



MATTERS AFFECTING THE WELFARE AND EFFICIENCY OF VOLUNTEER MEMBERS OF CFA

REPORT OF 2013 SURVEY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) engaged Dawson McDonald & Associates Pty Ltd (DMcD) in April 2012 to conduct research and devise a methodology to allow the VFBV to regularly sample the perceptions of its members on matters affecting the Welfare and Efficiency of CFA volunteers. The report from the 2012 research was lodged in July 2012. In February 2013 the VFBV again engaged DMcD to run the identical survey of volunteers to that which was conducted in 2012.

1452 volunteers completed the 2013 survey; this was an 80% increase from the 805 respondents in 2012. This represents an extremely robust sample of the views of CFA volunteers across Victoria, representing all CFA Regions, brigade types, age, gender and tenure. Respondents were asked to score each of 33 statements on a 10 point scale: firstly on how Important they believe it is for the statement to be true and secondly the extent to which actual Performance on the ground, in their perception, matches their Importance score. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide qualitative comments.

Results of the survey have identified the most important priorities for volunteers and the gaps between scores for Importance and Performance. Importance is synonymous with the Expectations of CFA volunteers.

It is important to note that in the months leading up to and during the period of the survey there were no major issues of concern, relevant to the survey in the public arena generally.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

No statements scored lower than 8.1 for Importance (In 2012 this was 8.0) indicating that all 33 statements referenced issues that are significant to the Welfare and Efficiency of CFA volunteers. Only 12 of the statements (2012 – 9 statements) scored 7.0 or above for Performance on a 10 point scale. Of the remaining 21 statements 7 scored below 6.0 for Performance (2012 – 12 statements).

The mean Performance score across all 33 statements was 6.6 compared to a mean Importance (Expectations) score of 8.7.

The mean Performance score in the 2012 survey for all 33 statements was 6.4 compared with 6.6 in 2013. Some individual statements recorded an increase in the number of volunteers scoring Performance at 7-10 (=satisfied), scores for some statements fell and yet others remained unchanged. The average change in Performance scores across all 33 statements was an increase of only 0.2, which has no statistical significance, so while there have been increases in some scores these have been very slight.

The 2013 results show that there are still significant gaps between volunteers' scores of Importance and Performance on many Statements. This means that their expectations on matters affecting their Welfare and Efficiency are far from being met. We expected in the aftermath of the Jones Inquiry and the Volunteer Charter that there would have been a marked improvement in Performance scores but this has not occurred.

The six statements recording the smallest gap between Importance and Performance scores were the same as for 2012. This was also true for the six statements recording the largest gaps.

No statement recorded a change in Performance score from 2012 to 2013 greater than 0.5 on a 10 point scale.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Performance scores for many statements have risen or fallen slightly but we regard a change of less than 0.5 on a 10 point scale as being of little or no statistical significance.

The Expectations of volunteers measured by Importance were not fully met on any of the 33 statements. For analysis the statements have been grouped in 7 clusters of like matters briefly summarised below.

Respect and Professionalism - Perceptions of mutual respect are still not strong and certainly well below where volunteers would like these to be. Perceptions of Respect and Professionalism are lowest in Northern and Western Metropolitan and Southern Metropolitan regions. CFA is seen to be doing a reasonable job in promoting **public understanding** and community confidence in the role and professionalism of CFA volunteers and their brigades, but the perception of volunteers is that the CFA does not accord them the respect they believe is merited.

My role as a volunteer – Volunteers largely regard the time and effort devoted to CFA as productive and worthwhile but are looking to CFA to help improve their volunteer/life balance, utilisation of their skills and experience, provision of opportunities to progress and better support in transitioning to non operational roles.

Co-operation- Volunteers feel strongly that they are not effectively consulted and involved in decision making at CFA corporate level and also want more consultation at local district/regional level. They also want better arrangements to allow paid staff and volunteers to work cooperatively as an integrated team and improved cooperation with CFA staff at all levels.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Support from CFA - CFA corporate policies and leadership are not seen to be supporting an effective volunteer based and fully integrated organisation. Volunteer leaders at brigade level are seen to be generally effectively supported and empowered and CFA actions to discourage workplace bullying is acknowledged.

Training by CFA – Importance scores have not changed from 2012 and Performance scores have only increased between 0.1 and 0.3. Much more needs to be done to make training available in formats at times and at locations that are helpful for volunteers, recognising that for most their availability for volunteer activities begins after the end of the normal working day.

Recruitment and Retention - A strong positive is a lack of discrimination at brigade level on gender, cultural backgrounds, different religious, political and personal beliefs. The environment across the wider CFA is seen to be volunteer friendly and welcoming to new members, with good support for new volunteers.

However the Performance scores show difficulties in recruiting and retaining younger people as volunteers.

People Management – My Brigade - People management at brigade level is generally regarded as fairly positive. Workplace bullying at Brigade level is one of the top three rated items for Importance but this issue seems to be being handled quite well with a Performance score of 7.9, although there are Expectations that more remains to be done. It also seems that some brigade leaders need support or additional training to deal effectively with human resource, conflict resolution and morale issues at brigade level (Statement 14). Statement 21 is very similar to Statement 14 but scores differently on Performance. The different scores suggest that volunteers think their brigade leaders (Statement 14) are reasonably competent in handling these matters but the entire brigade team (Statement 21) handles these more effectively as a unit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SATISFACTION

80% of respondents are satisfied with their role as a CFA volunteer (2012 – 79%) and 87% intend to continue their membership (2012 – 86%). The overwhelming reasons for being a CFA volunteer are “*to help protect the community I live in*” or “*a sense of fulfilment in supporting my community in a meaningful way*” (total 94%).

Levels of satisfaction “*with the way volunteers are treated by CFA*” are significantly lower at 57% overall (2012 – 54%). Four Regions recorded satisfaction on this item between 51% and 56% (Southern Metropolitan, Northern & Western Metropolitan, Loddon Mallee and Hume). The other 4 Regions scored satisfaction on this item at either 63% or 64%.

85% of volunteers with less than 1 year of service are satisfied “with the way volunteers are treated by CFA”. This plunges to only 69% for those with 1 – 5 years of service and after 11 years it is down to 47%.

Eastern Metropolitan significantly improved its satisfaction with the treatment of volunteers by CFA by 14 points, from 49% in 2012 to 63% in 2013. All other Regions rose or fell by between 4 and 8 points.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

10 recommendations have been put forward commencing on page 21. These recommendations include specific actions proposed by focus groups of volunteers to improve their welfare and efficiency (Recommendation 7 on pages 28 & 29). These focus groups met at Fiskville as part of the Drill-Down Project undertaken in the first and second quarters of 2013 to clarify some issues identified in the 2012 survey.

These 55,000 CFA volunteers provide the State with a **highly valuable but completely unpaid volunteer firefighting force** who risk injury and death to protect their communities and state assets.

In our opinion, given the risks they undertake, CFA volunteers have a higher right to have their Expectations fully met than people in most other organisations.

Therefore our first recommendation is that a commitment must be made by CFA, VFBV and the State government to meet or exceed the Expectations of CFA volunteers on all 33 statements in this survey which affect their welfare and efficiency.

VOLUNTEER WELFARE AND EFFICIENCY PROJECT

The Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) has a legislative role to “enable members of brigades (other than industry brigades) to consider and bring to the notice of the Authority all matters affecting their welfare and efficiency (other than questions of discipline and promotion)”.

To assist the VFBV to undertake its legislative and general duty effectively, the VFBV Board commissioned the Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Project.

In April 2012, the VFBV engaged Dawson McDonald & Associates Pty Ltd (DMcD) to conduct research in Australia and overseas and consult with a representative sample of VFBV members and others and use the results to devise a methodology that will allow the VFBV to regularly sample the perceptions of its members on matters affecting the welfare and efficiency of CFA volunteers, with the results being summarised in an appropriate Dashboard.

The report from the 2012 research was lodged in July 2012. In February 2013 the VFBV again engaged DMcD to run the identical survey of volunteers to that which was conducted in 2012.

The Principals of DMcD, John Dawson and Carmel McDonald both hold qualifications in the social sciences, are Fellows of the Australian Institute of Management and are two of only three people in Australia to have achieved accreditation by the International Society for Performance Improvement as Certified Performance Technologists. DMcD is affiliated with the worldwide consulting group of Persona Global and has been conducting research for and providing consulting services to the public and private sector in Australia, New Zealand and Asia for the past 20 years. This has included a number of assignments for emergency services organisations in Queensland, NSW and Victoria and for AFAC. John Dawson is a past President of the Australian Fire Protection Association (now the FPA).



OBTAINING VIEWS OF CFA VOLUNTEERS

Constructing the Survey Instrument:

In 2012 over 60 volunteers assisted in identifying key issues of concern to CFA volunteers in relation to their welfare and efficiency. Key themes emerging from a workshop with this group at CFA Fiskville was then used by DMcD to construct the survey instrument. This instrument was then used successfully to attract responses from 805 volunteers (for details refer to our 2012 report).

The 2012 survey instrument has been used without any change for the 2013 survey. This allows comparison of results between the two years.

Collection of Data:

Invitations to complete the survey were sent to all those who registered their interest with VFBV and also to volunteers for whom the VFBV holds an email address. A link to the survey was also provided on the VFBV website and information about the coming survey was communicated by the VFBV to brigade captains and through the Fireman Magazine.

Access to the survey was open to volunteers from 05/04/2013 until 26/04/2013. In addition to the online survey a small number of paper based surveys were completed – see Data Integrity below.

In the months leading up to and during the period of this survey there were no major issues of concern in the public arena generally that would have been relevant to this survey.

OBTAINING VIEWS OF CFA VOLUNTEERS

Expectations v Performance:

It is important to understand two aspects on the perceptions of volunteers on matters that they believe affect their welfare and efficiency so this survey instrument was designed with this in mind:

Importance – Respondents were asked to score each statement in the survey on how important they believe it was for the particular statement to be true (1 = not at all important, 10 = very important) – scores for Importance indicate the Expectations of Volunteers

Performance – next they were asked to rate the extent to which current performance matched these statements (1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree)

Where scores for Performance are lower than those for Importance, this indicates that the Expectations of volunteers have not been met.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide qualitative comments.

Data Integrity:

The tool used by DMcD to run the online survey has encryption level security (SSL). In order to ensure integrity from bias we also chose to limit each IP Address/Computer to one response thus preventing multiple responses from one PC even if used by different individuals.

DMcD monitored the responses to the survey daily and observed no response spikes that might have been indicative of individuals or groups attempting to bias the results. Questions were presented to respondents online in random order to avoid sequence bias.

Approximately 60 paper based surveys were completed. These were collected face to face from those 60 volunteers and entered in the database in a controlled environment.



OBTAINING VIEWS OF CFA VOLUNTEERS

Confidentiality:

Volunteers were given the option of responding anonymously or leaving their email address if they wished to be kept informed on progress with this project. 590 provided email addresses, while many others knew that VFBV already had their email addresses.

Sample Size:

In all there were 1452 valid responses to the survey. This included respondents from all districts and good representation across all requested demographics (1359 provided all the requested demographic data and others provided this in part). This represents a very robust sample of the views of CFA volunteers.

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) provided a generalised scientific guideline for sample size decisions when undertaking research. This stated that for a population of 75,000 (CFA volunteers 55,000+), a sample of 382 valid responses “ensures a good decision model”.

Data provided by the Melbourne University Mathematics & Computing Department shows that where the population size is infinite, then –

- A sample of 400 delivers a standard error rate of $\pm 2.5\%$
- A sample of 1,000 delivers a standard error rate of $\pm 1.6\%$

OBTAINING VIEWS OF CFA VOLUNTEERS

More precisely, calculations by research software specialists, Creative Research Systems, show that a sample of 1452 CFA volunteers from a total population of 55,000 provides a Confidence Interval of ± 2.54 at 95% Confidence Level, which is very robust (In 2012 805 valid responses gave a confidence interval of ± 3.43). By way of comparison here are three sample sizes for well known surveys that aim to reflect the views of the Australian population.

SURVEY	POPULATION	SAMPLE	%
The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA)	22,785,500	6,250	0.0003
Lowy Institute Poll	22,785,500	1,005	0.0004
Grey's Eye on Australia	22,785,000	1,000	0.00004
VFBV July 2013	55,000	1452	2.64

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes is used as a resource by teachers, researchers, policy makers and others interested in understanding the social dynamics of contemporary Australia. The Lowy Institute poll provides information about opinions on foreign investment in Australia, uranium sales to India, relations with Fiji, climate change, the war in Afghanistan and so on. Grey's Eye on Australia has been running for over 20 years and is used by major Brands for key business decisions based on population attitudes to social issues and consumption habits.

When the total population under investigation is small then the required sample size will be a high percentage of the total population. For example: using Krejcre and Morgan's method, if the total population under investigation is 200 then we would need a sample size of 132 whereas for a population of 1 million, we would only need a sample of 384. The VFBV sample of 1452 out of a total population of over 55,000 is highly satisfactory..



OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

The 33 statements in the survey were derived directly from the matters identified by CFA volunteers at the Fiskville workshop in 2012 as being the most important matters affecting the welfare and efficiency of CFA volunteers.

As noted above, respondents were asked to score each of these statements twice: firstly on how important it is for the statement to be true and secondly how they perceive performance against that statement. Scores for Importance can be regarded as the Expectations of CFA volunteers and wherever scores for Performance are lower than those for Importance, then clearly the Expectations are not being met.

In none of the 33 statements are the Expectations of CFA volunteers being fully met. The following table records the six statements where Expectations are closest to being met and the six where Expectations are furthest from being met.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

PERFORMANCE STRENGTHS

These are the top 6 statements that had the smallest gap between Importance and Performance.

		PERFORMANCE	IMPORTANCE	GAP
19	There are no barriers to the roles women can occupy in my brigade	8.5	9.3	0.8
18	People from all cultural backgrounds, different religious, political and personal beliefs are all made welcome at my brigade	8.2	9.1	0.9
4	I feel the time I devote to CFA is productive and worthwhile	7.7	8.9	1.2
23	The environment at my brigade is volunteer-friendly, welcoming to new members and creates good morale	7.8	9.1	1.3
16	Workplace bullying is not tolerated in brigades that I have been a member of	7.9	9.3	1.4
27	Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at my brigade level	7.6	9.0	1.4

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

PERFORMANCE WEAKNESSES

These are the top 6 statements that had the largest gap between Importance and Performance.

	PERFORMANCE	IMPORTANCE	GAP
26 Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at CFA Corporate level.	4.7	8.3	3.6
13 CFA provides enough training opportunities in formats, at times and at locations that make it easy for me to participate.	5.4	8.5	3.1
25 Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at my local District/Regional level.	5.8	8.7	2.9
11 CFA's workforce arrangements allow the paid staff and volunteers to work cooperatively as an integrated team.	5.7	8.5	2.8
10 CFA provides good leadership training for volunteers in people management, brigade management, conflict resolution and mentoring.	5.8	8.5	2.7
15 CFA corporate policies and leadership supports an effective volunteer based and fully integrated organisation.	5.9	8.5	2.6

These Strengths & Weaknesses show volunteers reasonably satisfied with circumstances at their brigade level but much less so in relation to the broader CFA. These are the same six strengths and weaknesses as in 2012 and there have only been very marginal changes in scores.



OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

Headline Results

The sample for 2013 at 1452 is 80% larger than the 2012 sample. All 33 statements are still regarded as very important by volunteers. The lowest score for Importance in 2013 is 8.1. As in 2012 none of the Performance scores for any of the 33 items matched the Importance scores placed on those.

Despite the much larger sample there were only marginal changes in the scores for Importance and Performance across all 33 statements. No statement changed its score by more than 0.5.

While the statements were presented to respondents in random order to avoid sequence bias, for the purpose of analysis we have grouped the statements into seven clusters of related matters. The presentation of data in graphic form for each cluster commences on page 31 of this report.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

The following table shows the mean gap between Importance and Performance for each cluster:

Clusters	2013 Scores			2012
	Performance	Importance	Gap	Gap
Respect and professionalism	6.4	8.5	2.1	2.4
My role as a volunteer	6.6	8.6	2.0	2.1
Co-operation	5.6	8.5	2.9	3.3
Support from CFA	6.6	8.8	2.2	2.4
Training by CFA	5.8	8.5	2.7	2.9
Recruitment and Retention	7.3	8.9	1.6	1.7
People Management – My Brigade	7.4	9.0	1.6	1.7

The Performance scores on the four items that comprise the Co-operation cluster each improved marginally. This cluster dealing with Co-operation and Consultation between CFA staff and volunteers again has the largest gap between the Expectations (Importance) and Performance perceived by volunteers as it did in 2012.

These scores suggest that the primary focus for improvement should be on the issues listed in the clusters for Co-operation and Training, followed by Support. At the Region level these Performance scores were notable –

- 7 of the 8 regions scored the Co-operation cluster below 6.0
- 5 regions scored the Training cluster below 6.0
- 3 regions scored the Support cluster between 6.3 and 6.4. 5 scored it between 6.6 and 6.9.



OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

Satisfaction by Region

For all respondents the overwhelming reasons for being a CFA volunteer are “to help protect the community I live in” or “a sense of fulfilment in supporting my community in a meaningful way” (total 94%). 80% of respondents are satisfied with their role as a CFA volunteer and 87% intend to continue their membership.

However the levels of satisfaction “with the way volunteers are treated by CFA” are significantly lower at 57% overall (2012 – 54%). Four Regions recorded satisfaction on this item between 51% and 56% (Southern Metropolitan, Northern & Western Metropolitan, Loddon Mallee and Hume). The other 4 Regions scored satisfaction on this item at either 63% or 64%.

Eastern Metropolitan significantly improved its satisfaction with the treatment of volunteers by CFA by 14 points, from 49% in 2012 to 63% in 2013. All other Regions rose or fell by between 4 and 8 points.

Recommend being a CFA Volunteer

Statement 37 was “I would recommend being a CFA volunteer to people I know”. It is very encouraging that a strong majority continue to be prepared to make this recommendation.

	2013	2012
Would recommend	82%	80%
Would not recommend	12%	15%
Unsure	6%	5%

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

Satisfaction by Length of Service

The principal reason for over 90% of people being volunteers is in order to protect their community. We believe this also strongly influences the preparedness of volunteers to recommend being a CFA volunteer. We believe this commitment to community is also reflected in the fact that 80% are satisfied with their own personal role as a volunteer. However satisfaction with the way volunteers are treated by CFA is much lower at 57%.

The following table provides data by length of tenure for those volunteers who scored satisfaction with their own role and satisfaction with treatment by CFA at 7-10 on a 10 point scale where 10 is the highest score available. **What is notable is the rapid fall in satisfaction with treatment by the CFA after one year's service.**

Time as Volunteer	Q34: Overall how satisfied are you with your role as a CFA volunteer?	Q35: Overall how satisfied are you with the way volunteers are treated by CFA?
Less than one year	85%	85%
1 – 5 years	80%	69%
6 – 10 years	77%	57%
11 – 15 years	77%	47%
16 – 24 years	77%	49%
25 – 29 years	82%	59%
30+ years	85%	57%



OBSERVATIONS ON DATA

Drill Down from 2013 Survey

In our report on the 2012 survey we recommended further investigation into some aspects of the data. This 'drill down' was conducted in the first and second quarters of 2013, commencing with a series of interviews with volunteers. Recurrent themes from these interviews then formed input to several focus groups of volunteers.

At Fiskville on 20th April 2013 five focus groups were each given a separate set of themes that emerged from the earlier interviews to discuss. In particular each focus group was asked to try to identify specific actions that would improve the welfare and efficiency of volunteers. Recommendation 7, on pages 28 and 29, summarises the actions proposed by these focus groups.

Recommendations and Detailed Data

The following pages present our Recommendations for action. The detailed data for each cluster and our comments on each begins on page 31.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of 20 years of consulting in this Practice we have run a large number of surveys to gather the perceptions of stakeholders on many issues. It is our experience that once we deliver the survey results the responsible organisation will act promptly to decide on and implement action needed to close the gaps between stakeholder expectations and organisational performance.

JONES ENQUIRY AND VOLUNTEER CHARTER

In March 2012 (several months before the first iteration of this survey of volunteers) the CEO of CFA issued a statement referring to the Jones Inquiry's final report and the resulting announcement by the responsible Minister of *“the six themes which now form the framework for CFA's response*

These include –

- 1. Cultural leadership to empower and support volunteerism*
- 2. Recruitment, retention, recognition and utilisation of volunteers*
- 3. Strengthening the volunteer based and integrated service delivery model*
- 4. Improved support for brigades and communities*
- 5. Training development*
- 6. Training and delivery assessment”*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the adoption of these themes and the formalisation of the Volunteer Charter we were hopeful that by the time the current survey was run (a year later) we would start to see signs of significant improvement in some of the lower Performance scores recorded in 2012.

The 2013 results do not show any significant improvement over 2012. Accordingly we are restating some of our recommendations from 2012 as well as including new ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 (similar to 2012)

Meeting Volunteer Expectations:

The 33 items scored for Importance and Performance in this survey were identified by volunteers themselves as fundamental to their welfare and efficiency and yet their Expectations are not being fully met on any of these matters.

Other research has shown that there is a continuing drift of young people to cities, less cultural commitment to volunteering among some migrant communities and overall an ageing population and increased work/life pressures. All of these impact on the number of volunteers available to the CFA.

If the CFA and State Government wish to retain what is a **highly valuable but completely unpaid volunteer fire fighting force** then the Expectations of volunteers, identified by them through this survey, must be met. People will remain as volunteers to protect their own community but unless their Expectations are met they could become quite a disgruntled workforce.

A commitment must be made by CFA, VFBV and State Government to meet or exceed the expectations of volunteers on all 33 items. This is fundamental to ensuring the welfare and efficiency of volunteers and their continuing availability as an unpaid emergency service.

The State Government and CFA have committed to the Volunteer Charter and to acting on six themes resulting from the Jones Inquiry. Vigorous action is now needed by all relevant parties to ensure the implementation in full of the principles enshrined in the charter which can be expected to contribute significantly to closing the gaps between Expectations and Performance identified in this report.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 2

Formal Review of Action:

If not already done, there should be a formal review instigated to identify action that was taken as a result of the 2012 survey and all volunteers should be advised of the results of this review.

We also strongly recommend that the CFA Board/Executive in conjunction with the VFBV should be establishing an ongoing process to review the results of these surveys, agree on specific action and advise all volunteers of the action to be taken. A measurable goal and a timeframe needs to be stated for each action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 3 (similar to 2012)

Co-operation and Consultation:

Only one of the four statements in the co-operation cluster scored marginally above 6.0 for Performance – two scored below 6.0 and one below 5.0. Immediate steps need to be taken to improve genuine cooperation and consultation at all levels between the CFA, paid staff and volunteers. This must include actively engaging volunteers in the identification, design and delivery of all processes, procedures and training relevant to their needs.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Support from CFA:

Action needs to be taken to strengthen Performance on these three issues -

NO.	STATEMENT	PERFORMANCE	IMPORTANCE	GAP
15	CFA corporate policies and leadership supports an effective volunteer based and fully integrated organisation.	5.9	8.5	2.6
28	My employer is effectively recognised and supported to release me to undertake my volunteer commitments.	6.5	8.7	2.3
30	CFA paid personnel in my local brigade/district area are committed to supporting and empowering volunteers.	6.2	8.8	2.5

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 5 (similar to 2012)

Training by CFA:

Of the three statements in this cluster dealing with training by CFA only one scored marginally above 6.0 for Performance with the other two scoring below 6.0. Early action is needed to increase the level of training available at brigade level in formats and particularly at times and locations that suit the needs of volunteers.

