



FEMA-1874-DR-VA

Public Assistance Program

Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm

Declared 2/16/2010

68 completed surveys returned out of a sample of 129.

52% Response Rate

Administered by:

Customer Satisfaction Analysis (CSA) Section

POC: Kathy Canaday, Program Analyst

Contact: 940-891-8856

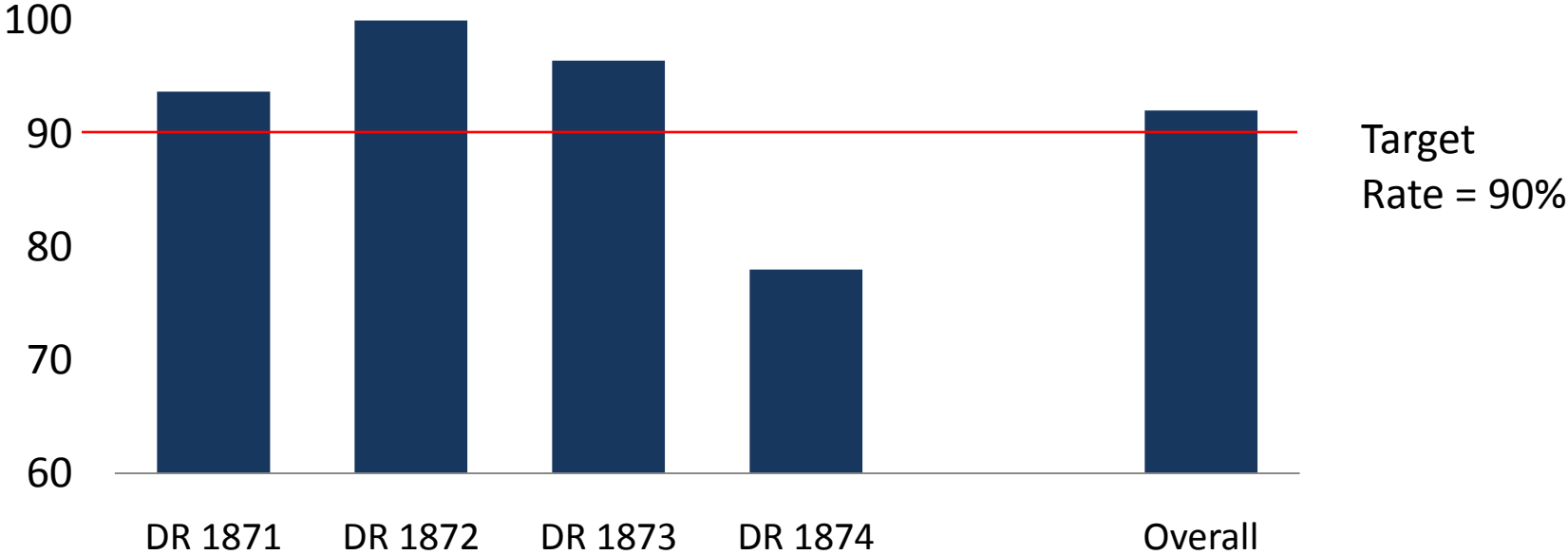
E-mail Address: Kathy.Canaday@dhs.gov

July 21, 2011



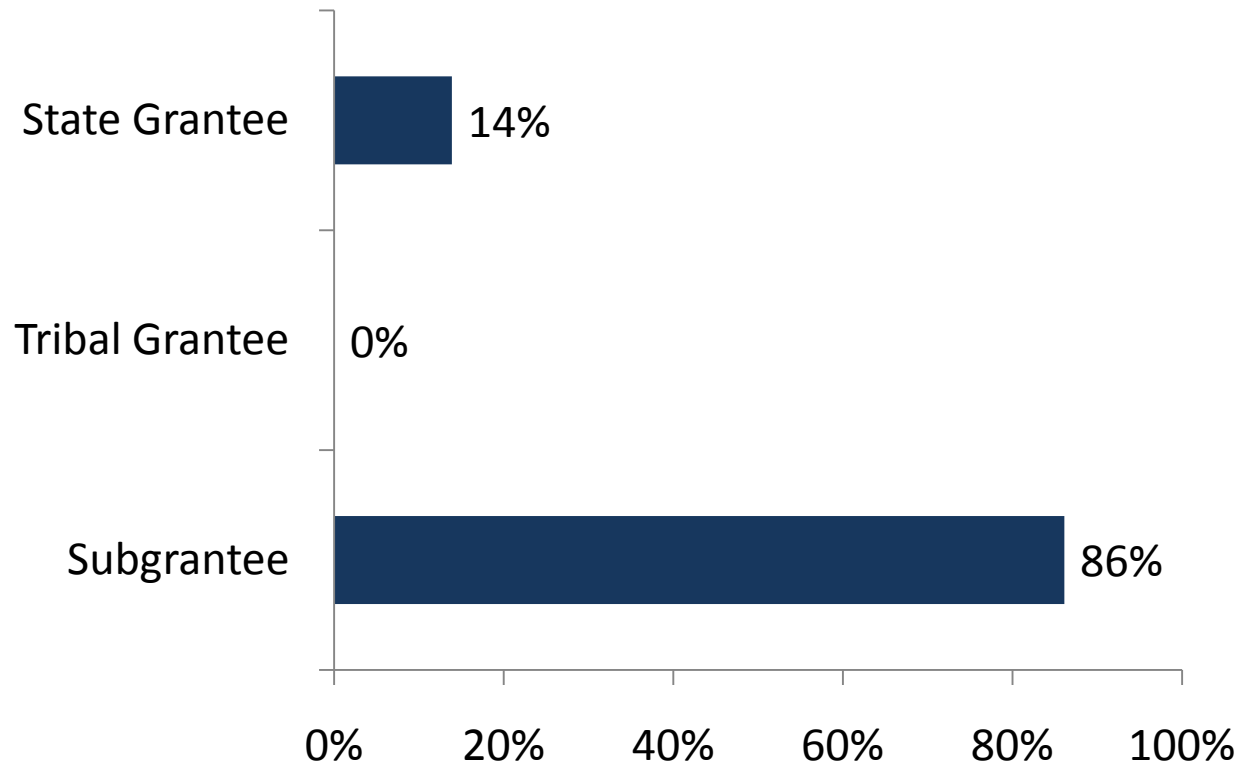
PA Program & Process Satisfaction

DR	Overall	PA Program	PA Process
DR 1871	93.73	97.96	89.5
DR 1872	100	100	100
DR 1873	96.45	97.6	95.3
DR 1874	78.00	79.0	77.00
Overall	92.05	93.64	90.45



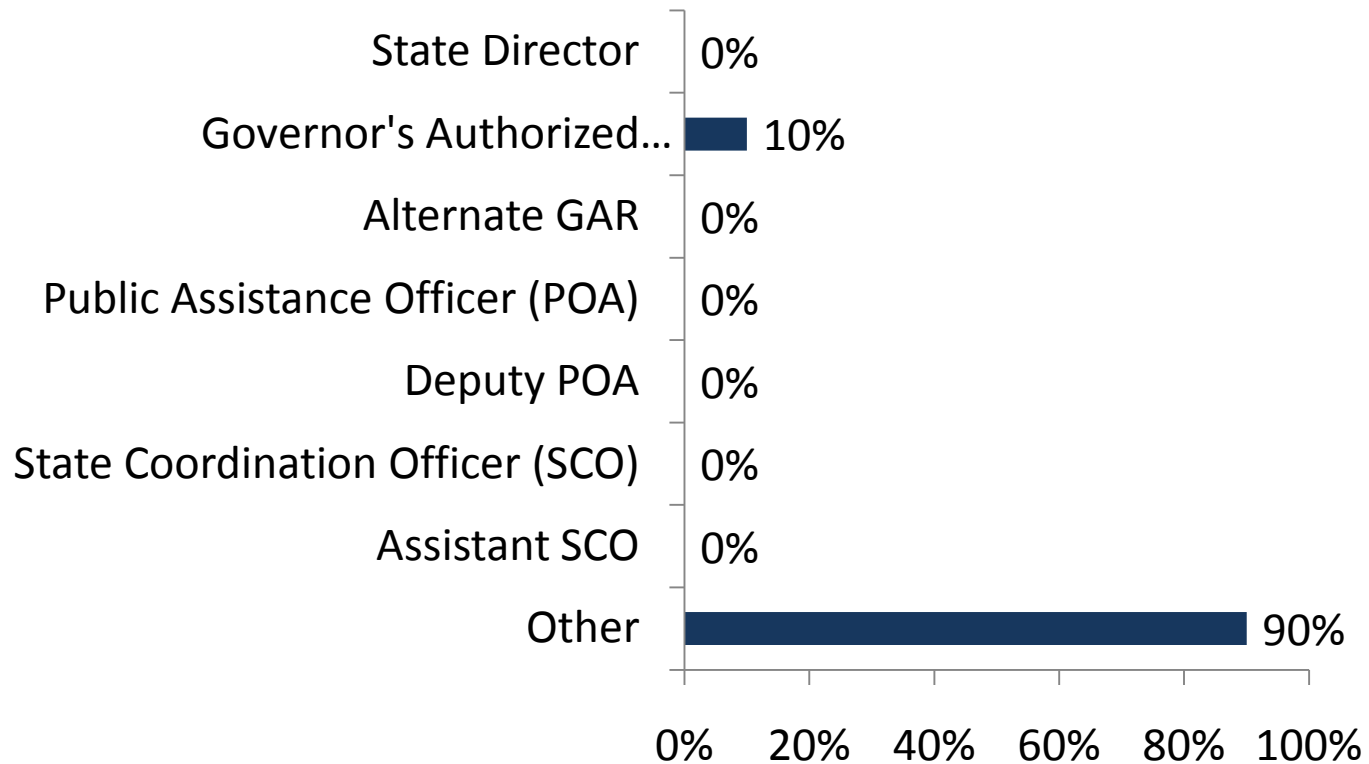
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2. What is your organization type?



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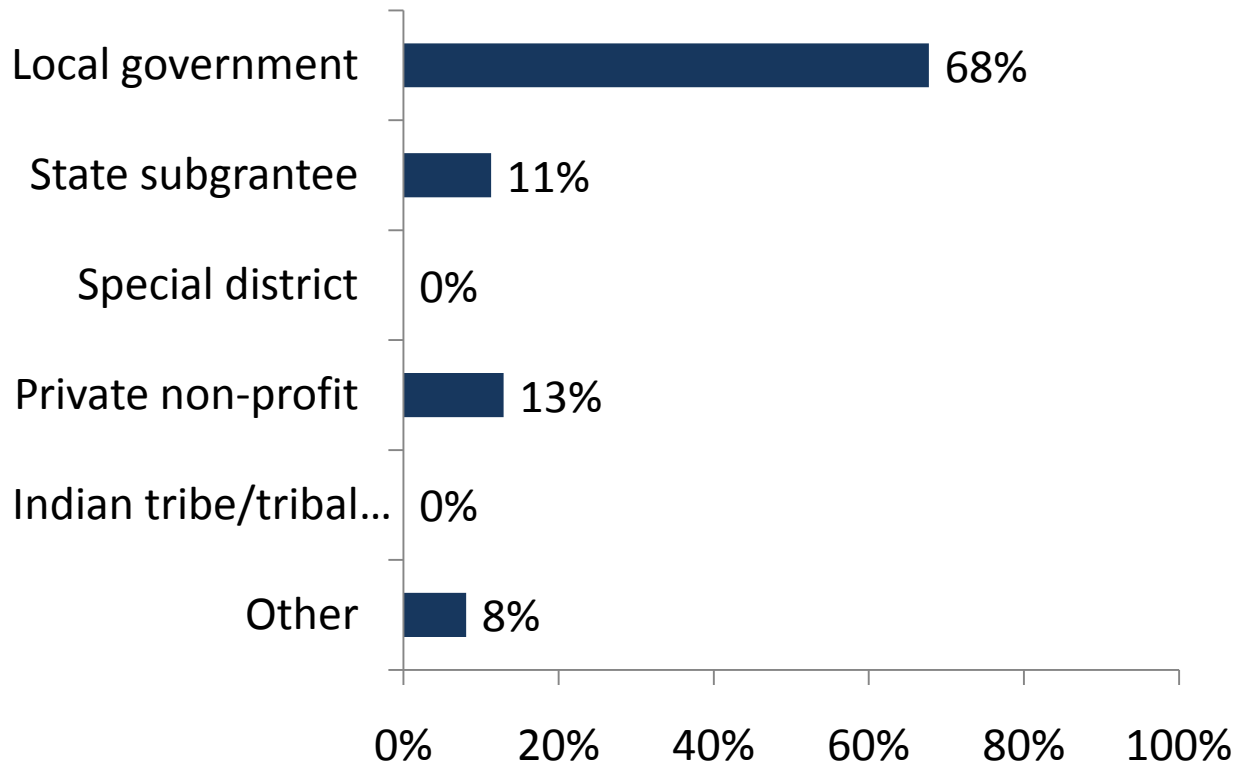
What is your position within your State organization



Other: None listed

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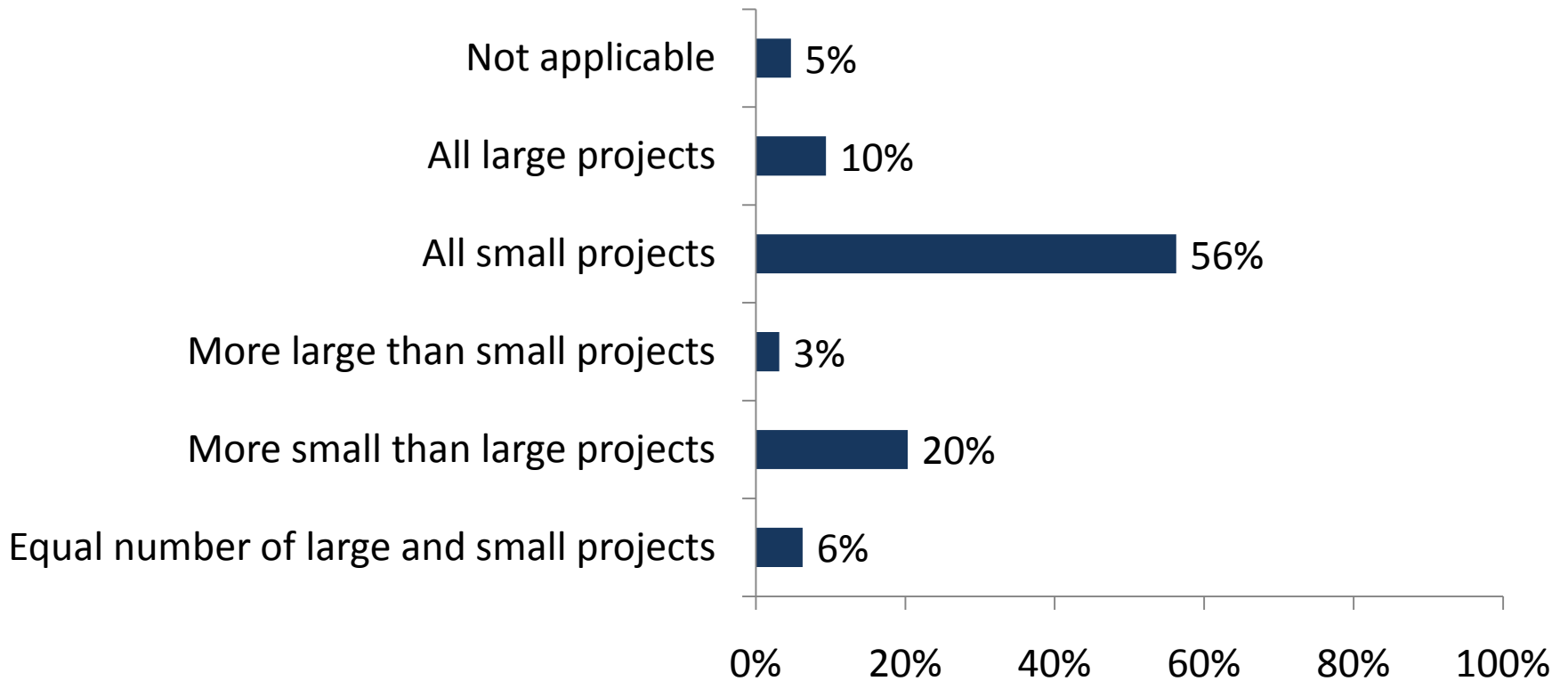
What is your position within your Subgrantee organization



