Commercial Activity on Gold Coast Ocean Beaches

Community Engagement Report
Prepared by Promedia Public Relations
May 2014
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1 Executive Summary

Council of the City of Gold Coast (the City) conducted a four week engagement program from 17 March to the morning of 15 April 2014 to determine the community response to commercial activities on Gold Coast ocean beaches.

The intent of the engagement program was to alert the community and stakeholders to the management plan being prepared on future commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches and offer the opportunity for the community and stakeholders to have their say on this subject. This community consultation was identified as an action in the Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023, adopted by the Council in August 2013. The primary target for this campaign was the Gold Coast general public as well as a range of existing commercial operators.

After considering the outcomes of the Ocean Beaches consultation, a management plan will be developed to manage commercial activities, which require a framework primarily to:

- clarify how businesses operating on ocean beaches will be managed including establishing roles and responsibilities for managing commercial activities
- clarify the processes for regulating commercial activities on ocean beaches
- provide consistency of activities being regulated between bathing and foreshore reserves

Community engagement was encouraged from the following key groups:

1. general public/community and stakeholders who were informed and engaged via four beach marquee days, radio and newsletter advertising, online information, social media and direct mail. They were encouraged to provide feedback via online and hard copy surveys, and on an open forum on www.haveyoursay.com.au
2. approximately 500 general community members engaged via a telephone survey with respondents stratified across 14 Council divisions and were representative of the community by age and gender
3. the City’s standing online community engagement group of almost 3000 – GCengage Forum –was notified of the engagement opportunity and encouraged to participate in the online survey and discussion forum. GCengage Forum is a closed group comprising of local residents who have been randomly selected to represent the Gold Coast community across qualifiers such as age, sex and geographic location. There are even numbers across the following demographic criteria: age, sex and geographic location – north, south, east and west of the City. This group has been operational since December 2012.

Engagement results have been analysed and reported on; based on comparing and contrasting responses from these three distinct groups.

A total of 1297 responses were gathered from these key groups during the engagement process.

Key responses were gained from:

- 502 residents stratified across 14 Council divisions and representative of the community by age and gender secured via a telephone survey conducted between 19 March and 1 April 2014
- 646 public survey responses, that being 386 online survey responses and 259 hard copy survey responses from participants who attended one of four beach marquee days, plus one hard copy survey returned by mail to Council
- 84 responses from the online "Have your say" public forum, with three email responses from GCengage Forum members, one email response from a community member and five letter submissions from stakeholders
- 40 online survey responses from GCengage Forum members
- 16 responses from the social media Facebook page in response to the City’s three postings during the program.

One local newspaper, The Gold Coast Bulletin, covered this issue extensively. Not only did it generate several stories over a period of almost a week, but it also conducted its own surveys. The Gold Coast Bulletin survey data has not been included in this report as it was unable to be validated and the questions did not differentiate between the current level and a new level of commercial activity on ocean beaches.
Please note:

The Gold Coast Bulletin response, although not Council initiated or driven, has been included for report comprehensiveness.
1.1 Key results

Key feedback resulting from City of Gold Coast’s engagement:

- majority of survey respondents indicated a preference for the “same” or “more” of every currently permitted commercial and non-commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches - Figure 1 below outlines the breakdown of each activity across all response groups.

Figure 1 – Graph of “more”, “same” and “less” of currently permitted Commercial/Non-commercial Activities across all response groups

- comments relating to particular ocean beaches for more, less or no commercial activity did not result in significant responses to any particular beach, with mostly general answers
- the greatest response for alternative activities was for ‘no alternative activities’ (44 per cent)
- the most popular commercial activities nominated were activities currently permitted under the local laws (37 per cent) and included: entertainment (in the form of music/bands/concerts); active lifestyle activities; and volleyball - Figure 2 below outlines the breakdown of responses to the question regarding alternative activities

Figure 2 - Summary of Alternative Activities by All Groups (Public, Telephone, GCengage Forum, Online Discussion Forum)
unsolicited responses included: environmental concerns such as “natural beauty” and “uniqueness” of ocean beaches (>200 mentions); parking concerns (80 mentions); regulation of activities (60 mentions); no touting (30 mentions) and litter control (20 mentions).

Please note:

- while every care was taken to record issues mentioned, with large volumes of data generated by all the open ended question responses, some general consensus interpretation was required to code comments into key themes for analysis and omissions and assumptions are unintentional. For this reason, every comment for every open ended question is detailed in Appendix 2.
- open ended questions were grouped to encompass a wide range of terminology used by respondents. Key terms used for analysis include:
  - food and beverage (F&B) has been used to encompass descriptions as varied as ice-creams, water, coffee, food.
  - equipment hire. This includes items such as umbrellas, lounges, deck chairs, bean bags.

The above findings provide an adequate representative sample of the Gold Coast community. Based on all survey responses received (1188), the City can have 95% confidence with a confidence interval of +/- 2.8 with the results. When considering the telephone survey respondents alone Council can have a 95% confidence with a confidence interval of +/-4.4.

The above findings provide an indication of the type of commercial activities that could be considered in the finalisation of the Draft Commercial Activity Management Plan to be presented to Council mid-2014.
2 Introduction

City of Gold Coast is currently reviewing its approach to managing commercial activities on the city’s ocean beaches. This review was identified as an action in the Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023, adopted by the Council in August 2013, which provides several outcomes and action items designed to maintain and protect Gold Coast beaches now and into the future. The engagement undertaken was directly linked to Action Item 1.2 from the strategy’s Outcome 1, “Everyone can enjoy a beach experience”, which was to “Develop a consistent approach to managing commercial activity on beaches through clearly defining ‘commercial activity’ and actively engaging stakeholders in the development of a commercial activity plan. This plan will clarify the rules around commercial activity on the beaches and management of these activities.” Management of the commercial activity plan will also incorporate requirements of the City’s relevant local law, Local Law No 30 (Bathing Reserves) 2005 [currently being amended to Local Law No 10 (Bathing Reserves) 2013] and Local Law No 9 (Parks and Reserves) 2008 (currently being amended).

The management plan will provide an approach to address the extent of commercial and non-commercial activities within areas of ocean beaches to ensure the appropriate balance between these two types of activities. For the purposes of this report and the future management plan, beaches are defined as the areas of sand within the bathing and foreshore reserves below the vegetated dunes and extending up to 1km under water into the ocean. A commercial activity is taken to be any activity that engages in business, as defined by the City’s local laws.

The engagement process undertaken in March-April 2014 will help inform a management plan that will:

- clarify how businesses operating on ocean beaches will be managed including establishing roles and responsibilities for managing commercial activities
- clarify the processes for regulating commercial activities on ocean beaches
- provide consistency of regulation within bathing and foreshore reserves
- ensure a balance between business and non-business use of beaches
- ensure approval processes are commensurate with local law requirements
- address the increasing commercial demands on our ocean beaches
- ensure the health and safety for users of our ocean beaches
- ensure the cleanliness and health of our ocean beaches; and
- protect our ocean beach infrastructure and promote stewardship for the management of our ocean beaches.

2.1 Report context

Council appointed Promedia in mid-March 2014 to support its planned month-long community engagement strategy and actions for this project.

Engagement planning commenced in March 2014 and activities were completed in April 2014 with the close of the feedback period on the morning of 15 April 2014. The feedback period was originally to close on 11 April, but was held open extra days due to media publicity about it closed on 14 April.

Engagement was undertaken to seek feedback on any issues or concerns associated with commercial activity on ocean beaches and build awareness in the community of the future management plan.

This report provides a description of the engagement activities undertaken and feedback received.

2.2 Project background

The City’s Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023 was developed through widespread community consultation and endorsed by Council on 20 August 2013. The draft strategy was released for community and stakeholder engagement between March and May 2013, with 1415 formal responses received. The Strategy sets the direction on maintaining and developing lifestyle and leisure opportunities, keeping Gold Coast beaches clean and healthy, protecting coastal infrastructure from erosions and other hazards and the need for everyone, including different levels of government, to work together to look after Gold Coast ocean beaches.

The city’s 52km of ocean beaches extend from Point Danger in the south to Jumpinpin in the northern end of South Stradbroke Island.
The community was provided with a Summary Document, which outlined a 12 month snapshot of activities approved in 2013 as an indication of current permitted uses. This summary document along with information on the dates and locations of each of the four consultation beach marquee days was made available online at http://gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab.

A brief summary of the types of commercial activities that were permitted in 2013 include:

- **Entertainment or promotional events** ranging from small sporting events such as volleyball competitions, music events which may attract crowds of approximately 4000 people, to major events such as Schoolies (two weeks), Bleach Festival (month) and Swell Festival (two weeks).

- **Filming for television commercials or movies**

- **Hire of beach equipment** - only to be conducted by a surf life saving club within 100m of the clubhouse. Beach equipment includes: bathing equipment (inflatable devices), beach umbrellas and deck chairs.

- **Marriage ceremonies** - not considered a commercial activity, however the frequency is considered in relation to the overall use of the beaches. Wedding ceremonies are currently restricted to no longer than an hour with no more than 50 persons attending.

- **Skydivers at North Kirra Beach** – where a section of this beach is designated to allow for the landing of tandem skydivers in an area defined by witches hats and monitored by staff for one to six hours per day.

- **Surfing competitions** - ranging from grass roots club events to major international events (for example, the Quiksilver Pro) running from one to 11 days.

- **Surf life saving club competitions** run by the Australian Surf Life Saving Association, the Queensland Surf Life Saving Association or the Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguard Association.

- **Surf schools** with an annual permit can set up in a designated area of the beach to instruct classes and individuals anytime during the day. Surf schools do not include stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing or para-surfing lessons.

Other points of note:

- **Surf life saving training** conducted by surf-life saving clubs and the City’s lifeguards is not considered a commercial activity.

- **Vehicle access** to beaches within bathing reserves is limited to essential service vehicles such as lifeguards, lifesavers, police and ambulance, the City’s maintenance vehicles, professional fishermen and survey vehicles.

- **Personal or group fitness training** will be prohibited within the bathing reserves under proposed *Local Law No 10 (Bathing Reserves) 2014*.

- **Off-leash dog beaches** at the Spit, Tallebudgera and Palm Beach have been designated for use by the community to exercise their dogs off lead.

- **Food vendors** are not permitted on the beaches. Sale of food on the beaches can promote littering. Vehicle access to the beach is also often required which is not recommended due to safety concerns.

The above information provided some context to those community members unfamiliar with the range of activities that occur on Gold Coast ocean beaches, assisted in their ranking of the preferred amount of such activity in the future as well as to identify any other types of commercial activity currently not permitted or proposed.
3 Community Engagement Objectives

The primary engagement program objectives were to:

- inform the community and stakeholders about the proposed Ocean Beaches Management Plan
- engage community members and stakeholders to provide feedback to assist in the development of the Plan
- provide mechanisms for community members and stakeholders to obtain information from the project team throughout the process
- to build and maintain relationships of trust and confidence with all stakeholders

Objectives were also designed to meet the City’s Corporate Plan 2009-2014 strategic priorities (Focus Area 1.2) which aims to:

- actively involve Gold Coast residents and organisations in shaping the decisions and actions which will impact on the city now and in the future
- encourage community participation through local groups, not-for-profit organisations and volunteering activities
- support the provision of information to the Gold Coast community on a wide range of issues that will affect the city.
4 Scope and Timing

Promedia’s engagement scope was to provide support to the City’s Consultation and Project Teams at community open days (beach marquee days), create opportunities for the community to provide feedback via a telephone survey and report on all community and stakeholder feedback received.