Special attention needs to be paid to the fact that many volunteers are employed or self employed so training during business hours is largely inaccessible for them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 6

Drill Down:

In 2012 we reported that three regions (Northern and Western Metropolitan, Southern Metropolitan and Gippsland) recorded lower Performance scores on 5 of the 7 clusters than the other five regions. Consistently low Performance scores were recorded in this 2013 survey for –

- Northern and Western Metropolitan Region (District 14)
- Southern Metropolitan Region (District 8)
- Loddon Mallee (Districts 2, 18 and 20)

Gippsland region has improved Performance with scores for 2013 matching or exceeding the average for all regions on most clusters.

We recommend more detailed investigation be carried out to establish what can be done to assist the above three regions to improve their Performance scores. It would also be helpful to take soundings in the Gippsland region to examine whether the improvement in scores resulted from specific actions or whether it merely resulted from a larger sample (the larger sample size in 2012 has not made any significant difference to the overall survey results but it could impact results where there may have been smaller numbers of respondents at segment level such as regions/districts).

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 7

Action Proposed by Volunteers:

The Drill Down Project recommended as a result of the 2012 survey took place in the first and second quarters of 2013 through a combination of interviews with volunteers and a series of focus groups at Fiskville. The following specific actions identified by the focus groups to improve the Welfare and Efficiency of volunteers should be implemented as soon as possible -

- 1) Increase grass roots interaction between catchment officers and brigade members
- 2) When volunteers visit a district office, treat them as team members not as outsiders
- 3) When formal consultation occurs ensure that CFA staff give equal time to “*listening*” as well as “*telling*” and provide volunteers with an advance agenda so they know what is to be discussed
- 4) For these formal consultations CFA staff and volunteers should agree on agenda items so that both groups can do their research beforehand. Also speaking notes on key points to be handed out at meetings
- 5) Improve induction procedures by involving volunteers in an open day at District HQ and have CFA admin staff attend brigade meetings as part of their induction
- 6) Arrange more flexible working hours for CFA staff so they can support volunteers during volunteer hours which are normally after 6pm. More flexible staff working hours would also greatly assist training opportunities for volunteers
- 7) Introduce a good, formal mentoring system for volunteers, which would be very helpful in recruitment and retention
- 8) Provide training for volunteers in conflict resolution and communication, including how to interact with the public during the stress of an incident



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 7 (continued)

- 9) Introduce recognition of prior learning in leadership and management. RPL is lacking in all areas at present e.g. Qualified paramedics are still required to do a basic first aid course through CFA before being permitted to administer first aid
- 10) Increase the availability of good operations leadership and team building courses
- 11) When new policies or changes are under consideration the volunteers test needs to be applied i.e. How will this impact volunteers?
- 12) Application of policies needs to be consistent across the whole state. At present interpretation varies from district to district
- 13) Undertake a review of the integrated model to identify what needs to be changed to make the model work more effectively and to build willing cooperation and respect between paid staff and volunteers
- 14) Reengage CFA staff in annual fuel reduction burns around townships to improve collaboration and learning opportunities
- 15) Train CFA operational staff in country situations, especially wild fire situations
- 16) Instead of having ICCs staffed by volunteers all day, put them on 30min stand-by
- 17) CFA to value time of volunteers more than at present e.g. Strike Teams are sent to an area and left on stand-by for hours with no activity
- 18) CFA also needs to take more account of loss of earnings for volunteers and demands on employers when volunteers are required to respond to matters that are not incident related

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 8 (similar to 2012)

VFBV Awareness:

VFBV needs to act to increase the effectiveness of its communication to all volunteers so that a much higher proportion become fully aware of the role played by VFBV in support of brigades and volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Ongoing Survey:

The current survey was run 9 months after the initial 2012 survey. This was planned to see whether action following the Jones Inquiry, the Volunteer Charter and the 2012 survey results would significantly improve performance results. It was also an opportunity to see whether seasonal conditions may have had an impact on survey results, which these have not.

Our more usual approach would be to run these types of surveys at no more than 12 monthly intervals so we recommend that the next survey should not be run before May 2014.

RECOMMENDATION 10 (similar to 2012)

Feedback:

Early action needs to be taken to provide information to all volunteers about the survey results and what steps are to be taken in response to the findings of this survey.

2013 SURVEY DATA - Detailed data from the 2013 survey appears on the following pages.



RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

Perceptions of mutual respect are still not strong and certainly well below where volunteers would like these to be. Perceptions of Respect and Professionalism are lowest in Northern and Western Metropolitan and Southern Metropolitan regions. CFA is seen to be doing a reasonable job in promoting public understanding and community confidence in the role and professionalism of CFA volunteers and their brigades, but the perception of volunteers is that the CFA does not accord them the respect they believe is merited.

Many volunteer comments pointed to a gap between CFA's supposed culture and the reality on the ground, differences between how staff and volunteers are treated, and the need for staff to understand volunteers and how a volunteer organisation works.

Recurring themes included;

- Volunteers being treated as second class when it came to respect, equipment and availability of training
- The need for CFA to 'walk the talk', translate its values into reality, and return to being an organisation in which volunteers are supported by staff, not the other way round
- The need for staff to be trained in understanding volunteers and volunteering, and sent to work with Brigades to gain practical experience
- The lack of promotion of volunteers' professionalism coupled with the career path of paid staff leads to staff approaching their roles in an overly dictating, controlling manner rather than supporting and empowering volunteers
- Decisions made with no consultation of volunteers or consultation just being paid lip service after decisions are actually made
- Staff receiving equipment such as PPC immediately, while volunteers had to wait, often for months

RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM

- Many volunteers seeing CFA Headquarters and District office decisions as the source of problems, while a significant number referred to ‘staff’ or industrial interference
- Many volunteers were careful to point out that it was only some staff who treated them with disrespect, while others worked with volunteers very well

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“I personally feel that as a volunteer, I and or the volunteer service generally, are not trusted to carry out our work without supervision.”

“...The lessons you teach to the youth of today, gets carried through to tomorrow. We have to remember that, we are there to work as a team, and to protect the community”

“Corporate CFA culture (especially Operations) takes no positive role in promoting the value of an organisational volunteer culture and actively promotes the view that CFA staff are "professional", and by implication volunteers "unprofessional“”

“The requirement for qualified volunteers to attend (mandatory) re-accreditation and skills maintenance sessions mid-week... demonstrates the total lack of regard the CFA has for volunteers.”

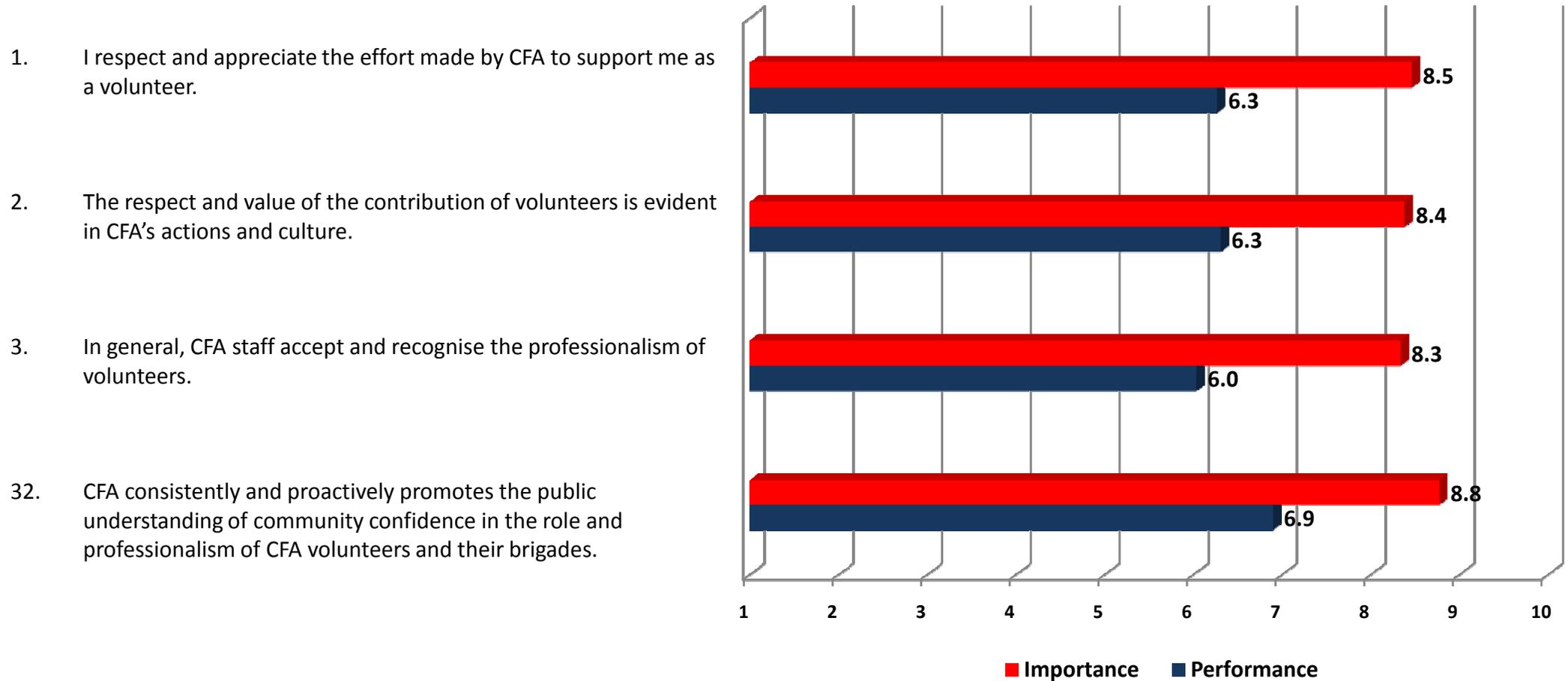
“Volunteer skills and experience continue to be ignored at larger incidents in respect to Command and Control functions (Sector Commanders, Div'nl Comm's, Op's Officers, Planning Off & Logistics Off) etc... Preferring to rely on Employees whether they are skilled in the roles or not”

“I think CFA often makes it look like volunteers have a voice by having meeting etc with them however the feedback is ignored and volunteers are impacted...”



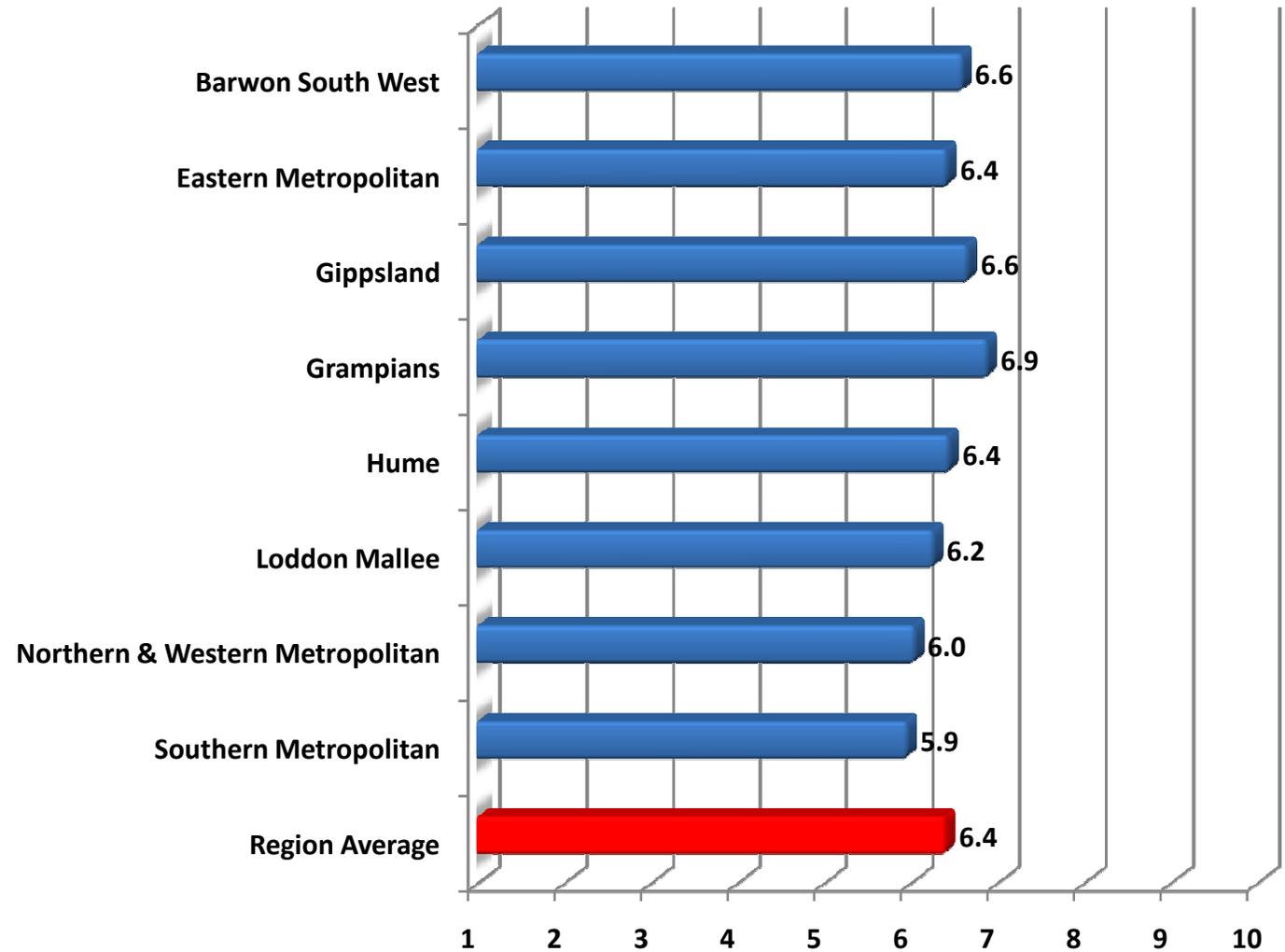
RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 4 statements in this section by all respondents.



RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for *performance* by region across the 4 statements comprising Respect and Professionalism



MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

Volunteers largely regard the time and effort devoted to CFA as productive and worthwhile but are looking to CFA to help improve their volunteer/life balance, utilisation of their skills and experience, provision of opportunities to progress and better support in transitioning to non operational roles.

Individual volunteers' perceptions of their roles often reflected how they were treated, by their own Brigade, by staff or by CFA.

- Many loved what they did as volunteers; the words 'proud', 'people' and 'community' appeared frequently
- Those who were disappointed raised issues including; the deterioration of a CFA culture that once respected volunteers, bullying by staff or their own BMT or the presence of a clique within their Brigade that was either unwelcoming to the newcomer or simply difficult to join
- Volunteers who were non-operational, older or not always available due to the demands of their own lives often felt CFA or their Brigade was not flexible enough to make use of their capacity to contribute
- Some noted that the time commitment has increased in recent years
- A lesser theme was the cost to employers or to the individual in lost time at work

MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“I have noticed that our brigade is losing many practical people who are the backbone in our brigade, due to the time demands the CFA and the brigade are making. Many years of experienced fire-fighting is being lost...”

“the CFA is becoming less user friendly to those volunteers who want to help without making the CFA the centre of their lives”

“CFA takes absolutely NO cogniscence of the skills I carry through the door”

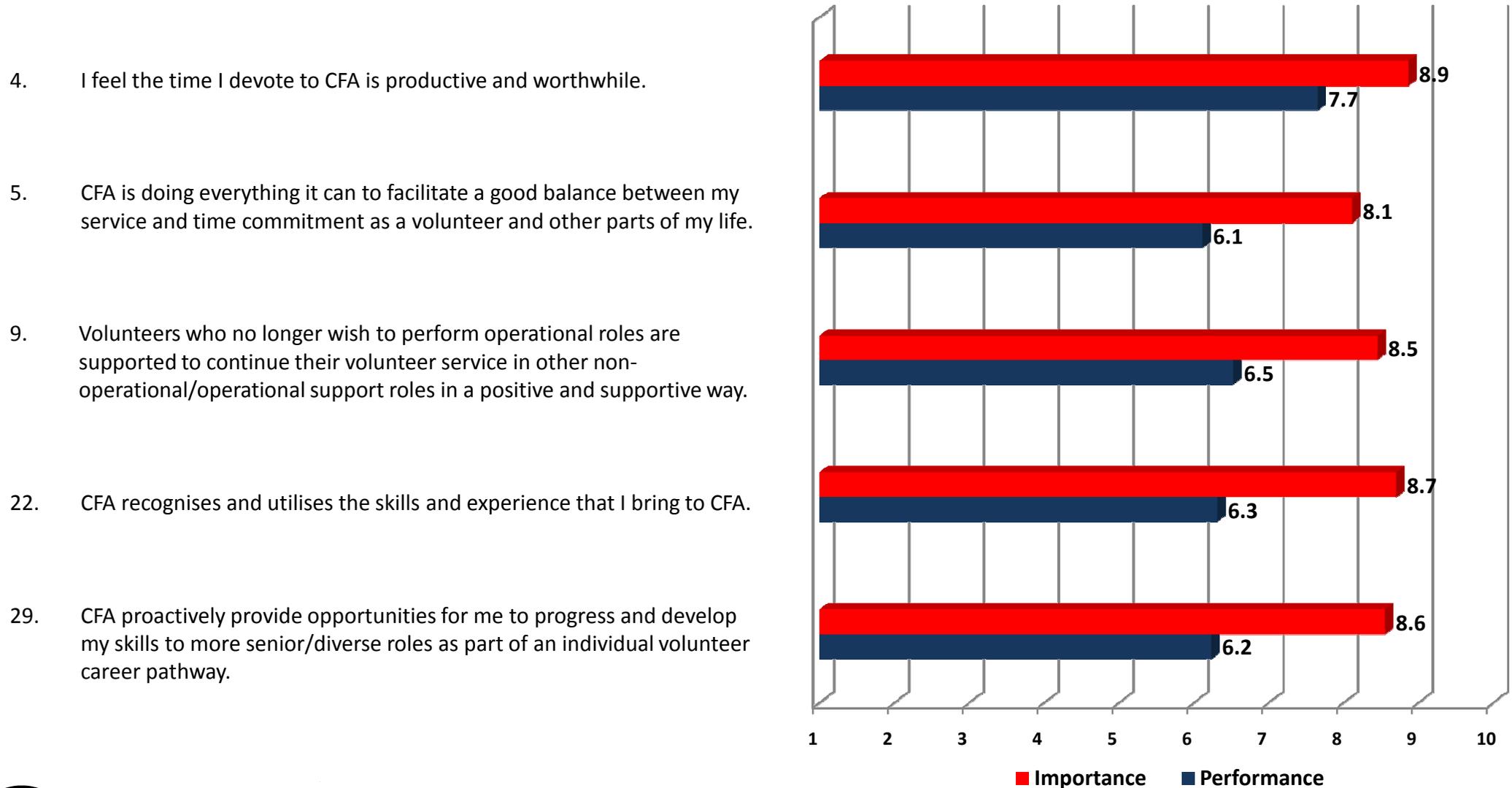
“the paid staff career path is all important and often conflicts with the best person for the job ideal. Volunteers suffer from this unequal, discriminatory practice”

“I would rate joining the CFA as a volunteer as one of the most rewarding decisions I have made. The skills I have learn and the camaraderie amongst members is invaluable, particularly on Strike Teams”

“I personally feel that as a volunteer, I and or the volunteer service generally, are not trusted to carry out our work without supervision.”

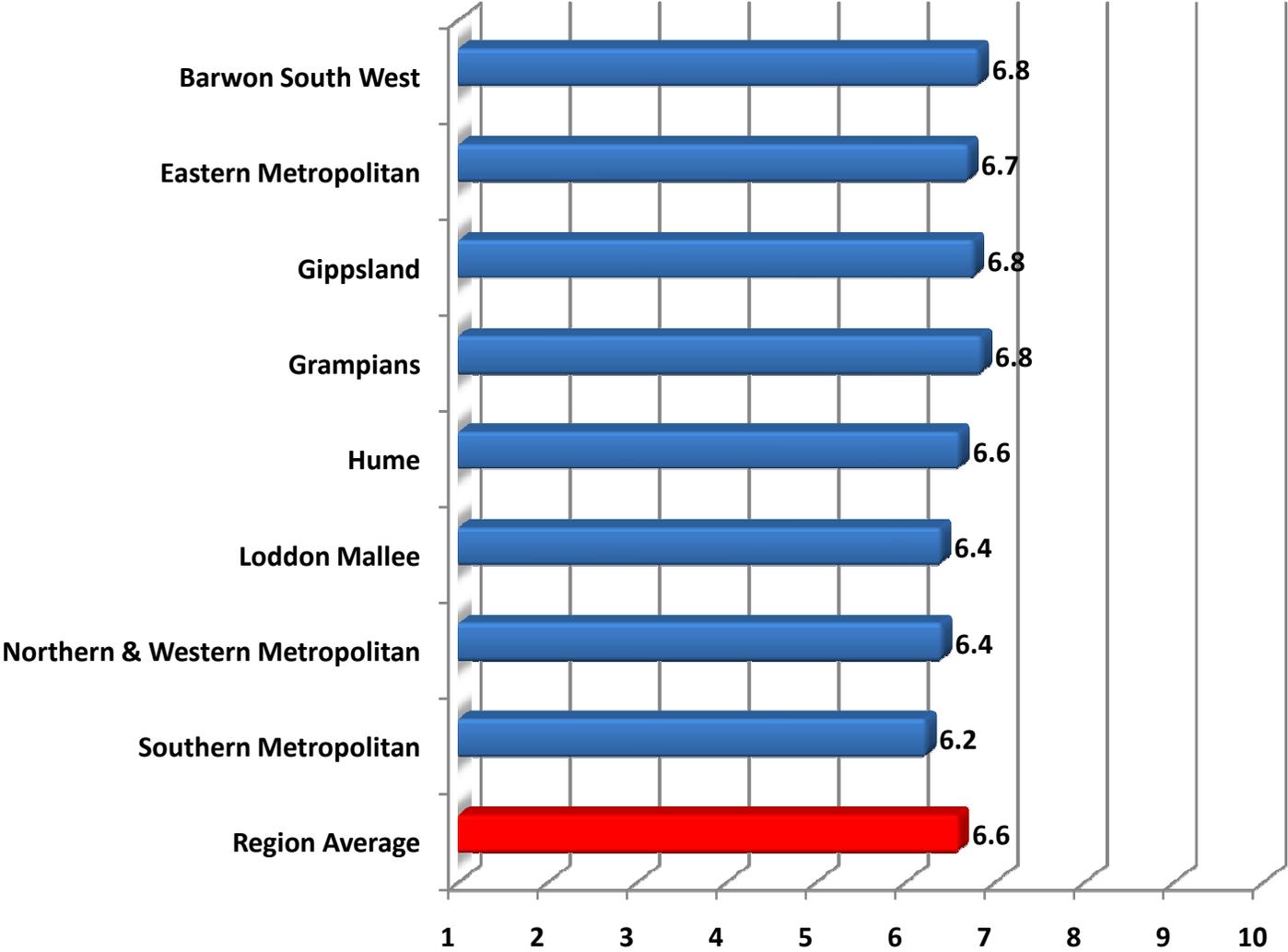
MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 5 statements in this section by all respondents.



MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for *performance* by region across the 5 statements comprising My Role as a Volunteer



CO-OPERATION

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

Volunteers feel strongly that they are not effectively consulted and involved in decision making at CFA corporate level and also want more consultation at local district/regional level. They also want better arrangements to allow paid staff and volunteers to work cooperatively as an integrated team and improved cooperation with CFA staff at all levels.

Many respondents felt the need for better communication and co-operation.

