

Training of the CFA Volunteer Workforce Analysis of Volunteer Opinion

An Interactive Qualifying Project
submitted to the Country Fire Authority, John Butler and James Stitz
and to the Faculty of
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Abstract

This project examined Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteer firefighters opinions concerning the current training process, including quality of training, quality of the learning materials used, access to training, perceived relevance of training, and quality of assessment. The CFA was presented with a report of the results, and recommendations for the areas volunteers felt need improvement. This study filled a seven year gap of information in volunteer opinion.

Executive Summary

The Country Fire Authority is a large volunteer based organization dedicated to fire protection in the State of Victoria. Firefighters must be well trained in methods of fighting fires to protect themselves and others. Volunteer firefighters cannot dedicate as much to their training as a full-time career firefighter can. Therefore, volunteer firefighter training must be closely scrutinized through the assessment of their skills.

The last study of volunteer opinion of training was conducted in 2001, meaning a gap of information exists concerning volunteer opinion. Recently, there have been concerns expressed by some volunteers, and the CFA is worried that these concerns may be a reflection of their entire volunteer base. The goal of this project was to examine the opinions of volunteer firefighters and provide analysis on the findings.

The team's objectives were centered on volunteer opinions of quality of training, quality of the learning materials used, access to training, perceived relevance of training, and quality of assessment. In order to meet these objectives, the team designed and administered phone and online surveys. To create a statistically significant sample, 260 volunteers were selected for the phone survey. The selection of the volunteers to be surveyed was based on a stratified random sample reflecting the age, gender, and regional composition of the total CFA volunteer population. The online survey was posted on the CFA website, Brigades Online, and was open to all CFA volunteers for a period of three weeks. The data from the surveys were used to analyze the opinions of volunteer firefighters, particularly concerning their opinions on the training process. The information from the online survey was used to support the conclusions drawn from the phone survey.

The conclusions drawn from the analysis of the survey provided, in general, a positive opinion on the current training programs. However, there were areas that volunteers wanted to see improvement in. A majority of volunteers want to see reference and learning materials posted online, and to lesser extent online training courses. Volunteers also wanted to see an increase in the amount of practical training. Additionally, volunteers felt that their skills were not being assessed enough at a brigade level.

These and other conclusions led to the team developing seven recommendations for the CFA. We ranked our recommendations in terms of impact on training and ease of implementation. These recommendations are:

1. Make reference and learning materials available online to volunteers.
2. Develop a notification system to alert volunteers of when their required competencies need to be renewed.
3. Urge brigade captains to conduct more regular skill assessments.
4. Offer the same course at various days and times across the week and weekends to fit volunteer availability; be more flexible with training times.
5. Add more practical training exercises wherever possible.
6. Develop some online training courses to supplement classroom and practical training.
7. Assess major risks (petrol plants, maritime) at a brigade level and address these in training.
8. Continue to strive towards the standardization of training methods with AFAC standards.

As a volunteer based organization, the CFA must make sure their volunteers are properly trained and satisfied with their training. By implementing these recommendations the CFA will better cater training for the volunteers and help to ease any concerns they have regarding their training. By responding to the volunteers' concerns, the CFA will improve training, help to create a safer work environment, and increase volunteer satisfaction.

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Authorship Page

All writing and research for this report was equally completed by Max Welker and Casey Rogan. Each member of this team contributed to all the chapters in the report.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	II
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	VI
AUTHORSHIP PAGE	VII
TABLE OF CONTENTS	VIII
TABLE OF TABLES	X
TABLE OF FIGURES	X
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND.....	4
2.1 THE COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY	4
2.1.1 MISSION OF THE CFA	6
2.2 STANDARDS FOR TRAINING.....	7
2.3 CURRENT TRAINING METHODS OF CFA	8
2.4 THE 2001 TRAINING SUMMIT	10
2.5 SUMMARY.....	12
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	13
3.1 DETERMINE VOLUNTEER OPINIONS REGARDING THE OVERALL QUALITY OF TRAINING.....	16
3.2 DETERMINE VOLUNTEER OPINIONS REGARDING THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENTS.....	16
3.3 DESCRIBE VOLUNTEER OPINIONS REGARDING THE RELEVANCE OF THE TRAINING.....	17
3.4 DETERMINE VOLUNTEER OPINIONS REGARDING ACCESSIBILITY OF THE TRAINING.....	17
3.5 DESCRIBE VOLUNTEER OPINIONS REGARDING QUALITY OF LEARNING MATERIALS.....	18
3.6 GENERAL COMMENTS	19
3.7 SELECTION OF SURVEY SAMPLE	19
3.8 ONLINE SURVEY.....	20
3.9 SUMMARY.....	21
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS	22
4.1 OVERALL QUALITY OF TRAINING	24
4.2 QUALITY OF TRAINING ASSESSMENT.....	26
4.3 PERCEIVED RELEVANCE OF TRAINING.....	28
4.4 ACCESSIBILITY OF TRAINING	30

4.5 <i>QUALITY OF LEARNING MATERIALS</i>	32
4.6 <i>GENERAL COMMENTS</i>	34
<u>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS</u>	35
5.1 <i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	36
5.2 <i>FUTURE WORK</i>	40
<u>WORKS CITED</u>	41
<u>APPENDIX A: ONLINE SURVEY</u>	44
<u>APPENDIX B: TELEPHONE SURVEY</u>	56
<u>APPENDIX C: TRAINING INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEW PLAN</u>	68
<u>APPENDIX D: BRIGADE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PLAN</u>	69
<u>APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUPS</u>	70
<u>APPENDIX F: RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM REPORT CONCERNING SUSTAINABILITY OF VOLUNTEERISM WITHIN THE CFA</u>	71
<u>APPENDIX G: ONLINE SURVEY PRESS RELEASE</u>	73
<u>APPENDIX H: CONDENSED ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS</u>	74
<u>APPENDIX I: CONDENSED TELEPHONE SURVEY RESULTS</u>	89

Table of Tables

Table 1- Selection of Survey Sample.....	20
Table 2 - Summary of Telephone and Online Survey Results.....	23

Table of Figures

Figure 1- Map of CFA Areas and Regions	5
Figure 2- Fiskville Training Facility.....	9
Figure 3- 2001 Summit Overview	11
Figure 4- Focus Group Picture 1: Max presenting to volunteers. (Left)	15
Figure 5- Focus Group Picture 2: Volunteer firefighters taking the survey. (Right)...	15
Figure 6- SurveyMonkey.com Logo.....	15
Figure 7- Example of a scale rating question.....	16
Figure 8- Telephone Survey Results: Volunteer Instructors vs. Career Instructors	24
Figure 9- Survey Results: Volunteer Opinion of Brigade and Area Training	25
Figure 10– Survey Results: Required Competencies.....	26
Figure 11- Survey Results: Frequency of Assessment	27
Figure 12– Survey Results: Assessment Language	28
Figure 13 – Survey Results: Relevance vs. Major Risks	28
Figure 14– Survey Results: AFAC	29
Figure 15– Survey Results: Training Instructor Access	30
Figure 16- Telephone Survey Results: Training Time vs. Training Location Convenience.....	31
Figure 17– Telephone Survey Results: Online Training Courses	32
Figure 18 – Telephone Survey Results: Online Reference Materials.....	33

Chapter 1: Introduction

Everyday around the world, firefighters work hard to save lives and property from different kinds of hazards. Much is at stake in the dangerous situations that they encounter daily. Firefighters must be knowledgeable and well trained in the most up- to-date methods of fighting fires to protect themselves and others. Because of their career choices, volunteer firefighters cannot dedicate as much to their training as a full-time career firefighter can. Therefore, volunteer firefighter training must be closely scrutinized through constant assessment of skills and knowledge of techniques.

Victoria is a large and diverse state. The terrain ranges from large urban areas, where nearly 70% of the population lives, to wide sweeping rural areas, where less than 13% of the population lives. Because of the wide spectrum of firefighting skills and needs that Victoria requires from its fire service, concerns with the training of volunteer firefighters have arisen (Butler and Stitz). The Country Fire Authority (CFA) is Victoria's largest fire protection organization and is charged with, among other things, ensuring proper training of all the volunteer firefighters in the state outside of Melbourne. All volunteers are given the same basic training. The depth of training, however, differs between rural and urban brigades. In rural areas, volunteers are trained in everything from bushfires and structure fires to flood assistance. In suburban Victoria, the range of training is much more diverse, including topics such as hazardous materials response and urban search and rescue. The wide range of topics that the volunteers are trained in makes it a challenge to uniformly evaluate the effectiveness of the CFA's training.

In 2000, the CFA initiated a complete overhaul of the training methods used for volunteers. In 2001, an organization-wide training summit was held to assess the

strengths and weaknesses of the new methods and to address any other training concerns. At the summit, numerous issues were addressed and tentative solutions agreed upon. In addition to unaddressed concerns from the summit, other issues and concerns have developed in the past seven years.

Since the summit, there has been no subsequent research conducted on the training of volunteer firefighters in the CFA. The summit made progress in identifying problems in training and had good ideas for solving some of the problems. However, since then, there has been little done to investigate what volunteers think of their training now. A gap of information exists between the 2001 summit and the issues concern today's volunteers. The quality of the learning materials, quality of assessment, overall quality of training, relevance of training, and access to training are issues that volunteers of the CFA have expressed concern with. The validity of these concerns and the percentage of members who have these concerns were unknown. However, for the safety of the firefighters and the people and property they protect, their governing organization, the CFA, has a responsibility to investigate these concerns further. With a volunteer base of nearly 59,000 people, this was a large undertaking.

The goal of this project was to reveal the opinions of the CFA's volunteer firefighters in regards to their training. To realize this goal, information from a telephone and an online survey conducted by the team was used to investigate the opinions of volunteers regarding the training process. Specific emphasis was given to the issues of overall quality of training, quality of assessments, perceived relevance of training, access of training, and learning materials used. The team determined that volunteer opinion was mostly positive. However the volunteers had several issues with their training including, but not limited to, the lack of practical training, the lack

of online materials and courses, and the lack of flexibility of training times. Using this data, the team formulated recommendations for the CFA to help them work towards resolving the concerns of their volunteers regarding training.

Chapter 2: Background

For a firefighter, training is a continuous process. They cannot allow their skills to fall out of practice, lest they become a danger to themselves, the people they protect, and their peers. The CFA is responsible for, among other things, ensuring the volunteer firefighters of Victoria receive regular training that is up to national and international standards. In 2001, the CFA held a training summit to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their training methods. Since then, the CFA has worked to resolve the issues that were raised at the summit, however some problems have proven difficult to address. For an organization that has a wide scope of members and is critical to public safety, such as the CFA, volunteer training must be effective and efficient. This chapter examines the CFA as an organization, including its standards and the 2001 training summit.

2.1 The Country Fire Authority

Organized fire protection in the State of Victoria began in 1890 with implementation of the Fire Brigades Act (About CFA: History). This legislation created two organizations, the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board (MFBB) and the Country Fire Brigades Board (CFBB), to coordinate the limited resources of Melbourne and the surrounding country to fight fires more effectively. In 1926, the first largely volunteer firefighter association was formed after a series of devastating bushfires. This organization, the Bush Fire Brigades, was run by the State Forest Department and held little power and few resources. From 1939 to 1944, several particularly destructive bushfires convinced the government that more had to be done to protect the people and wealth of Victoria from these natural disasters. The

government responded by passing legislation to create the Country Fire Authority on April 2nd, 1945. The organization was further refined in 1958 with the passing of the CFA Act, which although it has been amended some, still governs the CFA's everyday workings. Through this rich history of service, the CFA has evolved into the large and influential organization it is now.

Today, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) is the largest fire protection organization in Victoria, Australia. Its 59,509 volunteers and 700 career firefighters (CFA 2007 Annual Report) are responsible for putting out fires all over the state, a coverage area of over 150,000 square km containing more than 2.5 million people (About CFA). This includes all of Victoria except for the city of Melbourne, which is protected by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB). The firefighters are divided into 1,209 brigades in 20 regions, which are divided into nine areas as seen in Figure 1 below. The CFA also has seven training centers spread across Victoria to keep its members well trained and educated.

