

FSC Cruising survey (using SurveyMonkey) Aug 2013

Process

The Cruising Section developed a survey (using SurveyMonkey on-line software) to identify the attractions and barriers to taking part in its cruises. It also provided an opportunity to find out more about the demographics of the group. The internet link to the survey was emailed by the Club office to all those members who had indicated an interest in cruising on their annual data from returns. There were 470 members on that distribution list, with 87 responding (19% return rate). The majority of responses were received within 24 hours of issuing the survey. The results were analysed 5 days after issue.

Summary of results

- Most respondents were in the 55-70 age bracket, had been sailing keelboats for more than 15 years and usually sailed with just their partner.
- Most respondents were aware of most cruising events. The Quindalup cruise was the most highly recognised event.
- The most preferred nearby destination was Mandurah, closely followed by Rottnest. The least preferred was Mindarie. The most preferred distant destination was the Abrolhos, closely followed by Bunbury. The least preferred was Bali.
- The most preferred cruise format was a weekend cruise with an overnight stay. The least preferred format was a day sail during the week.
- The biggest factor influencing the decision to join a cruise was lack of time. Lack of sailing skills was the least influential factor.
- The strongest motivations for joining a cruise were to meet people and go to new destinations.
- More than three-quarters of respondents perceived Cruising events to be either quite social, or very social.
- 33 respondents made use of the final comments box to add their suggestions.

Observations and interpretations

Perhaps the most important outcome is not in the answers to the questions, but the very large numbers of people who have indicated an interest in cruising, and the large number of people who were prepared to take the time to answer the survey. The number of participants in cruises over the last few years has been about 20, yet we have 470 members interested in cruising. If we could get the number of people joining the events to be the same as the number who responded to the survey (87) that would be a huge, possibly unprecedented increase in participation. It would be a worthy 2-year goal.

The demographic holds no surprises, but it is worth noting the low number of respondents who sail with young children (9%).

Of concern is the heavy skew towards older sailors with a lot of experience. This implies we do not have enough newcomers to sustain the Cruising Section in the long term, a situation which must be addressed. This is not straightforward, involving marketing, socialising, mentoring, education and many other facets of running a successful recreational group.

The perception of the Cruising Section as a sociable group is very positive; we must maintain our efforts to be inclusive.

The motivations to join a cruise reflect the answers to other questions – sociability and new destinations. The main deterrent to joining is lack of time. Whilst this might appear to be outside our control, we can and must work to raise Cruising Events higher on the list of members' leisure priorities.

The notices of cruises appear to be getting out to the members in a timely fashion.

The popularity of overnight weekend cruises is strong. The interest in weekday cruises is low, but it might be worth running a weekday overnight cruise to determine how solid this interest is.

The preferred destinations yield some interesting insights. Rottneest is still highly preferred, despite the high cost of gaining access and the shortage of places to anchor. Of the more distant destinations, Abrolhos is a surprisingly popular choice. Support for an Albany cruise is comparatively weak.

Of particular relevance to the annual Quindalup Christmas Holiday cruise is the preference of Bunbury and Port Geographe over Quindalup as a destination. However, we must take heed that "Quindalup" is the most recognised title in our folio of events, when considering how we market the Christmas Holiday Cruise.

