

**British Columbia Government  
Retired Employees' Association**

**2021 General Members Survey:**

***Kelowna/Vernon  
Branch 1500***

***March 2022***



The content of this report and associated research has been commissioned from Collegiate Digital Resources Ltd. on behalf of the British Columbia Government Retired Employees' Association.

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### SUMMARY REPORT INFORMATION

<b>Company Name:</b>	<i>BC Government Retired Employees' Association.</i>
<b>Branch Name:</b>	<i>Kelowna/Vernon (Branch 1500)</i>
<b>Survey Start:</b>	<i>December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021</i>
<b>Survey End:</b>	<i>January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022</i>
<b>Report Date:</b>	<i>March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022.</i>

### SUMMARY STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Survey Population:</b>	<i>312</i>
<b>Sampling Method:</b>	<i>Census, no sampling used.</i>
<b>Responses:</b>	<i>134</i>
<b>Response Rate:</b>	<i>42.95%</i>
<b>Confidence Level:</b>	<i>.95</i>
<b>Confidence Interval:</b>	<i>+/- 6.41 points 19 times out of 20</i>
<b>Main Research Question:</b>	<i>What are the main activities that are a priority for BCGREA members, and what are the communication methods and frequencies preferred by members?</i>

This research report is based on the *General Members Survey* conducted by CDR Business Diagnostics on behalf of the BC Government Retired Employees' Association. The purpose of the survey was to collect data regarding the activities that are a priority for members, and what communication tools and frequency of communications are preferred by members when receiving information from the Association. **This report is filtered to only include the responses submitted from the branch indicated above.**

The survey ran from December 6th, 2021, to January 22nd, 2022. The survey was run census style, with no sampling methods used or required. The response rate for this branch was **134** completed responses out of a total branch membership of **312**. The total completion rate for the survey was therefore **42.95%**, which makes the survey accurate within +/- **6.41** points, 19 times out of 20. Due to the fairly low response rate and the relatively high margin of error, the results in this report may not be representative of the entire branch membership; however, the report may still provide useful insights.

The survey on which these results are based was completely anonymous and contained a mix of single answer and 'select all that apply' type quantitative questions, most of which had an 'Other' box to capture additional data. In addition, there was a one final open-ended qualitative question included at the end of the survey. Data was collected via a secure research server accessible only to staff at CDR Business Diagnostics.

All information is presented in aggregate form to ensure respondent anonymity pursuant to provincial and federal legislation and research ethical guidelines. All data for this survey was collected and managed in a manner consistent with the *Tri Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct of Research*.

If you have any questions about this report, please email [CollegiateDigital@protonmail.com](mailto:CollegiateDigital@protonmail.com)

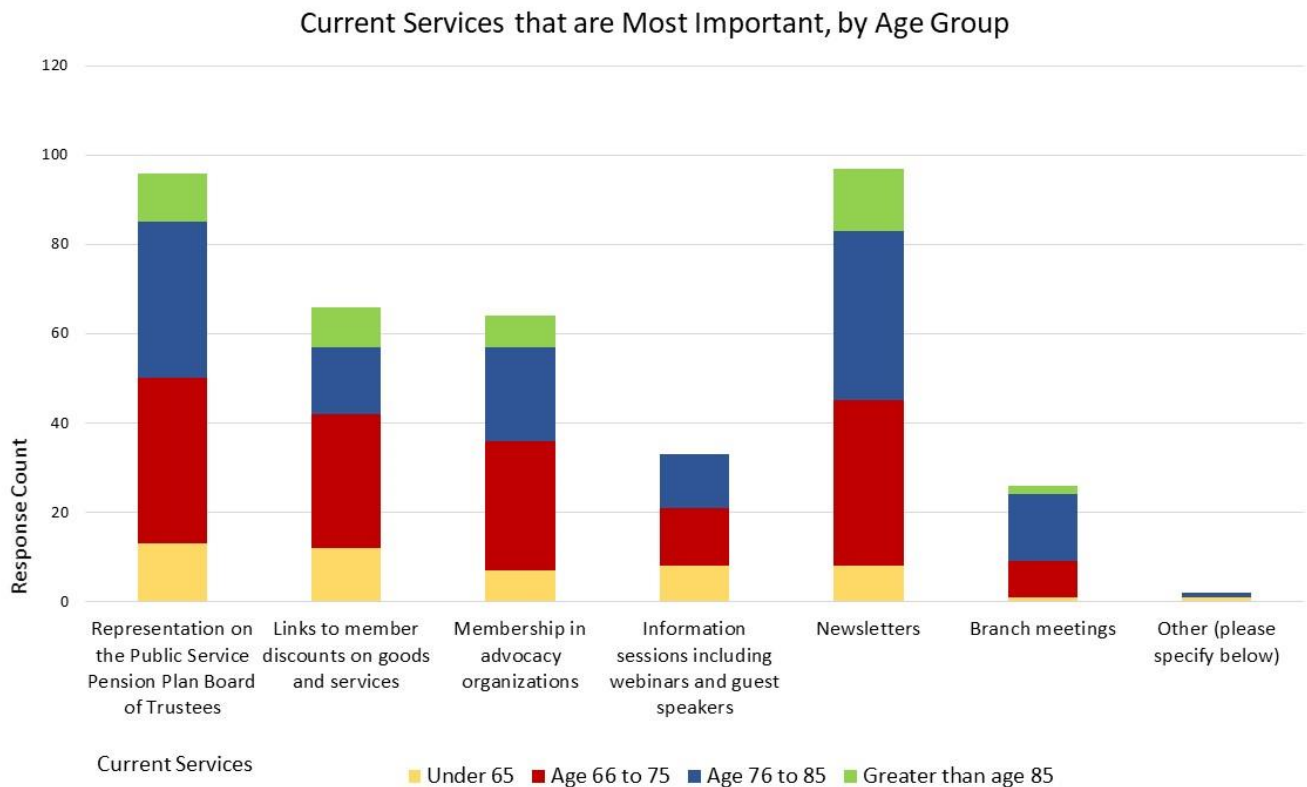
## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

