



WFC Annual Report

January 1, 2016

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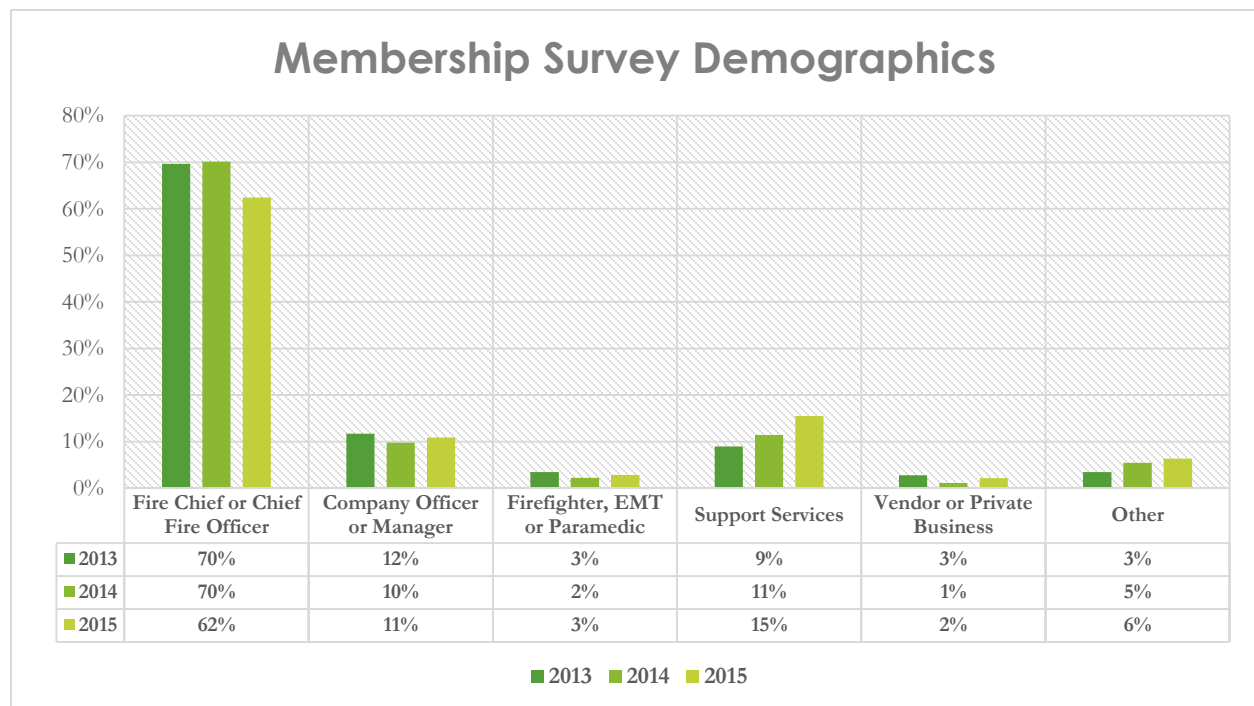
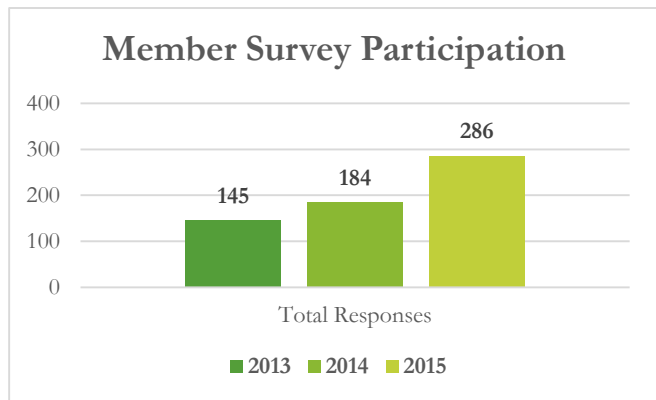
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Introduction

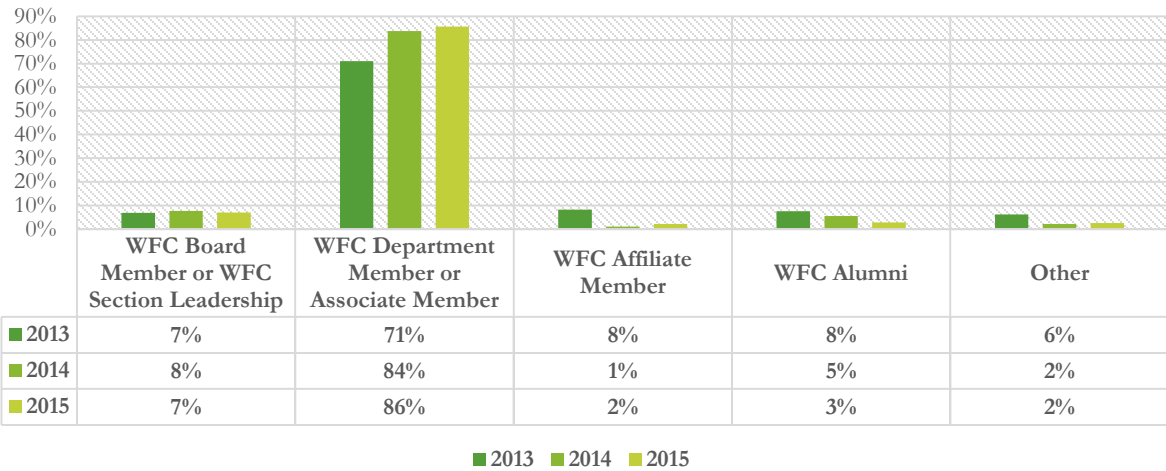
In an effort to continuously improve the Washington Fire Chiefs Association (WFC) we have created a strategic plan with goals which are used to direct and evaluate our progress. We based the performance of each strategic goal on measurable results and concrete feedback provided by our members and other key external stakeholders. As an organization we are constantly looking for ways to improve the value of our membership as seen through the eyes of our 2183 members.

Our motto is: “Serve, Educate & Lead”. This syncs well with the International Fire Chiefs Association motto of “Lead, Educate and Serve” and we collectively look for opportunities to demonstrate this in all that we think, say and do.

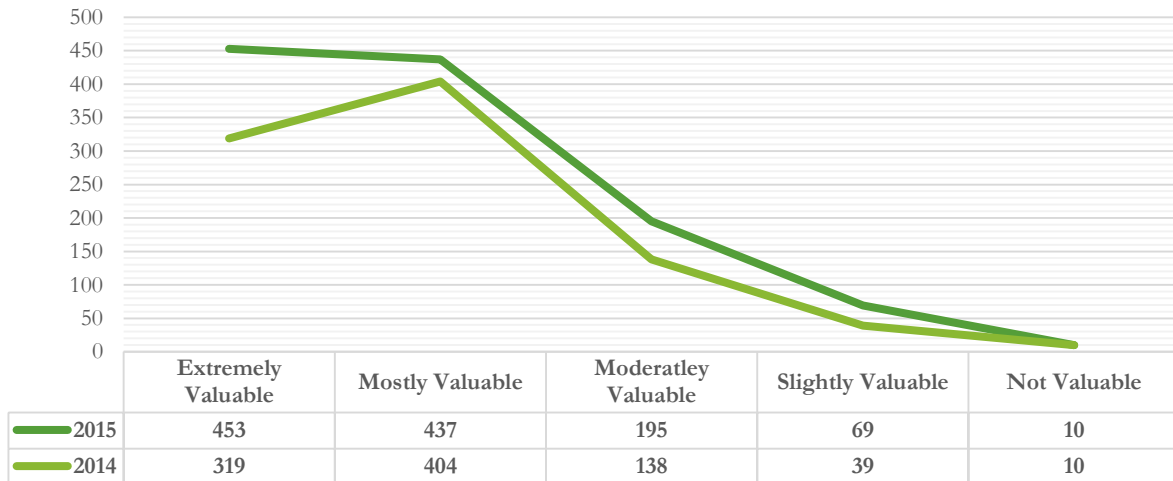
Throughout this report you will see a reference to our membership survey. We received 184 responses from our members regarding our 2014 services, and 286 responses regarding our 2015 services. These results are compared and contrasted in this report and offered as one method of evaluation.



