



North Cottesloe Surf Life Saving Club

Member Survey Results 2009

Executive Summary

It is always pleasing when a survey attracts a good response rate, which shows a high interest in the running of the surf club by the members. With an approximately 10% response rate, and the cross-section of age groups and genders aligned with the membership numbers, the response is indicative of the membership.

Generally the responses were positive with 70% feeling that the Club was excellent or had never been better. Club administration had a strong level of support. The issues voiced around general areas revolved around keeping a community feel and involvement even with a growing membership size, and also ensuring that the focus is on the core reason for being a surf club - keeping the beaches safe.

In a year of economic slow down and some difficult financial times, it's not surprising that the comments in the financial arena encourage prudent and thoughtful budgeting and expenditure. This was especially with consideration to the planned capital works and there was call for careful long term financial planning for this investment.

The response on facilities while enthusiastic also highlighted the need for more space to accommodate growing numbers. The aging equipment in the gym and general security were the two main areas of concern. The planned Club renovations will address many concerns including the refurbishment of gym equipment and we will also have a first aid training/meeting room and 2 large training general purpose rooms.

Surf sports issues centred on development of athletes and maintaining equality of focus across all disciplines. A call for more coaches and care of equipment was also raised, as well as a feeling that we need more work in swimming, promoting juniors and training programs in various disciplines and correct use of equipment. The Club has recently appointed a new director of coaching to improve, enhance, attract, and retain athletes across all surf sports disciplines. Subsidies for the purchase of board and ski equipment is designed to attract and retain competitors.

The issues in competition were diverse and included developing competition in the less popular sports, lack of competitors, maintain the elite, supporting beginners and non-elite and recognition of officials. The competition arena will have a major focus on senior carnivals, State Titles at Secret Harbour, and Nationals at Kurrawa. Swimming, IRB crew, and board paddlers will have a lot of focus in development from grass-roots and talent identification outside the Club. Beginners are supported with equipment made available and swim coaching at Claremont pool twice per week.

The issues facing education were around getting enough volunteers for the huge workload, maintaining consistency in education, looking after juniors, planning courses in advance and

tougher penalties for not being prepared for requalifications. The Education in-service will address the long suffered problem with consistency in training techniques. Additional resources will be sought to ensure that we can support the junior area. A heavy emphasis has been placed back onto the Club member to turn up ready to show their proficiency in their surf life saving skills. We are moving all higher awards outside the normal season and into the winter months. A recognition package will hopefully entice and retain both new and current members of the Education Team.

Many respondents wrote enthusiastically about juniors and nippers with the biggest issues thought to be retention, especially with teenagers. There were some calls for more development of our youth and around promoting participation and not just competition. The focus for juniors is about providing a community for junior members where they can belong and providing activities in both lifesaving skills and competition. Retention work revolves around the creation of a Cadet Coordinator and Cadet Competition Coordinator, access to the Club's specialist trainers and coaches, and development of a pilot reward program focussed on service and contribution. We have developed a core of extraordinarily committed and enthusiastic age managers, coaches and helpers to facilitate the junior program.

Events and communication were the areas thought to be run well by the respondents - social functions in particular. There were some concerns about membership retention and burn-out of a minority of hard-workers. Other concerns were ensuring that a larger number of members are more actively involved, containing membership costs and integrating new bronzies. The retention plans revolve around slowing the loss of new bronzies after a year by focused direction post-course. The newsletter remains the most effective method of reaching out to members to help out in club activities. The Club will be aiming to make sure that various events appeal to a cross-section of the Club.

Patrols got a pretty good mention as being run well with the new online rostering system being well received. The biggest issues around patrols were keeping focus on patrols, not enough members turning up to patrols or taking them seriously with some calls for harsher penalties. One initiative that has helped the Club has been the formation of a patrol captains' team responsible for identifying and solving issues that affect our patrols. The Board does deal with non-contributors or people who do not take patrols seriously. Using the quiet times in patrols more constructively has always been an issue.

As our club members' interests expand into the environment and community, the survey also polled the response on these topics. On the environment, many thought that the Club was doing a good job but that we could provide more information and bring the environment to the forefront. The response on the community was more encouraging and the Club will continue with initiatives such as the Christ Church Grammar Cadets Program and the beach wheelchair.

Introduction

Foreword from Club President

This isn't the first attempt we have made at seeking reliable feedback from you our members, about how the Club is going. The level of response each time increases as does the value of the comments and statistics. This gives us much confidence as we seek to manage the Club on your behalf and plan for the future.

