



# EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2004

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*Report of Findings*

*for*

*Tayside  
Fire Brigade*

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**FSCA  
FIRE SERVICES  
CONSULTATION ASSOCIATION**

The FSCA logo is displayed in white text against a background of stylized orange and yellow flames.

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**FSCA:**  
**Employee Survey Report of Findings**  
**for Tayside Fire Brigade**

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## Project Overview

### 1.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

A detailed questionnaire survey of Tayside Brigade employees was carried out between May and June 2004. 750 questionnaires were distributed and 300 were returned - representing a 40% response rate.

The survey investigated general job satisfaction; views on teamwork, health and safety, the performance of management and fellow employees; and the service provided to the public by the Brigade.

### 1.2 ANALYSIS PROFILE

#### Gender

The breakdown of the data indicates that there were considerably more male respondents than female. In total 89% of respondents were male and 11% were female (see Figure 1A below).

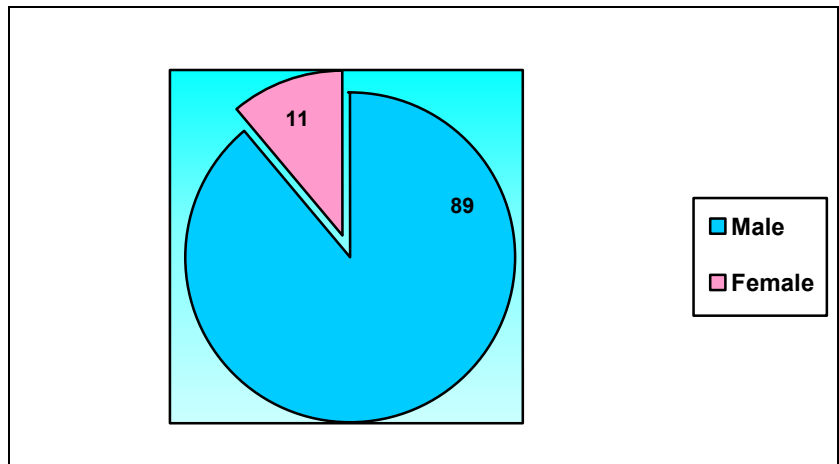
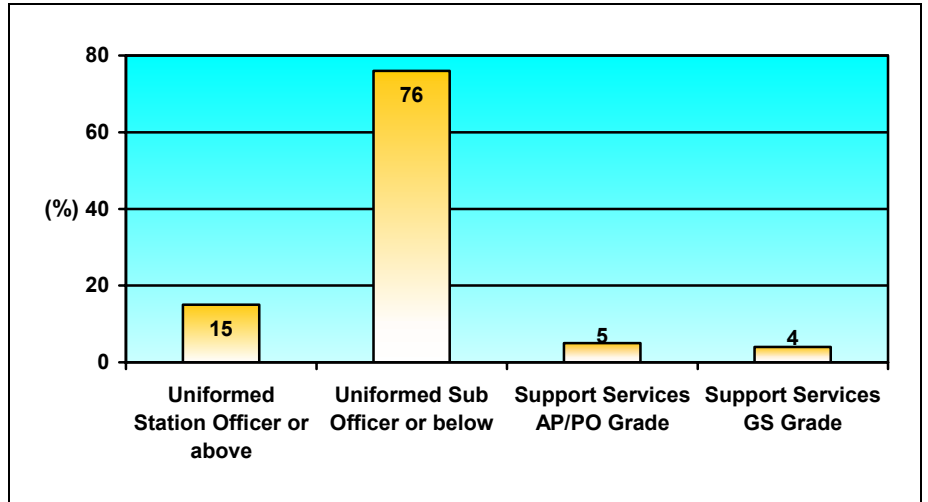


Figure 1A: Gender of Respondents

#### Working Profile

Four-fifths of respondents (81%) were full-time staff members, while the remaining 19% worked part-time.

Just over three-quarters of respondents were uniformed sub officers or below. 15% were uniformed station officers or above, while the remaining 9% were support staff, as detailed in Figure 1B.



**Figure 1B: Grade of Respondents**

The majority of respondents had worked for Tayside Fire Brigade for over ten years (67%). See Figure 1C.

Length of employment	Count	%
Less than 2 years	12	4%
2 to 5 years	39	14%
6 to 10 years	43	15%
More than 10 years	194	67%

**Figure 1C: Length of Employment, by all Respondents**



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# Core Questions

## 2.1 GENERAL JOB SATISFACTION

### Present Job in General

63% of employees were satisfied with their present job in general (only 8% of whom were *very* satisfied). 37% of all employees were dissatisfied with their job. Fulltime staff were more likely to be dissatisfied with their job (39%), as were staff that had been with the Fire Brigade for over ten years (43%).