Other: None listed

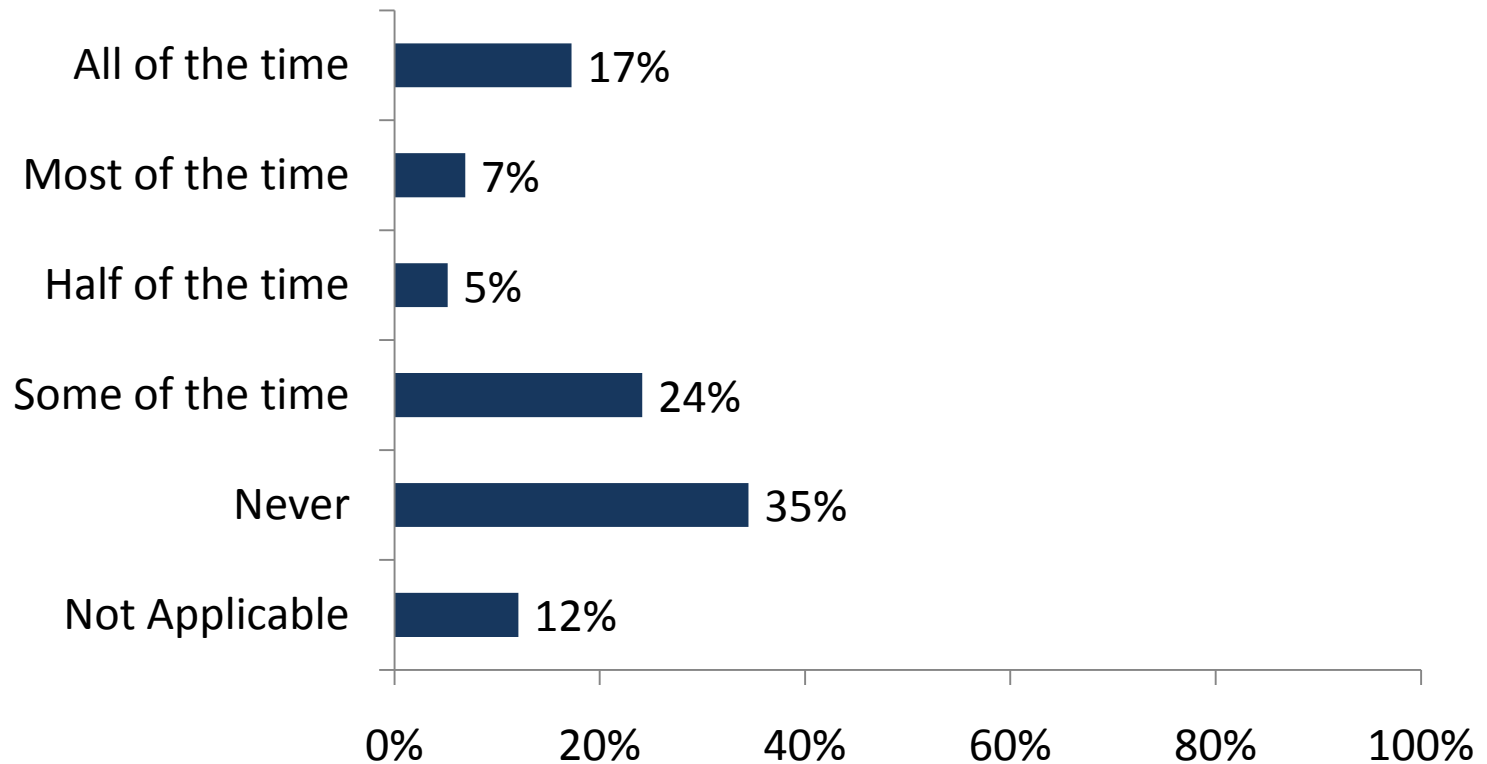
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3. What type(s) of projects(s) did you apply for?



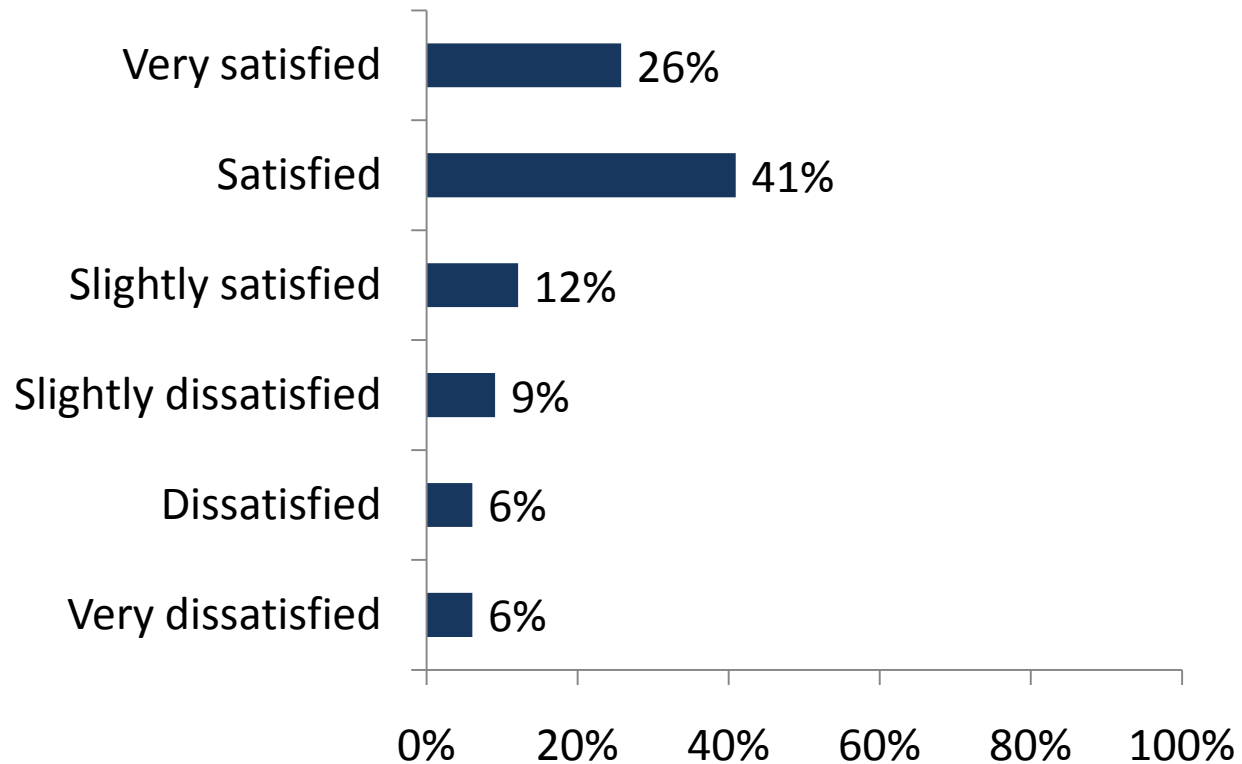
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4. Applicants have the option of writing their own Project Worksheet(s) for small projects. For the small projects for which you applied, did you choose to write your own Project Worksheet(s)?



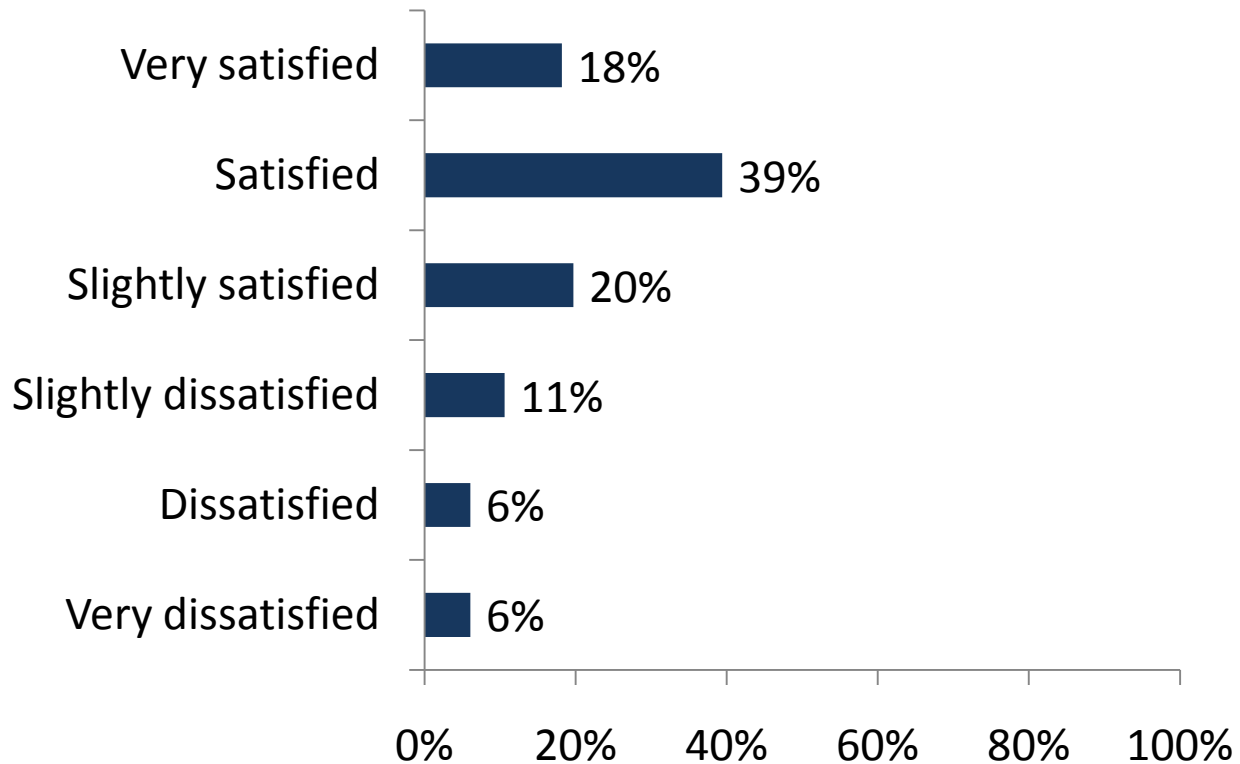
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5. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Public Assistance Program?



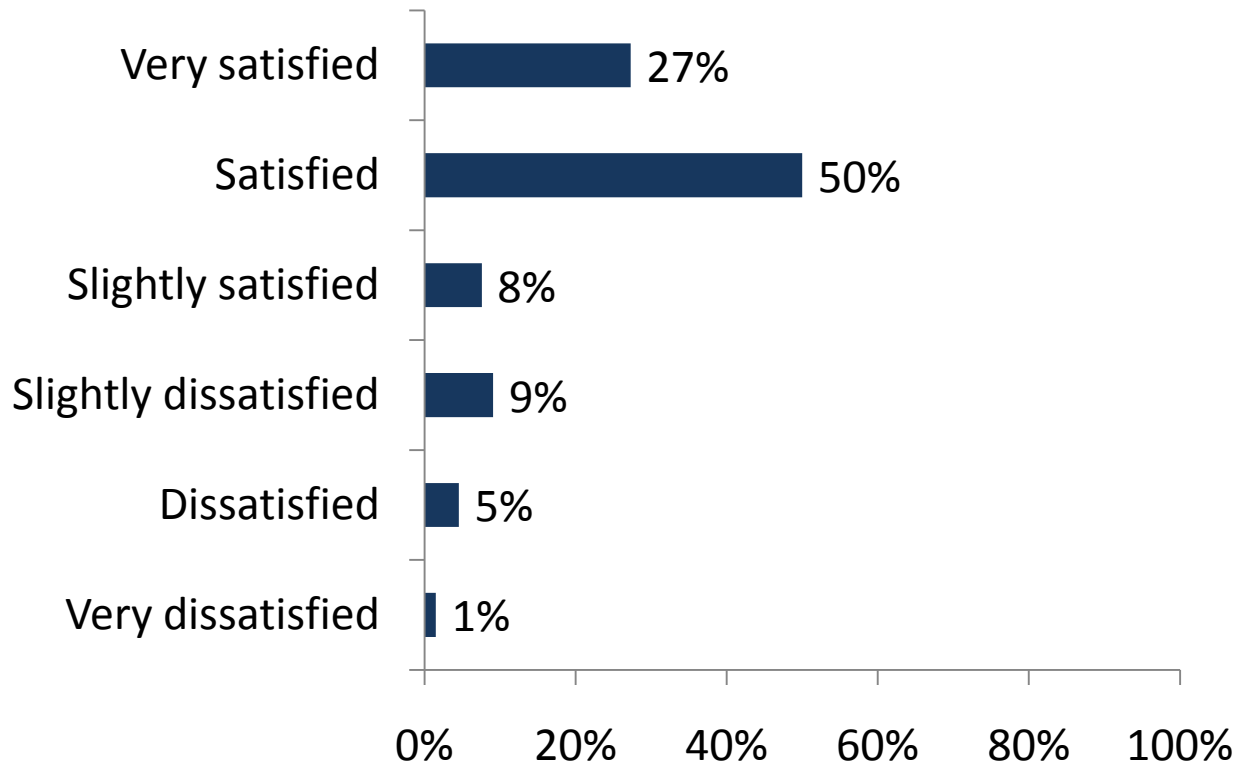
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6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Public Assistance process?



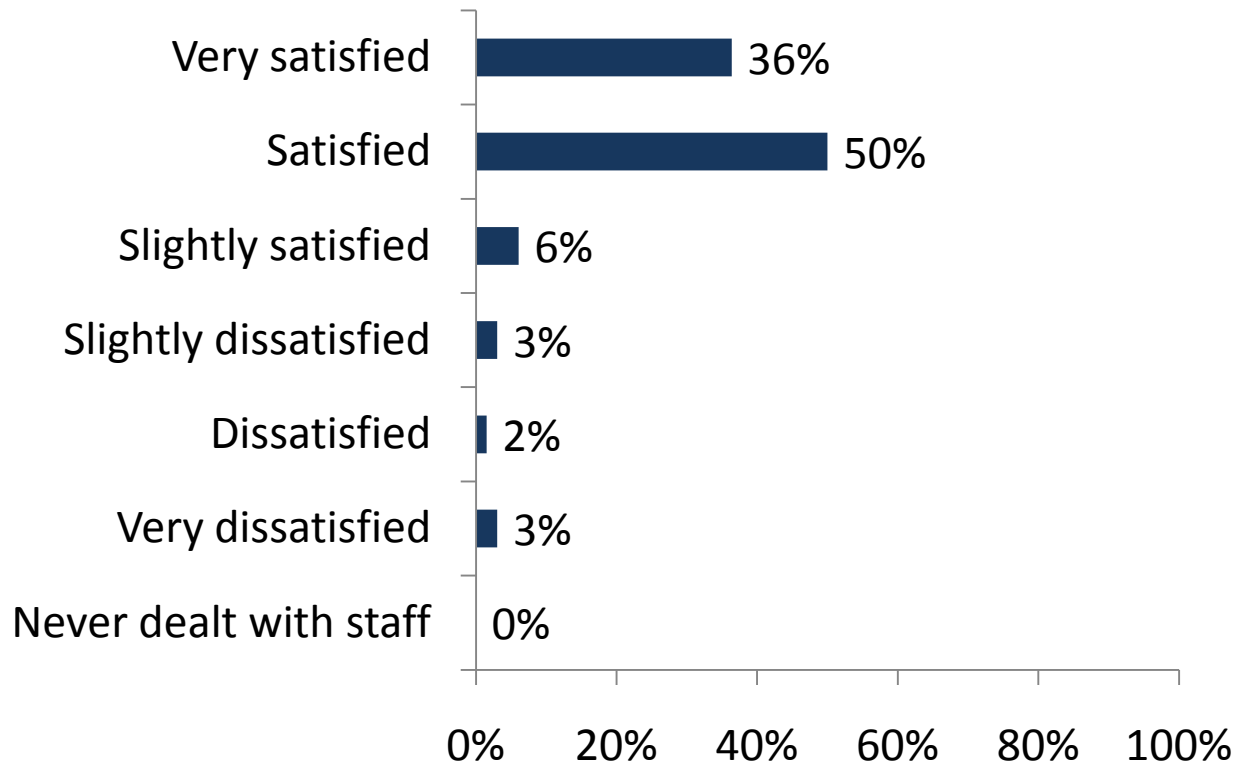
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7. How satisfied were you with the published information FEMA provided on the Public Assistance Program (e.g., documents on FEMA’s website, documents received at the Kickoff Meeting, etc.)?



