



CDR
Business
Diagnostics

**British Columbia Government
Retired Employees' Association**

2021 General Members Survey:
South Okanagan/Similkameen
Branch 900

March 2022



BusinessDiagnostics.ca



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1-250-661-2405

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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Publish date: March 4th, 2022.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

SUMMARY REPORT INFORMATION

Company Name:	BC Government Retired Employees' Association.
Branch Name:	South Okanagan-Similkameen (Branch 900)
Survey Start:	December 6 th , 2021
Survey End:	January 22 nd , 2022
Report Date:	March 4 th , 2022.

SUMMARY STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Survey Population:	203
Sampling Method:	Census, no sampling used.
Responses:	92
Response Rate:	45.32%
Confidence Level:	.95
Confidence Interval:	+/- 7.57 points 19 times out of 20
Main Research Question:	What are the main activities that are a priority for BCGREA members, and what are the communication methods and frequencies preferred by members?

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 **92** completed responses out of a total branch membership of **203**. The total completion rate for the survey was therefore **45.32%**, which makes the survey accurate within +/- **7.57** 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

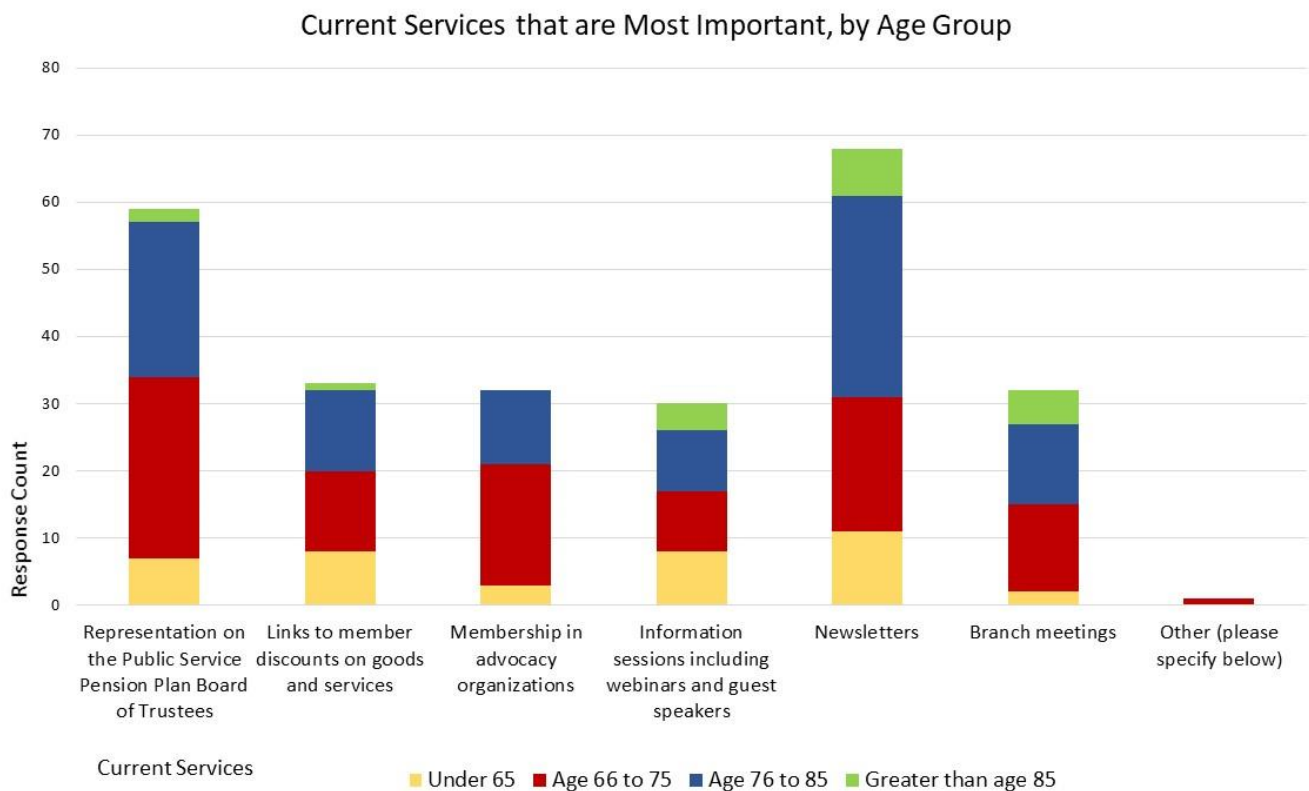
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Current Services

The current BCGREA service that is important to the most respondents is *Newsletters*. 73.91% 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 64.13% of respondents.