### 1. Current Services

The current BCGREA service that is important to the most respondents is *Newsletters*. 73.13% of survey respondents from this branch selected this service.

Another top service was *Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees*, selected by 71.64% of respondents.

Chart 1



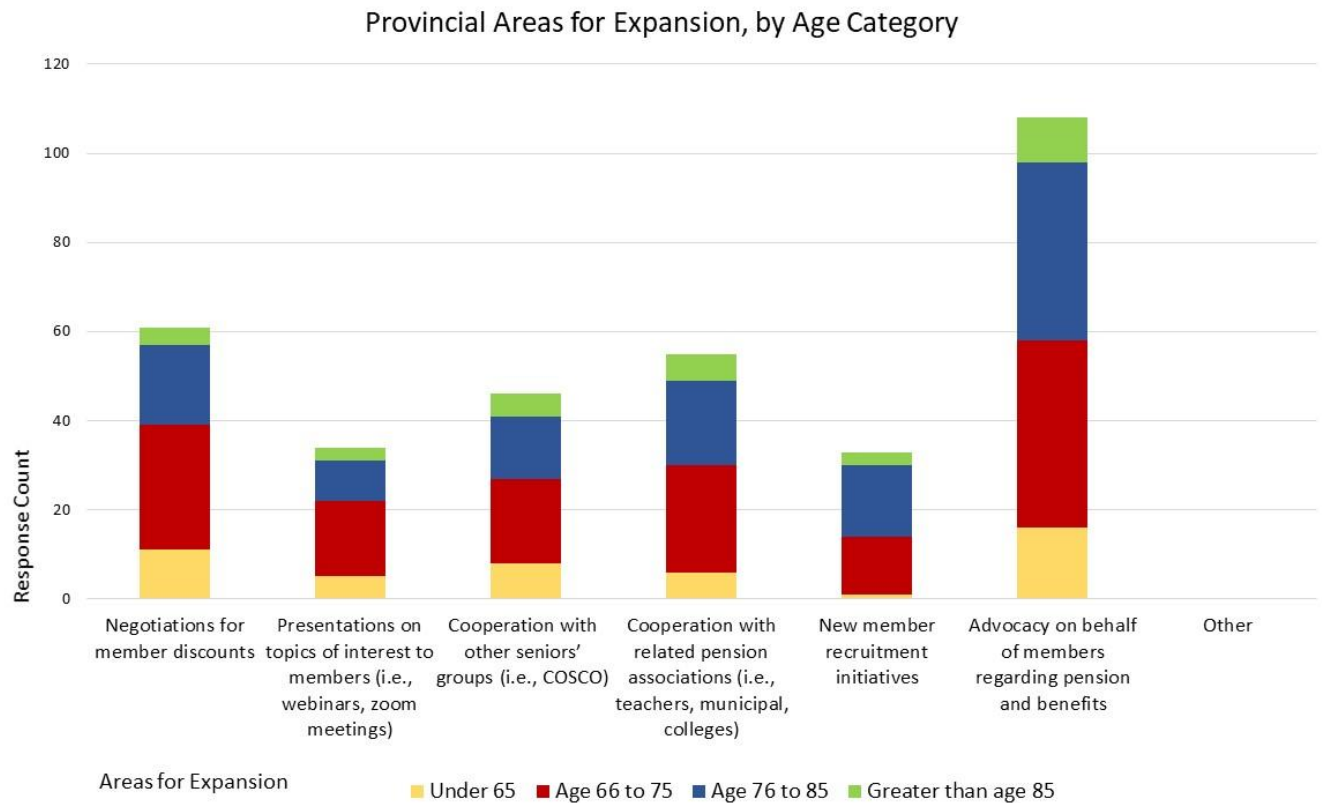
	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees	13	37	35	11	96
Links to member discounts on goods and services	12	30	15	9	66
Membership in advocacy organizations	7	29	21	7	64
Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers	8	13	12	0	33
Newsletters	8	37	38	14	97
Branch meetings	1	8	15	2	26
Other	1	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>384</b>

## 2. Provincial Areas for Expansion

When asked to choose areas where the BCGREA provincial body should expand their efforts, the option selected most frequently was *Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits*, selected by 80.60% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Negotiations for member discounts*, selected by 46.27% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 2