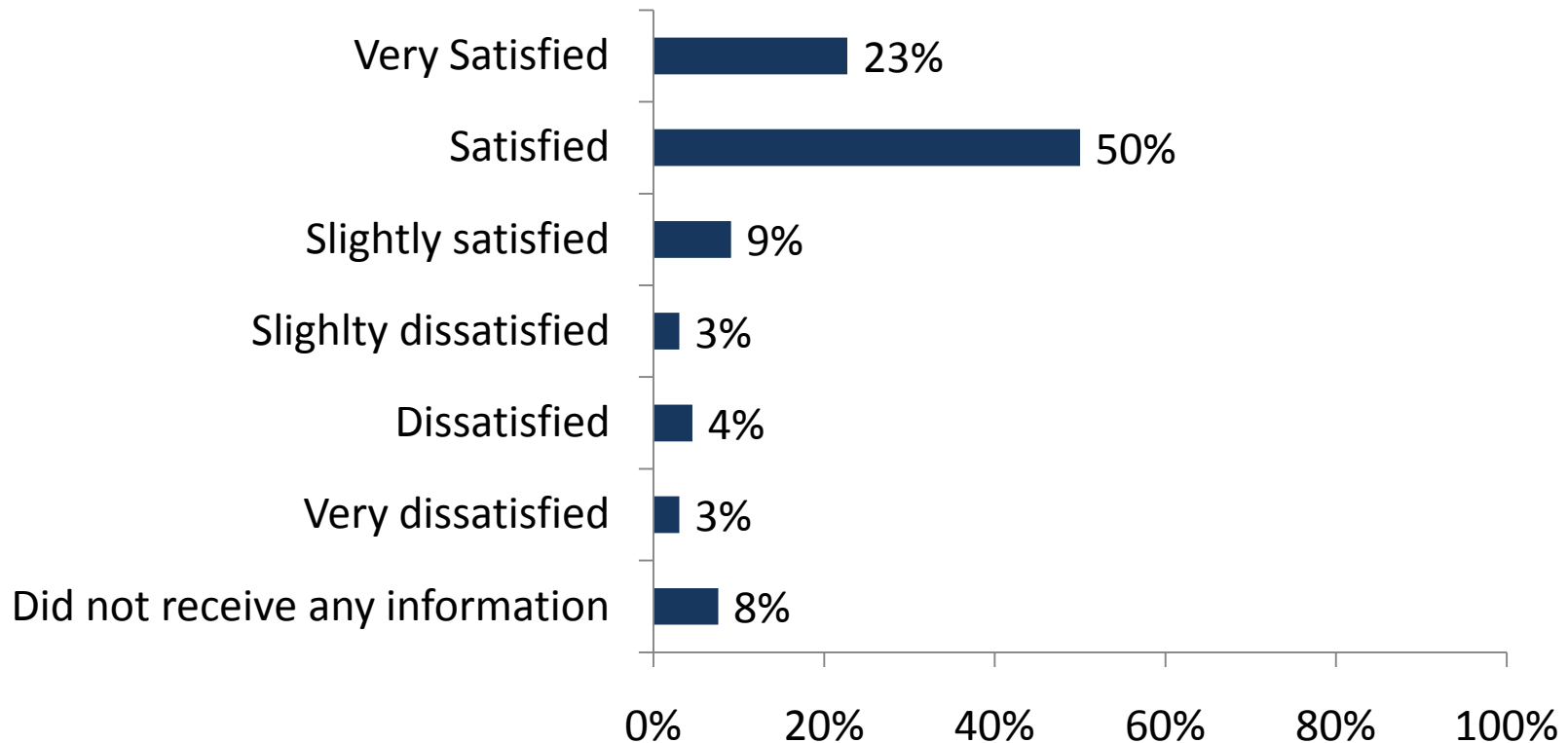
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8. How satisfied were you with staff's communication of information?



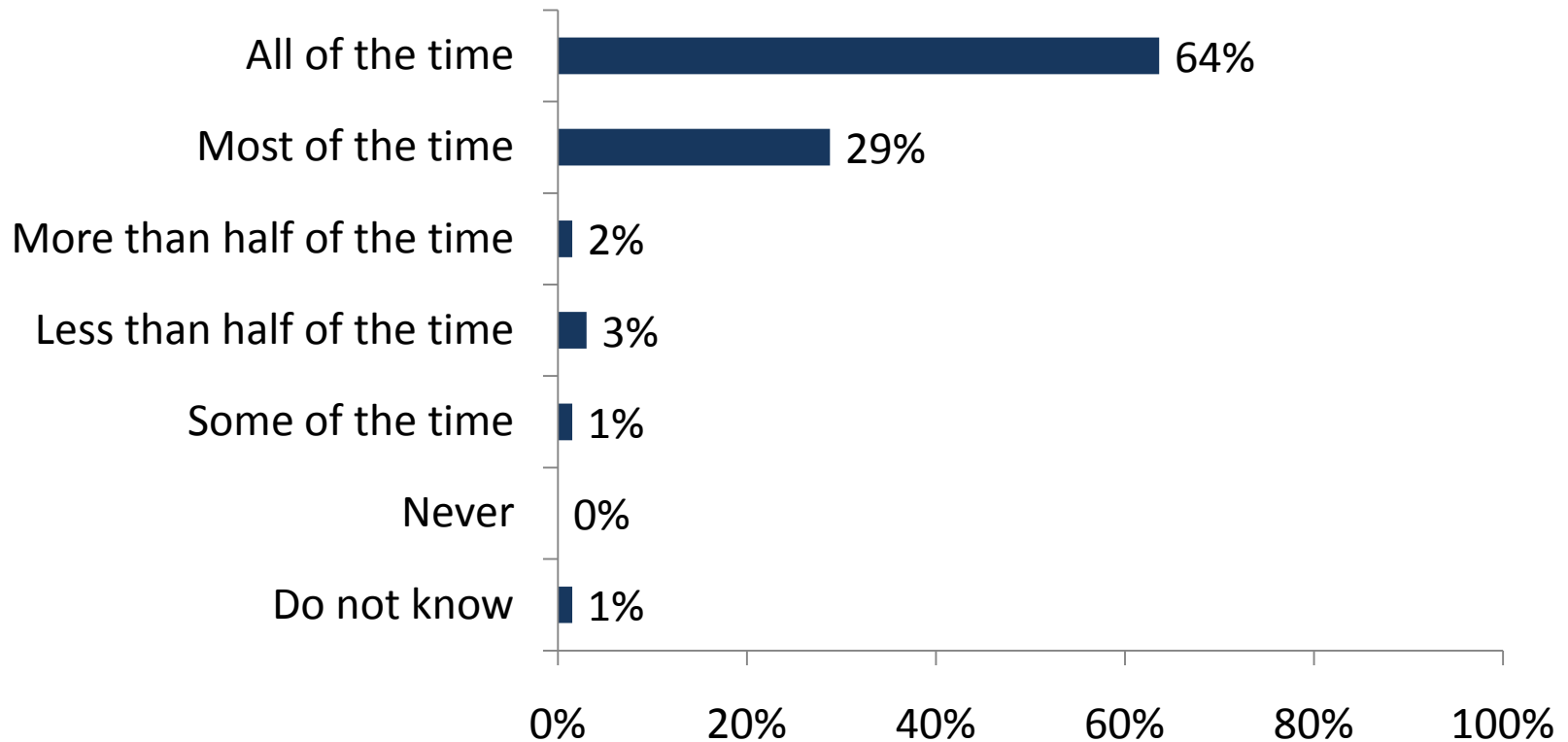
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9. How satisfied were you with the information FEMA provided you concerning the availability of Public Assistance mitigation funding?



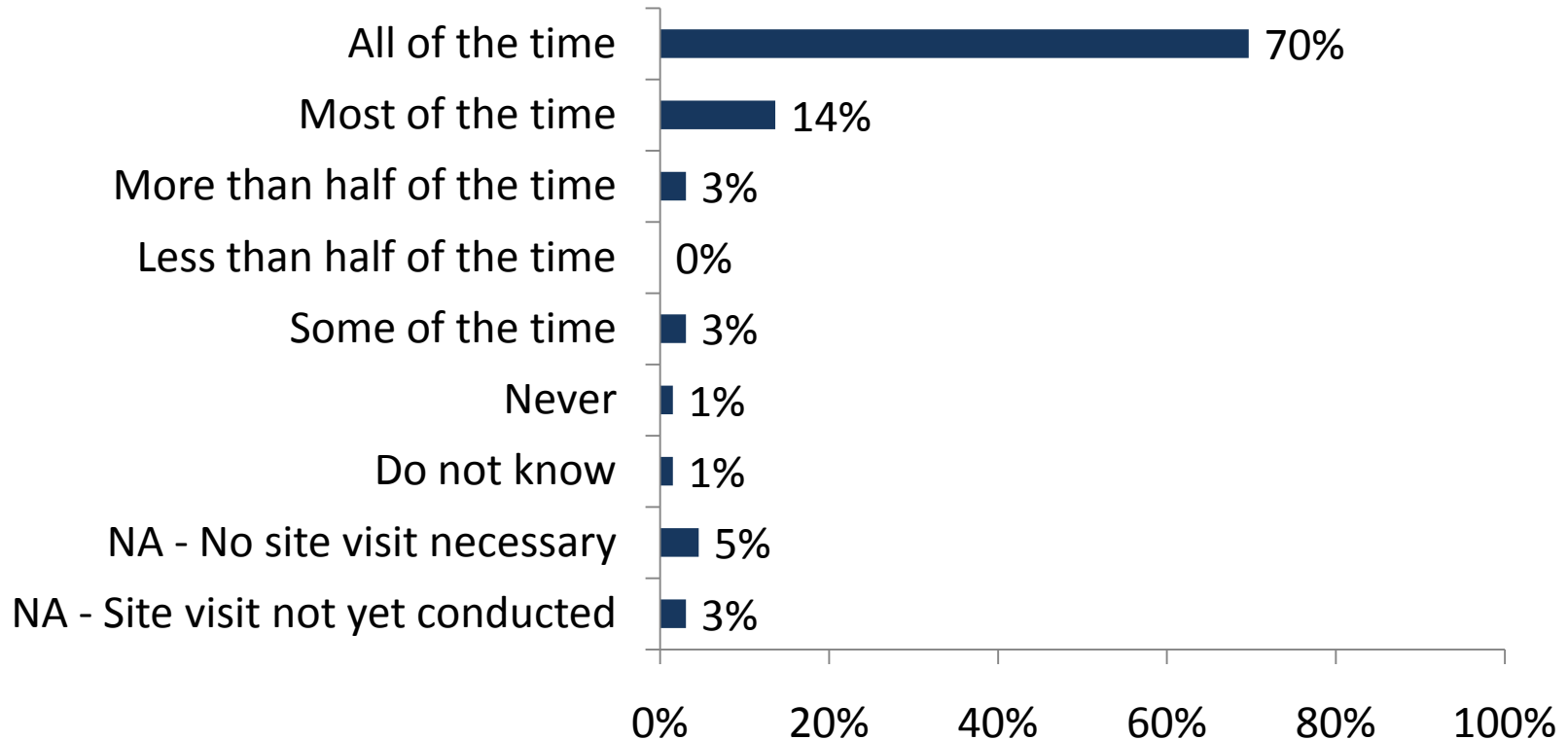
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10. The field staff understood the eligibility requirements:



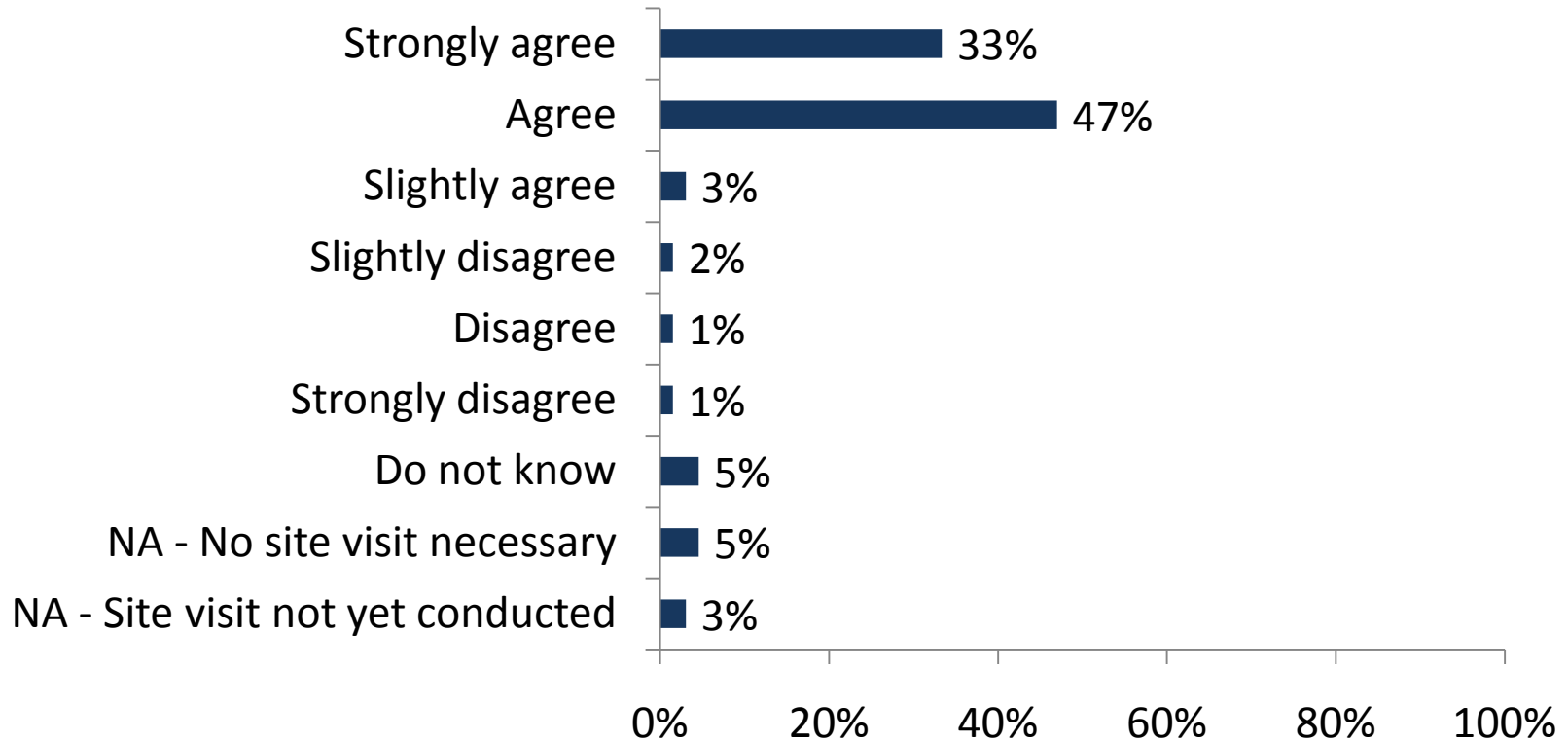
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11. The field staff that conducted the site visit(s) were competent and understood the types of damage they were assessing:



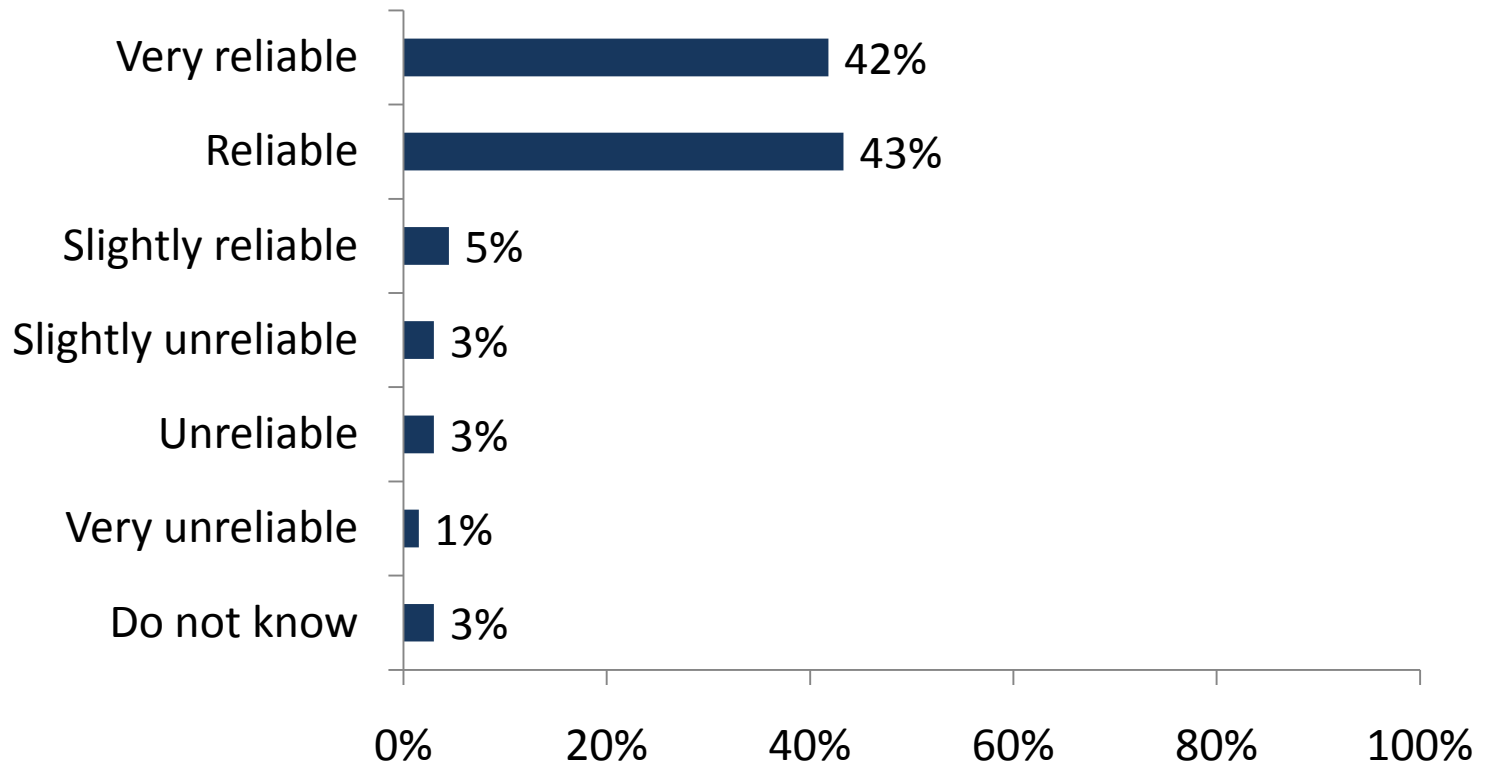
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12. The field staff that conducted the site visit(s) understood the local conditions that could influence the rebuilding process.