Chart 1



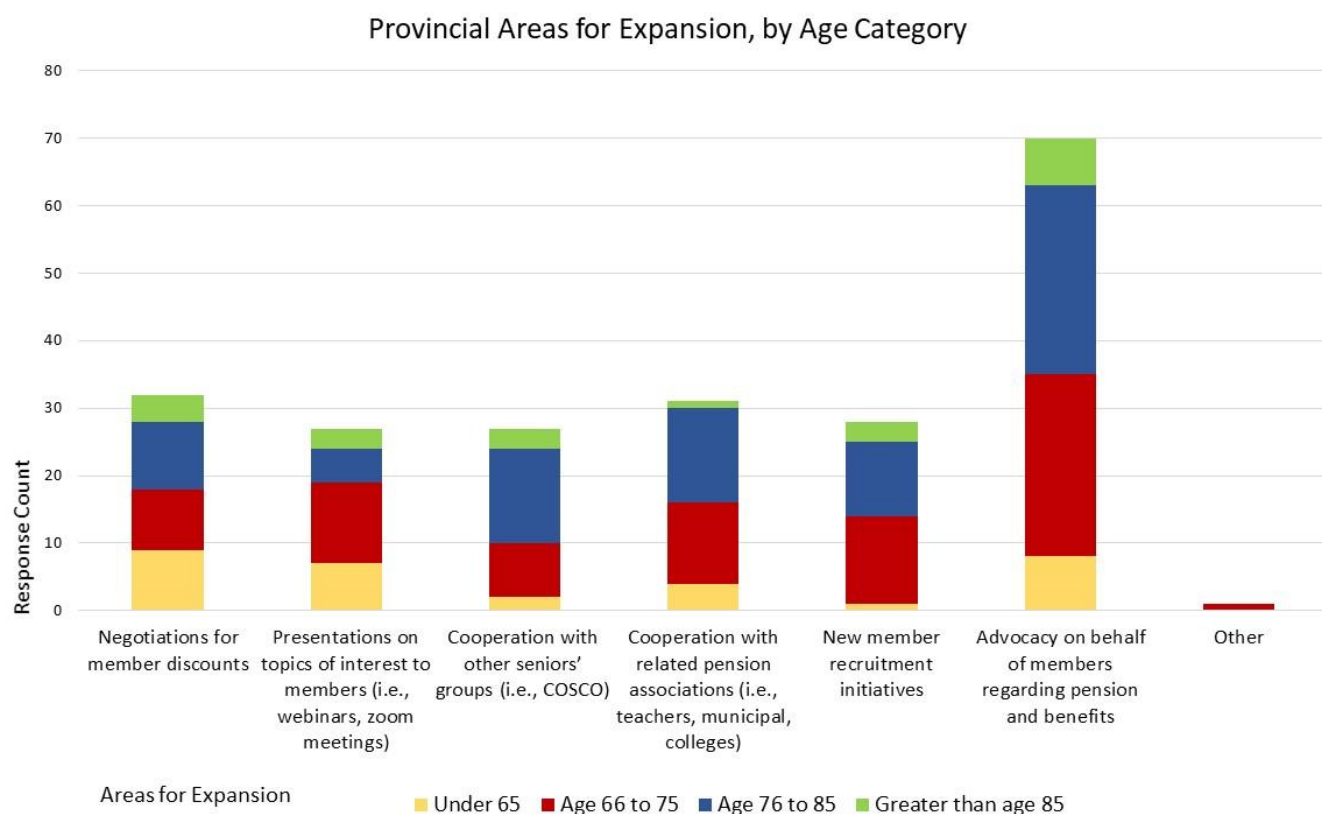
	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees	7	27	23	2	59
Links to member discounts on goods and services	8	12	12	1	33
Membership in advocacy organizations	3	18	11	0	32
Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers	8	9	9	4	30
Newsletters	11	20	30	7	68
Branch meetings	2	13	12	5	32
Other	0	1	0	0	1
Total	39	100	97	19	255

