



CENTRAL ALBERTA HOCKEY LEAGUE

Executive Memorandum

February 10, 2017

To: To all CAHL Participants and Hockey Alberta

Re: CAHL 2016-17 Membership Survey

As you are aware, starting last October the CAHL initiated a Membership Survey consisting of a 23 question Google Documents Form and it was completed in two Phases.

The two Phases were intended to provide information on the viewpoints of the Member Leadership groups and then the Key League Volunteers and to the Level of the Team Participants.

Our hopes are that these responses will provide insight into what Members and participants thoughts are on these topics to allow us plan potential actions at the end of the season.

Attached is the summary of the Feedback and the overall membership views on these important topics.

Take care

Terry Siverson
CAHL President

The Central Alberta Hockey League



2016 – 2017 Membership Survey Results, Actions and Key Indicators

February 8th, 2017

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1. Background

The CAHL has been in a continuous improvement cycle now into its 5th year. Several successful leadership transitions and the recent three years of significant growth have been managed under this process. The continuous review process is credited for having numerous practice/administrative and documentation updates. We also feel that it has been well received by the Membership.

A Membership Information Survey had been considered several times but the timing and resources were not available to accomplish the idea at the correct time of the Hockey Season. Many times the resources were used for day-to-day league operations needs instead, thus creating a barrier to implement and proceed with the survey.

The following reasons prompted the interest in the Survey again and the resources were planned and made available.

Primarily the CAHL completed this survey because:

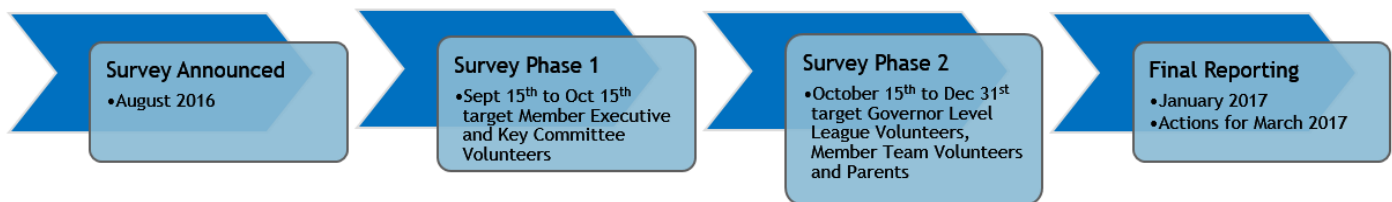
- Clarification of the CAHL Members wants and needs as a member driven organization.
- A few instances and/or statements of member feedback or dissatisfaction that all seemed opposite or different from our belief of what members wanted.
- Continued growth supporting what we are doing around competitiveness/balance, like skilled team placement and making travel a third priority after those. This includes new applicants to our league who tell us they want to join because of this belief (some other issues to) and as well the feedback and cooperation level as inter-league opportunities emerge that are not based on extremely close travel.
- Apparent differences between what we are told by CAHL Members and what Hockey Alberta Zone Volunteers and Staff are being told by the same members.
- Executive Committee Member uncertainty of why members continue to decline to use a reduced travel model for the CAHL lower tiers in Novice, Atom and Pee Wee even when a policy and support has been provided for it. It has been officially turned down now on two separate occasions.
- In addition to this, it was felt an opportunity existed with the growth we were experiencing to gauge new member's ideas and feedback on their thoughts for the direction of the CAHL.

The expected outcomes are that this survey would confirm, direct and help the CAHL Leadership with the short term and long term planning to make the continuous improvement cycle an ongoing effective tool for the betterment of the League.

2. Survey Implementation and Management Plan

This Membership Survey research and Question design was led by Vice President Ryan Robertson. He was supported by the CAHL Executive Committee, with additional support provided by Jodi Christensen and Jennaya Christensen. The remaining CAHL Executive took part in vetting the questions and providing feedback for target topics.

- Two types of on line survey delivery were reviewed, Survey Monkey and Google Document Forms. It was decided to move forward with Google Document Forms platform as we had a volume of expected responses that made it much more cost effective.
- Research indicated a wide range of questions and open response opportunities would be required
- A goal of not more than 25 questions would be targeted
- Phase 1 expectations 88 to 90 responses
- Phase 2 expectation 1200 additional responses from a group of League Governor Level volunteers and 418 teams/parents
- Final reporting in January of 2017
- Actions for March/April 2017



The questions or actions for March 2017 are being addressed as per the following:

- Question #'s 1, 2 and 3 are data based responses for additional future analysis and reference.
- Questions #'s 4, 6 and 11 to 16 are already under review in this current season.
- Questions 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 17 to 22 to be addressed by further review and potential actions planned in 2017 where possible.
- Other responses and Question # 23 - open feedback for improvements will be grouped and reviewed for additional actions where possible

3. Target Questions Development and Selection

As with any growth in an organization, concerns about meeting the membership needs are always present. Those concerns about what the members really “want” versus “need” has to become more apparent to match the resources needed for League Processes.

Mixed messages from the CAHL Directors, the Participants and the LMHA Executive Committees were evident and needed to be addressed.

As a result, the following topic areas were targeted in the questions:

- General data around what volunteer or participant roles of the survey respondents, the balance of where they had children playing in the CAHL or not and duration of involvement with the league were important considerations. We also felt it was an opportunity to see what people understand or how knowledgeable they are about the interactions of Hockey in Alberta from a league participant’s level in an indirect manner.
- Competitive Balance – Confirmation of how important competitive balance is to the participants needed to be addressed. In addition to this, the perception of what a competitive game is for the participants need to be identified. This included if participants were willing to give up competitiveness to reduce travel and to what level they would consider that suggestion.
- Travel – this was felt to be a significant feedback item and if not managed effectively as we grow it becomes a barrier to support and productive league management. We needed to know limitations the members were comfortable with and the process could then manage that accordingly.
- Schedule types – more specifically the number of times you play the same teams in a season had some merit as we were in the process of testing many different traditional and non-traditional schedules and the limitations of them. We needed some feedback on this for confirmation.
- Definitions of or what the perceptions of a successful season are for the participants in the CAHL needed to be identified.
- CAHL Processes around Tiering games, Regular Season games, tournament absence allowances and CAHL season durations were targeted for information collection.
- Comparisons to the importance of CAHL Banners and Provincial play / banners were identified as an item of interest.
- Playing more than one game in one location or two close locations the same day were provided to the CAHL as options if arrangements could be made to reduce time and travel. This needed verifications that participants would support that suggestion.
- Body Checking has been a concern for people for the last while with the changes to Pee Wee. We needed feedback on participant wishes moving forward.
- The need for understanding the interest/acceptance of helping a neighbour with inter-league play to reduce travel for participants in adjacent leagues. With the mandate to try inter-league play this was included to gauge the interest and consideration to help neighbours who did not have options for people to play as reasonable amount of teams.
- The interest for Inter-tier and/or Inter-league champions. The timing about the discussions around provincial play impacts and interaction with the league seemed good to ask this question for participant feedback.
- Lastly, a very open opportunity to provide feedback to the CAHL (If you could fix one thing) on anything you would like to see improved.

