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Survey Of Laboratory Safety Culture



Ben Owens, Jordan Clark, Veronica Dahir, Kacy Redd

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Purpose of the Survey

- Follow-up to *APLU Guide to Implementing a Safety Culture*
- Evaluate the current status of our safety programs
- Gauge progress on implementing a safety culture on our campuses
- Share ideas for improving safety culture



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Survey Format

- **Survey sent to VPRs of APLU member institutions**
 - **153 institutions contacted**
 - **29% response (45 responses)**
 - **One survey response per institution**
- **20 total questions**
 - *4 questions related to institutional characterization*
 - *2 questions related to status of safety program since 2016*
 - *12 questions on current status of safety program*
 - *2 requests for examples of safety program improvements – recent and planned*



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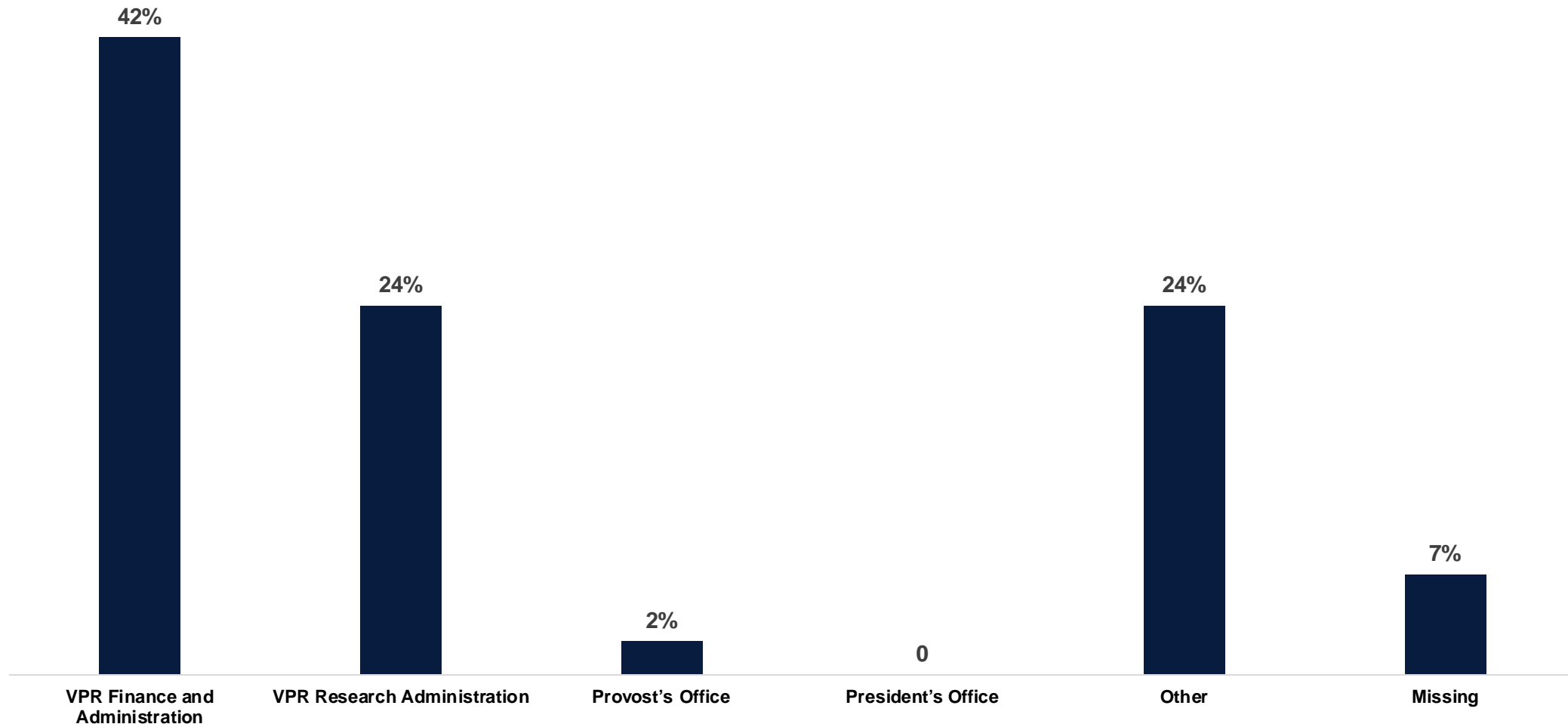
Institutional Characterization



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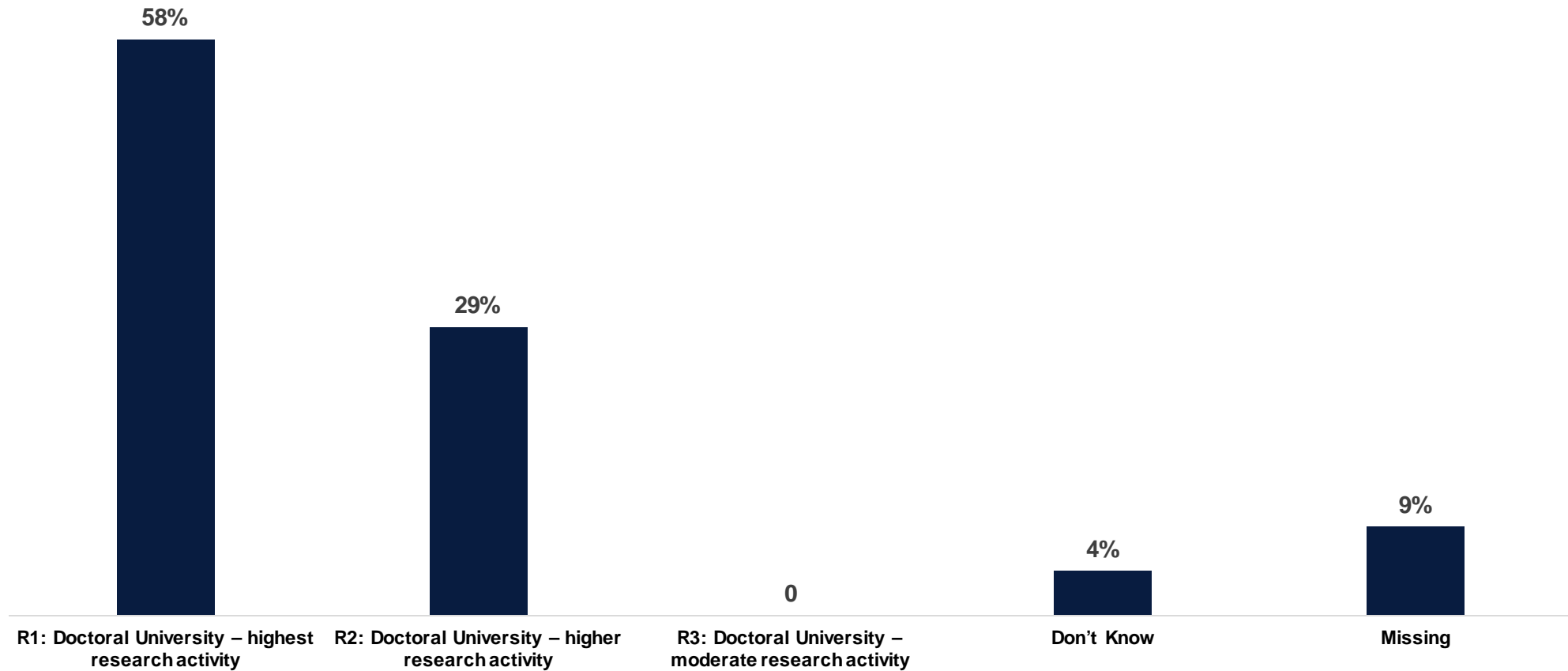
Who does the primary responsibility of laboratory safety fall under?