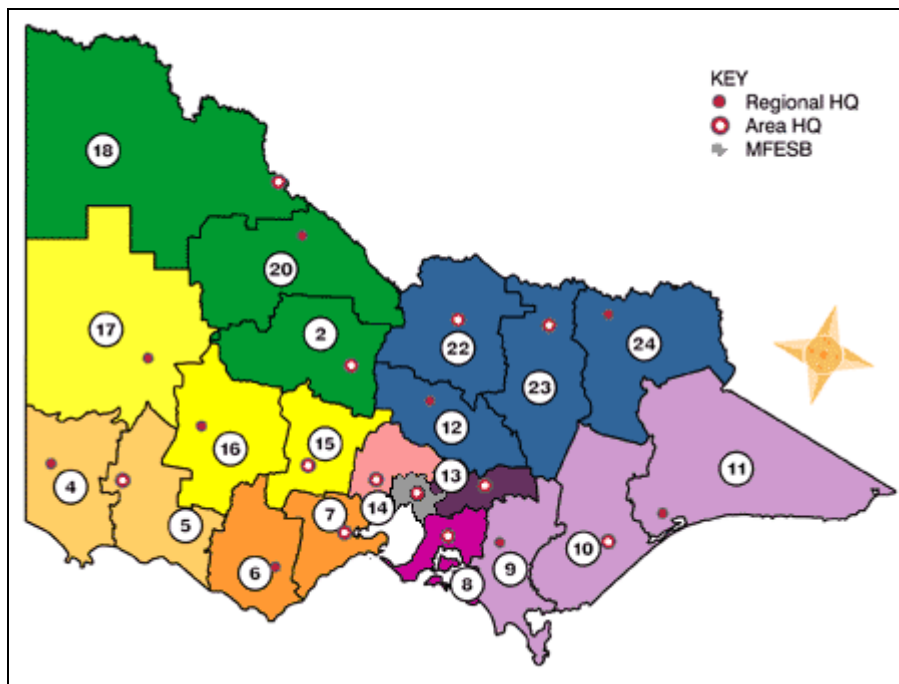


Figure 1- Map of CFA Areas and Regions

2.1.1 Mission of the CFA

The goal of any community service organization is to protect or serve the general public. This is no different for the Country Fire Authority. The CFA operates in the State of Victoria and is responsible for protecting all the land within the state, excluding the city of Melbourne as well as State forests and National Parks. The CFA's mission is to "be a professional community-based organization which will perform to agreed standards in the achievement of community safety outcomes, sustainable and dynamic into the future." (2001 CFA Annual Report). As an organization that deals with fire safety and firefighting, their objective is to meet the minimum standards set forth by agencies such as the International Standards Organization (ISO) and Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC). In addition, they strive to provide the community with information about fire safety and provide citizens with a professional and well trained firefighting and emergency response force. To achieve these goals, the CFA's members are involved in rigorous training, effective management and emergency planning, and various community awareness programs (2007 CFA Annual Report).

Other goals of the CFA are "to provide a cost effective fire and emergency service for the people of Victoria" and "to create a safe community through best practice and continuous improvement." (2001 CFA Annual Report). These are long range goals and for successful completion they must be achieved through upper management by creating objectives and goals for the individuals to carry out. The most important steps to achieve these goals are listed below:

- “Effectively implementing the major outputs in our Annual Plans”
- “Monitoring incident trends and social change in order that we can target services where they are most needed and identify and address potential problems at an early stage”
- “Monitoring trends in our own resource base and our efficiency and effectiveness.” (2001 CFA Annual Report)

The objectives and the ways to meet these objectives have been thoroughly considered and the successful implementation of the solutions will help boost the entire CFA and in turn, the training program.

2.2 Standards for Training

The development of national standards for fire service was started in 1989 by the Australian Fire Authorities Councils (AFAC) (CFA L&D Strategy). AFAC is the organization that represents all fire services and land management agencies. The standards that were developed are used to ensure that a common standard exists for training used by all fire agencies in Australia.

The standards are implemented by using "training packages." These training packages are divided into two parts, endorsed and non-endorsed. The endorsed component includes competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualifications, while the non-endorsed components include learning strategies, assessment resources, and professional development materials. The endorsed component is the definition of what a firefighter needs to know and be able to do in order to be qualified, whereas the non-endorsed component is the traditional curriculum.

The skills and practices, while they adhere to the standards, are usually passed

between people or brigades by demonstration or word of mouth, as not all of the standards are written out in a form that is useful on a brigade level. Other standards are specified in a set of documents called Fire Ground Practices (FGPs). FGPs are primarily the standards that relate to basic fire ground operations and the operation of ground equipment. These standards have been important to the maintenance of skill levels and ensuring that performance across the state is consistent.

2.3 Current Training Methods of CFA

Since the CFA is primarily a volunteer organization, its training methods must fit with the unique situations that come along with having a volunteer organization. Instructors give a lot of individual attention to students who are having trouble instead of failing them. As a result, their passing rate is extremely high (Butler and Stitz). Additionally, CFA brigades do not operate strictly on a pass/fail scale. The standard procedure is for volunteers to be classified as competent in an area as soon as they pass the course. This policy is necessary because the CFA needs all the well trained members it can get to run its organization successfully.

The skills a volunteer for the CFA will learn during training will differ depending on which role they choose within the organization. The major distinction between most CFA volunteers is operational or non-operational. The approximately 40,000 operational volunteers respond to emergencies and are in all regards, firefighters. The non-operational volunteers (approximately 19,000 people) do everything else. They contribute in many vital areas, which include fundraising, administration functions, equipment maintenance and much more. Training for operational volunteers, however, is much more in depth and time consuming than for non-operational members.

All training conducted by the CFA follows the standards set forth by the AFAC and ISO organizations. The CFA makes every attempt to work around their volunteers' jobs, families, and other obligations. For this reason, training sessions are usually conducted during weeknights and weekends. Weekly training takes place most often at the brigade itself, but training is also conducted on a larger scale at regional training centers.

Victoria has seven such training centers located throughout the state. The largest and most centrally located is at Fiskville. At these training centers, volunteer firefighters train in close to real life situations, as seen in Figure 2. These facilities are used by not only operational volunteers but also by officers, career firefighters, and corporate entities who wish to train their employees. The subjects are relevant to the firefighting basics and required to keep the volunteers in a safe working environment. These subjects include but are not limited to: basic firefighting, communications, leadership training, first aid, fire safety awareness, equipment maintenance, breathing apparatus, pump operation, and endorsed truck licensing. The training is split into specific sections based upon the volunteer's role within the brigade.



Figure 2- Fiskville Training Facility

2.4 The 2001 Training Summit

In 2001, the Country Fire Authority held a summit to address the major issues facing their training program, including delivery of training materials, skills recognition, and learning systems. Beyond discussing these topics, the most notable reasons for holding the summit were that new legislation was passed requiring certain criteria be met, community expectations had changed, and changing legal liability to the board and senior management. The summit brought together a large number of CFA members to discuss the issues and provide tentative solutions to the problems.

The problems that were presented affected the entire CFA. The summit was meant to address the big issues and not brigade specific problems. The summit was broken down into several groups, which discussed problems specific to that group. A general overview of the summit, along with groups relevant to the project and some of the problems and solutions that were discussed are shown below in Figure 3.

After the summit was completed, the solutions decided upon were largely left in the hands of brigade captains to act upon. Since there was no central CFA department responsible for following through with these tentative solutions, it is difficult to determine what suggestions had been implemented and which have not yet been put into practice. For this reason, the CFA does not know what problems still exist and what new problems have arisen since 2001.

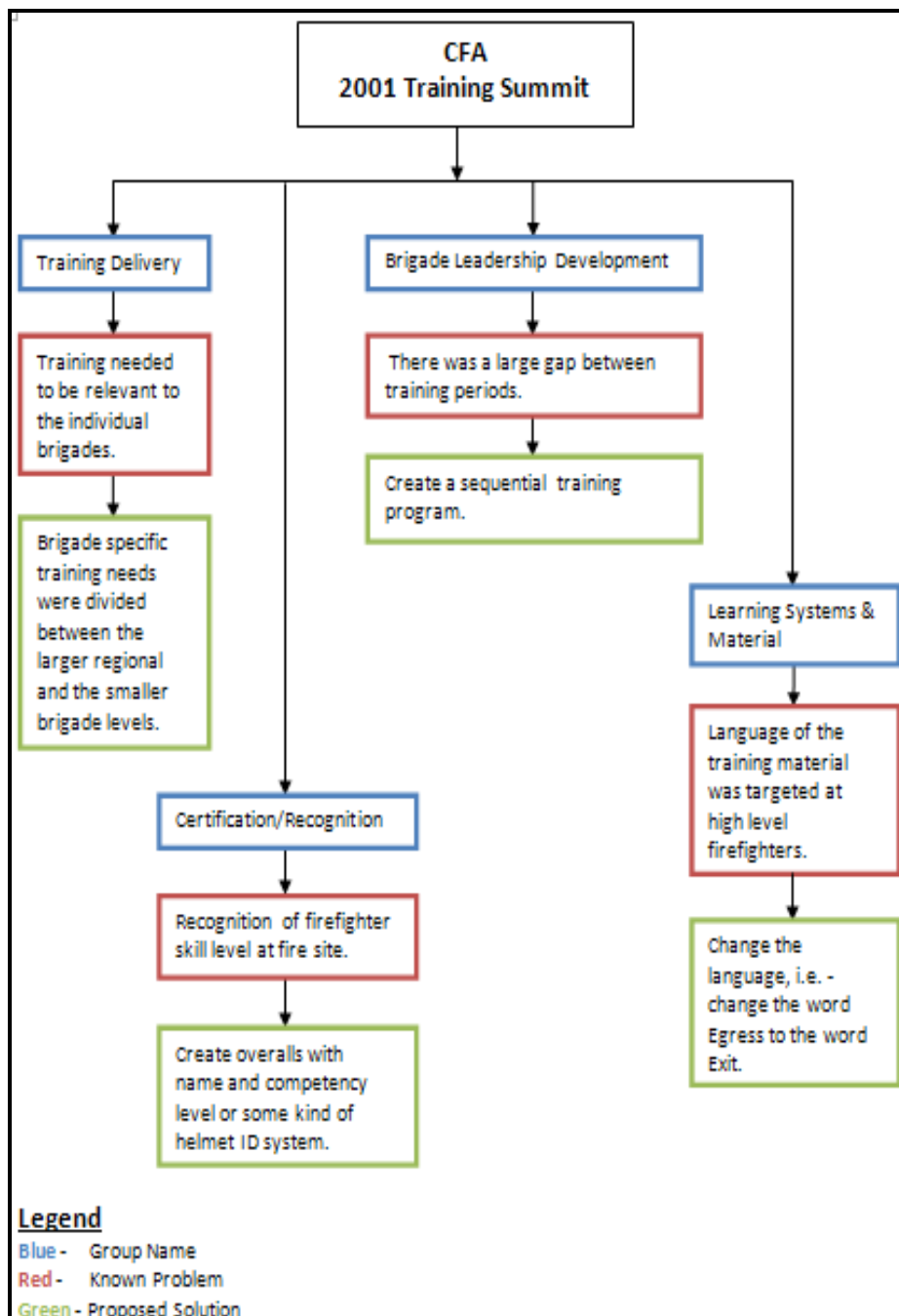


Figure 3- 2001 Summit Overview

2.5 Summary

This chapter explores the CFA as an organization, its history, and the 2001 Training Summit. In addition, this chapter gives an idea of some challenges that the volunteers might be facing. The 2001 Training Summit exhibits what the CFA has already done and the gap in information.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The goal of this project was to reveal the opinions of the CFA's volunteer firefighters in regards to their training. The team accomplished this goal by realizing the following objectives:

- Determine volunteer opinions regarding the overall quality of training
- Determine volunteer opinions regarding the quality of assessments
- Describe volunteer opinions regarding the relevance of the training
- Determine volunteer opinions regarding accessibility of the training
- Describe volunteer opinions regarding quality of learning materials

The preceding objectives were met by collecting the opinions of CFA operational volunteers. Two surveys were used to collect this information; one tailored to be completed online by any non-solicited CFA operational volunteer (Appendix A) and the other to be completed by selected volunteers via a phone call with a team member or a temporary employee hired by the CFA (Appendix B). A telephone survey of 260 operational volunteers was chosen by the team as the main means of data collection because it provided the means to select the survey sample. The phone survey sample selected was a random stratified sample that gave a valid representation of the entire CFA volunteer firefighter population. The demographic factors that were chosen to divide the sample were age, gender, and region within the CFA. The team was given demographic information for CFA volunteers from a report released on February 13, 2008 (Appendix D). This report provided the team with sufficient data to compute the relative demographics for the phone survey.

Because approximately 88% of the CFA volunteers are male, 220 of the 260 sampled were male. The volunteers within the CFA were divided into seven age brackets. The survey sample took into account the number of volunteers from each age bracket. Additionally, because the CFA consists of 20 different regions, a total of thirteen volunteers were surveyed from each region in order to create a balanced sample. In order to create a statistically significant sample for each region, the team selected an equal sample of thirteen to be taken from each. More detailed information of sample selection can be found in Section 3.7.

In addition to the phone survey before it was released to volunteers, an online survey was made available to all CFA volunteers. Since the survey sample would be difficult to control, the online survey was used just to enrich and support the results obtained from the central phone survey.

To create and test the survey, the team conducted phone interviews with nine CFA instructors. Instructors were interviewed to ensure that the final survey asked questions that were relevant to the training experience and used language that was understandable to volunteers. The team's instructor interview plan can be seen in Appendix C. After the instructor interviews, two focus groups were conducted with an urban, Hastings, and rural, Pakenham Upper, fire brigade. Pictures of these focus groups can be seen below in Figure 4 and 5 and the team's focus group plan can be seen in Appendix D. The volunteers present at the focus groups were issued consent forms (Appendix E), and then administered the survey. The feedback from the focus groups was used by the team to further refine and finalize the survey. The survey was revised according to the results obtained from the focus groups and it was then presented at the quarterly meeting of the Managers of Training and Development, which took place at The Country Place Conference Center on March 20th, 2008. The

survey was discussed and approved, with minor changes, by the present managers and the team's CFA sponsors. The following week, the survey was launched. Final versions of the online and telephone surveys can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.



