



Montana
RTAP Update
September 2024

Presented by Debra Brisk, P.E. (AZ & MN)

MDT RTAP PROJECT

Timeline overview:

- RFP timeline: Closed April 26, 2024
- Awarded project: June 5, 2024
- Began work: June 10, 2024
- MDT & DRB team biweekly meetings from June thru December
- Milestones + key deliverables outlined in schedule
- Conclude work: December 31, 2024

PROJECT TEAM

DRB knows rural transit & Rural Transit Assistance Programs.
Big Sky PR knows Montana.



<https://www.mnrtap.us>

We matched the experience, skills, and talents of our team to meet this project's scope of work.



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Based on survey & focus group engagement

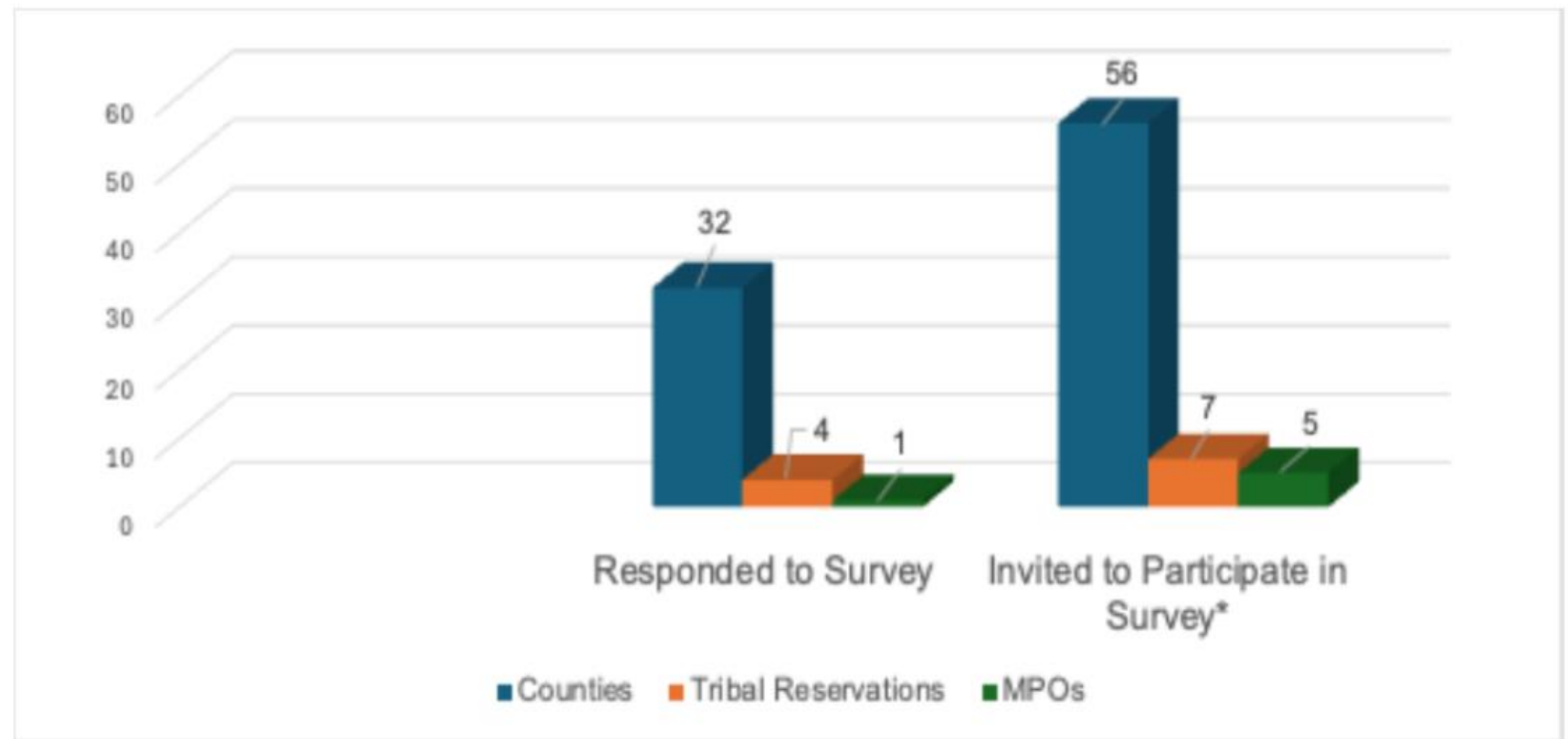
- MDT RTAP Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) Review
- Create a Training Plan
- MDT RTAP Review & Recommendations



