

SOUTHERN RIVERS CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY: STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS BENCHMARKING SURVEY



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Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The primary objective of this project was to benchmark the organisational capacity of the Southern Rivers CMA. The approach was based on a capacity model of CMA performance (Fenton, 2004)¹, in which the performance of CMAs is defined in terms of (i) management capacity, (ii) NRM program capacity, and (iii) the CMAs relationships with external organisations.

A survey was undertaken of all staff and Board Members within the Southern Rivers CMA in December 2007 and January 2008. Completed questionnaires were returned from all seven Board Members and 47 (67.1%) of staff.

Effectiveness of the CMA

CMA staff and Board Members believed the CMA was successfully progressing towards the achievement of NRM targets. Progress towards the achievement of NRM targets had improved over the past two years and staff and Board Members were optimistic about the future, believing greater progress would be made towards the achievement of NRM targets in the next two years.

The majority of staff and Board Members believed the CMA had been successful in developing relationships with stakeholder organisations; there had been improvement over the past two years; and there would be more successful relationships developed between the CMA and other stakeholder organisations in the future.

Management Capacity

The majority of staff and Board Members believe a shared NRM vision was held by most staff in the CMA and that this had improved slightly over the last two years. In addition there was a belief that a shared NRM vision was held by most Board Members and that both staff and Board Members held the same NRM vision.

The majority of staff and Board Members believed senior staff within the CMA had the appropriate level of the leadership capacity and that the corporate reputation of the CMA itself was moderately high. In addition, the decision making processes within the CMA were considered to be appropriate and working well.

The level of job satisfaction and morale was found to be 'average' across CMA staff and Board Members. However relatively lower job satisfaction was found amongst administration and business staff; amongst staff who had been with the CMA for three years and amongst temporary as compared to permanent staff. However, while the current level of job satisfaction is moderate, the level of job satisfaction two years ago was slightly higher than it is today.

Overall the level of perceived job security amongst staff was slightly below average. It was particularly low amongst administration and business staff; amongst those staff employed by the CMA for less than two years; and amongst temporary staff within the organisation.

In an average working week staff and Board Members spent 48% of their time on NRM program activities; 24% on general office and administration; 22% on partnership development and support and the remaining 6% on management activities.

All staff and Board Members were also asked to identify the amount of time they believed *they should* be spending on these activities. The magnitude of the discrepancy between actual and ideal

¹ Fenton, D.M. (2004). *Framework development: Indicators of capacity, performance and change in regional NRM bodies*. Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation, Canberra.

time spent on activities was not large, with the highest discrepancy being amongst management staff who believed they should be spending approximately 7% more of their time on partnership development and support and less time on general office management and administration. Across all staff and Board Members there was a belief that they should spending more time on partnership development and support and less time on general office management and administration.

Across all staff and Board Members, the human resource and financial management systems were regarded as adequate, with staff and Board Members also indicating that over the past two years there had been a significant improvement in the CMAs financial management systems.

Staff and Board Members also indicated a need for additional equipment and physical infrastructure, with the three most commonly reported needs being; (i) the need for remote data entry, such as PDAs; (ii) improved office space, including the size of offices, seating and the need for air conditioners; and (iii) the need for video conferencing facilities at subregional offices.

NRM Program Capacity

The majority of staff and Board Members believed the CMA was ‘effective’ in the achievement of intermediate outcomes, such as increasing NRM awareness; increasing community participation in NRM; facilitating NRM project development; increasing community capacity in NRM; and increasing the number of partnerships with other organisations and stakeholders.

There was also agreement that the CMA over the past 12 months had provided effective regional leadership in relation to NRM. The CMA’s regional leadership score was higher than both the State and National averages. External stakeholders, including Landcare groups and other non-Government and Government stakeholders also independently judged the regional NRM leadership of the CMA as being high.

Staff and Board Members also judged their knowledge and skills in a number of key areas which included:

Natural resource management and planning: Knowledge levels were average to high and similar to the NSW State average, although lower than the National average.

Biophysical systems: Knowledge levels were average to high, although somewhat lower than the NSW State and National averages.

Economic systems: Knowledge levels were slightly below average. While knowledge of economic systems was highest amongst Board Members and administrative and business support staff, the CMA fell significantly below the State and National averages.

Social systems: Knowledge levels were slightly above ‘average’ although somewhat lower than the State and National averages.

Aboriginal culture and communities: Knowledge levels were slightly below ‘average’ and below the State and National averages.

Community engagement and partnerships: Knowledge and skills in community engagement and partnerships were average to high.

Geographic information systems: Knowledge levels were low to average, with the highest knowledge being amongst Board Members and NRM program staff

Corporate governance; grants and contract management; monitoring; evaluation; and performance reporting: Knowledge levels were slightly lower than average and significantly below State and National averages

A range of training needs that were identified, however the two most commonly reported training needs were (i) training in GIS and (ii) training in contract and project management.

When staff and Board Members were asked to identify the key barriers to achieving NRM outcomes, the two most commonly identified barriers were (i) the lack of funding and uncertainty over the level of funding and funding cycles and (ii) Government policies, strategies and processes.

There was general agreement that the CMA did not have had adequate staff numbers to meet its NRM obligations and targets.

External Relationships

The majority of staff and Board Members understood the formal relationship between the CMA and the State and Australian Governments. As might be expected, Board Members and management staff had a greater understanding of these relationships than all other staff.

The quality of the relationship with State Government agencies and departments was found to be 'average' with little change evident in the quality of this relationship over the last two years.

The majority of staff and Board Members had (i) a high level of trust in their relationship with most stakeholder organisations; (ii) effective communication with most stakeholder organisations; (iii) a belief that most stakeholder organisations had been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA; and (iv) a belief that there had been an effective partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations;

Staff and Board Members believed that the CMA had clear and well understood processes for engaging with stakeholders and that the CMA's approach to engaging with stakeholders tended to be more opportunistic than strategic.

CMA staff and Board Members agreed with the statement that 'Aboriginal people should have the right to access lands for management and traditional cultural practices'. As might be expected, Aboriginal people themselves also agreed with this statement although the majority of landholders disagreed with the statement.

The majority of staff and Board Members also agreed with the statement that "as Traditional Owners of the land, Aboriginal people possess traditional ecological knowledge which may benefit the broader NRM landscape".

Community Support Team

Staff and Board Members were equally divided in relation to whether the CMAs community support team had sufficient staff numbers to achieve its objectives; although the majority of staff and Board Members believed the community support team had the necessary skills and resources to provide stakeholders and landholders; understood the needs of stakeholders and landholders; and that the community support team had been effective in developing the capacity of stakeholders and landholders.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA) is one of 13 regional natural resource management (NRM) bodies in NSW. The CMAs were established in 2004 and each CMA has developed a Catchment Action Plan (CAP) and Investment Strategies to support the management of natural resources and achievement of NRM targets within each region.

In achieving the NRM targets as identified in the CAP, capacity building and engagement are integral activities which need to be undertaken to *enable* the achievement of core NRM targets and objectives. These enabling activities, which lead to intermediate outcomes within the program logic of NRM, include for example increasing community awareness and knowledge of NRM issues and increased participation and involvement in NRM activities. This logic not only applies to landholders and NRM stakeholders, but it also applies to the Southern Rivers CMA, where an increase in staff and organisational capacity will also better enable to achievement of NRM targets.