This survey shows that North Cottesloe is functioning well. What is particularly pleasing is the level of satisfaction that you have with our communication to the membership. This is crucial. I know that your staff and the members of the board of management work very hard to ensure that our communication is first class, so it's very pleasing to see that it works and that you appreciate it.

We cannot rest on our laurels despite the generally high levels of satisfaction. Our size and popularity in our community presents its own set of problems particularly the pressures on the building and the pressures on the beach on most Sunday mornings.

The results of the survey are set out below in order with some commentary on the results, the raw scores and examples of comments made. Where appropriate additional commentary from the appropriate board or management team member is included as a response.

I would encourage you to read this document and understand what your fellow members think about the Club. If in your reading you are tempted to say to yourself "now that's an area I could add some value in" then don't let that moment pass! Contact me, John Polinelli your Club Captain, Kelly Moss your General Manager or any of the team on the board of management. Remember that much of our current success is driven by our broad and willing volunteer base – many hands make light work.

Goose

Response Statistics

There was 160 responses to the survey and a reasonably good cross-section of the club, with slightly more male than female responses but inline with the gender numbers in the club. Across the age groups, the largest number of respondents were 24 – 34 or over 51. The length of times that the respondents had been members of the club were spread across all timeframes so we got a good number of responses from new and old members.

71% felt that the club was 'excellent' or 'never been better' with most of the remaining responses being 'good' or 'okay'.

Gender

	Male	Female
Survey Respondents	56%	43%
Club Members	59%	41%

Age Range

<14	15-17	18-23	24-34	35-40	41-50	51+
0%	1%	13%	34%	9%	17%	24%

Length of Membership

Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	Over 10 years
12%	15%	20%	26%	27%

Opinion of the Club

How would you describe your current feelings towards the Club?					
Never been better	Excellent	Good	Okay	Not so good	Negative
11%	60%	21%	4%	1%	0%

1 General

The responses on what is generally run well at the club are generally very positive. The most enthusiasm is around the office and management of the club and most responses included administration with other areas and many comments were enthusiastic that it's all run well.

The general issues revolved around keeping a community feel in a growing member-base and also ensuring that there is involvement of more members and not just the usual faces.

Encouragingly, in the 'Do Better' section, most people repeated that they think the club is run really well, especially the office. Some responses again emphasised the community feel, and ensuring that the focus is on the core reason for being a surf club, and not solely on competition.

1.1 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"age groups, personal use of boards/gym/change rooms, general Sunday morning activities"

"The patrols and informing club members with what is happening at the club with the newsletter that is sent out frequently"

"attracting like-minded people and therefore creating a very good atmosphere in the club * arranging social events * keeping the facilities in good order * training (bronze course)"

"All facets. Have seen a massive step up from when I first joined from something more low-key and family style to what is now a very coordinated, professionally run club. Training and Nipper coordination I see having improved no end."

"Admin seems well controlled & general facility maintenance seems good - Weekly newsletter creates great sense of community"

"Member communications and benefits are fantastic, and the facilities are run well."

"The office staff are fantastic"

1.2 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"A small number (seemingly) of people doing a lot of the work for the club - this may be a false impression"

"Building the organisation, without losing the Club feel."

"Ensuring we aren't just a "popular, rich club". We need to make sure we stay relevant and are able to compete well and be rescue ready. I think too many members think of membership as a free (or cheap) ride to facilities at the beach."

"Maintaining the kid friendly atmosphere"

"public relations - eg with local council"

"Remaining relevant and approachable / attractive to the incoming generations"

"segregation of groups"

1.3 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"I would like to see more Adult beginner classes for Board & Ski so that those of us that have avoided this excellent pursuit for years could build confidence without looking like idiots amongst more experienced club members"

"Difficult to comment because we've only been members for less than a year, but there does not appear to be any outward show of the club addressing the environment, perhaps it should be advertised as to what the club is doing in the environmental area"

"Although I think the club has improved tremendously in this area, I always believe that we need to continually foster the community "within" so that members feel that the club includes them"

"Although improved in recent years, there is still a very strong bias towards competitors - we have little knowledge of people who do well at patrols, education, skills improvement, etc."

"Socially, the club is great. Office support is brilliant. With the number of new members signing up, I believe the club should be strict with people not turning up to patrols, and even more so with people not doing requalifications in the nominated sessions."

"This club is a jewel in the coastline of metropolitan W A. I recently visited icebergs at Bondi and, after allowing for the unique position of that club, I thought that North Cottesloe compared very favourably and is no doubt considerably cheaper. Everything has a price but I suppose that the gymnasium equipment, while adequate, might be due for upgrading."

