



Strategic Planning Member Survey Report

Administered by:



Executive Summary

To provide all Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs (KSAFC) members an opportunity to participate in the strategic planning process, a survey was administered between September 21 and October 14, 2021; 84 responded to the survey in whole or in part.

Raw results are included in this document beginning on Page 15; however, a summary is provided here.

Vision, Mission and Goals

Survey results indicate respondents are generally unclear about the organizations, vision, mission, and goals.

- **Mission:**
 - Nearly half (49%) of respondents indicate they understand the mission of KSAFC, 29% remain neutral, and 23% disagree.
 - More than half of respondents agree KSAFC welcomes involvement from career, volunteer, and combined departments, a quarter remain neutral, and 17% disagree.
- **Services Provided:**
 - About 35% of respondents agree the services KSAFC provides are valuable to their professional development, another 35% remain neutral, and 30% disagree.
 - Thirty percent of respondents rely on KSAFC to provide timely information regarding emerging issues in the fire service.
- **Advocates for the Fire Service**
 - Only about a quarter of respondents agree KSAFC is consulted as the experts on issues related to the fire service and fire safety, 30% disagree, and 43% neither agree nor disagree.
 - Slightly more than half (54%) of respondents agree KSAFC is considered statewide as an advocate for the fire service, 29% remain neutral, and 16% disagree.
 - Forty-two percent agree KSAFC works in partnership with other associations representing fire and emergency services, 41% neither agree nor disagree, and 17% disagree.

Strengths

Respondents were asked to identify up to three things that KSAFC does well. All responses can be found beginning on Page 16. However, the top two of a total of 58 responses are:

1. Annual conference
2. Communicates information and upcoming events via email, newsletter, and Kansas Daily Dispatch

Room for Improvement

Respondents were asked to identify up to three things in which KSAFC has room to improve. All responses can be found beginning on Page 18. However, the top two of 95 responses are:

1. Lack of communication regarding legislation, trends, and issues
2. Training, and personal and professional development

Annual Conference

While the annual conference was listed as a strength of the organization, questions specific to it indicate that it might not be as beneficial as it could be.

- About one-third of respondents believe the annual conference meets the needs of fire officers in Kansas and focuses on best practices.
- Less than one-third agree the annual conference helps officers develop personally and professionally, 50% neither agree nor disagree.
- Only about one-third look forward to the annual conference every year.

More respondents, however, indicate that the format is appropriate, with 40 percent agreeing the annual conference is offered in convenient locations and is well planned and executed. And 57 percent indicate the annual conference features engaging speakers and activities.

Programs or Initiatives

Respondents identified 84 programs or initiatives they would like KSAFC to focus on. Officer development, leadership training, communication with smaller/volunteer departments, and partnerships with KFRTI, KSFFA, KEMSA, and BEMS. All responses can be found beginning on Page 22.

Emerging Issues

The Center for Public Safety Excellence recently issued a white paper that identifies eight emerging issues for fire and emergency services. In considering the issues and initiatives, respondents were asked to reflect on how KSAFC is responding to these issues.

- **Re-identification:** Nearly half of respondents agree KSAFC celebrates the heritage of fire and emergency services while understanding it will experience significant changes over the next 30 years; about 18% disagree.
- **Culture:** About 42% of respondents agree KSAFC promotes best practices for firefighter training, credentialing, and professional development, another 40% remain neutral, and 17% disagree. One-third of respondents indicate KSAFC is open to change and focused on continuous improvement and 41% disagree.
- **Robust Use of Data:** More than half of respondents neither agree nor disagree KSAFC encourages its members to use data for evidence-based decision making, about 20% agree, and a quarter disagree.

- **Health and Wellness:** Forty percent of respondents agree KSAFC works to address mental health challenges, 30% remain neutral, and 30% disagree. Slightly less than one-third of respondents indicate KSAFC fosters fitness and wellness best practices, 35% disagree, and 35% neither agree nor disagree.
- **Partnerships:** About one-third of respondents agree KSAFC works with a wide range of partners to advance fire and emergency services, 39% remain neutral, and a quarter disagree. Forty-five percent agree KSAFC has good relations with other agencies representing the fire service, a third remain neutral, and 21% disagree.
- **Sustainability:** Nearly half of respondents disagree KSAFC is an innovator in fire and emergency services and only 19% agree.
- **Technology:** Only a quarter of respondents agree KSAFC understands the rapidly evolving technology used in fire and emergency services delivery.
- **Inclusiveness:** Nearly half (44%) believe leadership values diversity, equity, and inclusion. One-third of respondents agree KSAFC involves the fire service community in decisions that affect them, another third disagree.

Demographics

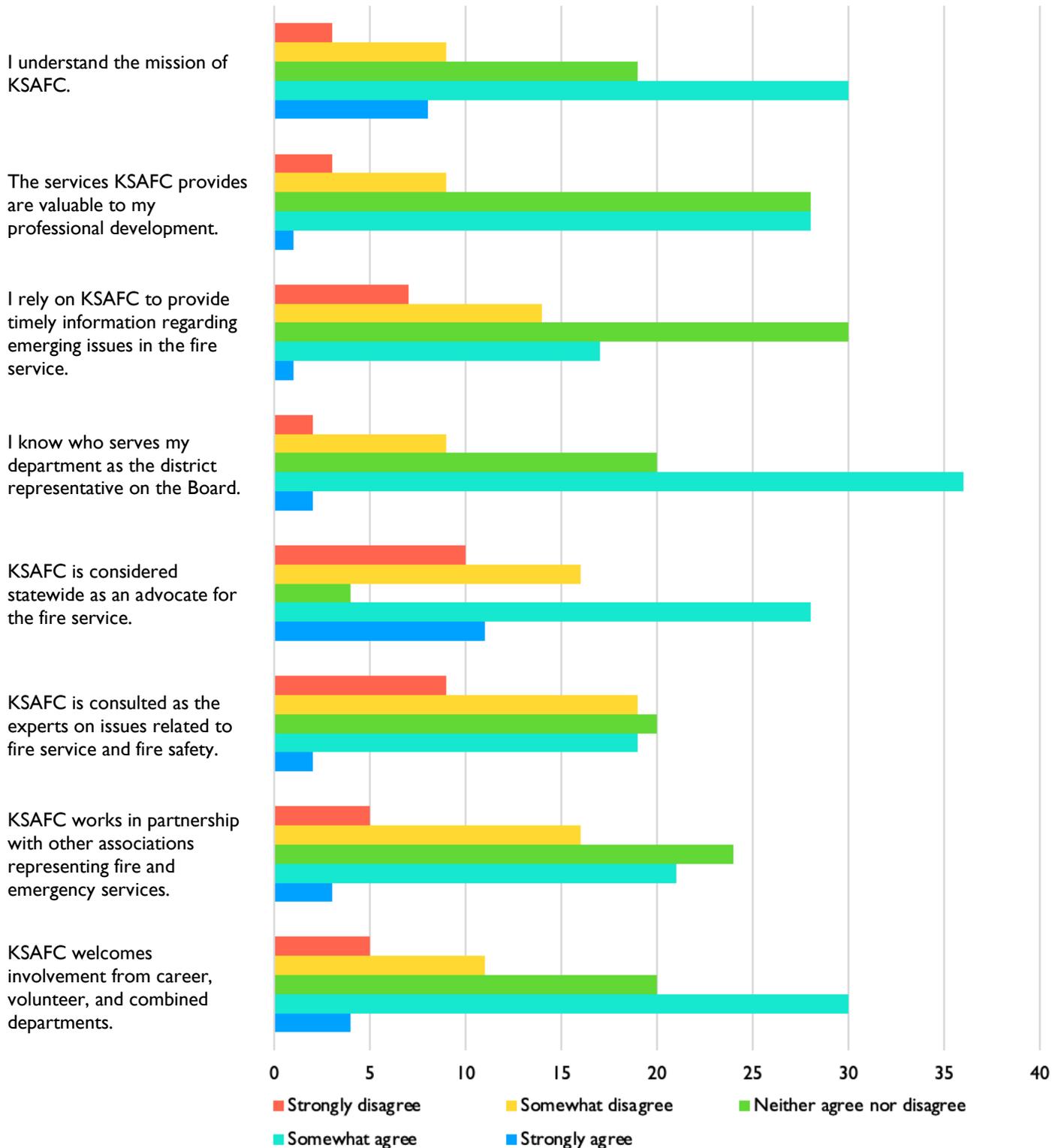
- The survey was taken predominantly by members of the organization, with more than 90% of respondents are members of KSAFC. Of those, 44% serve in volunteer or mostly volunteer organizations and 56% serve in career or mostly career organizations.
- Respondents are generally long-tenured officers, with 42% having served for at least 21 years and another 32% for between 11 and 21 years.
- More than 60% of respondents indicate they serve as Fire Chief, 26% serve as Chief Officer, less than 2% serve as Company Officer, 5% indicate they are retired. Nearly all respondents (96%) indicate they are white males.

