

**Softball New Zealand** [Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey] – [23/11/10]

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## **Executive Summary**

This report was commissioned by the General Manager of Softball New Zealand. The overall goals were to gauge stakeholder satisfaction with Softball NZ, and to also gather feedback, comments, and thoughts from Softball NZ stakeholders about the organisation and the game of softball in general. In particular, these were the specific areas feedback was sought in, 1) leadership and direction, 2) communication, 3) service delivery, 4) relationship with stakeholders, 5) staff feedback, and 6) website.

An online questionnaire was used and associations sent out invitations to various stakeholders consisting of coaches, athletes, sports co-ordinators, umpires, scorers, board members, club representatives, regional sports trusts, and other affiliated partners. There were 271 people who completed the online questionnaire and the main findings are:

### *Overall Assessments of Softball NZ*

Respondents were asked to give assessments of various key areas on a scale of 1 – 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent. All the averages ranged between 5.11 and 6.57 in the following areas:

- Leadership and direction (5.11)
- Communication (5.76)
- Service delivery (5.64)
- Relationship with Softball NZ (5.72)
- Service from staff (6.13)

### *Softball NZ Leadership & Direction*

- Focus more attention on the smaller associations and improve their relationship by interacting more on a personal basis
- Communication, especially in the form of listening to their stakeholders
- Focus on sponsorship and gaining media attention for the game.
- Focus more on ‘grass roots’
- Articulate their vision & goals more clearly, and communicate them
- Market & profile the game more

*(Softball NZ Leadership & Direction continued)*

- Bring subs down
- Communicate with clubs their plan forward for softball – lead associations
- Transparency of their decisions – open communication

*Softball NZ Communications*

- Need for effective media for softball and the elite teams
- Easy navigation of website and updating information
- E-NEWS publication is well done
- More communication on issues facing the game and how they are being addressed
- Visit the associations regularly to meet them and clubs

*Service Delivery from Softball NZ*

- Website needs to be updated on a regular basis and easier to navigate
- Make website user friendly
- Services offered by Softball NZ were not well advertised
- Run surveys like this one to see what people want
- Grow the game
- Get tournament information out early

*Softball NZ Staff*

- Letters, emails, or other form of communication need a timely reply
- Getting out and meeting softball stakeholders and spending time with associations
- Staff were doing a good job
- Spend more time with minor associations
- RGDO needs to get out more to clubs
- Tournament information to come out earlier
- Staff to be more pro-active
- Get regional pitching coaches in schools and associations

### *Softball NZ Relationship with Stakeholders*

- Better communication and interaction including visits to the softball community
- Working with stakeholders on strategies to move the game forward
- Be aware & sympathetic to difficulties facing small associations
- Listen and provide practical support
- Share the information received – best practise

### *Softball NZ Website*

- Easy navigation to the required information
- Updating news and information on a regular basis
- Keeping it simple
- Have a lot less clutter
- Better graphics
- News from associations

### *Other website information*

- Almost three out of four respondents visit the website either once or twice a week, or once or twice a month.
- Three out of four respondents visit the website for tournament information
- Other key reason for visiting the website is to view the latest news within the softball community.

There are a number of key comments and suggestions offered by SNZ stakeholders. A number of suggestions did not require a large resource outlay, just doing things more effectively in some of the areas within the organisation would assist in the game moving forward.

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Softball NZ had a desire to gather feedback, views, and opinions of key stakeholders. Following the 2009-2010 softball season, management wanted to engage stakeholders and seek their feedback about a number of matters pertaining to how softball is run throughout the country.

This valuable information would then be utilised and implemented into strategies and actions that would move the game of softball forward in New Zealand.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives are to gauge stakeholder satisfaction and to find the key thoughts, feedback, and ideas about:

1. The leadership and direction Softball NZ is taking softball.
2. The communication to and from Softball NZ to their stakeholders.
3. The service Softball NZ provides to their stakeholders.
4. The relationship Softball NZ has with their stakeholders.
5. The effectiveness of Softball NZ staff.
6. The Softball NZ website.

## 1.3 Research Methodology

The methodology included the following key element:

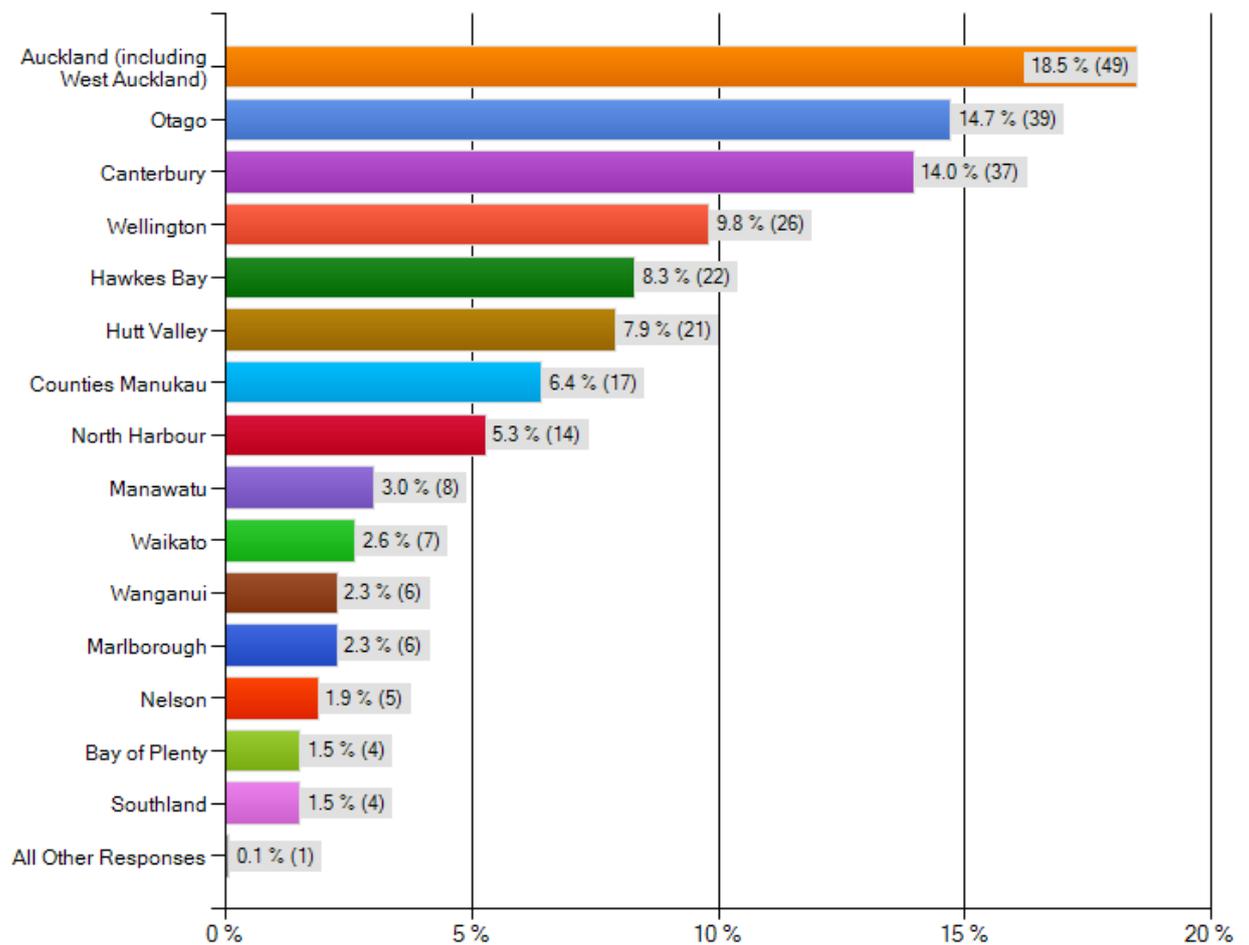
1. Online survey, aimed at the various SNZ stakeholders:
  - Senior athletes, Elite High Performance Coaches, Representative, junior, school, or club coaches, School sports co-ordinator, SNZ umpires & SNZ scorers, Association board members, Association administrator/executive, Club representative
2. Softball NZ sent an email to the associations which had the purpose and directions of the survey along with a web link that when it was clicked on would take the respondent though to the actual online survey.
3. Data would be collected and analysed.
4. A written report would highlight the findings of the study.