4. Phase 1 Intent and Outcomes

Each Member Minor Hockey Association has a CAHL Director that provides the communication to and from their LMHA Executive, Teams and the CAHL. This group of Directors combines to form the Board of the CAHL and provide direction the CAHL Executive who manages the operations side of the league, reporting back to the Board of Directors. The intent of the Phase one process was to confirm the perspective of the members and their Directors to ensure the CAHL Executive Committee was in line with that direction of the members.

Continuous improvement processes had already identified the issues with poor communication pathways that were actually a barrier to success. While we are still working on this communication process there does appear to be improvements over the last 2 years.

The Phase one survey was targeted or specifically directed to:

- LMHA Executive Committees
- League Key Volunteers and Contractors
- Hockey Alberta Office staff we are involved with – if interested
- CAHL Executive Committee
- Hockey Alberta Zone Volunteers the CAHL are involved with – if interested

Phase one expectations were approximately 88 to 90 responses but left it open to all people from those groups who may wish to respond to the survey.

Phase one actual responses were a very successful 122 so that goal was successfully achieved.

The Phase one process was completed on October 19th, we had requests for a few people to reply later that week due to work / travel issues which were accepted.

We did not make any questions mandatory so the respondents were open to not answering anything they were not comfortable in doing.

The response rates and the number of people who chose not to respond are listed in the table to the right.

It is interesting to note that for Question 23 that 32% (39) of the respondents from this group did not pick anything they would change given the opportunity to do so.

With 83 responses of Question # 23, we had 106 direct response comments for review.

In total there were 2806 potential responses in this Survey phase and all but 56 opportunities were used or 1.99% were not submitted.

Overall the LMHA members and the CAHL Directors answered questions much as they have directed the CAHL Executive to proceed to do so in the past.

Question #	Responses	%	# Non-response to Question
1	122	100.00%	0
2	122	100.00%	0
3	122	100.00%	0
4	122	100.00%	0
5	120	98.36%	2
6	121	99.18%	1
7	122	100.00%	0
8	122	100.00%	0
9	122	100.00%	0
10	121	99.18%	1
11	122	100.00%	0
12	122	100.00%	0
13	121	99.18%	1
14	121	99.18%	1
15	122	100.00%	0
16	121	99.18%	1
17	122	100.00%	0
18	119	97.54%	3
19	122	100.00%	0
20	121	99.18%	1
21	120	98.36%	2
22	118	96.72%	4
23	83	68.03%	39
122 - Total Responses for Survey			

5. Phase 1 General Conclusions

There did not seem to be a significant variance from the survey data and comments completed by the Phase one respondents towards the CAHL. Generally, the responses were supportive of the leagues processes and volunteers.

Response Rates of the Phase one survey

Other known survey providers identify that every survey to be credible must collect responses at a rate to create confidence and a reasonable margin of error for the out coming data.

The professional survey providers almost all agree that Response Rates vary widely depending on a number of factors. For online surveys, a response rate of 10% -15% is a more conservative and a safer guess if you have not surveyed your Organization before. Additionally a response rate of between 20 - 30% is considered to be highly successful.

Since we are far beyond this 20% to 30% recommendation in Phase one with more than the expected number of responses returned in the survey, we are very happy with the support of the League Leadership Group, LMHA Membership's and other interest parties participation.

The Margin for Error and Confidence of the Phase one survey

While Question # 23 is not considered part of the assessment due to the nature of the open question, the first 22 questions all had 118 to 122 responses each of a potential 122.

From the table below from Survey Monkey, the confidence level of the responses can be assessed on the higher end at between 95% and 99% or very reliable for a small sample survey size.

The Margin for error in these responses varies slightly depending on the number of responses for each question. Overall, the Margin of Error for Phase 1 is between $\pm 1\%$ and $\sim \pm 2.4\%$ depending on the question.

As Identified by Survey Monkey - Green lines by Interpolation

Survey Population	Margin of Error							Confidence Level		
	10%	5%	4%	3.5%	3%	2%	1%	90%	95%	99%
100	50	80					99	74	80	88
122	53	88	110	113	116	119	122	107	115	122
500	81	218					476	176	218	286

It is noteworthy that there did seem to be some noticeable differences in the comments around the importance of the competitive nature of the games and travel importance and that we have been advised by the Hockey Alberta communications and other comments / presentations we have heard over the last few years.

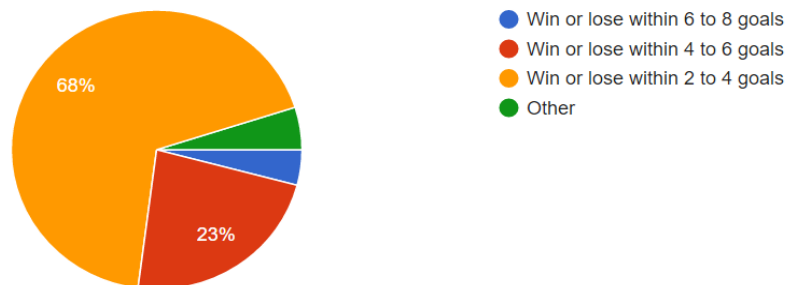
In fact, the feedback seems to be quite the opposite to what is being shared at this point.

Notable items:

- There were 97 (79%) of the respondents that were involved at the Executive level of their LMHA.
- Almost 46% of the Phase one group had children playing in the Atom Division. This was followed by Pee Wee with 26% of the Volunteers.
- Notably 17.2 % of the Phase one Responses were involved but no longer have children playing Minor Hockey.
- For years of involvement, almost 50% of the respondents have between two and six years experience in the league.

- The consideration of success of the year in the CAHL has a unique outcome. We did not expect that Winning a Banner or Winning 75% of the games of the year were the lowest responses for Question #5.
- The Definition of a competitive game in the CAHL is clear below. The respondents clearly stated that this was a game with a (2 to 4) or (4 to 6) goal differential (91%).