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 76.09% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Negotiations for member discounts*, selected by 34.78% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 2



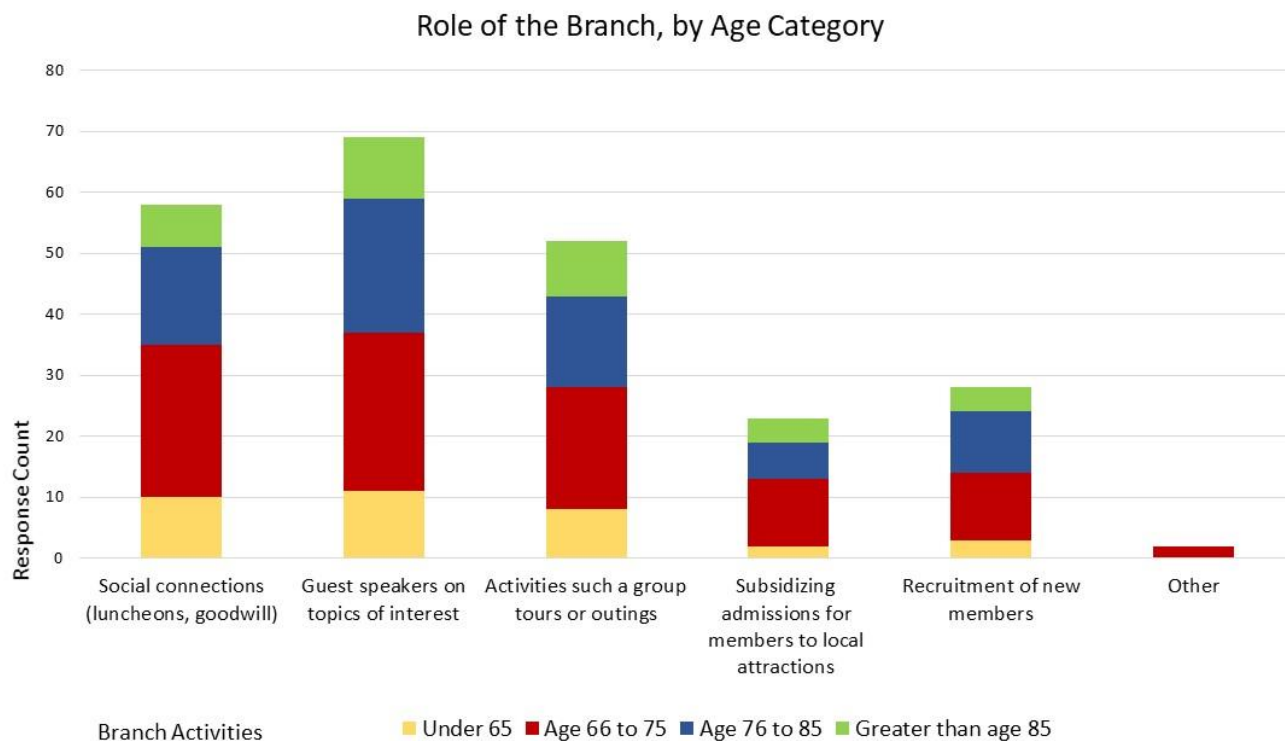
	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Negotiations for member discounts	9	9	10	4	32
Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings)	7	12	5	3	27
Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO)	2	8	14	3	27
Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges)	4	12	14	1	31
New member recruitment initiatives	1	13	11	3	28
Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits	8	27	28	7	70
Other	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	82	82	21	216

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 75.00% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)*, selected by 64.13% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 3



	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)	10	25	16	7	58
Guest speakers on topics of interest	11	26	22	10	69
Activities such a group tours or outings	8	20	15	9	52
Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions	2	11	6	4	23
Recruitment of new members	3	11	10	4	28
Other	0	2	0	0	2
Total	34	95	69	34	232

