

SYSTEMSSTATS

North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center

Governor's Crime Commission

The 2009 Governor's Crime Commission Client Satisfaction Survey

Staff from the Governor's Crime Commission's Criminal Justice Analysis Center developed and administered a customer satisfaction survey in an effort to enhance the level of satisfaction, improve services provided to potential and current grantees and to maintain and improve the business process. The 18-item questionnaire contained both open-ended questions where respondents were instructed to provide feedback, ideas and suggestions for improvement, as well as Likert rating scale items in which grantees were asked to provide their opinions on the strength of numerous services ranging from 1 — strongly disagree — to 5 — strongly agree.

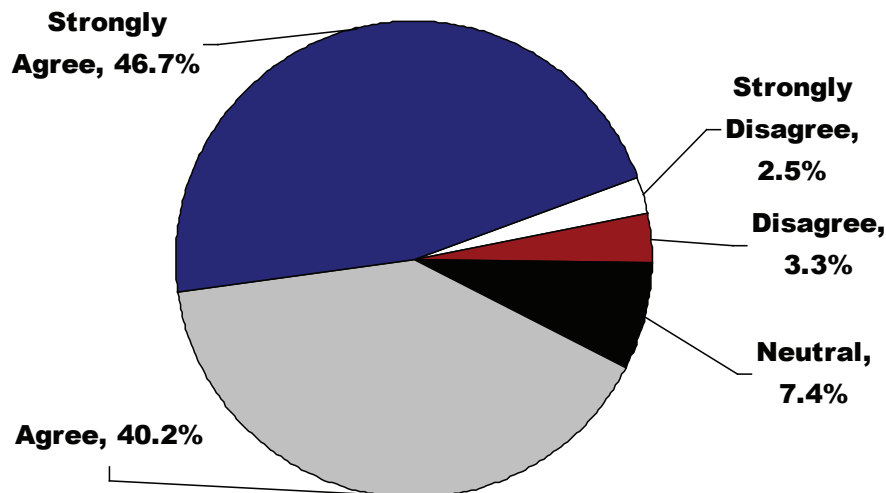
A total of 337 project directors from agencies that received GCC grant funding between July 1, 2007 and Dec. 31, 2008 were contacted and asked to complete the questionnaire. Grantees were given two and a half weeks to complete the survey and to provide their comments and ratings.

Of the agencies surveyed, 102 (30 percent) of the directors were managing grants that were open at the time the survey was administered. The remaining 235 (70 percent) were asked to provide feedback on closed grants.

A total of 122 surveys were completed for an overall survey response rate of 36 percent. Of those directors who specified a project type 29 (25 percent) were returned by project directors of criminal justice improvement programs, 65 (56 percent) were crime victim services grants, 17 (15 percent) were gang-related grants and the remaining 6 (5 percent) of the surveys returned were related to juvenile justice programs.

Survey responses indicate that the GCC's grants management specialists are viewed favorably by grantees and respond to inquiries in a timely manner. As Figure 1 depicts, over 85 percent of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the assertion that the specialists respond

Figure 1: Grants Management Specialists Respond in a Timely Manner



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in a timely fashion. Only seven respondents (6 percent) felt that timely responses were not being provided by staff of the grants management section.

Nearly an identical percentage of project directors who completed the survey either agreed or strongly agreed that the overall grant adjustment process was efficient or working well (81 percent). Twenty respondents (17 percent) commented in a neutral fashion. The remaining three directors (3 percent) strongly disagreed that the grant adjustment process works well.

Excluding those project directors who are managing or currently had managed an equipment only grant over one-half of the remaining project directors had received at least one site visit from their respective grants management specialist (65 percent). Of the 73 project directors who reported at least one site visit, over one-half (51 percent) viewed these visits as being exceptionally productive and informative with an additional 26 (36 percent) agreeing that the visits were informative and productive. Only seven directors expressed neutral feelings about the content of their site visit (10 percent). The remaining three respondents (4 percent)

disagreed suggesting that their visit(s) was either not productive or very informative or both unproductive and non-informative.

