DPE System Survey Results

Data from the February 2022 Nationwide Survey of DPE's and Flight Schools: Perceptions of the Current DPE System and Selected DPERWG Recommendations

Study Conducted by the Middle Tennessee State University Aerospace Department

Contact Information:
Wendy S. Beckman, Ed.D.
wendy.beckman@mtsu.edu
615-494-8755
MTSU Box 67, Murfreesboro, TN 37132

DPE System Survey Results

As part of the Reauthorization Act of 2018 the FAA assigned to the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) a review of the current Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) policies. The ARAC in turn assigned this task to the Designated Pilot Examiner Reforms Working Group (DPERWG). This Group delivered its recommendations to the FAA in June 2021, with an FAA response to the Group due by June 2022. The purpose of the research project for which the results are summarized below was to provide more insight regarding the current DPE system from stakeholders prior to that deadline.

To accomplish this, a survey soliciting perceptions of both the current DPE system and a number of specific recommendations made by the DPERWG was distributed to DPE's and flight schools nationwide by researchers in the Aerospace Department at Middle Tennessee State University in February of 2022. To solicit DPE responses, each of the 851 examiners currently listed on the FAA's DPE Locator website were sent a direct e-mail requesting their participation, and several industry groups encouraged DPE's to participate in the survey as well. A total of 306 valid responses were received from DPE's, for a 36% response rate. The survey responses received from DPE's were national in representation, with DPE's from 68 of 77 FSDO's responding. In addition to completing the anonymous survey, over 30 DPE's felt so strongly about the topic they contacted the study primary investigator personally via e-mail or a phone call to further convey their thoughts.

To solicit flight school participation, a direct e-mail requesting participation was sent to the flight school contact e-mail provided by the approximately 2000 flight schools listed on the AOPA Flight School Directory website, along with a similar direct e-mail to all members of the University Aviation Association. In addition, various industry groups encouraged their members who are associated with flight schools to participate. There were 773 valid responses to the Flight School DPE Survey. The flight school responses received were also national in representation, with schools reporting oversight from all 77 FSDO's nationwide. The average fleet size of the responding flight schools was 10.2 aircraft, with a minimum of 1 aircraft and a maximum of 100 aircraft reported. The average number of flight instructors employed by the responding flight schools was 11.4, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 250 instructors.

This document begins with a high-level overview of question responses as a means of quickly providing insight to where DPE's and flight schools indicate similar and differing perceptions. However, it is important to note that not all issues explored by the surveys are discussed in this opening overview. Beginning on p. 11, a summary of the responses from the DPE survey is provided, followed by a summary of responses from the flight school survey on p. 18. For more detailed response information for each question asked, the full DPE survey results begin on p. 22 and the full flight school survey results being on page 53. Of note, one important piece of information only provided in the summary DPE data is the average DPE reported times for the conduct of oral and flight test portions of various check rides, which can be seen on pages 16-17. This data may be particularly useful for decision-making regarding the number of events DPE's are able to safely and effectively accomplish each day.

Overview and Comparison of DPE and Flight School Survey Results

While conclusions from much of the data collected from the survey responses can be readily drawn from simply viewing the responses provided for each question asked, there are several overarching areas of interest that likely benefit from a more holistic analysis, including a comparison of DPE and flight school responses for those areas. These areas include: 1) the availability of check rides, 2) travel of DPE's to check ride locations as well as travel of applicants to check ride locations, and 3) perceptions of specific DPERWG recommendations.

Availability of check rides

Three questions asked on both the DPE and flight school surveys specifically addressed this issue:

1) *On average, when an applicant attempts to schedule a check ride, how long would that individual have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)?* This question was presented to both DPE's and flight schools. The perception of average wait time for a check ride to be conducted varied appreciably between the two groups, with DPE's indicating a two week or less wait time for 79% of applicants and with flight schools indicating a two week or less wait time for 40% of applicants.

2) *What is your perception of the number of DPE's within your FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?* There was also a considerable difference of perception on this question. While 73% of responding DPE's indicated the "right number" of DPE's were available in their FSDO's geographic area of responsibility and 21% indicated "too few" were available, flight schools perceived the reverse situation, with only 16% of flight schools indicating the "right number" of DPE's were available, and 83% indicating "too few" were available.

3) *What is your perception of the number of DPE's nationwide?* Scaled to a national level, the difference of perception between DPE's and flight schools regarding DPE availability continued. DPE responses indicated that 55% perceived that there are too few DPE's nationwide, while 42% perceived there is the right number. For flight school respondents, 92% perceived that there are currently too few DPE's nationwide to service the needs of applicants and 8% perceived there is currently the right number of DPE's nationwide.

An additional question asked only on the flight school survey specifically addressed check ride availability: *What is your overall perception of the availability of DPE's to conduct check rides for your flight school's students?* A majority (84%) of responding flight schools indicated that DPE availability is either somewhat (35%) or a significant issue (49%) for their students. Further, 48% of responding flight schools indicated that over 40% of their students incurred additional costs due to a gap in training between finishing a flight course and scheduling a check ride over the past year. The average cost per student reported was $1,567. The FAA reports 94,000 check rides performed by examiners in 2021. Conservatively, if 15% of all check ride applicants nationwide incur an additional $1,500 due to wait times for check rides, an annual cost of $21.1M is incurred by applicants due to wait times for check rides. Flight schools also reported an economic impact to their organization, with 167 responding flight schools providing detailed qualitative comments on the financial impact experienced. Frequently identified issues included: 1) Cost of applicants

maintaining proficiency while waiting for check ride (some schools provide this at no cost to student who have paid a flat fee for training); 2) opportunity cost of aircraft and CFI availability given time spent re-training applicants who were waiting for a check ride, 3) frustration and lack of motivation on the part of students who are waiting for long periods of time, leading to discontinuance of training for the next certificate/rating, 4) for collegiate programs, the lack of ability for a student to progress to the next course in their academic curriculum in the subsequent semester, leading to graduation delays which cause retention issues, and 5) for training programs conducted with students in residence, the cost of extended stay food and lodging financed by flight training providers. Specific cost estimated varied widely based on the type of costs incurred so an average would not be meaningful, but estimates ranged from $500 per year to $200,000 per year.

Taken together, the question responses discussed above indicate that flight schools perceive there is a much greater issue with check ride availability than do DPE's.

Can current DPE staffing levels handle the current demand?

To determine if the current DPE staffing level can handle the current demand for check rides, three DPE question responses were examined: 1) *On average, approximately how many check rides do you conduct each month as a DPE?* The responding DPE's indicated an average (mean) of 11.6 check rides per month. 2) *Approximately how many check rides per month would you like to conduct as a DPE?* The responding DPE's indicated they would like to conduct an average of 13.25 check rides per month. If this extra 1.65 check rides per month is scaled over a year and to all 840 DPE's the FAA currently indicates are in service, an additional 16,600 check ride slots would be generated annually. However, there was a different response indicated by DPE's to the question: 3) *Is the current number of check rides you conduct each month at the level you wish?* For this question, the DPE responses indicated 92% are conducting approximately the number of check rides they wish to each month, 8% indicate conducting far less than they would like, and none report conducting many more than they would like. Based on the responses to this third question, it is difficult to predict whether the current DPE staffing will be able to generate enough additional check ride availability necessary to reduce wait times.

Traveling for Check Rides

Given the difficulty flight schools report in securing check rides for their students, two approaches to broadening the available pool of DPE's have been taken in recent years; applicants traveling to DPE's in other geographic areas to take check rides and DPE's traveling to other geographic areas to conduct check rides. Responses to survey questions regarding both approaches will be addressed in turn.

Applicants traveling outside their geographic area

Both DPE's and flight schools were asked: *What percentage of check ride applicants travel to DPE's outside their FSDO's geographic area?* This question resulted in fairly similar responses from both DPE's and flight schools, with 83% of DPE's indicating that less than 40% of their check ride applicants come to them from outside their managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility and 76% of flight schools reporting that

less than 40% of their students travel to a DPE outside their geographic region for a check ride. It is encouraging that a majority of both DPE's and flight schools indicate that less than 40% of their applicants travel outside their geographic region. When mid-points of each answer range are taken and averaged over the percentage response for each, survey responses indicate an average of approximately 20% of applicants are estimated to travel outside their geographic area for a check ride. Given 94,000 check rides were conducted by DPE's in 2021, this means from survey data it is estimated that over 18,800 applicants traveled outside their geographic area for a check ride in 2021. While it was not possible to determine how far an average applicant traveled for a check ride from the survey data, at a conversative estimate of $400 of travel expenses per check ride (i.e., rental of aircraft for one hour flight to a DPE both ways), this equates to an annual total cost of $7.52M to applicants.

DPE's traveling outside their geographic area

Both groups were also asked: *What percentage of check rides are conducted by DPE's who travel outside of their managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?* This question also generated fairly consistent results between the two groups. For responding DPE's, 73% indicate they now travel outside their geographic area to conduct check rides. Of those that travel, 81% indicate conducting less than 40% of their check rides outside of their oversight FSDO's geographic area. For responding flight schools, 62% report less than 40% of their students' check rides done by DPE's coming in from other geographical regions. When the mid-points for each answer range are taken and averaged over the percentage indicated for each, survey respondents perceived that 20% of check rides in 2021 were performed by DPE's from outside their geographic area. Again, based on 94,000 check rides conducted by DPE's in 2021, 18,800 check rides were done by DPE's who traveled outside their geographic area.

There was also close agreement between DPE's and flight schools' perception of the handling of DPE travel expenses, with 62% of DPE's reporting charging for travel expenses when conducting a check ride at other than their home airport and 61% of flight schools reporting that either their flight school or the check ride applicants paid for DPE travel expenses half or more of the time. Whether DPE's absorb the cost of their travel by reflecting it in their check ride rates or applicants or flight schools pay the travel expenses, if a conservative $200 estimate of travel costs per check ride is utilized, this results in another $3.76M in travel costs experienced annually by the flight training industry.

Related to the ability of DPE's to travel outside their geographic area since this restriction was lifted in October of 2018, 55% of those who were examiners both before and after that date indicate they now service applicants outside their geographic area while they did not do so before. A considerable percentage (31%) indicate they are now conducting more check rides per quarter than before the removal of the geographic boundaries. In addition, 53% of responding flight schools indicated that there has been a slight or significant improvement in DPE availability since the geographical restrictions were dropped. It seems clear that the dropping of geographical boundaries for DPE's has assisted in providing more check ride availability nationwide, although it has also resulted in considerable travel costs being incurred by both applicants and DPE's.

Feedback on Selected DPERWG Recommendations

While there were more recommendations for DPE system improvement from the DPERWG than those listed below, perceptions on these specific recommendations were asked of both responding groups (note, there were others that were only asked of DPE's; please see summary or detail data from the DPE survey for these perceptions). Some recommendations had consensus opinion between DPE's and flight school respondents, while others indicated a split in perception.

Confidential Survey Applicant Feedback System

Question: *What is your perception of the development of confidential survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.*

For DPE respondents, 56% indicated being in favor (34%) or strongly in favor (22%) of an applicant feedback system, while 35% indicated no preference and 10% indicated being opposed (8%) or strongly opposed (2%). For flight school respondents, 82% indicated being in favor (32%) or strongly in favor (50%) of an applicant feedback system, 13% indicated no preference, and only 6% indicated being opposed (4%) or strongly opposed (2%) to such a feedback system.

National Oversight Model

Question: *What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of the DPE system versus continuing with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?*

The majority (44%) of responding DPE's believed (24%) or strongly believed (20%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be detrimental, while 19% believed (9%) or strongly believed (10%) a national oversight model would be beneficial. However, the most selected response (36%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental."

Conversely, only 16% of flight school respondents believed (9%) or strongly believed (7%) a national oversight model would be detrimental, while 41% believed (18%) or strongly believed (23%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be beneficial. However, once again the most selected response (43%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental."

While there are opposite perceptions of the two surveyed groups regarding the potential benefits of moving to a national oversight model, the high percentages of both groups who were not sure if such a move would be beneficial or detrimental seems to point to the need for additional details of how such a model might work in order to develop an informed opinion by those who would be effected by such a change.

Improvements to DPE Locator Website

Question: *What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?*

Perceptions of the two surveyed groups were very similar on this item. Of the responding DPE's, 55% believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 27% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective. There were 84 specific DPE suggestions made to improve the locator function, and these included the following most frequent themes:

- Make more user friendly - especially with regards to authorization types and more search parameters (24 comments)
- Geographically allow a search within a radius of a given zip code versus by city; provide a map (19 comments)
- Keep it current and updated (16 comments)
- Advertise it and make it more easily accessible (13 comments)

Of the responding flight schools, 57% of responding flight schools believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 19% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective. There were 188 specific suggestions made to improve the locator function, and these included the following most frequent themes:

- Keep the site updated (many DPE's listed are inactive and some newer DPE's are not reflected) (48 comments)
- Provide maps/zip code search/search by radius (30 comments)
- Add DPE availability and scheduling functions (28 comments)
- Advertise it (many flight schools indicated not knowing it existed) (22 comments)
- Identify which DPE's are authorized for which check rides in plain language (13 comments)

It should be noted that the four most frequent DPE suggestions overlap with four of the five most frequent flight school suggestions, with the one additional flight school suggestion being providing DPE availability and scheduling from the DPE locator website.

Treating oral and flight tests as two distinct events

There are two separate recommendations that were explored within this concept:

Question 1: *Should oral and flight tests be treated as two distinct events so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?*

This item had the strongest consensus between DPE's and flight schools of all items on the surveys. A strong majority of responding DPE's (86%) and responding flight schools (also 86%) believed it would be beneficial to be able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely a flight test could proceed after successful completion of the oral test.

Question 2: *Should oral and flight tests be treated as two distinct events so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on the scheduled test day?*

A strong majority (81%) of responding DPE's believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully. While a smaller percentage (59%), the majority of responding flight schools also believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully.

Changing medical requirements for DPE's

There were also two separate recommendations explored within this concept:

Question 1: *Should DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical be allowed to conduct oral tests?*

For the DPE respondents, there was a slight majority (46%) which strongly or somewhat supporting the concept, with 38% strongly or somewhat against the concept and 16% with no preference. Flight school respondents were more strongly in favor of the concept, with 62% indicating support or strong support for the concept and with 22% reporting being against or strongly against the concept. As with DPE's, 16% of flight schools also indicated no preference.

Question 2: *Should DPE's be allowed to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?*

This item had broad support from both DPE's and flight schools. There was either support or strong support (79%) of this concept by DPE's, as well as support or strong support (81%) of this concept by flight schools.

Conclusions

Based on the responses received, there are several issues that have been identified by either DPE's, flight schools, or both. It seems likely that there is no one sweeping change that will satisfactorily address all current issues with the DPE system, but instead that incremental improvements in several areas are necessary to progress. Possible improvements to the system based on survey responses are indicated below.

Inefficiencies in scheduling: Based on the survey responses, qualitative comments provided, and subsequent contact made by both DPE's and flight schools with the primary investigator, there is substantial dissatisfaction on the part of both DPE's and flight schools with the current state of the DPE system. Much of the frustration voiced centered around the considerable inefficiencies experienced on both sides of the equation. Flight schools expressed that significant time is spent trying to locate DPE's with availability within a two week time frame, with numerous calls made to try to determine the optimal DPE solution. Obtaining quick availability has often resulted in either DPE's traveling (20% of the time) or

applicants traveling (also 20% of the time), which means substantial costs are incurred. DPE's expressed that the scheduling of check rides by applicants who anticipate finishing a course at a particular point in time but that are subsequently unable to meet that deadline result in cancellations on short notice which they are then in large part unable to fill. They too report a large administrative burden in terms of scheduling, cancelling, and rescheduling of applicants.

A potential solution to the scheduling issue has been identified by both the DPERWG (recommendation #10) as well as by respondents in their suggestions of improvements to the DPE locator website. Specifically, incorporating the ability to allow searches by zip code radius and to implement visibility of DPE availability and subsequent scheduling of a particular DPE within an improved DPE locator function. In such a paradigm, applicants could search within a specified radius, receive a list of DPE's along with their availability (and potentially the DPE's rate for the check ride), and then schedule the DPE of their choice at that time. This would require that DPE's submit their availability and rates for inclusion on the locator website. Further, the system could be developed so that applicants are not able to schedule a check ride until they have submitted their IACRA information, alleviating the issue of unprepared applicants tying up available DPE time.

Number/distribution of DPE's

Based on 94,000 check rides conducted last year and per FAA data, 840 DPE's available in 2021, an average of 112 check rides per year per DPE were conducted. This equates to 9.3 check rides per DPE, which is slightly less than the average of 11.6 check rides per month reported by DPE's who responded to the survey. However, what is difficult to judge is whether the DPE availability within certain geographic areas is correct; i.e., given the level of travel indicated by both DPE's and applicants it seems there may be areas that have less capacity than necessary while others have excess capacity. Thorough data analysis of the activity level of DPE's by geographic area is necessary to determine the appropriate level of staffing. Seeking to minimize the need to travel by either party while keeping wait times under two weeks seems like a reasonable goal. If the DPE locator system improvements mentioned above were put into place, data analysis of bottlenecks in particular areas would quickly become apparent as DPE availability could be seen and monitored. Consistent long waits within particular zip code areas would flag the need for more examiners, while consistent unused availability would indicate the need for fewer.

As a related issue, 25% of DPE survey respondents indicated conducting 5 or less check rides per month on average. From an FAA oversight perspective, the level of time commitment to oversee DPE's who are not very active may not represent the best use of stretched personnel resources. While there are obviously at times circumstances that may dictate lower levels of activity, setting a minimum level of productivity may be useful. Encouraging the existing DPE cadre to become more active, even to the point of full-time DPE service, may be a rapid method to increase availability of check rides across the country as flight training numbers continue to grow. One particular survey item inquired about DPE perception of the quality and effectiveness of full-time DPE's, and 61% of those DPE's responding indicated both would improve or remain the same if more DPE's were encouraged to serve full-time.

Consensus on DPERWG Recommendations

As discussed above, there were several specific DPERWG recommendations that had broad consensus, either positively or negatively, from both DPE's and flight schools. The *positive consensus* items include:

1) Implementing an applicant feedback system. Since 91% of DPE's indicated being in favor, strongly in favor, or having no preference regarding such a system, and 95% of flight schools indicated the same, it appears such a system should be implemented.

2) Allowing oral tests to be conducted even if weather or mechanical issues will likely prevent conduct of the flight test. Both 86% of DPE's and flight schools indicated their support for this concept.

3) Allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements. DPE's indicated support or strong support (79%) and flight schools indicated support of strong support (81%) of this concept.

The *negative consensus* item was:

1) Not allowing a flight to be conducted if an oral test was failed on the scheduled test day, with 8!% of DPE's and 59% of flight schools not supporting this concept.

The item on which both DPE's and flight schools indicated a significant degree of *lack of ability to form a perception* was:

1) The potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model for the DPE system, with 36% or DPE's and 43% of flight schools indicated they were not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental.

Other

One final item deserving of comment was the strong DPE support for the institution of a formal mentoring program for new DPE's. This question was only asked of DPE's, not flight school participants, and 91% of DPE's either agreed or strongly agreed that providing a mentorship program for new DPE's would improve the effectiveness of the system. Further, 94% of DPE's indicated either some or a strong interest in serving as a mentor, even if no compensation was provided for that service.

SUMMARY OF QUESTION RESPONSES - DPE's

Feedback on Current DPE System

1. How long have you served as a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE)?
81% of responding DPE's have been examiners for three or more years and 45% have been examiners for more than 10 years.

2. Extent of DPE service:
While 18% of responding DPE's report full-time DPE service, the majority (67%) report part-time DPE service due to other part-time or full-time work commitments. Only 15% were part-time DPE's with no other work commitments.

3. What is your perception of the impact on the DPE system in terms of quality and effectiveness of applicant evaluations if more DPE's were encouraged to serve in a full-time capacity?
The majority (61%) of responding DPE's believed DPE quality and effectiveness would improve or remain the same if more DPE's were encouraged to serve in a full-time capacity.

4. On average, when an applicant attempts to schedule a check ride with you, how long would that individual have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)?
79% of responding DPE's reported a two week or less wait time for check ride scheduling, with 21% reporting a three weeks or more wait time.

5. On average, approximately how many check rides do you conduct each month as a DPE?
The responding DPE's indicated an average (mean) of 11.6 check rides per month (standard deviation of 8.27). The median was 10 check rides per month, with the minimum reported being .25 and the maximum reported being 70.

6. Approximately how many check rides per month would you like to conduct as a DPE?
The responding DPE's indicated they would like to conduct an average of 13.25 check rides per month (standard deviation of 9.2). The median number desired to be conducted was 12, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 100 indicated.

7. Is the current number of check rides you conduct each month at the level you wish?
92% of responding DPE's are conducting approximately the number of check rides they wish to each month (responses including a little less than they'd like, the appropriate number, and a little more than they'd like). Only 8% are conducting far less than they would like, and none report conducting many more than they would like.

8. Approximately what percentage of the check rides you conduct take place at your home airport?
The distribution of check rides conducted at DPE's home airport is fairly evenly distributed across percentage groupings. 66% of DPE's conducted less than 60% of their check rides at their home airport, while 44% of DPE's conducted more than 60% of their check rides at the home airport.

9. When you travel away from your home airport to conduct a check ride, which statement below best describes how you handle the travel costs:
A strong majority of DPE's (95%) indicate a willingness travel to other airports to conduct check rides, and a majority of those that will travel charge for the travel costs incurred (62%). Of the DPE's who indicated they would travel, 70 indicated there was no limit on the distance they would travel, 105 indicated they would travel less than 150 miles, and 110 indicated they would travel between 150-2000 miles.

10. Do you travel to other FSDO's geographic areas of responsibility to conduct check rides?
A majority (73%) of DPE's who responded indicate they travel to geographic areas beyond their oversight FSDO to conduct check rides.

11. What percentage of check rides do you conduct outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility? (note, only DPE's who responded affirmatively to the previous question were presented with this question).
For responding DPE's who do travel outside of their geographic region to conduct check rides, the majority (81%) conduct less than 40% of their check rides outside of their oversight FSDO's geographic area.

12. What percentage of the check ride applicants that you service come to you from outside your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?
83% of responding DPE's indicate that less than 40% of their check ride applicants come to them from outside their managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility.

13. What is your perception of the number of DPE's within your FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?
The majority (73%) of responding DPE's indicated the "right number" of DPE's in their FSDO's geographic area of responsibility, with 21% indicating there were too few DPE's in their area.

14. What is your perception of the number of DPE's nationwide?
The majority (55%) of responding DPE's perceived that there are too few DPE's nationwide, with 42% indicating there is the right number of DPE's nationwide.

15. Did you have permission to do check rides outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsiblity prior to October of 2018?

There was a fairly even mix of responding DPE's who had permission to do check rides outside of their managing FSDO's geographic area prior to 10/18 (34%) versus those that did not (44%). The remainder (22%) were not DPE's prior to 2018.

16. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your service as a DPE?

While 28% of responding DPE's indicate no impact from the removal of the geographic boundary restriction in 10/18, 55% of those who were examiners both before and after 10/18 indicate they now service applicants outside their geographic area while they did not do so before.

17. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundary restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your level of activity as a DPE?

While most responding DPE's indicate there has been no impact on their level of activity (47%), a significant percentage (31%) indicate they are now conducting more check rides per quarter than before the removal of the geographic boundaries.

18. When dealing with large flight schools, do students/instructors typically schedule themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles scheduling check rides for all students?

There is an even mix of how large flight schools handle check ride scheduling for their applicants with around 30% in each provided category (students/instructors/flight school administrative staff scheduling).

19. In terms of efficiency and convenience when dealing with large flight schools, what is your preference for the scheduling of check rides:

There is an even mix of opinions among DPE's regarding the preferred method of large flight school scheduling of applicants with 33% preferring applicants/instructors to schedule, 42% preferring flight school administrative staff to schedule, and 25% having no preference.

20. What is your perception of the level of oversight your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?

A majority (74%) of responding DPE's believe the level of oversight provided by their managing FSDO is appropriate.

21. What is your perception of the level of resources your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?

A majority (63%) of responding DPE's indicated the level of resources their managing FSDO is able to provide is appropriate, but 36% indicated the level of resources their managing FSDO is able to provide are either somewhat or significantly less than what is needed.

