



Port Douglas Combined Club Members' Survey Results 2009

Prepared by: The 20/20 Group

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Executive Summary

The Port Douglas Combined Club mailed out surveys to all its members in August 2009. A total of 381 completed surveys were returned representing an 18% response rate.

Almost half those who responded had been members for three years or less. Another 39% had been members for between four and ten years and the balance of 12% had been members for over 11 years.

FNQ residents accounted for 70% of completed surveys, with Victorians accounting for 17% and those from NSW 8%. Within FNQ, most were from the Port Douglas area (79%) and 13% were from Mossman area.

Overwhelming (83%) respondents did not think the Club's alcohol policy was too soft.

In terms of meals, 70% thought that the Club provided a good range of meals. Just under half (43%) indicated they would like to see an all day menu but a quarter disagreed with having an all day menu.

In terms of meal prices, 53% disagreed that the meals were too expensive and 51% agreed that the club had the best value meals in town – 25 per cent didn't agree and 25 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed.

One third of members reported missing out on table and just over half think members should be able to book a table for 4 or more people. Two thirds think only members should be able to book a table.

Only about a quarter of respondents thought they would benefit from a wireless hot spot and almost three quarters responded they would be unlikely to use the service.

Most respondents (75%) said they would like to see the Club grow in numbers. Improving meal prices and menu choices; improving facilities and services and ensuring the Club's history and its relevance the community were maintained were rated the top three priorities to sustain growth.

Two thirds felt the Club was doing enough to keep members informed of events, but 30% wanted the Club to do more to communicate with members.

Email was the most popular choice for method of communication with 47% of respondents choosing this option. One third would prefer communication by post.

Most respondents (71%) thought that the Club should not seek corporate sponsorship.

The discount offered on meals and drinks was the most common response as to the best benefit from membership.

Most respondents thought the Club should form reciprocal rights arrangements with other like-minded not for profit clubs.

Half of the respondents would not support a members' only night once a month. One quarter was supportive and one quarter did not respond.

When asked how the Club could improve its services by far the most mentioned topic was dining – including meals and table availability (or unavailability as seems to be the case). There were some great ideas put forward and generally comments were positive. There were also a few criticisms about particular issues and all comments, both positive and negative, have been grouped by subject matter and are listed in full in the main report.

1. Introduction

The Port Douglas Combined Club mailed out surveys to all of its members in August 2009. A total of 381 completed surveys were returned. With 2060 members, this represents an 18% response rate.

This report sets out the results which were tabulated by The 20/20 Group.

2. Respondent Characteristics

Almost half of the respondents had been members for three years or less.

No. of Years A Member	No.	%
One	87	23%
Two	48	13%
Three	48	13%
Four to Ten	149	39%
Eleven to Twenty	35	9%
Over Twenty	12	3%
No Answer	2	1%
Total	381	100%

Postcode: Respondents Place of Residents

FNQ residents accounted for 70% of completed surveys, with Victorians accounting for 17%.

Residence	No.	%
FNQ	265	70%
VIC	65	17%
NSW	30	8%
Other Qld	8	2%
SA	4	1%
TAS	4	1%
WA	2	1%
Overseas	3	1%
Total	381	100%

Within FNQ, most were from the Port Douglas Area as shown below:

FNQ	No.	%
Port Douglas ¹	209	79%
Mossman ²	34	13%
Nthn Beaches	11	4%
Other FNQ	6	2%
Cairns	5	2%
Total	265	100%

¹ Postcode 4877 includes Craiglie, Killaloe, Mowbray, Oak Beach, Port Douglas and Wangetti

² Postcode 4873 includes: Bamboo, Bonnie Doon, Cape Tribulation, Cassowary, Cooya, Dagmar, Daintree, Dedin, Diwan, Finlay Vale, Forest Creek, Cape Kimberley, Lower Daintree, Miallo, Mossman, Mossman Gorge, Newell, Noah, Rocky Point

3. Alcohol Policy

Overwhelming, respondents did not think the Club's alcohol policy was too soft with 83% responding NO to Question 2: Is the Club's Responsible Service of Alcohol Policy Too Soft?