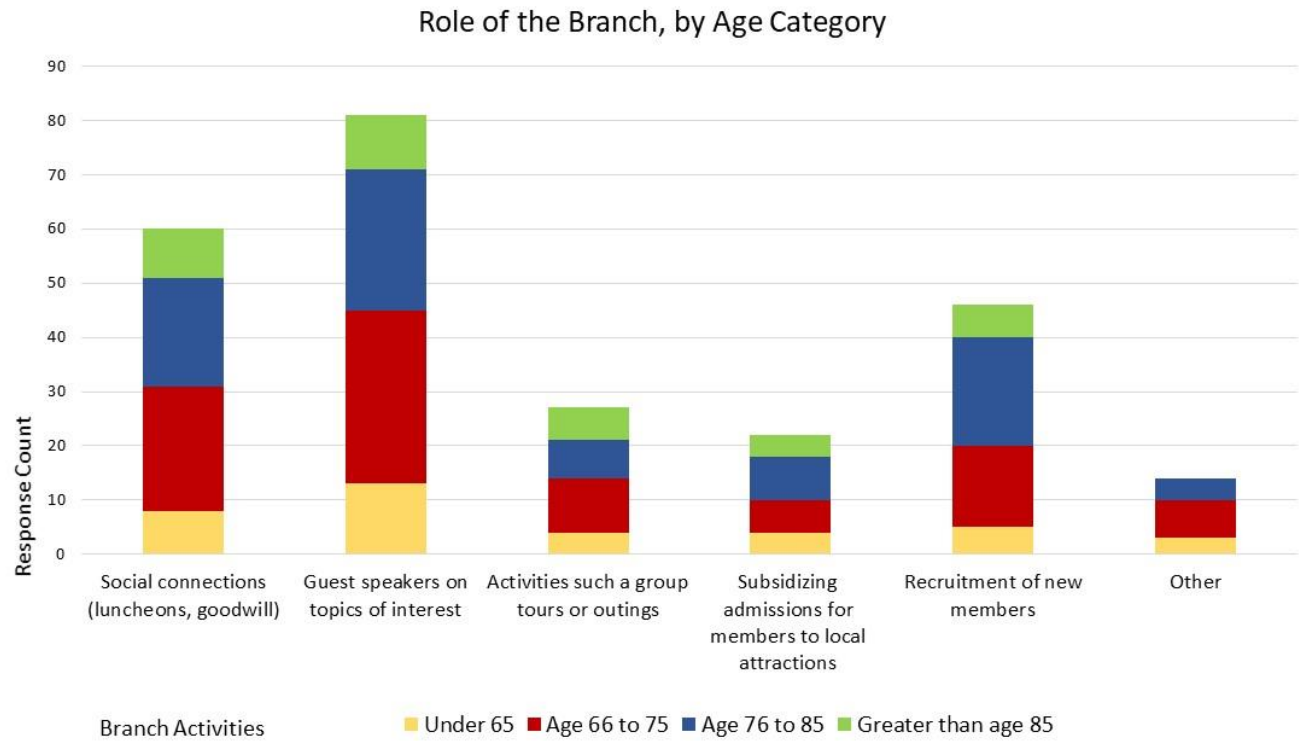
	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Negotiations for member discounts	11	28	18	4	61
Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings)	5	17	9	3	34
Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO)	8	19	14	5	46
Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges)	6	24	19	6	55
New member recruitment initiatives	1	13	16	3	33
Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits	16	42	40	10	108
Other	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>337</b>

### 3. The Role of the Branch

When asked about what their Branch should provide, the option selected most frequently was *Guest speakers on topics of interest*, selected by 61.19% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)*, selected by 45.52% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 3



	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)	8	23	20	9	60
Guest speakers on topics of interest	13	32	26	10	81
Activities such a group tours or outings	4	10	7	6	27
Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions	4	6	8	4	22
Recruitment of new members	5	15	20	6	46
Other	3	7	4	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>250</b>

