

Maintaining Service with Less Resources

William Dillon

Howe Springs Fire Rescue, Florence, SC

Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: William H. Diller

Date: Dec. 18, 2018

Abstract

The problem for this Applied Research Project was that Florence County, like the other departments in this country, has seen a decrease or at least a plateau in volunteerism and an increase in the demand for service. As call volumes increase and daily requirements get more and more demanding, the fire service in Florence County has felt the stress of not having enough personnel and not having the funding to supplement with paid personnel. The purpose of this Applied Research Project was to investigate alternatives that may provide some relief to our county's firefighter shortage, so services do not become sub-standard. A descriptive research method was used to answer the following questions. (1) Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters? (2) What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in South Carolina? (3) How can departments continue providing services with less personnel? (4) What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018? The researcher used published documents, interviews, and a survey. The results revealed answers concerning the retention issues and suggestions for staffing shortages. It was recommended that departments continue to focus on recruitment and retention efforts and start developing long term plans for consolidation of departments. It was also recommended that the newly established automatic-aid agreements be evaluated to see if they are having an impact on the personnel shortage.

Table of Contents

Certification Statement.....2

Abstract.....3

Table of Contents.....4

Introduction.....5

Background and Significance.....6

Literature Review.....8

Procedures.....14

Results.....17

Discussion.....27

Recommendations.....32

References.....36

Appendix A.....39

Appendix B.....40

Appendix C.....43

Maintaining Services with Less Resources

Florence County is a medium size urban/ rural county located in the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina. Over 80% of the fire protection in the county is covered utilizing volunteer firefighters. Florence is growing with industry, residential developments, and population, resulting in the need for emergency services to keep with the demand of such growth. However, Florence County is seeing a sharp decline in experienced volunteer firefighters as the years pass. The problem is that the county relies on these volunteers for fire suppression, medical first responder, hazardous material response, technical rescue, and water rescue. Without the volunteers there is the risk the services will decline, the public will be at risk, and insurance rates will go up.

Florence County covers 799.96 square miles and a population of 136,879 according to the 2010 Census (United States Census Bureau, 2010). The county is protected by 11 fire departments that are dispatched from the same telecommunications center. Automatic-aid and mutual-aid is used between each department regularly. There are currently fifty fire stations within the eleven departments with only ten of the stations being staffed around the clock. There are currently 552 firefighters that handle just under 10,000 calls a year for the Florence County's Fire Service.

The purpose of this research was to discover alternatives that may provide some relief to our County's firefighter shortage, so services do not become sub-standard. A descriptive research method was used to answer the following questions:

- (1) Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters?
- (2) What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in South Carolina?
- (3) How can departments continue providing services with less personnel?

(4) What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018?

Background and Significance

Florence County is a mostly rural county by square mileage but is growing rapidly with urban and suburban areas. With economic growth bringing large industry and commercial to our county, the demand for services continue to grow with plan reviews, code enforcement, fire inspections, pre-fire plans, and emergency calls. The retirement population is also growing within our county with numerous retirement homes and retirement communities being constructed. This along with several other uncontrollable factors has increased the call volume for all eleven departments over the years.

The fire service in Florence County also started running medical first responders calls twenty years ago which approximately doubled the call volumes for all the departments. With a heavier demand on the service to try and meet the NFPA 1720 and ISO requirements, the workload has increased on the shoulders of the personnel that currently are still with the County. Many departments are trying to fill in the shortages by hiring paid personnel for either day time hours or for shift work. By hiring so many career firefighters, we have seen budgets stretched to the point that concerns have been raised to the local government officials and to the citizens.

Hiring career firefighters also has its effects on volunteer firefighters. For the most part the career and volunteers can work hand in hand, but we have seen agencies where it did not go so well, and they ended up losing most of the volunteers that they had. Not only did they stand the risk of a volunteer leaving the service all together, but sometimes the volunteers quit once they became employed with the neighboring department. The fire service also lost a substantial amount of our firefighters to EMS and Law Enforcement agencies.

The current level of experience in each department is also alarming. Retaining firefighters for longer than five years has become a real challenge. There is an investment from the department into these firefighters and the experience they leave with is priceless. Our County, like most of the country, is seeing officers promoted at a very young age with very little experience. There is a risk with having unexperienced Officers making the decisions on an emergency scene; unfortunately, most departments have been left with no other choice but to promote what firefighters are available.

This applied research project is based on the Executive Development Class provided by the United States Fire Administration's Executive Fire Officer Program. Florence County is currently operating with very little change over the past twenty years when it pertains to a response. The stigma of having to admit things are changing along with noting the fire service must find ways to change with them still shadows our senior leadership in the fire service. Change management is discussed in Module Five of the Executive Development Class Student Manual. It states that, "People need to know why change is happening" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2016).

The problem that Florence County is having is nothing new to the fire service, but sometimes people accept that there is a problem and are comfortable with doing nothing about it. The United States Fire Administration's Strategic Plan has outlined five areas that the fire service needs to improve on (United States Fire Administration: Strategic Plan, n.d.). The problem in Florence County with our recruitment and retention efforts are listed in two of these goals. Goal two of the plan is to promote response, local planning and preparedness for all hazards. The leaders of the fire service in Florence County must improve the ability to prevent, mitigate and respond to emergencies. Goal three of the plan is to enhance the fire and

emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards. The fire departments that are within Florence County need to evaluate and improve their capabilities to respond to and recover from all incidents through training, education, exercise and evaluation. The demand on the service that has been provided for many years is getting to be too much for personnel in each department. Fire departments across the Country are trying everything to be able to maintain these services through transitioning to career staff, volunteer incentives, recruitment campaigns and the consolidation of departments. It is time for the leaders of the fire service in Florence County to find their solution to this growing problem.

Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review was conducted using relevant published documents that focused on recruitment and retention issues faced in the emergency services. Books, journals, publications, and web-based material were researched to help gather the information in the applied research project. The topic of this Applied Research Project is "Maintaining Service with Less Resources". The title is broad, but the problem is focused. Across Florence County, the State of South Carolina, and the United States Fire Service has witnessed the decline of volunteerism while the services required by the fire service are on the rise.

Years ago, firefighters fought fires. That was it. "We started out fighting fires, and in the years that followed, we took on one new area of responsibility after another" (Lasky, 2007, p. 1). As firefighters ventured into mitigating medical calls, technical rescue, water rescue, vehicle extrication, and hazardous materials our call volumes steadily climbed. Training also became a hurdle as firefighters tried to maintain the knowledge and skills needed to handle the departments' new all hazards occupation. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)(2017) reported that in 2015 there were 1,160,450 firefighters with 814,880 of those

being volunteer firefighters. The NFPA (2015) reported in the U.S. Fire Department Profile that volunteerism is higher than it was over twenty years ago.

Although the NFPA report shows only a small variation in the number of volunteers, other specific states and communities may have had more issues with their volunteer numbers. For instance, Mikulan (2014) reported that Pennsylvania has seen a decrease of approximately 8,000 volunteer firefighters each year. “Federal standards enacted to save firefighters’ lives have unintentionally created a barrier for volunteer service: It now takes hundreds of hours to be certified, and new firefighters often must cover the cost of training” (Brown & Urbina, 2014).

