

Management of Jurors

An inspection of the management of jurors
by the Northern Ireland Court Service

April 2010





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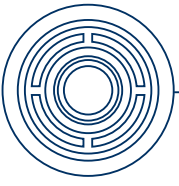
An inspection of the management of jurors
by the Northern Ireland Court Service

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to
Section 49(2) of the Justice (NI) Act 2002.

Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all







Contents

List of abbreviations		iv
Chief Inspector's Foreword		v
Executive Summary		vi
Recommendations		viii
SECTION 1: Inspection Report		
Chapter 1	Introduction and context	3
Chapter 2	Notification and summons	7
Chapter 3	At court	15
Chapter 4	Juror's experiences beyond court	23
SECTION 2: Appendices		
Appendix 1	Methodology	28
Appendix 2	Terms of Reference	30
Appendix 3	The jury pool	40
Appendix 4	Juror questionnaire	44
Appendix 5	Questionnaire results	49
Appendix 6	Jurors allowances	68



List of abbreviations

CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CSC	Customer Service Centre (Court Service)
EO	Electoral Office
E&W	England and Wales
HMCS	Her Majesty's Court Service (in England and Wales)
HMICA	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Court Administration
ICOS	Integrated Court Operation System
JMT	Jury Management Team
NI	Northern Ireland
NICtS	Northern Ireland Court Service
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
SIT	Service Improvement Team
SMT	Senior Management Team



Chief Inspector's Foreword

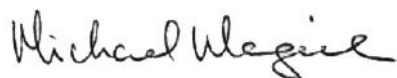
Jury service has been described as the cornerstone of the criminal justice system. It is critical that a high quality jury management process is in place to support the effective working of the court process. It is also important that those who are called for jury service are treated appropriately as they give up their time. In 2009-10 the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS) issued 24,900 jury notifications.

The aim of this inspection was to assess the provision of effective and efficient, high quality administrative (non judicial) services for those notified and summoned as jurors. The inspection examined each stage of the juror experience from notification and summons, to arrival at court, in-court information, pre-trial, trial and post-trial activity.

The overall message from the inspection is a positive one. In the view of Inspectors the Northern Ireland Court Service was meeting the demands of the system, by providing sufficient numbers of jurors to ensure the smooth running of criminal trials and avoiding unnecessary delay due to insufficient juror numbers. The ethos of 'customer service' was apparent in how the Court Service dealt with prospective jurors. In response to our survey, 93% of jurors described the experience as good or satisfactory and over 63% of respondents believed they had made a positive contribution. The work of the Court Service in this area has been the subject of on-going internal reviews and evaluation in line with good practice.

We make eight recommendations for improvement including the need to ensure that jurors are not left unused at the end of their jury service. Jury utilisation is important in maintaining the overall effectiveness of the system. Inspectors found that Northern Ireland Court Service staff showed much awareness of the implications of low jury utilisation and had already implemented changes to maximise utilisation. This is to be welcomed as is their desire to continue to provide improvement in this area.

The inspection was carried out by Bill Priestley and I would like to thank on his behalf, all those who participated, and in particular, the jurors who gave their time to speak with us and respond to the survey.



Dr Michael Maguire
Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland
April 2010



Executive Summary

Introduction

Trial by jury is a fundamental right in English law jurisdictions. However, the right to trial by jury is not absolute. This inspection is focused on the administration and management of the jury system by the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS) and does not comment on the outcomes of jury trials or on judicial matters.

The NICtS had reformed the way it dealt with the management of jury service and had implemented many changes since 2007. These included the centralisation of jury management under one team based in Londonderry/Derry.

The organisation had also introduced many initiatives based on its knowledge of the court system in England and Wales, following a report into the quality of service provided for jurors published in 2006¹. The NICtS had adopted the customer service excellence approach and jurors had been identified as a specific customer group in this process.


Our overall findings were as follows:

- The NICtS was meeting the demands of the system by providing sufficient numbers of jurors to ensure the smooth running of criminal trials and avoiding unnecessary delay due to insufficient juror numbers;
- the ethos of customer service had been applied to jurors to ensure that their experience of the system was a positive one;
- a consultation exercise into widening the jury pool had been completed and a summary of responses to the consultation was published in January 2010. Policy decisions have been reserved until after the devolution of responsibility for justice matters to the Northern Ireland Assembly;
- jurors surveyed and spoken to by Inspectors had generally positive experiences of how they had been managed and helped. A total of 93% of juror respondents said they had had a good or satisfactory experience of jury service and over 63% of respondents said that they felt they had made a positive contribution; and
- approaches to how jurors were being managed were subject to evaluation and review through meetings of the Service Improvement Team (SIT) and new initiatives were being suggested and explored.

Juror numbers

Whilst the demands of the system were being met, the numbers of jurors called regularly exceeded those actually required. The number of jurors actually used in trials had been monitored and reported on, but no overall target had been set with regard to utilisation rates. Internal monitoring had suggested that rates of under use varied between 34% and 73% for the year 2007-08.

¹ A thematic review of quality of service provided by Her Majesty's Court Service for jurors in the criminal courts: December 2006: HMICA



Research in England and Wales (E&W) had suggested that utilisation rates are linked to levels of juror satisfaction and confidence. Operating with optimum numbers of jurors would also improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the management and administration of jury service. In an effort to operate with the optimum number of jurors, it would be useful to set and monitor targets with regard to jury utilisation.

Jurors are normally excused further service if the trial in which they are sitting finishes within the four week period of their service. In E&W, jurors in this situation are returned to the jury pool to keep numbers within the optimum range. It may help with the setting of critical numbers for jurors called if in such cases, unless otherwise directed by the judge, that jurors return to the jury pool for the rest of their period of service.

Excusals and deferrals

Attrition of the numbers of jurors begins with the wide range of people excluded as of right by existing legislation and a summary of responses to the consultation exercise into widening the jury pool, had been published in January 2010. However, of those eligible up to one third had been excused service or had their service deferred.

The Jury Management Team (JMT) dealt with excusals and deferrals until a week before trial, at which point responsibility passed to local court administrators. There were no corporate guidelines as to how to deal with such requests from jurors. Draft guidance had been circulated but had not yet been adopted. It would be useful if guidelines could be finalised and adopted to standardise decision making around excusals and deferrals as much as possible.

Management and administration

There had been reviews of the information provided to jurors and initiatives had been suggested to make further information available to employers. This work should continue so that employers are made aware of the obligations of employees engaged on jury service.

Some court areas adopted the approach of splitting jury panels and this had benefited both jurors and NICtS. Splitting jury panels had reduced disruption for jurors and increased the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative process. The process was handled differently in different court areas but, it would be useful if splitting the jury panel was adopted across the NICtS and a standard approach of management of this process was implemented.

Court venues were generally suitable for most jurors and there had been a facilities audit to assess courts for ease of access. There had been some difficulties identified in terms of access by wheelchair users to jury boxes in some courts. It would be useful if the work already under way to improve accessibility continues and results in further action to ensure ease of access for jurors with disabilities.



Recommendations

Key recommendations

- Inspectors recommend that NICtS sets a target for jury utilisation and monitors this with the aim of further reducing the numbers of jurors notified and of establishing whether the service is operating efficiently with regard to the setting of juror numbers and their subsequent management (*paragraph 2.12*).
- Inspectors recommend that the NICtS agree and implement the draft guidelines for discretionary deferral, partial and full excusals as soon as possible. Monitoring to ensure compliance and for further development of the guidelines, should be introduced (*paragraph 2.16*).
- Inspectors recommend that in the event of a trial finishing within the period of a juror's service, and unless otherwise directed by the judge, that the NICtS implements a policy of returning jurors to the jury pool for the rest of their period of service (*paragraph 3.20*).

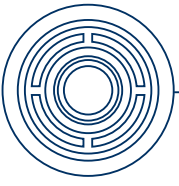
Other recommendations

- Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continue with its intention to make employers' information available, so that they are clear as to the obligations of employees engaged on jury service (*paragraph 2.21*).
- Inspectors recommend that the process of splitting the jury panel is adopted as policy across the NICtS and that a standard approach of informing jurors of the dates they are required to attend is implemented (*paragraph 3.4*).
- Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continues to monitor feedback about catering and refreshments from jurors so that local contracts can be reviewed using relevant information with the aim of enhancing the juror experience of the service (*paragraph 3.15*).
- Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continues to assess its court venues for ease of access for jurors with disabilities and takes action to improve accessibility, to enable disabled people to play a full part in jury service (*paragraph 3.19*).
- If the jury pool is widened along the lines of E&W, then Inspectors recommend the employment status of sworn jurors should be monitored to ensure that juries represent a balanced, cross section of society (*paragraph 4.6*).

Section



Inspection Report



CHAPTER 1:

Introduction and context



1.1 The principle that defendants in criminal cases should be tried by a jury of their peers, is one of the most fundamental in jurisdictions based on English law dating back nearly 800 years. In 1973, non-jury Diplock courts were introduced in Northern Ireland (NI) for trials on indictment of scheduled offences under the Emergency Provisions Act. These trials were phased out by the Justice and Security (NI) Act 2007, although trials may still be conducted without a jury in circumstances where the Director of Public Prosecutions is satisfied that certain statutory conditions are met (see ss.1-9).

1.2 However, it remains the case that the right to trial by jury is not absolute. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 allows for trials presided over by one judge in limited circumstances:

- in cases where there is danger of jury tampering, the prosecution may apply for a non-jury trial where “*there is evidence of a real and present danger that jury tampering would take place*”. Or “*notwithstanding any steps (including the provision of police protection)*

which might reasonably be taken to prevent jury tampering, the likelihood that it would take place and would be so substantial as to make it necessary in the interests of justice for the trial to be conducted without a jury”.

The same statute also sets out further circumstances where in fraud cases, an application may be made by the prosecution for a non-jury trial. However, this particular provision is not yet in force.

1.3 The status of jury trials was commented on in a recent case at the Court of Appeal in England² where the judges said: “*The right to trial by jury is so deeply entrenched in our constitution that, unless express statutory language indicates otherwise, the highest possible forensic standard of proof is required to be established before the right is removed. That is the criminal standard*”.

1.4 Jury service has been described as ‘the jewel in the Crown’ or ‘the corner-stone’ of the British criminal justice system³. In common with the Auld report, most stakeholders consulted during the course of this

² T & Ors R v [2009] EWCA Crim 1035 (05 June 2009).

³ Review of the Criminal Courts of England and Wales; The Right Honourable Lord Justice Auld September 2001.



inspection expressed a lot of confidence in the jury system and its ability to 'get it right' most of the time. However, this inspection is focused on the administration and management of the jury system by the NICtS and does not comment on the outcomes of jury trials or, on judicial matters.

- 1.5 The aim of this inspection was to assess the provision of effective and efficient, high quality administrative (non-judicial) services for those notified and summoned as jurors. Specifically, the inspection set out to:
- assess the quality of service provided by the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS) in the notification, selection and treatment of jurors;
 - identify areas of good and poor performance and the underlying reasons for the performance achieved; and
 - make recommendations aimed at improving service delivery.
- 1.6 The electoral roll is used as the basis of jury selection. Each year the Electoral Office supplies a list of randomly selected electors to the NICtS who then begin the process of sending out notices. In Northern Ireland the legislation governing how jury service is to be delivered, is contained in the Juries (NI) Order 1996 (as amended). At present there are many categories of people who are disqualified, ineligible or excusable from jury service⁴. In England and Wales (E&W) the jury pool was widened following Lord Justice Auld's recommendation to

exclude as few people as possible. In Northern Ireland this process is in its infancy. The NICtS has consulted on how best to widen the jury pool but no policy decisions had been taken at the time of inspection fieldwork.

- 1.7 In his report, Lord Justice Auld wrote: *"Most of the exclusions or scope for excusal from jury service deprive juries of the experience and skills of a wide range of professional and otherwise successful and busy people. They create the impression, voiced by many contributors to the Review, that jury service is only for those not important or clever enough to get out of it. In my view, no one should be automatically ineligible or excusable from jury service simply because he or she is a member of a certain profession or holds a particular office or job. Where the demands of the office or job are such as to make jury service difficult for him over the period covered by the jury summons, he should be subject to the same regime as the self-employed or ordinary wage earners or others for whom jury service is also costly and burdensome, that is, discretionary excusal or deferral."*
- 1.8 This recommendation was adopted by the Government and implemented in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (which amended the Juries Act 1974). In particular, eligibility for jury service in E&W was expanded by the removal of almost all the categories of individuals who generally were excused or barred from jury service. The emphasis changed from automatic excusal for

⁴ Full details in Appendix 3



many, to deferral of service where appropriate.

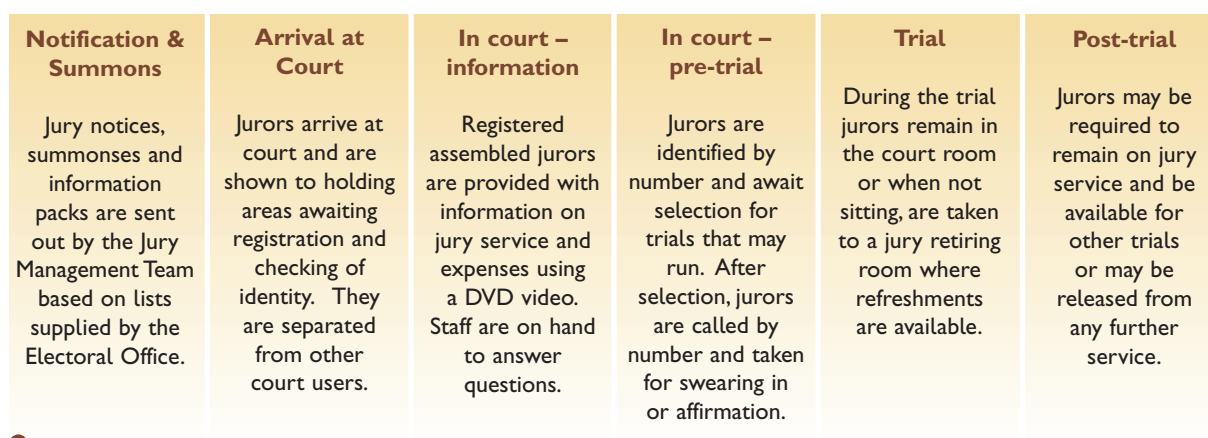
1.9 In Northern Ireland, once a person has been summoned to attend as a juror, they are normally expected to remain available for a period of four weeks. In E&W the corresponding period is two weeks. The NICtS has implemented various initiatives in an effort to enhance the juror experience and to lessen the impact of the period spent on jury service. These initiatives include splitting the jury panel into two smaller panels. This spreads the numbers of available jurors over the weekly period and enables staff to call smaller numbers on a particular day. It also enables them to limit the number of times a juror is required to attend court to once a week. The result is that unless a juror is required to sit on a case, any disruption is kept to a minimum. Inspectors were also told of a pilot scheme to operate in the Londonderry/Derry court area early in 2010, where the period of jury service will be reduced to two

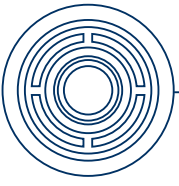
weeks in line with E&W. This pilot project will be monitored and evaluated for its effectiveness.

1.10 The NICtS staff are aware of the disruption to jurors that may be caused by potentially long running trials. After a juror is selected they are encouraged to identify any such impediments so that the smooth running of the trial is ensured and that jurors who show that a lengthy trial would be unreasonably disruptive to them are excused.

1.11 Figure 1 shows the pathway a typical juror follows from the time of notification and summons right through to completion of their jury service. Each element had been recognised by the NICtS and had been managed by them using the principles of customer service excellence. The NICtS had surveyed jurors as to their experience at each point of their journey and had published a juror journey map for use internally to enhance jurors' experiences.

Figure 1: Jurors pathway:



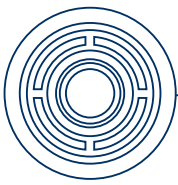


CHAPTER 2:

Notification and summons



- 2.1 The jury process begins each year with the provision of a list of names taken from the electoral roll. The list is generated randomly by the Electoral Office (EO) and supplied to the NICtS based on numbers supplied to the office by the NICtS. Once it has been received by the Jury Management Team (JMT) in Londonderry/Derry during February/March each year, a jury notice is served on everyone on the list. At this stage the JMT begins to receive communication from potential jurors as to delaying their jury service or giving reasons for excusal or exemption.
- 2.2 A wide range of people in Northern Ireland (NI) are excluded or are excusable from jury service as of right by legislation. The current position in NI broadly reflects the position in E&W prior to 2004. A full list of people disqualified, ineligible or exempt under the relevant legislation is reproduced in Appendix 3. Consultation had already taken place on 'widening the jury pool' in the Northern Ireland context but no policy decisions had as yet been taken with regard to this. The Electoral Office does not filter names on the register in any way except, for example, to remove people who are excluded from jury service by reason of age (over 70 or under 18), or those who have previously completed a period of jury service. However, the numbers requested by the NICtS from the EO have to factor in attrition due to people who are exempt as of right.
- 2.3 The benefits of access to a wider jury pool were examined in detail in Chapter 5 of Lord Justice Auld's report in E&W. A similar approach in NI would require the introduction of amending legislation. A summary of responses to the consultation on 'widening the jury pool' in NI was published in January 2010. Policy decisions have been reserved until after the devolution of responsibility for justice matters to the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 2.4 The numbers requested by the NICtS from the EO are set each year for forthcoming projected trials. These critical number projections are collated from court administrators at the various centres. There is no corporate method of determining the numbers required for jury service. Each court administrator reviews what is known about projected trials and using their own experience and judgement,



taking into account attrition from excusals and deferrals, indicates the numbers that will be required for the jury pool.

2.5 In practice the methodology for determining juror numbers differs little between each court area. However, administrators are risk averse when it comes to estimating the numbers of jurors required. This is borne out by questionnaire evidence, by staff and managers in the NICtS, and by other stakeholders all of which indicated that there had been no delays of trials due to non-availability of jurors. The risk averse approach is understandable. Avoidable delay in criminal trials must be reduced as much as possible and insufficient numbers of jurors would contribute to the risk of delay. Figure 2 shows the number of jury notifications issued over the last four court years.

Figure 2: Number of jury notifications issued:

Jury Notices issued			
2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
33,000	39,000	28,700	24,900

2.6 As figure 2 illustrates the NICtS has been steadily reducing the numbers of jurors notified each year. The NICtS had monitored the effects of this reduction and jury expenditure had been reduced by around 15% between 2006-07 and 2007-08. However, the perception of some jurors remains that too many are still left unused. It is often difficult to

predict whether trials will run or not as it is within the control of the defence to enter a plea at any time during the proceedings. Figure 3 shows the percentage of jurors put on notice but not used, by court division for the year 2007-08.

Figure 3: Percentage of jurors unused 2007-08

Division	% of jurors unused
Londonderry	34
Armagh & South Down	35
Belfast	37
Omagh	44
Ards	49
Craigavon	54
Enniskillen	68
Antrim	73
Overall	49

2.7 Pinpoint accuracy in determining the actual numbers required for jury service is impossible. However, large numbers of jurors left unused at the end of their period of service suggests that too many people are being required to attend for service.

