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CLIENT SURVEY STUDY OF DAC PEER REVIEWS

5 November 2002

The attached report was written by Dr Guido Ashoff, Consultant. Dr Ashoff conducted the client survey study under the direction of the Working Party on Aid Evaluation Informal Subgroup on Peer Reviews. The Subgroup met on 15 October 2002 to review the report and endorsed it for submission to the DAC.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. At the DAC Senior Level Meeting in December 2001, Members welcomed a proposal for a Client Survey Study of Peer Reviews whose overarching goal is to help make the peer reviews even more relevant to Member needs. The specific purpose of the survey is to identify the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the peer reviews in a systematic and client-focused way. To this end, after consultations with almost all DAC Delegates, the DAC Secretariat and the DAC Chairman, a detailed questionnaire was developed that served as a basis for in-depth interviews with key persons in Member capitals involved in peer reviews. This report synthesises the results of the responses given by twenty-one of twenty-three DAC Members and comes up with a number of conclusions and recommendations.

Overall importance and utility of the peer reviews

2. The peer reviews are a core function of the DAC: the interviewees almost unanimously considered them to be highly important within the DAC's activities. On balance, most Members (sixteen) are satisfied with the peer reviews, and the same number declared that the reviews had a high or some impact on their aid policies and practices. On the other hand, Members are seeking improvements in several areas. As a consequence, the peer reviews deserve particular attention and efforts aimed at improvement should be made in the knowledge that Members see a need for the reviews and have benefited from them. Two main areas of concern were indicated most frequently by the Members less satisfied with the peer reviews: too little comparative discussion and joint learning in the DAC on the basis of the peer reviews, and weaknesses in methodology.

Goals of the peer reviews

3. According to the survey, the peer reviews are based on sound goals: all Members interviewed consider the goals stated in the *Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews* to be appropriate or highly appropriate. A few modifications in the presentation rather than the substance of the goals were suggested, concerning, among other things, explicit references to the importance of assessing Member performance also from the viewpoint of policy coherence and the field level perspective (both of which aspects have already been part of the peer reviews for several years).

4. Judging from their goals, peer reviews address three clients: individual DAC Members, the DAC as a whole and wider publics in OECD countries and the international community. The survey has confirmed this three-fold client orientation. Thirteen Members consider improving the *individual* and *collective* aid performance of DAC Members to be equally important. This view is underpinned by the observation that most Members (sixteen) are in favour of the peer reviews having a specific focus relevant to the Members under review in addition to a common focus for all Members. Regarding the standards for assessment, however, the majority of Members (fourteen) advocate applying external standards (DAC

standards and other internationally agreed goals) rather than assessing Members against their own internal aims. The information function with regard to wider publics was almost unanimously considered to be highly important.

Scope of the peer reviews

5. Most Members are satisfied with both the scope of the last review of their country and the current “menu” of main issues of the reviews. As for the “menu”, however, they would like more weight to be given to issues such as policy coherence, implementation (as opposed to policies), aid outcome and sector approaches. Regarding policy coherence, almost all Members consider this issue relevant while half of them (eleven) are not satisfied with its treatment in recent peer reviews, referring to the lack of time devoted to it during the visits paid to capitals by the review team, insufficient analysis in the final reports and/or the lack of a common understanding of coherence in the DAC (definition, scope, standards). Reference was also made to the complexity of the issue.

6. As for the question whether peer reviews should assess Member implementation of *all* or only *selected* DAC guidelines, most Members (sixteen) prefer a selective approach, favouring either specific guidelines (e.g. on poverty reduction, conflict prevention or good governance) or suggesting that the DAC agree on a list of guidelines to be focused on during a given cycle of reviews and perhaps review the existing guidelines in order to identify the core ones and those that are outdated. A few Members prefer to focus on the guidelines most relevant to the Members under review.

7. The idea of treating issues of particular interest over a given cycle of peer reviews with an end-of-cycle discussion and analysis was welcomed by fifteen Members. The issues most frequently mentioned in this context include: policy coherence, poverty reduction, budget support and sectoral programme assistance, and outcome of aid. The opinions with regard to the length of the cycle differed widely, ranging from less than one year to a full cycle involving all Members (i.e. 4 - 5 years). For some interlocutors, the cycle should depend on the issue.

Standards for the assessment of DAC Member performance

8. Members almost unanimously consider the standards applied in peer reviews to be appropriate, with a number of interviewees qualifying this in two respects, however. First, several interlocutors do not regard the standards as sufficient, arguing that they are too input-oriented and therefore need to be supplemented by outcome-oriented standards. This view is supported by the observation that the large majority of Members (fifteen) are in favour of peer reviews assessing donors’ contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are essentially outcome goals. Second, eight Members advocated clearer standards in the sense of more measurable indicators and benchmarks and would like the DAC to reflect on this.

9. When asked how peer reviews should assess Member implementation of the sometimes very comprehensive DAC guidelines, eight Members stated that they would welcome the guidelines being supplemented by a checklist similar to the one on policy coherence annexed to the *DAC Guidelines on Poverty Reduction*, qualitative benchmarks or indicators (a task to be performed by the Working Parties or subsidiary bodies concerned). As for the MDGs, several Members, while acknowledging the difficulty to identify the contributions of individual donors to achieving global goals, have suggested that Members under review explain, and the review teams look at, the prominence given to the MDGs in policy statements, resource allocation and evaluations, thereby possibly providing good practices that can be shared.

Roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders

10. The overall impression from the survey is that most Members are satisfied with the roles currently played by the main stakeholders and do not see a need for major changes. This positive view, however, appears also to reflect a certain degree of realism with regard to what can reasonably be expected from Member countries. The *peer* character of the review process was considered satisfactory by seventeen Members. Nonetheless, ten believe it should be strengthened by Members devoting more resources to the peer review process in terms of qualified Examiners as well as better preparation for and more active participation in the peer review meetings.

11. The large majority of Members would not change the Chairman's, Examiners' and Secretariat's roles as well as the composition of the review team, except that the Examiners should actively engage at all stages and lead the review process as far as possible. One Member would like the Secretariat to focus on the more technical issues (to be discussed during a first visit to the country under review) and would prefer the Examiners to ask the political questions (during a second and main visit). While leaving the decision on whom to appoint as Examiners to the examining countries, a number of interlocutors would like to see a common understanding in the DAC on an Examiner profile.

12. Opinions largely differed on whether there should be a consensus between the Examiners and the Secretariat (favoured by thirteen and opposed by eight Members), who should lead the review team (very diverse responses) and whether a representative of a beneficiary country or a developing country organization should be involved in the peer review process as an observer (welcomed by thirteen Members, provided the country examined agrees and there has been a careful selection, and opposed by seven Members).

Peer review process

13. To judge from the interviews, three aspects need some discussion: the frequency of peer reviews, the field visits and the peer review meeting. While the current peer review interval (on average 3.8 - 4.6 years) was regarded as (highly) satisfactory by thirteen Members, nine find it too long and would like the DAC to return to shorter intervals because of the peer reviews' key role and overarching quality-assurance function. The field visits are undisputedly an essential element of the review process, but they appear to require some kind of a common format, which should be agreed on in the DAC, to specify what is expected from them and to ensure a certain degree of comparability.

14. Members almost unanimously consider the peer review meetings to be (highly) important, and two thirds said they were satisfied with the meetings. Those less satisfied mainly pointed out that, first, DAC Members did not always sufficiently prepare for and actively participate in the debate, and, second, the discussions sometimes had too broad a coverage instead of being focused on the relevant themes. Changing the role allocation among the actors of the peer review meetings is not an issue for most Members.

Resources and expertise available for peer reviews

15. The interviewees were asked to give their views on several options to improve the resources and expertise available for peer reviews. The idea to strengthen the role of the DAC's Working Parties (WPs) and other subsidiary bodies in monitoring Members' implementation of guidelines was rejected by thirteen Members, while seven welcomed this option, noting that some WPs had already initiated corresponding studies in the past and should do so more frequently with a view to providing more knowledge on the impact of the guidelines, on which peer reviews could draw. As for the WP on Aid Evaluation (WP-EV),

opinions clearly differed: while nine Members do not think it should play a more active role in the peer review process, nine others would like the WP-EV to contribute to improving the methodology of peer reviews, though without engaging in ongoing reviews.

16. The interlocutors were then asked whether the capacity of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring division of the Secretariat to conduct peer reviews should be widened by the following three options (positive responses in brackets): first, re-direction of resources and expertise from other divisions of the Secretariat to peer review work (thirteen), second, provision by Members of additional expertise through secondments (eleven), third, provision by Members of additional funding through voluntary contributions (eight). Some interviewees explicitly rejected the idea of secondments, arguing that the peer reviews might be unduly influenced by the providing country. Others considered the core function of the peer reviews to be incompatible with their being financed even partly through voluntary contributions. For the same reason, fourteen Members would like the field visits to be financed from the regular budget.

Documentation and output of the peer reviews

17. On balance, all documents were considered to be important, despite some notable differences: the DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations (MFRs) were given the highest scores, followed by the Secretariat Report and the Press Release. According to fourteen Members, the number of documents should not be reduced, while seven see a need for reduction, mainly by merging the Main Issues Paper with the MFRs. The general view is that these documents (including the field visit reports) should continue to be drafted by the Secretariat with as much input as possible from the Examiners. However, the majority of Members would like to discuss the MFRs and the Press Release in the peer review meeting, and eight think they should be formally agreed on in the meeting. Most interviewees considered the quality of the Secretariat Reports and the MFRs to be satisfactory or even better and saw both documents as frank enough. Half of the interlocutors would like the recommendations to be more specific (e.g. by highlighting good practices).

Follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC

18. Normally, about six to eighteen months after the review meeting in Paris, the DAC Chairman pays a visit to the capital of an examined country to discuss progress made in implementing the review's recommendations. Fifteen Members regarded this practice as appropriate. The idea of making the mid-term follow-up visits more formal, with a requirement to report back to the DAC, was welcomed by half of the interviewees and rejected by the other half. Almost all interlocutors think, however, that the Secretariat Reports should as a rule devote a section to progress made by Members examined since they were last reviewed.

19. The follow-up to the peer reviews for the sake of experience-sharing and collective learning in the DAC appears to be the weakest part of the peer review process: the majority considered it less satisfactory or unsatisfactory, pointing out that they had not seen much comparative discussion, let alone systematic efforts to synthesise and document lessons learnt and good practices.

Impact of and follow-up to the peer reviews in the examined countries

20. According to the survey, the peer reviews had a "high impact" in ten Member countries and "some impact" in six of them. This impact is due to three factors, each of which is a necessary but not sufficient condition: the analytical quality of the reviews, their "institutional" quality as reviews conducted by an independent and prestigious organisation from outside, and the political context in the country

examined, which may or may not be conducive to bringing about an impact. Members use the reports in a number of ways ranging from “low profile” use to “very high profile” use. The reports tend to be widely disseminated among those interested and are often also put on the Internet. The interviewees regard the reports on other Members as useful for the work of their own aid administrations but admit that in practice their use appears rather limited.

Recommendations

21. The most important areas for improvement would be a) collective learning from the peer reviews in the DAC, b) the scope (or coverage) of the peer reviews which, if more strongly focused on specific issues considered to be of particular interest to Members, would allow more-in depth analyses and facilitate joint lesson learning, and c) standards, which appear to be in need of more outcome orientation and more analytical underpinning in the form of benchmarks, measurable indicators and/or good practices as reference points. Further recommendations relate to a number of more specific aspects of the peer review process.

INTRODUCTION

22. At the DAC Senior Level Meeting in December 2001, Members welcomed a proposal for a Client Survey Study of DAC Peer Reviews whose overarching goal is to help make the peer reviews even more relevant to Member needs and policy concerns. The Working Party on Aid Evaluation (WP-EV) has been asked to direct this work and has set up an Informal Sub-group of Members from Norway (which chairs the Sub-group), Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, U.K. and the U.S. On the basis of competitive bidding, the Sub-group selected the author of the present report as the external and independent consultant to conduct the study under its direction.

23. The purpose of the client survey study is to help identify the strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the peer review process in a systematic and client-focused way. DAC Members are key stakeholders in the process and their needs should therefore lead efforts to further strengthen the peer reviews. The client survey constitutes the first step to this end and is supposed to be followed by more in-depth treatment of the key issues identified through the survey. The background and goal of the client survey are described in greater detail in the terms of reference (ToR) and the inception paper attached in **Annex I**.

24. The method proposed for the client survey study was to scope out the relevant questions to be asked to DAC Members in consultations with three focus groups drawn from all DAC Delegates and with the Secretariat, followed by detailed discussions with DAC Member capitals on the basis of a questionnaire capturing the results of the focus group consultations and presenting them in a systematic way.

25. The consultations with the DAC Delegates and the Secretariat took place mainly from 12 to 14 June 2002 and were held separately. **Annex II** provides detailed information on the attendance of the different meetings. In order to give all DAC Delegates the chance to participate in the consultations, an effort was made to involve *all* of them instead of selecting particular groups. Of the twenty-three DAC Delegates, nineteen attended the consultations¹ while one Delegate had provided written comments. Regarding the Secretariat, there were several discussion rounds involving the DCD director, almost all members of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring (PRPM) division and four members of other divisions. In addition, the consultant had a meeting with the DAC Chairman on 29 May 2002.

26. The consultations demonstrated the great importance attached to the peer review process by the DAC Delegates, the Secretariat and the DAC Chairman and revealed a large number of issues that, according to the interlocutors, deserve in-depth discussions with Member capitals and further deliberations in the DAC later on. The productivity of the consultations is reflected in the large scope of the questionnaire. The draft questionnaire contained 64 questions clustered in eleven key areas.

27. The draft questionnaire was sent to the members of the Informal Sub-group on Peer Reviews on 27 June 2002 for comments; a copy went to the Secretariat. Members of the Informal Sub-group and the

¹ Including one Delegate with whom an individual discussion was conducted on 6 June 2002.

Secretariat who commented on it, generally appreciated its comprehensiveness² and structure and had no objections to the mix of standardised and open questions. There were quite a number of useful specific comments and proposals that have for the most part been considered in the revised version attached to this report. However, very detailed questions (in part technical in nature)³ raised either during the focus group consultations or in the comments on the draft were not included in order to keep the questionnaire manageable.

28. The revised questionnaire (attached in **Annex III**) contained 71 questions, some of which were sub-divided. Twenty questions were standardised, requiring an answer on a simple scale (e.g. “highly important”, “important”, “less important”, “unimportant”). The function of this type of question is explained in paragraph 6 of the introduction to the questionnaire. Other questions required only a “yes” or “no” answer. The majority of the questions, however, were open, inviting the interlocutors to express their views and suggestions. For the convenience of the interlocutors, the questionnaire contained an explanatory introduction. In addition, several key areas or issues were introduced by explanations based either on the 1996 Guidelines on Peer Reviews⁴ or the Information Note for Peer Review Participants⁵.

29. The questionnaire served as the basis for detailed discussions with key persons in DAC Member capitals involved in DAC peer reviews and named by the DAC Delegates. For their information, the questionnaire was sent to the interlocutors prior to the interviews. The key persons were not expected to respond to the questionnaire in writing. They were, however, asked to consider the questions before the interview with the relevant units of their development co-operation headquarters involved in DAC peer reviews *and* with their Paris-based DAC Delegates in order to be able to give their views and suggestions on all aspects of the peer reviews addressed in the questionnaire.

30. According to the ToR, the interviews were to be conducted in many cases by telephone, while a selected number of capitals were to be visited for more in-depth interviews. In his work plan, the author had proposed several criteria for selecting the capitals to be visited⁶, it was planned, on this basis, to conduct face-to-face interviews in nine member countries⁷. Because of the holiday season in most member countries in July and/or August and the ensuing time constraints of the interlocutors, it was not possible to visit all of the capitals selected; in addition, the interview phase could not be extended beyond the first week of September due to the deadline set for submission of the draft report (30 September 2002).

² According to one member of the Informal Sub-group, “the questionnaire looks a little prohibitive, but once I had digested the explanations you gave, I think it is a manageable proposal.”

³ Just a few examples to illustrate this type of questions: “Do they [Members] want amounts in Euros or dollars for European Members?”; “How many reports did they read thoroughly?”, “Did they look at the tables in the annex?”; “Do they want to keep ‘total DAC’ as comparison or ‘average country effort’?” This is not to say that this type of questions is irrelevant, but it can probably be dealt with more adequately by the Secretariat approaching DAC Members directly than by the present interviews with key persons in capitals at the senior level.

⁴ Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS); the Guidelines were approved by the DAC on 21 October 1996.

⁵ Information Note on the Peer Review Process for Peer Review Participants, 28 October 2001 (working document from the Secretariat).

⁶ (1) DAC Member’s explicit interest in being visited, (2) European / non-European DAC Member, (3) large / medium / small donor, (4) above / below the 0.7 % level of ODA/GNI, (5) relatively new DAC Member, (6) recent peer review experience. See also the author’s mid-term report on the Client Survey Study of 31 July 2002.

⁷ Japan, the U.S., Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain and Greece.

31. The present survey is based on the responses from twenty-one of twenty-three DAC Member capitals. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in five countries (U.S., Germany, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands) while fourteen DAC Members were interviewed by telephone and two Members answered the questionnaire in writing only; in addition to the telephone interviews, several interviewees also provided written answers to the questionnaire. The face-to-face interviews took about 3.5 hours each, the telephone interviews between 1.5 and 2 hours. A list of the dates and interlocutors of the interviews is attached in **Annex IV**. The author would like to take this opportunity to thank all interlocutors for their kind co-operation, without which the study could not have been conducted.

32. To synthesise the results of the interviews the author proceeded as follows:

- To start out, the frequency of the responses to the standardised questions and the “yes” or “no” questions was determined with reference to the four-stage scale (“highly important”, “important” etc.) and the “yes” or “no” categories. The results have been entered in the questionnaire in { } behind the questions so that they can easily be identified (see **Annex III**).
- In order to determine the interlocutors’ assessments of the issues addressed in the standardised questions, the answers were translated into scores⁸ and aggregated in the form of the latter’s arithmetic mean. The corresponding results are tabulated in **Annex V**, which provides additional explanations.
- Regarding the open questions, on which interlocutors were invited to express their views and suggestions, the author compiled the responses, identified common points as far as possible and determined their relative frequency.
- Finally, the results were summarised, arranged according to the sections of the questionnaire, with the last chapter presenting the conclusions and recommendations.

