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**The Infrastructure of Research Administration at the RAND
Corporation:
A Case Study of The Social and Economic Policy Units**

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Abstract

In 2014, the Social and Economic Policy Units (or research units) at the RAND Corporation went through centralization which created new job titles and new job descriptions for research administrators, allowed research units to share research administrative staff, and introduced new tools for research staff to enhance research productivity. For this capstone project, the author examined whether centralization was effective by exploring whether it provided more opportunities for growth for research administration staff, whether job satisfaction had increased, whether research administration customer service had improved, whether research staff felt more supported by tools and resources, and whether research administration leads felt more supported in their units because of the centralization. The author administered a survey to the personnel within the research units and analyzed the results in order to determine whether centralization was successful. There were 30 responses to the survey out of 41 potential respondents.

Responses to the survey showed that centralization was largely a success among respondents. However, there were varied reactions to several components of the centralization, such as communication with research staff about the changes caused by centralization, revision of policies such as the timeliness of proposal scheduling, provision of more opportunities for research administrators to grow professionally and better understand their jobs, and more communication among research administration

leads is still warranted. Using current literature review, the author made eleven recommendations from the findings of the survey which included using performance metrics to evaluate change, providing more opportunities for training, developing a more personalized training plan for research administrators, and explaining the supervisor's role in change management. The recommendations in this project provide a good opportunity for further improvement and enhancement of the centralization of research units at the RAND Corporation.

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Abbreviations

Edu	Education
FFRDCs	Federally Funded Research and Development Centers
JIE	Justice, Infrastructure, and Environment
L&P	Labor and Population
NCURA	National Council of University Research Administrators
PI	Principal Investigator
PIF	Proposal Initiation Form
RA	Research Administrator
RFA	Research Finance Administrator
RFO	Research Financial Operations
ROA	Research Operations Administrator

Chapter 1. Introduction

The aim of this capstone project was to examine the centralization of the Social and Economic Policy Units, or research units, at the RAND Corporation and analyze whether centralization resolved the problem of having business research programs function independently of each other hence creating duplicative and inconsistent processes. The capstone project examined whether the centralization of research units was successful by evaluating the goals it accomplished such as providing new job titles to research administrators, sharing research finance administrators (RFAs) and research operations administrators (ROAs) across units, creating new budgeting tools to help researchers, and analyzing whether researchers felt more supported by the business changes.

A research administrator survey of 26 questions was administered in June 2017 to specific respondent groups affected by the centralization. The survey was designed to evaluate whether the centralization of research units had addressed the problems of a decentralized system and accomplished the RAND goal to effectively and efficiently support research. This capstone project also examined and analyzed current literature on research administration infrastructure and effective change management. Through this examination of the literature this capstone project sought to incorporate best practices into the analysis of the RAND reorganization.

1.2. Research Objective

The objective of this capstone project was to provide analysis and recommendations to the research unit leads and the Director of Operations of Research Financial Operations on whether the centralization of research administration had been successful by analyzing the results of the survey.

1.3 Research Questions

This capstone project was designed to examine if the centralization of the research units was a success by exploring the research questions below:

- 1) Has the centralization of research units provided more opportunities for growth for RFA/ROA staff due to job title changes and different job duties?
- 2) Has job satisfaction for RFA/ROA's increased because of the centralization system put into effect in 2014?
- 3) Does research staff feel more supported by tools and resources because of the centralization?
- 4) Does research staff feel the RFA/ROA's customer service improved because of the centralization?
- 5) Do RFA leads feel more supported in their units by RFA/ROAs because of the centralization?

1.4 Background

This section presents a background of RAND's research structure and discusses how the centralization of research units happened. At RAND, a non-profit think tank, research and analysis is carried out by five research programs (or research units) that address social and economic policy issues. These are (1) Health (2) Labor and Population (L&P), (3) Justice, Infrastructure, and Environment (JIE), (4) Education (Educ), and (5) International. RAND also operates three federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) that focus on U.S. national security policy issues: (1) Project Air Force, (2) Army Research Division, and (3) National Security Research Division. Each research program at RAND functions independently and has a separate governing body consisting of a lead unit administrator and unit administrators that report to the lead. The lead unit administrator works on business planning for the unit, is the liaison between finance and contracts, and manages the unit's financials, administration, and operations.

1.4.1 The Centralization of the Social and Economic Policy Units

In 2014 the administration of RAND's five research units was completely decentralized. The Director of RAND's Operations of Research Financial Operations

(RFO)¹ identified several problems with these independently operating business research programs:

- (a) A decentralized system created duplicate business practices and inconsistent procedures for research staff to follow among the research units
- (b) Financial project administration was inconsistent between proposal, start-up, and close out phases
- (c) There were inconsistent and duplicate approaches to external clients (e.g. different pricing models were presented to the same customer)
- (d) Smaller units lacked sufficient staffing or the staff did not have a good skill set in which to administer research awards
- (e) It was harder for some units to have support because of no unit administrator backup
- (f) Unit responses to finance requests were inconsistent and disjointed

RFO proposed that many of these issues might be lessened with a more centralized structure among the research units. RFO also recognized that the Education, Health, JIE, and L&P units had much in common such as similar clients and project management needs, and could benefit from streamlined back office functions to lessen disruption of critical unit activities. Therefore, these units combined at an administrative level to

¹ Maxine Morris, interview by author, Santa Monica, January 24, 2017.

become more centralized and share unit administrator staffing. They jointly became known to as the Social and Economic Policy Units, or research units.

Since, one of the objectives of the centralization was to efficiently and effectively support research through standardization (where possible), to reduce confusion for researchers (e.g. same approach, processes, and tools), and provide “cradle to grave”² financial project administration services, the research units went through a major overhaul that accomplished the following changes:

- (a) **Revised job titles and descriptions:** Unit administrators were divided between Research Finance Administrators (RFAs) and Research Operations Administrators (ROAs) creating clearer career path opportunities and distinguishing between financial and operational roles.
- (b) **Research units shared expert staff pool** for proposal budgeting, compliance practices, travel and expense reports, dedicated project assignments leading to areas of expertise, a clearer distinction between financial and operational responsibilities, and overall increased communication and efficiency in business practices.
- (c) **New tools were introduced**, including a budget proposal estimator for research staff, a proposal toolbox for research staff, a new proposal initiation form, desk

² The continuum of research administration is commonly referred to as “cradle to grave,” which describes the start of a research idea to the closing out of the research project

guides for research administrators, RFO intranet and teamspace sites that streamlined the research units, and guides for business practices on reporting, financial and contractual information.

As a result of the research units' centralization, the management structure changed as well. Although each of the four units retained a director of operations (who serves as the primary point of contact for that unit), the centralization created two research unit managers: one that leads finance administration and the other one that leads operations administration. RFAs report to the finance administrator lead and ROAs report to the operations administrator lead. The main benefit of having a streamlined approach to management (e.g. dividing the finance vs. operations team) was to help foster close collaboration on solving challenges and getting unified solutions. Dedicated project assignments were distributed among the teams, and a clearer distinction between financial and operational responsibilities was created to help with clearer career paths opportunities.

For standard proposal and project budgeting, RFAs were assigned to support researchers based on their last name. There were, however, some special assignments depending on need across the Units. For example, complex budgeting of time-and-material and master contracts were assigned to RFAs whose job was to focus on these types of contracts. New RFA hires in RFO were assigned to a dedicated RFA who mentored and trained them on budgeting at RAND in their first year. RFAs were also in

charge of budgeting proposals and budget tracking for projects through the entire lifecycle-- from the proposal stage through the end of the project. The centralization also created a shared expert RFA pool among research units for bid and proposal budgeting and project task assignment, conflict of interest review and approval, travel and expense report approvals, and data entry and management.

1.5 Exclusions and Limitations

The centralization of the research units did not impact the FFRDCs and this capstone project does not address why the FFRDCs did not choose to centralize their business practices alongside research units. In this project, data collection focused on non-FFRDC staff, research unit leads, and principal investigators who've worked within the research units in the last year.

The other limitation is that while there have been various publications on the infrastructure of research administrators at Universities, there has been very little research on the infrastructure of research administration at non-profits like RAND. Therefore, the literature review in chapter 2 covers literature that is available in the academic domain about research administration at Universities, but draws parallels and similarities to the non-profit structure at RAND in order to help answer the research questions in the capstone project.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter discusses current literature relevant to (a) the definition and role of a research administrator, (b) training for the research administrator, (c) infrastructure and the research administrator, (d) management's role as the agents of change, and (e) examines a case study of an institution and best practices for fostering a healthy environment for research administration.

2.1 What is a Research Administrator?

The term "research administrator" is a broad term and includes all people who manage extramural funding. Extramural funding is awarded to organizations outside the federal sector that perform research and development with federal funds in the form of contract, grant, or cooperative agreements.³ A research administrator (RA) may include people who work as department or central administrators, college administrators, grant and contract accountants, grant and contract specialists in pre-award and post-award, technology transfer personnel, industry employees who work with contracts, or compliance specialists. RAs can work in non-profit institutions, Universities, hospitals, foundations, state and local governments, and even primary and secondary schools.

³ National Science Foundation, "Glossary," accessed July 31, 2017. <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/fedfunds/glossary/def.htm>.

One of the most cited and extensive literature on research administration is from Kulakowski and Chronister's book on "Research Administration and Management."⁴ In the chapter on "The Organization of the Research Enterprise," Chronister and Killoren share that an RA plays an important role and describes someone who "leads, manages or supports the research enterprise."⁵ According to Landen and McCallister in their chapter, "The Research Administrator as a Professional: Training and Development," RAs are also known as "brokers, translators, intermediaries, and helpers who value the long-term process in research."⁶ In addition, RAs play many roles, such as "compliance officer, cheerleader, consoler, advocate, and perhaps the least appreciated role, crisis counselor."⁷

Landen and McCallister describe that communication is key to being a successful RA. An RA must sift through mounds of data to effectively communicate textual and numerical information to researchers. The lines of communication must stay open as it is vital to problem-solving and problem-prevention. Also, open communication between research administration and the sponsor is essential to the institution, and RAs play a fundamental role in fostering that communication. RAs must be problem solvers

⁴ Elliott C. Kulakowski and Lynne U. Chronister, *Research Administration and Management* (Sudbury, Mass.: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2011).

⁵ Lynne U. Chronister and Robert Killoren, "The Organization of the Research Enterprise," in *Research Administration and Management* (Sudbury, Mass.: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2011), 59.

⁶ Marcia Landen and Michael McCallister, "The Research Administrator as a Professional: Training and Development," 75.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

who demonstrate “high levels of honesty, integrity, and ethics,” solving and fixing what someone else “broke, answering ambiguous questions, weighing risk vs. rewards, and finding innovative solutions to a new problem.”⁸

Landen and McCallister also argue that RAs have become an occupational group that own expertise and knowledge, which are the makings of a profession. Therefore, specialized training for professional proficiency is essential. RAs can learn to excel by learning from others, modeling behaviors, practicing creativity, and sharing one’s strengths and experience. Training opportunities for RAs exist in associations like the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) and the Society of Research Administrators International (SRA) which help provide a forum for the discussion and exchange of information related to sponsored research. Landen and McCallister argue that training may not always be transferable to one’s institutional problems and processes. Therefore, on the job, experiential learning is essential for learning to become a skilled research administrator.⁹

2.2. Training for the Research Administrator

In the previous section, training was identified as a key skill in the RAs career. While on the job experiential learning is no replacement for an RAs training needs, organizations such as NCURA and SRA provide professional training that is considered

⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁹ Ibid., 76.

by many RAs as the standard for professional development. NCURA was founded in 1959 and its mission is to “serve its members and advance the field of research administration through education and professional development programs, the sharing of knowledge and experience, and by fostering a professional, collegial, and respected community.”¹⁰ NCURA serves University RAs. SRA, on the other hand, considers itself to be “the premier global research management society providing education, professional development and the latest comprehensive information about research management to over 5,000 members from over 40 countries.”¹¹ It serves not only university RAs but also hospitals and other non-university RAs.

NCURA supports university RAs not only through its training program but also through publications such as the NCURA Magazine and The Journal of Research Management Review. The NCURA Magazine is published six times a year. It includes perspectives on “federal policy on federal policy written by members and non-members, and the latest information and explanations on topics of interest to research administrators.”¹² NCURA’s Journal of Research Management Review discusses “broad range of issues affecting the administration of research and the changing research

¹⁰ National Council of University Research Administrators, "Core Purpose and Mission," NCURA, accessed July 31, 2017. <http://www.ncura.edu/AboutUs.aspx>.

¹¹ Society of Research Administrators International, "About SRA International," SRA International, accessed July 31, 2017. <https://www.srainternational.org/about-sra-international>.

¹² National Council of University Research Administrators, "NCURA Magazine," NCURA, accessed July 31, 2017. <http://www.ncura.edu/PublicationsStore/NCURAMagazine.aspx>.

environment at the national and international level.”¹³ NCURA holds an annual conference and regional conferences that meet throughout the year.

SRA, in addition to its professional training, publishes the *Journal of Research Administration*. This publication is published twice a year and is “dedicated to the education and the professional development of research administrators.”¹⁴ Like NCURA, SRA also holds section and chapter meetings based on geographic location and an annual conference. Both SRA and NCURA have published excellent and current literature on research administration which was very informative in exploring the research questions for this capstone project.

For example, one of the articles from *NCURA Magazine* provided insight on the kind of training an RA needs to be successful. In her article, “Evolved! Our Ever-Changing Skill Set(s),” Pfister argues that a research administrator’s success depends on many different variables.¹⁵ Understanding the kind of administrator at hand will determine the skill set/toolbox needed to complete the job effectively. Pre-award RAs, for example, rely heavily on time and stress management skills, whereas post-award RAs rely more on accounting and compliance skills. She argues that “as the profession

¹³ National Council of University Research Administrators, “Research Management Review,” NCURA, accessed July 31, 2017. <http://www.ncura.edu/PublicationsStore/ResearchManagementReview.aspx>.

¹⁴ Society of Research Administrators International, “SRA International Publications,” SRA International, accessed July 31, 2017. <https://srainternational.org/publications>.