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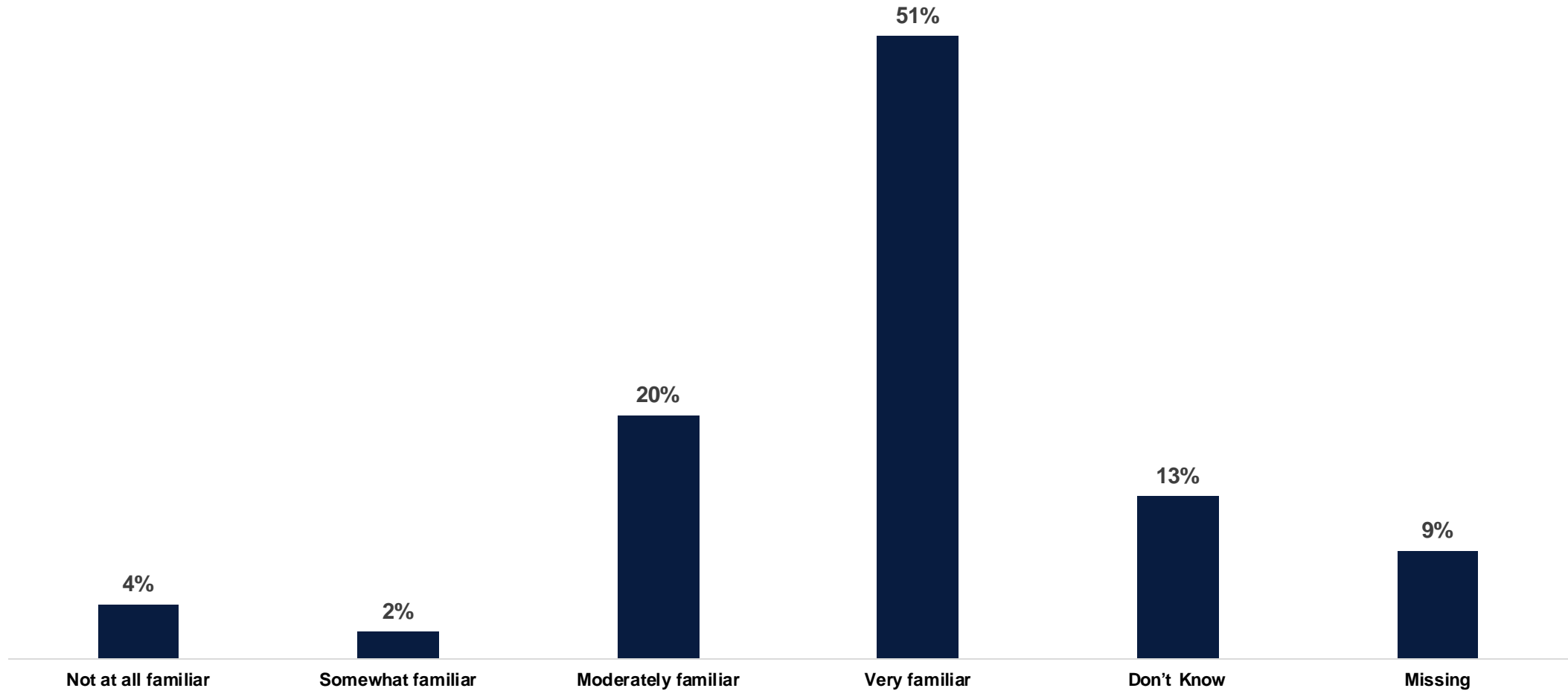
In which of the following categories is your institution categorized by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education?



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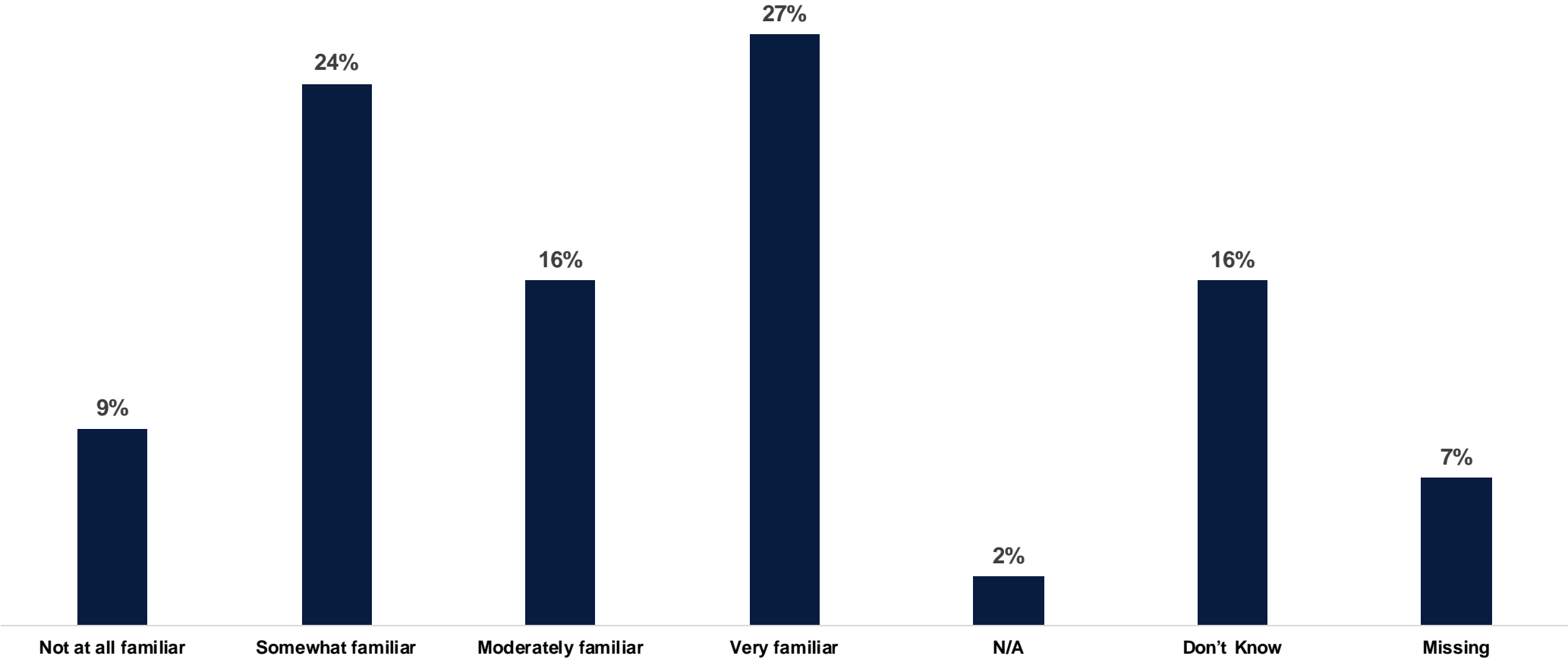
Please indicate your EH&S office's overall familiarity with the APLU recommendations



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Please indicate your institutional administrators' overall familiarity with the APLU recommendations



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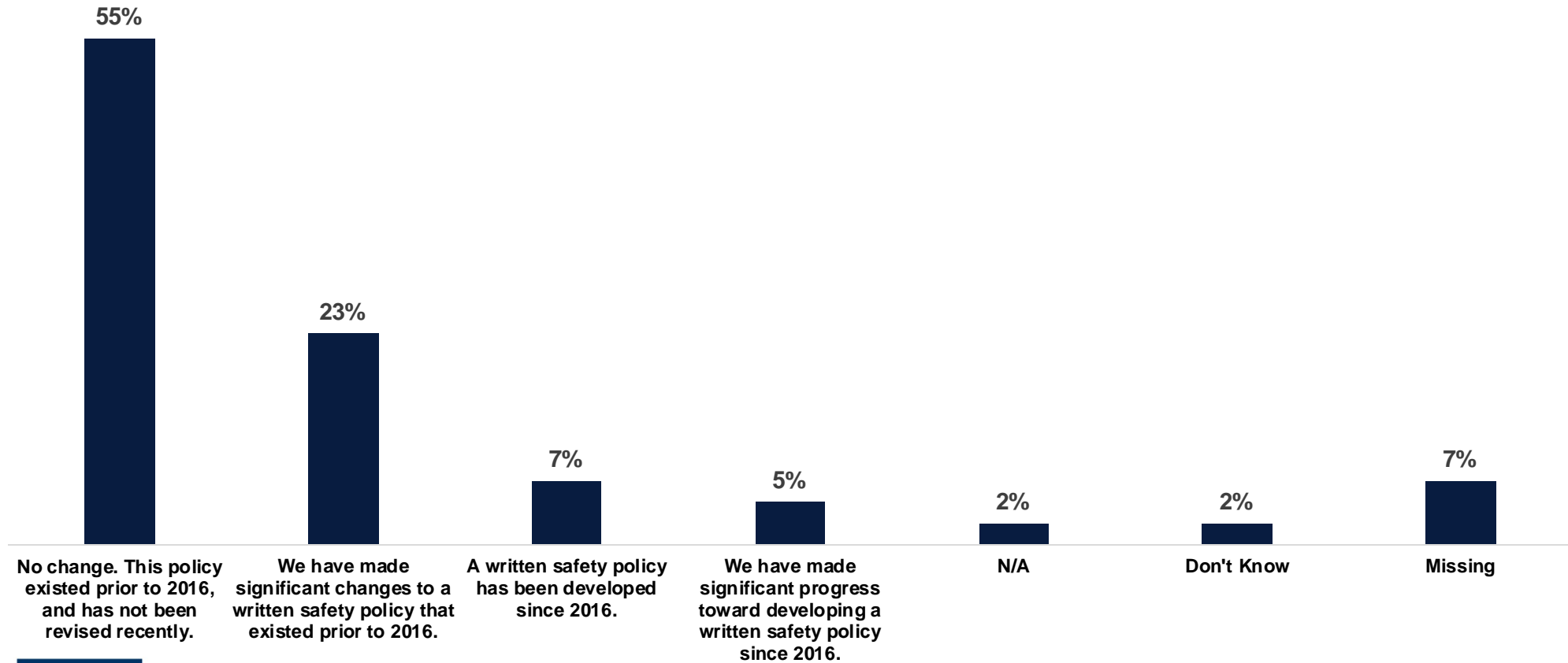
Status Since 2016