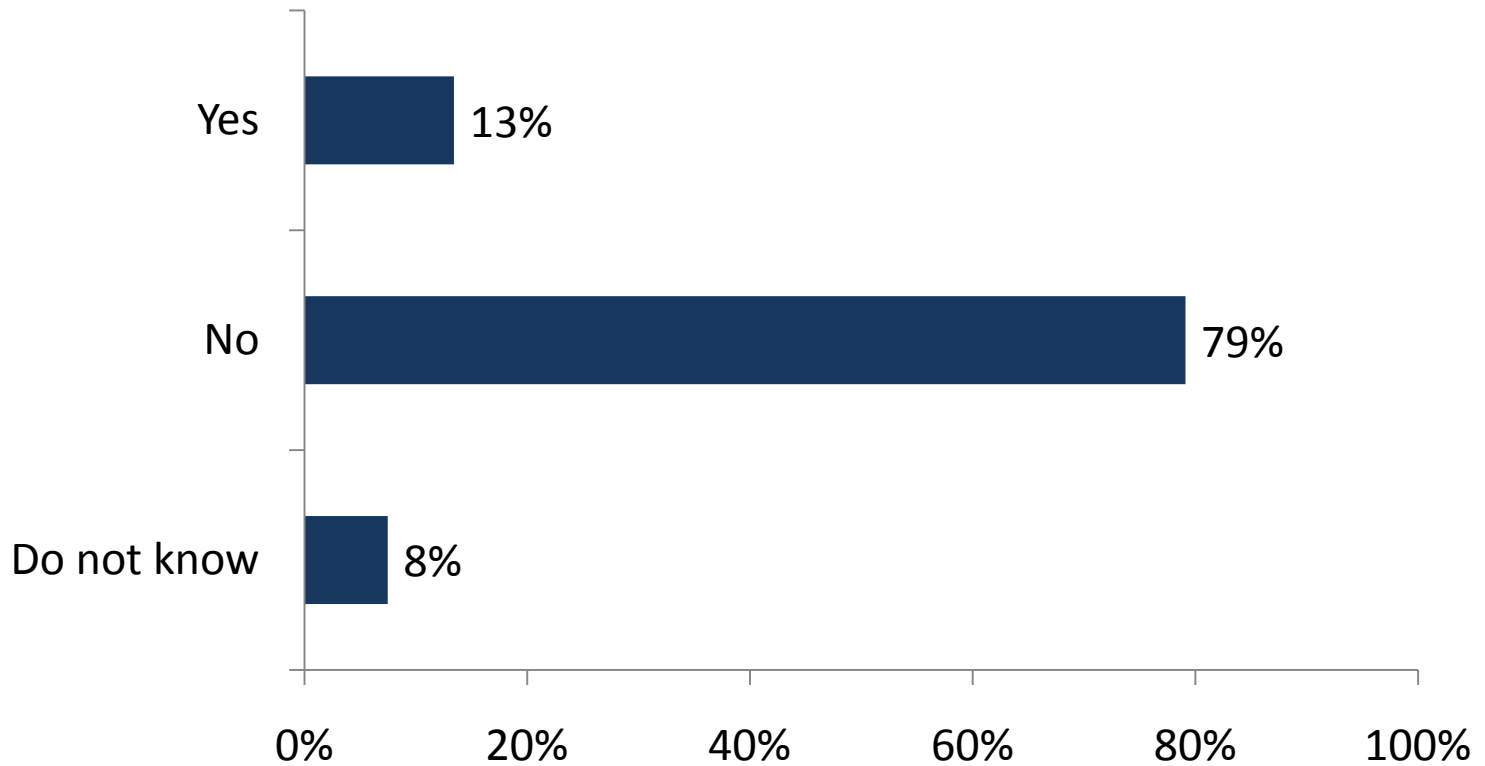
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13. How reliable were the decisions and information you received from staff?



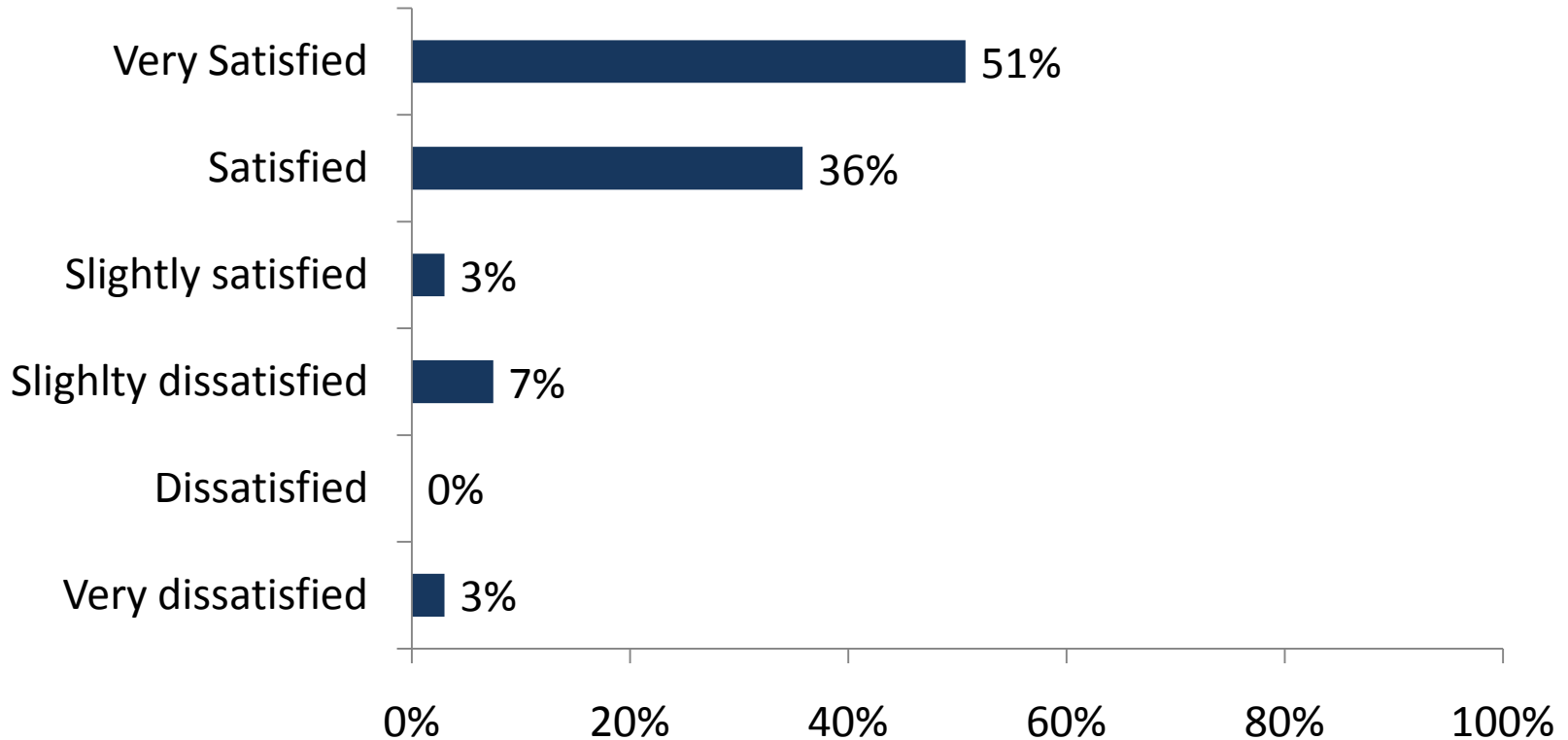
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14. Was staff turnover a problem?



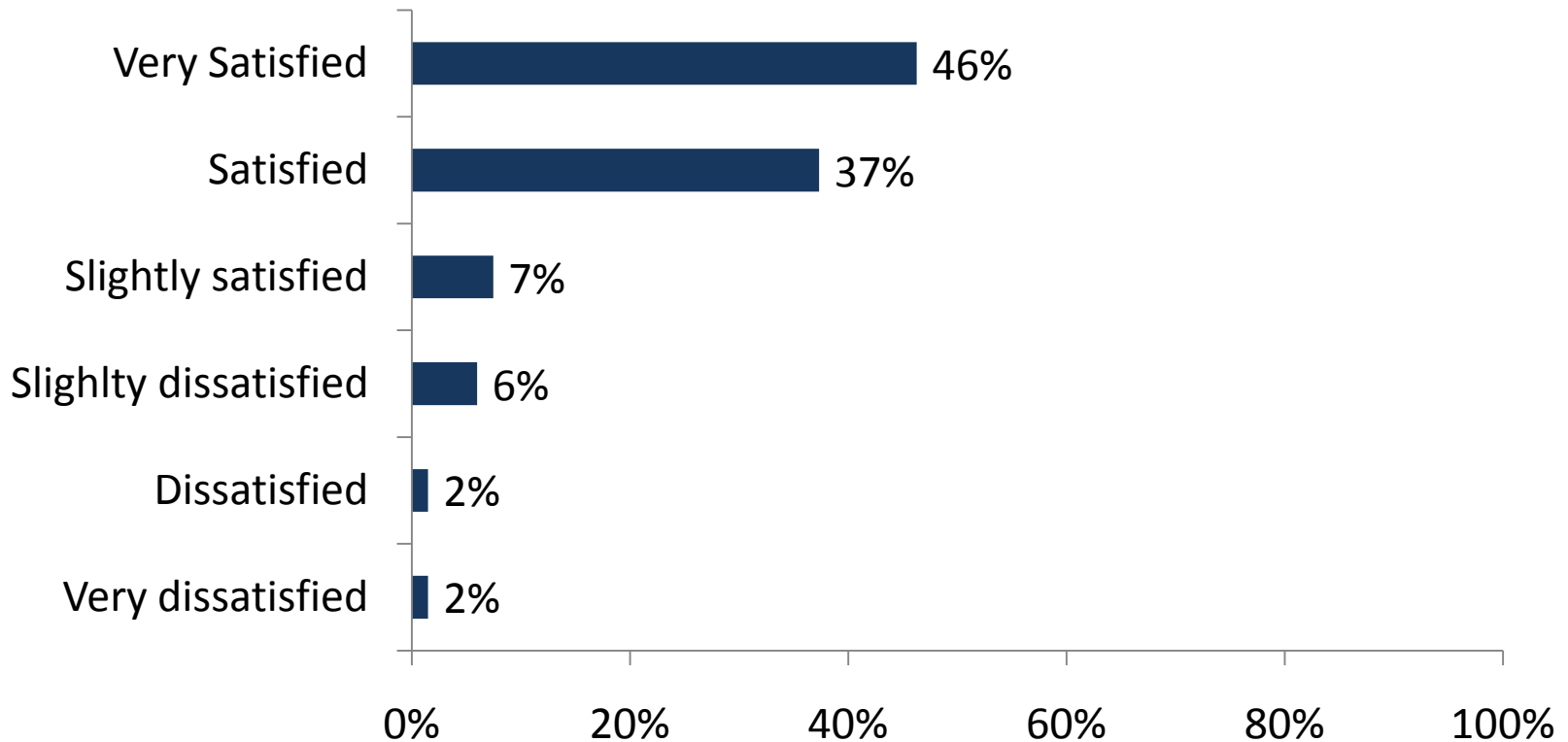
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15. Overall, how satisfied were you with the customer service provided by staff?



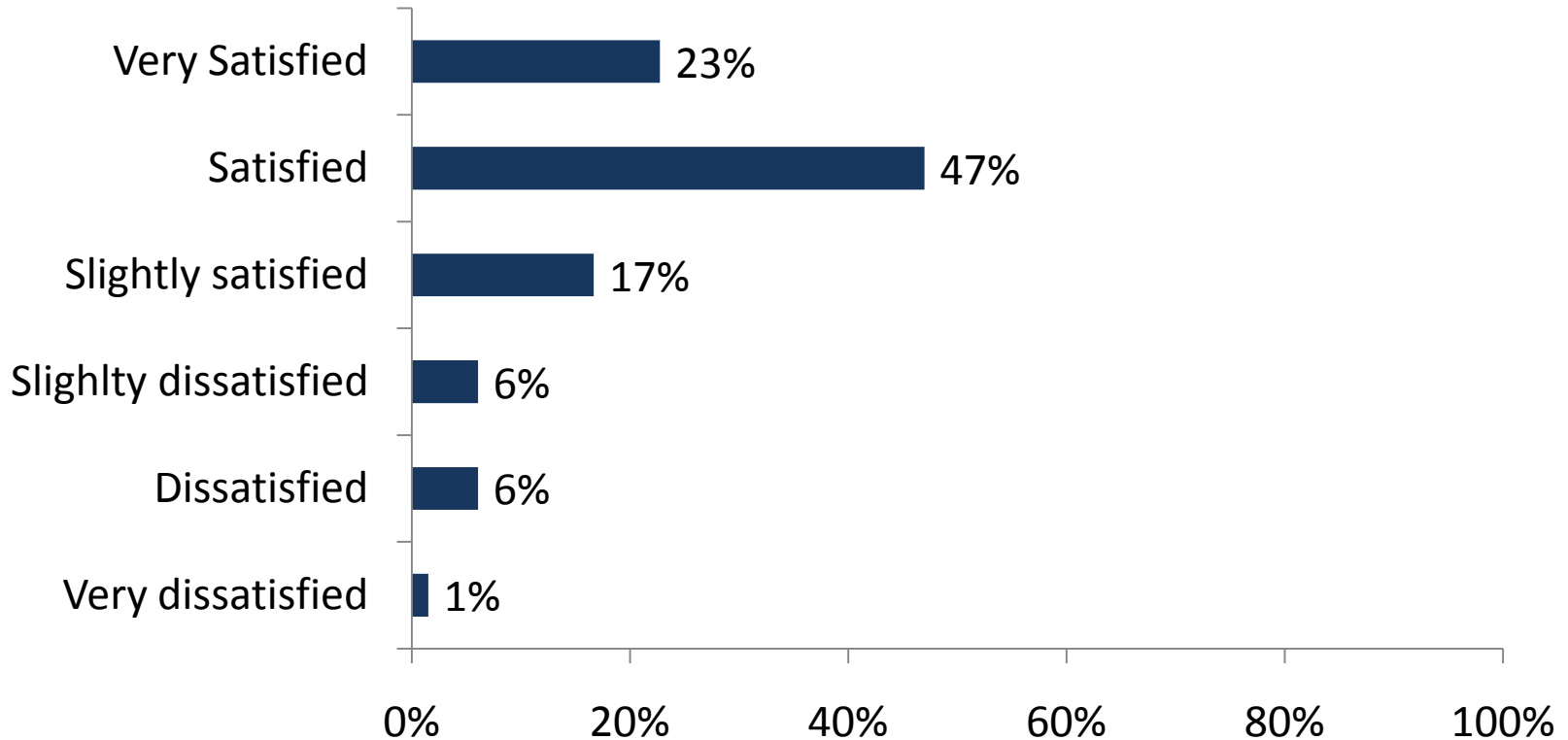
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16. Overall, how satisfied were you with the responsiveness provided by staff?



