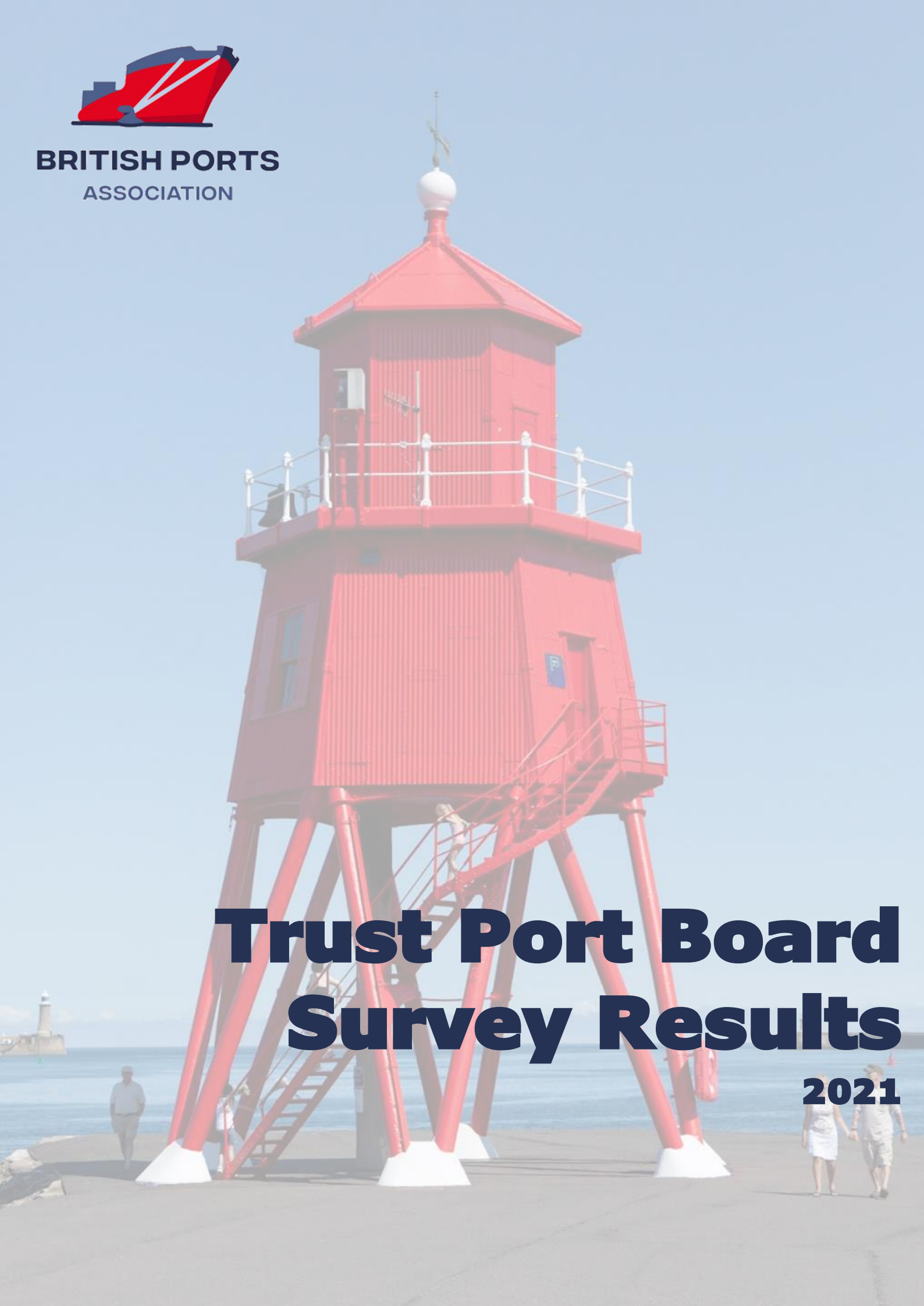


BRITISH PORTS
ASSOCIATION

Trust Port Board Survey Results

2021



Introduction

- This survey was issued to BPA trust port members in May and June 2021 to collect and present information that allows ports to assess themselves against their peers in terms of board activities and to provide context for existing and new trust port board members.
- Being the first survey of this kind conducted by the BPA, responses were collected via open-ended questions, so some answers are presented anecdotally with a summary of responses provided. Following this pilot, any future trust port board surveys will be presented with a more quantitative focus, guided by the spread of the data collected within the 2021 survey.
- Other useful documents the BPA has also produced includes a '[What are trust ports?](#)' [briefing paper](#) to assist Government, stakeholders, and new board members in their understanding of how ports operate under this kind of governance.
- The BPA also conducts an annual salary survey to allow ports to compare the remuneration of individual job roles within the report and benchmark themselves against this data. This may be useful information in conjunction with this survey, as the remuneration of board members is included in the data collected. Results are only provided in confidence to members who feed into the survey. We encourage members who have not done so previously, to consider feeding into this survey, which is circulated each year in Q1-Q2.
- The BPA also published a note on reclassified trust port board appointments in 2020. Accessible [here](#).

Respondent Data

- There were 16 respondents to the survey. 31% of which were major trust ports, 69% of which were minor trust ports.
- Please note that the sample size of each question is not always 16, due to some questions asking respondents to skip if a question did not apply.

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Results

How many board members do you have? (including Deputy Chair and Chair)

- The average is 10 board members.
- The greatest number is 15 board members, the smallest was 7.

How long are board members appointed for and how many terms are they able to serve?

- The average answer was that board members are appointed for 3 years and able to serve a maximum of two terms (which was the most common answer by far). Some respondents noted that three terms were allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- This data is mirrored for the role of Chair, though the possibility of serving four terms is more common than with standard board members.

How often are your board meetings held?

- On averages respondents hold an average of 7.5 meetings a year.
- The most common answer was 6 times a year (every two months), with 38% of respondents reporting this.
- 25% hold monthly meetings.

How are board papers sent?

- All respondents send papers digitally (via email or Board Intelligence).
- 1/3 send physical copies as well as digital.
- Some noted that they provide physical copies on request.

