

**British Columbia Government
Retired Employees' Association**

**2021 General Members Survey:
Western Communities
*Branch 2700***

June 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.

Contact: CollegiateDigital@protonmail.com

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

SUMMARY REPORT INFORMATION

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Company Name: | <i>BC Government Retired Employees' Association.</i> |
| Branch Name: | <i>Branch 2700</i> |
| Survey Start: | <i>December 6th, 2021</i> |
| Survey End: | <i>January 22nd, 2022</i> |
| Report Date: | <i>June 9th, 2022.</i> |

SUMMARY STATISTICAL INFORMATION

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Survey Population: | <i>367</i> |
| Sampling Method: | <i>Census, no sampling used.</i> |
| Responses: | <i>Online: 120 / Mail: 10 / Total: 130</i> |
| Response Rate: | <i>35.42%</i> |
| Confidence Level: | <i>.95</i> |
| Confidence Interval: | <i>+/- 6.92</i> |
| Main Research Question: | <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 **130** completed responses out of a total branch membership of **367**. The total completion rate for the survey was therefore **35.42%**, which makes the survey accurate within +/- **6.92** points, 19 times out of 20.

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

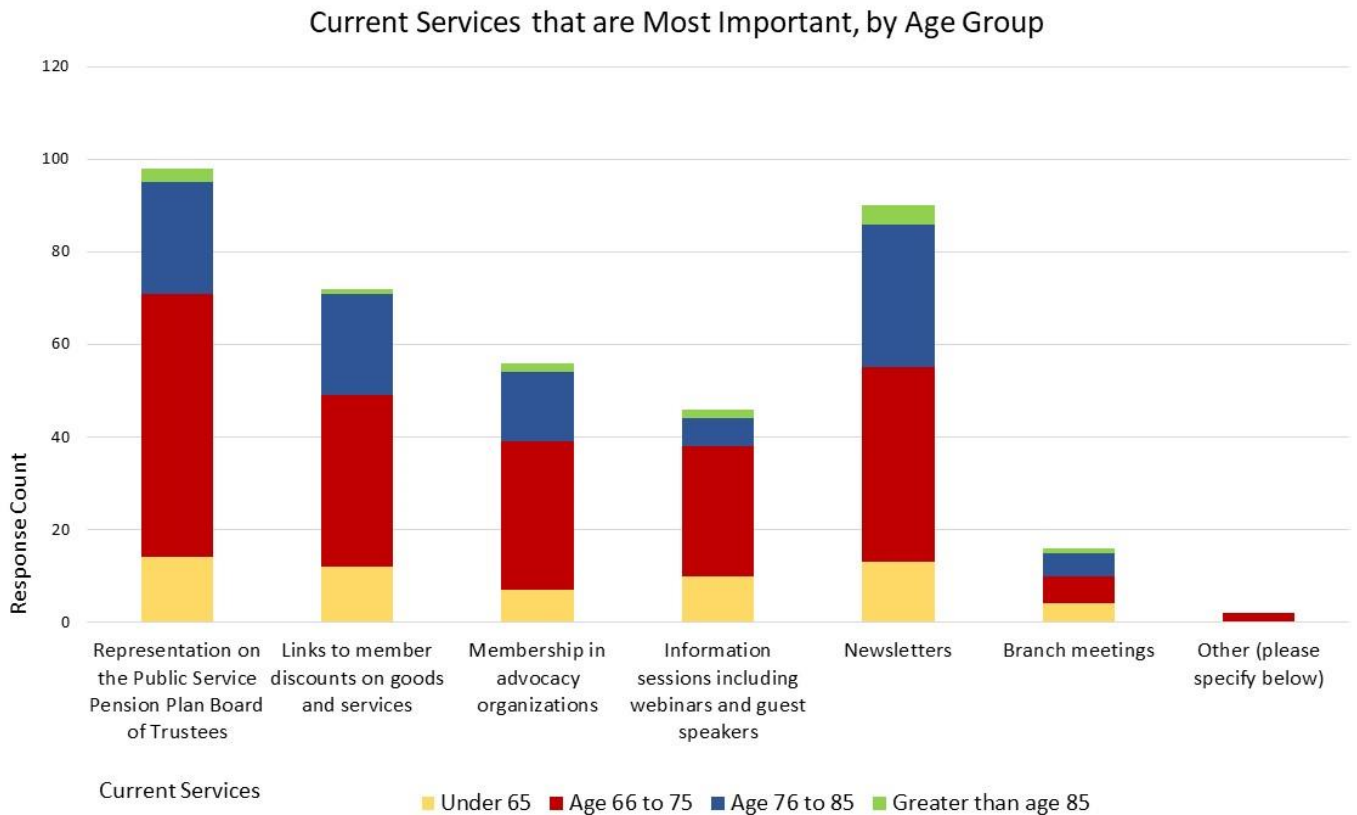
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Current Services

The current BCGREA service that is important to the most respondents is *Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees*. 75.38% of survey respondents from this branch selected this service.

