

## **Key Performance Indicator Report – March 2008**

At the completion of all projects (over £100,000) Coniston request that clients complete a Client Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ). These questionnaires make up an integral part of our Quality Management System and form the basis of our Key Performance Indicator results. The results of these Client Evaluation Questionnaires are compiled in this report.

### **Methodology**

#### **The Questionnaire**

The Client Evaluation Questionnaires are closed questionnaires, which are sent out, via the mail, to all of our clients where the contract value exceeds £100,000. The questionnaires are voluntary for our clients, however we encourage them wherever possible to complete and return the forms. Coniston are committed to providing a quality service and the results from these questionnaires provide essential feedback on our clients experience.

The questionnaire covers the integral aspects of any construction project – quality of the product, service, cost certainty, time predictability and the service provided by our staff. The questionnaire is a basic statistical analysis where clients are required to mark each of our services out of ten – one being unsatisfactory, ten being completely satisfactory. The questionnaire also provides a section at the end where clients are able to write any comments that are applicable to the contract.

The questionnaires are based upon the framework of the Key Performance Indicators published by Constructing Excellence. Constructing Excellence is a nationally recognised body who gather statistical information from construction companies throughout the country. Following the Constructing Excellence framework allows us to benchmark our performance against the industry standards.

This report is based on the responses from seventeen of our clients gathered during 2007. The projects featured in this report are:

St Francis School  
Institution of Structural Engineers  
British Museum Partition Wall  
Glebe School  
Institution of Structural Engineers (Summer Works)  
British Museum Corridors  
London Ambulance Service Deptford  
Providence Square  
Norbury Library  
British Museum Middle Room  
Tillingham Fire Station  
Manningtree Fire Station  
Newport Fire Station  
British Museum Gantry Works  
British Museum East Road  
British Museum Level II Toilets  
Beatrice Place

Twenty-seven questionnaires were sent out to clients through out 2007 and seventeen returned, giving us a return rate of 63%. The return rate for questionnaires during 2006, which make up the results for the 2007 report, was 86%.

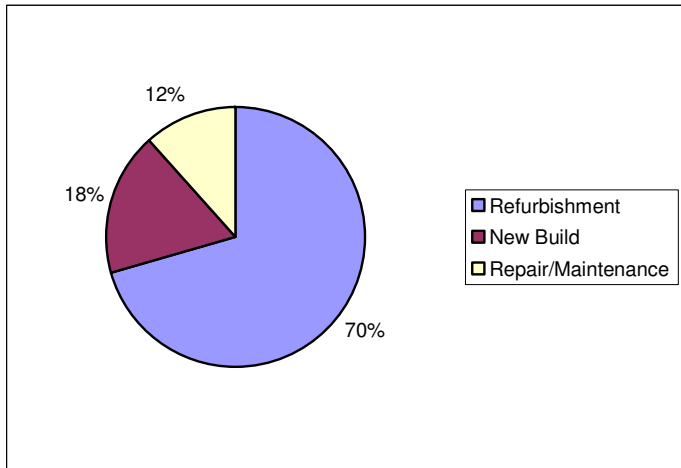
This shows a 23% drop in our return rate of questionnaires during one year. Maintaining high response rates is important to ensure representative results in the report. At present in the event that the questionnaire is not immediately returned a follow up e-mail/phone call is carried out, however these statistics would suggest that this does not encourage clients to return the questionnaire.

Of the ten clients who did not return their questionnaire only one of these was a repeat client. This suggests that even though repeat clients may be required to complete several of these forms in one year, this is not what is causing the problem of low returns. One client refused to complete the questionnaire.

It is suggested that for the coming year, a greater involvement by the Contracts Managers when the project is practically complete might place a greater emphasis on the importance of the questionnaires and encourage clients to complete and return them.

The results in this report appear at random. They are necessarily recorded in the order of projects as listed above.

## The statistics



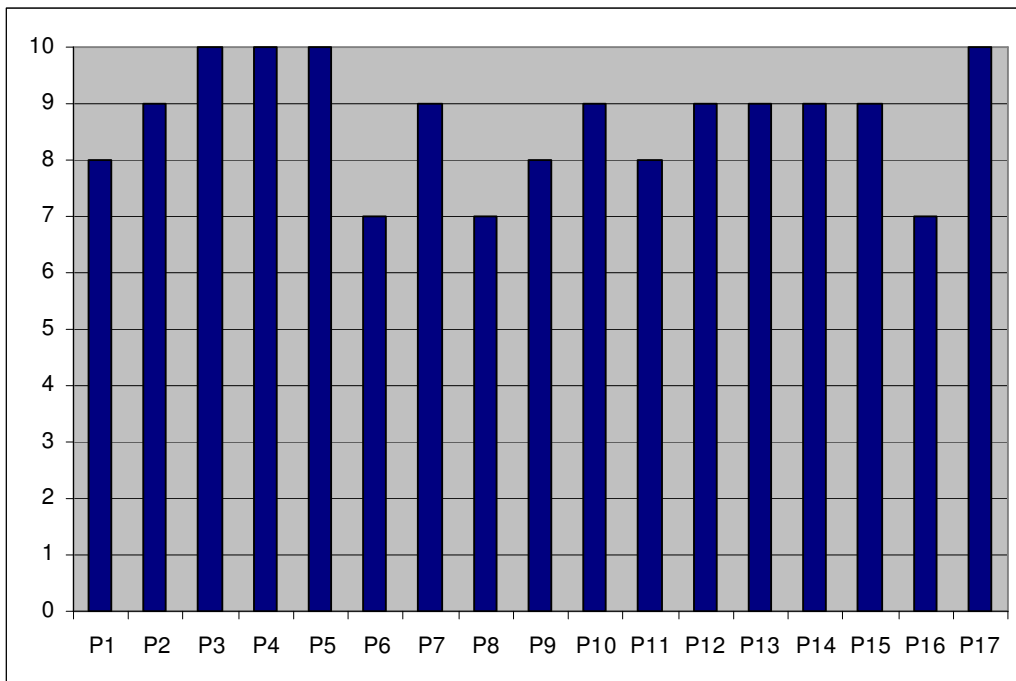
Of the seventeen CEQ's sent out twelve were for refurbishment projects (70%), three were for new build projects (18%) and two were for repair and maintenance projects (12%).

Nine were secured via single stage tendering, five were based on Framework agreements, one respondent answered 'other' (project was a

follow on from previous works for the same client the year previously) and two of the questionnaires were left blank for this question.

## Question 5 - Product<sup>1</sup>

Coniston received an average score of 8.7 for this question, equating to a benchmark score of 78%.