What would you define as a competitive game in the CAHL? (122 responses)



- This group would prefer six, seven or eight games being played in the tiering round. Additionally, 71% of the responses considered 14 to 18 games to be a reasonable number in the regular season. With an additional 6 % preferring 18 to 21 games.
- The length of the CAHL Season was identified by ~ 56% of the respondents that it should stay as it is. A group of 41% would like to see the season 1 week longer either at the beginning or the end of the current CAHL Season.
- There is good interest in helping neighbours or playing adjacent leagues to reduce travel as long as the competitive nature of the game is not altered.

There is good support for helping neighbours and working with inter-tier and inter-league play as needed. Other feedback on this will come from the testing of various traditional and non-traditional schedules this season.

Significant support for inter tier or inter-league championships was expressed from 82.8% of respondents.

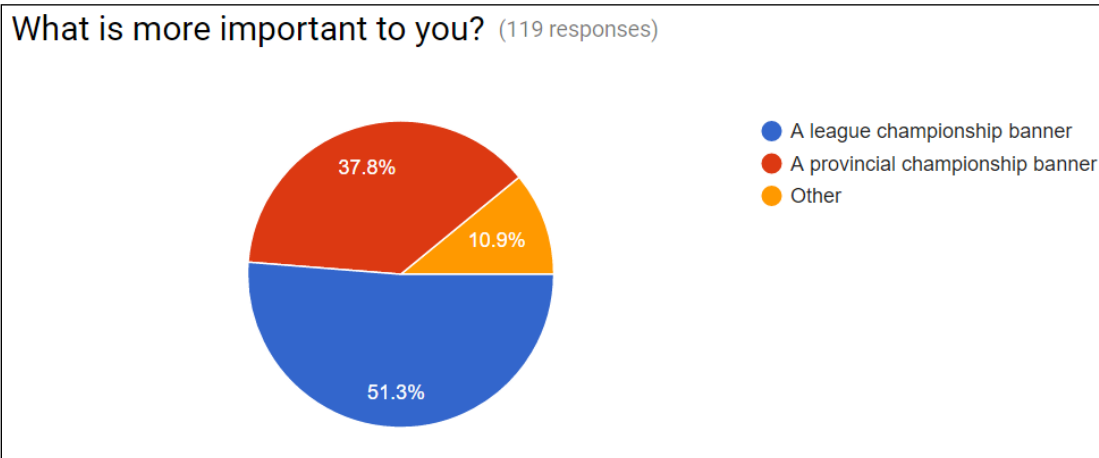
- There is a need to play teams multiple times in a season. The feedback seems limited to no more than 4 times by the feedback from this group. This has been tested this season and we already have feedback from the participants that they do not like the small tiers playing multiple times inside the tier only.

We have tested the following balanced schedule types this year and the feedback has been clear. We are mandated to maintain a balanced schedule by our members.

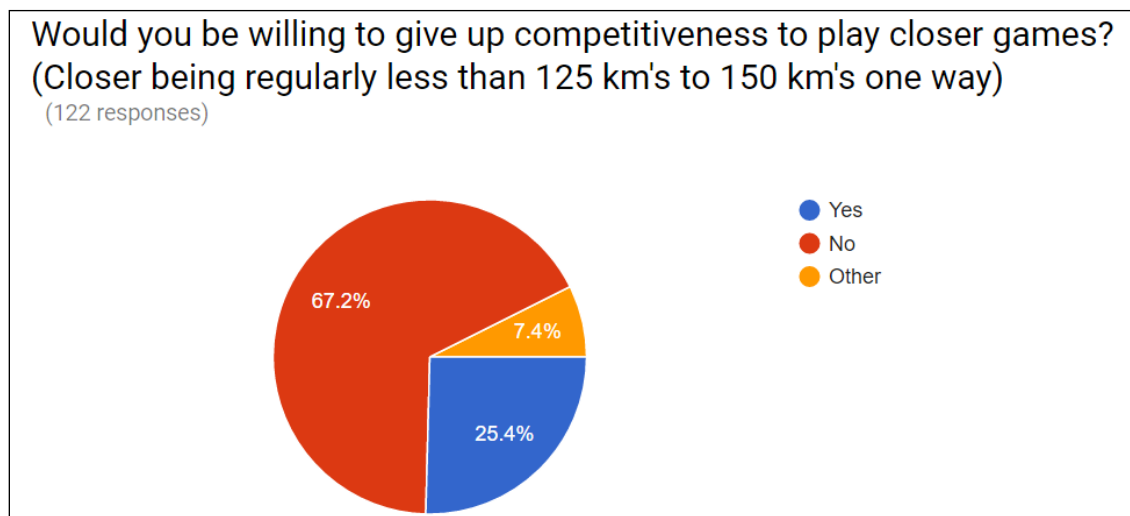
- Traditional Home and Away for groups of 14, 16, 18 games were completed.
- Non-traditional Home and Away multiples plus multiple half's were tested for groups playing each other 3, 4 and 5 times in a regular season. This was well received in all divisions with the exception of the Pee Wee T6SE tier that did not play inter-tier. Their feedback was even though the tier was quite competitive with no one being out played; they did not like the small group with only four teams.
- Inter-tier play was tested for groups of four, five and six against other tier groups of five and six teams. Specifically we tested this in Novice, Atom and Midget divisions. All with good feedback
- Inter-league play was tested in Novice and Atom Divisions. We tested inter-league CAHL groups of four and five teams with one or two Spud League Teams added. We also tested inter-league and Inter-tier together so that any issues with the idea would be identified.

These worked out well in Atom and Novice including the Novice T3 group. The T3 South and T3 NE played against themselves and then Spud League teams, T3 Central played amongst themselves and then 1 game versus the NE Tier and 1 game versus the South Tier.

