National Survey - Implementation Status of WRC Agreement

A snapshot of progress to date – May 2024

Survey Overview:

During the month of May 2024, Retained Firefighters participated in this survey on a voluntary basis. The survey is a snapshot of our collective understanding of the WRC agreement's implementation status at this point in time.

Data Collection and Collation:

Conducted independently and voluntarily by Retained Firefighters in their personal capacity, this survey reflects a genuine effort to share information. The data was collected diligently between 5th of May 2024 to the 24th of May 2024.

How Your Insights Underpin Progress

Purpose of the Survey:

The primary goal is to foster a better understanding of both successes and challenges in the implementation process nationally. By sharing these insights, we aspire to create a roadmap for implementation committees, helping them navigate and overcome obstacles.

Hope for the Future:

The findings are not just data; they are a tool for progress. Our collective hope is that these insights will be instrumental in steering implementation committees nationwide, enabling them to deliver the WRC agreement comprehensively across all 201 retained stations.

Survey Response

This survey was distributed to 201 Retained Fire Stations in the Republic of Ireland.

176 Retained Fire Stations responded.

13 Retained Fire Stations did not respond.

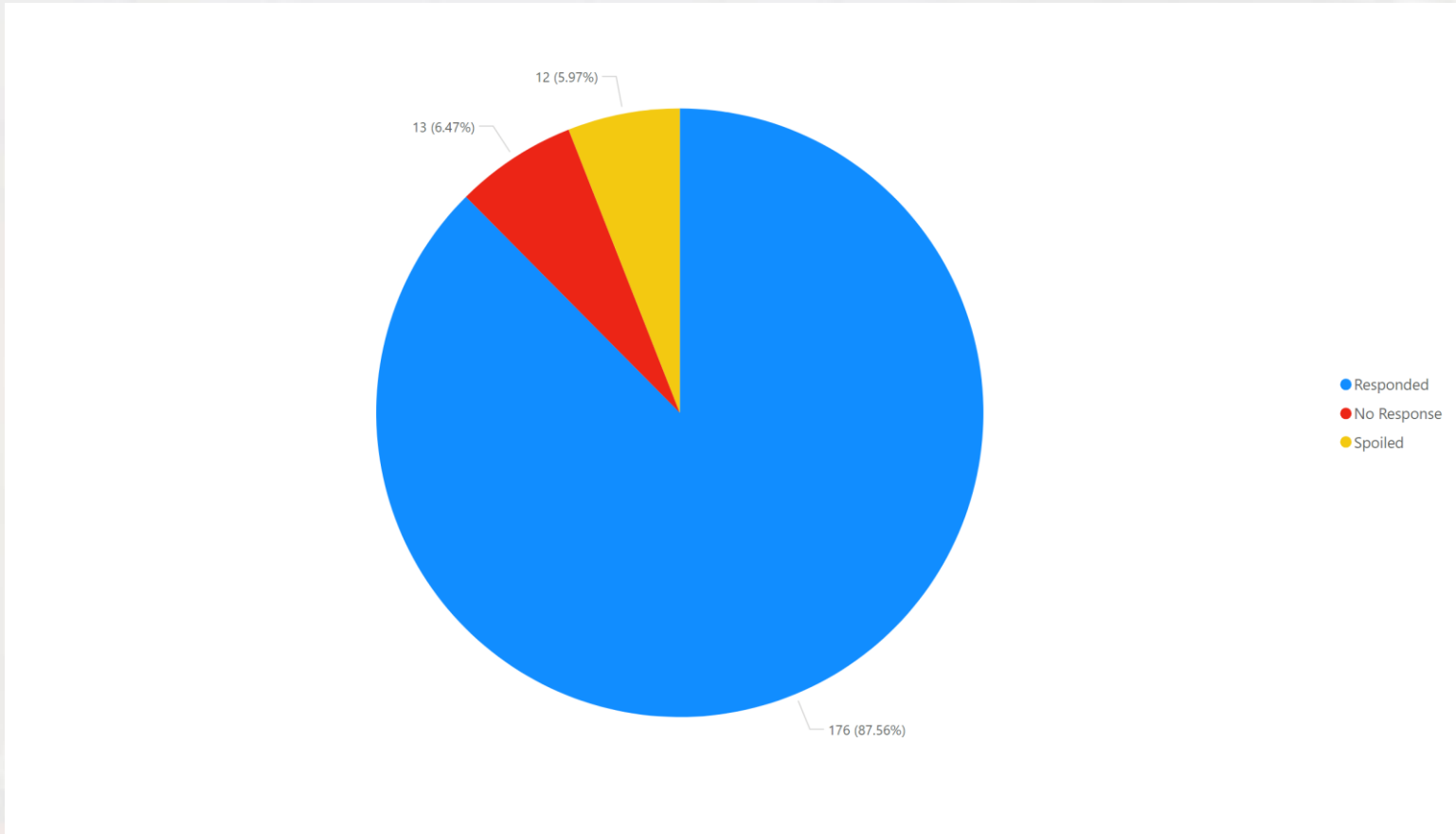
12 Retained Fire Stations survey was spoiled.

