

# Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2016

## Rural Fire Service Far Northern Report

Prepared for: Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

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Job No: 263104138

TNS

2016 Volunteer Survey



Queensland  
Government

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# 1

## Background, Objectives and Methodology

# Background and Objectives

- Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of frontline services and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) has approximately 42,000 dedicated volunteers across the state in the State Emergency Service (SES), Rural Fire Service (RFS), Research and Scientific Branch network, and Technical Rescue Unit.
- The volunteer base is largely made up of the RFS and SES with approximately 36,000 and 6,200 volunteers respectively.
- Across both of these services, the contribution of volunteers is vital in ensuring positive community outcomes, and as such it is imperative that the views and opinions of the volunteer base is heard. Only in this way can QFES understand the satisfaction of its volunteers, how it is performing in supporting them in their volunteer role and what can be done to improve their volunteer experience.
- In 2016 TNS has been commissioned to follow up and build on the 2014 survey it conducted to ascertain current levels of satisfaction and opinion on the support provided and organisational practices and processes.
- The findings of the 2016 volunteer survey are contained within this report.

The overall aim of the research is to:

Provide Queensland Fire and Emergency Services with robust measures of volunteer satisfaction with the services provided in order to provide direction and understanding as to what, if any, issues exist and how volunteers can be better supported in the future.

# Methodology

## Who did we survey?

- Volunteers in Rural Fire Service (Far Northern)

## How many responses did we receive

- n=297 (maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval is  $\pm 5.7\%$ )

## When did we interview?

- 11 July – 23 August 2016

## Sampling strategy

- Contacts from the QFES Volunteer database were emailed with an invitation to complete the survey. The survey was also distributed via hard-copy on request and at SES training nights, and a link to the survey was also placed on the QFES website.

## Interview methodology

- Online, self-completed interview. Average questionnaire length 10 minutes.

## Weighting

- No weighting was applied

# Questionnaire Flow

■ The questionnaire covered the following content:

1 Screener questions

2 General satisfaction

3 Perceptions of RFS

4 Recruitment

5 Leadership

6 Workplace conduct policies and procedures

7 Inclusion

8 Information and Communication

9 Recognition

10 Training and development

11 Intention to continue volunteering

12 Demographics

# Reporting Notes

- While the online survey required a forced response for each question, some respondents who completed a hard copy of the survey skipped certain questions. As such, sample sizes may vary slightly throughout the report.
- Where a total satisfied score is reported, this is calculated as the sum of satisfied + very satisfied.
- Where a total dissatisfied score is reported this is calculated as the sum of dissatisfied + very dissatisfied.
- These aggregated scores may not always add exactly to the individual percentage scores reported due to rounding.
- For single response questions, the sum of responses may not always add exactly to 100% due to rounding.
- Where questions have more than one response allowed, the sum of responses may add to more than 100%.

# 2

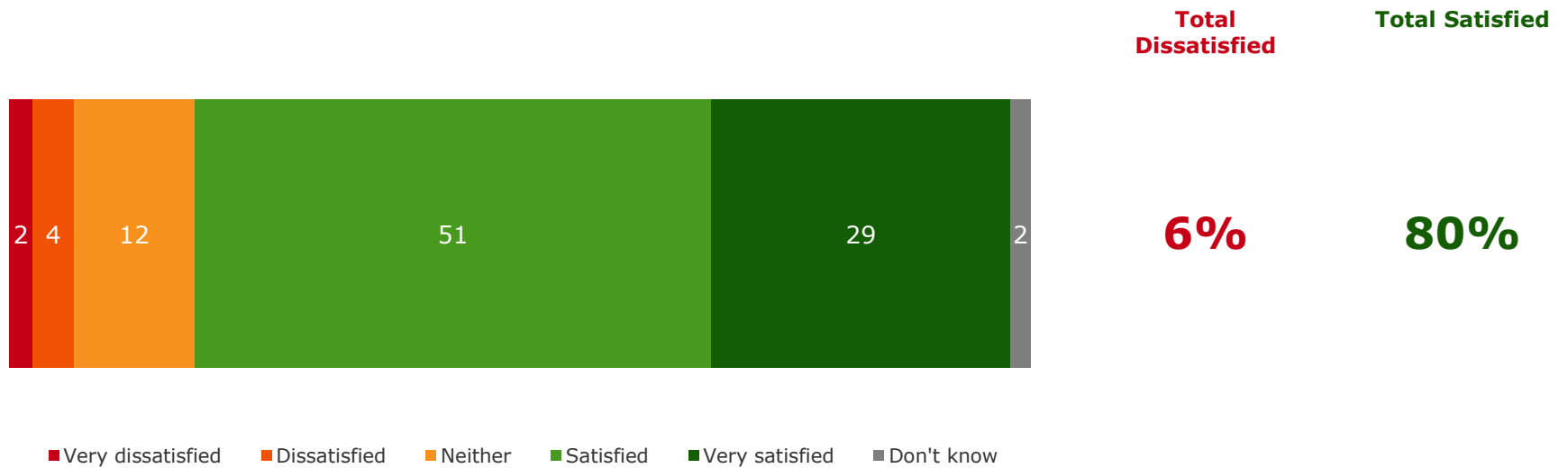
## Detailed Findings



# 2.1

## General Satisfaction

# General satisfaction with volunteering (%)



B1. How satisfied are you in general with the experience of volunteering with the Rural Fire Service?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

# Reasons for satisfaction with volunteering experience (%)



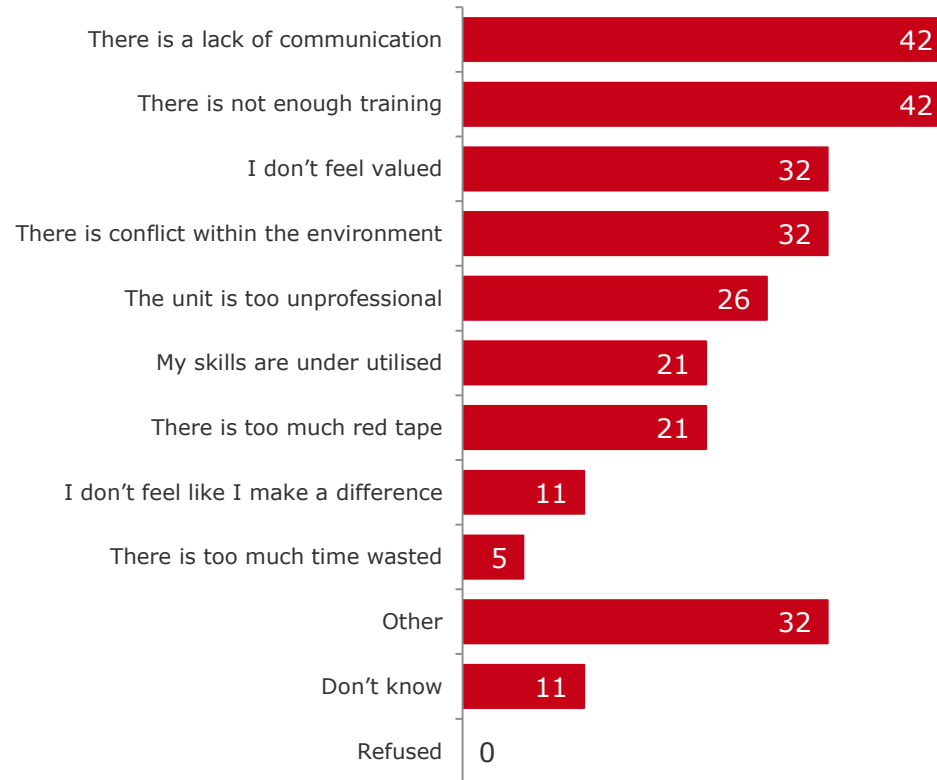
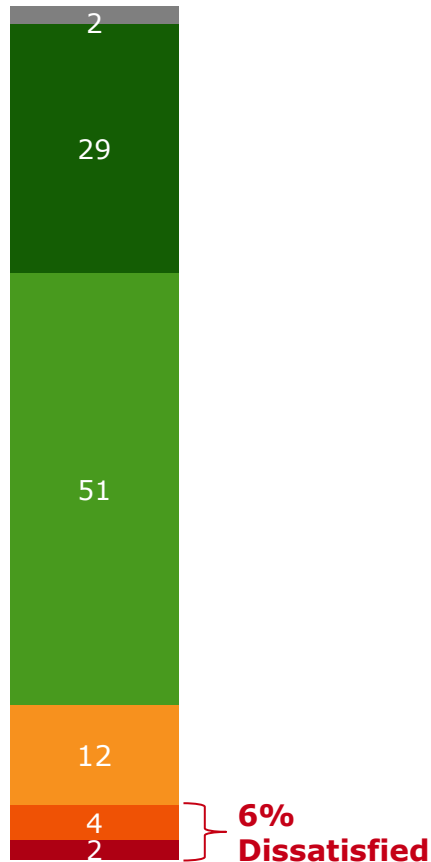
B1. How satisfied are you in general with the experience of volunteering with the Rural Fire Service?