¹⁵ Brigitte Pfister, “Evolved! Our Ever-Changing Skill Set(S),” *NCURA* 48, no. 4 (2016): 6-7, www.ncura.edu.

evolves, so do the skill sets needed to cultivate in ourselves and newcomers to the field.”¹⁶

Pfister concludes by emphasizing that the “newbie you hire today is quite literally the director of tomorrow, the very future of our profession.”¹⁷ Therefore, it is becoming increasingly important to train new hires to understand the profession, for example by attending NCURA/SRA conferences, but also developing the skills of the RAs already in place by helping them understand their duties much more clearly through on the job training.

2.3 Infrastructure and the Research Administrator

It is the responsibility of research institutions to invest time and training to ensure that RAs are trained properly. This not only benefits the RA, but it also ensures that institutional integrity is not compromised. This section discusses the literature on infrastructure that affects the RA.

Landen and McCallister in their chapter on, “The Research Administrator as a Professional: Training and Development,” describe three ways research institutions can help train RAs master their work tools, processes, and values:

- (a) **Work tools** are things that one needs to function productively. For example, work tools can include access to technology and training to use it efficiently,

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

knowledge in the ability to apply rules and regulations appropriately, and proficiency with the institution's management and financial database(s) and software. RAs need the proper work tools in order to excel in their jobs.

(b) **Institutional processes** create and distribute information such as proposal routing, financial transactions, and obtaining various approvals. RAs need to know the power structure for decision-making and how the information flows.

(c) **Institutional values** evolve based on the needs of the institution but can be called "the discourse of business." For example, the types of research allowable and universal issues that mark and define institutional decisions (e.g. conflict of interest policies, subrecipient monitoring).¹⁸ RAs need to know the institutional values of their organization in order to understand their jobs better and provide better services.

Landen and McCallister stress the need for RAs to be trained in universally-accepted training programs in order to stay abreast of the greater research community.¹⁹ They also add that just as how research is becoming more collaborative, so is research administration as it evolves into a more increasingly sophisticated and evolving enterprise. Learning the skill for effective research administration is a lifelong learning

¹⁸ Landen and McCallister, in *Research Administration and Management*, 78.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 78-79.

process because the field is so broad and no one research administrator can know everything.²⁰

NCURA has published literature on the kind of standards that institutions should have to create a supportive environment in research administration. This literature is called “Central-Level Standards of Effective Research Administration Operations” and is intended to evaluate “institutional components necessary to provide a supportive environment for the conduct of research and other support activities.”²¹

The standards have been developed over 10 years and represent the breadth of the field.

The NCURA peer-review program is a service conducted by a team of nationally recognized RAs whose task is to thoroughly review sponsored research at institutions using the NCURA standards. The feedback that RA peer-reviewers provide to the institution is intended to assist research management in providing “quality services, minimizing risk, and promoting a positive culture for research administration.”²²

There are 24 standards listed as baseline elements that peer-reviewers use to thoroughly assess an institution's research enterprise. One standard in particular is called “Research Administration Communications” and explains that an institution

²⁰ Ibid., 79.

²¹ National Council of University Research Administrators, "NCURA Central-Level Standards for Effective Research Administration Operations," NCURA, accessed July 19, 2017. <http://www.ncura.edu/InstitutionalPrograms.aspx>.

²² National Council of University Research Administrators, "Peer Review Program: Peer Assistance by Research Administrators for Research Administrators," NCURA, accessed August 1, 2017. <http://www.ncura.edu/InstitutionalPrograms/PeerReviewPrograms.aspx>.

must establish timely, regular communication regarding sponsored programs trends and activity levels, such as “policies and procedures, expectations, roles and responsibilities, changes in policies, and risk areas.”²³ This type of communication is commonplace for investigators and staff in research administration, and the opportunity to provide feedback should be receptive. In addition, current policies and procedures should be readily accessible on websites and other institutional media. When an institution produces timely and regular communication, it helps RAs and research staff understand their expectations.

2.3.1 The Supervisor’s Role in Helping Research Administrators

Supervisors play a vital role within the research infrastructure in helping RAs achieve success. They do so by helping create a healthy working environment and providing the appropriate tools as well as encouraging different work styles within the norms of an institution. To be successful, RAs must “possess qualities of self-assurance, personal initiative, and communication skills developed through the support of their supervisors.”²⁴ Landen and McCallister list several ways that supervisors can help research administrators achieve success. These are:

²³ National Council of University Research Administrators, “NCURA Central-Level Standards for Effective Research Administration Operations.”

²⁴ Landen and McCallister, in *Research Administration and Management*, 78-79.

- (a) **Creating a healthy environment** where RAs can work together for a common goal. Cultural understanding, diversity in gender, race, religion, and even an appreciation for eccentricity should be encouraged.
- (b) **Institutionalization of professional development** must be “an ongoing expectation and not an occasional opportunity.”²⁵ Mutual goals must be set in the areas of knowledge attainment, skills enhancement, or personal growth.
- (c) **Tools and job flexibility**, including flexible working hours, participation in workgroup decision making, and the freedom to question the status quo are some of the ways that supervisors can help contribute to a healthy working environment for research administrators.²⁶

Landen and McCallister argue that when hiring new staff general aptitude and values are more important than specific expertise in the area because skills can be learned on the job.²⁷ Finally, the authors stress that micromanaging supervisors kill the individual problem solver and create an environment where a skilled RA is reduced to a “clerk with routinized responsibilities” with no independence because they no longer own their jobs.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

2.3.2 Developing a Personalized Training Plan

Landen and McCallister suggest in their chapter "The Research Administrator as a Professional: Training and Development," that managers can reverse engineer an RA's job to determine a more personalized training plan. For example, considering the kind of skills required at the institution or in that job will help personalize a training plan. Possible questions to ask include, "what's the purpose of the job? What kind of tasks are required to complete the job effectively? What are the challenges/demands of the position? What kind of experience, skills, and level of experience is required to complete the job?" Finally, one of the biggest questions that should be asked is, "what must a person know to be successful?"²⁸

Landen and McCallister also explain that training in the business of research administration is never finished because it is an evolving field. Training decisions should be based on what a supervisor identifies as a need, what an individual staff member wants to learn, and what the research institution requires. One practical way for supervisors to know if their training expenditures are worthwhile is to "combine training evaluations with the annual performance review," because the whole purpose of training is to improve an individual's performance.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid., 80-81.

²⁹ Ibid., 81.

In the book *Research Administration and Management*, Tim Quigg argues in his chapter “Special Issues of Department Administration,” that experience from a trusted colleague “who has been through the wars and learned from it” is the only real teacher.³⁰ His advice for new research administrators is to “tread lightly, ask many questions, keep [your] eyes open and antennae up, test the waters with small initiatives first, and observe how the decision is actually made and by whom before initiating any major projects.”³¹ This is good advice for the newcomer to research administration, but it also emphasizes the importance of mentoring among peers. Mentorship by experienced RAs is invaluable because organizational culture and the idiosyncratic nuances of the institution are only understood by doing the job.

2.3.3 Change Management

Organizational and infrastructure change is difficult to implement without acknowledging the significance and influence of effective change management practices. Any institutional change may be met with resistance. Successful change can only occur when an institution’s leaders and agents of change communicate the issues that need to change to their staff.³² Also, an organization’s culture, values, norms, traditions, formal and informal decision structures, leadership style, and previous

³⁰ Tim Quigg, "Special Issues of Department Administration," 260.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Marcia Landen and Michael McCallister, "The Research Administrator as a Professional: Training and Development," 80-82.

history of change processes affect reactions to institutional change. If change is managed poorly, institutional change fatigue or resistance can reduce a system's ability to respond to new initiatives."³³

In her article "Ten Reasons People Resist Change" published by Harvard Business Review, Kanter mentions that smart leaders allow those affected by the change to be a part of the planning process.³⁴ Change interferes with autonomy, and this gives them some ownership in the process. Kanter also recommends that leaders remain focused on important things and minimize the number of "unrelated differences introduced by a central change." Finally, leaders can help bring about change by minimizing discomfort, for example, by diagnosing the source of resistance.³⁵

In the book *Research Administration and Management*, Robertson, Silver, Keenan, and Gail De Van's chapter on "Change Management Theory Put to Practice as Stakeholders' Advocates: A Case Study" describes ways in which management can help ease the transition from current to new:

- (a) Define the change, outcome vision, and challenges to achieve the vision
- (b) Assess the culture, its norms, values, change history, traditions, and expectations

³³ Lawrie Robertson et al., "Change Management Theory Put to Practice as Stakeholders' Advocates: A Case Study," 88.

³⁴ Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Ten Reasons People Resist Change," Harvard Business Review, accessed July 11, 2017. <https://hbr.org/2012/09/ten-reasons-people-resist-chang>.

³⁵ Ibid.

- (c) Identify, enroll, and clarify roles for stakeholders, decision-makers, sponsors, champions, and idea validators
- (d) Determine the schedule and constraints to develop an appropriate change management plan, communications strategy, and support structure
- (e) Communicate, coordinate, and celebrate
- (f) Monitor, adjust, and evaluate³⁶

A key point made by Robertson et al. in addressing change management is to focus on what can be done or what can be controlled or influenced. One of the “most dangerous phrase[s] to use is “I assumed.”³⁷ Management cannot assume that staff members know what is happening, and outcomes must be defined. A “lessons learned” document can be evaluated from past experiences and built on during the change. It is also vital for RAs to understand the rules that govern the change process, as it will directly impact them. RAs are more likely adapt and respond when the communication is clear.³⁸ Clear communication occurs when leaders “create certainty of process, with clear, simple steps and timetables.”³⁹

³⁶ Robertson et al., in *Research Administration and Management*, 88.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 96.

³⁹ Kanter, "Ten Reasons People Resist Change."

2.3.4 The Role of Performance Metrics

Metrics are one of the most helpful ways to evaluate performance in an institution. Metrics can be especially helpful when change has recently occurred. This section will describe the role of performance metrics in an institution and how it can be effectively used to evaluate success of an institution.

In their NCURA article “Using Statistics to Tell Your Story,” Southergill and Pfister discuss the importance of collecting data to create metrics that help evaluate success in a department.⁴⁰ Metrics can help assess whether the workload of RAs is reasonable and equitably distributed, but can also answer questions about performance like the amount of time it takes to review or process a proposal. They suggest collecting data about each proposal that an RA processes to evaluate why there might be delays in for example, proposal scheduling. Information such as the PIs name, project title, and date information can be received from the PI, as well as the date when the proposal was successfully submitted, all of which can be tracked in Excel. Once the data questions have been established, metrics can be developed to measure data and then be used as a standard for measuring ongoing performance.

For example, if an institution wants to examine turnaround time for proposals, recording information such as the PIs name, project title, and the date when a proposal

⁴⁰ Trisha Southergill and Brigette Pfister, "Using Statistics to Tell Your Story," *NCURA* 47, no. 4 (2015): 57-58, www.ncura.edu.

was successfully submitted can help the team and management understand why delays occur and find ways to overcome them. Southergill and Pfister explain that this data can also help explain to faculty why it is important to allow for enough lead time before a proposal is due.⁴¹ Metrics also need to be reassessed on a regular basis because things change with the passage of time and the type of information collected may need to change to improve business practices and processes.

Another metric that can be evaluated is job descriptions. Southergill and Pfister explain that there are several occasions when job descriptions do not explain the tasks that need doing. They argue that unclear job descriptions can be confusing to newcomers to the field. Creating a clearly-defined job description, such as “research administrators need to process proposals within the established time frame of five days,” can clarify expectations and define good performance.

Metrics that collect specific information can be used to answer questions about faculty, such as: “Which faculty members are consistently late in sending in their proposal materials for review? Are there consistent latecomers successful than their timely counterparts? Which faculty members have the highest success rates?”⁴² Ongoing data collection efforts can help gauge the success rate of proposals in comparison to their timeline. For example, a comparison between successful proposals

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

submitted in five business days versus less than two business days can “provide helpful analysis that will get the point across to faculty much better than any policy reminder will.”⁴³

Southergill and Pfister also discuss that data metrics can be used to assess whether workload on a team is fair and equitable.⁴⁴ Collecting data can allow management to see if “one member of the team is processing significantly more proposals than anyone else, or if an individual is consistently unable to meet the processing time target.” These types of metrics will also allow management to see how many proposals on average an individual can process at a time which in turn helps evaluate turnaround time and team performance. Managers can then identify training needs to lower stress levels, improve morale, and to help their team focus in the right direction.

Metrics can also be used to recognize team members. Southergill and Pfister explain that recognition can be “as simple as verbal commendation during a weekly staff meeting, or it could be a more formal recognition such as a letter or memo for their personnel file outlying the individual’s exceptional performance.” Other examples for recognizing team members are providing small monetary bonuses for documented excellent performance or buying lunch for an outstanding performing individual who

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

processes the most proposals in a given period with the fewest errors. Metrics can also be used to make PowerPoint presentations to illustrate the department's performance to faculty and upper management in a clear, measurable form, which can not only be impressive, but also help the institution understand the workload and volume of the job.

Finally, the authors argue that all RAs can also use metrics; it is not limited to those in supervisory roles. RAs can collect data about their own performance, including number of proposals submitted, transactions processed, and changes in productivity. This data can then be used for personal awareness of areas that need improvement, as well as "crucial communication for salary increases or promotion."⁴⁵

2.4 A Case Study on Training for Research Administration

While there have been various publications on the infrastructure of research administrators at Universities, there has been very little research on the infrastructure of research administration at non-profit organizations such as RAND. While the case study presented takes the University of Hawaii (UH) in their Department of Surgery, many of the changes it reported were similar to the centralization that happened at the RAND Corporation. Even though there are references to department administration at Universities, a parallel can be made to the Research Financial Administrators role at

⁴⁵ Ibid.

RAND. In addition, the faculty at UH can be compared to research staff at RAND. This case study was brought into the discussion because it illustrates that despite funding shortages UH experienced, the importance of professional development in the life of a research administrator didn't stop.

In the *Journal of Research Administration*, Maria Chun examined the Department of Surgery at the University of Hawaii (UH). In her article, "Building a Research Administration Infrastructure at the Department Level," she explained that in 2006 UH was suffering from an economic crisis that placed additional burdens on RAs.⁴⁶ The crisis was due to the decline in state funding and funding shortages from other possible sources of revenue. Also, centralization and decentralization of several administrative tasks had shifted because of changes in available funding, resources, or leadership.