2.8 Jury utilisation is an issue that has attracted much attention in the court system in E&W. A national target of 70% utilisation has been set and is monitored both nationally and regionally. Figure 4 illustrates the year to date (April – September 2009) utilisation figures by region in E&W which suggests that the target is a stretching one. Only the London region exceeded the target and the national average fell below target by 6.3%. Whilst jury utilisation is recognised as an issue and is well

monitored by the NICtS, no formal targets are set with regard to performance in this area.

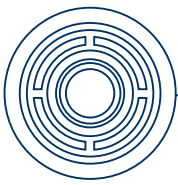
Figure 4: Jury utilisation by E&W region (year to date April-September 2009)

Region	Year to date % utilisation
London	75.2
Midlands	62.8
North-East	58.1
North-West	62.8
South-East	64
South-West	58.9
Wales	64.2
E&W average	63.7

2.9 Inspectors found that NICtS staff showed much awareness of the issues and implications of low jury utilisation rates and the identification of appropriate numbers to be notified for jury service. Many of the initiatives introduced for juror service in E&W as a result of target setting and performance monitoring, had been implemented by the NICtS since 2007. Court administrators had reduced the numbers called for jury service each year and other initiatives had been introduced to ensure a positive experience for jurors. Administrators felt that they were now calling as few jurors as possible to ensure that the balance between efficiency and the smooth running of jury trials was maintained, in the context of the rate of attrition on jury numbers due to excusals, exemptions and deferrals. Attrition rates in most of the court areas resulted in around one third of jurors called being lost from the jury

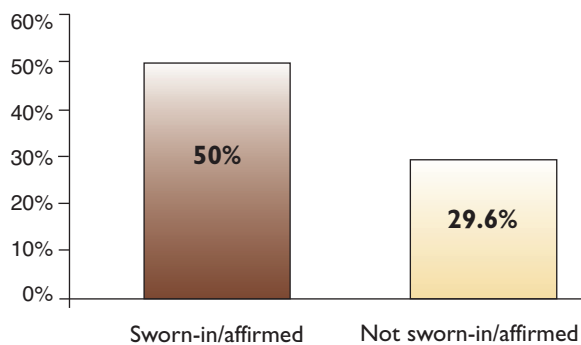
pool. However, setting targets and monitoring performance in this area would enable the NICtS to establish more accurately its efficacy in this area.

- 2.10 The numbers of jurors required to attend has an impact on the system, both financially and as to its reputation. Financially, administering and handling larger numbers of people than is strictly required is more expensive. In addition, expenses are payable to jurors and if numbers are constantly over and above that required, then the costs will be higher. The NICtS was unable to provide a detailed breakdown of full jury management costs as the budget for administering jury service is only one element of the larger Customer Service Centre (CSC) budget. The number of jurors who actually attended for Crown court proceedings in the court period September 2007 – June 2008 was 6,171. Based only on claims for travel, subsistence and loss of earnings, the cost was over £1.18m at an average of £192 per juror.
- 2.11 As to reputation, some jurors who remained unused at the end of their period of service told Inspectors that they felt that they had wasted their time. Survey results indicate that juror experience and perceptions of their contribution are less positive amongst those jurors who never reached the sworn-in or affirmed stage. In addition research by Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) in E&W indicates that higher utilisation rates result in higher juror satisfaction rates and increased confidence in the system. Figure 5



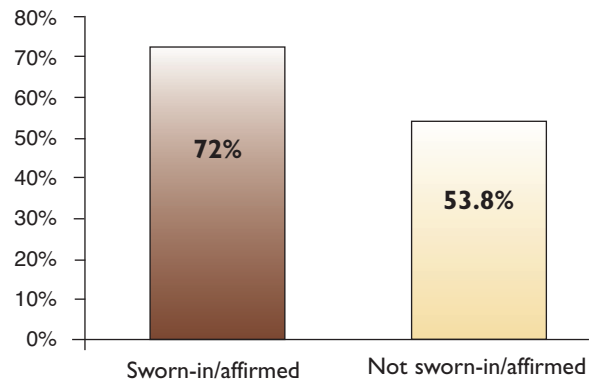
illustrates that the percentage of those jurors surveyed by CJI who indicated that they had a good experience of the system was 20.4% lower if they had not reached the sworn-in stage. Only 6.7% of all jurors who responded to the survey question said that they had had a poor experience of jury service.

Figure 5: Percentage of jurors having a good experience:



2.12 Figure 6 indicates that the percentage of jurors surveyed by CJI who believed that they had made a positive contribution to the criminal justice system was 18.2% higher amongst those who had been sworn-in or affirmed. It is important therefore that the numbers of people called for jury service reflect as accurately as possible the numbers actually used. **Inspectors recommend that NICtS sets a target for jury utilisation and monitors this with the aim of further reducing the numbers of jurors notified and of establishing whether the service is operating efficiently with regard to the setting of juror numbers and their subsequent management.**

Figure 6: Percentage of jurors believing they had made a positive contribution:



2.13 Between notification and summons, there is a continuing process of attrition of the numbers of jurors. The JMT receive information on a daily basis from people called for jury service regarding excusals, exemptions and deferrals. A target of three days is set for turnaround times with regard to responding to excusals and the JMT generally operate well within this. Targets are monitored on a daily basis and the process is well managed.

2.14 At the time of inspection fieldwork there were no agreed corporate guidelines to assist staff in making decisions on deferrals or excusals, although the JMT had set out excusal criteria and the required supporting evidence. A draft corporate guidance document had been produced and was in circulation. However, it had not been formally adopted or formalised. Having a central team dealing with the majority of applications for deferrals/excusals had reduced the opportunity for inconsistency in decision making across the service.



- 2.15 However, the JMT handle excusal and deferral requests only up until the period one week before a trial when the list is handed over to court administrators for remaining management. Jurors in different court divisions show widely variable rates of applications for excusals and deferrals but on average for the court year September 2007 - June 2008 the JMT excused around 24% of notified jurors. In some cases the JMT had advised applicants for excusals to apply to the trial judge on the first day of the trial. In the period one week before the trial responsibility for the juror list passes to local court administrators. On average, at this stage the rate of excusals for remaining jurors was around 37% for the court year September 2007 - June 2008.
- 2.16 Having agreed corporate guidelines as to excusals and deferrals would help to reduce the risk of inconsistent decision making across court areas and between JMT and court administrators. **Inspectors recommend that the NICtS agree and implement the draft guidelines for discretionary deferral, partial and full excusals as soon as possible. Monitoring to ensure compliance and for further development of the guidelines, should be introduced.**
- 2.17 Inspectors spoke with staff at the JMT regarding the process of initial notification and summons. It was obvious that the JMT staff were highly motivated to deliver a good service and to ensure that jurors had as positive an experience of the system as possible. At times it had been necessary to temporarily supplement JMT staff to enable efficient processing of over 20,000 notifications to jurors including information packs.
- 2.18 Handling forms that had not been completed fully by prospective jurors, limitations in the NICtS electronic management system (ICOS), and lack of physical storage space for over 20,000 juror packs were all identified as inhibitors. One example of a service improvement made following a visit by the ICOS team, to the JMT, was the introduction of the ability for jurors to complete their return forms on-line. Apart from direct communication such as with the ICOS team, staff had been able to raise these issues with managers. However, whilst they understood there were financial constraints and other priority issues for the NICtS, they felt that if the inhibitors were removed, they could deliver a better service for all stakeholders. Inspectors believe that the existing arrangements for raising issues through the Service Improvement Team (SIT) meetings, direct communication and use of the customer service excellence approach, will result in further improvements in the management and administration of jury service.
- 2.19 The NICtS had worked hard to ensure that people who received notification of jury service had access to comprehensive information. The JMT administered the sending out of information packs to jurors including a comprehensive juror booklet. This

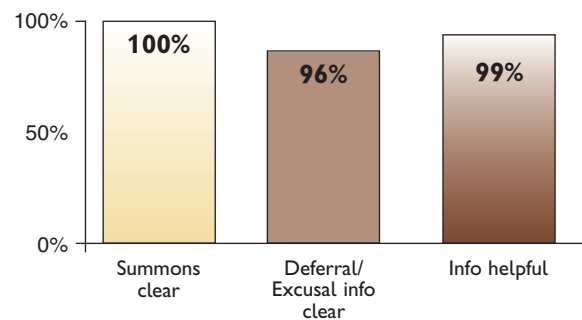


booklet had been kept updated to take account of changes in practice or policy. Further updates will be necessary, for example, with regard to the handling and storage of juror's mobile telephones whilst at court. However, the booklet contained a lot of information and many jurors spoken to by Inspectors said that they had read only what seemed to them, to be relevant parts of it. Court staff also put it to Inspectors that the size of the booklet could be off putting to jurors. Inspectors agree that in the light of forthcoming updates to the information contained in the booklet, and additional information for employers that is being considered, it would be prudent to review it. There is no doubt that the booklet raises expectations amongst prospective jurors that they will be required to sit on a case. However, Inspectors believe those expectations could best be managed by increasing the utilisation rate.

2.20 Further information for jurors had been posted on the NICtS website which included a question and answer section. The juror booklet was also available on-line, as well as the DVD video normally shown to jurors on first attendance at court. At the time of inspection fieldwork plans were well advanced to enable jurors to complete their return forms on-line. Since then, this scheme has been implemented but Inspectors are unable to comment on its usage or effectiveness. Based on information obtained from our survey, the vast majority of jurors indicated that information provided at the notification and summons

stage of the process had been helpful and clear. Figure 7 illustrates juror responses to information provided for them in the packs sent out by the JMT.

Figure 7: Percentage of Juror responses to initial information provided

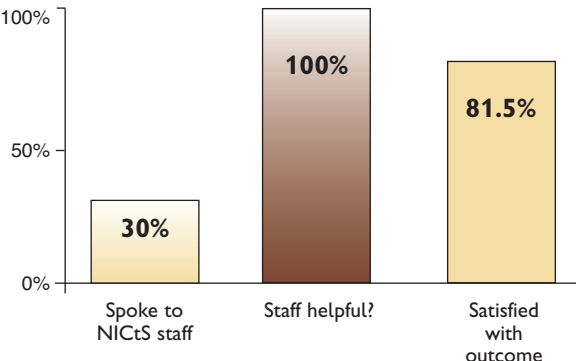


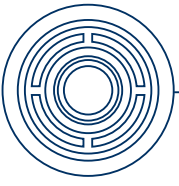
2.21 Some jurors indicated that more information on the process for their employers would have been beneficial. Inspectors found that the NICtS had identified this issue as part of customer service development. At the time of fieldwork, consultation was under way to determine the type of information and in what format it should be provided. Inspectors were given verbal anecdotal evidence of poor employer behaviour towards employees who were engaged on jury service but were unable to follow these up. However, the provision of clear information to employers on jury service would be of benefit. **Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continue with its intention to make employers' information available, so that they are clear as to the obligations of employees engaged on jury service.**



2.22 The deferral process is explained in information sent to jurors at the notification and summons stage of the process. Figure 8 shows that 30% of jurors who completed our survey said that they had made contact with NICtS staff concerning deferrals and excusals. All survey respondents who spoke with a member of staff said that they had been helpful, and over 81% of those who contacted staff about deferrals/excusals said that they had been satisfied with the outcome.

Figure 8: Juror responses to deferral process:





CHAPTER 3:

At court



Arrival

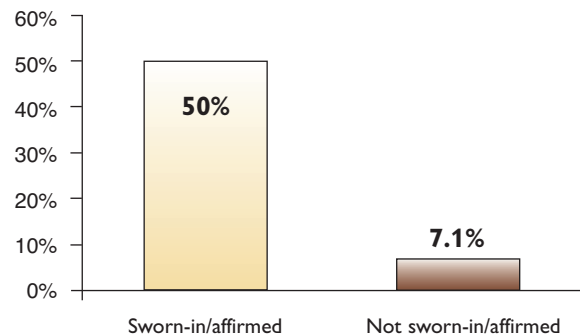
- 3.1 Depending on local arrangements, when jurors first arrive at court they are greeted by security staff and shown to a holding area which is often separate from other court users. This facility is not available in all courts due to the physical layout of the buildings. For example, jurors at Craigavon court are held in an area that is accessible to other court users until they are taken into a court room for registration. In other courts there are dedicated rooms available for holding and registration that are not accessible to other members of the public attending court.
- 3.2 Inspectors observed the arrival and registration process at four different court venues. Whilst there were different facilities at each, it was evident that security staff and other court staff adopted a customer care approach. Staff spoken to by Inspectors were very aware of how nervous some jurors can be and said that they did all they could to put jurors at ease. Inspectors observed this good practice first hand at all the locations visited.
- 3.3 Depending on the court, the numbers of jurors attending each day varied. However, the practice of splitting the jury panel so that not all jurors were required to attend on the same day had resulted in a more streamlined process which was easier for court staff and security staff to manage. The process involved half of the jury panel attending at the beginning of the week and the other half attending mid-week. Flexibility had been maintained so that if necessary panel numbers could be combined.
- 3.4 Not all court areas had adopted the practice of splitting the jury panel, but the advantages of doing so were apparent to Inspectors and to the NICtS. Court staff confirmed that the approach had reduced the time taken to register large numbers of jurors and had reduced associated costs. Inspectors found that the process of splitting jury panels was handled differently in different court areas. For example, in the Belfast area jurors are informed of the day they are required to attend by using 'juryline'. This is a telephone number that jurors are informed they must ring to find out which day they are required to attend. In other areas a



non-standard letter which informs jurors earlier in the process of their date for attendance is produced. ICOS had been unable to handle the production of the non-standard letter so this had been produced and administered by the JMT. Splitting jury panels reduces disruption for jurors and increases the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative process. **Inspectors recommend that the process of splitting the jury panel is adopted as policy across the NICtS and that a standard approach of informing jurors of the dates they are required to attend is implemented.**

3.5 In the context of safety and security, jurors were asked if they would have preferred to enter the court via a different entrance to other court users. Figure 9 illustrates that there was a wide variation in responses to our survey between those jurors who were sworn-in or affirmed and those who were not. A total of 50% of sworn-in/affirmed jurors who responded said they would have preferred to use a separate entrance as opposed to 7.1% of those who were not. The results indicate that half those juror respondents who had been involved in trials and therefore had attended court more often preferred a separate entrance. Jurors who are not sworn in generally would have attended court a maximum of four days over the four week period of their service. Whilst the results are not conclusive, they do indicate that for sworn-in/affirmed jurors, security is more of an issue.


Figure 9: Prefer to use a separate entrance



Information

3.6 Following initial arrival at court jurors are taken by security staff to be registered, identity checked and provided with information on jury service. The procedure is consistent across the court areas although the facilities differ. Some courts have dedicated rooms to enable the two-way exchange of information whilst others make best use of the facilities they have got. Inspectors found that at all court venues the security and comfort of jurors was foremost in the mind of security and other court staff.

3.7 Jurors are informed before they attend court what suitable identification to bring with them. Inspectors observed a consistent and well ordered approach to the process of registration at three courts. Numbers of staff handling registration varied from court to court depending on the numbers of jurors attending. However, Inspectors observed, and staff confirmed that the move to lesser numbers on a particular day by the practice of splitting the juror panel, was easier to manage.



3.8 Following registration, court staff record any absences and then use the juror DVD to ensure that jurors are fully informed of their obligations with regard to jury service. Inspectors observed the process a number of times and it was consistent across different court areas. The DVD is comprehensive and amongst other things, contains information on attendance, jury selection, the trial process and expense claims. Inspectors found that court staff willingly answered questions from jurors following the video presentation and were keen to maintain the customer service approach.

Pre-trial

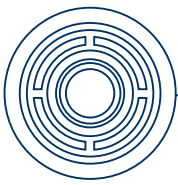
3.9 During this time jurors are required to wait in the juror assembly area until trials are ready to proceed. The waiting time varies depending on each case and some jurors told Inspectors that the provision of internet access at this time would be useful to enable jurors to catch up on work e-mails for example. The provision of reading material, such as newspapers in the jury assembly area were also suggested to Inspectors as a way of providing a useful distraction during the waiting time, which in some cases could be over two hours. Inspectors observed that many jurors who had attended court previously had brought their own reading material with them.

3.10 During the period of waiting for cases to proceed, Inspectors observed that court staff kept the waiting jurors informed of any

progress on a regular basis, although the information they could provide was limited. A total of 98% of jurors who responded to our survey said that court staff had kept them informed of what was happening. The provision of internet access and newspapers is one that was being considered by NICtS. Both have their dangers in that a juror may access information that may be seen as influencing their judgement.

3.11 Jurors are identified to the clerk of the court only by number and once numbers are selected court staff call the appropriate jurors to be taken for swearing in or affirmation. More than the standard number of 12 jurors (for criminal cases) are called to take account of issues such as knowledge of the defendant or non-availability for possible long trials. These jurors may remain on stand-by. The remaining jurors wait in the assembly area until discharged by the judge. Jurors who are called by number are escorted to the particular court room that they have been called to.

3.12 The jury assembly rooms that were visited by Inspectors at Londonderry/Derry, Laganside, Newry and Antrim were adequately supplied with basic refreshment facilities. For example, there were a variety of water dispensers and snack food and hot drinks vending machines. The quality of drinks and food on offer for those jurors who are required to wait in the assembly areas was criticised by some jurors. Some court staff also suggested that assembly areas could be supplied with better quality refreshment

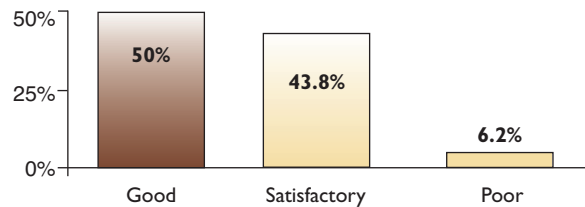


facilities. There was no jury assembly area available at Craigavon court but jurors had access there to a coffee bar/canteen and Inspectors heard no negative comments from jurors about the standard of food or drink supplied here. The provision of refreshments at this stage of the juror's journey through the system, when there may be long periods of waiting around to be selected for service, is important to the reputation of the NICtS but also to the perception of jurors as to how they are regarded.

Trial

3.13 Once sworn-in or affirmed for a trial jurors remain in the jury box unless otherwise directed by the judge. Jury keepers are appointed and also sworn-in from amongst the court security team to look after jurors' interests and to escort them from the court room to the jury retiring room. The facilities vary between courts, but of five court areas visited Inspectors considered that all jury retiring rooms were adequate. Jurors did raise with Inspectors the fact that in Laganside each jury retiring room had a shared toilet but otherwise said that facilities were satisfactory. Figure 10 shows that 93.8% of juror respondents to our survey thought that the retirement facilities were good or satisfactory.

