

National Biosafety Stewardship Month: A Glimpse Into Institutional Safety Activities

David A. Martinson, Ph.D.

National Biosafety and Biocontainment Training Program
-A Program of the National Institutes of Health-

david.martinson@nih.gov

Objectives

- Introduce the National Biosafety Stewardship Month (NBSM), including activities that were suggested by the NIH.
- Discuss a survey analysis to gauge how well the NBSM was administered and received at various research institutions.
- Compile survey results to improve future events.
- Analyze survey answers to determine any gaps in institutional biosafety oversight programs and provide possible solutions to rectify these problems.
- Provide discussion topics that address widespread biosafety program obstacles.

National Biosafety Stewardship Month

- September, 2014, NIH laboratories participated, and NIH grantee institutions were encouraged to do the same.

Goals were to:

- Reexamine policies and procedures.
- Conduct inventories of infectious agents and toxins.
- Reinforce biosafety training of investigators, laboratory staff, and members of IBCs.

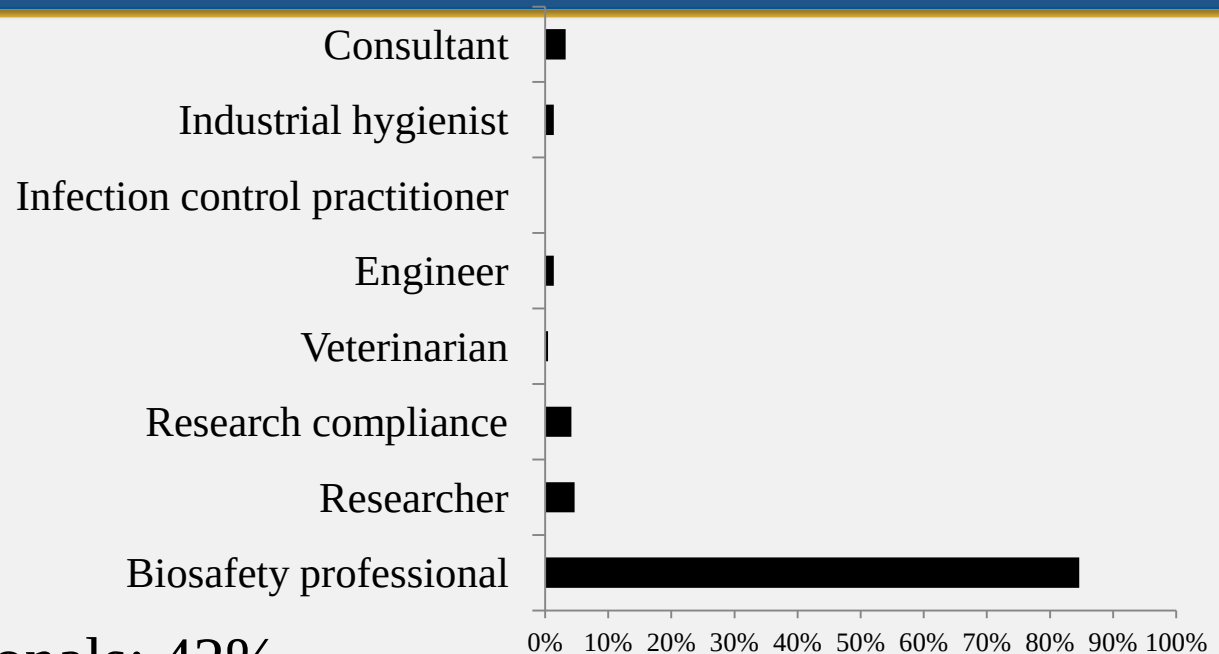
Survey Design

- ABSA distributed a 14 question survey entitled “ABSA National Biosafety Stewardship Month Survey” to all ABSA members.
- Questions were designed to address:
 - Awareness of the event.
 - Upper management support.
 - Types of activities undertaken.
 - Barriers to participation in the stewardship month.
 - Resources needed.