UH's goal was to develop a department level research administrative infrastructure and "hire knowledgeable, qualified research administrative staff and sat them in as close physical proximity to principal investigators as possible."⁴⁷ They also did not want to develop department level administration that was similar to central administration.⁴⁸ Some departmental administration tasks would include fiscal

⁴⁶ Maria B.J. Chun, "Building a Research Administration Infrastructure at the Department Level," *Journal of Research Administration* 41, no. 3 (2010): 78.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴⁸ Central administration at Universities function similarly to the Office of Contracts and Grants at the RAND Corporation

responsibility of grants, “reviewing budgets for salary and fringe rates, staffing commitments, other resources, and institutional support for any grant proposals submitted.”⁴⁹ Finally, they wanted to have department administrators who could assist in regulatory control that aligned with state and federal regulations.

2.4.1 The Approach for Infrastructure Change

To initiate the change in infrastructure, UH medical school created an associate chair position and hired an individual into that role to assist in the oversight of administrative and fiscal matters.⁵⁰ The associate chair immediately sought to develop formal guidance regarding department level responsibilities. She acquired a guide from the medical school’s central office which listed central office staff responsibilities, including providing oversight of post award activities and reminding department staff of reporting requirements and deadlines. Department staff, on the other hand, served as the liaison between the PIs and the central office and therefore must take an active role in oversight as well.⁵¹

The UH medical school submitted a grant proposal to a local foundation to aid with the development of its research administration infrastructure. The goal of the project was to “(a) increase department’s administrative and fiscal staff knowledge of

⁴⁹ Chun, "Building a Research Administration Infrastructure at the Department Level," 80.

⁵⁰ An Associate Chair position at Universities can be compared to the Director of Research Finance Operations at the RAND Corporation

⁵¹ Chun, "Building a Research Administration Infrastructure at the Department Level," 80.

research administration in order to be prepared to assist the department's current and future PIs, and (b) develop tools to help the PIs via the collection, review, and synthesis of information on university, school, and department level policies, as well as review best practices in research administration at other universities."⁵² Unfortunately, the department was not awarded the grant because the reviewers felt that it was the medical school's responsibility to find funding to support these efforts.⁵³

2.4.2 Hope After No Funding

With no hope of funding, the department still believed in the project and allowed the associate chair to continue developing the department's research administration infrastructure. In 2007, the associate chair received certification as a contracts and grants administrator through the central office's new training program, and in July 2008, a UH Department of Surgery Grants Administration Manual authored by the associate chair with input from the staff of the central office and other academic offices was created. Shortly afterward, an administrative, professional, and technical (APT) staff member was hired to process research administration work and other departmental fiscal transactions. The APT member became certified in the same central office training program as the Associate Chair. The associate chair was also able to attend the SRA International's conference in 2008 using UH department and personal funds. The

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 81.

conference helped increase the associate chair's knowledge of resources through networking and formal hands-on sessions.⁵⁴

2.4.3 Learning from Others

Maria Chun notes in her article that when the associate chair attended the SRA conference, she learned how other RAs in the field were going through similar infrastructure changes at their universities, and the desire for guidance at the department level was mutual among attendees. The associate chair also learned that the Department of Geography at the University of Maryland had undergone a reorganization that involved modifying job descriptions in their department's administration, and realized the importance of creating a need for training staff as necessary as they adjust to their new job duties.⁵⁵

Upon returning to her UH campus, the associate chair sent an email to the department RAs' listserv inquiring about any grants administration manuals that could be shared to obtain feedback on her UH manual. The response to her inquiry was surprising: 50 research administration staff at various universities shared the same desire for more guidance at the department level and had requested a copy of her department's manual upon completion. The manual is now posted on the NCURA website in the Department Administration Neighborhood. As a result of her work, the

⁵⁴ Ibid., 82.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

associate chair was also invited to join the Departmental Administration Neighborhood Committee at NCURA.

2.4.4 Application

Maria Chun concludes that the department's research administration infrastructure at UH medical school can overcome funding constraints with strong support and dedication to change. This case study highlighted the importance of collaboration with research administrators from other universities and how opening a dialogue can create opportunities for institutional improvement and better business practices. This case study also highlighted that learning does not stop in an evolving regulatory field.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Results

3.1 Methodology

Chapter 3 discusses the Research Administration survey design, participants, and results. The chapter starts by introducing how the survey was designed and ends with a discussion of the results.

This capstone project is a descriptive case study designed to garner information about the restructuring of the Social and Economic Policy Units (or research units) at the RAND Corporation. A questionnaire using the web-based Google Forms platform was administered to collect data. The survey gathered both quantitative questions and open-ended responses from RAND personnel. The questionnaire was anonymous to protect participants' confidentiality and participation was voluntary. The survey was sent on June 26th, 2017 and remained active for seven days. An accompanying email explained the purpose of the study and requested a voluntary response to complete the survey through a live link.

3.2 Study Participants

The survey targeted a specific population of RAND personnel, consisting of three respondent groups: (a) Principal Investigators (PIs), (b) Research Finance Administrators (RFAs) and Research Operation Administrators (ROAs), and (c) Research Finance Administrator (RFA) leads. The Principal Investigators (PIs) selected

were those who specifically submitted a Proposal Initiation Form (PIF) to the Social and Economic Policy Units (or research units) within the last year. The RFAs and their leads were selected from the research units and not from other departments (e.g. FFRDC's) within Research Finance Operations. The survey was sent to 23 PIs, 10 RFAs, four ROAs, and four RFA leads (41 potential respondents). Of these, 15 PIs, eight RFAs, three ROAs, and four RFA leads responded, which yielded a total response of 73% (30 respondents).⁵⁶

3.3 Survey Design

The survey started with seven preliminary questions that were identical for each group (questions one through seven). A skip pattern was developed on question seven to skip to a different section of the survey depending on the respondent group.

The PIs had questions 8-13 with question 13 as an open-ended question. The RFA and ROA groups were combined because of sample size and answered to questions 14-23 with question 23 as an open-ended question. The RFA leads had questions 24-26 with question 26 as an open-ended question. The open-ended questions asked whether there were any issues or concerns the respondent would like to raise about the centralization. Table 1 summarizes the type of questions used in the survey. Appendix I includes the survey questionnaire.

⁵⁶ Although responses were received from 30 individuals, not all respondents responded to each question in the survey.

Table 1. Overview of the Questions in the Survey

Question	Content Area	Sample Question	Response Properties
Questions 1-7	Preliminary background data	How many years have you been employed at RAND?	Multiple choice and Yes/No questions
Questions 8-13	Questions for PIs	Do you like the roll out of the new Proposal Initiation Form (PIF Form)?	Linear scale ratings, multiple choice, agree/disagree statements, open-ended question
Questions 14-23	Questions for RFAs/ROAs	How many opportunities do you have to get promoted where you work?	Linear scale ratings, multiple choice, agree/disagree statements, open-ended question
Questions 24-26	Questions for RFA leads	Please rate how satisfied you are overall with the restructuring of research units	Linear scale ratings, multiple choice, agree/disagree statements, open-ended question

3.4 Survey Results

This section lists the results of the survey. The results of the preliminary questions that were answered by all respondents were examined first. Then, the results of each respondent group were discussed separately: (a) Principal Investigators (PIs), (b) Research Finance Administrators and Research Operation Administrators (RFA/ROAs), and (c) Research Finance Administrator (RFA) leads. Section 3.5 discusses the results of the survey. Note that percentages reported in this paper are the

percentage of respondents who answered a particular question, not the percentage of the entire survey population with missing responses. Many respondents skipped one or more questions, so the relevant sample size as each percentage result is reported.

3.4.1 Preliminary Section of the Survey

The preliminary questions one through four were demographic questions that asked about the respondent's years of experience at RAND, years of experience in their current position, their highest level of education, and gender. Since the sample size was small (30 total respondents), it was determined that the highly identifiable questions be left out of the results.

Questions five asked the respondents how many hours they work daily. The question should have been designed to a specific respondent group, like the RFAs, PIs, or RFA leads and not ROAs. The ROAs are exempt employees that shouldn't be working more than eight hours a day unless they are paid overtime. Therefore, the design of the question did not help garner any insightful results and was left out.

Question six asked the respondents whether they were aware that research unit centralization had taken place. The results of the question six are summarized in figure 1. The sample size was 30 respondents and all of them provided a response.

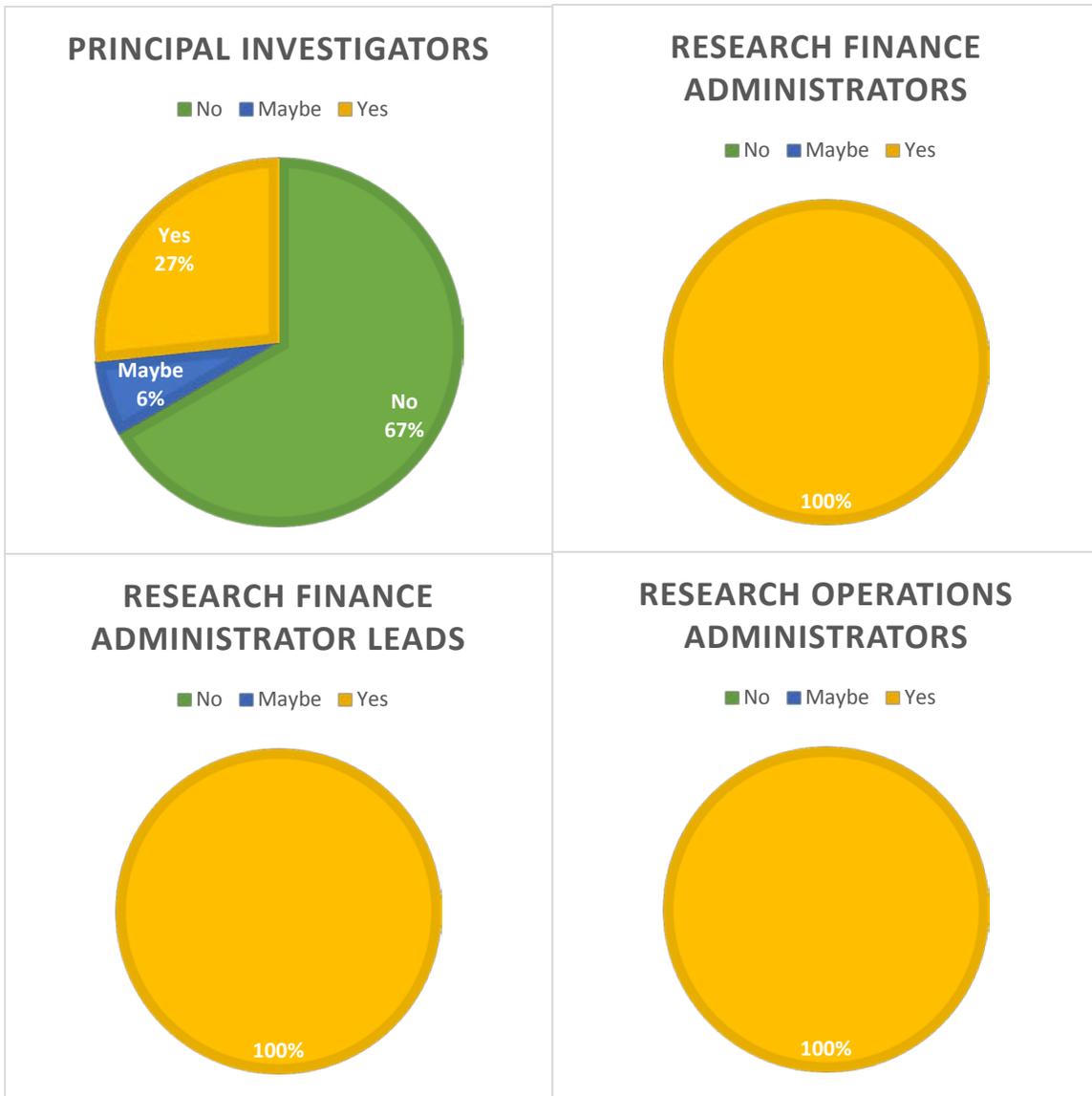


Figure 1. Awareness of research unit centralization among respondent groups

The PIs showed the lowest frequency of awareness about the centralization of research units, with 10 out of 15 respondents indicating that they were unaware (67%). One PI responded with a “maybe.” The remaining respondents (including all of those in the three other respondent groups) indicated that they were aware of the centralization of research units.

Question seven asked about the respondent's job title and was designed with a skip pattern to guide the respondent to the correct section for the remainder of the survey.

3.4.2 Principal Investigators (PIs)

Question eight asked the frequently with which PIs submit proposals through research units. The sample size was 15 PIs and all 15 responded to the question (n=15 to 15). The responses showed 53% of the PIs responded every 2-3 months, 33% PIs responded every 4-6 months, and 13% PIs said every month (figure 2). The frequency of proposals submitted in the period from 2-6 months (86%) indicates how important the proposal process is to PIs at RAND.