Figure 10: Retirement facilities:



3.14 During trials jurors are provided with refreshments at appropriate times. Food is supplied to the jury retirement rooms and jurors are required to eat in the rooms. Catering is handled by local court areas and the quality and type of food on offer to jurors varied accordingly. Many jurors made comments to Inspectors about the quality, quantity and choice of food on offer at most of the venues visited, although the quality of food on offer at Antrim court received many positive comments. Catering for jurors is not handled corporately across NICtS. Any contracts are dealt with locally by court administrators therefore variances in quality had occurred. There were processes in place at all the court areas visited to pick up comments from jurors about the standard of catering and this feedback had been used, for example, at Antrim where the contract with a previous supplier who had attracted negative comments from jurors had ended.

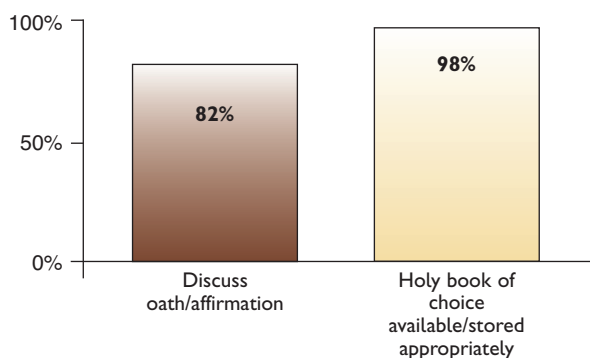
3.15 The issue of catering becomes more acute in longer running trials and Inspectors found that court staff had been very responsive to requests from jurors with regard to the provision of more choice of food available to them in such cases. Handling catering arrangements



locally appeared to Inspectors to be the most effective way of providing for jurors needs. However, this arrangement is dependent on the effectiveness of processes in place locally to gather and react to juror feedback in respect of catering. Gathering feedback from jurors as a customer group is driven by the customer service excellence standards and in general, appeared to be working well except where contracts had longer to run and caterers could not be changed quickly. **Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continues to monitor feedback about catering and refreshments from jurors so that local contracts can be reviewed using relevant information with the aim of enhancing the juror experience of the service.**

3.16 Figure 11 illustrates that most (82%) juror respondents to our survey had the issue of the choice of swearing in or affirmation discussed with them. 98% of juror respondents said that their holy book of choice was available and appropriately stored.

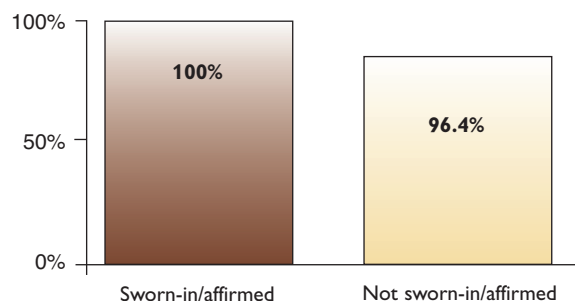
Figure 11: Oath and affirmation

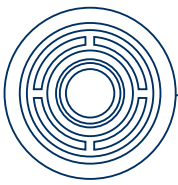


3.17 Once involved in trial, jurors movements were strictly controlled so that they did not inadvertently come into contact with defendants or supporters. In some courts where there is the facility, sworn-in or affirmed jurors are taken into the court via a separate entrance to decrease the risk of encountering supporters of the defendant.

3.18 Jurors who had been placed on stand-by to cater for illness of members of a jury or other issues were asked if they had found it easy to obtain information about when they may be needed. A total of 95.7% of those who responded said that it had been easy to obtain this information. Jurors also told Inspectors that they had been well briefed on their responsibilities. Figure 12 shows that all juror respondents to our questionnaire who had been sworn-in or affirmed said that they understood their role. The corresponding figure for those not sworn-in or affirmed was 96.4%.

Figure 12: Jurors who said they understood their role





3.19 There had been a facilities audit that had assessed courts for their accessibility for disabled people and comprehensive information had been included in the juror information booklet and on-line. However, there had still been issues for wheelchair users particularly in gaining access to the jury box in older court buildings such as Craigavon, and one juror with restricted mobility said that they had been told there was no lift access at Antrim courthouse. The particular issue explained to Inspectors at Craigavon had been resolved temporarily, but issues of accessibility had been raised internally and Inspectors were told that plans were in hand to address these dependent on budget constraints. **Inspectors recommend that the NICtS continues to assess its court venues for ease of access for jurors with disabilities and takes action to improve accessibility, to enable disabled people to play a full part in jury service.**

Post-trial

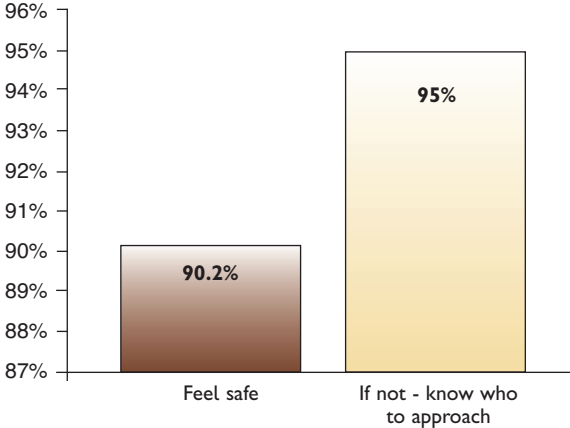
3.20 Following trial jurors may be returned to the jury pool if the trial finished within the period of their four weeks service. However, Inspectors were told that the policy is not to re-use jurors in this way although the practice was not prohibited. In E&W the practice of returning jurors to the jury pool following conclusion of a trial within

their two week service period is commonplace. The usual practice in E&W is to return jurors to the pool on the day following their discharge from a particular case. This practice helps keep the jury pool above the critical number. **Inspectors recommend that in the event of a trial finishing within the period of a juror's service, and unless otherwise directed by the judge, that the NICtS implements a policy of returning jurors to the jury pool for the rest of their period of service.**

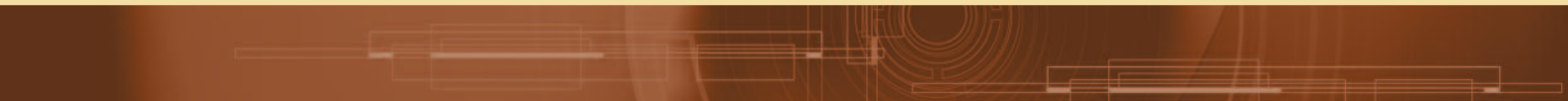
3.21 Jurors who are discharged from cases in NI leave the court buildings by the same exit as defendants (if released) or supporters. Inspectors were told that on occasion this had caused some problems where jurors had perceived that they were subject to stares and inaudible comments. Court security staff were aware of such situations and had in the past monitored the behaviour of people leaving the court. Figure 13 indicates that over 90% of sworn-in or affirmed jurors who responded to our questionnaire indicated that they felt safe and secure whilst around the courthouse. 95% of the remaining jurors said that they had known who to approach when they had felt unsafe or insecure around the courthouse.

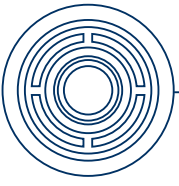


Figure 13: Safety and security



3.22 Jurors are often discharged from cases where there is a finding of guilt before sentencing whilst, for example, pre-sentence reports are prepared. Inspectors asked jurors whether they had been told how to obtain sentencing information about the trial in which they were sitting should they wish to do so. Many jurors told Inspectors that they were not interested in obtaining such information. However, only 41.9% of juror respondents to our survey said that they had been told how to get such information. This information is included in the juror booklet. However, the low result may reflect the level of interest jurors had in obtaining sentencing information.



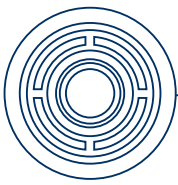


CHAPTER 4:

Jurors' experiences beyond court



- 4.1 Much of a juror's experience of how they are dealt with by the NICtS is based on what happens to them outside of the courthouse. The period of notification and summons has been dealt with in Chapter 2, whilst Chapter 3 covered the period spent in court. However, jurors interface with the system following their discharge from their period of service to obtain expenses due to them.
- 4.2 Jurors' experiences began with the information provided to them to enable them to claim expenses due. A total of 89.2% of juror respondents to our survey question said that the expenses forms had been clear and helpful. 18% had talked to court staff or had sought their help with the expenses forms. Expenses claims are processed through the JMT and staff there had received calls, particularly from employers regarding National Insurance enquiries concerning employees who were on jury service. The development of information aimed at employers is expected to help clarify such matters for employers.
- 4.3 There are targets set for the processing of expenses claims by JMT and these are monitored daily. The JMT produce a monthly performance report including a section on expenses claims to the court administrators. Inspectors found that JMT staff were very focused on delivering a good service to jurors in respect of their expenses claims. A target of 10 days had been set for payment of correctly submitted juror expense forms. The JMT are expected to process 95% of claims within the 10 day target and had generally achieved this. Jurors who completed our survey indicated that speed of payment was not an issue. Although there were many jurors who did not complete this particular question, of those who did, over 90% indicated that they had received payment within 10 days. Taking into account the fact that jurors did not allow for mistakes made on claim forms and the subsequent need for JMT to ask for amendments, this verifies the good performance of the JMT in respect of claim payment.
- 4.4 Accuracy of payments was raised by jurors and by JMT staff. 78% of jurors who responded to the question said that their payments had been accurate. Of those who indicated inaccurate payments, one

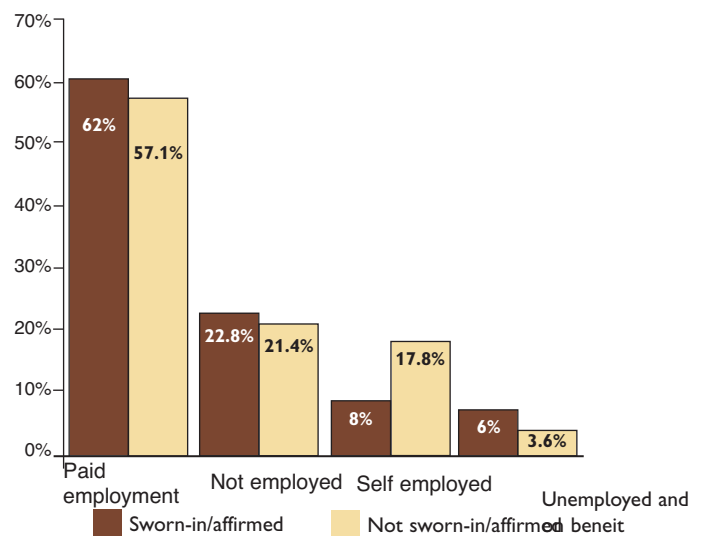



said that they had been overpaid whilst most said that they had been underpaid. Of the respondents to the survey only one had made a complaint regarding payment of expenses. JMT staff said that some jurors who contacted the office were unclear as to what qualified for expenses claims, despite the provision of information to them in the juror booklet. For example, some jurors had claimed for taxi fares when prior authorisation from the juries officer to use taxis should be sought. Inspectors were also present when advice on expenses claims was sought by jurors from court staff in the jury assembly area. Whilst information on expenses is contained in the packs, the provision of advice on expenses at every stage remains important. Inspectors suggest that NICtS consider providing expense information on posters in the jury assembly areas as a means of better communicating this information to jurors.

4.5 The issue of the low level of juror expenses was raised with Inspectors, especially by jurors who were self-employed. Juror allowances are set out in Appendix 6. The level of reimbursement for financial loss is set at a maximum of £63.12 per day where the period is over four hours except in circumstances where a juror has served more than 10 days. These rates are unlikely to increase in the current financial climate and Inspectors found no evidence to suggest that rates of reimbursement are related to requests for excusals or deferrals.

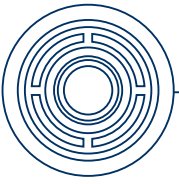
4.6 The breakdown by employment status of jurors who responded to our survey is shown in Figure 14. The figures for this particular snapshot of jurors suggest that representation is broadly in line with the rest of the population. However, the figures for self-employed people suggest that a lesser proportion are being sworn-in or affirmed as compared to other employment status categories. NICtS told Inspectors that they were unaware of any studies that suggested that self-employed people were less likely to be sworn-in than others. At present this is not an area of major concern. **If the jury pool is widened along the lines of E&W, then Inspectors recommend the employment status of sworn jurors should be monitored to ensure that juries represent a balanced cross section of society.**

Figure 14: Percentage breakdown of jurors by employment status



- 
- 4.7 Non-attendance of jurors is not a major issue as borne out by the proportion of fines imposed and confirmed by court staff. Inspectors were unable to collect any information from jurors regarding fines imposed for failing to attend for jury service. One juror did make a comment on the survey relating to fines stating: *“A rather disappointing experience with a real feeling of anticlimax after being threatened with a substantial fine for non attendance.”*

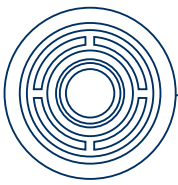
Whether this is a widely held view is unknown. Fines imposed as a proportion of notices issued had been running at between 4% and 6% for the years 2008-09.



Section



Appendices



Appendix 1: Methodology

This inspection commenced in September 2009. Preliminary research and consultation were undertaken with HMICA and the inspection terms of reference document was developed as a result of close liaison between CJI, HMICA and NICtS.

The inspection used a combination of methodologies. A representative range of court areas were selected to conduct preliminary contact meetings with jurors and follow-up questionnaires. Questionnaires were developed following consultation with NICtS and the Judiciary and were made available in a range of formats for jurors to complete. The questionnaires were distributed dependent on the jurors' preference by hard copy through conventional mail, by e-mail, or made available to complete via the CJI website. Based on the number of jurors who indicated that they were prepared to take part in a survey our overall return rate was 32%.

Jurors were also consulted informally by way of semi-structured one-to-one interviews whilst waiting at court areas and were able to contribute qualitative information verbally to Inspectors or by free text entries on the questionnaires.

A range of stakeholders were also consulted by way of structured or semi-structured interview as part of this inspection or as questions supplemental to interviews being conducted during other inspection fieldwork including:

- Judiciary;
- court staff at all levels;
- court security staff; and
- prosecutors.

The following roles within NICtS were consulted:

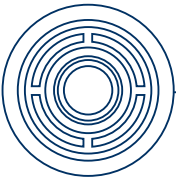
- Customer Service Managers;
- Court Managers;
- Court Administrators;
- Jury Management Team;
- Jury Management Team Manager;
- Jury Keepers; and
- Court Security staff.



The following documentation was examined:

- A review of the Criminal courts of England and Wales by The Right Honourable Lord Justice Auld; September 2001;
- Diversity and Fairness in the Jury System; Cheryl Thomas with Nigel Balmer; Ministry of Justice Research Series 2/07 June 2007;
- HM Inspectorate of Court Administration A thematic review of quality of service provided by HMCS for jurors in the criminal courts, December 2006;
- Consultation on widening the jury pool; NICtS 2008;
- Are juries fair?; Cheryl Thomas; Ministry of Justice Research Series 1/10 February 2010; and
- Internal NICtS reviews of performance relating to Jury management.





Appendix 2: Terms of reference

Introduction

Criminal Justice Inspection proposes to undertake an inspection of the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS) with regard to the quality of service it provides to jurors in the criminal courts.

The broad aim of the inspection is to:


- assess the provision of effective and efficient, high quality administrative services (non-judicial) for those notified and summoned as jurors, which builds public confidence in the justice system.

Specific objectives of the inspection will be to:

- assess the quality of service provided by NICtS in the notification, selection and treatment of jurors;
- identify areas of good and poor performance and the underlying reasons for the performance achieved;
- make recommendations aimed at improving service delivery;
- provide feedback in an appropriate format to NICtS; and
- report to the Ministers by means of a published report.

To facilitate the inspection Inspectors will:

1. Review NICtS policy and guidance for the notification, selection and treatment of jurors in the criminal courts.
2. Visit an agreed number of Crown Courts which will include an example from the range (e.g. rural, urban, large, small), to assess the quality of service provided for jurors. Staff, representatives of the judiciary and jurors will be interviewed. Jurors will be interviewed about the services they have received and it will be made clear that comments/discussion about deliberations in the jury room will not be permitted. Juror safety and security together with reimbursement of expenses will be important aspects of this work. Inspectors will also look at local decision making processes, for example:
 - deferring/excusing people from jury service;
 - how failure to respond to summons or attend at court are followed up (it is recognised that sentencing policy for fines is the remit of the judiciary and therefore will not fall within the scope of inspection); and
 - the effectiveness of estimating how many jurors should be called.



3. Consider the decision making processes at the Jury Management Team in Derry/Londonderry and the customer service provided by the unit. Inspectors will again look at decision making processes, for example:

- deferring/excusing people from jury service;
- how failure to respond to summons or attend at court are followed up; and
- the effectiveness of issuing the number of jury summonses requested by Court Administrators.

4. Consult with jurors by means of survey to obtain comprehensive data about the quality of service received from the NICtS and at local staff courts to identify areas of concern and good performance. Jurors will be initially contacted by supplying them with an 'expressions of interest' form on which they can nominate to participate in filling in a questionnaire.

Diversity will be a common theme across the inspection.

Success Criteria

There are a number of criteria that will be key in judging the success of the project:

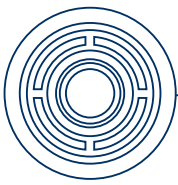
- improved service to and treatment of jurors thereby increasing public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS);
- barriers to improved service are identified and removed;
- good practice is identified and disseminated;
- a report, local and corporate initial feedback, recommendations and an NICtS action plan agreed, on time in accordance with the project plan;
- the methodology is reviewed and any learning points fed back into development of future CJI inspections; and
- the NICtS undergoes the minimum of disruption during the inspection process.

Methodology

The basis of the inspection will be the inspection framework (Annex I), which has been developed on the basis of the following assumptions:

- the inspection will cover all stages of the process of notification and selection including following the issue of a summons. The definition of a juror for this inspection is sufficiently wide to encompass all who receive notifications and summons and is not limited to those who actually serve on a jury; and
- the exercise of discretion over excusal and deferral, although conferred by statute⁵ on the judge, is delegated in the first instance to the Juries Officer (although any appeal against a Juries Officer's decision lies to the judge, and the Juries Officer may refer any decision in respect of excusal or deferral to the judge).

⁵ Art. 10, Juries (NI) Order 1996



Inspectors will gather evidence against the inspection framework, (*which has been agreed with NICtS and the judiciary*). They will visit a sample of Crown court centres to:

- assess facilities;
- interview service providers, judiciary and jurors; and
- review documentation.

Jurors will be invited to participate in a questionnaire relating to their experience of being a juror, the content of which will be agreed with the Lord Chief Justice.

The results from the samples will be taken as representative of the position in Northern Ireland in order to confirm that:

- resources are provided to ensure that the diverse needs of all jurors within Crown Courts are met in a safe and secure manner e.g. facilities used by jurors, health & safety risk assessments, etc;
- those summoned to be jurors experience a high quality service from court staff, which takes into account their diverse needs e.g. quality of service provided to jurors, displaying customer service focus competence at all grades⁶; and
- leadership, management and planning ensure a pro-active approach to improving the service provided to jurors, e.g. the use of quality assurance processes and opportunities for improvement.

