



Results

Survey 883539

Number of records in this query:	520
Total records in survey:	520
Percentage of total:	100.00%



Field summary for s1

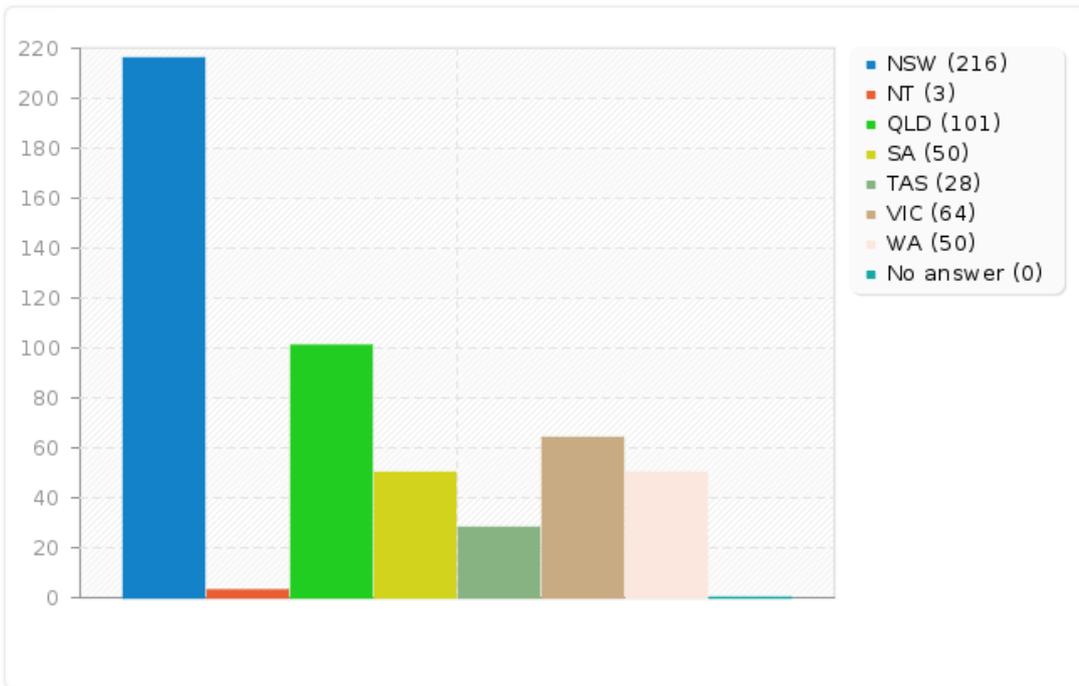
In which State do you live?

Answer	Count	Percentage
NSW (A1)	216	42.19%
NT (A7)	3	0.59%
QLD (A2)	101	19.73%
SA (A3)	50	9.77%
TAS (A4)	28	5.47%
VIC (A5)	64	12.50%
WA (A6)	50	9.77%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for s1

In which State do you live?





Field summary for s2

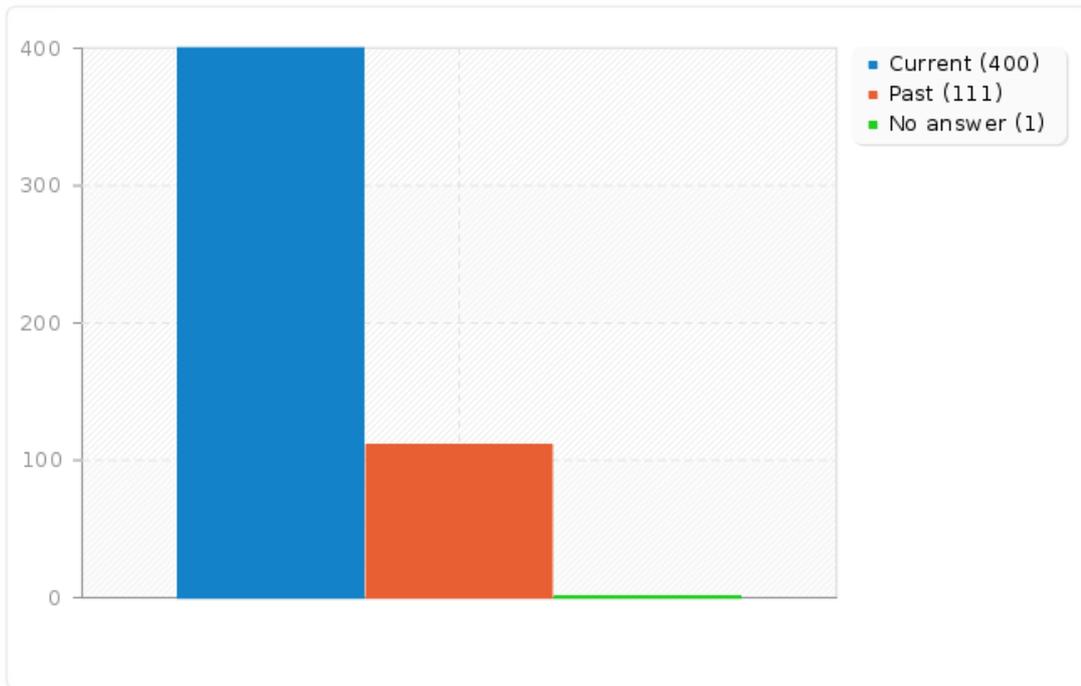
Are you a current or past competitor?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Current (A1)	400	78.12%
Past (A2)	111	21.68%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for s2

Are you a current or past competitor?





Field summary for s3

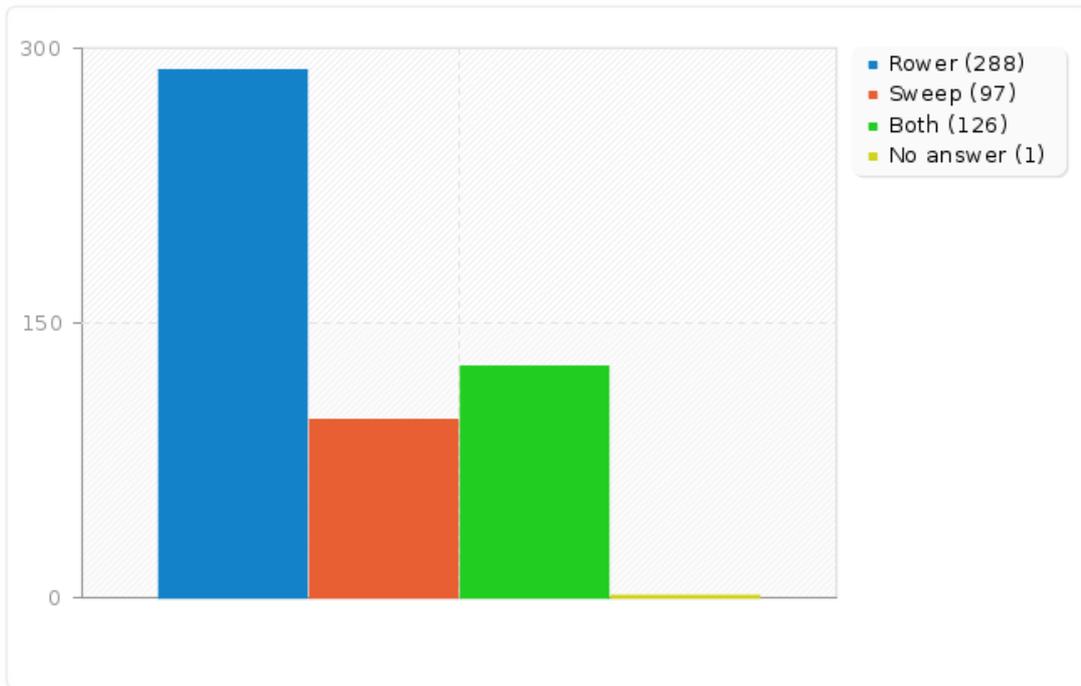
Is/was your status Rower/Sweep/Both?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Rower (A1)	288	56.25%
Sweep (A2)	97	18.95%
Both (A3)	126	24.61%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for s3

Is/was your status Rower/Sweep/Both?





Field summary for s4

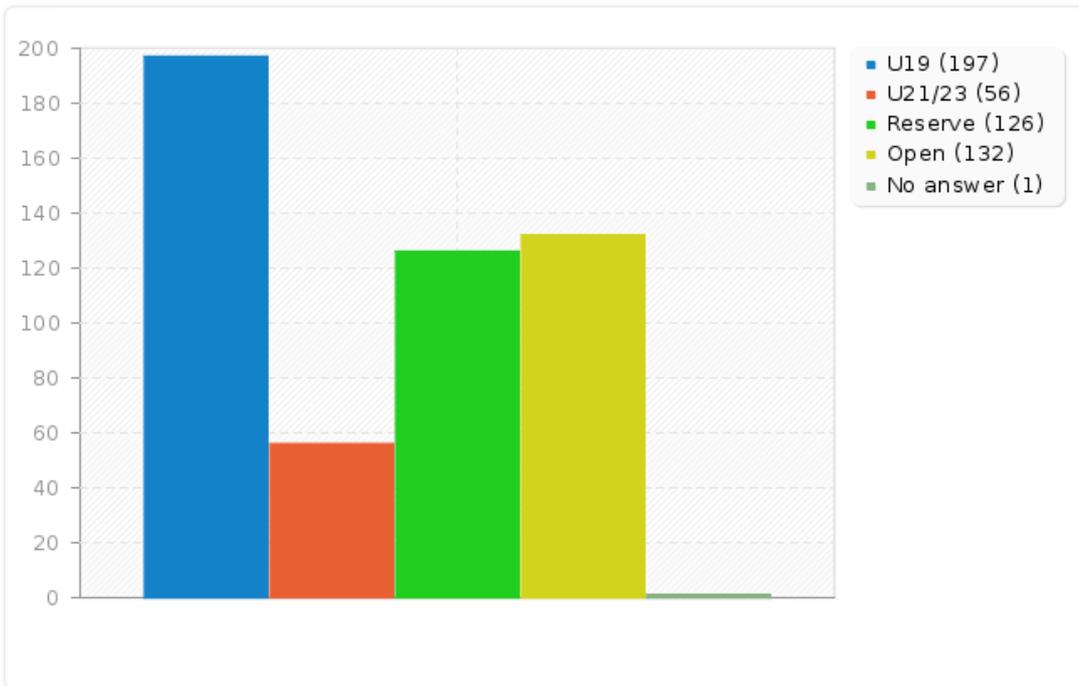
Did you start rowing at U19, U21/23, Reserve, Open

Answer	Count	Percentage
U19 (A1)	197	38.48%
U21/23 (A2)	56	10.94%
Reserve (A3)	126	24.61%
Open (A4)	132	25.78%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for s4

Did you start rowing at U19, U21/23, Reserve, Open





Field summary for s5

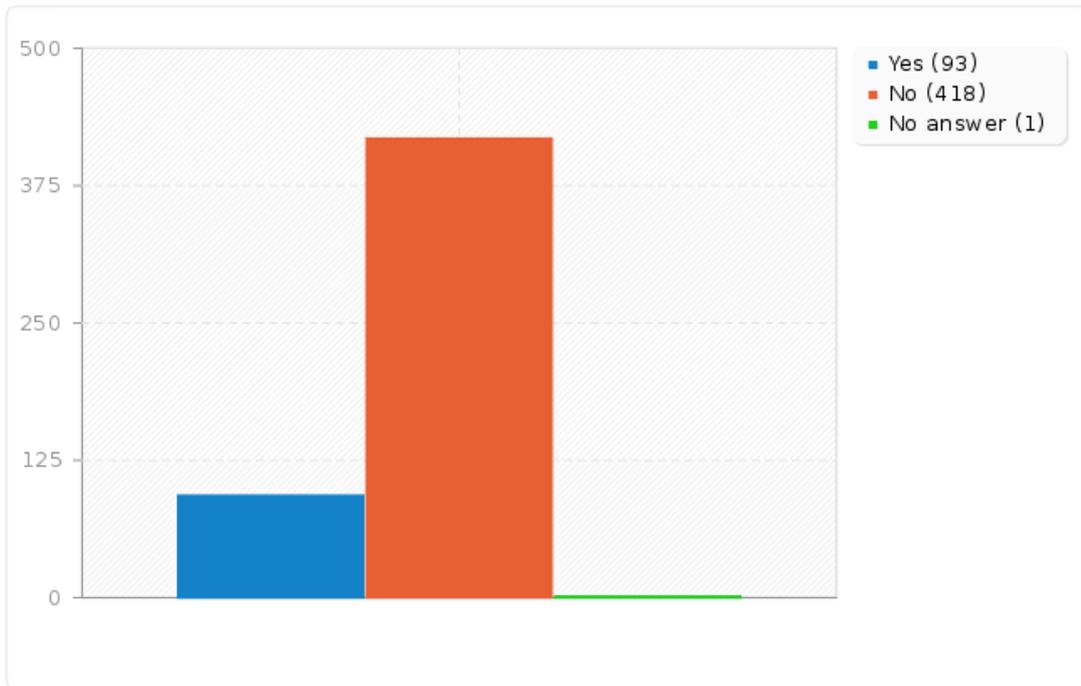
Did you row Stillwater prior to surfboats

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	93	18.16%
No (N)	418	81.64%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for s5

Did you row Stillwater prior to surfboats





Field summary for s6

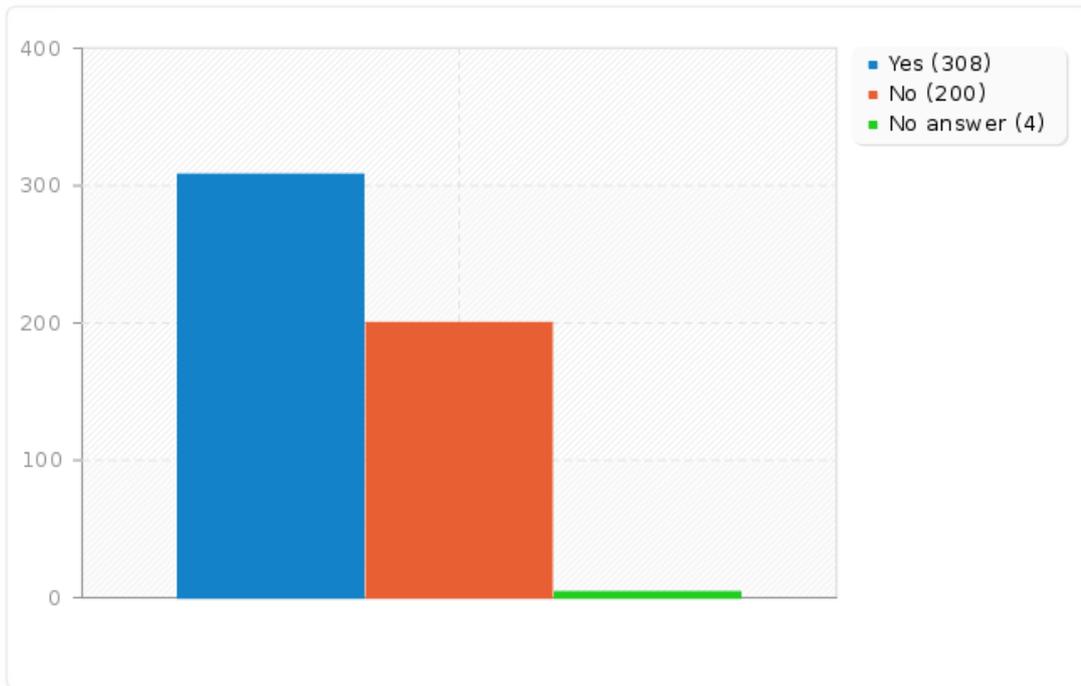
If you've stopped rowing are you still involved in Club Patrols?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	308	60.16%
No (N)	200	39.06%
No answer	4	0.78%



Field summary for s6

If you've stopped rowing are you still involved in Club Patrols?





Field summary for s7

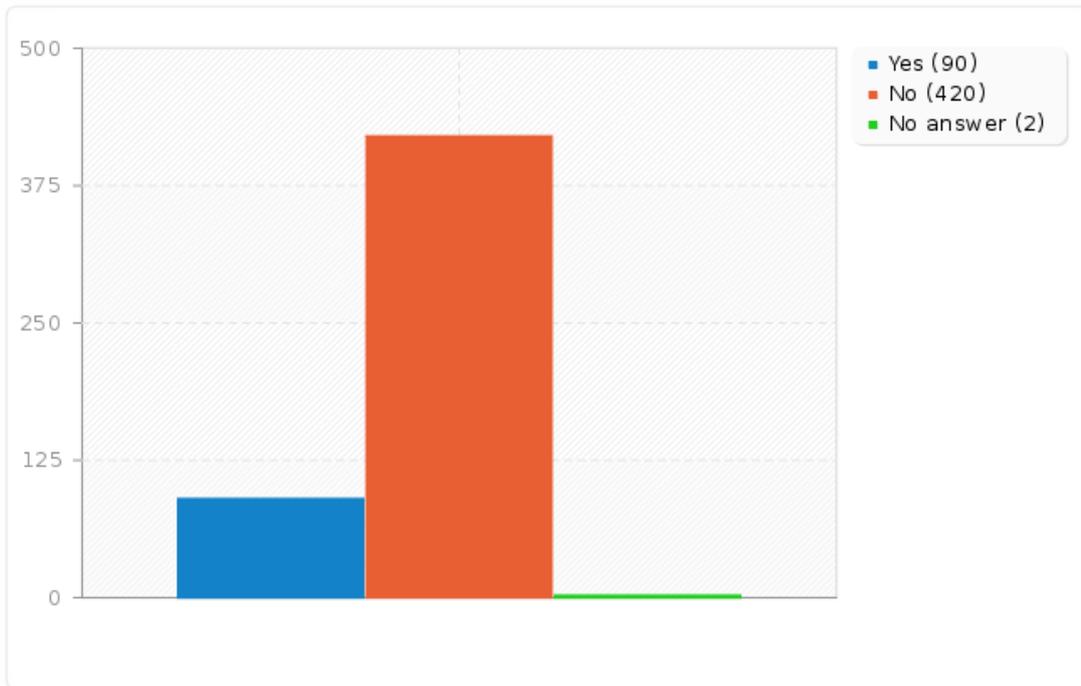
Did you transfer into surfboats from Nippers?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	90	17.58%
No (N)	420	82.03%
No answer	2	0.39%



Field summary for s7

Did you transfer into surfboats from Nippers?





Field summary for i1(SQ001)

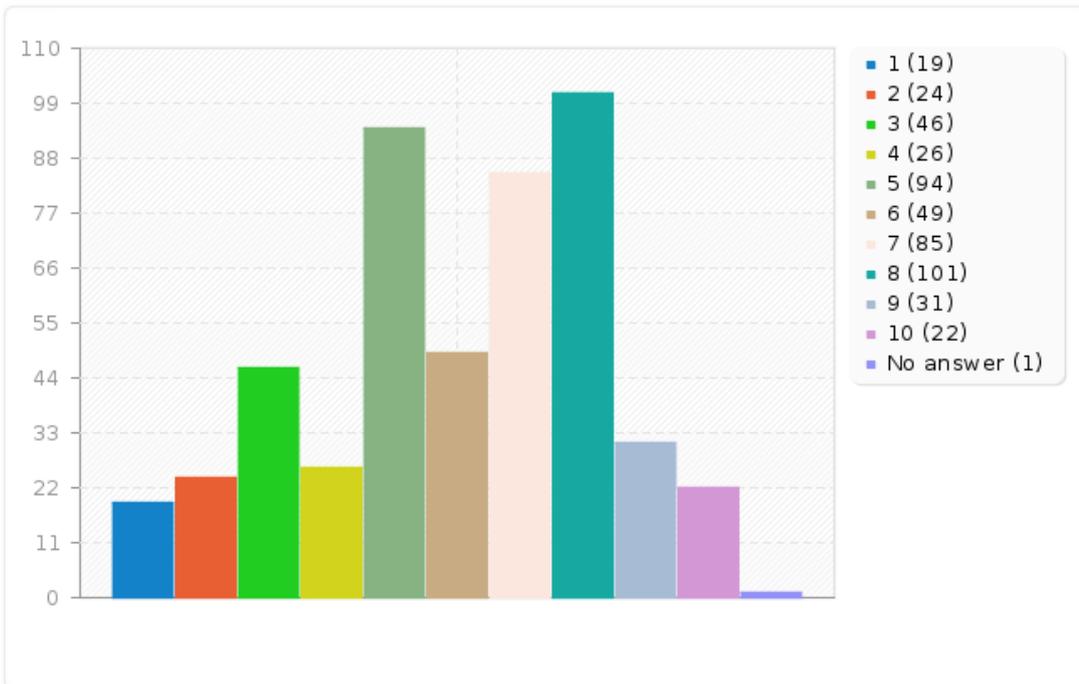
How would you rate the Bronze Training process out of TEN? - 10 being the best & 1 the worst? []

Answer	Count	Percentage
1 (1)	19	3.82%
2 (2)	24	4.82%
3 (3)	46	9.24%
4 (4)	26	5.22%
5 (5)	94	18.88%
6 (6)	49	9.84%
7 (7)	85	17.07%
8 (8)	101	20.28%
9 (9)	31	6.22%
10 (10)	22	4.42%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for i1(SQ001)

How would you rate the Bronze Training process out of TEN? - 10 being the best & 1 the worst? []





Field summary for i2

How many weeks did the club take to train you for the Bronze?

Calculation	Result
Count	497
Sum	2990.7000000000
Standard deviation	3.33
Average	6.02
Minimum	0.0000000000
1st quartile (Q1)	4
2nd quartile (Median)	6
3rd quartile (Q3)	8
Maximum	26.0000000000

Null values are ignored in calculations

Q1 and Q3 calculated using minitab method



Field summary for i3

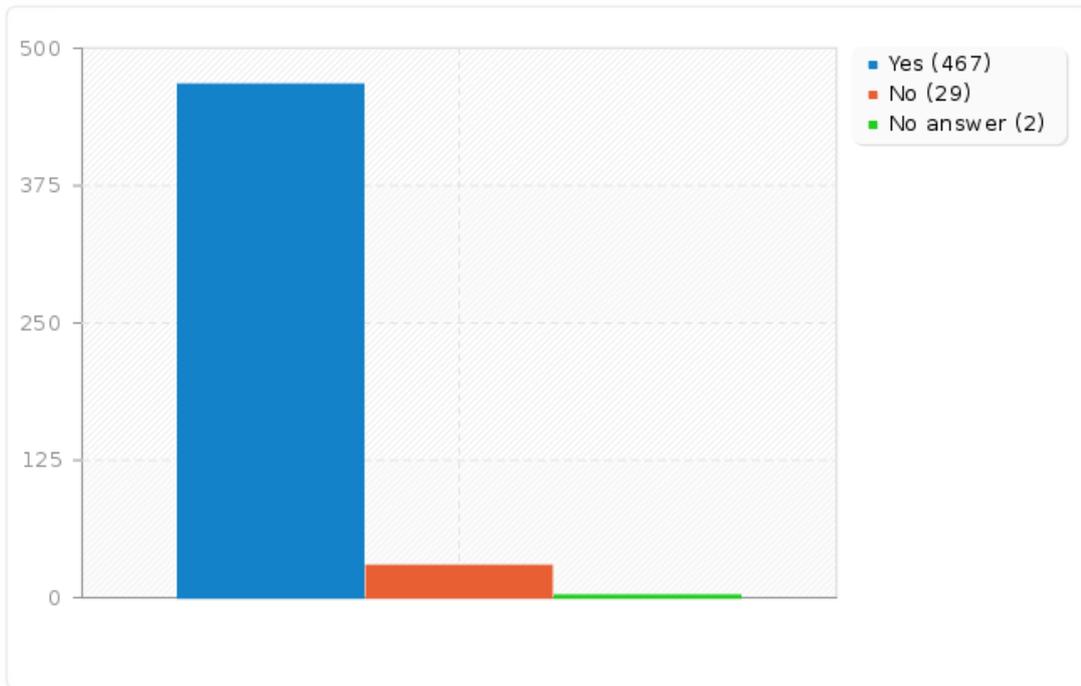
Were you made to feel welcome at your Club?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	467	93.78%
No (N)	29	5.82%
No answer	2	0.40%



Field summary for i3

Were you made to feel welcome at your Club?





Field summary for i4

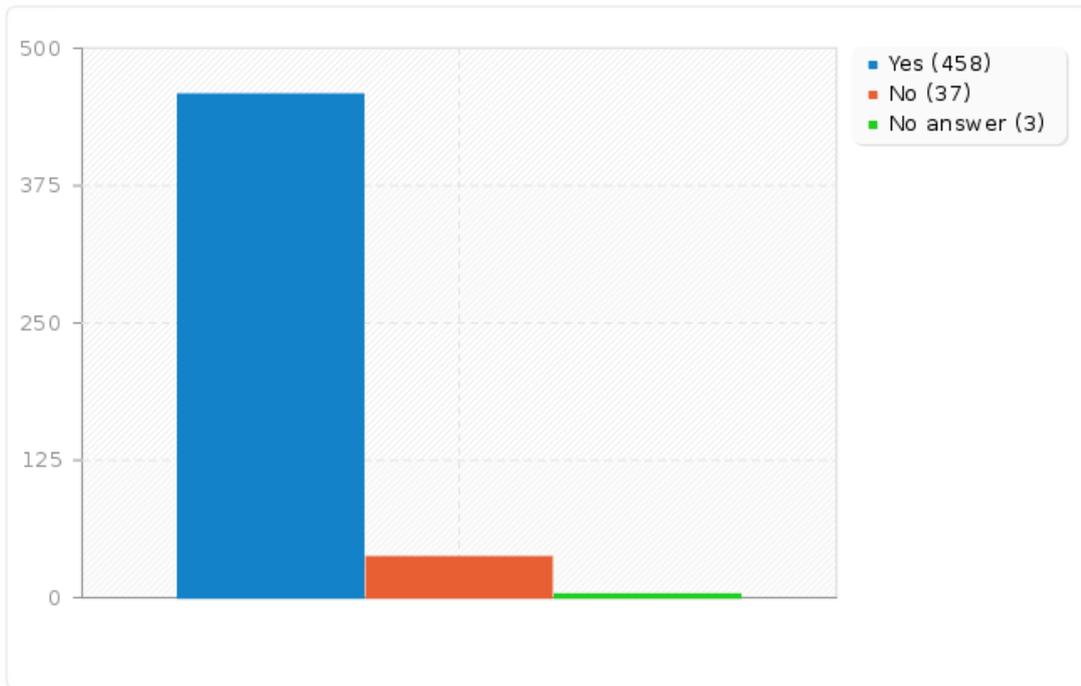
Would you encourage your friends to join a surf club?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	458	91.97%
No (N)	37	7.43%
No answer	3	0.60%



Field summary for i4

Would you encourage your friends to join a surf club?





