

Retention: Why are they leaving?

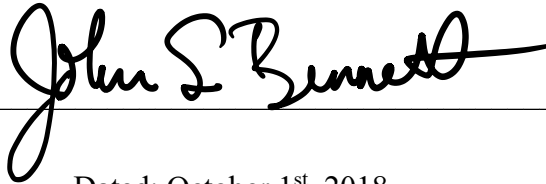
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Certification Statement

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 language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John S. Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dated: October 1st, 2018

Abstract

The problem the Telluride Fire Protection District (TFPD) has is always not being able to retain sufficient numbers of volunteer firefighters and EMTs to respond to fire and EMS incidents as defined by NFPA and best practices. The purpose of this research is to identify what attracts people to become volunteer responders and motivators for continued service. Three descriptive research surveys were used to collect information. The first was sent to Colorado Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments to determine common challenges experienced and best practices employed to maintain an adequate volunteer response force. The second survey was distributed to current members of TFPD to determine why they joined, what retention strategies are most important to longevity of service and why they believe people leave before reaching the 20-year retirement point. Another sent to former members of TFPD to determine what major factors caused their departure and determine strategies that would have lengthened their service. A literature review and the survey information provided insight into why volunteerism in the United States fire service is declining. The literature review steered the researcher to ask some common questions in each survey: 1) Why did you choose to volunteer? 2) Why do you continue to serve as a volunteer responder?, 3) Why do members leave the organization? and 4) What could TFPD do to encourage extended service of trained volunteer responders? The descriptive research showed overwhelmingly that people choose to volunteer to serve their community, but, step away due to pressures of economics (job), family responsibilities, high call volume and making the fire service a full-time career. Recommendations include continuing to develop best practices to recognize responders for their contribution, invest in their professional and personal development, engage frequently, explore non-wage benefit options and work with partners to develop housing opportunities.

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Introduction

The problem the Telluride Fire Protection District has not being able to retain sufficient numbers of volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel to respond to fire and EMS operations adequately. TFPD is experiencing an increase of volunteer separation and participation prior to completion of a volunteer career of service (20 years). This is becoming a trend in the American fire service, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics “the volunteer rate declined between 2011 and 2015 by 1.9 percent” (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2016). The NFPA also indicates that although “70 percent of firefighters nationwide are volunteers” (Verzoni, 2017) however, “the rate of volunteers per 1,000 people has steadily declined for the last 30 years” (Verzoni, 2017). Changes in TFPD’s community demographic are affecting our recruitment and especially our retention efforts. The situation is further exacerbated by a resort economy in a remote area with high costs of living and, in particular, the availability and cost of housing. The decreasing participation levels of volunteer responders is causing difficulty in efficient and effective emergency response based on NFPA 1720 recommendations. They recommend in “suburban areas with 500-1000 people/ mile squared a minimum response of 10 staff and a response of 10 minutes 80% of the time and in rural areas less than 500 people/ mile squared with 6 staff and a response time of 14 minutes 80% of the time” (NFPA, 2014). TFPD’s response district covers both the suburban and rural areas the NFPA describes with regard to people/ mile squared however, cannot meet the recommended staffing levels nor response time to meet the objective identified or recommended for the initial deployment of resources. TFPD can meet the staffing level recommendations with additional alarms to other stations and recall alarms yet cannot meet the desired response time. Additionally, more rigorous federal, state and TFPD training and certification requirements and increasing call volumes are impacting consistent participation as

well. Currently TFPD has primary responsibility for fire and EMS for 350 square miles while seemingly rural has a tax base valuation of \$784,327,990.00 million, and as a resort and festival destination the population that fluctuates between 5,000 and 15,000. This results in over calls per year for structure and wildland, EMS, HazMat, rescue. Yet TFPD, primarily due to the nature of its funding mechanism and community satisfaction and historical success of the response of the volunteer-based system, is not prepared to transition to a career fire and EMS service model based on funding mechanisms, affordability due to tax base and nature and numbers of calls for service. Compounding the issue is some peculiarities with Colorado tax laws that have in fact been reducing tax-based funding to the TFPD despite the growth in tax base and demand for services. This makes the addressing of volunteer responders' attraction and retention a mission critical matter for TFPD.

The purpose of this applied research project is to identify: 1) what attracts people to become volunteer responders in TFPD's region; 2) common retention challenges within the Colorado Fire service and specifically for TFPD; and 3) what TFPD can do to increase the retention rate. The objective is to identify opportunities to reduce departure rates of well trained and dedicated responders, create avenues to maintain membership at an optimal operational level, and fulfill responders basic needs to allow increased longevity and ability to serve without changing our service model or causing either response shortfalls or material financial impact to the community.

The research method used for this applied research project was the descriptive method utilizing a survey sent to Colorado volunteer and combination departments and to current and former members of TFPD. The survey work requested anonymous suggestions and

recommendations from TFPD responders, current and past, to identify potential solutions without placing undue stress on survey participants.

In the past 10 years a noticeable transition has occurred in the TFPD. Firefighters and EMS volunteer personnel have served less and less years as volunteers, while the amount of time committed during those years for training and response have increased. Historically prior responders within the fire district tended to serve the community consistently for 15 to 20 years. The changes in TFPD's economy and associated demographics has certainly led to a noticeable transition to shorter terms of service. Since the 1800's the Telluride area was most known for mining and ranching. And in the early 1970's the community became less of a blue-collar working community and changed towards a path of tourism and recreation. The ski area opened in 1972 and the mine ceased operations in 1976. Although, there was a significant culture change, residents continued to seek ways to stay in the area and became change agents for the shift in economic focus. In 1984, another town, The Town of Mountain Village adjacent to Telluride was master planned and within TFPD's response area began development. The community began to experience growth both of people that were moving to the area for the recreational lifestyle but also folks buying in the area for vacation, investment and semi or full retirement purposes. Fast forwarding to the middle 2000's, housing costs began to escalate and as a result housing for the local service and working-class residents began to exceed affordability. Today one of the biggest topics in our community is "affordable housing." This change has continued to push service and trade people or those that match the majority of the volunteer candidate demographic that work in the area to explore other options. They are moving to surrounding more affordable towns nearby, working more than a one job or moving completely away from the TFPD region. Additionally, pressures placed on volunteer responders

also effect their ability to serve. Brian Berry suggests the member priorities should be supported “Family, Career, firehouse”: “This is the order of priorities we use to help our members make decisions” (Berry, 2016).

The research was conducted to explore the primary causes of volunteer responders leaving the Colorado combination volunteer departments and Telluride Fire Protection District Volunteer programs before completing what would be considered a volunteer career of service term. The applied research was conducted utilizing the descriptive method to determine commonalities within the Colorado fire and emergency volunteer and combination services and the Telluride Fire Protection District from the current and former members perspective. Common questions with each of the three surveys are as follows: 1) years of service, 2) why do responders leave the service, 3) was a career path plan established? Additional questions were posed to TFPD active and former members to determine organizational gaps or challenges: 1) why did you choose to volunteer?, 2) would you recommend a friend to join?, 3) were you provided with proper opportunity to reach your potential in the response area(s)?, 4) where you provide ample training/ development opportunities?, 5) would a career path plan help guide you? and 6) why do people leave or why did you leave the service?

The intent of these questions was to determine trending within the TFPD organization and to also see if those trends matched the combination and volunteer service organizations in Colorado. Additional questions were directed to Colorado organizations to vet best practices that had not been considered or explored by TFPD leadership and to determine what programs or best practices were being utilized to maintain their membership. The TFPD current and past members were asked to identify potential services, benefits or programs that might encourage continued tenure. The survey also asked if a more single resource response

model would assist with demands placed on them. The desired outcome is to capture information to determine a direction to explore that would best support TFPD's people from the first day to the last day of their service. In elements the survey questions were asked to assist TFPD leadership in development of additional programs, support options and to address the true needs of our responders. The individual feedback requested will provide a substantial amount of personal perspective and paint a vivid picture of the germane personal needs of our personnel as well as successes and failures from TFPD as well as other like organizations in Colorado.

Background and Significance

The United States Fire Service is experiencing a significant decline in participation research demonstrates that departments are not maintaining the level of firefighters and emergency responders necessary to maintain adequate response forces based on current best practices and consensus standards. This is particularly true for rural communities that depend on volunteer-centric emergency services being mostly due to limited funding sources and lower incident call volumes. The ability to provide volunteer-centric services is a continued challenge. TFPD experiences the same the struggles that many other rural fire and emergency service organization in the United States are dealing with. However, while in a rural area there are parts of the district which have significant structures and valuation and swings in population from visitors that is not typical of most rural areas. In the last 10 years, 55 Fire and EMS responders have left TFPD's service, which represents a 64% in turnover in trained personnel at the district's expense. Some of the turn-over or loss is strictly due to retirement with 25 percent having completed 15-25 years of service or 15 out of the 60. However, a majority have left for a multitude of other reasons. Some due to organizational issues but the majority due to issues research has indicated as all too

common causes for departure; “no time to volunteer, conflicts in organization, organizational leadership created adverse atmosphere, too much training, attitude of existing personnel to newcomers, criticism received from officers/older members and lack of camaraderie”. (U.S. Fire Administration [USFA], 2007). TFPD has additional causes including housing availability, joining a career service, or economic reasons to include lack of jobs paying wages that allow above subsistence living in a high cost area. While many root causes for losing firefighters and EMTs are offered and certainly some solutions are presented in the research, no one has come up with a solid formula to assist combination and volunteer emergency response organizations to solve the crisis. The purpose of this applied research paper is to explore the options presented with both research nation-wide and specific to Colorado and TFPD current and former members in order to develop a program that will find success locally, and to share failures and successes with other organizations in the hope that all can reignite such an important part of our nation’s history and pride.

TFPD provides fire and emergency medical services to the Telluride region directed by state statute. TFPD is a combination fire district that operates based on a volunteer-centric concept. TFPD covers 350 square miles responding from 4 fire stations strategically placed to impact and serve the higher population areas while providing efficient emergency services to more remote locations. Service is provided with 65 volunteer firefighters, 32 EMT at basic and intermediate and paramedic certification level with 8 volunteers cross trained to provide EMS and fire. The fire district has a career (paid) staff with the following positions: District Chief, Fire Marshal, Fire Inspector, Fire Training Officer, four EMT-Paramedics that perform 24-hour shift work, a mechanic and a part-time office manager. The paid staff provides support and training to the volunteers along with daily duties of plan review, new and existing commercial

occupancy fire inspections, public education, public access AED program, wildfire seasonal program oversight and monitoring and daily management of the tax funded budget. TFPD provides a wide variety of services to include: fire, EMS, hazardous materials (technician level response), wildfire, special event coverage, public education, public access AED and mutual aid to neighboring communities. In May 2018 the fire district also implemented a seasonal wildfire crew to perform project work in the fire district and provides mutual aid support to our neighbors in Colorado through a cooperator agreement with the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (CDFPC).

TFPD operations are funded directly from a mill levy tax on residential and commercial property and additional revenue provided through pay for service to include, plan review, fire safety permit fees, ambulance transport, special event coverage, hazardous materials response and wildfire suppression. The demands and expectations placed by the community on volunteer responders are high. Service delivery expectations from the community as well as the organization are that of any career supplemented department. TFPD places a high value on the training with certification under state and national programs and preparedness of its responders. All responders provide shift work in some fashion. EMS responders schedule themselves in 12-hour or 24-hour segments (with a requested minimum of two shifts monthly), while firefighter shift schedules require one week on duty and two weeks off, if multiple alarms are issued, then specific stations are recalled, or an all station recall is initiated. Although we participate with our neighbors in mutual aid agreements, our response area is remote. If we request mutual aid from our neighbors it will often take 45 minutes to 2 ½ hours for their response. A big issue with mutual aid assistance is often they don't have enough resources to cover their own community.

The TFPD supports personnel by covering associated costs for response-oriented expenses. TFPD does put on or host a significant number of training programs within the District. For training not offered locally training requests are paid/ reimbursed if not covered by a grant. The reimbursement and costs include accommodations (hotel), mileage reimbursement (as necessary), daily per diem, books and travel and in some cases compensation to trainees for work time lost (case by case basis). There is no compensation to the volunteers for their time to attend training. The fire district supplies all duty uniforms, response gear and job specific gear. The fire district covers workers compensation. Fitness equipment is provided at each station. There are multiple discount opportunities in partnership with the Colorado State Fire Chief's Association and Colorado State Fire Fighters Association. An annual Participation Stipend Program was developed in 2015 to reward those with high participation rates of response and training as a way to mitigate the out of pocket expenses incurred by volunteering for TFPD. Within the Stipend Program the responder is compensated a base rate which increases with increased qualifications, competencies and for those that take on additional leadership responsibilities. Additionally, some local businesses offer discounts to fire district personnel and effort continue to add to that community support and some of the towns provide some amount of free water to fire and EMS responders. The fire district also offers three attached apartment units (1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom) a subsidized rental program located at one fire station. Volunteer selected are provided an opportunity to save money for a down payment to purchase a house or condo in the area. To date, the fire district has been successful in placing nine firefighters and EMS responders in their own homes within our response area. Unfortunately, this does not help all the responders that need assistance due to the high cost of housing and limited opportunities earnings in a high cost of living resort area with no meaningful manufacturing, technology, other non-

service industry or research and development businesses in the district or even nearby.

Partnerships have been developed in the last year with local governments to allow preference points for TFPD responders interested in town provided employee (deed restricted and subsidized) housing lotteries. This effort assisted in placing two additional responders locally.

Incident call volume continues to increase annually, EMS calls being a significant portion of that volume at about 70 percent, which includes transports to area hospitals as far away as 110 miles one way. TFPD responded to 980 calls for service in 2015 and is forecasted to increase to 1400 calls for service in 2018. Call growth was about 30 percent in three years with anticipated continued growth. Starting on Memorial Day through the middle of September, Telluride plays host to at least one festival or event every weekend, drawing between 5,000 and 15,000 visitors not including daily tourist traffic, to a town with a full-time population of only 5,900. The Telluride area does have two “soft” seasons in October and April. The winter ski season also accounts for large visitor populations during ski season. The increasing demand for services during “high” times, challenges our volunteer staff and leadership to develop ways to address the continued and erratic growth adequately. During increased populations weekends, TFPD employs extra paramedics and compensates volunteer EMS staff to stay at our main station to assist with the additional demand.

Prior to 2010, new volunteer recruitment was dependent on active volunteer fire and EMS responders recommending friends or interested parties walk in the station to determine fit. This process didn’t always provide the best selection, in part due to the pre-screening process or more accurately the lack there of. In 2010, all TFPD chief officers and the elected Board of Directors participated in a recruitment and retention workshop sponsored by the Colorado State Fire Chief’s Association in partnership with the Colorado State Firefighters Association that was

funded with a SAFER Grant to provide information, tools and best practices to assist volunteer and combination fire departments in Colorado with recruitment and retention. During this workshop, TFPD leadership recognized that changes in our approach were necessary to improve the caliber of new volunteer recruit selection and that effort was needed to find pathways to provide added value to a volunteer experience during their service tenure. Changes were executed to improve the selection process. The most effective was establishing clear expectations utilizing clearly written position descriptions that outlined the expectation of their participation and performance at each position along with a detailed background check performed by a third-party contractor. Although the workshop provided great direction toward a change in hiring and recruiting culture, TFPD management realized that continued effort was needed to maintain engagement and participation of volunteer responders for the long haul. TFPD identified a need to re-evaluate how new volunteer recruits were brought into the organization, how current or proven volunteers were being taken care of (engaged/ benefits etc.) and, how to address the changing needs of a very dynamic organization. Not everyone's needs align with one another. In prior years, volunteer firefighters were provided with a pension with a 20-year full vesting term and EMS volunteers provided nominal shift and per call flat rate compensation. Little if any effort was made to determine the true need of the responders nor was any effort put forth to determine what intrinsic or from the heart needs were being met. The prior culture was to provide nominal monetary compensation or extrinsic benefits to the group that originally joined the fire district to serve their community, whether that involved an increase in the pension rate or other nominal compensation motivators. Although some success has occurred with nominal compensation, efforts must be made to solidify the basic needs of our responders; a place to live, a sustainable wage from their career job, response support from their paying employers and path

for professional and personal growth. While some of the presented options fostered successful retention, it is clear all options have yet to be explored, proposed or initiated into policy.