The survey was completed by 87.56% of Stations nationally.

The survey was managed through Microsoft Forms. This allowed the survey be conducted online.

All completed surveys are anonymous.

Note: Survey questions in slide 13 for reference.



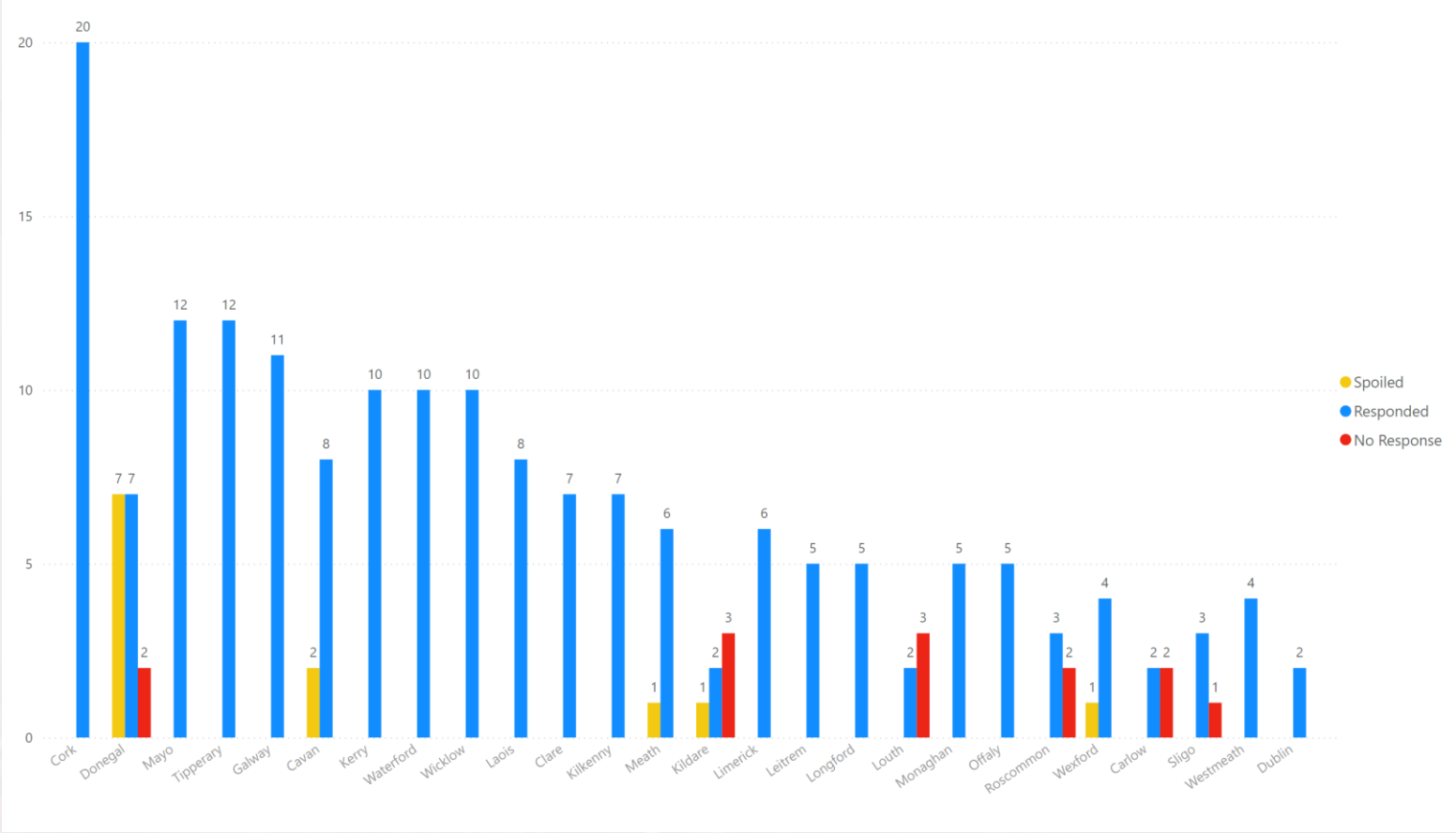
Survey Response by County

This slide presents a bar chart that illustrates the number of fire stations per fire authority and their respective response statuses to the survey conducted. The response statuses are categorized into three groups: Responded, No Response, and Spoiled Responses. This data provides insights into the engagement level of fire stations across different fire authorities.

