

Running head: INTEGRATING POSITION-SPECIFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Integrating Position-Specific Incident Management Team Training  
into the Cedar Falls Fire Rescue Training Program

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Paul Schilling", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

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John-Paul Schilling

## Abstract

The problem that brought forward this applied research project was: Cedar Falls Fire Rescue, Iowa does not offer position-specific Incident Management Team (IMT) training. The purpose of this research was to improve by integrating position-specific incident-management team training for the command and general staff function areas. Through descriptive research four questions were researched. What criteria are other communities of similar size utilizing for IMT position-specific training? What are the IMT position-specific training components that could be added to a department's training program? What was the associated cost and benefit of this type of training? Should there be a continuing-education component for the maintenance of the skills learned with this type of training.

Research procedures utilized an extensive search of the Internet for published articles relating to this subject. Use of the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy also and their online data base also proved to be beneficial in finding quality information. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to fire officials in seventy-five similar-sized communities.

The result of the research showed a need to integrate this type of training and continuing-education component into the Cedar Falls Fire Rescue's training program. It was also determined that there are alternate-funding options to offset the cost of this type of training.

Recommendations derived from the research results showed that department administration could build a quality IMT with depth and ability to maintain an effective disaster response.

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## Integrating Position-Specific Incident-Management Team Training into the Cedar Falls Fire Rescue Training Program

### Introduction

A key component to developing a program that relies on resources is the ability to have personnel trained to be successful from the program's inception. The City of Cedar Falls Fire Rescue is in the development stages of creating a local Incident Management Team (IMT). During the development process, the training criterion was reviewed. The review found that potential members have the required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training certification and know the basics of command and general staff position associated with a local Incident Management Team.

The State of Iowa has only one Type III All Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT) within its borders. This team is assigned to events based on a Governor's Disaster Declaration and the availability of the IMT. Should there be more than one disaster area at the same time, the City of Cedar Falls may have to be self-sufficient beyond the capabilities and established time period for a local (Type IV) IMT.

Cedar Falls Fire Rescue IMT program developer wished to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the team members by incorporating the position-specific IMT training for team members. This additional ability could be valuable as it may take more than one operational period before a (Type III) IMT is integrated into an incident. It is the Fire Chief's desire to have this type of training incorporated in to the department's training program and promotional criteria.

Cedar Falls Fire Rescue does not offer position-specific IMT training. The goal of this a program development, that will integrate position-specific IMT training components specifically

for command and general staff positions as defined by the National Incident Management System. Descriptive research answered the following four questions: What incident management team position-specific training criteria are other fire departments of similar size utilizing in their training program? What incident management team position-specific training components can be integrated into the existing training program? What are the associated costs and benefits of the position-specific IMT training components? What type of continuing education curriculum will be necessary for maintenance of position-specific skills?

### Background and Significance

The City of Cedar Falls is nestled in the heart of the Cedar Valley located in Northeast Iowa. Cedar Falls is also home to the University of Northern Iowa. The City's population has increased 8.6 % over the past decade bringing the 2010 population to 39,260. This population coupled with the 13,200 students attending the University has provided stability and economic growth even during the recent recession. The City's 2010 valuation increased 5.9% and allowed a continuation of full services delivered to its citizens through a general fund operating budget of \$22,059,480. (City of Cedar Falls [CCF], 2011)

Settlers first came to Sturgis Falls in 1845. They found the area attractive because of its standing timber, prairie for farming, and the Cedar River for its drinking, transportation and power potential. In 1853, the Black Hawk County commissioners convened in Cedar Falls and located the seat of county government in the community. Cedar Falls was incorporated in 1854. In 1855 a bitter referendum battle at the State Capitol moved the county seat to the neighboring City of Waterloo, Iowa. (City of Cedar Falls, 2011)

Cedar Falls is part of a metropolitan area located in Black Hawk County, the fourth most populated County in the State of Iowa. The Cedar River that once brought economic value to the

City (City of Cedar Falls, 2011) is now primarily used for recreational purposes. Bisecting the City from east to west the Cedar River is only crossable at two points within the City limits. The land area north of the Cedar River, commonly known as North Cedar, accounts for approximately twenty-four percent of the City's land mass. North Cedar has a residential population of approximately 2,300 citizens. This population has decreased due to seven major floods over the past twenty-one years. This area is not protected from flooding by a levy system or any natural barriers. (D. Sturch, personal communication, February 25, 2011)

Along the south side of the Cedar River the City is protected to a minimum of a 250-year flood level as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. A levee of four feet of free board allows these portions of the City to be protected to the established 500-year flood level. The area west of the Center Street Bridge is protected by natural limestone bluffs. East of the Center Street Bridge there is a manmade earthen levy system built to the 500-year flood level. This manmade levy protects the critical infrastructure for the City. If the Cedar River were to top this levy, the City could lose its wastewater plant, its power generating plant, the main communication hub for cable television and Internet, a large nursing home, the City Public Works Facility, one fire station, City Hall that also houses the police department and dozens of commercial businesses in the Main Street business district. (R. Gains, personal communication, March 7, 2011)

In June of 2008, The City of Cedar Falls experienced the greatest flood in recorded history. The Action Flood Stage for the Cedar Falls' portion of the Cedar River is set at 86 feet. The Flood Stage set for this portion is 88 feet. On June 10, 2008 Cedar River crested at 102.10 feet. The impact of this flood was devastating. Much of the critical infrastructure previously mentioned above was affected.

Table 1 Historical Crests of the Cedar River Effecting the City of Cedar Falls

1	102.10	06/10/2008
2	96.20	07/23/1999
3	96.10	03/21/1961
4	95.80	04/02/1993
5	94.99	05/25/2004
6	94.70	04/08/1965
7	94.20	05/21/1991
8	94.20	07/30/1990
9	93.99	04/14/2001
10	93.90	07/02/1969

Note: Statistical information derived from the following source  
(City of Cedar Falls, 2009, p. 24)

The frequency of flooding is increasing. To help mitigate flooding and other disaster, the City's Administration has asked Cedar Falls Fire Rescue to staff and manage the City's Emergency Operations Center. Cedar Falls Fire Rescue is in the process of developing a local Incident Management Team.

An interview with Richard McAlister, Director of the Administrative Services Department for the City of Cedar Falls and 35 year employee, discovered that the City's disaster awareness has grown tremendously since the first flood McAlister experienced in 1990. (R. McAlister, personal communication, February 17, 2011)

Three years later the flood of 1993 was a disaster on a disaster. Response was very individualized and varied by department without coordination. At that time, the State of Iowa

was not a big player when it came to a response to the City's needs. Overall there was a discontinuity in how City services responded to the event. (R. McAlister, 2011)

Another flood occurred in 1999 and the City was far better prepared for this event. Better mapping from the flood six years earlier provided important information for the building manmade levees and sealing of storm sewers. While City services worked together, there was not a unified command or a centralized location to funnel information and make decisions. (R. McAlister, 2011)

In 2004 another flood event occurred. A flood mitigation plan was in place with a designated incident command post and responsibilities. This plan was not followed during the flood. (R. McAlister, 2011)

Four years later, another flood of historical magnitude occurred. No matter what criticism the City received in the response to this and previous floods, the outcome was better than any in recent history. For this disaster, the City's plan was followed by all departments and produced a far better outcome. Cedar Falls Fire Rescue staffed the Incident Command Post and directed the operation of the mitigation efforts throughout the flood. These efforts aided in the recovery effort and the ability of the City to maintain its continuity of business. In addition all necessary paperwork was in place to aid FEMA reimbursements. (R. McAlister, 2011) (A complete list of interview questions asked of Richard McAlister can be found in Appendix A)

The information found in this applied research project has a direct application to the National Fire Academy's course "Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operation in Emergency Management." Correlation between the research topic and the student manual for this course is found in Unit 2: Community Hazards Emergency Response Capability Assurance. (United States Fire Administration, 2010, p. SM 2-1)

The background and significance show that the City of Cedar Falls is prone to flooding and that the city has progressively become more organized in dealing with these types of natural disasters. The descriptive research conducted in this project along with the results and recommendations will clearly prove support of the current United States Fire Administrations (USFA) Goals (United States Fire Administration, 2010) of:

- Reduce risk at the local level through prevention and mitigation.
- Improve local planning and preparedness.
- Improve the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards.
- Improve the fire and emergency services' professional status.

(United States Fire Administration, 2010)

#### Literature Review

Since February 28, 2003, the basis of every Incident Management Team development has been derived from "Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5): Management of Domestic Incidents." The purpose of this directive signed into law by President George W. Bush enhances the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system. (United States Department of Homeland Security [DHS], 2009)

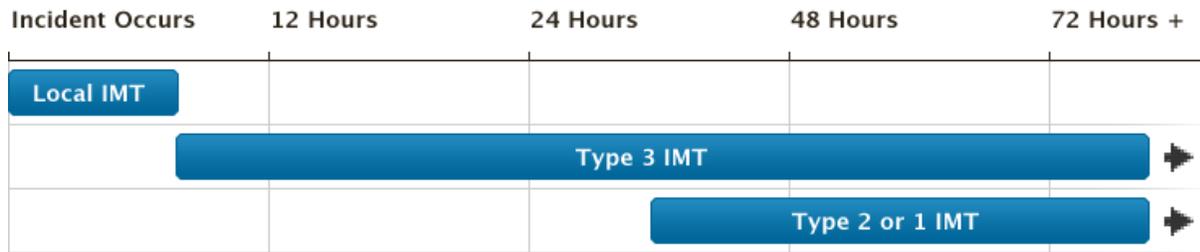
An Incident Management Team (IMT) is an incident command organization made up of the Command and General Staff members and other appropriate personnel in an ICS organization and can be deployed or activated, as needed. National, state, and some local IMTs have formal certification and qualification, notification, deployment, and operational procedures in place. In other cases, ad-hoc IMTs are formed at an incident or

for specific events. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the identified formal response requirements and responsibilities of the IMT, are factors in determining the ‘type, or level, of IMT.’ (United States Department of Homeland Security [DHS], 2008, p. 61)

In August 2003, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) convened a focus group of stakeholders and experts from across the country to best determine the means to develop Type III IMTs nationwide. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the stakeholders and the focus group agreed to stay with the basic National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Incident Command System (ICS) training and typing models for the all-hazards emergency response community. (United States Fire Administration [USFA], 2010)

