

Customer Satisfaction Tracking Annual Report 2006

British Columbia Ferry Services Inc.

Presented to:

British Columbia Ferry Services Inc.
Victoria, British Columbia



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Executive Overview

Background

British Columbia Ferry Services Inc. (BC Ferries), conducts a Customer Satisfaction Tracking (CST) study each year. The CST study is designed to monitor customer satisfaction with various aspects of service on BC Ferries in order to determine areas that passengers believe are performing well and areas that require improvement. This study is part of a regular program of ongoing research conducted each year by BC Ferries.

The following report provides annual customer satisfaction results for the following:

- Overall ferry service
- Service prior to arriving at the terminal
- Service at the ferry terminal
- Service onboard the ferry
- Service pertaining to loading/unloading
- Overall safety of operations, and
- Value for money of fares paid

For each of the more than sixty attributes, the scores for the last 4 years is shown on the graphs, to allow for easy comparison.

In addition to graphs showing the overall scores, the Appendix in this report includes detailed tables by route showing satisfaction scores for each of the 69 service attributes for 2006. The Appendix also includes detailed satisfaction scores for each of the 28 terminal-related attributes, shown separately for each of the main terminals.

Methodology

The research involves a two-phased approach. First a random sample of passengers are intercepted onboard to collect key data including frequency of travel on BC Ferries, purpose of trip, area of residence, origin/destination, and standard demographic questions. Immediately following this screener, passengers are given a longer follow-up survey to complete *after* they disembark and leave the terminal area.

Interviews are distributed across 8 routes in total, both larger and smaller, during three different time periods: peak, shoulder and low season. In 2006, a total of 14,148 screeners were completed and 5,625 questionnaires returned. A more detailed explanation of the research design is included in the *Research Methodology* section, in the Appendix of this report.

Findings

Customers were asked to rate their satisfaction with 69 different aspects of the services they received from BC Ferries on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied'.

Satisfaction with BC Ferries Overall

A total of 89% of passengers in 2006 reported to be satisfied overall with their experience travelling on BC Ferries, slightly higher than the satisfaction level measured in 2005 (86%). The increase is most notable among those 'very satisfied' increasing from 30% a year ago to a current level of 36%, the highest top box score achieved to date in a year end measure.

Satisfaction Before Arriving at Terminal

- Ratings of BC Ferries web site and highway signage are similar to levels attained in 2005.
- Passengers making phone contact with BC Ferries continue to be less complimentary of the *usefulness of BC Ferries phone service*, and specifically with *ease of using the automated system*, with ratings unchanged from a year ago.

Satisfaction at the Terminal

- Overall satisfaction levels with the terminal experience before boarding are significantly higher than measured a year ago (84% satisfied in contrast to 78% in 2005). All terminals have increased satisfaction levels with ratings improving most at the Departure Bay and Langdale terminals.
- Passengers who did not get on their desired sailing are understandably less satisfied with their terminal experience, as are those travelling for business purposes, and frequent travellers (who tend to overlap); however, ratings have strengthened among all these segments.
- In terms of demographic segments, satisfaction levels have increased among virtually all segments except among younger passengers (under 35 years) who continue to be slightly more critical about their experience at the terminal than their older counterparts (age 35 or older)
- Satisfaction levels continue to be high with all aspects of the ticket purchase process with average ratings more or less similar to a year ago but with some significant increases in the percentage of those who are 'very satisfied'.

- Satisfaction levels have improved with food and beverage services at all terminals, particularly with the *food/beverages offered*, and to a lesser extent with *value for money*.
- Similarly, satisfaction has also increased with the gift shop/news stand services at the terminals, in terms of both *variety/selection* and *value for money*. Satisfaction has also increased with the outdoor market areas.
- Overall, there have been no dramatic changes in satisfaction levels with foot passenger services with the exception that ratings for *parking value for money* are significantly higher compared to a year ago (39% satisfied compared to 30% in 2005).
- Satisfaction levels with other terminal services are quite consistent with past measures, but with some improvements in ratings of *availability* and *cleanliness of washrooms, overall look and décor inside the terminal and outside appearance of terminal*.

Satisfaction Onboard

- Onboard satisfaction levels have increased slightly among all passenger segments and demographic groups except among those 18-34 years of age and Gulf Island residents.

[**NOTE:** For route-specific results that follow, please refer to page 6 for all the route number codes]

- A total of 89% of passengers in 2006 were satisfied with their overall experience onboard, slightly higher than the 2005 level (86%) but note that the top box score has increased from 21% to 25% over the year, the highest level achieved to date. Ratings have increased on all major routes.
- Satisfaction levels with all aspects of the onboard gift shop/news stand have strengthened over the past year.
- Satisfaction with the seating (cleanliness, availability and comfort) are higher in all three main areas of food services. Ratings have been relatively static on all other attributes in each food service area over the past year, but note that in general, satisfaction with the Pacific Buffet has improved more than has satisfaction with the cafeteria or snack bar.
- Satisfaction levels with the *cleanliness of washrooms* have improved with 79% satisfied in 2006, in contrast to 71% in 2005.

- Travellers continue to be increasingly satisfied with the *comfort* and *cleanliness* of indoor lounge seating with a slight increase in the top box score ('very satisfied') for comfort and cleanliness.
- There have been minor improvements in ratings from 2005 on virtually all other onboard facilities and services.

Satisfaction with Sailing Schedules

- Ratings have been improving consistently with respect to sailing schedule attributes, with particular improvement over the past year of *on-time departures* (79% now satisfied compared to 73% in 2005). On-time departure ratings are notably higher on Routes 2, 3, 30, 4, 19 and 5/9.

Satisfaction with Safety

- Perceptions of the *safety of the ferry operations* continue to be stable and high, with the current satisfaction level at 85%.

Satisfaction with Overall Value

- Satisfaction levels continue to be low with perceived *value for money of the fares*, with no change in ratings.

Key Conclusions

Passenger satisfaction levels increased in 2006 overall, and in the following specific areas:

- Food/beverage services, gift shop/ news stand and outdoor market areas at terminals
- Availability and cleanliness of terminal washrooms
- Overall look and décor inside the terminal
- Outside appearance of terminal
- Onboard gift shop/ news stand
- Seating area of onboard food/beverage services
- Cleanliness of onboard washrooms
- On-time departures

BC Ferries also continues to perform well for:

- Staff in all areas
- Usefulness of the Web site
- Ease of using on-line reservations
- Highway signage
- Availability of terminal and onboard washrooms
- Outside decks
- Availability of tourist and travel info
- Procedures for loading and unloading
- Earliest ferry early enough
- Safety of ferry operations and loading/unloading

Areas of opportunity to enhance the customer experience continue to include:

Pre-terminal

- Usefulness of BC Ferries phone service
- Ease of using automated phone system

Terminal

- Value for money of food/beverages, merchandise and outdoor market
- Clarity of public address system
- Usefulness of TV screens
- Parking value for money

Onboard

- Ease of moving inside gift shop/ news stand
- Value for money of gift shop/ news stand/ food services
- Video arcade

Schedules

- Frequent enough
- Latest ferry late enough
- Ability to connect

Overall

- Value for money of fares

Detailed Findings

The following section shows the detailed findings from the study. It graphically displays the satisfaction scores for each of the sixty-nine service attributes, showing both the average satisfaction score out of 5 as well as the percentage for each level of satisfaction; that is, Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Very Satisfied. The ratings are shown for all surveyed BC Ferry routes combined and, where appropriate, the route-by-route scores are shown as well.

NOTE: When route numbers are shown in the graphs, please refer to the following table that explains each route number.

Ferry Routes Included in Customer Satisfaction Survey - 2006	
Route No.	Description of Route
Route 1	Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay
Route 2	Horseshoe Bay-Departure Bay
Route 3	Horseshoe Bay-Langdale
Route 30	Tsawwassen-Duke Point
Route 4	Swartz Bay-Fulford Harbour, Salt Spring Island
Route 19	Departure Bay-Descanso Bay, Gabriola Island
Route 5/9	Southern Gulf Islands (from Swartz Bay/from Tsawwassen)
Route 23	Campbell River-Quathiaski Cove, Quadra Island

Overall Satisfaction with BC Ferries

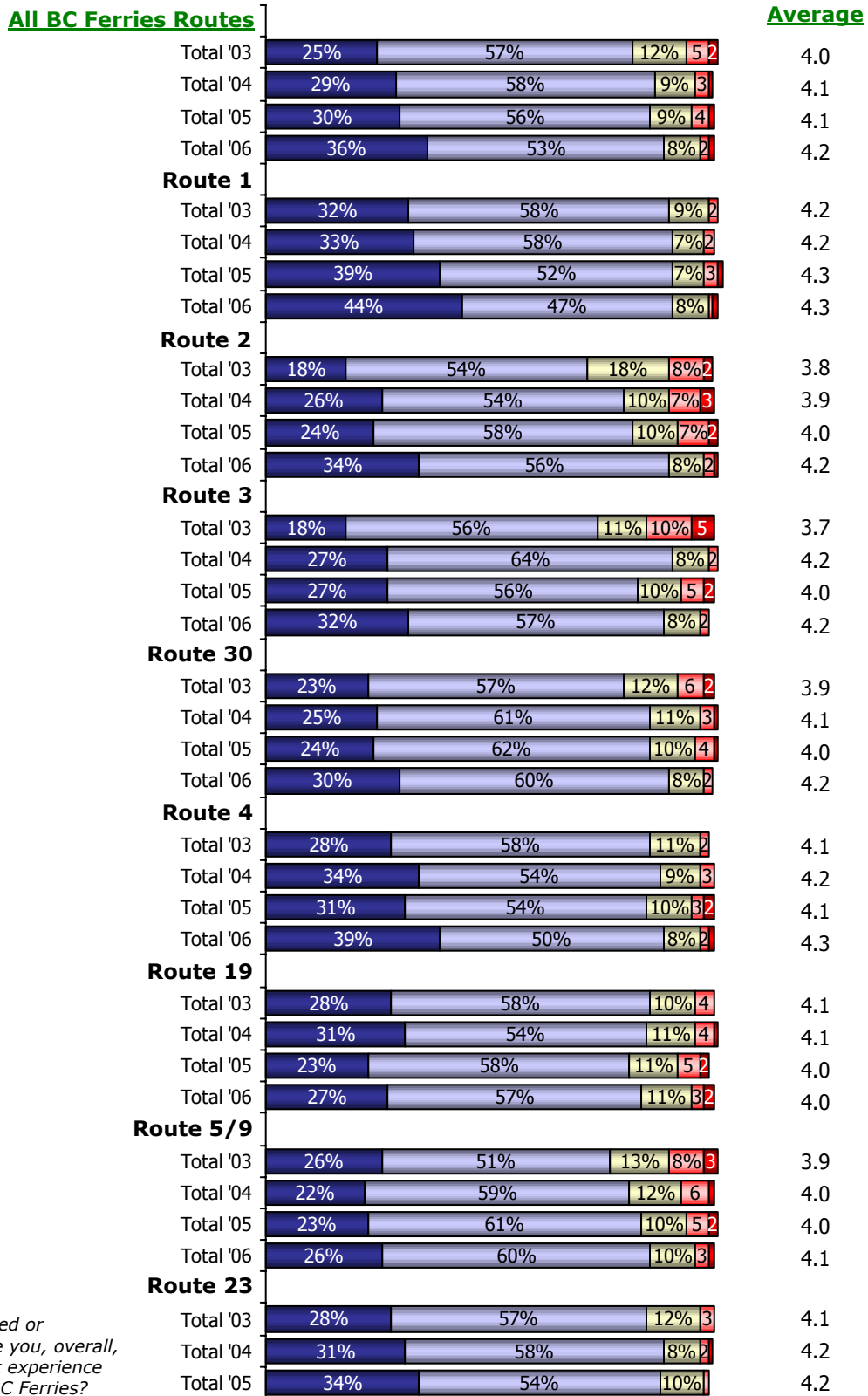
A total of 89% of passengers in 2006 reported to be satisfied overall with their experience travelling on BC Ferries, slightly higher than the satisfaction level measured in 2005 (86%). The increase is most notable among those 'very satisfied' increasing from 30% a year ago to a current level of 36%, the highest top box score achieved to date in a year end measure. Further note that the results are quite consistent by season.

[NOTE: Refer to page 6 for route number codes]

On a five-point scale where '1' means 'very dissatisfied' and '5' means 'very satisfied' an average score of 4.2 is achieved, an increase from 4.1 in 2004 and 2005 and from 4.0 in earlier years.

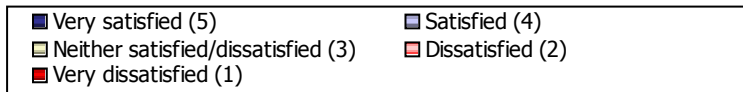
Satisfaction levels have strengthened on all major routes as well as on minor Route 4. Levels are stable on the remaining minor routes.

