RapidSOS

2025

State of **Emergency Response**

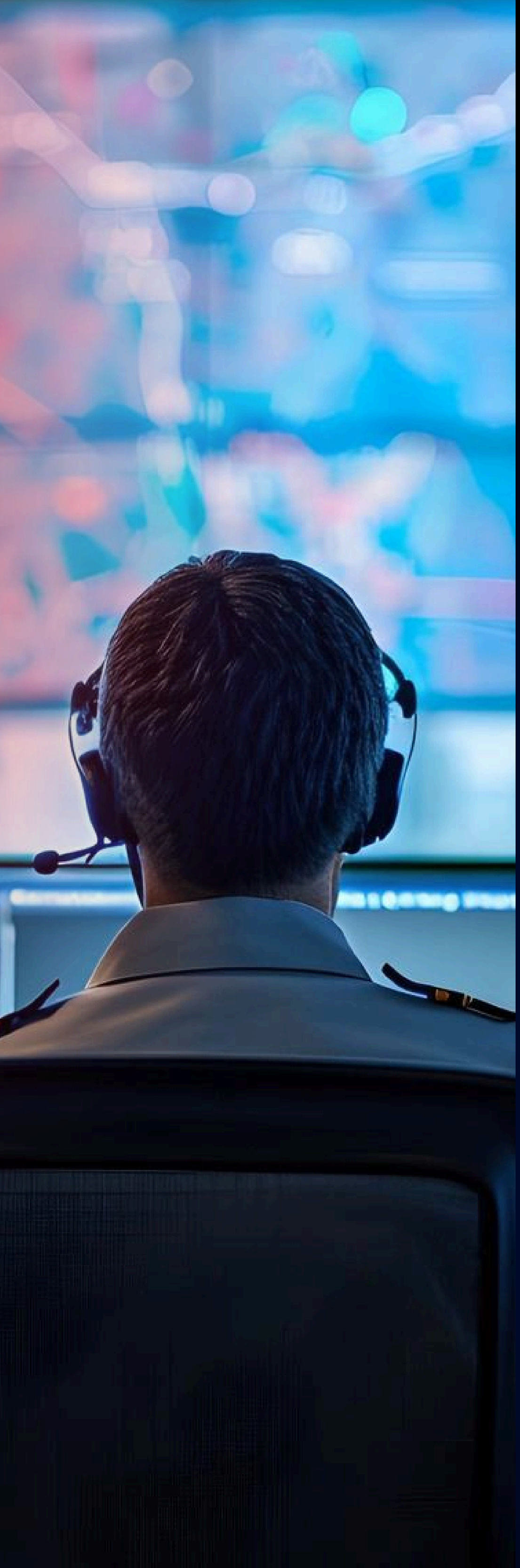
The Cost of Delayed Emergency Notifications on Enterprise Security & Safety

RapidSOS

2025 State of Emergency Response

The Cost of Delayed Emergency Notifications on Enterprise Security & Safety

Table of Contents



01

Introduction and Methodology

01

Introduction

In the world of enterprise security, every minute—even every second—can make the difference between containing an emergency incident and facing a full-scale crisis. However, many organizations continue to rely on outdated, manual notification processes to trigger their standard operating procedures (SOPs), resulting in dangerous delays in emergency response.

These SOPs, while essential, are only as effective as the data and insights they are built upon. Unfortunately, many emergency response systems are still based on outdated, manual notification methods—such as employees calling or messaging GSOCs or operations centers. This reliance on human intervention creates delays, introduces miscommunication, and significantly reduces response efficiency, especially in time-sensitive, high-stakes incidents. For corporate security leaders, the challenges associated with managing multiple communication streams—from GSOCs, operations leaders, law enforcement, and senior executives—can lead to bottlenecks and misalignments with serious consequences. Inconsistent communication, for example, coupled with the pressure to provide real-time updates to leadership, often results in the sharing of incomplete or inaccurate information. This can lead to frustration, mismanaged expectations, and eroded trust among key stakeholders. And in industries such as retail, manufacturing, and hospitality – where disruptions caused by delayed notifications can cascade into widespread consequences – delayed evacuations, prolonged operational downtime, and lost revenue are just the beginning. Millions of dollars in reputational and financial damage can result from a single incident, while safety risks to employees and customers grow exponentially with each passing second. Delays also hinder coordination with law enforcement and external partners, adding complexity to an already chaotic situation.

This survey was designed to explore the current state of emergency response across enterprise organizations and uncover the critical pain points security leaders face. Our objectives were to:

01 Examine how organizations are leveraging new technologies to improve emergency response outcomes.

02 Understand which data sources leaders perceive as the most reliable, fast, and actionable during emergencies.

03 Identify the root causes of delays and communication gaps that hinder the seamless execution of SOPs.

01

The findings are revealing. Even with technology investments, many organizations continue to struggle with fragmented communication workflows and delayed notifications. The reliance on manual methods slows response times and creates confusion and inconsistencies that can erode trust in the process. These inefficiencies ripple across operations, disrupting decision-making, straining leadership coordination, and impacting financial and operational continuity. The pressure on security teams to provide timely, accurate updates to senior leaders adds further complexity to an already difficult process.

In this report, we examined the current state of emergency notification and response systems to identify the root causes of delays, miscommunication, and inefficiencies during critical incidents. Through a survey of 300 enterprise security and safety leaders, we quantified the impact of these challenges on safety, operational continuity, and financial outcomes. The findings provide actionable insights into trends and strategies to help organizations make smarter investments, strengthen coordination with public safety partners, enhance emergency readiness, and achieve better outcomes in 2025.

Methodology

To get more insight into the impact of delayed notifications on corporate safety and emergency response, we commissioned a survey of 300 corporate security and safety leaders to shed light on their current systems, challenges and priorities.

This report was administered online by Global Surveyz Research, an independent global research firm. The survey is based on responses from senior managers across a range of corporate security and safety fields, including Global Security Operations Center (GSOC), Corporate Security, Emergency Management, Trust and Safety, Physical Security and Asset Protection, in roles such as Director Global Security Operations Center, Director Global Emergency Management, GSOC Manager, Director Corporate Security, Director GSOC Operations, Director of Crisis Management and Safety and CSO (Chief Security Officer). Survey participants hailed from US companies with 1,000+ employees in a variety of industries including retail, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, utilities and property management.

The respondents were recruited through a global B2B research panel and invited via email to complete the survey, with all responses collected during November 2024. The average amount of time spent on the survey was 6 minutes and 17 seconds. The answers to most of the non-numerical questions were randomized to prevent order bias in the answers.

Key Findings

02

01

49% of teams report frequent delays in emergency SOPs due to late notifications

Nearly half of respondents (49%) reported frequent delays in executing SOPs (Figure 5), with 63% of corporate security teams citing late or incomplete notifications as the primary cause (Figure 6). These delays disrupt evacuations, heighten safety risks, and cause operational downtime, particularly in industries like retail and manufacturing. Compounding the issue, first responders often arrive before teams are even aware of the incident. This highlights the critical need to replace manual processes and fragmented workflows with real-time, actionable insights to enhance continuity, safety, and trust in crisis management.

02

42% of organizations rely on manual incident notification methods, causing delays and $1–5M in losses

Organizations are heavily investing in security, with 53% allocating $1–5M annually and 42% allocating $6–10M (Figure 13). However, 42% still rely on manual notification methods like employee-initiated GSOC alerts, despite the availability of advanced technologies (Figure 2). This outdated approach causes delays, miscommunication, and inefficiencies, with 47% reporting $1–5M in losses from delayed responses to high-severity emergencies (Figure 14), and 32% of transportation and logistics companies experiencing losses over $5M (Figure 15). Real-time notification systems are critical to improving coordination, reducing delays, and mitigating risks.

03

Challenges with current emergency notification systems lead to a host of communication failures

Emergency notification challenges remain a significant barrier to effective responses, particularly in industries with dispersed and complex operations that hinder timely coordination. These challenges result in critical gaps: 20% of teams struggle to coordinate with first responders due to delays in awareness of onsite emergencies, 13% report limited coverage at rural or understaffed locations, and 16% face difficulties prioritizing high-stakes incidents as overwhelming alert volumes delay responses (Figure 4). Addressing fragmented communication channels through real-time alerting technologies and standardized training is essential to improving SOP execution and coordination

04

Real-time 911 call data improve onsite response and decision-making

Security teams often struggle to align their onsite security with external agencies during emergencies, particularly in complex situations involving multiple notifications and stakeholders, resulting in chaos, delays, and heightened risks. Enhanced 911 data visibility helps address these challenges by improving on-site staff effectiveness (16%), reducing unnecessary deployments (16%), and enabling faster decision-making (14%) with immediate context for incident-specific responses (Figure 10)

05

79% of corporate security leaders agree they could have done more to mitigate response delays

Most respondents (79%) understand the gravity of a delayed response (Figure 16), strongly agreeing that improving communication workflows and reducing reliance on manual escalations could mitigate these delays, paving the way for more streamlined responses during critical incidents.

02

Tools, Systems and Notification Methods for Emergency Incident Management

02

Tools, Systems and Notification Methods for Emergency Incident Management

Corporate security and safety leaders are using a variety of tools or systems to manage emergency incidents across their sites: threat intelligence tools are in the lead with 53%, followed closely by detection systems at 52% (Figure 1), which is unsurprising given that enterprises are increasingly striving to be more proactive about threat detection.

Incident management platforms are used by 48% of respondents, while mass notification tools and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are reported at 43% and 39%, respectively. These responses highlight a strong reliance on technology-driven tools to ensure effective SOPs and emergency management processes.