This project provides the basis for benchmarking the organisational capacity of the Southern Rivers CMA and will form a reference point for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of CMA capacity over the life of this and future CAPs.

2 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this project was to benchmark the organisational capacity of the Southern Rivers CMA. The approach was based on a capacity model of CMA performance (Fenton, 2004)², in which the performance of CMAs is defined in terms of (i) management capacity, (ii) NRM program capacity, and (iii) the CMAs relationships with external organisations.

The management capacity of the CMA includes for example, skills and abilities in financial management and human resources; the quality of decision making processes; leadership within the organisation; staff job satisfaction, security and workloads.

Similarly NRM program capacity, includes for example, the use and availability of NRM knowledge and technical skills; NRM leadership; training in NRM; and the use of staff resources to address NRM objectives.

While the performance of the CMA will be dependent upon management and NRM program capacity, it is also recognised that performance will be influenced by factors and processes external to the CMA, including the CMA's interaction with external organisations, including the Australian and State Government, regional stakeholders and the general community. In this context indicators include for example the level of trust in the relationship, information exchange and communication and the effectiveness of community engagement and community engagement activities.

Using the capacity model of CMA performance and through a workshop with senior staff in the CMA, a organisational target for the CMA was defined which stated that:

“From 2006, the Southern Rivers CMA will be an effective NRM organisation, with the appropriate management and NRM program capacity and external relationships to deliver NRM outcomes”

² Fenton, D.M. (2004). *Framework development: Indicators of capacity, performance and change in regional NRM bodies*. Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation, Canberra.

Although the project provides a basis for developing initiatives in relation to improving the organisational capacity of the CMA, the project focuses on benchmarking these attributes and is not an explanatory study which seeks to identify and explain the underlying causes or determinants of CMA capacity. As the first in a series of future benchmarking studies, this project provides the basis for future comparisons and the assessment of change across time.

3 METHODOLOGY

There were two core components to the project methodology which included (i) the design of the questionnaire and (ii) the distribution of the questionnaire to CMA staff and Board Members

3.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was based on (i) issues as identified and discussed in a workshop with CMA staff and other stakeholders and (ii) questions drawn from a recent national survey of regional NRM bodies (Fenton and Rickert, 2008)³. The questionnaire was designed so that it could be self completed. Furthermore the questionnaire consisted primarily of structured and close ended questions, which because they are more quantitative, are more suited to a monitoring program where comparisons and trends can be examined across time.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) included questions which focussed on:

1. The effectiveness of the CMA;
2. Management capacity;
3. NRM program capacity;
4. External relationships and partnerships;
5. The community support team; and
6. Characteristics of staff.

3.2 Questionnaire Distribution

The sampling frame consisted of staff and Board Members within the Southern Rivers CMA, which at the time the survey was undertaken in December 2007 and January 2008, included 70 staff member and 7 Board Members.

The questionnaire was developed as an Acrobat form which enabled it to be emailed as an attachment to all staff and Board Members. The form was completed using Acrobat software and was automatically returned as an Acrobat form to the consultants once completed.

Prior to the distribution of the form to all staff and Board Members, the CEO of the Southern Rivers CMA emailed all staff and Board Members of the CMA encouraging them to participate in the survey.

Over the December and January period several reminders were sent to staff and Board Members encouraging them to complete and submit the forms.

Completed forms were returned from all Board Members and 47 (67.1%) of staff.

³ Fenton, D. M. and Rickert, A.(2008). *A national baseline of the social and institutional foundations of natural resource management programs. National Land and Water Resources Audit, Canberra.*

4 INTERPRETATION OF GRAPHS

Figure 1 shows an example of the type of graph used in presenting the results of analyses.

Figure 1 shows the presentation of results in relation to mean scores. In this example the mean score is symbolised as a 'dot', with the upper and lower whiskers on either side of the mean indicating the 95% confidence interval. The 95% confidence interval indicates that, although we have estimated the population mean on the basis of sample data, we can be 95% confident the true population mean is between the upper and lower bounds that have been identified.

The graph also shows the mean for the Southern Rivers region. On the right axis of this graph the exact mean scores are presented and the sample size on which the mean was based. Sample sizes will vary as some questions were not applicable to all respondents, while in other instances the respondent may have indicated they were unable or did not wish to answer the question.

While the graph in Figure 1 shows the mean scores, a similar interpretation can be used to understand the information presented in graphs which show percentages (bar graphs). However in this case rather than mean scores being presented, the results are based on the percentage of respondents for each of the variables of interest.

In each of the graphics presented in this report, the variable of interest is compared against a number of other explanatory variables in order to further identify important relationships in the data. The range of explanatory variables used in the analysis is explained below:

Southern Rivers CMA (SRCMA): This is the mean for the CMA and includes all staff and Board Members.

Type of respondent: This provides a comparison of Board Members; management staff; NRM program and project staff; and administrative and business support staff. The classification of staff is based on their responses to Question 78 (Appendix A).

Years employed: This refers only to staff and categorises staff on the basis of the number of years they report being employed by the CMA (Question 79, Appendix A)

Staff tenure: This refers only to staff and compares those staff that have temporary and permanent appointments. (Question 81, Appendix A)

Comparative analysis: Many of the questions in this report may also have been asked in other surveys. The comparative analysis enables comparisons to be made between the responses of CMA staff and Board Members and the response of other groups or organisations. Where appropriate comparisons are shown with Landcare groups and non-Government and Government stakeholder organisations. These comparisons are drawn from surveys undertaken with Landcare groups and stakeholder organisations as part of the current benchmarking project.

In addition several of the graphics will show comparisons with State and National averages. These comparisons are drawn from the recent national survey of regional NRM bodies (Fenton and Rickert, 2008) undertaken in 2007⁴.

⁴ The national survey was based on data from 184 senior staff, 46 CEOs and 46 Chairs from regional NRM bodies throughout Australia. As the current CMA survey was primarily based on staff members, comparisons were only made with responses from senior staff in the national survey. Responses from CEO's and Chairs in the national survey were excluded from the comparative analysis. Some caution is still required in the

As indicated previously, it is important to recognise that this report provides benchmarking information against which the organisational capacity of the CMA can be monitored across time. The analyses and graphics are presented in such a way as to allow future assessments against this benchmarked information.

In terms of the direct interpretation of the current findings, it is generally only those CMA staff with detailed organisational knowledge who will be able to provide the contextual explanations for many of the findings reported in the graphics.