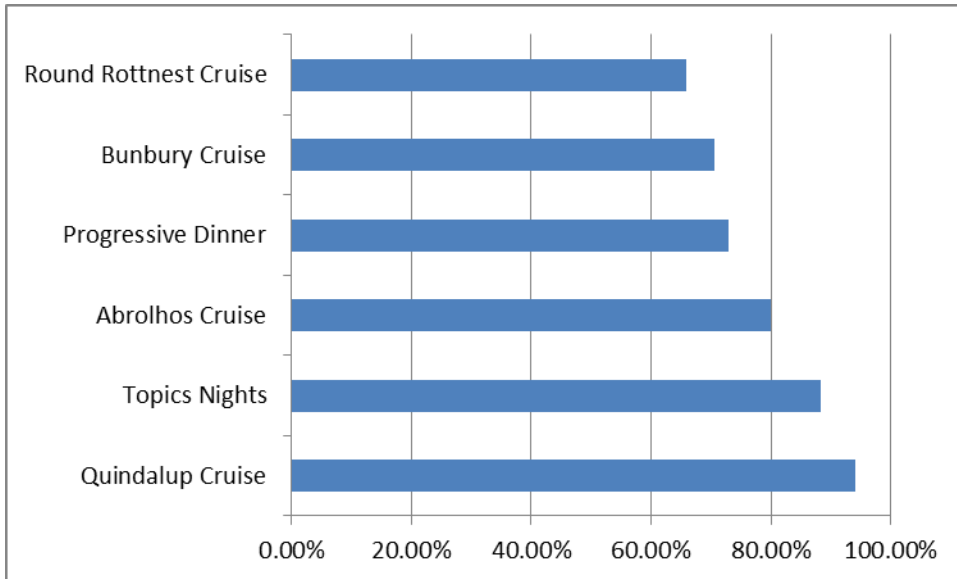
The low level of interest in Bali might be due to timing – a "just been there and done that" feeling for many. However, the survey shows there is very low "event bounce" from the 2013 rally – members are not rushing to follow in the wake of the 2013 participants for some reason.

Recommendations

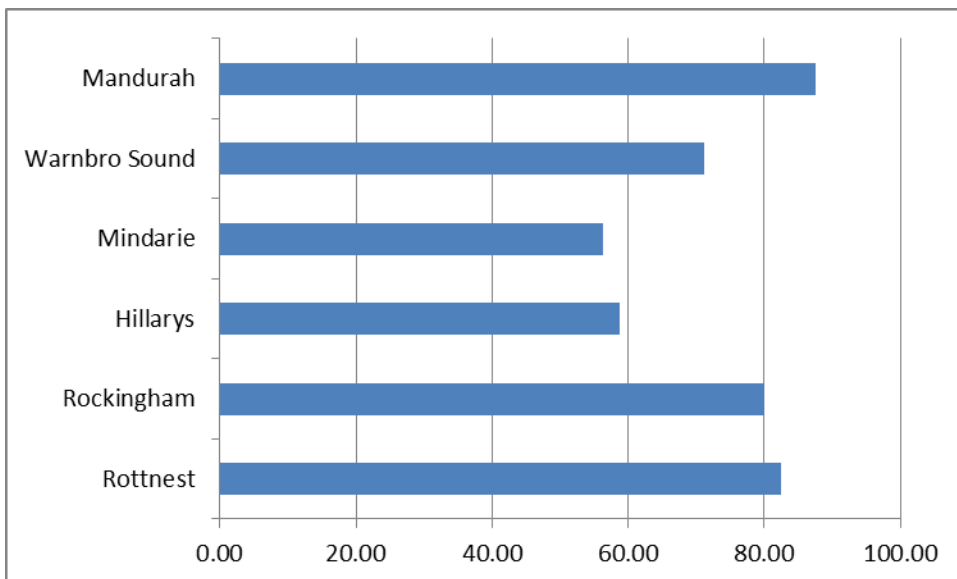
1. Set a goal of 87 participants in 2 years' time.
2. Develop and implement a 5 year plan to increase the number of "young" (under 50, let's say) newcomers to cruising.
3. Maintain our spread of destinations for weekend cruises, including Rottneest.
4. Review the destination for the Quindalup Christmas Holiday cruise.
5. Maintain the Abrolhos cruise in our calendar.
6. Consider running a trial weekday overnight cruise.
7. (for the Bali committee): Investigate the level of support for a 2015 Bali Rally.

Appendix: survey results.