This score of 8.7 is identical to the that achieved in 2007 report (based on the statistics from 2006). In 2006 two clients scored Coniston ten out of a possible ten,

<sup>1</sup> Questions 1- 4 were introductory questions about the location, type of project etc.

in 2007 four clients scored Coniston full points. Coniston score consistently highly in this area, with no client scoring Coniston less than seven out of a possible ten.

In the 2007 report Coniston set a target of achieving no less than an average 8.7 for customer satisfaction with regard to product, as the results show Coniston have successfully achieved this aim and continue to provide a consistently high service to our clients.

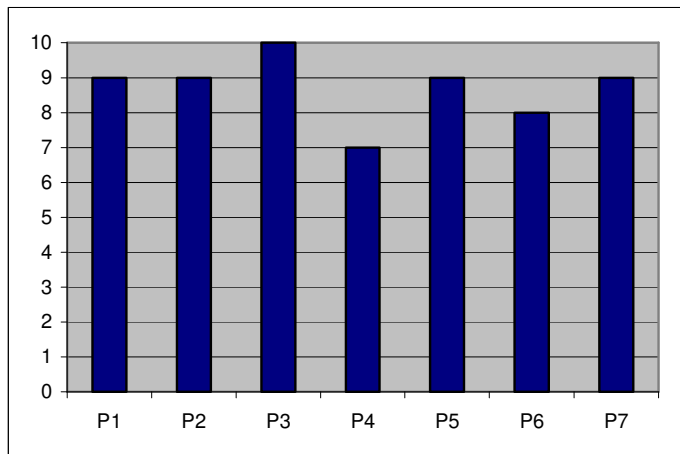
A benchmark score of 78% once again puts us in the top third of contractors within the industry<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Benchmark scores taken from Constructing Excellence 2008 KPI statistics

## Question 6 – Communication

### i) Prior to Contract Execution

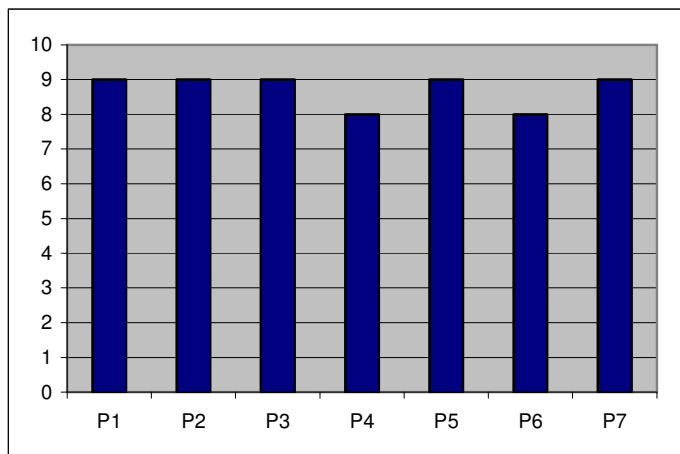


This is the first time this question (Question 6 – Communication) has appeared in the questionnaire and was added in accordance with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2000 guidelines which came into operation at Coniston in June 2007. Therefore, there are no previous years statistics to use by way of comparison to these results, in addition

only seven of the seventeen questionnaires contained this question as the remaining ten questionnaires were sent out prior to the inclusion of this question.

Coniston scored an average of 8.7 for this question, with one client awarding Coniston ten out of ten. Coniston did not receive less than seven out of a possible ten for this question. There is no equivalent benchmark score for this question as this question does not make up part of the Constructing Excellence KPI guidelines, it is purely an addition for the purposes of the ISO.

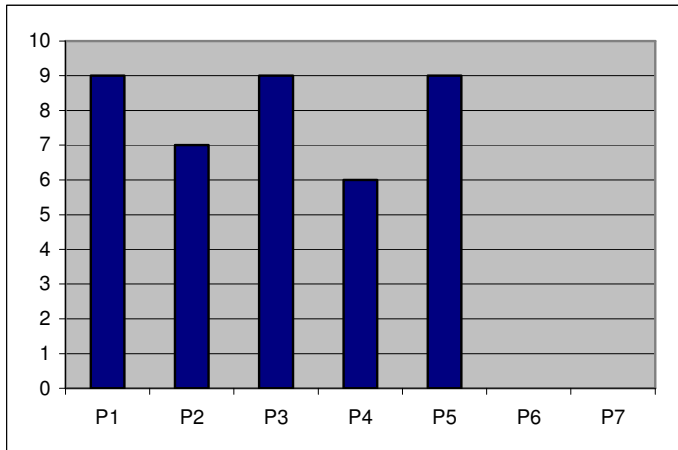
### ii) During Contract Execution



Coniston scored an average of 8.7 for this question, with no client awarding less than eight out of a possible ten. The scores are consistently high in response to this question suggesting that our clients are very satisfied with the level of communication they receive from Coniston whilst the project is taking place. Similar to the question above there is

no equivalent benchmark score for this question as it does make up part of the Constructing Excellence guidelines.

### iii) Post Contract Execution

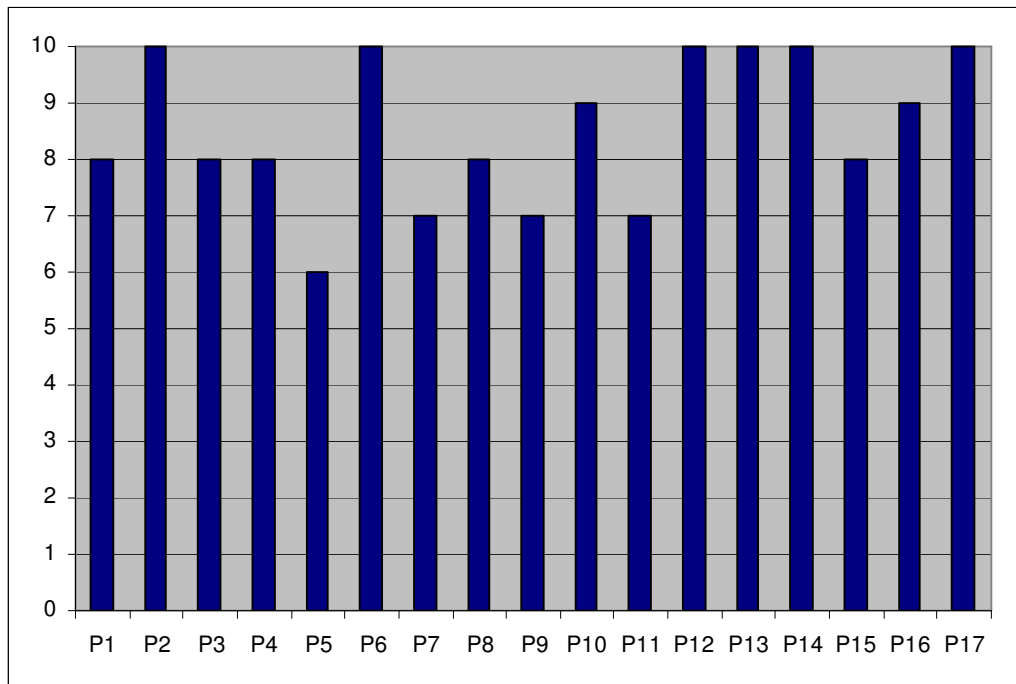


Of the seven clients who received the questionnaire with the additional communication section, two clients did not respond to this question. One client wrote N/A next to the question whilst the other simply left it blank. It is not clear from these responses why the question was left blank, it is possible that the questionnaires were sent