Figure 4- Focus Group Picture 1: Max presenting to volunteers. (Left)
Figure 5- Focus Group Picture 2: Volunteer firefighters taking the survey. (Right)

Both final surveys were created using SurveyMonkey.com. This website had many useful options and settings to help format the survey. It was easy for the team and volunteers to use and it improved survey response and analysis. The team collected, tracked, and analyzed data with SurveyMonkey.com's useful tools. SurveyMonkey.com's logo can be seen in Figure 6.



Figure 6- SurveyMonkey.com Logo

Before administering the survey, the brigade captains of any brigades involved were notified. They were told by the team that volunteers from their brigade had been randomly selected to take a survey regarding volunteer opinions on training. The brigade captains provided permission for the team to contact those volunteers and then passed that information on to the selected brigade members. These actions gave

credibility to the survey and allowed volunteers to be comfortable and promoted unbiased responses.

3.1 Determine volunteer opinions regarding the overall quality of training

The objective regarding the volunteers' opinion on the overall quality of training was realized through eight survey questions. The relevant questions were scale rating questions, on a scale of 1-5 with one corresponding to strongly disagree and five corresponding to strongly agree, and multiple choice. An example of a scale rating question used in the survey is given below in Figure 7. The scale rating questions enabled the interviewees to respond in a way that provided measurable answers to questions concerning overall quality of training, perceived competency of the training instructors, and renewal of required competencies. The multiple choice questions asked whether or not the CFA recognized any relevant prior training or if volunteers were able to receive additional instruction when requested.

11. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Volunteer training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 7- Example of a scale rating question

3.2 Determine volunteer opinions regarding the quality of assessments

The section of the survey that was used to determine how the volunteers expressed their opinions regarding assessments consisted of two multiple choice questions, two scale rating questions, and one open ended question. The

multiple choice questions were used to describe volunteer opinion on the frequency of the assessments. The scale rating questions provided input on the language used in assessments and if the assessments were an accurate reflection of what was taught in training courses. The open ended questions were again used as a space for the volunteer to express any recommendations or suggestions they may have had concerning their assessments.

3.3 Describe volunteer opinions regarding the relevance of the training

The next set of questions examined the opinions of training relevance to the work performed post-training. These five questions examined the volunteer opinions through scale rating and open ended questions. Through the scale rating questions, the volunteers surveyed were able to provide feedback on the training they underwent and if that training is applicable to the situations that they have encountered since. The open ended questions provided a means for the volunteers to express any suggestions or recommendations that they felt would improve the relevance of their training as well as to suggest what additional training the CFA should provide.

3.4 Determine volunteer opinions regarding accessibility of the training

To determine the accessibility of training, the surveyed volunteers were provided with nine questions that probed the volunteers' opinion on the times training was offered, where training was offered, and the accessibility of training

instructors. The questions that were concerned with when and where training was offered were in a scale rating format, with an open ended space after each question regarding when and where the volunteer thought training should be offered. The questions concerning trainer access were multiple choice. The questions asked how often a trainer was available to the volunteer and then if the volunteer felt that the level of availability was sufficient. Volunteer desire for access to online training courses was also explored in this section.

3.5 Describe volunteer opinions regarding quality of learning materials

In order to describe the quality of learning materials, the team solicited opinions concerning language used in the learning materials and the access to learning materials. The questions regarding learning materials were formatted as three scale rating questions and one open ended question. One of the scale rating questions asked how the volunteer would rate the language used in the learning materials. For example, whether the language was difficult to understand or if it was clear and concise, etc. The second scale question asked if the volunteer was satisfied with the level of access they had to learning materials. The third scale question investigated whether volunteers wanted access to online learning materials. An open ended question was used to determine if the volunteer had any specific suggestions or recommendations concerning the learning materials.

3.6 General Comments

In this section, two questions were posed to volunteers to wrap up the survey. The first one asked volunteers to comment on aspects of their training that were helpful and that they enjoyed. This is significant because it shined light on what the CFA was doing well. The last question of the survey asked the volunteers for recommendations and suggestions on any aspect of their training. This allowed volunteers to express any concerns that the survey had not already covered.

3.7 Selection of Survey Sample

With the phone survey, it was possible for a random stratified sample to be used, which created a fairly accurate cross section of the CFA volunteer base. Using Excel, a pivot table was produced from the CFA's volunteer database that separated the volunteers by age group, gender, and region. This pivot table was then used to examine the age brackets of each brigade. From each region, thirteen subjects were selected by age group and gender according to the most up-to-date CFA demographics study. The number of volunteers in each region is different, however the team chose to select thirteen members from each region so when the results were divided regionally, each region would have a sample that was large enough to have some statistic significance. From each region, eleven males and two females were chosen. These were further split into age groups as shown in Table 1 below. To ensure that there was no bias, a random number generator was first used to select which age groups the females would be chosen from. Then another random number generator was added to each name in each age group. The names were then sorted in ascending format. The first names were the ones from that age group that would be

chosen to take part in the survey. This process was then repeated for the males to fill out the rest of the age brackets for each region. The volunteer database provided by the CFA included the volunteers' regions, brigades, ranks, phone numbers, email addresses, and age brackets. A table showing the split of demographics of CFA volunteers the team used is shown below in Table 1. This table was produced by examining demographic information for the CFA (Appendix D) for age, gender, and region, and applying it to the chosen sample size of 260 volunteers.

Table 1- Selection of Survey Sample

Actual Population Percentage	Demographic	Per Region	Total
5	Region	13	260
87.795	Male	11	220
12.205	Female	2	40
11	<18	1	20
16.2	18-24	1	20
20.58	25-34	2	40
30.09	35-44	2	40
36.53	45-54	3	60
30.22	55-64	2	40
22.03	65+	2	40

3.8 Online Survey

The online survey made available to the volunteer firefighters of the CFA was distributed through the CFA members website *Brigades Online*. A link to the survey website was posted in the member's only section. A security option that was used with the survey made it possible for the online survey to be completed only once at any IP Address. This all but eliminated any possible contamination of data due to volunteers completing multiple surveys from one computer. The survey was advertised to the volunteers via a short press release (Appendix E) that was posted on *Brigades Online* and also in the weekly electronic CFA newsletter, *Fire Flyer*.

3.9 Summary

To meet the objectives set by the team, two surveys were formulated and tested using instructor interviews and volunteer focus groups. The main method of data gathering was the phone survey, which was supported by the online survey. The phone survey made it possible to select a survey sample that accurately reflected the CFA volunteers in terms of age, region, and gender.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

The phone survey generated 258 responses over the course of two and a half weeks. The CFA supplied the team with two non-CFA temporary employees, John Manalilli and Allison Mitchell, who assisted the team with conducting phone surveys. The team members and temporary employees were not members of the CFA so the results that were gathered had a minimal risk of bias. As the responses were gathered for the phone survey, they were also compared to the results gathered in the online survey. The online survey was conducted over a three week period. The online survey generated 373 responses.

Using an online calculator recommended by the CFA, the team was able to determine the confidence level and confidence interval of our surveys. Confidence level dictates at what percentage you can be sure an answer is true. Confidence interval tells between what percentages a response is valid. According to The Survey System calculator, our surveys had a confidence level of 95% and confidence intervals of 6.08% for the phone survey and 5.05% for the online survey (The Survey System); however these calculations did not take into account the method of sample selection. According to these numbers, if 50% of volunteers on the phone survey responded that their training was of good quality then you can be 95% sure that between 43.92-56.08% of the volunteer population would answer the same way.

A brief overview of the results from the phone and online survey is shown below in Table 2. The results and analysis in this chapter separately examine and compare the phone and online surveys.

Table 2 - Summary of Telephone and Online Survey Results

Key		
Excellent	$X \geq 4.0$	
Satisfactory	$3.75 \geq X < 4.0$	
Room for Improvement	$3.5 \geq X < 3.75$	
Needs Improvement	$X < 3.5$	
Question Description	Telephone Survey Rating	Online Survey Rating
Volunteer Training Instructors Competent	4.21	4.16
Career Training Instructors Competent	4.17	4.22
Additional Individual Instruction Frequency	3.97	3.94
I generally know when it is time to renew my required competencies.	3.63	3.32
Overall Quality of Training at Brigade	4.15	3.79
Overall Quality of Training Provided by Area Training Team	4.12	3.43
Skills Evaluation Frequency	4.43	3.91
Assessments of training have been an accurate measure of the material that was taught.	3.99	3.69
Assessment language is clear and easy to understand.	3.97	3.43
Training is relevant.	4.16	3.96
I am adequately trained for brigade specific risks.	3.67	3.56
AFAC is important to me.	3.63	4.04
Volunteer Training Instructor Access Frequency	4.52	4.32
Career Training Instructor Access Frequency	4.29	3.51
Training is offered at times that fit my schedule.	3.61	3.33
Training is offered in locations that are convenient for me.	3.95	3.65
Quality of Learning Materials	4.18	3.73
I have enough access to learning materials.	3.89	3.24

4.1 Overall Quality of Training

When asked their opinion on the competency of the volunteer training instructors, an overwhelming majority of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their volunteer instructors were competent of the material they taught.

Respondents also felt the same way about the career instructors in the CFA. As seen below in Figure 8, these two questions were agreed upon with similar ratings for both the phone and online survey.

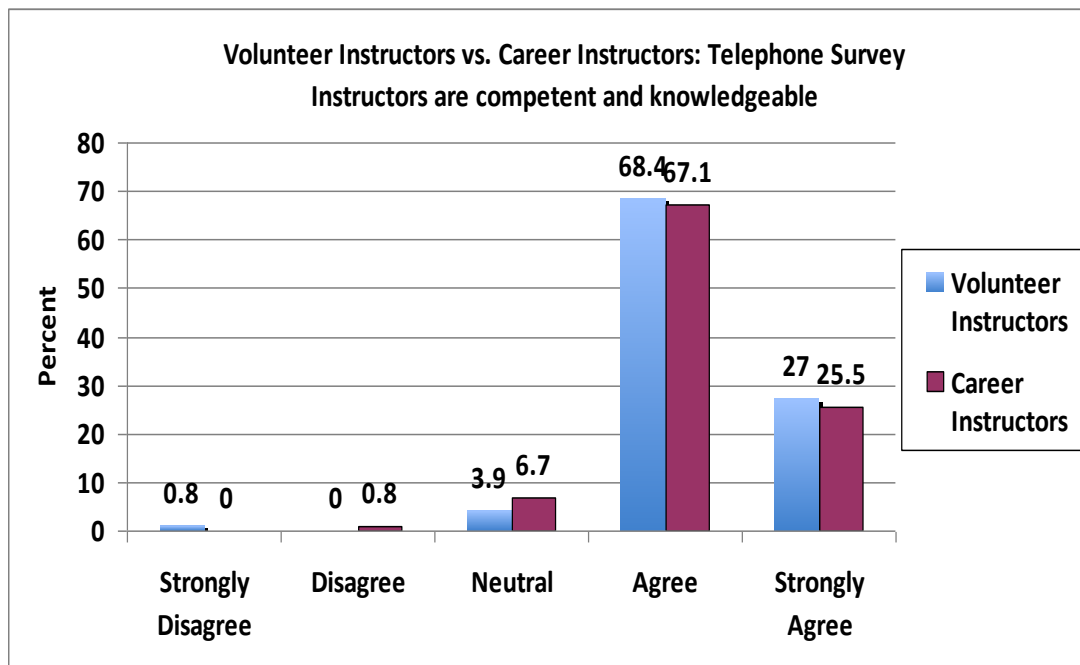


Figure 8- Telephone Survey Results: Volunteer Instructors vs. Career Instructors

The next question inquired into the volunteers' opinion on the overall quality of the volunteer training. This question was a strong indication of how volunteers generally feel about their training. On the phone survey, a majority of the volunteers agreed that the quality of brigade and area training is above average. On the online survey, the volunteers still gave positive feedback, however they were much more critical of training with their ratings being .4 lower for brigade training and .7 lower for area training. Figure 9 gives a visual breakdown of the volunteers'

opinion concerning the quality of their training.

