



Section 8 Contract Administration

Annual Customer Service Survey

2013

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Summary of 2013 Customer Service Survey Results

The 2013 Customer Service Survey titled “Annual Survey for Owners, Management Agents, and Property Managers of Section 8 Properties” was made available to Owners, Management Agents, and Property Managers on October 28, 2013. The survey used a web-based internet company to compose, collect, and analyze the results. A cover email and link to the survey was sent electronically to IFA’s Section 8 stakeholders. As of November 6, 2013, seventy-one responses to the survey had been received. In order to provide an additional opportunity to participate, the survey was sent a second time to Owners and Agents who had not previously responded. The survey return deadline was extended to November 22, 2013.

The survey included questions regarding specific core tasks. The survey also included questions about customer service and training. The survey questions were asked in the following order:

1. Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Reviews;
2. Rental Adjustments;
3. Contract Renewals;
4. Payment of HAP Vouchers & Special Claims;
5. CGI, Inc. (IFA’s subcontractor for voucher processing);
6. Customer Service and Communication; and
7. Training.

This is IFA’s twelfth survey conducted since the inception of the program in 2000. The questions in this survey are designed for consistency, and the survey uses the same content that was utilized in last year’s survey. IFA believes the web-based survey is easier for the Section 8 stakeholders to understand, takes less time to complete, and is more convenient to submit the completed survey to IFA. The Customer Service Survey was emailed to 345 Owners, Management Agents, and Property Managers. IFA received 93 responses to the survey, a 27% return rate. The return rate is an increase from the 2012 survey, which had a response rate of 24%.

Summary

IFA declined a few percentage points compared to last year’s overall average score in the customer service tasks performed by IFA staff. Most respondents still believe that IFA is maintaining a superior level of customer service by giving IFA a 95% overall average score. Contract Renewals and Customer Service were the top sections in the survey by posting an overall total of 97% satisfaction rating, while Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Reviews came in a close second by scoring a 96% overall satisfaction rating. The Owners/Agents responding did not give IFA as many perfect scores for total customer satisfaction rating as they did in last year’s survey. However, IFA did receive two (2) perfect satisfaction scores in the Customer Service /Communication section for “*courteous and professional*” and “*IFA responds in writing when necessary.*” The respondents gave IFA a 99% satisfaction rating in two (2) questions of Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Reviews section, and one (1) question of the Customer Service/Communication section. Additionally, the respondents gave IFA a 98% satisfaction rating for two (2) questions in the Contract Renewal section and one (1) question in the CGI, Inc. section of the survey.

This year IFA replaced EPS, Inc. with CGI, Inc. as the sub-contractor who conducts the review and reconciliation of monthly HAP vouchers. There was a minor decrease in the approval rating for CGI, Inc. as the new subcontractor. CGI, Inc. did receive a commendable 92% overall satisfactory rating compared to EPS's 95% overall rating achieved in last year's survey. Owners/Agents gave CGI, Inc. notable marks for their technical assistance, the smaller number of times Owners/Agents needed to contact CGI for assistance, and the clearness and conciseness of the monthly reconciliation. Additionally, when the statement was presented to the respondents, "*CGI processes your monthly voucher in a courteous and professional manner,*" CGI, Inc. received a 98% satisfactory rating.

Overall, Section 8 stakeholders are satisfied with IFA's services. On average, 95% of respondents stated they were satisfied to some degree with the services the Section 8 Contract Administration division provides. When presented with the statement, "*Is IFA's staff courteous and professional when responding to questions/inquiries?*" 78.1% of respondents answered "Always." 79.5% respondents answered "Excellent" when presented with the statement, "*How would you rate the level of courtesy and respect with which you are treated by IFA staff at all levels?*"

IFA's staff nearly received a perfect score of 100% satisfaction rating for two (2) out of six (6) questions in the Contract Renewal section from the Owner/Agents. The questions presented, "*The IFA team members who process the contract renewal have a thorough understanding of HUD rules and regulations,*" and "*The IFA team members provide technical assistance during and after the contract renewal process,*" missed a perfect score by one (1) response. Of the remaining four (4) questions in the Contract Renewal section, two (2) questions missed a perfect score by only two (2) responses. The overall performance rating was at 97% this year which was a slight decrease of 1% from last year's total. The survey's overall rating in Contract Renewal Division indicates the contract renewal staff is delivering exceptional customer service and providing technical assistance to their Section 8 stakeholders. Additionally, the survey illustrates the department processes contract renewals in a courteous and professional manner. IFA received only four (4) comments from the shareholders in this section of the survey. One (1) comment was positive, two (2) comments were unfavorable or neutral, and one (1) comment was written by an agent who was not directly involved in the Contract Renewal process.

The "Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Reviews" section and the "Customer Service" section also nearly received a perfect scores of 100% satisfaction rating for two (2) questions on the survey. The questions presented, "*IFA provides your organization with ample notice for scheduling the Management and Occupancy review and provides enough information to assist you in making preparation for the review,*" and "*The Housing Compliance Specialist (HCS) arrives at the property at the schedule time,*" missed a perfect score by one (1) response. The "Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review" section revealed the Housing Compliance Specialist excelled in having a thorough understanding of HUD's rules and regulations and performing follow-up on Owners'/Agents' questions, the HCS provided technical assistance during and after the Management and Occupancy Review and responds to phone calls or emails within two business days, and the HCS provided adequate instructions regarding corrections or appeals to the Management and Occupancy Review findings and/or ratings.

The "Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims" section of the survey had the biggest decrease this year with an overall 91% satisfactory rating. This was a decrease of 5% from the previous year. The questions presented, "*IFA provides clear and understandable answers to your voucher/special claims question,*" had a 90% satisfactory rating compared to 98% in last year's survey. This survey indicated the department was not providing clear and understandable reasons for voucher or special claim questions. In other survey

questions related to HAP vouchers and Special Claims that were not “Yes” or “No” questions, IFA received excellent scores that were at or above a 93% satisfactory rating score. Going forward, IFA should identify strategies for giving concise answers on vouchers and special claims questions to Section 8 stakeholders. Furthermore, IFA’s Voucher and Special Claims Department should strive to maintain the superior proficiency in areas of Contract Administration that staff has attained in the payment of vouchers and special claims.

IFA needs to find a practical and cost-effective way to inform and train our customers and stakeholders on the new HUD Handbook 4350.3 REV-1, Chg. 4, TRACS 202D, and the other HUD rules and regulations. HUD delivers this information to the Contract Administrators (IFA) and the public by the way of internet websites, but the current survey indicates the IFA’s internet usage had decreased from 50% to 45%.

The survey also showed that over 87.5% of the respondents would participate in training sessions if they were available on the Internet. Owners/Agents are most interested in information about Enterprise Income Verification (52.2%), HUD Handbook 4350.3 REV-1, Chg 4 (49.3%), Management and Occupancy Reviews (47.8%), TRACS/TRACS Discrepancies (34.8%), and Special Claims (30.4%). The Iowa Finance Authority will announce new and updated documents to the IFA website, www.IowaFinanceAuthority.gov as well as distribute the most current information in management bulletins and our quarterly newsletter, “News-Br-8-k,” to Section 8 stakeholders. IFA has restructured and updated the current website to a more customer-friendly format for their Section 8 compliance needs. IFA will need to encourage Owners, Agents, and Section 8 shareholders to use the new and improved website.

The Section 8 Customer Service Report will be submitted to IFA’s Executive Director, Chief Administration Officer, Section 8 Director, management team members, CGI. Inc., and our HUD Contract Administration Oversight Monitor (CAOM). The survey results will be posted on IFA’s website, and notification will be provided to all Owners/Agents by email titled “Section 8 News.”

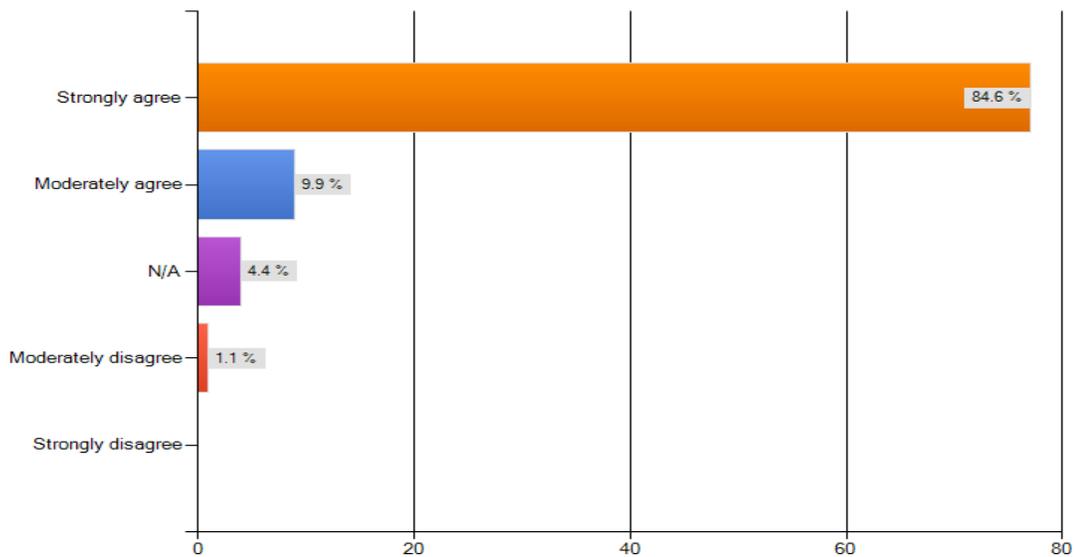
Percent of Respondents With Overall Satisfaction			
	2013	2012	2011
Management, Occupancy, & FHEO Reviews	96%	98%	99%
Rental Adjustments	93%	97%	98%
Contract Renewals	97%	98%	99%
HAP Voucher & Special Claims	91%	96%	97%
CGI, Inc. EPS, Inc. (2012-2011)	92%	95%	97%
Customer Service	97%	98%	98%
Average	95%	97%	98%

Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Reviews

93 respondents answered questions on the “Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review” section. Of the 93 customers who participated, the following responses were provided:

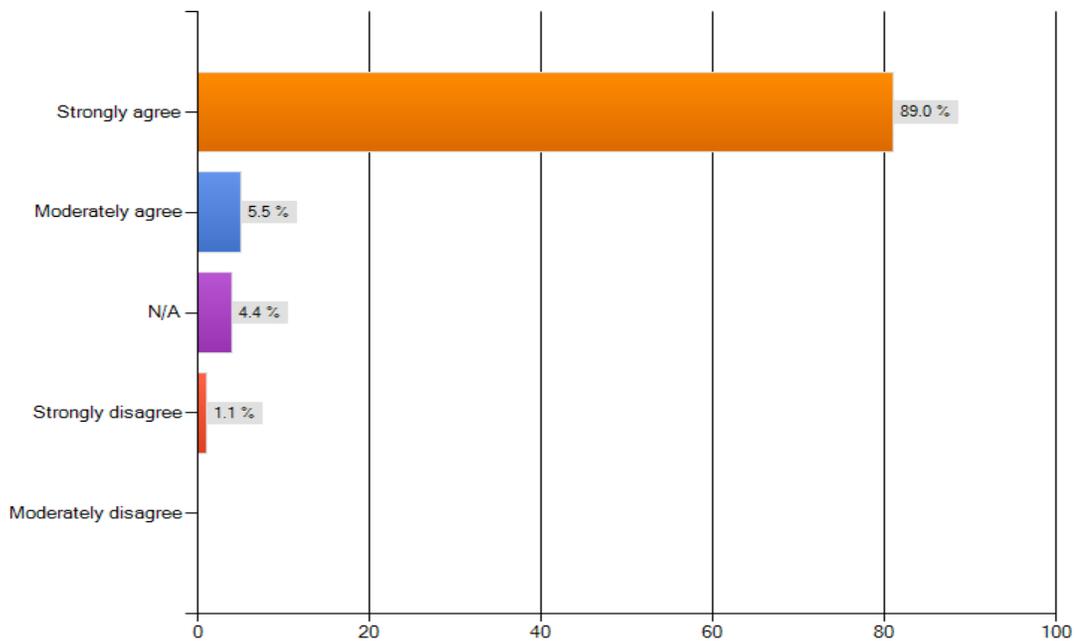
Question #1.

IFA provides your organization with ample notice for scheduling the Management and Occupancy Review and provides enough information to assist you in making preparation for the review.



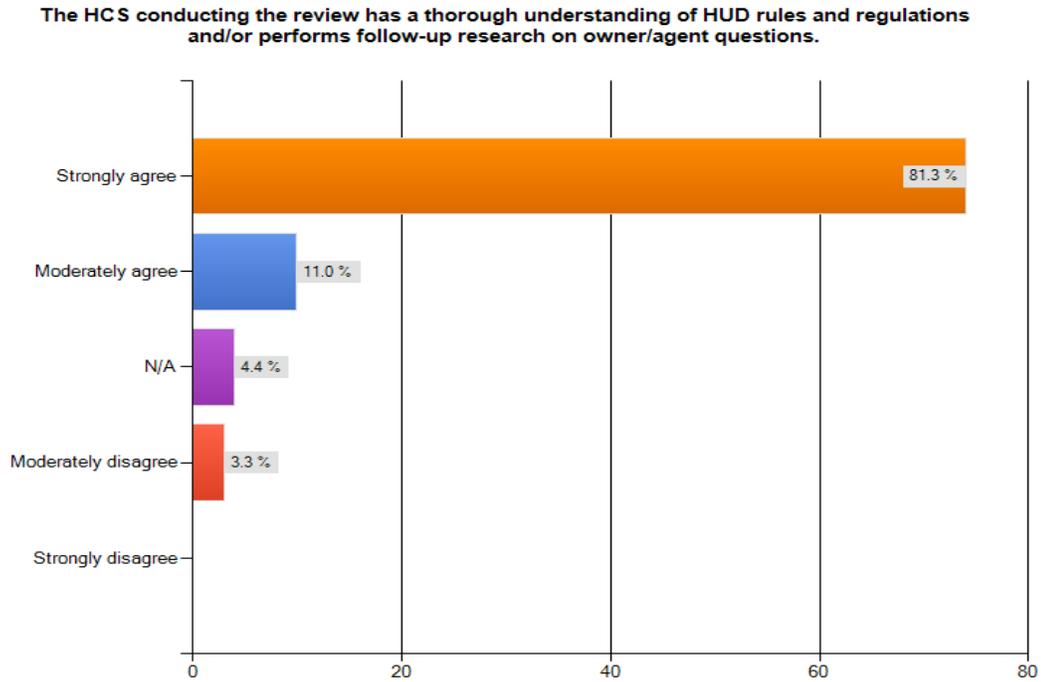
Question #2.

The Housing Compliance Specialist (HCS) arrives at the property at the scheduled time.