In any type of organization or business there must be good leadership in order for it to be successful. This is one of the areas in the Fire Service today where departments are truly seeing that shortage. Kingle and Hytner (2014), wrote that only one in five millennials stays with the same employer longer than five years. For a firefighter to gain the experience and training needed to lead they must grow in the service. Not retaining fire service personnel has put a real strain on departments that are still growing and needing even more leaders to manage their organization. It was reported by Neal (2017), that high attrition rates are trending upward for probation and post-probation firefighters. It is understandable that our leadership will become younger and less experienced as times move forward due to the ongoing retention problems.

Across the Country almost every department is experiencing the retention short falls. Paid and volunteer departments are seeing young recruits come and go with most staying less than five years. Maine is also experiencing that their firefighters “work long hours away from their town and can’t respond to day calls. They are more involved with their families and their kids’ activities. Both parents work outside the home” (Schroeder, 2015, p. 2). Smaller communities do not have a large enough tax base to pay a career department. In most cases

having a fully paid organization still would not bring enough manpower to the scene without outside resources. It is still imperative that departments continue to provide good retention programs for paid and volunteer personnel. For years the manpower pool has been referred to as ‘recruitment and retention’, but in today’s time the mind set should be “retention and recruitment”. “In many ways recruitment efforts are futile without a retention program to keep volunteers committed, involved, and active with the department” (National Volunteer Fire Council, 2018, p. 131).

It can be seen any many areas across the State of South Carolina that departments are making great efforts to try and recruit new personnel. These efforts can be noted through the many outdoor signage, television commercials, radio ads, and social media sites that are trying to market their departments for that next applicant. In Newberry, South Carolina, a Staffing and Adequate Fire Emergency Response (SAFER) grant was obtained to support their recruitment and retention efforts. The SAFER grant has been another tool to reach out and try to market the fire service and bring in new faces. Some of the key items that have been successful for Newberry include the quick application process, established a participation standard, a diversity program, and a strong explorer program. The Chief of Newberry also praised the ability to market his department utilizing the money over a four-year period (Parnell, 2015). Newberry Fire Department reported at a Council meeting in March 2018 that they had placed twenty-seven new personnel on the department in the last four years as a direct result of the new recruitment efforts (Wigger, 2018).

The South Carolina State Firefighters’ Association has implemented a recruitment and retention campaign that is seeing positive results around the State. The campaign is called South Carolina Volunteer Fire. One of the tools that seem to be working well is a web site and various

social media sites which educate interested candidates and allow for simple ways of contacting their local departments. Florence County has also been the recipient of several of these interested volunteers in the last twelve months. The SCVolunteerFire.org website and related recruitment marketing and retention programs are funded through the FEMA SAFER Grant program through the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association. (SC Volunteer Fire, 2018)

Even with the aforementioned recruitment and retention efforts, some areas have continued seeing shortages in qualified personnel to do the job. The NFPA is only showing a fluctuation of a few percent on the number of volunteers in this Country. The cause of the larger problem is that the number of firefighters have not increased to meet the rising volume of emergency response calls. In fact, Bodin (2017) reports that the call volume is exploding, and the numbers of calls managed by the fire service in the United States have tripled in the last thirty years. With the strain of more calls and the equal to or lesser than number of personnel departments had in the past, fire service leaders are scrambling to find ways to continue to provide reliable service to their communities.

One of the most common ways to support the decline of volunteers is to start hiring career firefighters to support staffing levels. For most of the communities this may not be an option due to the small population and small tax base. "More career firefighters could be the only option many towns will be left with if more residents don't volunteer to be on-call" (Schroeder, 2015, p. 5). Many departments also experience relaxed volunteerism when paid staff begins staffing the stations. Planning and preparing is key for transitioning between volunteer and career. "Your personnel are much more likely to buy into a plan if they have some ownership in decisions in the initial stages. Best laid plans don't always work as we hope" (Lentsch, 2013).

Another way that many departments are battling staffing issues is by consolidation of departments. It will generally start by departments having financial hardship or low staffing numbers. Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements will be put in place in most cases before leaders decide to start the consolidation process. There are many advantages of Automatic Aid and listed below are a few that discusses as being a real benefit to requesting agencies.

- *“Response from the closest station.*
- *Avoiding apparatus duplication.*
- *Quickly getting to the [NFPA 1710](#) or [NFPA 1720](#) staffing levels for a structure fire.*
- *Sharing specialty services.*
- *Increased availability of staff officers for ICS at major incidents.*
- *Help with ISO class rating” (Rielage, 2018).*

Automatic-aid can sometimes compound problems if the departments are not careful and offer more assistance than they can effectively manage. In some cases call volumes could rise substantially putting more strain on the already staffed taxed department. These agreements could leave the areas vulnerable at times if the automatic-aid is not negotiated fairly between the departments.

Consolidation of departments is another avenue that many departments across the Country are utilizing in order to fix their staffing shortage. There are many reasons to consolidate such as staffing shortages, financial shortages, and to improve insurance ratings. As Mikulan (2014) explains, by consolidating resources departments can increase efficiency, increase public safety, improve response times, improve training, ease financial burdens, and prevent the overlapping of apparatus. This applied research project is primarily focused on an alternative to providing

service with staffing shortages, but you must look at all aspects of consolidation when considering it. Consolidation can also bring some problems of its own.

Pride is described in positive and negative descriptions. A firefighter should be full of pride when it comes to the profession, the department, and his company. They should be proud of what they are a part of. But pride can also get in the way of needed progress if departments are not careful. One of the biggest hurdles with consolidation is firefighters that have so much pride that they will not allow growth or advancement. “When asked about the biggest obstacles toward consolidations, the majority of firefighters answered tradition, pride, and attitude/understanding.” (Mikulan, 2014)

Summary

The research provided through the literature review give the overview of what fire departments are facing with regards to recruitment, retention and the lack thereof. Other alternatives were also researched when recruitment and retention efforts fell short.

There are numerous resources that have been published which stress the decline of the amount of volunteer firefighters, while also suggesting that volunteer firefighters would be obsolete in years to come. This research discovered that not to be the case. The number has remained steady over the years with a few other variables changing making it feel like we are losing volunteers. The first factor to realize is that the American population is constantly growing but the number of volunteers does not reflect the same growth. The second factor is the demand placed on the same number of volunteers has grown substantially over the past three decades.

Research does show that there are positive results to some recruitment efforts. There are several publications reporting different ideas on how recruiting personnel is still working across

the Country. There are still good men and women walking in the door and willing to obtain the numerous hours of training that is required to be a firefighter. The downside to that is the published documents are showing the fire service is only retaining these new firefighters for five years or less. They are not staying to replace the leadership voids that we are having in the Fire Service. Retention is a real issue and even though there were several publications giving ideas on how to retain firefighters, there was no real evidence that anyone is having great success with any of their retention efforts.