out too soon in the post contract phase for the client to be able to adequately respond to this question, but this is speculation. The question shall remain in the questionnaire for the next twelve months, and an evaluation of its effectiveness shall be taken after this time – when there is a more representative sample with which to make a judgement.

However, this small sample does suggest that our clients are less satisfied with communication post contract execution than they are during or prior to contract execution, with an average of 8. To rectify this situation Coniston may wish to consider carrying out further research into this area as the 2008 questionnaires are returned and formulate a procedure for ensuring clients receive adequate communication post contract.

## Question 7i – Defects



Coniston scored an average of 8.5 with regard to defects, equating to a benchmark score of 73%. Six of the seventeen clients awarded Coniston ten out of ten for defects, reflecting that they considered the facility to be apparently defect free at time of handover. The 2007 report shows that only three of our clients awarded us a score of ten, showing a marked improvement in the number of clients who are receiving a defect free facility. In the 2007 report three of our clients also awarded us five out of ten in this area, where as the lowest score awarded in this instance is a six out of ten and only one client awarded this score again showing an improvement in performance year on year.

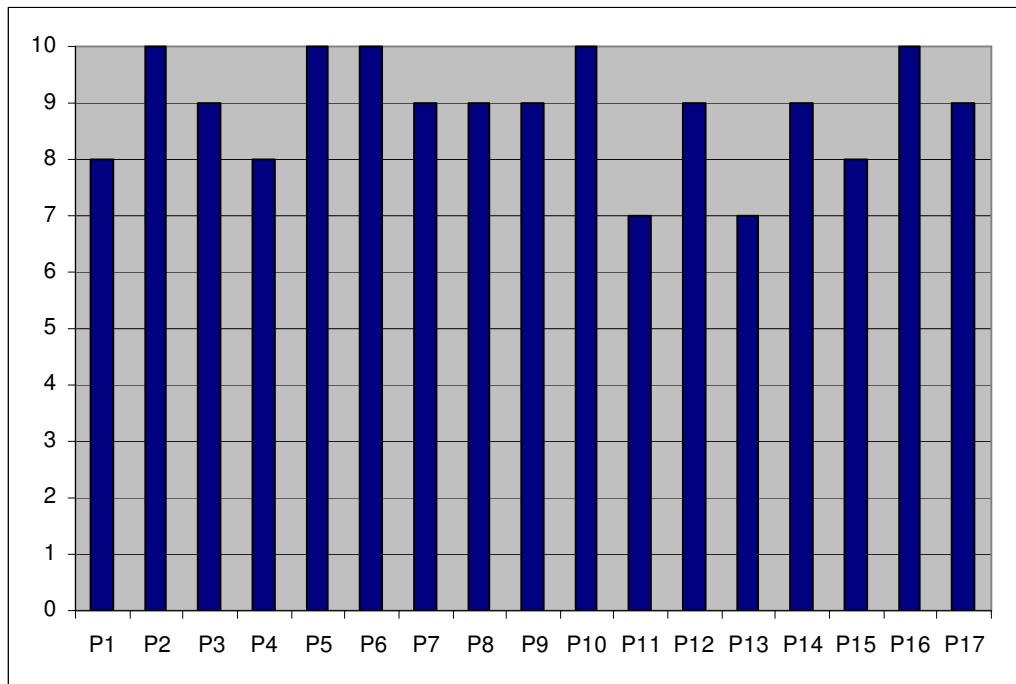
Our aim in the 2007 report was to achieve an average score of no less than eight out of ten in this area, a target that has been successfully achieved. This continuous improvement is an encouraging indication that Coniston are successfully moving towards our ultimate target of zero defects on all of our projects. These statistics show that 35% of our clients are receiving defect free facilities, with a further 41% reporting defects which had no impact on the client. This means that 24% of our clients are receiving a finished product where the defects were such that they did inconvenience the client, and during 2008 Coniston should strive to reduce this percentage in pursuit of their zero defects target.

Whilst statistics with regard to defects are useful to Coniston, this quantitative analysis does not provide explanation as to the nature of the defect and who ultimately is responsible for the problem. In an attempt to clarify this issue a second question was added to part seven of the questionnaire, asking the client who they thought was responsible for the defects they encountered. Seven clients did not answer this question, this figure included those who received a facility with zero defects. Three clients (30% of those who responded to this question) answered that they did not consider the defects to be the responsibility of the contractor. The remaining 70% of clients who responded to this question said that they did consider

the defects to be the responsibility of the contractor, with one client awarding Coniston a score of 2, suggesting that the defects were entirely our responsibility.

Of the 65% of clients that consider the finished product had defects of some nature, 70% of these consider that this was Conistons responsibility.

## Question 8 – Service



Coniston achieved an average score of 8.9 for the service they provide to their clients, a 0.6 increase on the average score for the 2007 report. An average of 8.9 equates to a national benchmark score of 87%, a 24% increase on our benchmark score for 2007.

