



## Long Range Planning Update

Long Range Planning Committee

September 29, 2023

### Committee Members

Chace Anderson, CHE

Alli Bell, SOC

Gerry Douglas, FLA

Doug Cole, PNW

Ernie Godshalk, BOS

Ian Gumprecht, NYS

Gretchen McCurdy, BDO

Sheila McCurdy, BOS

Bob Medland, GLS

Pat Montgomery, FLA

Jim Quanci, SFO

Tim Surgenor, BOS – Chair

Chris Otorowski, PNW –  
Commodore

Jay Gowell, BOS – Vice  
Commodore



## CCA Long Range Planning Committee

- Need identified during “Futures Task Force” work in 2015/2016
- Commissioned by Commodore Medland in 2021 – “As the CCA rounds our first centennial mark, to help guide the next leg of the voyage”
- Committee formed in early 2021 – looking to complete report in early 2024
- Recent Activities – Since last fall
  - Drafted “Mission Statement / About the CCA” text to sharpen focus on CCA mission
  - Collected data on current levels of Member engagement with CCA and “Adventurous use of the Sea”
  - Designed and fielded a member survey
  - Wrote a review of CCA activities in the form of the 1995 report “Views on a Vision for the CCA”
  - Benchmarking similar blue water clubs

## Mission Statement – Adopted at the Annual Meeting March 2023



The Cruising Club of America is a group of accomplished recreational offshore sailors bound together by friendship and the desire to foster the responsibilities, expertise, and skills needed for the adventurous use of the sea.

Members volunteer to achieve the CCA's goals by sharing experiences, organizing events on and off the water, promoting seamanship and best practices, and recognizing outstanding accomplishments by fellow members and the amateur sailing community. The Club's initiatives put particular emphasis on safety at sea education and training, exemplary offshore yacht design and construction, and environmental stewardship.

The CCA does not have a physical headquarters. The Club exists anywhere its members come together on land and sea. In popular sailing regions, members organize into stations which host local gatherings for members and guests.

The Club is known - since shortly after its founding in 1922 - for running the biennial Newport Bermuda Race and awarding the Blue Water Medal. More recently the CCA has added the Young Voyager Award, Roderick Stephens Seamanship Trophy, and Diana Russell Award for Innovation to honor those who represent the best of the Club's priorities. The Club has produced enduring books like *Nowhere Is Too Far*, *Far Horizons*, *Desirable and Undesirable Characteristics of Offshore Yachts*, *Safety for Cruising Couples*, and *Adventurous Use of the Sea*, cruising guides to the coast of Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and Labrador, and the annual publication of members' articles, *Voyages*.

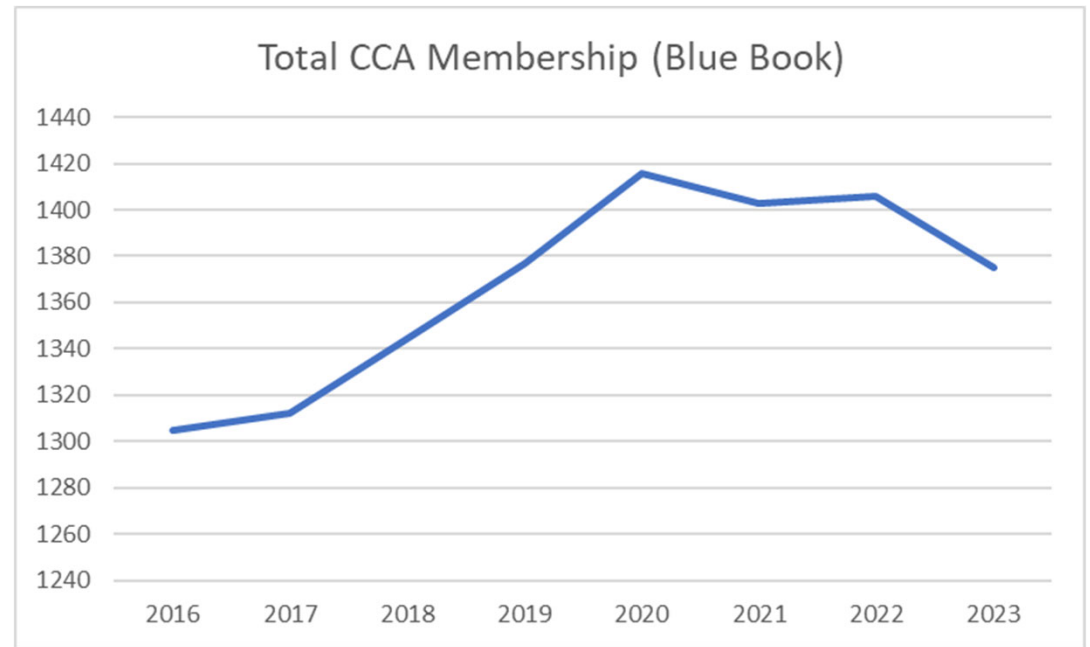


## Recent Membership Trends



## Recent Change in CCA Membership Trend

- Membership reached 1,416 in 2020, dropped to 1375 in 2023
- First decline in total membership in at least 25 years

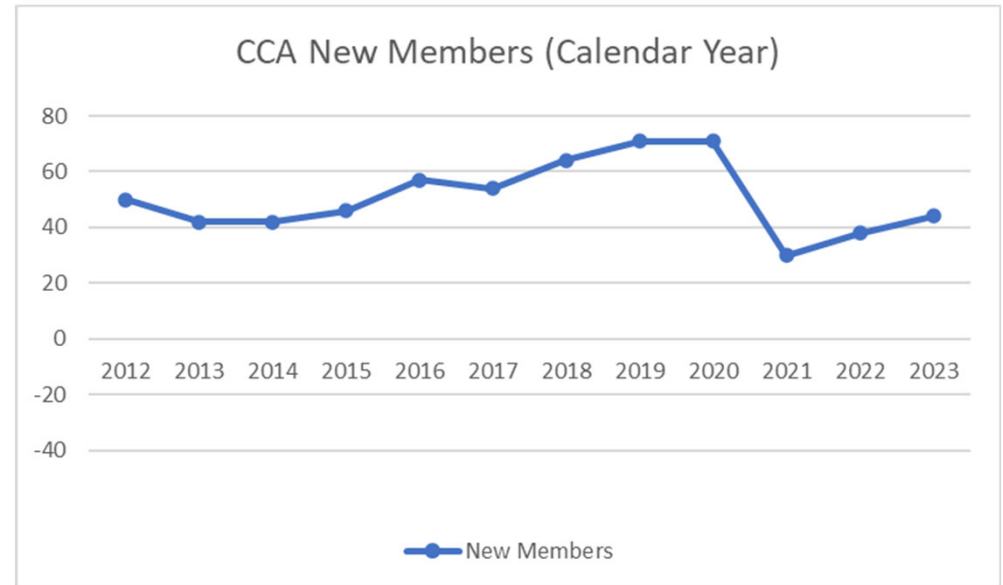


\*Blue Book Years



## Membership Decline – Factors

- Reduced size of New Member classes
  - Pandemic
  - Recent changes in membership guidelines (2022 Blue Book)
- Significant increases in resignations and dues delinquencies ~80 members lost from 2020 to 2023





## Considerations for Long Range Planning

- Long history of 1-2% per year membership growth has helped CCA accomplish important objectives
  - Increase proportion of young, women members
  - Maintain financial model with very low dues
- Change in this trend could have significant implications
- Important to focus on “return to growth” post pandemic
  
- Maintain high standards for membership
- Identify and recruit new members who meet those standards
- Retain current members



## **Recent Data on Member Engagement and Adventurous Use of the Sea**





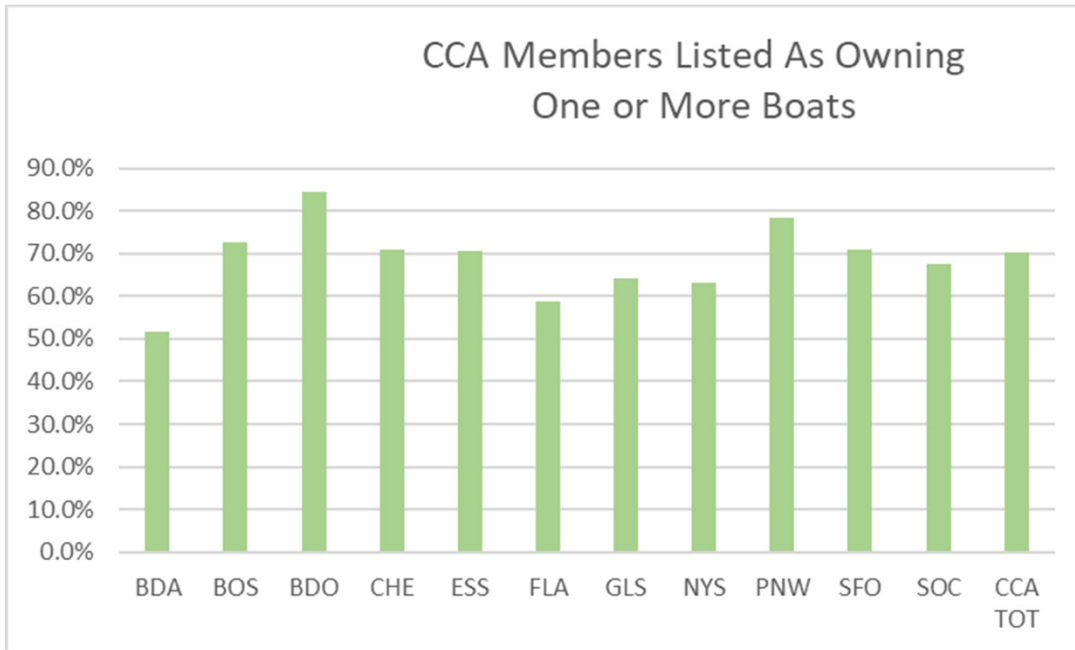
## Database - Current CCA Members Listed as Recipients By Award (Many Awardees have Multiple Awards)