The research showed that departments that could not staff adequately with volunteers would consider hiring paid staff to fill the voids. Mutual-Aid and Automatic-Aid agreements are also being used more than ever in the Fire Service due to the shortfalls in staffing in career and volunteer departments. The research of recruitment and retention revealed many sources to review, and departmental consolidation was a popular topic found in these sources. Consolidation is becoming a very popular way of solving staffing and financial deficits. Numerous departments have been consolidated just for staffing, but there are several other reasons that departments across the Country are seeking to consolidate. The fix to a staffing issue would directly depend on the severity of the problem within the department. Better recruiting and retention efforts, paid staff, automatic-aid, and departmental consolidation are all steps that can be taken to maintain services to the communities.

Procedures

This applied research project was supported with information collected using internal departmental data, surveys, published documents, and collecting interviews. The data collected focused on the following four questions. 1) Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters? 2) What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in South Carolina? 3) How can

departments continue providing services with less personnel? 4) What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018? Using the descriptive research method, the research was started with collecting statistics from the 11 local fire departments in Florence County. A survey was then completed asking five questions related to the research questions. Interviews were done with three local leaders in the fire service. Sam Brockington was chosen because he is the Fire Coordinator for Florence County. John DeLung was chosen due to his department being a majority career department with large call volume. Monty Tedder was chosen because his department is still volunteer with a low call volume.

Question One: Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters? To gather data on this question the following methods were used.

- 1.) A survey was sent out on social media via Survey Monkey asking for anyone in Florence County or immediate surrounding area that is not a current volunteer firefighter, but has served as a firefighter, to answer five short questions. It was posted on September 15, 2018 and results were collected on September 25, 2018. A total of 196 people took the survey. See Appendix C for Survey questions and responses.
- 2.) Published documents were used to gather information on what other departments around the Country are facing.
- 3.) Interviews were conducted with Florence County's Fire Coordinator, Windy Hill Volunteer Fire Company's Fire Chief, and Hannah-Salem-Friendfield Fire Department's Fire Chief. All three are experienced Chief Officers with over twenty-five years of service but each lead very different style and size organizations. The

interviews were recorded, and notes were taken. See Appendix B for interview questions and responses.

Question Two: What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in South Carolina? To gather data on this question the following methods were used.

- 1) Published documents were used to gather information on what other departments around the Country are facing.

Question Three: How can departments continue providing services with less personnel?

To gather data on this question the following methods were used.

- 1) Interviews were conducted with Florence County's Fire Coordinator, Windy Hill Volunteer Fire Company's Fire Chief, and Hannah-Salem-Friendfield Fire Department's Fire Chief. The interviews were recorded, and notes were taken. See Appendix B for interview questions and responses.
- 2) Published documents were used to gather information on what other departments around the Country are facing.

Question Four: What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018? To gather data on this question the following methods were used.

- 1) A survey was completed by phone or email to the eleven fire departments in Florence County. The survey was completed on July 22-24, 2018. See Appendix A for results from this survey.
- 2) Data was pulled from the NFPA's website to show numbers statistics collected by their research.

Limitations

There were minimal limitations on the research being collected. The Survey placed on Facebook received great feedback, but there is no way to verify that the data was not skewed due to a false entry. It was found through open conversations that at least one non-fire service personnel completed the survey. The numbers and amount of responses were still considered valuable, so they were documented in the applied research project.

The survey that was completed by phone and email was just to collect data from the local county fire departments. One department had very little knowledge of past details of the department due to an overturn in administration over the years. Timmonville Fire Department's 1998 data was approximated by the current Chief.

One of the research questions in this Applied Research Project was used to compare the trend of volunteer firefighters from 1998 to 2018. There was not one sole source to collect this data from. Pulling data for 2016 -2018 was difficult due to the data differing from one resource to another. Data was collected primarily using the NFPA to answer this question but the data for the last few years was limited on their site.

Results

This applied research project was to determine what, if anything, could be done to help with recruitment and retention efforts for the fire departments in Florence County so that their services do not become substandard. While researching personnel and experience shortages, the concern of recruitment and retention resolutions was addressed. Since this research was done specific for the Florence County Fire Service, but is also a nationwide problem, a descriptive research was done within the county and the country.

Research Question One: Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters in Florence County?

Research was completed by first creating a five-question survey concerning recruitment and retention. One out of these five questions were specific to recruiting and not related to retaining. This survey was submitted on Facebook as public and received responses from Florence County and surrounding Counties. It was asked that only people that had once been a volunteer firefighter but not currently a volunteer to answer the survey. Results are discussed below and can be seen in Appendix C. Interviews were also conducted with three different Fire Service Administrators within Florence County. There was a total of seven questions asked in the interview. Question #7 pertains to research question three and will be discussed with those results. Questions and answers from these interviews can be seen in Appendix B.

The survey that was posted on Facebook utilizing Survey Monkey provided an unexpected amount of feedback from past volunteer firefighters. A total of 196 people submitted the survey. There was very positive feedback on the social media site and several other fire service leaders called and requested a copy of the results. Question 1 of the survey asked, "How were you recruited into the Fire Service?" This question was asked to not only see what the best recruitment tool may be but to see if there was any coalition to retention. By comparing the numbers, the data did not help identify a relation to how the firefighter was recruited to their long-term commitment to the service. Overwhelmingly, the results showed that firefighters were recruited by word of mouth totaling 64.38% of the 146 that answered this question. Explorer and Junior programs were also a popular recruitment tool with 32.88% of the 146 people stating they were in one of these programs. Social Media and Recruiter was less than 3% of the total. Recruitment is a large part of getting the proper people in the organization. This question did

help with some of the concerns of the Applied Research Project, but it was not asked in the manner that would have provided the best results for the research question.

Question 2 of the survey asked, “Why did you stop being a volunteer Firefighter?” This question was answered by 163 of the 196 people that took the survey. The results to this question gave specific answers to why a volunteer firefighter would choose to stop volunteering. Out of the 163 people, 32.52% responded that they left to become a career firefighter. That is not a surprise in this county due to a large amount of our volunteer firefighters work as career firefighters, paramedics, or police officers. There were 25.77% who replied they did not have enough time. Poor Leadership caused 17.18% of the volunteers to leave the service. It was reported that the response of “Became too Demanding”, which got 11.66%, was too close to the response “Not Enough Time” and made it difficult to choose. “Lost Interest” and “Relocated” got the remaining 12.88% of the responses between them.

Survey question 3 asked, “Were classes and training reasonable to obtain?” This question was asked to determine if the amount of training required had any effect on the retention of firefighters. All 196 that were surveyed answered this question and 87.24% noted the training was reasonable. Classes take a larger portion of the firefighter’s time compared to 20 years ago, so this response was surprising in comparison to the previous survey question 2.

Survey question 4 asked, “How many years did you volunteer?” This question was to find out if there was a trend in how long a volunteer would commit their time to serving their community. All but one person responded to the question. The results showed that 35.9% leave with less than six years in the service. With 27.69% leaving between six and ten years, this means that over 60% of volunteers do not continue beyond ten years of service. These results, along with other parts of this ARP, demonstrate that recruitment alone is not the sole issue in

today's fire service. Retention of experienced firefighters is the bigger issue that departments are facing.

The last question in the survey asked, "Would you ever consider volunteering again?" This question did not specifically answer the research question but was asked to give an idea if the ones that left would ever consider returning to the service if the problems in survey question 2 were reversed. With 81.12% of the 196 answering yes, we can see that there are still resources out there but there are factors in the way from those resources making it in the door of the fire station.