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

B2. Why are you <insert satisfied or very satisfied as appropriate>?

BASE: Those satisfied with volunteering experience (n=237)

# Reasons for dissatisfaction with volunteering experience (%)



B1. How satisfied are you in general with the experience of volunteering with the Rural Fire Service?

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

B3. Why are you <insert dissatisfied or very dissatisfied as appropriate>?

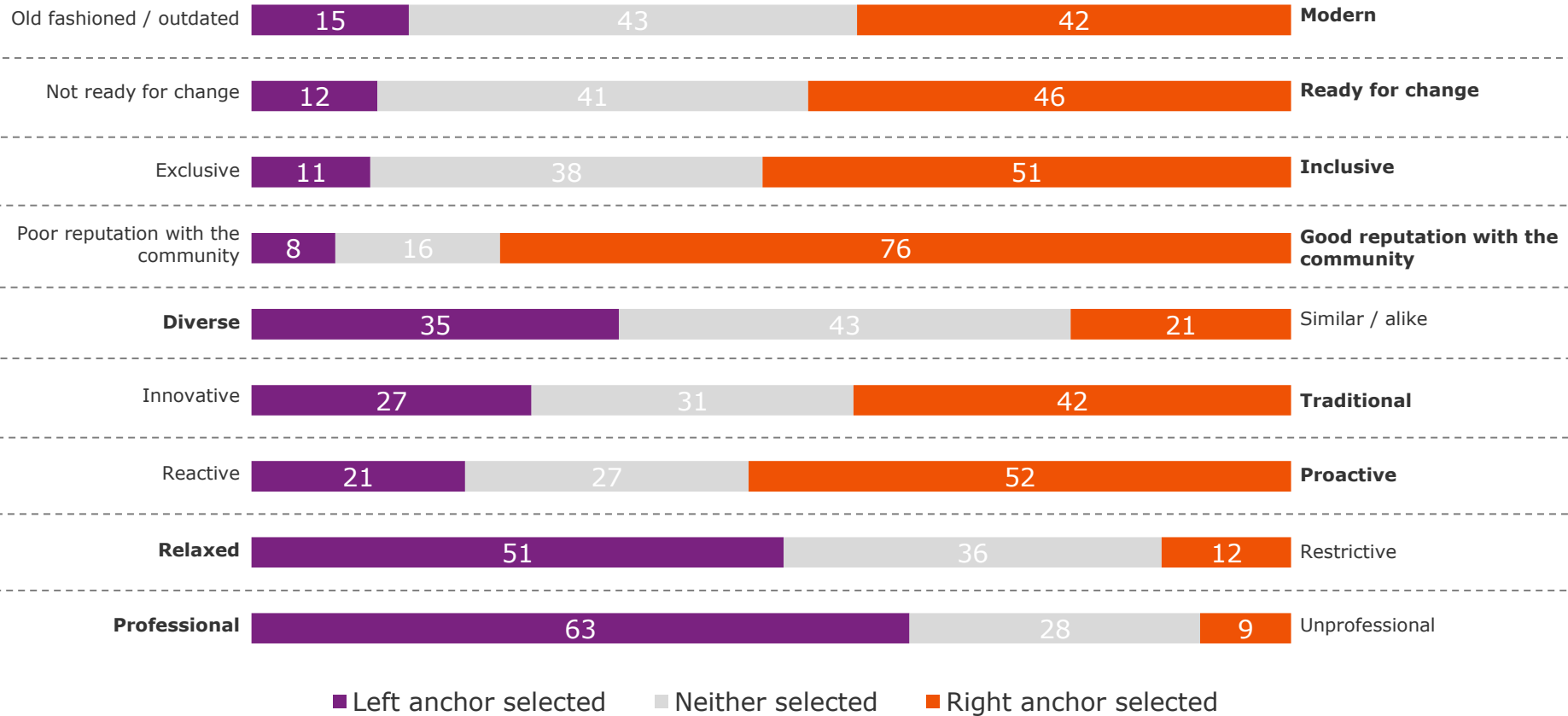
BASE: Those dissatisfied with volunteering experience (n=19\*)

**\*Caution: small sample size – results should be interpreted as indicative only**

# 2.2

## Perceptions of RFS

# Perceptions of RFS (%)



G1. You will now be shown pairs of words / phrases that people have used to describe the Rural Fire Service. For each pair, please select which word or phrase you feel best describes the Rural Fire Service. You may also select 'neither' if you feel neither word is an appropriate description.

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

NOTE: Bold text represents the word/phrase more often selected

# 2.3

## Leadership

# Perceptions of leadership in RFS – Top 2 (rated “Quite a lot” or “A great deal”)



D1. To what extent do you feel supported in your volunteer role in the Rural Fire Service by each of the following? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)  
 D2. And to what extent do you feel the following resolve conflict? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)  
 D3. And to what extent do you feel the following model effective leadership skills? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)  
 D4. And to what extent do you feel the following value your input? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)



# Perceived level of support in volunteer role by... (%)

**Top 2  
(rated 4 or  
5 out of 5)**

First Officer



**61%**

Brigade Management Committee



**52%**

Brigade Training and Support Officer



**51%**

Area Training and Support Officer



**46%**

Area Director



**38%**

■ 1 - Not at all    ■ 2 - Just a little    ■ 3 - A moderate amount    ■ 4 - Quite a lot    ■ 5 - A great deal    ■ Don't know    ■ Not applicable

D1. To what extent do you feel supported in your volunteer role in the Rural Fire Service by each of the following?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

# Perceived ability to resolve conflict by... (%)

**Top 2  
(rated 4 or 5  
out of 5)**



**41%**



**32%**



**30%**



**30%**



**27%**

■ 1 - Not at all    ■ 2 - Just a little    ■ 3 - A moderate amount    ■ 4 - Quite a lot    ■ 5 - A great deal    ■ Don't know    ■ Not applicable

D2. And to what extent do you feel the following resolve conflict?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

# Modelling of effective leadership skills by... (%)

**Top 2  
(rated 4 or 5  
out of 5)**

First Officer



**54%**

Brigade Training and Support Officer



**45%**

Area Training and Support Officer



**42%**

Brigade Management Committee



**41%**

Area Director



**38%**

■ 1 - Not at all    ■ 2 - Just a little    ■ 3 - A moderate amount    ■ 4 - Quite a lot    ■ 5 - A great deal    ■ Don't know    ■ Not applicable

D3. And to what extent do you feel the following model effective leadership skills?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