Final Comments

The final question gave respondents the opportunity to provide other comments. Multiple respondents express that KSAFC needs to increase its involvement and outreach, others mention they themselves are not familiar with the organization. All responses can be found on Page 39.

KSAFC's Vision, Mission, and Goals

Please provide your level of agreement with the following statements about the Kansas Fire and Rescue Training Institute's vision, mission, goals, and performance.



List two or three things that KSAFC does well.

Communicates with members	Pays attention to relevant issues	Maintains organizational consistency
Conferences		
Training	Networking	
Distribute information		
Annual conference	Daily dispatch posts through IAFC	
My board representative sends frequent e-mails advising of KSAFC information	I'm a new Chief, so I haven't been involved long enough to comment.	
Conference	Provides a network for professional communication	
Newsletters	Information	
Regularly Schedules an Annual Conference	Has a decent number of vendors at the Annual Conference	
Networking	Finding answers to questions	
For the most part, they maintain quality instructors	They provide quality training equipment/simulators	Provide available testing sites
Notifications via email	Annual conference	
Our district rep is good at getting information out	Information about some training events	
Kansas Daily Dispatch	Annual meeting	Upcoming events
Provides occasional emails about upcoming events	Provides occasional emails about legislative action items	
Conference		
Provides a conference but needs work at it		
I think they do a good job of paying attention to legislation		
Annual conference		
Holds annual conference	Provides support when asked	
Tries hard	Used to provide legislative info impacting the fire service	
Holds a conference	Has a website	

Political advocacy	Worthwhile annual conference	
Holds an annual conference		
Communications		
Provide or partner with other agencies for lobbying for the fire service		
Annual Conference is okay		
Collect membership dues		
Inclusive as to volunteer and paid	Recognizes short comings	
Represent firefighters at state level	Promote fire safety	
Advocate regarding current fire issues	Inclusive	
Legislative matters	Collect dues	
Legislative matters		
Annual Conference		

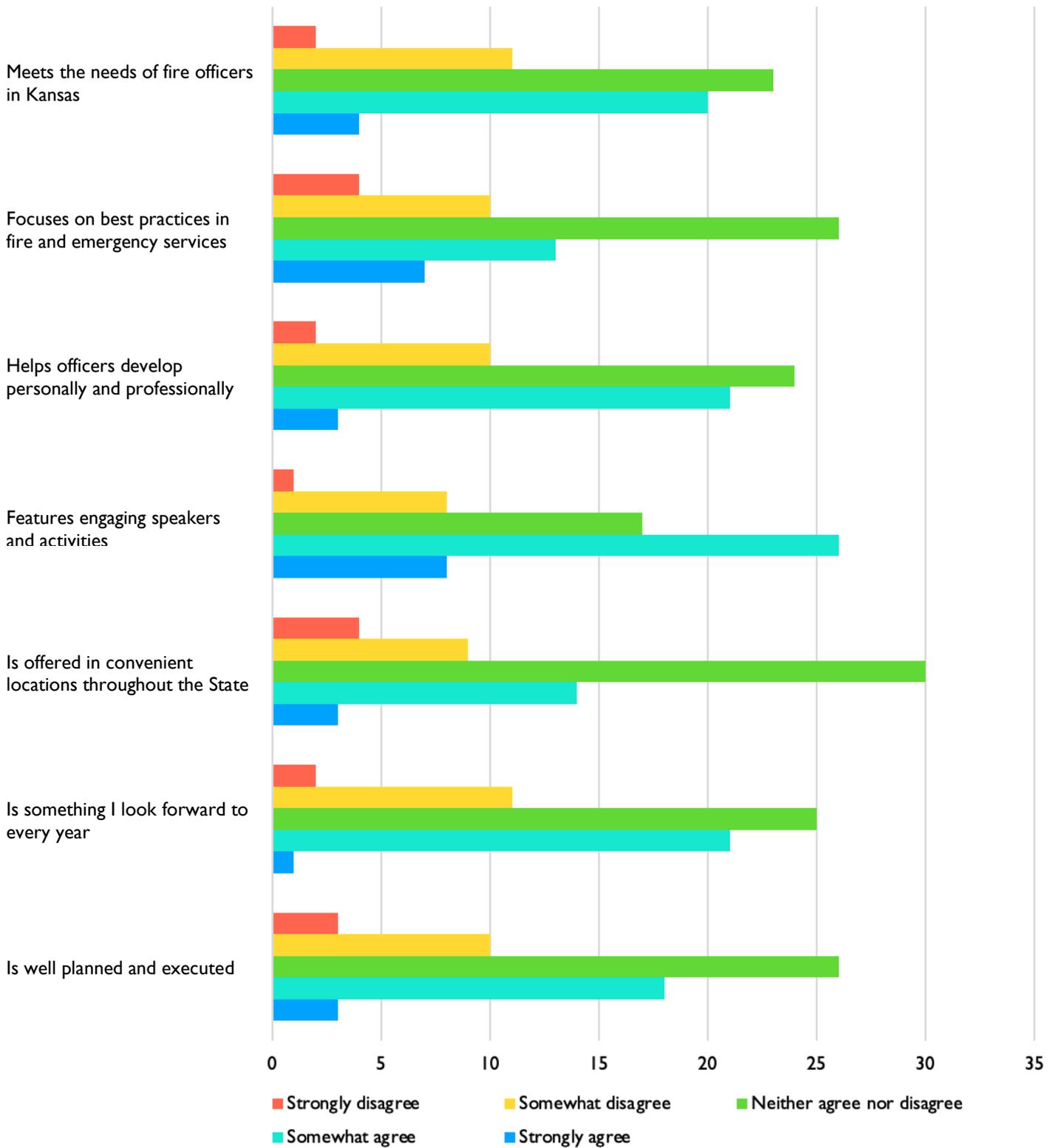
List two or three things in which KSAFC has room to improve.

Increasing membership	Pushing important state legislative issues	Professional development
Communications with smaller departments		
There's a lot of old people		
Being a resource for the fire service		
Communication to members overall on local and state matters	Receiving direction and input from the membership	
I joined the KSAFC as a new Fire Chief, but the only communication I received was the regular e-mails that are sent out. Maybe someone should reach out to new members and contact them personally		
Communication to membership of emerging issues	More active lobbying	Leading all fire service organizations
Training info		
Market and brand their mission across KS fire service	Develop a unique niche for KS fire service	
Need to have more communication than what is offered currently	Committees could work on initiatives throughout the year and state to elevate the Kansas Fire Service.	
Volunteer support		
Less restrictive on numbers required for a class, especially for volunteers	More online education	
I do not know what the organization does	Training opportunities	
Communication	Outreach of education	
Keeping departments informed about new bills in congress	Training in any aspect is helpful to volunteer departments	