33. As mentioned in the introduction to the questionnaire, all responses were treated anonymously. Therefore no DAC Member will be named in the present report. For the same reason, Members were tabulated in Annex V in random order so that they cannot be identified.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY (SYNTHESIS OF THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE)

Overall importance and utility of the peer reviews

34. The peer reviews are a core function of the DAC: the interlocutors almost unanimously considered them to be highly important within the DAC’s activities. On balance, a large majority of Members (sixteen) are satisfied (in a few cases highly satisfied) with the peer reviews (Question 2a, average score 1.9)⁹ and the same number declared that the peer reviews had a high impact (ten Members)

⁸ “Highly important/satisfactory etc.” = 3, “important/satisfactory etc.” = 2, “less important/satisfactory” = 1, “unimportant/unsatisfactory etc.” = 0.

⁹ The responses to the slightly more specific Question 4a concerning the overall achievement of the goals of the peer reviews convey almost the same picture: fifteen DAC Members consider overall goal achievement to be satisfactory (average score 1.8).

or some impact (six Members) on their development co-operation policies and practices (Question 67a, average score 2.1). On the other hand, the survey has shown that Members are seeking improvements in several areas. As a consequence, it is fair to conclude that, first, the peer reviews deserve particular attention because of the importance attached to them and, second, efforts toward improvements should be made in the knowledge that Members see a need for the peer reviews and have benefited from them.

35. The responses of the five Members less satisfied with the peer reviews as a whole or with the overall goal achievement¹⁰ point to weaknesses which, as will be seen later, are also perceived (but given less weight in the overall assessment) by other Members. Among the main areas of concern stressed, two were indicated most frequently: the insufficient use made of the peer reviews for comparative discussion and lesson-learning in the DAC and the methodology of the peer reviews. The first observation is consistent with the fact that this function of the peer reviews received the lowest average score (1.5, i.e. between “satisfactory” and “less satisfactory”) by all Members when explicitly asked (Question 66a).

Objectives of the peer reviews

36. The goals of the peer reviews as stated in the 1996 Guidelines on Peer Reviews (see Box 1) are important not only in view of what peer reviews are supposed to do and achieve, but also with regard to the clients to be served. Depending on which client is addressed, the peer reviews have to meet different expectations. These aspects were treated in several questions.

Box 1. Goals of the peer reviews

“The goals of the peer reviews are to:

- monitor Members’ development co-operation policies and programmes, and analyse their effectiveness, inputs, outputs and results;
- assist in improving individual and collective aid performance in both qualitative and quantitative terms;
- provide comparative reporting and credible analysis for wider publics in OECD countries and the international community;
- share experience and foster co-ordination.”

Source: Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS)

37. According to the survey, the peer reviews are based on sound goals: all DAC Members interviewed consider the goals to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory (Question 3a, average score: 2.4). This positive assessment of the goals is supported by the observation that sixteen Members would not like to change or modify the goals whereas only 7 would like to do so¹¹.

¹⁰ The Members less satisfied with the peer reviews as a whole (Question 2b) and with the goal achievement (Question 4b) are nearly the same (four of five).

¹¹ Two Members answered the corresponding Question 5a as “no” (regarding the substance of the goals) and “yes” (regarding the presentation or weight of some of the goals).

38. The Members wishing to change or modify goals proposed, among others, the following points¹²:

- explicit reference to the issue of policy coherence in the sense that peer reviews should monitor not only ODA policies and programmes but also the impact of other policies on partner countries, i.e. the “development-friendliness” of DAC Member policies in such areas as trade, agriculture, migration, and climate change;
- explicit reference to the importance of monitoring Member performance not only at headquarters’ level but also in the field (including partner countries’ ownership);
- clearer distinction between goals and means (“monitoring” being a mean rather than a goal).

39. The goal of improving the *individual* and *collective* aid performance of DAC Members suggests two clients for the peer reviews: the individual Members and the DAC as a whole. The 1996 Guidelines do not specify their relative weights. The interlocutors were asked whether they consider both aspects to be equally important or whether they would assign them different levels of importance. This question (No. 6) is of interest for specifying the relevance, client orientation, focus and standards for assessment of the peer reviews. There are two stylised views which are not mutually exclusive (except if put to an extreme), but require some reflection.

- One view is that the most important client of the peer reviews is the reviewed Member itself and not the DAC as a whole, that a Member under review learns more from an assessment of its own progress over time than from other DAC Members’ experience, and that, as a consequence, peer reviews should focus primarily on specific issues relevant to Members when examined and assess Members against their own internal policies and goals rather than on external standards.
- The other view does not doubt that the individual DAC Members are the ultimate clients since the DAC comprises twenty-three different donors, but instead emphasises the comparative “lessons learned” process through which Members are supposed to improve their performance. According to this view, it is important to set high standards and disseminate best practices in order to push Members up rather than move them along their individual learning curves and thereby shift them to some unspecified average. Consequently, the peer reviews should also be used for collective learning in the DAC. Proponents of this view point out that the DAC standards are common standards, which together with the internationally agreed standards (Millennium Development Goals, MDGs) should be reflected in Member policies and practices¹³.

40. According to the survey, the majority of DAC Members prefer a balanced approach as far as the thematic focus of the peer reviews is concerned, while advocating assessment against collectively agreed (external) standards:

¹² In addition, one suggestion was to specify what Members understand by “effectiveness” (including for instance the contribution of ODA to mobilising other types of flows to partner countries or the impact of ODA on structural change in partner countries) and to put more emphasis on the fourth goal (“share experience and foster co-ordination”). It appears, however, that these two points are a question not of goals but of the standards used to assess the effectiveness and of the practice of experience-sharing regarded by many Members as less satisfactory.

¹³ Another argument refers to the specific value added of the DAC in the sense that peer reviews assess Members against commonly agreed standards whereas an assessment of Members against internal standards could also be undertaken on a Member’s own initiative without involving the DAC.

- Thirteen Members consider the goals of improving the *individual* and *collective* aid performance to be equally important, whereas eight assign them different levels of importance (Question 7)¹⁴.
- According to sixteen Members, the peer reviews should have a specific focus relevant to Members at the time of the review in addition to a common basis for all peer reviews¹⁵.
- On the other hand, there was a clear preference for assessing Members against external standards (DAC standards, MDGs)¹⁶ rather than internal aims (fourteen Members are in favour of external standards, two advocate internal standards only, and five suggest both types of standards provided Members' internal goals are relevant and clear). The collective perspective is supported by the fact that in the case of a common basis for all peer reviews, most Members (fourteen) would like comparability of results to be given even more attention¹⁷.

41. It follows that both the individual Members and the DAC as a whole are clients of the peer reviews: the former as the ultimate beneficiaries and the latter as the common forum in which the results of the reviews are used for collective lesson-learning for the process of generating common standards and disseminating good practices that will in turn benefit the individual Members. Consequently, it is important for the DAC to ensure a follow-up to the peer reviews at the levels of both the Members examined and the DAC.

42. The third goal stated in the 1996 Guidelines implies that the peer reviews address a further client. Members were asked (Question 7) how important they consider the goal of providing comparative reporting and credible analysis for “wider publics in OECD countries and the international community” (information function of the peer reviews). The interlocutors almost unanimously considered this function to be highly important (thirteen) or important (seven). On the other hand, Members appear to prefer shorter peer review reports¹⁸, so that it might be useful to specify the goal of “providing comparative reporting and credible analysis”.

43. Because of the three-fold client orientation confirmed by the Members interviewed, there is a complex set of expectations to be met by the peer reviews, i.e. by those primarily involved in a peer review (Secretariat and Examiners), but also by the Members under review, who are expected to provide relevant information in their Memoranda and during the visits of the review team to capitals and recipient countries, and, not least, by the DAC, which is supposed to use the peer reviews for collective experience-sharing and lesson-learning.

¹⁴ Collective performance was emphasized by four and individual performance by two Members. Two Members did not indicate a preference (in one case because of divergent opinions within Member's own aid administration).

¹⁵ As regards the question who should define the issues of the peer reviews (Question 14), most Members want the DAC to define the common issues of all peer reviews (or the peer reviews during a given cycle) and the review team (i.e. the Secretariat + the Examiners) *and* the Member under review to define the specific issues of individual reviews.

¹⁶ The MDGs were specifically addressed in Question 24: according to fifteen Members, peer reviews should assess the performance of Members by the contribution they make to achieving the MDGs; five Members answered in the negative (two for methodological reasons).

¹⁷ See also paragraphs 56 -58.

¹⁸ See paragraph 51.

Scope of the peer reviews

44. Overall satisfaction with the scope of the peer reviews is high. Two thirds of the Members interviewed (fourteen) said they were (highly) satisfied with the scope of the latest peer review of their country, noting that the main issues relevant to them had been adequately covered. Several interlocutors commended the comprehensiveness of the review, the relevance of the questions and/or the sensitivity to specific features of their aid system. The Members less satisfied with the scope indicated different reasons, three of which were also raised by other Members in answering other questions¹⁹: insufficient treatment of policy coherence, too little attention paid to the implementation and outcomes of aid, and lack of sufficient comparability of the reviews. The other reasons were concerned with too broad coverage and insufficient depth of analysis (three Members), uneven treatment of major channels of its aid (one Member) and perception of uneven treatment of DAC Members in the peer reviews (according to one interviewee).

45. The appropriateness of the scope of the peer reviews was more specifically addressed in Question 9, which refers to the main areas of scrutiny in peer reviews²⁰. Fifteen Members basically wish to maintain the current “menu”,²¹ though some qualified this by calling for more weight to be given to the following issues (in order of frequency): policy coherence, implementation issues (particularly at field level), outcome of aid, sectoral and cross-cutting issues (including sector programme assistance and public-private partnerships) and humanitarian/emergency aid. Some interlocutors felt that less weight should be given to policy and strategic questions (because of the international consensus on core development goals) and the headquarters level as opposed to the field level. While a number of Members would like the peer reviews to focus more on the outcome of aid, almost all interlocutors rejected the idea of doing so without paying much attention to the aid delivery system that generates the outcome (Question 16).

46. The issue of policy coherence has been specifically addressed in the interviews (Question 10) because of the great importance attached to it in the focus group consultations (and subsequently confirmed by its occurrence in responses to other questions). Almost all Members consider the issue to be relevant. Only seven think that it was adequately dealt with in the last peer reviews, while eleven Members are not satisfied with the treatment of the issue, generally arguing that policy coherence needs more in-depth analysis. Several interlocutors referred to the lack of time during the latest review of their country for the review team to adequately deal with the issue (e.g. for extensive discussions with other government departments concerned) and in some cases regarded the analysis by the team as insufficient (for neglecting either specific policy areas or institutional aspects or the fact that the EU is responsible for some policies). Some interlocutors would like the DAC to clarify the common understanding of policy coherence (definition, scope, standards) while others welcomed the checklist included in the *DAC Guidelines on Poverty Reduction* as helpful (though perhaps too long). Reference was also made to the complexity of the issue and the risk of overburdening the peer reviews by paying too much attention to coherence. There is a broad consensus among Members that analysis of policy coherence should focus on both the content of the policy issues and the institutional process for improving coherence (Question 10c).

¹⁹ See paragraphs 45, 46 and 40.

²⁰ The question was introduced with the following explanation: “Currently there are six main areas of scrutiny in peer reviews: (1) strategic foundations and new orientations, (2) aid volume, channels and allocations for poverty reduction, (3) sectors and cross-cutting issues, (4) policy coherence, (5) organisation and management change, (6) country ownership and operations.”

²¹ Three Members spoke out in favour of narrowing the “menu”, while four were for enlarging it (with one Member indicating both). Except for one Member who just wished that fewer issues should be covered by the reviews to allow for a more in-depth treatment, the arguments of the other interlocutors in favour of a narrower or larger “menu” are covered by those advanced by the interviewees who want to maintain the current “menu” but change the relative weights of the its main issues.

47. According to the 1996 Guidelines (see footnote 4), the peer reviews are supposed to monitor “the Members’ implementation of DAC’s agreed broad strategies and accepted principles and guidelines for best practice.” In the course of time, the DAC has adopted a large number of principles and guidelines²², which are of interest not only as standards for assessment but also in view of the scope of the peer reviews. Members were asked whether the peer reviews should monitor the implementation of *all* or *selected* principles and guidelines, how this should be handled in the first case (all guidelines) and which guidelines or which criteria for selecting them should be applied in the second case (Question 11).

48. Eight Members are in favour of the peer reviews assessing the implementation of all guidelines, the main argument being that all guidelines are valid and no one should therefore be excluded from the peer reviews. Having said this, however, three of the eight Members see a need to select the guidelines to be checked in the individual peer reviews to keep the review process manageable, a view shared by most of the Members in favour of a selective approach. Five Members would like the peer reviews to check Members’ compliance with all guidelines on the basis of previous information to be given by Members in their Memoranda and to address more extensively those guidelines in the final report on which compliance is doubtful or positive experience can be shared.

49. Most Members prefer a selective approach either explicitly (thirteen) or implicitly (the three Members mentioned above). Several interlocutors suggested specific guidelines they regard as particularly relevant, such as the guidelines on poverty reduction, peace and conflict, and good governance. Other Members emphasised the most recent guidelines or those closely linked to the MDGs or would like the DAC to agree on a list of guidelines to be given particular attention to during a given cycle of peer reviews (possibly based on proposals by the corresponding Working Parties or subsidiary groups of the DAC). A further-reaching proposal was that the DAC should review the existing guidelines in order to identify those which should be regarded as core ones and those which are outdated. A few Members suggested focusing on the guidelines most relevant to the Member under review (e.g. aid-untying), including internationally agreed standards like the Food Aid Convention²³.

50. One way to handle the complexity of possible issues to be addressed in the peer reviews consists in temporarily reducing complexity by selecting issues that are given special attention during a certain number or cycle of peer reviews. This approach has two additional advantages: focus would be placed on issues of particular interest to Members thereby increasing the thematic relevance of the peer reviews, and it would improve collective learning from the peer reviews, provided that an end-of-cycle discussion and analysis is conducted by the DAC. Fifteen Members declared themselves to be in favour of such an approach, including an end-of-cycle discussion. The issues most frequently suggested are: policy coherence (indicated by nine Members), poverty reduction (four), budget support and sectoral programme assistance (four), outcome of development co-operation (two), achievement of the MDGs (two), and harmonization of procedures (two)²⁴. Regarding the length of the cycle, the opinions differed to a large extent, ranging from less than one year (i.e. less than 5 - 6 peer reviews) to a full cycle involving all

²² The DAC’s *Development Assistance Manual. DAC Principles for Effective Aid* of 1992 contains nine different guidelines. In addition, there are guidelines, for example, in the following areas: environment (ten specific guidelines); private sector development; participatory development and good governance; gender; peace and conflicts; anti-corruption proposals; poverty reduction; trade-related capacity-building; aid-untying.

²³ According to one proposal, the monitoring of the implementation of DAC guidelines by the Members under review should be primarily the task of the Secretariat, with the Examiners focusing more on political questions (see also paragraph 65).

²⁴ Other issues suggested include: public-private partnerships in development co-operation, decentralisation, conflict prevention, humanitarian and emergency aid, operating in weak states, capacity building experience, relations (and dilemmas) between ownership and conditionality.

Members (4 - 5 years). Several interlocutors prefer to define the cycle on the basis of the issue under consideration.

51. There were three additional questions on the scope of the peer reviews; these referred to the extent to which Official Aid (OA)²⁵ should be included in the reviews (Question 17), whether the statistical component of the peer reviews should be retained, shortened or enlarged (Question 18), and what page length of the peer review reports Members prefer (Question 62).

- Opinions differ on OA: five Members do not want OA to be considered at all in the peer reviews while five others have no firm view, arguing that OA is not relevant to them but should be included if important to a Member under review; seven Members would like OA to be included in the reviews but only on the margin (e.g. by comparing ODA and OA volumes). It was noted that OA might become relevant from the viewpoint of efforts to achieve the MDGs.
- Almost all Members (nineteen) want the statistical part of the peer reviews to be kept as it is.
- There appears to be a general preference for shorter peer review reports, if the five Members are disregarded who had no view or said that the reports should be as long as necessary. Of the sixteen remaining Members, none wants the reports to exceed 80 pages and only three would accept 60-80 pages in the case of large donors. Ten prefer a page length of 20-40 pages (in part with the specifications “without statistics” or “for small donors”), while nine others prefer 40-60 pages (partly with the specification “for larger donors”).

Standards for the assessment of DAC Member performance

52. Members almost unanimously consider the standards applied in peer reviews (see Box 2) to be appropriate or highly appropriate.

Box 2. Standards applied (to varying degrees) in DAC peer reviews

- Basic DAC standards (e.g. aid volume according to the DAC’s definition of ODA/OA, the DAC’s list of aid recipients and the various statistical reporting directives of the DAC; DAC recommendation on terms and conditions of aid; tied aid disciplines),
- Other quantitative indicators (e.g. ODA/GNI-ratio, ODA to LLDCs, 20/20-Initiative),
- DAC’s agreed guidelines, principles and orientations (recent ones refer to such areas as: environment; gender; poverty reduction; participatory development and good governance; conflict, peace and development co-operation; trade-related capacity building)

²⁵ Aid to countries listed in Part II of the DAC List of Aid Recipients, i.e. countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs) and the Newly Independent States (NIS) + more advanced developing countries and territories.

53. This overall positive assessment has to be qualified in two respects, however:

- Several Members believe that the standards are not sufficient, the main argument²⁶ being that they are overly input-oriented and need to be supplemented by outcome-oriented standards. This view is not confined to a few Members only but is widely shared as can be seen from the responses to questions 24a and 36: fifteen Members are in favour of the peer reviews assessing donors' performance also in terms of the contribution they make to achieving the MDGs²⁷, which are essentially outcome goals; and nineteen Members think that they should engage more intensively in analysing the outcome of their aid policies, thus improving the basis for the peer reviews.
- When asked whether peer reviews are sufficiently analytical in the sense of assessing Members' policies and efforts against relevant and clear standards (Question 21a), nine Members answered in the negative, eight of whom pointed out that there is a need for clearer standards in the sense of more measurable indicators that can be used for comparison²⁸.

