

# Wales Audit Office Staff Survey Report

14 July 2010

**Jules Yim. Consultant, Cognitive Edge**

**WAO Survey Development Group:**

Chris Bolton, Rachel Moss, Dorothy Johnson,  
Amanda Hughes, Gary Biggin, Ben Robertson,  
David Metcalfe, Martin Gibson, Anthony Veale.

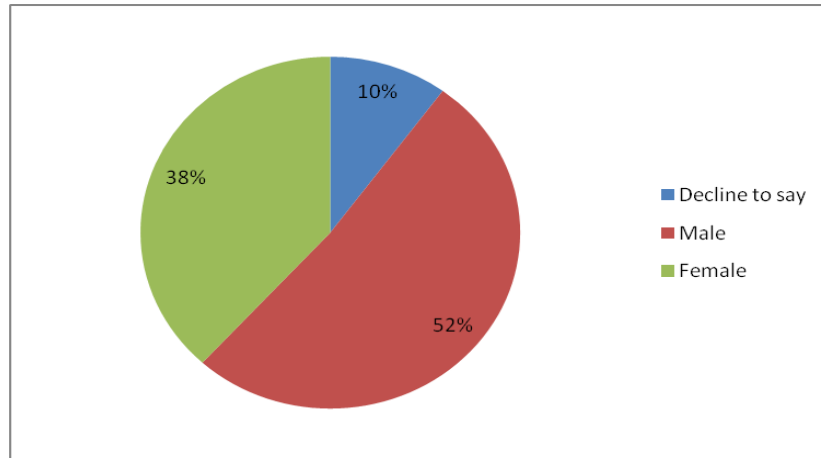




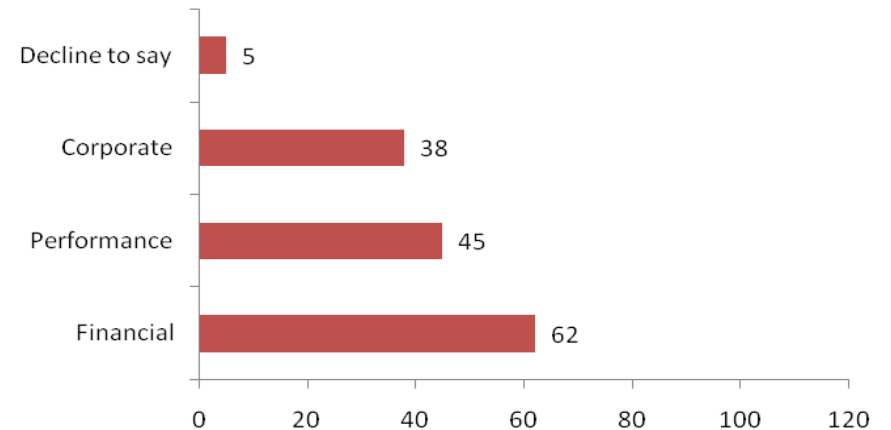
# Overview of responses to the survey

151 response were received, 58% of permanent staff

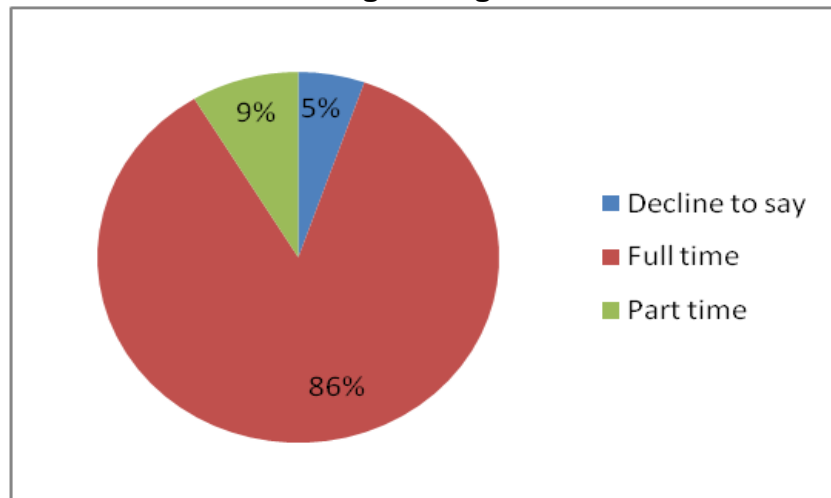
**Gender of people responding**



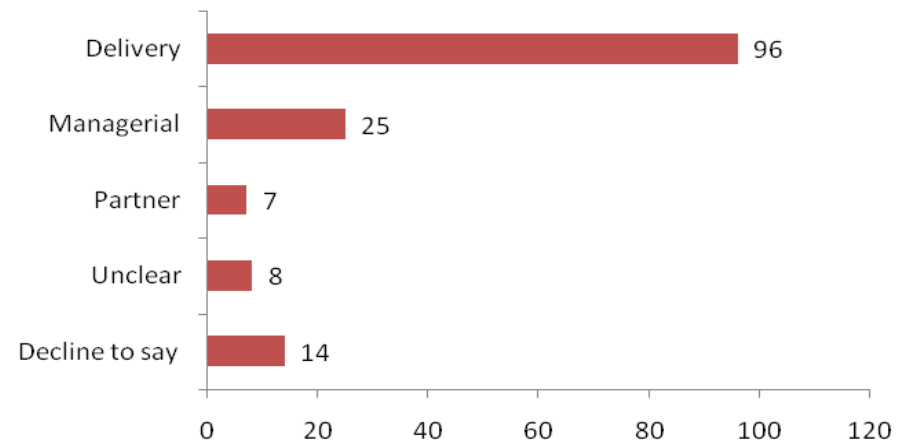
**Functional areas (numbers responding)**



**Contracted Working Arrangements**

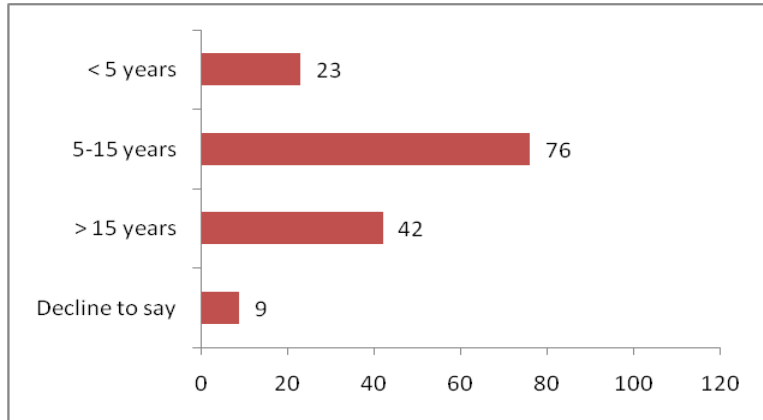


**Main role (numbers responding)**

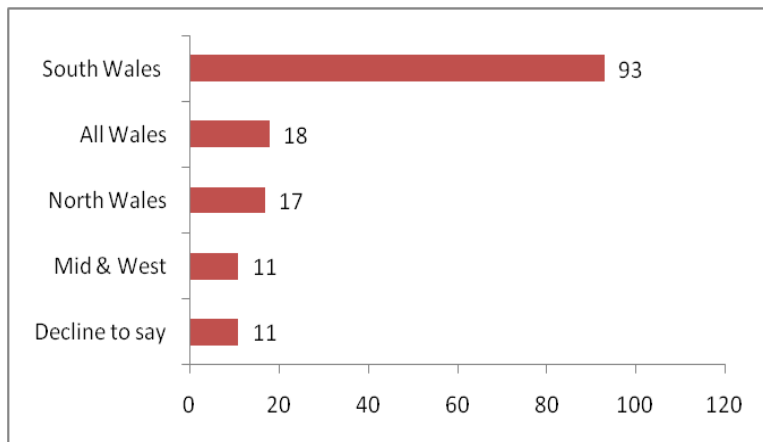


# Overview of responses to the survey

## Public sector audit work experience



## Geographical location within Wales



% of people declining to provide demographic data	Decline to say
Activity (Corporate, Finance, etc)	3.3%
Geography within Wales	7.3%
Main Focus of Role	9.3%
Gender	9.9%
Full/Part Time	5.3%
Experience in Public Sector Audit	6%

## Commentary on the overview of responses:

- No disparaging personal comments were made and consequently no narrative or other information has been deleted from the survey data set.
- The percentage response rate from financial auditors was lower than for corporate and performance staff.
- Response rates for staff in North and Mid and West Wales were lower than the rates for South Wales.
- A number of staff declined to provide demographic information. The highest proportion was for gender, with almost 10% declining to provide this information.
- We have assumed that staff have provided all other information accurately and honestly.