The high response rate overall provides a substantial sample size, making the survey results reliable and reflective of the national scenario.

Authorities with higher no responses or spoiled responses might need targeted follow-up or additional support to ensure full participation in future surveys.

The data visualized in this slide is crucial for understanding the level of engagement and participation from fire stations across various authorities. It highlights areas of success and those needing improvement, thereby guiding further actions to enhance the implementation of the WRC agreement across Ireland's fire services.



Survey Response to Payroll

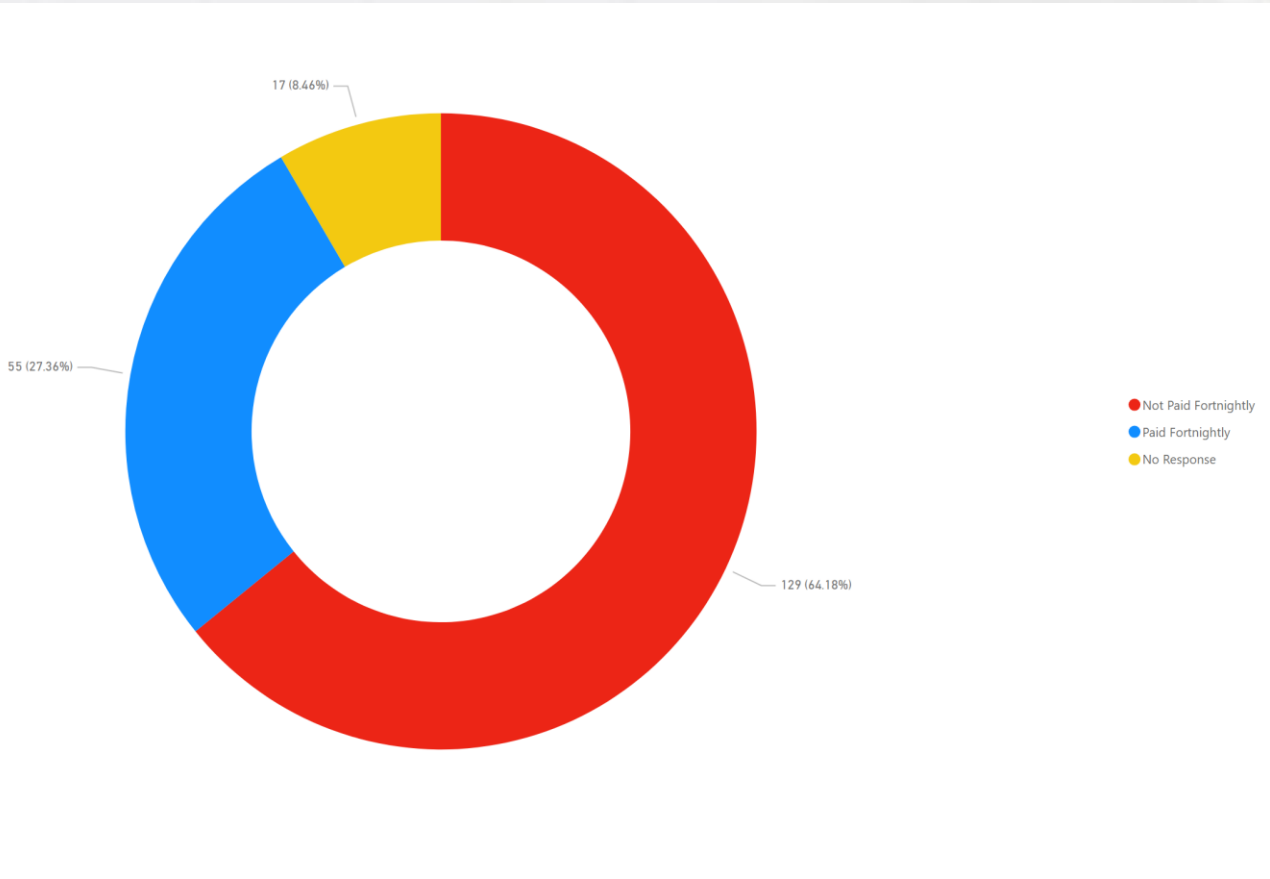
According to the WRC agreement, fire stations are required to transition to a fortnightly payroll system. This change aims to standardize payroll processes and improve financial management within the fire service.

The chart visually represents the current status, with segments indicating stations that have adopted the new payroll system (blue), those that have not (red), and those that did not respond (yellow).

Not Paid Fortnightly (Red): 64% of stations reported that they are not being paid on a fortnightly basis. This significant majority indicates a considerable delay or resistance in the implementation process.