Overall Satisfaction Level with Recent Experience Travelling with BC Ferries



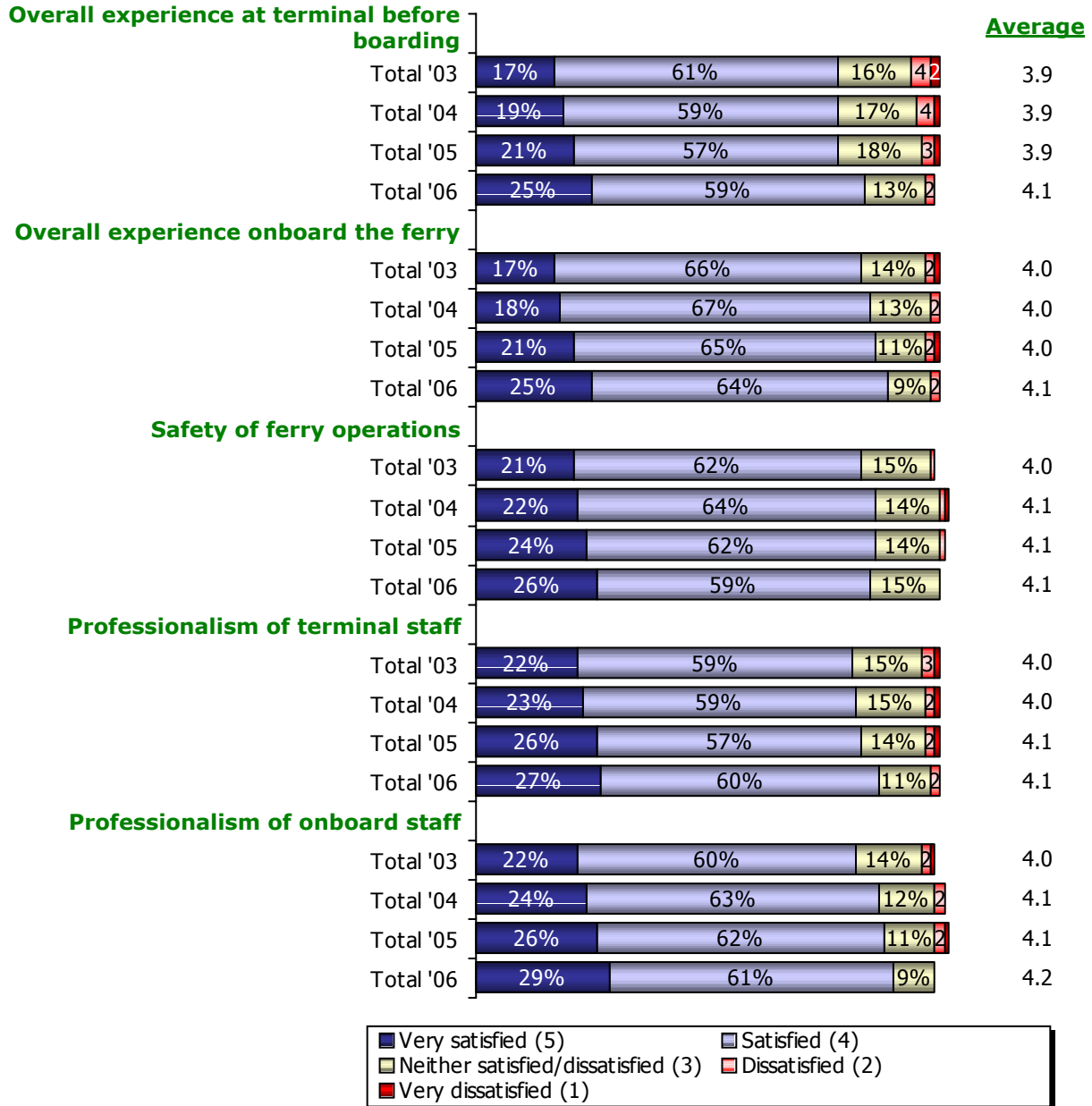
Q.1) How satisfied or dissatisfied were you, overall, with your recent experience travelling with BC Ferries?

Note: Route 23 not surveyed in 2006.



The following chart summarizes the results from overall measures of each main point of contact and specifically with BC Ferries staff. As a whole, performance ratings have steadily improved on most key measures. *Safety of ferry operations* remains high, at 4.1 out of 5, and has stayed at that high level over the past three years.

Summary of Main Satisfaction Scores



Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

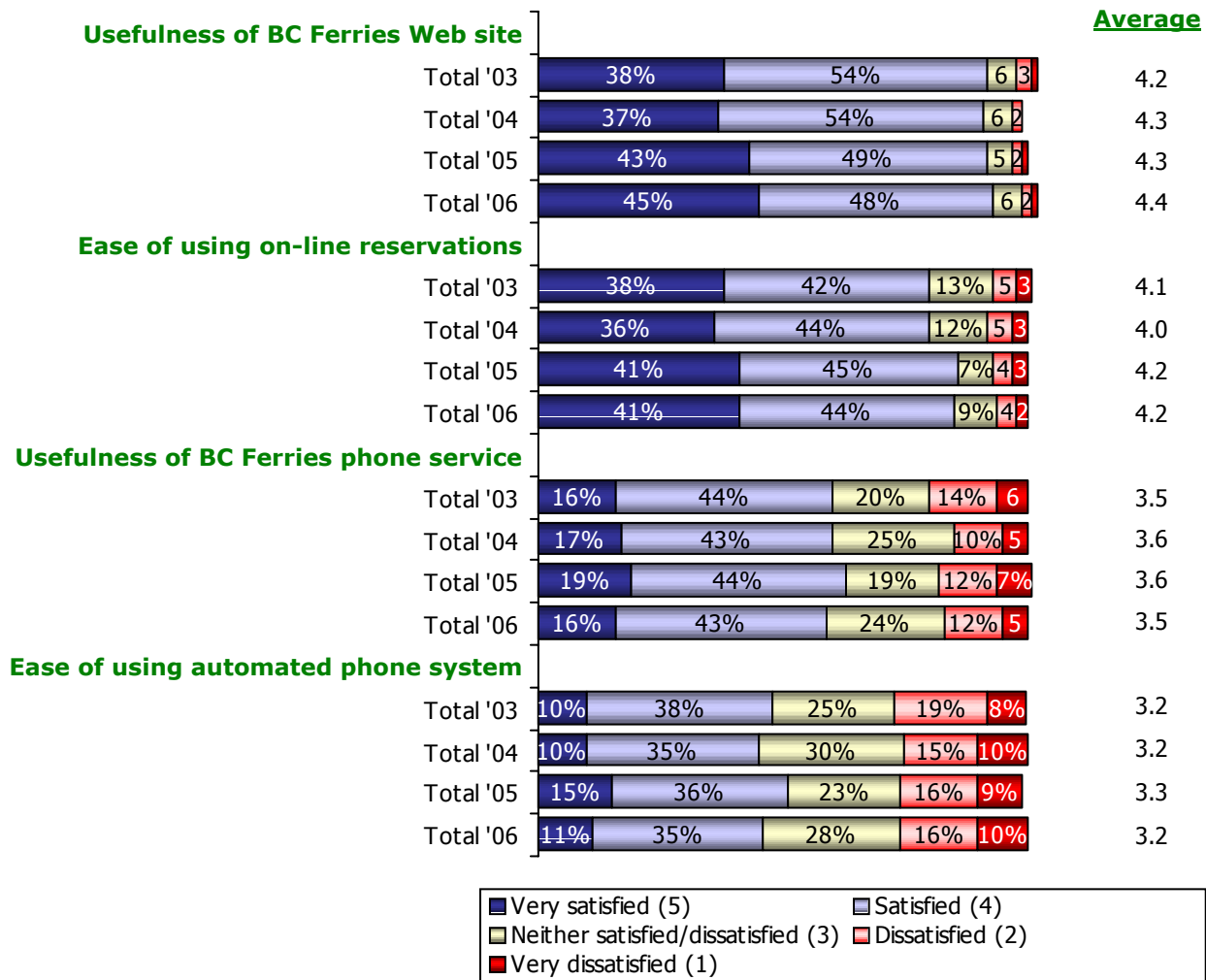
Before Arriving at Terminal

Web site and Phone Contact

Ratings of BC Ferries Web site are similar to levels obtained in 2005.

Passengers making phone contact with BC Ferries continue to be less complimentary of the *usefulness of BC Ferries phone service*, and specifically with *ease of using the automated system*, with ratings unchanged from a year ago.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Web site* and Phone Contact**



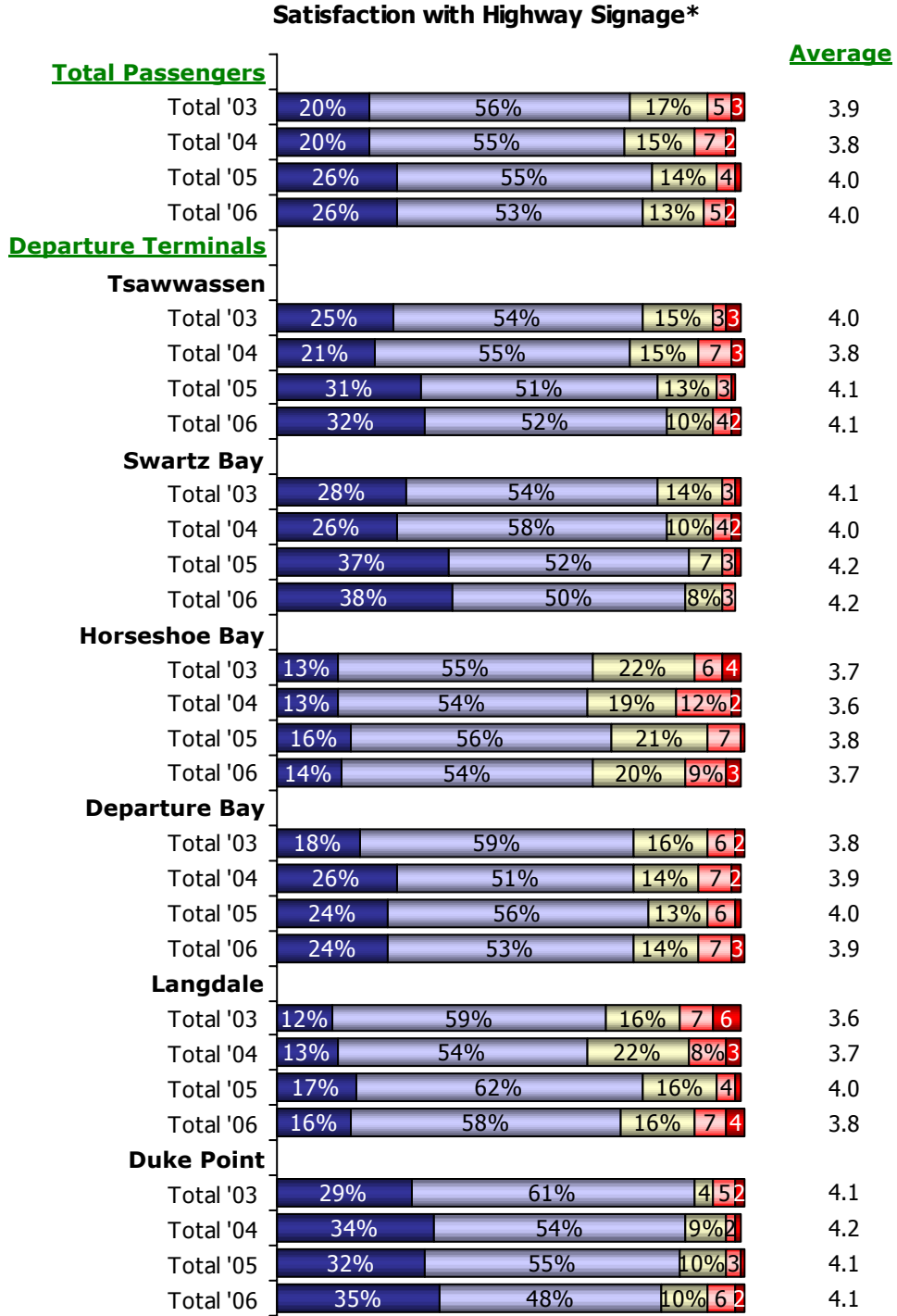
Q.2) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* 60% usage Web site, 34% for on-line reservations

** 30% usage phone service, 24% for automated system

Highway Signage

Satisfaction levels with highway signage have been stable.



