

# Peer Review College Feedback Survey – Summary Report – August 2025

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## Introduction

Feedback from PRC peer reviewers (PRs) and Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) is sought every year to assist the PRC Oversight Committee (OC) with their annual review of performance. A new approach to this task was taken in 2025, with both CABs and PRs being invited to fill in a questionnaire survey. Invitations were sent on 3 June 2025, and three weeks were allowed for responses. The survey questions were designed to enable the levels of satisfaction in the two groups to be quantified and to collect written feedback on a range of topics. The survey form could be completed anonymously if preferred.

Thirty-six responses were received from the 119 current PRs and seven from CAB representatives (of 44 invited). The quantitative results from the survey are given in Annexes 1 and 2 of this summary report. The written comments provided by the PRs and CABs are not included in this report but have been distributed to respondents who provided their names, along with responses from the PRC Team. The questions inviting written comments are also removed from the Annexes for simplicity.

## CAB responses

All seven of the CAB respondents were either 'satisfied', 'very satisfied' or 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to recruitment and training, allocation of reviews (to PRs) and the management of conflicts of interest (Annex 1). Additionally, all of the CABs were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the clarity, completeness and punctuality of the PRC reviews.

On the Persistent Disagreements (PDs) procedure, one CAB respondent was 'somewhat dissatisfied' and suggested that the PDs process should always be completed before a fishery is certified. The response explained that this is not done currently, both to avoid delays and to simplify the work involved.

Four of the CABs (57%) were 'somewhat satisfied' with the financial management of the PRC, including the fees charged for reviews. One noted that the fee rates are relatively high compared to the day rates currently paid by CABs and governments (UK).

## Peer Reviewer (PR) responses

The responses from the PRs also showed high levels of satisfaction (between 57 and 83% for the five different questions in Annex 2). Several PRs said they would appreciate more training/calibration, with a few specific topics suggested. These comments will be passed on to the MSC Training Team. In Section 2

of the form, most PRs (78%) were somewhat or very satisfied with the allocation of reviews to reviewers (Q4) and most (64%) confirmed that they would like to be invited to join more shortlists (Q6). Several PRs asked how the final PRs are selected from the shortlists. In Q7, most PRs (79%) confirmed they feel they are being invited to join shortlists which are appropriate to their experience. Just two comments suggested that some additional recent experience could be taken into account.

In Section 3 of the form, 78% of the PRs were somewhat/very satisfied with the operation of the PRC's conflict of interest (COI) procedures, but a concern was raised by one PR about their experience.

In Section 4, most PRs (57%) supported the new PDs procedure, while 36% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied', possibly due to a lack of experience with the procedure so far (Q10). In the detailed comments (not included in this summary), one PR suggested that the PDs procedure should be used for any case where a new condition could be justified. The PRC Team response argued that this would not be feasible given the potential increase in workload.

Finally, in Section 5, several comments were made about the PRC's financial management, including the allowance to claim up to an extra half-day for the follow-up reviews, and delays in payments.

## Oversight Committee response

The survey results were discussed with the PRC Oversight Committee (OC) and Third-Party Experts at their annual meeting on 21 July 2025. In summary, it was noted that although most CABs and PRs appear to be generally 'satisfied' with the current PRC operations, several suggestions for changes were received. The meeting also noted that less CABs and PRs had responded to the surveys than would have been desirable. Given this, and the responses to the comments provided by the PRC Team, it was agreed that no specific changes to the PRC procedures should be made at this time. It was also agreed that the suggestions on training and transparency around the procedures should be followed up on.