Another top service was *Newsletters*, selected by 69.23% of respondents.

Chart 1



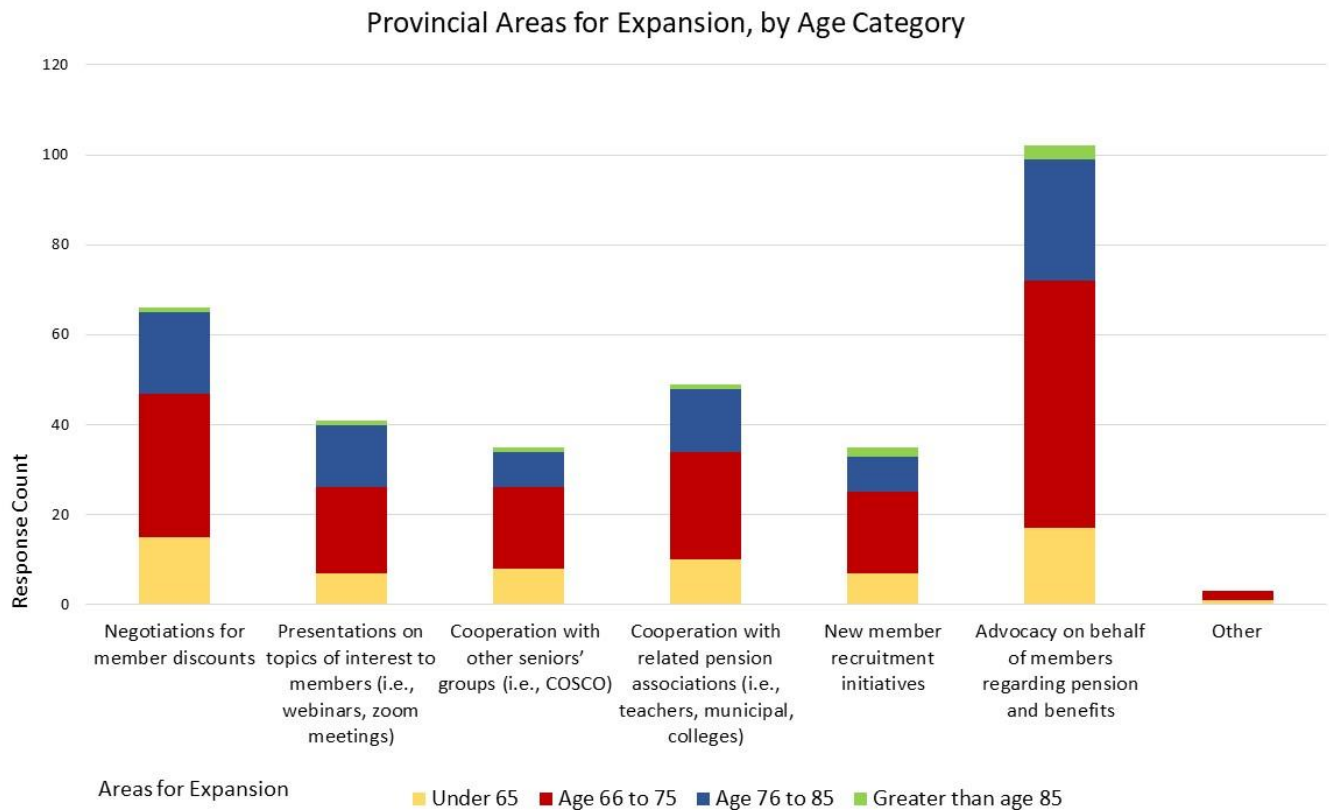
| | < 65 | 66 to 75 | 76 to 85 | > 85 | Total |
|---|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Representation on the Public Service Pension Plan Board of Trustees | 14 | 57 | 24 | 3 | 98 |
| Links to member discounts on goods and services | 12 | 37 | 22 | 1 | 72 |
| Membership in advocacy organizations | 7 | 32 | 15 | 2 | 56 |
| Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers | 10 | 28 | 6 | 2 | 46 |
| Newsletters | 13 | 42 | 31 | 4 | 90 |
| Branch meetings | 4 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 16 |
| Other | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 60 | 204 | 103 | 13 | 380 |

