AUSTRALIAN
CAMPS ASSOCIATION
More people outdoors more often

PRICING AND OCCUPANCY SURVEY

REPORT

2016 – 2017 FINANCIAL YEAR

Index

Introduction

The Pricing and Occupancy Survey has been conducted by the Australian Camps Association (ACA) since 2006. It was conducted every second year from 2006 to 2012. This Survey is the first completed since 2012.

The Survey informs member practice by benchmarking prices, capacities and occupancy rates. It also identifies any relevant industry trends and flags areas where members may benefit from further professional development and support via the ACA and other avenues.

The data and information derived from the Survey is made available to all ACA members and to government bodies making investment and policy decisions that impact on the camping sector.

This Survey covered the 2016 – 2017 financial year and was conducted from November 2017 to January 2018.

As in previous Surveys, questions were grouped in sections:

Section 1	General business information
Section 2	Capacity and occupancy rates
Section 3	Marketing and sales
Section 4	Rates, activities and charges
Section 5	Employment
Section 6	Financial data

Additional supporting information is provided in appendices attached.

All individual responses remain confidential. This Report is only published in aggregate form expressing percentages, totals, averages, etc. Individual site information is not published and will not be released to any member, external body or organisation.

This Report may be used in future presentations made by the Australian Camps Association to members, government bodies and funding agencies.

The Australian Camps Association sincerely thanks all of those members who contributed to this Report.

Pete Griffiths

Chief Executive Officer

The Australian Camps Association

February 2018

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Definitions of terms used in this Survey

Activity capacity	The number of guests that you can accommodate, or provide a service for, on any given day (ie not overnight)
Activity day	The number of guests on site on any given day (ie not overnight), usually associated with activity providers and/or day programs
ATAP	Australian Tourism Accreditation Program
Bed night	The number of beds occupied by paying guests
Booking	Any individual booking agreement or contract paid for and delivered
Client	The person, group or organisation which books or pays for your facilities or services
FTE	Full Time Equivalent, the total number of staff employed expressed in full time loads – eg two staff each employed on a 0.5 basis = 1 FTE
Full program	All of the program or activities are conducted by your staff
Guest	Anyone who visits your site or uses your services as the result of a booking
Led activities	Activities that are managed by your staff
Led journey program	Off site hiking and camping managed by your staff
NARTA	National Accommodation Recreation and Tourism Accreditation
Occupancy Rate	The percentage of available paying beds occupied by paying guests in a given year
Shared program program	Your staff and client staff/clients share in the delivery of the
Supported journey program	Guests are accompanied by one of your staff, or are met at least once a day at activity venues or overnight stop points with food or other support
Retention	Bookings that return to your site year on year

Executive Summary

Surveys were sent in hardcopy by post to 189 member camps and adventure activity providers. The Survey was open from November 2017 to Jan 2018. 47 responses (45 camps and two outdoor activity providers) were received, a response rate of 25%.

This is considered to be a better than average response (a 10 – 15% response rate is recognised as average for this type of Survey).

Some respondents chose not to (or were not able to) answer all or part of some questions, particularly those relating to financial information. This has meant that some question's data sets are incomplete. Where this is the case we have provided analysis only of those responses that have included complete data for that particular question.

Full details follow in the body of the Report but below are some general trends that have emerged since the last Survey (2012):

- The school market continues to grow, although this growth is slight (2 – 3%) and only in the government school sector. Camp participation from independent schools continues to decline (independent secondary school participation in particular has been consistently falling since 2010).

- There is strong growth in the family and faith based (note: this doesn't necessarily mean Christian) segments. There are indications that inbound bookings (those originating from overseas visitors) are beginning to gather pace (although the actual numbers remain relatively low).

- The number of camps offering ensuited rooms is increasing in response to real or perceived demand. This is indicative of a more competitive and discerning market place. Other indicators of this include increased capital investment, increased marketing spend and increased bed capacity.

- Marketing, insurance, energy and telephone/internet costs are increasing as a percentage of overall operating costs. Catering costs are not increasing as a percentage of overall operating costs and staff wage percentages are in fact down on 2012 figures, perhaps a reflection of the increasing proportion of casual staff compared to part and full time staff.

- With regards to activities offered, there is significantly less natural abseiling, hiking (day and overnight), horse-riding and canoeing offered than in 2012. There is growth in the ropes family of activities (high ropes, giant swings, bouldering walls, flying foxes) and in bush survival type activities. Other activities have experienced greater variation but these tend to be specialised and uncommon (eg caving, snowsports). Some new activities have popped up since the 2012 Survey, including geocaching, kitchen gardens, SUP, community engagement and cooking.

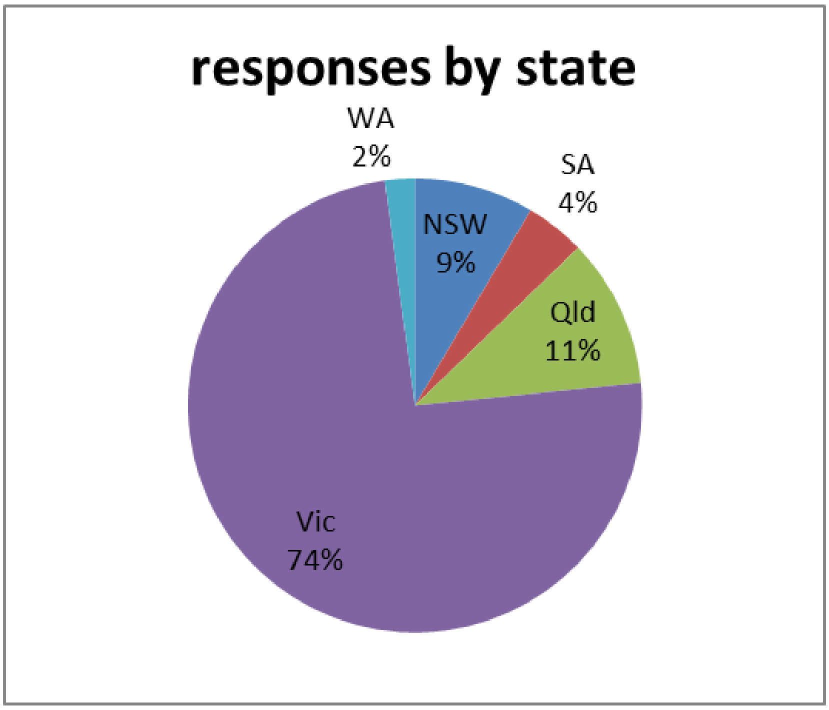
- The average number of enquiries received by residential camps in a 12 month period is 300. On average, about 4% (ie 12 enquiries per camp) of these enquiries are derived from the ACA's booking enquiry service. (~500 enquiries are received by the ACA p.a. and are then distributed to member camps).

Section 1 - General business information

Responses to questions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.5 are related to specific contact details and are not published.

1.4 Business location

State	Respondents
NSW	4
South Australia	2
Queensland	5
Victoria	35
Western Australia	1
TOTAL	47



This response remains consistent with previous surveys.
No responses were received from Tasmanian members.

1.6 Nature of the business

Nature of Business	Respondents
Tent sites with some cabin accommodation	4
Mainly cabins (12 or less beds per building) with ensuite bathrooms	14
Mainly cabins (12 or less beds per building) without ensuite bathrooms	15
Mainly dormitories (13 or more beds per sleeping area)	12
Outdoor activity provider using subcontracted facilities	2