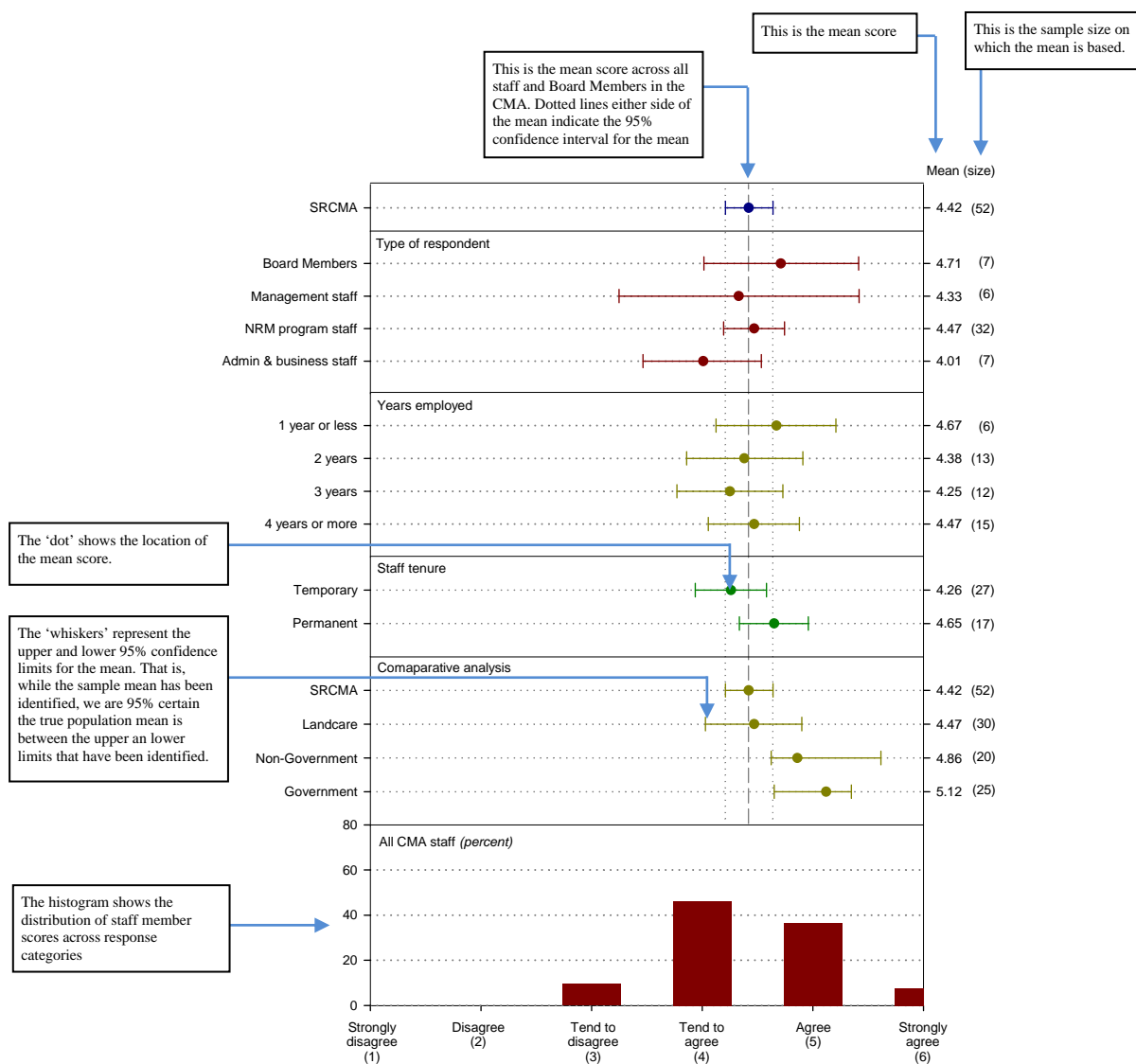


Figure 1 Example of graph used in reporting analyses

comparative analysis as comparisons are being made between all staff and Board Members of the Southern Rivers CMA with a sample of senior staff from the national survey.

5 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CMA

Staff and Board Member beliefs about the effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA was assessed in terms of (i) beliefs about progress towards the achievement of NRM targets and (ii) beliefs about the success of CMA relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders.

5.1 Achievement of NRM Targets

Figure 2 shows that CMA staff and Board Members believed the CMA was successfully progressing towards the achievement of NRM targets. This belief tended to be relatively higher amongst Board Members and management staff when compared to all other staff. In addition the belief was higher amongst CMA staff and Board Members when compared to Landcare and other non-Government and Government stakeholder organisations.

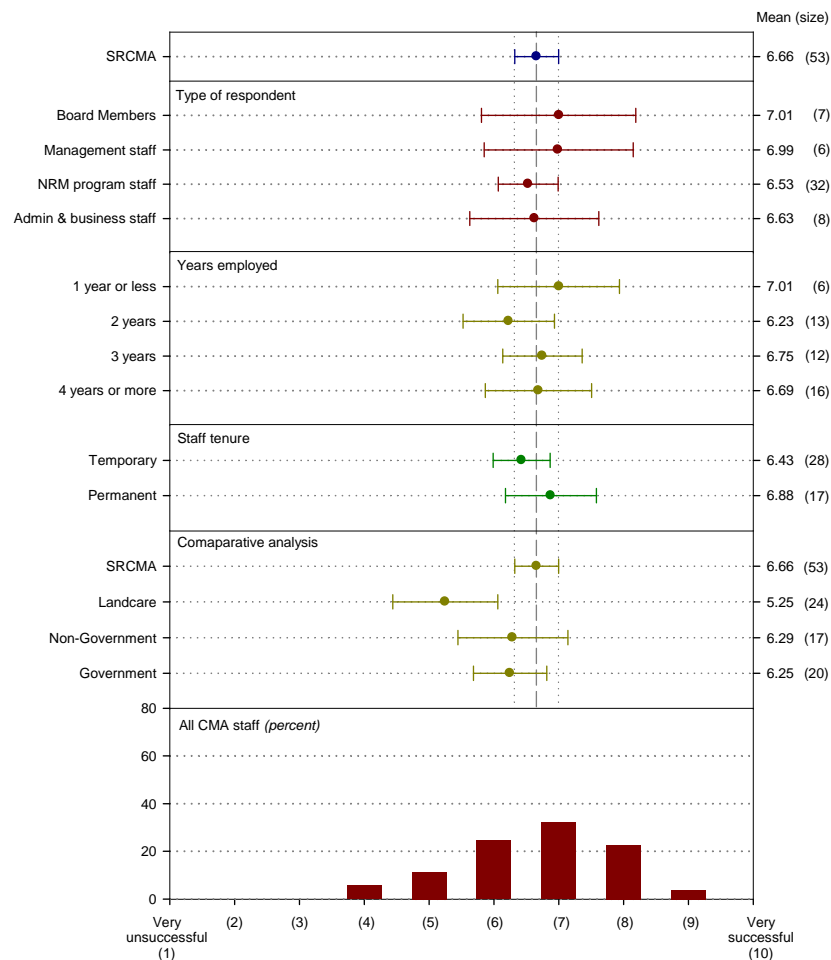


Figure 2. “Think about the CMAs progress towards and achievement of NRM targets. On a scale from one to ten, with one being very unsuccessful and ten being very successful, what score would you give the CMA?”

Figure 3 shows that two years ago most staff and Board Members would have judged progress towards the achievement of NRM targets as ‘average’, with an overall mean score of 5.26. There has clearly been significant improvement in progress towards the achievement of these targets when compared to the current time period (Figure 2) which has an average score of 6.66.