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 78.46% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Negotiations for member discounts*, selected by 50.77% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 2



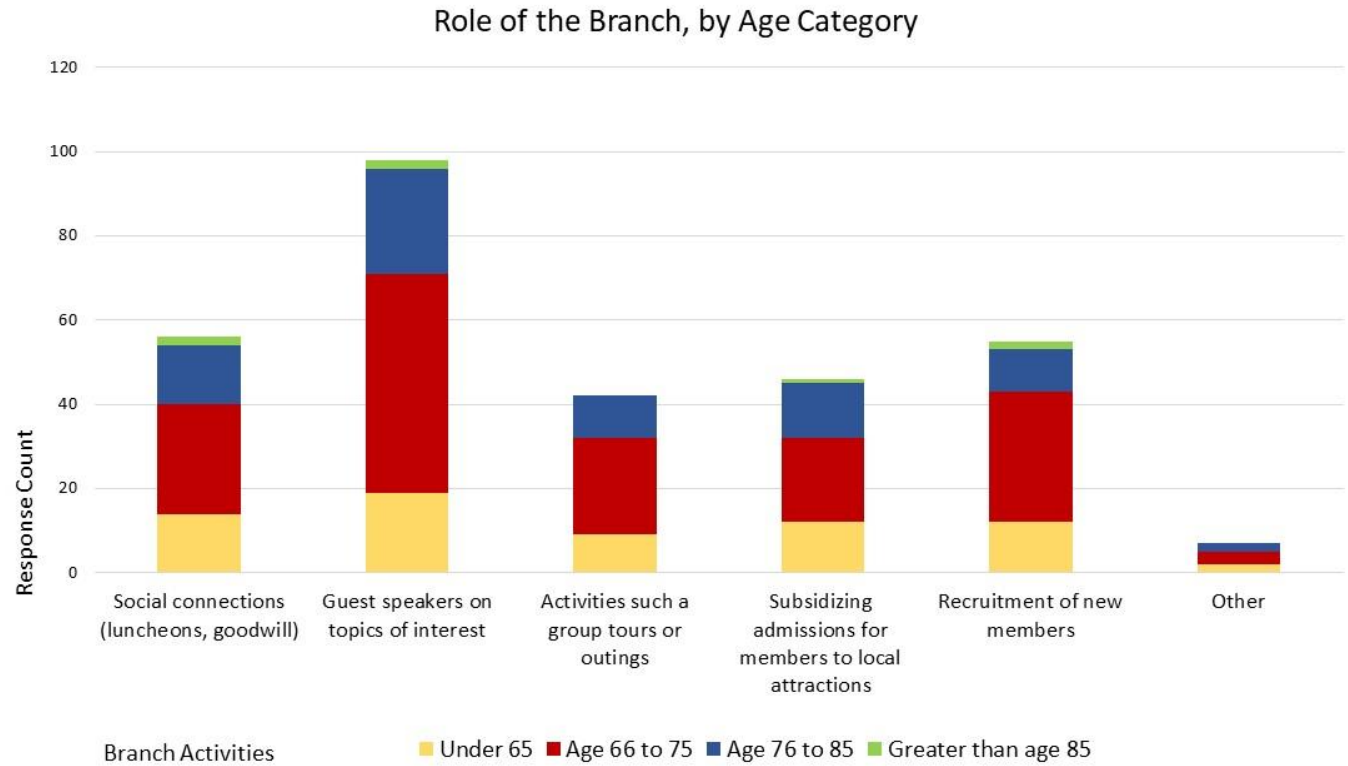
| | < 65 | 66 to 75 | 76 to 85 | > 85 | Total |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Negotiations for member discounts | 15 | 32 | 18 | 1 | 66 |
| Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings) | 7 | 19 | 14 | 1 | 41 |
| Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO) | 8 | 18 | 8 | 1 | 35 |
| Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges) | 10 | 24 | 14 | 1 | 49 |
| New member recruitment initiatives | 7 | 18 | 8 | 2 | 35 |
| Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits | 17 | 55 | 27 | 3 | 102 |
| Other | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 65 | 168 | 89 | 9 | 331 |

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 75.38% of respondents from this branch.

The second most-selected option was *Social connections (luncheons, goodwill)*, selected by 43.08% of respondents from this branch.

