



## **STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION**

1. First, we thank you for providing the staff with this important opportunity to address the Governing Council. It is greatly appreciated by the staff.
2. Early this year, the Staff Association Committee (SAC) conducted an anonymous climate survey among the staff, as has been done regularly at two year intervals. Much of this presentation will relate to the results of that survey, as it is the direct voice of the staff. However I will first describe some of the context.
3. IARC staff have the great good fortune to work in an organization that represents one of the finer aspirations of humanity: to bring together people from around the world to reduce suffering from cancer. This is a great gift, which carries also a responsibility to honour the role and to respect the near billion people who, through their governments, provide us with the resources to help them and the several billion other people of this earth.
4. An important part of the responsibility is to ensure that IARC is able to continue its role, even when the global economy is not strong. It is a responsibility we all share, whether our role is at a laboratory bench, verifying accounts or managing others. There are sometimes sacrifices to make, of money, of ambitions, or even of principles. Asking people to make those sacrifices is possible only where there is mutual respect and a clear priority given to the common goal. Keeping that goal in sight is at times difficult, and the more so in a large and disparate organization. There are temptations to tribalism: Professional vs General staff, staff vs management, science vs administration.
5. In one sense we are fortunate to be a small, localized agency within the WHO and UN system. However, the affiliation of IARC with the WHO also presents some difficulties. The staff rules that suit the management of a large, decentralized and essentially administrative organization will never be ideal for a small research institute located at a single site. First and foremost, students and post-doctoral fellows play a large and essential role at IARC, but this category of employment is neither recognized nor understood in the UN system.
6. Second, vacancies are less frequent and more specialized, so the possibility to evolve with a position is treasured. For this reason, the decision to suspend the Classification Review Committee has been difficult for some staff to accept, despite the undeniable budget concerns. A related factor is the chronic blockage of the General Service salary scale. The importance of both of these issues is symbolic as much as financial, particularly as Professional level salaries have continued to

evolve. There was also the decision announced at the 2012 Global Staff Management Council that new staff will not have access to continuing positions. The United Nations Human Resources system seeks to create a climate of mutual respect and objectivity as a route to optimal productivity, but there are signs that this respect is becoming strained.

7. A third factor is the physical state of our buildings. You will have heard that the majority of the tower was closed during the summer 2012 for urgent repairs to the heating and ventilation system. The disruption was considerable and many staff worked in quite poor conditions during the closure. This was followed by an unexpected failure, in February, of pipes scheduled for replacement this summer. A chain of events left the Latarjet building without heating for several days and with inadequate heating for 10 days.

8. Some other factors impacted a smaller number of staff: the unfortunate fact that the IARC Host Agreement creates different tax regimes for locally and internationally recruited staff continues to create tensions.

9. Coming to the survey, the Staff Association Committee decided to make a number of changes in the questionnaire, to better target some issues at the cost of direct comparability with the previous versions. In particular, a number of questions were subdivided to seek to distinguish agency-wide issues from those specific to a Group or Section. Some questions which were seen as having little real value were removed and others were trimmed of superlatives.

10. You will see in the annex below that many of the responses were very positive: staff are proud to work at IARC, they feel treated equitably with respect to gender and other factors, they agree with the research direction of the Agency. Supervisors are seen to have confidence in their staff, to encourage ethical behaviour and the free exchange of ideas.

11. On the other hand, there is a significant level of discontent. To some extent this may be the result of the context already described. A system where there are at least three different classes of employees (Professional, General Service and "Non-staff": post-docs and students) with different conditions will always create tensions. Few research institutes will not have challenges uniting the incompatible cultures of orderly administration and creative science, and IARC adds national and cultural differences to the mix. However it would be dangerous to suppose that such problems are inevitable and insoluble.

12. Of particular concern are the responses to the harassment questions. This is not immediately comparable with previous years, as there are now two questions, on sexual and other forms of harassment. The responses were also changed from yes-no to a five point scale, to allow some subjective indication of the severity. The results indicate unacceptable circumstances for a relatively small number of staff, but they are supported by disturbing individual comments. Some note that their problems are no longer current, but this is the result of them changing jobs within the Agency. While all expressed knowledge of the organizational mechanisms for dealing with the issue, this does not imply that these mechanisms have been able to resolve the problems: procedures are not, of themselves, solutions.

13. A second concern is the significantly degraded perception of the fairness of recruitment since the previous survey. This is a concern particularly within the scientific groups, where grade-for-grade there is a lower evaluation of the recruitment process. IARC has an elaborate procedure

designed to ensure a fair recruitment process, but the perceptions demonstrate that administrative procedures may not always be adequate to address human problems.

14. In conclusion, we encourage you to read the annexed survey results with an open mind. Unavoidably, the depressed state of the European and world economies and the fears and uncertainties they bring will have influenced the results, but there are indications of other problems. Management has not been immobile, and we believe that they have an interest and a will to address these issues. As we noted at the beginning, ensuring the continued effectiveness of IARC in the fight against cancer is a challenge for us all, and the challenge is not uniquely scientific or financial, but human. IARC is nothing without its staff, and the members of staff are not easily replaced. To do our jobs we need resources: a suitable building, money for the conduct of studies and salaries, but also stability and respect.