Paid Fortnightly (Blue): 27% of stations have successfully transitioned to the fortnightly payroll system. These stations serve as examples of compliance with the WRC agreement.

Station	County
Carlow Town	Carlow
Mallow	Cork
Chareville	Cork
Fermoy	Cork
Mitcheltown	Cork
Kanturk	Cork
Millstreet	Cork
Cobh	Cork
Youghal	Cork
Midleton	Cork
Kinsale	Cork
Bandon	Cork
Macroom	Cork
Crosshaven	Cork
Carrigaline	Cork
Clonakilty	Cork
Schull	Cork
Skibbereen	Cork
Bantry	Cork
Dunmanway	Cork
Castletownbere	Cork
Falcarragh	Donegal
Killorglin	Kerry
Sneem	Kerry
Killarney	Kerry
Ballybunion	Kerry
Tralee	Kerry
Dingle	Kerry
Listowel	Kerry
Castleisland	Kerry
Cahersiveen	Kerry
Kenmare	Kerry
Monasterevin	Kildare
Dundalk	Louth
Drogheda	Louth
Newport	Tipperary
Nenagh	Tipperary
Cloughjordan	Tipperary
Templemore	Tipperary
Bunclody	Wexford
Gorey	Wexford
Enniscorthy	Wexford
Bray	Wicklow