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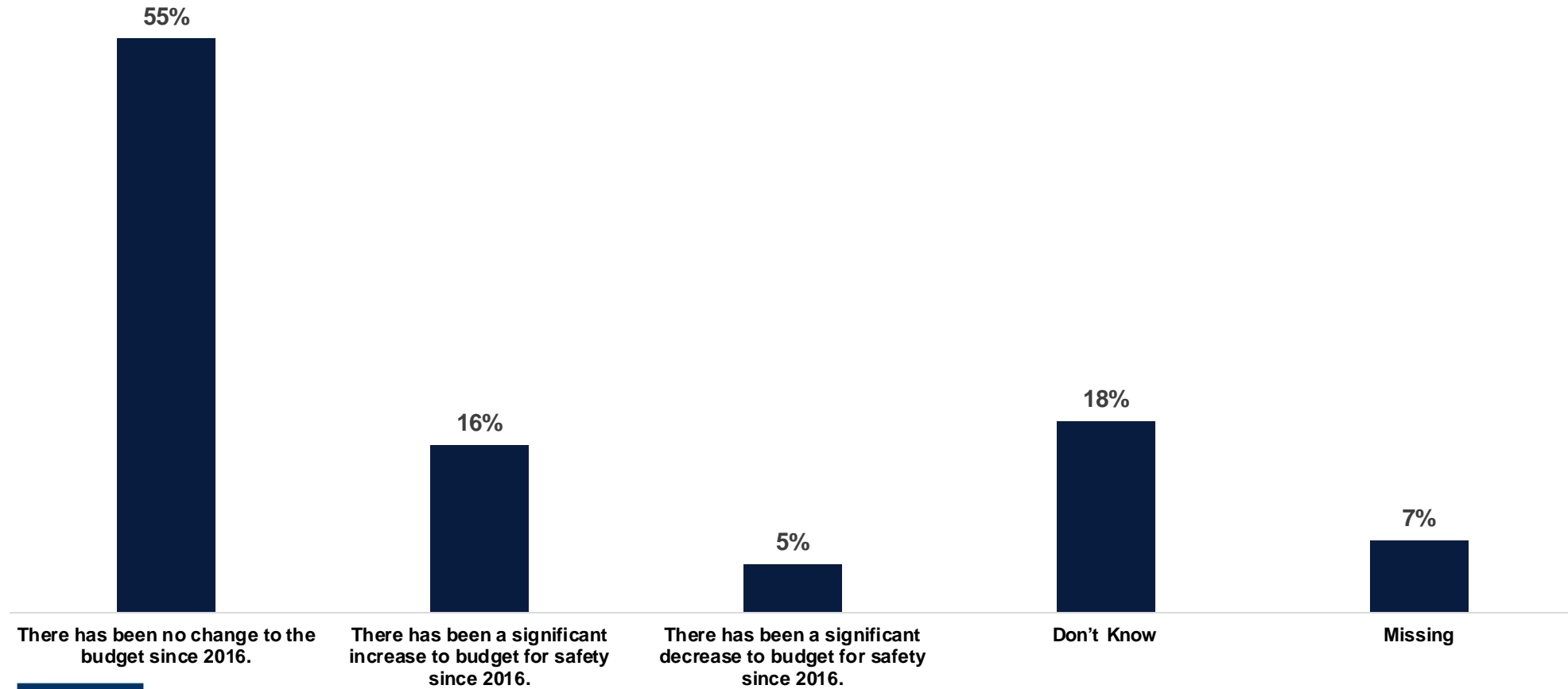
The institution has a written policy that establishes its commitment to safety and defines safety roles and responsibilities



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The institution has budgeted resources that establishes its commitment to safety



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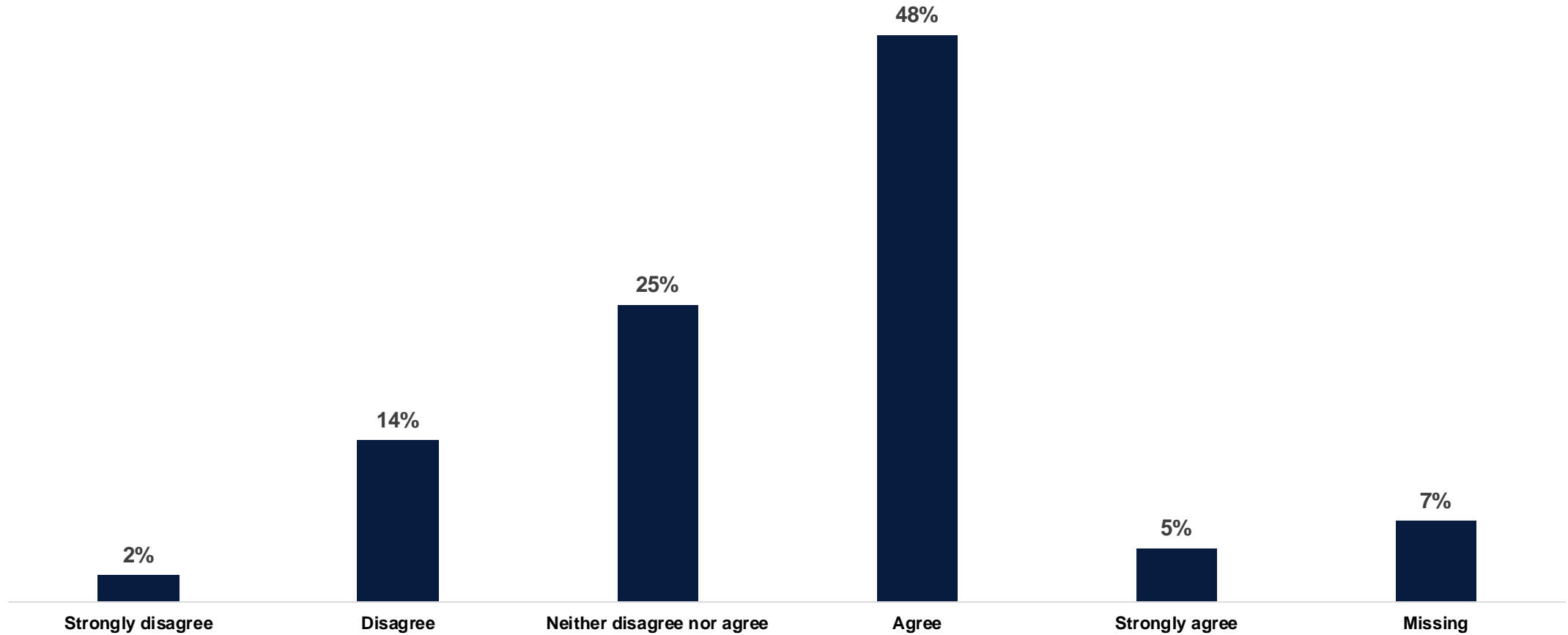
Current Status