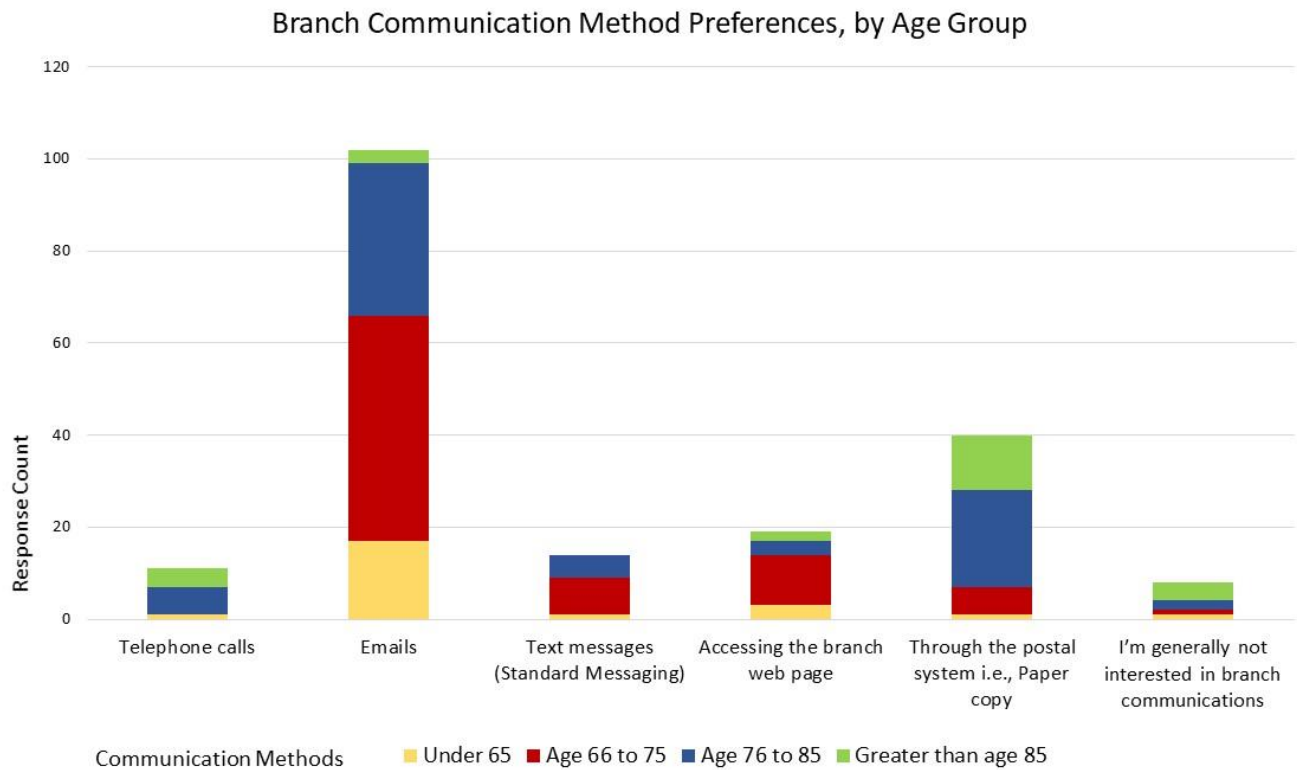
### 3. Communication Preferences

Overall, the most popular method of receiving branch communications is *Email*. This option was selected by 76.12% of respondents from this branch.

Overall, the second most popular method of receiving branch communications is *Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy*. This option was selected by 30.60% of respondents from this branch.

Email is the most popular communication method for every age group in this branch, except for members *Greater than age 85*, who prefer *Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy*. (See *Chart 5* on the following page.)

Chart 4



	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Telephone calls	1	0	6	4	11
Emails	17	49	33	3	102
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	1	8	5	0	14
Accessing the branch web page	3	11	3	2	19
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	1	6	21	12	40
I'm generally not interested in branch communications	1	1	2	4	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>194</b>



