

# *Survey of Board of Referee Chairs And Members*

**Final**

V9178-030061/005/CY

***Submitted to:***

**Human Resources and Skills Development Canada**

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## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The survey of Board of Referees Chairs and members was conducted in order to clarify the specific orientation and training development needs of Board chairs and members.

In addition the survey was meant to update and strengthen the orientation, training curriculum and continuing information for the Board of Referees at all stages of the training process by taking into consideration input from Board Chairs and members on their ongoing needs. Ultimately the survey findings are intended to help improve the overall administration of the appeals process.

# METHODOLOGY

Ipsos-Reid conducted a mail-based quantitative survey among Board of Referees Chairs and members. More specifically, the research involved Ipsos-Reid mailing out a printed invitation letter and two copies of the questionnaire (one in each official language) to the entire Board of Referees, 939 potential survey respondents in all. The invitation letter included a brief explanation of the purpose of the research and the measures taken to ensure the confidential and anonymous nature of the responses. In addition to the initial printed invitation letter and questionnaires, Ipsos-Reid sent out a reminder letter three weeks after the initial invitation letter and questionnaire were mailed out. The survey was in field from October 8th to December 6th, 2004. A total of 637 completed surveys were returned to Ipsos-Reid, representing a response rate for this survey of 68 percent.

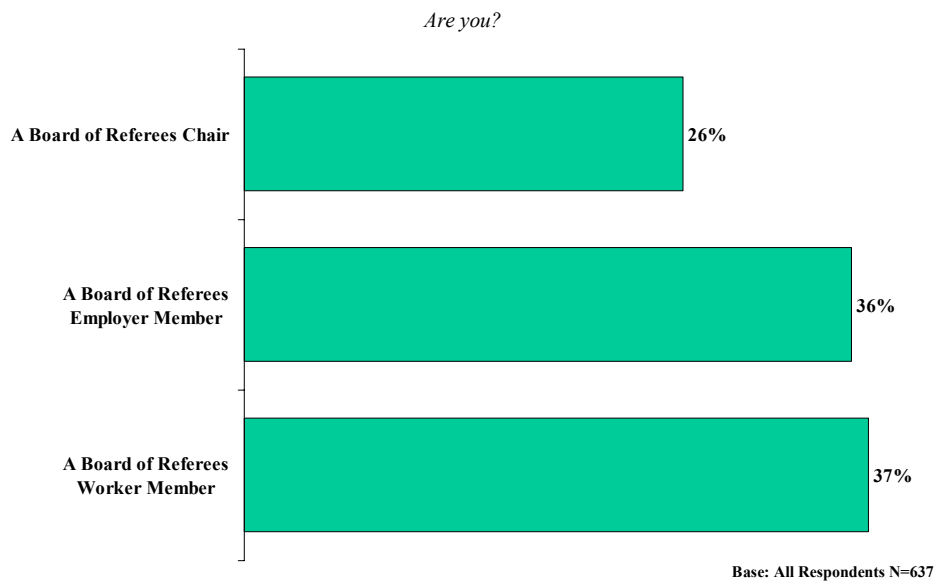
Below is a chart outlining the number of respondents broken down by respondent type.

	<b>Total Outgo</b>	<b>Total Completes</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
Chairs	246	168	68%
Employer Members	325	232	71%
Worker Members	368	237	64%

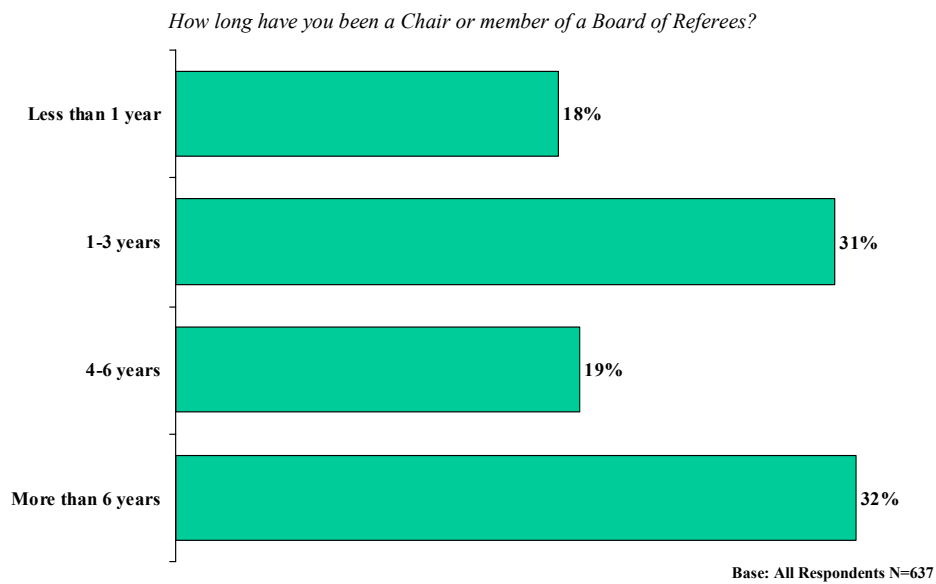
## Respondent Profile:

Charts below highlight respondents' Board of Referees status and length of tenure.

### Board of Referee Status



### Tenure



Note to Reader:

In a few cases respondents recorded more than one response to a single question, for example checking off both yes and no in response to a yes or no question. These responses were collapsed into the don't know/no response category.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Findings suggest that Board Chairs and members welcome all efforts made to assist them in doing their job. As such any opportunities, be they for additional training, information, tools or general assistance, which are intended to facilitate their ability to fulfill their Board of Referee responsibilities are welcomed.
- Perhaps not surprisingly, members and Chairs with shorter tenure tend to be more interested in and hold more favourable views of assistance, information, and training than do their longer-serving counterparts.
- Despite the overall positive nature of survey findings, and given the quantitative nature of the research as well as the limited opportunities for open-ended responses, additional qualitative exploration would be advised in order to further ascertain motivations and reasoning behind individual responses.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Orientation

- Most Board Chairs and members had received orientation package materials and feel these were valuable (48% very informative and 42% somewhat informative).
- A majority of Board Chairs and members (86%) say their roles and responsibilities were sufficiently explained to them at the time of their appointment.
- A majority (71%) acknowledge that it would be helpful to be able to consult with Chairs and members who have had a longer tenure with the Board.
- When presented with the option of receiving additional help/support in order to fulfill their Board responsibilities, assistance with decision writing (74%) is seen as the priority.

## Technical Training

- Respondents assign a high rating to the classroom technical training they received (58% saying very good, 35% saying good). Additionally, most of those who have attended classroom training assign high ratings to the full technical training (42% very good, 46% good).
- Most agree (77%) that the technical training they received was effective in providing them with the tools needed to hear appeals and that time allocated to classroom training was appropriate (60%).
- There is strong agreement among respondents that the observation of a Board of Referees hearing was a useful experience (82% saying very useful, 15% saying somewhat useful).
- There is no strong consensus as to whether hearings should be observed prior to classroom training or after (41% say before, 46% say after).

## Skills Training

- Most (78%) say they attended the three-day classroom training course.
- Almost all of those who have attended the hearing skills training course overwhelmingly say that the hearing skills training they received was useful (74% very, 22% somewhat).
- Those who attended the hearing skills training course tend to think the half-day decision writing session was useful (64% very, 25% somewhat).
- There is a strong recognition (85%) as to the value of offering refresher training on hearing skills previously acquired.

- Employer and worker members express high levels of interest (90%) in participating in a decision writing course.
- Most members (71%) would prefer to attend the decision writing course jointly with Chairs, thus ensuring more consistency in the decisions that are written.

## Annual Information Session

- A majority of respondents say they have attended the annual information session (80% saying always) and say that it was informative (52% very, 40% somewhat).
- Case studies have broadest appeal in terms of proposed activities at the annual information session (90% say they are interested in participating). Conversely role playing is least appealing (47% interest).
- There is strong interest in hearing skills refreshers – most (71%) say that these should be held separately from the annual information session.
- Respondents (excluding Chairs and members from the three largest Board Centres in Canada, more specifically lower mainland British Columbia, Toronto and Montreal) tend to agree (63%) that they would prefer that annual information sessions be held jointly with Chairs and members of other Board Centres.

## Other Areas of Inquiry

- There is strong interest in receiving regular updates (97%).
- Respondents would appreciate a help line (71%) and web-based resource for appeals related questions (73%) as well as a reference guide (94%).
- There is also strong interest in diversity training (70%).
- Chairs and members acknowledge that they have the working tools they need to do their job (79%).