

Fire Services Research

How it's going

MNL Symposium - 1 May 2025

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STRATEGIC ADVOCACY

CURRENT PRIORITIES

SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Advance approach to water and wastewater infrastructure based on right-sized innovative solutions + promote asset management.

A REGIONAL APPROACH

Ensure regional government implementation moves forward consistent with MNL approach + promote regional approach to challenges/solutions.

MUNICIPAL FISCAL STABILITY

Reignite municipal-provincial fiscal framework advocacy + support research on alternate sources of revenue.

1

6

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Lead municipal reconciliation and anti-racism efforts + promote, encourage, and support greater equity, diversity and inclusion across the sector.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

Support members to address health and safety challenges in their communities through research and advocacy + lead sector-wide housing and public transportation conversations.

5

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Revitalize climate change and climate resilience conversations as per historical MNL work in this area + use and update the 7-steps toolkit as foundation.

4

3

**SEAT
AT THE
TABLE**

2

Funding to support volunteer firefighter training

4-2024

Resolution for Increased Funding for Volunteer Firefighter Training

Active



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador call upon the provincial and federal governments to increase and earmark funding specifically for volunteer firefighting training, and ensure that municipalities are adequately supported in developing the skills and readiness of their fire departments. This would ensure that, in times of large-scale emergencies, such as forest fires, the province has a larger pool of well-trained resources to draw upon.

Fire Services training

Number	4-2024
Year	2024
Category	A
Town/Sponsor	Town of Cow Head
Status	Active

Training expenses and funding

“There are no course registration fees to attend this training school. **However, meals, travel, course textbooks and accommodations are the responsibility of the candidate.** Firefighters attending must bring Personal Protective Equipment (bunker gear and appropriate ensemble) for themselves and a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), where applicable, if they have a spare SCBA available.”

*Re: Annual Fire and Emergency Services Training School
Memo from FES, 7 Feb 2025*

“Requests for **financial assistance for operating grants or training** for fire departments will not be considered under this program.”

Firefighting equipment program, FES

Funding for training is the responsibility of the fire department, and therefore, the municipality.

Fire departments in NL

- In 2022, FES estimated that there were **450 career firefighters** in NL, and **5900 volunteer firefighters**.
- According to the 2015 *Report on the Operational Readiness of Municipal Fire Protection Services*, there are:
 - 2 career fire departments (Corner Brook and St. John's)
 - 6 combination (Conception Bay South, Grand Falls-Windsor, Gander, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador City, and Stephenville)
 - 266 volunteer fire departments.

Estimated annual cost of training

- At an estimated cost of \$1500 per firefighter for training, that means:

Type of firefighter	Estimated number of fire fighters	Total Cost (@1500 per firefighter)
Career	450	\$675,000
Volunteer	5900	\$8,850,000
Total	6350	\$9,525,000

- Municipalities with volunteer fire departments are therefore theoretically responsible, on average, to ensure that **\$35,808** is available annually for firefighter training. NOTE: Appendix B outlines budgeted amounts for fire protection among a select group of municipalities.
- The total package of funding available to support municipalities for all their training needs is now at approximately **\$800,000**.

MUNICIPALITIES NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR WELCOMES ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

For Immediate Release
April 9, 2025

St. John's – Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) is pleased to see support for municipalities in today's Provincial Budget announcements.

In advance of the 2025 Budget, MNL advocated for additional support to municipalities for their efforts in wastewater system monitoring and much needed training funding for volunteer firefighters in the province.

The \$100,000 announced today for wastewater monitoring assistance will help municipalities in our province meet requirements under the Federal Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations by enabling them to train municipal staff and purchase necessary equipment to do wastewater monitoring internally.

The \$225,000 announced for volunteer firefighter training will provide much needed funding to volunteer firefighters across the province to access the training that they require without having to rely heavily on municipalities for additional operational funding or fundraising.

MNL is also pleased to see that the Provincial Government is continuing its investment in municipal infrastructure. We look forward to further conversations on municipal/provincial/federal infrastructure funding arrangements.

"We need support for success. We have to ensure that municipalities have the right tools and resources so that councillors, staff, and firefighters can do their work safely, and with confidence. The funding announced in today's budget is another step forward to showing what we can achieve when we all work together toward common goals." – Councillor Amy Coady, MNL President