15. We thank you again for your attention.

## ANNEX

### IARC Work Climate Survey 2012–2013

The survey administered early in 2013, while following the general form of the previous survey and repeating many of the same questions also contained numerous changes. While it is desirable to be able to compare surveys of different periods, it is also appropriate to improve the instrument at the cost of total comparability.

The present survey contained additional questions in response to comments from staff. In particular, many noted that they experienced mainly the conditions within their Group or Section and felt unable to comment on circumstances in other groups.

We also split the question on harassment into two, one relating to sexual and other forms of harassment. Moreover these invited a response on a 5 point scale, consistent with the remainder of the survey, allowing respondents to give an indication of the severity of their experience. The supplementary questions for those who felt they had been harassed were dropped, as no one answered them in the 2010 survey.

Results are presented primarily as histograms to provide an immediate visual impression of the response to the questions. Subsequently, we investigated the possibility that some responses were heterogeneous with regard to gender, grade, duration of employment, type of contract and attachment to a scientific or administrative group. No significant heterogeneity was found with respect to gender, contract type or duration of employment, but responses to a number of questions did vary significantly with grade, and with scientific or administrative group membership. Hence in these cases we have presented the results broken down by these categories.

Note that in almost all questions a higher score reflects greater satisfaction. The exceptions are the two questions on harassment and a question on obstructions to training where the response is categorical.

#### *Results*

A total of 164 members and associate members collected codes to enable anonymous completion of the online survey. Of these, 134 were staff, the remainder being post-doctoral and other fellows and students. The response rate among staff was approximately 65%. The survey was completed by 142 persons. Not everyone answered all questions and the number of responses varied from 113 to 141. The question on grade was only answered by 125 respondents, so we have only lower limits on response rates:

	Number responding	Number eligible	Proportion
General Service	77	120	64%
P1-3	22	61	36%
P4-D	7	29	24%
Non-staff	19	86	22%
Total	125	296	42%

Many questions received very encouraging responses. Nine had averages of 4 or more (of a possible 5), with pride in working at IARC the highest. Nineteen were at or above 3.5.

Question	Number Responding	Mean Score /5
Proud to work at IARC	138	4.5
Supervisor has confidence	133	4.4
Treated with respect	139	4.1
Supervisor encourages ethics	126	4.1
Work satisfaction	141	4.1
Demographic equity	135	4.1
Confidence in supervisor	137	4.0
Agree research direction	118	4.0
Gender equity	136	4.0
Supervisor open to ideas	140	3.9
Supervisor delegates appropriately	126	3.8
Free to express opinions	137	3.7
Supervisor gives feedback	138	3.7
Collaboration within Section/Group	138	3.6
Physical conditions	140	3.6
Talents and skills used	138	3.6
SAC doing good job	123	3.6
Efforts recognized	138	3.6
Supervisor communicates well	140	3.5

On the other hand, there were 9 questions where the average score dropped below 3, with the two lowest scoring at or below 2.5. Clearly there is still room for improvement, but we note that the two lowest scores were related to the level of bureaucracy. The Director of Administration and Finance has been making considerable efforts in this area and it seems that it may take a little longer for the benefits to become apparent.

Question	Number Responding	Mean Score /5
Develop skills beyond current role	132	2.9
Recruitment is fair	126	2.9
Efforts to attract and retain good staff	130	2.9
P vs GS treatment fair	130	2.9
Scientific and Administration collaboration	130	2.8
Career opportunities	132	2.7
Supervisor invites feedback	133	2.6
Bureaucracy decreasing	113	2.5
Bureaucracy level ok	127	2.4

The questions where there were important differences between categories of staff were mostly in the above group of questions, the one exception being the question of stability of employment.

The perception of a stable position was much less common in scientific than administrative staff, presumably reflecting the large number of post-doctoral and other temporary positions. The other questions reflecting a difference of experiences between these two groups were on bureaucracy, fairness of recruiting and efforts to retain staff, with in each case the mean scores highest in those with administrative posts, intermediate in those working in a scientific section and lowest for those who did not specify their category.

Post	Stability of Position	Bureaucracy level	Attract and retain	Fairness of recruiting
Administration	3.9	2.7	3.1	3.0
Science	3.1	2.0	2.5	2.4
ND <sup>1</sup>	2.8	1.8	2.1	2.1

The other apparent divergence was by grade of staff. Fairness of recruiting is a concern for staff in the lower grades: the results (see last two sets of graphs below) suggest that scientific staff in P1-P3 grades are particularly concerned. The other distinction by grade is perhaps unsurprising, as it relates to equitable treatment of staff by grade.