54. Part of the standards applied in the peer reviews are quantitative and therefore measurable (see Box 2). The plea by eight Members for clearer standards does not question the usefulness of these standards; it refers rather to the question of how to assess the outcome of aid and Member performance in essentially qualitative or political areas such as policy coherence or the areas addressed by many DAC guidelines. The interlocutors did not suggest specific standards or indicators but see a need for the DAC to deal with this question (e.g. as part of the next working programme).

55. The interviews did not leave it at that, however. To explore the analytical applicability of the standards currently applied in the peer reviews or to be applied (outcome-oriented standards) in greater depth, the interlocutors were asked two additional questions (23 and 24b): How should peer reviews assess Members' implementation of the DAC's principles and guidelines (a number of which are very comprehensive)? (Question 23); and: How should peer reviews assess Members' contribution to achieving the MDGs? (Question 24b).

56. The first question is not only of methodological interest; it is also related to the scope of the peer reviews (how comprehensive can and should they be)²⁹, their efficiency (what can be reasonably assessed in the limited time available) and their effectiveness and relevance (are the right things assessed so that one can fairly expect the reviews to meet their goals). Apart from several interlocutors (seven) who would like the DAC to discuss the matter or had no answer, there were two groups of Members who answered the question. The first group (eight) would welcome the guidelines being supplemented by a checklist³⁰, qualitative benchmarks or indicators. The other group (five) argues that the implementation of the

²⁶ One Member suggested looking also into the efficiency of aid ("good use of money"), arguing that donors are keeping an eye on good governance and efficient money-spending in beneficiary countries without doing the same on their own side.

²⁷ Six Members opposed this view, two of them for methodological reasons.

²⁸ This result is consistent with the overall positive assessment of the standards applied in the peer reviews. They are regarded as (highly) appropriate (though not sufficient), but their appropriateness appears to refer mainly to their relevance and only to a lesser extent to their analytical clarity (lack of measurable indicators).

²⁹ If the implementation of very comprehensive guidelines such as the *DAC Guidelines on Poverty Reduction* is assessed in detail, this might reduce the scope open for dealing with other aspects in a peer review.

³⁰ Similar to the checklist on policy coherence annexed to the *DAC Guidelines on Poverty Reduction*.

guidelines should be assessed “fairly generally”, “pragmatically” or “holistically” by asking Members under review to explain their compliance³¹.

57. As for the second question concerning the MDGs, most interlocutors pointed to the difficulty of identifying the contribution of individual donors to the achievement of global goals. Reference was made to UNDP’s mandate to monitor goal achievement at the global level. While quite a number of interlocutors had no specific response and would like the DAC to reflect on the issue, several Members suggested assessing commitment to the MDGs by asking the Members under review to explain, and the review teams to look at, the prominence given to the MDGs in policy statements and strategic documents, in the allocation of resources to countries and sectors as well as in evaluations. As long as there are no commonly agreed criteria to measure the contribution of individual donors to achieving the MDGs, Members should demonstrate their commitment and approach, thereby providing positive experience and good practices that can be shared by others.

58. The interest in having more checklists, benchmarks or indicators for the assessment of Member performance on the one hand and in using the peer reviews to greater extent for disseminating good practices on the other was also confirmed by the responses to another question. As pointed out above (paragraph 19), a large majority of Members would like to see the comparability of the peer review results enhanced. When asked how this should be achieved (Question 13c), most referred to the aforementioned points³². While welcoming more comparability, most Members (fourteen) are not in favour of ranking Members (Question 25a).

Roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders

59. The peer review process involves four major stakeholders (apart from the country examined): the DAC Members as a whole, the DAC Chairman, the Examiners (peers) and the Secretariat. The questionnaire explained their roles on the basis of the 1996 Guidelines (see Box 3). The questions were subdivided into the following sections: *peer* character of the review process, DAC Members, DAC Chairman, Secretariat and Examiners, and representatives of partner countries (who, according to a number of Members, might become a new actor in the peer review process).

60. The overall impression from the survey is that most Members are satisfied with the roles played by the main stakeholders and do not see a need for major changes. This positive view, however, appears also to reflect a certain degree of realism with regard to what can reasonably be expected from Member countries.

61. A large majority of Members (seventeen) stated that they were satisfied with the *peer* character of the review process (Question 26a). The common argument of the few less satisfied respondents was that Members do not always devote sufficient resources to the peer reviews in terms of qualified Examiners as well as active preparation for and participation in the peer review meetings so that the Secretariat tends to

³¹ One interviewee considered the guidelines to be tools to be used intelligently by the review team rather than a list of points to be ticked off.

³² The comparability of the peer review results is of course not only a question of indicators, benchmarks and good practices shared. It depends also on whether peer reviews focus on the same issues and treat them systematically (by asking the same type of question). Selecting specific issues for a more systematic treatment during a given cycle of peer reviews, as suggested by a number of Members, can effectively contribute to enhancing comparability.

play the key role. Ten Members (the four less satisfied and six satisfied) believe the *peer* character should be strengthened and to this end have mainly made the following proposals³³:

- The examining countries should appoint qualified Examiners and give them sufficient time to play an active role during the whole peer review process (which is obviously a question of resources at headquarters level and, according to some interlocutors, might be difficult in practice).
- There should perhaps be a discussion in the DAC of the Memorandum submitted by the Member under review and supposed to start the review process.

Box 3. Roles of the major stakeholders involved in the peer review process

The peer review process involves four major stakeholders (apart from the country examined): the Secretariat, the Examiners, the DAC Chairman and the DAC Members. The 1996 Guidelines specify their roles as follows:

Secretariat and Examiners

- “Each DAC Member is reviewed at agreed intervals. The Secretariat does the planning and maintains the roster for naming two Members as Examiners for each Review, in consultation with Members.”
- “Examiners work with the Secretariat to prepare the Review including the Main Issues paper. Examiners and Secretariat visit examined Members' headquarters and if possible field operations in recipient countries in preparing the Review. Examiners and Members should seek input from their headquarters and field missions to prepare for Reviews.”
- At the peer review meeting, the Examiners make their statements leading into the round of questions, referring to the Main Issues paper and highlighting what they consider the most important issues. Examiners, other Members and the Secretariat may pose follow-up questions.
- “The examined Member, the Secretariat and the Examiners meet for an editorial session following the Review to finalise the Summary and Conclusions in the Draft Secretariat Report to accord with the Committee discussion and make any final corrections in the report.”

DAC Chairman:

- The Chairman leads and introduces the aid review meeting. “At the conclusion of the Review, the Chair will summarise selected main findings of the Review and issue a press release.”
- “The Chair is pursuing the practice of follow-up visits to capitals of countries, normally within six months after the publication of the review, (...) to pursue the value and use being made of the Review results (...).”

DAC Members

- At the peer review meeting, Members may pose follow-up questions.
- “The corrected Summary and Conclusions will be circulated to the DAC for comment.”

Source: Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS)

- During the field visits, the review team should consult more actively with other Members engaged in the field visit country.

³³ At this stage of the interviews, the interlocutors were asked how the peer character might best be strengthened (Question 27b) and how Members (as a whole) might play a more active role (Question 28b). The roles of the Examiners and the Secretariat were specifically addressed in Questions 30 - 33; for the responses, see paragraphs 63 - 65.

- Members should better prepare for the peer review meetings and participate in the debate in a more active and frank way. For this to be achieved, it was suggested that DAC Delegates and headquarters need more time for studying the draft reports, that headquarters should provide their Delegates with more comments and feed-back on the draft reports, and that the draft Main Findings and Recommendations should be circulated for comments among Members prior to the peer review meeting.

62. The definition of the Chairman's role in the peer review process as given by the 1996 Guidelines (see Box 3) was considered appropriate by all Members interviewed except one and no changes were proposed.

63. Regarding the interplay between the Secretariat and the Examiners in the peer review process (Question 30a), eighteen Members said they were satisfied. Two Members less satisfied argued that the Examiners did not have the influence they should have in view of the peer character of the process³⁴. Some other Members shared this view, in part adding, however, that it would be preferable to see more inputs and influence from the Examiners at all stages, though this might possibly not be very realistic due to resource and time constraints.

64. When asked whether the roles and tasks of the Secretariat and the Examiners should be changed (Question 31a), sixteen Members answered in the negative. The other five Members would like the Examiners to play a more active role, to make more written contributions to the report and/or to "lead the peer reviews process" whereas the Secretariat should mainly ensure the preparation, co-ordination, consistency and professionalism of the process and its link to the DAC.

65. There was one more specific proposal concerning the roles of the Secretariat and the Examiners: After receiving the Memorandum of the country examined, the Secretariat and the Examiners should agree on the questionnaire for the review. Then the Secretariat should pay a first visit to the Member under review to check and discuss the more technical questions, including implementation of DAC guidelines and draft a preliminary report. On the basis of this report, the Examiners plus one or two members of the Secretariat should visit the country under review for discussions on basic issues. It should in essence be the Examiners' role to ask political questions, which the Secretariat, according to this argument, could not do. The results of the second and main visit to the capital and of the field visits should eventually be incorporated into the peer review report.

66. Since the key role of the Examiners for the peer character of the review process had already been pointed out during the focus group consultations, the questionnaire included a question on whether there should be specific criteria for appointing the Examiners. There was a broad consensus among the interlocutors that while it is ultimately up to the examining countries to decide on how they want to be represented in the review team, it would be good to have a common understanding on an Examiner profile (ideally a senior representative of the aid administration with a solid professional background including field and evaluation experience and with an awareness of policy coherence issues). One interlocutor suggested disclosing the CVs of the Examiners among DAC Members.

67. In this context, comments were also made on the selection of the examining countries. Some interlocutors would like the two Examiners to represent different types of donors ("the team should be as diverse as possible"; "one should avoid having Examiners from two like-minded countries"). Opinions differed with regard to the question whether countries similar to the Member under review in terms of

³⁴ The third Member less satisfied referred to the "difference in depth of the peer reviews (...) depending on which country is to be examined and who in the Secretariat is in charge."

policies pursued or the size of the aid programme should be selected as examining countries: while some interviewees favoured this approach, others again preferred diversity.

68. Regarding the review team, almost all interlocutors saw the current composition as adequate (two Examiners + several members of the Secretariat, depending on the size of the country examined) and prefer to leave the question of a division of labour among the team members to the team (to be decided for instance according to team members' experience)³⁵. Thirteen Members took the view that there should be a consensus between the Examiners and the Secretariat, while the other eight disagreed and would like to see dissenting votes made transparent in the report. The question of who should lead the team also produced different opinions ranging from "the Secretariat"³⁶ (ten Members) or "to be left to the team" (four) to "an Examiner" (three) or "the most experienced" (two).

69. Recently a Member under review invited a representative from a developing country to take part in the review as an observer. This initiative prompted the question whether this should be generally possible. Thirteen Members answered in the affirmative, mainly pointing to the principle of partnership and noting that this would mean a chance to obtain a view from outside that could enrich the review process, provided the observer had been carefully selected. Some interlocutors would involve the observer at all stages of the review process, while others had only the peer review meeting in mind. Some noted that it should be up to the Member under review to decide. Seven Members opposed the idea, arguing that it would affect the unique nature of the peer reviews as a process among donors or that the process might become more complicated and possibly less frank.

Peer review process

70. The peer review of a DAC Member involves several stages: submission of the Memorandum (or Annual Report) by the Member under review, drafting of the questionnaires for the capital visit and field visits by the review team (intended to acquaint the country examined with the main issues of the review), visit to the capital of the country examined, field visits (one possibly prior to the capital visit), and the peer review meeting³⁷. These main stages were addressed by a number of questions, including some concerning the frequency of peer reviews.

71. The current peer review interval (3.8 - 4.6 years)³⁸ was regarded as (highly) satisfactory by thirteen Members, less satisfactory by six and unsatisfactory by two. Some of those satisfied with the current interval argued that Members needed sufficient time to implement the recommendations, that the impact of the reviews might diminish if reviews were conducted too frequently or that the process was rather labour-intensive. Nine Members would like the DAC to return to shorter intervals (preferably three

³⁵ For a specific proposal on division of labour, see paragraph 65.

³⁶ In part with the proviso that the team should be led by either the DCD Director or his deputy or by the head of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring division.

³⁷ For the output and documentation of the peer review process as its final stage see the correspondent section below.

³⁸ Currently five or six programmes are reviewed annually (see the DAC Chairman's forward to the peer review reports published in the DAC Journal). With twenty-three DAC Members, this means an average interval between two reviews of each Member of 3.8 - 4.6 years. Due to resource constraints in the Secretariat, the annual number of peer reviews has declined since the early 1990s, thus increasing the peer review intervals (annual number of peer reviews: 2001: 5; 2000: 5; 1999: 6; 1998: 7; 1997: 5; 1996: 6; 1995: 6; 1994: 8; 1993: 7; 1992: 8; 1991: 5; 1990: 7; 1989: 10).

years) because of the peer reviews' key role and quality-assurance function³⁹, provided the DAC's budget could be increased or resources were shifted within the Secretariat⁴⁰. Sixteen Members opposed the idea of a variable frequency of peer reviews, mainly pointing to the need to keep the process predictable. Fifteen Members could imagine reviews on demand by Members wishing to be examined, though half of them would be prepared to accept this only in exceptional cases (e.g. after major policy changes).

72. The Memorandum does not appear to be an issue for Members. Sixteen interlocutors suggested no changes, some of them adding that they appreciated the Memorandum as a highly useful input which had forced them to look systematically at their programme and was also available for other purposes (e.g. as an up-to-date government statement on aid policy). Three Members would like the Memoranda to be shortened because they believe the list of issues to be treated is too long and not sufficiently focused⁴¹. Eighteen Members found the questionnaires sent in advance to the countries examined useful and only three saw them as less useful ("too long").

73. As for review team's visit to the capital of the country examined, the focus group consultations had prompted only one question: whether the mission team should pay more attention to the views of NGOs, businesses that receive aid contracts, academics, journalists and other civil society actors interested in aid. The overall impression from the survey is that Members recognize the importance of the review team taking the views of these actors into due account⁴². According to a number of Members, the relevant point is not simply to ask for *more* attention to be paid to non-governmental actors, but to focus more on the selection of representative interlocutors, a careful planning of meetings to allow sufficient time for discussions, and, in the end, the need to keep the character of the reviews in mind⁴³. Only one Member would have liked the review team to have more contacts with a particular actor during the latest review (with representatives of the private sector, with a view to discussing the issue of public-private partnership in development co-operation).

74. Normally the review team visits two partner countries of the Member examined to gain an understanding of the way in which policies are implemented on the recipient's side. The main messages from the survey concerning these field visits can be summarised as follows:

- The field visits are an essential element of the peer review process: nineteen Members consider them to be highly important or important whereas only two find them less important.

³⁹ One Member suggested strengthening the peer reviews by conducting five annual mid-term reviews in addition to the five or six regular reviews. The mid-term reviews could take the form of a half-day meeting in Paris intended to discuss the progress made by an examined country since its last review and would encourage Members to take the review process more seriously.

⁴⁰ The issue of resources will be dealt with more specifically in paragraphs 79 - 82. According to one Member, the return to shorter intervals would not require more resources because then the peer reviews could become shorter by focusing mainly on changes and therefore be handled with the existing capacity.

⁴¹ Annex 1 of the 1996 Guidelines on Peer Reviews provides an outline of the Memoranda containing eighteen chapters. The outline is only indicative, however, specifying that "the length, completeness and depth of coverage will vary from country to country, and particular themes will emerge more strongly in individual cases."

⁴² Eleven Members answered the question in the affirmative, partly stressing the importance of discussions with such actors rather than actually calling for *more* of them. By the same token, the five Members who answered in the negative just said that the current practice was fine and would not need *more* efforts in this regard.

⁴³ As some interlocutors put it, Members are reviewed by the peers and the Secretariat and not by non-governmental actors, who should of course be listened to according to their roles. In the case of dissenting views between the official aid administration and non-governmental actors, both should be made transparent in the report.

- Opinions differ on whether their number should vary according to given criteria. Ten Members opposed this idea, while eleven are in favour of a variable number, mainly proposing programme size as the criterion (more field visits for large donors). Some interlocutors suggested selecting either one good and one bad performer or recipient countries that could provide interesting experience worth sharing.
- The current practice under which the Member under review selects the countries to be visited in consultation with the Secretariat is regarded as appropriate. Fifteen Members do not believe that the Secretariat and the Examiners should take a more active role in selection.
- According to fourteen Members, there should be terms of reference, a questionnaire or a common format for the field visits, to be agreed on in the DAC, in order to specify what is expected from them and to ensure a certain degree of comparability.
- Recent experience from a joint assessment⁴⁴ was welcomed by nineteen Members who think it should be continued whenever feasible and appropriate rather than on the basis of a pre-determined rule. Most Members would like the question of who should conduct the joint assessments to be decided case by case, while a few interlocutors suggested the formula “3 Examiners + 2 members of the Secretariat”.

75. The peer review process culminates in the peer review meeting in Paris, where the review team’s findings are presented, the Member examined sets out its position and responds to questions and the other Members are able to engage in the discussion (see also Box 4). The interviewees almost unanimously considered the meetings to be (highly) important, and two-thirds (fourteen) said they were satisfied with the practice of the meetings. Among the seven less satisfied, three pointed out that Members did not always sufficiently prepare for and actively participate in the debate, while two referred to the scope of the discussions as too broad and focused too little on the relevant issues.

Box 4. Course of the peer review meetings

“At the Peer Review meeting itself, following the Chair’s introduction, the Head of Delegation of the examined Member makes a brief statement updating major policy developments and perhaps highlighting areas where the examined country may have views that differ from those in the Draft Secretariat Report. The Examiners then make their statements leading into the round of questions, referring to the Main Issues paper and highlighting what they consider the most important issues. Examiners, other Members and the Secretariat may pose follow-up questions. At the conclusion of the Review, the Chair will summarise selected major findings of the Review and issue a press release.”

Source: Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS)

76. The seven Members less satisfied plus several other Members satisfied on the whole with the peer review meetings would like to see them improved mainly in the following ways⁴⁵:

- Members should adequately prepare for the meetings and engage more actively in the discussion (including regular attendance by Members).

⁴⁴ In 2001, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, subject to review in that year, suggested that the DAC conduct a joint assessment of their programmes during one of the field visits. The joint assessment was conducted in Mozambique with the results published in the DAC Journal, 2001, Vol. 2, No. 4.

⁴⁵ See also paragraph 88.