WFC Affiliation Demographics



Membership Value



In 2015 there were 2183 members and 386 fire departments represented throughout Washington State. The Association is led by a Board elected by its members. It includes five sections: EMS, Fire Mechanics, Fire Administrative Support, Fire Training, Safety & Officers, Public Fire Educators & the HazMat & Special Ops Committee.

Our Board members are:

Jim Walkowski

President
Spokane County Fire District 9
(509) 466-4602
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Bryan Collins

Position 4
Spokane Valley Fire Department
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Keith Wright

Vice President
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Mcorreia@ci.snoqualmie.wa.us

Murray Gordon

Past President
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mgordon@ci.everett.wa.us

Joe Molina

Position 6
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joe.molina@cityofvancouver.us

Jeff Griffin

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Dave LaFave

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360-575-6286
dave.lafave@c2fr.org

Steve Wright

Position 2
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(360) 971-2411
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Rocky Eastman

Position 8
Walla Walla County Fire District #4
(509) 529-1282
reastman@wwfire4.com

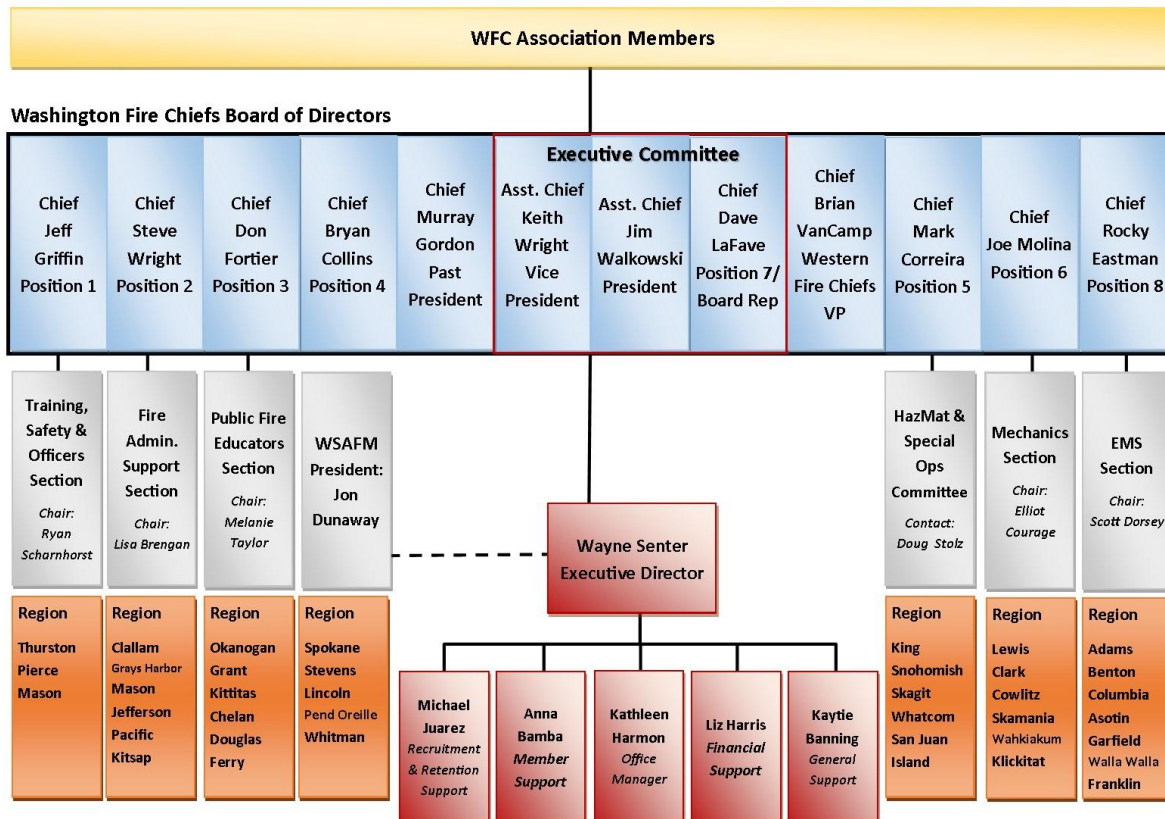
Don Fortier

Position 3
Grant County Fire District 3
(509) 787-2713
dfortier@gcfd3.net

Brian VanCamp

Western State Vice President
Thurston County Fire District 8
(360) 491-5320
vancamp@southbayfire.com

2015 Organization Chart



Our section and committee leaders in 2015 were:

Ryan Scharnhorst, Training, Safety & Officers
 Lisa Brengan, Fire Administrative Support
 Elliot Courage, Fire Mechanics
 Scott Dorsey, EMS
 Melanie Taylor, Public Fire Educators
 Doug Stolz, HazMat & Special Ops Committee

2015 Region Representatives

Bryan Collins, Spokane; Stevens; Lincoln; Pend Oreille; Whitman
 Mark Correia, King; Snohomish; Skagit; Whatcom; San Juan; Island
 Rocky Eastman, Walla Walla; Benton; Adams; Franklin; Columbia; Asotin; Garfield
 Don Fortier, Okanogan; Grant; Kittitas; Chelan; Douglas; Ferry; Yakima
 Jeff Griffin, Thurston; Pierce; Mason
 Joe Molina, Lewis; Clark; Cowlitz; Skamania; Wahkiakum; Klickitat
 Steve Wright, Clallam; Grays Harbor; Jefferson; Pacific; Kitsap

2015 Committee Representatives:

1604 Work Group, Chief Mark Peterson, Renton Fire & Emergency Services
HB 1721 Work Group, Deputy Chief Scott Dorsey, Snohomish County FD 7
AWC Legislative Committee, Chief Joe Molina, Vancouver Fire Department
Bylaws, Deputy Chief Jim Walkowski, Spokane County FD 9
Emergency Preparedness, Division Chief Dave DeHaan, Everett Fire Department
Finance Committee, Chief Bud Backer, East Pierce Fire & Rescue
Fire Defense Committee, Chief Dave LaFave, Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue
Fire Service Memorial Committee, Chaplain Pat Ellis, Kent Fire Department RFA
Legislative Committee, Chief Al Church, South King Fire & Rescue
PNWCG, Chief Dave LaFave, Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue
SBCC, Chief Hank Teran, Bainbridge Island Fire Department
SERC, Chief Bill Whealen, Benton County FD 4
SIEC, Chief Jim Sharp, West Pierce Fire & Rescue
Trauma Steering Committee, Assistant Chief Russ McCallion, East Pierce Fire & Rescue
WSRB, Chief Lee Soptich, Eastside Fire & Rescue