Grade	Equitable treatment GS vs P	Fairness of recruiting
GS	2.1	2.4
Other	2.4	2.3
P1-3	3.6	3.2
P4+	4.7	4
ND	2.9	2.1

It should also be noted that in both of these sub-group analyses, those who chose not to reveal their status (ND, not disclosed) were an important proportion of the population and they have been analysed as a distinct group. It might be supposed that these people felt inclined to hide their identity because they were expressing negative opinions and were concerned for their confidentiality.

#### *Differences from the 2010 survey*

As noted earlier, many of the questions have changed and cannot be directly compared. Where there was an exact or reasonably good correspondence with a question in the 2010 survey, we have compared the mean and applied a test of significance to the difference. Those significant at the 5% level are indicated by an \*. Note however that with approximately 40 comparable questions, we would expect to see differences of this magnitude even if there was no real change of mood. Where the difference is significant after allowing for the number of questions, we have indicated it with \*\*.

At the 5% level, four questions indicated an improvement, three a deterioration. Restricting to overall significance, there were two improvements and two declines. However the two improvements were the two questions on the PMDS, one relating to review and one to planning. Both were compared to the same question in 2010, which covered both areas. The first question showing a strongly significant fall was "At IARC I am treated with courtesy and respect". While it is not good to see a decline in such values, it should be noted that the fall was from 4.5 to 4.1.

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<sup>1</sup> ND = not disclosed

A more serious issue is the remaining strong difference, in response to the question "*IARC recruitment processes are transparent and fair*", where the score dropped from 3.6 to 2.9. As noted above, this question also generated significantly different responses according to both grade and scientific vs administrative post.

Fairness of recruiting			
	Scientific	Administrative	ND
GS	2.1	2.8	2.3
Other	2.3	4	-
P1-3	2.9	4	3.5
P4+	3.6	5	-
ND	2.3	5	1.8

### *Harassment*

An important issue over the last several surveys has been the issue of harassment. This was reported by 12% in 2007 and 10% in 2009. In 2011 a supplementary questionnaire was offered to those who reported harassment, but none of the 7 (4.7%) made use of this.

This year we abandoned the additional survey, but made two changes: the question was split into two, one specific to sexual harassment, the other to all other forms. In addition, the responses changed from yes/no to a 5-point scale (from strong disagreement to strong agreement with having been harassed by a colleague in the previous 12 months).

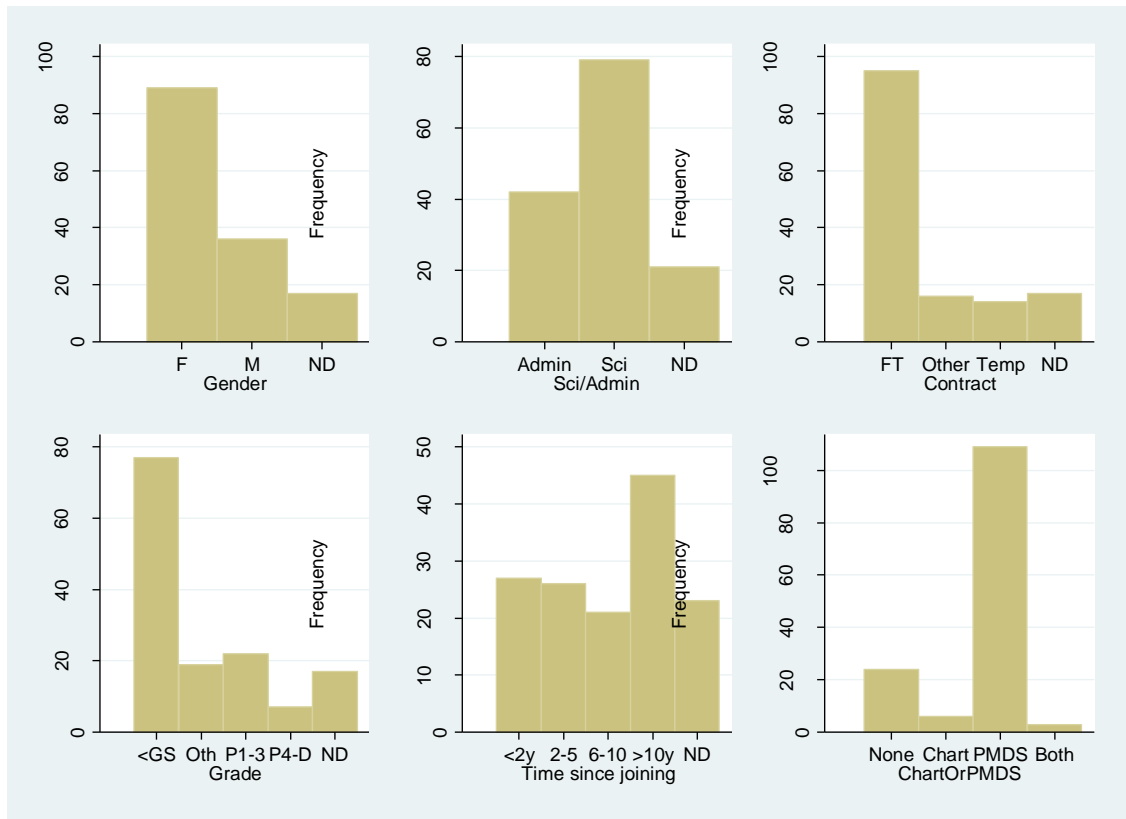
The results are displayed in the following table.