This finding also highlights the importance of multiple tools working together well to manage emergency incidents, because the more companies invest in different categories of tools, the more potential there is for the creation of data silos within the organization. This makes it harder to attain a global view of information during a crisis, which can hinder the efforts of different departments that must work together efficiently to successfully resolve emergencies. Siloed data resulting from the usage of multiple tools that aren't integrated with each other effectively can also make it difficult to filter and prioritize critical vs non-critical incidents, which can cause bottlenecks and delays in emergency response.

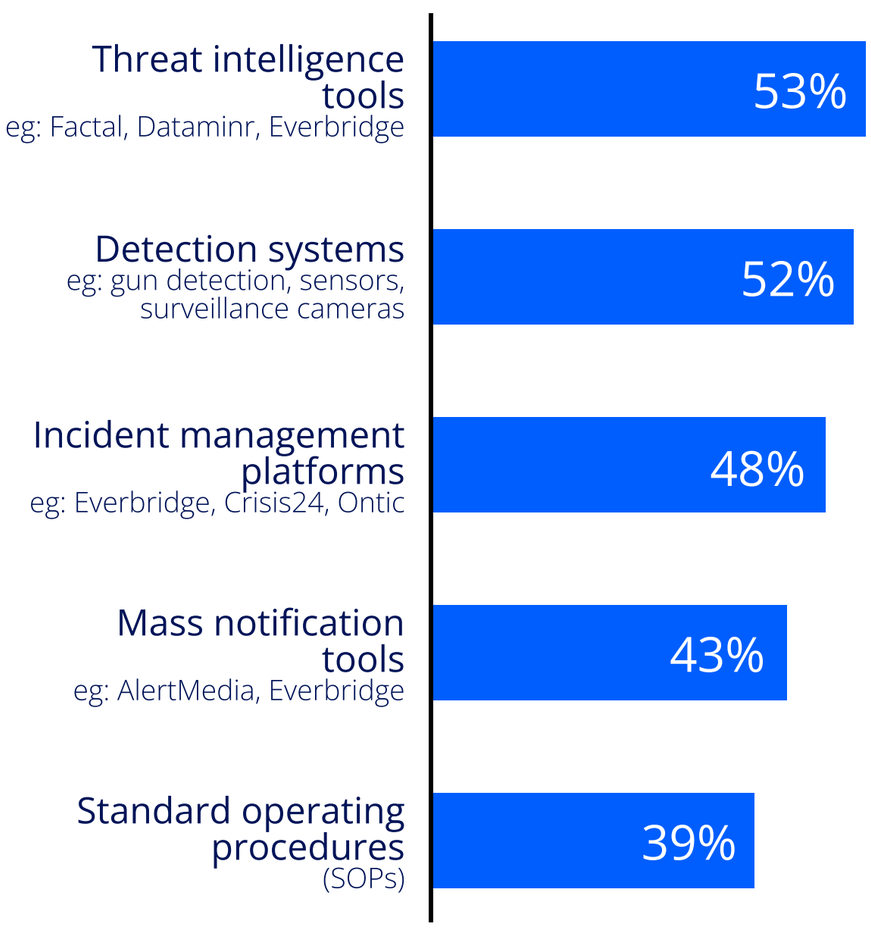


Figure 1:

Tools and Systems Used for Managing Emergency Incidents

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

02

Primary Notification Methods for Emergency Incidents

We asked respondents how they are typically notified of an emergency incident; The top responses were VoIP/telephony systems alerting when 911 is dialed (54%) and automatic alerts from monitoring systems (46%) as seen in Figure 2. Most of the other responses, however, indicate that employees are still manually reporting emergency incidents to the global security operations center (GSOC).

According to the 9-1-1 Association (NENA), 80% of calls to 9-1-1 in the US are made from wireless devices, and when they are made from large retail spaces, distribution centers, etc. – local security teams have no visibility over those calls from their facilities. They are not aware of the emergency until first responders arrive at the scene. Given that VOIP/telephony systems – the top notification method cited by respondents – only account for a small volume of 911 calls made via landlines, the fact that most 911 calls made last year happened on mobile leaves a huge blind spot for teams, seriously affecting their capacity to respond efficiently to emergencies.

The significant reliance on legacy, manual notification methods is leading enterprises to consider investing in more automated methods that provide actionable, real-time data for security teams to improve emergency response to incidents that occur at their physical locations.

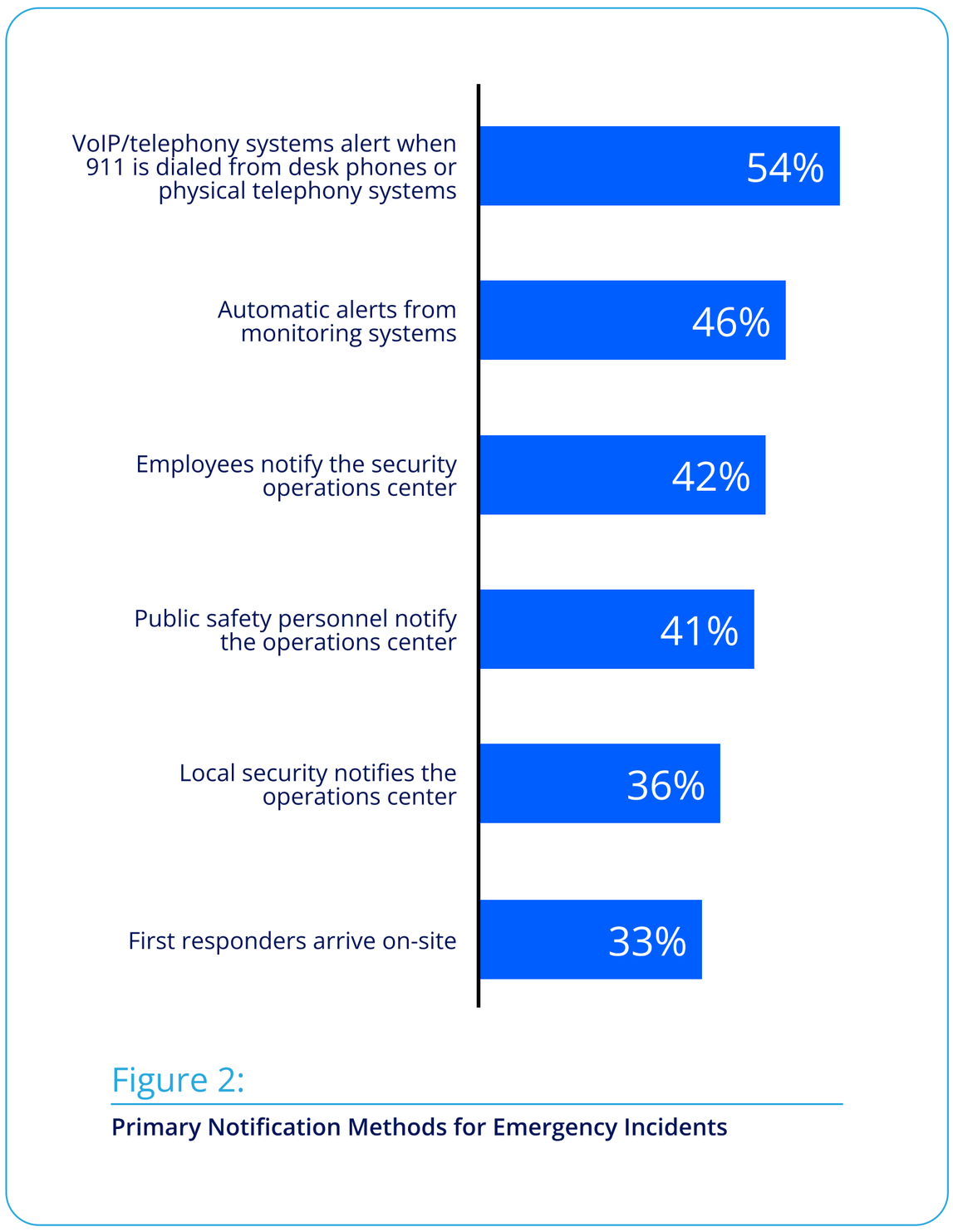


Figure 2:

Primary Notification Methods for Emergency Incidents

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

02

Fastest Notification Source for Real-Time
Alerts on High-Severity Incidents

During high-severity incidents, every minute that emergency response is delayed can increase the potential for damage or loss of assets and human life, so fast delivery of real-time notifications is vital. The notification source that delivers the fastest real-time alerts for high-severity incidents, according to 26% of the survey's respondents, is threat intelligence systems.

The next most effective sources include surveillance cameras or monitoring systems (22%), employees notifying the operations/security center (22%), 911 calls from employees or first responders (15%) and first responders arriving on-site (15%).

Much of the perception around the speed of response is tied to familiarity with the company's SOPs and workflows, so ongoing training of security personnel and employees on emergency incident notification, is essential. The integrity of real-time data is also an important factor in emergency response because in cases with large volumes of notifications, security teams must be able to filter and distinguish between critical and non-critical risks to act with maximum efficiency. This finding therefore highlights the importance not only of automated systems, but also of employee-driven notifications in delivering timely alerts during critical incidents.