Promedia was responsible for:
- receipt of a City-drafted survey for use in a public telephone survey of 500 respondents, stratified by 14 Council Divisions and consisting of 10 short answer and multiple choice questions;
- attending four consultation days (beach marquee days) to support the Project Team and encourage completion of the City’s survey;
- reporting on community and stakeholder feedback;
- supporting the City’s internal teams which undertook:
  - the drafting of the survey for public, telephone and GCEngage Forum members;
  - writing to stakeholders advising them of the community engagement opportunities;
  - emailing members of the GCengage Forum about the community engagement opportunity and online survey;
  - Have your say website;
  - online discussion forum;
  - developing key messages;
  - writing and distributing media releases;
  - City news radio communication;
  - public notice advertisement;
  - City of Gold Coast on hold phone messages;
  - social media posts;
  - collateral production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 March 2014</td>
<td>Letters mailed to more than 70 stakeholders advising of engagement opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 March-15 April 2014</td>
<td>Public notice press advertising, radio advertising, social media promotion, online survey and online information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 March – 1 April 2014</td>
<td>Undertook telephone survey of 502 community respondents, stratified by 14 Council divisions and representative of the general community by age and gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 March – 23 March 2014</td>
<td>Conducted four beach marquee mornings at Kurrawa, Burleigh, Main Beach and Coolangatta beaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 March 2014</td>
<td>Email to GCengage members advising of engagement opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 April 2014</td>
<td>Online survey and forum closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late April 2014</td>
<td>Report findings in community and stakeholder engagement report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1 – Engagement Activities Overview

Table 1 provides an overview of the major engagement activities and timing. The engagement was promoted from 17 March to 11 April, although the Council media release dated 20 March advised consultation ended 14 April. The online survey and forum questions were open until the morning of 15 April.
5 Key Messages

Key messages developed for the program included but were not limited to:

- City of Gold Coast is currently reviewing its approach to managing commercial activities on the city’s 52km of ocean beaches
- This review was identified as an action in the Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023, adopted by the Council in August 2013, developed to help the City manage valuable assets and the environmental, social and economic benefits they bring
- The community is being asked during a four week period to have their say about commercial activities on beaches
- Consultation will determine what sort of business activities the community wants on the city’s beaches and how they should be managed
- After considering the community’s views, the City will develop a management plan for commercial activities on ocean beaches, to be presented to Council in June 2014.
6 Stakeholders

Stakeholders for this engagement phase were defined by Council as below:

- General Gold Coast community
- Local business and community organisations (including surf life saving clubs, surf schools, surfing organisations, chambers of commerce, tourism and retail groups, fitness groups, restaurant industry and environmental groups) who might be interested in or affected by proposed regulation of commercial activities on ocean beaches.

All groups listed have a stake in the management plan – in that they can potentially affect or be affected by the City of Gold Coast’s actions with regards to the plan.
7 Engageement Tools

The following tools were used by the project team during the four week engagement period. Examples of collateral are available in Appendix 1.

7.1 Online Survey

7.1.1 General Public

An 11 question survey was provided on gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab from 17 March to 15 April 2014. The purpose of the survey was to obtain individual responses pertaining to how community members and stakeholders viewed commercial activities on ocean beaches. The survey contained a combination of closed and open questions.

The survey asked:
1. personal details - name, postcode, email, phone details
2. demographic (age) information
3. how did respondents hear about the public consultation
4. frequency of beach visitation
5. views on commercial and non-commercial permitted uses on ocean beaches and thoughts on more, same or less of such activities
6. interest in commercial activity on ocean beaches (e.g. beach user, business activity organiser)
7. if any particular beaches should have more or less commercial activity on them
8. desire for any other types of commercial activities on ocean beaches
9. if any beach should never be permitted to have commercial activity
10. other comments; and
11. if respondents would like to partake in future Council surveys.

A full copy of the survey is located in Appendix 1 of this document.

7.1.2 GCengage Forum

This same survey was available to GCengage Forum members. GCengage Forum is a closed group comprising of almost 3,000 local Gold Coast residents who have been randomly selected and volunteered to represent the Gold Coast community across qualifiers such as age, sex and geographic location. There are even numbers across the following demographic criteria: age, sex and geographic location – north, south, east and west of the City. Email advice about this consultation opportunity was sent to GCengage members on 24 March 2014.

7.2 Hard Copy Survey - Public

The same 11 questions used in the telephone survey and online were printed in a 4 page colour document and made available at beach marquee days (see Section 8.6). Attendees were encouraged to complete these at the information displays. In addition to the 11 questions, the survey contained a map (also available with online survey) indicating ocean beaches covered by the management plan; beach areas covered by different local laws; and dog parks.
7.3 Stratified Telephone Survey

An outbound 10 question telephone survey was undertaken between 19 March and 1 April 2014 on behalf of City of Gold Coast. The purpose of the survey was to obtain individual responses pertaining to how community members and stakeholders viewed commercial activities on ocean beaches.

It was the same as the online and hard copy survey, with only one question removed; that being Question 3 relating to how respondents heard of the project, since all were proactively approached by telephone.

The survey, stratified by 14 Council Divisions and consisting of 10 short answers and multiple choice questions, secured 502 responses during an approximate 7 minute survey.

The telephone survey was undertaken by Morris International’s Gold Coast-based fieldwork team. The survey was dual-frame, using landline and mobile sample frames, with a strategy of multiple call backs to each telephone number to ensure a representative and reliable sample of residents across the city, with each of the 14 Council Division segments further stratified by age, gender, household size working/not working etc.

- participant selections for each of the 14 divisions used an in-house program to ensure a broad spectrum of participants from each of the 14 divisions, to both mobiles and landlines. Businesses were not included in the data.
- this delivered a strong cross section of the desired age group and only secured responses from 15+ years of age to ensure we achieved a solid cross section of the community’s views on the issue (please note, that unlike the telephone survey, the public survey did attract a handful of respondents under 15 years of age).
- all 14 council division lists were uploaded into the system using an automatic dialling system.
- the Preview dialler option was used rather than the predictive option, to ensure participants were not holding on the line or ultimately hanging up if they thought there was no-one on the other end. While less time effective, it was the preferred delivery method of this campaign.
- answering machine detection was not initiated as this can be inaccurate and does not produce maximum quality Recycle and attempt settings were set with all 14 divisions completed within one attempt.
- where a participant struggled to provide a response, the operator would provide examples as outlined in the Commercial Activities Summary Document. In most cases a few keywords would prompt a response or conversation. Also, when questioned about the definitions, the Commercial Activities Summary Document was utilised.
- the permitted hours for telemarketing, regulated under the Do Not Call Register Act 2006 and associated telemarketing standards, were adhered to. No calls were conducted as per the Act on Sundays or public holidays, before 9am or after 8pm on weekdays, or before 9am or after 5pm on Saturdays.

The telephone survey delivered a positive phone experience and referral to the City of Gold Coast website www.gchaveyoursay.com.au for more information.
7.4 Online Discussion Forum - Public and GCengage Forum

An online forum was available on Council’s http://gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab consultation landing page available from 17 March – 15 April. Five forum questions, similar to the survey questions asked for feedback on:

- any beaches respondents would like to see more, less or same commercial activity on and why
- any other alternative uses on ocean beaches
- current range of uses of commercial and non-commercial permitted uses and whether there should be more or less of such activities
- any beaches Council should never permit commercial activity on
- any other comments.

This forum received 84 responses across the five questions.
7.5 Online Resource - Public and GCengage Forum

Project information was posted on City of Gold Coast website from 17 March to 15 April 2014, this being the time the project actively sought feedback. This project information (minus the ability to complete the survey and contribute to discussion forums) remains available.

This website http://gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab contained:
- link to Commercial Activities On Ocean Beaches Management Plan Summary document
- information promoting beach marquee days
- online survey
- discussion forum


7.6 Community Open Days (Beach Marquee Days)

In order to increase community awareness of participation in the engagement program, four beach-based information sessions were conducted in the first week of the program. The beach marquee days were conducted from a highly visible, City of Gold Coast branded marquee supported by additional program specific signage which presented a professional and welcoming venue to the public.

These four beach marquee days were to encourage community members to complete hard copy surveys. The beach marquee open days were held at:

- Kurrawa Beach (100m south of the Kurrawa SLSC), Thursday 20 March 2014, 7.30am-11.30am
- Burleigh Beach (100m north of Burleigh SLSC), Friday 21 May 2014, 7.30am-11.30am
- Main Beach (100m south of Southport SLSC), Saturday 22 March 2014, 7.00am-11.30am (adjoining weekly 5km Park Run course)
- Coolangatta Beach (near Kirra SLSC) Sunday 23 March 2014, 7.30am-11.30am (adjoining weekly Coolangatta Art and Craft markets).

Venues were selected as they provided some spread between the Coast’s 52km of ocean beaches and were designed around heavier pedestrian traffic locations and times in order to facilitate access to this participation process.

Project team members encouraged visitors at the open days to complete a hard copy survey or an online survey via the 4 ipads available for use at each open day.

![Beach marquee Main Beach 22 March 2014, adjoining course of free weekly 5km Park Run](image)

### 7.7 Stakeholder Liaison

The City’s project officers mailed a letter to more than 70 stakeholders on 18 March 2014 to advise them of the release of the engagement period; the ability to complete the online survey and provide feedback to be considered in the development of a draft management plan so the City can implement clear guidelines and a consistent approach to managing commercial activities on the City’s ocean beaches.

Stakeholders included surf life saving clubs, surf schools, surfing organisations, chambers of commerce, tourism and retail groups, fitness groups, restaurant industry and environmental groups.
7.8 Information Collateral - Public and GCengage Forum

Commercial Activity Management Plan Summary

A 12 page document summarising the plan was produced for distribution and could be found online at http://gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab and at all beach marquee days. It contained details about the local laws and how community members and stakeholders could have their say.

7.9Advertisements

Forty-two 15 and 30 second radio ads were broadcast between 6am and 6pm, as well as 400 run of station spots, on Gold FM 92.5 and Sea FM 90.9 during the weeks commencing 16-30 March. A third of the page colour ad was published in the whole of city free Friday Flyer on 21 March and 28 March. These ads invited interested members of the public/stakeholders to have their say and provide feedback via council’s website (and the first was published during the beach marquee activities which allowed residents to visit the project team if they desired).

7.10 Social Media

City of Gold Coast used Facebook to convey a range of messages promoting the ability to provide feedback on commercial activities on ocean beaches. City of Gold Coast Facebook page was ‘liked’ by approximately 16,000 people (as at 11 April 2014), meaning this number of people received information about the consultation opportunity via their news feeds. Facebook postings included a link to a 1:07 minute City of Gold Coast TV video (a Vimeo video available at http://vimeo.com/89682592 ).

7.11 Media

The City issued a media release entitled “Getting the balance right on our ocean beaches” on 20 March 2014 which highlighted Council’s desire for community input into the current approach to commercial activities on the ocean beaches.
8 Overall Engagement Response

The project team recorded a total of 1297 contacts for analysis during the engagement period. This included:

- 502 telephone survey responses (39 per cent of all contacts)
- 386 online survey responses from members of the general public (accounting for 30 per cent)
- 260 (or 20 per cent) hard copy survey responses from participants who attended four beach marquee days. This group is also considered general public
- the above two groups have been combined in the survey analysis as they are deemed to both be “public”
- 40 (or three per cent) online survey responses from GCengage Forum members
- 84 (or seven per cent) online discussion public forum respondents
- four emails
- five letters
- 16 Facebook comments or one per cent of all responses (89 likes and 17 pages shares are noted but not included in analysis).

Key responses were gained from:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Response Type</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Online survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Hard copy survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>GCengage surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Forum comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Stakeholder letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Emails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Facebook comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 - Public and GCengage Forum Total Responses to Council-initiated Engagement Across All Channels

8.1 Survey Responses

The project survey was central to gathering feedback. Overall, 1188 respondents completed the survey.

8.1.1 Online Survey - Public

The online survey was completed by 386 respondents. The majority of activity through the community consultation webpage www.gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab was recorded in the first week of the program.