The survey done for Research Question 1 was supplemented by an interview with three different fire administrators in Florence County. The interviews were conducted separately and scheduled at times convenient for the interviewee. Sam Brockington, County Fire Coordinator, was selected for his over 40 years of experience and his day to day management of combination and volunteer departments. John DeLung, Chief of Windy Hill Vol. Fire Company, was chosen because he has seen a strong shift from volunteer to paid in the last 10 years. Windy Hill Vol. Fire Company is a mostly suburban department responding to over a thousand calls a year. Monty Tedder, Chief of Hannah-Salem-Friendfield Fire Department, was chosen due to being a department which has managed to stay primarily a volunteer department, adding only a few paid staff to help with daytime duties. Hannah-Salem-Friendfield is a mostly rural department running approximately 250 calls a year.

Due to the amount of information that was collected from these three Chiefs, only a summary will be given for each question. The first question asked the Chiefs if they were concerned with the number of certified firefighters active in Florence County at this time. The responses were similar with two of the Chiefs who had immediate concerns and one Chief with

little concern now but concerned for the immediate future. It was the opinion of Chief Tedder that the county is maintaining volunteers, but he feels that on the current trend shortfalls may occur in the next five years.

The second question in the interview asked the Chiefs if their biggest concern was regarding recruitment or retention. All the Chiefs said that they were both important but two of them felt that retention was their choice of focus. Chief DeLung noted he felt that most retention programs were monetary based, and most volunteer departments could not afford to commit to those retention programs. He feels recruitment would be important to keep the numbers up to maintain service.

The third question asked the Chiefs their view on why there is such a high turnover rate in the fire service. The number of people with the commitment to serve and the fact that most people are busier trying to make a living in today's society were answers given by all three participants. Chief DeLung went on to add that he feels that bad leadership is also a key factor in the high turn over rate. The next question, question 4, was continued from question 3. It asked if they felt the turnover rate could be reversed. The answers were all negative, but the participants still noted optimism. The three participants all had a solution that they felt would reverse the turnover rate. Chief DeLung referenced that with talk of consolidating seven fire departments in the County, it has left the members concerned not knowing the future and has lowered the morale due to uncertainty.

Question five from the interview asked the Chiefs what they felt could be done to recruit new personnel. Chief Brockington's opinion was that we had to give the fire department the best image possible, so it would be appealing to the community. Chief Tedder and Chief DeLung

both felt that word of mouth was the best recruitment tool that we have and that it was imperative to keep the personnel's morale up so a positive message would be spread by them.

The last question asked was regarding the Chiefs' opinion on how departments could retain our personnel in the county. Chief DeLung stated he was not sure what anyone could do. As a seasoned Chief he has tried and watched others try numerous different things without much success. Chief Brockington feels that volunteers do not feel involved anymore and that they must feel needed to stay around. Chief Tedder noted that with so many departments across the county that more needs to be done to treat them all the same. Personnel are going from one department to another because of small incentives that their own departments were unable to offer.

The response to the final question provided the most data, and when compared to the survey responses, a clear picture of the concerns around retaining members and a lack of a resolution to those concerns. The fact that departments in the same county are experiencing retention problems at a different rate and recruitment and retention are not the same from one department to the other. Leadership, demographics, call volume, type of department, and the current generation are all terms that were used to describe the retention problem in Florence County.

Research Question Two: What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in the United States?

In this question the Country can be compared to Florence County in which some departments are putting a lot of efforts into recruitment and others are not. There are several departments across the United States that are having success with different recruitment methods. Some departments are running campaigns with billboards, television ads, and radio ads. Others

are using social media to market their department along with putting fire programs into the career centers at local high schools, as noted previously in the literature review section of this applied research project.

Research Question Three: How can departments continue providing services with less personnel?

This research question was studied using published documents and interview questions. The published documents found that the fire service across the country are all finding alternatives for staffing shortages. Supplementing volunteers with paid personnel is a popular trend. Automatic-aid and departmental consolidation is are also two different strategies that departments are using to fix their personnel shortage. A wide variety of options were discovered as many organizations across the Country are facing the same issues being researched in this Applied Research Project. Three Fire Service Leaders in Florence County was interviewed. They were asked seven questions in which six of them have already been discussed under Question One in the Results section of this ARP.

Question seven from the interview asked the Chiefs what leaders could do to maintain services if recruitment and retention efforts do not improve. The three participants responded that they felt that automatic aid and mutual aid had to be utilized now in order to maintain the current level of services. At the end of this research, ten out of the 11 departments in Florence County had signed automatic aid agreements to have one Engine Company from the closet neighboring agency respond to structure fires. This is a big change and by the completion of the ARP there was not enough recorded incidents to report on if it was making an impact or not. The Chiefs also expected to see an increase in paid personnel but felt that it would still not be enough to fill the void left by volunteers. Chief DeLung feels that services would have to be cut

if departments were to continue their current path in Florence County. He also felt that increasing the number of paid employees would not keep up with the current demand for service.

While doing the literature review on recruitment and retention, alternatives to support the staffing of the Fire Service were frequently noted. Three primary options were discussed in all the published documents. The addition of paid staff was one choice that several of the authors reported that departments were making. The primary issue with this choice is that funding is always a factor and smaller departments may not get a big return on their investment.

Automatic-aid and mutual-aid was also a solution being tried by departments. As answered in the interviews with the three Chiefs, it is obvious that Florence County is already moving in that direction. Automatic-aid can also become taxing to the departments and if not implemented appropriately, can put a financial burden on the department that is rendering the aid. When automatic-aid is utilized both parties should consider how this new response division will affect the operations of their department.

Consolidation was the third option discussed in the published documents. It is becoming a trend for fire departments in the Country to consolidate smaller departments into one larger department. By consolidating it was revealed that departments could increase your staffing response, save money, discontinue the duplication of effort, improve insurance ratings, and improve public safety. It was concluded with that a department must be careful when consolidating and not force consolidation. "Firefighters and elected officials should not consider what is popular or best for power or personal agendas but what will provide the best safety for the residents and the people they will serve in both the short- and the long-term (Mikulan, 2014). Forcing consolidation could have an adverse effect on the personnel and cause a multitude of problems including losing personnel.

Research Question Four: What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018?

This research question was answered by analyzing the local and national statistics. It was discovered that the trend over the last twenty years have shown that the volunteers number fluctuate just a few percent each year. The same has been proven in the departments in Florence County. Only three departments have seen a steady decline in volunteers over the past twenty years in Florence County. (See Appendix A) It was discovered while looking at these statistics that volunteerism for the average is not declining as severely as some publications state. The fact is that the fire service is getting busier by the day to include higher call volumes, broader responsibilities, and increased training requirements. With the demand going up and supply remaining the same it is obvious that there is a deficit.

Number of Firefighters in the U.S.