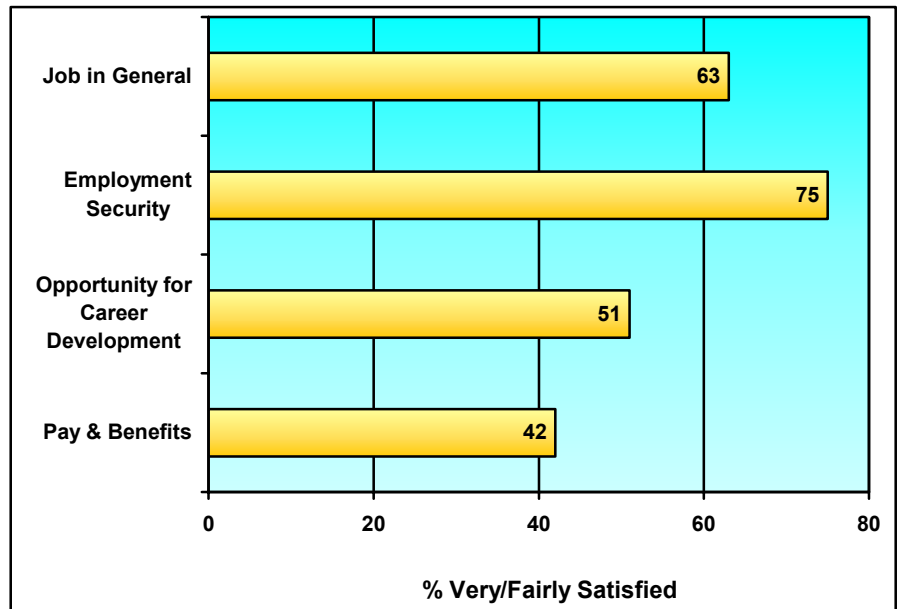


Figure 2A: General Job Satisfaction, by All Employees

### Employment Security

75% of all employees were satisfied with their employment security (including 21% who were *very* satisfied). 22% of all employees expressed dissatisfaction with the security of their job.

### Opportunities for Career Development

51% of all employees were satisfied with the opportunities for career development. Of this proportion, only 5% indicated they were *very* satisfied compared to the 46% who said they were *fairly* satisfied.



## Level of Pay and Benefits

Merely 42% of staff were satisfied with the level of pay and benefits they receive. Indeed, the majority of employees (57%) were dissatisfied with their level of pay and benefits. Full time staff were more likely to be dissatisfied than their part-time colleagues (60% compared to 48%).

## 2.2 FEELING OF VALUE IN THE BRIGADE

### Feeling Valued By The Brigade

Around a third of all respondents (34%), felt valued as an employee of the Brigade. 65% did not feel valued (including 27% who felt *strongly* that they are not valued as an employee of the Brigade). Those who had been employed for longer were less likely to agree that they felt valued. For instance, 59% of employees of less than six years felt valued compared to just 26% of staff that had worked for ten years or more.

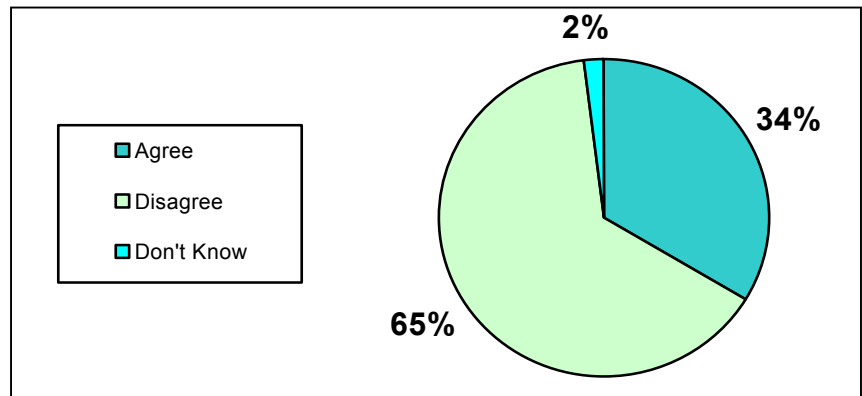


Figure 2B: Feeling Valued by The Brigade, by all Employees

### Feeling Valued By The Team

More than nine-in-ten (92%) employees felt valued by their team. Only 8% did not feel valued. These figures did not vary significantly across the profile of employees.

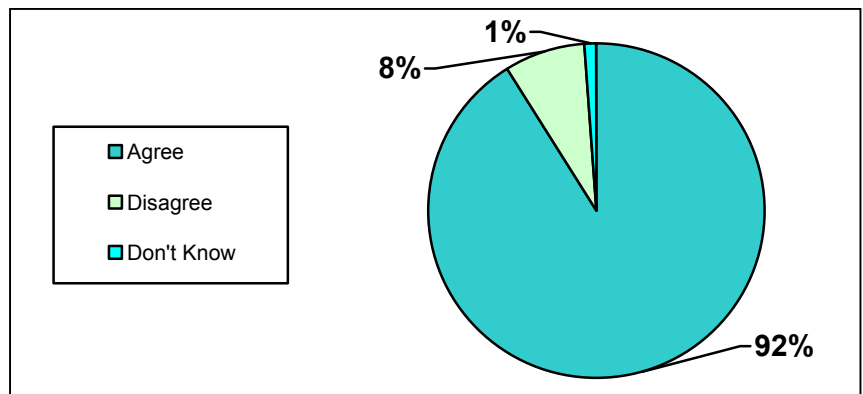


Figure 2C: Feeling Valued by The Team, by all Employees

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## 2.3 TEAMWORK IN THE BRIGADE

### Team or Watch Meetings

Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (72%) believes that their team has sufficient team or watch meetings to discuss problems and receive feedback.