Field summary for i5

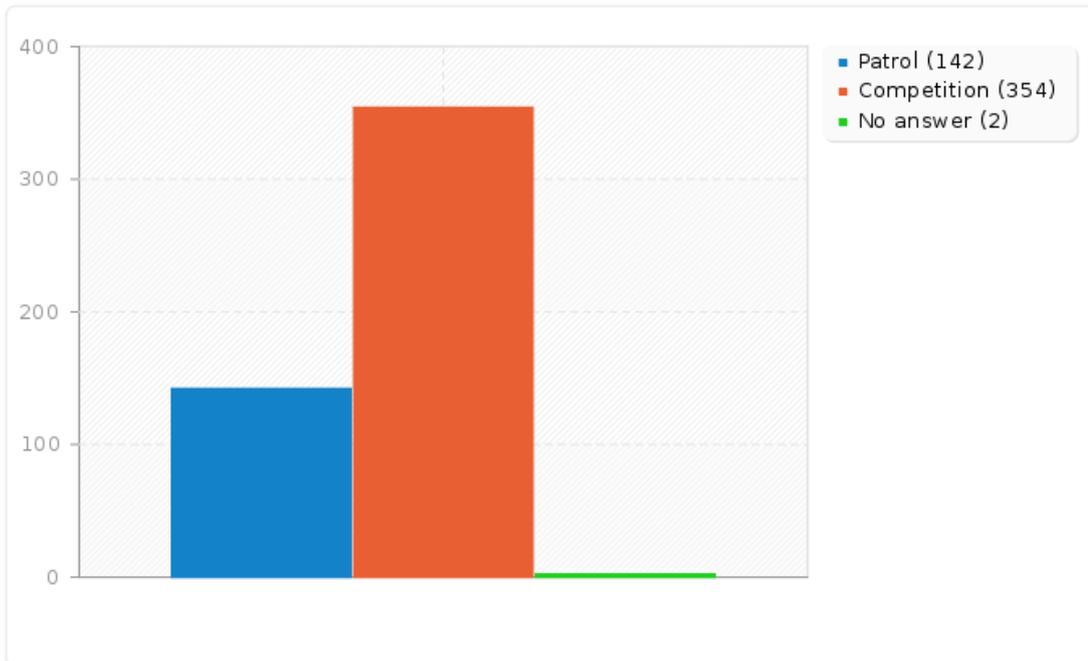
Did you join initially for patrol or competition?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Patrol (A1)	142	28.51%
Competition (A2)	354	71.08%
No answer	2	0.40%



Field summary for i5

Did you join initially for patrol or competition?





Field summary for i6

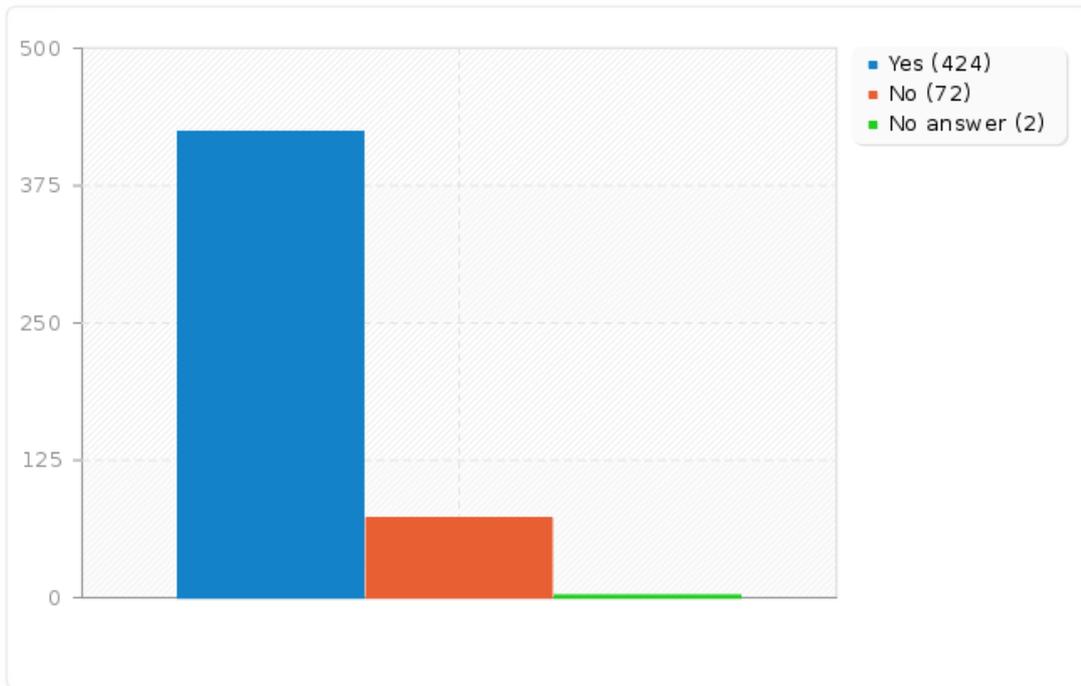
Knowing the process would you do it all (join) again?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	424	85.14%
No (N)	72	14.46%
No answer	2	0.40%



Field summary for i6

Knowing the process would you do it all (join) again?





Field summary for p1

How many patrols a season were/are expected of you by your club?

Calculation	Result
Count	490
Sum	4122.0000000000
Standard deviation	10.73
Average	8.41
Minimum	0.0000000000
1st quartile (Q1)	5
2nd quartile (Median)	7
3rd quartile (Q3)	10
Maximum	200.0000000000

Null values are ignored in calculations

Q1 and Q3 calculated using minitab method



Field summary for p2

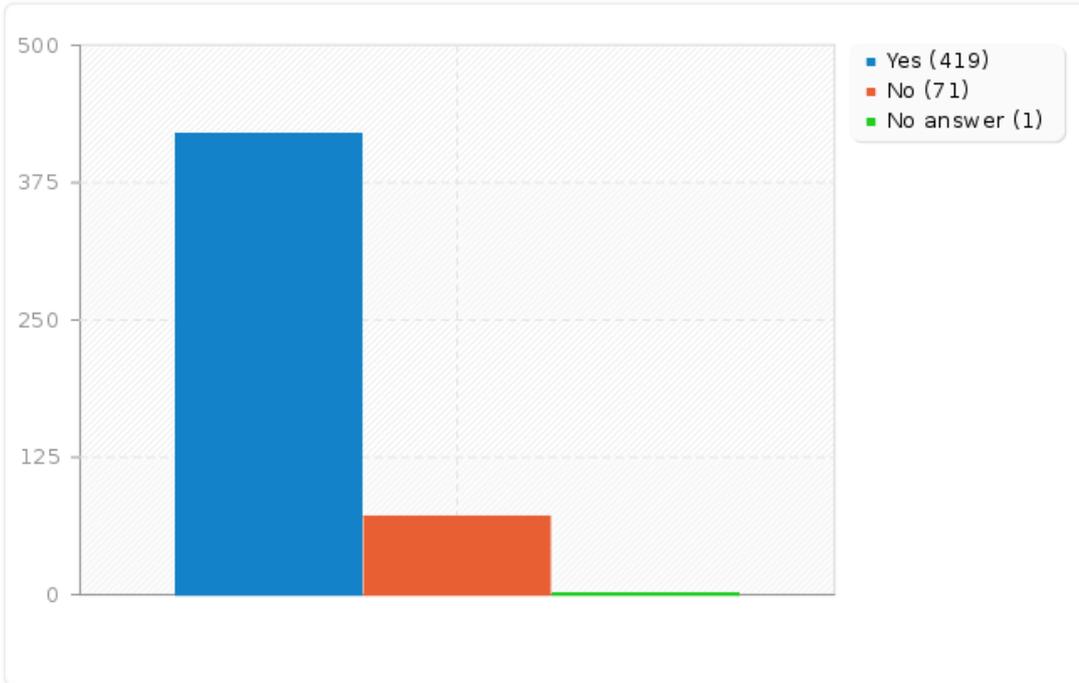
Did/do you complete all your patrol obligations in the season?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	419	85.34%
No (N)	71	14.46%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for p2

Did/do you complete all your patrol obligations in the season?





Field summary for p3

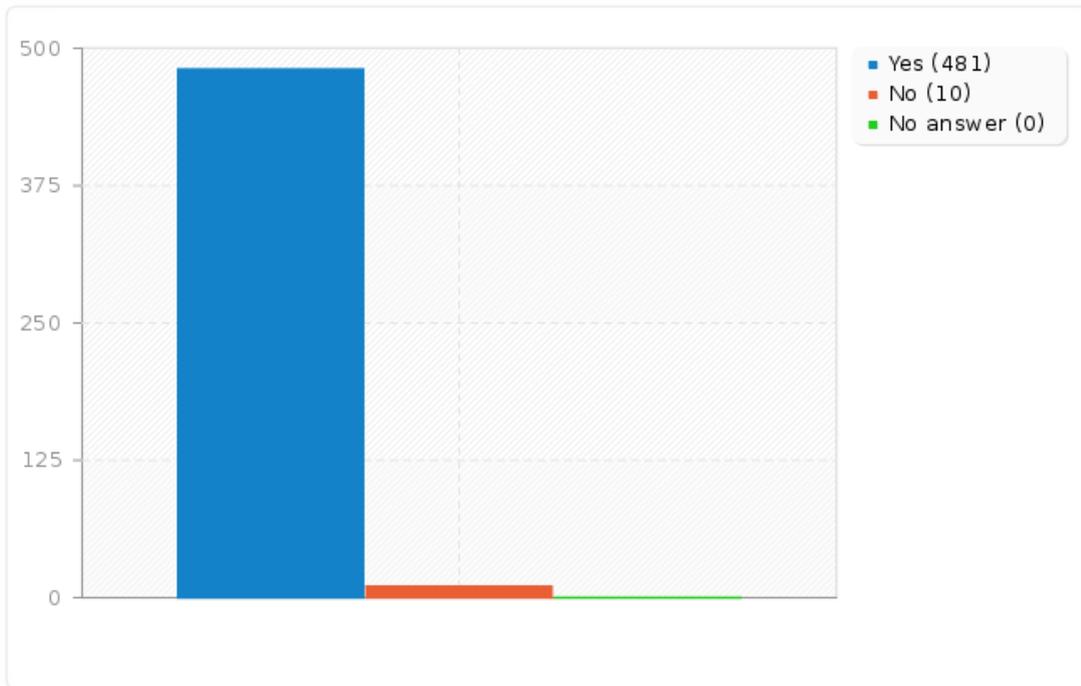
Do you understand the benefit in patrolling to provide a community service and support a great organisation?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	481	97.96%
No (N)	10	2.04%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for p3

Do you understand the benefit in patrolling to provide a community service and support a great organisation?





Field summary for p4

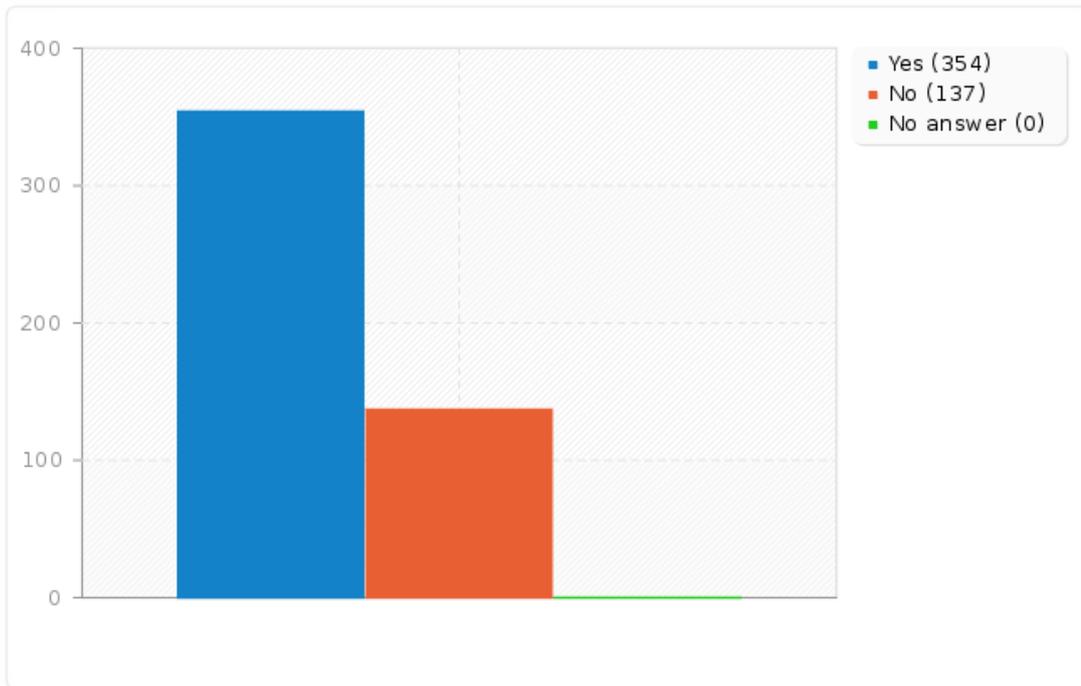
Would you recommend your friends to join & become patrolling club members?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	354	72.10%
No (N)	137	27.90%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for p4

Would you recommend your friends to join & become patrolling club members?





Field summary for p5

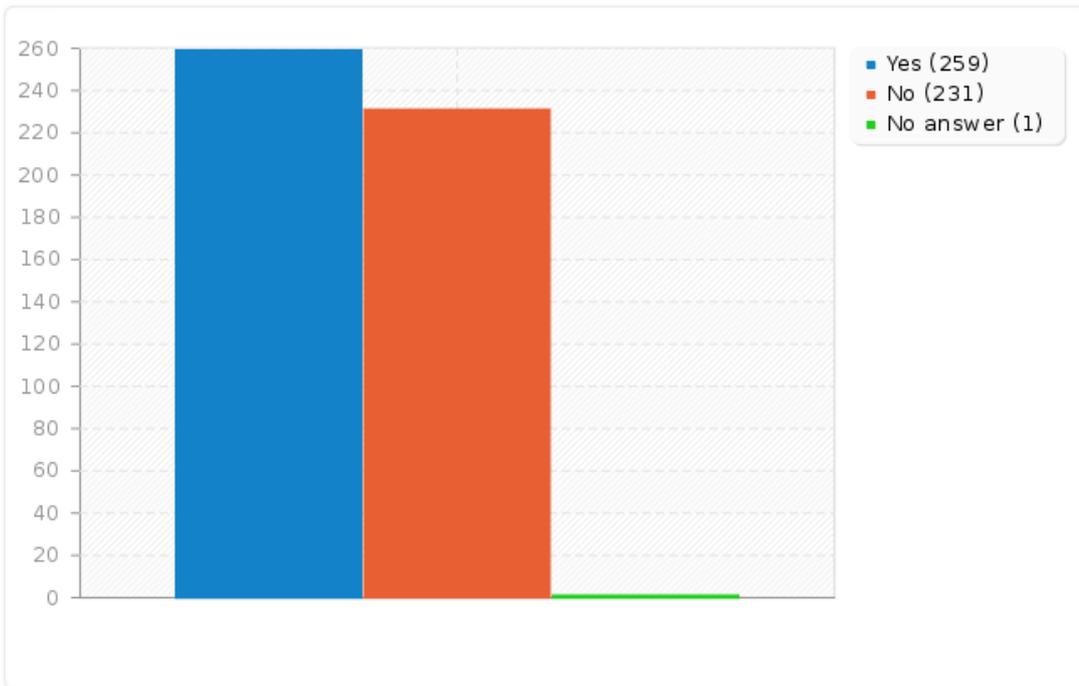
Do you consider your club patrols to be enjoyable, that you would continue even without being a competitor?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	259	52.75%
No (N)	231	47.05%
No answer	1	0.20%



Field summary for p5

Do you consider your club patrols to be enjoyable, that you would continue even without being a competitor?





Field summary for c1(SQ001)

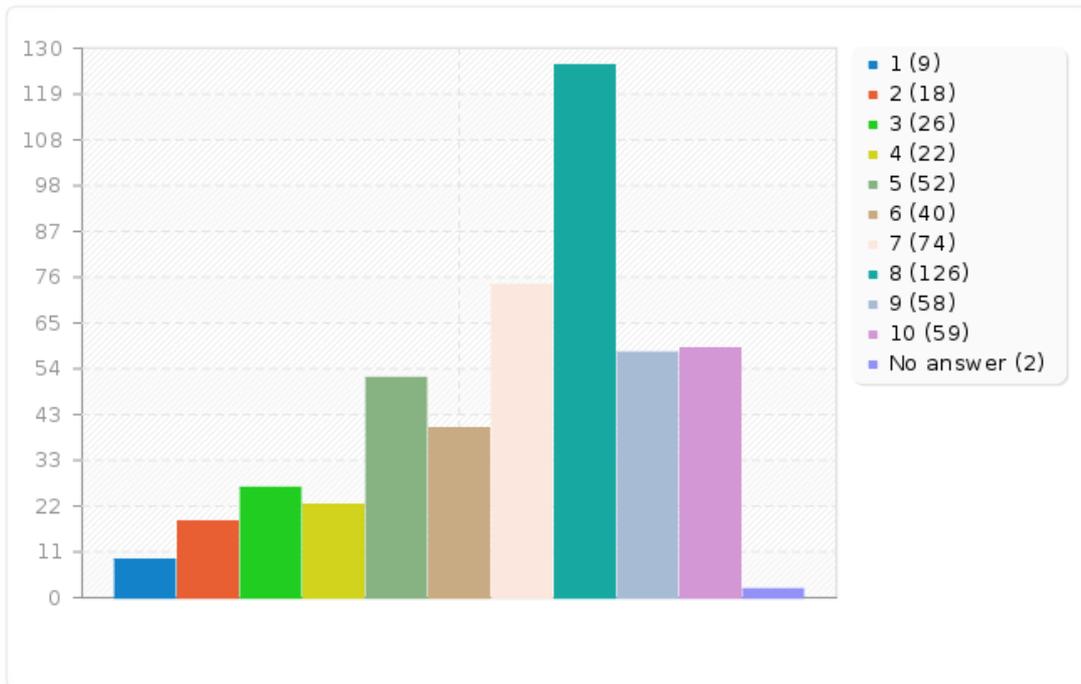
Out of 10, how would you rate SLS as a sport against others from your experience? (10 being the best & 1 the worst) []

Answer	Count	Percentage
1 (1)	9	1.85%
2 (2)	18	3.70%
3 (3)	26	5.35%
4 (4)	22	4.53%
5 (5)	52	10.70%
6 (6)	40	8.23%
7 (7)	74	15.23%
8 (8)	126	25.93%
9 (9)	58	11.93%
10 (10)	59	12.14%
No answer	2	0.41%



Field summary for c1(SQ001)

Out of 10, how would you rate SLS as a sport against others from your experience? (10 being the best & 1 the worst) []





Field summary for c2

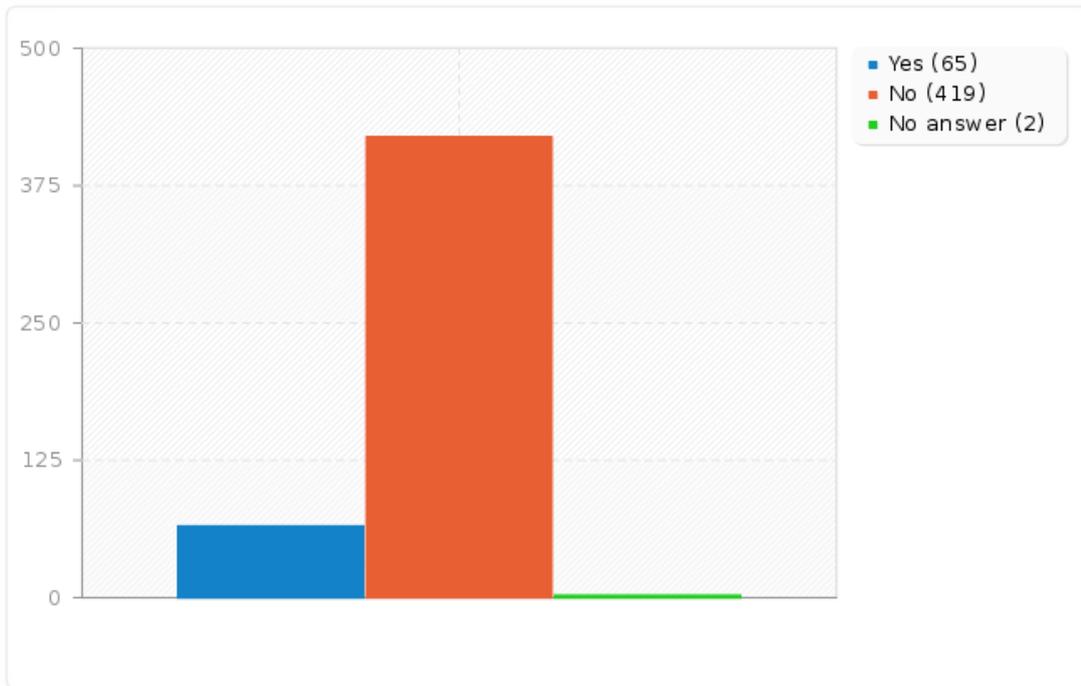
Do/did you feel included in the SLS decision making process at all levels?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	65	13.37%
No (N)	419	86.21%
No answer	2	0.41%



Field summary for c2

Do/did you feel included in the SLS decision making process at all levels?





Field summary for C3

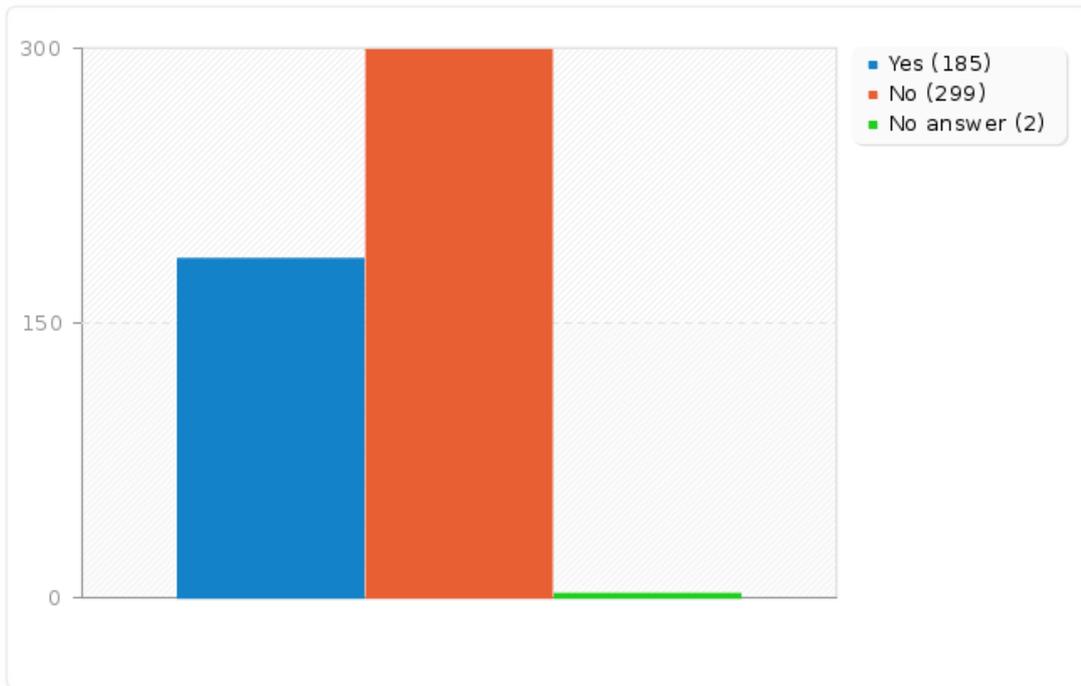
Do you agree that competitors should be penalised/discriminated against under the minimum patrol hour rule when no such penalty applies to any non-competitive member of your club?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	185	38.07%
No (N)	299	61.52%
No answer	2	0.41%



Field summary for C3

Do you agree that competitors should be penalised/discriminated against under the minimum patrol hour rule when no such penalty applies to any non-competitive member of your club?





Field summary for c4

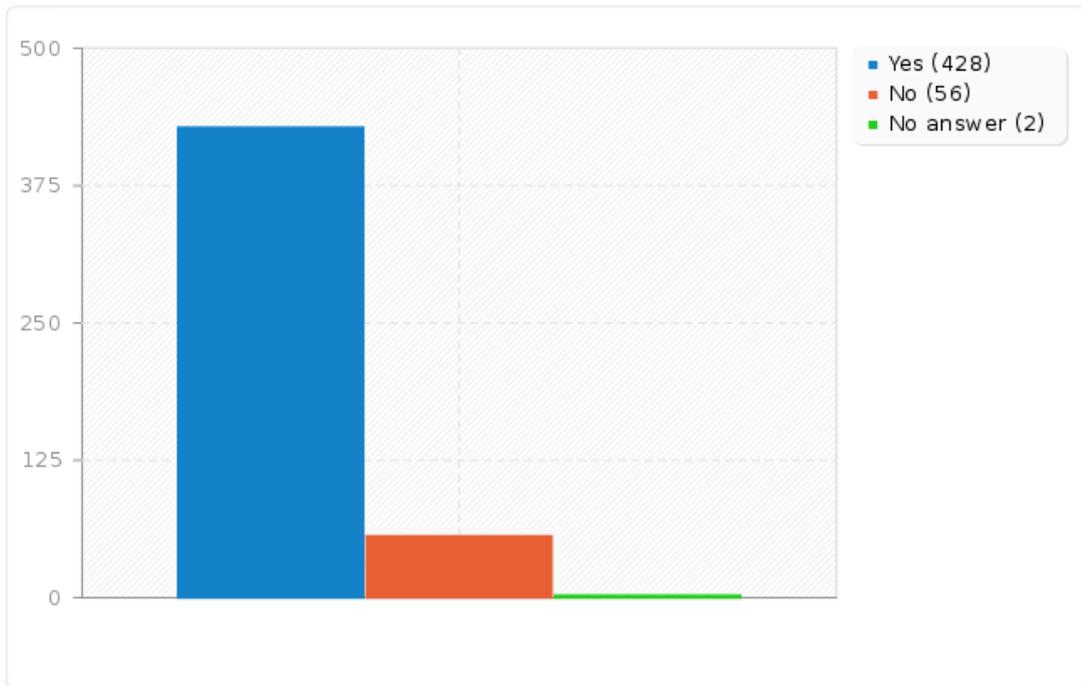
From your experience would you do it all again and join a surf club?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	428	88.07%
No (N)	56	11.52%
No answer	2	0.41%



Field summary for c4

From your experience would you do it all again and join a surf club?