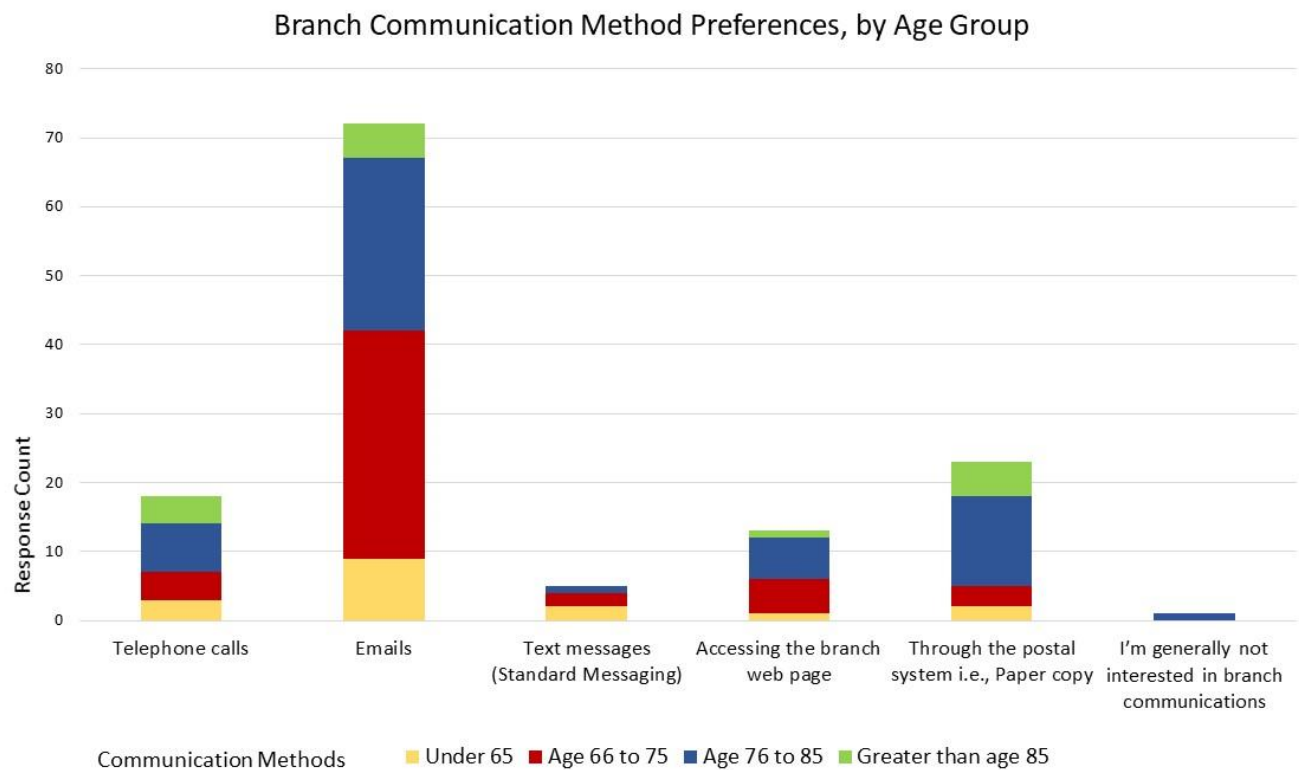
3. Communication Preferences

Overall, the most popular method of receiving branch communications is *Email*. This option was selected by 78.26% 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 26.09% of respondents from this branch.

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

Chart 4



	< 65	66 to 75	76 to 85	> 85	Total
Telephone calls	3	4	7	4	18
Emails	9	33	25	5	72
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	2	2	1	0	5
Accessing the branch web page	1	5	6	1	13
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	2	3	13	5	23
I'm generally not interested in branch communications	0	0	1	0	1
Total	17	47	53	15	132