Year	Aggregate		Career		Volunteer	
	Number	Rate per 1,000 Population	Number	Rate per 1,000 Population	Number	Rate per 1,000 Population
1986	1,045,950	1.48	237,750	1.73	808,200	7.88
1987	1,060,000	2.57	243,200	1.73	816,800	8.05
1988	1,040,750	2.22	252,500	1.77	788,250	7.77
1989	1,020,700	3.05	250,600	1.75	770,100	7.45
1990	1,025,650	3.19	253,000	1.73	772,650	7.56
1991	1,033,600	6.22	261,800	1.73	771,800	7.61
1992	1,058,300	3.94	253,000	1.72	805,300	7.34
1993	1,055,050	4.09	259,650	1.73	795,400	7.25
1994	1,073,600	4.12	265,700	1.76	807,900	7.19
1995	1,098,850	4.18	260,850	1.70	838,000	7.42
1996	1,081,800	4.07	266,300	1.74	815,500	6.98
1997	1,079,050	4.03	275,700	1.73	803,350	7.12
1998	1,082,500	4.00	278,300	1.70	804,200	7.18
1999	1,065,150	3.90	279,900	1.69	785,250	6.93
2000	1,064,150	3.86	286,800	1.64	777,350	7.25
2001	1,078,300	3.85	293,600	1.70	784,700	7.04
2002	1,108,250	3.89	291,650	1.68	816,600	7.12
2003	1,096,900	3.77	296,850	1.67	800,050	7.05
2004	1,100,750	3.76	305,150	1.71	795,600	6.88
2005	1,136,650	3.82	313,300	1.68	823,650	7.30
2006	1,140,900	3.81	316,950	1.74	823,950	7.26
2007	1,148,000	3.81	323,350	1.74	825,450	7.29
2008	1,148,850	3.81	321,700	1.73	827,150	7.01
2009	1,148,100	3.81	335,950	1.72	812,150	7.27
2010	1,103,300	3.57	335,150	1.66	768,150	6.59
2011	1,100,450	3.54	344,050	1.69	756,400	6.37
2012	1,129,250	3.60	345,950	1.67	783,300	6.60
2013	1,140,750	3.60	354,600	1.67	786,150	6.68
2014	1,134,400	3.56	346,150	1.68	788,250	6.43
2015	1,160,450	3.36	345,600	1.54	814,850	6.71

Source: NFPA Survey of Fire Departments for U.S. Fire Experience (1986-2015).

Discussion

Florence County grows a little everyday bringing with it more demands for the emergency services that protect it. The research questions that were used in the Applied Research Project determined that Florence County is experiencing shortages of personnel like most of the rest of the Country. There are departments in the county which are slowly increasing their numbers in volunteer firefighters while others are simply maintaining their current numbers. Three departments in the county have had a decrease in volunteers over the past twenty years. (See Appendix D) Firefighters was described by Lasky (2007) as a very wide variety of people that could be young or old and have many different interests in the service. As discussed in an interview with Chief John DeLung of the Windy Hill Fire Department, most of his run area is industrial, commercial, or low-income residential and he does not recruit many volunteers from these areas. (See Appendix B) This could be why volunteerism varies from area to area in Florence County. Along with a firefighter's personality and personal life, it was shown in Question 2 of the "Where are Firefighters going?" survey that Poor Leadership was also a leading factor in why firefighters leave the service. (See Appendix C)

Question 2 showed three major points to the researcher. The first is that many volunteer firefighters quit volunteering when they reach career status. Now some of these could be assumed to have started working for the same department that they had once volunteered for and labor laws prevented them from doing both. Others may just not have the drive to do both or are not willing to do it for free once they are paid. The second thing witnessed in the survey question is that possibly higher demand on services is causing volunteering to become too demanding and they may not have the time to be firefighters. The third point is that leadership has a direct effect on retaining personnel.

In this research it was discovered that retention of firefighters may be the larger problem threatening the departments. Within the surveys, the interviews, and the published documents there was a large amount of concern discovered for the future leadership of the fire service. The concern was also for the number of firefighters that do not stay longer than five years. “The vast majority (90%) said that they did not plan to stay with any given employer for more than five years” (Kingle & Hytner, 2014). This statement falls in line with how Chief John DeLung and Chief Sam Brockington answered the interview question “Why do you feel that there is a large amount of turnover into today’s fire service?” They both replied that most young people today do not have the desire to serve and have no commitment to their community. (See Appendix B) The number of millennial recruits that would be willing to dedicate their careers to public service and the fire service must find ways to market their worth. “The public and private sector are in competition for the best millennial talent but use different methods for attraction” (Neal, 2017, p. 16).

In the “Where are Firefighters going?” survey a large amount of the firefighters that responded stated that they left the fire service due to not having enough time. (See Appendix C) While interviewing Chief Monty Tedder he stated that it was harder to retain firefighters because in today’s society they were having to spend more of their time working to pay the bills. In Maine, where they are experiencing very little recruitment of new firefighters, Schroder (2015) explained they could not recruit young people and stated that they were just too busy. In this area of the research it was verified that recruitment and retention was a big issue in today’s fire service. What was discovered through the avenues of this research was that retention was becoming the bigger issue of the two. As Chief Monty Tedder explained in interview, “If you

cannot retain what you have, and word of mouth is the best recruitment tool, who is going to be doing the recruiting?" (See Appendix B)

With a large portion of the fire service losing their battle on retention, having a fresh group of recruits coming in the door as quickly as possible is very important to fill that void. Recruitment efforts vary from department to department. Some can be costly, while others are free. Each department must try different ideas until they find what works best for their area. "There are many departments that believe they should continue doing the same thing that they have always done and yet expect a different result" (Buckman, 2002). When firefighters were asked, "How were you recruited into the Fire Service?", 64.38% answered by word of mouth. (See Appendix C) The cheapest way of recruiting is also one of the most successful ways of recruiting. However, to market the departments even by word of mouth they must have a good product to sale. "Volunteers need to closely examine the image they portray in the community" (Buckman, 2002). Chief Monty Tedder said he felt like the departments had to improve their images to be able to recruit new personnel. (See Appendix B)

Any attempt of recruiting is admirable. Some agencies utilize advertisement through billboards, social media, newspaper ads, and digital signs. "Pizza Hut, Sonic and Arbys have agreed to give out recruitment information for the department as well." (Fire Chief Improves, 2015) Some of the avenues of recruiting can get expensive and departments may not be able to afford it. In the "Where are Firefighters going?" survey firefighters overwhelmingly chose "Word of Mouth" and "Explorer or Junior Programing" as the leading choice for recruiting receiving over 97% between the two choices. (See Appendix C) The results of the survey lead to the determination that some of the cheapest methods are the most effective recruitment tools.

Numerous publications had several ideas for recruitment tools, but none of them mentioned that word of mouth would be a successful avenue.

Even with the best recruitment and retention efforts, most departments continue having issues with the lack of personnel to complete their duties. The interviews conducted with three Fire Chiefs in Florence County all produced similar results to what was discovered through the published documents, with the exception of one difference. All the Chiefs suggested that departments would have to utilize more paid personnel, more automatic-aid, and more mutual-aid to be able to maintain services. Chief John DeLung also suggested that if the staffing shortages do not improve then departments could have to cut services. (See Appendix B) “In a perfect world, where every department is equally staffed and trained, automatic aid would be an outstanding program. It would avoid duplication of personnel or apparatus where each department contributes both a regular service and a specialty” (Rielage, 2018).