- There was a strong theme of CFA decisions being announced without any discussion and a lesser one of perceived industrial issues intruding into the way CFA and Brigades operate
- Volunteers pointed to the need for CFA to listen to Brigades and volunteers more before making decisions, and several raised the recent pager rollout as a bad example
- Volunteers also saw the need for better communication and co-operation with staff, with frequent changes in local staff sometimes preventing the building of good relationships
- Respondents wanted a better connection with CFA and made suggestions including having BASOs Brigade-based rather than District-based, and rostering some staff onto afternoon/evening shifts so they could attend Brigade meetings
- Some had concerns with co-operation within their own Brigades, suggesting cliques sometimes formed that made it difficult for some members to take part
- Some volunteers were very concerned by other agencies' actions or decisions affecting CFA volunteers on the fireground



CO-OPERATION

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“My overall experience within my brigade has been a great one and I very much enjoy my time there...”

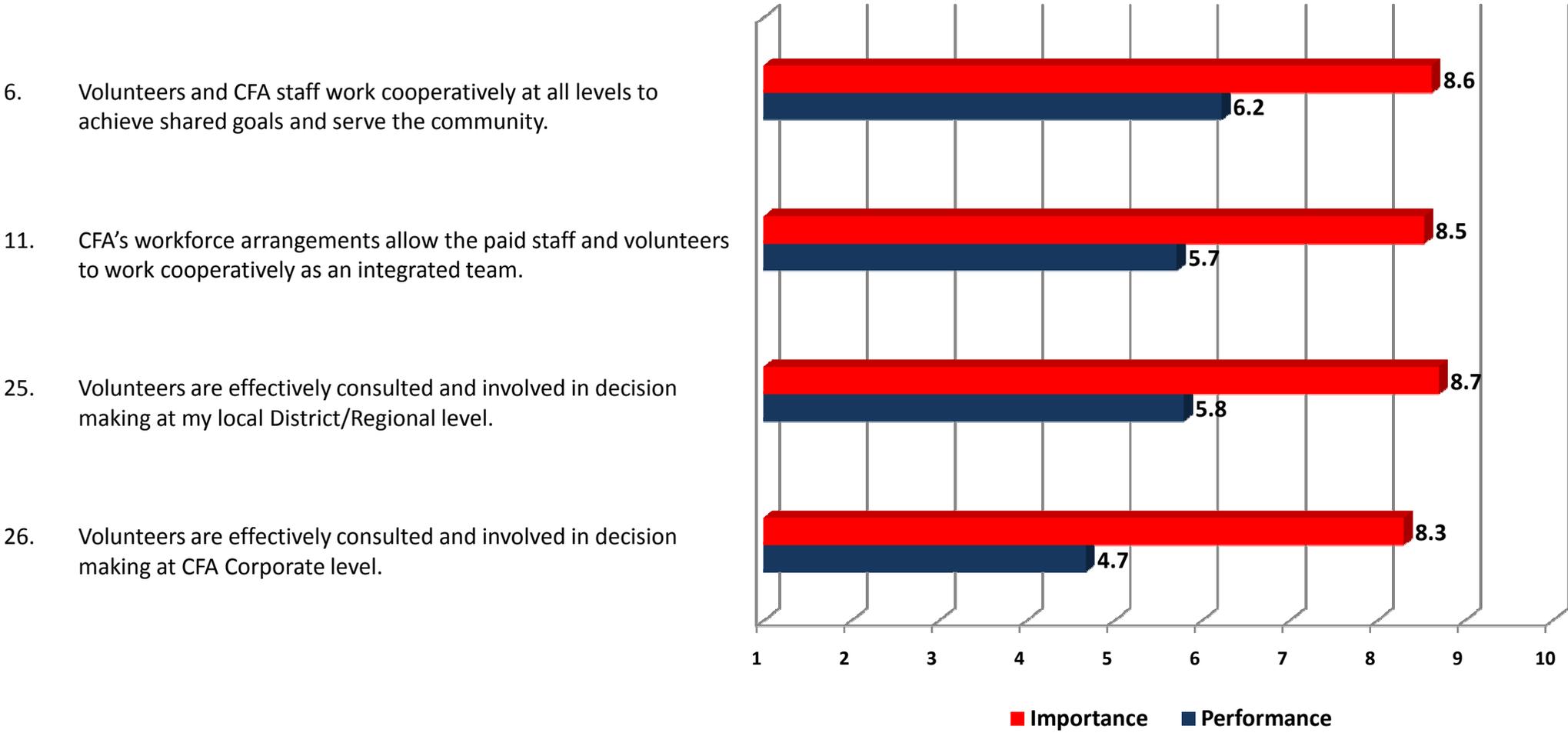
“I believe CFA has improved its methods of communication over the last 12months to volunteers. However sometimes this has been to the detriment of following a consistently traceable flow of info. Meaningful input from volunteers on their needs and requirements still requires improvement. Not just token "consultation".”

“I love being in the CFA, it is one of the best things I have done in my life but I am at a loss to understand why volunteers are sometimes treated with such disrespect by paid staff. To be fair, there are a number of station staff I deal with on a regular basis who are terrific but it does not take many interactions with the CFA bureaucracy (and some station staff) to get the feeling that they would perhaps like it better if all of us volunteers just went away”

“There is too often a lack of contact with Brigades on matters which require Brigade input or knowledge of what is happening in their area”

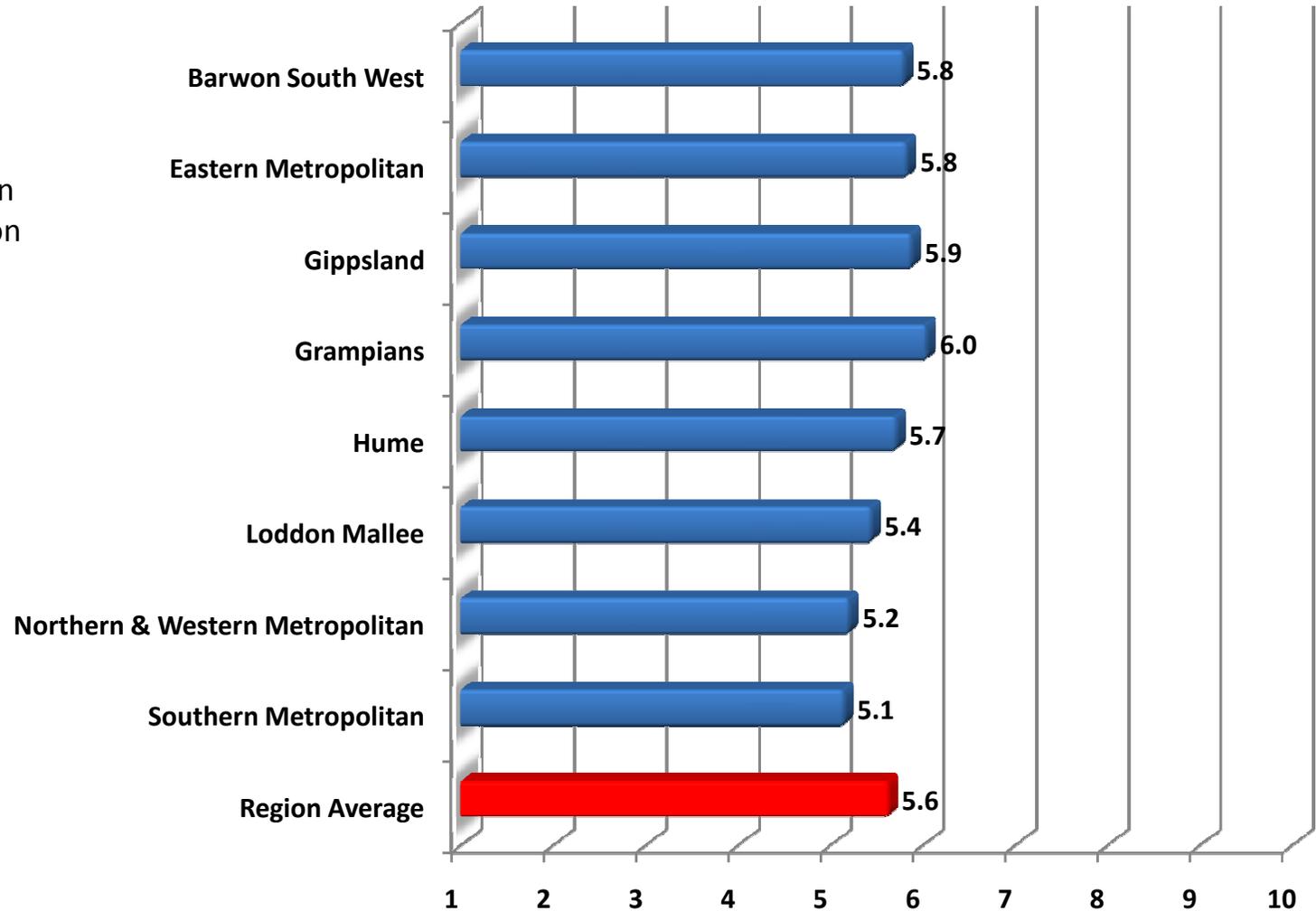
CO-OPERATION

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 4 statements in this section by all respondents.



CO-OPERATION – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for **performance** by region across the 4 statements comprising Co-operation



SUPPORT FROM CFA

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

CFA corporate policies and leadership are not seen to be supporting an effective volunteer based and fully integrated organisation.

Volunteer leaders at brigade level are seen to be generally effectively supported and empowered and CFA actions to discourage workplace bullying is acknowledged.

This area brought a large proportion of comments from respondents, mostly with practical issues directly affecting them at Brigade level

- Many were issues with CFA's handling or supply of pagers, PPC, other equipment, training and toilets, and a number of volunteers connected the problems with perceived CFA budget cuts
- A recurring theme was the observation that staff receive equipment as soon as it is requested where volunteers have to wait
- A number of respondents referred to bureaucracy in general, or to specific issues such as changing qualification requirements for training or gear, or different rules applying in different Districts
- Some respondents felt strongly that CFA must better support or train BMTs and District staff in dealing with conflict or morale issues

SUPPORT FROM CFA

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers (across the state there appear to be quite mixed experiences, as reflected in the comments):

“VOLUNTEERISM – CFA is clearly making an intensive effort to support volunteers more than before, and this shows in the written material and on the ground”

“The CFA and its support personnel are not very good at dealing with brigade personnel conflict issues. The issues are just allowed to continue and fester while those at the heart of the issues are not called to account for themselves and their behaviour..”

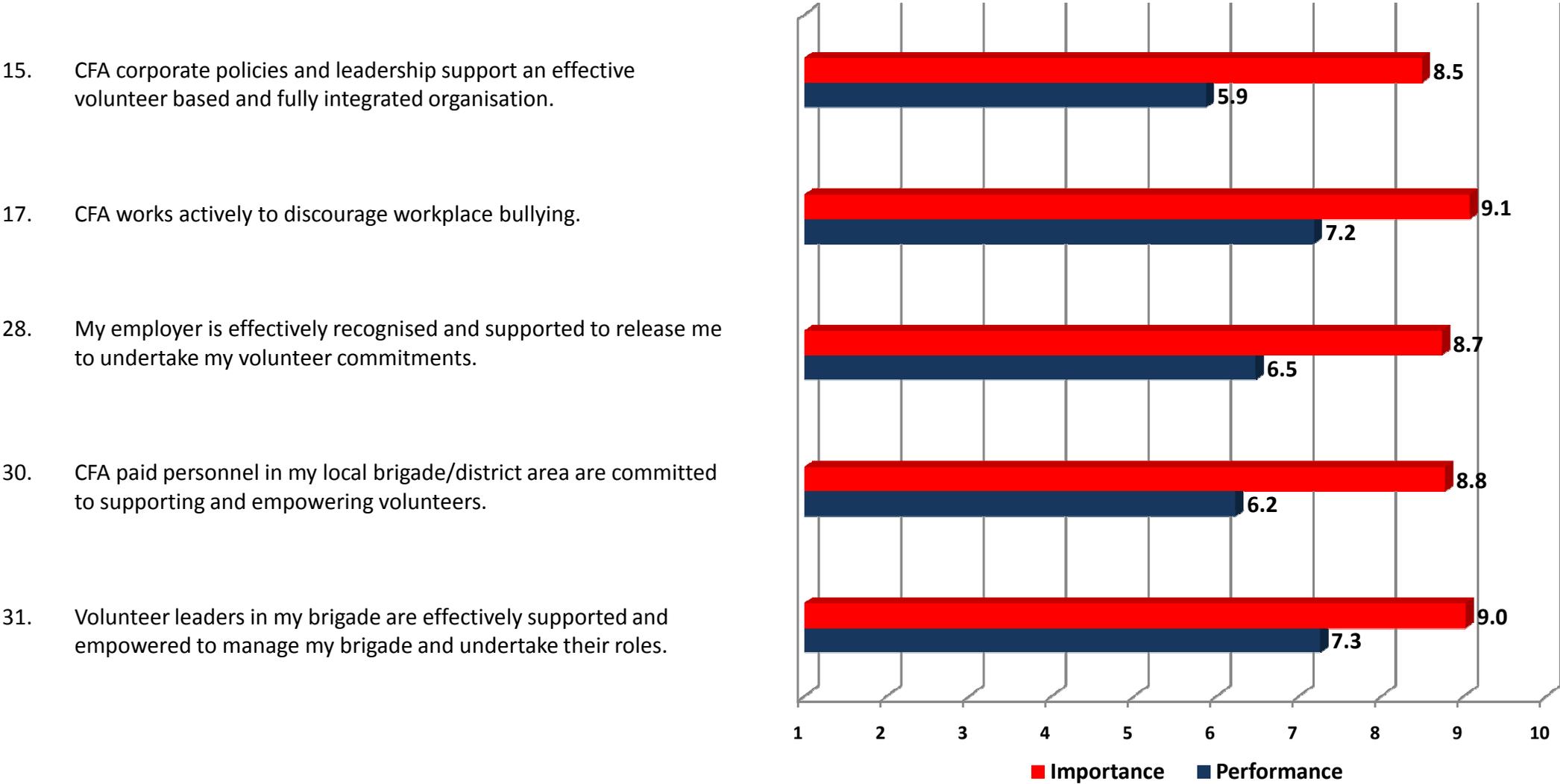
“Get regional staff professionals to live by the policies and procedures promoted by the CFA Board. At the moment the many goals, policies, objectives, programs and procedures are just seen as background noise that can be generally ignored when they don't suit the personal wishes of some officers, but are quoted verbatim when required to support their personal agendas, which can be and are many and varied. “

“Volunteer brigades get no money or equipment yet staff stations get anything they desire handed to them with no expense spared.”

“CFA really needs to have more involvement in brigades that are having issues with the BMT,”

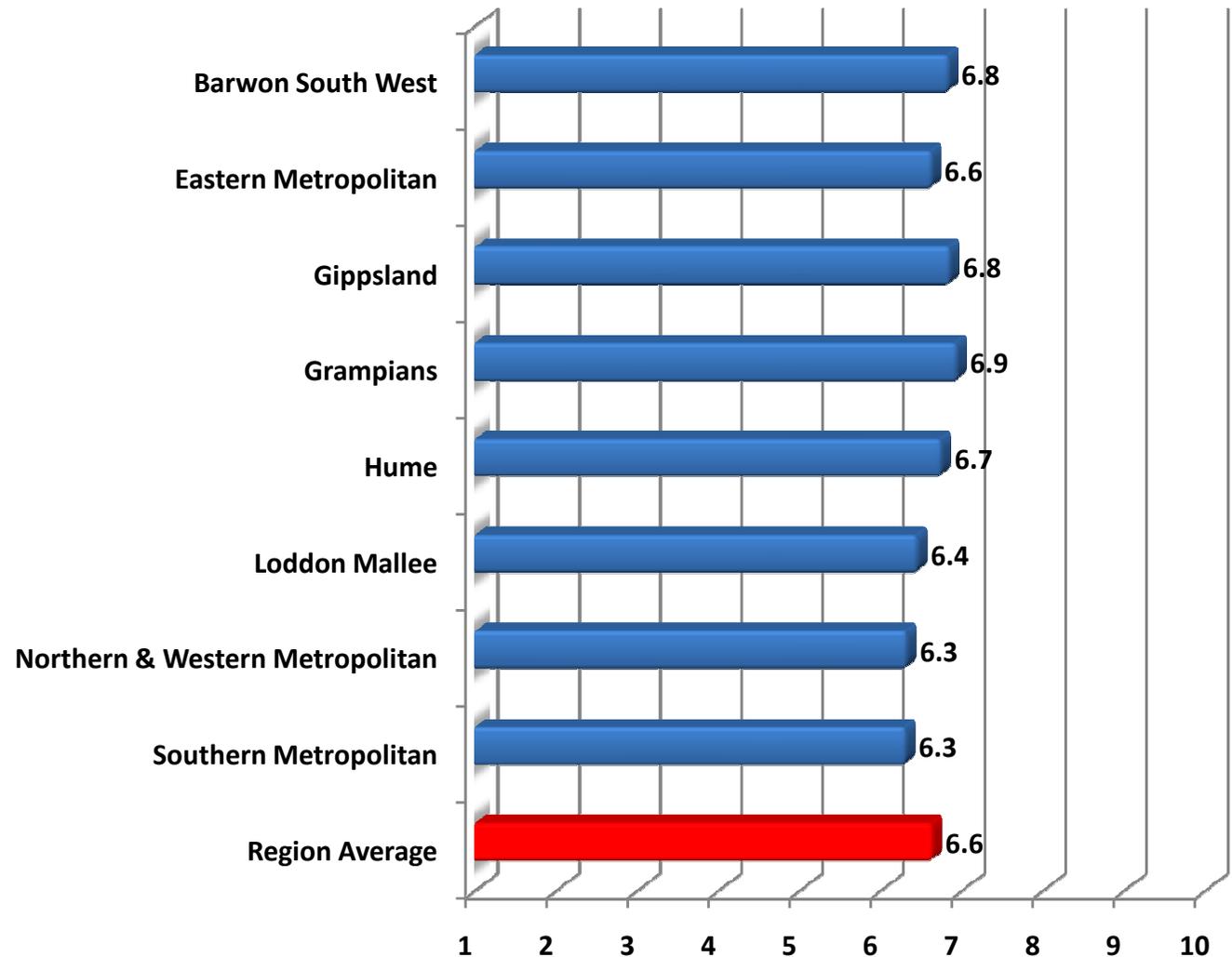
SUPPORT FROM CFA

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 5 statements in this section by all respondents.



SUPPORT FROM CFA – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for *performance* by region across the 5 statements comprising Support from CFA



TRAINING BY CFA

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

Importance scores have not changed from 2012 and Performance scores have only increased between 0.1 and 0.3. Much more needs to be done to make training available in formats at times and at locations that are helpful for volunteers, recognising that for most their availability for volunteer activities begins after the end of the normal working day.

As it has been the case in past official inquiries, training is high on the volunteers' list of concerns.

- Most respondents mentioned the shortage of courses or delays of months or years
- Another recurring theme was inconvenience, with courses held midweek during the day, only in certain locations, or demanding many days away from the volunteers' regular jobs
- Some objected to CFA's limits on the numbers of courses available to individual brigades
- A number urged CFA to put courses online to offer convenience of both time and location
- Several felt that staff receive the training they need, while volunteers often miss out
- Some felt ICC training was hard to get, others had undertaken it but not been given the opportunity to put it into practice
- Another theme was CFA's rejection of outside qualifications, including one from New South Wales' RFS
- Those who had become Secretary or Treasurer felt they needed far more preparation and support from CFA than being referred to the Brigade Management Manual
- A number had clearly become frustrated and felt training was unobtainable. Comments included; "absolutely appalling", "I've been waiting over 2 years", "massive problems with District staff and training", "this District's training regime is in tatters", and "what's training?"



TRAINING BY CFA

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“Training courses are generally good, but there are nowhere near enough courses held to satisfy demand in our area”

“Largest issue facing our brigade is lack of suitable training courses and the lack of encouragement of brigade members (despite being qualified) to conduct these courses. Over a period of time our skills related to risk have declined. Training will not listen even to Operations Staff! “

“Training opportunities in my district for Volunteers is absolutely appalling. There is no support or opportunity to do the courses we need to do to gain skills to be able to do BA and Search and Rescue etc. “

“A lot of information and training is "Staff" Only thus discouraging volunteers to ever take up these courses. It also makes volunteers feel worthless and degraded as they are not getting the same treatment as Paid Staff.”

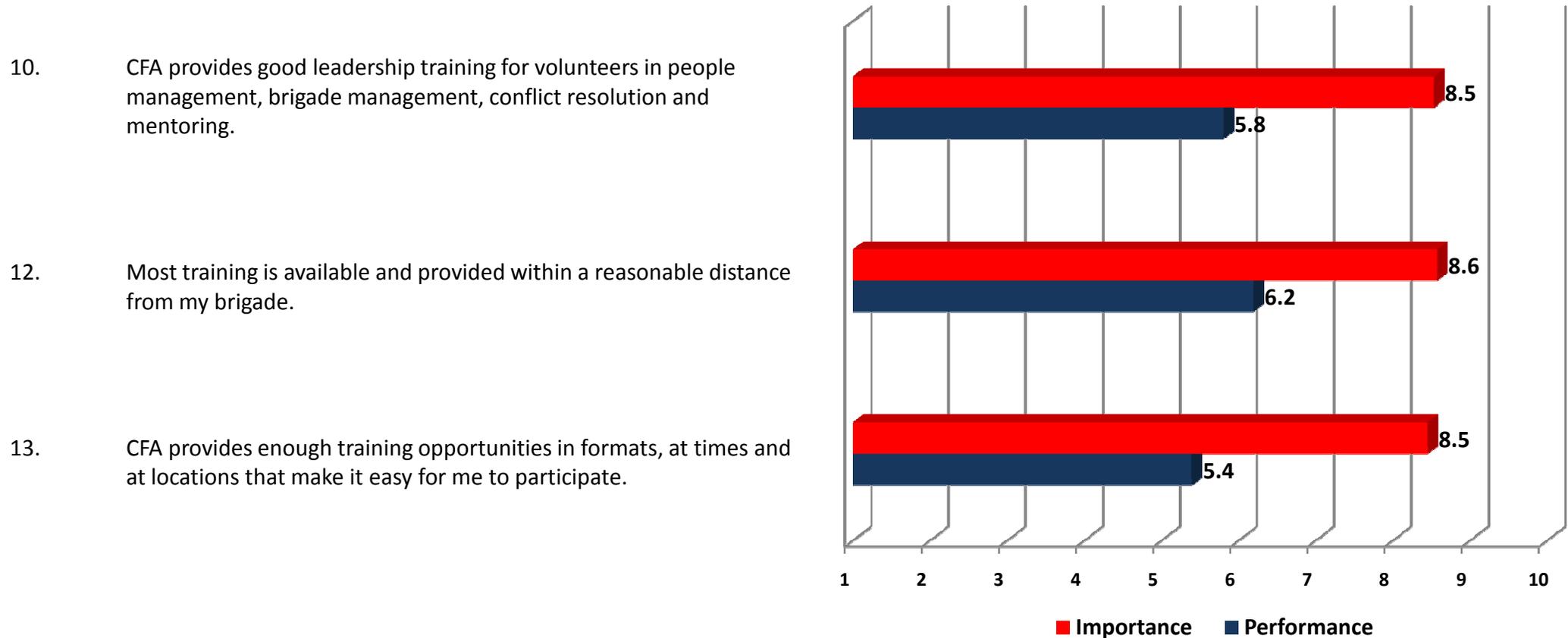
“We have members who have been waiting for months and years for places in training courses to be provided within a reasonable distance - fire-line and crew leadership, BA, driving, plant and equipment and many others. The current volunteer training program is inadequate”

“Staff get new courses and skills maintenance, why are vols left out.”