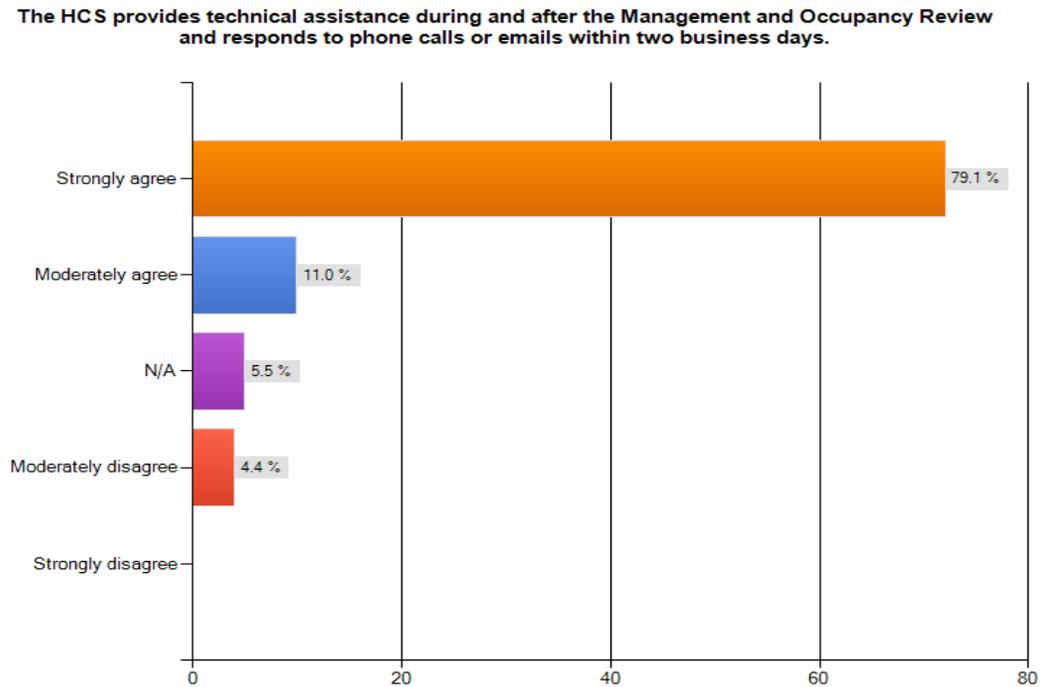


Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review (continued)

Question #3.

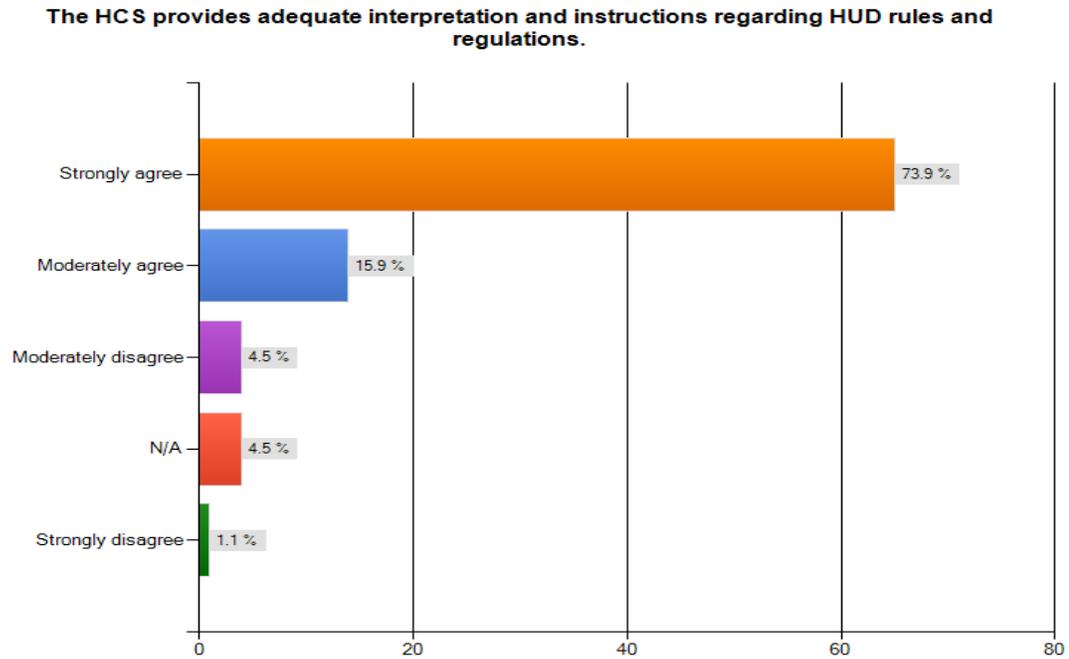


Question #4.

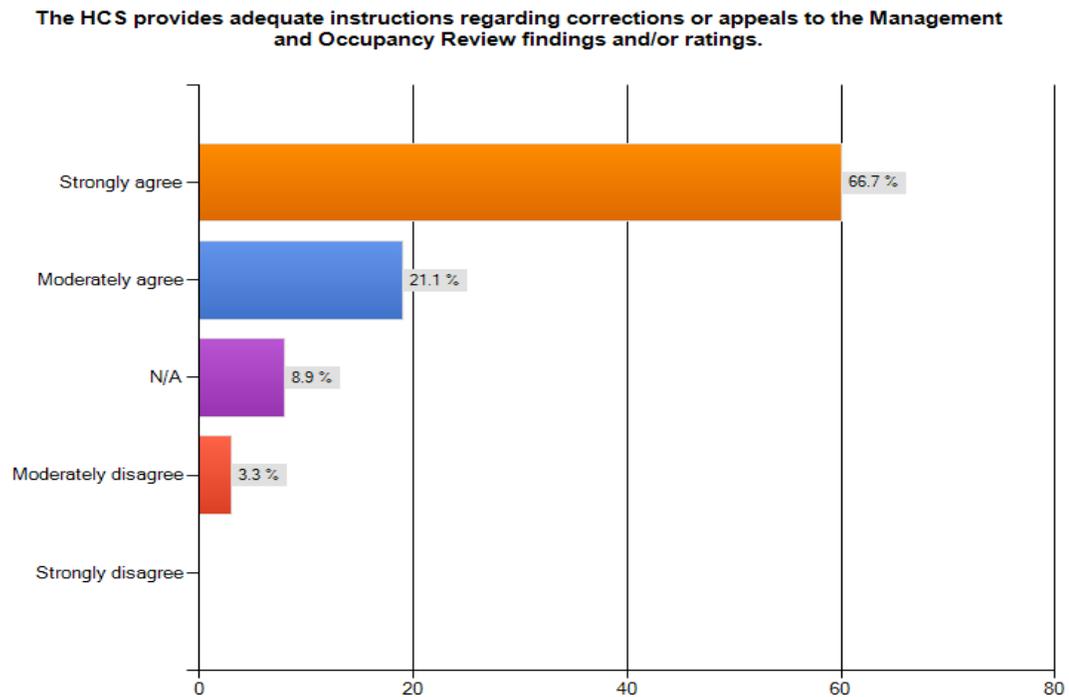


Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review (continued)

Question #5.

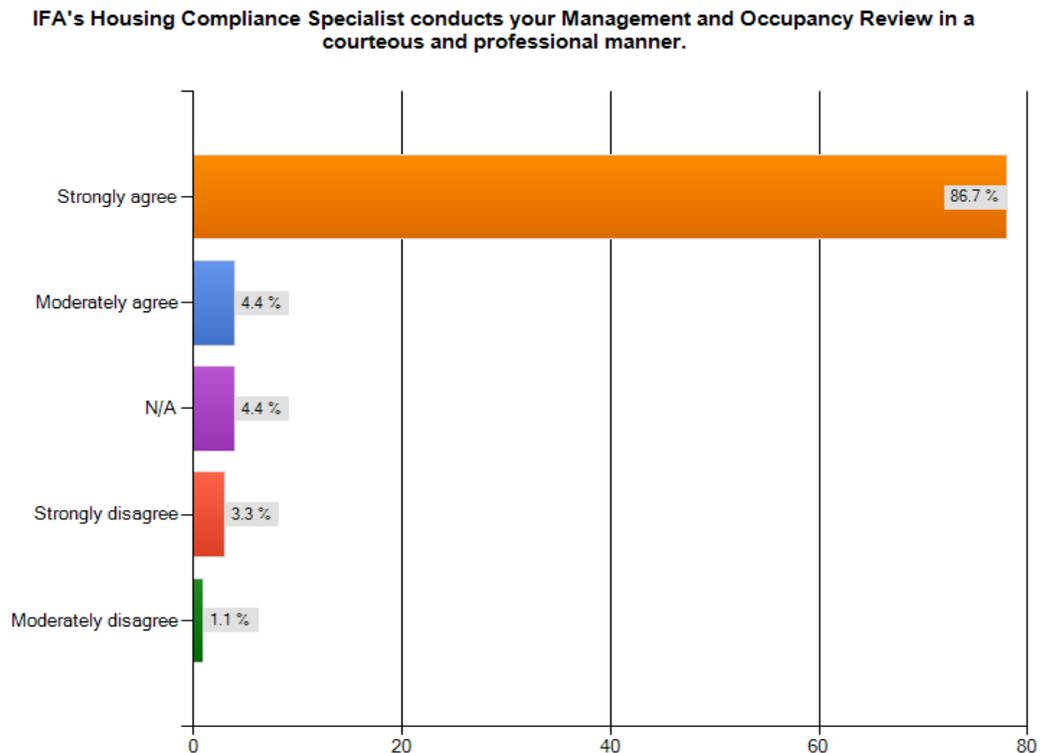


Question #6.



Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review (continued)

Question #7.



Comments from respondents - Management, Occupancy and FHEO Review

Of the 93 respondents who participated in the “Management, Occupancy, and FHEO Review” section, 15% offered the following comments and/or suggestions regarding the Management and Occupancy Review:

1. Not so familiar with (abc) abbreviations.
2. HCS is a pleasure to work with. HCS is very helpful, courteous and professional.
3. The HCS that I have for two of the properties that I manage is wonderful to work with. The HCS is a great resource for me and very helpful anytime I ask them a question.
4. IFA Staff has been very helpful.
5. I am brand new to the property and hope to have wonderful experiences. Thank you.
6. I'm not sure I met with anyone but I would like to though.

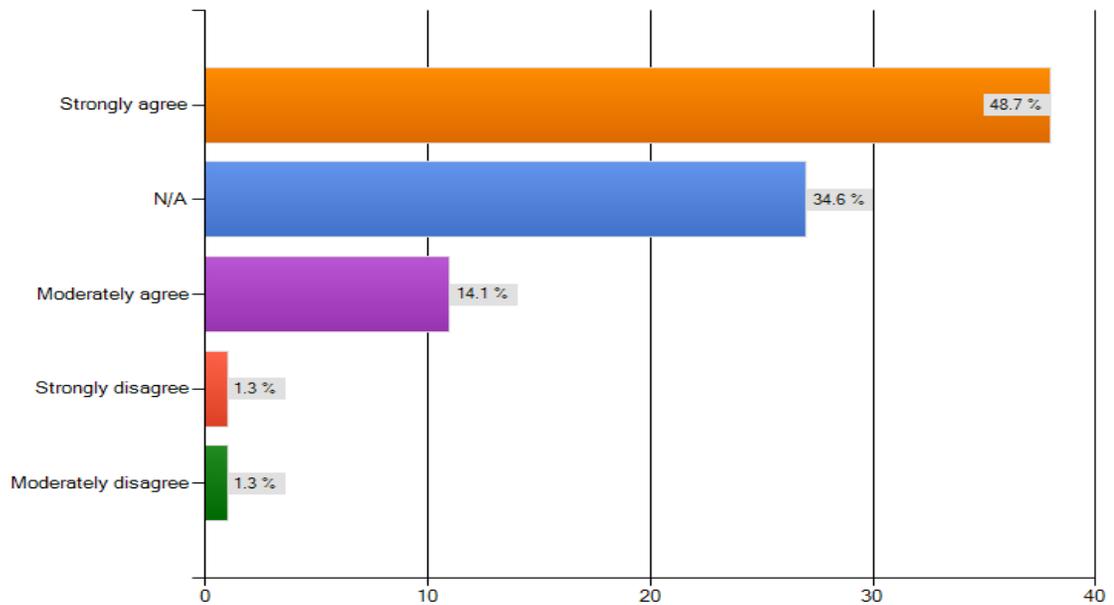
7. Seems like it takes a long time to get the final rating; our inspection was May 2 and did not get the results until October.
8. My HCS is a great resource when it comes to understanding of and the interpretation of HUD regulations. The HCS is always willing to help with questions regarding regulations and the MOR process. MY HCS always gets back to me right away. We are lucky to have such professional people to work with...
9. I am in Nebraska.
10. The compliance specialist was excellent.
11. #6 noted as N/A since we have not received the letter of corrections yet since reviews were just done within 5 days.
12. The HCS was unable to attend our last MOR due to an injury. The IFA sent 3 other persons to conduct the MOR in place of the HCS. It was stated by 2 of the IFA personnel that the property and units inspected were in great shape. Also, in 2010 we received a 99b on our REAC and in 2013 we received a 94b. Still we were only given a satisfactory for the units and the property by the HCS that did not attend the MOR. It is evident that the HCS has issues with the property manager, as witnessed during the MOR and in telephone and person to person conversations between the HCS and the property manager. It is our opinion that this property should be assigned a new HCS in order to alleviate tensions and personal emotions during and after the MOR.
13. The HCS is very good to work with and very professional when conducting the MORs.
14. I feel lucky to have the HCS that I do. The HCS is more than helpful with anything that I have asked for.
15. Have not gone thru a MOR yet with IFA. Property purchased within past year.
16. We like working with all the HCS's.
17. Love working with IFA! Very professional and knowledgeable staff.
18. MORs are too focused on minutia.

Rental Adjustments

The “Rental Adjustments” section received 76 responses, but an average of 35% were answered N/A. Of the 76 respondents who participated, the following answers were provided:

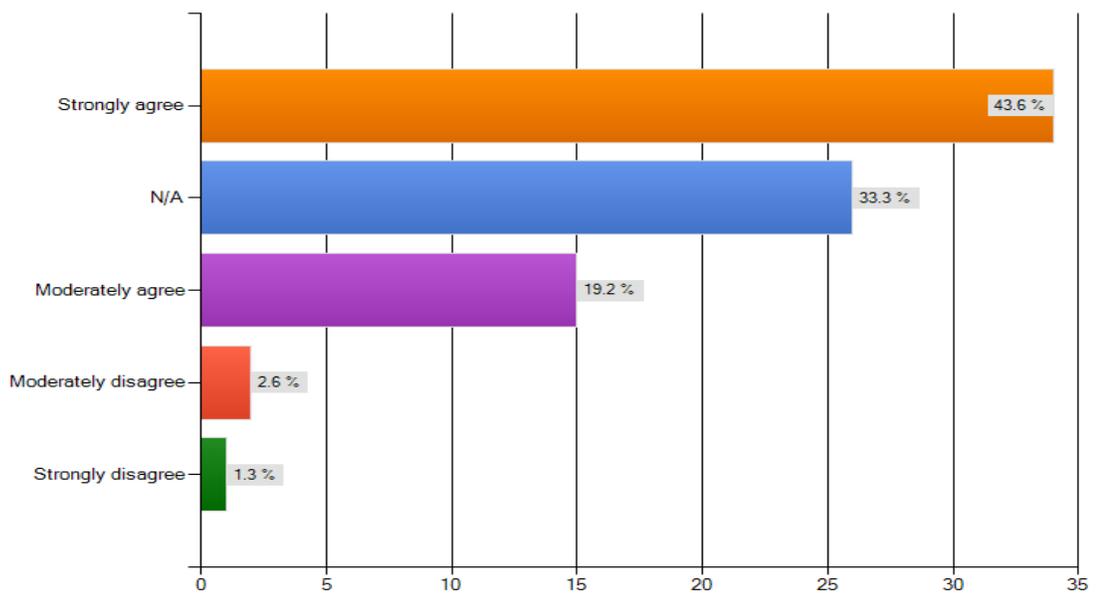
Question #1.