\$225,000
annual volunteer
firefighting
training fund

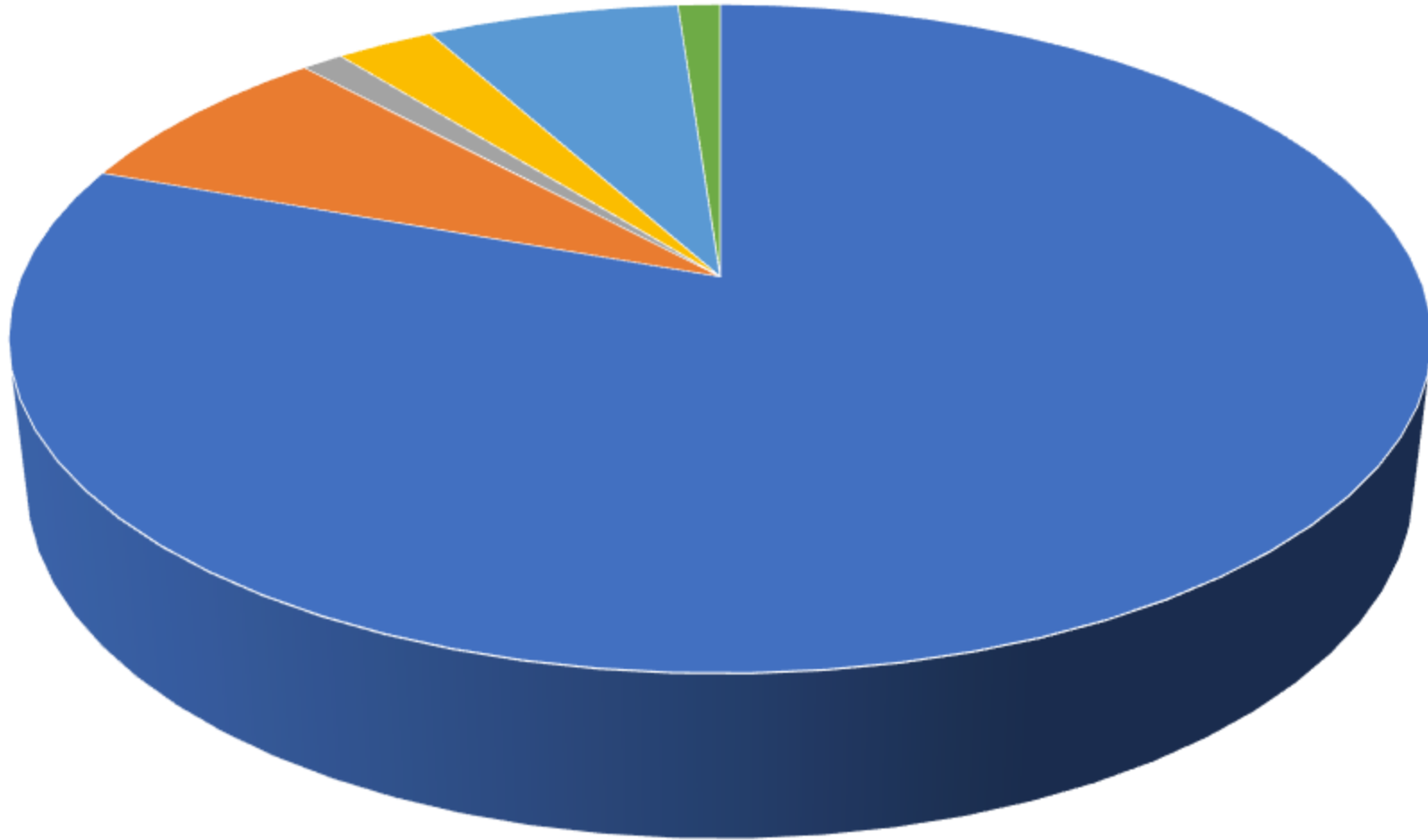
Firefighter outreach work

- Supported by the Department of Justice and Public Safety (and the 2024 Budget)
- Partnership of MNL, NLAFS, PMA
- Data collection at regional meetings