Chart 5

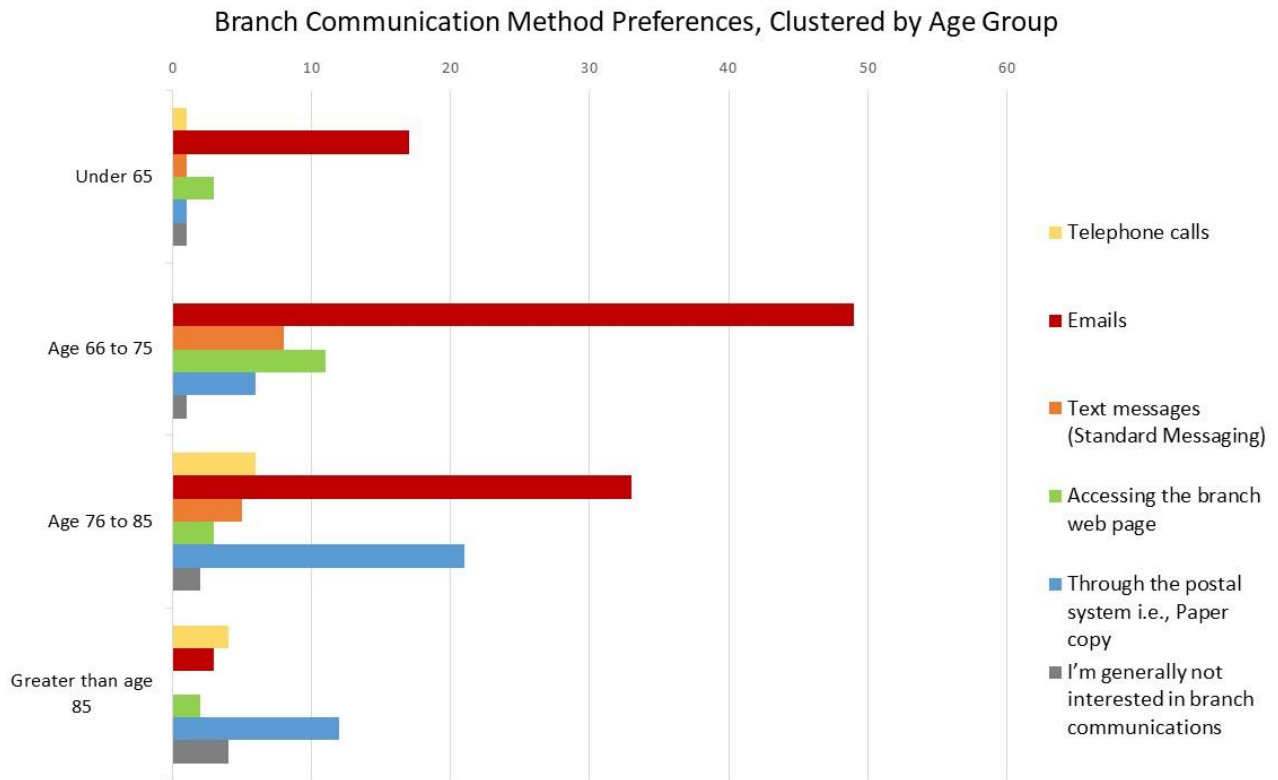
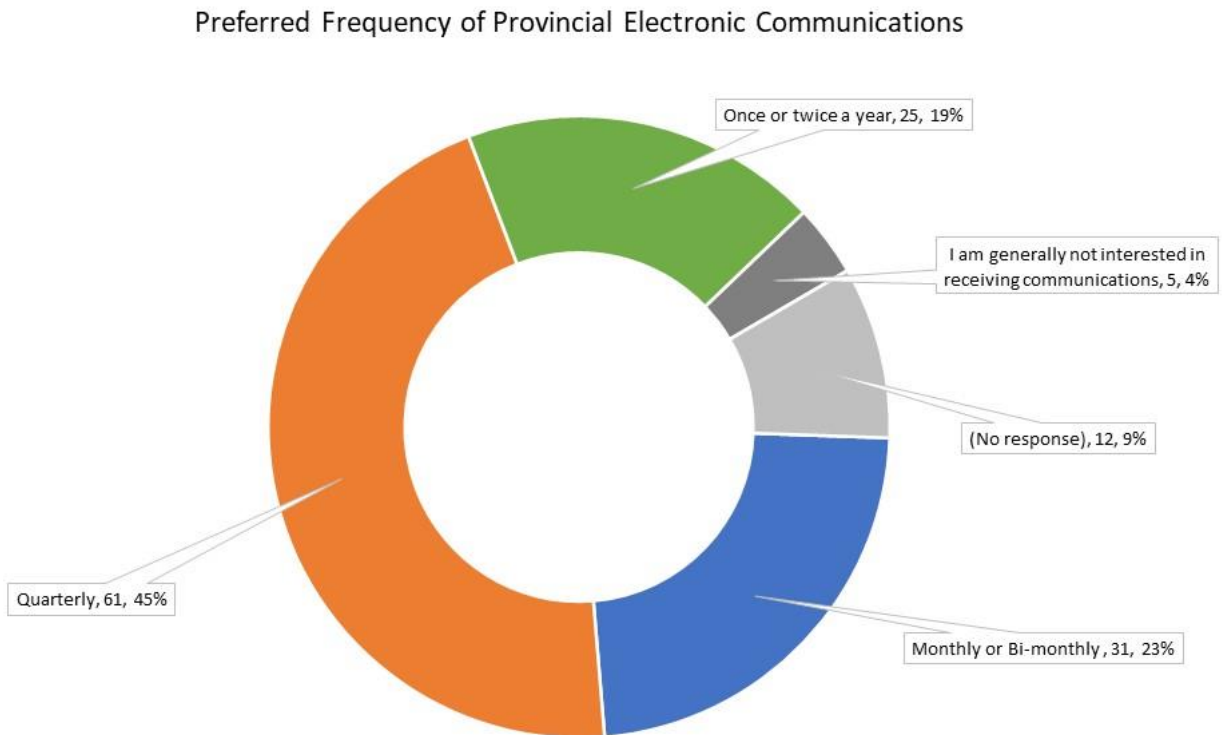


Chart 6



## QUANTITATIVE RESULTS BY QUESTION

This section shows the distribution of the responses selected for each question. The tables below provide the number of times each answer was selected, and the percentage of the total respondents this represents. All results in this section combine the online survey data and the mail-in data.

### About You

#### 1. My age falls within the following group:

Response	Number	Percentage
Under 65	17	12.69%
Age 66 to 75	50	37.31%
Age 76 to 85	48	35.82%
Greater than age 85	18	13.43%
(No response)	1	0.75%

#### 2. I belong to the following branch of the BCGREA:

Response	Number	Percentage
Kelowna/Vernon (Branch 1500)	134	100.00%

#### 3. The first three digits of my postal code are:

Response	Number	Percentage
T8H	1	0.75%
V0E	6	4.48%
V0H	1	0.75%
V1B	10	7.46%
V1H	7	5.22%
V1P	2	1.49%
V1T	24	17.91%
V1V	4	2.99%
V1W	12	8.96%
V1X	11	8.21%
V1Y	29	21.64%
V1Z	3	2.24%
V2A	3	2.24%
V3A	1	0.75%
V4T	9	6.72%
V4V	4	2.99%
V9T	1	0.75%
VIT	1	0.75%
(No response)	5	3.73%