# Extent to which input is valued by... (%)

**Top 2  
(rated 4 or  
5 out of 5)**

First Officer



**50%**

Brigade Management  
Committee



**44%**

Brigade Training and Support  
Officer



**40%**

Area Training and Support  
Officer



**35%**

Area Director

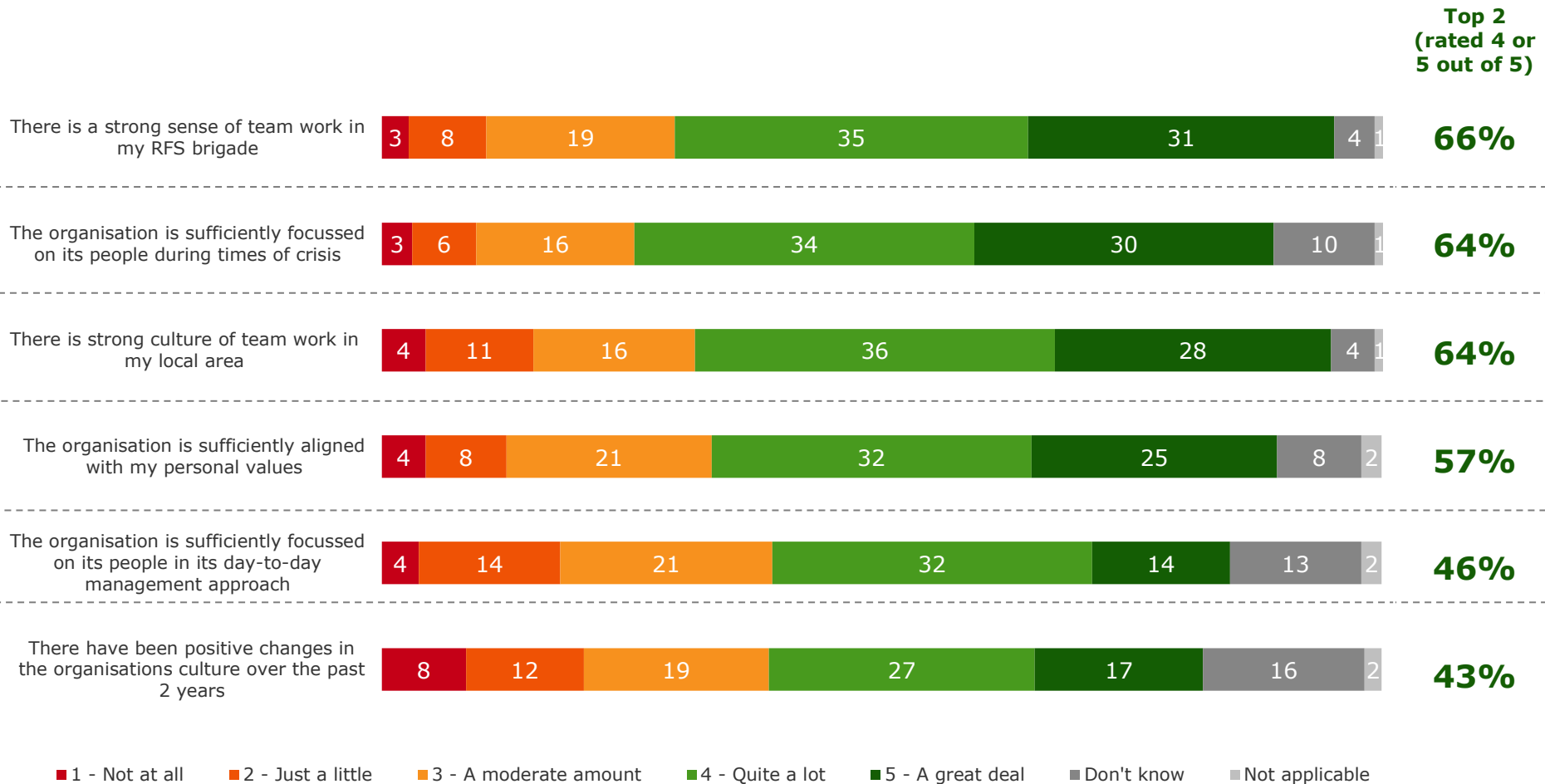


**33%**

■ 1 - Not at all    ■ 2 - Just a little    ■ 3 - A moderate amount    ■ 4 - Quite a lot    ■ 5 - A great deal    ■ Don't know    ■ Not applicable

D4. And to what extent do you feel the following value your input?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

# Perceptions of organisational culture (%)

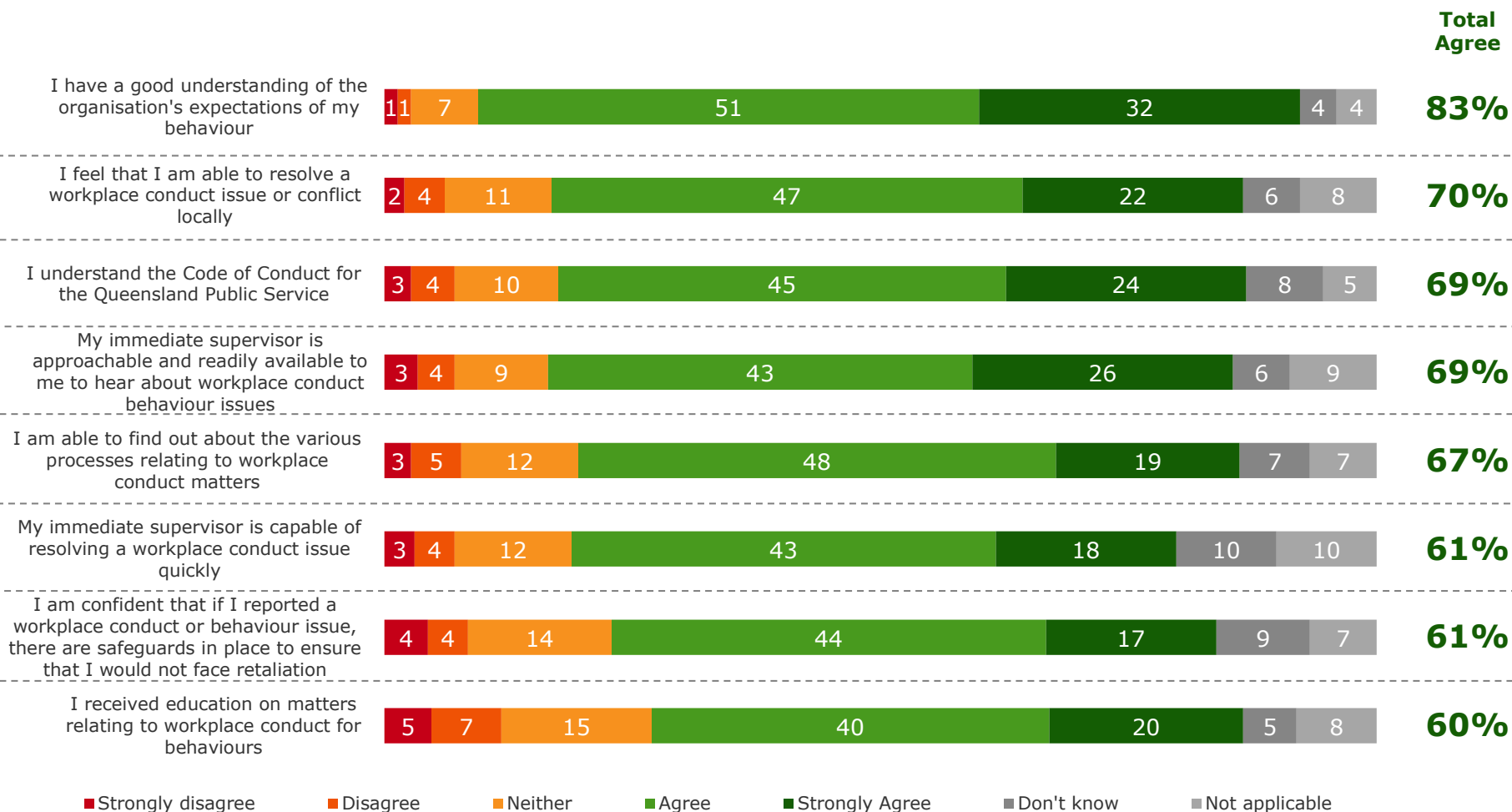


D5. Thinking about the organisational culture in the Rural Fire Service, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?  
 BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

# 2.4

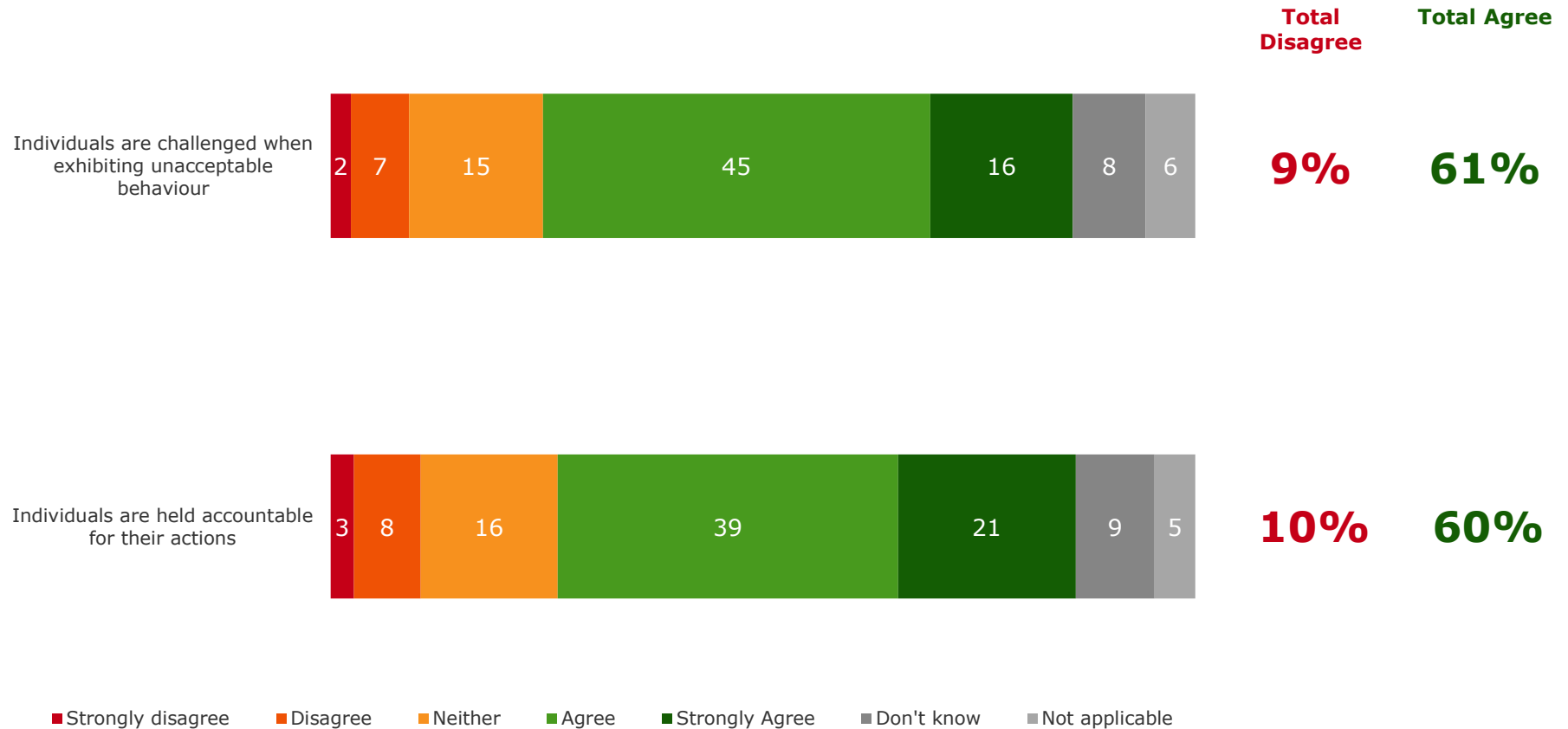
## Workplace Conduct Policies and Procedures