2 Financial

In the financial area, it was considered that the global financial pressures could make things difficult for the club and any future work should be mindful of this when planning capital works or considering fees for next season. In addition, some more transparency in budgets was called for.

2.1 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Continuing to attract the strongest sponsorship of all the clubs"

financial pressure"

"Lack of transparency with member's money being spent by sections without strategic"

"Maintaining sponsors, building and maintenance"

"Priority of capex. The club is a surf club first and foremost. Any development plans need to take this into account. Eg. the club should not be catering to members who only use the gym"

2.2 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"Keep the fees as low as possible, there is a recession, everyone can't afford the continuing increases in fees. Open up the membership"

"Keeping member fees low while using the money most effectively"

2.3 Response from the Board of Management

The finances of the Club are reported each year in the Annual Report and discussed in detail at the Annual General Meeting. The club formulates a Budget each year and reviews performance against Budget at monthly Board of Management meetings. The Budget includes Section Budgets for which the respective Section Captains are accountable to their Budget.

The Board has minimized subscription increases over the past few years, yet has been very active in maintaining and expanding sponsorship and donor base. In addition, a very conservative approach has been applied to approving operational and capital expenditure.

After extensive consultation with members, the Club is undertaking a significant upgrade to premises and facilities. A Building Fund campaign has been established to fund this upgrade and, with some members donating very generously to this Fund, it is hopeful this will be achieved.

3 Facilities

3.1 Statistics

Standard of clubhouse				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very poor
26%	41%	24%	6%	1%

Standard of gym and competition equipment				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
20%	41%	29%	6%	1%

67% of respondents thought the club facilities were 'good' or 'very good', with only 30% rating them only 'okay' or 'poor'. A medium number of responses included the gym as an area that is run well in facilities but there were few responses on the general facilities. A very large number of responses called for increased space and capacity for members a number mentioned the gym and change rooms in particular. Some specific responses for issues facing the facilities of the club were :

- Looking after gym equipment and gym etiquette and cleaning. Better stereo in the gym ... and then no music in the gym at certain times.
- Security at the club
- Storage space for equipment
- Club rooms - A bar, balcony extension, projector

3.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Club facilities are excellent, events are always well run"

"Great facilities"

"Member communications and benefits are fantastic, and the facilities are run well"

"Gym and fitness sessions"

3.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Accommodating increasing numbers of members"

"Capacity to expand"

"Change rooms need expansion / overhaul though are reasonable"

"Equipment security and management"

"Facilities upkeep & management"

"Gym equipment not being looked after by members very well"

"Will the door to club ever actually be locked and the security pass system be used?"

"Lack of bar/entertainment area/function room"

"Lack of storage room"

"Maintaining sponsors, building and maintenance"

"Security in and around the club"

"Storage facilities for Nipper accessories"

3.4 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"Extend deck to make better use of the great view. Install permanently mounted stereo in a locked cabinet in the gym with some speakers mounted around the gym. Buy a projector and have movie nights in the courtyard (plus wood fired pizzas and drinks) in the summer"

"Given current global financial crisis, abstain from any member funded capital works projects. If must be done, like the leaking roof, somehow get the funds from local/State/Fed Govts"

"Having visited a number of clubs on the east coast it would be great to have a better standard club house and gym although I appreciate the challenges of any development on the beachfront -and funding. Also, I have for years been trying to get into a bronze medallion course - more courses and more flexible times would be good. I also think the club needs to ensure its junior program is focussed on participation rather than competition so that less talented / competitive children remain interested"

"The funding of the proposed new building additions is also crucial for the Club"

"Better education for use of the gym (wear a shirt, don't drop weights, use a towel), harsher penalties for members not fulfilling obligations (misbehaving on patrol, missing patrols), tougher requalification standards (last year a person in my group asked "what's jaw thrust?")"

"Maintain the gym better, keep it cleaner, and get people to be responsible and put away equipment that they use. Men should wear shorts over their bathers and a t-shirt in the gym and everyone should use towels on the equipment"

"Thanks for survey. The gym floor needs to be cleaned at least monthly. Some members still insist on using gym wearing sand covered shoes. A no-music period in the morning, I really appreciate about 8am-9am. Many thanks!"

"There are too many guys in the gym without shirts on and they drop the equipment and they drip sweat on everything. I know several female members who find this uncomfortable and will not use the gym as a result. Overall the club is great."

"Would like to see gym facilities updated and more regular cleaning of gym and change rooms"

3.5 Response from the Board of Management

As the building program gets closer we have been able to fine tune the plans for the Club by using the direct feedback on the facilities from the recent survey. This feedback, and others feedback gained through the consultation process, as been has been used as a filter through which all design decisions will be feed. Specifically we have addressed the following key areas identified in the survey.