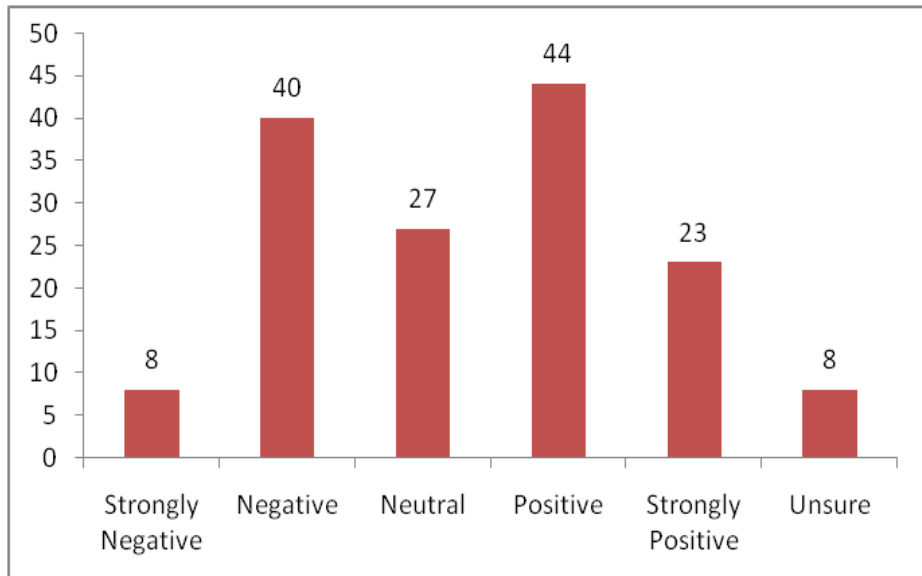
# 'Emotional Tone' of the WAO June/July 2010

'How it feels' in response to '*What is it like to work for the WAO?*'

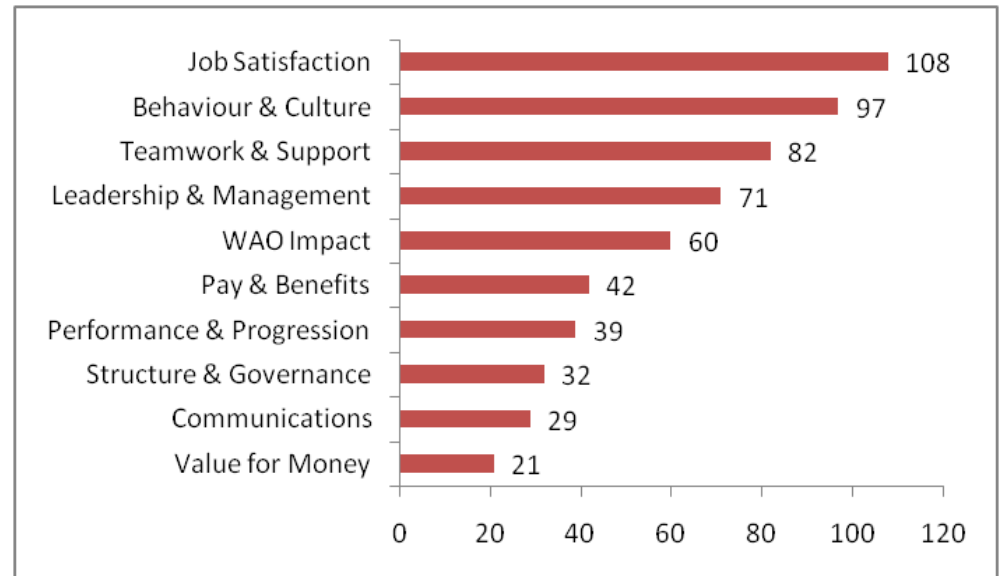
Emotional tone of the experience described (multiple options available)



Nature of the experience described



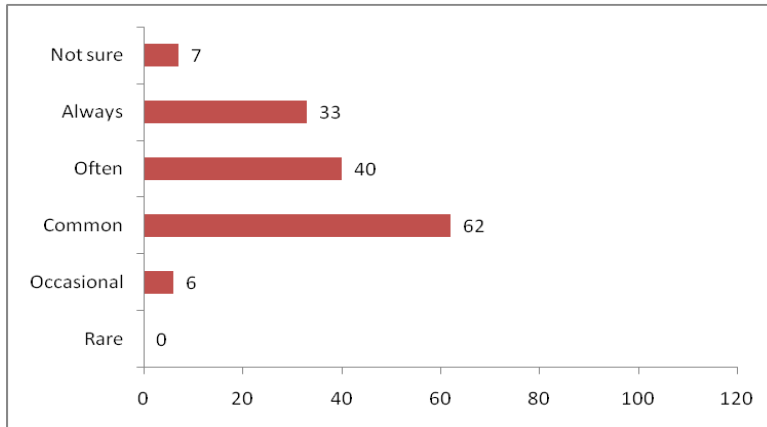
Main themes in the narrative (multiple options available)



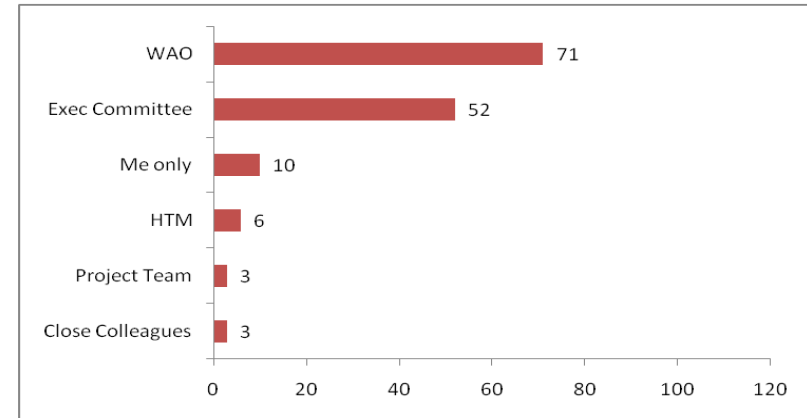
# 'Emotional Tone' of the WAO June/July 2010

## 'How it feels' in response to 'What is it like to work for the WAO?'

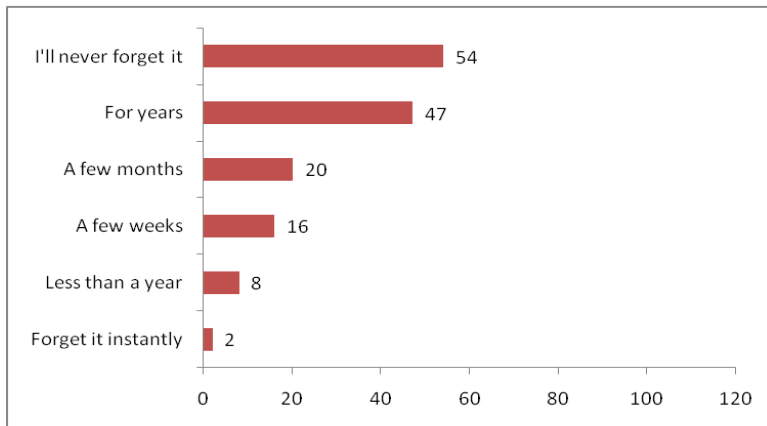
Frequency of the experience described



Who needs to pay attention or take action?



How long will you remember the experience?



### Commentary on 'Emotional Tone' responses:

- The nature of the experiences described were more positive than negative. There were over twice as many strongly positives as strongly negatives.
- However, the most commonly described feeling was 'frustrated' followed by 'hopeful', 'enthused' and 'glad'.
- Many of the experiences described occur frequently and will remain in people's memories for a long time, suggesting they are of great significance to people.
- For 'who needs to pay attention or take action?', most people think it should be 'higher body' such as Executive Committee or all of the WAO.





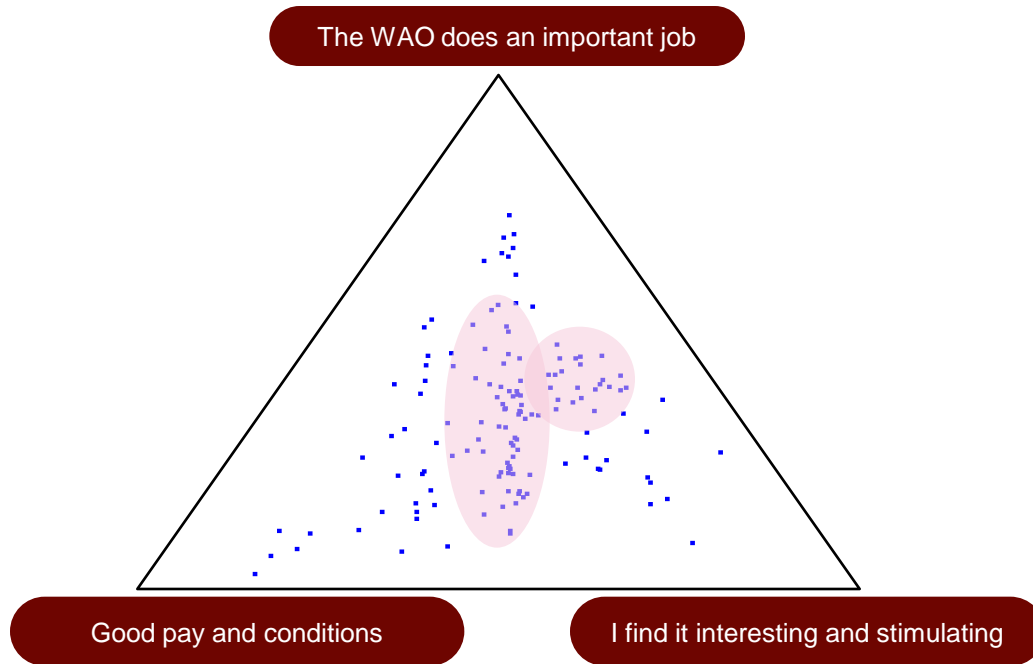
# Triangles

The following pages illustrate how staff answered the questions posed about working for the WAO





# Why do you work for the WAO?



## Guidance on how to read the triangles:

- The points represent the positions where people placed the dots in the survey.
- The 'patterns' formed by the points can be interpreted to help understand how people in the WAO feel about a particular question.
- Where obvious 'clusters' of points are evident, they have been highlighted.
- Different views, outliers, weak signals and emerging patterns can be identified.
- Through the use of the supporting SenseMaker software discussions to improve the situation can take place.