The 2015 WFC staff included:

Wayne Senter, Executive Director
Kathleen Harmon, Office Manager
Liz Harris, Financial Support
Kaytie Banning, General Support
Anna Bamba, Member Support
Michael Juarez, Recruitment & Retention Support

Goal 1

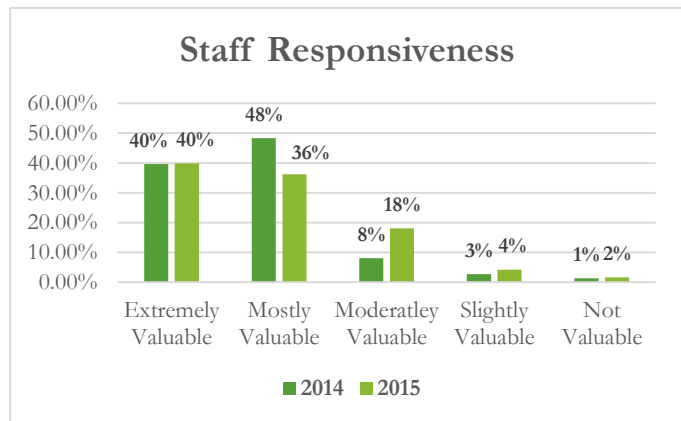
Strengthen and improve internal relationships with our members as measured by a reduction of distracting conflict and increased interest based problem solving resulting in improved outcomes.

The Washington Fire Chiefs foremost goal is to meet our members' needs. In each situation the WFC looks for root causes and interest based solutions that strengthen our connection with Washington fire agencies and cause no unintended negative consequences for the organization.

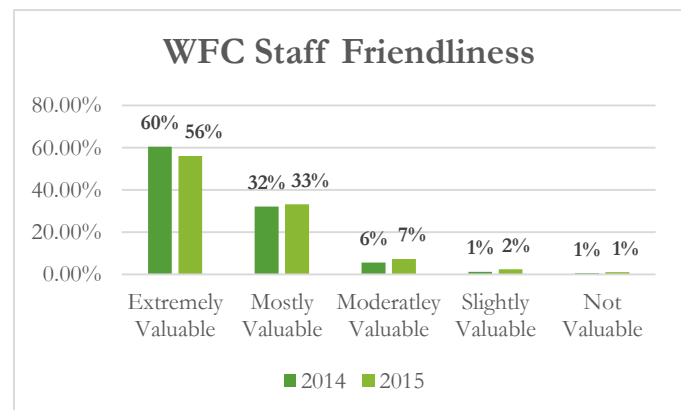
Frequently, members ask for assistance in resolving an issue that is a symptom of a larger problem, or the proposed solution does not meet the interests of all involved. We facilitate this by working through a simple problem solving model that serves the customer and maintains strong, productive & healthy relationships. Staff may not be able to help implement a specific solution suggested by the member, but the majority of the time is able to develop several other creative solutions that meet their needs. WFC staff often refer members to subject matter experts, Bugle member services, or local contacts, to assist fire department members in finding a workable local solution.

Staff proactively brainstorms ideas about new programs and processes to resolve potential conflicts before they happen. They look for existing systems and programs that can be leveraged to implement those programs quickly and efficiently. For example, this year staff worked to redesign the WFC website and integrate with the existing member management system. This resulted in far fewer calls from members seeking information, or needing login credentials and made WFC benefits and membership value more accessible.

The 2015 customer satisfaction survey showed a slight decline in staff responsiveness from the previous year. This is likely due to the large changes in staffing that were implemented in 2015 as well as a much larger sample of membership responding. In 2015 77% of the members who responded said that the WFC staff responsiveness was extremely valuable or mostly valuable opposed to 88% in 2014.



Compared to the previous year, nearly 55% more responses were received through the 2015 survey. This certainly improves survey validation and may indicate a greater interest in the WFC by its members. In 2014, 184 responses were received opposed to 286 this year. In 2015, WFC staff friendliness remained relatively flat at 90% who ranked staff friendliness as extremely valuable or mostly valuable, opposed to 92% in the



previous year. For the first time there were four comments given in answer to “What is the one program or service that you believe is most valuable?” noting staff as their most valuable program, and six comments in the general comments section question that indicate appreciation for the WFC staff.

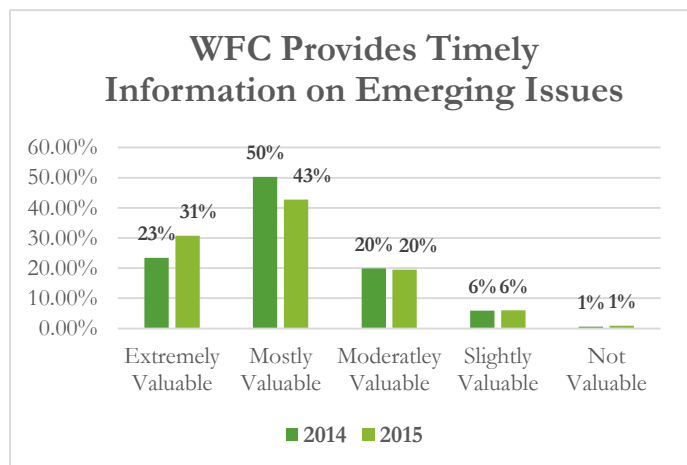
Reviewing the survey data in depth showed that there was a 162% increase in responses from those who had been members less than five years. Those members overall, rated the WFC programs an average of 7% lower than those in other categories with the greatest discrepancy being “WFC Problem Solving Assistance”. With those involved with the WFC less than 5 years ranking it 20% less valuable than those that have been with the WFC more than 5 years.

This points to an opportunity to improve value for newer members by providing more relevant programs and resources for these members and by providing information and education regarding current programs we offer. WFC staff plans to record a “New Member Webinar” for 2016 and provide that recording year round to new members to help them discover the services and programs we have to offer. It is believed that this new webinar program, increased interaction with Board regional representatives and new member kits will provide more avenues for the WFC new members to become better engaged with the WFC and for the WFC to adapt to their needs.

This year the WFC successfully transitioned two support staff positions. Despite all of the challenges of training new staff and modifying existing staff responsibilities, the WFC was able to maintain or improve customer confidence as determined through feedback and survey results.

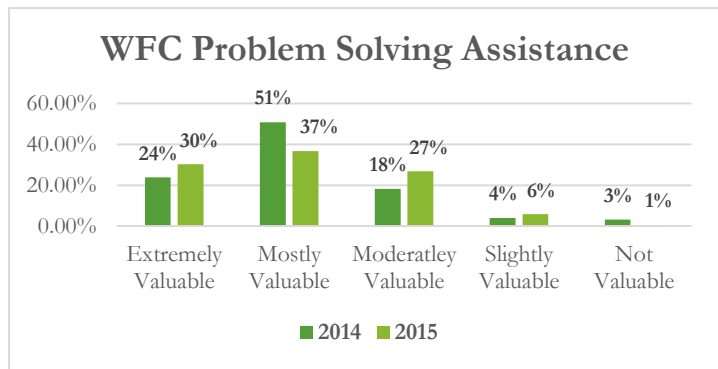
It is always a challenge to find staff that are the right fit for the available positions, as well as individuals who fit the overall dynamics of the office. The team goal here is to communicate, coordinate and cooperate with each other in the demanding WFC office environment.