## 2.0 Profile of Respondents

### 2.1 Where respondents reside

There were 271 people that completed the online questionnaire. As you see in Figure 2.1, it illustrates that almost 20% of respondents are from the Auckland region. Almost 30% of respondents are either from the Canterbury or Otago regions, and almost 10% reside currently in Wellington.

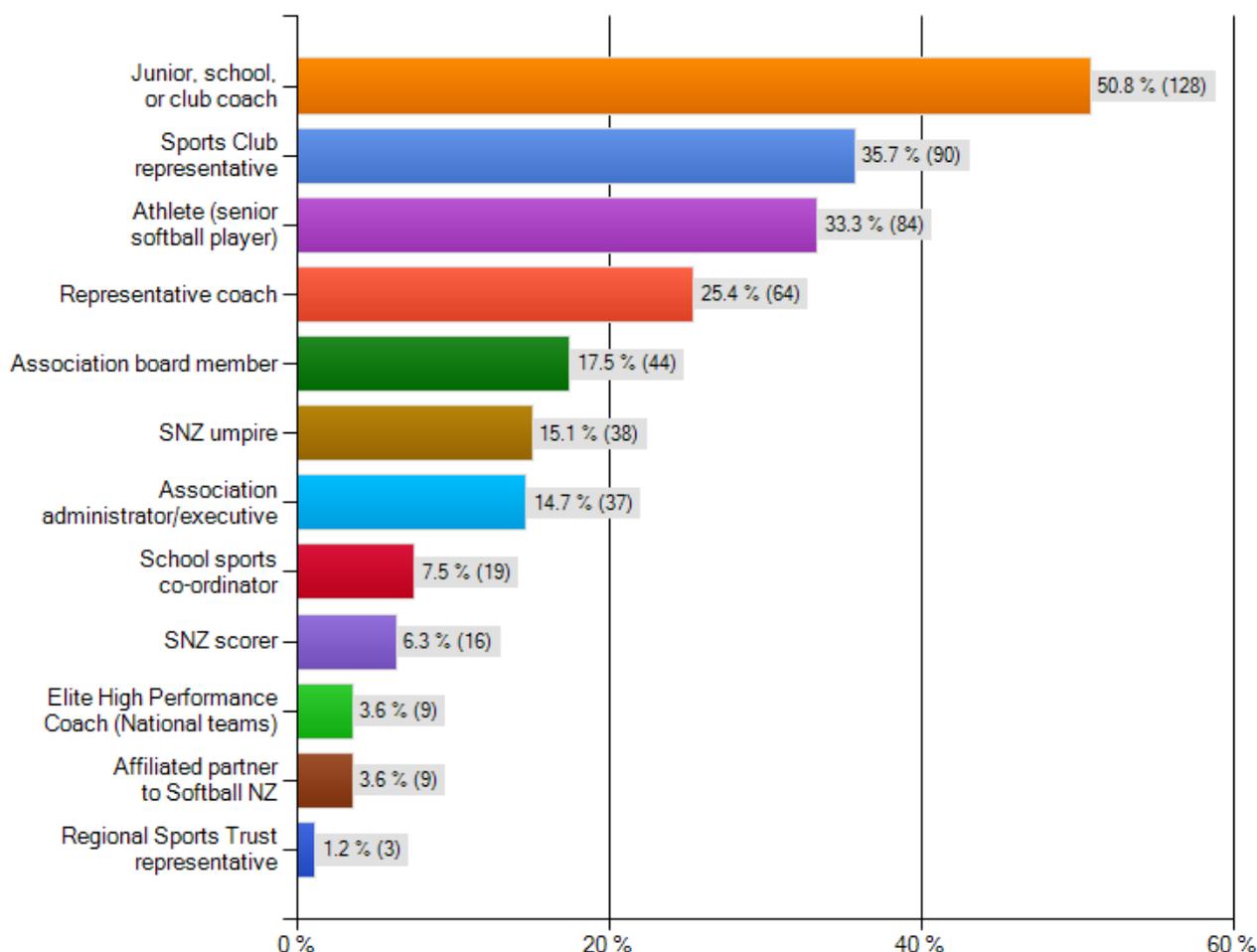
**Figure 2.1: Region where the respondents reside (Percentage is shown and total numbers are in brackets)**



## 2.2 Roles undertaken by respondents last season

Respondents were then asked what roles they undertook last season. It is common knowledge that many undertake a number of roles throughout the season, one may be known to coach a junior team, coach a representative team, umpire junior and senior games, and then also serve on the Association Board. Figure 2.2 illustrates all the roles undertaken by the respondents last season where respondents were asked to tick all of the roles that applied to them. Half of the respondents either coached a junior, school, or club team. Just over a third of respondents were representatives on clubs