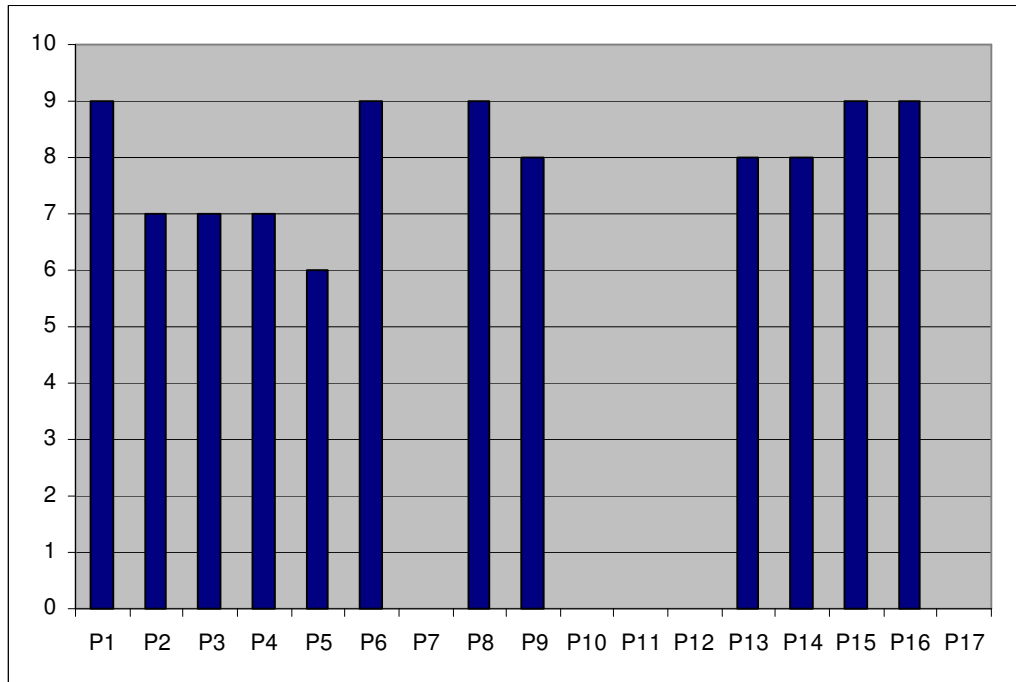
The graph above shows that Coniston were consistently awarded high scores for service with five respondents (29%) awarding us ten out of ten. The lowest score awarded was seven out of ten, compared to a four out of ten awarded in the 2007 report.

This area shows a marked improvement in the service Coniston are providing to clients, with a greater consistency across the board compared to 2007.

Coniston set a target of achieving no less than an average of 8.5 in the 2007 report for this area. With an average score of 8.9 achieved, this target has been successfully met and shows significant continual improvement.

### Question 9 – Service by other parties<sup>3</sup>

In order to establish the clients overall satisfaction with the service they have received, Coniston added this question about the performance of the other parties involved with the project at the beginning of 2007. Coniston were interested to learn how they fared in comparison to other professional parties involved with the project and this question was intended to achieve feedback in this area.



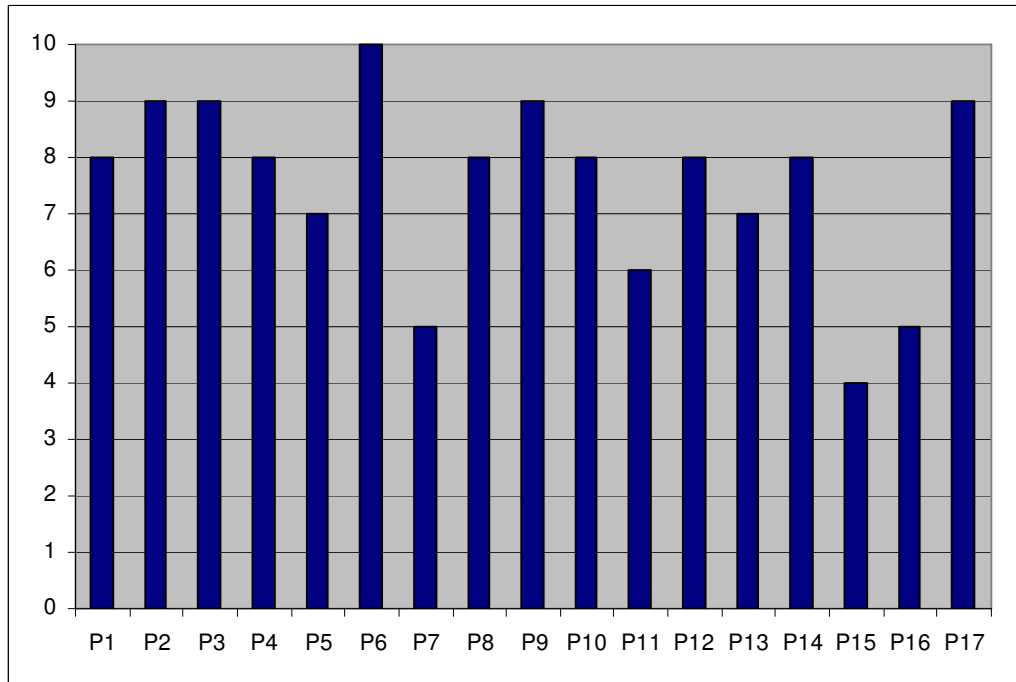
Five of the respondents did not answer this question, all five of these respondents put 'N/A' alongside this question.

Of those respondents who did answer the question most were fairly satisfied with the other parties involved with the project, achieving an overall average of 8, fractionally lower than the average score received by Coniston.

The intention of including this question was to ascertain whether Coniston were possibly being marked down in any area, for problems for which we were not directly responsible. It was hoped that this question would focus clients attention to the work carried out by Coniston, distinct from the work carried out by other members of the professional team. Whilst these results suggest that Coniston, on average, achieve a higher score for satisfaction than other members of the professional team, this sample is relatively small and a greater response would be required to make any firm interpretations of the data.

<sup>3</sup> Not included in the Constructing Excellence KPI information

### Question 10i - Cost



Coniston were awarded an average of 7.5 for cost certainty<sup>4</sup>. Coniston were awarded one score of ten out of ten (compared to the 2007 report where Coniston were awarded three scores of ten). The lowest score recorded was four of ten (compared to the lowest score in the 2007 report of three), interestingly this score was awarded from one of the company's long standing clients, who places a great deal of repeat business with Coniston.

The average score of 7.5 for cost certainty is a 0.2 reduction in the average score awarded in the 2007 report, which in turn was a 0.9 reduction in the score awarded in the 2006 report. This shows a drop of 1.1 in our average scores in the past two years in this area.