Evidence will be gathered against the inspection framework at both the hypothesis and judgement stages. It will include:

- interviews with jurors;
- evidence from juror questionnaires;
- observations;
- interviews with key NICtS staff and judiciary; and
- consideration of relevant data and documents.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity are taken account of in the Inspection Framework.

The inspection will examine the treatment of jurors as they pass through the selection and trial process to assess that they are treated fairly, with respect, sensitivity and as valued participants. It will consider administrative processes and treatment by non-judicial court staff, not the judiciary.

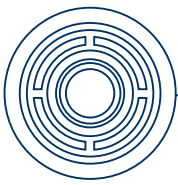
The inspection will also assess whether there is an overall and coherent NICtS approach to equality and diversity for jurors.

⁶ NICtS have a competence framework against which all staff are measured. Customer Focus is a key competence in the framework. Training needs in customer service are determined from how staff members display competence within customer focus.



The following process is proposed:

- The liaison officer within NICtS will be contacted at every stage of the process to make arrangements for court visits, agree processes for the distribution of ‘expressions of interest’ forms and to arrange follow-up interviews with appropriate NICtS staff.
- Questionnaires for jurors who answer the ‘expressions of interest’ forms (whether done by post, on-line, or by e-mail) will be prepared by the Lead Inspector and agreed by the Lord Chief Justice.
- Evidence gathering will be in a form that can be easily assessed and analysed to produce data that will contribute useful evidence to the inspection team and the findings. This will be in a format decided by the Lead Inspector.
- Fieldwork will test out the findings and analysis of the questionnaires. The themes identified will be supported by individual, local evidence and tested in interviews with local managers at the conclusion of visits to Crown Courts. These findings will be evaluated and will be subject to the CJI quality assurance and inspection management process.
- Draft emerging findings will be provided by the most appropriate means agreed with NICtS to the Head of Court Operations and NICtS Liaison Officer prior to drafting of the report. The draft report will be made available to the NICtS for factual accuracy comment as per the agreed protocol and NICtS will be invited to prepare an Action Plan to address any recommendations made.
- A report providing an overview of the quality of service provided to jurors (focused on outcomes, particularly illustrating good performance and, if appropriate, containing recommendations,) will be published having been cleared with the appropriate Ministers.
- If possible the NICtS Action Plan will be published with the report; otherwise the Action Plan will be published on the CJI website following publication. The draft press release will be shared with the NICtS prior to publication.



Annex I

Draft inspection framework

Quality of Service for those people summoned to be Jurors in Criminal Courts

The provision of effective and efficient, high quality administrative services for those summoned as jurors, which builds public confidence in the justice system.

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

1. Leadership, management and planning ensure a pro-active approach to improving the service provided to jurors

1.1 Leadership for the provision of high quality administrative services for jurors is clear and visible throughout NICtS, and this is effectively communicated internally and externally

- NICtS works with others to identify the needs of jurors and deliver plans relating to the provision of appropriate services to jurors. [key source: briefing materials and interviews]
- Key strategic issues for the provision of services for jurors, including the promotion of diversity, are identified and developed as part of an integrated planning process which includes seeking and responding to the views of local communities, Courts User Forums and other stakeholders [key source: interviews, Court User Forum minutes, Customer Service Board minutes & Service Improvement Team minutes]
- Aims and objectives, relating to the service provision for jurors and the promotion of diversity, are well integrated within strategic and operational plans, and appropriate actions are subsequently taken and evaluated. For example, diversity policies and practices are reviewed against legislative requirements such as RR(NI)Order and DDA [key source: area plans and interviews]
- NICtS provides statements of values and priorities in regard to jurors and managers at all levels ensure that these are communicated and reflected in administrative policies, management decisions and practice. For example, high level statements are reflected in area/regional plans and Courts Charter, all staff are aware of plans/values & their own responsibilities [key source: local plans and interviews]
- The diverse needs of jurors are identified and plans put in place to meet these [key source: observation, interviews and local plans]
- NICtS and local business plans include service standards and improvement targets for jurors [key source briefing materials and interviews]
- Effective training programme for staff involved with jurors e.g. customer service, handling difficult people, diversity, including DDA, RR(NI)Order [key source: training needs analysis, training plan(s) and interviews]
- Where appropriate, court centres collaborate to make good and effective use of services, facilities and resources to offer good customer service to jurors [key source: estate strategy, capital bids interviews with court manager, estates manager]
- The NICtS Annual Report includes performance against juror service standards and targets [key source: internal reports]



1.2 There is a robust performance management system which is used to support a culture of improvement in service delivery for jurors

- Management information is analysed, disseminated appropriately, and used to evaluate initiatives and identify areas for improvement and actions to bring about improvements in the levels of service provided for jurors [key source: interviews and customer service data]
- There are clearly identified and published standards of service jurors can expect and published performance against these [key source: briefing materials, observations and waiting time data]
- Good practice in service provision for jurors is identified and shared, both within the area and more widely [key source: interviews]
- Staff understand their contribution to the provision of good service standards to jurors and are helped to achieve this, e.g. through feedback and training [key source training needs analysis, training plans and interviews]
- NICTS works with other bodies to ensure that reducing unnecessary waiting is given appropriate priority and, where appropriate, there are action plans to reduce waiting times on the day. For example, NICTS works with others to manage trials effectively and reduce the number of cracked and ineffective trials [key source interviews]
- Juror utilisation is measured on a regular basis and action taken to improve performance [key source waiting times data and interviews]
- Managers, Customer Service Board, court users and other stakeholders receive regular reports on the quality of service performance [key source: observation and interviews]
- Allocation of resources facilitates the need to progress cases quickly by ensuring an adequate supply of trained administrative staff and sufficient courtroom space for the workload [key source: interviews, observation and operational plans]
- Jurors are surveyed to establish their level of satisfaction with the treatment received, results reported and action taken [Key source: customer satisfaction data and performance reports, interviews]

1.3 Feedback and complaints about the administration of courts are encouraged from jurors, are dealt with fully and promptly and used to inform improvements in practices and performance

- Those summoned for or who undertake jury service are provided with accessible information about how to provide feedback or complain and are provided with appropriate responses [key source: pick up leaflets on court visits and interviews]
- There is an agreed process for dealing with both verbal and written feedback and complaints and systems are changed as a result of a complaint or feedback where necessary [key source: complaints/comments log and interviews]
- Information about feedback and complaints, and NICTS's response to them, is published at court centres and in the area's annual report [key source: annual reports and observations]




DELIVERY

2. Resources are provided to ensure that the diverse needs of all jurors within courthouses are met in a safe and secure manner

2.1 Buildings are accessible and offer adequate comfort and facilities, and appropriate privacy to jurors

- Jurors are provided with a satisfactory environment and facilities. For example, courtrooms and retiring rooms are conducive to concentration and comfortable, telephones with acoustic hoods in appropriate areas, decoration is clean, bright and in good repair, smoking area provided where possible, available and appropriate private space for prayer or contemplation if required, all proceedings in court are clearly audible for jurors, any overnight accommodation is appropriate [key source: observation, interviews]
- The needs of jurors with disabilities have been assessed and satisfactory arrangements made to meet these. For example disabled access, clear signage, aids to hearing provided [key source: disability policy, observation and interview, area plans]
- The provision, maintenance and use of buildings, information technology and equipment deliver effective and efficient high quality services for jurors [key source: business plans and interviews]
- Facilities enable jurors to be separated from other court users [key source: observation]
- Adequate refreshment facilities for all jurors are provided. For example food is of a good quality, reasonably priced, special diets catered for, available at the appropriate time. [key source: observation, court charter]



2.2 Appropriate levels of safety and security are in place, meeting the needs of all jurors and complying with statutory obligations

- Service provision for all jurors complies with relevant statutory requirements, e.g. Health & Safety legislation [key source: interviews, observation, protocols/guidelines on safety/security]
- Jurors are provided with a safe and secure environment and facilities [key source: observation and interviews]
- Risk assessments are compiled in conjunction with other agencies [key source: interviews and risk assessments]
- Appropriate evacuation procedure is in place which safeguards jurors safety and security, is clearly understood by staff and is tested with regular drills [key source: interviews]
- An alarm procedure for security problems is in place and effective. Courtrooms are sufficiently equipped with alarms in case of an incident [key source: observation and interview]
- Courthouses are open sufficiently early to enable jurors to enter court safely in advance of court start times [key source: observation]
- Jurors are protected from assault or intimidation. For example, courtrooms have fixed furniture, defendants or their supporters cannot harm or intimidate the jurors in the courtroom, the court works with the police to assess and manage any risk of intimidation [key source: interviews and risk assessments]
- Any overnight accommodation is safe and secure [Key source: interviews and risk assessments]
- Jury pool members' personal property is secure [Key source: interviews and observation]

OUTCOMES

3. Those summoned to be jurors experience a high quality service from court staff, which takes into account their diverse needs

3.1 Jurors are treated with courtesy, offered appropriate help and enquiries are dealt with promptly by NICtS staff

- Systems are in place to identify and meet the needs of jury pool members prior to, and during attendance at court. For example aids to hearing [key source: observation, interviews and plans]
- Jurors are treated with respect and sensitivity by NICtS staff and administrative systems promote a sense of jurors being valued. For example receiving appropriate recognition of their service, being separated from other court users, court staff recognising that they are undertaking a public duty in the way that they talk to or treat jurors [key source: interview, observation]
- Jurors are kept informed about any delay [key source: observation and interview]
- Jurors who are upset by their experience are offered appropriate care and support⁷ [key source: interview and observation]
- It is straightforward for jurors to find out the sentence passed in any trial they sat on [Key source: interview, observation, testing]
- Jurors on standby have easy access to information about when they will be required. [Key source: interview, observation]

⁷ At Judge's discretion (depending on trial and evidence heard)



3.2 Administrative arrangements are in place to enable all jurors to understand and effectively participate in court proceedings

- NICtS ensures that jury pool members receive sufficient information to prepare them for going to court, and appropriate explanations of procedures at court and during the trial. For example a pre-visit to the court if desired, the juror video and jury manager speech are audible, available to all pool members and effective; questions are encouraged and properly dealt with. [Key source: observation and interview]
- Information is available to all jurors and readily provided in formats that are appropriate. For example, plain English, large print format, Braille [Key source: aide memoirs and observations]
- Explanations given by NICtS staff to jurors are given in plain English [Key source: observations]
- Oath and affirmation procedures are appropriate, clear and an appropriate range of Holy Books is readily available and stored correctly [key source: briefing materials, observation, local guidance to staff, Judicial Studies Board (JSB) guidance, Justices' Clerks' Society (JCS) guidance]
- Jury pool members with literacy issues are discreetly identified and enabled to sit on appropriate cases [Key source: interview, observation, staff training records]
- Court ICT equipment facilitates the evidence being presented to the jury in the most effective manner [Key source: observation, interview, ICT plans]

3.3 The administrative process of creating the jury pool is effective, efficient, respects the diverse needs of potential jurors and promotes confidence in the CJS

- Court estimates for how many jurors will be required are appropriate [Key source: monitoring data, interviews, observation]
 - The electoral register is used effectively to ensure that jury pools are representative [Key source: interview, observation]
 - Summonses and other communications with potential jurors are clear and prompt [Key source: observation, interview, monitoring data]
 - Discretion [e.g. in imposing sanctions for non-response, in deciding applications for excusal or deferment and in deciding who can be released or stood down] is exercised appropriately and consistently, within appropriate guidelines and decisions are communicated promptly and clearly [Key source: interview, observation]
 - Potential jurors are offered appropriate advice and assistance [Key source: interview, observation]
 - Appropriate administrative steps are taken to initiate action against jurors who fail to respond to a summons or to attend court, and to enforce any subsequent order of the court [Key source: observation, interview]
 - Checks on the eligibility of those summoned to form a jury pool are effective [Key source: interview, observation]
 - The diverse needs of pool members are pro-actively identified and met [Key source: interview, , observation]
 - The need to obtain jury pool members on the day is minimised, those selected are subject to eligibility checks and provided with appropriate information [Key source: interview, observation]
 - Jurors are released as soon as is possible whilst meeting the needs of the court [Key source: interview observation]
-



3.4 Members of the jury pool receive prompt and appropriate reimbursements for any losses reasonably incurred as a result of jury service

- Allowances are adequate to meet reasonable juror requirements and their levels are kept under review [Key source: juror survey, interview]
- Rules and guidance are applied appropriately in order to achieve the dual outcome of consistency whilst meeting juror needs [Key source: interview, observation]
- Information on allowances and payment methods is clear and pro-actively provided [Key source: observation, interview, juror survey]
- The payment of allowances is prompt and accurate and meets the needs of pool and panel members [Key source: juror survey, interview, performance data, observation]



Appendix 3: The Jury Pool

Disqualified:


The following persons are disqualified from Jury Service and may not serve on a jury in any court.

- Any person who has at any time been convicted by a court in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man and sentenced:
 - to imprisonment for life or for a term of five years or more; or
 - to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure or during the pleasure of the Secretary of State or during the pleasure of the Governor of Northern Ireland.
- Any person who at any time in the last ten years has in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man:
 - served any part of a sentence of imprisonment or detention; or
 - been detained in a young offenders centre; or
 - has passed on him or (as the case may be) made in respect of him, a recorded sentence or imprisonment, a suspended sentence of imprisonment or an order for detention; or
 - had made in respect of him a community service order.
- Any person who at any time in the last five years has, in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands, been placed on probation.

Ineligible:

Persons concerned with the Administration of Justice.

- Persons holding or who have at any time held any paid, judicial or other office belonging to any court of justice in Northern Ireland.
- Lay magistrates.
- Members of the juvenile court panels.
- The Chairman or President, the Vice-Chairman or Vice-President and the Registrar and Assistant Registrar of any Tribunal.
- Barristers-at-law and solicitors whether or not in actual practice as such.
- Solicitors' clerks.
- Students of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland or of the Law Society of Northern Ireland.
- The Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland, the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland and the members of staff of the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland.

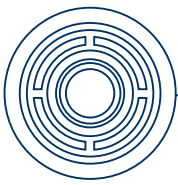
- 
- The Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland and the members of his staff.
 - Officers of the Northern Ireland Office or of the Lord Chancellor's Department.
 - Members of the Northern Ireland Court Service.
 - Court security officers.
 - Governors, chaplains and other officers of, and members of Independent Monitoring Boards for the following establishments:
 - a prison within the meaning of the Prison Act (Northern Ireland) 1953;
 - a Juvenile Justice Centre or attendance centre within the meaning of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998; or
 - a remand centre or young offenders centre within the meaning of the Treatment of Offenders Act (Northern Ireland) 1968.
 - The warden or a member of the staff of a bail hostel as defined in Article 2(2) of the Probation Board (Northern Ireland) Order 1982.
 - Members of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.
 - Probation officers and persons appointed to assist them.
 - A person appointed for the purposes of Article 7(6) of the Treatment of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1976.
 - Police officers and any other person employed in any capacity by virtue of which he has the powers and privileges of a constable.
 - Members and staff of the Policing Board.
 - The Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and persons employed by him.
 - Persons in charge of, or employed in, a forensic science laboratory.
 - Prisoner custody officers within the meaning of section 122(1) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.
 - Members and employees of the Criminal Cases Review Commission.
 - Persons who at any time within the past ten years have been persons falling within any of the foregoing descriptions (except the first) of persons concerned with the administration of justice.

The Forces:

- Persons serving on full pay as members of any of the naval, military or air forces of the Crown raised in the United Kingdom.
- Members of the Royal Irish Regiment.

Other Persons:

- Persons suffering from mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.
- Persons unable to understand the English language.



Excusable as of right:

Parliament

- Peers and Peeresses entitled to receive writs of summons to attend the House of Lords.
- Members of the House of Commons.

Northern Ireland Assembly

- Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- Officers and servants of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive

- Members of the Scottish Parliament.
- Members of the Scottish Executive.
- Junior Scottish Ministers.

European Parliament

- Representatives to the European Parliament.

Public Officials

- The Assembly Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints.
- Persons in the Northern Ireland Civil Service receiving a salary on a scale the maximum of which is not lower than the maximum of the Grade 5 scale.
- The Chief Electoral Officer and persons appointed to assist him.
- The Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland.
- The Auditor General for Scotland.
- The Secretary and any Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
- Officers employed in any capacity by the Commissioners for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
- Officers in charge of a head office in Northern Ireland of a department of the Government of the United Kingdom.
- Inspectors of schools.
- Inspectors appointed under section 123 of the Mines Act (Northern Ireland) 1969.

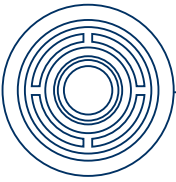
Clergy, etc

- A person in Holy Orders and a regular minister of any religious denomination.
- Vowed members of any religious order living in a monastery, convent or other religious community.
- Practising members of a religious society or order the tenets or beliefs of which are incompatible with jury service.



Professions

- Professors and members of the teaching staff of a university or institution of further education and full-time teachers in any school.
- Masters of vessels, duly licensed pilots and lighthouse keepers.
- The following persons, if actually practising their profession and registered (including provisionally or temporarily registered), enrolled or certified under the statutory provisions relating to that profession:
 - medical practitioners;
 - dentists;
 - nurses;
 - midwives;
 - veterinary surgeons and veterinary practitioners;
 - pharmaceutical chemists.
- Persons aged between 65 and 70 years.



Appendix 4: Juror Questionnaire

This questionnaire was distributed to jurors who agreed to take part in the survey following initial contact with CJI Inspectors. The survey was made available in hard copy, electronically by e-mail, and accessible on line through the CJI website.



Inspection: The Quality of Service provided to Jurors by the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this inspection. It should take about 10 minutes to complete these questions. If you have been sworn in as a juror please complete both sections A and B. Otherwise please just complete section A.

CJI is an independent statutory inspectorate with responsibility for inspecting all aspects of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland apart from the judiciary. We do not inspect or comment on judicial decisions. Nor may we inquire about statements made, opinions expressed or votes cast by members of a jury in the course of their deliberations in any legal proceedings.

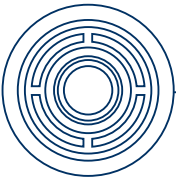
All comments are in confidence.

Please put an X in the relevant box for your answer. Most questions are the yes/no type. If you wish to add comments, please put them in the relevant boxes. When completed return the form in the pre-paid envelope to:

CJINI, 14 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7BA.