## Observations on why people work for the WAO:

- A main cluster towards the centre on the triangle suggests most people work for the WAO for a combination of all three reasons offered.
- The secondary cluster may represent people who are more motivated by the WAO mission and stimulating work than financial reward.



# What is it like working for the WAO?

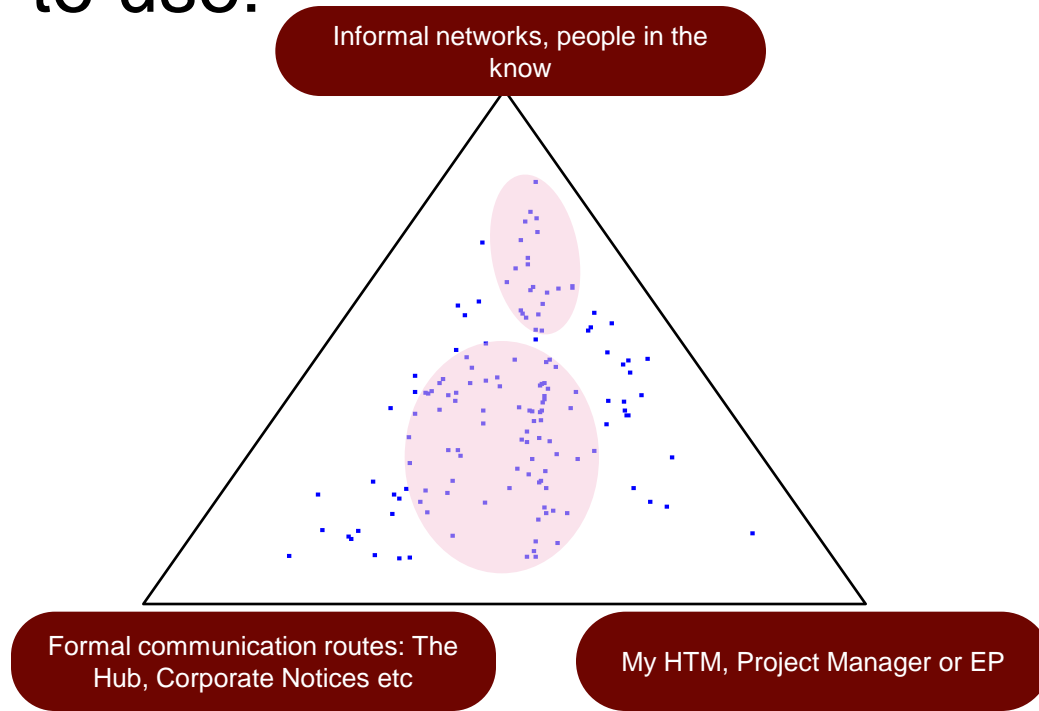


## Observations:

- The main cluster is located towards the bottom of the triangle, indicating a mix of job satisfaction and pride as the descriptions of what it is like working for the WAO
- The secondary cluster towards to top of the triangle indicates a group of people who have identified that they would like to leave the WAO. This represents approximately 15 people.



# To get hold of WAO corporate information that I need to use:

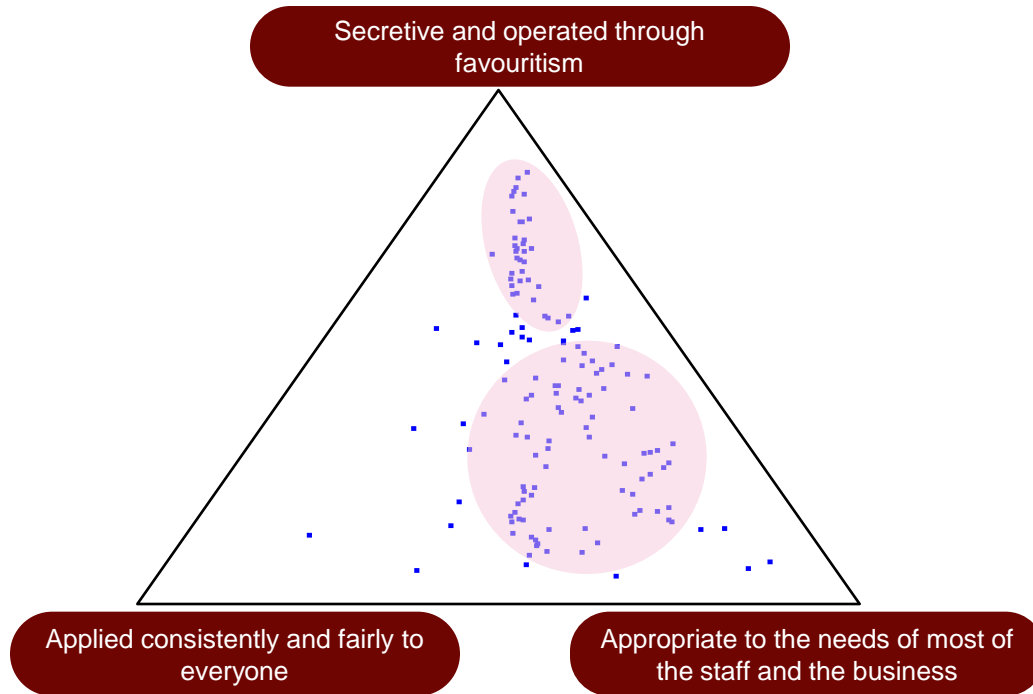


## Observations:

- The main cluster indicates that people use a combination of formal communication routes and face to face contact with HTMs and Managers.
- There is a secondary cluster where people mostly use informal networks in preference to formal arrangements.
- Both of these clusters are poorly defined relative to others observed.



# The work allocation process in the WAO is:

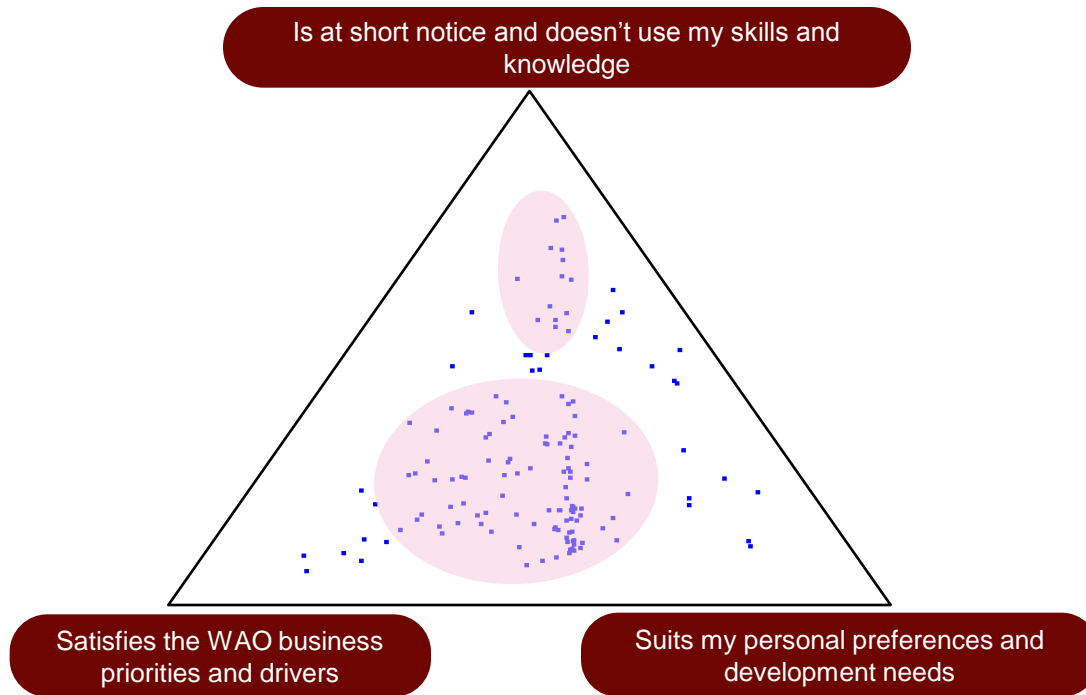


## Observations:

- The main cluster is within the area of work allocation being appropriate to the needs of most of the staff and the business.
- There is a secondary cluster in the area of people feeling that work allocation is operated secretly and through a process of favouritism.
- Overall the cluster are located away from the apex describing consistency and fairness.