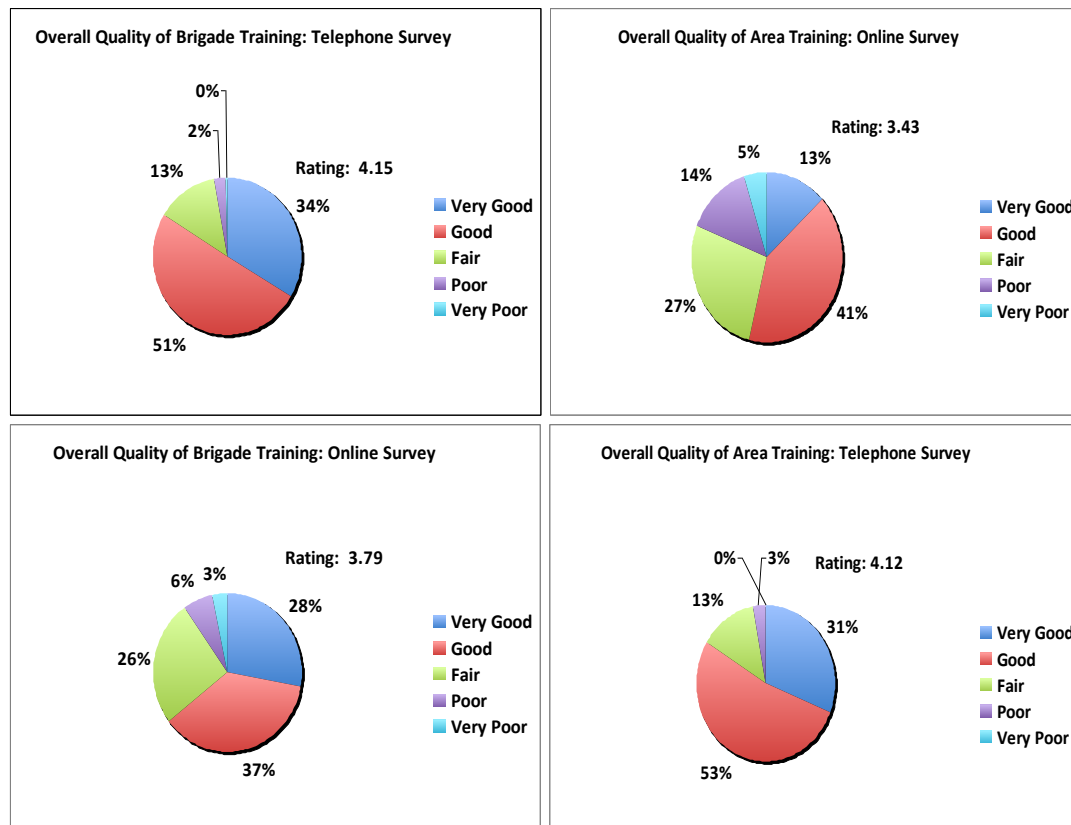


Figure 9- Survey Results: Volunteer Opinion of Brigade and Area Training

The team investigated this rift between the online and telephone surveys by separating high ranking officials, lieutenants and captains, to see if they had been more critical. However, this was not the case. The survey reflects that reserved optimism was shared by most respondents to the online survey. The pattern of respondents to the online survey being much more critical of CFA training and other relevant issues would hold through much of the survey results. The results of this set of questions indicate that the training undergone by volunteers is good overall; however those who responded online were more reserved in their optimism. If there were any issues, they were most likely to have been with specific parts of training and not training as a whole. Recognition of prior learning still seems to be a frustrating problem for the volunteers of the CFA. Approximately 50-60% of volunteers who believed they had prior learning had it officially recognized by the CFA and had

training packages credited to them. From the open ended responses, we learned that volunteers were frustrated with lengthy process and red tape they had to go through in order to have the CFA recognize their prior learning. Another place where volunteers expressed frustration was in keeping up with their required competencies.

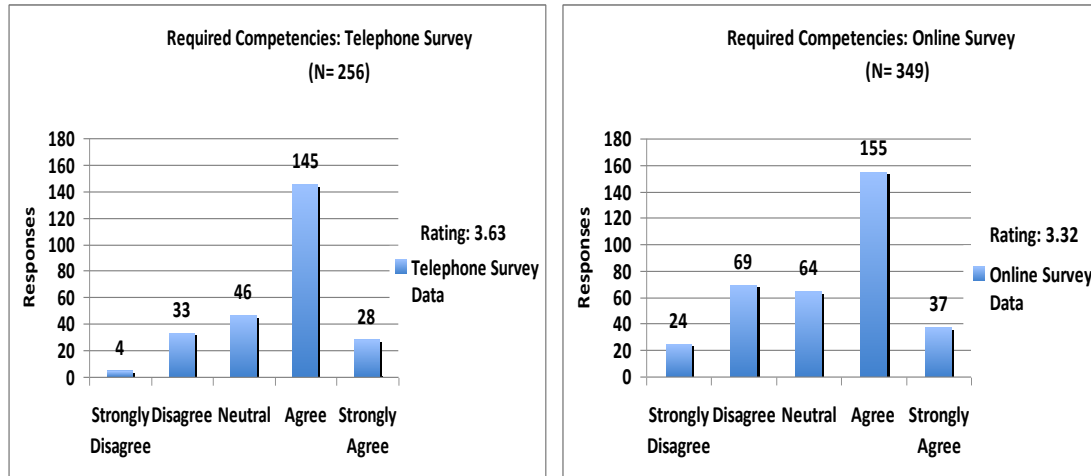


Figure 10– Survey Results: Required Competencies

On both the phone and online surveys, volunteers expressed that they generally did not know when it was time to renew their required competencies. Seen in Figure 10, a significant amount of volunteers do not agree that they usually remember when to renew their required competencies. This is reflected in results from both of the surveys, though more so from the online survey. On the question of individual additional instruction frequency, respondents to both surveys showed reserved confidence that most of the time instructors would provide them with additional individual instruction if they requested it.

4.2 Quality of Training Assessment

The majority of volunteers who completed the survey responded that their skills were assessed approximately 1-3 times a year. On the online survey, 56% of volunteers thought that this was enough assessment, while 41% felt that they

received too few assessments. On the telephone survey, 76% of volunteers thought that this was enough assessment, while 22% felt that they received too few assessments. Though opinions on this matter were split for both surveys, less than 5% of volunteers responded that they were assessed too much. Figure 11 shows that there is room to add more assessments.

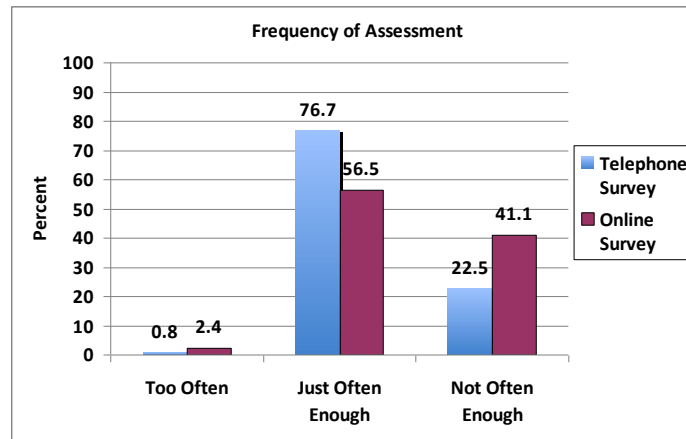


Figure 11- Survey Results: Frequency of Assessment

The next question asked if volunteers felt that their assessments were accurate reflections of what they were taught. Almost 80% of all participating volunteers felt that the questions in the assessments do pertain to the material they were taught. Once again, the online respondents were more critical of assessments, with their rating being .3 lower than the telephone survey rating. When asked if the wording in the assessments was clear and easy to understand, respondents to the telephone survey were reserved but positive, while respondents to the online survey were split on the matter. This split can be seen below in Figure 12. The open ended question clarified that some volunteers were frustrated with the ambiguous and complicated language in some assessment materials. Another issue that was revealed through the open ended question was that many volunteers were worried about the lack of practical assessment because good theory did not always lead to good practice.

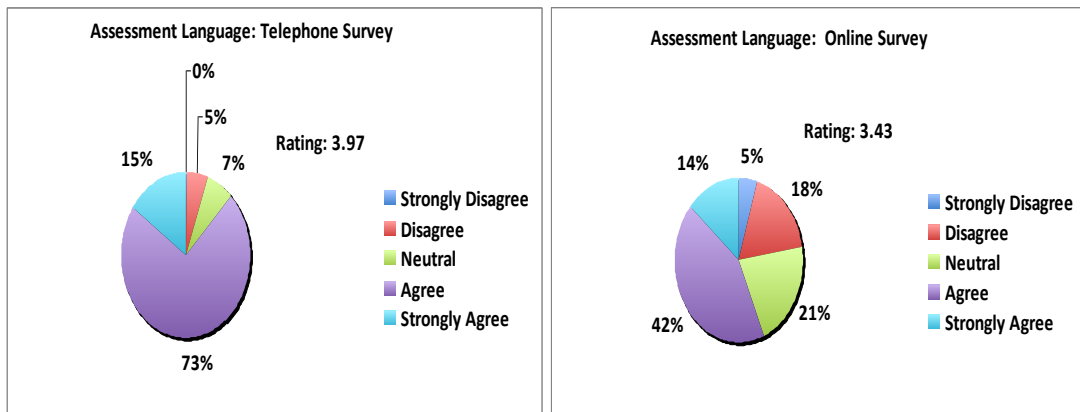


Figure 12– Survey Results: Assessment Language

4.3 Perceived Relevance of Training

The next question set was used to indicate the volunteers’ opinion on the relevance of their training. The first two questions in this section ask the volunteer if their training is relevant to the emergencies that they respond to and if they feel properly trained for any major risks specific to their brigade. The ratings for these two questions are compared below in Figure 13 for both surveys.

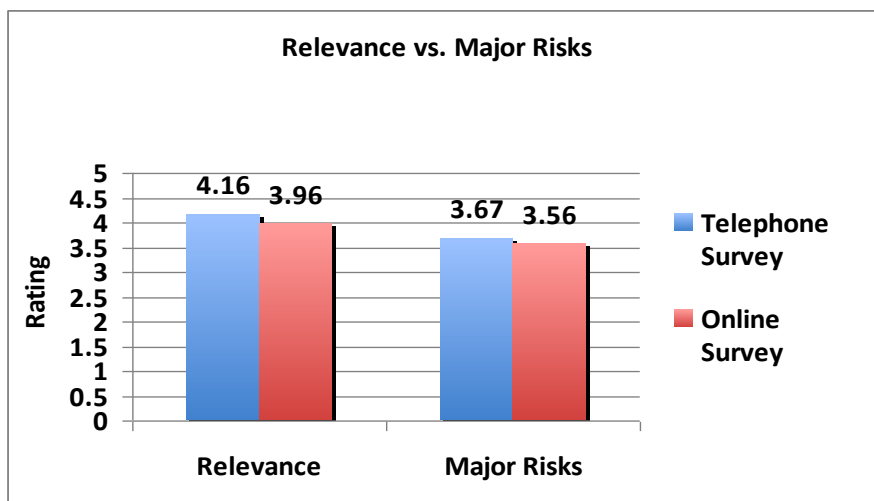


Figure 13 – Survey Results: Relevance vs. Major Risks

For the first question volunteers responded in both surveys that their training was relevant by giving it a positive rating. However, in the second question, the volunteers responded less positively, indicating that there was room for improvement in the area of training for brigade specific risks.

The next question asked how much the volunteer cared about achieving national qualifications and standards (AFAC). Because not all firefighting agencies have exactly the same guidelines, a firefighter that is certified in one state may not be certified in other states. Standardization is something that the CFA and similar organizations are working toward, but the process is a lengthy and tedious one. In response to the question, the majority of volunteers in both surveys agreed that achieving national certification is important. This issue was one of the few places in the survey where the online respondents were more positive than the telephone respondents. This is shown in Figure 14.

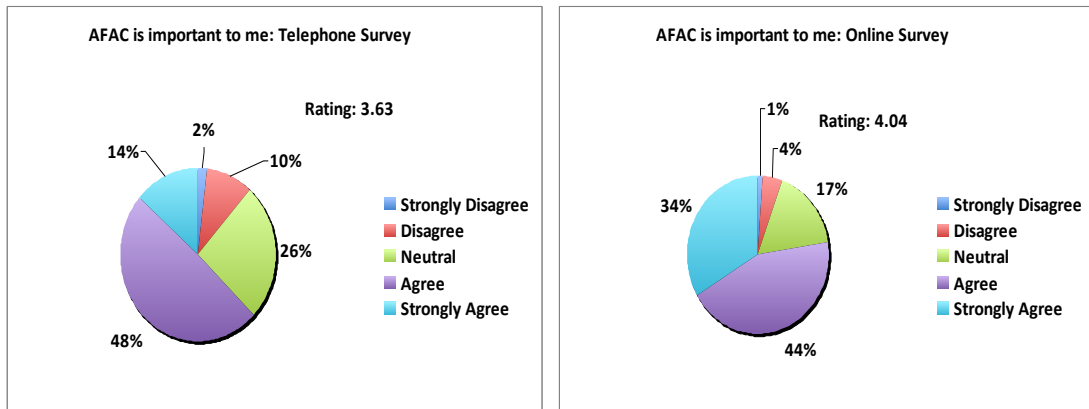


Figure 14– Survey Results: AFAC

The open-ended questions asked what additional training the volunteers would like and what they think could be done to improve the relevance of training. One reoccurring theme in these questions was that volunteers wanted to see more team building and leadership exercises to learn how to deal with people and confrontations. Additionally, many of the volunteers want more practical training, as opposed to theory or simulated exercises. The desire for more practical training was the most prevalent response to the open ended questions in all sections of both surveys. Clearly, the volunteers are united in their wish to have more practical or “hot fire”

training. While these responses could not be sorted as easily as multiple choice or rating, they provided a greater depth of information.

4.4 Accessibility of Training

The first questions asked about the volunteers’ accessibility to training were how often the volunteer had access to paid and volunteer instructors. According to the responses, the majority said that volunteer trainers are available to volunteers once a week or more, which nearly 75% of volunteers from both surveys said was sufficient. The level of access to career trainers was perceived differently by respondents. According to the responses, most volunteers only have access to career trainers approximately once every six months. Nearly 30% of responding volunteers from the telephone survey and 60% of responding volunteers from the online survey felt that this frequency is not often enough. Volunteers clearly want more access to career training instructors. This is exhibited below in Figure 15.