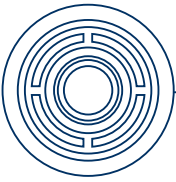
PART A

<i>Where did you complete your jury service?</i>	<i>What were the dates of your jury service?</i>	<i>.../.../... to .../.../...</i>	<i>Today's date?</i>	<i>.../.../...</i>	
1	<i>Did you receive your summons for jury service early enough to allow you to make any necessary arrangements?</i>	Yes	No		
2	<i>If no, please comment.</i>				
3	<i>Did serving as a juror require you to make special arrangements for...?</i>	Work	Travel	Childcare	Other (Please specify)
4	<i>Was the summons clear – did you understand its content?</i>	Yes		No	
5	<i>Was any information provided about jury service?</i>	Yes		No	
6	<i>If yes, was it helpful?</i>	Yes		No	
7	<i>Did the summons make clear when and how you could ask for jury service to be deferred / excused?</i>	Yes		No	
8	<i>Did you speak to staff from the Jury Management Team or the court about deferring or being excused jury service?</i>	Yes		No	
9	<i>Were the staff helpful?</i>	Yes		No	
10	<i>Were you satisfied with the outcome?</i>	Yes		No	
11	<i>If you were not satisfied, why not?</i>				
12	<i>Before you arrived at court, were you asked if you had any special needs to be met?</i>	Yes		No	
13	<i>If no, were you asked when at court?</i>	Yes		No	



14	Were your needs met satisfactorily?	Yes	No	Comments	
15	In your experience were there any delays at court because there weren't enough jurors?	Yes	No		
16	Did you understand the role you were expected to play during jury service?	Yes	No	Comments	
17	How would you describe your experience of being a juror?	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	
18	Do you consider your experience of jury service ...	An inconvenience you would rather not have had to do	A positive contribution to the criminal justice system		
19	Has your experience increased or decreased your level of confidence in the criminal justice system.	Increased	Decreased		
20	Why?				
21	Did you feel safe and secure in and around the courthouse?	Yes	No		
22	If you didn't feel safe, did you know who to speak to?	Yes	No		
23	Would you have preferred to use a separate entrance?	Yes	No		
24	Were you told what to do in case of a fire alarm?	Yes	No		
25	If you are a smoker, did you know where you could go to have a cigarette?	Yes	No		
26	Did court staff keep you informed about what was happening?	Yes	No		
27	What was your employment status at the time of jury service?	In paid employment	Not employed	Unemployed and in receipt of benefit	Self-employed
28	Was the information about how to claim for financial loss and subsistence allowances clear and helpful?	Yes	No	Comments	

29	<i>Did you talk to any court staff or seek help from them about financial loss or subsistence allowances and/or filling in the forms?</i>	Yes		No		
30	What proof did you have to take to court to prove your financial loss?	<i>Certificate of loss of earnings/ letter etc from employer?</i>		<i>Receipts for child care costs</i>		<i>Other (please state)</i>
31	How much financial loss did you claim for?	<i>Per day</i>		<i>In total</i>		<i>Don't know</i>
32	What was the actual cost of refreshments compared with the allowance given?					
33	<i>How quickly were you paid for financial loss and/or subsistence?</i>	<i>In 5 days</i>	<i>In 10 days</i>	<i>In 21 days</i>	<i>21+ days</i>	<i>Comments</i>
34	<i>Were the sums paid accurate?</i>	Yes		No		Comments
35	Did you find that paying up front for travel, etc, was difficult for you financially?	Yes		No		Comments
36	<i>Did you complain about any aspect of payment for financial loss and subsistence allowances?</i>	Yes		No		Comments
	<i>Any other comments</i>					



PART B

1	<i>If the evidence you heard upset you, were you told that additional help or assistance was available?</i>	Yes	No
2	Did anyone discuss with you the issue of swearing an oath or making an affirmation?	Yes	No
3	Was your holy book of choice available and suitably stored?	Yes	No
4	<i>Were your retirement facilities</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>
5	<i>If you felt the retirement facilities were poor, please say why?</i>		<i>Poor</i>
6	<i>Were you told by a member of staff how to find out the sentence passed in any trial on which you sat?</i>	Yes	No
7	<i>If you were placed on standby, was it easy to find out when you would be needed?</i>	Yes	No
	<i>Any other comments</i>		

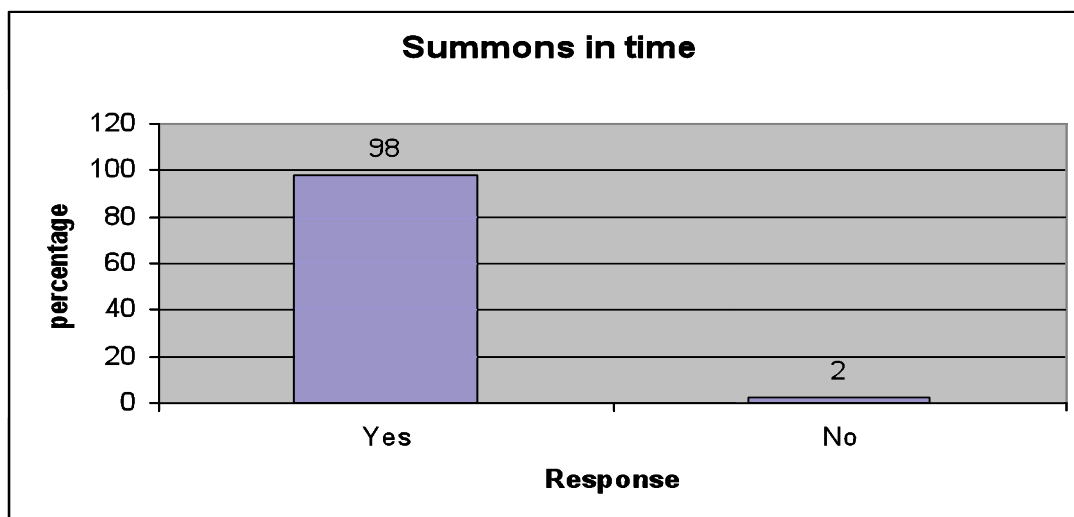
Appendix 5: Questionnaire Results

Results are divided into two categories:

- Jurors who reached the stage of being sworn-in or affirmed; and
- Jurors who were not sworn-in or affirmed.

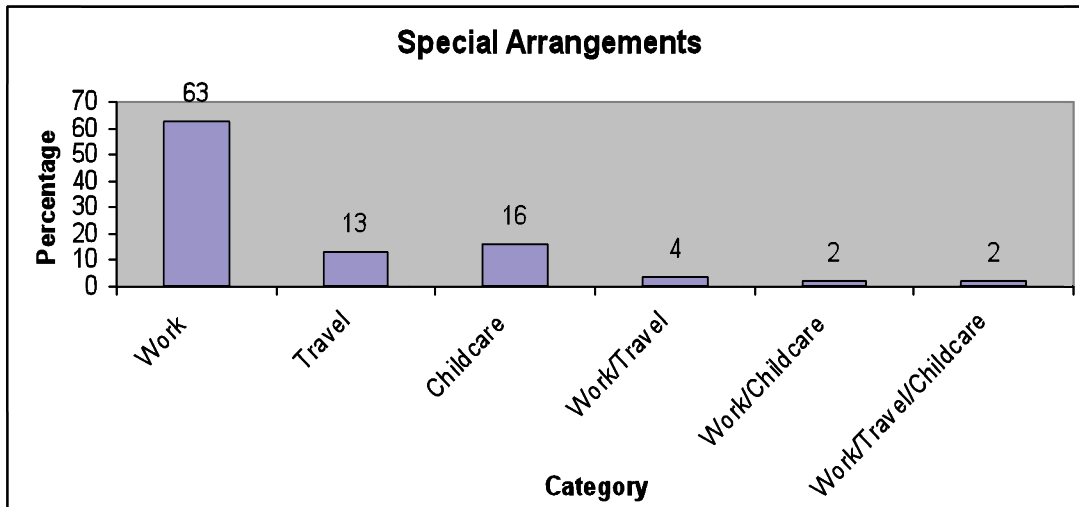
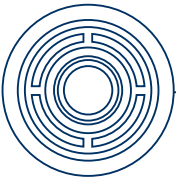
Juror comments are reproduced exactly as they appeared on the questionnaire.

Sworn in/affirmed



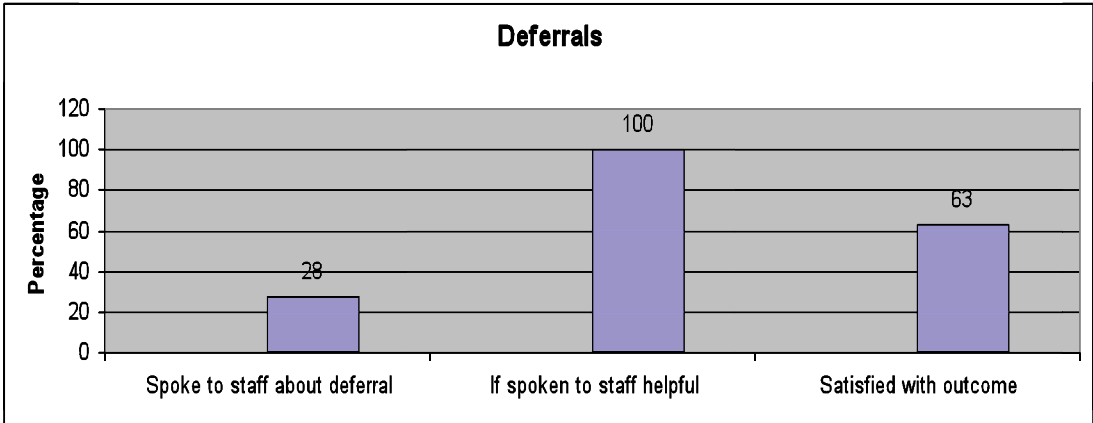
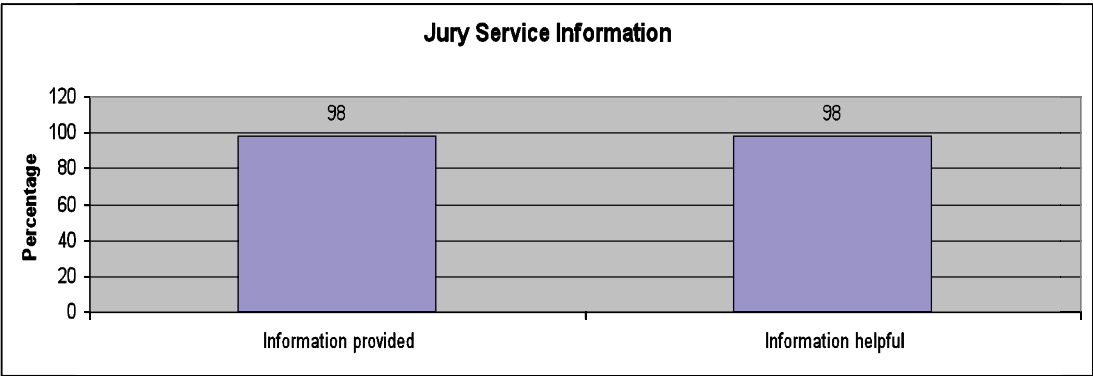
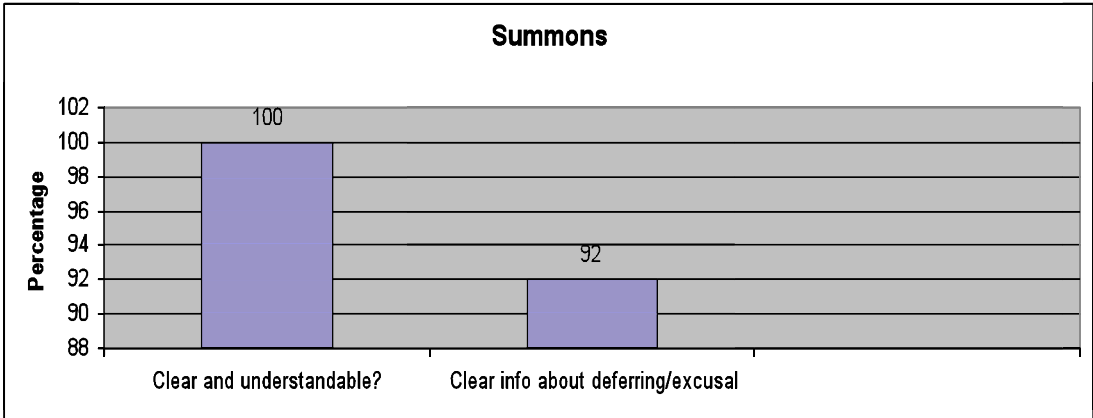
Comments:

*Already had holiday booked before receiving Summons so had to ask for deferral (Laganside);
I was excused from 23/9 because of illness (Craigavon).*



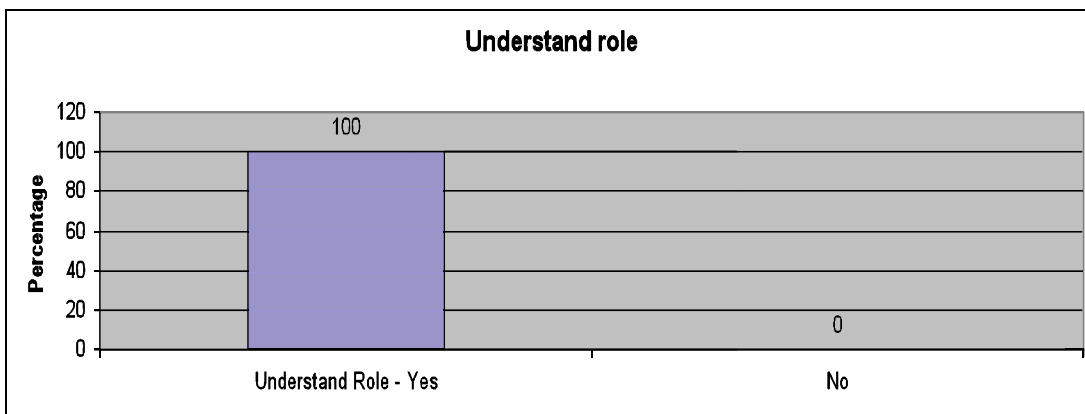
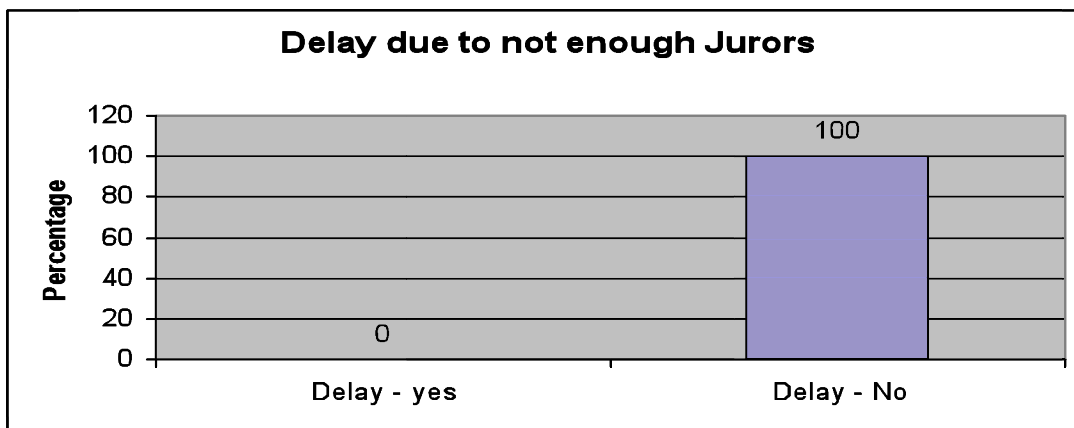
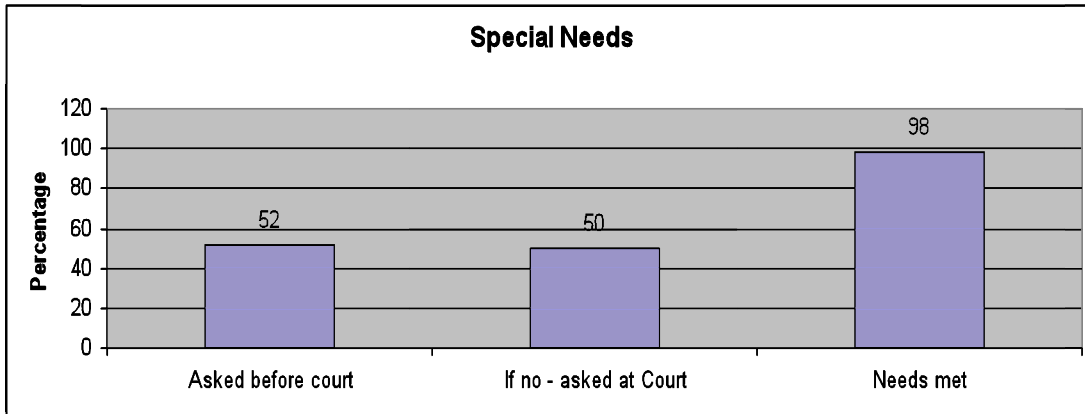
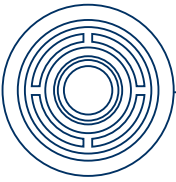
Comments:

Rail travel (Laganside); Arranging Suitable Cover (Newry); Phone calls (Antrim/Ballymena); I couldn't car share (Laganside); Arrange other staff members to return client calls while out of office (Newry); Time off (Laganside); Could not help my daughter with my two grandsons (Newry); Had to arrange time off work (Antrim); Backlog of work had to be cleared on days not in attendance at court (Antrim); Using private vehicle instead of train (Newry); Arrange time off with Manager (Newry); Cover required for time at court (Newry); Checking out trains to get to court (Laganside); Got neighbour to take and collect youngest child from school, and look after until I got home (Newry); Arranging suitable childcare and getting my other child picked up from school (Antrim); Had to get someone else to fill in for me (Newry); Hospital (Newry); Employer had to arrange cover (Laganside); Time off (Craigavon); My husband had to drive me to Antrim (Antrim); It was necessary to make arrangements with my employer (Newry).