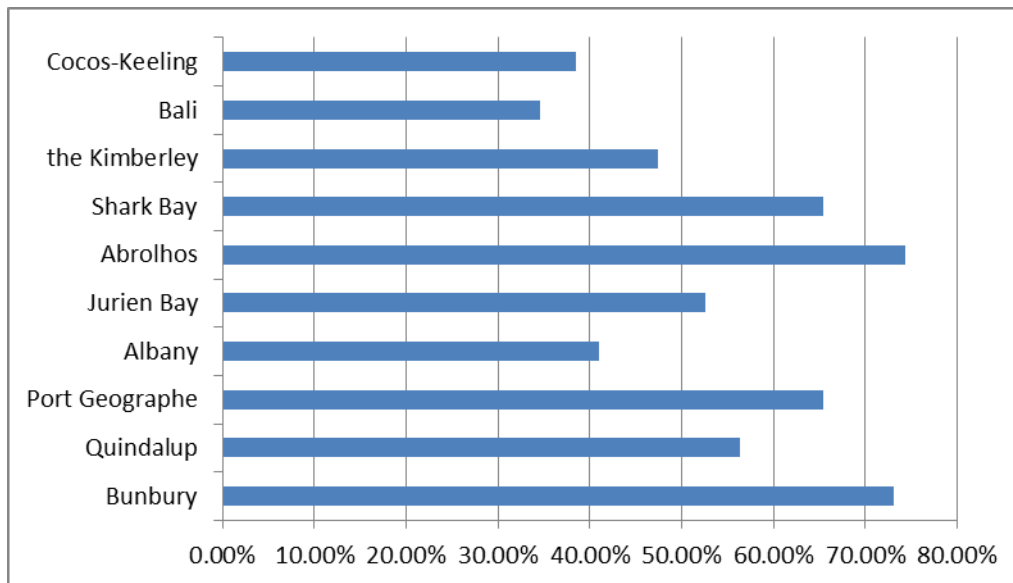
1. Which of the following Cruising Section events are you aware of?



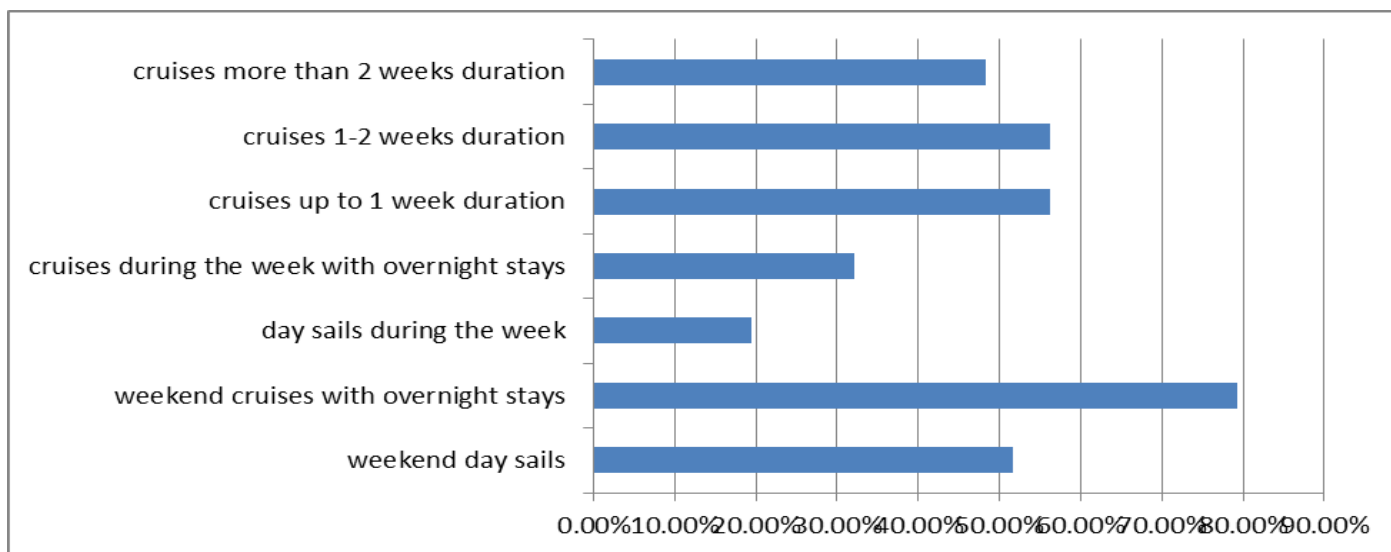
2. Which of the following nearby cruise destinations would you be interested in going to? (tick as many as you wish)