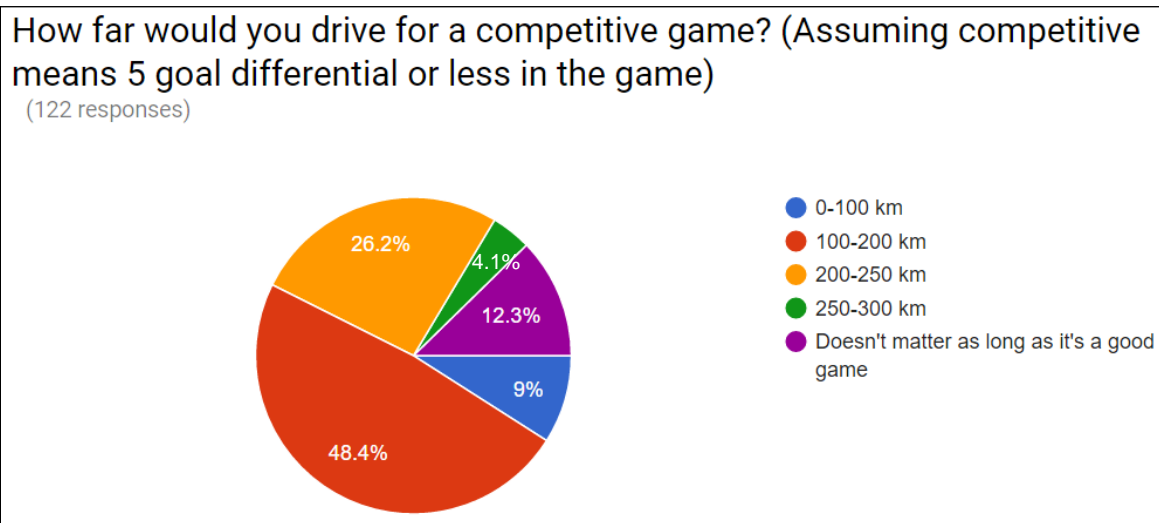
- There was 61% support for playing two games against the same team in the same location the same day to reduce travel with 57% willing to play in two different locations against two different teams in the same day. Supported by comments more interest in the lower Divisions that in the older ones and the second game of the day should be the same for both teams.
- A group of 73% of the respondents do not want body checking removed from hockey.
- This is a more even split when specifically asking from Bantam and then Midget for lower tiers only. In those cases though, only a slight majority indicates they do not want it removed with the margin being 42% to 44% wanting body checking removed only at the lower levels in these divisions
- The view of the Provincial Banners vs. the CAHL Tier Banner was not as expected. We thought the respondents would overall be a significant number of both being important to the season process of a team. That was not the case.



It is clear that the CAHL's direction must not compromise the competitive balance we strive for at the expense of travel. With only ~ 25% of respondents willing to sacrifice the competitive nature of our League processes.



Therefore, since there is not a desire to reduce competitiveness, “how much is too much driving” for the Competitive Games in our League?



With the results above, only 9% of the respondents want the games to be less than 100km's travel. This is clear that the CAHL must make an effort to reduce travel as much as possible but not at the sacrifice of any competitive balances.

The open response question Number 23 was an opportunity to give the respondents an opportunity to make comments, suggestions, be critical in nature if they felt it was required to express their concerns or perspectives of the issues. Notably, ~32 % or 39 people did not use the opportunity to ask or expressed other needs for improvement.

Response categories found in the review were, in order of total responses:

1. Concerns with CAHL Rules – ~ 26% (28) of the recorded responses.

- Drop Clock
- Tier sizes
- Geographic splits
- CAHL Growth – stop expanding and others want more expansion
- Sandbagging
- Time commitment
- Sportsmanship Points
- Early deadlines
- Longer season
- Shorter meetings
- Meeting location
- Begin using tournament play
- Playoff Seeding format
- Overall Tier Champions
- Alter regular season schedules to 2 weekends with four games then a weekend off.
- Retiering meetings and process
- Fewer Tiering games
- More Regular Season games
- Mandate longer ice slots – no 1.5 hr ice for games.
- Retier teams after Christmas one more time
- Different tournament rules
- Compensation for league Volunteers and Executive
- Start using an unbalanced schedule
- Bigger meeting venue
- Stronger stance on spectator discipline
- Monthly meetings and distance to them
- Spilt league priorities for T3 and above vs. below
- Make larger associations play with themselves
- Be more understanding
- Volunteer roles are too hard

2. **Travel** - ~ 23% (25) of the recorded responses. We were surprised that just over 23% of the respondents still indicated travel was an issue to fix.

That is not in line with the way they previously answered the questions so we will have to do more research into that result. It is clear they do not want to give up competitiveness at any cost but are still concerned about travel.

- Geographic splits
- Less travel for lower tiers
- Travel is important but don't impact the competitive nature of the games
- Put in limits to try to reduce travel
- CAHL is already improving this

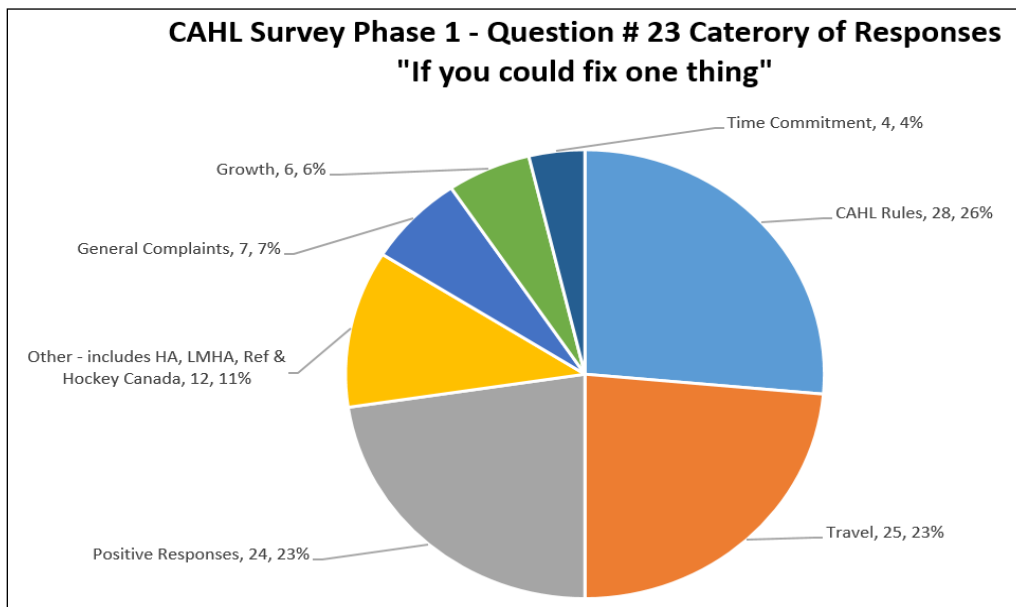
3. **Positive statements or statements of support** - ~23 % (24) of the recorded responses. It was nice to see that of the responses we received 23% were positive in nature. Quite often, these are missed.