Q.2) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

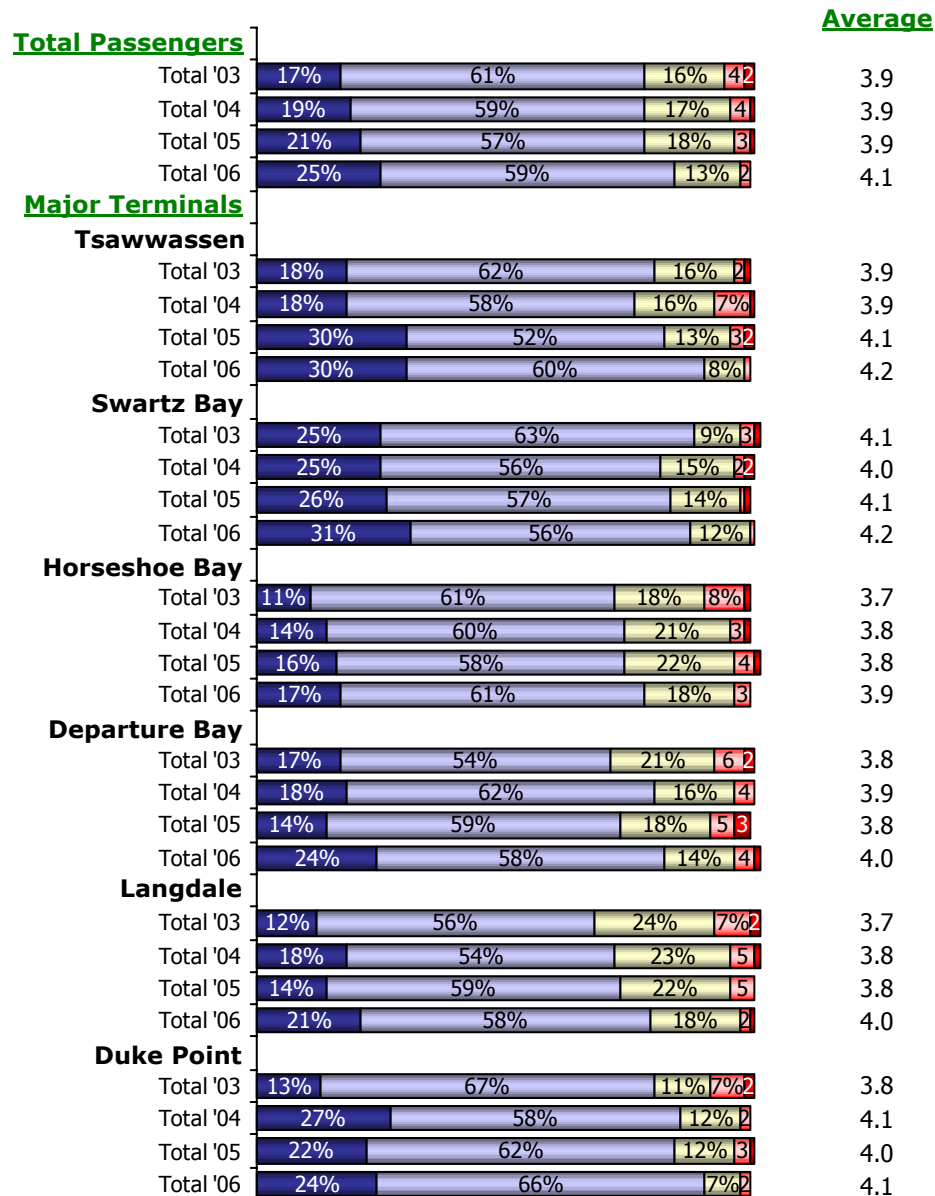
* Usage: 77%

At the Terminal

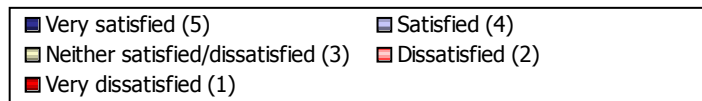
Overall Experience at the Terminal

Overall satisfaction levels with experience at the terminal before boarding are significantly higher than measured a year ago (84% satisfied in contrast to 78% in 2005). All terminals have increased satisfaction levels with ratings improving most at the Departure Bay and Langdale terminals.

Overall Satisfaction with Experience at the Terminal Before Boarding



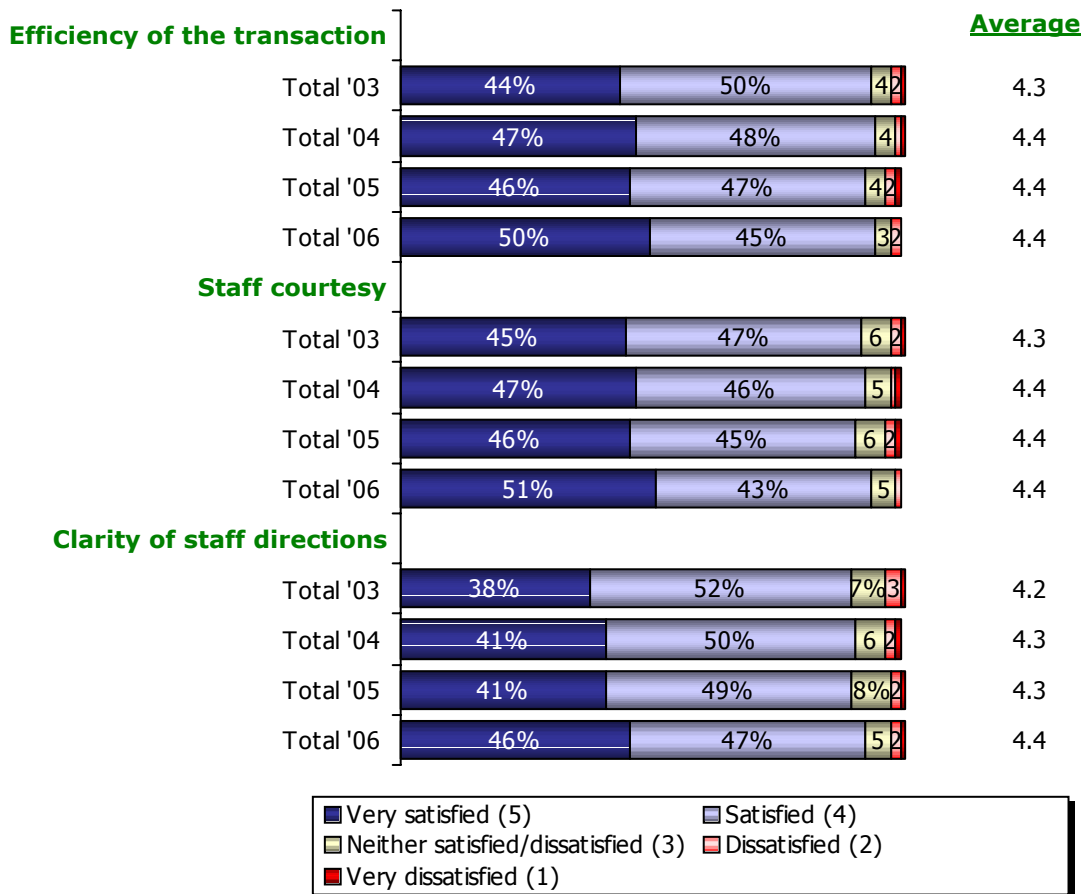
Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.



Ticket Purchase

Satisfaction levels continue to be high with all aspects of the ticket purchase process with average ratings more or less similar to a year ago but with some significant increases in the percentage of those who say 'very satisfied'.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Ticket Purchase

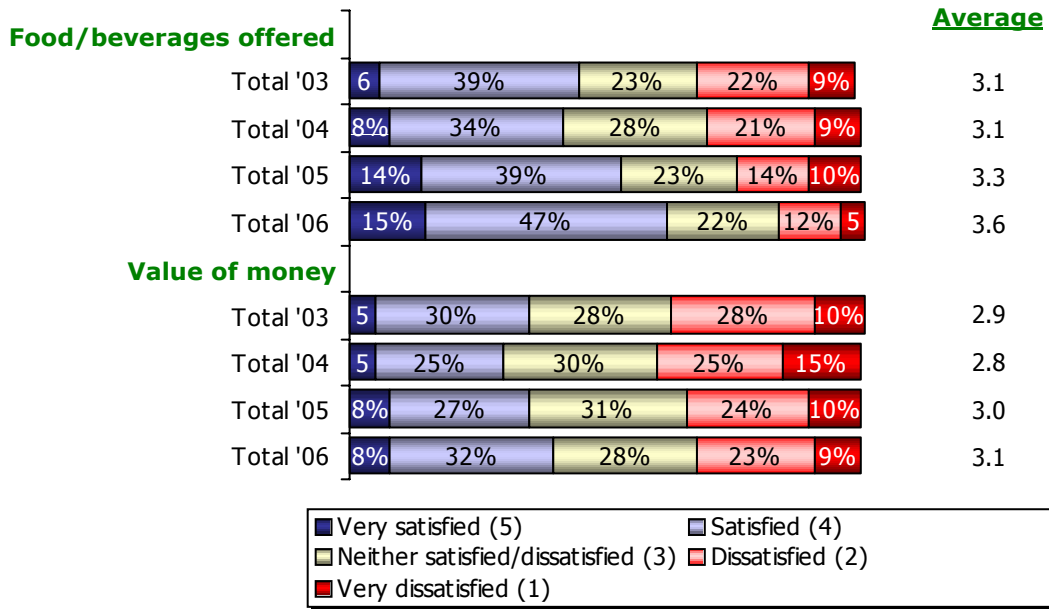


Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Food/Beverage Services at Terminal

Satisfaction levels have improved with food and beverage services at all terminals, particularly with the *food/beverages offered*, and to a lesser extent with *value for money*.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Food and Beverage Services at Terminal*



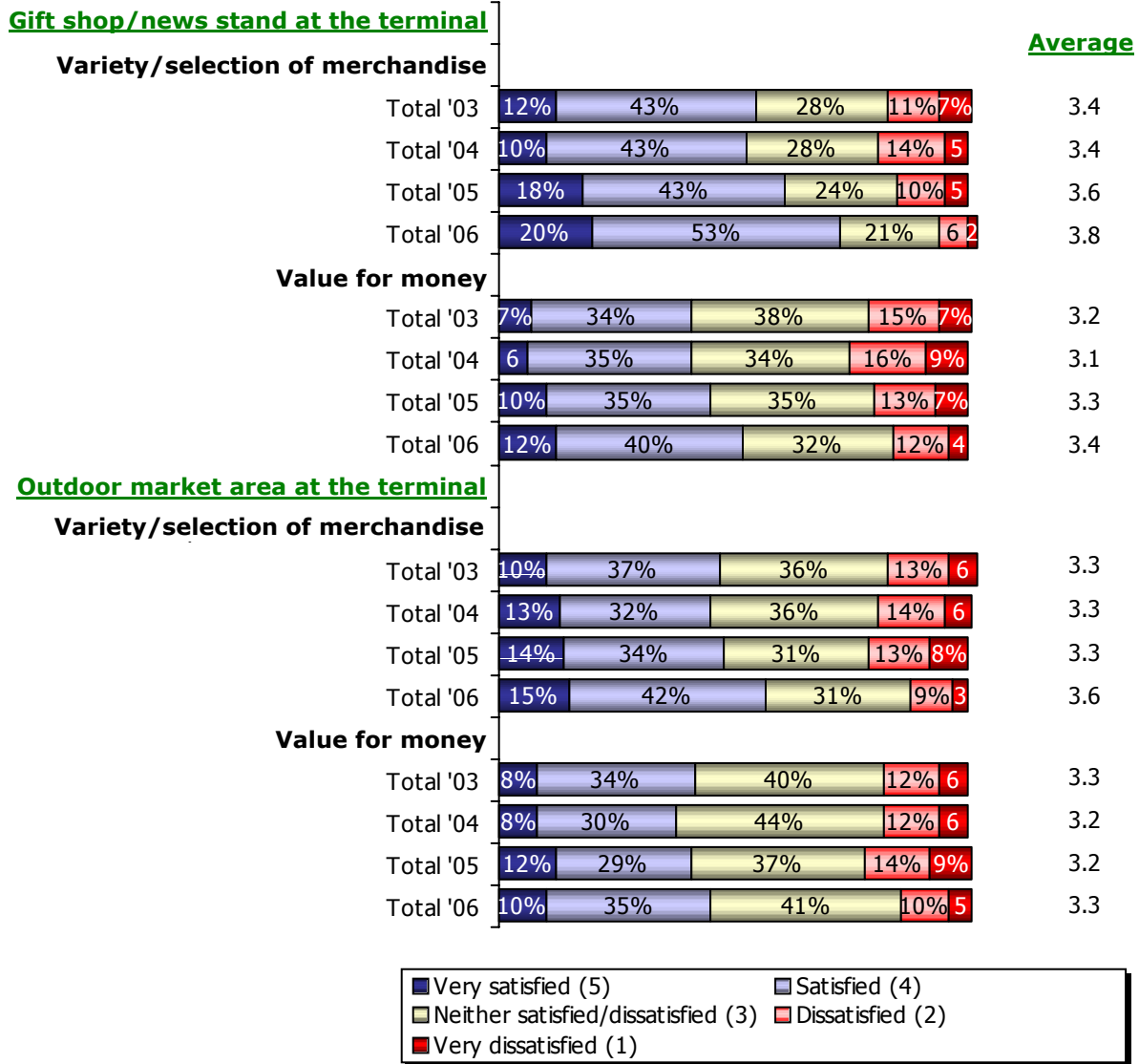
Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* 47% usage overall; excluding routes 19 and 23.