Feedback on Selected DPERWG Recommendations

1. What is your perception of the development of confidential survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.

56% of responding DPE's indicate being in favor (34%) or strongly in favor (22%) of an applicant feedback system, while the most selected response (35%) was "no preference." The remaining 10% indicated being opposed or strongly opposed to an applicant feedback system.

2. What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of the DPE system versus continuing with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?

The majority (44%) of responding DPE's believed (24%) or strongly believed (20%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be detrimental, while 19% believed or strongly believed a national oversight model would be beneficial. However, the most selected response (36%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental".

3. What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?

55% of responding DPE's believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 27% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective. Specific suggestions to improve the locator function included:

- Make more user friendly - especially with regards to authorization types and more search parameters (24 comments)
- Geographically should do within a radius of some zip code versus by city; provide a map (19 comments)
- Keep it current and updated (16 comments)
- Advertise it and make it more easily accessible (13 comments)

4. In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?

A strong majority (86%) of responding DPE's believed it would be beneficial to be able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely a flight test could proceed after successful completion of the oral test.

5. In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on the scheduled test day?
A strong majority (81%) of responding DPE's believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully.

6. What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?
There was a fairy even split of perceptions regarding the potential use of DPE's who are unable to maintain their medical for the conduct of oral exams only, with 46% strongly or somewhat supporting the concept and 38% strongly or somewhat against the concept (16% with no preference).

7. What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?
There was either "support" or "strong support" (79% cumulatively) for allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's.

8. What is your perception of the concept of having DPE applicants be required to pass a knowledge test (pulled from current test bank questions appropriate to the authorizations being sought) prior to being considered as a potential DPE applicant?
A majority (58%) of responding examiners supported the concept having DPE applicants pass a knowledge test prior to being considered as a potential DPE; 28% indicated no preference on this concept; 14% indicated being against the concept.

9. What is your perception of the effectiveness of having individuals be required to pass a proficiency check conducted by a current DPE prior to being able to make an application to become a DPE?
The majority (64%) of responding DPE's supported individuals being required to pass a proficiency check conducted by a current DPE prior to being able to make an application to become a DPE; 21% indicated no preference on the concept; 15% indicated being against the concept.

10. What is your perception of the development of a mentorship program for new DPE's; i.e., assigning a mentor (an experienced DPE) to new DPE's to assist with questions during their early service?
A very large majority (91%) of responding DPE's agreed or strongly agreed that having a mentorship program for new DPE's would improve the effectiveness of the system.

11. Would you be willing to serve as a mentor for new DPE's (no compensation provided)?
A very large majority (94%) of responding DPE's have either strong or some interest as serving as a mentor for new DPE's.

DPE AVERAGE REPORTED TIMES FOR ORAL/FLIGHT PORTIONS OF CHECK RIDES

For each of type of check rides you are authorized to conduct, please indicate the average time in hours (using decimals if needed) spent for each the oral and flight portions of the examinations:

Average hours reported	Type of Check Ride
2.1	Private ASEL - Oral
1.7	Private ASEL – Flight
2.0	Private AMEL – Oral
1.7	Private AMEL – Flight
2.1	Instrument Airplane – Oral
1.8	Instrument Airplane – Flight
2.1	Commercial ASEL – Oral
1.8	Commercial ASEL – Flight
2.0	Commercial AMEL – Oral
1.7	Commercial AMEL – Flight
4.8	Certified Flight Instructor ASEL – Oral
1.8	Certified Flight Instructor ASEL – Flight
2.4	Certified Instrument Instructor Airplane – Oral
1.7	Certified Instrument Instructor – Flight
2.5	Certified Flight Instructor MEL – Oral
1.6	Certified Flight Instructor MEL – Flight
2.4	Airline Transport Pilot ASEL – Oral
2.0	Airline Tranport Pilot ASEL – Flight
2.5	Airline Transport Pilot AMEL – Oral
2.3	Airline Transport Pilot AMEL – Flight
1.3	Private ASES – Oral
1.1	Private ASES – Flight
1.5	Private AMES – Oral
1.3	Private AMES – Flight
1.3	Commercial ASES – Oral
1.2	Commercial ASES – Flight
1.6	Commercial AMES – Oral
1.5	Commercial AMES – Flight
2.6	Private RH – Oral
1.5	Private RH – Flight
2.5	Commercial RH – Oral
1.5	Commercial RH – Flight
2.5	Instrument RH – Oral
1.8	Instrument RH – Flight
3.0	Airline Transport Pilot RH – Oral
1.9	Airline Transport Pilot RH – Flight
4.7	Flight Instructor RH – Oral
1.6	Flight Instructor RH – Flight
2.0	Private GL- Oral
.9	Private GL – Flight

2.0	Commercial GL – Oral
.9	Commercial GL – Flight
3.6	Flight Instructor GL – Oral
1.0	Flight Instructor GL - Flight
1.9	Sport Pilot ASEL – Oral
1.5	Sport Pilot ASEL – Flight
3.8	Sport Pilot Flight Instructor – Oral
1.8	Sport Pilot Flight Instructor – Flight

Notes:

1) Several DPE's reported confusion with how to report whether certificates were "add on" or "initial", which would influence their time estimates (i.e., adding ASES to existing ASEL)

2) Several check ride types had an insufficient response rate to report average times. These included:

Airline Transport Pilot AMES Oral and Flight
Private LTAB Oral and Flight
Commercial LTAB Oral and Flight
Sport Pilot GL Oral and Flight
Sport Pilot ASES Oral and Flight
Sport Pilot LTAB Oral and Flight

SUMMARY OF QUESTION RESPONSES – FLIGHT SCHOOLS

Feedback On Current DPE System

1. What title best describes your position at your flight school?
68% of respondents were in management positions, 32% were in line instructor positions.

2. What training courses are offered by your flight school?
A complete listing of the number of schools and the various courses they offer may be seen beginning on page 52.

3. On average, when a DPE is contacted to schedule a check ride, how long would an applicant have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)?
40% of responding flight schools indicated a two week or less wait time for check ride scheduling, with 60% reporting a three week or more wait time.

4. What is your overall perception of the availability of DPE's to conduct check rides for your flight school's students?
A large majority (84%) of responding flight schools indicated that DPE availability is either somewhat (35%) or a significant (49%) issue for their students.

5. What percentage of check ride applicants from your flight school travel to a DPE outside your FSDO's geographic region for their check ride?
For responding flight schools, 76% of the schools report less than 40% of their students travel to a DPE outside their geographic region for a check ride.

6. Does your flight school bring in DPE's from other geographic regions to conduct check rides?
For responding flight schools, 36% report bringing in DPE's from other geographic regions to conduct check rides for their applicants.

7. What percentage of your school's applicants do check rides with an examiner brought in from outside your oversight FSDO's geographic region?
For flight schools that reported bringing in DPE's from other geographic regions, 38% indicated having more than 41%-100% of their students' check rides done by DPE's from other geographical regions with 62% reporting less than 40% of their students' check rides done by DPE's from other geographical regions.

8. Why does your flight school utilize DPE's from outside your geographical area (check all that apply)?
The reason cited for using DPE's from outside a flight school's geographic area is predominantly DPE availability (75% of responses).

9. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?
53% of responding flight schools indicated that there has been a slight or significant improvement in DPE availability since the geographical restrictions were dropped; 28% indicated there was no impact from the change.

10. How has the ability of DPE's to conduct up to three complete check rides per day (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?
There was an even split of perceptions, with 41% of responding flight schools indicating this change had no impact on DPE availability, and 40% reporting a slight or significant increase in DPE availability.

11. If your students experience significant delays in scheduling check rides with DPE's, do these delays cause any costs for your flight school?

While only 27% of responding flight schools indicated their school incurred additional costs from check ride delays, 167 of those that reported additional costs provided detailed qualitative comments on the financial impact experienced by their flight school. Frequently identified issues included: 1) Cost of applicants maintaining proficiency while waiting for check ride (some schools provide this at no cost to student who have paid a flat fee for training); 2) opportunity cost of aircraft and CFI availability given time spent re-training applicants who were waiting for a check ride, 3) frustration and lack of motivation on the part of students who are waiting for long periods of time, leading to discontinuance of training for the next certificate/rating, 4) for collegiate programs, the lack of ability for a student to progress to the next course in their academic curriculum in the subsequent semester, leading to graduation delays which cause retention issues. Specific cost estimates varied widely based on the type of costs incurred so an average was not really meaningful, but estimates ranged from $500/year to $200,000/year.

12. Payment for Travel of DPE's
For responding flight schools who indicate bringing in examiners from other geographic regions, 23% of schools report the school paying for DPE travel expenses half the time or more while 38% indicate students paying for DPE travel expenses half the time or more. A large percentage of schools (81%) report setting up schedules to maximize DPE efficiency half the time or more when they are brought in from outside their geographic region.

13. In the last year (2021), what percentage of students at your flight school would you say experienced additional costs due to a gap in time between finishing flight course requirements and getting a check ride date with a DPE?
48% of responding flight schools indicate that over 40% of their students incurred additional costs due to a gap in training between finishing a flight course and scheduling a check ride over the past year. The average cost per student reported was $1,567.

14. What is your perception of the number of DPE's in your geographic region?
A large majority (83%) of responding flight schools indicated they believed there are currently too few DPE's in their geographic region to service the needs of the area.

15. What is your perception of the number of DPE's nationwide?
A large majority (92%) of responding flight schools indicated their perception that there are currently too few DPE's nationwide to service the needs of applicants.

16. Do your flight school's students/instructors typically schedule DPE's for check rides themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles the scheduling of check rides for all students?
The large majority of flight schools (70%) indicated that students and instructors schedule check rides individually with DPE's, versus flight school administrative staff.

Feedback on Selected DPERWG Recommendations

1. What is your perception of the development of a survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.
82% of responding flight schools indicate being in favor (32%) or strongly in favor (50%) of an applicant feedback system, with only 6% indicated being opposed (4%) or strongly opposed (2%) to such a feedback system; 13% indicated no preference.

2. What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of DPE's versus remaining with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?
41% of responding flight schools believed (18%) or strongly believed (23%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be beneficial, while 16% believed a national oversight model would be detrimental or strongly detrimental. However, the most selected response (43%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental."

3. What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?
57% of responding flight schools believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 19% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective. There were 188 specific suggestions made to improve the locator function, and these included the following most frequent themes:

- Keep the site updated (many DPE's listed are inactive and some newer DPE's are not reflected) (48 comments)

- Provide maps/zip code search/search by radius (30 comments)
- Add DPE availability and scheduling functions (28 comments)
- Advertise it (many flight schools indicated not knowing it existed) (22 comments)
- Identify which DPE's are authorized for which check rides in plain language (13 comments)

4. In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as separate events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?
The large majority (86%) of responding flight schools believed it would be beneficial to be able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely a flight test could proceed after successful completion of the oral test.

5. In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on a scheduled test day?
A majority (59%) of responding flight schools believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully.

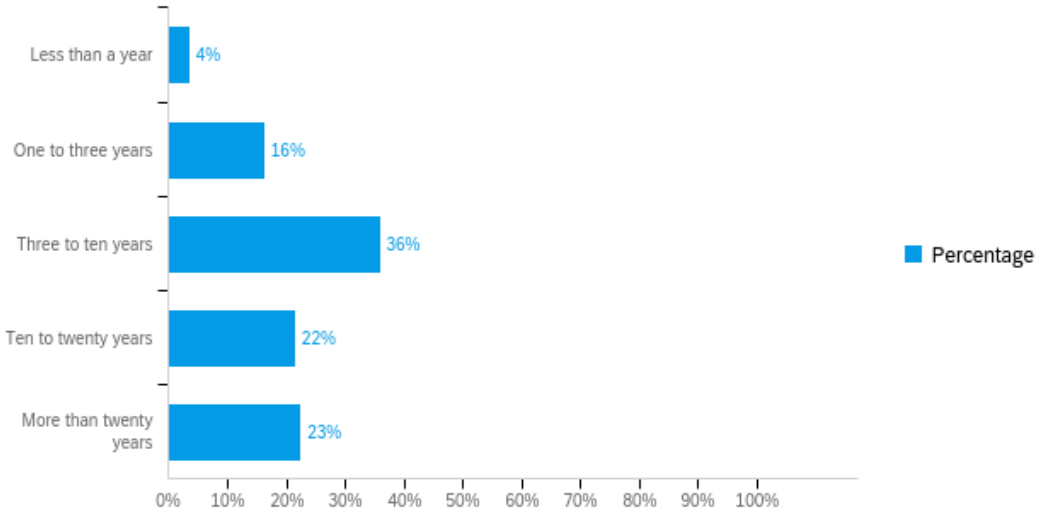
6. What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?
62% of responding flight schools indicated support (27%) or strong support (35%) for allowing DPE's who are unable to maintain their medical for the conduct of oral exams only, with 22% reporting being against (13%) or strongly against (9%) the concept; 16% indicated no preference.

7. What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?
There was support or strong support (81%) for allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's.

Question Response Details – DPE Survey

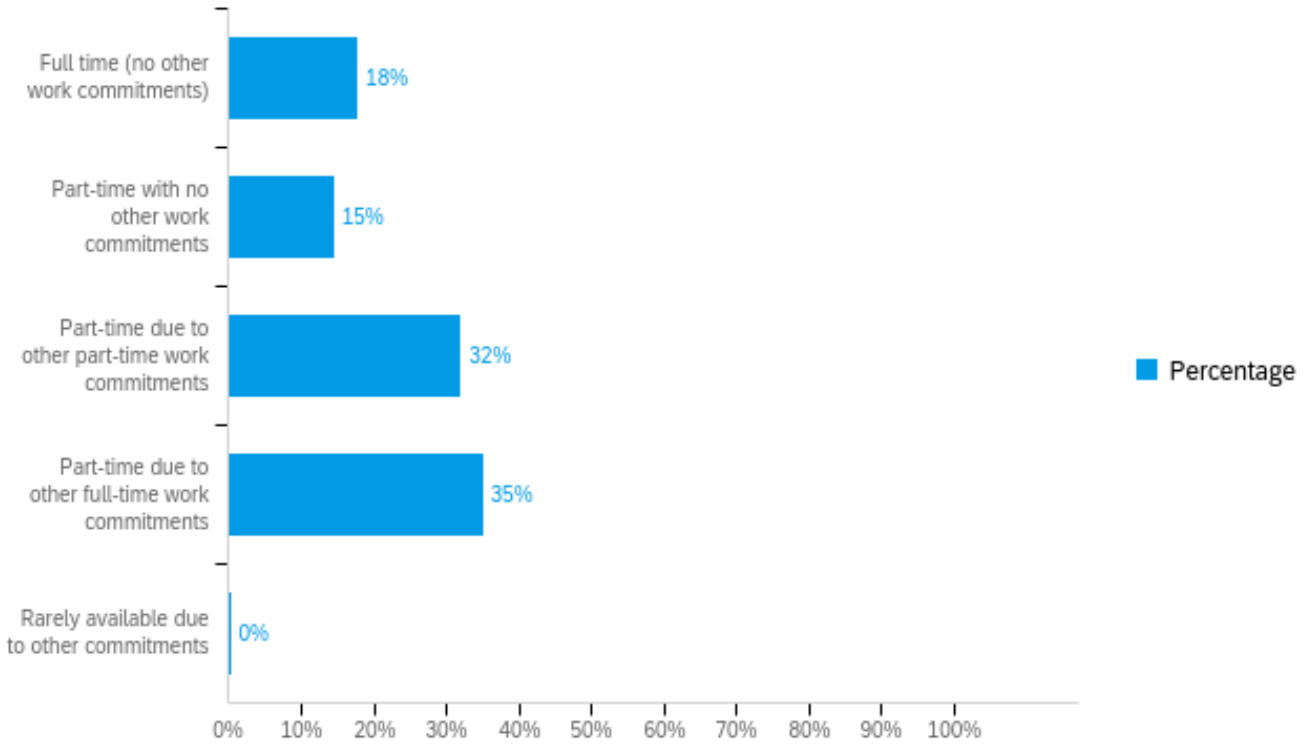
FEEDBACK ON CURRENT DPE SYSTEM

1. How long have you served as a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE)?



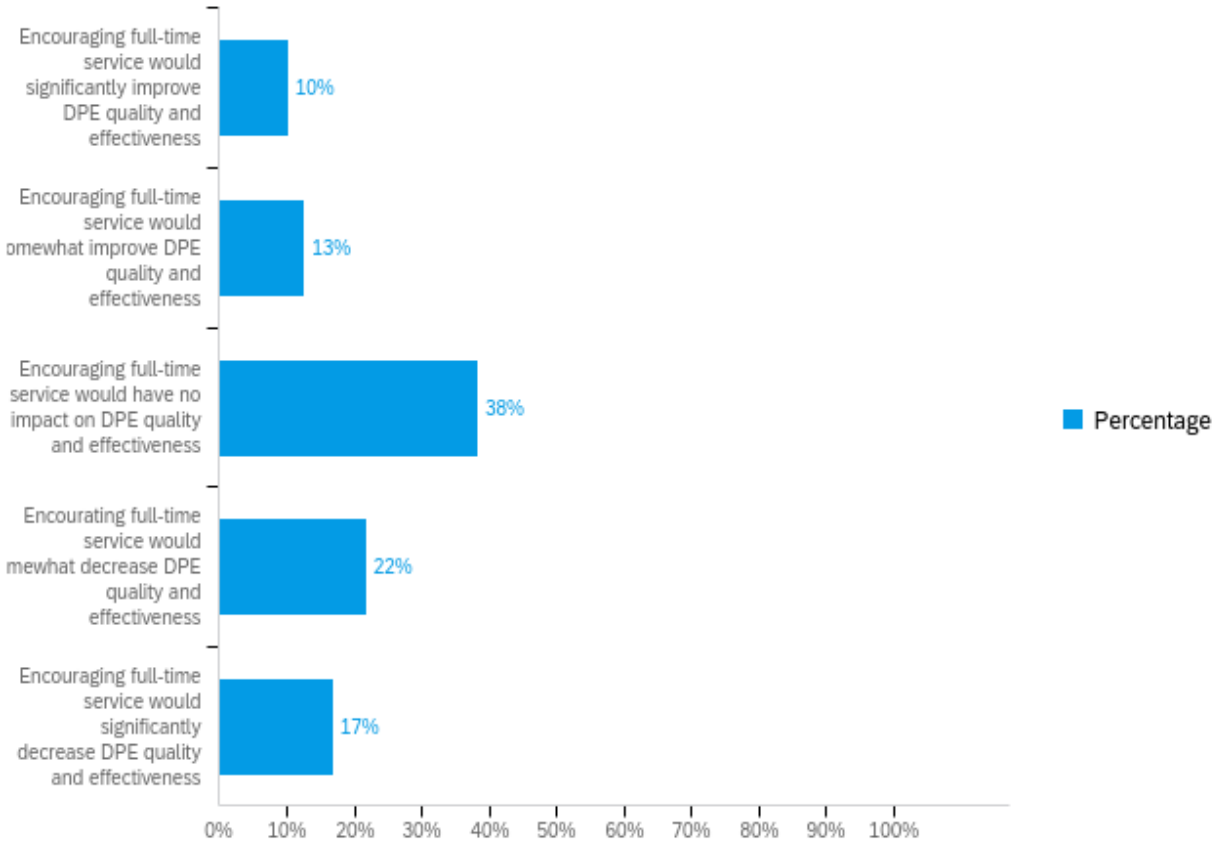
#	How long have you served as a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE)?	Percentage
1	Less than a year	4%
2	One to three years	16%
3	Three to ten years	36%
4	Ten to twenty years	22%
5	More than twenty years	23%
	Total Responses	306
	Summary - 81% of responding DPE's have been examiners for three or more years and 45% have been examiners for more than 10 years.	

2. Is your DPE service:



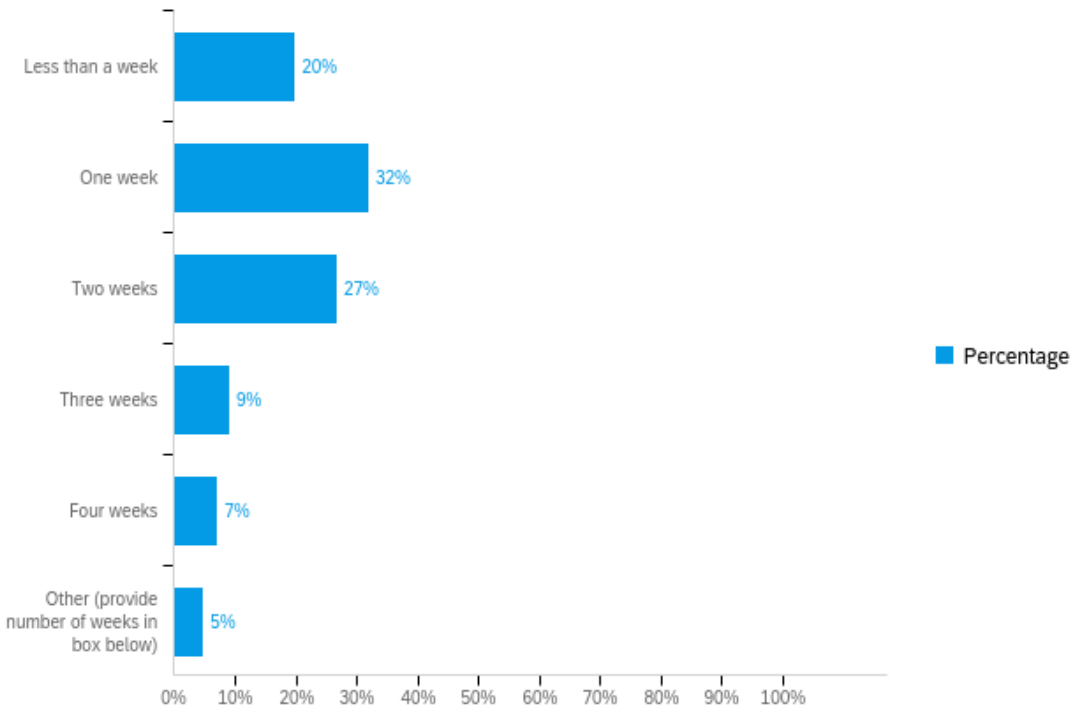
#	Is your DPE service:	Percentage
1	Full time (no other work commitments)	18%
2	Part-time with no other work commitments	15%
3	Part-time due to other part-time work commitments	32%
4	Part-time due to other full-time work commitments	35%
5	Rarely available due to other commitments	0%
	Total Responses	302
	Summary - While 18% of responding DPE's report full-time DPE service, the majority (67%) report part-time DPE service due to other part-time or full-time work commitments. Only 15% were part-time DPE's with no other work commitments.	

3. What is your perception of the impact on the DPE system in terms of quality and effectiveness of applicant evaluations if more DPE's were encouraged to serve in a full-time capacity?