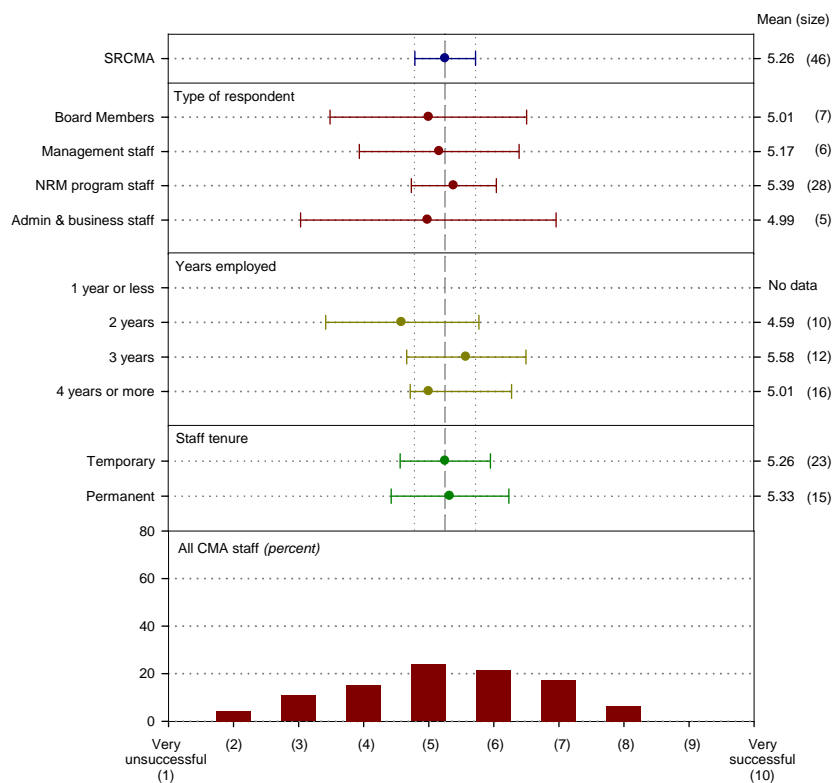


Figure 3. “If you were asked this question two years ago what score would you have given the CMA?” (NRM targets)

While the current situation (Figure 2) indicates successful progress towards the achievement of NRM targets, and there has been improvement over the past two years (Figure 3); Figure 4 indicates that the majority of staff and Board Members are optimistic about the future, believing there will be even greater progress made in the future towards the achievement of NRM targets.

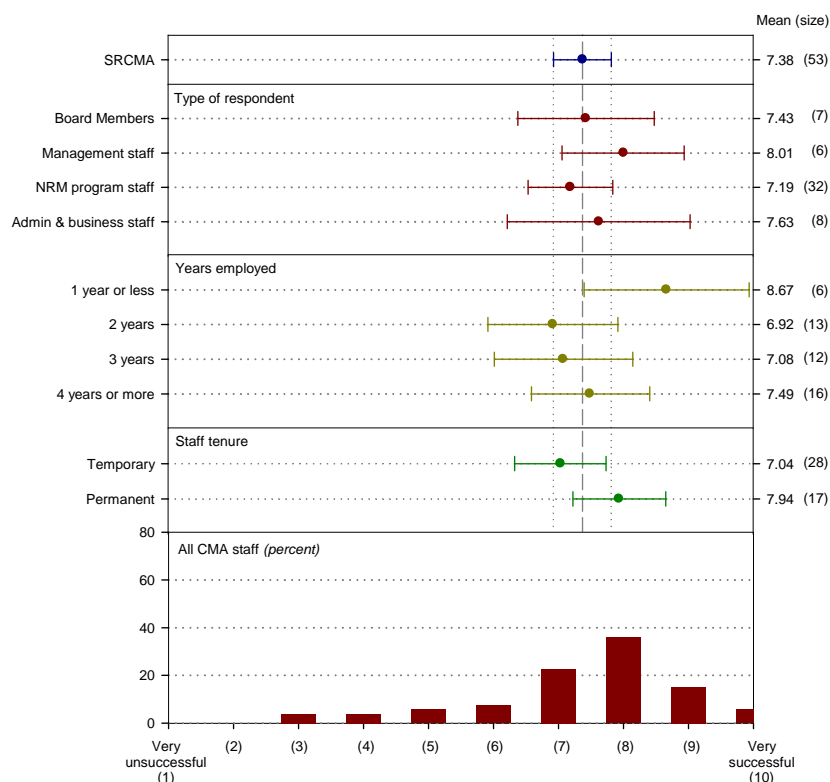


Figure 4. "In two years time how do you think you will answer the question?" (NRM targets)

5.2 Partnerships with other Organisations

Figure 5 shows that CMA staff and Board Members believed the CMA had developed successful relationships and partnerships with other external organisations.. This belief tended to be relatively higher amongst Board Members and management staff and amongst permanent rather than temporary staff.

Interestingly while the CMA believed it had developed successful relationships and partnerships with external stakeholder organisations, a sample of non-Government and Government stakeholder organisations also believed their organisations had developed successful relationships and partnerships with the CMA. The exception, as shown in Figure 5, was that Landcare groups believed their relationship with the CMA was not as successful as the CMA's judgement of its relationship with external stakeholder organisations.

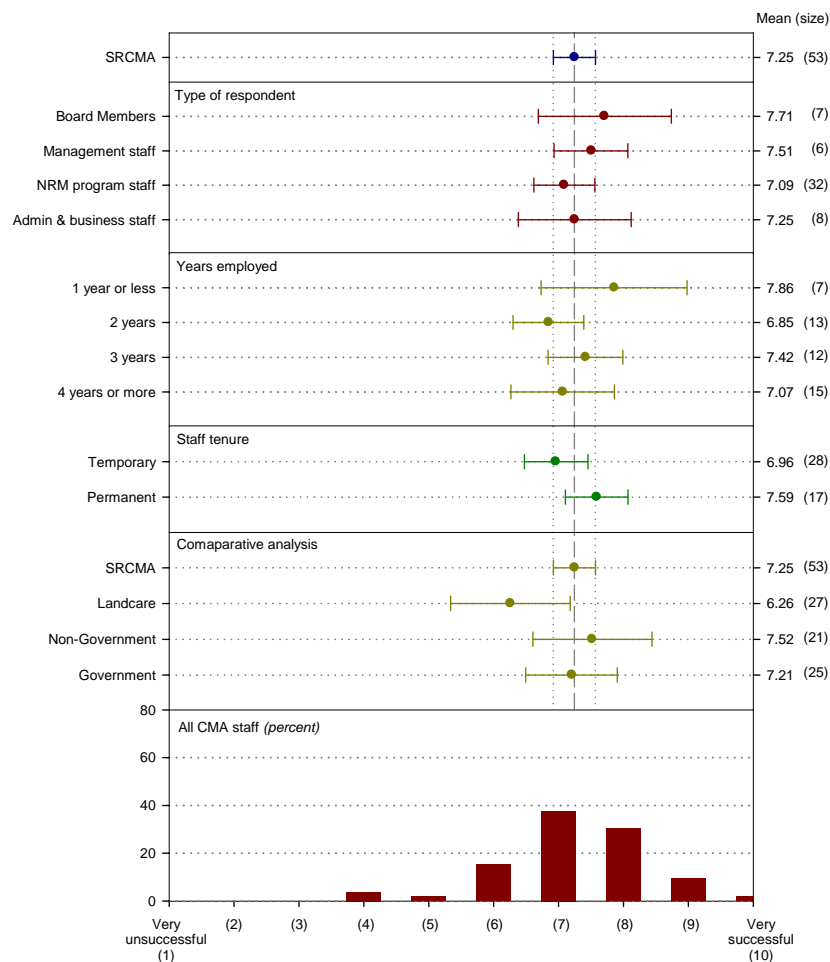


Figure 5. “Think about the CMA and the relationships and partnerships that have been developed with other organisations. On a scale from one to ten, with one being very unsuccessful and ten being very successful, what score would you give the CMA?”