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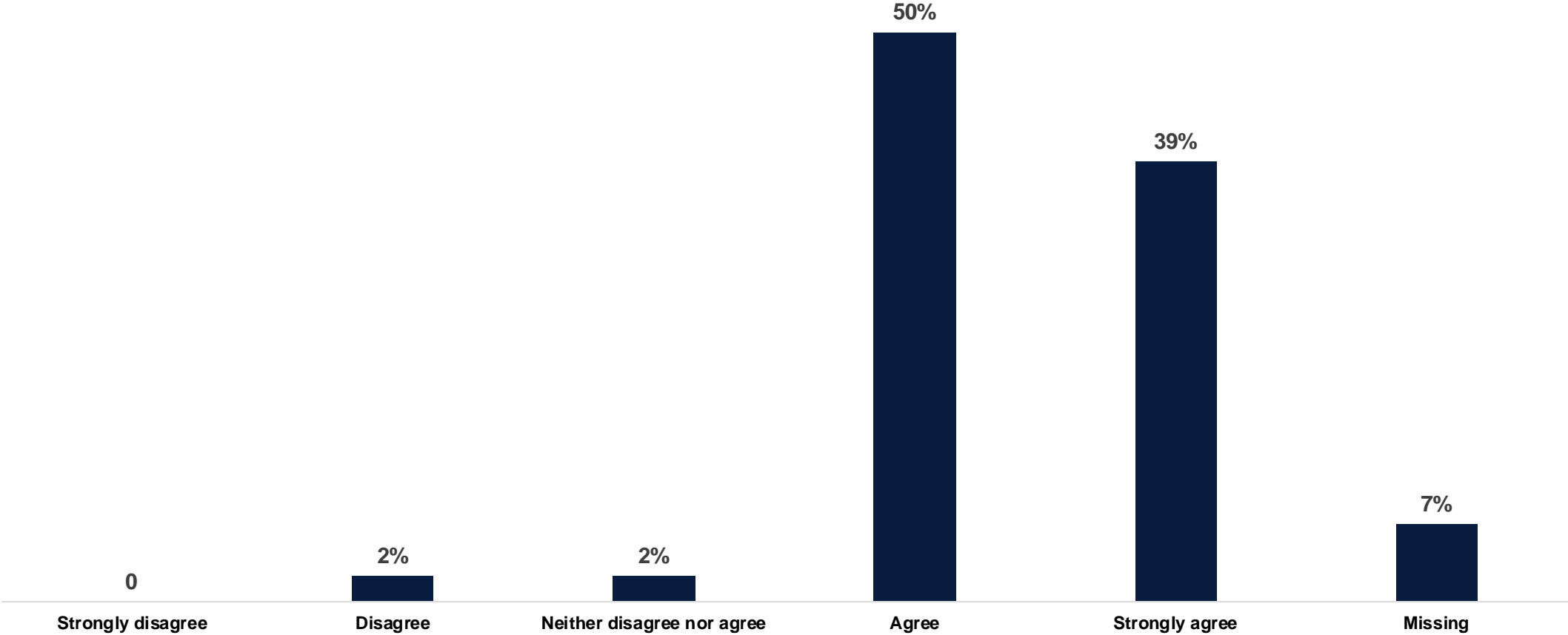
A sufficient budget is designated on an ongoing basis to support a proactive safety program



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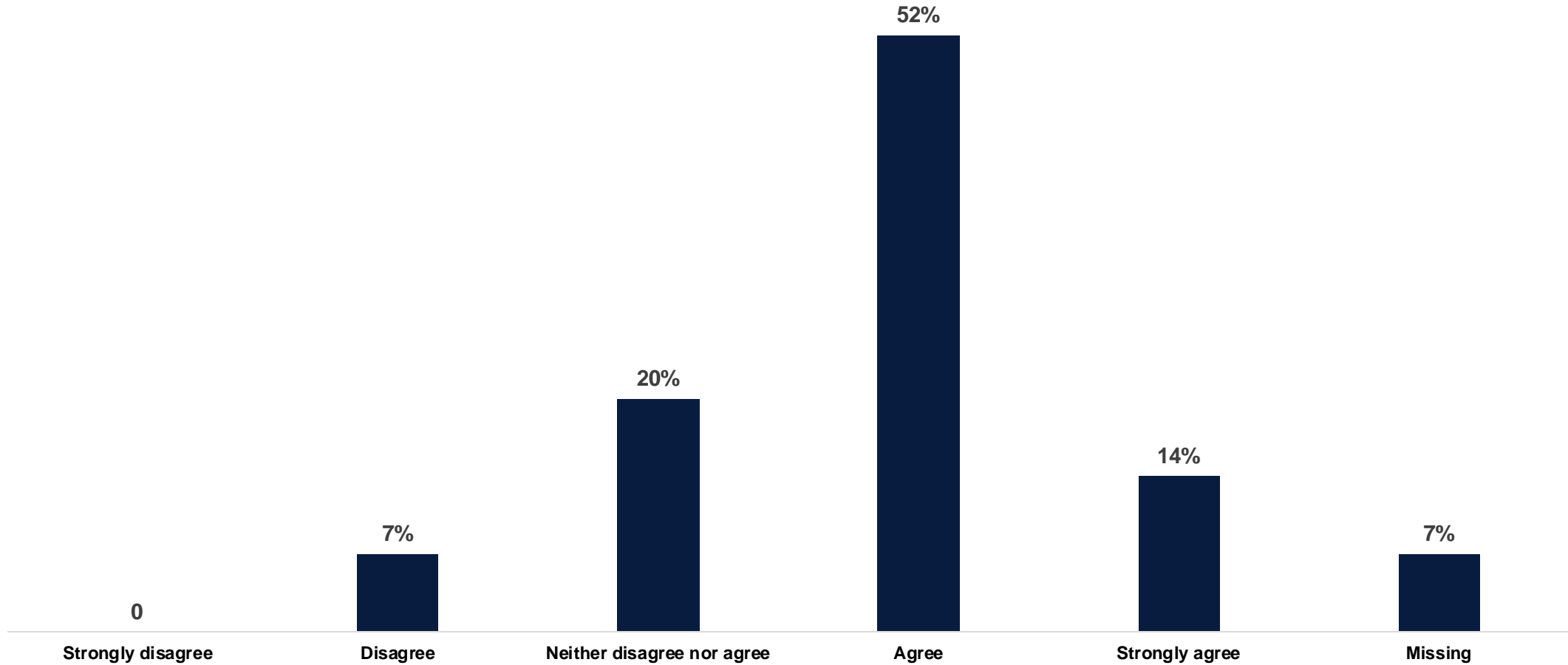
Safety education and training are provided to faculty and staff who are involved in science and engineering teaching and research



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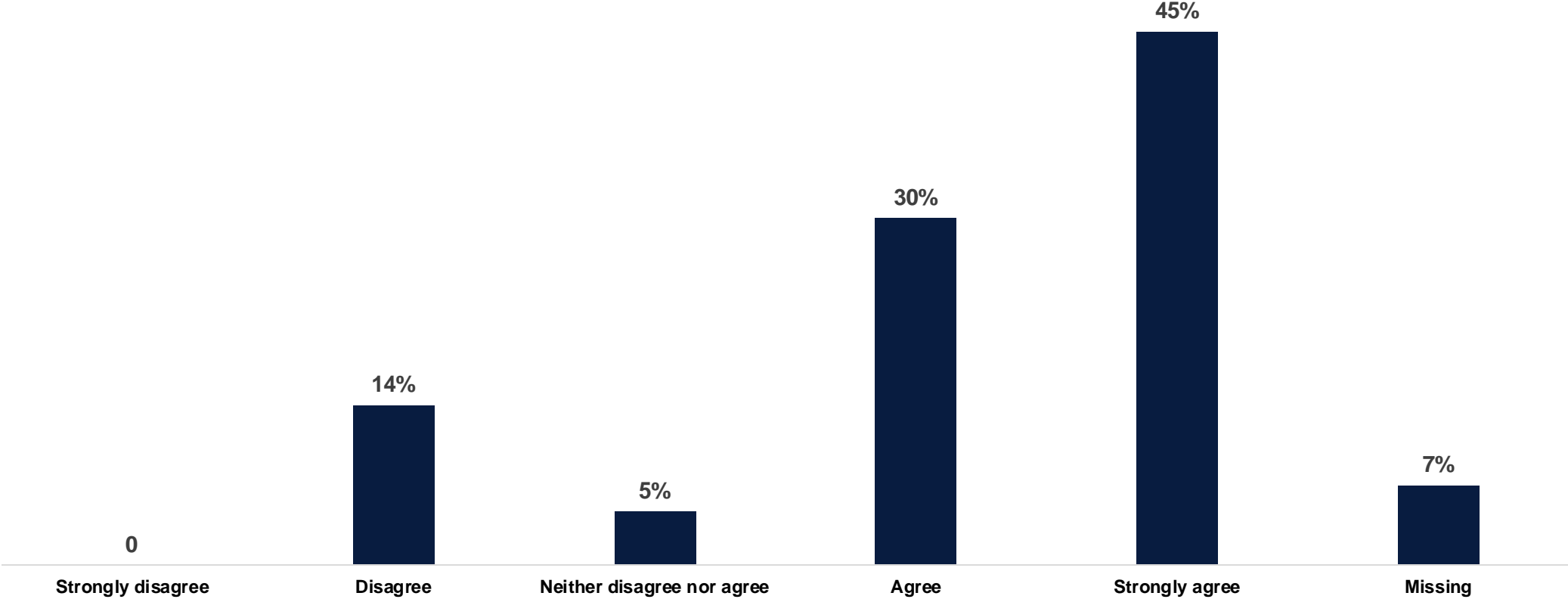
Education on safety principles and safe work practices is integrated into science and engineering teaching and research activities