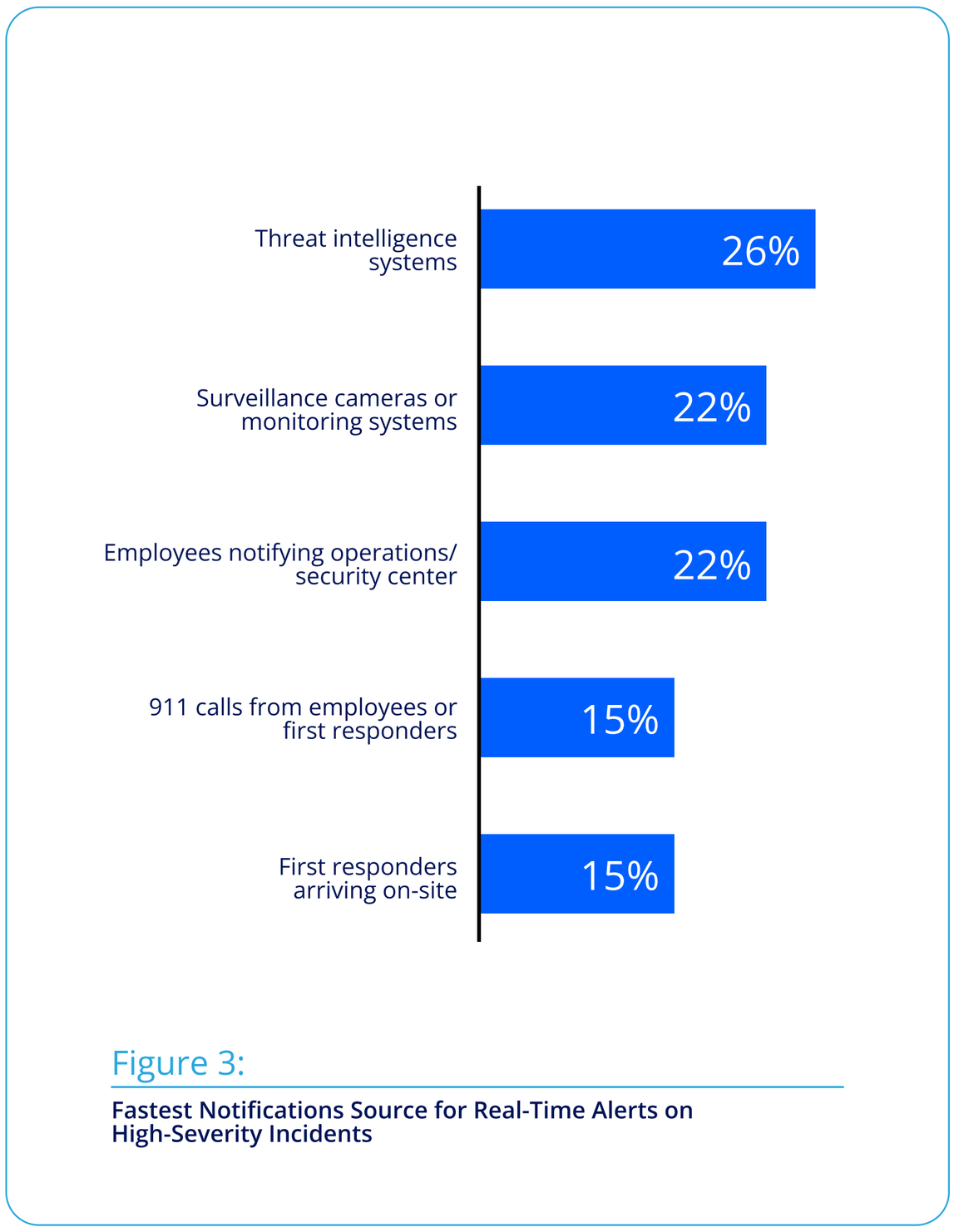


Figure 3:

Fastest Notifications Source for Real-Time Alerts on High-Severity Incidents

03

Challenges and Impacts of Delayed Emergency Notification

03

Greatest Challenges in Current Incident Notification Systems

Security teams often struggle to stay aligned with external agencies, especially in complex situations that can escalate when multiple emergency notifications and response stakeholders are involved, causing chaos. It's no wonder, therefore, that the greatest challenge they face with their current incident notification systems, is inconsistent or unreliable communication between security teams and first responders (20%), as seen in Figure 4.

Their second greatest challenge is difficulty prioritizing critical incidents (16%) due to overwhelming volumes of alerts that make it hard to identify high-priority situations. Limited coverage across all areas is also problematic (13%), because with enterprises operating across numerous and sometimes remote locations – including distribution centers, rural sites and less-staffed facilities – they often lack the same level of security coordination as corporate hubs such as their headquarters and retail spaces. Notably, no respondents reported having no challenges.

Overall, this finding underscores the importance of standardization of incident notification systems across organizations – especially those with decentralized facilities or increasingly complex operations – in view of the potentially disastrous cost of communication failures. It also highlights the need for more integrated digital platforms to facilitate real-time alerts for greater accuracy and consistent visibility.

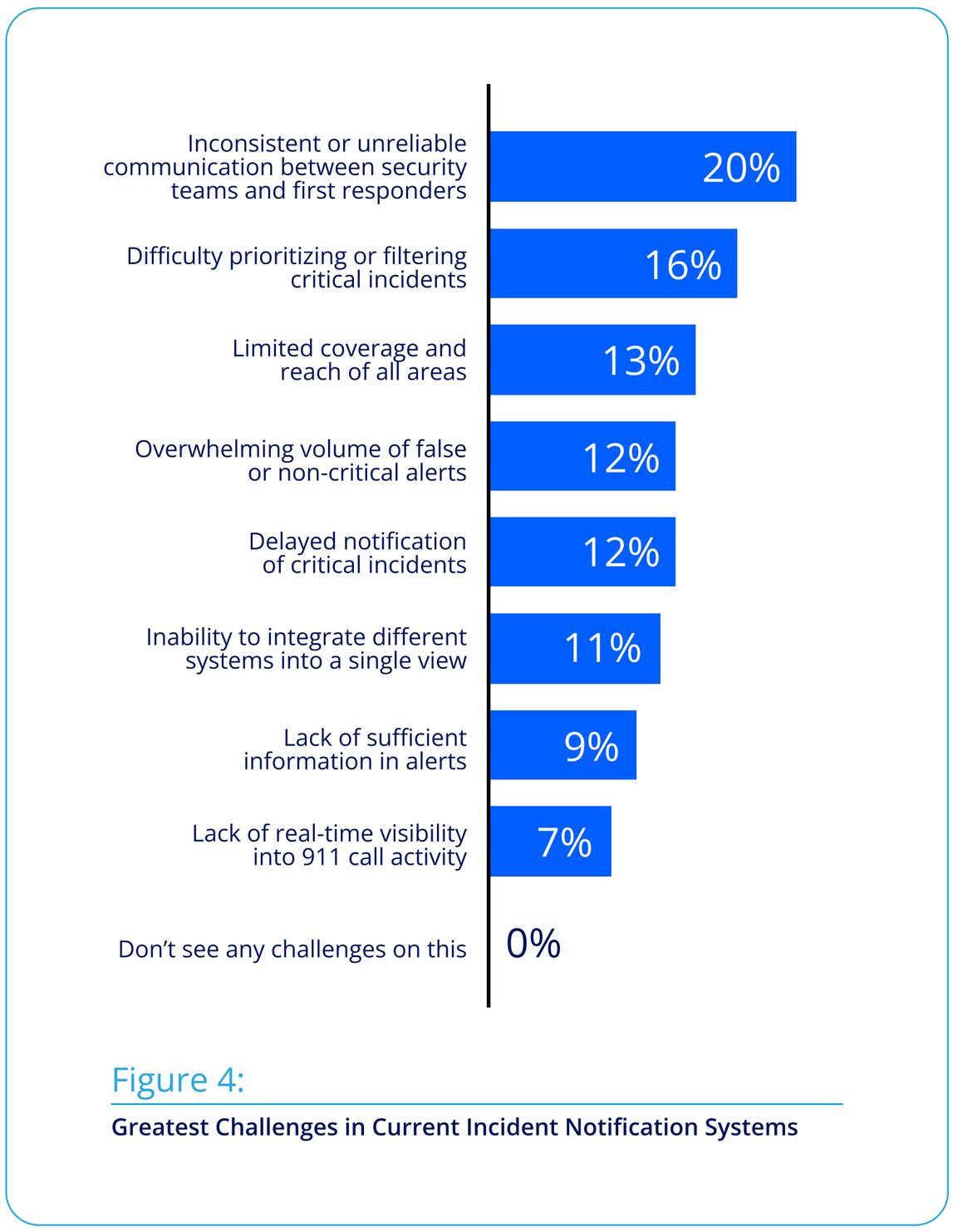


Figure 4:

Greatest Challenges in Current Incident Notification Systems

03

Frequency of Delays in SOPs Resulting from Failure to Receive Timely Notifications

All of the companies surveyed report that their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergency response are delayed (to various degrees) due failing to receive timely or complete notifications (Figure 5). Notably, nearly half of the respondents (49%) report delays occurring "always, very frequently, or frequently" (51%-100% of the time). These frequent delays are most pronounced in Corporate Security and Physical Security (63%) and Facilities Management departments (59%), as seen in Figure 6.

This finding reveals an urgent need for enterprises to address the fragmented channels that cause frequent delays and bottlenecks and undermine operational readiness, to improve their response during high-stakes emergencies. In addition, technology gaps relying on manual methods suggest a need for automated systems that provide real-time visibility and integration across all of their sites to minimize delays, which are most commonly caused by:

01 Inconsistent and unreliable communication between multiple locations that have varying levels of preparedness and on-site training

02 Overreliance on human reporting and lack of real-time data impede decision-making

03 Waiting for first responders to arrive before escalating

04 High volumes of alerts make it difficult to filter out false positives, forcing security teams to verify and escalate incidents manually.