- Firefighters survey, Sept-Oct 2024 (n= 263)

Profile of firefighters as per survey work

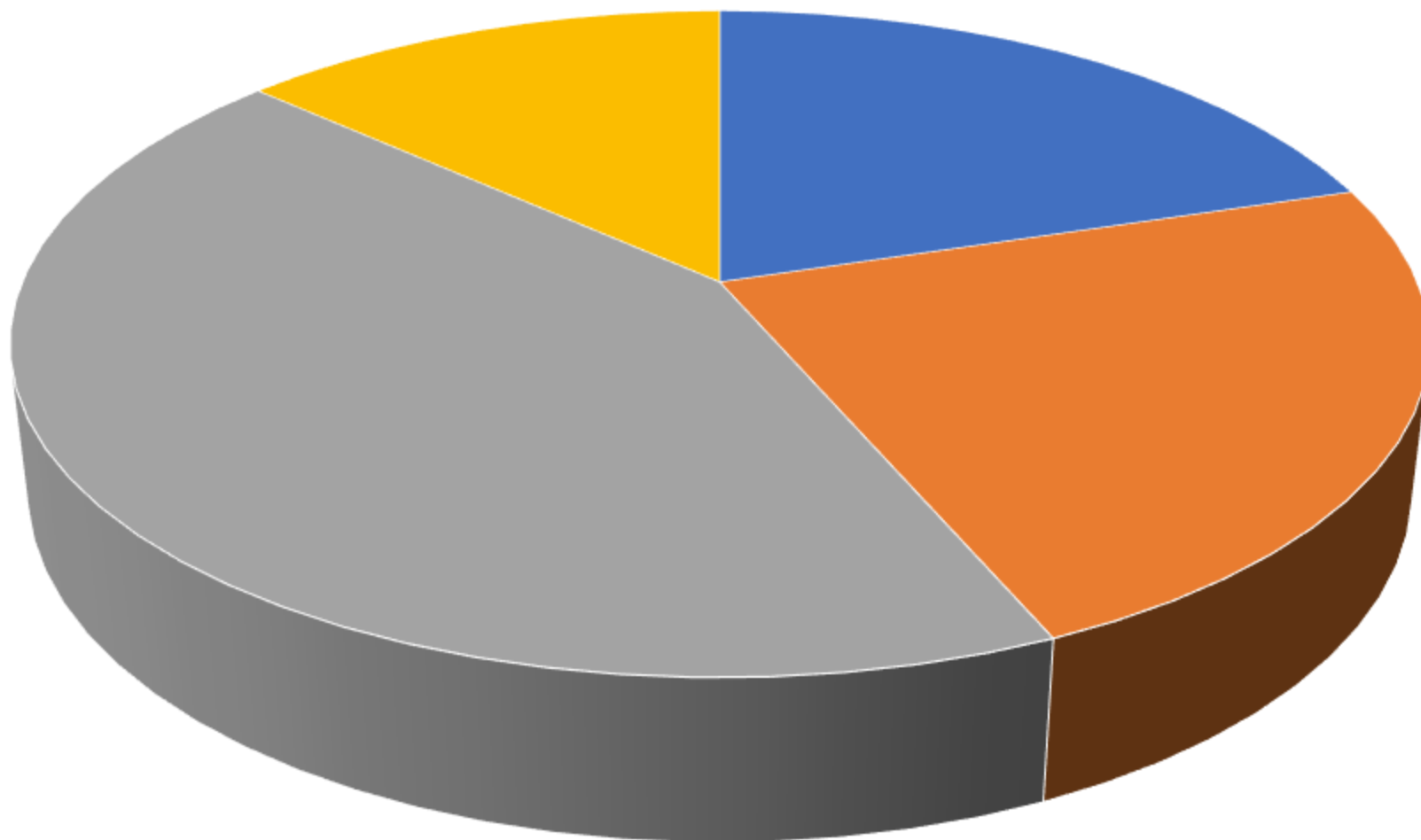
- Predominantly volunteers who also work full-time
- Seasoned firefighters with decades of experience
- Leaders

