

## Nicole Clarke and Tony Lowe (IDR Policy)

- Here today to outline the Individual Conciliation Service in Acas
- A look at the Acas website and useful pages for the TU representative
- Brief outline of Early Conciliation (EC)
- A quick reminder of some of the top tips for reps
- A look at the work we're doing to improve our service for users

- [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)
- Top tabs to navigate to key areas
- Advice tab – by topic and key areas/questions
- Research & commentary – some interesting & topical areas
- **Dispute Resolution** – info about EC, and access to EC notification form

# Journey of a dispute



- Internal grievance/procedures – an important initial first step
- Early Conciliation – notify Acas (time limits, mandatory)
- EC over period of up to 6 weeks
- Conciliation – free, stop the clock, confidential, easy to access, voluntary
- Resolution (formal via COT3, informal)
- No resolution – EC certificate
- ET claim lodged
- Conciliation offered again

# Getting the best out of conciliation



## *Some top tips for reps*

- Contact details (email, phone) and availability
- Fill out the EC notification form as fully as possible
- Have your info ready, and do some planning for calls
- A “mindset” for conciliation (as opposed to an ET hearing)
- “What a difference a rep makes” ...
- “Free” time.....why wouldn't you engage?
- Be aware of time limits



# Discovery Project (March 2021)



## Project aims

- Identify areas of inefficiency in the current service and examine different approaches
- Identify pain points for customers and conciliators and explore options to alleviate those pain points
- Look for how digital and technological solutions could blend into our conciliation service and consider whether these might also offer opportunities to relieve some of the pain points

Our key aims were therefore to understand the current state of the end-to-end conciliation journey from the perspective of our conciliators, support staff, and customers.