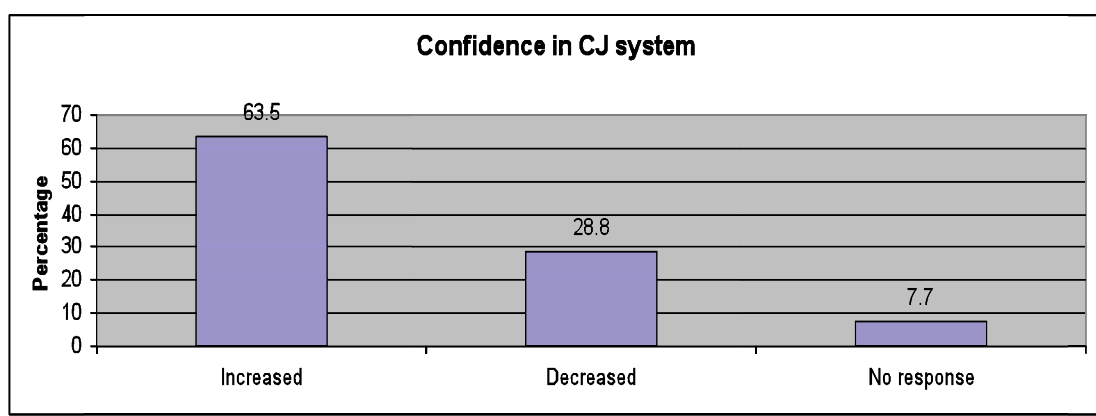
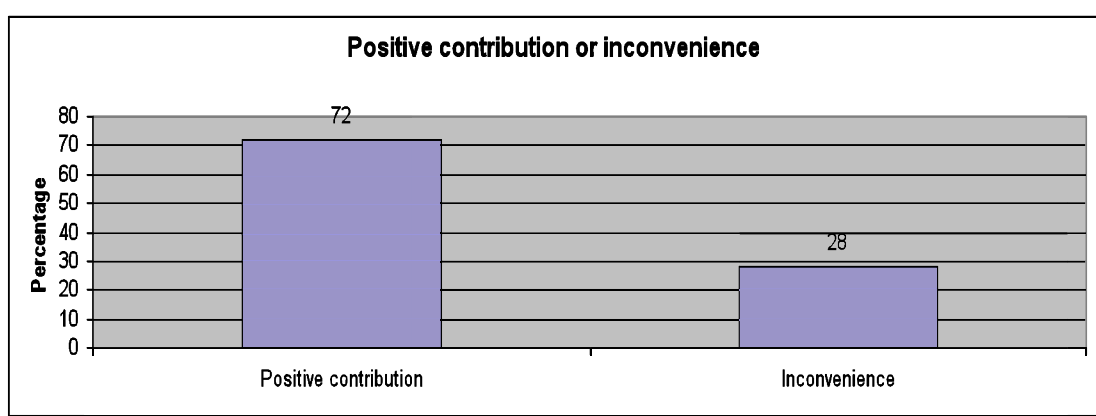
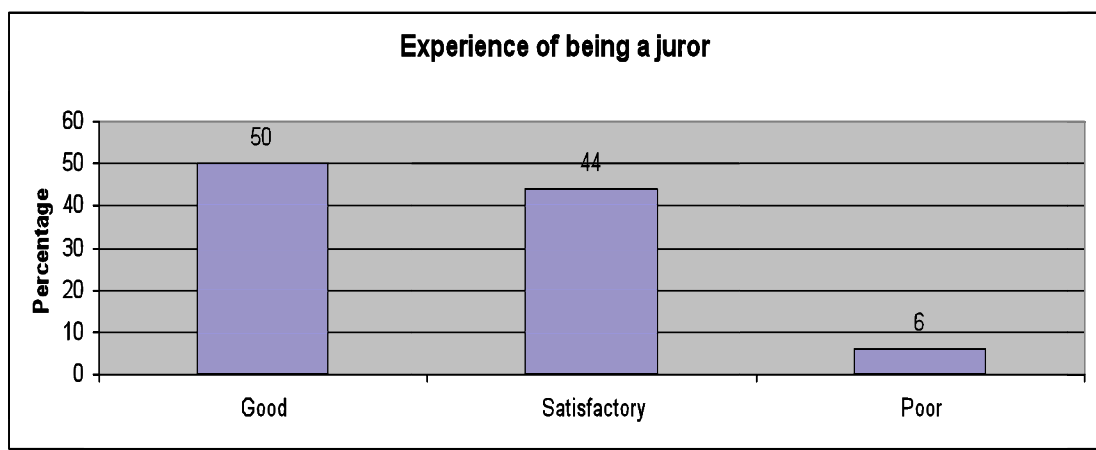
Comments:

Time and money being wasted (Antrim/Ballymena); It was very hard to get childcare sorted out for every day I had to do Jury Service (Newry); We spent a week in the court room, only for it to be ended on the Monday by the Judge, we didn't fully understand why (Craigavon).



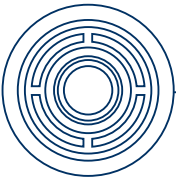
Comments:

I was one of three extra jurors sworn in. I was not used (Laganside); I was the Foreperson and I handled it ok (Newry); Judge explained each case (once as a Juror and once as a Reserve) (Antrim); I now know people are given a fair hearing (Laganside); Everything was clearly explained each day I attended (Laganside).



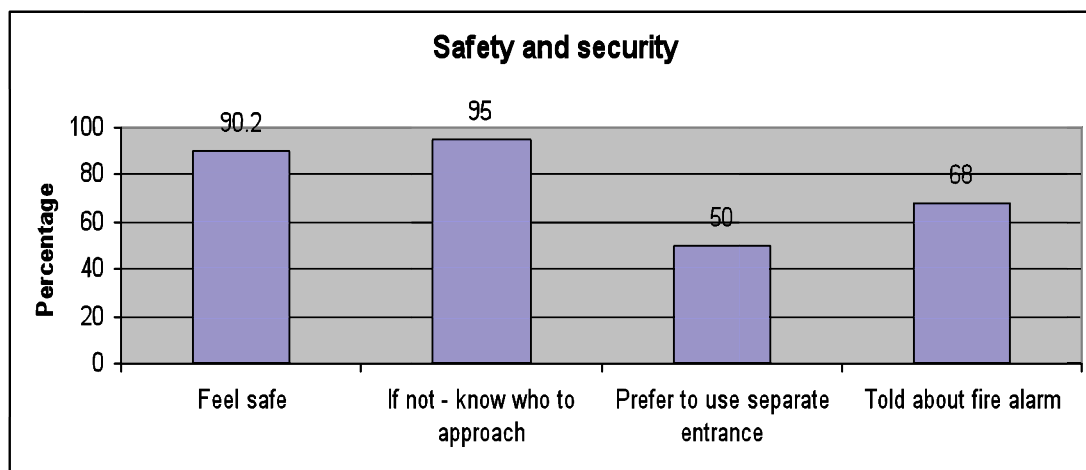
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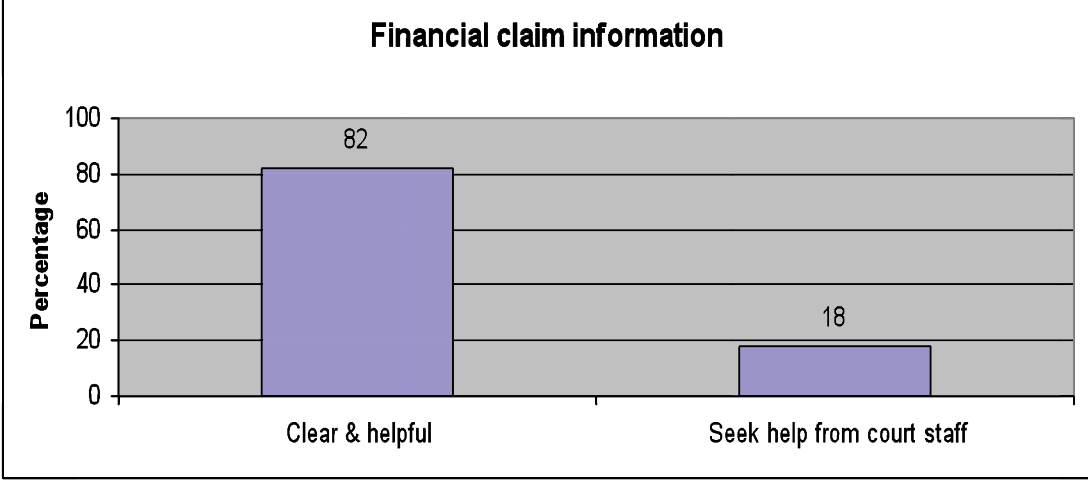
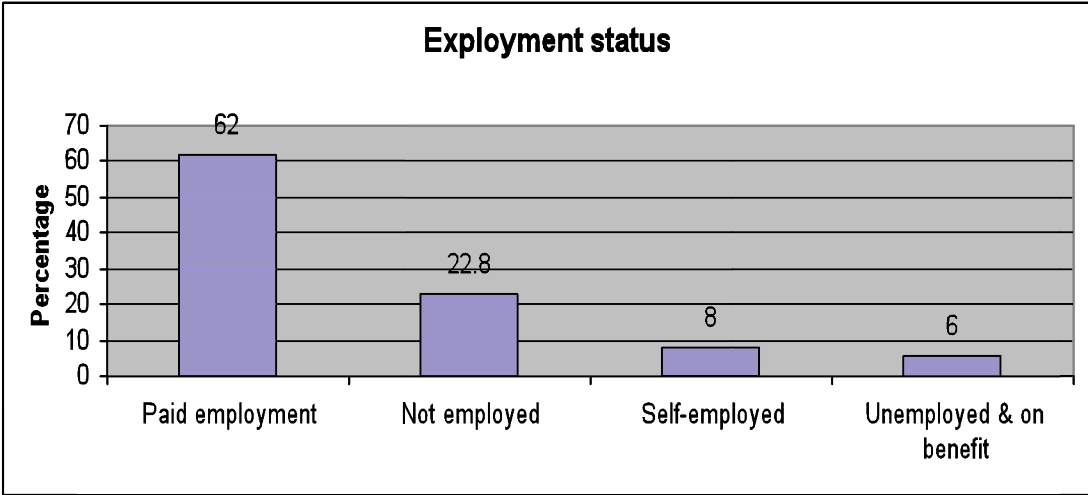
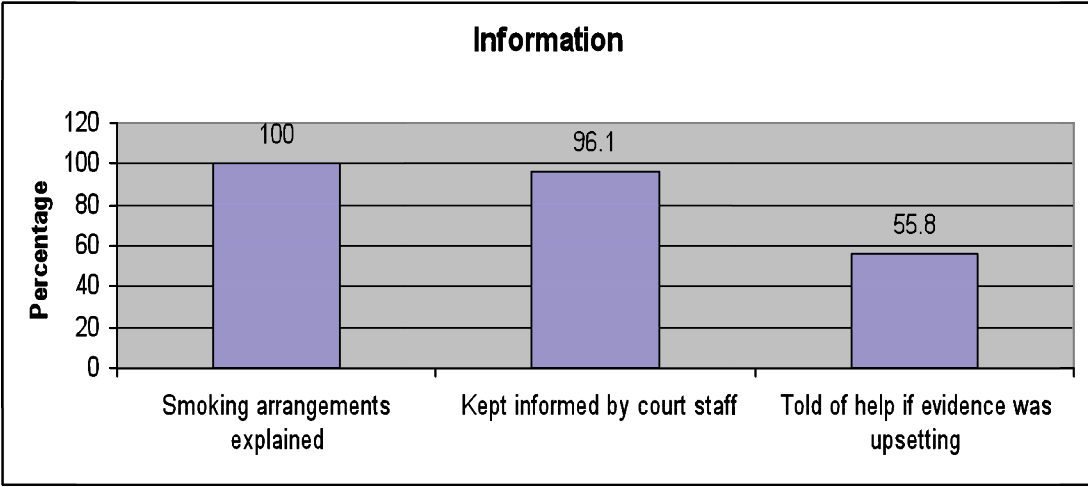
Why? Decreased: Gives a feeling of disorganisation with jurors being regarded as a necessary evil and given of little consideration;
It seems like a lot of people earning a good wage for very little and ultimately we the tax payer are footing the bill. No-one seems to be in any sort of hurry to do anything;
The technicalities of the legal system & the verbiage used on the charge sheet meant more time was spent debating the specific meaning & intent of the charge than determining the facts of the cases.



Both cases I was asked to sit on the prosecution withdrew the evidence. Surely this could have been done earlier to avoid the cost of the court sitting. Defendant was found not guilty by order of judge. Record was therefore not guilty when he may or may not have been guilty;
System seems to work for the defendant rather than the claimant;
The burden of proof in prosecution cases is very high and it is difficult for the prosecution to prove their case beyond reasonable doubt; I believe in my second trial that the accused was guilty but as the jury couldn't agree, there was no conviction - that's wrong. Also, who pays for this and other cases like it. Felt a lot of time, hence money wasted; A number of cases were brought to trial which were then dismissed as there was no evidence; Too much time spent on legal arrangements which we felt should have been sorted before the case got into court; Prosecution legal team had not prepared thoroughly enough. This meant jurors asked to leave court to facilitate legal argument; So much time is wasted in court as barristers do not have the case researched properly and some of the cases should never even get to court as there is no evidence; Lots of agreeing to plead guilty to lesser charge in quite a few cases, the no jury required.

Why? Increased: I have now seen the justice system in action (Newry); conduct of the judge (Craigavon); Through an increased understanding acquired during my experience of serving (Newry); Because it gave me an insight into processes as they happened, not what I had seen on television (Antrim); Better understanding of how system works (Antrim) However case we were sworn in for was straightforward, might have been different story if this was not the case; Justice being done (Laganside); Personal interaction with people involved was impressive (Newry); now have a better understanding of the process (Laganside); I now know people are given a fair hearing; I was impressed by the attention to detail by the barristers and judges and by the randomness of choosing jury members (Laganside); Because I had always thought that more people got off (Newry); Case dealt with appeared fair to both parties (Newry).

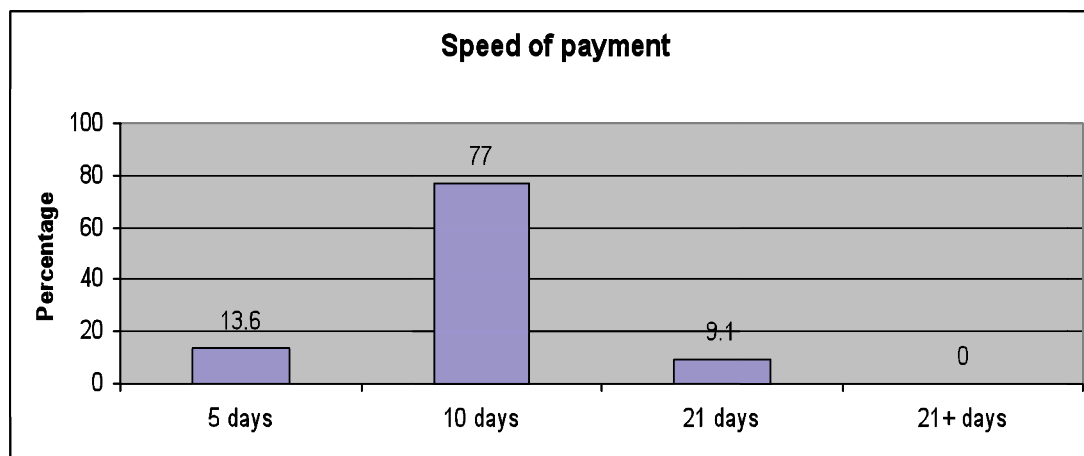
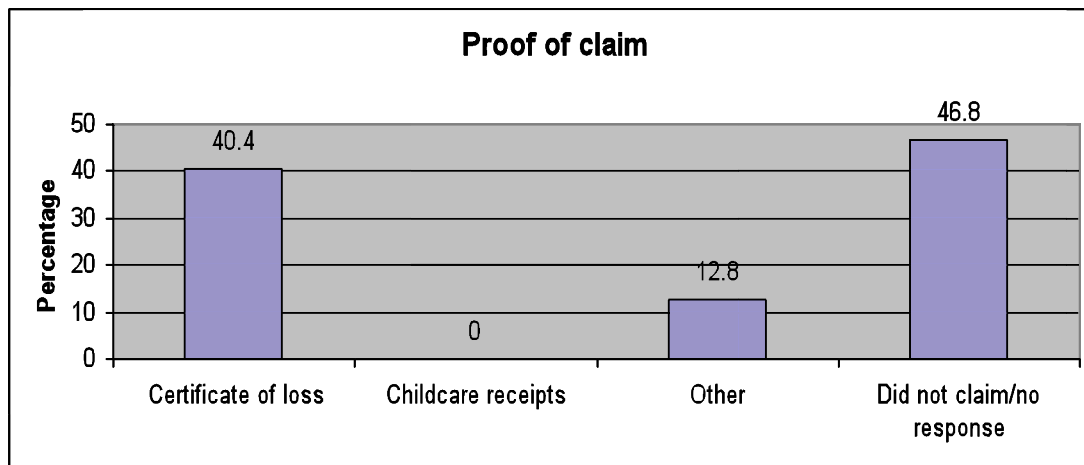






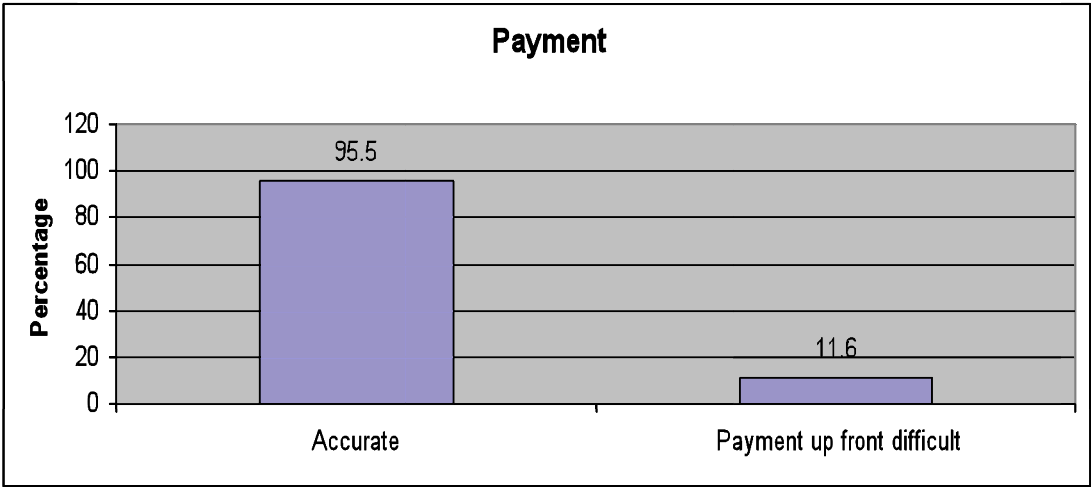
Comments:

Seemed to confuse employer; Not all that straight forward; Did not make a claim; I had my claim paid within 12 days of sending it in. I think that was very good; Have put in claim for my expenses but as of yet have no word back; Claim form self-explanatory; It was easy to understand; Information booklet sent with the summons provided clear information on how to complete the claim form; I had no problem filling in the forms; The form could be more straightforward.