(Molino Sr., 2006, p. 222) The focus group agreed to stay with this model for the all hazards response community. The team types including certifying level and basic makeup are:

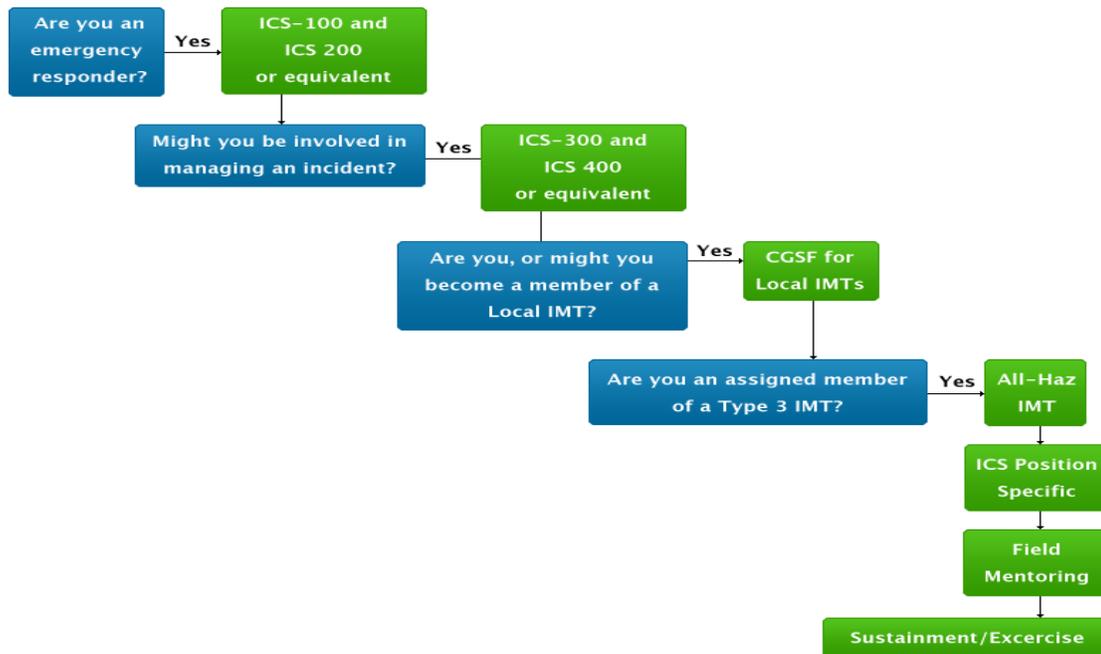
- Type V (local): city and township level, locally certified jurisdiction specific or by mutual agreement
- Type IV (local): county or fire district level, county or regionally certified, multiagency jurisdiction
- Type III: state or large metropolitan area level, state certified, state, region or area with multiple jurisdictions or mutual aid agreements
- Type II: national or state level, federally or state certified, less staffing or experience than Type I, smaller scale national or state incident
- Type I: national or state level, federally or state certified, most experience and most equipment

Table 2 IMT Timeline for Response and Operations

Note: Source <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/subjects/incident/imt/imt-about.shtm>

Originally five team types were recognized by the focus group, however today many training programs have coupled Type IV and Type V teams into a team type titled “Local Incident Management Teams.” The Type III teams have been retitled to “All Hazard Incident Management Teams.” Type I and Type II team names have remained unchanged. (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2008)

In January 2004, FEMA and the USFA introduced a training “roadmap” for fire and emergency services developing local and regional/metropolitan incident management teams. This training roadmap supports the difficulty that fire service leader’s face when trying to address response needs. The operation of Incident Management Teams is dependent on local needs, available resources, and the level and training of team members. The roadmap ensures that fire departments will have the necessary support and qualified IMT members they need to protect their residents and cities. (USFA Provides ‘Roadmap’ for Training Incident Management Teams, 2004)

Table 3 Road Map for training Incident Management Teams

Note: Source (USFA Provides ‘Roadmap’ for Training Incident Management Teams, 2004)

The USFA recommends that all emergency responders attain the certification level of ICS 100, 200, 300 or equivalent. It is further recommended for emergency service responders who may serve in command and general staff positions during the first Operational Period of a major incident, including those who may serve on a Type IV or Type V IMT, the courses of: “Introduction to Command & General Staff,” “Command & General Staff Functions in the Incident Command System” and “Intro to Unified Command for Multi-Agency and Catastrophic Incidents.” (United States Fire Administration [USFA], n.d.)

The Department of Homeland Security/Incident Management System Integration Division, along with NWCG, USFA, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Environmental Protection Agency, has developed ICS Type III position-specific professional development opportunities. The performance-based position-specific development consists of sixteen classroom-based

courses. (United States Fire Administration, 2009) Of these sixteen position-specific training courses, nine focus on the command and general staff positions of an incident management team.

The following table lists the course name and number.

Table 4 Command and General Staff Course Name and Number

- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Incident Commander (IC) Course (P400)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Public Information Officer (PIO) Course (P403)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Safety Officer (SOFR) Course (P404)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Liaison Officer (LOFR) Course (P402)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Operations Section Chief (OSC) Course (P430)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Planning Section Chief (PSC) Course (P440)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Logistics Section Chief (LSC) Course (P450)
- NIMS ICS All-Hazards Position-Specific: Finance/Administration Section Chief (FSC) Course (P460)
- NIMS ICS All Hazards Position-specific: Intelligence/Investigation Function (P480)

Note: information for this table derived from (Department of Homeland Security, National Integration Center, 2008)

Personnel qualifications guidance will list the performance requirements, through position task books or tasks, for specific positions in a format that allows the trainee to be evaluated against written guidelines. These tasks, based on core competencies and associated behavior are the measurable activities that demonstrate proficiency associated with the competencies and behavior. Successful performance of all tasks during exercises, job shadowing, and or operations for a relevant position, as observed and recorded by an evaluator, results in a recommendation to the certifying agency that the trainee will be qualified for the position. (DHS, NIC, 2008, p. 18, 19)

Costs associated with position-specific training vary from state to state and by the entity hosting the training. There are options for training through the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) that offers stipend courses at their training facility in Emmitsburg, Maryland. These courses are offered throughout the year either by the Emergency Management Institute or the National Fire Academy. These courses typically have no tuition costs. All course materials and housing are at no cost to the course participant. However, all participants are responsible for the cost of incidental and cafeteria services. (Emergency Management Institute [EMI], 2010)

Regional delivery courses are offered through the Homeland Security, NIMS and ICS Training Grant Program. In order for Incident Command System courses to be eligible for reimbursement through this program, they must teach the basic system outlined in the NIMS version 7.1. An agency should be cautious about applying for this grant program. Not all of the ICS courses are reimbursed by this funding mechanism. (Homeland Security: NIMS and ICS Training Grant Program , 2010)

The courses offered through the NETC are affordable. Resident courses at the NETC or for grants funds through the Homeland Security: NIMS and ICS Training Grant Program is very

competitive. Should the agency not win a grant or their personnel are not selected for resident courses, there are opportunities for training through private companies.

One such company is Incident Management Training Consortium (IMTC) LLC. This particular company presents themselves as a company that offers; quality, reduced total cost, efficient use of time, reduced stress for the student and the elimination of risk due to the companies experience, knowledge and mentoring. Pricing for classes is dependent on multiple factors on a case by case basis. The price is dependent on course level, location, travel costs and number of students. The Company does offer eight out of the nine command and general staff position-specific training courses. The one course not offered is the “All Hazards Position-specific: Intelligence/Investigation Function” (P480). (D. Hays, personal communication, March 7, 2011).

The research also provided a conversation with Dave Wilson, Johnson County, Iowa, Emergency Management Director Mr. Wilson noted that recently at the local level, the Department of Homeland Security, Region 6 Office, offered four command and general staff position-specific training courses. Courses are offered free of charge to students associated with either a local IMT or an AHIMT. The funding mechanism for this program was the 2007 U.S. Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management Grant Program (EMPG). Two of the courses are offered within the Cedar Falls/Waterloo Metro area. The other two courses are within a 90-minute commute. (D. Wilson, personal communication, March, 8, 2011)

Training benefits for IMT's are deeply set within the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Gallant (2008 p.31), The NIMS ensures interoperability of equipment, communications and the certification of emergency response and incident management personnel. NIMS is managed by the National Integration Center (NIC) and this agency sets the standards that ensure organizations and field personnel possess the minimum knowledge skills

and experience required to perform their activities safely and efficiently. This standard also includes training experience and credentialing.

Development of a nationwide credentialing system tied to training and certification is a fundamental component of NIMS. This universal credential is intended to provide incident commanders and supporting multi-agency coordination systems with the means to verify, quickly and accurately, the identity and qualifications of emergency personnel responding to an event. (Barnes, 2006, p. 19) The best technical design for a universal first-responder credential will be one that provides sufficient flexibility to meet the local needs of different responding organizations encountering different levels of risk, but is still work across multiple jurisdictions. Therefore, it should be capable of local implementation but be universally acceptable. (Barnes, 2006, p. 23)

In February, 2008, the National Integration Center (NIC) Incident Management System Integration Division published the “National Incident Management System – Five Year NIMS Training Plan.” This plan establishes core competencies, training courses and personnel qualifications. The plan describes the operational foundations of these efforts; defines NIMS core competencies, training courses and personnel qualifications as part of the National training Program for NIMS; assembles and updates the training guidance for available NIMS training courses; and lays out the next five years development of the national training program. (Department of Homeland Security, National Integration Center, 2008)

Found within the five year NIMS training plan is the “Refresher Training Section.” In this section refresher training is recommended on a regular basis to ensure that knowledge and skills are maintained especially for those personnel who are not regularly involved in complex multi-jurisdictional incidents. Refresher training may be considered for inclusion as a requirement beginning in Fiscal Year 2009 (DHS,NIC, 2008, p. 20)

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) published a document that relates to 'The National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide,' PMS 310-1. Developed under the sponsorship of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) it is designed to establish minimum requirements for training, experience, physical fitness level, and currency standards for wildland fire positions that all participating agencies have agreed to meet for national mobilization. (National Wildfire Coordinating Group [NWCG], 2008, p. 7)

Also found within the "Wildland Fire Qualification Guide" is a specific section related to recertification. This section states that each agency is responsible for annually certifying qualifications of its personnel based upon the requirements of this guide and agency specific requirements supplementing this guide. This responsibility includes evaluation of personnel for recertification in cases where position qualifications are no longer valid due to a lack of current experience.