Field summary for a1

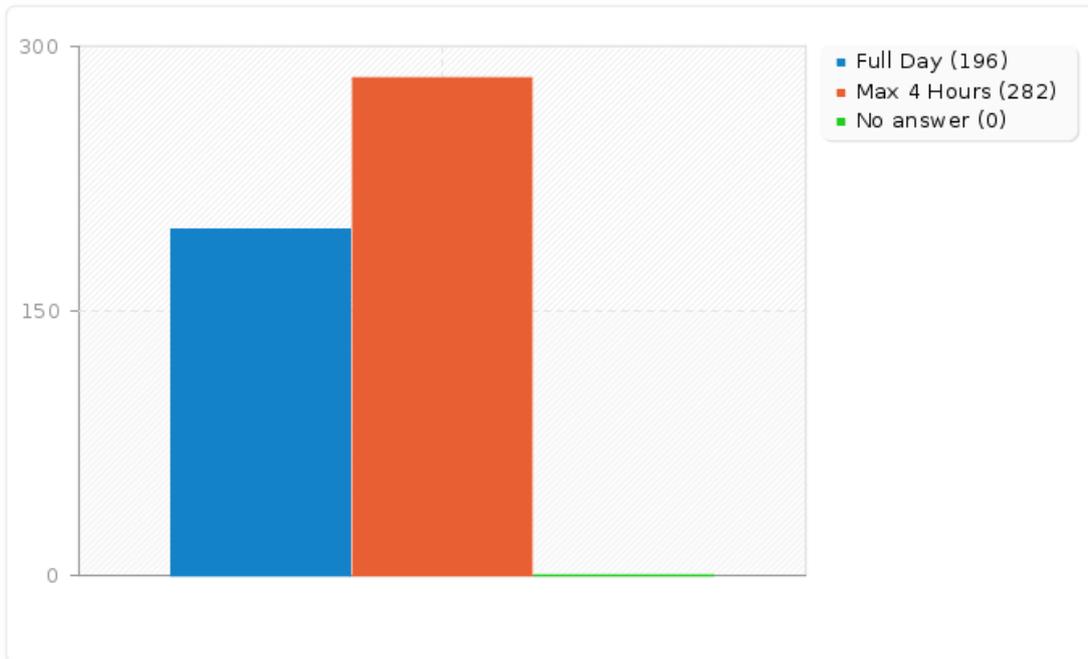
Do you support full day on the beach or max 4 hour events understanding that for shorter beach time events have to change in some instances?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Full Day (A1)	196	41.00%
Max 4 Hours (A2)	282	59.00%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a1

Do you support full day on the beach or max 4 hour events understanding that for shorter beach time events have to change in some instances?





Field summary for a2

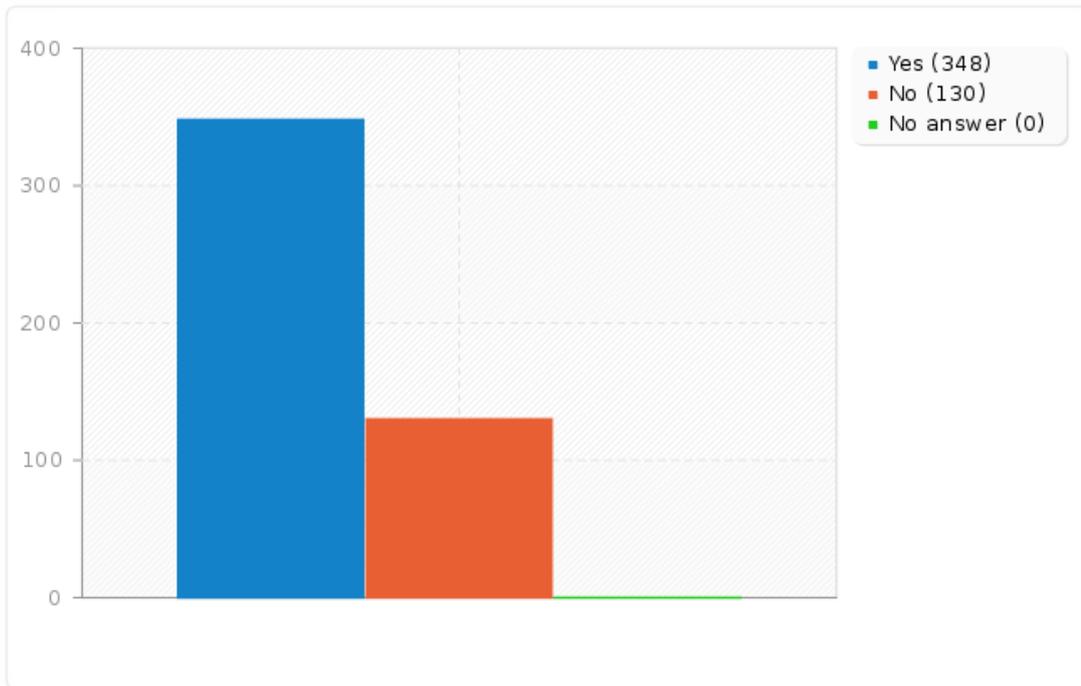
Do you support changing the event structure to shorten time on the beach?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	348	72.80%
No (N)	130	27.20%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a2

Do you support changing the event structure to shorten time on the beach?





Field summary for a3

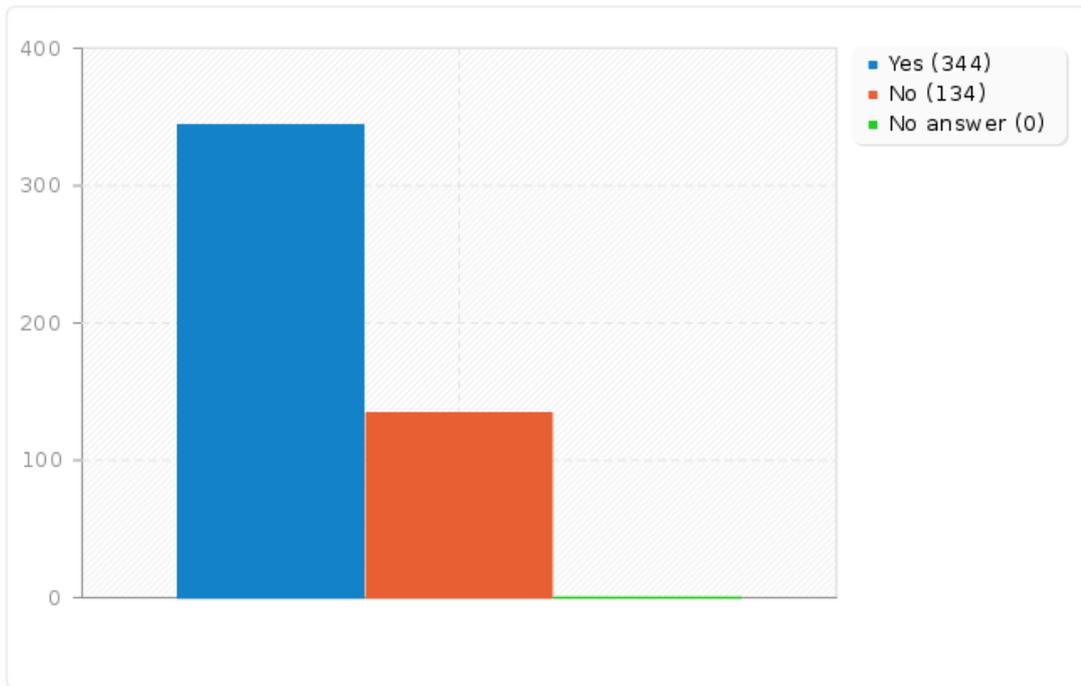
Would you like to see more short course events if they provide more races with less turnaround time in between?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	344	71.97%
No (N)	134	28.03%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a3

Would you like to see more short course events if they provide more races with less turnaround time in between?





Field summary for a4

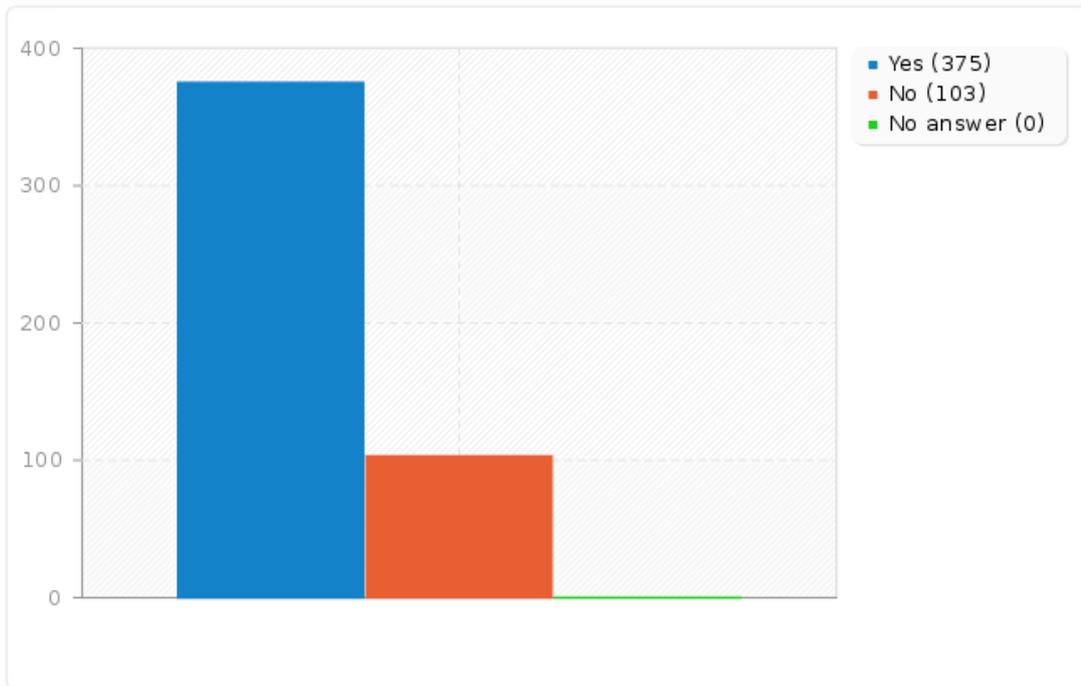
Would you support some twilight events for single divisions?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	375	78.45%
No (N)	103	21.55%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a4

Would you support some twilight events for single divisions?





Field summary for a5

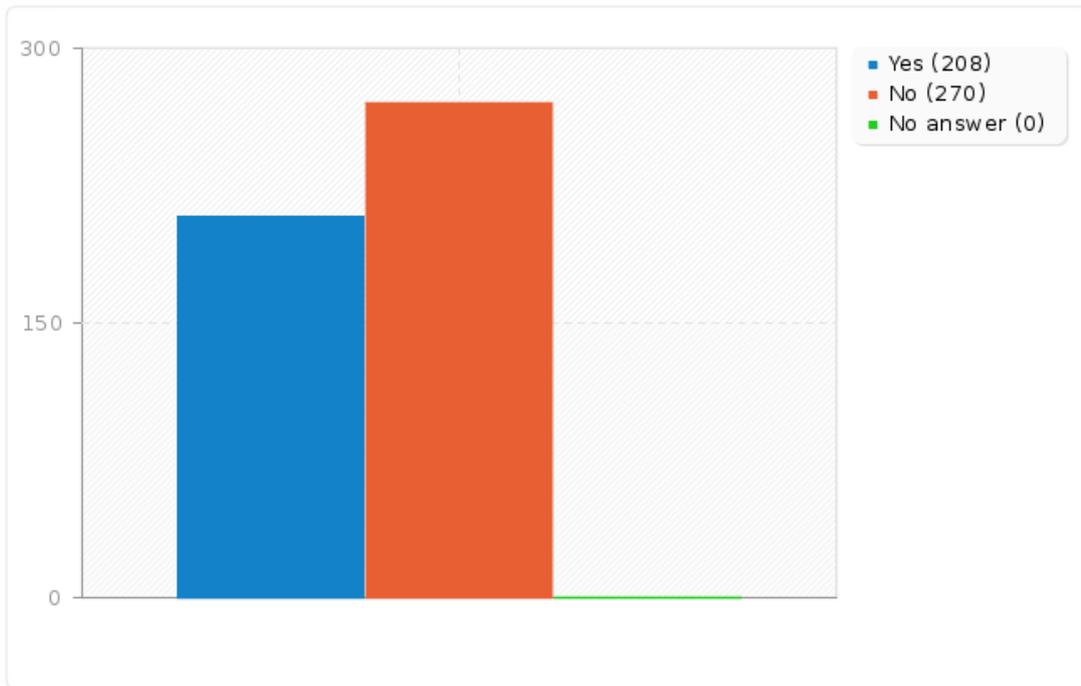
Do we need more team relay type events for boats?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	208	43.51%
No (N)	270	56.49%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a5

Do we need more team relay type events for boats?





Field summary for a6

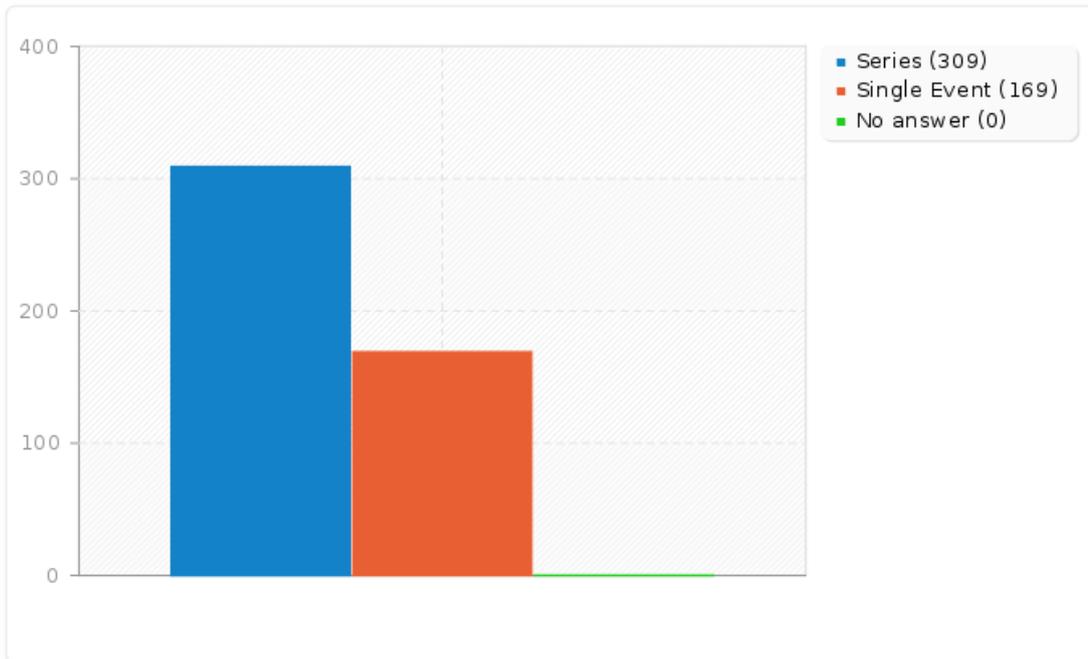
Do you support Series type events (i.e. State/Region Series) or single events days?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Series (A1)	309	64.64%
Single Event (A2)	169	35.36%
No answer	0	0.00%



Field summary for a6

Do you support Series type events (i.e. State/Region Series) or single events days?





Field summary for I1

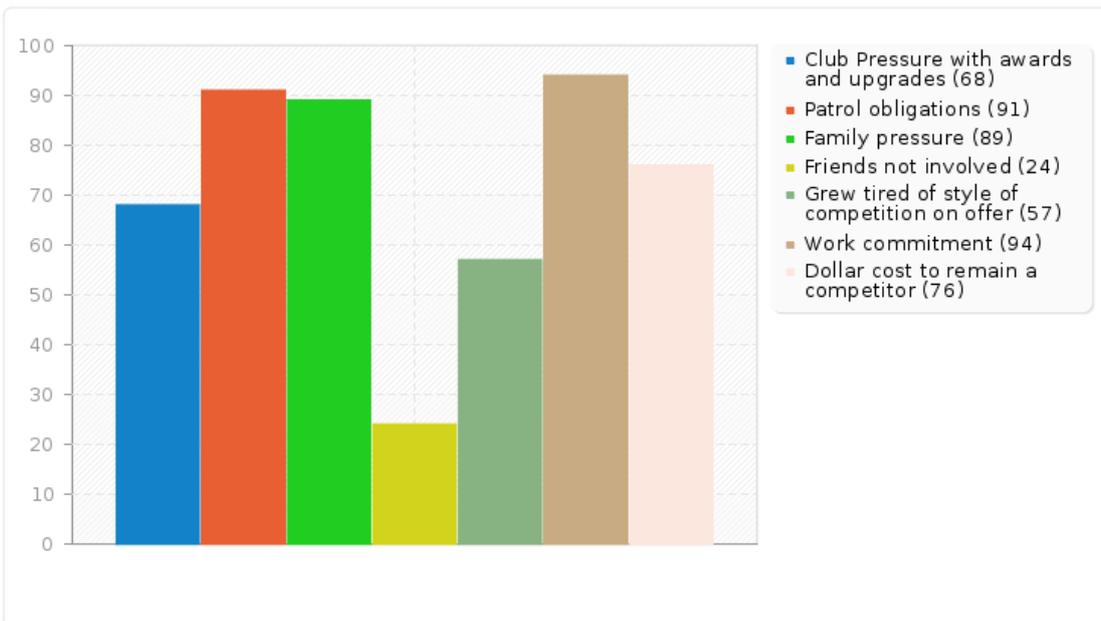
Select as many contributing factors as apply as to why you are leaving or intend to leave the sport?. If you are still competing or not contemplating leaving - please do not respond to this question.

Answer	Count	Percentage
Club Pressure with awards and upgrades (SQ001)	68	14.23%
Patrol obligations (SQ002)	91	19.04%
Family pressure (SQ003)	89	18.62%
Friends not involved (SQ004)	24	5.02%
Grew tired of style of competition on offer (SQ005)	57	11.92%
Work commitment (SQ006)	94	19.67%
Dollar cost to remain a competitor (SQ007)	76	15.90%



Field summary for I1

Select as many contributing factors as apply as to why you are leaving or intend to leave the sport?. If you are still competing or not contemplating leaving - please do not respond to this question.





Field summary for b1

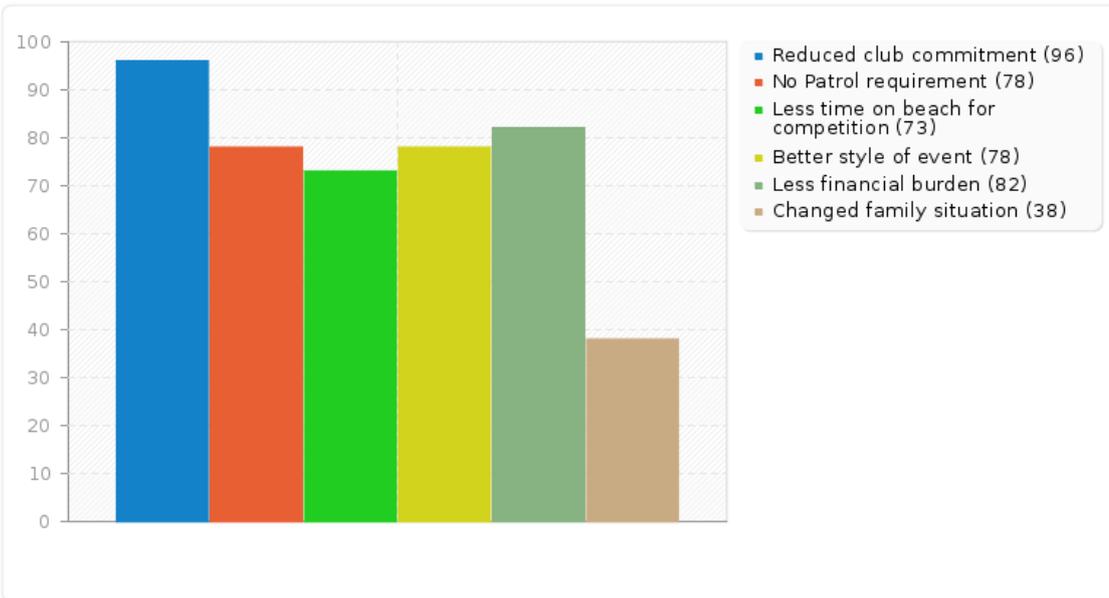
If you have already left or planning to leave at seasons end, what would it take to bring you back? Tick as many options as apply to you. If the question does not apply - please do not respond.

Answer	Count	Percentage
Reduced club commitment (SQ001)	96	20.13%
No Patrol requirement (SQ002)	78	16.35%
Less time on beach for competition (SQ003)	73	15.30%
Better style of event (SQ004)	78	16.35%
Less financial burden (SQ005)	82	17.19%
Changed family situation (SQ006)	38	7.97%



Field summary for b1

If you have already left or planning to leave at seasons end, what would it take to bring you back? Tick as many options as apply to you. If the question does not apply - please do not respond.





Field summary for g1

Please enter any general comments you may care to make on this subject

Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	297	63.06%
No answer	174	36.94%

ID	Response
12	get officials and particularly referees that have an idea. the are referees that have no interpersonal skills and are inconsistent with their rulings. Young competitors don't relate to some officials because young people think, act, behave differently to the way some officials expect them to. It is 2015 not 1975. get a better carnival calendar where events don't clash.
14	There is s serious disconnect between the hierarchy at SLSA and the members. Further to this LSV (and SLSA) look at us as a business with employees and we are treated as such. I would never leave my club but it's a hard decision to make at times when decisions are made by people who are not life savers and this is where I see the major issues are coming from.
15	Let us row in waves
16	I obtained my Bronze in 1975. Currently the level of updates required and the breaking down of awards to such small entities and requiring constant "re-certification" is causing me to re-evaluate will I stay in rowing. I have been a sweep for over 20 years but that counts for nothing. I still need to qualify and do bloody recertification as a level one coach...I know what I'm doing and am surrounded by like minded people and its all bullshit to get more funds and push me away from the sport.
17	There is a huge lack of available sweeps to train and take on crews currently, I know of 3 crews in different clubs who have disbanded and left surfboats as a result of this. Having started as a nipper many years ago in qld surfboats and then rejoining the sport in the last few years in Sydney I have found the training style among all sweeps somewhat lacking and inconsistent. Maybe that's a general decline in the years I was away, but I notice it across all clubs here. I've returned to board and ski training which is a bit easier to get involved in.
18	I think the changes as a result (although understandable) did deter a lot of surf boat rowers. Surf boat rowers row because they love the surf and waves - moving events to areas prone to have no/limited waves is a big deterrent for the sport.
20	There is this continual fight by individuals or organisations or groups to get what they want, whether it be for recognition, self satisfaction or for sponsorship dollars. I see the ASRL committee trying to break this down for the betterment of the sport and the organisation so support the current strategy but unless the larger SLS organisation sees this as well the numbers will continue to drop, as people once they realise whats going on will continue to go away from the sport.
25	The question at the start of this survey about how/when you got into surf boats did'nt include an option for masters. I know quite a few blokes who started their surfboat careers in the masters division.
28	OH&S requirements getting harder to deal with
32	I joined Surf Life Saving in the 60's in NSW, the SLS Bronze was regarded as a high achievement back then. To maintain your fitness and hone skills there was always the Sunday Morning Beach and Surf events with Beach Sprint, Surf Races, Belt Races etc. Today the Nippers control the beach on Sunday Mornings and senior members just do Patrols without the fun of Club Competition that the young and older members enjoyed in past years. The Volunteer Surf Life Saver today has so many regulations and safety requirements to comply with based on SLSA's fear of litigation. Most Clubs in QLD no longer have bunk rooms or accommodation for members, this was always a draw card younger members to be able to stay at the beach for the weekend. In conclusion to my rant Surf Life Saving is very much over regulated with the Volunteers and Competitors being required to comply with regulations imposed by Paid Bureaucrats that run SLSA.
35	I began rowing with a NSW club in 2001 for 5yrs, I moved up north qld to a non surf region for 3yrs, then moved south again & joined a qld club to begin rowing again. I was extremely annoyed to find out I had to re-do my bronze all over as it expires after 3yrs, this in itself was a



pain in the ass and a waste of time as the only thing that had changed was the CPR requirements. The rubbish/politics/pig headedness of volunteers that put themselves on pedestals, should have been enough to turn me off rejoining SLS except for the love of rowing.

I am still a member, however am not rowing this season purely due to club politics, once again, the biggest problem with SLS is its a volunteer organisation full of people that are nothing in the real world, but can pretend to be something in volunteer organisations. The politics, double standards, back-door agreements/handshakes is disgusting and needs to be nipped in the butt on a club level but sadly it's "mates" in the upper levels, that ruin it for others.

In terms of patrols, I understand patrols need to be done, but coming from a small coastal town club with struggling member numbers & finances & still only required to do the minimum for competition rights, then joining a very financial club with hundreds of members and required to do way more hours to gain competition rights is once again wrong. This should be a standard minimum patrol hour requirement across the board, not varying from club to club. Just this change in itself would entice many past members back.

Another issue which is keeping past members from rejoining or even current members continuing to compete is being penalised from changing from club to club. I can understand loyalty should be important but if you want to compete, yet there are not enough rowers in your current club but seats available in other clubs, you should be entitled to change clubs without being penalised. I know of several cases where people who are long service and are penalised by the new club & required to start patrolling again, this is beyond wrong and I guarantee you, another reason why members are leaving.

In terms of competitions, the days drag on way too long. I once again realise it's volunteer officials that run the competitions but organisation is very lacking. There is too much down time & whoever came up with the terrible idea of starting carnivals later in the day last seasons needs a bullet. What other sports take up a whole day to compete??? Again, get this sorted & people will be banging the door down to rejoin & compete. If you look at the majority of rowers bring families, it's too big a commitment for people to sacrifice such a big part of their weekends especially ontop of the already large amount of patrols hours required. I would like to say I'm proud to be a member of SLS, but as I said, the politics, double standards & dodgy back door deals ruin it for the honest people.