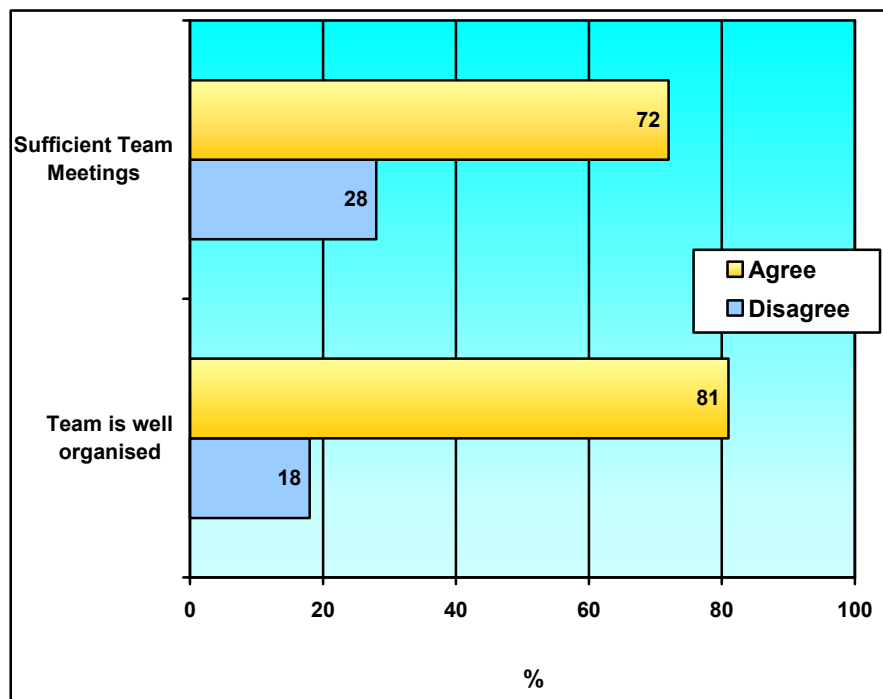


Figure 2D: Teamwork in the Brigade, by all Employees

While only 20% of full-time employees did not feel they have enough meetings, 52% of part-time personnel believed that their team needed to have more meetings.

### Team Organisation

More than four-fifths of employees (81%) felt that their team is well organised (including 21% who strongly agreed that this was the case). 18% of employees did not consider their team to be well organised. Part-time staff were less likely to positively assess the team organisation (63% agreed that their team was well organised compared to 86% of full-time staff).

## 2.4 VIEWS OF IMMEDIATE BOSS

Figure 2E (below) shows the proportions of staff that agreed with various statements concerning their immediate boss.

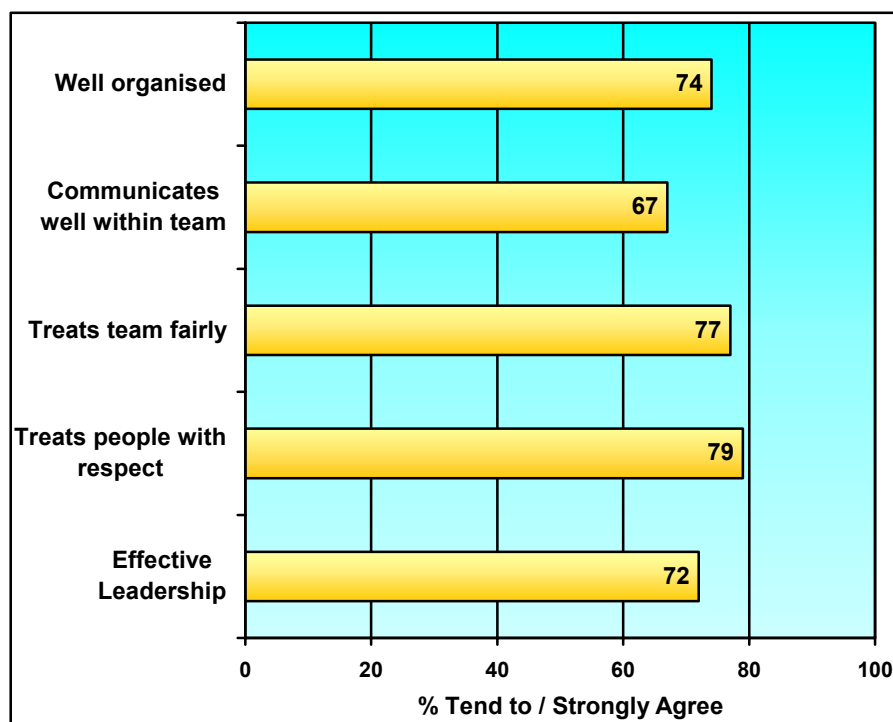


Figure 2E: Views of Immediate Boss, by all Employees

### Organisation

Just under three-quarters of employees (74%) felt their immediate boss was well organised in his or her work.