4. **Other Responses** - Hockey Canada, includes Ref's, Hockey Alberta and LMHA's policies or processes with ~ 11 % (12) of the recorded responses.

- Inconsistent Officiating
- Concerns about follow up with Ref issues. A committee should be formed to hear Officials complaints
- Remove body checking further
- Put in limits to try to reduce travel for Provincials
- Tryouts and team formation issues due to timelines
- More body checking not less

5. **The remaining categories** were all less than 17 % of the total responses as shown in the chart below.

Key points from these categories will be addressed as action items at the end of this document.



Please see the supplemental Survey documents showing the detailed survey results for additional information and comments.

6. Phase 2 Intent and Outcomes

Each Member Minor Hockey Association has declared teams in the CAHL and all interact directly with League Volunteers. The CAHL Director that provides the communication to and from their LMHA Executive, Teams and the CAHL Executive.

As normally takes place the teams and the associated tier are to operate autonomously as individual entities inside the league operations model. Other portions of the League and Hockey Alberta entities are involved as need to resolve or complete tasks as needed.

Phase two was to target specifically:

- League Governor Volunteers
- Team Parents and Guardians
- Team Volunteers
- Team Fans and Supporters

Phase 2 expectations were 1200 additional responses from League Governor Level volunteers and 418 teams/parents/supporters.

Phase two actual responses were a very successful 1583 so that goal was achieved. The survey response rates were approximately 23.5 % of all available respondents based on team numbers and direct participants.

The Phase one process was completed on October 19th, Phase two was open to responses until December 31st.

January 9th we turned off the survey and stopped taking submissions to the survey.

We did not make any questions mandatory so the respondents were open to not answering anything they were not comfortable in doing.

The response rates and the number of people who chose not to respond are listed in the table to the right.

The top five questions that were not answered:

1. Question 23 - "if you could fix one thing?" - 617 non-responses. It is interesting to note, this Question that 37% (587) of the respondents did not pick anything they would change given the opportunity to do so.
2. Question 18 - Banner Question (what is more important to you between Hockey Alberta and the CAHL Banners?) – 76 non-responses.
3. Question 10 – Playoff format question (would you approve if the CAHL playoffs were the same as Hockey Alberta Provincial Playdowns?) – 60 non-responses.
4. Question 22 – (would you be interested in forming a non- body contact tier in the CAHL) – 50 non-responses.
5. Question 19 – (Are you in support of removing body checking from Bantam or Midget?)–42 non-responses.

Question #	Responses	%	# Non-response to Question
1	1569	99.12%	14
2	1567	98.99%	16
3	1569	99.12%	14
4	1562	98.67%	21
5	1562	98.67%	21
6	1569	99.12%	14
7	1571	99.24%	12
8	1573	99.37%	10
9	1559	98.48%	24
10	1523	96.21%	60
11	1564	98.80%	19
12	1568	99.05%	15
13	1563	98.74%	20
14	1567	98.99%	16
15	1566	98.93%	17
16	1561	98.61%	22
17	1560	98.55%	23
18	1507	95.20%	76
19	1541	97.35%	42
20	1548	97.79%	35
21	1547	97.73%	36
22	1533	96.84%	50
23	996	62.92%	587
1583 - Total Responses for Survey			

In total there were 36,402 potential responses in this Survey phase and all but 1164 opportunities were used or 3.2% were not submitted or the opportunity taken.

7. Phase 2 General Conclusions

There did not seem to be a significant variance from the survey data and comments completed by the Phase one respondents towards the CAHL. Generally, the responses were supportive of the leagues processes and volunteers.

Response Rates of the Phase Two survey

As mentioned in the Phase one conclusions section, we anticipated ~ 1200 responses or approximately a 17% response rate.

With an actual response rate of ~ 23% in the Phase two survey, we are very happy with the support of the League Governor Leadership Group, the teams and their supporter's participation.

The Margin for Error and Confidence of the Phase one survey

While Question # 23 is not considered part of the assessment due to the nature of the open question, the first 22 questions all had 1507 to 1579 responses each of a potential 1583 in total.

From the table below from Survey Monkey, the confidence level of the responses can be assessed on the higher end at 99% or very reliable for a sample survey size.

The Margin for Error in these responses varies slightly depending on the number of responses for each question. Overall, the Margin of Error for Phase two Responses were just on either side of ~ +/-3.5% for the response range of 1507 to 1579 responses each of the total 1583 responses.

As Identified by Survey Monkey - Green lines by Interpolation

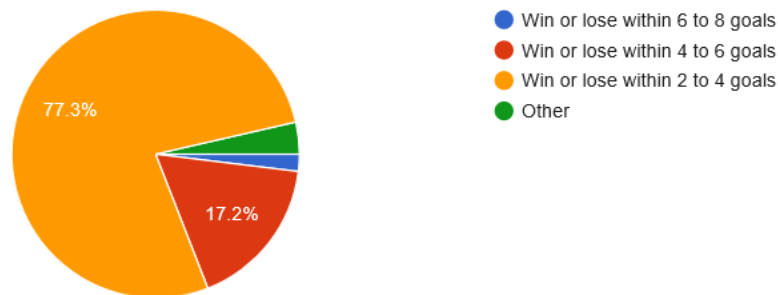
Survey Population	Margin of Error							Confidence Level		
	10%	5%	4%	3.5%	3%	2%	1%	90%	95%	99%
100	50	80					99	74	80	88
122	53	88	110	113	116	119	122	107	115	122
500	81	218					476	176	218	286
1,000	88	278					906	215	278	400
~ 7000	91	339	1145	1549	1952	2758	3564	247	339	548
10,000	96	370					4,900	264	370	623

With this many responses to the survey, it is clear the expectation and wishes of the participants of the games we sanction. Notable items from this survey are:

- A strong response from parents and team participants was noted – with ~ 1323 responses being from parents and 729 from Team Volunteers
- The respondents have players well spread across all divisions of play.
- The length of experience in the CAHL by respondents is broadly spread out across age groups and divisions of play.
- There were numerous indicators of what a successful season is to participants in our League. Also worth noting only 13.9 % of the responses indicated a Championship Banner was an indicator of success.
- Good feedback is provided on participants expectations of number of tiering round games and regular season games for the season.
- Clear support was shown for the majority of the responses that two or less tournaments were acceptable during league play. Less than 16.5% of the responses indicated that three were preferred.

- Very strongly supported that a competitive game in the CAHL is score differentials between 2 and 4 goals – 77.3%, 4 to 6 goals – 17.2 %. This is supportive of our attempts to reduce goal differentials in our games. A strong response though, with 94.5% of responding supporting this ranges of 2 to 6 goals as a competitive game.