Chart 5

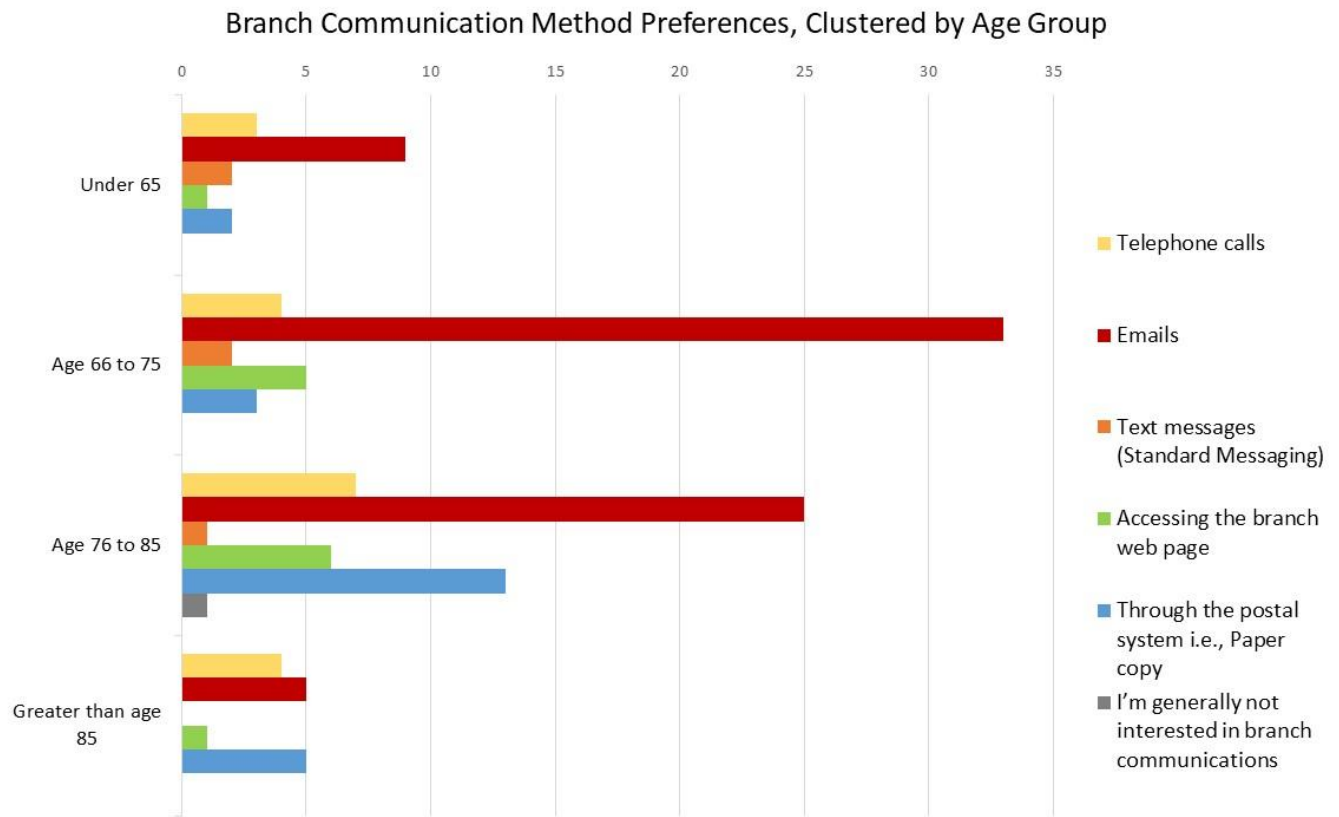
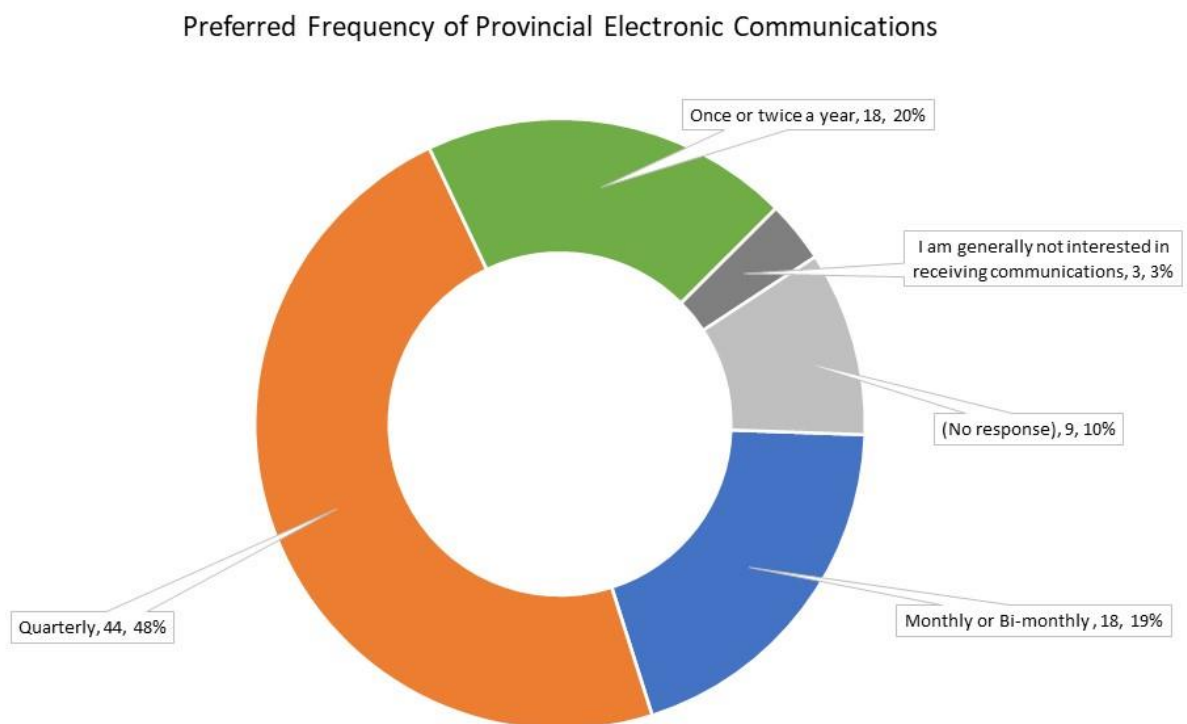