3. Which of the following more distant destinations would you be interested in sailing to? (tick as many as you wish)



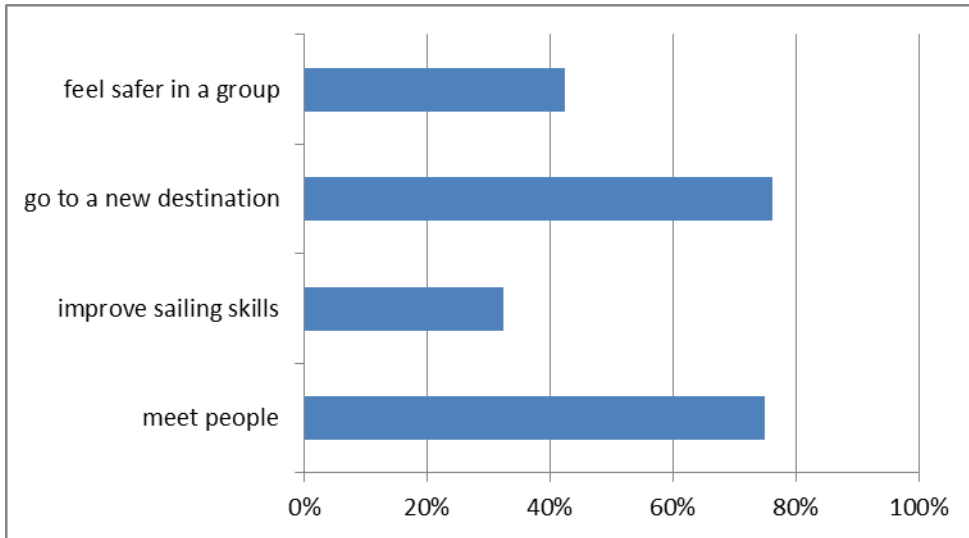
4. What duration and timing of cruises would interest you (tick as many as you wish)



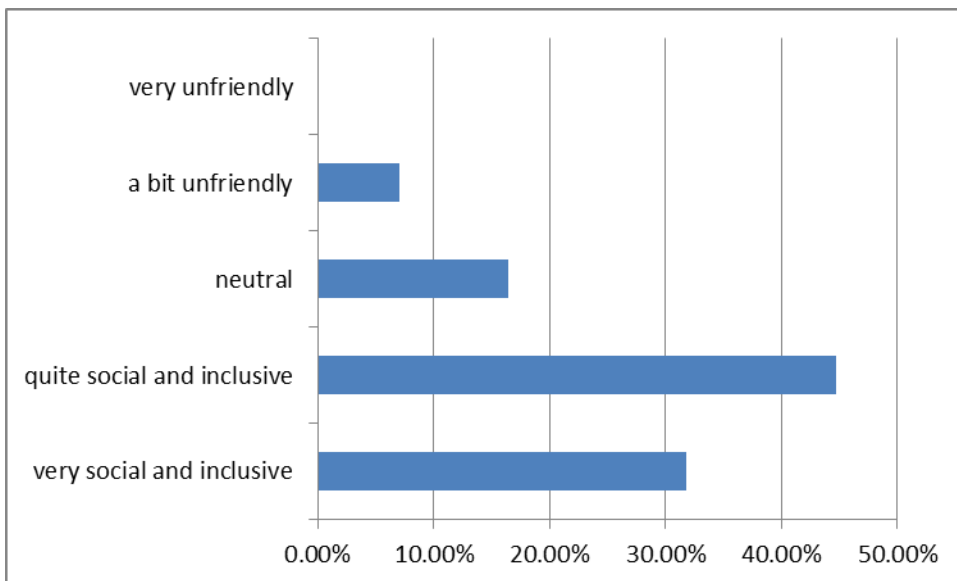
5. Please rate the following factors as to how much they have affected your decision to join an organised cruise.