“The lack of training available for volunteers in the ICC is a great disappointment for me. ”

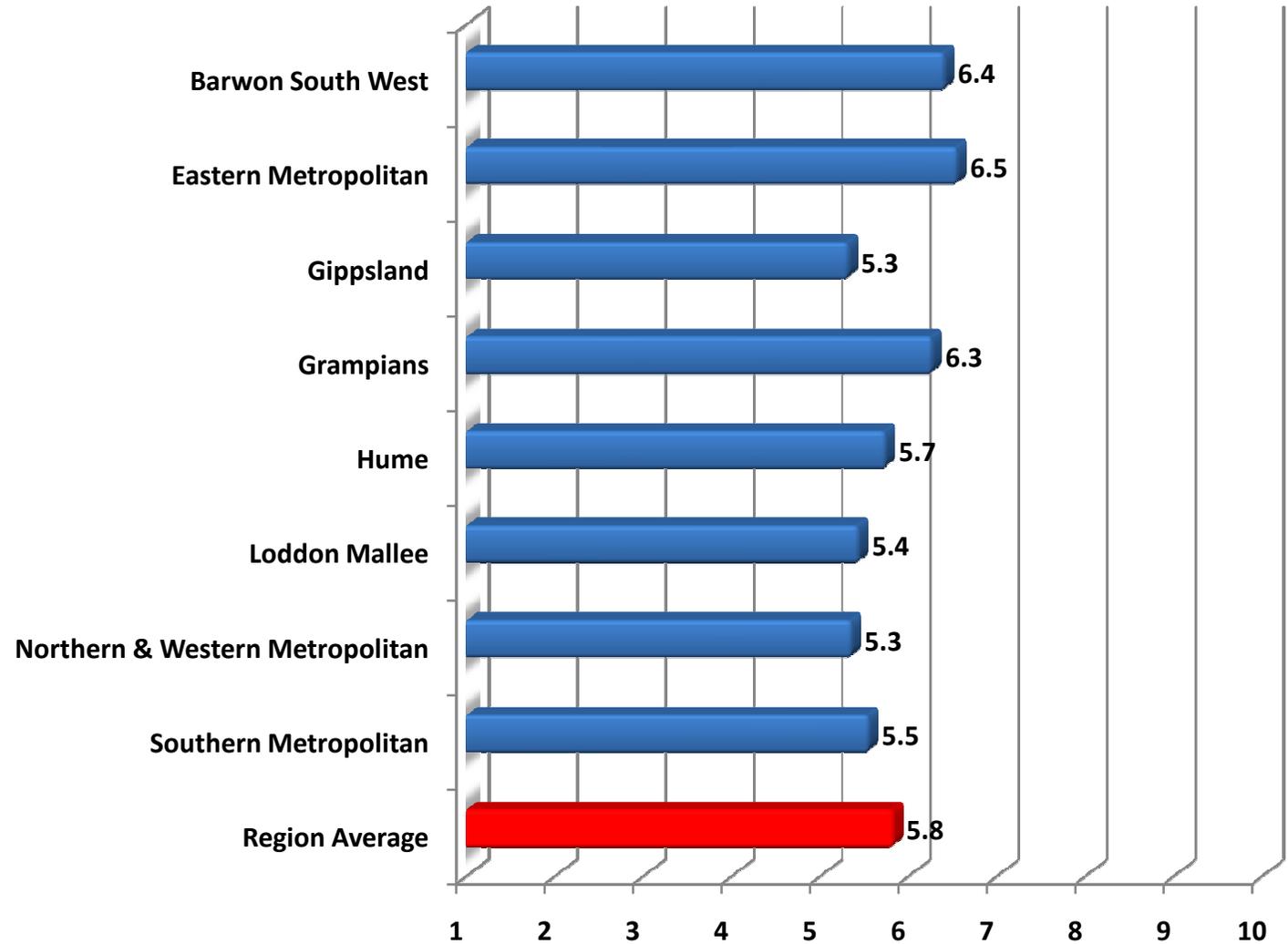
TRAINING BY CFA

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 3 statements in this section by all respondents.



TRAINING BY CFA – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for *performance* by region across the 3 statements comprising Training by CFA



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

A strong positive is a lack of discrimination at brigade level on gender, cultural backgrounds, different religious, political and personal beliefs. The environment across the wider CFA is seen to be volunteer friendly and welcoming to new members, with good support for new volunteers .

However the Performance scores show difficulties in recruiting and retaining younger people as volunteers.

The issues of recruitment and retention fell into a series of major themes;

- The difficulty of recruiting young people and the need for CFA to support Brigades in recruiting them
- Women and people from non-English speaking backgrounds as groups to be encouraged
- The need for active roles for older volunteers no longer suited to front line firefighting but still wanting to contribute
- Support and recognition for important, non-firefighting roles, like Brigade Secretary
- The effect of integration on some Brigades, relegating their volunteers to a last resort
- Other issues mentioned included the need for lateral entry for volunteers to take up staff positions, and the need to better educate the public on the value of volunteers and volunteering



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“Our last lot of recruits finished their minimum skills 6 months ago and are still waiting on gear from district headquarters. As a result, they can't turn out and many have been available for the fires this season but could not go. Great way to retain the new volunteers we struggle to find and train up CFA!”

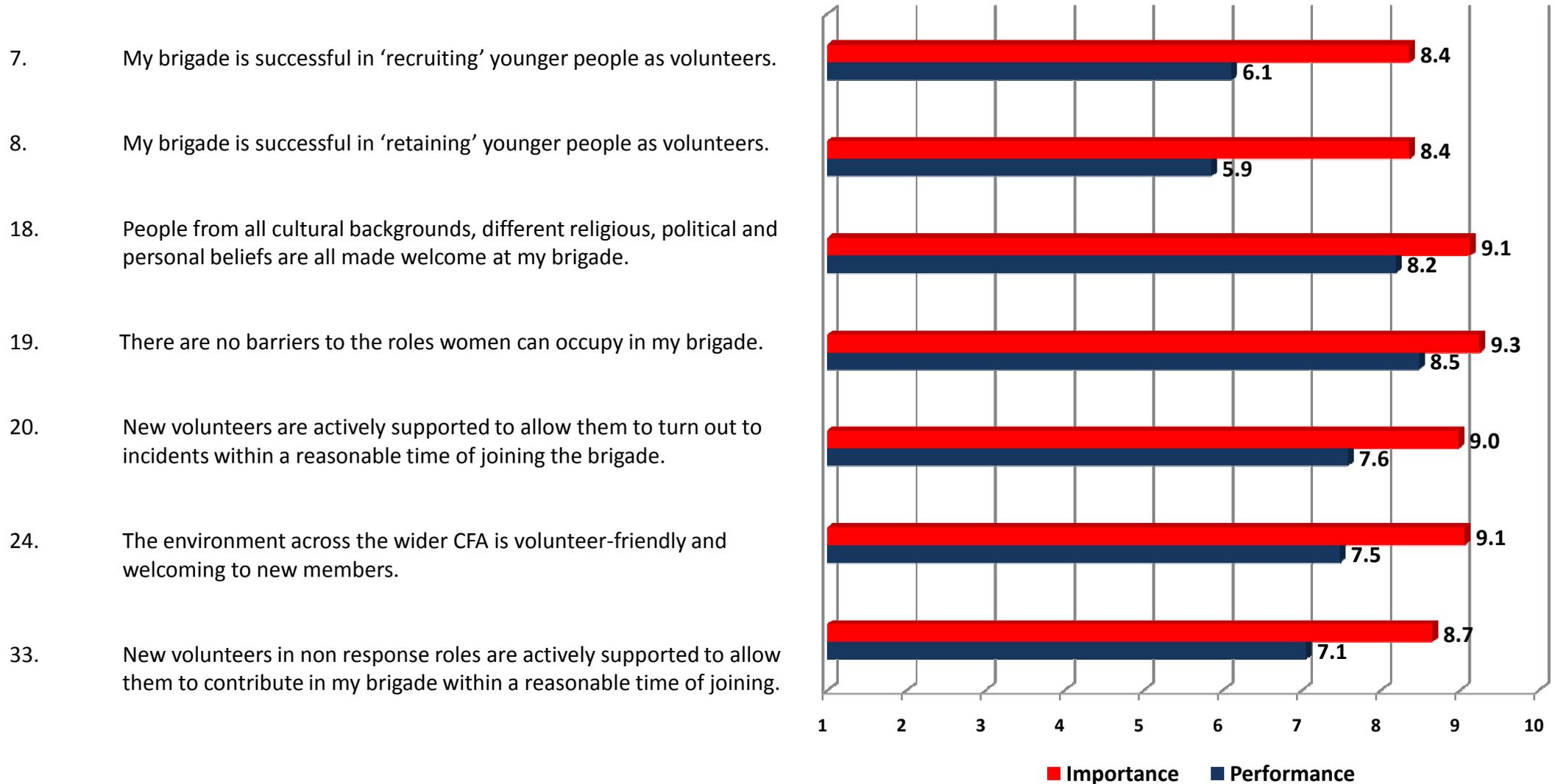
“It is getting very hard to recruit younger members in rural brigades”

“I believe there are not enough roles for people who can no longer lift the heavy equipment on appliances”

“There still isn't enough voice from VFBV about how to tackle female and CALD community member recruitment and retention.”

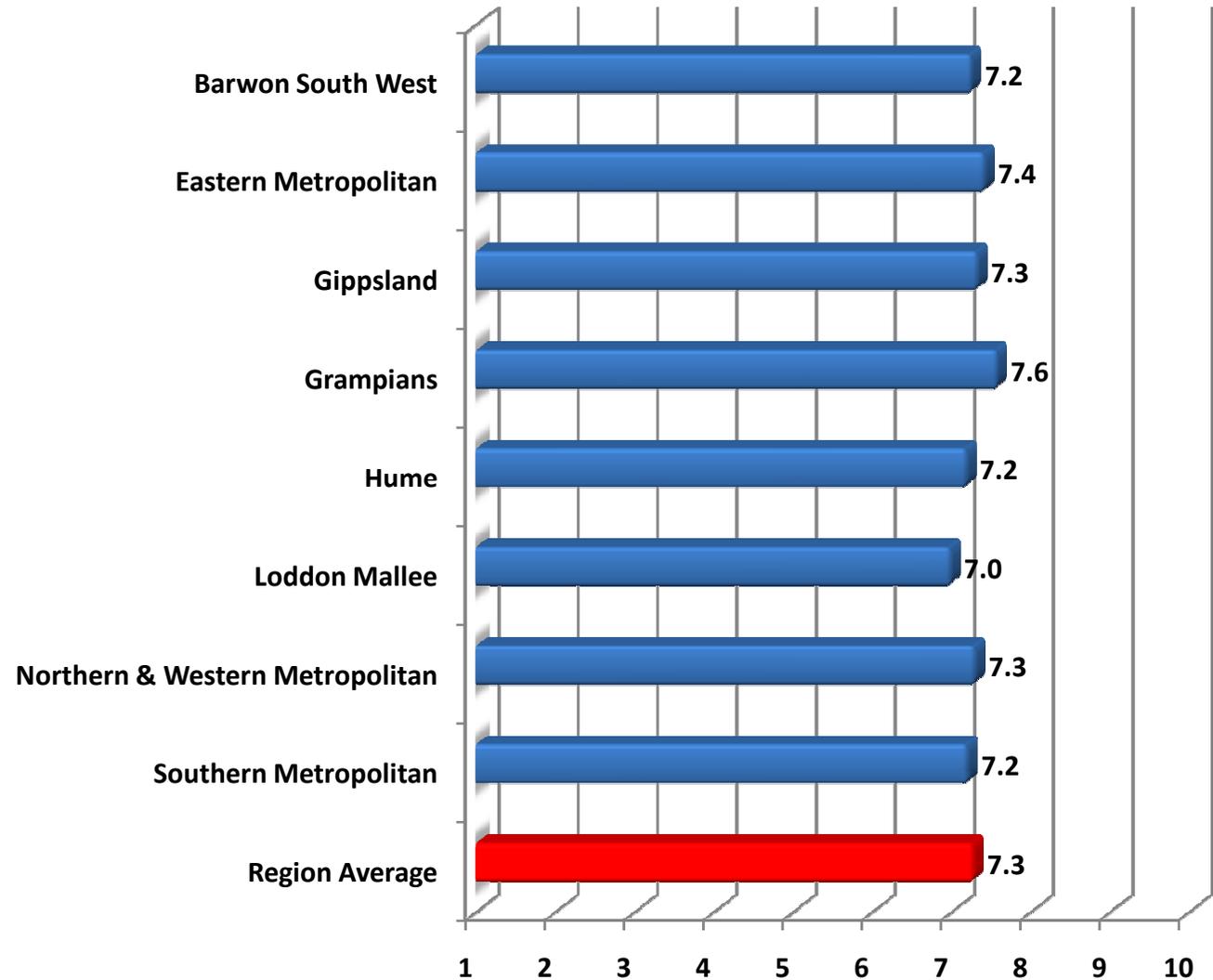
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 7 statements in this section by all respondents.



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for **performance** by region across the 7 statements comprising Recruitment and Retention



PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE

There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

People management at brigade level is generally regarded as fairly positive. Workplace bullying at Brigade level is one of the top three rated items for Importance but this issue seems to be being handled quite well with a Performance score of 7.9, although there are Expectations that more remains to be done. It also seems that some brigade leaders need support or additional training to deal effectively with human resource, conflict resolution and morale issues at brigade level (Statement 14). Statement 21 is very similar to Statement 14 but scores differently on Performance. The different scores suggest that volunteers think their brigade leaders (Statement 14) are reasonably competent in handling these matters but the entire brigade team (Statement 21) handles these more effectively as a unit.

The people management issues raised often centred on the need for better skills and support for Brigade Management Teams. At times that meant ending bullying or exclusion, but mostly it focused on the need to support BMTs made up of people chosen for their firefighting rather than their administration and people management skills.

Other issues included;

- The need for CFA leadership, administration and management training and support for BMTs, and possibly the introduction of specific qualifications for BMT members
- Direct CFA support to BMTs needing assistance or managing conflict
- The need for CFA to support BMTs in succession planning
- The need to define roles for non-operational volunteers so they can be retained



PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE

- Better resource management on the fireground so volunteer morale isn't ground down by wasted time and menial tasks
- A growing lack of understanding of volunteer values as Ops Officers are chosen from station staff

These comments are representative of the views of a number of volunteers

“Capacity to manage conflict and HR issues is not supported. Captains and Lts are elected on popularity not competency and training / development does not support inexperienced or under skilled people in those roles. People are left to do their best, without much support. “

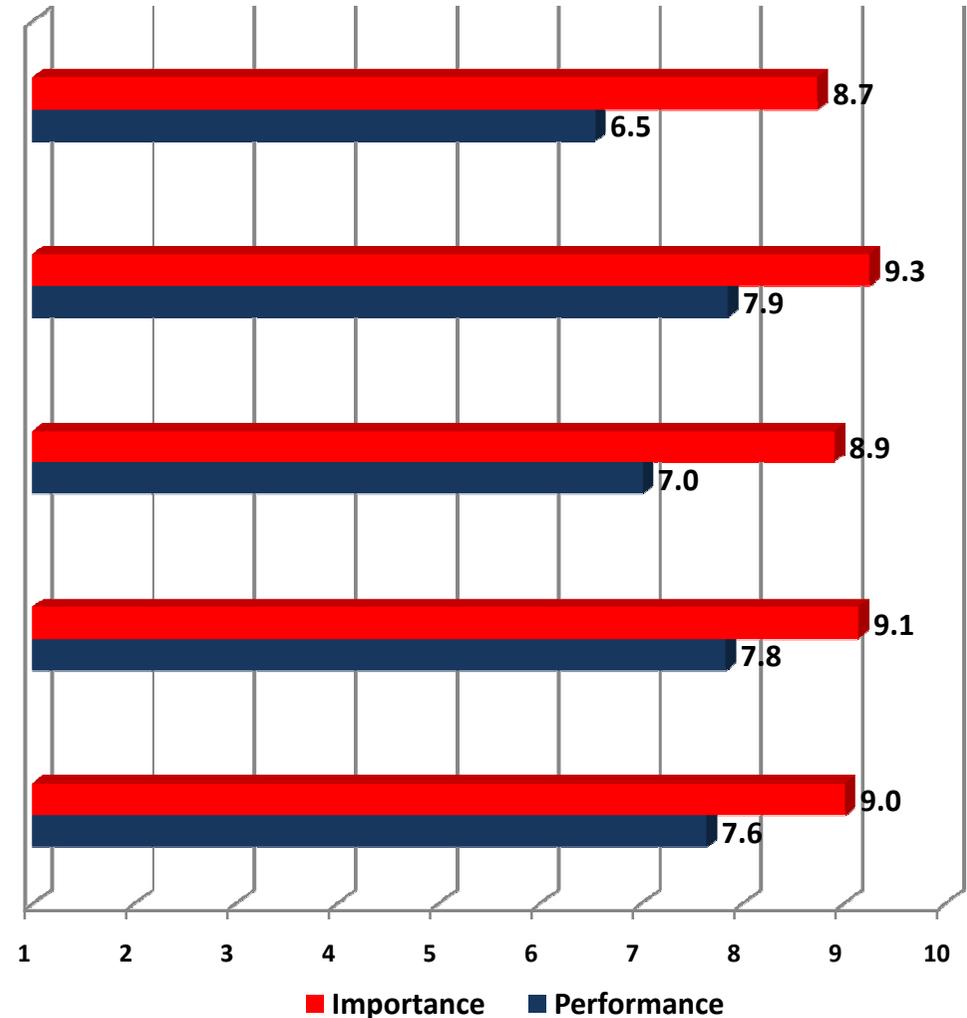
“We promote through the ranks based on fireground skills not people management skills. We are a long way off being free from bullying or being inclusive of women let alone the cultural diverse.”

“Leaders in brigades should be made to take part in leadership training.”

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE

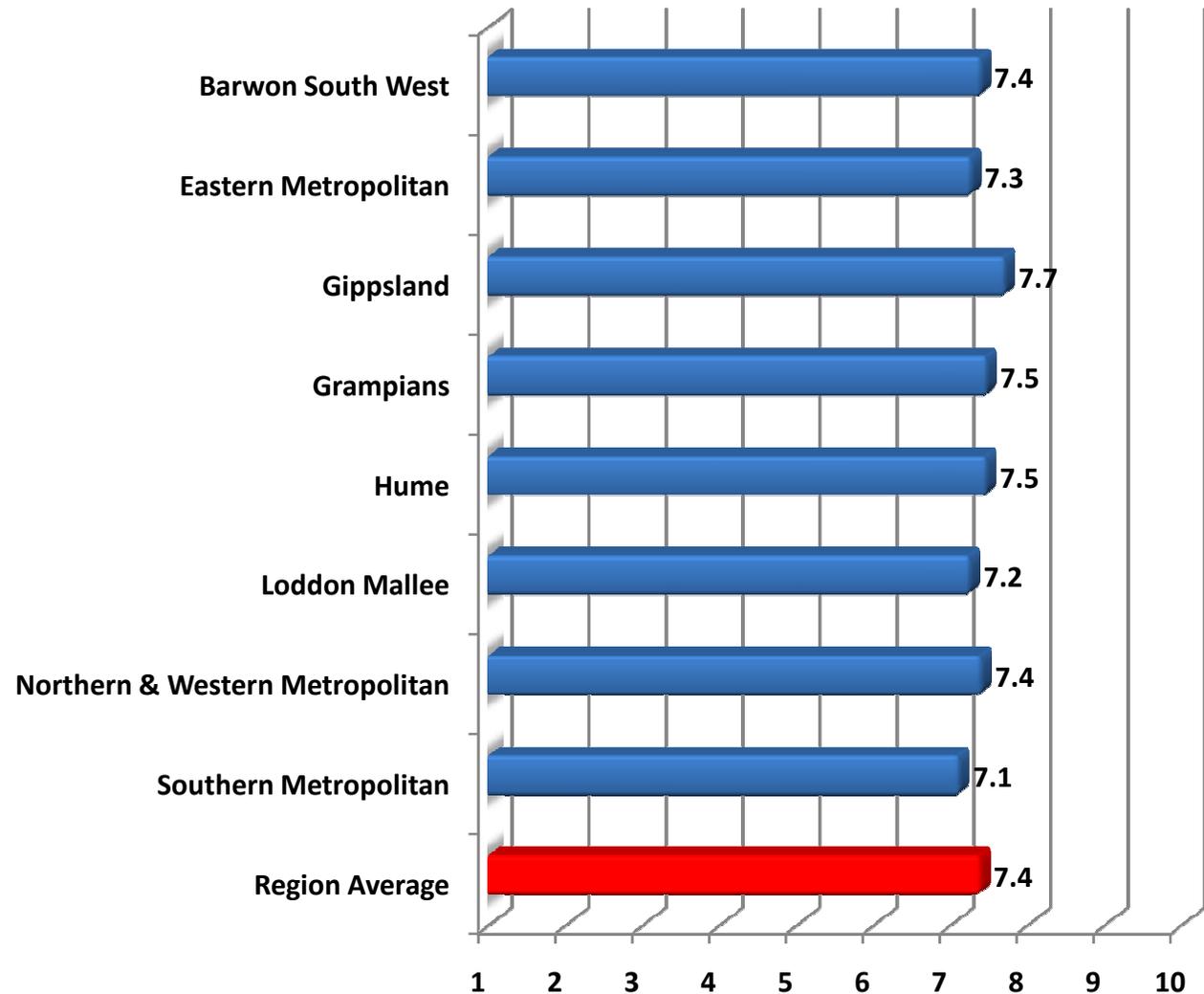
This chart shows the average of the ratings awarded for each of the 5 statements in this section by all respondents.

- 14. My brigade leaders are able to deal effectively with human resource, conflict resolution and morale issues at brigade level.
- 16. Workplace bullying is not tolerated in brigades that I have been a member of
- 21. People management issues, conflict resolution and volunteer morale are generally well managed within my brigade.
- 23. The environment at my brigade is volunteer-friendly, welcoming to new members and creates good morale.
- 27. Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at my brigade level.



PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE – BY REGION

This graph represents the mean score for **performance** by region across the 5 statements comprising People Management – My Brigade



SATISFACTION LEVELS

Having reflected on and scored all statements in the survey, respondents were then asked to indicate their levels of satisfaction.

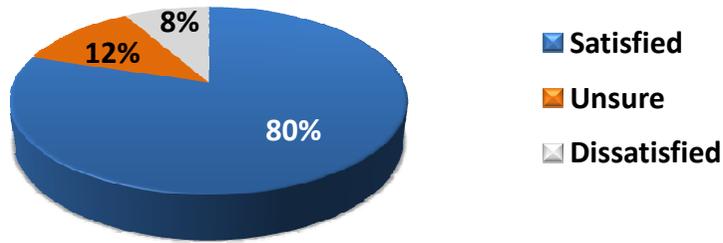
There are no significant differences in the Performance and Importance scores for 2013 compared to 2012.

80% are satisfied with their role as a CFA volunteer and 87% intend to continue their membership. Of continuing concern is the fact that only 57% are satisfied with the way volunteers are treated by CFA with 26% actively dissatisfied and 17% unsure or ambivalent.

82% of volunteers are prepared to recommend being a CFA volunteer to people they know. 12% are uncertain whether they would do so and 6% would not.