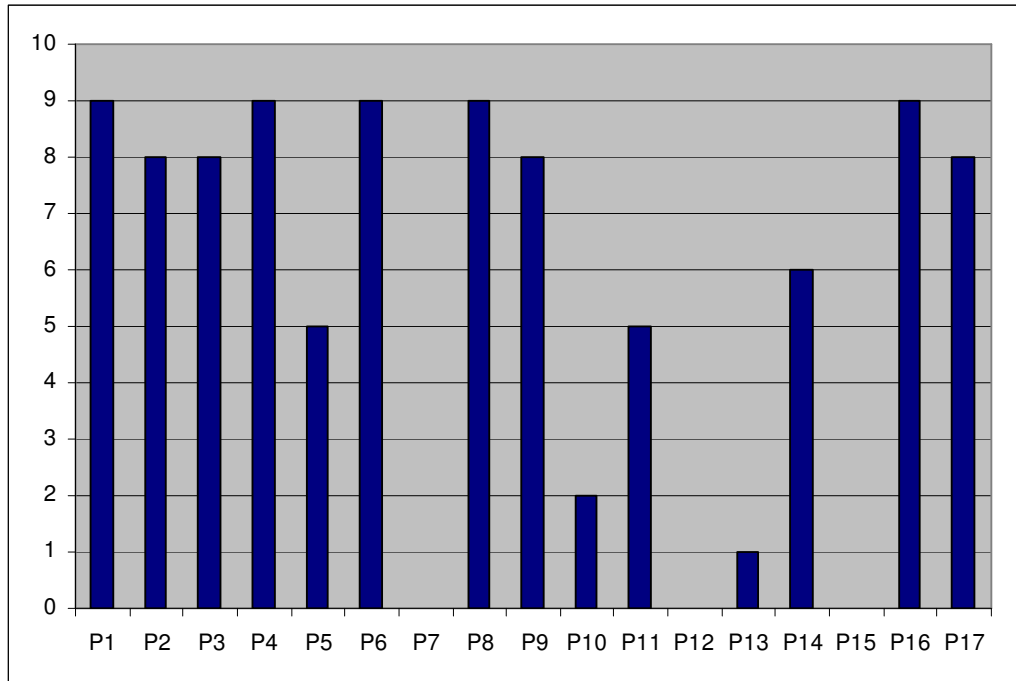
Coniston set a target of achieving not less than 8, as an average score in the 2007 report. Unfortunately the 2008 average of 7.5 falls below this target figure and requires greater attention going into 2008 to ensure improvement in this area.

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<sup>4</sup> This score does not equate to an industry benchmark score because Constructing Excellence quantifies the calculations for the industry standard for this question differently to how Coniston gather data.

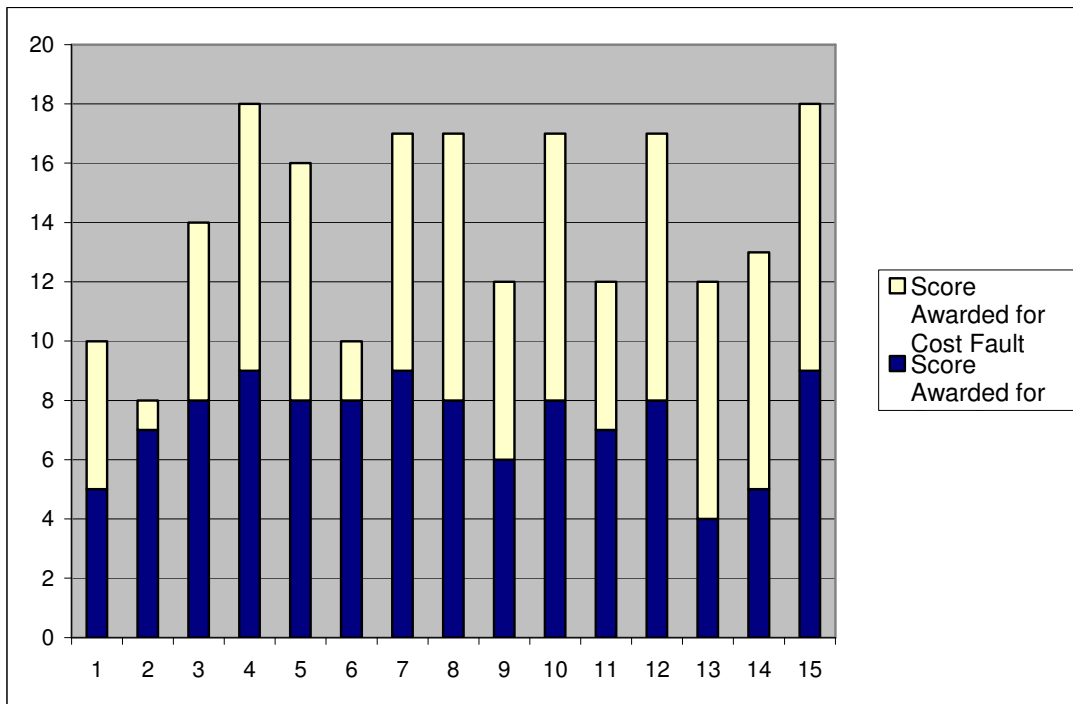
### Question 10ii – Cost Fault

This question was added to the questionnaire following the 2007 report, in order to ascertain whether clients generally considered any lack of cost certainty on their projects to be the responsibility of Coniston, or whether they considered there to be third party influence out of Conistons control.



As the graph shows the scores awarded for this question varied considerably. Three clients left the question completely blank, with no notes made on the response at all. 64% of the respondents felt that the lack of cost certainty on their project was mostly out of the contractors control. 21% felt that the contractor was partly to blame for the lack of cost certainty and 15% felt that the lack of cost certainty was completely the fault of the contractor.

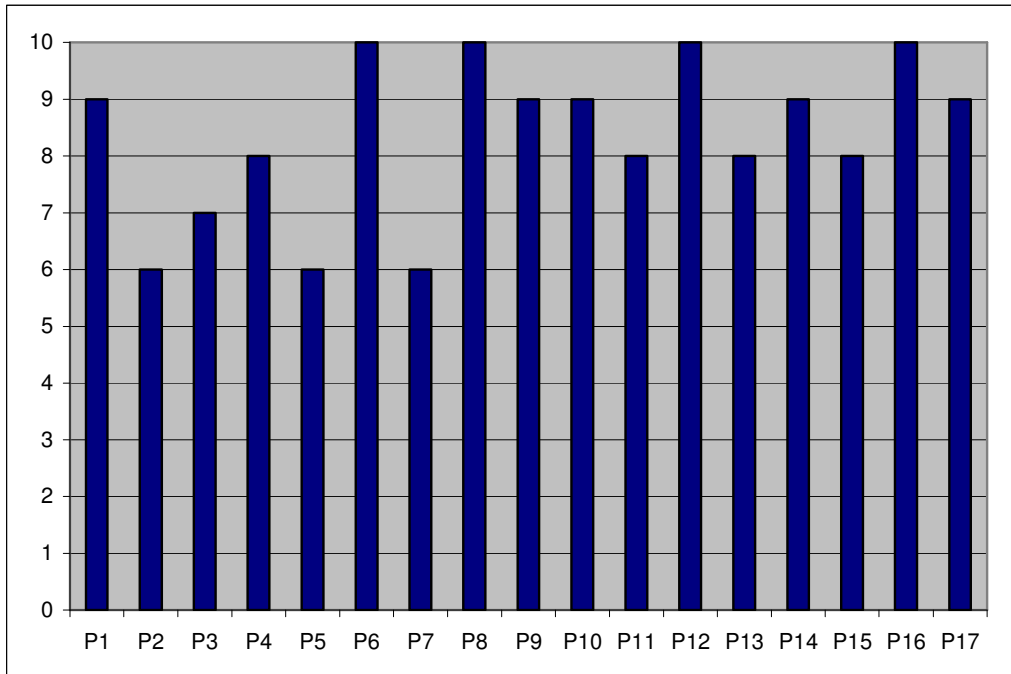
The responses to this question are useful when cross referenced against the responses received for questions 10i). 47% said they were mostly satisfied with the project with regard to cost certainty in answer to the question above. 18% said they were mostly dissatisfied with the project with regard to cost certainty. The comparative answers of the two questions are below only those who responded to both questions).