# Perceptions and understanding of workplace conduct policies and procedures (%)



F1. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with these statements about the Rural Fire Service's policies and procedures. Please note for these questions your immediate supervisor refers to the next person in line through the chain of command.  
 BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

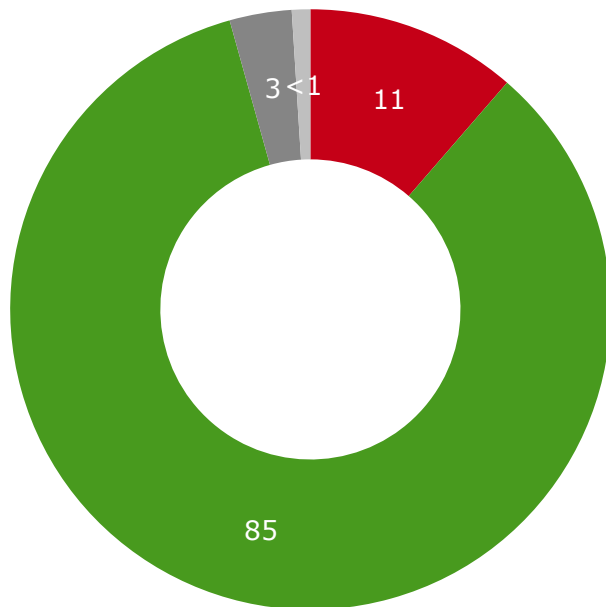
# Perceptions of ... (%)



F2. And to what extent do you agree with the following statements?  
 BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297 for each)

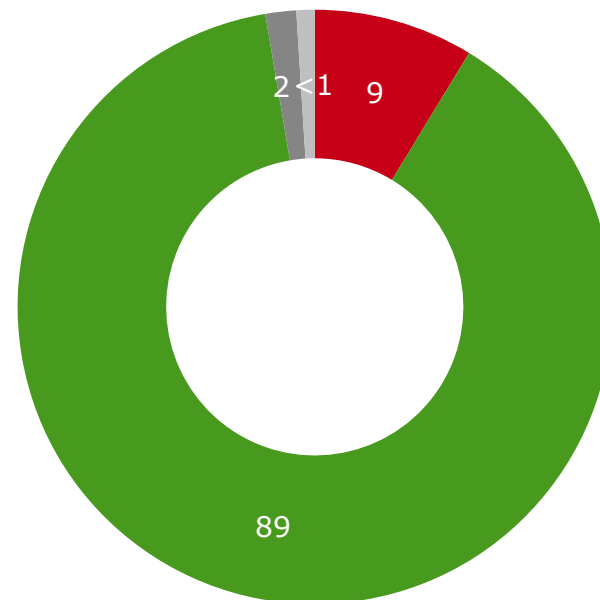


## Witnessed bullying in volunteer environment (%)



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know ■ Refused

## Been subject to bullying in volunteer environment (%)



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know ■ Refused

F3. During the last 2 years have you witnessed any such bullying in your Rural Fire Service volunteer environment?

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

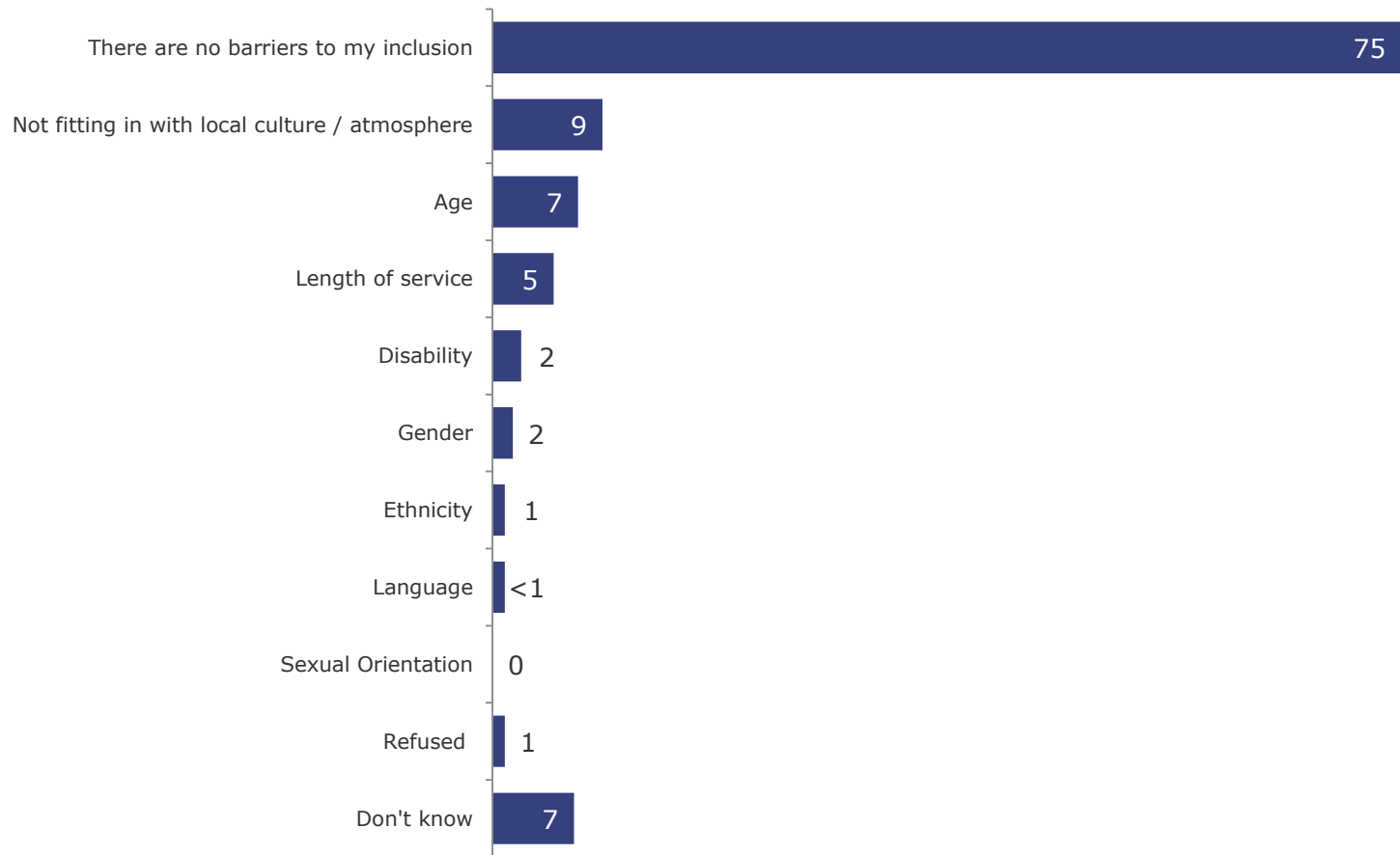
F4. And during the last 2 years have you been subject to any such bullying in your Rural Fire Service volunteer environment?

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

# 2.5

## Inclusion

## Barriers to inclusion (%)

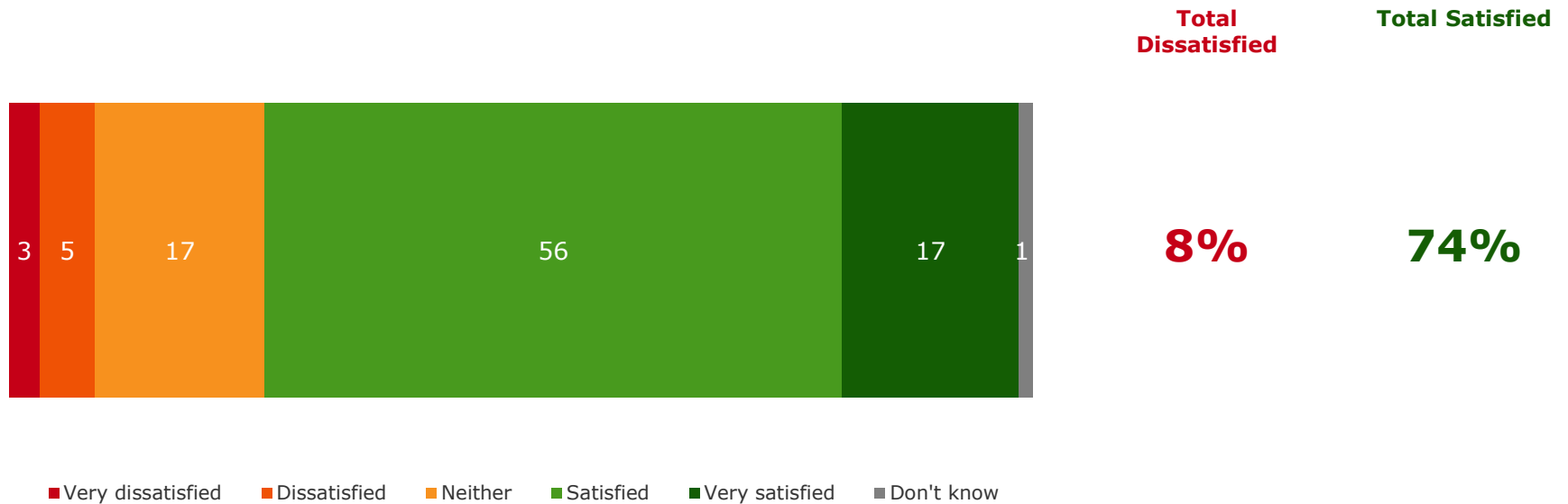


E1. Thinking about possible barriers to inclusion within the Rural Fire Service, which, if any, of the following have been barriers to your inclusion?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