At the level of a state AHIMT, some require a form of continuing education or re-credentialing. The State of Indiana's "AHIMT Incident Management Program Guidelines for the Position Qualification System" (AHIMT – Type III) requires for requalification: complete 20 hours of in-service training over four years; participate (in position) in at least two incidents or events that last longer than one operational period of twelve hours or more and require a written Incident Action Plan (IAP); or, participate (in position) in at least two full-scale exercises that require the development of an IAP in an operational period that lasts longer than six hours. (Indiana Department of Homeland Security, Field Services Division [INDHS], 2010, p. 10)

The Oklahoma AHIMT requires that team members maintain annual continuing education requirements of a minimum sixteen hours annually. The continuing education must be related to ICS, emergency management, emergency operations center, multi-agency

coordination, position-specific training, exercises, and/or actual incidents. (Oklahoma AHIMT Oversight Committee, 2010)

To summarize the literature review, the Department of Homeland Security has developed with its stakeholders a national incident management system that establishes five levels of incident management teams. These teams have different levels of responsibilities depending upon the participants and the duration of the incident. In 2008, DHS published a five-year training plan that established a credentialing system to ensure the position-specific qualifications of team members. Within this training plan is the beginning of re-qualification criteria/continuing-education requirements. Finally, funding sources for training team members are scarce. With the exception of DHS grant funds, the burden will be placed on individual participants or their host agency.

### Procedures

Descriptive research was used to identify the purpose of this applied research project to improve Incident Management Team operational efficiency by developing a program to integrate position-specific Incident Management Team training. The Literature Review of this project started in October 2010 while the author was attending the National Fire Academy Course R306 “Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management.” With access to the Learning Resource Center on the Academy campus, research of reference material was completed. Most of the additional research was conducted online using the Internet search engine provided by the Learning Resource Center of the National Fire Academy, Google™, AltaVista™, Infoseek™, and Ask™.

Research Question #1:

What incident management team (IMT) position-specific training criteria are other fire departments of similar size utilizing in their training program?

For this question, a short comprehensive yet short questionnaire was sent via email to seventy-five fire officials across the nation. The tool used to collect and analyze the respondent's answers was provided by SurveyMonkey.com™. The questionnaire asked a few demographic questions to establish similarities to City of Cedar Falls. (Appendix C) One question asked about their department's NIMS compliancy and another question asked about personnel participation on either a local or regional IMT. There were four questions that addressed training requirements of the team members and one question relating to continuing education requirements for team participation. The final two questions asked about the cost benefit aspect of position-specific training and funding sources.

All of the responses to the questionnaire were offered in a multiple-choice format and a few questions had the option of additional comments. The questionnaire was designed for staff-level officers to answer with minimal effort or research. It was the author's goal in developing the questionnaire that the respondents would not spend more than fifteen minutes completing all eleven questions.

In order to send this questionnaire to chief officers of similar-sized communities, the author utilized a list that was created during the research process for the author's last "Executive Fire Officer Applied Research Project." The list of seventy-five e-mail addresses was created in June of 2010 through a lengthy process that involved utilizing Google™ search engine, city-data.com and the United States Census Bureau's American FactFinder. The list was created and a hyperlink provided by SurveyMonkey.com™ allowed the recipients of the e-mail a one click step to start the questionnaire process. (Schilling, 2010)

The privacy of the respondents' e-mail address was kept secure by utilizing the author's municipal e-mail account as the primary recipient. The seventy-five contact e-mail addresses were entered as blind copy recipients. To offer more privacy protection, it was decided not to utilize the suggested method of response collection by SurveyMonkey.com™ since this method would divulge the respondents IP address. (Schilling, 2010)

The information derived from the respondents could have had value to all those departments participating in the questionnaire. In the body of the e-mail were offered to those who responded. The respondent simply needed to reply the word "results" to the originator of the e-mail. Once the results were collected and placed into graphs, the information would be send to their e-mail address. (Appendix D) (Schilling, 2010)

Research Question #2:

What incident management team position-specific training components can be integrated into the existing training program?

Personal communications with experts in the field of IMT and several Internet search engines found All Hazard Incident Management Team's websites and policy documents. Two of the survey questions were written to address this issue.

Research Question #3:

What are the costs and benefits of the position-specific IMT training components?

A search of the Internet resulted in several contacts in both government agencies and private companies that facilitate IMT training programs. One question from the questionnaire related to this topic. Additionally two of the questions within the questionnaire were created to assist in producing results for research question #3

#### Research Question #4:

What type of continuing education curriculum will be necessary for the maintenance of position-specific skills?

Research question #4 addressed the issue of continuing education units necessary for maintaining position-specific skills. Information was gathered through extensive use of Internet search engines and two question related to the subject found in the questionnaire.

The information gleaned from the questionnaire, Internet searches and personal communications were utilized in the “Results,” “Discussion” and “Recommendations” section of this applied research project. This information will be valuable for Cedar Falls Fire Rescue to move forward in their effort to set up this program.

#### Limitations

Several limitations were discovered during the research for the project. First, it was discovered that research of scholarly books and articles was very limited for this narrowband of subject matter. The majority of usable documentation came from governmental reports or studies. Second, the use of IMTs is still a relatively new idea within the nation’s fire service. To get information on a topic that is just evolving within the IMT concept is limited to the credible resources documented. Third, some information had to be taken from personal communications. This method can be questionable due to the validity of the interviewee’s expertise in this field. Finally, since the author has limited experience in developing a validated survey, a simple questionnaire was developed to aid in answering the research questions.

#### Results

The results of this applied research project come from an extensive literature review of the subject and a questionnaire sent to seventy-five fire officials of similar-sized communities.

The questionnaire was developed utilizing the SurveyMonkey.com™ instrument. One unexpected result of the Literature Review was the lack of credible information about position-specific IMT training, continued-education units/credentialing and funding for this type of training.

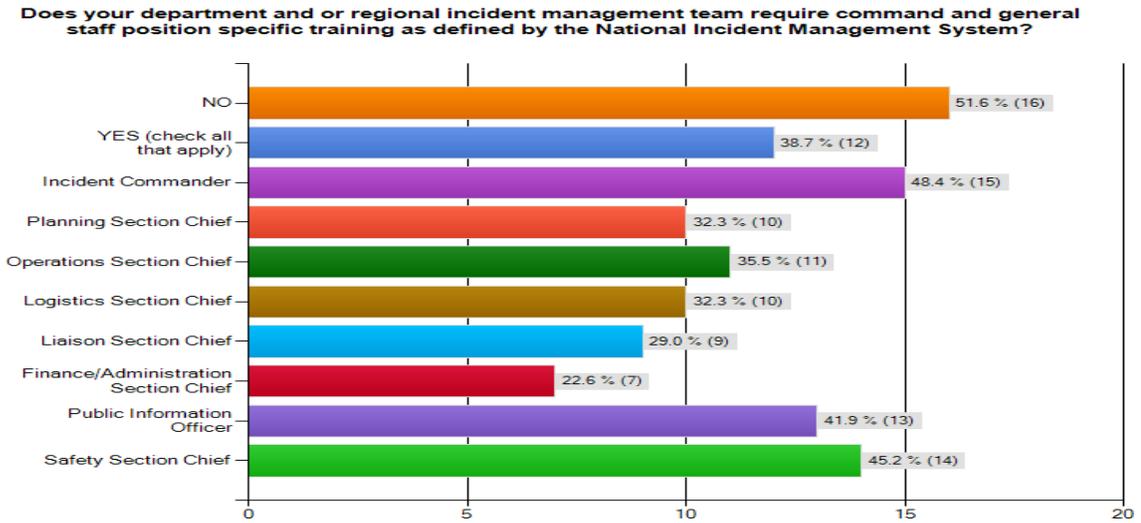
The results of the questionnaire were used to establish what other fire departments of similar size are doing to address the issue of position-specific IMT training. Documentation for the original email sent to prospective respondents can be found in Appendix B. A listing of the survey questions and multiple-choice answers can be found in Appendix C. A descriptive analysis of the responses to the questionnaire can be found in Appendix D. Of the seventy-five surveys sent out via email, forty-three were returned. This is a 57.335% rate of return.

Research Question #1:

What incident management team (IMT) position-specific training criteria are other fire departments of similar size utilizing in their training program?

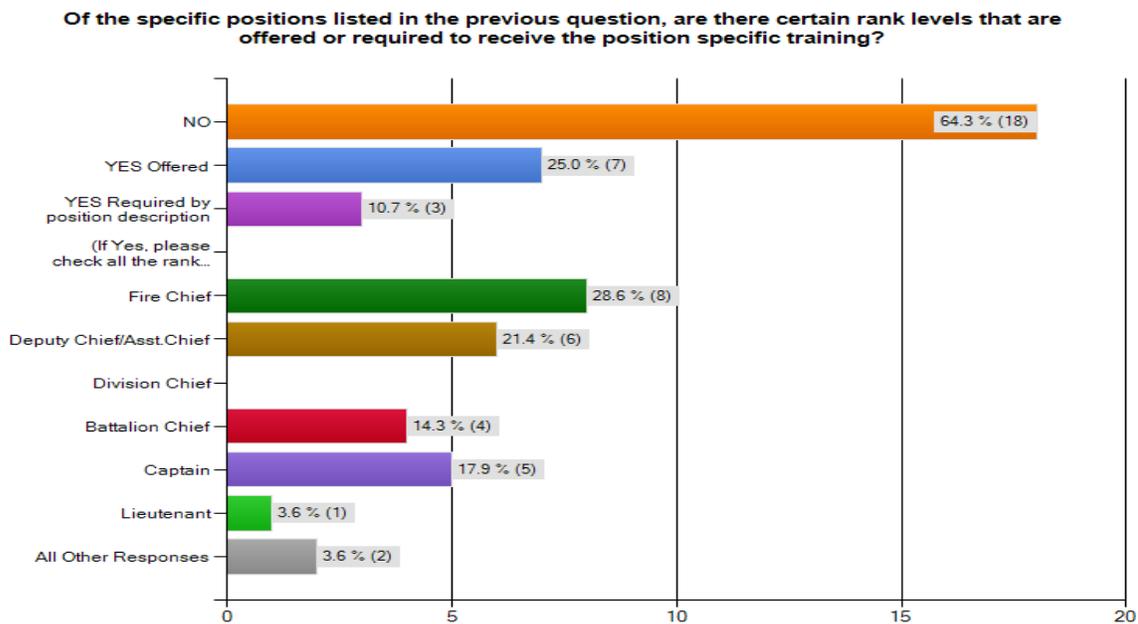
The e-mail proved to be an excellent tool to determine results for this research question. E-mail question #3 (Appendix C) asked if the respondents' department was NIMS compliant. Of the 43 respondents, 42 stated that their department was NIMS compliant. One did not answer the question. E-mail question #6 (Appendix C) asked "Does your department and or regional incident management team require command and general staff position-specific training as defined by the National Incident Management System?" Just under 50% of the respondents required some position command and general staff specific training. Below, Table 5 displays the breakdown of required position-specific training courses which are used by similar fire departments and IMTs.