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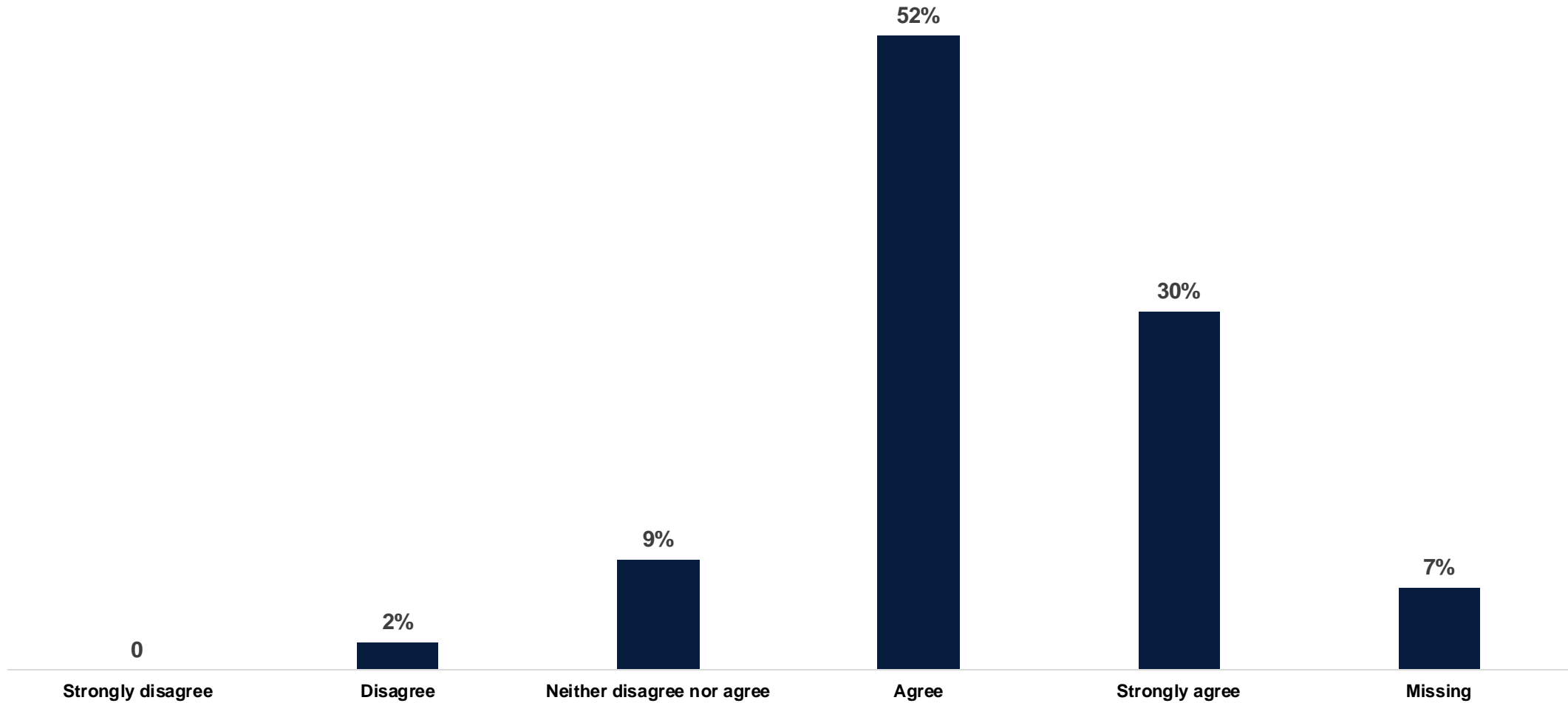
Safety committees comprised of faculty, staff, safety professionals, and students are established and functional



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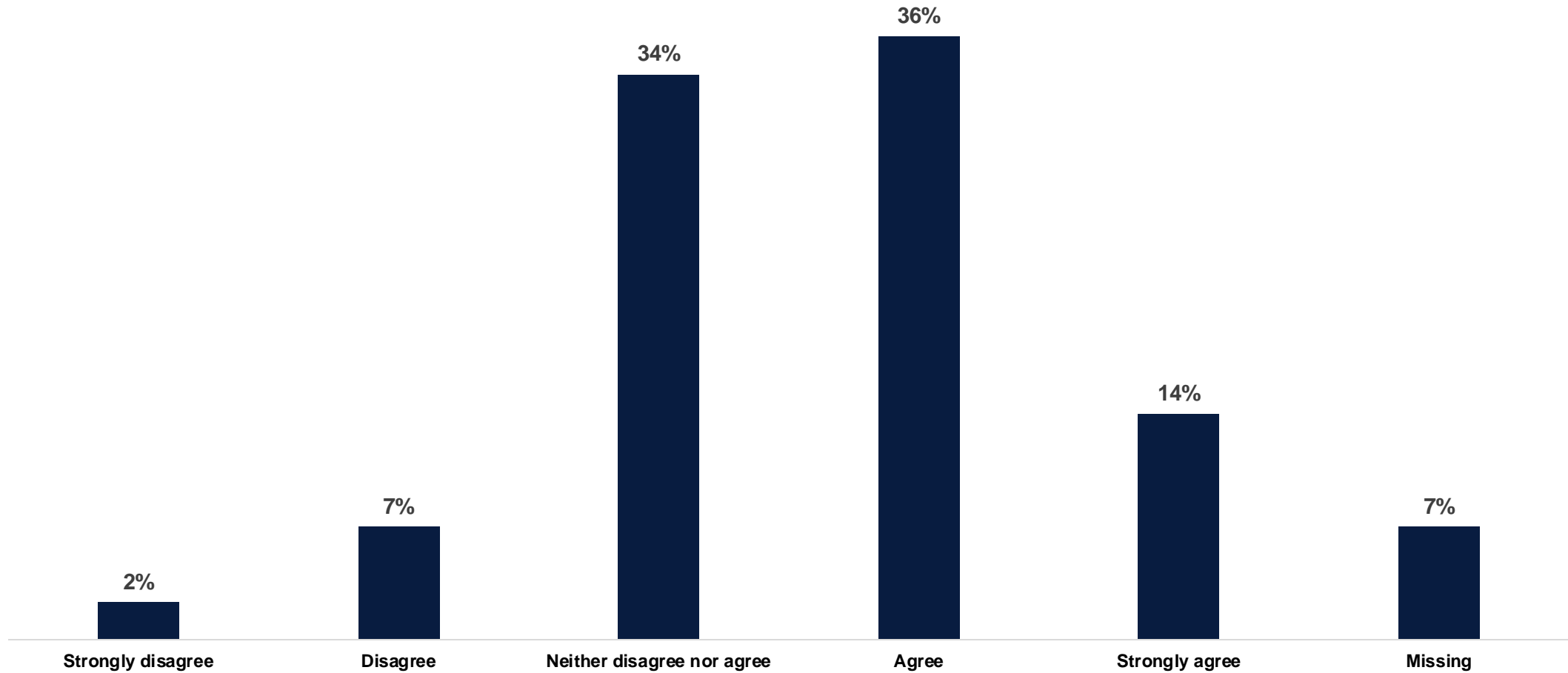
A collaborative relationship exists between the EH&S office and faculty and staff