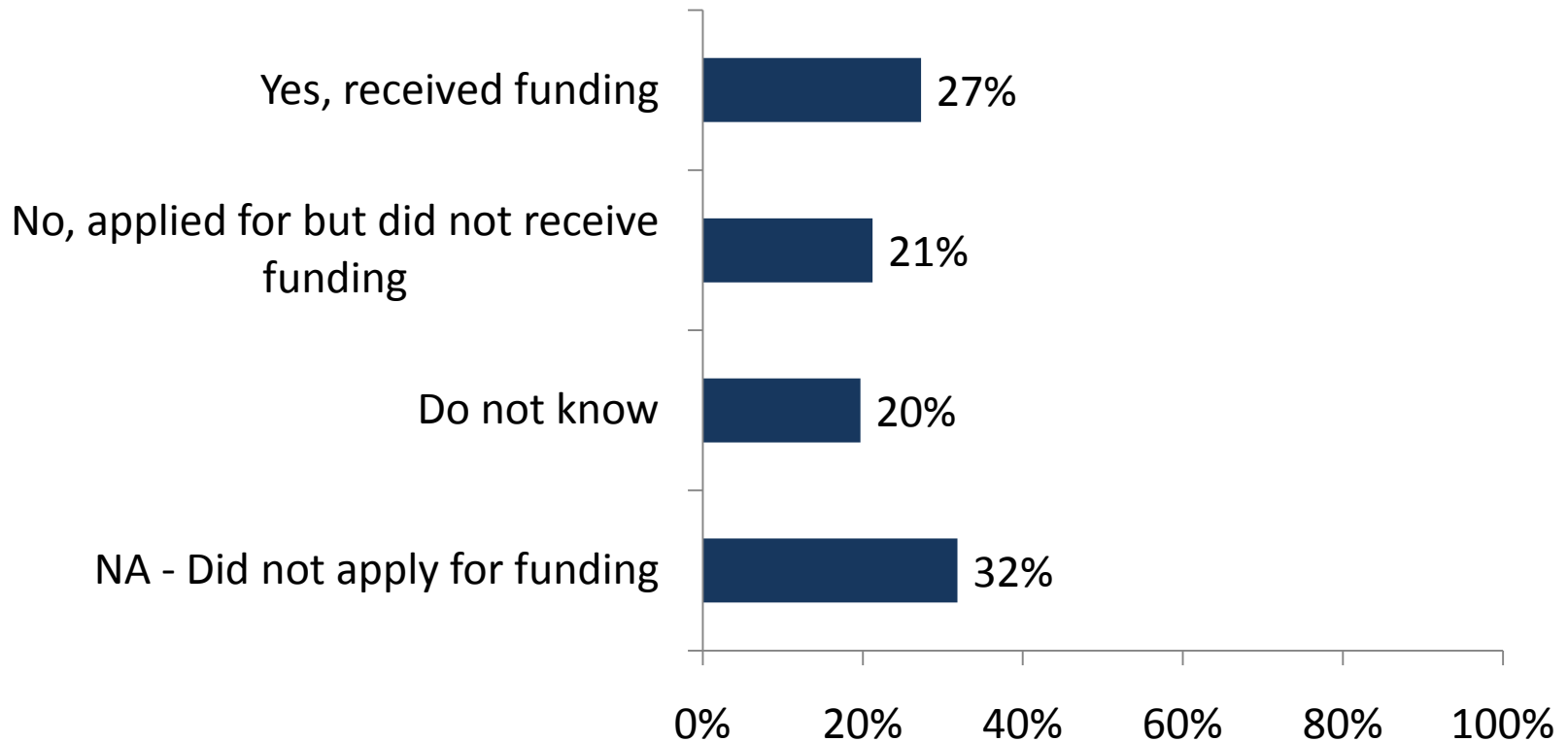
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17. Overall, how satisfied were you with the Project Worksheet process?



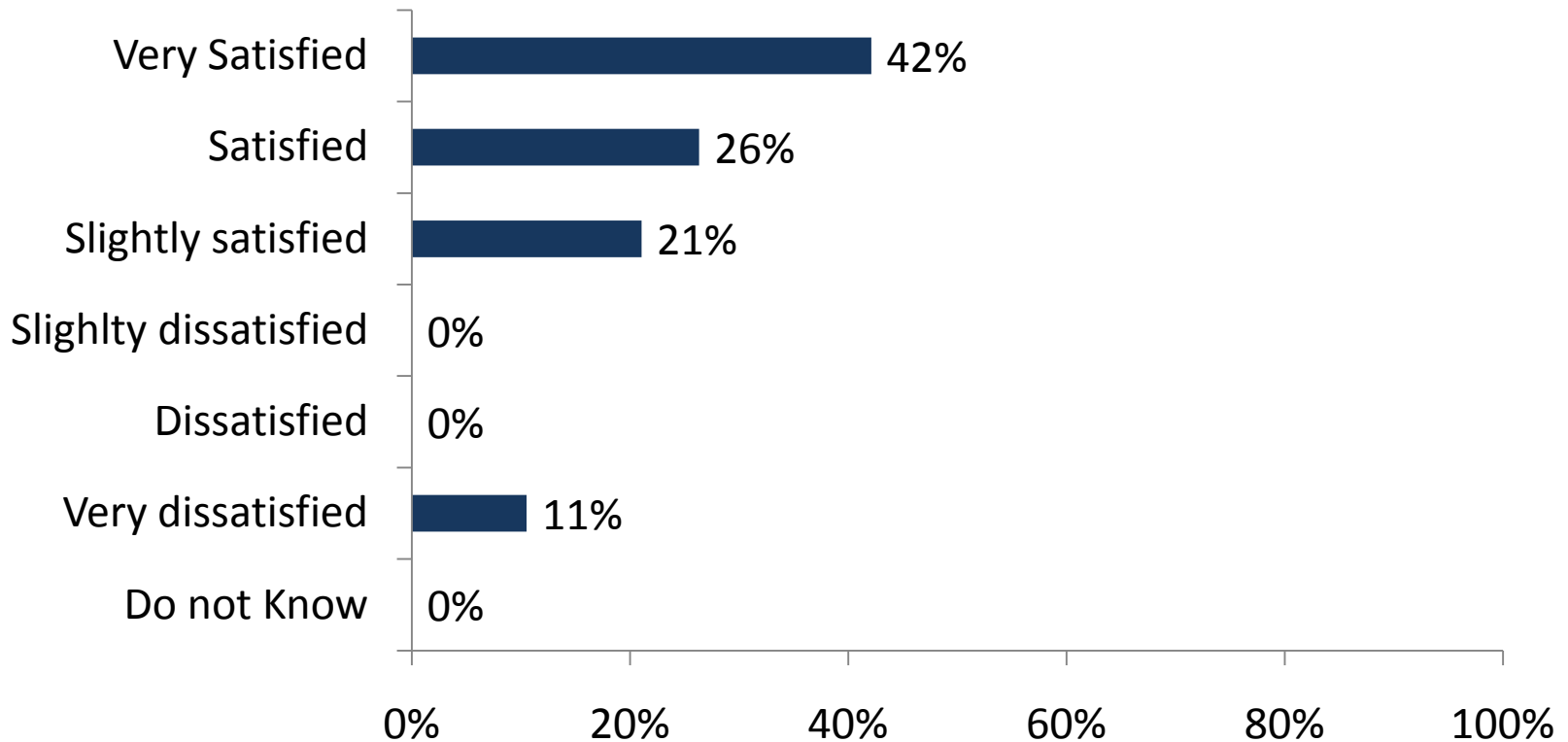
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18a. Did you receive Public Assistance mitigation funding?



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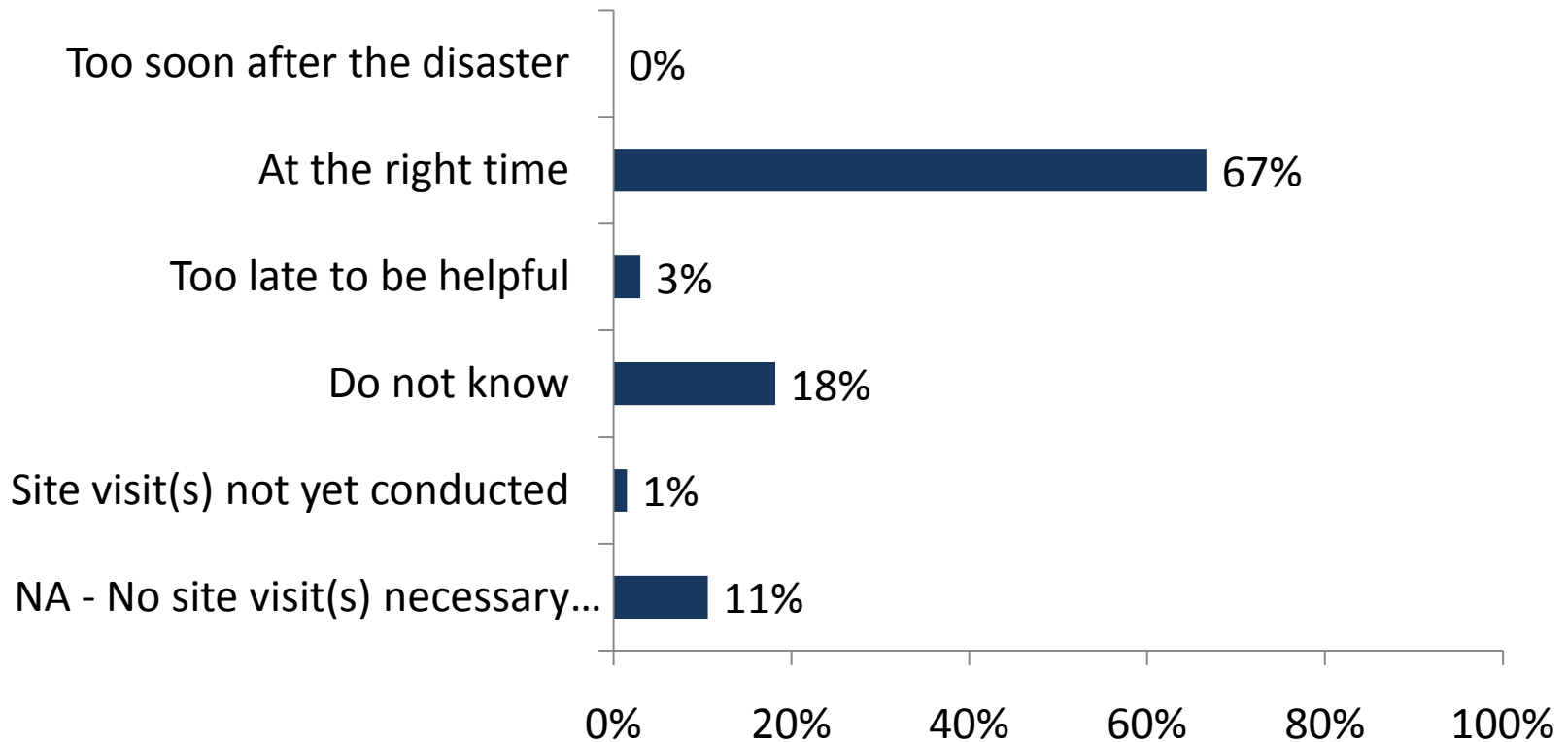
18b. How satisfied were you with the amount of Public Assistance mitigation funding you received?



Only answered by those who answered “yes” to Question 18a.

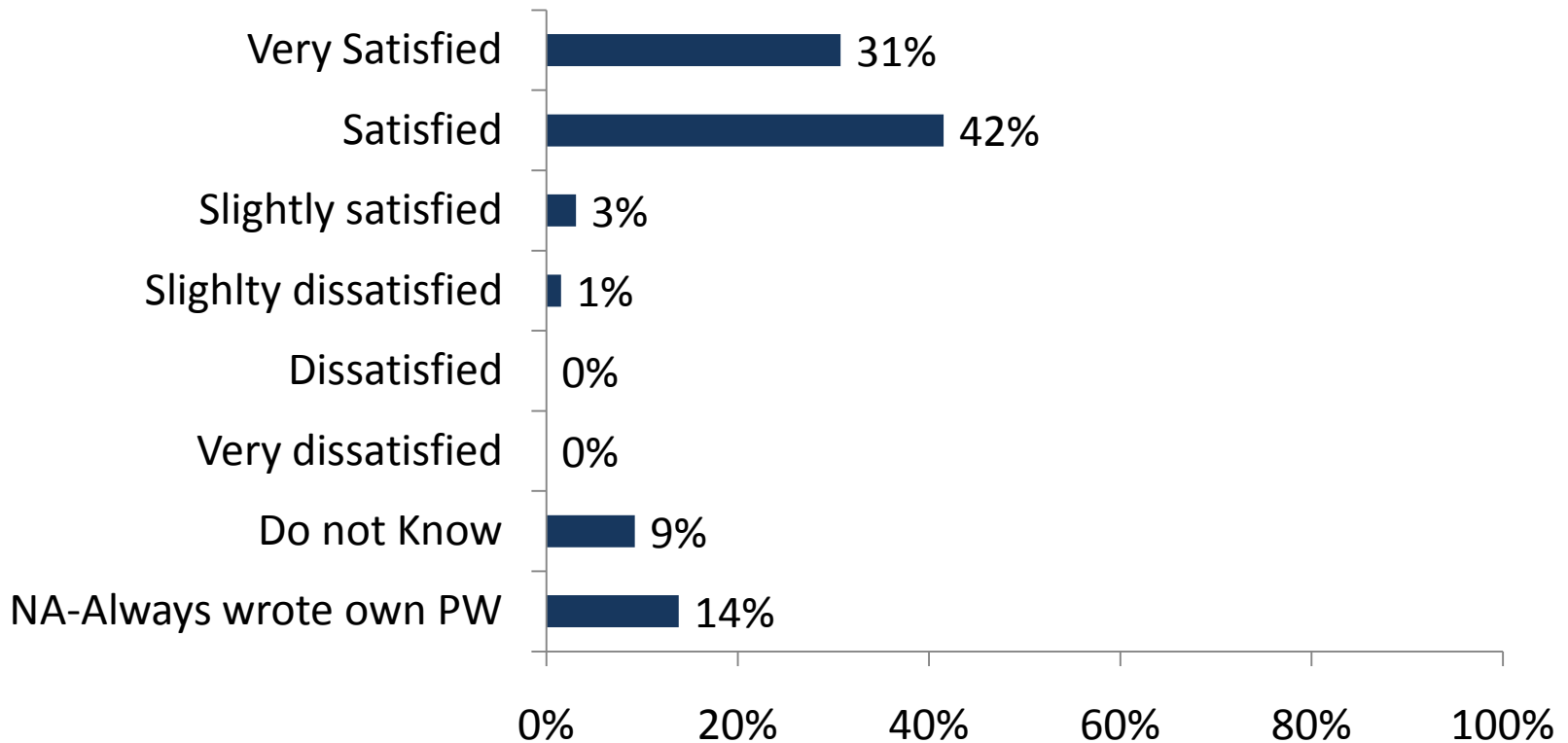
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19. If FEMA conducted a site visit, FEMA conducted the Project Worksheet site visit(s):



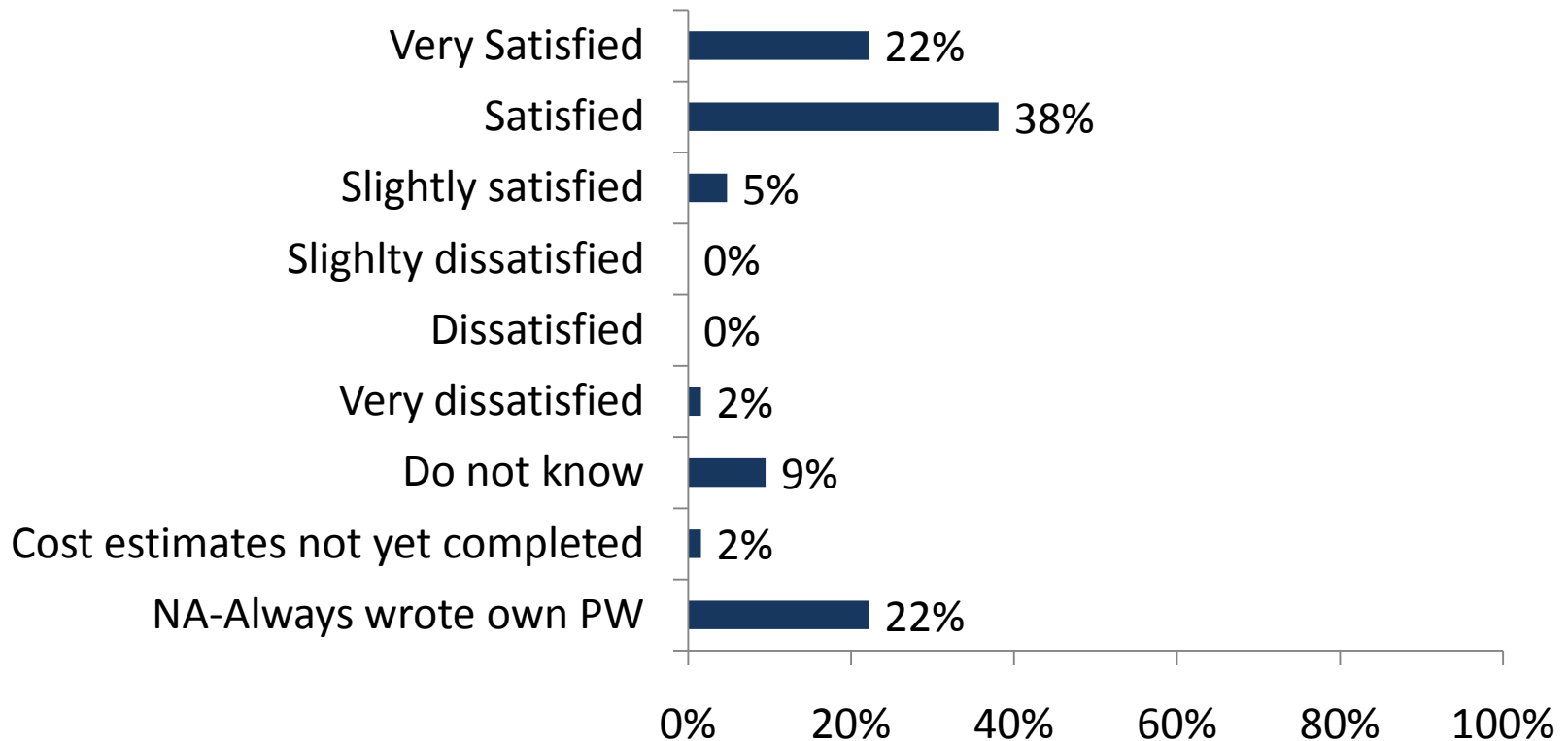
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20. If FEMA developed the scope(s) of work, how satisfied were you with their development?