The IFA team members conducting the rent adjustments have a thorough understanding of HUD rules and regulations.



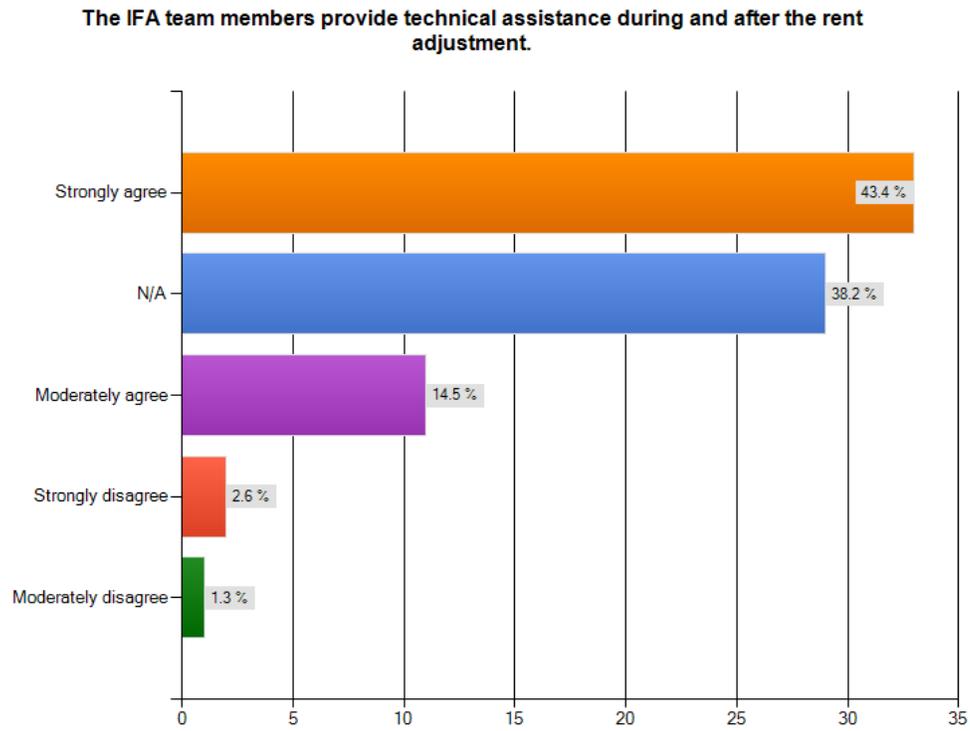
Question #2.

The IFA team members provide clear and understandable answers to your rent adjustment questions.

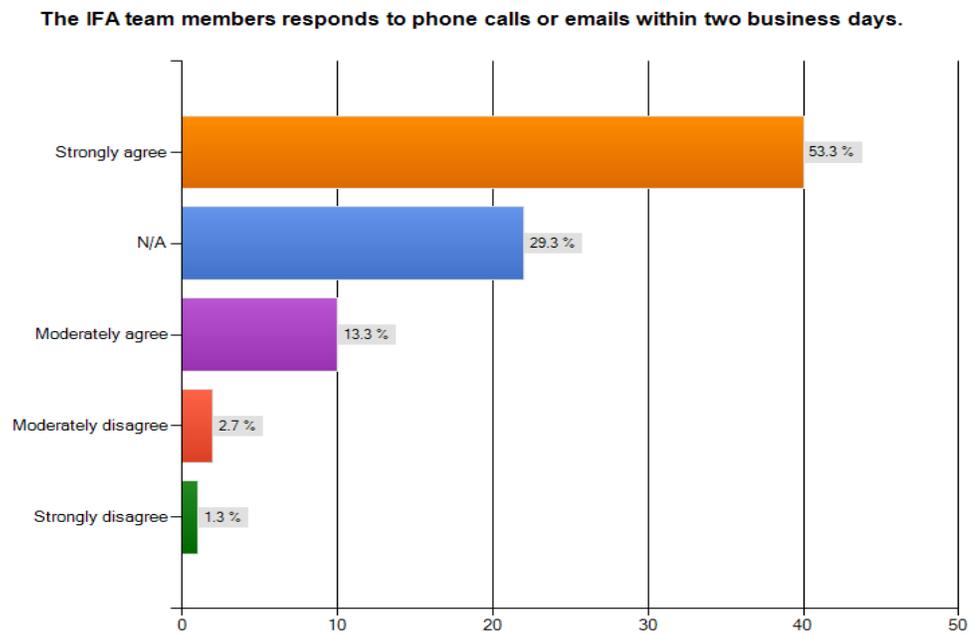


Rental Adjustments (continued)

Question #3.



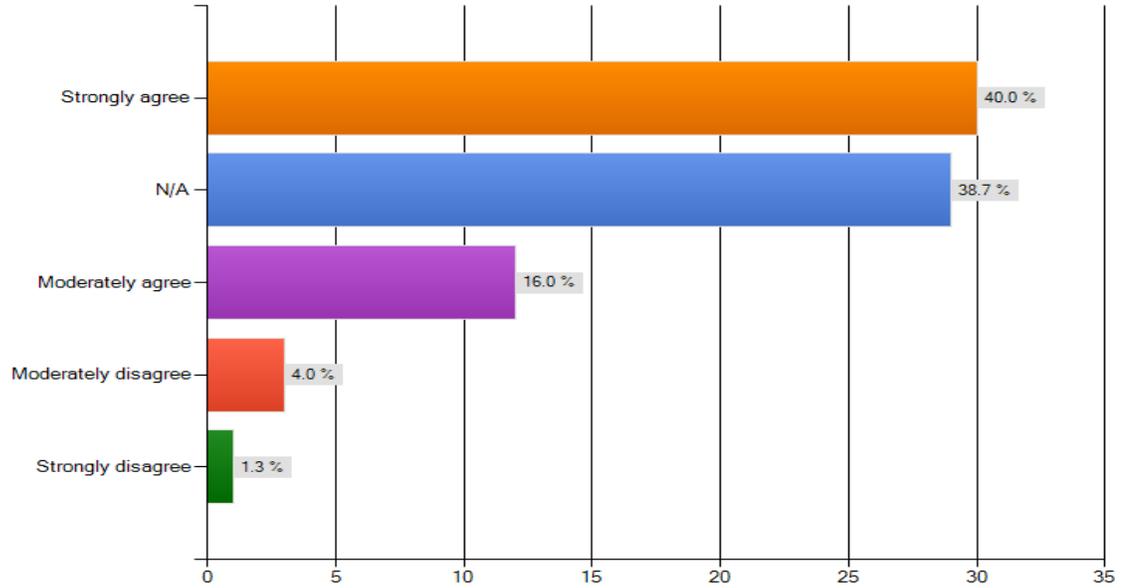
Question #4.



Rental Adjustments (continued)

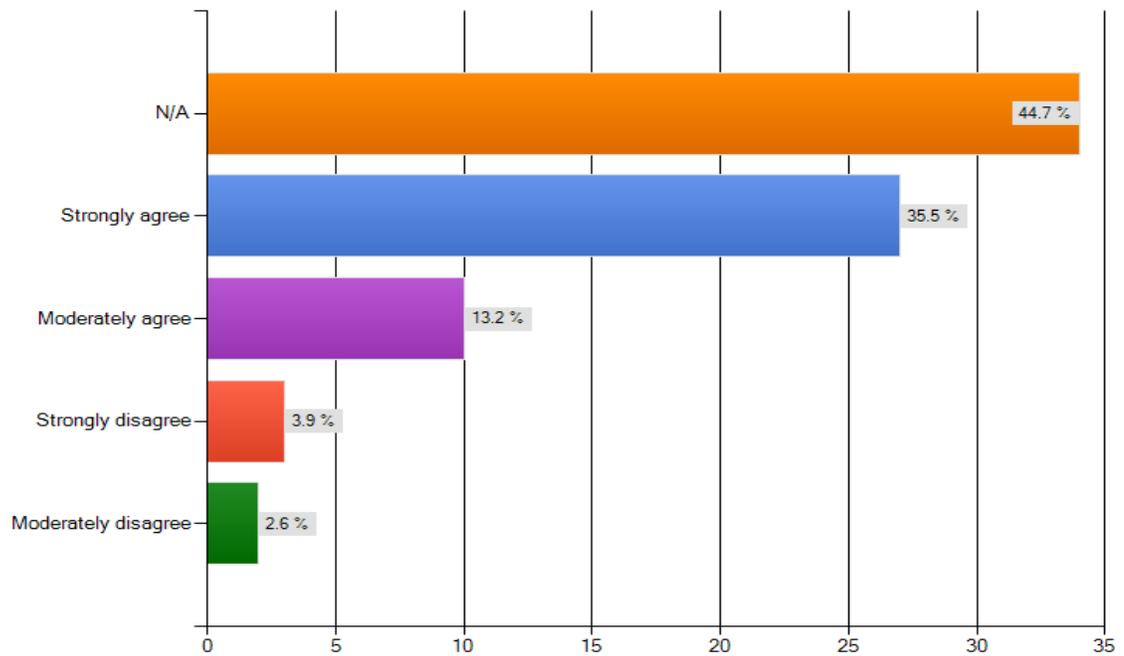
Question #5.

The IFA team members inform you if there is a problem or delay in processing your rent adjustment.



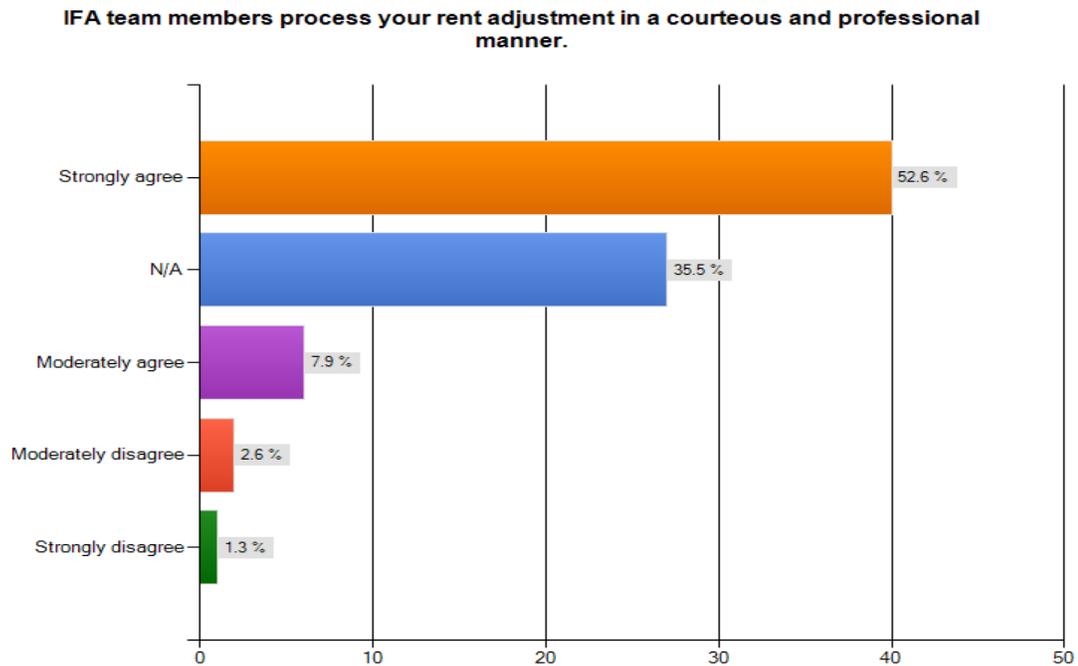
Question #6.

IFA team members provided a clear explanation for a rent adjustment that was denied or reduced.



Rental Adjustments (continued)

Question #7.



Comments from respondents – Rental Adjustments

Of the 76 respondents who participated in “Rental Adjustments” section, 7% offered the following comments and/or suggestions regarding Rental Adjustments:

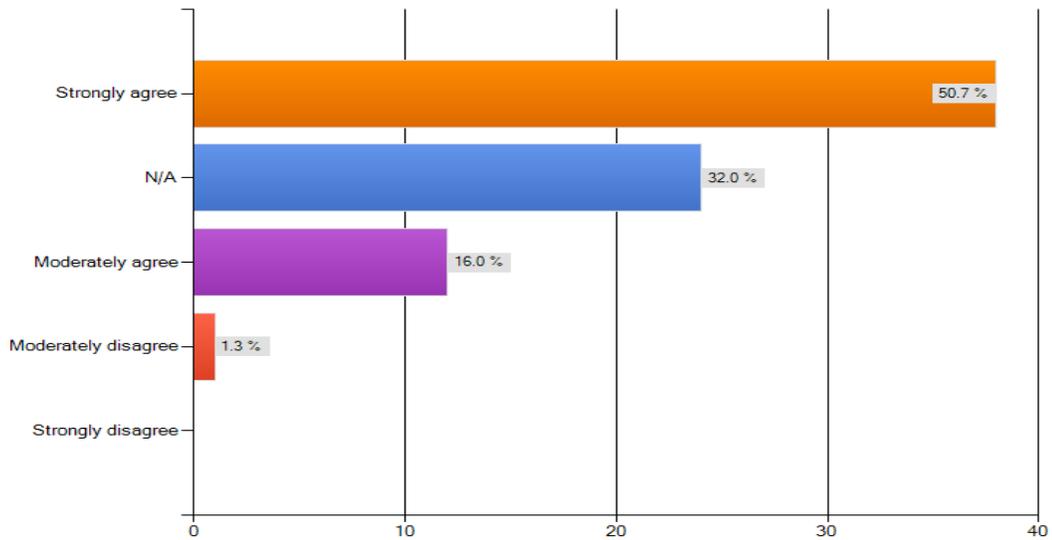
1. The IFA team member is so quick on responding to the Vacancy Claims that I submit and again a great resource when I have any questions.
2. If you have a number I could call.
3. I placed N/A for these as Corporate handles any rent increase/decrease.
4. Rent adjustment done in corporate office.
5. Not involved in this process. Can't answer.