Work Status (n=262)



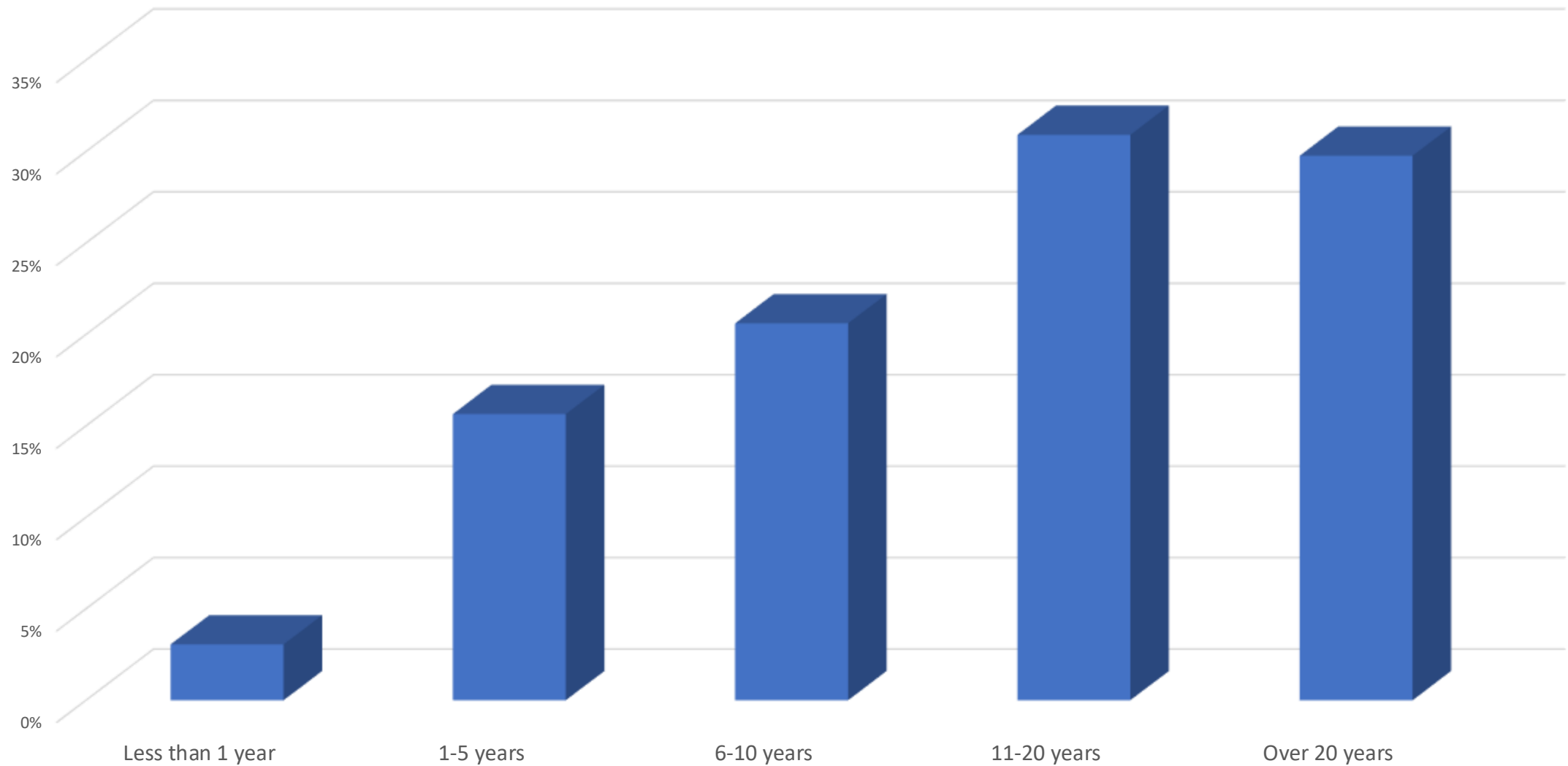
■ Working full time ■ Working part-time ■ Rotational worker ■ Seasonal worker ■ Retired ■ Not specified