Communication with membership, I get far more information from the IAFC than from the KSAFC	Leadership education opportunities	Advocate for Emergency Services as a whole
Training	Legislative involvement	Help build a State Fire Academy
I'm a brand-new member so I'm not sure yet	Website wasn't up to date the last time I looked	
Communication with membership.	Regular updates as to issues and happenings at the state level.	
Training		
Communication, lobby, training	Training for officer development	Website development
Lack of communication	No minutes from executive meetings/legislative issues	No representative updates from state boards or commission appointments
Not familiar with KSAFC activities		
Relationship with KSFFA	Relationship with KU Fire Service Training	
Keeping members informed on what is going on at KSAFC	Recruiting new members and retaining current members	Providing a value to members
Professional development	Website is basic	
Move conference to the wintertime	Professional development programs	Communicate the platform
Communication with members	Year-round training not just one conference	Complete mutual aid network
Reaching out to members, and agencies	Representing the fire service	Advocate for change
Political advocacy	Industry and public visibility	Authoring and distribution of position papers regarding issues of importance to the Kansas fire service
Communication with members	Active, visible advocacy for the fire service	Reliable resource for information about fire service trends and issues
Promoting the organization		
Advocating on issues like wildland deployment reimbursements		

Officer development - both volunteer and career		
Frequent and ongoing communication with members about all things related to the Kansas fire service	Legislative advocacy for the fire service in Kansas	
Informing members of Fire Service issues	Develop a way to share SOG/ policies	Keep website updated
Communication	Advocacy	Education
Communication	Inclusion	Mentoring and development
Bringing leadership training to others in the State	Communication as to ongoing service issues whether paid or volunteer	
Understand issues and assist- not a one size fits all	Trend setter in the industry for common topics effecting all departments	No solutions/resources to help mitigate issues at hand
Communicate	Provide Chief Officer training	
Provide training for professional fire chiefs	Help to improve training for all ranks	
Relationship with other fire service groups		
Better access for potential and current members to get information	Provide more information to its members	Reach out to all fire chief not just members
Over communication with its members	Trainings for Chief Officers	

Please indicate your level of agreement with statements about KSAFC's conference. The KSAFC conference...



List two or three programs or initiatives you would like KSAFC to focus on.

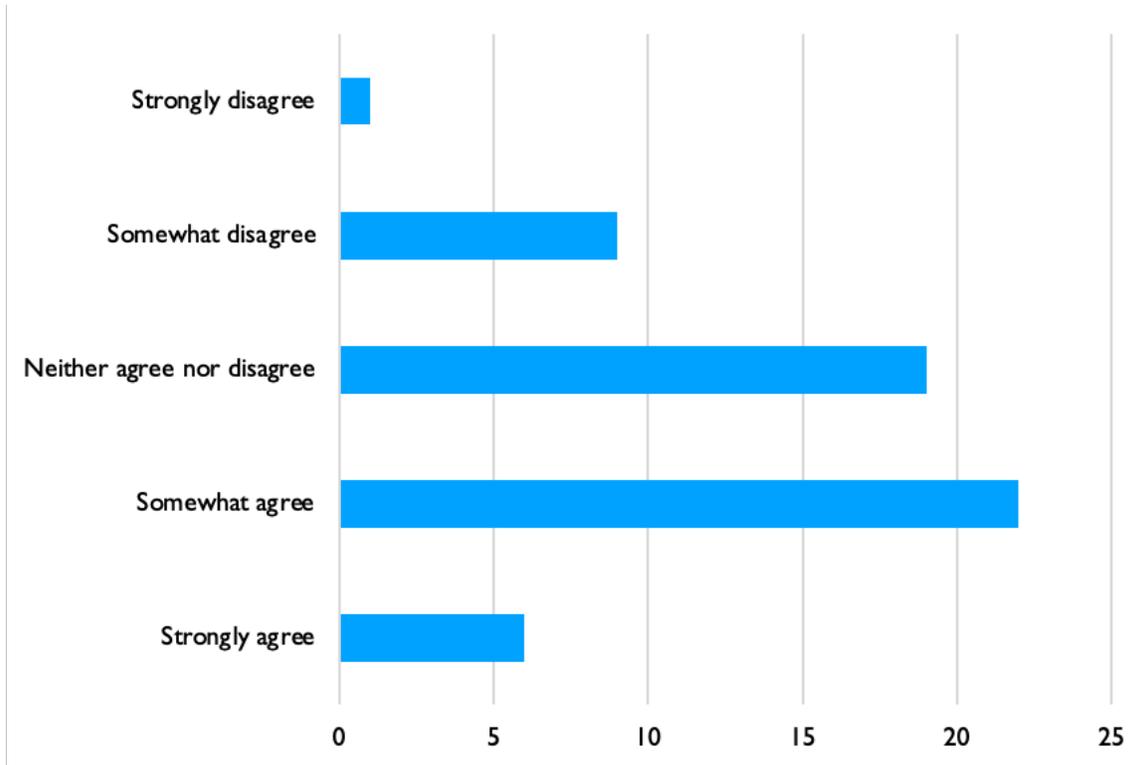
Firefighter safety	Communications	GEMT
Communications with non-member Chiefs	Membership	
Assisting KFRTI in development of a Leadership Training Program for future Chief's with a focus on the volunteer and combination departments		
Officer development	Working towards a streamlining of Fire and Emergency Service state agencies	
Helping lead KSFFA and KFRTI to be in sync	Legislation benefitting Kansas fire service	
Fire Officer III-IV Development	Executive Fire Officer development	
Grant writing	Leadership development	Technology and innovation
Volunteer support		
New member involvement	Training opportunities	
Leadership classes	Recruitment and retention	
Federal grants or other funding	Current or future COVID policies	Social media Issues plaguing departments
IAFC Company Officer and Chief Officer classes, similar to what Colorado State Fire Chiefs offer	Virtual and in person leadership educational opportunities	Work with other Emergency Service organizations to come to consensus decisions, such as legislative matters. It seems the KSAFC is often not willing to participate in meetings involving other professional organizations.
State Fire Academy	Training	Legislation
ISO rating system	Current legislative initiatives and how they affect large and small departments	Best practices on basic training for volunteer firefighters
Recruitment and Retention of Firefighters	Funding opportunities for rural fire departments	
Training for officers in the volunteer side	Better communication, more communication	

Minimum firefighter requirements	Communication	KSFFA and KFRTI collaboration
Need to get smaller departments more involved		
Better professional development for Fire Chiefs	Bring national programs in for conference	
Being a stronger leader in state activities	Figuring out what training we could sponsor or provide	Building a strong active membership
Professional training/guidance	Better use of the website	
New chief orientation	Regional deployments	Joint programs with BEMS or KEMSA
Incident command training to smaller departments	Re-vamp conference	At least monthly informational emails
PTSD/ mental health	Working with KEMSA on initiatives	Bridging the gap with the KSFFA
Appropriate funding for Wildfire Response, Education, and Coordination	Residential sprinklers - perhaps not a legislative solution requiring them, but a tax incentive to those who voluntarily install them.	Why do County Sherriff's, County Emergency Managers, and the Adjutant General have such obscene amounts of statutory authority and power?
Minimum firefighter training standards for the state	Officer development opportunities	Liability protections for fire chiefs
Wildland deployment reimbursements		
Officer Development - both Volunteer and Career		
A way to include and inform members of regional meetings and hot topics in the fire service.	A way to share questions and concerns with other chiefs/ such as an online forum	Fire sprinklers in the home, especially in the very large houses we are seeing built.
Leadership development	Management development	
Chief officer development	Mentoring	Inclusion of all Kansas fire departments
Leadership development	Regional schools	
Mandatory NFPA 1582 Physicals for all FFs	Interagency standardized reporting system	
Firefighter health	Firefighter safety	Mental health awareness
Bringing more fire leaders to the association		

Fire law in Kansas/ program to educate on roles and responsibilities	Finance management for new fire chief	Fire chiefs and labor management relations
CRR Program		