### Communication with the Team

67% of employees felt that their immediate boss communicates well with the team, but 31% of all employees did not share this view. Non-operations staff<sup>1</sup> were significantly less likely to agree that their immediate boss communicates well (just 44% agreed).

### Treatment of Team Members

77% of all employees felt that their immediate boss treats team members fairly, but 21% disagreed with this view.

### Treatment People with Respect

Around four-fifths of employees (79%) felt that their immediate boss treats people with respect, but 20% did not agree with this view.

<sup>1</sup> Staff within Fire Safety, Personnel Services, Technical Services, Corporate Services

## Effective Leadership

72% of all employees felt their immediate boss provides effective leadership, while 26% of all employees did not agree with this view.



## 2.5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SERVICE

### Ethnic Minorities

Half of the respondents felt that ethnic minority employees are treated in the same way as any other member of staff. 18% of all respondents believed that ethnic minority employees are treated better than other staff, while just 1% felt that ethnic minority employees are treated worse than other members of staff. A further 31% indicated 'don't know'.

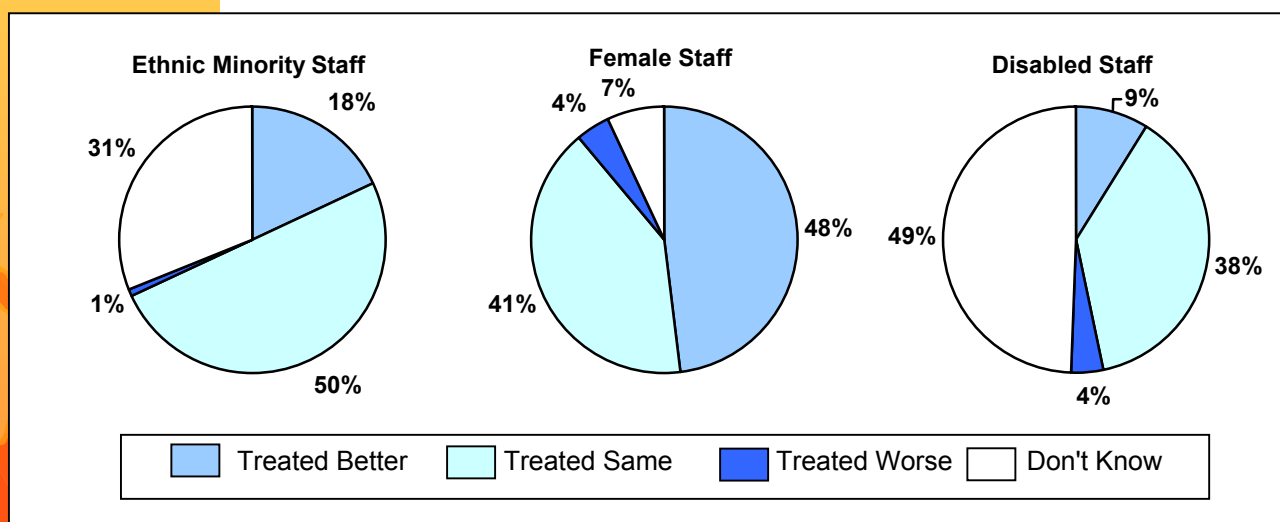


Figure 2F: Views of Equal Opportunities in the Service, by all Employees

### Female Employees

Overall, nearly half of the employees (48%) felt that female employees were treated more favourably than others in the Brigade. Slightly fewer (41%), felt that females were treated the same while a further 4% believed that this group were treated worse.

It was noticeable that 10% of female respondents felt that female employees are treated worse compared to 4% of males. In contrast, 53% of male respondents felt that women employees are treated better, while only 10% of female respondents held this view.

### Employees with Disabilities

Nearly two-fifths of all respondents (38%) felt that employees with disabilities are treated in the same way as any other member of staff. 9% of respondents believed that employees

with disabilities are treated better than other staff and 4% felt that staff with disabilities are treated worse than others. However, it should be noted that 49% of respondents answered “don’t know”.



## 2.6 TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

### Training

47% of employees agreed that they received enough training to do their job effectively. However, the majority of staff (53%) did not believe that their training provision was sufficient. Operations - B Division staff (43%) were less likely to agree that they received enough training compared to their Division A colleagues (51%).

The vast majority of staff (95%) indicated that they were prepared to learn new skills or work practices in order to do their jobs more effectively.