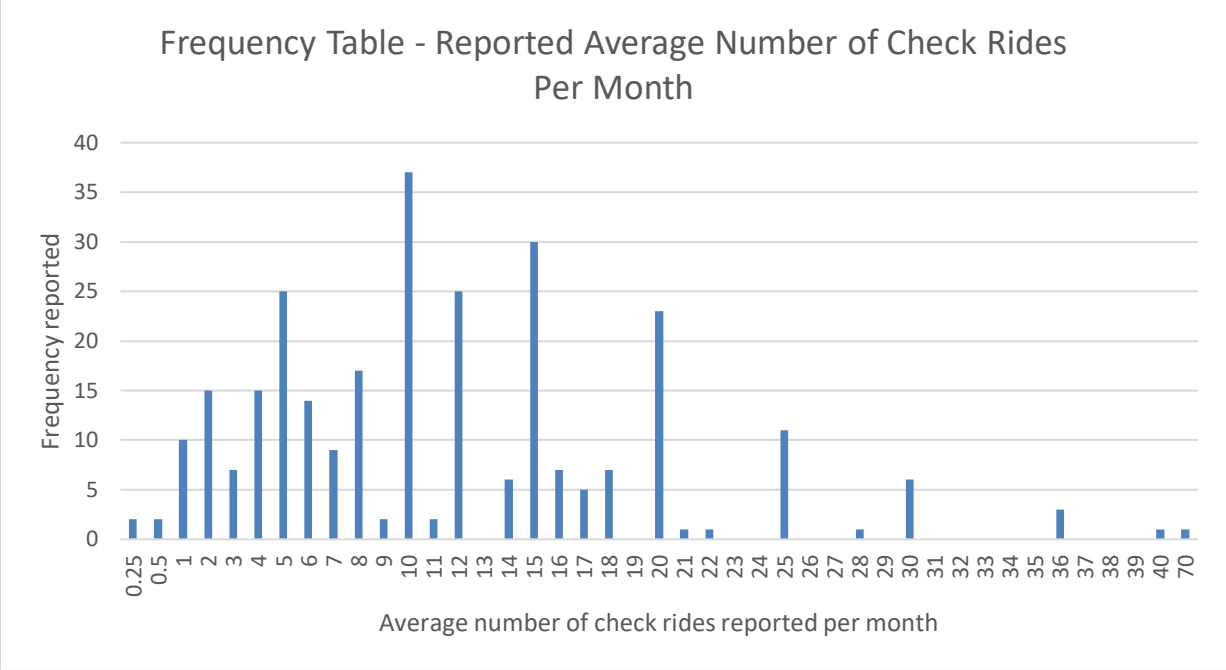
#	What is your perception of the impact on the DPE system in terms of quality and effectiveness of applicant evaluations if more DPE's were encouraged to serve in a full-time capacity?	Percentage
1	Encouraging full-time service would significantly improve DPE quality and effectiveness	10%
2	Encouraging full-time service would somewhat improve DPE quality and effectiveness	13%
3	Encouraging full-time service would have no impact on DPE quality and effectiveness	38%
4	Encourating full-time service would somewhat decrease DPE quality and effectiveness	22%
5	Encouraging full-time service would significantly decrease DPE quality and effectiveness	17%
	Total Responses	284
	Summary - The majority (61%) of responding DPE's believed DPE quality and effectiveness would improve or remain the same if more DPE's were encouraged to serve in a full-time capacity.	

4. On average, when an applicant attempts to schedule a check ride with you, how long would that individual have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)?



#	On average, when an applicant attempts to schedule a check ride with you, how long would that individual have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)? - Selected Choice	Percentage
1	Less than a week	20%
2	One week	32%
3	Two weeks	27%
4	Three weeks	9%
5	Four weeks	7%
6	Other (provide number of weeks in box below)	5%
	Total Responses	306
	Summary - 79% of responding DPE's reported a two week or less wait time for check ride scheduling, with 21% reporting a three weeks or more wait time.	

5. On average, approximately how many check rides do you conduct each month as a DPE?

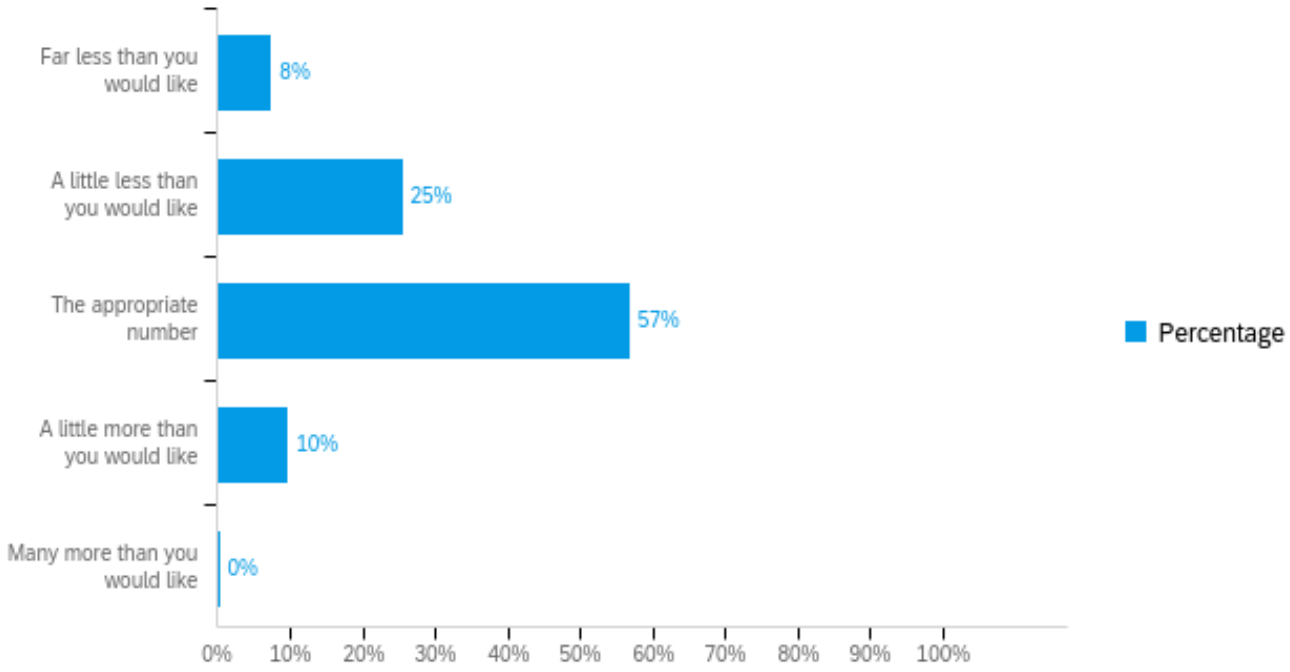


Summary - The responding DPE's indicated an average (mean) of 11.6 check rides per month (standard deviation of 8.27). The median was 10 check rides per month, with the minimum reported being .25 and the maximum reported being 70. Of the responding DPE's, 54% reported doing 10 or less check rides per month, while 46% reported doing 11 or more check rides per month.

6. Approximately how many check rides per month would you like to conduct as a DPE?

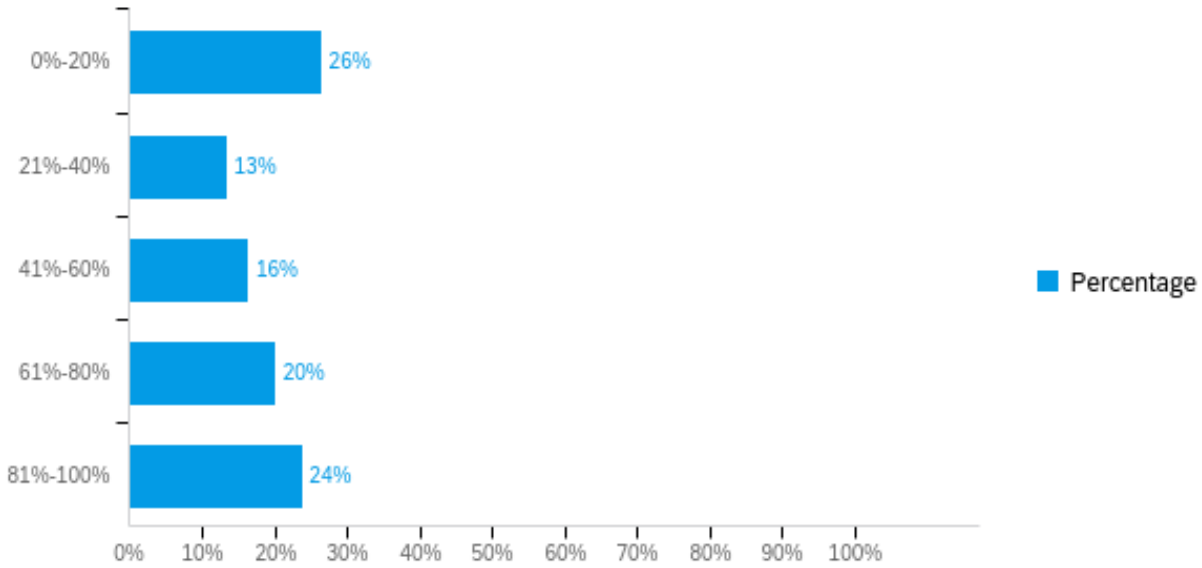
Summary - The responding DPE's indicated they would like to conduct an average of 13.25 check rides per month (standard deviation of 9.2). The median number desired to be conducted was 12, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 100 indicated.

7. Is the current number of check rides you conduct each month



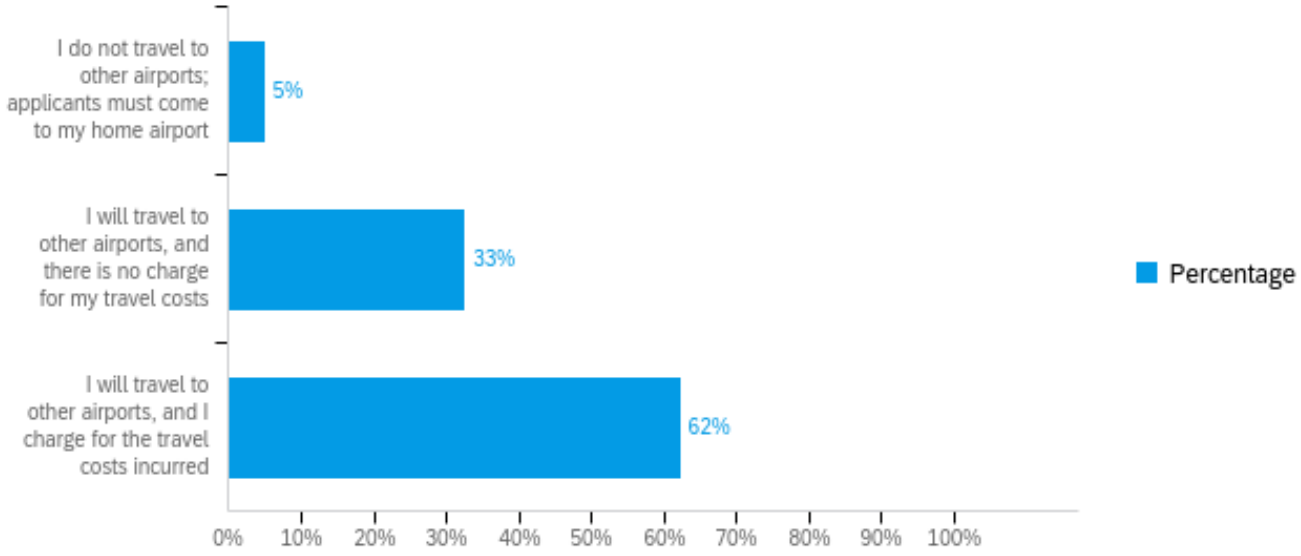
#	Is the current number of check rides you conduct each month	Percentage
1	Far less than you would like	8%
2	A little less than you would like	25%
3	The appropriate number	57%
4	A little more than you would like	10%
5	Many more than you would like	0%
	Total Responses	306
	Summary - 92% of responding DPE's are conducting approximately the number of check rides they wish to each month (responses including a little less than they'd like, the appropriate number, and a little more than they'd like). Only 8% are conducting far less than they would like, and none report conducting many more than they would like.	

8. Approximately what percentage of the check rides you conduct take place at your home airport?



#	Approximately what percentage of the check rides you conduct take place at your home airport?	Percentage
1	0%-20%	26%
2	21%-40%	13%
3	41%-60%	16%
4	61%-80%	20%
5	81%-100%	24%
	Total Responses	299
	Summary - The distribution of check rides conducted at DPE's home airport is fairly evenly distributed across percentage groupings. 66% of DPE's conducted less than 60% of their check rides at their home airport, while 44% of DPE's conducted more than 60% of their check rides at the home airport.	

9. When you travel away from your home airport to conduct a check ride, which statement below best describes how you handle the travel costs:

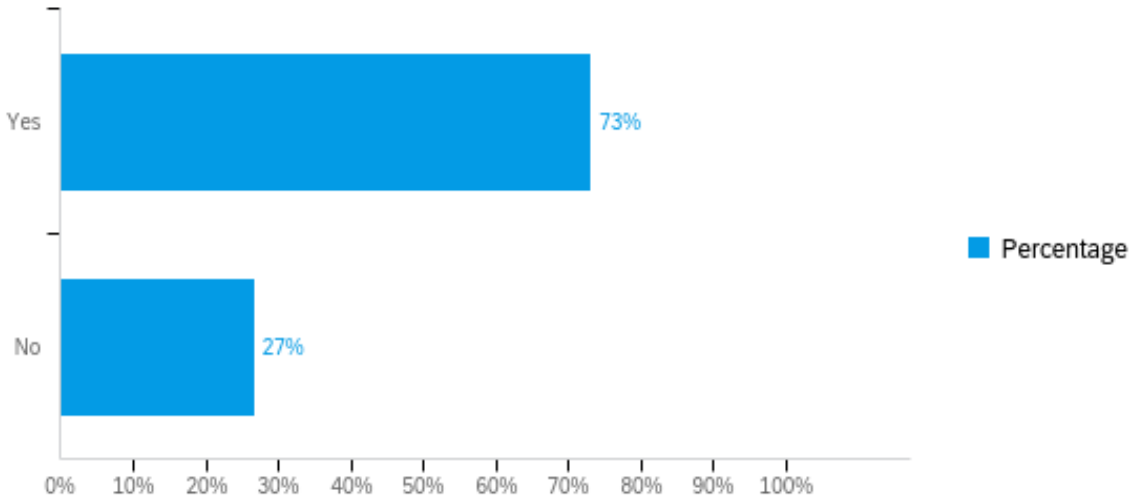


#	When you travel away from your home airport to conduct a check ride, which statement below best describes how you handle the travel costs:	Percentage
1	I do not travel to other airports; applicants must come to my home airport	5%
2	I will travel to other airports, and there is no charge for my travel costs	33%
3	I will travel to other airports, and I charge for the travel costs incurred	62%
	Total Responses	300
	Summary - A majority of DPE's (95%) indicated a willingness to travel to other airports to conduct check rides, and most of those that will travel charge for the travel costs incurred (62%).	

What is the maximum distance you will travel to conduct a check ride (presented only to those respondents who indicated they would travel)?

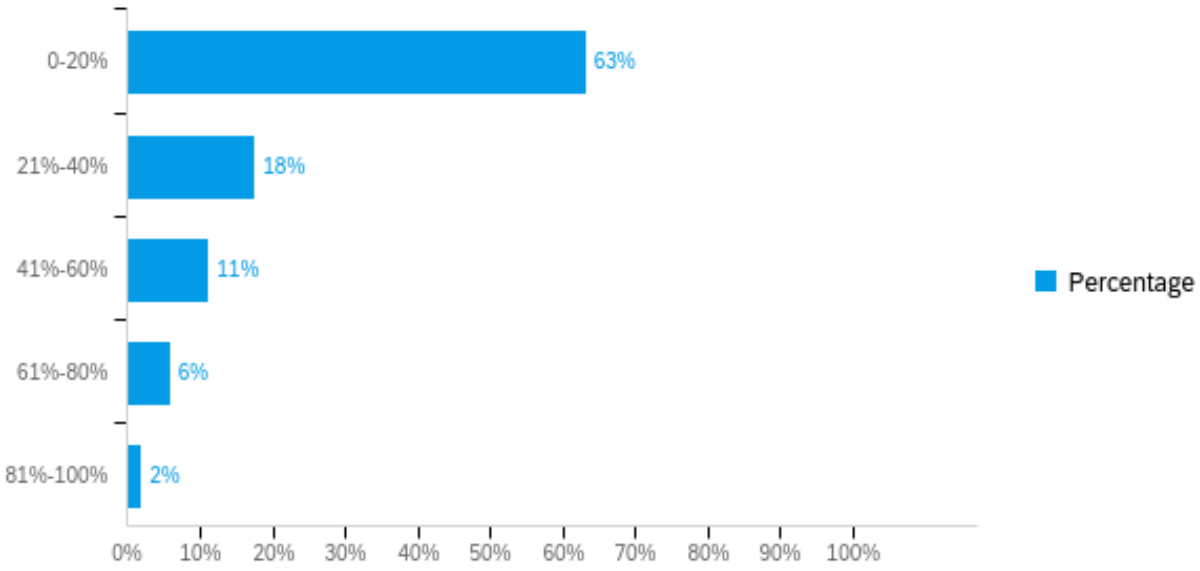
Summary - 70 responding DPE's indicted there was no limit on the distance they would travel; 105 indicated they would travel less than 150 miles; 110 indicated they would travel between 150-2000 miles.

10. Do you travel to other FSDO's geographic areas of responsibility to conduct check rides?



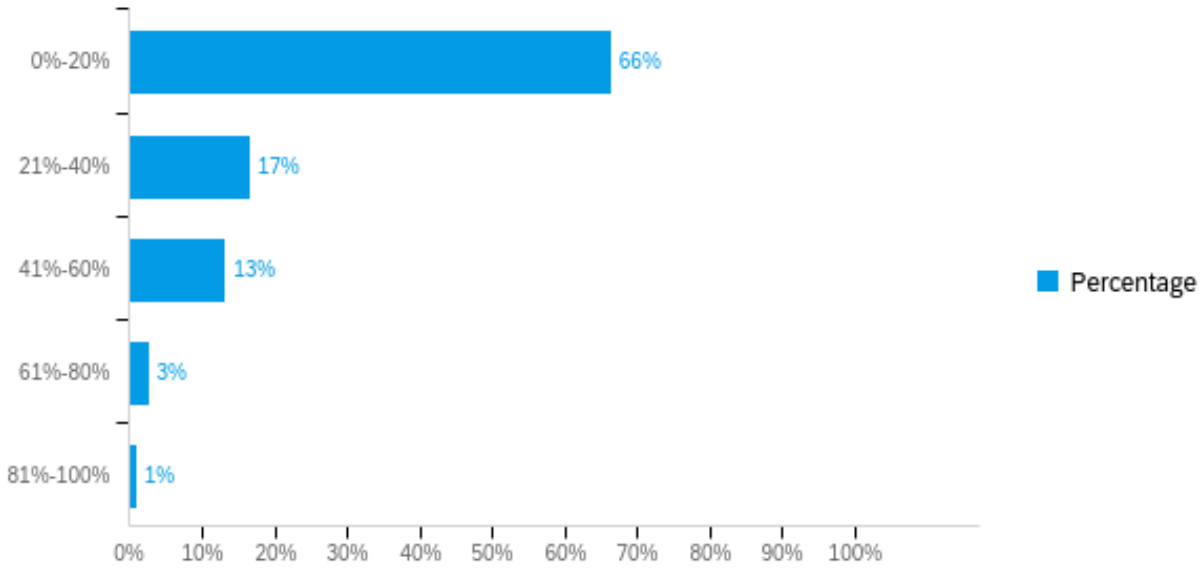
#	Do you travel to other FSDO's geographic areas of responsibility to conduct check rides?	Percentage
1	Yes	73%
2	No	27%
	Total Responses	284
	Summary - A majority (73%) of DPE's who responded indicate they travel to geographic areas beyond their oversight FSDO to conduct check rides.	

11. What percentage of check rides do you conduct outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility? (note, only DPE's who responded affirmatively to the previous question were presented with this question).



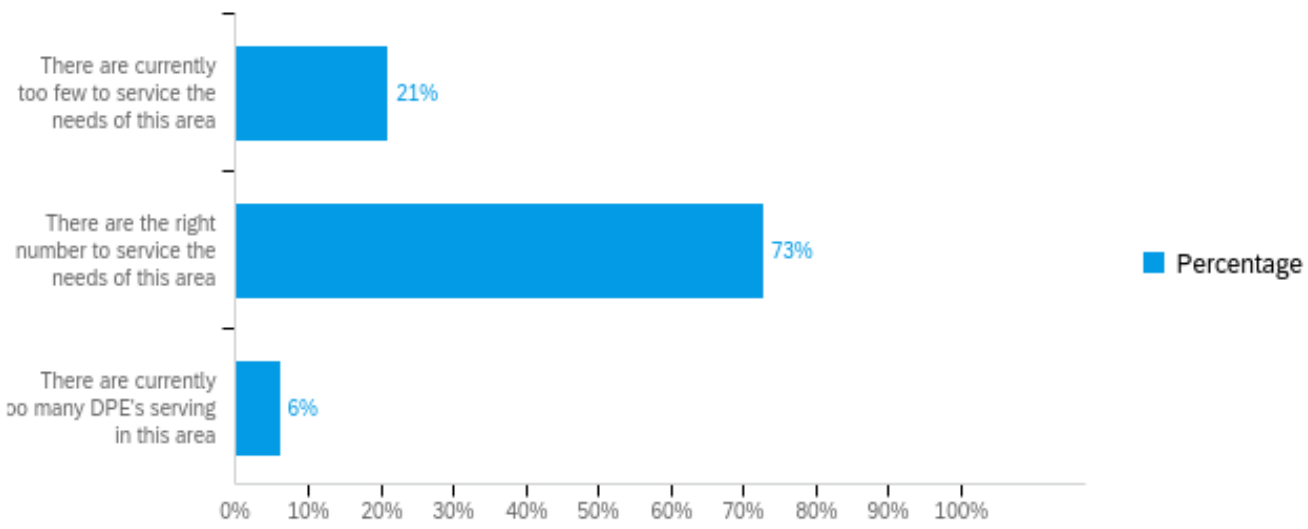
#	What percentage of check rides do you conduct outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?	Percentage
1	0-20%	63%
2	21%-40%	18%
3	41%-60%	11%
4	61%-80%	6%
5	81%-100%	2%
	Total Responses	204
	Summary - For responding DPE's who do travel outside of their geographic region to conduct check rides, the majority (81%) conduct less than 40% of their check rides outside of their oversight FSDO's geographic area.	

12. What percentage of the check ride applicants that you service come to you from outside your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?



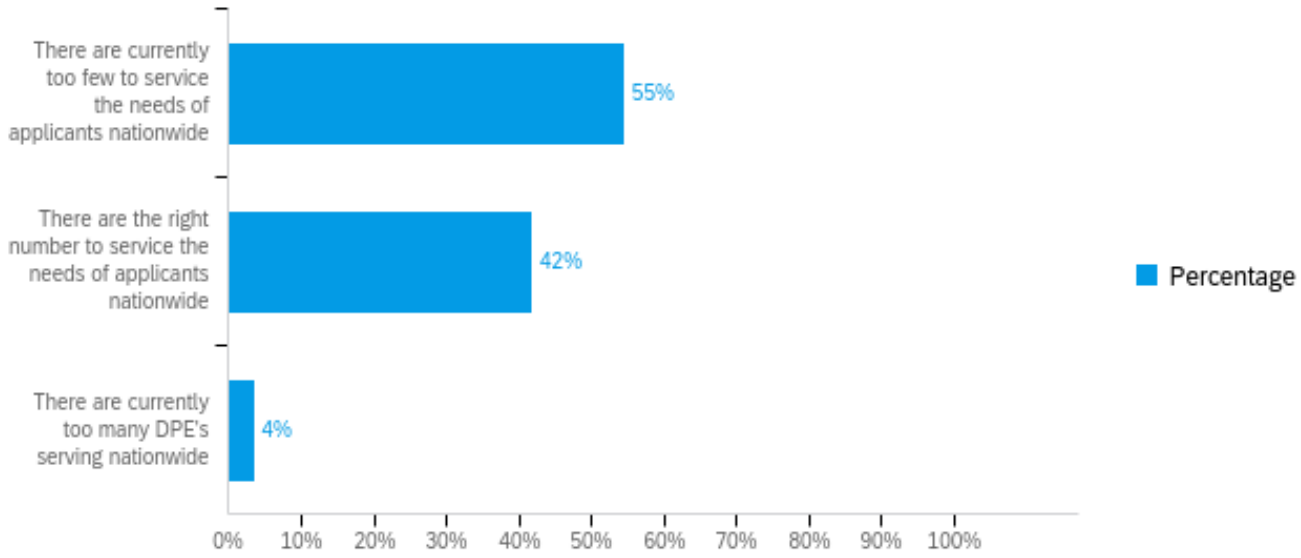
#	What percentage of the check ride applicants that you service come to you from outside your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsiblity?	Percentage
1	0%-20%	66%
2	21%-40%	17%
3	41%-60%	13%
4	61%-80%	3%
5	81%-100%	1%
	Total Responses	301
	Summary - 83% of responding DPE’s indicate that less than 40% of their check ride applicants come to them from outside their managing FSDO’s geographic area of responsibility.	