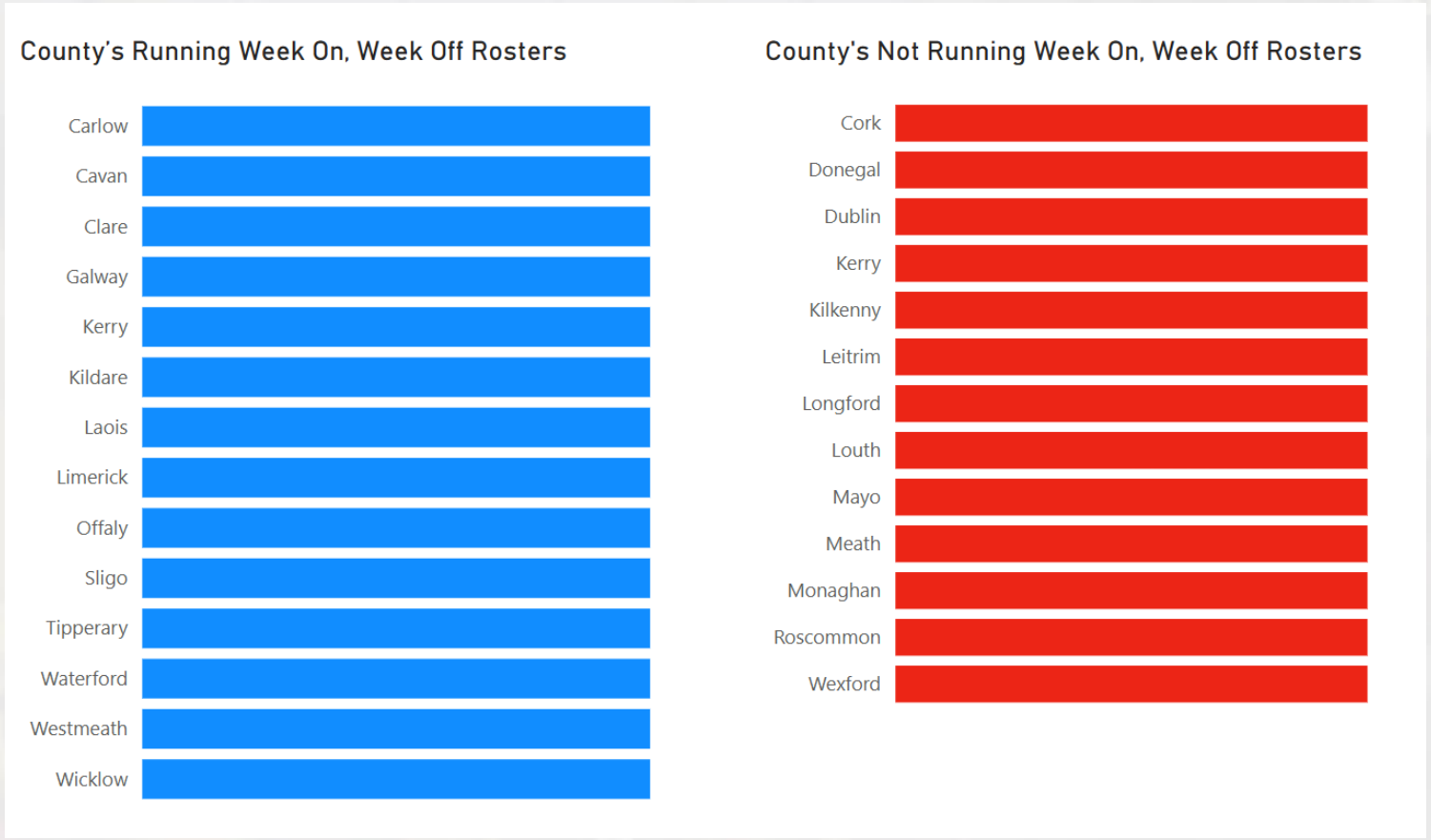


County's working Week On Week Off

A significant transformation within the Fire Service at the national level is the transition to a week-on, week-off roster system. This specific provision, as outlined in the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) agreement, is expected to significantly improve both retention and recruitment within the service.

This slide highlights the Fire Authorities that have implemented the week-on, week-off structure in one or more of their stations.

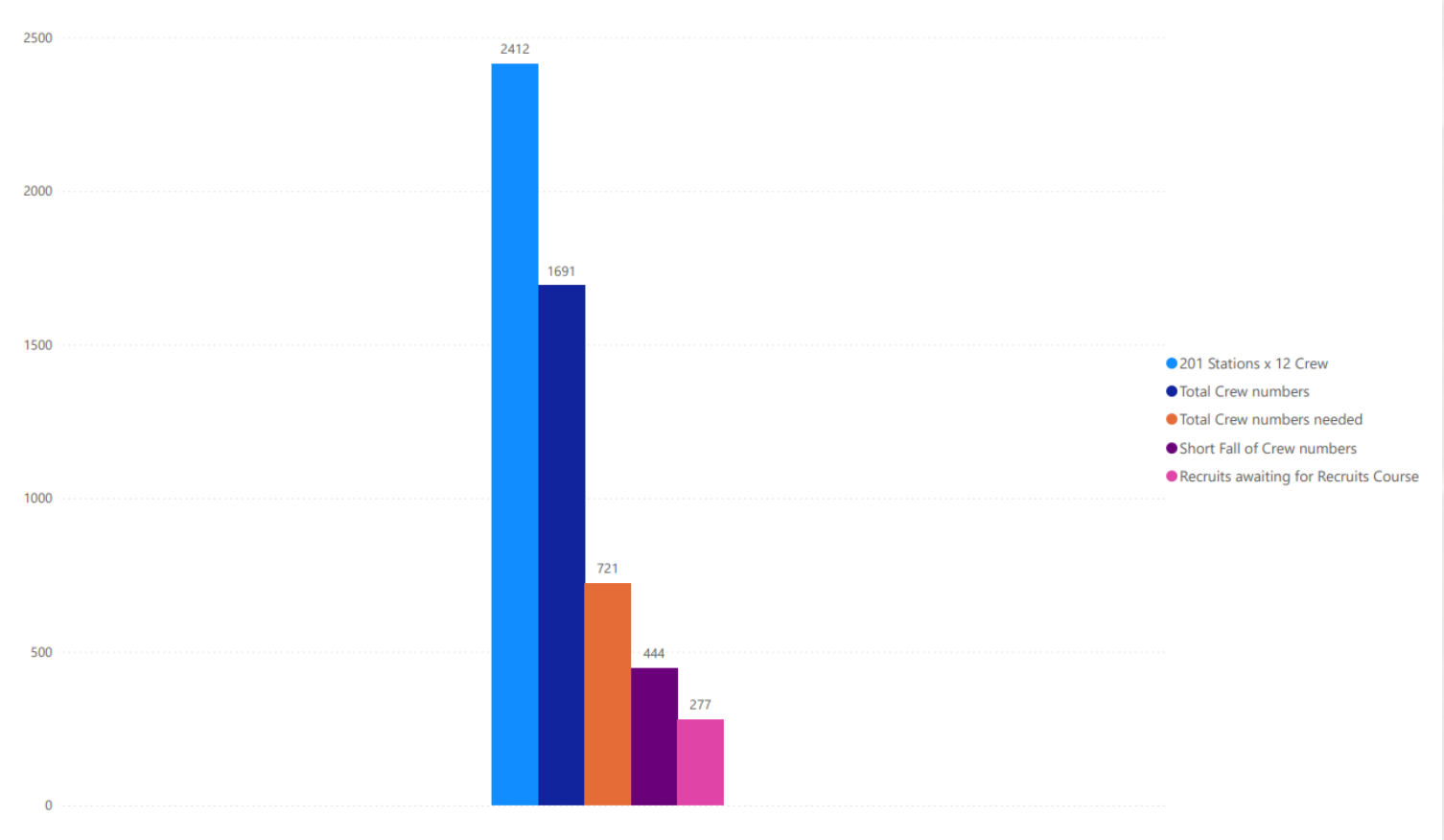
However, many Fire Authorities have not prioritized this transition. By sharing successful strategies across authorities, this crucial part of the agreement could be implemented swiftly and effectively.