**Figure 2.2: Role(s) undertaken by respondents last season (Percentage is shown and total numbers are in brackets)**



### 2.3 Main role undertaken by respondents last season

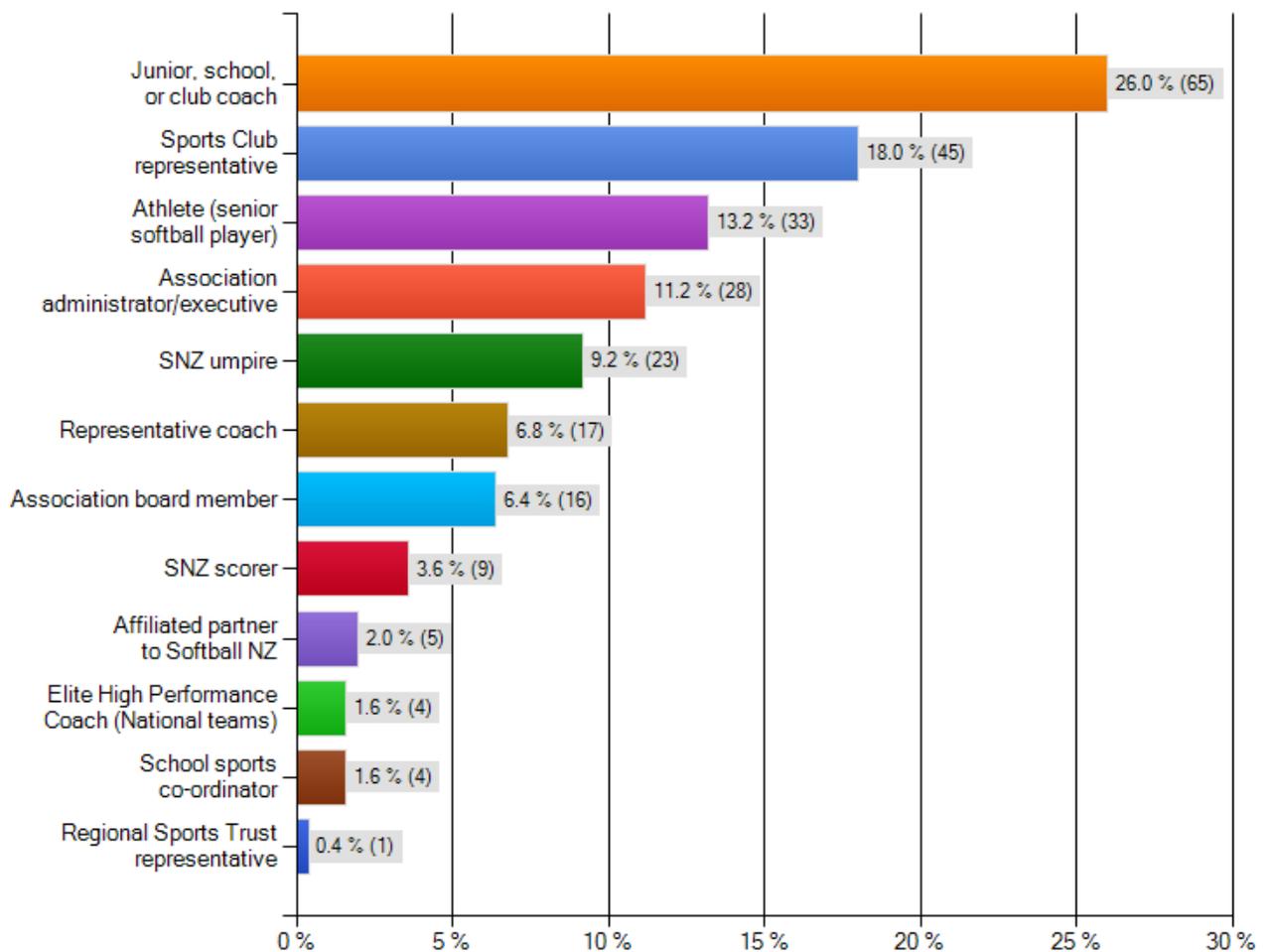
Respondents were then asked to name the one MAIN role they undertook last season. Figure 2.3 shows that one in four respondents either coached a junior, school, or club team. When compared to the the result in Figure 2.2 we see that there is a large number of respondents who are coaching junior, school, or club teams but class their main role as something else.

Similar other results are shown when comparing Figure 2.2 with Figure 2.3, we find:

- A lot of senior players playing last season did not rate playing senior softball as their main role
- Association Board members had multiple roles
- Sports club representatives had multiple roles

**Figure 2.3: The one MAIN role undertaken by respondents last season.**

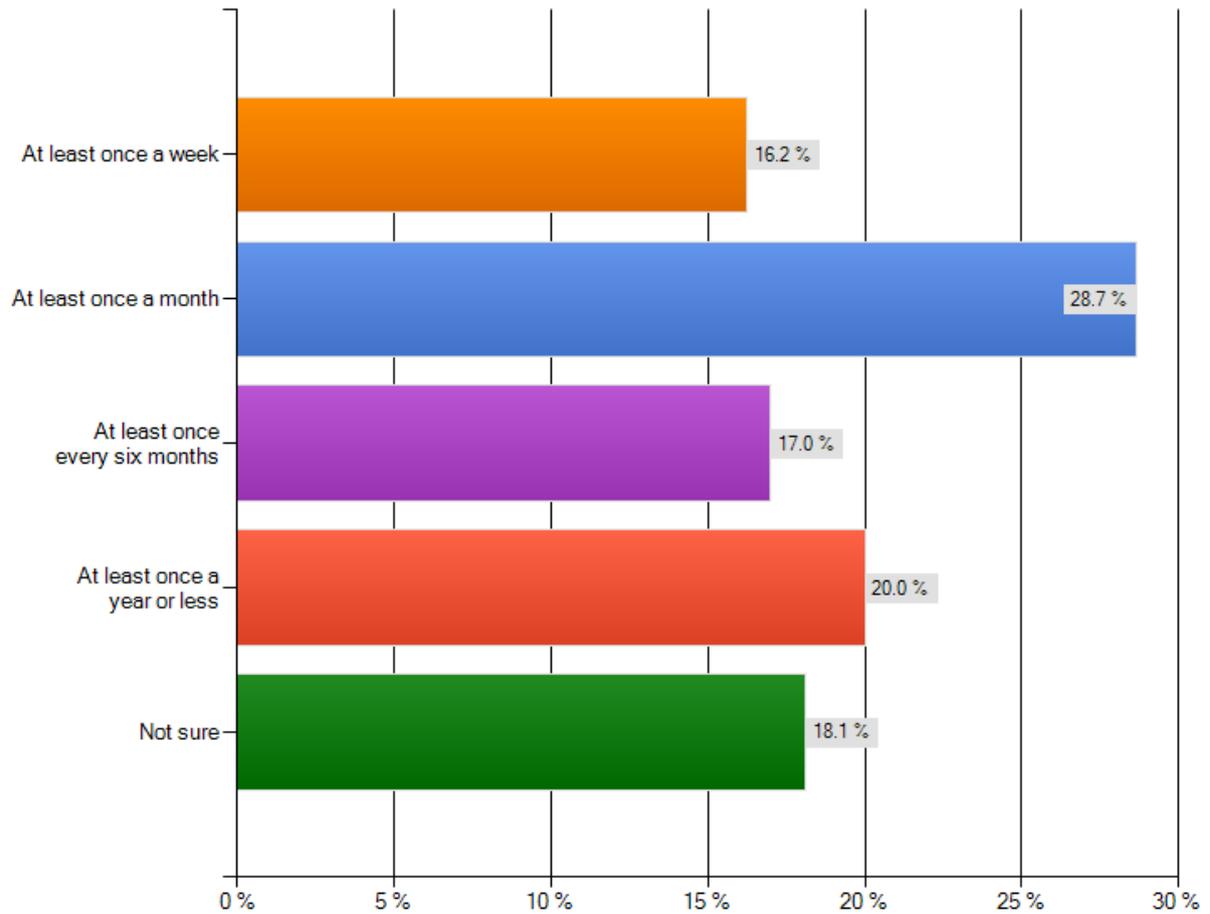
**(Percentage is shown and total numbers are in brackets)**



## 2.4 Number of times respondents interact with Softball NZ

Communicating and interacting with Softball NZ on a regular basis occurs with many respondents. In Figure 2.3 we find that 16% interact at least once a week, and just under 30% of respondents interact at least once a month with Softball NZ.