This applied research project addresses or supplements four of the five goals established by the USFA to “reduce risk at the local level through prevention / mitigation”, “improve local planning and preparedness”, “improve the emergency services’ capability for response to and recovery from all hazards” and “improve the fire and emergency services’ professional services”. (U.S. Fire Administration [USFA], n.d.).

Literature Review

An extensive review of supporting literature identified similar observations of challenges with retention and the ability to serve that are being placed on emergency service volunteers: housing costs, the need to have more than one job (economic), demands of family life, decreased support of employers to leave work during business hours, internal communication within the organization (being heard), lack of ability to provide input to the organization (ownership), increased call volume, additional training requirements, changing service expectations of the public, was not the experience expected and engagement from organizational leadership, perhaps a stagnate community demographic (aging populations), fund raising efforts necessary to maintain operational fortitude taking time away from training and fire specific tasks, and changes in organizational structure (volunteer to combination and/or to career). “There should be a significant incentive to ensure that volunteers remain active within the organization” (Wodicka, 2012). Leadership must invest significant effort and communication with recruits to determine volunteers’ individual needs. What do volunteers want out of their service? Is extrinsic (monetary reward) or intrinsic (from the heart) more important? “If members feel their

organization cares about them, they are likelier to commit to the organization and remain engaged” (Dominguez, 2018).

The National Fire Protection Association provided a *Profile Fact Sheet of US Fire Departments* in 2015 that stated “70 percent of departments were volunteer consisting of 814,850 firefighters.” (Haynes and Stein, 2017). The majority of those volunteer department responders serving smaller communities. Donald P. Bliss suggests effort is needed to capture the “profound spirit of volunteerism and giving back” the “we can do anything” “attitude when it comes to challenges...” (Bliss, 2017).

Although most of the fire departments in the United States are constructed of volunteer firefighters and EMS responders there is an ever-changing dynamic. Some would consider the challenge merely a succession planning process and leadership should get out in the community and recruit replacements for the firefighters and EMS responders retiring or leaving the service for any number of reasons. In the NFPA document *U.S. Fire Department Profile- 2015*, they identify a tenure period chart that indicates most volunteer firefighters have served for “more than 10 years, 340,250” (Haynes and Stein, 2017). However, compared to the other tenure periods, there isn’t adequate backfill being produced. Digging deeper, they also indicate that “half the fire service is 40 or more years old”. (Haynes and Stein, 2017). Other factors are identified in an article written by Rick Markley. He states that “Time is in short supply”. “Reasons for decline in volunteer ranks is that the prolonged economic downturn” and the “amount of training” (Markley, March 2012) has reduced the time volunteers have to commit to response, training and time required to provide a solid and competent response. NFPA research shows that for a population between 5,000 and 9,999, firefighter tenure averages are as follows; “10.2 % serve less than a year, 26.2 % between 1-5 years, 23.4 % between 6-10 years and 40.2

% more than 10 years” (Haynes and Stein, 2017). This data shows a reasonable rate of those that serve more than ten years and is solid being above 40 percent. However, when you consider almost 60 percent end their service prior to 10 years there is not backfill nor adequate succession for those who serve more than 10 years. Take that information and apply an age profile from the same study and they report that for communities 5,000 to 9,999 “firefighters under the age of 30 are estimated at 30.3 %, age 30 to 39 at 26.2%, age 40 to 49 20.8% and 50 years and older 22.7%”. (Haynes and Stein, 2017). When comparing the metrics identified, it shows we are reasonably good at recruitment and perhaps retention for a short period but not for volunteer career longevity. When 59.8 percent of the volunteer work force serves for less than 10 years and of that work force 22.7 percent serving older than the age of 50, a challenge exists. The increasing expectations in training and competence, increased call volumes, physical demands, unusual hours of response the fire and EMS profession becomes challenging for volunteer responders and has direct impacts family and paid career. Can volunteer and combination organizations make accommodations based on time available and interest at the occasion of the call? “Flexibility is an attribute that is necessary but often misunderstood in the volunteer services” (Maltbie, 2015). The public expects the red truck or ambulance to arrive timely and with the proper ability to solve their issue, regardless of the compensation package involved. “Organizations that have difficulty mobilizing will find it harder getting volunteers to stay around for the long term” (Wodicka, 2012).

An NFPA Journal article “*Shrinking Resources, Growing Concern*” the article identified and discussed the rate of joining a volunteer fire department as “volunteers are getting tougher to find” (Verzoni, 2017). The author compared rates of joining from “1988-1994 to 2009-2015 and found a decline of 0.79%” (Verzoni, 2017). While below a one percent drop in recruitment

seems low when an organization is charged with providing service, it can have a significant impact. Additional consideration should be given to the participation rate. A roster may have 20 responders on it. The responder has a locker, may attend social events and assist with fund raising efforts, but what is the attendance when the bells sound? How many organizations experience the 80/20 rule- twenty percent of the organization's work force performing eighty percent of the necessary duties? In an extreme example a fire department shut its doors. The Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company "will no longer provide fire or EMS response..." "... company leaders cited a noticeable decline in volunteer participation" (Anderson, 2018). Examples like the prior are not options for small rural American communities, especially, when you consider funding mechanisms, ability to continue to recruit and train, limited population to draw willing responders from and changes in demographics. "The overall impact of volunteering is significant." "By one estimate, all those volunteer hours add up to around \$175 billion worth of service, an important benefit to society as a whole for which no one has to pay" (Bernasek, 2014). Volunteerism rate ??declines?? are not unique to fire and EMS response organization. A news release from the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported "the volunteer rate declined by 0.4 percentage point to 24.9 percent for the year ending in September 2015. About 62.6 million people volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2014 and September 2015" (BLS, 2016).

The National Volunteer Fire Council identifies root causes of additional pressure applied to volunteer responders and factors that challenge the ability of a volunteer to serve. "time demands, training requirements, increasing call volume, changes in the "nature of the business", changes in sociological conditions (in rural areas), leadership problems, federal legislation and regulations, increasing use of combination departments, higher costs of housing (in affluent

communities), aging communities and internal conflict” (National Volunteer Fire Council [NVFC], n.d.). “Another oft-cited reason for the decline in volunteer ranks is that the prolonged economic downturn has forced many to work much longer hours to make ends meet.” (Markley, 2012). It seems there is a broad scope within the volunteer community as to why people choose to volunteer and why they ultimately leave. Another article from the state of Pennsylvania provides additional examples of reasons retention is difficult by pointing out problems “in recent decades: time constraints born from two-income households and longer commutes; more training requirements; more volunteers retiring; and fewer young people joining” (Bond, 2018). The volunteer fire and emergency response service “once an iconic part of American life is losing its allure, in part because the work-some would say calling- is a lot less fun than it used to be.” (Brown, and Urbina, 2014). The changing demographic in rural areas also has an impact. “Urbanization and the aging of the rural population are taking their toll as fewer young people are available to replace firefighters who retire”. (Brown, and Urbina, 2014). The NVFC identifies in the *Volunteer Fire Service Fact Sheet* that the demographic or age profile for all community sizes is changing. In smaller communities the age of “mostly volunteer” responders, the largest growth percentage is the “50 & up” group with a 14.9 percent growth from 1987. It also shows an increase in age 50 or older for each community size “10,000-24999, 5,000-9,999, 2,500-4,999 and under 2,500). (National Volunteer Fire Council [NVFC], n.d.).

Fire and emergency service organizations address these continuing and growing issues. There is so much time, effort and money put forth to find volunteers, develop qualified responders, provide training opportunities, purchase personal protective equipment. That we cannot afford to lose quality, highly trained with certification and dedicated people. We must find ways to maintain their skill sets, enhance their experience, feed their passion and find ways

to continue to attract, develop and retain new recruits. “The stakes are particularly high because volunteers save not only lives but money” (Brown, and Urbina, 2014). Nationwide volunteers save the tax payers literally billions! “With volunteering on the decline, perhaps it’s time to pay attention to an area of the economy we usually take for granted” (Bernasek, 2014). Return on investment must also be a consideration and drive the quality of the effort management puts into their people. “We know that volunteers are not free. There is a cost associated with recruiting, screening, placing, training, equipping and supporting our volunteers. Just like employees, that cost is usually front-loaded meaning we invest a lot of resources up front with the anticipation that the return on investment (ROI) will pay off down the road” (Rosenthal, (ed.) 2015). When an organization considers the amount of money it takes to properly train and outfit a responder, the savings volunteers offer is priceless. The loss of volunteer fire and EMS responders is becoming an epidemic in the United States and leadership must address and change recruitment and retention strategies as soon as possible. “People who volunteer want to do meaningful work, and they hate to waste their time” (Nesbit and Christensen, 2018). While some organizations may recruit to fill positions, the fire and EMS they cannot pick anyone who walks in. “wanted, volunteers no experience necessary, warm bodies wanted just come on in!” (Wittich, 2017). Dr. Wittich asks, is this what we are really looking for? Or are we looking more for those that fit our organization’s mission, vision and values. Do we as volunteer-centric organizations spend adequate time in developing what we really want from our people who serve the community? Are we setting a bar that makes our organization operationally effective and efficient, special and desirable to be a part of or are we merely filling a coat on the rack? A quote from Stephen Jobs provided in Dr. Wittich’s book says, “be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren’t used to an environment where excellence is expected” (Wittich, 2017). Being specific about expectations

and having the conversations about what a volunteer needs from their experience are important starting points. Also important are “Assigning volunteers to tasks that match their skills, providing opportunities to share their experiences with other volunteers, supporting new volunteers, informing volunteers through regular communication, welcoming and respecting volunteers” (Chen, et.al., 2013). “Bring greater clarity and meaning to their work”. (Nesbit and Christensen, 2018). Additional effort needs to be provided while continuing to monitor the needs and wants of your volunteer staff. “People volunteer for many reasons, sometimes altruism, sometimes personal, but always for a purpose. We need to understand that purpose in order to attract and retain the volunteer” (Wittich, 2017). “Volunteers themselves report that lending a hand makes them feel happier and more fulfilled” (Nesbit and Christensen, 2018). A TFPD Captain often offers what he calls unsolicited advice and his thought is “a “volunteer” is an identification of compensation level and is not a reflection of training level, professionalism or skills provided to an organization” (Freedman, G.K., personal conversation, September 10, 2017). Candice M. McDonald identified six emerging themes to successful retention while researching for her doctoral dissertation, “(a) schedule accommodations, (b) nonwage benefits, (c) opportunities for employee success, (d) recognition, (e) family, and (f) recruitment” (McDonald, 2016). “Acknowledging that some of the old ways aren’t working” (Bond, 2018). Adjusting to the climate changes in the community and communicating with the great people that volunteer in your organization are of the utmost importance. “Establish a coaching relationship with team members and have ongoing coaching dialog through regular meetings” (Dominguez, 2018). “People are more likely to volunteer when they feel an organization is well-managed and will make good use of their time” (Rosenthal, 2015). “When volunteers are asked what they gain from offering their time and talents, most can quickly describe what they receive that feeds their

passion” “The volunteers’ personal purpose for serving is crystal clear in their heart and mind” (Altland, 2015). Finding out what their needs are, make it a family process so all are recognized on a regular basis, determining and accepting the fact that response requirement have some elements of flexibility and understanding that your volunteer isn’t going to respond to every call, but the ones they are able to participate will do so at their best. “Retention is heavily focused on the needs of personnel” (Hesselmeyer, 2018). We need to provide for the intrinsic motivations of “pride in serving others, satisfaction derived from being a highly skilled expert in a time-honored craft, the reward of overcoming limitations and meeting challenges, and the enjoyment of being a respected and valued member of a well-functioning team”. “We all want to feel like an integral part of a professional and highly effective team”. (Geis, 2015). “Helping a volunteer land in a role that meets their needs, wants and desires is the essence of volunteer engagement” (Altland, 2015). Reaching out to the public to establish additional benefits with discounts, making effort to recognize achievements with social media and other outlets in the public’s view, providing for special accommodations. “... stress the importance of making personal connections with potential volunteers and focusing on the camaraderie and experiences, not just the cool trucks and equipment ...” (Bond, 2018). Leadership needs to tell the story of why volunteers are so important in the service what it means to the organization and to their community. A TFPD Deputy Chief often says in interviews, “the compensation is little, and the rewards are many” (Deputy Chief Retired, Donald S. Bennett, witnessed interview with recruit, 2017). Another avenue that needs attention in the volunteer service is succession. Preparing the next generation of leaders and maintaining institutional knowledge while continuing to support the organization’s mission, vision and values.

Mark Clayton contends that an effort and investment in serious succession planning is another path to insure continued participation and encourage longevity. “invite people to step up, remove barriers, educate and engage your decision-makers” “those cadets graduate, however, their departments often fail to provide the resources and processes necessary to develop them” (Clayton, 2018). Another key to retention of high quality and competent responders is support and challenge with development of career and personal goal setting. The communication must start on day one and be sustained on a regular basis. Involve your people in the development path of the organization. “Voice matters in organizational decisions” (Maltbie, 2015), encourage them to participate as stakeholders in the organization not just in positions needed to cover the call demands daily. Challenge Them! These concepts apply to all organizations, volunteer or otherwise. Leadership of the organization must invest time and effort into their people daily.

The challenges of retention are not unique to any fire and EMS service organization in the United States. However, research is showing a more significant problem for organizations that serve a population of 5,000 people or less. The changes in community demographics in rural areas are especially impacting the ability to recruit and retain fire and emergency responders younger and able populations migrating to urban areas for work and lifestyle opportunities. Volunteer organizations will continue to face challenges of retention yet must work to mitigate, delay and extend the length of time volunteers are willing to participate. TFPD is experiencing much of the same issues as other organizations. TFPD is committed to exploring and experimenting in suggestions offered by survey responders and recommendations found through the literature review process. We will continue to interact with volunteer responders frequently to develop non-wage benefits and options that support their needs and allow them time to provide our community with exceptional volunteer emergency service.

Procedures

This applied research project utilized the descriptive method to evaluate and explore why firefighters and EMS personnel decide to participate in the service, why they stay and root causes for their premature departure. Along with those key aspects the research was intended to determine and explore snapshots of potential best practices, support programs and identify additional benefits, non-wage benefit or program support incentives that could be developed to encourage consistent participation through a volunteer career. First, a trend of reduced retention or turn over within the TFPD organization was identified. Then a pathway or process was established to develop reasonable, workable and affordable solutions to enhance volunteer career retention.

While attending the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program R123 Executive Development, a literature review and resource gathering effort started utilizing the National Emergency Training Center Library. The objective was three-fold: 1) to determine if retention in volunteer and combination emergency response organizations was a unique situation for TFPD or a more common challenge in the global sense, 2) to determine if there were resources that identified workable solutions to an ever-growing resource deficit, the golden solution, 3) to develop non-wage benefits, support programs and potential compensation strategies that provide meaningful supportive tools to maintain the volunteer program and extend the career service life of TFPD volunteer members.

Key words used to explore the volume of research and documentation as well as the validity of the selected research problem were explored. Key words used included recruitment, retention, volunteer, combination, solutions, motivation of volunteerism.

The next step was to determine the audience from which to request research information and feedback. The audience selected was fire and EMS services in Colorado who were considered all-volunteer or combination organizations (volunteer and career responders), along with TFPD current and former members. The Colorado volunteer and combination departments or districts were selected to increase the perspective in the research and determine if the trends of retention align with TFPD observations, experiences and challenges. Common questions were crafted to establish where TFPD lined up with the rest of the state. The goal was not only to determine commonalities but also to identify differences in retention programming and dig for programs or solutions that TFPD could explore, test, adopt and budget to encourage extended volunteer service.

Once the audience was developed, a contact list for Colorado departments collected from the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (CDFPC) and a contact list was established for the current and former TFPD volunteer members. A similar set of questions were written to determine the experience and perception of each group. The research was conducted using the descriptive method by utilizing *SurveyMonkey*® surveys sent to the developed email contact lists. Many of the questions utilized similar language however, additional questions were asked of Colorado organizations to explore what programs they offer that provided the most success. Questions were developed specifically for the TFPD current and former member population to determine if there were unique short-comings or challenges in our community that effected retention differently than outside communities. They were also asked to provide input and comment if the survey didn't provide the appropriate choices and were given the opportunity to provide additional perspective or present ideas not previously considered.