Chart 3



| | < 65 | 66 to 75 | 76 to 85 | > 85 | Total |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Social connections (luncheons, goodwill) | 14 | 26 | 14 | 2 | 56 |
| Guest speakers on topics of interest | 19 | 52 | 25 | 2 | 98 |
| Activities such a group tours or outings | 9 | 23 | 10 | 0 | 42 |
| Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions | 12 | 20 | 13 | 1 | 46 |
| Recruitment of new members | 12 | 31 | 10 | 2 | 55 |
| Other | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 68 | 155 | 74 | 7 | 304 |

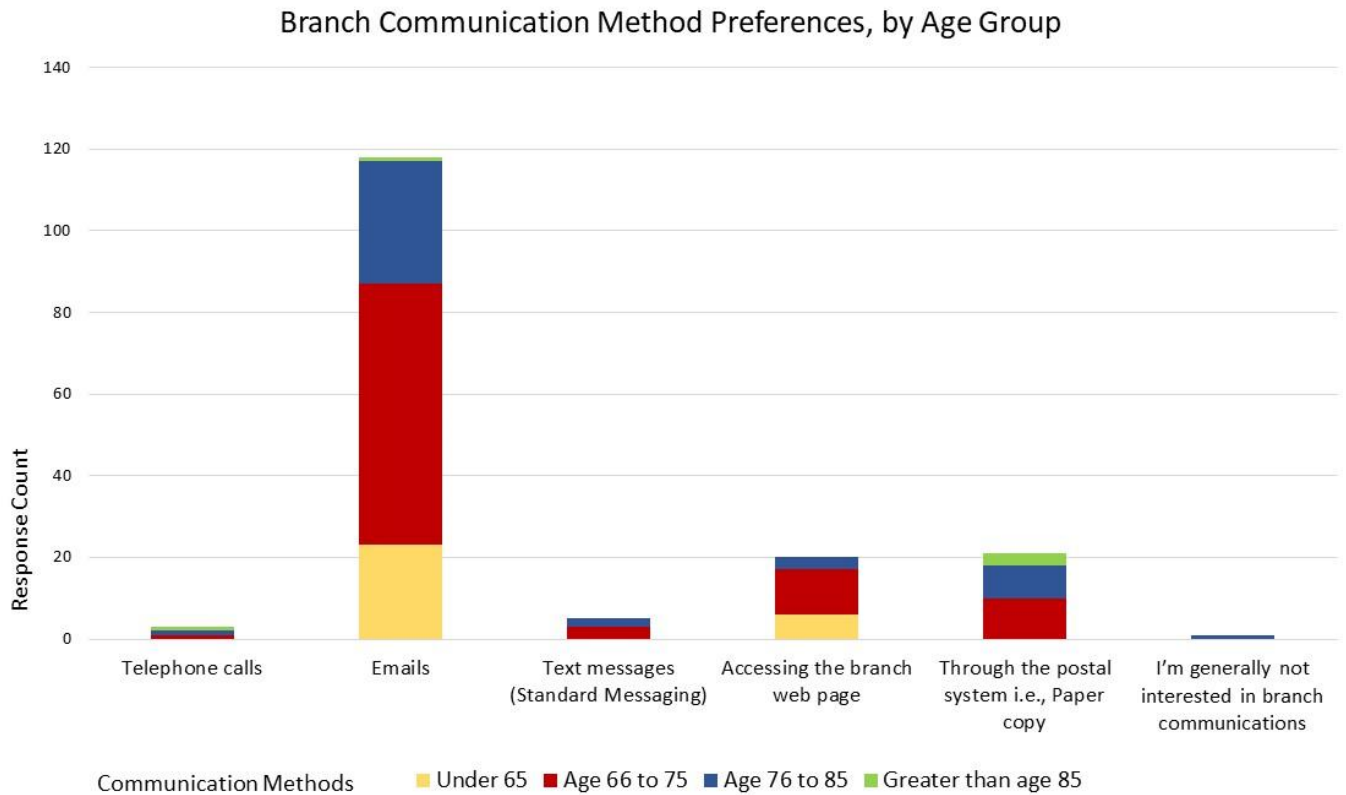
3. Communication Preferences

Overall, the most popular method of receiving branch communications is *Email*. This option was selected by 90.77% 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 16.15% 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 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Emails | 23 | 64 | 30 | 1 | 118 |
| Text messages (Standard Messaging) | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| Accessing the branch web page | 6 | 11 | 3 | 0 | 20 |
| Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy | 0 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 21 |
| I'm generally not interested in branch communications | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 29 | 89 | 45 | 5 | 168 |