**Figure 2.3: Amount of times respondents interact with Softball NZ (%)**

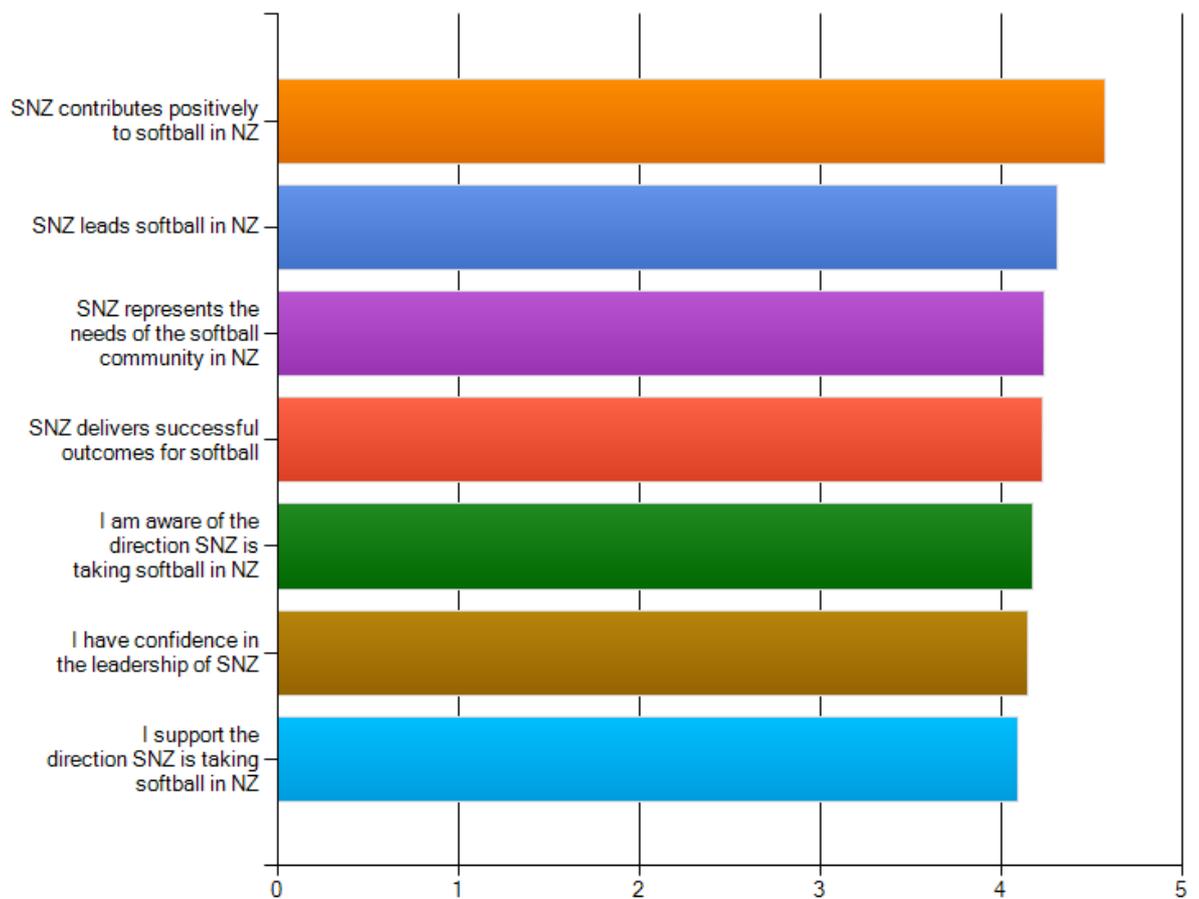


### 3.0 Leadership and Direction

#### 3.1 General statements and overall assessment

Respondents were then asked a number of statements in regards to the leadership and direction Softball NZ is taking the game of softball. In Figure 3.1 we see that all respondents were basically unsure in regards to the statements shown. That is, they were ‘middle of the road’ by not agreeing or disagreeing to a great extent. This was also shown where respondents were asked on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = poor and 10 = excellent, what their overall assessment of the effectiveness of Softball NZ’s leadership and direction was, the result was **5.11**.

**Figure 3.1: General statements about the leadership & direction shown by Softball NZ (7=Strongly Agree, 6=Agree, 5=Somewhat Agree, 4=Unsure, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)**



### **3.2 Feedback from respondents on leadership & direction**

Respondents were then asked to provide feedback and comments about how Softball NZ could improve their leadership and direction. Feedback strongly suggested that more attention should be paid to smaller associations and clubs by improving relationships and interacting on a personal basis with them. In addition, SNZ need to improve their communication and listen more to their stakeholders. A big focus should be put on sponsorship and gaining media attention to profile and display the game.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

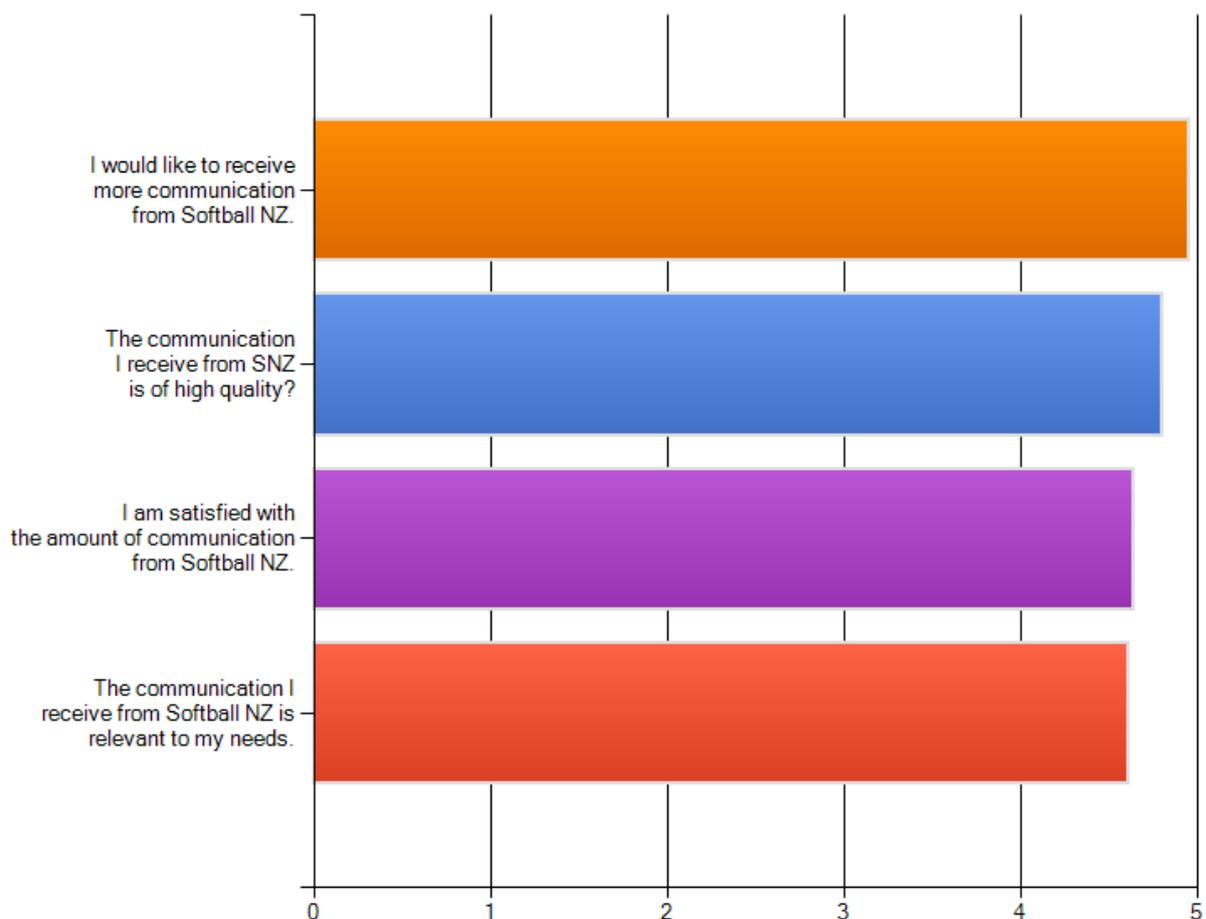
- Focus more on ‘grass roots’
- Articulate their vision & goals more clearly, and communicate them
- Market & profile the game more
- Bring subs down
- Communicate with clubs their plan forward for softball – lead associations
- Transparency of their decisions – open communication

