

3.0 Publication Usage

This chapter examines how publications are used by respondents. Specifically, the following dimensions are assessed:

- recall and usage rates;
- circulation of publications within client organizations and retention; and
- uses and reasons for non-use.

The information in this chapter can be used to assess distribution strategies, to better understand how respondents use publications and to identify segments where Departmental publications may not be fulfilling information requirements.

3.1 Reception and Usage

Overall, the results showed that respondents recalled only 56% of the publications that were distributed to them. In part, this low level of recall can be explained by distribution dating back more than one year. Overall, publications that were mailed less than one year from the survey date were recalled 62% of the time compared to 50% for those mailed one to two-years before the survey and 39% for those mailed more than two years ago. Low recall levels may also be related to relevance in that respondents did not recall receiving publications because they were not directly relevant to their business interests (overall, 61% of respondents who did not use publications indicated lack of relevance as a reason).

Analysis of various segments showed some differentiation among recall rates. The following segments had *higher* than average recall rates:

- organizations with less than \$100,000 in annual revenues;
- businesses that derived at least 50% of their earnings from export;
- service businesses;
- small businesses with fewer than 20 employees; and
- organizations that had participated in programs sponsored by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

Segments which had *lower* than average levels of recall can be characterized by:

- revenues of more than \$10 million per year;
- no export activity or a lower dependence on export activities; and
- between 20 and 100 employees.

Overall, only 32% of publications were used by respondents (or 59% of those where respondents recalled receiving them). As shown in Figure 7, of all the documents