Position in Fire Department (n=262)

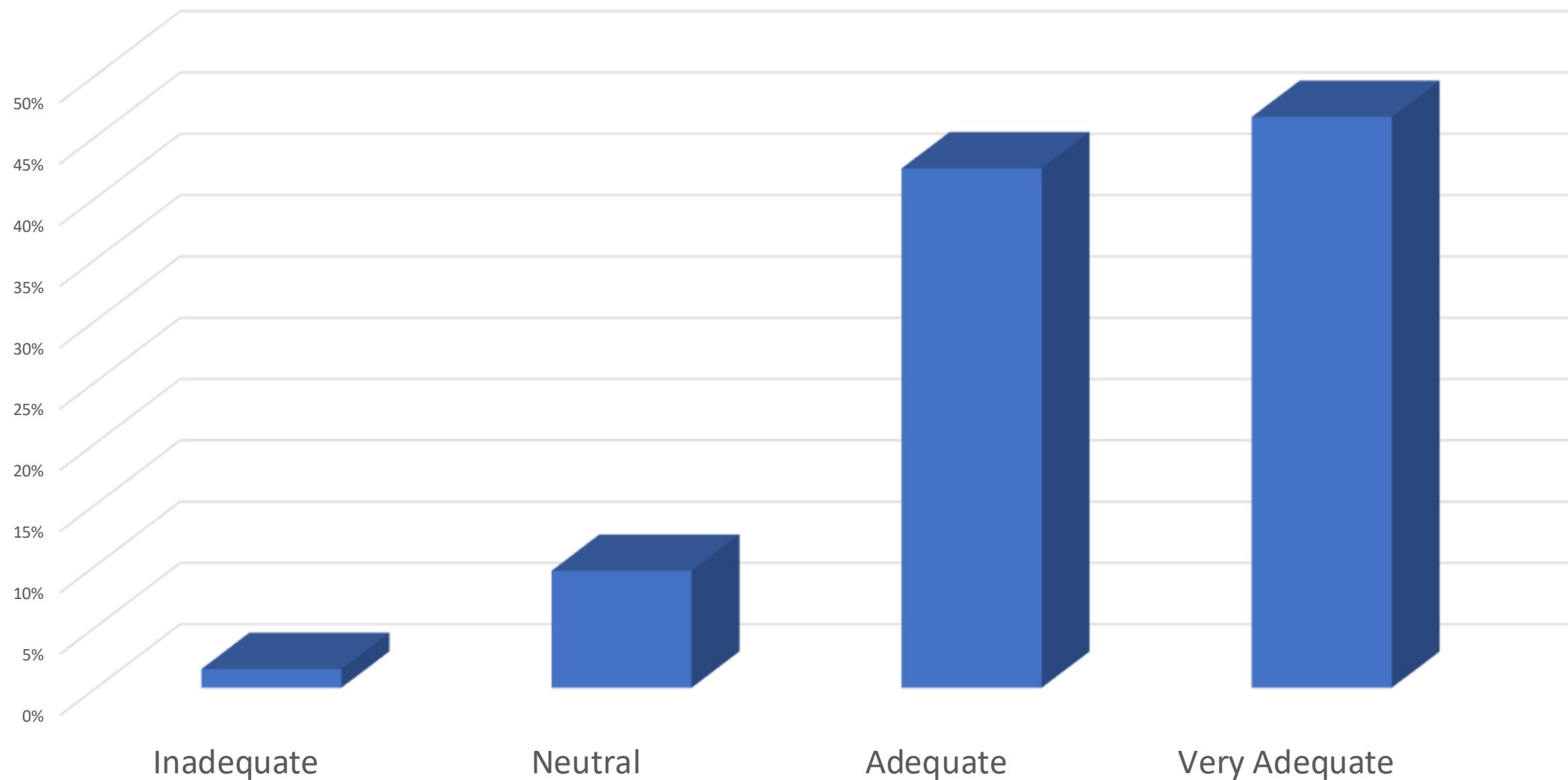


■ Fire Captain/Lieutenant ■ Fire Chief ■ Firefighter ■ Other

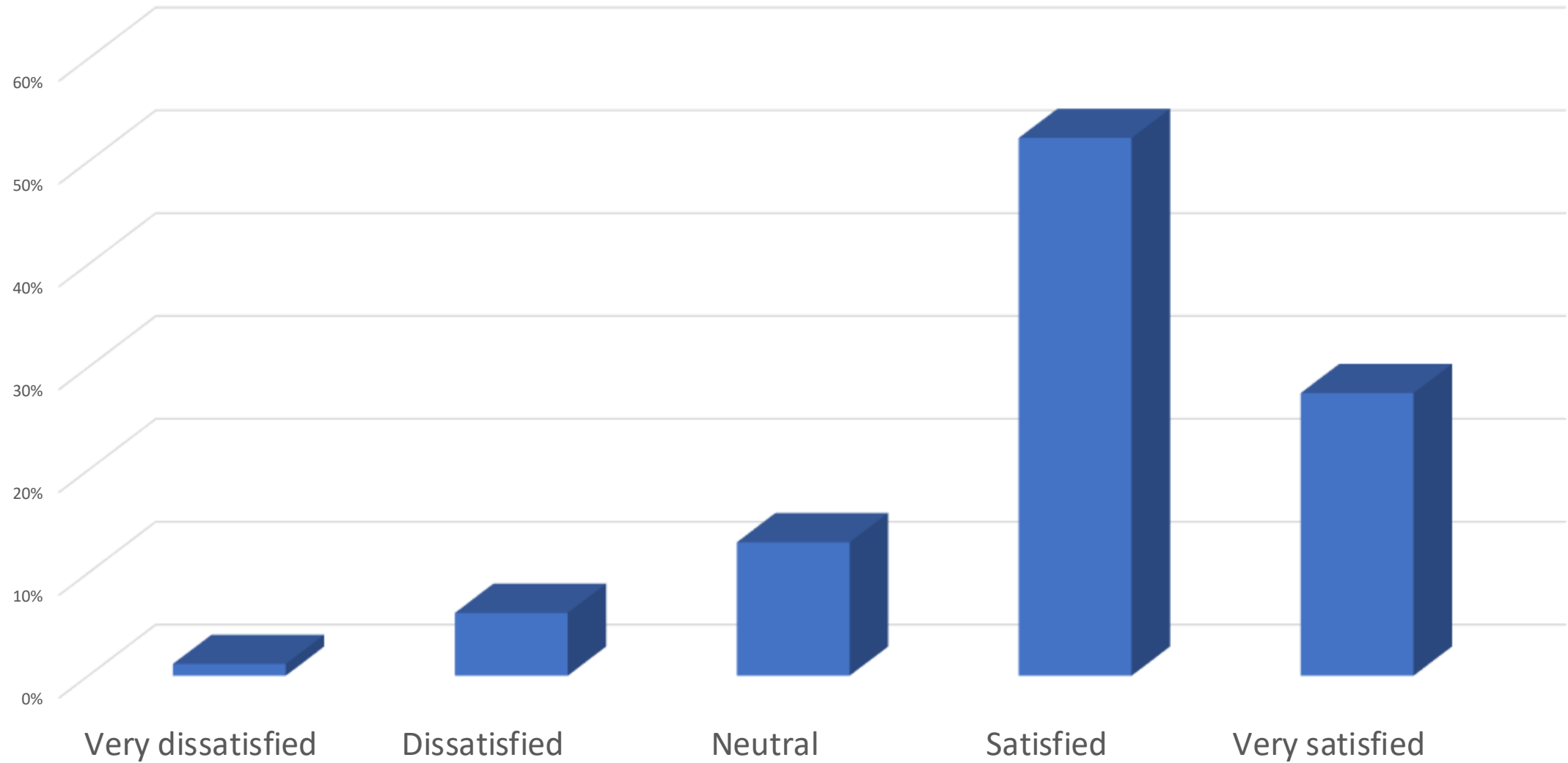
Length of time as firefighter (n=262)