8.1.2 Online Survey - GCengage Forum

Forty respondents completed the survey, with more than half completing the survey mid-program.
8.1.3 Hardcopy Survey - Public

The hard copy survey was completed by 260 community members via the four beach marquee days - Main Beach (81) followed by Coolangatta (66), Burleigh (84) and Kurrawara (48). One survey was returned to the City undelivered. The higher numbers achieved by the Main Beach and Coolangatta open days were likely to be assisted by other public activities in that space at the time (Park Run and markets).

iPads provided at the beach marquee days did not prove popular, with only two people (at Burleigh beach) completing the survey online via ipads). The IPads proved valuable for showing people through the engagement websites.

More people (than 260 - the number who completed the survey) attended the marquee days, however some opted not to complete the survey while at least 50 others took hard copy surveys, copies of the Summary Document containing the website address or website address flyer with them. Some of these may have translated to online survey respondents after these open days.

8.1.4 Stratified Telephone Survey

The telephone survey was completed by 502 participants across all 14 council divisions. The number of people from each Division totalled 36, other than Divisions 1 and 6, which each totalled 35.

8.2 Website Responses – Public And GCengage Forum

City of Gold Coast’s ‘Have your say’ commercial activity on ocean beaches web pages attracted 1470 unique page views (1600 in total) between launch date and 15 April.

Interest in the online information peaked around four times during the program, with the largest spike in interest during the first week of the program 17-24 March (877 views for the week), coinciding with Council’s radio advertising program, delivery of email to GCengage members making them aware of the engagement opportunity. Smaller spikes occurred around 30 March, and around 3 April; likely in response to Council’s Facebook posting of the same day advising that “time was running out to have your say”, and finally around 10 April when the Gold Coast Bulletin published the front page story on the subject.


The top links visited from this page were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page visited</th>
<th>No of page views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary Document Commercial Activities on Ocean Beaches Management Plan (Library)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach marquee days - dates and locations (Key dates)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will be asked during consultation? (FAQs)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – Unique Page Views on http://www.gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab

Further details are available in Appendix 2.

8.3 Online Forum Responses

The online forum was designed to provide a platform for discussion about the desire or not of commercial activity on some or all beaches. The forum was accessed via the webpage and was managed by Council’s engagement team. The five online forum questions, which attracted a total of 523 unique views, posed similar questions to the survey questions. Eighty-four responses were received from 57 different contributors. The most “popular” discussion was Question 1 (see immediately below) which was viewed by 151 different people (“unique page views”), and received 32 comments from 27 people.
Questions viewed and comments made are as follows:

- Question 1 about what beaches you would like to see more, less or the same commercial activity on was viewed 151 times and received 32 comments
- Question 2 asking about preferred alternative activities was viewed 122 times and received 11 comments
- Question 3 asking about whether people wanted more or less of current permitted uses was viewed 90 times and received 16 comments
- Question 4 asking if there were any beaches where no commercial activity should be permitted was viewed 48 times and received 3 comments
- Question 5 asking for other comments on the issue was viewed 111 times and received 22 comments
- eighty-four comments were made by 57 contributors, with around 10 making more than one comment across several questions.

In broad terms when comments are combined across all questions, the desire for less commercial activity slightly outweighed the support of more commercial activity (when omitting the desire for a nude beach which appears not to be representative of the majority of contributors).

All responses are detailed in full in Appendix 3.

**8.4 Media Response**

Following the release of the Council’s media release, articles appeared in:

- Gold Coast Tourism Members News online newsletter, 19 March - about feedback opportunities
- Blank (press and online cultural newsletter) published 20 March - about the consultation period
- Gold Coast Sun (3 editions), 2 April - about the consultation period
- Gold Coast Bulletin, 10 April – Front page and pages 4-5 about consultation, results of ReachTel poll + Opinion editorial page 22 criticising the consultation approach
- Gold Coast Bulletin, 10 April – online poll and readers’ comments
- Gold Coast Bulletin, 11 April – On-sand surf school booths suggested by surf school owner Dave Payne, numbers of events in 2013
- Gold Coast Bulletin, 12 April – two journalists given opposing view for and against commercialisation
- Economic Development Gold Coast Update April 2014 online newsletter, 11 April - about the consultation period ending

**8.5 Social Media Response**

City of Gold Coast messages on the City’s Facebook site at https://www.facebook.com/cityofgoldcoast included the following responses on respective dates:
• on the 21st of March a video was uploaded to the Facebook site that included vision of the Burleigh community display and an interview with Chief Lifeguard Warren Young. The video was liked by 11 and was shared by 2
• on the 25th of March the Facebook page cover photo was changed to Have Your Say Commercial Activity on Ocean Beaches and the page was liked by 23 people and was shared by 3
• on the 3rd of April the community was asked to discuss its preferred type of business activities at Gold Coast beaches via www.cityofgoldcoast.com.au/haveyoursay. This posting was liked by 55 people and was shared by 12, with 16 comments.

These Facebook postings were designed to channel interest to (and in turn formal feedback via) the City’s Have your say web page at http://gchaveyoursay.com.au/cab and also to provide a discussion opportunity if so desired by page followers. As it was not a primary channel of capturing feedback, comments have been recorded more in terms of response numbers rather than formal analysed. The details of the 16 comments are outlined in section 9.5.

8.6 Stakeholder Responses

In response to the approximate 70 letters mailed to stakeholders, the project team received the following response:

• five letters of submission
• one hard copy survey + letter (completed at beach marquee day)
• 12 surveys (identified from the City’s database of letters mailed)

8.6.1 Surf Life Saving Clubs

The project team received two letter submissions - one from Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) and the other from Broadbeach Surf Life Saving Club regarding the same issues.

On behalf of all SLS clubs, SLSQ requested the following:

• exclusive rights for commercial activities within existing patrol boundaries and immediate areas around the clubs (including roving patrol areas and beachside areas including parkland)
• that Council not allow other commercial operators within SLSC patrol areas
• services to be at the discretion of SLSCs and not linked to patrol times
• activities be run by Supporter Clubs with all proceeds to SLSCs
• activities to be anything associated with water and beach environment including but not limited to equipment, refreshments, sunscreen and apparel
• roving services would involve carts/ATVs or in a fixed location such as a stall or current cafes
• SLSC roving patrol vehicles may be used but commercial activities would not be undertaken by patrolling members
• terms would be linked to terms of current GCCC/SLSC leases and for freehold clubs, linked to the period while SLSC is the registered land owner
• would be an opportunity to link product sales to surf schools but SLSCs would not provide surfing school activities.

Broadbeach SLSC submission supported and requested the same as above.

8.6.2 Surf Schools

Cheyne Horan of Cheyne Horan School of Surf also supplied a letter in addition to completing a hard copy survey at Burleigh beach marquee. His comments are summarised as follows:
• surf schools should be on the beach (and signed), operating 8am-6pm to help keep beaches safer
• ideally require areas for shade but also areas for storage and meeting points
• operate from designated areas near flagged areas but not encroaching on them
• suggested a "neutral" beach activity coordinator so surf schools all treated fairly
• surf board hire should be run by surf schools as it is a major part of business (as opposed to surf clubs)

The 12 online surveys were largely from surf school operators (9). Issues raised by school representatives specific to their business included (excluding Cheyne Horan as his comments are detailed above):

• in response to Question 7, three mentioned Currumbin Alley (context of being crowded, limited parking; too many operators); another one mentioned Burleigh ("has potential for more" [commercial activity])
• in response to Question 8, one mentioned need for stand up paddle area lessons at quieter beaches (e.g. Palm Beach/Tugun)
• in response to Question 10, one commented that surf schools require a beach location. Two other comments related to desire for hire of equipment (deck chairs etc) on some beaches.

8.6.3 Other Stakeholders

Three other stakeholder submissions were received from planning/engineering, tourism and business representatives. One opposed commercialisation, one supported limited commercialisation in specific areas and the other supported event activities within the region it operates. These are outlined below:

1. Ocean Park Consulting resubmitted a response provided to the Draft Gold Coast Ocean Beaches Strategy in April 2013. The submission touched on broader issues such as the priority given to beaches, funding and approval processes. More specifically, Ocean Park opposed commercialisation arguing that life guards/lifesavers should not be distracted by commercial ventures, while funding for beach management should be sourced from three levels of governments rather than relying on commercial payments to fund capital work. The submission notes that the primary goal should be safety and the natural environment.

2. Connecting Southern Gold Coast (CSGC), which has the objective to foster economic growth and development in the southern region, supports beach-based events which it says can be a unique selling proposition for the city. CSGC suggests commercialisation of nominated beaches is a necessity and of significant value to the economy. CSGC recommends that it manage events on specific beaches of Currumbin, North Kirra/Kirra, Coolangatta and Greenmount for a trial period of 36 months with a maximum of 15 days of beach activity per year in Southern Gold Coast, that it be allowed to secure events to benefit precinct traders and that it be able to commercialise any beach event and as a not for profit operation, it collect revenue for further investment back into the broader precinct. The organisation is not seeking control over equipment, merchandise or refreshments.

3. Gold Coast Central Chamber of Commerce letter (received after the close of consultation but considered in this report) supports limited commercialisation of specific beaches to add value to the Gold Coast. It recommends that Main Beach, Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach (Kurrawa) and Burleigh Heads would be best suited to commercial activities, leaving the sections in between for quiet enjoyment. It suggests that activities be undertaken by surf clubs, alliances or traders from within those precincts to return economic value to those precincts. The Chamber also suggested that commercial opportunities should not be open to tender outside of the immediate beach precincts in the first instance, giving local traders a better opportunity. The type of activities deemed appropriate could include but not be limited to beach equipment (Al the suntan man style), watercraft hire and lessons, coffee and drink carts where appropriate, a permanent bar on the foreshore at Surfers Paradise, and appropriate paid event activation as is currently being trialled in Surfers Paradise and with Opera on the Beach.

8.7 Email Responses

Council received four email responses through Have Your Say mailto:haveyoursay@goldcoast.qld.gov.au. Three were from GCengage Forum members who chose to reply email rather than complete the online survey. One response suggested a kite festival. The other did not support commercial business on the sand involving fixed structures but was in favour of limited licensed vendors as well as concerts and sporting events etc. The third approved of park based exercise activity but not
money making activity as beaches belong to all. The fourth email response was from a beach goer and volunteer lifesaver who suggested paid lockers to reduce the number of people reporting their bags lost or keys stolen, wrist bands for young children with their parents contact details written on them to reduce the number of lost children and highly identifiable poles on busy beaches to provide guidance for beach goers to locate their property left on the beach.
9 Community Engagement Results

This section is divided into the survey results as well as a summary of the types of issues raised by respondents during engagement.

Results in this report are categorised into four respondent groups. Those groups are:

- **Public** survey respondents, meaning general public community members and stakeholders who accessed the online survey or completed the survey hard copy at or after the beach marquees and posted these to the City. While these people represent the general community, they took an active interest in this issue by choosing to complete the online survey. Around 40 per cent of them completed the survey while visiting the beach or nearby park area.
- **Telephone** survey respondents were chosen in a stratified survey to represent the entire city and who were randomly approached to complete the survey.
- **GCengage** Forum members, (the City of Gold Coast's online community reference group).
- **Online discussion forum** members (public), who replied to only five of the 11 questions asked of the above groups.

Results from these groups have been analysed separately, to determine any difference – if any - between the public and stakeholders responding to advertisements, the City's community-based events and planned promotions versus the City's online community reference group (GCengage Forum) and public online forum members and the telephone respondents who were actively pursued for their opinion.

