

## INSIGHT AND INTELLIGENCE



### The challenge

The Rural Payments Agency, part of Defra, has undergone considerable transformation to meet the challenge of fundamental change in how countries across Europe maintain their natural environments.

For RPA staff, it meant a long period of upheaval and catch up, as the operations to assess and make payments faced a ever moving target, Prior staff surveys has found a less engaged and responsive workforce. The 2005 survey response level was very low. For 2007, a new approach would be needed, if the improvements being made were to be monitored.

### What did we do?

From the start, Quadrant and research partner BMG new that the survey method would need to deliver all of the basic, simple, proven steps in generating a quality response. We began and ended the work as a combined client/contractor team with an easy open exchange of ideas and options for improvement. Inherited wisdoms, of always having 'done it that way', were challenged. Keeping to timetable was also important given the expectation of a campaign weary front hire staff.

We also tend to manage and minimise the workload of internal staff given that each was taking on many tasks to overcome the workload at RPA.

### What was the breakthrough for Rural Payments Agency?

In 2007 the breakthrough was all about internal communications, ensuring that staff and management recognised the importance of employee soundings. The timing of email, magazine and poster reminders and appreciation was vital to built the response effort across each of the ten day research period.

In 2008, we are appointed to repeat the survey and are looking to breakthrough with an even higher response rate, towards 66% and in line with other Defra departments and Civil Service Benchmarks.