Gym

The fundraising efforts will allow the Club to make substantial changes to the gym being in the form of refurbishment of equipment, upgrade of the space itself, improved ventilation and a sound system.

Bar

The new design of the bar will have an expertly designed and extended service area for food and drinks. Although the final layout is yet to be determined it should also include a cool room and commercial grade kitchen.

Storage

If we are allowed to extend the Club to the north underground we should also be able to have ample room for all our gear and trailers to be stored in site.

Change rooms

The ladies will be completely redesigned and extended and will address issues such shower cubicles, toilets and ventilation.

Security

We have installed a new security system but this will be better integrated into the upgraded building and we are also hoping to install lockers for valuables.

Meetings and training

At the end of the building we will have a purpose office which will be able to be accessed directly from the courtyard. We will also have a first aid training / meeting room and two large training general purpose rooms. This will be fitted with appropriate storage facilities as well as comprehensive audio visual equipment for social and training purposes.

4 Surf Sports

The different disciplines have been grouped together under surf sports. Boats were mentioned quite often as being run well and the skis occasionally.

The issues raised centred around development of athletes and maintaining equality of focus across all disciplines, it was felt that this has been uneven. A call for more coaches and care of equipment was also raised, as well as a feeling that we need more work in swimming.

There was a very small number of responses in what we can do better in surf sports but centred around promoting juniors and beginners and better information about training in the sports and equipment use.

4.1 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Competition - in particular the boat section"

"Surfboats"

"Functions and club events, skills and development training, gym, skis and boats, nippers"

"nippers, gym, skis, office, admin, integrating females at all levels"

"the sprinters"

4.2 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Creating a better interaction between different disciplines throughout the season"

"Ensuring all sports are recognised and given equal priority"

"Lack of coaching - established training program and structure"

"Maintaining high quality of training across all areas"

"Care of board equipment - making sure members know how to clean equipment after use, don't let general public use equipment"

"Development of athletes, especially in skis and boards"

"Competition depth - swimming particularly"

4.3 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"The low number of competitive ski paddlers in Nationals showed a need to further develop and promote this skill in younger members"

"I would like to see more Adult beginner classes for Board & Ski so that those of us that have avoided this excellent pursuit for years could build confidence without looking like idiots amongst more experienced club members."

"Have more information about training with the club available, perhaps on the website/email and make it more clear about ski use i.e. which can be used by all members and which are privately owned to ensure there is no confusion/incidents"

"Bring back the North Cott Mile"

4.4 Response from the Board of Management

This season we have a new paid position, the director of coaching. This position has been designed to improve, enhance, attract and retain athletes across all surf sports disciplines. Athletes will be provided with regular training schedules and gym programs, all available over the internet and email.

We have several identified coaches including two swim coaches, a dedicated ski captain/coach, all boat sweeps will have a minimum level one coaching certificate, and programs under way for board, ironperson, and ski development. Several members have also recently attended the level one coaching clinics, which they are required to complete an assignment and 20 hours practical coaching to become certified coaches.

Subsidies for purchase of board and ski equipment have been approved by the board of management. This program is designed to attract and retain competitors, and encourage people to buy their own equipment suited to their own size.

Each section will have an area for storage of equipment within the current sheds to maintain their own gear.

5 Competition

Over 50% of respondents thought that competitions were 'good' or 'excellent' but there were quite a few members who didn't answer this question.

There was a small to medium response on competition with some general comments that competition is good, especially in Surf Boats.

The issues in competition were small in number but diverse. Some responses included:

- Developing competition in the less popular sports
- Lack of competitors
- Maintain the elite
- Supporting beginners and non-elite
- Recognition of officials.

5.1 Statistics

Competitions				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
25%	28%	13%	2%	0%

5.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Nippers, competition"

"David and his band of merry men with the nippers"

"Competition, Events, Communication"

"It would appear that most competition divisions are well run in themselves"

"Competition - in particular the boat section"

5.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Building a stronger competition base"

"Competing in all sections"

"Developing a strong competitive culture in non-boat and non-beach areas"

"Getting more older teens to compete"

"Helping senior competitors finding groups and pathways to train and compete"

"Lack of competitive members - too surf boat centric"

"Maintaining / achieving top competition performance levels"

"Not enough encouragement/ involvement in bringing non elite club members into the competition"

"Number of officials and their recognition"

"Open Competitors in some areas - paddling etc"

5.4 Response from the Board of Management

We have the calendar for this year's competition involving surf board and ski series, sprint series, and the Navy boat series to begin the season. Senior carnivals, state titles at Secret Harbour, and Nationals at Kurrawa are then our major focus. All club members are encouraged to compete given they have a current bronze medallion and the required number of patrol hours for the calendar year at state titles. Travel subsidies for National titles and other interstate travel will be given according to previous results, appearance at carnivals, presence at training and assistance at events.