Retail Services at Terminal

Similarly, satisfaction has also increased with the gift shop/news stand services and outdoor market areas at the terminals, in terms of both *variety/selection* and *value for money*.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Retail Services at Terminal*



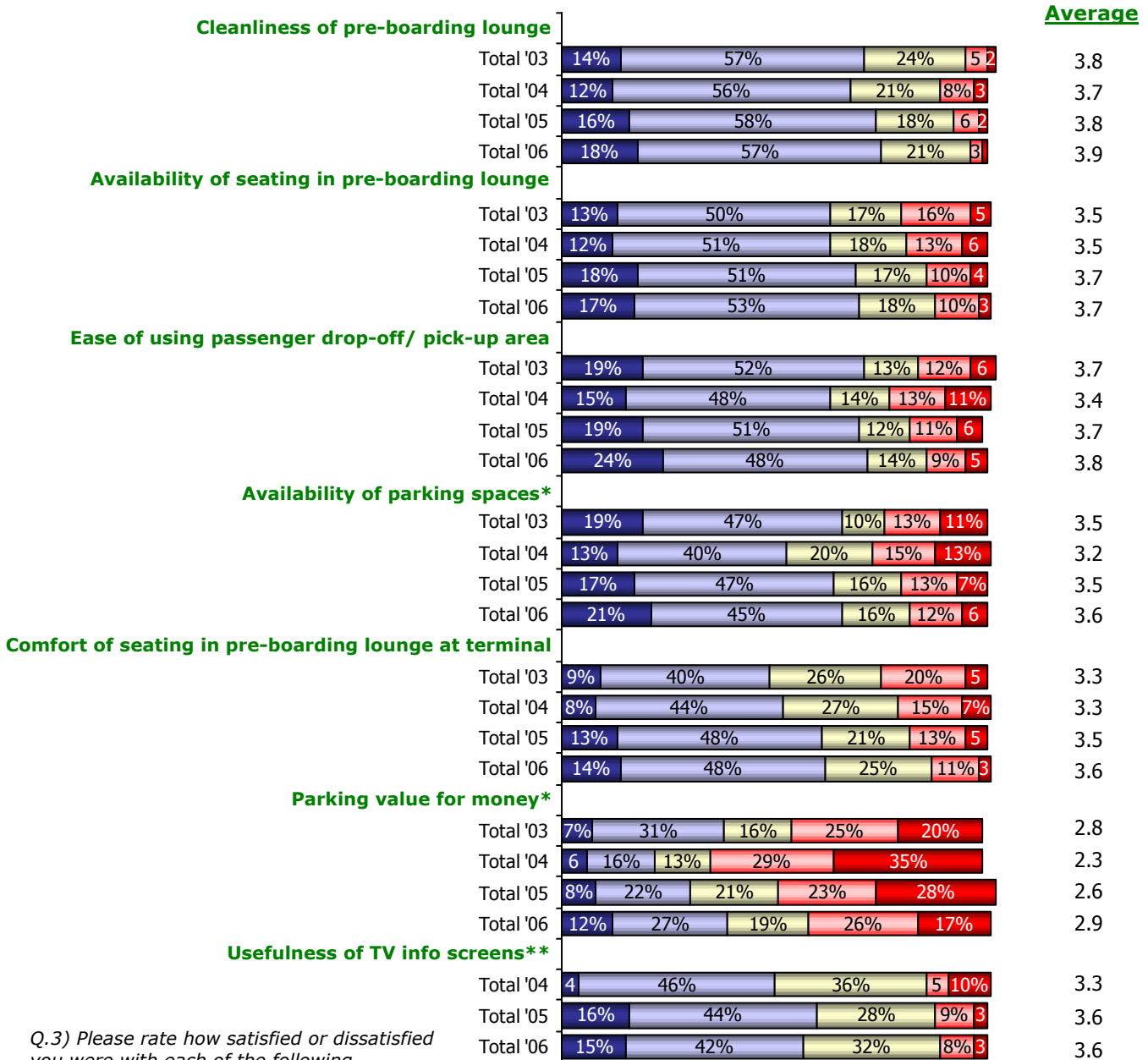
Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* 36% usage gift shop, 24% usage outdoor market; excludes route 19, and route 23.

Foot Passenger Services

Overall, there have been no dramatic changes in satisfaction levels with foot passenger services with the exception that ratings for *parking value for money* are considerably higher compared to a year ago (39% satisfied compared to 30% in 2005).

Satisfaction with Foot Passenger Services*



Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

28% are foot passengers (including bus).

* Excludes Route 23.

** Includes Routes 1, 2 3 & 30 & 4

** Excludes Routes 19, 23, 5, 9 Wave 1 foot passengers only, Wave 2 & 3 all passengers) 2005

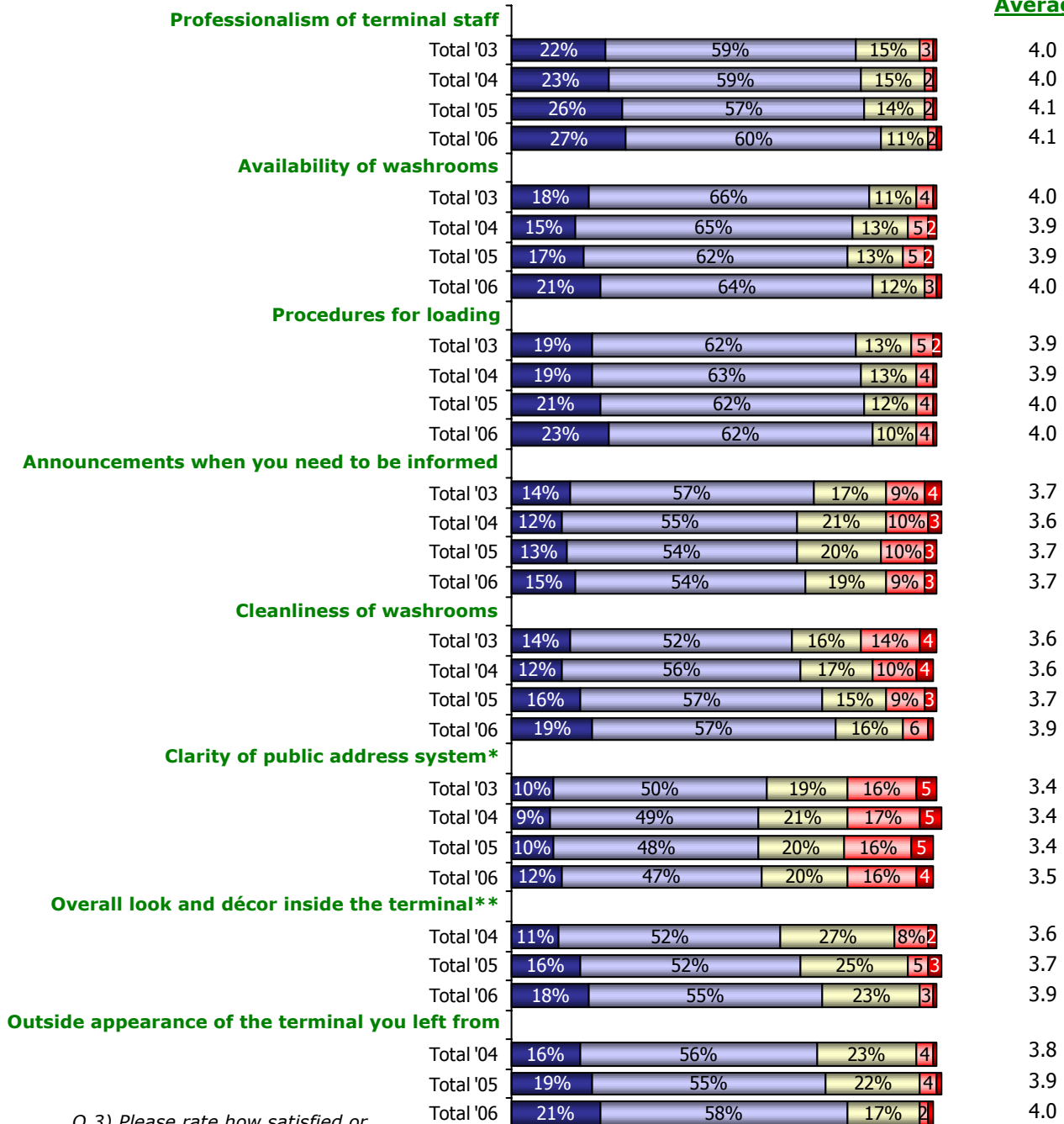


Other Terminal Services

Satisfaction levels with other terminal services are quite consistent with past measures, but with some improvements in ratings of *availability* and *cleanliness of washrooms*, *overall look and décor inside the terminal* and *outside appearance of terminal*.

Satisfaction with Other Terminal Services

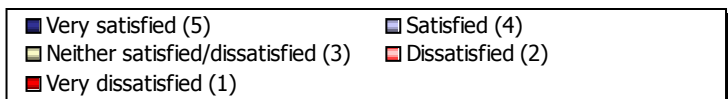
Average



Q.3) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* Excluding Route 23.

** Excludes Route 19 & 23.



Onboard Experience

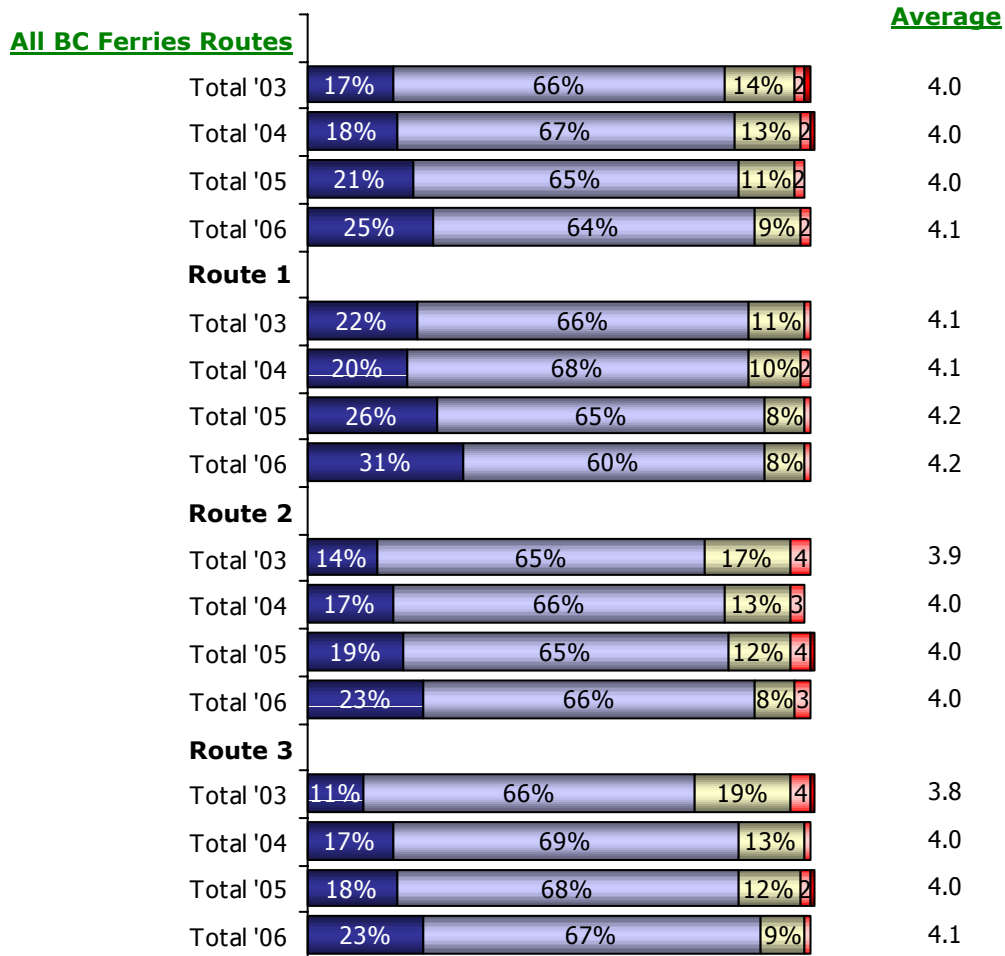
Overall Onboard Experience

Onboard satisfaction achieved a rating of 4.1 this year, a slight increase from previous years.

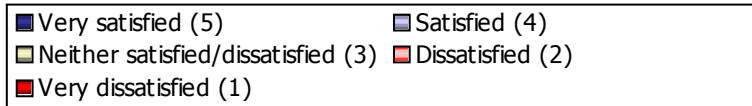
A total of 89% of passengers in 2006 were satisfied with their overall experience onboard, slightly higher than the 2005 level (86%) but note that the top box score has increased from 21% to 25% over the year, the highest level achieved to date. Ratings have increased mostly on all major routes.