Oh and one last thing, get rid of the helmets, this in itself will shut the sport down. Allow people to make the choice themselves to wear them, for God sakes make competitors sign disclaimers that they are choosing to not wear them at their own risk. The major incidents over the years have not been in the boat areana, yet we are the ones that have to wear the helmets -where's the logic in that?

Thankyou for allowing a big bough space to give my opinion, hopefull someone will take it serious & make some big changes. It's certainly not hearsay, it's constant discussion on the frontline.

Thanks

- 37 Reduced time on beach at competition
- 38 I'm pregnant hence why not rowing, but intend returning if we can get a crew together (difficulty with women my age due to family pressures). Cost is inhibitive with travel/accom to one off events, especially for those not in full time work (ie uni students/families/etc).
- 39 This survey should account for the time commitments required to compete.
Primary reason for leaving:
Training hours became prohibitive when coupled with full time work commitments.
Other suggestion:
engage people from the wider community beyond the suburbs immediately surrounding the beaches.
- 41 I stopped rowing this year after 13 straight seasons of competition which began in 2001 at around the time competitor numbers peaked. After witnessing the decline of the sport over past decade, I don't believe that surf club commitments are the root cause of the malaise affecting the sport. Whilst surf club commitments are a hassle sometimes, if you really enjoy the sport like I did, you'll do whatever surf club activities are required to compete.

Conversely, if you're not enjoying the sport like you used to (which is true in my case), then surf club commitments are easily enough of a burden to make you give it away.

When I think about what made me passionate about surfboats when I started in 2001, and compare those memories to the way I feel about the sport now there is a clear difference.

In 2001 surfboats were fun and exciting, they gave me an adrenaline rush. They kept me coming back because even when I wasn't in the fastest crew I still believed I had a chance to



win because surf would effect the result. Carnivals were conducted at surf beaches in all surf conditions. It was very rare for a carnival to be cancelled or relocated.

Compare that to the past few years and surfboats aren't exciting anymore. Carnivals are routinely cancelled or relocated. Surf conditions are the exception rather than the norm. There's no adrenaline rush. Surfboat crews have adapted to these changed circumstances, and it is understood that these days to be successful the highest levels of fitness and rowing technique are required. If I'm not in a fast crew these days I know with relative certainty that the surf conditions won't give me the opportunity to win.

And last of all, when I was a young man I used to be proud to tell the women that I was trying to impress that I rowed surfboats because most people understood it was a little bit dangerous and extreme. Imagine doing that these days? Invite the girls down to the beach to watch you row in near flat conditions with your silly helmet on? No wonder young guys in the 18-24 bracket aren't interested.

This year I gave it away because I reflected on the past few seasons and wondered why I was wasting my time.

- 8 plus sessions a week just to be competitive on flat water
- No adrenaline rush or excitement from racing in surf
- Expensive trips away to beaches with flat surf where I knew I wasn't a real chance at winning and would be wasting my money
- The prospect of being forced to wear a helmet this year

In my opinion, the problem with the sport isn't surf club bureaucracy. That has always been there and people still did what they had to do to compete. The problem is the things that made the sport attractive have slowly leached out over the past few years, and it's just not fun anymore.

Taking the surf away from surfboats over the past few years because of "safety" has made them a slow, unsatisfying substitute for stillwater rowing. I get much more satisfaction from going 3 times as fast on the river in my club 8.

Let people race in surf again and they will come. Continuing to allow heavy handed bureaucracy to take away the essence of the sport under the premise of improving "safety" will see numbers continue to decline.

Get in touch with me when I can row in surf again, I'd be glad to come back.

46 I don't want to be forced to wear a helmet, barriers to entry for the sport are too great, extent of requirements to be a sweep are over the top and harming the sport

47 I think a big issue in Surf boats is that there has been a change in the demographic. You are starting to have as many or more women competing as men yet you have half as many divisions for them. This is gender discrimination and makes it harder to recruit women at a young age or those who would like to be a reserve grade.

48 Asrl should be promoting involvement in sls - not excluding.

By having 4 boat finals - as sarsl are doing this season - they are eliminating two boats (8 people) from finals and even more from semis. This means lots of people are turning up for only 3 rows with no chance of points ! Basically more than 3/4 boats get no chance of getting points - which puts them in same category as those who don't bother to turn up especially in poorer weather.

This does not promote competition or a fun atomosphere.

The good boats get more rows / practice and the newer crews get eliminated early and they lose valuable race practice, start/turn practice, wave/trail practice and eventually drop out because it's not worth all their training and time attending competitions just to race 3 rounds.

Semi finals also need to be fairer with crews being split due to where they come in the rounds. Not all

Top crews in on semi and the others in another. Should automatically be 1,3,5,7 and 2,4,6,8 in the two semis with no "juggling" of crews.



patrol requirements from their competition manual and make the obtaining of bronze awards easier.

Remove the U23M division completely and offer more rows for Open crews and cut back the number of rows available to Reserve grade this will encourage rowers to row Opens and also necessitate the development of new sweeps.

The sport needs to be more friendly to newcomers and provide exciting formats for crews.

We are really passed having all grades compete at a Carnival We can run Open and Juniors at a Carnival.

U23m rowing should be dropped completely and or revert back to U21M.

- 54 The ASRL needs to stand strong in support of the tribe. No to mandatory wearing of helmets and PFD's. Also keep tweaking the matrix and push for the egg n spooners to use the same.
- 55 I primarily have left because the sport has changed for the worst. No big surfs, Championship events at the same few millponds. If I wanted stillwater I would row on the river. No interest sweeping /training crews to row in the flat. BORING. As for being an official, it is fun and camaraderie is great. I have some good friends but the whinging, whining idiots complaining all the time about course, buoys, edge, blind finish judges, cheating judges etc... blah blah. I have better things to do with my time and family than listen to the same whingers week in week out. It wasn't fun any more listening to the whinging with racing in 1 ft water. Why bother. One of the big problems is that at Kurrawa for example there was minor complaints about the course because crews were happy to just get out and back. No one even looked at the cans to see if they were straight. Small surf, flat water makes it all to close and the whingers come out because it is their God given right to win. It has also gone way too far with the responsibility on officials with helmets, surf ratings etc...Why would anyone put themselves in a situation where something happens after they make a call. No thanks. Maybe put this out in a post for the general members to see why an old salt is not around anymore. It will only get worse.
- Something to ponder.... Kurrawa was not dangerous. The idiots standing up the back didn't help. The issue is the boats. They are too buoyant. We have been too smart by design. The boats of the last period with tanks are extremely difficult to steer on a wave if you have no boatspeed, broken wave, whitewater wave behind you etc..the open or partial tanked boats e.g. Miles boat of the late 80s 90s were an absolute dream to handle in all conditions. You should go back to the future and phase out the current boats. It will take 20 years as they are so durable but they are a very big part of the current sweeping dilemma.

Good luck in the future, you'll need it.

- 56 You have neglected to include any mention of two of the most important Groups involved. THE MASTERS & THE OFFICIALS. THE MASTERS ARE BARELY TOLERATED AT MIXED CARNIVALS, YET THEY ARE THE MOST DEDICATED ROWERS/FUND RAISERS/HARD WORKING/ & THEY USUALLY BECOME OFFICIALS WHEN AGE PREVENTS THEM FROM ROWING. The OFFICIALS are the Back bone of the whole organisation. & should be included in the decision making. YOU HAVEN'T EVEN REFERRED TO THEM IN THIS SURVEY.
- 57 Numbers have declined in all sports, not just ours. Great initiative with free entry for the kids. Masters crews are just as important as juniors, they are workers/mentors/coaches and help with transport. maybe they should be a little more appreciated at State and Aussies and not looked upon as a burden.
- 58 The farce of hi vis and helmets being applied to surf boats. (Patrols wear red and yellow)
The lowering of standards with regard to bigger surf conditions and supporting a part of this:
Having bay competitions for surf boats
Too much red tape
- 59 I feel a major component of the decline is driven by the reduced number of young sweeps prepared to dedicate the time to train crews. I also believe that the media coverage and event profiles are now non existant and in the days of Peter Hickey running events they were wins that were highly sort after. There is too much travel required for profile events.
- 60 I am not sure that this survey will get the results that you want due to its structure. I think a different survey for differnt groups i.e. U19, U23, Reserves, Open, Masters and Sweeps would probably give you a much more indepth view. Also, there was no mention of the helmets fiasco or the discrimination against boaties or the support, or lack of, that the Club provides which are reasons why I am aware of several people leaving the sport and



- Association. Some of the questions only allowed one answer when the correct answer was both or more than one.
Cost, lack of exposure (Media etc) and low Club support are reasons why I consider giving it up.
Perhaps the ASRL could develop a promotion section with material and guidance to help attract and retain sponsors and younger rowers would help.
- 65 Love rowing. Sweep accreditation is a good thing but I think it put a few people off.
Keeping a crew together and fit takes a lot of commitment.
ASRL are great.
- 66 I have experienced the feeling that the boat section is not supported by the surf club which makes keeping up our surf club commitments and competition commitments difficult. A lack of financial support has also made the travelling to and from training, carnivals and to the surf club very difficult especially for uni students which is what my crew are made up of.
- 69 Too many rules and regulations. SLS run by old school thinking. Too many members in decision making positions on power trips. Surf sport needs to seperate from life saving. All traditional sports seem to be re inventing themselves to attract younger age groups with shorter versions of their games , what is SLS doing
- 70 The Association is over governed and focussed too much "fluff" / non core activities.
Perception of very little support for grassroots clubbies. Too much emphasis on elite athletes and lifeguard services.
Transparency around SLSQ lifeguard contracts, there is ongoing pressure on clubs to expand their volunteer services. I suspect so SLSQ can take cream from paid lifeguard contracts with councils.
- 71 I joined th boat section after being a ski paddler. I am now a life member and do not patrol. I row junior crews as I cannot regularly attend Aussies. A number of my rowers have joined other clubs. I think consistent sweeps is a contributing factor to rowers leaving.
- 72 Positive actions would be lessening the patrol burden currently imposed on athletes, and better organisation of series events - boost the fanfair / integrate with nutrigrain series / obtain betting approval from gambling authorities so people can bet on races nation wide, then capitalise/ charge a fee to agencies facilitating such gambling.
- 73 I joined the sport late in life in my late 30's. Our crew are all in there 40's now & find it frustrating to compete with the younger crews all the time. In WA we only get one race per year to race against guys our own age (Masters State Tittles). It would be good if the Navy Boat Series had a masters division? We also need to pay ASRL membership plus entry fee for each event.
- 74 Trying to get information off the ASRL Forum is annoying. A more accessible website for event information/results would be excellent.
- 76 Greater incentives to be placed around Under 19 competitors - representative opportunities, opportunities for top U19 crews to be supported to travel interstate for greater competition. Travel around ALL Australian States for Titles. Sponsor product prizes as incentives. Clubs to have a strategic plan around youth. Look at successful clubs in boats - North Cronulla, Bilgola, Alex Headland, Austinmer, North Cottesloe what do they have in common?
- 78 Joining a surf lifesaving club and becoming 'qualified' to race is a long, difficult and not particularly useful for our chosen sport of Surf Boats. However, I love surf boat rowing so much that I am willing to put up with it all. I think it is disappointing the lack of support from SLSA and their apparent lack of interest in working with the ASRL to improve competitor numbers. thanks for your support
- 82 Surf boat rowing is aligned to surf lifesaving - you cant do one without the other.
This survey is heavily biased to the negative side of this - what about the camaraderie and other benefits...
The longest waste of time at carnivals is the turn around - as a percentage of races - by shortening the distance you don't get many more races unless the turn around times are imp[roved.
- 85 Our great sport is being overrun by too many rules and regulations, feel its causing the loss of competitors.
- 86 1. Round robin events are more inclusive as most crews are not competitive enough to get more than two rows at a big events.
2. Come and learn from the North Coast Series about how to run an inclusive series, it is challenging enough for the serious crews and enjoyable enough for the social rowers.
3. Individual clubs should be able to set the minimum patrol hours required for carnivals dependant on personal commitments for work and family.
- 88 The cost of entry fees is becoming a joke, \$100 per crew at branch level for 2 rows? Most clubs pass this on to the rowers, add this to state, Aussies ,ASRL, local boat series and all the other events to row in adds up.
- 90 Surf Life Saving should be promoted not only as a service to the community (ie Patrols) but



- as a type of social 'tool' for society. The reason I joined was to be social, and to do a common sport with friends, serving the community was just a by product of that. Patrol with friends is always more enjoyable than with just anyone, some clubs (my old one inclusive) discourage this, which is counter productive.
- 92 The biggest issue is the qualifications needed just to try out the sport. If the "patrol hour requirement" is removed it will spell the end of a number of clubs (mine included) and I would not go elsewhere just to race in a sport with a reduced number of clubs or crews.
- 94 *I am 69 and rowed for 52 years and have only stopped for health reasons.
*As a Life Member the patrol questions not that relevant to me and bronze gained in 1961.
*I don't believe SLS are really interested in boats. eg dropped them from inter-branch championships
*Safety issues are pushing rowers away. What do you talk about over a beer? Not winning medals!! You remember the big wipe outs you enjoyed
- 96 More relaxed competition. Training required to be a very competitive crew is too much.
- 97 I have raised this matter many times but here I go again. If something is not done by way of making the current design of surf boats safer for competitors, I beleive more people will be injured or at least not consider taking up the sport. Tanks in boats must GO. Get back to safety not speed. Before tanks were introduced, we did not have boats rolling over, back shot and end over ends on nearly every wave, no matter how big or small. These boats cannot handle large waves and now we have a committee to determine if we can compete on the day due to size of surf. There is no chance for bowmen to protect their backs by way of placing the inside foot on the keel and stand up when going over steep waves as in the past, as there is now an incline in the floor next to the bow seat. As a former multiple Australian Open Champion, I would now have to think twice as to whether I would risk my back and body regardless of my ability as a rower. On another note. Time on beach and costs are probably the most common cause of dropouts in the sport. People are sick of booking flights for Championships, holidays and accomodation only to have the competition moved kilometres away or cancelled due to conditions of surf mainly because the younger girls and boys can't handle the conditions. Hope some or all of my comments are considered, especially the boat specs or our great sport will suffer irreparable damage.
- 98 We have a great sport and been lucky enough to have success and making long life freindships but other sports around us change with the times and it's hard for us because it is a voluntary organisation with restrictions. I strongly believe we need to be part of slsa however the clubs have more control back to each branch not bigger States like nsw dictating to everyone.

I don't agree to breakaway from the organisation however if changes aren't made we the rowers might be forced to what would be sad as I know as a family we enjoy being part of the sls community.
- 99 Too many times in competition established clubs and sweeps receive favourable outcomes from their ability to negotiate with referees. We encounter this at two australian open me. Knock on effects for our crew began to wear the spirit of the crew down to the
- 102 Races need to actually start early in the morning, and less time standing around waiting.
Need to pay water safety people because lack of IRB crew slow down events.
- 103 I'm finding the sport's training requirements are difficult to maintain for competitors who wish to be up with the best. Most rowers row to win and with the daily requirements needed for life eg work, family commitments, the training schedule required to win (nothing short of that of a professional athlete less the \$\$ and rest time) is next to impossible for many. Not to mention the scrutiny SLS and mainly rowers are under from the media due to our recent tragedies, helmets and less opportunity to row in real surf.
- 104 More emphasis is needed on the actual goal of participating in a sport, achieving..

you can win an event and there is no prize money, no excitement or no sense of achievement. after a carnival its all about getting off the beach as quick as possible..
- 107 If we are required to hold coaches and sweeps award to compete there needs to be more courses held so that people are not turned away from the sport that want to do it
- 108 Your questions haven't addressed the systemic problem as a whole. To compete a Club has to provide qualified IRB Drivers that are experienced in conditions often worse that their own Club at a time there is a shortage of competent IRB Crews. Officials, team managers, coaches etc all need to be accredited through a process that is often insulting but very time consuming. Patrol accreditation is also cumbersome as I recently checked to find I now have around 26 qualifications most of which i need to requal each year although I have been a lifesaver over 20 years. This yeart our U19 & u23 crews had 3 carnivals before their exams or work had allowed them to compete as well as requal. We consistantly loose people because they can not possibly meet their requal and competition requiremnets before Dec31 and as



- we are a team sport they withdraw leaving their 3 teammates without a crew so they also withdraw. Dosen't take long to make your 800 members lossed. Please note the issue is to due with systemic problems within life saving not a desire to compete as surf boat rowers.
- 109 I have no faith in SLSA at State & National level, they are so out of touch with us at Club level, I dislike SLSA because of this, however love the organistaion at Club level.
- 110 The 2 biggest issues for those currently competing is lack of meaningful consultation in the major carnivals & general competition programming by SLSA & SLSNSW & the increasing complexity of competition & patrols. It appears that a significant portion of complexity is created by SLSA's insistence on application of Work Health & Safety - we're volunteers & WHS has no part in surf club life. Patrols - Saturday patrols, Saturday is play day, Sunday is patrol day; all of the new award requirements to operate a patrol makes it extremely difficult get people to commit the additional time to get the awards, arrange a patrol team with the appropriate award spread & get swaps for competition days - what happened to just having your Bronze. The whole SLSA education process for us volunteered is totally out of control, there is too much cross-over between the professional training arm & the volunteer arm.
- 115 A few questions are hard to answer ie Bronze course that I completed is 1977 would have rated a 10. a couple of other questions i answered based on todays enviroment rather than my earlier years
- 117 Some people join to compete and others for their community commitment and this needs to be addressed. In places like Darwin there is no point in patrolling a beach on a Sunday afternoon when the tide is out, but it has to be done to get your 'hours' Yet people work behind the bar or fix up boats and craft or maintain the club etc but none of this is allowed to count towards hours. All this and we are one of the more relaxed clubs in Australia.
- 118 I believe the sport has lost its way. Focus should be on club events (ie local carnivals), not elite events. ASRL open should be more varied and in continuos me locations to provide interest. Numbers will not always be at the high level but the interest to see new places will mean more people will stay in the sport as a whole. It should be about enjoyment, the travels, the pig pen enjoying a beer and mateship.
Too much money is pent on waste instead lower entry fees and make the sport enjoyable again.
- 119 Reasons why I think people are leaving are.
Pink singlets
Helmets
Season finishing far too late it should be all over by mid March
Aussies being held in Perth why can't we have it in NSW or Vic
- 123 We need a women's reserve or masters grade at all competitions !
- 124 This survey appears to be focused on preconceived reasons as to why the sport is dying, specifically patrol obligations. Missed opportunity to dig deeper.
- 126 I was a rower for 14 years and when I started back in 97 there was a great variety of competitions that aren't around today. I remember also being able to compete in competitions before I had completed my bronze which was a great motivator to get it done.
- I think there is too much politics in the sport these days. My husband is still on the beach sweeping so I am still involved with what is going on. I think they need to start giving decisions back to the rowers and let them have a voice. There are a few controversial judges and decision makers on the beach at the moment that are too club focused rather than the sport as a whole. If these people with power can't make decisions without their personal views getting in the way then they should be removed. It reflects so badly on our sport and does not encourage either recruitment or people to stay in the sport.
- If you guys truly want to start recruiting more rowers you need to get rid of the politics and make competition more fun. Yes there is definitely a need to have serious carnivals but there should be fun focused events and the sport is sorely lacking in that department.
- In terms of patrolling I think there will always be people that will whinge about it. They can choose to change clubs if they don't like the structure of patrols, etc but at the end of the day if you guys make it worthwhile to show up at carnivals, people will do their patrols regardless of whether they want to be there or not.
- 127 As an official we do not get enough feed back on our past present and future duties so we don't know how much we have contributed or how much more we are needed we need some feed back or we will drop off (sad but let us know) we do love being part of the programme for boats as I /we have been boaties all of our lives
- 128 My financial issues were due to constant injuries- new ones and nigging old ones
Now that I dont row any more I live having my weekend back- there was just way way way too much time spent sitting on the beach waiting.



- 8 hour days for about 20 mins of racing...
- 130 In my opinion, the governing bodies of SLS are just making it too hard to get new people involved with surf clubs. I've been involved with surf boats for just over 40 years and it is now almost impossible to get people from outside the movement to try the sport without breaking a few of the rules, and in doing that we put our own heads on the block. Surf Life Saving is all about keeping our beaches safe, but we could have so many more people doing that if there weren't so many obstacles placed in the way of getting prospective competitors involved.
- 131 Patrol time should not be the only factor in letting people compete. What about service to club in other ways be counted to allow competition.
- 132 crew numbers are less than 50% of what they were 10 years in qld. There are a lot of 'hoops' to jump through to be a boatie these days. Plus the decision to have the aussie titles three years in a row in Perth was the almost fatal blow for boat rowing in Qld. The people who made this decision should hang their heads in shame and then with surf boat rowing on its knees back to perth we go.
- 133 Surf boat culture can sometime deter younger rowers from joining.
- 137 I feel that Surf lifesaving is becoming a police state with too many rules. I'm a patrol captain and vice boat captain and am happy to give back to my club to row surf boats. After 14 seasons of both patrolling and rowing I have to wonder whether the two can co exist in the future.
- 139 Perhaps more recognition of participation at surfboat events compared to pennants for only the winner of each division. We don't need anything fancy, but a token prize!! for second and third might be an encouragement for crews, especially when one crew wins every carnival! What happened to crews having to go up into Open when they win at reserve grade? I think there's a lot of 'masters' rowers who would be keen to continue if they were catered for at carnivals.
- 140 I refuse to row with a stupid helmet on, so quit the sport.
- 141 Some questions should perhaps offer an alternative to Yes or No answers. MUST create fun and rewarding atmosphere with really good club interaction (and inter-club interaction) Gear (ie surf boats / oars etc) is very expensive, meaning there can be a pretty big gap between those clubs with fast/newer gear & those with older. Makes a huge difference to speed in the water! I like the idea of twilight events (except that the water /winds tend to be worse & issues of weather/running over into night time which poses a whole new set of circumstances.
- 142 Insufficient emphasis on the surf aspect of surfboats. Far too much influence from stillwater rowing. That and attitude of SLSA is killing the sport. Ocean Thunder is the best competition we attend. OT is doing more for our sport than anything else. We will continue to decrease until the powers that be including the ASRL start to respect our surfing culture that is the basis of surfboats. The SLSA, ASRL and too many participants have spoilt our sport through politics and self interest. It is too hard to comply with SLSA qualification and patrol requirements. I do not think this survey was well put together. There were the questions about rower and sweep development, surf skill development and our culture. If the ASRL cannot even identify the relevance of including such items in such a survey they are a waste of time. The ASRL must look at itself. Its membership is based on a requirement to join to compete in Australian Open. It attracts small numbers to its AGM and has virtually nothing effective to promote surf skills or development of sweeps and rowers. We compete in SURF boats but all we get is stillwater rowing crap from the ASRL and SLSA. If I am disillusioned it is no wonder others are losing interest. Kim Marsh ASRL Hall of Fame member and National Surfboat Selector.
- 144 Other sports don't have the patrol commitments and penalties of our sport. As much as I've enjoyed my time in life saving, numbers won't increase unless we become a stand alone sport. To train, patrol, for full all club commitments and compete at a high level seems too much for the younger ones coming through. Even trying to find fill ins for patrols falling on competition days and being penalised if you miss one pushes our sport into the "too hard" basket.
- 145 I am a sweep, I spend so much time encouraging new members that are genuinely interested, The club policy will not let non bronze members try out in any situation {flat water} They are not overly happy with Boat area encouraging young members to engage in the sport, even when the 15 year olds are bored & on the edge of leaving. They want team sport as teenagers, they want to be together as they are in net ball, football, it's not encouraged as SLS believes the core sport of beach/water swimming is priority. Teens love boats but we are restricted. Bored river rowers are even put on hold & basically the Bronze if often just too much paper work to be bothered as they are often at uni!! It's a no brainer, The sad thing these people are usually well educated & those that persist are great members! We at Henley have squashed the old boatie mentality & don't expect it from members! Train hard & enjoy your sport! I came to SLS 30 years ago from Aussie rules football & never left. Love ASRL OPEN & NAVY CUP. In years to come, it will equal an Aussie medal (too long, too expensive) for boaties



- 146 who now tour the country at least 3 times a year if your serious!Thanks ASRL for financial support to our young dedicated rowers.
We need SURF racing! The reason that there is such conservative decisions being made when deciding whether racing takes place at various beaches, is that it takes into account under trained sweeps and rowers. Thus these people are dictating the future of our sport. More stress needs to take hold on making sure under developed sweeps aren't taking under developed crews. The sport needs testing conditions, not drag races in half foot bay conditions. This doesn't give our beloved sport any uniqueness. We don't need (even though we of course welcome them) river rowers. We need the kids with surf knowledge and training from the nippers coming thru and rowing. Most clubs are rich in nipper activity and this is where we need to retain the ones who aren't fast enough board or ski or swim competitors... To give them an opportunity to stay involved at a high level with their friends. Thanks for your time.
- 147 I am still a member of SLSA(Q) at club level the only reason I have not completed patrol hours is that I am presently living overseas. Having reached senior and representative level in a few sports surf boats is the best I have participated in.
- 149 In some clubs the politics within the boat section or in the club make the environment and processes less enjoyable.
- There is still a strong focus on male leadership in many instances. Empowering some women in the club/sls structures may result in a more balanced approach.
- Personally not living at the beach means that the travel for competition and patrols takes significant commitment to fulfil.
- 150 we need to bring back the fun in the movement . the movement is pushing away young people with all the rules
- 151 slsc politics shits me to tears
- 153 there are a lot of older experienced sweeps who do not want to remain proficient but would still sweep and train crews at training.they have the time to introduce young members in calm water conditions and prepare them for racing and also this keeps them involved and all their knowledge or repairing boats and equipment
- 155 I feel that we must get back to basic everyday foremat of carnivals.Sure it makes promotional coverage to have elite events but I feel it does not encourage juniors.
.Stats of State and Australian show they have a significant decline,however the current ecomice situation and time off from work or studies does not help
Keep up your good work and UP THE BOATIES
- 156 We must never lose the "surf" component of our sport. It is the major part of our sport and without it, our sport can not exist. We are surfrowers and surf lifesavers not just rowers so if we cant compete in the surf, then we do not compete at all. No rivers, No lakes. Surf sports is about testing our skills in the surf to better equipped us for rescues in the surf. Most rescues eventuate in rough surf, so we must compete in roigh surf to help ready us. Otherwise we will end up with the situation of patrolling members refusing to perform a life saving rescue because they dont have any experience in rough conditions hence arent qualified or confident to do the job. We also need to keep sweeps in the sport by reducing the burden on them in regards to compliance, risk, WHS, financially etc and make it easy for them to remain involved. At the moment it is so much easier for them to just walk away.
- 157 It's time to leave sls
- 158 SLSA has lost the plot. There is far too much regulation, risk management and general interference in surf carnivals, by people who do not know the first thing about life saving. Patrols and proficiencies are way too complicated. People are being driven away by all this regulation and punishment type attitude. Keep it simple. ASRL have lost their way. The Chat Forum is non existent, the website is at best clumsy and at worst designed so that there will be no interference from people who do not necessarily agree with how the ASRL has recently got right into bed with SLSA. It was not created for that purpose. There should be a national approach to the boat carnival calendar system. The present system is pathetic. Make things easier for young people to compete and you will retain them. If you do not, then the sport will perish and you people will always be held accountable.
- 160 Not a good survey. Some questions double up and some questions that are mandatory do not apply to my situation. I don't see how you can/will get a true result from this survey. Brett Dingwall, Wollongong City SLSC. For me, my biggest issue with carnivals is starting on time. If it's advertised that the carnival starts at 8am, then start it at 8am, not sit around for half an hour , an hour or even more waiting for Draws to be done, cans to be set, finishing stands to



be placed. This all should be done an hour before the carnival is due to start. Manly carnival, What a joke, two day carnival. I have an u23 womens crew, row sat morning, prob finish before lunch, then if they make the finals we have to come back up on the Sunday morning. You see to me, whoever is making this sort of decision is the sports worst enemy, it is more than ridiculous!