# 2.6

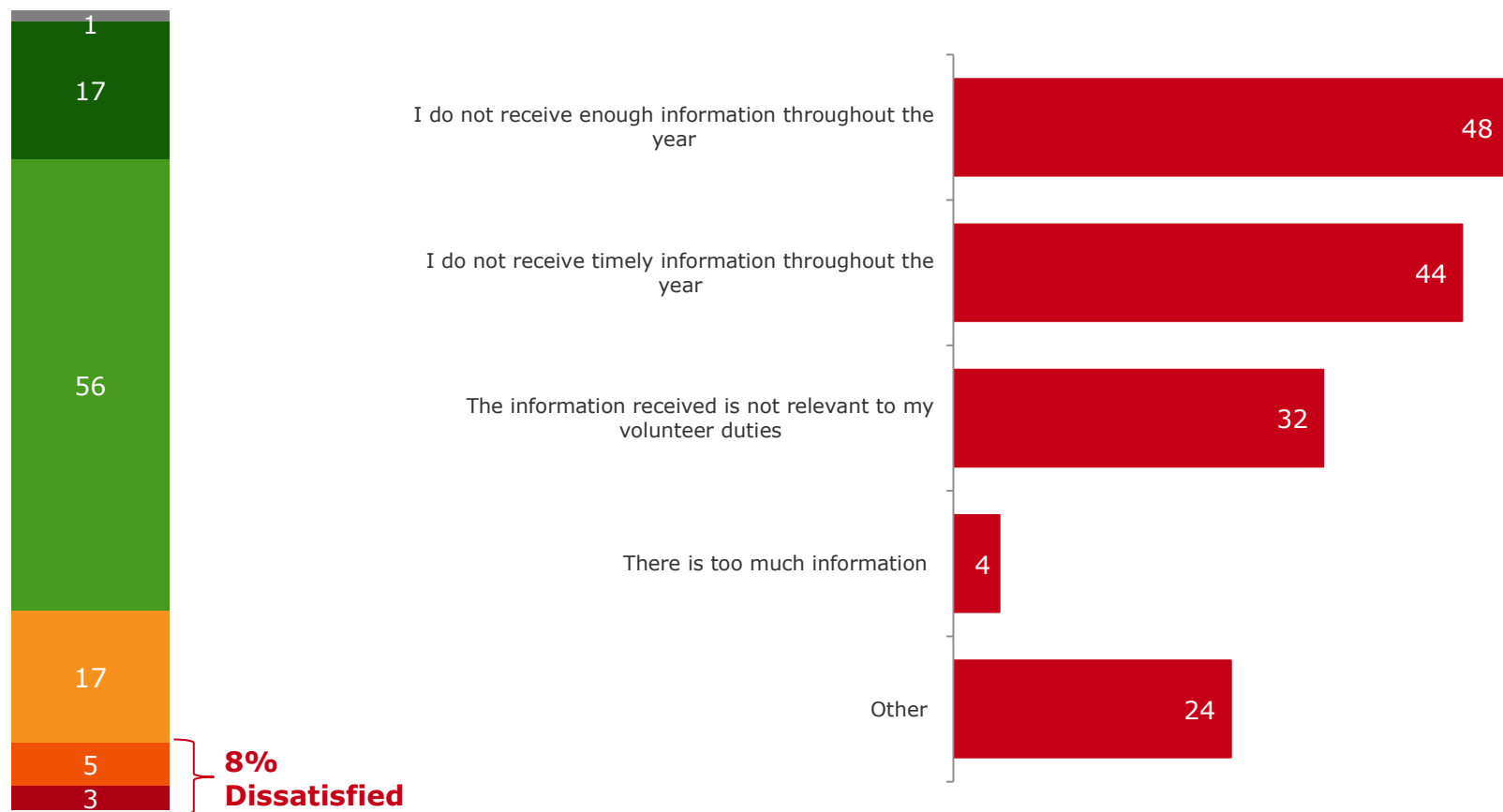
## Information and Communication

# Satisfaction with general information received (%)



H1. How satisfied are you with the general information received from the Rural Fire Service during the year? Note: This does not refer to in field communications or calls for service.  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=296)

# Reasons for dissatisfaction with general information received (%)



H1. How satisfied are you with the general information received from the Rural Fire Service during the year? Note: This does not refer to in field communications or calls for service.

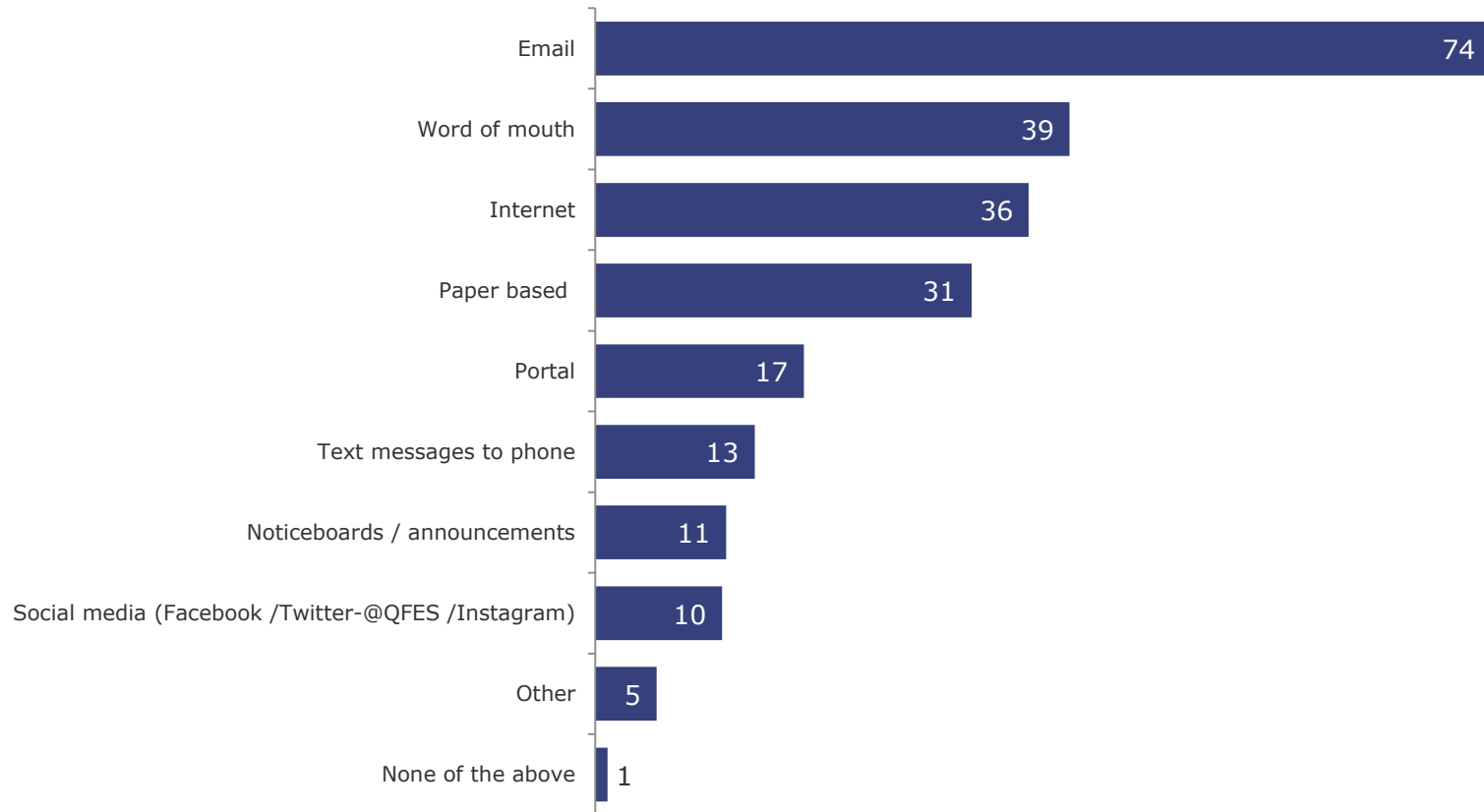
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=296)

H2. What is the main reason for your dissatisfaction with general information received from the Rural Fire Service during the year?