Figure 6 shows that two years ago most staff and Board Members would have judged the success of relationships and partnerships with external organisations as slightly above average, with an overall mean score of 5.61. There has clearly been significant improvement in the CMAs relationship with other organisations when compared to the current time period (Figure 2) which has an average score of 7.25.

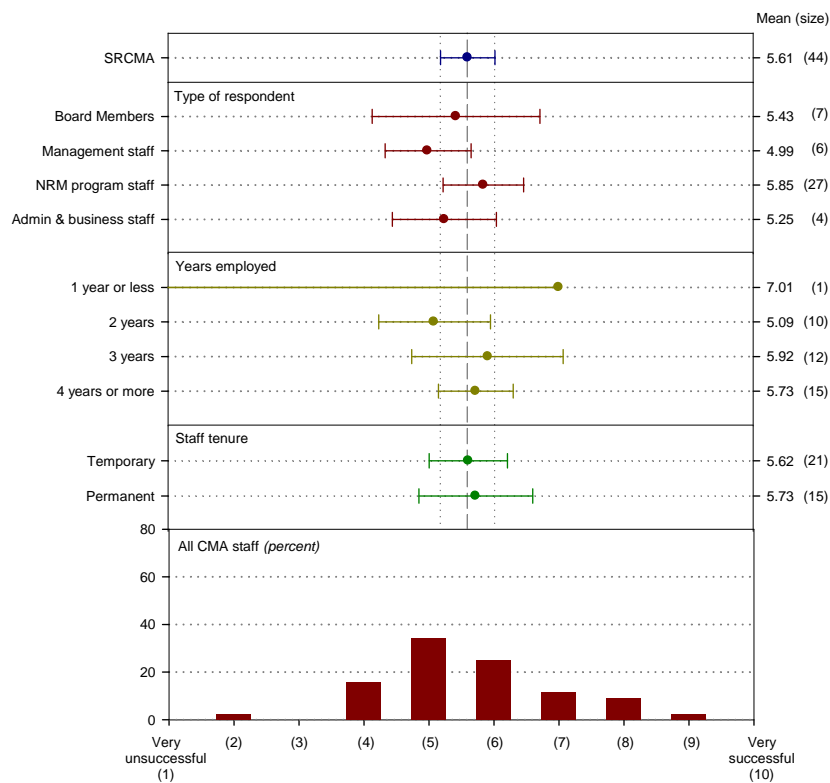


Figure 6. “In two years time how do you think you will answer the question?”
(Relationships and partnerships)

While the current situation (Figure 5) indicates the CMA has successful relationships with external organisations, and there has been improvement over the past two years (Figure 6); Figure 7 indicates that the majority of staff and Board Members are optimistic about the future, believing there will be even more successful relationships developed between the CMA and other organisations in the future.

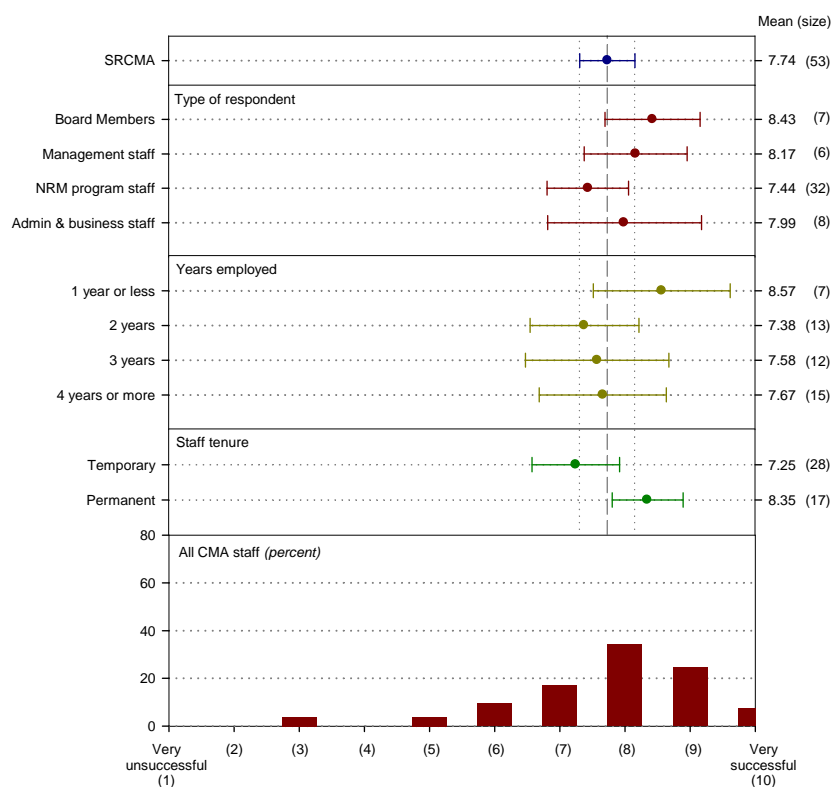


Figure 7. “In two years time how do you think you will answer the question?”
(Relationships and partnerships)

6 MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

The management capacity of the Southern Rivers CMA was assessed by examining staff and Board Member beliefs in relation to:

- A shared NRM vision amongst staff and Board Members
- Leadership within the CMA
- Decision making within the CMA
- Job satisfaction and security
- Workload and work structure
- Human resource management
- Financial management
- Equipment and physical infrastructure requirements

6.1 A Shared NRM Vision

Figure 8 shows that most staff and Board Members believe a shared NRM vision is held by most staff in the CMA. This belief is relatively strong amongst Board Members and management staff when compared to all other CMA staff. The belief also tends to be strongest amongst staff who have only been with the CMA for a relatively short period of time and amongst staff that are on permanent rather than temporary appointments. While this belief was strong across all staff and Board Members, the strength of the belief was nevertheless lower than the National and State average.