John Parkinson	180
Transoceanic	124
Circumnavigation	60
Fifteen Thrashes	44
Vilas Prize	25
RCC	21
Nye	20
Far Horizons	14
Blue Water	9
Stephens	3
Young Voyager	3
Diana Russell	1
Other	1
Total	<hr/> 505

- 17.1% of Current CCA Members (or 234 in total) have won one or more sailing awards
- The average awards per awardee is 2.2
- John Parkinson and Transoceanic are most frequently awarded
- Estimates are ~25% of NBR skippers are CCA members
- Strong participation in other blue water racing including west coast events

<https://cruisingclub.org/awards>

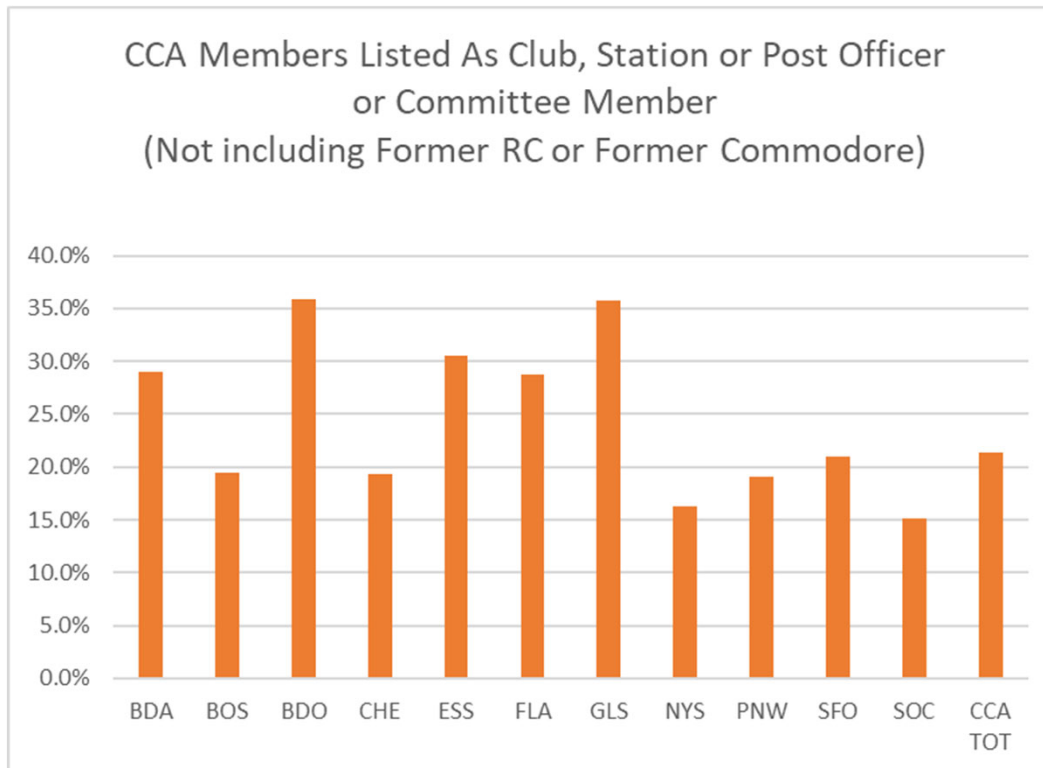
## Database - CCA Members Listed as Owning one or More Boats



- 70.2% of CCA members (or 958 members) listed as owning one or more boats



## Database - CCA Members Volunteering at Club or Station Level (not including former RC or Former Commodore)



- 21.3% of CCA Members (or 293 Members) are involved as current Club or Station level officers or committee members
- Volunteers committing large amounts of time and energy
- Long Term Planning Consideration
  - Recognize that member volunteers are a key resource for the CCA
  - Important to focus on recruiting members to leadership positions and committees
  - Be careful when creating new activities – do we have the people to staff them?



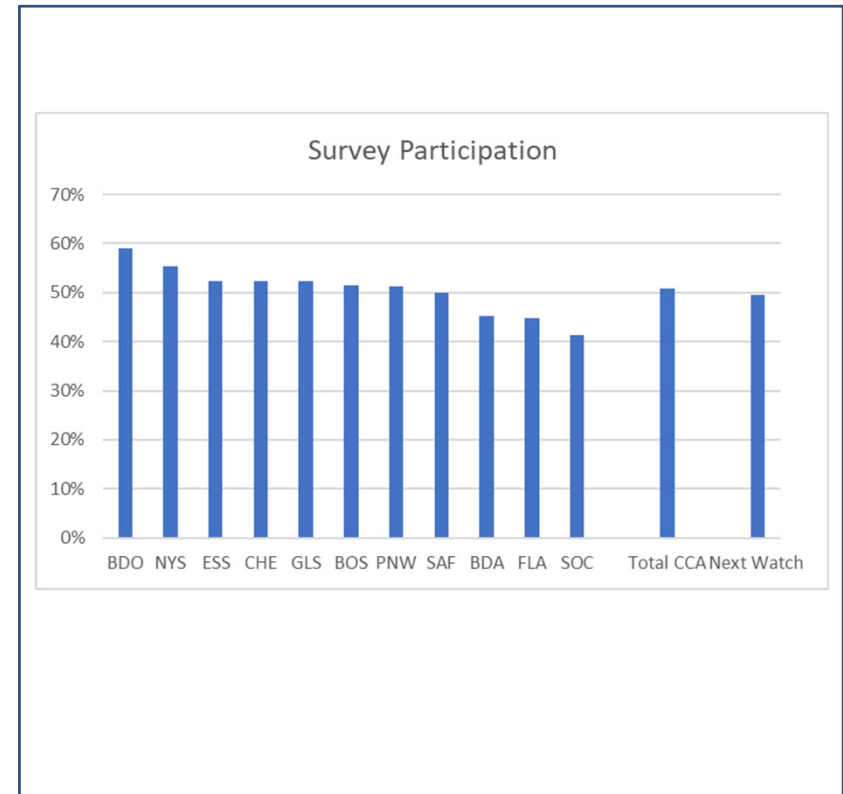
## 2023 Member Survey



# 2023 Member Survey

## Survey Overview

- Design Team – Alli Bell, Ernie Godshalk, Tim Surgenor
- Conducted via email (Survey Monkey) during August 2023
- 694 Full or Partial Responses, representing ~50% of the total membership of the Club
- Station participation rates from 41% to 59%
- Next Watch participation of 49%





## Survey Objectives

### Key Questions

- What is the current level of CCA member participation?
  - Measure level of sailing participation ( Adventurous Use of the Sea)
  - Station activities
  - Club activities
  - New Member process
- What are hurdles to member's increased participation?
- How do members value CCA activities?
- How do members get information on CCA activities?
- What roles are members interested in?
- Generally, develop insights on how to increase member participation and satisfaction



## Initial Impressions

- Fellow members share a love of day sailing, coastal cruising
  - Significant participation in blue water or extended cruising and/or blue water racing / NBR
- Significant support for the activities of the CCA – members view committee work as very important
- Insights on Engagement
  - Consider member profiles – meet them where they are
    - Events that fit available time and distance
    - Interest in Station activities higher than Club activities for many members
    - Committee roles as entry point to volunteering
  - “Make the Ask” – direct contact with members (telephone) may work best
  - Make it efficient – value volunteer time
  - Reach out to members we haven’t heard from



## **We belong to an amazing club!**

### **Thanks to fellow members who took the time to complete the survey!**

“Grateful for my CCA Membership and all it has to offer in the way of a welcoming environment, friendships, education, and opportunities to participate across our Club. Keep encouraging members to participate. It will be worth their time.”

“I participate because I love the people I meet. CCA members are a breed apart. I'm always interested in spending time with other CCA members.”

“The CCA is made up of a wonderful group of accomplished and like-minded sailors. Majority of my friends are from the CCA.”

“I am proud to be a member of CCA.”