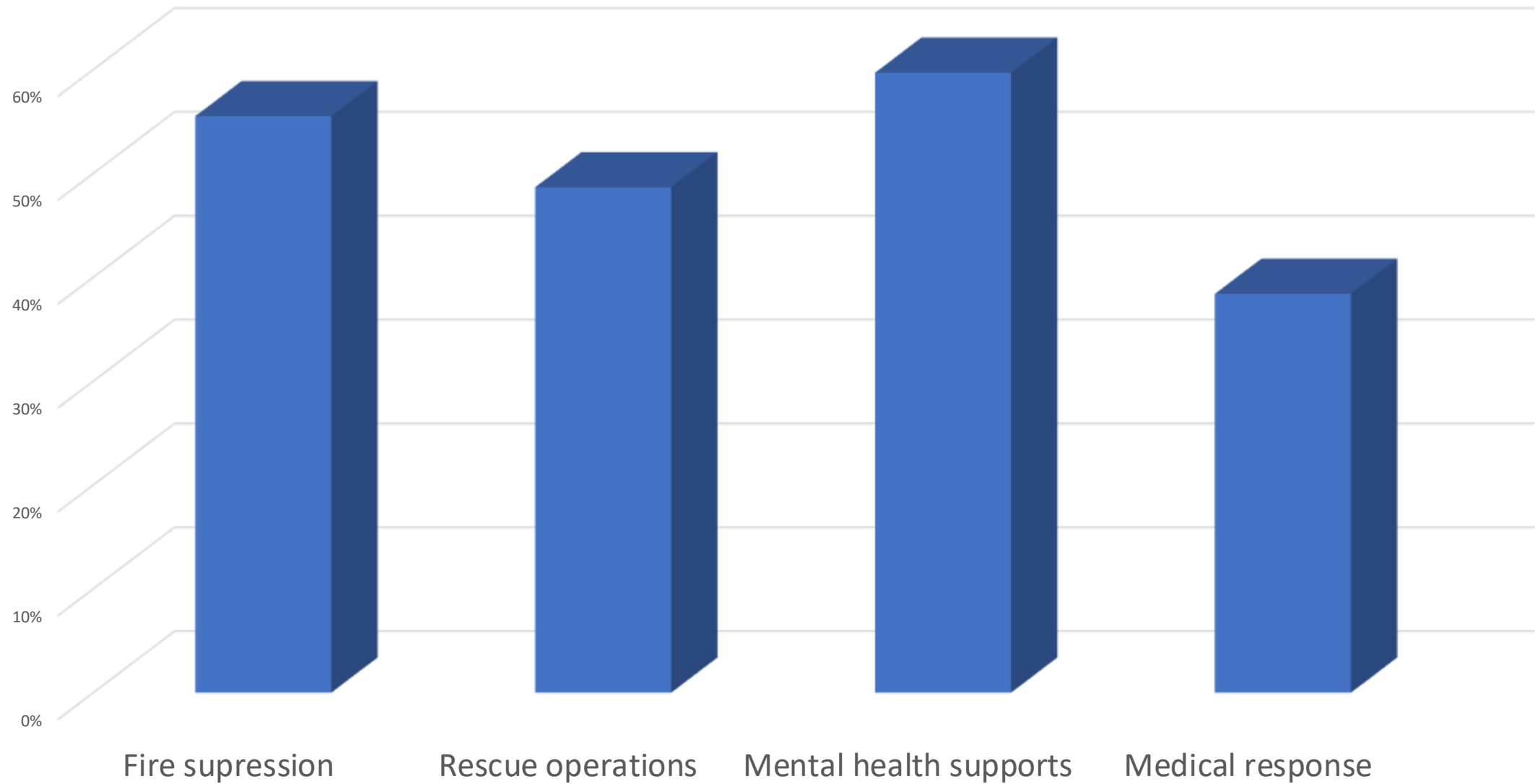
Adequacy of training (n=262)



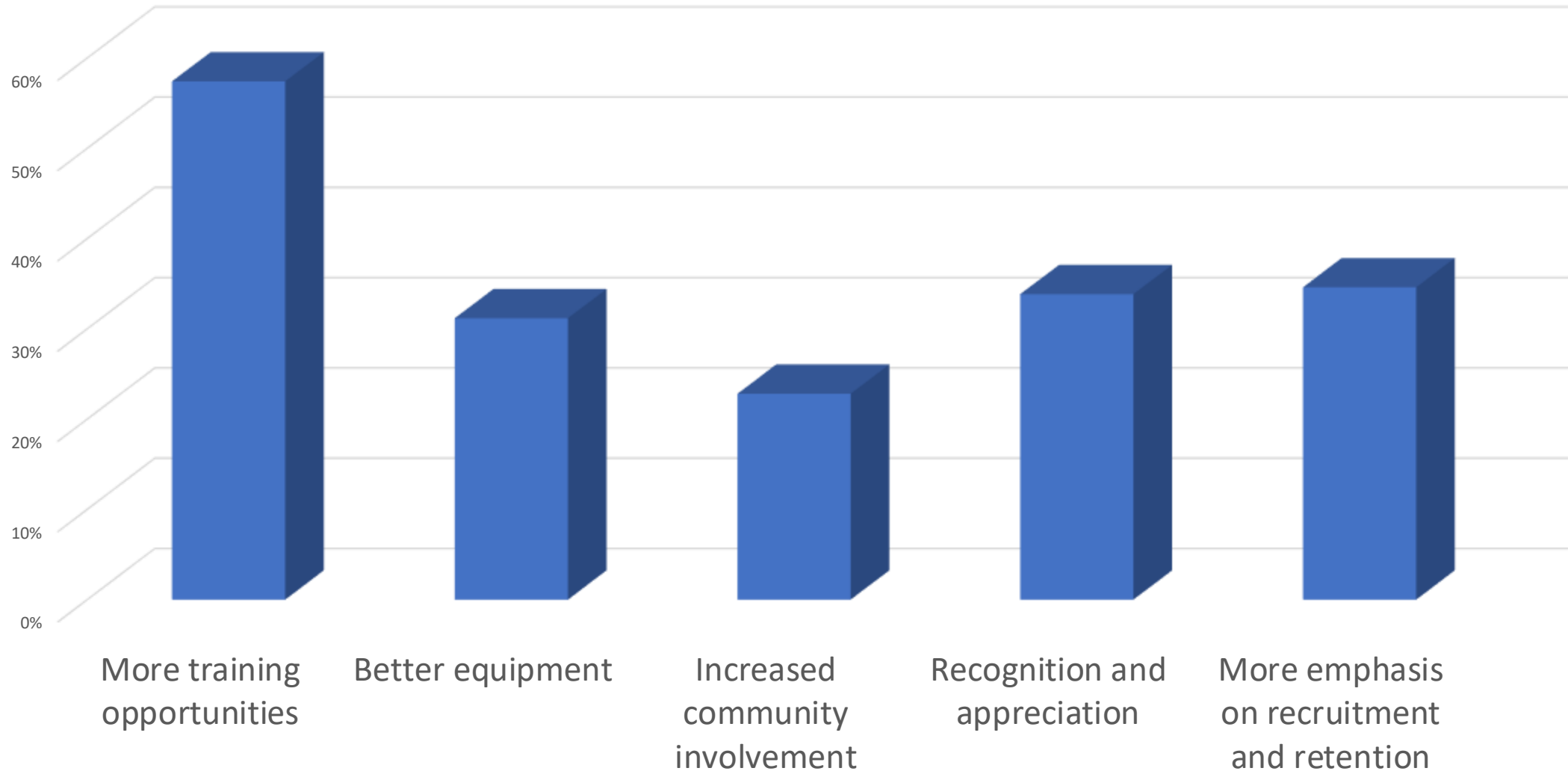
Satisfaction with firefighting equipment (n=262)