Chart 5

Branch Communication Method Preferences, Clustered by Age Group

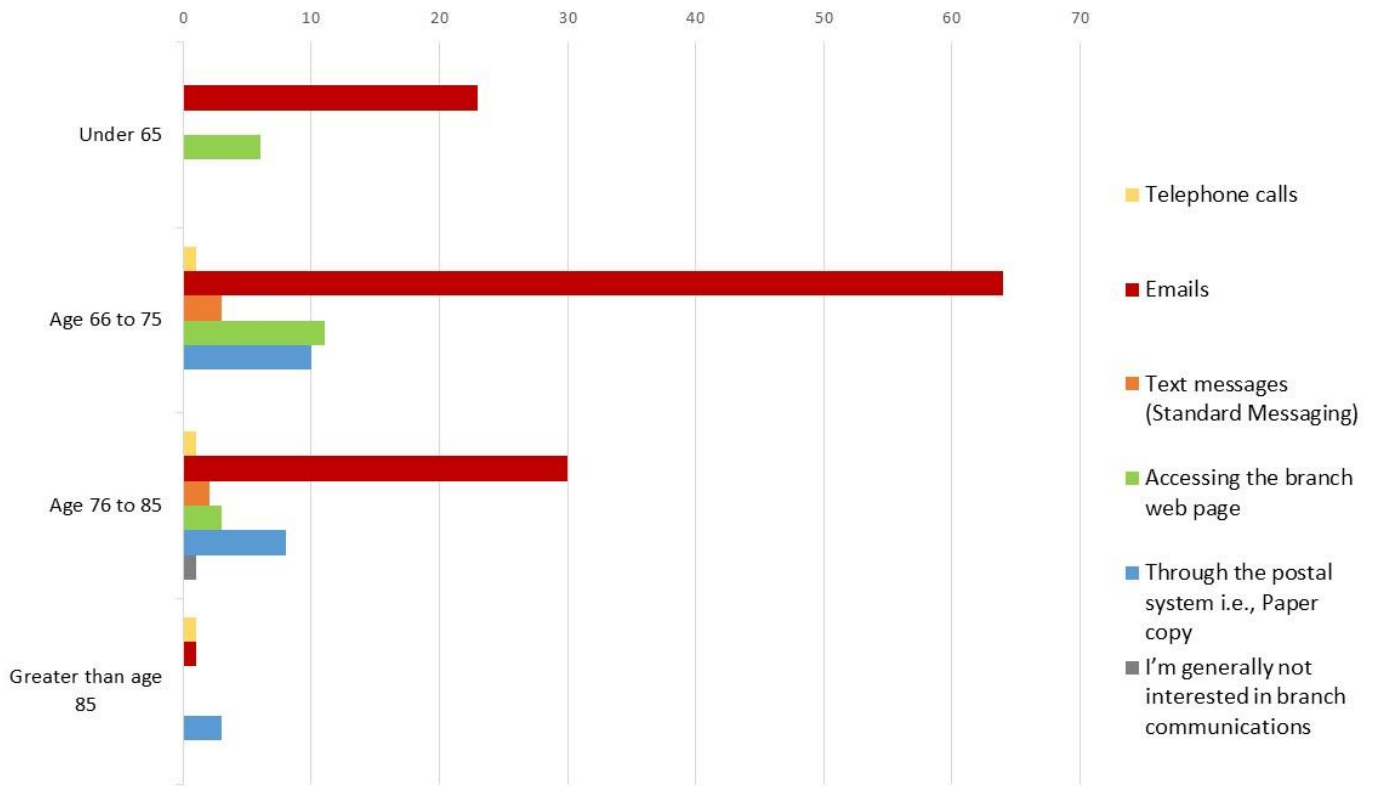
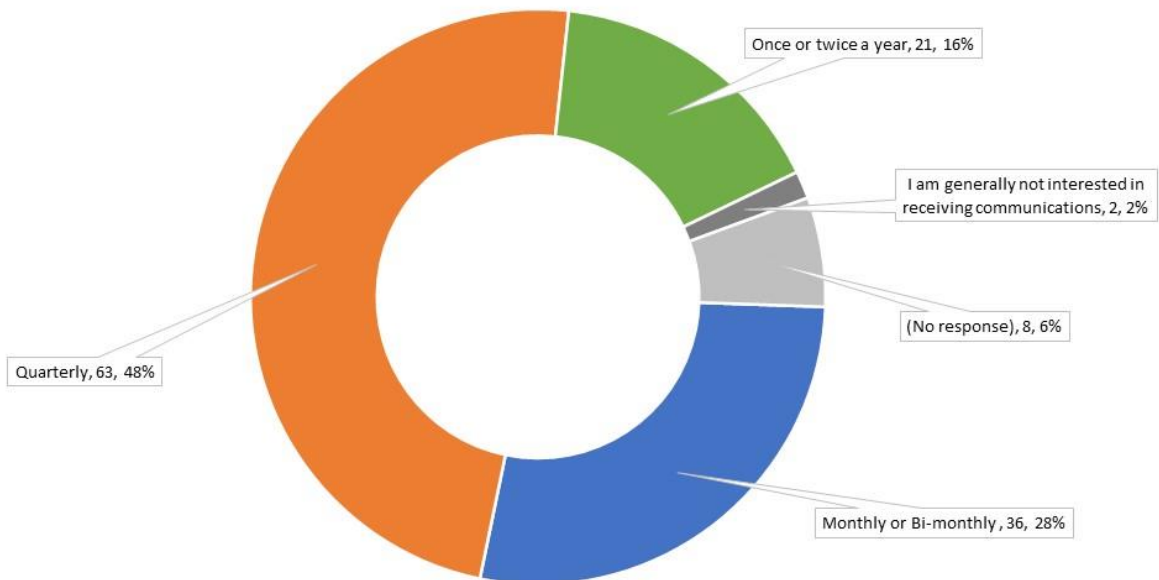