BASE: Those dissatisfied with general information received (n=25\*)

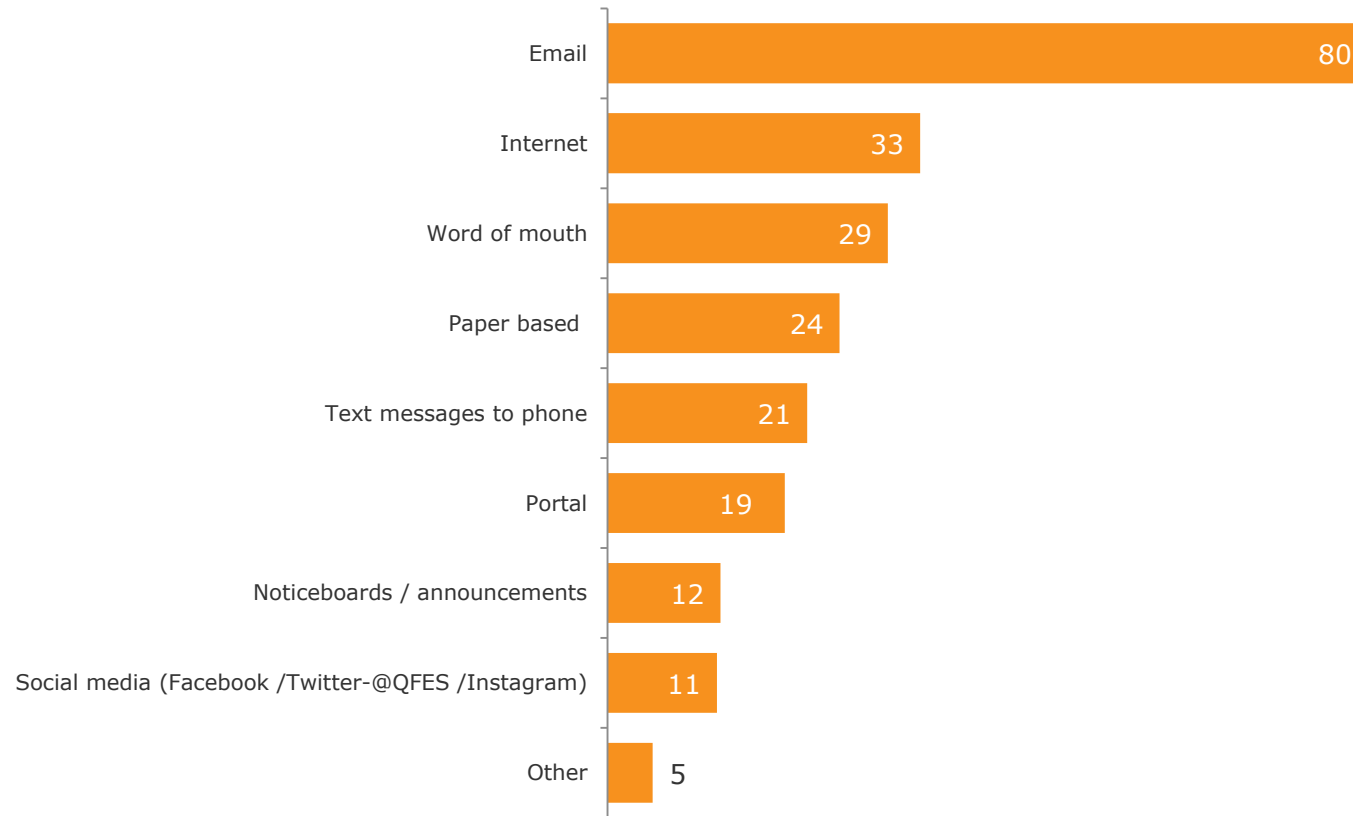
**\*Caution: small sample size – results should be interpreted as indicative only**

## Current information access methods (%)



H3. What current methods do you use to access and keep up to date with information relating to the Rural Fire Service?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=296)

## Preferred information access method (%)



H4. And what is your preferred methods to access and keep up to date with information relating to the Rural Fire Service?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=296)



# Desired frequency of service updates via each method (%)



■ Weekly
 ■ Fortnightly
 ■ Monthly
 ■ As available

H5. And how frequently would you like to receive updates / information via your preferred method of communication(s)?

BASE: Those who preferred each method (Paper based n=72; Portal n=55; Internet n=97; Email n=236; Social media n=34; Text messages to phone n=62; Word of mouth n=87; Noticeboards/announcements n=35)

# 2.7

## Recognition

# Importance of recognition (%)

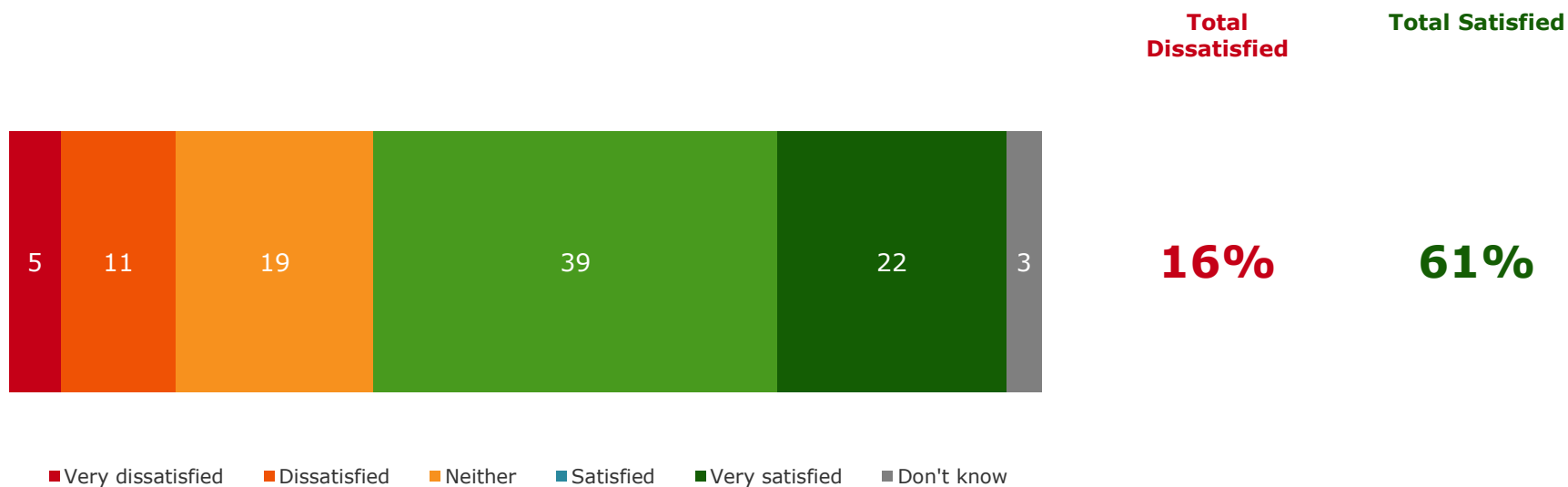


I1. Which of the following forms of recognition is most important to you?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=296)

# 2.8

## Training and Development

## Satisfaction with training over the past two years (%)



J1. How satisfied were you with the training provided for your volunteer work with the Rural Fire Service over the past two years?  
BASE: RFS respondents- Far Northern (n=297)

# Reasons for dissatisfaction with training (%)



J1. How satisfied were you with the training provided for your volunteer work with the Rural Fire Service over the past two years?