	Sexual Harassment		Other Harassment	
No response	8	5.6%	11	7.7%
Strongly disagree	128	90.1%	104	73.2%
2	3	2.1%	9	6.3%
3	1	0.7%	5	3.5%
4	0	0.0%	11	7.7%
Strongly agree	2	1.4%	2	1.4%

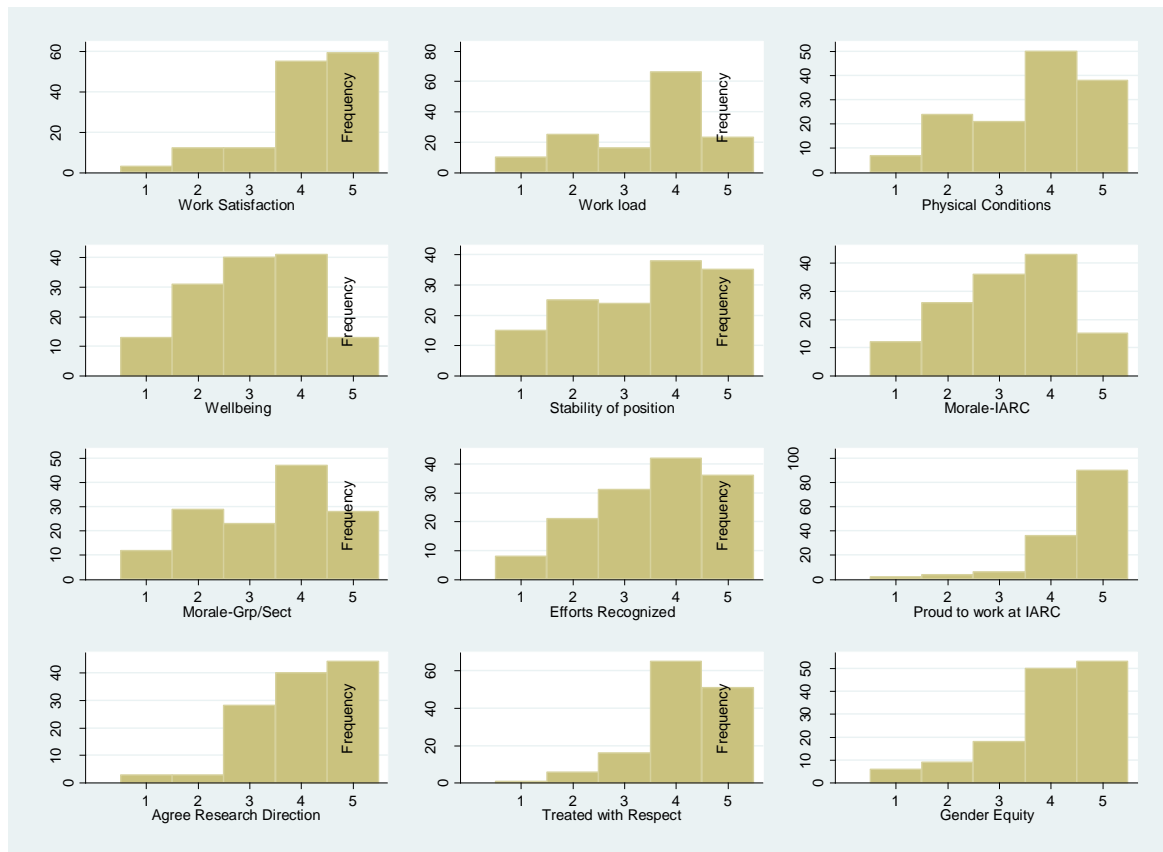
Hence the proportion reporting sexual harassment is slightly less than for all harassment in the previous survey, but we must suppose that not all the harassment previously reported was sexual in nature. It should be noted that those reporting sexual harassment were not disproportionately female.

A further point is that there is some overlap between the two questions, so the total number harassed is less than the sum of the two columns above: a total of 27 reported some concerns, with 17 (12%) giving a score of 3 or more. Clearly this remains an issue of concern for IARC.