Training areas requiring more emphasis (n=263)



Factors that would improve retention(n=263)



Firefighters in Atlantic Canada: Balancing professional obligations and familiarity in rural communities

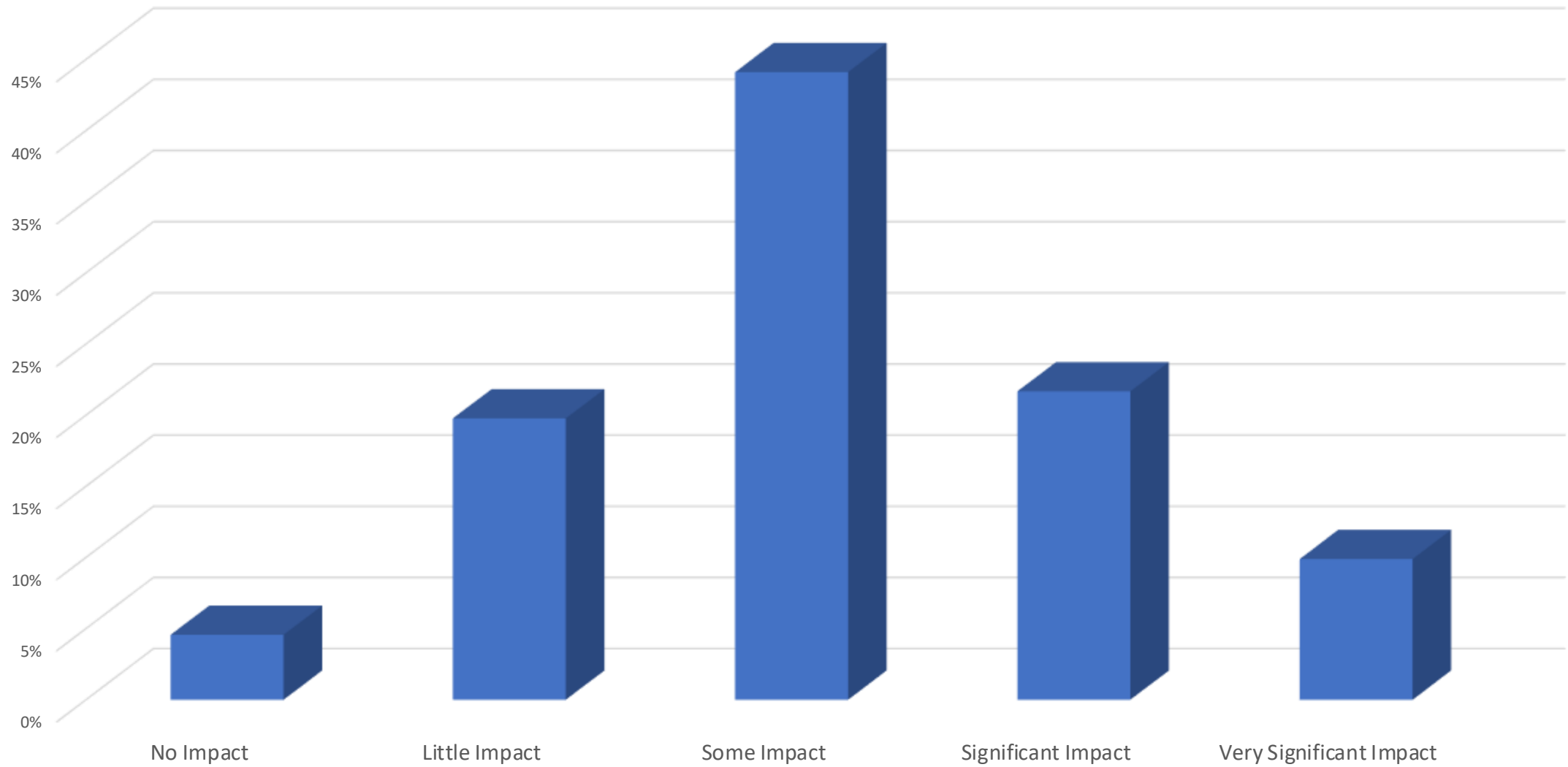
Rachel Richmond, Rosemary Ricciardelli, Bridget Barry & Heidi Cramm