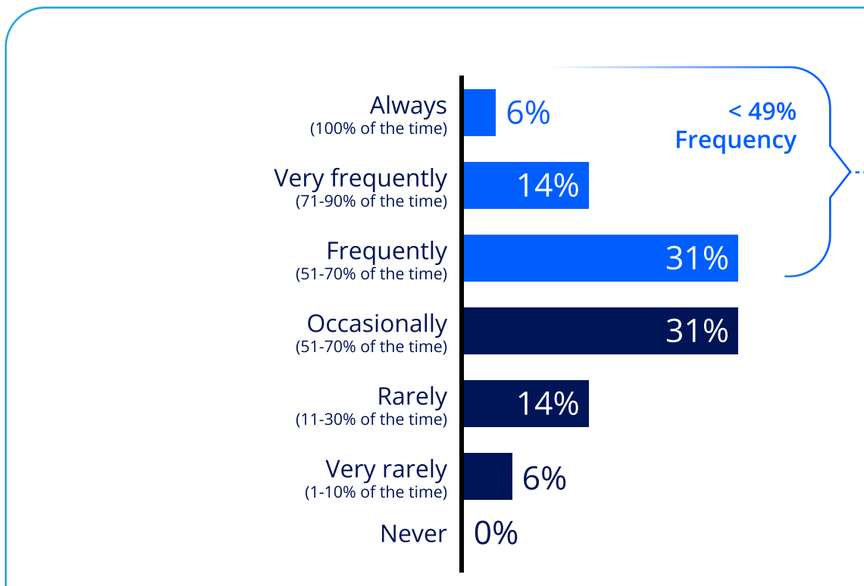


Figure 5:

Frequency of Delays in SOPs Resulting from Failure to Receive Timely Notifications

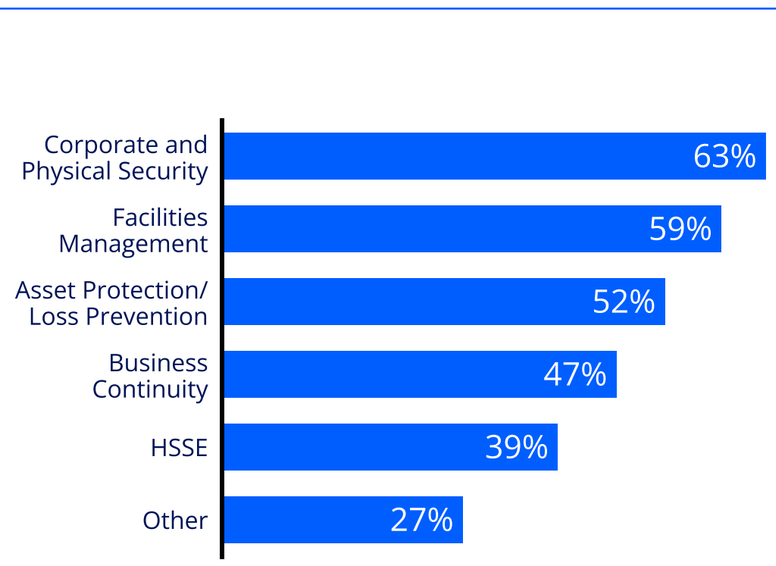


Figure 6:

51% - 100% Frequency by 'Department'

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

03

Percentage of Incidents Where Team Response Was Too Slow Due to Delayed Information

Delayed information remains a critical obstacle to effective emergency response, with 89% of respondents reporting delayed team responses in more than 30% of incidents (for 40% it's in more than 50% of cases), as seen in Figure 7.

These delays are not without consequence. Slow responses increase safety risks, extend operational downtime, and create cascading challenges in high-severity emergencies. As teams struggle to deliver real-time insights to response teams, the data underscores an urgent need for systems that streamline communication and improve decision-making.

For organizations, closing this gap means investing in technologies and workflows that deliver accurate, real-time information. By reducing the impact of delayed notifications, security leaders can strengthen emergency response, minimize risk, and improve outcomes in critical incidents.

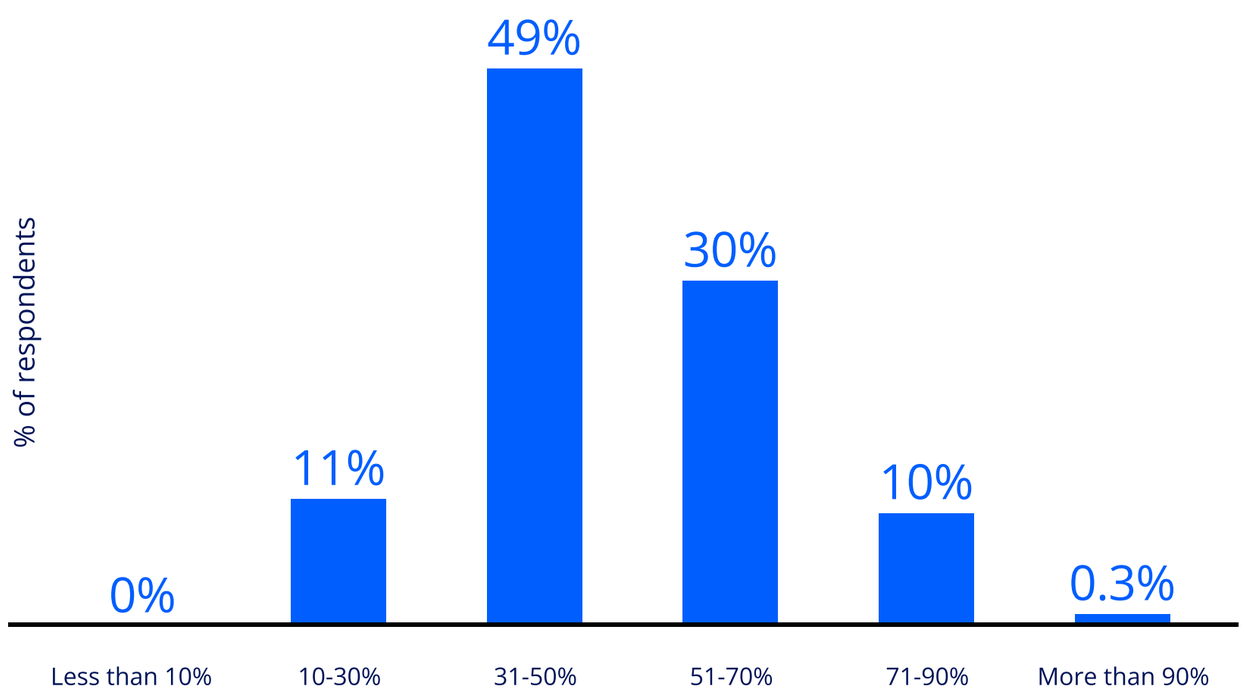


Figure 7:

Percentage of Incidents Where Team Response was Too Slow Due to Delayed Information

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

03

Impacts of Delayed Emergency Notifications on Business Operations

When asked to identify the most common consequences of delayed emergency notifications on their business operations, respondents reported a wide variety of very serious impacts. The most common effect, cited by 36% of respondents, is confusion or miscommunication with first responders upon arrival (Figure 8) – which is consistent with the top challenge they are experiencing with their current incident notification systems, as seen in Figure 7.

Increased downtime or delays in operations and the inability to secure or evacuate affected areas in time – each noted by 35% of respondents – are also common, which is unsurprising given that downtime not only impacts the physical safety of assets and people, but also disrupts normal business operations, which can have significant financial implications for the business.

Other significant impacts include harm to individuals (32%), damage to physical assets and infrastructure (31%), and reduced ability to provide timely assistance (29%). Additional challenges include delayed response time (27%), increased operational costs (26%), and escalation of emergency situations (25%).