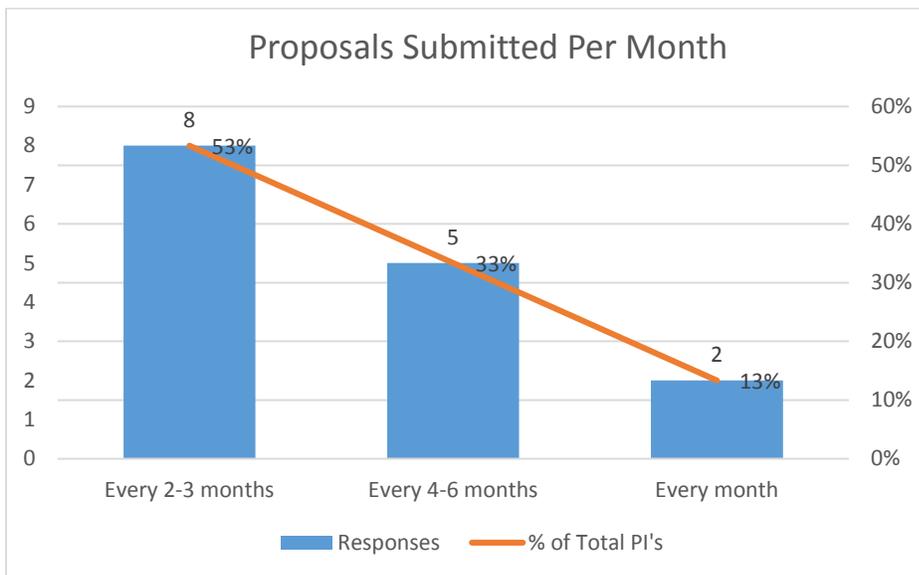


Figure 2. Frequency of proposals submitted per month

Question nine asked the respondents to rate the RFAs performance on a scale from 1-5 (1=poor, 5=excellent). Figure 3 summarizes the RFAs performance in four

categories: professionalism, reliability, empathy, and responsiveness. It also lists the responses for “not applicable” as N/A. The sample size was 15 PIs, but only 14 responded to the question. Out of all the categories, the RFAs received the most favorable rating in professionalism with 57% of the respondents affirming it is excellent and 36% thought it was good.

In the category of responsiveness, one PI responded that RFAs have a “fair” performance, but 36% rated RFA responsiveness as excellent and 43% rated it is good.

As for the RFAs’ empathy, 14% rated it as good, 43% thought it was very good, and 36% thought it was excellent. One PI thought that the category of empathy is not applicable to RFAs’ performance.

Finally, in assessing RFAs reliability, 14% thought it was good, 43% thought it was very good, and 43% thought it was excellent.



Figure 3. The PIs rating of RFAs performance

Question 10 asked the PIs how they like the roll out of the new Proposal Initiation Form (PIF). The sample size of PIs was 15, but only 14 responded. As shown in figure 4, 50% said the new PIF matched expectations, 21% thought it was better than expected, and 29% were neutral.

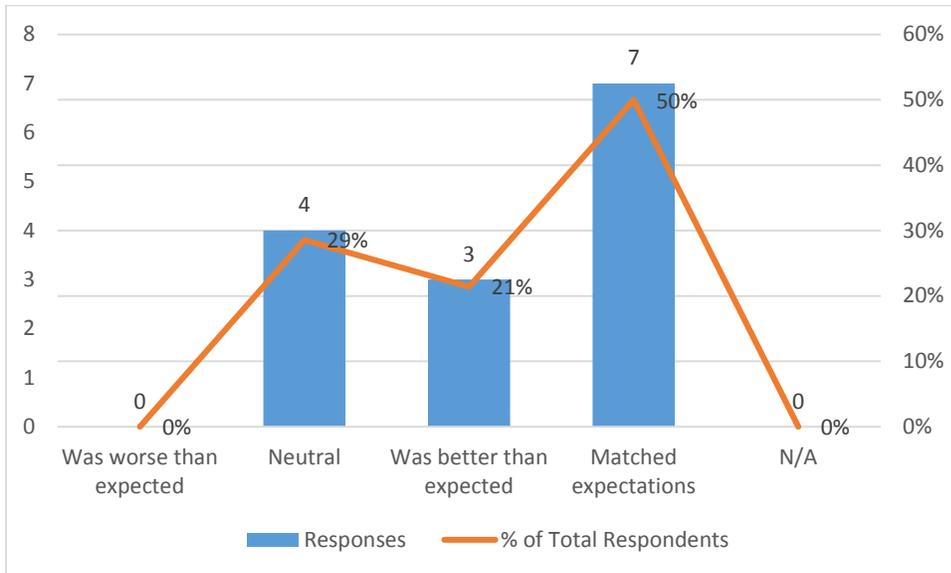


Figure 4. PIs opinion of the new PIF form

Question 11 which asked how satisfied the respondents were with the overall proposal meetings on a scale from 1 to 5 (1=very dissatisfied, 5=extremely satisfied). All 15 respondents responded to this question and results indicate that most PIs (60%) are satisfied with the proposal meetings and 27% are extremely satisfied (figure 5).

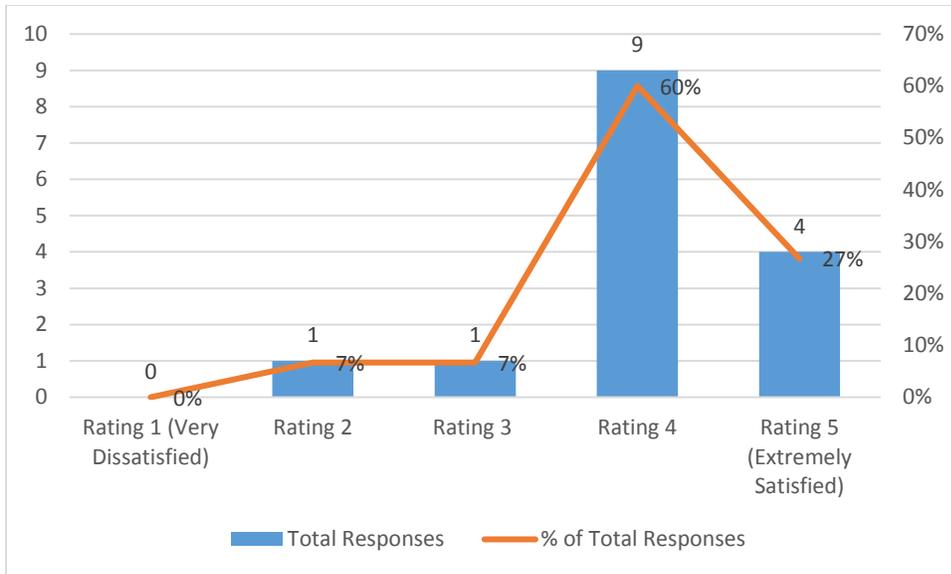
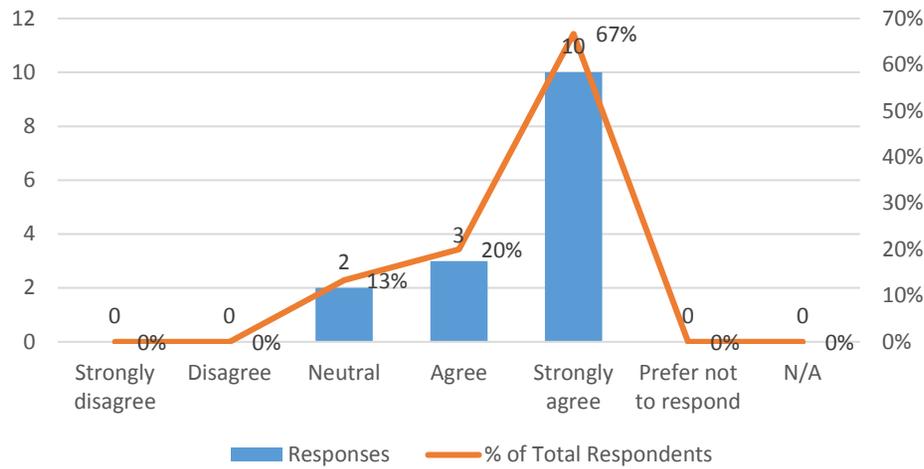


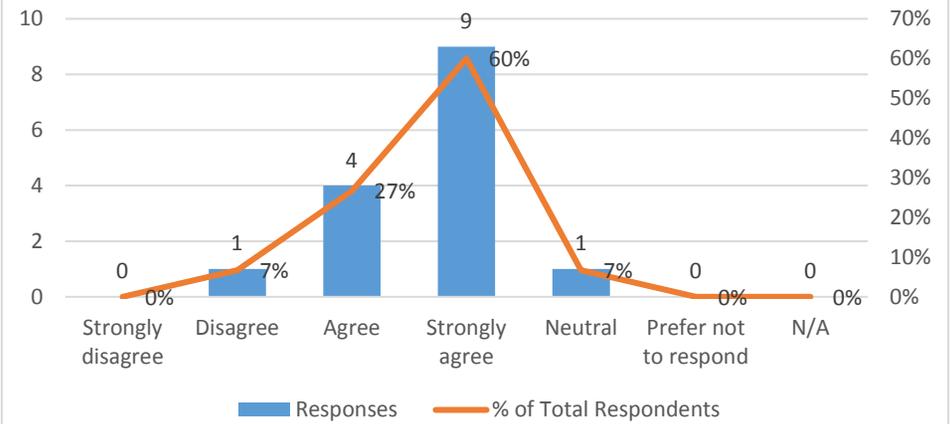
Figure 5. Overall satisfaction with proposal meetings

Question 12 asked the respondents whether they disagree or agree with seven categories of support that RFAs provide to PIs at RAND. The categories of support relate to the RFAs customer service. The sample size of PIs was 15 and all of them responded. Responses are summarized in figure 6. In response to whether RFAs are aware of RAND’s business rules, the results are highly favorable, 67% of PIs strongly agree and 20% of PIs agree, indicating that RFAs are aware of RAND’s business rules. In response to whether PIs feel supported when they submit short turn-around proposals, the results are also favorable, with 60% of PIs who strongly agree and 27% who agree indicating that they felt supported.

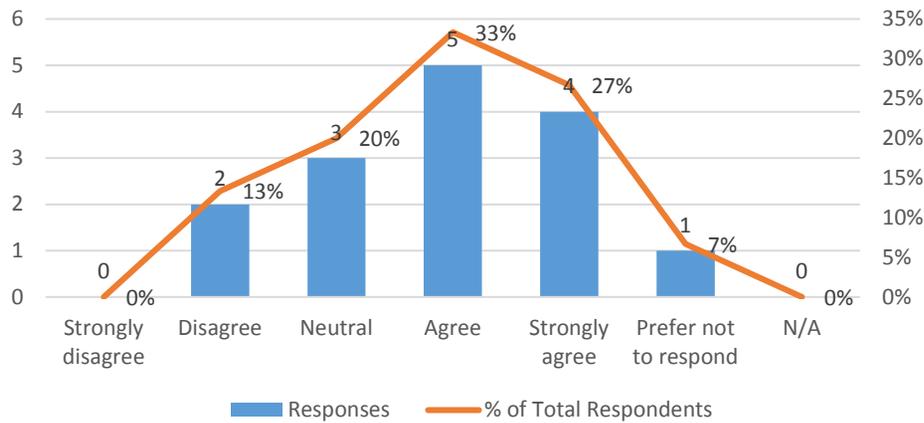
RFA's are aware of RAND's business rules



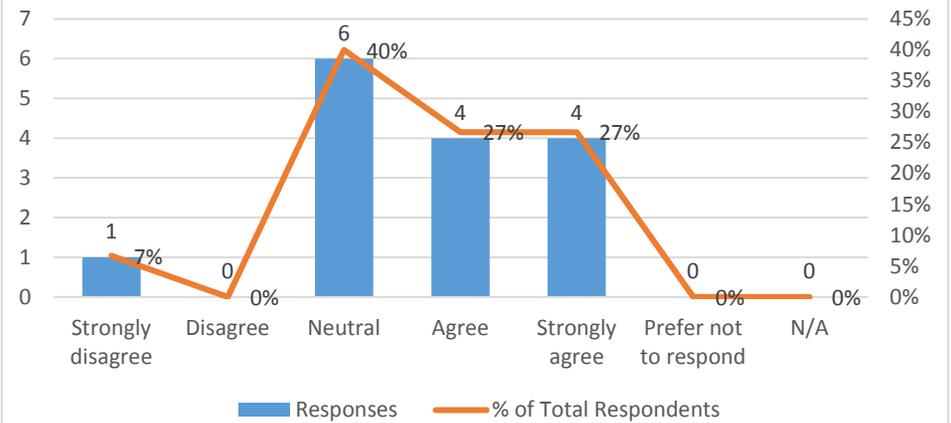
I feel supported when I submit short turn-around proposals