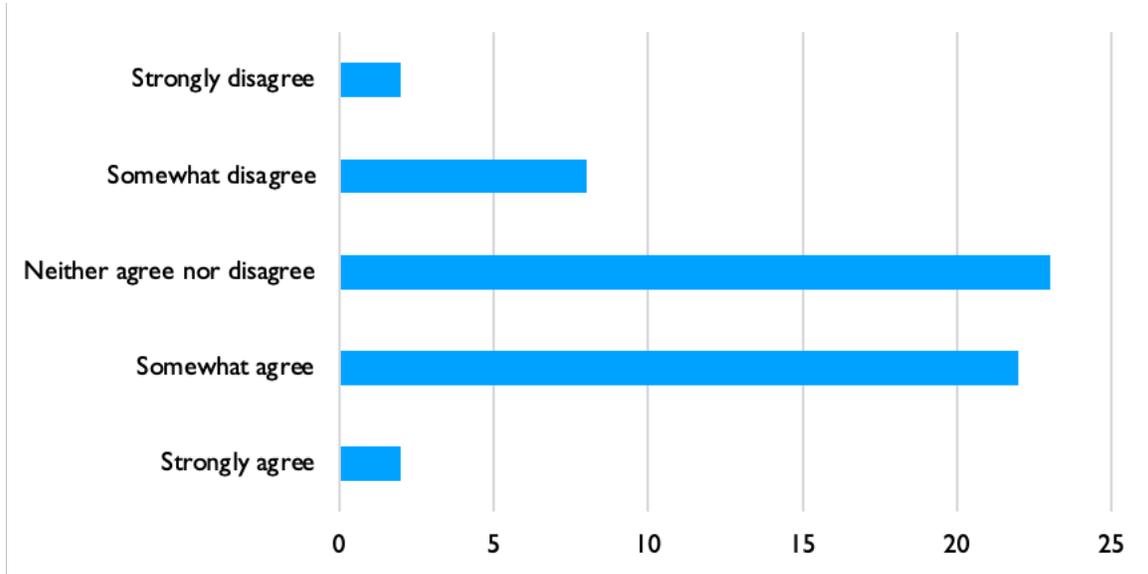
Re-Identification

KSAFC celebrates the heritage of fire and emergency services while understanding it will experience significant changes over the next 30 years.

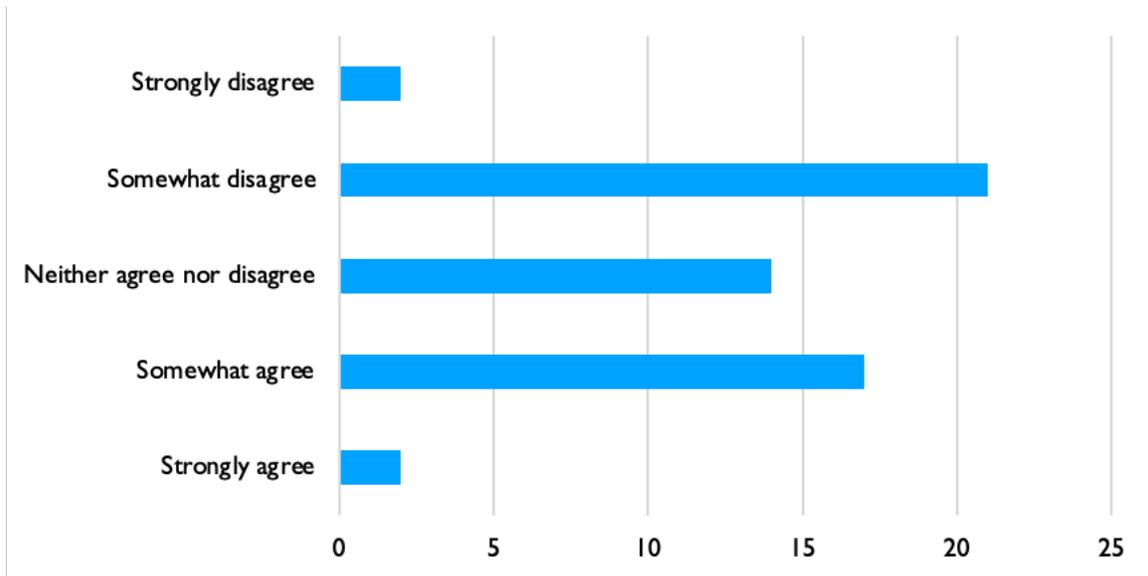


Culture

KSAFC promotes best practices for firefighter training, credentialing, and professional development.

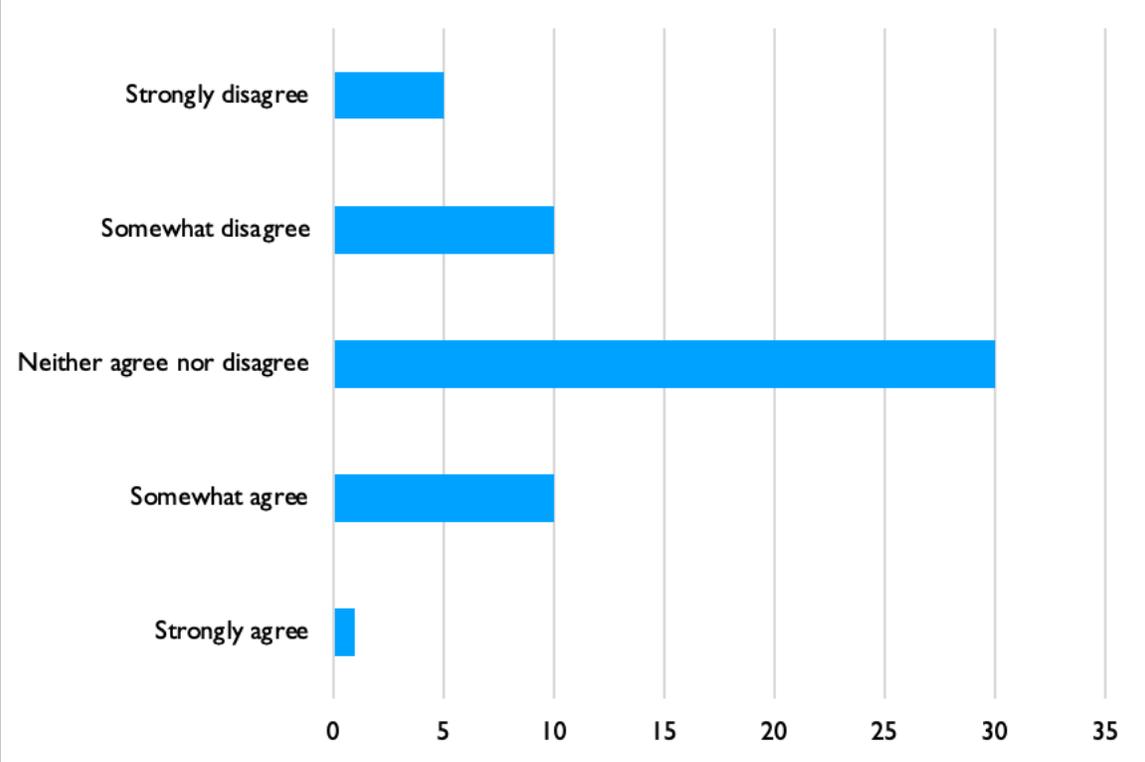


KSAFC is open to change and focused on continuous improvement.



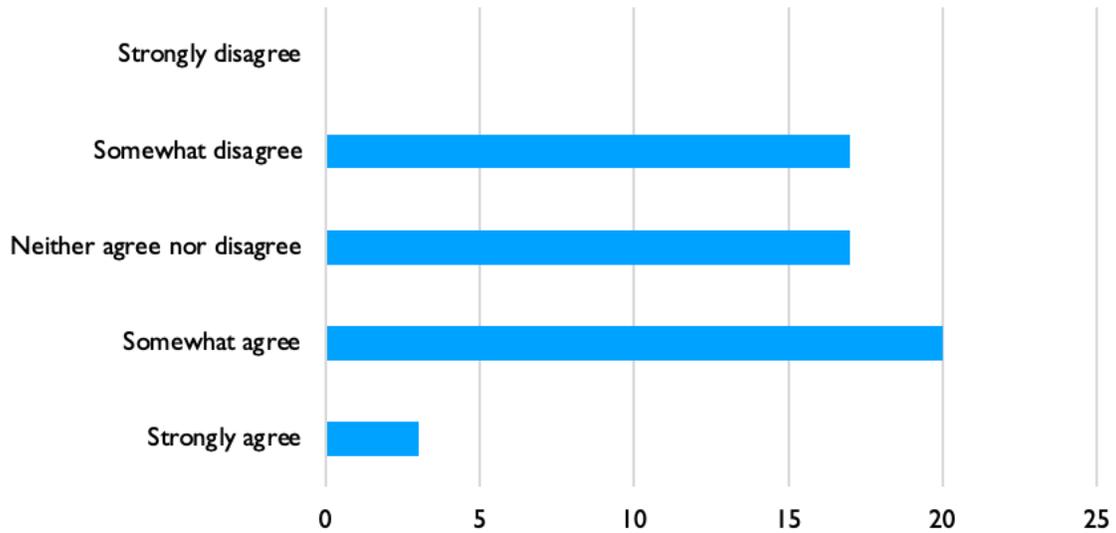
Robust Use of Data

KSAFC encourages its members to use data for evidence-based decision making.