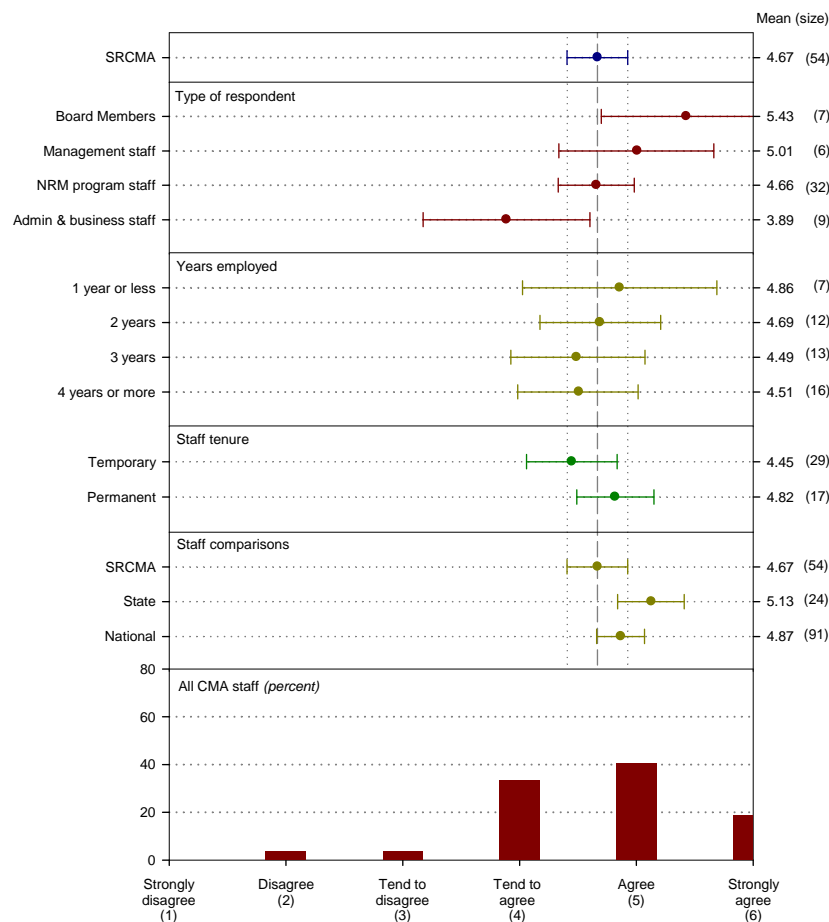


Figure 8. “A shared vision is held by most staff within the CMA”

Figure 9 shows that if the same question about a shared vision amongst staff were to have been asked two years ago, the current situation (Figure 8) would be a slight improvement in comparison to two years ago. For instance two years ago the mean score would have been judged by all staff and Board Members to have been 4.42, while currently the mean score is 4.67.

When comparing Figures 8 and 9 and the greater belief in a shared vision, Board Members and management staff show the most significant change when compared to all other CMA staff.

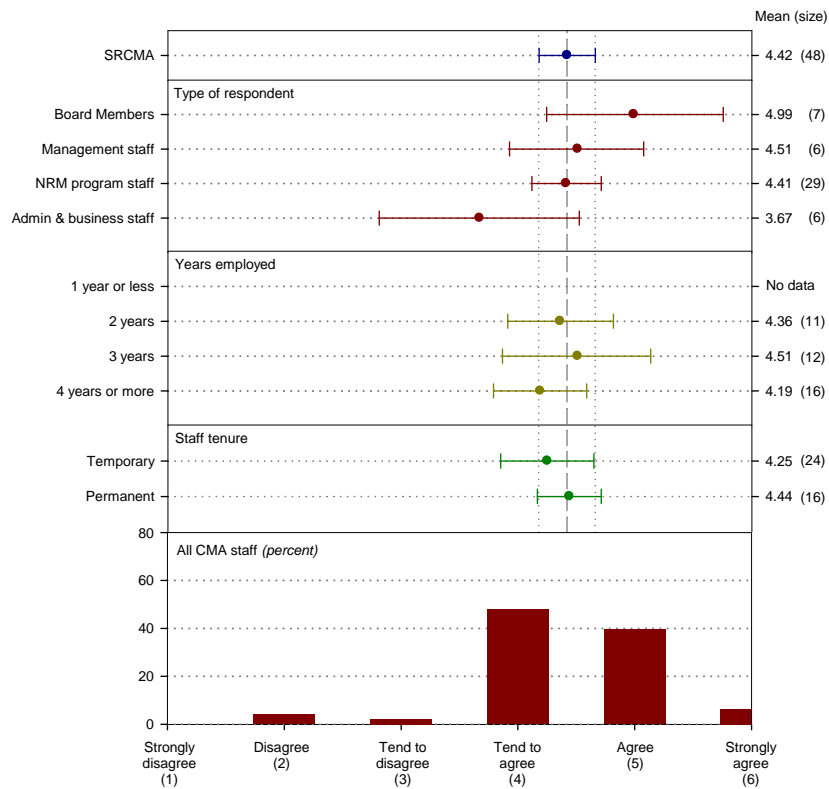


Figure 9. "If you were asked this question two years ago how would you have answered it?" (A shared vision is held by most staff within the CMA)"

Figure 10 shows that the majority of staff and Board Members believe that a shared NRM vision is held by most Board Members. This view is very strong amongst Board Members themselves and relatively less so amongst all other CMA staff.

In addition the strength of agreement with this belief amongst staff and Board Members is marginally higher than the State and National average.

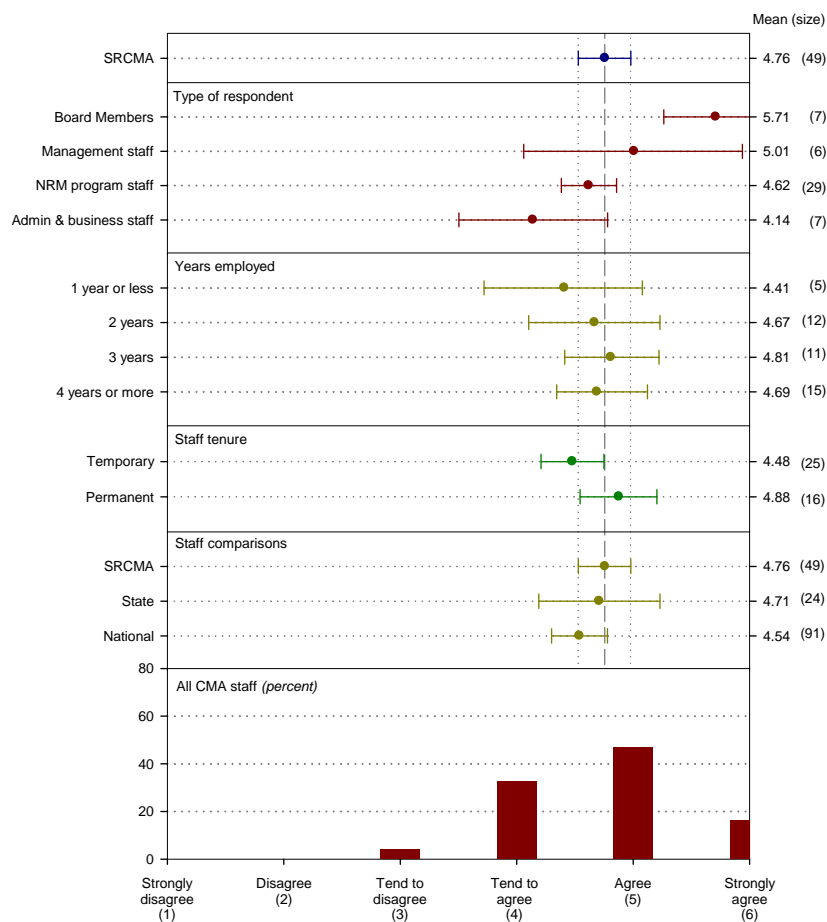


Figure 10. “A shared vision is held by most Board Members”

As shown in Figure 11, the majority of staff and Board Members believed both staff and Board Members held the same shared NRM vision. Again Board Members were more likely to hold this view than other staff within the CMA, with administrative and business support staff holding a very different view on this issue when compared to all other staff and Board Members.