County's Recruits

This slide illustrates the significant scale of the task involved in completing the initial firefighting recruit course, highlighting the large number of recruits requiring this fundamental training. Given the magnitude of this initial training requirement, ongoing and possibly rolling recruitment will be necessary to ensure all recruits are adequately trained. Effective planning and resource allocation are crucial to manage this extensive and continuous training process.

Please note that these figures are estimates and obtaining accurate, specific figures would require more comprehensive national data.



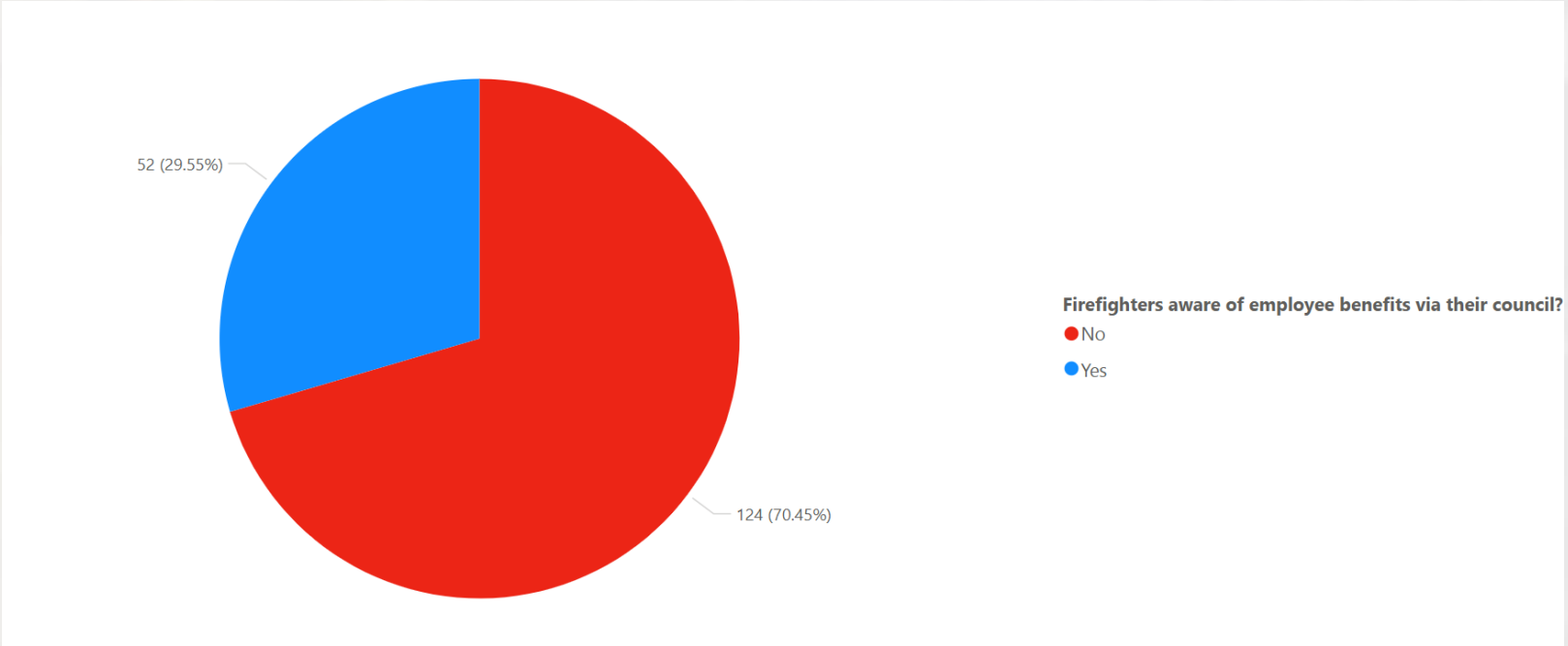
Are you a valued employee of the Council?

This slide presents a pie chart showing the proportion of firefighters who are aware of the employee benefits provided by their council. The data highlights a significant disconnect between firefighters and their councils.

The chart indicates that 70.45% of firefighters (124) are not aware of the employee benefits available to them via their council, while only 29.55% (52) are aware.

This significant lack of awareness underscores the need for councils to engage more directly with firefighters. Ensuring that firefighters feel like integral employees of the council is crucial for improving communication and benefit utilization.

Councils should prioritize initiatives to bridge this gap, such as conducting informational sessions, distributing benefit guides, and establishing clear communication channels.