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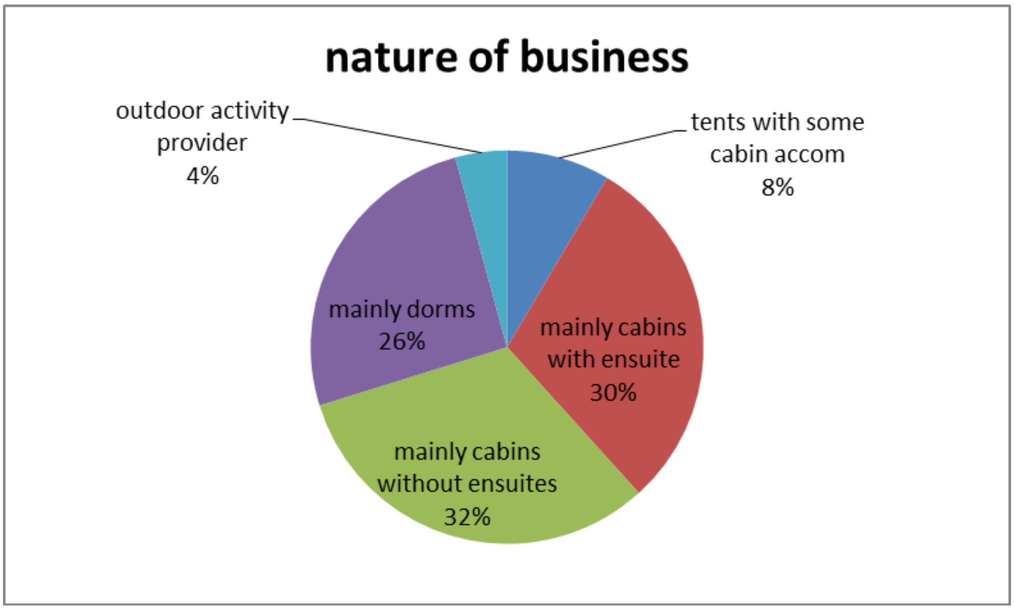
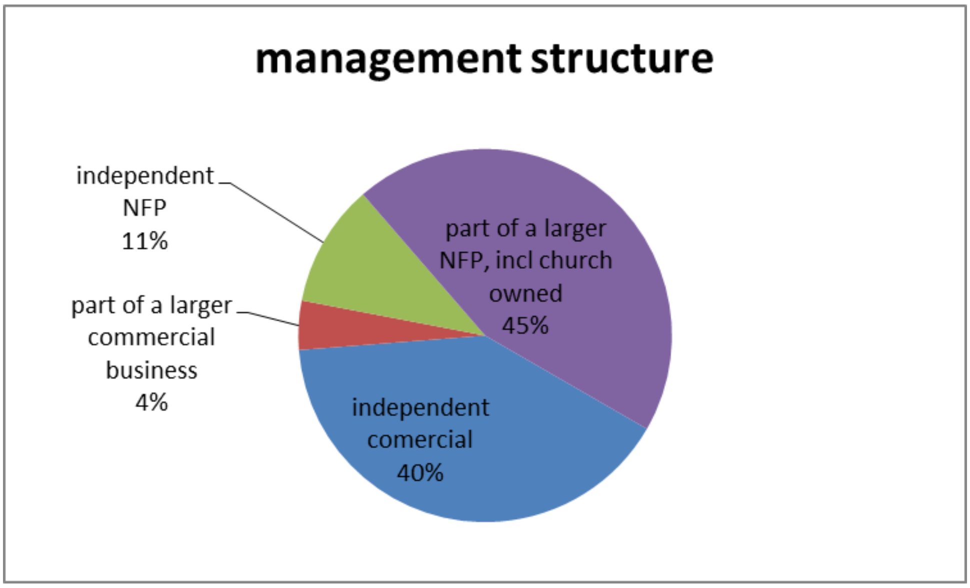


Comparison with previous Surveys shows a clear trend towards ensuite bathroom accommodation (up from 13% in 2012 to 30% in this Survey). There is a corresponding reduction in non-ensuite accommodation (down from 50% in 2012 to 32% in this Survey).

The remaining categories remain relatively static.

1.7 Business type

Business type	Respondents
Independent commercial operator	19
Part of a larger commercial entity	2
Independent Not For Profit (NFP)	5
Part of a larger NFP entity, including church owned	21



This Survey has shown a marked increase in responses from independent commercial operators (0 responses in 2012, 17% in 2010).

1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 Accreditation and wider sector engagement

The following table lists respondent's affiliations with external organisations or accreditation schemes.

Organisation / scheme	Respondents	% of Respondents
Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)	38	81%
ATAP Camping and Adventure Activity (CAA) module	36	77%
National Accommodation, Recreation and Tourism Accreditation (NARTA)	8	17%
Both ATAP and NARTA	7	15%
Christian Venues Association	8	17%
Outdoor Council of Australia	2	4%
Outdoors NSW	3	6%
Outdoors Victoria	8	17%
Outdoors Queensland	4	8%
South Australian TIC	2	4%
Victorian TIC	10	21%
Other (WATIC, OEA, QTIC, OEA, tourism bodies, etc)	8	17%

Section 2 – Capacity and occupancy rates

2.1 Overnight accommodation

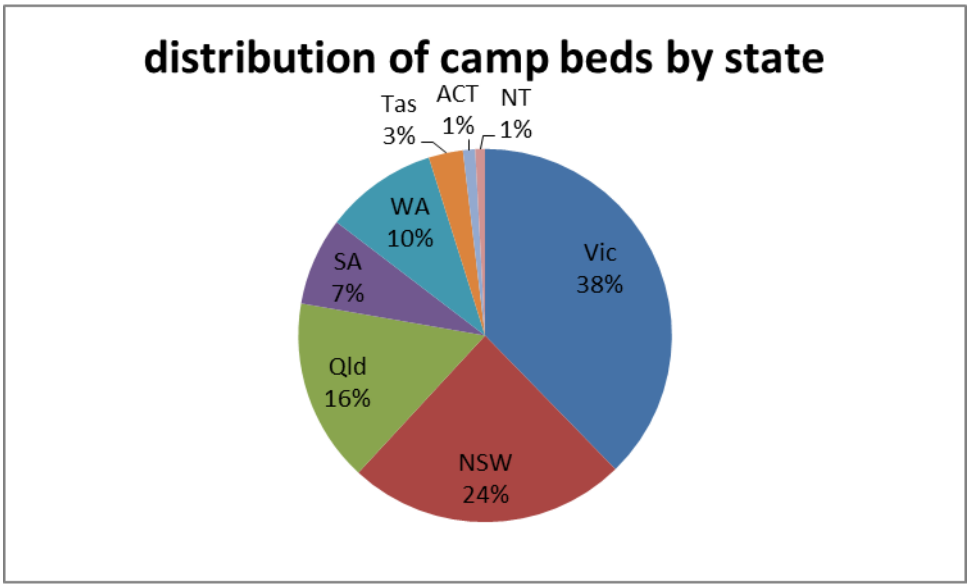
96% of respondents provide overnight accommodation (the remaining 4% were outdoor activity providers).

2.2 Bed capacity

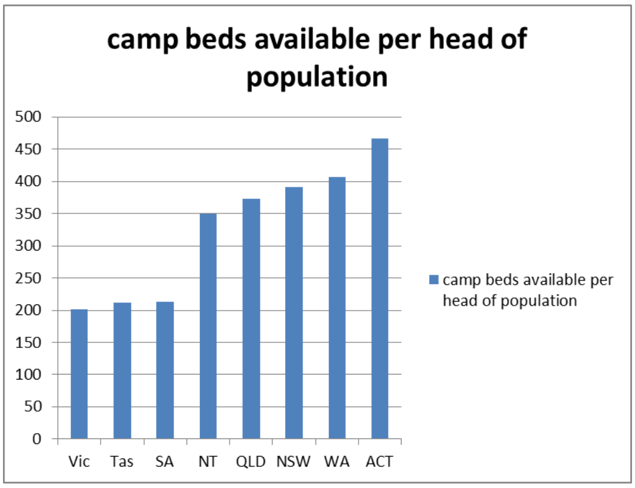
Respondent's bed capacity ranged from 42 to 1300, with an average of 206. Some of the higher bed capacity totals include fixed tent style accommodation (ie not free camping, but not permanent buildings either), and this has impacted on the data.

If we remove the highest value as a result, the average bed capacity is 176. This is up from 134 in 2012.

Multiplying the ACA's best estimate of the number of residential camps (facilities that provide group accommodation, catering and led outdoor activities on site) in Australia (see Appendix 3) by an average of 176 beds gives the sector a total bed capacity of 83,072.



It is also possible to compare the number of people per camp bed available in each state:



The above graph effectively illustrates the comparative potential for growth in beds per state (bearing in mind geographic and demographic variations).

Analysed by business type:

Business type	average beds
Independent commercial operator	237
Part of a larger commercial business	288
Independent Not For Profit (NFP)	152
Part of a larger NFP, including church owned	184

2.3 Occupancy rate

Respondent's occupancy rates ranged from 5 to 81%, with an average of 33% (very slightly up from 2012).

Business type	average occupancy
Independent commercial operator	34%
Part of a larger commercial business	21%
Independent Not For Profit (NFP)	22%
Part of a larger NFP, including church owned	35%

2.4 Day usage of sites.

Usage of sites as a single day venue ranged from 0% to 20% with an average of 3%.