Swimming, IRB crew, and board paddlers are the main areas identified by the BOM to be lacking. These areas will have a lot of focus in development from grass-roots, talent identification outside the club, and integration of pool swimmers into surf. We also have a section captain dedicated to long distance open water swimming this year.

Beginners are supported with provision of a small number of skis and boards available to use, as well as swim coaching at Claremont pool twice per week.

6 Education

74% thought that education was 'good' or 'very good' with only 15% responding only 'okay'.

A large number of respondents thought that education was run well with bronze in particular getting a good mention. It was noted that we could use some depth in more areas than just bronze but there weren't many specific responses.

The issues facing education were around getting enough volunteers for the huge workload, maintaining consistency in education, looking after juniors and planning courses in advance.

Although a small number of responses, some members have asked for tougher penalties for not being prepared for requalifications and more flexible education training times.

6.1 Statistics

Training and Education				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
38%	36%	15%	2%	0%

6.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Bronze education gets a lot of help from a lot of people and train a lot of people"

"The use of technology for requalifications"

"Education seems to struggle to deliver the depth of services but acknowledge the challenge of having volunteers fulfil a significant load"

"Bronze training/re-qualling and patrols"

"Education - will do better this coming season"

6.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Consistency in education training"

"Fulfilling our education obligations, particularly to our juniors"

"Getting enough volunteers for education and after school programs"

"Keeping members proficient with patrol skills"

"Lack of qualified and available trainers and educators"

"Not enough importance on life saving awards and patrolling members becoming more qualified eg ARC"

"Not having a specific training schedule with regards to when a certain qualification can be done, e.g. when the next ARC or bronze group is run"

6.4 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"I believe the club should be strict with people not doing requalifications in the nominated sessions"

"Tougher requalification standards (last year a person in my group asked "what's jaw thrust?")"

"I have for years been trying to get into a bronze medallion course - more courses and more flexible times would be good"

"Online component to development, ie bronze medallion"

6.5 Response from the Board of Management

Consistency in Education

Education has long suffered a problem with consistency within the area of training technique. We have tried to combat this problem this season by advertising the Education In-service early providing Education Team members with good foresight so they could make themselves available for the session.

The in-service covered all Bronze, ARC and Spinal techniques and the correct practices for demonstration to students. This teaching through demonstration in "unity" hopefully brings everyone on to the same page for the rest of the season.

Fulfilling our education obligations to our Juniors

The area of Junior Education is still very weak at the Club; every additional resource will be sought to ensure that we can support the junior push; however this is restrained by low educational resources with higher demands of senior education such as Bronze courses and Requals.

Requals

Requals this year have had a complete make over and are now very much focused on competency based outcomes. A heavy emphasis has been place back onto the Club member to turn up ready to show their proficiency in their Surf Life Saving Skills, instead of just showing up and having a refresher.

The Education Team is also focusing on individual instructing sessions where one instructor takes no more than 10 members through a requal at one time. This we hope will improve visual assessments by our instructors ensuring that all gaps in knowledge are identified.

These individual requals will focus on team work and we hope that Club members will find them more fun and engaging.

Higher Awards

Due to the overwhelming amount of Educational activities that occur during the summer season, also to lessen the workload on instructors we are moving all Higher Awards outside the normal season and into the winter months.

The Education team trialled this last winter and it was thought to be a successful endeavour at spreading the workload whilst providing the opportunity for people to become qualified in higher awards. This practice will be repeated in 2010.

All Higher Awards will be advertised through the Club electronic mail during the winter months.

RTO

I personally feel we meet the RTO requirements better than any other Club. We are doing our best!

Attraction and Retention of Education Members

At present there is a whole lot of behind the scenes activity going into providing an Attraction and Retention strategic approach to Education. At first it will involve the approval of the board for a recognition program to be introduced for all Education members.

This recognition package will hope fully entice and retain both new and current members of the Education Team.

This will be much like the Patrol Captains Agreement.

However I also want to take it one step further and take a look at future projections and try and develop a strong business angle which will hopefully secure resources for Education in the decades to come for the Club. This initiative will hopefully allow the Club to keep growing and not be restrained by its woeful education participation by its members.

7 Juniors

55% thought juniors 'good' or 'very good' which undersells how many respondents wrote enthusiastically about juniors in the open responses.

A large number of respondents thought nippers were run really well and it was mentioned in quite a few general responses.