[NOTE: Refer to page 6 or page 30 for Route number codes]

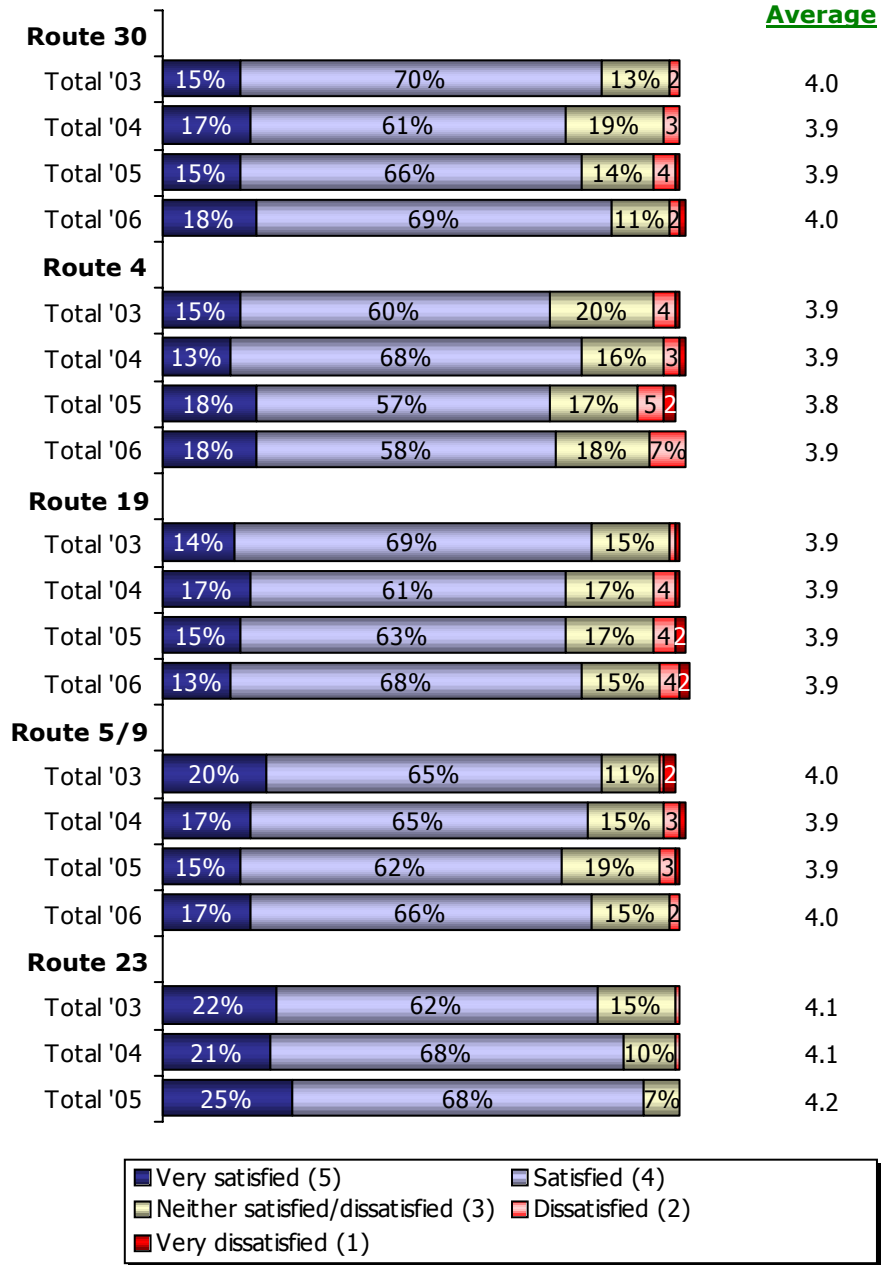
Overall Satisfaction with Onboard Experience



Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.



**Overall Satisfaction with Onboard Experience
(cont'd)**



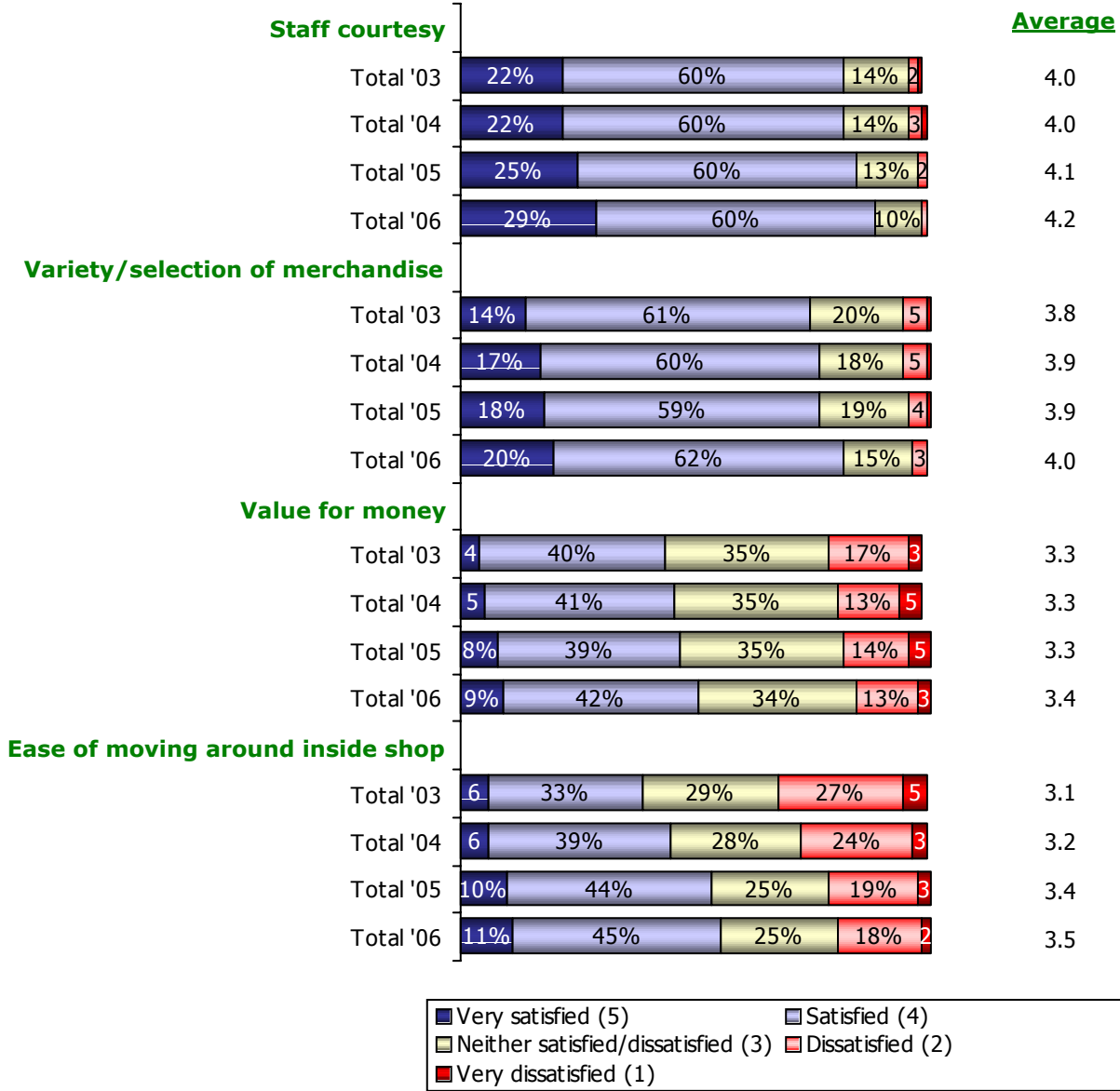
Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Note: Route not surveyed in 2006

Onboard Gift Shop/News Stand

Satisfaction levels with all aspects of the onboard gift shop/news stand have strengthened over the past year.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Gift Shop/News Stand Onboard*



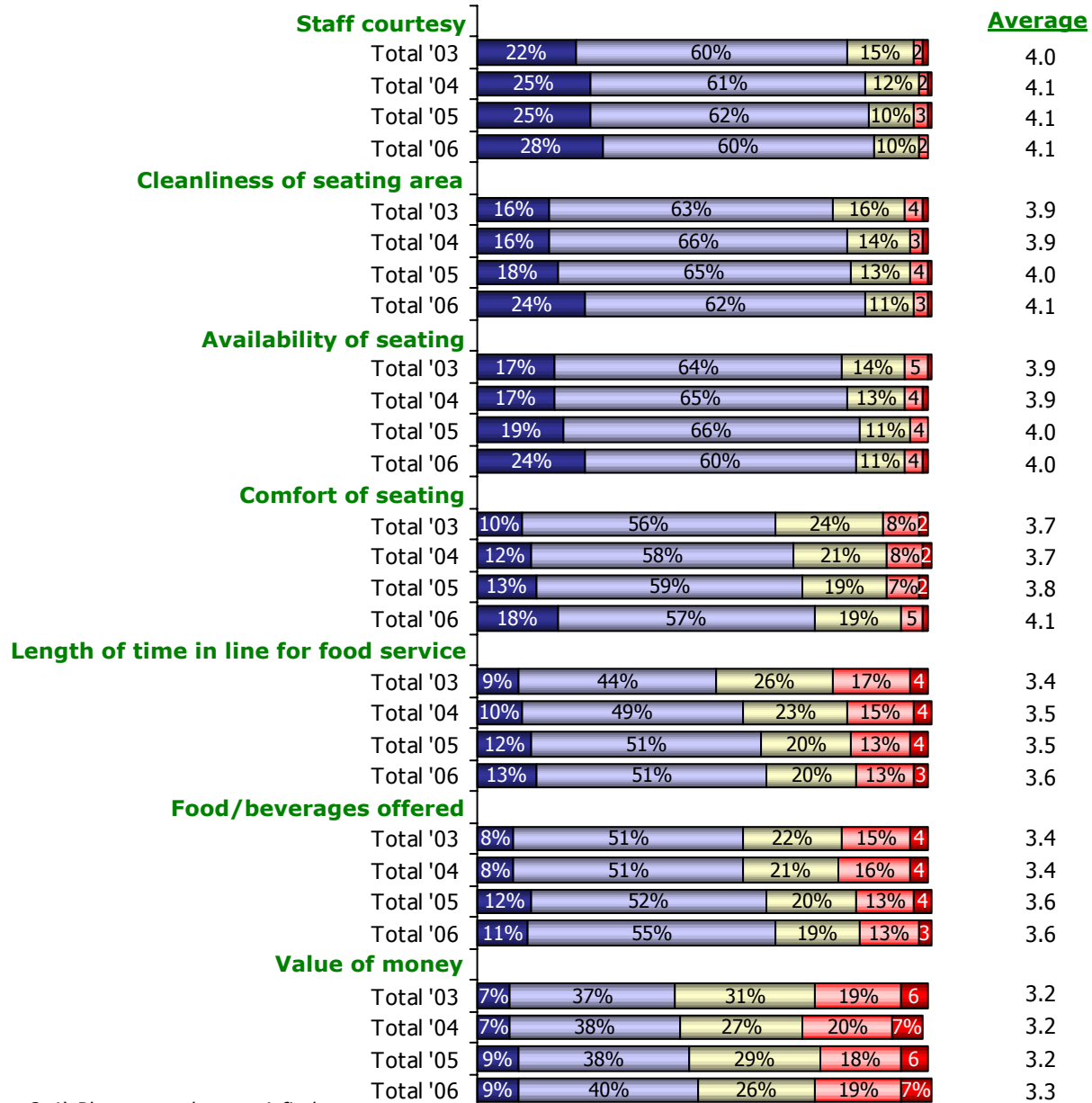
Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* Excludes Routes 4, 19 and 23. Otherwise usage is 58%.

Onboard Food Services

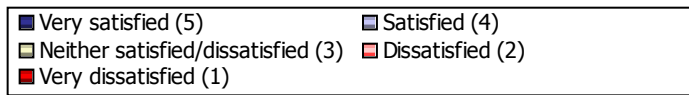
Satisfaction levels have strengthened with the following aspects of onboard food services: *cleanliness of seating area, availability of seating, and for comfort of seating*. Either total satisfaction levels or the top box scores have increased compared to 2005 on these attributes.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Food and Beverage Services Onboard*



Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* Excludes Routes 4, 19 and 23. Usage 76%

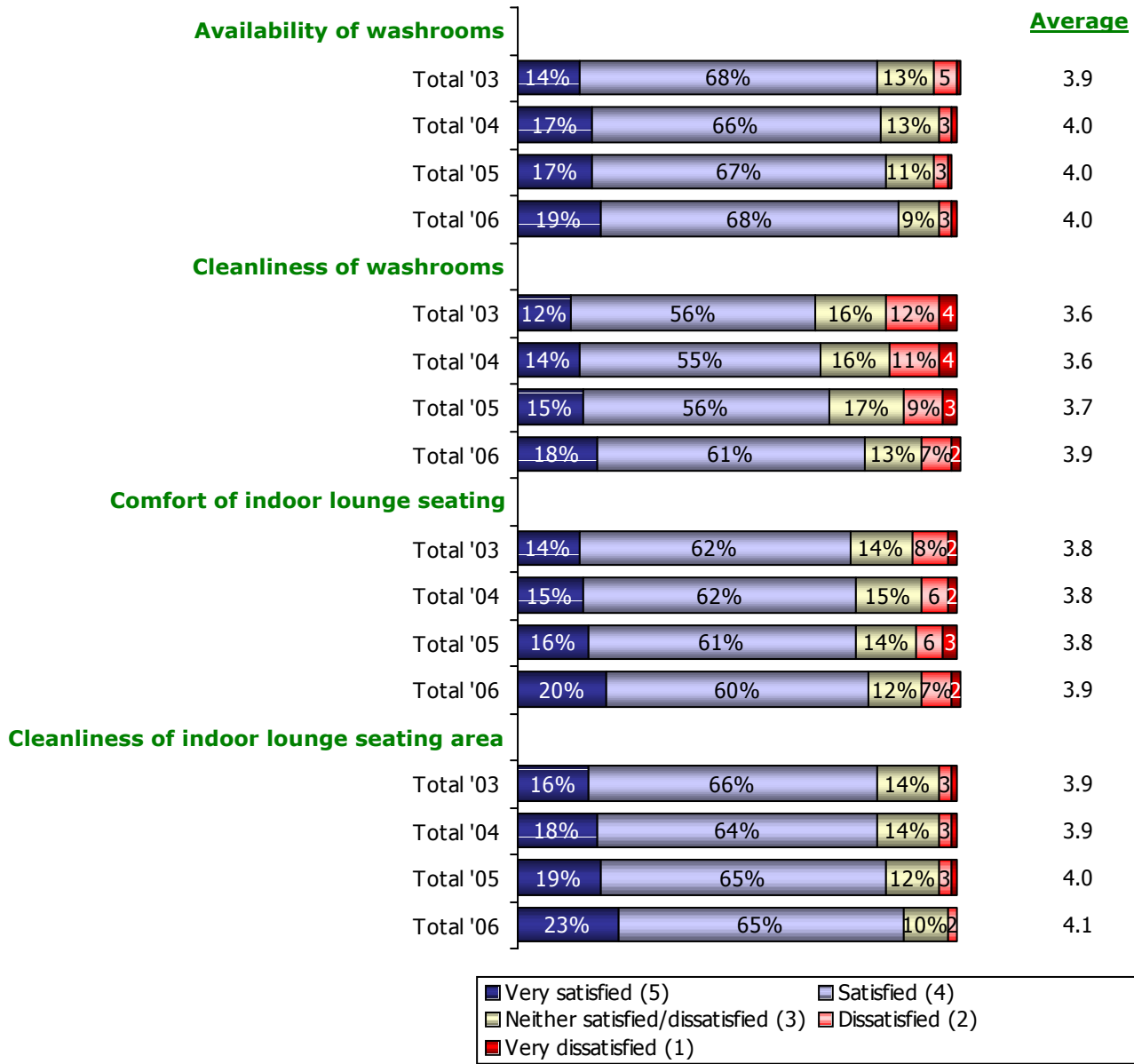


Onboard Washrooms and Onboard Seating

Satisfaction levels with the *cleanliness of washrooms* have improved with 79% satisfied in 2006, in contrast to 71% in 2005.