Section 3 – Marketing and sales

These questions explored enquiry levels and enquiry source, conversion rates, barriers to booking, client types, retention rates and reasons for cancelling.

There are a number of respondents who were not able (some may have been unwilling) to answer all questions, which indicates that this area (marketing and sales) is one that could use further marketing PD.

3.1 How many enquiries did you receive during the 2016 – 2017 FY?

38 responses (81%)

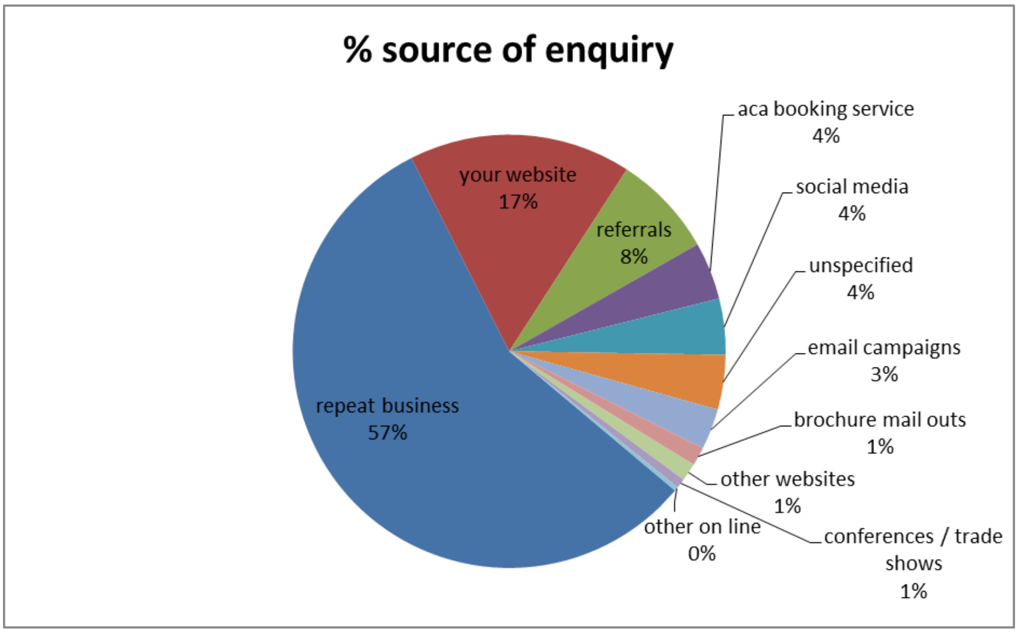
Responses ranged from 12 to 1,426, with an average of 300.

3.2 Enquiry source

42 responses (89%)

Enquiry source by ranking

Source	% of enquiries (average)
Repeat business	56.0 %
Website	16.6%
Referrals	7.7%
ACA booking service	4.3%
Social media	4.2%
Unspecified (eg cold calls)	4.1%
Email campaigns	3.0%
Mail outs	1.4%
Other websites	1.3%
Conferences / trade shows	0.7%
Other on line	0.3%



3.3 Actual bookings made

42 responses (89%)

Responses ranged from 8 to 644, with an average of 148.

3.4 Conversion rate

38 responses (81%)

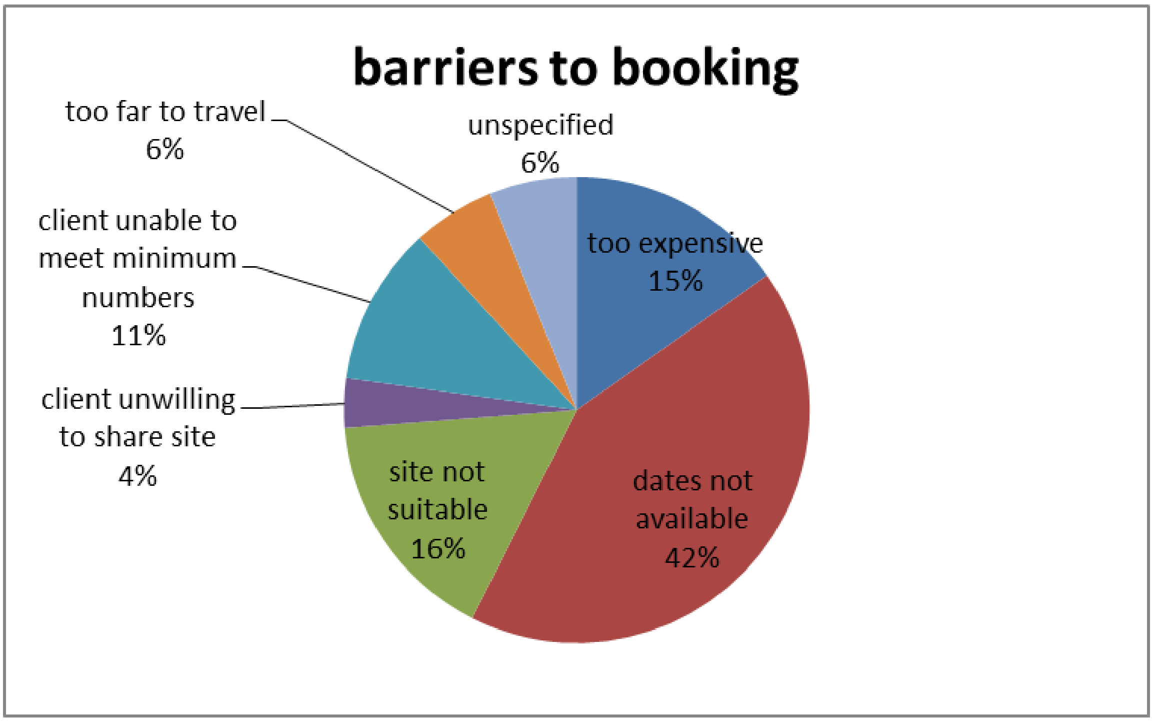
Responses ranged from 11% to 92%, with an average of 55%.

3.5 Reasons for not converting the enquiry into a booking

45 responses (96%)

Barriers by ranking

Rank	Reason
1	Dates not available
2	Site not suitable
3	Too expensive
4	Client unable to meet minimum numbers
equal 5	Unknown / too far to travel
6	Client unwilling to share site