The Colorado fire and emergency services *SurveyMonkey* survey was sent to 336 agencies. 61 responses were received, generating a return of 18 percent, asking 20 questions. Responses were captured and are contained in Appendix A. The TFPD active member *SurveyMonkey* survey was sent to 85 active members with a return of 54 percent and they were asked 10 questions. Responses received are contained in Appendix B. TFPD Former Member *SurveyMonkey* survey was sent to 55 former members with a return of 38 percent and they were asked 11 questions. Former member responses documented are contained in Appendix C. The goal with all of the surveys was to provide an opportunity for each participant to share their experiences and provide input and feedback to solutions via the anonymous surveys. Open ended and multiple-choice questions were asked. Responders were asked to provide specific answers and additional opportunities were given to provide personal perspective.

Limitations were experienced with data collection caused by inaccurate email contacts and limited returned responses or survey participation. Additionally, resources did not allow follow-up to generate higher response rates from a very busy sample demographic. This resulted in some sample sizes for the basis of this paper do not meet the generally accepted stochastic sample confidence of a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/-10%. Whether participation in the survey requests was caused by inaccurate contact information or lack of interest in participating the rate of return while valuable to the researcher may not provide enough data to validate the results.

	Surveys requested	Surveys Returned	sample return size needed for 95%CL +/- 10%ME
COLO	336	61	75
Active	85	47	46
Former	55	21	36

Table 1 Sample size confidence level summary (Survey Monkey survey size Calculator)

The other limitations encountered were reducing the amount of recruitment and retention materials in the literature search and review that involved other forms of volunteerism within the United States. The fire and EMS require incredibly different skill sets, time requirements, certifications and risk profiles not associated with other organization volunteer needs. Although, great examples were provided for engagement, non-wage benefits and support programs, the risk involved, training required, timing of needed assistance (schedules) and cost to outfit fire and emergency services is quite different.

Results

The purpose of the research was to identify why TFPD emergency responders are leaving prior to completion of a 20 years volunteer career. To develop programs to address shortcomings and develop best practices in retention care to extend service time. Data was collected via three anonymous *SurveyMonkey* surveys. Surveys were sent to Colorado Combination and Volunteer organizations to determine if they were experiencing the same decline in volunteer participation. Sixty-two percent affirmed that a decrease in retention occurs, 30% said they have stable participation and 8% reporting increased retention. The goal was also to gain insight on programs they offered that may reduce the decline. Additional surveys were sent to TFPD active and former members to establish why they join, continue to participate and what causes early departure. The survey also provided the flexibility for those participants to

offer suggestions to help reduce waning participation rates within TFPD and offer potential solutions to the fire and EMS services.

The first questions asked determined how many Colorado emergency services organizations of the sixty-one that participated were volunteer or combination. The Colorado combination organizations represented 61 percent of the participants and “all” volunteer organizations accounted for 39 percent. Volunteer populations ranged from three volunteer responders to ninety. When reporting the years of service, the Colorado combination and volunteer organizations said their responders ranged from 50% serving 1 to 5 years, 25% serving 6-10 years, 15% serving 11-15, 7% with 16-20 years of service and 3% 20 years of service or more of service. The years of service reported by TFPD active members are the following: 1-5 years 35%, 6-10 years 17%, 11-15 22%, 16-20 22% and 20 year or more 4%. and former members reporting 1-5 38%, 6-10 at 19%, 11-15 at 29%, 16-20 0.0% and 20 or more years of service at 14% (as graphically shown in Figure 1).

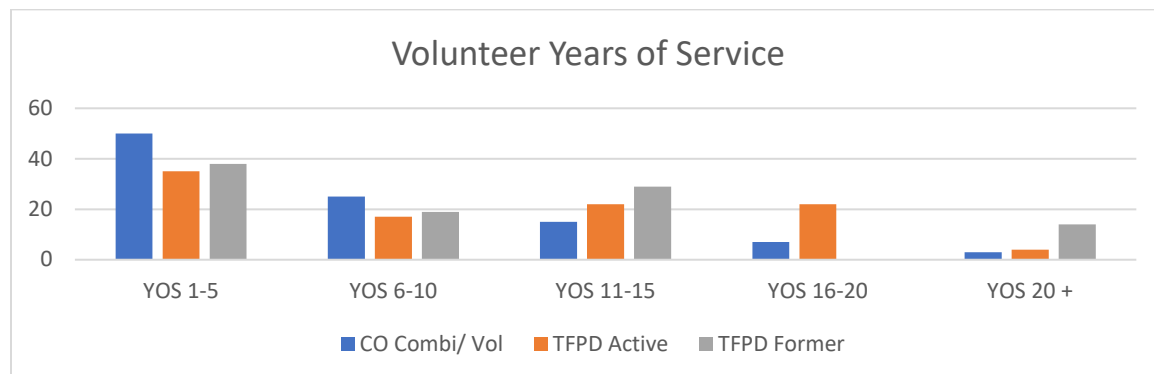


Figure 1: Volunteer Years of Service

TFPD volunteer active and former members were asked why they choose to join the fire and emergency service and overwhelmingly the said “to serve the community”, 73% for active and 95% for former members. “To find a meaningful, exciting and challenging environment”

was the response from 49% of active and 48% of former. Twenty-five percent of active members joined to be challenged mentally and physically while 62% of the former said this was important. A friend or family member asked them to join 15% and 29% respectively. 36% of active members identified to learn a new trade or skill set while 52% of former identified this as a reason to join. And to connect to a group with common vision was stated by 13% of active members and 43% former members. No one identified the uniform as a reason (Figure 2). Active members provided additional reasons such as the “hazardous materials team, inspiration from grandfather and to maintain certification and experience” (Appendix B). No additional reasons were provided by former members.

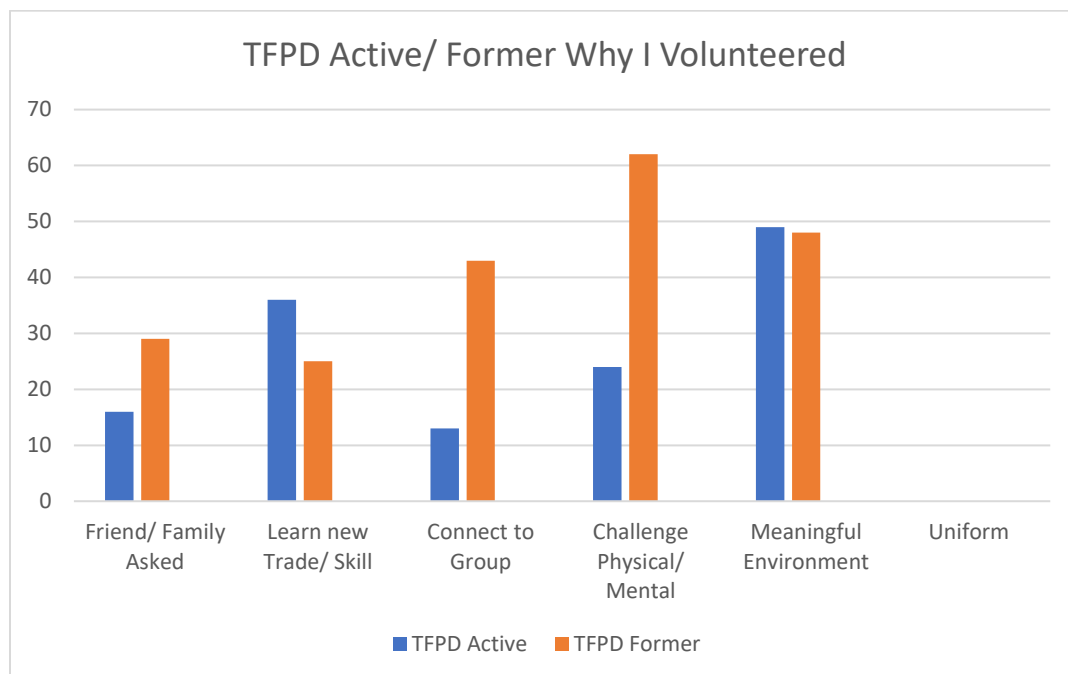


Figure 2 Why did you choose to volunteer with TFPD

Another shared question asked TFPD active and former members was, “would you recommend a friend to volunteer for TFPD?” Both groups said they would with an overwhelming YES! TFPD active members reporting yes at 98% and former members at 95%

(Figure 3). A few responders offered additional comments to include: “Make the obligation abundantly clear first, tell them it is an incredible time commitment, much more so than when I first joined, yes and no, friends need to understand the expectations and the leadership style. I am struggling with this moral dilemma now. Do I invite a friend to the game only for them to be let down? And the RIGHT friend. Many in our (and other) Communities don’t have the ability for consistent commitments (of any sort)” (Appendix B and C).

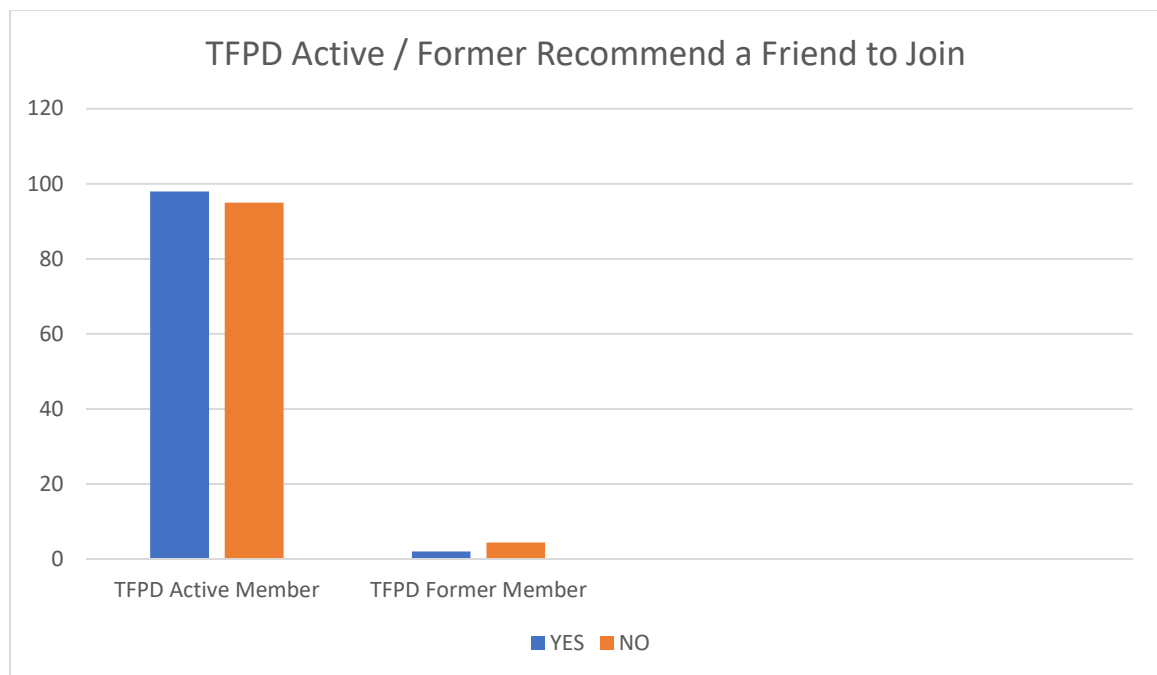


Figure 3 Would you recommend a friend to join TFPD?

The TFPD active and former members were asked if they were provided proper opportunity to reach their potential. Active members answered yes at 78% and former at 89% (Figure 4). Would a career path plan have helped guide your service with TFPD? Active members responded with 52% yes and 48% no, while former members said yes 38% and no at 62%. (Figure 4). Where they provided ample training/ development opportunities? (Figure 4). The intended outcome with the questions was to determine if leadership and the organization is

providing the necessary amount of direction, support and opportunity to assist volunteers to succeed in the volunteer career. TFPD active and former members provided additional feedback to the questions asked. Starting with, were they provided opportunity to reach their potential the added: “time constraints between work, home and volunteer make it difficult to prioritize volunteer, I look forward to every opportunity, more paid training and communication along with a plan for progression, TFPD takes the utmost care of its members and training was adequate, but keeping skill levels up was a challenge,” (Appendix B and C) When asked about ample training/ development opportunities, they offered additional comment: “Yes, always happy to have more though, there is always more than I can take advantage of! Feel like all levels are provided with valuable opportunity. The best! Both fire and EMS and training adequate but keeping skill levels up was a challenge” (Appendix B and C). And when questioned about development of a career path plan TFPD active and former members responded with these additional suggestions: “you all helped me so much with training and mentorship, I always wanted to be paid fulltime with some benefits and I would have never left, expectations and requirements are very clear in application and interview stages as well as from officers, to some it matters, to others it does not. I do like structure in this situation, Maybe? As an officer, it could help guide roles to give members. In general, there is an evolution to roles played by all due to changes in ability and interest over time, Not needed. Always encouraged and Yes 23 years ago” (Appendix B and C).

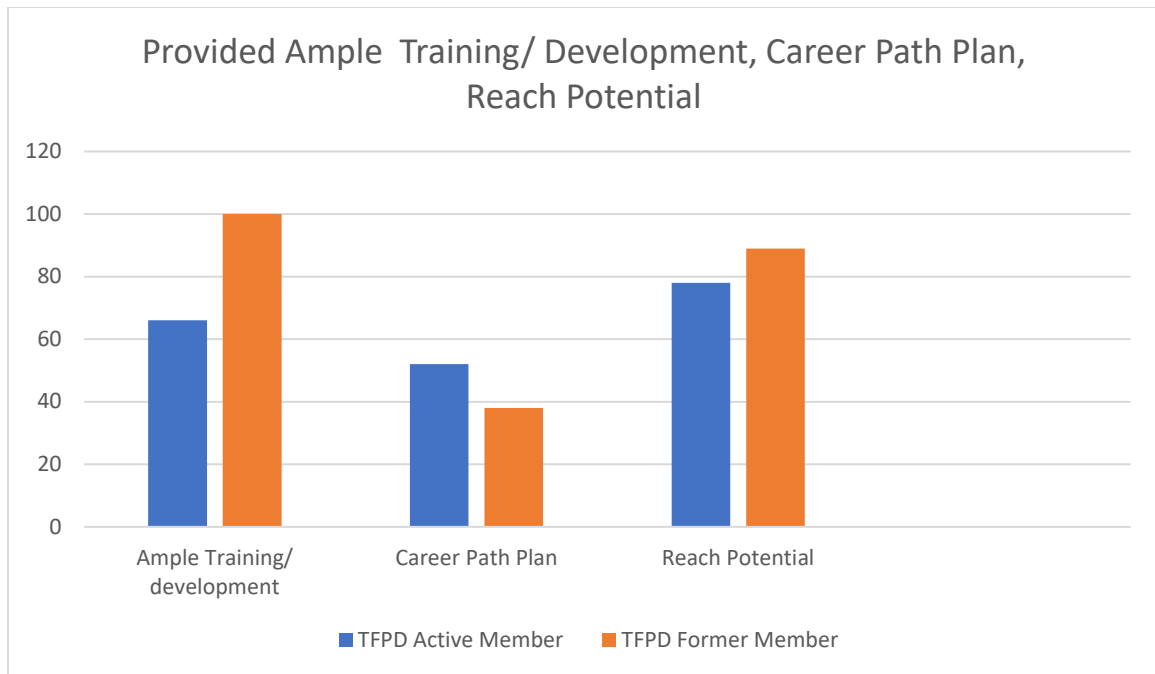


Figure 4 Ample training/ development opportunity, Career path plan, Reach potential

The Colorado combination and volunteer emergency response organizations and TFPD active and former members were all asked what root causes they either have experienced or what their perception is on why responders leave their organizations prior to serving a full-length career. The chart in figure 5 shows the top causes for departure. The Colorado emergency services survey participants identified family responsibilities as the top reason for departure at 65%, while active and former members said this was the second root cause at 51% and 22% respectively. 40% of Colorado organizations identified economics/ job conflicts as the second cause, while active members reported 65% and 28% of former members identifying it as top reasons for leaving. Former members also identified choosing to make emergency services a (full-time/paid) career as a top reason for leaving along with the other survey participants. Thirty-three percent of active and 11% former TFPD members also identified housing availability as another top reason while that cause ranks low with Colorado organizations as a whole 12.5%. High call volume and training requirements were reported as a cause for departure

by Colorado emergency services organizations at 46 percent, yet active members identified them lower at 25 % for training and increase call volume at 14%. Former members ranked increased training at 6% and increased call volume at 11%. Additional thoughts provided in the comment area included: “less community involvement, finding time to obtain certs and maintaining the certs, retirement, most members are young and not committed to one place, moved, I went back to school and had to leave the area, reduced time in District/state” (Appendix A, B and C).