SURVEY - PARTICIPATION

54 participants from:

- 4 Tribal Nations
- 32 Counties
- 1 MPO

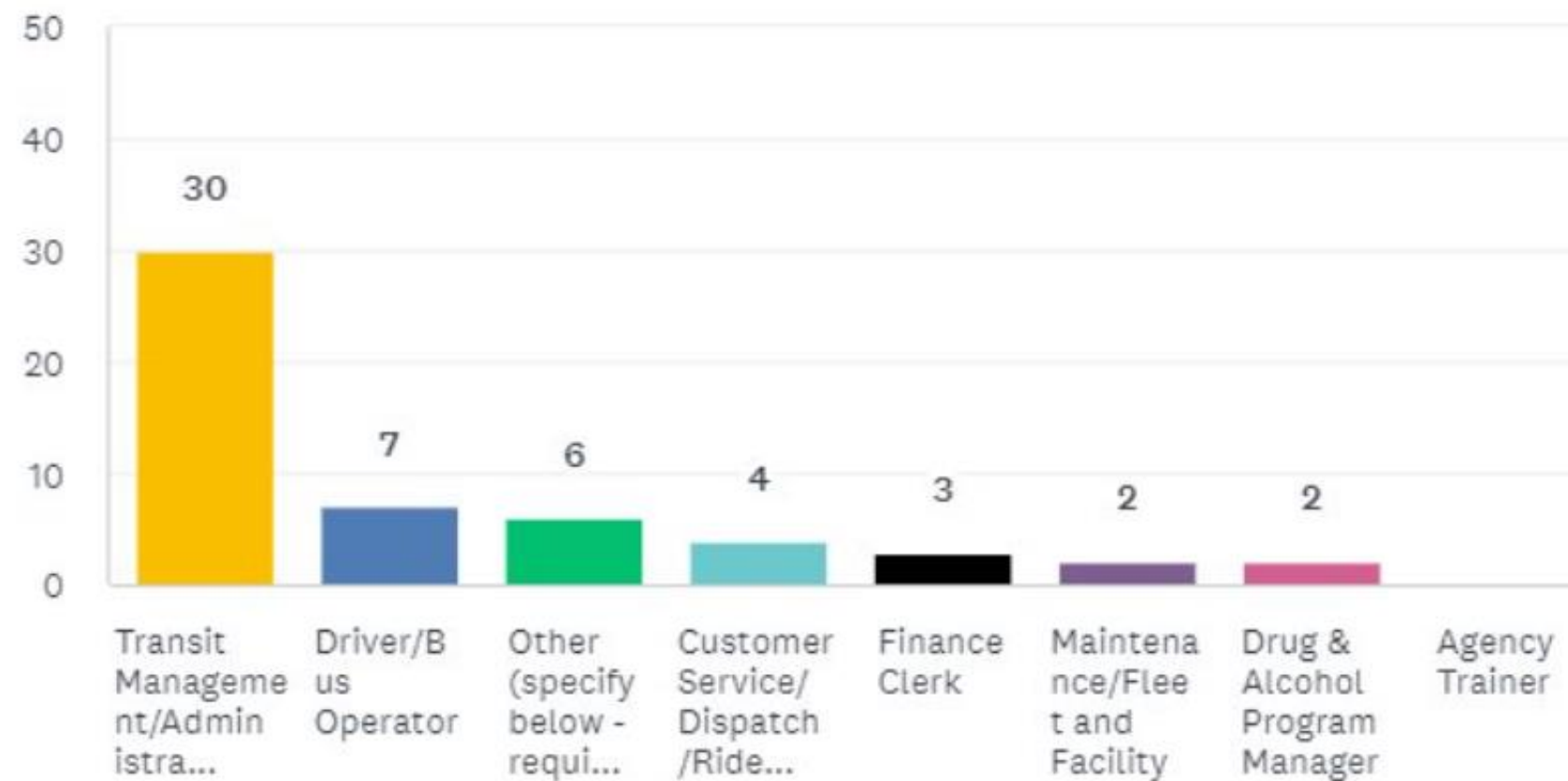


*Represents the emails provided by MDT. This number does not account for the survey being shared beyond that list.

SURVEY - PRIMARY ROLE