## Member Needs and Preferences

### 4. I initially joined the BCGREA for the following reasons (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
I was invited to join by a member, friend or colleague	28	20.90%
I wanted social contact with former coworkers and fellow retirees	25	18.66%
I saw information about the BCGREA at a preretirement seminar or Pension Life	64	47.76%
I wanted the discounts offered such as travel insurance, hearing aids, etc.	47	35.07%
I wanted to receive updates on pension status	91	67.91%
I wanted to have a representative for my interests on the Pension Board of Trustees	61	45.52%
Other (please specify below)	9	6.72%
(No response)	6	4.48%

#### Other (please specify below):

- Husband worked for the Dept. of Highways.
- I belonged to a BCEU Riverview and switched over when I retired.
- Haven't had any contacts since I moved to care facility in Kelowna from Vernon in Feb.
- I am really thankful for my job at the liquor store at Orchard Park for 21 years.
- Wife of member who is deceased (2009).
- I joined Nanaimo/mid Island Branch 600 about 1992-3; have since moved to West Kelowna. Not active now.
- To stay informed on what's happening in and around my community.
- I think the invitation came with my retirement package.
- I wanted to see if the association would lobby for better extended health and dental benefits.
- To support a group who lobby government to protect and work for the rights and to protect the benefits of retired Gov't employees.
- Joined at retirement.
- I thought that someday the BCGREA might be of assistance to me in my retirement.
- I wanted to be kept up to date on government pension issues.
- Retired from 35 yrs. service, just wanted to keep in touch and receive info following retirement.

### 5. Current services provided by the BCGREA that are most important or relevant to me include (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees	96	71.64%
Links to member discounts on goods and services	67	50.00%
Membership in advocacy organizations (Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC - COSCO, National Pensioners Federation - NPF, BC Health Coalition)	64	47.76%
Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers	33	24.63%
Newsletters	98	73.13%
Branch meetings	26	19.40%
Other (please specify below)	2	1.49%
(No response)	3	2.24%

Other (please specify below):

- Pension.
- I used to enjoy seeing other members at the lunches we used to have at the Schubert Centre, but these no longer occur in Vernon.
- Important information that is relevant before the regular distribution methods are utilized.
- I have yet to find use for the BCGREA.
- Looking forward to meeting in person soon.

6. I support branches making charitable donations to seniors' groups in their communities.

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	100	74.63%
No	23	17.16%
(No response)	11	8.21%

7. I believe that the BCGREA should also provide the following additional services to its members: (please specify below)

- Benefits we HAD on retirement.
- At the extent of which is unknown, it is difficult to answer.
- I had to buy hearing aids from Costco. Can I have support and get some help in my costs, I had to pay \$2348.00
- Branch must be justifiable and open.
- We used to donate to a scholarship for an offspring of a member to attend tertiary education. I didn't know we donated to seniors' groups.
- Maintain communications and advocacy role to BCGEU.
- Better way of distributing information? To those in senior's homes?
- If we could provide our members with current community events in their home communities. Free social events.
- A website that provides that not only provides core information but also news, information and interactive tools and resources on various topics of interest and relevance to the broad membership. This could include more education-based information to encourage lifelong learning and engagement. Perhaps having more content and interesting information would encourage more members to use it.
- Unknown at this time.
- Special letters to those members who are ill. Check ins with the lonely and shut in. Help members find support programs and activity programs in their communities.
- Improve the extended health benefits. e.g., Denture renewal is subject to 5 year qualifying time BUT the entitlement is limited to a one year limit. Should be a blanket reasonable amount for the 5-year period.
- Zoom connection to members that cannot attend meetings.
- Protect incomes from large tax grabs by federal and provincial government's when a member loses their spouse. I.e., the loss of the tax splitting benefit and the income tax deduction of the deceased spouse. The survivor suddenly has far less disposable income but still must pay the same expenses such as mortgage payments, property taxes, hydro, natural gas, car expenses,

insurance for house and car etc. We widows/widowers need help to stop the tax grab! But there is no one to help us. We are alone! The government attacks us one at a time.

- Check in calls for the shut in's and disabled, and those in need. Check with members what projects they'd like to have and what social needs are not being met.
- Subsidized dental.

8. When receiving communications from my local branch of the BCGREA, I generally prefer (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Telephone calls	12	8.96%
Emails	102	76.12%
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	14	10.45%
Accessing the branch web page	19	14.18%
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	41	30.60%
I'm generally not interested in branch communications	8	5.97%
(No response)	5	3.73%

9. When receiving communications from my provincial executive of the BCGREA, I generally prefer (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Emails	100	74.63%
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	13	9.70%
Through the BCGREA webpage	18	13.43%
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	44	32.84%
I'm generally not interested in provincial communications	6	4.48%
(No response)	4	2.99%

10. When receiving provincial newsletters, I generally prefer to receive them via (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Emails	80	59.70%
Paper copy	73	54.48%
Posting on BCGREA website	18	13.43%
I'm generally not interested in provincial newsletters	2	1.49%
(No response)	3	2.24%