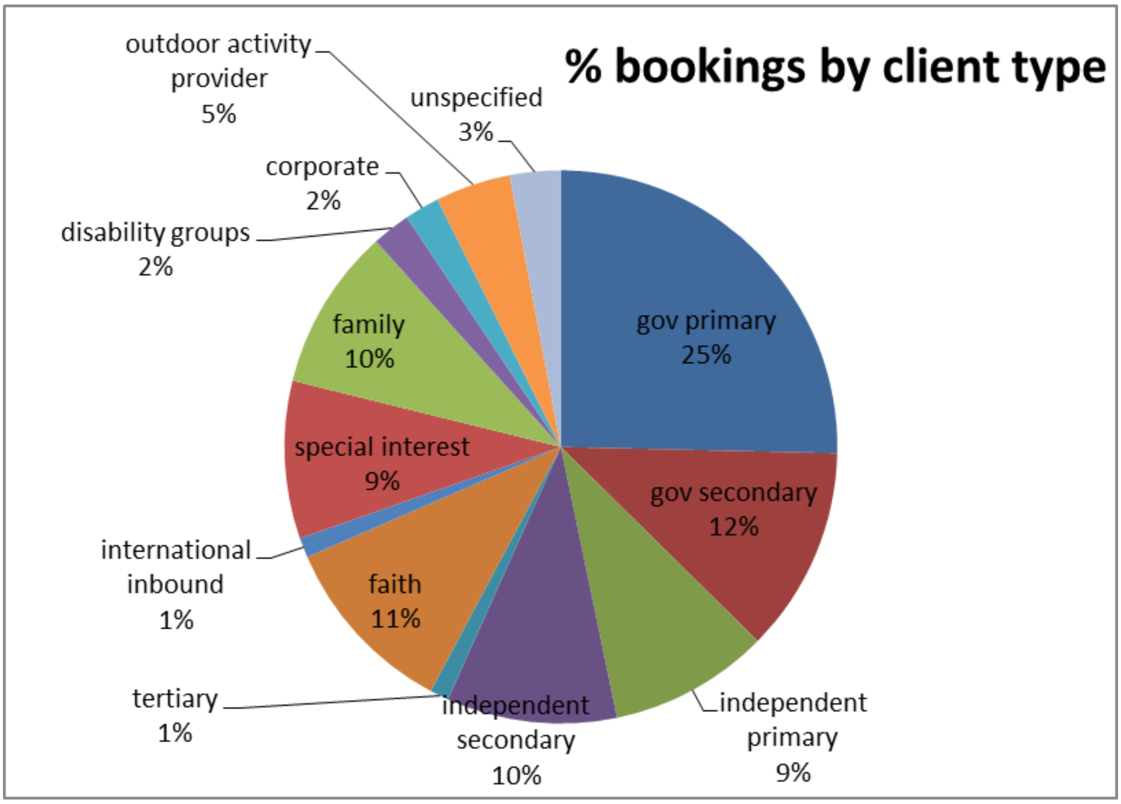
3.6 Client type

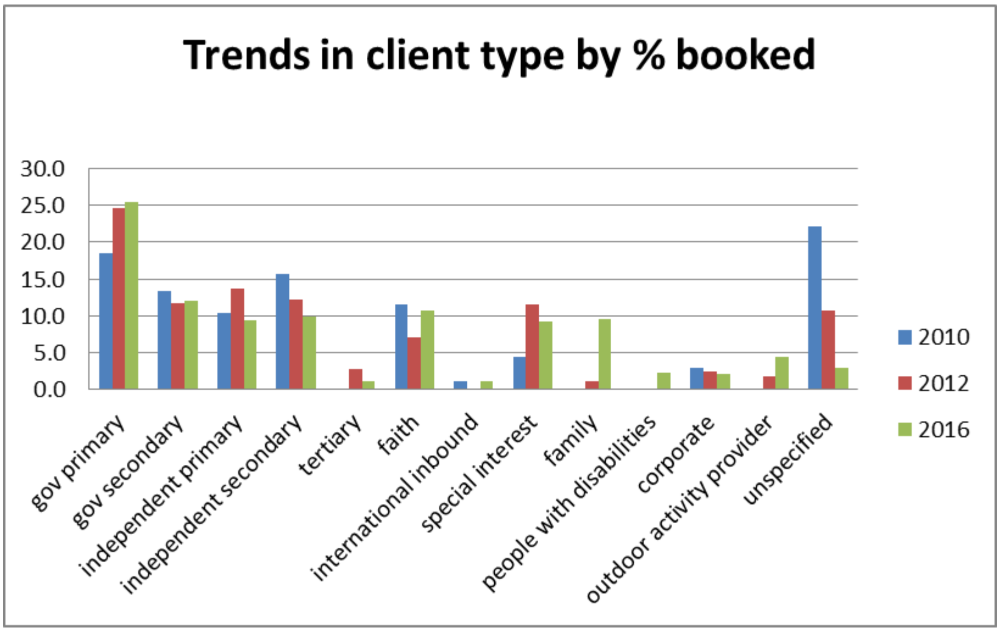
43 useable responses (91%).

Note that not all sites are open to all user groups (some camps cater to schools only, some cater for community groups only, depending on their ownership and mission).

Client type by ranking

Rank	Client type
1	Government primary school
2	Government secondary school
3	Faith
4	Independent secondary
5	Independent primary
6	Family
7	Special interest
8	Outdoor activity provider
9	Unspecified
10	People with disabilities
11	Corporate
12	Inbound international
13	Tertiary

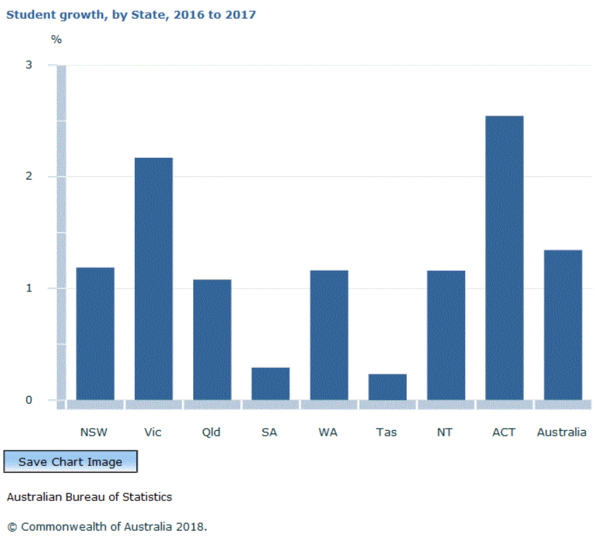




While it remains true that the bulk of business continues to be derived from the school sector (56.7%), this is down from 62.3% reported in 2012. In particular, independent primary schools are down 32% and independent secondary schools are down 18% since 2012.

There was a slight observed growth in school bookings in government primary schools (up 3% since 2012), and government secondary schools (up 2% since 2012).

This overall result may be a result of an observed increase in regulation / risk management in schools generally, but is surprising given the growth in enrolled students reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics[1], particularly in Victoria which showed the greatest increase in enrolments for 10 years.



[1] http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4221.0 , see Appendix 1 for more details

ABS statistics indicate that while school enrolments are growing, enrolments in independent schools have experienced their third straight year of decline (albeit very slow) while paradoxically the number of independent schools is rising = more independent schools with smaller cohorts. At the same time independent school participation in camps has continued to decline for the third consecutive P and O Survey period.

Client types showing the most growth since 2012 are bookings by family groups (up 690%), external outdoor activity providers (up 150%) and faith groups of all denominations (up 50%). There was a statistically large increase in inbound business but the overall numbers remain small.

Reported bookings made by tertiary and special interest groups have dropped since 2012.

Pleasingly, the number of reported bookings that came from an unknown source has dropped significantly, which we hope is an indication that camp operators are now better informed about their businesses and are thus better able to target their marketing spend.

3.7 School group retention rate

44 responses (94%).

Responses ranged from 25% to 100%, with an average of 79%

3.8 Community group retention rate

32 responses (68%).

Responses ranged from 0% (a camp that works only with school groups) to 100% (a camp that works only with community groups), with an average of 50%. This is naturally lower than school retention as community group bookings are often one-offs (eg weddings, re-unions, etc).

3.9 Groups cancelling after making a booking.

45 responses (96%).

Responses ranged from 0% to 20%, with an average of 4%. This is consistent with the results reported in the 2012 survey.

3.10 reasons for cancellation

44 responses (94%).

See table and graphs on following page for data.

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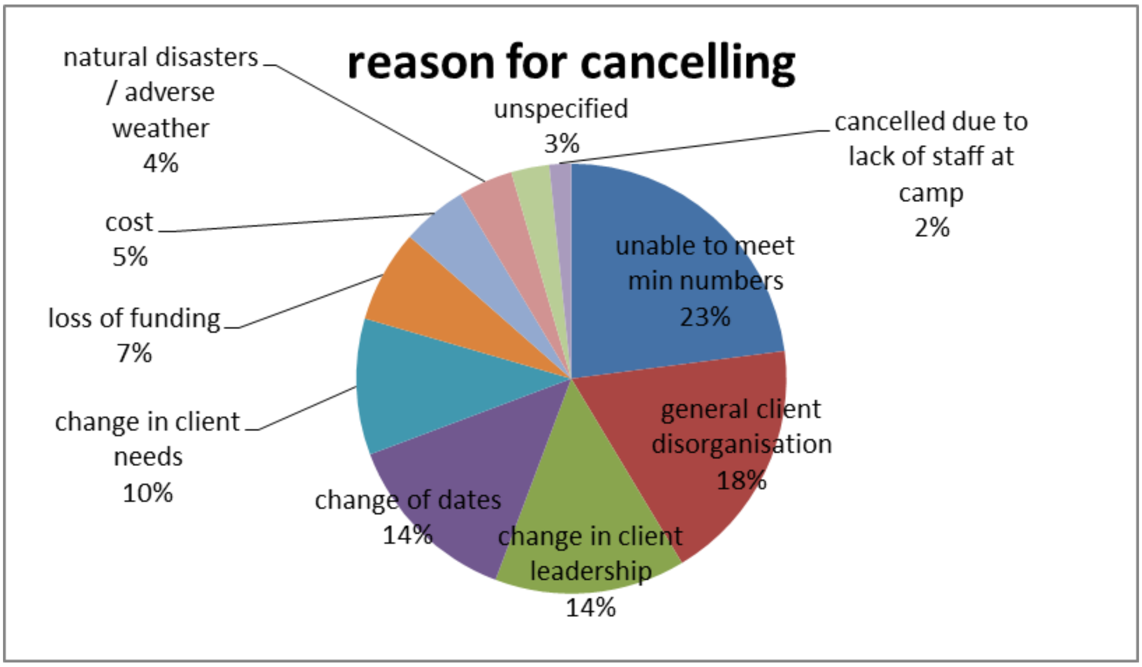
Cancellation reason by ranking

Rank	Reason
1	Unable to meet minimum numbers
2	General client disorganisation
equal 3	Change of dates / change in client leadership
4	Change in client needs
5	Loss of funding
6	Cost
7	Adverse weather
8	Unspecified
9	Cancelled by venue due to lack of resources – eg staff



It is difficult to draw too many comparisons with the 2012 survey responses, except to note that cost / lack of funding as a reason for cancelling has dropped from 17.9% of the total to 12%, and that issues around client disorganisation (generally and unable to meet minimum numbers) has dropped from 62.1% to 41% - but still ranks as the largest factors in cancellations. This is consistent with results from surveys conducted in 2010 and 2008.