# The work that I get allocated generally:

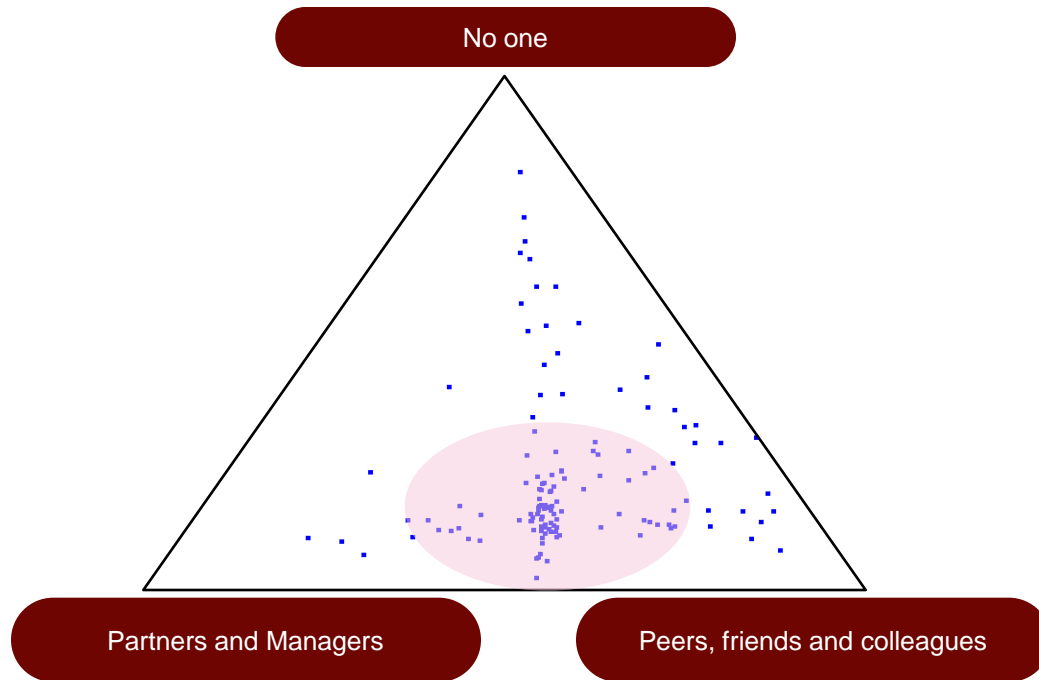


## Observations:

- The main cluster is located between the work people are allocated suiting both their personal requirements and the business needs. There is a pull towards WAO business priorities over personal preferences.
- There is a secondary cluster towards the area of work being allocated at short notice and not using the skills and knowledge of people.



# When it comes down to dealing with tough CLIENT related work issues I feel that I can trust:

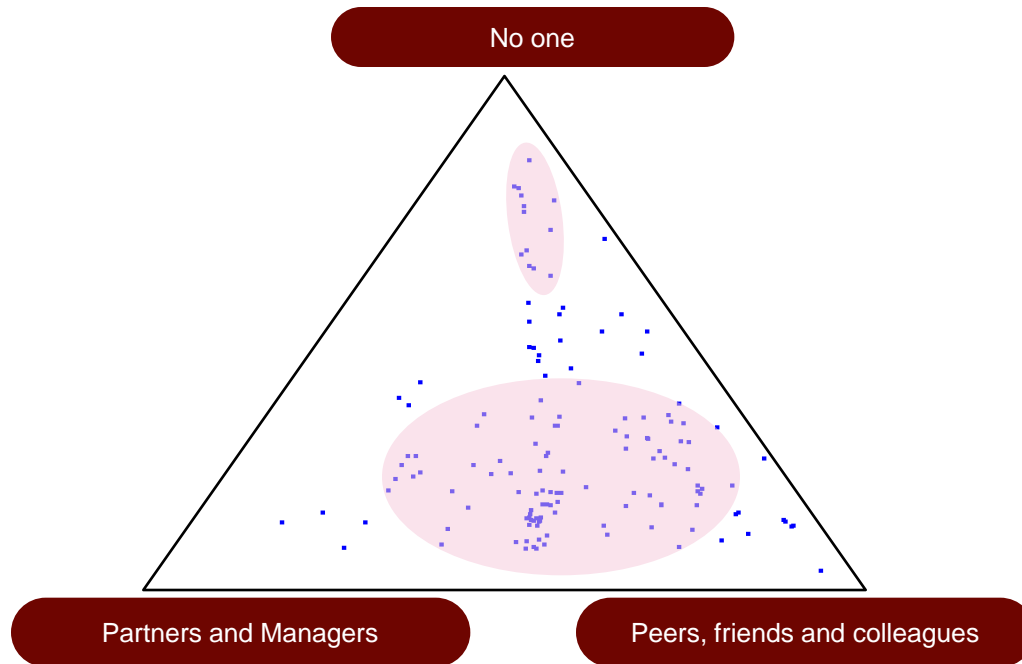


## Observations:

- There is a single cluster which crosses the area between trusting partners and managers and peers, friends and colleagues.
- The distribution is skewed slightly more towards the right of the triad, towards peers, friends and colleagues.
- There are a few outliers towards the trust 'No one' apex.



# When it comes down to dealing with tough COLLEAGUE related work issues I feel that I can trust:

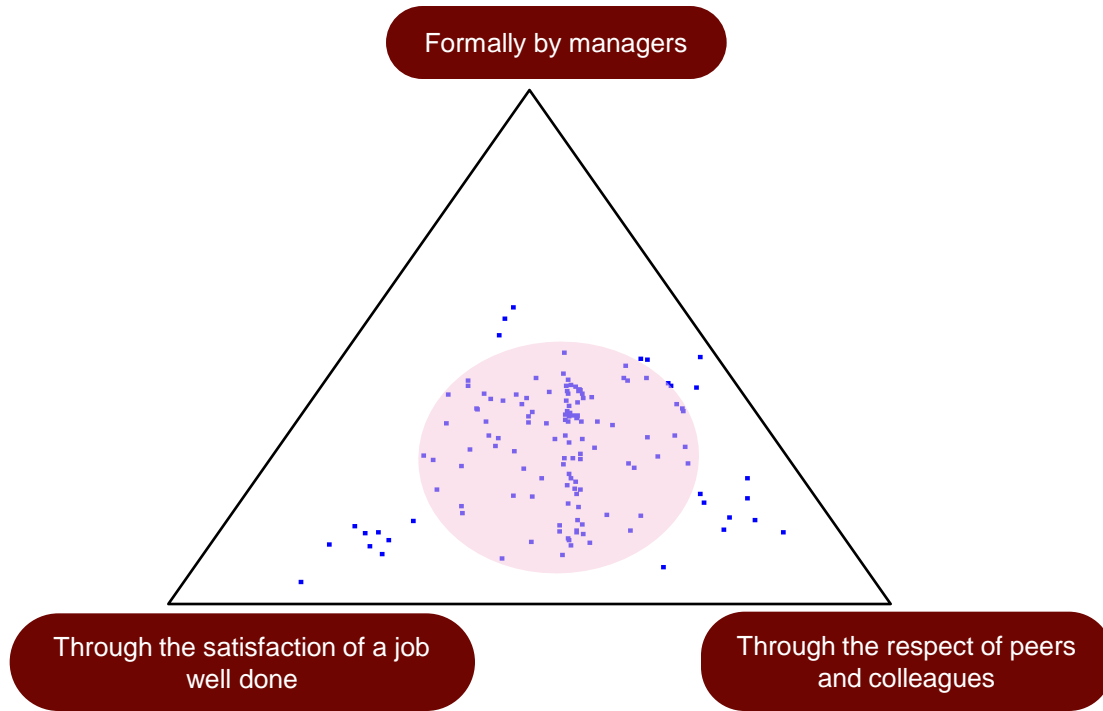


## Observations:

- There is a single large cluster which crosses the area between trusting partners and managers and peers, friends and colleagues.
- The distribution is skewed slightly more towards the right of the triad, towards, peers, friends and colleagues.
- There is a smaller cluster towards the trust 'No one' apex.



# The positive contribution I make is recognised:



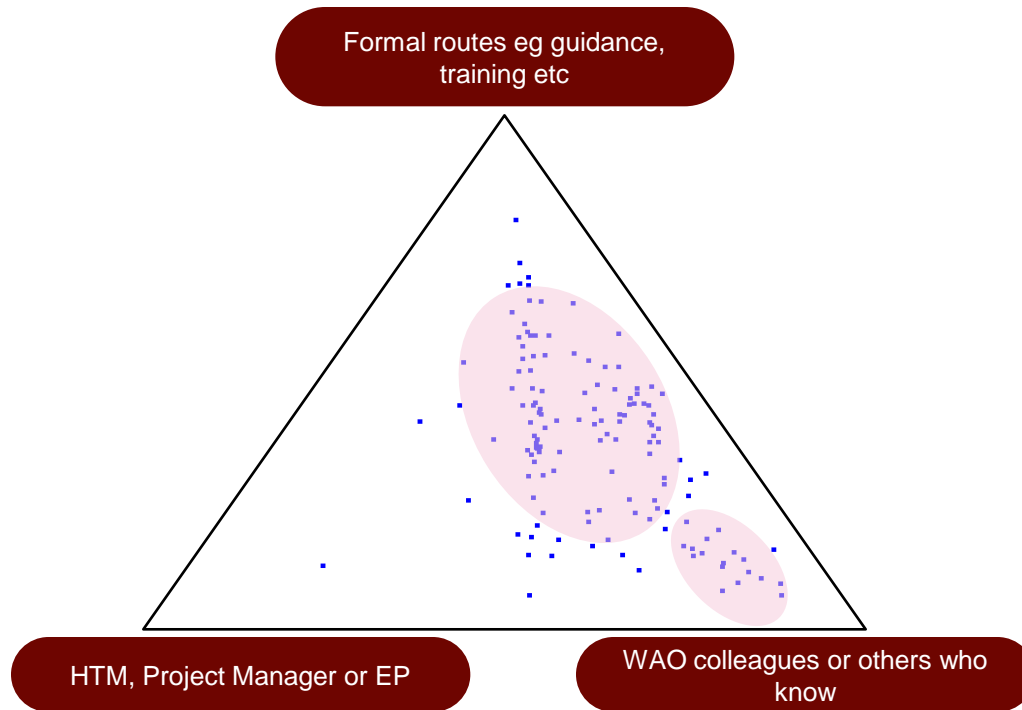
## Observations:

- The main cluster is located towards the bottom of the triangle crossing over between people receiving recognition from peers and colleagues and from a sense of personal satisfaction.
- There are few points located in the direction of formal recognition from managers.





