

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS  
CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY  
May 2010**

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In March 2010, DSL conducted our third customer service survey, which is now done on a biennial basis. We use the six Department of Administrative Services-mandated questions, and include an open-ended question for respondents' comments. The survey is used to track Key Performance Measure 15 (Customer Service), and our goal is to have 93 percent of our customers rating DSL's service delivery as "good" or "excellent."

Approximately 3800 surveys were sent to customers who interacted with DSL in 2009. This is more than double the number that was sent out in 2008 (1580). The survey was sent via e-mail and mail to five customer groups. The samples were drawn from the agency's Land Administration System (LAS) database; the Unclaimed Property Section's claims database; the wetland consultant e-mail list; and South Slough's newsletter and education e-mail lists. The unclaimed property survey recipients were the only randomly sampled group because of the large number of customers in 2009. For all other groups, all customers were surveyed.

Slightly more than 1,100 surveys were returned, a 29% return rate. This is greater than previous years' return rates (16% in 2008 and 23.5% in 2007). However, we sent out more surveys this year, because of the large number of e-mail addresses used. All mailed surveys contained a self-addressed, stamped, return envelope.

The five groups surveyed were:

***Land Management*** (waterway, rangeland and other lessees)  
934 surveys sent (422 e-mailed; 512 mailed)  
244 returned – 26%

***Wetlands and Waterways*** (permittees, wetland customers and consultants)  
823 surveys sent (423 e-mailed; 420 mailed)  
219 returned – 26.6%

***Unclaimed Property*** (claimants)  
1320 surveys sent (440 e-mailed; 880 mailed)  
459 returned – 34.7%

***Agency Partners*** (Public Review Process database)  
775 surveys e-mailed  
99 returned – 12.7%

***South Slough*** (e-newsletter and education contacts)  
162 surveys e-mailed  
81 returned – 50%

All six questions had a rating scale of Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor and Don't Know. Because of the large number of respondents who indicated "don't know" on many questions – ranging from just a few percent up to 33 percent – we removed all the "don't knows" from the total for each question. This makes the universe of tallied responses slightly lower than the gross number of surveys returned.

Our goal was to get at least 200 responses per program, except for South Slough which sent out 162 surveys. When analyzing survey results, it is preferable to have at least 100 responses. The numbers for land management, wetlands and waterways, unclaimed property, and partners are adequate for analyzing those separately. South Slough's high return rate (50%) contributes to the overall accuracy of their results. Each of the five program areas received program-specific respondent comments.

The agency's combined scoring follows. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

**1. How do you rate the timeliness of the services DSL provides?**

<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Excellent: 34%	Excellent: 29%	Excellent: 25%
Good: 46%	Good: 46%	Good: 43%
Fair: 14%	Fair: 17%	Fair: 18%
Poor: 6%	Poor: 8%	Poor: 15%
<b>Excl/Good 80%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 75%</b>	<b>Excl/Good 68%</b>

**2. How do you rate DSL's ability to provide services correctly the first time?**

<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Excellent: 41%	Excellent: 29%	Excellent: 30%
Good: 44%	Good: 52%	Good: 45%
Fair: 10%	Fair: 11%	Fair: 17%
Poor: 6%	Poor: 8%	Poor: 9%
<b>Excl/Good: 85%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 81%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 75%</b>

**3. How do you rate DSL's helpfulness?**

<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Excellent: 40%	Excellent: 37%	Excellent: 32%
Good: 42%	Good: 45%	Good: 44%
Fair: 12%	Fair: 11%	Fair: 16%
Poor: 6%	Poor: 7%	Poor: 8%
<b>Excl/Good: 82%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 82%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 76%</b>

**4. How do you rate the knowledge and expertise of DSL employees?**

2010	2008	2007
Excellent: 43%	Excellent: 35%	Excellent: 37%
Good: 43%	Good: 47%	Good: 45%
Fair: 10%	Fair: 15%	Fair: 14%
Poor: 4%	Poor: 3%	Poor: 4%
<b>Excl/Good: 86%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 82%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 82%</b>