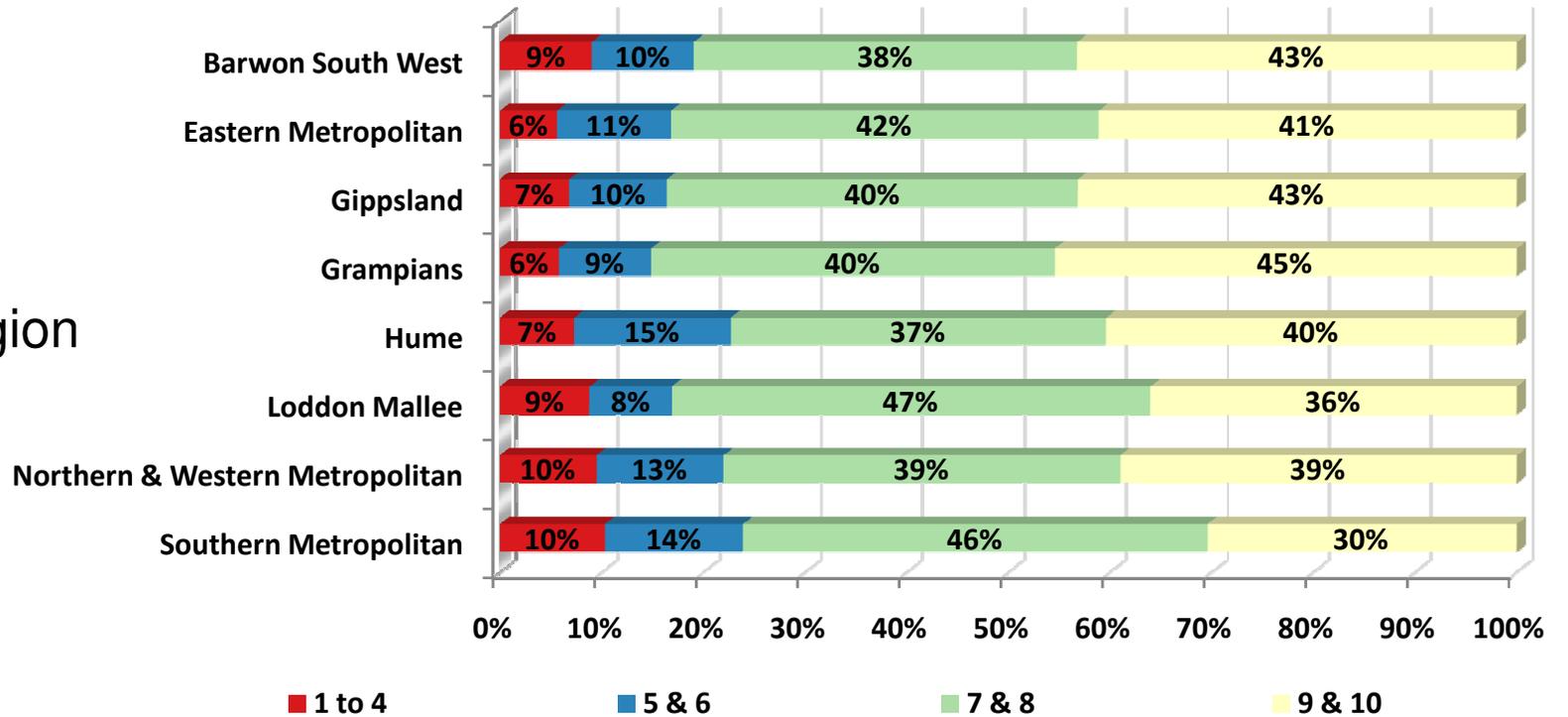
SATISFACTION LEVELS

34. Overall how satisfied are you with your role as a CFA volunteer?



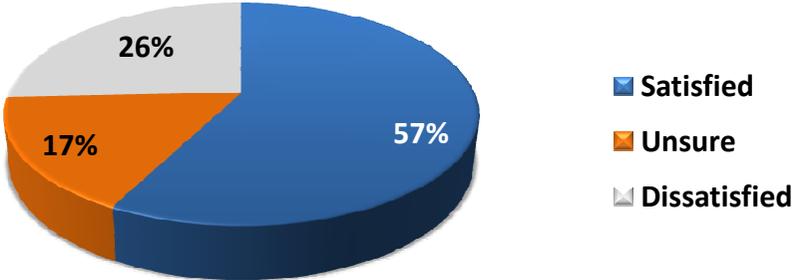
Overall results

Results – By Region



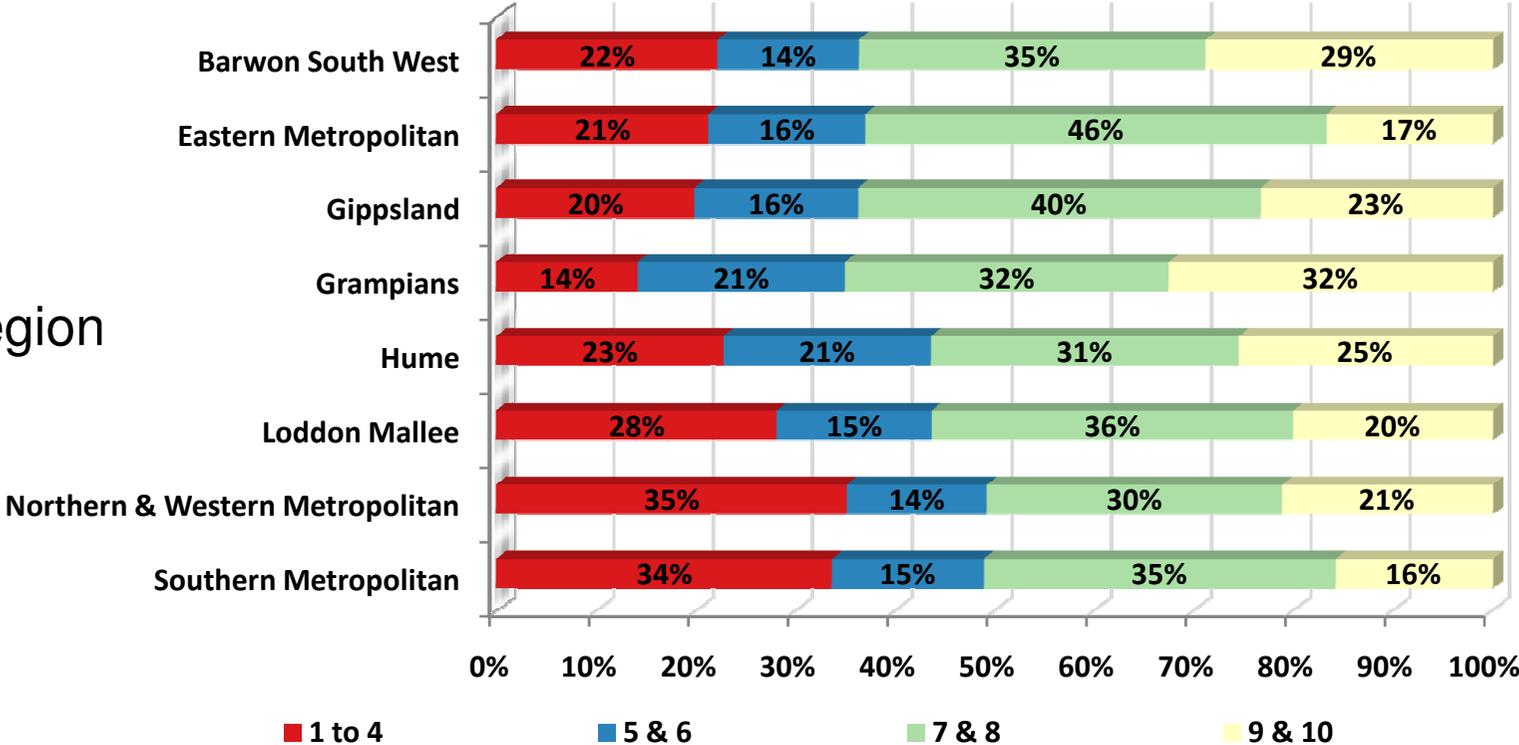
SATISFACTION LEVELS

35. Overall how satisfied are you with the way volunteers are treated by CFA?



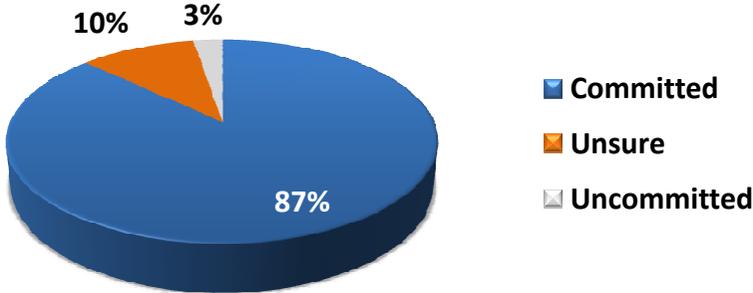
Overall results

Results – By Region



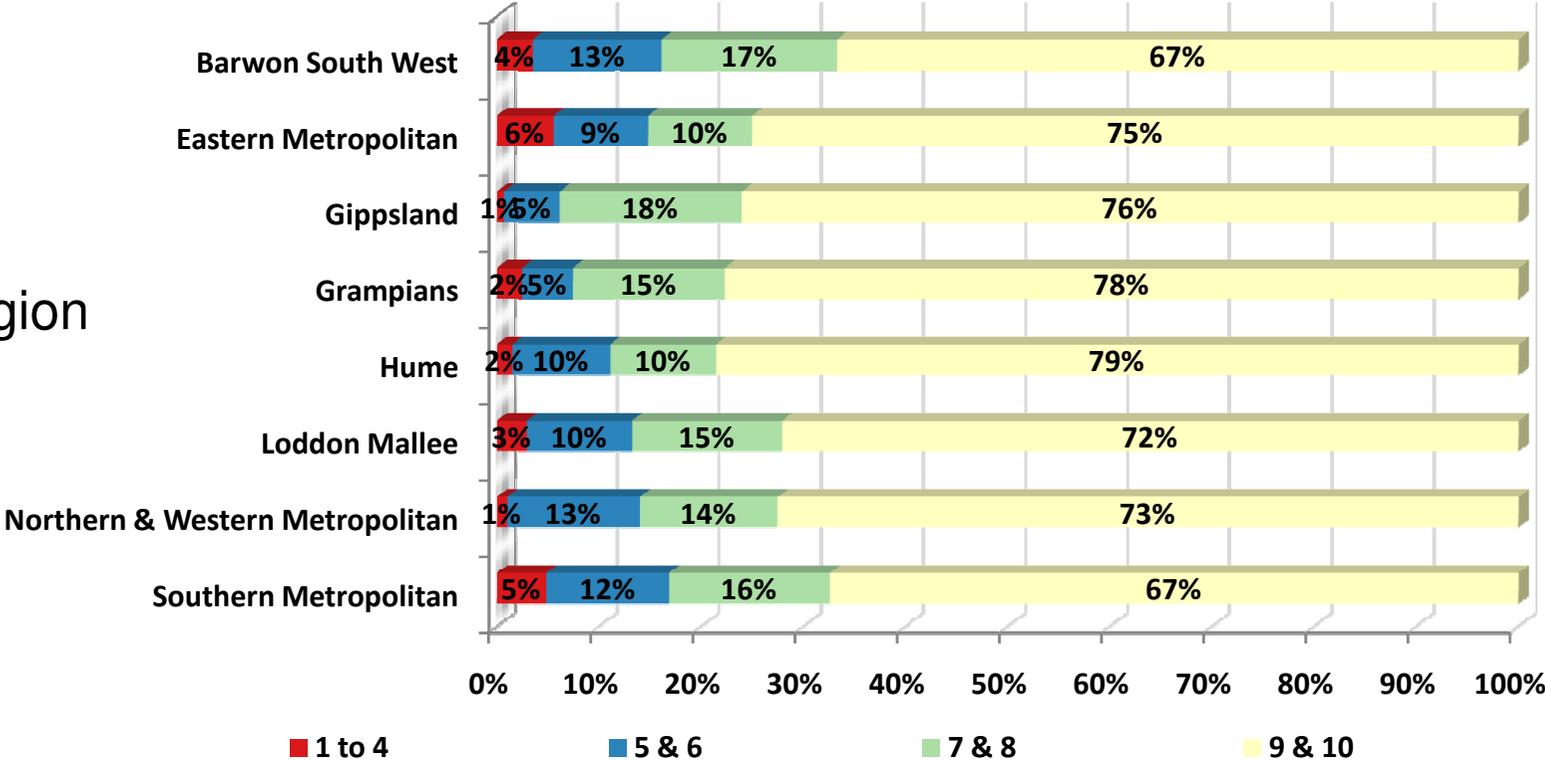
SATISFACTION LEVELS

36. I intend to continue my membership with CFA.



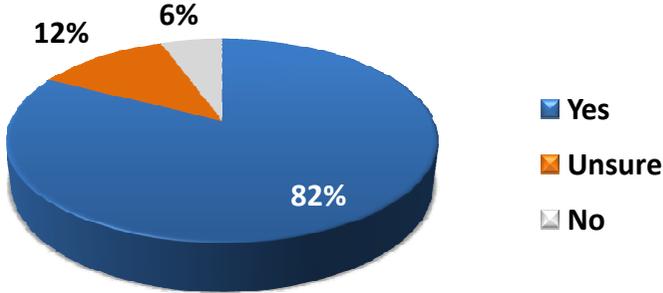
Overall results

Results – By Region



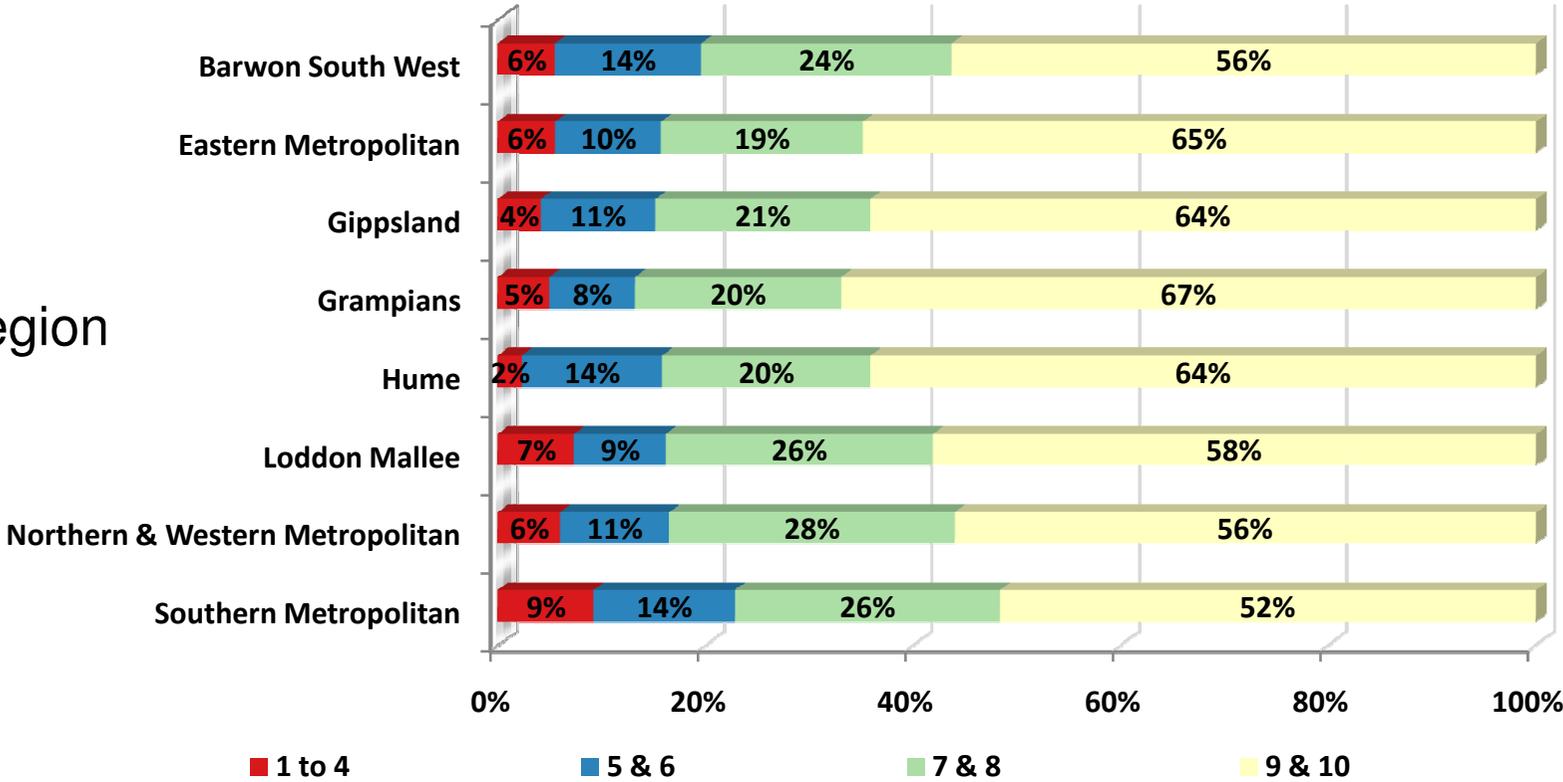
SATISFACTION LEVELS

37. I would recommend being a CFA volunteer to people I know.

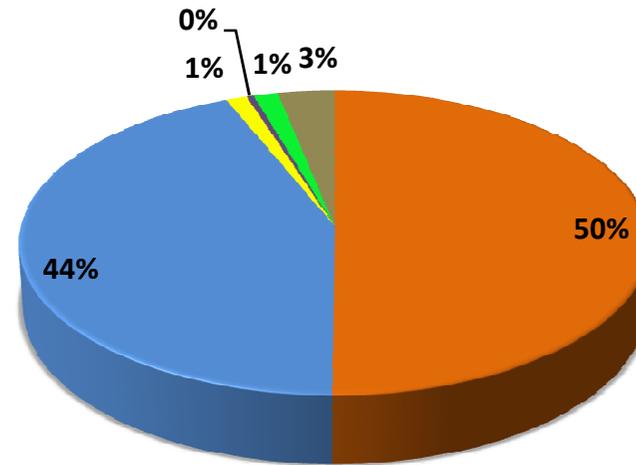


Overall results

Results – By Region



WHY AM I A CFA VOLUNTEER?

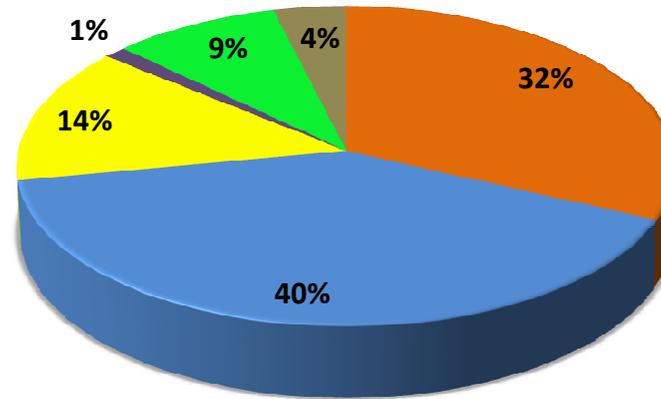


Volunteers were given five choices from which to select the single most important reason they have chosen to become a CFA volunteer. 94% said this was either *“to help protect the community I live in”* or for *“a sense of fulfilment in supporting my community in a meaningful way”*.

- To help protect the community I live in
- A sense of fulfilment in supporting my community in a meaningful way
- To learn new skills
- To meet new people
- To enjoy social contact with other volunteers
- Other

WHY AM I A CFA VOLUNTEER?

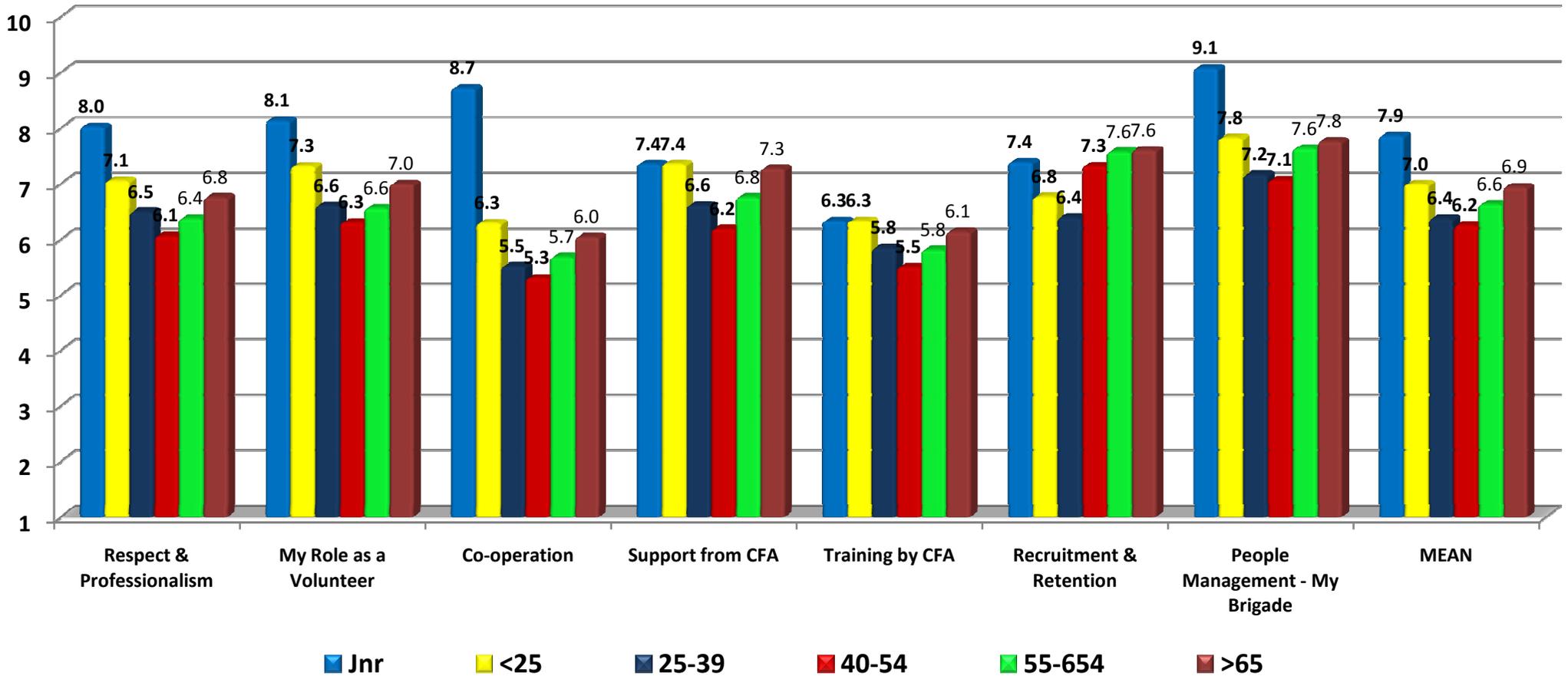
Asked to select from the same five options the next most important reason they volunteer, 72% chose the two reasons mentioned above. 24% said their second most important reason for being a CFA volunteer is either to learn new skills, meet new people or enjoy social contact with other volunteers.