Analysis of Results and Responses

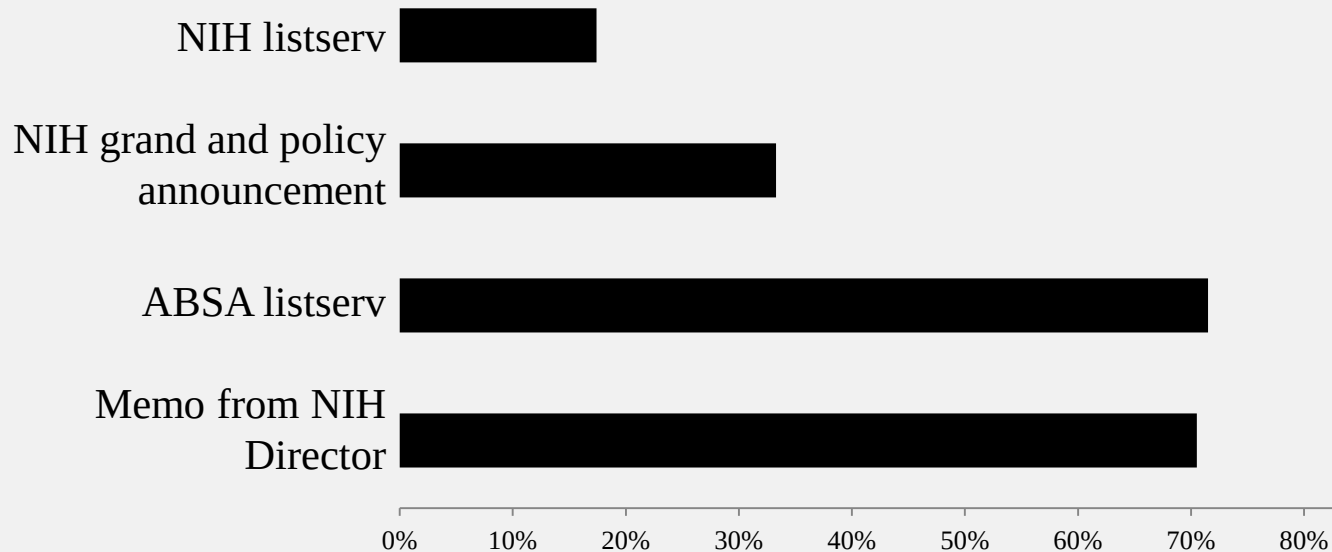
- All questions had predetermined suggested answers to select.
- An additional option for each answer was given to respond with “other” responses.
- All suggested and “other” responses were captured and analyzed.
- The most informative questions and responses are discussed here.

Q1-Please indicate your position in your place of employment.



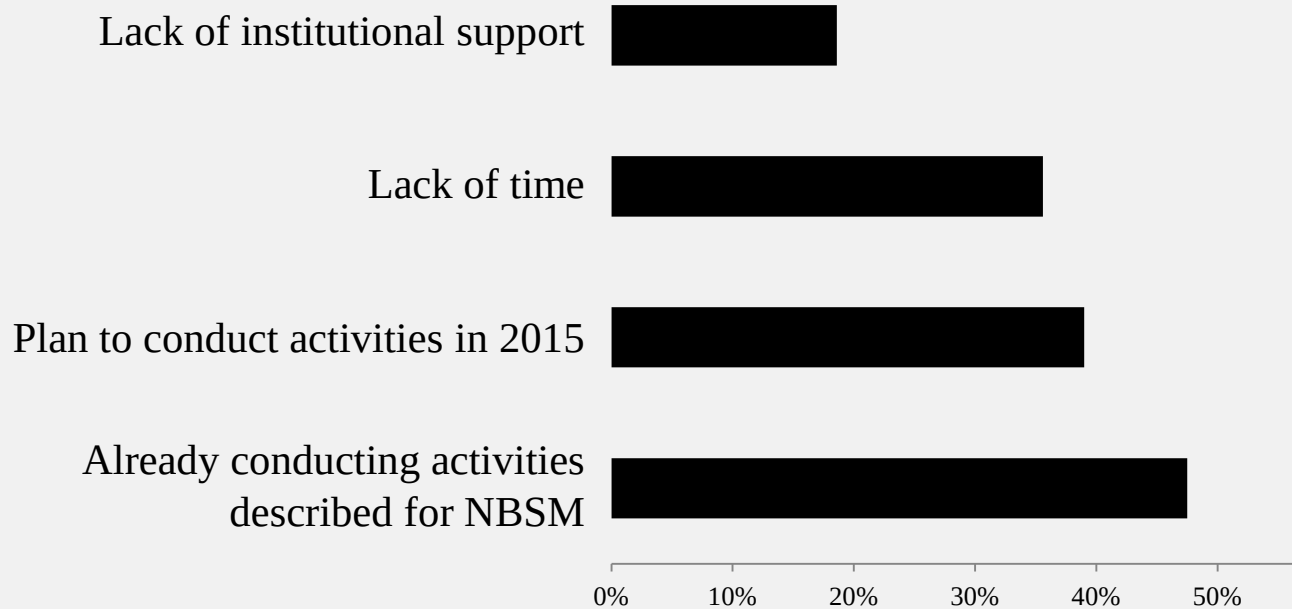
- Senior EH&S professionals: 42%.
- Target audience: biosafety professionals, in particular senior EH&S professionals.
- Not aware of NBSM initiative: 20%.