What standing items do you have on your agenda?

The most frequent items mentioned were:

- Apologies
- Declaration of interests
- Previous board minutes
- Matters arising
- Safety report
- Environmental report
- CEO report
- Financial report
- Port director's report
- Harbour engineer's report
- AOB
- Date of the next meeting

Other items reported by respondents were:

- Management accounts
- Audit and risk
- Remuneration and & Terms of Service
- Advisory committee and employee meetings
- Stakeholder/public relations
- Media/Communications
- Events/Fund Raising
- Property Report
- Business Development
- Port Users Report

What is your induction process for new board members?

Responses mentioned the following items:

- Report on Business of Harbour Commissioners.
- Meeting with HM/CEO/Financial Director.
- Duty Holder course.
- External Governance training.
- Provision of key internal documents (Strategic Review, 10-Year Plan etc) and key external documents (Good Governance Guidance, Maritime 2050 etc).
- Attend 1-2 meetings as an observer
- Site tours/tripping with pilots and dredgers.
- Presentations with topics including:
 - Duty holder responsibilities.
 - Long term strategic planning.
 - Harbour Law.
 - National legislation.
 - Staff structure.
 - Finances.
 - Long term major infrastructure repair, replacement & development opportunities.
 - Berth utilisation.
 - Stakeholder engagement.

What sub-committees do you have?

All sub-committees mentioned in responses are as follows:

- Budget / Finance
- Environment
- Safety
- Moorings
- Personnel
- Remuneration
- Audit and Risk
- Governance and Strategy
- Commercial
- Major Projects
- Fisheries

- Port Security
- Licensing
- Harbour Operations
- Events and Fundraising

How do you review the performance of your Chair and board members and how often is this done?

- The majority of respondents noted that reviews of board members occur annually, conducted by the Chair and Deputy Chair, often by completing a formalised performance and development review.
- Some noted that they were too small to have an official review as all board members are non-executive while others stated that reviews were informal and ongoing.
- The review of the Chair is commonly reviewed by Vice-Chair and CEO, perhaps using private feedback from other board members.

How do you measure commercial performance and business KPIs at board level?

Responses mentioned the following business and commercial KPIs:

- Annual budgets are set by the board and performance is measured monthly against the budget.
- Monthly YTD tonnage throughput by commodity handled Vs. budget and Vs. prior year. Likewise with vessel calls and unitised cargoes.
- New inquiries and existing business noted in CEO report
- Commercial performance also measured against progress in attracting new customers/tenants, number of quotations issued and percentage of success.
- Annual statistics on ship calls, pilotage acts, cargo handled, leisure craft dues sold and slipway use.
- Detailed monthly reports to board including reports by the marketing manager.