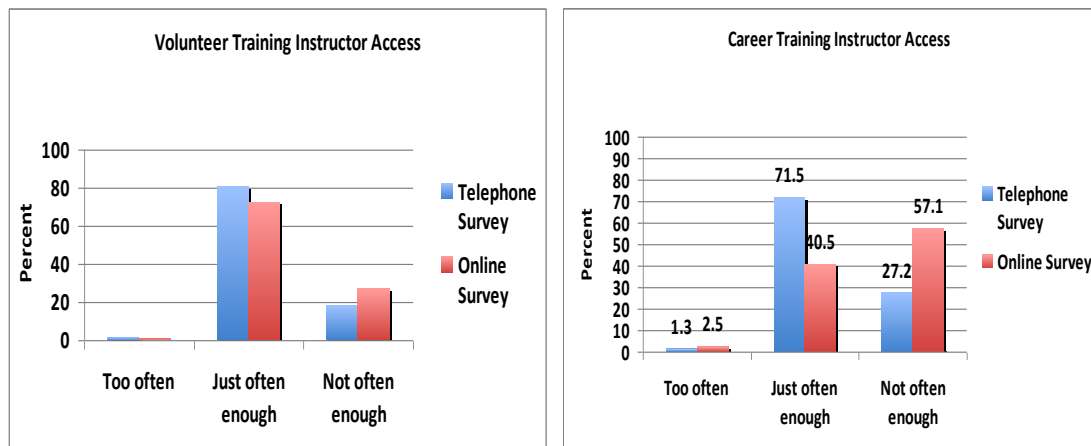


Figure 15– Survey Results: Training Instructor Access

The next set of questions that volunteers were asked dealt with the timing and locations of training. Over half of all responding volunteers felt that training is offered at convenient times. However, over 25% of telephone responses and over

45% of online responses indicated some level of dissatisfaction with training times.

The locations in which training was held seemed to be less of a problem as volunteers in both surveys rated it much more positively. This is shown in Figure 16.

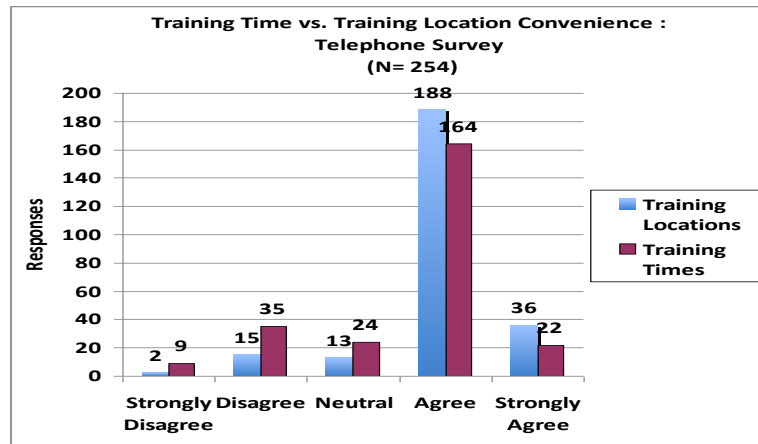


Figure 16- Telephone Survey Results: Training Time vs. Training Location Convenience

In the open ended responses, those that felt training times should be changed most often replied that they would like to see more training happening on nights and weekends, because this is when most volunteers are not at working their usual job. Volunteers also expressed that the CFA needed to be more flexible with the times of training. Many suggested holding the same training course at several different times over the course of a week so brigade members could pick which time would be most convenient for them. The most common open ended response concerning the location of training stated that training should be held closer to the individual brigades.

The final question in this section rated how much the volunteers wanted to have access to more online training courses. From the online survey, it is not surprising that over 87% of the volunteers who responded wanted to see more online training, including over 50% that strongly agreed.

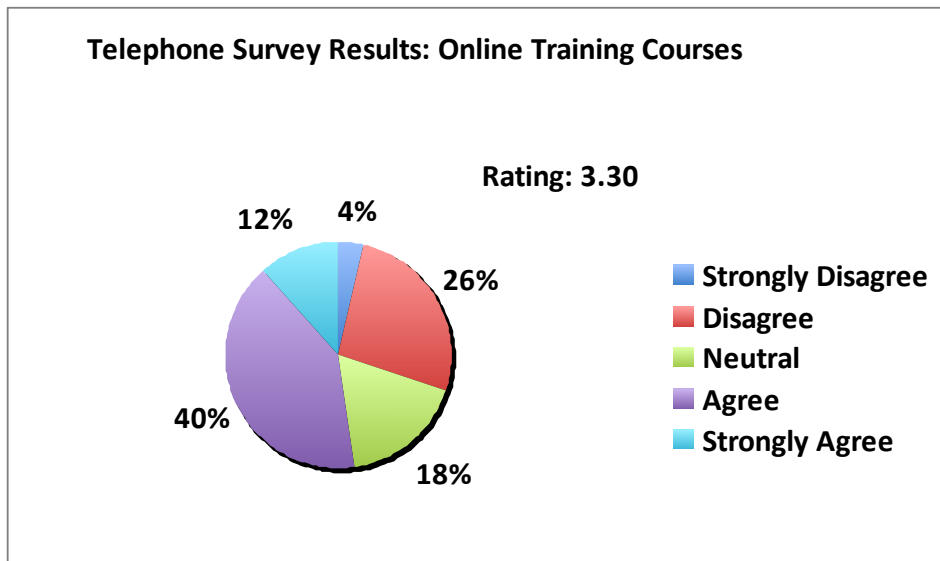


Figure 17– Telephone Survey Results: Online Training Courses

The response from the telephone survey was much more reserved, with approximately 50% who responded wanting to see more online training, including 12% that strongly agreed. The response from the telephone survey can be seen graphically in Figure 17. We believe the telephone response to be the much more accurate number as an online survey would be biased to questions asking about online learning courses. Even if the online survey is excluded for this question, the majority of volunteers do want some sort of access to online training courses. Even though there was no open ended question regarding this specific issue, it was expressed to the team many times during interviews that the online courses should not replace training courses but only be used as supplemental to the training of volunteers.

4.5 Quality of Learning Materials

The final set of questions before the general comments section asked the volunteers to respond to a series of statements, indicating their level of agreement to each statement. The first question asked the volunteer opinion on the overall quality of learning materials used. The average response of the volunteers was that

the learning materials were of fair to good quality with responses from the telephone survey rating higher than those from the online survey. Just over 2% from the phone survey and just fewer than 8% from the online survey responded negatively in reference to overall training material quality. This is an excellent indicator that volunteers are quite satisfied with the quality of their learning materials.

When asked if the volunteer had enough access to training materials, over 85% of volunteers who took the phone survey responded positively. However, less than 50% of online respondents responded the same way. Negative numbers were relatively high for this question on the online survey. The next question asked if the volunteers would like to see more materials and reference information posted online. Not surprisingly almost 94% of online responses stated that they were in favor of this suggestion. Again, since this set of data comes from the self-administered online survey, this number is most likely skewed to favor volunteers with Internet access.

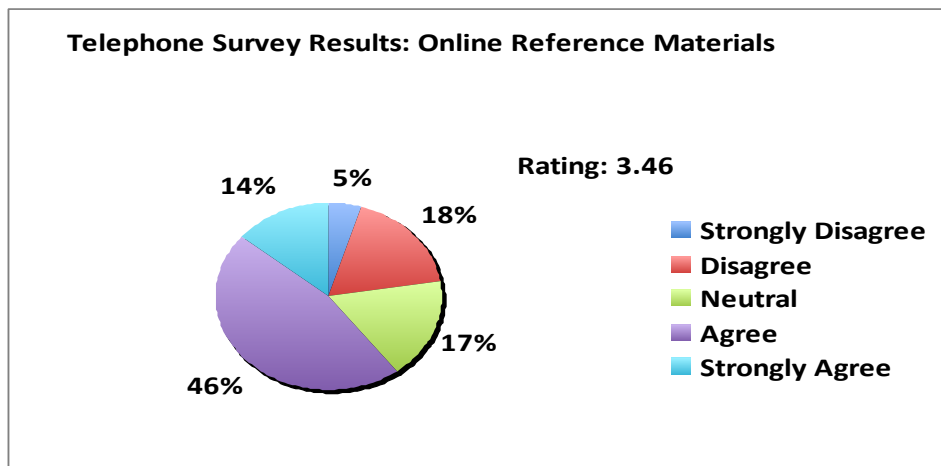


Figure 18 – Telephone Survey Results: Online Reference Materials

From the phone survey, 60% of volunteers responded that they would be in favor of online reference and learning materials. To view this graphically, refer to Figure 18. This is a full 10% higher than the positive response for online training.

Once again, we believe the numbers from the phone survey to be much more accurate than the numbers obtained from the online survey.

4.6 General Comments

When asked what parts of training they enjoyed, volunteers responded overwhelmingly with hands-on and practical training. Many enjoyed their time at seven training centers the CFA runs. Also, many enjoyed group training where they got to meet and interact with other CFA volunteers. Leadership courses were also mentioned frequently by volunteers as lessons that they found enjoyable. When asked to give recommendations on any aspect of their training, again, volunteers stressed the need for more practical training. Many volunteers also expressed that training courses should be shorter and more concise. Overall, the most common response to the open ended questions on both surveys was by far the need for more practical training.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

After interpreting the phone and online survey data through SurveyMonkey.com and Excel tables, the team reached its conclusions about the project. The data were examined according to each of the team's objectives and trends in the results were identified.

This survey provides the CFA with information that says their training is working and its quality is perceived as good by the volunteers. From the survey data, the team concluded volunteers are generally satisfied with the training that they receive from the CFA. The large majority of volunteers are happy with the training currently provided. Several aspects of training have room for improvement but the widespread opinion of CFA volunteers is largely positive.

The second conclusion is that the quality of assessments is generally good however the frequency of assessments is not adequate. Contrary to what the CFA thought before the survey, most volunteers feel that the language used in assessments is clear and understandable. There were some minor issues with assessment language and wording, but they were not as widespread as previously thought by the CFA. The main problem that most of the volunteers had with assessments was that they felt the frequency of assessment was not high enough.

The next conclusion is that volunteers are generally happy with the relevance and application of their training. However, the data gathered addressing volunteer training for major risks indicated that volunteers need additional brigade specific training. Also, with a large amount of data backing it, the team concluded that a large number of volunteers want more practical training. They want more practical training whenever and wherever possible.

When it comes to accessibility of training, the data suggests that the location of training is not a problem and the CFA has done an adequate job of providing training locations that are convenient for volunteers. The CFA has also done an adequate job of training volunteers as instructors and ensuring that each brigade has access to one. However, there are some issues the volunteers still have with access to training. Volunteers don't have enough access to career instructors and a significant portion of the volunteer workforce feel the times when training sessions are scheduled are not flexible enough.

Additionally, the team concluded that training materials are perceived by the volunteers to be of excellent quality. The volunteers have few issues with the quality and content of the materials they use in training. The volunteers' core problem with the learning materials is gaining access to them. This is also expressed through their desire for more online materials.

5.1 Recommendations

The team generated eight major conclusions to help the CFA further improve volunteer training. They are listed below, ranked in order of ease of implementation and extent of positive impact on the training of CFA volunteers.

1. Make reference and learning materials available online to volunteers.

Developing a learning materials database is a cost effective way of providing a large number of volunteers with the materials they want, when they want them. Being able to view, download, or print these reference materials off the Internet will make training officers' jobs much easier and allow for easier

referencing by volunteers. It is suggested that the materials be available through Brigades Online.

- 2. Develop a notification system to alert volunteers of when their required competencies need to be renewed.** Volunteers have jobs and families outside of the CFA so it is difficult for them to keep up with their numerous competencies. Developing a system to notify them when their competencies are about to expire will improve skills maintenance and create a safer working environment. Suggested methods for notification include emailing or mailing the training officer and/or the volunteers themselves.
- 3. Urge brigade captains to conduct more regular skill brigade level assessments.** Assessments are invaluable for skills maintenance and ensuring the safety of volunteers. The volunteers have expressed that currently it does not happen enough. It is up to the brigade captains to ensure this happens more often and perhaps a statement from CFA headquarters could motivate them to do that.
- 4. Offer the same course at various days and times across the week and weekends to fit volunteer availability, be more flexible with training times.** As stated before, volunteers have many other commitments outside of the CFA. Although most training is currently offered during nights and weekends, the timing of that training is too rigid to allow a significant portion of CFA volunteers to regularly attend. We believe by being more flexible with training times and offering the volunteers several different options that

volunteer attendance at training sessions will increase and produce a happier and better prepared volunteer workforce.

5. Add more practical training exercises wherever possible. While this recommendation probably has the most financial, logistical, and environmental implications for the CFA, it would probably make the most impact if those issues could be resolved. During the course of the survey, volunteers gave a resounding call for more practical training. We heard this opinion for a plethora of reasons citing issues such as better assessments, increase in safety, increase in happiness and interest of volunteers, better prepared volunteers and brigades, and even higher recruitment numbers and retention, all of which could be gained through the addition of more practical training.

6. Develop some online training courses to supplement classroom and practical training. While many volunteers in the CFA are averse to online learning, a small majority are in favor of the option. Technology continues to play an ever expanding role in all aspects of modern life. Therefore, we propose that at this time development and implementation of online training courses only be done with the purpose of supplementing current training. Many volunteers still feel that online learning could never replace classroom or practical training. Therefore, only as a supplementary, should online training courses be considered at this time.