Contract Renewals

The “Contract Renewals” section received 75 responses and, like the “Rental Adjustments” section, an average of 36% were answered N/A. Of the 75 respondents who participated, the following answers were provided:

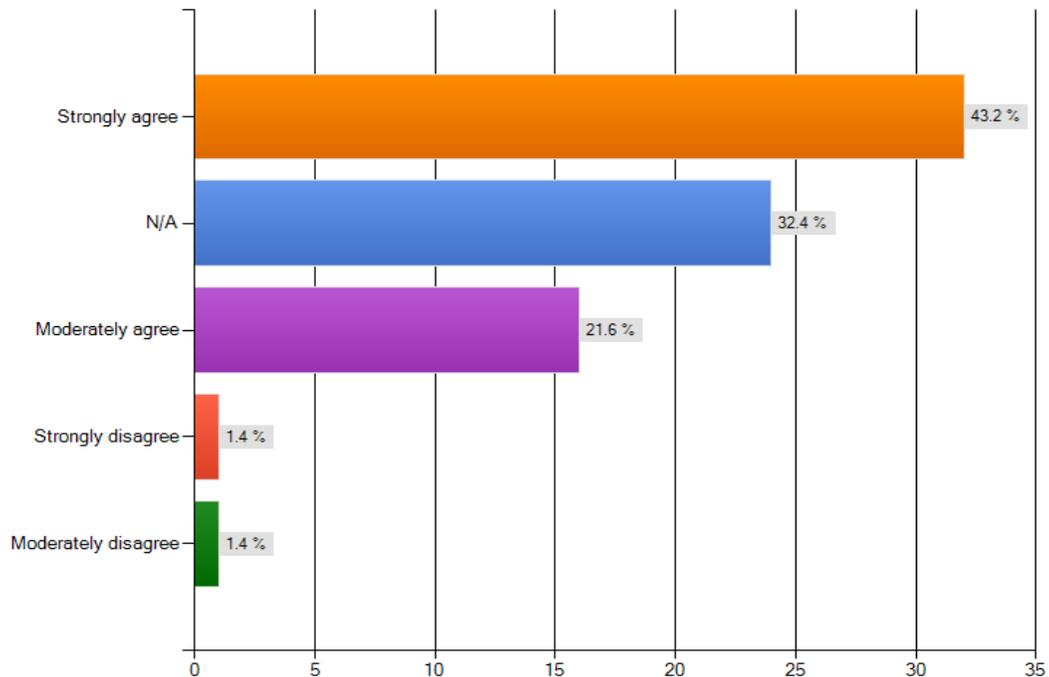
Question #1.

The IFA team members who process the contract renewal have a thorough understanding of HUD rules and regulations.



Question #2.

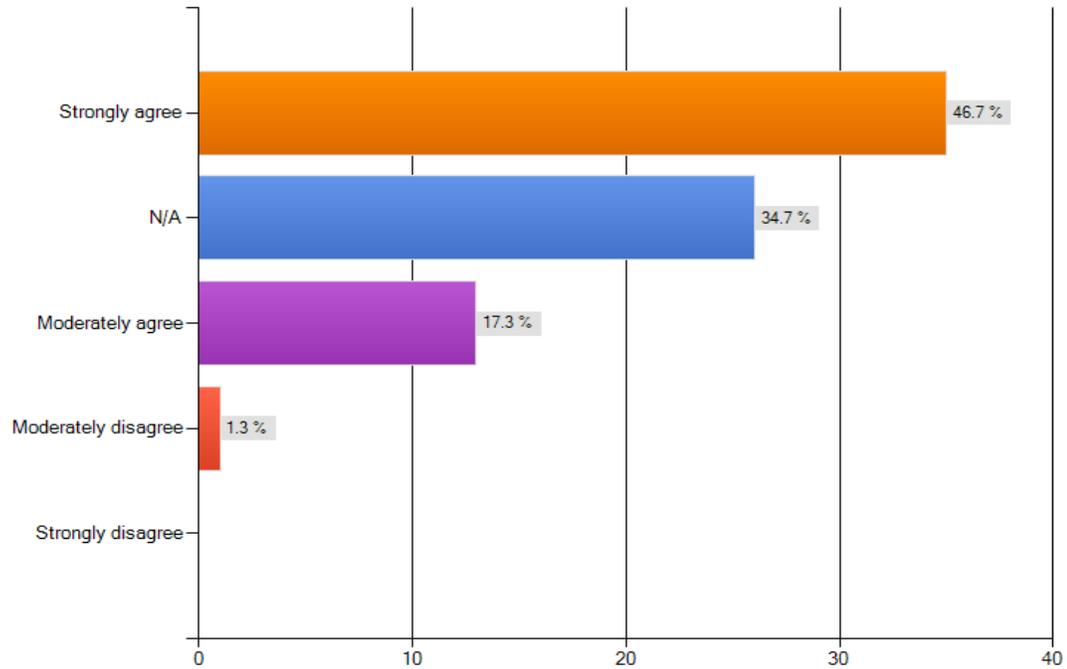
IFA provides clear and understandable answers to your contract renewal questions.



Contract Renewals (continued)

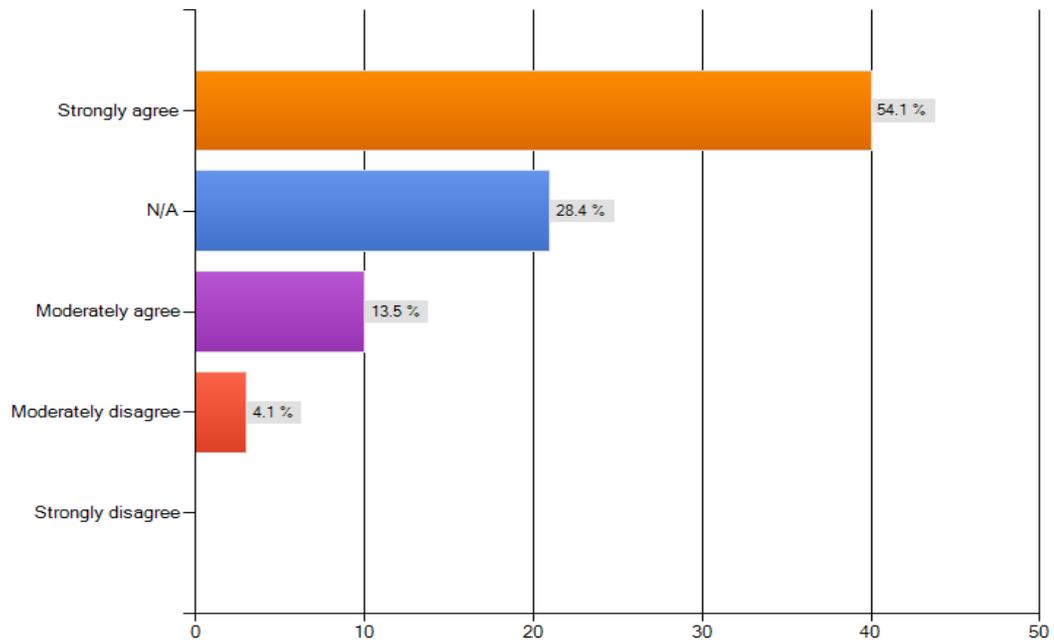
Question #3.

The IFA team members provide technical assistance during and after the contract renewal process.



Question #4.

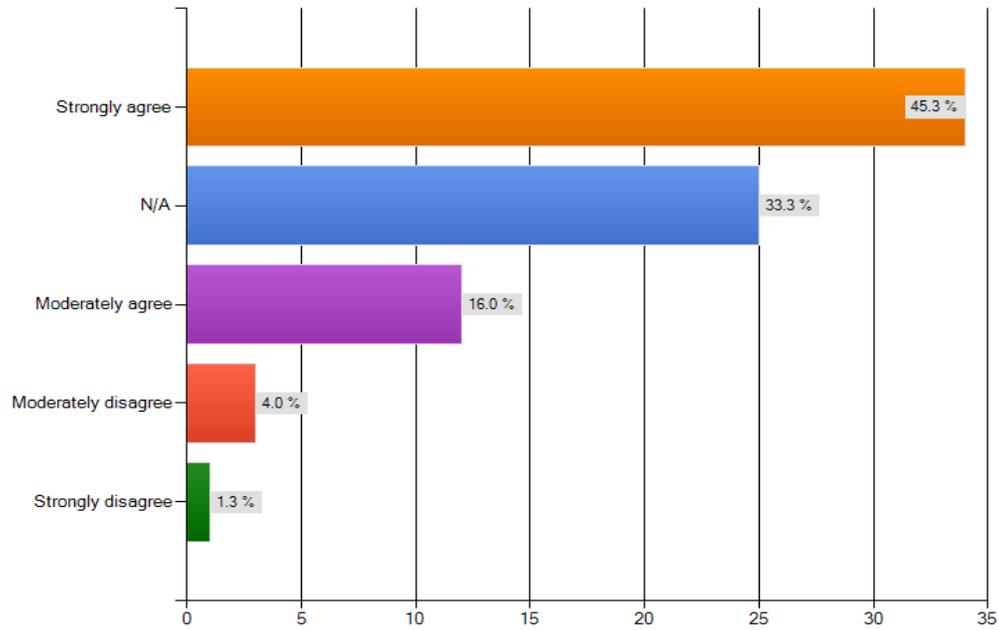
The IFA team members respond to phone calls or e-mails within two business days.



Contract Renewals (continued)

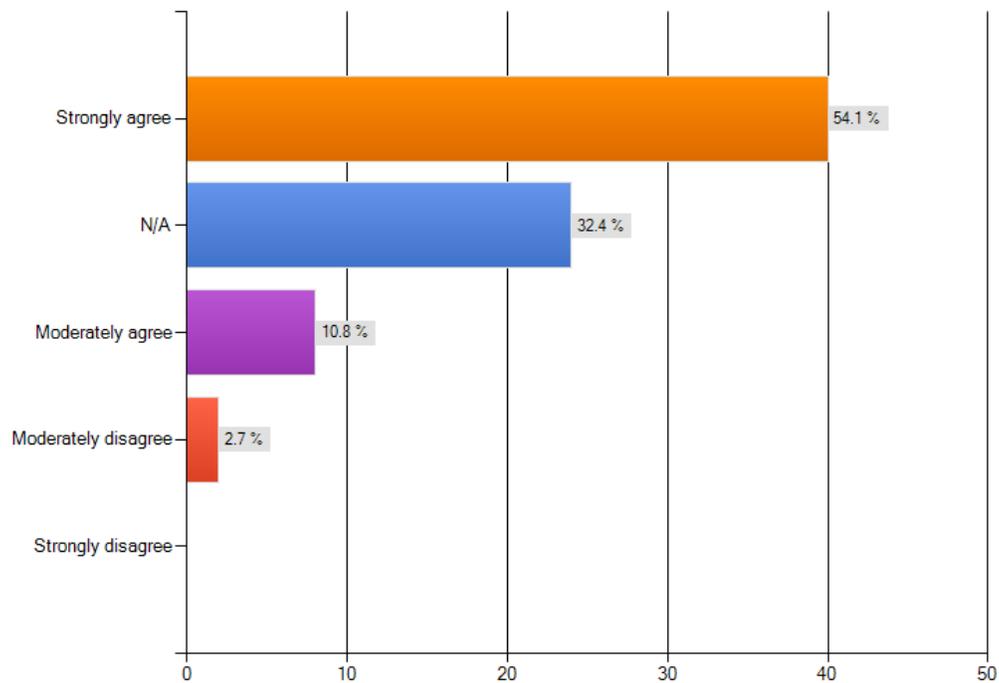
Question #5.

IFA informs you if there is a problem or delay in processing your contract renewal.



Question #6.

IFA team members process your contract renewal in a courteous and professional manner.



Comments from respondents – Contract Renewals

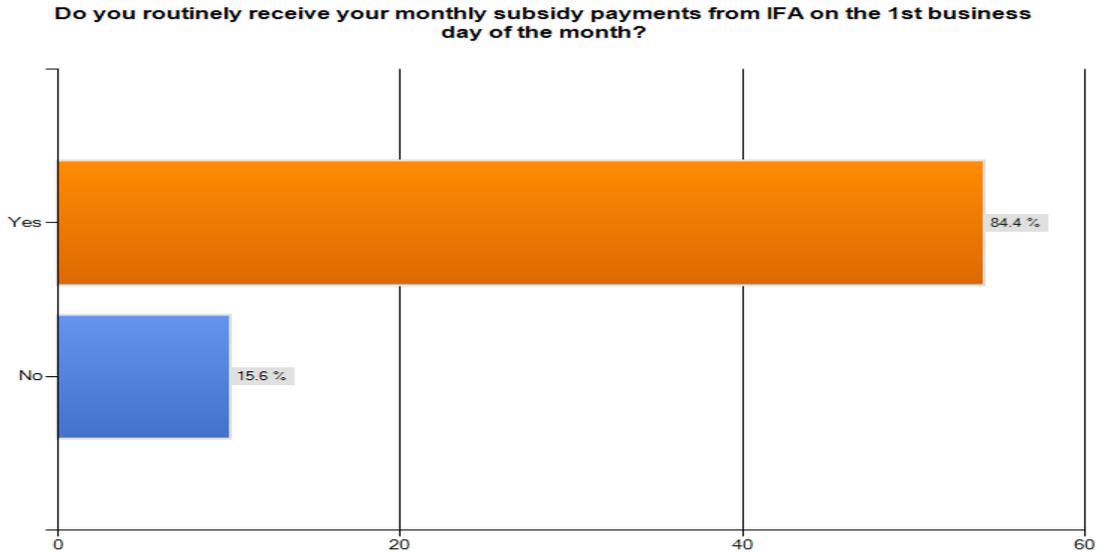
Of the 75 respondents who participated in “Contract Renewals” section, 5% offered the following comments and/or suggestions regarding Contract Renewals:

1. IFA staff has been proactive in helping with contract renewal.
2. They let us know if they need more information to process, but not if there is a delay, or what the delay is.
3. Same as the previous comment.
4. Not involved in this process.

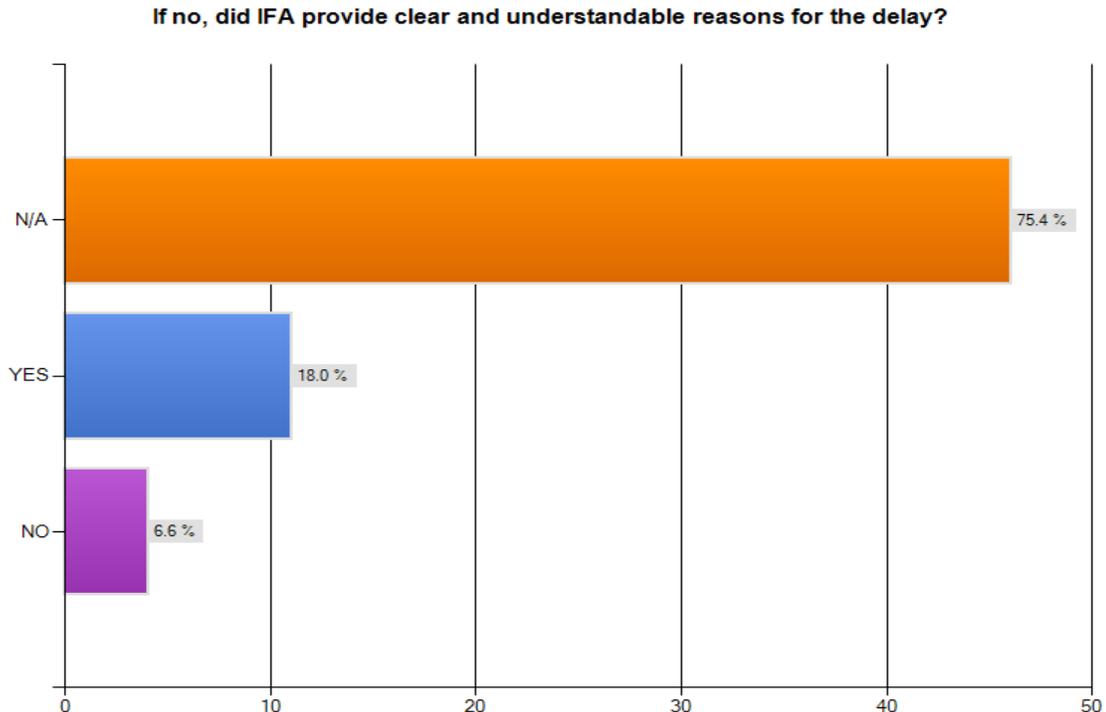
Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims

The payment of “HAP Vouchers/Special Claims” section received approximately 70 responses for most questions, but, like the “Rental Adjustments” and “Contract Renewals” sections, an average of 39% were answered N/A. Of the respondents who participated, the following answers were provided:

Question #1.