How do you measure health and safety performance and KPIs at board level?

Responses mentioned the following health and safety KPIs:

- Incident/Injury Trends.
- Analysis of health and safety statistics including near misses, minor, moderate and major accidents (number and days since last). Also accident by type (plant people, property), by employee and 3rd party.
- Report at each meeting showing statistics for all incidents including lost time, graph comparing with national statistics, info on all internal health and safety audits and external 45001 audits.

How do you measure PMSC compliance at board level?

- The most common responses were to have a standing item on the harbour masters report, internal and external audits by designated person/independent and duty holder reports.
- It was also mentioned by some that the Annual Report includes statistics on incidents etc.

How do you measure environmental performance at board level?

- Review progress against environmental action plan.
- Harbour Master reports on marine environmental in board papers.
- CEO report or report from the environmental officer at each board meeting.
- The incident rate reported.
- Annual summary report.
- Environmental Policy to benchmark against ISO 14001.

How do you measure financial performance at board level?

- Set budgets and review performance against this.
- Review audit report and accounts.
- Other items analysed include revenue, EBITDA, profit before tax, Cash position, debtors, tonnage unit and vessel throughput, sickness, Summary P&L and balance sheet, net assets, cash flow, borrowings and covenant strength.
- Progress against 10-year plan measured.
- Bank balance increasing rather than decreasing.
- Externally assess each month by a chartered accountant who reports directly to the board.

How often do you review your risk register?

- The vast majority stated this is reviewed annually but many noted also review when an incident/near miss occurs.
- Some state that they review quarterly or at each board meeting.

If you have a port strategy or master plan, how often is this reviewed?

- 42% of respondents review annually, 42% review every 5 years.
- Though one respondent states that this is reviewed on a rolling 10-year basis and another said every 3 years.

How do you measure stakeholder engagement at board level?

- Review progress against stakeholder engagement targets in strategic plan or customer satisfaction surveys.

- Communication report highlights stakeholder engagement since the last meeting.
- Measure the number of posts and followers since the last meeting on social media.
- A formal stakeholder mapping exercise is undertaken.
- KPIs including the number of complaints received, attendance at public meetings, the number of stakeholders we have engaged with, social media followers.
- Monitor stakeholder meetings minutes and attendance at Harbour Consultative Group.
- Informally as all Board Members are stakeholders and as such in contact with other stakeholders throughout the year.

Do you hold annual stakeholder meetings (that are open to the public) or public meetings? How many people do you usually have attend?

- 94% of respondents report that they do hold an annual stakeholder meeting. 1 respondent (6%) reports that they did not due to a history of poor attendance.
- Attendance at these meetings was reported to range from 2 to 350 people. The average was approximately 97 people.

Do you hold public open days (when Covid-19 rules allow this)? How many people do you usually have attend?

- 50% of respondents said they do not hold public open days, 50% report that they do.
- Some of those who said no did state that they regularly hold arranged group tours, however.
- Total attendance at open days (spread across the year) ranges from 30-2000 attendees.

Do you conduct stakeholder surveys? How is this done and how often?

- 42% of respondents report that they do not conduct stakeholder surveys.
- 42% of respondents also report that they have an annual survey.
- One respondent noted an ongoing review and another said they conduct a survey every 3 months.

How often do you review your board governance structures and processes?

- 44% of respondents report that they review board governance structures annually, 25% have an ongoing review and 13% said every 5 years.
- The remaining respondents either never conduct a review, or review every 2 or 3 years.

How often do you review the ownership structure of your port? Is this review done internally or with the assistance of an external contact?

- 63% of respondents report that as a trust port this is never reviewed.
- Of those that do review this status, a mix of frequencies from 1,2,3 and 5 years were reported.

If you pay your board members, do you review this regularly?

- Of those who pay board members, 75% review their pay annually.
- 25% report that they conduct a review every three years.

Do you have a policy in place for whistleblowing, from either a staff member or a board member?

- 50% of respondents report that they do have a formal policy in place.
- 50% said no (though this includes having 'no formal policy').
- Some of those with a formal policy in place stated that there was an open-door policy in place. Personnel being able to contact Safecall (a whistleblowing company) was also mentioned a couple of times.

Do you have a policy in place for reporting bullying, from either a member of staff or a board member?

- 88% of respondents said yes, they do have a policy in place.
- As with the previous question, some noted that personnel can also contact Safecall.