# To quickly get hold of technical information to do my job, I rely upon:



## Observations:

- The main cluster is located between people obtaining technical information through formal training and guidance and through dialogue with colleagues.
- The cluster is skewed away from HTM, Project Manager or EP.
- There is a secondary cluster where people appear to rely mainly upon colleagues rather than more formal routes.



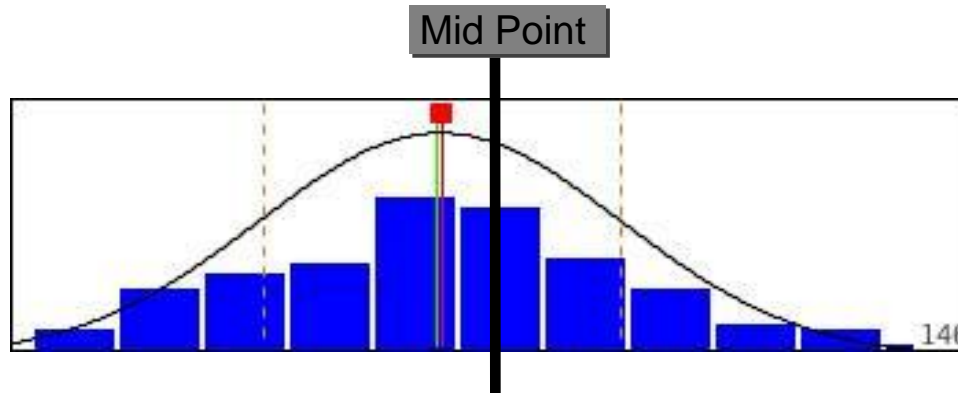
# Polarities

The following pages illustrate how Staff answered the questions posed about working for the WAO



# In your view, working arrangements at the WAO are generally...

Far too structured and controlled. There is no room for flexibility or individual thought



Anarchy. People do what they want when they choose

## How to read the polarity charts:

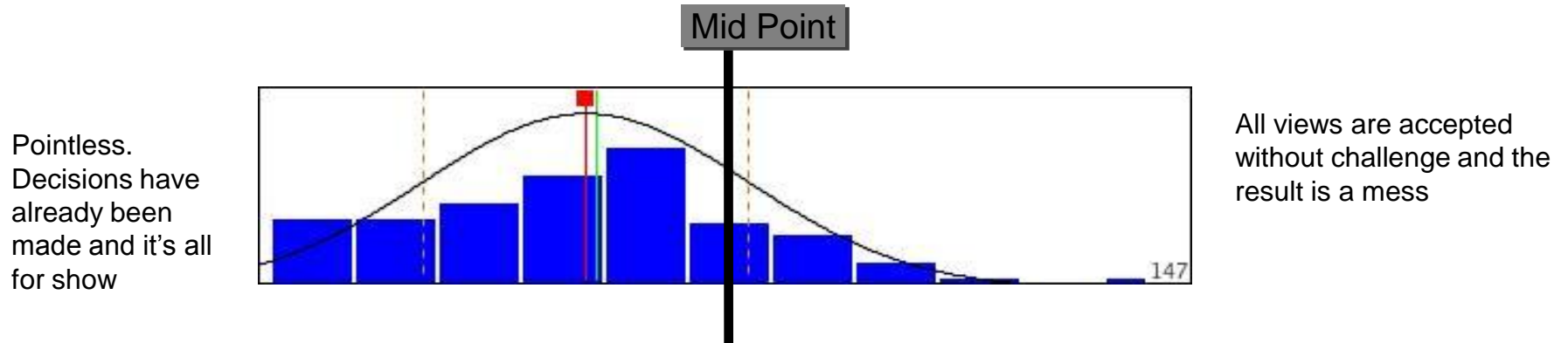
- The 'polarities' offered are detailed on the left and right of the graphic.
- The 'Mid Point' is labelled and the distribution of the responses are plotted with the mean illustrated as a red box.
- A shift towards either of the polarities, or an unexpected or uneven distribution may indicate issues which require closer examination.

## Observations:

- There is a slight pull to the left of the mid point, with the mean situated towards structure and control and away from anarchy.
- The distribution is fairly even around the mean.



# Corporate consultation over important things is...



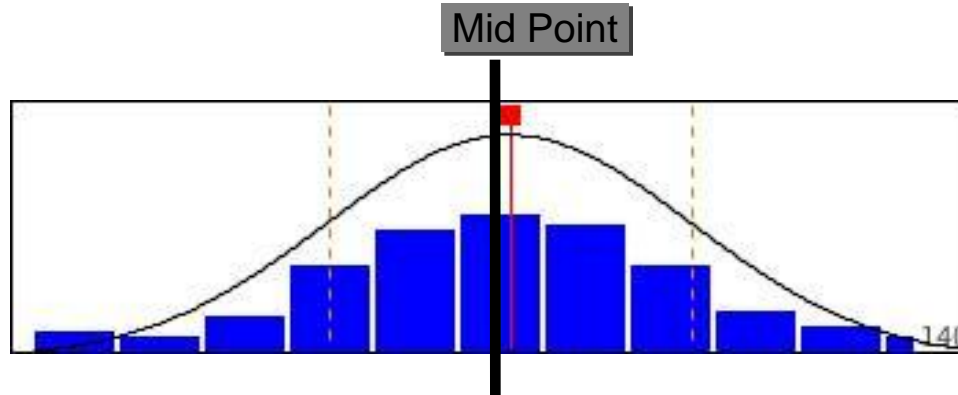
## Observations:

- The mean is significantly to the left of the midpoint, towards the polarity of consultation being pointless and decisions have already been made.
- There are virtually no records in the area of the other polarity where all views are accepted without challenge.
- The overall distribution is not even with significant numbers close to the extreme of the polarity around corporate consultations being pointless.



# Personal development is...

A free for all,  
where my needs  
are never met



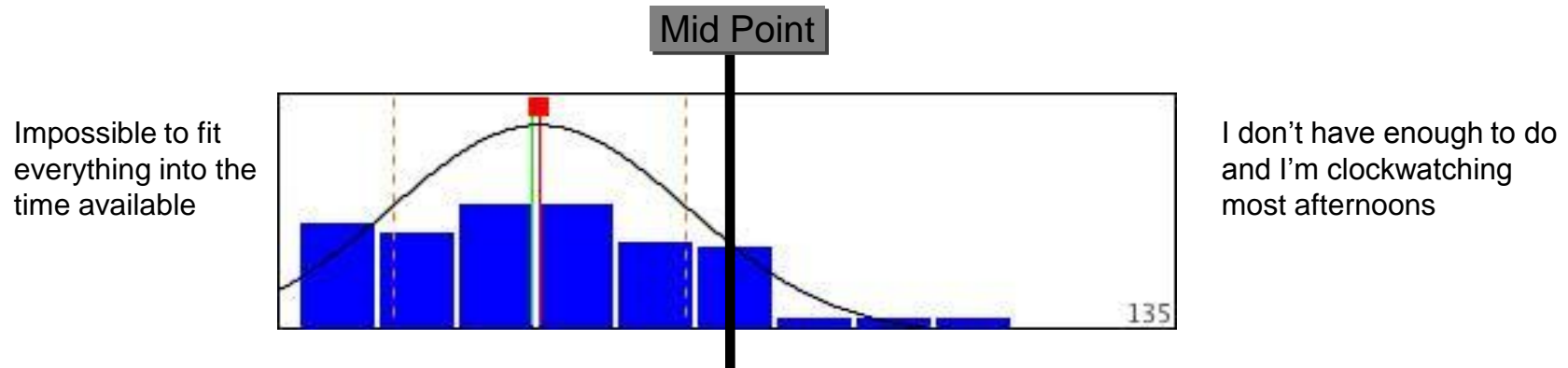
Like nursery school. You  
get sheep dipped whether  
you need it or not

## Observations:

- The mean is close to the mid point.
- The overall distribution fits the curve, although there are a small number of points near each of the polarities.