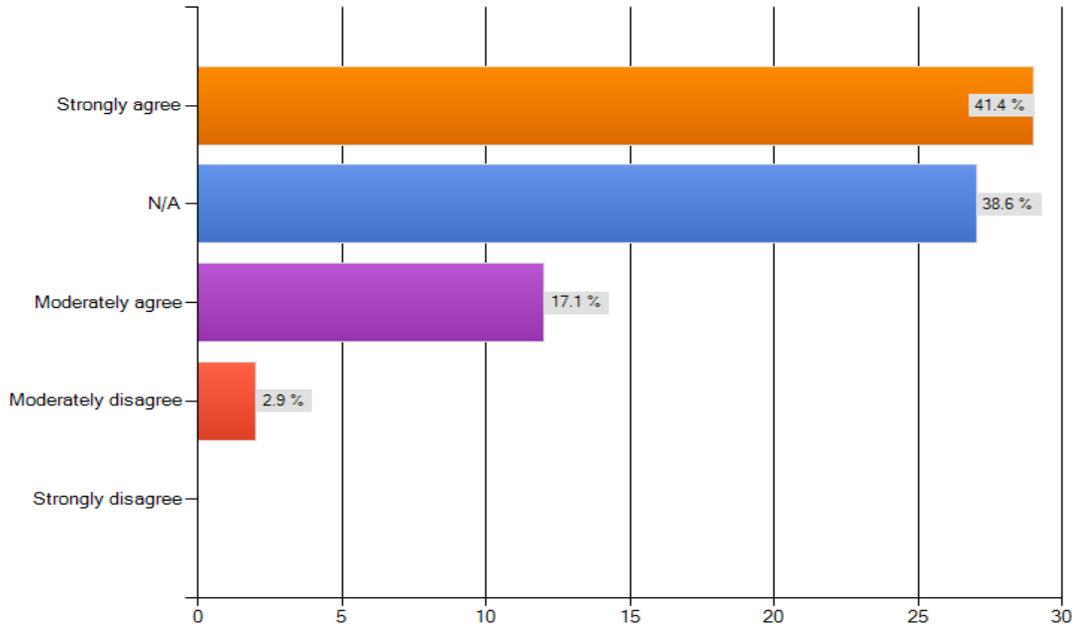
Question #2.



Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims (continued)

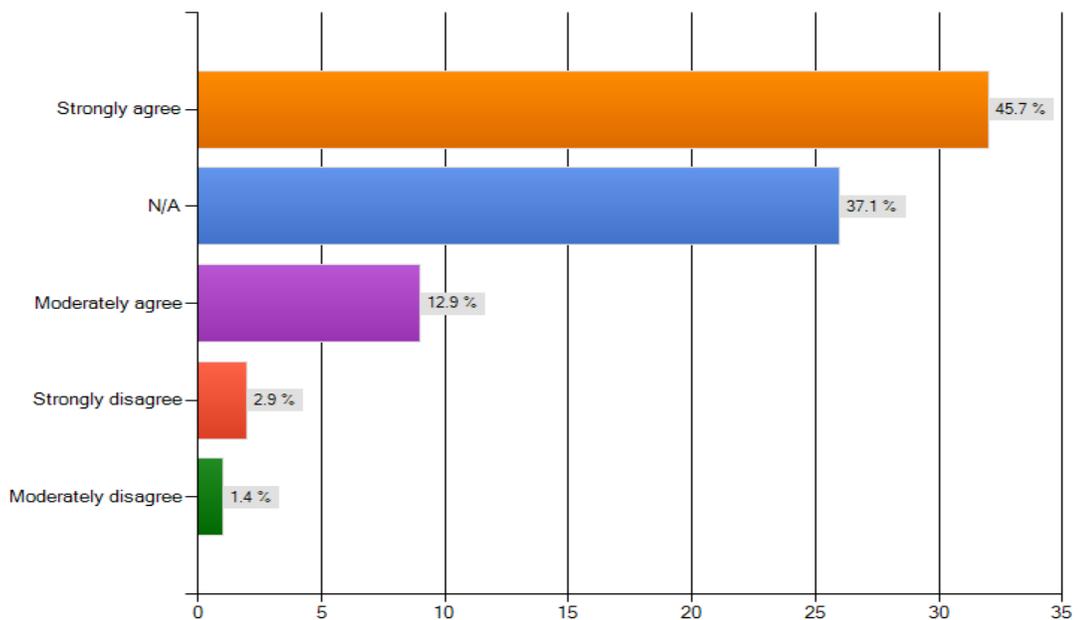
Question #3.

IFA informs you in advance of funding shortfalls which may result in the delay of your HAP subsidy.



Question #4.

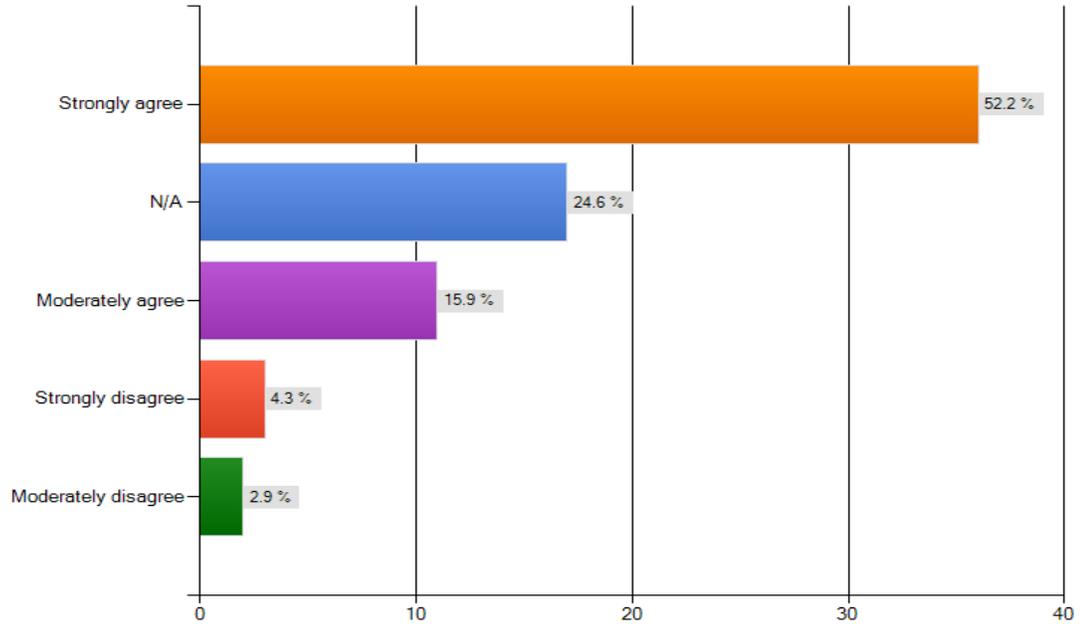
IFA processes your special claims requests with a thorough understanding of HUD rules and regulations.



Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims (continued)

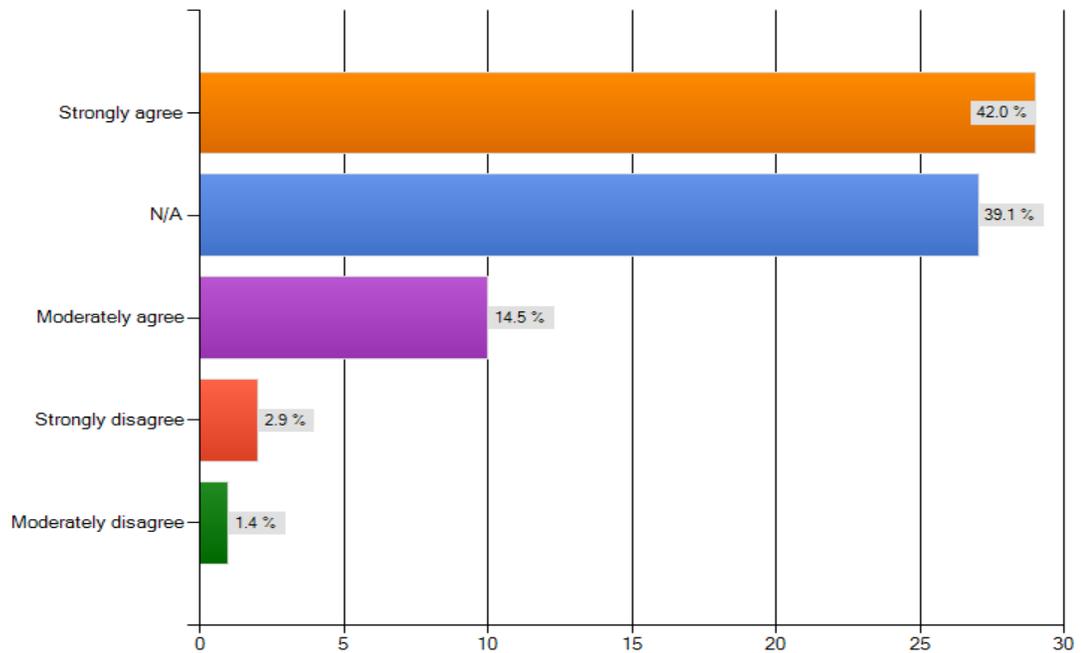
Question #5.

IFA provides clear and understandable answers to your voucher adjustment/special claims questions.



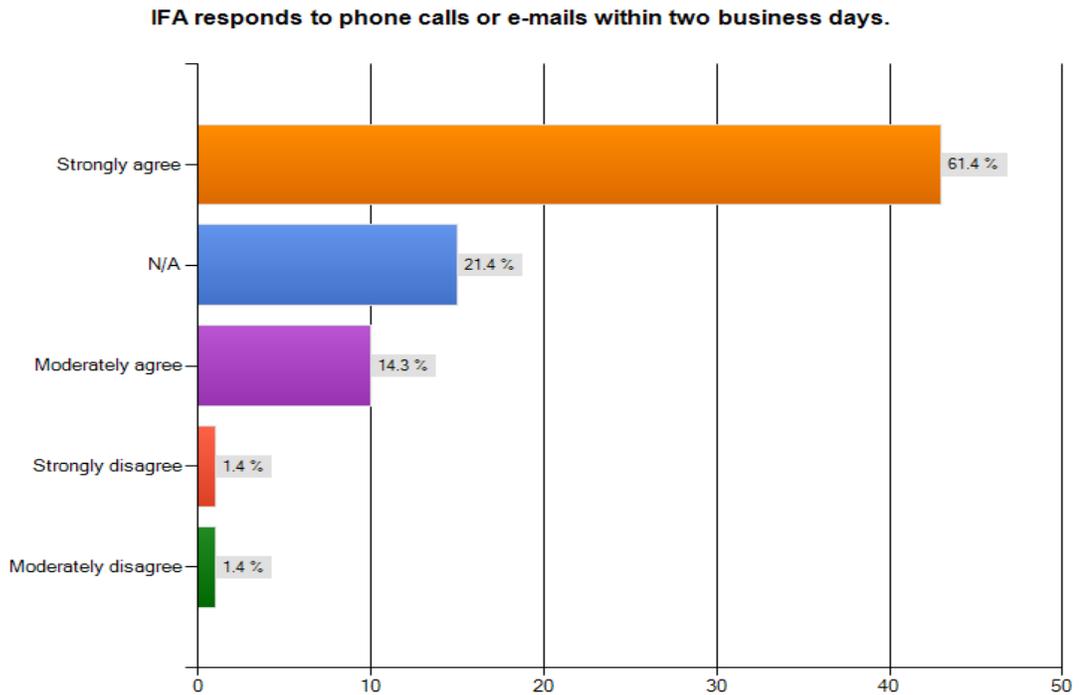
Question #6.

IFA provides technical assistance during and after the special claims request process.

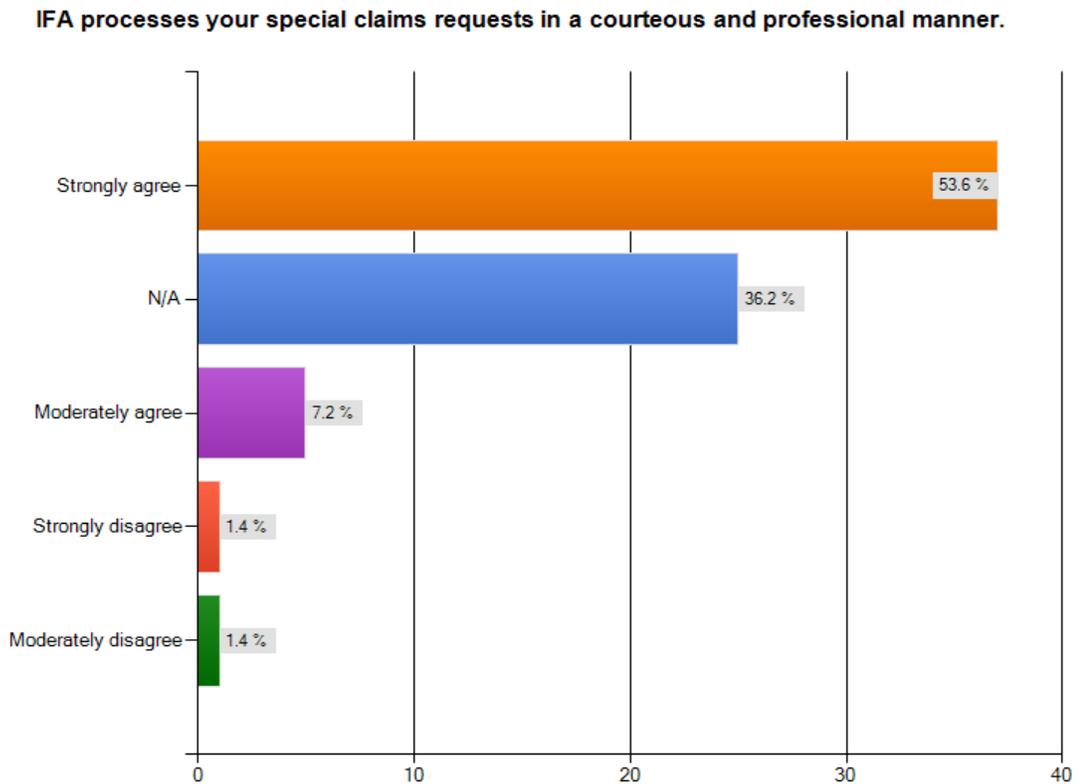


Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims (continued)

Question #7.



Question #8.