What is your PRIMARY role at your agency? This will determine the questions you are asked for this survey. You will have the option to answer questions for additional roles you work/supervise later in the survey. (SELECT ONE)

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



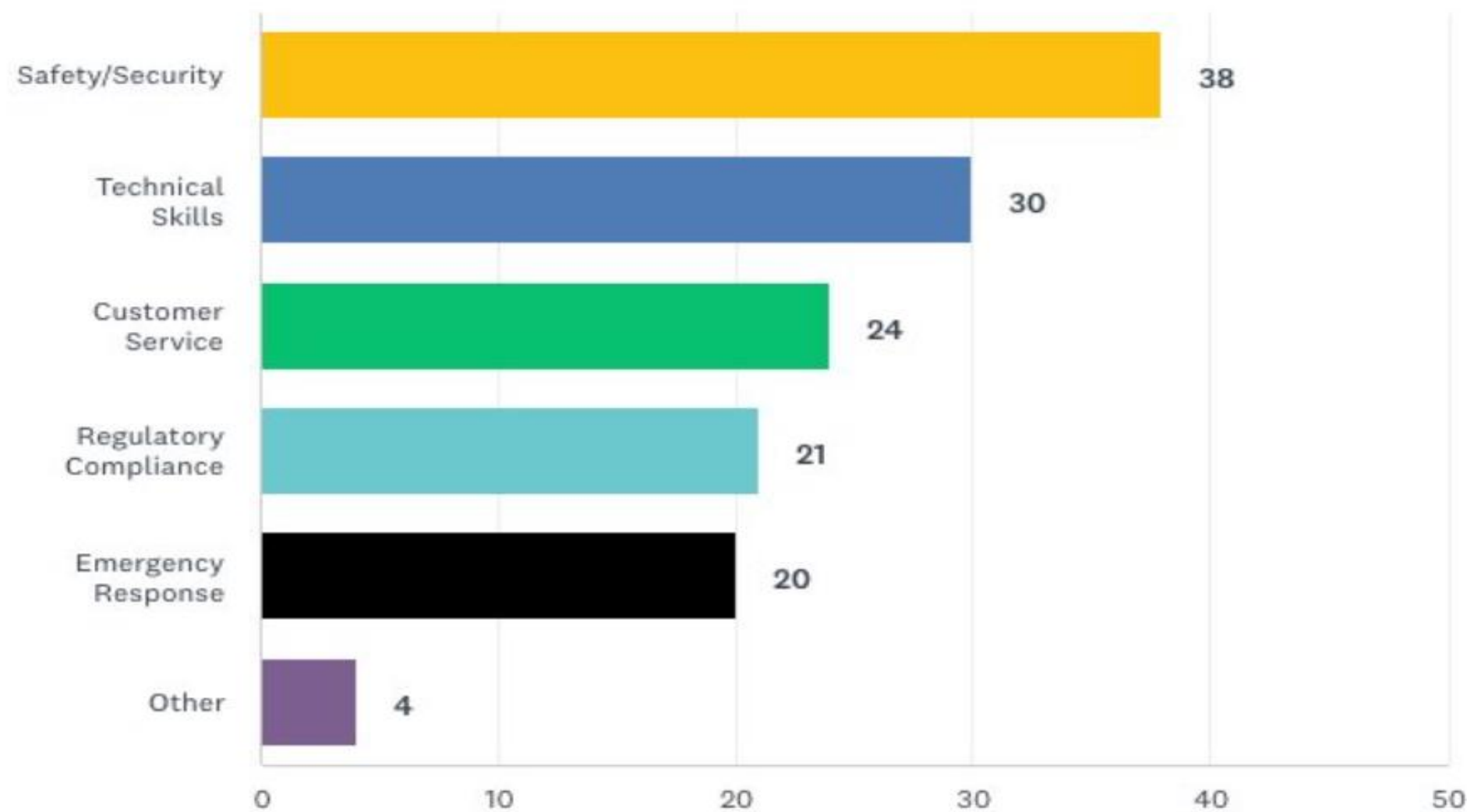
Of the other responses:

- 1 is both a dispatcher and driver
- 1 is a dispatcher
- 2 are MDT staff
- 1 could be grouped with Finance Clerk
- 1 is a volunteer driver




SURVEY - TRAINING CATEGORIES

What areas of training do you believe is needed in your agency? Select all that apply.

Answered: 51 Skipped: 3



SURVEY - TRAINING TOP 5 TOPICS BY ROLE

Training			
Coordinated Transportation Planning to Meet FTA Requirements	X		
HR Basics	X		
Fleet & Facility Asset Management	X		
NTD Requirements	X		
Drug & Alcohol Program Management	X		
Understanding Data Related to Dispatching & Scheduling			X
Technology for Dispatching & Scheduling			X
Communication Between Drivers and Dispatchers			X
Ride Scheduling			X
Dispatching 101			X
Incident & Emergency Reporting		X	
Driving Skills Refresher for Experienced Drivers		X	
Lifts		X	
Advanced Mobility Devices Securement		X	
Passenger Assistance Safety & Sensitivity (PASS)		X	

Survey - Icon Key



Managers



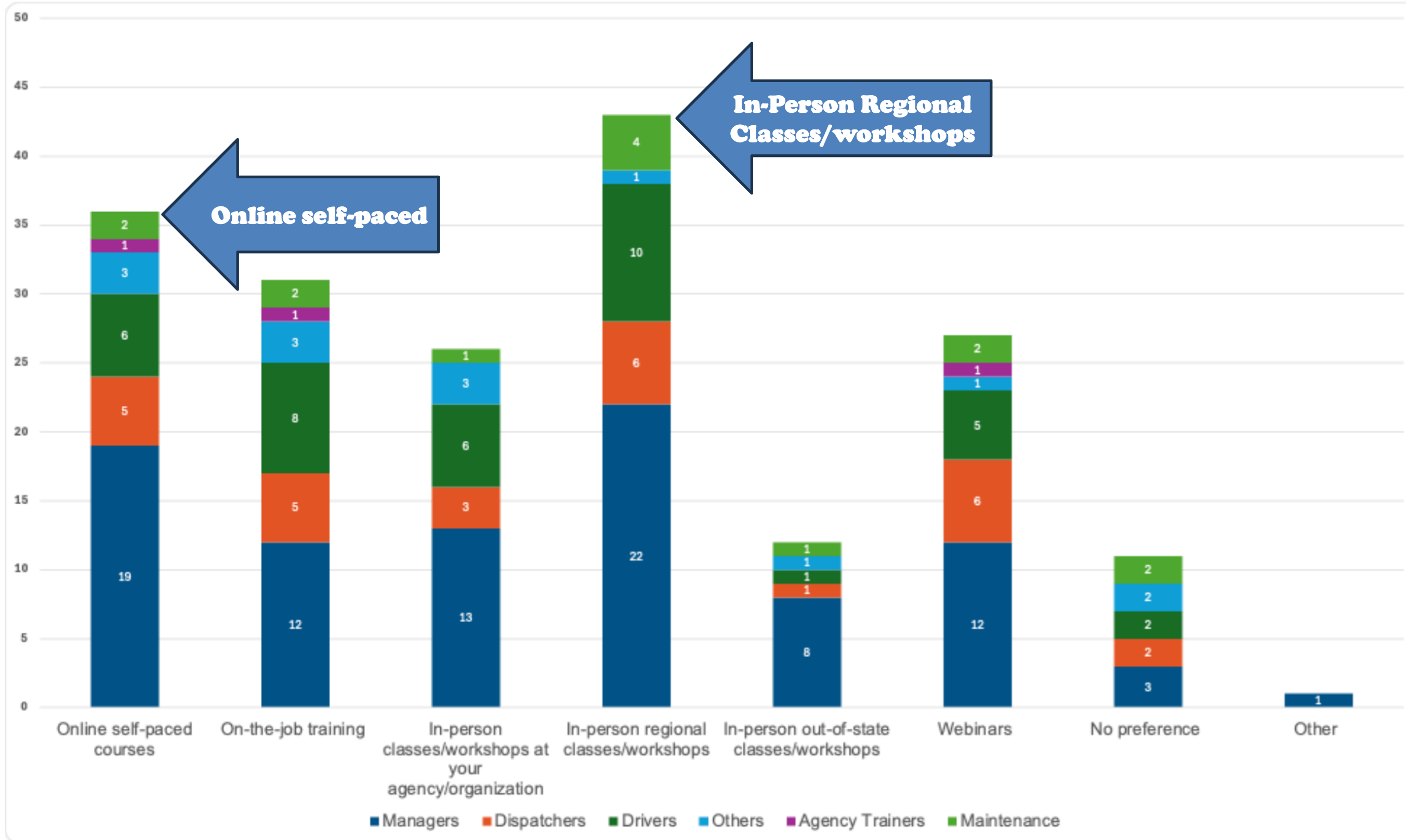
Drivers



Dispatchers

Includes transit managers/administrators, finance clerks/managers, drug and alcohol program managers, and people who selected "other"

SURVEY – PREFERRED TRAINING DELIVERY METHOD



SURVEY – WHEN TO OFFER TRAINING



