
Research Report

Maine Fire Training & Education Southern Maine Community College Statewide Report

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METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The Maine Fire Training & Education (MFTE) Survey is based on Internet interviews conducted from February 5th, 2007 to February 19th, 2007 with a total of 100 fire chiefs around the state of Maine.

The goal of this survey was to allow MFTE to better understand the realities facing fire departments and firefighters in Maine and to evaluate the effectiveness and utility of MFTE and the programs and services it provides. The results will help in the design and setting of priorities for training programs to meet the needs of Maine fire departments and focus the direction of MFTE to provide meaningful assistance, programs, and services around the state.

The Sample

The sample of Maine fire chiefs was based on an email list developed by MFTE from their own records, information provided by the Maine Municipal Association, and calls to fire departments themselves. A total of 334 email addresses were collected from 428 municipalities with fire departments in the state.

Respondents were recruited for the survey through a series of email invitations. Fire Chiefs were sent up to three emails soliciting their participation in the survey. The invitations included a statement of the purpose of the survey, a link to the survey (with an embedded password ensuring a survey was only completed once), and contact information if the respondent wished to verify the validity of the study.

Among the 334 fire chiefs for which we had contact information, a total of 100 completed the survey before the deadline for data collection. A handful of fire chiefs had left their position either before or during data collection.

Sampling error

The percentages reported for the entire sample are within plus or minus 8.6% that would be found if all fire chiefs in the state were interviewed. For example, if our survey showed that 50% of the sample had used a training service, then the comparable figure for the population would be somewhere between 41.4% and 58.6% with a confidence level of 95%.

NOTE: When examining differences for small sub-populations (such as results for those in a specific area of the state), the associated sampling errors can be quite large given the relatively small number of respondents. Care must be taken when comparing differences between very small sub populations given the relatively large sampling error.

Response Rates

The response rate for the Maine Fire Training & Education Survey was 44%. A total of 334 email invitations were sent to fire chiefs, of which, 106 were returned as undeliverable after multiple attempts. Out of 228 valid email addresses, 100 completed surveys were collected.

Differences

Demographic differences are noted throughout the summary report in the comments section of each question. Due to the relatively small sample size, differences are not significantly different at 95% confidence unless explicitly noted. The demographic sub-populations examined include:

Region of the State: Four regions based on county. They include South (Cumberland and York), Central (Androscoggin, Kennebec, Franklin, Oxford), Coastal (Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Knox, Hancock, Washington), and North (Aroostook, Somerset, Penobscot, Piscataquis).

Administrative Region: The two MFTE administrative regions (Region 1 and Region 2).

Urban/Rural: Municipalities were grouped into two categories based on their proximity to urban areas. Cities (e.g. Augusta, Portland, Bangor) and their surrounding suburban areas were classified as “urban” the remaining municipalities were classified as “rural”.

Training Budget: Departments were classified into groups based on annual training budget that was self-reported in question 1.3. The breakdowns included: Less than \$2,500 a year, \$2,500 to \$5,000 a year, and over \$5,000 a year. Budgets of under \$1,000 a year and over \$10,000 a year were also examined.

KEY FINDINGS

Demographics

- Two-thirds of respondents (66%) have a 100% volunteer fire department. One-quarter (24%) have a fire department that is more than 80% volunteer.
- All fire departments provide fire suppression services, while 78% conduct vehicle extrication, 54% hazardous materials response at an operations level, and 40% technical rescue services.
- One-quarter of respondents have a department with an annual training budget that falls between \$1,000 and \$2,499 annually. Twenty-one percent said their annual training budget was less than \$1,000.

Image and Awareness of MFTE

- Overall, 57% of fire chiefs have a positive impression of MFTE, while 20% have a negative impression, and 23% are neutral.
- When asked to explain their impression of MFTE, 34% of fire chiefs had positive comments related to their past experiences, while 17% said that they had limited contact or interaction with MFTE.
- Eighty-five percent of fire chiefs stated that the role of MFTE should be to provide basic training to all Maine firefighters. Eighty-four percent stated that it was to train people in the local departments to be able to provide basic training to firefighters.

Relationship with MFTE

- Nine in ten fire chiefs are aware that MFTE is a department of Southern Maine Community College (SMCC).
- Almost half of respondents (46%) indicated that MFTE's affiliation with SMCC is very or somewhat positive for the fire service as a whole.
- Twenty-nine percent of fire chiefs indicated that MFTE and SMCC are a good fit and work well together. Twenty-one percent said there was a need for more accessible classes in different parts of the state and more outreach programs, and 17% felt that the MFTE and the college should have separate focuses.
- When asked who MFTE should be affiliated with, 19% of fire chiefs felt that MFTE should be an independent agency, 18% as a part of SMCC, and 16% with the Maine Department of Public Safety.
- When asked to explain their rationale for affiliation, 17% of fire chiefs stated that MFTE could benefit from SMCC's resources, while 16% felt that Maine should follow other state's programs, and 12% that MFTE as an independent agency would allow more and better services to be provided around the state.

Funding Options

- Thirty-seven percent of fire chiefs would be very or somewhat likely to support a fee per student to insure their department receives the training services requested.
- When asked about specific scenarios, 43% of fire chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay a \$65 fee per student for 16-hour basic level courses and 32% would be likely to pay an \$85 per student fee for 16-hour advanced level or technical courses. Only 11% of fire chiefs would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.
- When asked if they would pay course fees if those fees would result in capital improvements, 42% of fire chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay the \$65 per student fee and 30% would be likely to pay the \$85 per student fee. Only 12% of fire chiefs would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.
- Among those who felt a course fee was not acceptable, approximately two-thirds (63%) indicated that they would not be able to pay it because of limited budgets.
- If forced to choose, fifty-nine percent of fire chiefs would rather pay a firefighter training course fee over a firefighter certification testing fee.

Evaluation of Services Provided

- Seventy-one percent of fire chiefs feel that MFTE training programs and curriculum are either somewhat or very important to their departments.
- Three-quarters of fire departments surveyed (74%) have used MFTE services in the past three years.
- The most commonly used training courses or services are basic firefighting skills (60%), Firefighter-I/II program (50%), Pump operator (46%), and Firefighter-I/II certification (36%).
- Seventy-eight percent of fire chiefs are very or somewhat satisfied with the basic firefighter skills training their department has received. This compares to 70% of chiefs who are satisfied with the Firefighter-I/II program, 88% with Pump operator training, and 74% with the Firefighter-I/II certification.
- Twenty percent of fire chiefs have experienced a problem with a MFTE training or service.
- Among those experiencing problems, 32% of fire chiefs had difficulties scheduling classes or training, 32% had problems with testing for certifications, and 21% had problems with specific instructors.
- Among those experiencing problems with MFTE training or services, 10% said that MFTE worked to resolve the problem, while 45% were not sure.
- Thirty-seven percent of fire chiefs feel that MFTE should conduct more field delivery and improve the local delivery of training and services. Twenty-one percent mentioned the need for improved communication with the local departments to help keep them informed of what is being offered in their area.
- Over three-quarters of fire chiefs indicated that pump operator training (78%) and basic firefighter skills training (76%) will be very or somewhat important to their department over the next five years.

- Thirty-nine percent of fire chiefs stated that MFTE has provided an instructor for their department in the past 12 months.
- Ninety-five percent of fire chiefs rated the competency of the MFTE instructor as very or somewhat competent.
- Half of all fire chiefs have instructors that were trained by MFTE. Another 20% have departments without instructors.
- Among respondents, 43% have discussed training needs with MFTE staff in the last 12 months.
- Half (52%) of fire chiefs are aware that MFTE will recognize training completed in-house by local training officers.
- The majority of fire chiefs (83%) are aware that a firefighter may attend MFTE-sponsored trainings in other community or stations in the state.
- Less than half of fire chiefs (43%) know what is meant by Pro Board Accreditation.
- Fifty-seven percent of fire chiefs are aware that a firefighter can obtain a national Pro Board certificate through MFTE training and curriculum.
- Forty-six percent of fire chiefs are very or somewhat interested in obtaining Pro Board certification for either themselves or their firefighters.
- Only 9% of fire chiefs stated that MFTE training programs are inconsistent in content or of poor quality.
- The majority of fire chiefs (54%) feel that MFTE has been responsive to their departments' needs and the needs of Maine fire services.
- Among those who feel that MFTE has not been responsive to their needs, 45% state difficulties getting training or services, or long waits for services that have been requested.

Administrative and Communications

- The most common ways that fire chiefs have learned about MFTE's training opportunities include networking with other firefighters (41%), mailings (40%), and association meetings (36%).
- Sixty-nine percent of fire chiefs have registered for training programs through the mail, compared to 30% who have registered online, and 22% by fax.
- Fire chiefs expressed high levels of satisfaction with all methods of registration. Eighty-eight percent were very or somewhat satisfied with their registration by fax, 84% were satisfied with their registration by mail, and 78% with in-person delivery.
- The majority of fire chiefs received a confirmation about their registration regardless of the method that was used. This includes those that registered in person (100%), online (82%), by mail (75%), or by fax (63%).
- Among those with suggestions to improve the registration process, 17% of fire chiefs suggest doing more of it online, while 10% would like a faster confirmation process.
- Over half of fire chiefs (56%) visit the MFTE website at least twice a year, with 37% visiting the website once a month or more.

- Fifty-five percent of fire chiefs know that training programs scheduled through MFTE are listed on the website calendar.
- Half of fire chiefs (49%) know about the MFTE Newsletter available on the MFTE website.
- Forty-eight percent of fire chiefs have read the MFTE Newsletter.
- Among those who have read the newsletter, eight in ten fire chiefs found it very of somewhat useful.
- Only seven percent of fire chiefs have experienced a problem communicating with MFTE.
- Among the fire chiefs experiencing a problem, 57% said it was due to phone calls that were not returned.
- Among the fire chiefs experiencing a problem, 43% felt that MFTE worked to resolve the problem.
- Ninety-three percent of fire chiefs are aware of federal requirements for NIMS training.
- Thirty-eight percent of fire chiefs recommended that MFTE should communicate with their department using email, specifically an email list or an email newsletter to all the departments in the state. Twenty-three percent mentioned direct mailings, and 15% felt there was a need for more area representatives and local visits to the departments.
- One-quarter (24%) of fire chiefs feel that MFTE's top priority in the near future should be to provide basic training to all firefighters in the state. Another one-quarter (24%) feel that it is to improve the local delivery of training programs and services, especially to those in rural areas of Maine.
- When asked for final recommendations, 14% of fire chiefs commented that MFTE provides quality training and services to firefighters and should keep up the good work, while 11% mentioned that communication between MFTE and the departments should be improved with the goal of increasing awareness of MFTE and the services it provides.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the survey results consistently point to the fact that Maine Fire Training & Education (MFTE) provides high quality training and services to Maine fire departments. The majority of fire chiefs in the state have a positive impression of MFTE and the services it provides. They rate the quality of MFTE courses, curriculum, and instruction highly, and find a great deal of value in the training and services offered by MFTE. In addition, fire chiefs place great importance on MFTE training. For example, among the fire chiefs surveyed:

- 71% said MFTE training programs and curriculum are important to their departments.
- 74% have used MFTE services in the past three years.
- Only 9% said MFTE training programs are inconsistent or of poor quality.
- 95% rated MFTE instructors as very or somewhat competent.

While there is no doubt in the quality of MFTE courses and instructors (especially with the recent addition of Jones & Bartlett curriculum), the results indicate there are a few specific areas that MFTE could stand to improve. While 57% of fire chiefs have a positive impression of MFTE overall, that leaves 23% who have no impression and 20% who have a negative impression. Likewise, 54% of fire chiefs said that MFTE has been responsive to their departments' needs and the needs of Maine fire services, but 24% said it has not been. Within the scope of the survey, dissatisfaction with MFTE stems from four general areas.

1. Unrealistic expectations of MFTE's role.

The perception among fire chiefs is that MFTE should be providing a comprehensive range of fire training services throughout the state. When asked what the role of MFTE should be, the majority of fire chiefs said that it was to provide both basic and advanced trainings, training departments to provide both basic and advanced training, and provide fire officer training.

Further, the training needs of career and volunteer departments are very different. Departments with larger budgets are more likely to have participated in Firefighter-I/II program and certification and technical consultation, while smaller departments were more likely to have used basic firefighter skills training, apparatus operator/EVOC, and vehicle extrication. Volunteer departments also mentioned a need for more local trainings aimed at getting volunteer firefighters up and running.

The sheer amount and types of training that is required from departments has created a set of expectations that is difficult to meet based on MFTE's current level of resources. MFTE must take care in being upfront about its role in Maine's fire services and what its capacity's are. As was stated in the 2005 Review of Maine Fire Training & Education by Joseph Hodges, "MFT&E needs to recognize that it cannot be all things to all people... treat people with respect, listen to and pay attention to them, and be honest with them. If you can't do something, admit it."

2. Difficulty getting training or service in a timely manner.

When fire chiefs experienced problems with MFTE, it was most often due to not receiving the training they requested or having to wait a long time to receive their training. Among the fire chiefs who felt that MFTE has not been responsive to their needs, 45% mentioned problems with getting training.

"I have requested three classes in the last year. One program was placed on hold and then reinstated 3 months later, one had no core curriculum, and the other was to happen this spring if scheduled."

Cancellations and rescheduling go hand-in-hand with all types of training programs, however, fire chiefs were frustrated by the long waits between training requests and when they finally received their training course. Courses being canceled after multi-month waits exacerbated this frustration. Fire chiefs recognize that MFTE offers quality training, which is why they have so far been willing to wait months for a course they've requested. However, faced with increasingly long waits and run-arounds, some departments have started to set up and run training programs on their own.

"My area has been asking for a FF1 FF2 class and it seems we just got the run around. We have ended up putting on our own with out any help from MFTE."

An issue that MFTE faces in providing timely training to all departments is that most are not able or willing to pay for training services. Only 37% of fire chiefs would be likely to support a fee per student to insure their department receives the training services requested. Support ranges from 43% for \$65 per student basic level courses to 11% for \$1,500 per student for a state fire academy. Among those who felt a course fee was not acceptable, two-thirds said that they would not be able to pay it because their department's budget is limited.

3. Perception that MFTE is not meeting the needs of volunteer fire departments

Volunteer and rural departments expressed a number of concerns with MFTE training. Many rural departments felt that it was difficult to get trainings in their area, felt that they could be better informed by MFTE of trainings going on around or near them, and that they faced long waits when requesting trainings. There were a number of comments asking for more local evening and weekend courses aimed at volunteer firefighters. Most recognized that while MFTE training is very good, the long courses do not meet the needs of volunteer firefighters.

"MFTE provides good service but we are away from all of the population centers and have to travel to almost all training. ITV and ATM are better then nothing but can't replace the live face and hands on training. We need to have local people trained to teach on a regional basis within about a 30 mile radius. We also need to have the option of breaking down the training requirements. 200+ hours is getting near impossible for most volunteers."

Not surprisingly, the Southern Maine Community College link also did not play well with many fire chiefs in the northern and western part of the state. It gave the impression that MFTE was there to serve the southern part of the state and that MFTE primarily operated out of those offices. A number of fire chiefs liked the idea of community college affiliation, as it provides credibility to the training courses and (in the eyes of the fire chiefs) gives MFTE access to SMCC's resources. But many thought that expanding MFTE's link to all community colleges in the state would result in better statewide service and local delivery of training programs.

4. A lack of communication with MFTE staff

MFTE has developed a number of good communication tools to inform departments of its training and services. These include a website that contains a great deal of course-related information, the ability to register for classes online, the ability to contact MFTE online, an

online calendar of courses, and a newsletter (which 80% of fire chiefs who read it found it useful).

Among those surveyed, three-quarters of fire chiefs have visited the MFTE website in the past and over half visit the site at least twice a year. In addition, approximately half of the fire chiefs know about the website calendar and half had read the newsletter.

While MFTE has produced a useful online presence, currently the burden is on the fire chief to keep himself updated of MFTE events and courses, typically by going to the MFTE website. It was suggested in the survey that MFTE do more to reach out to the departments directly, either by communicating with the departments by email (mentioned by 38% of fire chiefs), mail (23%), or local visits by area representatives (15%). Specifically, it was mentioned that MFTE could do a better job of keeping fire chiefs informed of courses being offered within 30-50-100 miles of their area.

An email list may be a good way to keep fire chiefs informed of MFTE events on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the MFTE newsletter could be emailed or mailed to chiefs. These would be a cost effective way to communicate directly with departments. Local visits or phone calls to departments would require more time and effort on MFTE's part, but it would take some of the burden off the fire chiefs for keeping informed about the training services being offered in their area.

"I realize communication is a two way street, and I probably haven't done enough to improve our comm. with MFTE. I was led to believe many years ago that a rep. from MFTE. would make contact with each fire dept. in the State at least once a year. I can assure you that hasn't happened with us. I'm sure MFTE. is well aware how busy volunteer Chiefs are around the State. I guess I'll have to start visiting the web site a little more often."

In Summary

Finally, the fire chiefs own opinion on what they think MFTE should have as its top priority in the next 1 to 10 years is, not surprisingly, varied and comprehensive. It included recommendations to focus on providing quality fire training (24%), improving the local delivery of programs and services, especially in rural areas of the state (24%), ensuring that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers (18%), improving the communication and marketing of MFTE (16%), and establishing a permanent state fire academy (14%).

"Creating a regular schedule of courses through out the year as much as possible. Providing possible regional course locations with regular programs firefighters can attend. Developing a consistent level of fire programs for basic recruits whether you provide the program or restart grants for departments to obtain and train themselves."

"I think the best thing MFTE can do is field delivery courses. We have used this a lot and has been very, very useful for us as a small town fire department. We use this along with our mutual aid department. This works well for us, we have full classes. You can not beat this level of training, excellent instructors, done in your area or region, little travel time. I would be willing to paid a fee to keep this program going. As I said before we use MFTE for almost all of our training. Once in a while some of our members go to a weekend fire attack school."

MFTE faces a significant challenge in trying to meet the wide-ranging training needs of fire departments in the state. The fact that many departments are unable to pay for even basic level training for firefighters and that MFTE's resources are also limited means that there is likely no perfect solution to this problem. It will be important for MFTE to communicate more directly with the departments to temper their expectations of MFTE's role and inform them of the training opportunities available to them and their departments. If it is not feasible to provide local field trainings to all areas of the state in a timely manner, then it is important that MFTE be upfront about this.