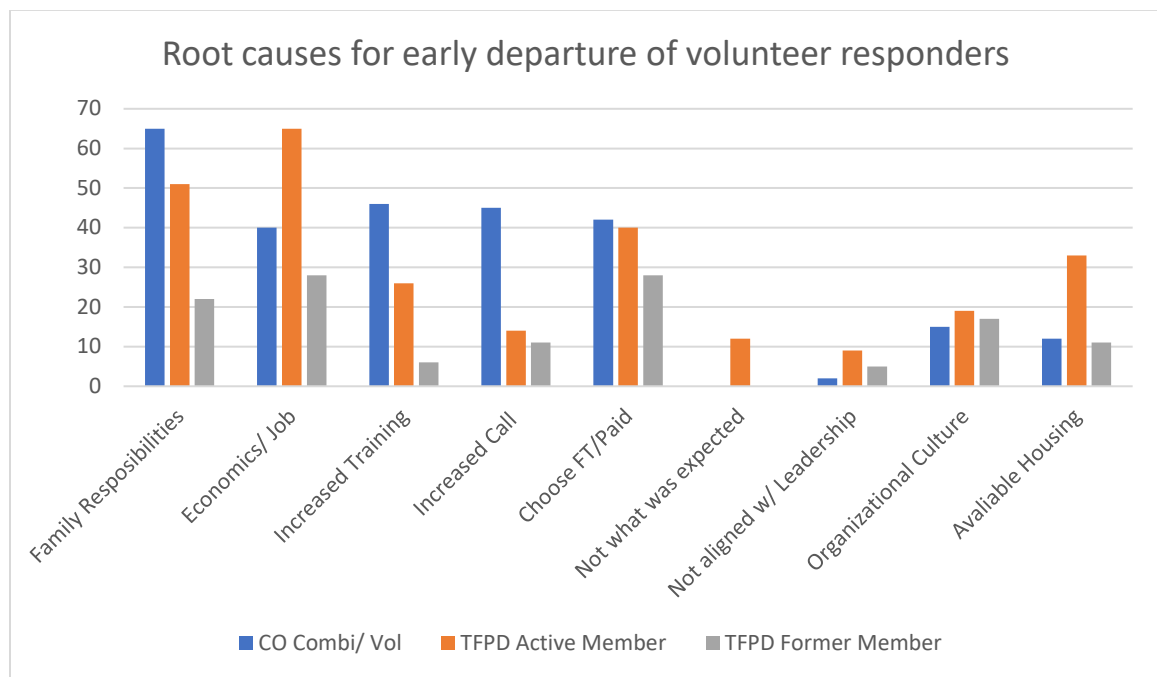


Figure 5 Root causes for early departure of volunteer responders.

Colorado emergency services organizations were asked about incentives and recognition programs to determine what they offer their responders and gauge or compare this against the programs TFPD offers and should consider (Figure 6). TFPD aligns well with Colorado combination and volunteer organizations with regards to incentives provided to their emergency volunteer responders. TFPD matches incentives of other Colorado organizations with FPPA pension (71%), participation stipends (44%), in-house training (75%), out of district training and

reimbursement (76%), local discounts (17%) and the State of Colorado “state bid tire” discounts (54%). In addition, some pay-for-call is used to cover extra responsibilities. TFPD fire personnel serve as the driver for local and transport ambulance duties for compensation for the majority of runs. EMS responders are provided a nominal shift pay and per call compensation because the Colorado Revised Statute language does allow for EMS “only responders to qualify for the FPPA pension program”. Additional comments were provided by Colorado Combination and Volunteer survey participants: “death and disability(??insurance??), gym memberships, family accidental death insurance, life and D&D insurance, annual fund distributed to members on a set of rules, meeting minimum hours, minimum training, and two special events, money for quarterly efforts, helicopter ambulance supplemental insurance, pro-volunteer, family based environment, yearly physicals, uniform stipend, Accident Sickness Disability, meal per diem \$12.50/12-hr shift, mileage to and from the station from their home, AFLAC accident/ injury and cancer Policy” (Appendix A).

The TFPD former members were asked similar questions regarding increasing/improving engagement and providing feedback to foster organizational improvement. They suggested the following: “Focus on developing the brotherhood of the members. train officers to respect the time of their battalion members, Provide leaders with consistent people management training. Hire recruits for full time employment, selected from the volunteer pool. Provide stipends and housing allowances, more interaction on individual needs/ wants for career path/personal development, offer health insurance to volunteers and scholarships to exiting seniors at THS that are not leaving the area. More minorities would be nice and a 10-year pension, Housing is a huge problem, as well as, affordable/discounted health insurance options” (Appendix C).

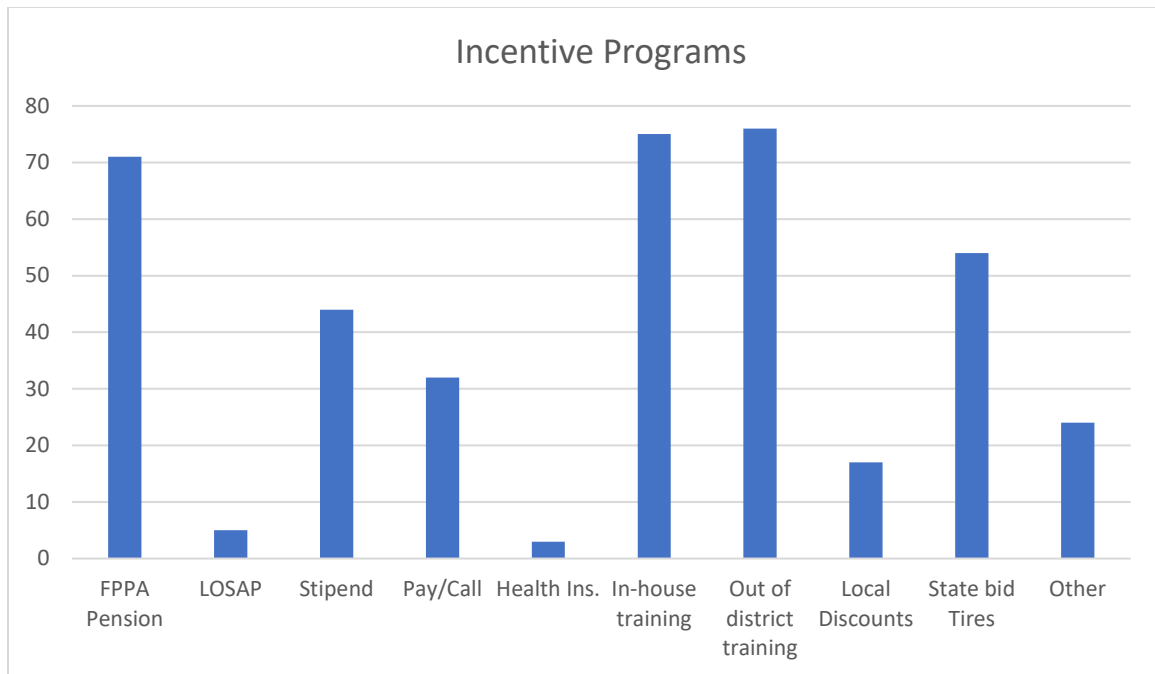


Figure 6 Colorado Combination and Volunteer Incentive Programs

Discussion

TFPD has experienced a decline in volunteer length of service from fire and EMS responders in the last 10 years, we have lost 55 qualified responders, with an average time of service of 3.5 years, for a variety of reasons. Fifteen retirees completed at least 15 years of service to our community. Others left because of family responsibilities, job conflicts, cultural changes in the organization or left the area. Fifteen left to continue training and a professional career (paid) in firefighting, paramedicine or the medical field. The ones who choose to leave to continue in the profession at a different level TFPD considers this paying it forward. The rest excluding the groups mentioned left to continue training and education in pursuit of a career within the field are the challenge. How does TFPD maintain the relationship and volunteer response support? In 2018 alone, TFPD has placed 10 new responders into service and years prior did not look much different.

Another intent of the applied research was to determine if retention was a unique challenge locally or if the challenge is being experienced in other combination and volunteer fire and emergency services organization. The literature review and survey returns received from Colorado combination and volunteer organizations clearly show retention is not a unique or special problem for the TFPD. Sixty-two percent of Colorado combination and volunteer organizations reported decreased retention of volunteers in their organizations. Ryan Fox, in his first year Executive Fire Officer Program applied research project, identified that Campbell County Fire Department experienced reduced retention. “The results concluded that the CCFD lost 111 members between 2011- 2015 with an average retention rate of 5.9 years” (Fox, 2016). Primary root causes mirror those identified by Colorado combination and volunteer survey participants, TFPD active and former member respondents and the U.S. Fire Administration report FA-310. These were job conflict, family responsibilities and organizational leadership challenges (Fox, 2016), (Appendix A, B and C). However, there isn’t a universal solution. The local environment often drives the challenges faced. Whether the communities’ young people are moving to more urban areas for other opportunities, or a community is difficult to make a living in and/ or has a cost of living which is extreme the problem effects the most. The survey requests sent to Colorado combination and volunteer organizations were intended to gather evidence of the trend in our state and determine how aligned TFPD was in comparison. Although some questions aligned, TFPD presented spikes in leaving the area to pursue additional training and career opportunities that mimicked their volunteer commitments while other felt the housing availability was a bigger root cause. The high cost of living in the Telluride area could certainly drive some of the other causes for leaving such as family responsibilities and economic influences.

When the research was completed and analyzed the goal was to identify best practices and determine additional options that TFPD had yet to explore. When a specific benefits package or incentive program is established it does not always meet each individual need or expectation. Perhaps a café model would be the most effective mechanism. When the surveys were received, reviewed and analyzed it was determined that most of the incentives or benefits offered by TFPD were similar to statewide option. FPPA pension, stipends, pay per call, in-house and out of district training (Appendix A). However, some survey responders added comments to encourage potential additional or different options. Some responders valued personal fitness such as gym memberships. Other suggestions addressed basic personal needs like suggesting to offer health and life insurance, increases in nominal non-career compensation or ensuring that response costs are covered. Other suggestions included housing stipends and additional development opportunities both personal and professional.

The literature review offered showed that the retention challenge and that it is not unique to the fire and emergency services, but rather common to most volunteer-centric organizations in the United States. One article reflected on the cost volunteer fire and EMS save communities. “The overall impact of volunteering is significant.” “By one estimate, all those volunteer hours add up to around \$175 billion worth of service, an important benefit to society as a whole for which no one has to pay” (Bernasek, 2014). The majority of the literature review was focused towards fire and emergency response organizations because of the distinctive requirements of training and knowledge, flexibility required to respond when needed and the risk involved with the profession. To maintain engagement and volunteer career longevity with such a specialized group should be a focus of all volunteer-centric organizations and become a priority based on the cost savings to the communities they serve. The need for volunteers is present in almost all

volunteer-centric organizations given the cost to train, outfit, insure fire and emergency responders that volunteer their time are important to recognize. Imagine the effects of having to provide salaries and additional benefits to small rural communities that do not have the necessary resources to support the emergency response needs of their communities. “Too many agencies spend months thinking about how to recruit new volunteers. It is important to find out how to attract volunteers into your agency” (Wittich, 2017).

Data provided in the *U.S. Fire Department Profile* report identified that tenure periods would appear strong with regard to the concept of recruiting firefighters to maintain a strong force. They reported that 9.5% of firefighters have served less than a year, 25.5 served 1-5 years, 23% 6-10 years and 42% served for more than 10 years (Haynes and Stein. 2017). In comparison, the Colorado combination and volunteer organizations feedback were that responders served between 1-5 was 53%, 6-10 28%, 11-16 15% 16-20 years 8% and 20 or more 5%. TFPD active served 15 years 35%, 6-10 17%, 16-20 year 22% and more than 20 years 4%. TFPD former members who served 1-5 at 38%, 6-10 years 19%, 11-15 29%, 16-20 at 0% and more than 20 or 14% (Figure 7).

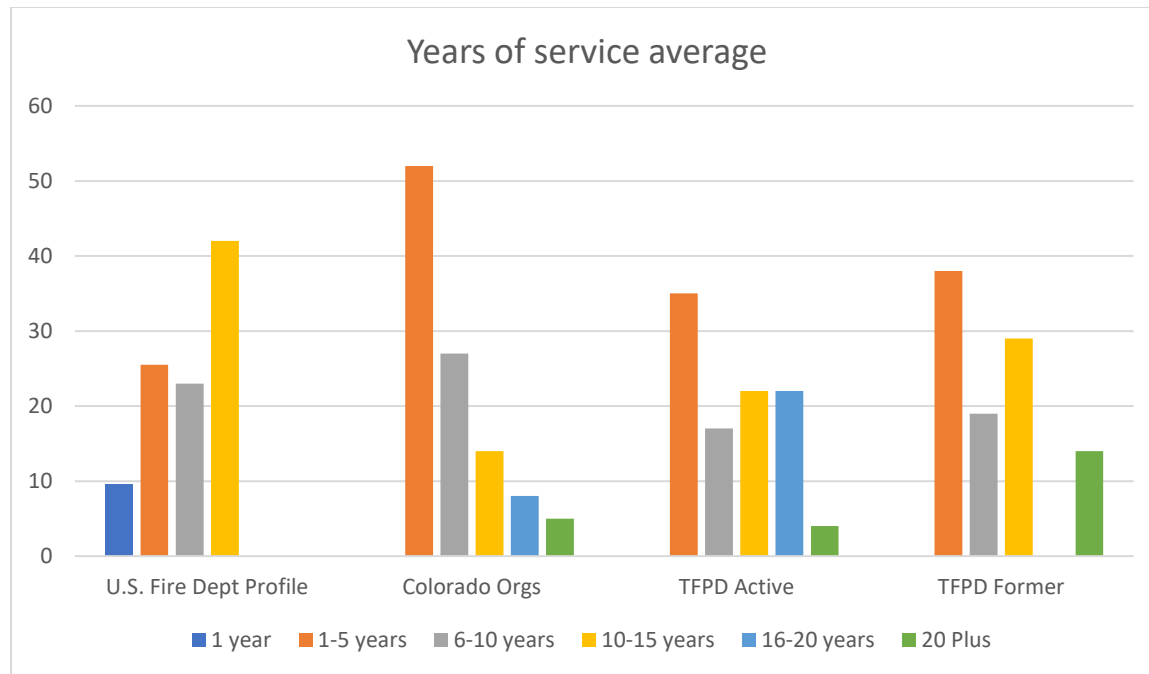


Figure 7 Years of service average

The backfill is not sustaining the whole. More volunteers are serving the public in a volunteer capacity yet not continuing service past 10 or 15 years. The age of firefighters and EMTs provides similar data in the literature section. The older a responder gets the lower the participation rate. The problem with retaining volunteer emergency responders is not just about keeping folks engaged for a 20-year service span but it also corresponds hand in hand with recruitment. "... helping a volunteer land in a role that meets their needs, wants and desires is the essence of volunteer engagement..." (Altland, 2015). Once we have the volunteer emergency responder on the hook, we need to focus on retaining them. "Retaining talent is having conversations with every person you hope will stay on your team." (Kaye and Jordan-Evans, 2014).