Response	No.	%
No	318	83%
Yes	43	11%
Don't Know	4	1%
No Answer	16	4%
Total	381	100%

4. Meals

Essentially, 70% of respondents thought that the Club provided a good range of meals.

Response	No.	%	%
There is a good range of meals available			
Strong Disagree	8	2%	
Disagree	24	6%	6%
Neutral	82	22%	
Agree	162	43%	
Strongly Agree	105	28%	70%
Total	381	100%	

Just under half of the respondents (43%) indicated they would like to see an all day menu. One quarter disagreed with having an all day menu.

I'd like to see an all day menu			
Strong Disagree	44	12%	
Disagree	51	13%	25%
Neutral	124	33%	
Agree	78	20%	
Strongly Agree	84	22%	43%
Total	381	100%	

In terms of the price of meals, over half of the respondents (53%) disagreed that the meals were too expensive.

The meals are too expensive			
Strong Disagree	79	21%	
Disagree	124	33%	53%
Neutral	96	25%	
Agree	38	10%	
Strongly Agree	44	12%	22%
Total	381	100%	

In terms of having the best value meals in town, one quarter disagreed, one quarter neither agreed nor disagreed and 51% agreed with the statement that the club had the best value meals in town.

The Combined Club has the best value meals in town			
Strong Disagree	48	13%	
Disagree	48	13%	25%
Neutral	91	24%	
Agree	108	28%	
Strongly Agree	86	23%	51%
Total	381	100%	

5. Table Availability for Diners

One third of members reported missing out on tables during the past two months. Just over half of the respondents (55%) think members should be able to book a table for 4 people, rather than the current policy which is to take bookings only for 10 or more diners.

Two thirds (64%) think only members should be able to book a table.

Question 4 Have you missed out on a table over the past two months?

Response	No.	%
No	197	52%
Yes	127	33%
Haven't been to Club for a meal	54	14%
No Response	3	1%
Total	381	100%

Question 5A Currently the Club only takes bookings for 10 or more. Do you think this should be reduced to four?

Response	No.	%
Yes	211	55%
No	164	43%
No Answer	6	2%
Total	381	100%

Question 5B Do you think only members should be able to book a table?

Response	No.	%
Yes	244	64%
No	131	34%
No Answer	6	2%
Total	381	100%

6. Wireless Hot Spot

Only about a quarter of respondents thought that the Club would benefit from providing a wireless hot spot. Almost three quarters responded they would be unlikely to use the service.

Response	No.	%
No	280	73%
Yes	92	24%
No Answer	9	2%
Total	381	100%

7. Growth

Three quarters of respondents said they would like to see the Club grow in numbers

Growth	No.	%
Yes	285	75%
No	93	24%
No Answer	3	1%
Total	381	100%

Those who wanted growth were asked to rate in order of importance, what areas the Club should focus on over the next 3 – 5 years. A total of 313 respondents responded, which included 31 members who didn't want growth, but did rate what they thought the Club's main focus should be over the next few years.