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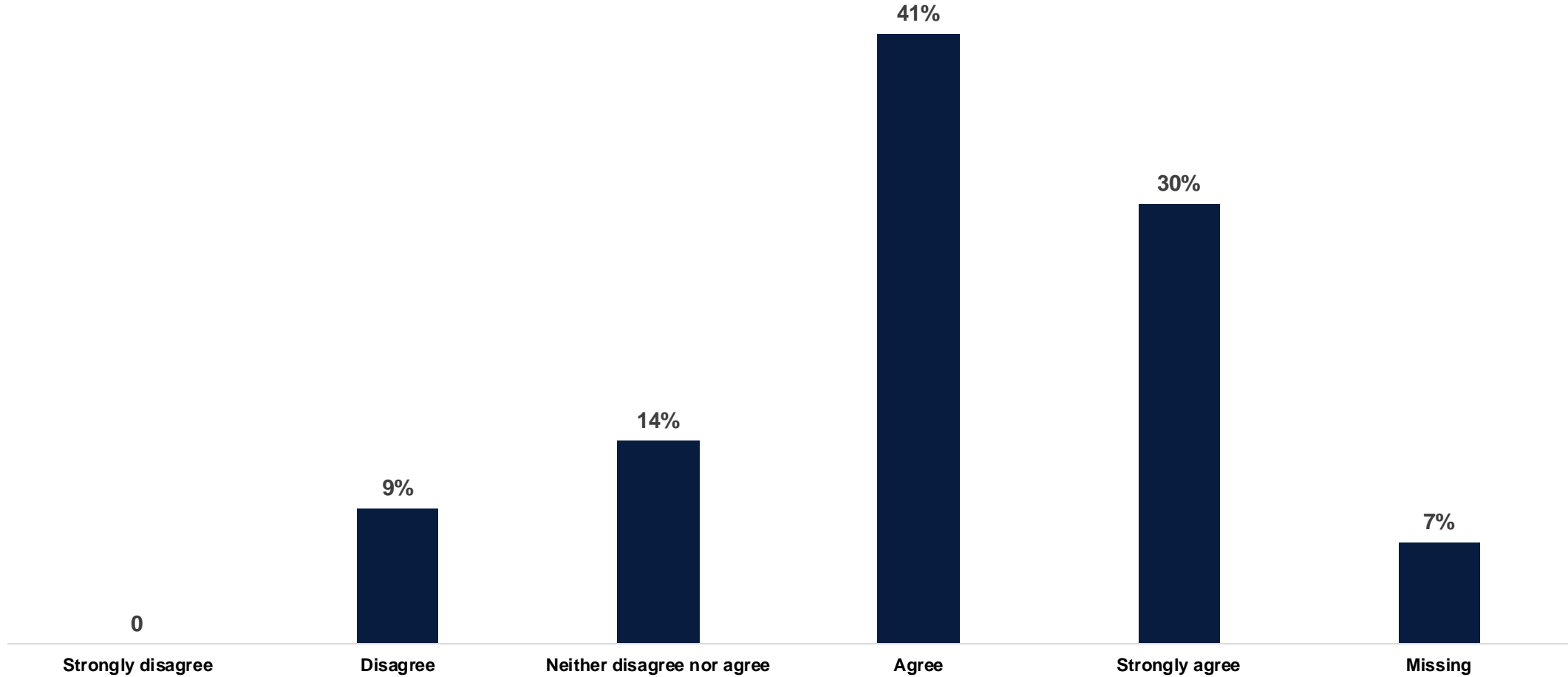
Risk assessment is an integral component of teaching and research activities



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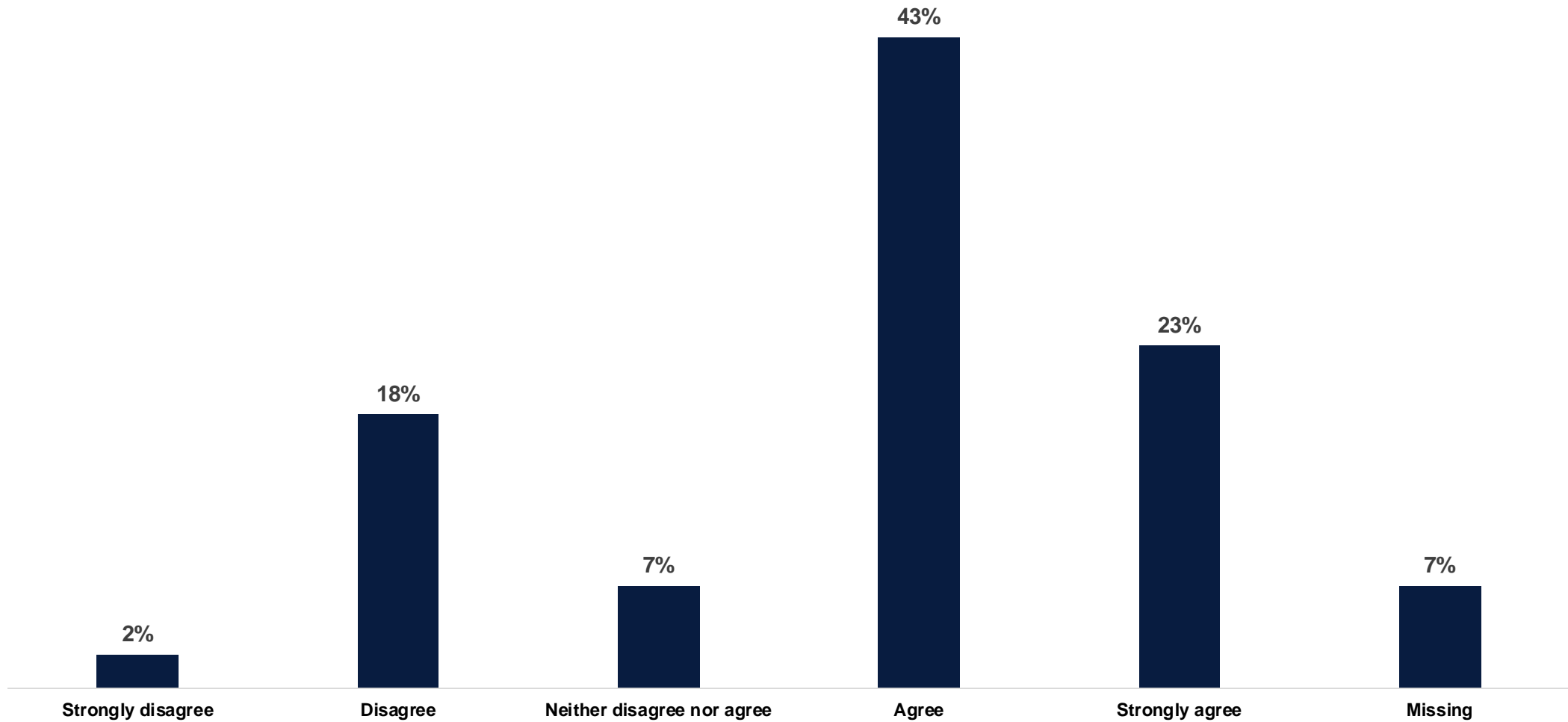
Proactive safety assessments of laboratory and field research activities are routinely conducted