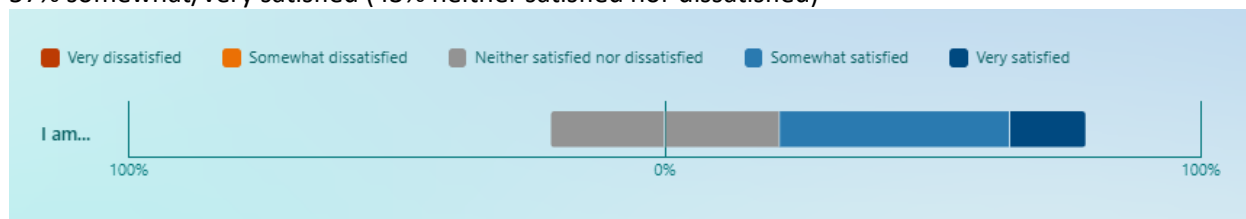
The OC also encouraged the publication of this short report on the PRC page of the MSC website, and the circulation of the full results to those respondents who gave their names. It was hoped that such transparency in reporting would encourage greater participation in future surveys.

## Annex 1 – Summary of CAB responses (not including written comments)

### Section 1 - PRC recruitment and training

1. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to recruitment and training of peer reviewers?

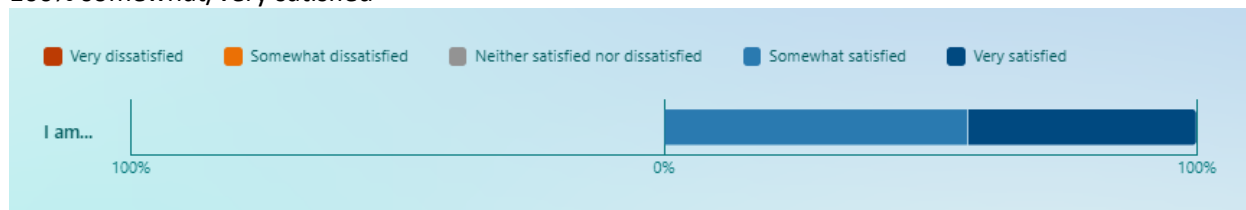
57% somewhat/very satisfied (43% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)



### Section 2 - PRC allocation of reviews

3. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to the allocation of reviews to peer reviewers?

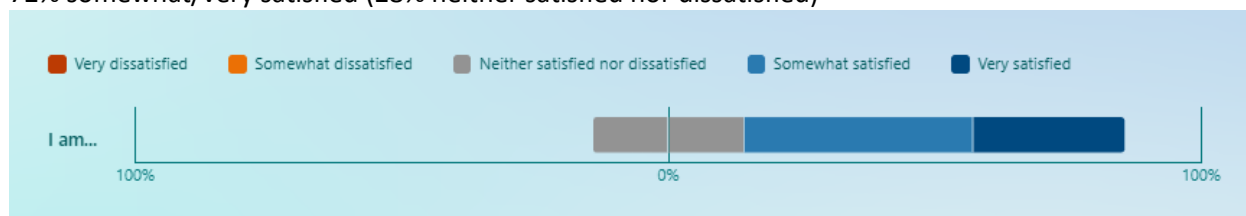
100% somewhat/very satisfied



### Section 3 – Management of conflicts of interest

5. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to the management of conflicts of interest (as described in the PRC Structures & Procedures document Sections 3, 4, Annex 7).

72% somewhat/very satisfied (28% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)



## Section 4 – Quality of the PRC reviews

7. How satisfied are you with the clarity, completeness and punctuality of the PRC reviews?

100% somewhat/very satisfied



## Section 5 – Persistent Disagreements Procedure

9. How satisfied are you with the PRC's new procedure for resolving 'persistent disagreements' between PRs and CABs?

50% somewhat satisfied (33% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, one CAB did not answer)



## Section 6 – Financial Management

11. How satisfied are you with the financial management of the PRC including the fees charged to CABs for peer reviews.

57% somewhat satisfied (29% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)



## Section 7 – Identity

13. If you are happy to share, please provide your name and [CAB below](#). Identities will not be included in any reporting of the results, but may be useful in case we have any follow-up questions for you.