The biggest issues facing the juniors was retention, especially in the face of other sports, particularly with the teenagers. There were some calls for more development of our youth and special care in transitioning cadets to senior members.

There were very few responses in what juniors could do better, however the responses we did get centred around promoting participation and not just competition. One club member's son had a scary experience with a large wave in nippers and so we need to be more careful with our water safety for nippers.

7.1 Statistics

Junior activities				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
35%	22%	4%	1%	0%

7.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Nippers, competition, age groups, general Sunday morning activities"

"VERY IMPRESSED with support and training for junior members and encouragement to be part of the wider community through SLSC activities."

"Bringing about a community spirit and enabling kids to become confident in the surf"

"The junior section with its age managers and assistance from parents"

"Training and Nipper coordination I see having improved no end"

"The training of young people, team building / self-respect, good fitness habits for life, camaraderie"

7.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Bored Juniors"

"Competing with other sports for our youth"

"Junior retention and build up still required more work. We seem to import athletes (eg. from flat water rowing or track sprinting) rather than build them up internally"

"Loss of junior competitors"

"Nippers - Needs more support and guidance to build and strengthen"

"Nippers' parents use club as a free child minding or networking venue then move-on as kids do other sports"

"Transition from cadets to active members"

7.4 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"I would like to see a club that gets juniors involved more in fun activities at the beach if they are not so interested in comps"

"Do competitions on Sunday's and keep a score to count towards champion kids? Keep them involved and attending. Do team sports in U/15 to U/19 to make them feel part of a team and more likely to compete, i.e. surf rescue, surf teams, board relay!"

"I think the club needs to ensure its junior program is focussed on participation rather than competition so that less talented / competitive children remain interested"

"Need to get grouping of Nippers according to year at school, not birth date. Could alleviate some attrition"

7.5 Response from the Board of Management

Balance between Competition and Participation

The focus for Juniors is about providing junior members with a meeting place where they can belong, regardless of their preferences around competition. The Club recognises two distinct streams of competition and lifesaving service. Many children, from quite a young age, will express their key goal as "becoming a life saver".

In the past twelve months we have been responding to this challenge by:

- Incorporating rescue, first aid and basic resuscitation activities into Sunday activities even for younger members;
- Ensuring Club activities continue on Sundays where there is a competition elsewhere.

Towards the end of each season the focus does slant more towards competition and we make no apology for this. Competition success is an important part of a well rounded surf life saving club.

Junior Retention

Our retention rates are quite high relative to other clubs, yet a real area of concern is the under 15 to 19 groups. As a club we have struggled with this area, (as do all Clubs), and this is a challenging age group to deal with. Serious competitors seem to drift away from Sunday activities to the competition training groups, while the Sunday Cadet participants seem to enjoy a more loosely framed program of activities in contrast to the more formal format of Nippers.

Building on the good work of James and Belinda Bennett and Davinia Finucane, we are working on a number of initiatives, namely:

- Creation of the new positions of Cadet Coordinator, and Cadet Competition Coordinator, with Mike Silbert and Lyle Banks filling the roles respectively.
- Engagement with the senior section far more effectively with the Junior Bronze courses, and access to the clubs specialist trainers better planned and coordinated.
- Development of a pilot reward program, the Big Kahuna, a retention program for this age group focussed on service and contribution.

Future Progress

We remain committed to improving the program each year and we have developed a core of extraordinarily committed and enthusiastic, age managers, coaches and helpers. Through their efforts we are working towards building a program that is sustainable in the long term

8 Membership

93% of members thought that the communication from the club was 'good or 'very good' with 76% of those responses in the 'very good' area. 72% thought that social functions were 'good' or 'very good' with 47% in 'very good'.

Events and communication were the main areas mentioned in membership, and in particular the online newsletter was thought to be great. There were a lot of mention about how well events were run, or social functions in general.

There were a large number of issues around membership, especially in member retention and involvement and concern about burn-out by a few members doing the majority of the work. The responses can be grouped in a few areas:

- Ensuring that a larger number or members are more actively involved
- Containing membership costs
- Integrating new bronzies
- Non-members using the club
- Club participation
- The things we could be doing better for membership is integrating new members.

8.1 Statistics

Communication				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
76%	17%	5%	0%	0%

Social Functions				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
47%	35%	10%	0%	0%

8.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Events (especially Food & Wine Expo). Well done!"