Section 4 Rates, charges and activities

Catering: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4

- 91% of respondents offer full catering.
- 68% of respondents offer a self-cater option.
- 31% of bookings request self-catering.
- 43% of respondents applied different charges for adult and child catering.

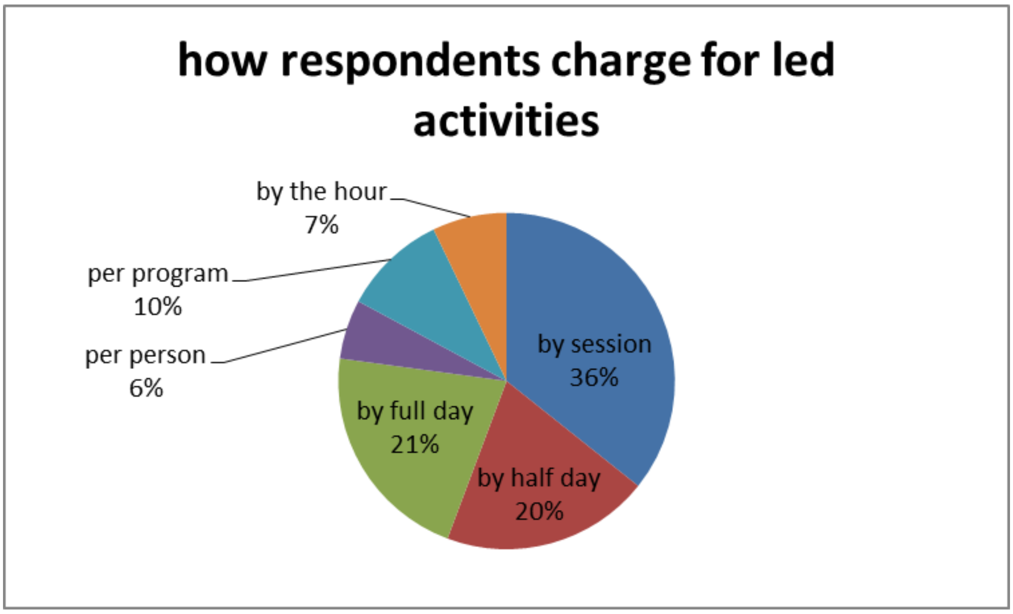
Charges: 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7

Item	Average charge (ex GST)	% diff from 2012 Survey
Full catering, adult rate, one bed night (three meals)	$96	+28%
Full catering, adult rate, two bed nights (three days, seven meals)	$189	+50%
Self-cater per single bed night	$46	+40%
Self-cater per weekend	$94	+9%
Camping on site	$22	-12%
Day visit	$8	- 38%

Program provision: 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, and 4.13

- 89% of respondents offered led activities
- 66% of respondents offer a shared (combined camp staff and teacher / leader facilitated) program delivery model
- 13% of respondents offer a journey option (ie camping off site)
- 70% of respondents offer separately chargeable led activity support
- An average of 64% of clients request led activities