Tables

The following information highlights other areas that need attention.

Driver Mechanic

There has been a positive increase in DM roles been filled and advertised but at least 60 station say that there's been no advertising regrading this role. This must be addressed.

Recruitment

Rolling recruitment is now essential for most counties, as the national target will not be met in 2024.

Renumeration and back pay

Remuneration and back pay have mostly been completed. This is a positive step toward normalizing relations.

Driver Mechanic (DM Role)	Stations in January	Stations in May
Positions Not Advertised	106	60
Positions Filled	59	67
Positions Advertised	19	49

Recruitment	Stations in January	Stations in May
Campaign Started	84	131
Campaign Completed	54	41
Campaign Not Started	46	4

Renumeration and back pay	Stations in January	Stations in May
Fully paid and up to date	91	140
Partially paid	73	28
Not Paid	20	8

Net Promotor Score (NPS)

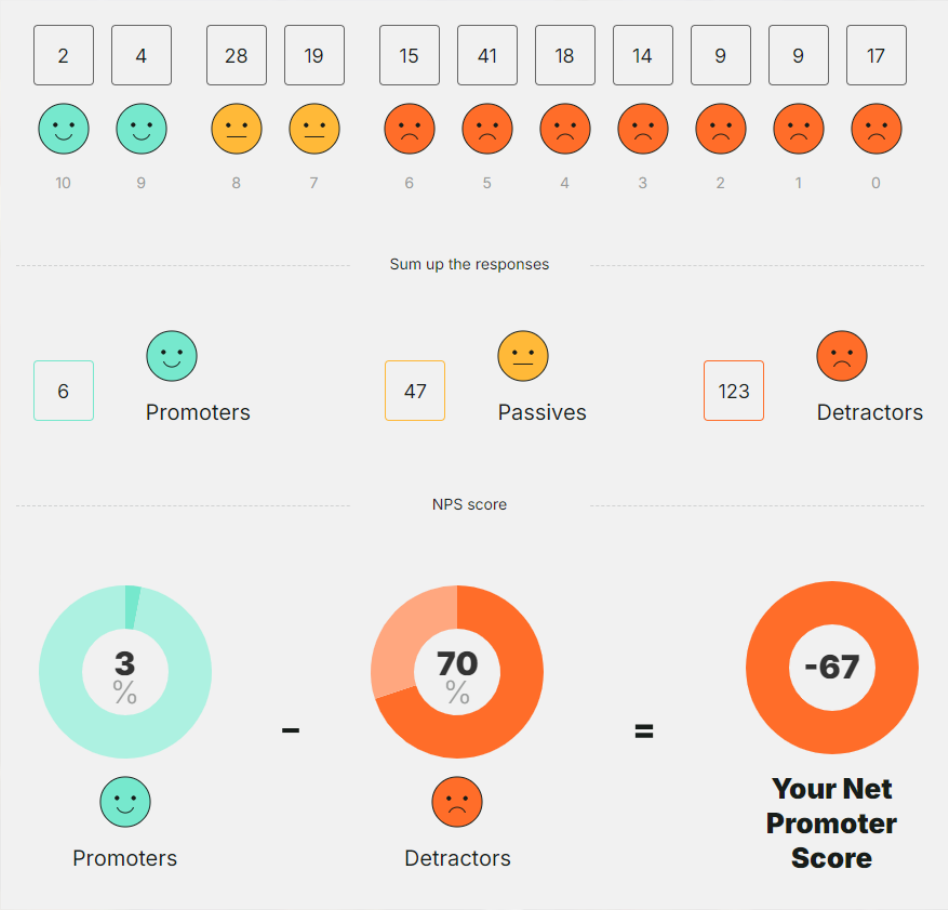
Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a key metric for assessing customer loyalty and satisfaction, indicating a company's growth potential based on customer perceptions and recommendations. The NPS categorizes respondents into:

Promoters (score 9-10): Dedicated supporters who actively endorse our services to others**.**

Passives (score 7-8): Generally satisfied but not enthusiastic; may consider other options.

Detractors (score 0-6): Dissatisfied individuals who may harm the reputation through negative feedback.

In our survey, 176 respondents rated their satisfaction with the implementation of the WRC Agreement, resulting in an NPS of -67, with 3% Promoters, 27% Passives, and 70% Detractors.



Conclusion

- The National Survey conducted in May 2024 highlights significant progress and areas needing improvement in the implementation of the WRC agreement across Ireland's retained fire stations.