Q2-How did you become aware of the NBSM initiative?



- Most efficacious: Memo from NIH Director and ABSA listserv.
 - Great for identifying biosafety professionals in the research setting.
- Private industry and hospital safety personnel may not be as readily targeted through these mechanisms.

Q3-Why did your institution not conduct any activities as part of the NBSM initiative?



- Encouraging: nearly half of the institutions that did not directly participate in NBSM were already conducting the activities described for NBSM.
- Discouraging: they did not want to improve upon their activities.
- Perhaps offer a wider variety of activities, help, or resources for the next NBSM.

Conducted an extensive inventory of
infectious agents and toxins



Conducted training events



Sought to catalogue all infectious
agents and toxins



Updated the catalogue of infectious
agents and toxins



Reviewed policies and procedures

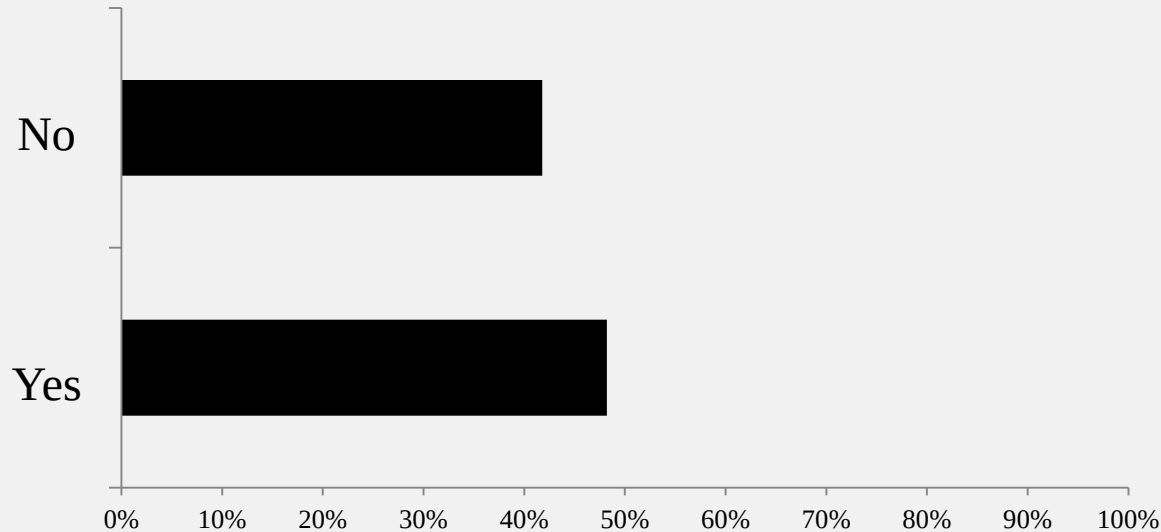


0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

**Q4-In response to
NBSM, which of
the following
activities did your
institution pursue?**

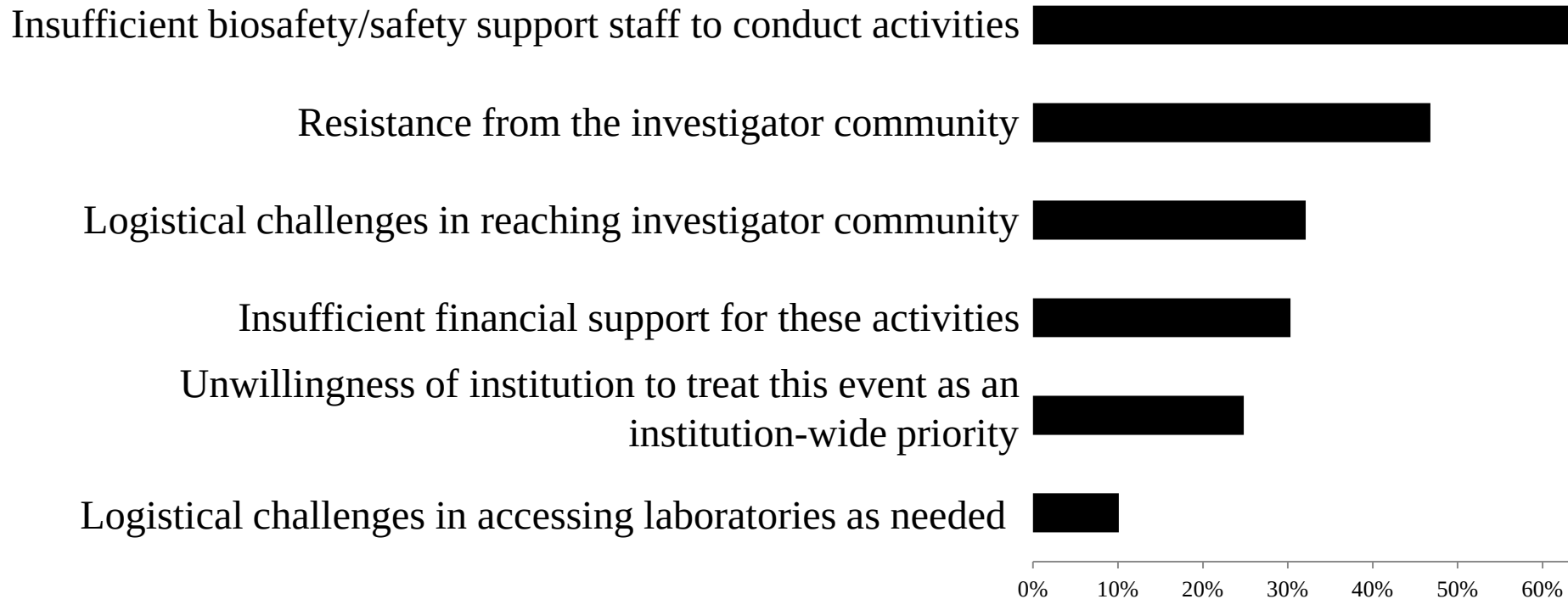
- Many of the respondents asked their PIs to conduct inventories
 - Some do not have inventory systems
- A future question to ask is: If ABSA provides an inventory database outline would the institutions be more persistent in making sure inventories are created and maintained?

Q5-Was the senior administration at your institution supportive of conducting activities as part of NBSM?