- To help protect the community I live in
- A sense of fulfilment in supporting my community in a meaningful way
- To learn new skills
- To meet new people
- To enjoy social contact with other volunteers
- Other

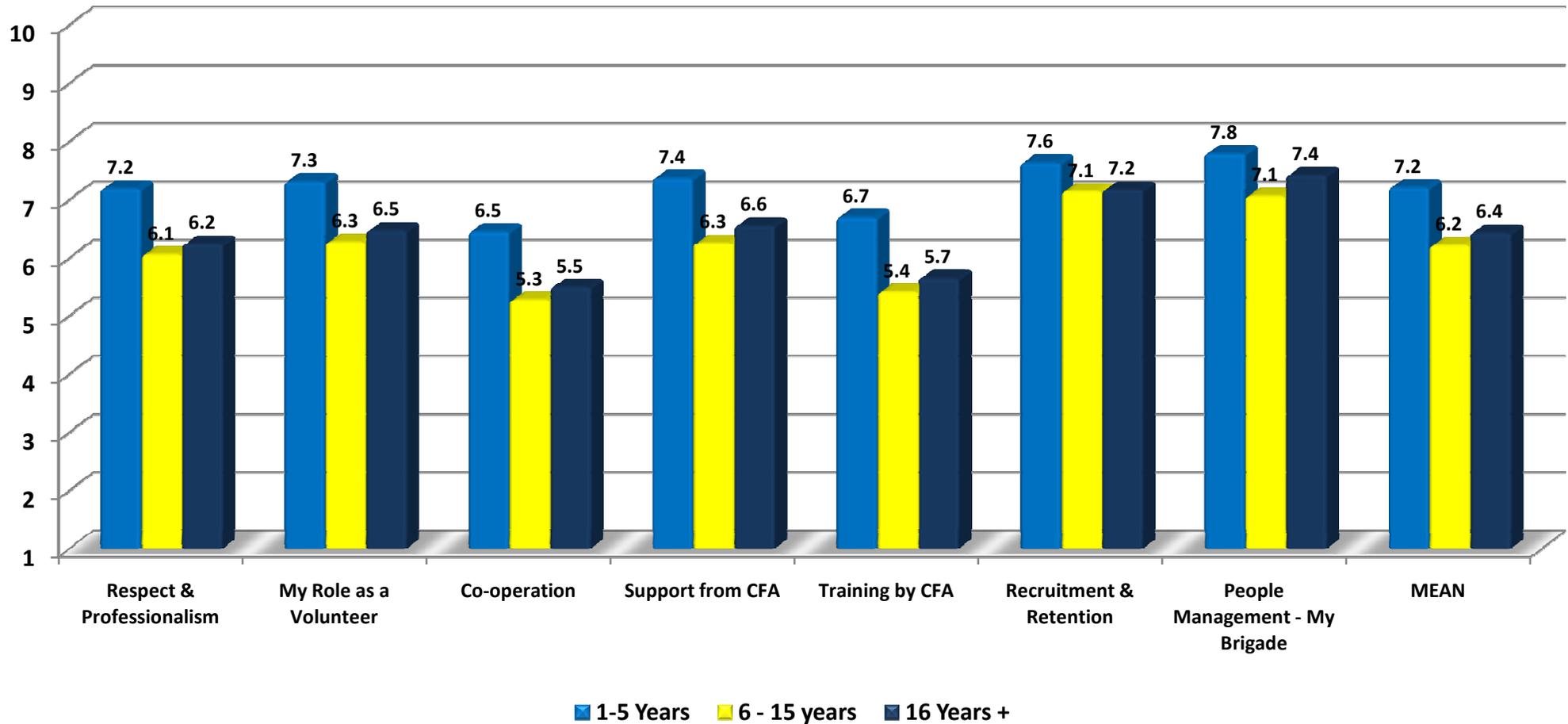
ALIGNMENT – AGE

This chart shows **variation between age bands of volunteers** of the **perceived performance** against each cluster in this survey.



ALIGNMENT – LENGTH OF SERVICE

This chart shows **variation between the length of service of volunteers** of the **perceived performance** against each cluster in this survey.



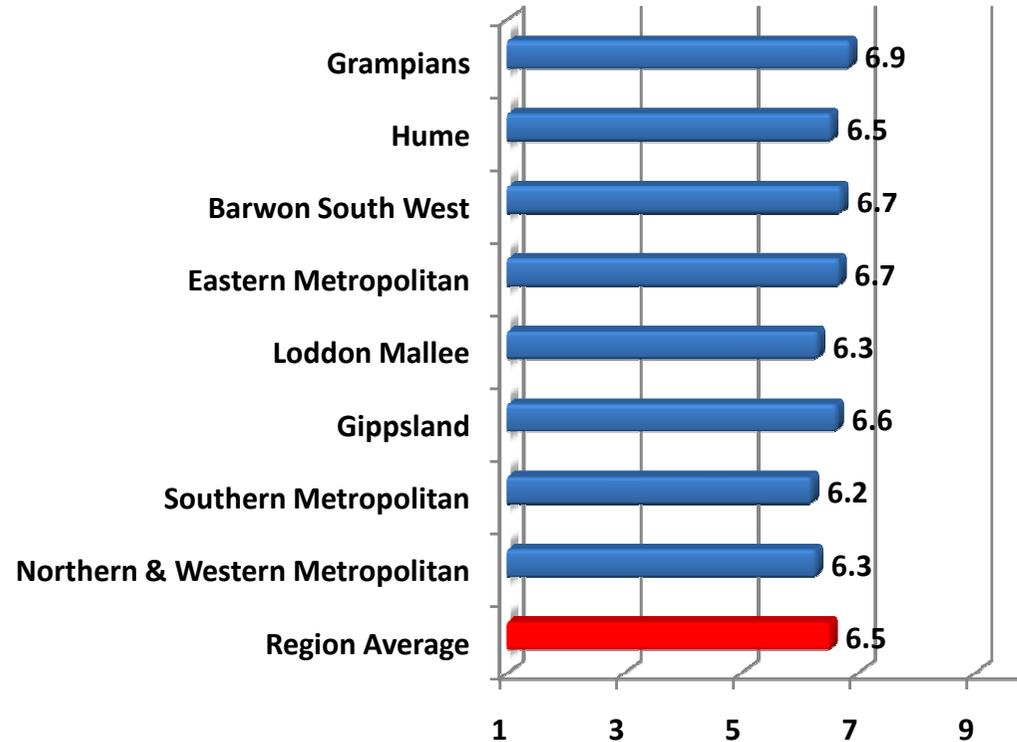
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEGMENTS

Regions:

Reviewing the performance scores by Region for each of the seven clusters (from Respect and Professionalism to People Management – My Brigade) shows that three Regions rank lowest of all on their mean scores for 5 of the seven clusters. These three are Northern and Western Metropolitan, Loddon Mallee and Southern Metropolitan.

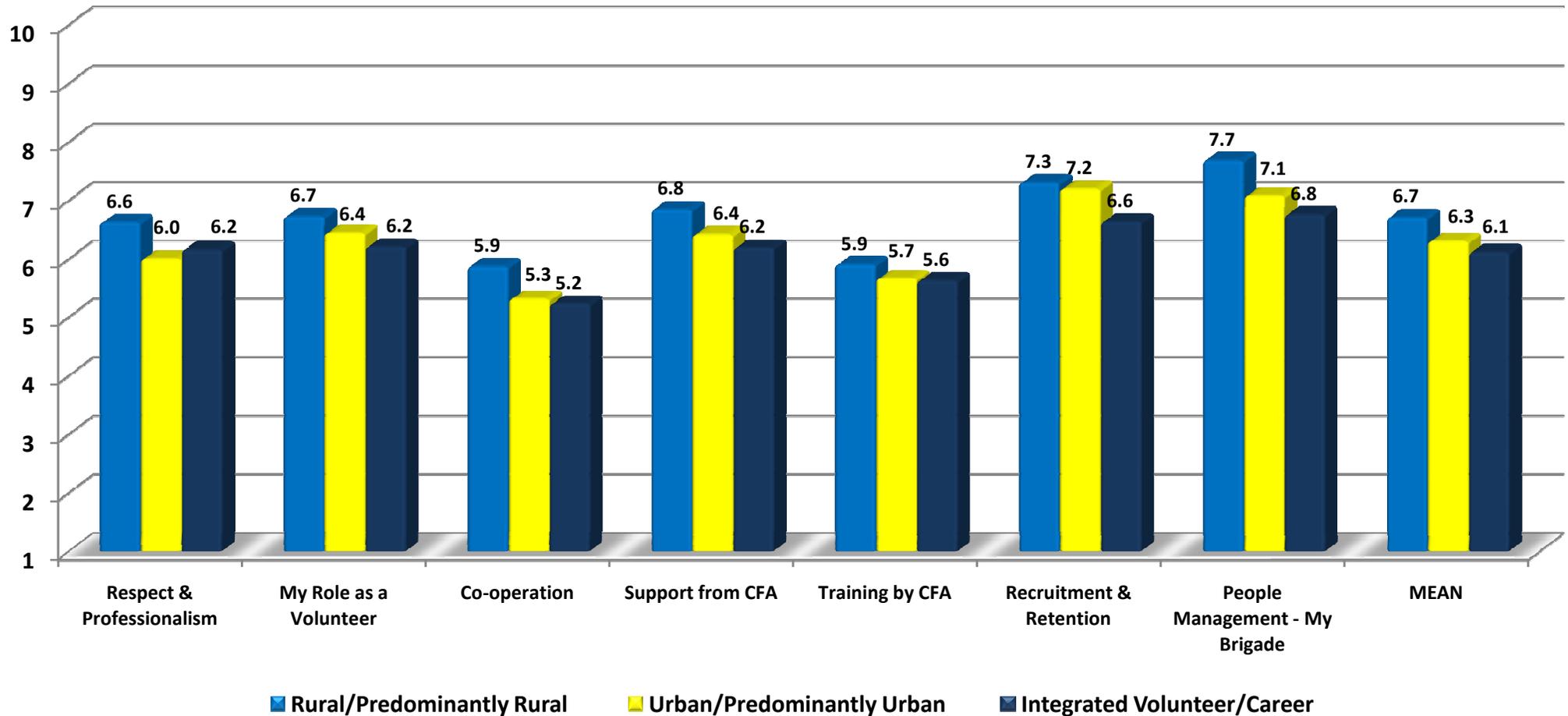
NB: Data was not collected at Brigade level.

This graph represents the mean score for **performance** for each region across all 33 statements



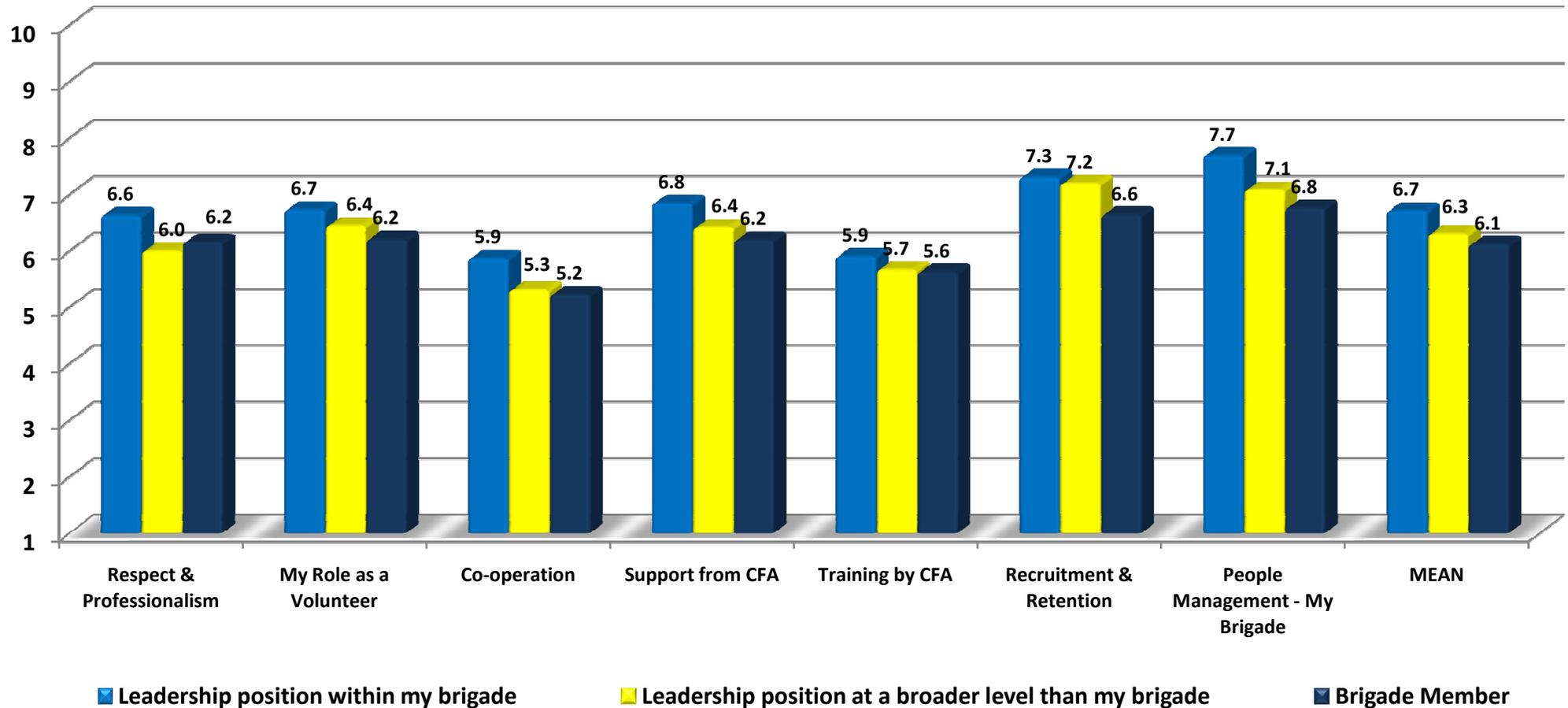
ALIGNMENT – TYPE OF BRIGADE

This chart shows **variation between the types of brigades that volunteers belong to** of the **perceived performance** against each cluster in this survey.



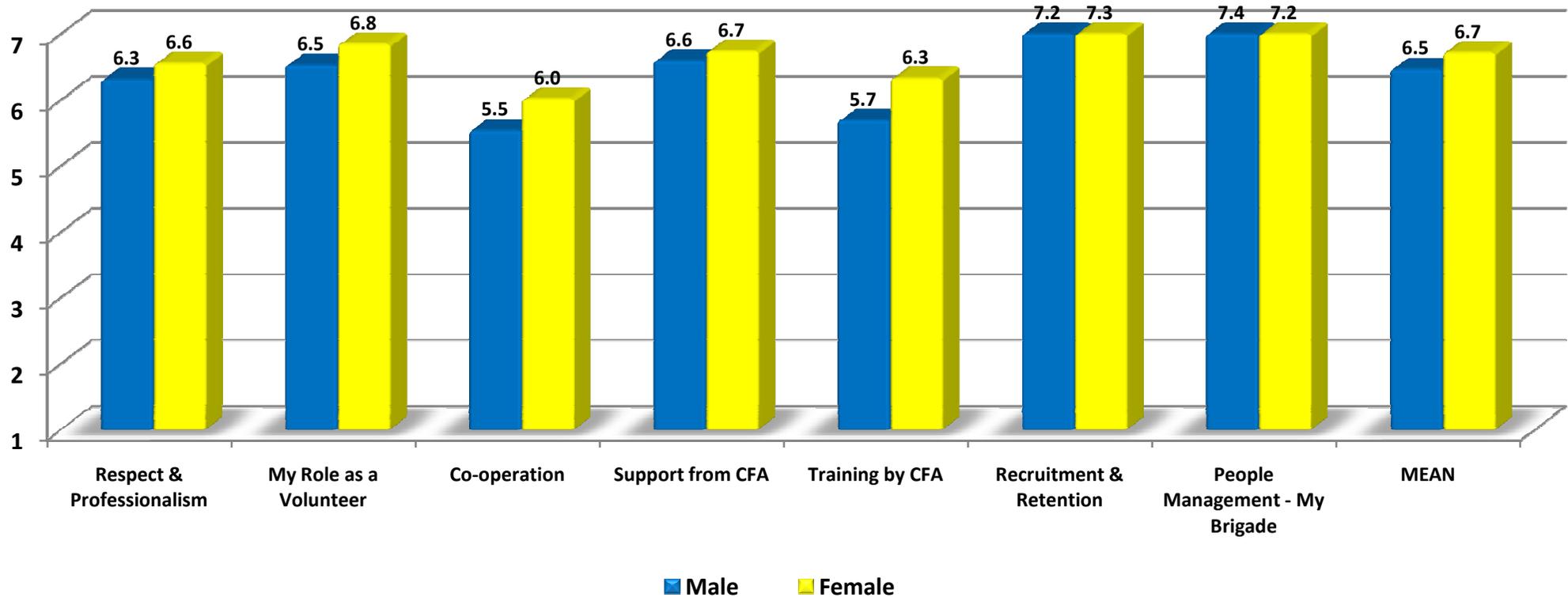
ALIGNMENT – POSITION AS A VOLUNTEER

This chart shows **variation between the leadership positions held by volunteers** of the **perceived performance** against each cluster in this survey.



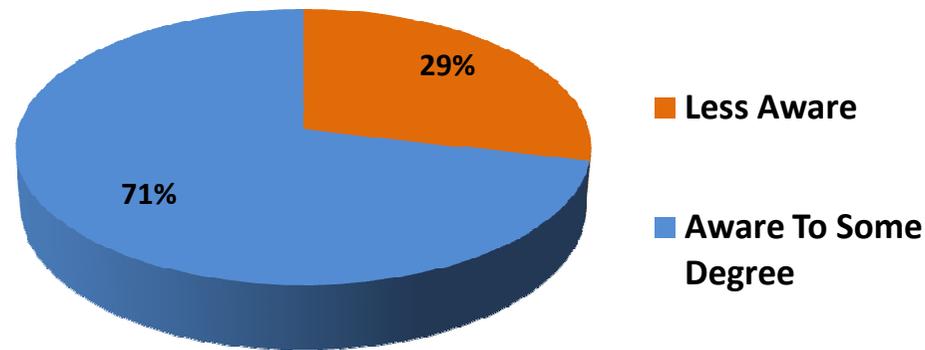
ALIGNMENT – GENDER

This chart shows **variation between the gender of volunteers** of the **perceived performance** against each cluster in this survey.



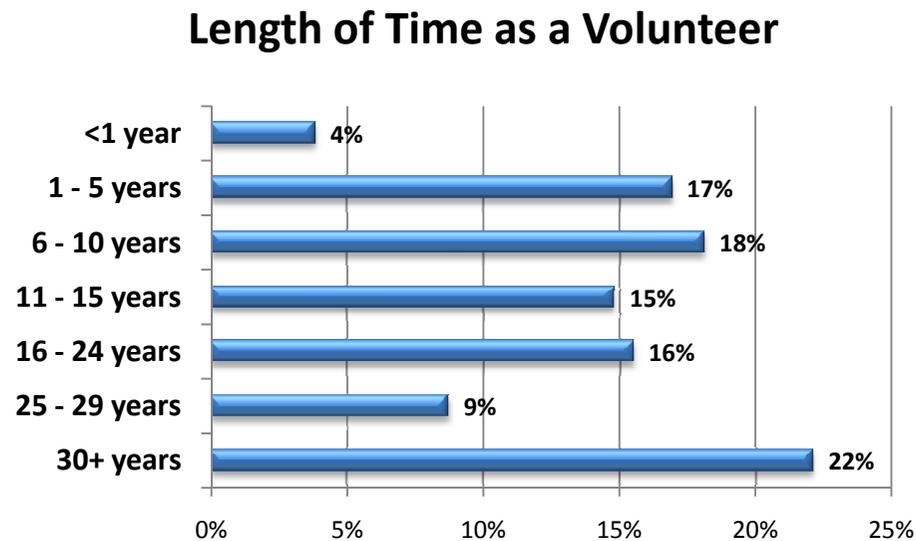
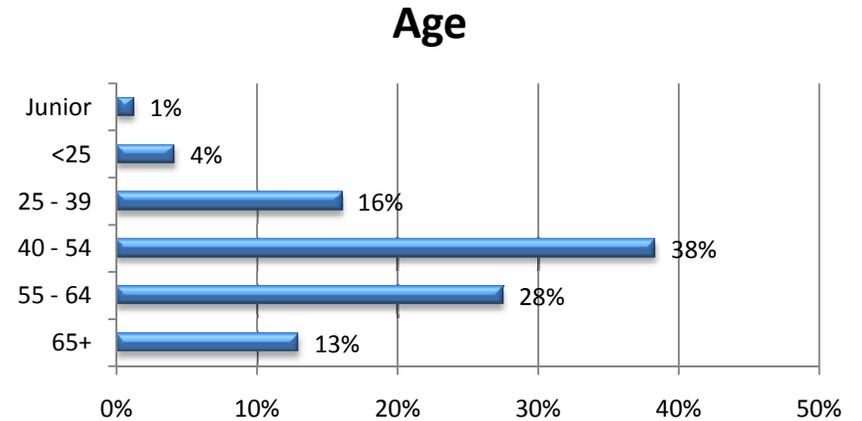
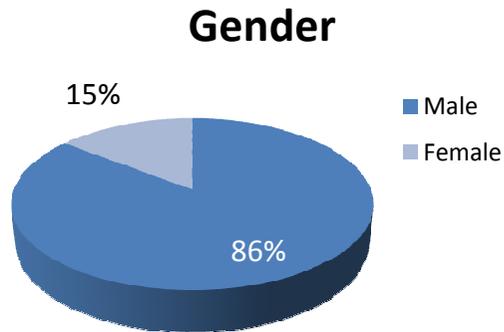
AWARENESS OF THE VFBV

71% of volunteers have varying degrees of awareness of the role VFBV plays in support of brigades and volunteers; 29% are less aware.



DEMOGRAPHICS

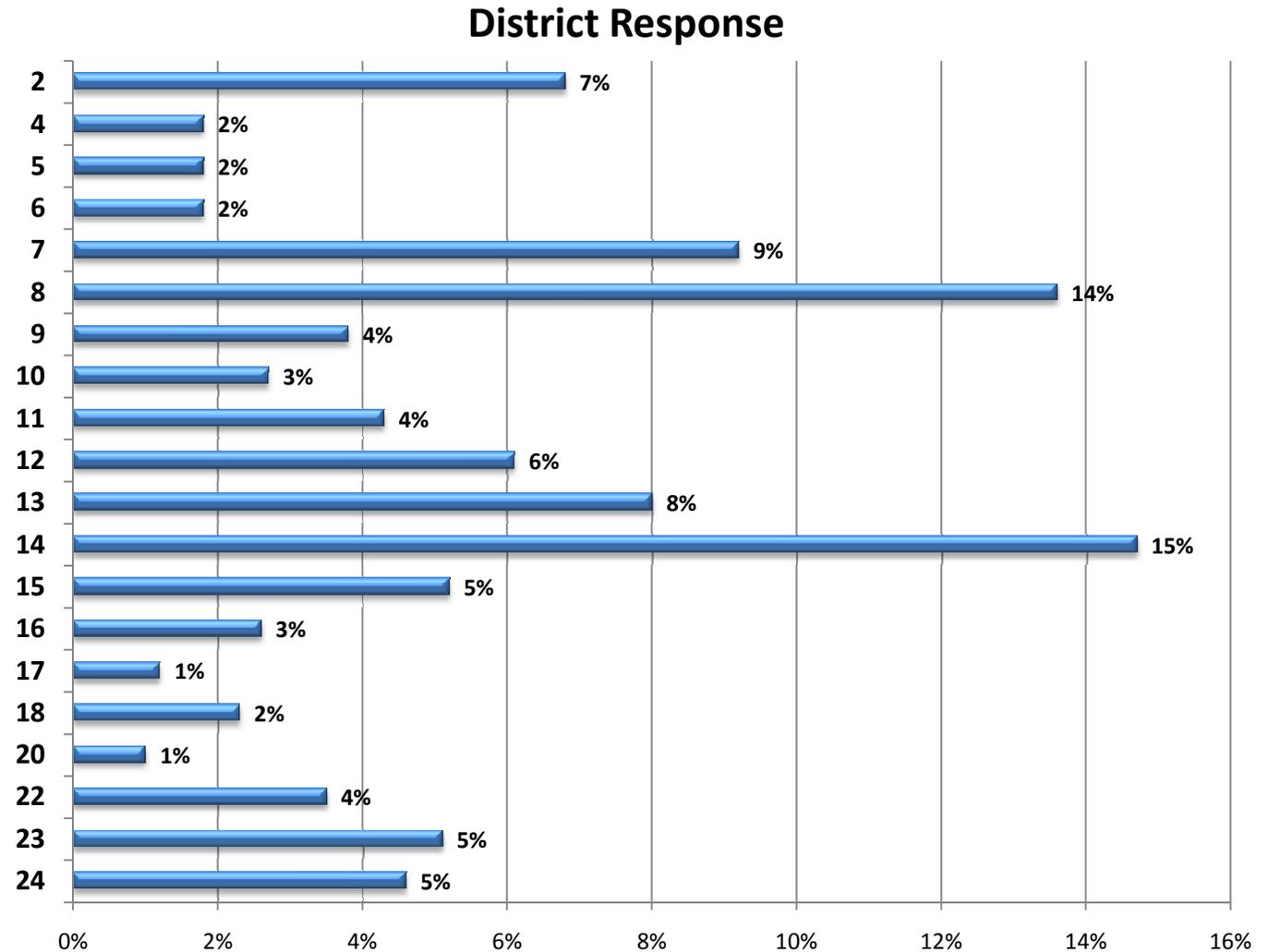
The following graphs show all respondents by gender, age and length of time as a volunteer.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The following graph shows the volunteers by District.