162 SLS have not understood the problems with the workload placed on our young people today. Young people work various hours for up to 7 days a week. Patrols are boring. There is too much emphasis on escaping legal actions! E why are the flags on the beach only 20 mtrs apart when there is ideal conditions and a packed beach.

164 Always enjoy time in the boat, gym and bar with mates and seeing/mentoring junior rowers coming through the ranks. Always actively encourage new rowers and the sport both within the club and out

165 I support both full day and 4hr/shorter event days. I also support both series and single events. I would like to see some carnival days moved back to Saturdays. Cheers

169 The dangers/safety risk involved in the sport when the conditions are not ideal is something that deters people and myself but I continue to because I like the training/environment and team involved in the sport.

170 Surf boat rowing is a huge commitment with training and competition. Training is just about every day whilst competition can take you all over NSW and even all around the country. Adding to patrols to the mix especially the sheer number of them (my previous club expected over 10 patrols per season) means that there is little time for anything else outside of work. When you couple this with other aspects such as club functions, running raffles, appeal day, etc. it means that the sport is a full-time job or more in itself.

I think we need to look at the practicalities to ensure that the commitment is not too excessive. Compare the sport to something like playing football and you can see that the amount of time is significantly greater. I'm not sure what the solution is but something needs to be done.

Coupled with this I think we need to attract younger people to the sport. This needs to be through schools and through the nippers. We need to make it attractive for the nippers to stay in the clubs and for people in school or university to be interested in trialling the sport. More effort is needed in this area.

In addition, in surf boat rowing there are too many factions. I know that SLSA and ASRL are trying to work together which is great. However, there are issues such as with Ocean Thunder that just aren't needed and aren't warranted. We need to be working together and not pulling in different directions. The sport needs to have representatives from all over and not just keep getting pulled back to the Sydney Northern Beaches who have their own agendas. We need to grow everywhere for the benefit of the support and this sometimes means sacrificing personal agendas.

171 Surfboat always get the shit end of the stick at major championships, pay the most entry fees, most competitors but worst locations, amenities, rule changes.

Country clubs get shafted compared to big city clubs re alley draws / worst lanes, officials bending to the whim re protests and starts.

Slsa is more about making money than looking after it members

172 Competitor numbers a dwindling due to the paperwork, difficulty getting awards etc. Younger sweeps are not coming up through the ranks because SLSA make it so difficult to get accreditation. Gone are the days, where rowers, used to be able to grab a sweep oar and practice in the bay/surf with a competent crew, and practicing to become an experienced sweep.

Competition is a lot less fun than i remember when I first started rowing 10 years ago. We used to be able to compete in big surf. There was nothing better than smashing through big surf, catching a monster wave. You didn't have to win to enjoy the sport. Even if you rolled over, or broke equipment it was still a fun day. Now, due to do-gooders out there, we train and compete in flat water. As sweeps aren't practicing in big surf, they are losing some of their skill, which in turn causes them to slew on smaller waves, making the competition referee's think it is too dangerous, so we have to compete in flatter and flatter conditions. It's a vicious cycle.

173 Lack of sweeps means that not everyone can compete at our club. Allowing Composite crews at championship events means that those of us who have crews with injury, someone falling pregnant, injured or overloaded sweeps can still race. You could add the provision that they have had to compete previously in that season for their respective clubs.

174 Good survey, however some of the questions were a bit ambiguous. If you had asked how many hours a season a competitor was expected to patrol this would give a better indication



of the expected additional commitment to compete. I DO agree there is a community benefit to patrolling but do not agree with it being linked to competition. Competitors of other sport are not obligated to perform community service in order to compete in their chosen sport. This places additional time pressures on competitors.

Shorter events may seem like a good idea if you live in Sydney, however, if you factor in the time taken to travel to an event from a regional area, then 8 hours of travel for a 4 hour event becomes less attractive.

Happy to discuss my opinions further: meadowsweep@gmail.com

175

My only comment is about the regulation on helmet wearing and the risk matrix. Whilst I understand that the body is protecting itself, this has now become a farce. For instance the weekend just gone in Victoria, a carnival was held at Fairhaven beach. Risk matrix score was a 17, thus meaning helmets to be worn. However, on the same stretch of beach, the arts and craft sections had no helmets. Watching some of there racing, especially boards and ski's, it was quite dangerous as many were flipped and subsequent board and ski's loss and hurdling down the face of the waves ready to collect the next unsuspecting competitor. This does not make sense.

What is good for the goose has to be good for the gander.

As to numbers decreasing across the board, it is hard to say how to combat this. It really comes down to the respective clubs and how they view each section especially the boats. IN most cases in VIC, boats are on the outer from a club point of view. This segregation is not good for us. It does not welcome people, and you feel on the outside in everything you do. The clubs look after what they believe to bring in the "money & support". Also the numbers are reasonably consistent. In VIC, you do not see any really new crews. Some U23 crews here and there, but from a Senior point of view, it is the same faces, different crew compositions and maybe a club change for people, but really no new additions.

176

Some of the questions in this survey are a little bit leading and I was forced to answer some with responses that I didn't mean just so I could move on.

I firmly believe that surf boat crew numbers are droppng because of the anal approach by SLSA. The Bronze Medallion process is tedious & makes it hard to start the sport. It is also ridiculous that ASRL events now insist on patrol hours being up to date.

180

Open competitors need to see more surf, carnivals are run to suit younger age groups who can not handle or have not been taught how to handle surf. SA needs to make sure coaches teach their athletes how to handle surf.

181

It's extremely difficult to get new competitors into the sport. The Bronze course costs a fortune on top of membership - from memory mine back in 1996 was free or the club paid it. It's a HUGE barrier especially to young people. It's a lot to fork out BEFORE you're even supposed to get into the boat and then they want you to work on the beach... for free!? I think there's also far too much content in the bronze course that is not needed for rowing a surf boat. Fair enough, make sure competitors can swim, but is the rest of it really necessary? Patrolling skills should be learned while on patrol from those who have been doing it for a while ...just like we do with rowing really.

182

You are asking the wrong questions. You people are stupid. It's your fault and your work with SLSA that is stuffing the sport.

We have always had to do patrols and get a bronze.

Allow us to row in the surf and be self regulated for safety...that would get numbers back.

No one wants to row and go to a flat beach to be smashed and knocked out with zero chance by olympic standard athletes. Put chance and fun back into the sport.

Oh yes, and get Bert to resign. He is a control freak and has no idea what everyone wants

184

Having competed in the sport for 12 season, I would probably pin point the following changes that might have contributed to reduced numbers:

*Lack of skilled sweeps- more development required in this area. All of the skilled sweeps come from the old school and are in their 60s/70s! Dying breed. They have alot of experience rowing in big surf, whereas younger sweeps would not have experienced this since the sport has been restricted by surf conditions.

*Cultural shift in competition- no longer a social event rather super competitive. No in between. When I first started, rowers would meet after events and be social together. I would say this is the only amateur sport where the competitors train harder than some professional sports that get paid!

*Lack of junior development.

*The sport takes a lot of time if you wish to be successful. This is hard for the 25-35 age bracket who are likely to be off having families etc.



*The movement to share the Titles to Western Australia for three years in a row. I personally loved going to WA but understand the huge financial costs associated to get boats and competitors there. Particularly when the majority of competitors come from the East Coast. In response to keeping it fair for those in WA who wish to compete, surely some subsidy could be provided by SLSA to support those to come to the East Coast for competition. As we know, the majority of us really only want to win an Australian Medal.

*That's another issue, perhaps there is some way we could increase the value of rowing in other events. So that competitors don't just acknowledge the Australia Gold Medal winner (once a year). That way people will feel like its worth the effort to compete rather than having a 1 in 50 chance of being that crew!

*I really like the concept of having series type events. It encourages competitors to turn up to more carnivals in order to keep their runs on the board.

Get some more sponsorship and give prizes away for series. Remember when the Ocean Thunder first started. Every one that won a round (not the whole series) got a plasma TV!

*I also like the idea of block racing, however you end up having to stay around when you aren't racing to help other crews manage their gear/equipment etc.

186

Understand the importance of patrolling beach and keeping lifesaving skills up. What's unfortunate is that now a Bronze course is taking up to 12 weeks in our club. This is the number one deterrent for new or returning members that have to repeat Bronze due to absence from SLS. It seems many educators see the opportunity to "take centre stage" and protract a course that can be completed in half the time. Recent potential Competition Bronze members have vented frustration in this suggesting that they could complete the physical sections of the course better than the instructor... Completing another board rescue 25 times maybe a little over kill.

I'm sure an appropriate Bronze course could be completed in a shorter period meeting SLA guidelines. In addition I feel there could be scope to complete a Competition Bronze allowing potential surf sports competitor to be able to complete basics over a 2 week period with ongoing training whilst in patrols.

It is noted that some club have the majority of patrolling members as surf sports competitors. If SLA wish to expand membership alone allow a Competition Bronze over a shorter period. This would naturally meet the needs of SLA from a memshership and surf sports perspective.

189

With regards to the consideration of net growth / loss of numbers: there would seem to be many reasons for this, including the diversity of options for youth and lack of depth in coaching (mentoring).But I do observe over many years, the growing regulation and apparent punitive response to non-compliance for what is largely a community and social activity for enjoyment. Thanks.

190

I think family commitments play a big role in males 28 - 38 dropping out, with both parents in the work force and shared parenting.

192

I have been in surfboats since I was 14, so i have seen plenty of changes to the sport of surf boat rowing & to surf-lifesaving itself.

At first all you needed was a bronze, a pair of sluggo's & a wee bit of courage. Nowadays you need a Bronze that takes a year to get, then you need a CertIV, then a rubber Duckie crewman's licence, then a rubber duckie driver's licence, then a Cert something else, it just goes on and on & of course now a surf boat sweeps licence!! Oh neally forgot proficiency, just a revising session, so says Surf-Lifesaving, but NO. Far too many of the Nazi club or branch officials that have never competed in boats or any other ski, board or surf swimmer think this is a time to flex their SLSA official muscles.

These fucking Nazi SLSA officials who seem to come from nipper parents background have no respect for the older competitor.

Oh & Queensland boaties have to swim to the boat buoys(in a pool) as well in under 8 minutes.

In my late 50's now I can't be bothered with all the surf lifesaving bullshit. I used to encourage young blokes to get in & have a go at surfboats, I especially liked what I call BSC's, that's my code name for big strong c..ts, but I keep an open eye for average blokes & gals that show courage,commitment & tenacity, in other words HEART.

Surf-Lifesaving as it became top heavy with breaucrats it has become more demanding on the guy on the beach,that is because they have to justify their paid job. It is common knowledge, you only have to listen to John Laws radio to learn that SLSA is the most expensive charity, it takes 87% of every dollar for it's own breaucracy.

SLSA has become a tyrant organization that is top heavy with paid officials driving around in SLSA 4 wheel drives going, "feed us, feed us, feed us" . Yes a full blown MONSTER.

It is time the ASRL to send forth a brave knight(surf boat rower) & slay this CREATURE.



- Send forth the DECREE for a brave knight.
Now you have all heard this before, I am too old at 58, however I will support the brave knight to the hilt that does have the courage.
Maybe it's time the ASRL became the Brave Knight.
- 194 Big turnover as rowing is a sport which requires a lot of commitment among a team to be successful. With work and family commitments it does become a difficult sport to allow time to row whilst still being competitive. We are doing a community service when on patrol and yet we still have to pay membership to patrol. I understand the competition fees help out the club but once I finish I don't think I will continue to pay to be a volunteer. Also my current club doesn't give you much option between what patrols you get. Often they are put on days I'm unable to do and it is too difficult to get a substitute. There should be a better system in distributing patrols so members can patrol when they are free and not when they have plans which makes patrols a burden.
- 195 Different clubs have very different cultures. I am a patrol captain @ NS which has little competition and compete for long reef (and do extra patrols there. Plan carnivals for the whole of Sydney. This weekend Wanda conflicts with queensie, reducing competition. Have one overarching org and stop the in-house fighting. The politics drives a lot of people away - both club to club, region to region and state vs a us. Work together at all levels.
- 197 Amount of time spent on patrol is too much. Especially public holidays as these should be done by lifeguards. We are volunteers not professionals and should be treated as such.
- 199 There's nothing wrong with the bronze process itself, its making people who just want to try surfboats, do a bronze before they even get in a boat. Surf Boats need to decide if they want to remain part of surf lifesaving (and do the patrols, bronze etc) or if they want to break away and be an independent sporting body with no affiliation with SLSA.
- The question on series and single day events didn't give the option of both. I like to do both. A series is good, but a few single day events are also good.
- Also, I'm all for short course racing and getting more races in, but we still need some long course stuff, otherwise, we get to Aussies and we've had insufficient long race prep. Maybe the short course stuff could be primarily before December?
- 202 Whilst I would have designed this survey differently, I admire the ASRL in taking the initiative to put it together - well done ASRL.
You might have considered asking some questions about the value of the ASRL in supporting and promoting surf boat rowing. I am sure you would have got a positive response, and you could have used this as evidence of the League's value.
- 203 SLSA needs to make it easier for young people to join a club and compete. SLSA has turned into a government bureaucracy and the manner in which they treat & interact with the broader membership base reflects on the dwindling numbers in competition. e.g - the Aussies participation rates. SLSA needs to start listening to the membership base and understand their issues & concerns. SLSA has a long way to go to restore the faith - the time for hostilities is over and common sense needs to prevail. In many respects too, the ASRL has also lost touch with the broader membership base and their concerns. We are not being well represented which is causing serious angst.
- 205 My answers are out of the ordinary and may not add much to this information collection.
1. Did my bronze training while waiting for women to be admitted, hence long training time.
2. Esperance Goldfields is very isolated, any competition is usually 8 hours drive away.
3. Small regional centre/population base - so pool of potential similar age (53yrs) female rowers small and falling - hence not competing this season.
4. Have/am doing small amount of learning/fill in sweeping for other crew training, this season. (In the bay not surf)
thanks Penny Boardman
- 206 Sorry, but this survey had several deficiencies and did not get at the nub of all the issues this sport faces. Did ASRL get consulting help on social survey design? I suspect not. A pity and lost opportunity. First, there was a question that did not provide a N/A response when one was needed - a "Have you stopped beating your wife? question. Second, there was at least one leading question referencing a "great organisation". Sure, surf lifesaving is a great thing. but let's not forget the cloud SLSA has been under over its handling of comp safety with two fatalities at nationals in recent years. Yet the survey made no reference to safety or injury issues, despite that background and also the recent deplorable maladministration exemplified by the cancellation of the Bancoora carnival. Does ASRL believe that such events are unconnected with the decline in the sport? Apparently from your survey. Or that helmets were accepted in white water kayaking more than 30 years ago but surf rowers have only reluctantly and not fully accepted them even now in 2015? Yet no reference in your survey. I congratulate ASRL for at least conducting a survey but perhaps another should be made to



- address these issues. Meanwhile, after a fun couple of seasons with a small bayside club and a failed to reinstate surf rowing at a coast club, I'll bow out of the sport having made some new friends and had lots of fun. It's just a pity that the sport, its entities like ASRL, LSV and SLSA, frankly cannot get their act together to promote this historically important sport and get people involved. I could also mention the upcoming Gallipoli campaign but in Victoria that is almost irrelevant to all but a handful of people. I wish ASRL luck in turning this sport around.
- 207 I joined Surf Life Saving in 1974, and it was much simpler then. Now everything is so strict and anal, members are treated as if they are employees, not volunteers.
- 213 I loved doing rowing back when I was in Perth when I moved to Queensland the new club I went to didn't make me feel welcome at all so I stopped.
- 215 I've been involved in SLS and surf boat rowing for nearly 50 years so I suppose I've got a different opinion to today's surf rower.
I'd do it all again as I wouldn't still be around if I don't still enjoy it.
Saying that, I do believe their needs to be changes made as today's society is a lot different to 50 years ago!
- 216 I have been away from the sport for a long time but I am currently trying to establish a boat section at my club.
This has been very difficult:
- Just getting 4 crew members in the same place at the same time for training is much more difficult than I thought it would be.
- The commitment required by competitors in this sport is very high from both time and cost perspectives. A competition day for us will generally involve travelling 3+ hours to the competition location, paying for accommodation nearby and competing the following day.
- Young members have a lot of other commitments and distractions and find it difficult to commit the time required for surf boat competition. It is no surprise to me that the U19 and U23 sections are the weakest but this does not bode well for the future of the sport.
- Some suggestions:
- Schedule competitions to start later in the morning to give crews who need to travel time to get to the venue without having to pay for local accommodation.
- Offer cheap/free accommodation at clubs close to competition locations
- Increase incentives to U19 & U23 competitors through subsidised competition and ASRL fees.
- Find other ways to recognise/reward U19/U23 crews who participate in competitions.
Recognise that this generation has grown up in an era where all participants have received rewards, not just the winners.
- I support the patrol hour obligations as it is an impediment to recruitment of 'gun' competitors for championship events. 16 hours is not too much to ask.
- 218 I left surf boat rowing due to moving to a small country town in East Coast, Tasmania. There is a surf club here but have been told by the president that they have no intentions of having senior competing members and only want to run the club to make their nippers surf aware. I will not join this club as there is no gain for me as I would not be a competing surf boat rower and would only be paying sus to "baby sit other peoples children.
- 220 Too many rules and red tape , cost to row is huge as it impacts on work and is costly for country crews to travel.Entry fees to high , was a positive move to stop fees for U19's at ASRL level needs to go futher from NSW SLS and SLSA.More opportunities to represent our state ans country in youth division and travel to NZ or other countries.Surfboats need a media person employed to put articles in press to drive our profile.
- 221 I can't think of any other sport that enforces compulsory community service to qualify for competition.
- 224 as a small club would like to see the rules change about mixed crews ,e.g. sweeps if u have a sweep for the whole season should be able to compete at state events and not be penalised also with computerist crews seeing getting hard to to get crews , and were as rowers should be aloud to make the choice if we want to wear helmets not be told
- 225 The patrol requirements are a joke. No one wants to do seven weeks of bronze training. The idea of probationary training learning on the beach is brilliant and is the way to go.
- 227 Main issues experienced: 1. Timing of the events - often in the middle of the day which limits the ability to do anything else that day - should be in the morning to allow the afternoon/evening for other things. 2. When combine the competition days and patrol requirements a full day is taken out of every fort nights weekends. I am happy to meet the minimum patrol requirements but consideration should be given to reducing additional hours as it significantly increases the burden of this sport beyond that of any other sport.
- 228 There are so many more reasons that affect whether I want to leave or stay. I have been a rower for 18 years, and during that time I dropped out for 3 years and rowed stillwater



instead. Then I came back to the surf.

The biggest gripes I have are:

- Decreasing numbers of crews at carnivals - there is much less competition out there. We went to two carnivals this year where there were less than 2 heats of reserve crews, and all other divisions also struggled to get more than one, max two heats.

- This is obvious even during training, we used to see crews out from different clubs every night of the week (in Cronulla / Bate Bay area). We're lucky to even see another crew all season training these days. There is just nobody rowing in our local area!

- Why then, with decreasing numbers - do we still seem to spend a ridiculous amount of time on the beach? From what I can see:

- It makes no sense that if you have half the numbers, why a carnival still drags out all day.

- It would seem that we have become less efficient at running carnivals - this is both competitors and officials.

- The turnaround between races is ridiculous, officials don't push crews to hurry up, and crews have no real urgency. We wait on the edge 5min between races.

- Draws take forever to publish. Why in this day and age, with technology, AND less crews, are we still waiting and waiting to find out our next alley??

- Officials faff. I love officials and they do a job and we couldn't race without them but surely they just want to get on with it also? Sometimes it seems that nobody is in charge. Just get on with it.

SAFETY

- I can tell you now that the bullshit surrounding safety vests and helmets recently has put a massive dampener on the sport. Fine - we can live with wearing pink singlets, but the number of people I know who have dropped from the sport and will never come back due to the helmet situation... you have no idea. For every person that says they're fine with rowing in a helmet, another has made the decision to either walk away or just not bother coming back. They rowed in the good ol' days and they have no interest in coming back. It's too hard.

- Sweeps accreditation. Did you know that I was the first ever sweep to be formally accredited at my surf club? Yet I can't even hold a wave over 1m. Our actual competition sweeps had to go and get signed off by an official at the next club down the road! One of these guys has won silver at the Aussie Championships in huge surf. Such is the appalling administration of sweeps, we can't even have our own (now accredited) sweeps sign off on the competency of our up and coming sweeps. No wonder it's a dying sport when the people who will be running it into the future - the sweeps - are also dropping like flies. Consider that every sweep probably takes on 2 or 3 crews per year on average, what do you think this does to the numbers?

JOINING THE CLUB

- It's been so long since I joined - I was an U18, not U19. But I've been Club Captain and Vice Captain and fairly recently, I know the changes the SLSA has pushed onto clubs and the level of paperwork and red tape is extraordinary. I wouldn't be at all surprised if the Bronze Medallion process these days was a big turn off, in fact patrolling in general seems to be getting harder. More awards than ever, more regulations to follow. More chance of getting in trouble from the lifeguards - it's ust not relaxing. It used to be much more fun on the beach, these days everybody's shit scared about litigation and being seen to do the right thing on the beach. You can't play a lazy game of cricket at some clubs because it means you're not doing your duty. Remember we are volunteers, and a patrol group of 15 people can afford a few people to take a break. You can't be staring at the shoreline for 5 hours straight and expect people's attention levels to keep up. The patrol culture has a lot to be desired, if patrols are compulsory then they also need to be fun. I agree that rowers should need their bronze and to do patrols, but perhaps the expectation from clubs that they do nearly double the number of hours as SLSA requires as minimum, needs to be looked at. That's a club level thing I guess. There's no easy answer to whether or not rowers (or competitors in general) should be exempt from patrolling. Clubs will not have sufficient patrolling members if we allow this to happen. Penalties could be looked at differently however. Incentives are always better than penalties.

OFFICIALS

- It's unbelievable that you have to be accredited to do basic official duties. There should be a basic level (that doesn't require a course, or training, or a minimum commitment of X hours per year) that anybody can just rock up and assist at a carnival.



- Does the organisation seriously think that somebody needs to be an accredited official to sit on a judging stand, or help run results, or marshall boats and other like jobs? If clubs are supposed to have people represent to help run the carnival (quotas) there are plenty of times myself and other rowers in my club have not been able to race because someone in our crew is missing for the day, but yet we can't turn up and help at the carnival because we aren't a Level X official or something. What a waste, we just go and do nothing but watch, or don't go at all. Again, much less participation. I don't think anybody minds helping out, but we don't want to have to jump through the hurdles of officialdom and fill out reams of paperwork.

SLSA BURDEN

- Tell the association that they need to stop writing policies, and start making life easier. Take the burden away from the volunteers. Their jobs in the ivory tower are not a justification to sit there and write more rules and regulations. The average person in a club doesn't ever see these documents, nor do they care. But they feel their effects weigh them down again and again. E.g. when pink singlets came out - that's another thing to organise. Sweeps accreditation... another thing to organise. No training without a risk assessment. You're kidding, right? I can tell you those are a full on waste of time and the organisation is kidding themselves if they think people are actually following all these rules they come up with. On a grass roots level, nobody cares any more. We just want to train and compete and be left alone in peace to get on with it. There's enough time spent on organising crews, fixing equipment, etc. There's not enough time.

I don't particularly think this survey has been a brilliant data mining exercise. I'm very grateful that there is space enough to leave comment here. There are plenty of questions that I could have answered either way to. I don't really know what you're trying to find out.

Yes - I like full day events, as long as they are managed efficiently. I don't like full day events when the numbers are down and we are only on the beach because of faffing and inefficiency.

I'm certainly not a fan of running events over multiple days when its possible to run them in just a single day. I suspect that events like State, Manly and even Aussies could all potentially drop a day off their schedule if things were more organised.

In saying that, I'm all for short course racing too. But the only regular short course racing we've done in Sydney is the Garie Dash (OT doesn't count for all rowers). And even though the Garie Dash is short course, they STILL manage to drag it out for about 6 hours. It might as well be a full length race / full carnival. Anecdotaly, did you know that there were only a handful more crews at Mollymook than there were at the Garie Dash? Such is the state of our competitor numbers...

I'm DEFINITELY in favour of more racing in general. A constant gripe of the carnival calendar for the past 5 years or even longer, is the continual decline of carnivals. There are now no longer surfboat events at Coogee, Cronulla, Elouera (we used to have three carnivals per year there) and even the Intercities at Wanda has dropped surfboat events!! There are no carnivals at all in the Eastern Suburbs for surfboats unless they decide to host the Branch Championships there, maybe Maroubra. So, in our own Sydney Branch alone we now have lost 6 events over the course of the year, compared to the racing calendar from less than a decade ago.

Thankfully, we have the option to attend the SNB and South Coast series events now. And the only reason they would have opened up to us (finally) is because they are also struggling for numbers.