As illustrated in Figure 2, more than one-half (52 percent) of the responding project directors agreed that the commission's grant management forms are clearly written and easy to understand, i.e. user-friendly. An additional 38 directors (31.4 percent) strongly agreed that these forms are clear and user-friendly. Combined, 84 percent of the respondents had no overall serious concerns or problems with the required forms — which are necessary for proper fiscal and grant management documentation. Only six directors (5 percent) stated that these forms are not clearly written and are not easy to understand and complete.

Respondents were invited to suggest ideas for improving these forms and to note any comments that they felt would enable the commission staff to further enhance these documents and make them even more user-friendly. Fifty-four directors (44 percent) offered specific comments and ideas. Of those responses, 22 (41 percent) either reiterated how the forms are already clear and user-friendly or stated that they had no serious problems or

Figure 2: The Grant Forms are Clear and User-Friendly

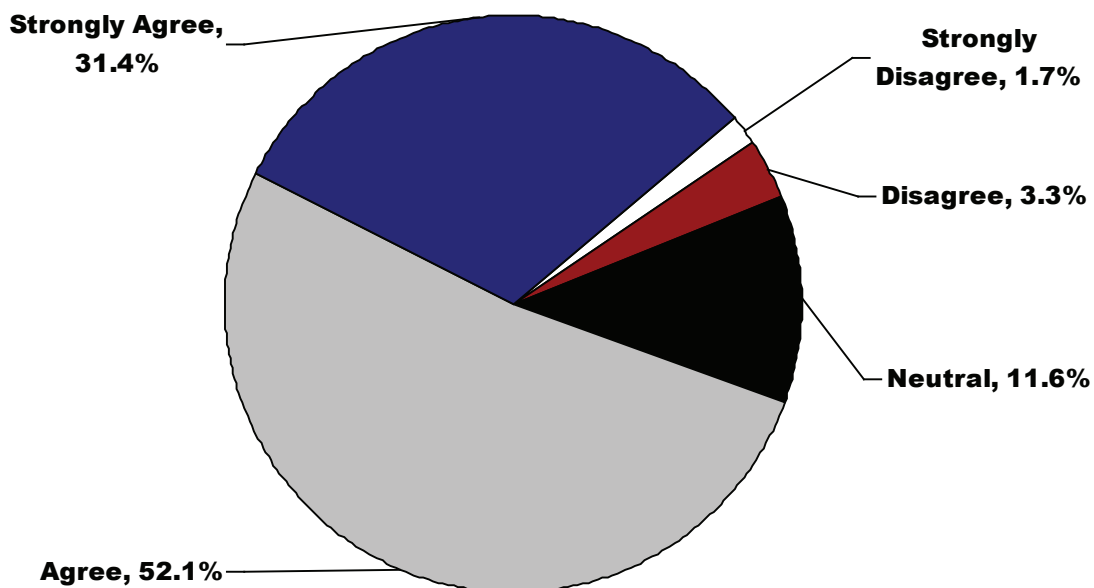
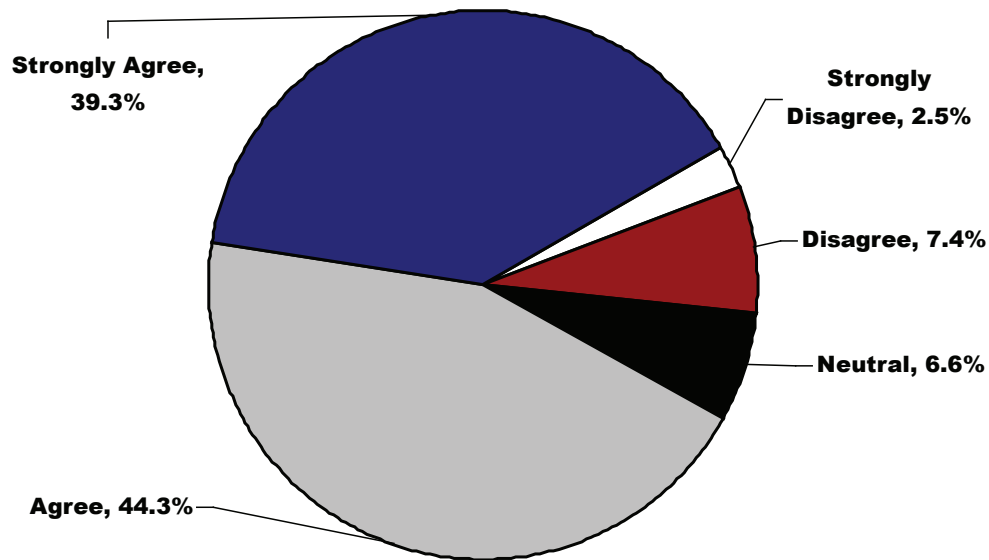