"Communication to members is EXCELLENT"

"The newsletter communications are great. The events I've been to at the club have always been good"

"Club atmosphere, social functions, communicating with club members"

"Attracting like-minded people and therefore creating a very good atmosphere in the club *
arranging social events * keeping the facilities in good order"

"Communication - email newsletters, easy to contact staff"

"Weekly newsletters, social functions, communications with the office"

"Events/ social calendar - more than enough events throughout the year for all age groups and
types of members"

"Social aspects and specialised sessions ie self defence, morning boxing with Nick"

8.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Are all members meeting expectations, compliance of members to perform duties etc"

"Attracting/retaining the right young members"

"Communication with members - everyone cops a lot of emails from a tonne of sources"

"Encouraging and facilitating involvement from a broad cross-section of members (seems to be
working well at the moment)"

"Getting more of the membership involved in club activities. Seems to be the same few doing
most of the work"

"Integration of different divisions and helping bronze graduates become involved in the
divisions"

"Keeping members actively involved"

"Maintaining the strength of the NC community"

"Member retention, Members not participating, Members not pulling their weight"

"Non members using the gym"

"Not hosting the Nth Cott Mile swim"

"People joining to just use the gym and not be involved in other parts of the club"

"Retaining our professional management and key volunteers"

"Size of membership - can the Club become too big and impersonal?"

"Welcoming of new members"

"Getting everyone to know each other through a combined training session before the bar on
fri"

8.4 Examples of “Things we could do better”

“Club should be more welcoming for new members - some find it hard to fit in”

“I'm not sure if it's different now, but when I did my bronze in 2000 we weren't given any information about club activities (swimming, paddling, rowing, sprinting, competition etc.) and how to get involved in them. I would suggest that a visit to the Bronze class by the captains of each of those areas would be a good idea. It would help dissipate any feelings of shyness or intimidation. I still don't even know what all the events at a surf carnival are! I would love to see a day of 'come and try' some of the activities you get at a carnival in a no-threat atmosphere. Would also help to put some names to faces.”

8.5 Response from the Board of Management

Retention and involvement

The retention plans revolve around stopping new bronzies from only staying one year at the club, and keeping our current members involved. The survey was an effective way of finding club members who are keen to help out more and the board members will each be contacting members who have shown interest in their areas.

The newsletter is the most effective method of reaching to members to help out in club activities and we'll be continuing to think of new ways to keep people interested and involved.

New bronzies

Getting the section captains to speak to the new bronzies at the start of their classes is a great first step however we need to continue to find ways to help new bronzies become active and happy members of the club. I am looking for a couple of enthusiastic people who would like to be part of helping new bronzies integrate into the club.

Events

The events continue to be run well by our events managers and attract many members of the club. The club will be aiming to ensure that events appeal to a cross-section of the club.

Communication

The weekly newsletter continues to be a very useful and appreciated method of communication about events around the club – keeping people informed about what's happening at the club and what events are coming up.

The quarterly newsletter with a sponsorship focus was launched last year and has been a great success for broadening the profile of the club to the external community as well as the members. These newsletters will continue and any suggestions from the membership will be welcomed.

9 Patrols

Patrols got a pretty good mention as being run well with the new online rostering system also mentioned. 60% thought that patrols were 'good' or 'very good' with only 23% thinking they were 'poor' or 'okay'. About 20% didn't respond on patrols.

The biggest issues around patrols were keeping focus on patrols as opposed to social, not enough members turning up to patrols or taking them seriously with some calls for harsher penalties.

When asked what would make patrols more interesting there was a very large number of responses with quite a few around more training on patrols. Some called for smaller (and therefore more inclusive and accessible) patrol sizes, and tasks to do during patrol. In addition, some more direction from patrol captains and education about patrolling was considered useful.

Some called for quizzes, spot checks and rewards for good patrolling to keep them on their toes. Others wanted freedom to do their own training while on patrol if it's quiet.

There was a very large amount of enthusiasm for the online rostering system with most happy to just say they liked it. Some constructive responses included:

More incentives to do the less popular patrols, like more points for these ones

Some more warning so everyone has a chance to get the popular patrols

More information about the awards held by existing patrol members.

The loss of the 'team' effect now that you're not patrolling with the same group each time.

9.1 Statistics

Patrols				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
26%	38%	21%	2%	1%

Patrol and Lifesaving Equipment				
Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
26%	49%	10%	1%	0%

9.2 Examples of "Things we're doing well"

"Our patrols are well organised"

"The use of technology for requalifications ... and patrols is also excellent."

"Patrol system now heaps better. - Admin girls do a great job."

"Keep up the good work North Cott - I appreciate being involved and love the online patrol sign-up."

9.3 Examples of "Biggest Issues"

"Being stricter with people not doing requals on time"

"Ensuring that, as a large club, we can get the support of "typical" members to fill routine patrols and special occasions (eg. Junior states). Finishing a patrol early because we can't put 6 people in yellow shirts out on a Saturday afternoon is not acceptable."