11. I would prefer to receive electronic communication from the provincial BCGREA:

Response	Number	Percentage
Monthly or Bi-monthly	31	23.13%
Quarterly	61	45.52%
Once or twice a year	25	18.66%
I'm generally not interested in receiving communications	5	3.73%
(No response)	12	8.96%

## Branch Operations

12. Prior to the pandemic, I generally attended branch meetings:

Response	Number	Percentage
Regularly	18	13.43%
Occasionally	20	14.93%
Rarely	24	17.91%
Never	67	50.00%
(No response)	5	3.73%

13. I would be willing to help with my local branch activities if requested.

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	37	27.61%
No	88	65.67%
(No response)	9	6.72%

Responses by Age Group:

Age Group	Response	Number	Percentage*
< 65	Yes	9	52.94%
	No	8	47.06%
66 to 75	Yes	17	34.00%
	No	30	60.00%
76 to 85	Yes	8	16.67%
	No	34	70.83%
> 85	Yes	3	16.67%
	No	15	83.33%

\*Percentage of respondents in the age category, as indicated in Question 1.

14. I see the role of the branch as providing: (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)	61	45.52%
Guest speakers on topics of interest	82	61.19%
Activities such a group tours or outings	27	20.15%
Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions	23	17.16%
Recruitment of new members	46	34.33%
Other (please specify below)	14	10.45%
(No response)	20	14.93%

Other (please specify below):

- Spouse is 87 years old and is unable to access the above. Younger members for the above would be great
- Any information that affects the welfare of any member.
- Information on bargaining.
- I have moved to Edmonton from Kelowna, so it's different here. I only moved because my daughter is here to take care of me.

- Communication of vital information to BC gov't retirees on pension and affiliated matters.
- Advocacy and representation.
- More connection via emails.
- Information/updates on any issues impacting the pension or benefits.
- During covid none of these seem that relevant.
- Providing communication and information to branch members including branch executive activities.
- Information emails.
- A voice to the Govt and PSA regarding our concerns of our extended health and dental benefits.
- A handful of people to contribute to the provincial body.
- We need meetings closer to home...Vernon.
- The branch should be a staunch advocate for members rights, such as pension/medical benefits.
- Opportunity for retirees to get involved in helping the BCGREA achieve its mission and objectives.
- Keeping members up to date on issues affecting members.
- A conduit for general and local issues and info to and from members.
- A blanket representation.
- Contact members I moved to lake country but no county committee.

15. I think that the BCGREA provincial body should expand their efforts in the following areas (check all that apply):

Response	Number	Percentage
Negotiations for member discounts	62	46.27%
Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings)	34	25.37%
Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO)	46	34.33%
Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges)	55	41.04%
New member recruitment initiatives	33	24.63%
Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits	108	80.60%
Other (please specify below)	0	0.00%
(No response)	14	10.45%

Other (please specify below)

- Discounts on necessary use of walker. I paid \$500 for my walker and was not allowed any discount by Green Shields (Ontario).
- Maintain not expand.
- Issues with coverage by Green Shield.

16. If the branch I belong to became dormant, I would be satisfied with my interests being met exclusively at the provincial level.

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	106	79.10%
No	18	13.43%
(No response)	10	7.46%

Responses by Age Group:

Age Group	Response	Number	Percentage*
< 65	Yes	15	88.24%
	No	2	11.76%
66 to 75	Yes	38	76.00%
	No	9	18.00%
76 to 85	Yes	40	83.33%
	No	5	10.42%
> 85	Yes	13	72.22%
	No	1	5.56%

*\*Percentage of respondents in the age category, as indicated in Question 1.*



## QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The survey included one final open-ended question, worded as follows:

*Is there anything else you would like the BCGREA Provincial executive group to know or consider moving forward?*

The written responses submitted by survey respondents in this branch are included below in their entirety. They have not been edited in any way other than to remove any identifying information, and to correct obvious spelling and grammar errors. Responses have been grouped by themes that are presented alphabetically.

### Communications Systems and Content

- As I am now in a senior's home, I rely on any information via email. Not sure if I always hear important info?
- Provincial and Branches should focus on communications with members. The problem is the lack of engagement of and with members. During this time of Covid, it has become apparent that communication is more essential, in any of the following forms, emails, mail-outs, and on-line meetings.
- I'd like our meetings to be Hybrid (in-person & Zoom). This allows for a great deal more participation especially for us with disabilities and ambulation problems reduces travel risk issues i.e., car accidents etc. Zoom Meetings are less taxing when having access from one's own home. It is also financially efficient.
- I think it is very important that we stay in touch as best we can. I feel very isolated in Kelowna. I was very disappointed when our meetings failed. It was very obvious as members slowly stopped coming. The executive was worn out from trying to hold us together. I was unable to help and perhaps many others were in the same position.
- I feel the BCGREA executive should update the local branches whenever a member moves to a new community, so the local branch is updated "on the fly" so to speak. The local branch can then get in touch with the member who now lives in the community, perhaps via email as the Executive has the last email for them and they can pass it on to the local executive. I was originally from the Prince George branch, then moved to Vernon but was unable to contact the branch in Vernon. I moved to Grand Forks and was able to contact the local branch to become a member there. Once I moved back to Vernon I'm once again without contact although I still receive emails from the Grand Forks branch.
- I get a lot of information from the pension newsletter. I would like to see this continue.
- Reach out to new members who have moved with information where and when meeting held.