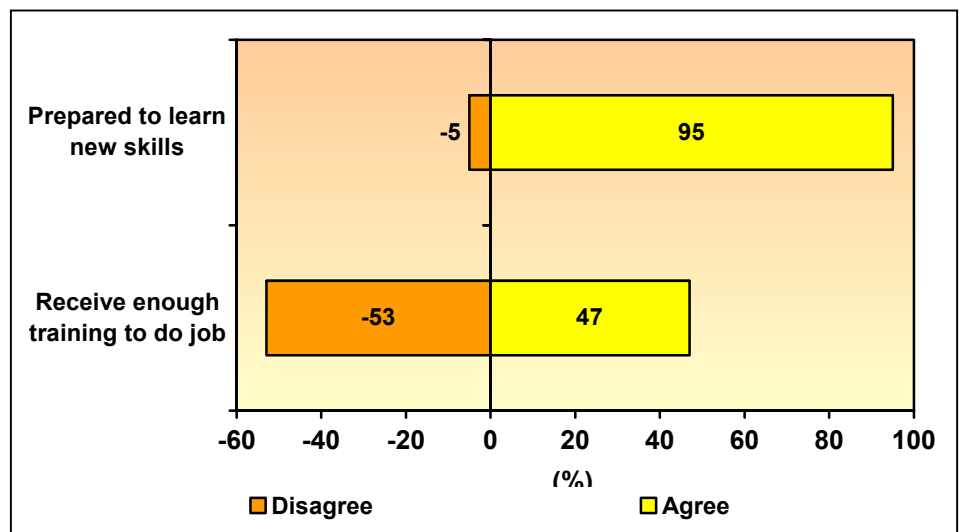
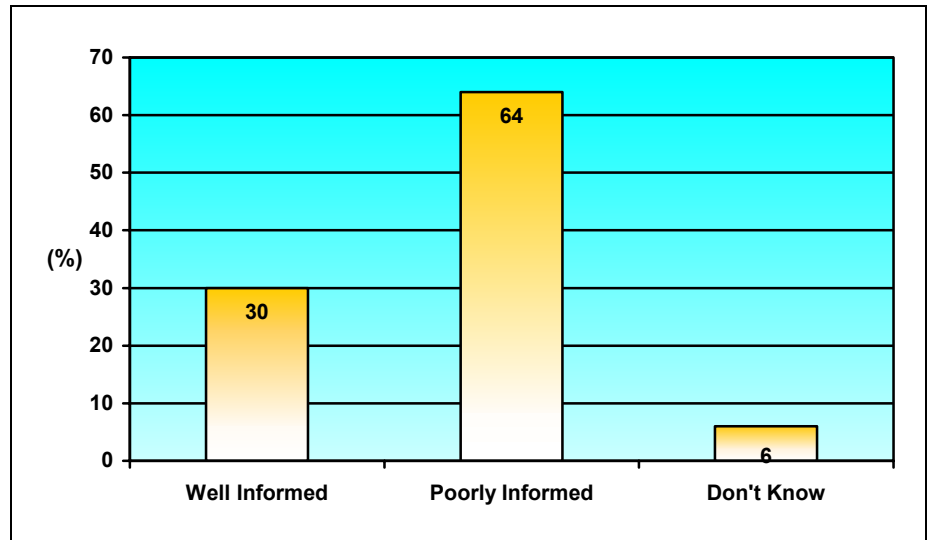


Figure 2G: Views on Training, by all Employees

### Feedback Regarding Personal Performance

As illustrated by Figure 2H, 30% of staff felt well informed about their personal performance, yet nearly two-thirds of staff (64%) indicated that, in their opinion, they were poorly informed in relation to their personal performance.



**Figure 2H: Feedback on Personal Performance, by all Employees**

## **2.7 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Responsibility For Own Fitness**

93% of employees felt they should be personally responsible for achieving fitness levels that ensure they are able to perform their duties. Only 5% of employees disagreed with this view.

### **Current Health and Safety Advice**

Around seven-in-ten employees (68%) agreed that they currently receive sufficient advice concerning health and safety issues. However, 30% of employees felt that the advice they receive is inadequate. These figures did not vary significantly across the profile of employees.

## **2.8 BRIGADE SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC**

### **The Brigade and Its Employees**

In general, employees had a positive view of the Brigade and its employees (see Figure 2J). 98% of all employees felt that, in serving the public the Brigade and its employees are courteous, 96% believed that they are caring, while a similar proportion (95%) felt they are fair. 97% of respondents considered the Brigade and employees helpful, while 96% believed them to be reliable. 91% felt that the Fire Brigade and its employees are efficient, and 90% stated that they are tolerant of people's differences.