Chart 6

Preferred Frequency of Provincial Electronic Communications



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 | 23 | 17.69% |
| Age 66 to 75 | 66 | 50.77% |
| Age 76 to 85 | 37 | 28.46% |
| Greater than age 85 | 4 | 3.08% |
| (No response) | 0 | 0.00% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Western Communities (Branch 2700) | 130 | 100.00% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|----------|--------|------------|
| V9B | 50 | 38.46% |
| V9C | 35 | 26.92% |
| V9L | 26 | 20.00% |
| V9Z | 19 | 14.62% |

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 | 19 | 14.62% |
| I wanted social contact with former coworkers and fellow retirees | 12 | 9.23% |
| I saw information about the BCGREA at a preretirement seminar or Pension Life | 61 | 46.92% |
| I wanted the discounts offered such as travel insurance, hearing aids, etc. | 44 | 33.85% |
| I wanted to receive updates on pension status | 79 | 60.77% |
| I wanted to have a representative for my interests on the Pension Board of Trustees | 52 | 40.00% |
| Other (please specify below) | 7 | 5.38% |
| (No response) | 4 | 3.08% |

Other (please specify below):

- As an advocate for my rights.
- Branch opened in Duncan, which I joined.
- Husband passed away.
- I am the wife of a retired person.
- I have participated in activities but I find it difficult due to distance and commitments.
- I received information on the BCGREA in my retirement package.
- I wanted a voice to lobby for better benefits post retirement.
- I wanted to be a member of something to feel useful in my retirement.
- Just wanted to stay associated with something after I retired, for no good reason really.
- Looking for things to do in retirement with my spouse.

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 | 98 | 75.38% |
| Links to member discounts on goods and services | 72 | 55.38% |
| Membership in advocacy organizations (Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC - COSCO, National Pensioners Federation - NPF, BC Health Coalition) | 56 | 43.08% |
| Information sessions including webinars and guest speakers | 46 | 35.38% |
| Newsletters | 90 | 69.23% |
| Branch meetings | 16 | 12.31% |
| Other (please specify below) | 2 | 1.54% |
| (No response) | 3 | 2.31% |

Other (please specify below):

- Representation to ensure our medical needs (medication coverage & expenses etc.) are not cut back any further.
- Travel and extended health insurance.

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| Yes | 95 | 73.08% |
| No | 28 | 21.54% |
| (No response) | 7 | 5.38% |

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

- Anything that will affect their pension.
- Branch meetings via Zoom as well as in person.
- Day excursions (wineries, parks, historic attractions, fishing).
- Forwarding information on pensions and retirement.

- Have a stronger voice with our benefits provider. Let's not let them be eroded.
- How about an assisted living & LTC facility for BCGEU members?
- I belong to branch 600, Nanaimo/mid island, and I live in Duncan, BC. All branch meetings are held in Nanaimo, which means myself and others from Duncan often find it difficult to attend. Meetings should alternate between all areas served by Branch 600.
- No need to do more.
- Non-care housing suitable for seniors with restricted mobility. Looking for a 1 level townhouse or rancher to buy.
- Perhaps post links on the website to other services of possible interest to seniors (like walking groups or Silver Threads in Victoria) or other similar groups in other cities.
- Provide information/referral to community resources.
- Referral service to community resources.
- Seniors services, programs, information on aging, information on what to expect as you age (life changes, etc.).
- We need a branch back in Duncan.