Chart 6



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	12	13.04%
Age 66 to 75	33	35.87%
Age 76 to 85	34	36.96%
Greater than age 85	12	13.04%
(No response)	1	1.09%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Okanagan/Similkameen (Branch 900)	92	100.00%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
1N5	1	1.09%
3Z9	1	1.09%
T7Z	2	2.17%
V0E	1	1.09%
V0H	21	22.83%
V0X	5	5.43%
V0Z	1	1.09%
V2A	51	55.43%
V7E	1	1.09%
V9L	1	1.09%
VOH	2	2.17%
(No response)	5	5.43%

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	26	28.26%
I wanted social contact with former coworkers and fellow retirees	26	28.26%
I saw information about the BCGREA at a preretirement seminar or Pension Life	37	40.22%
I wanted the discounts offered such as travel insurance, hearing aids, etc.	21	22.83%
I wanted to receive updates on pension status	57	61.96%
I wanted to have a representative for my interests on the Pension Board of Trustees	37	40.22%
Other (please specify below)	2	2.17%
(No response)	5	5.43%

Other (please specify below):

- It was the responsible thing to do.
- My husband was a member.
- I am a lifetime member.
- I worked 26 years for Alberta Govt and moved to BC, had my pension moved to BC.
- I was a member of the Govt. Excluded group, so it was natural to slide over into BCGREA. The MOST important reason is to stay abreast of our pension plans, trends and directions. I feel only BCGREA can do that credibly!
- My late husband was a member.
- I am the wife of a long-term employee.

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	59	64.13%
Links to member discounts on goods and services	33	35.87%
Membership in advocacy organizations (Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC - COSCO, National Pensioners Federation - NPF, BC Health Coalition)	32	34.78%
Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers	30	32.61%
Newsletters	68	73.91%
Branch meetings	33	35.87%
Other (please specify below)	1	1.09%
(No response)	4	4.35%

Other (please specify below):

- Extended medical/Travel Insurance.
- Now living back in Alberta, so emails and newsletters are important.
- With Covid nothing is happening.

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	69	75.00%
No	15	16.30%
(No response)	8	8.70%

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

- Improved health care benefits, e.g., Dental, Hearing Aids etc. Increases in pension plan with cost of living, Improved visits to massage and physio.
- Optional drug only coverage not total package! Prescriptions and plans with pensions expensive and BC medical deductions are unreasonable
- We are doing a good job.
- Options for supplementary medical/dental insurance.
- Information services.
- Happy with the way it is right now.
- Senior care homes.
- Representative at Government level relating to Senior's housing issues. Establish advocacy relationship with organizations like: RC Legion, Canadians Snowbirds, Lions, Kinsmen to shape policy supporting retired members.
- Don't spread yourselves so thin that you stop being able to do your core mandate well!
- They are doing okay.
- Zoom AGM and important Speakers and Seminars.
- Computer education.
- Be more proactive with current union members so they are fully briefed on what we do.
- Help with mental health services if required.
- It would be helpful to have information, when turning 65, on the transition from the Pension with CPP/OAP bridging to those bridging portions disappearing and how and when to apply for the separate CPP and OAP benefits, so there is no gap and loss of some portion of my pension.
- Support entry as a group or team in Seniors events identified as BCGREA... the majority of the team must be BCGREA members.