### Issues Associated with Green Shield

- I am not Happy with Green Shield coverage I have BEEN A MEMBER OF THE BCGREA SINCE I RETIRED over 20 years ago since we changed plans it is very hard to get information on my coverage also we don't get good coverage our amounts of coverage is too low even now we have to pay \$250.00 EVERY YEAR and its not very much coverage Hearing aides is only around 800.00 on a cost of a hearing aide that is around \$3000.00. I feel that a Dentist rip off a member always the first question is DO YOU HAVE COVERAGE for your dental work. I believe That kind of

questions is unfair even most other coverage is the same question that is asked can we not get better coverage???

- I have found the switch to Green Shield less than satisfactory. I realize it is unlikely we can reverse the decision but found dealing with Blue Cross much easier.

### **Membership Support for the BCGREA / Executive**

- We are happy.
- You are doing a good job.
- All good, thanks.
- I thank them for all they do!!!
- While I have never been much involved, I value the organization and am pleased to be a member.
- I appreciate the efforts and dedication of those who volunteer to serve on the executive or in local branches during these times of apathy and overburdening of the few who do volunteer. I wish I could think of a way to generate enthusiasm amongst members.
- They are doing a great job on our behalf and keeping retirees informed.
- I think the executive is doing an excellent job.
- I appreciate the commitment of all the local and provincial executive members and continued outreach to the membership.
- I am quite satisfied what the provincial body is currently doing on my behalf.

### **Other**

- I stopped attending as an objection to death and dying reports given at meetings. I felt and thought it was not a report, and it breached confidentiality of members who had not given permission for reporting. Most often it was a "Bitching" session" of disgruntled people.
- I'm not really sure what my role is as a retired government employee and being associated with you?
- Please do not take my lack of participation as a lack of interest.
- I tried to get the BCGREA travel insurance discount but was unable to reach anyone about it. I then tried to speak to someone at BCGREA about it, but it appears you have no full time staff.

### **Role/Involvement in Pension/Benefits Negotiations**

- Not really. Just maintain the best representation on matters of pension and retirement.
- I have been retired for 18 Years. During that time what I have received most from the BCGREA is a Christmas time communication about hearing aid discounts, but not with the service provider that I deal with. When I initially retired and was part of the local meetings, the main subject was the benefits re: medical that had been changed by the government. The policy predated and did not apply to me, but ultimately failed in the court challenges and many members then seemed to lose interest because the association was deemed to be ineffective, and our local association seemed to falter following that. The revived local then seemed to turn to political activity and I received emails indicating that we needed to defeat the Liberals. While I have supported an alternative political party, the association is supposed to be nonpartisan. The BCGREA must be careful to be non-political.

- The main mandate should still be an advocacy role for members through providing input to and from the Pension Corporation. However, I think that there is an opportunity and need to provide communication to members beyond just the BCGREA activities. There are many sources of information and news that is senior focused including general information, insights into new technology & health, travel destinations, etc. This may be more of a magazine type resource and perhaps out of scope but would add to the benefit/value of membership. NOTE: There are a few questions in this survey that only allowed a yes or no answer. There should have been an opportunity for a maybe or other response. Saying yes or no doesn't account for situations that one might consider a yes with more information. As such I responded with "No".
- Keep up the good work on the pension plan front.
- Improved benefits and cost of living increases would be nice!
- Making sure we are aware of any changes in our pension plan. In sure that the powers that be are not investing the pension dollars for Private for Profit Assisted Living and Long-Term Care Facilities. We do not want our dollars making profit from the care of our seniors with failing health. That is disgraceful practice.
- More information on specific negotiation items with medical services plan [GSC].

#### **Travel / Distance Issues**

- I reside in an assisted living residence.
- I am no longer able to attend meetings at my branch location due to a move to Kamloops in 2018. Like to keep in touch through emails and website.

## ABOUT US

CDR Business Diagnostics is a small business specializing in organizational diagnostic services and custom research projects to clients worldwide. While we are incorporated in British Columbia, Canada, we leverage modern digital technology to its fullest in order to provide service to clients wherever we are needed. We work with mid- to large-sized organizations, whether public, private, or non-profit.

**Our Vision:** *Healthy and effective clients with a strong competitive edge.*

At CDR Business Diagnostics, we believe that the best decisions are informed decisions, based on factual evidence, sound methodology, and an objective lens. We believe that all organizations can benefit from increased knowledge of themselves and their environment.

Collegiate Digital Resources was founded in 2012 by Dr. Richard Brown, an experienced practitioner of organization development and diagnostics, with well over 15 years of public and private sector experience.

We can be reached by email at [CollegiateDigital@protonmail.com](mailto:CollegiateDigital@protonmail.com), by phone at 1(250) 661-2405 or visit us on the Web at [BusinessDiagnostics.ca](http://BusinessDiagnostics.ca).