Consolidation seems to be the final answer when all other efforts fail. The published documents strongly supported the success that consolidation of departments could have if the consolidation efforts were handled correctly. “The mayors and councils of both cities vehemently opposed merging the two departments, so the fire chiefs agreed upon a consolidation of services that made sense” (Rielage, 2018). Consolidation efforts must be led by the departments that will be affected and not by politics. The local government officials need to be involved, but just to show the support needed for it to be successful. It was explained by Mikulan (2014), that consolidation must be looked at on a case by case basis, but consolidations need to begin occurring if the volunteer fire service has any chance of survival.

Research discovered that staffing is a problem for the fire service across the Country. Small and large departments, volunteer or combination, struggle daily with staffing shortages.

However, the common reports of there not being as many volunteers as there once were have been proven to be false through statistics from the NFPA and the National Volunteer Fire Council. Instead, the facts show that there is a volunteer shortage with call volumes on the rise. The fire service has gotten extremely busy with calls for service and training requirements. Through all the sources of this research it was agreed that the fire service is struggling to maintain services because of the lack of manpower.

All over the county and in Florence County there are numerous efforts taking place to recruit and retain firefighters. It was determined that even though some departments are pouring money into recruitment campaigns, the cheaper and more effective alternative appears to be departments advertising by word of mouth. Each department must ensure that their department has an image worthy of selling to a recruit. Other pathways the research took was a large emphasis on recruiting females and diversity within an organization. Both topics are extremely important but was not researched in this Applied Research Project.

The interviews and the published documents both revealed that alternatives are already being utilized to make up for these shortages in manpower. Two of the most common methods that were discussed were paid personnel and automatic-aid. Both have their pros and cons but seem to be temporary fixes for the Country and Florence County. Consolidation is a big topic in many of the publications that were researched while doing this project. It was discussed by the local Chiefs that were interviewed, but the interview questions did not ask them of departmental consolidation specifically. Consolidation seems to be a positive move for the departments that are trying to keep volunteerism alive in their communities.

Florence County is falling right into the same trend as other fire departments across the state and nation; Florence County is struggling to maintain with a mostly volunteer work force.

This researcher discovered that Florence County should be looking toward the next step of consolidation. Twenty years ago, a majority of all the departments in Florence County were fully volunteer departments. Ten years ago, a majority of all the departments in Florence County were combination departments. In 2018, while this Applied Research Project was being completed, every department within Florence County had agreed to some amount of automatic-aid to help cover staff shortages and response times. The research shows that the departments must continue to focus on recruitment and retention, but they must be prepared to take the next step in maintaining services with less resources.

Recommendations

Florence County's Fire Service is suffering like the rest of the nation's Fire Service, with a shortage of manpower to meet the needs for its respective communities. The initial Problem Statement for this Applied Research Project was: "Florence County is losing volunteer firefighters at an alarming rate which is directly reflecting in the services that are provided to our citizens." It was discovered while doing the research that the problem statement is not true. Florence County is maintaining the number of volunteers it has had for many years, but the departments are not retaining the experienced firefighters and the leadership that is needed to remain sufficient. It is also not increasing the number of firefighters as the number of calls are steady on the rise. The following four questions were addressed in the research:

1. Why are we not retaining our volunteer firefighters?
2. What recruitment efforts are working for other departments in South Carolina?
3. How can departments continue providing services with less personnel?
4. What is the trend of volunteers from 1998 until 2018?

The purpose of this research was to investigate alternatives that may provide some relief to County's firefighter shortage, so services do not become sub-standard. These are recommendations to help resolve recruitment and retention shortfalls and to maintain current services with the current number of personnel.

1. With volunteers still making up 70% of the Fire Service's work force, it is recommended that a strong focus is continued to be placed on recruitment and retention. It is imperative that departments begin retaining their investment and stop losing their volunteers within the first five years of service. The following is suggested:
 - All the departments in Florence County should evaluate their process for making it through a probationary period. There needs to be an easy and steady flow for recruits to move through and become a member.
 - The Florence County Fire Chiefs' Association should coordinate between the departments to make sure that all the firefighters in Florence County are receiving the same benefits.
 - The Florence County Fire Chiefs' Association should champion a policy that would provide incentives like: LOSAP, Paid-on-call, training incentives, and local county property tax breaks.
 - The departments should also review their training and certification requirements to make sure they are not demanding for a volunteer to be able to obtain.
2. This research not only confirmed that other parts of the state and nation are having similar problems with recruiting but unveiled numerous avenues others are using to

recruit firefighters. The following is recommended to assist with the recruiting efforts in Florence County:

- Florence County should apply for the Staffing and Adequate Fire Emergency Response (SAFER) grant. This grant should be used to hire a Recruitment and Retention position and provide some funding for marketing.
 - Fire Chiefs should look at the image of their department to make sure it is something that is appealing to new recruits. Existing personnel should be encouraged to recruit by word of mouth.
 - Florence County should share the cost in a marketing campaign to recruit and promote firefighters. Billboards, TV ads, radio advertisements, and public appearances should begin as soon as possible. A committee should be established through the Florence County Fire Chiefs' Association in order to appropriately allocate the funding.
3. With call volumes on the rise and volunteerism remaining stagnant, fire service leaders are being forced to find alternatives to continue services at the same level of quality they do today. Safety, Insurance Ratings, and public image can only be protected with the proper amount of manpower to do the job. While several fire departments have already begun hiring shift personnel and all departments have started to utilize automatic-aid, the following recommendations can be made:
- The Fire Chiefs re-evaluated the automatic-aid after one year and determine if more paid personnel should be added.

- The Fire Chiefs of Florence County should create a long-term plan for department consolidation. This should be a department-driven consolidation with the best interest of the citizens and personnel in mind. The consolidation plan does not have to be initiated until the Fire Chiefs note that the other alternatives are failing to provide the minimum amount of response.

In conclusion, the Florence County's Fire Service should make every effort to recruit and retain volunteers. The leadership in the county needs to be prepared for a continued demand increase on the fire service and make every preparation for what will be necessary to maintain services in the future.

References

- Brown, A. & Urbina, I. (2014, August). "The Disappearing Volunteer Firefighter," *The New York Times*, Retrieved August 23, 2018 from <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/17/sunday-review/the-disappearing-volunteer-firefighter.html>
- Bodine, M. (2017, June 29). *Volunteer Fire Departments Are Struggling to Retain Firefighters, While 911 Calls Are Surging*. Retrieved August 10, 2018, from <http://www.govtech.com/em/disaster/EM-Summer-2017-Dwindling-Force.html>
- Buckman, J. M. (2002). The Future of the Volunteer Fire Service. *Fire Engineering*, 155(8), 10. Retrieved from <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=uid&db=a9h&AN=7355024&site=ehost-live>
- Fire Chief improves volunteer recruitment, retention. (2015, February 19). *Fire Chief*. Retrieved August 18, 2018, from <https://www.firechief.com/2015/02/19/fire-chief-improves-volunteer-recruitment-retention/>
- Kingl, A. & Hytner, R. (2014, May). "Millennials Don't Expect to Work Anywhere for More than Five Years," *Guardian*, 1, Retrieved August 23, 2018 from <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/millennials-jobs-five-years-pay-priority>.
- Lasky, R. (2007). *Pride & ownership: A firefighters love of the job*. Tulsa, OK: Penwell.