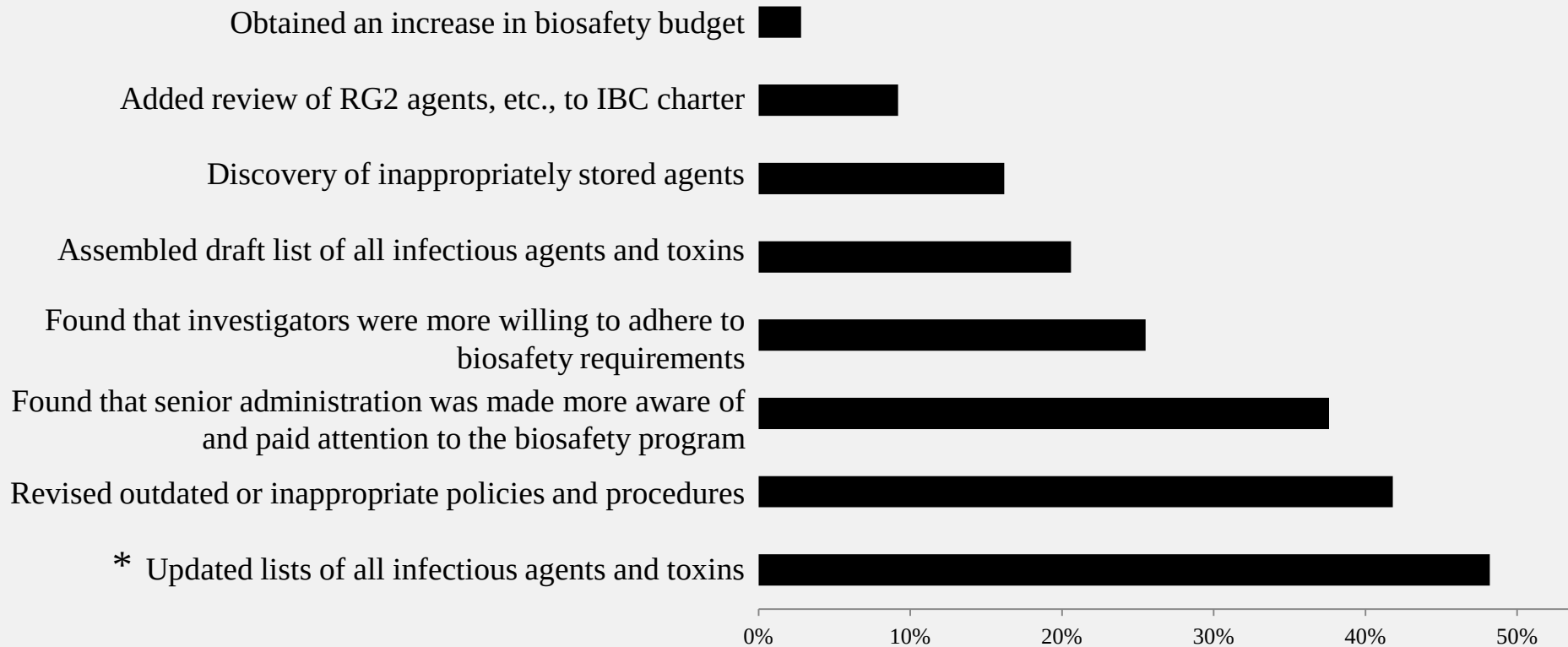


- Nearly 40% of respondents did not receive senior administration support.
 - Administrative support is essential for generating employee participation.
- Administration was supportive but not willing to provide financial support.

Q6-Did you encounter any challenges in conducting activities in observation of NBSM?