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---|--------|------------|
| Telephone calls | 3 | 2.31% |
| Emails | 118 | 90.77% |
| Text messages (Standard Messaging) | 5 | 3.85% |
| Accessing the branch web page | 20 | 15.38% |
| Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy | 21 | 16.15% |
| I'm generally not interested in branch communications | 1 | 0.77% |
| (No response) | 1 | 0.77% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---|--------|------------|
| Emails | 114 | 87.69% |
| Text messages (Standard Messaging) | 6 | 4.62% |
| Through the BCGREA webpage | 22 | 16.92% |
| Through the postal system i.e., Paper copy | 25 | 19.23% |
| I'm generally not interested in provincial communications | 4 | 3.08% |
| (No response) | 1 | 0.77% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| Emails | 100 | 76.92% |
| Paper copy | 36 | 27.69% |
| Posting on BCGREA website | 24 | 18.46% |
| I'm generally not interested in provincial newsletters | 3 | 2.31% |
| (No response) | 3 | 2.31% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| Monthly or Bi-monthly | 36 | 27.69% |
| Quarterly | 63 | 48.46% |
| Once or twice a year | 21 | 16.15% |
| I'm generally not interested in receiving communications | 2 | 1.54% |
| (No response) | 8 | 6.15% |

Branch Operations

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| Regularly | 9 | 6.92% |
| Occasionally | 23 | 17.69% |
| Rarely | 24 | 18.46% |
| Never | 72 | 55.38% |
| (No response) | 2 | 1.54% |

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

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| Yes | 24 | 18.46% |
| No | 100 | 76.92% |
| (No response) | 6 | 4.62% |

Responses by Age Group:

| Age Group | Response | Number | Percentage* |
|-----------|----------|--------|-------------|
| < 65 | Yes | 5 | 21.74% |
| | No | 17 | 73.91% |
| 66 to 75 | Yes | 12 | 18.18% |
| | No | 51 | 77.27% |
| 76 to 85 | Yes | 7 | 18.92% |
| | No | 28 | 75.68% |
| > 85 | Yes | 0 | 0.00% |
| | No | 4 | 100.00% |

*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) | 56 | 43.08% |
| Guest speakers on topics of interest | 98 | 75.38% |
| Activities such a group tours or outings | 42 | 32.31% |
| Subsidizing admissions for members to local attractions | 46 | 35.38% |
| Recruitment of new members | 55 | 42.31% |
| Other (please specify below) | 7 | 5.38% |
| (No response) | 9 | 6.92% |

Other (please specify below):

- Advocacy regarding benefits.
- Advocating for members.
- Assisting in keeping members up to date and current news/changes relating to our pensions.
- I would just like to say that I support subsidies as not all retired have enough disposable income.
- Information on changes that concern seniors.
- Keeping abreast of changes to our Pension and Income Tax updates or news.
- Point of contact on questions or issues of interest to members.
- Providing community resource information.
- Providing information relevant to the status of our pension plan stability and benefits.
- Provincial advocacy.
- Representation.
- When I was in Grand Forks I attended meeting regularly and enjoyed the group there.

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 | 66 | 50.77% |
| Presentations on topics of interest to members (i.e., webinars, zoom meetings) | 41 | 31.54% |
| Cooperation with other seniors' groups (i.e., COSCO) | 35 | 26.92% |
| Cooperation with related pension associations (i.e., teachers, municipal, colleges) | 49 | 37.69% |
| New member recruitment initiatives | 35 | 26.92% |
| Advocacy on behalf of members regarding pension and benefits | 102 | 78.46% |
| Other (please specify below) | 3 | 2.31% |
| (No response) | 12 | 9.23% |

Other (please specify below)

- Advocate with Green Shield regarding medication substitutes where they are an issue & reimbursement.
- I believe that recruitment of new retirees and those coming close to retirement is most important.
- If possible somehow work to increase coverage for the Dental allotment \$1500 annually does not cover much.
- Offer referral tips regarding Pension issues and Extended Benefits links.
- Satisfied with work done to date.
- That is if expanding at all. i.e.. I think they are already doing a good job.
- This question is a can of worms. A volunteer org can only do so much and I believe you are currently doing all you can.

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 | 90 | 69.23% |
| No | 36 | 27.69% |
| (No response) | 4 | 3.08% |

Responses by Age Group:

| Age Group | Response | Number | Percentage* |
|-----------|----------|--------|-------------|
| < 65 | Yes | 17 | 73.91% |
| | No | 6 | 26.09% |
| 66 to 75 | Yes | 51 | 77.27% |
| | No | 14 | 21.21% |
| 76 to 85 | Yes | 20 | 54.05% |
| | No | 14 | 37.84% |
| > 85 | Yes | 2 | 50.00% |
| | No | 2 | 50.00% |

*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 do appreciate the effort made by current BCGREA in reaching out to their members.