- The discussion should focus on relevant issues considered to be of major interest not only to the country examined but also to Members (with the Main Issues Paper structured accordingly), thereby providing Members with an additional incentive to engage in the discussion.
- Members should discuss the Main Findings and Recommendations before the meeting (either in a preparatory meeting or by correspondence) to be in a better position to make comments and/or suggest modifications and thus to correct the impression that during the meeting there is not sufficient scope to modify pre-determined results.

77. Changing the role allocation among the actors of the peer review meetings is not an issue for most Members. Seventeen do not think the Secretariat should play a more active role, mostly pointing to the peer character of the review process and the supportive role of the Secretariat. There should be no different role for the Examiners according to thirteen Members, and the seven answering the question in the affirmative would like the Examiners to play a more active role by focusing the discussion on key issues rather than changing their roles in a formal sense.

78. Asked about the main output expected from the peer review meeting, most interlocutors either referred to the current output and documentation of the peer reviews (see below) or had no specific comments. Only very few Members expect a specific output distinct from the existing documentation (e.g. “a concise summary”).

Resources and expertise available for peer reviews

79. As mentioned above, the annual number of peer reviews and thus the frequency of reviews of individual Members has declined since the early 1990s due to a lack of resources. In addition, the number of DAC guidelines and principles whose implementation by Members is supposed to be assessed by the reviews has increased over time. As a consequence, the question of resources and expertise available for peer reviews matters. Against this background, Members were asked:

- whether the role of the Working Parties (WPs) and other subsidiary bodies in monitoring Members’ implementation of DAC guidelines should be strengthened (Question 12),
- whether the Working Party on Aid Evaluation (WP-EV) should play a more active role in the peer review process (Question 55),
- how the capacity of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring (PRPM) division of the Secretariat to conduct peer reviews should be improved (Question 53),
- whether, because of their great importance, the field visits should be financed from the regular budget rather than through voluntary contributions, which mean that the Members under review are expected to finance the Secretariat’s costs (Question 54).

80. The first question was answered in the negative by thirteen Members, who argued that it is not the WPs’ role to assess Members’ implementation of DAC guidelines, that there should be no transfer of responsibility for peer reviews to the WPs, that the latter lack the necessary capacity, that the peer review process would become too complicated, and/or that the comprehensiveness of the reviews might suffer from this way. Seven Members would welcome a more active role of the WPs, pointing out that some WPs have already initiated studies on Members’ implementation of certain guidelines and should do so more frequently with a view to providing more knowledge on the impact of the guidelines. For the peer reviews

to be able to draw on that knowledge, the Secretariat would have to make sure that the results of such studies are appropriately fed into the reviews of individual Members. The idea of leaving the monitoring of Members' implementation of DAC guidelines *entirely* to the WPs or subsidiary bodies concerned (Question 12c) was rejected almost unanimously.

81. On the second question, opinions clearly differ: nine Members answered it in the negative, while nine others think the WP-EV should play a more active role in the peer review process, qualifying this in two respects: the WP-EV should contribute to improving the methodology of peer reviews (standards, benchmarks, indicators) and, according to one interlocutor, be the body that monitors the peer review process; however, the WP-EV should not be involved in current reviews.

82. Regarding the third question, the questionnaire offered several options, which are presented in Table 1 together with the distribution of positive responses. As can be seen, the three main options offered, while regarded by a number of Members as means to improve the capacity of the PRPM division, are far from meeting with general approval. Some interlocutors explicitly rejected secondments, arguing that the peer review process might risk being unduly influenced by the providing country. According to some other Members, the core function attributed to the peer reviews is incompatible with their being financed even partly through voluntary contributions. Based on the same reasoning, fourteen Members would like the field visits to be financed from the regular budget; six Members disagreed, some of them adding, however, that this would be a good but not very realistic option (fourth question).

Table 1. Positive responses to the question on how the capacity of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring (PRPM) division of the Secretariat to conduct peer reviews should be improved (Question 53)

Option	Positive answers
• by re-directing resources and expertise from other divisions of the Secretariat to peer review work	13
• by Members' providing additional expertise by means of secondments	11
• by Members' providing additional funding through voluntary contributions	8*
• by other means	2
- members of the PRPM division should have the opportunity to spend a few weeks in the aid administration of some Member countries to gain a better understanding of Member practices	(1)
- members of the PRPM division should be given the chance to conduct periodic further training and professional "refuelling" (e.g. with regard to assessment methodology)	(1)
- establishment of a general trust fund based on voluntary contributions on the use of which the DAC should decide, giving peer review work high priority	(1)

*2 Members accept this option only on condition that the voluntary contributions are untied.

Documentation and output of the peer review process

83. The documentation and output of the peer review process consist of several documents explained in Box 5.

Box 5. Documentation and output of the peer review process

- **Country Memorandum** or most recent **Activity Report/Annual Report** prepared by the DAC Member reviewed. “This memorandum is an important source of information and input for the DAC report, and is submitted by all DAC Members on an annual basis, usually around mid-July.”
- **Peer Review Report** prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Examiners and consisting of two parts:
 - **DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations** summarising the main findings of the review team and providing a list of DAC principle recommendations,
 - complete text of the **Secretariat Report**.
- **Field Visit Reports** prepared by the Secretariat or an Examiner.
- **Main Issues Paper** prepared by the Secretariat and the Examiners and cleared with the DAC Chairman in advance; it forms the core of the discussions at the peer review meeting and presents written questions for the Member reviewed.
- **Press Release** issued by the Chairman following the actual review meeting; a draft press release is prepared by the Secretariat (with possible contributions by the Examiners) a week or so in advance of the peer review meeting and discussed by the reviewed Member’s representatives and the Examiners at lunch on the day of the review meeting and may be amended following discussions at the end of the peer review meeting; as soon as it is finalised and approved by the Chairman, it is released and put on the OECD website.

Source: Information Note on the Peer Review Process for Peer Review Participants, 28 October 2001 (working document by the Secretariat)

84. On average, all documents were considered to be important notwithstanding some notable differences (Table 2). The DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations were given the highest scores, followed by the Secretariat Report and the Press Release. The Country Memorandum was regarded as less important by one third of the interviewees, which to some extent probably reflects the fact that this document is the only one in the peer review process to be submitted by Members.

Table 2. Importance given to the different peer review documents by the 21 Members interviewed

[number of responses per category]	Country Memorandum	Secretariat Report	Field Visit Reports	DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations	Main Issues Paper	Press Release
Highly important	3	10	2	17	6	12
> between highly important and important	2	1	1	1	1	2
Important	9	10	17	2	10	5
Less important	7		1	1	1	2
Unimportant					3	
Mean Score*	[1.9]	[2.5]	[2.1]	[2.8]	[2.0]	[2.5]

* according to the following scale of scores: "highly important" = 3, "between highly important and important" = 2.5, "important" = 2, "less important" = 1, "unimportant" = 0.

85. According to fourteen Members, the number of documents should not be reduced, which is consistent with the aforementioned overall picture, whereas seven see a need for reduction mainly by merging the Main Issues Paper with the DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations.

86. As far as the drafting of the documents is concerned, Members do not see a need to change the roles explained in Box 5, i.e. the documents (except of course the Country Memorandum) should be drafted by the Secretariat with as much input from the Examiners as possible.

87. Regarding the responsibilities for issuing the documents, the current practice is as follows:

- The Secretariat Report, which includes different forms of presentation of the findings from the field visits⁴⁶, is published in the DAC Journal "on the authority of Secretary General of the OECD".
- The DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations are published as part of the final Secretariat Report (sometimes termed "Summary and Conclusions"), but are for two reasons supposed to reflect the DAC's view: they are finalised during the editorial session following the peer review meeting to accord with the Committee discussion; the corrected version is then circulated to the DAC for comments⁴⁷.
- The Press Release is issued by the DAC Chairman and also published in the final report.

⁴⁶ As separate annexes (see e.g. the latest reports on the reviews of the U.S., the EC, France and Austria), as boxes inserted in the text (see e.g. the latest reports on the reviews of the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand and Italy) or integrated in the text (see e.g. the latest reports on the reviews of Sweden and Switzerland).

⁴⁷ See the 1996 Guidelines on DAC Peer Reviews (footnote 4), paragraphs 18 and 19.

88. Most interviewees do not want to change this practice in a formal sense⁴⁸. However, there is a widespread feeling that Members should have a more direct say in the Main Findings and Recommendations and the Press Release, as can be seen from the responses to Question 58: “Should the DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations and the Press Release be discussed and agreed on more formally in the peer review meeting?” (positive responses in brackets):

- DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations: discussed (sixteen Members), agreed on (eight);
- Press Release: discussed (thirteen Members), agreed on (eight).

If put into practice, these proposals would to some extent change the course and character of the discussion during the peer review meeting.

89. The quality of the Secretariat Reports and the DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations was considered by most interviewees to be satisfactory or even better (see Table 3). The two interlocutors less satisfied pointed to the uneven treatment of certain topics in different reports as well as to occasional inaccuracies.

Table 3. Members’ overall assessment of the quality of the Secretariat Reports and the DACs Main Findings and Recommendations (Question 59a; total number of responses 20)		
[number of responses in brackets]	Secretariat Report	DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations
Highly Satisfactory	3	3
Between highly important and important	2	2
Satisfactory	13	13
Less Satisfactory	2	2
Unsatisfactory		
Mean score*	[2.1]	[2.1]

* in accordance with the following scale of scores: “highly important” = 3, “between highly important and important” = 2.5, “important” = 2, “less important” = 1, “unimportant” = 0.

90. The question on the quality of the aforementioned documents was specified in two additional respects: the degree of frankness and the character of the recommendations. Thirteen Members considered the Secretariat Reports and the DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations frank enough, while 6 did not. The latter would like the two documents to be franker in the sense that the results of the reviews, which are supposed to be critical⁴⁹, are stated unequivocally but diplomatically, provided the conclusions are based on a solid analysis. One interlocutor suggested making disagreements between the review team and the examined country transparent even in the final report, arguing that this might stimulate the debate

⁴⁸ A few interlocutors proposed issuing the Main Findings and Recommendations as well as the Press Release under the formal responsibility of the DAC.

⁴⁹ According to the DAC Chairman’s foreword to the peer review reports published in the DAC Journal, the policies and efforts of Members are examined *critically* (italics by G.A.).

at home. A few interviewees less satisfied qualified their plea for more frankness by pointing out that attention should also be paid to the political context in the country under review and efforts should be made to prevent the reports from undermining domestic support for aid policy⁵⁰; as a consequence, the debate during the peer review meeting might be franker than the final reports.

91. Most interviewees (twelve) did not want to answer the question on whether there should be more or fewer recommendations in general terms, arguing that there should be as many as necessary, depending on the case in question. Six interviewees would prefer fewer recommendations, whereas three called for more. On the other hand, ten Members would like the recommendations to be more specific⁵¹, e.g. with regard to policy coherence (how to improve coherence). The recommendations could be made more specific by highlighting good practices, i.e. by showing how other donors deal with difficult issues. Some interlocutors would welcome more specific advice in relatively new areas such as sector-wide approaches or budget financing.

Follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC

92. The follow-up to peer reviews by the DAC with respect to the countries examined is explained in Box 6. Fifteen Members regarded this practice as appropriate. Of the four less satisfied respondents, two argued that being paid a visit by the Chairman half a year after the review was too early, since more time was needed to implement the recommendations; another Member noted there had been no visit at all since the last review in 1998.

Box 6. Follow-up to peer reviews by the DAC with regard to the countries examined

According to the 1996 Guidelines on Peer Reviews (see footnote 4), “the DAC Chair is pursuing the practice of follow-up visits to capitals of countries, normally within six months after the publication of the review, (...) to pursue the value and use being made of the Review results (...).”

The Information Note on the Peer Review Process (see footnote 5) describes the practice as follows: “Following the review meeting in Paris, perhaps six to eighteen months after, the DAC Chairman, occasionally accompanied by representatives of the Secretariat, pays a visit to the capital of the reviewed Member. The purpose of this follow-up visit is to discuss adoption of the recommendations made at the time of the peer review meeting. The reviewed member hosts this visit, and should present relevant information on follow-up activities taken, or planned, as a consequence of the Peer Review.”

93. Opinions clearly differ on whether the process of a mid-point follow-up visit to the examined country capital should be made more formal and involve a requirement to report back to the DAC on the progress made: half of the interviewees (ten) said they were in favour, whereas the other half (ten) answered in the negative. Almost all interlocutors (eighteen) think, however, that the Secretariat Reports should as a rule devote a section to the progress made by the Members reviewed in implementing the recommendations of the last review (some of recent Reports have done so).

⁵⁰ As one interlocutor put it: “There is a balance to be struck, without accepting to compromise on the integrity of the Secretariat and the Examiners, between identifying areas where improvements need to be made and doing so in a way which is constructive and encouraging and which does not cause serious domestic problems for the donor under review.”

⁵¹ Five interviewees did not think so, while six again refused to answer in general terms (“depends on the individual case”).

94. Unlike the follow-up to the reviews of individual Members, the follow-up to the reviews made for the sake of experience-sharing and collective learning in the DAC (see Box 7) was assessed as significantly less favourable: nine of seventeen Members who responded to the question considered it less satisfactory or unsatisfactory, with only eight stating that they were satisfied. To judge from the average score of 1.5 (between satisfactory and less satisfactory), this appears to be the weakest part of the peer review process. Quite a number of interviewees said they had not seen much evidence of comparative discussion, let alone systematic efforts to synthesise and document lessons learnt and good practices. The impression was that discussions on common results of peer reviews, if they took place, tended to be more ad hoc than systematic.

Box 7. Follow-up to the peer reviews for the sake of experience-sharing and collective learning in the DAC

“To supplement and follow-up individual Reviews, the Committee may organise comparative discussions in which a series of Reviews (say for a particular year) and/or particular policy themes emerging in Reviews or DAC recommendations are taken up with a view to enhancing follow-up and experience-sharing. Trends and issues analysed in Reviews will be used to plan future DAC work.”

Source: Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS)

Impact of and follow-up to the peer reviews in the examined countries

95. To judge from the survey, the peer reviews have an influence on Members’ aid policies and practices. When asked how they would assess the impact of the latest (or the last two) aid reviews of their country, ten Members stated that the impact was “high” and six reported “some impact”; only five regarded the impact as “small” or found that there was “no impact”. The interlocutors were then asked to briefly explain the impact. Box 8 provides a condensed summary of the responses.

Box 8. Impact of peer reviews on Members’ aid programmes (examples)			
Member*	Impact of latest peer review (s)	Areas for which the peer reviews identified weaknesses and/or encouraged changes	Comments on the impact of the peer reviews
A	between “high impact” and “some impact”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new strategic policy framework with special focus on poverty, human rights and the environment aid agency re-launched as a semi-autonomous body (previously division within the Foreign Office) 	Peer review had a high impact because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it contained clear recommendations it fitted in with thinking on reforms in aid administration it coincided with a new reform-oriented government
B	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> peer review discovered lack of co-ordination between Foreign Office and Ministry of Economic Affairs need to strengthen evaluation unit need for country assistance strategies 	peer review has been a point of reference (important that we were examined from outside)

C	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • several efforts to strengthen representation of aid administration in partner countries • more attention paid to policy coherence 	a number of recommendations point to well-known weaknesses and can be incorporated in current reform efforts as an additional independent view from outside
D	some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aid now focused on a limited number of partner countries (previous peer reviews having criticised the large country dispersion) • financial regulations of various ministries on support for NGOs were unified 	
E	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • last review identified two key challenges: how to grow in terms of aid and how to manage that growth • peer review influenced the government in deciding a year later to reach the 0.7 %-target by 2007 and to review the overall programme 	the high-level review of the aid programme decided on by the government was driven in the main by the recommendations of the last DAC peer review
F	some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • last peer review was one element in the process leading to a new law on aid 	peer review report served as a reference document in the debate on aid policy
G	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • last peer review was very comprehensive, “turned stones” and helped to clarify thoughts • one consequence was that the number of partner countries was reconsidered 	peer review took place at a time when aid policies were under discussion by a parliamentary commission; the conclusions could thus be used in the reform of development co-operation
H	some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decentralisation of aid administration reconsidered after the last review • management of technical experts found by last review not to be effective was subsequently changed 	
I	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peer review helped to convince Parliament to maintain the present aid volume • concentration on fewer recipient countries 	peer review was particularly useful in that it was regarded as an independent evaluation
J	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programming and evaluation systems were improved • increased support to NGOs • focus on poverty reduction was stressed 	the aid administration was already aware of the weaknesses highlighted by the peer review but it was important to have a view from outside
K	small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to improve quality assurance (evaluation and monitoring) 	the recommendations of the last review were not much substantiated and action-oriented; nonetheless they drew attention to weaknesses in quality assurance
L	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moving from projects to programmes 	the last peer review was an important element in the domestic debate on necessary changes in aid

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decentralisation • aid untying 	policies
M	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for an adequate skills mix in the aid administration to manage the growth of the aid budget (up to the 0.7 %-level) in accordance with the goals of aid policy • mainstreaming poverty reduction in aid programmes (recommendation by the review before the last one) 	
O	some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement of co-ordination between ministries involved in aid by setting up a special co-ordination committee • one central operator designated for implementation and direct and management of aid-related activities 	the review before the last one was a key input for some reforms of the aid system

*The Members presented here are listed in a random order differing from the order in Annex V.

96. The impact of the peer reviews appears to depend on three factors each of which is a necessary but not sufficient condition:

- the analytical quality of the peer reviews in terms of a thorough analysis and relevant recommendations: in several cases the peer reviews drew the attention to crucial weaknesses of aid policies and practices and thus sensitised decision-makers with regard to the need for reforms; conversely, two Members explained part of the low impact of their latest reviews by pointing out that there was nothing new in the analysis and recommendations;
- the “institutional” quality of the peer reviews conducted by an independent and prestigious organisation from outside: a number of interviewees said their aid administration had been well aware of the problems highlighted by the peer reviews the important point having been, however, that the message was conveyed by the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee; as a consequence, the peer reviews are often used by decision-makers as a welcome tool to explain the need for changes or to defend “the case of aid” in Parliament;
- the political context in the reviewed country which may or may not be conducive to bringing about an impact: in some Member countries, the peer reviews coincided with planned or on-going reforms of aid or with a debate in Parliament on aid policies and gave that process additional momentum; on the other hand, two Members reported that the peer reviews had no impact, not because of their quality but for lack of enabling conditions: in one case, the peer review coincided with the EC presidency of the country examined, which totally absorbed the capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (also in charge of aid), so that the review “was simply forgotten”; in the other case, the review coincided with major reforms launched by a new government without much reference to the peer review.