WFC staff provided information on emerging issues and proactively responded to member concerns through networking at the local, state and federal level. Staff remained vigilant and alert for issues that may impact local fire agencies. This activity allowed us to maintain our positive rating as demonstrated by the rating “provides timely information on emerging issues” at 73%. An example of this was a letter regarding concerns on the Department of Labor & Industries rate increases that the WFC shared with the membership in

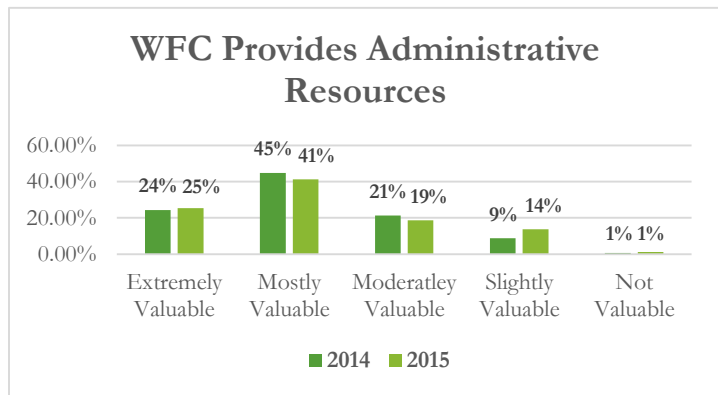


November, encouraging our members to also express their concerns. This action and information was vital to our members who were facing huge rate increases. Due to this action a workgroup was created to find a way to mitigate any future increases. That member communication was read by over 600 members which indicates timely and valuable information. Several member Fire Chiefs took time to send us e-mails expressing their support and appreciation for tackling this issue.

There was a decrease of 6% in the value of our problem solving assistance. The WFC regularly receives calls from members asking for assistance with a wide variety of issues, which will be addressed more specifically in goal 9. An increase in WFC proactivity may be responsible for a slight decrease in the number of calls requesting assistance.



The value of our administrative resources for 2015 stayed flat at 67%, compared to 69% in 2014. The WFC continues to develop and refers targeted resources for its members' use. These resources may be training related, such as the Safety Calendar developed through the 2014 SHIP grant, or recruitment materials such as the "Veteran's Guide to Becoming a Firefighter" developed late in 2015.



Goal 2

Build on existing legislative relationships to maximize influence in the legislative process as measured by our effectiveness on a collective fire service agenda.

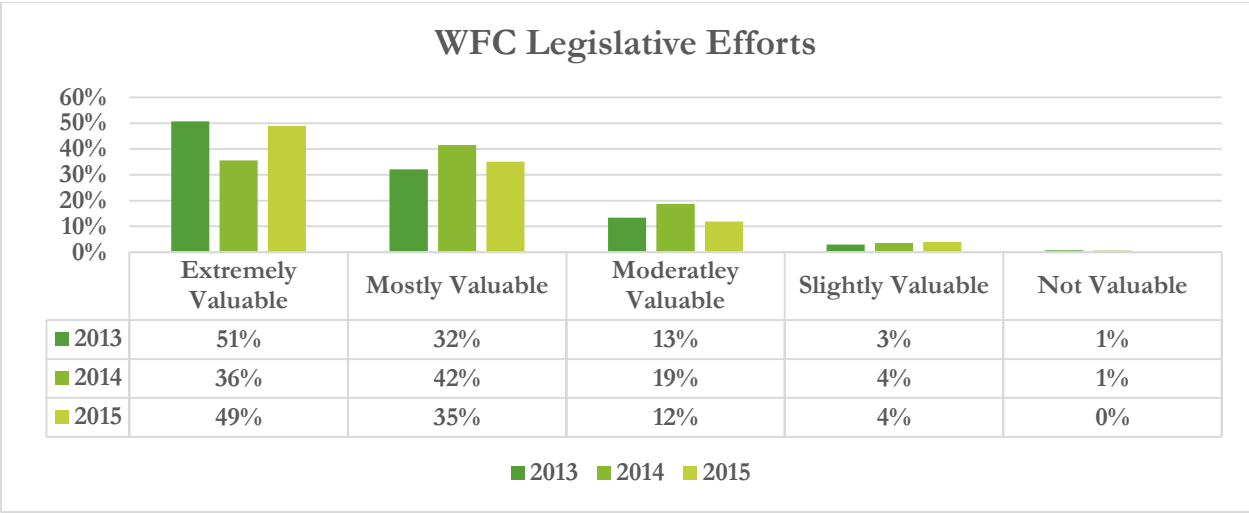


The WFC's focus is to build relationships with all fire service groups, state agencies and elected officials to ensure that the needs of the overall fire service are adequately represented in the legislature. The WFC has worked closely with the Washington State Fire Commissioners Association, Washington State Fire Fighters Association, Washington State Council of Fire Fighters, State Fire Marshal's Office, Washington State Association of Fire Marshals, Department of Natural Resources, State Military Department, State Emergency Management Association, Association of Washington Cities, Association of Washington Counties, Washington Ambulance Association, Department of Ecology and many others. In reaching out to all probable stakeholders, we ensure that our efforts are well supported and that there are no unintended negative consequences for

the fire service or our other industry partners. In the next year, the WFC will continue to build upon these important efforts which will ensure our continued success.

Some of our successes in 2015 were:

- **Passage of HB 2007**
Working closely with the Washington State Council of Firefighters to implement the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) Program, which will potentially bring millions of dollars back to Washington State
- **Passage of HB 1389**
Working closely with the Washington Fire Commissioners Association and others to return funding authorization of fire mobilization to its original, "all hazard," intent to allow for use in non-fire instances such as the tragic slide in Oso
- **Passage of HB 1449**
Working closely with a number of partners, including state EMD, the State Emergency Management Association, the Department of Ecology, and others, to implement wide-spread reform and reporting requirements in the area of oil transportation safety
- **Passage of HB 1222**
Working closely with our city fire agencies and our Fire Mechanics Section to update state law regarding fire apparatus length and weight restrictions
- **Passage of HB 1313**
To provide fire districts and RFA's the ability to enact biennial rather than annual budgets