Volunteer and volunteer-centric organizations must address the needs of their people to maintain a functional response force. Suggestions from literature review indicate the answers are

in providing for the volunteer's most basic needs or intrinsic touching the heart needs. Michelle Sawyer suggests in her BLOG: "1. Make a Good First Impression, 2. Always Be a Positive Representative, 3. Make Their Effort Worth Their Time, 4. Be Flexible, 5. Go Above and Beyond, 6. Get Personal, 7. Give Volunteers a Boost, 9. Volunteer More, 10. Show Appreciation" (Sawyer, [n.d.]). Address the identified root causes for early departure and make changes to the organization as possible.

Much of the literature reflects the recommendations provided by the survey participants. "The experience is rewarding and worth their time, training requirements are not excessive, the time demands are adaptable and manageable, they are rewarded with a personal sense of value, there is good leadership minimizing conflict and there is ample support for the organization" (U.S. Fire Administration, 2007). "Relationships matters more than ever. Teach, coach, recognize, and-most importantly-empower" (Berry, 2016). Leaders and members have to put forth effort from the first day to the last to provide for our volunteers. Not everyone's need is alike and to spend the quality time to determine needs, wants and support volunteers by providing the tools they require for success are priority.

Recommendations

Based on review and analysis of the foregoing research eight recommended changes to the TFPD volunteer engagement programing are being recommended to TFPD leadership and the Board of Directors. Retention of our committed, well qualified and professional fire and emergency services responders is an important step to encourage extended service or volunteer

career service. The following suggestions will address the feedback provided by the survey participants that also aligned with the Colorado combination and volunteer fire and emergency services participants.

1. Explore flexibility of scheduled shifts. Open discussions with the volunteer membership to determine what works the best for their schedules. For EMS responders, does the open shift enrollment work the best or should it be based on when your assigned EMS Battalion Chief is on? Should TFPD maintain fire shifts of one week on and two weeks off or should a Kelly or Modified Kelly schedule be considered. What component of shift flexibility works while still providing adequate coverage?
2. Continue to develop local partnerships to provide additional local housing opportunities. Initiate discussions with the Town of Telluride, Town of Mountain Village and San Miguel County Housing Authorities to establish priority points for fire and EMS volunteer when volunteers in all housing programs. Develop a plan to purchase or build additional housing units that tie in with the master planning process and provide opportunities for volunteer responders to save money to purchase their own home locally.
3. To value volunteer time, audit and ensure training sessions are designed, organized and delivered efficiently and effectively. Explore wage replacement support for responders that miss work to attend training, so they don't have to utilize their vacation time. Provide more frequent leadership and people management training to encourage better leadership and career growth potential. Offer avenues for volunteers to develop themselves personally and professionally.

4. Given the cost of health insurance today and the difficulty people have securing coverage, work with and explore opportunities to provide health insurance and supplemental insurance or subsidized plans through TFPD's and other local and regional insurance brokers.
5. Re-establish the TFPD recruitment (attraction) and retention committee to develop new retention strategies specific to the needs of TFPD people. Continue to explore what other agencies provide. Study and fully understand the incurred costs to be involved as a volunteer responder. The current base rate of the participation stipend is \$1,000.00 annually. Does that rate need to be increased if funding can be made available? Develop additional non-career wage benefits through partnership with local businesses. Research a LOSAP program for EMS responders to establish equity with FPPA pension benefits fire personnel receive following 15 years of service.
6. Communicate with TFPD personnel more frequently to ensure their needs are being met. Contact them on special events: birthdays, anniversaries, kids' birthdays. Develop a quarterly interview or survey on a random basis to gauge the volunteer personnel's "temperature."
7. Develop an exit interview process to capture why volunteers are leaving, ask what the TFPD organization does/did well and where improvement can be made.

Reach out to the employers and business owners who employ fire and EMS responders to encourage support, such as paid time off, when they are needed for emergencies. In turn, provide public recognition for their support.

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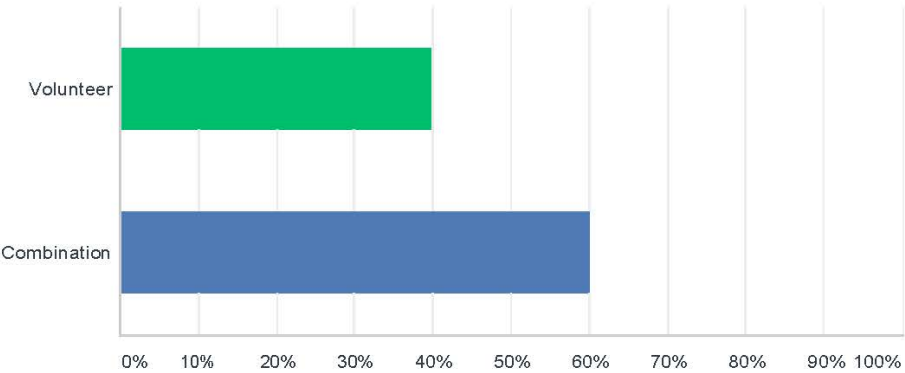
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Colorado Combination and Volunteer Fire Department Retention Survey

Q1 What type of Fire Department

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Volunteer	39.34%	24
Combination	60.66%	37
TOTAL		61

Q2 How many volunteer firefighters/ EMT's serve your organization?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	12	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	38	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	12	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	20	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	27	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	31	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	22	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
8	32	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
9	10	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
10	22	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
11	24	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
12	3	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
13	41	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
14	22	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
15	48	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
16	22	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
17	16	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
18	34	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
19	14	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
20	7	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
21	14	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
22	10	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
23	24	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
24	36	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
25	35	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
26	30	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
27	45	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
28	9, no EMT's	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
29	43	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
30	15 total volunteers. 7 are EMT's	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
31	28	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
32	9 Volunteers---3 EMT	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
33	16	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
34	18	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
35	12	6/20/2018 8:23 AM

36	4	6/20/2018 7:48 AM
37	5	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
38	34	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
39	3	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
40	20	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
41	4	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
42	8	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
43	20	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
44	15	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
45	4	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
46	20	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
47	<5	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
48	13	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
49	9	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
50	8	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	50	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
52	20	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
53	21	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
54	23	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	40	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	7	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
57	9	6/19/2018 3:52 PM
58	7	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
59	3	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
60	40	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
61	37	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q3 How many have served 1 to 5 years?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	12	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	22	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	3	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	5	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	27	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	9	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	11	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
8	8	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
9	10	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
10	16	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
11	20	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
12	2	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
13	20	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
14	21	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
15	25	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
16	10	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
17	9	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
18	13	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
19	10	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
20	5	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
21	3	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
22	6	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
23	10	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
24	14	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
25	12	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
26	8	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
27	15	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
28	5	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
29	28	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
30	4	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
31	9	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
32	6	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
33	8	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
34	13	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
35	5	6/20/2018 8:23 AM

36	4	6/20/2018 7:48 AM
37	5	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
38	34	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
39	3	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
40	20	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
41	4	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
42	8	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
43	20	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
44	15	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
45	4	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
46	20	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
47	<5	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
48	13	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
49	9	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
50	8	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	50	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
52	20	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
53	21	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
54	23	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	40	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	7	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
57	9	6/19/2018 3:52 PM
58	7	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
59	3	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
60	40	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
61	37	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q4 How Many have served 6-10 years?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	8	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	0	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	4	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	11	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	18	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	5	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	3	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
8	8	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
9	5	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
10	5	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
11	4	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
12	0	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
13	5	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
14	10	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
15	6	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
16	6	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
17	3	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
18	10	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
19	3	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
20	4	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
21	4	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
22	5	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
23	5	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
24	7	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
25	15	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
26	10	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
27	15	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
28	2	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
29	5	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
30	7	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
31	11	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
32	1	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
33	0	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
34	5	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
35	5	6/20/2018 8:23 AM

36	8	6/20/2018 7:48 AM
37	4	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
38	3	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
39	4	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
40	4	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
41	1	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
42	3	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
43	10	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
44	0	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
45	2	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
46	12	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
47	None	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
48	13	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
49	2	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
50	2	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	15	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
52	10	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
53	6	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
54	1	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	30	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	3	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
57	5	6/19/2018 3:52 PM
58	20	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
59	3	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
60	41	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
61	20	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q5 How many have served 11-15 years?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	3	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	7	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	4	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	4	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	18	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	6	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	2	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
8	10	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
9	5	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
10	1	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
11	0	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
12	0	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
13	10	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
14	8	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
15	2	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
16	2	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
17	3	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
18	3	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
19	1	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
20	0	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
21	3	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
22	5	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
23	5	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
24	4	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
25	7	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
26	6	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
27	10	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
28	0	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
29	9	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
30	1	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
31	7	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
32	0	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
33	0	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
34	2	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
35	1	6/20/2018 8:23 AM

36	4	6/20/2018 7:48 AM
37	1	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
38	0	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
39	4	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
40	4	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
41	0	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
42	2	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
43	3	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
44	1	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
45	0	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
46	4	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
47	None	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
48	10	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
49	0	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
50	0	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	3	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
52	5	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
53	6	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
54	0	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	4	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	7	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
57	2	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
58	0	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
59	3	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
60	20	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q6 How Many have served 16-20 years?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	2	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	5	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	1	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	0	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	2	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	7	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	3	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
8	3	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
9	0	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
10	0	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
11	0	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
12	3	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
13	4	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
14	0	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
15	3	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
16	0	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
17	3	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
18	0	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
19	0	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
20	1	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
21	5	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
22	1	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
23	2	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
24	1	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
25	5	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
26	3	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
27	0	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
28	0	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
29	1	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
30	1	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
31	0	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
32	0	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
33	1	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
34	0	6/20/2018 8:23 AM
35	6	6/20/2018 7:48 AM

36	1	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
37	0	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
38	2	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
39	2	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
40	4	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
41	2	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
42	4	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
43	3	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
44	0	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
45	4	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
46	None	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
47	8	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
48	1	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
49	2	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
50	8	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	3	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
52	5	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
53	0	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
54	4	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	0	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	4	6/19/2018 3:52 PM
57	0	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
58	0	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
59	0	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
60	9	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q7 How many have served 20 or more years?

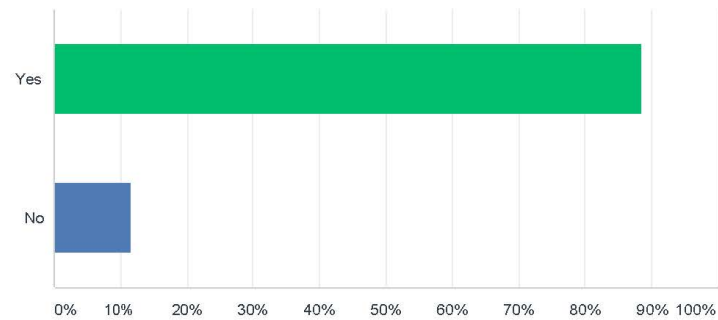
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	1	7/8/2018 6:39 AM
2	4	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
3	1	6/26/2018 4:32 PM
4	0	6/26/2018 9:41 AM
5	2	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
6	4	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
7	4	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
8	3	6/23/2018 6:27 AM
9	2	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
10	0	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
11	0	6/22/2018 8:22 AM
12	0	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
13	3	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
14	4	6/21/2018 2:55 PM
15	0	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
16	1	6/21/2018 9:36 AM
17	1	6/21/2018 9:30 AM
18	5	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
19	0	6/21/2018 9:21 AM
20	0	6/21/2018 7:56 AM
21	2	6/21/2018 6:35 AM
22	4	6/20/2018 10:30 PM
23	3	6/20/2018 6:39 PM
24	9	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
25	0	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
26	1	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
27	2	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
28	0	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
29	1	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
30	1	6/20/2018 2:16 PM
31	0	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
32	2	6/20/2018 9:35 AM
33	0	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
34	0	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
35	1	6/20/2018 8:23 AM

36	2	6/20/2018 7:48 AM
37	2	6/20/2018 7:25 AM
38	0	6/20/2018 6:32 AM
39	1	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
40	0	6/19/2018 8:40 PM
41	0	6/19/2018 7:12 PM
42	0	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
43	0	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
44	0	6/19/2018 5:19 PM
45	0	6/19/2018 4:28 PM
46	4	6/19/2018 4:26 PM
47	None	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
48	6	6/19/2018 4:10 PM
49	0	6/19/2018 4:08 PM
50	0	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
51	2	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
52	2	6/19/2018 3:59 PM
53	2	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
54	1	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
55	2	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
56	0	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
57	2	6/19/2018 3:52 PM
58	0	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
59	0	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
60	0	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
61	4	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q8 Do you offer an incentive program?

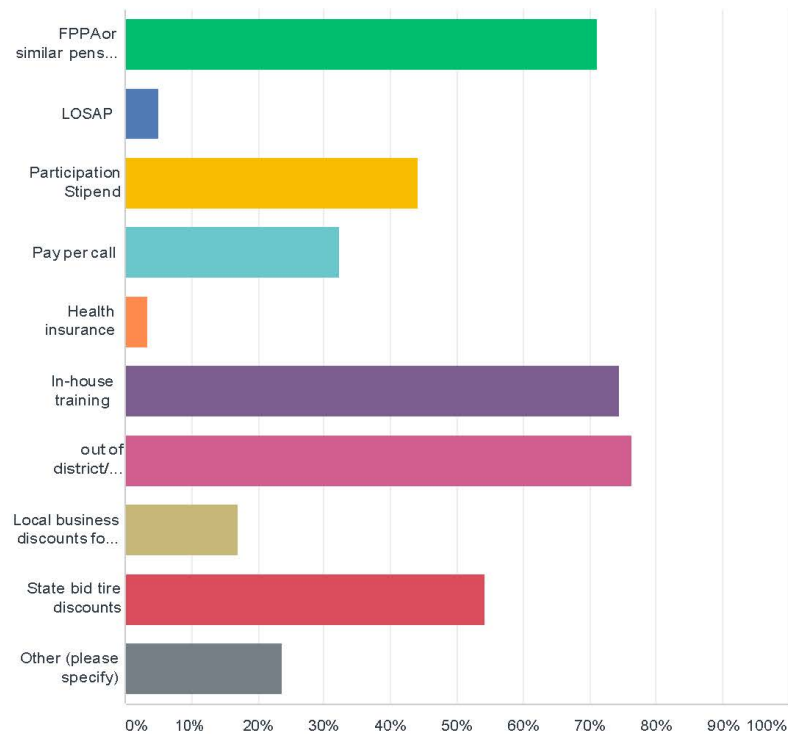
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		88.52%	54
No		11.48%	7
TOTAL			61

Q9 What incentive programs do you offer?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2

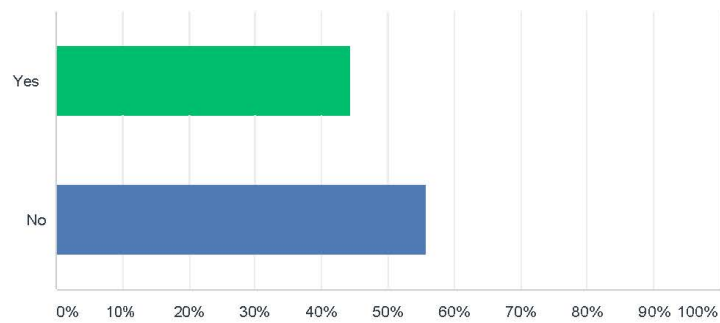


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
FPPA or similar pension Program with vesting	71.19%	42
LOSAP	5.08%	3
Participation Stipend	44.07%	26
Pay per call	32.20%	19
Health insurance	3.39%	2
In-house training	74.58%	44
out of district/ department training and reimbursement	76.27%	45
Local business discounts for responders	16.95%	10
State bid tire discounts	54.24%	32
Other (please specify)	23.73%	14
Total Respondents: 59		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	D&D Gym membership	6/25/2018 3:19 PM
2	Family accidental death insurance	6/25/2018 10:33 AM
3	life and A D&D insurance	6/23/2018 9:17 AM
4	Annual fund distributed to members based on a set of rules; meeting minimum hours, minimum training, and two special events	6/22/2018 10:41 AM
5	money for quarterly efforts	6/21/2018 3:19 PM
6	Helicopter Ambulance Supplemental Insurance	6/20/2018 5:07 PM
7	Pro-volunteer, family based environment	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
8	Yearly Physicals	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
9	Year end bonus if the exceed different requirements	6/20/2018 9:42 AM
10	uniform stipend	6/20/2018 9:05 AM
11	Uniform Stipen, Accident Sickness Disability,	6/19/2018 5:27 PM
12	Meal per diem of 12.50/12-hr shift, mileage to and from the station from their home.	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
13	Gym memberships	6/19/2018 3:55 PM
14	AFLAC Accident/Injury and Cancer Policy	6/19/2018 3:33 PM

Q10 Do you develop a career path plan with new recruits?