## 4.0 Communication

### 4.1 General statements and overall assessment

Respondents were then asked a number of statements in regards to communication received or not received from Softball NZ. In Figure 4.1 we see that all respondents somewhat agreed that they would like to receive more communication from Softball NZ. In addition, they somewhat agreed that the communication received from Softball NZ was of a high quality. Respondents were asked on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = poor and 10 = excellent, what their overall assessment of the effectiveness of Softball NZ's communication, the result was **5.76**.

**Figure 4.1: General statements about Softball NZ's communication to stakeholders (7=Strongly Agree, 6=Agree, 5=Somewhat Agree, 4=Unsure, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree).**



## **4.2 Feedback from respondents on communication**

Respondents were then asked to provide feedback and comments about how Softball NZ could improve their communication with their stakeholders. Feedback strongly suggested the need for effective media for softball in general and on elite teams. It is vital Softball NZ upgrade, update, and have the website easy to navigate to find the right information. It was also found that respondents liked the e-news and other communication they receive.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

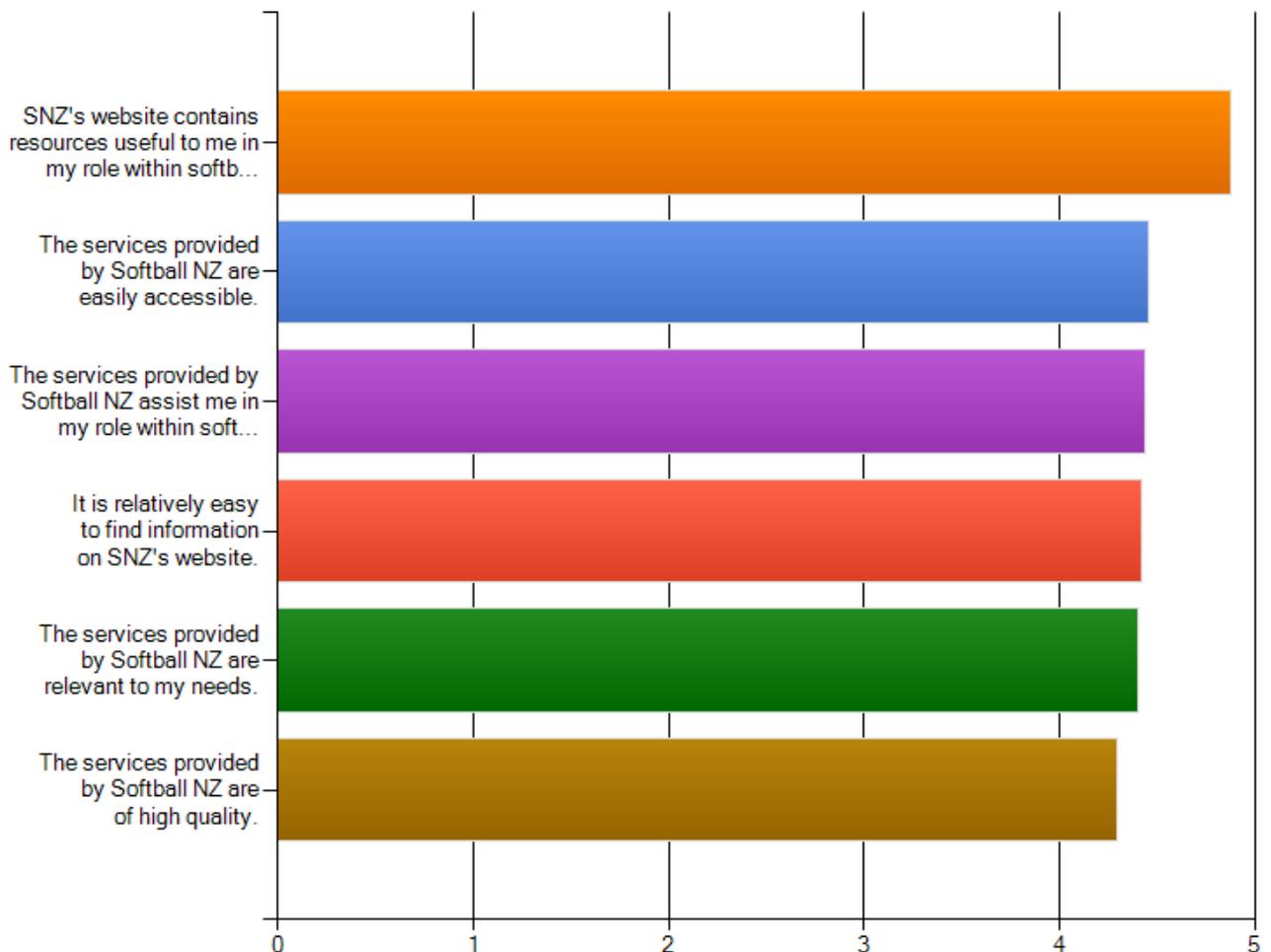
- More communication on issues facing the game and how they are being addressed
- Visit the associations regularly to meet them and clubs

## 5.0 Services

### 5.1 General statements and overall assessment

Respondents were asked a number of statements in regards to the services offered by Softball NZ. In Figure 5.1 we see that the respondents somewhat agreed that the resources within the website were useful in their softball roles. When asked if services offered by SNZ were of a high quality the response indicated that it was average. This was also shown where respondents were asked on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = poor and 10 = excellent, what their overall assessment of the effectiveness of Softball NZ's service delivery was, the result was **5.64**.