Table 5 Required Position-specific Training Courses



Addition training criteria requiring position-specific training by department rank was answered in the results of Email Question #7. (Appendix C) Here 35% of the respondents required certain position-specific training for certain ranks within their department. Table 6 describes the requirements and value/percentages of the answers.

Table 6 Required Position-specific Training by Rank



When conducting a review of literature for this research question, no credible information was found to answer Research Question #1. Extensive searching of departmental websites, scholarly articles, and books produced no results. The only information found was for state-run AHIMTs.

Research Question #2:

What incident management team position-specific training components can be integrated into the existing training program?

The Literature Review was the greatest source of information for this question. Several DHS and USFA documents were found to show what the national five-year training programs encompassed for this type of training and to what level each team type should achieve to become competent and valued members. Nine courses for command and general staff positions were found through research. Also assisting in answering this research question was Email Question #6 that was sent to comparable departments. (See Table 5 and/or Appendix D)

Research Question #3:

What are the costs and benefits of the position-specific IMT training components?

For information relating to this question, the author had to rely primarily on personal communications with experts in the field. Conversations were conducted with persons from private industry representing companies that instruct classes for position-specific IMT training. Also, conversations were had with public-agency personnel who organize training opportunities through FEMA and the Emergency Management Institute. Finally, two questions were posed in the email questionnaire. Question 10 asked “Have you found the associated cost of position-specific training to be beneficial?” Fifty-seven percent of the respondents stated that they did

find position-specific training to be beneficial and 43% answered that they did not see the cost benefit.

Email question #11 provided results directly related to Research Question 3. The question asked “Have you found funding sources other than your general operating budget to facilitate position-specific training classes?” The response was that 63.3% have not found any other funding sources, 30% did find a funding mechanism through their state, 13.3% found federal funding, and 6.7% found regional funding sources.

Research Question #4:

What type of continuing education curriculum will be necessary for the maintenance of position-specific skills?

The results for this question were found both within the email questionnaire and through an Internet search. The Internet research found information within the five year NIMS training. In the plan it calls for refresher training recommended on a regular especially for those personnel who are not regular basis involved in complex multi-jurisdictional incidents. (DHS,NIC, 2008, p. 20) However this refresher-training recommendation does not state the form, quantity or quality of refresher training. Internet research also discovered that at a state level some AHIMTs either require refresher training or continued-education training for their AHIMT members. The hours spent refreshing or attending continuing education classes vary from twenty hours over a four year period to a more restrictive sixteen hours annually.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group, one of the partners who assisted in the development of the National Incident Management System, has developed a qualification guide for those who participate within their incidents. Much of their qualification guide relates to the National Response Frame Work. Yet even within their own recertification guidelines the guide

places the requirements for annual member recertification on the representing agency. Their recertification standards are left to the discretion of the local agency but each member must meet at a minimum in the initial qualification for each position.

Email questionnaire # 6 specifically addressed Research Question #4 and asked the respondents “Does your department or regional IMT require continuing education or credentialing for command and general staff positions?” Of the responses received, forty-five percent do not require any credentialing or continuing education for their team members. Thirty-two percent of the respondents require continuing education and 22% require credentialing.

### Discussion

The basis of every IMT development has been derived from Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5): “Management of Domestic Incidents.” (DHS, 2009) In 2004 the United States Fire Administration developed a Road Map for training Incident Management Teams. (USFA Provides ‘Roadmap’ for Training Incident Management Teams, 2004) Most recently in 2008, the National Integration Center (NIC), Incident Management System Integration Division published the “National Incident Management System – Five Year NIMS Training Plan.” (DHS, NIC, 2008) Also in 2008, one of the largest partners in creating a successful national incident management system, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group introduced the “Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide.” (NWCG, 2008) The research involved in this applied research project has provided the necessary information and results to make recommendation on integrating command and general position-specific training requirements and continued-education requirements for each respective position.

It seems that all of the right programs are in place and now it is time for team leadership to require not only position-specific training but also some form of continued or

requalification/credentialing. This should be required on all local, state or national sponsored teams.

As the fire service grows smaller in numbers due to the economy or some form of right-sizing management philosophy, the fire service is still looked upon the primary structural component for an IMT. This adds yet another hat that many fire and life-safety professionals must wear. What comes with this particular hat is infrequent response and utilization of knowledge skills and abilities in this area of supposed expertise.

There are teams across the country that are embracing this issue and requiring the initial training components, position-specific components and continued-education units. Some of these teams are from agencies similar in size to Cedar Falls. Others are state-funded AHIMTs and some are nationally deployable teams (Type I & II).

From an educational standpoint it makes sense that if you are to use your knowledge and practice your skills infrequently, there is a necessity for some sort of tools to ensure the maintenance of these abilities. Whether it is going along with the National Credentialing Criteria, following the National Training Plan or developing and assuring the proficiency of your team members with your own program, some type of cognitive and psychomotor-skill refresher training is imperative for a successful Incident Management Team.

There are alternate funding sources that can defer a portion of the burden for this project away from the local operating budget. It will take some searching and possibly applying for grant funds to accomplish this, but as many other programs developed over the years, funding could become more readily accessible if the team is creative in searching for alternate funding sources.

Funding will be an important factor in the achievement of this program however this research has provided several good sources of alternate funding. Also, there is always the possibility of sharing costs with either other local teams or the state AHIMT partners.

As the author of this applied research project, this research has provided credible information showing the need for position-specific Incident Management Team training for Cedar Falls Fire Rescue's local IMT Program. The author feels that there is a significant need for this training to be included for a local (Type IV) IMT. The risk for our team to be in service longer than the implied 6- 12 hours is high since there is only one state AHIMT able to assist us. The problem has been identified with methods and programs discovered through research and statistics to provide a basis for the development, funding and implementation of this endeavor.

#### Recommendations

Based on the information discovered through this applied research project it is the author's recommendation that Cedar Falls Fire Rescue proceed with integrating position-specific IMT training into their training program. Additional research will be required to address the specific needs for this program's success.

It should be recognized that these training opportunities are for members of a Type IV (local) IMT. Found in Table II on page 11 of this report, the documentation demonstrates that during past incidents a local IMT should only be in place for event lasting up to eight hours. Research showed that this particular local IMT may have to be in place and operating command and general staff positions for twenty-four hours or more depending on the availability of the state AHIMT. With this in mind the following specific recommendation are made:

Position-specific training requirements by rank structure

The integration of these training components should begin within the parameters and guidelines of the soon-to-be-formed local IMT for Cedar Falls. Since the IMT will be new to both Cedar Falls Fire Rescue and the City of Cedar Falls, this requirement for inclusion on the team should be seamless.

Based on the local team development process and the limited number of staff members involved (See Appendix E for Cedar Falls Fire Rescue Organization Chart) the initial all-hazards position-specific courses that will be integrated and focused on shall be: All Hazards Incident Commander (IC), All-Hazards Safety Officer (SOFR), All-Hazards Operations Section Chief (OSC), All-Hazards Planning-Section Chief (PSC) and All-Hazards Logistics-Section Chief (LSC). These identified IMT positions shall be staffed by the Fire Chief, Fire Marshall and the three Line Battalion Chiefs.

The other remaining required specific positions found within the command and general staff function areas are; All-Hazards Public Information Officer (PIO), All-Hazards Liaison Officer (LFOR), and All-Hazards Finance/Administration (FSC). These position-specific training courses should be attended by the Training Officer (Captain) and the six Line Captains.

It is not recommended that specific positions within the command and general staff structure be placed into any position description. With limited team members and such specific requirements for the staff function areas, it is recommended that the following statement be placed under the subject heading: “License or Certificate for the Captains, Battalion Chiefs and Fire Chiefs” position description:

Possession of or ability to obtain within one year of promotion or appointment: NIMS ICS All-Hazard Position-specific Training. The particular course to be attended will vary and shall be determined by the Cedar Falls Local IMT Team Leader.

### Continuing Education Curriculum

Since the knowledge, skills and abilities of command and general staff members of a local IMT are seldom used, it is recommended that each member at this level complete a minimum of sixteen position-specific continuing education hours biannually. These continuing education hours can be a combination of classroom and or exercised-based training.

It is also recommended that each command and general staff member participate in a fully-functioned disaster exercise facilitated by the Black Hawk County Emergency Management Office. Records for certification and continuing-education hours shall be kept by Cedar Falls Fire Rescue training officer.

### Funding

It is recommended that Cedar Falls Fire Rescue administration pursue grant funding opportunities for All-Hazard Position-specific Training classes. It is also recommended that the administration uses this applied research project as justification and seek more funding in the training and education line item of the City of Cedar Falls operating budget.

Another avenue to efficiently fund training for this endeavor as described in the literature and results section of this applied research project is to monitor the Department of Homeland Security regional offices serving Iowa for planned All-Hazard Position-specific training opportunities.

A problem within the Cedar Falls Fire Department has been recognized, researched, results tallied and recommendations made. With this applied research project, Cedar Falls Fire Rescue's administration should move forward and build a quality local IMT that will have depth and ability to maintain an efficient and effective disaster response to protect the community we serve.

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Appendix A

**Interview Questions for Richard McAlister, Director of Administrative Services**

**City of Cedar Falls, Iowa**

1. *In your experience with the City of Cedar Falls, can you highlight the significant disasters which have stricken the city?*
2. *How has an incident management team aided in mitigating these disaster incidents?*
3. *What deficiencies have you noticed in the mitigation of these disasters?*
4. *What corrective actions have taken place to resolve the deficiencies?*
5. *Would you consider position-specific incident management team training a priority?*
6. *Is there anything else you would like to add?*

Appendix B

**Research Survey E-mail**

**From:** John Schilling  
**Sent:** Monday, February 28, 2011 2:54 PM  
**To:** John Schilling  
**Subject:** Executive Fire Officer Research Survey

Partners,

My name is John-Paul Schilling and I am conducting research for an Executive Fire Officer applied research project for the class, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management. The title of the research is "Integrating Position-specific Incident Management Team Training into the Cedar Falls Fire Rescue Training Program." The purpose of the research is: to improve Incident Management Team operational efficiency by developing a program that will integrate position-specific Incident Management Team training.