Of the total of 1452 responses, only 93 people did not state which district they were from.



APPENDIX

SUMMARY DATA OF INDIVIDUAL RATINGS

SUMMARY GRAPHS

The following graphs are a summary of the way each statement was scored by all respondents from your organisation. The graph on this page is just an example to explain the scoring.

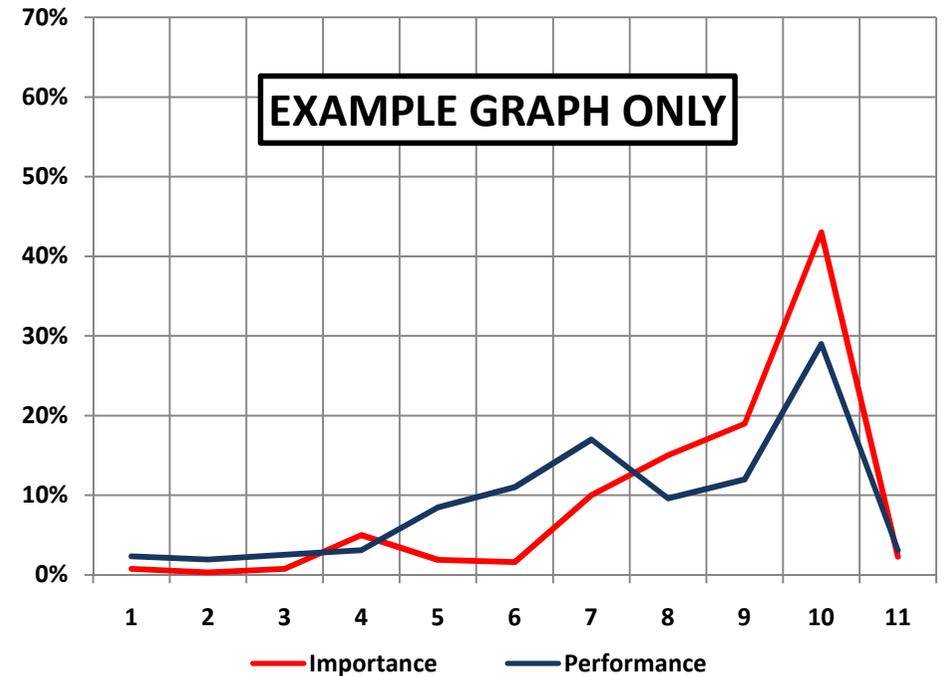
The Y Axis shows the percentage of people who scored the statement from 1 to 10 (with 11 being No Opinion/Don't know).

The X Axis shows the scores that respondents gave to this statement using a 10 point scale on

Importance :
1 = not at all important.
10 = very important
11 = no opinion/don't know

Performance:
1 = strongly disagree.
10 = strongly agree
11 = no opinion/don't know

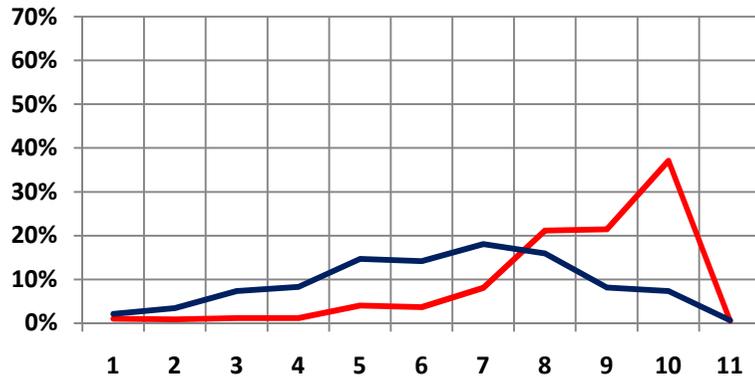
So in this example, 43% of respondents scored this statement at 10 (very important), but less than 29% strongly agree that the performance is good.



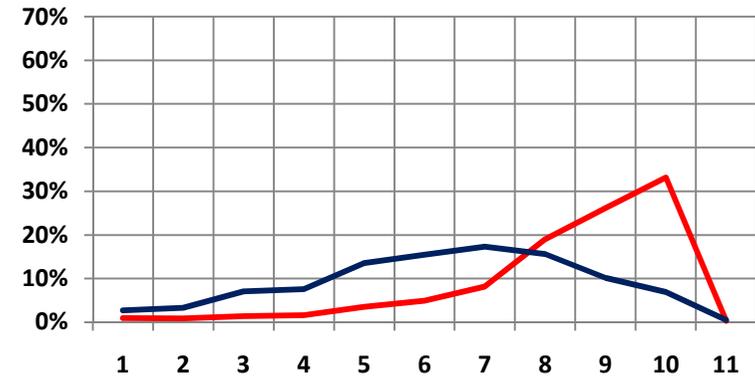
RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM

— Importance — Performance

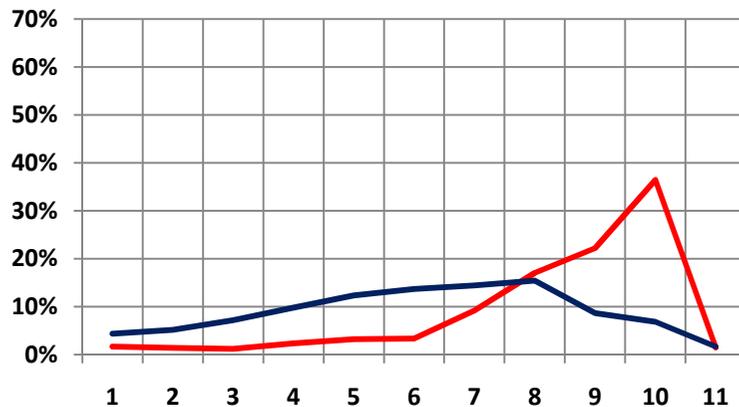
1. I respect and appreciate the effort made by CFA to support me as a volunteer.



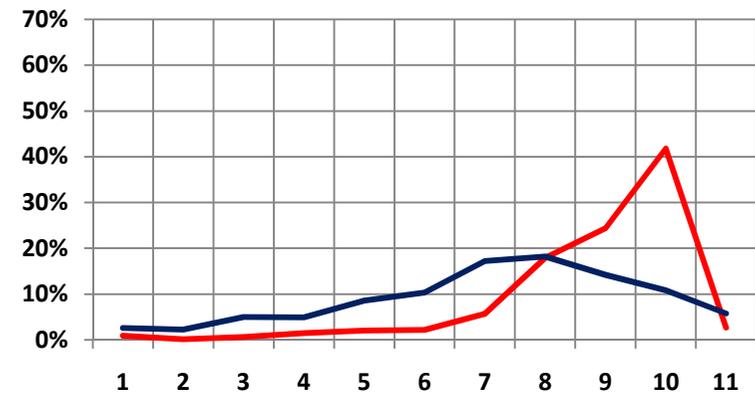
2. The respect and value of the contribution of volunteers is evident in CFA's actions and culture.



3. In general, CFA staff accept and recognise the professionalism of volunteers.



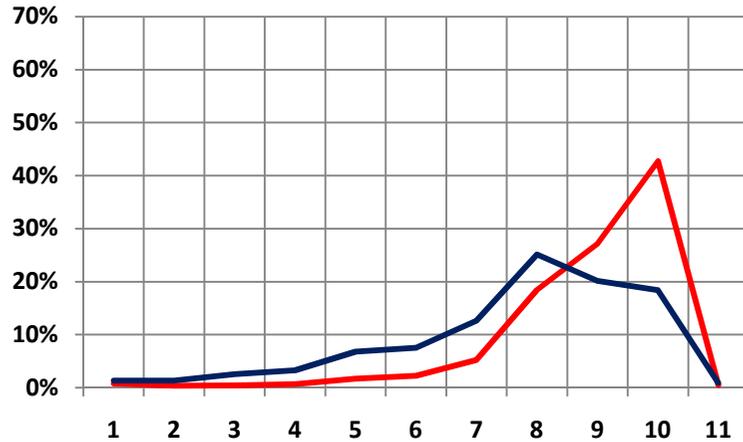
32. CFA consistently and proactively promotes public understanding of community confidence in the role and professionalism of CFA volunteers and their brigades.



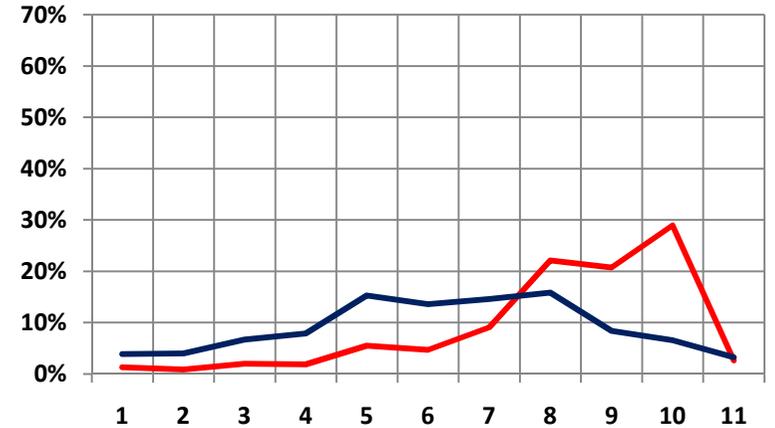
MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

— Importance — Performance

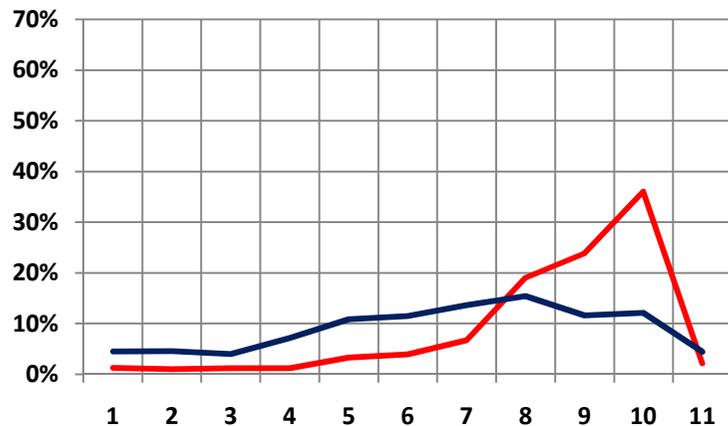
4. I feel the time I devote to CFA is productive and worthwhile.



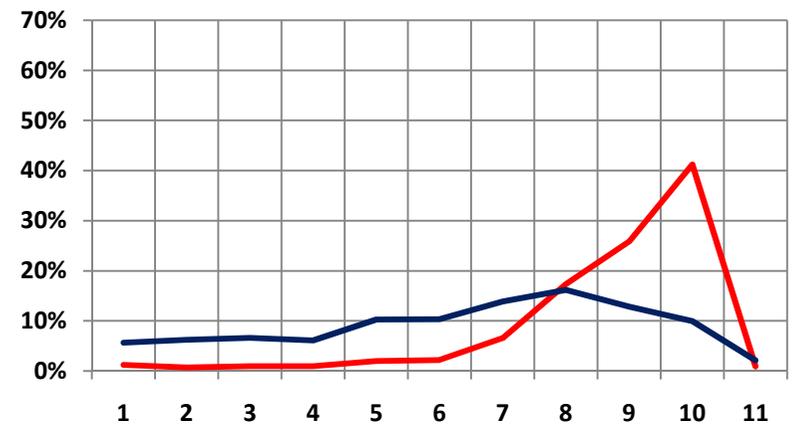
5. CFA is doing everything it can to facilitate a good balance between my service and time commitment as a volunteer and other parts of my life.



9. Volunteers who no longer wish to perform operational roles are supported to continue their volunteer service in other non-operational/operational support roles in a positive and supportive way.



22. CFA recognises and utilises the skills and experience that I bring to CFA.

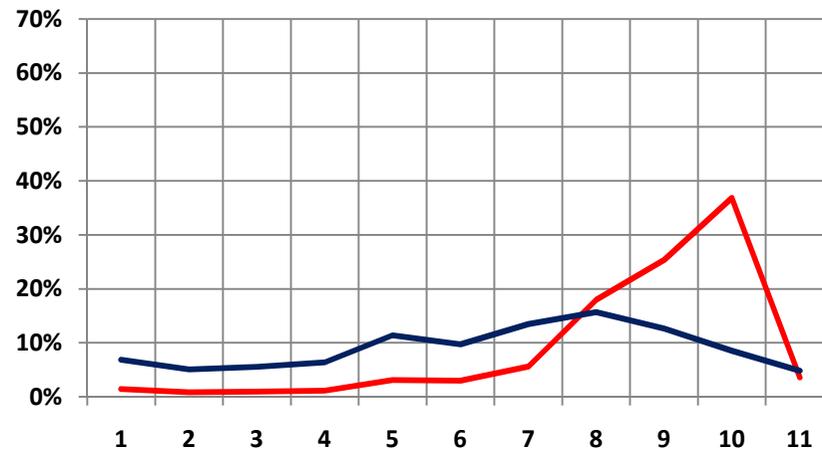


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MY ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

— Importance — Performance

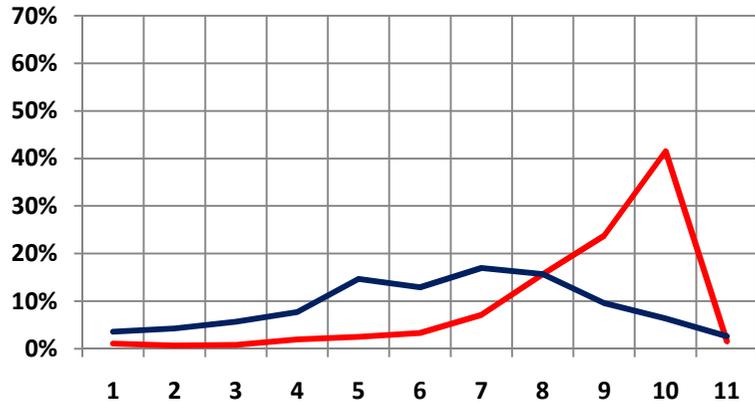
29. CFA proactively provide opportunities for me to progress and develop my skills to more senior/diverse roles as part of an individual volunteer career pathway.



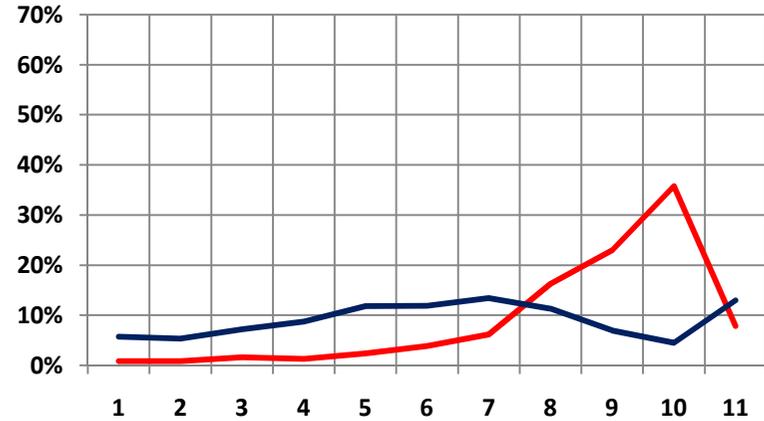
CO-OPERATION

— Importance — Performance

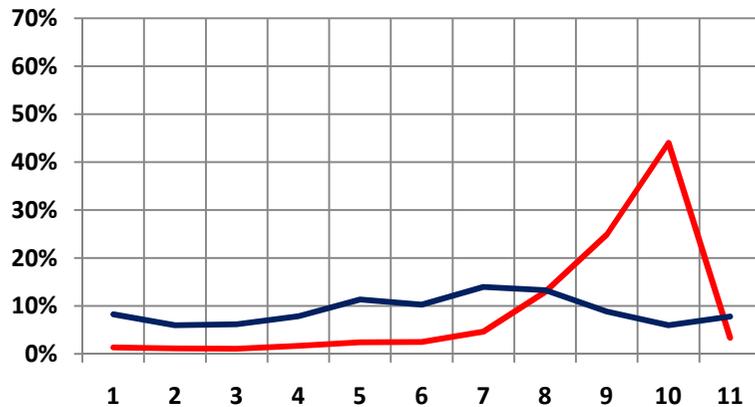
6. Volunteers and CFA staff work cooperatively at all levels to achieve shared goals and serve the community.



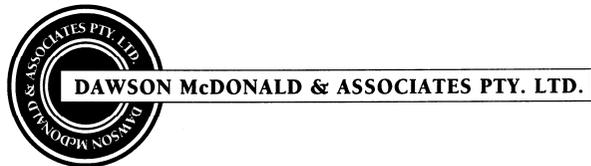
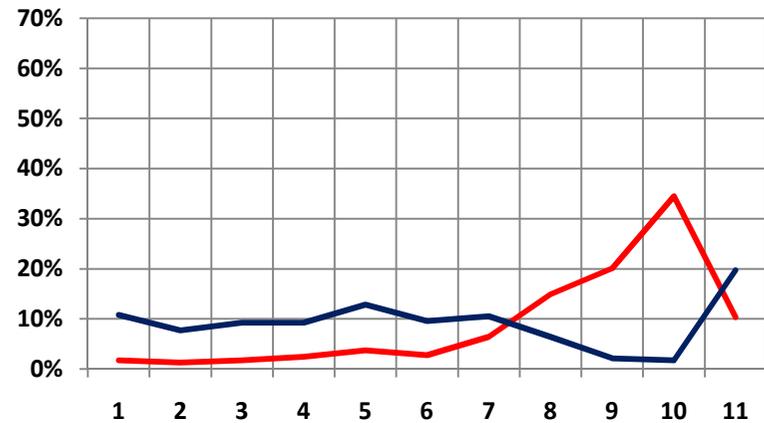
11. CFA's workforce arrangements allow the paid staff and volunteers to work cooperatively as an integrated team.



25. Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at my local District/Regional level.



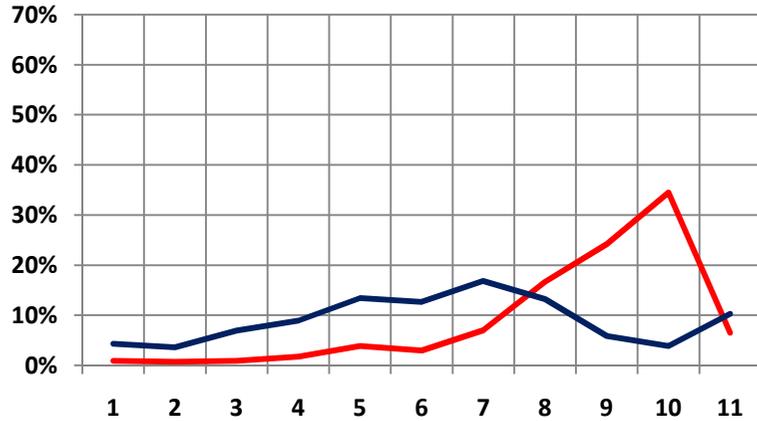
26. Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at CFA Corporate level.



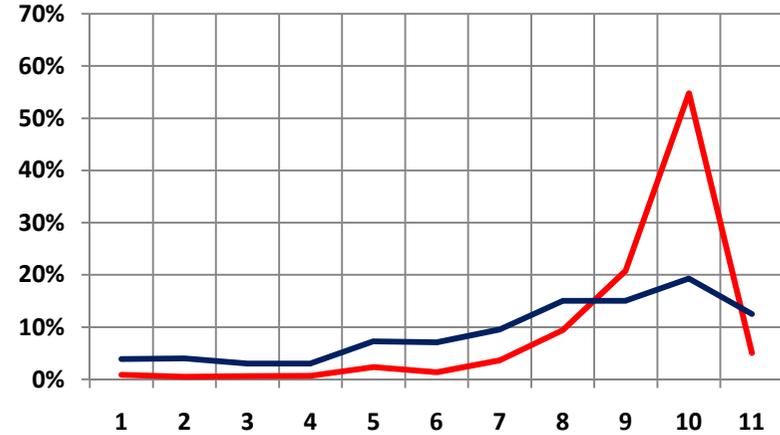
SUPPORT

— Importance — Performance

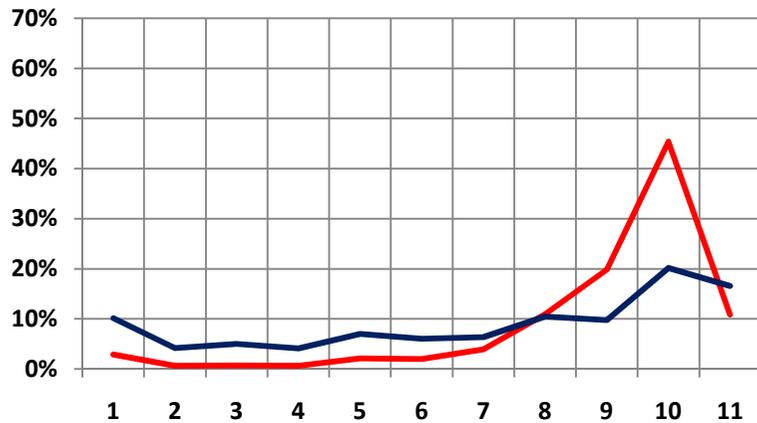
15. CFA corporate policies and leadership support an effective volunteer based and fully integrated organisation.



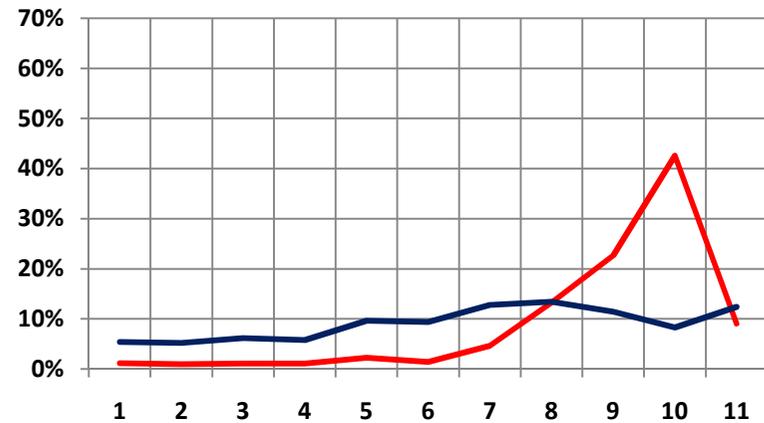
17. CFA works actively to discourage workplace bullying.