To cite this article: Rachel Richmond, Rosemary Ricciardelli, Bridget Barry & Heidi Cramm (27 Aug 2024): Firefighters in Atlantic Canada: Balancing professional obligations and familiarity in rural communities, Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health, DOI: [10.1080/15555240.2024.2394683](https://doi.org/10.1080/15555240.2024.2394683)

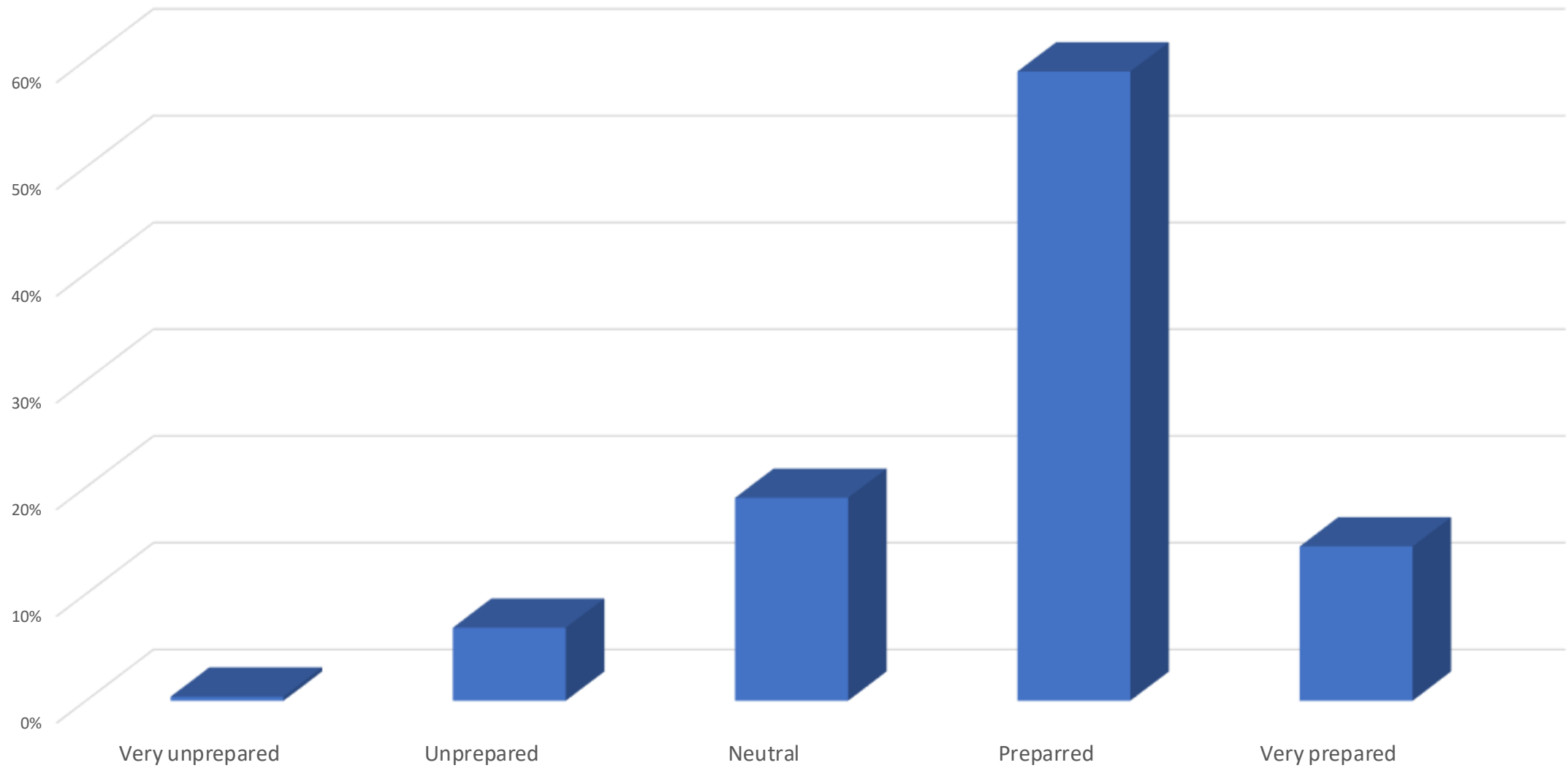
For a firefighter who had been a volunteer and was now part of a full-time career crew, the helplessness associated with being the first—and only—firefighter on a scene was striking. Echoing the expression of anticipation of support and being alone on the scene, PX said:

Right, so that changes things too. Like when you respond as a unit you know you're going to something that's probably not pretty you're prepared for it but when you're one-on-one and it's just chaos and you got no one there to help you control the scenes or the people or anything that's going on, it's just chaos. And that's a really bad situation. Time is like it's standing still. We can talk about our response times, but you get waiting for the rest of the guys to show up it's like an eternity (Witless Bay Fire Department).

Perception of climate change impacts on firefighting (n=263)



Perception of preparedness for emerging fire risks (n=263)





Made possible through
funding from the
Federation of Canadian Municipalities'
Green Municipal Fund and the
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Questions?



Municipalities

Newfoundland and Labrador