BASE: RFS respondents- Far Northern (n=297)

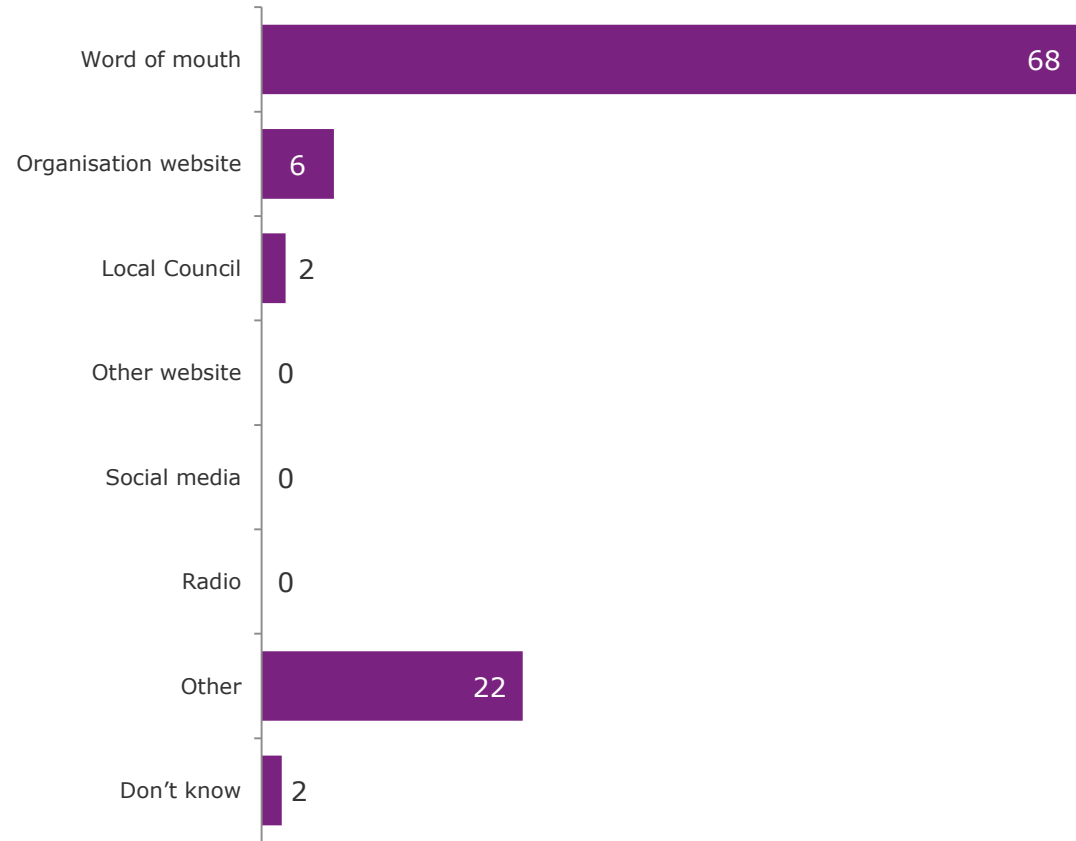
J2. What are the main reason/s for you dissatisfaction with your training?

BASE: Those dissatisfied with training (n=48)

# 2.9

## Recruitment and Intention to Continue Volunteering

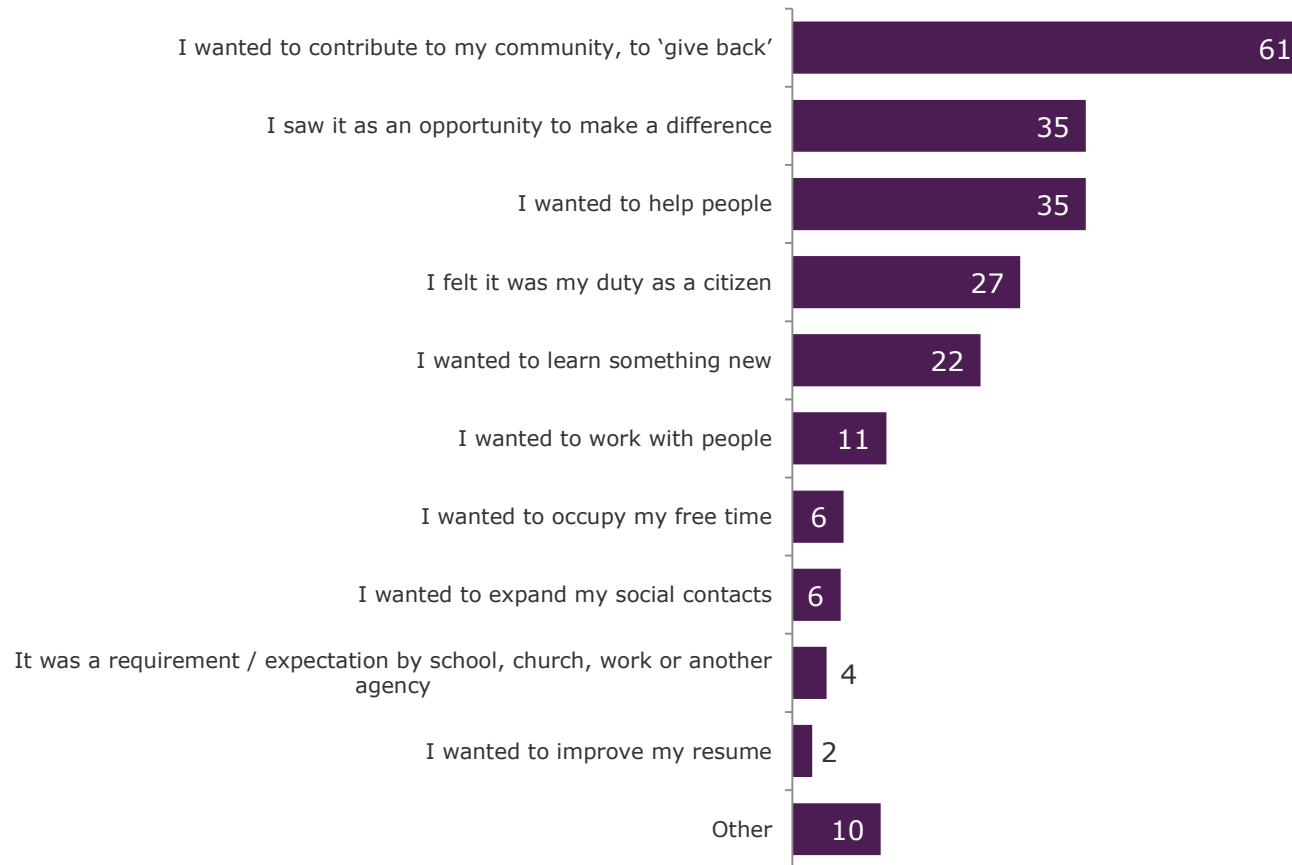
## First learnt about volunteering opportunities (%)



C1. How did you first learn about volunteer opportunities with the Rural Fire Service?  
BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

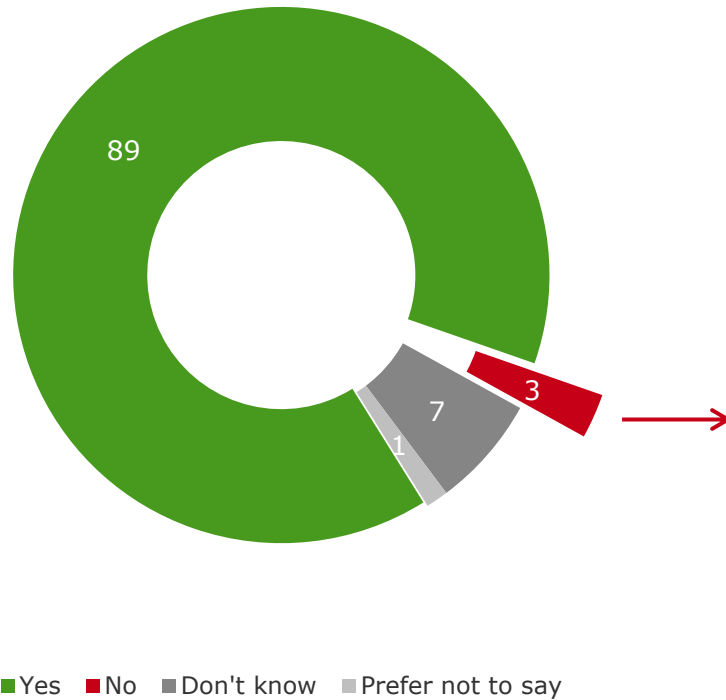


# Factors for motivation to volunteer (%)

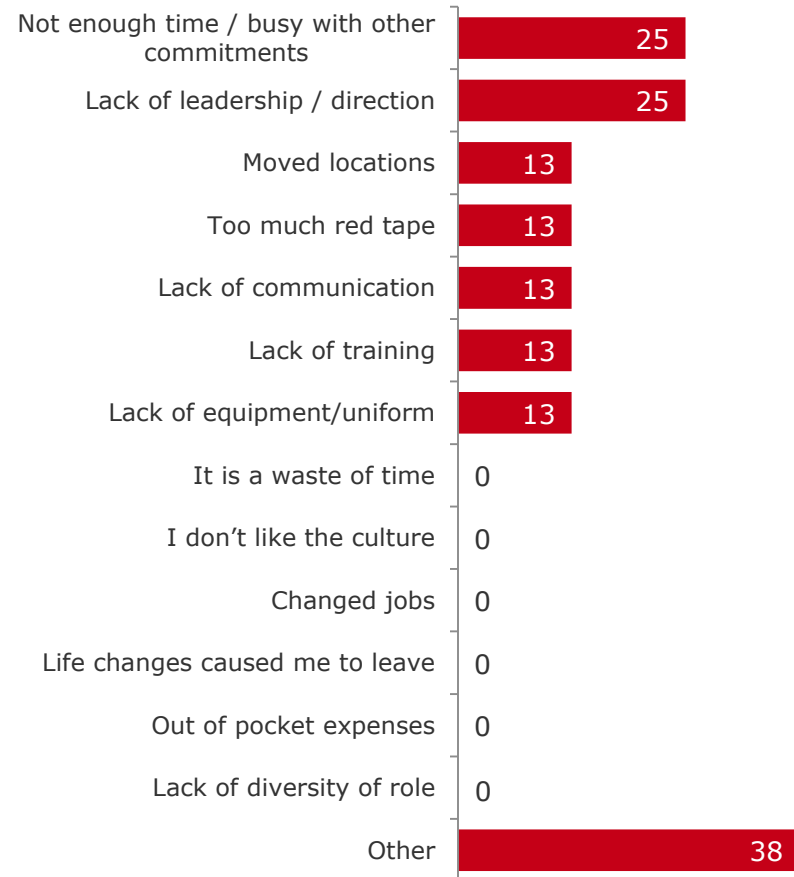


C2. What factors motivated you to volunteer with the Rural Fire Service?  
BASE: RFS respondents -Far Northern (n=297)

## Intention to continue volunteering (%)



## Reasons for not intending to continue volunteering (%)



K1. Do you intend to continue volunteering with the Rural Fire Service?

BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

K2. What is the main reason/s why you do not intend to continue volunteering?

BASE: Those who do not intend on continuing volunteering (n=8\*)

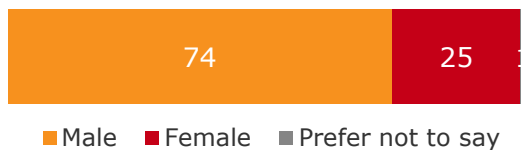
**\*Caution: small sample size – results should be interpreted as indicative only**

# 3

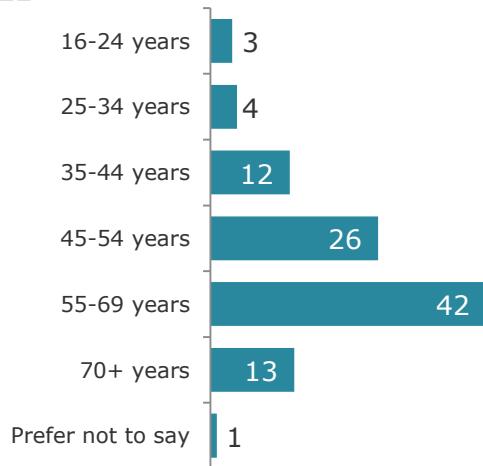
## Respondent profile

# Respondent Profile (1)

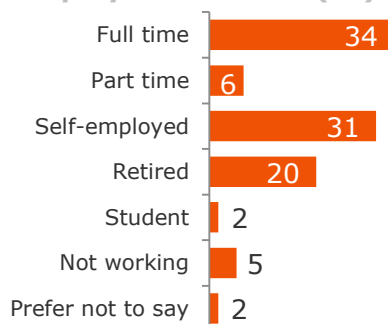
## Gender (%)



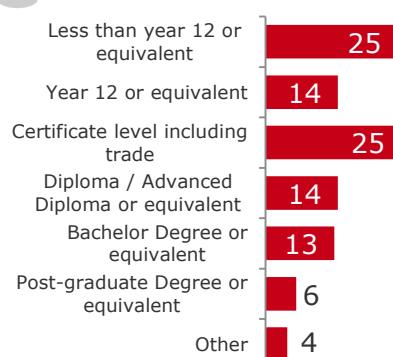
## Age (%)



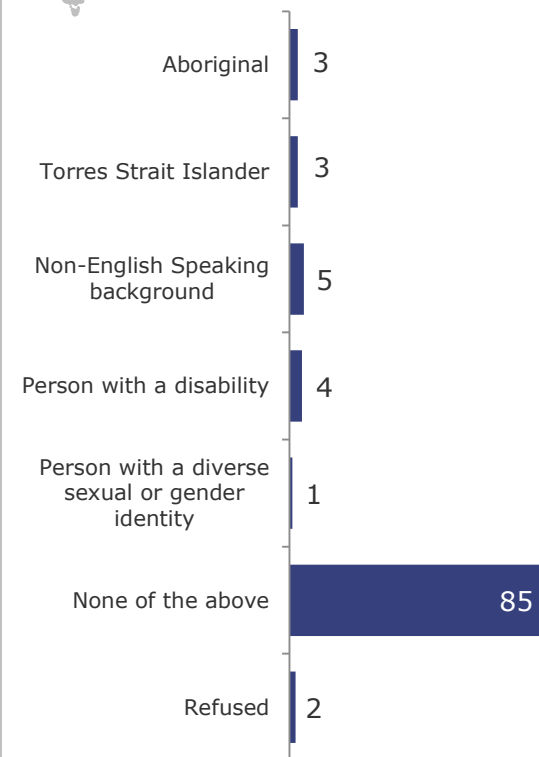
## Employment Status (%)



## Highest level of Education (%)



## Personal Identification (%)



Demo7. What is your gender? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

Demo5. What is your age? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

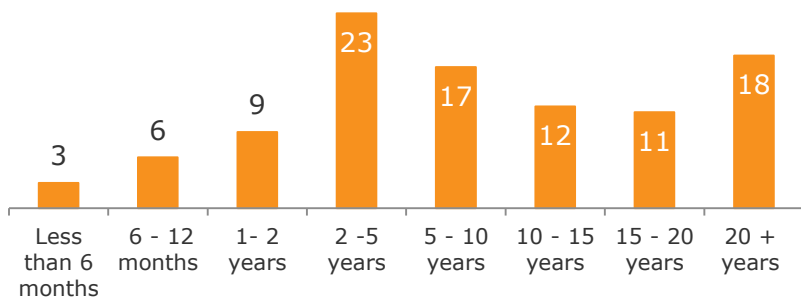
Demo1. What is your current employment status? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

Demo2. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=295)

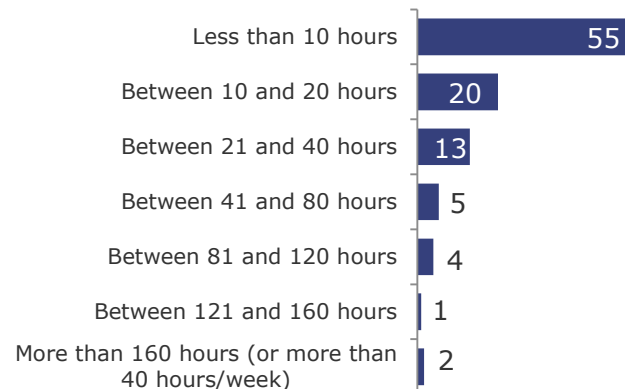
Demo8. Do you identify as any of the following? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

# Respondent Profile (2)

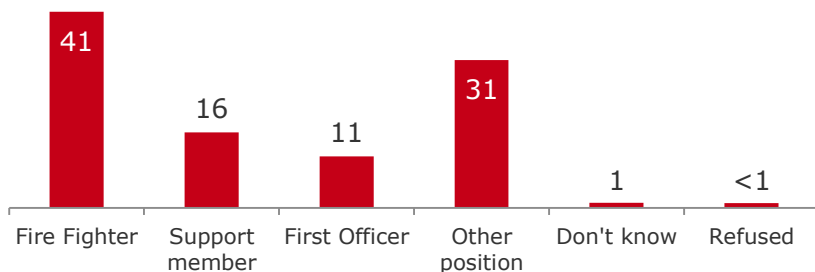
How long have you been volunteering with the RFS (%)



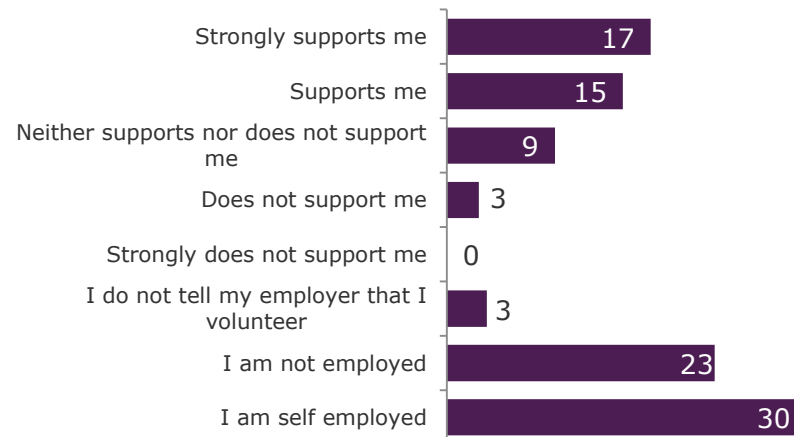
Approx. hours per month spent volunteering in past 2 years (%)



Position within organisation RFS (%)



Extent that employer supports volunteering (%)



Demo3. How long have you been volunteering with the RFS? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)  
A3. And which position do you currently hold? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)  
A4. On average, across the last 2 years, approximately how many hours per month did you spend volunteering for the RFS? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)  
A5. To what extent does your employer support you volunteering? BASE: RFS respondents - Far Northern (n=297)

# Thank you

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