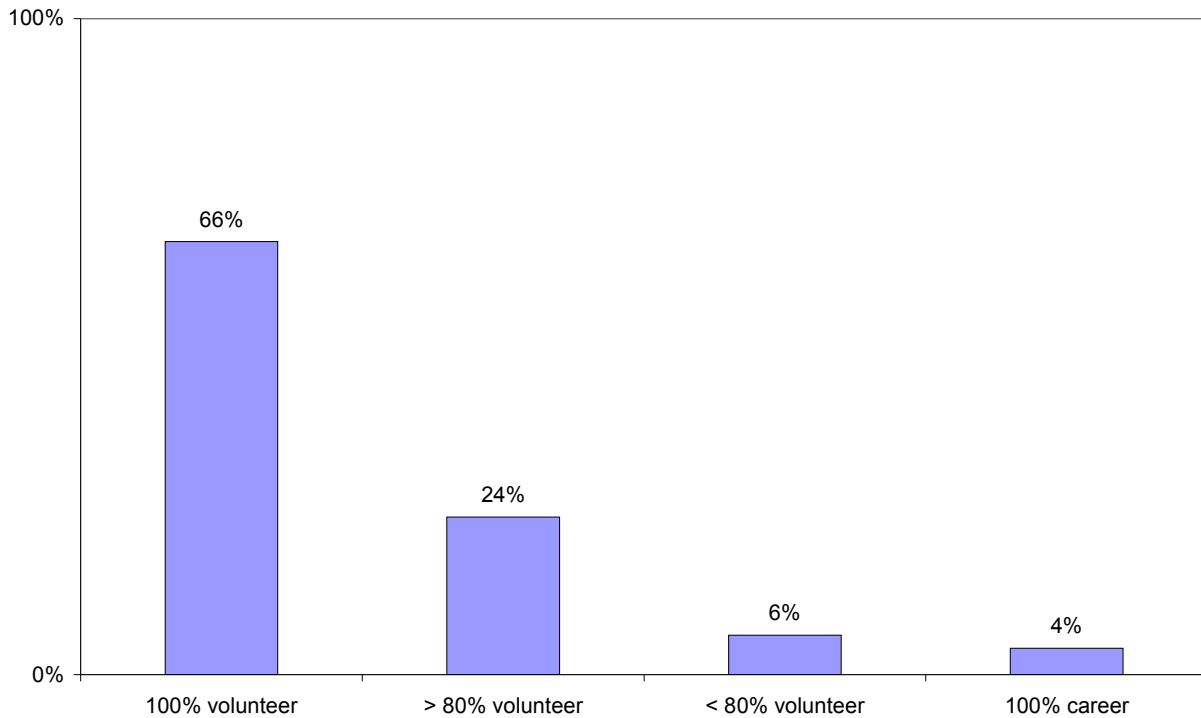
The survey results suggest that MFTE has made improvements in its ability to deliver training courses, course curriculum, and communicating with fire departments and chiefs since the 2005 Review of Maine Fire Training & Education. The survey has also provided MFTE with a baseline set of image, evaluation, and communication measurements from fire chiefs in Maine. Their message to MFTE is a challenging one, however, the baseline results indicate that MFTE is headed down the correct path and should continue to improve the quality of its programs, its ability to provide local training to rural and volunteer departments, and communication efforts to all fire chiefs and departments.

SUMMARY REPORT

Demographics

Two-thirds of respondents (66%) have a 100% volunteer fire department. One-quarter (24%) have a fire department that is more than 80% volunteer.

1.1. Type of fire department (select only one)



1.1. Type of fire department (select only one)

	%
100% volunteer	66%
> 80% volunteer	24%
< 80% volunteer	6%
100% career	4%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs participating in this survey, 66% have a fire department that is 100% volunteer, 24% have a fire department that is > 80% volunteer, 6% have a fire department that is <80% volunteer, and 4% have a department that consists of 100% career firefighters.

All fire departments provide fire suppression services, while 78% conduct vehicle extrication, 54% hazardous materials response at an operations level, and 40% technical rescue services.

**1.2. Which essential services are provided by your department on a regular basis?
(select all that apply)**

	%
Fire suppression	100%
Vehicle extrication	78%
Haz-mat response at operations level	54%
Technical rescue (high-low angle, trench, confined space, water rescue, etc.)	40%
Emergency management agency control	32%
EMS first response with transport by other provider	29%
EMS-ALS with emergency transport	21%
EMS-Basic with emergency transport	11%
Haz-mat response at technician level	10%
EMS-Non-emergency transport	8%
WMD strike team	7%
WMD response team	6%

Note. Multiple responses allowed: totals may not add up to 100%.

Comments:

When fire chiefs were asked what services were provided by their department on a regular basis, 100% stated fire suppression, 78% vehicle extrication, and 54% hazardous materials response at an operations level. Less than half of the responding chiefs stated that their fire department provides technical rescue services (40%), such as high-low angle, trench, confined space, and water rescues, emergency management agency control (32%), EMS first response with transport by other provider (29%), and EMS-ALS with emergency transport (21%).

One-quarter of respondents have a department with an annual training budget that falls between \$1,000 and \$2,499 annually. Twenty-one percent said their annual training budget was less than \$1,000.

1.3 What is your department's total annual budget for training?

	%
<\$100	2%
\$101 – \$499	8%
\$500 -- \$999	11%
\$1,000 – \$2,499	25%
\$2,500 – \$4,999	22%
\$5,000 – \$9,999	14%
\$10,000 – \$19,999	8%
\$20,000 – \$29,999	5%
>\$30,000	5%
Total	100%

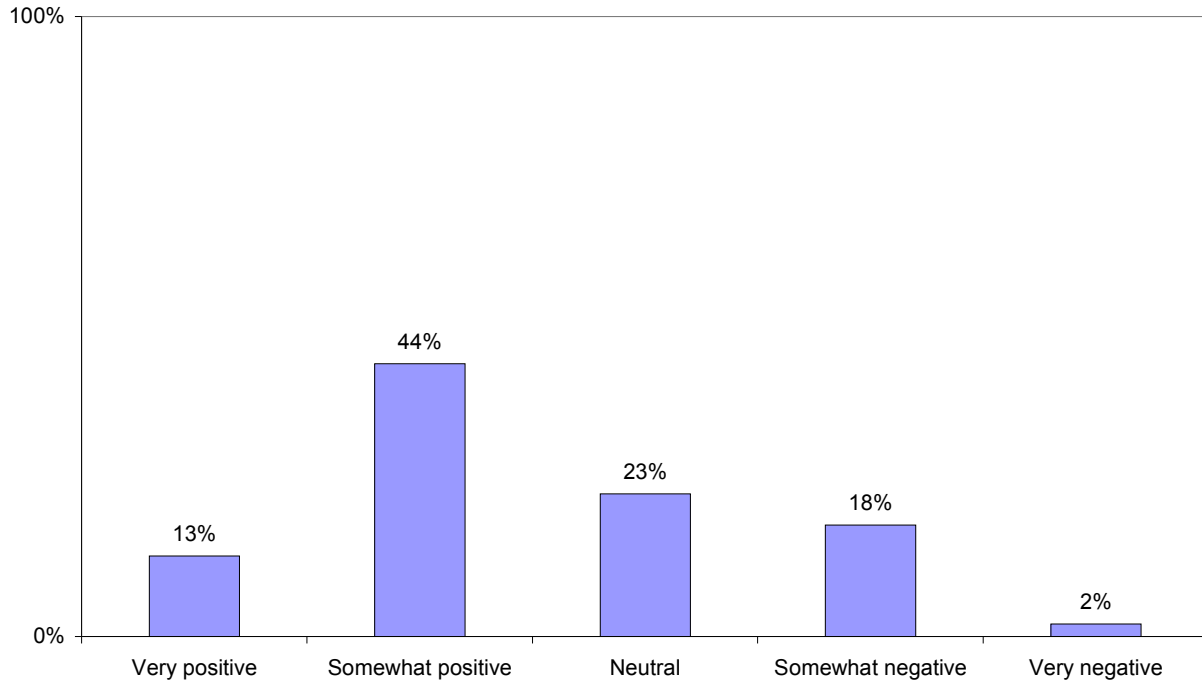
Comments:

The majority of responding fire chiefs have departments with training budgets of less than \$5,000 a year. One-quarter of those chiefs have budgets of between \$1,000 and \$2,499 and 22% have budgets of \$2,500 to \$4,999. One in ten fire chiefs stated their department has an annual training budget of \$20,000 or more.

Image and Awareness of MTFE

Overall, 57% of fire chiefs have a positive impression of MTFE, while 20% have a negative impression, and 23% are neutral.

2.1. When thinking about MTFE, would you say your overall impression is...



2.1. When thinking about MTFE, would you say your overall impression is...

	%
Very negative	2%
Somewhat negative	18%
Neutral	23%
Somewhat positive	44%
Very positive	13%
Total	100%

Comments:

Fifty-seven percent of fire chiefs have a positive impression of MFTE, with 13% having a very positive and 44% having a somewhat positive impression. Twenty percent of fire chiefs have either a very (2%) or somewhat negative (18%) impression, while 23% are neutral.

Differences

Fire chiefs in urban areas were more likely to have a very or somewhat positive impression of MFTE (67%) than those in rural areas (55%), although this difference is not statistically significant.

Fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 are more likely to have a positive impression of MFTE (64%) than those with training budgets of less than \$2,500 (47%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 - \$5,000 (46%).

When asked to explain their impression of MFTE, 34% of fire chiefs had positive comments related to their past experiences, while 17% said that they had limited contact or interaction with MFTE.

2.2. Why do you say that?

	%
Positive (General)	34%
Limited contact/ interaction with MFTE	17%
Improved communications needed	13%
Quality training	13%
Specific difficulty or negative experience	13%
Organization of MFTE is in transition	11%
Distance/ difficulty attending training	9%
Good instructors	9%
Field delivery has declined	7%
Instructor concerns - inexperienced, programs not completed	6%
Cost/ affordability	3%
Have not always received promised training	3%
Free training	2%
Other	5%
Total	100%

Comments:

After rating their impression of MFTE, respondents were asked to explain why they felt that way. Thirty-four percent of respondents had positive comments in general about MFTE and the services it provides. The majority of these comments related to past experiences with MFTE, such as having good experiences with courses and other services, good communication with MFTE staff, and how MFTE has worked with their department to set up local training programs.

Seventeen percent of fire chiefs admitted that they had limited contact with MFTE. This included chiefs that were new to their position, but it also included veteran chiefs who feel that there has been little communication between their department and MFTE over the years.

Among those with a negative impression of MFTE, 13% of chiefs noted that improved communications are needed between MFTE and their departments. Some felt that their calls were not returned or not returned quickly enough. Others were not informed of trainings. A number of fire chiefs stated that while it was easy to schedule a training, it was more difficult to get an instructor to firm up an exact date. This included cancellations, rescheduling, and a lack of instructor commitment.

Eighty-five percent of fire chiefs stated that the role of MFTE should be to provide basic training to all Maine firefighters. Eighty-four percent stated that it was to train people in the local departments to be able to provide basic training to firefighters.

2.3. In your opinion, the role of MFTE should be to... (select all that apply)

	%
Provide basic training to Maine firefighters	85%
Train people in the local departments to be able to provide basic training to firefighters	84%
Train interior firefighters to the requirements of the Maine BLS directives	79%
Provide fire officer training to Maine firefighters	75%
Train people in the local departments to be able to provide specialized training to firefighters	60%
Provide all training, basic to advanced to both career and volunteer departments	6%
Establish fire academy/ state training facility	2%
All of the above	1%
Other	17%

Note. Multiple responses allowed: totals may not add up to 100%.

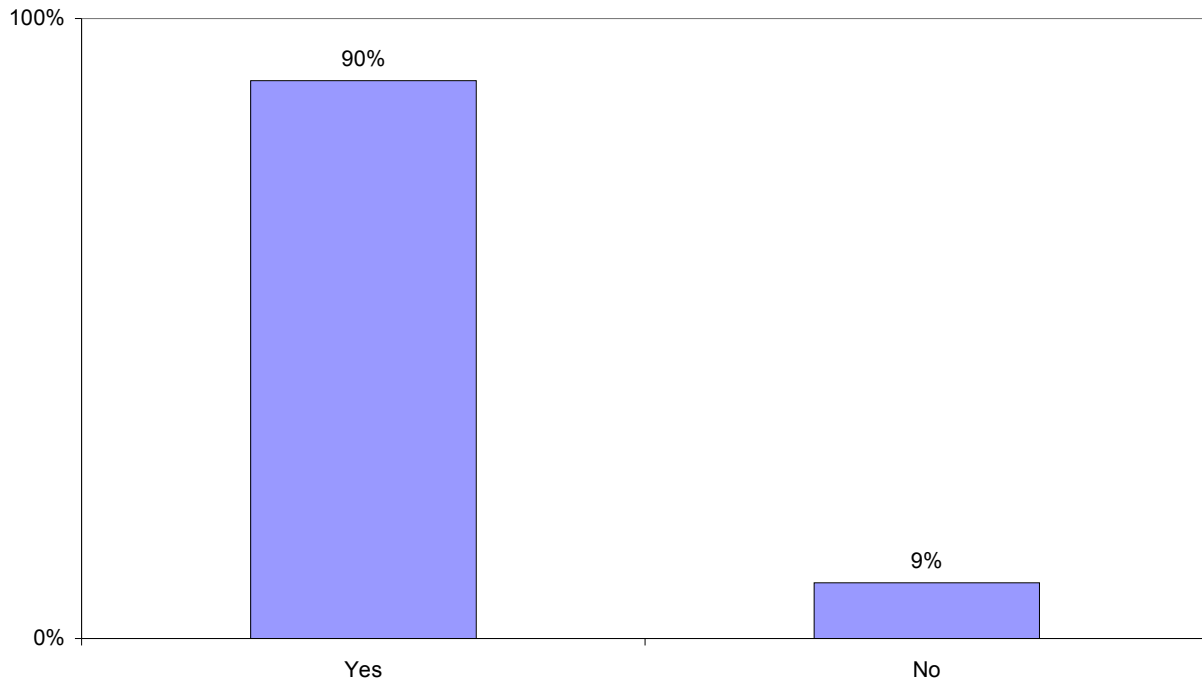
Comments:

When asked what they felt the role of MFTE should be, 85% of fire chiefs stated it was to provide basic training to Maine firefighters, 84% to train people in the local departments to be able to provide basic training to firefighters, 79% to train interior firefighters to the requirements of the Maine BLS directives, and 75% to provide fire officer training to Maine firefighters. Sixty percent of chiefs said the role of MFTE was to train people in the local departments to be able to provide specialized training to firefighters and 6% said it was to provide all training, both basic and advanced, to both career and volunteer departments.

Relationship with MFTE

Nine in ten fire chiefs are aware that MFTE is a department of Southern Maine Community College (SMCC).

3.1. Are you aware that MFTE is a department of Southern Maine Community College?



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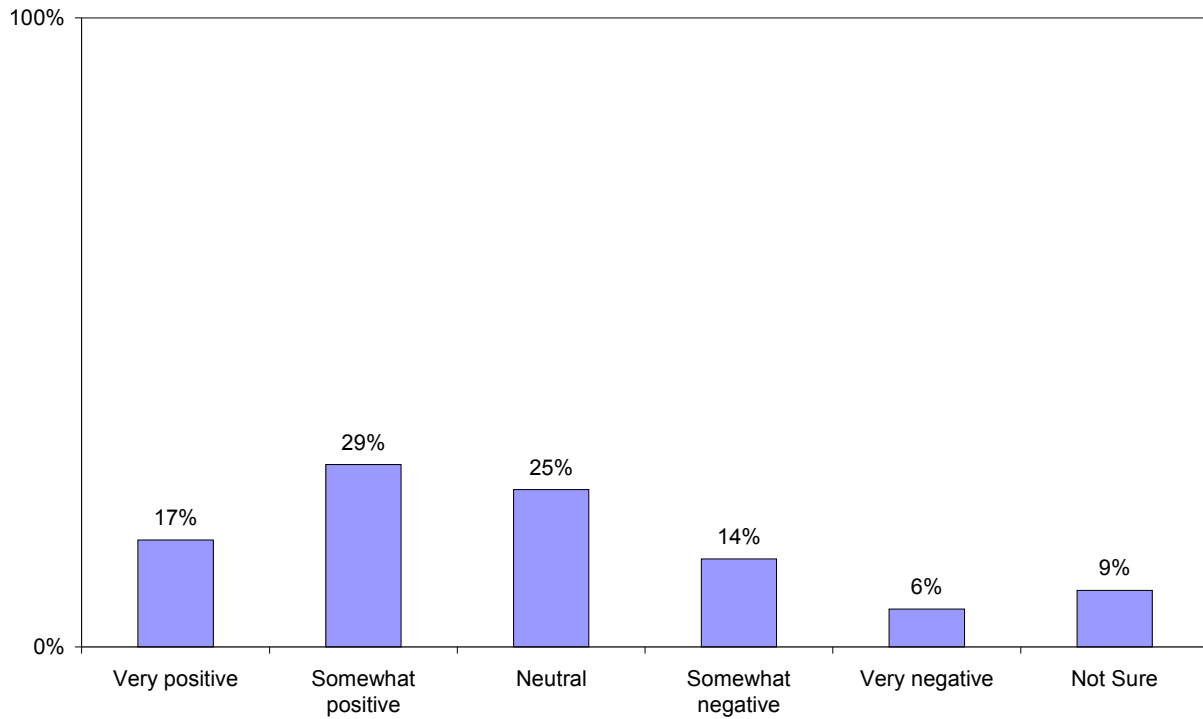
	%
Yes	90%
No	9%
Not Sure	1%
Total	100%

Comments:

Nine in ten fire chiefs were aware that MFTE is a department of Southern Maine Community College. Awareness of the MFTE/SMCC link was fairly consistent across regions, with chiefs in the South (95%) slightly more likely to be aware than those in the North (90%), Central (91%), and Coastal (86%) regions.

Almost half of respondents (46%) indicated that MFTE's affiliation with SMCC is very or somewhat positive for the fire service as a whole.

3.2. For the fire service as a whole, do you feel that this affiliation is...



3.2. For the fire service as a whole, do you feel that this affiliation is...

	%
Very negative	6%
Somewhat negative	14%
Neutral	25%
Somewhat positive	29%
Very positive	17%
Not Sure	9%
Total	100%

Twenty-nine percent of fire chiefs indicated that MFTE and SMCC are a good fit and work well together. Twenty-one percent said there was a need for more accessible classes in different parts of the state and more outreach programs, and 17% felt that the MFTE and the college should have separate focuses.

3.3. What relationship would you like to see between MFTE and Southern Maine Community College?

	%
Work together/ good fit with SMCC	29%
More accessible classes (evening, weekend, different parts of the state), more outreach programs.	21%
Separation - SMCC fire science degree only, MFTE field delivery	17%
Expand to all community colleges, not just SMCC	7%
Prefer MFTE to have state affiliation - State Fire Marshall	4%
Want Fire Fighter Academy akin to State Police Academy	4%
Other	13%
Not Sure	18%
Total	100%

Comments:

Twenty-nine percent of fire chiefs stated that MFTE and SMCC are a good fit and work well together. Typical comments included that MFTE’s role in training and certifying is an education function that aligns with the college, that the current situation has produced good results, and that the SMCC link provides credibility for the fire science degree problem.

An additional 21% of chiefs would like to see MFTE provide more outreach programs for local departments. This would include local classes for volunteer firefighters that could be attended on nights or weekends. The SMCC relationship is seen as a detriment to MFTE being able to provide statewide services, especially to rural departments.

Seventeen percent of respondents would like to separate MFTE and SMCC into different entities. SMCC would handle the Fire Science program while MFTE would be responsible for field delivery of training programs and services. The thought is that this would allow MFTE to focus its resources on providing local delivery of training services,

When asked who should MFTE be affiliated with, 19% of fire chiefs felt that MFTE should be an independent agency, 18% as a part of SMCC, and 16% with the Maine Department of Public Safety.

3.4. In thinking about the role of MFTE, who should MFTE be affiliated with?

	%
MFTE should be an independent agency	19%
Southern Maine Community College	18%
Maine Department of Public Safety (but separate from the Fire Marshal's Office)	16%
State Fire Marshal's Office	10%
Maine Emergency Management Agency	7%
Not Sure	27%
Other	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Nineteen percent of fire chiefs stated that MFTE should be an independent agency, while 18% said that it should be affiliated with Southern Maine Community College, 16% with the Department of Public Safety, and 10% with the State Fire Marshal's Office. Seven percent of chiefs said that MFTE should be affiliated with the Maine Emergency Management Agency.