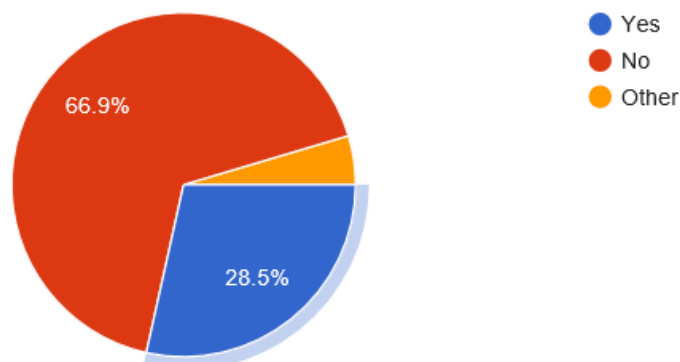
What would you define as a competitive game in the CAHL? (1562 responses)



- There were indicators that people would like to see the CAHL Season at least 1 week longer (38.6% of responses would like to see the season 1 week longer in some way) with 47.2 % wanting it left as it currently is.
- Acceptable number of times to play the same team in a regular season schedule – the feedback limits the acceptance to around four games, 4 or clearer 5 times in a season is when the indicators begin to become clear the participants do not want that.
- Responses to aligning the playoff format with Hockey Alberta Provincial play garnered only 42.8% support from the respondents. The majority wanted to the same as it is now or expanded in a different manner.
- Competition Priority - It is clear that the CAHL's direction must not compromise the competitive balance we strive for at the expense of travel. With only ~ 28.5% of respondents willing to sacrifice the competitive nature of our League processes.

Would you be willing to give up competitiveness to play closer games?
(Closer being regularly less than 125 km's to 150 km's one way)

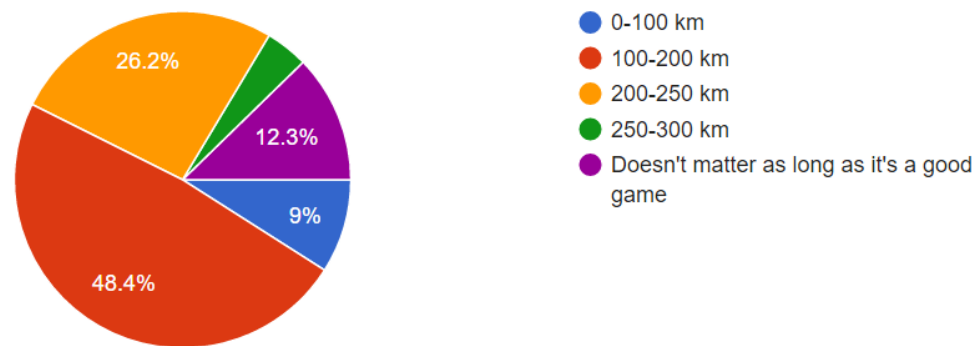
(1566 responses)



- Therefore, since there is not a desire to reduce competitiveness, “how much is too much driving” for the Competitive Games in our League?

How far would you drive for a competitive game? (Assuming competitive means 5 goal differential or less in the game)

(122 responses)



- With the results above, only 9% of the respondents want the games to be less than 100km's travel. This is clear that the CAHL must make an effort to reduce travel as much as possible but not at the sacrifice of any competitive balances.
- Travel – there are respondents have provided responses to the survey that contradict each other significantly. Even though it is clear that the competitive policy of the CAHL is meeting the needs and wants of the participants, there is still a strong presence that travel is an issue.

Yet when given the opportunity to reduce travel why a reduced travel policy would not be endorsed? Looking at only the 16% who responded that they are only willing to travel 100 km's for a competitive game. However only 28% of respondents would give up competitiveness for consistently less than 150 km's of travel.

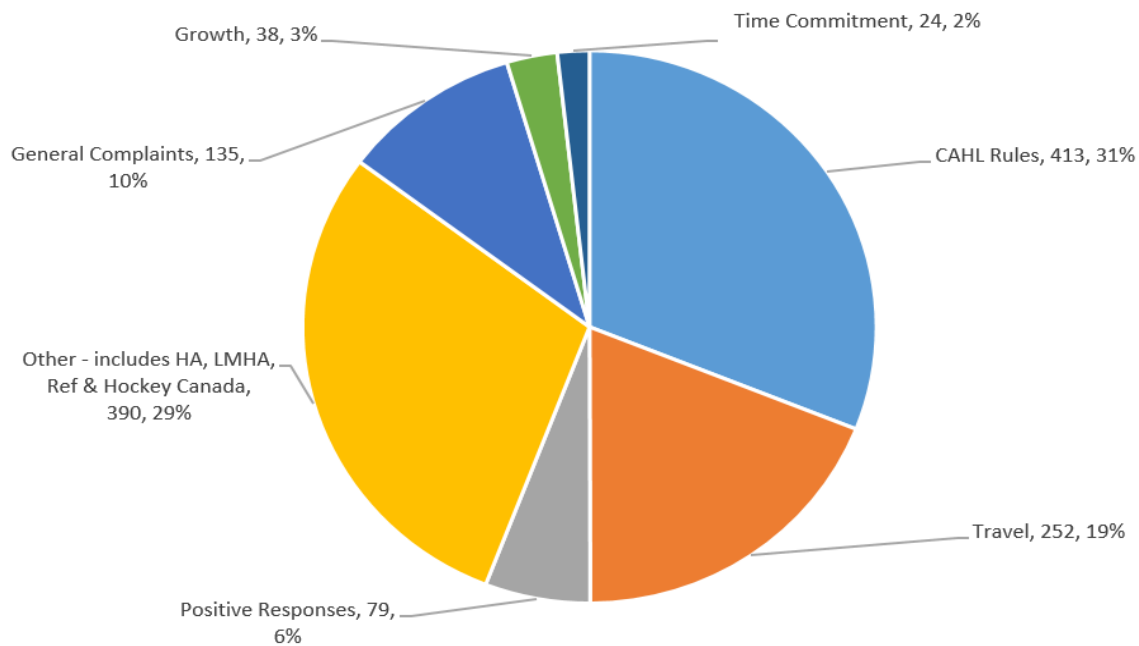
This is further complicated by responses from 68.3 % they are willing to travel 100km's to 250 km's for the competitive game. Also of interest is that 15.7 % of respondents will drive 250 km's to 300 km's or does not matter as long as it is a good game.