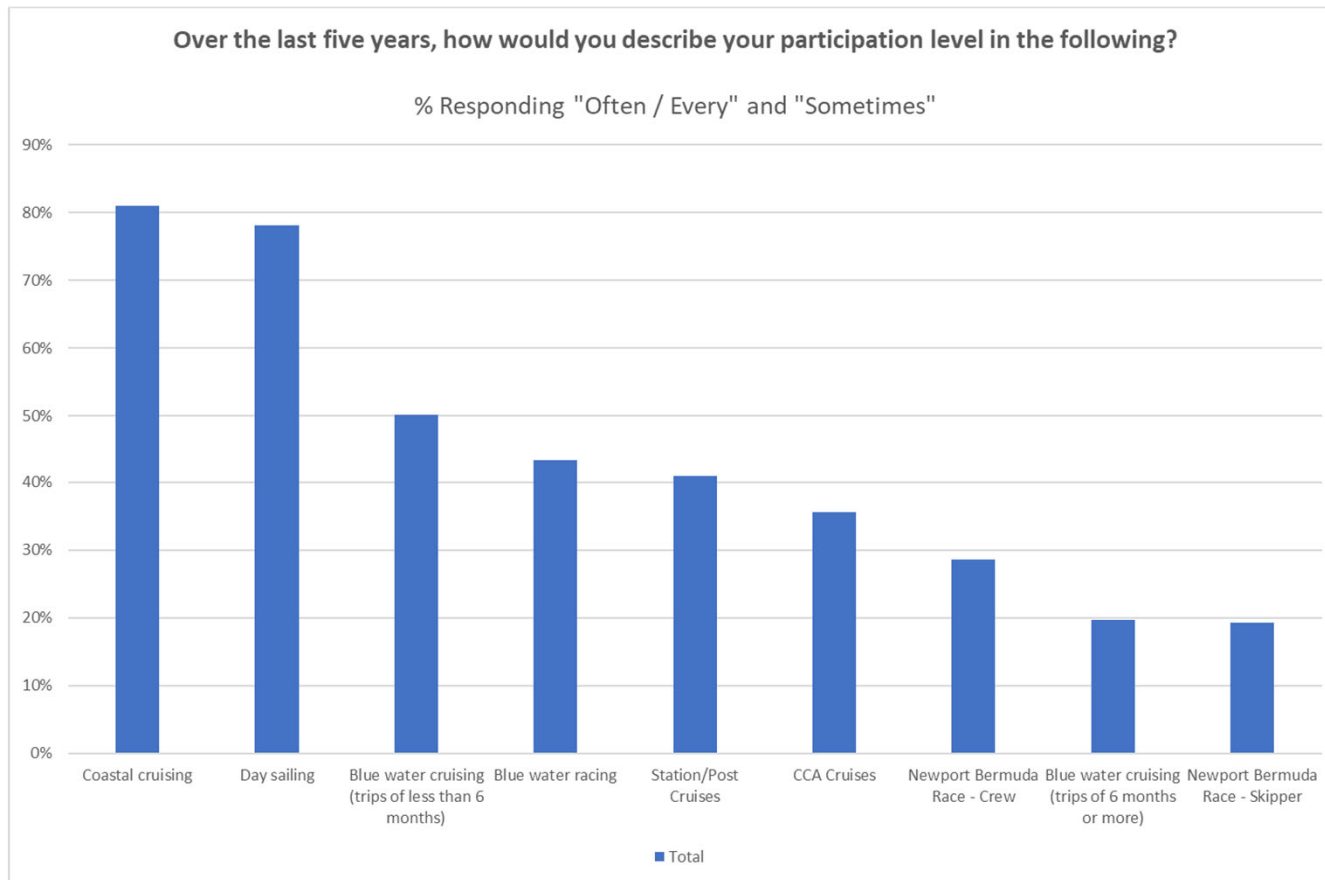




**Q2 - Over the last five years, how would you describe your participation level in the following?**

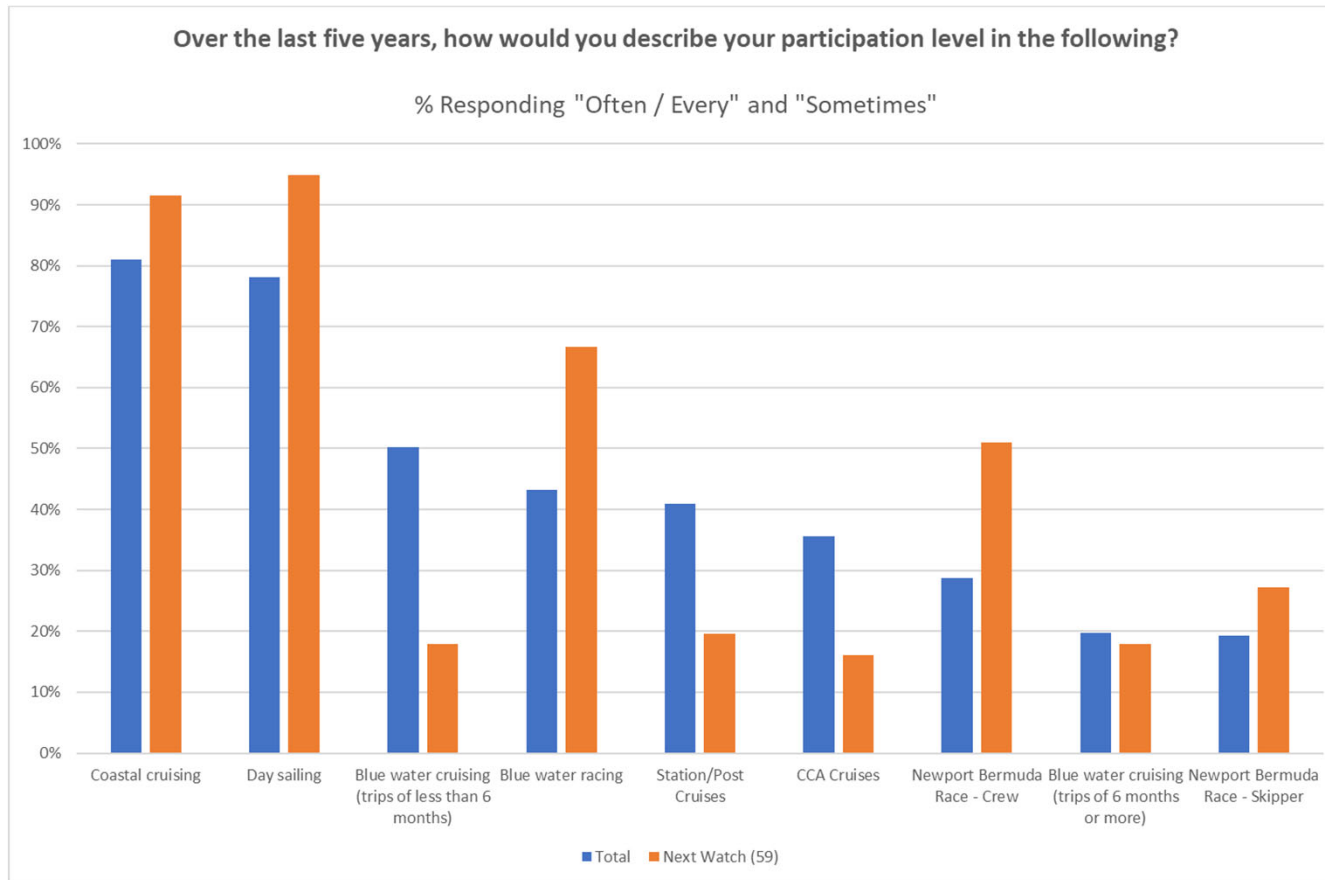


## Adventurous Use of the Sea: Our members are deeply involved with on-the-water activities led by coastal cruising and day sailing



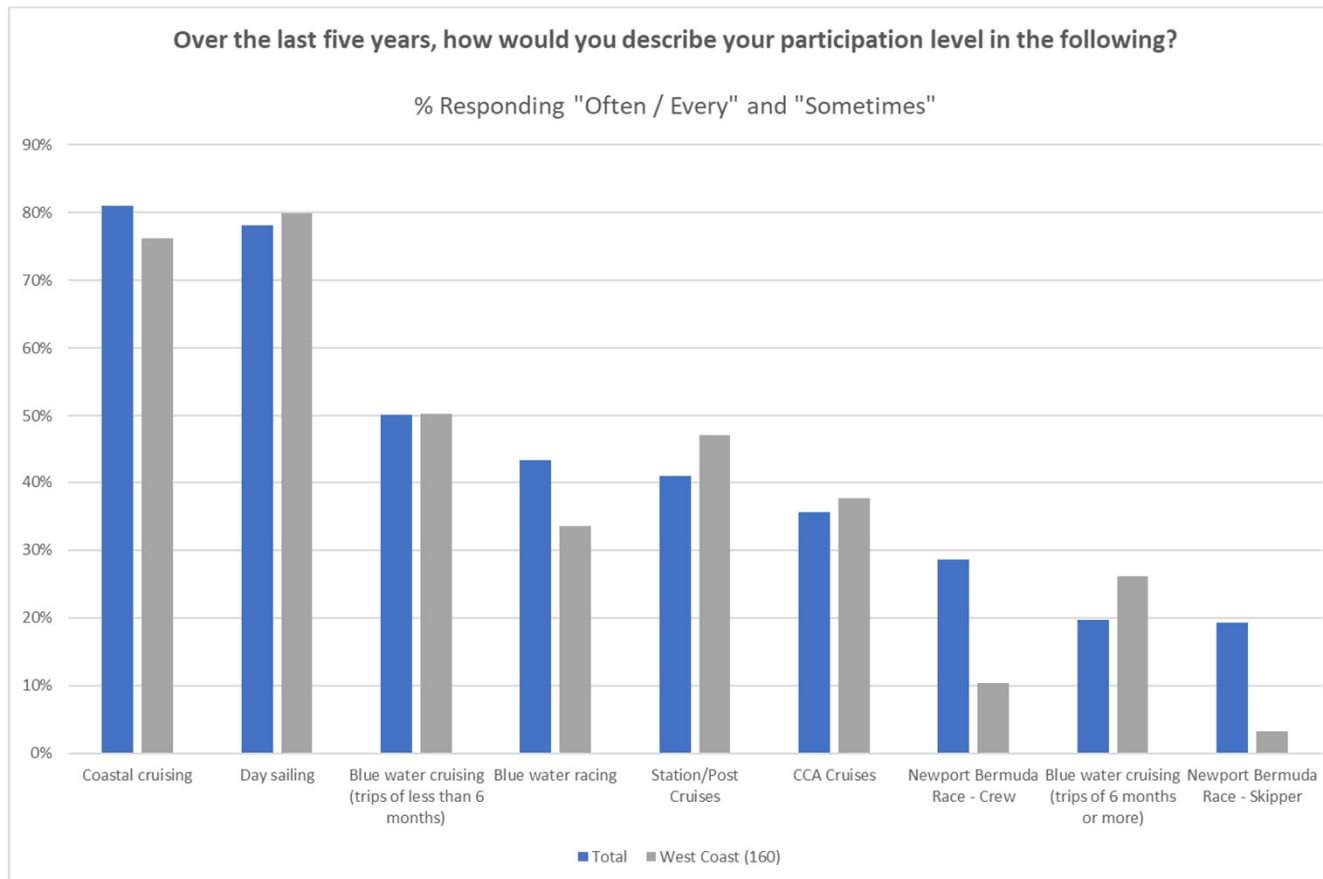


# Adventurous Use of the Sea: Next Watch members (Age <55) report generally higher participation except lower in station and club cruises