7. Address major risks (petrol plants, maritime) at a brigade level and account for these in training. Although this process may take extensive research and resources to fully comprehend and solve the problem, steps must be taken to at least start this process. Many CFA volunteers feel unprepared for major risks their brigade may be responsible for. Some have even expressed that they feel headquarters will not address the problem until tragedy strikes and the negative publicity forces them to do something about it. For the safety of the volunteers and the regions they protect, preparations must be made to deal with major risks at a brigade level.

8. Continue to strive towards the standardization of training methods with AFAC standards. The question concerning the importance of AFAC to volunteers in specific was added through the request of the Regional Training Managers. This question received a positive response with many volunteers expressing that the standards were helpful when working together with other brigades and fire protection agencies. This positive response is an indication that the CFA should maintain its efforts for standardization of training between states.

We also recommend that in the future that the CFA conducts most of its online surveys. Online respondents will most likely be younger or higher ranking volunteers with Internet access, however data that applies to the entire CFA volunteer workforce can be extracted from online survey. Online surveys are cost-effective, efficient, and statistically relevant if the questions are structured correctly with demographics taken into consideration.

5.2 Future Work

The surveys conducted during the course of this project gathered a wealth of data. In order for the CFA to take full advantage of this, more extensive analysis including additional investigation of demographic trends should be carried out. Additional research should also be carried out on methods for applying some of the team's more complicated recommendations such as the addition of more practical training, the implementation of online training courses, and addressing major brigade specific risks. To do this, areas of particular interest for further study could include the cost and feasibility of adding more practical training, the level of internet access for volunteers and effective online learning methods, and identification of major brigade specific risks across the state such as marinas and manufacturing plants.

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Appendix A: Online Survey

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

1. Privacy Statement

The CFA is working in conjunction with a student team from the United States to conduct research concerning volunteers' opinions of their training. The team will be surveying volunteer firefighters over the next two months in order to assist the CFA in gaining insight into current training delivery. The data collected from this survey may improve future planning and training development. If you would like to help, then please participate in the survey and your name can be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate valid at the CFA shop.

Please read the privacy statement and then take the survey. Thank you for your time and input.

Privacy Statement:

The survey will last about 15 to 20 minutes. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to discuss any question or terminate the interview at any time. Any data collected during the survey will be kept confidential, and will be accessible by only the members of the team and our immediate faculty advisors. We will only use personal information provided by you for the purposes for which it was collected. Your name will not be used in any subsequent report or publication without your permission.

If you consent to be interviewed, we would ask that you indicate your agreement at this time.

1. What is your name? (For 100\$ gift certificate drawing only)

2. What is your phone number? (For 100\$ gift certificate drawing only)

*** 3. I agree to participate in the survey.**

Yes

No

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

2. Demographics

4. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

5. How old are you?

- Less than 18
- 18-25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-65
- 65 and older

6. How long have you been a volunteer?

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

7. What region is your brigade located in?

8. What is your position in the CFA?

- Operational Member
- Secretary
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Other (please specify)

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

9. What is your highest level of education reached?

- Secondary school
- TAFE
- University
- Post-Graduate
- None of the above

10. How often do you respond to emergencies?

- Daily or multiple times a day
- Weekly or multiple times a week
- Monthly or multiple times a month
- Every six months or multiple times every six months
- Fewer times than the above

3. Training Statistics

11. On average, how often do you participate in training?

- Daily or multiple times a day
- Weekly or multiple times a week
- Monthly or multiple times a month
- Every six months or multiple times every six months
- Fewer times than the above

12. Where do you typically participate in training? (Select all that apply)

- My brigade station
- Other brigade stations
- Fiskville Training Ground
- Northern District Training Ground
- West Sale Training Ground
- Wangaratta Training Ground
- Wimmera Field Training Ground
- Peshurst Training Ground
- South Eastern Training Ground
- Other (please specify)

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

4. Training

13. Did you receive any relevant training before you volunteered with the CFA?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please specify

14. Did the CFA recognize this training?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please specify

15. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Volunteer training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Career (paid) training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. When requested, how often did you receive additional individual instruction?

- Every time
 Most of the time
 Sometimes
 Rarely
 Never

18. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I generally know when it is time to renew my required competencies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Please respond to the following statement:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
How would you describe the overall quality of your training at your brigade?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

20. Please respond to the following statement:

How would you describe the overall quality of your training provided by your area training team?	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

5. Training Assessment

21. How often are your skills checked?

- Never
- Less than once per year
- 1-3 times per year
- 4-6 times per year
- 7-9 times per year
- 10-12 times per year
- More than 12 times per year

22. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

23. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The assessments of my training have been an accurate measure of the material that was taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The language used in written assessment materials (tests) is clear and easy to understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the assessment process.

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

6. Training Relevance

26. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My training is relevant to the situations I encounter when responding to a call.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am adequately trained for any major risks that are specific to my brigade. (maritime, petrol plants, chemical plants, etc...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The achievement national qualifications and standards (AFAC) in firefighting is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. What additional training should the CFA provide to help you perform your role?

30. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the relevance of your training.

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

7. Training Access

31. How often do you have access to a volunteer training instructor?

- Once a day or more
- Once a week or more
- Once a month or more
- Once every six months or more
- Once a year or more

32. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

33. How often do you have access to a career (paid) training instructor?

- Once a day or more
- Once a week or more
- Once a month or more
- Once every six months or more
- Once a year or more

34. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

35. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Training is offered at times that fit my schedule.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

36. When do you think training should be offered?

37. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Training is offered in locations that are convenient for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

38. Where do you think training should be offered?

39. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like to have access to online training courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

8. Training Learning Materials

40. Please respond to the following statement:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
How would you describe the overall quality of the learning materials used during training?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

41. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the quality of learning materials used during training.

42. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have enough access to learning materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

43. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like to have access to online reference and learning materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

9. General Comments

44. Please use the space below to comment on the aspects of your training that you enjoyed and have helped you learn.

45. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving any aspect of your training.

Appendix B: Telephone Survey

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

1. Privacy Statement

Hi, my name is _____. I have spoken with _____ in regards to calling you.

If the interviewee has doubts or concerns about the survey offer to have their training managers call them to confirm the validity of the survey.

I'm calling from CFA headquarters. I'm part of a student team from the United States conducting research concerning the training of volunteer firefighters. We will be surveying 250 volunteer firefighters over the next two months in order to assist the CFA in gaining insight into the volunteers' opinions of the current training program. You have been randomly selected to take part in this survey. Is it convenient for you to take the survey now or should I call back at a later time.

If yes: Great, we have a privacy statement to read and then we will begin the survey.

If no: Is there another time and/or date I could call back when it would be more convenient for you?

Before we begin, we would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in the interview which will last about 15 to 20 minutes. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to discuss any question or terminate the interview at any time. Any notes, and subsequent transcripts of the interview will be kept confidential, and will be accessible by only the members of the team and our immediate faculty advisors. We will only use personal information provided by you for the purposes for which it was collected. Your name will not be used in any subsequent report or publication without your permission.

If you consent to be interviewed, we would ask that you indicate your agreement at this time.

*** 1. I agree to participate in the interview.**

- Yes
 No

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

2. Demographics

2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

3. How old are you?

- Less than 18
- 18-25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and older

4. What region is your brigade located in?

5. What is your position in the CFA?

- Operational Member
- Secretary
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Other (please specify)

6. How long have you been a volunteer?

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

7. What is your highest level of education reached?

- Secondary school
- TAFE
- University
- Post-Graduate
- None of the above

8. How often do you respond to emergencies?

- Daily or multiple times a day
- Weekly or multiple times a week
- Monthly or multiple times a month
- Every six months or multiple times every six months
- Fewer times than the above

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

3. Training Statistics

9. On average, how often do you participate in training?

- Daily or multiple times a day
- Weekly or multiple times a week
- Monthly or multiple times a month
- Every six months or multiple times every six months
- Fewer times than the above

10. Where do you typically participate in training? (Select all that apply)

- My brigade station
- Other brigade stations
- Fiskville Training Ground
- Northern District Training Ground
- West Sale Training Ground
- Wangaratta Training Ground
- Wimmera Field Training Ground
- Peshurst Training Ground
- South Eastern Training Ground
- Other (please specify)

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

4. Training

11. Did you receive any relevant training before you volunteered with the CFA?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please specify

12. Did the CFA recognize this training?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please specify

13. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Volunteer training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Career (paid) training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. When requested, how often did you receive additional individual instruction?

- Every time
 Most of the time
 Sometimes
 Rarely
 Never

16. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I generally know when it is time to renew my required competencies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Please respond to the following statement:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
How would you describe the overall quality of your training at your brigade?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

18. Please respond to the following statement:

How would you describe the overall quality of your training provided by your area training team?

Very Poor

Poor

Fair

Good

Very Good

5. Training Assessment

19. How often are your skills checked?

- Never
- Less than once per year
- 1-3 times per year
- 4-6 times per year
- 7-9 times per year
- 10-12 times per year
- More than 12 times per year

20. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

21. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The assessments of my training have been an accurate measure of the material that was taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The language used in written assessment materials (tests) is clear and easy to understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the assessment process?

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

6. Training Relevance

24. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My training is relevant to the situations I encounter when responding to a call.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am adequately trained for any major risks that are specific to my brigade. (maritime, petrol plants, chemical plants, etc...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The achievement national qualifications and standards (AFAC) in firefighting is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. What additional training should the CFA provide to help you perform your role?

28. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the relevance of your training?

7. Training Access

29. How often do you have access to a volunteer training instructor?

- Once a day or more
- Once a week or more
- Once a month or more
- Once every six months or more
- Once a year or more

30. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

31. How often do you have access to a career (paid) training instructor?

- Once a day or more
- Once a week or more
- Once a month or more
- Once every six months or more
- Once a year or more

32. Do you find this frequency:

- Too often
- Just often enough
- Not often enough

33. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Training is offered at times that fit my schedule.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34. When do you think training should be offered?

35. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Training is offered in locations that are convenient for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

36. Where do you think training should be offered?

37. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like to have access to online training courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

8. Training Learning Materials

38. Please respond to the following statement:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
How would you describe the overall quality of the learning materials used during training?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

39. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the quality of learning materials used during training?

40. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have enough access to learning materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

41. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like to have access to online reference and learning materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

9. General Comments

42. Do you have any comments on the aspects of your training that you enjoyed and have helped you learn?

43. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving any aspect of your training?

Appendix C: Training Instructor Interview Plan

Training Instructor Interview Plan

1. Demographics (if necessary)
 - a. What training centres do you train volunteers at?
 - b. What regions do you train volunteers in?
 - c. Do you train volunteers at brigades?
 - d. Which Risk Categories of brigades do you train?

2. Feedback Rate
 - a. In general, what percentage of trainees seek out additional instruction?
 - i. During training?
 - ii. During assessment?
 - b. In general, what percentage of trainees provide you with feedback?
 - i. During training?
 - ii. During assessment?

3. Volunteer Difficulties: Feedback Based
 - a. What have volunteers specifically expressed having difficulties with?
 - i. During training?
 - ii. During assessment?
 - b. Have they communicated why they are having difficulties?
 - i. If so, what have they offered as explanations?
 - c. Why do you think they might be having difficulties with these specific issues?

4. Instructor Understanding of Targeted Volunteer Issues
 - a. In general, what are some of the problems volunteers routinely face in regards to:
 - i. Access to training
 - ii. The quality of training
 - iii. The quality of training materials (i.e. booklets, etc..)
 - iv. The relevance of training received
 - v. The quality of training assessment

Appendix D: Brigade Focus Group Interview Plan

Brigade Focus Group Interview Plan

1. Introductions
2. Explain our project and our purpose
3. Administer survey to volunteers (time how long it takes to self-administer survey)
4. First impressions of survey
5. Suggestions for improvement
 - a. Overall clarity
 - b. Questions to be added/remove
 - c. Language issues
 - d. Structure/order of questions
6. Further issues, this is what we are investigating
 - a. Learning materials
 - b. Access to training
 - c. Relevance of training
 - d. Assessment
 - e. Quality of training
 - f. Are there any other issues?

Materials Needed

10 Surveys
10 pencils
Stopwatch
Camera
Notebooks
Large Presentation/Post-It Board
Markers
Refreshments

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form for Focus Groups

Participation Form and Statement of Rights

We are students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and we are conducting a research project on behalf of the Country Fire Authority to assess the effectiveness of the CFA's training of operational volunteers. As part of this project we are conducting a series of interviews with key individuals. We have asked you to participate because we believe you have unique knowledge of these issues that will be valuable to the project.

Before we begin, we would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in the interview which will last about (expected duration of interview). Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to discuss any question or terminate the interview at any time. With your permission we would like to record the interview. Any tapes, notes, and subsequent transcripts of the interview will be kept confidential, and will be accessible by only the members of the team and our immediate faculty advisors. We will only use personal information provided by you for the purposes for which it was collected. Your name will not be used in any subsequent report or publication without your permission.

If you consent to be interviewed at this time, we would ask that you indicate your agreement below.