- While the high response rate of 87.56% indicates robust engagement, the data reveals substantial challenges in areas such as payroll transition, employee benefit awareness, and the implementation of new rostering systems. These insights are crucial for guiding implementation committees to address these challenges effectively, ensuring comprehensive and timely execution of the WRC agreement across all fire authorities

Disclaimer

This survey and its corresponding report have been undertaken and compiled in a personal capacity by a small group of Retained Firefighters. The information presented herein reflects the views and feedback gathered from Fire Stations across the country regarding the implementation of the WRC agreement. It is important to note that this document is not an official representation of the Retained Fire Service, Senior Management, or Local Fire Authorities.

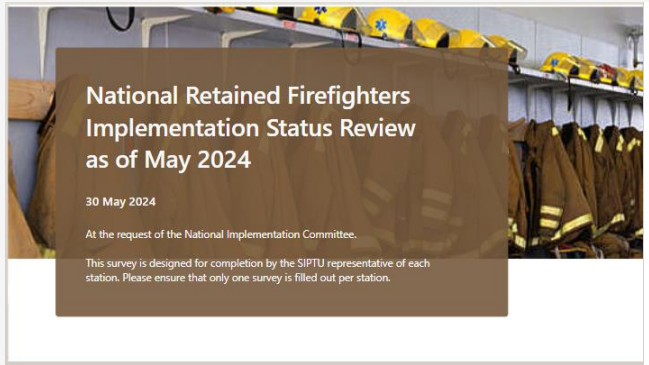
The purpose of this survey was to create a snapshot of the status nationwide, aiming to empower Retained Firefighters to advocate for the agreed-upon changes that are yet to be implemented. The findings are presented in various charts and will be shared with all Retained Firefighters, as well as anyone interested in reviewing the information.

It is acknowledged that the content may not align with the perspectives of Senior Management within the Retained Fire Service and Local Fire Authorities. This report serves as an independent initiative to foster awareness and discussion within the Retained Firefighting community.

Readers are encouraged to interpret the information with the understanding that it does not carry official endorsement. Any concerns or discrepancies with the data should be addressed to the individuals responsible for the survey, rather than being attributed to the official stance of the Retained Fire Service or Local Fire Authorities.

This disclaimer aims to clarify the context and origin of the information presented in the report, emphasizing its unofficial nature and the personal capacity in which it was compiled.

Survey Questions



Section 1

1. Station *

Enter your answer

2. County *

Enter your answer

3. Current Crew numbers *

Select your answer

4. How many annual callouts does your station typically experience? *

Select your answer

5. Recruitment *

Recruitment has been advertised in most counties and is completed in others. Recruitment is the key to many of the recommendations in the WRC agreement.

- Campaign Started
- Campaign not Started
- Campaign Completed

6. How many new Recruits are currently awaiting enrolment in a Recruits course? *

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 or more

7. Are the recently enlisted Recruits set to attend a Recruits course this year? *

There are 12 recruit courses scheduled from January to October 2024.

Select your answer

8. Has your station implemented Week on Week Off *

As stated in the WRC agreement, you are entitled to a week-on, week-off schedule.

Select your answer

9. Has your station adopted another rostered time off format?

Best describe your rostered time off below.

Enter your answer

10. Does your station use an app to manage time off? *

Apps provide valuable assistance in managing time off.

- Yes
- No

11. What is the name of the App to manage time off? *

- iFire
- Whats App
- Spreadsheet
- Combination of Whats App & iFire
- Do not use Apps
- Other

12. Driver Mechanic (DM Role) *

DM roles are available under the WRC agreement.

- Positions Advertised
- Positions not Advertised
- Positions Filled

13. Renumeration and back pay *

Back pay is due to Firefighters from July 2023.

- Fully paid and up to date
- Not Paid
- Partially Paid

14. Payroll *

The WRC agreement requires payroll to move to fortnightly.

- Paid Fortnightly
- Not Paid Fortnightly

15. Are you aware of your employee benefits via your council? *

As an employee of the council we are entitled to employee benefits. It is important to support employees in access these benefits if they are not aware of them.

- Yes
- No

16. How satisfied are you with the implementation of the WRC Agreement at this point? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Not satisfied — Extremely satisfied

References

The following references were researched to validate the information for the survey. This report has been submitted to SPITU on the 07/02/2024.

Authors of the report:

- Mark Atkins – Retained Firefighter
- Brian Murray - Retained Firefighter
- Cathal Callanan – Retained Firefighter

List of the report:

- Mark Atkins (Contributors)
- Brian Murray (Contributors)
- Cathal Callanan (Contributors)
- SIPTU County Reps & Shop Stewarts (Contributors)

Email Correspondence:

- Email from Sligo County Council
- Email from Kerry County Council

Documents:

- Waterford Fire Service - Retained Fire Stations – Working Arrangements document.
- Wicklow County Survey conducted by Firefighters from Wicklow

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