13. What is your perception of the number of DPE’s within your FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?



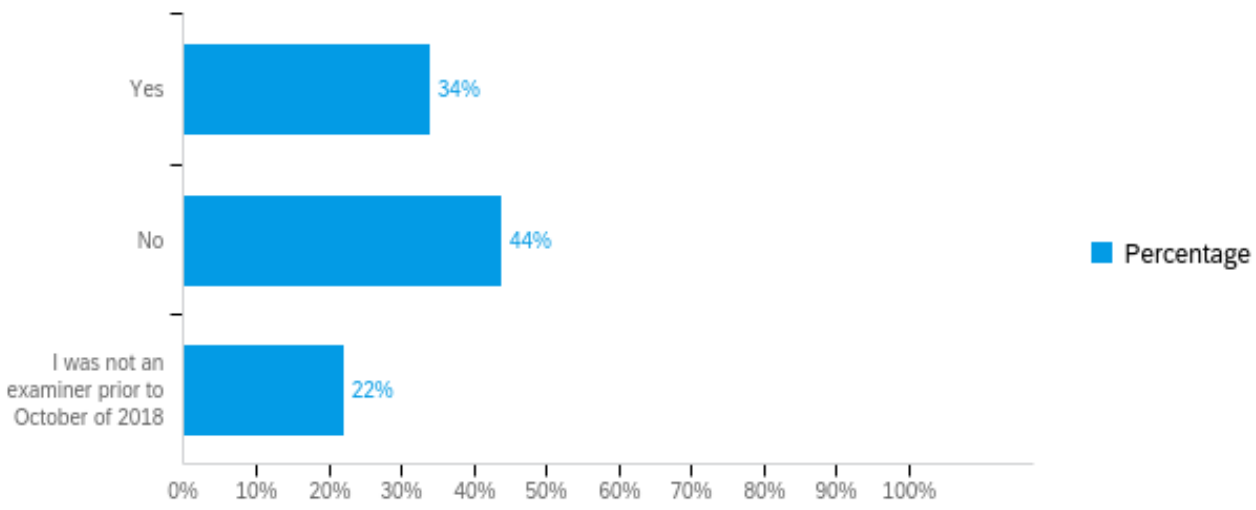
#	What is your perception of the number of DPE’s within your FSDO's geographic area of responsibility?	Percentage
1	There are currently too few to service the needs of this area	21%
2	There are the right number to service the needs of this area	73%
3	There are currently too many DPE's serving in this area	6%
	Total Responses	294
	Summary - The majority (73%) of responding DPE’s indicated the “right number” of DPE’s in their FSDO’s geographic area of responsibility, with 21% indicating there were too few DPE’s in their area and 6% indicating there were too many DPE’s in their area.	

14. What is your perception of the number of DPE’s nationwide?



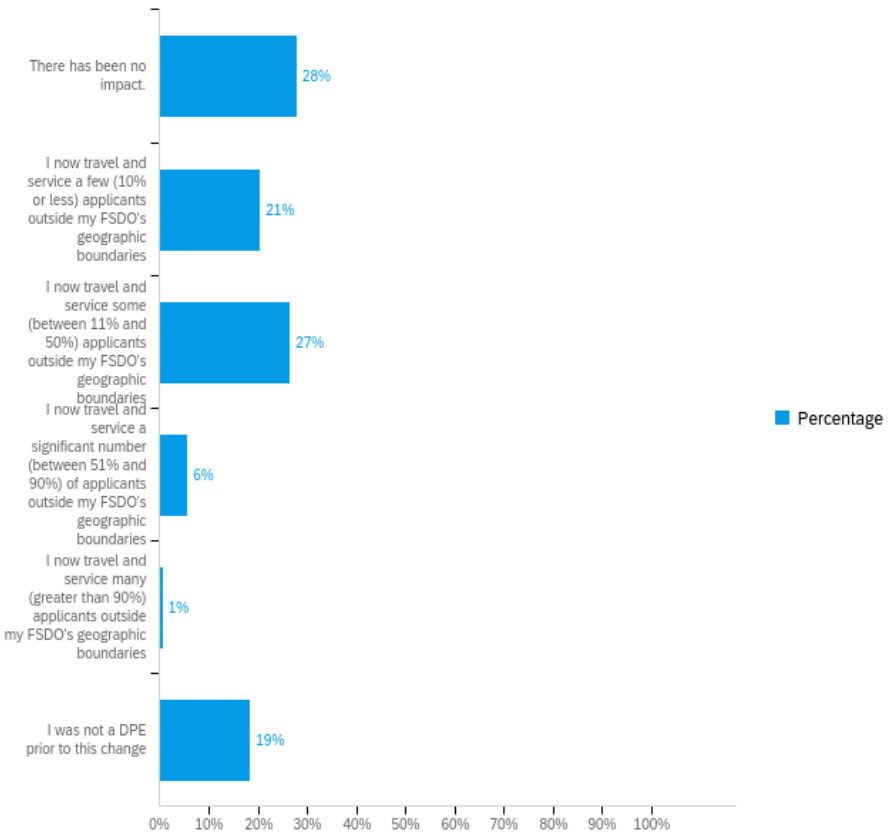
#	What is your perception of the number of DPE’s nationwide?	Percentage
1	There are currently too few to service the needs of applicants nationwide	55%
2	There are the right number to service the needs of applicants nationwide	42%
3	There are currently too many DPE's serving nationwide	4%
	Total Responses	284
	Summary - The majority (55%) of responding DPE’s perceived that there are too few DPE’s nationwide, with 42% indicating there is the right number of DPE’s nationwide.	

15. Did you have permission to do check rides outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsibility prior to October of 2018?



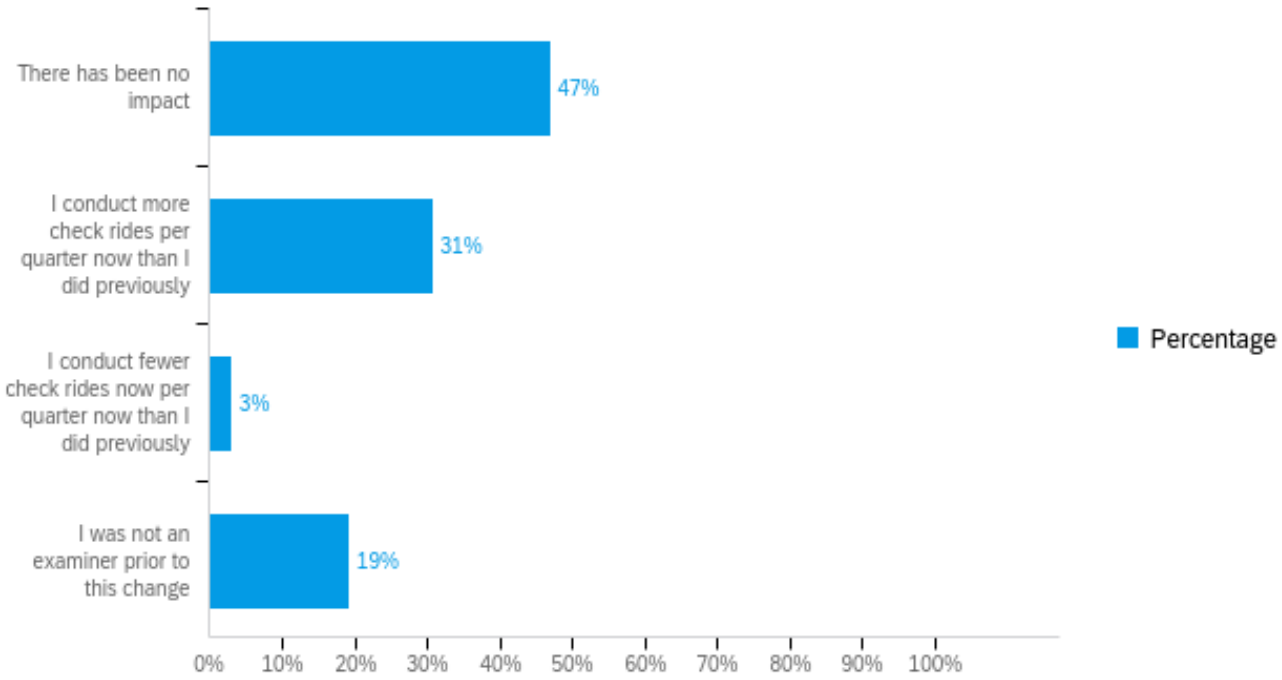
#	Did you have permission to do check rides outside of your managing FSDO's geographic area of responsiblity prior to October of 2018?	Percentage
1	Yes	34%
2	No	44%
3	I was not an examiner prior to October of 2018	22%
	Total Responses	294
	Summary - There was a fairly even mix of responding DPE's who had permission to do check rides outside of their managing FSDO's geographic area prior to 10/18 (34%) versus those that did not (44%).	

16. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your service as a DPE?



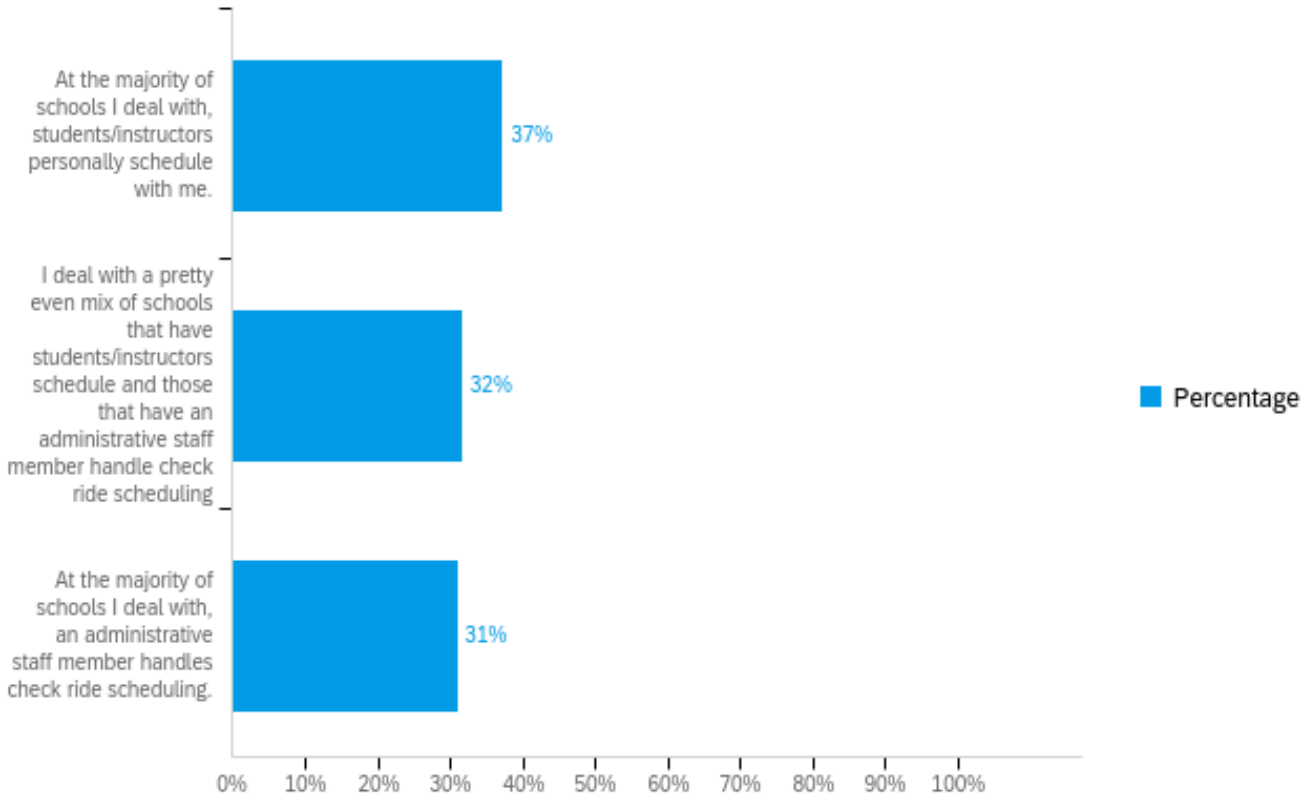
#	How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your service as a DPE?	Percentage
1	There has been no impact.	28%
2	I now travel and service a few (10% or less) applicants outside my FSDO's geographic boundaries	21%
3	I now travel and service some (between 11% and 50%) applicants outside my FSDO's geographic boundaries	27%
4	I now travel and service a significant number (between 51% and 90%) of applicants outside my FSDO's geographic boundaries	6%
5	I now travel and service many (greater than 90%) applicants outside my FSDO's geographic boundaries	1%
6	I was not a DPE prior to this change	19%
	Total Responses	297
	Summary - While 28% of responding DPE's indicate no impact from the removal of the geographic boundary restriction in 10/18, 55% of those who were examiners both before and after 10/18 indicate they now service applicants outside their geographic area while they did not do so before.	

17. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundary restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your level of activity as a DPE?



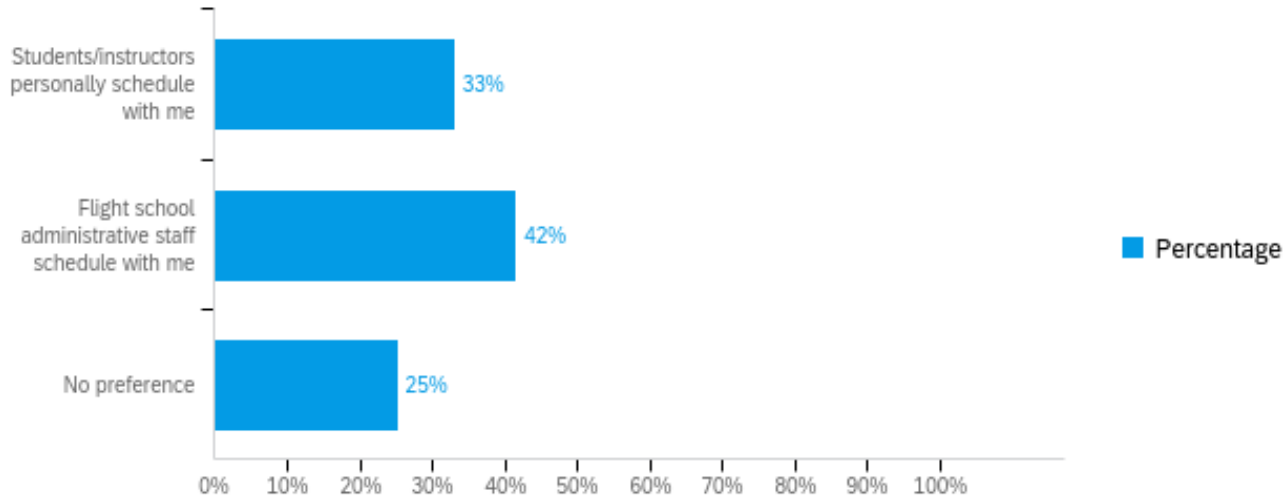
#	How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundary restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted your level of activity as a DPE?	Percentage
1	There has been no impact	47%
2	I conduct more check rides per quarter now than I did previously	31%
3	I conduct fewer check rides now per quarter now than I did previously	3%
4	I was not an examiner prior to this change	19%
	Total Responses	296
	Summary - While most responding DPE's indicate there has been no impact on their level of activity (47%), a significant percentage (31%) indicate they are now conducting more check rides per quarter than before the removal of the geographic boundaries.	

18. When dealing with large flight schools, do students/instructors typically schedule themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles scheduling check rides for all students?



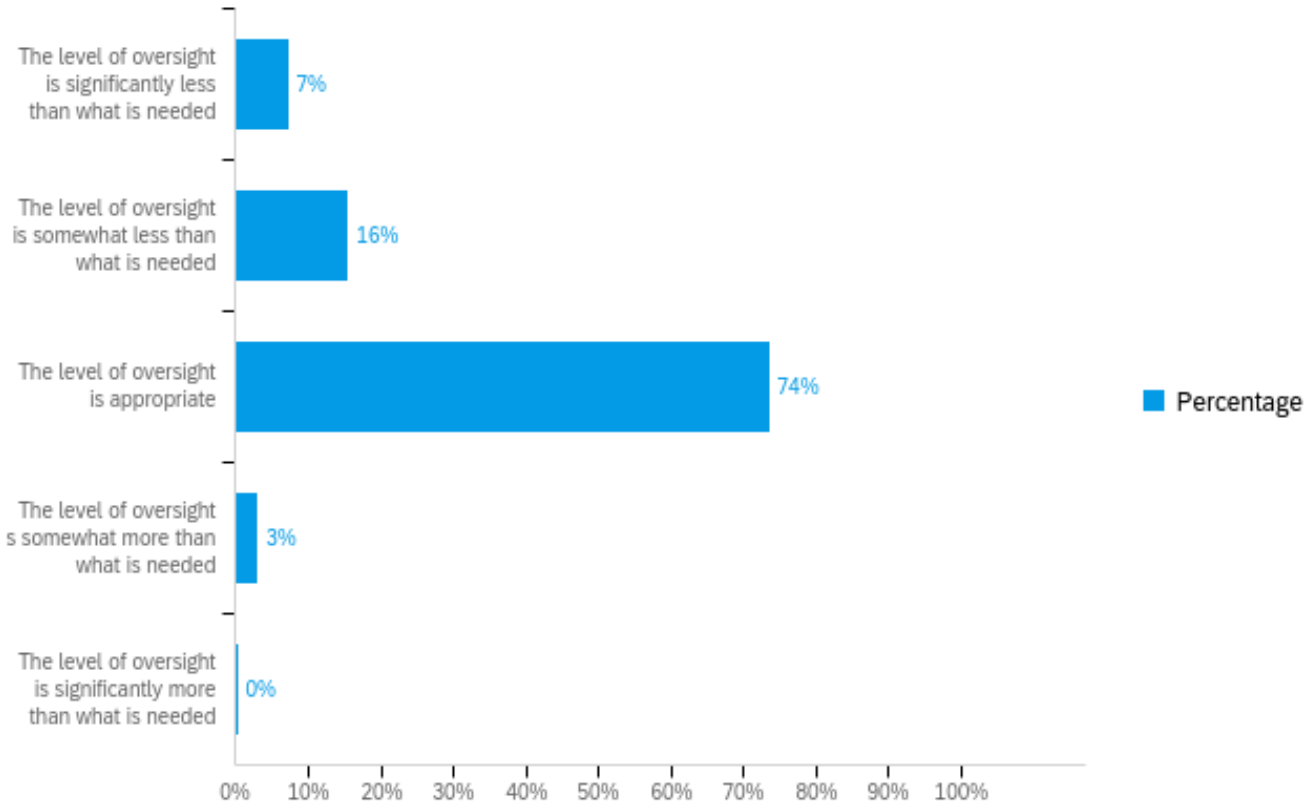
#	When dealing with large flight schools, do students/instructors typically schedule themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles scheduling check rides for all students?	Percentage
1	At the majority of schools I deal with, students/instructors personally schedule with me.	37%
2	I deal with a pretty even mix of schools that have students/instructors schedule and those that have an administrative staff member handle check ride scheduling	32%
3	At the majority of schools I deal with, an administrative staff member handles check ride scheduling.	31%
	Total Responses	284
	Summary - There is an even mix reported by DPE's of how large flight schools handle check ride scheduling for their applicants, with around 30% in each provided category.	

19. In terms of efficiency and convenience when dealing with large flight schools, what is your preference for the scheduling of check rides:



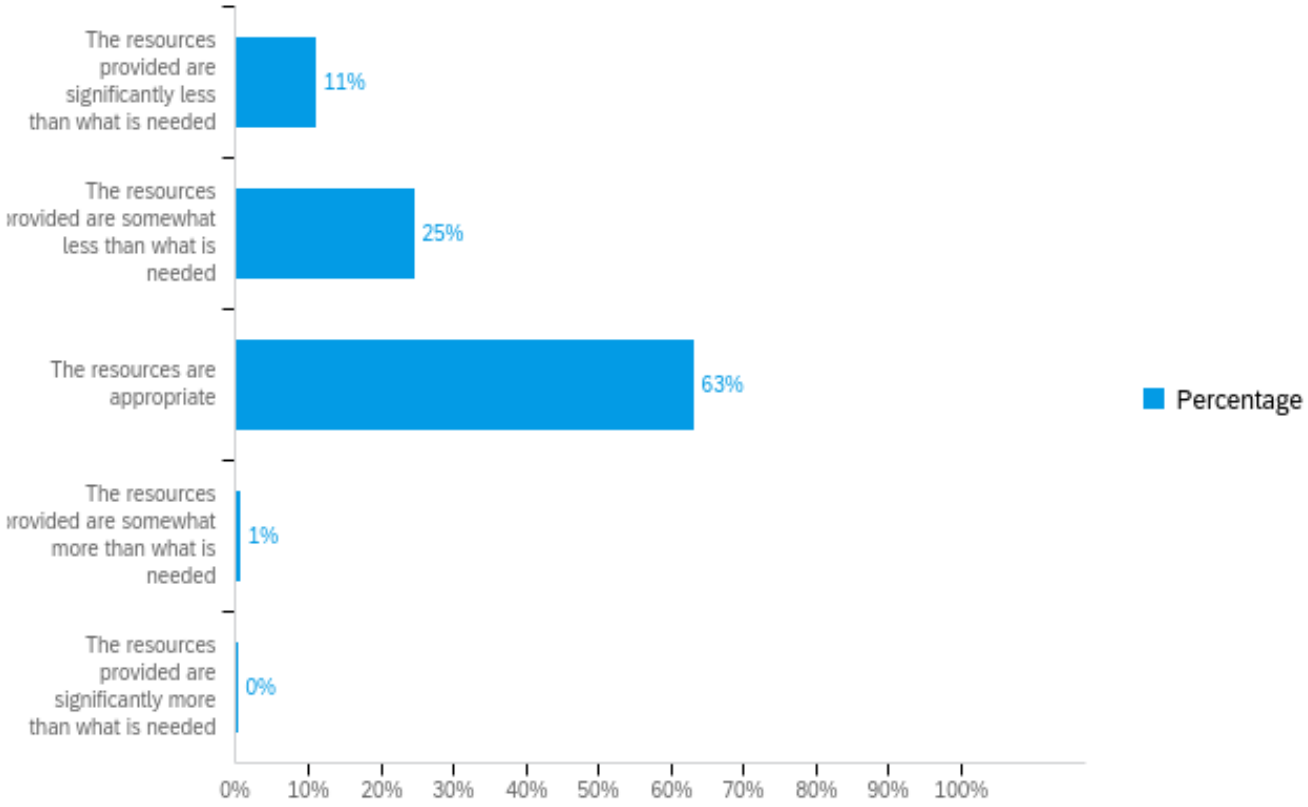
#	In terms of efficiency and convenience when dealing with large flight schools, what is your preference for the scheduling of check rides:	Percentage
1	Students/instructors personally schedule with me	33%
2	Flight school administrative staff schedule with me	42%
3	No preference	25%
	Total Responses	281
	Summary - There is an even mix of opinions among DPE's regarding the preferred method of large flight school scheduling of applicants, with 33% preferring students/instructors to schedule, 42% preferring flight school administrative staff to schedule, and 25% indicating no preference.	

20. What is your perception of the level of oversight your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?



#	What is your perception of the level of oversight your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?	Percentage
1	The level of oversight is significantly less than what is needed	7%
2	The level of oversight is somewhat less than what is needed	16%
3	The level of oversight is appropriate	74%
4	The level of oversight is somewhat more than what is needed	3%
5	The level of oversight is significantly more than what is needed	0%
	Total Responses	288
	Summary - A majority (74%) of responding DPE's believe the level of oversight provided by their managing FSDO is appropriate.	

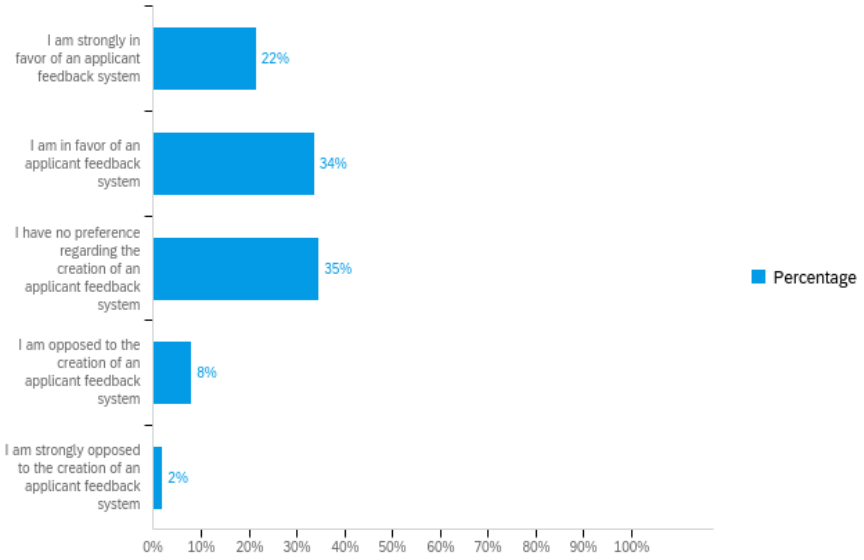
21. What is your perception of the level of resources your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?