Differences

Fire chiefs in administrative Region 2 are significantly more likely (at 95% confidence) to feel that MFTE should be affiliated with Southern Maine Community College (25%) than chiefs outside Region 2 (9%).

When asked to explain their rationale for affiliation, 17% of fire chiefs stated that MFTE could benefit from SMCC's resources, while 16% felt that Maine should follow other state's programs, and 12% that MFTE as an independent agency would allow more and better services to be provided around the state.

3.5 Why do you say that?

	%
Able to utilize college resources	17%
Look at other states' programs	16%
Accessibility - able to offer services & programs to a broader area	12%
Similar function/ mission	11%
Depends of MFTE's goals and mission	9%
Does not fit with college programs	3%
Other	35%
Not Sure	4%
Total	100%

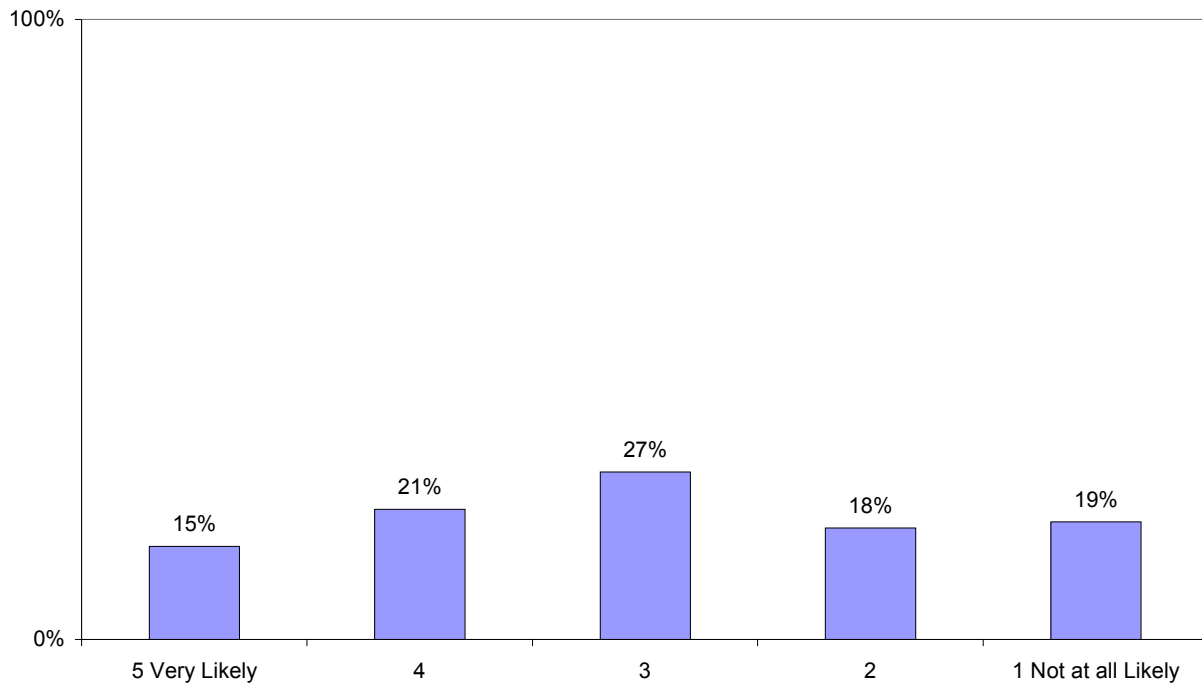
Comments:

As a follow-up to question 3.4, fire chiefs were asked to explain why they felt MFTE should be affiliated with the organization they specified in 3.4. Seventeen percent of respondents felt that MFTE's affiliation with SMCC allows MFTE to utilize and leverage the college's resources. Another 16% felt that Maine should follow other state's models, specifically New Hampshire, and consolidate agencies (training, inspections, investigations, etc.) to provide a more cohesive service. Twelve percent stated that MFTE as an independent agency would provide greater accessibility to programs and services, especially in the eastern and northern part of the state and to small volunteer departments.

Funding Options

Thirty-seven percent of fire chiefs would be very or somewhat likely to support a fee per student to insure their department receives the training services requested.

4.1. How likely would you be to support a fee per student to insure you or your department receives the training services requested?

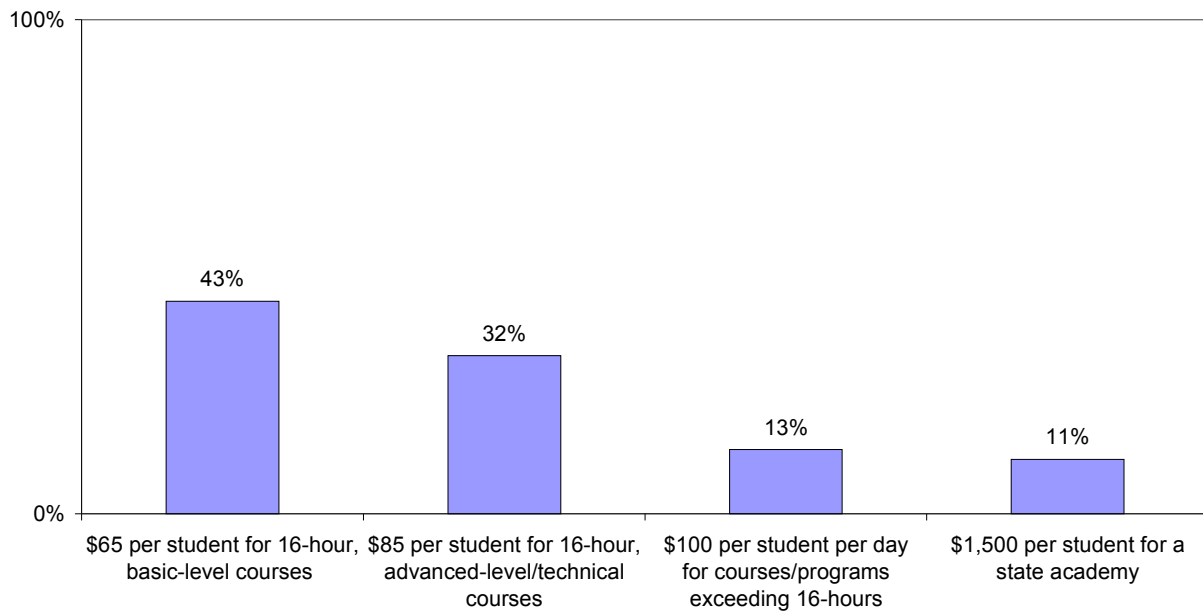


4.1. How likely would you be to support a fee per student to insure you or your department receives the training services requested?

	%
1 Not at all Likely	19%
2	18%
3	27%
4	21%
5 Very Likely	15%
Total	100%

When asked about specific scenarios, 43% of fire chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay a \$65 fee per student for 16-hour basic level courses and 32% would be likely to pay an \$85 per student fee for 16-hour advanced level or technical courses. Only 11% of fire chiefs would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.

**4.2. How likely would you be to pay the following per course fees if it meant you or your department could receive training within 2 months of your request, as compared to a 6 or more months wait?
(% somewhat or very likely)**



4.2. How likely would you be to pay the following per course fees if it meant you or your department could receive training within 2 months of your request, as compared to a 6 or more months wait?

	\$65 per student for 16-hour, basic-level courses	\$85 per student for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses	\$100 per student per day for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours	\$1,500 per student for a state academy
1 Not at all Likely	23%	33%	53%	69%
2	17%	17%	21%	12%
3	15%	17%	10%	6%
4	23%	18%	6%	3%
5 Very Likely	20%	14%	7%	8%
Not Applicable	2%	1%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Comments:

Fire chiefs were asked their opinion about specific hypothetical funding options that would allow MFTE to possibly improve and expand on training programs and services and make capital improvements. Among the different options, 43% of chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay a \$65 per student fee for 16-hour, basic-level courses if they would be able to get training within 2 months of their request, as compared to 6 months or more. Thirty-two percent of chiefs stated they would be likely to pay \$85 per student fee for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses, 13% would be likely to pay \$100 per student per day fee for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours, and 11% would be likely to pay a \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.

Differences

Fire chiefs in urban areas would be more likely to pay \$1,500 per student for a state academy (17%) than those in rural areas (9%).

Half (50%) of fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of over \$2,500 would be likely to pay \$65 per student for 16-hour, basic-level courses, compared to 34% of those with budgets of less than \$2,500.

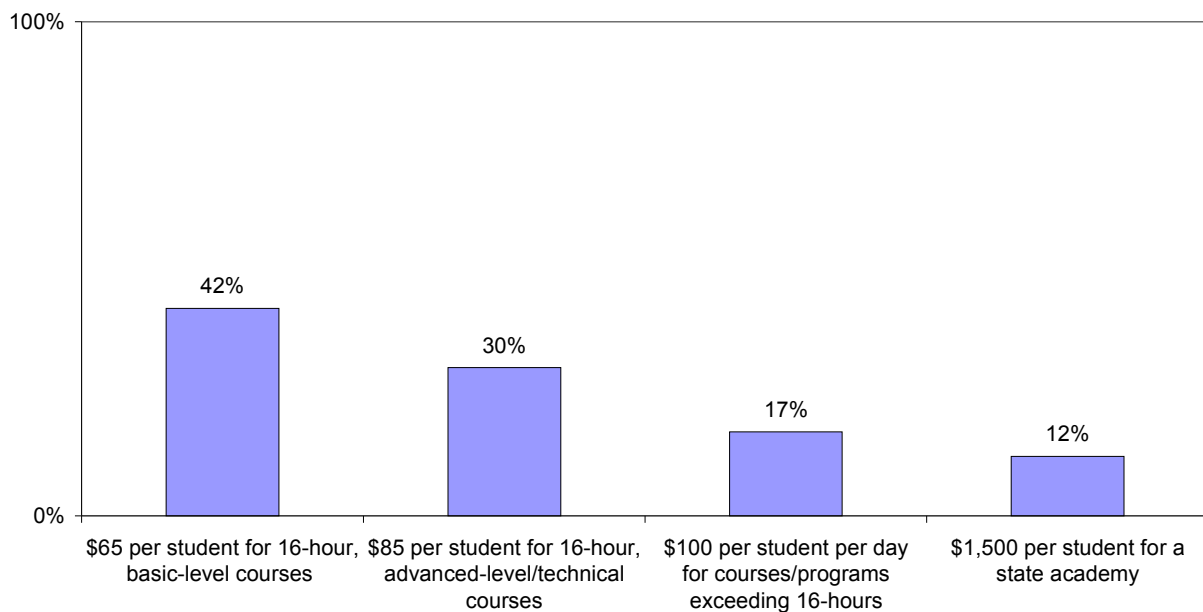
Fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 would be more likely to pay \$85 per student for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses (41%) than those with budgets of less than \$2,500 (32%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000 (26%).

Fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$10,000 would be more likely to pay \$100 per student per day for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours (28%) than those with budgets of less than \$2,500 (4%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$10,000 (9%).

Twenty-three percent of fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of over \$10,000 would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student for a state academy, compared to 8% for those with budgets of less than \$10,000.

When asked if they would pay course fees if those fees would result in capital improvements, 42% of fire chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay the \$65 per student fee and 30% would be likely to pay the \$85 per student fee. Only 12% of fire chiefs would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.

4.3. Would you prefer the following per course fees if it meant MFTE could make capital improvements such as upgrade trailers and reinvigorate local training facility grants, and maintain/replace training equipment? (% somewhat or very likely)



4.3. Would you prefer the following per course fees if it meant MFTE could make capital improvements such as upgrade trailers and reinvigorate local training facility grants, and maintenance/replacement of training equipment?

	\$65 per student for 16-hour, basic-level courses	\$85 per student for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses	\$100 per student per day for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours	\$1,500 per student for a state academy
1 Not at all Likely	26%	33%	54%	69%
2	16%	16%	17%	10%
3	15%	19%	10%	7%
4	23%	15%	6%	3%
5 Very Likely	19%	15%	11%	9%
Not Applicable	1%	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Comments:

Fire chiefs were also asked their opinion about funding options if they would allow MFTE to make capital improvements. Among these options, 42% of chiefs said that they would be very or somewhat likely to pay a \$65 per student fee for 16-hour, basic-level courses if it meant that MFTE could make needed capital improvements to training equipment. Thirty percent of chiefs stated they would be likely to pay \$85 per student fee for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses, 17% would be likely to pay \$100 per student per day fee for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours, and 12% would be likely to pay a \$1,500 per student fee for a state academy.

Differences

Fire chiefs in urban areas would be more likely to pay \$1,500 per student for a state academy (28%) than those in rural areas (8%).

Fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 would be more likely to pay \$85 per student for 16-hour, advanced-level/technical courses (38%) than those with budgets of less than \$2,500 (26%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000 (27%).

Fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$10,000 are more likely to pay \$100 per student per day for courses/programs exceeding 16-hours (38%) than those with budgets of less than \$2,500 (8%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$10,000 (19%).

Twenty-eight percent of fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of over \$10,000 would be likely to pay \$1,500 per student for a state academy, compared to 6% for those with budgets of less than \$2,500, and 11% for those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Among those who felt a course fee was not acceptable, approximately two-thirds (63%) indicated that they would not be able to pay it because of limited budgets.

4_3c: If you feel these per student per course fees are not acceptable, please explain why you feel that way.

	%
Limited budget/ could not afford	63%
Training locally	13%
State mandated training should be state funded	13%
Other	17%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs who thought that course fees were not acceptable, 63% (approximately one-third of all respondents) said that they had a limited budget and could not afford to pay the fees. These are small departments using volunteers (with higher turnover) and these chiefs state they would not be able to raise taxes to pay for more than a few of their firefighters. Some mentioned that they would be forced to stop training altogether.

Differences

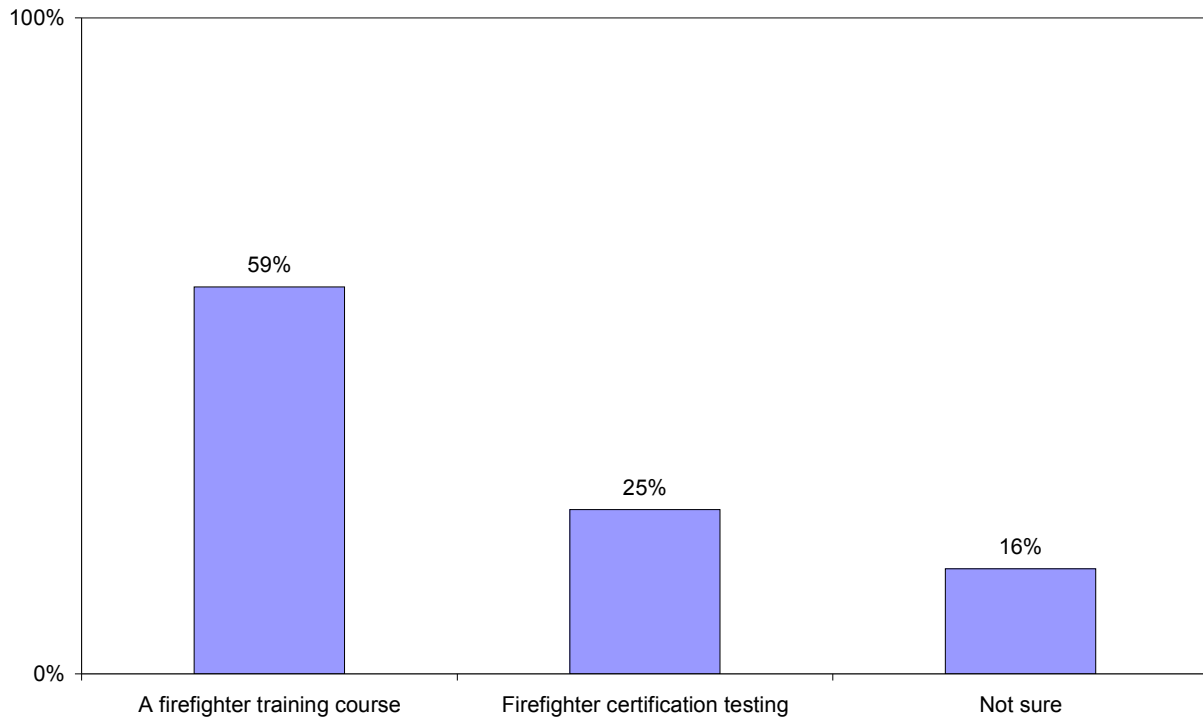
By region, 22% of fire chiefs in the South, 83% in the Central region, 73% in the North, and 63% in the Coastal region could not afford to pay course fees due to a limited budget.

Seventy percent of fire chiefs in rural areas stated that that course fees were not acceptable because they had a limited budget and could not afford them. Only 17% of chiefs in urban areas said that they could not afford course fees.

Eighty-one percent of fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of less than \$2,500 a year said that course fees were not acceptable because they had a limited budget and could not afford them. This compares to 55% of those with training budgets between \$2,500 to \$5,000 and 40% of those with budgets over \$5,000 a year.

If forced to choose, fifty-nine percent of fire chiefs would rather pay a firefighter training course fee over a firefighter certification testing fee.

4.4. If you had to pay a fee, would you rather pay the fee for...



4.4. If you had to pay a fee, would you rather pay the fee for...

	%
A firefighter training course	59%
Firefighter certification testing	25%
Not sure	16%
Total	100%

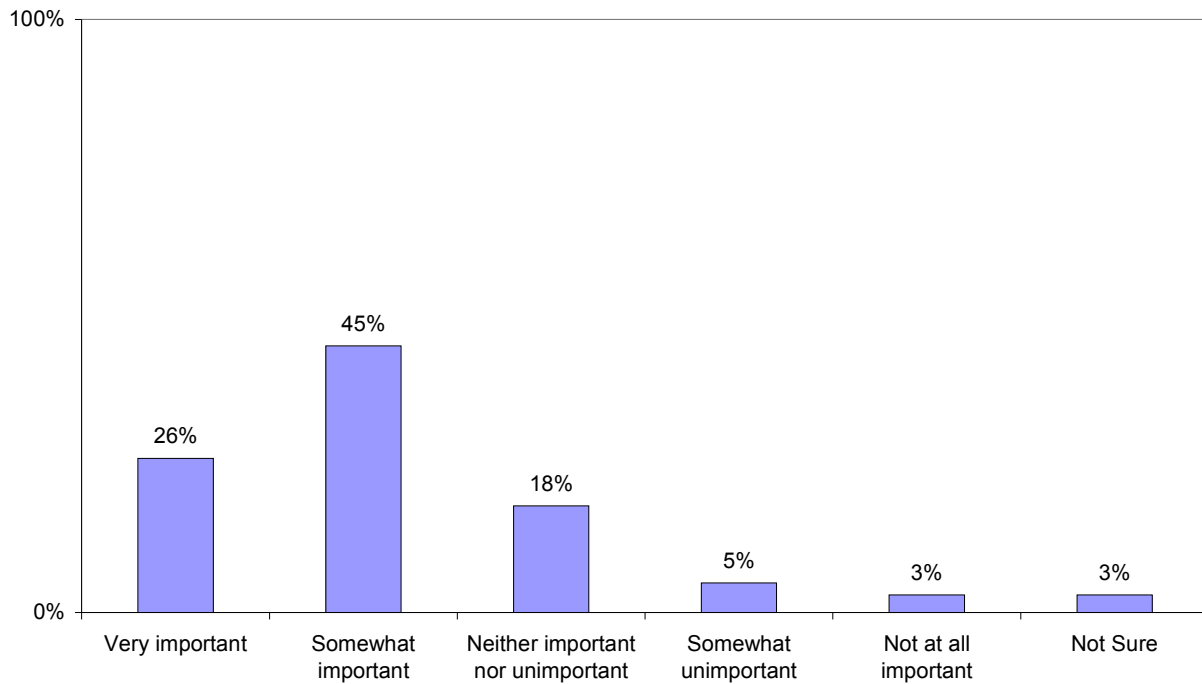
Comments:

When asked what they would rather pay for, 59% of fire chiefs said a firefighter training course, while 25% said firefighter certification testing. However, fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$10,000 are more likely to want to pay for firefighter certification testing (39%) than those with budgets of less than \$2,500 (20%) and those with budgets of \$2,500 to \$10,000 (25%).