**Figure 5.1: General statements about the services delivered by Softball NZ (7=Strongly Agree, 6=Agree, 5=Somewhat Agree, 4=Unsure, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)**



## **5.2 Feedback from respondents on Softball NZ service delivery**

Respondents were then asked to provide feedback and comments about how Softball NZ could improve their service delivery. Feedback strongly suggested that the website needs to be updated on a regular basis and easy to navigate. It was noted the website is not user friendly.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

- Services offered by Softball NZ were not well advertised
- Run surveys like this one to see what people want
- Grow the game
- Get tournament information out early

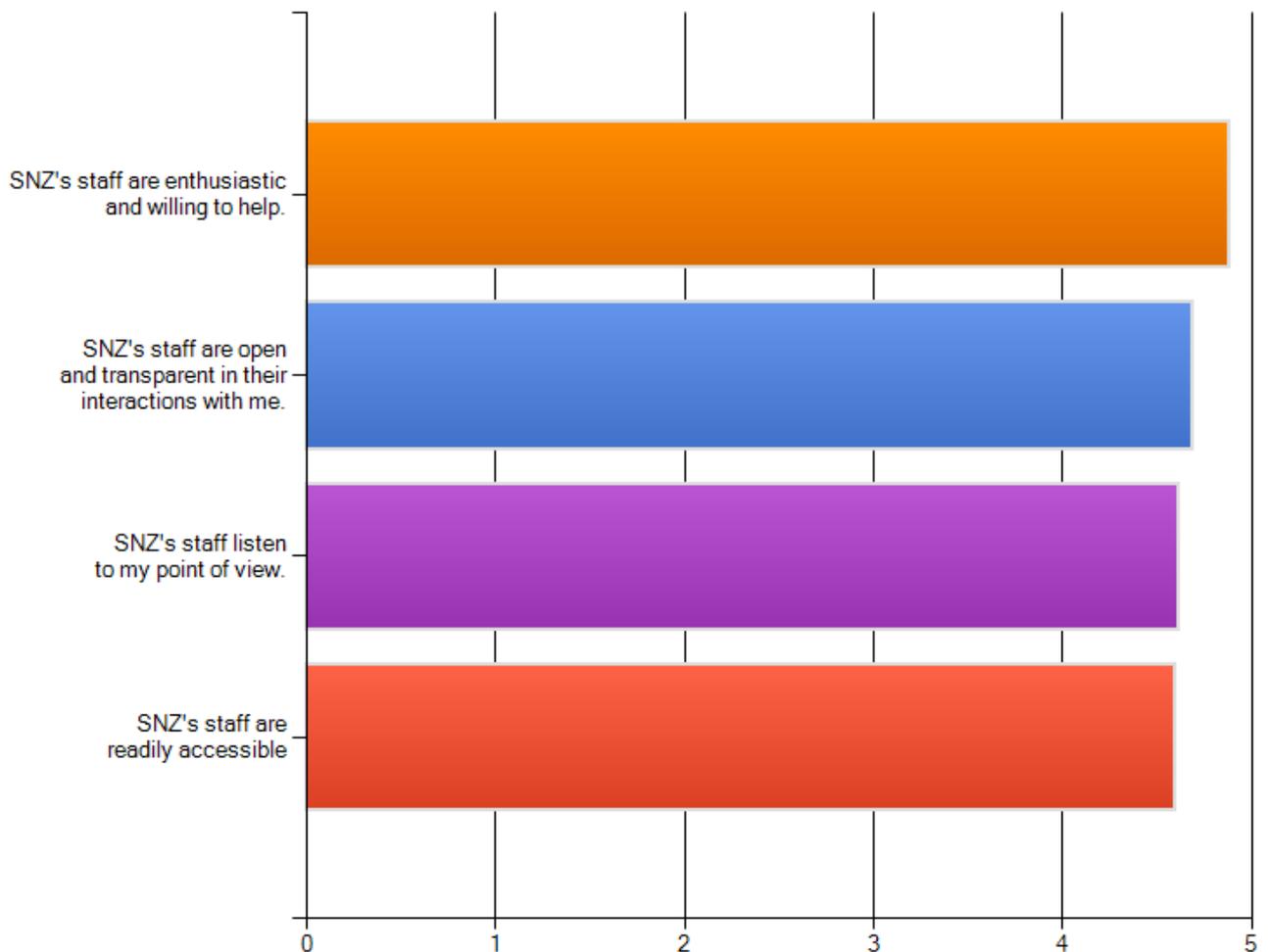
## 6.0 SNZ Staff and Relationship with Stakeholders

### 6.1 General statements and overall assessment

Respondents were asked a number of statements in regards to the Softball NZ staff.

In Figure 6.1 we see that all respondents somewhat agreed that the staff are enthusiastic and willing to help. Respondents were asked on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = poor and 10 = excellent, what their overall assessment of their relationship with Softball NZ was, the result was **5.72**.

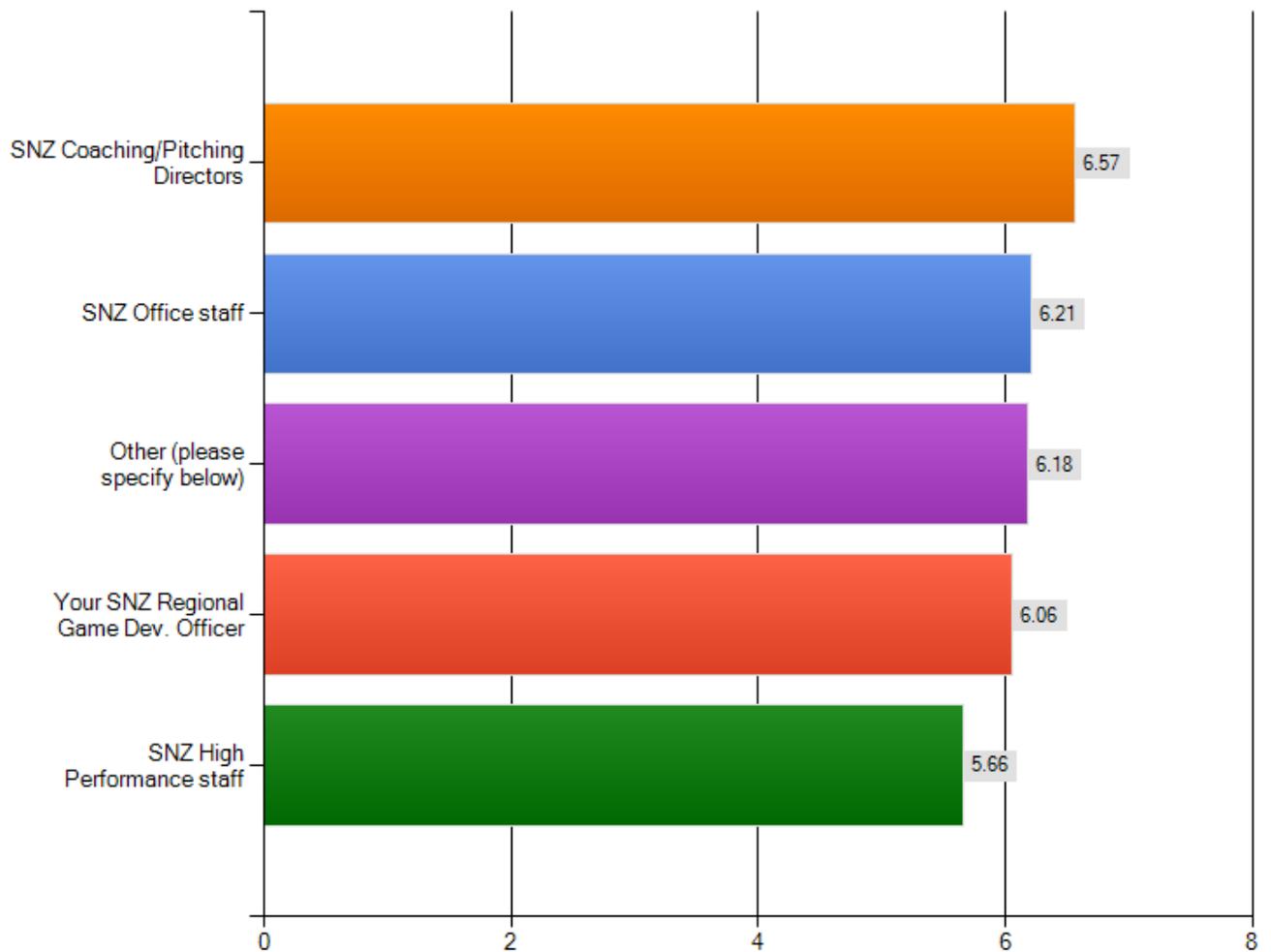
**Figure 6.1: General statements about the Softball NZ staff (7=Strongly Agree, 6=Agree, 5=Somewhat Agree, 4=Unsure, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)**