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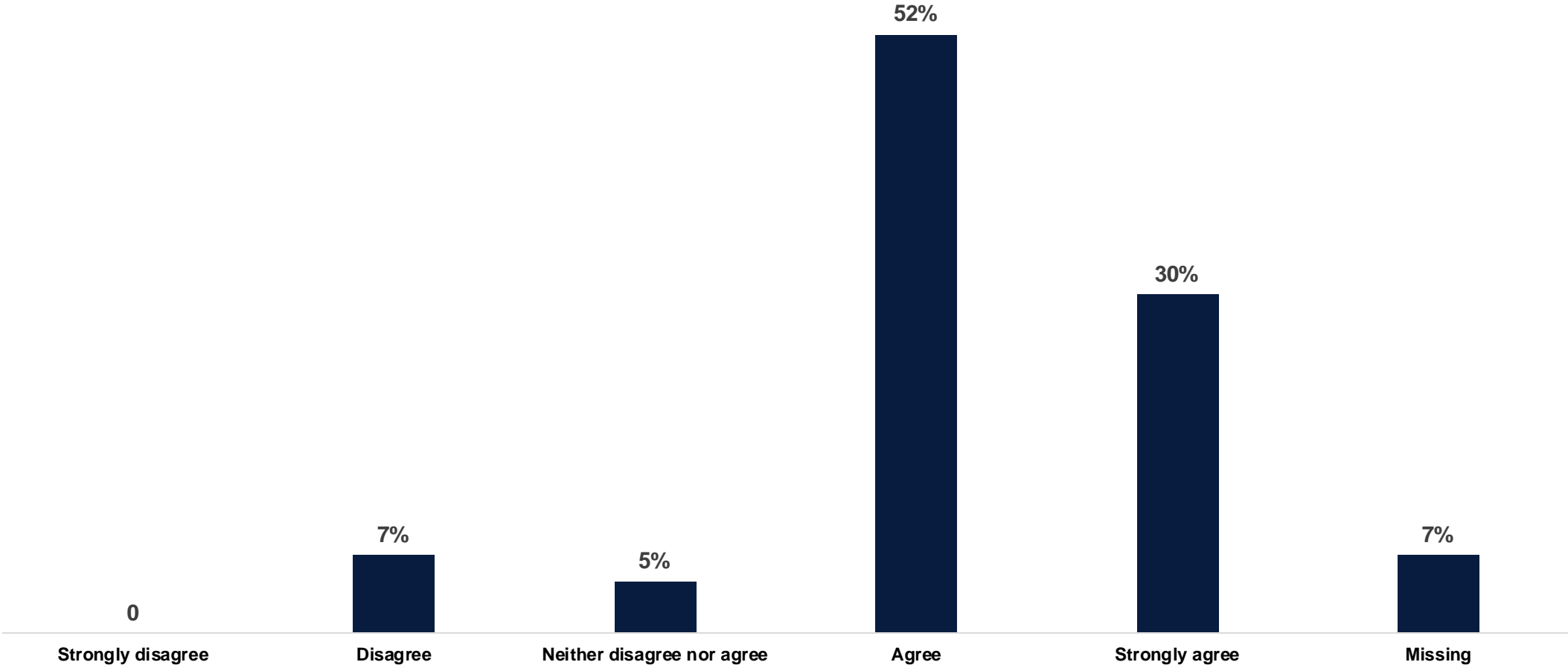
Incidents and near-misses are reported and lessons learned are communicated



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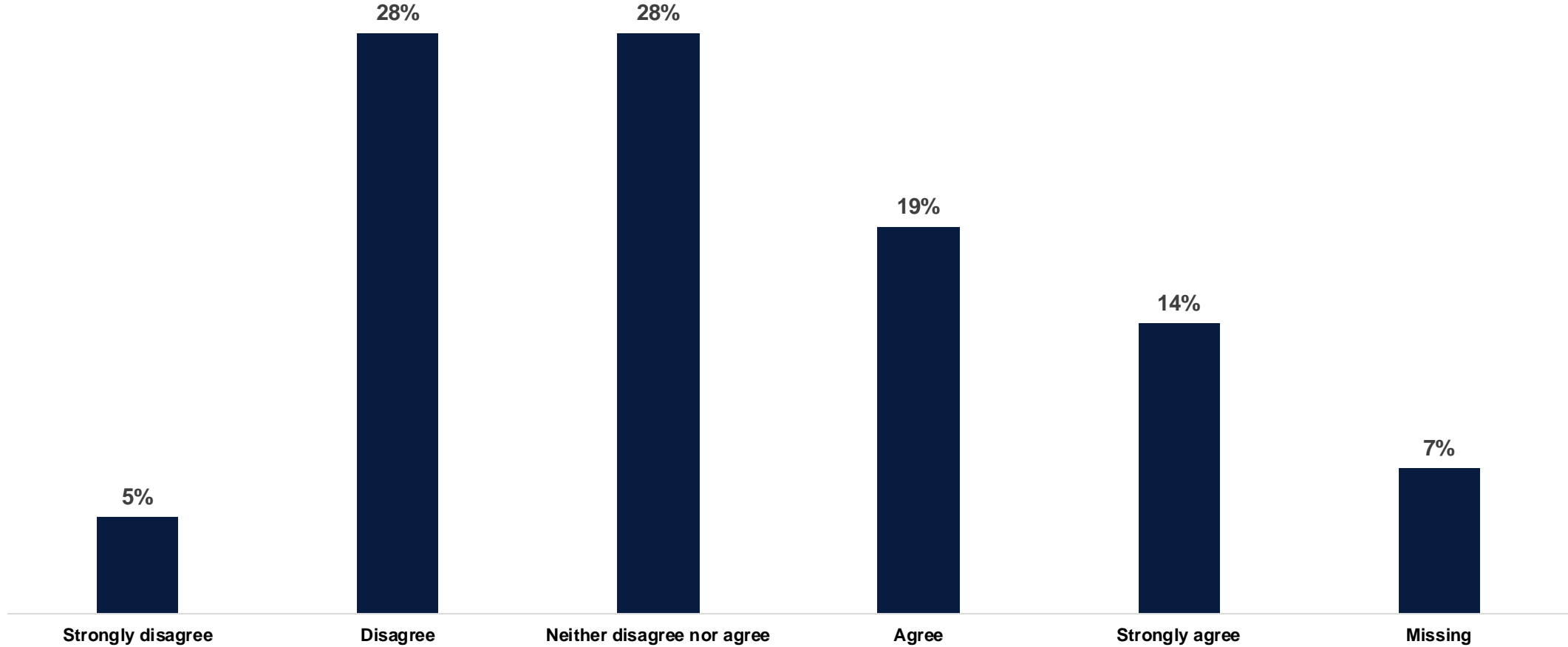
There is ongoing review of safety programs to identify deficiencies and opportunities for improvement



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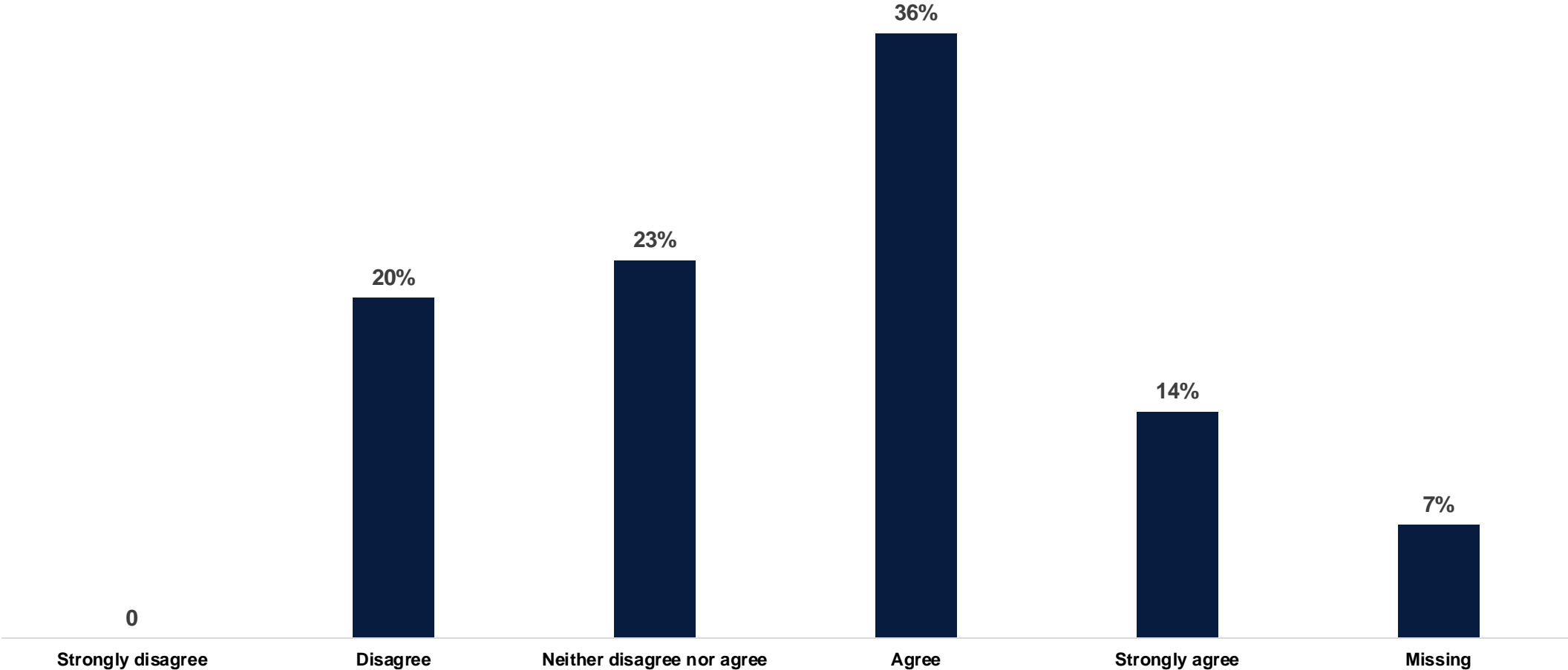
A process to recognize and reward good safety performance has been implemented



