



MEMBER SURVEY 2011

Executive Summary of Results

During August/September 2011, the LCA Board undertook a survey of all Members, to elicit their views on a number of subjects – including Membership benefits. These views will be incorporated into the LCA's future activity plans – not least those for 2012.

The views of Members who responded are summarised in this Executive Summary, and the key outcomes follow. Regarding the responses:

- **A GOOD PROPORTION OF MEMBERS RESPONDED** c33% of LCA Members responded to the survey invitation
- **ALL TYPES OF MEMBER RESPONDED** responses were submitted by similar proportions of owner-operated; franchisee, and consortium cruise club Members
- **SOME LONG-STANDING MEMBERS GOT INVOLVED** of the total sample, c33% were Members of more than 5 years' standing, and 66% were of 1 – 5 years' standing
- **ALMOST ALL THOSE WHO RESPONDED WILL REJOIN FOR 2012** c93% of Members who responded confirmed they would consider continuing in Membership through 2012; with c82% stating they would definitely rejoin, and c11% indicating they would 'probably' rejoin

The Survey allowed for and encouraged Members to include free-format comments to supplement their individual responses, and a number of these are particularly worthy of repetition in this Executive Summary :

- 'As a 'home agent', it is really important to have every chance to communicate with 'real' agents'
- 'I would find it easier to attend Meetings if the dates were given out well in advance. I think this would increase attendance numbers'
- 'It is important for me to attend every Meeting possible as it allows me to gather up-to-date information that otherwise I would not be privy to'
- 'Membership could be very useful, but is unfortunately pretty irrelevant. I was surprised when Gills joined a couple of years ago when their approach seemed to be the antithesis of how other Members operated ... what percentage of cruise sales do we account for annually? If we are too small, we are irrelevant to CCS and RCCL and other large players'

- 'hard to get out of office – would like regional meeting based near Gatwick'
- 'newsletter needs to be simpler, cleaner and more specific'
- 'had only a few enquiries from the website, but one 5 years ago was a biggie and the client has stayed with us'
- 'need more offers and LCA Exclusives to raise LCA profile with consumers'

MAIN REASONS FOR JOINING THE LCA In response to this multiple choice / multiple answer question, c50% of Members responding identified access to Member networking, including Spring and Autumn Meetings, as a main reason for joining. c40% cited access to special events, including ship visits; c33% referred to the LCA website as a strong motivator to Membership, and a similar proportion cited Stowaway Magazine as a main reason for joining, c20% commented that the LCA eBulletin encouraged their Membership

PARTICIPATION IN LCA MEMBERS' MEETINGS c33% of respondees reported having participated in 5 or more LCA Members' Meetings; whilst c35% confirmed they had yet to attend their first Meeting. The remainder of Members who responded had attended between 1 and 4 Meetings

LCA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS The Member benefits identified as most valuable by respondees, on a scale of 1 – 5 (not valuable – highly valuable respectively), were :

- LCA Exclusive Offers : score c4 = very valuable
- Member / Associate networking meetings : c4 = very valuable
- www.thelca.com referred cruise enquiries : c3.5 = valuable / very valuable
- Stowaway Magazine : c3.5 = valuable / very valuable
- www.thelca.com managed weekly cruise offers : c3 = valuable

CONCLUSIONS The overall 'flavour' of responses suggests that LCA Members value the group enough to remain in Membership, provided it remains cost-effective. Some frustration emerged regarding the location and degree of pre-planning of dates, in connection with LCA Meetings, which are generally valued as a conduit to Associate partners, and an opportunity to network. There appears to be a definite appetite for more LCA Exclusive offers (eg exclusive escorted departures), and other Membership benefits which 'differentiate' the LCA from the rest of the cruise retailing sector.

Viewed from the perspective of the volunteer Board of Directors, the survey strongly suggests a continuing role for the LCA in connecting specialist cruise travel consultants with cruise providers, but demonstrates the need for the LCA to grow Membership (of both agents and Associates), in order to fund further development of www.thelca.com, and of a more advanced programme of LCA Exclusive products.