*Demographics of respondents*

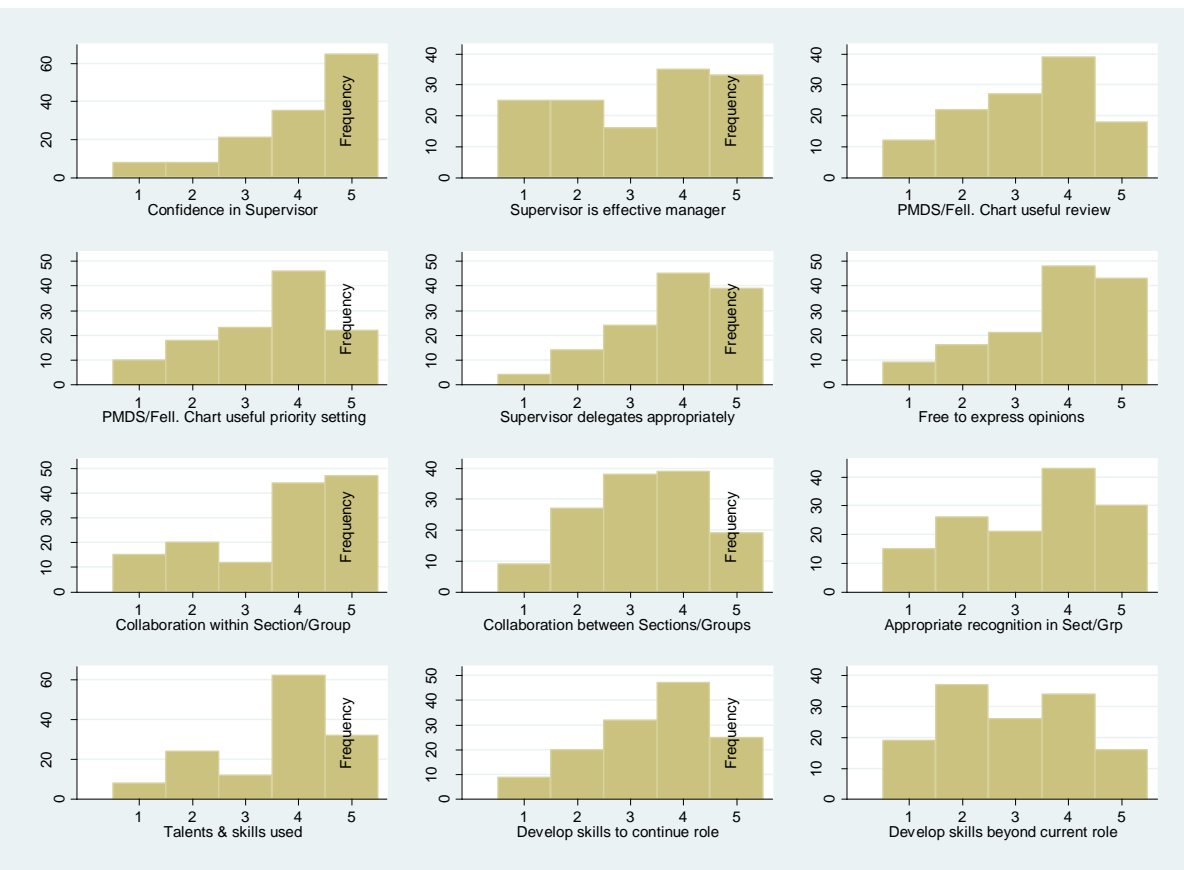
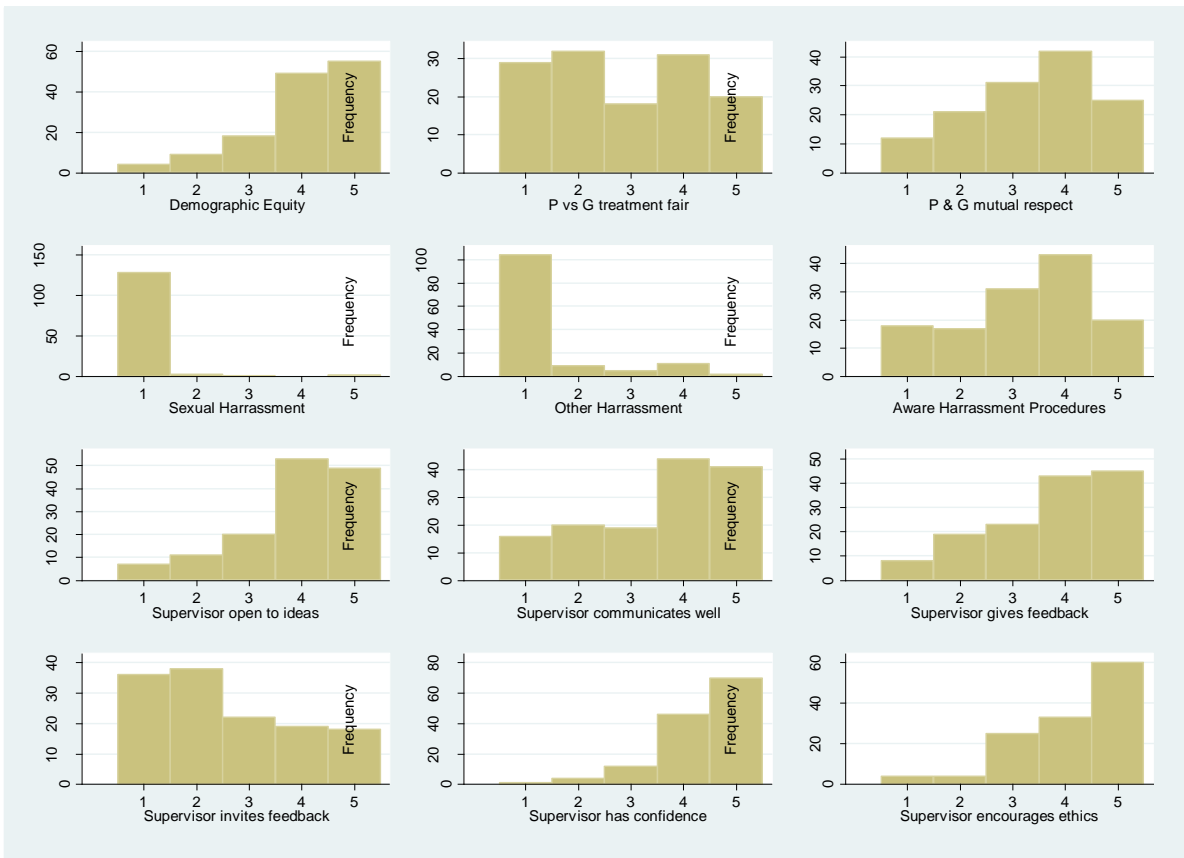