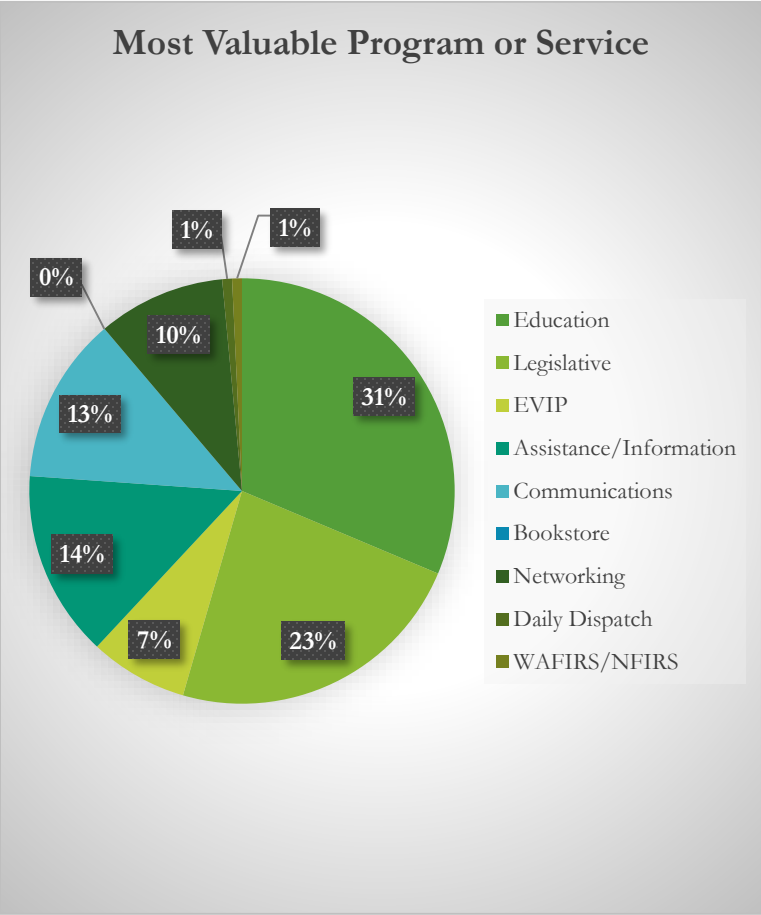


The membership survey indicated our legislative effort as the second most valuable program and extremely or mostly valuable at 84% which is an increase of 7% from the previous year. There was a 13% increase in those that felt the WFC legislative efforts were extremely valuable. Of those surveyed in 2015, 23% saw the WFC legislative efforts as the single most valuable service the association provides.

Approximately 1500 WFC staff hours are spent each year to provide this service on behalf of our members. This effort is headed by our lead legislative lobbyist Dylan Doty. In addition, our WFC legislative chair Dr. Allen Church, Fire Chief of South King Fire and Rescue leads our legislative committee that meets regularly to coordinate our efforts. Our Executive Director Wayne Senter is a lobbyist and along with Kathleen Harmon serves as primary staff to our legislative support efforts.

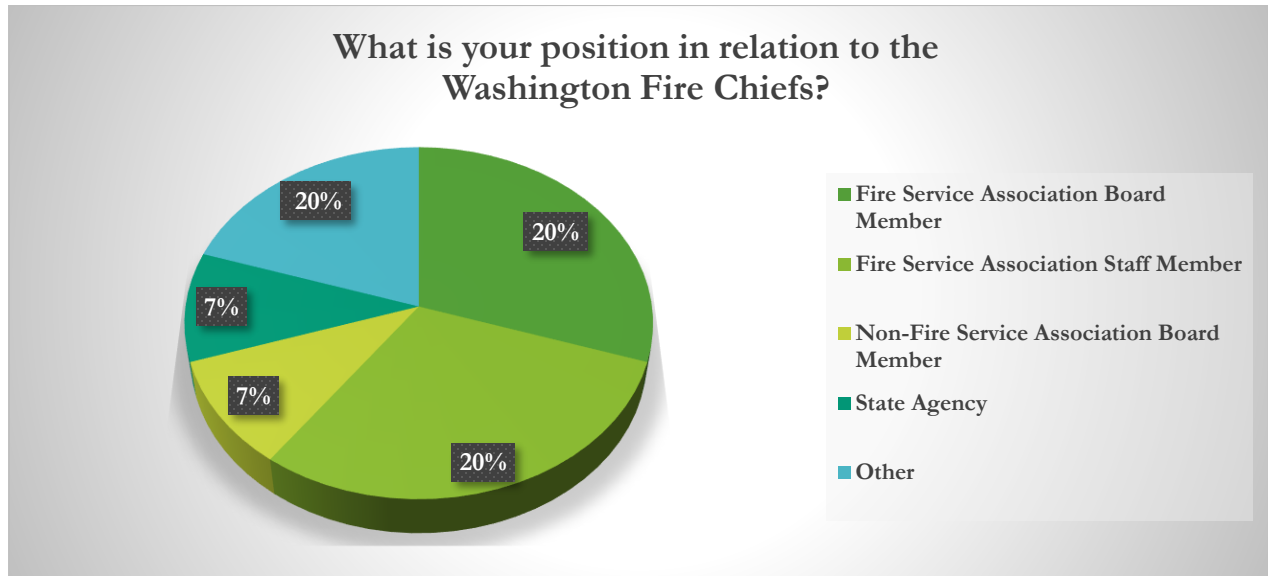
Our top five legislative issues for 2015 were:

- Raise the E.M.S. levy cap to \$.75 /\$1000 of A.V.
- Funding of all-risk mobilization
- Public record request compliance funding
- Volunteer firefighter incentives
- Allowing a city to form RFA