97. Members use the peer review reports in numerous ways, depending on specific circumstances and ranging from “low profile” use (discussion by the units directly concerned; short press release) to wide dissemination within the aid administration (at headquarters and field levels) and “high profile” use (e.g. action plans to follow-up on the recommendations; formal discussion of the report with other government

departments and/or in the parliamentary committee on development co-operation; invitation of the review team to present the report in a session attended by representatives of the government, Parliament and NGOs).

98. Many Members distribute copies of the report to NGOs, academia and the media interested and/or make it available to the general public by putting it on the Internet. Several Members have the report or at least the summary and conclusions translated into their own language. Others do not do so, arguing that the English version is easily understood by those interested.

99. Almost all interlocutors considered the peer review reports of *other* DAC Members to be useful for the work of their aid administrations, qualifying this assessment, however, in many cases by pointing out that in practice only very limited use is made of them. Preparing for bilateral consultations with other Members seems to be a typical occasion for drawing on other reports. Several interviewees found it difficult to “plough” through a large number of reports in search of interesting experience of other donors and would highly welcome synthesised reports on relevant issues.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goals of the peer reviews

100. According to the DAC Members, the goals of the peer reviews are appropriate and are therefore not a major point on the agenda of possible improvements. Should the 1996 Guidelines on Peer Reviews be updated, it would seem reasonable to state the goals more precisely by including references to the issue of policy coherence, the importance of monitoring Member performance also at the field level and perhaps by making a distinction between goals and means. This could easily be agreed on since the first two points have increasingly become part of the peer review process and are regarded as important by most DAC Members.

101. As the majority of Members appear to prefer shorter peer review reports, it might be helpful to specify the highly rated information function of the peer reviews by indicating what the main substance of the individual peer review reports should be (e.g. major changes, experience relevant to other Members, assessments rather than descriptions) *and/or* by reference to the need for more comparative reports on relevant aspects based on the individual peer review reports.

Scope of the peer reviews

102. The “menu” of the main issues of the peer reviews, while basically welcomed by most Members, appears to need some specification with regard to the weights to be given to different issues or chapters. It would be useful for the DAC to discuss whether within the current “menu” peer reviews should pay more attention not only to policy coherence (emphasised by almost all interlocutors) but also, as suggested, to implementation questions (particularly in the field) and the outcome of aid. The weights given to the main chapters of the “menu” and their focus could be determined and changed in line with the DAC’s selection

of specific issues of particular interest that should be treated during a given cycle of peer reviews (see below).

103. The issue of policy coherence and how best to give it adequate treatment in the peer reviews require further discussion in the DAC. The advantage of having such a discussion now is threefold: First, there is a large measure of consensus among Members on the high relevance of the issue for both development co-operation and the peer reviews as a tool to improve the latter; second, the understanding of coherence in terms of policy areas concerned and institutional mechanisms needed to enhance it has greatly improved in the last few years because of debates in Member countries and the OECD; and third, a wealth of experience has been gained in a number of peer reviews dealing with policy coherence in Members under review. The proposed discussion should have two aims: a comparative analysis of the existing experience for common learning and, based on that, definition of a manageable approach to dealing with policy coherence in up-coming peer reviews. In this context, the usefulness of the checklist on coherence contained in the *DAC Guidelines on Poverty Reduction* should also be discussed.

104. Peer reviews are faced with the problem of a high and increasing complexity of the issues to be considered, owing to the growing number of guidelines and principles adopted by the DAC and the ongoing development co-operation debate, which is generating new themes. Previous peer reviews had already tried to reduce this complexity by defining the aforementioned “menu” issues and by focusing on issues regarded as particularly relevant in the individual case. While Members are for the most part satisfied with the ensuing scope or coverage of the peer reviews of their countries, there is apparently still some uncertainty or uneasiness regarding the question whether the peer reviews as a whole pay sufficient attention to the issues considered to be most relevant.

105. As a consequence, the DAC should review the existing guidelines in order to select those to be given particular attention during a given number of peer reviews. It would be helpful to identify the guidelines that no longer reflect the state of the art (a decision to be prepared by the corresponding Working Parties and subsidiary bodies). As shown by the survey, most Members prefer a selective approach in view of the large number of guidelines.

106. In addition, the DAC should agree on issues of particular interest for special consideration during a given cycle of peer reviews with an end-of-cycle discussion. Such an approach, equally welcomed by most Members, has four advantages: it reduces the complexity of possible issues to be dealt with in peer reviews; in doing so it facilitates a more in-depth analysis; it increases the thematic relevance of peer reviews to Members; and it improves collective learning in the DAC. Members have suggested a number of themes to be treated in this way (paragraph 29). It has to be stressed that this approach should leave room to address issues of specific interest to the individual Members under review.

Standards for the assessment of DAC Member performance

107. The standards applied in peer reviews, while regarded by nearly all Members as appropriate, need to be supplemented or specified in three respects: *First*, there appears to be a need for more outcome-oriented standards and indicators. It has to be recalled that Members almost unanimously believe that they should engage more intensively in analysing the outcome of their aid policies. Having suitable indicators for this will benefit the peer reviews in two ways: they help the review teams to pay more attention to the outcome-orientation of Members’ policies and practices; and, even more important, Members can use them to assess the outcome of their efforts on their own, thereby also improving the basis for peer reviews which can then draw on evidence provided by Members.

108. *Second*, assessing Members' contribution to the MDGs is a special case of the aforementioned concern because of the difficulty involved in identifying individual contributions to global goals. Nevertheless, peer reviews should systematically ask Members under review to explain their commitment to the MDGs in policy statements, resource allocation and evaluations. Since there may be different ways to contribute to the MDGs, particularly as regards the most prominent and at the same time most global goal (halving extreme poverty by 2015), there cannot be a once-for-all list of indicators to assess Members' commitment to the MDGs. Whichever way is chosen, however, Members should be asked to explain the rationale of their approach from the viewpoint of the MDGs. As a result, peer reviews could come up with good practices that can be shared among Members.

109. *Third*, DAC guidelines and principles should be supplemented by checklists, qualitative benchmarks or indicators that help Members in following the guidelines and peer reviews in assessing their implementation. This task would be the responsibility of the Working Parties and subsidiary bodies, with final approval to be given by the DAC. As pointed out, peer reviews would benefit from such an effort in terms of scope, efficiency, effectiveness and relevance.

Roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders

110. As most Members see no need to change the roles of the stakeholders, the main recommendation is that Members, in order to ensure and improve the peer character of the review process, appoint qualified Examiners and engage actively in the peer review process. To this end, it would be useful:

- for the DAC to have a common understanding of the Examiner profile required,
- for Member headquarters to provide their Examiners with sufficient time to play an active role at all stages of the process and their Paris-based DAC Delegates with comments on the peer review reports,
- for the Delegates to participate actively in the peer review meetings,
- for the Secretariat to make the documents prepared for the peer review meeting available to the participants as early as possible to provide sufficient time for preparation.

111. There should be a discussion of the proposal to have the Secretariat deal with more technical issues (including Members' implementation of the DAC guidelines) and the Examiners focus on the basic political questions (possibly during two separate visits to the capital of the country examined). It would have to be seen to what extent this approach could enhance the Examiners' influence and thereby the peer character of the review process or whether the Secretariat is possibly given more influence if it conducts part of the review on its own.

112. As one Member under review has already invited a representative from a developing country to take part in the peer review as an observer and some other Members are willing to do the same, and since a slight majority of the Members interviewed welcome this perspective, the DAC should first gather some experience and then discuss the extent to which the peer review process has benefited from the views from outside or been affected in its unique peer character and whether this *route* should be followed more systematically with a view to enriching the review process and fostering the principle of partnership.

Peer review process

113. Because of the key function assigned to the peer reviews, their frequency appears to be a controversial issue and needs to be discussed in the DAC. The discussion should take as yardsticks the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the peer reviews and might address the following questions⁵²:

- *Effectiveness*: To what extent will a return to shorter intervals, as advocated by almost half of the Members interviewed, enhance the effectiveness of peer reviews, i.e. the achievement of their goals? Will more frequent reviews (e.g. every three years) improve their quality-assurance function, as claimed by the proponents of shorter intervals but questioned by some other Members, who argued that Members need sufficient time to implement the recommendations? Can the quality-assurance function be better performed by a more systematic follow-up by the DAC to the reviews of individual Members rather than more frequent reviews? Is there a trade-off between the frequency of peer reviews and their quality in terms of comprehensive, thorough, critical and credible analysis or can shorter intervals be a vehicle for improving quality by forcing the review team to focus on basic issues, policy changes and interesting experience worth sharing? What is the importance of more frequent reviews for goal achievement when compared with other proposals made to improve the goal achievement of the peer reviews (concerning, for example, the scope and standards of the reviews or common lesson-learning from the reviews in the DAC)? In the interviews, opinions on these questions differed.
- *Efficiency*: More frequent peer reviews tend to require more resources and efforts on the part of both the Secretariat and Members (e.g. examined countries having to prepare the reviews; examining countries having to appoint qualified Examiners and give them sufficient time to take an active role in the review process; the expectation that DAC Members will properly prepare for the peer review meetings and actively engage in the discussions). Are these additional efforts warranted in the light of the expected gains in goal achievement? If so, are Members willing to provide the Secretariat with sufficient resources and expertise to ensure more frequent reviews or to change priorities in the DAC working programme? The survey has shown that Members are not very optimistic about an increase in the regular budget and would like to see a shift of resources in the Secretariat (and hence in the DAC's working programme) and/or would prefer to see Members provide additional expertise by means of secondments and/or additional funding through voluntary contributions. These options, however, are not undisputed among Members as the interviews have made clear, so that there is a need for a systematic discussion in the DAC.
- *Impact*: The impact of peer reviews on Members' aid policies and practices appears to be rather high. Would more frequent peer reviews enhance the impact, reduce it, as some interlocutors have claimed, or leave it more or less unchanged?

114. As a highly welcomed part of the peer review process, the field visits should be given a common format by means of terms of reference or a basic questionnaire to be developed by the Secretariat and agreed on in the DAC. Joint assessments, a new and very promising variant of the field visits, should be conducted whenever feasible and appropriate.

⁵² It should be pointed out that these questions as they are put here could *not* be answered by the present survey for three reasons: first, they were not part of the questionnaire; second, they present themselves only now after all interviews have been finished; third, even if some of the questions had emerged after the first interviews, the questionnaire could not have been changed in the middle of the interview phase because of the need for comparability.

115. Because of the great importance attached to the peer review meetings and the fact that they give Members as a whole the main or rather the only opportunity to engage in what is supposed to be a *peer* discussion, it is the Members' responsibility to sufficiently prepare for and actively participate in the meetings. There should be a discussion in the DAC on whether Members' interest in the meetings can be enhanced by focusing the debate on a smaller number of issues considered to be of particular common interest as suggested by some interlocutors.

Resources and expertise available for peer reviews

116. If the capacity to conduct peer reviews of the quantity and quality desired is considered constrained, there are two possible solutions: to reduce the coverage of peer reviews (focusing on fewer issues) and/or to improve the resource and expertise base available. While according to the survey the first option offers some scope (as proposed above: by selecting guidelines to be given particular attention during a number of peer reviews and/or by agreeing on issues of special interest for special consideration during a given cycle of peer reviews), it will probably not be sufficient since several issues (such as policy coherence or implementation of aid) appear to need more in-depth treatment and most members would like the collective learning from the peer reviews to be improved, which will require more work on synthesising common experience and lessons. Hence the amount of peer review work is unlikely to decrease substantially, and thus the question of resources and expertise available remains relevant.

117. Although the majority of Members do not think the WPs and other subsidiary bodies should play a more active role in the monitoring of Members' implementation of DAC guidelines, this option should be considered for two reasons: first, some WPs have already engaged in this respect by initiating studies on results of which peer reviews can draw; second, if some guidelines are selected for special consideration during a given cycle of peer reviews, the WPs that elaborated these guidelines might have an incentive to initiate studies on implementation with a view to feeding the results into the peer review process. In any case, WPs should be interested in the impact of their products.

118. Since the methodology of the peer reviews appears to be a matter of concern for a number of Members and at least half of the interviewees would welcome more support and guidance from the WP-EV in this regard, the latter should consider three issues in particular: outcome-oriented standards, ways to assess the contribution of individual donors to achieving the MDGs in a more systematic way, and more measurable indicators and benchmarks, which are regarded by several interviewees as necessary to make the peer reviews more analytical. The WP-EV's main task would be to explore and synthesise the corresponding know-how available in Member countries and internationally rather than initiate primary research.

119. Increasing the PRPM division's capacity to conduct peer reviews by re-directing resources and expertise from other divisions of the Secretariat to peer review work appears to be the option favoured by most Members. It has to be pointed out, however, that this is closely linked to the DAC working programme and therefore requires discussion of the priorities to be given to the different areas of DAC work. The other two options, i.e. secondments and/or voluntary contributions, while meeting with somewhat less agreement according to the survey, have already been current practice in the last few years and will continue to be helpful as long as the regular budget is not increased. So there should be a discussion not of principles but of whether there is a need for additional arrangements (e.g. channelling voluntary contributions into a general trust fund as suggested) to prevent the peer review process from becoming overly dependant on the flow of such additional resources or from being unduly influenced by providing Members.

120. The Secretariat should consider the utility and feasibility of the measures proposed for further training of members of the PRPM division, e.g. by giving them the chance to spend a few weeks in the aid administrations of some Members (provided the latter agree) or by organising professional “refuelling” in areas such as assessment methodology.

Documentation and output of the peer review process

121. The fact that one third of the interviewees regarded the Country Memorandum as less important should not give rise to premature conclusions. It has to be recalled that 16 Members did not suggest any changes with regard to the Memorandum when explicitly asked (see paragraph 51). Before drawing conclusions, it would appear useful to also ask the Secretariat to give its view, since the Memorandum is supposed to start the review process by providing the review team with an updated presentation of the main developments in aid policies and practices and therefore constitutes an important source of information and input for the DAC report.

122. According to the survey, there is only limited scope for streamlining the documentation and output of the peer review process by reducing the number of documents. The easiest way to achieve this end would be to merge the Main Issues Paper with the DAC’s Main Findings and Recommendations (MFRs). If the latter are discussed in the peer review meeting, as suggested by the large majority of interviewees, they would assume the role of the Main Issues Paper in terms of setting the agenda for the debate. Unlike the Main Issues Paper, the MFRs and the other documents, i.e. the Secretariat Report (including the field visit reports) and the Press Release, are regarded as indispensable. A more promising means to achieve efficiency gains would be to reduce the length of the Secretariat Reports, as proposed by most interlocutors.

123. Discussion of the drafts of the MFRs and the Press Release in the peer review meeting, as suggested by many interviewees, would give Members a greater say in the two documents that received the highest scores in terms of importance. The appeal of this idea is that it would enhance the peer character of the review process without too much additional effort. On the other hand, this might to some extent change the course of the meeting by transforming part of it into an editorial session, especially if the two documents are also agreed on in the meeting. The pros and cons should be considered.

Follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC

124. As the current practice of visits paid by the DAC Chairman to the capitals of examined countries some time after the peer review meetings was regarded as appropriate by most interviewees, one might be inclined to leave it at that. Nonetheless, one should discuss the appropriateness of this practice in a broader context. Bearing in mind the fact that the frequency of peer reviews has declined over time and was considered less satisfactory by eight Members, it would appear reasonable to rethink the function of the follow-up visits.

- If the DAC returned to shorter review intervals (e.g. three years, as suggested by a number of interviewees), there would be no need to go beyond the current practice.
- If, on the other hand, the present interval (actually more than four years in a number of cases) is retained or extended to five years, as was done in some cases, the follow-up should be intensified and take the form a mid-term review, not of the entire programme of the examined country, but of the progress made since the last review. This could be done either by having the DAC Chairman formally report back to the DAC on the progress made (as suggested by

half of the interviewees) or by having the examined country itself report on its progress in a half-day meeting in Paris.

125. The Secretariat Reports should as rule devote a section to the progress made by the examined countries in implementing the recommendations of the last review, as some Reports have already done.

126. The peer reviews provide a wealth of experience and lessons learnt that is unique because no other national or international organisation conducts similar reviews. The 1996 Guidelines are therefore right in expecting the peer reviews to assist in improving not only the individual but also the collective aid performance of Members. This function was unequivocally confirmed by the survey, with e.g. most interviewees considering individual and collective learning to be equally important or suggesting that issues of particular interest be focused on during a given cycle of peer reviews with an end-of-cycle discussion or calling for the recommendations to be more specific by pointing to good practices. In other words, the peer reviews will lose part of their *raison d'être* unless they are used for experience-sharing and collective learning in the DAC.

127. This process has to be systematically organised on the basis of the following steps *and* documented so that the results can be used by everyone interested.

- The DAC should define issues of special interest and/or select specific guidelines to be paid particular attention during a given cycle of peer reviews. The joint assessments, if continued, could be very helpful in gaining comparative experience.
- At the end of the cycle, the lessons learnt and good practices have to be distilled, synthesised and documented, a task that has to be carried out primarily by the Secretariat (hopefully with some inputs from the Examiners), since it alone has the comparative experience from several reviews available to it.
- On this basis, there should be a detailed discussion in the DAC or its subsidiary bodies concerned with a view to both sharing the results and drawing conclusions for Members' aid policies and practices.
- The final stage would be publication of the aforementioned synthesis of lessons learnt together with the a summary of the DAC discussion.

128. Proceeding in this way will undoubtedly require additional efforts and resources on the part of the Secretariat. Whether they can be balanced out by focusing on selected issues and thus narrowing the coverage of the peer reviews and possibly by reducing the page length of the reports is difficult to judge *ex ante*. This question has to be discussed, however, and it would be useful to assume that the process outlined above, if it is to be effective, will absorb part of the Secretariat's resources, which would then not be available for other purposes. Such an assumption would help clarify the priorities the DAC wants to set and the choices to be made then.