Issues Associated with Green Shield

- I am a new member, I joined to get discounted travel insurance. That said I have been thinking for some time about the pension benefits which are, in my opinion very poor. I was thinking if there was an interest in advocating for better benefits I would be willing to work on that task.

Membership Support for the BCGREA / Executive

- Thank you all for putting forth your time & efforts on everyone's behalf.
- Thank you for keeping up the great work by all executives!
- Just like to thank everyone who works so hard on behalf of the retirees.
- They do well now.
- Thank you for all you do & are going to do to protect our Pension. I think it's so important to have you. Let's have a Healthy, Prosperous, Happy 2022 !
- You've been doing a great job looking after our interests.
- I would like extend my thanks to the Provincial and Victoria executive for keeping information flowing, particularly with the challenges of the pandemic.
- I appreciate the work they are doing, I'm not able to participate or help out as I currently live outside the country for about 5 months a year.
- Thank you to those people who serve.
- I am disabled so unable to help. And hard of hearing so prefer Emails. Thanks for all you do for us.
- Thanks for all the work you currently do for members.

Other

- Just to let you know I joined in Grand Forks and have moved to the Island (2009) but still a member in Grand Forks. I am OK with that.
- I think a local voice is important to keep the view of its members at the forefront.
- All retiring govt employees should be auto enrolled in BCGREA and if they don't want to belong they have to unsubscribe by taking such action.
- I enjoyed the meetings, when I attended, but didn't enjoy pressure to do more. Also, members were so diverse, hardly ever met anyone who had worked in my field. So, I went to socialize, but

not to do work. People were generally very friendly, though especially when 'grooming' to take over. I was burnt out from work and just wanted the company.

- I always choose Email communication due to a problem with hearing. Thanks to all of you for being there when I no longer am able to help. *[Researcher's Note: Personal identifying information removed to protect anonymity of respondent].*

Suggestions for New BCGREA Initiatives

- I know SO MANY recent retired government employees that are so complacent about joining the BCGREA, even after I suggest they should. I would like to have the Pension Corporation AND/OR the BC Public Service Agency send out our information brochure to all retiring employees and stress the benefit of having an advocating agency looking out for their behalf. Sometimes I feel like giving these folks a shake and saying to them "can you imagine being retired WITHOUT your Public Service Pension Plan income"? It should be treasured and our trustee representative supported by joining the organization.
- I would come to meetings but I live in Sooke and am disabled. Would it be possible to have a "travelling" meeting maybe once a year.
- Take into consideration our aging demographic, effects of the pandemic, and making the organization relevant to new members.
- I think the BCGREA's structure should be reorganized to be more centralized so as to provide equitable service to all members. I don't believe the majority of members view the organization as a social one, so in-person meetings aren't necessary. I'd support centralizing & hiring administrative staff to field questions & arrange events. Perhaps each area could have a contact person. Also, I'd like to see more transparency, especially regarding finances. This is another reason for centralizing. What is every Branch doing with their portion of fees collected? How much is in the provincial account? What are the membership fees being used for?
- I feel donations are a personal choice and no group should make a decision on one over any other. Tax deductions are better served at the personal level also. I also feel that Provincial should concentrate on the higher level issues and leave the more "social/personal" issues to the branches. You are all doing a wonderful job, so thank you for all your time and hard work over the years!
- It would be good to not duplicate what the branches are sending out or doing. And I want the Association to be totally unpolitical and unbiased in all matters. Only send what is 100% pertinent to the association's purpose. It's easy to feel like wanting to help out this and that, but not everyone may support this or that.
- Broaden scope of communication by including more in-depth articles explaining benefits in simple to understand terms. There have been very helpful articles written and more would be appreciated. Application of Benefits through our Senior years would be helpful; death, dying, vision, hearing, travel/transport, healthcare, wills, estates. I'm not sure why I keep receiving 'hearing aid' advertising in the mail. I find it unnecessary. There are many other items/services which will give discounts who don't repeatedly send mail. After COVID, meetings in other towns, or combined meetings with other neighbouring locations, would encourage more members, feel more inclusive of those members outside Victoria, improve communication channels, include other professionals in our area supporting local services and encourage more member participation.

Travel / Distance Issues

- We have no branch in Duncan. I attended all meetings when we did.

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.