*Amalgamated responses*

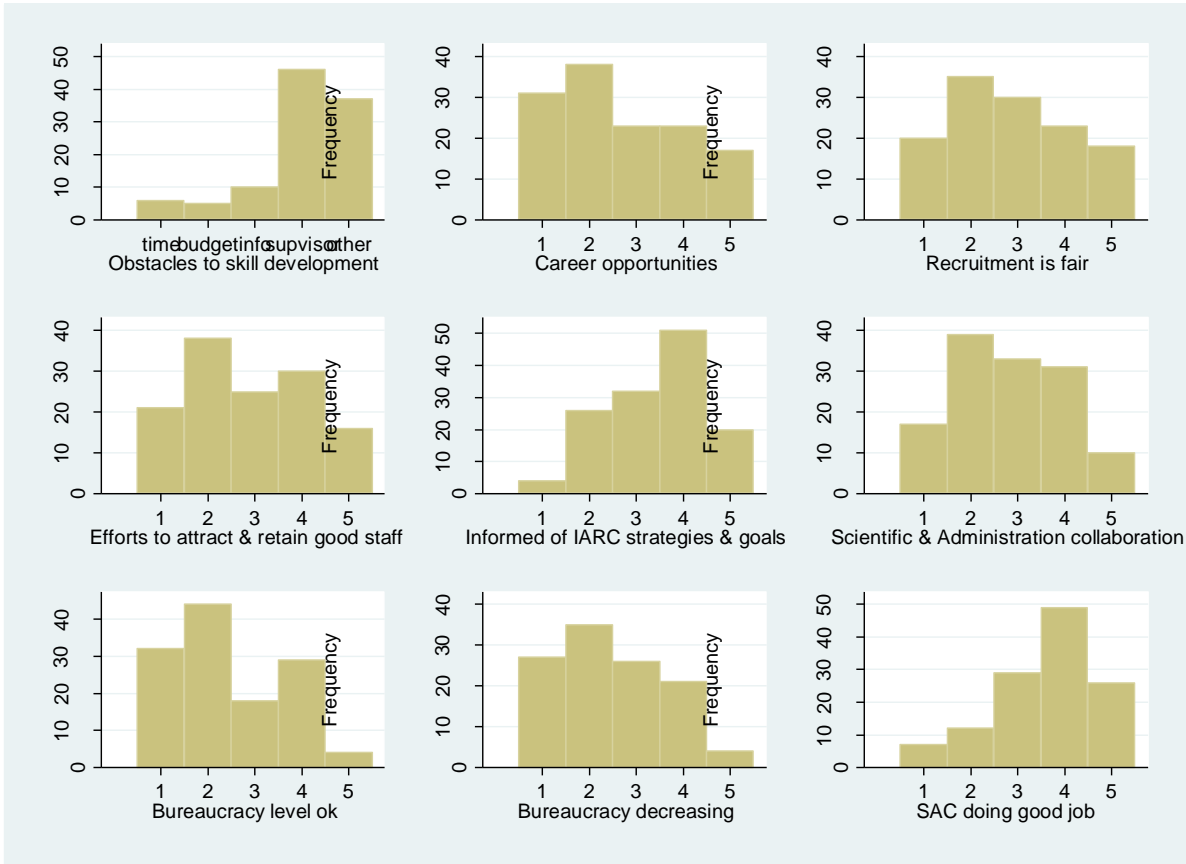




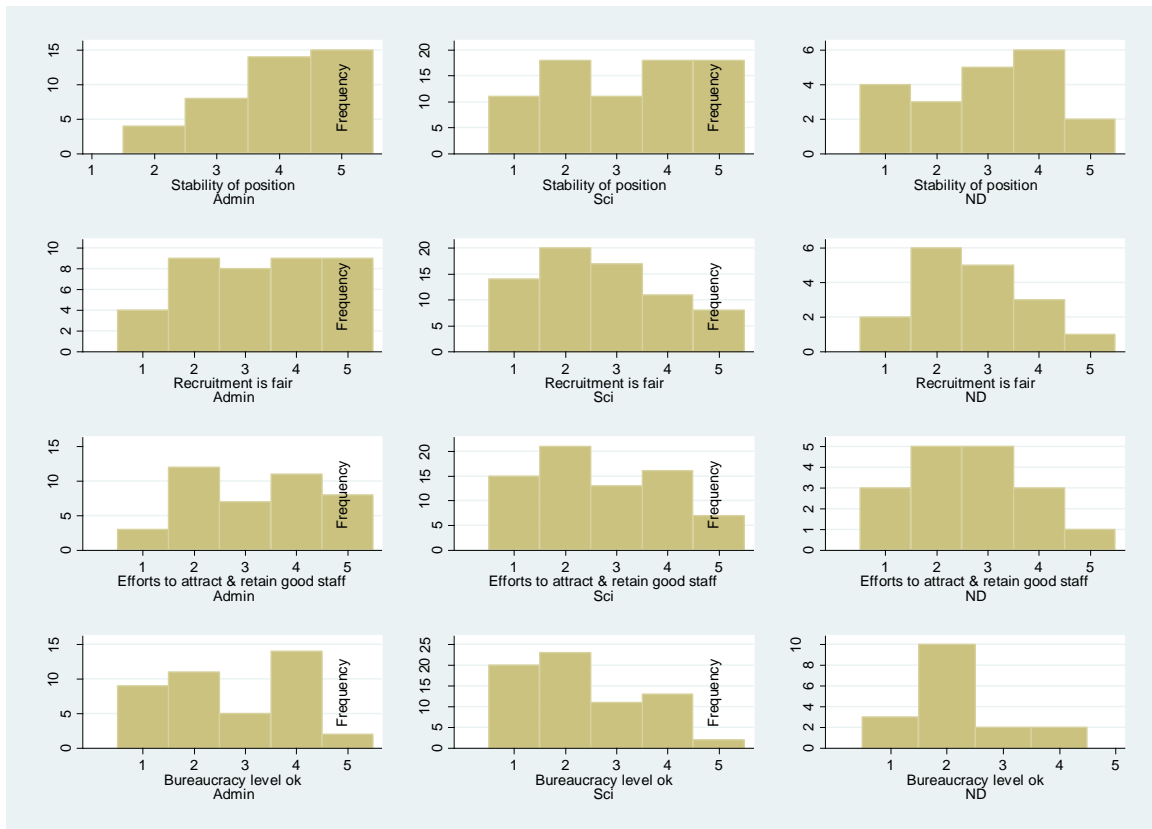
*Amalgamated responses*



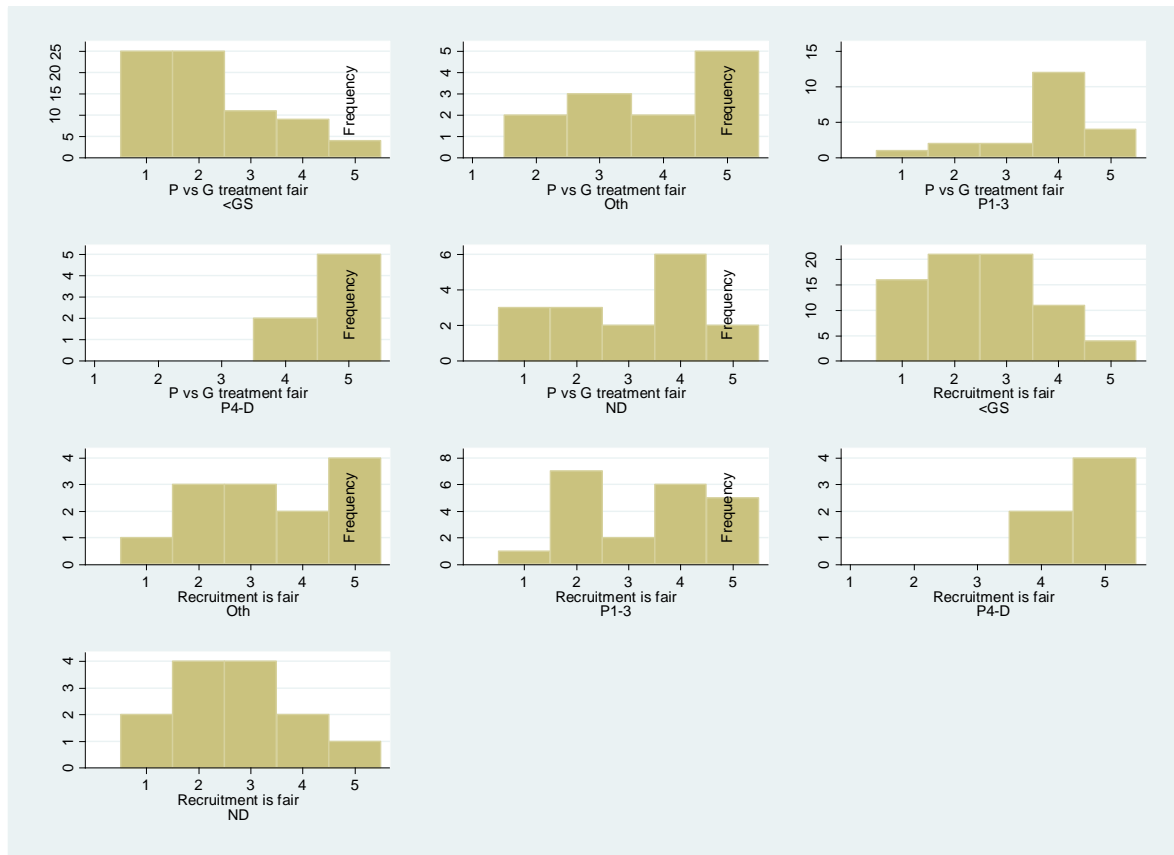
*Amalgamated responses*



*Responses differing by Science/Administration*



*Responses differing by grade*



*Full questions*

Question	N	Mean	Change	P-value
My work gives me a sense of satisfaction	141	4.1	0.2 *	0.04
My workload is about right	140	3.5	0.2	0.15
I am satisfied with the physical conditions at work (space, lighting, heat, noise, air quality, etc.)	140	3.6	-0.1	0.40
IARC makes efforts in favour of staff well-being and health	138	3.1		
I am satisfied with the stability of my position	137	3.4		
Morale at IARC is high	132	3.2	-0.2	0.10
Morale in my Group/Section is high	139	3.4	-0.3 *	0.02
My efforts at work are recognized and valued	138	3.6		
I am proud to work at IARC	138	4.5	0.1	0.36
I agree with the research direction taken by IARC	118	4.0		
At IARC, I'm treated with courtesy and respect	139	4.1	-0.4 **	2.3E-05
There is equitable treatment of men and women	136	4.0	-0.1	0.45
There is equitable treatment across other demographic groupings (national origin, religion, age, marital status, disability, ...)	135	4.1	-0.1	0.54