Evaluation of Services Provided

Seventy-one percent of fire chiefs feel that MFTE training programs and curriculum are either somewhat or very important to their departments.

5.1. How important are MFTE training programs and training curriculum to your department?



5.1. How important are MFTE training programs and training curriculum to your department?

	%
Not at all important	3%
Somewhat unimportant	5%
Neither important nor unimportant	18%
Somewhat important	45%
Very important	26%
Not Sure	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Close to three quarters of fire chiefs (71%) feel that MFTE training programs and training curriculum are very (26%) or somewhat (45%) important to their department. Eighteen percent said that MFTE programs and curriculum are neither important nor unimportant, while only 8% said that they were either very (3%) or somewhat (5%) unimportant.

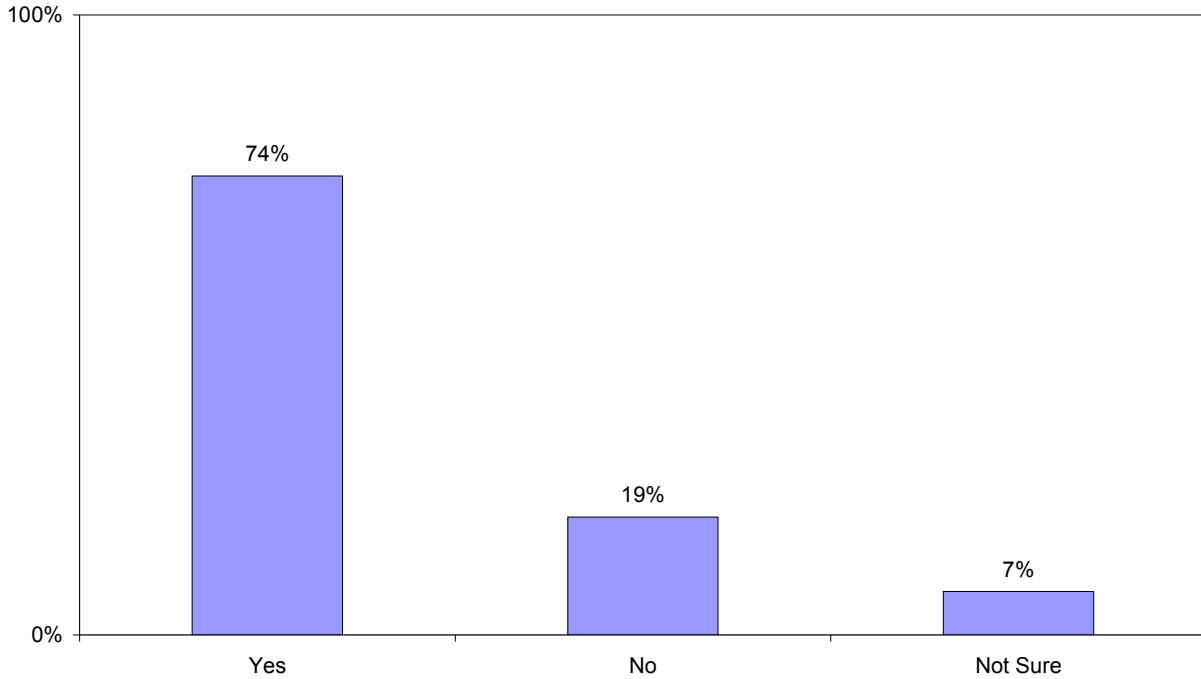
Differences

Fire chiefs in urban areas were more likely state that MFTE programs and curriculum were important to their department (78%) than those in rural areas (69%), although this difference is not statistically significant.

Seventy-six percent of fire chiefs who have departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 said that MFTE programs and curriculum were important to their department, compared to 70% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 68% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Three-quarters of fire departments surveyed (74%) have used MFTE services in the past three years.

5.2. In the past three years, have you or your department used any MFTE services?



5.2. In the past three years, have you or your department used any MFTE services?

	%
Yes	74%
No	19%
Not Sure	7%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs surveyed, three-quarters have used MFTE services in the past three years. Chiefs in departments with larger training budgets were more likely to have used services: 84% of those with annual department budgets of over \$5,000 have used MFTE services in the past three years, compared to 68% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000 and 70% of those with budgets of less than \$2,500 annually. Similarly, chiefs in urban areas are more likely to have used MFTE services (89%) than those in rural areas (71%).

The most commonly used training courses or services are basic firefighting skills (60%), Firefighter-I/II program (50%), Pump operator (46%), and Firefighter-I/II certification (36%).

**5.3. Which training courses or services have you or your department used? (Select all that apply)
(% who have used a course or service)**

	%
Basic firefighting skills	66%
Firefighter-I/II program	50%
Pump operator	46%
Firefighter-I/II certification	36%
Apparatus operator/EVOC	31%
Incident command/NIMS	24%
Incident safety officer	23%
Haz-mat	22%
Basic fire school	20%
Tactics and strategy for company and chief officers	15%
Fire Officer-I/II certification/End Testing	12%
Vehicle extrication	11%
Annual pump service test	9%
Administrative training for company and chief officers	8%
Aerial apparatus operations	8%
Acceptance tests for new pumpers	8%
Basic officer school	5%
Technical consultation (e.g., apparatus study, station location study, management study, training program assessment, etc.)	3%
Special and Advanced rescue training	3%
Other	8%
None of the above	1%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs surveyed, the most commonly used training course was basic firefighting skills, which was used by 66% of the chief's departments. This was followed by the Firefighter I/II program (50%), Pump operator (46%), Firefighter I/II certification (36%), Apparatus operator/EVOC (31%), Incident command/NIMS (24%), Incident safety officer (23%), and Haz-mat (22%).

Seventy-eight percent of fire chiefs are very or somewhat satisfied with the basic firefighter skills training their department has received. This compares to 70% of chiefs who are satisfied with the Firefighter-I/II program, 88% with pump operator training, and 74% with the Firefighter-I/II certification.

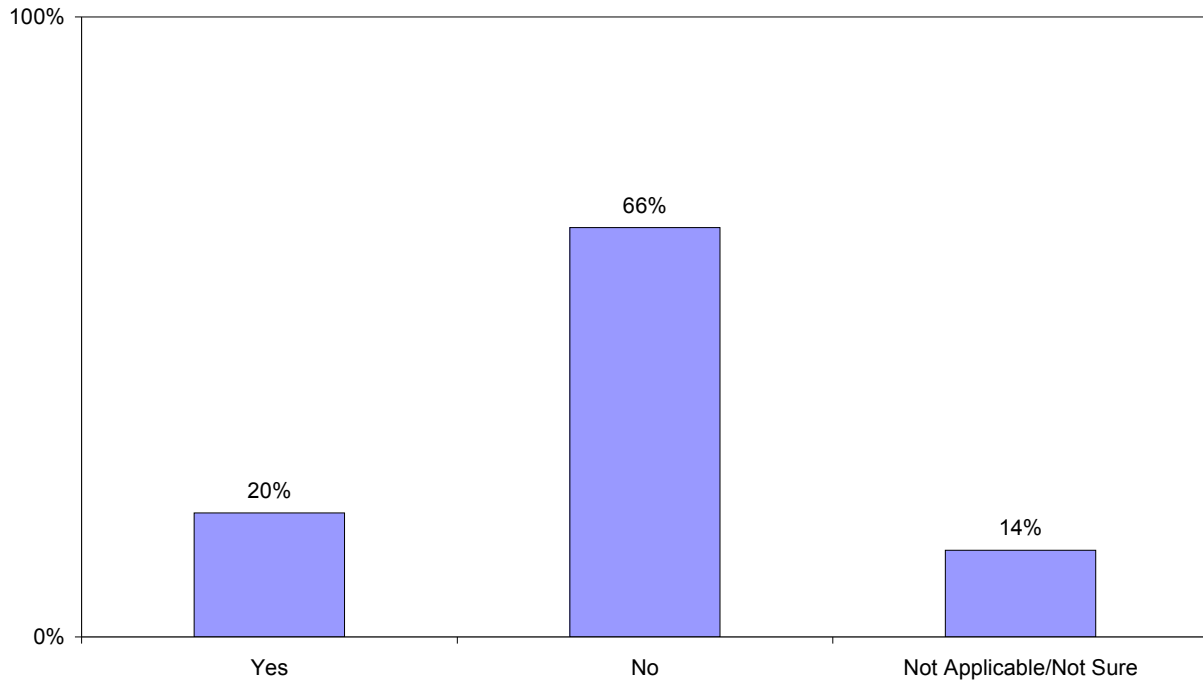
**5.4. How would you rate the training and/or service you received?
(% very or somewhat satisfied)**

	%
Basic firefighting skills	78%
Pump operator	88%
Apparatus operator/EVOC	95%
Incident command/NIMS	88%
Tactics and strategy for company and chief officers	91%
Administrative training for company and chief officers	100%
Vehicle extrication	88%
Haz-mat	81%
Aerial apparatus operations	100%
Basic fire school	80%
Basic officer school	100%
Firefighter-I/II program	70%
Firefighter-I/II certification	74%
Fire Officer-I/II certification/End Testing	88%
Incident safety officer	81%
Technical consultation (e.g., apparatus study, station location study, management study, training program assessment, etc.)	100%
Special and Advanced rescue training	100%
Annual pump service test	100%
Acceptance tests for new pumpers	83%

Note: Some training courses or services, such as technical consultation and special and advanced rescue, have less than total 10 responses for this question due to the low number of departments in this survey who have used the service.

Twenty percent of fire chiefs have experience a problem with a MFTE training or service.

5.5. Did you experience any problems with the MFTE training or service that you or your department participated?



5.5. Did you experience any problems with the MFTE training or service that you or your department participated?

	%
Yes	20%
No	66%
Not Applicable	7%
Not Sure	7%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs surveyed, 20% experienced a problem with the MFTE training or service their department received. All of the chiefs who experienced a problem are located in rural areas of the state (25% of all chiefs in rural areas said they experienced a problem, compared to 0% in urban areas).

Among those experiencing problems, 32% of fire chiefs had difficulties scheduling classes or training, 32% had problems with testing for certifications, and 21% had problems with specific instructors.

5.6. What were these problems?

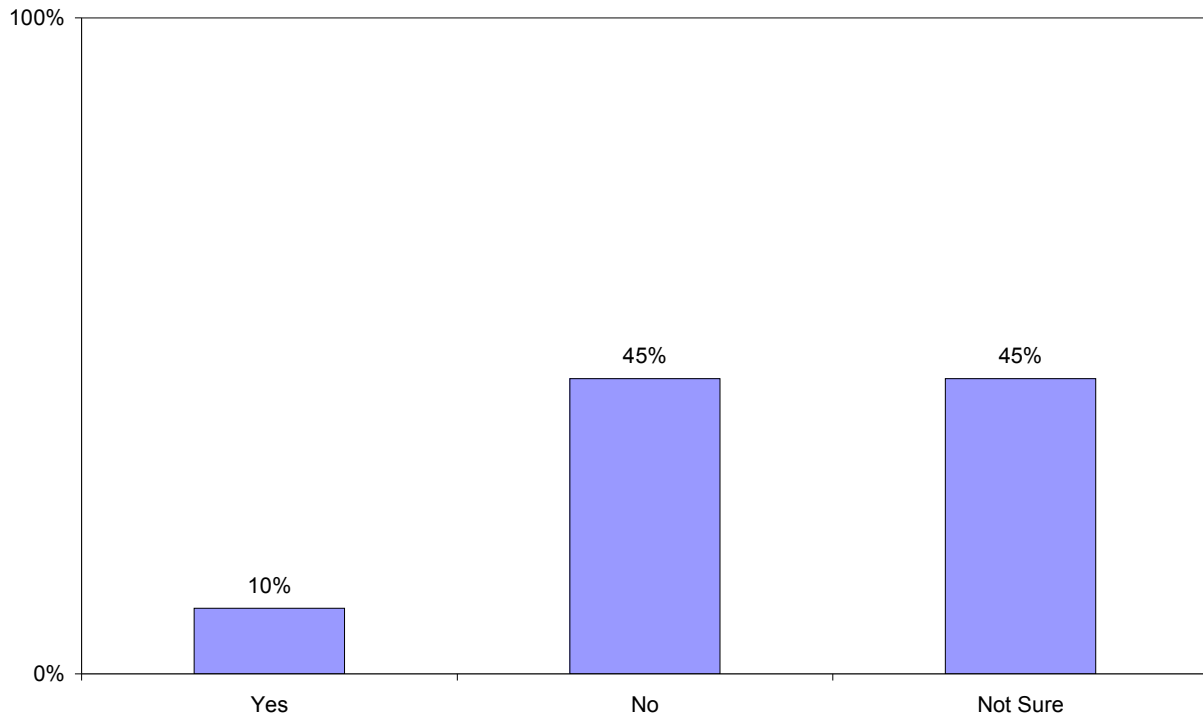
	%
Difficulty getting classes/ scheduling	32%
Testing problems - not locally available, didn't cover class taken	32%
Problems with instructors	21%
Communication improvement needed	16%
Incomplete training	16%
Other	5%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the 20% of fire chiefs who experienced a problem with MFTE training or service, 32% had delays in getting the classes they had scheduled or had cancellation issues, 32% had problems finding locally available tests or felt that the tests did not match what was taught in the classes, and 21% experienced problems with instructors (they typically felt that instructors had treated or spoken to firefighters inappropriately).

Among those experiencing problems with MFTE training or services, 10% said that MFTE worked to resolve the problem, while 45% were not sure.

5.7. Did MFTE work to resolve these problems?



5.7. Did MFTE work to resolve these problems?

	%
Yes	10%
No	45%
Not Sure	45%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs experiencing a problem with the MFTE training or service that their department participated in, only 10% indicated that MFTE worked to resolve their problem, while 45% said MFTE did not work to resolve the problem. Another 45% were not sure.

Thirty-seven percent of fire chiefs feel that MFTE should conduct more field delivery and improve the local delivery of training and services. Twenty-one percent mentioned the need for improved communication with the local departments to help keep them informed of what is being offered in their area.

5.8. What should MFTE do to improve its program and services?

	%
Local delivery of programs/ improve field services	37%
More marketing of programs, training/ improve communications	21%
Ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers	19%
Need state academy - JB is improvement	7%
Positive general	7%
Continue offering training at no cost/ keep costs down	5%
More night & weekend programs	5%
Reduce class size minimums	2%
Other	19%
Not Sure	4%
Total	100%

Comments:

Fire chiefs were asked what MFTE could do to improve the programs and services it provides. Thirty-seven percent said that MFTE should improve the local delivery of its programs. This included a number of suggestions, such as providing more classes in rural areas of the state (i.e. northern, western, and eastern Maine), providing more evening and weekend classes, and hiring more instructors to provide trainings in local departments around the state.

Twenty-one percent of chiefs said that better communication and marketing of programs was needed. This primarily included the need to better inform the surrounding community and departments when classes are being offered in their area. It also included the request for more contact with the local departments in general.

Another 19% of fire chiefs felt that MFTE should ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers. They requested more basic trainings and that “programs that are long, while very good, are not very good options for departments that are all volunteer”.

Over three-quarters of fire chiefs indicated that pump operator training (78%) and basic firefighter skills training (76%) will be very or somewhat important to their department over the next five years.

**5.9. How important will each of the following training courses or services be to you or your department in the next 5 years?
(% indicating the service will be somewhat or very important)**

	%
Pump operator	78%
Basic firefighting skills	76%
Firefighter-I/II program	68%
Apparatus operator/EVOC	67%
Firefighter-I/II certification	64%
Basic fire school	61%
Tactics and strategy for company and chief officers	59%
Incident safety officer	59%
Vehicle extrication	56%
Incident command/NIMS	54%
Haz-mat	48%
Basic officer school	47%
Administrative training for company and chief officers	45%
Fire Officer-I/II certification/End Testing	45%
Annual pump service test	35%
Aerial apparatus operations	34%
Other	32%
Special and Advanced rescue training	28%
Acceptance tests for new pumpers	25%
Technical consultation (e.g., apparatus study, station location study, management study, training program assessment, etc)	24%

Comments:

Fire chiefs were asked to rate how important various training courses and services would be to their department in the next five years. The most important course was pump operator, which was rated as very or somewhat important by 78% of fire chiefs. This was followed by basic firefighting skills (76%), the Firefighter I/II program (68%), apparatus operator/EVOC (67%), Firefighter I/II certification (64%), and basic fire school (61%).

Differences

Fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of less than \$2,500 were significantly more likely (at 95% confidence) to say that basic firefighting skills would be important to their department in the next five years (87%) than those with training budgets of over \$5,000 (60%).

Fire chiefs in rural departments were significantly more likely (at 95% confidence) to say that basic firefighting skills would be important to their department in the next five years (83%) than those in urban areas (44%).

Eighty-three percent of fire chiefs in the North region said that basic firefighting skills would be important to their department in the next five years, compared to 70% in the South, 75% in the Coastal, and 73% in the Central regions.

Fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of less than \$2,500 were more likely to say that pump operator would be important to their department in the next five years (83%) than those with budgets of between \$2,500 and \$5,000 (77%) and those with budgets over \$5,000 (66%).

Fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of less than \$2,500 were more likely to say that vehicle extrication would be important to their department in the next five years (69%) than those with training budgets of over \$2,500 (41%).

Fire chiefs in rural departments were significantly more likely (at 95% confidence) to say that vehicle extrication would be important to their department in the next five years (59%) than those in urban areas (34%).

Seventy percent of fire chiefs in the North region said that vehicle extrication would be important to their department in the next five years, compared to 45% in the South, 53% in the Coastal, and 41% in the Central regions.

Fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of over \$2,500 were more likely to say that aerial apparatus operations would be important to their department in the next five years (38%) than those with training budgets of less than \$2,500 (18%).

Fire chiefs in rural departments were more likely to say that basic fire school would be important to their department in the next five years (65%) than those in urban areas (33%).