Comments from respondents –Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims

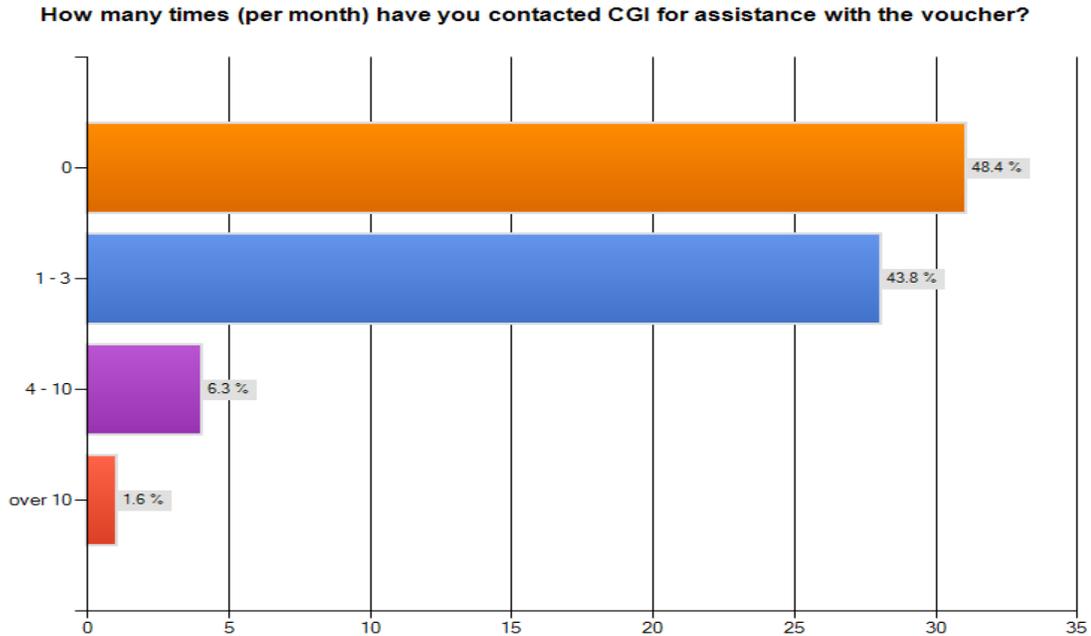
Of the 70 Owners/Agents who participated in “Payment of HAP Vouchers/Special Claims” section, 9% offered the following comments and/or suggestions regarding HAP Vouchers/Special Claims:

1. I enjoy working with IFA’s staff on my Special Claims. They are very helpful when I have questions and they respond quickly.
2. Our vouchers are submitted to CGI, Inc.
3. Same as previous comment.
4. In reality, HUD informs us of funding shortfalls.
5. We usually contact the CA for voucher questions.
6. We’ve never had technical assistance on special claims.

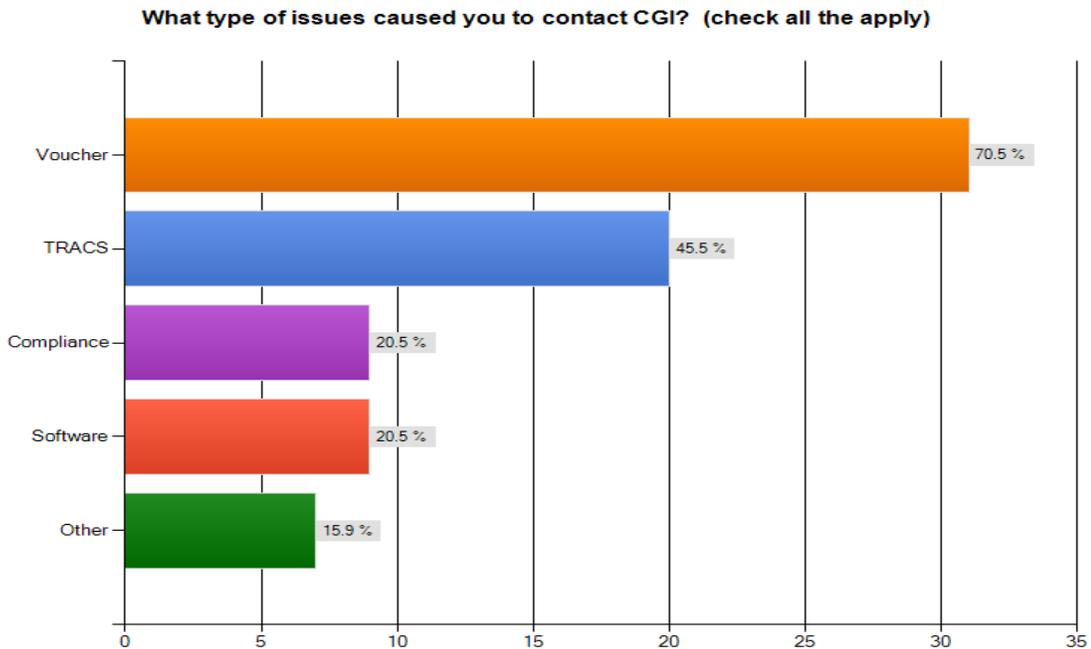
CGI, Inc. (IFA’s sub-contractor for voucher reconciliation and transmission to HUD)

On average, 67 Owners/Agents answered questions on the “CGI, Inc.” section of the customer survey. Of the stakeholders who participated, the following responses were provided:

Question #1.



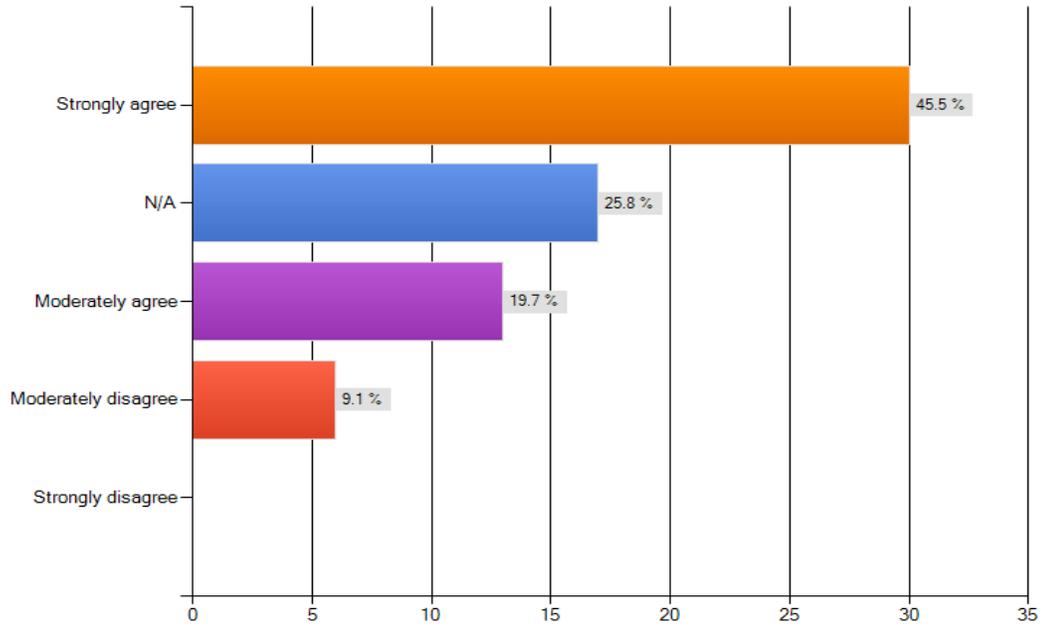
Question #2.



CGI, Inc. (continued)

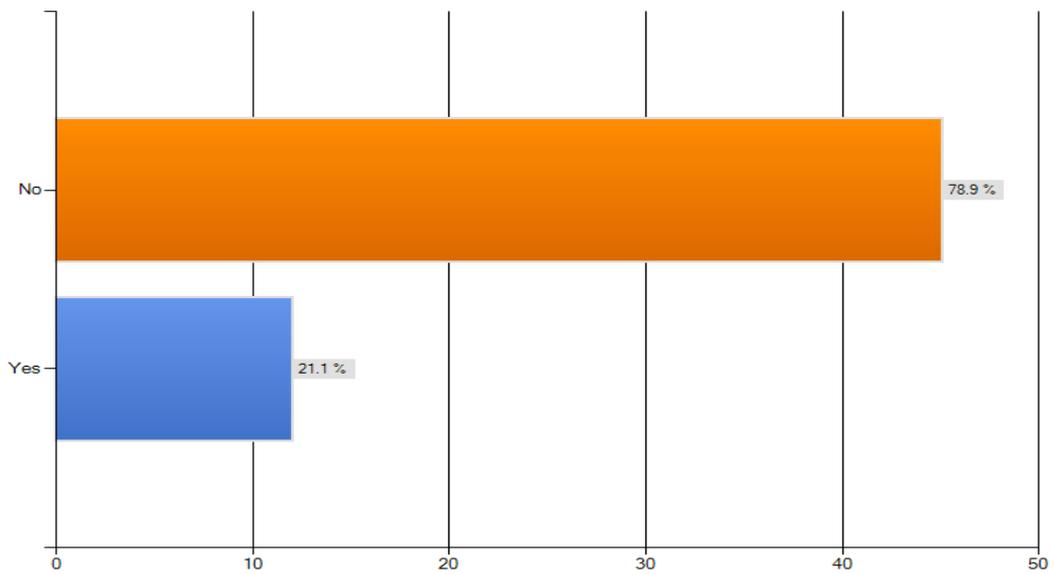
Question #3.

CGI provides clear and understandable answers to your voucher compliance/submission question(s)?



Question #4.

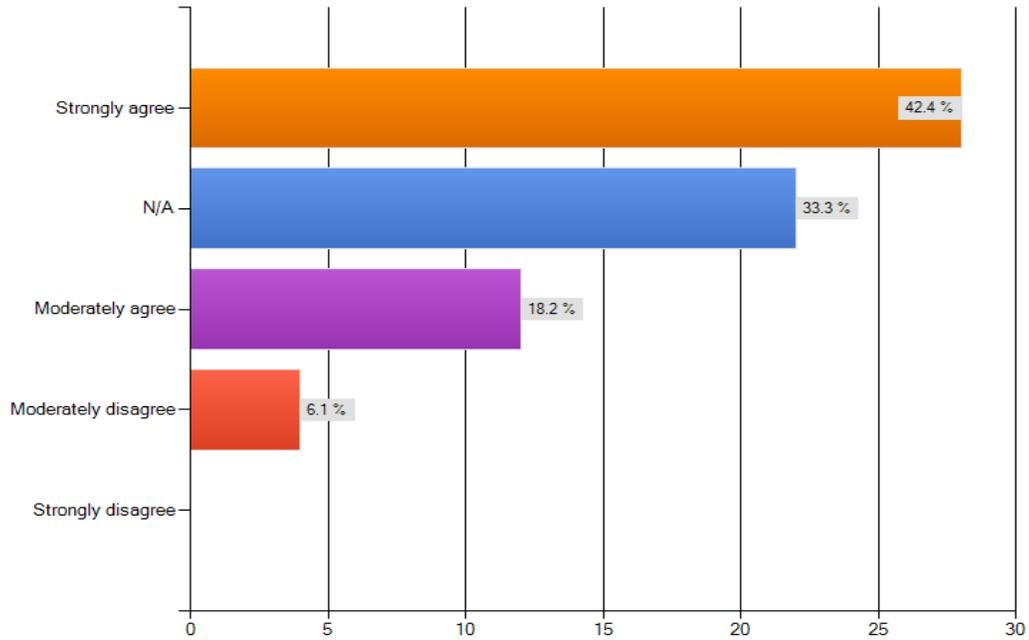
Did you call CGI more than one time to resolve the same issue?



CGI, Inc. (continued)

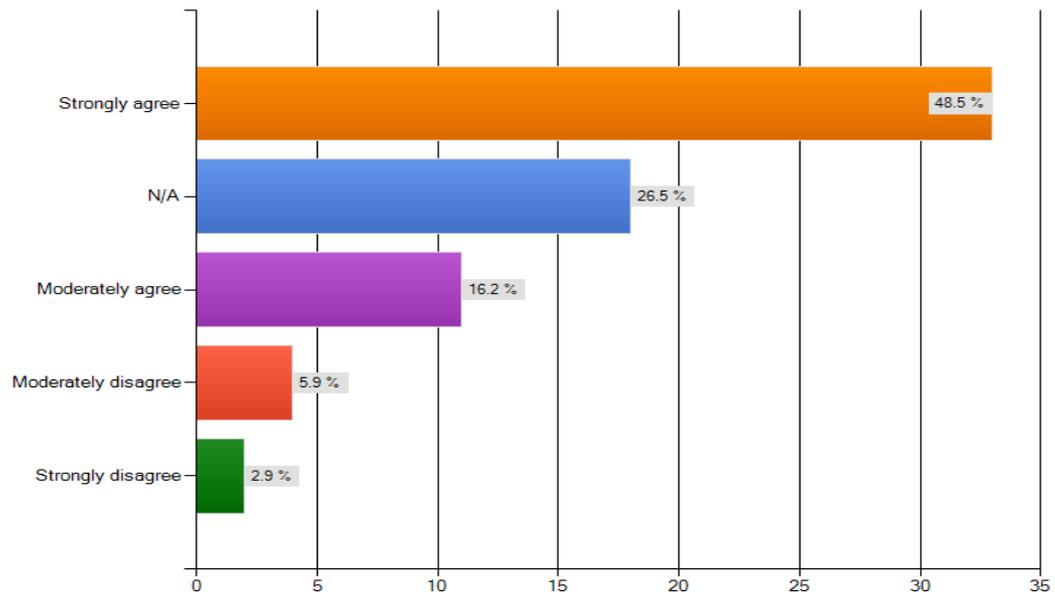
Question #5.

CGI provides technical assistance to complete the reconciliation process.



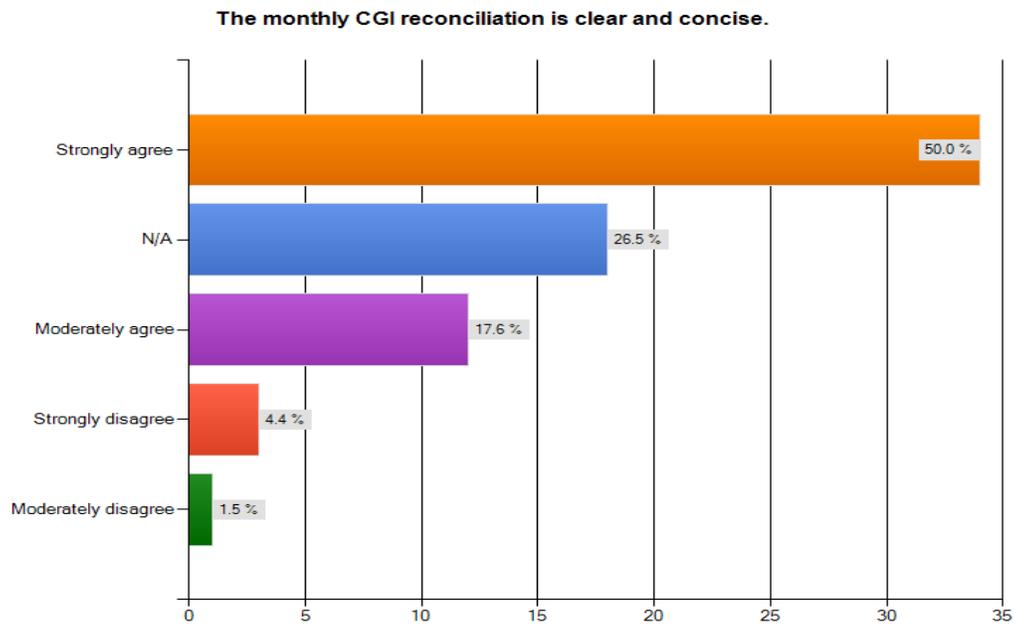
Question #6.