- Lentsch, S. (2013, October 01). One Department's Journey from Volunteer to Paid. Retrieved December 2, 2018, from <https://www.fireengineering.com/articles/print/volume-166/issue-10/departments/volunteers-corner/one-department-s-journey-from-volunteer-to-paid.html>
- Mikulan, V. (2014, July). Volunteer Fire Department Consolidation in Pennsylvania. *Fire Engineering*, 167(7), 14-22.
- National Fire Protection Agency. (2015). U.S. Fire Department Profile. Retrieved from <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Emergency-Responders/US-fire-department-profile>
- National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). (2018). Volunteer Fire Service Culture: Essential Strategies for Success. Retrieved August 23, 2018, from <https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Culture-Shift-Textbook-FINAL.pdf>
- Neal, S. F. (2017). *Millennials in the Fire Service: The Effectiveness of the Fire Service Recruiting, Testing, and Retention* (Unpublished master's thesis). Naval Postgraduate School.
- Parnell, E. (2015, August 16). Newberry Fire Department Receives SAFER Grant. *The Newberry Observer*. Retrieved August 23, 2018, from <https://www.newberryobserver.com/news/1476/newberry-fire-department-receives-safer-grant>
- Rielage, R. (2018, June 11). Automatic and mutual aid: The response conundrum. *Fire Rescue 1*. doi:<https://www.firerescue1.com/fire-chief/articles/384184018-Automatic-and-mutual-aid-The-response-conundrum/>

Schroeder, K. (2015, March 2). Small-town danger sign: Not enough firefighters. *Morning Sentinel*. Retrieved August 15, 2018, from

<https://www.pressherald.com/2015/03/01/small-town-danger-sign-not-enough-firefighters/>

South Carolina Volunteer Fire (2018) Retrieved August 27, 2018, from

<https://www.scvolunteerfire.org/>

United States Census Bureau. (2010). *Florence County*. Retrieved from

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/florencecountysouthcarolina,US/INC11021>

1

United States Fire Administration, National Fire Academy. (2016, September). *Executive Development Student Manual*. Emmitsburg (5th ed.), MD: Author

United States Fire Administration: Strategic Plan. (n.d).

https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/strategic_plan.pdf

Wigger, A. (2018, March 26). Shealy Gives Recruitment Update. *The Newberry Observer*.

Retrieved August 23, 2018, from

<https://www.newberryobserver.com/news/22543/shealy-gives-recruitment-update>

Appendix A

	Paid (2018)	Paid (1998)	Vol. (2018)	Vol. (1998)	Calls (1998)	Calls (2017)
Florence Fire Department	82	70	0	0	2000	3357
West Florence Fire Department	25	1	27	58	807	1330
South Lynches Fire Department	5	3	120	100	500	775
Sardis Timmons ville Fire Department	6	0	38	20	180	273
Johnsonville Fire Department	5	1	30	30	92	187
Hannah-Salem-Friendfield Fire Department	9	1	58	25	80	247
Howe Springs Fire Rescue	7	0	64	50	550	987
Windy Hill Fire Company	15	1	17	34	496	1020
Olanta Fire Department	4	0	30	15	50	171
Lake City Fire Department	11	10	20	35	250	548
Timmons ville Fire Department	0	0	12	15	60	141

Appendix B

Interview with Windy Hill Fire Company Fire Chief John DeLung

- 1) In a few words, could you describe if you have any concern to the number of certified firefighters that Florence County has currently. *We will never have enough volunteers to manage today's work load with the current society. Florence is ok right now but feels it won't last long on current trend.*
- 2) In your opinion, do you believe that recruitment or retention is the bigger concern? Could you please describe your answer? *Recruitment. Most retention programs are monetary based, and some departments can't afford the programs. Most won't stay around even with the money.*
- 3) Why do you feel that there is a large amount of turnover into today's fire service? *People have no desire to serve their communities. Poor leadership is another leading cause for people to leave.*
- 4) Concerning question 3, do you think the problem can be reversed or corrected? *Yes. Their needs to be more transparency in the direction that the Florence County fire service. Speculation of consolidation is concerning to the personnel.*
- 5) What could be done to increase the recruitment of firefighters in our County? *The morale needs to be improved for recruitment to improve by word of mouth. Well trained firefighters generally have a better morale.*
- 6) What could be done to retain our personnel in our County? *Not sure what can be done but incentives such as LOSAP and Paid-on-call.*
- 7) What can leaders do to maintain our services if recruitment and retention efforts don't improve? *Automatic-aid, career staff, and cut some services and last resort.*

Interview with Hannah Salem Friendfield Fire Dept. Fire Chief Monty Tedder

- 1) In a few words, could you describe if you have any concern to the number of certified firefighters that Florence County has currently. *Florence County is in good shape right now but will need more staffing within the next five years.*
- 2) In your opinion, do you believe that recruitment or retention is the bigger concern? Could you please describe your answer? *Retention. We need to keep what we already have so we can recruit more by mouth.*
- 3) Why do you feel that there is a large amount of turnover into today's fire service? *Firefighters are having to leave because the price of living is getting higher than their wages. Just harder to make it into today's time.*
- 4) Concerning question 3, do you think the problem can be reversed or corrected? *Yes. Only if we can start retaining the members that we have.*
- 5) What could be done to increase the recruitment of firefighters in our County? *Improve the fire departments image so the department is a desirable place to volunteer your time.*
- 6) What could be done to retain our personnel in our County? *Treat all personnel across the county the same and not different from department to department.*
- 7) What can leaders do to maintain our services if recruitment and retention efforts don't improve? *More paid personnel. Possibly more paid administration positions.*

Interview with Florence County Fire Coordinator Sam Brockington

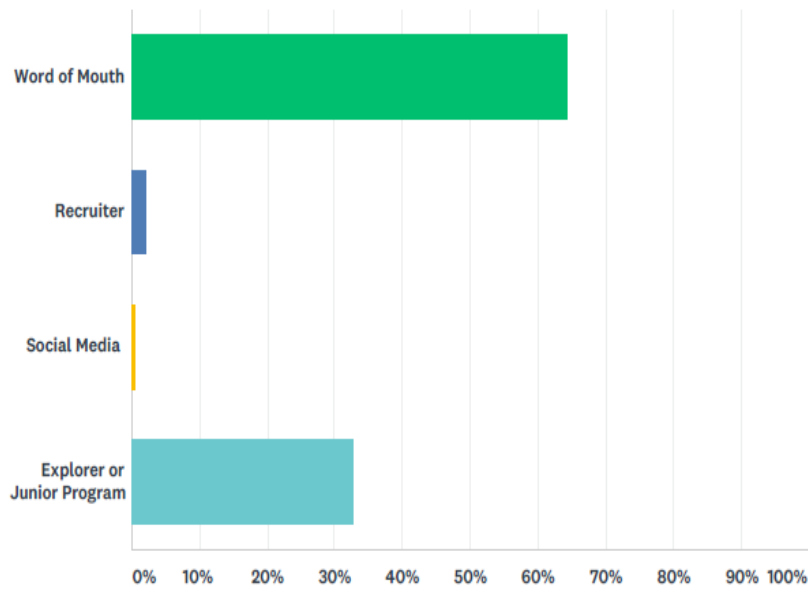
- 1) In a few words, could you describe if you have any concern to the number of certified firefighters that Florence County has currently. *Yes. Requirements and call volume have increased, and the public does not work in their community anymore.*
- 2) In your opinion, do you believe that recruitment or retention is the bigger concern? Could you please describe your answer? *Both equally. Recruitment pull is smaller. Retaining is a concern because we are losing our investment.*
- 3) Why do you feel that there is a large amount of turnover into today's fire service? *Younger recruits do not have commitment to serve their community.*
- 4) Concerning question 3, do you think the problem can be reversed or corrected? *I have deep concerns that it will never be reversed without a change in society.*
- 5) What could be done to increase the recruitment of firefighters in our County? *By building up the brotherhood and having our members do the recruiting by word of mouth. Also, need to have a plan for recruitment.*
- 6) What could be done to retain our personnel in our County? *We need to keep them involved and make them feel wanted. Also, we need to develop a true career ladder.*
- 7) What can leaders do to maintain our services if recruitment and retention efforts don't improve? *Automatic-aid is key successful large-scale incidents. We need standard SOG's and to train together regularly.*

