

Maricopa Association of Governments



Regional Domestic Violence Protocol Model 2014 Implementation Updated Survey Results

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Domestic Violence Protocol Evaluation Project was designed to enhance existing arrest and prosecution protocols for addressing domestic violence. With the help of the Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police (AACOP) and Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (AZ POST), a survey was distributed in 2013 and 2014 to gather information about implementation of the Regional Protocol Model. The new findings compare how the implementation of the protocol has changed from 2013 to 2014. The results provide insights into how the protocol model is being utilized and identifies the changing needs of the region.

Summary of Findings:

- The survey was distributed to 73 law enforcement agencies across the state in 2014. A total of 30 agencies provided responses in 2014. In 2013 a total of 30 agencies also completed the survey.
- Eighty-eight percent of the 16 participating law enforcement agencies, who answered this particular question, said the implementation of the protocol model has resulted in their agency being better equipped to handle domestic violence cases.
- Barriers to implementation of the protocol model changed from 2013 to 2014. The percent of respondents who reported "cost" as a barrier in 2013 increased by 20 percent in 2014. The percent of respondents who reported "limited staff" and "lack of training" as barriers in 2013 increased by 15 percent in 2014.
- The number of respondents who reported "technical assistance" for additional resources needed dropped from 38 percent in 2013 to four percent in 2014.

*The following charts illustrate the degree to which law enforcement agencies have implemented the protocol model in Maricopa County and in other counties across Arizona. Please note that each protocol has been abbreviated for use in the charts. Please refer to the Protocol Model for more detail. The subsequent charts provide an overview of the barriers agencies indicated as well as what additional resources might be helpful to further implementation. Additional details of participants' responses are also provided in the attached appendix. Please direct any questions to Nikki Oxford, MAG, at noxford@azmag.gov or (602) 759-1843.

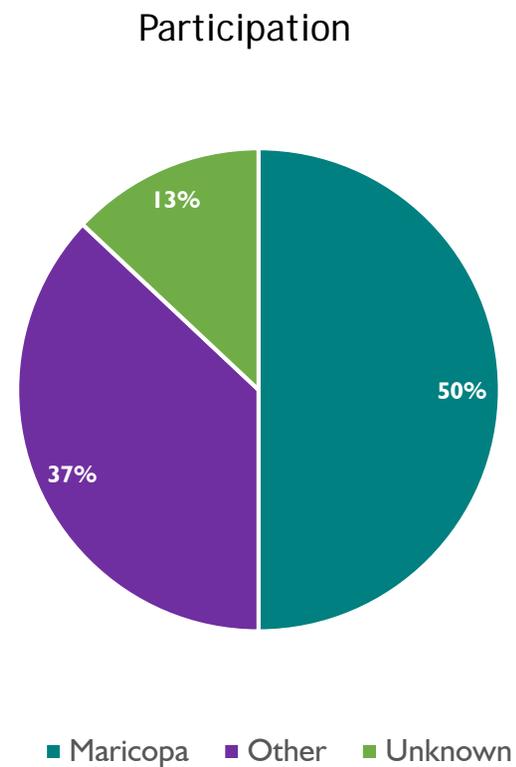


Figure 1: This pie chart illustrates the percentage of law enforcement agencies that completed this survey.