I know you don't need more proof that we're struggling as a sport. In my opinion, the top end of SLSA and all the rules and regulations forced upon us these days is largely to blame. The sport is no longer dying. It is basically dead. Surfboats are a strange idea that a few die hards hold on to, and some young guys get involved in to cross train for their rugby on the side.

To bring the sport back to LIFE we need to focus on the following:

- Juniors and 23s who need Bronze - that's an immediate blocker - send them away for 4-8 weeks and then come back and we'll finally be able to race??? That doesn't work. How



about... EXPRESS BRONZE COURSE - if clubs can't run them then perhaps the Branch or State can step up, and members can pay to attend to cover costs. Why wouldn't it be possible to run a full weekend (2-day) Bronze course, 8-10 hours per day. Then the following weekend, they do the test? Get it over and done with within two weeks. That's the kind of efficiency that will massively help boost the ranks of juniors. I know it's possible - I've personally trained a squad of Indian Lifeguards in Bronze Medallion and several other awards, all gained within the space of 2 weeks.

- SLSA - less regulations - make our lives simpler and easier, not harder.

- More events! Especially pre-Christmas, there are weeks without decent events to go to. IF you are serious about introducing new short course races, this is the time to do it. Crews are generally less fit and are still trying to gel 4 blokes together. Shorter distance racing would be ideal and encourage more crews to race at that time of year.

- Regular OPEN events - we've lost a lot of Open Carnivals and partially to blame is a range of specialist events and series championships. Ocean Thunder, Young Guns, SNB Series, South Coast Series, these are all good events in their own right, and I'm pretty sure they are here to stay. However the downside is that each day a round of these style events are conducted, you lose an opportunity to run an open carnival that is open to everybody, not just a select group. If we are going to encourage more events - they need to be OPEN to EVERYBODY and not selective or regional. With dwindling numbers of crews across the entire nation, I'd be happy to be racing against anybody that wanted to turn up to an event.

One day, open carnivals are the way forward.

- More efficient events! Let's get better at turnaround times, less faffing, faster draws being published. It all adds up. I'm sure we could successfully cut 1-2 hours off the average event through less faffing about.

- Drop helmets. I realise this ain't gonna happen anytime soon, especially since the ASRL has taken to supporting the issue with SLSA on the grounds of safety (ha) but I have to mention it. Compulsory helmets stinks. It should be recommended but not mandatory.

Most importantly, let's try to make everything we do fun. There is a lot of negativity in this sport. A lot of it is from the huge personalities that we have in our sport - frequently clashing, very opinionated people. I am one of them. At the end of the day, people leave this sport because it becomes too draining and too hard and not enough fun. Lack of racing, lack of competition, a burden of bureaucracy and redtape... it's a hard vicious circle to break out of, I think we'll be doing well as a sport if we can come out of this death spiral. It needs to be fun.

229 Masters to do only 5 carnivals max including state and Aussies leaving carnivals days to the future of the sport. 3 other carnivals incorporating masters regional carnivals that would go over two days. In Queensland that would be held on the Gold Coast, Sunny coast and Mackay(long weekend). 3 divisions only. 160- 200's(Bucks) 200 - 240's(Middies) 240 Plus(Legends) One flat water carnival sprint carnival held in capital cities where you could also have a introduction to sport with under 17 division. Get kids in boats in 15's not 19's. Sweeps/coaches course specific to surf boats.

230 I have been involved in surf boats for over 10 years I am a sweep and a rower and my father was also a sweep/rower. I love this sport and treasure every moment I am involved in it. I have competed for clubs in both NSW and QLD. Both have their pros and cons.

There are only two points that need addressing.

Bronze - we need to find a way of running our own courses at a district level clubs are restrictive and inflexible for peoples lifestyles.

Carnival Roster - Set dates before the start of the season and stick to them! A lot of people work weekends these days and need to book in time off in advance when you change dates people miss out.

I would also suggest Sunday carnivals as most people have Sundays off so better opportunity for better numbers.

Love this sport lets keep it alive!

232 The current bronze medallion course is to long - why cant theory be done on line. New competitors should be allowed to complete whilst completing their bronze.(one year time



frame)

Sweeps of crews should be able to include training hours as patrol hours to encourage new sweeps.

233

I stopped rowing because of bullying, behind the scenes gossiping, deliberate exclusion and the ugly arrogance of "we are so much better than everyone" attitude. It was appalling. The surf club allowed this behaviour to take place.

Surf Lifesaving is an iconic movement that is sadly being trampled by competitors. Lifesaving is NOT a sport, you're there to do a job and provide a safe environment for the general public. Far too much emphasis is placed on competition, exclusivity of the boatie and the general arrogance of surf boats and their competitors. Whist it is a great sport the people who compete think their shit don't stink! I'm tired of it. It's pathetic.

I find it quite insulting that the movement promotes health and fitness yet 90% of officials at surf carnivals (not just boats) are grossly obese, bias against top clubs - yeah, officials cheat - and are condescending sods who still think they're the greatest athletes that ever existed. What a joke! Officials should be there because they love the sport and love encouraging others to participate and take joy in that. They're all there to pat each other on the back and say....back in our day! It's bullshit and they should be removed!

I'll go back if and when the distasteful, condescending attitude of the sport changes; which will probably be never. SLSA investigated itself after the fatalities at the last couple of Aussies. Really? They investigated themselves. The movement is not above being investigated by the proper channels. But that's the level of arrogance the becomes a surf lifesaver, does it not? Just ask them!

I will continue to patrol for my club. I will continue to provide a valuable service to the community. I will continue to actively update and upgrade my awards so that I can be at the best level to manage, coordinate and instruct in an emergency.

To think that competitors should be excluded from patrols is preposterous. They shouldn't forget the reason they are there in the first place. Too many competitors in my club do their 16hrs and then after January 1 you never see them again. THAT is not club spirit; it's selfish and arrogant.

Competitors and officials need to lift their game. Get back to the blood of the movement and make more of an effort to be community conscious.

234

we only stopped rowing this season because one of the other rowers quit for personal reasons and we were unable to find another rower to take their place in the crew. we looked under every rock and crevice for another rower and just couldn't find one. one rower doesn't want to row- and 3 others end up having to stop as well. that's probably one of the reasons you see such a massive drop off in numbers, if this wasn't a team sport you wouldn't see such an impact. patrol is and should be treated separately from competition. you should be able to compete and not have to patrol. the people that join surf clubs to patrol are a different breed to people who join to compete. they don't have the same goals or aspirations. we need a massive re-think of how all this stuff works. i'm hugely in favour of changing racing formats and competition formats to make it a more lifestyle friendly sport.

235

Regarding Patrolling: Competitive Members give up a significant amount of time to participate in their chosen surf sports. It is our decision entirely to participate in our sport, however I find it quite ridiculous that we are penalised for missing, and or not reaching the quota expected by the SLA each season. The time we allocate to our sport is VERY high and mimics that or any professional athlete. I think the expectation placed on competitive members to complete the same amount of hours as non-competitive members is way off the mark and unrealistic.

I am very passionate about my club and my sport, i am also in a very senior position at work and at a point in my career which needs me to focus a lot of my time on my work. My chosen surf sport is an important factor in my life, often allowing me the separation i need to effectively maintain the high levels required within the workplace - giving up more time to patrol, which often takes the best part of a weekend is quite hard.

...i am not saying Patrols should be removed for Competitive Members, i fully support Patrolling, however i think lowering the expectation should be taken into consideration.

237

I think people should be able to try competition surf rowing without bronze, but have completed a swimming competency.



- 238 Myself and many friends spend lots of hours training kids but still have to perform our patrol hours. Age group managers and helpers should get accredited with water cover or patrol hours for the time they spend performing these tasks. Training kids, attending kids carnivals/competitions etc and then my own, performing or swapping patrols because I couldn't make the patrol I was originally assigned, hardly gives me any spare time. Also having rowing comps when there is a junior carnival does not seem smart as most senior rowers that I know have kids in nippers. Kids come first!! Also pink hi-vis vests is not the best way to keep or in particular attract young males to the sport (orange would be much better). The last point is for Juniors, as we have several Juniors that will not be doing states with surf as it is on the same time as states for athletics???? Not smart planning.
- 239 My personal belief is that while my sport is under the SLSA banner, the same obligations apply to me as other club members in terms of patrols. While I understand that there is no direct repercussion on a members that are not competing, when they elect not to turn up for their patrols, that is just the nature of it. The world isn't always fair.
- I would rather have full day events with a lot of racing than half day events that involve travelling 2-3 hours one way to race a couple of times and turn around and travel the same amount of time back.
- I come from a flat water background, but my observations at my current club is that a large number of the people with a flat water background are recruited for their rowing skills but lack the willingness to put into the club and community and come across as very precious and work shy. They expect others to do the work for them and for different rules to apply to them than both other rowers and other members. This also applies to their take on patrols and actually attending them and if they do, actually being present and interacting with the patrol group.
- 240 I support shorter races, the introduction of mixed crews and any waiving of rules that do not allow prospective members to try rowing before they obtain their bronze.
- I believe that the current Fly in Fly out employment syndrome is killing heaps of sports not only Surf Lifesaving. While I fully support safety measures we may be going too far when we cancel a carnival if the surf is a little tricky. Another reason for the decline is the commitment factor. Young men and women these days have so much on their plate that they cannot commit to the training and competition. One of the most important factors which I believe are killing the sport is the past high level/standard of the rowing. It may sound like double dutch but the standard was so high that some rowers did not want to compete to run last. Most crews trained to the max and those that did not were flogged. When I first owed all clubs had an A grade, a Reserve and a junior. We trained two nights a week on the river and on Saturday or Sunday. Nowadays, unless you train 3 nights/mornings a week in the boat, two night/mornings in the gym plus running to days/nights you are going to get flogged and the average man/woman does not want the embarrassment.
- 241 Firstly, I have long service, but I have answered the questions as if I do not have long service. Now I rarely have time to patrol, except to fill in for people who can't make it, perhaps once or twice a year. Saying that, I did my time patrolling between the ages of 15 and late 20's, and feel that long service is a reward to sls members after 10 years of service, which can be very difficult at times. I feel that being able to compete without the need for patrol is a reward for those years of service. If I did not have long service now, I would simply not be rowing anymore, it would just take up too much time, especially rowing A's takes up at least 12 hours per week with training. The only reason I kept patrolling is because I knew that I was getting close to long service, and patrol free competition. Rowing A's is just within my time budget now, but if I still had to patrol, I would quit simply due to time constraints.
- Apart from that, I'm into my 10th season straight of rowing and I still love it. Although I am 30 this year, and while I am nearing my peak in rowing career, I am thinking of taking a few years off after this season to travel and have a family. Not sure whether I would come back, hopefully I would.
- I like the way rowing is now, and always have. I know you guys have been bickering with Ocean Thunder a lot, and I can understand that (there are many old stubborn people in boats and I think they just enjoy a good argument!) I always support ASRL, and would prefer to compete and win at ASRL & SLSA events than Thunder. Thunder to me is a stand alone event, that is good training and competition if the club can afford it and make it, but does not have the prestige of ASRL or SLSA events. If I were to win an event, my preferences would be Aussies, State, ASRL, Branch, Local Boat Series etc. I like rowing Thunder, it has a place in surf boats and it would be nice to win, but I enjoy the traditional carnivals at the end



of the season more.

Let me know if you'd like any more info.

Cheers,

Tim Jarrold

0438 661 607

242

SLSA has long stopped listening to the competitor - they do not consult and are not inclusive. The amount of hoops a person has to jump through to requalify to compete if they have had 2 years out of the sport is just too stupid for words.

246

This sport is being run by amateurs. Offilidom is taking the sport backwards at a rate on knots

247

At one of the questions, I remarked that i did not feel welcome by my club when I joined the sport. I believe that this was due to the clubs negative attitude towards surfboat rowers. Since then, I have moved to another club with a better culture and a better attitude towards 'boaties'.

248

the sport is not as enjoyable as it was 10 years ago.

249

Carnivals drag on far too long given the number of crews competing. When people have family /work commitments that take you away for a whole day something will give. This year it has been pleasing to see trials of different things to see what works.

Carnivals like Coffs Harbour used to be something that both NSW and QLD crews looked forward to at the beginning of the season. Now numbers are dropping off very quickly because the competition is no longer there due to the Mollymook carnival. The ASRL need to step in and space the bigger carnivals further apart with added incentives to ring back the big carnivals

250

One of the main and very serious contributing factors to the end of our crew which saw three people leave the sport is the 'special' treatment some clubs and sweeps receive at the cost of other crews with weaker relationship with officials. Too many times I've seen sweeps protest when a crew is beaten and because of their standing as a 'legend' of the sport, the protest is heard and accepted and the crew put through to the next round. The knock on effects of this for the rest of the field are generally unfair and unjust.

A great example of this is 2014 Australian where Corrimal clearly defeated Batemans bay in about the quarter final at the Australian. Corrimal produced the video evidence and the carnival referee would not even look at it. Had this been another club or another sweep, the hearing would have been heard.

A prominent club had protested the race before when they where clearly beaten and were put through to the next round and ultimately made the final. The same club protested in 2013 after they were beaten in the first semi final and progressed to the championship race.

Sitting on the beach at the ASRL for hours why officials make up their mind about the order of events i.e. 2013 where competitors sat in their tents for two hours waiting on a decision.

The Sydney Branch carnival in 2013 where the host club and decided to change the format of the event half way through the carnival because they didn't have the points to make the final.

Its just amateur hour and too many people can make rules up as they go along and play favorites with crews at the expense of others. The sport needs to be run in a fair and ethical way to ensure everyone has a fair go.

Who knows how draws are completed. It seems we are still using the Woofa system for alley selection. Come on, lets get serious and use some technology like the random sort function or seed elimination events like every other sport does.

The lack of cameras on finishing lines as promised after the 2013 Australian.

Why are we not using laser technology to align boys and alley lengths, particularly at major carnivals.

I hope this helps. My intention is to not have a whinge but to point out some issues that we have encountered year in year out. At the end of the day i think some simple steps could be taken to improve process and transparency around what actually occurs.

On the matter of carnival all day carnivals v block racing, i find block racing carnivals far more enjoyable than all day events. I would prefer a longe distance as i think the longer racing really provides the best opportunity for the best crew to win. This is a true test of rowing ability, surf skills and fitness.

I would support more block style events and if that came in a small shortening of distance then that might be the compromise needed.

252

I am a masters competitor but compete in reserves as well. Masters competitions at a llc arrivals should in my opinion be first not last as for example has been the case in our branch competitions. At all events there should be a minimum of 3 row round robin whatever the



- number of crews in an event. In large and dangerous surf's the officials must be mindful of what the majority of the sweeps advise. I am aware that each sweep can decide not to row but that is very hard on an individual basis. Events need to be begun and run on time except in exceptional circumstances and then if it is delayed the reason for the delay must be immediately advised to competitors and spectators and updated if the delay is lengthy.
- 253 I wish slsa would let us compete in the surf rather than keep calling the carnivals off or moving them to LESS RISKY places there taking our surf skills away from us and the younger generations Shane Walker Boat captain Soldiers Beach slsc
- 255 I think the ASRL / QSRL has a lot of work to do in regards to better communicating the carnival schedule and maintaining it. I dont beleive we should have carnivals on consecutive Saturdays and Sundays. I also dont beleive we should be squashing two rounds into one super long day on the beach. I would like to see things go back to when we had a carnival every second weekend or so during summer. Ideally these carnivals would be on Sundays as a lot of people work on Saturdays these days.
- 256 I love the sport but find the constant upgrade on awards tiring and pressure to patrol hard. i am now an active reserve so its easier but in the past its been a struggle. I also think its disappointing how often we don't get to row in surf even though thats the sport we chose to do.. I compete in ocean thunder and LOVE that format, 9 races in a day is so much better 4 races in a full day carnival ran poorly.
- 261 1. Club competitors sacrifice their time for events, travel, travel costs and equipment, patrol schedules, etc. Given such a high level of commitment to the sport, it is incumbent upon ASRL to communicate all decisions and the reasons for the decisions affecting rowing at all levels - events, regulation changes, safety, etc. to all clubs immediately they are made, so that clubs & competitors may react accordingly with least amount of disruption, inconvenience & cost.
2. Greater promotion of and exposure to rowing through a variety of media outlets is essential, especially the calendar, special events such as Australia Day Navy Series, Vic Championships and Aussies.
- 262 i will be leaving the sport at the end of the season due to wanting to start a family. However I will be intending to return as soon as I can in some capacity- masters/open
- 264 Surf boats require four dedicated rowers and a dedicated sweep. I know a lot of people who would like to participate in rowing but we do not have enough numbers for another crew or the flexibility to have a 'training' type session for people who won't compete but want to have a go or get ready for the next season. This makes it hard for people to become involved in rowing in particular.
- 265 I support changes to keep our sport exciting, relevant and possible for juniors, family men/women and masters
- 267 SOME OF THE QUESTIONS HAD MANDATORY ANSWERS REQUIRED BUT SHOULD BE N/A.
IE: IF YOU HAVE STOPPED COMPETITION, DO YOU STILL DO PATROLS?
I AM STILL COMPETING SO HOW DO I ANSWER THAT??
THERE WERE OTHERS....
- 268 52 years a member would never my club had 9 crews now have 1 crew
- 269 I would support the ASRL Open in becoming the Aust Titles carnival for surf boats.
All our members are being asked to compete further into April if not May and this is turning rowers away who would like to play their winter sport.
The OPEN gets more crews competing, is over a shorter time and is better run.
- 270 Entry fees for Aussies to expensive. To many state titles in flat surf. Rules and regulations killing sport
- 271 40 years ago doing your bronze was very different. Patrolling is a great community service. The sport of surfboat rowing is the most challenging team oriented sport there is. Total trust in each other is required. My role is now officiating. Giving back to the sport that gave me so much. Mate ship and people are my most satisfying aspects of the sport.
- 272 There needs to be more focus around the junior competitors rather than focusing all on the open men. The juniors are meant to be the future of the sport and they get little to no coverage or support.
- 273 the amount of carnivals that are available to competitors are overwhelming and to be competitive are not viable to not attend. plus the time that it takes to complete a carnival, a full day, is onerous to competitors.
shorter events with less time on the beach would be beneficial.
- 276 Patrolling on Saturdays when paid lifeguards are on, as well as the sheer number of hours/public holidays that I patrol is the biggest reason I am not happy at surf club. Rowing is the only thing keeping me there
- 277 Starting a family (I'm female) takes you away from the sport during pregnancy
And then after you are time poor to commit to a crew that train regularly.



279	Events should include all divisions all the time .
281	Too much paperwork, qualifications, bureaucracy and levels of management/administration in SLSA, with some staff who have not had club/patrol experience, or who lack understanding of the modern world we live in, which is changing faster and faster. Work and family commitments are seen as more important these days by members/competitors, and work/life balance is high in peoples' minds. People join surf clubs for different reasons, so the SLSA needs to be adaptive to those in terms of patrol commitments, etc. Surely the reduction in competitor numbers is an obvious sign of this, plus there is too much emphasis on Nippers, with minimal throughput into the senior ranks compared to the number of kids in the many "Sunday Child Minding Centres" around the country.
282	I'm not currently planning on discontinuing surf boats however some factors that are making me think this way are that there is very little competition for under 19 and under 23 girls which makes improvement, competing and motivation very difficult. Race days see unorganised and we often feel disregarded as a younger crew. For example at the most recent carnival we were in different heats then the other two under 23s. Even though it wasn't a full heat we were moved and therefore didn't gain any racing experience in our age level nor did we feel welcome or important.
286	The dumbing down of the sport to prevent competition is the thing that is killing participation. We signed up for the sport for the thrill and excitement not for still water rowing in larger boats . No wonder kids now prefer to just surf or try some other extreme type of sport. There is plenty of talk of a boycott of the NSW state titles for the lack of surf competition. I accept the risks will be higher for female and junior crews due to the difference in strength and experience but why should this ruin the whole sport?
287	I think more juniors would be attracted if they could try surf boats at a much younger age.
288	Both my sons had quit nippers but loved surf boats and were lucky enough to try it at 14yrs. in small country branches boat series events take competitors away from their branch carnivals this then effects team events at branch carnivals & reduces the competitor numbers to individuals, as a result a club may have only 1 competitor in say a u/19 board race. if he/she drops out of that race, a branch with say 6 clubs in it then only has 5 competitors in the event. I think we should promote club branch carnivals more to get the numbers for the elite carnivals
293	There should be a division for men and women under 18 then men and women under 21 to bring back young people to the sport so it is more competitive the same as other areas of competition in surf lifesaving. Too many restrictions and costs to be a competitor and entry fees to enter carnivals too expensive. With the rule that boat rowers have to wear helmets it should be for all competitors not just boat rowers on the beach and boat officials as well on stands.
294	I have been a member of this movement since I was a nipper starting back in the late 60's. I am a member of the ASRL and support its principles but I do not believe the manner in which this survey is/was conducted. I am unable to give a true reflection of my opinion with yes/no answers to questions presented.
295	Surfboats are here because of SLS and this needs to be remembered. Most other SLS events finish carnivals much quicker than surfboats so we need to complete events during the season much quicker - 8am to 1pm is just too long. We are the longest sport other than cricket! We need to start innovating and stop complaining or blaming SLSA!
296	Money is a problem In buying surfboats for a lot of small clubs and the well to do don't seem to care ! Patrols are a problem with a competitors which could be more understanding !
299	There is not a decline in competition numbers across the broad spectrum of competition. That statement is not correct and is misleading. IRB competition numbers continues to grow year after year without fail. Your questions also seem to dwell on patrol requirements with over 50% of your survey pertaining to them. Surf life saving is a community service that uses competition to maintain the levels of fitness of its members for beach patrols. Competition is also used as a retention tool to maintain beach patrols. Its when competition is used as a recruitment tool with beach patrols as a secondary thought that we see members only stay for short periods or leave once they don't wish to continue competition any more. And that goes for all surf sports. I can't say that I agree that your questions in this survey will give you any sound evidenced based research on reasons why members are leaving your sport. The survey appears like it was manipulated for a specific outcome already. All the best in interpreting your raw data.
301	too many rules and regs not enough fun
304	ASRL to get back to looking after the competitors and stop acting as multi event promoters. The way the ASRL caved in to SLSA on the use of helmets just proved that the committee are there for their own gratification. They should be there to look after things for ALL competitors not just a few. Stop interfering with local boat series by taking all the best dates for what are "Mickey Mouse"



- events.
Give some of the sponsorship money back to grass roots competitions.
- 308 Workplace commitments on weekends and the amount of time required for patrol, skills upgrades to comply with new regulations combined with training and competition requirements is one of the major issues affecting our sport.
- 310 As much as I think it's like selling your soul to the devil, major sponsors need to be bought in to help raise the profile of the sports side of surf lifesaving. With all the money behind mainstream sports such as ALF, NRL and soccer targeting kids in school, through corporate sponsors (McDonalds, Coke a Cola etc.), the flow of new talent and even just folks wanting to try something new will dry up. Also the costs involved to get kids started in competition, expendable income is much reduced, there needs to be a fund (government and corporate sponsored) to provide grants to kids via their clubs to help set up. We provide safe beaches to swim at, god knows how many fast food outlets use images of people having fun at the beaches to sell their goods. Some pressure on them to help keep that happy image alive couldn't hurt.
- How about encouraging links between sports clubs and SLS clubs, for example, what better way for an AFL player in the state league to keep fit during the off season? Surf Boat rowing! It's a media win, win situation.
- The other thing to consider is that other SLS sports are inclusive for kids of a younger age than those who eventually take part in Surf Boat rowing, which means by the time they become old enough to hop into a boat they may have already chosen to compete in another field. I'm not sure how we could change this other than to make it the sport to aspire to. Competency badges, coaching badges and perhaps a club focused way of introducing younger club members to rowing. We often row a couple of the younger club members with the seniors, it makes them feel inclusive and helps give them confidence in surf conditions.
- Unfortunately it's like anything you need to market, you have to make it the must have thing for the upcoming generation. We need a media spotlight on the sport, imagine Buddy Franklin trying his hand at boat rowing on the Footy Show and claiming surf boat rowing as hard core and praising those who do it as amazing community surf life savers?
- I came to this sport at 37 years old, previous to living in Australia I was a landlocked POM. I had never even seen waves like the ones we row in, I was drunk and sat around a fire pot when a mate asked me if I'd like to give rowing a go. He picked me up at 07:00 the next day to give it a try, hung over and more than dusty, that first wave had me hooked. I should mention that it was about 1' high and we had roller seats in to train for the marathon season but the spray of cold water and the excitement of doing something new and way out of my depth got me hooked. I also had to up my game to be a competent swimmer for the SLS patrols, my run swim run was done in waves bigger than I had ever seen at that time, as were the rescues, but wanting to be in that boat pushed me beyond the fear of a big scary ocean. That's an addiction that I'd like more people to experience, especially younger people who have the most to gain from it.
- 311 I first rowed about 1959.I have been a boat official almost 18 years.I love the excitement,noise and spectacle of surf boat rowing.SLSA needs to run as a professional efficient low cost business and recognise that surf life saving clubs are still the focus of the movement.Many years ago North Cronulla produced a video of club life to encourage more members,it worked,and I would like to see a similar thing shown regularly on national TV so that Australian people know that we need more members and how rewarding it is to be a member short term and long term.there is no better activity than surf boat rowing for personal fitness,team work commitment and personal development.
- 314 I welcome the survey and the chance to partake. I think some of the questions are pointed and a general comment should be considered.
- 317 Now a Surf Sports Official and find it hard to get info Carnivals so I can officiate,eg. North Coast boat series.
- No contact info or carnival times on web site
- 319 I have found the sign up process really disorganised. I was keen to row this year as were a number of other rowers. There was a crew chosen without trials & what seemed to be a popularity contest. Also a lack a sweeps to take a second crew meant we have 4 rowers left out for the season which is unfortunate. I would have swapped clubs if I had of known we wouldn't be rowing.
- 320 Rowing training and competing with your mates is one of the best "blokey time" you can have. We build the trust and confidence to compete.
We are sick of sls dickheads with clipboards ,ticking boxes and dictating terms.