I agree to participate in the interview

Interviewee Name

Interviewee Signature

Date

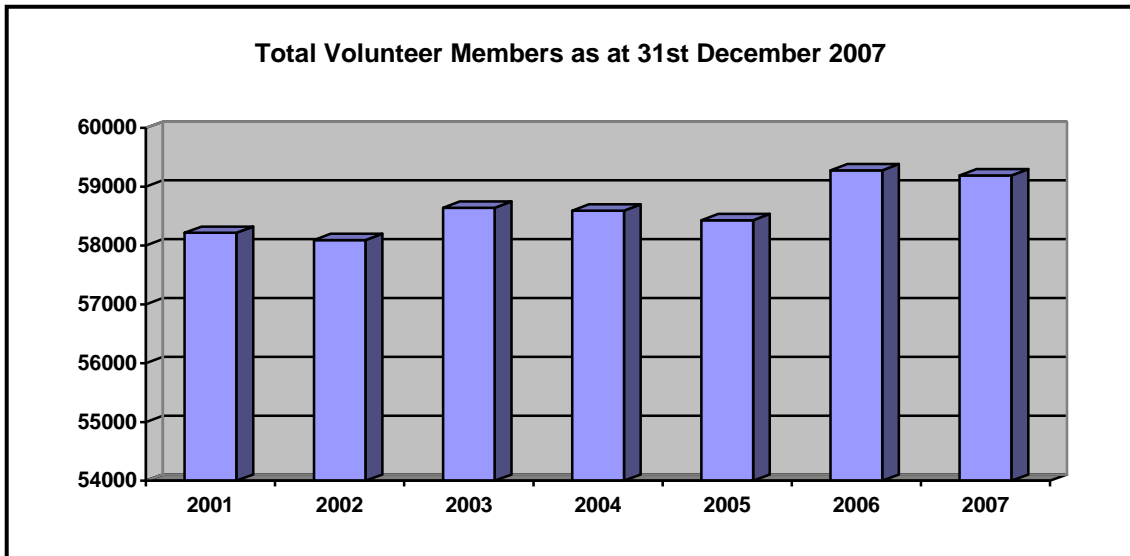
Please initial for permission to record

Interviewee Initials

Interviewer signature

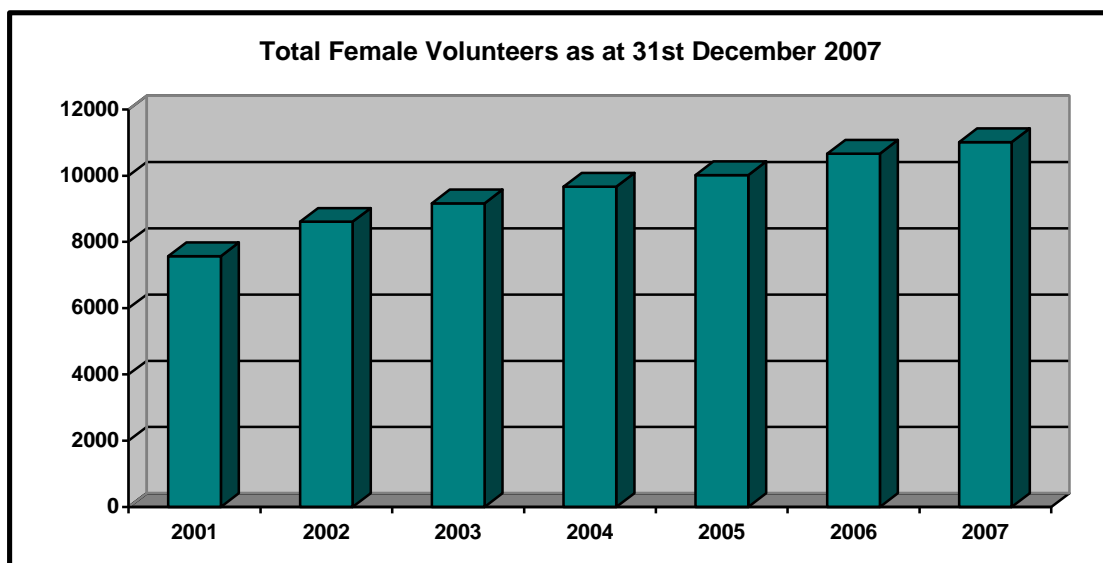
Date

Appendix F: Relevant Information from Report Concerning Sustainability of Volunteerism within the CFA



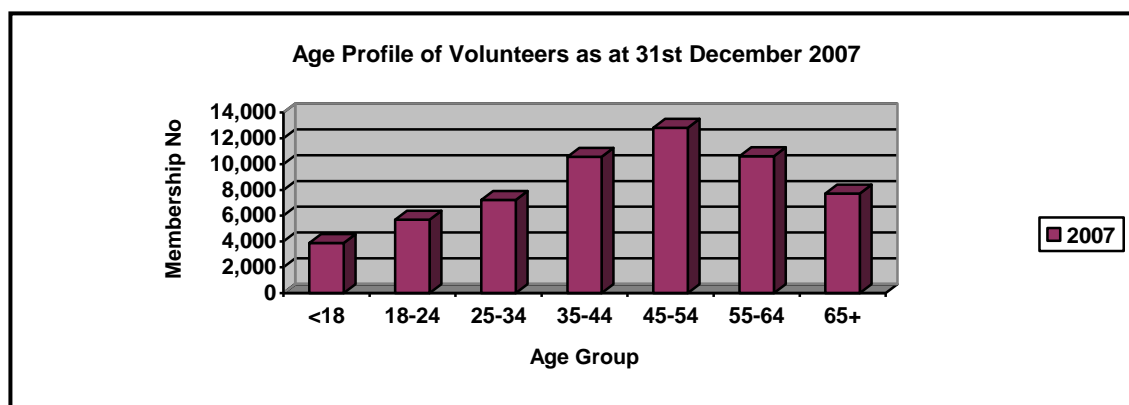
As at	31/12/01	31/12/02	31/12/03	31/12/04	31/12/05	31/12/06	31/12/07
Volunteer Members	58216	58092	58643	58592	58430	59279	59192

	31 st Dec 2005	31 st Dec 2007
Operational	36718	35075
Non-Operational	21712	24117



As at	31/12/01	31/12/02	31/12/03	31/12/04	31/12/05	31/12/06	31/12/07
Females	7574	8609	9168	9667	10019	10666	11015

	31 st Dec 2005	31 st Dec 2007
Operational	4011	4281
Non-Operational	6008	6734



Age group	<18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Unknown
No. of vols.	3875	5680	7219	10553	12814	10601	7727	723

Appendix G: Online Survey Press Release

For immediate release. Please announce the following research project:

Important CFA Research Project Underway: How you can help and win a \$100 gift certificate valid at the CFA shop in the process.

The CFA is working in conjunction with a student team from the United States to conduct research concerning volunteers' opinions of their training. The team will be surveying volunteer firefighters over the next two months in order to assist the CFA in gaining insight into current training delivery. The data collected from this survey may improve future planning and training development. If you would like to help, then please participate in the survey and your name can be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate valid at the CFA shop. Listed below is the link to the survey.

“Post survey link here”

Thank you for your help in spreading the word to those who can participate.

Sincerely,



Casey Rogan
Max Welker
WPI/CFA Training Team



Appendix H: Condensed Online Survey Results

CFA Volunteer Opinion Online Survey

1. What is your name? (For 100\$ gift certificate drawing only)		
		Response Count
		330
	<i>answered question</i>	330
	<i>skipped question</i>	43

2. What is your phone number? (For 100\$ gift certificate drawing only)		
		Response Count
		328
	<i>answered question</i>	328
	<i>skipped question</i>	45

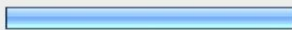




3. I agree to participate in the survey.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		99.5%	371
No		0.5%	2
	<i>answered question</i>		373
	<i>skipped question</i>		0


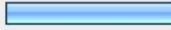
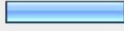


4. What is your gender?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Male		88.3%	303
Female		11.7%	40
	<i>answered question</i>		343
	<i>skipped question</i>		30

5. How old are you?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 18		3.5%	12
18-25		16.5%	57
26-34		17.4%	60
35-44		29.0%	100
45-54		19.4%	67
55-65		12.2%	42
65 and older		2.0%	7
		<i>answered question</i>	345
		<i>skipped question</i>	28

6. How long have you been a volunteer?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year		3.9%	14
1-2 years		11.3%	41
3-5 years		17.4%	63
6-10 years		22.7%	82
11-15 years		13.8%	50
16-20 years		10.5%	38
More than 20 years		20.4%	74
		<i>answered question</i>	362
		<i>skipped question</i>	11

7. What region is your brigade located in?		
		Response Count
		337
	<i>answered question</i>	337
	<i>skipped question</i>	36

8. What is your position in the CFA?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Operational Member		52.0%	178
Secretary		4.7%	16
Lieutenant		23.4%	80
Captain		6.4%	22
Other (please specify)		13.5%	46
	<i>answered question</i>		342
	<i>skipped question</i>		31

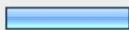
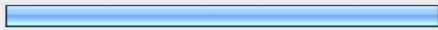
9. What is your highest level of education reached?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Secondary school		35.7%	129
TAFE		30.5%	110
University		21.1%	76
Post-Graduate		11.1%	40
None of the above		1.7%	6
	<i>answered question</i>		361
	<i>skipped question</i>		12

10. How often do you respond to emergencies?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Daily or multiple times a day		12.5%	45
Weekly or multiple times a week		48.2%	174
Monthly or multiple times a month		28.3%	102
Every six months or multiple times every six months		8.9%	32
Fewer times then the above		2.2%	8
<i>answered question</i>			361
<i>skipped question</i>			12

11. On average, how often do you participate in training?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Daily or multiple times a day		0.6%	2
Weekly or multiple times a week		57.0%	203
Monthly or multiple times a month		31.2%	111
Every six months or multiple times every six months		8.1%	29
Fewer times then the above		3.1%	11
<i>answered question</i>			356
<i>skipped question</i>			17

12. Where do you typically participate in training? (Select all that apply)			
		Response Percent	Response Count
My brigade station		96.1%	345
Other brigade stations		40.1%	144
Fiskville Training Ground		21.2%	76
Northern District Training Ground		2.5%	9
West Sale Training Ground		5.0%	18
Wangaratta Training Ground		4.5%	16
Wimmera Field Training Ground		1.1%	4
Penshurst Training Ground		2.2%	8
South Eastern Training Ground		23.4%	84
Other (please specify)		11.7%	42
<i>answered question</i>			359
<i>skipped question</i>			14

13. Did you receive any relevant training before you volunteered with the CFA?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		27.9%	98
No		72.1%	253
If yes, please specify			85
<i>answered question</i>			351
<i>skipped question</i>			22

14. Did the CFA recognize this training?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			22.0%	55
No			78.0%	195
If yes, please specify				38
<i>answered question</i>				250
<i>skipped question</i>				123

15. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Volunteer training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	0.3% (1)	2.3% (8)	10.8% (38)	54.5% (192)	32.1% (113)	4.16	352
<i>answered question</i>							352
<i>skipped question</i>							21

16. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Career (paid) training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	0.6% (2)	2.6% (9)	8.9% (31)	50.1% (174)	37.8% (131)	4.22	347
<i>answered question</i>							347
<i>skipped question</i>							26

17. When requested, how often did you receive additional individual instruction?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Every time		35.9%	122
Most of the time		35.6%	121
Sometimes		17.4%	59
Rarely		9.1%	31
Never		2.1%	7
<i>answered question</i>			340
<i>skipped question</i>			33

18. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I generally know when it is time to renew my required competencies.	6.9% (24)	19.8% (69)	18.3% (64)	44.4% (155)	10.6% (37)	3.32	349
<i>answered question</i>							349
<i>skipped question</i>							24

19. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of your training at your brigade?	3.4% (12)	6.3% (22)	25.7% (90)	36.9% (129)	27.7% (97)	3.79	350
<i>answered question</i>							350
<i>skipped question</i>							23

20. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of your training provided by your area training team?	5.1% (18)	13.7% (48)	27.4% (96)	40.7% (143)	13.1% (46)	3.43	351
<i>answered question</i>							351
<i>skipped question</i>							22

21. How often are your skills checked?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Never		13.2%	45
Less than once per year		17.4%	59
1-3 times per year		37.6%	128
4-6 times per year		15.6%	53
7-9 times per year		4.4%	15
10-12 times per year		3.8%	13
More than 12 times per year		7.9%	27
<i>answered question</i>			340
<i>skipped question</i>			33

22. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		2.4%	8
Just often enough		56.5%	191
Not often enough		41.1%	139
<i>answered question</i>			338
<i>skipped question</i>			35

23. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The assessments of my training have been an accurate measure of the material that was taught.	2.6% (9)	9.2% (32)	17.3% (60)	58.1% (201)	12.7% (44)	3.69	346
<i>answered question</i>							346
<i>skipped question</i>							27

24. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The language used in written assessment materials (tests) is clear and easy to understand.	4.6% (16)	17.9% (62)	21.1% (73)	42.8% (148)	13.6% (47)	3.43	346
<i>answered question</i>							346
<i>skipped question</i>							27

25. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the assessment process.		Response Count
		143
<i>answered question</i>		143
<i>skipped question</i>		230

26. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
My training is relevant to the situations I encounter when responding to a call.	0.6% (2)	7.6% (26)	12.0% (41)	55.4% (190)	24.5% (84)	3.96	343
<i>answered question</i>							343
<i>skipped question</i>							30

27. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I am adequately trained for any major risks that are specific to my brigade. (maritime, petrol plants, chemical plants, etc...)	3.5% (12)	14.6% (50)	19.8% (68)	46.9% (161)	15.2% (52)	3.56	343
<i>answered question</i>							343
<i>skipped question</i>							30

28. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The achievement national qualifications and standards (AFAC) in firefighting is important to me.	1.2% (4)	4.4% (15)	17.0% (58)	43.7% (149)	33.7% (115)	4.04	341
<i>answered question</i>							341
<i>skipped question</i>							32

29. What additional training should the CFA provide to help you perform your role?		Response Count
		200
<i>answered question</i>		200
<i>skipped question</i>		173

30. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the relevance of your training.		Response Count
		135
<i>answered question</i>		135
<i>skipped question</i>		238

31. How often do you have access to a volunteer training instructor?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Once a day or more		11.6%	39
Once a week or more		38.5%	129
Once a month or more		26.6%	89
Once every six months or more		14.0%	47
Once a year or more		9.3%	31
		<i>answered question</i>	335
		<i>skipped question</i>	38

32. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		0.9%	3
Just often enough		72.4%	239
Not often enough		26.7%	88
		<i>answered question</i>	330
		<i>skipped question</i>	43

33. How often do you have access to a career (paid) training instructor?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Once a day or more		7.0%	23
Once a week or more		9.2%	30
Once a month or more		13.1%	43
Once every six months or more		38.5%	126
Once a year or more		32.1%	105
<i>answered question</i>			327
<i>skipped question</i>			46

34. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		2.5%	8
Just often enough		40.5%	132
Not often enough		57.1%	186
<i>answered question</i>			326
<i>skipped question</i>			47

35. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Training is offered at times that fit my schedule.	7.7% (26)	14.5% (49)	25.4% (86)	42.3% (143)	10.1% (34)	3.33	338
<i>answered question</i>							338
<i>skipped question</i>							35

36. When do you think training should be offered?		Response Count
		217
	<i>answered question</i>	217
	<i>skipped question</i>	156

37. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Training is offered in locations that are convenient for me.	3.6% (12)	8.6% (29)	19.9% (67)	54.9% (185)	13.1% (44)	3.65	337
	<i>answered question</i>						337
	<i>skipped question</i>						36

38. Where do you think training should be offered?		Response Count
		182
	<i>answered question</i>	182
	<i>skipped question</i>	191

39. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I would like to have access to online training courses.	2.1% (7)	1.5% (5)	9.4% (32)	34.1% (116)	52.9% (180)	4.34	340
	<i>answered question</i>						340
	<i>skipped question</i>						33

40. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of the learning materials used during training?	2.1% (7)	5.6% (19)	26.9% (91)	47.9% (162)	17.5% (59)	3.73	338
<i>answered question</i>							338
<i>skipped question</i>							35

41. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving the quality of learning materials used during training.		Response Count
		142
<i>answered question</i>		142
<i>skipped question</i>		231

42. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I have enough access to learning materials.	4.4% (15)	21.3% (72)	26.3% (89)	41.4% (140)	6.5% (22)	3.24	338
<i>answered question</i>							338
<i>skipped question</i>							35

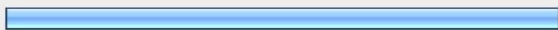
43. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I would like to have access to online reference and learning materials.	0.3% (1)	0.6% (2)	4.7% (16)	33.6% (114)	60.8% (206)	4.54	339
<i>answered question</i>							339
<i>skipped question</i>							34



44. Please use the space below to comment on the aspects of your training that you enjoyed and have helped you learn.		Response Count
		201
	<i>answered question</i>	201
	<i>skipped question</i>	172





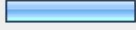


45. Please use the space below for recommendations or suggestions for improving any aspect of your training.		Response Count
		168
	<i>answered question</i>	168
	<i>skipped question</i>	205

Appendix I: Condensed Telephone Survey Results





CFA Volunteer Opinion Telephone Survey

1. I agree to participate in the interview.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	258
No		0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>			258
<i>skipped question</i>			0

2. What is your gender?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Male		84.4%	216
Female		15.6%	40
<i>answered question</i>			256
<i>skipped question</i>			2

3. How old are you?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 18		7.4%	19
18-25		8.2%	21
26-34		15.2%	39
35-44		15.2%	39
45-54		23.0%	59
55-64		15.6%	40
65 and older		15.2%	39
<i>answered question</i>			256
<i>skipped question</i>			2

4. What region is your brigade located in?		
		Response Count
		256
	<i>answered question</i>	256
	<i>skipped question</i>	2

5. What is your position in the CFA?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Operational Member		80.1%	205
Secretary		0.4%	1
Lieutenant		15.6%	40
Captain		3.9%	10
Other (please specify)		0.0%	0
	<i>answered question</i>		256
	<i>skipped question</i>		2

6. How long have you been a volunteer?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year		5.1%	13
1-2 years		10.5%	27
3-5 years		17.9%	46
6-10 years		17.5%	45
11-15 years		13.2%	34
16-20 years		5.8%	15
More than 20 years		30.0%	77
		<i>answered question</i>	257
		<i>skipped question</i>	1


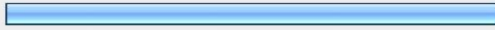
7. What is your highest level of education reached?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Secondary school		58.8%	150
TAFE		19.6%	50
University		12.9%	33
Post-Graduate		3.1%	8
None of the above		5.5%	14
		<i>answered question</i>	255
		<i>skipped question</i>	3

8. How often do you respond to emergencies?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Daily or multiple times a day		3.9%	10
Weekly or multiple times a week		21.1%	54
Monthly or multiple times a month		40.6%	104
Every six months or multiple times every six months		20.7%	53
Fewer times then the above		13.7%	35
<i>answered question</i>			256
<i>skipped question</i>			2

9. On average, how often do you participate in training?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Daily or multiple times a day		0.4%	1
Weekly or multiple times a week		26.5%	68
Monthly or multiple times a month		33.5%	86
Every six months or multiple times every six months		24.9%	64
Fewer times then the above		14.8%	38
<i>answered question</i>			257
<i>skipped question</i>			1

10. Where do you typically participate in training? (Select all that apply)			
		Response Percent	Response Count
My brigade station		92.6%	237
Other brigade stations		21.9%	56
Fiskville Training Ground		6.6%	17
Northern District Training Ground		1.2%	3
West Sale Training Ground		1.6%	4
Wangaratta Training Ground		1.6%	4
Wimmera Field Training Ground		0.0%	0
Penshurst Training Ground		3.1%	8
South Eastern Training Ground		4.3%	11
Other (please specify)		15.2%	39
<i>answered question</i>			256
<i>skipped question</i>			2

11. Did you receive any relevant training before you volunteered with the CFA?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		13.3%	34
No		86.7%	222
If yes, please specify			28
<i>answered question</i>			256
<i>skipped question</i>			2

12. Did the CFA recognize this training?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			11.1%	21
No			88.9%	169
If yes, please specify				17
answered question				190
skipped question				68

13. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Volunteer training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	0.8% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.9% (10)	68.4% (175)	27.0% (69)	4.21	256
answered question							256
skipped question							2

14. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Career (paid) training instructors are competent and knowledgeable of the information they present.	0.0% (0)	0.8% (2)	6.7% (17)	67.1% (171)	25.5% (65)	4.17	255
answered question							255
skipped question							3

15. When requested, how often did you receive additional individual instruction?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Every time		36.7%	92
Most of the time		43.0%	108
Sometimes		11.6%	29
Rarely		4.8%	12
Never		4.0%	10
<i>answered question</i>			251
<i>skipped question</i>			7

16. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I generally know when it is time to renew my required competencies.	1.6% (4)	12.9% (33)	18.0% (46)	56.6% (145)	10.9% (28)	3.63	256
<i>answered question</i>							256
<i>skipped question</i>							2

17. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of your training at your brigade?	0.4% (1)	2.4% (6)	13.3% (34)	50.2% (128)	33.7% (86)	4.15	255
<i>answered question</i>							255
<i>skipped question</i>							3

18. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of your training provided by your area training team?	0.0% (0)	3.1% (8)	12.9% (33)	52.9% (135)	31.0% (79)	4.12	255
<i>answered question</i>							255
<i>skipped question</i>							3

19. How often are your skills checked?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Never		10.4%	26
Less than once per year		14.9%	37
1-3 times per year		36.5%	91
4-6 times per year		14.9%	37
7-9 times per year		3.6%	9
10-12 times per year		12.4%	31
More than 12 times per year		7.2%	18
<i>answered question</i>			249
<i>skipped question</i>			9

20. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		0.8%	2
Just often enough		76.7%	191
Not often enough		22.5%	56
<i>answered question</i>			249
<i>skipped question</i>			9

21. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The assessments of my training have been an accurate measure of the material that was taught.	0.0% (0)	1.6% (4)	6.6% (17)	83.2% (213)	8.6% (22)	3.99	256
<i>answered question</i>							256
<i>skipped question</i>							2

22. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The language used in written assessment materials (tests) is clear and easy to understand.	0.4% (1)	5.1% (13)	7.1% (18)	72.2% (184)	15.3% (39)	3.97	255
<i>answered question</i>							255
<i>skipped question</i>							3

23. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the assessment process?		Response Count
		47
<i>answered question</i>		47
<i>skipped question</i>		211

24. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
My training is relevant to the situations I encounter when responding to a call.	0.4% (1)	1.2% (3)	6.6% (17)	66.0% (169)	25.8% (66)	4.16	256
<i>answered question</i>							256
<i>skipped question</i>							2




25. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I am adequately trained for any major risks that are specific to my brigade. (maritime, petrol plants, chemical plants, etc...)	0.8% (2)	12.2% (31)	18.9% (48)	55.9% (142)	12.2% (31)	3.67	254
<i>answered question</i>							254
<i>skipped question</i>							4

26. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
The achievement national qualifications and standards (AFAC) in firefighting is important to me.	2.0% (5)	9.6% (24)	25.7% (64)	49.0% (122)	13.7% (34)	3.63	249
<i>answered question</i>							249
<i>skipped question</i>							9

27. What additional training should the CFA provide to help you perform your role?		Response Count
		76
<i>answered question</i>		76
<i>skipped question</i>		182

28. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the relevance of your training?		Response Count
		44
<i>answered question</i>		44
<i>skipped question</i>		214

29. How often do you have access to a volunteer training instructor?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Once a day or more		28.4%	71
Once a week or more		27.2%	68
Once a month or more		17.6%	44
Once every six months or more		17.2%	43
Once a year or more		9.6%	24
<i>answered question</i>			250
<i>skipped question</i>			8

30. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		1.2%	3
Just often enough		80.8%	202
Not often enough		18.0%	45
<i>answered question</i>			250
<i>skipped question</i>			8

31. How often do you have access to a career (paid) training instructor?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Once a day or more		13.4%	32
Once a week or more		20.5%	49
Once a month or more		15.1%	36
Once every six months or more		27.2%	65
Once a year or more		23.8%	57
<i>answered question</i>			239
<i>skipped question</i>			19

32. Do you find this frequency:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Too often		1.3%	3
Just often enough		71.5%	171
Not often enough		27.2%	65
<i>answered question</i>			239
<i>skipped question</i>			19

33. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Training is offered at times that fit my schedule.	3.5% (9)	13.8% (35)	9.4% (24)	64.6% (164)	8.7% (22)	3.61	254
<i>answered question</i>							254
<i>skipped question</i>							4

34. When do you think training should be offered?		Response Count
		99
	<i>answered question</i>	99
	<i>skipped question</i>	159

35. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
Training is offered in locations that are convenient for me.	0.8% (2)	5.9% (15)	5.1% (13)	74.0% (188)	14.2% (36)	3.95	254
	<i>answered question</i>						254
	<i>skipped question</i>						4

36. Where do you think training should be offered?		Response Count
		74
	<i>answered question</i>	74
	<i>skipped question</i>	184

37. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I would like to have access to online training courses.	3.5% (9)	26.6% (68)	17.6% (45)	40.6% (104)	11.7% (30)	3.30	256
	<i>answered question</i>						256
	<i>skipped question</i>						2

38. Please respond to the following statement:							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
How would you describe the overall quality of the learning materials used during training?	0.0% (0)	2.3% (6)	6.6% (17)	62.1% (159)	28.9% (74)	4.18	256
	<i>answered question</i>						256
	<i>skipped question</i>						2

39. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the quality of learning materials used during training?		Response Count
		49
	<i>answered question</i>	49
	<i>skipped question</i>	209

40. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I have enough access to learning materials.	0.4% (1)	4.7% (12)	10.6% (27)	74.5% (190)	9.8% (25)	3.89	255
	<i>answered question</i>						255
	<i>skipped question</i>						3

41. Please indicate how well you agree or disagree with the following statement:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I would like to have access to online reference and learning materials.	4.7% (12)	17.9% (46)	17.1% (44)	46.3% (119)	14.0% (36)	3.47	257
	<i>answered question</i>						257
	<i>skipped question</i>						1

42. Do you have any comments on the aspects of your training that you enjoyed and have helped you learn?		Response Count
		175
	<i>answered question</i>	175
	<i>skipped question</i>	83

43. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving any aspect of your training?		Response Count
		155
	<i>answered question</i>	155
	<i>skipped question</i>	103