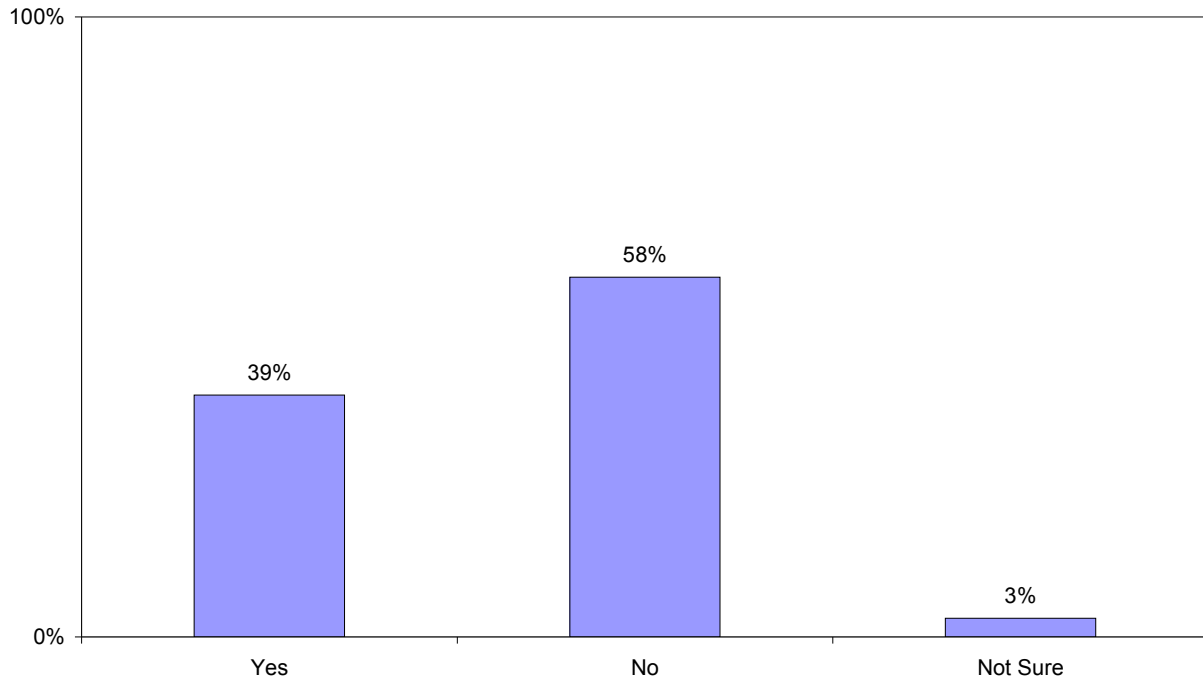
Sixty percent of fire chiefs with departmental training budgets of more than \$5,000 said that basic officer school would be important to their department in the next five years, compared to 41% of those with budgets between \$2,500 and \$5,000 and 41% of those with budgets under \$2,500.

Fifty-seven percent of fire chiefs in the North region said that annual pump service test would be important to their department in the next five years, compared to 10% in the South, 32% in the Coastal, and 23% in the Central regions.

Forty-three percent of fire chiefs in the North region said that acceptance tests for new pumpers would be important to their department in the next five years, compared to 5% in the South, 25% in the Coastal, and 10% in the Central regions.

Thirty-nine percent of fire chiefs stated that MFTE has provided an instructor for their department in the past 12 months.

5.10. Has MFTE provided an instructor to teach a course for your department in the past 12 months?



5.10. Has MFTE provided an instructor to teach a course for your department in the past 12 months?

	%
Yes	39%
No	58%
Not Sure	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Thirty-nine percent of fire chiefs stated that MFTE has provided an instructor to teach a course for their department in the past 12 months.

Differences

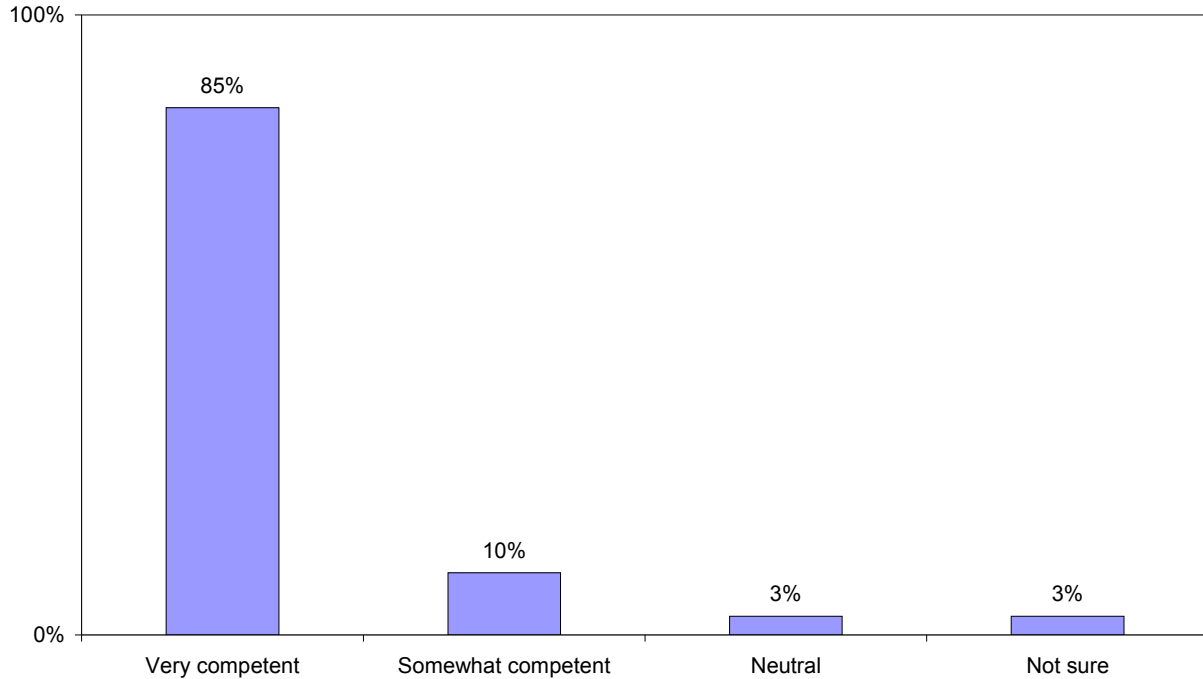
Fire chiefs in rural areas were more likely to state that MFTE has provided their department with an instructor (44%) than those in urban areas (17%).

Fifty-four percent of chiefs in the Coastal region said that MFTE has provided an instructor to teach a course for their department in the past 12 months. This is higher than those in the South (25%), Central (36%), and North (37%) regions.

Departments with smaller training budgets are more likely to have used an MFTE provided instructor in the last 12 months. For example, 52% of fire chiefs who have annual training budgets of less than \$1,000 have had MFTE provide an instructor for their department in the past 12 months, compared to 44% of chiefs with budgets of between \$1,000 and \$2,500, 32% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000, and 31% of chiefs with budgets of over \$5,000.

Ninety-five percent of fire chiefs rated the competency of the MFTE instructor as very or somewhat competent.

5.11. How would you rate the competency of the instructor? (if more than one instructor, please rate the most recent one).



5.11. How would you rate the competency of the instructor? (if more than one instructor, please rate the most recent one).

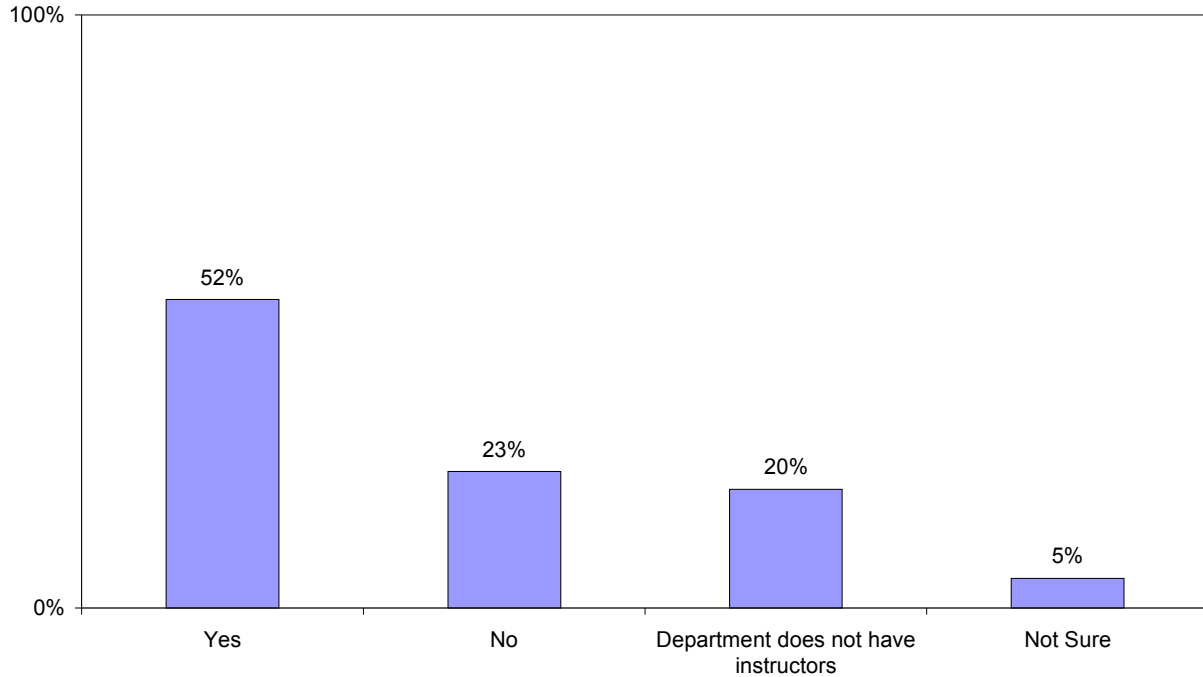
	%
Neutral	3%
Somewhat competent	10%
Very competent	85%
Not sure	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among those fire chiefs who have participated in MFTE trainings, almost all (95%) rate the instructor as very of somewhat competent. Three percent of chiefs rated the competency of the instructor as neutral and 3% were unsure.

Half of all fire chiefs have instructors that were trained by MFTE. Another 20% have departments without instructors.

5.12. If your department has its own instructors, were they trained by MFTE?



5.12. If your department has its own instructors, were they trained by MFTE?

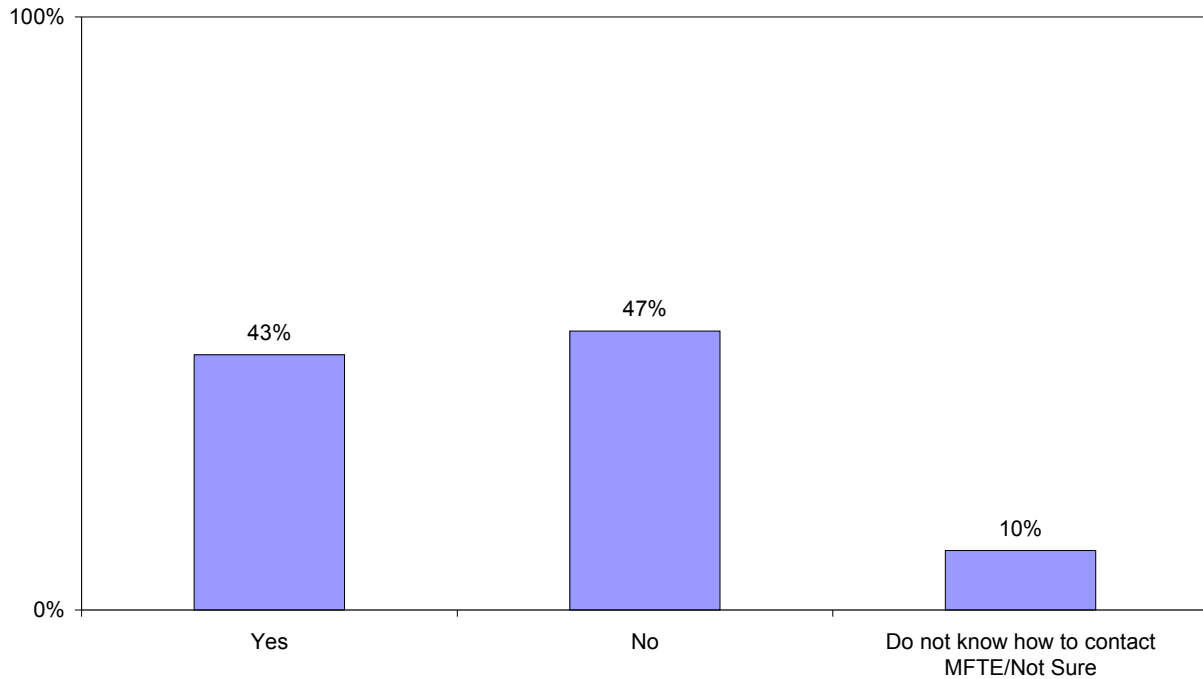
	%
Yes	52%
No	23%
Department does not have instructors	20%
Not Sure	5%
Total	100%

Comments:

Half of respondents (52%) have departments with instructors who were trained by MFTE. Twenty percent have no instructors in their department, and 23% have instructors, but they were not trained by MFTE. Fire chiefs in urban areas were more likely to have instructors trained by MFTE (72%) than those in rural areas (48%). Additionally, 57% percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$2,500 have MFTE trained instructors, compared to 46% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500.

Among respondents, 43% have discussed training needs with MFTE staff in the last 12 months.

5.13. Have you or your department's training officer talked with MFTE staff within the last 12 months to discuss training needs?



5.13. Have you or your department's training officer talked with MFTE staff within the last 12 months to discuss training needs?

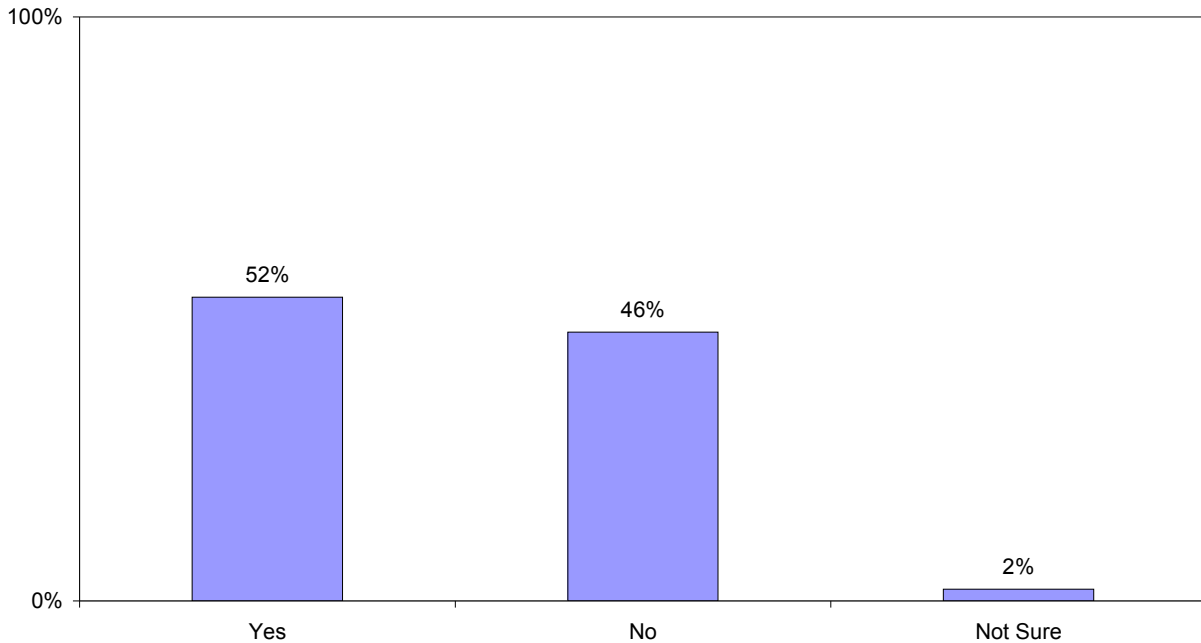
	%
Yes	43%
No	47%
Do not know how to contact MFTE	4%
Not Sure	6%
Total	100%

Comments:

Forty-three percent of fire chiefs say they (or their training officer) has spoken with MFTE staff within the last 12 months to discuss training needs. By area, 35% of chiefs in the South region, 43% in the Coastal region, 59% in the Central region, and 37% North region have met with MFTE within the last 12 months.

Half (52%) of fire chiefs are aware that MFTE will recognize training completed in-house by local training officers.

5.14. Are you aware that MFTE will recognize training completed in-house by local training officers using approved MFTE programs and issue completion cards for that training?



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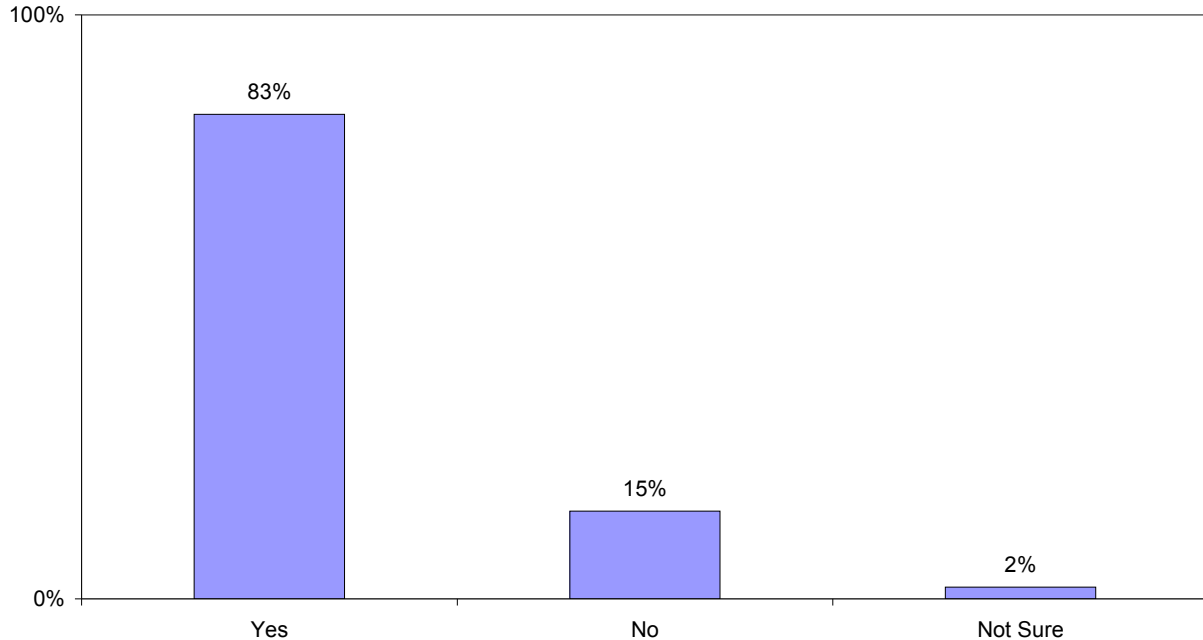
	%
Yes	52%
No	46%
Not Sure	2%
Total	100%

Comments:

Half of fire chiefs (52%) were aware that MFTE will recognize training completed in-house by local training officers. By training budget, 69% percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 were aware that MFTE will recognize such training, compared to 37% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 59% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000. Additionally, 78% of chiefs in urban areas were aware that MFTE would recognize in-house training, significantly higher than those in rural areas (46%).

The majority of fire chiefs (83%) are aware that a firefighter may attend MFTE-sponsored trainings in other community or stations in the state.

5.15. Are you aware that a firefighter may attend with Chief’s approval any MFTE-sponsored training no matter what community or station it is held in?



5.15. Are you aware that a firefighter may attend with Chief’s approval any MFTE-sponsored training no matter what community or station it is held in?