Being aware of the amount of these surveys which you may receive, I have limited mine to only 11 questions. It would be greatly appreciated if you could complete the survey by March 10, 2011. The survey tool will be turned off after this date. The survey can be accessed by clicking on the link below.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CT9MXYN>

If you would like the results of this survey, simply reply to this e-mail with the word "Results", and I will distribute the results once the research project is completed.

Thank you and in the interest of public safety, I am,

John-Paul Schilling  
Fire Chief  
Cedar Falls Fire Rescue  
1718 Main Street  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Office 319.273.8622  
Fax 319.273.8663  
e-mail [john.schilling@cedarfalls.com](mailto:john.schilling@cedarfalls.com)

EDUCATE MITIGATE EVALUATE

Appendix C

**Integrating Position-specific Incident Management Team Training into the Cedar Falls**

**Fire Rescue Training Program – Questionnaire**

**1. What is the population of your service area?**

- 0 - 20,000
- 20,001 - 40,000
- 40,001 - 60,000
- 60,001 - 80,000
- 80,001 - 100,000
- over 100,000

**2. How many uniformed and civilian personnel are employed by your department**

- Less than 20
- 21 - 40
- 41 - 60
- 61 - 80
- Over 80

**3. Is your department NIMS Compliant?**

- YES
- NO

**4. Do members of your department participate on an Incident Management Team?**

- YES Department Team
- YES Regional Team
- NO
- If you answered no, please do not continue. Simply scroll to the bottom of the survey and click submit.

**5. Please check all of the prerequisite training for members of your Incident Management Team or regional team**

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> IS 100 | <input type="checkbox"/> IS 700 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IS 200 | <input type="checkbox"/> IS 701 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IS 300 | <input type="checkbox"/> IS 800 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IS 400 |                                 |

**6. Does your department and or regional incident management team require command and general staff position-specific training as defined by the National Incident Management System?**

- NO
- YES (check all that apply)
- Incident Commander
- Planning Section Chief
- Operations Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Liaison Section Chief
- Finance/Administration Section Chief
- Public Information Officer
- Safety Section Chief

**7. Of the specific positions listed in the previous question, are there certain rank levels that are offered or required to receive the position-specific training?**

- NO
- YES Offered
- YES Required by position description
- (If Yes, please check all the rank levels that apply)
- Fire Chief
- Deputy Chief/Asst.Chief
- Division Chief
- Battalion Chief
- Captain
- Lieutenant
- Driver/Engineer/Apparatus Operator
- Firefighter

Other (please specify)

**8. If you offer IMT position-specific training, has it been formally placed in your training program? example requiring it for certain rank positions within your department?**

- YES
- NO

**9. Does your department or regional incident management team require continuing education or credentialing for the Command and general staff positions**

- NO
- YES Continuing education
- YES Credentialing

**10. Have you found the associated cost of position-specific training to be beneficial?**

- YES
- NO

Other (please specify)

**11. Have you found funding sources other than your general operating budget to facilitate position-specific training classes?**

- NO
- YES, local funding source
- YES, regional funding source
- YES, State funding source
- YES, Federal funding source

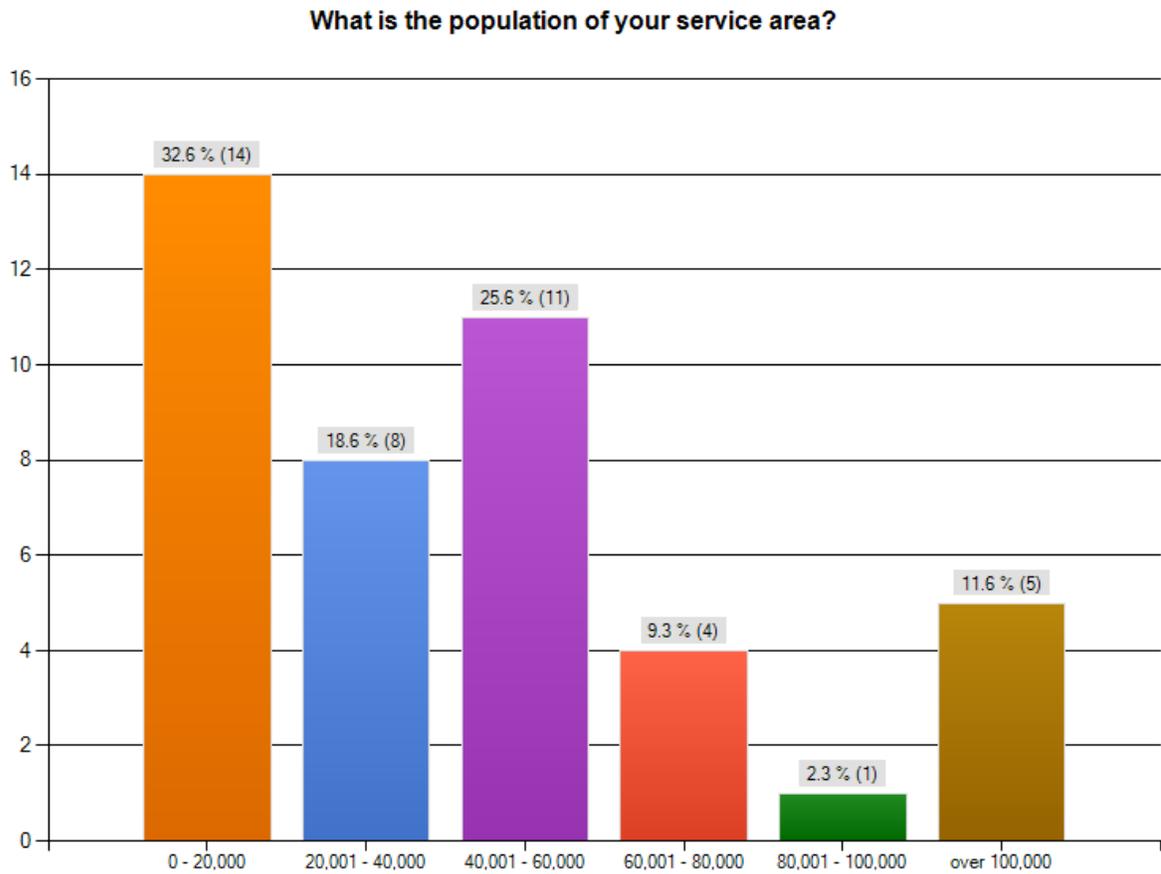
Other (please specify)

Appendix D

**Descriptive Questionnaire Results**

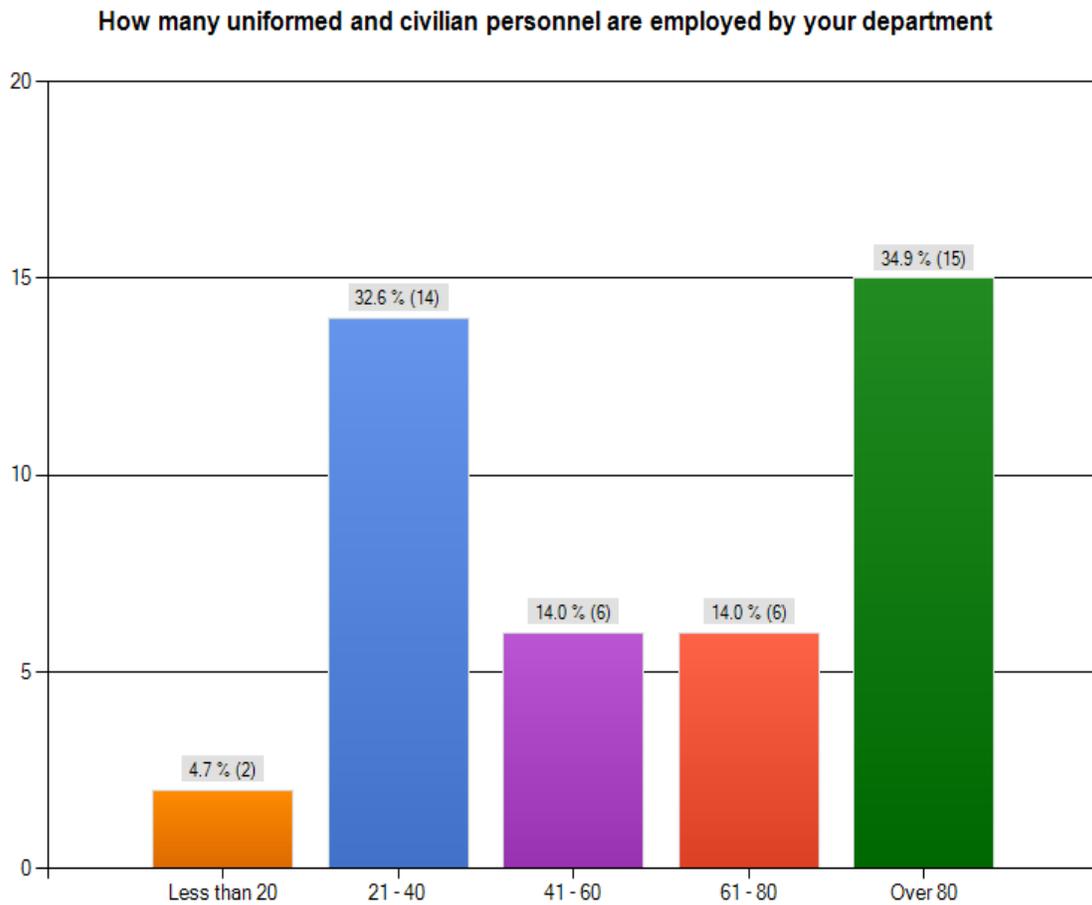
Question 1

What is the population of your service area?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0 - 20,000	32.6%	14
20,001 - 40,000	18.6%	8
40,001 - 60,000	25.6%	11
60,001 - 80,000	9.3%	4
80,001 - 100,000	2.3%	1
over 100,000	11.6%	5
<i>answered question</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>