I am aware of compliance regulations when I submit proposals



Proposal meetings are scheduled in a timely manner



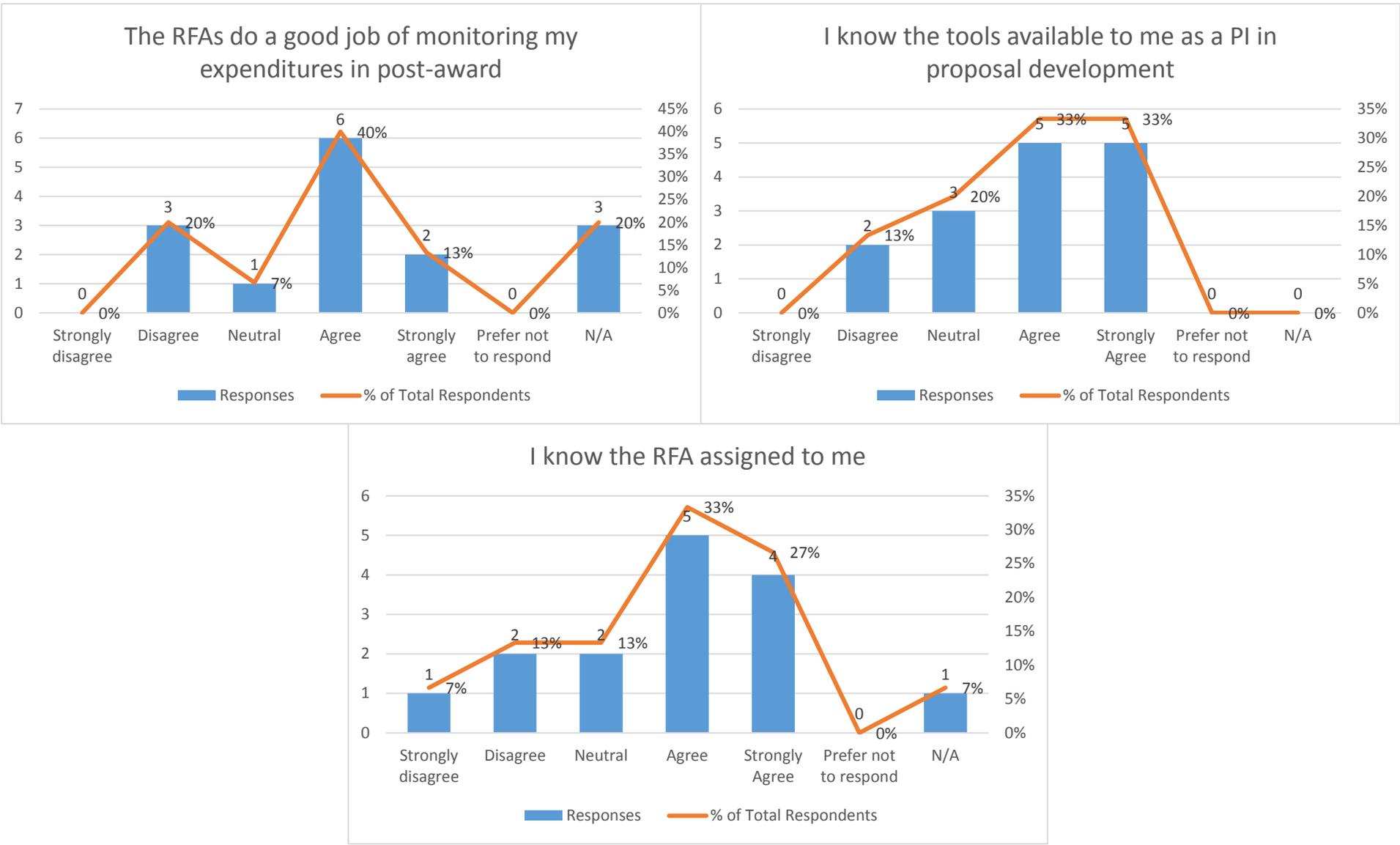


Figure 6. RFAs customer service

In response to whether PIs are made aware of compliance regulations (e.g. Conflict of Interest, Export Control, Security) when submitting proposals, the results were varied. The results show that 27% strongly agree, 33% agree, and 20% are neutral. Overall, 60% of the PIs were made aware of compliance regulations and the rest disagreed, were neutral or didn't respond. In response to whether proposal meetings are scheduled promptly, 54% responded favorably (agree and strongly agree), but 40% were neutral. In response to how well RFAs monitor PIs' post-award expenditures, 53% viewed the RFAs' post-award monitoring as favorable (agree and strongly agree), and 46% were either neutral, disagreed, or deemed it not applicable.

In response to whether the PIs were familiar with the tools available to them in proposal development, such as boilerplate language, templates, and budgeting tools, 67% were aware (agree and strongly agree) of proposal development tools and 33% disagreed or were neutral. Finally, in response to whether PIs know the RFA assigned to them, 60% knew the RFA assigned to them and 40% did not, were neutral, or thought it was not applicable.

Question 13 was an open-ended question and asked PIs if they had any suggestions for improvement. Only 8 PIs out of the possible 15 (53%) provided feedback. Figure 7 groups the eight respondents' open-ended answers into five themes: proposal scheduling, RFA distribution, RFA customer service, survey design, and proposal tools.

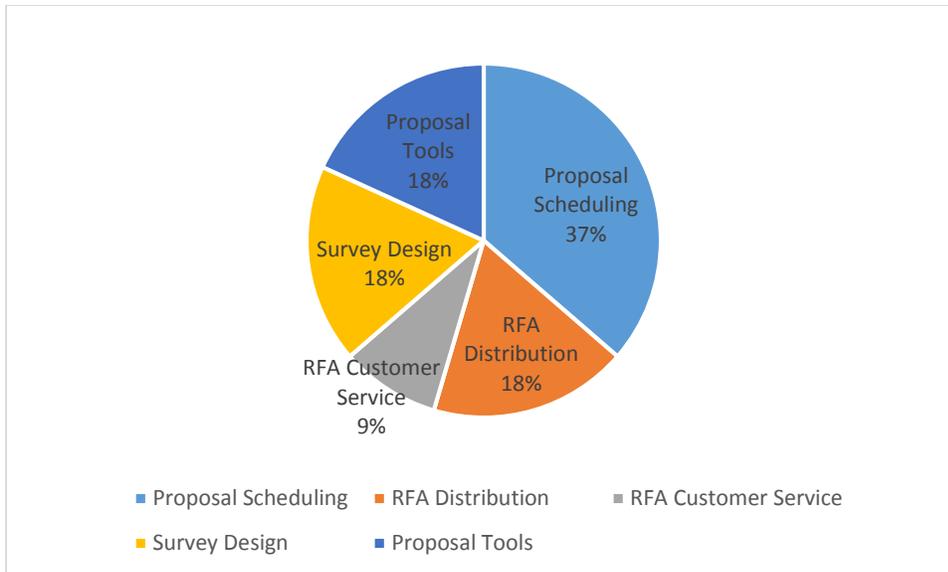


Figure 7. Open-ended feedback on SEP unit restructuring

The most prevalent theme raised was the timing of scheduled proposal meetings in relation to the deadline (36%). The following comments from respondents illustrate this point:

I think there needs to be greater clarity as to when a full blast proposal process is needed versus simply getting a ballpark idea of how much something might cost and relaying that information to a prospective client. It is frustrating to go through the whole shebang just to get a budgeter to come up with a back of the envelope figure that doesn't bind anybody to anything.

Sometimes when I complete the proposal initiation form, if the deadline for the proposal is not for a while, the proposal meeting will not be scheduled for quite some time. This makes it hard to know when materials are going to be due to Contracts, especially when working with outside collaborators. The earlier the conversations about dates take place, the better (from my perspective).

The proposal meetings improved greatly a year or so ago. There isn't enough communication about how and why things work the way that they do. It is extremely hard to get a proposal set up for a deadline that is far out in the future even when it is needed to calculate deadlines for a team that incorporates researchers from outside RAND.

There was one positive opinion about proposal meetings: “Proposal meetings used to be scheduled too far out, but they have gotten much better in the last few months.” Other themes raised by the PIs (18% for each) were those about RFA distribution or assignment, proposal tools, and survey design. Comments regarding RFAs customer service and distribution are discussed below:

I think we are lacking in providing sufficient boilerplate to PIs for proposals as well as standardized tools for calculating the numbers that go into budget narratives. If the proposal wants annual FTE for each project member, I have to build a spreadsheet and calculate those values based on my guess as to the number of days a RAND employee has available for work. If I want to talk about RAND's capabilities in particular areas, I have to hunt for the language. If I want to explain what we will do regarding HSPC review, I have to pull stuff that I've written for other proposals. There should be a very easy to use menu for proposals based on ALL of the ones we regularly submit so that the standard stuff (like how management will conduct oversight over project expenditures) is already in a few paragraphs for copying.

Other PIs responded: “My responses vary by RFA and are an average of excellent to less good experiences, especially with timeliness and responsiveness.” And, “It would be useful to know more about what tools are available to PIs--I find that I ended up searching the RAND website invariably for boilerplate language.”

There were two comments about survey design. One related to the designation of “Principal Investigator” in Preliminary Question seven and that it is a role in a research study and not a job title. The respondent found the designation of “Principal Investigator” misleading. The second commentator was confused about who the RFAs were because multiple people help with the proposal. This confusion stemmed from the

designation of “Research Finance Administrator” which is a new job title that was created during the restructuring (the previous title was Unit Administrator). The confusion of job title is not surprising, given that only 67% of PIs were aware of the centralization of research units.

Comments related to proposal tools (9% of total respondents) were: “It sometimes seems that RFAs are very overcommitted and have too much on their plate.” And, “I preferred having continuity with the RFAs across proposal type rather than orienting to a new person's style practically every time I work on a new proposal.”

3.4.3 Research Finance Administrators (RFAs) and Research Operation Administrators (ROAs)

In this section, both the RFAs and ROAs were combined questions because the sample size was small (total respondents=11). Question 14 asked the RFA/ROAs about their level of satisfaction with their job on a scale from 1 for very dissatisfied to 5 for extremely satisfied. Two respondents skipped this question, yielding a total of 9 responses out of a possible 11, as shown in figure 8. The highest rating received was a 4 out of a possible 5, with 56% of RFAs and ROAs that indicated overall satisfaction with their jobs. The responses showed that 22% of RFA/ROAs indicated a rating of 5 (extremely satisfied). The total responses lean to a favorable outcome showing that 78% (rating of 4 and 5 combined) of the RFA/ROAs were satisfied with their jobs.

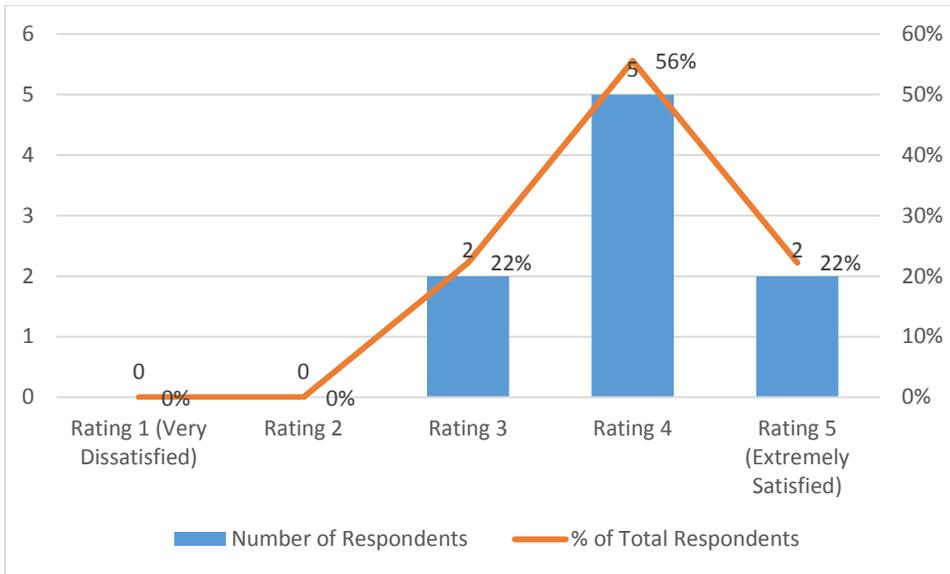


Figure 8. Job satisfaction

Question 15 asked the RFA/ROAs how challenging their jobs were and provided the following options: not at all challenging, extremely challenging, prefer not to respond, and not applicable. All 11 respondents answered the question. Figure 9 illustrates the results, showing that 45% viewed their jobs as very challenging and moderately challenging.

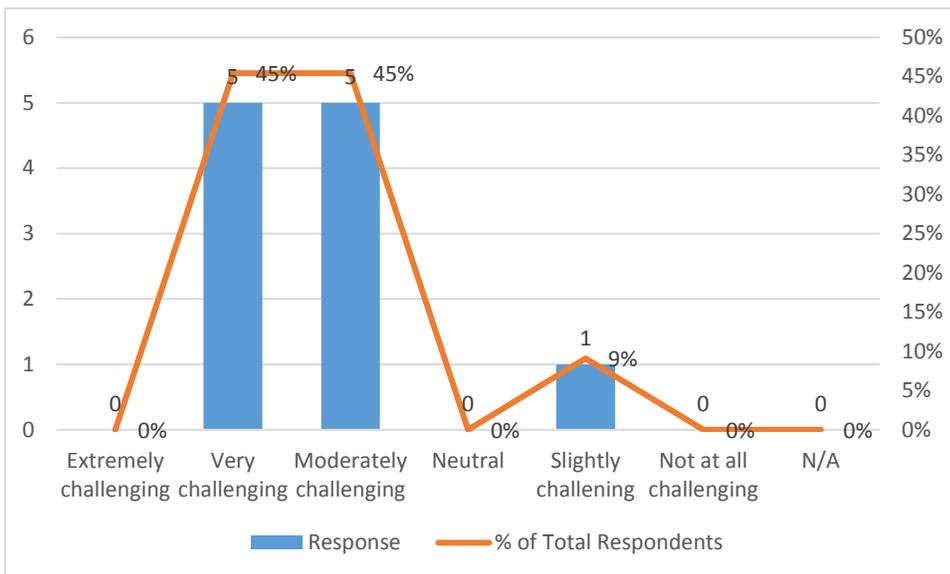


Figure 9. Job challenge

Question 16 asked RFA/ROAs to rate their stress levels on a scale from 1 to 5 (1=very stressful, 5=not stressful at all). All 11 respondents answered the question. Nearly half of respondents (45%) felt stressed at times, 27% feel somewhat stressed, and 27% leaned toward not feeling stressed at all (figure 10).

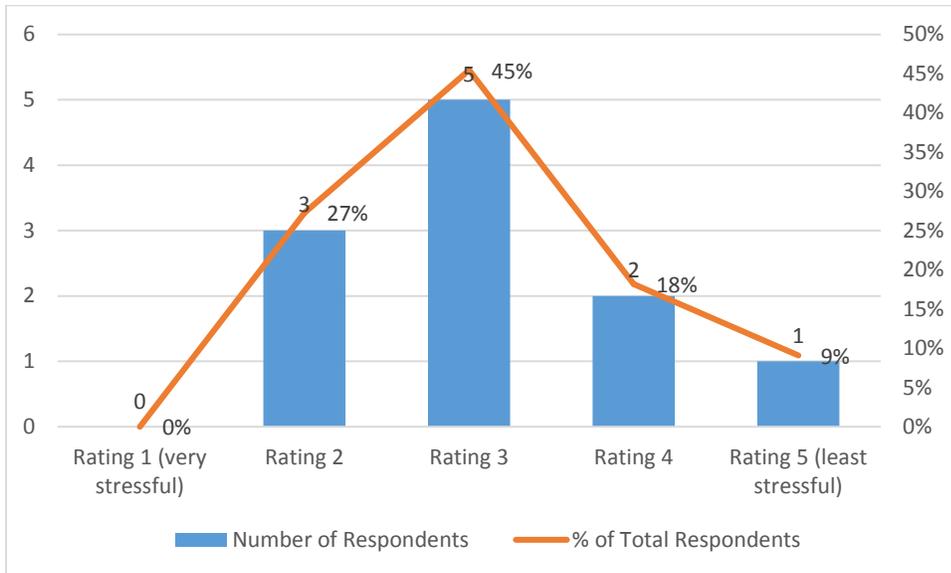


Figure 10. **Job stress**

Question 17 asked respondents how well they are paid for the work they do, with choices ranging from “not at all well” to “extremely well.” All 11 respondents answered the question. Figure 11 illustrates the results, showing an equal number of respondents feeling that they were paid slightly well or moderately well (total 72%).