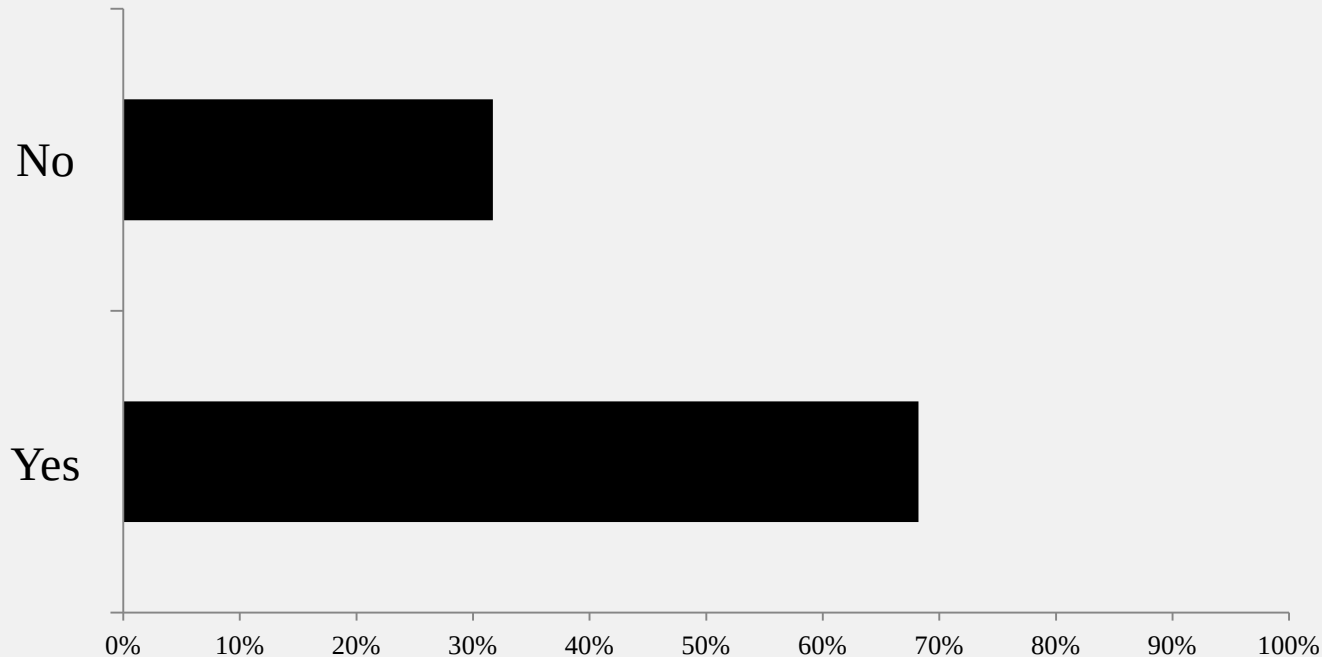


Q7-What were some of the outcomes of NBSM at your institution?



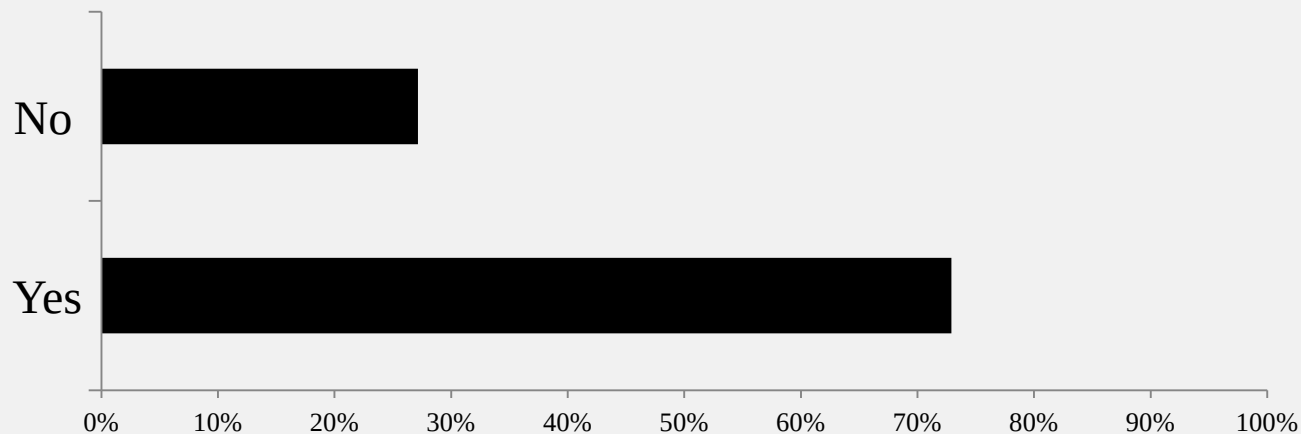
- The initiative served as an excellent catalyst for “housekeeping” especially in respect to freezers/stocks.