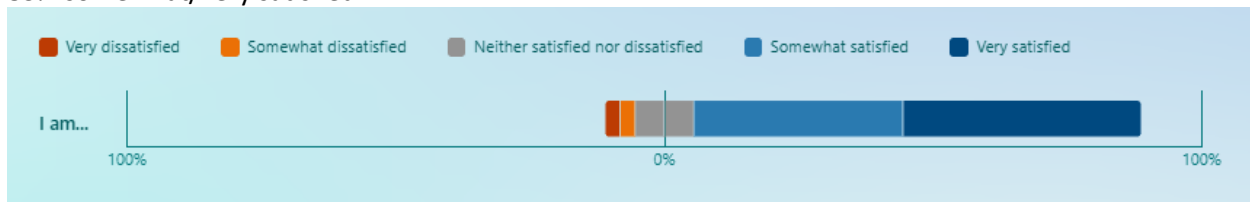
6 of the 7 CAB contacts provided their names and CABs.

## Annex 2 – Summary of PR responses (not including written comments)

### Section 1 - PRC recruitment and training

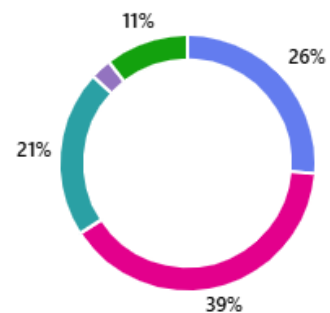
1. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to recruitment and training of peer reviewers?

83% somewhat/very satisfied



3. PRs were invited to take the full training course on the new Fisheries Standard v3.1 in the PRs' Update of 4 March 2025. Do you intend to take the training and thus be eligible for reviews against that standard?

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> I have already taken the new v3.1 training	10
<span style="color: magenta;">●</span> I will take the training when I have some free time	15
<span style="color: teal;">●</span> I will take the training if invited to shortlist for a peer review or to join a CAB Assessment Team using the...	8
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> I am not intending to take the v3.1 training (please give reason/s below...)	1
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Other	4



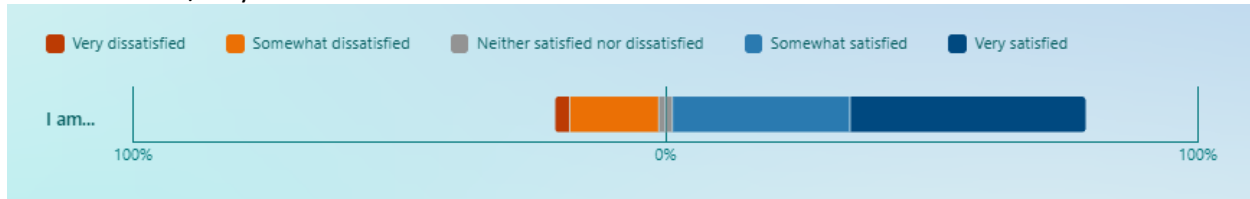
#### Other answers...

- I have taken for some PI, am taking the others.
- I already started and will continue when I have some free time.
- I have started this training module for an MSC preassessment.
- I will take the training in July 2025.

## Section 2 - PRC allocation of reviews

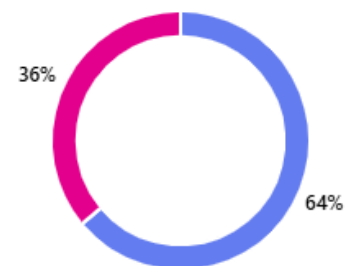
4. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to the allocation of reviews to peer reviewers?