Interestingly the two clients who considered Coniston to be completely at fault for lack of time certainty were still mostly satisfied about the overall cost certainty of the programme, awarding a seven and eight respectively. However, of the clients that were most dissatisfied with the cost certainty of the project, only one considered that Coniston had part control over this situation.

These statistics indicate that cost certainty becomes difficult to quantify. The statistics do not show any pattern of Conistons bearing on the cost certainty of a project, the clients have very diverse opinions. Some clients who were happy with the cost certainty of the project, hold Coniston responsible for the issue, conversely some clients who were very unhappy with the cost certainty of the project, do not Consider that this was within Conistons control.

### Question 10i – Time Predictability

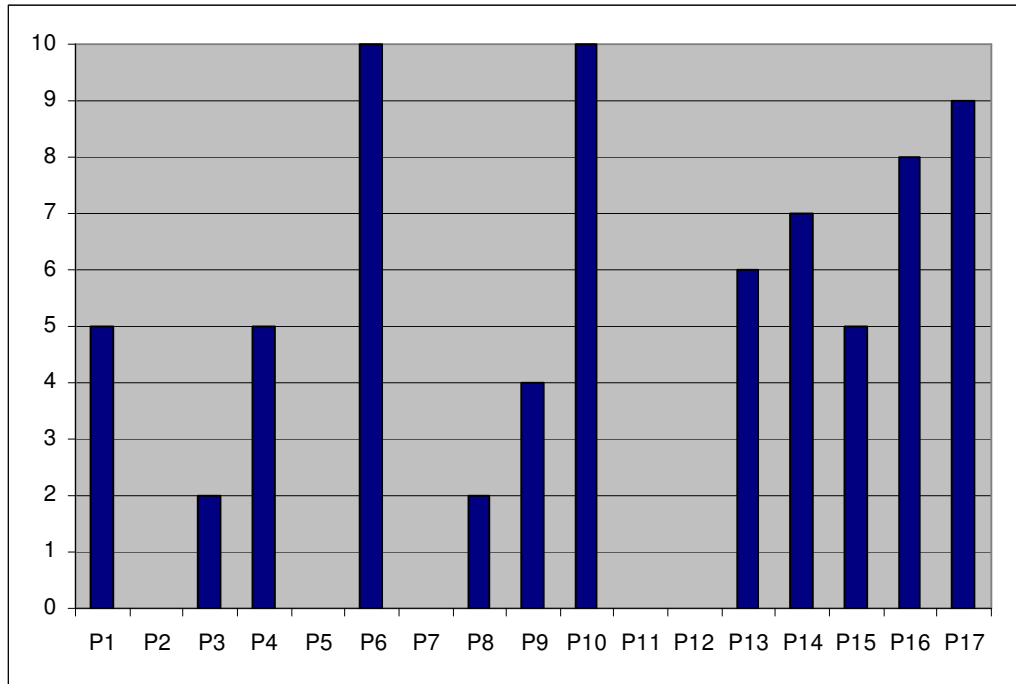


Coniston were awarded an average score of 8.3 out of ten for time predictability. This is a 0.7 increase on the statistics gathered from the previous year, showing a marked improvement. 24% of our clients awarded us ten out of a possible ten for the time predictability of their project and no client awarded Coniston lower than a six.

The target set from the previous years report was for an average of no less than eight therefore Coniston have successfully achieved the continual improvement they aimed for year on year.

### Question 10ii – Time Fault

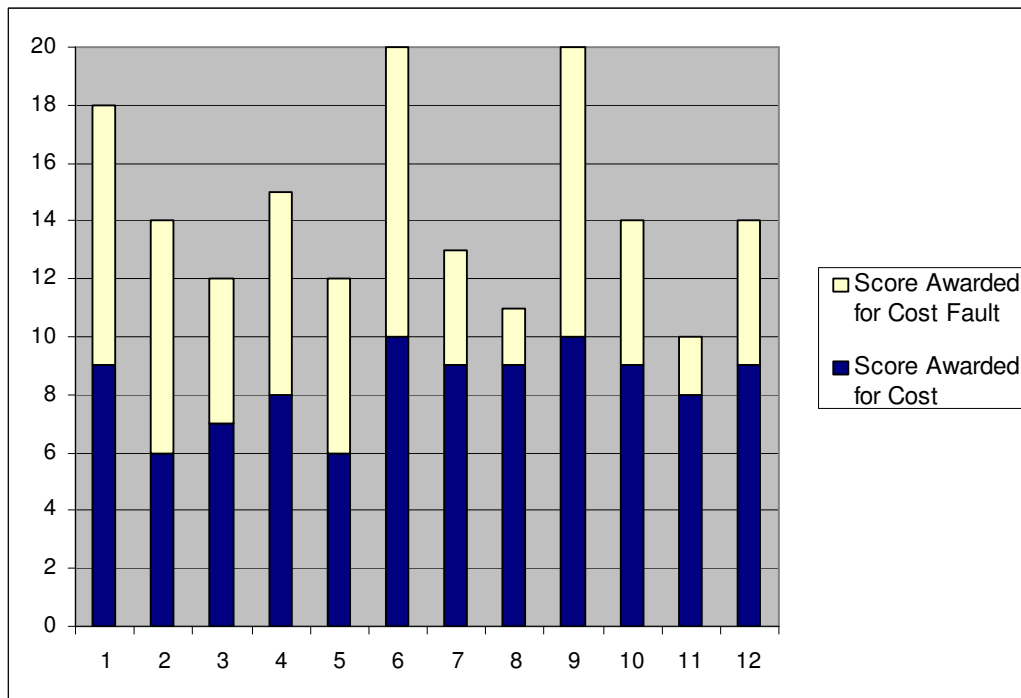
Similarly, to the cost question above Coniston added an additional question to the 2007 questionnaires to establish who the client considered responsible for any lack of time predictability on their project.