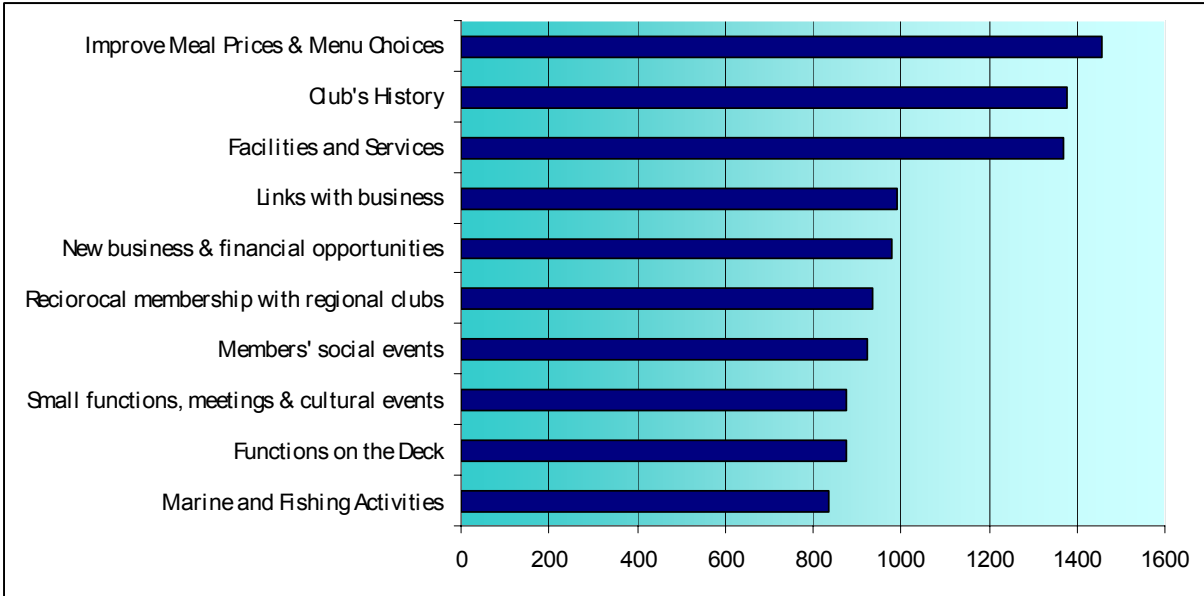
However, before looking at the results, it should be noted that Question 8 was interpreted in two quite different ways.

- Group A: 172 members (56%) looked at each item individually and gave it a rating of between 1 and 10.
- Group B: 141 members (45%) rated the areas against each other – listing them from most to least important. With this group, whilst the survey listed 1 as least important and 10 as most important, analysis of the results indicated that a few members may have treated 1 as most important and 10 as the least. It is not likely to be a significant number so as to skew results, however it needs to be noted – particularly for future wording of surveys.

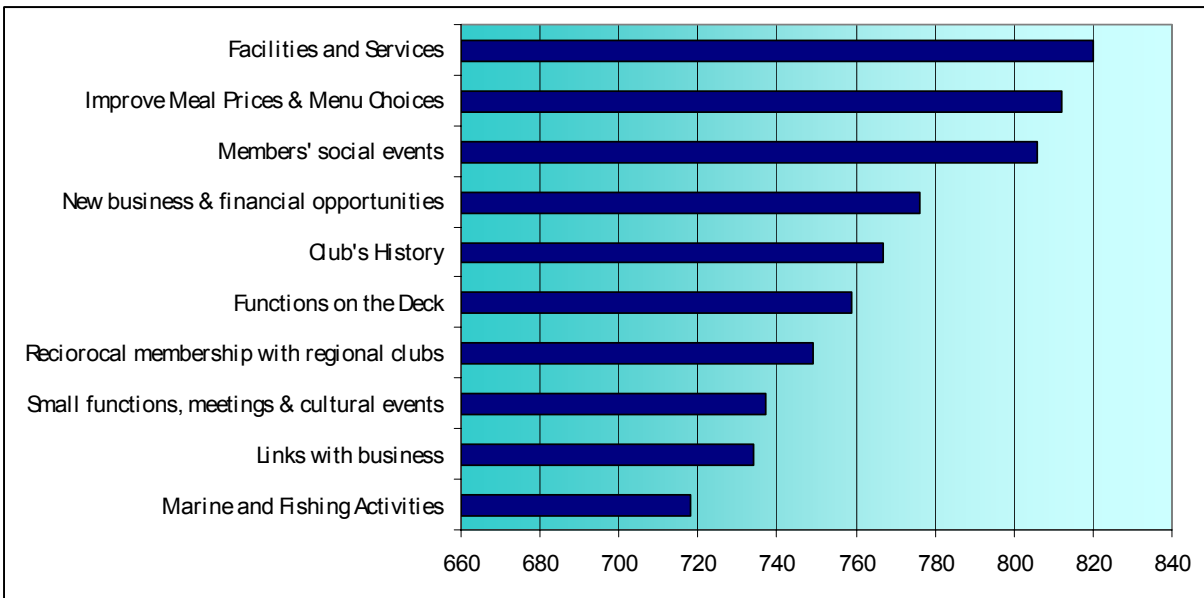
It is recommended that for next year's member survey, this question be worded differently so as to be clearer and remove any ambiguity.