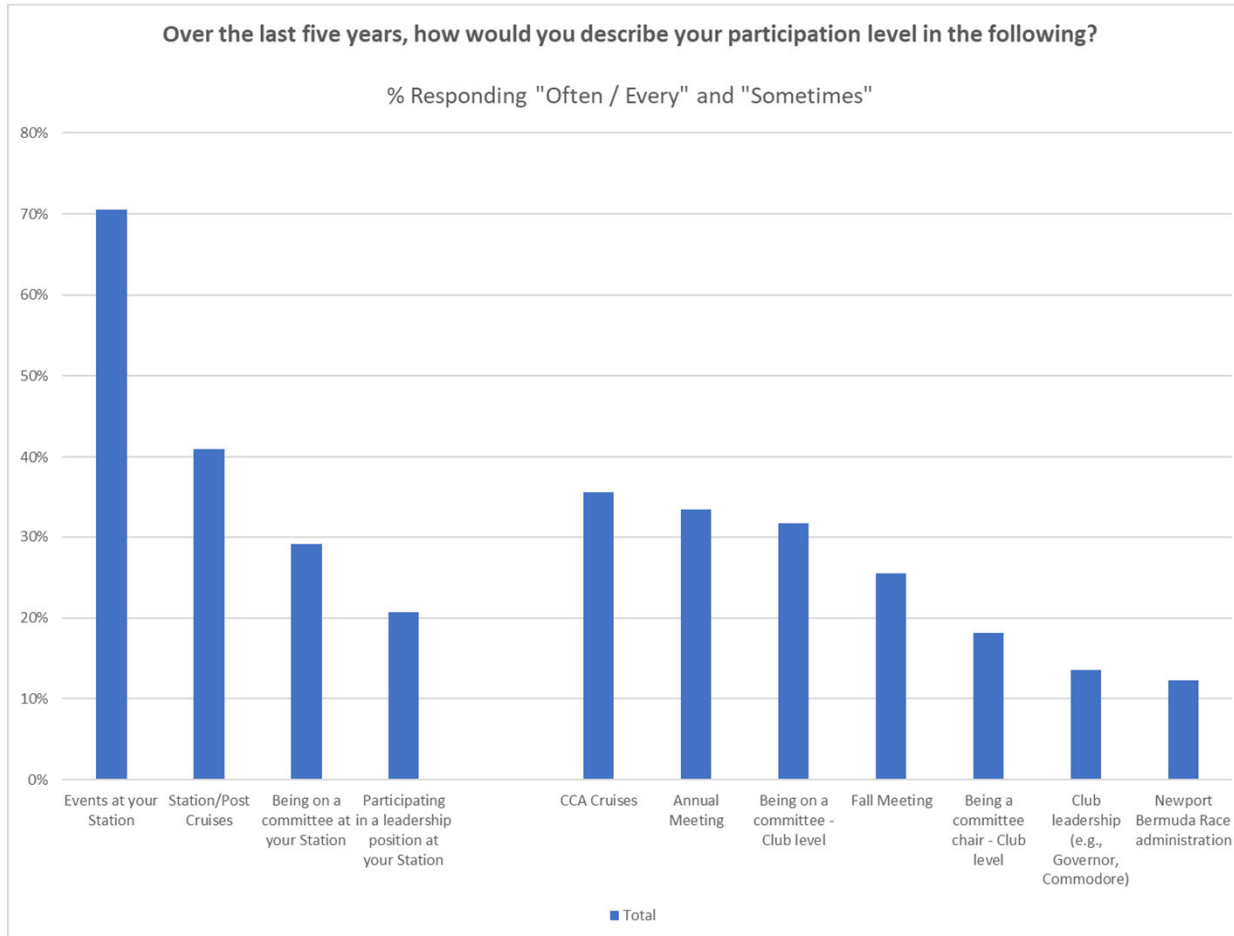


## Adventurous Use of the Sea: West Coast / GLS members report higher participation in station and club cruises and less in NBR and racing



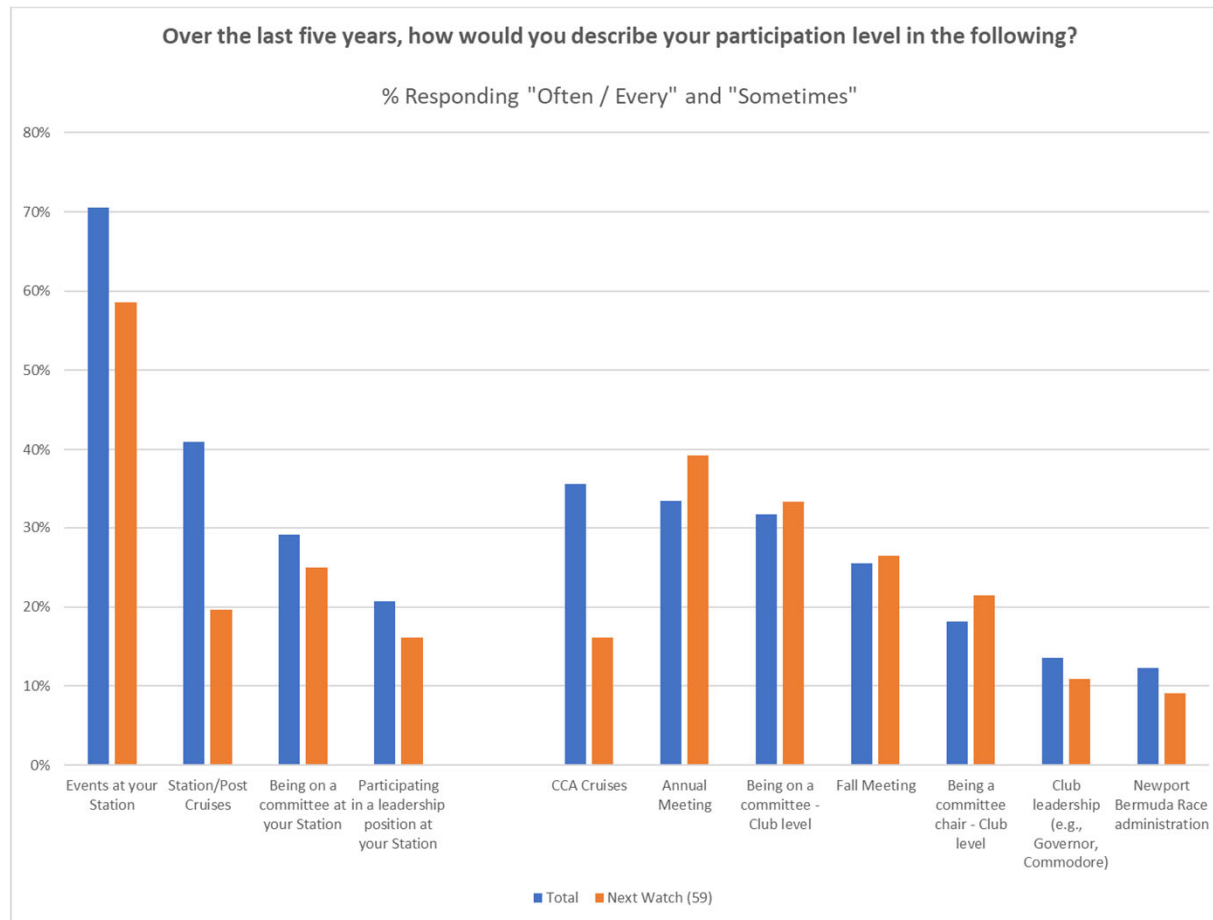


## CCA Events, Cruises and Committees: Members report highest participation in station events, station cruises and club cruises