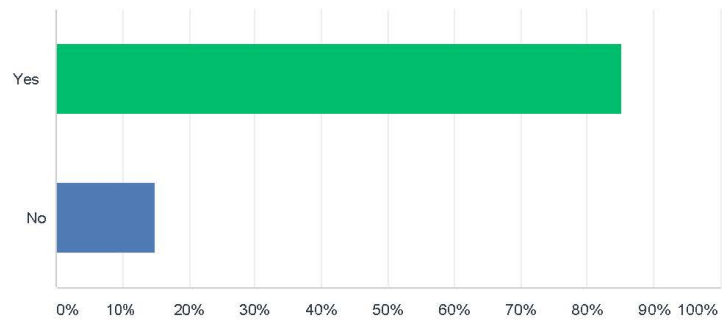
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	44.26%	27
No	55.74%	34
TOTAL		61

Q11 Do you have recognition programs in place?

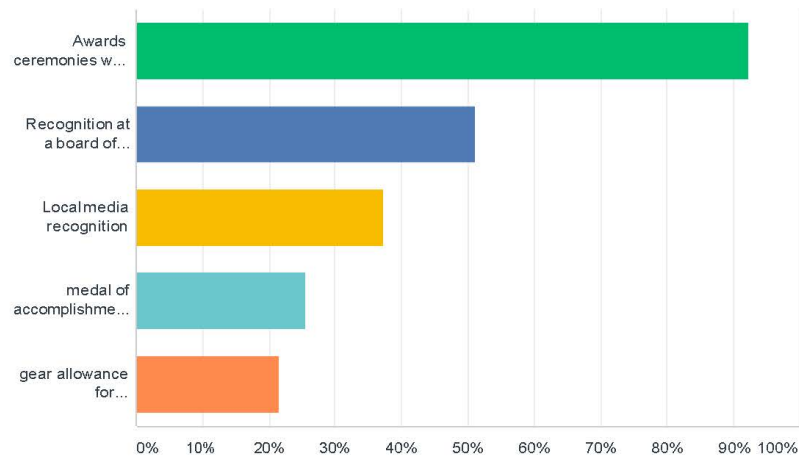
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		85.25%	52
No		14.75%	9
TOTAL			61

Q12 If yes what applies to your program?

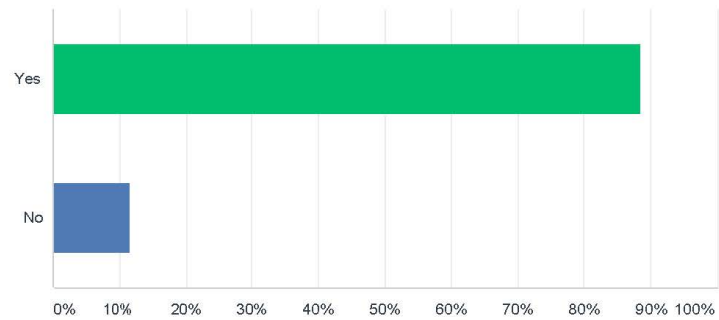
Answered: 51 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Awards ceremonies with family and peers	92.16%	47
Recognition at a board of directors meeting	50.98%	26
Local media recognition	37.25%	19
medal of accomplishment presentation	25.49%	13
gear allowance for performance/ participation	21.57%	11
Total Respondents: 51		

Q13 Do you conduct a pre-interview of recruits to determine areas of interest?

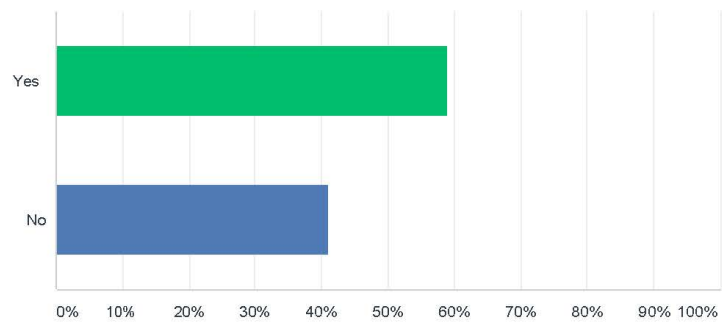
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		88.52%	54
No		11.48%	7
TOTAL			61

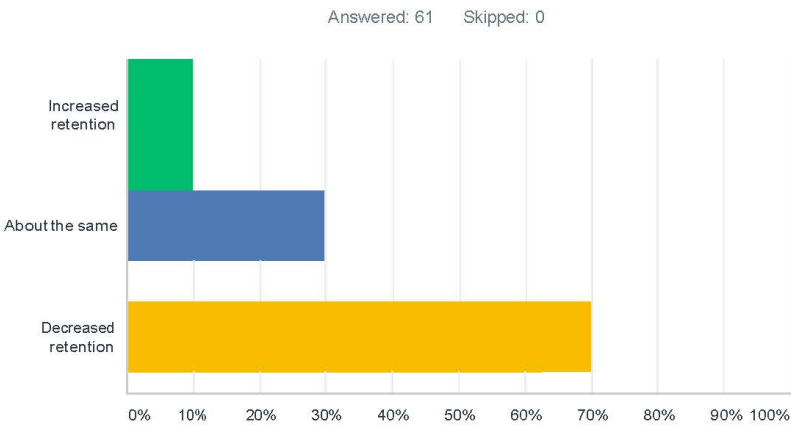
Q14 Do you require certification and or a reading list for promotion?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		59.02%	36
No		40.98%	25
TOTAL			61

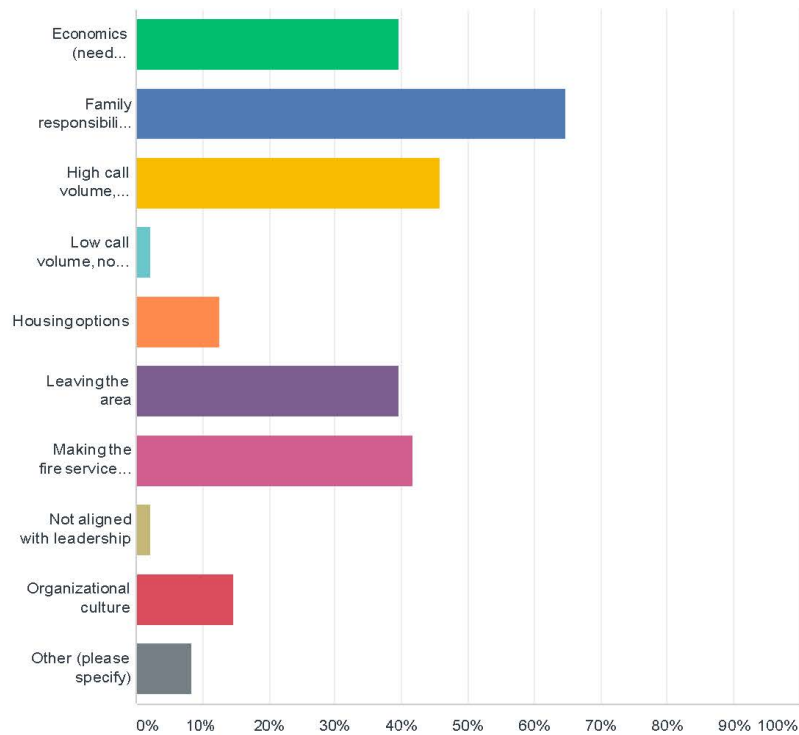
Q15 Is your organization experiencing changes with retaining volunteers for a career (20 years)?



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Increased retention		8.20%	5
About the same		29.51%	18
Decreased retention		62.30%	38
TOTAL			61

Q16 If YES what issues are at the top of the list?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 13

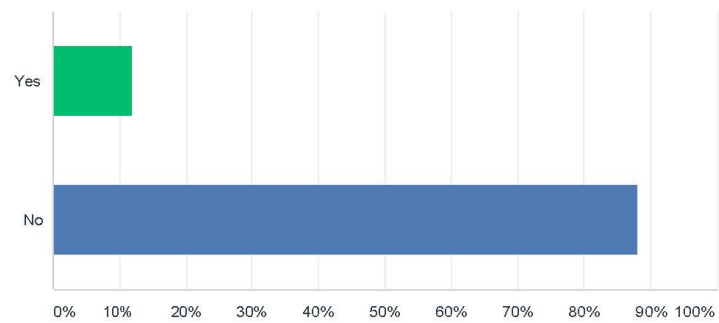


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Economics (need additional income sources)	39.58%	19
Family responsibilities	64.58%	31
High call volume, training requirements	45.83%	22
Low call volume, no training requirements	2.08%	1
Housing options	12.50%	6
Leaving the area	39.58%	19
Making the fire service a career (paid) choice	41.67%	20
Not aligned with leadership	2.08%	1
Organizational culture	14.58%	7
Other (please specify)	8.33%	4
Total Respondents: 48		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Finding time to obtain certs and maintaining the certs	6/22/2018 11:33 AM
2	n/a	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
3	Less community involvement	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
4	Career positions with other agencies	6/19/2018 4:16 PM

Q17 Does your organization utilize an engagement strategy?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		11.86%	7
No		88.14%	52
TOTAL			59

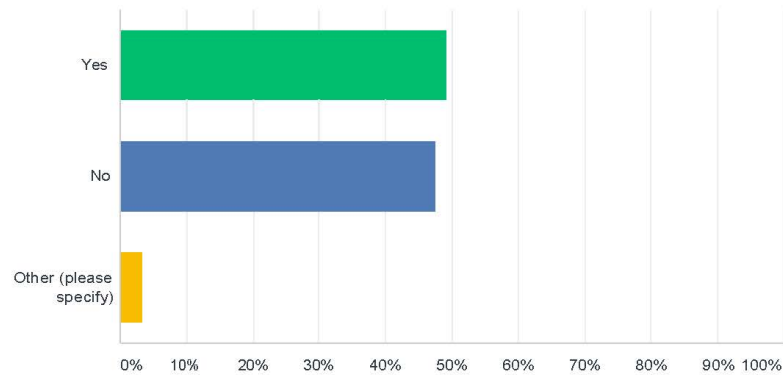
Q18 If so what components are effective?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 41

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Began a pre FF-1/EMR indoctrination program	7/3/2018 11:20 AM
2	Pay for some of their academy costs	6/22/2018 7:44 AM
3	na	6/21/2018 10:04 AM
4	social media for the dept. raises community awareness, source of pride for ff to be part of this. no upward limits are place on training, and will send to out of area training. Wildfire assignments. large range of skill sets welcomed. broad diversity from the community. involvement at the local, regional and state levels.	6/21/2018 9:28 AM
5	na	6/20/2018 4:40 PM
6	Na	6/20/2018 3:25 PM
7	n/a	6/20/2018 2:53 PM
8	N/A	6/20/2018 2:50 PM
9	n/a	6/20/2018 8:32 AM
10	certification required after 1 year, fire, ems, wildland. Officer development is encouraged, department SOPs and bylaws are followed.	6/20/2018 8:23 AM
11	Na	6/20/2018 6:01 AM
12	Na	6/19/2018 6:28 PM
13	N/A	6/19/2018 4:16 PM
14	N/A	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
15	n/a	6/19/2018 4:05 PM
16	Work towards individual goals	6/19/2018 3:54 PM
17	Na	6/19/2018 3:43 PM
18	N/A	6/19/2018 3:33 PM
19	n/a	6/19/2018 3:32 PM
20	NA	6/19/2018 3:03 PM

Q19 Does your organization offer a single resource/ specialty responder option (Hazmat/ fire/ EMS wildfire etc.)

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

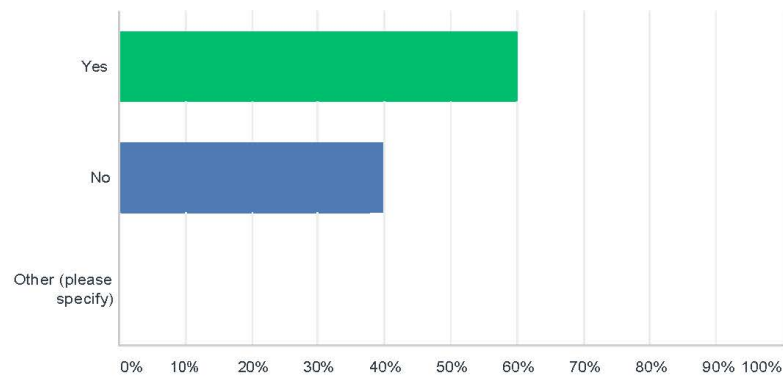


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		49.18%	30
No		47.54%	29
Other (please specify)		3.28%	2
TOTAL			61

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	We expect certain certifications but then let them choose an area of higher training.	6/20/2018 2:30 PM
2	Dispatcher & EMS Cadre	6/19/2018 3:54 PM

Q20 Does your organization encourage an exit interview?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		60.66%	37
No		37.70%	23
Other (please specify)		1.64%	1
TOTAL			61

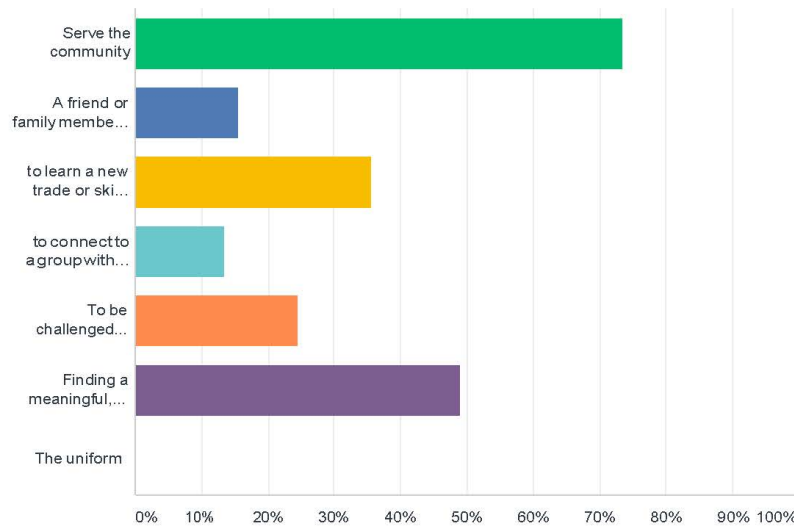
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	We cull folks who quit responding to calls or meetings after several discussions with them. While few are just mismatches, we find primary job loss is main cause, followed by the time constraints of young families a close second. Sometimes we're not a good fit for the person, but we usually get that figured out in the first few months before we allow membership. all involve a lot of discussion. Sometimes, folks just move away without telling us.	6/21/2018 9:28 AM

Telluride Fire Protection District Active Member Retention Survey

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q1 Why did you choose to volunteer for TFPD?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 2



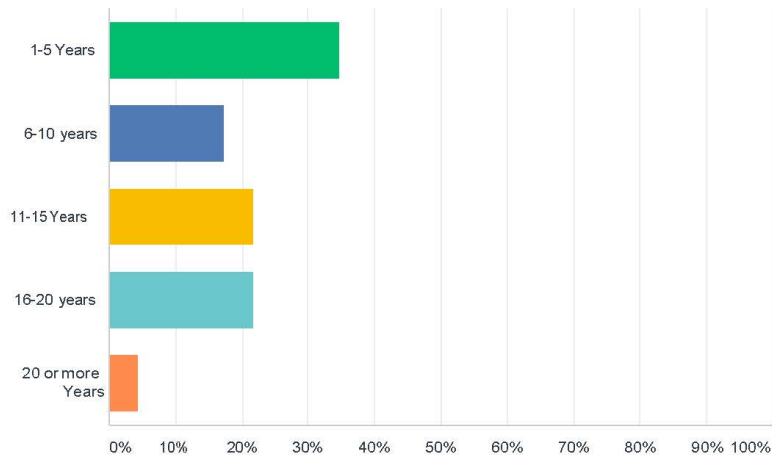
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Serve the community	73.33%	33
A friend or family member asked me to participate	15.56%	7
to learn a new trade or skill set	35.56%	16
to connect to a group with a common vision	13.33%	6
To be challenged mentally and physically	24.44%	11
Finding a meaningful, exciting and challenging volunteer environment	48.89%	22
The uniform	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 45		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Hazmat Team	6/26/2018 2:21 PM
2	Inspired by my Grandfather who was a doctor.	6/24/2018 9:56 AM
3	maintain certification	6/22/2018 3:43 PM
4	Experience	6/22/2018 2:59 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q2 How many years have you served TFPD?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1

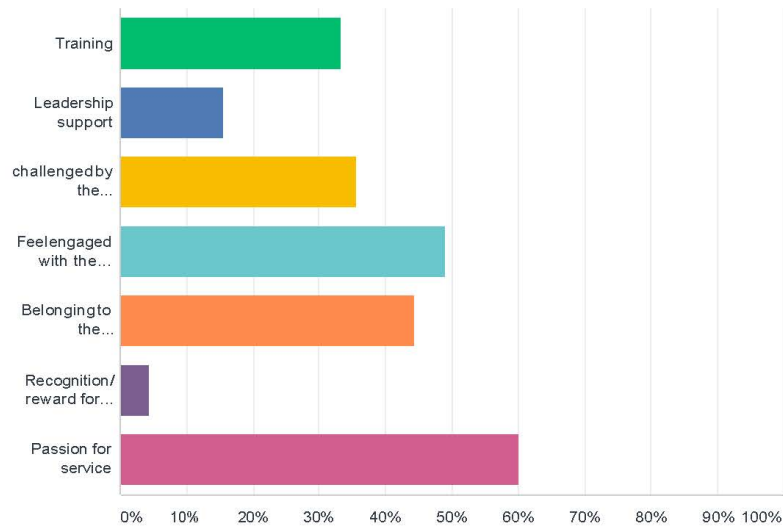


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-5 Years	34.78%	16
6-10 years	17.39%	8
11-15 Years	21.74%	10
16-20 years	21.74%	10
20 or more Years	4.35%	2
Total Respondents: 46		

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q3 Why do you continue to Volunteer?