9.1 Online and Hard Copy Survey Responses

A total of 1188 responses were received from survey respondents. This was split between:

- 646 “public” being 386 online respondents and 260 people who attended beach marquee days and completed hard copy surveys including one returned mail hard copy survey.
- 502 telephone responses. These respondents returned a very high percentage (almost 100 per cent) for every closed question.
- 40 GCengage Forum responses.

9.1.1 Demographics

**Q1: Please provide your personal details.**

While this question asked for name, postcode, email and telephone, only postcode will be reported on below. Note. All these questions were optional.
All except 25 public survey respondents provided this information. A broad range of suburbs were recorded for public survey responses with the most responses from:

- postcode 4218 covering the Broadbeach area
- 4220 covering the Burleigh-Miami area
- postcode 4217 covering areas such as Main Beach, Surfers Paradise

The above accounted for more than one third of all responses. This result is not surprising when considering the beach marquee locations of Broadbeach, Burleigh and Main Beach.

The telephone survey respondents are not reported on as a stratified sample was taken from each of the 14 divisions, with between 35-36 respondents from each division.

GCengage Forum responses who responded were from a wide range of suburbs, with the most respondents from Southport (4), followed by Coomera (3), Nerang (3) and the following with two representatives each - Currumbin, Mermaid, Robina, Burleigh, Ormeau, Varsity, Carrara and Molendinar.
Q2. Please indicate your age group

**Total Survey by Age**

Figure 5 - Total Public, Telephone and GCengage Forum Survey Respondents by Age

Older demographics are more heavily represented in all groups who completed the survey, with 55 to 74 year olds accounting for just over half (52 per cent) of all respondents. Just over 40 per cent of the public survey and two thirds of the telephone survey (66 per cent) were represented by respondents aged 55 years plus, with the highest representation in the public survey from the 55-64 age group (23 per cent) while the 65-74 year age group had the largest representation in the telephone survey (30 per cent). Just over half (54 percent) of the public respondents were aged 25-54 compared to one third (32 per cent) of telephone respondents. Fewer than 10 per cent of public and telephone survey respondents were aged under 24.

Only five GCengage Forum members provided their age, with all five being in the 65 year plus age bracket.

Less than one per cent of public respondents were aged under 15 years, and none from this age demographic were recorded on the stratified telephone survey nor the GCengage Forum. Please note that the online forum group are not represented in this total.

**Public Survey by Age**

Figure 6 - Public Survey Respondents by Age
Q3. How did you hear about this public consultation and survey?

This response was only relevant to those who completed the online and hard copy survey. Telephone survey respondents were not asked this question since they were proactively contacted and almost all GCengage Forum members indicated they knew about this survey via email, as they volunteered to be contacted by email for Council community engagement opportunities.

The largest majority of people (44 per cent) indicated they responded to the beach marquee days, followed by online advertising which includes Council website and social media (22 per cent), word of mouth (20 per cent), radio advertising (11 per cent) and finally stakeholders who responded to a letter mailed by the project team (3 per cent).

Figure 7 - Telephone Respondents by Age

Figure 8 - Public Response on How Respondents Heard about Consultation/Survey
Q4: How regularly do you visit Gold Coast’s ocean beaches?

More than half of all respondents indicated they visited Gold Coast ocean beaches at least weekly or more frequently (58 per cent). Thirteen per cent indicated monthly visits and the remaining respondents visited beaches fortnightly, every three months or never around the same rate (around 10 per cent).

![Total frequency of beach visits](image)

**Figure 9- Total Public, Telephone and GCengage Forum Frequency of Visits to Gold Coast Ocean Beaches**

Three quarters of public respondents indicated they visited beaches daily (42 per cent) or weekly (33 per cent), with another 18 per cent saying they visited fortnightly or monthly. The remaining respondents, less than 10 per cent frequent beaches every three months or less frequently. This high number of frequent visitors is unsurprising when considering hard copy surveys were completed at the beach and those who sought out the opportunity to provide feedback are likely beach users.

![Public frequency of beach visits](image)

**Figure 10 - Public Frequency of Ocean Beach Visits**

In comparison, 43 per cent of telephone survey respondents visit the beach daily (21 per cent) or weekly (22 per cent). Another 13 per cent visit fortnightly. Monthly and every three monthly beach visitors recorded similar percentages (13-17 per cent). Fourteen per cent indicated they never visited the beach, a much higher percentage than public respondents.
Figure 11 - Telephone Respondents Frequency of Beach Visits

More than half (60 per cent) of the 40 GCengage Forum members who replied said they visited the beach daily (20 per cent) or weekly (40 per cent). Another quarter (25 per cent) indicated they visited monthly, followed by fortnightly (10 per cent) and every three months (5 per cent).

Figure 12 – GCengage Forum Members Frequency of Beach Visits

9.2 Commercial Activity

The community/stakeholders were asked to provide quantitative feedback on a range of commercial and some non-commercial activities currently permitted on Gold Coast ocean beaches. These uses are:
- Entertainment/promotional events
- Filming
- Hire of beach equipment from Surf Life Saving Clubs
- Marriage ceremonies (non-commercial)
- Sky divers at North Kirra beach
- Special Council events (e.g. Carols by Candlelight)
- Surfing competitions
- Surf Life Saving Club competitions
- Surf schools
- Surf Life Saving training (non-commercial)

In addition, they were able to provide qualitative feedback as to why they ranked the desire for more or less of types of activities, their preferences for any alternative activities, specific beaches they believe Council should keep commercial activity free and any other comments.

9.2.1 Rankings of existing permitted uses

Q5: Currently there is a range of commercial and non-commercial activities permitted on Gold Coast ocean beaches. These are listed below. For each activity, please tick whether you would like to see ‘more’; the ‘same’; or ‘less’ of these activities on our ocean beaches. Please explain the reason for your answer.

![Figure 2 - Total Public, Telephone and GCengage Forum Rankings of Permitted Commercial/Non-commercial Activities](image)

Figure 11 provides a summary of the rankings provided by the three key survey respondent groups (excluding the online forum discussion group as their response structure did not allow easy alignment with other respondent groups). The majority of survey respondents indicated a preference for the “same” or “more” of every current permitted commercial activity. In broad terms, public and GCengage Forum members returned similar sentiments, wanting the “same” amount of activity whereas telephone respondents indicated a desire for “more” of the activities. The 502 telephone survey respondents indicated a preference for “more” of all activities other than two – marriages (more and same amounts were almost identical at 48 and 47 per cent) and sky diving at North Kirra beach.
9.2.1.1 Public responses to Question 5

Figure 3 - Public Survey Rankings of Permitted Commercial/Non-Commercial Activities

Public survey respondents largely indicated a desire for the "same" amount of permitted commercial and non-commercial activity other than two categories, those being the desire for more Special Council events (53 per cent) and the hire of beach equipment by SLSC - although in this latter category the desire for "more" was very close to the "same" ranking (46 and 43 per cent).

While respondents indicated they favoured the "same" amount of activity in all of the other eight categories, the next activities which attracted the highest percentage for "more" were non-commercial surf life saving training (44 per cent), surfing events (39 per cent) followed by entertainment and promotional events (38 per cent).

Activities that ranked as being least desired ("less") were entertainment or promotional events (13 per cent), hire of beach equipment (11 per cent) and sky divers at North Kirra (10 per cent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>More %</th>
<th>Same %</th>
<th>Less %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/promotional events</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>Hire of beach equipment from Surf Life Saving Clubs</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Marriage ceremonies (non-commercial)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sky divers at North Kirra beach</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Council events (e.g. Carols by Candlelight)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Surfing competitions</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surf Life Saving Club competitions</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3 - Public Responses to More, Same and Less of Permitted Activity on Ocean Beaches

- **Activity**: Surf schools  
  **More %**: 29  
  **Same %**: 63  
  **Less %**: 8

- **Activity**: Surf Life Saving training (non-commercial)  
  **More %**: 44  
  **Same %**: 55  
  **Less %**: 1

**Public open ended responses to Question 5. Please explain the reason for your answer.**

Responses to this were varied. However the main topics of comments by approximate mention have been summarised below:

- against commercial activity/concerns about commercialisation/too much now (47)
- for commercialisation (with some commenting about need for restrictions ) 44
- current commercial activity levels acceptable 45
- for F&B/Vendors 1
- against F&B vendors 2
- for equipment hire (9) with 2 indicating support for hire as SLSC function only
- against equipment hire 3
- surf schools attracted 12 comments ranging from Rainbow Bay is saturated (2), Currumbin is overcrowded (3), beaches overcrowded and therefore dangerous (3). Other single mention is that they need a beach presence (1), against surf schools (1), surf school shops acceptable but not vans (1), current number acceptable (1).

Responses typical of these key issues above are as follows, however a complete listing of every comment is available in Appendix 2.

- “Leave the beach for the residents...No commercial stuff on the beach.  We are Australia, not Europe.

- *This whole 'everyone else must suffer so a select few can make a dollar' mentality must end.  The beach belongs to the generations NOT private enterprise.

- *Our beaches are our best natural resource for residents and tourism, and for the size of our population compared to the length of our beaches we underutilize this resource.  When you compare how the beaches are used in Europe with how little our beaches are used in our city it shows you that there is much more scope for them to be used.

- *Our beaches are beautiful but very under used.  I would love it if we could hire beach lounges or chairs.  When I travelled around South East Asia, I always hired them, it was a fantastic service & made the beach more enjoyable.

- *Great to see beaches being used as long as environment is considered and safe and happy environment.

- *I think it's about right as it is.  I don't want to be hassled at the beach and the beaches are so clean with no rubbish.

- *I am happy with the level of activity on the beaches and do not want any more, as I want people to be able to access the beaches without being excluded because of "special interest" events.”
9.2.1.2 Telephone responses to Question 5

Figure 4 - Telephone Survey Rankings of Permitted Commercial/Non-Commercial Activities

Telephone respondents indicated a preference for "more" of each activity, bar two categories where respondents preferred the "same" amount. The exceptions which received the highest ranking of preference for "same" amount were sky divers at North Kirra (54 per cent) and marriage ceremonies—although with marriage ceremonies the majority at 48 per cent favoured "same", followed by an almost equal preference for "more" at 47 per cent.

As with the public response, the activity that elicited the most response in terms of desire for "more" activity was special events (such as Carols by Candlelight) which attracted three quarters of support (75 per cent). Support for "more" types of activity was followed by "more" non-commercial surf club training (67 per cent), beach equipment hire from SLS Clubs (66 per cent), surf schools (61 per cent), SLSC competitions and surfing competitions (both 57 per cent), filming (51 per cent), marriages (47 per cent), entertainment/promotional events (42 per cent) and finally sky divers at North Kirra (27 per cent).

Activities that ranked as being least desired ("less") were entertainment and promotional events and sky diving at North Kirra (both 19 per cent), beach equipment hire by SLSCs (9 per cent), filming (8 per cent), marriages and surfing competitions (both 5 per cent), SLSC competitions and surf schools (both 3 per cent) and special events and non-commercial SLS training (both 2 per cent).