## 6.2 Assessment of SNZ staff

Respondents were asked on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = poor and 10 = excellent, what their overall assessment is of SNZ staffing areas and the service they get from each. In Figure 6.2 the coaching staff received the highest rating of 6.57. In all, the average over all staffing areas was **6.13**.

**Figure 6.2: General assessment of service received from Softball NZ staffing areas (1=Poor, 10=Excellent)**



### **6.3 Feedback on what staff at Softball NZ can improve upon**

Respondents were asked to provide feedback and comments about what Softball NZ staff could improve upon. Feedback strongly suggested that staff should reply promptly to letters, emails, or other forms of communication. The staff could also get out and meet people and spend more time with associations. Respondents felt like they did not know who their RGDO was. However, some felt that the staff were doing a good job.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

- Spend more time with minor associations
- RGDO needs to get out more to clubs
- Tournament information to come out earlier
- Staff to be more pro-active
- Get regional pitching coaches in schools and associations

### **6.4 Feedback from respondents on improving the relationship with Softball NZ**

Respondents were asked to provide feedback and comments about what they think could improve the quality of their relationship with Softball NZ. Feedback strongly suggested that there needs to be better communication along with more inter-action and visits to the softball community. Overall, the working relationship needs to improve by working together on strategies which will move the game forward.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

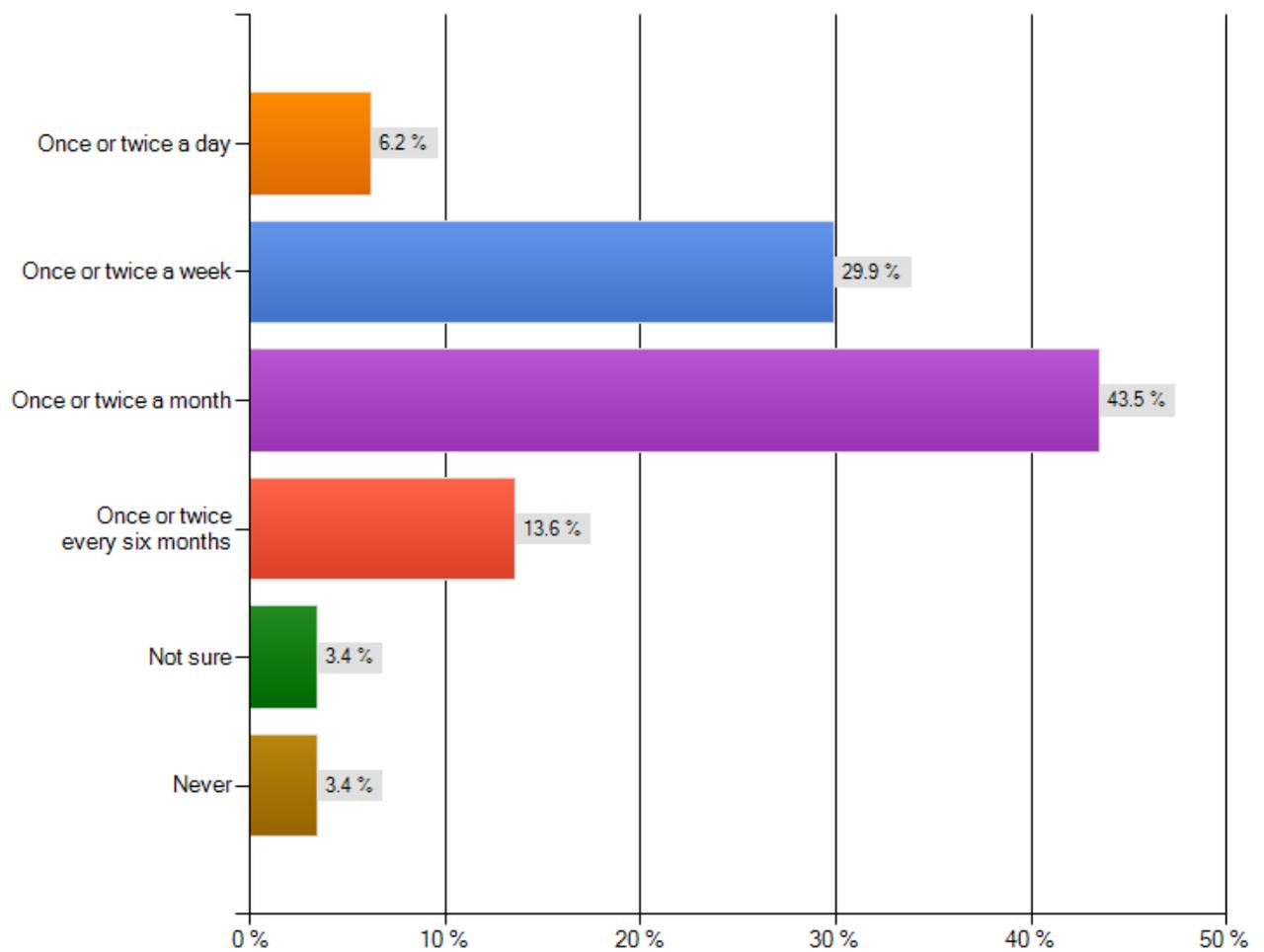
- Be aware & sympathetic to difficulties facing small associations
- Listen and provide practical support
- Share the information received – best practise

## 7.0 Softball NZ Website

### 7.1 Frequency of visiting SNZ website

In Figure 7.1 we see that close to half of all the respondents visit the website at least once or twice a month, whilst almost 30% visit the website once or twice a week.