CGI responds to phone calls or e-mails within two business days.

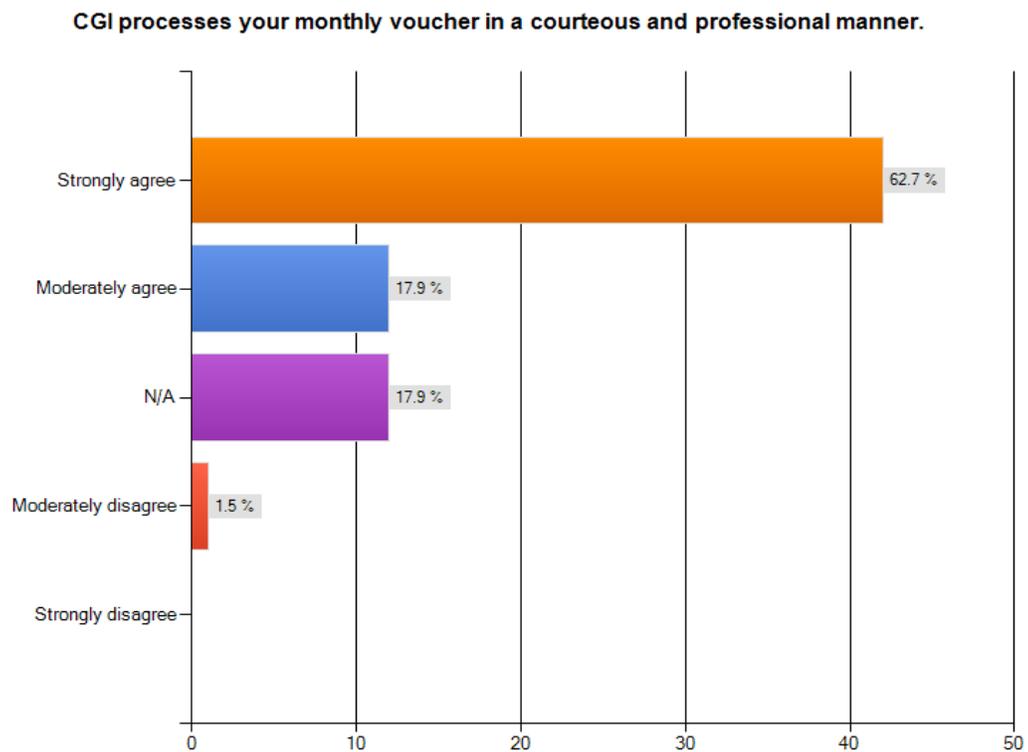


CGI, Inc. (continued)

Question #7.



Question #8.



Comments from respondents – CGI, Inc. (IFA’s sub-contractor)

Of the 67 Owners/Agents who participated in the “CGI, Inc.” section of the customer survey, 10% offered the following comments and/or suggestions regarding CGI, Inc.:

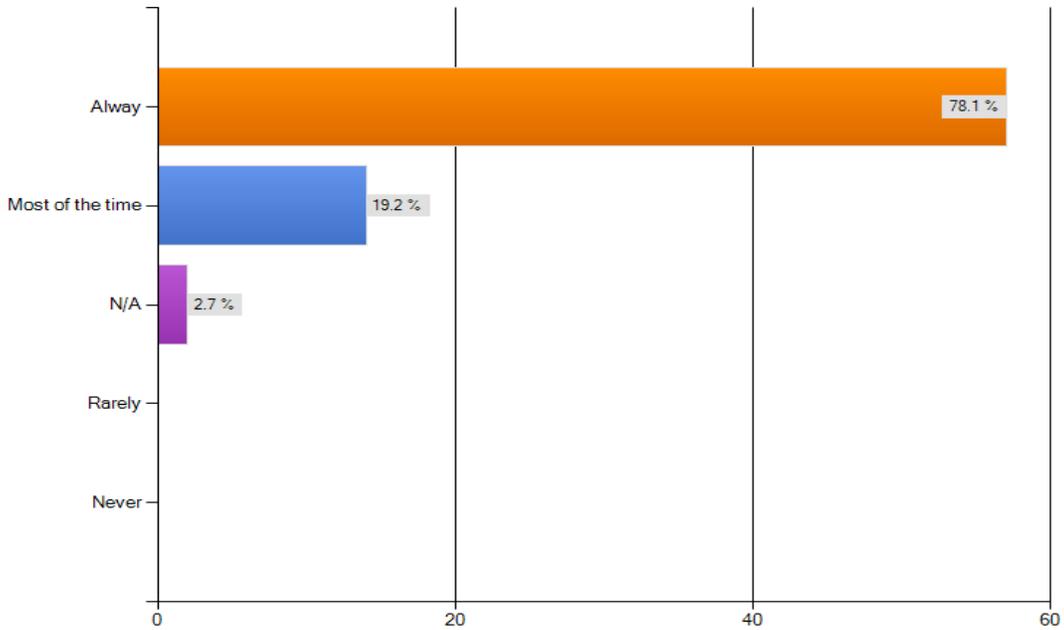
1. It has been a couple of months back where I had some issues and I couldn’t get a good explanation of what I needed to do or have my software company do to resolve the issue.
2. I do like the written confirmation report we receive from CGI that we did not get from EPS.
3. I had changed the rent before HUD had given the ok. So it took a few months to resolve. Everything has been fine since then. Almost time to try again.
4. I would urge IFA to require CGI to submit individual tenant files, Move-Ins, Move Outs, IR’s to TRACS immediately when they are submitted instead of waiting until they submit the voucher that contains the event. In fact, I thought they were required to do so. When a tenant moves in during the earlier part of the month and the move-in is not submitted to TRACS until the 5th of the next month, it delays verification of the tenant.
5. Same of as previous comment.
6. Have dealt with different people for different sites and have found some to be difficult to communicate with and not very knowledgeable about issues having. At other times, for different site (different person) have been extremely helpful.
7. The forms they send are difficult to “interpret,” especially if there is a discrepancy. Hard to figure out what needs to be changed.

Customer Service and Communication

The “Customer Service and Communication” section received 76 responses from owners/agents. Of those who participated in this section, the following answers were recorded:

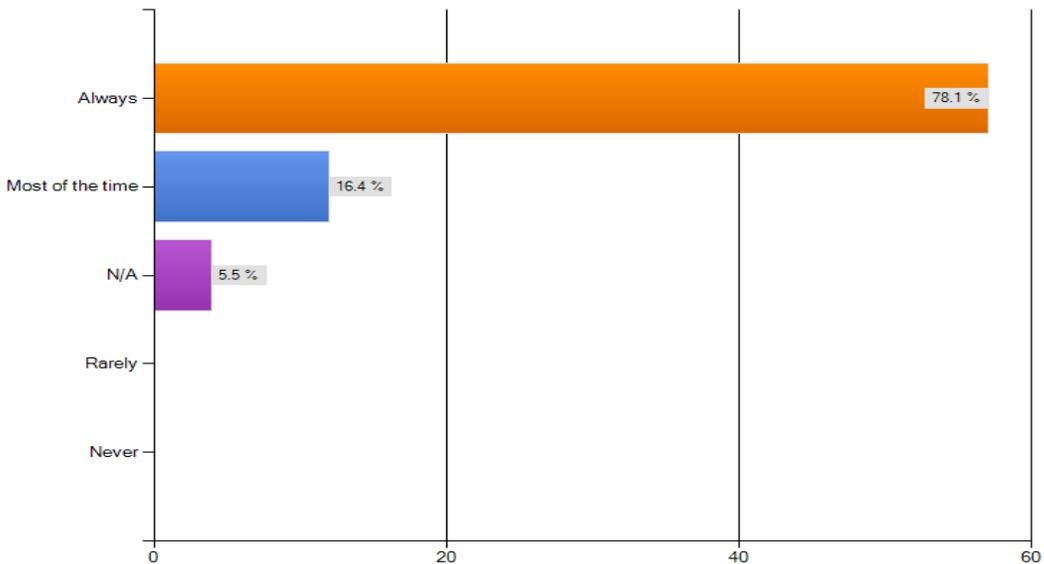
Question #1.

IFA's staff is courteous and professional when responding to questions/inquiries.



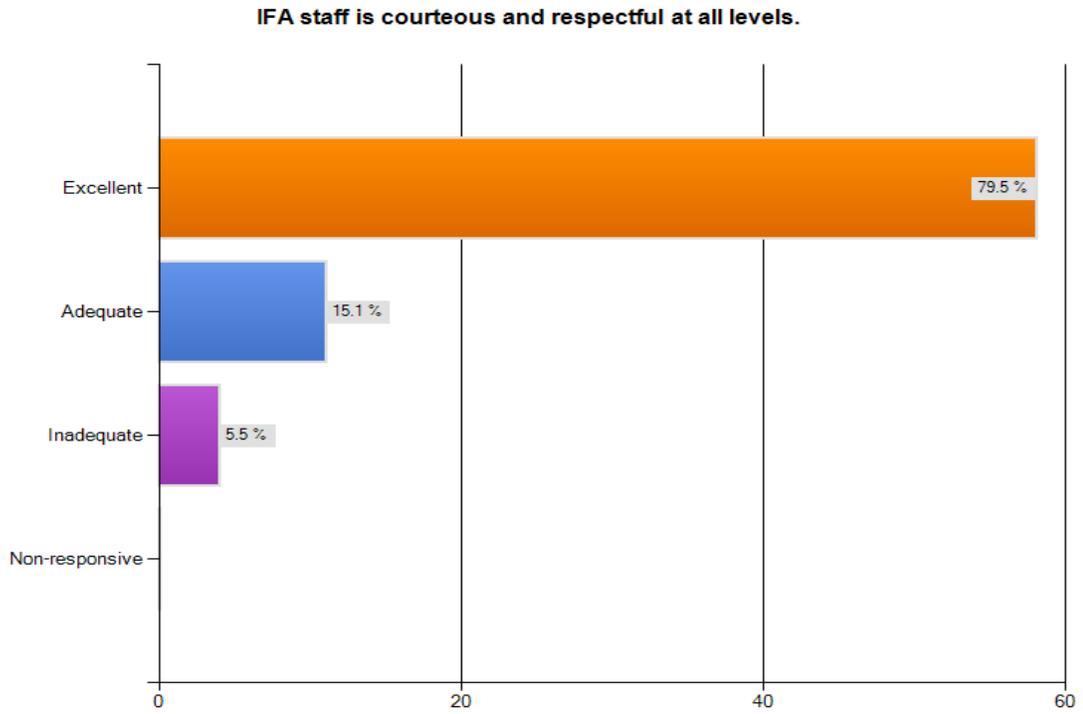
Question #2.

IFA responds in writing when necessary (whether electronically or via mail service).

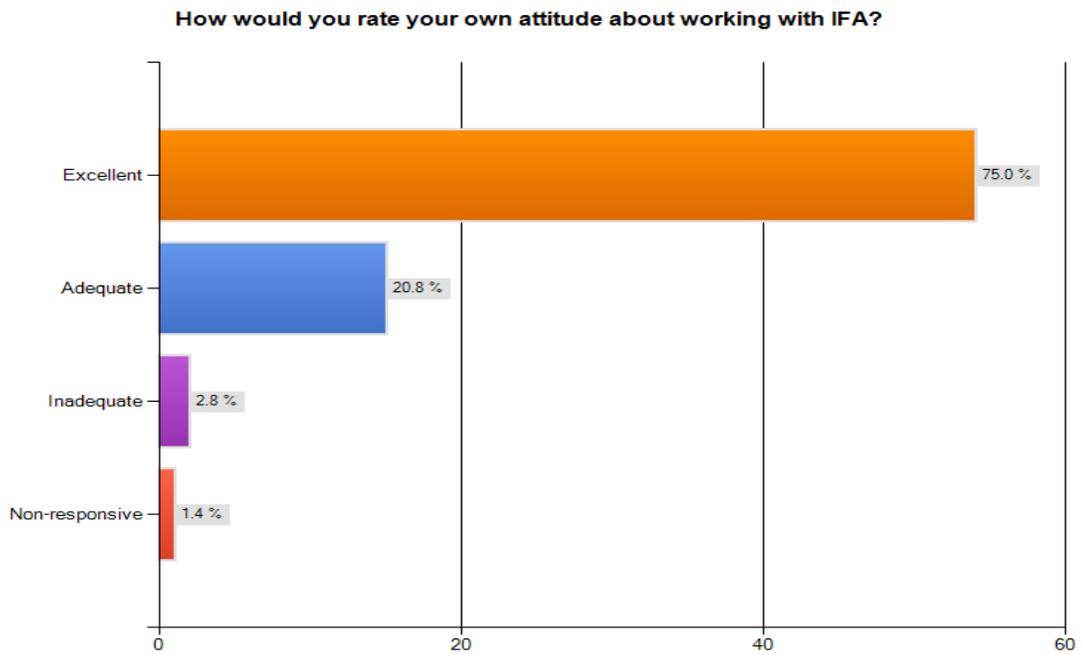


Customer Service and Communication (continued)

Question #3.

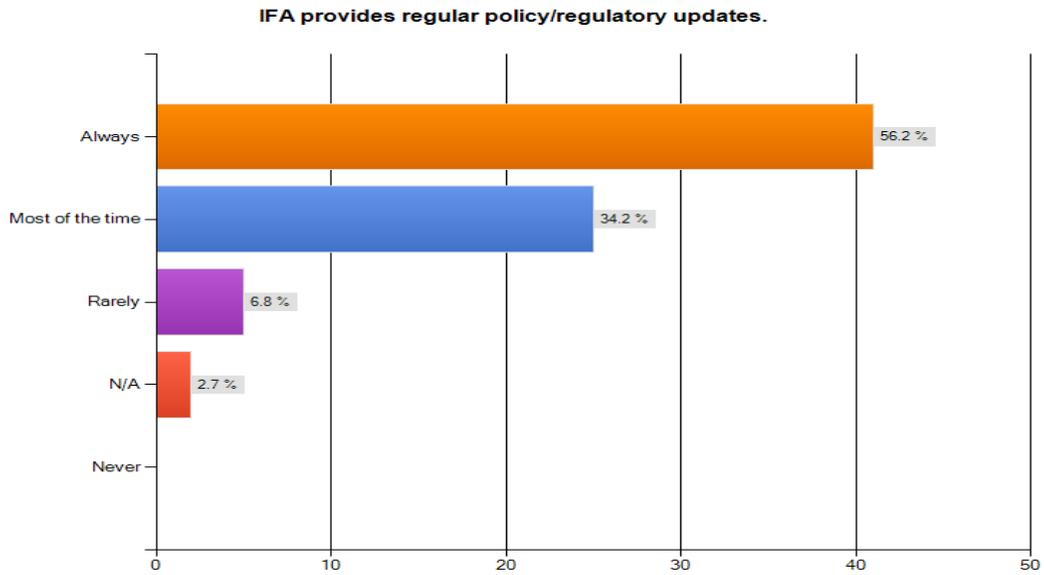


Question #4.

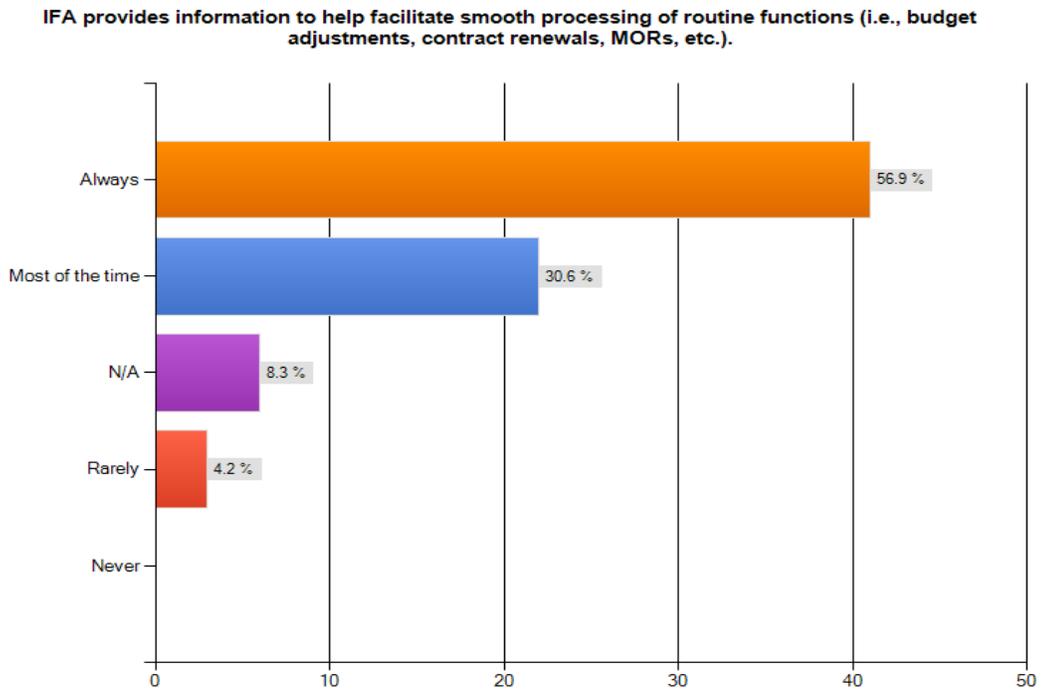


Customer Service and Communication (continued)

Question #5.

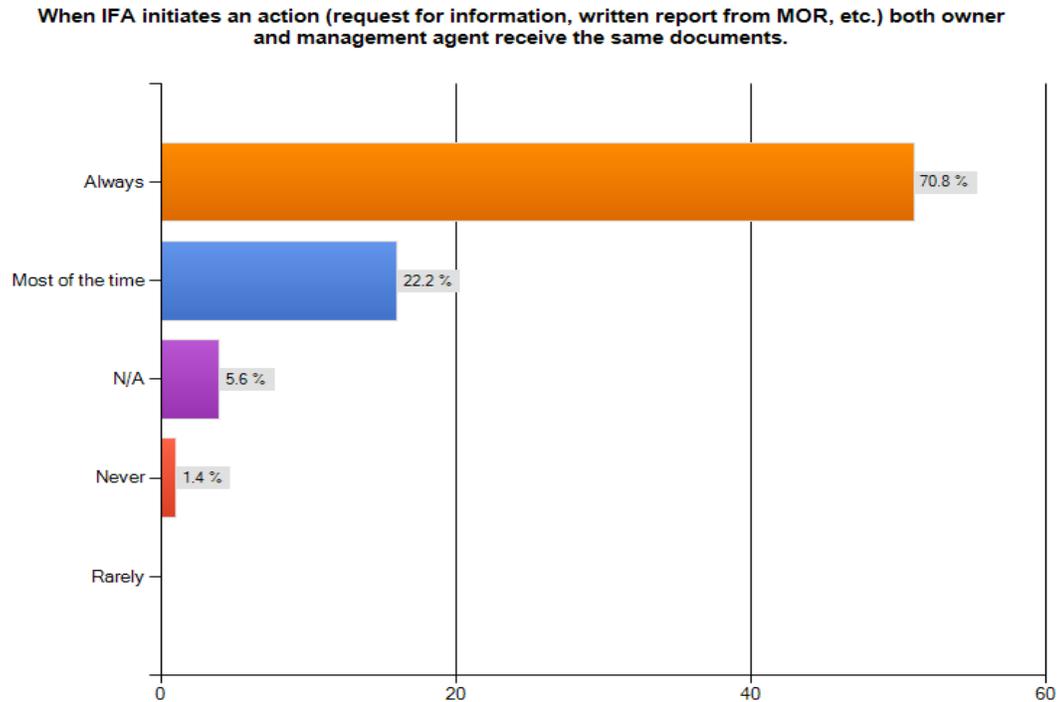


Question #6.



Customer Service and Communication (continued)

Question #7.



Comments from respondents – Customer Service and Communication

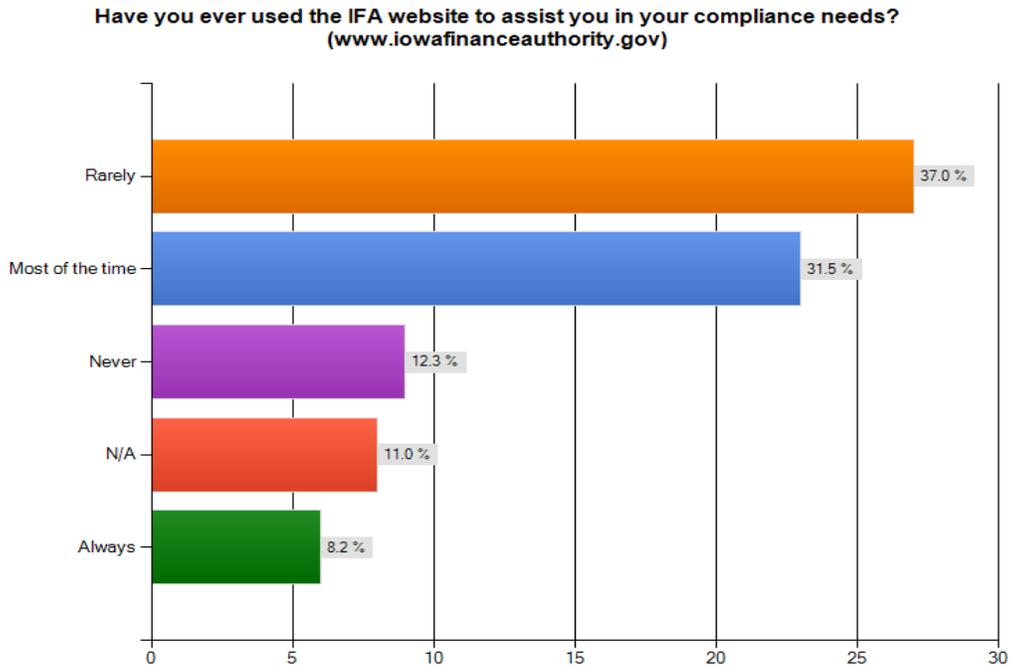
Of the 73 stakeholders who participated in the “Customer Service and Communication” section of the customer survey, 3% offered the following comments or suggestions:

1. This survey should let you know “How Many Questions It Has.” I.e. you’re on question 5 of 80 or give us an idea how long the survey is.
2. I left several phone messages for a staff member in August and I still have not received a call back.

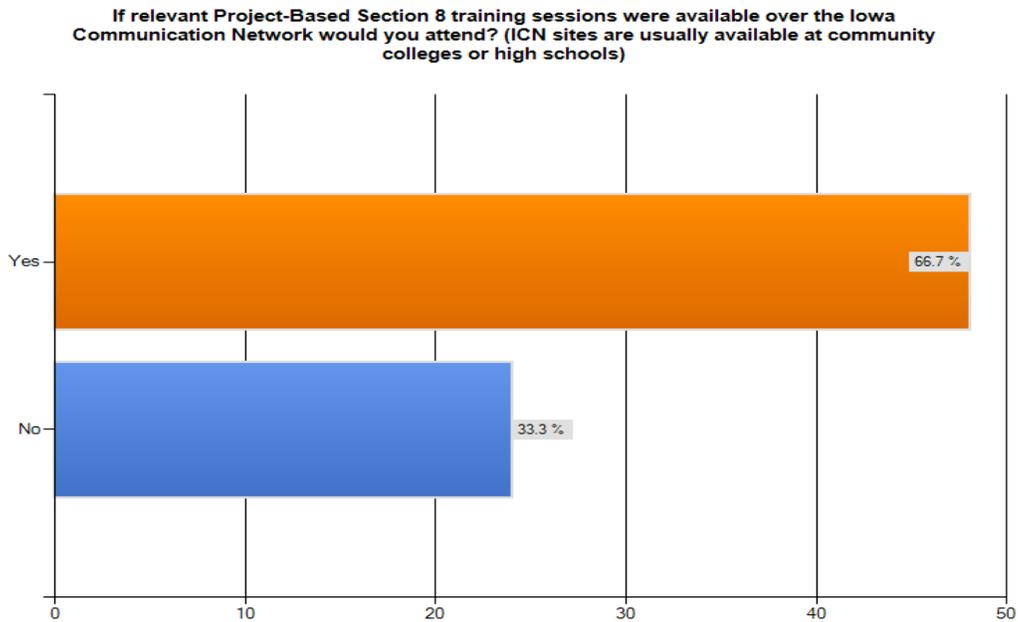
Training

Approximately 72 Owners/Agents answered questions in the “Training” section of the customer survey. Of those who participated, the following responses were provided:

Question #1.

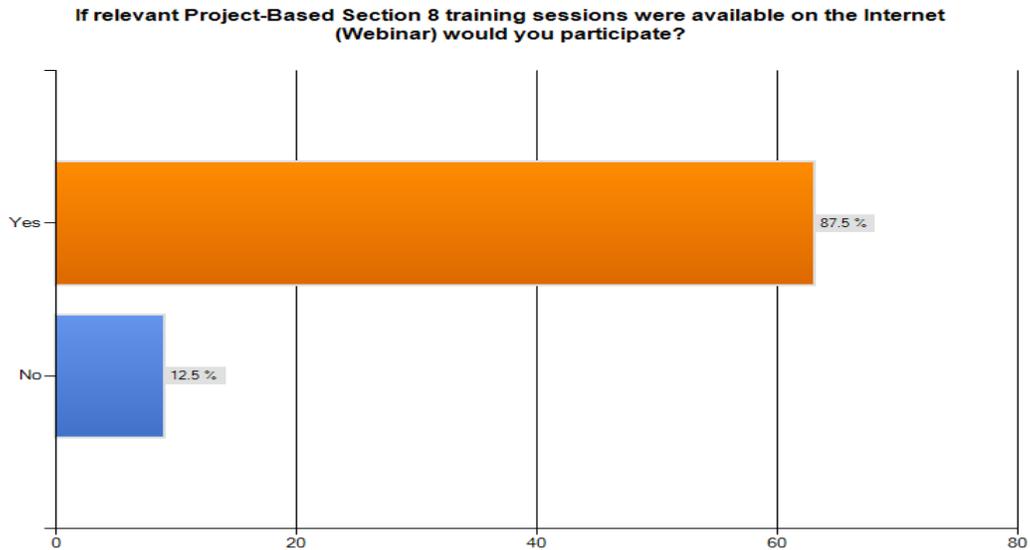


Question #2.

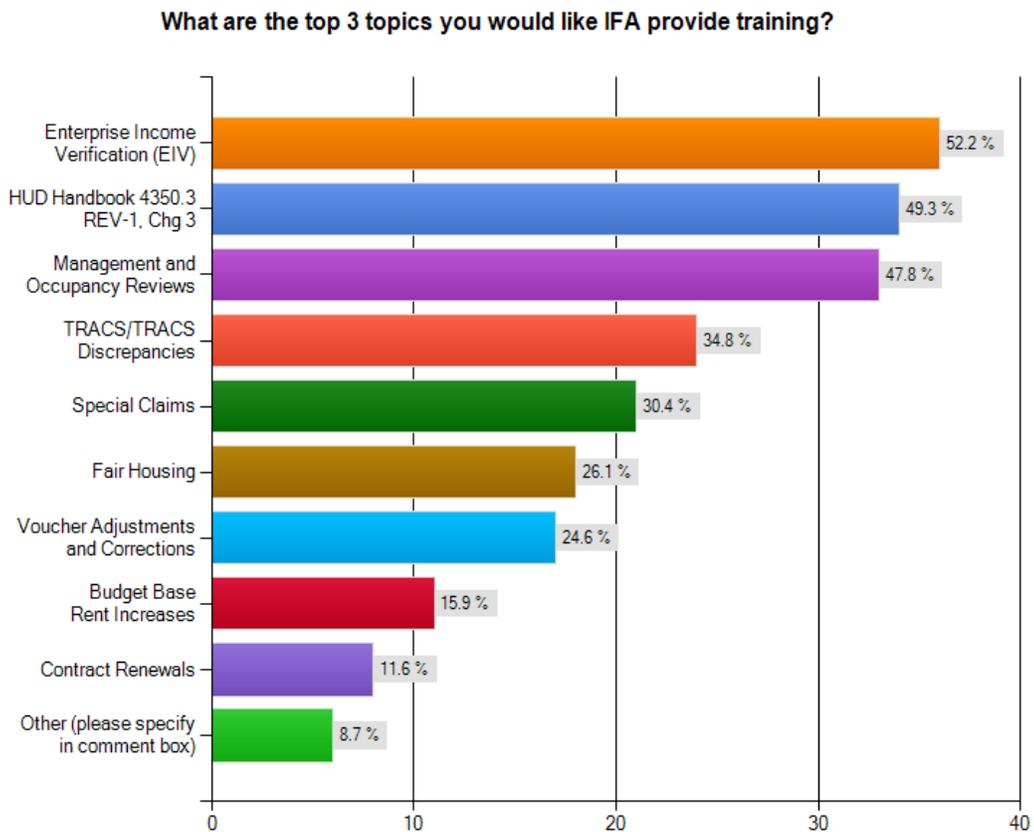


Training (continued)

Question #3.



Question #4.



Comments from respondents – Training

Of the 72 Owners/Agents who participated in the “Training” section, 17% offered the following comments or suggestions:

1. Programs
2. HOPWA info please.
3. #4 I could have made three more checks.
4. HUD Handbook 4350.3. – Change 4 rather than Change 3.
5. Chg 4 !!!
6. Tenant Selection Plans.
7. What surprise findings will be scrutinized each year as it changes.
8. File organization.
9. Everyone at IFA that I have worked with or had contact with, have always been helpful and friendly.
10. More training on discrepancies for EIV.
11. EIV – income discrepancies.

****Note:** The 2013 Annual Customer Service Survey inadvertently used old HUD Handbook 4350.3 REV-1, CHG 3 instead of new HUD Handbook 4350.3 REV-1, CHG 4.