As mentioned above, when considering preferences for the "same" amount of activity, sky diving at North Kirra ranked highest (54 per cent), followed by marriages (48 per cent) then filming (41 per cent), SLSC competitions (40 per cent), entertainment/promotional events (39 per cent), surfing competitions (38 per cent), surf schools (37 per cent), non-commercial SLS training (32 per cent), beach equipment hire at SLSC (25 per cent) and special events (23 per cent).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Activity</th>
<th>More %</th>
<th>Same %</th>
<th>Less%</th>
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<td>Entertainment/promotional events</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>Filming</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Hire of beach equipment from Surf Life Saving Clubs</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage ceremonies (non-commercial)</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>5</td>
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## Activity

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>More %</th>
<th>Same %</th>
<th>Less %</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sky divers at North Kirra beach</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Council events (e.g. Carols by Candlelight)</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>Surfing competitions</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>Surf schools</td>
<td>61</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf Life Saving training (non-commercial)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
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Table 4 - Telephone Responses to More, Same and Less of Permitted Activity on Ocean Beaches

- **Telephone open ended responses to Question 5. Please explain the reason for your answer.**

Responses to this were varied. However, the main topics in comments by approximate mention have been summarised below:

- dislike of Schoolies Festival (44 mentions), with V8 supercar race sometimes mentioned. While this comment was recorded from respondents in and around Surfers (4215-4217), this was not a comment exclusive to respondents from this area.
- support equipment hire (28), with a few mentions for SLSC exclusive arrangement while others were against such an arrangement
- against equipment hire (3)
- support for filming (11), seen as a positive for the city, as long as it doesn’t interfere with beach goers
- support for more sport (6)
- support for concerts/events (8)
- support for sky divers (6), as long as it doesn’t interfere with beach goers
- support for more surf schools (3), more surfing competitions (3), support SLSC comps (3)
- against surfing comps, surf schools as take up too much beach (2)

Responses typical of these key issues above are as follows, however a complete listing of every comment is available in Appendix 2.

- “Don’t like schoolies or V8 supercars because of congestion, noise
- Definitely like to see less of schoolies, I would like to see controlled crowds
- Schoolies brings bad publicity and our beaches are filthy and my family avoid going to Surfers at this time
- Hire of beach equipment from surf life saving clubs- As long as money is going to the club.
- Filming and if helps promote the GC more is better… more hire equipment from anyone not just SLSC…more at the parks carols by candlelight surf competitions as long as they’re well run
- More festivals brings more people - filming as long as they don’t take the beach for too long a periods….Hire of equipment is good - bit more shade areas - not too much of hiring as it would get too much like Bali…..When commercialism starts taking over beaches it gets to a point where the commercialised aren’t paying rent that’s not right!!!!……Gold coast is all about the beaches that’s all we have - we need to look after and to be used……Plenty of parks on the beaches and as long as the alcohol is controlled……surf comps are excellent and need more!!……surf schools as long as they don’t abuse the system”
9.2.1.3 GCengage Forum Member’s responses to Question 5

GCengage Forum members responses mirrored the public survey results, with only two activities where people considered "more" activity acceptable; that being, the hire of beach equipment by SLSCs (55 per cent ranked "more") and special Council event (50 per cent ranked "more"). The same amount of respondents indicated a preference for “more/same” non-commercial surf club training (48 per cent).

When considering preferences for the "same" amount of activity, marriages ranked highest (72 per cent), followed by sky divers at North Kirra (66 per cent), filming (62 per cent) and entertainment/promotional events which all received around 60 per cent ranking.

Activities that ranked as being least desired ("less") were then sky divers at North Kirra (13 per cent), beach equipment hire by SLSCs and surf schools (both 8 per cent). All of the other activities rated 5 per cent or less in rankings of desire for "less" activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>More %</th>
<th>Same %</th>
<th>Less %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/promotional events</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire of beach equipment from Surf Life Saving Clubs</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage ceremonies (non-commercial)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky divers at North Kirra beach</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Council events (e.g. Carols by Candlelight)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing competitions</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf Life Saving Club competitions</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf schools</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf Life Saving training (non-commercial)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 - GCengage Forum Member Responses to More, Same and Less of Permitted Activity on Ocean Beaches

- **GCengage Forum open ended responses to Question 5 Please explain the reason for your answer.**

Further themes in these responses by approximate mention have been summarised below:

- desire for more surf awareness training (5 comments)
- beaches to stay free of charge (3)
- beaches are able to support commercial activities (3)
- support for events as long as no littering issues (3)

Other themes that at least two people supported related to: amount of commercial activity acceptable as is; leave the beaches natural, support for hire of equipment and another two who supported SLSC making money without imposing on beach goers, support for more events.

Responses typical of these key issues above are as follows, however a complete listing of every comment is available in Appendix 2.

- “Should be more surf training to understand it better
- It is important to promote and maintain recreational use of the beaches as free of charge places to enjoy.
- As long as events have good litter management and security we should keep using them for events. I think we should allow surf lifesaving clubs first chance when it comes to profiting so that they can patrol our beaches longer in summertime. If they can make more money they can employ people longer hours and prevent drownings. They should be given the first option to rent out chairs and beach umbrellas if they would like to.”

### 9.2.1.4 Online Forum responses to Question 5

The online forum discussion Question 3 posed a similar question to that of the online and hard copy survey Question 5. The question asked:

3. Currently there is a range of commercial and non-commercial activities permitted on Gold Coast ocean beaches. These are listed below. Which of these activities would you like to see more or less of and why? (16 responses)

The responses were generally evenly spread between support for more and less of types of activities. Comments indicating a preference for “less” activity included:
- two comments about markets in Surfers Paradise
- single mentions of preference for less surfing competitions at popular surf breaks, large events such as Cooly Rocks/Quicksilver, F&B compete with existing retail, boats/surf craft at Currumbin and filming.

In the area of preference for “more” activity, comments that related were:

- two comments in support for sunscreen sales
- two comments in support of equipment hire by surf clubs only
- single mentions of support for beach lockers, deck chairs, icecream/drinks, surf stand up paddle lessons

**Q6: What is your interest in commercial activity on ocean beaches? (tick one or more of the following boxes)**

The results for Question 6 are unusually aligned, with each of the three groups responding that 98 per cent were beach users.

![Total interest in commercial activity](chart)

*# Multiple answers accepted across categories*

**Figure 6 - Total Interest in Commercial Activity Across Public, Telephone and GCengage Forum Respondents by Mention**

The public survey results are not exact as they might initially indicate as some respondents ticked two or more categories of beach use as the survey offered. While 98 per cent of the people who responded did indicate they were beach users, another group of 12 per cent (72 people) indicated they were also commercial activity participants. Seven per cent (39 people) indicated they were also business activity organisers and eight per cent (49 people) were not for profit activity organisers.

As visible in Figure 15, almost all telephone participants were beach users (98 per cent). This was followed by a very small number of beach activity organisers (2 per cent or 8 people) and not for profit activity organisers (3 people). No one indicated they used commercial beach activities.
Almost every GCengage Forum member said they used the beach, while one of the 40 (or 3 per cent) said they were a business activity organiser, six (or 15 per cent) indicated they were a not for profit organiser and another three (8 per cent) said they participated in commercial activities.

**Q7: Open ended question - Are there any particular ocean beaches you would like to see more or less commercial activity on and why?**

A relatively low number of respondents provided a specific answer to this open ended question, with many making general comments about commercial activity. Figure 16 graphically represents approximate mentions of specific beaches. Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach and Burleigh were the key beaches mentioned, with the majority of respondents indicating a desire for more commercial activity in those areas. Public respondents also mentioned Kirra and Coolangatta as requiring "more" commercial activity. It is worthy to note that these comments are from reasonably small numbers. Further explanation and detail from each group follows. All comments are available in full in Appendix 2.

![Figure 7 - Total Approximate Mentions for Particular Beaches for More or Less Commercial Activity - by All Groups (Public, Telephone, GCengage Forum, Online Discussion Forum)](image)

**Figure 7 - Total Approximate Mentions for Particular Beaches for More or Less Commercial Activity - by All Groups (Public, Telephone, GCengage Forum, Online Discussion Forum)**

9.2.1.5 **Public responses to Question 7**

This question received 493 responses with 321 specific comments (65 per cent) and 172 "no" responses (35 per cent). The figure above illustrates that the beaches where respondents would be willing to accept more commercial activity were Surfers Paradise (44), Broadbeach (26) and Burleigh (14), Kirra (13) and Coolangatta (11). Others that received three or fewer mentions were Main Beach, Greenmount, Nobby, and The Spit.

Desire for less commercial activity was strongest for Currumbin (8), Burleigh (6), Surfers (4) and then three mentions or less were recorded for Palm Beach, Broadbeach, Kirra, Main Beach, Snapper, Miami and single mentions of Nobby, Rainbow Bay, Spit and Narrowneck.

What is not reflected in the above is that respondents mentioned specific beaches, but did not provide an indication of whether they wanted "more" activity or "less" activity at those beaches, making it difficult to include them in the analysis. Beaches which fell into this category were Surfers Paradise (around 12 mentions), Burleigh (9 mentions), Broadbeach and Currumbin (both 5 mentions), Main Beach (4) plus a range of other beaches (similar to above as well as Tallebudgera).
Other key points to note was the sentiment to keep commercial "about the same" (16), all beaches should have less (13), "no more" commercial activity (7), and all beaches should have more commercial activity (6), keep commercial activity restricted to tourist areas such as Surfers and Broadbeach (5).

9.2.1.6 Telephone responses to Question 7

Around 100 specific answers were received in response to this question. Many responded simply No or "not really" (around 180, almost double the response rate).

The analysis below centres on answers to the question – recognising only specific beaches mentioned, as opposed to analysing a range of responses which ranged from somewhat relevant comments such as “beaches should all stay as they are” to comments about the cruise ship terminal.

Figure 15 shows that beaches where respondents wanted more commercial activity was Surfers (14) (with another 7 saying there was enough or no more commercial activity needed); Burleigh (8) (with another 5 saying there was enough or no more needed), The Spit (6), Main Beach (6). Those with three or fewer mentions for more activity were Palm Beach, Miami, Nobby, Greenmount, Kirra, and Northcliffe.

Desire for less commercial activity was strongest for Burleigh (8 with 1 specific to fitness groups), Surfers Paradise (6), The Spit (6 with 1 being no activity) andCurrumbin (5 with 1 specific to fitness groups). Those with three or fewer mentions were Main Beach, Broadwater, Palm Beach, Kurrawa, Coolangatta, and South Stradbrooke. Another respondent mentioned “leave Tallebudgera, Currumbin, Rainbow Bay alone” – which could be interpreted as less (or same).

A few indicated a particular beach but not whether they wanted more or less. Those mentioned but not clarified were "North Burleigh", “Main Beach” or “Surfers Paradise needs less attention” ; “Runaway Bay parking is difficult” Or Surfers Paradise is crowded (3), "more northern end”

Other sentiments expressed were: more activity on all beaches (8), less activity on all beaches (6), good as is (4), spread activities around beaches (4), enough activity on all beaches (2).

9.2.1.7 GCengage Forum responses to Question 7

Only about half of GCengage Forum members (22) responded. Figure 15 shows the only beaches mentioned were: more activity at Burleigh (1) and less at Surfers Paradise (2). Others were mentioned but fell outside the scope of ocean beaches. Other comments included keeping commercial activity to tourist centres such as Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach (2 mentions) and single comments such as: no more in Surfers , activities should be spread along the coastline, leave southern beaches, supports commercial activity at all beaches, need little commercial activity at any and fitness groups intrusive.

9.2.1.8 Online Forum responses to Question 7

The online discussion forum Question 1 posed a similar question to the online and hard copy survey Question 7. The forum question asked:

1. Are there any particular ocean beaches you would like to see ‘more’, ‘less’ or the ‘same’ commercial activity on and why? (32 responses from 19 contributors)

As with the survey results, few respondents nominated a particular beach in their reply but the beach most frequently raised was Surfers Paradise, with comments reasonably evenly spread between “more” and “less”. A summary of comments follows:

In the area for preference for “less” activity:
- four comments supported less activity at Surfers Paradise
- four indicated a preference for no commercial activity
- two comments indicated Surfers markets compete against retail while another two said markets are tacky
- single issue comments were varied including: reduced beach access due to concerts, against commercial/club events especially at Duranbah/Snapper Rocks/Greenmount/Currumbin Alley/Burleigh, against small commercial activity,
Currumbin Alley too busy with surf lessons, less activity in general, beaches should not be overcrowded and polluted, no support for equipment hire, off leash dog areas not working well.