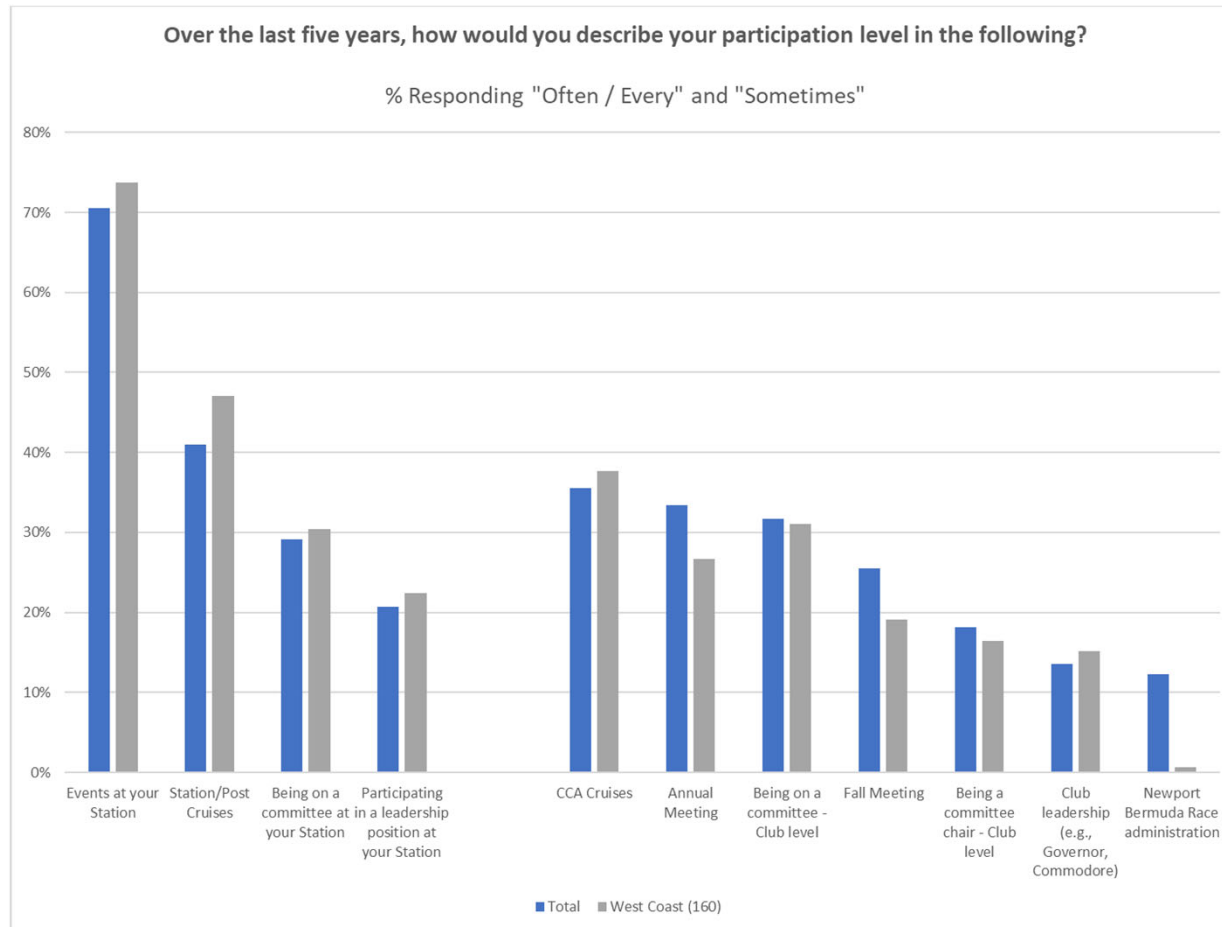


## CCA Events, Cruises and Committees:Next Watch CCA members (Age <55) report lower participation in cruises



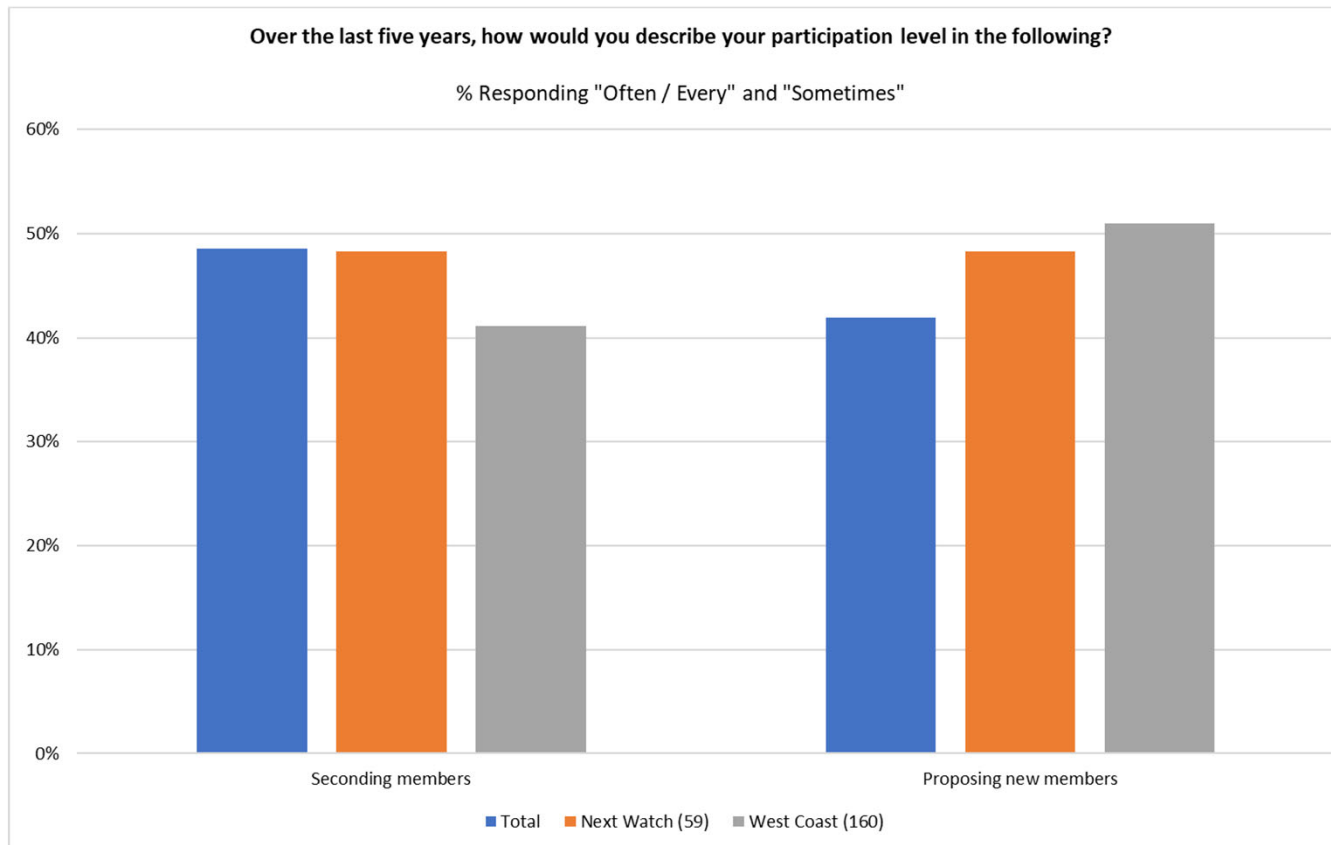


## CCA Events, Cruises and Committees: West Coast and GLS members report slightly higher participation in station activities and lower in club meetings