- 321 Travel distance & cost, Not enough racing for the lesser crews, to many crews rowing reserves when they should be A's. need more racing we drive 3-5 hrs one way for 3 or 4 rows. less carnivals before christmas, start the racing season later, this will mean less carnivals, however the ones that are there make them bigger & better
- 323 People that were boaties and have left all comment that the bureaucratic nightmare that is slsa and the paperwork that they demand is daunting. Try bringing a rower back into competition now, I have been told by Branch that they have to re-do their bronze as it is too arduous and complex to allow reassessment etc!! The clubs don't make these rules, it comes from the ivory tower. Clubs and branches should have more input and control over THEIR members and their requirements.
- 328 Give Clubs the Authority to act on Patrols, Patrol Hours and Defaults
Bring back the Fun in Patrols
Shorter time frame for Bronze Squads
Try before you buy scenario - Try the various sports surf Lifesaving has to offer before you do bronze
More short course events for surf boats
More Teams events for Surf Boats - ie lifesaver relays.
State & National Bodies to listen to the competitors re carnivals and procedures. they are racing and its their sport so listen to them
- 329 Answer Options to Questions need to have a section where we can voice our opinion not just have one directional answers. E.g. I like both series events (OT) and single events (Aussies). My Open crew does not turn up to carnivals due to work/family commitments, We do all the training and more but cant sit on a beach every Saturday for minimal amounts of rows and against minimal competition. This is why we enjoy doing Ocean Thunder, it is only one day a month, all the good crews turn up, we can have an absolute tough day of racing, check our boat speed, then disappear for another month to just train. This is a tough sport, if you are not in a competitive crew with a good sweep, you would become disillusioned and by the end of the year you have had enough and could easily find better things to do with your time.
- 331 I am a member of Manly LSC and for anyone who wants to row there it cost \$150 membership plus \$75 boatrowers fee. = \$225 for the privelege of rowing . I am a sweep and know my crews ,who are young and financially strapped ,struggle with these fees . I think the ASRL should scrap all of these series events and just concertrate on the ASRL championships . There are too many events on and it has become financially draining for competitors . I went to the Triple Crown event last year which was a total waste of time and money. Instead of putting events on like this ,and wasting members \$\$\$\$ the ASRL should spend that money on a real recruitment drive to bolster the junior ranks. To be honest ,boaties don't compete for the prize money ,so channel that money into recruitment. The ASRL should go back to a simple philosophy of representing the ongoing long terms betterment of surf boat rowing . K.I.S KEEP IT SIMPLE
- 332 With rowing, I felt that we all put a lot of effort into competing as well as non-competition events such as fundraising and patrols but weren't rewarded in any way - the club wasn't able to subsidise accommodation/entry fees/uniform requirements and the patrolling requirements were very strict in terms of the amount of hours you had to complete in order to compete. Competitions were often poorly organised, for example there was a lot of waiting around and not a lot of competing and it did feel like a waste of time if you travelled a long way to compete. The style of competition also always meant that you may travel somewhere and book 2 or three nights accommodation (eg state or aussies) and if you were knocked out on the first day there were no other events to compete in.
- 337 SLSA needs to LISTEN to the boat rowing section. From a grass roots level it feels the SLSA does not listen and does not care - a perfect example is the way boats seem to have been singled out with the helmet policy when the other sporting sections have not been impacted yet (despite two deaths occurring there). Boat sweeps (of which I am one) are generally very aware of their competitors safety, and with differing skill levels of crews and sweeps we need to ensure that the competition as a whole is not pulled down to the lowest common denominator(at some large carnivals you can split the carnival to different days so that less powerful or less skilled division can row elsewhere on an alternate day). As far as the NSW state championships go we MUST try and force a decision to row where there is a reasonable potential for surf to occur.
- 338 The red tape continuously being introduced by SLSA is the single biggest deterrent to people being involved in the sport. Clubs making Bronze courses run over 8-12 weeks with multiple nights a week required before being allowed to see if you like the sport you are joining for is not an appealing entry point for new participants to find out if they enjoy the sport. Once you are in, it seems all SLS is interested in at the state and branch levels is playing traffic police in finding reasons why people can't compete in the sport. Either you didn't do your proficiency by the arbitrary deadline, you fell short on a state imposed number of minimum patrol hours,



you didn't complete a risk assessment prior to training in the same environment you train in every day, nor wear your pink singlet when there is no research to suggest it is any more visible under the water than no singlet at all. Your crew has someone fall ill and there is a proficient member from another club that could still allow you to compete that is happy to assist but the blessed 'rules' don't allow common sense. Same for sweeps being able to assist another club where there sweep is either unable to attend or has the common sense to realise the conditions are beyond his or her abilities but again, the rules don't allow so they either go where they shouldn't and cause injuries or the crew is unable to compete (both result in people wanting to leave).

If the association spent 1/4 of the time it commits to finding ways of restricting peoples ability to participate and actually finding ways to cut red tape, allowing common sense to be the first course of response rather than living and dying by an outdated set of rules (that have been added onto for over a century with no-one bothering to check and see if these things are still relevant or necessary) and actually encouraging people into the sport I think the end result could be an amazing turnaround in the number of people wanting to remain or become involved and we may actually see a reversal of the appalling decline we currently have.

Another issue I feel has a negative effect is the elite focus brought on by events like Ocean Thunder which have had a detrimental impact on the number of crews wishing to compete in the open divisions, especially open men's (spend the time to look at the timeline of introduction of Ocean Thunder against the declining numbers you refer to). Unfortunately with an event like OT falling in the middle of the summer season it takes away 4 weekends of crew time which once patrol commitments, ASRL Open, states championships and Aussies are taken into account does not leave a lot of time for other competition for these crews or their sweeps. Crews now believe if they are unable to participate in OT, they wont be competitive in the open division so are walking away as some are too proud to row in reserves and don't wish to be non-competitive in opens. By all means have an event that caters for the elite, but place it at the right time of the season. When it first came in it was in September to December and had minimal effect on the season program. Better still have it over two weekend double headers in September and October (more chance of winter swell) and it will have zero effect on the competitive season running from November through April each year.

341 in QLD you have only 2 series to compete in, if you cant afford the \$770 for the QLD cup for 4 x 1 day races, the value & amount of racing is a lot different to the SLSQ run carnivals from pre ASRL, where you pay \$15 per competitor, the \$ are killing of the kids & pressures of budget for the young family man & women who row. the rowers league started for better & equality racing, & a cost neutral no money making by league, now QLD has turned it into a high \$ money making event. plus other issues with 2 day events, plenty of racing for the race weekends

342 "Out of 10, how would you rate SLS as a sport against others from your experience? (10 being the best & 1 the worst)" could be a better question: I think the SPORT is great - I have chosen it as my only competitive activity - but I am dissatisfied with the administration of it. Similarly in response to "Do you consider your club patrols to be enjoyable, that you would continue even without being a competitor?": I don't want my "no" to be misinterpreted as that I don't enjoy the lifesaving aspect - I do - but the sport is my main motivation.

I will leave the sport if we have to wear safety vests, or similar safety measures are enforced. As an adult, I compete in this knowing the risks completely: If I don't think conditions are manageable I will choose not to row. The believe the Australian courts have a strong emphasis on "personal responsibility" in sporting cases.

343 Onerous awards structure a barrier to entry & ongoing commitment. Particularly older members who have decades of experience & knowledge. I am less involved than I could be because of the anal approach to complying with awards and the inflexibility associated especially when the administrators dishing out the directions are not current or qualified and/or in some cases so fat & unfit that they could not (very poor role models - despite their administrative prowess). When questioning the intricacies of the 'rules' the common response is that they don't really know so they shed responsibility and say 'ask State Centre - come back when you have their approval' - poor administration, PR and attitude.

344 There are too many rules coming into play before a competitor sets foot on the beach. Every year boat carnivals are being held at more and more beaches with next to no surf. Rowers like to challenge themselves against the surf as well as each other.

346 I have been involved in surf life saving and boat rowing for for nearly 40 years. Times are changing and peoples choices are increasing. Boat rowing is just one sport they can become involved with but the time and personal commitments are becoming too onerous.



- We need to:
Decrease bureaucracy and time obtaining your bronze medallion
Decrease the time spent on the beach at surf carnivals
Ensure we have programmes for development of new rowers
Attract more sweeps to our sports
Reduce the amount of events (OT, ASRL, Local carnivals, State, Aussies) into a consolidated program
Have a bigger say in life saving decision making regarding boat rowing events.
- 347 Where to begin? The sport is no longer about striving to achieve something special. Everyone wants something easy and a social day out. Society has changed so much and we are part of that unfortunate change. Next year I be cutting back for taking three crews to 1 because of the time needed to do it properly. I just hope that the events remain fairer mum. Streamline them sure but don't turn them into novelty races please.
- 348 The "yes" or "no" answers only do not give an accurate representation for some questions ie. there should be a "Not applicable" or "Not sure" box.
With the loss of 19-30 year olds this seems to reflect a lack of commitment to everything by many in this age group depending on whether it is convenient or something else is more attractive than to turn up to training/carnivals. I appreciate this is a generalization but it does not seem to take much for this age group to lose interest. Activities like the George Bass or Murray Marathon can engender a strong team spirit and provide reasons to stay in the sport. A lack of sweeps is also an ongoing problem, but prospective sweeps have to want to take the position and although a progression from being a rower is probably desirable, many rowers prefer to continue rowing only.
Officials are also an endangered species and the introduction of shorter carnivals/block racing with officials doing 4 or 5 hour shifts rather than all day would encourage older competitors to stay in the sport and also pass on their knowledge to and encourage younger competitors.
- 350 love the sport but SLSQ continual changes in making members upgrade awards it is just getting to hard and I couldn't be bothered anymore
- 351 The effort that it takes to keep qualified as a patrolling member and sweeping qualifications is getting too difficult
- 361 The reason I have left the sport I love so much and no longer want to row or learn to sweep is the way the sport is run. It is run by old scared officials that only care about ohs issues the introduction of helmets was the last straw all carnivals are held in flat conditions ie state at umina and when there is surf they either cancel or make us wear helmets there is no thrill left and no excitement for competitors or spectators. The needs and wants if competitors has never been considered and this nanny state is so bad I was abused by some ohs rep at Aussies for having a swim after a race without a Fluor singlet when I'm trained to reduce people at the beach I don't need to pit up with that sort of crap and I am going back to rugby league and competitive surfing as those sports accept that there is risk involved in the sport and I can go out in actual surf and actually test my skills this sport has been killed by out if date officials who are old scared about someone getting hurt and until that changed and the sport goes back to surf beaches like kurrawa and drops the ppe as it damages the image which is why people get into the sport I got into it because I watched these big strong brave bronzed men charge through massive surf and test them selves against the sea what 15 16 year old boy wants to row in flat water then put him in a pink Lycra top then put a stupid looking helmet on teen age girls and boys care about image and we have lost ours
- 359 Cost and time pressure, along with all the extra OHS. To sweep you need to join a club, get bronze / redo proficiency, Level 1 / 2 coaching as well as sweep proficiency tests. That is before we even start rowing and training. For small club with single sweep it is a HUGE commitment. Too huge.
- 360 Best sport, huge commitment between training, competition, patrols and club Commitments such as fundraising. Not sustainable for extended years. Costly to be competitive and travel. Very political, Surf Life Saving seems to attract power hungry people who aren't understanding to people's life commitments and only understand a 9-5 mon-fri work roster. No flexibility in patrols. Would be good to be able to fit them in when possible.
- 363 more events for average crews, less elite events. greater media coverage of surfs boats, surf safety ads should include surf boat images.
- 364 At my club even non competitors get penalised for not completing a full seasons hours. It is a Surf Life Saving Sport and tradition I believe it should stay connected to our clubs. Without our surf clubs we could not afford the cost to even compete.
- 365 The relationship between branch, state and national organisations with the average patrolling member is very poor.



- 368 Boaties are persona non grata at most clubs, but they don't help themselves by isolating themselves. I would like to see the removal of the boat area at carnivals and mixing everyone in. Boaties need to take a more active role in surf clubs, they have a bad name in Vic for freeloading and not giving back. We take expensive equipment and a whole shed, we should be expected to give back.
- There also should be more development of Bronze Medallion attainees into rowing. Clubs should have to make a documented attempt to field a junior (U/19 or U/23) crew in order to field a senior crew in a season. If no interest/doesn't happen, then Ok but should be mandatory youth development..
- 372 When I was very involved with Surf rowing as a sweep and rower, I was could not understand officials inability to understand how the ocean works.
- There seems to be an improvement in the boat section with trials of the Surf Hazard Rating system. This is the best thing I have seen in Surf lifesaving. If nippers and members were to learn all the components of how the ocean works, as with the Surf Hzard rating system, more members may remain involved as a result of their knowledge and confidence. Very few members practice surf skills now. I am not suggesting new bronze members be expected to do belt swims again, although the current physical requirements when you have your bronze are very poor, with no timed pool swim required. Over 75% of beach patrol members today would not be able to retrieve a patient form the surf in challenging conditions.
- 373 I know many people who would like to row surf boats, and know that they would enjoy the opportunity. The time commitment of having to be on the beach or at the surf club every weekend through summer is very difficult for famalies and couples. It you are not on the beach training, you will be involved with the club on patrol, or fund raising, or club management, or working bees or travelling to carnivals or something else. Not only do people not have the time for this commitment, they just dont want to do it. Free time is a luxury....and I dont see many who want to give it away on a regular, routine and rostered fashion. As the President of the Emu Park Surf Life Saving Club, I see and hear of this regularly. Happy to discuss this further if required.
- 374 i& think work isamajor factormember these days only have part time jobs & cant go to a carnival if work crops up
- 375 I retired after 30+ years in the movement. Surfboat sport is clearly dying as the stated statistics show. The lack of support for the sport from the governing bodies was a significant factor in my decision - the constant battle with local and national bodies, including during actual events, was one of the significant factors that eventually wore me down. I was present at the Aussies in the years of the fatalities and the behaviour of the organizers in those appalling conditions was reprehensible. Despite the fact the two most recent tragedies occurred outside the boat area, it appears all the changes to racing conditions (helmets for example) are being imposed on the boat area. The sport is in danger of being regulated out of existence.
- There appears to be no vision for the future of the sport nationally and in my state (Vic)the sport is insular, introspective, rife with cliques,factionalism and self interest and continually serves up more of the same, only with less numbers. Anyone who tries to make a change or offer an alternative appears to be undermined by the "establishment". With numbers constantly dropping - especially amongst those with experience, no one seems the slightest bit concerned when people leave the sport.
- Ultimately the whole exercise became a chore and a negative return activity. I never thought I would get tired of surfboat racing but so many factors combined to make it something I'd rather not do. It saddens and disappoints me that a movement I gave a significant proportion of my life to ultimately became something that frustrated and angered me to the point that I gave it up.
- 376 Not very well made survey, hard to give answers when questions aren't clear.
- Need the sport to be exposed more to the general public, most young people (prospective junior rowers) don't even know the sport exists even though many would love it.
- Process needs to be simplified in getting people from outside of clubs into the sport although I understand that isn't a simple or easy thing to change
- 378 Surfboat rowers are neglected and not appreciated for what they are. Boaties are often the glue that holds a club together, I have rowed and patrolled for 25 years, Crews I have rowed in have always completed our club commitments including Social events, Fundraising and Patrolling.
- SLSA needs to support Surfboat rowing.If boats go, there will be a large reduction in Patrolling members, we don't live to patrol, but we fulfill our commitments.
- TV coverage is so often focused on the giggle events, last carnival in Victoria (Fairhaven)



was massive swell and the boats were providing some great entertainment, yet the TV cameras on the beach were not shooting footage...why. Because SLSA is biased against boats. ASRL you need to harden up and take on SLSA, represent your members and don't be pussies.

- 379 It's a great sport burdened by far too many rules and regulations. Some events should be offered for non patrolling members.
My recruitment of young people to the sport is restricted by people making it so arduous for someone to be allowed to compete that interested kids are lost forever because of that experience
- 380 To ASRL committee you were set up to get a better deal for surfboats. This is stat survey for SLSA and nothing to do with boats. There are series events for every other sport, tennis, surfboards etal so you are trying to change the course of surfboat history. Not all questions are for surfboats so you have wasted 20 minutes of my life and this survey which will have no effect on surf life saving or surfboats.
- 382 Being associated with an organisation like SLS has further advantages than sport. How do we highlight those otherwise without the patrol aspect we the same as any other sport and what impact would trying to change it have on our officials volunteering to run events. Would support block racing at each carnival as taking way to long between races
- 384 I only joined to row surfboats, and would not be involved in the surf club if there was no boats. If surfboats could some how become independent of the surf lifesaving I would support that as well, but I just cant see that being an option as it would be to costly for individuals to run themselves
- 386 the move to paid employees running our organisation has moved it away from being inclusive and driven by members needs. the current culture is that of a business, with continuous improvement and risk mitigation strategies ruining the club culture. The focus of central bodies must be on the needs of the members ahead of anything else. Without members we provide no service to the community. the current focus on meeting community needs ahead of the needs of our people is short sighted. We are volunteers and if the barriers are too difficult then the life saving as a volunteer service will wither and die.
Competitions need to understand the changing dynamics of the community. No longer do people have weekends free of other commitments. Many of our young people work in jobs that are at times when traditionally there was nothing open and competition and patrol was free of encumbrances. we need events that can be done in half a day if we are to survive. Shorter boat races would allow plenty of racing without the current delays
- 387 I don't mind spending all day at the beach competing. I would rather see more racing in one day than cut throat eliminations.
As a sweep if there were twilight events for 1 division I wouldn't be able to go everynight for each division and also train the crews and balance home life etc.
- 388 Its been raised before. If you wish to get younger crews to compete in boats the cost of competition needs to be reduced for them. They are usually involved in other sports and the cost all up for parents are high. The cost of boats are an issue also, most clubs will not support boats due to the high capital cost and maintenance involved. Crews/sweeps will generally gravitate to clubs that have the money to buy boats, subsidies the juniors, etc.
- 389 We should only have up to 12 race boat events for the year (same as Ocean Thunder) at 3 or 4 central beachers in vic. Beachers should be : Ocean Grove , Jan juc, Anglesea and Fairhaven or Breamelea. It should be up to the crew if we wear safety hats and vests. SLV fees are to high and the cost must come down . SLV has to many paid staff and we should not have to keep paying wage costs to support them.
- 393 our club is driving people away with having to do 60+ hours of patrol per season. Even with a sub whilst you are completing, you are required to make up those hours or get penalised.
- 395 having started as a junior in 2000 and walked away from the sport firstly for Rugby and then too travel I have noticed a massive change since I first started in terms of numbers, culture, events, coverage and even the prestige of the sport.

A lot of this is interconnected and the reasons in the decline are not mutually exclusive but it is heading in a way that makes me question whether the sport will exist when my son is old enough to row.

When I reflect on rowing juniors and 21's in the early 2000's (up here in qld) I have strong memories of wonderful carnivals and series and a massive emphasis from the club to field a crew in each division. sweeps seemed to be in greater abundance, and winning series both as a crew and a club were top of the targeted achievements.

now, given the diluted numbers, lack of quality racing, we only really focus on the Aussies.



When I think about the future and rowing numbers I look into the "pipeline" and it really is empty. There is hardly any crews graduating from 19's to 23's and even fewer to A's.

In qld most of the rowers in A grade are plus 35. The crop of 23's from 2009 ish up here have all disappeared, with only Marcus Walker from formerly the Kurrawa Mojo and Mac Hamilton of the Thundercats (now Barbarians) the only 2 from about 6 or so really good crews still going.

How do we solve it? I Don't know, and if we are being serious it will take almost a rowing generation to get it back but we might as well start somewhere. we need to keep feeding in from the bottom and pumping juniors and 23's in somehow.

I would love to see a carnival/series that was so prestigious but a club was only allowed entry if it had an under age crew.

in qld this year we have seen about 5 junior crews and 5 23 mens crews, and as mentioned earlier most of the A grade crews wont be around in another 2 years.

- 396 Make the events safer. With years service your patrol commitments should become more voluntary as more years service are accumulated.
- 397 Moving Aussies to Perth was the start of me and my crew losing interest. To do a season and not compete at aussies was deflating. I am long service, but my club still demands high patrol hours. And with f/t work and f/t family commitments it is not that easy. Club also quite anti surf boats despite us doing a lot of fund raising and pulling our weight@ Too much politics and not enough about the competitors and sport!! Bring in some decent sponsors, create sexy events and bring some money back for wins!
- 398 Recruitment of rowers or prospective rowers has suffered largely because boats are no longer seen as an integral part of the club system.They have lost visibility during regular patrols on the beach.
Boats were typically used as a support mechanism for patrols but have been replaced by IRBs.The opportunity for youngsters to see and interact with boats and crews has been eliminated as in most cases boats are on the water at times when patrols and/or club beach events are not taking place.
The administration system has further eliminated the opportunity for youngsters to be involved by only allowing those over 16 to get in a boat.
By this age youngsters have already made other sport choices within the movement such as boards/IRBs or dry mediums.
Smaller clubs and club management also seem to be contributing to the demise of boats as in general they are seen as an unnecessary expense so funds are diverted to other club activities.
Sadly it seems that surf boats are slowly becoming redundant eg (Surf Reels)and attendant activities,and there seems to be little will within the movement to slow the decay.
- It is my opinion that here on the West Coast the availability of regular boat competition at levels above 19-23s is extremely poor,regular masters competition is almost non existent which makes it difficult to remain enthusiastic about the sport which I would suspect is at the root of the declining numbers of participants in these older age groups.
I would be very happy to discuss my contribution in detail.
- 399 Patrols are part of a commitment to not only owing but also the club in general. This is a must otherwise they will not gel together. In general it is still a cheap sport option and beats other sports handsdown for low costs. Still love the sport but taking a break from rowing after 13 years.
- 402 As a north queensland competitor, there needs to be more financial support as we travel long distances to be involved.
- 403 Surf Life Saving is more than a sport. I feel it is not appropriate to provide a survey option of "no patrol obligations" as this will not happen and only raises expectations among some members that "I can compete without doing patrols". A more reasonable option would be to ask "how patrol obligations can be better structured to allow competition"?
No patrols, no surf life saving.
- 405 Takes too much time to get a bronza done. The requirements of getting someone to rowing stage, for example bronze 9 weeks paid membership, flouro singlets etc are a major deterrent to getting new rowers. We need some sort of cover so people who wish to "try before you buy" rowing, can do so. Without this in place I can tell you now, you will never increase numbers and will continue to have a decline in crews. I dont feel its anything to do with rowing conditions, flat or surf, but more the ease to recruit these days. Rediculous. And the amount



- of people out there willing to report any little breach. Really they need a life. We need it made easier
- 406 Question - If the Australian titles could be run by the rowers league at the end of the year, would we only have to satisfy our club level commitments and not be bound by any SLS commtments (patrol hours/ awards ECT) ? Also - Entry fees can go to the ASRL.
- 407 Less patrolling hours commitment. Don't want SLS to take up my whole life. As much as I love the sport. Patrolling + training + competing takes a large chunk of your life anyway. Take out the red tape of the surf club, but I think that's a bigger issue than the ASRL can solve.
- 408 More back up beaches need to be planned and location of carnivals chosen selected according to seasonal weather patterns. Ie. in Queensland, Coolum is always planned after Christmas and always ends up being cancelled or tentative because of big seas at this time of year. Waste of everyone's time. Shame to miss out on racing. More contingencies need to be planned.
- 412 I am now 56 years old, still do patrols, and would love an opportunity to join a Masters crew at my club if one was to arise. However, I had a serious accident about five years ago, which has limited my abilities in all active areas. So, I will just continue to be patient ...
- 415 I started in this sport in 1999. It was a fantastic sport that attracted me for many of the reasons I still enjoy today. It is unfortunate that I will most likely walk away due to the forever changing racing formats and safety requirements that seem to be placed on us because it sounds good in theory and not practice. Bring back the formats we had in 1999 as there was nothing wrong with them. Sometimes tough and sometimes lucky. We all knew what we stood for and that should never have been touched. We must remember to value the word 'Surf' in our sport as surf boat rowers. When I knew I was rowing in surf I trained for it. There is no excuse for ignorance to training in conditions that test you.
- 418 More support for new sweeps.
Experienced sweeps & clubs working together as a team so as to create quality crews & provide support for struggling clubs.
In my view there are too many individuals with their own agenda.
Especially in Vic if everyone came together as one big team,
The sport would become stronger.
- 422 In regards to surfboat involvement and competition, the quicker ASRL can break away from SLS the better. SLSA is slowly killing the sport.
- 428 I think there needs to be more acceptance of change from the older generation. For example the fact that Manly cannot hold the presentations at Manly Surf Club because someone had a fight with someone else 60 years ago. It's ridiculous and that's one of the main reasons the sport is dying. There's needs to be a cohesive board across all states. To be honest if be happy just doing ocean thunder/states and aussies. Take a look at Ocean a thunder. That's how to run a good event.
- 429 more events in western australia for Rowing
- 432 Boat rowers have become the prima donnas of the sport and replaced the beach sprinters. I have won branch, regional and state medals in surf boats and believe that to compete you must first do your patrol requirements. I have been involved in SLS for over 47 years and If the rowers that have come along in recent years dont want to do their patrols they can row still water.
- Times are changing and the last few coronal enquiries due to some very unfortunate incidents, have made it much more difficult for everyone however the continual unhelpful and very disrespectful comments on the ASRL website make the rowers look like a rabble to the general community and shows the selfishness and disrespectful attitudes of many of the present day rowers where it is all about them and no one else matters.
- If the rowers don't want to play the game as set out by the history and governing body then they can start up their own events and buy their own boats and pay their own insurance.
- 435 Whilst you have encouraged members of past and present to respond to this survey, the questions asked are very "now" and I feel the survey did not really apply to me for the questions regarding bronze. I did my bronze 26 years ago and a LOT has changed since then. The reason I have left the movement is from the lack of SUPPORT my surf club afforded me when the tables were turned. Care factor from them after 26 years of loyal service - not on your nelly. That just about should say it all.
- 433 The ASRL is a fantastic innovation to surf boat racing. The structure and high level of administration of the ASRL should present an envy to other sporting organisations. As a former rower and now an official I am proud to be part of the organisation.
- 435 The idea of state titles being at somewhere like kings cliff on the qld border 2 years in row