In the area of preference for “more” activity:

- two comments indicated that commercial activity on Surfers Paradise was acceptable but keep other beaches as are
- three comments related to support for vendors and equipment hire
- single issues that could be placed in “more” category included: desire for ability to sell sunscreen, night movies, wider spread of activities outside Surfers Paradise, camel rides.

Those comments about desire for “same” amount of activity:

- four comments related to general support for same amount of commercial activity as present
- single mentions about adequacy of surf school placements and adequacy of surf school numbers.

Other comments related to:

- concern that public assets not be sold (3)
- definition of “commercial activity (2)
- concerts not family friendly (2).

Comments typical of the above analysis are as follows:

- "I would like to see less commercial activity on Surfers Paradise beach and foreshore. Beach concerts being staged during peak holiday season promoting alcohol is not how our beaches are meant to be enjoyed, they block off the area for days and generally make the precinct look ugly. Additionally the ever growing and increasing number of Markets on the Surfers Paradise foreshore has created a retail precinct in direct competition with local traders..."

- Why not list one major beach as an initial commercial venture? Surfers is such a commercial area already- to introduce rental chairs, umbrellas etc, ambulatory refreshment sellers etc surely would just be an extension of tourist services in the area. Leave the other beaches in their natural state. Whether locals or visitors want commercialised or natural beaches, they will choose & their presence will confirm the opinion of the public

- "Beaches in most parts of the world have umbrella and deck chair hire because.........That's what tourists want. There are also vendors who will sell you cold drinks while you enjoy the beach whilst not getting melanoma. If you don't want to hire an umbrella then don't, but don't try and stop other people from doing so if they choose..."

A full list of comments is available in Appendix 2 and 3.

**Q8: Would you like to see any alternative activities on ocean beaches (If so, please describe)**

This open ended question was analysed across all four respondent groups. Dozens of different activities were nominated. Overall the numbers of recorded responses were reasonably low when considering the total number of respondents. For ease of analysis, these were grouped in broad categories of no activity (responses such as "no, none, no additional"); not really/unsure (responses such as "not really, not that I can think of, unsure, N/A, nil, no thoughts, not at the moment"); currently supported activities (activity types currently being approved under the local law and included the more common mentioned activities of equipment hire, music/bands/concerts, active lifestyle, sport, volleyball, cricket, family events, children’s activities, movie nights, sand sculptures, surf awareness); food and beverage/vendors (including ice-creams, water, coffee, food plus vendors); cafe/dining; massage; group fitness training and markets. Note the activities included in ‘currently supported activities’ whilst able to be approved under the local law, are not always applied for. For example only one Surf Life Saving club applied for a permit to hire beach equipment which they did not renew for this current year.

Due to the variance in words used to describe activities, answers required some interpretation to be grouped into major themes. Other points to keep in mind are: the term food and beverage (F&B) covers food, drink, ice-cream, water, coffee,
plus vendors (with the term ice-creams and drinks commonly used). Several respondents also mentioned the sale of sunscreen alongside food and drinks. The term F&B is distinct from cafes/restaurants/kiosks/dining which have been counted separately due to the need for on-site infrastructure. Equipment hire, which does not mean exclusive hire by Surf Life Saving Clubs, mentions umbrellas, lounges, chairs, bean bags, cabanas and shade.

In broad terms, an analysis of responses revealed an overall preference for no commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches (44 per cent) followed by 37 per cent support for uses such as equipment hire/entertainment/active lifestyle/sport/family events/movies/surf awareness/sand sculptures (currently supported activities). The most popular of these activities were music/bands/concerts, active lifestyle activities and volleyball.

Of the activities not currently supported by the local laws (13 per cent), food and beverage/vendors received 5 per cent support, cafes/dining (3 per cent), fitness groups (2 per cent) and markets (1 per cent). Another six per cent were unsure of their response to this question.

![Figure 8 - Summary of Alternative Activities by All Groups (Public, Telephone, GCengage Forum, Online Discussion Forum)](image)

9.2.1.9 Public survey responses to Question 8

Just over half respondents (362) provided some comment on this issue (although this includes the answers “no” which totalled around 109 or 30 per cent of the 362). Food and beverage/vendors as well as hire of equipment, not exclusively by SLSCs received frequent mentions by the public respondents. The activities which received the highest estimated number of responses were:
• New alternate activities (88)
  o food and beverage (23) + vendors (10)
  o cafes/dining (16)
  o bars (8)
  o massage (6)
  o yoga (3)
  o camel riding (3)
  o fitness groups (10)
  o markets (5)
  o huts (4)

• Currently supported activities (122)
  o equipment hire (31)
  o bands/concert /music (21)
  o active lifestyle (9) - (Council funded and free activities)
  o volleyball (16)
  o children's activities (9)
  o sport (6) and then footy/soccer/ball games (4)
  o cultural events (6)
  o family activities (5)
  o movies (5)
  o cricket (4)
  o surf awareness (3)
  o fishing competitions (3)
  o dog friendly activities/areas (3)
  o sand sculpting (3)

Other activities with two mentions include but are not limited to cultural events, boat racing, horse riding, and single mention buskers, air shows, 4 wheel driving, nightclub.

9.2.1.10 Telephone responses to Question 8

This question again attracted a high response rate in terms of comments made (490), however more than 200 replied "no". The activities which received the highest number of responses were:

• New alternate activities (29)
  o F&B (9) + vendors (2)
  o cafes/dining (6)
  o markets (4)
  o fitness groups (8)

• Currently supported activities (116)
  o music events including live bands and concerts /music (24) + opera/popera (3)
  o volleyball (18)
  o family events (13)
  o active lifestyle (11)
  o beach cricket (16)
  o children activities (9)
Other activities with two mentions included fishing competitions, sitting watching boats, horse riding, nude/topless beach, touch football. Single mentions included (but are not limited to) more hiring of chairs and umbrellas, drinks served under a roofed area, yoga, lockers, offshore power boat racing, fireworks, wind and kite surfing competitions, Aquasplash, sun tan man, soccer, cultural events, sculptures/festivals, huts for shade, torches/drumming, fire dancing, seating close to water, boating/yachting races, windsurfing.

9.2.1.11 GCengage Forum responses to Question 8

Of the 24 responses, only half responded to this open ended question. The most mentions the same activity received was two:

- New alternate activities (4)
  - food and beverage (2) + cafes (1)
  - pre-set up beach equipment (1)
- Currently supported activities (6)
  - entertainment (2)
  - equipment hire (2)
  - sand sculpture (2)

All other single issues ranged from keep as natural as possible, little commercial activity as possible, teach water safety, movies, marriage ceremonies, children’s castle/child care, desire not be harassed on the sand, no to vendors, need for trees, entertainment, markets, art, fitness, volleyball, basketball, cricket, markets, sport, exercise, massage, movies, child care.

9.2.1.12 Online forum responses to Question 8

The online forum Question 2 posed a similar question to the online and hard copy survey Question 9. This question asked:

2. Would you like to see any alternative activities on ocean beaches; and if so, please describe. (11 responses)

This question generated a large response regarding the desire for a nude beach. This forum question was the only avenue in which this alternative activity was raised in any number throughout the engagement program. Responses relate to:

- eight comments of support for a nude beach
- support for movies on beach (1), ability to sell sunscreen (1) and more surfing/Frisbees/food markets/volleyball/BBQs
- “We have some of the best beaches in the world here and we are missing out on millions of dollars worth of tourism. This all because we don’t have any legal Clothing optional (naturist) beaches in Qld, so why set an example and create a legal naturist area along the Gold Coast Strip. I am sure you would be pleasantly surprised at the economic benefits you would gain”.
- Representative responses from this question across all groups include:
  - “Chairs and umbrellas. Able to sell ice cream and drinks on foreshore and beach
  - I wouldn’t be in favour of too many commercial activities on the beaches. You go to some beaches overseas and can’t get a moment’s peace for people trying to sell you something. Having said that, it would be great to have beach lockers, deckchairs, ice cream/drink/sunscreen vendors on the beaches. It would be convenient and, provided they didn’t tout, would be a great addition.
- Pop up bars, pop up coffee/cafe, anything that improves the vibe and placemaking of our best asset

- Yes. Umbrella and sun lounge hire. Controlled areas of beach huts like in Europe. Areas of beer gardens and commercial outlets

- No-we should keep GC beaches in their natural state as much as possible.

- Volley Ball is a massively popular for participants and spectators. Much more should be made of this sport with Council Run fun competitions each month and facilities at all main beaches.

- More fitness and entertainment as long as they are well managed and do not effect environment

- Any sports that can be played on the beach would be great - cricket & volley ball

A full list of comments is available in Appendix 2 and 3.

Q9: Are there any ocean beaches that Council should never permit commercial activities on? Please add to your response why those beaches should not be permitted to have commercial activities.

The majority of responses to this question received the answer "no" (approximately 211 mentions by telephone respondents, 80 by public respondents and five GCengage Forum Members). Respondents who answered "all" (or no commercial activity/none/limited) totalled around 33 in the public survey and 21 in the telephone survey.

The Spit was the key beach nominated by the majority of respondents as the beach where no commercial activity should occur. While many did not expand upon the reason for their selections, some of the comments regarding nomination of The Spit included:

- "The Spit should not be commercialised in my view. That should be a sacred space past the Sheraton for a natural experience only"

- The Spit is great for dogs and untouched.

- The Spit doesn't have enough access for big crowds"

The other key beaches then most frequently nominated were:
9.2.1.13 Public responses to Question 9

Again, around half of public respondents provided some response (331). The beach most frequently nominated by public respondents as their preferred area for no commercial activity was:

- The Spit (approximately 29 mentions)
- Currumbin (13)
- Burleigh (12)
- Main Beach (or north of Main Beach) (7)
- Rainbow Bay (7)
- South Stradbroke (7)
- Miami (7)
- Kirra (5)
- Tallebudgera (5)
- Palm Beach (5)
- Snapper Rocks (3)

Other beaches with fewer mentions were Surfers Paradise (2), Kurrawa (2), Mermaid (2), Tugun (2) and single mentions for Broadbeach, Wavebreak Island, Coolangatta, Southport, Bilinga and Seaway. Southern beaches (mostly identified as beaches south of Burleigh) also rated 6 mentions.

However, a larger number provided general comments which included:
• “no” (80 comments)
• “all should never be commercialised (33)
• most should never be commercialised/limited commercialisation (7)

9.2.1.14 Telephone responses to Question 9

Almost all of the respondents replied (490). The most frequent response to this question was “no” which received approximately 211 mentions and “no all is good” another nine. In contrast, the “all” or “no/limited” commercial activity received around 21 mentions. Of the remaining answers, the beaches most frequently nominated as their preferred area for no commercial activity was:

• The Spit (approximately 45 mentions)
• Burleigh (20)
• Rainbow Bay (10)
•Currumbin (10)
•Main Beach (and north of Main Beach) (10)
•Kirra (7)
•South Stradbroke (6)
•Coolangatta (4)
•Greenmount (3)
•Kurrawa (3)

Other beaches with approximately two or fewer mentions were, Tallebudgera, Southport, Snapper Rocks, Wavebreak Island, Broadbeach, Narrowneck, Miami, Nobby, Tugun, and Palm Beach.

There were other sentiments expressed as “all good” (7), restore Kirra (2), “keep smaller beaches less commercial” (7).

9.2.1.15 GCengage Forum responses to Question 9

Of the 19 GCengage Forum members who commented, the beaches most frequently nominated for no commercial activity were:

• The Spit (6)
•Burleigh (3)
•Currumbin (3)
•Main Beach (2)

Single mentions for Kirra, Snapper Rocks, Greenmount, Miami, Palm Beach, Duranbah, “Islands” and “smaller” beaches. Five people answered “no”, with at least another three saying “no” with comments, however the comments were all different and did not allow grouping for analysis.

9.2.1.16 Online forum responses to Question 9

The online forum Question 4 provided a response to the above online and hard copy survey Question 9.