# Getting my job done is...

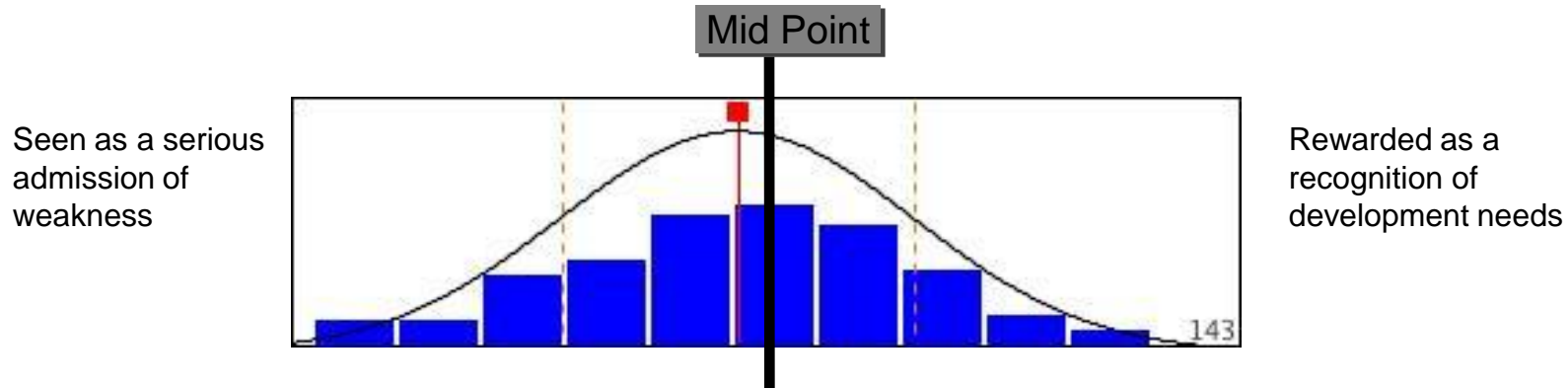


## Observations

- The mean is significantly left of the mid point, towards it being impossible for people to fit their workload into the time available.
- There are no data recorded towards the polarity of people 'clockwatching'.
- The overall distribution is very uneven. There are significant numbers close to the extreme of it being impossible to fit everything into the time available.



# Seeking help for a work problem is...

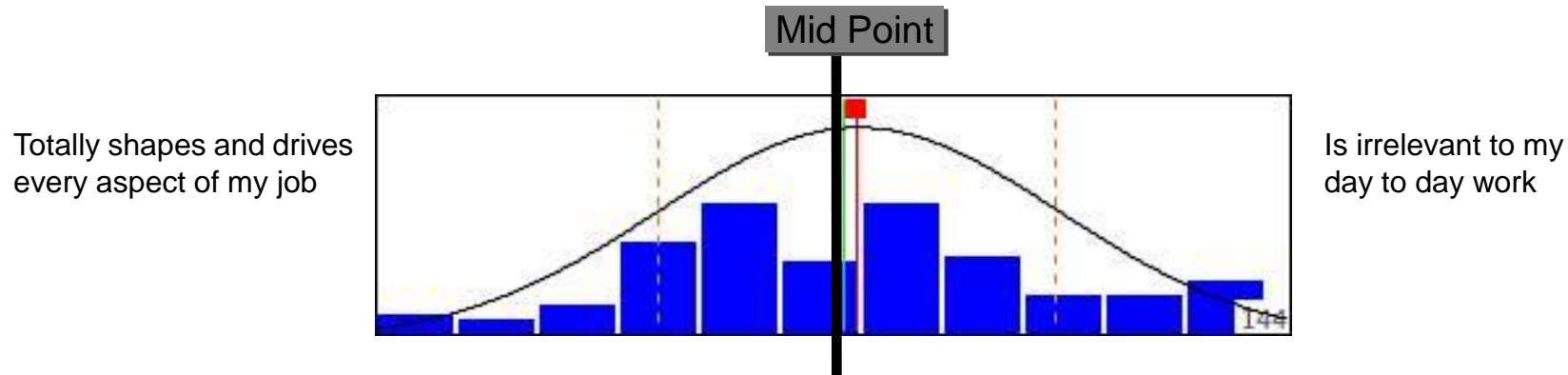


## Observations:

- The mean is slightly to the left of the mid point.
- The overall distribution fits the curve, although there are a small number of points near each of the polarities.



# The current strategic direction of the WAO...



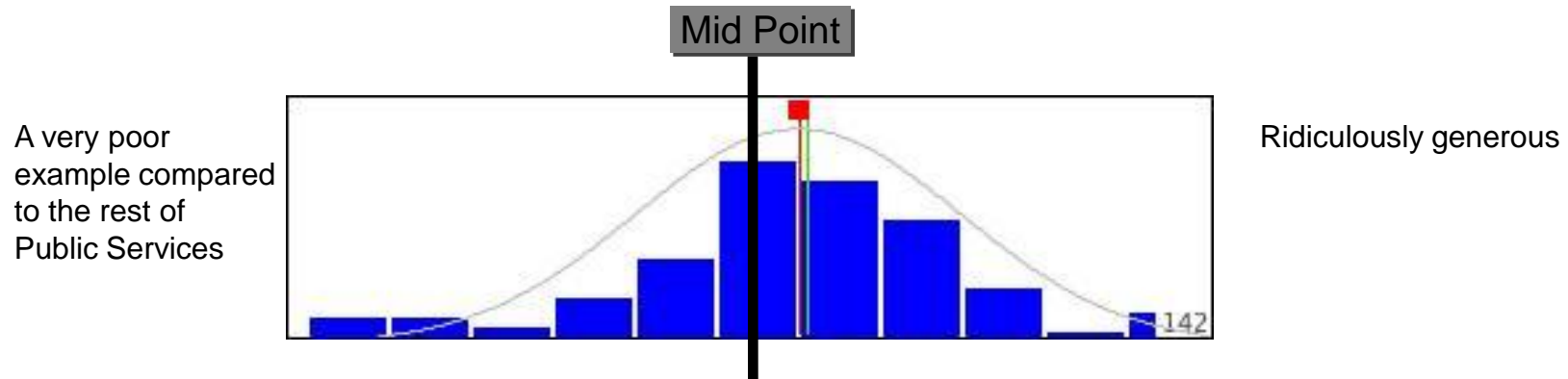
## Observations:

- The mean is very slightly to the right of the mid point.
- The overall distribution is uneven with peaks either side of the mid point which indicates a wide range of perspectives amongst staff.
- The contrasting views between those who are at either of the extremes are worth exploring.





# Terms (benefits) and working conditions at the WAO are...

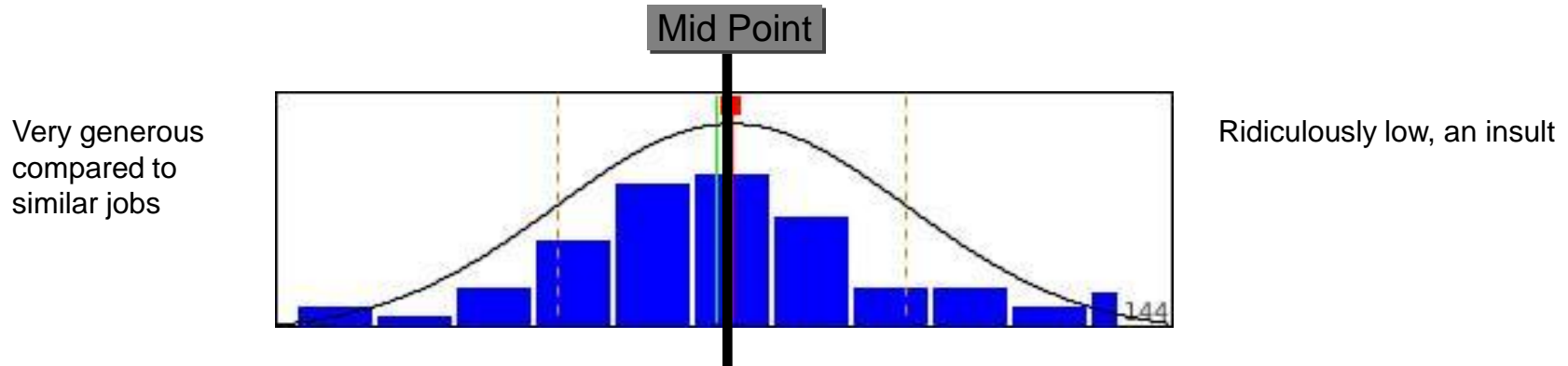


## Observations:

- The mean is slightly to the right of the mid point.
- The distribution is slightly uneven.
- The contrasting views between those who are at either of the extremes are worth exploring.