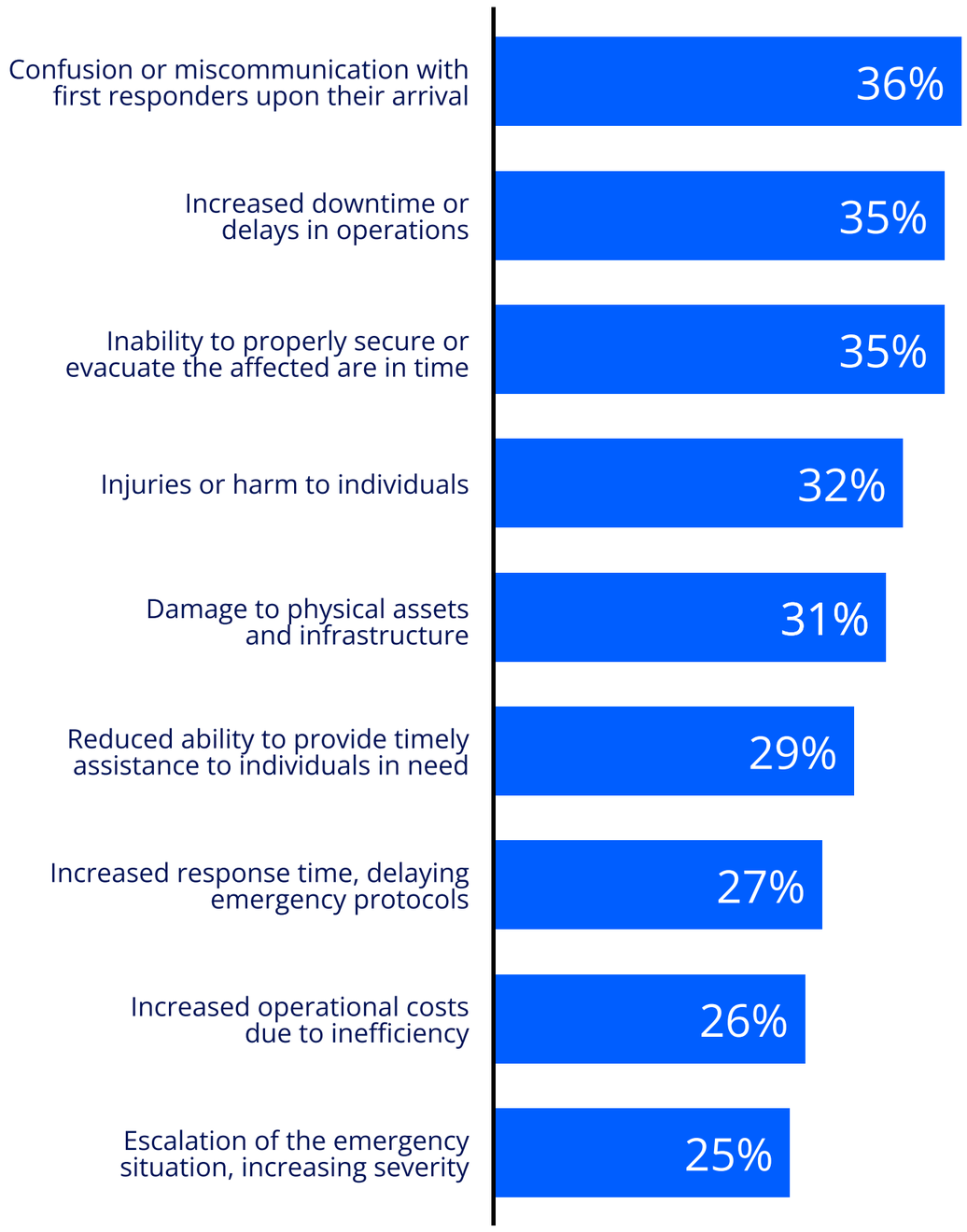


Figure 8:

Impacts of Delayed Emergency Notification on Business Operations

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

04

Impact of Insufficient Real-Time Visibility Into 911 Calls

2025 State of Emergency Response | RapidSOS

04

Frequency of First Responders Arriving Before Team Awareness of Emergency Incidents

A concerning finding from the survey reveals that 50% of respondents reported first responders frequently arriving on-site before their teams were aware of an emergency incident. Among these, 30% said this happens frequently, 14% very frequently, and 6% always (Figure 9). This reflects a critical blind spot for corporate security teams, where the lack of real-time visibility into 911 calls leaves internal teams unprepared to act as situations unfold.

First responders typically arrive following a 911 call. Since security teams often lack visibility into mobile 911 calls from within their facilities, it's unsurprising that first responders arrive first in as many as half of all cases. This finding highlights a significant safety gap between corporate security teams and 911 centers and an opportunity for enterprises to bridge this gap by connecting to 911's digital ecosystem. Real-time alerts ensure GSOC teams can mobilize onsite personnel and prepare effectively for first responders.

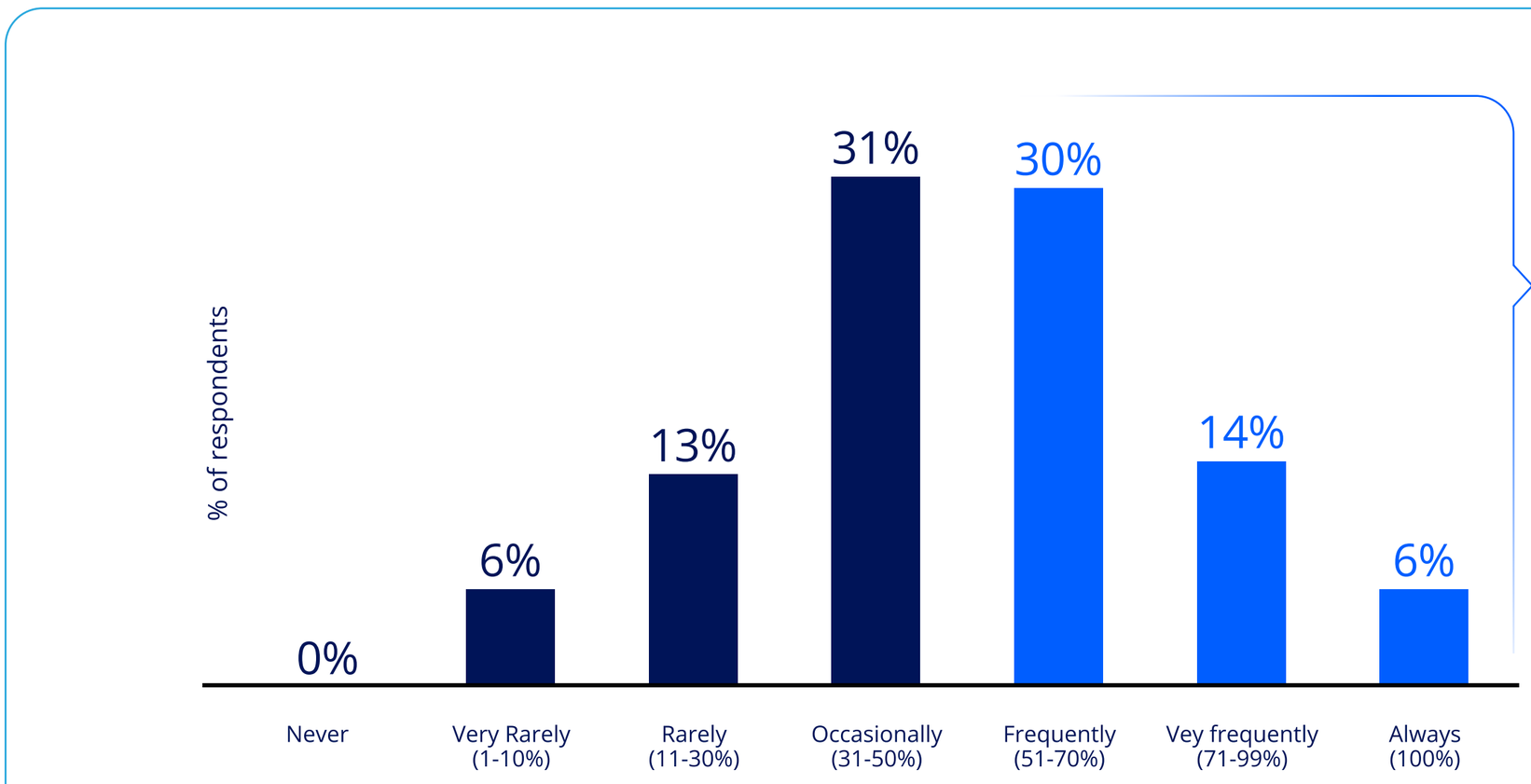


Figure 7:

Percentage of Incidents Where Team Response was Too Slow Due to Delayed Information

04

Impact of Real-Time Visibility into 911 Call Data on Emergency Response

Real-time visibility into 911 call data transforms how enterprises with multiple locations manage emergencies. With the same visibility as 911 centers, GSOC teams can immediately dispatch onsite security personnel to verify incidents, allocate resources effectively, and begin responses in high-severity situations—all while preparing for the arrival of first responders.

The key benefits of real-time visibility include a significant improvement in the effectiveness of onsite staff and guard services, while also reducing unnecessary staff deployments—as cited by 16% of respondents (Figure 10). Additionally, 14% highlighted advantages such as quicker resource deployment, faster decision-making, and immediate context about the emergencies.

By closing critical communication gaps with law enforcement and enabling proactive coordination, real-time 911 insights allow organizations to streamline responses, minimize delays, and align onsite efforts with external stakeholders for more effective crisis management.