Month/ Time of Year	<i>Sept., Oct., April & May</i> (Fall and Spring)	<i>May & Sept.</i> (Fall and Spring)	<i>Sept. & Oct.</i> (Fall)
Days of Week	<i>Tue-Thu</i> (slight preference for Tuesday and Wednesday)	<i>Mon-Fri</i> (slight preference for Tuesday and Wednesday)	<i>Mon-Fri</i> (slight preference for Monday)
Time of Day	<i>Morning</i> 8-10:59 am	<i>Morning & Mid-Day</i> 8am-2pm	<i>Mid-Day</i> 11am-2pm

Key Takeaways:

- **September and October are the best months for training**
- **Management prefers mid-week mornings for training**
- **All role prefer training between 8am and 2pm during weekdays**
- **Weekends, evenings, and early morning trainings are rarely/never ideal**

SURVEY - WHAT MONTANA RTAP DOES WELL (TOP 5)

What does Montana's Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) do well?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 14

Top 5 areas Montana RTAP does well

1. Instructors are **knowledgeable**
2. Training prepares me to **do my job better**
3. Training is **easy to comprehend**
4. Training includes **support materials** I can refer to later
5. Scholarship (**Reimbursement**) application process

SURVEY - MONTANA RTAP IMPROVEMENTS (TOP 5)