# Basic pay for the job I do is...

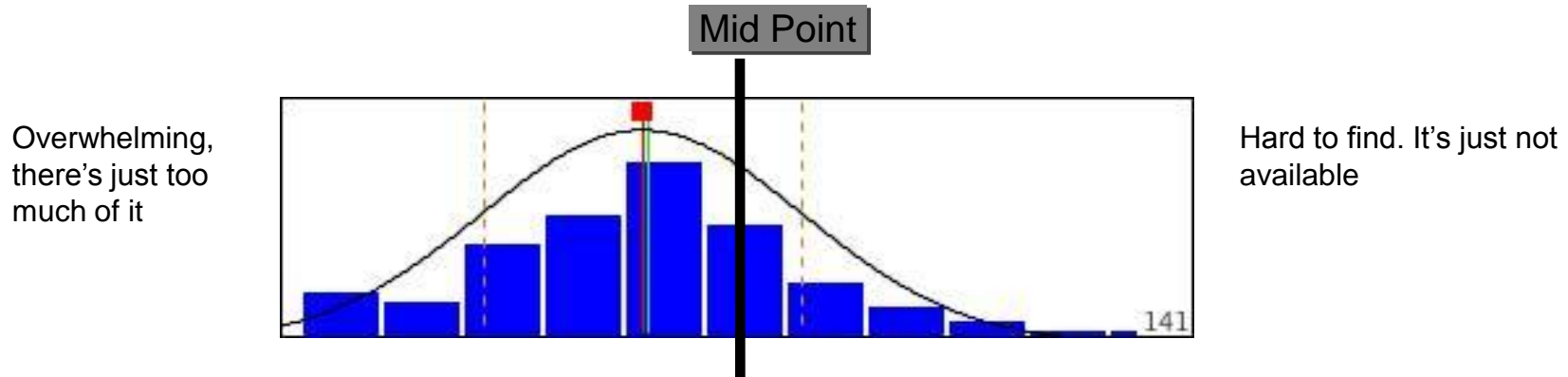


## Observations:

- The mean is at the mid point.
- The distribution is slightly uneven.
- The contrasting views between those who are at either of the extremes are worth exploring, for example those at the ridiculously low extreme compared to those at the very generous extreme.



# Corporate information about working is...



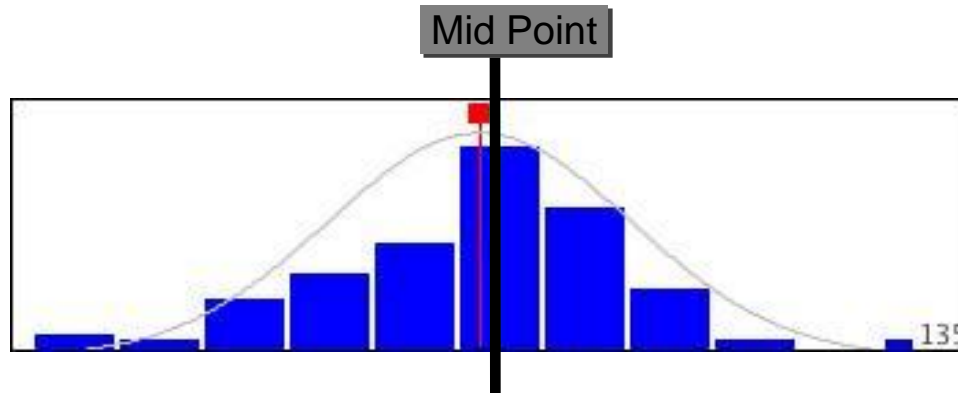
## Observations:

- The mean was located to the left of the ideal, towards information being overwhelming.
- The overall distribution is generally even with the exception of a group close to the overwhelming polarity. This grouping may have skewed the distribution towards the left hand side.



# My manager is...

Invisible. Never around when I really need them



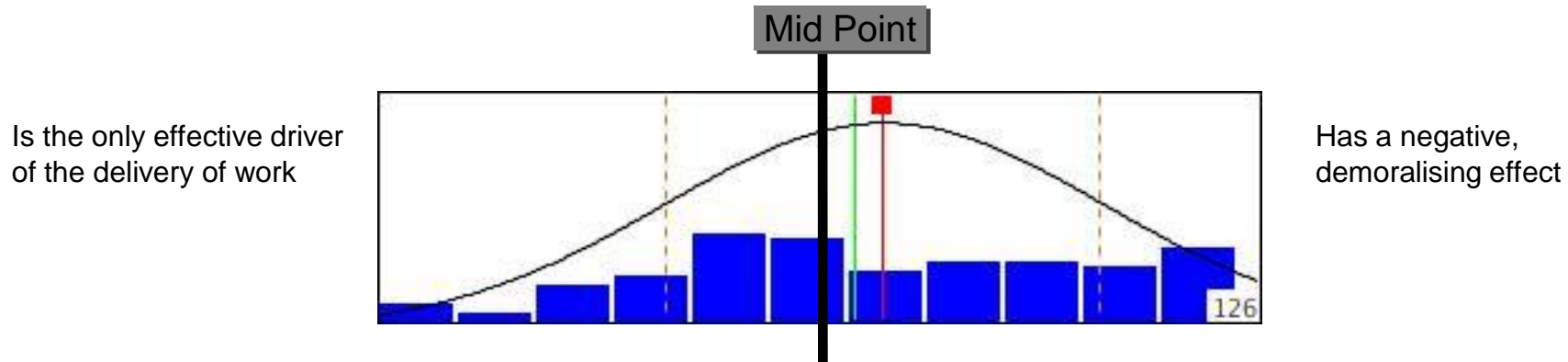
Everywhere, micromanaging and meddling in everything

## Observations:

- The mean is close to the mid point.
- The overall distribution is slightly uneven and there are a small number of points near each of the polarities.



# Time recording...

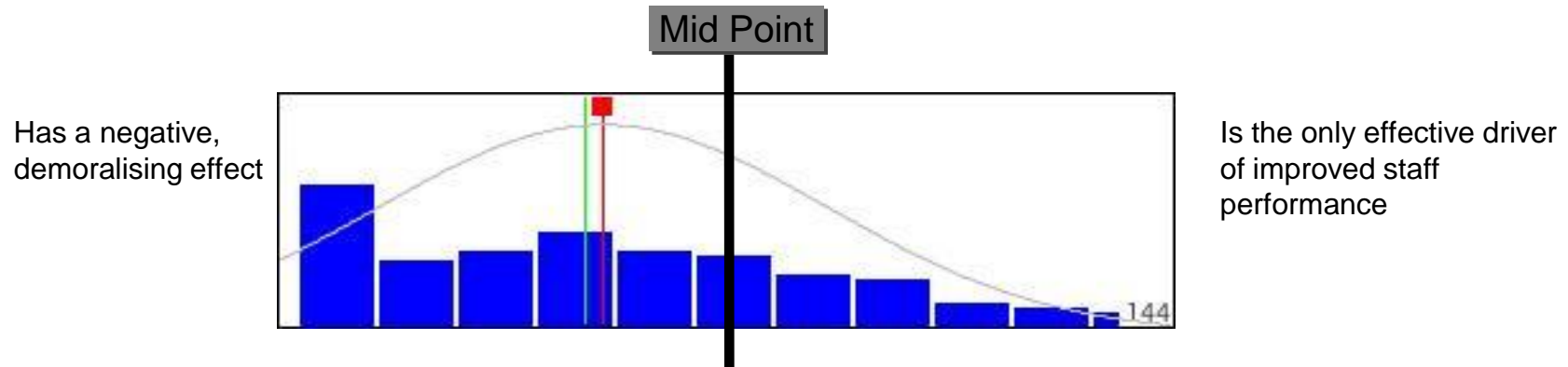


## Observations:

- The mean was to the right of the mid point towards time recording having a demoralising effect.
- The distribution is uneven and does not fit the curve.
- There is a cluster towards the left of the mid point.
- There is also a significant cluster towards the far right polarity which is much larger than the numbers at the far left polarity.



# The performance management (staff appraisal) system...

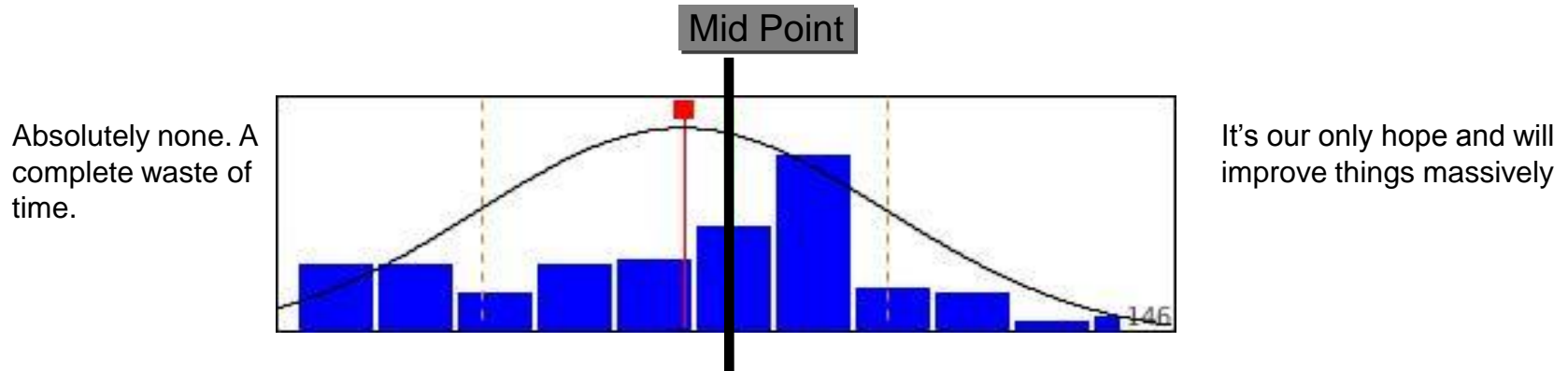


## Observations:

- The mean is significantly to the left of the mid point.
- The distribution is very uneven with a significant number very close to the left hand polarity, 'a negative and demoralising effect'.
- This skew towards the left hand polarity is worthy of further investigation.