78% somewhat/very satisfied



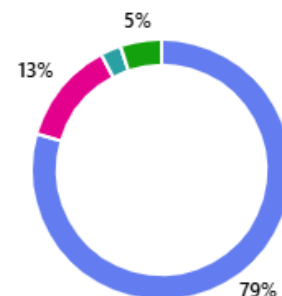
6. How satisfied are you with the number of peer review shortlists you have been invited to join?  
Please select or provide an answer below:

I would like to be invited to join more peer review shortlists	23
The number of shortlist invitations is about right	13
My availability is quite limited. I would prefer to receive less invitations	0
Other	0



7. Do you feel that we are inviting you to peer review shortlists for the types of fisheries that are most appropriate to your experience? If you answer 'Mostly' or 'No' to this question, please indicate in the 'other' response box which other types of fisheries you think you could also be invited to shortlist for. For this to be most useful, please also provide your name in the last box of the survey form. If this answer reflects new experience gained since you applied to join the PRC, we will ask you to provide an updated CV.

Yes	31
Mostly	5
No	1
I haven't been invited to join a peer review shortlist yet	0
Other	2



### Other answers

- Mostly; My work with a CAB has expanded beyond what the PRC is inviting me to

- Mostly; I may be receiving a higher proportion of invitations for tuna fisheries relative to my previous experience, which also encompasses European and UK fisheries, and demersal longline fisheries, but this may be a reflection of the proportion of all MSC fisheries that tuna represents.

### Section 3 – Management of conflicts of interest

8. How satisfied are you with the PRC's performance and procedures relating to the management of conflicts of interest (as described in the PRC Structures & Procedures document Sections 3, 4, Annex 7).

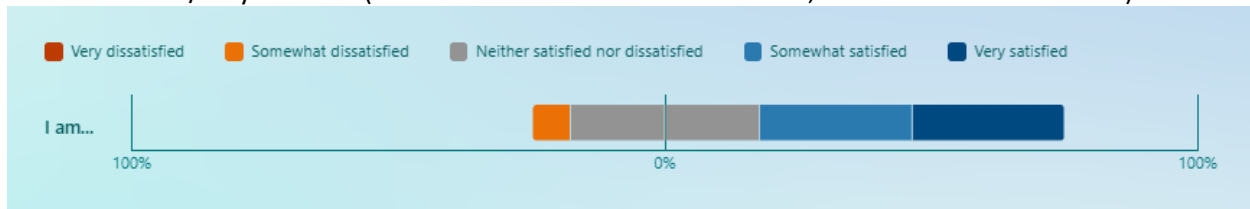
78% somewhat/very satisfied



### Section 4 – Persistent Disagreements Procedure

10. How satisfied are you with the PRC's new procedure for resolving 'persistent disagreements' between PRs and CABs?

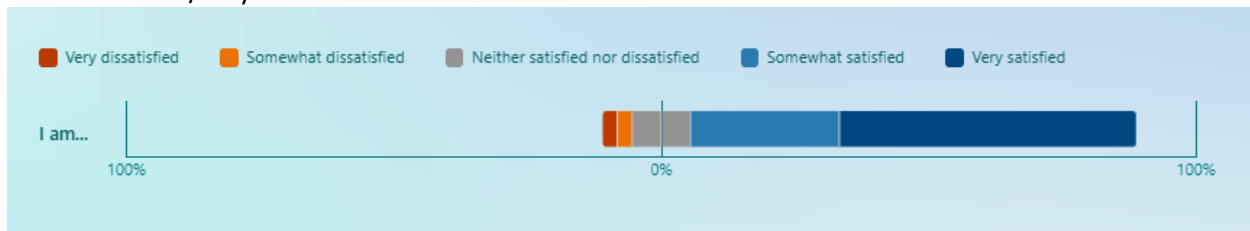
57% somewhat/very satisfied (36% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; seven PRs did not answer)



### Section 5 – Financial Management

12. How satisfied are you with the financial management of the PRC including the fees paid to PRs for peer reviews.

83% somewhat/very satisfied



## Section 6 – Identity

13. If you are happy to share, please provide your name and current home location/region below (especially if it has changed since your original application to the PRC). Identities will not be included in any reporting of the results, but may be useful particularly in the analysis of Question 7, and in case we have any follow-up questions for you.

29 of 36 PRs provided their names and locations.