"Having enough times for teens to get patrol hours"

"Keeping members proficient with patrol skills"

"keeping people focussed on patrols, not just the 'social' or competition side of the club"

"Making sure every patrol is full and that people turn up"

"Members not turning up to patrols. Need penalties introduced"

"Not enough importance on life saving awards and patrolling members becoming more qualified eg ARC"

9.4 Examples of "Things we could do better"

"Harsher penalties for members not fulfilling obligations (misbehaving on patrol, missing patrols)"

"I believe the club should be strict with people not turning up to patrols, and even more so with people not doing requalifications in the nominated sessions."

9.5 Response from the Board of Management

There was 160 responses to the survey and a reasonably good cross-section of the club, with slightly more male than female responses but inline with the gender numbers in the club. 85% gave patrols an ok or better score, with 3% Poor or Worse. Not sure where the other 12% went, perhaps they didn't answer.

Most people think the club is doing well especially the shift in focus from purely competition to now providing nipper and junior focus, as well as improving lifesaving and community education.

We are always looking for more ways to acknowledge people who do well at patrols. One initiative that has helped the club has been the formation of a patrol captains' team. This team is responsible for identifying issues that affect our patrols. It is in large part due to their feedback that we keep improving the lifesaving section of the club. With over 500 active members, however, it is very difficult to have a system in place to recognise outstanding achievement and contribution. We have started recording details of club members involved in rescues, but have not decided how best to use that information.

The Board does deal with non-contributors or people who do not take patrols seriously (including requalification). We are currently keeping records of non-attendance or incidents between captains and patrol members spanning over three years. It is hoped that this evidence will assist us in dealing with repeat offenders in a way that does not put our patrols in jeopardy. So far, we've had the lowest incidence of penalty patrol notices being issued for breaches. The message is getting through to most members that it's vital to present yourself for your rostered patrols.

There was a suggestion in the survey to have more awards offered to members for up-skilling instead of stopping at bronze level by perhaps targeting members that have been at the club for several years and have not got anything more than bronze. This will be passed on to the Board for further consideration.

Using the down time in patrols more constructively has always been an issue. Unfortunately no solution has ever 'stuck' as being practicable for every patrol. This will be a work in progress for the next season, with hopefully some input from the patrol captains.

10 Environment and Community

10.1 Environment

69% of respondents thought we were doing a satisfactory job on the environment.

The suggestions on what we could do better in the environment were in these following areas:

- Grey water program
- Saving water
- Recycling
- More bins
- Information on sustainability and environmental issues

10.2 Community

The members feel we are doing a satisfactory job in the community with 89% respondents answering yes to that question. There is general feeling that we could do more work within schools in education and recruitment. One had concern about the alcohol focus and another called for better links with Cottesloe Coastcare.

10.3 Response from the Board of Management

Environment

It would be fair to say that the Club has not had a strong focus on environmental issues in the past. Whilst we make significant contributions to keeping our beach clean and safe the environmental impact of our activities has not been a priority.

With the upcoming building redevelopment program the Club will be looking at environmental initiatives such as installing water saving toilets/urinals, shower heads and taps. We will also consider installing rain water tanks and a grey water recycling system. Federal government funding is available to surf clubs for such projects. A water audit conducted in early 2009 identified a number of ways the Club could be improving its water efficiency and this will be used when planning the building fit out.

The Club has two recycling bins that are collected twice weekly however could improve in this area. The constant problem with the recycling bins is the issue of people putting general waste in them. An approach has been made to the Town of Cottesloe to install council bins near the North Cottesloe beachfront as there are currently no bins in this area. This needs to be followed up.

Community

It is pleasing to see that such a high percentage of members believe we are doing a satisfactory job in the community as this has been a focus for the Club over the last three years. We no longer have an insular focus but are constantly looking at ways we can broaden our service to the community beyond the flags. Our service to the community has been recognized through the Club receiving the Town of Cottesloe's Community Group of the Year Award in 2007 and the SLSWA Club of the Year Award in 2007 and 2009.

We now have close relationships with a number of local schools such as Christ Church Grammar with the Surf Cadets Program and North Cottesloe Primary School with the Active After-School Program. We are planning to expand these relationships by offering training courses to teachers in our catchment area through our commercial training business.

Other community initiatives that the Club is involved in include the On the Same Wave Program to teach beach safety to migrants, providing the beach wheelchair and matting for people with disabilities and taking life saving education to the remote indigenous schools in the Dampier Peninsula.