## Member Proposal Process: 40-50% of respondents report recent participation in proposing or seconding new members

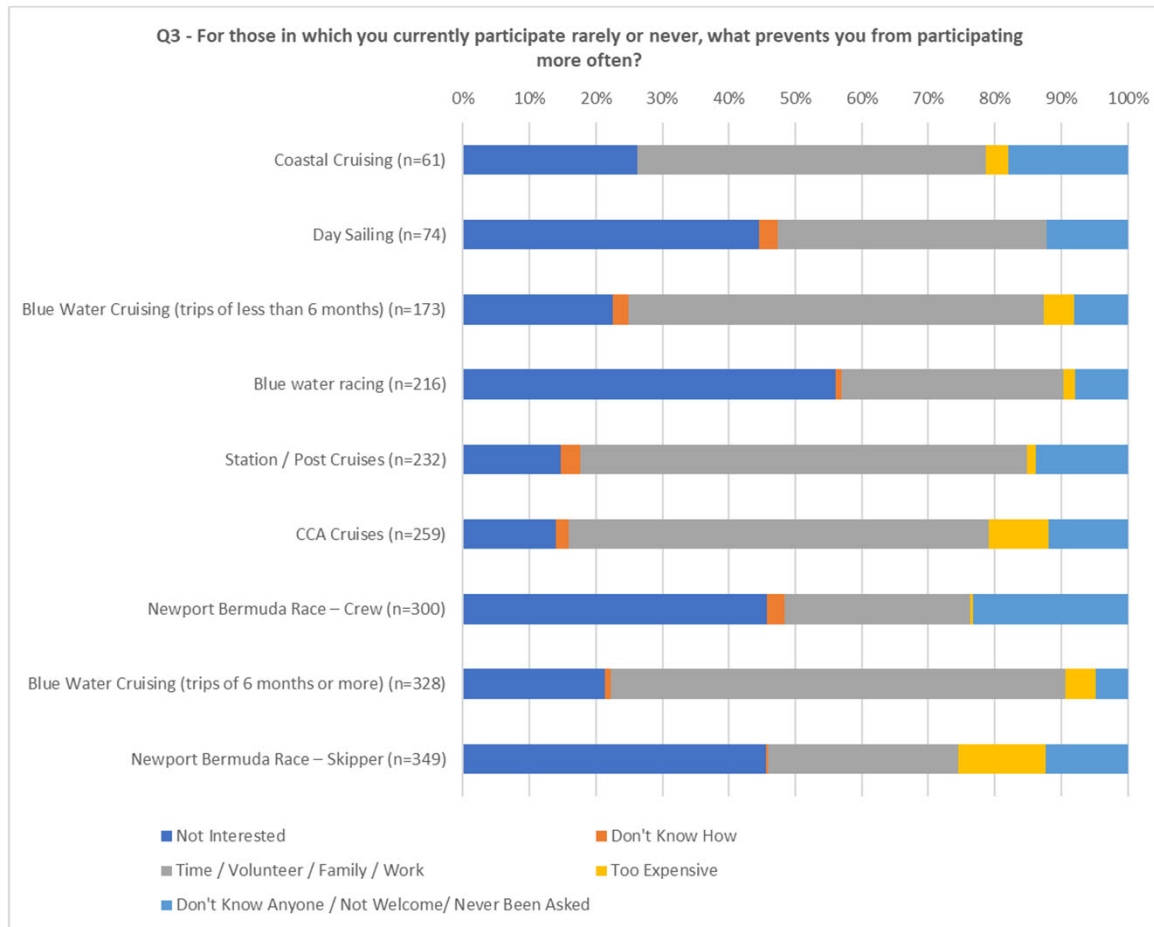






**Q3 - For those in which you currently participate rarely or never, what prevents you from participating more often?**

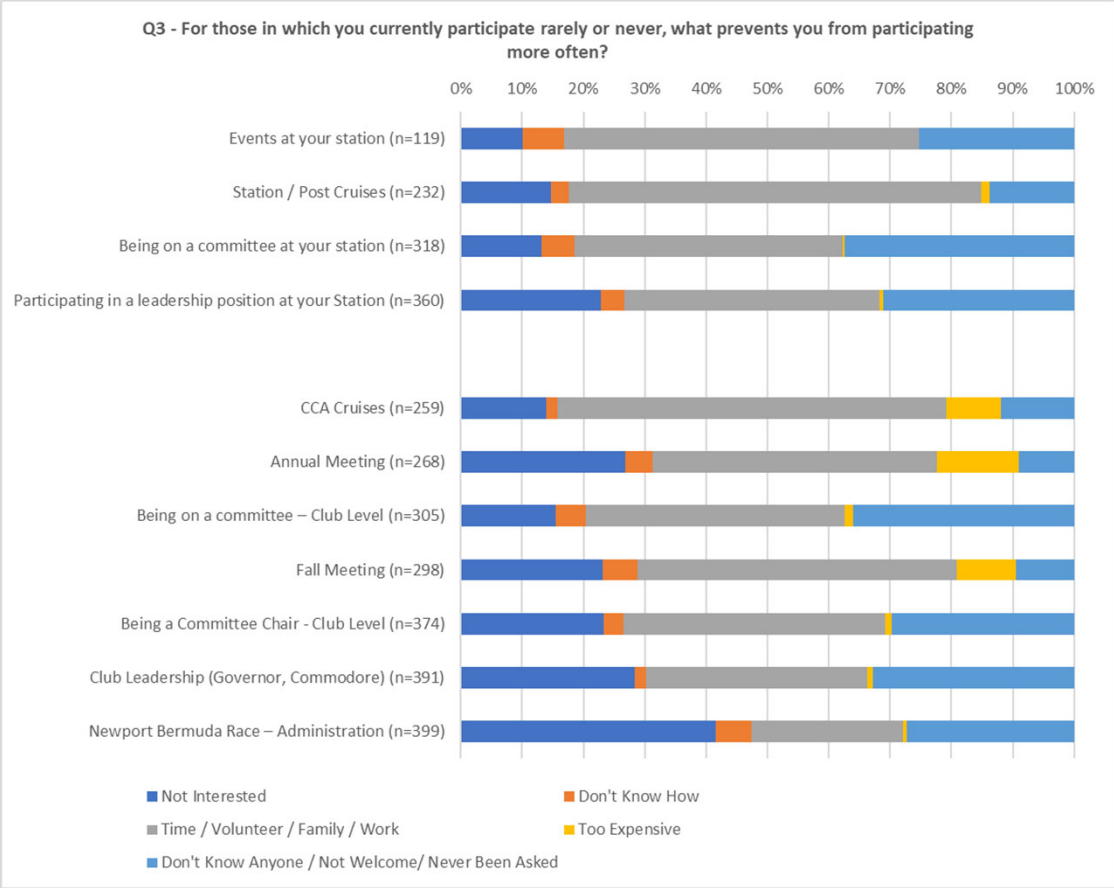
# Adventurous Use of the Sea: Lack of time, interest are primary reasons members do not participate in on-the-water events



# CCA Events, Cruises and Committees: “never been asked” is significant hurdle for committee and leadership roles



All Responders

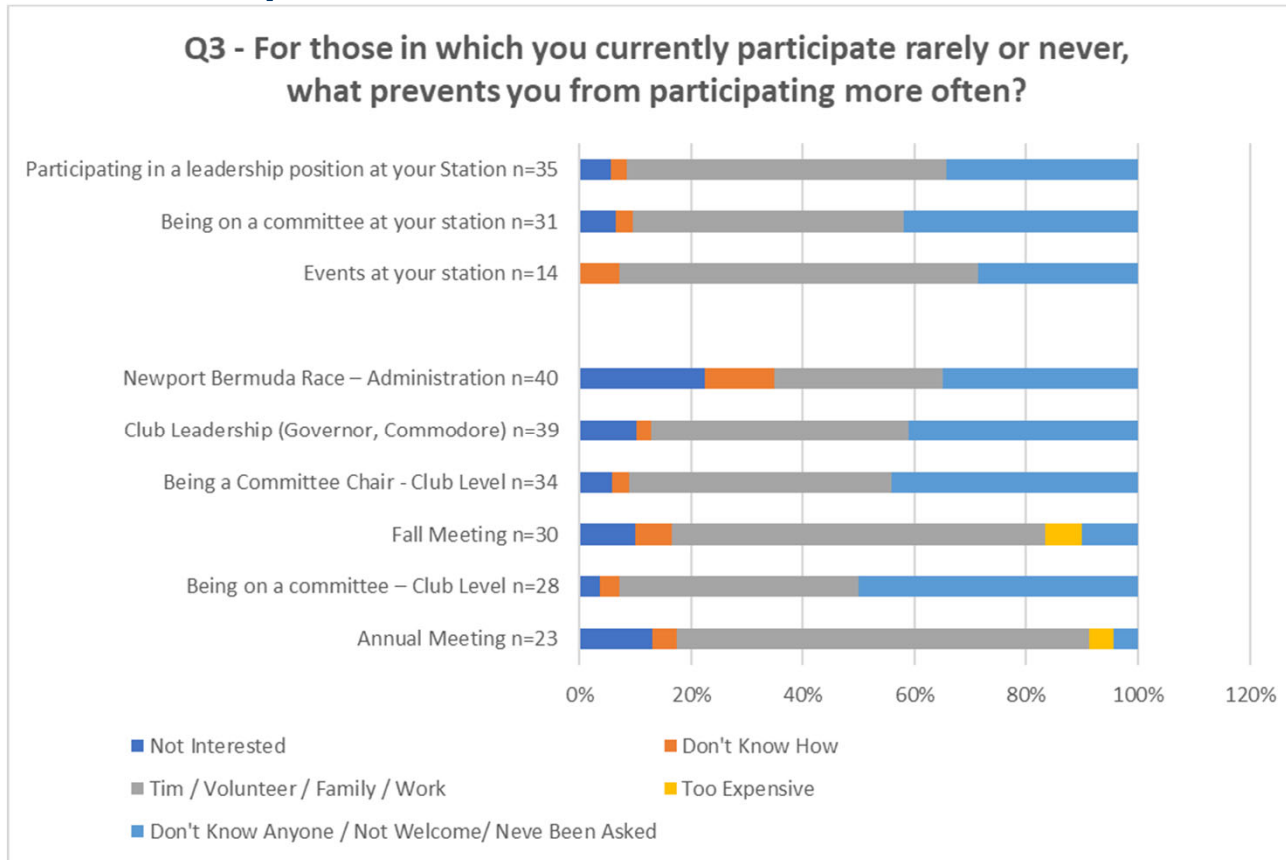


- Lack of Time is predominant hurdle
- “Never Been Asked” is significant hurdle for some categories
- “Too Expensive” cited less frequently – applies to club cruises and meetings