#	What is your perception of the level of resources your FSDO is able to provide to DPE's?	Percentage
1	The resources provided are significantly less than what is needed	11%
2	The resources provided are somewhat less than what is needed	25%
3	The resources are appropriate	63%
4	The resources provided are somewhat more than what is needed	1%
5	The resources provided are significantly more than what is needed	0%
	Total Responses	288
	Summary - A majority (63%) of responding DPE's indicated the level of resources their managing FSDO is able to provide is appropriate, but 36% indicated the level of resources their managing FSDO is able to provide are either somewhat or significantly less than what is needed.	

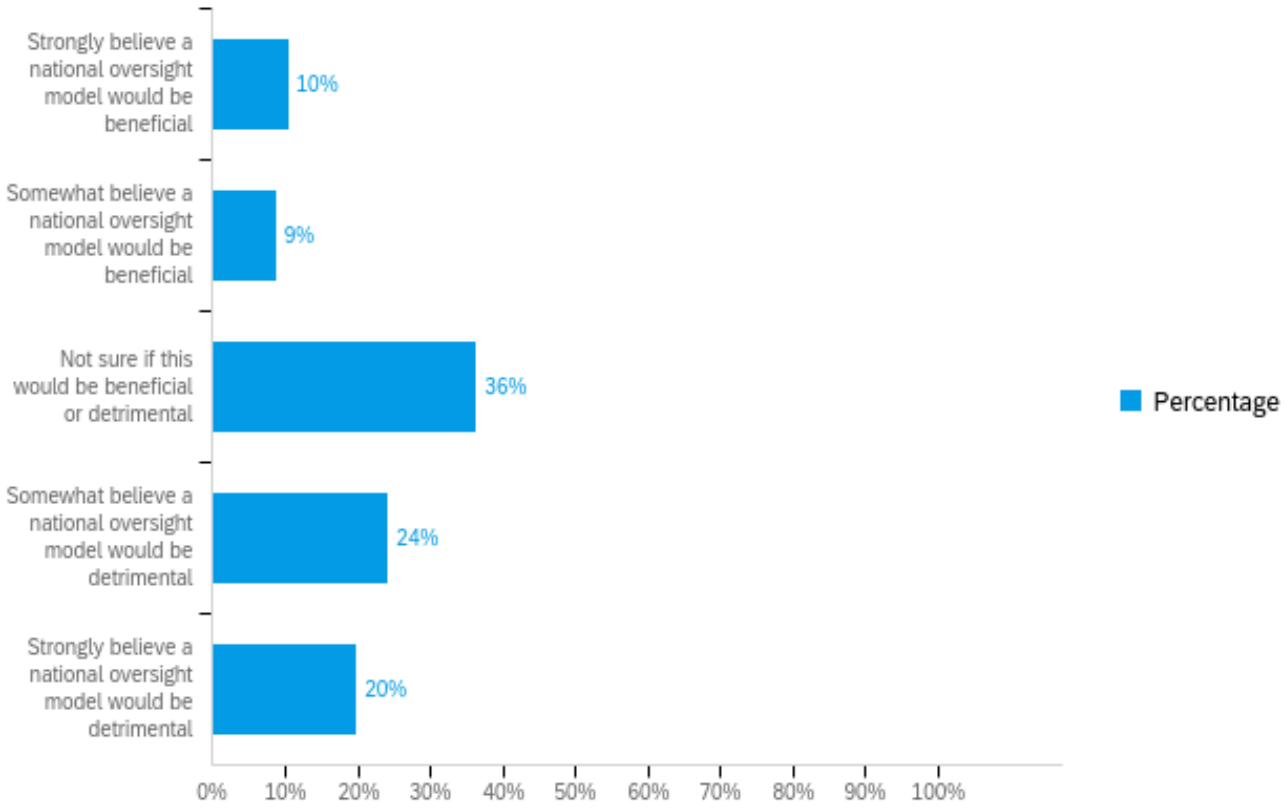
FEEDBACK ON SELECTED DPERWG RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is your perception of the development of confidential survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.



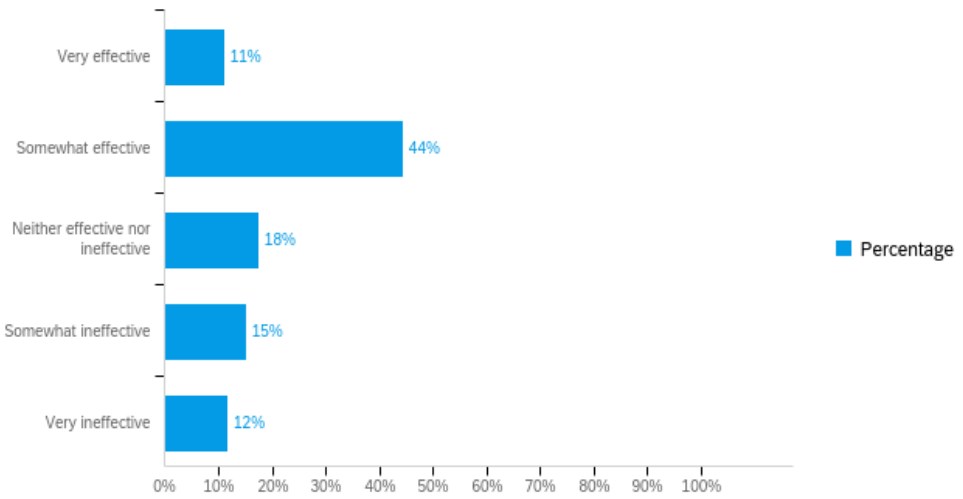
#	What is your perception of the development of confidential survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.	Percentage
1	I am strongly in favor of an applicant feedback system	22%
2	I am in favor of an applicant feedback system	34%
3	I have no preference regarding the creation of an applicant feedback system	35%
4	I am opposed to the creation of an applicant feedback system	8%
5	I am strongly opposed to the creation of an applicant feedback system	2%
	Total Responses	297
	Summary - 56% of responding DPE's indicate being in favor (34%) or strongly in favor (22%) of an applicant feedback system, while the most selected response (35%) was "no preference." Only 10% indicate being opposed (8%) or strongly opposed (2%) to an applicant feedback system.	

2. What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of the DPE system versus continuing with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?



#	What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of the DPE system versus continuing with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?	Percentage
1	Strongly believe a national oversight model would be beneficial	10%
2	Somewhat believe a national oversight model would be beneficial	9%
3	Not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental	36%
4	Somewhat believe a national oversight model would be detrimental	24%
5	Strongly believe a national oversight model would be detrimental	20%
	Total Responses	296
	Summary - The majority (44%) of responding DPE's believed (24%) or strongly believed (20%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be detrimental, while 19% believed (9%) or strongly believed (10%) a national oversight model would be beneficial. However, the most selected response (36%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental."	

3. What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?



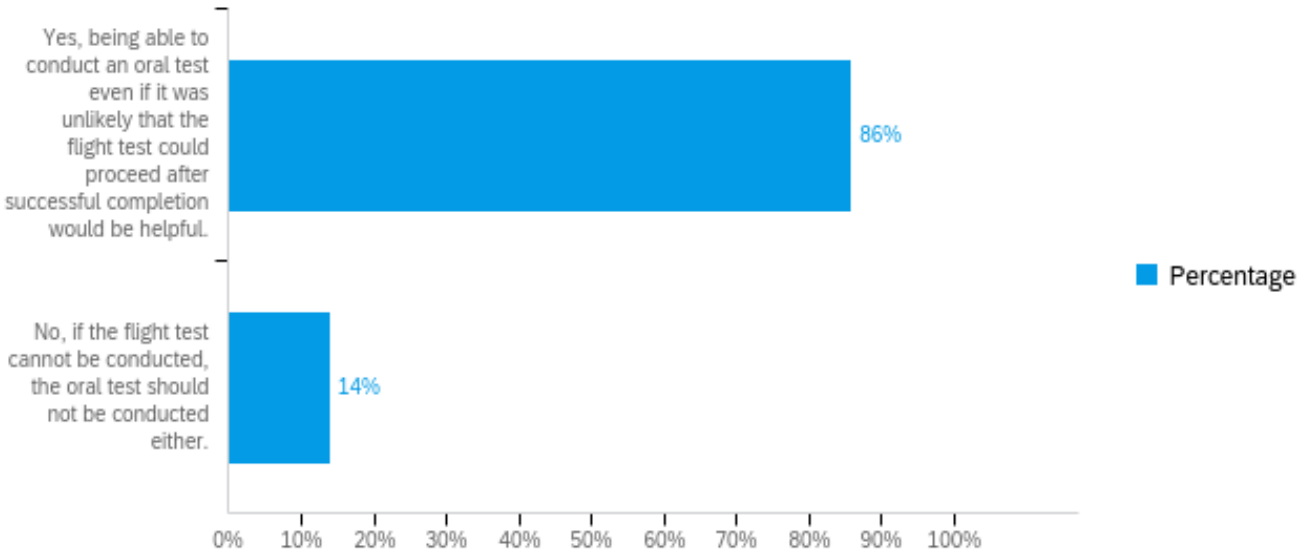
#	What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?	Percentage
1	Very effective	11%
2	Somewhat effective	44%
3	Neither effective nor ineffective	18%
4	Somewhat ineffective	15%
5	Very ineffective	12%
	Total Responses	297
	Summary - 55% of responding DPE's believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 27% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective.	

What do you believe needs to be done to improve the functionality of the DPE locator website?

There were 84 total comments for this question. The most frequent themes included:

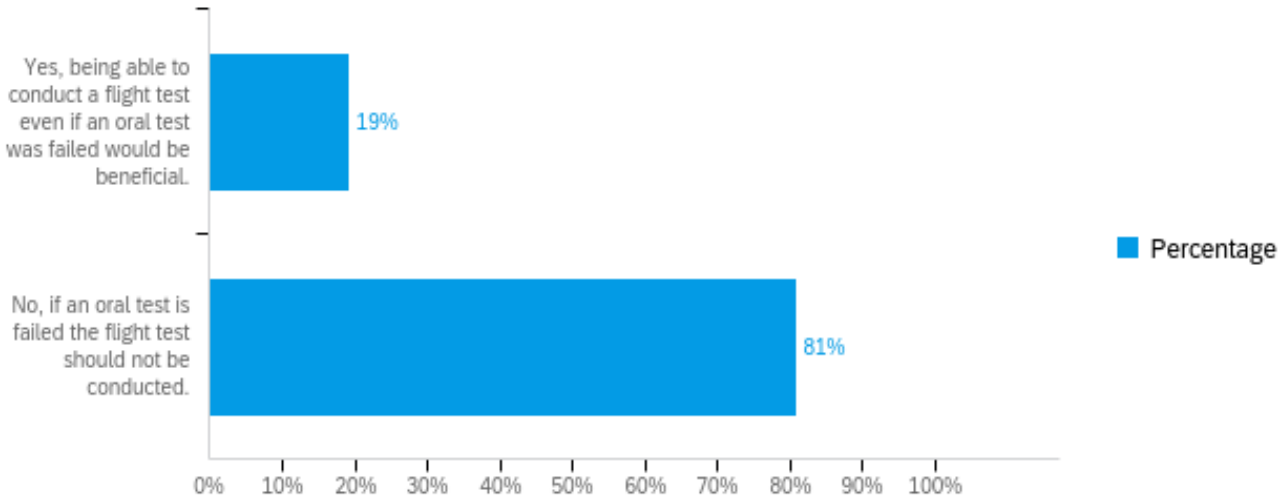
- Make more user friendly - especially with regards to authorization types and more search parameters (24 comments)
- Geographically should do within a radius of some zip code versus by city; provide a map (19 comments)
- Keep it current and updated (16 comments)
- Advertise it and make it more easily accessible (13 comments)

4. In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?



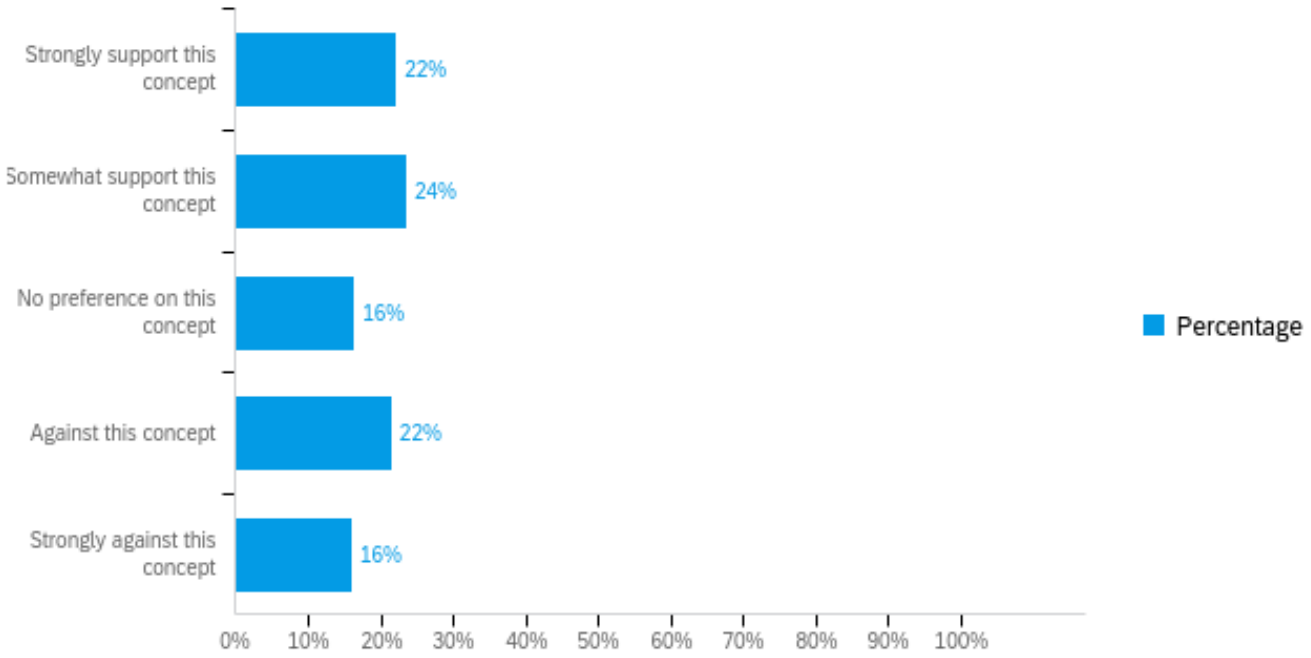
#	In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?	Percentage
1	Yes, being able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely that the flight test could proceed after successful completion would be helpful.	86%
2	No, if the flight test cannot be conducted, the oral test should not be conducted either.	14%
	Total Responses	292
	Summary - The strong majority (86%) of responding DPE's believed it would be beneficial to be able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely a flight test could proceed after successful completion of the oral test.	

5. In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on the scheduled test day?



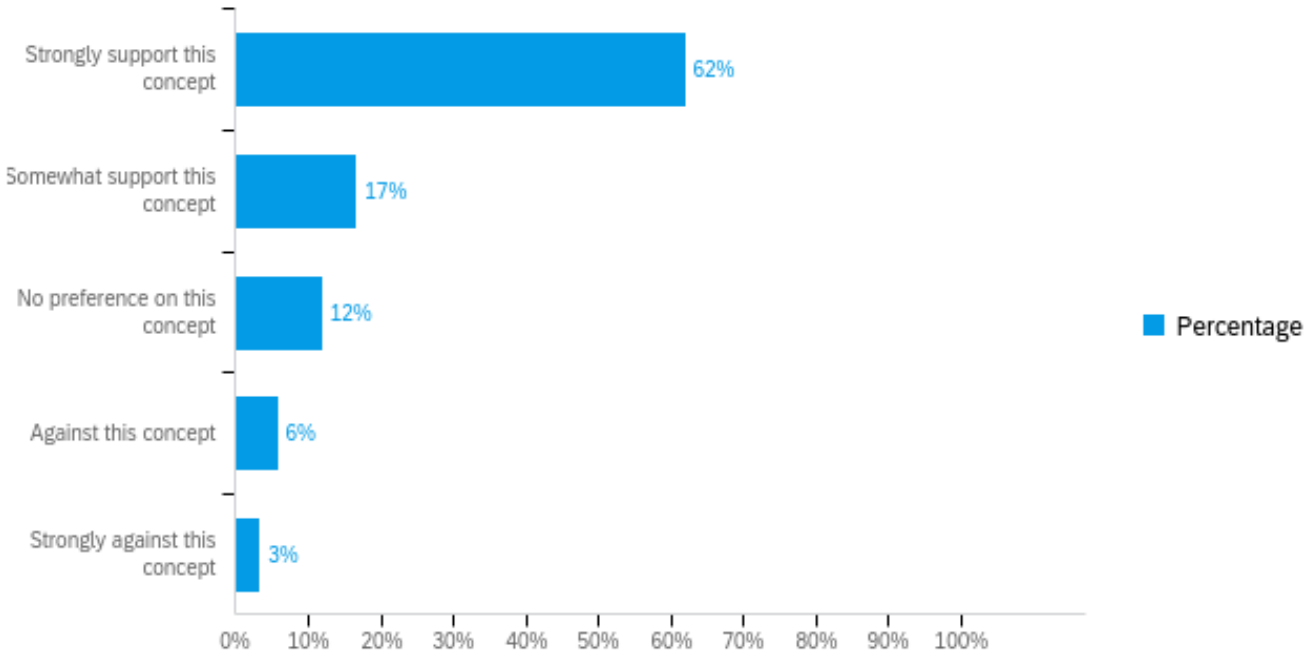
#	In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on the scheduled test day?	Percentage
1	Yes, being able to conduct a flight test even if an oral test was failed would be beneficial.	19%
2	No, if an oral test is failed the flight test should not be conducted.	81%
	Total Responses	292
	Summary – A strong majority (81%) of responding DPE's believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully.	

6. What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?



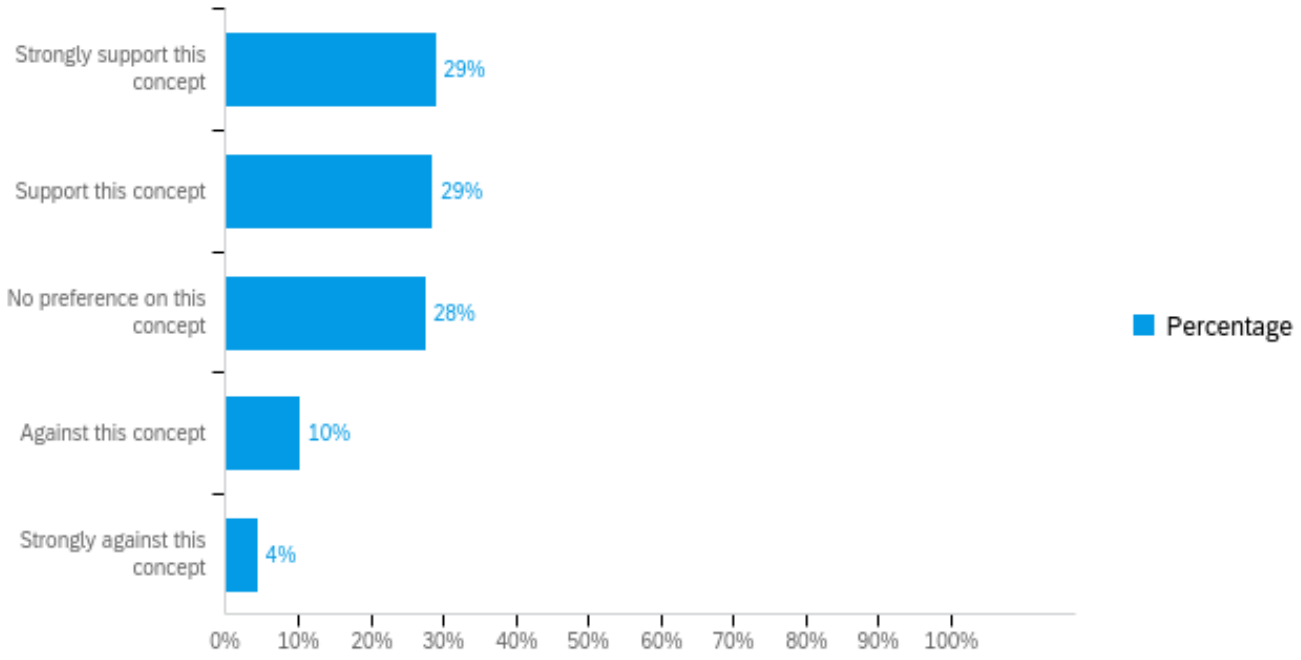
#	What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?	Percentage
1	Strongly support this concept	22%
2	Somewhat support this concept	24%
3	No preference on this concept	16%
4	Against this concept	22%
5	Strongly against this concept	16%
	Total Responses	292
	Summary - There was an even split of perceptions regarding the potential use of DPE's who are unable to maintain their medical for the conduct of oral exams only, with 46% strongly or somewhat supporting the concept and 38% strongly or somewhat against the concept. An additional 16% had no preference on this concept.	

7. What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?



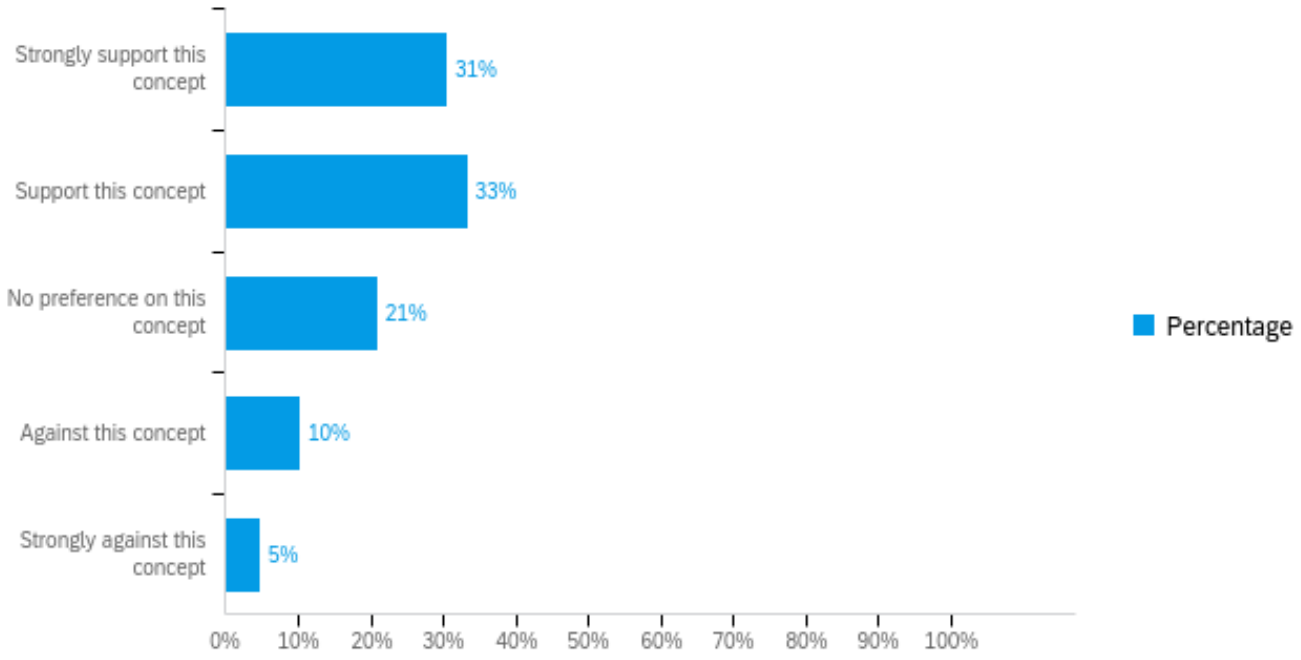
#	What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?	Percentage
1	Strongly support this concept	62%
2	Somewhat support this concept	17%
3	No preference on this concept	12%
4	Against this concept	6%
5	Strongly against this concept	3%
	Total Responses	292
	Summary - There was support or strong support (79%) for allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's.	