Impact of and follow-up to the peer reviews in the examined countries

129. As with any development co-operation project, the impact of peer reviews depends not only on the quality of the project (review) alone but also, and eventually in a decisive way, on the use made of it by clients. The survey has shown that in a number of cases the impact of the reviews was influenced by a favourable political moment or context. Since most interviewees opposed the idea of more flexibility in the

peer review calendar in order to keep it predictable, it will be difficult always to conduct the reviews at precisely the moments that are most propitious.

130. Nonetheless, the survey has also shown that, carefully used, the peer reviews can play an important role as an information tool for raising public awareness of aid concerns and as a reference document to be used in the debate on aid policies to explain and underpin necessary reforms. It is ultimately up to the Members to reap the benefits of a major effort in which each of them is involved in being reviewed, in acting as an Examiner or in engaging in DAC work related to peer reviews.

ANNEX I: CLIENT SURVEY STUDY OF PEER REVIEWS

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANT

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

The background, current context and purpose of this study are described in the Inception paper, which is an Annex to the Terms of Reference. The Inception paper has been elaborated by the Secretariat on the basis of discussions by the WP- EV Informal Sub Group on Peer Reviews, which undertook a detailed review of a draft version of the report at its meeting on 13 November 2001. Discussions at the WP-EV meeting on 14-15 November and the ensuing DAC SLM held on 12- 13 December 2001 have also informed the Inception paper.

The overall purpose of this study is to contribute to the process of continually improving the quality and relevance of peer reviews; a key objective endorsed by the DAC SLM in December 2001. The survey should help identify the strengths, weaknesses and challenges in peer review processes in a systematic and client-focused way, involving in particular the views of senior managers and decision-makers in Member capitals. Following the request by the DAC SLM 2000 for closer collaboration between the WP-EV and the peer reviews, the WP-EV has set up an Informal Subgroup on Peer Reviews to provide overall direction to the work with the assistance of the Secretariat. The Sub-group will report back to the DAC, which will in turn consider the results of the survey and review possible implications of recommendations emanating from it, and any required follow up work.

DUTIES OF THE CONSULTANT

The consultant is asked to undertake the following tasks:

- Participate in a preparatory meeting/briefing session with the Secretariat, in order to obtain a fuller understanding of Peer Review work (May).
- Prepare a schedule for focus group and/or individual consultations with DAC delegates in Paris (May 2002). Appropriate focus groups would need to be formed; a possible division may be by examiners and examinee countries and/or by dividing focus groups into recent reviews vs. currently on-going reviews (see Inception paper). Give consideration to a Secretariat focus group consultation.
- Lead and facilitate these focus group/individual interviews and prepare a summary of the main points of the discussions and consultations (June 2002).
- On the basis of the issues identified through the interviews with delegates and interviews with relevant units in the Secretariat, notably the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring Division, prepare an interview questionnaire for DAC Member capitals. A draft version should be prepared and shared with the Informal Sub-group for review before the interview questionnaire is finalised (June 2002).

- The interview questionnaire should be used to conduct in-depth discussions with key persons in capitals involved in DAC peer reviews including at policy and senior management level. The consultant would probably conduct telephone interviews in many cases but Member capitals should be visited for more in-depth interviews. In order to limit costs and produce timely results, a selected number of capitals should be visited. DAC delegates will be useful contact points to help identify the key persons in each capital. (June- August)

Outputs

- Provide a brief interim report of progress to the WP- EV Informal Sub-group on Peer Reviews (end May) and interact with the Sub-group and the Secretariat as required.
- Synthesise the results of the questionnaire and provide a report not exceeding 30 pages with an executive summary of no more than four pages. Some analytical tabulation of findings would be helpful. Technical information (such as structure of the questionnaire, lists of persons interviewed etc) should be contained in annexes to the main report. Present the draft report to the WP-EV Informal Sub-group, and on the basis of comments received, undertake any necessary revisions (September 2002).
- Together with the Chair of the Informal Sub-group of Peer Reviews, present a final draft and its main findings to the DAC (Autumn meeting 2002, suitable date to be identified) and revise the report, as necessary, in light of the discussion. This will become the final version.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTANT

The consultant is expected to have a broad experience with the bilateral donor community and development issues including both at the policy and the operational aid management level. He/She should have strong analytical and communication skills and be or be able to grasp and synthesise a considerable quantity of detailed information. Familiarity with the DAC and peer reviews would be useful but would not be the main criterion for selection.

He/She would also need very good facilitation skills, or alternatively to bring such competence on board for the specific focus group sessions. Some research assistance would probably also be needed for processing of the interview questionnaires. The detailed organisation of such additional assistance will be the principal consultant's responsibility.

BUDGET AND WORKPLAN

Qualified consultants are invited to submit indications of interest with a budget not exceeding €64.000 and the main elements of a work plan by 20 April. The submission should not exceed three pages. A CV should be attached.

DIRECTION AND COORDINATION OF STUDY

As indicated in the section on context and purpose, the WP-EV Informal Sub-group on Peer Reviews will provide overall direction to the work and will select the consultant (see also para. 2 of the Inception paper). In the Secretariat, Hans Lundgren (evaluation) and Sean Conlin (peer reviews) will facilitate the work of the consultant and liaise with the Sub-group and the PRPM Division. Karen Blaise will handle administrative issues related to the contract.

INCEPTION PAPER

Background

At the DAC Senior Level Meeting in December 2000, Members proposed closer collaboration between the Working Party on Aid Evaluation and the peer reviews. The need to support efforts to maintain high quality and to continuously seek improvements was noted.

In response to the DAC request and the SLM discussion, the WP-EV set up an Informal Sub-group on peer reviews composed of members interested in contributing to this work. Mr. Jan Dybfest, Deputy Director General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway was elected Chair. Participants are WP-EV members from Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, U.K and the U.S. The Informal Sub-Group met twice in the spring of 2001 and on 13 November on the occasion of the 35th meeting of the WP-EV. Following an initial phase of familiarisation with peer review processes and evaluation working methods, useful discussions on specific issues took place that also led to more intense interaction with evaluation departments in some of the peer reviews conducted in 2001. At the May meeting, it was agreed to pursue this effort with an analytical study that could provide the basis for more in-depth discussion and focused effort.

At the 35th meeting of the Working Party it was agreed that this analytical study would use a two-phase approach starting with a client survey of peer reviews, to be followed by more in-depth treatment of the key issues identified through the client survey. The Secretariat subsequently submitted an information note on this procedure to the Senior Level Meeting on 13 December 2001 [DCD/DAC(2001)33].

Purpose of the client survey

The overall goal of the analytical study is to contribute to the process of continuous improvement of the quality and relevance of peer reviews. The specific purpose of the initial client survey is to identify the strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the peer review processes in a more systematic and client-focused way. DAC Members are key stakeholders in the processes and their needs should lead efforts to further strengthen peer reviews.

Method and process

Following the discussions in the WP-EV in November 2001, the method proposed is to scope out the key issues in focus groups drawn from all DAC Delegations followed by a more detailed questionnaire in capitals, supported as necessary by key informant interviews (including by telephone). The key issues might be explored most effectively through three initial focus groups selected on the basis of (1) present or recent involvement as examined country, (2) present or recent involvement as examiner, and (3) earlier involvement as examined country. The aim of the focus groups is to help the consultant to develop the detailed questionnaire for the capitals. The consultant should also set out a proposed framework for analyzing the responses to the questionnaire. During this initial stage it will also be necessary to determine which type of agency official should be invited to respond to the questionnaires, and to establish a list of names and contact details. For key informants the consultant may also follow up the questionnaire with telephone interviews.

Issues for consideration in the focus groups, questionnaire and key informant interviews

It was a strong recommendation of the Working Party that the initial stages of the process should not predetermine the results or close off avenues for investigation, so the process should be as open-ended as possible. At the same time, to enhance comparability of results it is useful to provide some analytical structure to the study. In earlier discussions, several dimensions have emerged as possible key areas for improvement, and these might be used below as a framework for organizing the focus group discussions. In each case, the suggestion is that there is an open-ended question to start the discussion, but that the facilitator considers some further detailed issues to prompt discussion if required.

i) Provide clearer standards to assess donor performance

In recent DAC discussions, questions have been raised on the specific criteria for assessment of donor performance, and the need for clear-cut commonly agreed standards. What suggestions would focus group participants make regarding clarification of standards and criteria?

Further prompts could include suggestions about i) the examined country's national standards, e.g. donors' stated policies, results-based criteria, or ii) external criteria, e.g. ODA volumes and ODA/GNI ratios, DAC Guidelines (and the issue of prioritisation among them), or internationally agreed outcomes, such as the targets approved in the Millennium Declaration.

ii) Improve the efficiency of the peer review process

How might the efficiency of the peer review process be improved?

Further prompts for the discussion might include a focus on priority topics rather than comprehensive coverage, reducing the number of documents produced by the process, frequency of peer reviews, suggestions for deployment of staff and examiners, improving the relevance, focus and organization of the DAC peer review meeting in Paris, and improving financial arrangements for field missions.

iii) Enhance the transparency of the peer review process

What are the views on the transparency of the peer review process?

Further prompts for the discussion might include defining transparency, differentiating clearly the authorship of the different documents, the initial sharing of findings with the examined country, the role of the press release, and views on the possible links between transparency and credibility of the process among Members.

iv) Improve participation

How can the participation of key stakeholders be improved in the peer review process?

Prompts might involve pointing out some of the key stakeholders including: i) the reviewed country; ii) the examining countries; iii) beneficiary countries iv) other DAC Members; v) DCD Secretariat.

v) Enhance the learning and dissemination of lessons and follow up of DAC recommendations

How might lesson-learning for individual donors, as well as the donor community be enhanced? How could the follow-up of DAC recommendations be improved?

Further prompts might involve suggestions about the need for both individual and collective lessons, feasibility of focusing on themes, greater attention to comparability of results, increasing the strategic use of

results in other DAC work, and suggestions for follow-up of recommendations, including a possible mid-term review of recommendations.

iv) New directions and resource requirements in the peer review process

What are the key new directions for the peer reviews to explore?

Prompts could remind participants about the joint assessments at country level (Mozambique), the demand-driven assessments of donor performance and practices at country level (Nepal), and recent examples of follow-up action (Ireland). Other OECD review mechanisms could also be considered. It would also be useful to consider resource requirements in this context, and whether some present activities might be dropped to accommodate the new areas or whether DAC Members would like to see additional resources supporting new directions. Consideration should also be given to the scope for engaging other parts of the Secretariat more deeply in peer reviews.

ANNEX II: PARTICIPANTS OF THE FOCUS GROUP CONSULTATIONS PRECEDING THE ELABORATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. DAC Delegates

	13 June 2002 10.00 - 12.30	13 June 2002 14.30 - 17.00	14 June 2002 10.00 - 12.30	14 June 2002 14.30 - 17.00
AUSTRALIA	written comments by Mr. Davies			
AUSTRIA				Ms. Vavrik
BELGIUM		Mr. Frix		
CANADA				Mr. Wade
DENMARK				Mr. Rasmussen
EC				Mr. Fontaine
FINLAND	Ms. Linnell			
FRANCE				
GERMANY	Mr. Westreicher			
GREECE	Mr. Serrelis			
IRELAND				Ms. Callan
ITALY		Mr. De Luca		
JAPAN				Mr. Hanatani
LUXEMBOURG				
NETHERLANDS		Mr. Sciarone		
NEW ZEALAND	individual discussion with Mr. Wilson on 6 June 2002			
NORWAY	Ms. Hirth			
PORTUGAL				
SPAIN			Mr. Sanz Escorihuela	
SWEDEN	Ms. Joseffson			

SWITZERLAND	Mr. Obrist			
UNITED KINGDOM				Mr. Roper
UNITED STATES		Mr. Kammerer		

2. Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD)

2.1 DCD Director

Mr. Röska: meeting on 28 May 2002 and telephone conversation on 8 July 2002

2.2 Peer Review and Policy Monitoring (PRPM) division

- a. Briefing on the peer review process and first focus group consultation on 29 May 2002:
Mr. McGill, Mr. Conlin, Ms. Eggleston, Ms. Miyamoto, Mr. Laird, Ms. Nicod, Ms. Paris
- b. Second focus group consultation on 12 June 2002:
Mr. Conlin, Ms. Eggleston, Mr. Hradsky, Ms. Miyamoto, Ms. Nicod, Ms. Paris

2.3 Other DCD members (14 June 2002)

Mr. Nicol, Mr. Lundgren, Mr. Scott, Ms. Thioléron

3 DAC Chairman

In addition to the focus group consultations with the DAC Delegates and the Secretariat, the consultant had a meeting with the DAC Chairman Jean-Claude Faure on 29 May 2002.

ANNEX III: CLIENT SURVEY STUDY OF DAC PEER REVIEWS

Questionnaire for interviews with DAC Member capitals

Introduction

At the DAC Senior Level Meeting in December 2001, Members welcomed a proposal for a Client Survey Study of DAC Peer Reviews whose overarching goal is to help make the peer reviews still more relevant to Member needs and policy concerns. The Working Party on Aid Evaluation (WP-EV) has been asked to lead this work and has set up an Informal Sub-group of members from Norway (chairing the Sub-group), Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, U.K. and the U.S. On the basis of a competitive bidding, the Sub-group selected me as the external and independent consultant who conducts the study under its direction.

The purpose of the Client Survey Study of DAC Peer Reviews is to help identify the strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the peer review process in a systematic and client-focused way. DAC Members are key stakeholders in the process and their needs should therefore lead efforts to further strengthen the peer reviews. The approach proposed has been to scope out the key issues in consultations with the DAC Delegates and the Secretariat in Paris, followed by in-depth interviews with DAC Member capitals to be conducted by means of a questionnaire.

The following questionnaire has been developed on the basis of the consultations held with the DAC Delegates and the Secretariat from 12 to 14 June 2002. A draft version of the questionnaire was circulated for comments to the Informal Sub-group and the Secretariat. The questionnaire contains 71 questions (a number of which are subdivided) and additional explanations where necessary. The questions have been clustered according to the 11 key areas mentioned in the table of contents (see next page). The questionnaire will be used for the in-depth discussions with key-persons in DAC Member capitals involved in DAC peer reviews and named by the DAC Delegates. The interviews will be conducted either by telephone or directly by the consultant visiting the capitals.

The questionnaire will be sent to the key persons in capitals prior to the interviews for their information. The key persons are not expected to answer the questionnaire in writing. However, they are asked to consider the questions before the interview with the relevant units of their development co-operation headquarters involved in DAC peer reviews *and* with their Paris-based DAC Delegates in order to be able to give their views and suggestions on all aspects of the peer reviews addressed in the questionnaire.

According to the Terms of Reference, the process of the study should be as open-ended as possible while, at the same time, ensuring the comparability of the results. The latter will basically be achieved by the questionnaire, which is the common basis for all interviews, and will be enhanced by some standardisation. To this end, 20 questions will be standardised, requiring an answer according to a simple scale (e.g. “highly important”, “important”, “less important”, “unimportant”); these questions (marked by an *) often introduce the key area or issue addressed. Other questions require a “yes” or “no” answer. The majority of the questions, however, will be open, inviting the interlocutors to express their views and suggestions. All questions are indicated by the symbol: ►.

Regarding the standardised questions, it should be stressed that despite obvious methodological shortcomings they are important and also answerable.

- They have no analytical value in the sense that specific recommendations can be inferred from them; nor is there any objective yardstick or scale for measuring and ranking the answers. Nevertheless they are important because they provide a general assessment and thus help portray the background against which specific aspects of the peer review process are analysed and possible improvements are sought. It is useful to know whether this background (i.e. the general feeling) is favourable rather than unfavourable or vice versa.
- To give an overall assessment according to a simple scale might seem difficult, but it is of course possible. Assume your minister (who most probably does not have the time to deal with the details of the peer review process) wants you to tell him what on balance your general impression or assessment of a certain aspect is. So please do not hesitate to answer the standardised questions.

All answers will be treated anonymously.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those among the DAC Delegates, the staff of the Secretariat and the members of the Informal Sub-group who either participated in the consultations preceding the elaboration of the present questionnaire or commented on its draft for their numerous comments and suggestions. The consultations not only turned out to be highly productive (which is proved by the considerable number of questions resulting from the issues raised during the consultations) but also demonstrated the great importance attached to the peer review process. I would be very glad if the Client Survey Study could be continued in the same spirit during the interviews with DAC Member capitals. Thank you very much in advance for your kind co-operation.

Questionnaire

[figures in { }: number of DAC Members having indicated the different categories; > refers to answers between two categories]

1. Overall importance and utility of the peer reviews

[1]* ► How important do you consider the peer reviews within the range of the DAC's activities?

- highly important {17}
> {2}
- important {2}
- less important
- unimportant

[2a]* ► On balance, how satisfied are you with the DAC peer reviews?

- highly satisfied {3}
> {1}
- satisfied {12}
- less satisfied {5}
- unsatisfied

[2b] ► If "less satisfied" or "unsatisfied", please indicate the areas of your main concern.

II Objectives of the DAC peer reviews

According to the *1996 Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews*,⁵³ "the goals of the peer reviews are to:

- monitor Members' development co-operation policies and programmes, and analyse their effectiveness, inputs, outputs and results;
- assist in improving individual and collective aid performance in both qualitative and quantitative terms;
- provide comparative reporting and credible analysis for wider publics in OECD countries and the international community;
- share experience and foster co-ordination."

[3a]* ► Do you consider this statement of the goals basically appropriate?

- highly appropriate {9}
- appropriate {12}
- less appropriate
- inappropriate

[3b] ► If "less appropriate" or "inappropriate", please indicate your main reasons.

⁵³ Draft Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Reviews, DCD/DAC(96)25, 26-Sep-1996 (OLIS); the Guidelines were approved by the DAC on 21 October 1996.

- [4a]* ► On balance, how do you consider the overall achievement of the aforementioned goals?
- highly satisfactory {1}
 - > {1}
 - satisfactory {13}
 - > {1}
 - less satisfactory {5}
 - unsatisfactory
- [4b] ► If "less satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory", please indicate your main reasons.
- [5a] ► Would you like to change or modify the aforementioned goals of the peer reviews?
- yes {5} no {16} yes and no: {2}
- [5b] ► If yes, how? (What is in your view the main purpose of the peer reviews?)
- [6] ► Regarding the goal of improving the *individual* and *collective* aid performance of DAC Members, do you consider both aspects to be equally important or would you assign them different importance? [see also question no. 13a]
- equally important {13} different importance {8}
- [7]* ► How important do you consider the goal of providing comparative reporting and credible analysis for wider publics (information function of the peer reviews)?
- highly important {13}
 - > {1}
 - important {6}
 - less important {1}
 - unimportant

III Scope of the peer reviews

[8a]* ► When considering the peer reviews of the last few years or the latest peer review of your country, are you basically satisfied with the scope (coverage) of the peer reviews?