- and then 3 years straight at umina. What's wrong with a change ?
Also in opens every race is close. Why not use go pro cameras on the judge stands ? And helmets. They should def be at own choice
- 443 Some of our Younger rowers are finishing school and starting work. Some of this work is part time and on the weekend which often clashes with patrols/carnivals. These guys find it hard to commit to a training schedule due to the changing nature of their work rosters. At smaller clubs there is pressure to raise/collect money for equipment and fees etc.
- 447 More help to train sweeps is needed at state level. Its really hard to teach sweeps.
- 450 There is serious costs with travel, accommodation & entry fees with the sport. It is a great sport to be doing but it is expensive to do when you have a young family and other household cost are going up. Plus the time away from the when competing.
- 452 Good to see you doing things like this to find out how our rowers really feel .
- 453 I gained my bronze in Jan 1958 where the 6 man R&R was part the training was 5 months but life styles and demands on our time was a lot less back then. I feel that if new rowers were allowed to train in the boats after joining the club for insurance, passed a qualifying swim and CPR basics and passed the rest of the bronze award over the next twelve months we have to be proficient in so many fields even to use the ATV to tow the boat along the beach when I have been driving including 4X4s for 58 years surf boats are fun and should stay that way.
- 454 Be great to have more weekend away competitions for masters to give more chance to catch up and build on the camaraderie that has developed over the years.
- 456 Love the sport and the ASRL.
- 458 I have been involved in clubs and boats for 40 yrs.
- One of the competitive advantages of surf boats is that it is linked to an australian icon brand (surf lifesaving). This is why I think keeping patrol and club involvement is important.
- What has happened is that patrolling and just being a member of your club is getting harder with more and more requirements. We need to make patrolling and requalifying more flexible so that it is not such a burden on members.
- There has been a lot done in Vic to improve the running of carnivals, this has generally worked. We have some very competant referees (e.g. Peter Van Duran). It is especially important to have the boat competition ref totally in charge of the situation and not beholding to other parts of the beach or other competitions running at the same time.
- 460 As a competitive surf boat rower since 1975 I have seen many changes in the sport. Not only in the craft we compete in but also in the competitors. Competitors today have many more distractions outside rowing, be it - education, social media, social events (music concerts, entertainment) or just chilling out.
Back in my days of competitive surf boat rowing, that's all you did, Row. You didn't go on holidays, get married, have children. Everything was done out of surf club season.
Todays surf boat rowers don't appear to have the same commitment. You do get some crews that are very keen to be successful while others are just casual about the whole thing. It's a frustrating conundrum we are in.
Maybe it's the fact that you have to do patrols so as you can compete in carnivals.
This is a fact of surf live saving life as a competitor. It will not and never should change.
- 462 U19 competition should be made u18.
U23 competition should be made u21 men&women
We have to try & stop younger members getting flogged every Carnival.Men & Women at 23yrs,should be capable of holding their own in open company.
Series events should be reduced.
- 463 Well done for seeking members views. A couple of points from me. As a person with a Graduate Diploma in Marketing Management I think that there are a number of biased questions and others that people will answer because they are compulsory but the results might not be valid as no context was given. I'm not going to go back and dissect each question, but I think they are reasonably obvious. This is important because we (ASRL rowers/members) don't want anyone else (Clubs, Branches, States etc) challenging the survey results. Having said that, I am extremely grateful for what the ASRL has done for Lifesaving by running regular events throughout the season. A quick example. In my club we have 11 patrols of about 6 members, 8 of the 11 patrol captains are rowers, and 40% of patrol members are rowers. In my crew we have, club president, IRB trainer, clubhouse director, treasurer/ chief training officer (same person - me) and we are swept by the Club Captain who is also boat captain. Our Vice Captain is a rower, IRB officer a sweep, Safety



- Officer a rower and on it goes. We are in Central Queensland (Emu Park) so every event we go to is a weekend road trip. As you can imagine, getting patrols organised those weekends can be a challenge, but we work it out. I understand that our experience is not representative of the majority. The main point here is that our club would definitely struggle to meet lifesaving obligations without our boat program. Finally, here is my free tip - If rowers have challenges with the way Bronze Medallion Course is conducted, do what we have done and become the trainers:), better still get one of the rowers to be Club President or Club Captain. Have fun - John Phelan
- 464 We need less dickheads. Get rid of SLSNSW in its entirety, they only care about money. Get rid of the stretch between Palm Beach and Manly. Between these 2, most problems in NSW will be solved.
- 465 Surf boat competition is all about the competitors and asking them what they want. This comment is made from an official's perspective.
I believe that we have too many competition events in a calendar year and people who have different agendas.
ASRL is doing a very good job attempting to represent our sport with ONE voice to SLSA. The local competitions start the process and we need to run carnivals that consistently apply the rules of competition.
The format of the Battle of the Boats at Pacific Palms has merit and over 2 days of competition, all crews row 6 races, before cutting numbers to semi finals and finals. If crews travel a long way for a carnival, they really want more than just one row.
A sweeps meeting is held before competition starts and I see benefit of having a debrief with representative competitors and officials at the completion of competition, despite everyone looking to head home.
On safety, the movement needs to finalise the issue of wearing buoyancy vests, which if light in construction and do not impede rowing, should be mandatory.
Phil Hird 0409453560
- 466 We need a system that makes it easier to introduce new rowers to clubs. ie: temporary membership so new members can get an idea what the sport and club have to offer.
- 469 There are some great rowers who want to try surfboats but the lifesaving bit doesn't interest them. It would be great to have another option, I know you want people in boats to be good swimmers etc and understand surf but it's a shame they have to jump through so many hoops to enjoy the sport. I've noticed at some of our SA Competitions only 4 boats make it into the final, it's frustrating when you're knocked out in the semi and there's room for more boats to compete in the final than are there. It's a great feeling to make the final even if you still finish fifth. It's a shame you're left feeling disappointed when you've worked hard throughout the day.
- 470 time factor
- 471 I am 77 years of age and rowed from the age of 16 until in my day you retired about 29 for work/family. No masters. Had a great life rowing. Two Clubs Avalon/Freshie. I am now in Bondi and help out. training is very hard for young blokes/girls with all the other commitments. I think we lose sight of our motto Vigilance and Service and some rowers think they don't have to do patrols because they are competing. I know it is a generational thing but some competitors Iron-man etc have become elite to the detriment of c all.
- 473 Sometimes it feels as though there are many barriers to participating, particularly when it comes to safety. Whilst people understand and acknowledge there are risks, it can't stop us from participating. This only diminishes surf skills and further exacerbates the problem. We should be able to sign a disclaimer which acknowledges our acceptance of these risks of competition like any other sport or leisure activity.
- 474 There is a genuine power struggle to control our sport which is directly effecting the growth of the sport with a shortage of referees and their deputy appointments. The asrl is also a secret service in its struggle to control.
- 475 Until this year I was involved with committee, patrols and veteran competition for 8 years. The constant extra awards and patrol hours over recent years have become too much, so I retired completely from surf club. I would enjoy to be able to stay a little involved and mainly practice rowing for fitness and fun with my long time rowing friends. Though that isn't allowed under SLS rules, too much commitment has driven me away and will probably continue with others in the future. Surf Life saving has wonderful volunteers who give up their time, I wish I could stay involved just a little and feel the past 8 years could give me more credit towards at least having a social row with my old friends. You never know I then may find time to help a little with club matters. Though not if I have to do a lot. Just a little would be nice though.
Regards Peter Phipps
- 476 I AM A RETIRED COMPETITOR BUT STILL INVOLVED AS ADMIN BUT I AM AN OFFICIAL FOR ASRL COMP AND LOOKING TO THE ASSIES AT SHELL HARBOUR AND THE ASSIES AT TUGAN



482	Always room for improvement
483	<p>We have a very unique sport that is loved by many for different reasons. I see all the variables and challenges that the ocean throws as it's biggest asset. Sadly over the last 5 years we've seen the skills to deal with these diminish. Ultimately we are our own worst enemy as people struggle for the balance between speed and skill. I have seen the skill set of crews disappear in recent years to the point that officials don't have confidence in the competitors.</p> <p>I disagree with mandatory helmet use as it has been introduced as a result of incidents in other disciplines. After the one tragedy in surf boats, gate cans were introduced to prevent similar situations occurring which seems to have worked.</p>
484	<p>This is my second season out of hte boat due to family commitments (15mth old twins!!). I intended to come back this season but patrol and other club 'mandatory' commitments as well as having to spend all day on a beach for competition made it impossible for me to compete again this year.</p> <p>I'm hopeful of a return next season, but would really like to see less idle time on the beach on race day. Faster turn around of races. I know htat conditions can prevent quick turn around where equipment needs to be recovered etc... but otherwise, there's no real reason not to be able to get a heat, rep, semi and final over in a 4hr block.</p> <p>The other thing that I find frustrating is that entries are taken on the morning of competition. As an old hat at river boat rowing, entries are due the week before the race. I would really support a system where entries were due even the friday before (i.e. a day or two) the carnival. That way we aren't sitting on a beach whilst entries are taken, draws are done and then put up on a board... This is all stuff that can be done in advance... a good system that could easily be adapted to boats is www.regattacentral.com for entries and payment etc... and www.regatamaster.com which feed into the back end for draws/results... can even have a smart phone app for results/draws etc... The Melbourne Head Regatta uses these systems and, funnily enough is a really efficient regatta and is over by 1pm havng run all classes of river boats... We had a surfboat category one year which was fantastic over 5km...</p> <p>Happy to chat further - Tom Skidmore - thomas@mortgagestar.com.au</p>
486	Don't like block racing. Doesn't help the clubs and is not good to develop club togetherness club
487	keep the surveys up , it keeps our sport ticking
490	work commitments and children impact on being a competitor - having the time to do all - having wife children involved is essential but the cost and time for all is a major detractor
494	<p>Lets embrace the Safety commitment being made to our sport and get on with it, a mix of go it alone rowing competitions and halfdays with major and minor days.</p> <p>Its been a fantastic journey so far lets keep it going for future generations participate as a judge starter corse judge when you can get involved in the sports manage ment have your say and be listened to</p>
495	not really
497	SLSA and the states need to get back to basic club level in way of support, reduce cost and make it easier to requal and spend time at your club.
498	<p>SURF LIFESAVING AUSTRALIA & STATE CENTER ARE APPLYING TOO MANY OBLIGATIONS ON OUR PATROLLING MEMBERS. THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY AWARDS THAT EACH PATROL HAS TO HAVE. THIS HAS CUT MY CLUBS PATROL NUMBERS ALMOST IN HALF, MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR MEMBERS TO COMPETE AND ALSO DO THE EXTRA PATROL HOURS. ANOTHER BIG PROBLEM IS THE SATURDAY PATROLS WE ARE MADE TO DO, SITTING ON THE BEACH ALONG SIDE THE LIFEGUARD - WHAT A WASTE ON TIME AND RESOURCES!!! WHEN I LOOK AT THE COUNCIL LIFE GUARDS WHO PATROL DUEING THE WEEK & SATURDAYS, OFTEN ON THEIR OWN, THEY DO NOT HAVE THE SAME RESTRICTIONS AS THE VOLUNTEER LIFESAVER.</p>
500	Need to remove over-reaction to potential injuries and big surf. Sweeps committee for each carnival should be appointed and governing not SLSA reps
501	<p>Thank you for the survey.</p> <p>Keep up the good work</p>
502	ASRL provide good competition and officials. At both NSW State and Aussies in 2014 the level of refereeing to us was atrocious. One of my crews was penalised out of a final only to have the officials realise after the final that the crew who beat us there should have been rowing in an age division (masters) below us. The official clearly favour Sydney crews at major events in NSW (Battle of the Boats is a prime example). Crews from the country (Wauchope Bonny Hills) DO NOT get equality of starts and judging. It is so obvious to many



- of us and has been for a large number of years.
The patrol penalties for competitors v non competitors is also a really serious consideration in clubs such as ours. It is more and more difficult to keep young rowers and competitive members once they realise how busy a season is with patrols, training and competition as well as fund raising.
ASRL must take over surf boats and help us break away from SLSA.....
- 503 If the sport trends are not changed with in 2 to 3 years it will die. I don't have the answers but as well the barriers that surf life saving put on the sport, the generation coming through have a different culture, than the past, so our sport has to change how it runs events, all other sports have.
- 507 More block racing, single division carnivals. Get rid of the silly old bugger brigade that runs the major carnivals
Introduce an u19 women's division. It is stupid sexism that it isn't already done. The sweeps will bring the crews through
If the division exists.
- 509 no sweep for masters comp no help for new sweep to fill this void
- 510 More variation to events might bring some competitors back, eg, twilight/night carnivals, relays, skins etc
- 511 Have rowed on and off for 30 years. Have been long service after 8 years. Surf rowing needs to cut slsc loose and affiliate with rowing Australia end of story.
- 520 more support to the boat area and more feed back from slsa
- 521 It has become increasingly difficult to attract younger rowers to the sport and SLS at all levels are not supporting clubs. Trainers that have trained for 30 years are no longer accredited to assess. NSW SLS is trying to push its own agenda with the dislike for the boat section and making more difficult to getting people interested in the sport and surf life saving before committing to full patrols and bronze awards. I have been suspended for 3 years for trying to bring new rowers and life savers in the door after 23 years of patrols and rowings. Local branch kangaroo court!!, no support from SLS at any level other than club. I have 4 children that all were interested in competition and patrols which would have kept me in the movement. NOT NOW....
- 522 at my club we are struggling to recruit new rowers to the area for a number of reasons - there are no new rowers who live in the area. we struggle to attract juniors to the sport. Nippers are brought up on boards and skis. They cant touch a boat till they are 16 years old, you've already lost potential rowers as they don't know about the sport.
- I came to the sport late at age 29. I the commitment to join (bronze/patrols) to someone who is unsure about the sport already puts people off. It's a pity that people can't join the sport and then after a year be required to become patrolling members. I think competition members should still have to patrol but think there needs to be a carnival/racing at least once a month twice a month in the lead up to key events like states and aussies.
- 524 I have been a club member for over 30 years since joining as a nipper.
My club, Anglesea places huge club obligations and at times has been anti boats, hence leaving for 5 years. Coming back, lifesaving in General has missed the plot. Seems a place for business men to flex their muscle and instate bs rules requirements and regulation. I love the sport of surf boat racing and have plenty to offer, but it won't take much to push myself and many others away. I think all club members should complete patrol hours/requirements without issue. The pressure clubs place on making money is madness..
My motivation is driven by protecting our sport either within SLSC umbrella, or doing it alone. Our sport needs major sponsor dollars to reduce costs, improve events, and stem the loss of good people. I think junior development has turned a corner and looking promising, but the system has to support that.
Helmet safety debate was always going to step up and play it's part. It is just the sport evolving and I have no issue with its inception. Let's stay ahead of that movement and continue to be proactive and show diligence.
Time away from my family will be what ends my involvement, and that if we no longer have events at surf beaches..
Regards, Joe Bergin
- 526 I appreciate the tradition of surfboats and would feel that existing carnivals are good and it's a matter of focusing on how we can do these better rather than new series or carnivals.
I would be less likely to want to compete at a twilight short-course carnival than a traditional Manly carnival for instance.
Ocean Thunder has a great format. Well organised, lots of quality racing with short turn-around catering for two divisions of racing. It is a financial burden and an event (selfishly) that I wouldn't be able to commit to if held outside Sydney metro, given my current family situation.



Australian Titles and ASRL open you expect to dedicate the weekend to these events which is fine but less meaningful carnivals, time efficiency is critical.

Ocean Thunder is good bang for buck. It's the highest quality racing with the minimum amount of time commitment.

A ruthless approach to competition that can be afforded in Sydney metro will not work in more remote areas like Tasmania where the approach needs to be different. More innovative initiatives to drive competition has prolonged the death of surfboats in that State for a little longer but new participants to the sport in Tasmania are only participating in less meaningful events which devalues the relevance of competing in the end, without the big events to strive for. How many crews from Tasmania competed at Australian Titles last year? ASRL Open is more heavily attended (because it's funded for State Teams and other crews in the club can ride off the crew which makes the state team to subsidise the costs.)

When there is big event to strive for at the end of the season, work and family commitments become higher priority and the crew eventually loses its way.

Basically what I am saying is the Surfboating culture is getting lost because of certain factors, one of which is too many "Mickey Mouse" events which devalues the traditional carnivals.

527 I enjoy rowing boats, however the time commitment and costs involved are starting to be a major factor in me possibly leaving the sport. As I am 30 years old and will have two children aged under 3 by next season, the cost of being a registered/competing member keeps increasing as well as paying entry fees for events, which puts a lot of pressure on our budget. I also need to consider that if I am not on patrol, I am at a competition that takes me away from time with my family over the summer period and greater strain on my partner while I am not there and able to assist in raising our children.

529 Don't place unreal expectations on competitors and officials aim for enjoyment in the sport for all concerned

531 SLS is much more bureaucratic than ever before more effort goes into processes than outcomes. Those who administer SLS are more concerned about process than quality practical prevention rescue and resuscitation skills. SLS no longer recruits 15-18 year olds that is when they drop out of SLS.

The more professionals administrators we have the more process they develop and the less capable participants at senior we get (we get lots of parents who get their Bronze and become lifesavers I am concerned about some of their skills). If we asked the Professional administrators what processes could we drop they would only say we need more.

532 ski and board paddlers should be made to wear helmets

533 We need an easier process of getting people into the sport.

The potential of a "try before you buy" membership or 4 week membership for people wanting to try the sport (but to still be insured) before they commit to completing the bronze or patrols would help clubs get people involved. (Triathlon Australia has this process in place and it allows people to try out a club and the sport before they commit to paying full membership fees).

In QLD we are losing numbers and need to look at ways of making the competition better - I know plenty of people who would like to try the sport but the barriers i.e bronze and patrols deters them. If they can try the sport and like it, they will be more willing to commit to undertaking the bronze course.

In QLD I think it is also difficult to get young athletes into the sport because most of the Schools which have still water programs are based in Brisbane, therefore there is no natural progression for these kids onto Surfboats. If we could organise a try before you buy type membership or some sort of encouragement for clubs to get these juniors involved we could try and target some schools and get them into clubs.

I don't think the helmets were a bad decision, if everyone has to do it its fine. It has meant we can race in bigger swell in Queensland so it's appreciated.

534 We need youth to maintain numbers! No 20 year old wants to row hungover on a Sunday!

This is why Footy matches are played on a Saturday! Young people go out on a Saturday night! Its no secret!

Also - align carnivals with events! Port Fairy have a 2 day carnival the week before the long weekend. ?????? If it were on the long weekend, people could row sat & sun and then enjoy the folk festival sunday night with the monday off! Its not rocket science!

535 Main reasons for no longer rowing next year: shift worker, including weekends. Family want to spend time with you when not working and sometimes prefer you weren't rowing.

The events: it's surfboat rowing not still water. Having the State at Umina again is ridiculous.



I'm glad Manly still went ahead on the weekend although disappointing the format was changed.

Costs: Accommodation for the whole family to go to State and Aussies plus other carnivals up and down the East Coast becomes a costly affair. Add food, fuel / airfares, and event costs and its no longer a cheap sport.

537 *might be a bit of fun to have mixed male / female races

540 From lakes entrance- (far eastern Victoria) travell is biggest burden majority carnivals west coast 6-7 hours on average plus 2-3 nights accomodation, fuel, time.

Some of questions did not apply as I am a life member and as such exempt from patrol, I have rowed on and off for the past 38 years - present stint 22 years. In this stint it took 13 years & a lot of bronze and silver medals to get a gold medal at masters (state) we joked that the gold medal cost \$130,000:00 10k per year for that 13 years, but with travel accomodation time off work, late for work, it is probably pretty realistic. !!!!

We run 2 masters crews but it is very hard to get a commitment from 18 -30 year olds masters life's seemed to have settled down and are more committed and can see that rowing is a great sport to keep fit, and on positive side do patrol with your kids, we are all 50 something year. Olds and can mix it all younger members on boards swimming etc (and even beat some of them!!!!). Rowing has kept us all fit and we are all well respected by all the younger members, we are currently traing for Gallipoli, hope grammer and spelling ok (boat rower, our sweep tells us rowers aren't that bright!!)

Cheers Sheppo

542 The ASRL doesn't support country/ remote clubs ,only the big smoke crews get any real benefit from the ASRL.

At least SLSA ran a real interstate with all 7 states included, the battle of the dich is a bit lame why not support more country/remote clubs rather than 2 elite crews whos clubs are not usually that bad off ?

543 The bronze process is to long and complicated. If someone joins the club in December they don't compete for that season. I recommend a short bronze course of basic requirements with the rest learnt on patrol and additional self-learning modules. That gets the kids on the beach in a patrol ASAP.

544 Strange questions, difficult to answer in my situation. Our club has a lot of old silly old farts who want to ride on the reputations that my generation established, they havn't a clue and hence they are the main reason for people not taking up boats and for me walking away again in the near future. Too many dangerously incompetent people are in control!

545 Your questions have many variable answers, so its difficult to be precise. However, SLSC in the past, has been a haven for genuine community workers, giving up their personnel time to give back to our society. It has grown sideways to be taken over by bureaucracy and red tape. we have lost the "doers" and recruited "can't doers" , for instant , the head of our club does not want competitors.

There is a narcissistic bully culture in the admin section of our club. The admin today attracts the typical stero type,overweight retired ????

there used to be no barriers to do things in the past, club leaders are possibly too afraid to "go out on a limb "

Several years ago, I obtained my sweeps ticket, I sat next to a legend in the rowing fraternity, who had been in boats for over 50 years, he had to do a sweeps ticket ??? if thats the world we have created, we cant all complain about it when it disappears in front of us with people scratching their head saying " well thats how it is these days ". if thats the new way , the results are now showing, people are walking with their feet.

I sweep and train rowers from 3 different clubs because I love the sport, yet I stay away from the admin because 2 out of the 3 clubs committee are anti boats, Anti competition , anti competitors ??? We just got a brand new club (paid for by taxpayers and community) and yet the admin culture is to keep it away from the community. We have trouble getting people to contribute to board level because of bullying culture of that type of leader.

take surf life saving, its ironically drowning from a sea of administrators ? we need a culture of, doers , not talkers

solution : halve the admin numbers, SLSC (NSW & Aust) hand the reins and \$\$\$ back to club level and let them run as grass roots level,

The club is a community service and outlets for youth , why is there a joining fee ? when members do more community hours than some of our petty thieves ? celebrate the SL culture with local events for families , every surf club is located on the most beautiful and valuable piece of australian coast but we are too afraid to put on an outdoor movie (for fear of insurance and ohs)

547 I understand that the financial Burden especially in Tasmania where crews must always travel to carnivals is high and coupled with our patrol requirements it can become difficult to



continue Surf Boat Rowing and being a patrolling SLS member. However speaking with my club in mind, if the Surf Boat rowers left the SLSC to form a new entity separate from SLS the SLSC which we have work hard to build would struggle quite significantly. I find generally the Surf Boat Rowers within SLSC's are the often (but not always) the ones which set up the beaches for carnivals, work at the club and are heavily involved in the club. Without these members it would be difficult for many SLSC's to continue. Additionally I would expect that without the support from the SLSC's and SLS in general including the facilities that SLSC's have built over 10's of years (and in some cases over 100's of years) Surf Boats and surf boat crews would not be able to function as the funds and effort required to build the facilities needed for club rooms etc including just simply obtaining a piece of land near/on a beach and beginning the planning would be a task almost unachievable. Additionally we must recognise the general support of the community we as surf boat rowers receive as a result of our Surf Life Saving heritage and brand, this we would not be able to attract as a separate entity from SLS. As a result I finish this comment with two point 1) "We are Stronger as One" and 2) "Our brand is our greatest asset".

548

I have previously spent almost 20 years involved in Surfboats(age 17-36). I have rowed in Australian and ASRL Finals. I have been involved as a sweep with approx 10x crews that covered all age groups and sexes over the past 15 years. I have loved the sport. Some issues I have had with Surfboats and SLS in general are:

- The unwillingness to accommodate competitors and lifesavers in general. I have seen alot of my friends walk away from the sport, not because of not wanting to row, but because of family commitments and Surf clubs unwillingness to accommodate past members in different life stages to keep them involved.

- I have seen alot of past members with experience in other areas of SLS walk away. I have tried to bring some of their experience back in the form of offering Long Service Membership.(I'm talking about members with 10-20 years experience) That idea was scuttled by my current club committee. Unfortunately,it has an all or nothing mentality to members and patrols.

- I think the revolving door of SLS members is partly to do with not offering something more to members than just patrolling the beach. I would like to see PATROLLING members who complete their minimum hours, be rewarded internally by Surf clubs in the way of cheaper meals, bar prices etc. We lose alot of our young members to Uni in Melbourne also, so there needs to be more incentive for them to stay involved when they are back home during Uni breaks.

- Coaching, Swimming, Personal Training(PT) and Surf training should be offered within clubs. These should be paid roles so there needs to be a slight shift by SLS to redefine what is classed as voluntary in today`s society. Patrolling the beach should be voluntary, some other roles, such as the above mentioned, need to be pay as you go. SLS has become a Registered Training Organisation(RTO). It seems unethical for SLS to spruike volunteer, then charge for training programs that fit in a recognised national training framework.

- The current process from some clubs is to not accommodate competitors in regards to Patrol rosters and rostering patrols on carnivals. This creates alot of angst amongst competitors who are SLS members because it is their chosen sport. I think, overall, competitors appreciate they need to do their bit on the beach patrolling but, patrolling is not the no.1 reason they are members. I liken it to a footballer training hard all week, and instead of playing a game on Saturday, they are told to work in the football club canteen instead.

- I think there is alot of underlying angst between Board and Ski and Surfboat competitors. I would like to see Surfboats compete away from Board and Ski and only come together for State/Australian Titles. I think this would create a win-win situation. 1. Both sports get to pick the most appropriate parts of the beach to compete on and 2. when one discipline is away competing then the other, theoretically, is available to stay at their home beach and patrol.

- I think the resistance to helmets has been unhelpful. I think we should have the helmet clause activated earlier(2ft/half a meter swell rather than 4ft/1 meter swell). In Victoria, in conjunction with the surf rating system, it seems Boaties are using helmets as a result of deeming the surf unsafe and when helmets come out, there is forward thinking into whether the event should be moved/cancelled. My interpretation of the helmet rule was: you wear them most of the time, unless its ridiculously flat, and then use the surf rating system to determine beach safety. Helmets shouldn't be an indication that the beach is unsafe. It should be a form of mandatory PPE to protect the sport moving forward, along with surf vests. It is also ridiculous that Board and Ski Paddlers - Particularly women and juniors are not wearing helmets also. The recent televised `Summer of Surf Series` at Fairhaven VIC was a perfect example. If you compared that footage of the womens ski race to a surfboat race, the question has to be asked: Why are helmets not mandatory for craft 18ft long and raced behind each other when people are falling off often?

549

Some of the questions didn't have the correct options. eg. I was a Nipper dad that evolved



into Surfboat rowing and Patrols.

Problems for us in the regions is that everything is in the south east so a carnival is a whole weekend or more away for us. Can anything be done for the regions??

550

judges and officials need to be more "in touch" with the average member/competitor