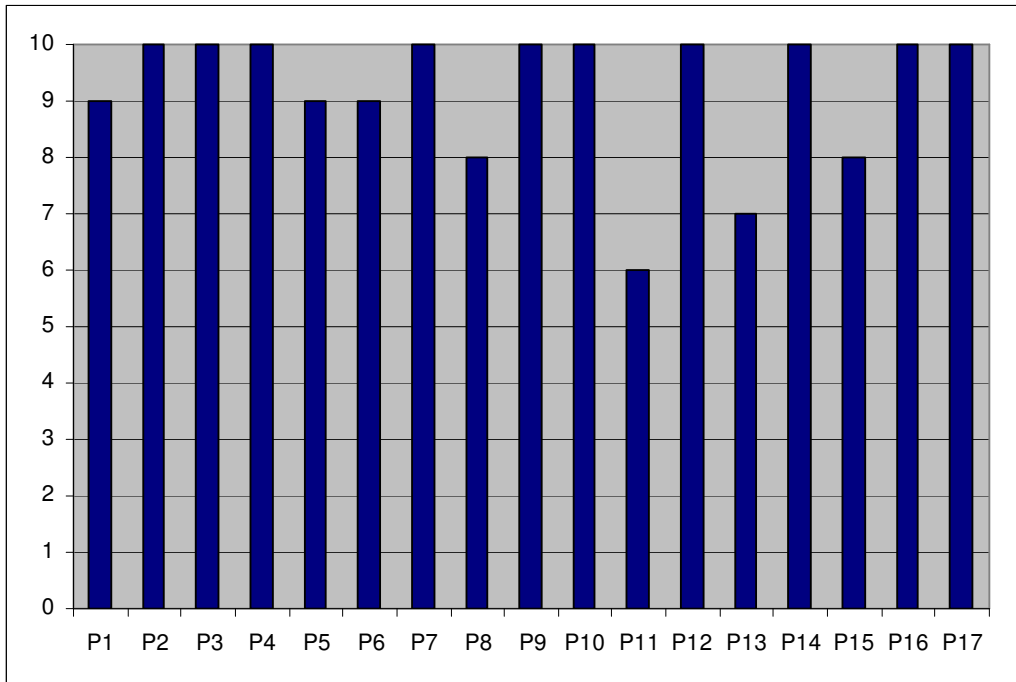
The table illustrates some very diverse results for this question. Five of the respondents left this question blank. Four of these five respondents answered that they were mostly or totally satisfied with their project in terms of time predictability in response to question 10i, one client responded that they were 'neither' satisfied or dissatisfied.

Of those that provided a response to this question 16% considered that Coniston were in no way to blame for any lack of time predictability. However, as a general trend most of the clients that responded, even those that said they were mostly satisfied with the time predictability of their project, considered Coniston to be at least partly at fault.

The graph below shows a comparison of the responses for question 10i and 10ii (only those clients who responded to both questions):



### Question 11i – Site Operatives

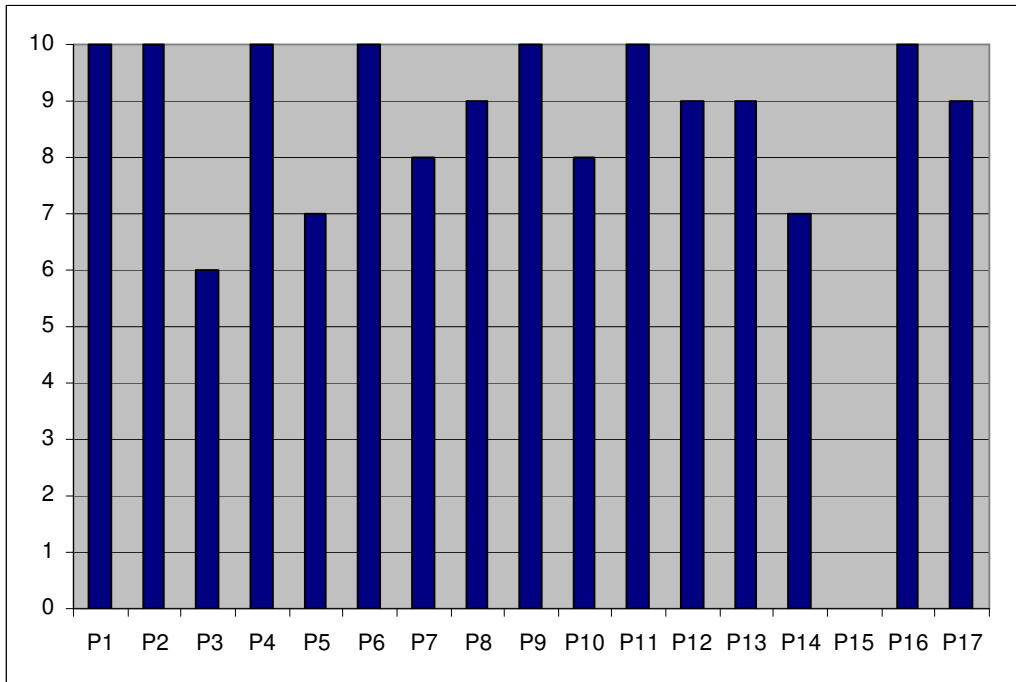


The above results equate to an average of 9.2 for the performance of our site staff. 59% of the respondents awarded our site staff 10 out of 10 on performance.

Whilst Coniston site staff always score highly in response to this section, this is the highest average score recorded to date, and a 0.3 increase on the average score recorded in the 2007 report.

Coniston set a target in the 2007 report of maintaining their high levels of customer service, with a standard of no less than 8.9 average in this area. As the statistics show Coniston have exceeded this target and site staff continue to score highly in this area and remain one of the company's greatest assets.

### Question 9ii – Site Managers/Contracts Managers



One of the respondents left this section of the questionnaire blank. From the remaining sixteen responses Coniston were awarded an average of 7.8 out of ten, a 0.8 reduction by comparison to the results recorded in the 2007 report.

44% of our clients awarded a full score of 10 out of ten to our Site/Contracts Managers.

The results in this area remain relatively constant year on year, however this is the first year that we have seen a drop in the average. Coniston set a target of achieving no less than an average of 8.8 from the 2007 results, this target has been missed by 1.

**Question 10 – Recommendations**

When asked if clients would recommend Coniston as a main contractor or use Conistons services again, all seventeen clients (100%) said that they would recommend or use Coniston again.

The 2007 report shows that 89% of our clients said they would recommend us, therefore the 2008 results show not only an 11% improvement on the statistics but also that Coniston have achieved the target of 90% in this area set last year.