8. What is your perception of the concept of having DPE applicants be required to pass a knowledge test (pulled from current test bank questions appropriate to the authorizations being sought) prior to being considered as a potential DPE applicant?



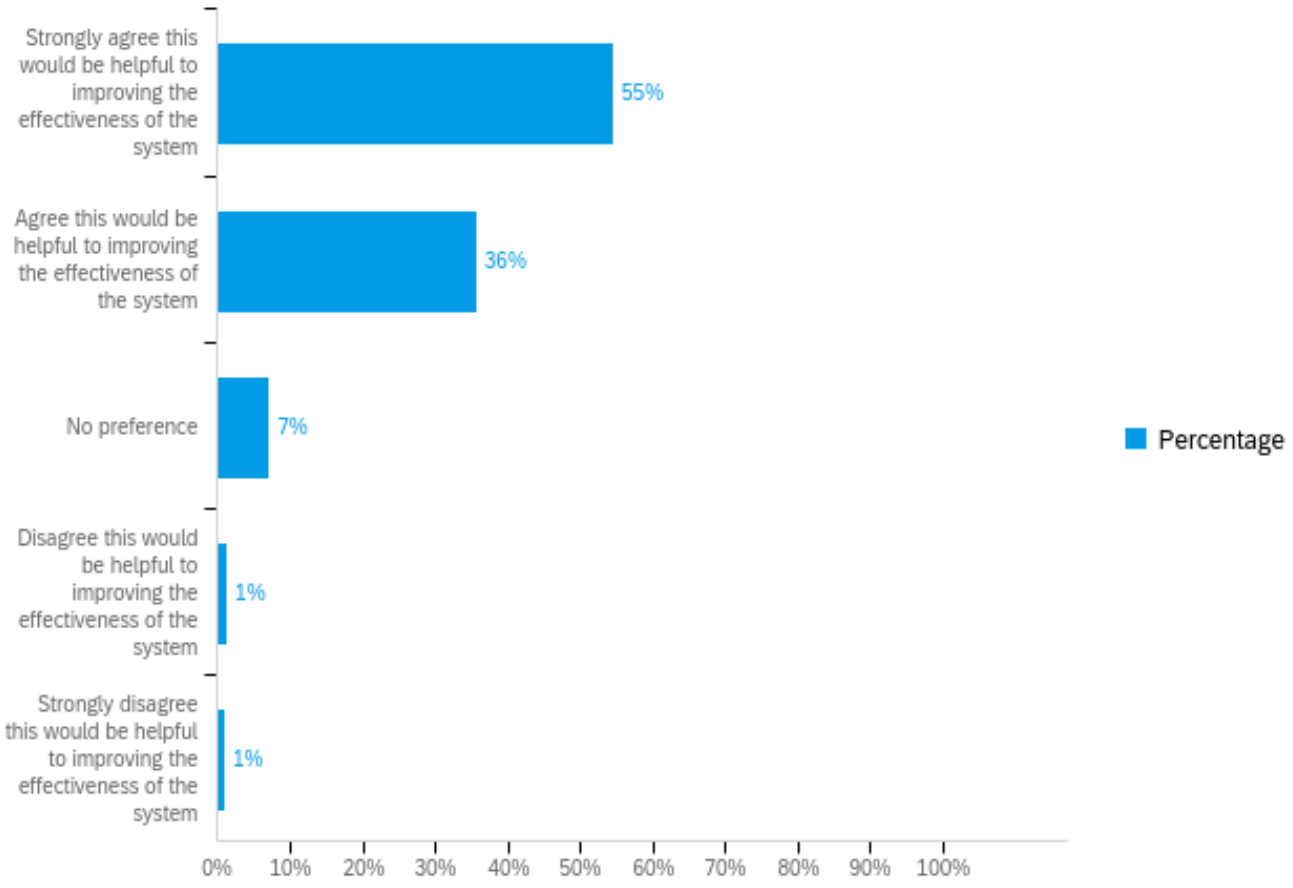
#	What is your perception of the concept of having DPE applicants be required to pass a knowledge test (pulled from current test bank questions appropriate to the authorizations being sought) prior to being considered as a potential DPE applicant?	Percentage
1	Strongly support this concept	29%
2	Support this concept	29%
3	No preference on this concept	28%
4	Against this concept	10%
5	Strongly against this concept	4%
	Total Responses	290
	Summary - A majority (58%) of responding examiners supported the concept having DPE applicants pass a knowledge test prior to being considered as a potential DPE, with 28% indicating no preference on the concept and 14% being against the concept.	

9. What is your perception of the effectiveness of having individuals be required to pass a proficiency check conducted by a current DPE prior to being able to make an application to become a DPE?



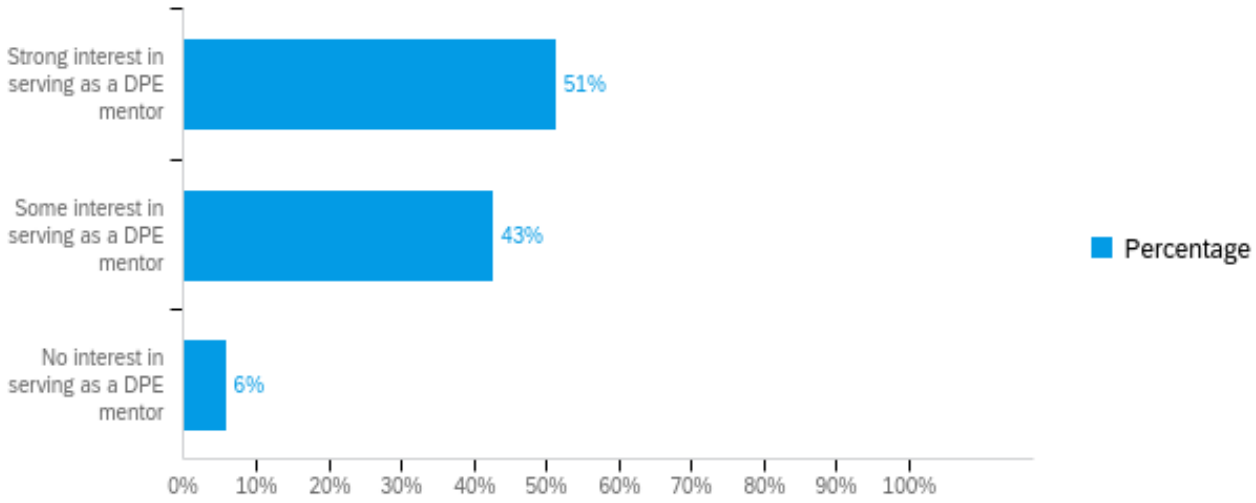
#	What is your perception of the effectiveness of having individuals be required to pass a proficiency check conducted by a current DPE prior to being able to make an application to become a DPE?	Percentage
1	Strongly support this concept	31%
2	Support this concept	33%
3	No preference on this concept	21%
4	Against this concept	10%
5	Strongly against this concept	5%
	Total Responses	291
	Summary - The majority (64%) of responding DPE's supported individuals being required to pass a proficiency check conducted by a current DPE prior to being able to make an application to become a DPE, 21% indicated no preference on this concept, and 15% indicated being opposed to this concept.	

10. What is your perception of the development of a mentorship program for new DPE's; i.e., assigning a mentor (an experienced DPE) to new DPE's to assist with questions during their early service?



#	What is your perception of the development of a mentorship program for new DPE's; i.e., assigning a mentor (an experienced DPE) to new DPE's to assist with questions during their early service?	Percentage
1	Strongly agree this would be helpful to improving the effectiveness of the system	55%
2	Agree this would be helpful to improving the effectiveness of the system	36%
3	No preference	7%
4	Disagree this would be helpful to improving the effectiveness of the system	1%
5	Strongly disagree this would be helpful to improving the effectiveness of the system	1%
	Total Responses	291
	Summary – A very large majority (91%) of responding DPE's agreed or strongly agreed that having a mentorship program for new DPE's would improve the effectiveness of the system.	

11. Would you be willing to serve as a mentor for new DPE's (no compensation provided)?



#	Would you be willing to serve as a mentor for new DPE's (no compensation provided)?	Percentage
1	Strong interest in serving as a DPE mentor	51%
2	Some interest in serving as a DPE mentor	43%
3	No interest in serving as a DPE mentor	6%
	Total Responses	290
	Summary - A very large majority (94%) of responding DPE's have either strong or some interest as serving as a mentor for new DPE's.	

Question Response Details – Flight School Survey

FEEDBACK ON CURRENT DPE SYSTEM

1. What title best describes your position at your flight school?

	Choice Answer	%	Count
1	Director of Operations	15.52%	120
2	Chief Instructor	27.04%	209
3	Assistant Chief Instructor	6.60%	51
4	Line Instructor	32.21%	249
5	Training Support Personnel	1.68%	13
6	*Other (please specify)	16.95%	131
	Total	100%	773

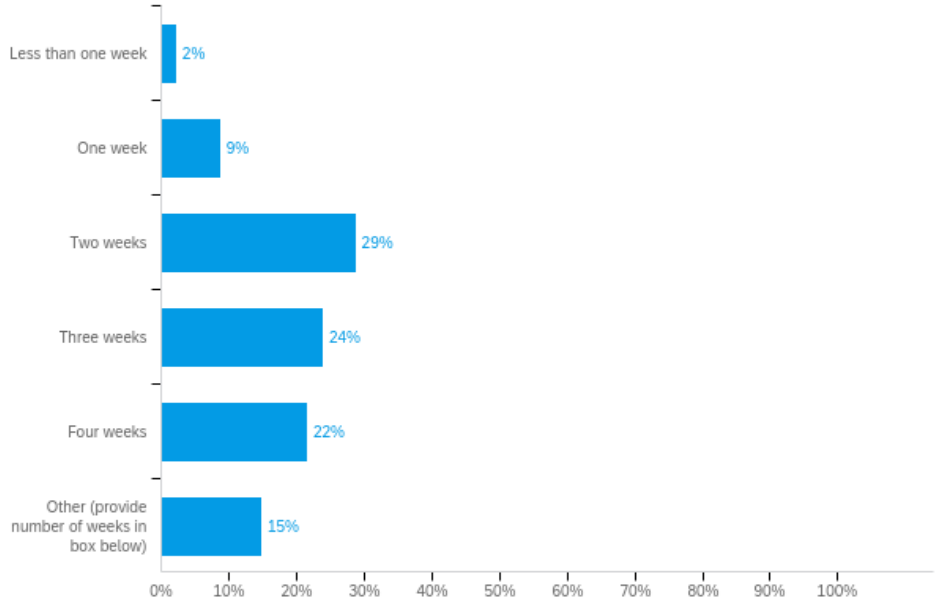
* Note – “other” was most frequently indicated to be owner/founder/President/CEO

2. What training courses are offered by your flight school?

	Course	Part 61	#	Part 141	#	Part 141 Examining Authority?	#
1	Private ASEL	75%	620	21%	176	3%	26
2	Private AMEL	81%	348	17%	71	2%	10
3	Instrument Airplane	74%	577	22%	173	3%	25
4	Commercial ASEL	76%	578	22%	168	2%	15
5	Commercial AMEL	74%	348	23%	107	3%	13
6	Certified Flight Instructor ASEL	83%	564	15%	105	1%	10
7	Instrument Instructor Airplane	85%	547	14%	91	1%	9
8	Certified Flight Instructor AMEL	81%	342	17%	73	1%	6
9	Airline Transport Pilot ASEL	94%	188	6%	11	1%	1

10	Airline Transport Pilot AMEL	90%	155	9%	16	1%	1
11	Private ASES	96%	52	4%	2	0%	0
12	Private AMES	100%	11	0%	0	0%	0
13	Commercial ASES	96%	49	4%	2	0%	0
14	Commercial AMES	100%	13	0%	0	0%	0
15	Airline Transport Pilot AMES	100%	7	0%	0	0%	0
16	Private RH	73%	60	27%	22	0%	0
17	Commercial RH	75%	60	25%	20	0%	0
18	Instrument RH	76%	51	24%	16	0%	0
19	Airline Transport Pilot RH	82%	27	18%	6	0%	0
20	Flight Instructor RH	79%	52	21%	14	0%	0
21	Private GL	91%	20	9%	2	0%	0
22	Commercial GL	95%	21	5%	1	0%	0
23	Flight Instructor GL	95%	19	5%	1	0%	0
24	Private LTAB	100%	2	0%	0	0%	0
25	Commercial LTAB	100%	2	0%	0	0%	0
26	Sport Pilot GL	100%	8	0%	0	0%	0
27	Sport Pilot ASEL	97%	103	3%	3	0%	0
28	Sport Pilot ASES	100%	10	0%	0	0%	0
29	Sport Pilot LTAB	100%	4	0%	0	0%	0
30	Sport Pilot Flight Instructor	100%	54	0%	0	0%	0

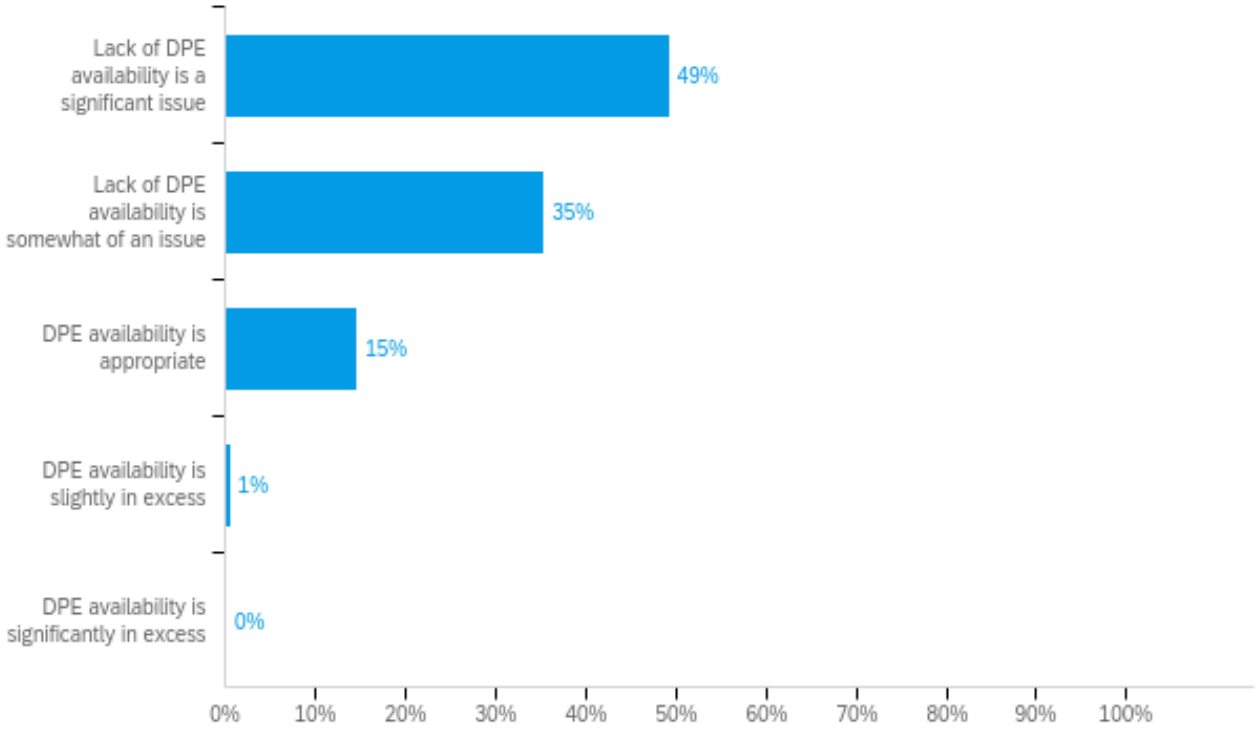
3. On average, when a DPE is contacted to schedule a check ride, how long would an applicant have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)?



1	On average, when a DPE is contacted to schedule a check ride, how long would an applicant have to wait for that ride to be conducted (initial scheduling only, irrespective of weather or other subsequent delays)? - Selected Choice		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than one week	2%	17
2	One week	9%	67
3	Two weeks	29%	221
4	Three weeks	24%	184
5	Four weeks	22%	166
6	*Other (provide number of weeks in box below)	15%	114
	Total	100%	769
	Summary - 40% of responding flight schools indicated a two week or less wait time for check ride scheduling, with 60% reporting a three week or more wait time.		

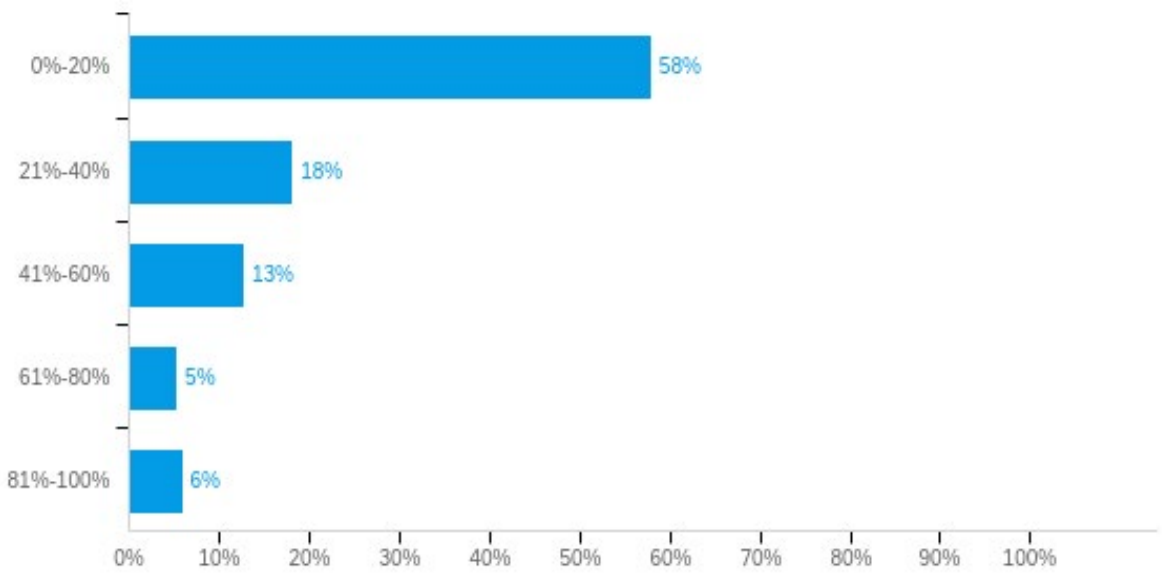
*Note, for those that selected “Other” the average wait time reported was 9 weeks.

4. What is your overall perception of the availability of DPE's to conduct check rides for your flight school's students?



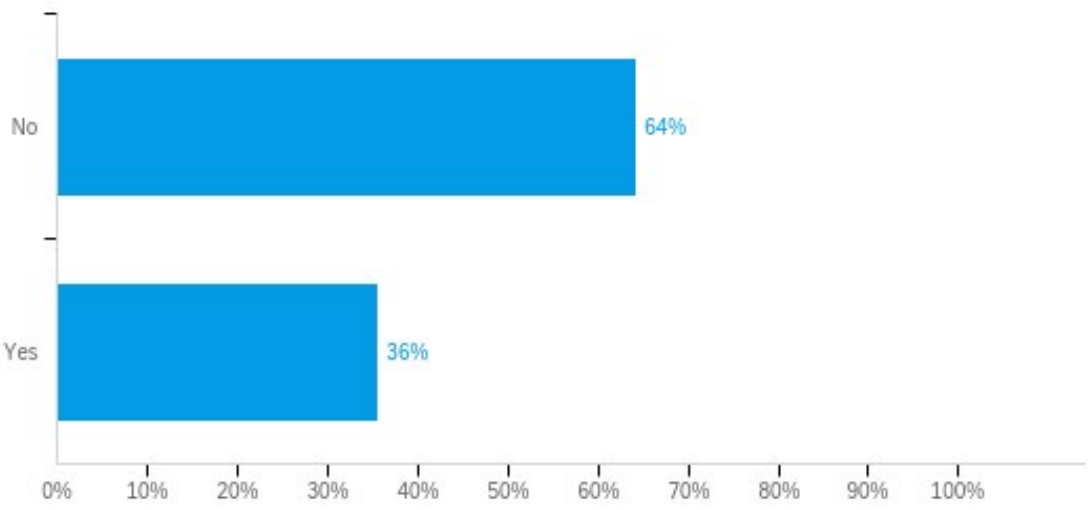
1	What is your overall perception of the availability of DPE's to conduct check rides for your flight school's students?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Lack of DPE availability is a significant issue	49%	380
2	Lack of DPE availability is somewhat of an issue	35%	273
3	DPE availability is appropriate	15%	113
4	DPE availability is slightly in excess	1%	4
5	DPE availability is significantly in excess	0%	1
	Total	100%	771
	Summary - A large majority (84%) of responding flight schools indicated that DPE availability is either somewhat (35%) or a significant (49%) issue for their students; 15% indicated DPE availability is appropriate; only 1% indicated any excess DPE availability.		

5. What percentage of check ride applicants from your flight school travel to a DPE outside your FSDO's geographic region for their check ride?



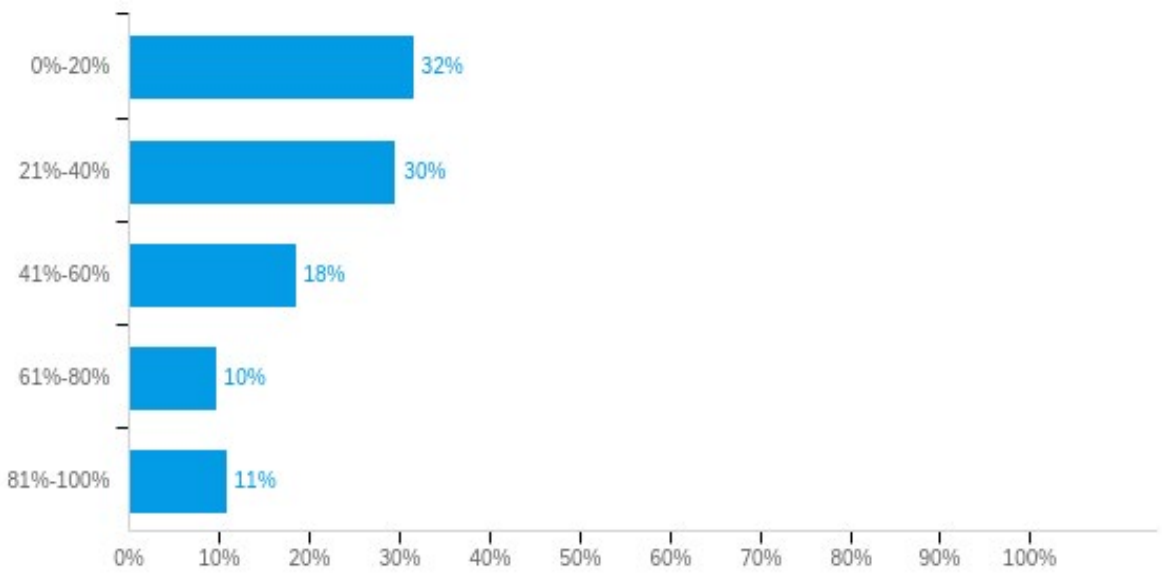
1	What percentage of check ride applicants from your flight school travel to a DPE outside your FSDO's geographic region for their check ride?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	0%-20%	58%	437
2	21%-40%	18%	137
3	41%-60%	13%	96
4	61%-80%	5%	40
5	81%-100%	6%	44
	Total	100%	754
	Summary - For responding flight schools, 76% of the schools report less than 40% of their students travel to a DPE outside their geographic region for a check ride.		