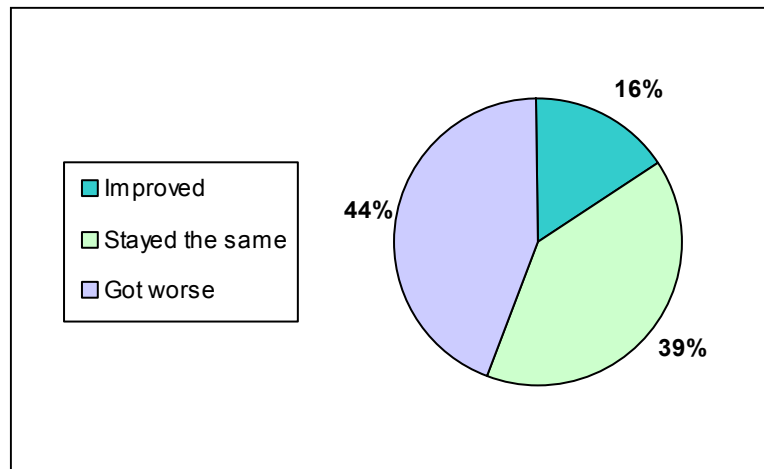


Attribute	% Agree
Courteous	98
Caring	96
Efficient	91
Fair	95
Helpful	97
Tolerant	90
Reliable	96

**Figure 2J: Views on the Brigade and its Employees, by all Employees**

### Recent Brigade Performance

Just 16% of all employees felt that the Brigade’s performance had improved over the previous three years. 39% believed the performance had stayed the same while the largest proportion believed the service had deteriorated (44%).



**Figure 2K: Views on Brigade Performance in the Last Three Years, by all Employees**

### Overall Views of the Fire and Rescue Brigade

94% of all employees felt that the Fire Brigade provides a good service to the public. 6% felt that the service provided was either fairly or very poor.



## Priorities for the Brigade

### 3.1 PRIORITIES TO IMPROVE AS AN EMPLOYER

All employees were asked to state what they felt Tayside Fire Brigade's three main priorities should be to improve as an employer. Figure 3A below shows the suggestions that employees selected.

Main Priorities	%
Consulting employees on priorities	58
Openness and honesty	42
Encouraging training and personal development	32
Reducing bureaucracy	31
Honesty and constructiveness	29
Dealing effectively with poor performers	24
Providing clear leadership	22
Encouraging staff to say what they think	20
Recognising good work	19
Allowing staff to use their discretion	10
Using reasoning rather than fear	8
Providing a learning organisation	6

**Table 3A: Priorities for the Brigade to Improve as an Employer, by all Employees**

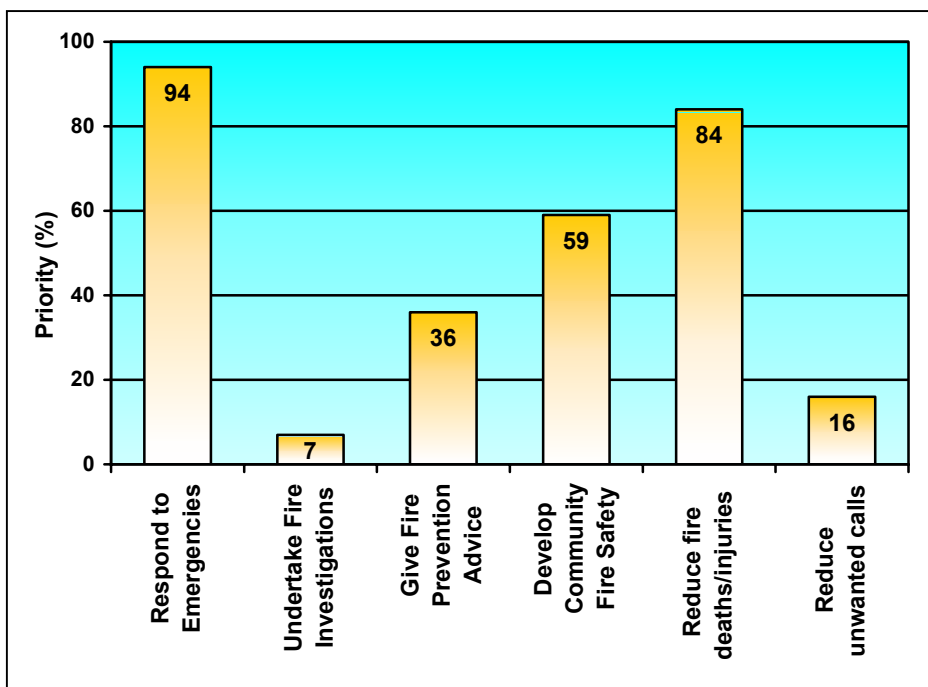
The main suggestion was for Tayside Fire Brigade to 'consult employees on priorities' (suggested by 58% of all employees). A further 42% felt that 'openness and honesty' should be a priority, while 'encouraging training and personal development' was a suggestion of 32% of the respondents.

Reducing bureaucracy (31%) and more honesty and constructiveness (29%) also received considerable support from the respondents.

### 3.2 PRIORITIES IN SERVING THE COMMUNITY



Provided with a list of main services for the Brigade, employees were asked to indicate which three they considered to be the priority of the Brigade. The vast majority of employees (94%) felt that responding to emergencies is a main priority for the Fire Brigade. 84% considered that reducing the number of deaths or injuries from fire is a major priority, while 59% believed that developing community fire safety is a major concern. 36% of employees considered the provision of fire prevention advice a priority for the Fire Brigade in the community. Only 16% believed that reducing unwanted fire calls is a priority, and just 7% of employees thought that undertaking fire investigations was a priority of the Fire Brigade's work. The following diagram details these results.