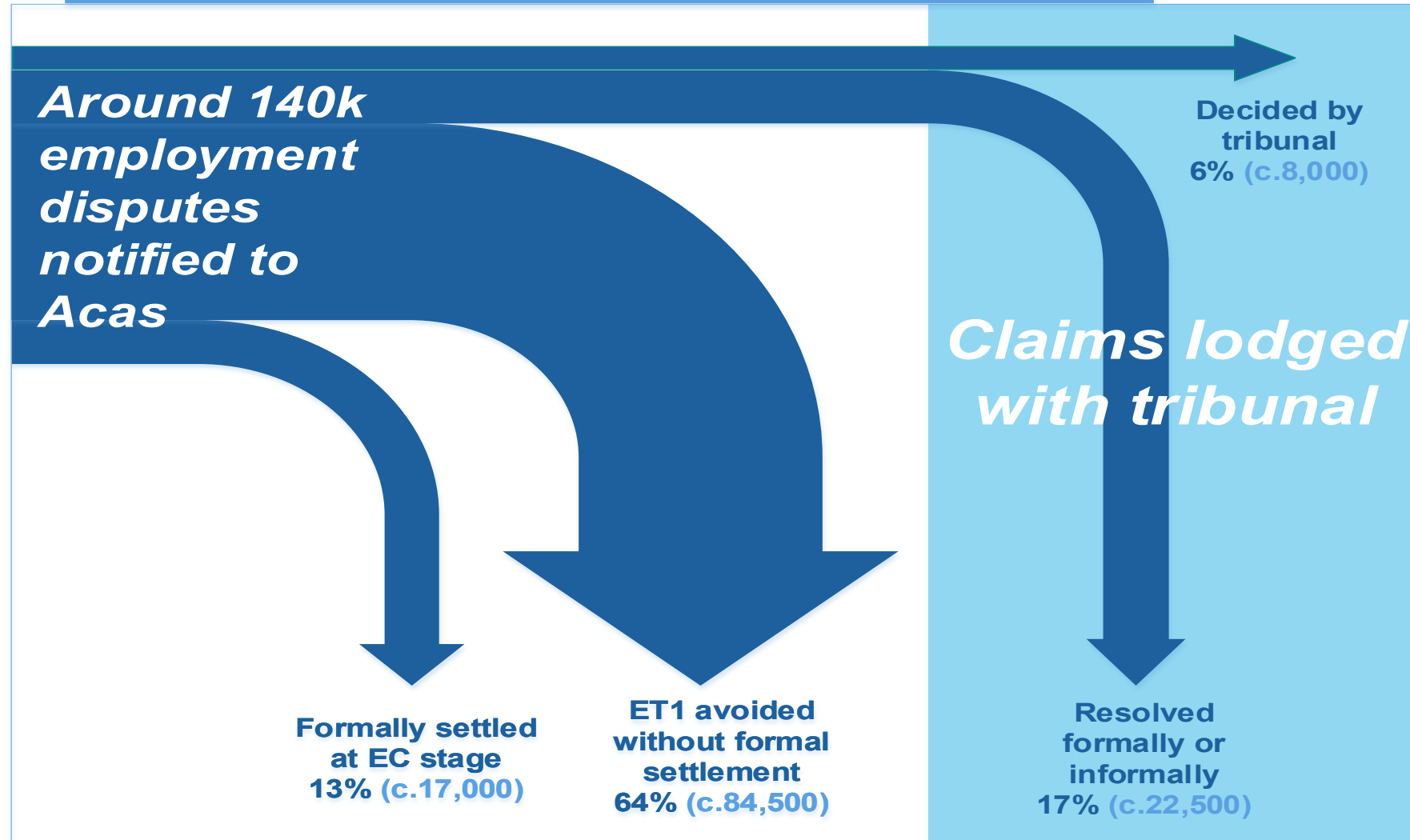
## Project recommendations

The research from Discovery has resulted in developing and prioritising several workstreams under a programme of work we have called the **IDR Smarter Resolutions Programme**.

# The 'Waterfall of Cases' diagram

(based on case receipts 2020/2021)

## Acas impact on conciliation cases



# Workstream 1 – Content strategy

We will look at how to provide the right content at the right point of the journey to help users understand their next right step.

This might include:

- how to effectively resolve disputes internally
- the role of Acas and what users should expect from us
- the benefits of conciliation (comparing with ETs)
- information regarding the case (eg highlighting any jurisdictional issues)
- the dispute resolution process.
- and more!



## VISION

**Users grasp basic principles of employment law related to their dispute, the most appropriate way to resolve it, and have clear expectations of where Acas can help**

## OUTCOMES

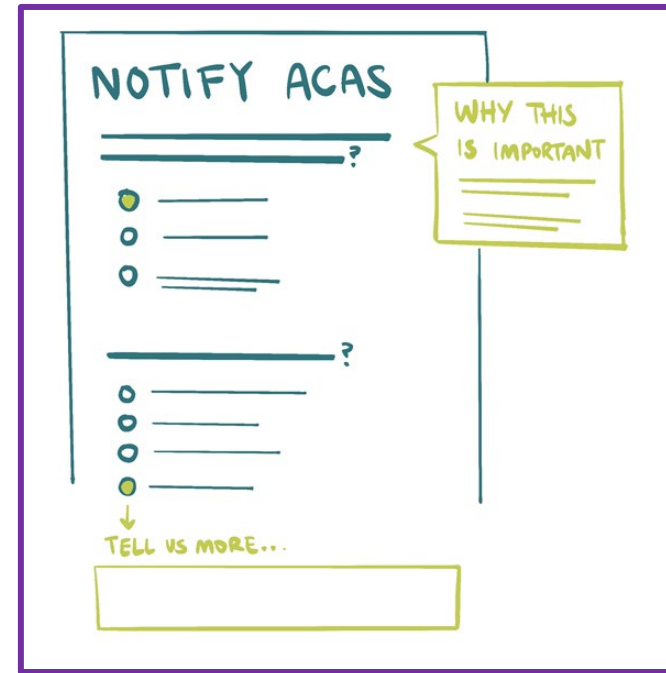
- *Reduced flow of work into Early Conciliation*
- *People in Early Conciliation have exhausted informal resolution routes before submitting a claim*
- *Parties better informed about EC and ET (including benefits of resolution over ET and what they need to do to present case at ET)*
- *Parties clear on the law that applies to their case*
- *Users understand if they have a potentially valid claim*

# Workstream 2: Assisted notification

Can we capture more complete and relevant information about the claim that could:

- Mitigate against claims being raised unnecessarily
- Identify if the claim has potential problem that may prevent a claim being accepted or conciliation being a realistic possibility (e.g. incorrect basic info, incorrect jurisdiction)
- Identify if more information is required.

This will ensure that the case is as well prepared as possible before it gets to conciliators, allowing us to allocate the claim to the right conciliator, arrange the first meeting more rapidly, and better help parties with the claim.