- Participants responded they were in favour of playing two games in one day to reduce the travel of the teams, but not as supportive in playing two games in one day in two locations and different teams.
- There is strong support to help ones neighbour out and very strong support (77.8 %) for inter-League championship play. Very positive responses for Inter-tier championships as well.
- We were surprised that when given the choice to identify which was more important to you, a Hockey Alberta Provincials Banner or a CAHL Banner. We expected the majority of responses to say both. That is a surprise but may be reflective and indicate the larger number of our teams that do not get to participate in provincial play.
- The Body Checking question - to remove it from Bantam, Midget or both divisions did not collect good support. When you reduced the question to lower tiers in Bantam 38% or lower tiers in Midget 35% expressed interest.
- When asked if they would support developing a non-body checking division – only 35.4% of the responses were interested. This would require further investigation to see the declared ranges of these teams to see if this was possible

Question # 23 Open responses to “fix one thing” several hundred respondents provided more than one item that they would suggest needs fixing. The summary of this question:

- General Categories of Responses (996 responses in total with 1333 specific points)
 - CAHL Specific Rules – 413 - (~31%)
 - Other – 390 – (~29%) includes Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, Ref and LMHA comments
 - Travel – 252 – (~19%)
 - General complaints – 135– (~10%)
 - Positive Responses – 79 – (~6%)
 - Growth – 38 – (~3%)
 - Time Commitment expected – 24 – (~2%)

CAHL Survey Phase 2 - Question # 23 Category of Responses "If you could fix one thing"



Please see the supplemental presentation and information documents showing the detailed survey results for detailed information.

8. Actions and Timelines

The following is an action item list for short term and long term planning and implementation as it can be logistically prepared and implemented

Short Term planning and use of the feedback:

These actions will be addressed as much as possible for April 2017 completion in the CAHL Notice of Motion process or the operating practices of the CAHL:

- At the next available CAHL meeting, The membership will discuss:
 - Geographic splits including impacts to inter-tier schedules for tier creation.
 - Review the Tiering round game counts and regular season game counts for direction next season.
 - Discuss the test or trail schedules and outcomes.
- A CAHL League Competition Policy will be completed and presented to the membership for review and their recommendations. This would include feedback on what a successful season is in the CAHL.
- Tiering round game expectations – effective next season the Governor in Chief and Lead Governors will manage the tiering round games for teams to a minimum of six (6) per team using additional games only as needed to resolve unknowns in their placement recommendation. The current soft targets are not clearly supported by the survey responses. From the survey responses, the new soft target for the tiering round should average between six and seven games per team.
- Number of times playing the same teams expectations – effective next season the CAHL Executive will manage the game schedules so that during the regular season teams will not play another team more than 4 times in Novice, Atom, Pee Wee and try to ensure 3 times in Bantam and Midget as the survey response recommendations and comments indicates.

Numerous test schedules were completed this regular season already and the ability to use inter-tier and inter-league play has been identified effectively now so that in the event of small tiers being recommended due to competitive balance, that can be combined to reduce the effects of playing a team too many times in a season.

- Travel distances to games – effective for next season, with the exception to Tier 1 and 2 in all divisions; all travel for games in the CAHL will not exceed approximately 250 km's one way without discussion and approval from the CAHL Vice President responsible for the Division. A two game approach in tiering will be used and for regular season schedules, Inter-tier schedule considerations will be used to reduce this as much as possible. In cases where this is deemed necessary after all other efforts have been exhausted, a discussion will be completed with effected team to explain why and ask for their support and if they have other solutions, they see to help with the situation.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the discussion will be escalated to the CAHL President for resolution.

- Novice, Atom and Pee Wee Teams agreeing to play two games in one day will be allowed to change their CAHL game schedule without penalty and will be encouraged to do so. This will be limited to the same two teams using one location or arena facility unless otherwise agreed to by the effected teams.
- Further review and feedback of inter-league play will be done at the end of the current season for future consideration. If members have additional feedback of the inter-league trail project this season please let the CAHL Executive know.

Longer Term planning and use of the feedback:

The following actions items will be addressed as logistically possible in the upcoming CAHL season:

- No change will be done to the CAHL Tournament policy at present unless it is presented by a member in our Notice of Motion Process.
- The CAHL Tiering round policy is being further reviewed by a sub-committee at present, the feedback from this survey will be provided for them to review as well in making their recommendations.
- The CAHL will look at the recommendation of a longer CAHL Regular season and will discuss this with the Directors for further direction and feedback. This is also being discussed at the Hockey Alberta Leagues Committee levels so all the factors can be reviewed before actions are taken and a finalized plan is presented.
- The CAHL playoff formats and policy will need to be reviewed to allow for a longer regular season. More discussion with the Directors will be required.
- There are several initiatives ongoing with Hockey Alberta at this time. The seasonal structure and duration of league play will be addressed in that process.
- Body Checking debate will go on for now until a decision is made at the National or Regional levels. The CAHL does not have adequate feedback from the survey to make this determination with the team volumes we have at present. It will however be addressed in compliance to the sanctioning responsibilities of the league as directed to do so.
- While there appears to be support for a non-body checking division in the CAHL at this time. Logistically there is no way to move to that in time to complete the League preparations needed in the near future.

In the event the CAHL is approached with that interest, it will be supported and managed as we do now for those participants.

If I could fix one thing - the feedback and actions:

It is worth noting that when given the open opportunity to make suggestions or comments to fix one thing or more if they chose to do so, that 587 people or ~ 37% did not take the opportunity to do so.

In regards to CAHL Specific Rules – 413 responses - (~31%)

- A few comments that were personal in nature and abusive were encountered. Generally that the CAHL and its volunteers may not be as understanding as what people have expected. While it is expected, we need to continue to maintain as a high standard of customer service for our members. It is not fair to bash a volunteer or the League when you do not get an answer that you want or generally like either. Just because the answer is NO do not take it out on the volunteers.
- A common complaint and response are the CAHL Game Regulation rules and policies. It is unique the CAHL Volunteers are tasked with managing this requirement and blamed for the fines but they were approved and implemented by the Board of Directors?

The biggest volumes of responses are to the fix the fines for the game sheet errors, data entry delays and errors and game verification fines.

It is important that all parties realize that these fines are there due to significant compliance issues in the past, which has caused significant hardship to League volunteers and to member teams. With that in mind, the CAHL Executive will review the situation and concerns with the Directors for their feedback before any further considerations will be taken.