What would you recommend as improvements to the state's Rural Transportation Assistance Program?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 14

Top 5 Suggested Improvements

1. **Advance notice** of training opportunities
2. Offer a selection of courses for **online training** that can be taken anytime, at our own pace, for topics that do not require hands-on skills testing, and will benefit transit staff
3. Proactive training for new **federal or state requirement or compliance** issues
4. **Reminders** about the scheduled trainings
5. **Recordings** of online training

FOCUS GROUPS

DATES

- September 4 – Glendive, District 4 office
- September 5 – Travel to Missoula
- September 6 – Missoula, District 1 office
- September 9 – Helena, MDT headquarters



FOCUS GROUPS & ONE ON ONE WITH MTA LEADERSHIP

Good conversations

- Re-emphasized need for online training | mini-courses
- Need to have local | regional training
- Office of Public Instruction is great (Lewistown)
- Have a menu of trainings (list who, when, what they offer)
- Policy review & training
- Enhance training materials for today (repetitive information – year after year)



FOCUS GROUPS & ONE ON ONE WITH MTA LEADERSHIP

- NTD / BlackCat training
- Wheelchair securement | lift maintenance training
- Use peers as a mentor | opportunity to learn from each other
- PASS training (opportunities, local)
- Statewide partnerships to support training (Rural participates in small urban trainings)
- Provide & utilize checklists to support the training
- Knowledge of MDT RTAP, National RTAP



VIRTUAL FOCUS GROUP



Monday, September 16th
10am to Noon (Montana Time)


This session will provide an opportunity for you to share your insights and feedback on how MDT can enhance transit training and support for rural transit systems in Montana.

To join the session, please register using the following link:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MDT_V_focusgroup.

You will receive all the necessary details to access the virtual focus group prior to the event.

PROJECT PROGRESS

- Progressive development of deliverables
- Dependency between task outcomes
- Time allowance for MDT review

 SCHEDULE - REVISED 9.10.2024							
	Task 1: Project Management	Task 2: Data Gathering & Engagement (Phase 1)				Task 3: RTAP Annual Work Plan Development (Phase 2)	Task 4: RTAP Review & Recommendations
Sept 9 - 13		Final Report ▲	Focus Group 3 4				
Sept 16 - 20	Mtg 8 ●		Virtual Focus Meeting	SWOT Outline			
Sept 23 - 27			Review Draft Report MDT		Training Work Plan Outline		
Sept 30 - Oct 4	Mtg 9 ●		final report ▲				
Oct 7 - 11					Draft Training Work Plan		
Oct 14 - 18	Mtg 10 ●				MDT Review		
Oct 21 - 25				Review Draft SWOT MDT			Outline of MDT RTAP Report
Oct 28 - Nov 1	Mtg 11 ●						
Nov 4 - 8							
Nov 11 - 15	Mtg 12 ●						Draft MDT RTAP Report
Nov 18 - 22							Review of MDT RTAP Report
Nov 25 - 29	Mtg 13 ●						👤
Dec 2 - 6							▲
Dec 9 - 13	Mtg 14 ●						★
Dec 16 - 20		Float in the schedule - goal is to be completed by December 13, 2024.					
Dec 23 - 27	LAST Invoice / Report						
Dec 30 - 31							

KEY: ● Progress Meetings
 📄 Monthly Progress Reports submitted with Monthly Invoice
 ■ Draft
 ▲ Final
 1|2|3|4 Focus Groups
 👤 Presentation
 ★ Final Plan and Recommendations Deliverable

CONTINUED EFFORTS & PRIORITIES

- Assessing information received (Survey and Focus Group)
- SWOT analysis
 - Classify, review & report
- Training plan
 - based on training interests & needs
 - respecting the agency's availability
 - assessing the best way to deliver the training
- MDT RTAP recommendations

QUESTIONS

CONTACT INFO

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