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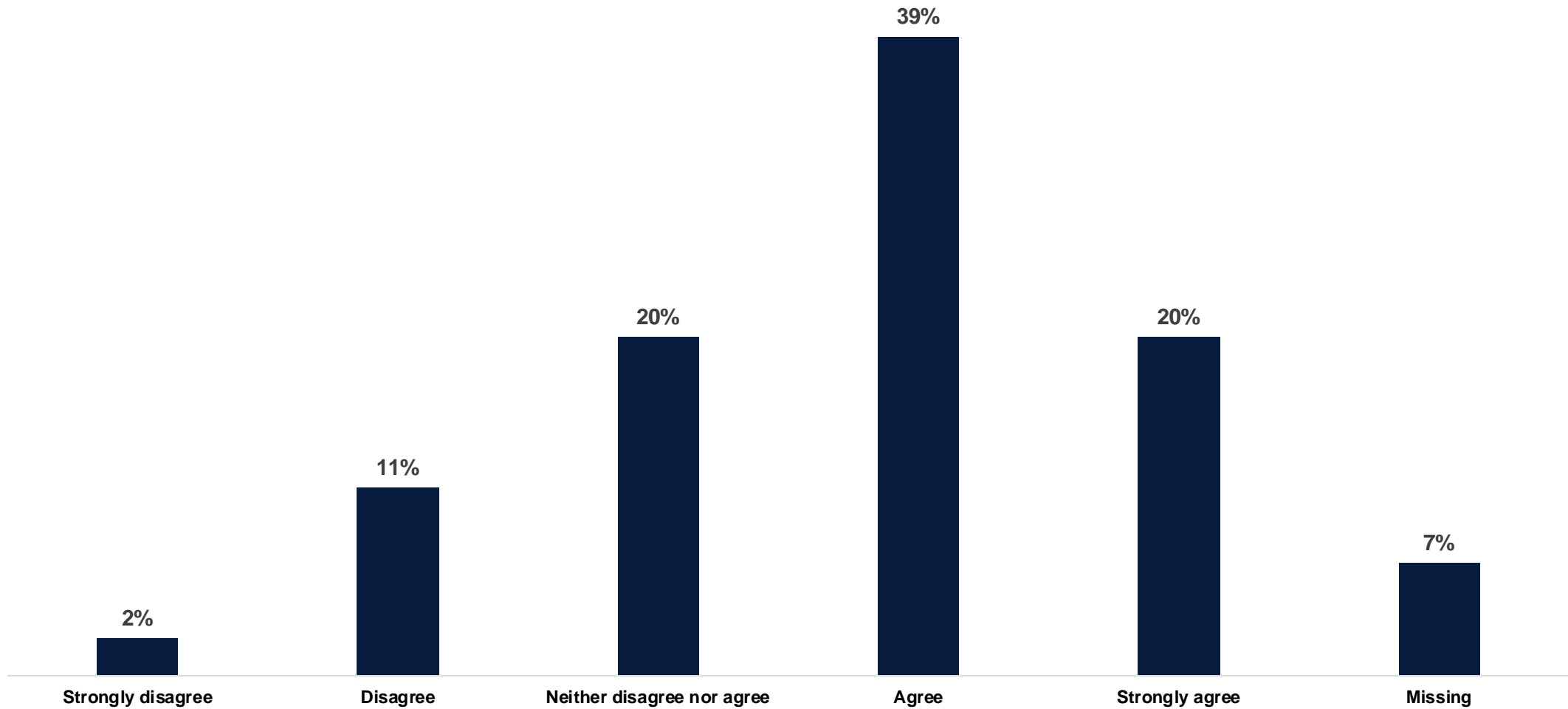
Safety objectives and performance are tracked and communicated across the institution



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Overall, our institution has recently made significant progress on implementing a safety culture



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Open Ended Responses



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Please share with us specific examples of how your institution has recently made improvements to its safety culture (Optional)

- **Safety Committees**
 - Established new committees or refocused existing committee to improve laboratory safety culture
 - One committee co-chaired by VPR and VPAF
- **Improved Safety Communication**
 - Developed safety scorecard to communicate to deans on a quarterly basis
 - Direct communication from senior leadership regarding expectations for conducting safe research
 - Development of institution-specific implementation plan (for APLU recommendations)
 - Included “lessons learned” at annual research symposium
- **Recognition of Safety Performance**
 - Established award program to recognize individuals and lab groups



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Please share with us specific examples of how your institution has recently made improvements to its safety culture (Optional)

- **Partnership between EH&S office and academics**
 - Established jointly funded safety budget for addressing safety issues
 - Changing EH&S office from regulatory focus to support and service
- **Organizational Changes**
 - Organizational structure modified to support APLU recommendations
 - Established/hired new safety positions
- **Safety Initiatives**
 - Developed online incident/near-miss reporting system
 - Established university chemical distribution center



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Please share with us specific examples of how your institution plans to make improvements to its safety culture in the future (Optional)

- **Improved Safety Communication**
 - Implementation of safety culture initiative jointly developed by VPR and VPAF, and endorsed by president
 - Improved collaboration between VPR and VPAF
- **Safety Committees**
 - Implementation of faculty committee recommendations to improve safety culture, with regular reports to senior leadership
 - Expansion of safety committees to include graduate student safety committee and engage more employees in university safety culture
- **Safety Training**
 - Expand training to reach new faculty sooner after they arrive on campus
 - Increase safety training as part of student instruction



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Please share with us specific examples of how your institution plans to make improvements to its safety culture in the future (Optional)

- **Safety Initiatives**
 - Implementation of incident/near-miss reporting, and lessons learned
 - Acquisition and implementation of electronic lab safety management system
 - Expand laboratory assessment program and include faculty/researchers in the assessment process
 - Establish program to provide PPE to labs
 - Conduct laboratory-based incident response exercise with local emergency responders
- **Improved Safety Policies**
 - Implement a roles and responsibilities policy
 - Developing field safety guidelines



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Summary

- **We feel positive about our safety programs and are improving the safety culture on our campuses**
- **In general:**
 - **Written safety policies are established**
 - **Safety training is provided to faculty and staff; safety education is generally integrated into teaching and research**
 - **Safety committees are established and functional**
 - **EH&S offices work collaboratively with faculty and staff**
 - **Proactive safety assessments are routinely conducted**
 - **Accidents and near-misses are reported and lessons learned are communicated, but some feel that they need to improve in this area**
 - **Safety programs are evaluated for opportunities to improve**



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Summary

- **Areas for improvement**
 - Safety budgets are generally adequate, but mostly haven't increased since 2016
 - Risk assessment is integrated into teaching and research, but many campuses feel that they need to do more
 - Recognition and reward for good safety performance needs to be improved
- **Recent improvements**
 - New or refocused safety committees to improve safety culture
 - Improved communication of safety programs and expectations
 - Programs to recognize and reward good safety performance
 - Partnerships between EH&S office and academics
- **Planned improvements**
 - Initiatives to improve communication of safety programs and expectations
 - New or refocused safety committees to improve safety culture
 - New safety initiatives



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Acknowledgements

- **Dr. Mridul Gautam, Vice President for Research and Innovation, UNR**
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