Figure 3: I Know Who to Contact Regarding Programmatic or Non-Fiscal Related Issues



suggestions for improvement. The remaining 32 respondents offered insightful suggestions for enhancing these grant forms. Their responses and ideas clustered around two primary areas: 1) the format and content of the forms and 2) form instructions. Selected comments included:

- Cost reports should be fillable forms
- Need the ability to save all forms to our hard drive
- Put the forms in Excel with embedded formulas
- Monthly cost reports should be an electronic form
- It would be great if the process was web based
- Provide examples of correctly completed forms
- Better descriptions of what is to go in each field
- Clearer definitions or instructions for the state agencies

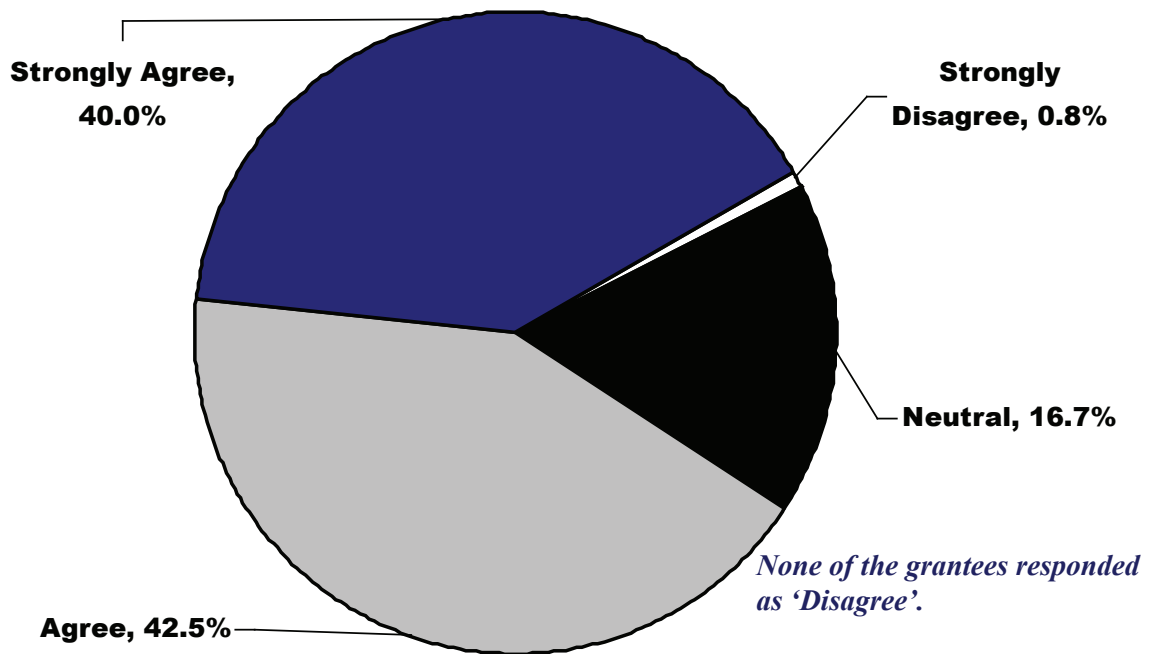
In addition to grants management-related survey items, project directors were asked a series of

questions regarding technical assistance and interaction with the commission's planners. Overall, grantees are knowledgeable about the commission's staff and are aware of the specific duties and specialty areas of the planning section. More than three-quarters (84 percent) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they knew who to contact at the commission regarding programmatic or non-fiscal related questions. Only 20 project directors (16 percent) reported being neutral, uncertain or completely unaware of who to contact when programmatic questions or issues arose. (See Figure 3 above.)

Similar to the grants management specialists the commission's planners were also viewed positively with an overwhelming majority of the responding project directors (84 percent) reporting that these staff members respond in a timely manner when contacted. Only four survey participants (3 percent) responded in the negative. The remaining respondents opted for the neutral response category when asked about the timeliness of planner responses.