## **Comments**

'A well run contract, well received by end user and client'

'Find Coniston to be pro-active in solving problems'

'Some issues in completion delays due to supplier problems'

'This is the second toilet project that I have worked on with Coniston. The reason for selection on the second project was due to good performance. Coniston proved their worth and again performed extremely well, finishing early to meet the clients requirement and programme for exhibition opening. I found all Coniston staff to be extremely helpful and everyone worked well as a team – very well done'

'Mark and the team on site worked very hard to provide a good quality scheme. They were helpful, professional and a credit to your company'

'Very efficient and helpful'

'Andy and the team worked well on a fairly difficult, tight scheme. The guys on the station were impressed with attitude, performance and standard of the works and the team on site'

## Summary

A summary of this report is as follows:

- 63% of the questionnaires sent out were completed and returned. This is a drop of 23% from the previous year and misses the benchmark set in the 2007 report of 89%.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark of attaining an average score of 8.7 for client satisfaction with regard to product, with a score of 8.7 attained.
- The results show an average score of 8.7 out of ten for communication prior to contract execution.
- The results show an average score of 8.7 out of ten for communication during contract execution.
- The results show an average score of 8 out of ten for communication post contract execution – lower than the other two scores for communication.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark in attaining an average score of 8 for client satisfaction with regard to defects, with a score of 8.5 attained.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark score of 8.5 out of ten for client satisfaction with regard to service, with a score of 8.9 attained.
- Coniston did not achieve their benchmark score of 8 out of ten for client satisfaction with regard to cost, with a score of 7.5 attained.
- The statistics for whom the client considers responsible for any lack of cost certainty on a project do not show any pattern, and at this point are not considered a useful guide of the score awarded for cost certainty.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark score of 8 out of ten for client satisfaction with regard to time predictability, with a score of 8.3 attained.
- The statistics for whom the client considers responsible for any lack of time predictability on a project do not show any pattern, and at this point are not considered a useful guide of the score awarded for time predictability.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark score of 8.9 out of ten for the performance of their site staff, with a score of 9.2 attained – the highest score ever recorded in this section of our KPI report since its inception.
- Coniston did not achieve their benchmark score of 8.8 out of ten for the performance of their contracts managers, with a score of 7.8 attained.
- Coniston achieved their benchmark of 90% of clients who would be willing to recommend or use Coniston again, attaining a 100% positive response to this question.

## Conclusions

Once again, despite the drop in return rates, the questionnaires are providing a useful insight into satisfaction levels of our clients and how Coniston are performing compared to national patterns. In 2007 a number of questions were added to the questionnaire to provide greater information that the company and the ISO required. It is speculative as to whether the addition of these questions has led to the drop in response rates. As mentioned in the first section of this report it is suggested that Contracts Managers have a greater involvement in distributing these questionnaires when the project is practically complete to place a greater emphasis on their completion and encourage clients to return them. However, the questionnaire structure is such that it is providing useful information and no questions shall be removed from the current format.

Most areas covered in the questionnaire show a good level of customer satisfaction across the business, equating to national benchmark scores that put Coniston in the top third of contractors in the country – even higher in some areas.

Coniston achieved their targets in most areas in this questionnaire missing their target in only three areas – cost certainty, performance of Contracts Managers and the questionnaire return rate.

Coniston are able to demonstrate through the results gathered in this questionnaire continuous improvement from the 2006-2007 questionnaires. By monitoring and measuring our performance we are able to benchmark ourselves against our own targets and national statistics.

Coniston set out to include additional questions in the questionnaire this year, recommended in last years report. These questions were successfully added, and whilst the data gathered from these questions is not considered a representative sample on which to base analysis, the questions shall remain in the questionnaire for comparison.

Coniston set out to include accident frequency rates in accordance with the guidelines of Constructing Excellence, to their KPI statistics this year. However, due to lack of resources these statistics have not been gathered. This remains a target for Coniston for next years KPI scheme.

Coniston also set out to broaden the scope of our KPI scheme, to include minor works. The questionnaires contained in this report are only sent out to clients whose projects are valued at over £100,000. It was decided it would be useful to gather statistics on the performance of our minor works department, by adding a second questionnaire. This questionnaire was added early in 2007, and sent out with the operators who are responsible for carry out the minor works. However, despite the system being in place the questionnaires were not returned. Only six questionnaires were returned throughout the entire year, and all six of these were during the first few weeks of operating the system. Despite encouraging the operatives to provide the clients with a questionnaire the return rate was such that the system soon became inoperable. Part way through last year the system was abandoned and questionnaires were once again only sent to those clients where the project value exceeded £100,000.

Since the 2007 KPI report Coniston has successfully secured formal ISO 9001:2000 accreditation. As part of this process Coniston have developed a 'definition' of what is and is not considered a capital project. The 2008 questionnaire shall be sent out

to all clients with whom we are carrying out a capital project – using the ISO definition.

Coniston only carry out minor for a small number of clients. Virtually all minor works are carried out for clients with whom we have developed relationships and carry out significant repeat business. However, the minor works carried out by Coniston is considered to account for somewhere between 20 – 22% of the company's turnover, therefore is a significant part of the business that would benefit from statistical, quantitative analysis. To this end towards the end of 2008, all clients for whom Coniston has carried out minor works during the year, shall receive one questionnaire concentrating on our performance through-out the year, rather than on a project by project basis. The questionnaire shall be designed for exactly this purpose and will be distinct from the questionnaires used to gather data on capital projects.

## Targets

- Coniston shall seek to achieve a 80% response rate from both the capital project and minor works questionnaires.
- Coniston shall increase its KPI capacity to include minor works.
- Coniston shall broaden the scope of its KPI scheme to include accident frequency rates.
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 8.9 for client satisfaction with regard to product.
- Coniston shall maintain its score of an average of 8.7 for communication prior to contract execution
- Coniston shall maintain its score of an average of 8.7 for communication during contract execution.
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 8.7 for communication post contract.
- Coniston shall maintain its goal of working towards zero defects, with a target of an average of no less then 8.9 for defects.
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 9 for client satisfaction with regard to service
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 8.5 for client satisfaction with regard to cost certainty.
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 8.5 for client satisfaction with regard to time predictability.
- Coniston shall maintain its score of 9.2 for the performance of our site staff
- Coniston shall seek to achieve an average score of no less than 8.5 for the performance of our Contracts Managers
- Coniston shall maintain its 100% record of clients who would recommend or use Coniston again.

For more information on our KPI Scheme or the results contained in this questionnaire please contact Eleanor – [estedman@conistonltd.co.uk](mailto:estedman@conistonltd.co.uk) 01322 223231.