4.12 Charges for led activities

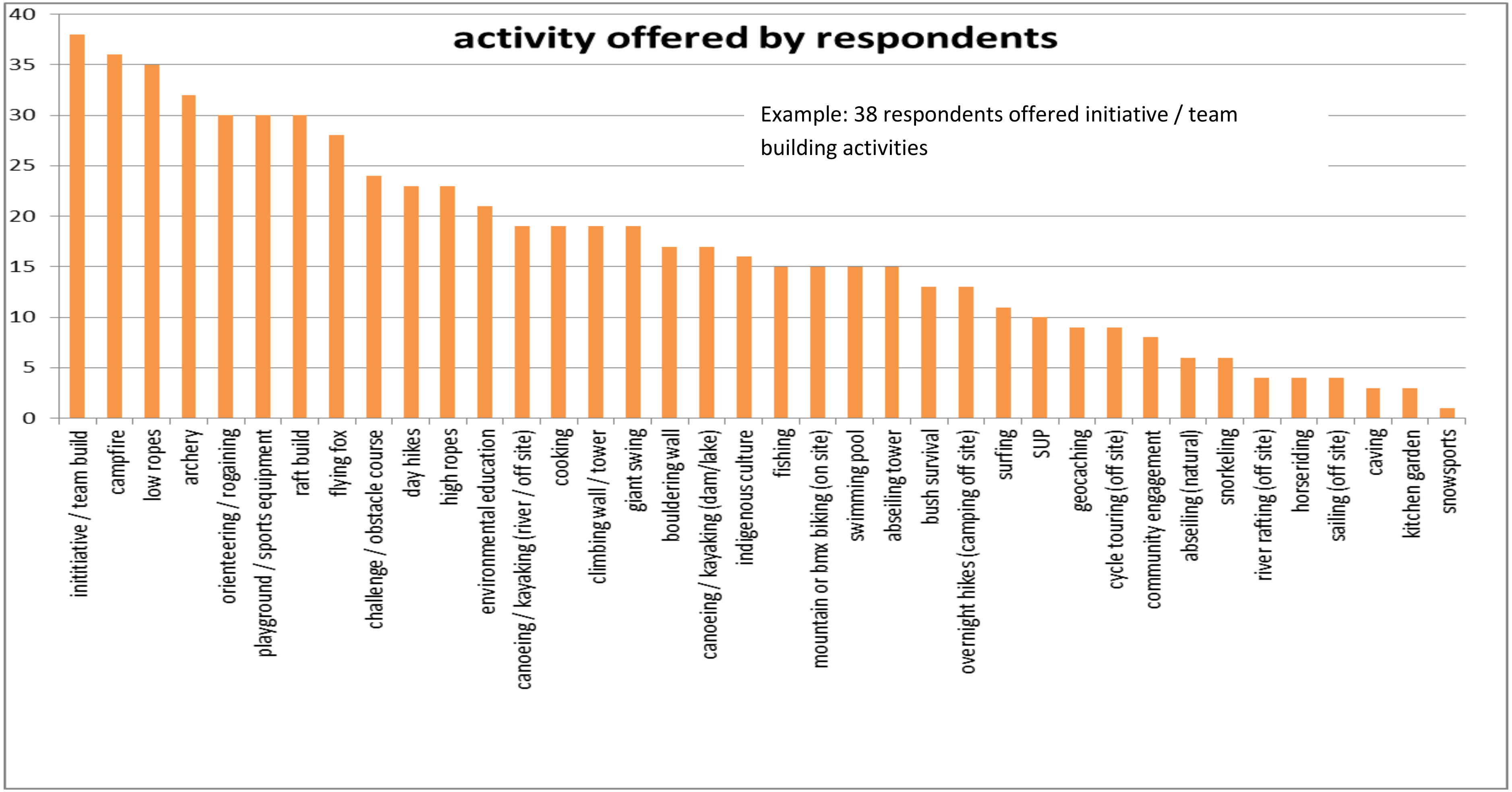


4.14 Activities on site

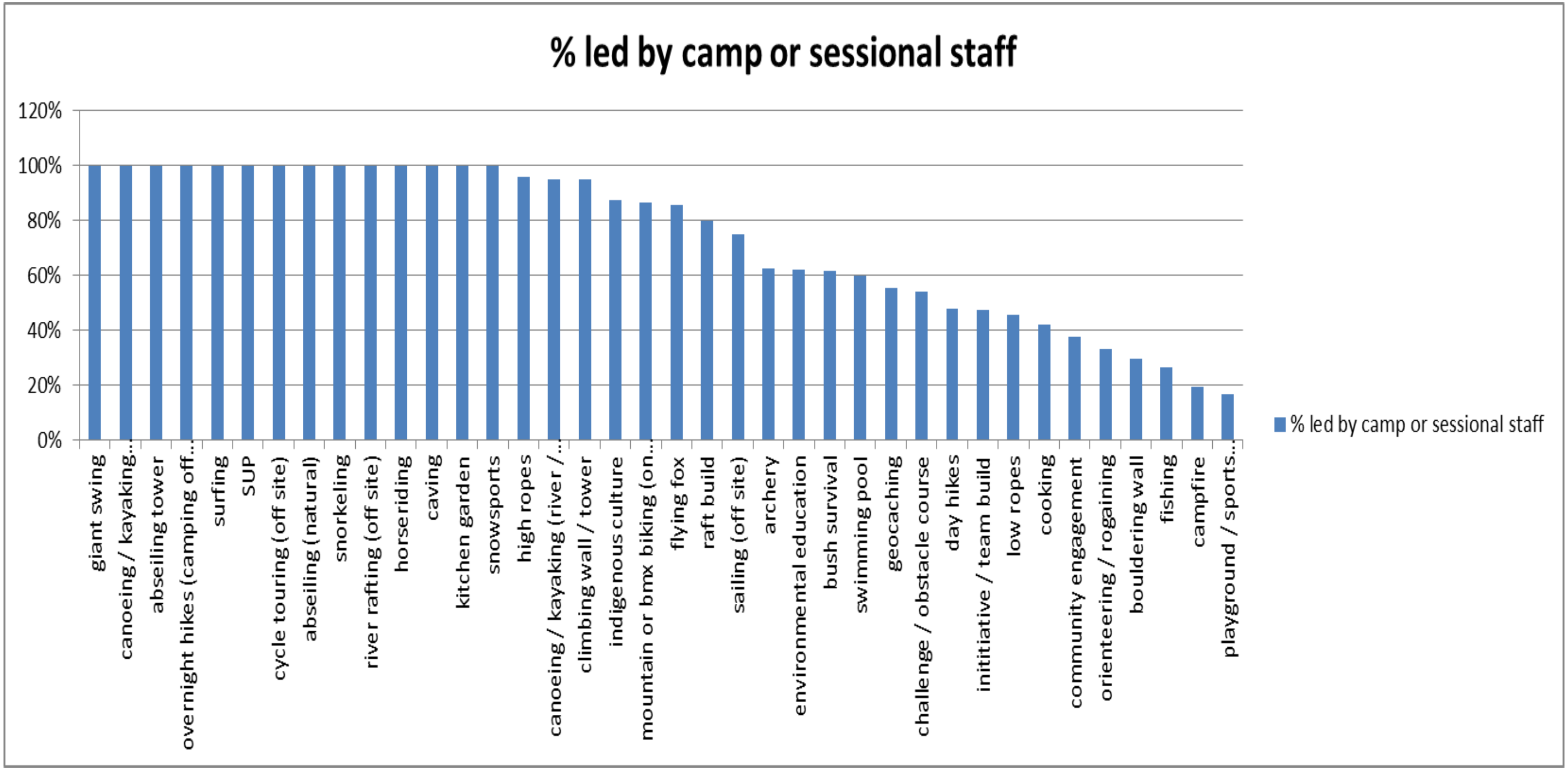
The number of activities on site ranged from one (eg schools that run their own camp with basic facilities only) to 28, with the average being 15.

Activity by rank

Activity	Number of respondents offering that activity	% of total respondents
Initiative / team build	38	80%
Campfire	36	76%
Low ropes	35	71%
Archery	32	66%
Orienteering / Rogaining	30	61%
Playground / sports equipment	30	66%
Raft build	30	54%
Flying fox	28	54%
Challenge / obstacle course	24	51%
Day hikes	23	49%
High ropes	23	41%
Environmental education	21	46%
Canoeing / kayaking (river / off site)	19	44%
Cooking	19	39%
Climbing wall / tower	19	39%
Giant swing	19	32%
Bouldering wall	17	34%
Canoeing / kayaking (dam/lake)	17	24%
Indigenous culture	16	34%
Fishing	15	34%
Mountain or BMX biking (on site)	15	34%
Swimming pool	15	32%
Abseiling tower	15	24%
Bush survival	13	49%
Overnight hikes (camping off site)	13	22%
Surfing	11	24%
SUP	10	24%
Geocaching	9	22%
Cycle touring (off site)	9	17%
Community engagement	8	17%
Abseiling (natural)	6	12%
Snorkeling	6	10%
River rafting (off site)	4	10%
Horse-riding	4	10%
Sailing (off site)	3	7%
Caving	3	7%
Kitchen garden	3	7%
Snowsports	1	2%



activity offered by respondents
Example: 38 respondents offered initiative / team building activities
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
inititiative / team build
campfire
low ropes
archery
orienteering / rogaining
playground / sports equipment
raft build
flying fox
challenge / obstacle course
day hikes
high ropes
environmental education
canoeing / kayaking (river / off site)
cooking
climbing wall / tower
giant swing
bouldering wall
canoeing / kayaking (dam/lake)
indigenous culture
fishing
mountain or bmx biking (on site)
swimming pool
abseiling tower
bush survival
overnight hikes (camping off site)
surfing
SUP
geocaching
cycle touring (off site)
community engagement
abseiling (natural)
snorkeling
river rafting (off site)
horseriding
sailing (off site)
caving
kitchen garden
snowsports



Example: 63% of camps ran archery as a led activity, ie 37% of camps had teachers or the group running this activity

Part 5 - Employment

This set of questions gauged staff levels, staff turnover, use of subcontractors and volunteers and finally provided some indication of the use of local services.

43 responses (91%)

Staffing: 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5

Full time staff on payroll	Range: 0 – 28
	Average: 5
Part time staff on payroll	Range: 0 – 134
	Average: 5
Casual staff on payroll	Range: 0 – 79
	Average: 18
Volunteers assisting paid staff	19 respondents (40% of total) reported engaging volunteers.
	Range: 0 – 230
	Average: 13
Sub contracted staff employed	Range: 0 – 20
	Average: 4

Data since 2010

employment type	av. response 2010	av. response 2012	av. response 2016
full time	6.5	6.6	5.1
part time	2.3		5.1
casual	14		18.2
subcontracted	3.5	6	4.5
volunteer	31.9	23	13.3

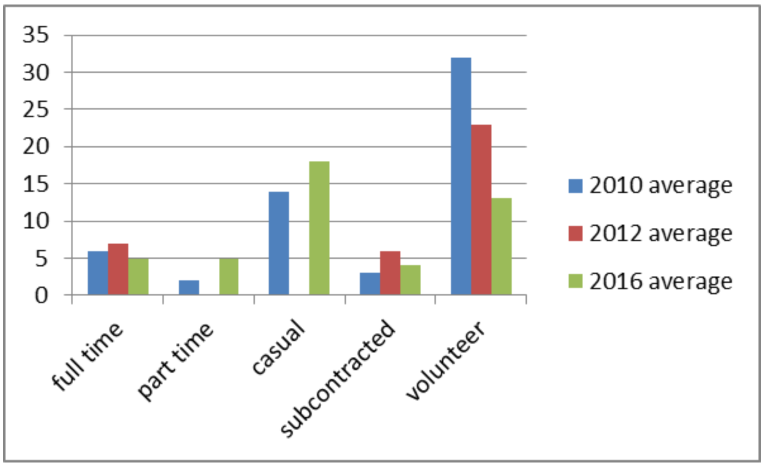
Note: **Question 5.2 "How many Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff did you employ during the 2016-2017 FY?"** did not generate sufficient accurate responses for the result to be reported on here.

Employment trends

The graph below (next page) illustrates the following trends observed since 2010:

1. A decline in full time employment,
2. An increase in part time / casual employment
3. A drastic decline in volunteer employment

Employment trends



Using the estimated total camps in Australia of 471, estimated total employment (not including volunteer staff) across all camps during the 2016/17 financial year is 15,072 positions (21,195 positions including volunteers).