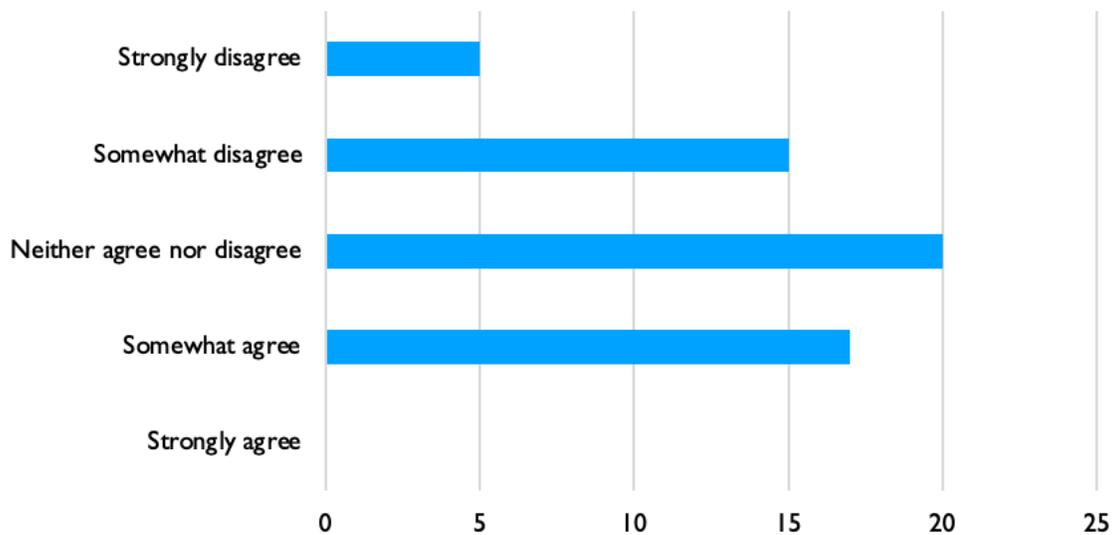


Health and Wellness

KSAFC works to address mental health challenges facing fire and emergency services.

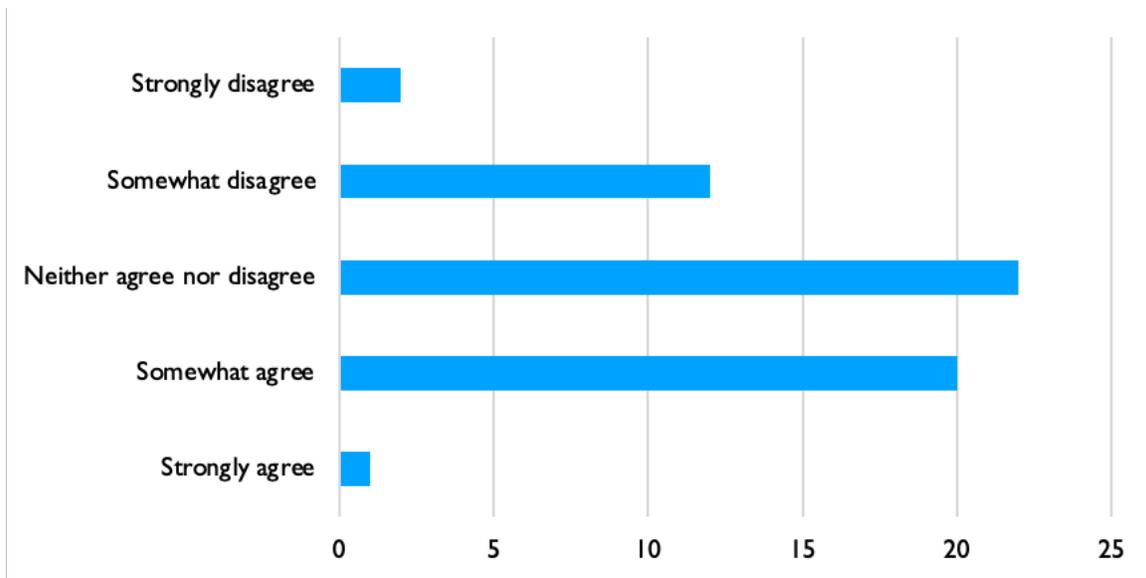


KSAFC fosters fitness and wellness best practices.

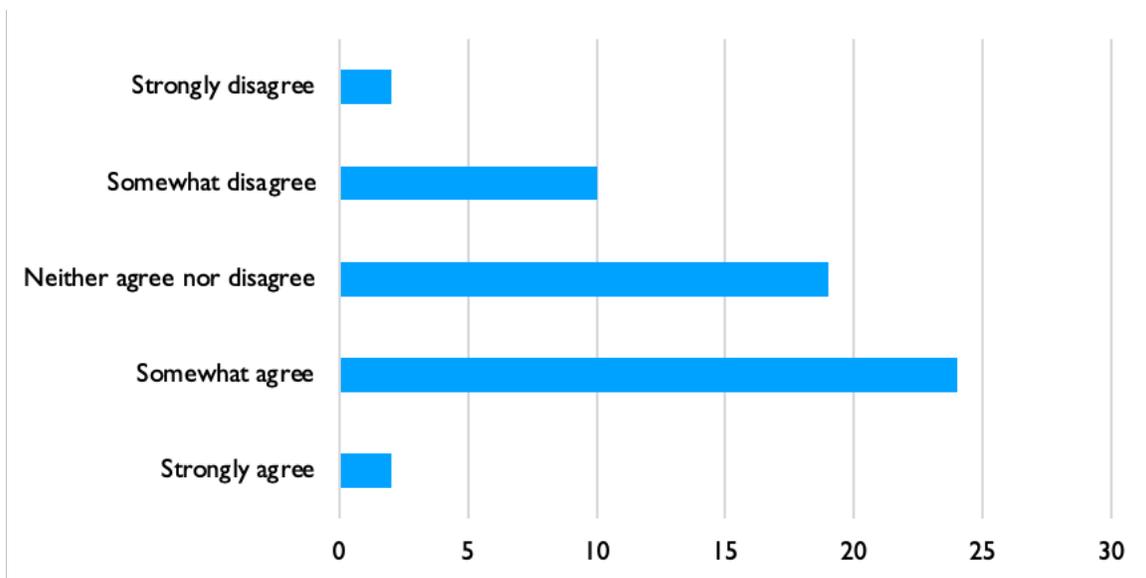


Partnerships

KSAFC works with a wide range of partners to advance fire and emergency services.