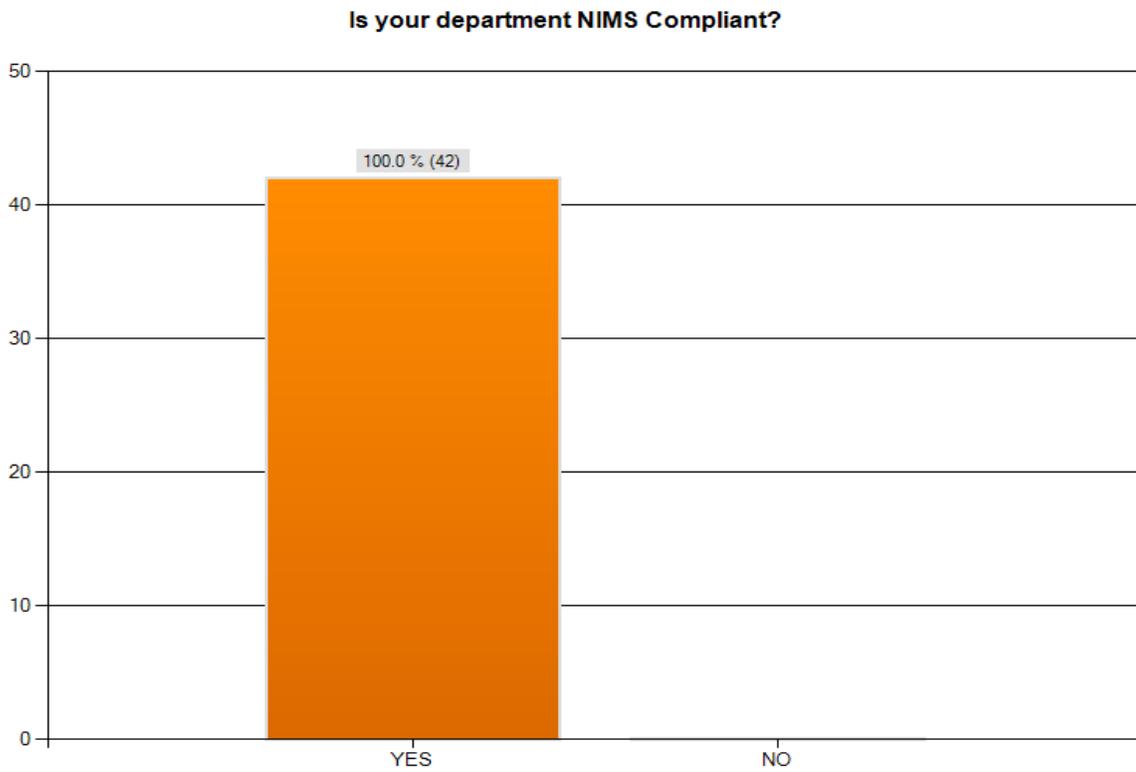
Question 2

How many uniformed and civilian personnel are employed by your department		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 20	4.7%	2
21 - 40	32.6%	14
41 - 60	14.0%	6
61 - 80	14.0%	6
Over 80	34.9%	15
<i>answered question</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>



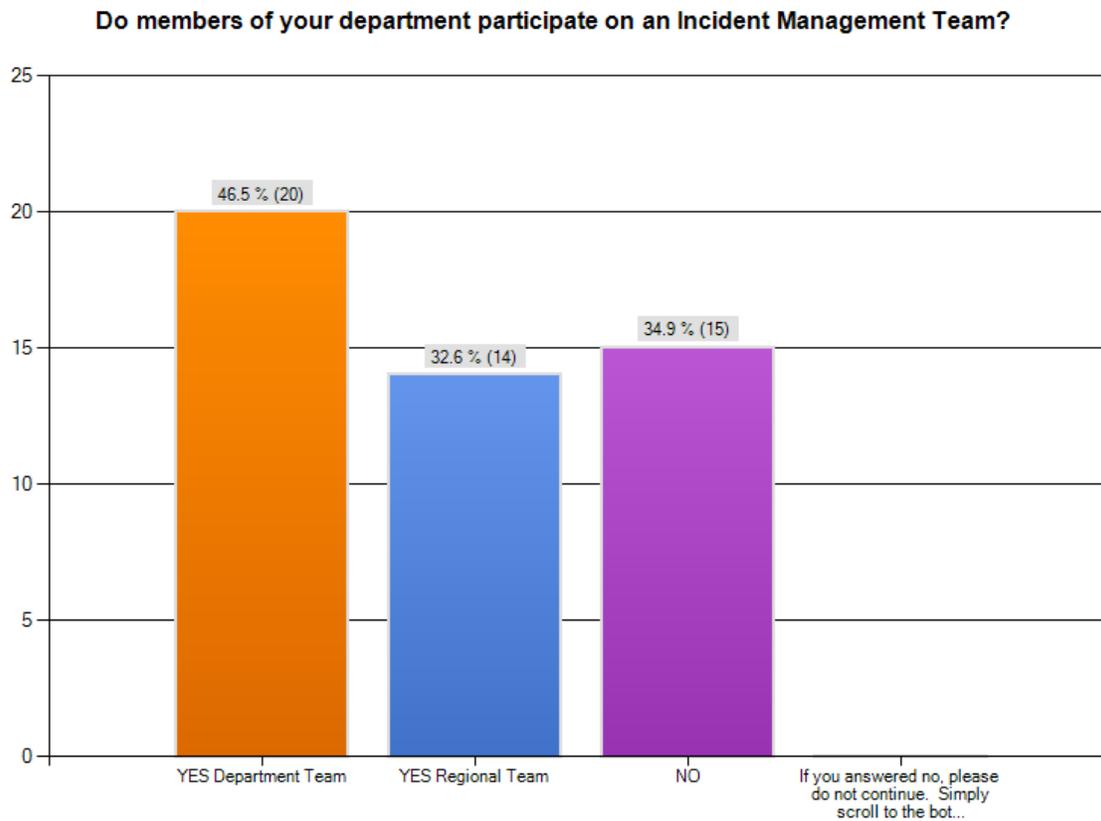
Question 3

Is your department NIMS Compliant?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	100.0%	42
NO	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		<b>42</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>1</b>



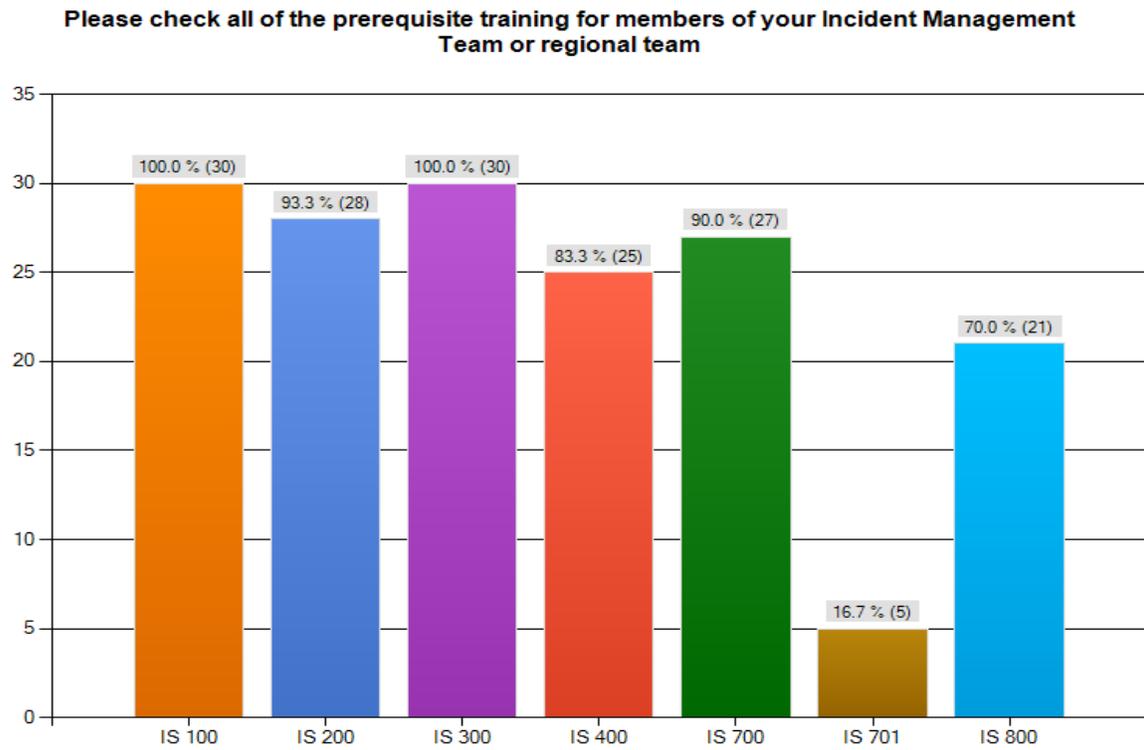
Question 4

Do members of your department participate on an Incident Management Team?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
YES Department Team	46.5%	20
YES Regional Team	32.6%	14
NO	34.9%	15
If you answered no, please do not continue. Simply scroll to the bottom of the survey and click submit.	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>