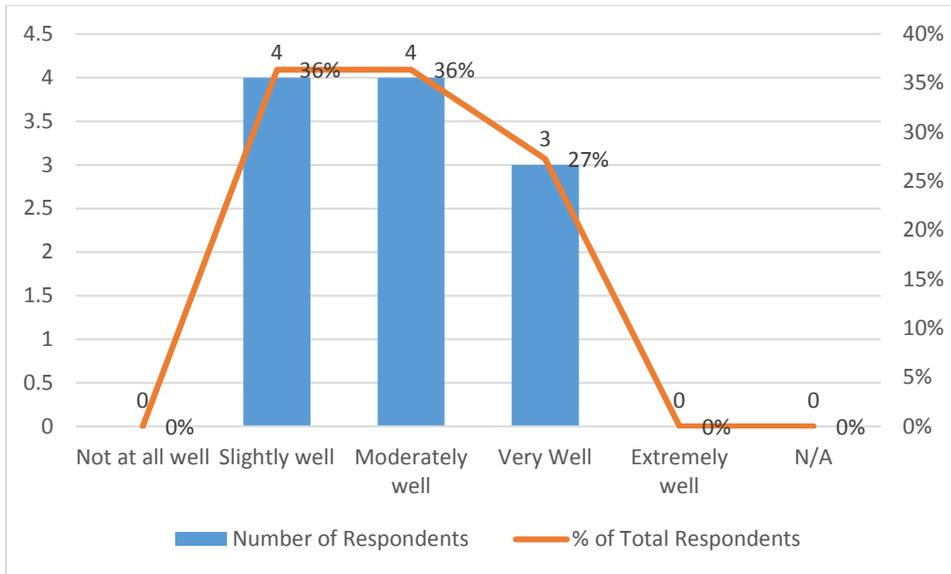


Figure 11. Job pay

Question 18 asked the respondents whether they agree or disagree with six statements regarding their job duties as RFAs/ROAs. All 11 respondents answered the question and figure 12 summarizes the results.

In summary, 91% of respondents strongly agreed that they knew their roles as RFA/ROAs and 9% agreed. Only 9% disagree that they don't feel like an expert in their area, but 82% agree and 9% strongly agree that they do. When asked whom to seek if they have questions, 73% of RFA/ROAs strongly agreed and 27% agreed that they knew whom to seek for questions. When asked whether the distribution of work among RFAs is balanced, 18% responded "not applicable." For the other respondents, the answers were balanced across categories: 27% disagreed about RFA work being balanced, 27% were neutral, and 27% agreed.

When asked if respondents were confident that their backup could do their work in their absence, 91% agreed and strongly agreed that their backup could do the work, but 9% disagreed. Finally, when asked whether the title change has provided the RFAs/ROAs with better career paths, 36% agreed, but 63% were neutral, disagreed, or did not respond.

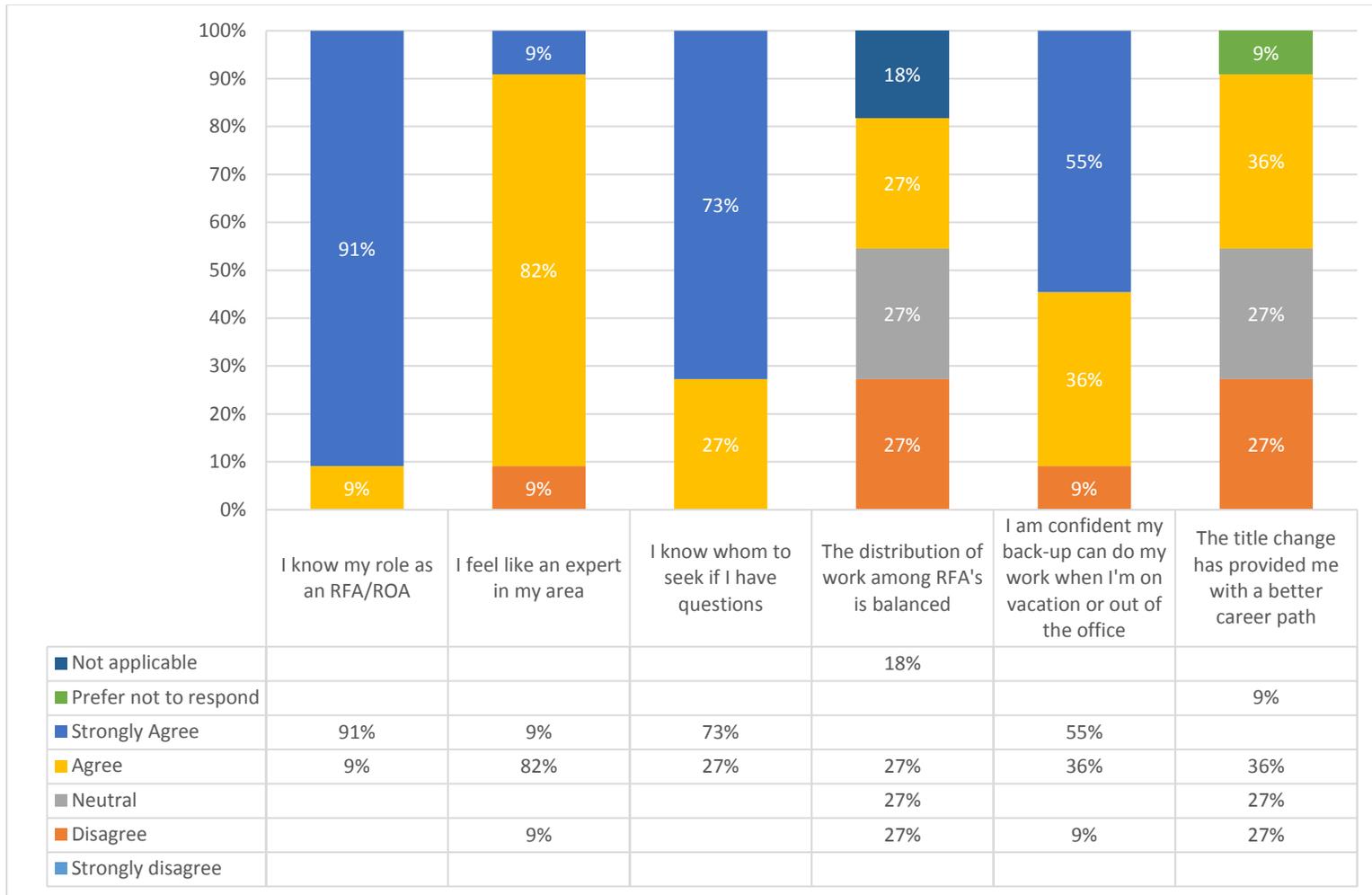


Figure 12. Job duties

Question 19 asked respondents whether tasks assigned by their supervisors allowed them to grow professionally. All 11 respondents answered the question. 45% felt opportunities to grow professionally happen slightly often and 18% felt it happened moderately often. However, only 9% felt opportunities to grow professionally happened very often. In addition, 18% thought that opportunities to grow professionally were “not applicable” (see figure 13).

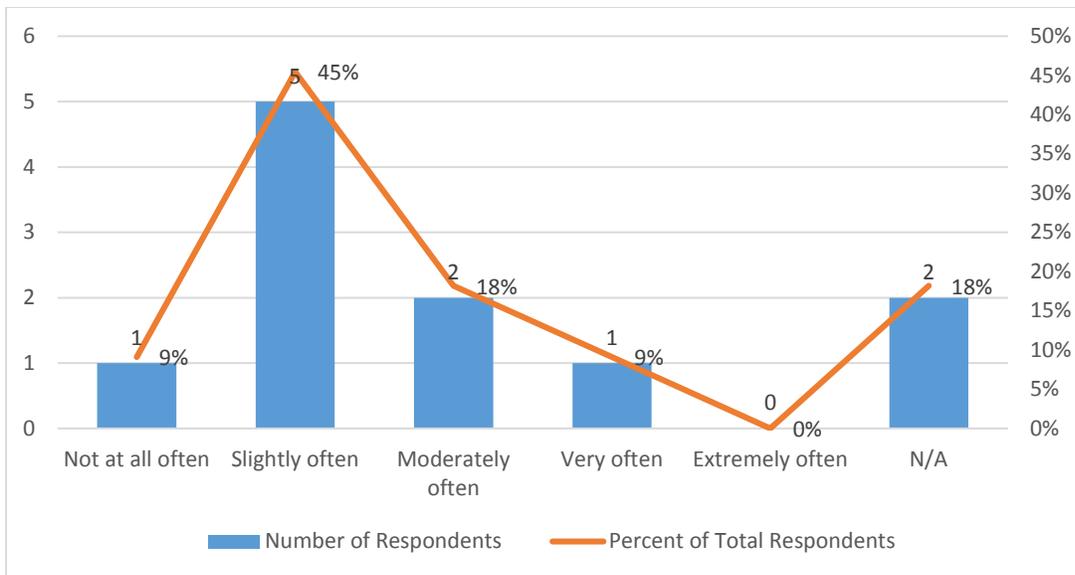


Figure 13. Opportunities to grow professionally

Question 20 asked respondents how many opportunities were available at their workplace to get promoted. All 11 respondents answered the question. Only 18% found moderate opportunities to grow and an overwhelming 73% said there were only a few, as shown in figure 14.

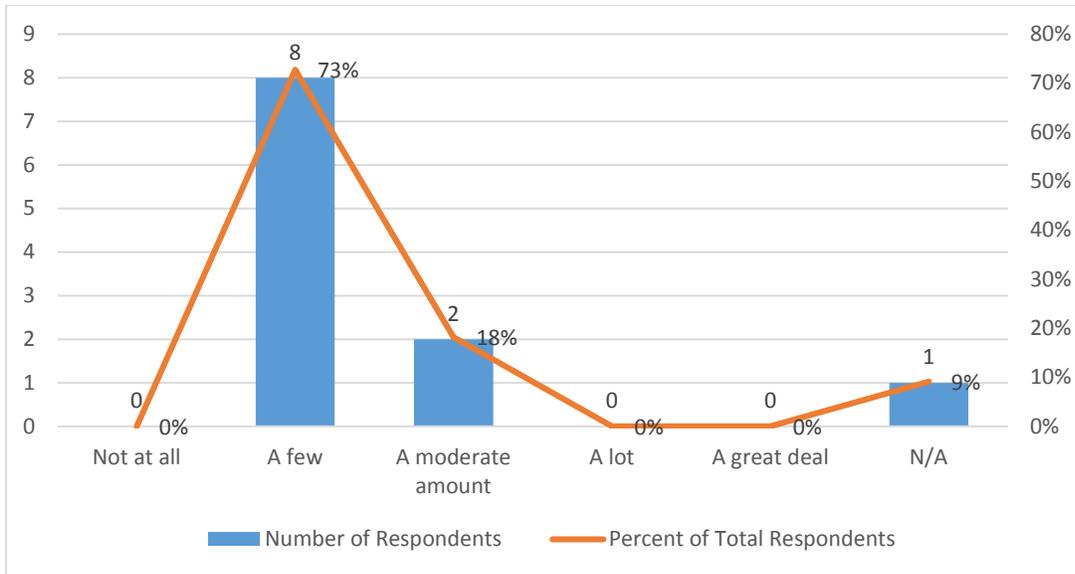


Figure 14. Opportunities for promotion

Question 21 asked RFA/ROAs whether they are supervised too much, too little, or an appropriate amount. All 11 respondents answered the question as illustrated in figure 15. The results show a healthy balance of supervision and independence with 91% of respondents indicating they're supervised the right amount.

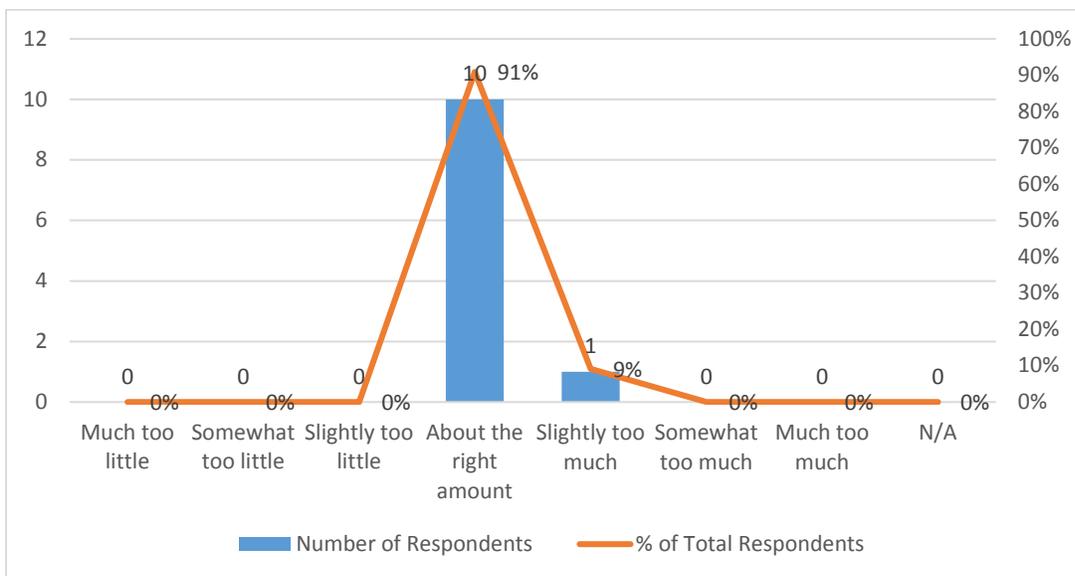


Figure 15. Amount of supervision

Question 22 asked the respondents to indicate on a scale from 1-5 (1=poor, 5=excellent), how they would rank themselves in their career skills. Ten skills were evaluated: the ability to handle pressure, organizational skills, problem-solving skills, communication skills, ability to multitask and prioritize, math and budgeting proficiency, attention to detail, continuous learning, customer service and collegiality, and knowledge of rules and regulations. Figure 16 lists the results and all 11 respondents answered the question. The ability to handle pressure had a highly favorable result, with 99% of respondents rating themselves as “very good” and “good”. Similarly, 91% of respondents rated themselves favorably for organizational skills.