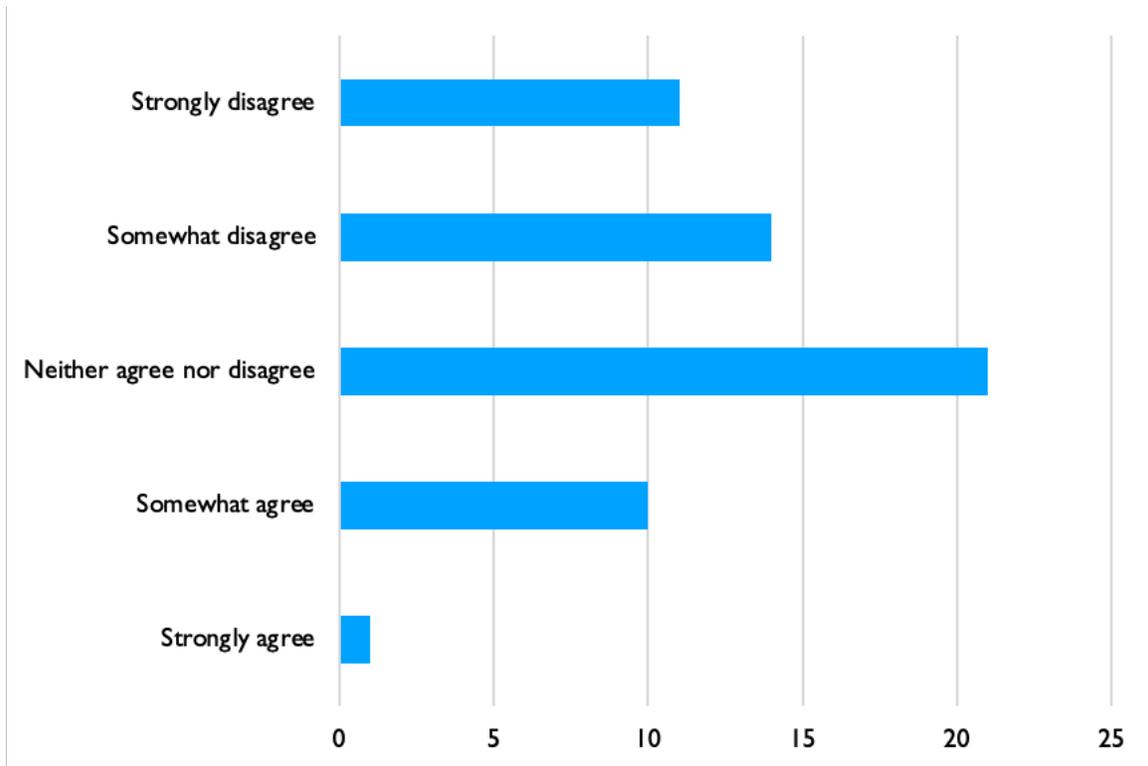


KSAFC has good relations with other agencies representing the fire service.



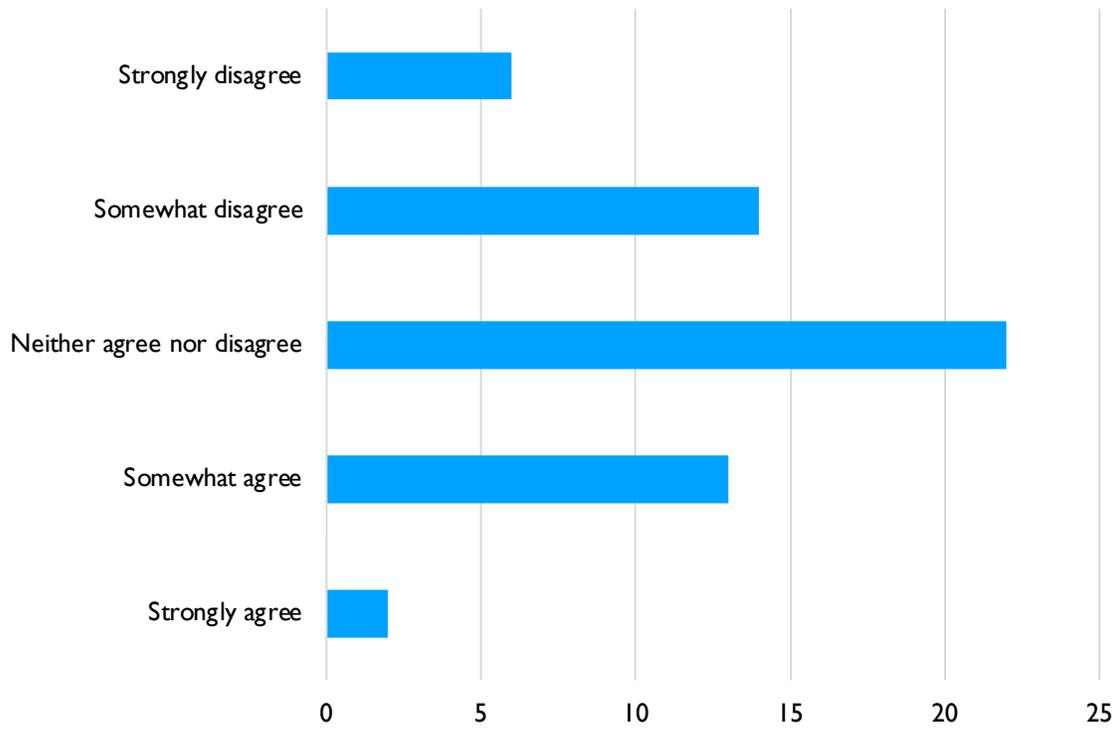
Sustainability

KSAFC is an innovator in fire and emergency services education, providing the needed skill sets, knowledge, and abilities required for the future and to keep up to date with emerging technologies.



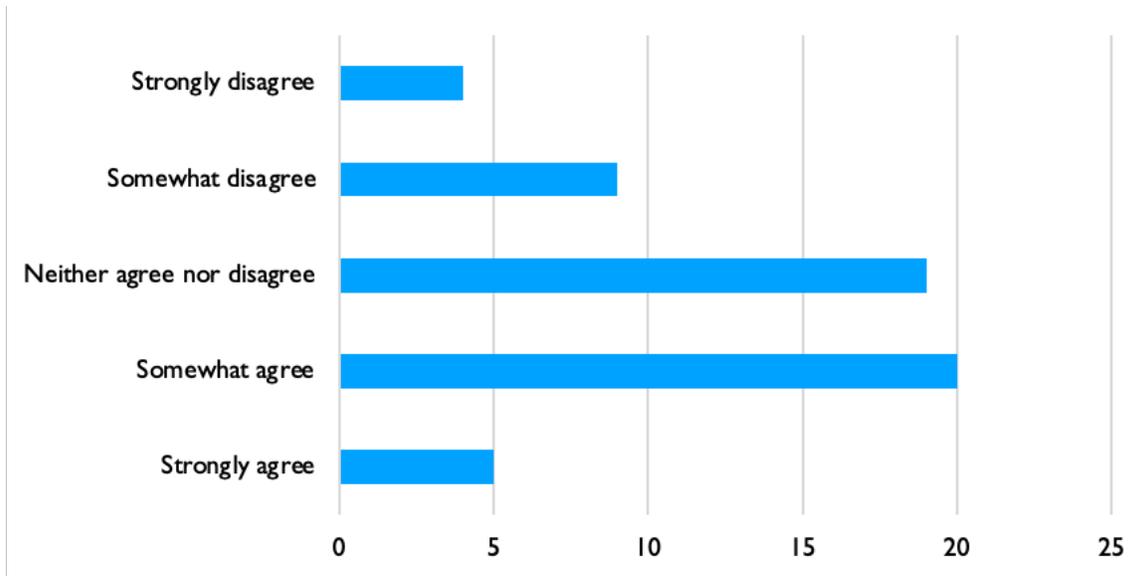
Technology

KSAFC understands the rapidly evolving technology used in fire and emergency services delivery.