Travellers continue to be increasingly satisfied with the *comfort and cleanliness* of indoor lounge seating with a slight increase in the top box score ('very satisfied') for comfort and cleanliness.

Satisfaction with Onboard Washrooms and Onboard Seating

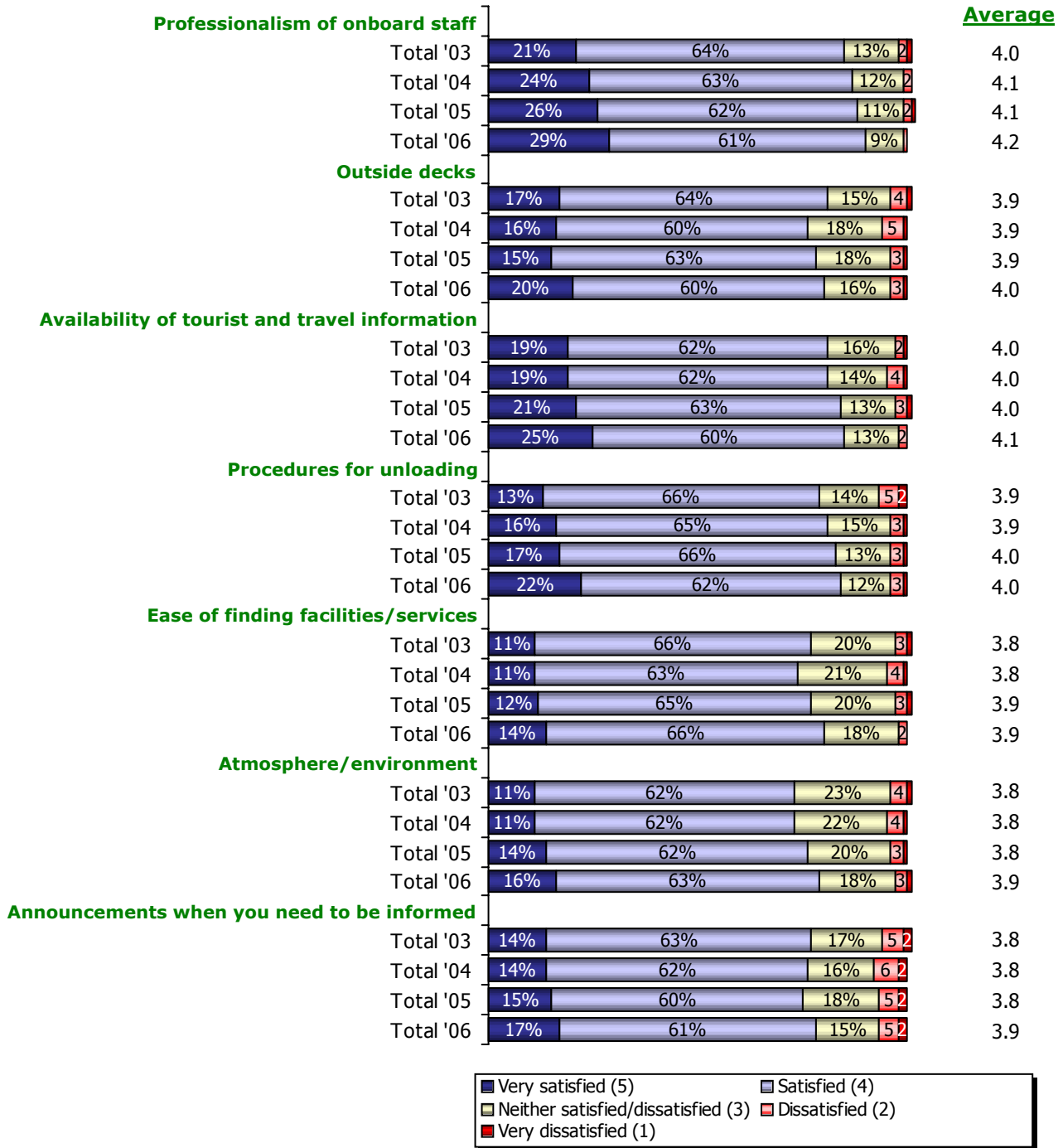


Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Other Onboard Facilities/Services

There have been minor improvements in ratings from 2005 on virtually all other onboard facilities and services (see following page also).

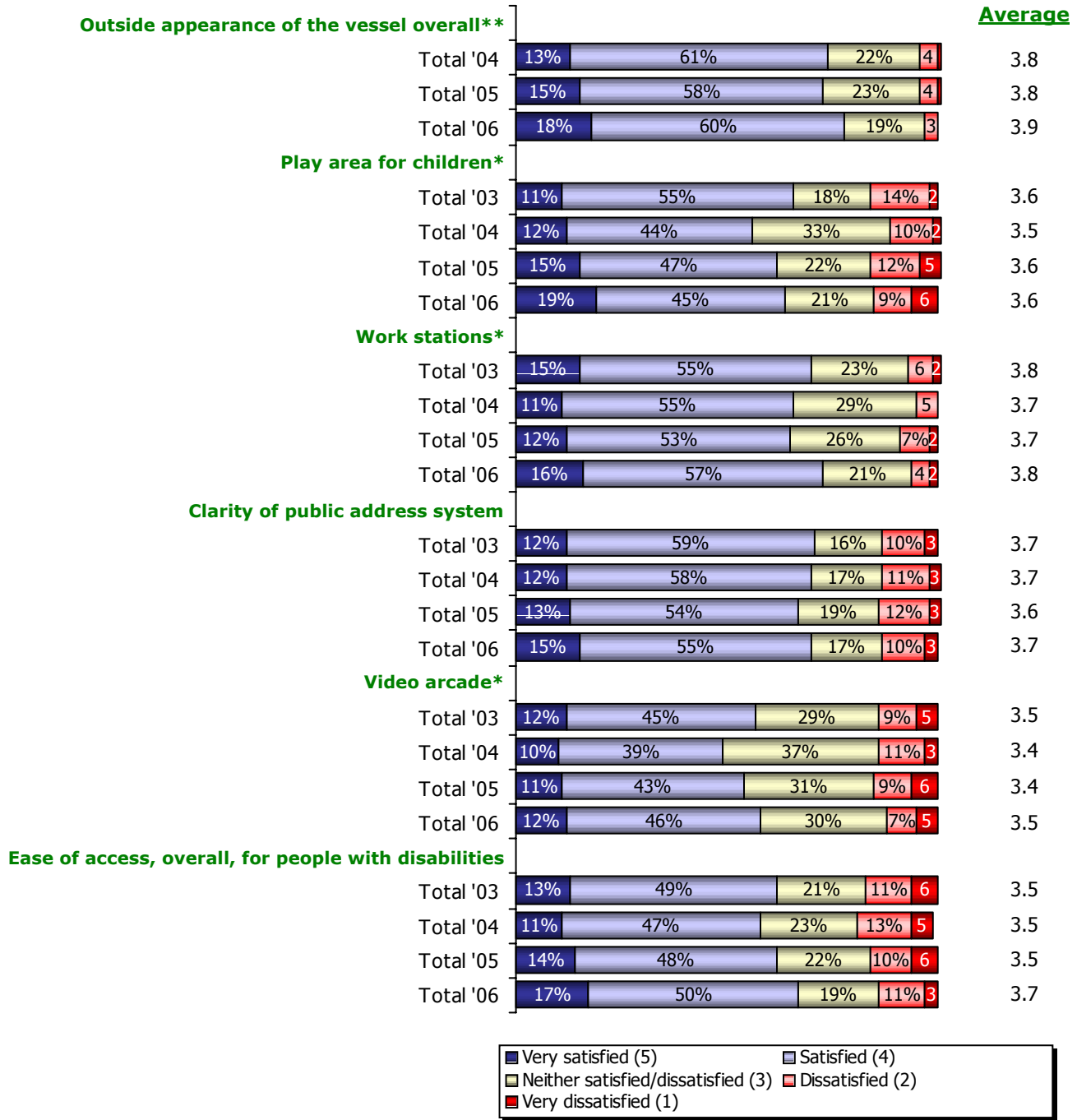
Satisfaction with Other Facilities/Services Onboard



Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Other Onboard Facilities/Services (cont'd)

Satisfaction with Other Facilities/Services Onboard (cont'd)



Q.4) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

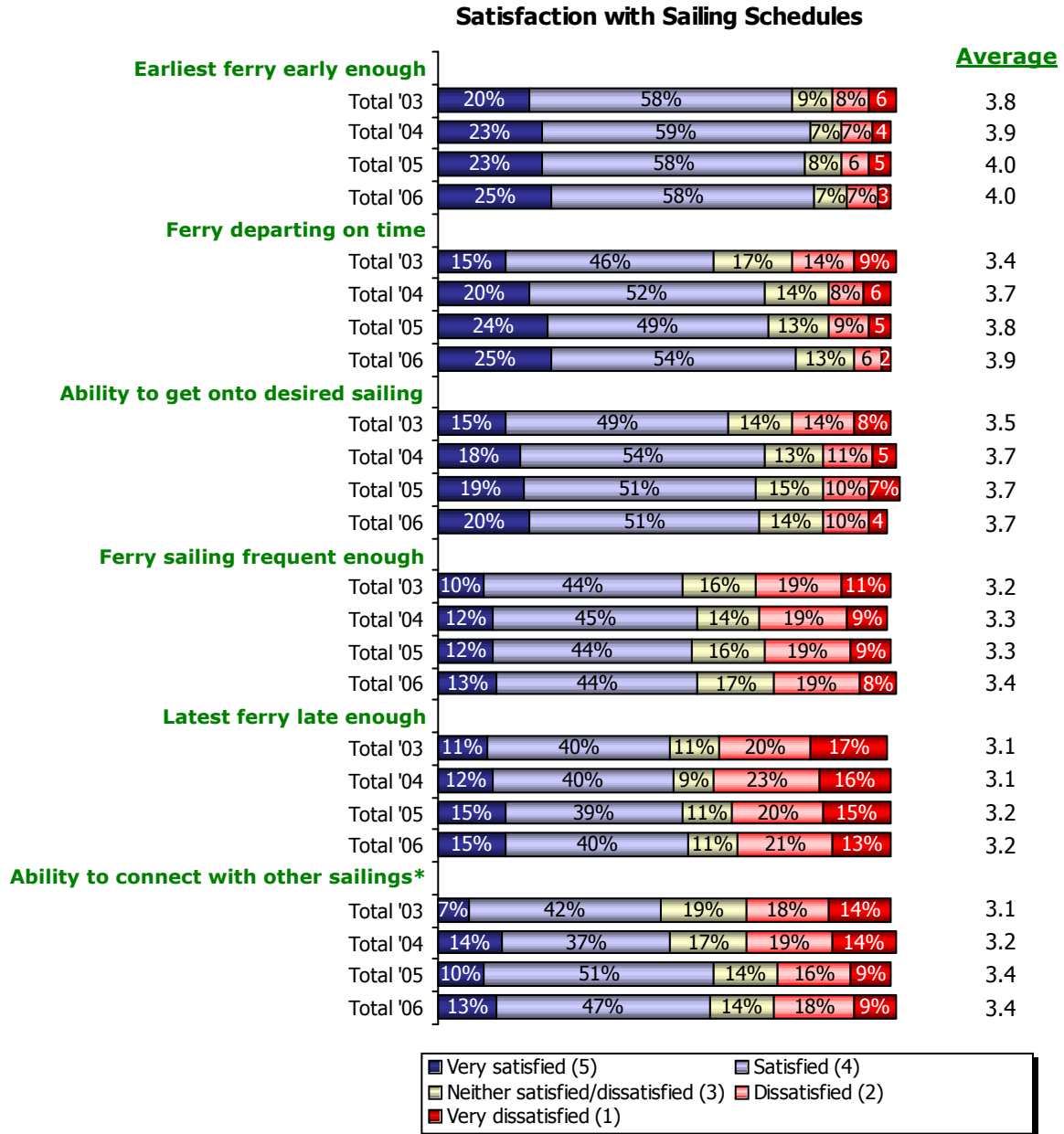
* Excludes routes 4, 19, and 23.