The results however are still useful, as the data from each of the two groups has been collated and reported on separately (and compared). Refer over the page for Figures 2 & 3.

Group A – 172 Respondents



Group B – 141 Respondents



Rating in the top three priorities for both was:

- improving meal prices and menu choices; and
- facilities and services

Rating in the bottom three was:

- marine and fishing; and
- promoting the Club for small functions, meetings and cultural events

Another way of looking at the responses is to total up how many times each area was rated most important. This shows the top three as being facilities and services, the Club's history and its relevance to the community and meals and prices.

Main Focus for Club over next 3 – 5 years	No. of times rated 10 i.e. Most Important
Facilities & Services	118
History & Relevance to Community	102
Meals & Prices	100
Investigate new business and financial opportunities	55
Reciprocal Rights	44
Links with local business	38
Marine & Fishing	31
Increase deck functions	31
Social Events	28
Promote for small functions/ meetings cultural events	27

8. Communication to Members

Two thirds of respondents felt the Club was doing enough to keep members informed of events, with 30% wanting the Club to do more to communicate with its members.

Response	No.	%
Yes	253	66%
No	115	30%
No Answer	13	3%
Total	381	100%

Email was the most popular choice for method of communication with 47% of respondents choosing this option. One third (34%) would prefer communication by post. One respondent suggested SMS text message as a form of communication.

Response	No.	%	Comments
Email	179	47%	
Post	130	34%	
No Preference	69	18%	
Other	1	0%	SMS Text
No Response	2	1%	
Total	381	100%	

9. Corporate Sponsorship

Most respondents (71%) thought that the Club should not seek corporate sponsorship.

Response	No.	%	Comments
No	271	71%	
Yes	78	20%	
No Answer	32	8%	
Total	381	100%	

Of the 20 per cent that did support corporate sponsorship, suggestions included:

- Banks [2]
- Ergon [1]
- Coles [1]
- Real Estate Agents [4]
- Brewers [9] Yellowtail [1]
- Airlines [4] incl. Qantas - 3
- Coach Companies [2] incl. Sun Palm - 1
- Local Businesses [2]
- Local Retailers [2]
- Tourism operators [11] incl. Quicksilver - 8
- Accommodation Operators [8] incl. Mantra, Junipers & Peppers

10. Membership Benefits

The discount offered on meals and drinks was the most common response as to the best benefit from membership.

Meal discounts were mentioned 173 times with discount on drinks mentioned 172 times. Many respondents nominated the meals and drinks discounts together (133).

The Club's birthday offer was mentioned by 57 respondents and the Christmas party by 24.

Other membership benefits mentioned included the ability to tie up boat, the atmosphere, views and location of the club, the low cost of membership and special events and social occasions such as Melbourne Cup and Mothers Day and the entertainment nights. Comments are listed below:

- able to tie up boat
- atmosphere & views / pleasant environment
- entertainment nights
- fair price policy
- free member events
- good venue / great social venue
- happy hour
- location
- low cost of membership
- meal prices being realistic / prices / saving money
- member activities
- members only events
- membership renewal benefits
- mothers day, Melbourne cup
- no benefit while can't get a seat
- no signing in
- quality & price
- rum
- social occasions
- special event discounts
- views & meals are great

11. Reciprocal Arrangements

Most respondents thought the Club should form reciprocal rights arrangements with other like-minded not for profit clubs.

Response	No.	%
Yes	234	61%
No	127	33%
No Answer	20	5%
Total	381	100%

Of the 234 members who would like to see reciprocal rights, just over half selected local and other Queensland, or both. Just under half suggested interstate clubs and just over a third suggested overseas clubs as potential for reciprocal rights.

Response	No.	% of those who want reciprocal rights
Local	130	56%
Other Queensland	135	58%
Interstate	111	47%
Overseas	84	36%

12. Members' Only Night

Half of the respondents would not support a members' only night once a month. One quarter were supportive and one quarter did not respond.

