less about cross-agency working and more about mutual respect and value.

## Senior Management Team

10. Of the six questions relating to the SMT, Historic Scotland is ahead of the MORI and Public Sector norms in 3 and ahead of the Scottish Public Sector in a fourth. The two areas where HS would appear to be less successful, compared to the norms, are the perception that SMT is not interested in listening to the opinions of staff and communicating a clear vision of where HS is going (although on the question of SMT communicating a clear vision 38% of staff who responded neither agreed nor disagreed, a higher proportion than the norm). This has to be considered alongside the answer to the question on whether SMT has a clear vision of where the agency is going where HS is ahead of all sector norms (40% compared to 37%). We are also ahead of the Scottish public sector norm for listening to the opinions of staff (29% compared to 25%). If Policy and MCU are factored out, HS is ahead of all norms for listening to the opinions of staff.

## **Other headline results**

11. The percentage of employees who believe morale in the agency is good has risen from 20% in 2005 to 32% in 2008 (47% of staff believe that morale in their department is good). This compares to an overall norm of 29% and 22% in the Scottish public sector. When comparing individual groups this is 35% in Policy and over 77% in Access and Understanding and 75% in HR/OST.

12. Communications has shown a small improvement since 2005 with 55% of employees stating that they feel informed, a 2% increase on 2005. This compares to a Scottish Public Sector norm of 45% and an overall norm of 52%.

13. There have been good improvements since 2005 in terms of treating staff fairly, setting realistic targets, giving support and guidance, responding to issues and getting the best out of people. Staff at Historic Scotland are more likely to rate their line managers positively on all aspects than Ipsos MORI has found elsewhere.

*This relatively positive picture across the board is significant, given the importance of the role of line managers in supporting and directing colleagues. [Ipsos MORI]*

14. Relative strengths of line managers at Historic Scotland include commitment to the organisation (83%), making clear what is expected of staff (75%), listening to ideas (73%), recognising good work (72%) and giving the right information to do the job properly (72%).

15. There are significant improvements on change management over the 2005 results and the agency compares well to the overall and sector norms with the exception of involving staff where the response of 29% is well behind the overall and sector norms of 50% and 54%.

## **Action Taken**

16. A special edition of Historic Times dedicated to the Employee Survey was issued to all staff and the survey was published on the agency's intranet.

17. SMT is quite clearly taking strategic decisions for the agency and it is also clear from the results of the staff survey that employees are aware of that. However, there appears to be a break-down in the link between those decisions and staff associating them with SMT. As a quick way to establish that link all staff notices now go out under the heading of 'from Senior Management Team'. The notices still carry the signature of individual directors.

18. The main vehicle for setting out the agency's strategic thinking is the corporate plan. Although individual groups may be aware of their part of the plan there does not appear to be a great awareness of the plan as a whole. A notice setting out the broad aims of the corporate plan and how it links to and supports the SMT's vision for the agency has been issued to coincide with the publication of the corporate plan. Individual directors have been asked to brief their management teams on the corporate plan as a whole. SMT will issue a quarterly update on the corporate plan.

19. Dealing with the cross-agency issue is more complex; not least in trying to establish the nature of the problem. This is not a quick fix issue and the intention is to set up a cross-agency working group to establish the nature of the problem highlighted in the staff survey and identify possible solutions.

20. We will issue an annual report from SMT, signed off by the chief executive, highlighting achievements made towards the agency's wider aims and objectives and looking ahead to the main challenges facing the agency in the coming year.

30. In order to take a more pro-active approach to employee engagement we will be setting up quarterly meetings with staff to identify issues and problems.

**Patrick Connor**  
**Head of Communications and Media**  
**20 October 2008**

## **Ipsos MORI's Executive Summary**

1. Staff think very highly of Historic Scotland. Virtually all understand and are committed to Historic Scotland achieving its mission statement and aims, and understand the contribution they are expected to make. Historic Scotland staff are considerably more likely to express engagement that staff in other organisations Ipsos MORI has surveyed in recent years.

2. As a result, advocacy of Historic Scotland services is high. On average, less than half of staff speak highly of their employer's services. However, three-quarters of Historic Scotland staff speak highly of the Agency's services. Staff are also more likely to speak highly than three years ago. Furthermore, the majority believe Historic Scotland understands and satisfies the needs of external customers and acts to improve services.

3. Views of Historic Scotland as a place to work are also relatively high. Over half rate it above average as a place to work and speak highly of it as an employer to others. Advocacy of Historic Scotland as an employer has increased significantly since 2005 and is noticeably higher than expressed by staff in other organisations.

4. However, this support is not entirely translated in to overall job satisfaction. Although three-quarter of staff are satisfied in their present job, this is similar to levels of satisfaction across all organisations for whom Ipsos MORI has conducted employee surveys in recent years. Satisfaction with aspects such as working hours, the working environment, feeling part of a team, sense of accomplishment, the benefits package and development are on a par with that of other organisations. This suggests strong support for Historic Scotland is based on more than just the job.

5. Some aspects of working life are very positive, such as having adequate resources, receiving sufficient training and receiving regular feedback. Furthermore, good improvements have been made in the last few years in terms of giving staff challenging things to do, satisfaction with the benefits package and development, feelings of working for a successful organisation, consulting staff about their work, and career development. When asked directly, staff are more likely than in 2005 to say Historic Scotland performs well in terms of giving sufficient authority to make decisions and in treating individuals as valued and respected employees.

6. Many of these changes are a reflection of the strong views of line managers. Staff are more likely than counterparts in other organisations to rate their line manager positively on all aspects. Particular strengths are commitment to Historic Scotland, making clear what is expected of staff, listening to ideas, recognising good work and giving staff the right information to do the job properly. They have also made significant improvements in terms of treating staff fairly, setting realistic targets, giving support and guidance, responding to issues, and getting the most out of people.

7. Staff perceptions of the Senior Management Team are not as favourable as staff views of senior management in other organisations. Historic Scotland staff are just as likely as to agree they have as much contact as they want, that senior managers have a vision of where

the organisation is going and that they have confidence in them. They are less likely to agree they trust senior management, that senior management is listening to staff opinion and that senior management *communicates* a clear vision of where Historic Scotland is going.

8. One of the strongest drivers of engagement with the organisation is good communication. Ipsos MORI research regularly highlights that those who feel informed are more likely to be satisfied in their job and to speak highly of it to others. Historic Scotland staff are similarly likely to feel informed as staff in other organisations. Half feel they are kept informed, although only one in ten feel Historic Scotland keeps them *fully* informed.

9. The three main sources of information are email, immediate line managers and rumour. Although better use could, perhaps, be made of team briefings, senior management and the employee newsletter. It is noticeable in the subgroup analysis that those departments that made best use of the range of information sources are also those that are most likely to feel informed.

### **Implications**

10. Staff are strongly committed to helping historic Scotland achieve its mission statement and aims. They speak highly of its services and of its focus on satisfying external customers. Satisfaction with many aspects of the job is high or has improved significantly over the last few years, and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of their line managers.

11. However, these facts do not translate into a particularly high level of overall job satisfaction. Clues to why are illustrated in the ratings of communication and senior management, which are not above those of staff in other organisations. In particular, staff would like to feel senior management are listening to staff and communicating a clear vision of where Historic Scotland is going. In addition, more use could be made of team briefings, dissemination of information via senior staff and the employee newsletter.