** Question not asked in 2003

Sailing Schedules

Various Aspects of Sailing Schedules

Ratings have been improving consistently with respect to sailing schedule attributes, with particular improvement over the past year of *on-time departures* (79% now satisfied compared to 73% in 2005)



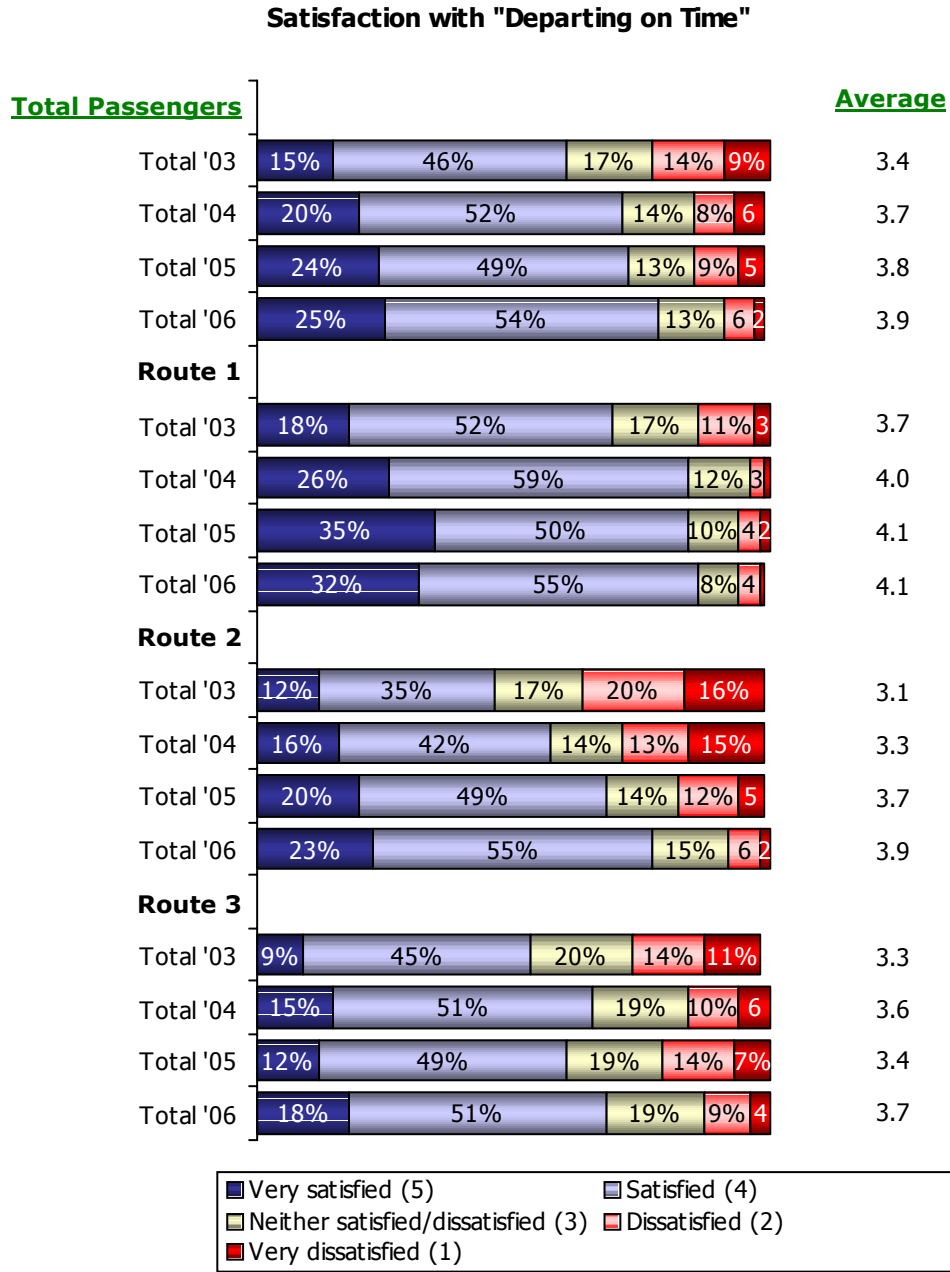
Q.5) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

* Based on those connecting (n=493).

Departing on Time

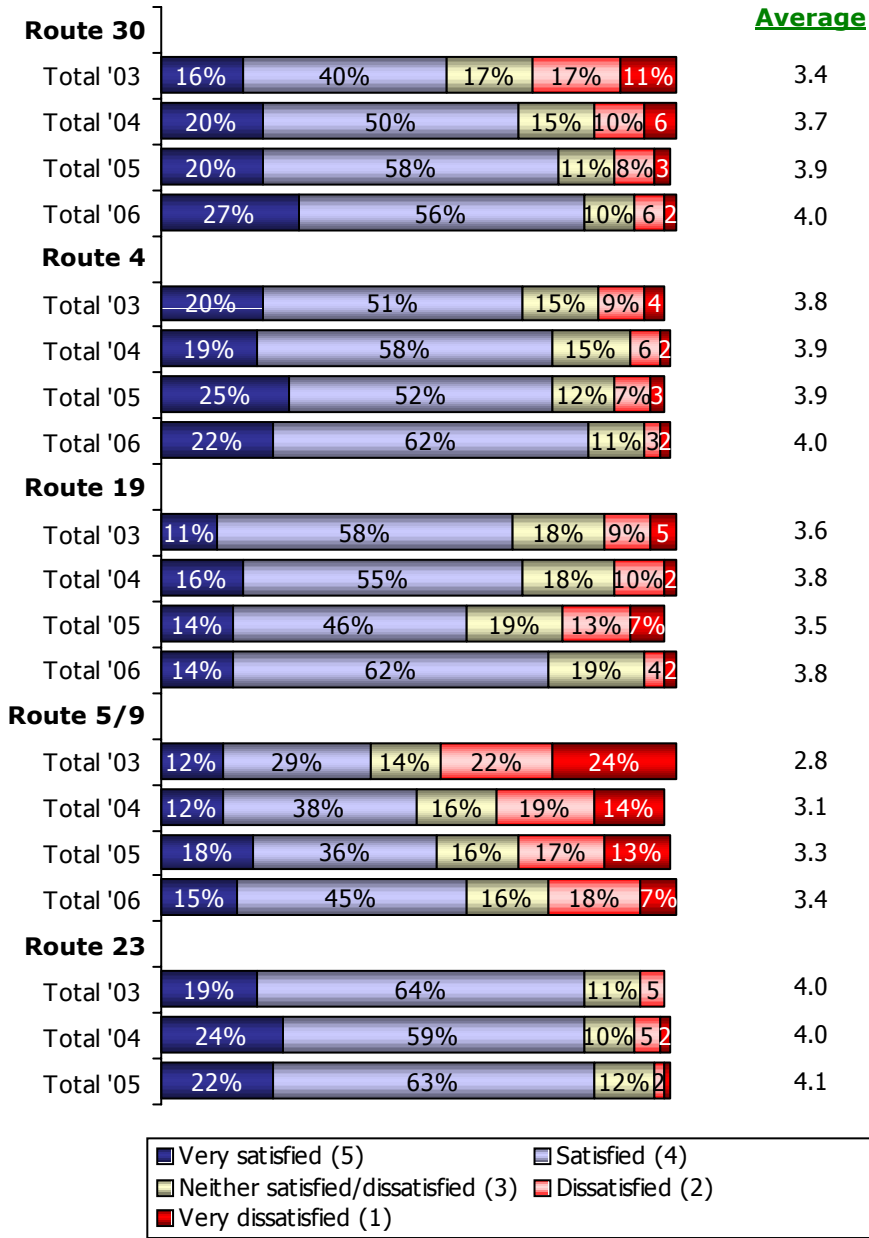
The following graph details the ratings for "departing on time" by route. In comparison to 2005, ratings are notably higher on Routes 2, 3, 30, 4, 19 and 5/9.

[NOTE: Refer to page 6 or page 30 for Route number codes]



Q.5) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

**Satisfaction with "Departing on Time"
(cont'd)**



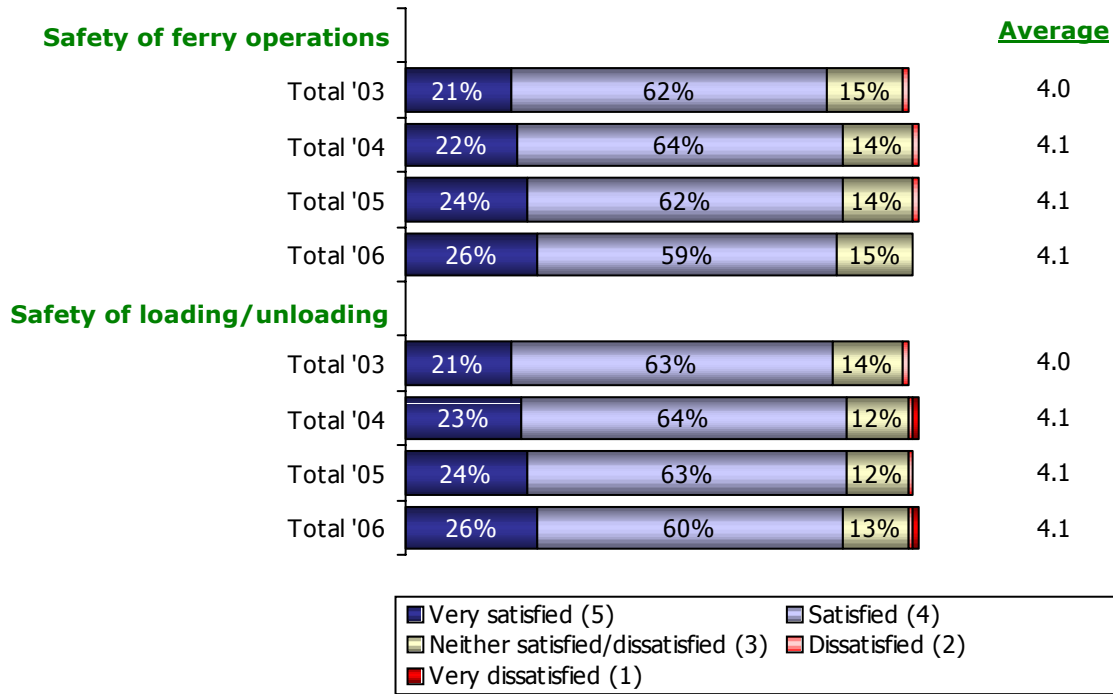
Q.5) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Note: Route 23 not surveyed in 2006.

Safety

Perceptions of the *safety of the ferry operations* continue to be stable and high, with the current satisfaction level at 85%.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Safety

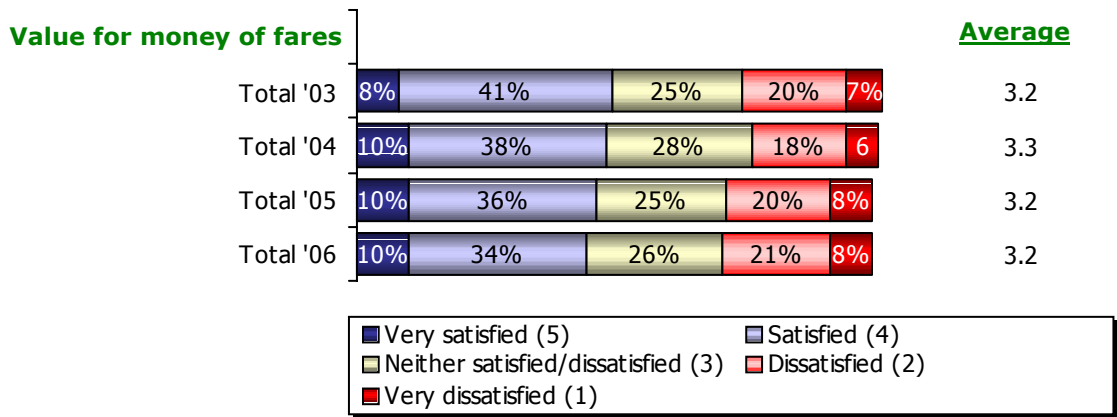


Q.5) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Overall Value

Satisfaction levels continue to be low with perceived *value for money of the fares*, with no change in ratings.

Satisfaction with Overall Value



Q.5) Please rate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each of the following.

Appendices

Route-by-Route Satisfaction Score for Each Attribute:

Ferry Routes Included in Customer Satisfaction Survey - 2006	
Route No.	Description of Route
Route 1	Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay
Route 2	Horseshoe Bay-Departure Bay
Route 3	Horseshoe Bay-Langdale
Route 30	Tsawwassen-Duke Point
Route 4	Swartz Bay-Fulford Harbour, Salt Spring Island
Route 19	Departure Bay-Descanso Bay, Gabriola Island
Route 5/9	Southern Gulf Islands (from Swartz Bay/from Tsawwassen)
Route 23	Campbell River-Quathiaski Cove, Quadra Island

NOTE: Combined, these routes represent approximately 80% of the annual passenger traffic volume on BC Ferries.