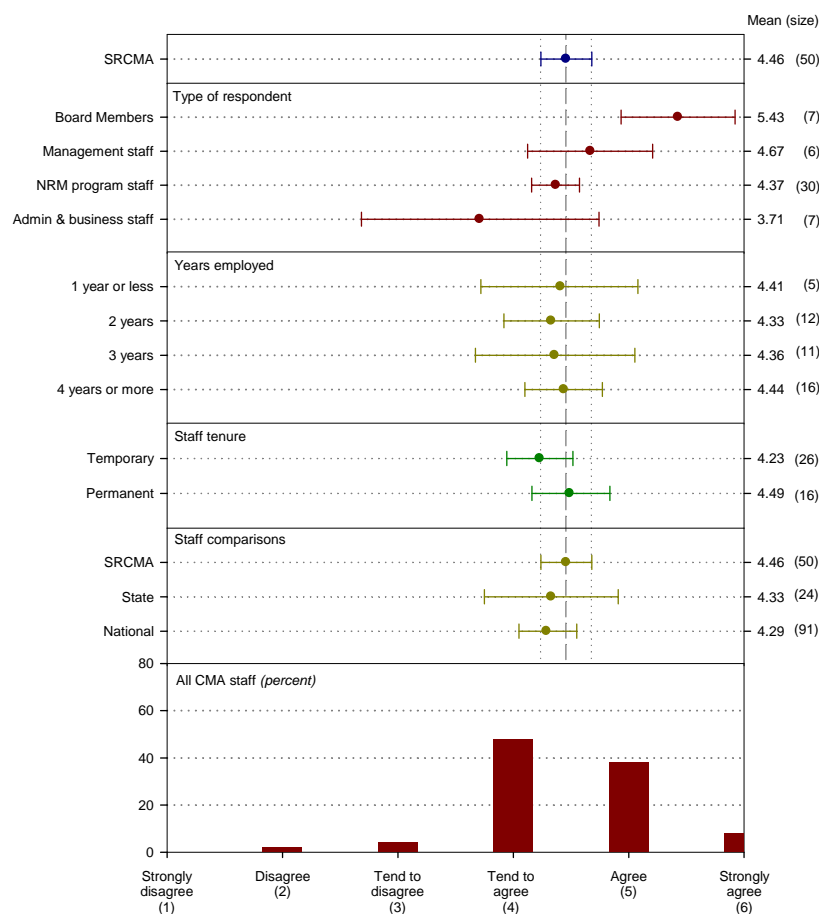


Figure 11. “To what extent do you agree with the statement that, ‘Within the last 12 months staff and Board Members have had the same shared NRM vision’?”

Judgements about the working relationship between staff and Board Members are shown in Figure 12. Board Members clearly believed the working relationship between staff and Board Members to be far closer than did CMA staff; although overall all staff and Board Members believed the working relationship to be ‘close’ as opposed to ‘remote’.

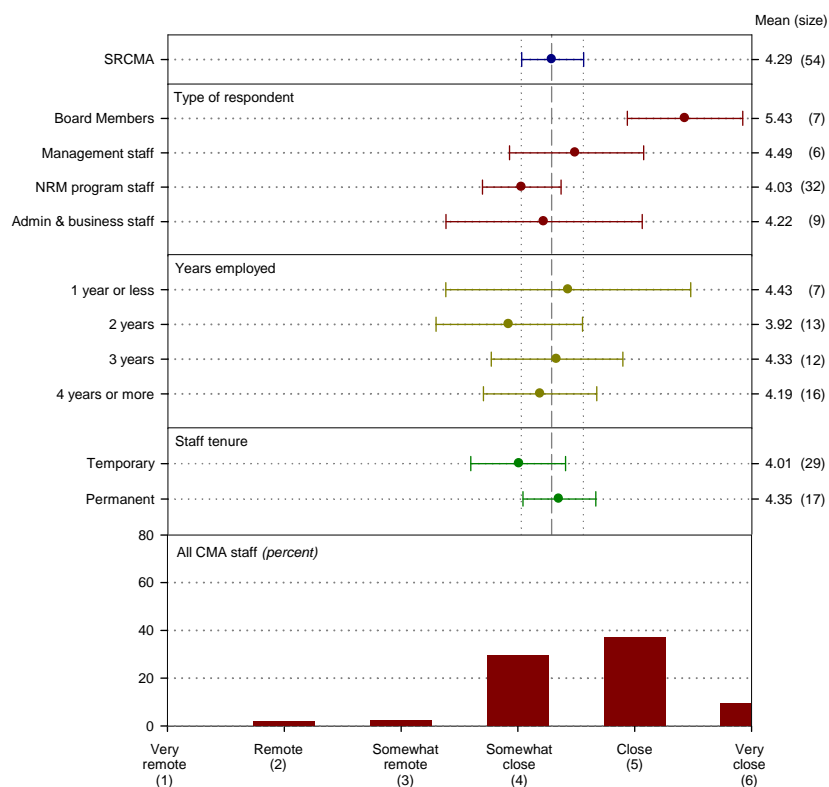


Figure 12. “I would describe the working relationship between staff and the CMA Board as...”

6.2 Leadership within the CMA

The questionnaire included seven questions about the leadership capacity of senior staff within the CMA. All staff and Board Members were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the following seven statements about senior staff within the CMA over the past 12 months.

1. [They]...have worked to achieve the objectives of the organisation
2. [They]...have made well informed decisions
3. [They]...have provided a clear strategic direction for the organisation
4. [They]...have worked well with others outside the organisation
5. [They]...have communicated well with staff within the organisation
6. [They]...have been flexible and adaptive in their decision making
7. [They]...have provided consistent messages to staff in the CMA

An analysis of the seven belief statements about senior staff within the CMA indicated the scores to be highly correlated⁵ and that essentially each of the belief statements were measuring the same underlying concept. For this reason a composite index of CMA leadership was formed by summing and averaging across all seven belief statements.

Figure 13 shows the composite leadership score for senior staff within the CMA. It is clear that the majority of staff and Board Members either 'tend to agree' or 'agree' with each of the seven statements forming the composite. In addition, and as identified earlier, Board Members and management staff judge the leadership capacity of senior staff higher than other staff within the CMA.