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Telephone calls	18	19.57%
Emails	72	78.26%
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	5	5.43%
Accessing the branch web page	13	14.13%
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	24	26.09%
I'm generally not interested in branch communications	1	1.09%
(No response)	3	3.26%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Emails	65	70.65%
Text messages (Standard Messaging)	5	5.43%
Through the BCGREA webpage	19	20.65%
Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy	34	36.96%
I'm generally not interested in provincial communications	1	1.09%
(No response)	3	3.26%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Emails	56	60.87%
Paper copy	41	44.57%
Posting on BCGREA website	9	9.78%
I'm generally not interested in provincial newsletters	2	2.17%
(No response)	1	1.09%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Monthly or Bi-monthly	18	19.57%
Quarterly	44	47.83%
Once or twice a year	18	19.57%
I'm generally not interested in receiving communications	3	3.26%
(No response)	9	9.78%

Branch Operations

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Regularly	28	30.43%
Occasionally	19	20.65%
Rarely	17	18.48%
Never	25	27.17%
(No response)	3	3.26%

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

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	39	42.39%
No	49	53.26%
(No response)	4	4.35%

Responses by Age Group:

Age Group	Response	Number	Percentage*
< 65	Yes	6	50.00%
	No	6	50.00%
66 to 75	Yes	19	57.58%
	No	13	39.39%
76 to 85	Yes	11	32.35%
	No	21	61.76%
> 85	Yes	3	25.00%
	No	8	66.67%

*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)	59	64.13%
Guest speakers on topics of interest	69	75.00%
Activities such a group tours or outings	52	56.52%
Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions	24	26.09%
Recruitment of new members	28	30.43%
Other (please specify below)	2	2.17%
(No response)	12	13.04%

Other (please specify below):

- Membership.
- Bringing people together to discuss things of common interest in casual conversations in conjunction with the meetings.
- I need help with some one to ride with me for a few days to help ne keep my drivers LICENCE.
- As I haven't attended a Branch meeting, I'm having difficulty answering this. I join fraternal organizations to be involved in community-based endeavor. I have always felt that, while working in the Public Service, I was contributing to the well-being of my community and those that travelled through it... that's what we did, we enabled and supported others. We joined the BCGEU for similar reasons. We need to be seen as members of a larger community through actions that encourage the participation of our membership in the support of others.
- Feedback up the chain to the Association Executive to support representation on issues.
- Providing input from members to Provincial Executive and Policies.
- I'm living in a rural community now & find it hard to participate at this time. Maybe in the future!
- All of the above if 'joiners.'
- All of the above.
- Organize Group rate or going as a group, no need to actually subsidize.

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	32	34.78%
Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings)	27	29.35%
Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO)	27	29.35%
Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges)	31	33.70%
New member recruitment initiatives	28	30.43%
Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits	70	76.09%
Other (please specify below)	1	1.09%
(No response)	10	10.87%

Other (please specify below)

- I am concerned about the medical refunds that I have never received.
- This question is difficult for me to answer since I am ignorant of all the efforts of the provincial body. Much of these topics are backroom workings of the organization to interact with other like-minded organizations. I see all the above as useful pursue to build solidarity with them.
- I live in Summerland Armstrong.
- Our new extended provides less the Blue Cross.
- Covered.
- One item that bothers me and i would like to see more rational for "why" is the constant changes to the GSC plan!!? When we made our decision at retirement, we were told in no uncertain terms we could not change them and yet i see a real erosion of eligibility, costs, deductible amount etc. I would like to have a more information and rational for these changes given the trend is less and more costs back to me.
- Hard to say we should expand because I think we are already doing well, aren't we??
- Access to funds for smaller branches on an application or grant basis. Support participation in social and sporting activities as a group, identified as BCGREA members.