Average Satisfaction Ratings by Route – All Waves 2006 (see page 30 for Route Number Codes)											
	Total	Larger Routes				Route 3	Smaller Routes				
		Total	1	2	30		Total	4	19	5/9	23
OVERALL EXPERIENCE											
Trip overall	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.1	-
BEFORE ARRIVING AT TERMINAL											
Usefulness of BC Ferries website	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.3	-
Ease of using on-line reservations	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.0	-
Usefulness of BC Ferries phone service	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.7	-
Ease of using automated phone service	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	-
Highway signage	4.0	4.0	4.2	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.6	4.0	-
TERMINAL EXPERIENCE											
Terminal overall	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0	-
Outside appearance of the terminal	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.6	4.0	-
Ticket Purchase											
Efficiency of the transaction	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.4	-
Staff courtesy	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4	-
Clarity of staff directions	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	-
Food & Beverage Services at the Terminal											
Food beverages offered	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	-	3.4	-
Value for money	3.1	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	-	3.1	-
Gift Shop/News Stand at the Terminal											
Variety/selection of merchandise	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.4	-	3.6	-
Value for money	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	-	3.3	-
Outdoor Market Area at the Terminal											
Variety/selection of merchandise	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	-	3.6	-
Value for money	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	-	3.3	-
Other Terminal Services											
Clarity of Public address system	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4	-
Announcements when you need to be informed	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	-
Overall look & décor inside terminal	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.8	-	3.8	-
Availability of washrooms	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	-
Cleanliness of washrooms	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.6	4.0	-
Procedures for loading	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8	-
Professionalism of terminal staff	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	-

continued

Average Satisfaction Ratings by Route – All Waves 2006 (cont'd) (see page 30 for Route Number Codes)											
	Total	Larger Routes			Route 3	Smaller Routes					
		Total	1	2		30	Total	4	19	5/9	23
Foot Passenger Services at the Terminal											
Usefulness of TV info screens	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.5	-	-	-
Availability of parking spaces	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.2	3.0	2.5	3.7	-
Parking value for money	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.9	3.4	3.0	2.2	3.3	2.9	-
Ease of using passenger drop-off/ pick-up area	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.8	-
Availability of seating in pre-boarding lounge at terminal	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.4	3.8	-
Comfort of seating in pre-boarding lounge at terminal	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.6	2.9	3.6	-
Cleanliness of pre-boarding lounge	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.4	4.0	-
ONBOARD EXPERIENCE											
Onboard overall	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	-
Gift Shop/ News Stand											
Variety/ selection of merchandise	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	-	-	3.7	-
Staff courtesy	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	-	-	4.1	-
Ease of moving around inside shop	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.3	2.9	3.6	3.5	-	-	3.5	-
Value for money	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	-	-	3.4	-
Food Services											
Length of time in line for food services	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.7	-	-	3.7	-
Food/ beverages offered	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.4	-	-	3.4	-
Staff courtesy	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	-	-	4.1	-
Availability of seating	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.0	-	-	4.0	-
Comfort of seating	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.7	-	-	3.7	-
Cleanliness of seating area	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	-	-	4.0	-
Value for money	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.2	-	-	3.2	-
Washrooms											
Availability of washrooms	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.0	-
Cleanliness of washrooms	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.4	3.9	-
Lounge Seating											
Comfort of indoor lounge seating	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.4	2.9	2.9	3.7	-
Cleanliness of indoor lounge seating area	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.5	4.0	-

continued

Average Satisfaction Ratings by Route –All Waves 2006 (cont'd) (see page 30 for Route Number Codes)											
	Total	Larger Routes			Route 3	Smaller Routes					
		Total	1	2		30	Total	4	19	5/9	23
Other Onboard Facilities/ Services											
Play area for children	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.8	2.9	-	-	2.9	-
Video arcade	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.5	2.9	-	-	2.9	-
Work stations	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.4	3.9	3.6	-	-	3.6	-
Outside decks	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	-
Outside appearance of the vessel overall	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	-
Availability of tourist and travel information	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.9	-
Ease of access, overall, for people with disabilities	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.4	-
Ease of finding facilities/ services	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8	-
Clarity of public address system	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.6	-
Announcements when you need to be informed	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.8	-
Atmosphere/ environment	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.8	-
Procedures for unloading	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	-
Professionalism with onboard staff	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	-
Experience with the Sailing Schedule											
Earliest ferry earliest enough	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	-
Latest ferry late enough	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.7	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.3	3.5	-
Ferry sailing frequent enough	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.3	2.9	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.0	-
Ability to get onto desired ferry	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.6	3.9	3.1	3.8	-
Ability to connect with other sailings	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.6	2.6	3.6	-
Ferry departing on time	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.4	-
Safety											
Safety of ferry operations	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	-
Safety of loading/unloading	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	-
OVERALL VALUE											
Value for money of fares	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.2	-

TERMINAL ATTRIBUTE ONLY – Satisfaction Ratings by Terminal - All Waves 2006 -							
	Total	Tsawwassen	Swartz Bay	Horseshoe Bay	Departure Bay	Langdale	Duke Point
OVERALL EXPERIENCE							
Overall	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
TERMINAL EXPERIENCE							
Terminal overall	4.1	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1
Outside appearance of the terminal	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.2
Ticket Purchase							
Efficiency of the transaction	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.4
Staff courtesy	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.5
Clarity of staff directions	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.5
Food & Beverage Services at the Terminal							
Food beverages offered	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3
Value for money	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.1	2.8
Gift Shop/News Stand at the Terminal							
Variety/selection of merchandise	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.5
Value for money	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3
Outdoor Market Area at the Terminal							
Variety/selection of merchandise	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.3
Value for money	3.3	3.6	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.2
Other Terminal Services							
Clarity of Public address system	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.7
Announcements when you need to be informed	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.9
Overall look and décor inside terminal	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9
Availability of washrooms	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1
Cleanliness of washrooms	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.9
Procedures for loading	4.0	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.1
Professionalism of terminal staff	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.2
Foot Passenger Services at the Terminal							
Usefulness of TV info screens	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1
Availability of parking spaces	3.6	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.1
Parking value for money	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.6	3.5	2.9
Ease of using passenger drop-off/ pick-up area	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.9
Availability of seating in pre-boarding lounge at terminal	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.0
Comfort of seating in pre-boarding lounge at terminal	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.6
Cleanliness of pre-boarding lounge	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.6	4.0	4.1
Overall Value							
Value for money of fares	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0

Research Methodology

Background

British Columbia Ferry Services Inc. (BC Ferries) has commissioned tracking research to gauge customer satisfaction on specific BC Ferries Routes to determine and monitor areas of service that patrons believe are performing favourably and areas requiring improvement. Ultimately, this research will contribute to product and service enhancements for an improved service for BC Ferries travellers.

Project Overview

The 2003 Customer Satisfaction Tracking Study acted as a baseline for the newly formed B.C. Ferry Services Inc. and was designed to track performance on satisfaction levels overall and with specific service attributes. Once a year, the annual satisfaction scores will be published on the BC Ferries Web site as required by the Coastal Ferry Services Contract.

The study is designed to provide input to the Corporate Strategic Plan and to regular service and marketing plans.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

- Determine BC Ferries' customers' satisfaction levels overall with BC Ferries' service,
- Determine satisfaction with the specific attributes of the service,
- Uncover the relative importance of attributes,
- Measure satisfaction with attributes that span the entire range of points of customer contact with BC Ferries,
- Track changes in satisfaction over time, and across customer segments,
- Identify the critical improvements to the current service offering that will have the greatest impact on customer satisfaction,
- Ensure the tracking research is relevant and credible enough to pass internal and external scrutiny.

Quantitative Tracking Research

First, a random sample of passengers was intercepted onboard to collect key “screener” data including frequency of travel on BC Ferries, purpose of trip, area of residence, origin/destination, and standard demographic questions. Each questionnaire also included coding of the route, the departure time, location of interview, the vessel name and any other information of value for analysis. This information was collected in the form of a “batch header”, which was attached to all the “screeners” completed on each sailing.

Immediately following this “screener”, passengers were asked to complete a survey *after* they disembarked and left the terminal area. The completed survey was returned in a postage pre-paid envelope. Respondents were instructed to complete the survey within 48 hours of receiving it to ensure top-of-mind experiences were recorded.

This self-administered portion of the survey was designed to capture satisfaction and usage information from all potential points of contact for the *last* trip—from initial information requests, access to terminal, and ticket sales, to onboard, disembarking and post-travel experience. It included:

- an overall satisfaction measure
- service/facility attribute satisfaction ratings
- expenditure data
- problems encountered and responsiveness of personnel in resolving problems
- suggested changes or additions that would enhance the experience

The survey instrument was designed in full consultation with BC Ferries.

Sample Size

The total sample of placements was disproportionately distributed across larger and smaller routes to ensure a minimum number of interviews per route for reliability.

Routes surveyed and the number of screeners and completed returned surveys from each route during 2006 are as follows:

	Screeners	Returns
Larger Routes:		
Route 1: Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay	2,178	861
Route 2: Horseshoe Bay-Departure bay	2,042	692
Route 3: Horseshoe Bay-Langdale	1,337	611
Route 30: Tsawwassen-Duke Point	1,881	708
Smaller Routes:		
Route 4: Swartz Bay-Fulford Harbour, Saltspring Island	1,553	541
Route 19: Departure Bay-Descanso Bay, Gabriola Island	1,403	421
Route 5/9: Southern Gulf Islands	3,754	1,791
TOTAL	14,148	5,625

(Note: Route 23 was not surveyed in 2006).

Sample Validation and Weighting

The data was weighted to bring them into their correct proportions, based on known statistics for the field period. Data was weighted to match actual passenger distribution:

- within each wave, by routes selected for surveying,
- within each route by daypart,
- within each route by weekday and weekend traffic, and
- by known BC Ferries traffic volume by wave

The weighting procedures have been professionally scrutinized and approved by a professional statistician specializing in transportation research.

The table following outlines the actual and weighted distributions of the sample.

Actual & Weighted Distribution of the Sample - 2006 -				
	Screeners		Returns	
	<u>Actual</u> (14,148) %	<u>Weighted</u> (14,148) %	<u>Actual</u> (5,625) %	<u>Weighted</u> (5,605) %
Larger Routes	53	84	51	85
Weekend	16	29	15	26
30	3	3	3	3
3	3	5	3	5
2	5	7	4	6
1	5	13	4	12
Weekday	37	56	36	59
30	10	6	9	5
3	7	11	8	13
2	9	15	8	14
1	10	24	11	27
Smaller Routes	47	16	49	15
Weekend	14	4	13	4
19	3	1	2	1
4	3	1	3	1
5/9	7	2	8	2
23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weekday	34	11	36	11
19	7	4	6	3
4	8	3	7	3
5/9	19	4	24	5
23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Data Collection

The interviewers for this study were personal intercept staff who have completed rigorous training and are experienced with general public studies as well as business-to-business studies. A detailed briefing of interviewing staff was attended by the field director, supervisory staff and the project director.

So that a proper representation of ferry travellers was interviewed, interviewers were trained in the following techniques and randomization procedures, which were strictly adhered to:

- Passengers were approached as soon as they were seated and where necessary, minimum age verified (18 years and over).
- An interview with every 5th person was attempted.
- Passengers in small as well as large groups were approached; respondents were instructed to complete the survey individually, not as a group.
- All areas of the vessel were covered - cafeteria, snack bar, all lounge areas, outer decks and vehicle; interviewers moved to each of these areas every 15 minutes on major routes and every 5 minutes on minor routes.
- Both foot and vehicle passengers were approached.
- To correct for inherent bias of foot to vehicle passengers (foot passengers are first on and last off), interviewing was conducted on parking decks with vehicle passengers after the announcement signaling arrival to port.
- Interviewers were instructed not to accommodate patrons requesting a survey; however, if individuals were persistent a specially marked copy was provided allowing for its removal from the total.

Interviewing and questionnaire placements for the 2006 study were completed during shoulder season, peak season and off-peak season (June, August and November, respectively).

Data Analysis

Senior coding staff was briefed on relevant information and nuances. Categories for open-end responses were developed under the guidance of the senior researcher and verification was performed by the coding supervisor.

The data entry system used for this study includes an internal edit, which is custom programmed. This immediate verification during the data entry process reduces entry errors and a further more detailed computer edit is performed after entry of the data.

For standard cross-tabulations, software designed expressly for marketing research was employed. Special editing and cleaning features of this database package ensure that the records are data entered and coded with accuracy. Further rigorous checks for inherent logic and consistency were performed prior to data tabulation.

Response Rate

The following outlines the response rates achieved in 2006.

Response Rates	
Larger Routes	2006
Route 1	40%
Route 2	34%
Route 3	46%
Route 30	38%
Smaller Routes	
Route 4	35%
Route 19	30%
Route 5/9	48%
Route 23	n/a
Overall response	40%

Margin of Error

Overall, the tolerance limits for this measure at the 95% level of confidence, based on the most conservative case (i.e., a statistic of 50%) are as follows:

Tolerance Limits – 2006		
	Actual Sample Size	Approximate Tolerance Limits % Points
Total Screeners	14,148	+/- 0.8%
Total Returns	5,625	+/- 1.3%
Total Larger Route Returns	2,261	+/- 2.1%
Total Smaller Route Returns	2,753	+/- 1.9%

These tolerance limits apply to a true random sample typically achieved through a general population telephone survey. However, in similar studies, we have found that our sampling rigours have consistently produced an accuracy level well within the tolerance limits described here.