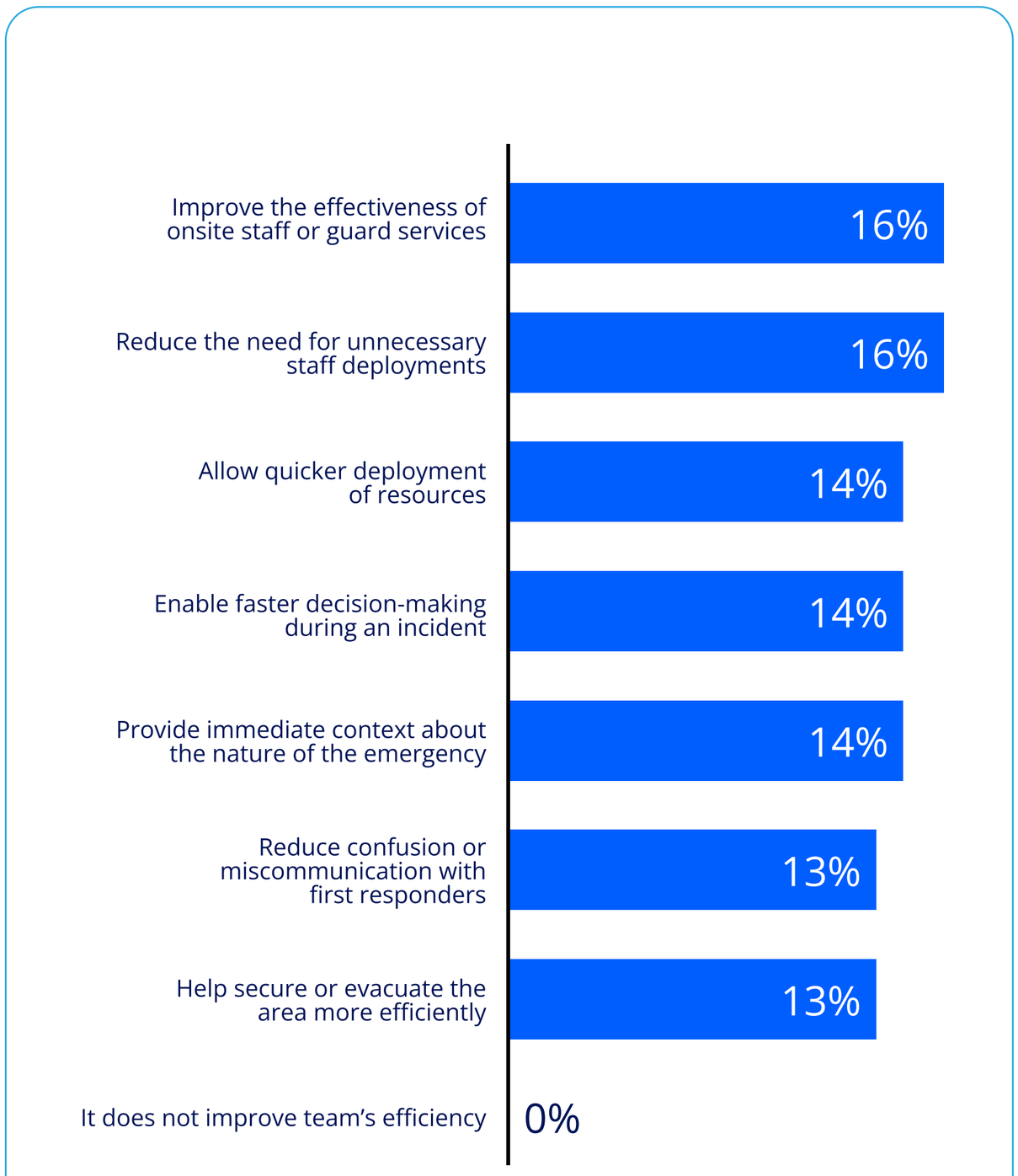


Figure 10:

Impact of Real-Time Visibility into 911 Calll Data on Emergency Response

04

Impact of Real-Time Notifications on 911 Calls for Team Responsiveness

All surveyed companies agree: receiving real-time notifications on 911 calls made from within their sites would significantly enhance their team's responsiveness to high-severity incidents. In fact, 46% of respondents reported that real-time notifications would improve responsiveness to a great extent (33%) or a very great extent (13%), while 42% noted a moderate improvement (Figure 11). Only 12% believed the impact would be minimal.

Corporate Security and Physical Security departments see the greatest potential for improvement (Figure 12), with 22% highlighting the critical role these notifications play in managing alerts, triaging calls, and deploying security personnel efficiently. This finding underscores the importance of real-time 911 notifications in equipping teams with the context they need to act faster, reduce risks, and align their efforts with first responders for more effective crisis management.

Across this report, the evidence is clear: integrating real-time 911 data into emergency workflows is not just beneficial—it's essential for improving team responsiveness and achieving better outcomes in high-stakes situations.

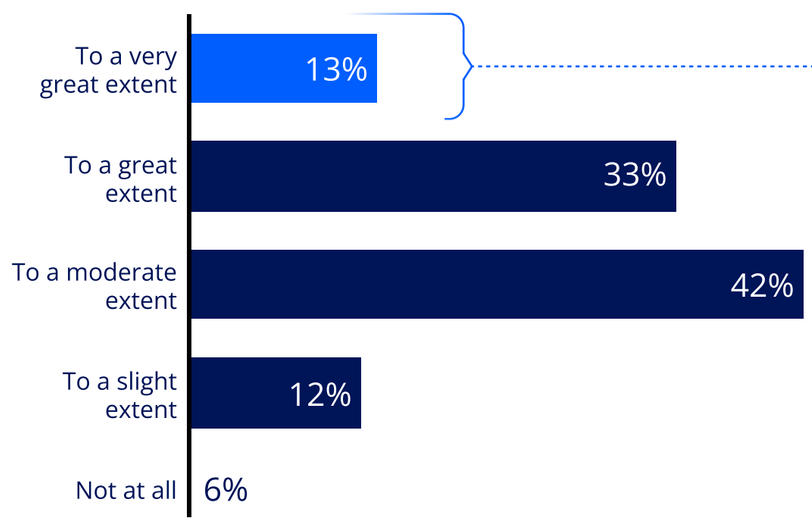


Figure 11:

Impact of Real-Time Notifications on 911 Calls for Team Responsiveness

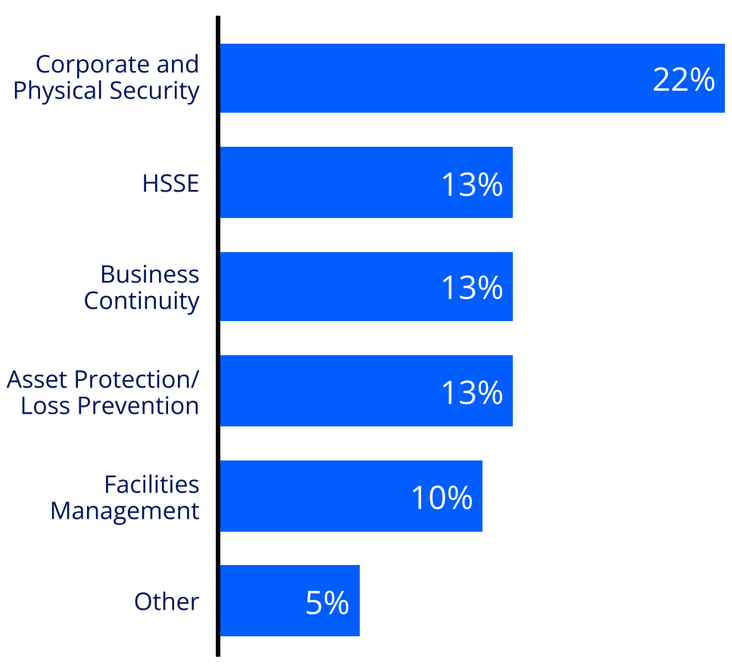


Figure 12:

"To a very great extent" by 'Department'

05

The Cost of Delayed Emergency Notifications on Enterprise Security and Safety

05

Annual Budget Allocation for Emergency Response Coordination

Since technology can't necessarily prevent emergency incidents from occurring, enterprises understand the importance of emergency preparedness in mitigating risk and responding to emergency incidents as efficiently as possible when they occur. When asked how much of their annual budget is allocated to tools, on-site security staff, and training for emergency response coordination, 96% of respondents indicated they spend more than $1 million, with a majority (53%) allocating between $1-5 million and 42% allocating $6-10 million. A small percentage (4%) allocate less than $1 million, and only 1% report budgets exceeding $10 million (Figure 13).

Although enterprises spend an average of $5.1 million annually – confirming that most budgets fall within the mid-range category for emergency preparedness – a significant proportion of companies still rely on manual methods to notify them of emergency incidents at their physical locations (as seen in Figure 2). This suggests that a higher budget allocation is likely needed to invest in more automated tools and systems to improve their capacity for emergency response coordination, especially given the potential financial damage that can be caused as a result of poor response to emergency incidents.

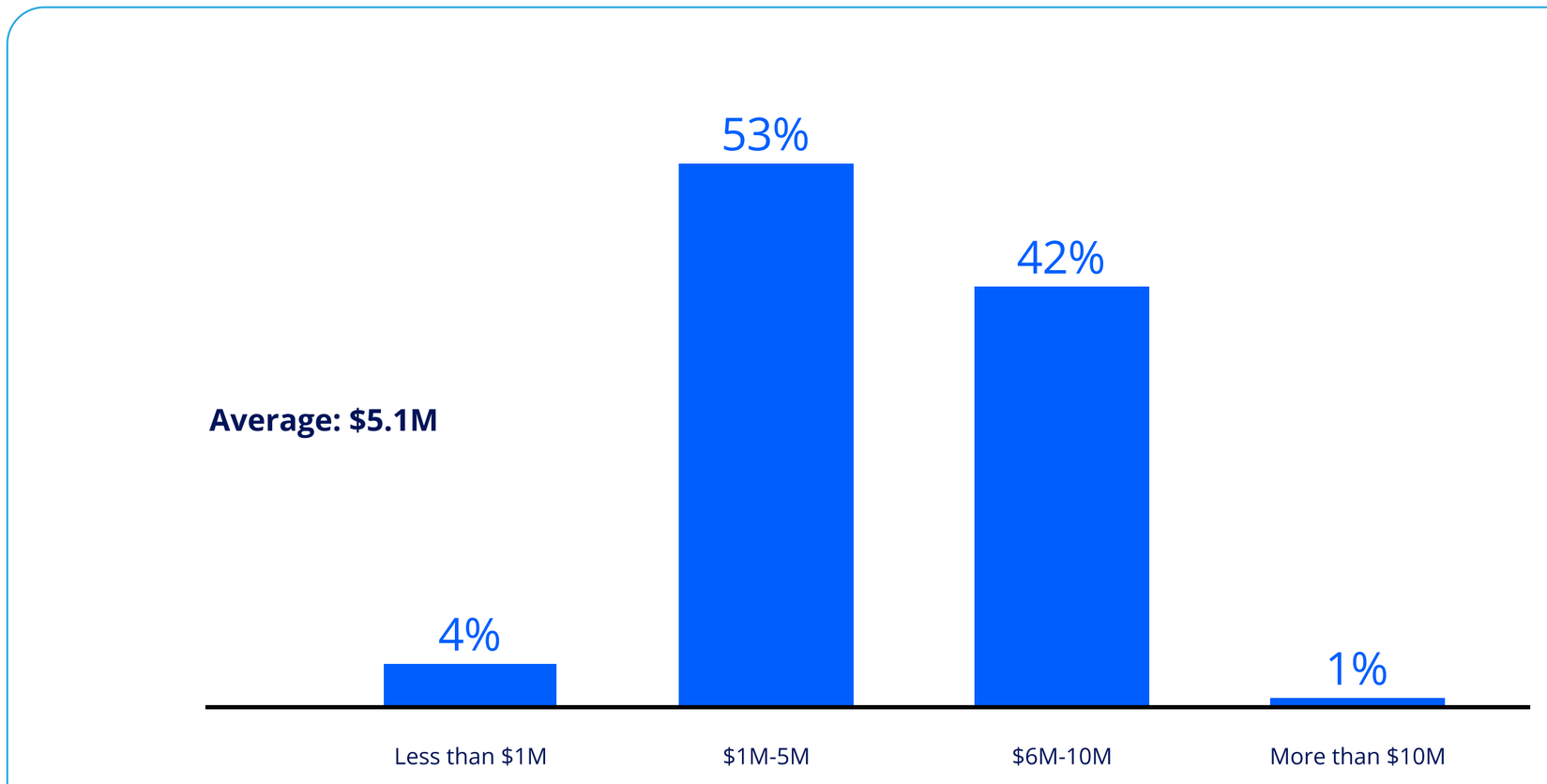


Figure 13:

Annual Budget Allocation for Emergency Response Coordination

05

Financial Impact of Delayed Response to High-Severity Emergencies

Delays when responding to high-severity emergencies can have far-reaching consequences for businesses, ranging from revenue loss and compliance risks to damaged assets and increased operational costs. On average, respondents reported financial losses of $3 million per incident (Figure 14), with the majority (47%) indicating losses between $1-5 million. An additional 18% experienced losses between $5-10 million, underscoring the financial gravity of these delays.

Industries such as Transport and Logistics (32%) are particularly vulnerable (Figure 15), where delays can result in costly incidents like derailments, collisions, or hazardous material spills—putting fleets, assets, and operations at significant risk. Similarly, sectors like Real Estate (22%) and Pharma (20%) face cascading effects from delayed responses, affecting both reputation and operational continuity.

Effective emergency response requires a dual focus: mitigating immediate operational disruptions while maintaining communication across key stakeholders. Delays can create ripple effects—clearing a casino floor, evacuating manufacturing facilities, or halting logistics operations. Each scenario underscores the need for timely, coordinated responses to minimize downtime, protect assets, and reduce overall risk.

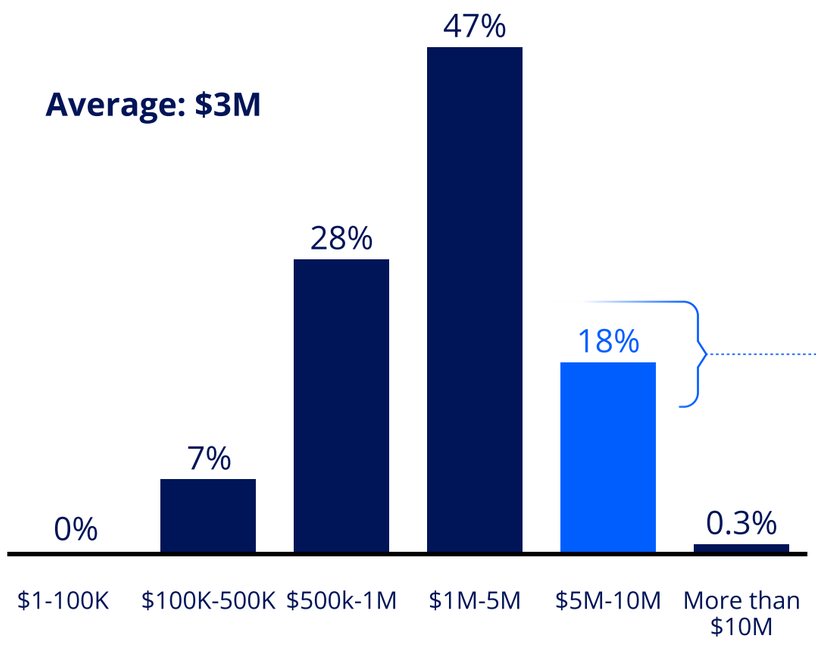


Figure 14:

Financial Impact of Delayed Response to High-Severity Emergencies

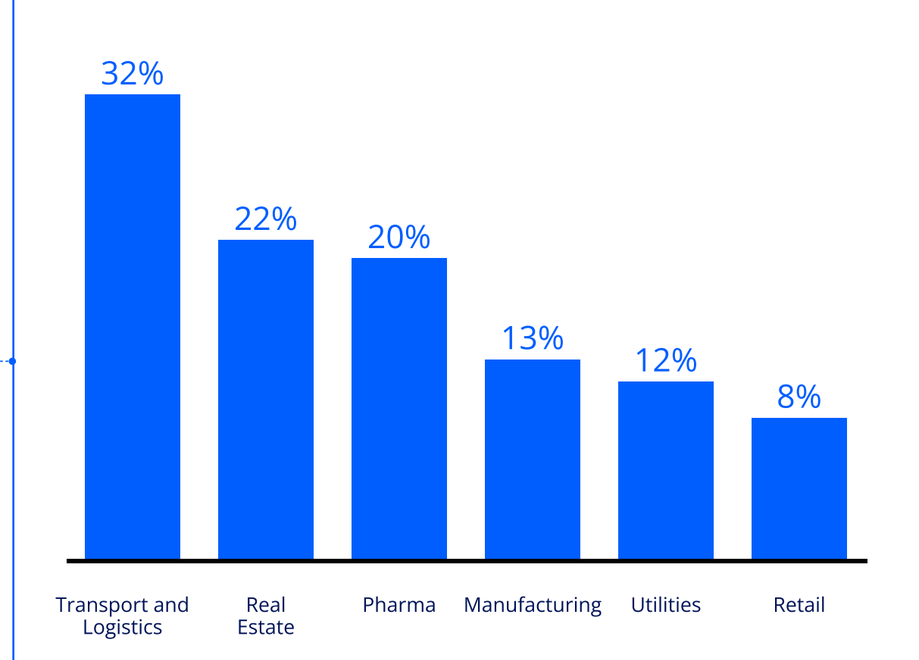


Figure 15:

$5-10M by 'Industry'

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages may add up to more than 100**

05

Leadership Accountability in High-Stakes Emergencies

When emergency responses are delayed due to late notifications, leaders feel the weight of their responsibility. 79% of respondents agreed they could have done more to ensure better outcomes, with 47% strongly agreeing—reflecting a broad acknowledgment of gaps in current processes (Figure 16).

As the financial damages from delayed responses grow, so does the pressure to perform: In incidents with financial damages exceeding $5 million, 87% of leaders—including 72% strongly agreeing—acknowledge that their organizations could have done better.

These findings underscore a critical insight for today's CSOs:

> Emergency response isn't just about reacting; it's about anticipating and proactively addressing vulnerabilities before high-stakes scenarios escalate.
>
> The ability to anticipate and address delays at every stage isn't just an operational imperative—it's a reflection of effective leadership. This starts with investing in real-time systems to mitigate risks, enhance accountability, and inspire confidence in your organization's response readiness.

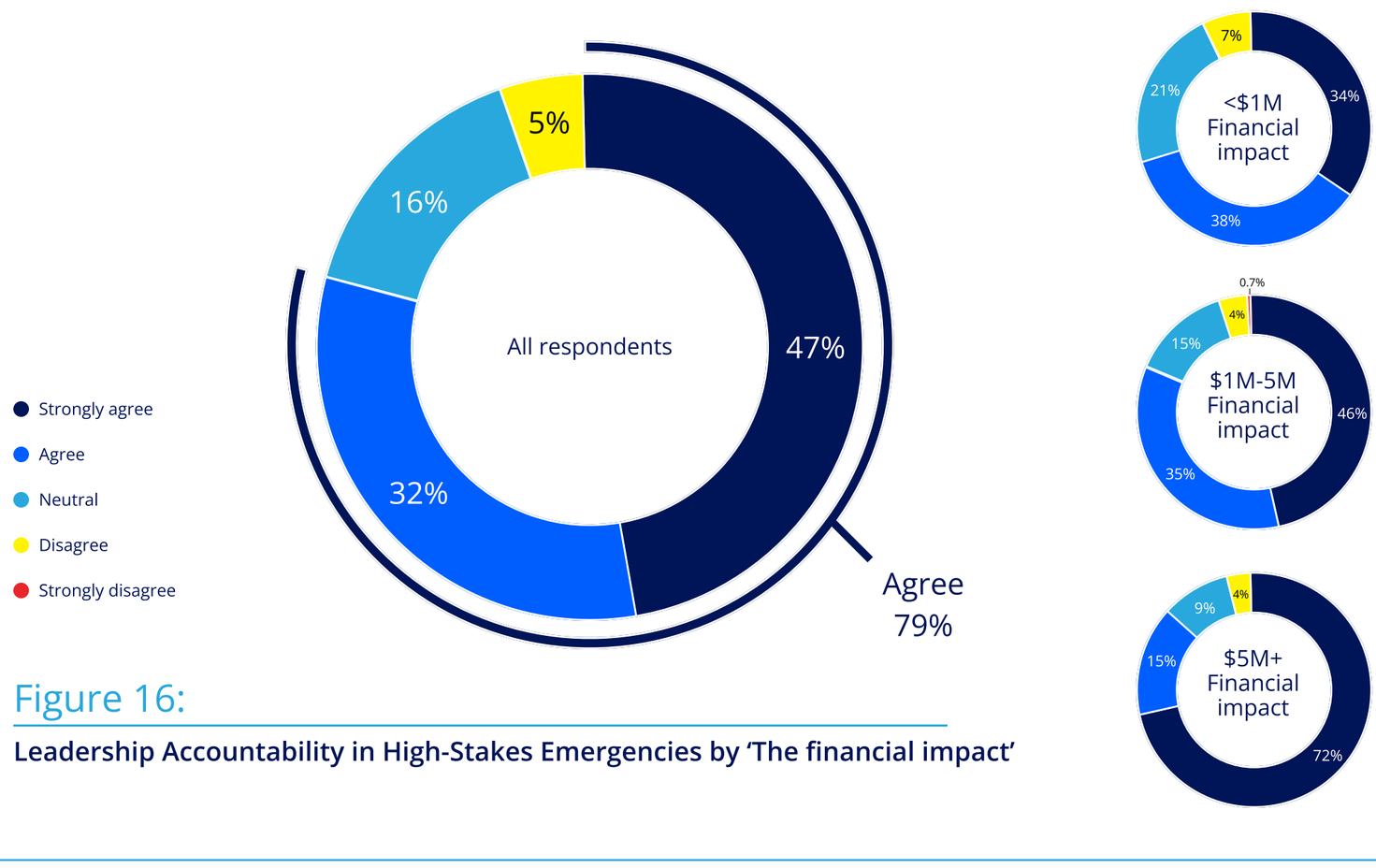


Figure 16:

Leadership Accountability in High-Stakes Emergencies by 'The financial impact'

Who We Surveyed

Industry, Company Size, Department, Job Seniority

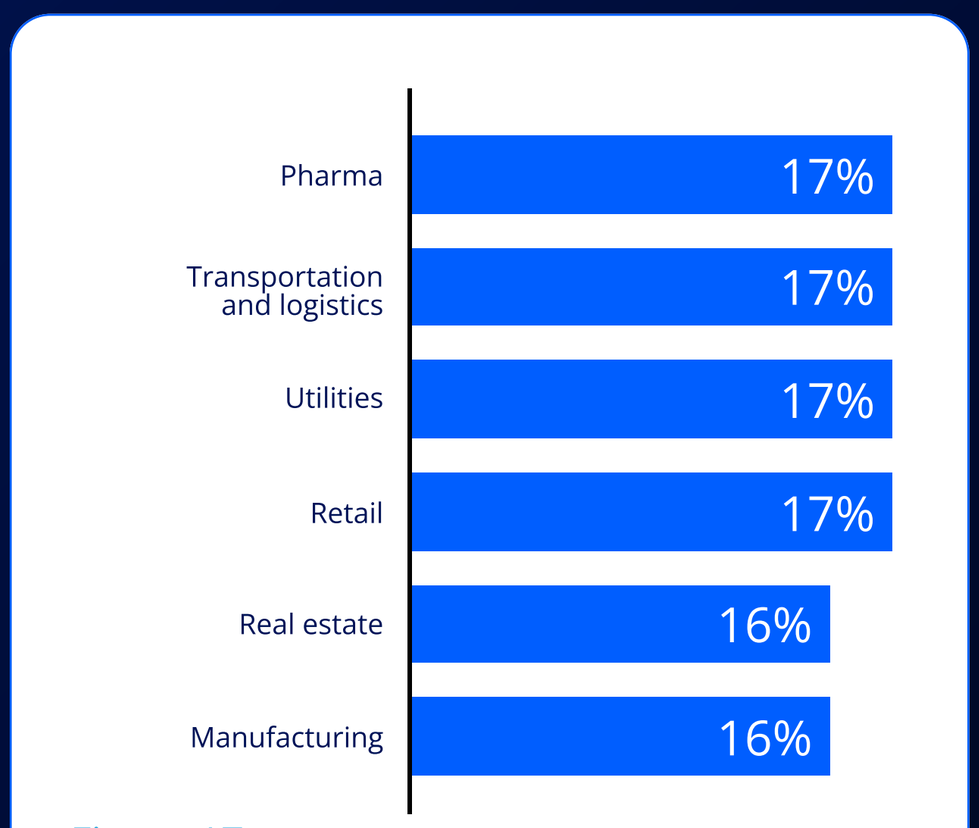


Figure 17:

Industry

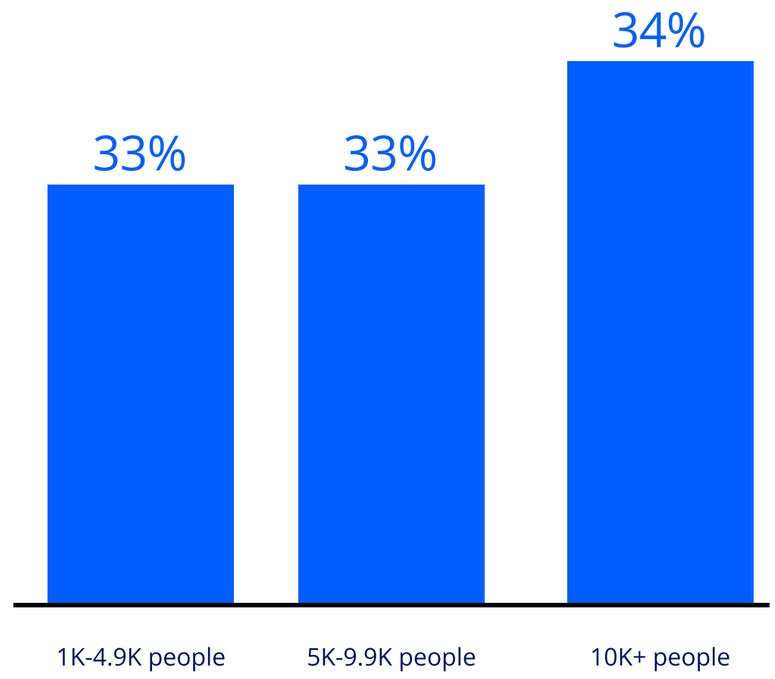


Figure 18:

Company Size

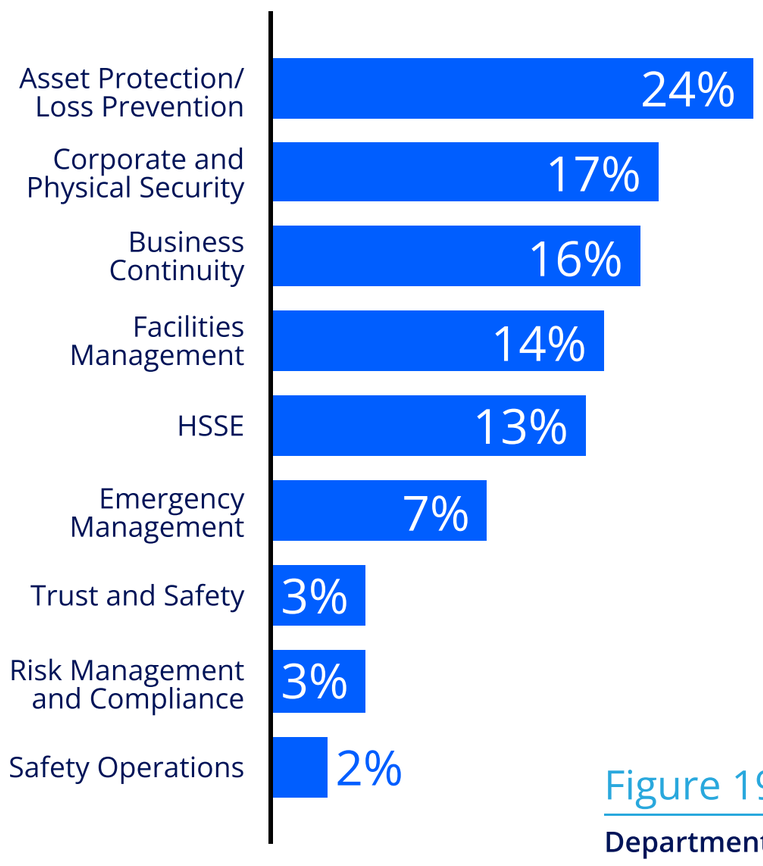


Figure 19:

Department

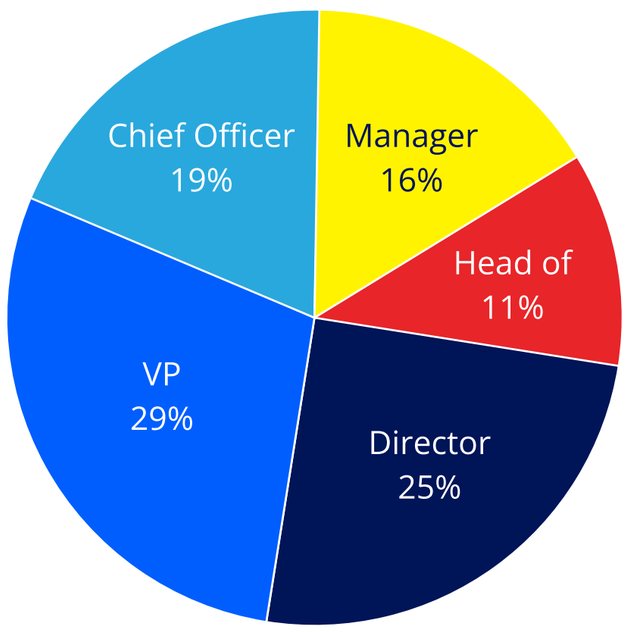


Figure 20:

Job Seniority

About RapidSOS

07

RapidSOS is an intelligent safety company that harnesses artificial and human intelligence to fuse life-saving data from 540M+ connected devices, apps, and sensors from 200+ global technology companies to over 21,000 public safety agencies in six countries. Whether there's an unsafe moment or an emergency, RapidSOS Ready devices, vehicles, homes, or buildings deliver essential data to the right place when it matters most.

Book a Call with an Expert

https://rapidsos.com/request-a-demo

Visit Us for More Information

RapidSOS