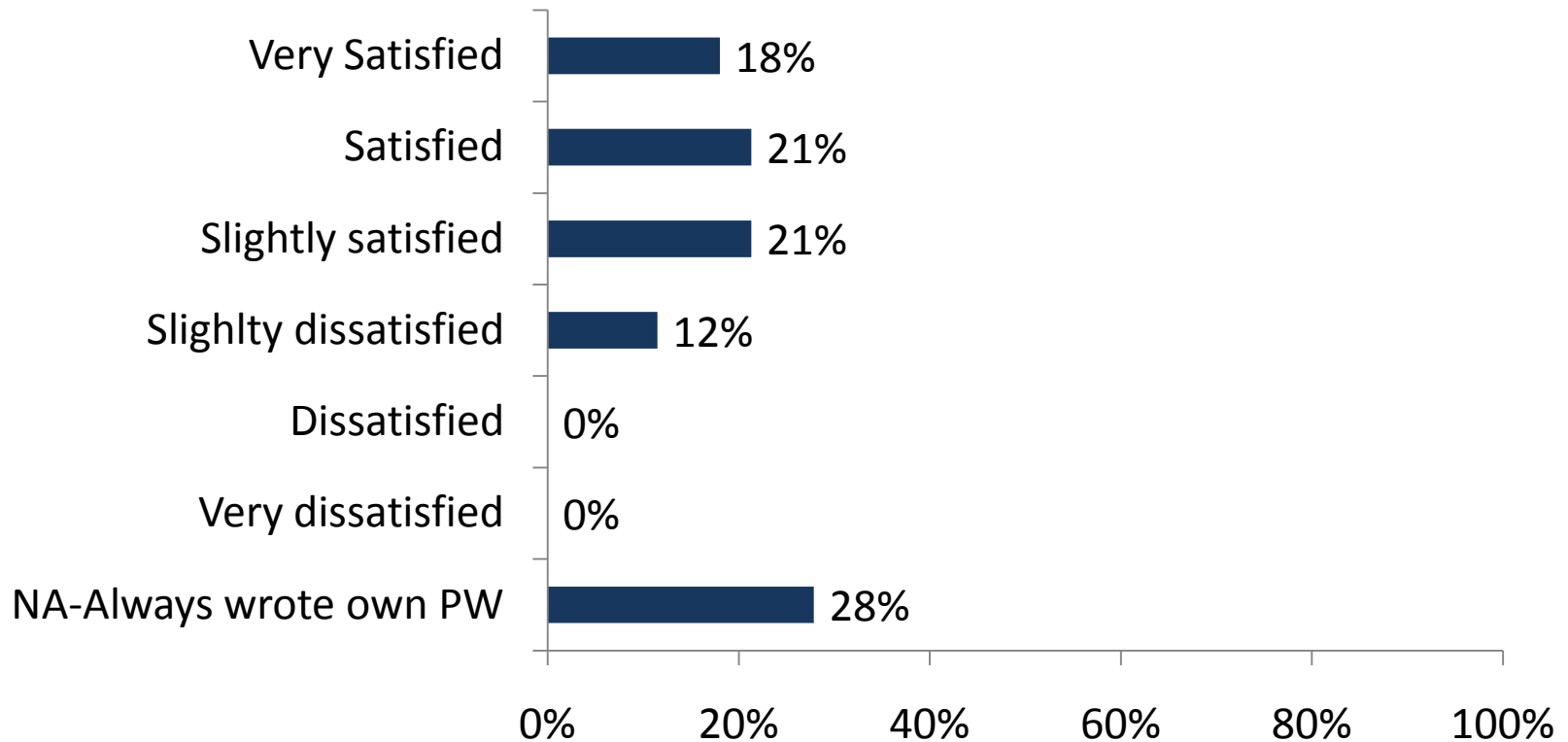
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21. If FEMA identified damage repair cost estimates, how satisfied were you with these estimates?



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22. If you wrote your own Project Worksheet(s), how satisfied were you with completing your Project Worksheet(s) in terms of its complexity, your time invested, and the availability of necessary information?



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23. If you had any small projects, and you chose not to write your own Project Worksheet(s), please briefly explain why you asked FEMA to write your Project Worksheet(s).

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- VDOT wrote all the PW's relating to snow removal and FEMA did the severe weather PW's. We had multiple disasters going on at the same time and it was easier to allow FEMA to write the project worksheets.
- they offered and were much more competent to write them as our staff
- Unfamiliarity with the process.
- This was my first time dealing with reimbursement from FEMA and did not feel I had the knowledge to write our own Project Worksheet.
- I found the forms to be confusing and complicated. If not for the assistance of field staff, I would not have followed through. I was satisfied with most of my interactions with FEMA, it is the state agency with whom I had difficulties.
- Had numerous problems working with the Project Worksheet. Many areas of the spreadsheet had become corrupt. Could not get a clean copy from other jurisdictions, the State, or the FEMA representative
- Our project specialist (J Sweeney) offered to write the PWs.
- John Carr, our Fema Representative volunteered to draft our project worksheet while he was here.

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23. If you had any small projects, and you chose not to write your own Project Worksheet(s), please briefly explain why you asked FEMA to write your Project Worksheet(s).

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- I completed some of the project worksheet such as the payroll, equipment, labor and contractor information. However, I didn't complete the scope of work. I relied on Sandra Haizlip, the FEMA rep to help me complete the PWs as she seemed to know what information was necessary to be included. Also, she knew what supporting documentation was needed for all of the expenditures. I didn't mind putting together all the required supporting documentation but the project worksheets just seemed to be so huge and cumbersome for small projects. However, Sandra Haizlip was very helpful and patient. I can't answer question 21 since FEMA did not identify any damage repair cost estimates because we either had the projects completed by the time they came or we obtained our own estimates from contractors.
- We did not ask, it was offered to us by the FEMA rep. and suggested that it was quicker for him to do it. Not having gone through this process before, we had no reason to doubt him.
- n/a
- This was the first time the staff had dealings with this paperwork (we have a new finance administrator). The FEMA Reps worked closely with the county and towns to help us through this process.
- Staff assisted us with worksheets during site visit. Staff help was greatly appreciated in writing the scope.
- Im not sure if it was FEMA or VDOM but it was very difficult getting through the process. We had teams come out to help but they required as much staff time as if I did the project worksheet myself. And despite the assistance the worksheets were returned for corrections.

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23. If you had any small projects, and you chose not to write your own Project Worksheet(s), please briefly explain why you asked FEMA to write your Project Worksheet(s).

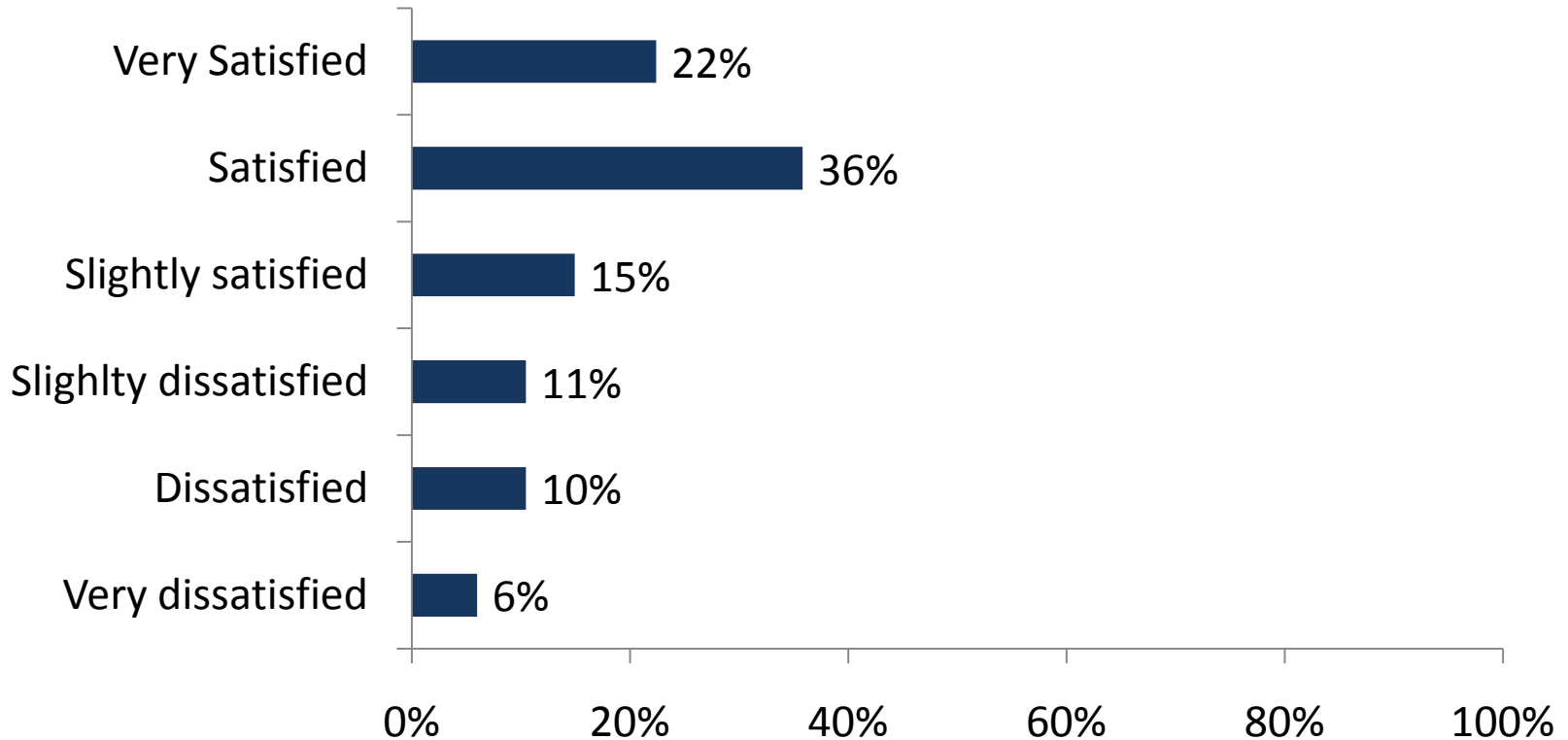
NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- I developed and wrote my own project worksheets in Excel. FEMA Field Staff took data and entered into Work Sheet. If they're available electronically, wasn't aware of it. Our Field Staff was professional, courteous, and very helpful.
- All of the PWs were written collaboratively, we supplied all of the data including the force account sheets and narratives, FEMA developed the PWs.
- The Town asked FEMA to write the Project Worksheets due to the FEMA representatives expertise on completing the worksheet and the volume of the project worksheets.
- I didn't ask them to write it.
- This was my first experience working with FEMA on the grant process and the staff that was sent out by FEMA was very understanding of my limited understanding of the process; they offered to help with the more complex worksheets and wrote those for me. I was most appreciative of the learning process that this provided me.
- No one on the planet understands the FEMA paperwork which changes every two weeks.
- The FEMA representative offered to help with the worksheets and we were very happy for the assistance.
- The field staff was more experienced and capable of writing the Project Worksheet.
- FEMA assisted us in writing Project Worksheets as we went through the process.

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24. How satisfied were you with FEMA's timeliness:

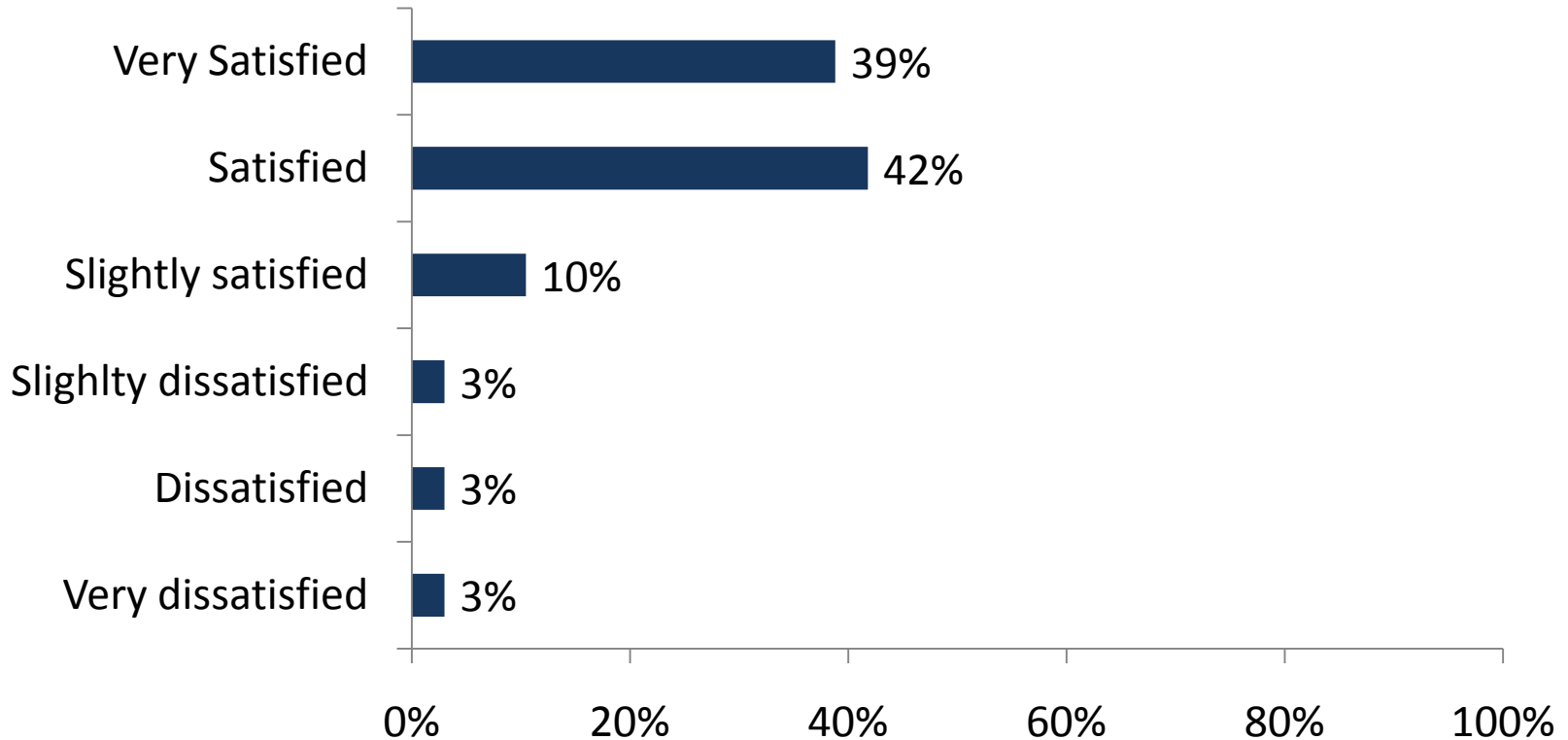
A. Overall:



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24. How satisfied were you with FEMA's timeliness:

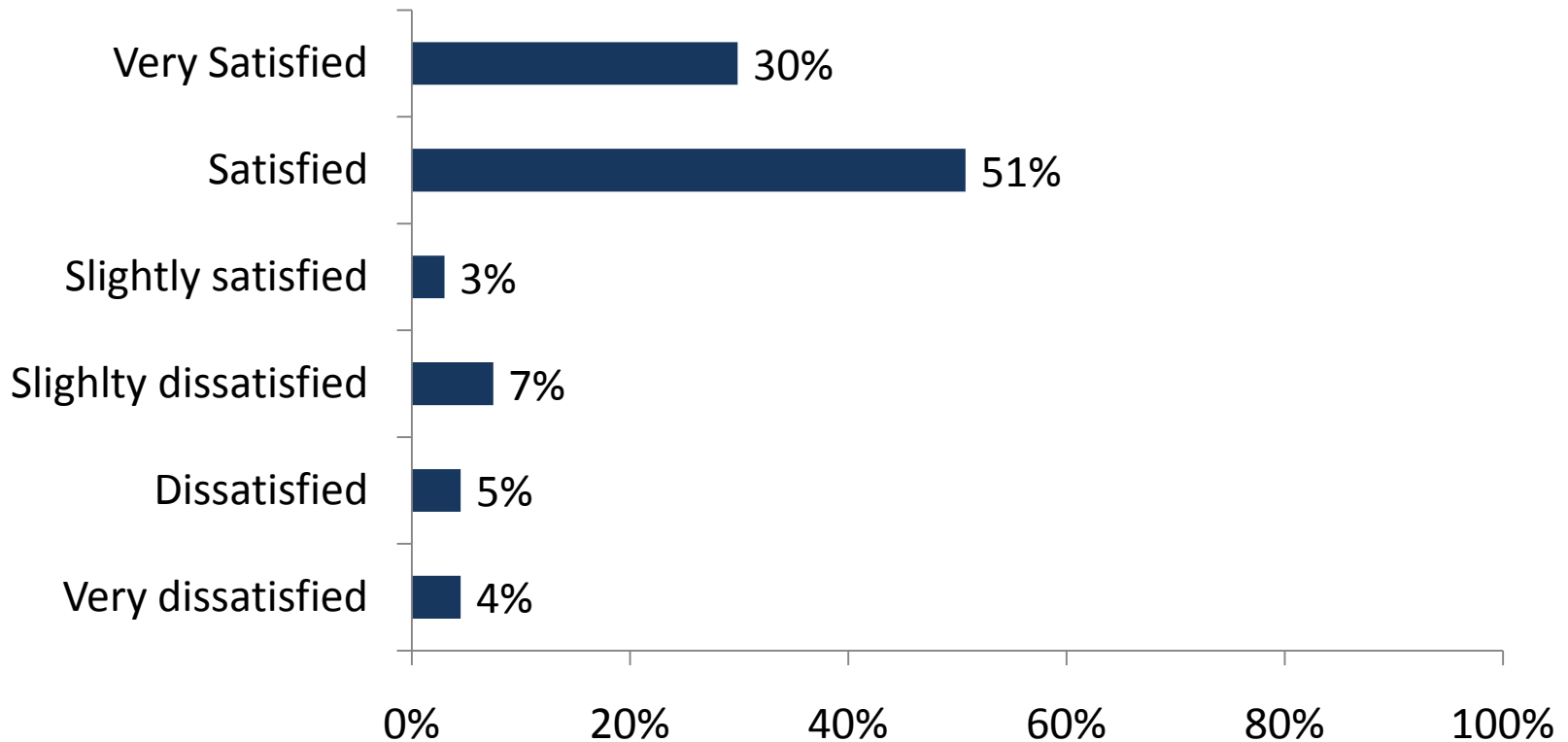
B. In relation to providing information:



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24. How satisfied were you with FEMA's timeliness:

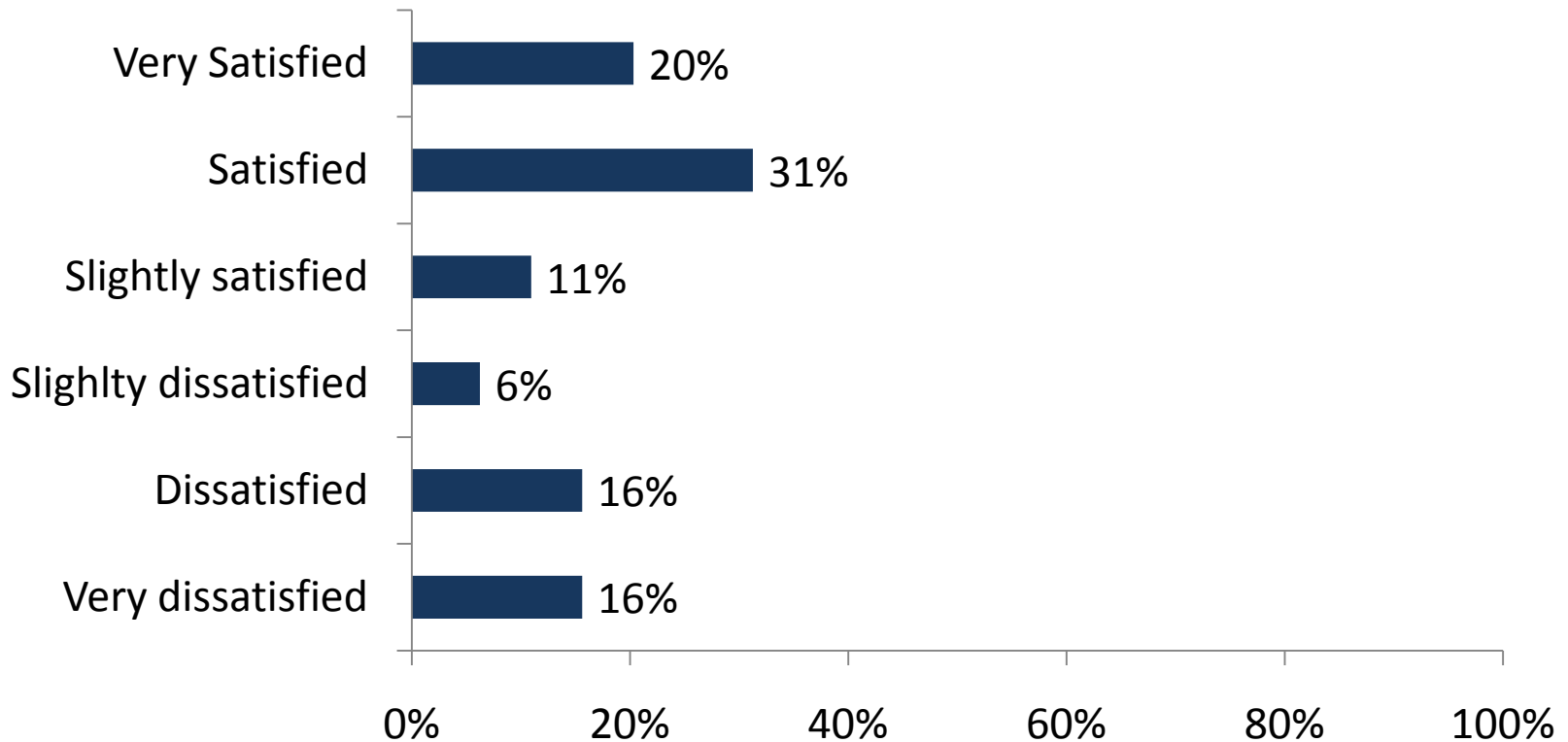
C. In relation to making eligibility decisions:



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24. How satisfied were you with FEMA's timeliness:

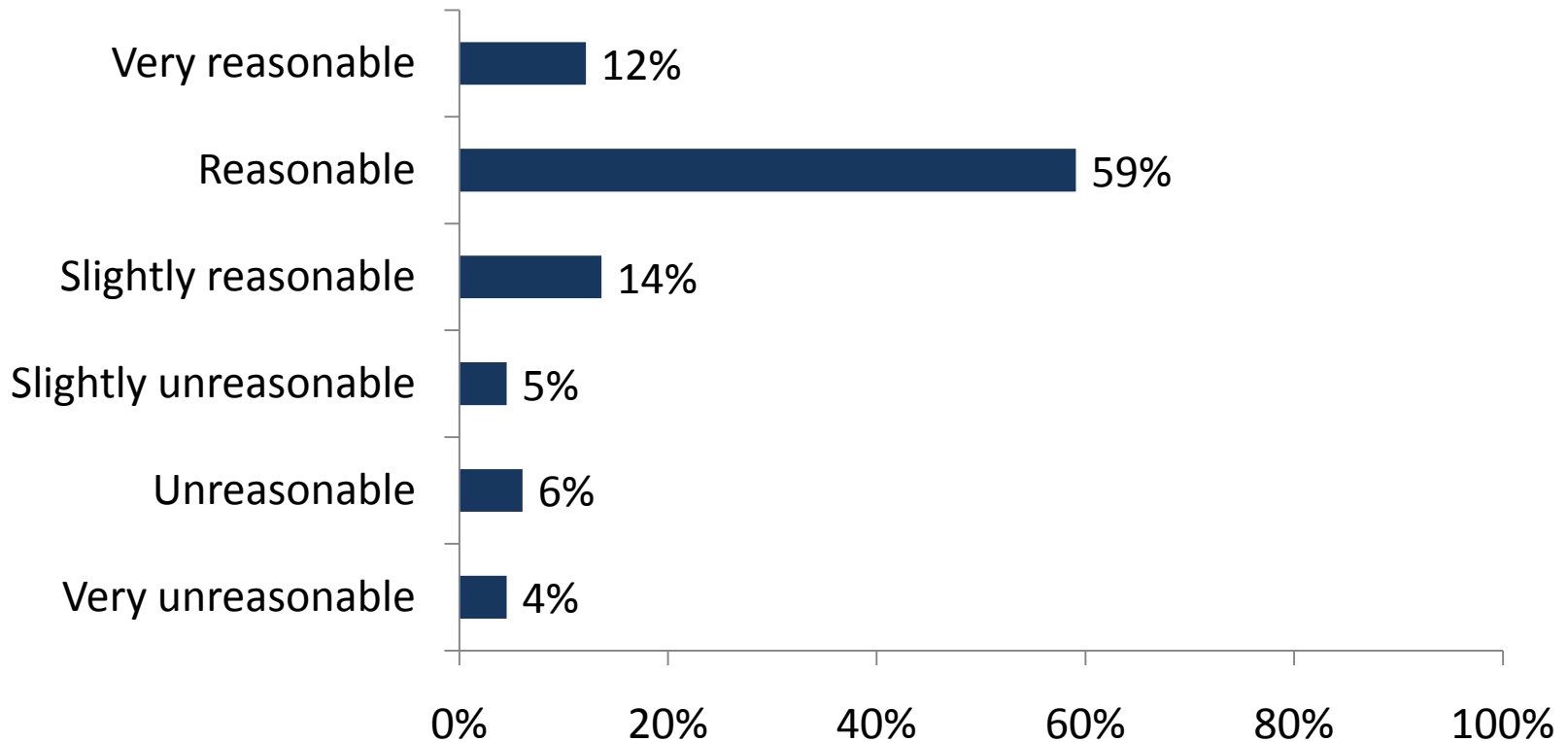
D. In relation to providing funds:



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25. How reasonable were administrative requirements for the following?

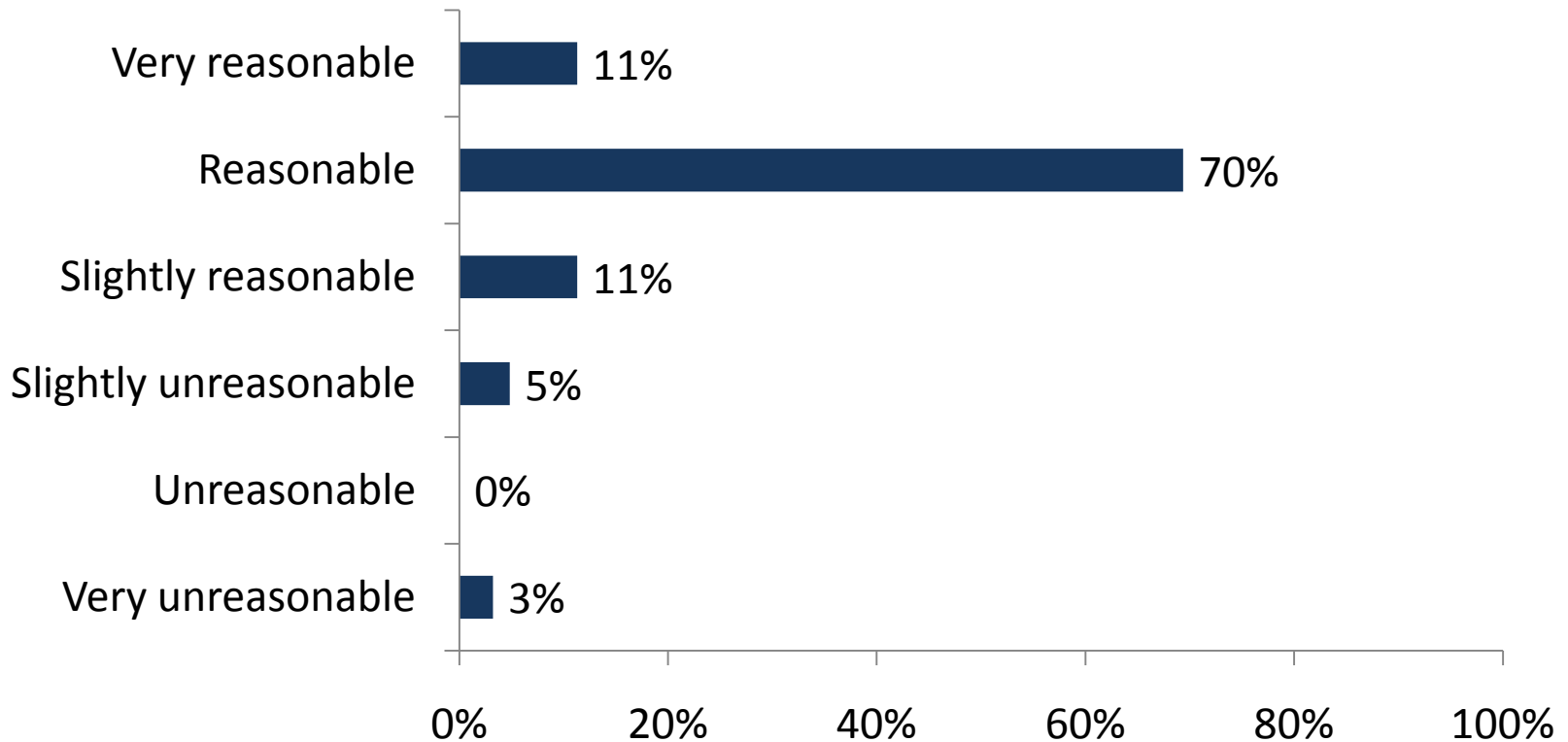
A. Overall



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25. How reasonable were administrative requirements for the following?