This is made up of:

Full time:	2,335 positions
Part time:	2,355 positions
Casual:	8,478 positions
Subcontracted:	1,884 positions
Volunteer:	6,123 positions

5.2 How many staff left your employ in the survey period?

Fulltime	Range: 0 - 9
	Average: 1
Part time	Range: 0 - 78
	Average: 2
Casual	Range: 0 - 10
	Average: 3

These results are consistent with the employment figures recorded above – ie the highest staff turnover is in the part time / casual area (which has the highest employment figures).

5.6 How many local suppliers (within 30 minutes travel of your camp) did you purchase goods or services from during the 2016-2017 FY?

Range: 0 - 100

Average: 14

Section 6 - Financial information

Some respondents chose not to provide financial data and some respondents that were part of a larger commercial organisation were not able to / chose not to indicate allocation of some costs back to parent company.

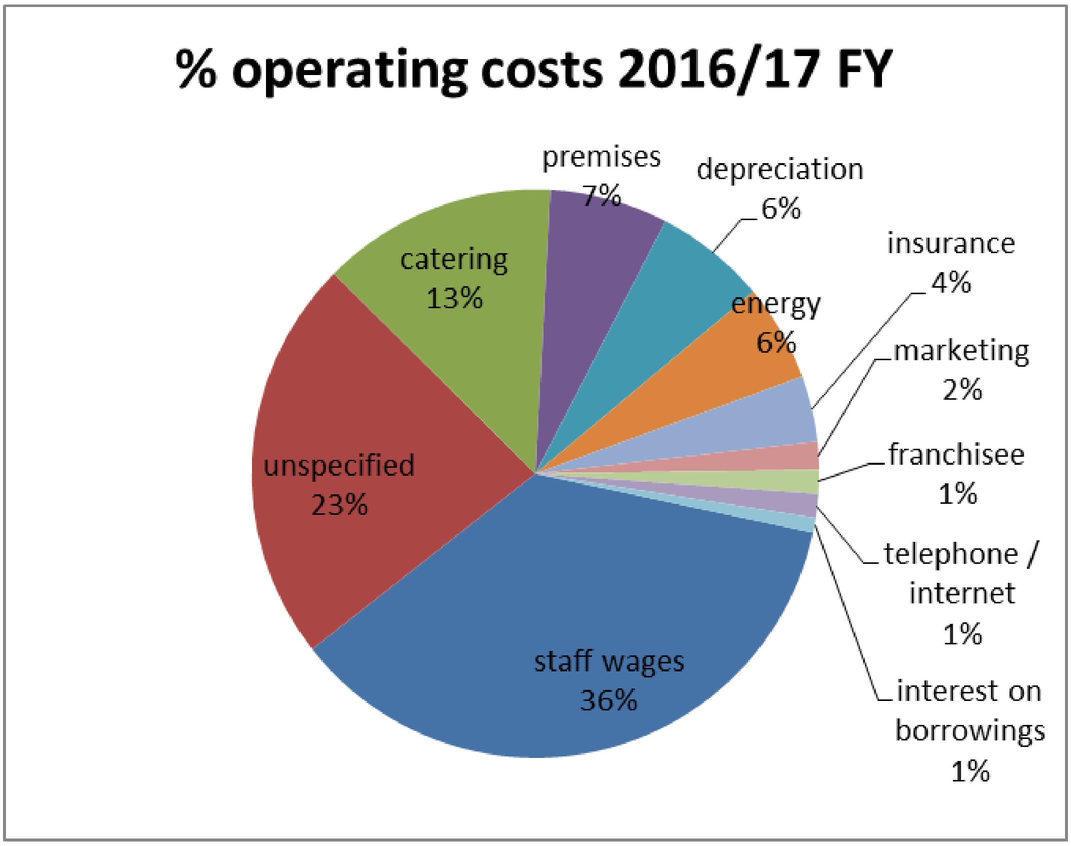
6.1 Turnover

41 responses (87%).

Responses ranged from $24,492 to $11,200,000, with an average of $1,475,461. This would give an indicative total Australian residential camps sector turnover of $695M.

6.2 Operating expenditure

36 responses (77%).



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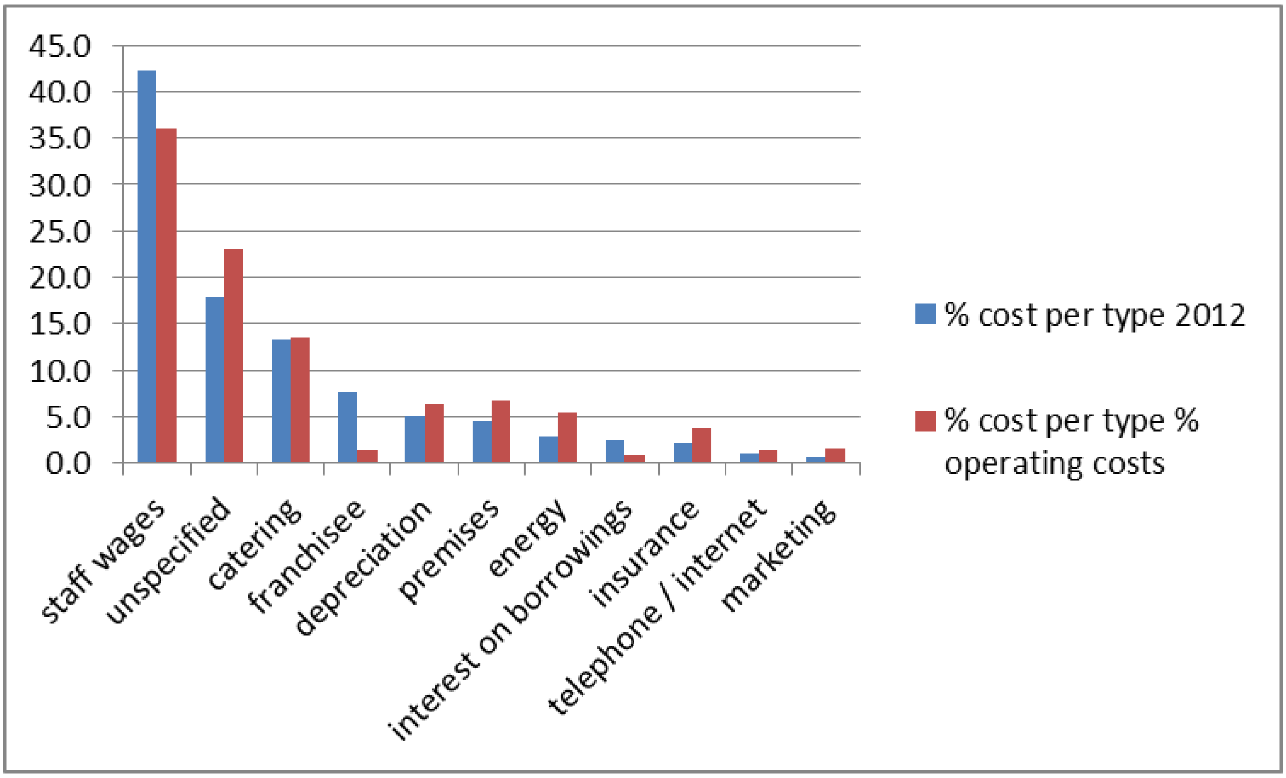
Comparison between 2012 and 2016/17 cost centres

Item	% total operating cost - 2012	% total operating cost - 2016	% difference
Staff wages	42.3	36.3	-14%
Unspecified	17.9	23.2	29%
Catering	13.3	13.4	1%
Franchisee	7.7	1.3	-83%
Depreciation	5.1	6.2	22%
Premises	4.4	6.8	53%
Energy	2.9	5.3	83%
Interest on borrowings	2.6	0.9	-65%
Insurance	2.1	3.7	77%
Telephone / internet	1.0	1.3	36%
Marketing	0.8	1.6	114%



Trends

The biggest cost increases since the 2012 Survey are in marketing (up 114%), energy (up 83%) and insurance (up 77%).

Conversely, the biggest cost decreases since 2012 are in franchisee (down 83%), interest on borrowings (down 65%) and staff wages (down 14%).

6.3 Capital expenditure

35 responses (75%).

Responses ranged from $10,000 to $2.3M, with an average of $228,187.

This represents an increase of 26% over 2012 average capital expenditure.