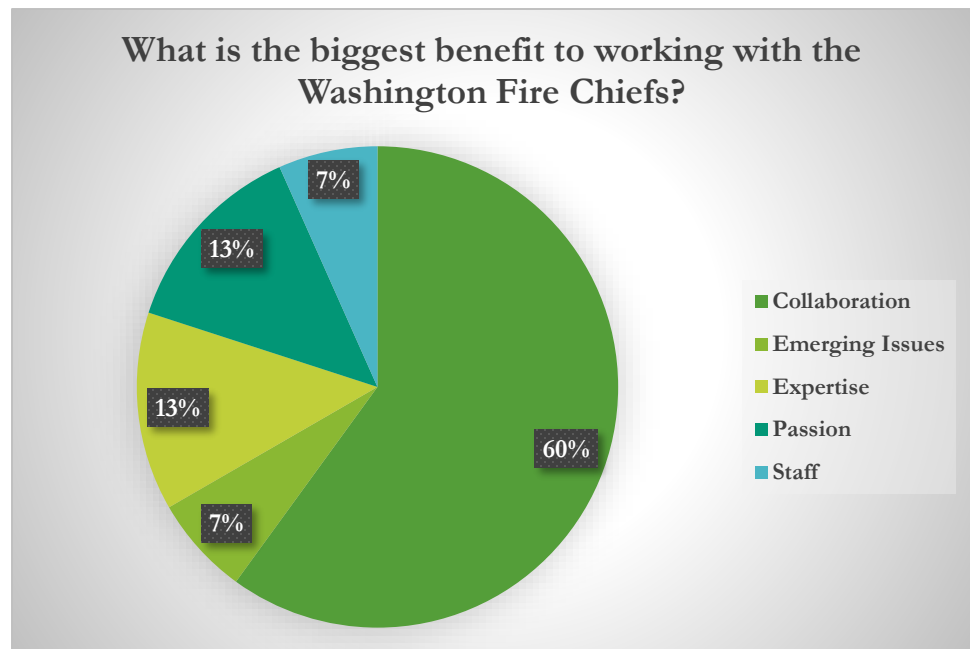
Goal 3

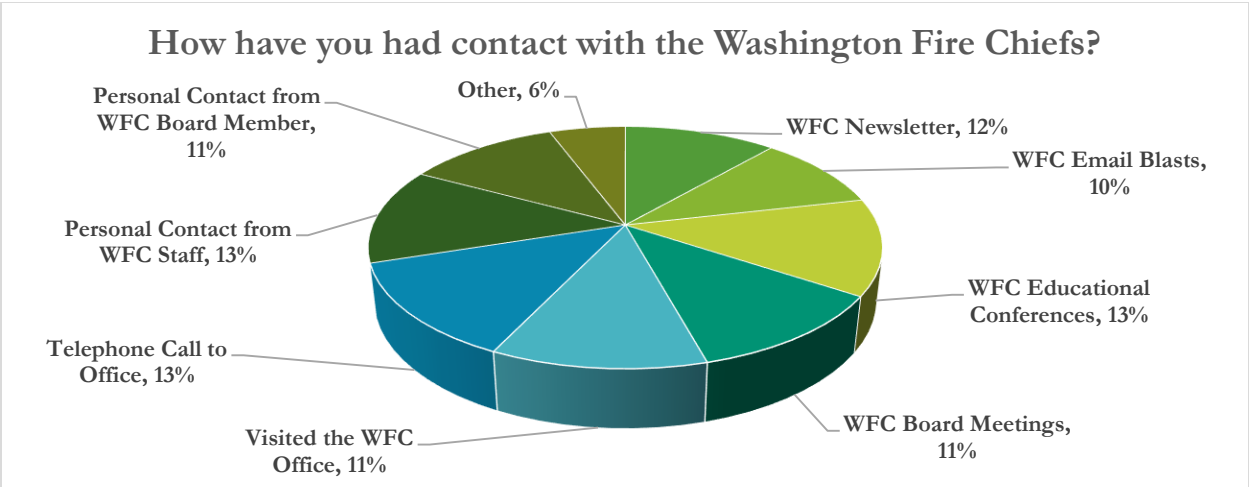
Strengthen and improve external fire partnership relationships, especially the WFCA, WSFFA, WSCFF, DNR, Military Department-EMD and WSP as measured by feedback from Board Members and Staff from those organizations.



The WFC Staff and leadership continues to build and improve our relationships with external organizations. A relationship survey aimed at soliciting feedback went to multiple contacts within our key external organizations. This was the second year that the survey was offered and 15 agencies responded, which was 4 more than in 2014.

Those that responded noted the biggest benefit to working with the WFC as things like collaboration and expertise. Overall, when asked to rate their relationship with the WFC, 100% expressed a favorable relationship with the majority (46%) expressing that their relationship with the WFC was excellent.





In the survey, it was asked what the WFC could do better to further improve our relationships in the future. Many comments asked the organization to continue its efforts to communicate, reach out and share timely information.

The WFC continues its effort to communicate with key external partners. The WFC meets regularly with the State Fire Marshal, WFCA and state agencies such as LNI, EMD, DNR, MD, and more. In addition, the WFC participated in the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association, CPSE conference and other out of state events, creating opportunities for communication and partnerships not previously available.

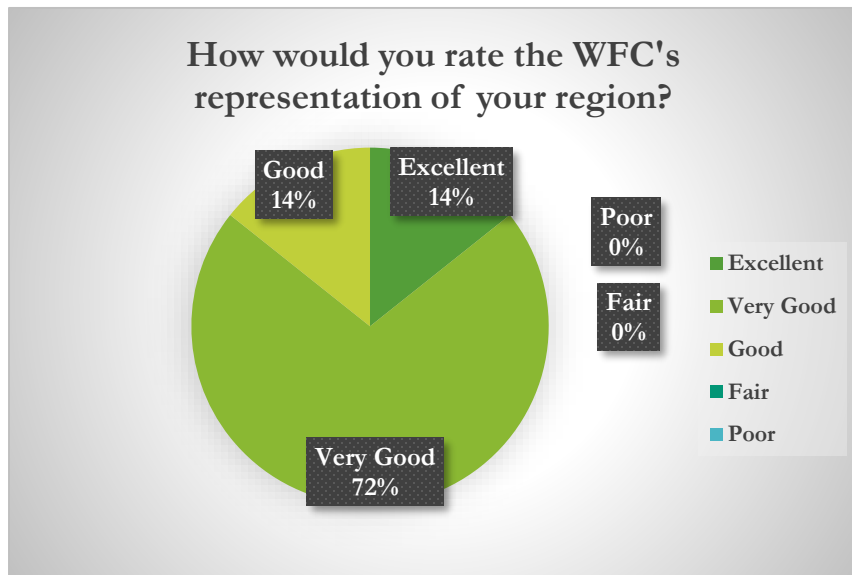
The WFC’s partnership with JATC has created a new innovative opportunity to link the veteran’s programs with the JATC program to further their efforts to employ returning veterans. Working with the Washington Fire Commissioners Association the WFC was able to partner in promoting a volunteer health insurance program geared towards small volunteer organizations.

The WFC’s streamlined communication process allows these external organizations to participate in the WFC board meetings, giving them a chance to report on a related activity in their organization. If they are unable to attend, we encourage them to send a short written report for inclusion in the Board agenda packet or to call in and make a verbal report.

Goal 4

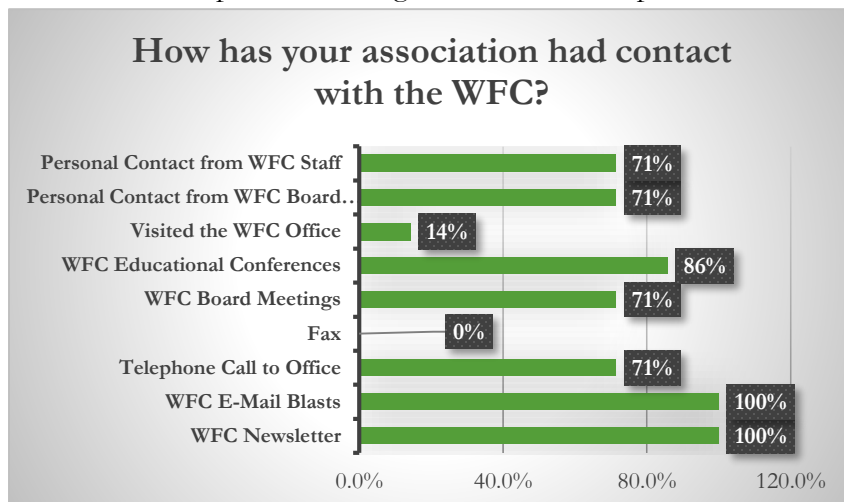
Increase proactive communication and contact with members on critical issues as measured by feedback from the county chief organizations.

In 2015 the WFC continued to progress on the three-year goal for the WFC Executive Director to visit all county fire chief's associations in the state. During the year, the Executive Director visited 18 county fire chief association meetings, including Benton, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Franklin, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, & Whatcom counties. As of the end of 2015, he has visited 26 of our 39 county fire chief associations. The purpose of these visits is to check-in with our local fire chiefs and leaders to share what the WFC is doing and to hear what issues the local fire chiefs are dealing with seeking ways the WFC might be able to assist.



The WFC held the first virtual County Presidents Meeting in 2015. Fourteen County Fire Chief Association representatives joined us, representing ten counties. Using the webinar platform, participants were able to provide their input on legislative issues and share innovative programs from their region. Overall feedback from attendees of this event were very positive.

When asked to rate the WFC's representation of their region, the response was favorable with 85% of those who responded sharing that the WFC's representation was either Excellent or Very Good.



As timely and relevant communication between the WFC and our county fire chief's associations improves, we expect to see a corresponding increase in participation. The WFC hopes to see an improvement in value and communication as seen through the eyes of the county fire chief's associations.

Goal 5

Strengthen support for staff and continue to meet the needs of our customers as measured by staff/customer feedback during six month and annual reviews.

The WFC staff made this goal a priority for 2015. A staff reorganization took place at the end of 2014, which opened the door to reinvent the positions in a way that would better serve the WFC membership.