6. Does your flight school bring in DPE's from other geographic regions to conduct check rides?



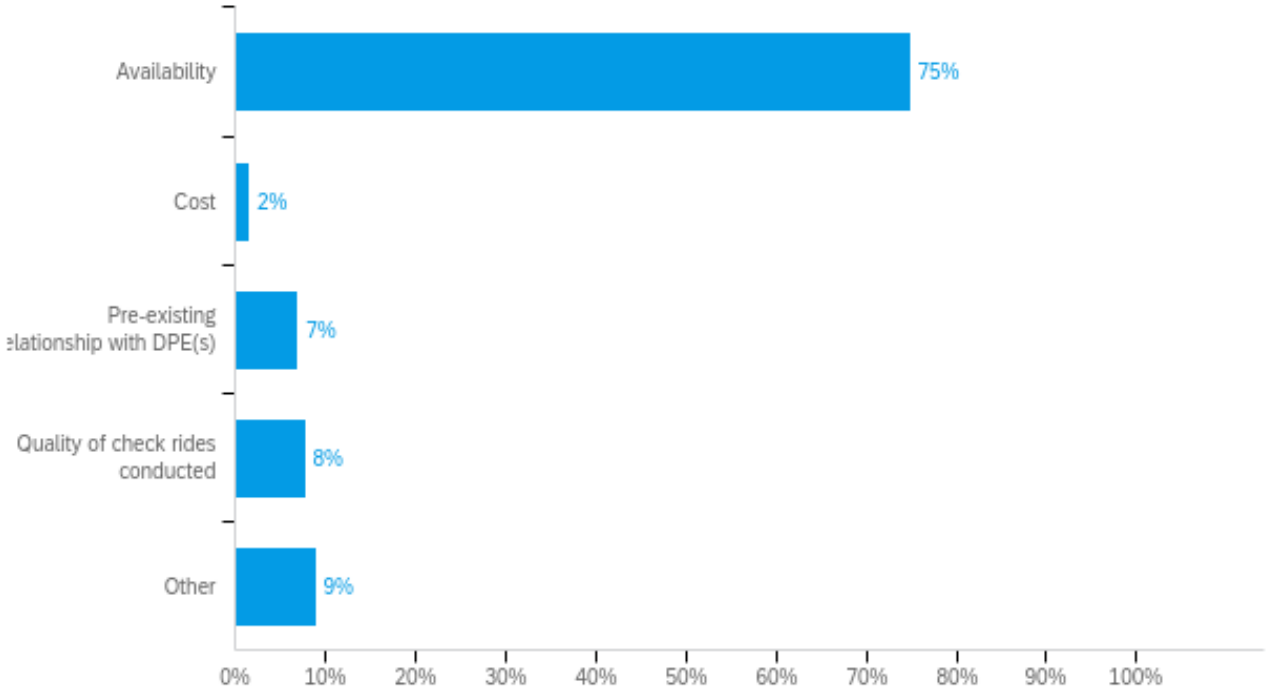
1	Does your flight school bring in DPE's from other geographic regions to conduct check rides?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	64%	485
2	Yes	36%	269
	Total	100%	754
	Summary - For responding flight schools, 36% report bringing in DPE's from other geographic regions to conduct check rides for their applicants.		

7. What percentage of your school's applicants do check rides with an examiner brought in from outside your oversight FSDO's geographic region?



1	What percentage of your school's applicants do check rides with an examiner brought in from outside your oversight FSDO's geographic region?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	0%-20%	32%	82
2	21%-40%	30%	77
3	41%-60%	18%	48
4	61%-80%	10%	25
5	81%-100%	11%	28
	Total	100%	260
	Summary - For flight schools that reported bringing in DPE's from other geographic regions, 38% indicated having more than 41%-100% of their students' check rides done by DPE's from other geographical regions with 62% reporting less than 40% of their students' check rides done by DPE's from other geographical regions.		

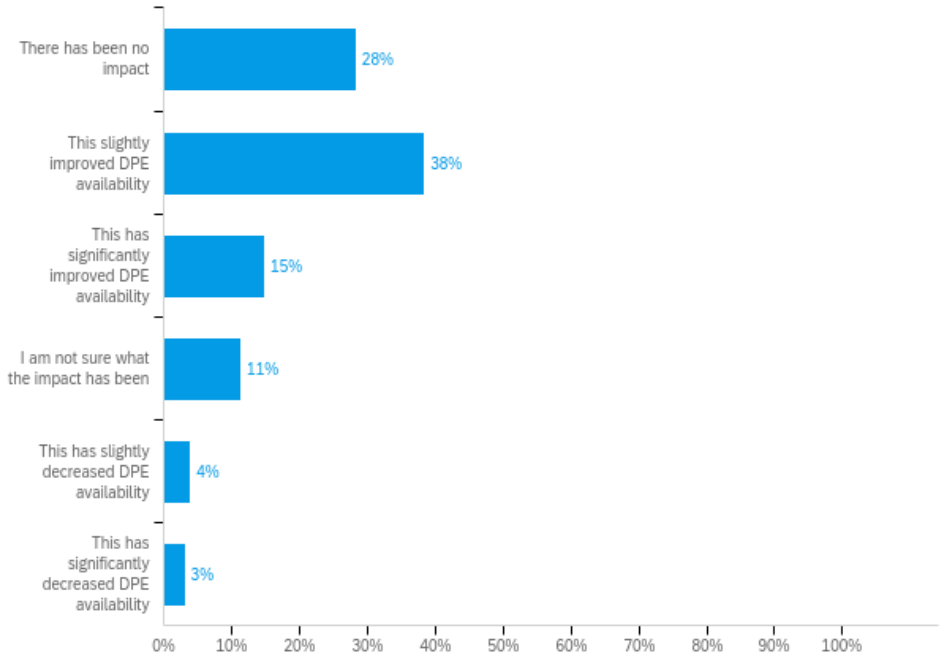
8. Why does your flight school utilize DPE's from outside your geographical area (check all that apply)?



1	Why does your flight school utilize DPE's from outside your geographical area (check all that apply)? - Selected Choice		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Availability	75%	194
2	Cost	2%	4
3	Pre-existing relationship with DPE(s)	7%	18
4	Quality of check rides conducted	8%	20
5	Other	9%	23
	Total	100%	259

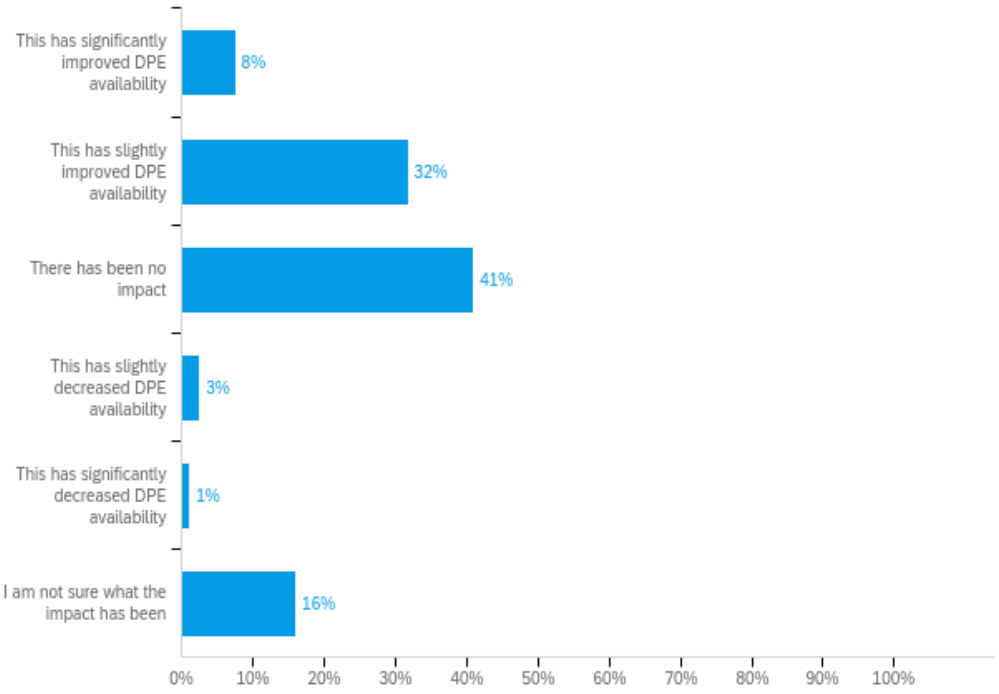
Summary - The reason cited for using DPE's from outside a flight school's geographic area predominantly has to do with DPE availability (75% of responses).

9. How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?



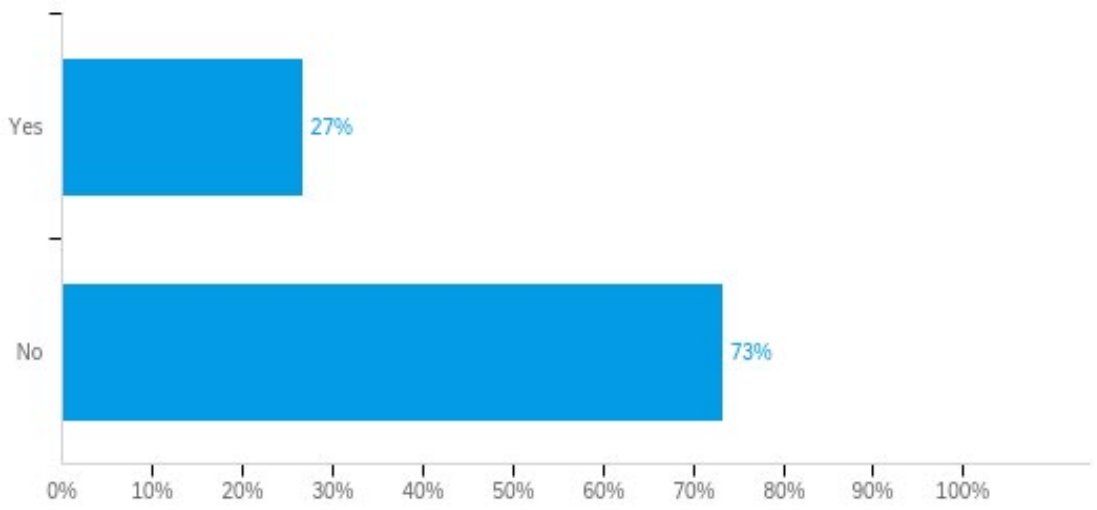
1	How has the removal of the FSDO geographic boundaries restrictions (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	There has been no impact	28%	202
2	This slightly improved DPE availability	38%	274
3	This has significantly improved DPE availability	15%	106
4	I am not sure what the impact has been	11%	81
5	This has slightly decreased DPE availability	4%	28
6	This has significantly decreased DPE availability	3%	22
	Total	100%	713
	Summary - 53% of responding flight schools indicated that there has been a slight or significant improvement in DPE availability since the geographical restrictions were dropped; 28% indicated there was no impact from the change.		

10. How has the ability of DPE's to conduct up to three complete check rides per day (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?



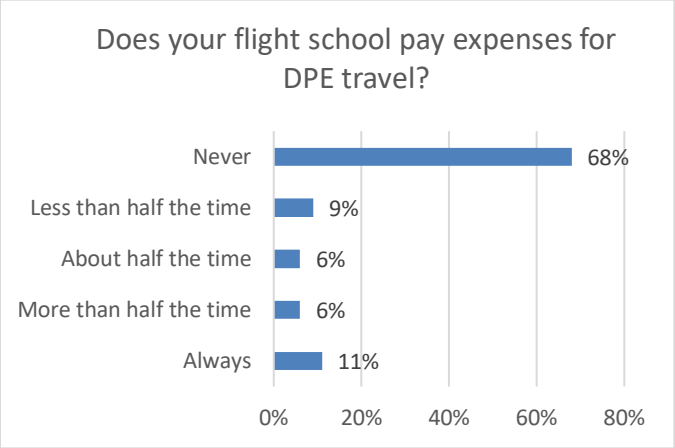
1	How has the ability of DPE's to conduct up to three complete check rides per day (effective in October 2018) impacted the level of availability your applicants have experienced from DPE's?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	This has significantly improved DPE availability	8%	53
2	This has slightly improved DPE availability	32%	224
3	There has been no impact	41%	289
4	This has slightly decreased DPE availability	3%	18
5	This has significantly decreased DPE availability	1%	8
6	I am not sure what the impact has been	16%	113
	Total	100%	705
	Summary - There was an even split of perceptions, with 41% of responding flight schools indicating this change had no impact on DPE availability, and 40% reporting a slight or significant increase in DPE availability.		

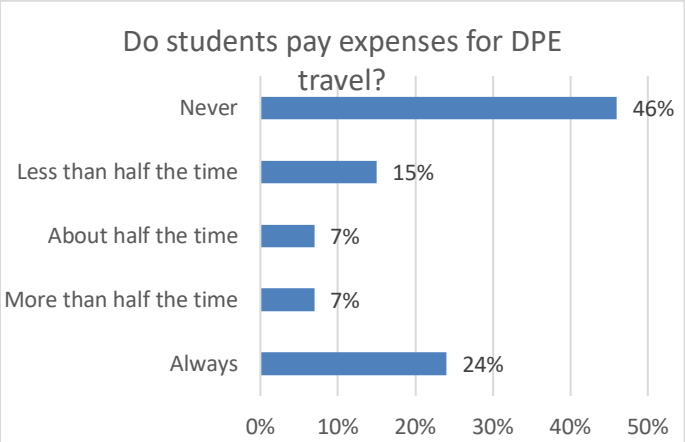
11. If your students experience significant delays in scheduling check rides with DPE's, do these delays cause any costs for your flight school?

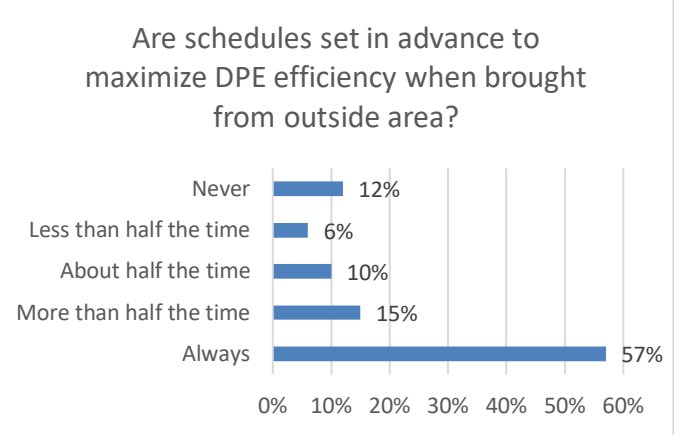


1	If your students experience significant delays in scheduling check rides with DPE's, do these delays cause any costs for your flight school?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	27%	189
2	No	73%	519
	Total	100%	708
	Summary - While only 27% of responding flight schools indicated their school incurred additional costs from check ride delays, 167 of those that reported additional costs provided detailed qualitative comments on the financial impact experienced by their flight school. Frequently identified issues included: 1) Cost of applicants maintaining proficiency while waiting for check ride (some schools provide this at no cost to student who have paid a flat fee for training); 2) opportunity cost of aircraft and CFI availability given time spent re-training applicants who were waiting for a check ride, 3) frustration and lack of motivation on the part of students who are waiting for long periods of time, leading to discontinuance of training for the next certificate/rating, 4) for collegiate programs, the lack of ability for a student to progress to the next course in their academic curriculum in the subsequent semester, leading to graduation delays which cause retention issues. Specific cost estimated varied widely based on the type of costs incurred so an average was not really meaningful, but estimates ranged from $500/year to $200,000/year.		

12. Please indicate the applicability of the following statements:



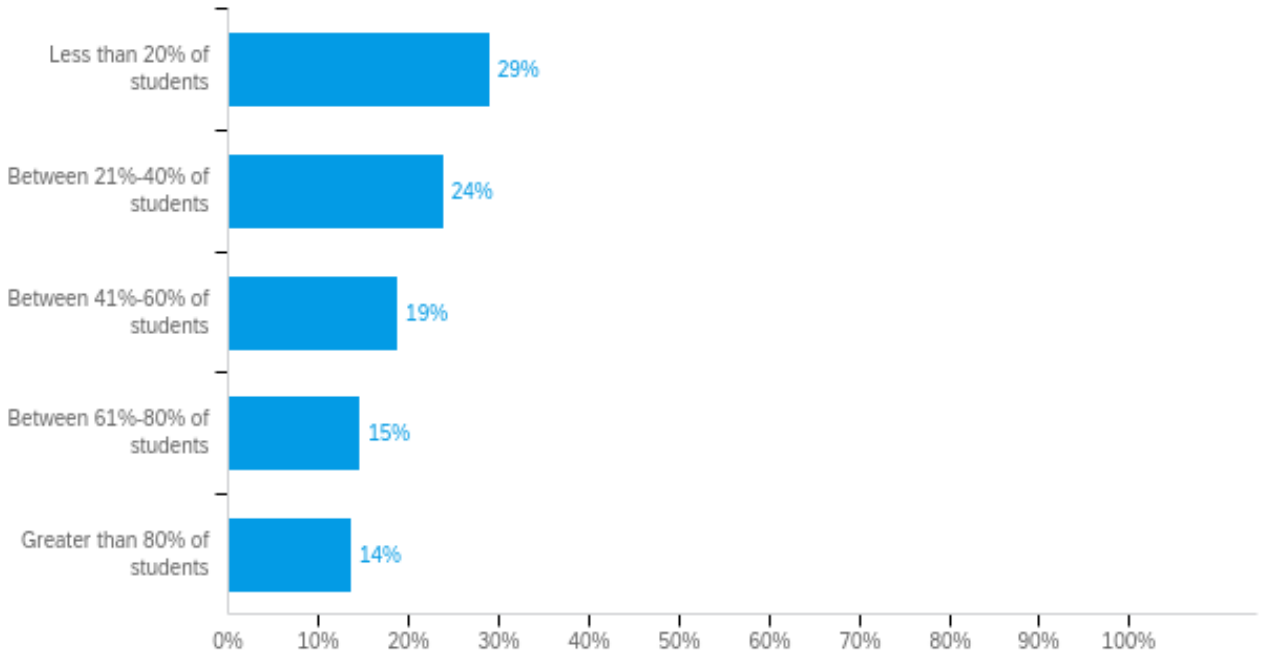




#	Question	Always		More than half the time		About half the time		Less than half the time		Never		Total
1	Does your flight school pay expenses for DPE's brought in from outside your geographic region?	11%	27	6%	15	6%	15	9%	24	68%	175	256
2	Do students pay expenses for DPE's brought in from outside your geographic region?	24%	62	7%	18	7%	18	15%	38	46%	118	254
3	Are schedules set up in advance to maximize the efficiency of DPE's when brought in from outside your geographic region?	57%	144	15%	39	10%	26	6%	15	12%	31	255

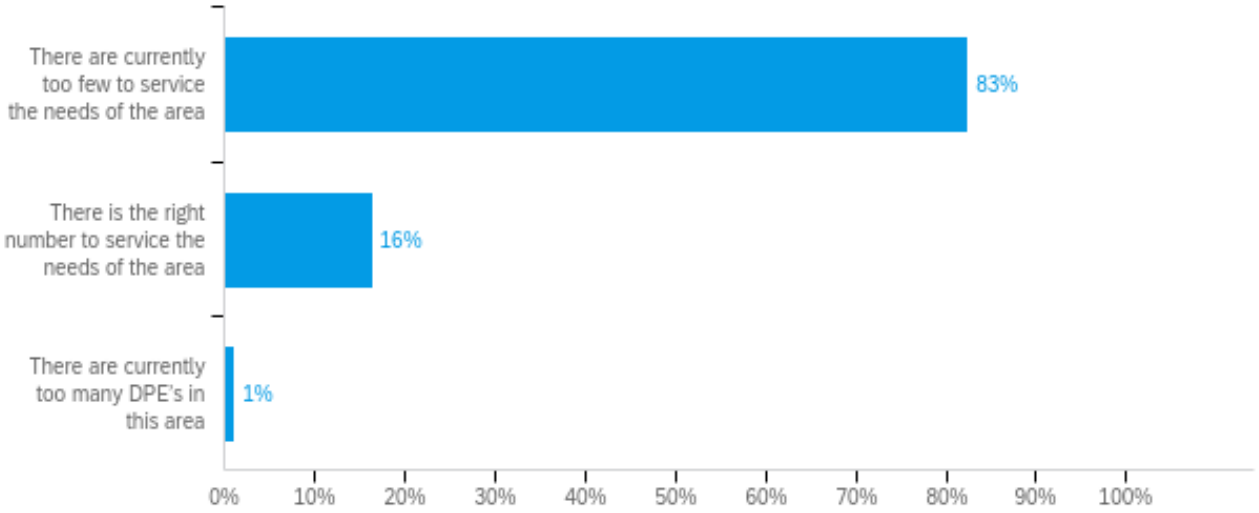
Summary - For responding flight schools which indicate bringing in examiners from other geographic regions, 23% of schools report the school paying for DPE travel expenses half the time or more, while 38% indicate students paying for DPE travel expenses half the time or more. A large percentage of schools (81%) report setting up schedules to maximize DPE efficiency half or more of the time when they are brought in from outside their geographic region.

13. In the last year (2021), what percentage of students at your flight school would you say experienced additional costs due to a gap in time between finishing flight course requirements and getting a check ride date with a DPE?



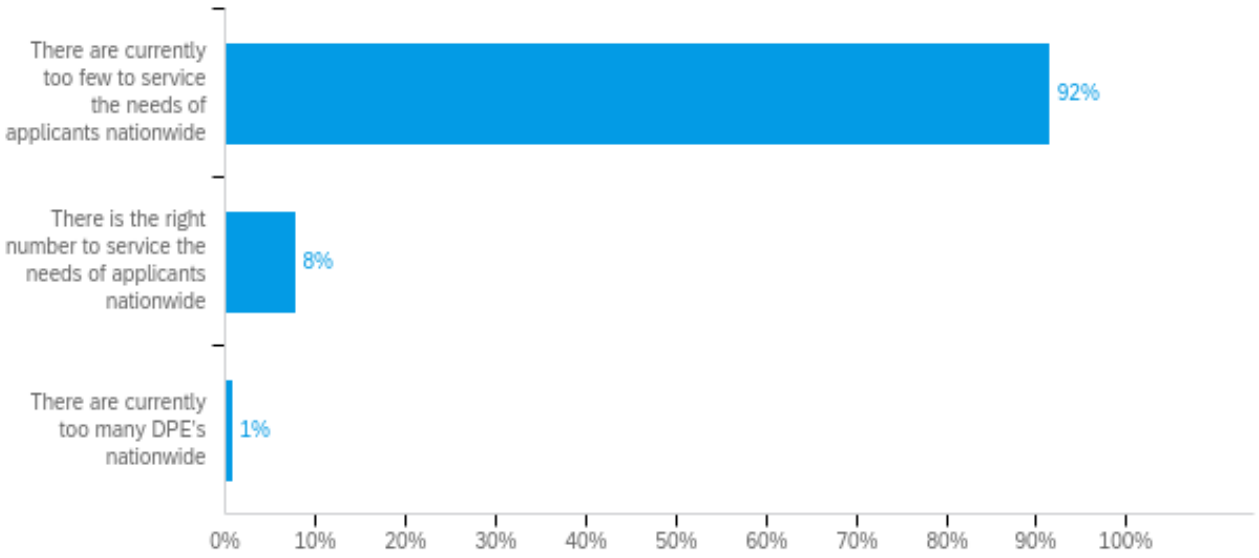
1	In the last year (2021), what percentage of students at your flight school would you say experienced additional costs due to a gap in time between finishing flight course requirements and getting a check ride date with a DPE?		
	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than 20% of students	29%	208
2	Between 21%-40% of students	24%	171
3	Between 41%-60% of students	19%	135
4	Between 61%-80% of students	15%	105
5	Greater than 80% of students	14%	98
	Total	100%	717
	Summary - 48% of responding flight schools indicate that over 40% of their students incurred additional costs due to a gap in training between finishing a flight course and scheduling a check ride over the last year. The average cost per student reported was $1,567.		