Question 5

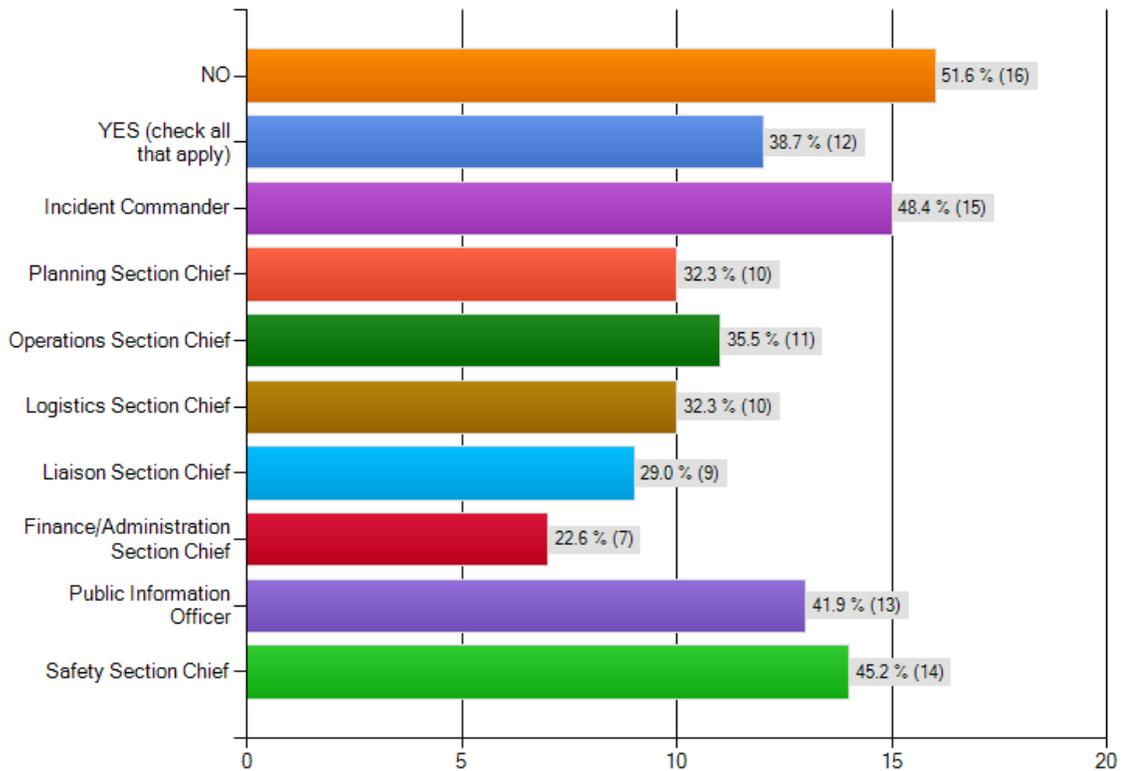
Please check all of the prerequisite training for members of your Incident Management Team or regional team		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
IS 100	100.0%	30
IS 200	93.3%	28
IS 300	100.0%	30
IS 400	83.3%	25
IS 700	90.0%	27
IS 701	16.7%	5
IS 800	70.0%	21
<i>answered question</i>		<b>30</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>



Question 6

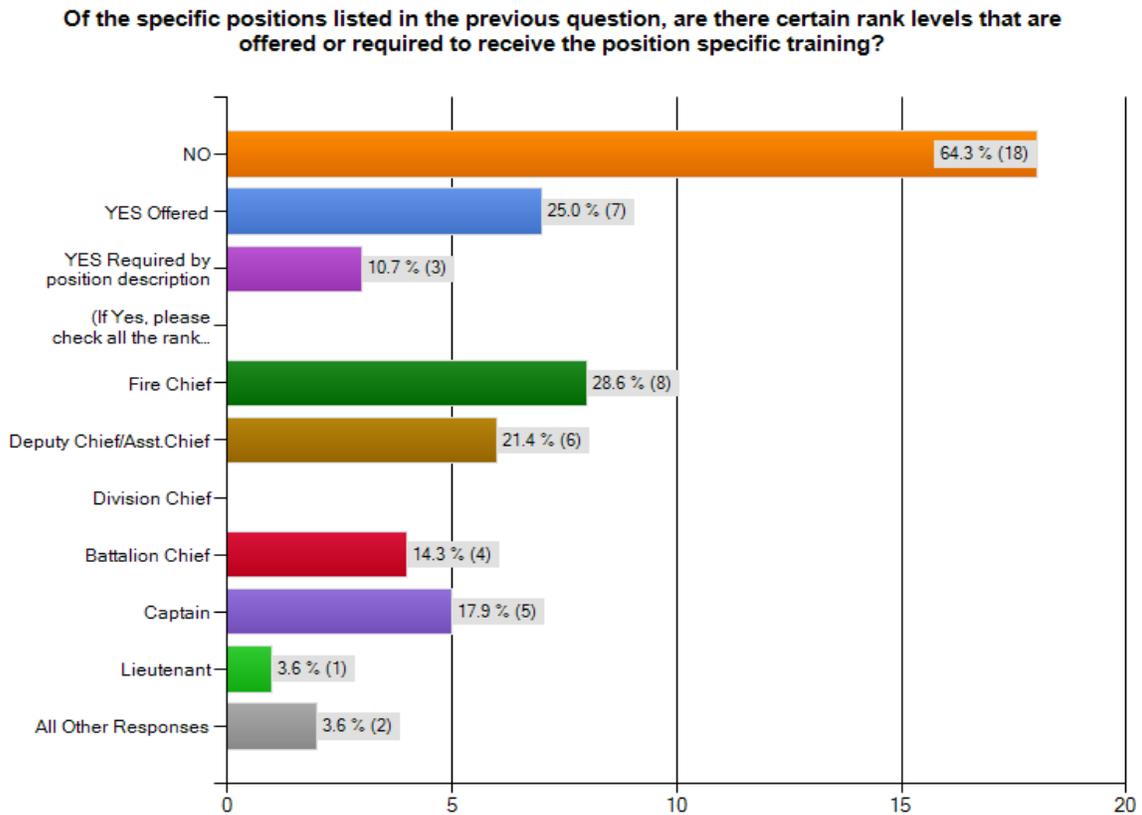
Does your department and or regional incident management team require command and general staff position-specific training as defined by the National Incident Management System?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
NO	51.6%	16
YES (check all that apply)	38.7%	12
Incident Commander	48.4%	15
Planning Section Chief	32.3%	10
Operations Section Chief	35.5%	11
Logistics Section Chief	32.3%	10
Liaison Section Chief	29.0%	9
Finance/Administration Section Chief	22.6%	7
Public Information Officer	41.9%	13
Safety Section Chief	45.2%	14
<i>answered question</i>		<b>31</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>12</b>

Does your department and or regional incident management team require command and general staff position specific training as defined by the National Incident Management System?



Question 7

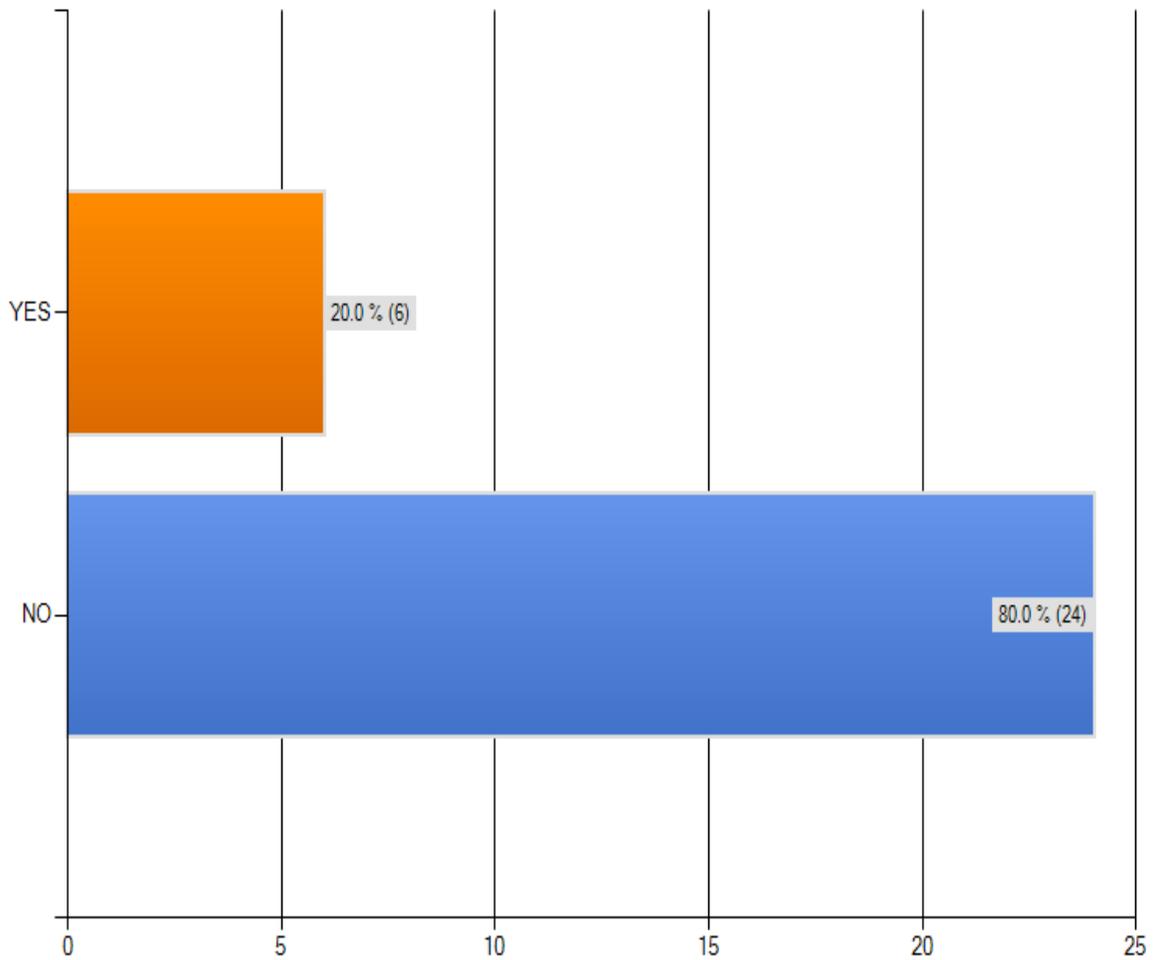
Of the specific positions listed in the previous question, are there certain rank levels that are offered or required to receive the position-specific training?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
NO	64.3%	18
YES Offered	25.0%	7
YES Required by position description	10.7%	3
(If Yes, please check all the rank levels that apply)	0.0%	0
Fire Chief	28.6%	8
Deputy Chief/Asst.Chief	21.4%	6
Division Chief	0.0%	0
Battalion Chief	14.3%	4
Captain	17.9%	5
Lieutenant	3.6%	1
Driver/Engineer/Apparatus Operator	3.6%	1
Firefighter	3.6%	1
Other (please specify)		4
<i>answered question</i>		<b>28</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>15</b>



Question 8

If you offer IMT position-specific training, has it been formally placed in your training program? Example requiring it for certain rank positions within your department?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	20.0%	6
NO	80.0%	24
<i>answered question</i>		<b>30</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>