**Figure 3B: Main Priorities for the Brigade in the Community, by all Employees**

### 3.3 CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER BRIGADES



72% of all employees wanted greater co-operation between Tayside Fire Brigade and neighbouring Brigades. 84% felt there should be more co-operation with the Ambulance Service; 74% believed there should be more co-operation with the Police, and 48% wanted closer relations with schools and/or education departments. Less than a third of employees (31%) wanted greater co-operation between the Brigade and Social Services, and just 31% felt the Fire Brigade should work more closely with probation services. See Figure 3C.

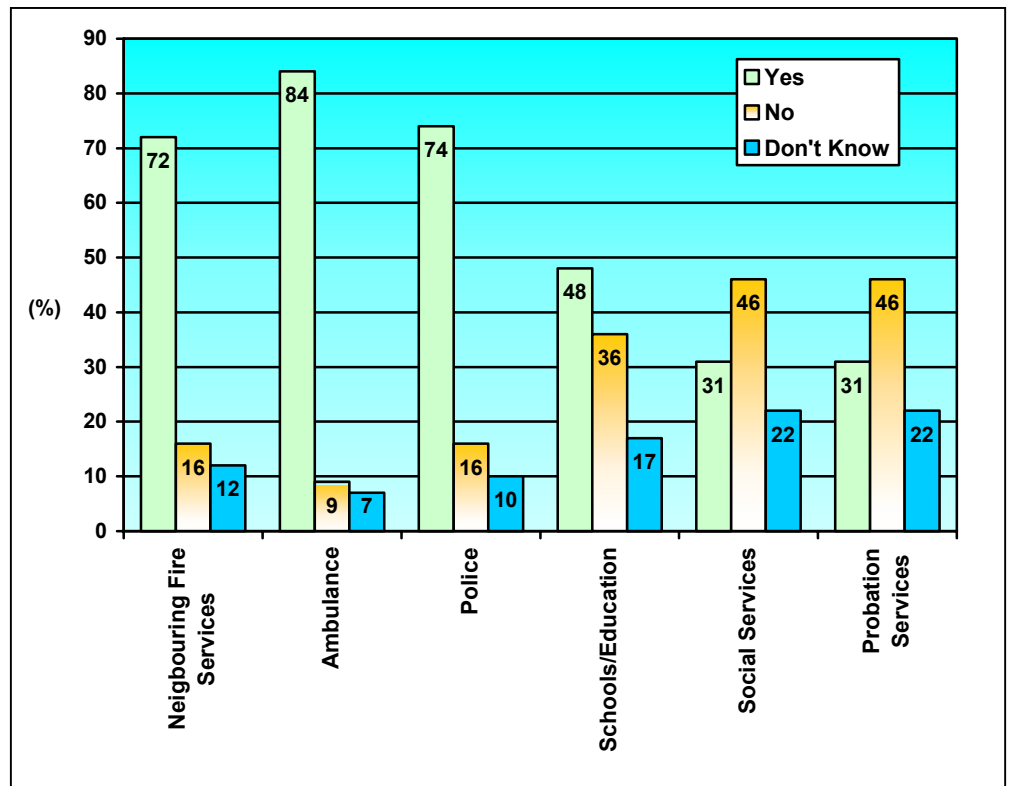


Figure 3C: Views on Inter-Brigade Co-operation, by all Employees



## Other Issues

### 4.1 HEALTH & SAFETY

In general, employees were positive about the level of health and safety standards in the work place. 94% of all employees felt that health and safety regulations are observed well in the station or office, although 6% felt they were poorly observed; 94% of staff also believed that the regulations are well adhered to during training, with just 1% considering this adherence to be poor (with the remaining staff selecting don't know). 88% felt that health and safety regulations are observed either *very* or *fairly* well on the fire ground. 5% felt they are poorly observed with the remaining 7% opting for don't know.