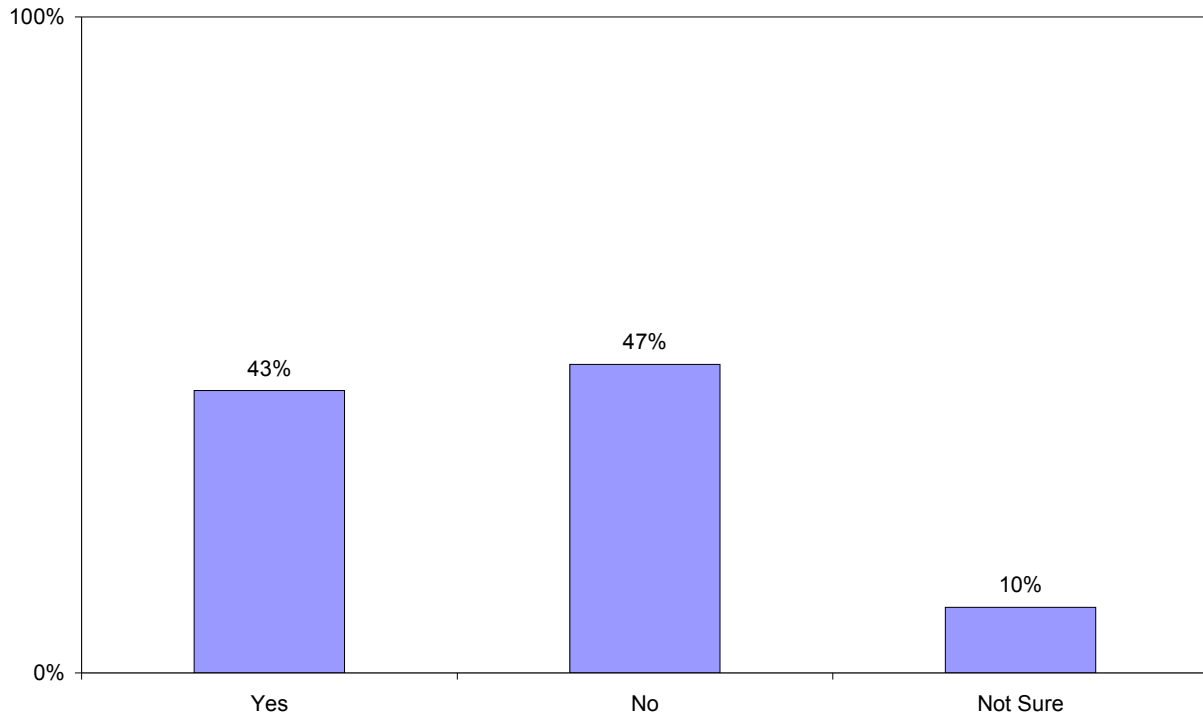
	%
Yes	83%
No	15%
Not Sure	2%
Total	100%

Comments:

Eighty-three percent of fire chiefs were aware that a firefighter may attend MFTE sponsored training in other communities or stations. Fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of less than \$2,500 were slightly less likely to be aware that a firefighter can attend trainings in other communities (76%) than chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000 (91%) and \$5,000 or more (88%).

Less than half of fire chiefs (43%) know what is meant by Pro Board Accreditation.

5.16. Do you know what is meant by Pro Board Accreditation?



5.16. Do you know what is meant by Pro Board Accreditation?

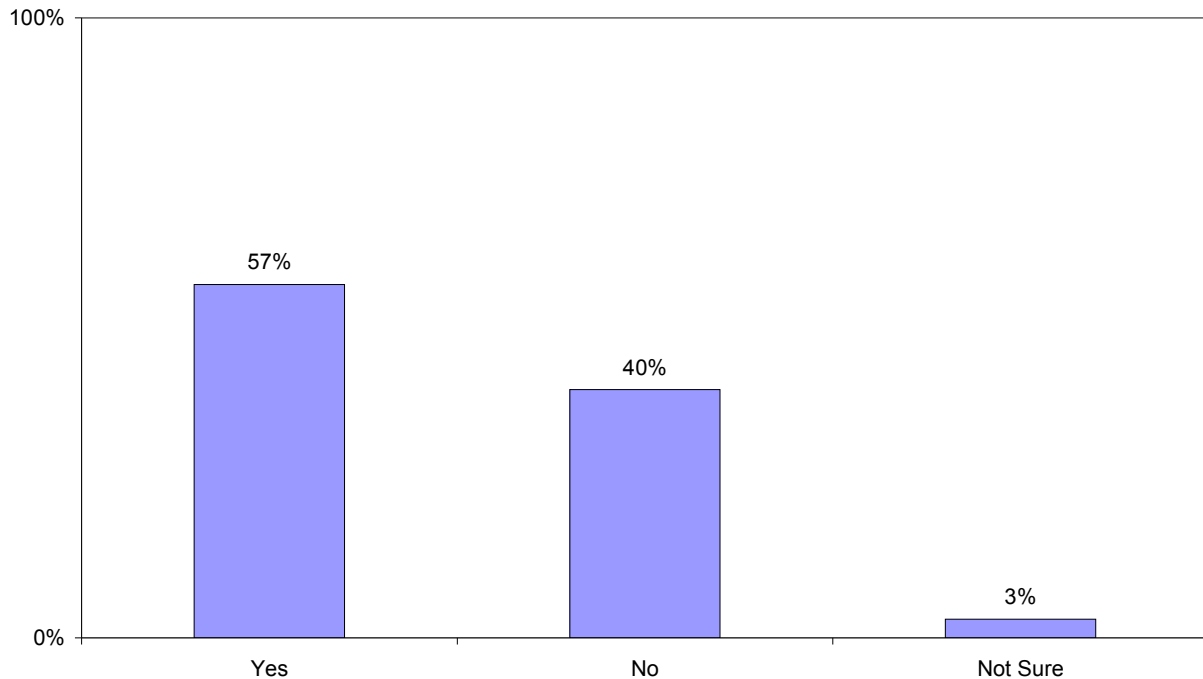
	%
Yes	43%
No	47%
Not Sure	10%
Total	100%

Comments:

Overall, 43% of fire chiefs indicated that they knew what was meant by Pro Board Accreditation. Those in larger departments were more likely to know about the term. For example, 59% chiefs with training budgets of over \$5,000 a year knew about Pro Board Accreditation, compared to 40% of those with training budgets of less than \$5,000.

Fifty-seven percent of fire chiefs are aware that a firefighter can obtain a national Pro Board certificate through MFTE training and curriculum.

5.17. Are you aware that through MFTE training and curriculum, a firefighter can obtain a national Pro Board certificate?



5.17. Are you aware that through MFTE training and curriculum, a firefighter can obtain a national Pro Board certificate?

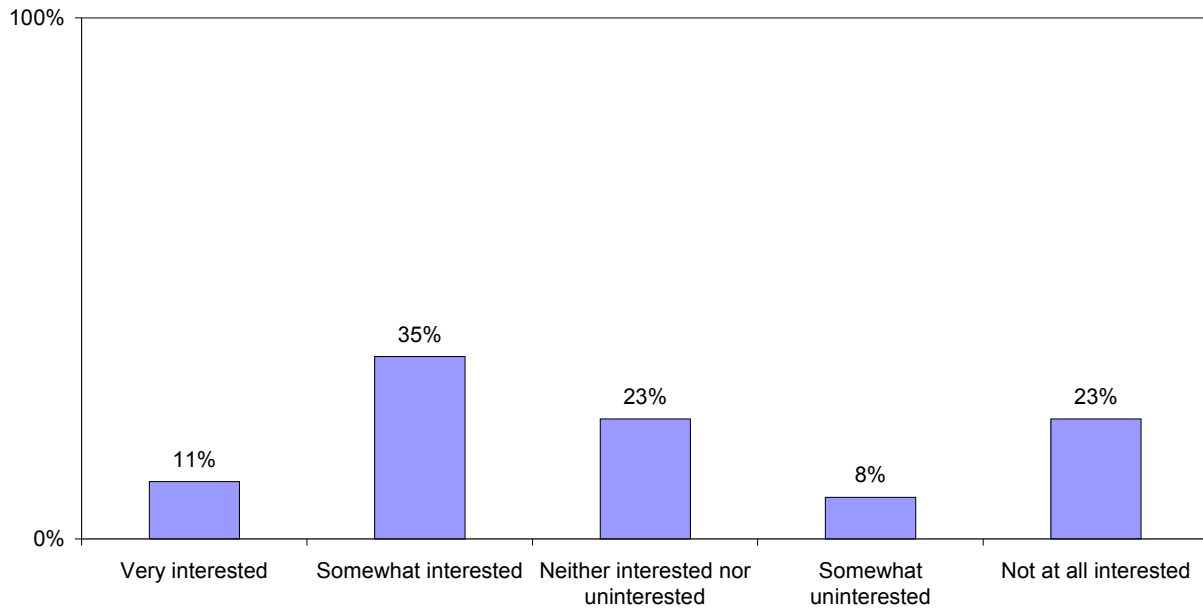
	%
Yes	57%
No	40%
Not Sure	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Half of all fire chiefs (57%) were aware that a firefighter can obtain a national Pro Board certificate through MFTE training and curriculum. Those in larger departments were statistically significantly more likely to be aware of the certification. Seventy-eight percent of fire chiefs with training budgets of over \$5,000 were aware, compared to 55% of those with training budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000 and 43% with budgets of less than \$2,500.

Forty-six percent of fire chiefs are very or somewhat interested in obtaining Pro Board certification for either themselves or their firefighters.

5.18. How interested would you be in obtaining Pro Board certification for you or your firefighters, knowing that this recognition will allow for transfer of certificates to and from the twenty-four states currently recognized by the Pro Board?



5.18. How interested would you be in obtaining Pro Board certification for you or your firefighters, knowing that this recognition will allow for transfer of certificates to and from the twenty-four states currently recognized by the Pro Board?

	%
Not at all interested	23%
Somewhat uninterested	8%
Neither interested nor uninterested	23%
Somewhat interested	35%
Very interested	11%
Total	100%

Comments:

Forty-six percent of fire chiefs expressed interest in obtaining Pro Board certification for themselves or their firefighters, which would allow for transfer of certificates to and from the twenty-four states currently recognized by the Pro Board. Eleven percent of chiefs were very interested and 35% of chiefs were somewhat interested. Twenty-three percent of chiefs were neither interested nor uninterested, while 8% expressed some disinterest, and 23% were not at all interested.

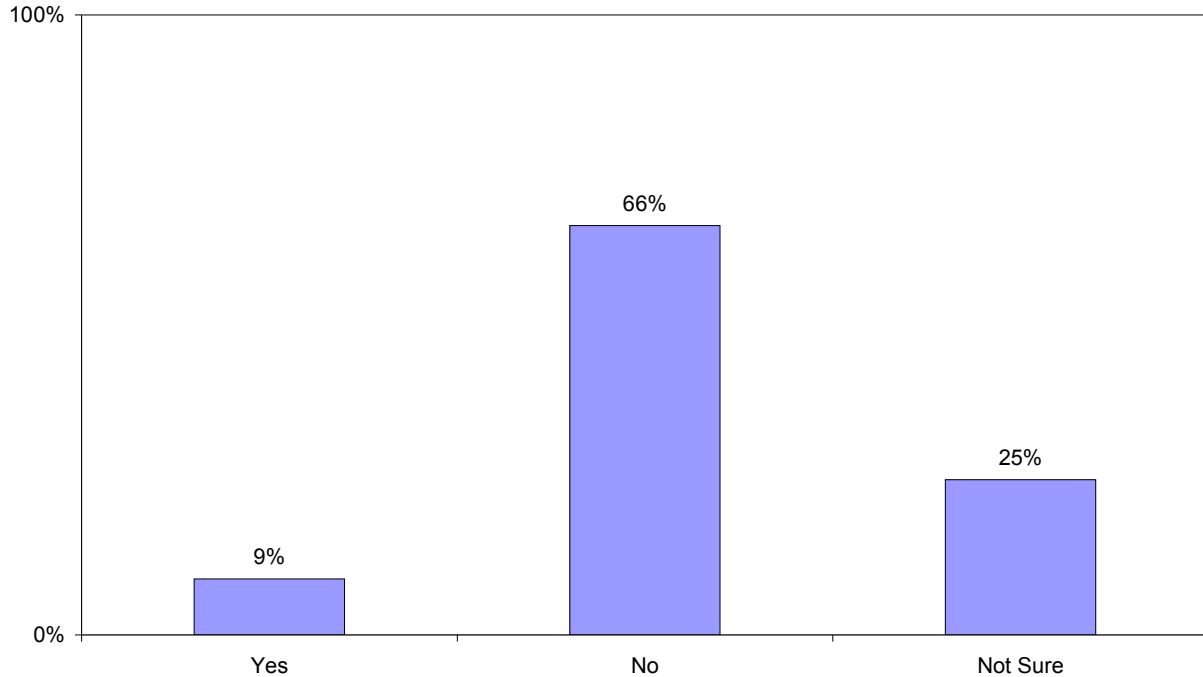
Differences

Fire chiefs in urban areas are more interested in obtaining Pro Board certification for themselves or their firefighters (61%) than those in rural areas (43%).

56% percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 would be interested in obtaining certification for themselves or their firefighters, compared to 39% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 45% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Only 9% of fire chiefs stated that MFTE training programs are inconsistent in content or of poor quality.

5.19. Would you say MFTE training programs are inconsistent in content or of poor quality?



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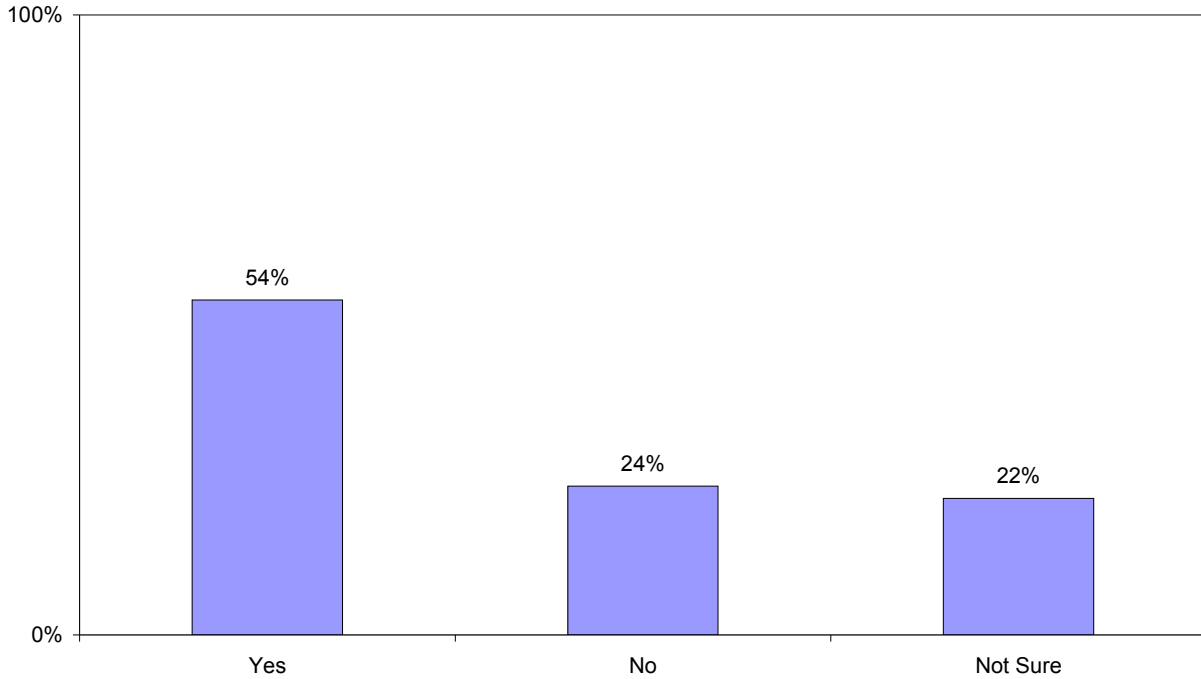
	%
Yes	9%
No	66%
Not Sure	25%
Total	100%

Comments:

Only 9% of fire chiefs felt that MFTE training programs are inconsistent in content or of poor quality. By region, 10% in the South, 18% in the Coastal region, 5% in the Central region, and 3% in the North region felt that MFTE programs were inconsistent or of poor quality.

The majority of fire chiefs (54%) feel that MFTE has been responsive to their departments' needs and the needs of Maine Fires services.

5.20. Would you say MFTE has been responsive to the needs of your department and the Maine Fire services in general?



5.20. Would you say MFTE has been responsive to the needs of your department and the Maine Fire services in general?

	%
Yes	54%
No	24%
Not Sure	22%
Total	100%

Comments:

Over half of fire chiefs (54%) felt that MFTE has been responsive to the needs of their department and the Maine Fire services in general, 24% felt that MFTE has not been responsive, and 22% were not sure.

Differences

Sixty-six percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 felt that MFTE has been responsive to the needs of their department and the Maine Fire services in general, compared to 54% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 36% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000.

By region, 60% in the South region, 50% in the Coastal region, 68% in the Central region, and 43% in the North region stated that MFTE has been responsive.

Fire chiefs in urban areas were more likely to state that MFTE has been responsive (72%) than those in rural areas (50%).

Among those who feel that MFTE has not been responsive to their needs, 45% state difficulties getting training or services, or long waits for services that have been requested.

5.20a. Why you feel that way?

	%
Difficulty getting or scheduling classes/training	45%
Communication improvement needed	15%
Little to no interaction with agency	5%
Problems - general	5%
Other	30%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the 24% of fire chiefs who felt that MFTE had not been responsive to the needs of their department and the Maine Fire services in general, 45% said that they had difficulty getting the classes they had scheduled or had to wait for extended periods of time before they were able to receive their training. Fifteen percent of chiefs felt that more communication was needed between MFTE and their department in order to keep the department up to date on the training being provided in their area.

Administrative and Communications

The most common ways that fire chiefs have learned about MFTE's training opportunities include networking with other firefighters (41%), mailings (40%), and association meetings (36%).

6.1. How did you learn about the training opportunities that MFTE offers?

	%
Networking with other firefighters	41%
Mailings	40%
Association meetings	36%
Personal referral	26%
Website	25%
Called MFTE directly	19%
Other	10%
Not Sure/Have not heard	5%
Total	100%

Comments:

Four in ten fire chiefs have learned about the training opportunities that MFTE provides either through networking with other firefighters or direct mailings. Thirty-six percent have learned about MFTE opportunities through association meetings, 26% by personal referral, 25% through the MFTE website, and 19% have called MFTE directly.