Overall, the RFA/ROAs view their skills favorably with ratings of good and higher in all ten categories. The lowest ratings for fair were in organization skills (9%), attention to detail (18%), and knowledge of rules and regulations (9%).

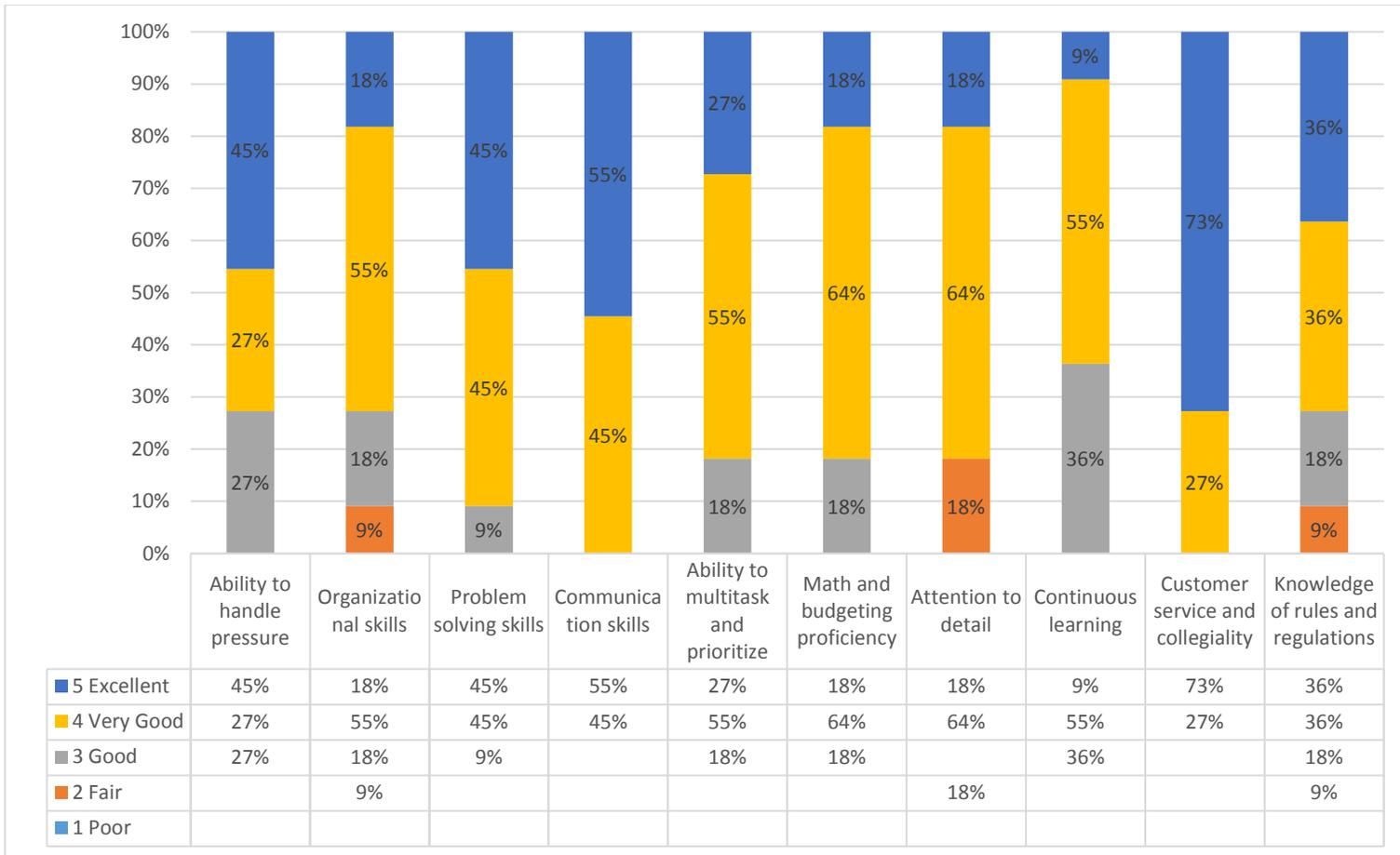


Figure 16. RFAs rating job skills

The last item on the survey was an open-ended question about any other issues or concerns they would like to raise. Only two respondents out of the possible 11 (18%) responded. One respondent commented that the career path for growth is clear, but the hurdle to promotion is Human Resources (HR). Another respondent commented that one of the challenges of the job is working across research units and servicing different clients. Therefore, the position is fast-paced making it difficult to keep up and stay organized. The respondent also indicated that more training or mentoring could be helpful. The respondent's comment affirms what one of the PIs said about RFAs being over-committed and having too much on their plate.

3.4.4 Research Finance Administrator Leads (RFA Leads)

Four RFA leads responded to the survey and were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with four statements about the centralization of research units. The first statement asked whether research unit's staff had taken ad hoc projects when needed and the result was favorable, with three who strongly agreed and one who agreed. When asked whether their Unit felt supported during time-sensitive deadlines or peak periods, all respondents strongly agreed. When asked if information sharing among research units had led to streamlined business practices, three strongly agreed and one was neutral. Finally, when asked whether restructuring had helped provide better strategic pricing to RAND's clients, the answers differed: two were neutral, one agreed, and one strongly agreed. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5

being extremely satisfied, RFA leads were asked how satisfied they were overall with the centralization. All respondents answered the same a rating of 4 for satisfied. None of the RFA leads responded to the open-ended question about whether they had any other issues or concerns.

3.5 Discussion of Survey Results

This section discusses the survey results from the previous section. The outline of this section follows the same as the previous section discussing the preliminary section first and then each respondent group is discussed separately.

3.5.1 Preliminary Section of the Survey

In the preliminary section of the survey, the questions asked were demographic questions and were not included in the analysis because the sample size was too small. The only question that was used in the results was question six. Question six asked all the respondents whether they were aware that the research units had gone through centralization. The results show that the respondent group that was least aware of the centralization were the PIs (67%). This may be because the centralization directly affected the RA staff and departmental change only needs to be focused on that specific group. Even though the PIs indicated that they were unaware of the centralization, their responses to the other questions in section 3.4.2 and 3.5.2 indicate that they have a good

business relationship with the RFA/ROAs and the changes brought about affected them positively.

3.5.2 Principal Investigators (PIs)

The PIs viewed RFAs and ROAs work favorably in professionalism, but see improvement for reliability, responsiveness, and empathy. For example, question nine asked the PIs to rate the RFAs performance on a scale from 1-5 (1=poor, 5=excellent) and the RFA/ROAs received the highest rating in professionalism at 57%. However, RFAs reliability, responsiveness, and empathy all received an average rating of 43%. The lowest rating the RFA/ROAs received was responsiveness at 7%. The results indicate that either RFA/ROAs are generally slow to respond to PIs requests for information or the RFA/ROAs have a large workload and cannot respond at a reasonable time. When the RFA/ROAs were asked whether the distribution of their work is balanced, 54% were neutral or disagreed, so that may indicate the slow response or that the distribution of work is unbalanced.

In the open-ended feedback, 18% of PIs also believed that RFA distribution could be improved. RAND may consider reviewing RFA/ROA workload and helping the RFA and ROA's set proper expectations for responses to requests, or help them communicate realistic requests to PIs. In addition, it's important for RFA/ROAs and PIs to have good communication. Good communication can also help increase empathy on both sides.

Question 12 asked the PIs to agree or disagree with statements about RFAs customer service (listed in figure 6). One of the statements had asked whether RFAs do a good job of monitoring expenditures in post-award. The variability of PI responses may indicate that the question was not clear enough (46% were neutral, disagree, or think it is not applicable). Although RFAs are not responsible for close monitoring of every single post-award expenditure—it is ultimately the PI's responsibility to ensure how their project funds are spent—RFAs are responsible for ensuring that projects do not over- or underspend in terms of straight line spending over the project's period of performance. Nevertheless, even though the results were favorable (40% agree and 13% strongly agree), the department could explain roles and responsibilities more clearly between the PI and RFAs.

One of the goals of the centralization was to create streamlined processes so that parallel and duplicative systems could be eliminated. One of the old processes was the paper system of proposal initiation forms (PIF) that every research unit had. The centralization created a new electronic PIF, which eliminated the duplicative paper system. It was also customized so that all the research units could follow it. The new PIF had favorable results among PIs: 50% believe it matched expectations and 21% thought it was better than expected. In addition, 87% of PIs were satisfied with the structure of proposal meetings, which was also streamlined so that RFA/ROAs were leading them the same way (instead of leading them separately per research unit).

Finally, the PIs felt that RFA/ROAs customer service was above average, with 87% of PIs who felt supported when submitting proposals. However, the satisfaction of proposal meetings being scheduled promptly was only slightly above majority opinion at 54%. This is an area that the institution could also look at improving. Table 2 summarizes the PIs responses to all the questions.

Table 2. Summary of PIs Responses

Topic	Key Findings
Centralization of Research Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67% were unaware of the restructuring
RFAs Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest rating was in professionalism at 57% Average rating was 43% for empathy, reliability, and responsiveness Lowest rating was responsiveness at 7%
New PIF Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% believed it matched expectations, 21% thought it was better than expected
Proposal Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87% were satisfied with new proposal meeting structure
RFAs Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87% felt supported when submitting proposals 80% believe RFAs were aware of business rules 66% were aware of proposal development tools, but 33% disagree or are neutral 60% were made aware of compliance regulations 54% believe proposals were scheduled promptly, but 40% were neutral 53% viewed the RFAs monitoring post-award expenditures as good, but 46% were neutral, disagree, or think it is not applicable 60% knew the RFA assigned to them and 40% were neutral, disagree, or think it is not applicable
Open-ended Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36% believed that the timing of proposal scheduling can be improved 18% believed that proposal tools can be improved 18% believed RFA distribution can be improved

3.5.3 Research Finance Administrators (RFAs) and Research Operation Administrators (ROAs)

The RFA/ROAs were asked nine questions about their jobs and skills. The highest results showed that 78% of RFA/ROAs were satisfied with their jobs and 91% strongly agreed that they knew their roles. In addition, 82% felt like an expert in their area and 73% knew whom to turn to questions. RFA/ROAs also felt they are supervised the appropriate amount (91%) and rated themselves high on job skills. As for job pay, 72% of RFAs and ROAs felt they are paid slightly or moderately well.

Question 18 asked the RFA/ROAs whether they agree or disagree with six statements regarding their job duties (figure 12). The six statements in the question, which ranged from whom to turn to questions and whether the title change provided better career paths, were intended to evaluate whether the centralization of research units accomplished the goals it had set. RFAs/ROAs were confident in their duties and roles, but only 36% thought the title change provided better career paths and 54% disagreed or were neutral. The responses showed that 45% of the RFA/ROAs believed that opportunities for professional development from the supervisor happened slightly often, but only 18% felt it happened moderately often. Also, 73% felt there were few opportunities for promotion. RAND should hold further discussions on the career paths that RFAs/ROAs can take.

The question of whether the distribution of work among RFAs is balanced was already addressed in the previous section (3.5.2), however the question yielded 18% of

responses that were “not applicable.” The reason for this response may be because the question didn’t include ROAs in the categorization of workload distribution; which was an error in the survey design. As for the other respondents, the answers were balanced across categories: 27% disagreed about RFA work being balanced, 27% were neutral, and 27% agreed. As workloads increase either due to increased federal regulations, or reduced staffing, it’s important for RAs to have strong time management and organizational skills in addition to prioritizing tasks and delegating accordingly. Further discussions are warranted in the department about whether the distribution of work among RFAs is balanced.

RFA/ROAs were asked to rate their stress levels and 45% felt stressed at times, 27% were stressed, and 27% did not feel stressed. The RFA/ROAs also viewed their job moderately to very challenging, with 45% who viewed it as very challenging and moderately challenging, respectively. The stress may be due to workload which the institution can investigate, but it can also be due to lack of training and mentoring. The recommendation section 4.2 in chapter 4 explores this in more detail.

When RFA/ROAs were asked to rate their job skills, the lowest ratings were in organization skills (9%), attention to detail (18%), and knowledge of rules and regulations (9%). Optional training might be beneficial as a refresher to some people on the team. However, the highest rating the RFA/ROAs gave themselves was for customer service and collegiality at 73%. This also matches how 57% of PIs rated the

RFA/ROA's professionalism when asked the question about RFA/ROAs customer service. Table 3 summarizes the RFA/ROAs responses to all the questions.

Table 3. Summary of RFA/ROAs Responses

Topic	Key Findings
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% of RFA/ROAs were satisfied with their jobs
Job Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% viewed their jobs as very challenging, and 45% view it as moderately challenging
Job Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% felt stressed at times, 27% were stressed, and 27% did not feel stressed
Job Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 72% felt they are paid slightly or moderately well 27% believed they are paid very well
Job Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% strongly agreed they knew their role as an RFA/ROA 82% felt like an expert in their area 73% knew whom to turn to for questions 54% were neutral or disagree about whether the distribution of RFAs is balanced 55% were confident their back-ups can do their jobs Only 36% agreed the title change provided better career paths, 54% disagree or are neutral
Opportunities to Grow Professionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% felt professional opportunities from the supervisor happen slightly often, 18% believed it happens moderately often
Opportunities for Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 73% found there were few opportunities for promotion
Amount of Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% felt they were supervised the right amount
Rating Job Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The highest rating was for customer service and collegiality at 73% The average rating was at 55% was for continuous learning, organizational skills, and the ability to multitask The lowest ratings were 9% and for knowledge of rules and regulations, organizational skills, and problem-solving skills
Open-ended Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9% felt that the career path is clear, but the hurdle is HR 9% felt that the position is challenging and more mentoring and training can increase confidence

3.5.4 Research Finance Administrator Leads' (RFA Leads)

The RFA leads all agree that RFAs can take on ad hoc projects as needed and felt supported during time-sensitive deadlines. The results showed that the RFA leads viewed the centralization favorably, but half were neutral about whether centralization had helped provide better strategic pricing to RAND's clients. One of the goals of the centralization was to increase collaboration among the research units since they had similar clientele. One of the key areas the RFA leads felt the streamlining would do was help provide better strategic pricing to RAND's clients, however, most were divided. Therefore, consistent strategic pricing could be an area of further exploration and collaboration among research unit leads and RFAs. Overall, RFA leads were satisfied with the centralization and table 4 summarizes the RFA/ROAs responses to all the questions.