An almost identical percentage (82 percent) of project directors either agreed or strongly agreed

Figure 4: I Received Outstanding Technical Assistance While Writing my Grant



that the commission staff provided outstanding technical assistance to them during the grant writing period. As Figure 4 documents, only one respondent strongly disagreed, and none simply disagreed, that the technical assistance was outstanding.

Six items were included in the survey in an effort to gather information on the quality of the commission's annual grant writing and grant award workshops. Open-ended questions were also included to allow participants to express ideas and suggestions for improving the workshops.

Sixty-three percent of the responding project directors attended one of this year's grant writing workshops. Of that number, 86 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops were informative and the staff addressed all of their respective questions. Only four of the attendees (5 percent) disagreed, noting that the workshops were not informative and/or that they did not have all of their questions answered to their satisfaction. The remaining seven (9 percent) reported that they were undecided or neutral

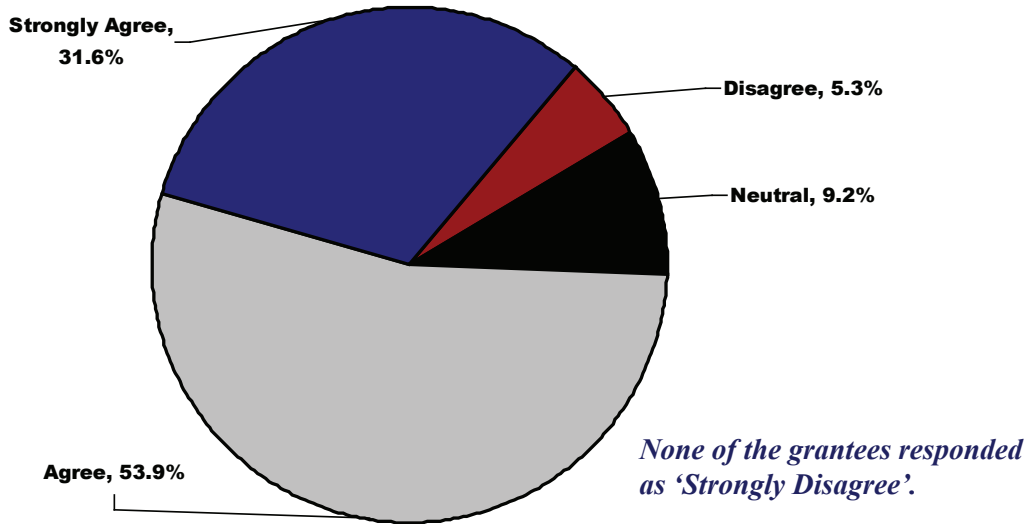
in making an assessment of workshop content. (Refer to Figure 5 at the top of the next page.)

Respondents were also asked to provide any ideas and suggestions for improving the grant writing workshops. Thirty-seven of those surveyed (30 percent) offered comments. Roughly one-half of these directors noted that the workshops were fine as they are and stated that they would not make any substantial changes. The remaining directors made some recommendations for improvement, including the following responses:

- Offer a 'What is New' session for returning attendees
- Give us more information on other available grant funding sources
- Offer a recorded version on-line
- Offer more workshops across the state
- Offer separate sessions for seasoned grant writers or attendees with more detailed information

Eighty-two (68 percent) of the responding project directors attended one of this year's grant award