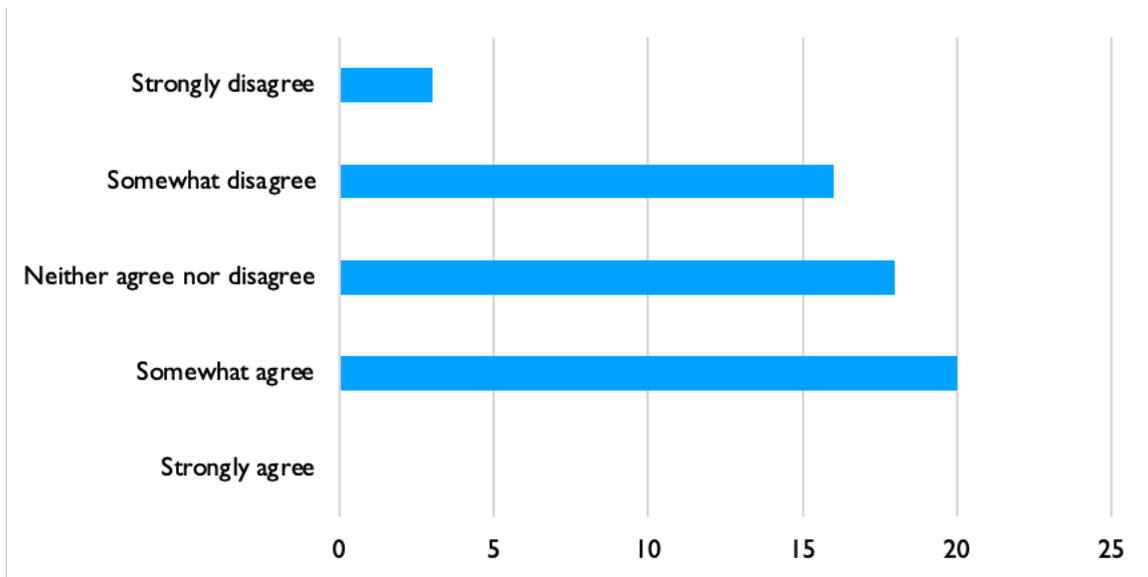


Inclusiveness

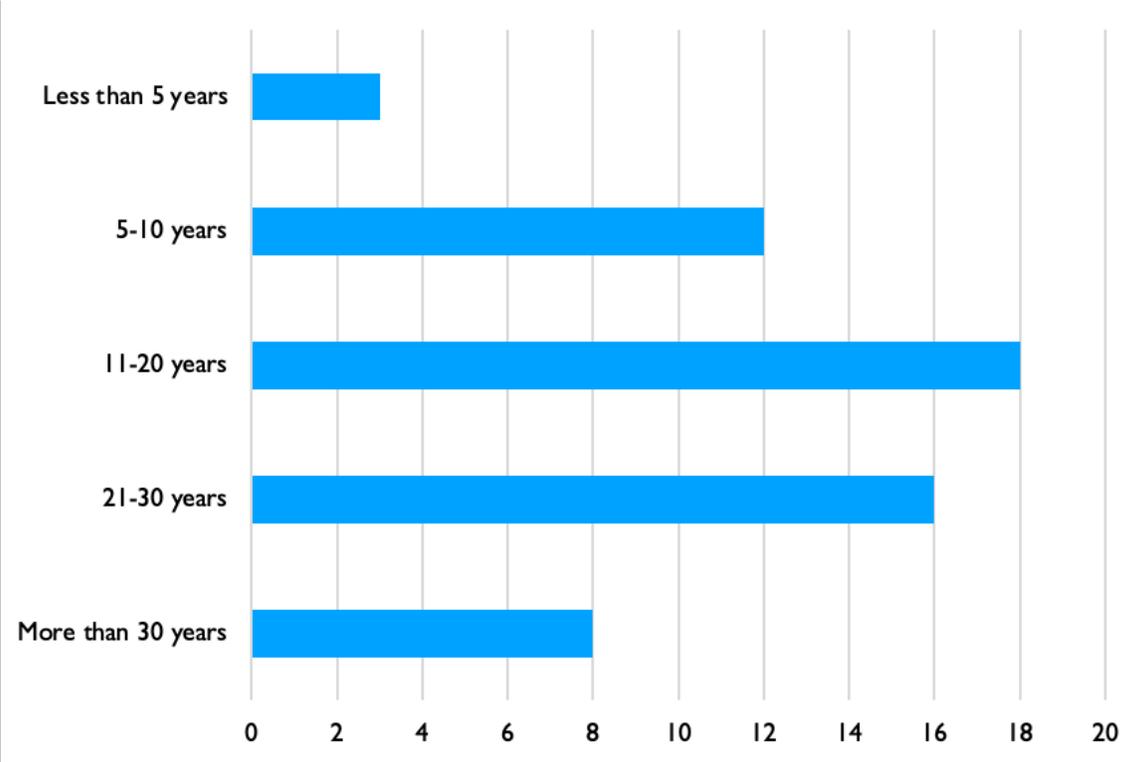
Leadership values diversity, equity, and inclusion.



KSAFC involves the fire service community in decisions that affect them.



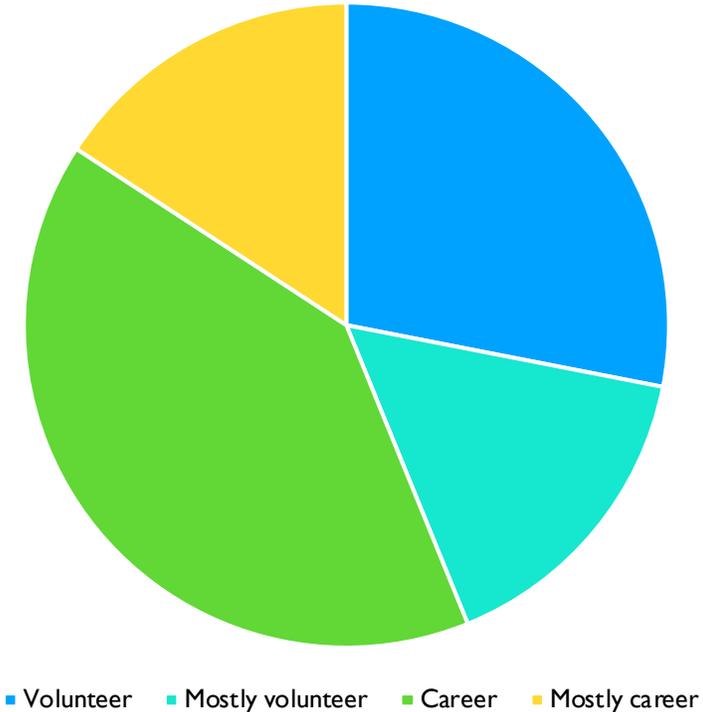
How long have you served as a fire officer?



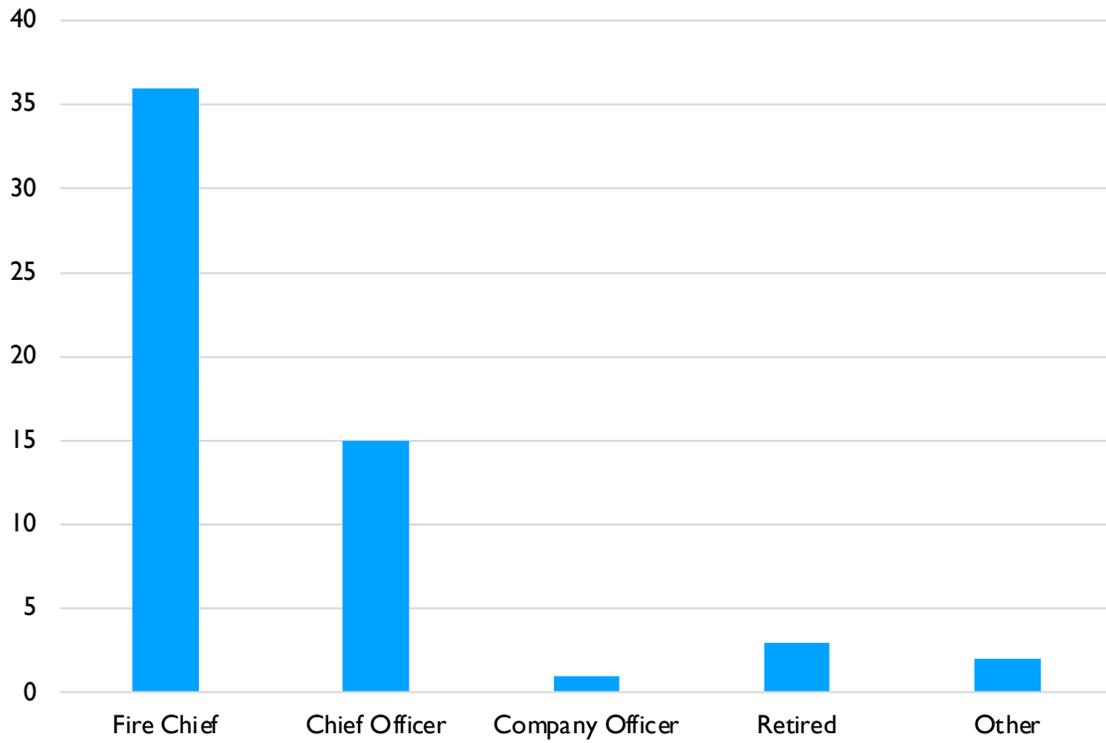
I am a member of KSAFC.