Table 4. **Summary of RFA Leads Responses**

Topic	Key Findings
RFAs able to take on ad hoc projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All agreed
Units Feel Supported at Time-Sensitive Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All agreed
Streamlined Business Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 strongly agree, 1 was neutral
Better Strategic Pricing to Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 were neutral, 2 agree
Overall Satisfaction of Restructuring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All were satisfied

Chapter 4: Recommendations and Conclusion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the key findings across all three respondent groups and provides recommendations where possible. The chapter concludes by analyzing whether the centralization accomplished its mission based on survey results.

4.2 Recommendations

Chapter 4 focuses on eleven findings that were endorsed by <55% of respondents. These are discussed below and recommendations are listed after each finding.

- 1) 54% of RFA/ROAs were neutral or disagree about whether the distribution of RFAs is balanced
- 2) 53% of PIs view the RFAs monitoring post-award expenditures as good, but 46% were neutral, disagree, or thought it was not applicable.

Recommendation: An evaluation of roles and responsibilities can be performed by the Unit to determine whether the workload is balanced and distributed among RAs. In addition, an assessment of performance can assist in determining why some PIs feel that RFAs are overworked. The responsibility of monitoring post-award expenditures is shared between the PI and RFA to varying degrees. Nevertheless, a clear explanation of roles and responsibilities of the PI and RFA related to post-award monitoring of expenditures will prove invaluable to the institution.

3) 54% of PIs believe proposals are scheduled promptly, but 40% are neutral

Recommendation: Several opinions were voiced in the open-ended section of the survey that proposal scheduling was often delayed and unhelpful for PIs who are organized and want to be aware of deadlines as soon as possible. Scheduling proposal meetings early helps to avoid contracting issues that can be dealt with in advance and allows deadlines to be set early with external collaborators. If proposal scheduling is creating a bottle neck, then the process should be revisited and streamlined. The department can explore the causes of the delays with proposal scheduling and what it can do to help proposals be scheduled at an earlier time. As discussed in the literature review in chapter 2 (section 2.3.4) the role of performance metrics can be especially helpful in this situation. Data metrics can be collected about the amount of time it takes to schedule a proposal meeting, the response time of the PI, and assess whether the delays are occurring from the institution or the PI. The institution can then decide what can be done to mitigate the situation.

4) Only 36% of RFAs/ROAs thought the title change provided better career paths, 54% disagreed or were neutral

5) 73% of RFAs/ROAs believed there are few opportunities for promotion

Recommendations: One goal of research unit centralization was to ensure that title changes provided better career paths. The department may consider developing a clearly laid-out career path for RFAs/ROAs, which can be posted on an internal site,

outlining the difference between an RFA I and II and the steps to reach the next level. ROAs can also see what opportunities for growth exist and how they can further their skills within the organization. As mentioned in chapter 2 (section 2.2) in the literature review, it is becoming increasingly important to train new hires to understand the profession, and develop the skills of the research administrators already in place and help them understand their duties much clearly. Training can also be done professionally through NCURA and SRA. If travel costs are an issue, staff can be trained through regional or local chapters that happen within SRA/NCURA.

In chapter 2, a discussion on NCURA standards (section 2.3) was made as it relates to “Research Administration Communications.” The standard explains that an institution must establish timely, regular communication regarding sponsored programs trends and activity levels, such as “policies and procedures, expectations, roles and responsibilities, changes in policies, and risk areas.”⁵⁷ Although this has been done at the RAND Corporation, especially with the establishment of the new structure in research units, the survey seems to suggest that more communication, especially as it relates to roles and responsibilities and reorganizational change, should be communicated more regularly and clearly.

⁵⁷ National Council of University Research Administrators, "Building a Research Administration Infrastructure at the Department Level."

- 6) 45% felt professional opportunities from the supervisor happen slightly often, 18% believed it happens moderately often
- 7) 45% viewed their jobs as very challenging, and 45% saw it as moderately challenging
- 8) 45% of RFA/ROAs felt stressed, 27% were stressed, and 27% did not feel stressed
- 9) The RFA/ROAs lowest ratings for job skills were 9% and for knowledge of rules and regulations, organizational skills, and problem-solving skills

Recommendations: The findings above indicate a pattern that RFAs/ROAs are stressed, view their jobs as challenging, need improvement in some job skills, and feel that professional development does not happen often. These findings can be mitigated through performance metrics and training opportunities so that RFAs/ROAs feel have a sense of purpose and that their institution has invested in them. These findings were consistent with the literature review discussed in Chapter 2. Section 2.3.2 discussed how managers can help create a personalized training plan for RAs by reverse engineering their job to discover what skills can be sharpened.

Landen and McCallister⁵⁸ suggested managers ask questions like, “what’s the purpose of the job? What kind of tasks are required to complete the job effectively? What are the challenges/demands of the position? What kind of experience, skills, and level or experience is required to complete the job?” Answering these questions can

⁵⁸ Landen and McCallister, in *Research Administration and Management*, 80-81.

help managers create a personalized training plan where senior RAs can help develop the skills of the RAs already in place through on the job training, or managers can send RA staff to professional development meetings as well.

10) 67% of PIs were unaware of the centralization of research units

Recommendation: As mentioned in chapter 3 of survey results (Section 3.5.1), PIs may not have been aware of the centralization because it didn't directly affect them.

Nevertheless, the centralization created institutional processes such as tools for PIs and more RFA support for smaller Units which positively affected the PIs.

11) When asked whether restructuring has helped provide better strategic pricing to RAND's clients, the answers differed among RFA leads: 2 were neutral, 1 agreed, and 1 strongly agreed

Recommendation: This item was explored because one of the goals of centralization was to create consistent strategic pricing (e.g. indirect fees) for RAND's clients, especially among research units that share the same clientele. Because the responses were varied among RFA leads, it might be worth exploring how indirect fees are charged to similar clients now compared to how they were charged in the past. In addition, an outline of fees and pricing can be created as a guidance document for consistency in practices. This issue can also be resolved through better communication among the RFA leads.

4.3 Conclusion

The goal of the centralization of research units was to move to a more centralized system with more consistent processes for research staff and administrators. The centralization would streamline financial project administration and create consistent approaches to external clients. The centralization created new job titles, allowed an expert pool of RFA/ROA staff to be shared among research units, and introduced new tools to the research staff such as the new PIF form and desk guides for the RAs. The centralization also created “cradle to grave” financial administration which allowed for more standardization across units with similar clientele. This also helped streamline processes through communication and collaboration. The centralization was largely a success, as most respondents viewed the changes favorably.

RAND’s culture also proved to be resilient to change for RA staff, RFA leads, and researchers. Although the centralization was largely a success, some responses to the survey showed varied reactions to several components of the change, such as communication with research staff about the changes caused by centralization, revision of policies such as the timeliness of proposal scheduling, provision of more opportunities for RFAs/ROAs to grow professionally and better understand their jobs, and more communication among RFA leads on similar pricing models for clients.

Nevertheless, the centralization provided job satisfaction for RFA/ROAs because it created opportunities for RAs to work in different departments and share the same

pool of research staff. The “cradle to grave” experience of research administration may have also improved job satisfaction. In addition, over half of research staff felt supported by the proposal development tools, such as the roll out of the PIF and budgeting tool. Research staff also viewed RFA/ROA’s customer service very favorably. RFA leads felt more supported in their research units because the centralization created opportunities for expert RFA’s from other departments to share expertise and contribute to their units’ success. Hopefully, the recommendations in this capstone project provide good opportunity for further improvement and enhancement of the centralization of research units at the RAND Corporation.

Appendix 1: Original Survey Questions

Research Administration Survey

I am Dolly Dahdal, a current graduate student in the Masters of Science Program in Research Administration at Johns Hopkins University. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. This survey is being distributed to Research Finance/Operation Administrators and Principal Investigators. It is being done to garner information about the restructuring of the Social and Economic Policy Units (SEP Units) at the RAND Corporation. The topic of Research Administration infrastructure is important for universities, research hospitals, and non-profit organizations that are building and operating a research enterprise. The results of the survey will serve as a metric for all institutions and will allow universities, research hospitals, and non-profit organizations to have a better understanding on creating an infrastructure that would foster research administration's growth and job satisfaction.

Your response to the questionnaire will be anonymous. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. After collecting the survey responses, the data will be analyzed and reported without disclosing any sensitive or identifiable information about the participants of this survey. Collection of this data is very important to me as this data is part of my graduate capstone project and is needed for me to graduate. The deadline to complete the survey is July 3rd, 2017. Your time and feedback are greatly appreciated.

This survey has been approved by the Johns Hopkins IRB. My capstone project, once completed and accepted will be available in JScholarship. Your completion of this survey or questionnaire will serve as your consent to be in this research study. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact my advisor at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Marianne Woods, Director of the M.S. program in Research Administration at mwoods9@jhu.edu. Thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

* Required

Preliminary Questions

1. How many years have you been employed at RAND? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-6 years
- 6-9 years
- 9-12 years
- 12-15 years
- 15-18 years
- 18-21 years
- More than 20 years

2. How many years have you been employed in your current position? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-6 years
- 6-9 years
- 9-12 years
- 12-15 years
- 15-18 years
- 18-21 years
- More than 20 years

3. What is your highest level of education? *

Mark only one oval.

- High School Diploma/GED
- B.A. or B.S.
- Master's Degree
- Ed.D.
- Ph.D.
- M.D.
- J.D.

4. What gender do you identify with? *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Other: _____

5. How many hours do you work daily? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 6 hours
- 6-8 hours
- 8 hours
- More than 8 hours
- Other: _____

6. Are you aware that Research Financial Operations (RFO) went through a Social and Economic Policy Unit (SEP Unit) restructuring? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

7. What is your current job title? *

Mark only one oval.

- Research Finance Administrator Lead (RFA Lead) Skip to question 24.
- Research Finance Administrator (RFA) Skip to question 14.
- Research Operations Administrator (ROA) Skip to question 14.
- Principal Investigator (PI) Skip to question 8.

Principal Investigators

8. How frequently do you submit proposals through the SEP Units?

Mark only one oval.

- Every week
- Every 2-3 weeks
- Every month
- Every 2-3 months
- Every 4-6 months
- Once or twice a year
- Not applicable

9. On a scale from 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you overall rate the Research Finance Administrator's (RFA's) performance?

Mark only one oval per row.

	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very good	5 Excellent	Prefer not to respond	Not applicable
Professionalism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Reliability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Empathy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Responsiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					

10. Do you like the roll out of the new Proposal Initiation Form (PIF Form)?

Mark only one oval.

- Was better than expected
- Matched expectations
- Was worse than expected
- Neutral
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

11. Please rate how satisfied you are overall with Proposal Meetings

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely Satisfied				

12. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements:

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer not to respond	Not applicable
RFAs are aware of RAND's business rules	<input type="radio"/>						
I feel supported when I submit short turn-around proposals.	<input type="radio"/>						
I am aware of compliance regulations when I submit proposals (e.g. Conflict of Interest, Export Control, Security)	<input type="radio"/>						
Proposal meetings are scheduled in a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>						
The RFA's do a good job of monitoring my expenditures in post-award	<input type="radio"/>						
I know the tools available to me as a PI in proposal development (e.g. boilerplate language, templates, budget tools)	<input type="radio"/>						
I know the RFA assigned to me	<input type="radio"/>						

13. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Stop filling out this form.

Research Finance Administrators & Research Operation Administrators

14. Please rate how satisfied you are with your job

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely Satisfied				

15. How challenging is your job?

Mark only one oval.

- Extremely challenging
- Very challenging
- Moderately challenging
- Neutral
- Slightly challenging
- Not at all challenging
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

16. Please rate your stress level in a typical week

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Stressful	<input type="radio"/>	Not Stressful at All				

17. How well are you paid for the work you do?

Mark only one oval.

- Extremely well
- Very well
- Moderately well
- Slightly well
- Not at all well
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

18. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements:

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer not to respond	Not applicable
I know my role as an RFA/ROA	<input type="radio"/>						
I feel like an expert in my area	<input type="radio"/>						
I know whom to seek for guidance if I have questions	<input type="radio"/>						
The distribution of work among RFA's is balanced	<input type="radio"/>						
I am confident my back-up can do my work when I'm on vacation or out of the office	<input type="radio"/>						
The title change has provided me with a better career path	<input type="radio"/>						

19. How often do the tasks assigned to you by your supervisor help you grow professionally?

Mark only one oval.

- Extremely often
- Very often
- Moderately often
- Slightly often
- Not at all often
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

20. How many opportunities do you have to get promoted where you work?

Mark only one oval.

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A few
- None at all
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

21. Are you supervised too much at work, supervised too little, or supervised about the right amount?

Mark only one oval.

- Much too much
- Somewhat too much
- Slightly too much
- About the right amount
- Slightly too little
- Somewhat too little
- Much too little
- Prefer not to respond
- Not applicable

22. On a scale from 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rank yourself in the following skills:

Mark only one oval per row.

	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very good	5 Excellent	Prefer not to respond	Not applicable
Ability to handle pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Organizational skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Problem solving skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Communication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Ability to multitask and prioritize	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Math and budgeting proficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Attention to detail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Continuous learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Customer service and collegiality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Knowledge of rules and regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					

23. Do you have any other issues/concerns you'd like to raise?

Stop filling out this form.

Research Finance Administrator Leads

24. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements:

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer not to respond	Not applicable
SEP Unit staffing has taken on ad hoc projects when needed	<input type="radio"/>						
My Unit feels supported during time-sensitive deadlines or peak periods	<input type="radio"/>						
Information sharing among SEP Units has led to streamlined business practices	<input type="radio"/>						
Restructuring has helped provide better strategic pricing to our clients	<input type="radio"/>						

25. Please rate how satisfied you are overall with the restructuring of SEP Units

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely Satisfied				

26. Do you have any other issues/concerns you'd like to raise?

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Curriculum Vitae

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