## VISION

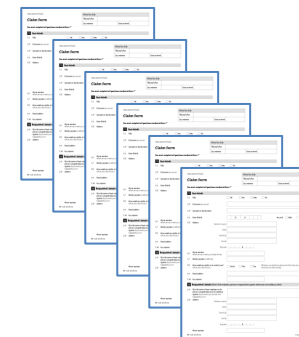
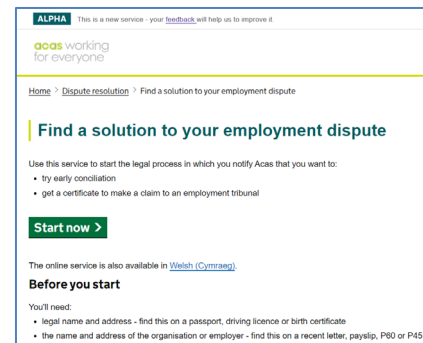
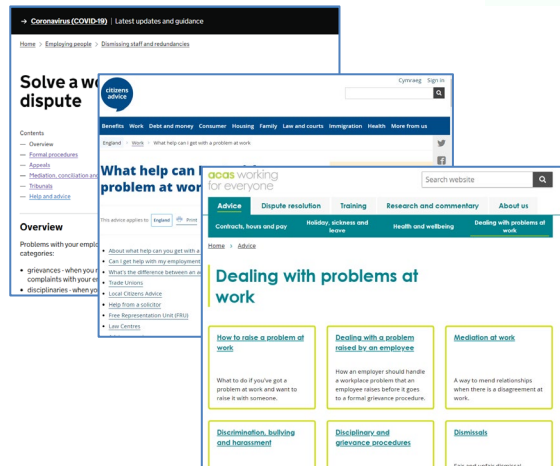
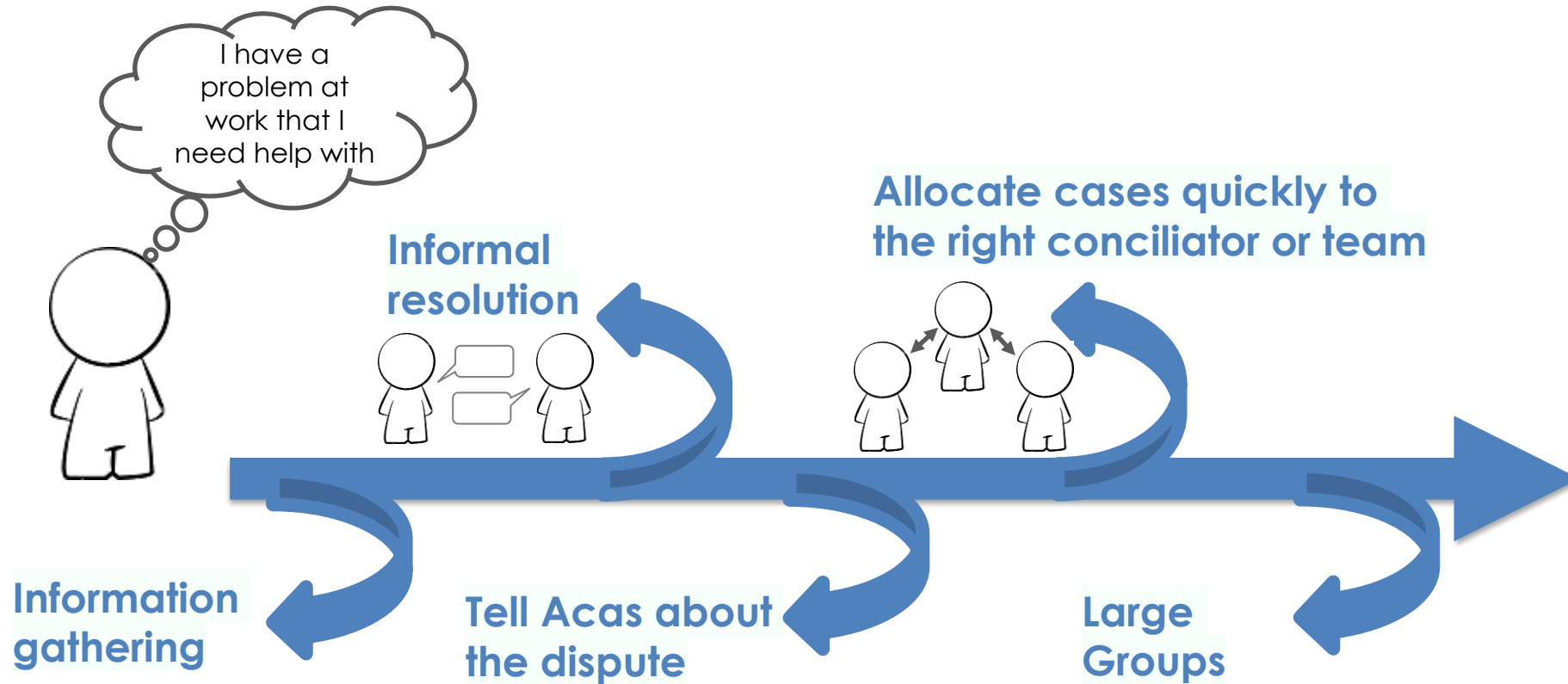
**Users are guided to supply information that conciliators need to provide the best possible service at the earliest point.**

## OUTCOMES

- Reduced flow of work into Early Conciliation
- People in Early Conciliation have exhausted informal resolution routes before submitting a claim
- Parties engage in discussion with conciliators which is focused on resolution
- Most cases go direct from notification to conciliator
- Good quality data collected and used to inform the service.



# Solving a workplace dispute



# Questions