# Will this survey make any difference to the staff in the WAO?



## Observations:

- The mean was to the left of the mid point.
- The distribution is uneven with a significant peak resulting in the skew to the right.
- There are large numbers close to the left hand polarity which do need to be considered.



# Ideas

The following pages provide a summary of the ideas provided by Staff.

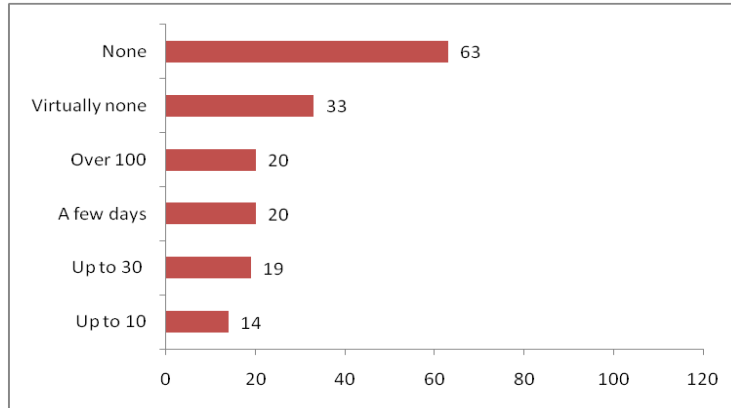
Over the coming months the ideas will be developed to help improve the WAO.



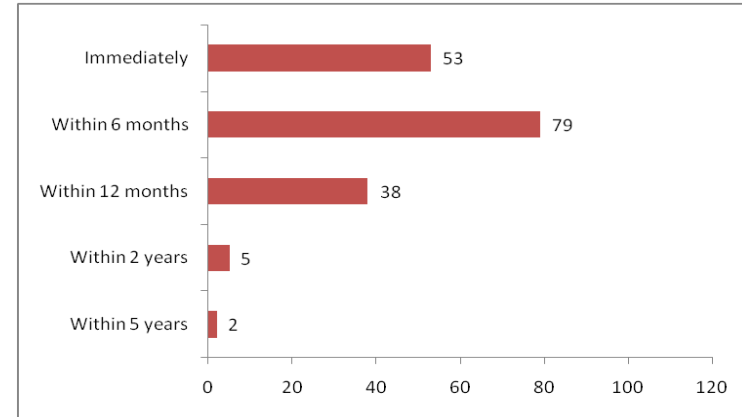


# Overview of the 185 ideas provided

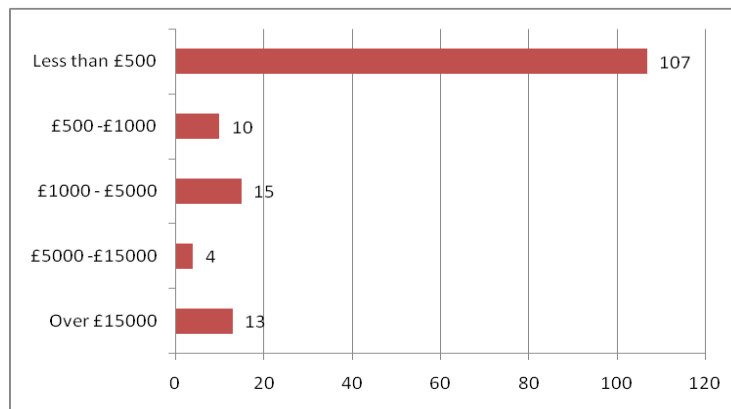
## Days required to implement the idea



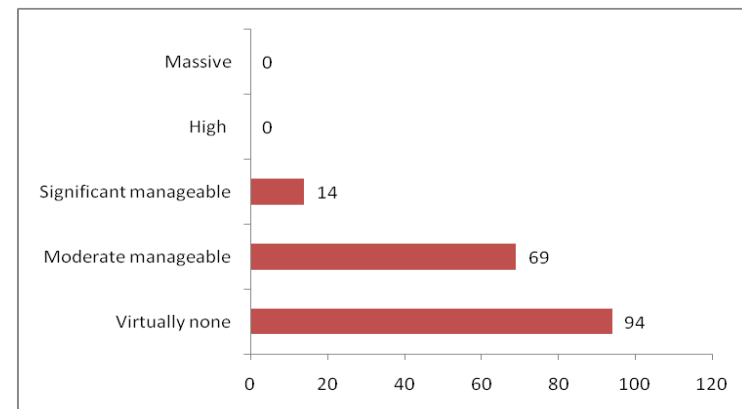
## Time required to implement the idea



## Cost of implementing the idea

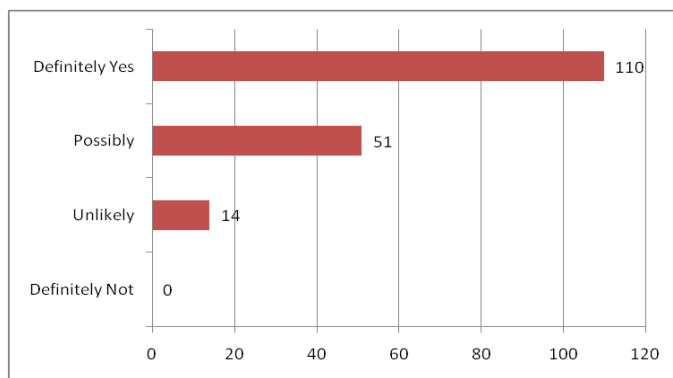


## Risks attached to implementing the idea

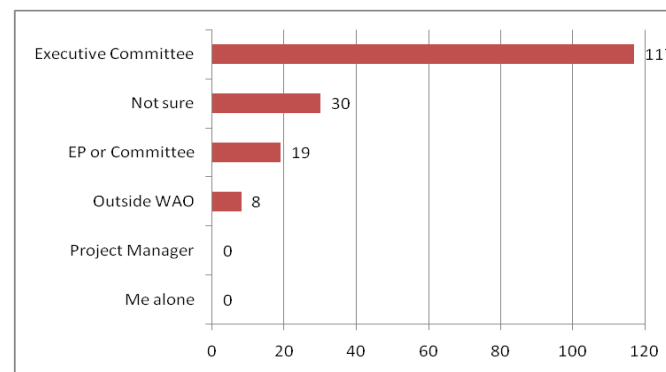


# Overview of the 185 ideas provided

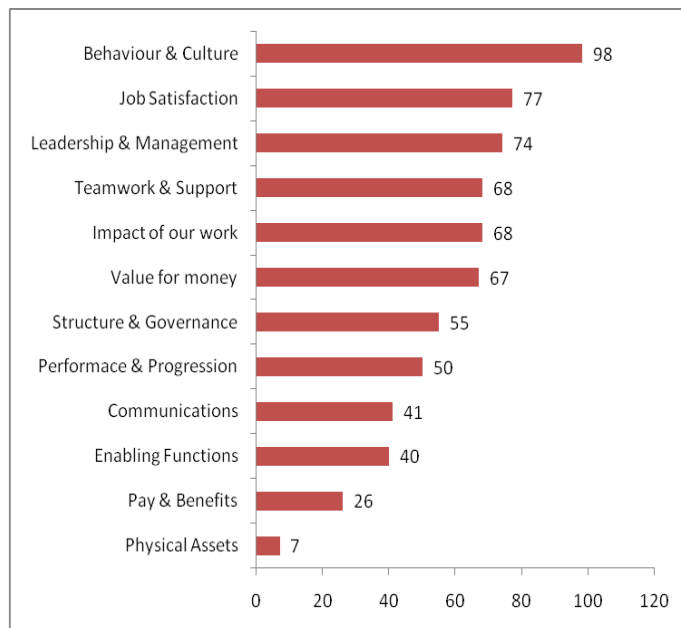
## Will the idea make the WAO more efficient?



## Approval required to implement the idea



## Areas of WAO activity where ideas applied



## Commentary on the ideas:

- A significant number of the ideas submitted were actually descriptions of a problem, rather than a specific explanation of how to solve the problem.
- Many ideas were categorised as low risk, low cost, and could be implemented rapidly. However people considered they needed senior level approval to be implemented.
- A number of the ideas provided, correspond with areas of interest generated in part 1 of the survey, for example the Performance Management System.
- Ideas to improve the efficiency of the WAO are being reviewed to assist with the ongoing work in this area.
- All ideas will be used as the starting point for the WAO Ideas Scheme which will be launched in September.

# Next Steps

This report will be followed by a note from the Change Programme Board detailing how things will be taken forward.

In September the WAO Ideas Scheme will be launched, using the 185 ideas generated in the staff survey as its' starting point.

The ideas that relate to specific areas will be dealt with by relevant groups or individuals who can help secure the improvement required.

Any comments or questions on the survey process and the use of SenseMaker™ or Cognitive Edge methods should be directed to the Survey Project Manager, Chris Bolton.

Any comments or questions on the results of the survey or this report can be directed to any of the Development Group members or the Change Programme Board.

Many thanks for taking the time to participate in the survey and read the report.

**WAO Staff Survey Development Group.**

14 July 2010