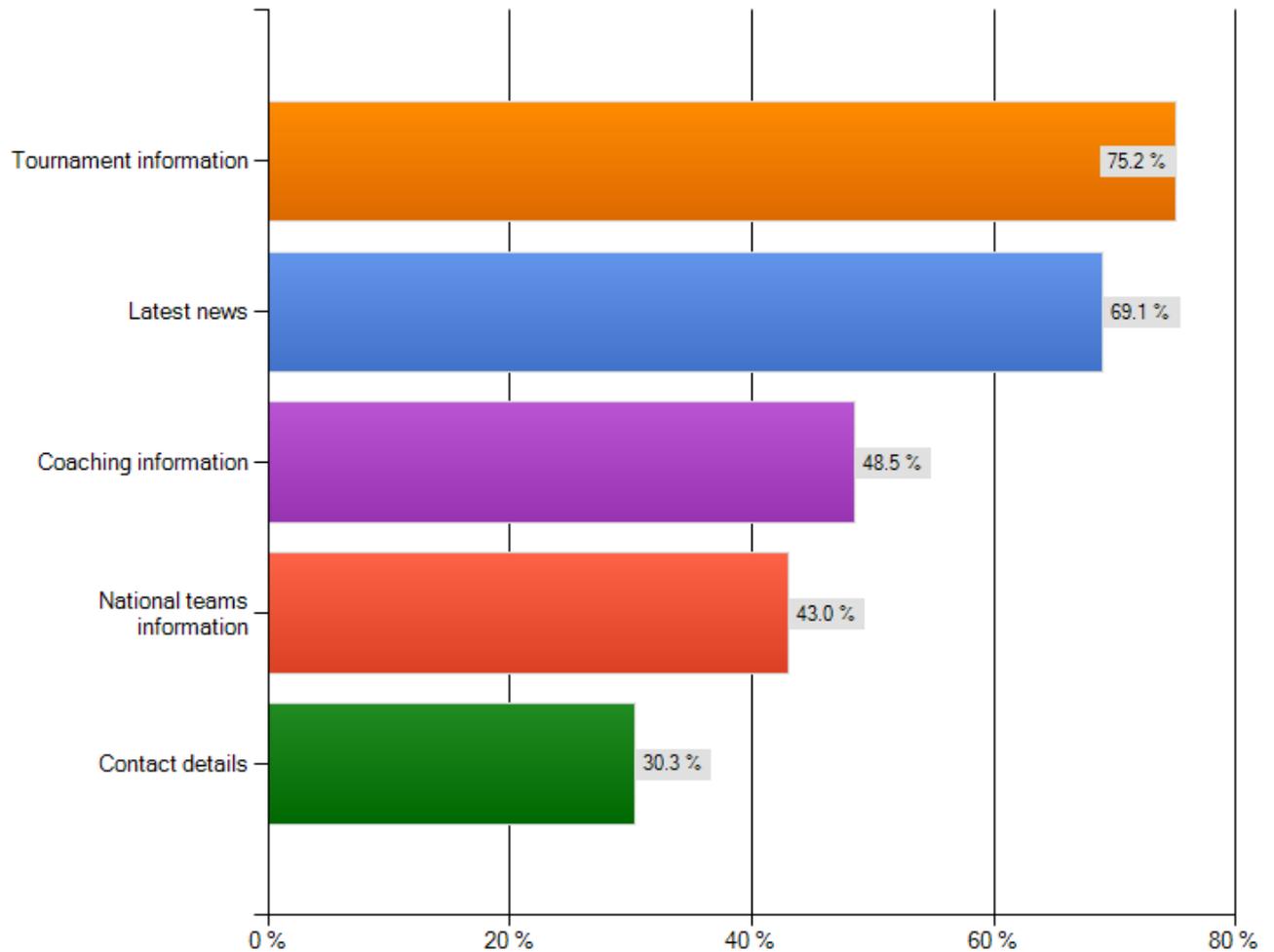
**Figure 7.1: Frequency of visits to the SNZ website by respondents (%)**



## 7.2 Main reason(s) respondents go to the SNZ website

In Figure 7.2 we see that 3 out of 4 respondents utilise the tournament information on the website. Almost 70% also check the website for the latest news.

**Figure 7.2: Key reasons to visit SNZ website (%)**



### **7.3 Feedback from respondents about the Softball NZ website**

Respondents were asked to provide feedback and comments about improvements to the Softball NZ website. Feedback emphatically suggested that the website needs to be easy to navigate and that locating the required information be quick. Quite strongly as well was the desire to keep the website updated with current information or news.

Other key responses from respondents were the following (and in order of importance):

- Keeping it simple
- Have a lot less clutter
- Better graphics
- News from associations

#### *Other website information*

- Almost three out of four respondents visit the website either once or twice a week, or once or twice a month.
- Three out of four respondents visit the website for tournament information
- Other key reason for visiting the website is to view the latest news within the softball community.

## 8.0 Summary

There were 271 people who completed the online survey. Approximately one out of five resided in Auckland, most respondents held multiple roles throughout the softball season, and almost half interacted with Softball NZ either once a week or at least once a month.

Respondents were asked to give assessments of various key areas on a scale of 1 – 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent. All the averages ranged between 5.11 and 6.57 in the following areas:

- Leadership and direction (5.11)
- Communication (5.76)
- Service delivery (5.64)
- Relationship with Softball NZ (5.72)
- Service from staff (6.13)

In terms of leadership and direction it was felt that Softball NZ should focus more attention on the smaller associations and improve their relationship by interacting more on a personal basis. Communication, especially in the form of listening to their stakeholders was also strongly suggested along with a big focus on sponsorship and gaining media attention for the game.

With regards to communication a strong response towards the need for effective media for softball and the elite teams was put forward. The website required attention where updating information and easier navigation to find the right information was vital to improving the communication between Softball NZ and their stakeholders. On a positive note the E-NEWS publication was found to be a success, the information and layout of it was deemed to be well done.

Softball NZ delivers various services, and feedback primarily here pointed towards the website. As mentioned previously, the website needs to be updated on a regular basis and easier to navigate. Making the website user friendly was a priority. Some also felt the services offered by Softball NZ were not well advertised.

Staff feedback strongly suggested that letters, emails, or other form of communication required a reply in a timely fashion. Getting out and meeting softball stakeholders and spending time with associations was also suggested, and some felt the staff were doing a good job.

In regards to improving relationships respondents felt there needs to be better communication and interaction including visits to the softball community. In addition, working with stakeholders on strategies to move the game forward was also mentioned.

Almost three out of four respondents visit the website either once or twice a week, or once or twice a month. In addition, three out of four respondents visit the website for tournament information and the other key reason for visiting was to view the latest news and information within the softball community.

In terms of suggestions for the website, it was emphatically requested that the website be easy to navigate to the required information. Also, updating news and information within the website was imperative. Keeping it simple, free of clutter, better graphics, and news from associations, were also widely suggested.

## **8.1 Conclusion**

There are a number of key suggestions offered by Softball NZ stakeholders. Moving forward Softball NZ should meet to discuss different areas and look to implement these suggestions into their strategies and plans. Further 'buy in' from stakeholders in the strategies laid out by Softball NZ will increase if suggestions and feedback were taken into account and actioned upon. A number of suggestions did not require a large resource outlay, just being more effective in some of the areas within the organisation would assist the game moving forward.