Response	No.	%
No	191	50%
Yes	97	25%
No Answer	93	24%
Total	381	100%

13. Suggestions to Improve

Respondents were asked how the Club could improve its services to members and the community. The comments have been grouped by subject matter and are presently essentially in full, although duplications have been removed.

By far the most commented about subject was dining. Respondents comment on either the availability of tables (or more accurately the unavailability of tables), the range of meals, price and the quality.

13.1. Table Reservations

With 30% of members unable to get a table for dinner, it was not surprising that a number of the comments for improvements were about table reservations. Some offered solutions:

- allow members to book for 6pm, if they don't show give to walk-ins
- suggest for bookings, tables of 4 for members & 6 for visitors, minimum on special occasions can't book table if less than ten
- stop accepting non-locals as members, charge tourists a lot more than members for meals, this would give us more tables
- visitors arriving late arvo taking best tables before members arrive-members reserve
- improve seating arrangement for dinner, guests waiting longest should get next table
- reservations for members only would be great
- reserve a number of tables on balcony for members, stop visitors lobbing at 5pm taking up space not ordering food
- if people book and fail to show up, maybe refuse booking in future
- members should be able to book during the week
- if a table is reserved for 6pm, can it be used between 4 and 6pm for drinks?
- allow members to reserve a table
- cap members and visitors in order to cope with tables
- Friday is members' night impossible to get a table for meals and draw

13.2. Meals

Meals were the most commonly mentioned and general comments were:

- ensure kitchen provides good, inexpensive, non exotic meals
- get a decent kitchen going
- employ new chef
- use more local produce and fish

Comments regarding meal prices were:

- keep food prices down
- meals prices have gone up & quality down
- bring back cheaper meal for members only to get more local support
- keep menu prices reasonable, it is a club not a PD restaurant
- lower meal prices
- increase members discounts on meals and drinks
- reduce prices
- don't charge too much
- higher meal discount for members
- regular special meal deals like other clubs

Comments regarding the range of meals were:

- Broaden menu choice
- I miss the Asian salad
- changing menu is important with light meals not always large heavy meals
- from lunch till dinner snack bar / snack bar between lunch and dinner
- simple all day menu
- get a new chef, improve meals, a roast is not meat and salad
- alternatives to chips and salad
- improve meals, healthier menu
- less fried food
- more options for vegetarians
- offer healthier menu choices {more grain bread, less fried food}
- special meals once a month like Chinese or Italian
- opening for brekkie would be great
- breakfast at the club would be fantastic!

Comments regarding the quality of meals were:

- meals have gone downwards
- maintain meal quality
- meals to be served hot at table
- quality of meals needs to be maintained at high level
- there used to be a members only meal daily
- remember it's a club not a restaurant when deciding the menu
- improve meal quality
- slight improvement in meal quality
- food not good, quality meals at club not restaurant prices

Other comments related to smoking, children, music, liquor and service to the community.

13.3. Children

- control kids under 12, noisy under new sail
- extend kids menu
- ask parents to be responsible with kids
- provide kids area away from dining

13.4. Music

- background music only, keep band level low at functions
- have more live music
- music too loud

13.5. Smoking

There were several comments about the smoking area including relocating the smokers' area, making the Club non-smoking, increasing the smokers' area, and keeping the smoking area as is. Comments were:

- address smoking location
- smoking area does not provide smoke free environment
- new smoking area away from food
- make it a non smoking club / no smoking everywhere
- make smokers area larger
- larger area for smokers
- put smokers on lower deck
- members should have own area, other than smoking area
- relocate smokers area
- smoking area on deck
- keep smoking area as is
- turn smokers area into lounge to read and enjoy a drink
- get rid of smoking area

13.6. Liquor

- always have a reasonably priced sparkling wine
- better wines
- bring back Hahn Super Dry
- signs to say what beer is on tap

13.7. Service to Community

A few members wanted to see the Club keep up its support of community groups.