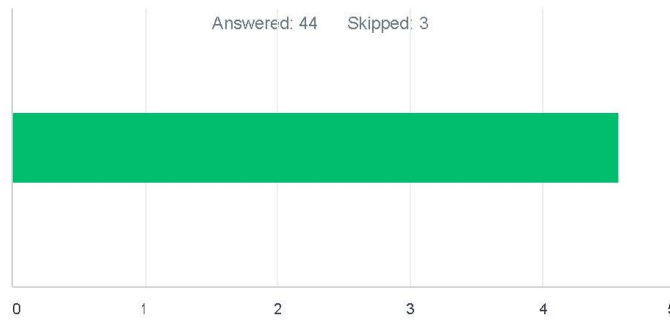
Answered: 45 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Training		33.33%	15
Leadership support		15.56%	7
challenged by the work/problems encountered		35.56%	16
Feel engaged with the organization		48.89%	22
Belonging to the Brotherhood/ Sisterhood of emergency responders		44.44%	20
Recognition/ reward for effort provided		4.44%	2
Passion for service		60.00%	27
Total Respondents: 45			
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE	
1	I believe it is very important to serve and give back to my community	7/28/2018 9:00 AM	
2	To give back to my community after I have been raping society for so long.	6/25/2018 3:35 PM	
3	I love the place that I grew up in.	6/23/2018 10:15 PM	
4	Amazing training that helps us grow as a team.	6/22/2018 8:29 PM	

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q4 Are you provided ample training/ development opportunities?



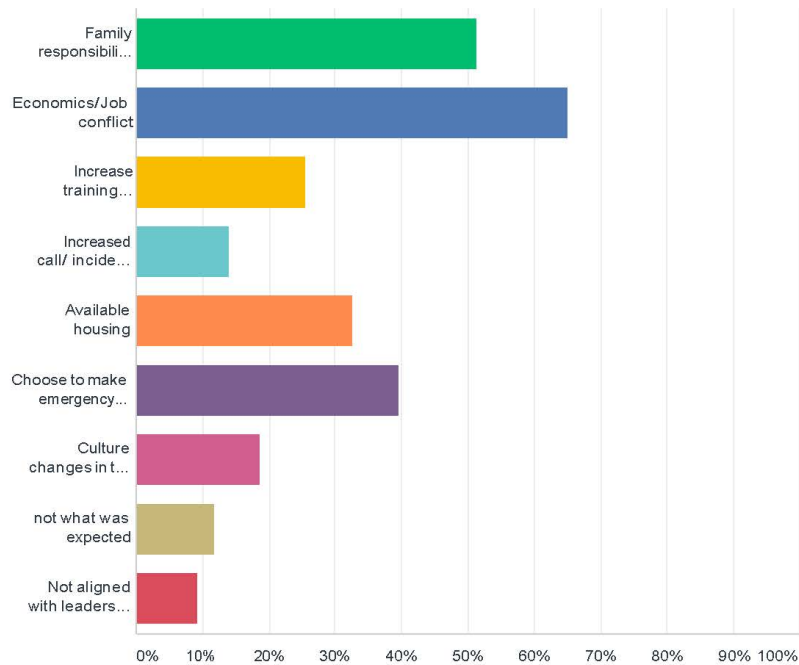
	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Stars	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	25.00%	65.91%		
	0	0	4	11	29	44	4.57

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes	7/20/2018 8:26 AM
2	yes. always happy to have more though.	6/25/2018 10:38 AM
3	There is always more than I can take advantage of! Feel like all levels are provided with valuable opportunity.	6/25/2018 9:52 AM
4	The best! Both Fire & EMS	6/24/2018 8:23 AM
5	Looking forward to EVT Academy	6/23/2018 7:55 AM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q5 Why do members choose to leave the organization?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Family responsibilities		51.16%	22
Economics/ Job conflict		65.12%	28
Increase training requirements		25.58%	11
Increased call/ incident numbers		13.95%	6
Available housing		32.56%	14
Choose to make emergency service a career (full-time/ paid)		39.53%	17
Culture changes in the organization		18.60%	8
not what was expected		11.63%	5
Not aligned with leadership		9.30%	4
Total Respondents: 43			
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE	
1	Not enough calls	7/22/2018 10:30 PM	
2	Age out	7/3/2018 8:16 AM	

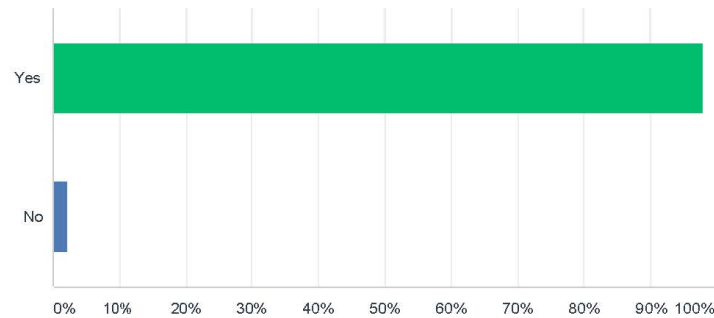
TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

3	Bat crazy leaders that do not respect you and cannot handle constructive criticism.	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
4	n/a	6/25/2018 12:25 PM
5	Retirement	6/25/2018 10:17 AM
6	probably for several of the above reasons	6/24/2018 9:56 AM
7	The new ones leave for the about reason. Must are long term	6/24/2018 8:23 AM
8	Most new members are young and not committed to one place.	6/23/2018 10:15 PM
9	I can not speak for others. If ever I would leave it would be due to the unprofessionalism and belittling of my Captain. Yet I would seek-will support prior to leaving.	6/22/2018 6:46 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q6 Would you recommend a friend to join TFPD?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



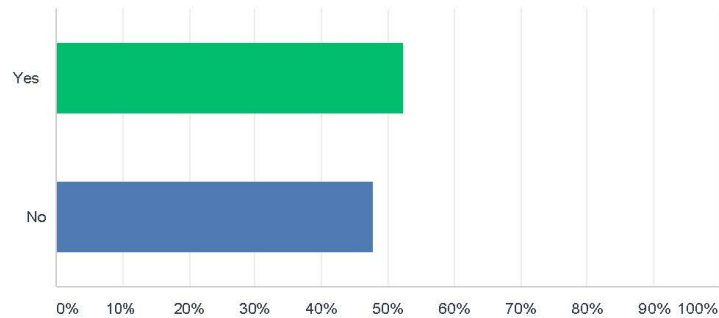
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		97.87%	46
No		2.13%	1
TOTAL			47

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Though I tell them it is an incredible time commitment, much more so than when I first joined	7/28/2018 9:00 AM
2	Yes and no, friends need to understand the expectations and the leadership style. I am struggling with this moral dilemma now. Do I invite a friend to the game only for them to be let down?	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
3	The RIGHT Friend. Many in our (and Other) Community don't have ability for consistent commitments (of any sort)	6/25/2018 9:52 AM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q7 Would a volunteer career path plan help guide your service with TFPD?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 3



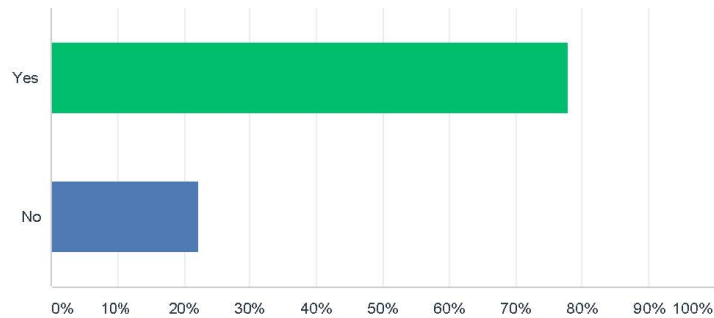
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		52.27%	23
No		47.73%	21
TOTAL			44

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Expectations and requirements are very clear in application and interview stages as well as from officers.	6/26/2018 2:21 PM
2	a yes or no answer could be interpreted many ways	6/25/2018 8:40 PM
3	To some it matters, to others it does not. I do like structure in this situation.	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
4	Maybe? As An officer, it could help guide roles to give to Members. In General there is an Evolution to Roles played by all due to changes in ability and interest over time	6/25/2018 9:52 AM
5	Not needed. Always encouraged	6/24/2018 8:23 AM
6	Yes 23 years ago.	6/23/2018 10:15 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q8 Are you provided with the proper opportunity to reach your potential?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 2



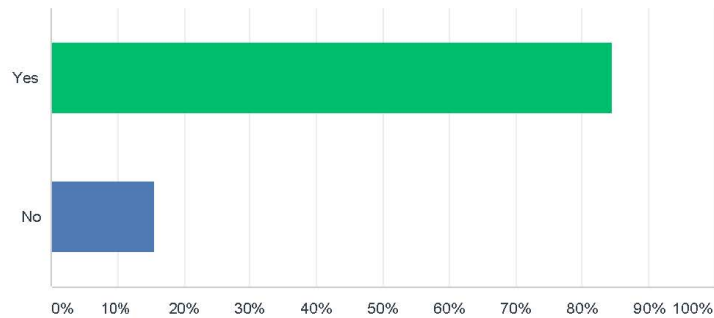
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	77.78%	35
No	22.22%	10
TOTAL		45

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I think yes; however, time constraints between work, home, and volunteer make it difficult to prioritize volunteer.	7/3/2018 8:16 AM
2	not sure	6/30/2018 5:18 PM
3	I am very appreciative of the district providing training and learning opportunities. I look forward to every opportunity, from bimonthly training to specialty camps & classes.	6/26/2018 2:21 PM
4	Heck No. I am not sure I want to reach my potential in this area. Currently letting potential organically grow.	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
5	more paid training and communications along with a plan for progression would help with participating in more training and then using education with more confidence.	6/25/2018 10:38 AM
6	Each of us has different potential. Some desire high-level proficiency at Emergency response, that is best achieved through high-volume repetition for some.	6/25/2018 9:52 AM
7	More than.	6/24/2018 8:23 AM
8	TFPD takes the up most care of its members.	6/23/2018 10:15 PM
9	We are trained to work well together.	6/22/2018 8:29 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q9 Do you receive the proper recognition for your volunteer service?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		84.44%	38
No		15.56%	7
TOTAL			45

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I didn't join for recognition but it is heartwarming when passersby thank you when in logo gear or uniform.	6/26/2018 2:21 PM
2	I guess, but I am never looking for it	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
3	No recognition is needed. The job is the reward.	6/25/2018 9:52 AM
4	Not looking for recognition	6/24/2018 12:54 PM
5	Yes, until you retire then you are a little forgotten about.	6/23/2018 10:15 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q10 If no what could the organization provide to improve?

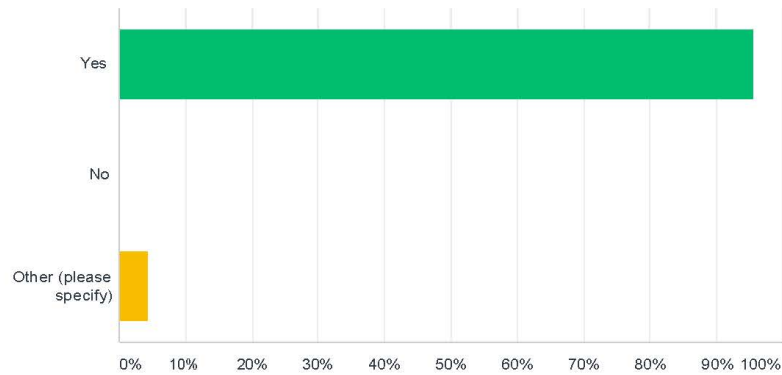
Answered: 18 Skipped: 29

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	answered yes	7/22/2018 10:38 AM
2	People work hard to contribute and the recognition like emt if the month or year is a joke, no one knows why the individual is selected	7/21/2018 11:25 PM
3	N/a	7/19/2018 6:02 PM
4	I am a Yes regarding adequate "recognition", but I think there is always room to "further recognize" volunteers - just because volunteers aren't asking for more does not mean we should assume that additional recognition is not warranted or deserved.	7/3/2018 4:43 PM
5	I think that firefighters are well recognized for what we do in the community. That is one reason that it is easy to stay with the organization.	7/3/2018 8:16 AM
6	Get rid of the vindictive behaviors related to some people. Also some folks are so gung ho that it could become a anamostic environment and others do what they can . All volunteers should be respected . When a district employee is a volunteer which is great they have understand what others do to become and stay on the department	6/26/2018 9:32 AM
7	I say yes. But it could be added to by recognizing volunteers on a wider scale (monthly awards in paper? published firefighter owned/ran business directory? discounts at local businesses?)	6/25/2018 10:38 AM
8	Plenty of recognition	6/25/2018 10:23 AM
9	n/a	6/25/2018 10:17 AM
10	We give decent public Exposure in the papers. We are seen in action. Internally we have praise and awards. The only other step may be more/consistent reward solely for participation. Vve have talked recently about Battalion training and possible meals to follow. This would be positive reinforcement and morale building.	6/25/2018 9:52 AM
11	Shift to a combo professional and volly organization since a handful of people run 90% of the calls	6/24/2018 12:54 PM
12	Better pay and more events for members to recognize their service.	6/23/2018 6:11 PM
13	Be more welcoming to young trainees.	6/23/2018 7:55 AM
14	Personal appreciation and recognition. EMT of the month is never specific, more like a popularity vote	6/23/2018 7:23 AM
15	pay for CE's provided outside of organization if needed to maintain certification	6/22/2018 3:43 PM
16	A better understanding that volunteers are unpaid and are not always able to make every meeting/training/call	6/22/2018 2:59 PM
17	n/a	6/22/2018 1:38 PM
18	group health care	6/22/2018 1:11 PM

TFPD Active Member Retention Survey

Q11 Do you understand what is expected of you in your current position?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		95.65%	44
No		0.00%	0
Other (please specify)		4.35%	2
TOTAL			46