# CCA Events, Cruises and Committees: “never been asked” is significant hurdle for committee and leadership roles

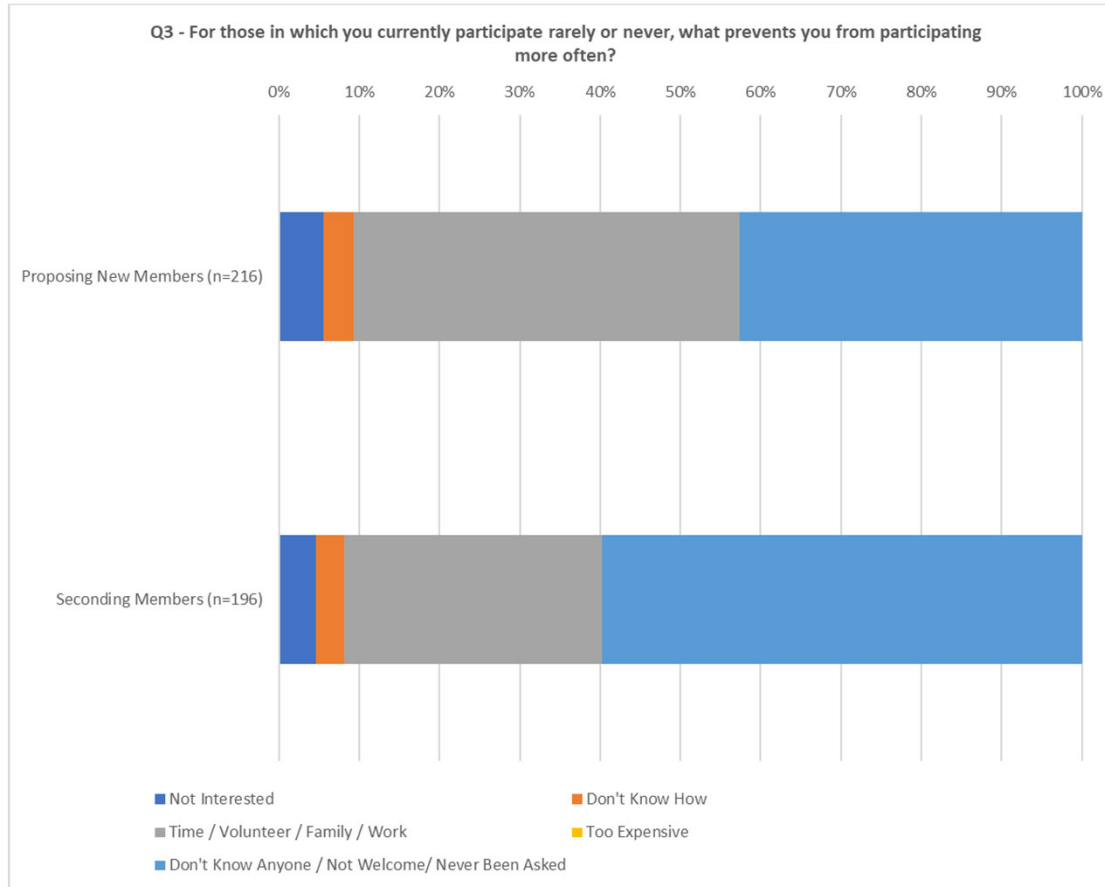


Next Watch



- Lack of Time is predominant hurdle
- “Never Been Asked” is significant hurdle for some categories

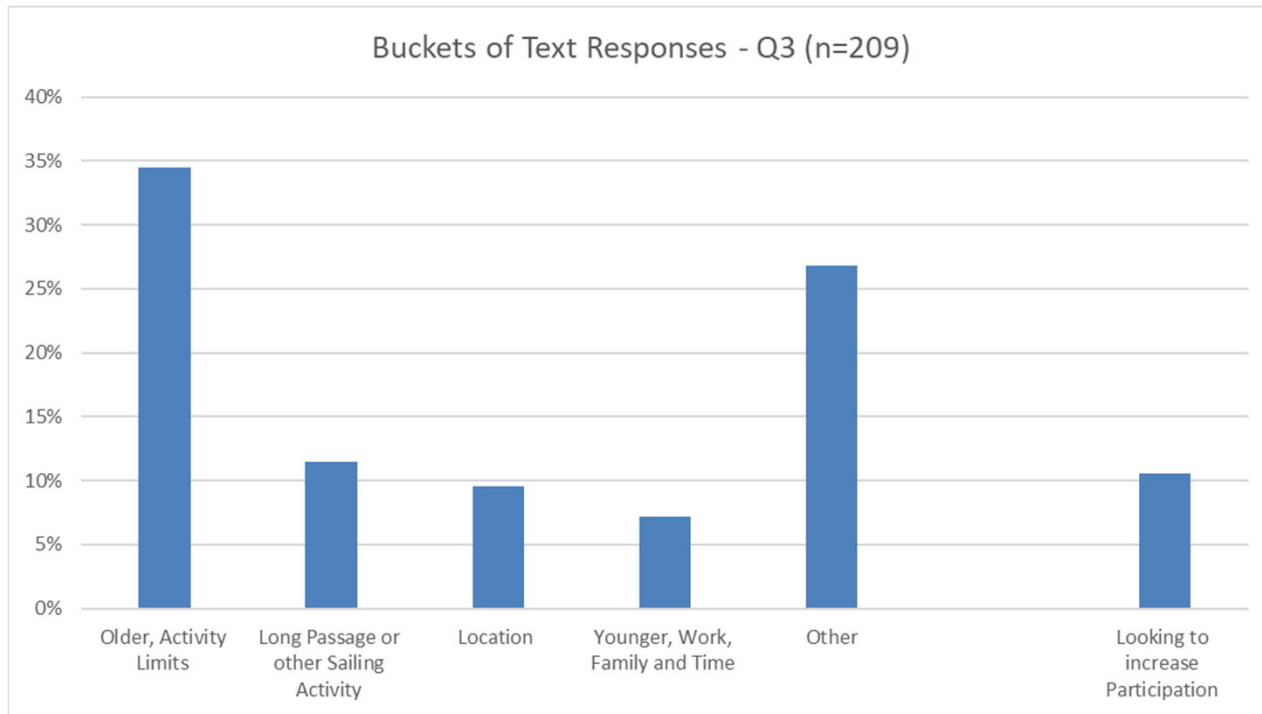
## New Member Proposal Process:



- “Lack of Time”
- “Don’t Know Anyone”



## Text Responses – Groups of CCA members whose ability to participate is limited



- Older members who no longer get on the water but who love the CCA are a significant segment of members
- Members engaged full time in voyages or sailing activities cannot participate in many CCA offerings
- Younger members cite conflicts with work and family schedules – would like to see CCA events that are shorter and during evening hours
- Many members report living far from station hubs and therefore unable to participate



## Selected comments from Members looking to increase participation

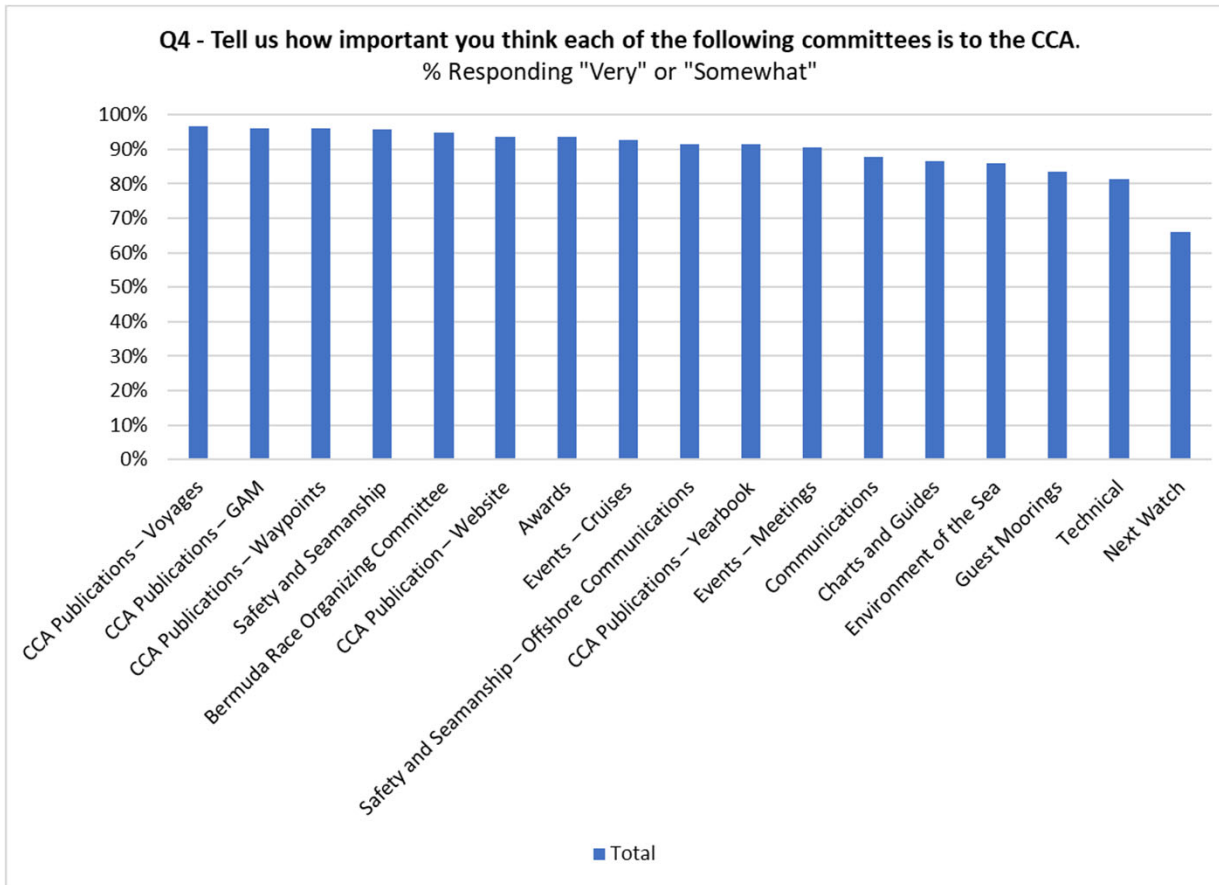
- Life Transition – looking to participate more
  - Am getting to the point where I will have more time and am eager to participate more. Failure to participate in the past has been exclusively my fault! All are welcoming and I am sure opportunities are there.
  - ... focused on stepping back from work. I have served on the board and also as fleet captain at [another club]; the latter involved the planning of many cruises, and I would be pleased to be involved in that way for the CCA.
  - I have participated in some of the topics listed ... then became involved in local club leadership for several years. Now increasing my CCA involvement again.
- New Members – looking to participate more
  - I'm a fairly new member of CCA so the opportunity to participate in some of these things has not come my way yet
  - Just getting into all this
  - I am a new member, and have not yet fully participated in Club events.
  - I am a new member and haven't had the opportunity to participate yet
- Looking for an entry point / invitation
  - I perhaps have also been a bit timid.
  - I am interested in doing committee work and once sent a note to that effect. But did not really get a response. I would participate in more cruises especially in Maine and points north in the future.
  - I'm new to [the CCA] as of a few years ago but I've not been invited to participate.