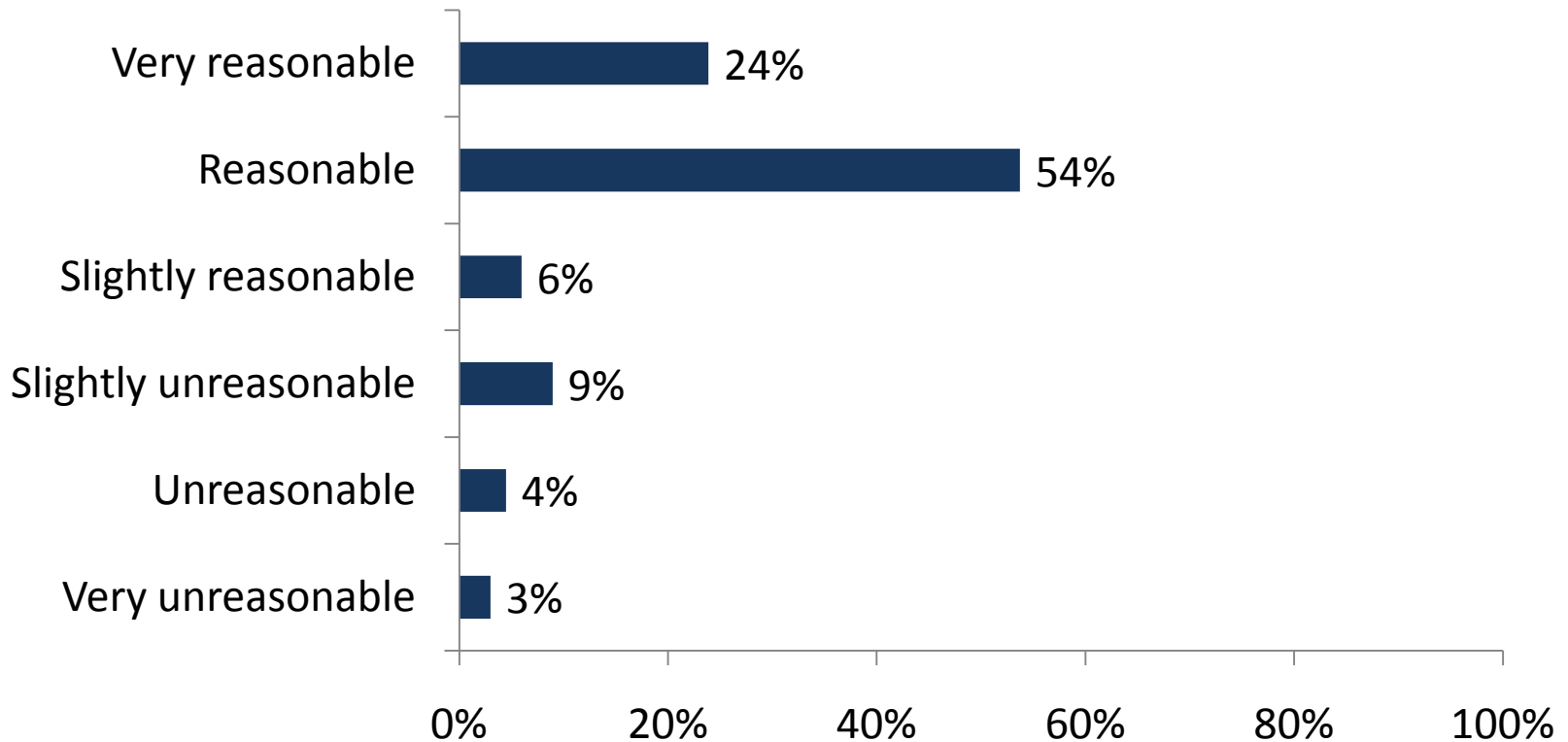
B. Pre-disaster documentation



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25. How reasonable were administrative requirements for the following?

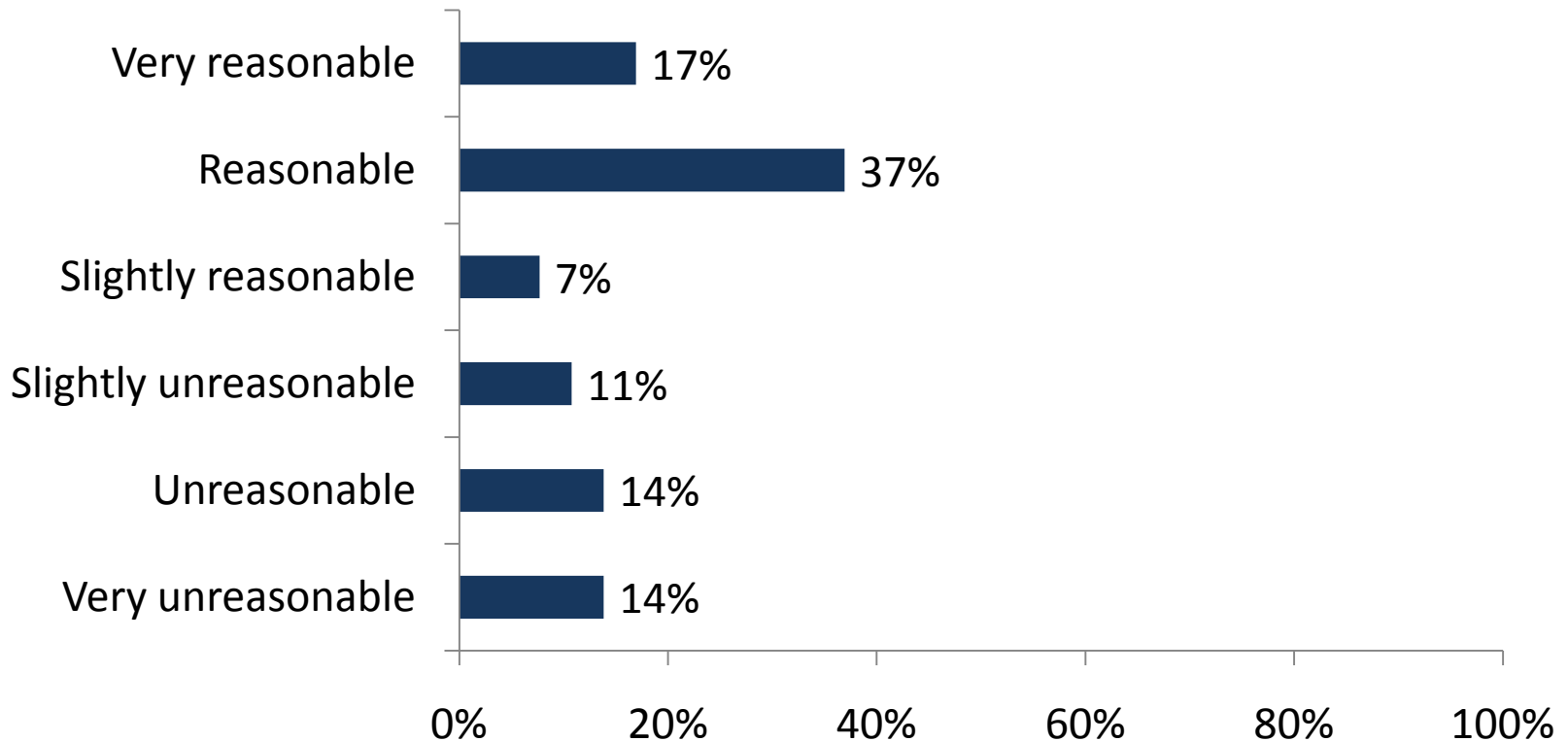
C. Project Worksheet review



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25. How reasonable were administrative requirements for the following?

D. Payment of claims



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26. Is there anything you would have liked FEMA to have done differently during this disaster recovery?

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- No, because the FEMA PAC worked out of our office which made it very easy to get questions answered in a timely manner.
- there response to our appeal took forever and here over one year after the declared disaster we are still waiting for payment of some project worksheets.
- Speed up the time for payment of claims.
- FEMA officials and State Officials didn't always appear to be on the same page.
- No
- I was told by field staff that staff overtime that the agency incurred as a direct result of the storm could be claimed and that was overturned at a regional level
- After almost one year from the first visit STILL NO MONEY PAID!
- It took a longer time frame from the completion of documentation and award decision until reimbursement was delivered. I would suggest a little quicker action regarding sending the award, once documentation is completed
- I think everyone wanted to help and did but the problem is the funding. It has been over a year and we still have not received the funding. I have also had to resubmit information even though people tell me that it was done already. Working for a nonprofit myself, I can understand the heavy work load and everyone was very nice and wanted to help. I just think that the funding (payment) issue puts a damper on an overall good process.

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26. Is there anything you would have liked FEMA to have done differently during this disaster recovery?

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- Would have liked to see this process begin sooner. Storm occurred in December but PA didn't begin until July. This makes it difficult gathering additional information from those impacted especially since the jurisdiction was impacted again between the time of this storm and the time the PA process began.
- It has been a year and 1/2 since the disaster and we only last month received half of the funds. Who knows when we will receive the other half? Why is the state taking so long to review the claim when everything was reviewed by FEMA at the outset?
- For this disaster we were determined ineligible even though the County surrounding us was declared. Communicating with staff was frustrating as their voicemail box was full or emails went unreturned. An appeal was attempted but I cannot be certain it was ever received. For the snow storm declaration in December of 2009 we were reviewed multiple times and changes were made by each staff member. This process was not easy and the apparently overworked staff seemed overwhelmed. Snm
- I thought the field representatives did a excellent job while on site. It would be nice to know where the application status is currently. Until we received this survey form, we had no idea if or when we would be rewarded our funds. We are truly blessed to have FEMA to help accelerate recovery during a disaster.
- We still haven't received funding even though we completed all paperwork last June.

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26. Is there anything you would have liked FEMA to have done differently during this disaster recovery?

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- project worksheets in Excel were a problem. field workers could not fix coding errors to allow data entry and had to take our developed worksheets. poor worksheet design & implementation. office controls worksheet and field workers can't fix the errors. very frustrating.
- Not ask for the same paperwork multiple times from multiple people when there was staff turnover. Ask for all of the paperwork up front vs. asking for one set, then another set once that comes in. Having the reps be consistent in what they ask. One rep told us a specific letter on letterhead was sufficient and his replacement said it was not.
- n/a
- Nothing noted at this time
- Can't think of a thing. We "adopted" our field reps. Thanks for all you do. Jane Bennett, Emergency Manager, Wise County, VA 276-328-2321
- We had some confusion about applying with the jurisdiction or if we had to apply on our own. At first we were told to apply with the jurisdiction then told we had to apply on our own. This slowed and confused the initial filling and slowed payment.
- Communicated more with us...we emailed and called several times with no response from FEMA.
- Initially, there was little communication and coordination at the State level. Time-lines, information, updates, response and guidance not delivered. After the kick-off meeting FEMA field representative, Mr. TJ Tremmel, assisted greatly and expeditiously. Overall, under the circumstances, Mr. Tremmel made it a pleasurable experience.

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26. Is there anything you would have liked FEMA to have done differently during this disaster recovery?

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- Tell the truth.....The amount of paperwork is ridiculous. Why does it take two years to get reimbursed? We would up doing the same paperwork three or more times because the FEMA reps kept losing or throwing the paperwork away. The communication between FEMA and the State was terrible. The Computer Excel spreadsheets were all corrupted and did not work properly. The FEMA reservist didn't know what they were doing. One reservist would say something then the next person would say something totally different. Considering the amount of work that it takes to get any reimbursement out of FEMA it is really not worth the effort. If that is FEMA's intent.....To make it so difficult that Local Jurisdictions will just not submit, then bravo, I think FEMA's plan is working.
- It would have been helpful to know exactly what documentation was going to be necessary from the beginning in order to receive the funds once they were approved. It takes a lot of time to gather this information and it could have been gathered while we were waiting to hear from FEMA on the next step.
- We have had an "approval" letter yet have not received payment. While I understand our claim is small in the big picture, it was submitted, reviewed and approved. Our kickoff meeting was held over three months after event and some of documentation hard to acquire and review.
- We are still waiting for our funding to come through after submittal of project worksheets in August 2010. FEMA staff helped us with the submittal of project worksheets. If there was a problem with the submittal, someone should have followed up with us in order to get this claim processed. Initial Field Staff assistance was excellent.

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27. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Public Assistance Program. (Continued)

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- For this to have been my first time dealing with anything like this I was very pleased with how helpful the Field Rep was and how he walked me through all of the paperwork.
- NA
- In my situation, the state department slowed the process enormously. Perhaps it was because my claim was so small.
- Overall this has not really worked well considering the relatively small amount of payment that we expected to receive.
- I was pleased as a whole with the FEMA response to our requests. Nealia Dabney was particularly helpful. She could almost always be reached by phone if not she returned phone calls and e-mails. The gentlemen who made our site visit were extremely knowledgeable and provided valuable assistance
- Cannot see that adding the state review level has added anything but slowness to the review process.
- The program either needs a more streamlined process or a dedicated group of staff that are able to provide consistent reviews and guidance.

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27. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Public Assistance Program. (Continued)

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- The excel spreadsheet provided for the 1874 disaster had a few glitches, such as the macros not working properly. Once information was entered it was difficult to update and/or change. I think the new spreadsheet was an improvement over previous disasters I worked on but still needs some work. I would like to see the ability to directly upload information, instead of needing to provide so much paperwork.
- n/a
- The program and process was "near perfect" for our little county.
- Clearer instructions for Higher Education Institutions in regards to applying for disaster funding.
- Need to hold states more accountable about paying our monies. Still have not received final payment.
- The Public Assistance Program has been very helpful to the University during difficult situations. The only issues that we have experienced could be attributed to the difficulties of operating within state guidelines (ours) for construction projects and trying to do that in a timely matter. FEMA, rightly, would like to close things out and we are shackled by our insurance requirements and mandated procedures that slow things down significantly. We sincerely appreciate the patience that has been shown to us in these situations.

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27. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Public Assistance Program. (Continued)

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- 1. All policies should be in writing and given to the applicant. 2. The Force account labor worksheets are a mess. The formulas did not work, there was a virus on the disk FEMA gave us! 3. The force account labor forms do not take into account traditional public safety staff according to the unwritten FEMA rules/policies concerning Public Safety overtime eligibility. THE STAFFORD ACT IS FINE BUT ALL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUSTMENTS MADE BY FEMA OVER THE YEARS MAKE IT CUMBERSOME AT BEST. THIS WAS THE FIRST SNOW DISASTER UNDER THE NEW SNOW POLICY AND IT WAS UNFAIR AND UNJUST TO THE COMMUNITIES. THE SNOW POLICY NEEDS TO MIRROR THE INTENT OF THE STAFFORD ACT NOT BE A SEPERATE ACT IN ITSELF.
- The process for seeking reimbursement started off smoothly with the field staff explaining what was needed and how the process was to work. The responses to the questions in this survey are reflective of the frustration and disappointment in the administrative process of seeking reimbursement from FEMA. It has been 16 months since the storm and approximately a year since the request was submitted to FEMA. During this time Town staff has been asked to resubmit information multiple times as well as being asked to submit information that was not previously requested because of different interpretations of the regulations from one FEMA representative to another FEMA representative. This experience has left a negative impression of FEMA with the Town and a lack of confidence in working together in the future, if required.

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27. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Public Assistance Program. (Continued)

NOTE: The following comments and suggestions have not been edited, with the exception of redacting personal identifiers.

- It is not worth dealing with. FEMA should have a new policy.....If the project is not worth at least one million dollars FEMA should not provide any assistance. It's not worth a localities time to spend two years doing worthless paperwork to get less money than that. Ask yourself, why localities have to hire contractors to do their FEMA Disaster paperwork.....Don't you think that maybe there is a flaw in your system. When your paperwork is so screwed up that local governments have to hire someone to do that work????
- We provided time sheets for the project worksheets to the representatives in the beginning and all labor information was submitted. After a year, we were asked to provide proof of payment and check record that payment was received for labor. It would have beneficial in the beginning to know that we needed to submitted that proof of documentation. This made our filing process delayed to gathered the information that was needed. However, staff was very patient and worked with us to allow us to gather the necessary documentation. We did have turnover from our projects passed on from one representative then to another. But everyone that assisted us was very accommodating and helpful. We appreciate the opportunity to apply for the funding to help our jurisdiction with the expenses from both storms. Thanks again for the help and support. At this time, we have not received any funding.
- Probablely my only comment during this process is regarding the time period of getting our funds. This snow storm happened in Dec 2009 and we still have not received any funds. Everytwo/three months I will get email with more info that is needed.
- FEMA has approved, have received little support from state on the fund delivery process and no actual dollars. We are now over 18 months from event, I can only hope we do not go through a major disaster.

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27. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Public Assistance Program. (Continued)

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- I am not sure what caused the hold up in receiving funds, however I think that it was at the State level. We had to submit the same documentation several times and are just now receiving the funds for a relative simple disaster (snow storm cleanup, no reconstruction). The FEMA representative was very helpful.
- Field Staff was excellent in coming in and discussing what had to be done and assisting us in writing project worksheets. However, lack of follow-up between FEMA after submittal of project worksheets. If additional information was needed, FEMA staff should have called and requested. Have been waiting for payment with no knowledge of any additional information needed. Thought everything had been submitted that was required.
- Program was very helpful. Staff was knowledgeable and helped us through this process.
- The whole application process was too problematic. Information had to be submitted more than once so duplication was a problem. The application should be refined and reduced and submittal of mitigation could be more timely.