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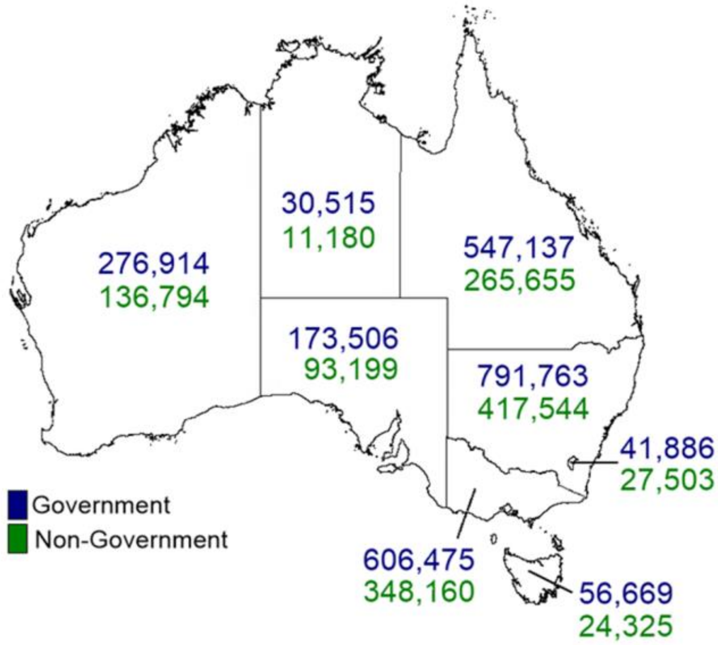
Appendix 1 - Schools, Australia, 2017 Report extract

Source: http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4221.0

Total students enrolled

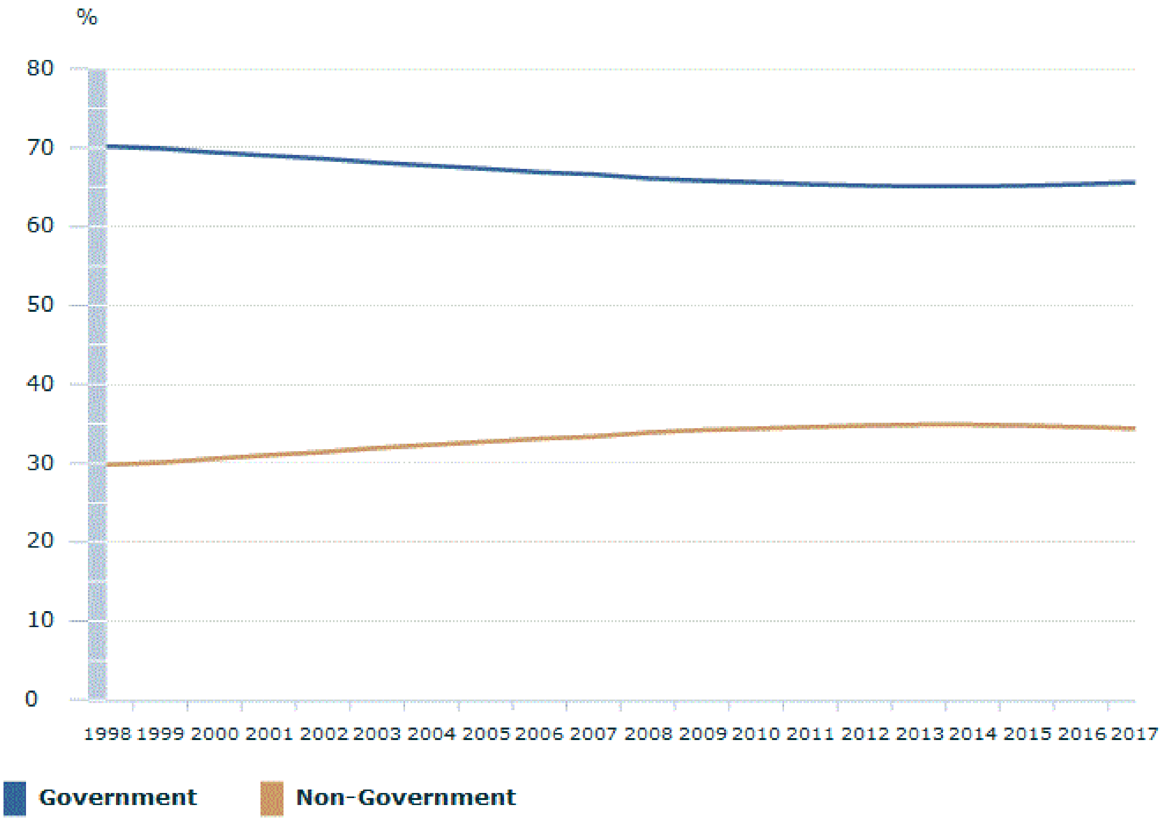


Source: 4221.0 - Schools, Australia, 2017
(c) Commonwealth of Australia, 2018

In 2017 there were 9,444 schools in Australia, an increase of 30 schools on the 2016 figure. Victoria and Queensland reported the largest movements in school counts from 2016 to 2017, with an increase of 8 schools reported for each. The increase in school numbers was driven predominantly by growth in Independent schools.

Year	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust
2017	3 087	2 233	1 737	714	1 088	261	190	134	9 444
2016	3 081	2 225	1 729	717	1 083	259	188	132	9 414

Proportion of enrolments, by Affiliation, Year



Save Chart Image

Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Appendix 2 - Challenges for continued success

Respondents were asked to identify their biggest challenges for future success, which are ranked under the following headings by number of relevant comments as follows:

Business growth/stability

1. Low margins
2. Balance between price and value
3. Finding new sites to enable growth
4. Developing a unique program
5. Maintaining facilities in a very competitive market
6. Overcapitalisation – hard to get a business valuation that reflects actual capital value
7. Group size exceeding our camp capacity
8. Site capacity
9. Campsite is too small, run by volunteers as a low cost operation to support disadvantaged camping groups
10. Maintaining a water supply
11. Decreased camp spend/decreased days on camp = less program
12. Increasing school clients
13. Financial growth and expansion into new markets
14. Increased bed night and catering costs for groups
15. Need to increase client data base especially those who book bi and tri-ennially to help protect from these changes.
16. Volume of weekend and school holiday day visits/tourists
17. Decrease in weekend attendance
18. Day retreats/overnight vs weekends
19. Improving facilities to keep clients wanting to come back
20. Enough activities for campers

Increased external pressures

1. Bus cost increases
2. Increased local government charges
3. Insurance costs
4. Changes in leadership in schools and organisations affect repeat business
5. Retention of long term lease
6. Retaining permits for surf school
7. Rising expense against perceived value for money
8. Economy – less discretionary spending
9. Economic struggle for some families
10. Retention of volunteers
11. Dividing influences between church and state government and the pressure this will put on church facilities
12. Churches becoming smaller
13. The way the community is looking at churches is negative but we provide great programs. This may impact us.
14. Cost (schools more aware of wants/desires

Regulation/compliance/risk management

1. Regulations in schools
2. Increasingly difficult for schools
3. Compulsory accreditation
4. Insurance costs and risk assessments
5. Increased government compliance requirements
6. Government decisions that change how schools book camps
7. Keeping up with policy and procedure changes
8. Teachers not wanting to lead low risk activities on site
9. Increased teacher/leader responsibility
10. Cultural challenges re dietary/religious requirements

Competition

1. Competition from government owned camps (cheaper price point)
2. Uneven playing field where big organisations who are subsidised by donations and volunteers compete in the same market
3. Competition from newer venues
4. Retaining market share
5. Increased competition from caravan parks and hotel/motels wanting a slice of the market
6. Securing new bookings
7. Increased competition from Qld government camps
8. Larger competition who are able to undercut our prices
9. Costs and competition – eg cheap cruises, flights

Staff

1. Staff quality and training
2. Maintaining staff levels to run the facility properly with the income we have
3. Recruitment
4. Retention and recruitment of quality staff
5. Recruitment
6. Maintaining reliable staff
7. Getting a suitable manager

Appendix 3 - Estimated total camps and beds by state

The following table represents the ACA's current best estimation at time of publication of the number of residential camps[1] in each state.

State	**Estimated number of residential camps**[1]	**Estimated total beds** (Using 176 beds / residential camp as average)	**% of total**
ACT	5	880	1%
New South Wales	114	20,064	26%
Northern Territory	4	704	1%
South Australia	36	6,336	8%
Queensland	75	13,200	16%
Victoria	178	31,328	40%
Tasmania	14	2,464	3%
Western Australia	45	8,096	8%
Total	**471**	**83,072**	

[1]Venues with group accommodation, catering and led outdoor activities on site