Differences

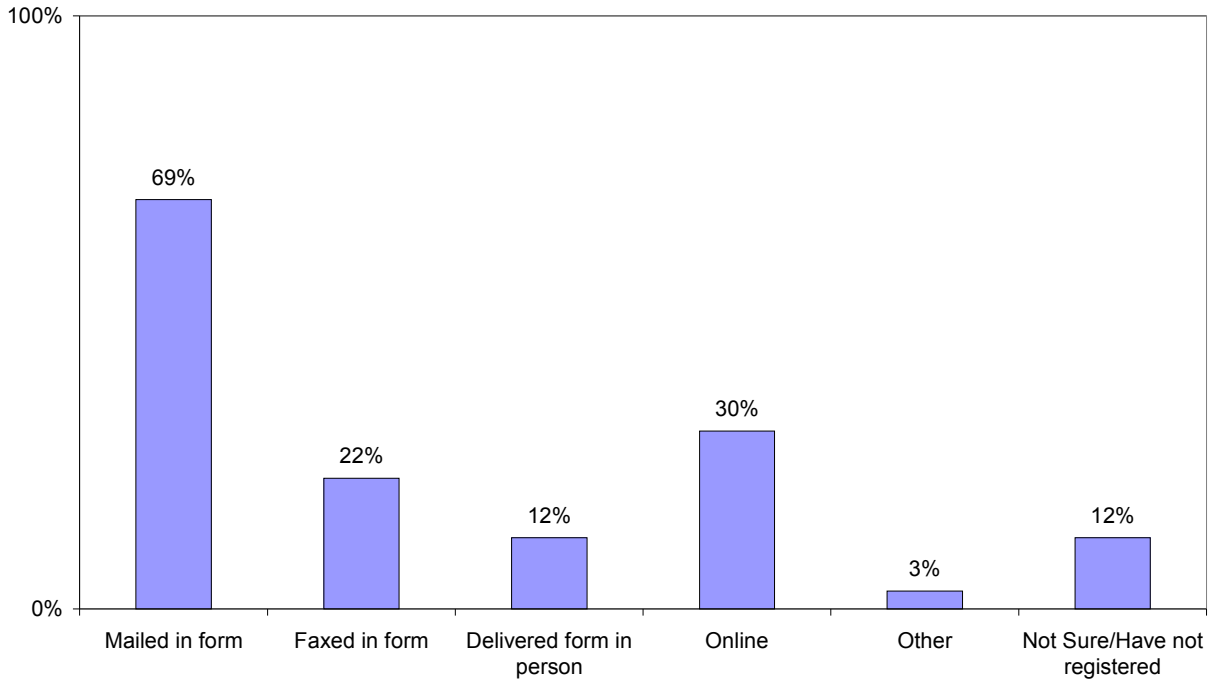
In the South region, 40% of fire chiefs have used the MFTE website to learn about training opportunities, compared to 29% in the Coastal region, 27% in the Central region, and 10% in the North region.

In the Coastal region, 43% of fire chiefs have been personally referred, compared to 20% in the South region, 9% in the Central region, and 27% in the North region.

Thirty-eight percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 have used the MFTE website to learn about training opportunities, compared to 11% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 36% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Sixty-nine percent of fire chiefs have registered for training programs through the mail, compared to 30% who have registered online, and 22% by fax.

6.2. How have you registered for MFTE training programs? (select all that apply)



6.2. How have you registered for MFTE training programs? (select all that apply)

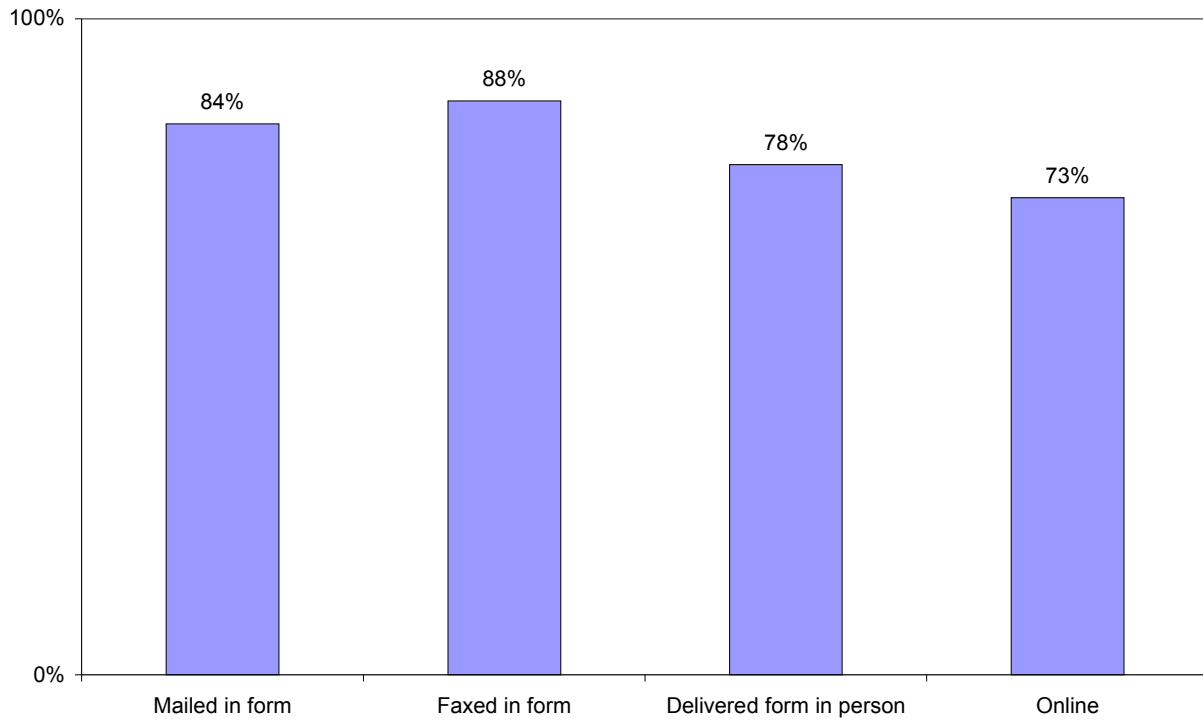
	%
Mailed in form	69%
Faxed in form	22%
Delivered form in person	12%
Online	30%
Other	3%
Not Sure/Have not registered	12%
Total	100%

Comments:

The majority of fire chiefs have registered for MFTE training programs using a mailed in form (69%), followed by online registration (30%), a faxed in form (22%), and a personally delivered form (12%). Twelve percent were not sure or have not registered.

Fire chiefs expressed high levels of satisfaction with all methods of registration. Eighty-eight percent were very or somewhat satisfied with their registration by fax, 84% were satisfied with their registration by mail, and 78% with in-person delivery.

6.3. How satisfied were you with the registration process by...

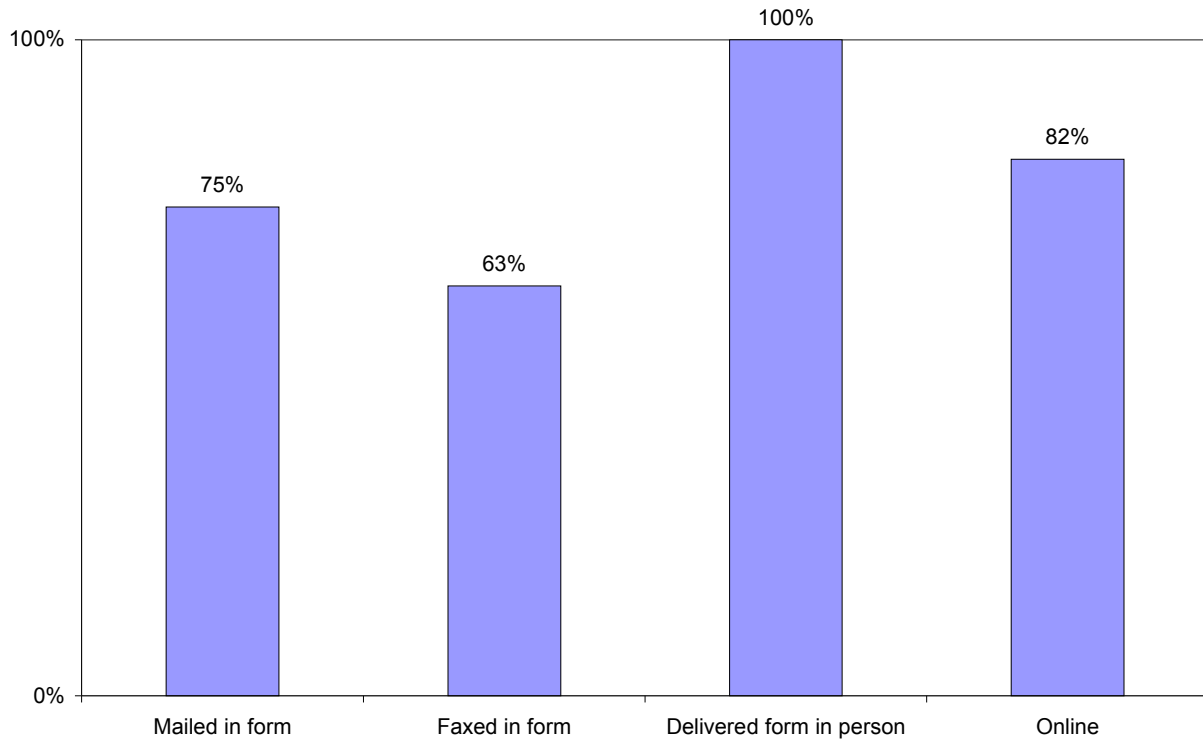


**6.3. How satisfied were you with the registration process by...
(% somewhat or very satisfied)**

	%
Mailed in form	84%
Faxed in form	88%
Delivered form in person	78%
Online	73%

The majority of fire chiefs received a confirmation about their registration regardless of the method that was used. This includes those that registered in person (100%), online (82%), by mail (75%), or by fax (63%).

6.4. Did you receive a confirmation about your registration by...



6.4. Did you receive a confirmation about your registration by...

	%
Mailed in form	75%
Faxed in form	63%
Delivered form in person	100%
Online	82%

Among those with suggestions to improve the registration process, 17% of fire chiefs suggest doing more of it online, while 10% would like a faster confirmation process.

6.5. How can the registration process be improved?

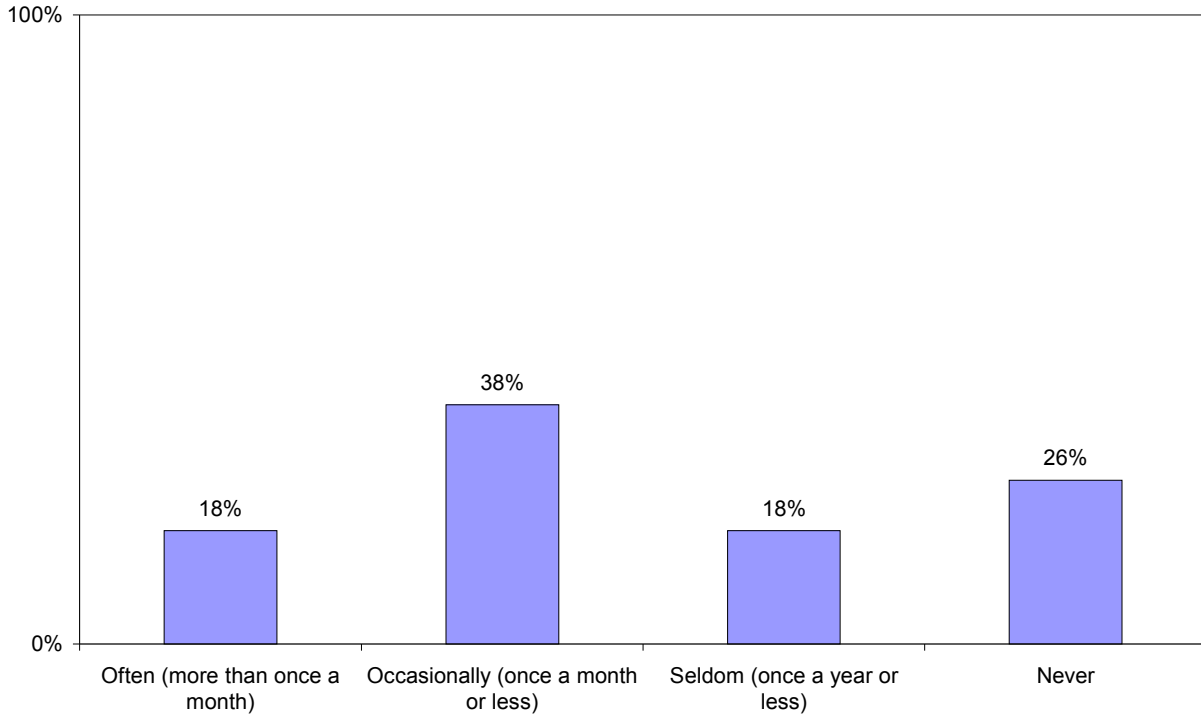
	%
Fine the way it is	30%
On-line registration	17%
Quicker confirmation	10%
Other	17%
Not Sure	27%
Total	100%

Comments:

The majority of fire chiefs either like the current registration process (30%) or have no suggestions on how to improve it (27%). Seventeen percent of chiefs were either unaware that MFTE offered online registration or like the current online registration process and would to see more of it. Ten percent of chiefs suggested a quicker confirmation process.

Over half of fire chiefs (56%) visit the MFTE website at least twice a year, with 37% visiting the website once a month or more.

6.6. How often do you visit the MFTE website for training information?



6.6. How often do you visit the MFTE website for training information?

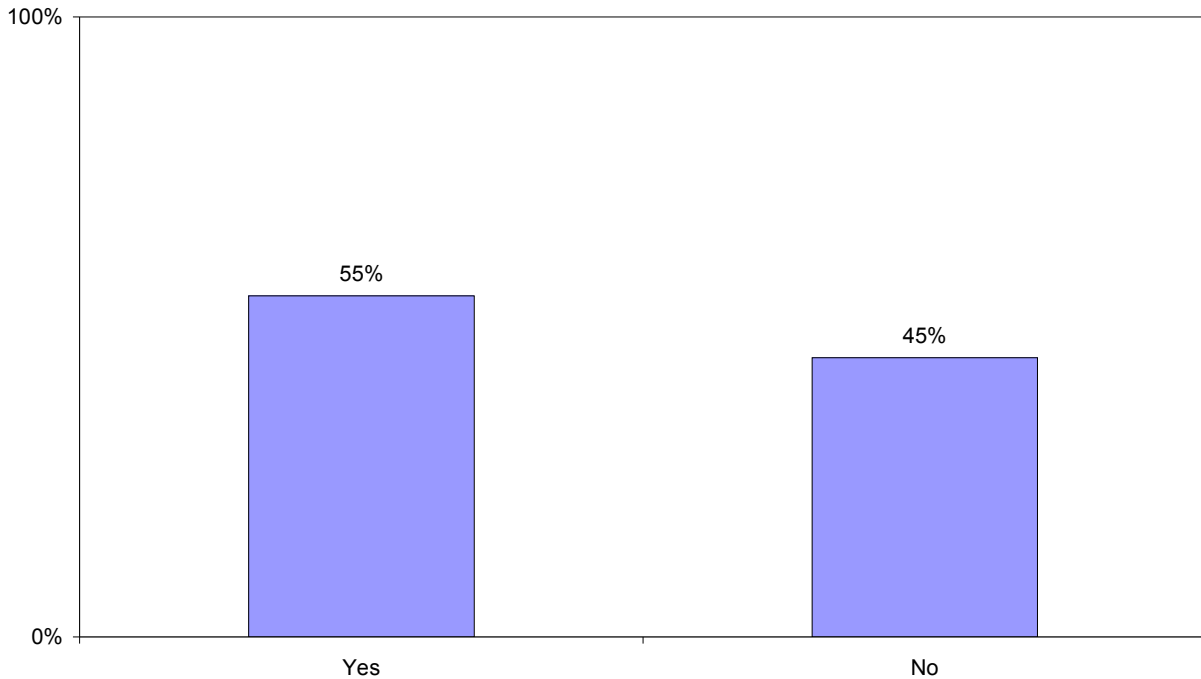
	%
More than once a week	2%
Once a week	7%
2+ times a month	9%
Once a month	19%
2+ times a year	19%
Once a year or less	18%
Never	26%
Total	100%

Comments:

Three-quarters (74%) of fire chiefs have visited the MFTE website for training information at least once. Over half (56%) visit the site multiple times a year.

Fifty-five percent of fire chiefs know that training programs scheduled through MFTE are listed on the website calendar.

6.7. Do you know that all training programs scheduled through MFTE are listed on the MFTE website calendar?



6.7. Do you know that all training programs scheduled through MFTE are listed on the MFTE website calendar?

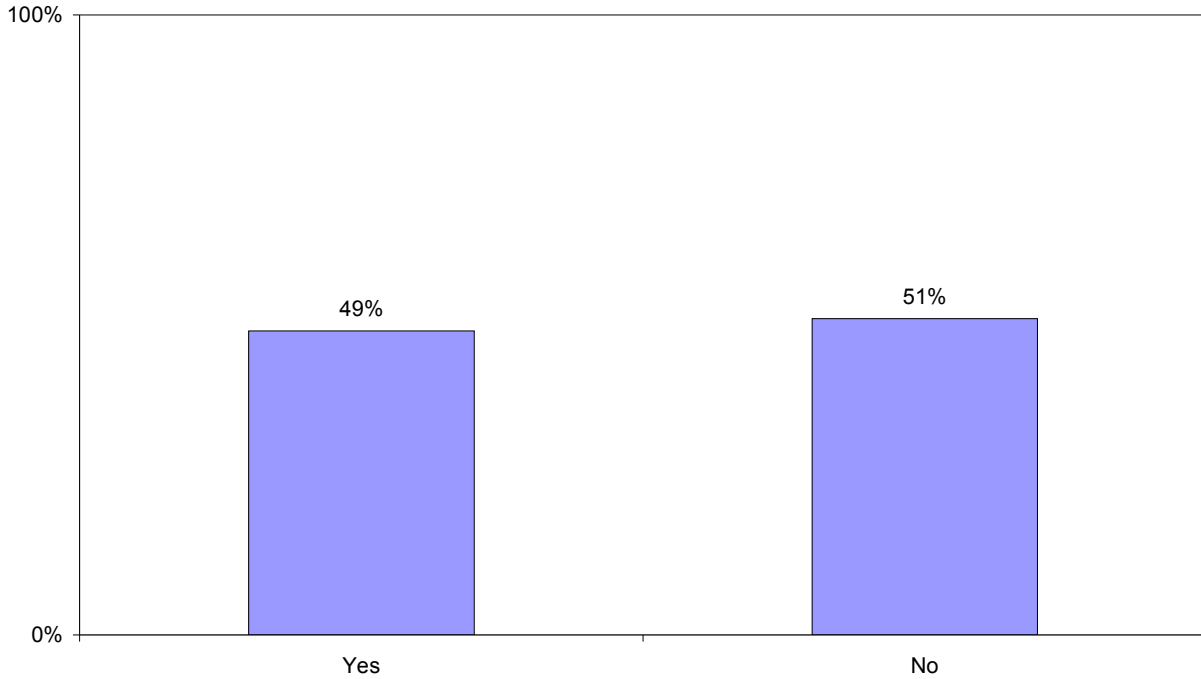
	%
Yes	55%
No	45%
Total	100%

Comments:

Fifty-five percent of responding fire chiefs were aware that scheduled training programs are listed online on the MFTE website calendar. Seventy percent of those who have visited the MFTE website at least once were aware of the calendar.

Half of fire chiefs (49%) know about the MFTE Newsletter available on the MFTE website.