- Fines – Will be generally reviewed with the CAHL Board of Directors as soon as possible
- Number of games – lots of feedback with the majority of these comments wanting more games even statements of 24 to 30 game regular seasons.

There also were concerns that fewer games were expected. Suggestions of one game per weekend and even suggestions of 10 games in the entire season.

- Do not care for the schedules as they “always get the away half” when it is done. The half’s go that way when not enough ice is available in the process. There is nothing that can be done when the ice is not provided to the teams and the CAHL from the LMHA’s
- These requests also contradict the support for balanced competition and schedules from the previous questions. Perhaps, this is some perspective that the Directors are not using in feedback to the CAHL Volunteers.
- Length of Season – there was clear interest in the CAHL season being longer with a variety of choices about what is needed. Factors affecting Season length are primarily:
 - Completion of the “AAA” and “AA” tryouts process
 - Team formation time after the elite hockey process is completed from local LMHA tryouts to combining associations to make teams due to shortages of players in the older age groups mostly. Many Tiered teams are just being formed at the deadlines the CAHL have currently.
 - Ice availability in smaller member Minor Hockey Associations and facilities in rural Alberta who do not generally control their rink operating timelines.

In regards to “Other” comments – 390 responses – (~29%) includes Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, Ref and LMHA comments

- Many comments about tryouts and team formation processes as well as statements that are not part of the Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada guidelines that LMHA’s need to follow were expressed.
- Very clear participants are not informed adequately of the areas of responsibilities of Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, their local Minor Hockey Associations and the CAHL.
- Many unhappy comments that the LMHA is not helping them for a few different reasons

Travel – 252 responses – (~19%)

- It is important to note that this season in the CAHL significant effort was placed into making tiers that not only provided a good balance of competitive and like teams, it also provided benchmarks that could be used to involve escalated discussions around managing how far was too far to ask a team to go.

In the tiering round all travel greater than 275 km’s was escalated to the Vice President’s level of the Executive or higher for review. In all during the 3072 game tiering round there were less than 60 escalated requests for travel in the five divisions of play.

Survey Respondents still replied in the surveys that they travelled in excess of that regularly and at times the CAHL did this on purpose just to fill a game slot. With the way this is managed this season it does not make sense why people feel this way when quite clearly we did not do that and bench marked our process to monitor for that.

- Lots of feedback on geographic or segment splits with suggestions towards regions, quadrants, tournament style play for regular season and playoffs
- Lots of feedback about distances, its ridiculous, etc but in the cross comparing questions these do not match the way the same individuals answered the other questions in the survey. Their survey responses actually contradict themselves.
- No mention of the League Distance Calculator that the CAHL uses for discussions and decisions around travel.

General complaints – 135– (~10%)

- Numerous personal or league complaints regarding individuals or the league in general to ease up or “loosen up a little”
- 3 complaints directed at individuals, one very inappropriate one.
- Don’t stress about the little stuff it affects the teams
- Remember mistakes are human, give volunteers a break
- Less tournaments and less “Hockey Culture Pressure”
- Rules and fines are extreme, there are many parents that won't volunteer to work intime boxes for fear of the repercussions. It is ridiculous.
- Sandbagging in general
- Separate members into like size teams numbers
- League culture and manuals are too much, people do not need that
- Lots of other general complaints
- Don’t be so hard on teams in the tiering round
- Too much league documentation to go through, needs to be reduced

Positive Feedback – 79 responses – (~6%)

Many supportive and positive comments and from the open question or comment opportunity. Nice to see and hear.

Growth – 38 responses – (~3%)

- Many concerns both for and against League Growth
- Complaints that it is wrecking the league
- Comments that it is making it great
- Immediate actions are need to keep on letting people in
- Lots of comments about quadrants or geographical splitting of the league.

Time Commitment – 24 responses – (~2%)

- Numerous comments that the Hockey Commitment takes too much family and play time from the kids
- Travel any longer than it takes to play the game is wrecking time for the players to hang out, bond and enjoy the kid’s life.
- Take away from my kids couch time on the game systems
- Season length comments impacting family vacation times and long weekend trips

9. Summary

The survey overall achieved the goals set out by the CAHL Executive Committee and felt that people were open to providing productive feedback. The Survey Response Rate, the Survey Margin of Error and Data Confidence goals met or exceeded the CAHL Executives expectations.

The detailed information has been found helpful and worth the effort. We will continue to share the information with the groups and organizations that the CAHL interacts with for further discussion and review. Any feedback on these results would be greatly appreciated and openly accepted.

It is clear from this survey responses and real time discussions / questions that participants in the league are unclear or unsure of the Hockey Alberta, CAHL and LMHA areas of responsibilities and this should be a consideration for future communications in some manner in the future, perhaps by all parties mentioned here.

It is also clear that the support from our members is generally that:

- League priorities are clear and the CAHL has already tested strategies this year to make the balance beneficial to the member's wishes for further future implementation.
 - # 1 – Competitive Balance including having a stated competitive model policy of target goal differentials for the league to work within. This includes a Balanced Regular season Tier schedule.

From our previous discussions and the comments in the survey around having an unbalanced regular season schedule; it is very clear we cannot do that under the current league operating philosophy. Feedback in the survey and outside of the survey for quite some time is that in the regular season each team must play the assigned teams the same number of times.
 - # 2 – Importance of like teams to play with a preference towards 6 to 8 tiering round games and approximately 14 to 18 regular season games is the majority of the responses.

While there is interest expressed in the survey for up to 38 games in the CAHL Season for a team, the logistical issues include that most LMHA operation or funding models only allow 12 to 14 home games maximum as part of the operating model they use for each season.

We also have CAHL Members who are unable to provide the 12 ice slots for home games per team in their current operating models even though the CAHL requires 4 for the tiering round and 8 for the regular season. This season with resetting the Regular season games to "0" we did not have enough ice submitted for even 1/3 of the division tiers to have an 18 game regular season schedule. So then adding 8 in the tiering round for a total of 26 this season is the best we should expect in the future under our present processes.
 - # 3 – Travel considerations to make the tier beneficial by geography is to be and will only be done after the priorities above are addressed. While travel is an important consideration, it is only to be considered after the competitive balance is established.
- A Sub-committee of CAHL Members (1 Coach and 4 Directors or LMHA Presidents) are reviewing the tiering policy and they are already well on their way to making a recommendation we hope to hear in the near future. This committee is looking into the concerns in the survey already.

The CAHL has already began the improvement process with this information as detailed in the previous sections.



Respectfully submitted for review by Terry Siverson CAHL President