	strongly disagree	slightly disagree	neutral	slightly agree	strongly agree
lack of time	13.92%	7.59%	13.92%	24.05%	40.51%
shortage of crew	29.87%	16.88%	25.97%	18.18%	9.09%
uninteresting destinations	26.39%	18.06%	33.33%	18.06%	4.17%
unsociable participants	47.83%	17.39%	26.09%	7.25%	1.45%
lack of sailing skills	56.94%	18.06%	11.11%	9.72%	4.17%
notices of events not received in sufficient time	32.88%	28.77%	28.77%	9.59%	0%

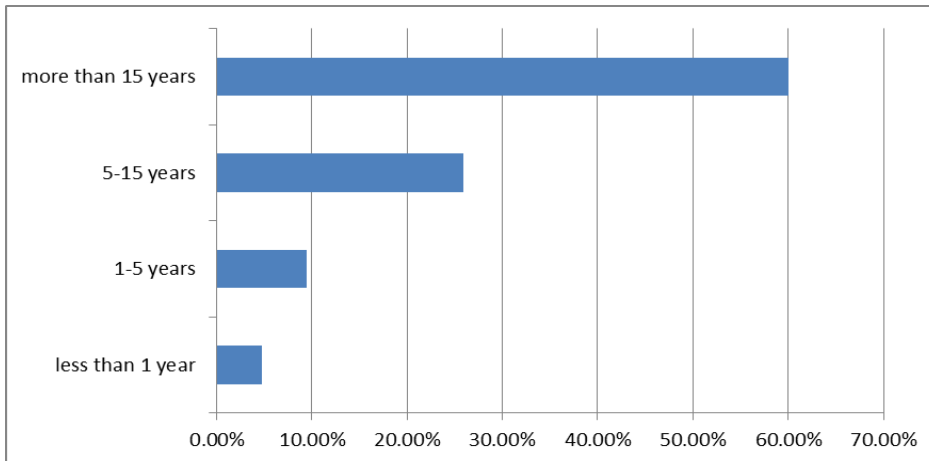
6. What would motivate you to join a cruise?



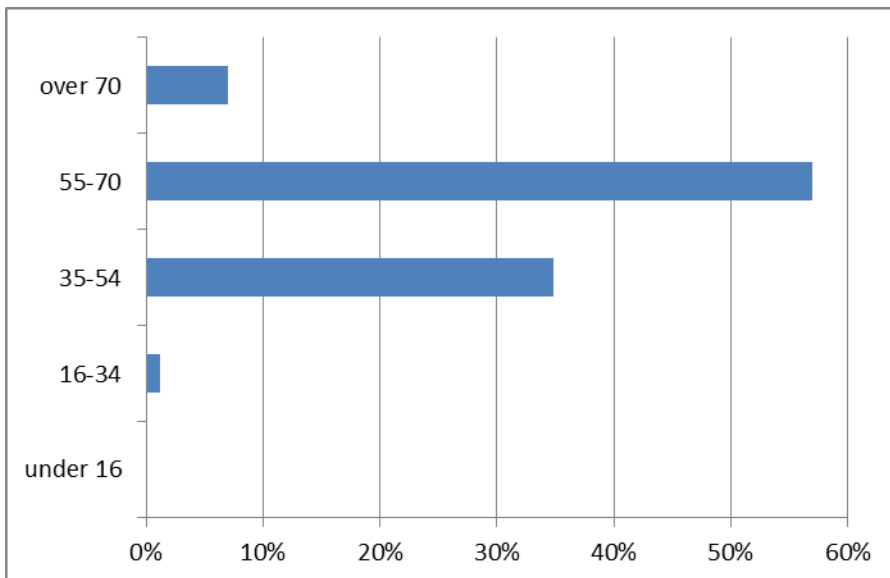
7. Which of the following phrases best describes your perception of Cruising Section events?



8. How many years have you been sailing keel boats?



9. What age bracket do you fit into?



10. Which of the following best describes your usual crew? (tick only one box)