**5. How do you rate the availability of information at DSL?**

2010	2008	2007
Excellent: 33%	Excellent: 21%	Excellent: 26%
Good: 47%	Good: 50%	Good: 49%
Fair: 15%	Fair: 21%	Fair: 20%
Poor: 6%	Poor: 7%	Poor: 5%
<b>Excl/Good: 80%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 71%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 75%</b>

**6. How do you rate the overall quality of service DSL provides?**

2010	2008	2007
Excellent: 36%	Excellent: 28%	Excellent: 24%
Good: 47%	Good: 52%	Good: 48%
Fair: 11%	Fair: 14%	Fair: 18%
Poor: 6%	Poor: 6%	Poor: 10%
<b>Excl/Good: 83%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 80%</b>	<b>Excl/Good: 72%</b>

**Conclusions:**

Though DSL did not reach the goal of having 93% of our customers rate our service as good or excellent, there is solid evidence of improvement in all areas:

**Timeliness** improved from 68% in 2007 to 80% in 2010.

**Providing services correctly the first time** improved from 75% in 2007 to 85% in 2010.

**Helpfulness** improved from 76% in 2007 to 82% in 2010.

**Employee knowledge and expertise** improved from 82% in 2007 to 86% in 2010.

**Availability of information** improved from 75% in 2007 to 80% in 2010.

**Overall quality of service** improved from 72% in 2007 to 83% in 2010.

Despite the regulatory nature of some DSL programs, our customers consistently rate our staff as professional and knowledgeable, making this question the highest rated (86% in 2010). However, it's clear from the responses that many customers don't have much personal interaction with staff (for example, they receive a lease

renewal letter in the mail and send in their payment without ever talking to anyone; or file an unclaimed property claim without staff contact). Many of the negative comments we received focus on this lack of interaction. Other issues include:

### **Land Management**

- People resent having to pay what they perceive is a “tax” on their waterway structures.
- Regulation by multiple agencies is confusing, and lessees would like to see DSL coordinate more with local government.
- Decisions vary among staff – we need to be more consistent.
- Why doesn’t DSL get involved in water quality issues?
- Many people don’t want any increases in registration fees for waterway structures.

### **Wetlands and Waterways**

- It takes too long for decisions to be made – too much red tape.
- Agencies need to coordinate more effectively; streamline services.
- The tone of letters is threatening.
- Decisions vary among staff – we need to be more consistent.
- Mitigation standards are unrealistic.
- Improve the permit process for voluntary restoration projects – “don’t be an obstacle.”
- Conduct more training for wetland professionals throughout state.

### **Unclaimed Property**

- It is very difficult to talk to a person – many people would like to see a dedicated staff person handle phone calls.
- The process takes too long.
- Many people would like to know the source of their unclaimed property.

### **Partners**

- DSL is understaffed and employee turnover is an issue.
- Inconsistent decision-making among staff.
- Staff needs to get out into the field more to see projects and issues on the ground.
- Coordination with other agencies needs to be improved.
- Timeliness is an issue – speed up processes.
- Citizens of Oregon are not “customers.” How about conducting an analysis on DSL stewardship of the public’s resources?

### **South Slough**

- There were no negative comments about the South Slough, and these two comments sum up respondents’ feelings about the program: *“SSNERR is a major resource and asset to Oregon’s South Coast.” “This is an awesome program which serves the community on many levels.”*

DSL continues to take customer service very seriously, and implement strategies to increase the effectiveness of our customer service, including more Web-based services, staff training, and customer-friendly communications. We believe we're on the right track, and we hope our customers continue to see improved service from DSL over time.

Following is a sampling of the positive comments received:

*"I have been impressed with both your knowledge and professional staff as well as the high level of customer service. Thanks."*

*"I was attempting to develop my lot.....when the county informed me that wetlands might be an issue. Your representatives quickly got me the information I needed and what I anticipated to be a nightmare turned out to be quite pleasant."*

*"I would say you people are running DSL superior to most government agencies – don't get the big head."*

*"Very pleasantly surprised by the positive service. Thank you."*

*"...job well done – both efficient and honest."*

*"This is one of the best units in state government right now from where I sit."*