Q8-Does your institution have plans to sustain any of the activities initiated as a consequence of NBSM?



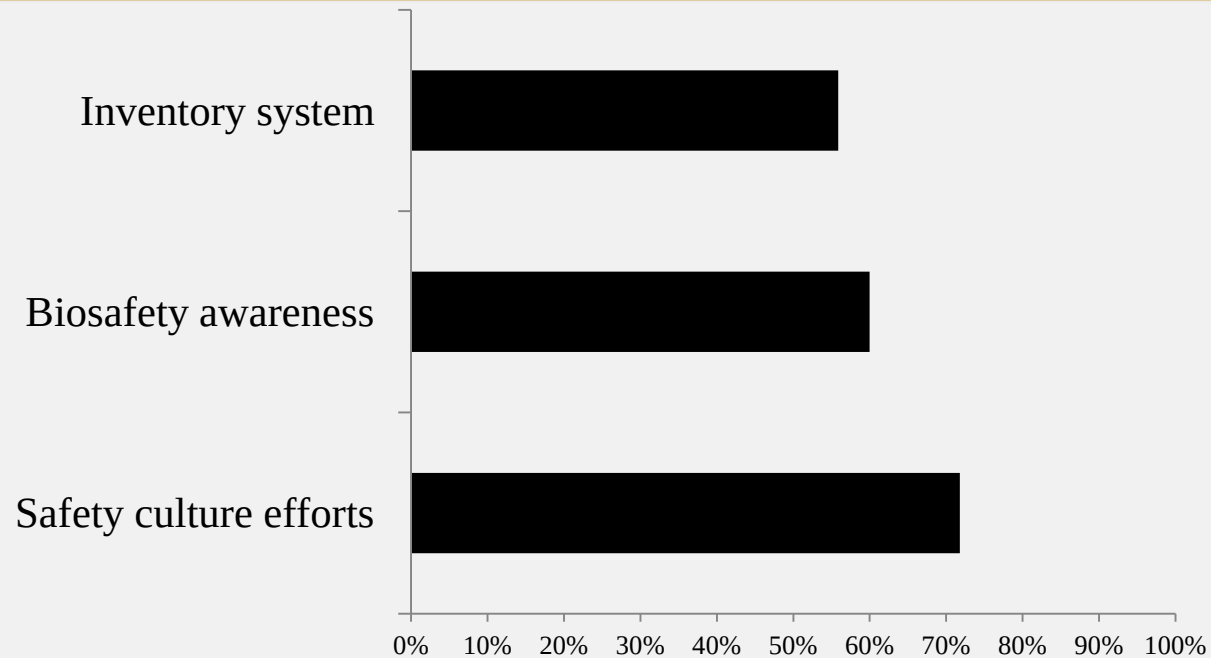
- Performing annual inventory reviews and annual assessment of policies, procedures and training programs.

Q9-Would you like to see NBSM be an annual event with a different focus each year?



- September is a very busy time at most academic institutions, with it being the beginning of the semester.
- Many respondents commented that there was not enough lead time to prepare.

Q10-To assist you in strategizing improvements for your institution, what areas of professional development would you like to see ABSA offer a webinar or course in?



- A simple online inventory system that would be easy to develop has been mentioned in responses for many different questions.
- Institutional safety culture should be a key topic for future programs.

Success of the National Biosafety Stewardship Month

- ✓ • Reexamine policies and procedures.
- ✓ • Conduct inventories of infectious agents and toxins.
- Reinforce biosafety training of investigators, laboratory staff, and members of IBCs.

Improvements

- Reinforce biosafety training of investigators, laboratory staff, and members of IBCs.
- Continue to target EH&S professionals, especially management, and begin incorporating private industry and hospital safety personnel.
- Tactics to enhance senior administration “buy-in” could promote safety culture.
- More work is required to develop a shift towards safety culture.

2015 NBSM

Thematic elements of enhancing a culture of safety/responsibility:

- Training
- Engagement
- Transparency

Acknowledgements

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Questions

Comments

Discussion Topics?

david.martinson@nih.gov