14. What is your perception of the number of DPE's in your geographic region?



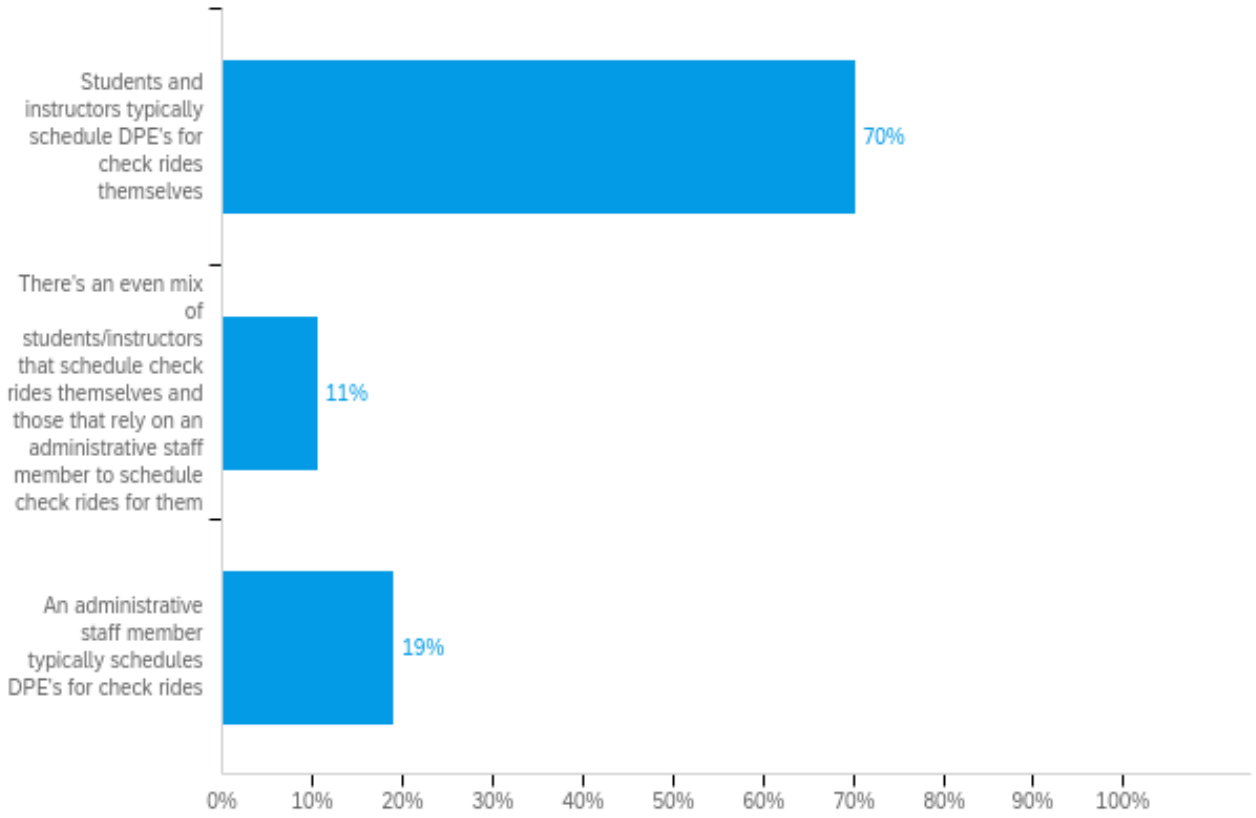
1	What is your perception of the number of DPE's in your geographic region?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	There are currently too few to service the needs of the area	83%	590
2	There is the right number to service the needs of the area	16%	117
3	There are currently too many DPE's in this area	1%	8
	Total	100%	715
	Summary - A large majority (83%) of responding flight schools indicated they believed there are currently too few DPE's in their geographic region to service the needs of the area.		

15. What is your perception of the number of DPE's nationwide?



	What is your perception of the number of DPE's nationwide?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	There are currently too few to service the needs of applicants nationwide	92%	616
2	There is the right number to service the needs of applicants nationwide	8%	52
3	There are currently too many DPE's nationwide	1%	5
	Total	100%	673
	Summary - A large majority (92%) of responding flight schools indicated their perception that there are currently too few DPE's nationwide to service the needs of applicants.		

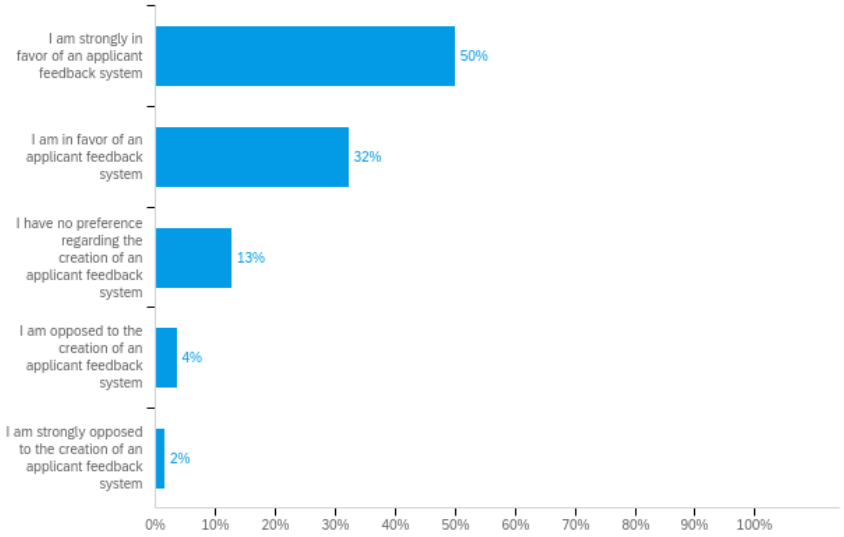
16. Do your flight school's students/instructors typically schedule DPE's for check rides themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles the scheduling of check rides for all students?



	Do your flight school's students/instructors typically schedule DPE's for check rides themselves, or is there a centralized administrative staff member who handles the scheduling of check rides for all students?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Students and instructors typically schedule DPE's for check rides themselves	70%	504
2	There's an even mix of students/instructors that schedule check rides themselves and those that rely on an administrative staff member to schedule check rides for them	11%	76
3	An administrative staff member typically schedules DPE's for check rides	19%	137
	Total	100%	717
	Summary - The large majority of flight schools (70%) indicated that students and instructors schedule check rides individually with DPE's, versus flight school administrative staff.		

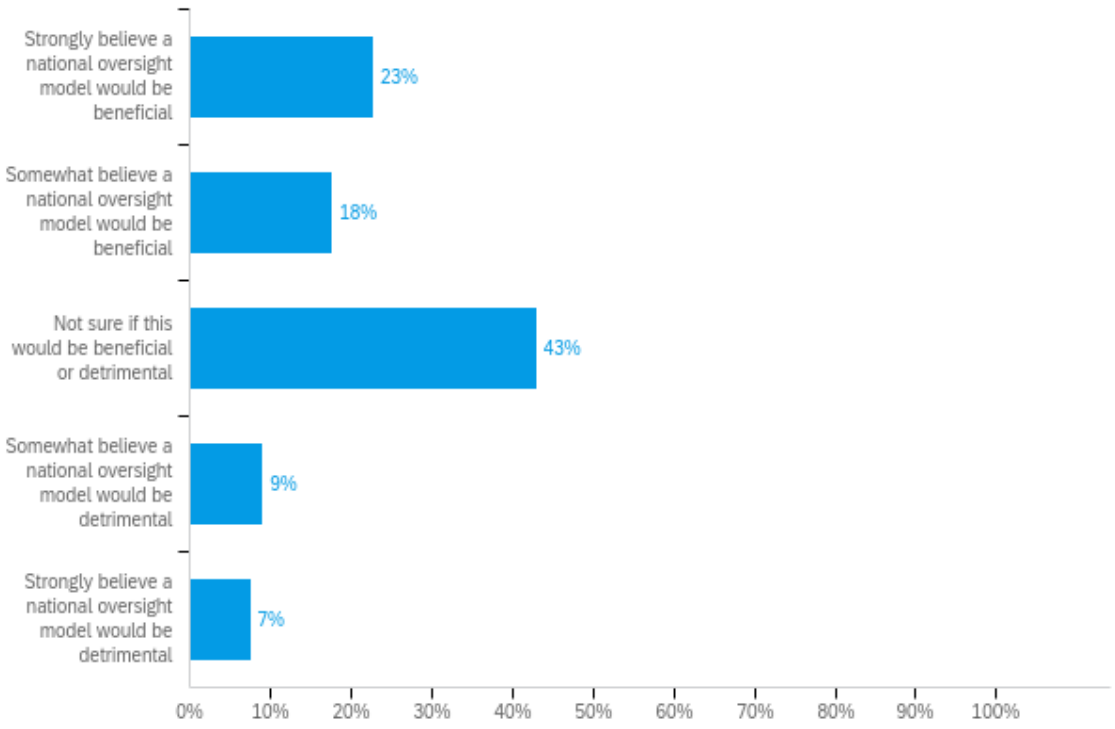
FEEDBACK ON SELECTED DPERWG RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What is your perception of the development of a survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.



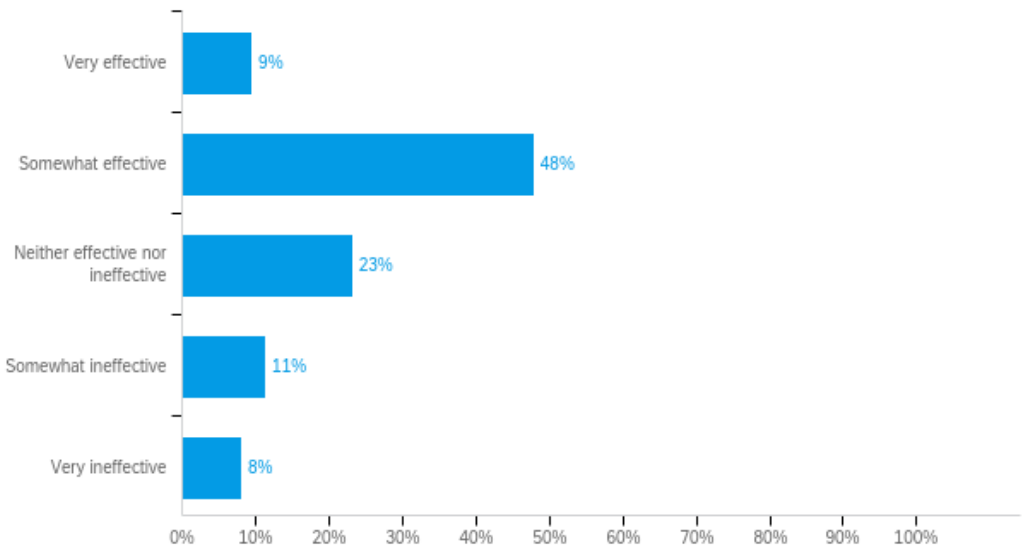
	What is your perception of the development of a survey feedback system to be administered by the FAA, by which applicants are encouraged to complete a survey regarding their check ride experience? Such a survey might include questions about the time required to schedule the test, the time required for the test, the applicants' perception of the fairness of the test, the appropriateness of the facilities utilized (if provided by examiner), etc. The aim of such a system is to enable continuous improvement in the DPE system.		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	I am strongly in favor of an applicant feedback system	50%	357
2	I am in favor of an applicant feedback system	32%	230
3	I have no preference regarding the creation of an applicant feedback system	13%	91
4	I am opposed to the creation of an applicant feedback system	4%	25
5	I am strongly opposed to the creation of an applicant feedback system	2%	11
	Total	100%	714
	Summary - 82% of responding flight schools indicate being in favor (32%) or strongly in favor (50%) of an applicant feedback system, with only 6% indicating being opposed (4%) or strongly opposed (2%) to such a feedback system; 13% indicated no preference.		

2. What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of DPE's versus remaining with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?



	What is your perception of the potential benefit of moving to a centralized national oversight model of DPE's versus remaining with the existing local FSDO oversight of DPE's?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly believe a national oversight model would be beneficial	23%	161
2	Somewhat believe a national oversight model would be beneficial	18%	125
3	Not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental	43%	304
4	Somewhat believe a national oversight model would be detrimental	9%	64
5	Strongly believe a national oversight model would be detrimental	7%	53
	Total	100%	707
	Summary - 41% of responding flight schools somewhat believed (18%) or strongly believed (23%) a national oversight model for DPE's would be beneficial, while 16% believed a national oversight model would be detrimental. However, the most selected response (43%) was "not sure if this would be beneficial or detrimental."		

3. What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?



	What is your perception of the effectiveness of the current DPE locator function provided on the FAA website?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Very effective	9%	66
2	Somewhat effective	48%	333
3	Neither effective nor ineffective	23%	161
4	Somewhat ineffective	11%	79
5	Very ineffective	8%	56
	Total	100%	695

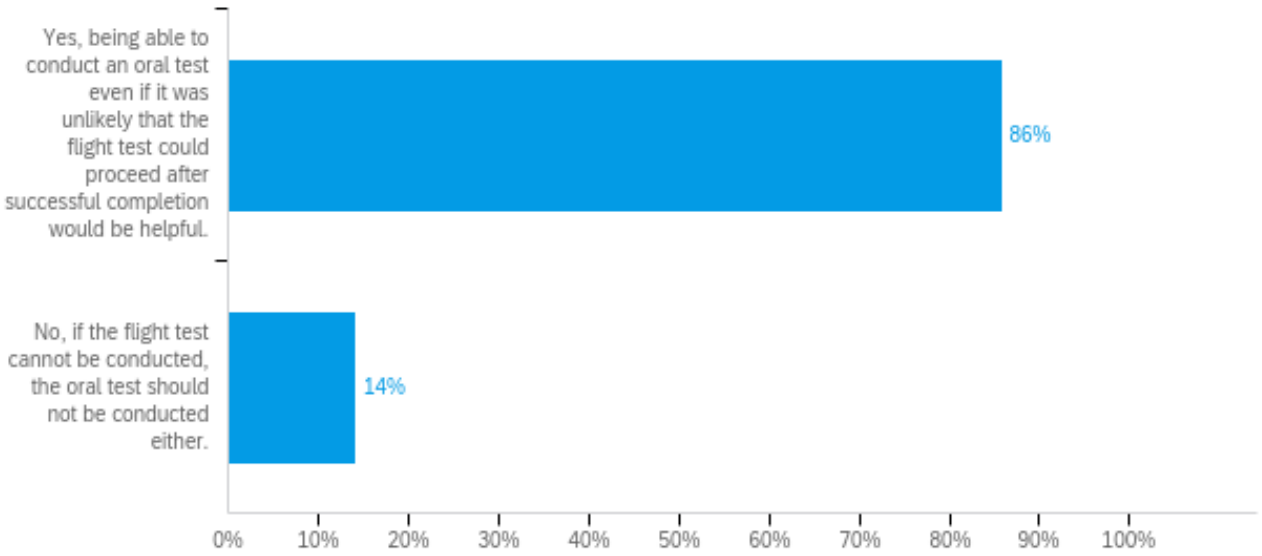
Summary - 57% of responding flight schools believed the DPE locator website is very or somewhat effective, while 19% believed it was ineffective or very ineffective.

What do you believe needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of the DPE locator website?

There were 188 specific suggestions made to improve the locator function. The most frequent themes included:

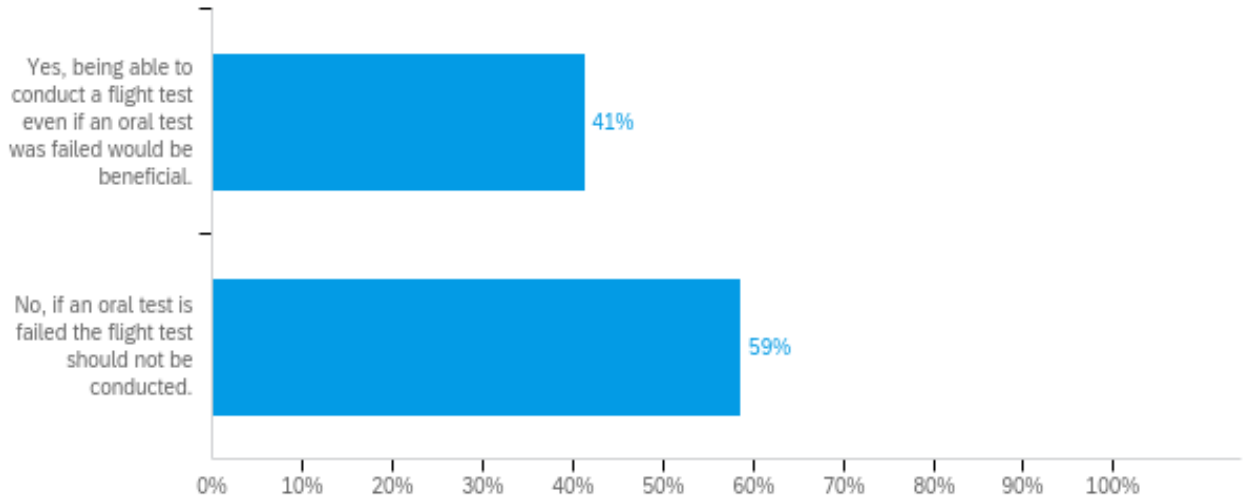
- **Keep updated (many DPE's listed are inactive and some newer DPE's are not reflected) (48 comments)**
- **Provide maps/zip code search/search by radius (30 comments)**
- **Add DPE availabilty and scheduling functions (28 comments)**
- **Advertise it (many flight schools indicated not knowing it existed) (22 comments)**
- **Identify which DPE's are authorized for which checkrides in plain language (13 comments)**

4. In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as separate events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?



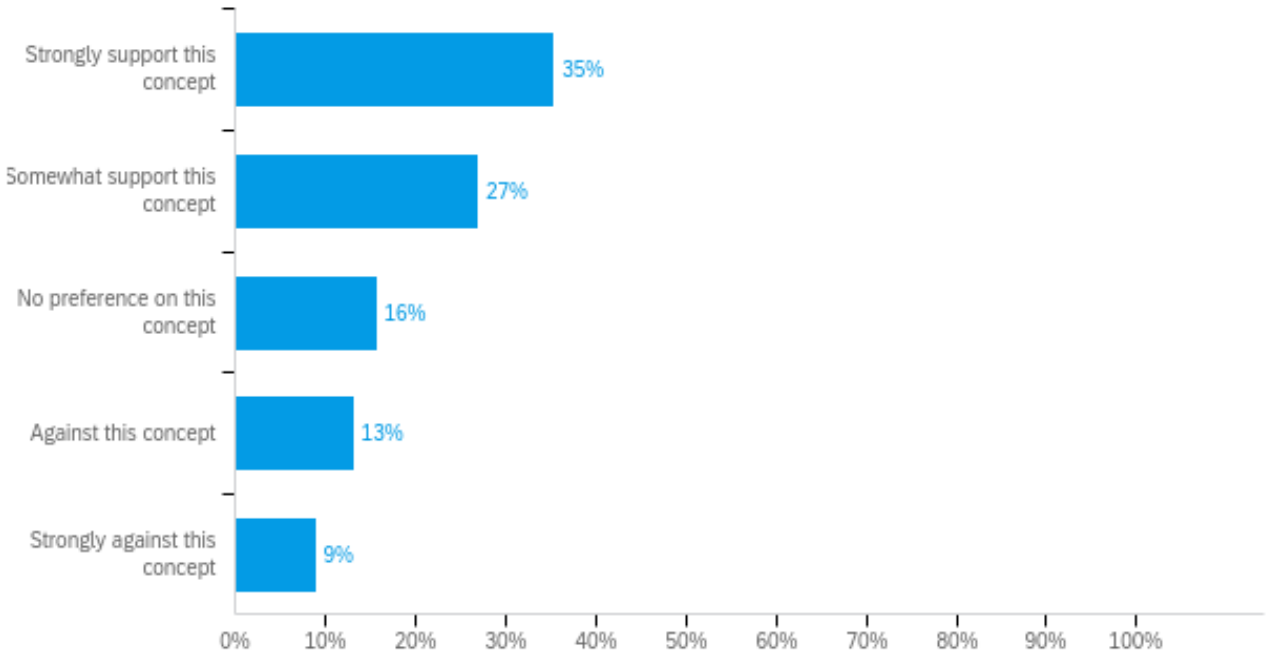
	In your perception, would it be beneficial to treat oral and flight tests as separate events, so that weather or mechanical issues that would prevent the conduct of a flight test would not preclude conducting an oral test as scheduled?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, being able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely that the flight test could proceed after successful completion would be helpful.	86%	613
2	No, if the flight test cannot be conducted, the oral test should not be conducted either.	14%	101
	Total	100%	714
	Summary - The large majority (86%) of responding flight schools believed it would be beneficial to be able to conduct an oral test even if it was unlikely a flight test could proceed after successful completion of the oral test.		

5. In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on a scheduled test day?



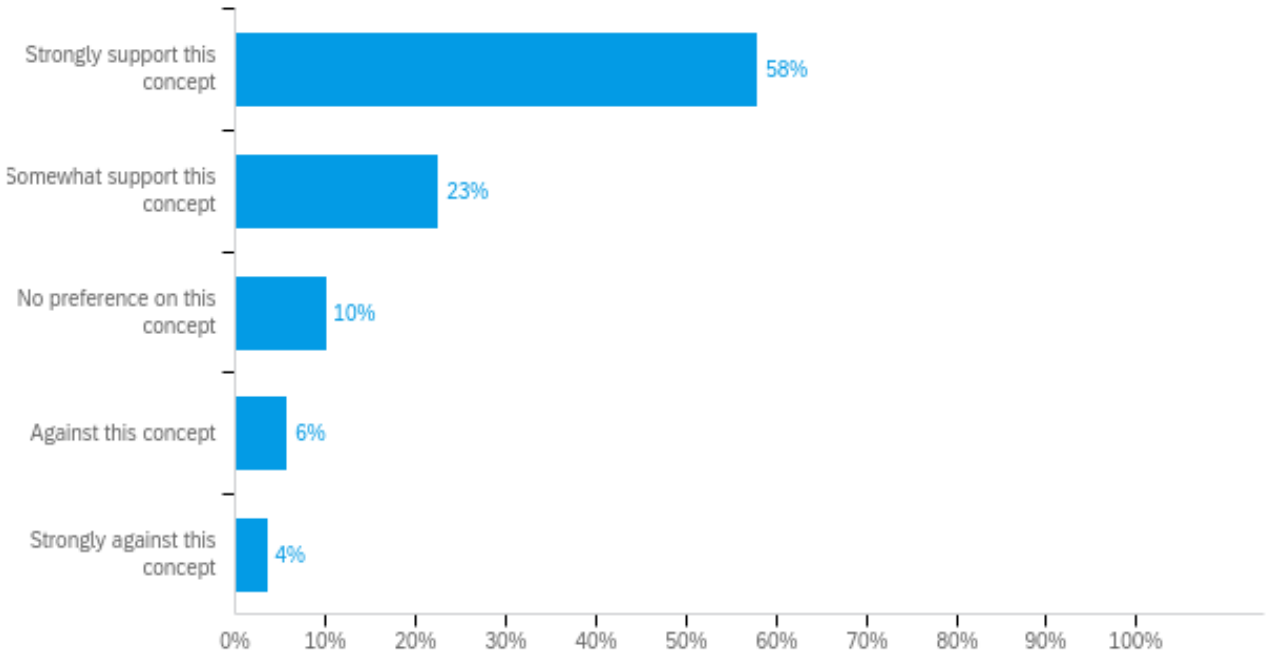
	In your perception, would it be beneficial to separate oral and flight tests as two distinct events, so that failing an oral test would not preclude conducting a flight test on a scheduled test day?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, being able to conduct a flight test even if an oral test was failed would be beneficial.	41%	294
2	No, if an oral test is failed the flight test should not be conducted.	59%	418
	Total	100%	712
	Summary - A majority (59%) of responding flight schools believed that a flight test should not be conducted if an oral test was not completed successfully.		

6. What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?



1	What is your perception of allowing DPE's who are no longer able to maintain their medical to conduct oral tests, in order to provide for increased availability of flight tests by other DPE's?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly support this concept	35%	251
2	Somewhat support this concept	27%	191
3	No preference on this concept	16%	111
4	Against this concept	13%	93
5	Strongly against this concept	9%	63
	Total	100%	709
	Summary - 62% of responding flight schools indicated some support (27%) or strong support (35%) for allowing DPE's who are unable to maintain their medical for the conduct of oral exams only, with 22% reporting being against (13%) or strongly against (9%) the concept; 16% reported no preference.		

7. What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?



	What is your perception of allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's?		
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly support this concept	58%	411
2	Somewhat support this concept	23%	160
3	No preference on this concept	10%	71
4	Against this concept	6%	41
5	Strongly against this concept	4%	25
	Total	100%	708
	Summary - There was support or strong support (81%) for allowing DPE's to conduct check rides under the provisions of BasicMed as appropriate by aircraft and operating requirements, versus continuing to require a minimum of a third class medical for all DPE's.		