28. My employer is effectively recognised and supported to release me to undertake my volunteer commitments.



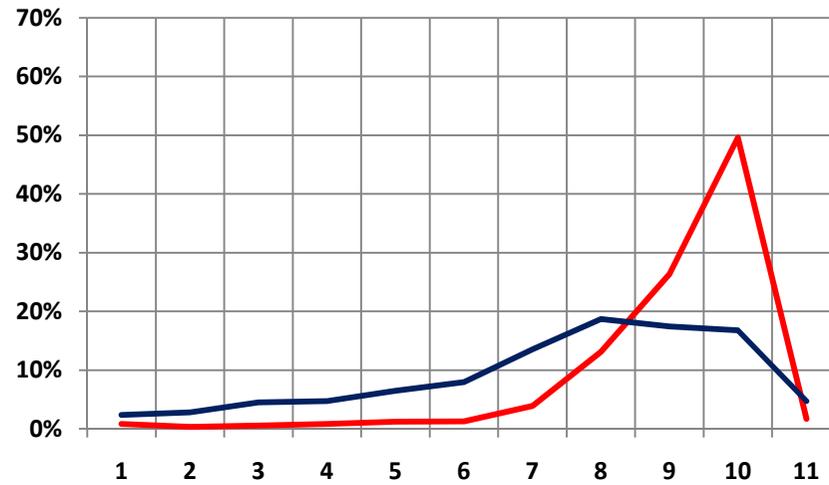
30. CFA paid personnel in my local brigade/district area are committed to supporting and empowering volunteers.



SUPPORT

— Importance — Performance

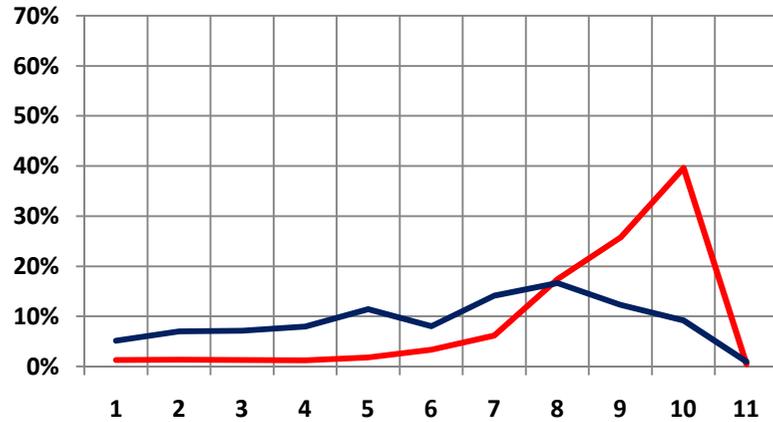
31. Volunteer leaders in my brigade are effectively supported and empowered to manage my brigade and undertake their roles.



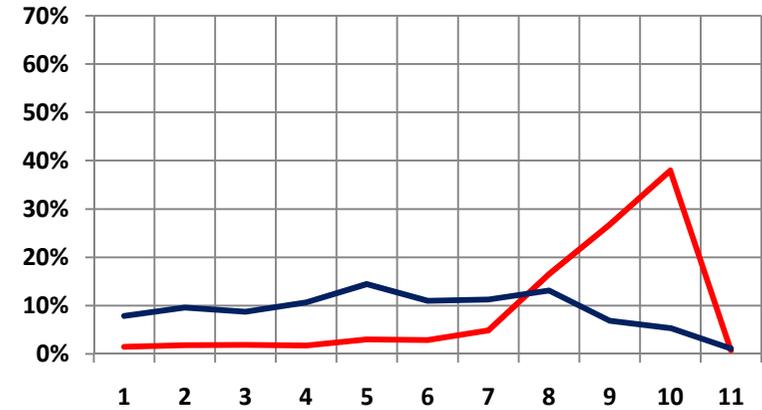
TRAINING

— Importance — Performance

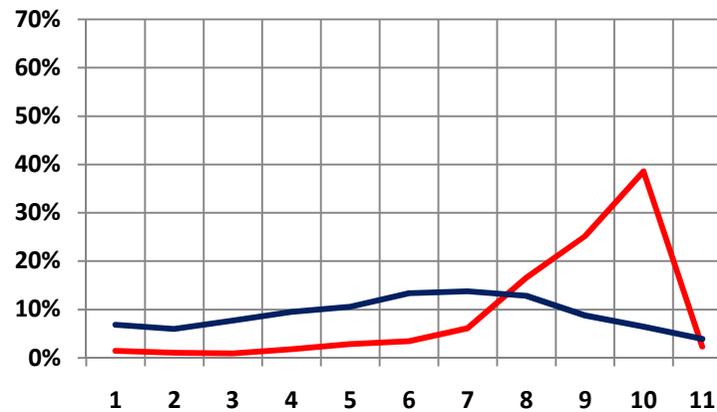
12. Most training is available and provided within a reasonable distance from my brigade.



13. CFA provides enough training opportunities in formats, at times and at locations that make it easy for me to participate.



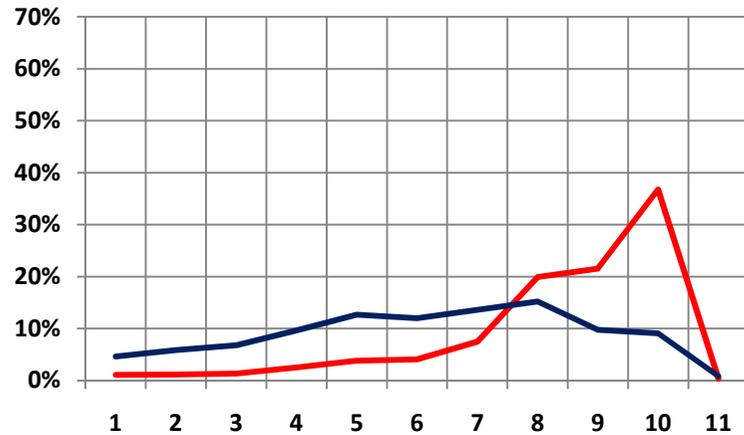
10. CFA provides good leadership training for volunteers in people management, brigade management, conflict resolution and mentoring.



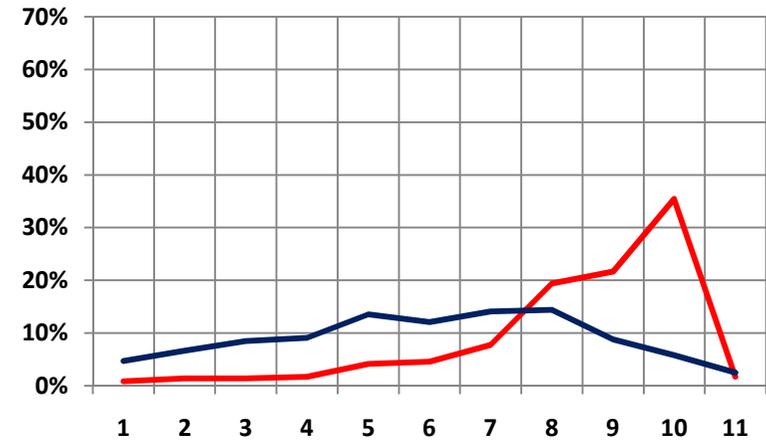
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

— Importance — Performance

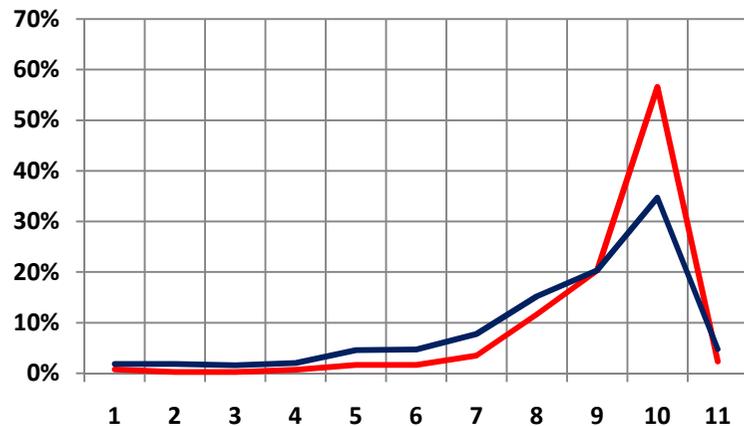
7. My brigade is successful in 'recruiting' younger people as volunteers.



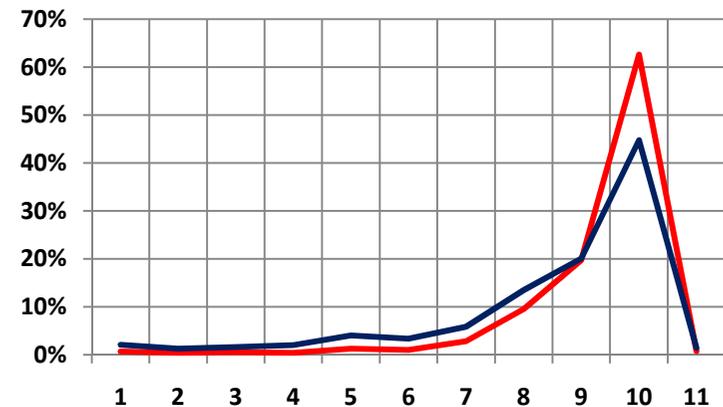
8. My brigade is successful in 'retaining' younger people as volunteers.



18. People from all cultural backgrounds, different religious, political and personal beliefs are all made welcome at my brigade.



19. There are no barriers to the roles women can occupy in my brigade.

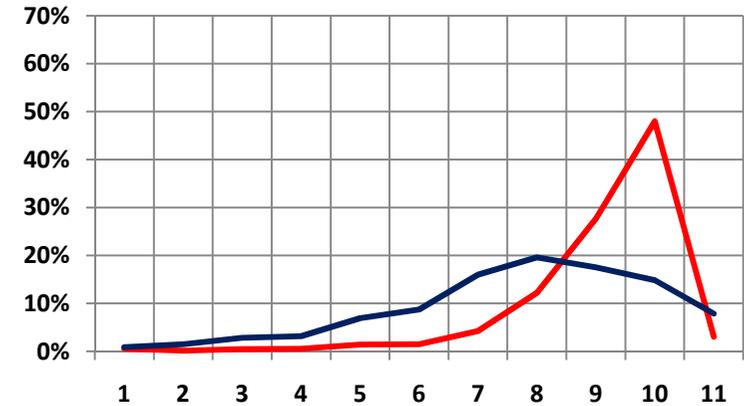
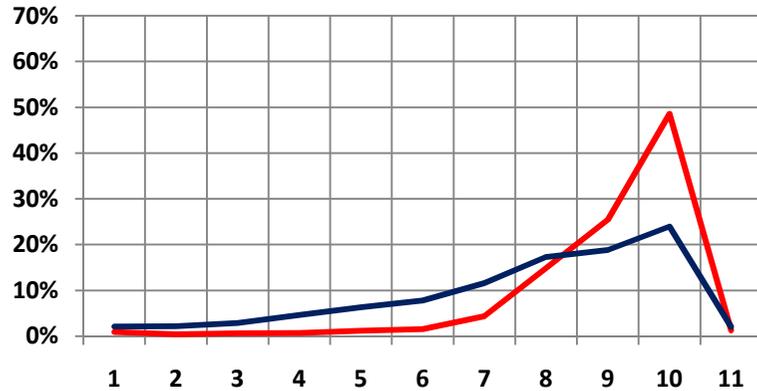


RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

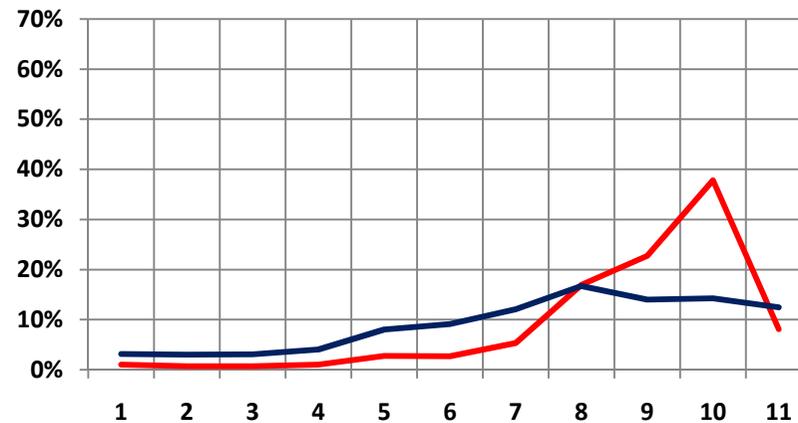
— Importance — Performance

20. New volunteers are actively supported to allow them to turn out to incidents within a reasonable time of joining the brigade.

24. The environment across the wider CFA is volunteer-friendly and welcoming to new members.



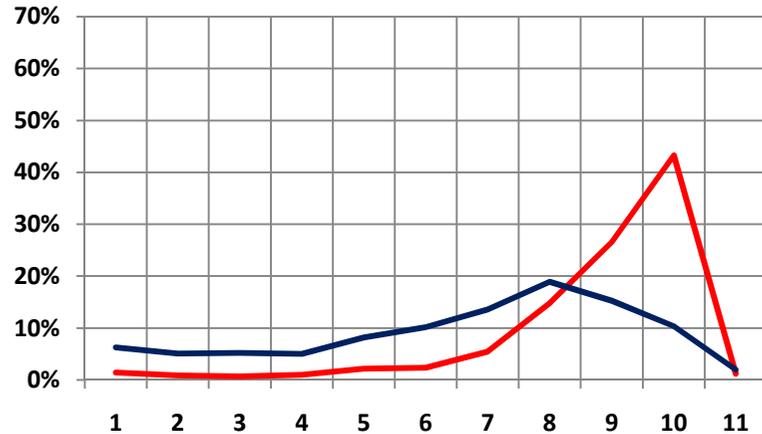
33. New volunteers in non response roles are actively supported to allow them to contribute in my brigade within a reasonable time of joining.



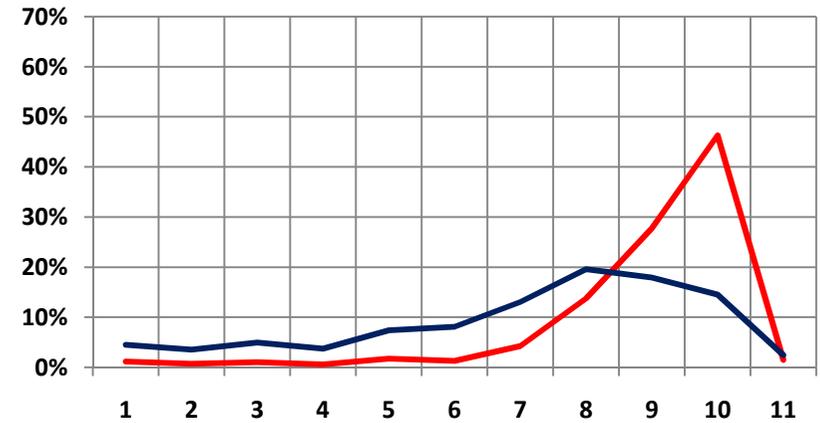
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE

— Importance — Performance

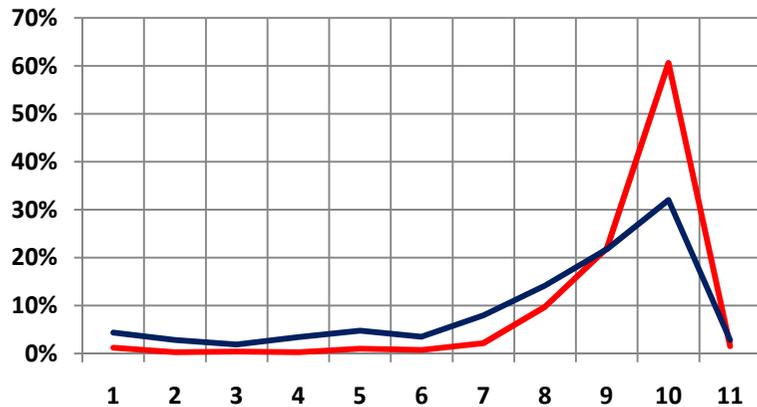
14. My brigade leaders are able to deal effectively with human resource, conflict resolution and morale issues at brigade level.



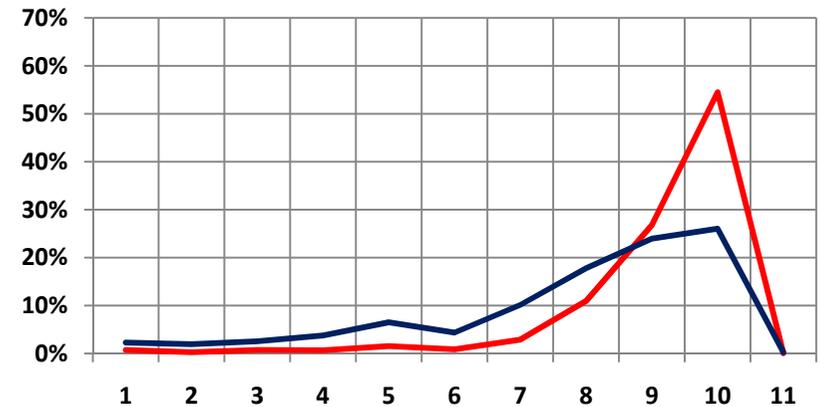
21. People management issues, conflict resolution and volunteer morale are generally well managed within my brigade.



16. Workplace bullying is not tolerated in brigades that I have been a member of.



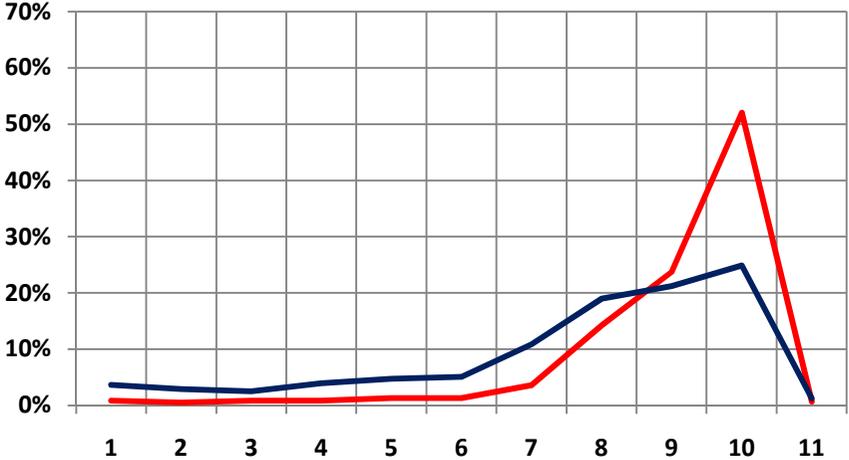
23. The environment at my brigade is volunteer-friendly, welcoming to new members and creates good morale.



PEOPLE MANAGEMENT – MY BRIGADE

— Importance — Performance

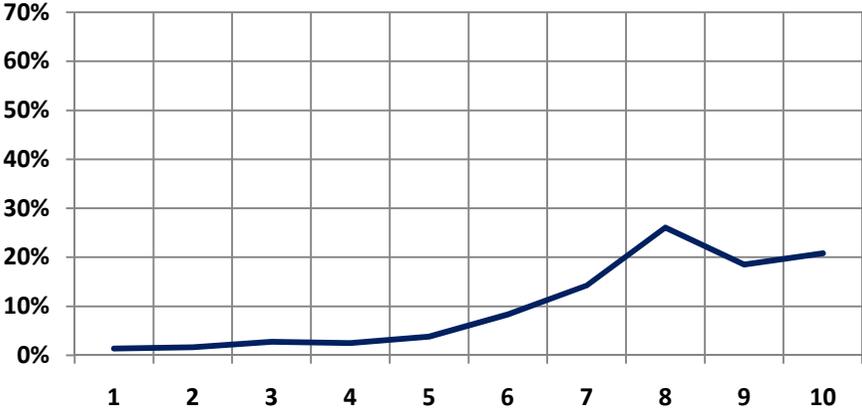
27. Volunteers are effectively consulted and involved in decision making at my brigade level.



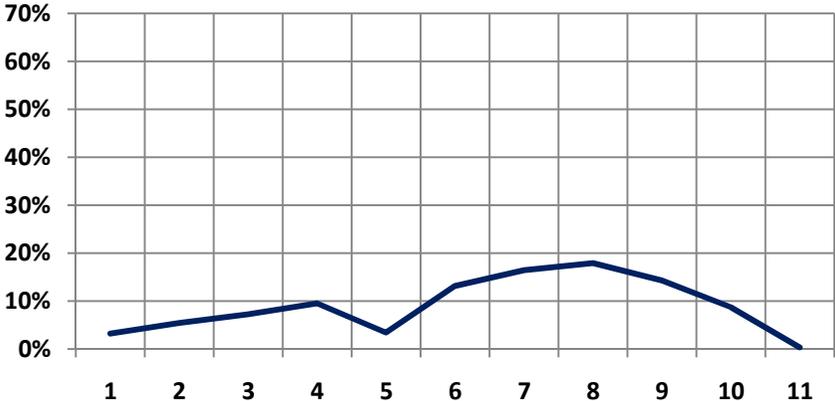
SATISFACTION LEVELS

Respondents were asked to rate each statement from 1 – 10, with 1 being the most positive, and 5 being unsure. Where applicable, 11 equalled 'don't know'.

34. Overall how satisfied are you with your role as a CFA volunteer?

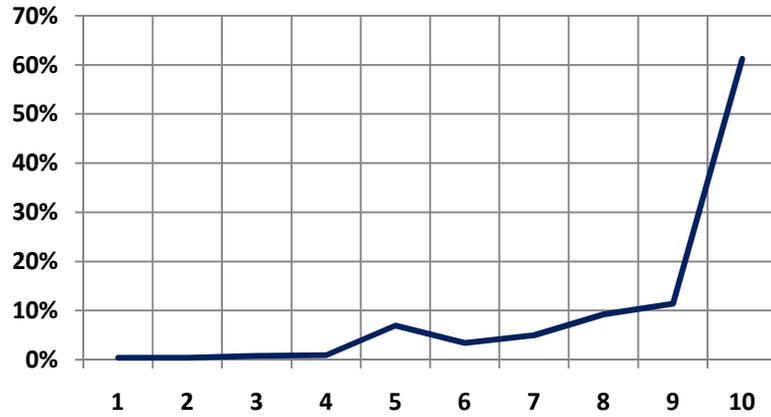


35. Overall how satisfied are you with the way volunteers are treated by CFA?

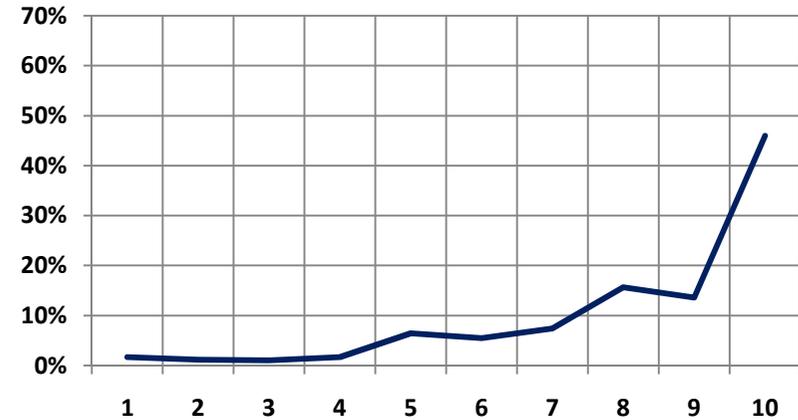


SATISFACTION LEVELS

36. I intend to continue my membership with CFA.



37. I would recommend being a CFA volunteer to people I know.



40. I am aware of the role VFBV plays in support of brigades and volunteers