In 2015 the Financial Support position focused on revenue and expenditures for the organization and a Membership Support position added a focus on membership updates, recruitment and retention.

With new staff came fresh ideas and in October of 2015 a new integrated member management system was launched. The member management database was integrated with a new and improved website. This change streamlined login credentials for WFC members, who had previously needed to remember two separate logins. This integration also automatically tracked new member accounts, password resets and changes in membership which reduced staff maintenance hours.

In November of 2015 staff integrated the member management system with the QuickBooks software which tracks the organization's financial transactions. This eliminated duplication previously required by staff to keep two systems up to date, and increased accuracy of the financial and membership records.

Staff worked to build internal relationships through various social events including staff potlucks, minor office improvement projects, and meetings. A staff retreat was held at the Little Creek Casino, where staff reviewed the strategic plan, discussed strategic goals, practiced some teambuilding and celebrated our successes with a holiday lunch.

Building on the theme of regular and relevant communications such as the Friday Updates sent by the Executive Director, a Monday "Snapshot" email from the Office Manager conveys staff specific information necessary for the week, as well as, keeping all staff informed about the many projects being coordinated in the office.

All of the WFC staff are very pleased with the support they receive and the direction the WFC is heading.



Goal 6

Increase involvement and participation of our members in the strategic plan development and the execution of that collaborative document as measured by post development surveys.



Due to the strategic planning session only occurring every five years, we did not conduct a planning session in 2015. However, the plan that was developed in 2014, was finalized by the WFC board and distributed to the membership.

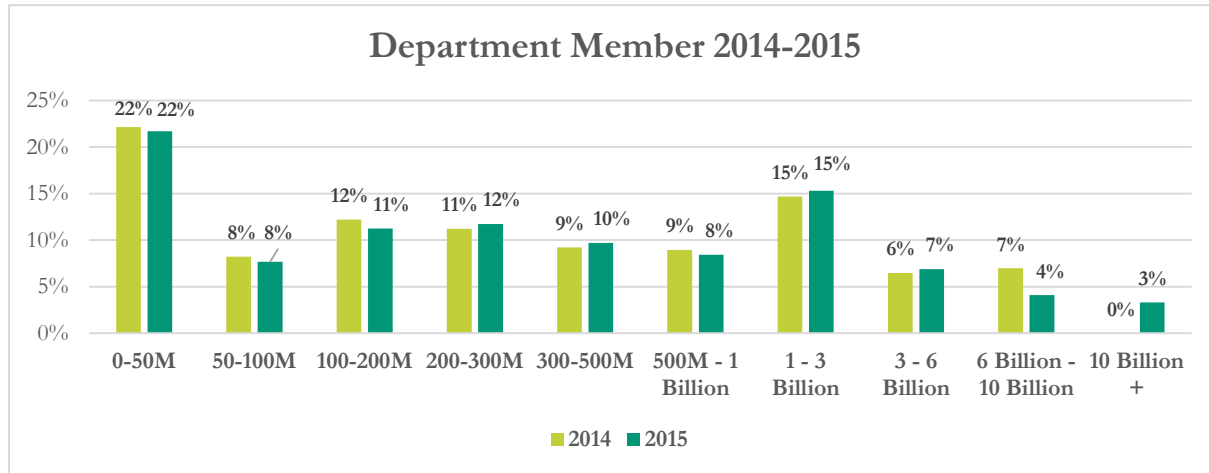
Staff continues to take an active role in keeping the direction the members set at the forefront of day to day activities, through monthly “Objectives” which tie in to the strategic goals.

Because strategic goals, which come from the five year strategic plan, are directly related to the task level objectives, it ensures coordination and alignment with what our members view as priorities and value.

Washington Fire Chiefs Strategic Planning Participants				
<i>Kris Alberti</i>	<i>Bud Backer</i>	<i>Grant Baynes</i>	<i>Russ Bong</i>	<i>Lisa Brengan</i>
<i>Steve Brooks</i>	<i>Mike Bucy</i>	<i>Jeremy Burns</i>	<i>Bryan Collins</i>	<i>Mark Correira</i>
<i>Elliot Courage</i>	<i>Lysandra Davis</i>	<i>Scott Dorman</i>	<i>Dylan Doty</i>	<i>Chuck Duffy</i>
<i>Larry Elliott</i>	<i>Pat Ellis</i>	<i>Robert Ferrell</i>	<i>Don Fortier</i>	<i>Murray Gordon</i>
<i>Jeff Griffin</i>	<i>Ed Grubbs</i>	<i>Kathleen Harmon</i>	<i>Elizabeth Harris</i>	<i>Shane Heston</i>
<i>Jeff Jensen</i>	<i>Jim Kambeitz</i>	<i>Ted Krysinski</i>	<i>Hallie McCurdy</i>	<i>Jennifer McGinnis</i>
<i>Brian McMahan</i>	<i>T.J. Nedrow</i>	<i>Chris Panush</i>	<i>Erica Reich</i>	<i>Michael Roesch</i>
<i>Trip Rumberger</i>	<i>Ryan Scharnhorst</i>	<i>Karmen Schuemann</i>	<i>John Sinclair</i>	<i>Doug Stoltz</i>
<i>Melanie Taylor</i>	<i>Bill Terhune</i>	<i>Brian VanCamp</i>	<i>Ted Vander Houwen</i>	<i>Jim Walkowski</i>
<i>John Westfall</i>		<i>Keith Wright</i>		<i>Steve Wright</i>

Goal 7

Increase membership value in the eyes of current and potential members as measured by recruitment and retention data.