Participating Counties

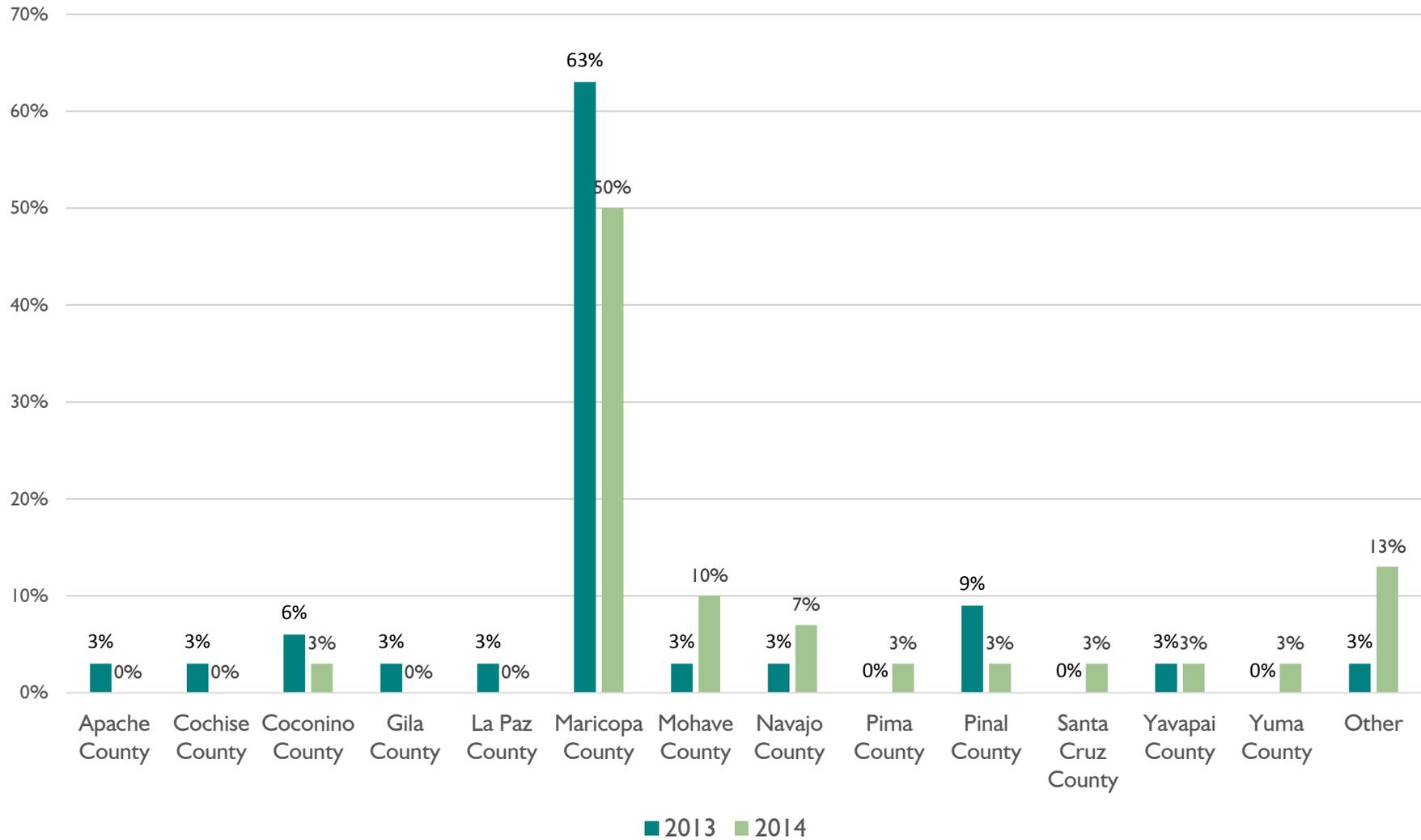


Figure 2: This chart represents the different counties of law enforcement that responded to the survey in 2013 and 2014.

Do you feel your department is better able to handle domestic violence calls and/or cases?