**Q4 - Tell us how important you think each of the following committees is to the CCA.**



# Survey participants report strong support for CCA Committees



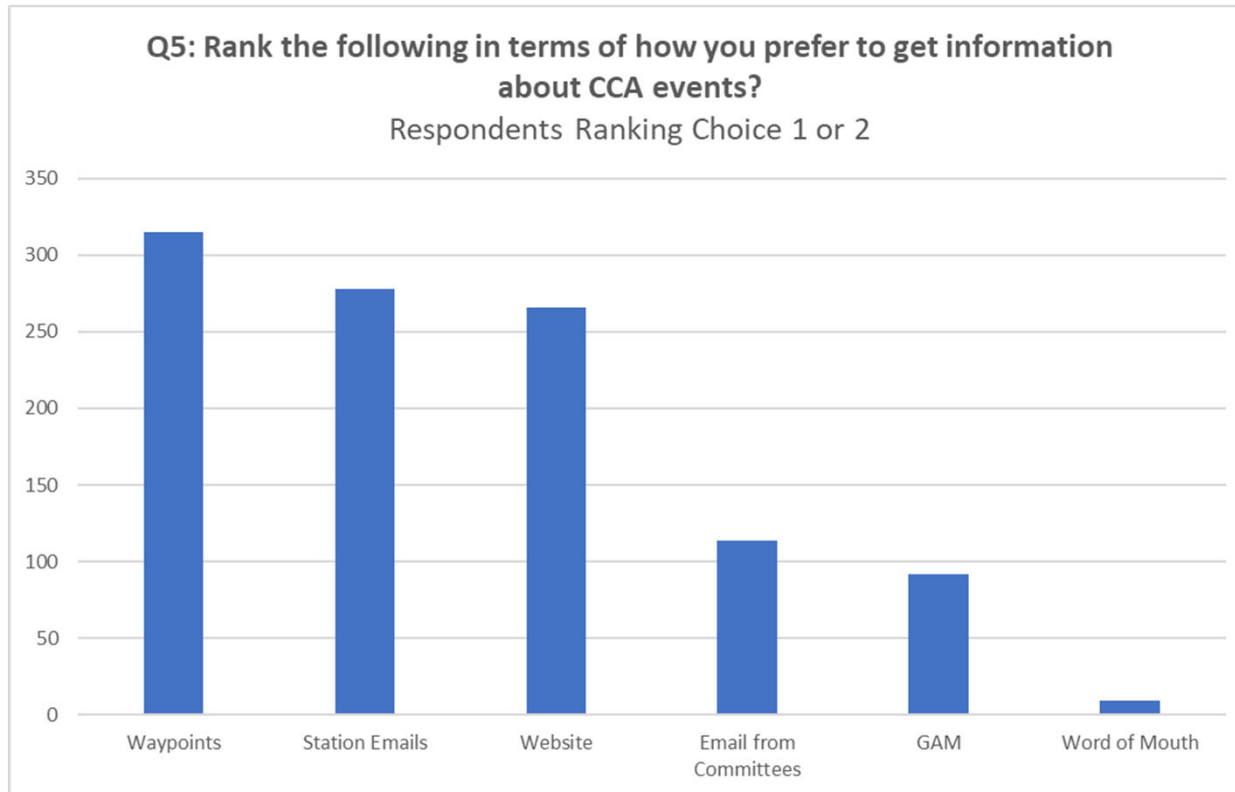
Opportunities – “I Don’t Know What This Committee Does”:

- 26% - Next Watch
- 14% - Technical
- 8% - Communications



**Q5 - Rank the following in terms of how you prefer to get information about CCA events?**

# CCA Members Prefer Waypoints, Station Emails and Website roughly equally as sources of event information.



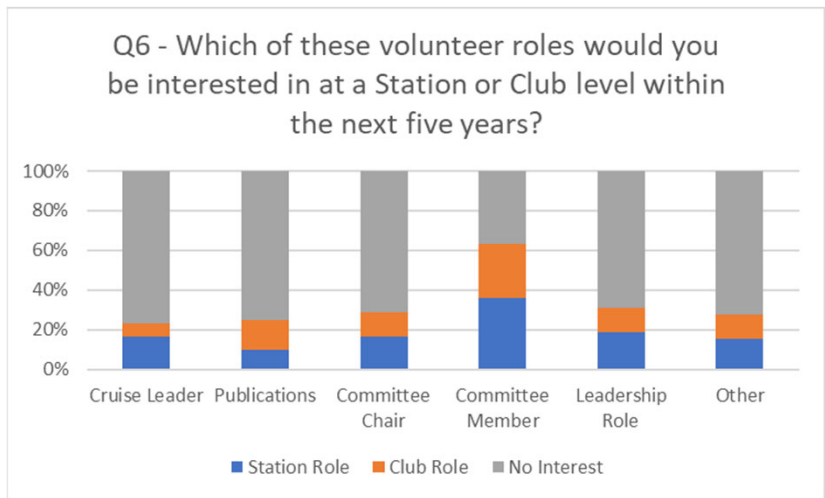


**Q6 - Which of these volunteer roles would you be interested in at a Station or Club level within the next five years?**

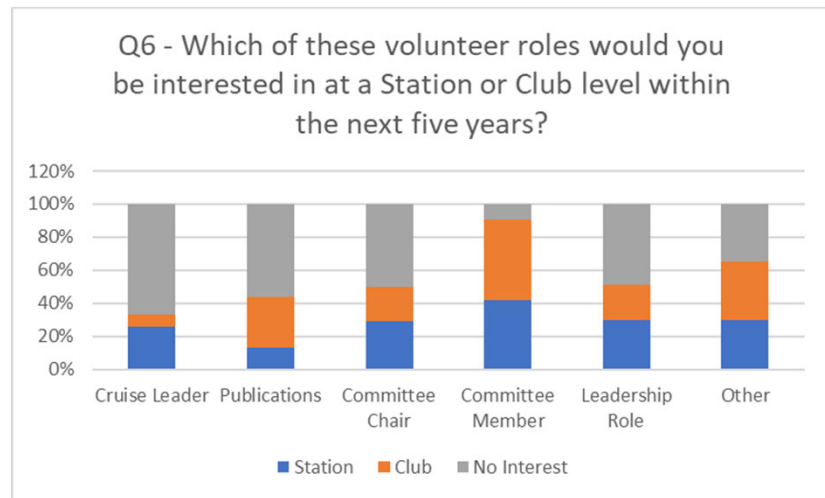


# Committee roles are the most common entry point for volunteer roles as identified by members

### All Responders



### Next Watch



Over 215 members provided contact information and indicated willingness to volunteer. Many of these are already active, but names will be provided to station and club leadership.

## Text comments

- Positive Comments
- Suggestions
- Criticisms / complaints



## LRP Next Steps

- Continue to digest messages from member survey
- Complete benchmarking of other blue water sailing clubs
- Build consensus on priorities
  - Strategic
  - Operational
- Compile report





## Vision for the Next 5-10 Years (DRAFT)

- “Steady as she goes.”
  - Continued focus on building a community of accomplished offshore sailors committed to adventurous use of the sea
  - The focus, operation and activities of the CCA will be similar to what we find today, with changes driven by responses to opportunities and our environment.
- The club’s membership standards will remain high.
  - We will be committed to maintaining high standards for sailing experience and personal character.
  - CCA Membership will continue to be a mark of distinction.
- After flattening during the pandemic, The Club will return to a pattern of slow (1-2%) annual membership growth.
  - This translates to a 2030 target of 1,515 to 1,650 members.
  - As we grow, we will focus on expanding the percentage of members that are “Next Watch” and Women.
- The CCA will increase efforts to make individuals in the Blue Water sailing aware of the CCA, what its activities are, and the level of seamanship required for membership.





## Strategic Challenges for the CCA

- Sustaining growth in our membership
  - Maintaining current high membership standard
  - Returning to post-pandemic growth of at least 1% per annum over time
- Increasing Awareness of the CCA Among Blue Water Sailing Community - Perpetuating and enhancing CCA "Brand"
  - To reinforce "value" in eyes of members
  - Consistency of messaging about the CCA
  - Indirect impact on new member recruiting – “that sounds like a club I would want to join”
- Ensuring adequate volunteer resources to sustain
  - Current volunteer operating model
  - growth and the quality of CCA “product” – publications, events, committee work in the world
- Increasing diversity in our membership
  - Youth
  - Women
  - Geography



**Thank You!**