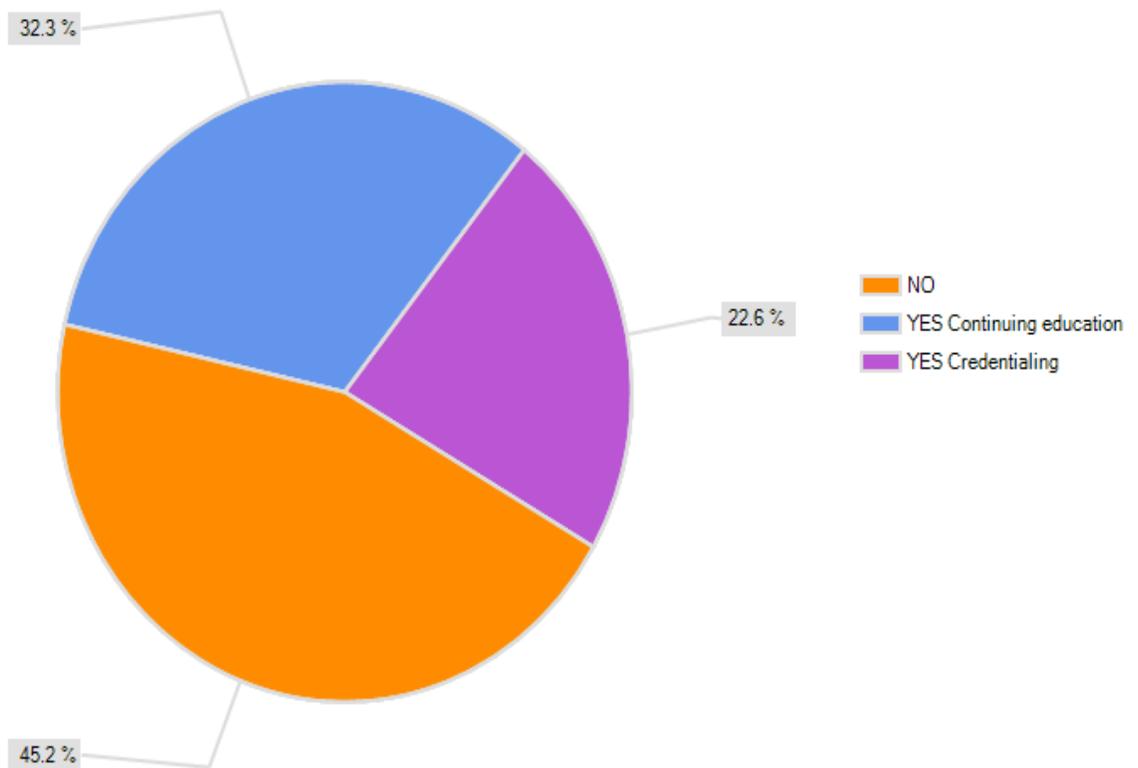
If you offer IMT position specific training, has it been formally placed in your training program?  
example requiring it for certain rank positions within your department?



Question 9

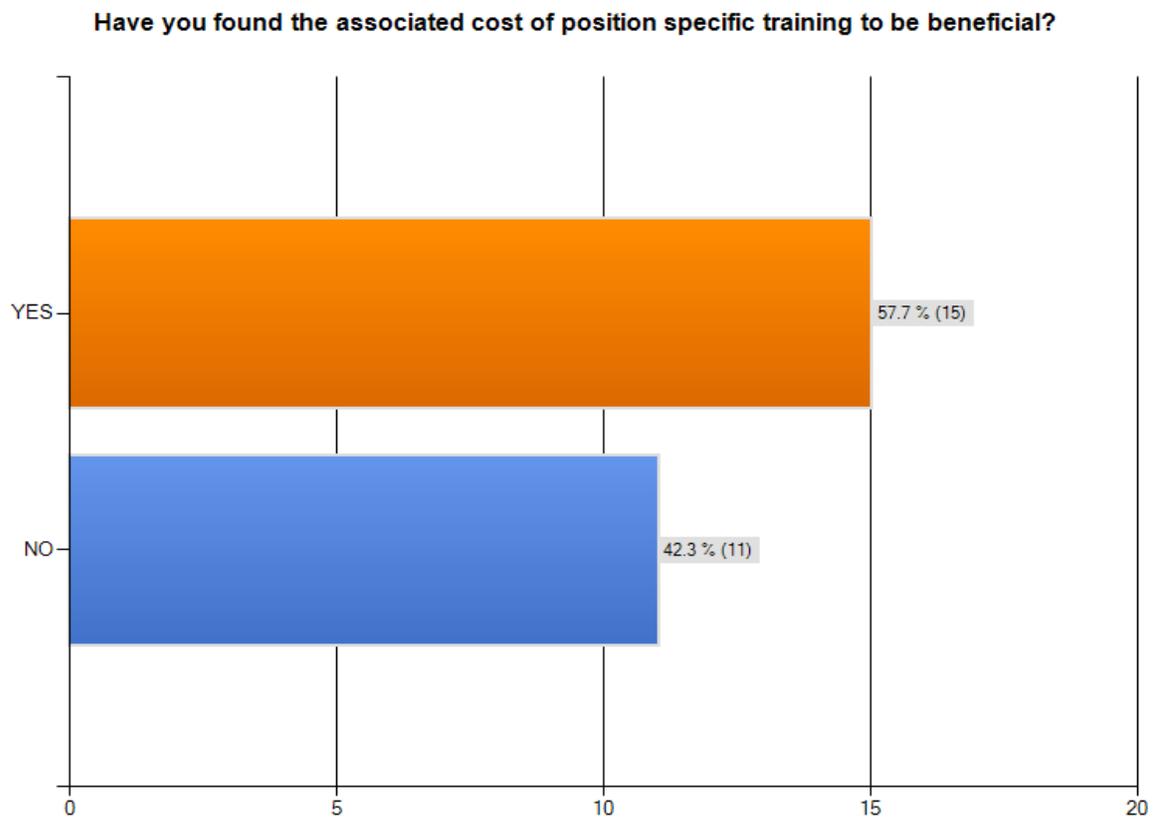
Does your department or regional incident management team require continuing education or credentialing for the Command and general staff positions		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
NO	45.2%	14
YES Continuing education	32.3%	10
YES Credentialing	22.6%	7
<i>answered question</i>		<b>31</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>12</b>

Does your department or regional incident management team require continuing education or credentialing for the Command and general staff positions



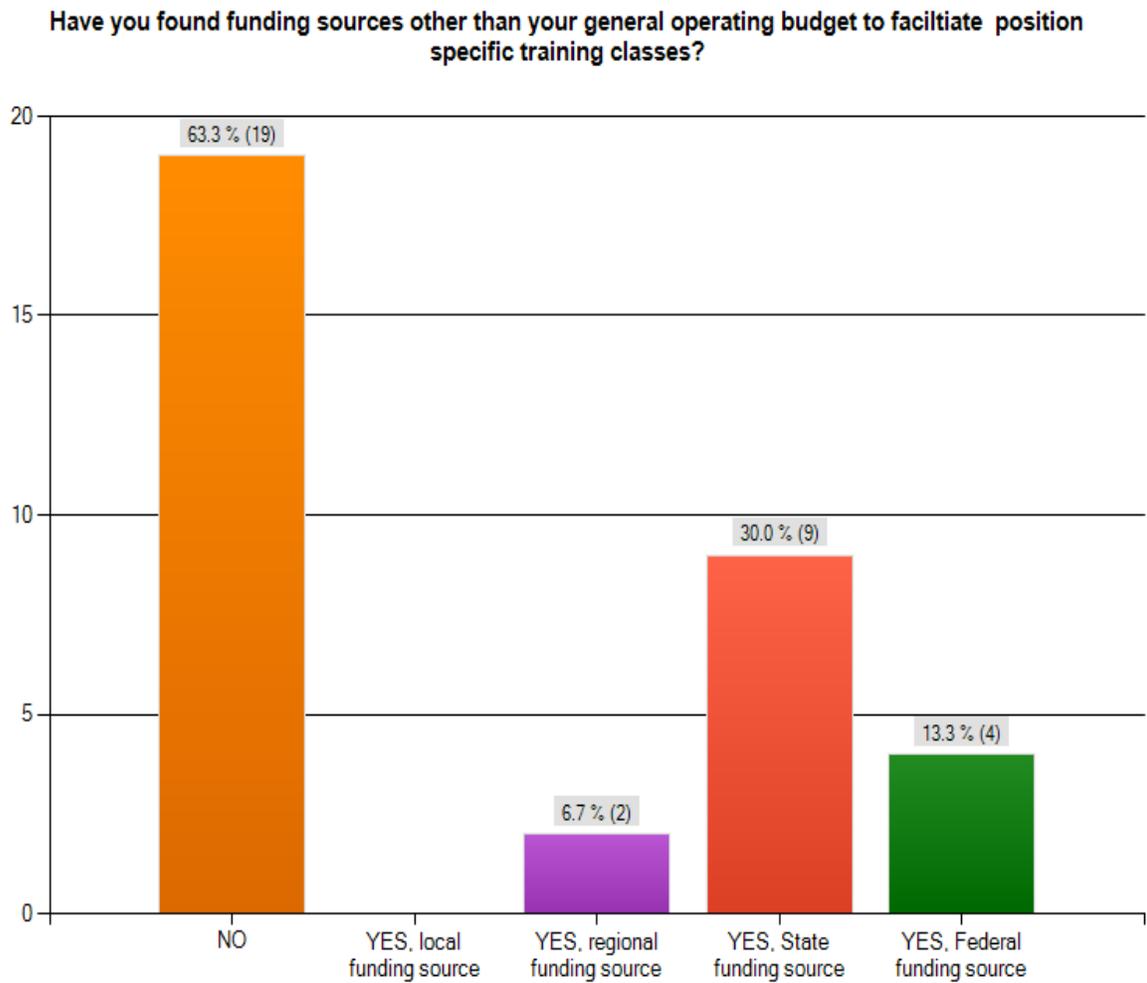
Question 10

Have you found the associated cost of position-specific training to be beneficial?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	57.7%	15
NO	42.3%	11
Other (please specify)		4
<i>answered question</i>		<b>26</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>17</b>



Question 11

Have you found funding sources other than your general operating budget to facilitate position-specific training classes?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
NO	63.3%	19
YES, local funding source	0.0%	0
YES, regional funding source	6.7%	2
YES, State funding source	30.0%	9
YES, Federal funding source	13.3%	4
Other (please specify)		2
<i>answered question</i>		<b>30</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>



Appendix E

Cedar Falls Fire Rescue Organizational Chart