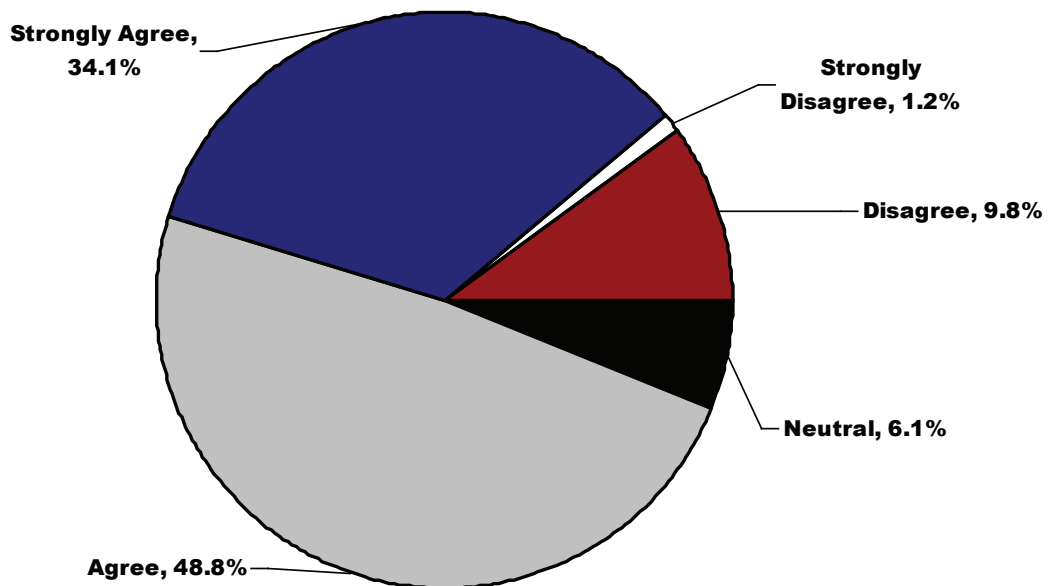
Figure 5: The Grant Writing Workshop was Informative and Addressed All of My Questions



workshops with more than three-quarters (83 percent) revealing that they found the session to be informative and sufficient in answering all of their questions. Nine directors, or 11 percent of those who attended, did not find the grant award workshops to be informative and/or felt that the presenters and materials did not adequately answer all of their respective questions. (See Figure 6 below.)

Forty-five respondents (37 percent) provided feedback on the question dealing with how to improve the grant award workshops. Of these 45 project directors, 29 (64.4 percent) actually provided suggestions for making improvements as opposed to simply writing that the workshops were good or that they did not have any suggestions. Responses tended to cluster into two distinct categories with one set being more

Figure 6: The Grant Award Workshop was Informative and Addressed All of My Questions



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critical of the content of the sessions and another set offering more concrete ideas for improving the grant award workshops. Selected comments from both clusters are included below.

- Again, offer a 'What is New' session for returning attendees
- Provide separate sessions for first time attendees and returning grant recipients
- I did not like the tone of the presentations this year
- If you have been (to a workshop) before, you should not have to return the following year
- Offer more workshops across the state
- Move the presentations to an on-line format
- Too much talking and not enough interaction



The final survey questions were deliberately broad in order to provide respondents with an opportunity to provide their overall impressions on the entire grant process, to offer comments on the GCC's overall level of service delivery and to offer ideas about new services and types of technical assistance that the commission could possibly begin to offer in the future.

Eighty-nine (73 percent) of the directors responded to an open-ended question which asked them what went well with the entire grant process. Response sets clustered in three areas with positive comments about staff availability, knowledge and responsiveness receiving the most comments. Respondents were extremely appreciative of the staff and their hard work,

especially members of the grants management section. Positive comments about filing and processing GCC forms, the consistency of our grant process and its efficiency were also common. A lesser number of respondents noted their appreciation for receiving funding and for the impact that these funds have exerted on their communities. Selected comments are listed below.

- Open communication between agency staff and grants management specialists
- Grant managers are well trained and supportive
- Staff have genuine interest in our project
- Helpful folks at GCC answering the phone
- Personal attention to my questions and needs
- The GCC staff is the most professional and prepared group
- Everything, I love that we are not bombarded with too many requirements
- Forms and Internet process are easy to use
- Grant application process is uncomplicated
- Having specific funding priorities helps us focus
- I really like the new e-mail attachment process
- Instructions for writing grants are clear
- Positive change in the community
- Receiving monies and providing our area with a good program
- We can prove impact on population area served
- GCC has always supported and believed in our agency
- Pretty much everything

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Conversely, respondents were asked about what has not gone well with the overall grant process. Only 50 responses were received (41 percent) for this inquiry. The majority of these concerns dealt with turnover in the grants management section and on the process of submitting grant forms and other related reporting requirements. Comments included:

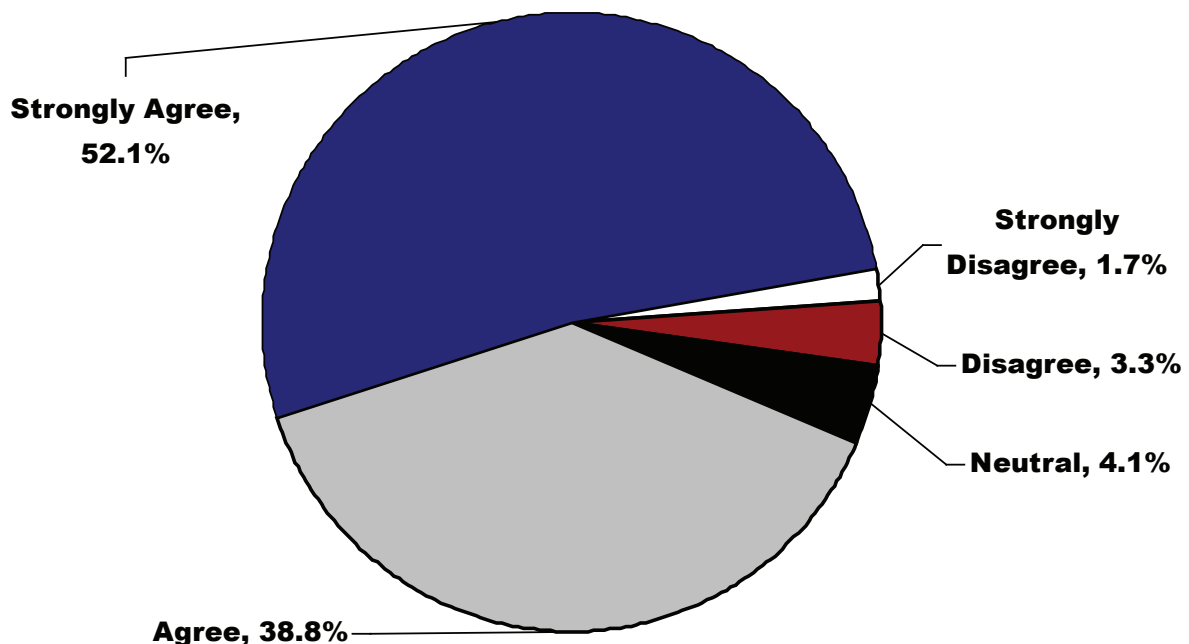
- Change in manager/specialist
- Communication is sometimes a challenge
- It is frustrating having different grant managers
- It took a long time to get a manager assigned
- Lack of consistency in award packet and directions
- Budgets keep getting rejected
- Need more training to complete the required reports
- Reimbursement is not timely
- The current year funding process has been slow

- The delay in contracts which is a symptom of the system
- We did not receive our grant award until late September

As depicted in Figure 7 below, almost 91 percent of the responding project directors either agreed (39 percent) or strongly agreed (52 percent) that on an overall basis they were satisfied with the level of service they have received from commission staff. Five percent were not satisfied and the remaining 4 percent responded that they were neutral regarding the satisfaction level of the service provision that they have received.

Respondents were asked to offer suggestions on new and/or additional services that the commission could begin to provide with 55 (45 percent) directors answering this open-ended question. Of this number an overwhelming majority simply restated positive aspects and compliments as opposed to offering any new services or technical assistance. Of the few who did suggest new ideas selected comments are as follows on the next page:

Figure 7: Overall, I am Satisfied with the Level of Services I Have Received



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Crime Victims' Services Planner Maria Fryer addresses workshop attendees in a break-out session.

- A checklist of required forms, documents, reporting etc.
- Greater access for grass root agencies
- It would be especially helpful to know the backgrounds of the staff
- Take a critical look at what is actually working
- Ability for more web-based reporting

Project directors were also queried regarding what commission staff could do to enhance and improve its service delivery. Seventy-two responses were received (59 percent) with 36 or one-half of these reiterating the positive attributes of the GCC and its processes. To summarize and quote one director, "If it ain't broke don't fix it." Other actual ideas and suggestions for enhancing better service delivery are noted below.

- Provide a thorough handbook with examples in a question and answer format
- Keep the agency webpage more up to date
- Get the monthly cost reports out in a timely manner
- Train NC Council for Women on GCC process
- Respond in a more timely manner and stop reassigning grants managers
- Keep up the research and assessments of crime trends

- More money that is non-competitive
- Accept everything electronically
- Upper management should be more approachable

Summary

A number of the suggestions made by survey respondents were already being implemented by the GCC. For example, this year the grant writing workshops were presented in five sessions and recorded for web access. Suggestions about electronic submission of reports and related information are currently being examined. The summary results of the survey will be made available to GCC management and staff to assist in the evaluation of procedures.