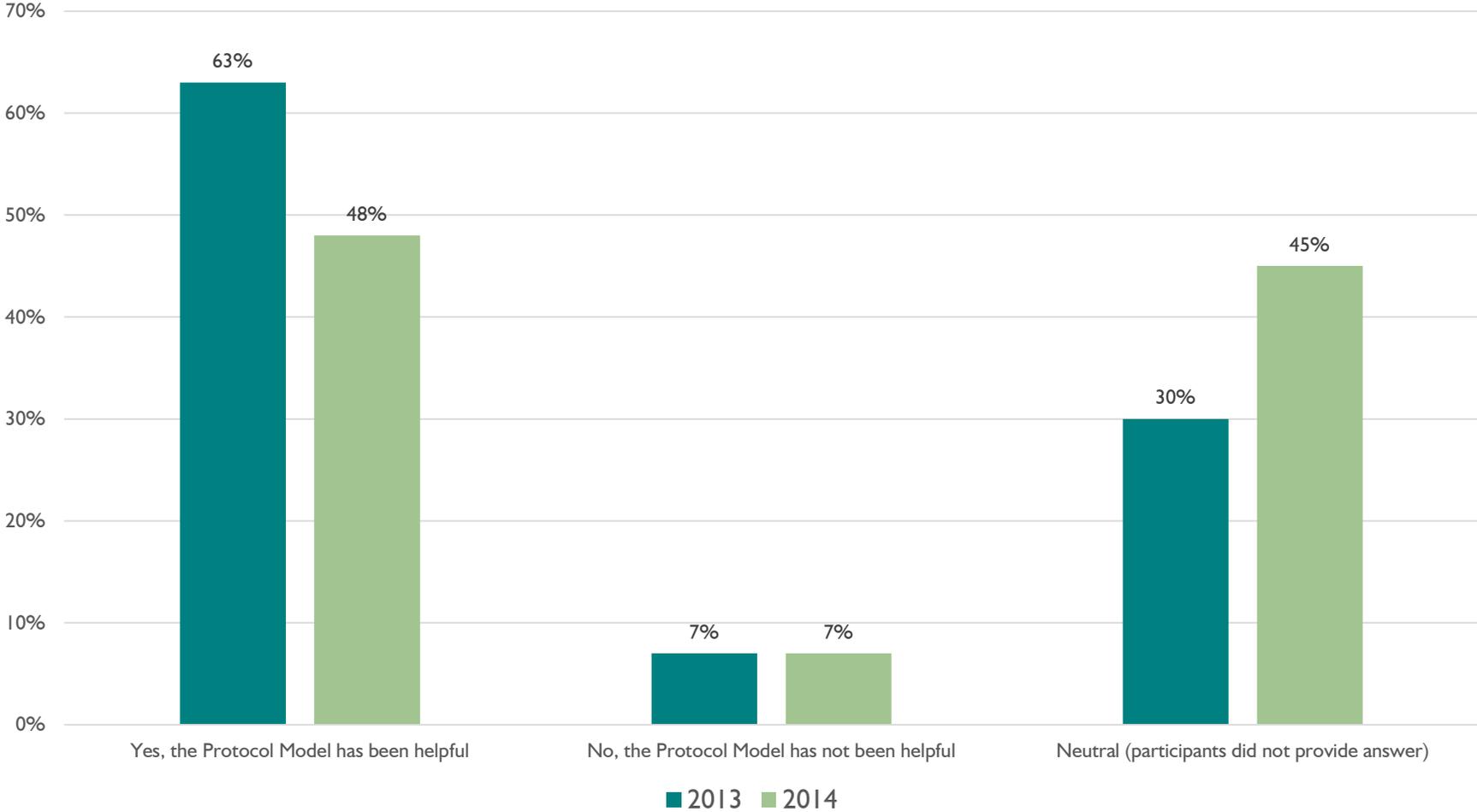


Figure 3: This graph depicts responses from law enforcement agencies when asked if they feel their department is better able to handle domestic violence calls and/or cases.

Barriers to Implementation

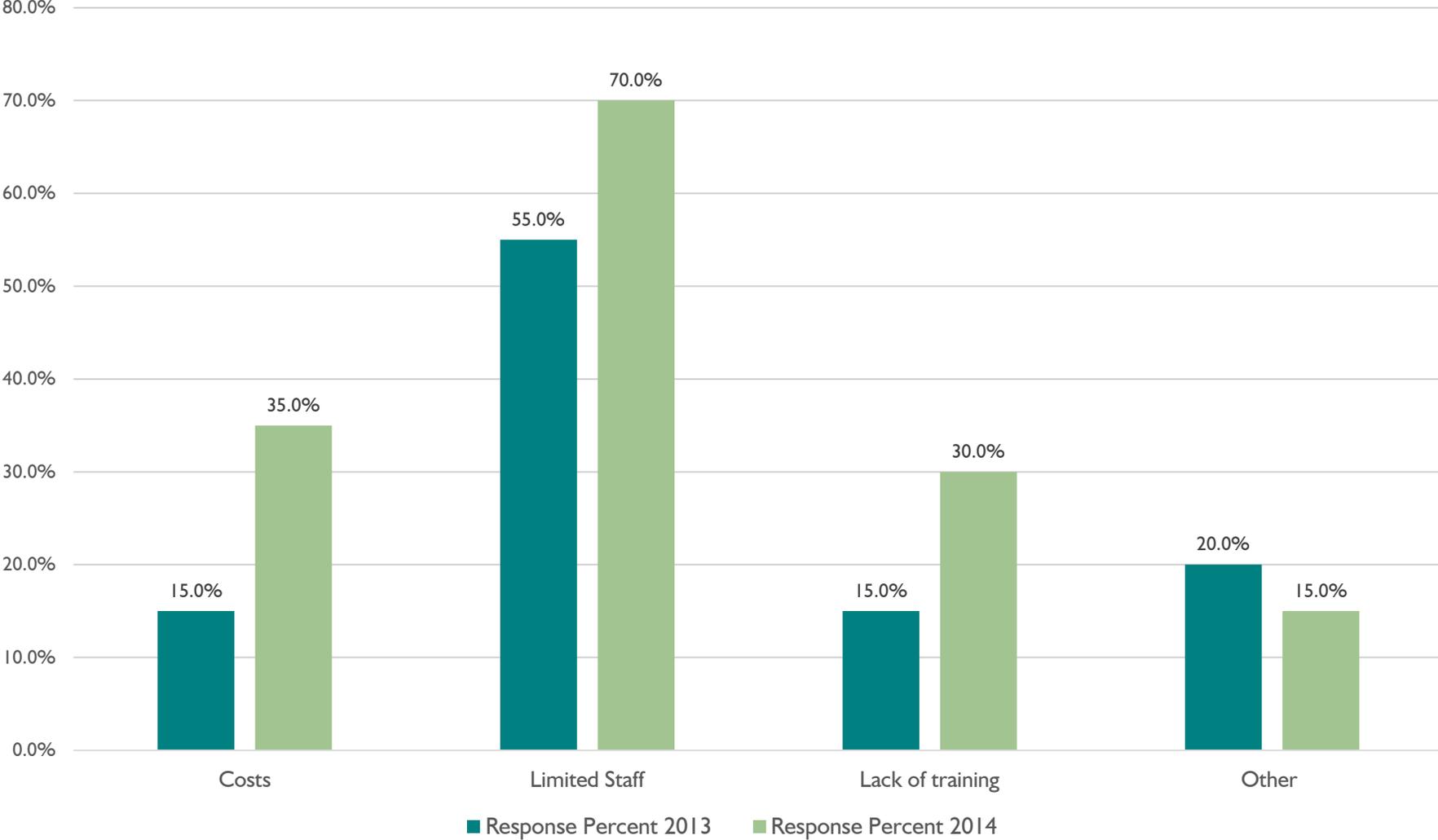


Figure 4: This chart shows the responses of law enforcement agencies that completed the survey when asked what barriers they saw in implementing the protocol model.

Additional Resources Needed

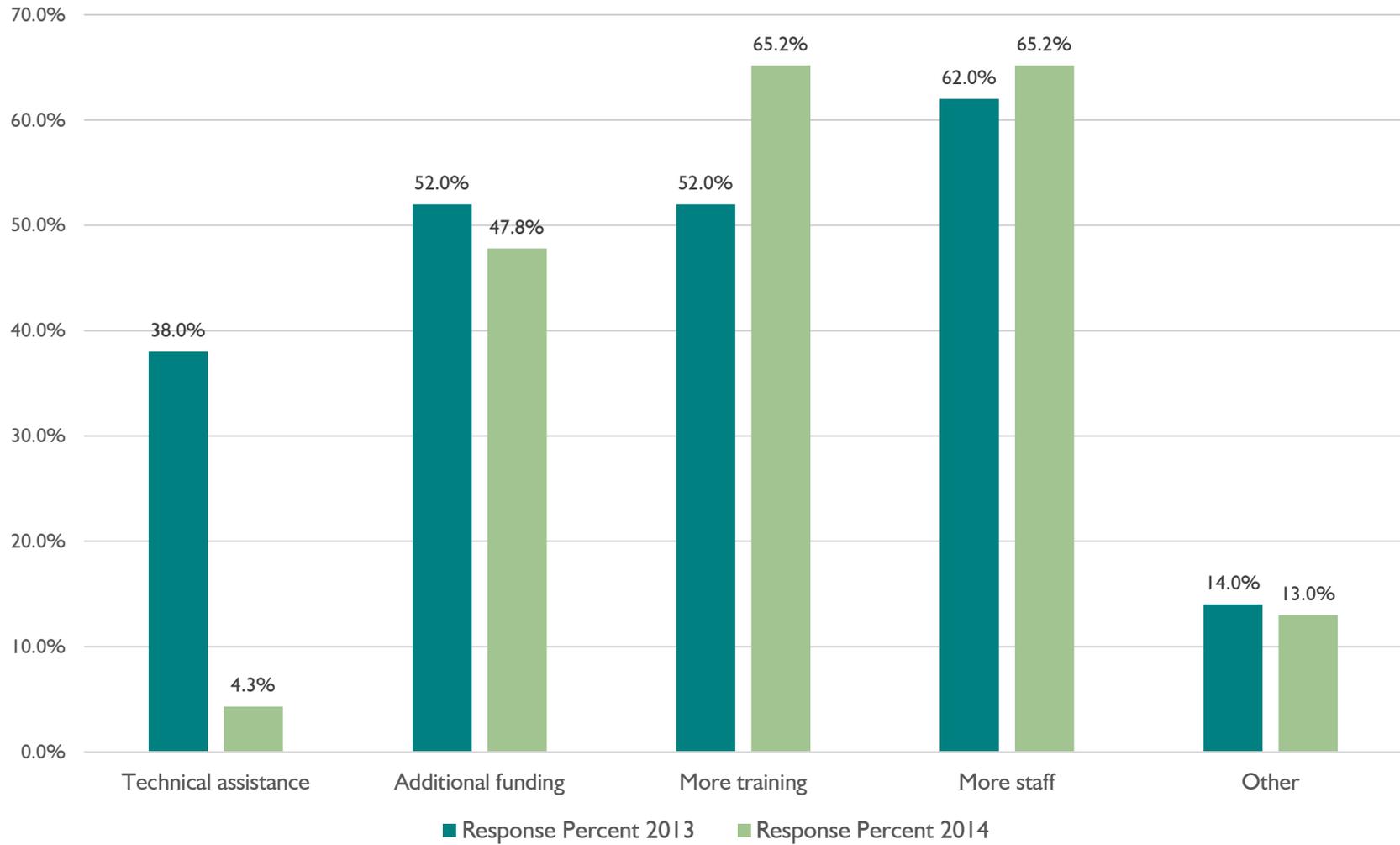


Figure 5: This graph displays the responses from law enforcement agencies that completed the survey about additional resources needed to enhance implementation of the protocol model.

Helpful Practices

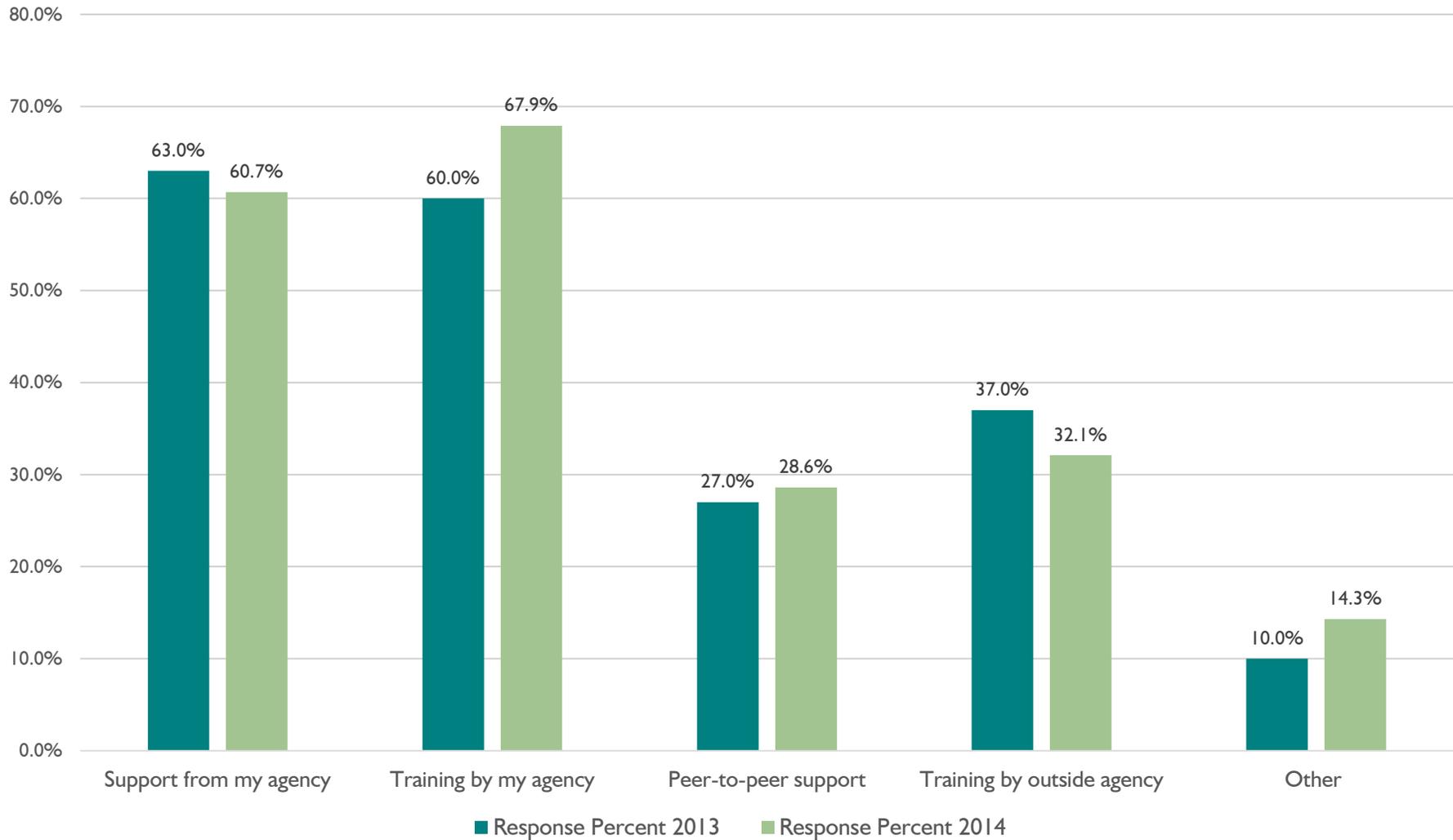


Figure 6: This chart demonstrates the responses of law enforcement agencies that completed the survey when asked about helpful practices that have aided in implementing the protocols.

Implementation Rates

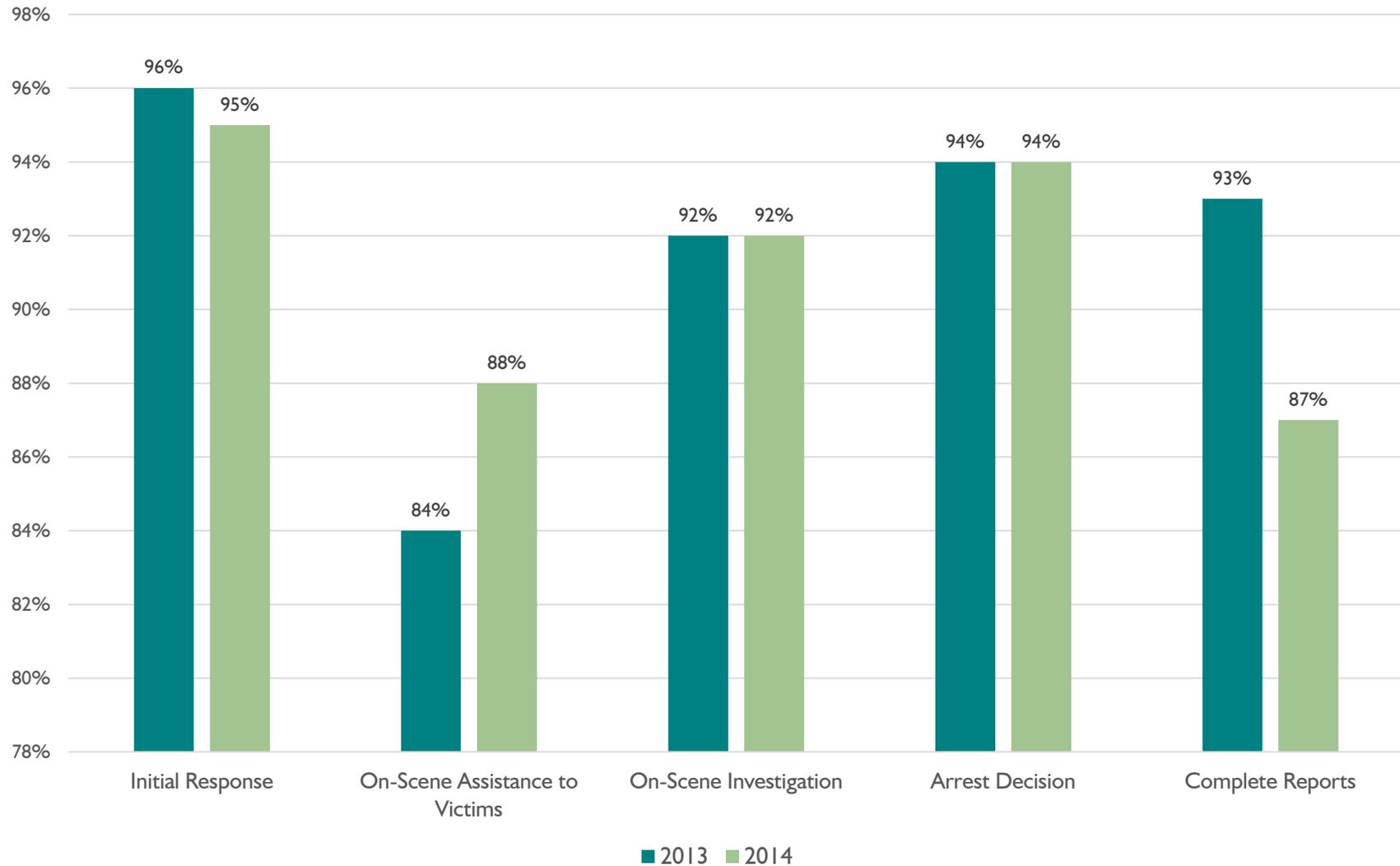


Figure 7: This graph shows the level of implementation of each section of the protocol model according to law enforcement agencies that completed the survey.

Measuring Progress

Determine Main Barriers

According to feedback given from participants, the main barriers to implementing the protocol 100 percent are due to time and resources. Cost was cited as a barrier to implementation in 2013 from 15 percent of respondents. However, this percentage increased to 35 percent in 2014. This could be due to a growing concern over municipal budget cuts and the stagnant economy. Another barrier reported was limited staff. In 2013 the percent of participants who reported limited staff as a barrier to implementation was 55 percent. However, in 2014 that percentage increased to 70 percent. This increase might be attributed to the recent increase in lethality assessment programs, which are designed to identify more victims of domestic violence and determine the lethality of their situation. These programs might be identifying more victims than in previous years and putting further strain on the already tight budgets of agencies. While many agencies report the protocol has been implemented for many years already, training can be a barrier. With frequent staff changes and new hires it can be difficult to keep everyone up to date on the protocol model. One agency reported the reason why some protocols have not been implemented is because they are impractical.

- Time and resources.
- Limited staff.
- Lack of training.
- Some protocols are impractical.

Identify Supportive Factors

It is important to identify supportive factors that have aided agencies in successfully implementing the protocol model. Once these factors are identified other agencies may enhance their implementation based on lessons learned by other agencies. According to responses given in the survey, one of the most supportive factors reported from participants was on-going training by their agency. Nearly 68 percent of respondents cited this as a helpful practice and others noted the importance of on-going training within the agency as something that has improved their response to domestic violence (see appendix under figure 3, bullet one). Other participants noted how the addition of Lethality Assessment Programs has helped to strengthen the use of the protocol and their ability to better serve victims (see appendix under figure 3, bullet four). Respondents also provided detailed comments about helpful practices, one of them being that when victim services units are funded and supported it helps change the attitudes of officers. These changes were ultimately what led to implementation of the protocol being successful (see appendix, under figure 6, bullet point one).

- On-going training by agency.
- Implementation of DV Lethality Assessment Programs.
- Culture and attitude of staff and management.

- Grant funded and supported victim's services units.

Develop Strategies

- Help agencies develop on-going training for staff within their agency.
- Encourage more municipalities to adopt Lethality Assessment Programs by incorporating it into the protocol model.
- Provide trainings about how to change the organizational culture within agencies as needed to support the implementation of the protocol.

Appendix

Figure 1 & 2

Participating Counties

- The counties who completed the survey in 2013 are not all the same counties who completed the survey in 2014. Therefore, the data presented and compared are not equal and represent slightly different populations. It is important to keep this in mind when tracking progress from 2013 to 2014.

Figure 3

Do you feel your department is better able to handle domestic violence calls and/or cases?

The following bullet points are the detailed responses, to the italicized question above, provided by those agencies who completed the survey.

- Because of our size we have more resources than smaller agencies. We have ongoing training conducted by the DV unit in patrol briefings.
- Yes, we have always handled DV calls with high standards and will continue to do so.
- Yes, the guidance and constant oversight by the department and supervisor reinforces these protocols.
- Absolutely, we just implemented the DV lethality assessment program to augment the DV Protocol, and I think my department is far better equipped to deal with DV calls at this point.
- I feel we are better able to handle domestic violence calls due to these protocols. Being aware of the inherent dangers associated with continued domestic violence makes it a priority to maintain the safety of our citizens.
- Again the introduction of our victim's services and the attitude of upper management!
- I think we are better oriented to handle DV incidents through the training received, and the resources built over the past two years.
- Many of the protocol items were already included in our policy and report writing manual.
- Our agency does a better job in handling these type of calls, contributing to this is emphasis on following Arizona Revised Statutes as written, applying base investigative skills, and applying the law as prescribed in a fair and even manner.
- Yes.
- Yes. Our department is consistent with the handling of all domestic violence calls and most of these are higher priority so we usually have a supervisor on scene as well.
- Yes, our DV investigations have improved and we are providing better service to our victims.
- We have implemented protocol or similar protocol over the years and conducted training for patrol officers.

- I feel in many ways we set standards in our county as to how we handle DV calls.
- Yes, our DV Specific Offense Report implements many aspects of the protocol model and walks responding officers through a proper domestic violence investigation, as well as providing the victim with more information that is DV specific than our standard victims' rights pamphlet.
- Our police department provides adequate training to patrol and detectives to ensure DV calls are handled appropriately.

Figure 4

Barriers to Implementation

The following bullet points are the responses from participants who specified the "other" option on the survey:

- Some of these are impractical.
- These protocols were being adhered to as far back as 2004.
- Most of these elements were already implemented by our agency.

Figure 5

Additional Resources Needed

The following bullet points are the responses from participants who specified the "other" option on the survey:

- We are short on man power like many other agencies.
- Short table tops [Table tops are scenario based exercises to practice the way we want to actually perform] with officer to reinforce protocols, templates in report program to reinforce important information collected.
- Temper the activism. Law enforcement has already vastly improved response to DV over the last ten years.

Figure 6

Helpful Practices

The following bullet points are the responses from participants who specified the "other" option on the survey:

- Grant funded and supported victim services unit helps change the culture of officers. Changing the culture is the biggest piece and ultimately the most successful.
- Legal Updates.

- Most of the protocol has been implemented for years.
- We have always done these things since at least 2004.

Figure 7 & 8

Implemented Sections of the Protocol Model

- It is important to note the methodology of the Implementation Survey varied slightly from 2013 to 2014. Therefore, because the data was calculated in different programs in 2013 and 2014, it is not exactly the same. However, calculations are very similar and the data is still a useful tool to provide a snap shot of changes from year to year.
- As depicted in Figure 7, the implementation rate of the sections “Initial Response”, “On-Scene Investigation”, and “Arrest Decision” of the protocol remained the same from 2013 to 2014. The implementation rate of the section “On-Scene Assistance to Victims” increased by four percent from 2013 (84 percent) to 2014 (88 percent). This could be the results of increased adoption of Lethality Assessment Programs throughout the valley. The implementation rate of the section “Complete Reports” fell from 93 percent implemented in 2013 to 87 percent implemented in 2014. This could be due to the numerous comments indicating certain protocols in this section being “impractical” (E24d&k) therefore purposely not implemented. As depicted in Figure 8, Protocol E24d “Identify any emergency medical personnel who responded. Provided their names and cell phone numbers for follow up” was only implemented 56 percent of the time. Protocol E24k “Fill out Injury Documentation Picture Reports of all injuries found on victim and/or suspect” was only implemented 63 percent of the time. This is because these protocols have since been modified to more accurately reflect how these practices are conducted by law enforcement agencies.

Qualitative Survey Responses

Of the protocols not implemented, please explain why they have not been implemented by your agency.

- C16d-Recording of all interviews on scene is not mandatory since officers are not issued recorders.
- Some [protocols] are under review and in process of implementation. Officers are also being trained and updated on these issues.
- [Our agency is] building a very proactive victim services unit which will assist in continuing education. Overall, a strong majority of the recommended protocols are being followed. Feedback and assessment is in process!
- B14-No "Victim Services Unit". Officers on scene conduct victim interview and assist with placement.
- Time and resources.
- C17b & E24k-Generally investigation officers don't do background checks. Detectives following up take the photos and report [which is] generally used to document injuries.
- A protocol is a recommendation of best practices in the eyes of those who create it.

- **CI 6b**-The policy regarding juveniles was checked as not implemented because we have forensic interviewers who do most of your juvenile interviews.
- Some of them [the protocols] don't apply to our agencies such as a "form IV". Don't know what that is.
- Other informal procedures are in place that are not as precise as the protocol.
- **BI 5**-These resources may be in the Victim's Right's Pamphlets. I checked "Not Implemented", because I am looking into it and the survey will not remain open in the time it will take to do that.
- **E24d**-We provide the engine number and shift for responding medical personnel, their contact info can be obtained later if needed. We have not had a need to immediately collect the names and personal cell numbers for responding firefighters and EMT's unless they were witness to a specific event or statement and do not currently have plans to implement this protocol.
- **E24e**-We don't provide cell phone numbers and don't require written statements.
- The information or action recommended is addressed indirectly by another (i.e., the information isn't requested by the officer, but it is available if needed).

Resources

Survey of Law Enforcement Agencies for 2014 Protocol Evaluation Project Implementation Survey.