Appendix C

Where are Firefighters going?

Q1 How were you recruited into the Fire Service?

Answered: 146 Skipped: 50

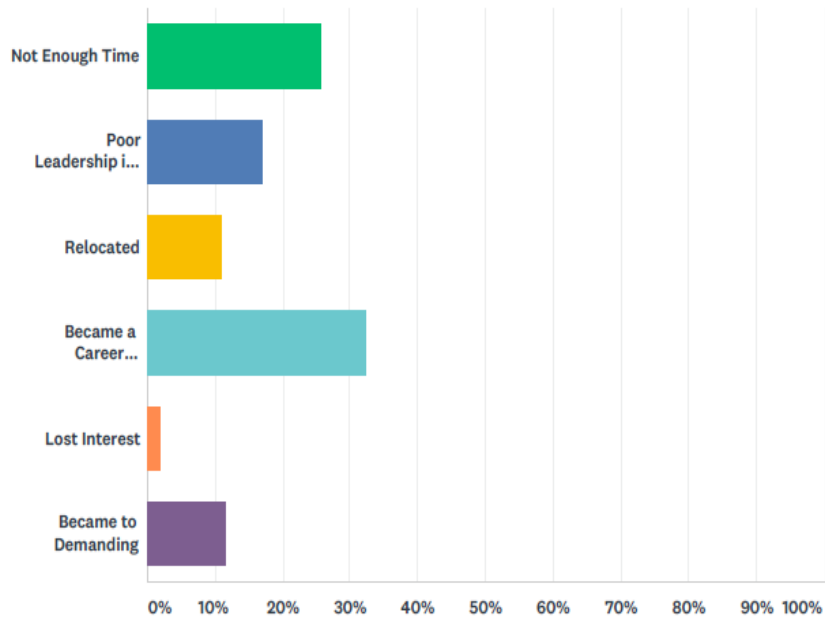


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Word of Mouth	64.38%	94
Recruiter	2.05%	3
Social Media	0.68%	1
Explorer or Junior Program	32.88%	48
TOTAL		146

Where are Firefighters going?

Q2 Why did you stop being a Volunteer Firefighter?

Answered: 163 Skipped: 33

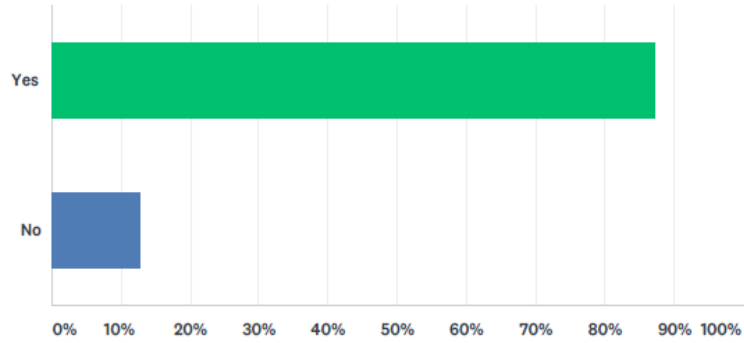


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not Enough Time	25.77%	42
Poor Leadership in the organization	17.18%	28
Relocated	11.04%	18
Became a Career Firefighter	32.52%	53
Lost Interest	1.84%	3
Became to Demanding	11.66%	19
TOTAL		163

Where are Firefighters going?

Q3 Were Classes and Training reasonable to obtain?

Answered: 196 Skipped: 0

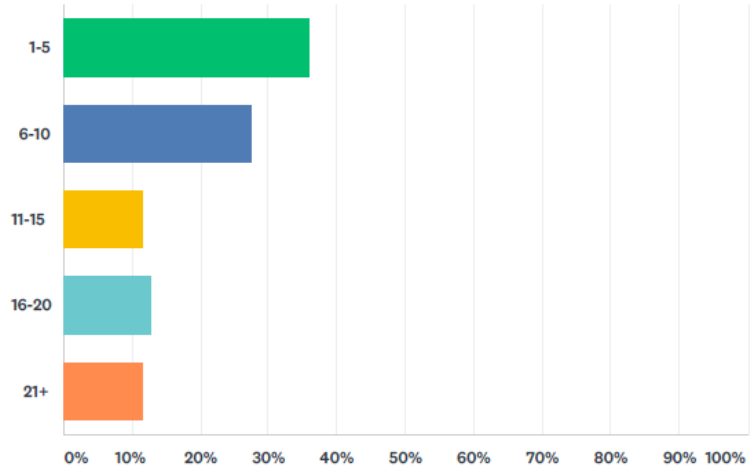


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	87.24%	171
No	12.76%	25
TOTAL		196

Where are Firefighters going?

Q4 How many Years did you serve as a Volunteer?

Answered: 195 Skipped: 1

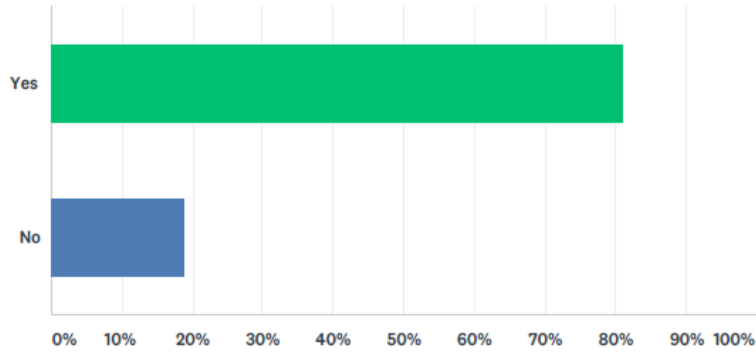


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-5	35.90%	70
6-10	27.69%	54
11-15	11.79%	23
16-20	12.82%	25
21+	11.79%	23
TOTAL		195

Where are Firefighters going?

Q5 Would you ever consider Volunteering again?

Answered: 196 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	81.12%	159
No	18.88%	37
TOTAL		196