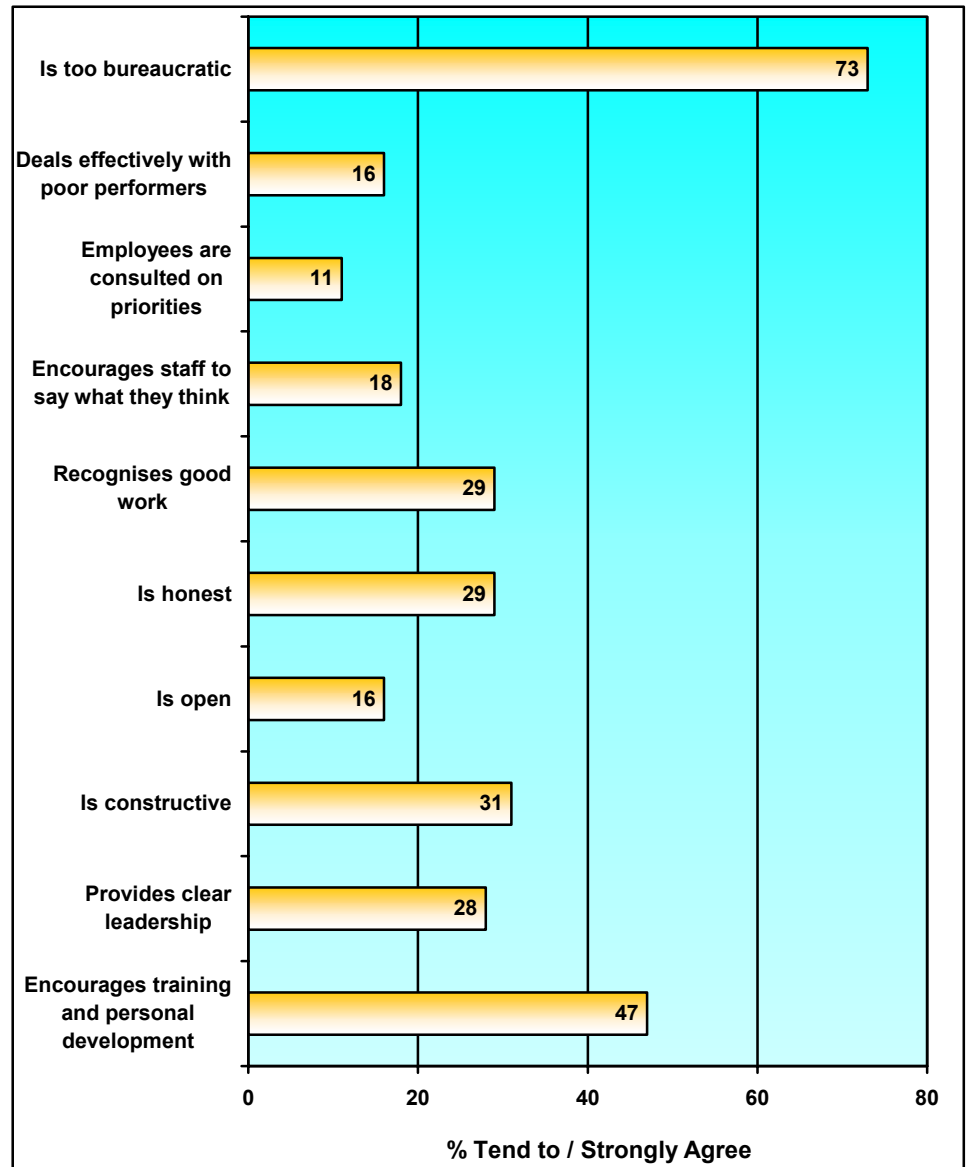
### 4.2 EQUIPMENT

In relation to general equipment required in doing their jobs effectively, less than three-fifths of staff (59%) either *tended* to or *strongly* agreed that this equipment was in place. 41% of staff disagreed that they had the equipment they needed.

Half of all staff members (50%) did not agree that they had the computer systems needed to do their jobs effectively. Indeed, just 3% of staff *strongly* agreed that they had the necessary systems (although 42% tended to agree that this was the case). By employment group, Operations - B Division staff were the least likely to agree (just 30% tended to agree with none strongly agreeing).

### 4.3 MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Figure 4A (overleaf) illustrates the degree to which the respondents agreed with various statements related to the management culture of the Brigade. Some elements are clearly more of a concern for staff than others. For instance, 73% of employees believe the Brigade management culture is too bureaucratic, while just 16% consider the culture to be effective in dealing with poor performers. Only one-in-ten (11%) staff agreed that employees are consulted on priorities, although almost half (47%) felt that management encourage training and personal development. Only 30% of the respondents agreed that the management culture recognises good work. Similarly, less than a third of staff considered the management culture to be honest (29%) or constructive (31%).



**Figure 4A: Views of Brigade Management Culture, by all Employees**

### Senior Management

Only 22% of staff agreed that senior management are keen to tell employees about changes that are happening. Just 4% strongly agreed that this was the case.

Nearly nine-in-ten employees (88%) did not feel that senior managers take an interest in how employees think and feel about work.



#### 4.4 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

All employees were asked about the methods currently used to disseminate information within the Brigade and to state which method they would prefer to receive information. The results for which are included in the following table.

Information Source	Preferred %	Actual %
Memoranda/letter	25	57
Brigade orders	18	53
Face to face communication with team leader	55	22
Electronic mail	36	45
Team/watch meetings	40	26
Grapevine	4	49
Notice boards	12	25
Trade Unions	10	24
Quickfire newsletter	17	55
IRMP newsletter	7	26

**Figure 4B: Preferred/actual information sources, by all Employees**

While over half of the respondents (55%) would prefer to receive information face-to-face from their team leader, only 22% of employees currently do so. Team watch meetings were the second most preferred option for the dissemination of current issues but again the proportion who preferred this option (40%) was higher than the proportion who actually received their information via this source (26%). Meanwhile, 36% of employees preferred the Brigade to inform them about current issues via electronic mail, while this was an actual source for almost half (45%) of employees.



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