4. Are there any ocean beaches that Council should never permit commercial activities on; and if so, why do you think those beaches should not be permitted to have commercial activities? (3 responses)
Those beaches mentioned were:

- Seaway (2)
- Jumpinpin (2)
- The Spit (1)
- Wavebreak Island (1)

- Representative remarks across all groups include:
  - “Burleigh Heads or the Southern beaches. Leave some beaches for the locals to enjoy, they are busy enough already
  - Leave the Spit - still so natural and doesn't want anything to change that”
  - Currumbin beach busy enough
  - From Main beach north - spit is nice and unspoiled leave it as is. Where the accommodation ends at main beach the commercial things are fine - although not enough parking at the spit”
  - “Rainbow Bay and other small beaches should be left as there isn't enough room to have events without effecting the whole area”
  - Less commercial activity on all Gold Coast ocean beaches because these beaches belong to generations NOT private enterprise.
  - All except activities above. Don’t destroy the lifestyle we have. Look at Asia for instance - you can’t even sit without being hassled. People can walk to the shops etc. There's enough everywhere”

A full list of comments is available in Appendix 2 and 3.

9.2.2 Open ended question of ‘any other comments’

Q10: Do you have any other comments relating to commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches?

The majority of respondents took the opportunity to provide a comment in this section, although themes were extensive with more than approximately 700 comments. Some were not related to the commercial activity on beach consultation – such as comments about support for or opposition to the cruise ship terminal (reasonably evenly matched). The most frequent comments related to either general opposition to commercial activity, support for commercial activity and the desire to keep beaches clean. Another comment across all groups (albeit reasonably small numbers) was the hope that Gold Coast beaches not end up like Bali.

9.2.2.1 Public responses to Question 10

The majority of people provided some comments (474, 170 skipped). Responses were broad ranging. The key issues are listed below in order of estimated mentions. Key themes have been grouped together under the following headings:
• against commercial activity/desire for less or limited (29)
• support commercialisation or more commercial activity (26) but several comments qualified this by saying that it needed to be regulated/monitored
• against F&B/vendors (6) and no or less restaurants (6)
• support for food and beverage (6) and restaurants (4)
• support current level of commercial activity (9)
• desire for clean beaches (8) and commercial organisers need to help keep beaches clean (4)
• against hawkers (6)
• no advertising (5)
• support equipment hire (3) but one qualified only through SLSC
• desire that Gold Coast beaches not end up like Bali (4)
• keep commercial activities to main tourist areas (3)
• support personal trainers (2) and against trainers (1)
• against equipment hire (2)

9.2.2.2 Telephone responses to Question 10

Just over half of the telephone respondents opted to provide additional comments. No real trends emerged during analysis of this question, as many responses were small numbered comments or single issues ranging from desire for more rubbish bins and free Wi-Fi, to no vehicles on beaches, no vendors, and no markets.

The key issues – some of which are not related to the commercial activity on beach consultation – are listed below in order of frequency of mention. Key themes have been grouped together under the following headings:

• need for more parking at beaches (12) and desire for free parking (3)
• happy with beaches at present (8)
• concerns about litter/environment (5)
• no commercialisation/too many commercial activities/desire for less commercialisation (7)
• support food vendors (4) but against alcohol (1) and support only icecream/drinks (1)
• want to ensure no charge to use beaches (4)
• keep commercialism to a minimum (4)
• desire to encourage more Nippers (4)
• concern that Gold Coast beaches don’t end up like Bali (2)
• desire for more free events (3)
• desire for more public facilities such as showers/toilets (3)
• against large concerts (2)

9.2.2.3 GCengage Forum responses to Question 10

Exactly half of the 40 respondents provided an answer to this question. Most were single issue comments, however those most frequently expressed were:

• a desire that beaches not be overrun by hawkers (like Bali) (3)
• desire for more commercial activity (2).

Other issues raised (but not limited to) were the need to trial commercial activity, desire for air shows/night time events, no support for vendors, that beaches are a place to relax, commercial activity should be tasteful, no commercial activity as in the US, opposition to beaches being littered so keep natural.
Online forum responses to Question 10

The fifth and final online forum question posed the similar open ended online and hard copy survey Question 10.

5. Do you have any other comments relating to commercial activity on ocean beaches? (22 responses)

No definite trends emerged in this open ended question. The most frequent mention of similar issues were:

- four comments about desire for no more commercial activity/keep beaches as they are while one commented about desire for less commercial activity
- three comments about preference for no commercial activity
- two comments about desire for locker hire, but one qualified that locker hire should be run only from surf clubs
- two comments about fewer large events as they compete with existing retail/consume car parking.

Single issues related to preferences for products/service related to:

- desire for private functions to consume alcohol, icecream/drinks, sunscreen, more parking/free buses, support for commercial activity, support for surf schools, support for one off events, support for SLC activities.

Single issues related to preferences against products/service related to:

- no hired campervans during surf contests, less activity at Surfers Paradise due to events/markets,

Other single comments related to beach erosion, too few car parks and Council benefitting from commercial activity.

- Representative responses from this question across all groups include:

  - “Beaches should be open to sales of food and beverages in some areas
  - Allow commercial activity but very limited
  - I think sales of water (preferably chilled) and SPF is a must on/near to the beach. On a hot day, this is the 2 most important items required for a persons health. If they are more conveniently accessed, I think it will greatly improve the health ofQLDers. Food/snacks sales would also be good too. I would also like to see chairs/loungers, tents and umbrellas available to hire. Tourism is huge here, people can’t necessarily bring all these items here with them. Hire would be a great option for them.
  - Good for tourism
  - I think commercial activity is fine as long as suitable provisions and conditions are placed on the organisers.
  - Something that is unique and attracts tourists. Keep traders classy. Should NOT be just selling standard junk on the beaches. Council should sell permits to these businesses and limit the number of licences issued. The beaches should not be flooded with commercial (Do not do a RIO or Miami beach model)
  - Do not allow any, or there will be a gradual increase in activity and then we will find that they will start charging us to use any beach. Stop it now. Don’t let it start.
  - There should overall be no increase in commercial activities on any Gold Coast beach. Do not sacrifice the beach for profit. You will destroy the Gold Coast. The beach is one of the last assets of the Gold Coast that remains untouched by the greedy hands and tacky touristy gimmicks
  - I am concerned it will be like Europe where everything must be paid for or like Bali where I was walking on the beach and suddenly someone’s hands were on my neck trying to offer me a massage.
  - Don’t spoil the natural attraction
• People should not be allowed to approach you like they do in Bali, if you want their service you should have to call them over.

• I feel that our beaches are beautiful just like they are...we have achieved a good balance and should keep it like this.

• More parking is needed at many of the beaches, especially where there is a combination of people and dog beaches.

• Please don’t open beach front areas to commercial activities..... How sad... We all know leaving nature to be enjoyed in its natural state brings the greatest joy..... You know it; don’t be swayed by businesses wanting to make money to feather their nests by using our beaches... Please allow the community the enjoyment of leaving nature tell its story......

• I would not like to see any commercial activity on ocean beaches. It will lead to people pesterling you all the time, more rubbish accumulating and less income for the adjoining legitimate businesses paying large rents.”

A full list of these and other comments are detailed in Appendix 2 and 3.

9.3 Interest in Council-wide Community Engagement

Q 11. If you would like to take part in future online City of Gold Coast surveys, please provide your email address:

This question was asked to give community members the ability to have their say on future online consultations. Response rates were more than adequate, gaining around 350 email addresses of community members/stakeholders. Two hundred and thirty four (234) public respondents provided their email addresses for future consultation (36 per cent response rate) while 115 telephone survey respondents supplied their email address (23 per cent). More telephone respondents offered that they could be reached by telephone only (not unusual since they were contacted by phone) but these numbers have not been noted for the purposes of this report as this question is asked to notify participants about online based consultations. This question was irrelevant for GCengage Forum members who already participate in City surveys.

This information is available for use by the City’s Consultation Team and project teams for notification of any future community engagement opportunities on this issue or other city-wide issues.

9.4 Social Media Responses

Facebook postings attracted 16 comments in total. While some people mentioned more than one issue, the most frequent comments related to support for food and beverages (5 mentions) and support for equipment hire (4 mentions).
10 Other responses worthy of note

Responses to the five open ended survey questions were extremely broad ranging. While the majority of responses have been covered under Section 9, there were several issues of note that arose consistently across each of the four respondent groups. Some relate directly to the question of commercialisation, while others are relevant in so far as they provide an insight into those subjects the community feel relevant.

- "Environmental" concerns

A consistent message throughout all open ended questions was the need to protect the natural beauty of Gold Coast ocean beaches. This issue arose more than 200 times across Questions 5-10 responses, particularly in response to questions regarding were there any beaches that should never permit commercial activities and any other general comments. The issues were not so much directly linked to environmental actions (such as concerns about dunes although this was raised), but more about retaining the "natural beauty" of the beaches, so everyone can enjoy their natural state now and into the future and keeping the "uniqueness" of our beaches which attracts tourists.

- Litter

A somewhat related issue to the above was litter or pollution. Another 20 comments were made regarding concerns about litter. While some of them related to existing concerns, a consistent message was the concern that commercial activity may increase litter on beaches and that stricter litter laws may be required.

- Parking

Around 80 comments were made regarding concerns that commercial activity would increase what some respondents perceive as already existing parking issues. Broadly, people raised concerns that additional commercial activity would be difficult or if approved, would require additional parking. Some comments suggested that large events be kept at larger beaches such as Surfers Paradise or Broadbeach which has more parking available, while others specifically mentioned beaches which they perceive already having parking issues. This included (but is not limited to) Currumbin, Palm Beach, Burleigh and Rainbow Bay.

- Regulation

Around 60 comments related to regulation issues across a broad range of topics. Generally, there were comments that commercial activity was acceptable assuming restrictions or permit systems were in place for operators.

While not directly related to regulation, another point of interest was that some respondents raised concerns that beaches remain "free". Education would help overcome this misconception that the community would have to pay to use the beach even if commercial activities are approved in the future.

- Surf clubs

Almost 50 comments related directly to Surf Life Saving Clubs hiring beach equipment. The majority of mentions (around 30) supported Surf Life Saving Clubs controlling equipment hire, with another six respondents indicating this commercial activity should be available exclusively to SLSCs. Conversely, 11 other people did not support SLSCs having the right or exclusive right to hire equipment (with these respondents suggesting this should be the role of small businesses or that clubs should not be distracted from saving lives by commercial activities).

- Surf schools

Surf schools received around 30 mentions by respondents across all groups. While some comments supported surf schools (which was reflected in the survey Question 5), open ended question responses related more to congestion. The issue of overcrowding included comments about too many schools and group sizes, with the main beaches mentioned in this context as Currumbin (6) and Rainbow Bay (2).
• Touting

More than 30 comments related to touting on beaches and at least another dozen specifically mentioned the desire that Gold Coast ocean beaches not "end up like Bali or Thailand". This theme was most obvious in Question 10 which asked for other general comments. It appears that respondents may be willing to buy something on a beach, but they don't want to be "sold" items by hawkers or touters.
11 Summary of Responses

Based on the all community engagement feedback and results, from the public, GCengage Forum members and community stakeholders, below is a summary of all responses:

- majority of survey respondents indicated a preference for the “same” or “more” of every currently permitted commercial and non-commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches (see Summary in Section 2.2 for list of uses)
- Figure 1 below outlines the breakdown of each activity across all response groups.