Is your fire and emergency services department volunteer or career?



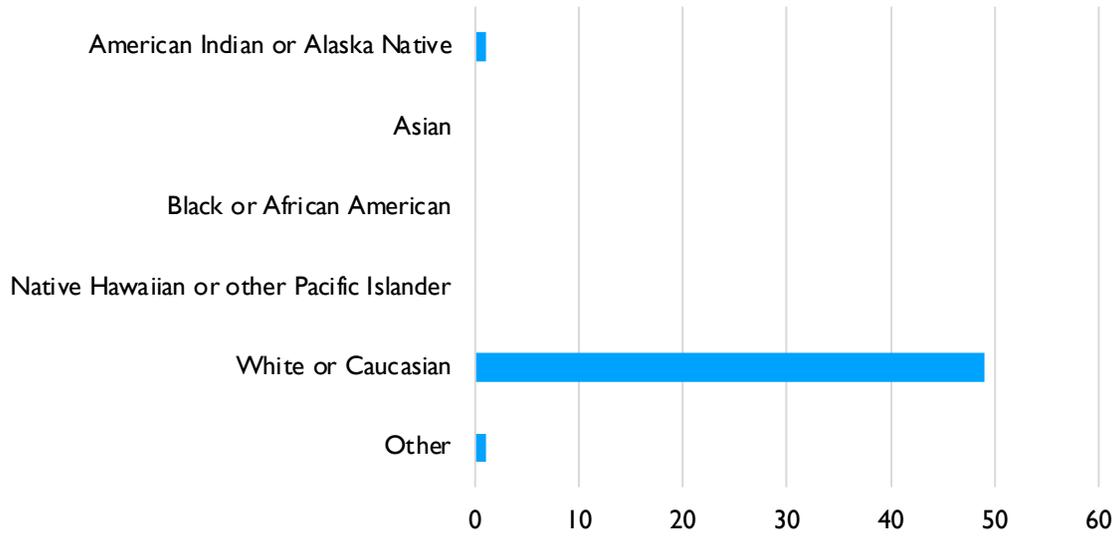
What best describes your current position in your organization?



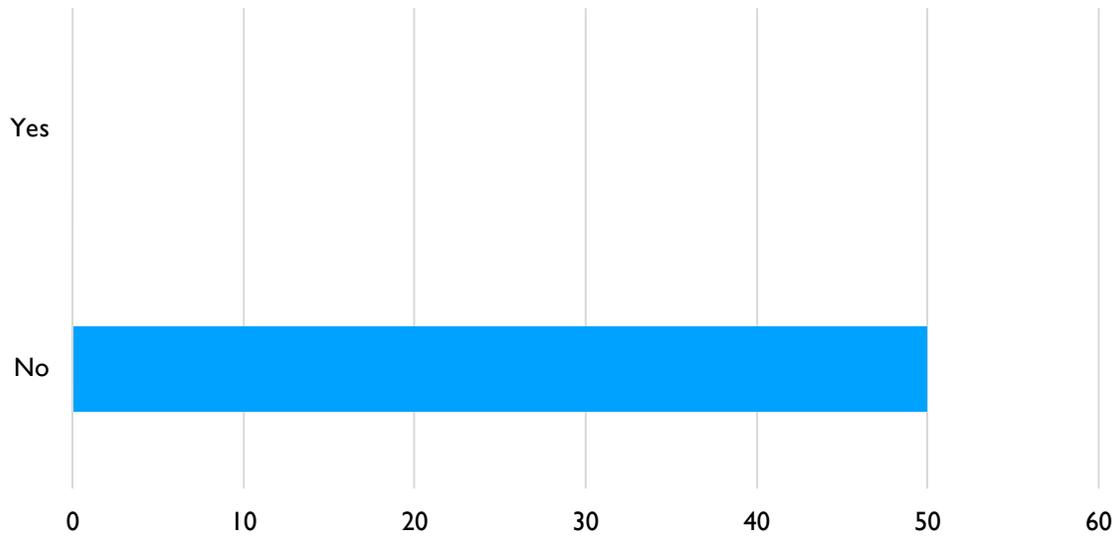
Other:

- Director

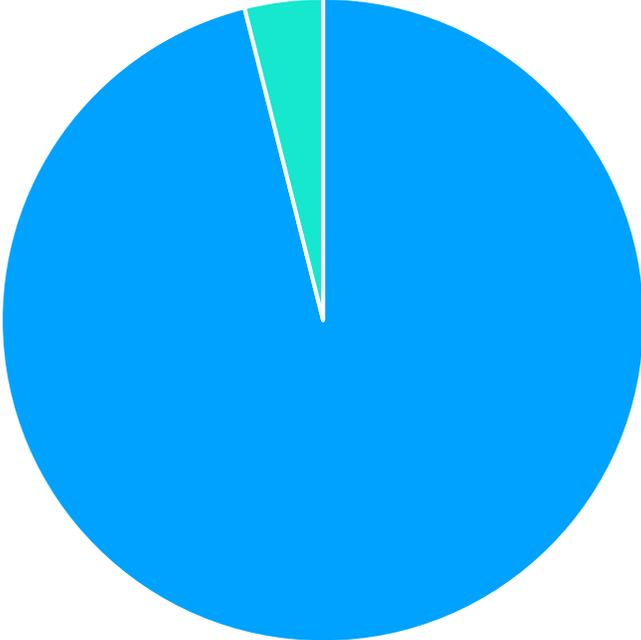
What is your race? (Optional)



Are you Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin? (Optional)



What is your gender? (Optional)



■ Male ■ Female

Please provide any other comments you'd like to share.

I work with KS Fire & Rescue Training Institute and this survey has lead me to realize I don't know much about KSAFC and I would like to change that. I look forward to collaborating with KSAFC on developing the State's fire service.

Thank you for the opportunity!

I was appointed to my position 5 months before the pandemic shut down the country. I have had little experience with KSAFC. Please consider that with my response to the survey.

Simply not familiar with the organization. I've attended a couple of annual conferences and attended good classes but otherwise, uninvolved.

I believe this organization can do better and I still believe in it. I would like to see more information on the website as this could be a great tool. Professional training or guidance to obtain training should be pushed more and let people know the path to get there. Most departments have the path established but there are others that don't. Also, there are other options of professional development other than just going to the NFA and achieving EFO. While this is great training, I don't think it should be the only focus. KU offers Certified Public Manager course which is a great help to understanding governmental processes.

I hope they can become relevant for the future.

Most people and agencies do not know that the Fire Chiefs even have a group. When a discussion comes up and who needs to be involved, it is always KSFFA, the Union group, the Pro Chiefs, KEMSA, and the Police Alliance. KSAFC is not involved, disconnected, and out of touch.

The visibility of the KSAFC needs to be increased to a level on par with the KSFFA.

The conference seems to be more focused on the banquet, hospitality room, apple pie contest, and raffle ticket sales rather than equipping Fire Chiefs with new tools and information to better equip them for their job.

I would like to see the board to get out and see the volunteer departments and help promoting this organization. I truly believe that this organization is great, and I respect everything that they do.

KSAFC has a great deal of potential, and I would like to see more chiefs in the state involved. It should be the voice representing Kansas fire departments (not OSFM or KSFFA).

I fail to see the value of membership in the KSAFC.

If the organization does not begin to include up and coming and help in developing officers, the organization will fail to exist in the near future.

There needs to be more involvement of the organization to help develop new leaders. KSAFC must develop training or classes that pertain to the type of department individuals work for. There are no cookie cutter courses. Volunteer Chiefs for Volunteer departments etc. The association must keep reviewing the changes in the fire service and adapt their training accordingly. The involvement and communications need to continue after the conference is over.