Comments:

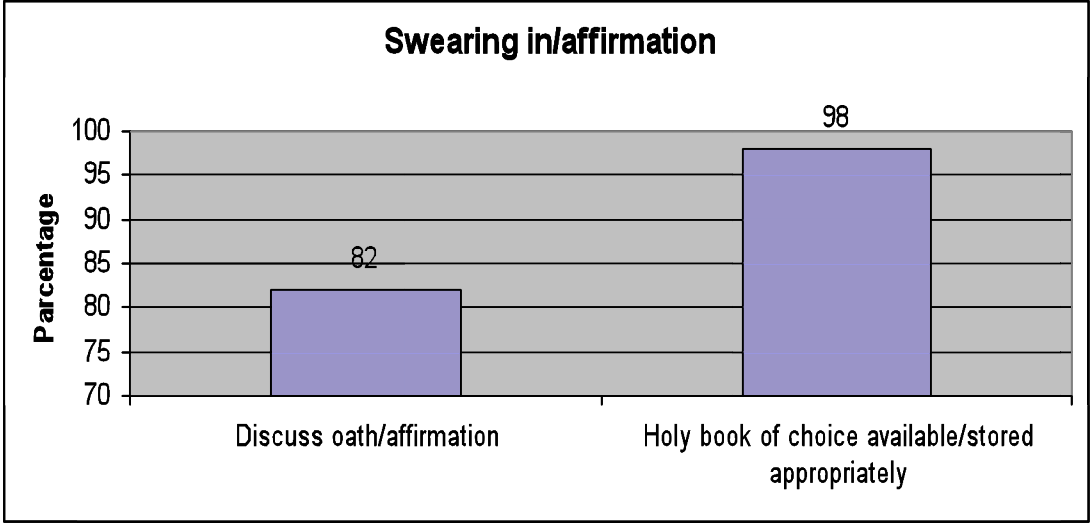
Travel still unpaid (Laganside); I have just sent off my claim form within the last few days (Newry); Paid in 12 days, was very good (Newry); Received expenses promptly (Newry); Don't know - workplace handles/processes my earned income and I claim post Jury Service (Antrim); Have not yet been paid; Very fast (laganside); Don't know. So far waiting one week; Was quick turnaround (Newry); My employer has taken a long time to fill in the form so cannot say yet; Satisfied with expenses.



Comments:

Expenses not paid in full (Laganside); I was paid more than I worked out about £14 more (Newry); Work's company to receive payment; Petrol, parking and meals.

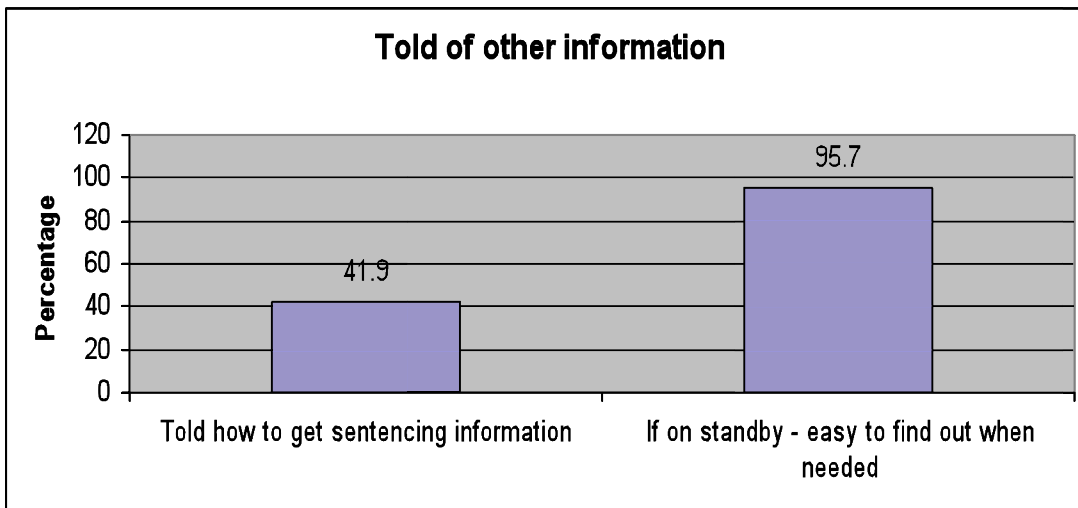
No one made any complaint about financial claims





Comments:


Room too small, Single loo (Laganside); Very small and stuffy (Antrim/Ballymena); Good - Apart from the food – not good (Laganside); Could have had more facilities (i.e. papers, magazines etc.) (Court not stated).



Overall comment

Pre-select jury panels at 10am (Laganside); An interesting experience (Antrim / Ballymena); Selection is poorly organised (Laganside);

I was last called for jury service 16 years ago. There was a marked improvement on the way I was treated. All the staff were courteous and appeared anxious to be polite and helpful in contrast with the behaviour I had experienced before. I also appreciated being referred in public only by number as I had felt very intimidated 16 years ago when I was identified by members of the public as I went through the public area of the courthouse to the jury room (Craigavon); I was very nervous leading up to my jury service date but found the whole experience interesting despite being



disturbed by the case involved. All the court staff were most friendly and helpful and I would be happy to repeat the process in the future should I be called again. (Newry); Worthwhile experience (Laganside);

Separate entrance- Comment - should be even a time delay for Jurors and persons attending to leave separately (Antrim)

Apart from omission re. fire alarm, there is one other matter - only two members of staff checking registration details - caused considerable delay because so many registrants wished to ask questions - process was unbearably extended - there should have been at least two further staff for some 60 registrants - of the two staff there, one 'junior' merely opened identification documents - very frustrating - also refreshments were meagre and no hot water available - also once indoors could not go 'off site' to purchase refreshments - finally to enable free parking I had to set out on journey some 2.5hrs before court began (7.30am - 8.00am). (Newry)

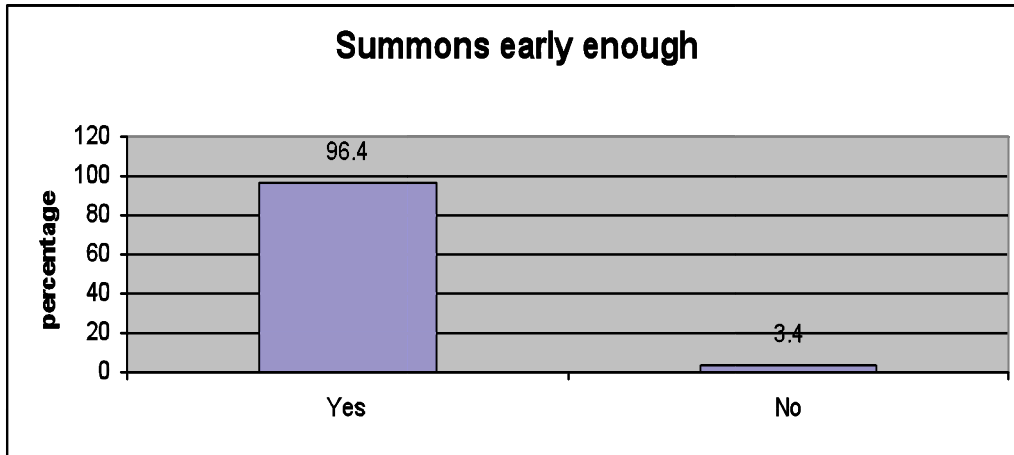
A lot of time-wasting on first trial over a period of three days. I was actually in court for 1hr 40mins. Rest of time was sitting about in Juror's Room. I found this unacceptable - waste of time and money (Antrim)

food provided at lunch was at times quite poor (Laganside); We were sent in and out of the court room too much. We did not fully understand why the Judge ended the case on the Monday after hearing evidence for a full week (Craigavon); I cannot speak highly enough about the jury keepers on the three trials which I attended as a jury member. They made what could have been a daunting experience, much easier. I was also impressed how the prosecution barristers and the judges concerned explained everything so clearly (Laganside);

Was sworn in, but only as a reserve, and then not required (Laganside); It would be helpful if jurors could actually witness when the leading witness/s were being sworn in. This would be particularly helpful in cases such as mine when evidence in chief is presented to a jury over several days (court area not stated); There should be more professional jobs exempt from jury service; anyone who works in the education sector shouldn't be allowed to be called up for jury service - i.e. technicians, as they play an important part in school life as students education is at risk (Antrim); I have had two hip and one knee replacement. I found there was no lift available (as advised by a member of staff). I found having to use the stairs difficult (Antrim); Choice of food could be better (Newry).

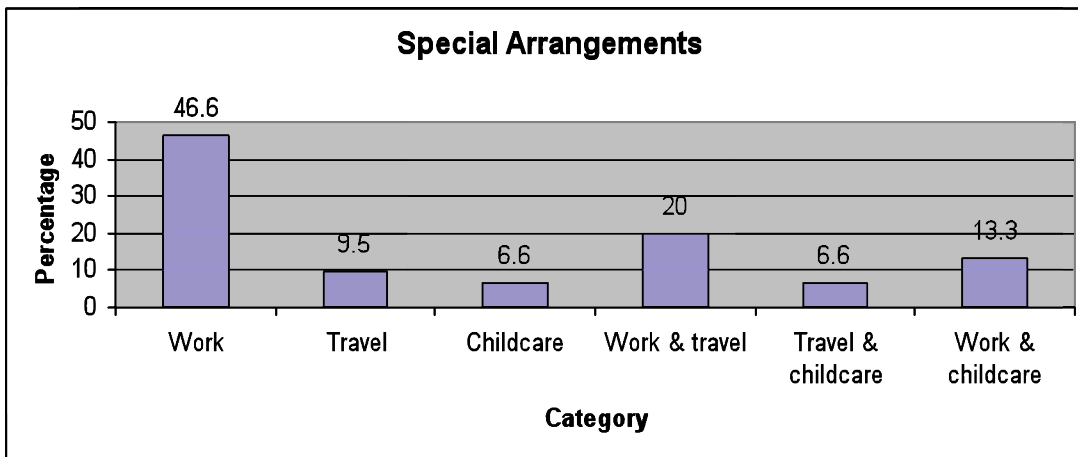


Not sworn in / affirmed



Comments:

I was away for holidays so only received it on my return (Laganside)



Comments:

Babysitting (Newry)

travel my kids 2 & from school (Newry)

Notify. Me unavailable for certain scheduled meetings at work (Laganside)

Had to make up the lost time (Newry)

I had to find out bus times and get a taxi to the bus stop. In work I had to arrange for possible cover as I only found out the night before if I had to attend court.

I work in a school; arrangements to cover work (Laganside)

Had to cancel certain arrangements (Laganside)

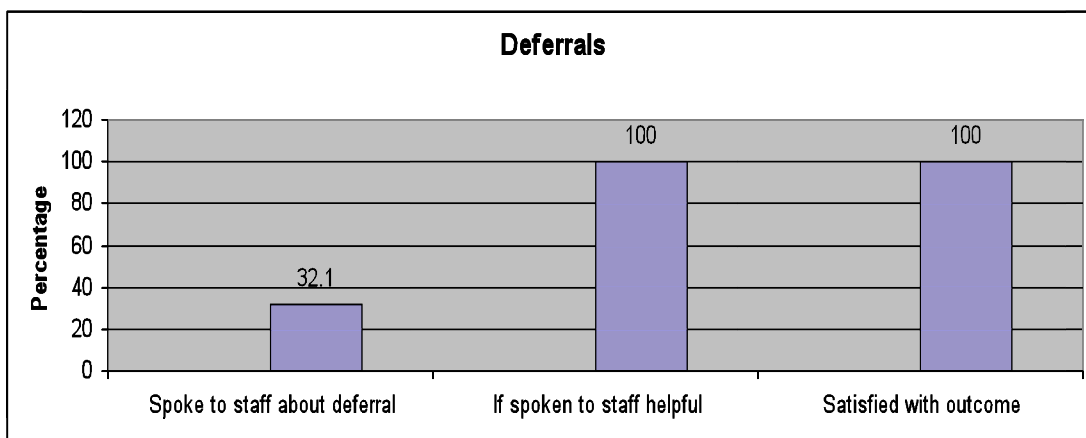
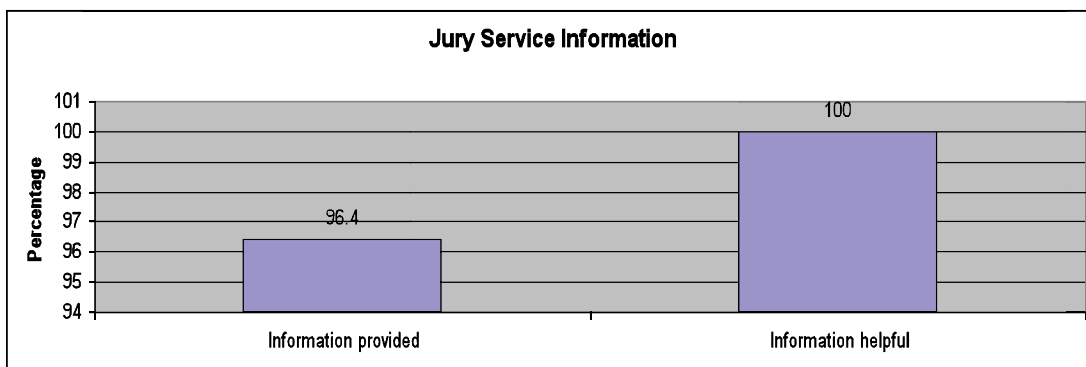
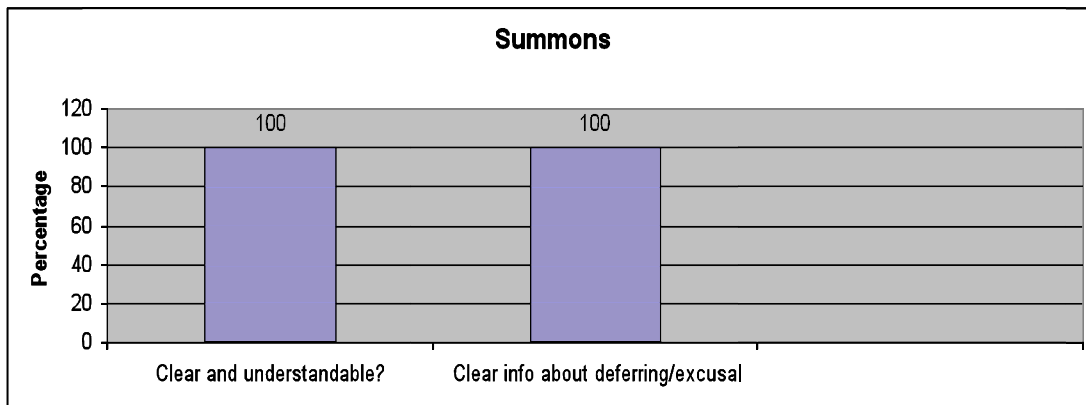
I was unable to plan business meetings (Newry)

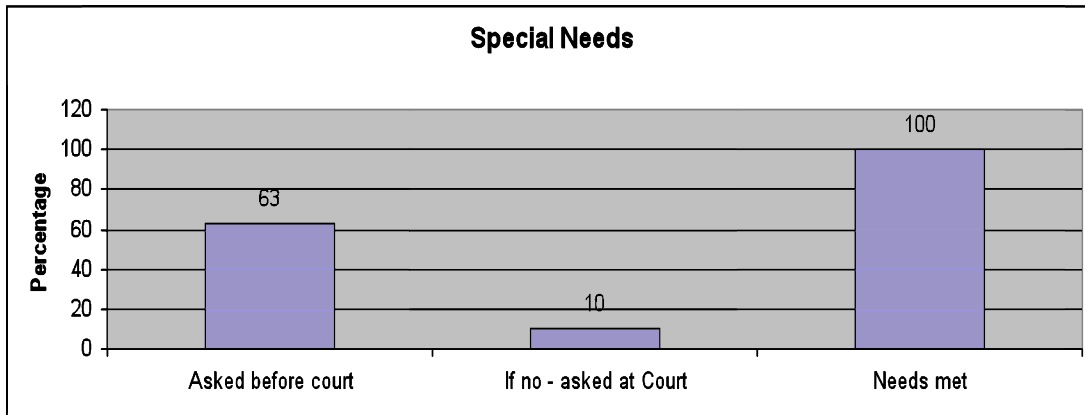
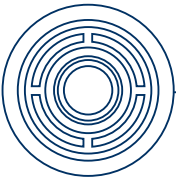
time off to attend (Laganside)

Had to get permission out of work had to travel to Belfast (Laganside)



It meant not taking on commitments for the duration of the period as I did not know when I might be called. In the end I only missed several hours and moved work accordingly (Laganside) I had to ensure that my overtime shifts were covered during my service in case I was required (Antrim)



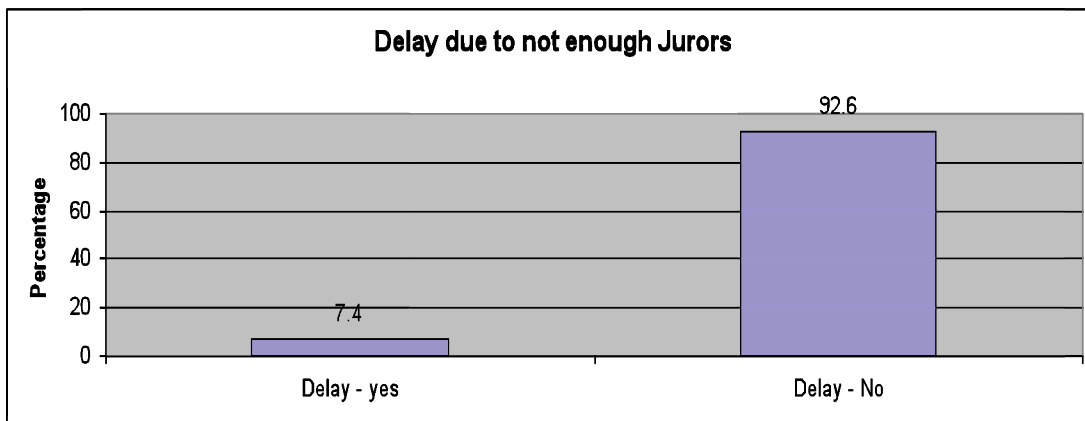


Comments:

Staff very helpful and courteous (Laganside)

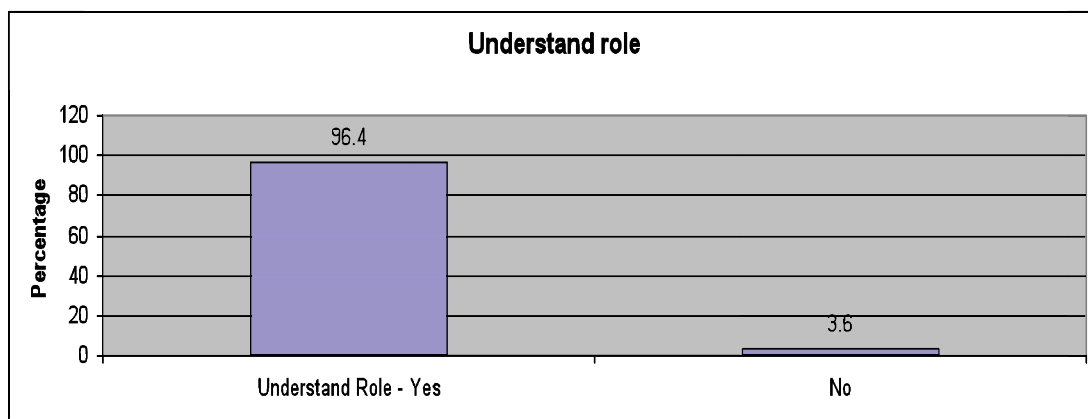
No special needs were requested

Information booklet explained special needs (Antrim)



Comments:

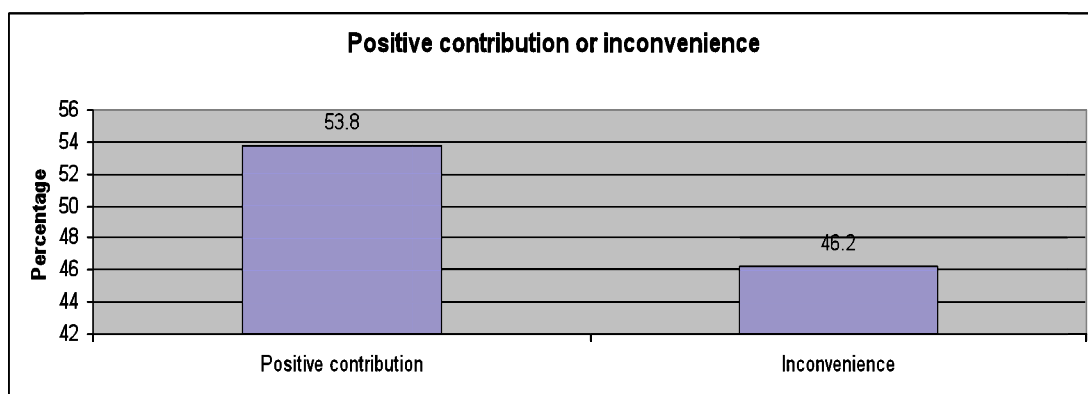
This is a joke. There were about 500 of summoned and there was massive overkill. The one day I had to attend and stay there was 100+ people and 17 of us were called. Far too many summoned (Laganside)

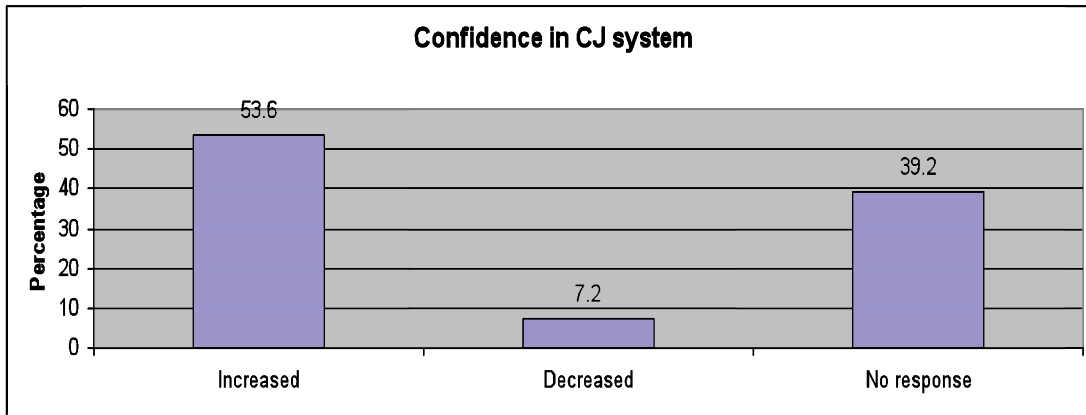
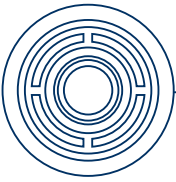


Comments:

It was explained in the booklet sent out with the summons and explained on video further (Laganside)

We watched a dvd on the first day we attended (Antrim)



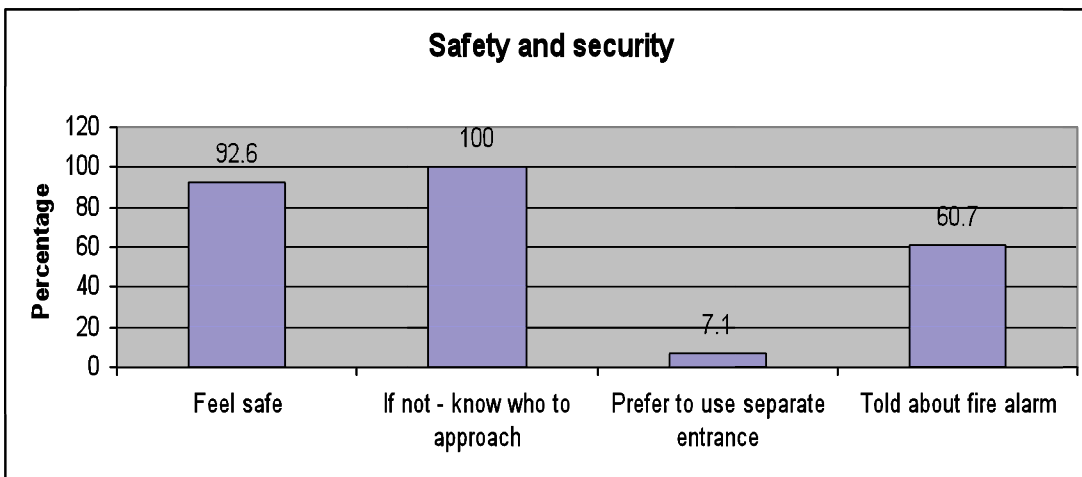


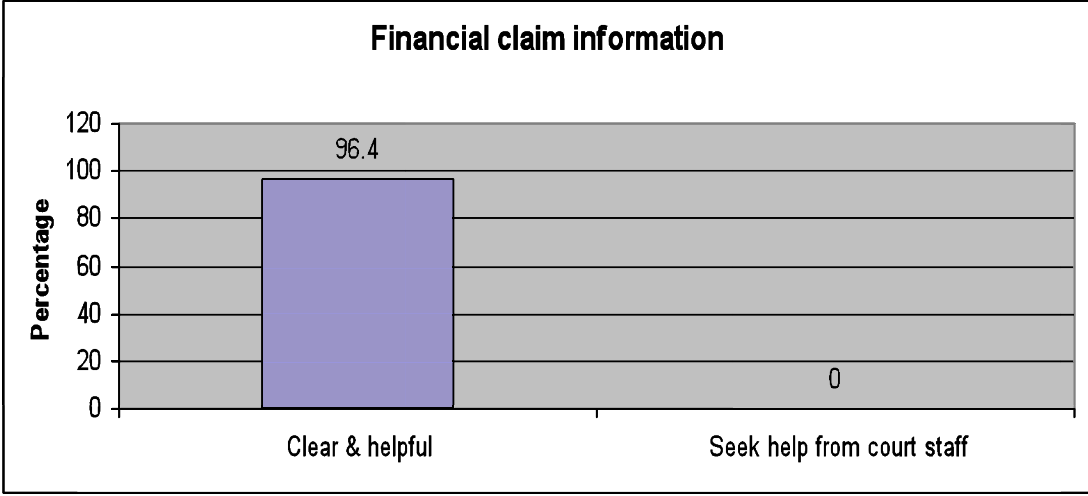
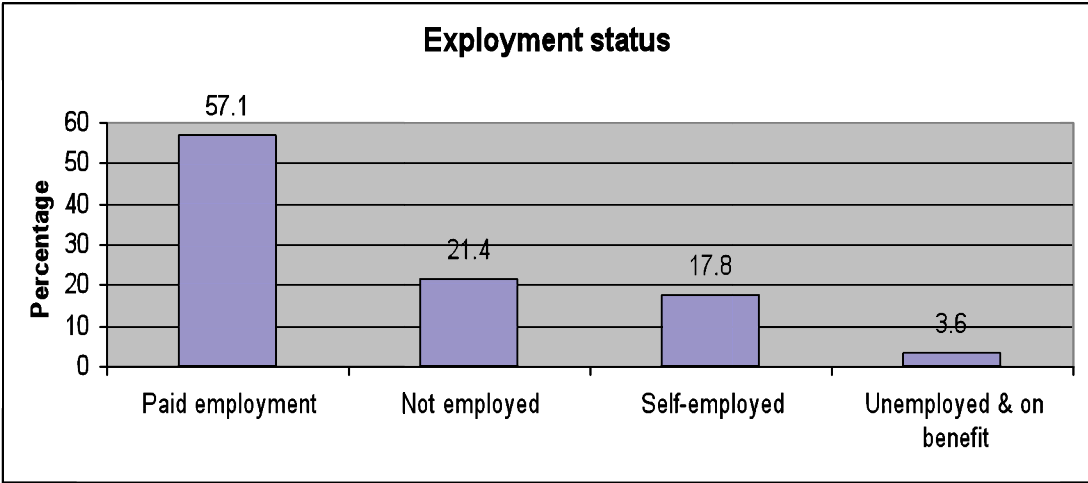
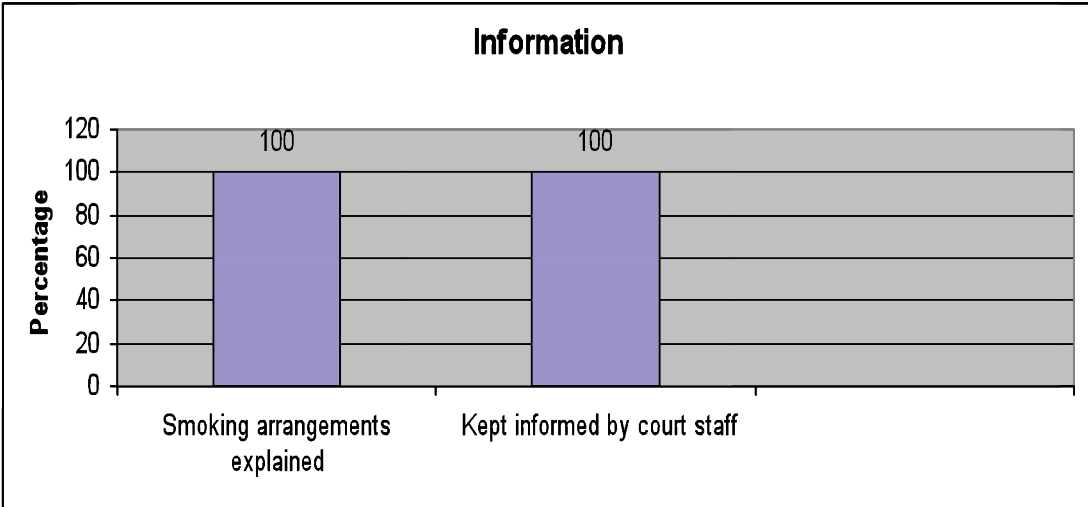
Comments: Why increased?

*because of the different type of people that was selected (Newry)
the jury is people made from ordinary people (Newry)
know more about it (Laganside)
Very professional (laganside)
Experience was very positive and professional (Newry)
Very considerate and understanding (Newry)*

Why decreased?

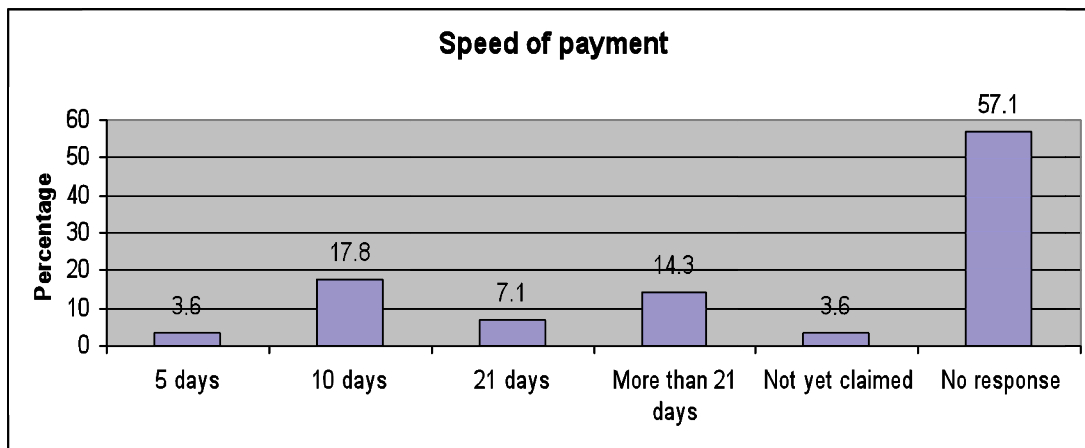
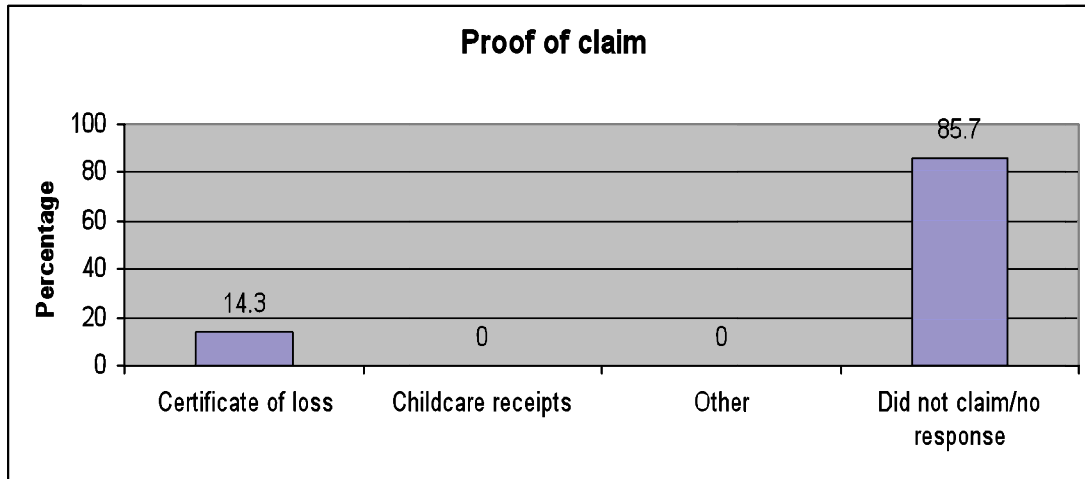
*I thought that a jury was to be made up of random members of the public. I understand that both legal teams want the best for the clients but I feel it is not fair that they can object to any juror on the basis of their gender, age etc. Surely this helps to create a biased jury and where is the justice in that (Antrim)
One person did not respond to the question but gave a comment Neither. Not increased my good opinion of its efficiency. In answer to 19, I was interested in doing jury service and every disappointed that so many of us were summoned and so few called. A waste of people's time and willingness to serve the public good (Laganside)*







I found the form complicated, i.e. how to claim for loss of hours.



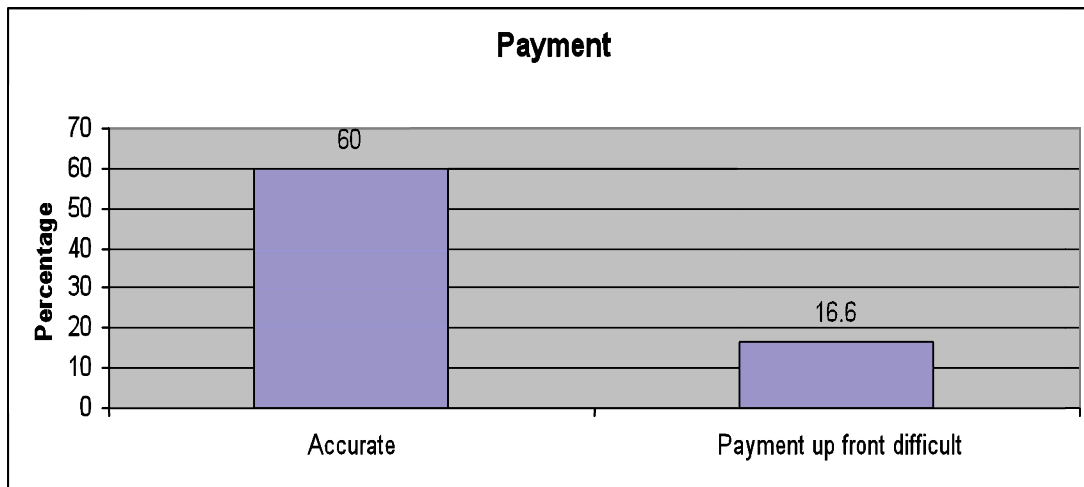
Comments:

There was an issue about bus tickets but it was quickly resolved

Very quickly.

Returned by post in five days to get a stamp.

Not yet submitted



Comments:

Payment was an insult. Max expenses could have been £87.00 Was paid £39.00.

No idea was not provided with breakdown how determined

I was sent a letter to confirm my total payment though it has not been credited to my account

One person made a complaint about financial loss and subsistence and commented: [Complained]

By phone, explained I work for NEELB, don't have a stamp. Had to get a letter from Headmaster.

Staff were not helpful on phone.

Overall comments:

No thought 4 people with kids

A very disappointing and deflating experience. I was keen to do my bit and clearly only a small proportion of those called were needed. I feel messed around for nothing.

The system is such that we as jurors feel unimportant.

The court staff were very helpful and informed us every step of the proceedings many thanks

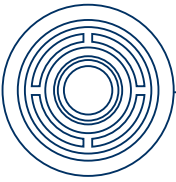
Altered answer to state 'a positive contribution BUT would rather no have had to do'.

Car parking could be better

Because I work for a small company I found that it did inconvenience them not knowing if I was going to be away from work all day or just to lunchtime although thankfully we only had a couple of weeks of Jury.

A rather disappointing experience with a real feeling of anticlimax after being threatened with a substantial fine for non attendance.

I think it is good to be involved with the criminal justice service but I also think that it is unfair to expect people to give up their lives for a month especially if they were not getting paid for their time. Perhaps if I had of been on a case I might feel different but although I only had to come twice a week I felt that I was wasting my time just sitting there. Also I felt a bit like a criminal myself because someone else got to decide what a relevant excuse was to be excused for any period of time and that I was unable to plan anything for the whole month of September just in case I wasn't allowed excusal and that the judge didn't deem it important enough even though it was important to me.



Appendix 6: Juror allowances

Travel

Reimbursement of standard rate public transport fares, or a set mileage rate if the juror has to drive.

Meal allowance

An allowance of either £5.55 if away from home for up to 10 hours, or £11.83 if away from home for longer than 10 hours. This meal allowance is only payable if a meal is not provided at public expense.

Financial loss (Including loss of earnings)

Financial loss, which incorporates any loss of earnings, reimburses any loss as a direct result of jury service up to daily maximum limits. The maximum payable doubles from the 11th day of jury service onwards. **The maximum limits are for total financial loss** so if, for example, a juror is claiming for loss of earnings and childcare on the same day then the maximum relates to the combined loss.

The maximum rates (from 1st August 2009 to 31st July 2010) are:

For the first 10 days:

For a period not exceeding 4 hours	£31.56
For a period of more than 4 hours	£63.12

From the 11th day onwards, the maximum limit increases to £126.25 per day.


The maximum limits are for combined/total financial loss to include:

- loss of earnings;
- childcare;
- National Insurance contributions; and
- pension contributions.

If a juror is not being fully paid whilst on jury service they can claim back any shortfall up to the daily maximum. If they are losing more than the maximum, the balance cannot be paid by the court.

If a juror losing earnings wishes to claim financial loss their employer must complete the 'Employer's Certificate' at the back of the claim form on the jury summons, certifying their net daily loss.

If they do not earn the same rate each day then an average figure should be used. The court cannot reimburse loss of earnings without a valid 'Employer's Certificate'. Payment by the Court Service is made to the juror and any arrangement for employers to recoup wages is a matter between the juror and their employer.



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