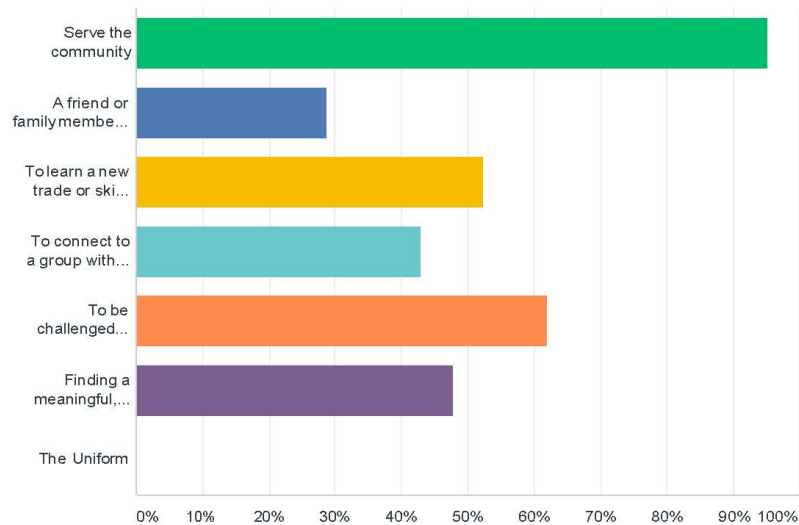
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes, but do the people in leadership positions understand what is expected and not just driving their own agenda	6/25/2018 3:35 PM
2	kind of	6/22/2018 1:11 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q1 Why did you choose to volunteer with the Telluride Fire Protection District?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



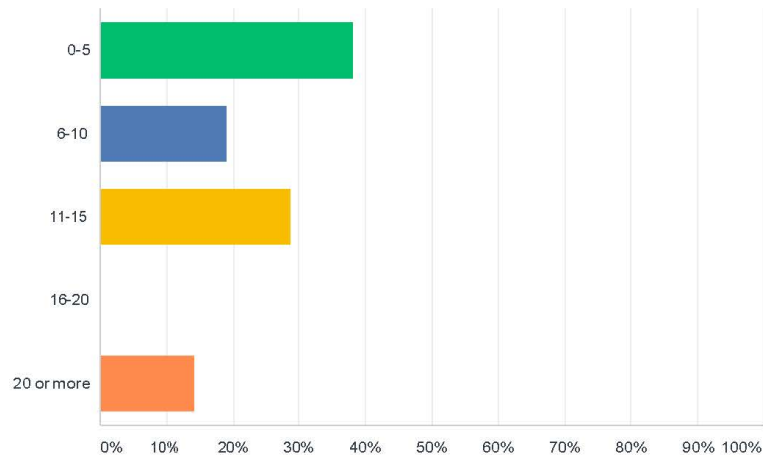
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Serve the community		95.24%	20
A friend or family member asked me to participate		28.57%	6
To learn a new trade or skill set		52.38%	11
To connect to a group with a common vision		42.86%	9
To be challenged mentally and physically		61.90%	13
Finding a meaningful, exciting and challenging volunteer environment		47.62%	10
The Uniform		0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 21			

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q2 How many years did you serve?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0

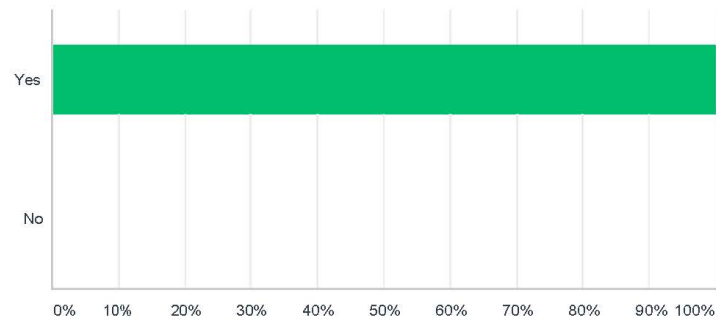


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-5	38.10%	8
6-10	19.05%	4
11-15	28.57%	6
16-20	0.00%	0
20 or more	14.29%	3
Total Respondents: 21		

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q3 Where you provided ample training/ development opportunities?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



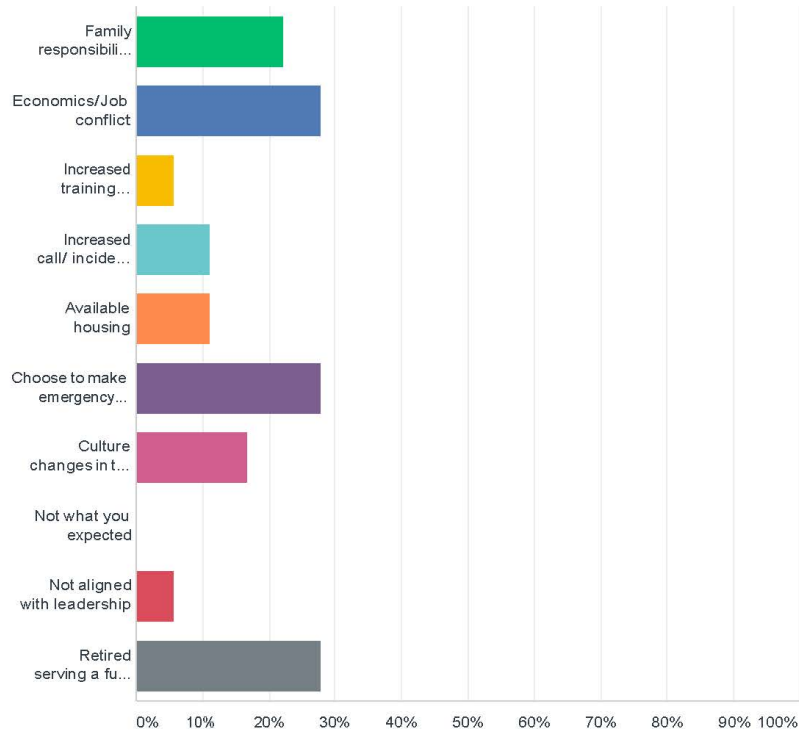
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		100.00%	21
No		0.00%	0
TOTAL			21

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Training was adequate, but keeping skill levels up was a challenge.	6/25/2018 8:51 AM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q4 Why did you end your service with TFPD?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Family responsibilities	22.22%	4
Economics/ Job conflict	27.78%	5
Increased training requirements	5.56%	1
Increased call/ incident numbers	11.11%	2
Available housing	11.11%	2
Choose to make emergency service a career (full-time/ paid)	27.78%	5
Culture changes in the organization	16.67%	3
Not what you expected	0.00%	0
Not aligned with leadership	5.56%	1
Retired serving a full volunteer career	27.78%	5
Total Respondents: 18		

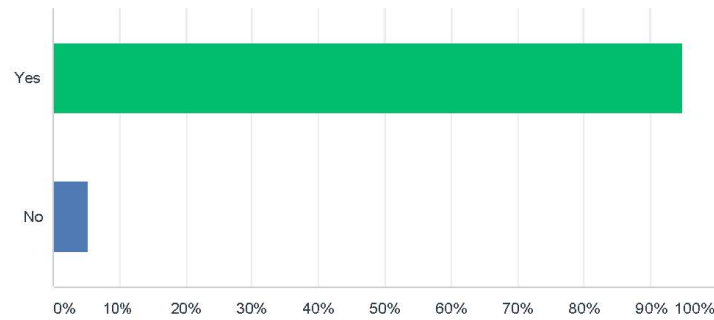
Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	reduced time in District/state	6/28/2018 8:27 AM
2	Moved away	6/25/2018 8:48 PM
3	Moved from Telluride	6/25/2018 4:01 PM
4	I went back to school and had to leave the area - I never would have stopped volunteering	6/25/2018 12:23 AM
5	Telluride is a very challenging place to make a living and to own a residence.	6/24/2018 11:38 PM
6	Moved	6/24/2018 7:38 AM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q5 Would you recommend a friend to join TFPD?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2



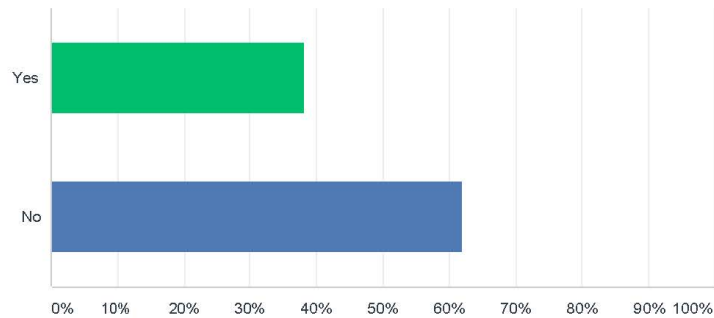
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		94.74%	18
No		5.26%	1
TOTAL			19

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I'd make the obligation abundantly clear first	6/24/2018 11:38 PM
2	Depends	6/23/2018 1:34 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q6 Would a career path plan have helped keep you serving TFPD?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		38.10%	8
No		61.90%	13
TOTAL			21

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	You all helped me so much with training and mentor ship.	6/25/2018 12:23 AM
2	I always wanted to be paid full time with some benefits and I would have never left	6/24/2018 11:38 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q7 What could TFPD offer to encourage continued volunteer service?

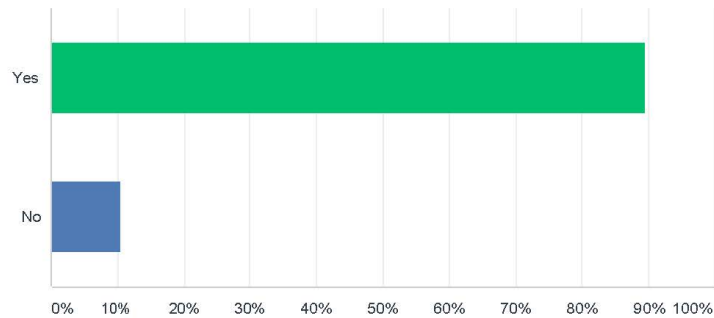
Answered: 20 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	opportunities for members to hang out and socialize outside of fire calls and training	7/7/2018 11:23 AM
2	A path to full time employment.	7/4/2018 10:43 AM
3	Non volunteer paid positions for dedicated individuals	6/28/2018 4:40 PM
4	pragmatically given demographics and cost of living suspect the pool of people resident, willing and able to serve will not be able to do so on a solely volunteer w/o compensation basis. While not full time career suspect current income compensation and/or in kinds like discounted housing will be needed to meet response needs	6/28/2018 8:27 AM
5	They take pretty good care of their volunteers	6/25/2018 8:48 PM
6	Nothing. I would have had 20 years if I had not moved.	6/25/2018 4:01 PM
7	The Lake Powell EMS trips were terrific for team building and encouragement.	6/25/2018 8:51 AM
8	Honestly it was one of the best experiences of my life	6/25/2018 12:23 AM
9	Retaining volunteers will always be a challenge. It is a dying concept.	6/24/2018 11:38 PM
10	NA	6/24/2018 9:21 PM
11	Stipends for call response	6/24/2018 6:43 PM
12	for many its housing. not in my case.	6/24/2018 1:39 PM
13	Offer better antennae option for radio and improved pager reception.	6/24/2018 9:32 AM
14	Medical Insurance	6/24/2018 7:38 AM
15	10 year pension	6/23/2018 9:26 PM
16	Better affordable housing opportunities.	6/23/2018 6:51 PM
17	Housing opportunity and/or a path for a career position.	6/23/2018 3:52 PM
18	I just had too many jobs	6/23/2018 3:29 PM
19	Nothing	6/23/2018 1:34 PM
20	some kind of health insurance program	6/23/2018 1:32 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q8 Were you provided proper opportunity to reach your potential?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		89.47%	17
No		10.53%	2
TOTAL			19

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure how to answer that... while training was terrific for a small town, real life experience seemed to be the key to gaining confidence and skills.	6/25/2018 8:51 AM
2	Difficult to answer.	6/23/2018 1:34 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q9 If no, what could be improved?

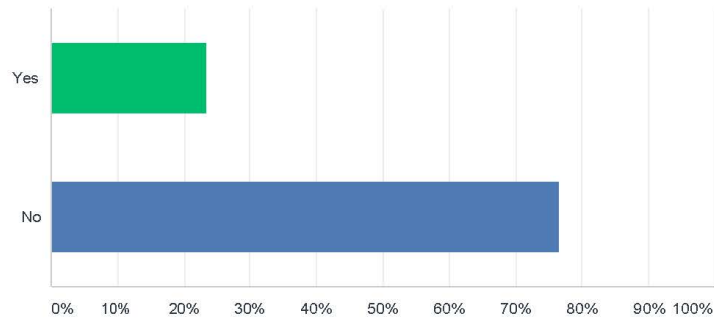
Answered: 10 Skipped: 11

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Better call response structure so no one's time is wasted	7/7/2018 11:23 AM
2	A transition to a paid position, for those who earn it.	6/28/2018 4:40 PM
3	N/a	6/25/2018 8:48 PM
4	While difficult to get the time off, ride-along opportunities in bigger cities might be helpful.	6/25/2018 8:51 AM
5	A transition to a paid position, for those who earn it.	6/24/2018 11:38 PM
6	NA	6/24/2018 9:21 PM
7	Maybe larger battalions so call attendance requirements could be more relaxed	6/24/2018 9:32 AM
8	N/A	6/24/2018 7:38 AM
9	Great group, training amazing	6/23/2018 3:29 PM
10	Different dynamics at the top	6/23/2018 1:34 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q10 Would offering a single resource specialty opportunity (Fire/ EMS/ Wildfire/ Hazmat) have helped you serve a longer period?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		23.53%	4
No		76.47%	13
TOTAL			17

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I enjoyed the diversity of being able to respond to any need.	7/4/2018 10:43 AM
2	Year round with basic benefits, yes	6/28/2018 4:40 PM
3	I believe that is how it was when I was volunteering...	6/25/2018 8:51 AM
4	Possibly, i am staying on through the 2018 summer wildland season.	6/24/2018 1:39 PM
5	Had I not moved, I would have gone through fire training for an EMS/Fire combo.	6/24/2018 7:38 AM
6	EMS was my specific field. I did not venture out of that	6/23/2018 1:34 PM
7	which already is the case	6/23/2018 1:32 PM

Former Telluride Fire Protection District Member Retention Survey

Q11 Do you have suggestions for TFPD to increase/ improve engagement?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Focus on developing the Brotherhood of the members. Those guys are not showing up for individual selfish reasons. Train officers to respect the time of their battalion members. Train hard, play hard, limit false alarms, provide leaders with consistent people management training.	7/7/2018 11:23 AM
2	Hiring recruits for full time employment, selected from the Volunteer pool. This would encourage the Candidate / Volunteer to perform at their best; 24-7 / 365. Not just when the alarm goes off, but during training and interacting with the community while off duty as well.	7/4/2018 10:43 AM
3	If you find good people work to keep them	6/28/2018 4:40 PM
4	No	6/25/2018 8:48 PM
5	Keep up the great work!	6/25/2018 4:01 PM
6	It is an admirable community service requiring professional flexibility not always practical. I may still be active had my professional career not conflicted.	6/25/2018 8:51 AM
7	Honestly it's an incredible experience with excellent mentors. I loved being a part of something bigger than myself and being able to help save the day. I have continued on in my education since I left and in about 3 years will be a physician.	6/25/2018 12:23 AM
8	You need to transition those whom you care about into full-time paid service and keep volunteers as a auxiliary force.	6/24/2018 11:38 PM
9	NA	6/24/2018 9:21 PM
10	Stipens and housing allowances	6/24/2018 6:43 PM
11	more interaction on individual needs/wants for career path/personal development. more information/interaction on wildland with stations 1&2	6/24/2018 1:39 PM
12	No	6/24/2018 9:32 AM
13	Offer health insurance and scholarships to exiting seniors at THS that are not leaving the area. More minorities would have also been nice	6/24/2018 7:38 AM
14	10 year pension	6/23/2018 9:26 PM
15	Housing is a huge problem. I was lucky, didn't have this problem	6/23/2018 3:29 PM
16	No	6/23/2018 1:34 PM
17	affordable/discounted health insurance options	6/23/2018 1:32 PM