

Guide to the Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey

This guide explains how to use the Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey, including how to:

set an optional
performance target

conduct the survey
with your minister

develop a score
based on the results

use the results for
improving performance.

The Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey is used by agencies to assess their minister's satisfaction with the quality of the agency's policy advice.

The survey is used for:

- **external accountability** – agencies report their ministerial satisfaction scores in their annual reports
- **performance improvement** – agencies use the results of the survey to improve the way they engage with their minister.

The minister's responses are subject to the *Official Information Act 1982*.

The image shows a thumbnail of the Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey form. It includes fields for Agency/Portfolio and Time period. The purpose of the survey is to ensure you are well supported in your role as Minister and receive high quality policy advice. Your feedback will help us improve policy performance and set standards for the agency's management. The form asks to rate the following aspects of the agency's policy advice using this scale: 1 (Needs significant improvement), 2 (Needs improvement), 3 (Satisfied), 4 (Very satisfied), 5 (Extremely satisfied). The first section is '1. Responsiveness and context' with a table for the last year, the agency's policies, and various aspects of policy advice.

A. Setting a target ministerial satisfaction score

Agencies with a policy appropriation or policy category within a multi-category appropriation must include a performance target for ministerial satisfaction in their Estimates: a score out of 5 using the ratings below.

1 Needs
significant
improvement

2 Needs
improvement

3 Satisfied

4 Very
satisfied

5 Extremely
satisfied

B. Conducting the survey

Agencies enter their agency name, the portfolio, and the relevant time period at the top of the survey before providing to the minister.

WHO

The survey should be completed by the portfolio minister. Your agency can also choose to survey associate ministers or parliamentary under-secretaries.

WHEN

The survey results should cover the financial year and be completed in time for the ministerial satisfaction score to be reported in the agency's annual report.

Agencies can decide how often to conduct the survey, although most do it annually or six-monthly. The survey can also be used to provide direct feedback on specific projects and for driving continuous improvement.

It can be helpful to engage with the minister's office early so they can find time for the minister to complete the survey.

HOW

Find out from your minister whether they would like to complete the survey electronically or by hand.

Send the survey with a covering brief that reminds the minister of the policy advice supplied during the survey's time period.



The Policy Project

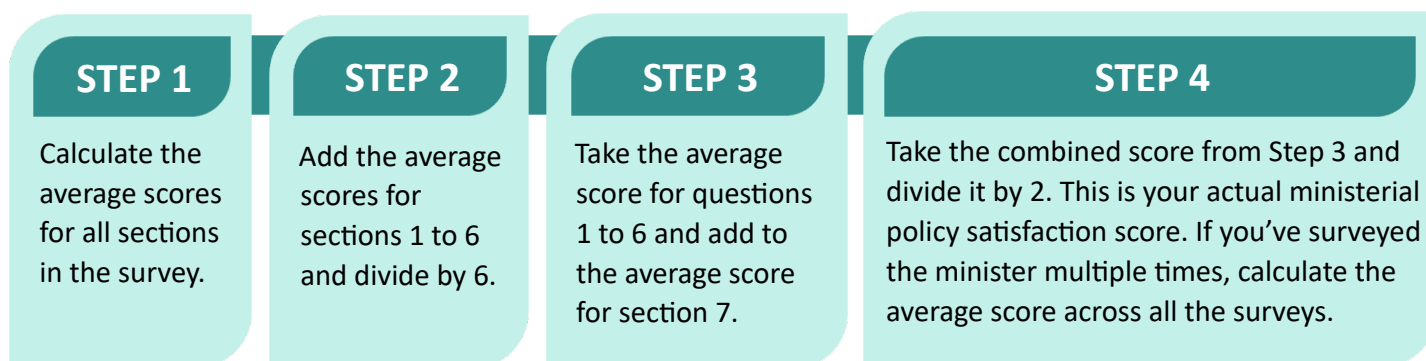


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C. Scoring the survey

The survey includes questions with rating scales and spaces for comments. Only the rating scales are used to calculate the ministerial satisfaction score.

Calculating the ministerial policy satisfaction score



The score to be included in the annual report

Some agencies will report multiple ministerial satisfaction scores that correspond to different policy advice categories reported in the Estimates. Where an agency needs to conduct multiple surveys for one policy advice category, an average of the combined survey scores is reported.

If you've been unable to survey the minister, associate minister, or parliamentary under-secretary, note in the annual report that "The Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey results are unavailable".

D. Adding extra questions to the survey

Some agencies may wish to add extra questions to the survey on matters particularly relevant to their agency's policy advice. The survey is provided in Word format so agencies can add extra questions if they wish to gain feedback on other aspects of performance (e.g. ministerial support services). The questions with rating scales are collected in tables that can be copied and pasted to the end of the document, then modified. You can add questions with rating scales or free-text responses, as necessary.

If you do add extra questions to the survey, don't include those responses when you calculate the ministerial policy satisfaction score. Only base your score on the original questions provided in the survey. That way, all agencies with a policy appropriation are applying a common performance standard.

You can pinpoint areas for improvement by looking beyond the score and into the question responses. Note that comparing scores across ministers is of limited value due to differing expectations and standards.

To receive more regular feedback from the minister, selected questions and their rating scales from the survey can be included on individual policy advice papers, so the minister can provide feedback on that specific paper. Whether this option works will depend on your minister's preferences.

You could use the survey results in the following ways to improve your engagement with the minister:

