

MRO 2021 Stakeholder Survey

Summary Results

October 2021



**MIDWEST
RELIABILITY
ORGANIZATION**

380 St. Peter St, Suite 800
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-855-1760
MRO.net

Table of Contents

Preface	3
Executive Summary	4
Target Audience	4
Background.....	4
Survey Implementation	4
Performance Measurements	4
Year-Over-Year Comparisons	5
2021 Survey Results	6
Question 1: Sector	6
Question 2: Role	7
Question 3: Newsletter	8
Question 4: Service	9
Question 5: Communication	11
Question 6: Training and Education	12
Question 7: Reliability Improvement.....	13
Question 8: Leadership	14
Question 9: Board of Directors	15
Questions Added In 2021	16
Question 10: How many MRO stakeholder outreach events do you typically attend each year (including conferences, training sessions, webinars, and workshops)?.....	16
Question 11: Please rate the quality and value of MRO stakeholder outreach events:	16
Question 12: Please list the stakeholder outreach events you find the most valuable, and why:	17
Question 13: If there was a nominal fee charged to attend MRO stakeholder outreach events, would you still participate?	17
Overall Satisfaction and DisSatisfaction	18
Question 15: Satisfaction.....	18
Question 16: Dissatisfaction	18
Question 17: Remaining Thoughts.....	18
Conclusion	18



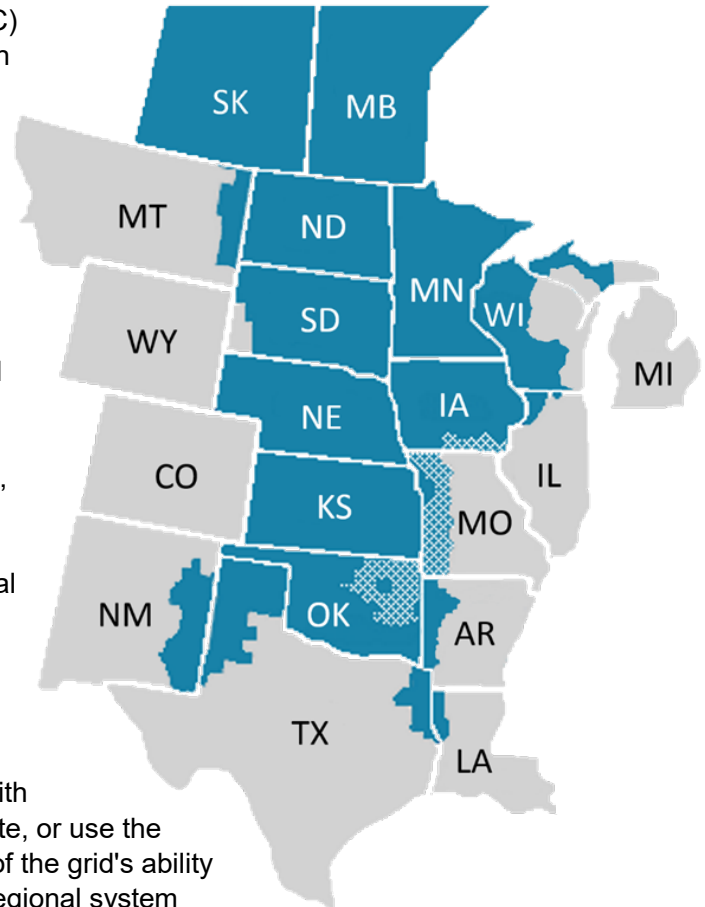
PREFACE

Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO) is dedicated to its vision of **a highly reliable and secure North American bulk power system**. To ensure reliability of the bulk power system in the United States, Congress passed the Energy Policy Act of 2005, creating a new regulatory organization called the Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) to establish mandatory Reliability Standards and monitor and enforce compliance with those standards on those who own, operate, or use the interconnected power grid.

In 2006, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) as the ERO under section 215(e)(4) of the Federal Power Act. NERC delegates its authority to monitor and enforce compliance to six Regional Entities established across North America, of which MRO is one. Recognizing the international nature of the grid, NERC as the ERO, along with MRO, established similar arrangements with provincial authorities in Canada.

The MRO region spans the provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and all or parts of the states of Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin. The region includes more than 200 organizations that are involved in the production and delivery of electric power, including municipal utilities, cooperatives, investor-owned utilities, transmission system operators, federal power marketing agencies, Canadian Crown Corporations, and independent power producers.

MRO's primary responsibilities are to: ensure compliance with mandatory Reliability Standards by entities who own, operate, or use the North American bulk power system; conduct assessments of the grid's ability to meet electric power demand in the region; and analyze regional system events. Additionally, MRO creates an open forum for stakeholder experts in the region to discuss important topics related to addressing risk and improving reliable operations of the bulk power system.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Target Audience

MRO's Stakeholder Survey is sent to all MRO members, registered entities and industry stakeholders that do business, are subject to the regulatory oversight, or have an interest in Midwest Reliability Organization. Recognizing that individual experiences may vary, MRO encourages participation from multiple individuals within an organization and does not limit responses in any way.

Background

MRO seeks feedback on MRO's performance in six areas: *service, communication, leadership, training and education, reliability improvement*, and the *board*. The results of this survey are used primarily to benchmark MRO's year-over-year performance related to stakeholder satisfaction, as well as to identify areas for improvement.

The survey is conducted anonymously so respondents can be open and honest in their responses. Respondents are asked to rate MRO on a 4-point scale of "Excellent, Good, Average, and Poor." Respondents can also respond "Not Applicable." Qualitative comments can be provided in response to all questions. We define these ratings as follows.

- **EXCELLENT** - Outstanding. Consistently embodies MRO's Principles of doing the right thing in the right way to support the reliable operations of the bulk power system. MRO creates substantial value for bulk power system reliable operations.
- **GOOD** - Superior. More than acceptable. Reflects MRO's Principles of doing the right thing in the right way to support the reliable operations of the bulk power system. MRO creates value for bulk power system reliable operations.
- **AVERAGE** - Passable without distinction.
- **POOR** - Seriously deficient and unacceptable. Often runs counter to expected behaviors under MRO's Principles.

In 2021, four questions were added to help measure MRO's performance related to stakeholder outreach. Responses to these questions do not impact the numerical ratings for the year-over-year performance in the six areas noted above. Finally, at the end of each survey we ask respondents to comment on any particular areas of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Survey Implementation

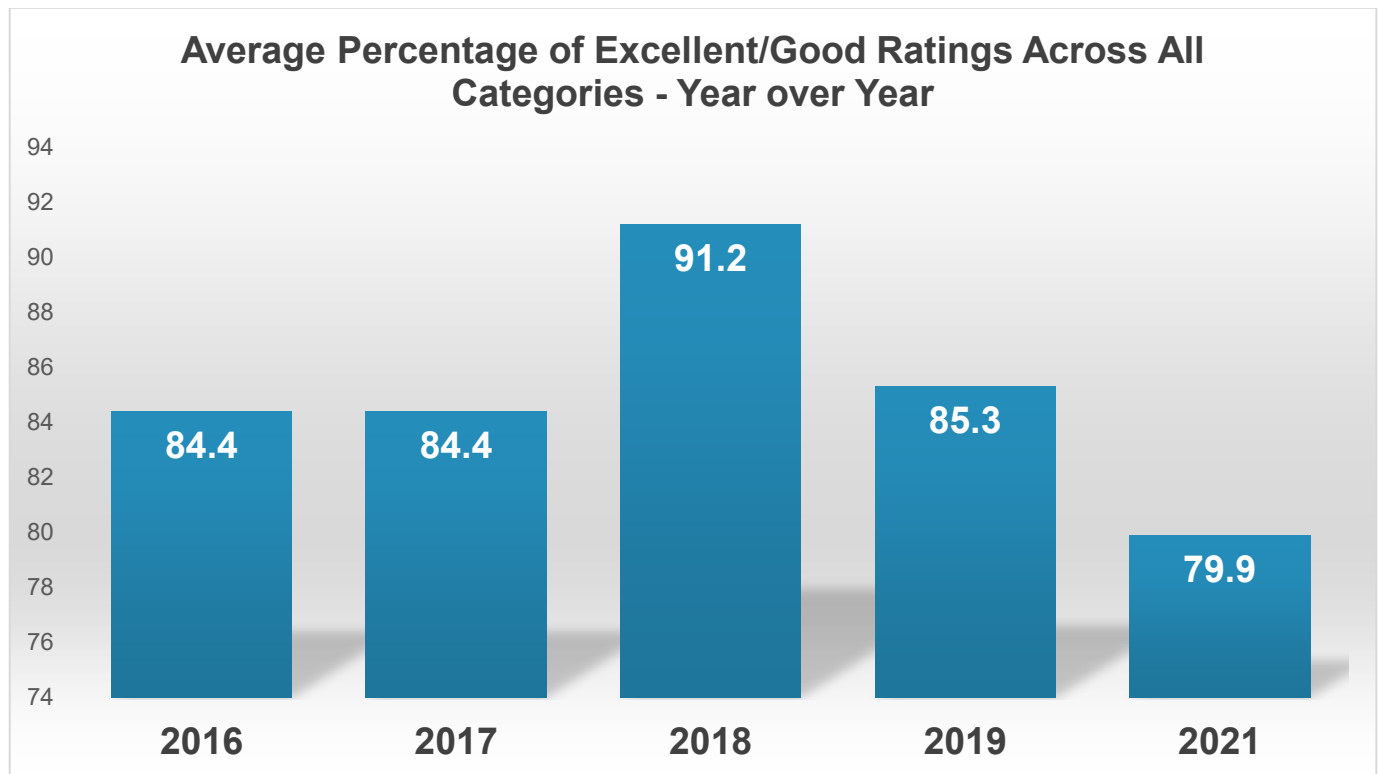
The 2021 stakeholder survey was available to complete between October 1 and October 18 and reflected a slight decrease in stakeholder participation with 82 respondents, compared to 86 respondents in 2019. All sectors participated in the survey and the proportion of respondents who have compliance roles remained the highest at 65 percent. The complete survey results are shared first with MRO's Governance and Personnel Committee and then with the entire board. Following the board's review, this summary of the survey results is posted on MRO's public-facing website.

Performance Measurements

The following is a summary of the year-over-year "Excellent" and "Good" responses by survey category. As you will see by the data provided, 2021 ratings of MRO's performance continue to remain high.



Year-Over-Year Comparisons

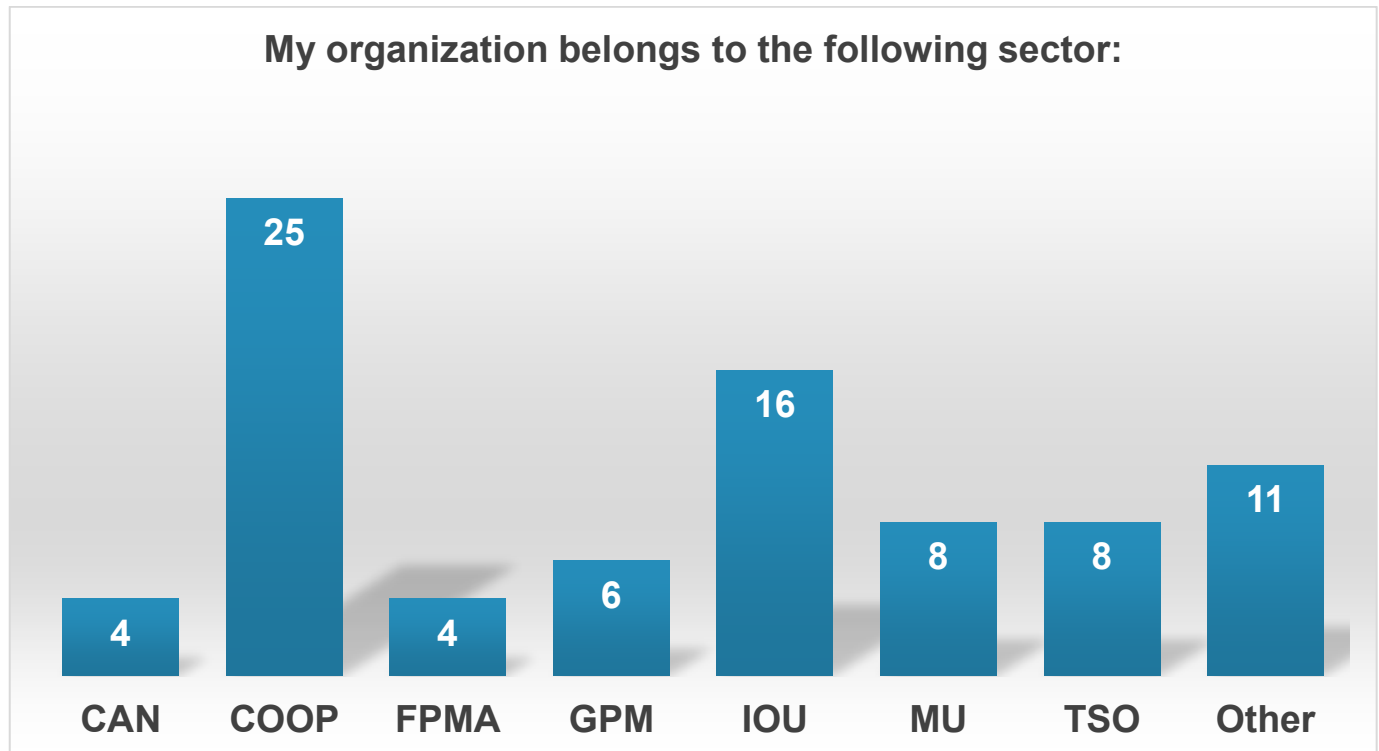


Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Service	48	87.3	39	79.6	57	92.0	63	87.5	53	73.6
Communication	49	84.5	47	87.0	52	89.7	71	88.8	67	84.8
Training and Education	49	83.1	48	88.9	59	93.8	71	85.5	69	89.7
Reliability Improvement	47	85.5	42	80.8	48	92.3	55	85.9	52	78.8
Leadership	52	88.1	44	84.6	55	96.5	61	84.7	62	81.6
Board	35	77.8	36	85.7	28	87.5	34	79.1	33	70.8
Average %:		84.4		84.4		91.2		85.3		79.9



2021 SURVEY RESULTS

Question 1: Sector



Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021
CAN (Canadian Utility)	5	6	5	9	4
COOP (Cooperative Utility)	14	14	21	21	25
FPMA (Federal Power Marketing Agency)	3	2	2	3	4
GPM (Generator and/or Power Marketer)	4	4	10	9	6
IOU (Investor Owned Utility)	17	11	14	17	16
MU (Municipal Utility)	9	13	14	14	8
TSO (Transmission System Operator)	6	4	2	6	8
Other	2	2	1	7	11
Skipped	0	0	0	0	0
Total Respondents	60	56	69	86	82



Question 2: Role

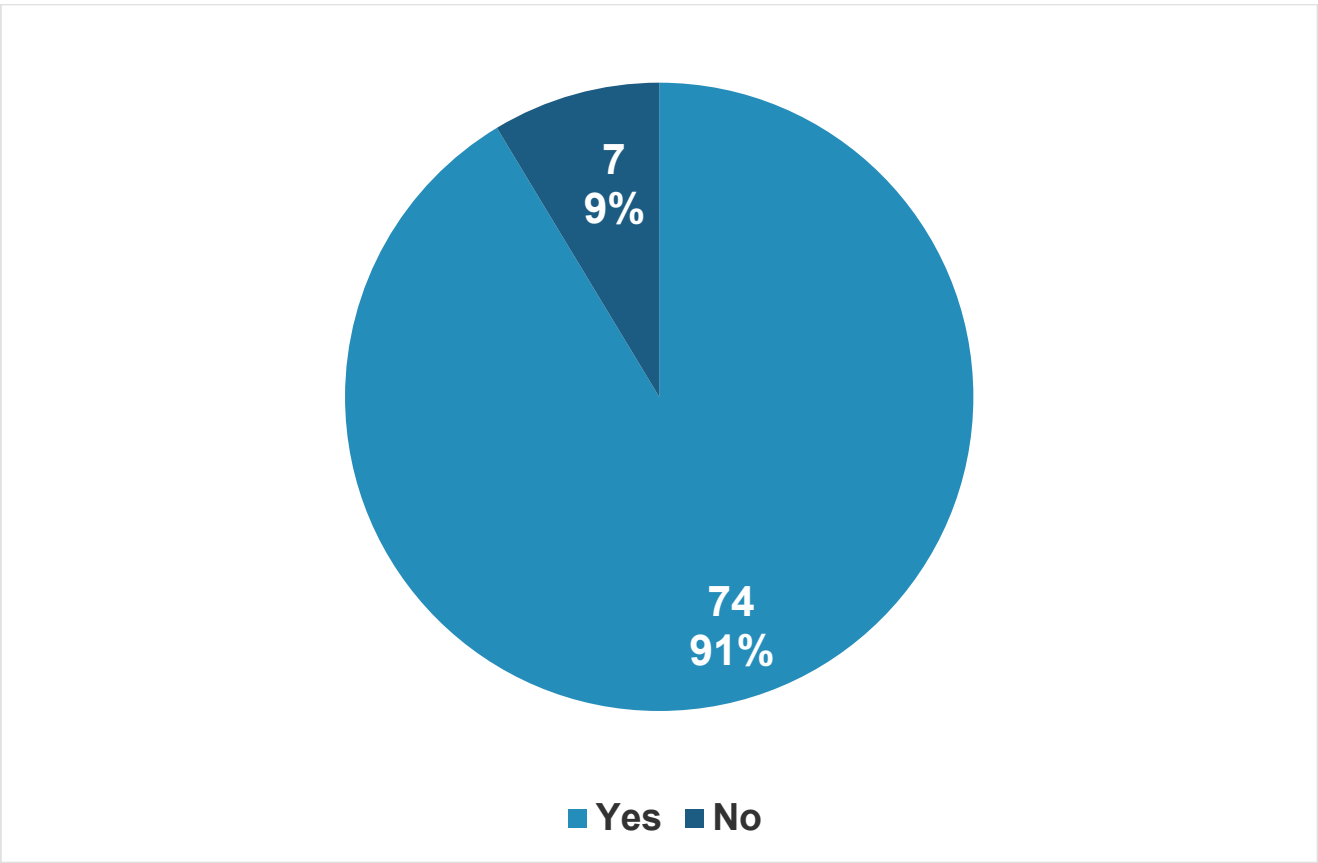


Role	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021
Compliance	37	35	45	57	52
Executive (Director or Officer)	5	7	5	8	5
Engineering	7	4	7	7	7
Legal or Regulatory	1	1	3	4	5
Operations	5	7	7	6	7
Technical/IT	2	0	1	1	2
Other	3	2	1	3	2
Skipped	0	0	0	0	2
Total Respondents	60	56	69	86	82



Question 3: Newsletter

Are you a regular reader of the MRO newsletter Midwest Reliability Matters?

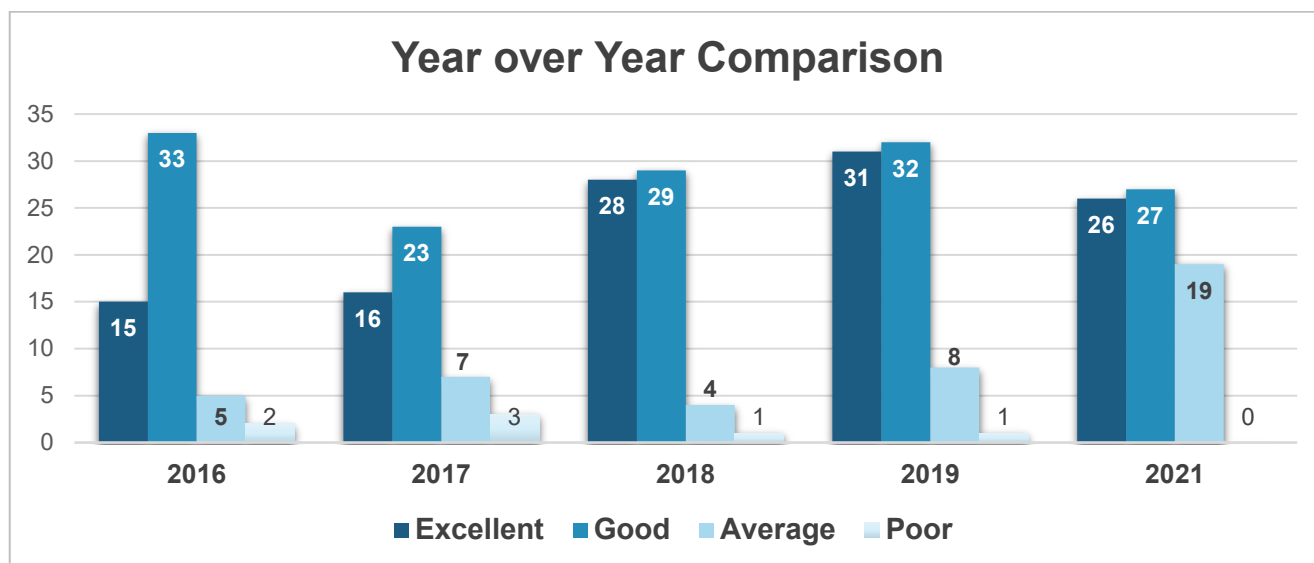


	2016	2017	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Yes	55	46	67	83.6	76	89.4	74	91.36
No	5	9	2	16.4	9	10.6	7	8.64



Question 4: Service

When my company asks a question regarding reliability matters, how well does MRO staff address these questions and concerns in a timely, responsive manner?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	15	27.3	16	32.7	28	45.2	31	43.1	26	36.1
Good	33	60.0	23	46.9	29	46.8	32	44.4	27	37.5
Average	5	9.1	7	14.3	4	6.5	8	11.1	19	26.4
Poor	2	3.6	3	6.1	1	1.6	1	1.4	0	0
N/A	5	0	7	0	4	0	14	0	3	0
Total	55		49		62		72		72	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Service	48	87.3	39	79.6	57	92.0	63	87.5	53	73.6

Feedback and Suggestions

Although the overall satisfaction rate declined in this category, the number of respondents that provided Excellent or Good ratings is still strong at more than 73% and there were no Poor ratings. The comments received continue to reflect that MRO staff are responsive to stakeholder requests, and a number of commenters expressed appreciation for the opportunity to submit questions through MRO's HERO email, which is monitored by several staff. Similar to previous years, a few respondents noted delayed or longer than usual response times to specific questions. MRO provides an initial acknowledgement to each HERO question, noting a goal of providing a full response to the entity within 30 days. In 2021, the average response time was 12 days, however, a subset of questions require further vetting across the ERO and

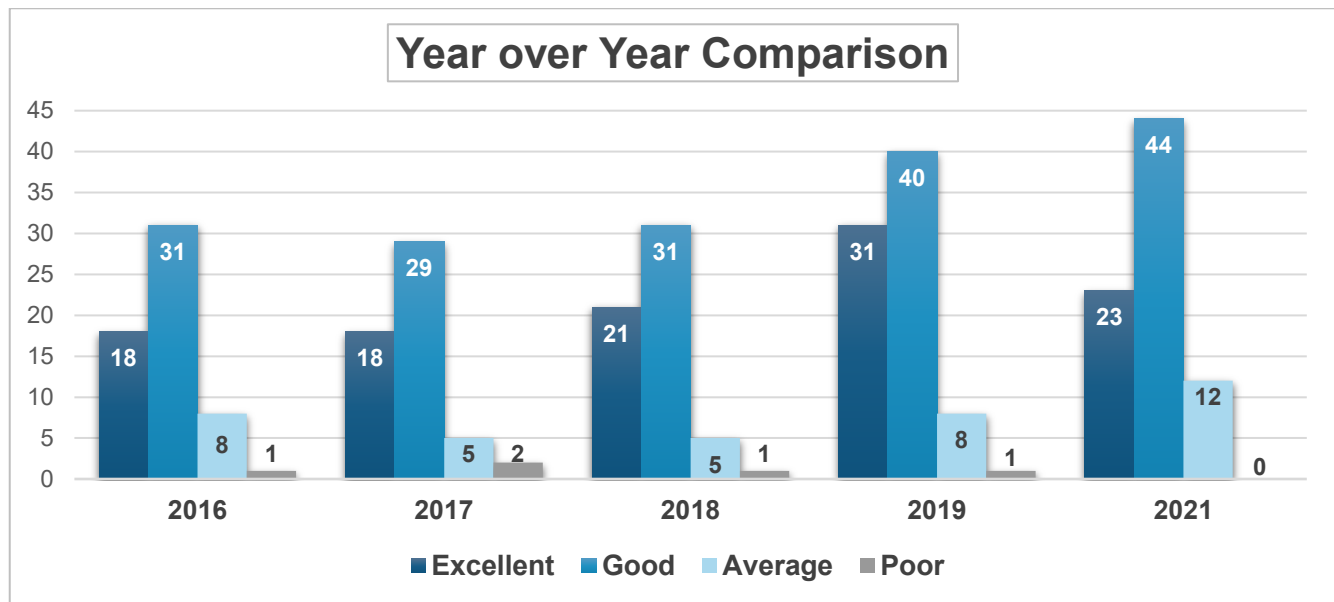


take much longer to answer. In 2022, MRO plans to implement additional communication mechanisms for those questions that take longer. Additionally, the processing time for noncompliances increased in 2021. MRO enlisted a third-party process consultant to review its processes in conjunction with the transition to Align. The results of this analysis will be incorporated into process changes in 2022 with a goal of decreasing processing times.



Question 5: Communication

How well does MRO share information to help you improve reliability?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	18	31.0	18	33.3	21	36.2	31	38.8	23	29.1
Good	31	53.5	29	53.7	31	53.5	40	50.0	44	55.7
Average	8	13.8	5	9.3	5	8.6	8	10.0	12	15.2
Poor	1	1.7	2	3.7	1	1.7	1	1.3	0	0
N/A	1	0	2	0	2	0	6	0	0	0
Total	58		54		58		80		79	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Communication	49	84.5	47	87.0	52	89.7	71	88.75	67	84.8

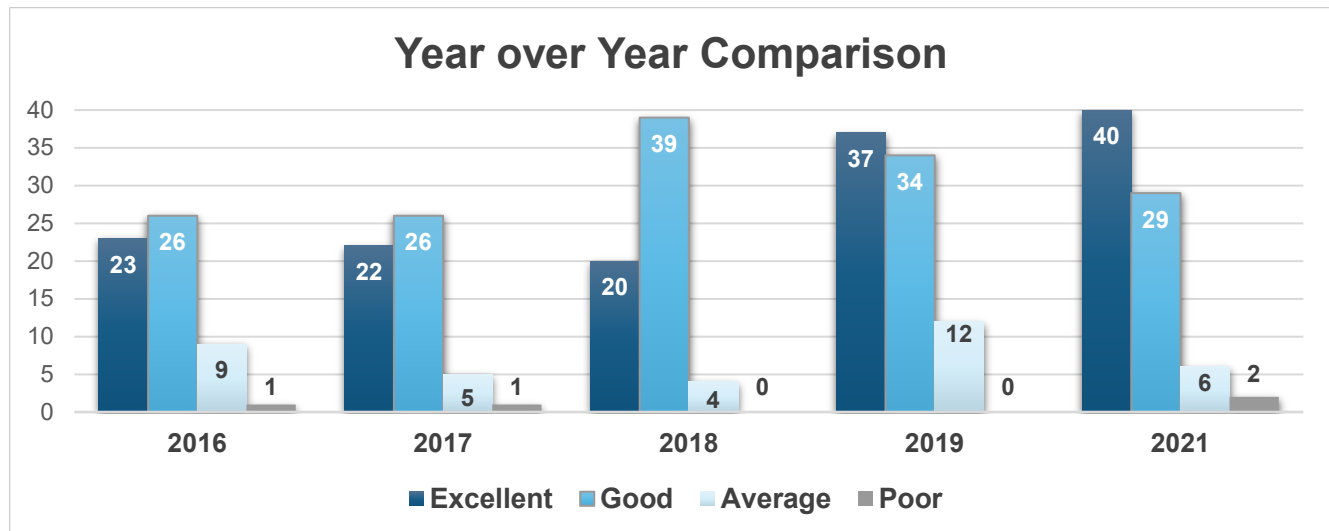
Feedback and Suggestions

Respondents continue to be very satisfied with the information and methods MRO uses to communicate with stakeholders. One respondent noted, "I find the Midwest Reliability Matters newsletter to be world class. And MRO does a terrific job of providing timely e-mail communications to advise of webinars, meeting and activities that enhance our compliance posture." While the comments were overwhelming positive, there were a few suggestions on ways to improve communications that MRO's leadership team will take under consideration in 2022.



Question 6: Training and Education

Has MRO effectively created opportunities for you and your staff to participate in the organization through committees, workshops, and other areas?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	23	39.0	22	40.7	20	31.8	37	44.6	40	52.0
Good	26	44.0	26	48.2	39	61.9	34	41.0	29	37.7
Average	9	15.3	5	9.3	4	6.4	12	14.5	6	7.8
Poor	1	1.7	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0	2	2.6
N/A	1	0	2	0	2	0	3	0	1	0
Total	59		54		63		83		77	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Training & Education	49	83.0	48	88.9	59	93.7	71	85.5	69	89.7

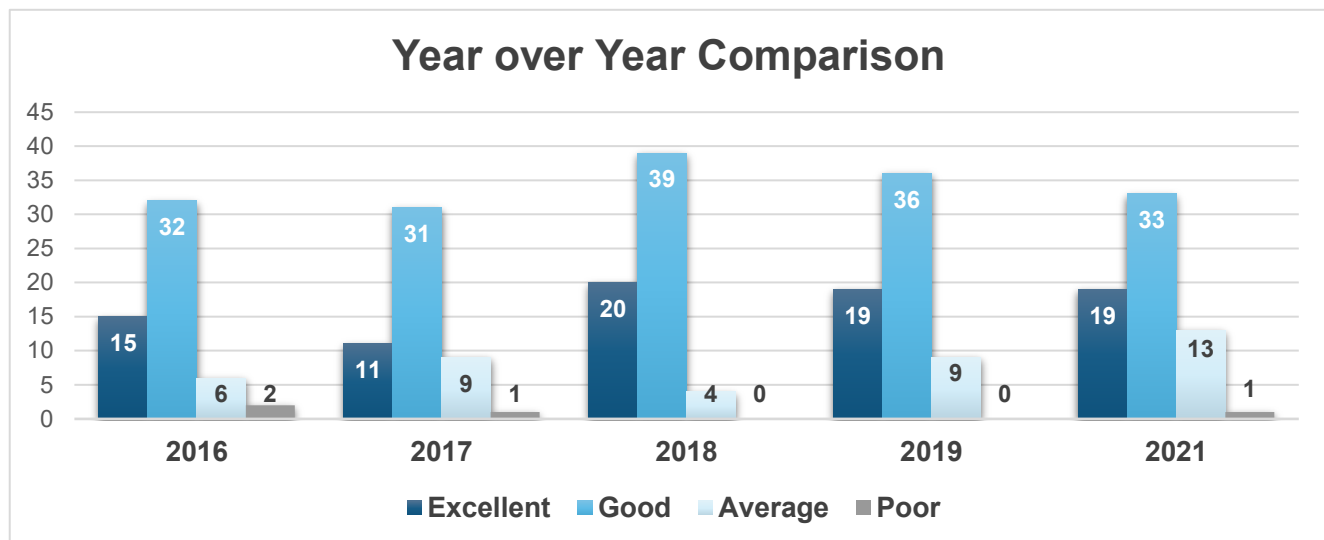
Feedback and Suggestions

Respondents expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the number and type of educational opportunities offered by MRO, specifically during the pandemic and a time of fully virtual learning. For the third straight year, Excellent responses increased to now account for over half of all responses. One respondent stated, “The advisory councils have done outstanding work on enhancing/expanding the knowledge transfer to the industry...” Based on the feedback received, both the opportunities to participate and the quality of training events is greatly appreciated by MRO registered entities. Recordings of these events can be viewed in MRO’s [video library](#).



Question 7: Reliability Improvement

How well has MRO assisted your company in addressing matters related to reliability?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	15	27.3	11	21.2	14	26.9	19	29.7	19	28.8
Good	32	58.2	31	59.6	34	65.4	36	56.3	33	50.0
Average	6	10.9	9	17.3	3	5.8	9	14.1	13	19.7
Poor	2	3.6	1	1.9	1	1.9	0	0	1	1.5
N/A	5	0	4	0	3	0	22	0	9	0
Total	55		52		52		64		66	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Reliability Improvement	47	85.5	42	80.8	48	92.3	55	85.94	52	78.8

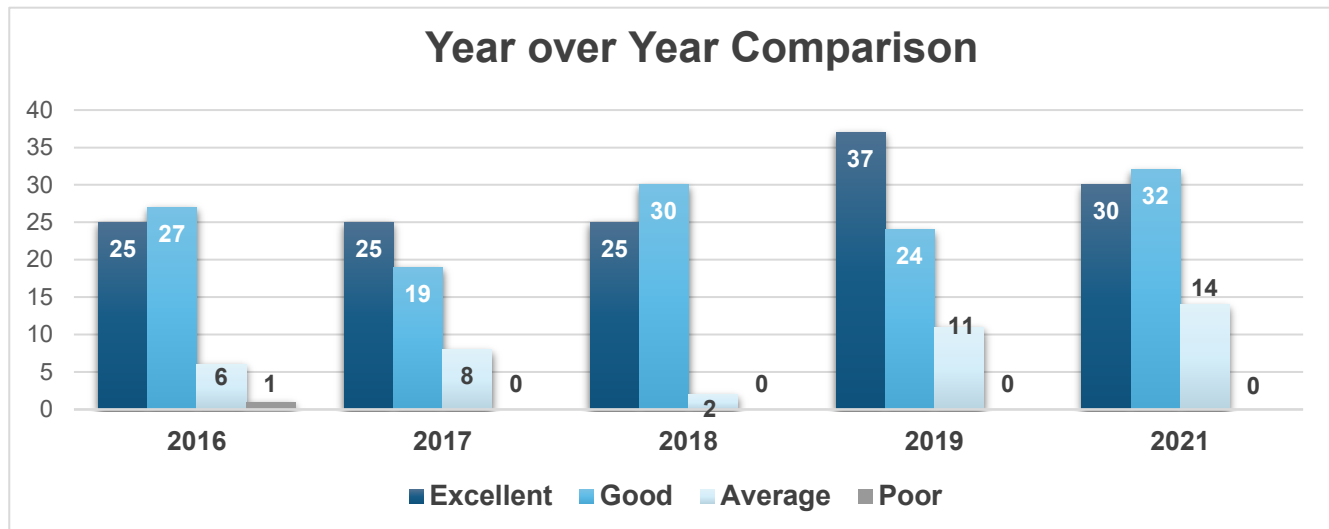
Feedback and Suggestions

Respondents continue to be satisfied with MRO's efforts to improve reliability and security, and expressed appreciation for MRO's outreach efforts on related topics. One respondent said, "While we all know that compliance with standards is important, we appreciate that MRO understands that reliability is really the goal." In 2022, MRO staff will continue working with registered entities to address the greatest risks to reliability and security of the regional bulk power system, and will continue to seek ways to improve these efforts.



Question 8: Leadership

Overall, how would you rate MRO's leadership to improve reliability and address risks to the bulk power system?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	25	42.4	25	48.1	25	43.9	37	51.4	30	39.5
Good	27	45.8	19	36.5	30	52.6	24	33.3	32	42.1
Average	6	10.2	8	15.4	2	3.51	11	15.3	14	18.4
Poor	1	1.7	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
N/A	1	0	4	0	2	0	14	0	1	0
Total	59		52		57		72		76	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Leadership	52	88.2	44	84.6	55	96.5	61	84.7	62	81.6

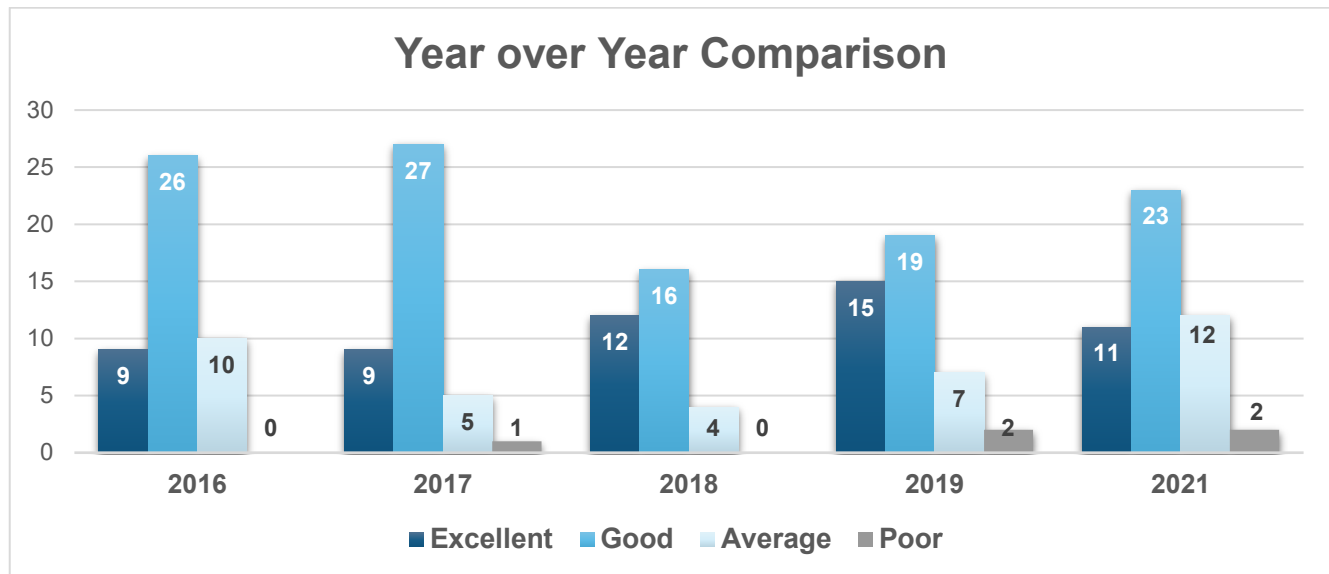
Feedback and Suggestions

The high percentage (more than 80%) of Excellent and Good responses in this area indicate that MRO stakeholders remain very satisfied with the leadership of the organization. One responded said “There has been a shift over the years where MRO seems more like a partner to have open dialogue about compliance and reliability. MRO’s seasonal risk assessments have also been helpful.” While most of the commenters expressed appreciation for MRO’s strong focus on addressing regional risk, others thought more could be done North American-wide and MRO could help lead these efforts. MRO’s leadership team will continue to seek opportunities to promote the ERO vision and mission across all industry stakeholders in 2022 and beyond.



Question 9: Board of Directors

How well do you feel that the board provides adequate strategic guidance and review of the activities of MRO?



Number of Year over Year Responses by Category										
	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Excellent	9	20.0	9	21.4	12	37.5	15	34.9	11	22.9
Good	26	57.8	27	64.3	16	50.0	19	44.2	23	47.9
Average	10	22.2	5	11.9	4	12.5	7	16.3	12	25.0
Poor	0	0	1	2.4	0	0.0	2	4.7	2	4.2
N/A	14	0	14	0	10	0.0	43	0	12	
Total	45		42		32		43		48	

Number and Percentage of Excellent/Good Ratings by Category										
Category	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%	2021	%
Board	35	77.8	36	85.7	28	87.5	34	79.1	33	70.8

Feedback and Suggestions

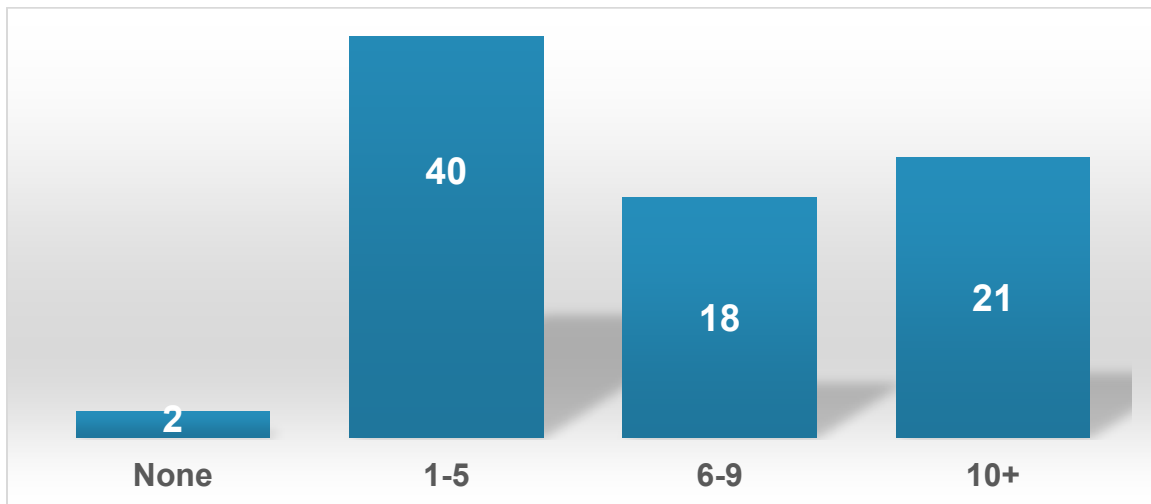
The satisfaction rating in this area has remained low year-over-year, which is not surprising given the role and composition of the majority of the respondents. The comments conveyed a general lack of awareness or familiarity with the MRO Board of Directors and its activities. MRO's leadership team and the board will continue to seek ways to communicate information about the work of the board to stakeholders, and to encourage broader participation from other audience groups in future satisfaction surveys.



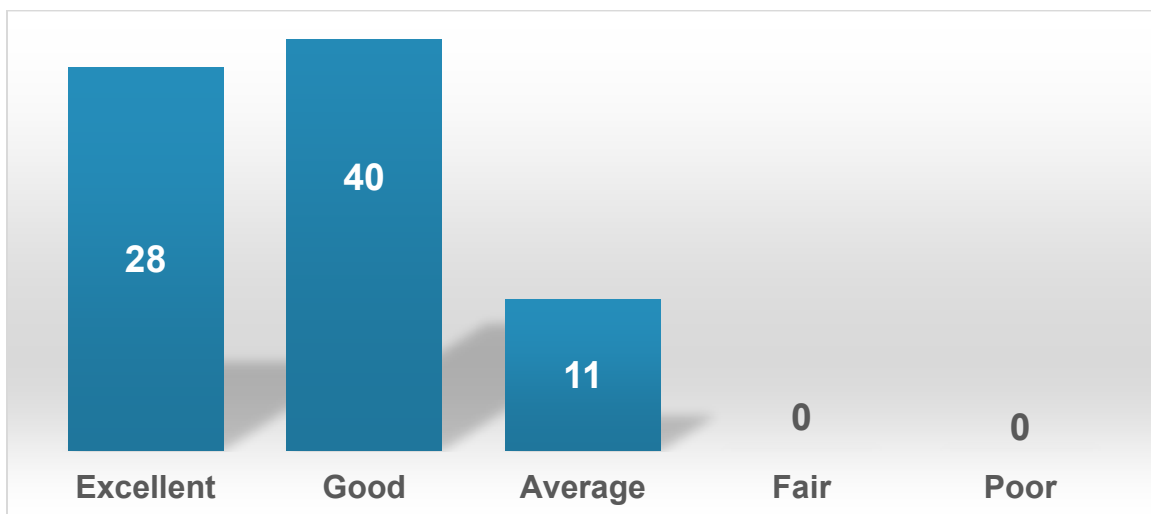
QUESTIONS ADDED IN 2021

Four questions were added to this year's survey to measure MRO's performance related to stakeholder outreach. Responses to these questions do not impact the numerical ratings for the year-over-year performance in the primary six survey areas.

Question 10: How many MRO stakeholder outreach events do you typically attend each year (including conferences, training sessions, webinars, and workshops)?

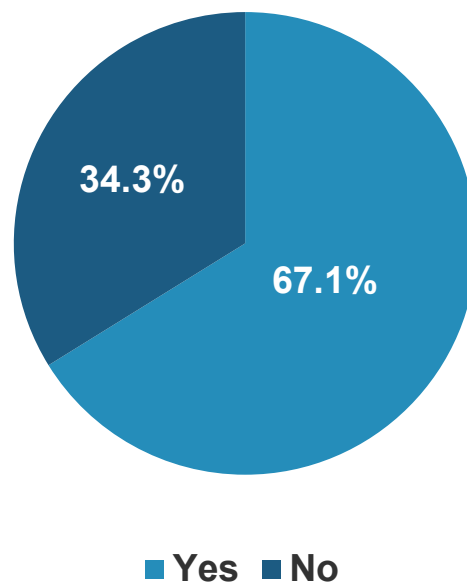


Question 11: Please rate the quality and value of MRO stakeholder outreach events:



Question 12: Please list the stakeholder outreach events you find the most valuable, and why:

This comment-only question indicated that respondents find value in a wide variety of MRO outreach events, and the CMEP, Security and Reliability conferences were mentioned multiple times. Participants also noted that CMEPAC monthly calls, the SAC's weekly Threat Forum, and webinars on specific reliability and security topics are particularly helpful.

Question 13: If there was a nominal fee charged to attend MRO stakeholder outreach events, would you still participate?**Feedback and Suggestions from Outreach Questions**

The high participation rate in MRO's outreach events, along with the number of Excellent and Good responses regarding the quality of outreach, reflect very high levels of stakeholder satisfaction with MRO's outreach efforts. The comments received were overwhelmingly positive and indicate a strong desire for more of this kind of engagement with industry.

When participants were asked if they would pay a nominal fee to attend MRO events, the majority (67%) of respondents indicated they would pay a fee. However, respondents noted they would be less likely to attend as many events if there was a cost associated with participation.



OVERALL SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION

Question 15: Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to list any specific characteristics of MRO with which they were SATISFIED. Thirty respondents provided comments, while fifty-two skipped the question. Several respondents complimented the approachability and engagement of MRO staff, the opportunity to participate in organizational group activities, and the quality of MRO's communications and outreach. MRO's risk-based approach to outreach was also commended.

One respondent noted, "The leadership and organization of MRO staff is outstanding as well as responsiveness to registered entity questions and concerns. MRO is progressive in [its] approach to compliance monitoring and seems to be focused more on risk and providing guidance to ensure reliability of the BES...this approach is definitely appreciated!" Another stated that he or she appreciates "How open and responsive the MRO is to questions, [and] that MRO has created an environment where we feel comfortable asking questions."

Question 16: Dissatisfaction

Respondents were asked to list any specific characteristics of MRO with which they were DISSATISFIED. Nineteen respondents provided comments and sixty-three skipped the question. Of the comments received, nine were "none." The remaining responses received pertained to the timeliness of certain activities and perceived inconsistencies in approach related to compliance monitoring. One respondent noted difficulty finding information on MRO's website and one stated he or she would like more entity-to-entity discussion during organizational group meetings. MRO's leadership team will review and consider the comments provided and how to improve MRO's performance in the indicated areas.

Question 17: Remaining Thoughts

Respondents were asked to share any remaining thoughts about their experiences with MRO, including suggestions for improvement. Fourteen comments were received; sixty-eight participants skipped the question. Respondents expressed appreciation for MRO's focus on risk and the level of engagement with, and support provided to, registered entities. There a few suggestions for improvement in the compliance area, and one commenter added that with the shift to renewable energy, he or she would like to see more focus on related impacts to the grid. MRO's leadership team will explore these recommendations in 2022.

CONCLUSION

MRO's Annual Stakeholder Survey provides an opportunity for stakeholders that do business, are subject to the regulatory oversight, or have an interest in Midwest Reliability Organization, to provide input and feedback on MRO's performance as a regulator. We sincerely appreciate the open and honest responses we receive through this survey and will continue to use it as a tool to identify areas for future improvement. All comments and suggestions made through the stakeholder survey will be considered by MRO's leadership team.

We would like to thank those who responded to this year's survey, and will work to enhance the areas identified for improvement in 2022, along with continuing to promote our shared vision of a highly reliable and secure North American bulk power system.