- keep up good work and service to community / keep looking after community
- well done, keep up support of community groups
- support for community groups is wonderful service to continue
- look after local community
- remember clubs are about community, we are the only general club

13.8. Suggestions and Ideas

Many respondents offered specific suggestions and ideas:

- bingo would be good
- better flood lighting for car park and entry door
- blind at front to keep sun out
- a meet and greet person
- a separate receptionist for members ordering meals
- members need sticker for car as non members using car park
- have a bus door-to-door service
- provide free/cheap transport especially on event nights
- may be one other raffle night
- coach outings
- provide for 5 year membership
- provide free coffee for members only
- more info needed on candidates for elections
- provide hat hooks
- refurbish toilets
- provide keno and tab
- quarterly newsletter
- take Visa and MasterCard for payment
- be sun smart and allow hats, this is 2009
- Pull up clear blinds on southern side to keep out cold wind in winter
- need more protection from southerly wind
- should be able to wear hats
- buy a club fishing boat and make available for hire by members
- sunshade uncomfortable between 4.30-5.30pm
- parents room
- more advertising of upcoming events
- need more staff
- like to see Christmas party return to what it was
- links with Mossman golf club
- there are 400 ex servicemen in the area - become RSL sub branch
- several chairs padded for comfort
- special short term projects, personal to community
- over years raffle numbers have increased but prize remains the same
- family membership
- remove tacky advertising from new deck view is better
- make tables fixed - keep in orderly lines
- advertise in areas of hotels on what is on etc
- further advertisement to maximise profits
- membership fee \$20 full & social
- club should be involved in maintaining integrity & history of waterfront

Some respondents were critical of particular issues. A few members thought that members were being neglected at the expense of tourists and visitors.

- better member service, too much focus on visitors
- think more about members than you do for tourists
- too many tourists allowed – no longer a club for locals
- priority firstly to members

Other critical comments were varied.

- lost its atmosphere, food too expensive and not to standard
- prices becoming too high / prices getting too high
- seeing the same drunks on the veranda every day makes me sick; have sent ten meals back
- staff excellent, manager remote and unfriendly
- teach the staff to be civil
- be more friendly
- get new management, new cook, its our club not a business
- get a new manager
- I think it is bad that committee members are seen continually drunk at club
- don't let politics get in the way of a good club
- don't try to be all things to all people - i.e. pretentious
- adopt a more proactive policy

And a few people didn't want to see the Club change:

- don't get too big and spoil ambience
- keep the running of club simple by maintaining status quo
- I like it the way it is, please don't make it too flash, we come to avoid that
- stay as is

14. Nice Things

To finish on a positive note, when asked if members had other remarks in terms of improvements, 39 respondents commented that the Club was wonderful as is. This from one member: "We congratulate the club executive committee and manager on the wonderful improvements to the club completed this year."

Other comments were:

- doing a wonderful job / doing a good job
- excellent club now, we love it
- doing excellent effort at present
- club is doing well, maintain it
- I am very pleased with club
- I like it the way it is, friendly
- great club
- love the new deck / deck is great
- great staff, service and meals
- very happy with current club
- very satisfied
- compliments on deck and sail
- you guys are great
- you are doing fine
- it works well
- recent increased patronage shows committee doing good job
- it's a great community club
- club fills a need with excellent staff
- I think club gives back to locals very well
- I think you are doing great job as is
- love club as is
- continue the good work being done now
- maintain the great service
- stay as relaxed and fun environment
- the club has gone ahead in leaps and bounds over last 13 years, keep it up
- we are interstate visiting members, always look forward to returning
- like it the way it is, visit twice a year, enjoy casual atmosphere and local staff
- stay cool
- retain the charm
- keep providing good service
- the club is superb
- the club's current character is what makes it endearing
- the club is one of the positive features that attracts us to Port each year
- the club is doing a great job already

15. Conclusion

Having an annual survey is just one method for members to have input into how the Club is run, and its future priorities. The Port Douglas Combined Club is always happy to hear feedback from members as to how it can improve services, or hear from members with suggestions as to how it can contribute more to the local community.

It is the Club's intention to do an annual survey of members and this will enable it to track its performance over time.

The executive summary of this Members' Survey Report is sent to all members and a full copy of the report is posted on the Club's website.