![Total rankings of permitted activity](image)

Figure 1 – Graph of “more”, “same” and “less” of currently permitted Commercial/Non-commercial Activities across all response groups

Support for "more" currently permitted commercial activity on ocean beaches:

- the activity which received the highest preference from all response groups for “more” activity was special Council events such as Carols by Candlelight (53 per cent public, 75 per cent telephone and 50 per cent GCengage Forum support) with the next highest support for "more" activity was equipment hire (46 per cent public, 66 per cent telephone and 55 per cent GCengage Forum support)
- Of the above group of respondents, the stratified 502 telephone survey respondents – indicated a preference for “more” non-commercial surf training (67 per cent), surf schools (61 per cent), surfing competitions (57 per cent), SLSC competitions (57 per cent), filming (51 per cent), and entertainment (42 per cent).
- Surfers Paradise was the beach that received the most responses in terms of a desire for “more” commercial activity (60 mentions), however it was also the beach that received the greatest number of mentions in terms of a desire for "less" commercial activity (12 mentions). The “more” outweighed the “less”

Support for "same" amount of currently permitted commercial activity on ocean beaches:
the activities which received the highest preference from all response groups for “same” activity were marriages and sky divers at North Kirra (both 67 per cent)

of the above telephone survey respondents indicated a preference for the “same” amount of sky divers at North Kirra (54 per cent), the public respondents indicated a similar preference for both marriages and sky divers at North Kirra (48 & 47 per cent), and GCengage Forum respondents indicated a preference for marriages (72 per cent)

Support for “less” currently permitted commercial activity on ocean beaches:

the activity which attracted some of the highest percentages in terms of preference for “less” activity consistently across all three respondent groups was sky divers at North Kirra (10 per cent public, 19 per cent telephone and 13 per cent GCengage Forum). This needs to be balanced by the statistics in the above dot point; that around 60 per cent of each group indicated desire for the “same” amount of sky diving at North Kirra)

as mentioned previously, Surfers Paradise was the beach that received the most responses in terms of a desire for “less” commercial activity (12 mentions)

Support for “no” commercial activity on ocean beaches

the top three beaches that respondents indicated a preference for ‘no commercial activity’ on were: The Spit; Burleigh and Currumbin

Support for alternative commercial activity on ocean beaches

the greatest response for alternative activities was for ‘no alternative activities’ (44 per cent)

the most popular commercial activities nominated across all response groups were activities currently permitted under the local laws (37 per cent) and included: entertainment (in the form of music/bands/concerts); active lifestyle activities; and volleyball.

The most popular alternative activity not currently permitted under the local law was food and beverage/vendors (6 per cent) followed by cafes/dining (4 per cent), fitness groups (? Per cent), markets (2 per cent) and massage (1 per cent)

![Total key alternative activities](image)

Figure 9 - Summary of Alternative Activities by All Groups (Public, Telephone, GCengage Forum, Online Discussion Forum)

Responses to the survey questions 4-9 (following demographic information) from the public survey, telephone survey and GCengage Forum online survey are summarised below in Table 6.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions – Commercial Activity</th>
<th>Public survey responses % of responses</th>
<th>Telephone survey responses % of responses</th>
<th>GCengage survey responses % of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q4 How regularly do you visit GC ocean beaches?</td>
<td>Daily 42</td>
<td>Daily 21</td>
<td>Daily 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly 33</td>
<td>Weekly 22</td>
<td>Weekly 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fortnightly 6</td>
<td>Fortnightly 13</td>
<td>Fortnightly 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly 12</td>
<td>Monthly 13</td>
<td>Monthly 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 months 7</td>
<td>3 months 17</td>
<td>3 months 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never 0</td>
<td>Never 14</td>
<td>Never 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Survey questions – Commercial Activity

**Q5** Tick whether you would like to see more, the same or less of these activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Public survey responses</th>
<th>Telephone survey responses</th>
<th>GCengage survey responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of responses</td>
<td>% of responses</td>
<td>% of responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filming</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment hire</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriages</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky divers North Kirra</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Council events</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing comps</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLSC comps</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf schools</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS training</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q6 What is your interest in commercial activity on ocean beaches?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beach user</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business organiser</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not for profit organiser</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial activity participant</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach user</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business organiser</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not for profit organiser</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial activity participant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey questions</td>
<td>Public survey responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 Are there any particular beaches you would like to see more or less activity on?#</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More (no.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfers Paradise</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadbeach</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burleigh</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirra</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coolangatta</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currumbin</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Beach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 6; about same 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All less 13; no more 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(7 no more)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Public survey responses</th>
<th>Telephone survey responses</th>
<th>GCengage survey responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By key mentions</td>
<td>By key mentions</td>
<td>By key mentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 Would you like to see any alternative activities on ocean beaches?#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New alternative activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F&amp;B/vendors</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F&amp;B/vendors</td>
<td>F&amp;B/vendors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafes + bars etc</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Cafes + bars etc</td>
<td>Cafes + bars etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No commercial activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No activity</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>No activity</td>
<td>No activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently supported activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment hire</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Equipment hire</td>
<td>Equipment hire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bands/concert/music</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Bands/concert/music</td>
<td>Bands/concert/music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active lifestyle</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Active lifestyle</td>
<td>Active lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport + specific sports</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sport + sports</td>
<td>Sport + sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family events</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Family events</td>
<td>Family events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>Movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 Are there any ocean beaches that Council should never permit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spit</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>The Spit</td>
<td>The Spit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burleigh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Burleigh</td>
<td>Burleigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currumbin</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Currumbin</td>
<td>Currumbin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Beach (+ north)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Main Beach (+ north)</td>
<td>Main Beach (+ north)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial activities on?#</td>
<td>South Stradbroke</td>
<td>South Stradbroke</td>
<td>South Stradbroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Bay</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rainbow Bay</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirra</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kirra</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#Multiple answers accepted; limited responses provided above for open ended Questions 7-9

Table 6 – Summary of Key Survey Results
While not part of Council’s engagement program, due to the quantity of responses, the following Gold Coast Bulletin survey responses are worthy of note.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold Coast Bulletin polls</th>
<th>ReachTel telephone opinion poll</th>
<th>Gold Coast Bulletin online poll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you support allowing commercial operations like food and beverage service and entertainment on certain designated beaches</td>
<td>Yes 63.3</td>
<td>No 25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should there be businesses on the beach?</td>
<td>Yes 60.42</td>
<td>No 39.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7 - Summary of Gold Coast Bulletin Survey Results**
12 Summary of Evaluation Methods

The program achieved its engagement objectives (refer Section 3) by:

- promoting the engagement program to the community, GCengage Forum and stakeholders via a variety of communication channels including advertising, email and beach marquee days
- producing and distributing communication material – hard copy and online material
- providing communication in a concise way with information written in plain English for ease of understanding
- offering the community and stakeholders several participation methods including the online survey and forum and hardcopy survey at beach marquee days (falling within the engagement range of the International Association for Public Participation’s ‘Participation Spectrum’)
- providing the opportunity for stakeholders to have their say which was demonstrated by: (1) receipt of 502 telephone surveys from across all 14 divisions; (2) 646 other survey completion attempts; and (3) more than 260 visitors to the beach marquee days - therefore enabling Council’s project team to ascertain whether there were any concerns or issues that required consideration.

The community engagement process allowed all those who were interested the opportunity to input in future Council decision making and therefore, met the project team’s objectives.

The community engagement program objectives are evaluated as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To inform stakeholders and the community about the commercial activity on Ocean Beaches Management Plan</td>
<td>Advertising about the plan and engagement opportunities coincided with program milestones; from the engagement launch date; followed by the four beach marquee days talking to the community. Social media continued until the close of engagement. A letter (via email) went to around 70 industry stakeholders informing them of the community engagement program, the beach marquee days and encouraging their input. This occurred in the first week of engagement. Telephone survey of 502 participants 2 colour display ads in the Friday flyer during the first and second week of the program (and during the beach marquee engagement activities). 42 x 15 and 30 sec radio spots 6am-6pm + 400 run of station spots on two radio stations and formats through the community engagement program. Three Facebook postings during the community engagement program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide mechanisms for the community/stakeholders to obtain information from the project team throughout the process</td>
<td>Online information available throughout duration of the community engagement program from 17 March to 15 April (am) Project team members were available for face to face questions and briefing at beach marquee during 20-23 March. Around 300 people visited the four beach marquee days, with 259 hard copy surveys completed + one returned mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To engage stakeholders and interested community members to provide feedback</td>
<td>Online survey and information available to all, receiving 1600 visits Hard copy Survey and information available face to face with project team at four locations over four days Telephone survey conducted with 502 residents, via landline and mobile phones. Additional information about the Management Plan also made available to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>respondents via phone survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 GCengage Forum members completed survey and accessed online information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five forum discussion questions attracted 84 responses from the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 stakeholders provided a written response (some in addition to completing surveys)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build and maintain relationships of trust and confidence with all stakeholders.</td>
<td>No issues arose during engagement, other than Gold Coast Bulletin somewhat critical of short consultation period (via editorial).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>349 people who attempted surveys indicated an interest in participating in future Council community engagement programs. Each provided their name and contact email.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8 – Evaluation of Engagement Objectives**
13 Recommendations

The feedback provided by community members can assist the project team in finalising the Commercial Activity Management Plan for Ocean Beaches, another action in the wider Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023, designed to maintain and protect Gold Coast beaches now and into the future.

It is recommended that Council:

- write to responding stakeholders advising them of the draft management plan’s progress, any Council decision and responses to their suggestions for their own organisation
- follow up with the 359 respondents who nominated on survey Question 11 that they would like to be involved in future surveys about city wide projects

Following the engagement and in the interests of managing commercial activities that are conducted on the City’s world class beaches, a recommendation is to conduct a further survey in twelve months that would build supporting data in terms of trends in community preferences; and further details via set multiple choice questions about community preferences for activities on particular beaches, and the management of commercial activities on sections of beaches at particular times of the day and year including public and school holiday periods. This engagement has shown that there is a great appetite in the community for discussing the commercial activities being managed on ocean beaches and further feedback will ensure that management of ocean beaches remains a priority and that the right activities are being managed in the right locations at the right times of the year and in the most appropriate manner.

It might also be the starting point for communication and education campaigns to help deliver outcomes in this area in the future.

Survey results indicated the following could be useful in the Gold Coast community:

- easily accessible and plain English definitions of commercial activity and ocean beaches (e.g. does not include parkland which was mentioned in some survey responses)
- depending on the outcome of the management plan, explain in public communication/advertising the extent of any additional commercial activities and their limitations/regulations and beach cleanliness to address concerns expressed throughout the survey.
14 Conclusion

Council of the City of Gold Coast had clear objectives for its four week engagement program for the Commercial Activity on Ocean Beaches Management Plan.

The community and stakeholders were provided a range of opportunities to provide feedback and ask questions about the project. The majority provided feedback via online/hard copy survey and proactive telephone survey.

Overall, the engagement based on the feedback provided confirmed that:

- majority of survey respondents indicated a preference for the “same” or “more” of every current permitted commercial and non-commercial activity on Gold Coast ocean beaches
- comments relating to particular ocean beaches for more, less or no commercial activity did not result in significant responses to any particular beach, with mostly general answers
- in response to the question about preferred alternative activities on ocean beaches, 44 per cent of respondents indicated an overall preference for no commercial activity
- the most popular alternative commercial activities (37 per cent) nominated across all respondents were for currently supported activities including entertainment, active lifestyles and volleyball
- unsolicited responses included: environmental concerns such as “natural beauty” and “uniqueness” of ocean beaches (>200 mentions); parking concerns (80 mentions); regulation of activities (60 mentions); no touting (30 mentions) and litter control (20 mentions)

Council of the City of Gold Coast received useful feedback to be considered in finalising the management plan for Council’s deliberation in mid-2014. The process has also allowed the City to build engagement relationships with additional community members in general who saw the City in public settings providing an opportunity for the community to “have their say”; and more specifically to those community members who indicated a willingness to participate in future city-wide engagement programs.