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	53	57.61%
No	33	35.87%
(No response)	6	6.52%

Responses by Age Group:

Age Group	Response	Number	Percentage*
< 65	Yes	5	41.67%
	No	7	58.33%
66 to 75	Yes	19	57.58%
	No	12	36.36%
76 to 85	Yes	22	64.71%
	No	9	26.47%
> 85	Yes	7	58.33%
	No	4	33.33%

**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

- I appreciate receiving information about my pension as often as possible.
- I believe that communication from the Provincial level with the membership is a key if the BCGREA is to continue to be an active organization for the membership. It's a reminder for members in these days where being physically in the same room is sometimes difficult for members.

Issues Associated with Green Shield

- Green shield is very picky about things that Blue Cross covered. They will not reimburse for required shoe lift and orthotics that have always been done for me by a highly qualified Swiss/German shoe orthotics maker with master craftsman with certification from Europe. They insist he write an exam and join an association in Ontario. The gentleman is in his 70's and feel it's an insult. In the meantime, I am out 100's of \$ because I continue to use the only person who can produce a product that cares for my feet. [*Researcher's Note: Personal identifying information removed to protect anonymity of respondent*].
- Just the point about getting information from our reps (vs Green Shield Canada) about the changes they make. The rates remain the same but since we dropped Blue Cross I see a real erosion of how the extended care plan is managed. Seems like we are constantly being nit picked slowly both in what is eligible and costs.

Membership Support for the BCGREA / Executive

- I am very happy with our branch; the executive keeps us up to date and find the communication very good. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you for those working at the provincial level to pursue matters of interest to all of us retired government employees. Your efforts are appreciated by me and I'm sure by many others who may not take the time to say it.
- I appreciate the volunteer work being done by the representatives on our behalf. I would be interested in attending virtual information meetings from time to time.
- Am content with things as they currently stand - thinking of the COVID issue, etc.

Other

- I have our insurer looking at giving other provincial members for dental coverage.
- If my branch should become dormant, I would discontinue my membership.
- Public identity. It's not all about me. We need to be seen as a viable path for our membership to contribute. We have Knowledge, Skills and Ability, we are retired not yet dead.
- If the branch I belong to became dormant, I would be satisfied with my interests being met exclusively at the provincial level. I am finding this a bit difficult to provide a Yes or No answer to this question. Is there no other possible option? If there is no other option, why is this question even being asked?
- Important to have local input in each area due to different requirements in each provincial area!
- I have severe mobility issues and no longer drive. We are now in a Assisted Living Facility and Covid put a stop to nearly everything. Physical Meetings are out! Appreciate what the local branch and Provincial Board are trying to do! Major inflation cost increases yet savings give basically pay no interest and even that is taxed!!

Role/Involvement in Pension/Benefits Negotiations

- Better prescription plans only.
- Health and welfare benefits are the greatest concern to me. I feel that many of the health provisions in our pension details are being written, and/or interpreted, by people with little or no knowledge of the impact of their decisions. Just look at the punitive nature of the initial deductibles we have to pay before we get the full allowance in our health plans. People do not choose to be hit by long term illnesses or diseases!
- As noted in my comments above, regarding pension transition at the age of 65.

Suggestions for New BCGREA Initiatives

- Delegation limits at the provincial AGM are quite stringent. Consider opening up to allow a few more branch members to attend without the branch having to fund the expenses. When and if we can have face to face meetings again.
- Wondering if it would be worthwhile to allow employees to join preretirement.
- When face-to-face meetings are allowed...return to inviting more Branch Members. These members need not be voting members, but their expenses should be covered by provincial. Small branches cannot afford the expense of sending observers. The new provincial BCGREA.CA site looks great, lets keep this up to date and encourage Branches to keep messaging on local events current. Invite other Branches, if possible, to attend or participate...and let us all know what works for your branch. Encourage participation in healthy activities like BC Senior Winter/Summer games...ask members that attend these activities to submit a short article to their local Branch newsletter for inclusion on the Provincial site. Encourage members that belong to or participate in other healthy Seniors' activities to identify themselves as BCGREA members.

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, by phone at 1(250) 661-2405 or visit us on the Web at BusinessDiagnostics.ca.