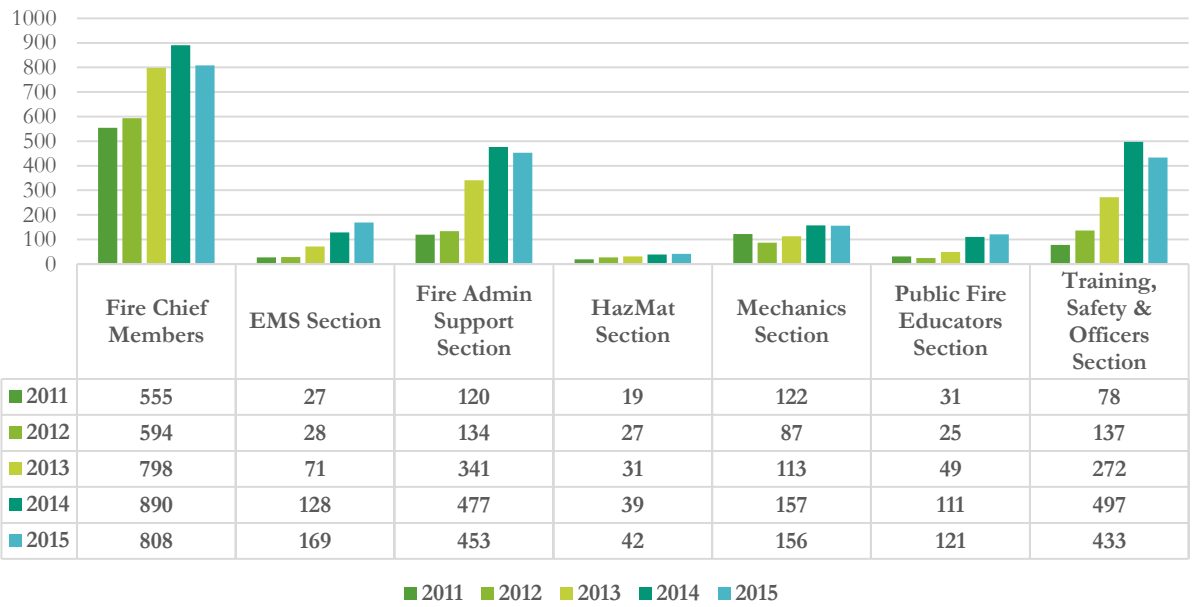


The membership of the Washington Fire Chiefs is our very reason for existence. As such, recruitment and retention of members is a primary focus. In 2012 WFC members voted to change the membership structure to be more inclusive and simple to understand. The dues tiers were adjusted and several new tiers were created to improve equity. When the changes were voted into effect, to ensure the membership structure grew with time, a 10th tier was scheduled to automatically go into effect in 2015. As shown in the “Department Member 2014-2015” chart above, membership overall stayed very static, with the smallest tiers seeing some slight reduction, likely due to mergers and consolidations and the mid-sized department membership tiers seeing some growth. The WFC goal remains to have 100% of all agencies as members, a level not met to date. In 2015 we had a total of 386 member agencies of 475 possible fire agencies statewide.

To maintain a high level of membership, excellent outreach, follow up and value must be attained. To this end, the WFC has implemented a system of follow up which involves an initial written notice, personal contact from staff and contact from board members as needed. In 2015 a Member Kit was developed and sent to each member department, including the 2015 Guide to Membership, Membership Certificate, Member Cards, Fire Service Directory and more. Through feedback given to the office and board, these member kits were viewed as a welcome surprise, and added value.



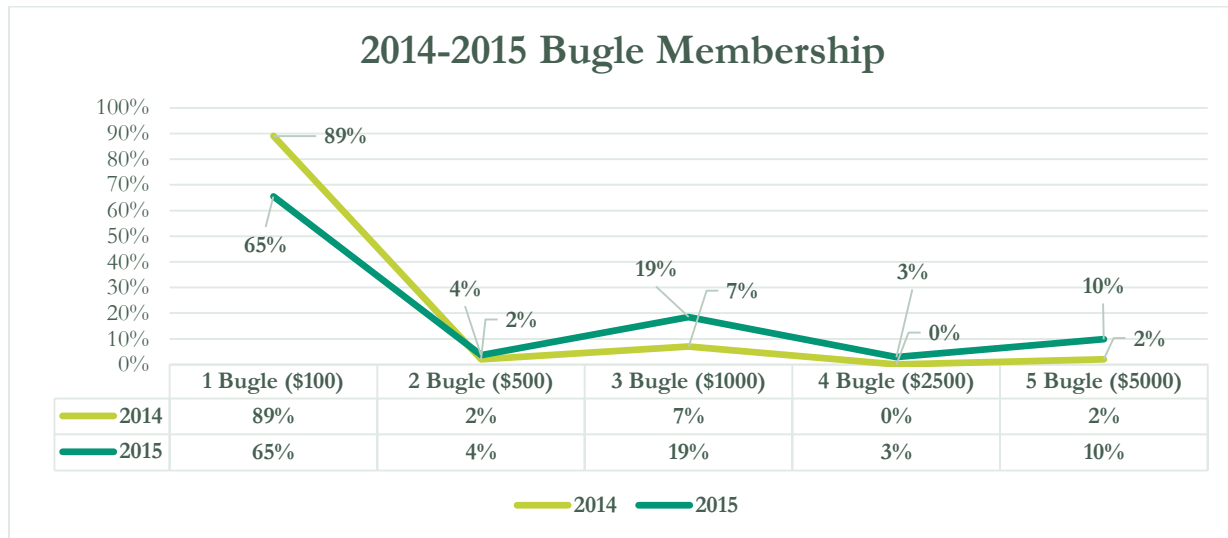
2011-2015 Individual Members



In 2015 there was a slight dip in overall individual memberships due to an effort on the part of WFC staff to ensure the membership records were current and correct. By taking an active role in asking for updates, asking clarifying questions regarding those updates, as well as making the membership system easier for members to update themselves, there is a higher level of accuracy in the WFC membership records, which leads to greater and more consistent value for the WFC membership. As the WFC continues this proactive effort on membership, it can be expected that membership will increase.

Goal 8

Increase revenues through partnerships with vendors, fire service partners and the Fire Rescue Wellness Corporation as measured against historic annual revenues.



The WFC Associate membership program was revised in 2012. This program was renamed at that time to be the WFC Bugle Membership program. This is an area where the most opportunity for membership exists since there are a finite amount of fire agencies in the state but there are many more businesses throughout the US that could potentially benefit from a Bugle membership with the WFC.

In 2015 the membership renewal forms were redesigned to emphasize renewal at the previous level or an opportunity to upgrade a membership with the corresponding benefit advantages. A membership kit was sent to those members who renewed their membership with the benefits of their membership tier.

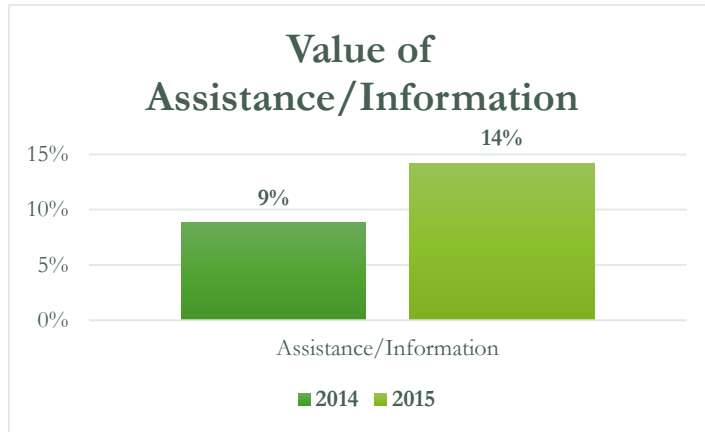
The membership services support staff position has taken an active role in seeking out and following up with business that are potential members. Personal contact is key in this area of focus and building those relationships with businesses can take time.

As seen by the retention data, there was an overall reduction in the number of 1 Bugle members, however there was a 24% increase in the level of participation in the higher bugle categories. This increased participation translated into \$33,000 of new revenue to the association.



Goal 9

Continue to be the premier resource fire chiefs use when they are facing a crisis within their agency or region as measured by documenting the contacts and outcomes.



One of the key benefits the WFC provides is problem solving expertise for Fire Chiefs and Fire Chief Associations. In 2015 there was a 5% increase in how valuable the WFC members perceive this program.

The WFC receives approximately 35 calls per month through the office phone, directly to the Executive Director and through email seeking assistance.

Many times the calls for assistance we receive may speak of a greater state wide issue. For example, in 2015, the WFC became aware of the bakken oil by rail risks. This issue prompted a letter to the four major railroad companies that transport oil by rail in our state. This issue was a major topic of discussion during the 2015 legislative session, and at the federal level. It also opened the door for greater communication with states who shared the WFC's interest.

The WFC Board members and staff proactively contact agencies and Chiefs to offer assistance when a community or agency is facing a crisis or problem. The WFC plans to improve problem solving through networking with the "Chiefs Discussion Forum". This forum allows chiefs to post questions and receive responses and share documents. It also allows for the responses to these questions to be found in a central location, so other members facing similar circumstances may benefit from the answers catalogued there.