6.8. Do you know about the MFTE Newsletter available on MFTE website at www.mfte.org?



6.8. Do you know about the MFTE Newsletter available on MFTE website at www.mfte.org?

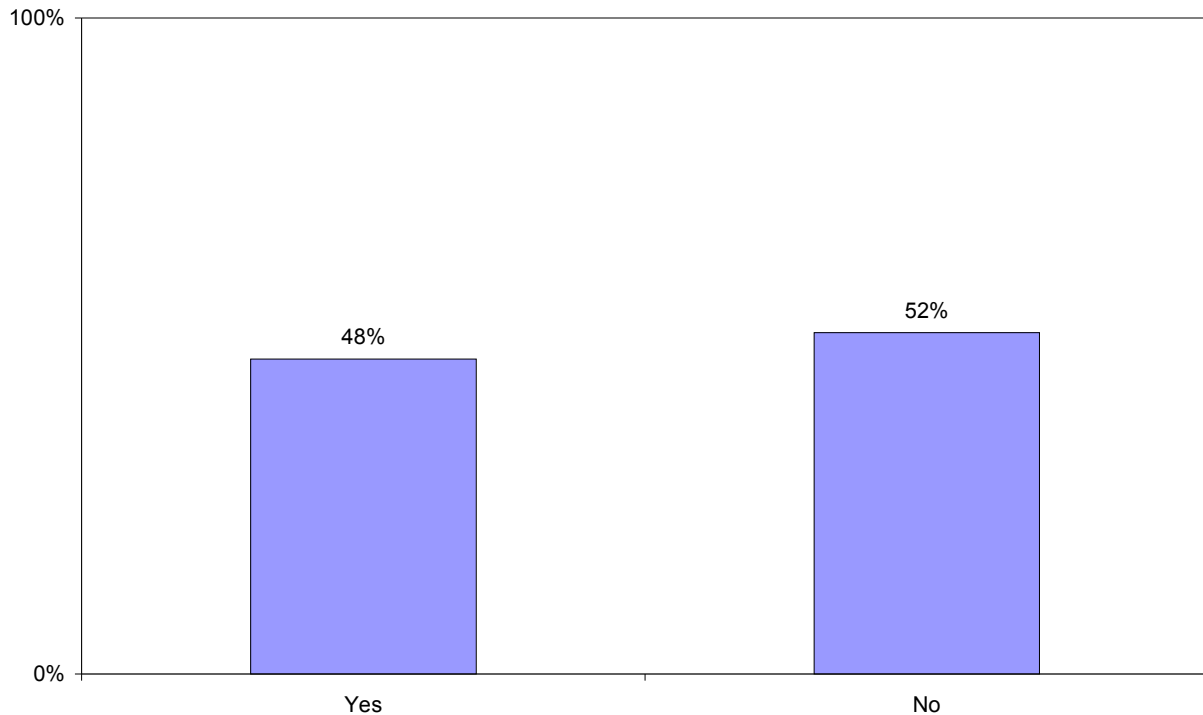
	%
Yes	49%
No	51%
Total	100%

Comments:

Half (49%) of fire chiefs were aware that the MFTE newsletter was available on the website. Among the fire chiefs who have visited the MFTE website at least once, 64% knew about the newsletter being available online.

Forty-eight percent of fire chiefs have read the MFTE Newsletter.

6.9. Have you read the Newsletter?



6.9. Have you read the Newsletter?

	%
Yes	48%
No	52%
Total	100%

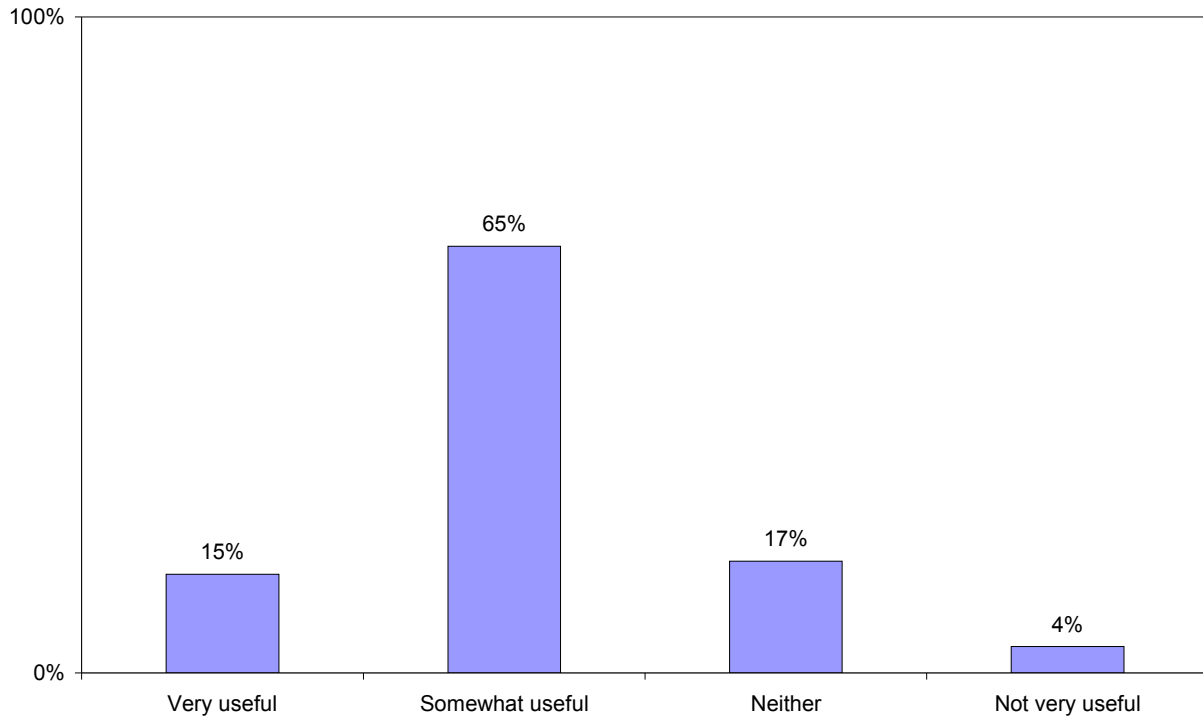
Comments:

Nearly all fire chiefs who knew about the availability of the newsletter on the MFTE website have read it. A total of 48% of fire chiefs said they have read the newsletter. Among the chiefs who have visited the MFTE website at least once in the past, 62% have read the newsletter.

Fire chiefs in larger departments were more likely to read the newsletter than those in smaller departments. Sixty-six percent of fire chiefs who have annual departmental training budgets of over \$5,000 have read the newsletter, compared to 35% of chiefs with budgets of less than \$2,500 and 50% of chiefs with budgets of \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Among those who have read the newsletter, eight in ten fire chiefs found it very of somewhat useful.

6.10. Did you find the newsletter...



6.10. Did you find it ...

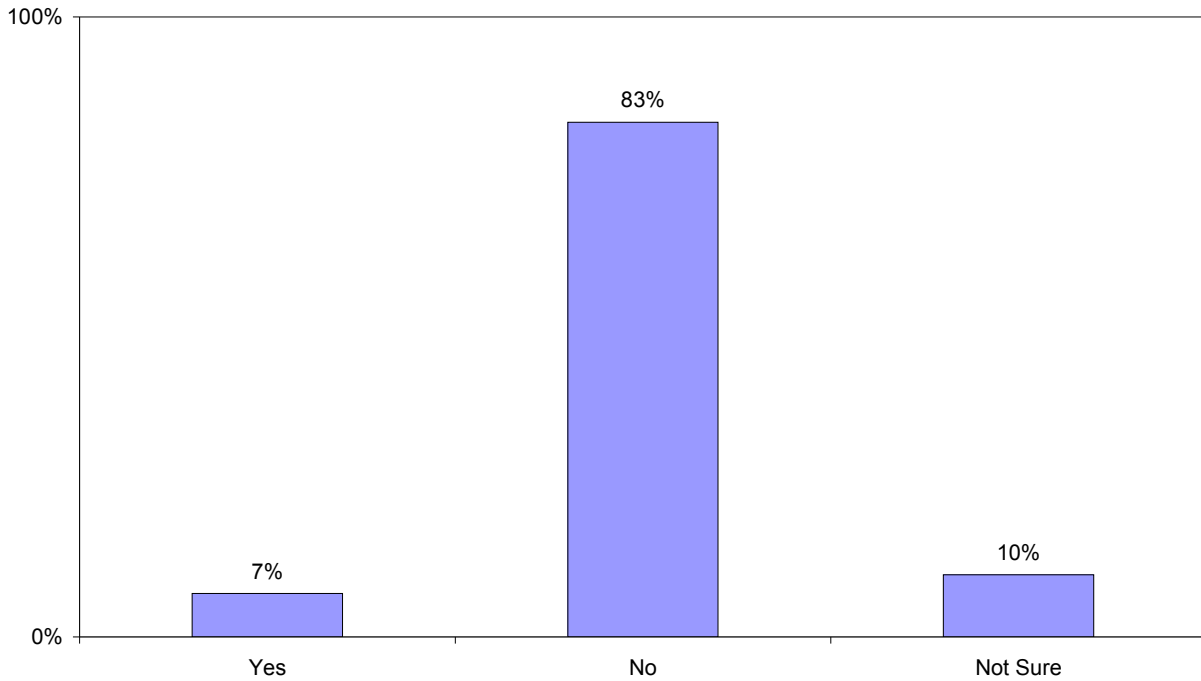
	%
Not very useful	4%
Neither	17%
Somewhat useful	65%
Very useful	15%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among those who have read the newsletter, eight in ten found it either very (15%) or somewhat (65%) useful. Only 4% of chiefs said it was not very useful. The percentage of fire chiefs who found the newsletter useful was similar across the different regions and budget levels.

Only seven percent of fire chiefs have experienced a problem communicating with MFTE.

6.11. Did you experience problems with any type of communication with MFTE?



6.11. Did you experience problems with any type of communication with MFTE?

	%
Yes	7%
No	83%
Not Sure	10%
Total	100%

Comments:

Seven percent of fire chiefs have experienced a problem communicating with MFTE, however, 15% of chiefs in the South said they experienced a communication problem (compared to 7% in the Coastal region, 5% in the Central region, and 3% in the North region).

Among the fire chiefs experiencing a problem, 57% said it was due to phone calls that were not returned.

6.12. What were these problems?

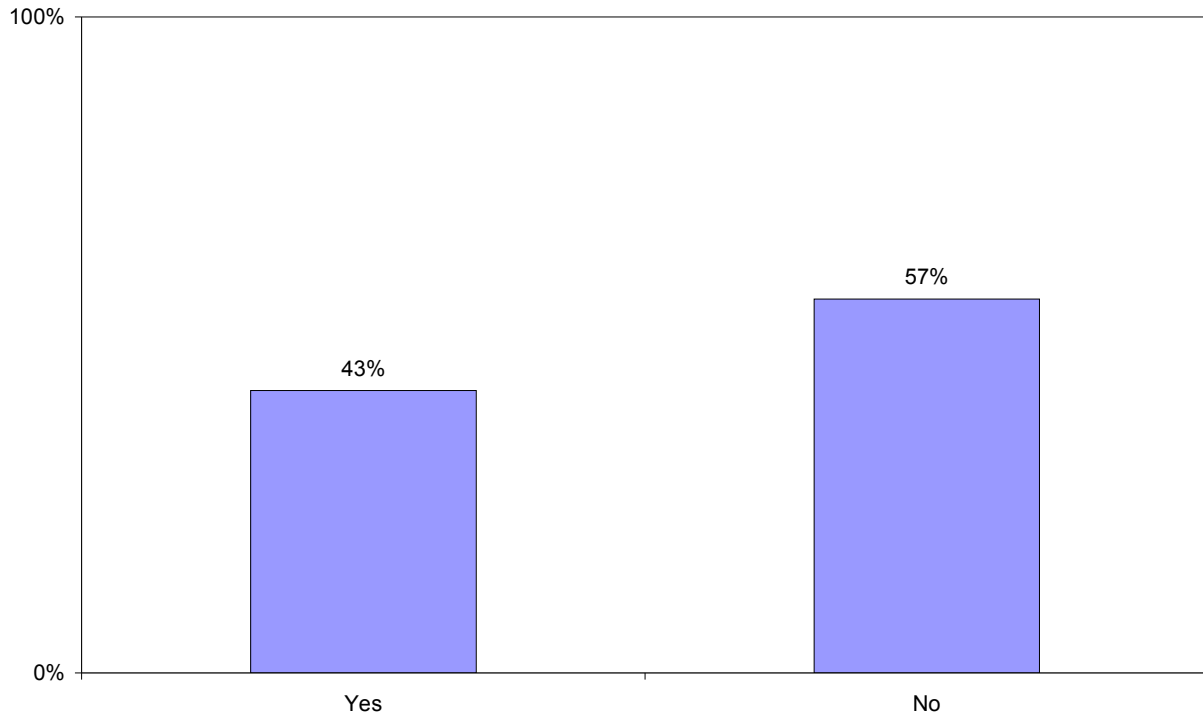
	%
Phone calls not returned	57%
MFTE needs to talk to chiefs in person or by phone	14%
Lack of communication general - needs improvement	14%
Other	14%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among the fire chiefs who experienced a problem communicating with MFTE, 57% said that their phone calls were not returned. Other problems included a need for MFTE to speak to chiefs one-on-one and that there was a lack of communication between MFTE and the local departments in general.

Among the fire chiefs experiencing a problem, 43% felt that MFTE worked to resolve the problem.

6.13. Did MFTE work to resolve these problems?



6.13. Did MFTE work to resolve these problems?

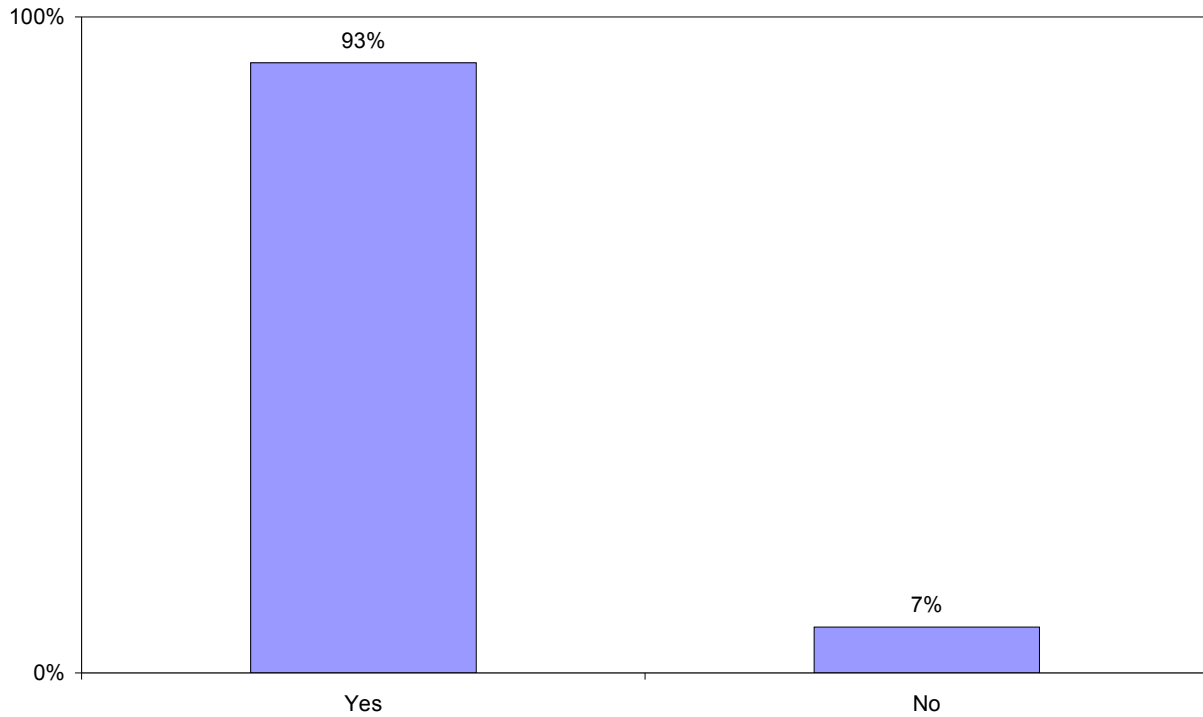
	%
Yes	43%
No	57%
Total	100%

Comments:

Among those who experience a communication problem, 43% said that MFTE worked to resolve this problem.

Ninety-three percent of fire chiefs are aware of federal requirements for NIMS training.

6.14. Are you aware of federal requirements for NIMS training?



6.14. Are you aware of federal requirements for NIMS training?

	%
Yes	93%
No	7%
Total	100%

Comments:

Nearly all chiefs are aware of federal requirements for National Incident Management System (NIMS) training.

Thirty-eight percent of fire chiefs recommended that MFTE should communicate with their department using email, specifically an email list or an email newsletter to all the departments in the state. Twenty-three percent mentioned direct mailings, and 15% felt there was a need for more area representatives and local visits to the departments.

6.15. How can MFTE better communicate with you and your department?

	%
Email/ newsletter	38%
Direct mail	23%
Area reps - in person visits or phone	15%
Positive general - more of same	11%
Website - keep current, will use more now that aware of it	9%
Lack of communication general - needs improvement	6%
Return phone calls	2%
Other	8%
Not Sure	11%
Total	100%

Comments:

When fire chiefs were asked how MFTE could better communicate with them or their department, 38% mentioned an email list or email newsletter that could be sent to all the departments in the state. A number of chiefs suggested that the MFTE newsletter could be emailed to them directly. An additional 23% mentioned direct mail, such as the newsletter being mailed to them, 15% want area representatives to regularly visit them in person or call them phone, and 11% had positive comments about MFTE's communication and want more of the same.

One-quarter (24%) of fire chiefs feel that MFTE's top priority in the near future should be to provide basic training to all firefighters in the state. Another one-quarter (24%) feel that it is to improve the local delivery of training programs and services, especially to those in rural areas of Maine.

6.16. What should MFTE have as its top priority during the next 1/5/10 years?

	%
Basic fire training/ quality training/ BLS	24%
Field services - improve on local delivery of programs	24%
Ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers	18%
Improve communication/ marketing MFTE	16%
Permanent state fire academy	14%
Meeting the challenges of both career and volunteer departments	12%
Regional training facilities - perhaps by county	8%
Define mission, re-organize, streamline MFTE	7%
Expand Pro-Board certification/ testing	7%
Create a regular schedule of courses throughout the year	5%
Other	3%
Not Sure	3%
Total	100%

Comments:

Twenty-four percent of fire chiefs want MFTE to focus more on provided basic fire training and making sure that all firefighters are trained to the basic BLS standards. Another 24% would like MFTE to improve local field delivery programs and services to all departments in the state. For example:

“Make basic firefighter skills training more available locally. Realize that in rural towns we can not spend too much time training and that our members work various types of shift work and get no pay for firefighting. We must have the basic knowledge, do everything safely and comply with reasonable requirements; but we can only spend a certain amount of time training, responding to mailings, trying to keep up with regulations when we do not get paid and may only respond to 3 structural fires a year.”

Additionally, 18% stated that MFTE should ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers, 16% that the communication and marketing between MFTE and the departments should be improved (through direct and frequent dialogue), and 14% want a permanent state fire academy established in the state.

When asked for final recommendations, 14% of fire chiefs commented that MFTE provides quality training and services to firefighters and should keep up the good work, while 11% mentioned that communication between MFTE and the departments should be improved with the goal of increasing awareness of MFTE and the services it provides.

6.17. Do you have any final comments and/or recommendations about MFTE or the services it provides?

	%
Good job - more of same	14%
Improve communication/ marketing MFTE	11%
Ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers	9%
Field services - improve on local delivery of programs	9%
Define mission, re-organize, streamline MFTE	7%
Basic fire training/ quality training/ BLS	5%
Meeting the challenges of both career and volunteer departments	4%
Regional training facilities - perhaps by county	2%
Other	16%
Not Sure	35%
Total	100%

Comments:

When asked if they had any final comments or recommendations, 14% of fire chiefs said that MFTE was doing a good job in general. Specifically, chiefs said that MFTE was doing a good job utilizing resources, listening to the departments, and working with the departments to meet their training needs. Eleven percent of chiefs recommended that MFTE continue to improve its communication and marketing with the departments. Meet directly with chiefs and keep them informed of training opportunities in their area. Nine percent of fire chiefs said that MFTE should ensure that training is obtainable and practical for volunteers, and 9% would like to see MFTE improve its local delivery of programs and services, especially in rural areas of the state.