Grants Manager Melvin Williams responds to questions during the Juvenile Justice Committee's break-out session at a recent workshop.

Grants managers and planners work with grantees throughout the process of applying for, receiving and implementing grants. They seek to establish a good working relationship and rapport with grantees while ensuring that all reporting requirements are met. While it is evident from this survey that the greater portion of clients are satisfied with the assistance they received, GCC staff continue to improve and streamline processes while ensuring the documentation standards of the GCC and the federal government are met.

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Appendix: Governor's Crime Commission Customer Satisfaction Survey

Below is a representation of the Customer Satisfaction Survey that was made available on the GCC Website. Items with a box () could be selected by clicking on a radio button on the survey. Items listed with the number of characters allowed were free-form text boxes for grantees to enter their responses to the question. All data was compiled in a database for review and analysis.

**Governor's Crime Commission
Customer Satisfaction Survey
A Survey of GCC Grantees**

This survey is being conducted in an effort to gather your thoughts, opinions and ideas regarding the level of customer satisfaction that you have received from the Governor's Crime Commission in relation to your current grant. Please take a few minutes to complete the questions below. All responses will remain anonymous and will not affect your grant. Your input is extremely valuable to the commission and will help us to maintain continuous improvement process in this area.

Use the tab key or mouse to move between entry fields. Do not use ENTER, which will generate an error message.

What type of grant do you have?

Your Grant Program Area:

- Juvenile Justice Criminal Justice Improvement
 Gang Prevention Crime Victims' Services

Rank each of the questions below on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being "strongly disagree" or "not satisfied" and 5 being "strongly agree" or "very satisfied", or provide appropriate response. If a question is not applicable to you or your agency please skip that question.

1. My grants management specialist responds in a timely manner.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
2. The grant adjustment process is working well.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
3. If your grant is **not** an equipment only grant, have you received a site visit from a grants management specialist?
 Yes No
- 3a. If Yes, site visits by my grants management specialist were productive and informative.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
4. The grant forms are clear and user-friendly.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
- 4a. How can these forms be improved to become more user-friendly? (255 characters allowed)

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5. I know who to contact at the commission regarding programmatic or non-fiscal related issues.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

6. The planners at the commission respond in a timely manner.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

7. I received adequate technical assistance from commission staff when writing my grant.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The following questions pertain to the commission's grant writing (Fall) and grant award workshops (Summer).

8. I attended this year's grant **writing** workshop.

Yes No

9. I found the grant **writing** workshop to be informative and it addressed all of my questions.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

10. What suggestions do you have for improving these grant **writing** workshops? (255 characters allowed)

11. I attended this year's grant **award** workshop. (Summer workshop)

Yes No

12. I found the grant **award** workshop to be informative and it addressed all of my questions.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

13. What suggestions do you have for improving these grant **award** workshops? (255 characters allowed)

14. Looking at the entire grant process from writing the grant to managing your project, what has gone well? Please be as specific as possible. (255 characters allowed)

15. Conversely, what has not gone well? Please be as specific as possible. (255 characters allowed)

16. Overall, I am satisfied with the level of service I have received from the Governor's Crime Commission.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

17. Is there any service that the commission is currently not providing that you would like to see us provide? (255 characters allowed)

18. What can the staff of the Governor's Crime Commission do to provide better services to you or your agency? (255 characters allowed)

Thank you for completing this survey. We sincerely appreciate your thoughts on how we can better serve you. Always feel free to contact the staff of the Governor's Crime Commission at any time for assistance with your grant projects.

The Governor's Crime Commission was established in 1977 by the North Carolina General Assembly under G.S. 143B-479. Its primary duty is "to be the chief advisory body to the Governor and the Secretary of the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety for the development and implementation of criminal justice policy." The Crime Commission is always open to comments and suggestions from the public as well as criminal justice officials. Please contact us and let us know your thoughts and feelings on the information contained in this publication or on any other criminal justice issue of concern to you.

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