Both P and GS staff are treated fairly	130	2.9		
There is mutual respect between GS and P staff	131	3.4	-0.3	0.07
I have been sexually harassed at IARC during the last 12 months	134	1.1		

Question	N	Mean	Change	P-value
I have been harassed in other ways at IARC during the last 12 months	131	1.5		
I am aware of the procedures to follow in case of harassment	129	3.2		
My supervisor is open to ideas and suggestions	140	3.9	-0.1	0.60
My supervisor communicates credibly and effectively with me	140	3.5	-0.2	0.14
My supervisor gives me constructive feedback on my work performance	138	3.7	0.0	0.89
My supervisor invites feedback on his or her performance	133	2.6	0.0	0.79
My supervisor has confidence in my work	133	4.4		
My supervisor encourages me to work in an ethical manner	126	4.1	0.1	0.24
I have confidence in the work of my supervisor	137	4.0		
My supervisor is an effective manager	134	3.2		
The PMDS/Fellowship Charter is a useful opportunity to review my performance	118	3.2	0.6 **	0.0002
The PMDS/Fellowship Charter is an effective way to set priorities for future work	119	3.4	0.7 **	3.5E-07
Authority is delegated by my supervisor when appropriate	126	3.8	0.2	0.12
In my Group we are free to express opinions and are able to challenge each other	137	3.7	-0.1	0.52
There is good collaboration within my Group/Section	138	3.6	-0.1	0.49
There is good collaboration across Groups/Sections	132	3.2	0.3 *	0.0068
In my Group/Section people get appropriate recognition for their work	135	3.3	0.3	0.06
In my work, my talents and skills are used effectively	138	3.6	0.0	0.99
I am able to maintain and develop the skills I need to continue to perform my current role effectively	133	3.4	0.3	0.07
I am able to develop new skills in order to perform beyond my current role	132	2.9		
If any, my main obstacle to improving my skills is : Time / Budget / Knowledge of opportunities / My supervisor / Other	104	Most frequent: "Supervisor"		
I am satisfied with my career opportunities at IARC or beyond	132	2.7	-0.1	0.68
IARC recruitment processes are transparent and fair	126	2.9	-0.7 **	4.2E-06
In my view, IARC does its best to attract and retain excellent staff	130	2.9	-0.2	0.29
I am well informed about IARC's strategies and plans.	133	3.4	0.0	0.96
There is good collaboration between scientific and administrative Groups/Sections	130	2.8		
The level of bureaucracy is reasonable	127	2.4		
The level of bureaucracy is decreasing	113	2.5	-0.1	0.40
The Staff Association Committee (SAC) is doing a good job	123	3.6		