- highly satisfied {2}
> {2}
- satisfied {10}
> {2}
- less satisfied {5}
- unsatisfied

[8b] ► Please indicate your main reasons for being:

either highly satisfied/satisfied *or* less satisfied/unsatisfied.

Currently there are six main areas of scrutiny in peer reviews:⁵⁴ (1) strategic foundations and new orientations, (2) aid volume, channels and allocations for poverty reduction, (3) sectors and cross-cutting issues, (4) policy coherence, (5) organisation and management change, (6) country ownership and operations.

[9a] ► Should this "menu" be maintained or changed (narrowed or enlarged)?

- maintained {15} narrowed {3} enlarged {4}

[one Member indicated both: "narrowed" and "enlarged"]

[9b] ► If it should be changed, which topics need more coverage, which topics need less?

[10a] ► Policy coherence has become one of the main areas of recent peer reviews.⁵⁵ As far as you know the respective peer review reports, do you think that the issue of policy coherence has been adequately dealt with?

- yes {7} no {11} do not know [or "yes" and "no"] {3}

[10b] ► If no, please indicate your main reasons?

⁵⁴ See for instance the latest report on the EC Aid Review [DCD/DAC/AR(2002)2/EC/Part2, 22-May-2002]

⁵⁵ See e.g. the latest peer review reports of the EC, Germany, U.K., France and Australia where policy coherence is dealt with in separate main chapters. In some other peer review reports (e.g. of the Netherlands, Belgium, New Zealand, Italy and Portugal), policy coherence is dealt with in separate sub-chapters.

[10c] ► What should the analysis of policy coherence focus on?

- the content of the issues (regarding trade, agricultural and other policies) {1}
- the institutional process for seeking coherence {5}
- both 15}

According to the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1), the peer reviews are supposed to monitor "the Members' implementation of DAC's agreed broad strategies and accepted principles and guidelines for best practice."⁵⁶ In the course of time, the DAC has adopted a large number of principles and guidelines.

[11a] ► Should peer reviews monitor the implementation of *all* or *selected* DAC principles and guidelines?

- all principles and guidelines {8} selected principles and guidelines {13}

[11b] ► If *all* DAC principles and guidelines, how should this be handled?

[11c] ► If *selected* ones, which principles and guidelines or which criteria for selecting them do you suggest?

[12a] ► Should the role of the Working Parties and other subsidiary bodies in the monitoring of the Members' implementation of DAC's principles and guidelines be strengthened?

- yes {7} no {13} no comment {1}

[12b] ► If yes, how? [see also Section VII]

[12c] ► Should the monitoring of the Members' implementation of DAC's principles and guidelines be left entirely to the DAC's Working Parties and other subsidiary bodies?

- yes {0} no {18} no answer {3}

[13a] ► Should all peer reviews focus on the *same* issues or should peer reviews of different Members have a *specific* focus relevant to them at the time of their being examined (possibly in addition to a common basis for all peer reviews? [see also Question no. 6]

- focus on the same issues {3}
- have a specific focus relevant to Members at the time of their being examined {2}
- have a specific focus in addition to a common basis for all peer reviews {16}

[13b] ► In the case of a common basis for all peer reviews, should the comparability of the results still be paid more attention to?

- yes {14} no {4} depends on the issues {2} no answer {1}

⁵⁶ References to the implementation of DAC guidelines are currently to be found in part III of the aid review reports: "Sectors [or: Main themes] and cross-cutting issues".

[13c] ► If yes, how?

[14] ► Who should determine the issues to be considered in the peer reviews?

- in the case of common issues?
- in the case specific issues?

[15a] ► Should issues of particular interest be handled over a certain cycle of peer reviews?

- yes {15} no {6}

[15b] ► If yes, what cycle do you suggest?

[15c] ► If yes, should there be an end-of-cycle wrap up or analysis? [see also Question no. 66]

- yes {15} no {0}

[15d] ► If yes, please indicate some subjects you consider to be of particular interest?

[16] ► Should peer reviews mainly focus on the outcome of DAC Members' policies and programmes without paying much attention to the aid delivery system (policies, institutions, instruments, practices) that generates the outcome?

- yes {0} no {19} yes and no: {2}

[17] ► To what extent should Official Aid (i.e. aid to countries listed in Part II of the DAC List of Aid Recipients) be considered in the peer reviews?

[18a] ► Should the statistical component of the peer reviews be kept, shortened or enlarged?

- kept {19} shortened {1} enlarged {1}

[18b] ► If shortened or enlarged, what should be cut down or added?

IV Standards for the assessment of DAC Members' performance

There are three kinds of standards being applied (to varying degrees) in peer reviews:

- basic DAC standards (e.g. aid volume according to the DAC's definition of ODA/OA, the DAC's list of aid recipients and the various statistical reporting directives of the DAC; DAC recommendation on terms and conditions of aid; tied aid disciplines),
- other quantitative indicators (e.g. ODA/GNI-ratio, ODA to LLDCs, 20/20-Initiative),
- DAC's agreed guidelines, principles and orientations (recent ones refer to such areas as: environment; gender; poverty reduction; participatory development and good governance; conflict, peace and development co-operation).

[19a]* ► On balance, do you consider the aforementioned standards to be an appropriate basis for assessing DAC Members' policies and practices?

- highly appropriate {4}
- > {2}
- appropriate {13}
- less appropriate {2}
- inappropriate

[19b] ► If "less appropriate" or "inappropriate", please indicate your main reasons.

[19c] ► If "less appropriate" or "inappropriate", what kind of standards or benchmarks should be applied in the peer reviews? [see also Questions no. 21b and 21c]

[20] ► Should the peer reviews assess Members against their own *internal* policies and aims rather than the aforementioned external standards (basic DAC standards; other quantitative indicators; DAC's agreed guidelines, principles and orientations)?

- yes {2}
- no {14}
- both {5}

According to the DAC Chairman's foreword to the peer review reports published in the DAC Journal, the policies and efforts of Members are *critically* examined [italics by G. A.]. In the context of this section, one can reasonably understand by the word *critically* that the peer reviews are sufficiently analytical in the sense of assessing Members' policies and efforts against both relevant and clear standards (see also Question 60a).

[21a] ► Do you think that the peer reviews are sufficiently analytical in the sense of assessing Members' policies and efforts against relevant and clear standards?

- yes {12}
- no {9}

[21b] ► If no, is there a need for:

- more relevant standards? {1}
- clearer standards (more measurable indicators)? {8}

[21c] ► Which standards do you suggest? [see also Question 19c]

[22] ► Who should develop new (more relevant and/or clearer) standards?

[23] ► A number of DAC's principles and guidelines are very comprehensive. How should their implementation by Members be assessed?

[24a] ► Should peer reviews assess the performance of Members by the contribution they make to achieving the UN millennium development goals?⁵⁷

- yes {15} no {6}

[24b] ► If yes, how should peer reviews do so?

[25a] ► Should the peer review reports *rank* DAC Members according to the measurable standards or indicators applied?

- yes {6} no {14}

[25b] ► If yes, please give examples.

V *Roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders*⁵⁸

The peer review process involves four major stakeholders (apart from the examined country): the Secretariat, the Examiners, the DAC Chairman and the DAC Members. The *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1) specify their roles as follows (see also section VI.5 for the peer review meeting):

Secretariat and Examiners:

- “Each DAC Member is reviewed at agreed intervals. The Secretariat does the planning and maintains the roster for naming two Members as Examiners for each Review, in consultation with Members.”
- "Examiners work with the Secretariat to prepare the Review including the Main Issues paper. Examiners and Secretariat visit examined Members' headquarters and if possible field operations in recipient countries in preparing the Review. Examiners and Members should seek input from their headquarters and field missions to prepare for Reviews."
- At the peer review meeting, the Examiners make their statements leading into the round of questions, referring to the Main Issues paper and highlighting what they consider the most important issues. Examiners, other Members and the Secretariat may pose follow-up questions.
- "The examined Member, the Secretariat and the Examiners meet for an editorial session following the Review to finalise the Summary and Conclusions in the Draft Secretariat Report to accord with the Committee discussion and make any final corrections in the report"

DAC Chairman:

- The Chairman leads and introduces the aid review meeting. "At the conclusion of the Review, the Chair will summarise selected main findings of the Review and issue a press release."
- "The Chair is pursuing the practice of follow-up visits to capitals of countries, normally within six months after the publication of the review, (...) to pursue the value and use being made of the Review results (...)."

⁵⁷ See www.paris21.org/betterworld.

⁵⁸ For the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders with regard to the different documents see section VIII.

DAC Members

- At the peer review meeting, Members may pose follow-up questions.
- "The corrected Summary and Conclusions will be circulated to the DAC for comment."

V.1 *Peer character of the peer review process*

[26a]* ► On balance, are you satisfied with the *peer* character of the peer review process?

- highly satisfied {2}
- > {1}
- satisfied {14}
- > {1}
- less satisfied {3}
- unsatisfied

[26b] ► If "less satisfied" or "unsatisfied", please indicate your main reasons.

[27a] ► Should the *peer* character of the review process be strengthened?

- yes {10} no {11}

[27b] ► If yes, how?

V.2 *DAC Members [see also sections VI.5 and VIII]*

[28a] ► Should their role in the peer review process be a more active one?

- yes {8} no {13}

[28b] ► If yes, what do you suggest?

V.3 *DAC Chairman [see also sections VI.5, VIII and IX.1]*

[29a] ► Do you consider the aforementioned definition of the Chairman's role in the peer review process to be appropriate?

- yes {20} no {1}

[29b] ► If no, how would you like to have it changed?

V.4 *Secretariat and Examiners*

[30a]* ► On balance, how do you view the interplay of the Secretariat and the Examiners in the peer review process?

- highly satisfactory {1}
- satisfactory {17}
- less satisfactory {3}
- unsatisfactory

[30b] ► If "less satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory", please indicate your main reasons.

[31a] ► Should the roles and tasks of the Secretariat and the Examiners in the peer review process be changed? (see also sections VI.5 and VIII)

- yes {4}
- no {16}
- no answer {1}

[31b] ► If yes, how?

[32a] ► Should there be specific criteria for selecting/appointing the Examiners?

- yes {11}
- no {9}
- no answer {1}

[32b] ► If yes, which criteria do you suggest?

Regarding the *examining team* that visits examined Members' headquarters and field operations in recipient countries:

[33a] ► How should it be composed of?

[33b] ► Should there be a specific division of labour among the members of the team?

- yes {6}
- no {15}

[33c] ► If yes, what division of labour do you suggest?

[33d] ► Should there be a consensus between the Examiners and the Secretariat?

- yes {13}
- no {8}

[33e] ► Who should lead the team?

V.5 *Representatives of partner countries*

[34a] ► Should representatives of partner countries or third parties⁵⁹ be involved in the peer review process as observers?

yes {13} no {7} no answer {1}

[34b] ► If yes *or* no, why?

[34c] ► If yes, at what stage (e.g. in the review team, during the peer review meeting)?

VI *Peer review process*

VI.1 *Preparation of the peer reviews by the Members under review and the Secretariat*

According to the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1), DAC Members are expected to submit a Memorandum (or Annual Report) every year (by mid-July). The Memorandum (or Annual Report) is the first document in the series of documents presented for each peer review. Annex 1 of the *1996 Guidelines* contains an indicative outline in “checklist” form for issues to be covered in a Memorandum and in a Draft Secretariat Report.

[35] ► Do you have any suggestions with regard to the Memorandum as part of the peer review process? [see also Question 56a]

[36] ► Should DAC Members engage more intensively in analysing the outcome of their development co-operation policies, thus improving the basis for the peer reviews?

yes {19} no {1} no view {1}

[37a]* ► How do you consider the usefulness of the questionnaires sent to the examined Member by the Secretariat before the visits to capitals and the field visits?

highly useful {5}

useful {13}

less useful {3}

useless

[37b] ► If “less useful” or “useless”, how could the questionnaires be made more useful?

⁵⁹ Such as the Economic Commission for Africa.

VI.2 *Frequency of the peer reviews*

According to the DAC Chairman's forward to the peer review reports published in the DAC Journal,⁶⁰ "five or six programmes are examined annually." With 23 DAC Members, this means an average interval between two peer reviews of an individual Member of 3.8 - 4.6 years (in the case of 6 or 5 reviews per year). Due to resource constraints in the Secretariat, the number of peer reviews per year has declined since the early 1990s,⁶¹ thus increasing the peer review intervals.

[38]* ► Do you consider the aforementioned average peer review interval (3.8 - 4.6 years) satisfactory?

- highly satisfactory {3}
- satisfactory {10}
- less satisfactory {6}
- unsatisfactory {2}

[39a] ► Should the DAC increase the number of peer reviews per year in order to return to shorter intervals?

- yes {9}
- no {11}
- no answer {1}

[39b] ► If yes, how should this be achieved?

[40a] ► Should the DAC opt for a variable frequency (e.g. three years for larger programmes, four years for smaller programmes)?

- yes {5}
- no {16}

[40b] ► If yes, which kind of variable frequency do you suggest?

[40c] ► Should aid reviews be possible on demand by Members wishing to be examined?

- yes {15}
- no {5}

VI.3 *Visits to the capital of the Member under review*

[41] ► Should the mission team during the visits to capitals pay more attention to the views of NGOs, businesses that receive aid contracts, academics, journalists and other civil society actors interested in aid?

- yes {11}
- no {5}
- no preference/no answer {5}

⁶⁰ See e.g. the DAC Journal Vol. 2, 2001, No.4.

⁶¹ Number of DAC Members examined: 2001: 5 (+ a joint assessment); 2000: 5; 1999: 6; 1998: 7; 1997: 5; 1996: 6; 1995: 6; 1994: 8; 1993: 7; 1992: 8; 1991: 5; 1990: 7; 1989: 10.

VI.4 Field visits and joint assessments

According to the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1), "examiners and Secretariat visit examined Members' headquarters and if possible field operations in recipient countries (...)." There are now normally one or two field visits for each review.⁶²

[42]* ► How important do you consider the field visits?

- highly important {14}
- important {7}
- less important
- unimportant

[43a] ► Should the number of field visits vary according to some criteria (e.g. two field visits in the case of big donors and one field visit in the case of small donors)?

- yes {11}
- no {10}

[43b] ► If yes, which criteria do you suggest?

"In consultation with the Secretariat, the reviewed member selects the country to be visited, taking into consideration the extent to which the chosen country is representative of their overall development co-operation programme as well as other relevant issues." (Information Note on the peer Review Process; see footnote 10)

[44] ► Should the Secretariat and the Examiners take a more active role in deciding on the field visit countries?

- yes {6}
- no {15}

[45a] ► Should there be agreed standards with regard to the substance and methodology of the field visits?

- yes {14}
- no {6}
- no answer {1}

[45b] ► If yes, what kind of standards do you suggest?

[45c] ► If yes, who should develop such standards?

In 2001, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, subject to review in that year, suggested that the DAC conduct a joint assessment of their programmes during one of the field visits. The joint assessment was conducted in Mozambique. The results were published in the DAC Journal, 2001, Vol. 2, No. 4.

[46a] ► Should the practice of joint assessments be continued?

- yes {19}
- no {0}
- no preference/no answer {2}

[46b] ► If yes, on what scale (taking the present resources and capacity available into account)?

⁶² Information Note on the Peer Review Process for Peer Review Participants, 28 October 2001 (working document by the Secretariat)

[46c] ► If yes, who should undertake them? (how many Examiners/members of the Secretariat)?

VI.5 *Peer review meeting at OECD headquarters*

The 1996 *Guidelines* (see footnote 1) specify the peer review meeting as follows:

"At the Peer Review meeting itself, following the Chair's introduction, the Head of Delegation of the examined Member makes a brief statement updating major policy developments and perhaps highlighting areas where the examined country may have views that differ from those in the Draft Secretariat Report. The Examiners then make their statements leading into the round of questions, referring to the Main Issues paper and highlighting what they consider the most important issues. Examiners, other Members and the Secretariat may pose follow-up questions. At the conclusion of the Review, the Chair will summarise selected major findings of the Review and issue a press release."

[47]* ► How important do you consider the peer review meetings?

- highly important {11}
- important {8}
- less important {2}
- unimportant

[48a]* ► On balance, are you satisfied with the practice of the peer review meetings?

- highly satisfied {1}
- > {2}
- satisfied {11}
- less satisfied {7}
- unsatisfied

[48b] ► If "less satisfied" or "unsatisfied", please indicate your main reasons?

[49] ► If you think the peer review meetings should be improved, what are your main suggestions?

[50a] ► Should the Secretariat play a more active role in the peer review meeting?

- yes {4}
- no {17}

[50b] ► If yes, which role do you suggest?

[51a] ► Should there be a different role for the Examiners in the peer review meeting?

- yes {7}
- no {13}
- no answer {1}

[51b] ► If yes, which role do you suggest?

[52] ► What should be the main output of the peer review meeting? [see also section VIII]

VII *Resources and expertise available for peer reviews*

As mentioned before, the frequency of peer reviews has been reduced due to the scarcity of resources.

[53] ► How should the capacity of the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring (PRPM) division of the Secretariat for conducting peer reviews be improved? [interlocutors could indicate several options]

- by re-directing resources and expertise from other divisions of the Secretariat to peer review work? [see also Question 12] {13}
- by Members' providing additional expertise by means of secondments? {11}
- by Members' providing additional funding (voluntary contributions)? {8}
- by other means? ► If so, which means do you suggest? {2}

[54] ► Field visits depend on voluntary contributions (which can place an additional administrative burden on both the Secretariat and the DAC Member providing the contribution). Should field visits be financed by the regular budget?

yes {14} no {6} no answer {1}

[55a] ► Should the DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation play a more active role in the peer review process?

yes {9} no {9} no answer {3}

[55b] ► If so, in which way?

VIII *Documentation and output of the peer review process*

According to the *Information Note* (see footnote 10), the documentation for each review consists of:

- the **Country Memorandum** or most recent **Activity Report/Annual Report** prepared by the reviewed DAC Member. "This memorandum is an important source of information and input for the DAC report, and is submitted by all DAC Members on an annual basis, usually around mid-July."
- the **Peer Review Report** prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Examiners and consisting of two parts:
 - the **DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations** summarising the main findings of the review team and providing a list of DAC principle recommendations,
 - the entire text of the **Secretariat Report**;
- **Field Visit Reports** prepared by the Secretariat or an Examiner,

- the **Main Issues Paper** prepared by the Secretariat and the Examiners and cleared with the DAC Chairman in advance; it forms the core of the discussions at the peer review meeting and presents written questions for the reviewed Member;
- the **Press Release** issued by the Chairman following the actual review meeting; a draft press release is prepared in advance of the peer review meeting and discussed among the reviewed Member's representatives and the Examiners at lunch on the day of the review meeting and may be amended following discussions at the end of the peer review meeting; as soon as it is finalised and approved by the Chairman, it is released and put on the OECD internet site.

[56a]* ► How important do you consider the aforementioned documents?

[total number of answers: 21]

[number of answers per category]	Country Memorandum	Secretariat Report	Field Visit Reports	DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations	Main Issues Paper	Press Release
highly important	3	10	2	17	6	12
> between "highly important" and "important"	2	1	1	1	1	2
important	9	10	17	2	10	5
less important	7		1	1	1	2
unimportant					3	
Mean score	[1.9]	[2.5]	[2.1]	[2.8]	[2.0]	[2.5]

[56b] ► Should the number of documents be reduced?

- yes {7} no {14}

[56c] ► If yes, what kind of output (documentation) of a peer review do you consider necessary?

[57a] ► Who should draft the aforementioned documents (provided you think they should be kept) and under who's responsibility should they be issued?

	draft	responsibility
Secretariat Report	[for the answers see the report]	
Field Visit Reports		
DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations		
Main Issues Paper		
Press Release		

[57b] ► Do you have other suggestions with regard to the authorship of and the responsibility for the output of the peer review process?

[61b] ► Should the recommendations be more specific?

- yes {10} no {5} no preference (“just right”; “depends on the case”) {6}

[61c] ► If yes, please give examples.

[62] ► If you consider both the reading capacity of those to whom the Peer Review Reports are primarily addressed and the information function of the Reports,⁶³ what do you think should be the typical page length of the Secretariat Report including statistical material and notes from the field missions (perhaps varying according to the size of the donor)?

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-40 pages {10} | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-60 pages {9} | <input type="checkbox"/> 60-80 pages {3} | <input type="checkbox"/> >80 pages {0} | <input type="checkbox"/> no view or “page length should depend on the size of the donor”: {5} |
| [sometimes with the specifications “without statistics” or “in the case of small donors”] | [sometimes with the specifications “including statistics” or “in the case of large donors”] | [with the specification “in the case on large donors only”] | | |

IX Follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC

IX.1 Follow-up by the DAC with regard to the examined countries

According to the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1), “the DAC Chair is pursuing the practice of follow-up visits to capitals of countries, normally within six months after the publication of the review, (...) to pursue the value and use being made of the Review results (...).”

The *Information Note on the Peer Review Process* (see footnote 10) describes the practice as follows: “Following the review meeting in Paris, perhaps six to eighteen months after, the DAC Chairman, occasionally accompanied by representatives of the Secretariat, pays a visit to the capital of the reviewed Member. The purpose of this follow-up visit is to discuss adoption of the recommendations made at the time of the peer review meeting. The reviewed member hosts this visit, and should present relevant information on follow-up activities taken, or planned, as a consequence of the Peer Review.”

[63a]* ► How do you consider the practice of follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC with regard to the reviewed Members? [number of answers: 20]

- highly appropriate {3}
- appropriate {13}
- > {2}
- less appropriate {1}
- inappropriate {1}

[63b] ► If “less appropriate” or “inappropriate”, please indicate your main reasons.

⁶³ According to the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1), one of the objectives of the peer reviews is to “provide comparative reporting and credible analysis for wider publics in OECD countries and the international community” and to publicise “authoritative reports on the Member’s policies and programmes” [see also Question 7].

- [63c] ► If “less appropriate” or “inappropriate”, how should it be improved?
- [64] ► Should the Secretariat Report as a rule devote a section to the progress made by the examined Member in implementing the recommendations of the last review?⁶⁴
- yes {18} no {3}
- [65] ► Should the process of a mid-point follow-up visit to the examined country capital be made more formal, with a requirement to report back to the DAC on the progress made?
- yes {10} no {10} no preference {1}

IX.2 *Follow-up by the DAC for the sake of improving the collective performance of Members*

Regarding the goal of improving the collective performance, the *1996 Guidelines* (see footnote 1) point out: "To supplement and follow-up individual Reviews, the Committee may organise comparative discussions in which a series of Reviews (say for a particular year) and/or particular policy themes emerging in Reviews or DAC recommendations are taken up with a view to enhancing follow-up and experience-sharing. Trends and issues analysed in Reviews will be used to plan future DAC work."

- [66a]* ► On balance, how do you consider the practice of comparative discussion and experience-sharing within the DAC on the basis of the peer reviews? [number of answers: 17]
- highly satisfactory {2}
- satisfactory {6}
- less satisfactory {7}
- unsatisfactory {2}

[66b] ► If "less satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory", please indicate your main reasons.

[66c] ► If “less satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”, how should it be improved?

⁶⁴ A recent example in this regard can be found in the peer review report of the EC, which in Annex 1 lists the main recommendations of the 1998 peer review and describes the achievements by the EC up to 2001. See: Review of the Development Co-operation Policies and Programmes of the European Community. Draft Secretariat Report, DCD/DAC/AR(2002)2/EC/PART2, 22-May-2002.

X Follow-up to, and impact of, the peer reviews in the examined countries

[67a]* ► On balance, how do you consider the impact of the latest (or the last two) peer review(s) of your country on your country's development co-operation policies and practice?

- high impact {10}
> {1}
- some impact {5}
- small impact {2}
> {2}
- no impact {1}

[67b] ► If there has been an impact, please describe it briefly.

[68] ► How has your aid administration followed up on the recommendations of the latest (or the last two) peer review(s) of your country? (e.g. workshops? action plan?)

Regarding the use and dissemination of the peer review reports:

[69a] ► How are the peer review reports used by your aid administration?

[69b] ► Are the reports (or at least the Main Findings and Recommendations) discussed with other government departments, the Parliament and NGOs?

[69c] ► How are the reports disseminated in your country after publication? (Are they translated into your country's language?)

[70a]* ► How useful do you consider the peer review reports of *other* DAC Members for the work of your aid administration? [number of answers: 20]

- highly useful {1}
> {1}
- useful {17}
- less useful
> {1}
- useless

[70b] ► If "less useful" or "useless", please indicate your main reasons.

XI Further suggestions for improvement

- [71] ► Do you have any further suggestions to enhance the peer review process, i.e.
- its relevance (definition of the rationale and the goals)
 - its effectiveness (achievement of the goals)
 - its efficiency (rationalisation of the peer review process)
 - its impact (for individual Members and the DAC as a whole)?

Thank you very much for your kind co-operation and patience.

ANNEX IV: INTERLOCUTORS, DATE AND FORM OF THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH DAC MEMBER CAPITALS

	Questionnaire sent to capital	Interview conducted		
		On	How	With
AUSTRALIA	15.7	19.7	Phone	Robin Davies, DAC Delegate
AUSTRIA	18.7	26.8	Phone and written answers	Dr Edda Weiss, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head of Division "Co-ordination of Development Co-operation".
BELGIUM	19.7			
CANADA	22.7	28.8	Phone	Paul Sadler, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Senior Analyst, Policy Co-ordination, Policy Branch
DENMARK	22.7	2.9	Phone and written answers	Ib Kelland, Chief Consultant (on a part time basis) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Head of Department "UN Aid, examiner in the 2001 aid review of Belgium
EC	19.7	30.8	Phone and written answers	Patrice Lenormand, European Commission, DG DEV A/2, member of the unit "UN OECD, G8, other donors", co-ordinator of the 2002 aid review of Greece.
FINLAND	22.7	29.8	Phone	Laura Kansikas-Debraise, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head of Division "Co-ordination of Development Policy", examiner in the 2002 aid review of Greece
FRANCE	22.7	19.8	Phone	Jacques Le Pape, Ministère des Finances, Direction du Trésor, Chef du Bureau

				“Aide au Développement – Institutions Multilatérales de Développement”.
GERMANY	16.7	22.8	Visit	<p><u>Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development:</u></p> <p>Dr. Michael Hofmann, Director General “Global and Sectoral Issues, European and Multilateral Development Co-operation”</p> <p>Georg Lührs, Head of Division “OECD/DAC, G7/G8, Bilateral Co-operation with Other Donors, Statistics”</p> <p>Sabine Rothkegel. member of the OECD/DAC Division</p> <p>Dr. Horst Breier, Head of Division “Evaluation, Quality Management”</p> <p>Ronald Meyer, examiner in the 2001 aid review of the Netherlands</p> <p><u>Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the OECD:</u></p> <p>Eduard Westreicher, DAC Delegate</p> <p><u>Foreign Office:</u></p> <p>Frank M. Mann, Head of Division “Development Policy”</p>
GREECE	18.7	17.9*	Written answers	Angelique Skami, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Directorate for Development Co-operation, Head of Department “Policy Planning”
IRELAND	19.7	1.8	Phone and written answers	Frank Sheridan, Department of Foreign Affairs, Development Co-operation Directorate, Head of Bilateral Aid
ITALY	19.7	6.9	Phone and written answers	Claudio Spinedi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of Italian Co-operation, Head of Section “Policies and Planning”
JAPAN	17.7	5.9*	Written answers	Natsuko Sakata, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Economic Co-operation Bureau, Assistant Director of the Multilateral Co-operation Division

LUXEMBOURG	22.7			
NETHERLANDS	18.7	20.8	Visit	<u>Ministry of Foreign Affairs:</u> Rob D. van den Berg, Director “Policy and Operations Department” Frans Bevort, former DAC co-ordinator Fritz Mijndert, Head of Division “Aid Information Management” Robert G.Dijksterhuis, Head of Section “Entrepreneurship and Business Development” Rob Visser, Deputy Director, Department of Social Policy Freek Keppels, Deputy Head / ODA Co-ordinator Caroline Poldermans, Deputy Head, Peace Building and Good Governance Division
NEW ZEALAND	19.7	1.8	Phone	Don Clarke, New Zealand Agency for International Development, Section “Evaluation, Analysis & Programme Support”
NORWAY	23.7	3.9	Visit	<u>Ministry of Foreign Affairs:</u> Jan Dybfest, Deputy Director General, Department for Development Co-operation Policy Sven Smaaland, Head of Development Co-operation Section, co-ordinator of the 1999 aid review of Norway Sigurd Endresen, Senior Adviser, former ambassador to Mozambique
PORTUGAL	16.7	5.9	Phone and written answers	Alexandra Chambel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Instituto da Cooperação Portuguesa, Evaluation Division

SPAIN	17.7	6.9	Phone	Luis Tejada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Chief Director, Planning and Evaluation Unit
SWEDEN	23.7	2.8	Visit	<u>Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development:</u> Erik Backman, Swedish examiner in the 2000 aid review of the U.S. Ingrid Wetterqvist, Deputy Director, Democracy and Human Rights Stefan Isaksson, Head of Section
SWITZERLAND	19.7	29.8	Phone	Christoph Graf, Swiss Agency for Development Co-operation (SDC), Head "Evaluation and Controlling"
UK	22.7	28.8	Phone	Richard Teuten Department for International Development (DFID), Deputy Head, Development Policy Department Ian Symons, DFID, member of the Development Policy Department
USA	17.7	5.8	Visit	<u>USAID, Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC):</u> Muneera Salem-Murdock, Multilateral Donor Affairs (OECD/DAC, IFIs, G8, UN) Norman Nicholson, Director, Office of Donor Co-ordination and Outreach Gerald Britan, Director, Office of Development Evaluation and Orientation Barbara Turner, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
* date of answers received				

ANNEX V: TABULATION OF THE RESPONSES TO THE STANDARDISED QUESTIONS

Explanatory notes

1. The 21 DAC Members who responded to the questionnaire have been listed in the left column of the following tables in a random order so that they cannot be identified. The numbers do **not** correspond to the alphabetical order.
2. The responses to the standardised questions have been translated into scores as follows:
 - “highly important/satisfactory/appropriate” = 3,
 - “important/satisfactory/appropriate” = 2,
 - “less important/satisfactory/appropriate” = 1,
 - “unimportant/unsatisfactory/inappropriate” = 0,
 - the scores 2.5 or 1.5 or 0.5 mean “between highly important and important”, “between important and less important” or “between less important and unimportant” etc.
 - “-” means: no response provided.
3. n = number of answers (mostly, though not always, 21); Σ = sum of the scores given to the responses to a given question.
4. **Mean** = arithmetic mean of the scores given to the responses to a given question (indicates the average assessment of the Members interviewed).

	1	2a	3a	4a	7	8a	19a
	How important do you consider the peer reviews within the range of the DAC's activities?	On balance, how satisfied are you with the DAC peer reviews?	Do you consider the goals of the peer reviews (as stated in the <i>1996 Guidelines on the Preparation of DAC Peer Reviews</i>) basically satisfactory?	On balance, how do you consider the overall achievement of the goals of the peer reviews?	How important do you consider the goal of providing comparative reporting and credible analysis for wider publics (information function of the peer reviews)?	When considering the peer reviews of the last few years or the latest peer review of your country, are you basically satisfied with the scope (coverage) of the peer reviews?	On balance, do you consider the standards applied in the peer reviews to be an appropriate basis for assessing DAC Members' policies and practices?
1	3	1	3	1	1	1	2
2	3	1	2	2	2	1	1
3	3	1	3	1	2	1	3
4	3	2	2	2	3	2	2.5
5	3	1	2	1	3	2	3
6	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
7	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
8	3	2	2	2	3	1.5	2
9	3	1	3	1	3	2	2
10	3	3	3	2	2.5	3	2.5
11	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
12	3	2	2	2	3	2	2
13	2.5	2	2	2	3	2.5	2

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14	3	3	2	2	3	2	2
15	2.5	2.5	3	2.5	3	2.5	2
16	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
17	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
18							
19							
20	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
21	3	2	2	2	3	1	2
22	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
23	3	2	2	1.5	3	1.5	2
<i>n</i>	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Σ	60	40.5	51	38	54.5	39	45
Mean	2.9	1.9	2.4	1.8	2.6	1.9	2.1

	26a	30	37a	38	42	47	48a
	On balance, how satisfied are you with the peer character of the peer review process?	On balance, how do you view the interplay between the Secretariat and the Examiners in the peer review process?	How do you consider the usefulness of the questionnaires sent to the examined Member by the Secretariat before the visits to the capital and the field visits?	Do you consider the average peer review interval (3.8 - 4.6 years) satisfactory?	How important do you consider the field visits?	How important do you consider the peer review meetings?	On balance, are you satisfied with the practice of the peer review meetings?
1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2
2	2	1	2	2	2	3	1
3	2	2	1	1	2	3	1
4	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
5	1	1	3	0	3	3	1
6	2	2	2	2	3	2	1
7	2	2	3	1	3	3	2
8	2	2	1	2	3	1	1
9	1	1	1	0	3	2	1
10	2.5	3	2	3	3	3	2.5
11	2	2	3	3	3	3	2
12	1.5	2	2	1	3	2	2
13	2	2	2	1	2	2	2

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14	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
15	3	2	3	2	3	3	2.5
16	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
17	2	2	2	2	3	1	2
18							
19							
20	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
21	2	2	3	2	3	3	1
22	3	2	2	1	3	3	3
23	2	2	2	1	2	3	2
<i>n</i>	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Σ	41	40	44	35	56	51	37
Mean	2.0	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.7	2.4	1.8

	56a	56a	56a	56a	56a	56a	59a
	How important do you consider the Country Memorandum?	How important do you consider the Secretariat Report	How important do you consider the Field Visit Reports?	How important do you consider the DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations?	How important do you consider the Main Issues Paper?	How important do you consider the Press Release?	On balance, how do you judge the quality of the Secretariat Report?
1	2	3	2	3	2	3	2
2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2
3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3
4	1	2	2	3	2	2.5	2.5
5	1	3	2	3	0	3	1
6	2	2	2	3	3	2	2
7	2	3	3	3	2	2	2
8	1	3	2	2	1	1	2
9	1	3	1	1	0	3	1
10	2.5	3	2	3	0	2	3
11	3	3	2	3	3	2	2
12	1	2	2	3	3	1	3
13	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
14	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
15	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	-
16	2	2	2	3	2	3	2

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17	2	2	2	3	2	3	2
18							
19							
20	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
21	1	3	2	3	2	3	2
22	2	2	2	3	2	3	2
23	2	2	2	3	3	3	2.5
<i>n</i>	21	21	21	21	21	21	20
Σ	39	52.5	43.5	58.5	41.5	53	42
Mean	1.9	2.5	2.1	2.8	2.0	2.5	2.1

	59a	63a	66a	67a	70a
	On balance, how do you judge the quality of the DAC's Main Findings and Recommendations?	How do you consider the practice of follow-up to the peer reviews by the DAC with regard to the reviewed Members?	On balance, how do you consider the practice of comparative discussion and experience-sharing within the DAC on the basis of the peer reviews?	On balance, how do you consider the impact of the latest (or the last two) peer review (s) of your country on your country's development co-operation policies and practice?	How useful do you consider the peer review reports of <i>other</i> DAC Members for the work of your aid administration?
1	2	1.5	1	0.5	2
2	1	2	1	1	2
3	2	2	-	2	2.5
4	2.5	2	1	3	2
5	2	1	2	3	2
6	2	2	1	3	2
7	2	2	2	3	2
8	2	2	1	3	0.5
9	1	2	1	1	2
10	3	1.5	-	3	2
11	3	3	3	3	3
12	2	0	0	0	2
13	2	2	1	2	2
14	2	3	2	3	2
15	-	-	-	2	-
16	2	2	2	3	2

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17	2	2	-	2.5	2
18					
19					
20	2	2	2	2	2
21	3	2	3	3	2
22	2	3	2	2	2
23	2.5	2	0	0.5	2
<i>n</i>	20	20	17	21	20
Σ	42	39	25	45	40
Mean	2.1	2.0	1.5	2.1	2.0