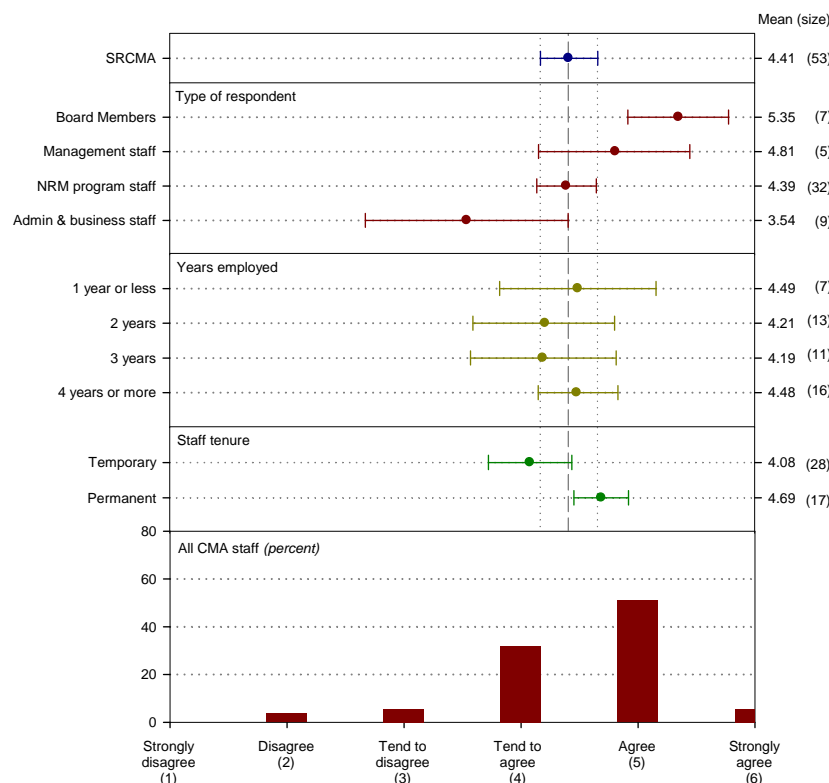


Figure 13. Composite measure of CMA leadership capacity

⁵ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.94.

6.3 Corporate reputation of the CMA

Although only indirectly related to leadership, all staff and Board Members were asked to judge the corporate reputation of the CMA. Figure 14 shows that the corporate reputation of the CMA amongst staff and Board Members to be either ‘moderate’ or ‘moderately-high’. Again Board Members and management staff tend to judge this attribute higher than other staff, as do permanent relative to temporary staff.

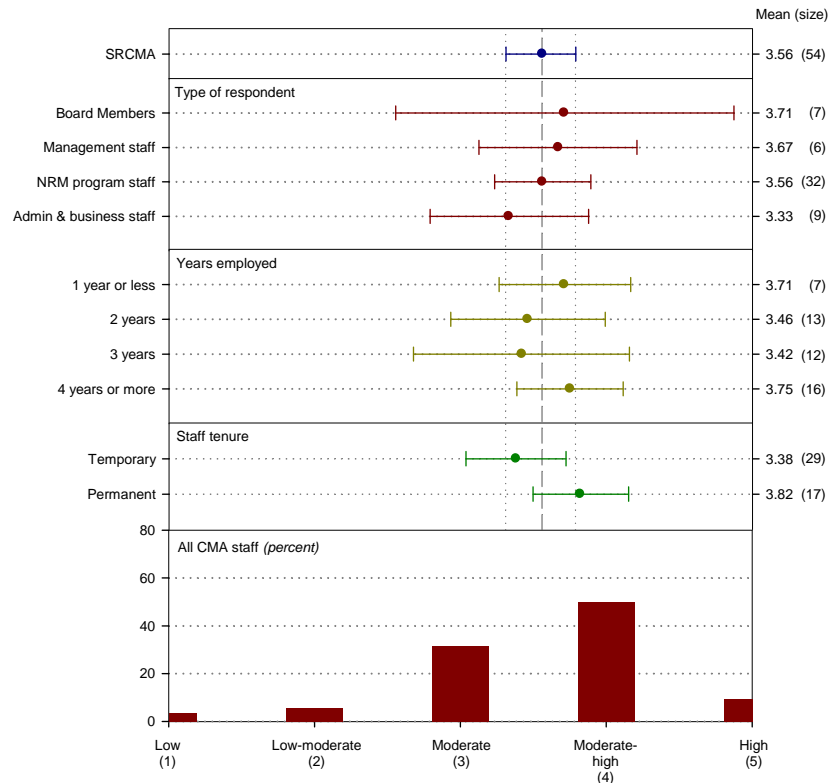


Figure 14. “I think the corporate reputation of the CMA in the region is...”

6.4 Decision Making within the CMA

The appropriateness and adequacy of decision making processes within the CMA was assessed through four questions which included:

1. The CMA has the appropriate decision making processes in place to achieve its objectives.
2. An appropriate mix of people are involved in decision making within the CMA
3. The decision making processes within the CMA are working well
4. When the CMA makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups.

An analysis of the four belief statements indicated the scores to be highly correlated⁶ and that each of the belief statements were measuring the same underlying concept. For this reason a composite index of CMA decision making was formed by summing and averaging across all four belief statements.

Figure 15 indicates the majority of staff and Board Members believe the decision making processes within the CMA to be appropriate and working well. This is particularly the case amongst Board Members and staff with permanent appointments. However, the CMA scores somewhat lower on this measure when compared to the State and National average.

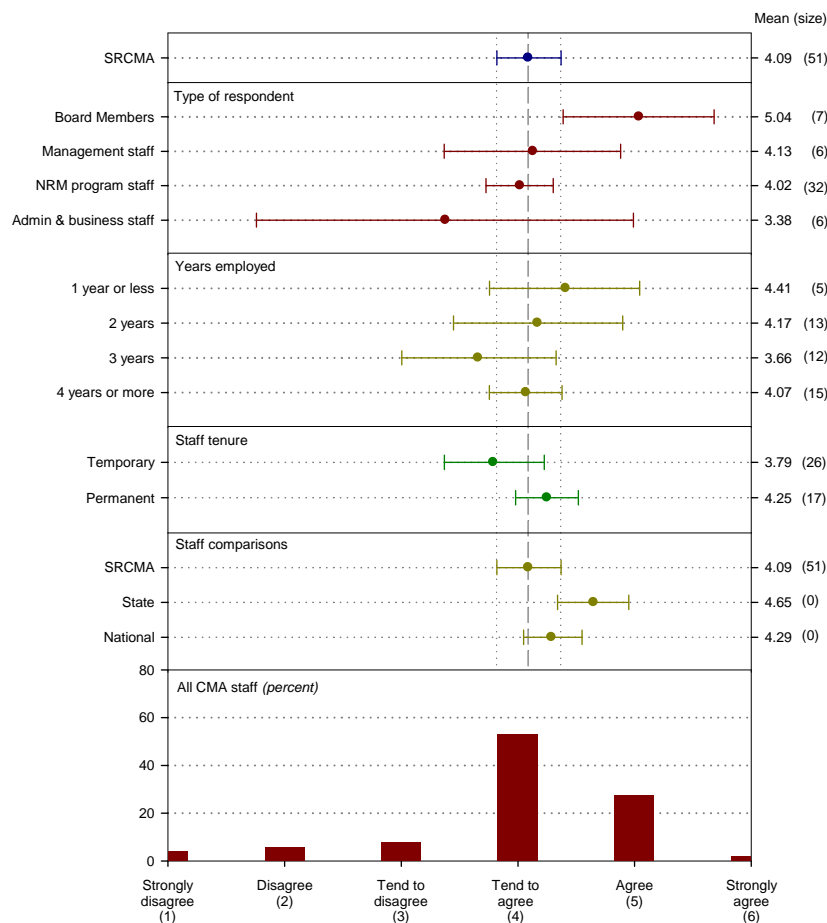


Figure 15. Composite measure of CMA decision making

⁶ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.94.

Figure 16 shows staff and Board Member beliefs about the organisational structure within the CMA. While the majority of staff and Board Members considered the organisational structure of the CMA to be flat, those staff members recently appointed to the CMA were more likely to consider the structure to be hierarchical.

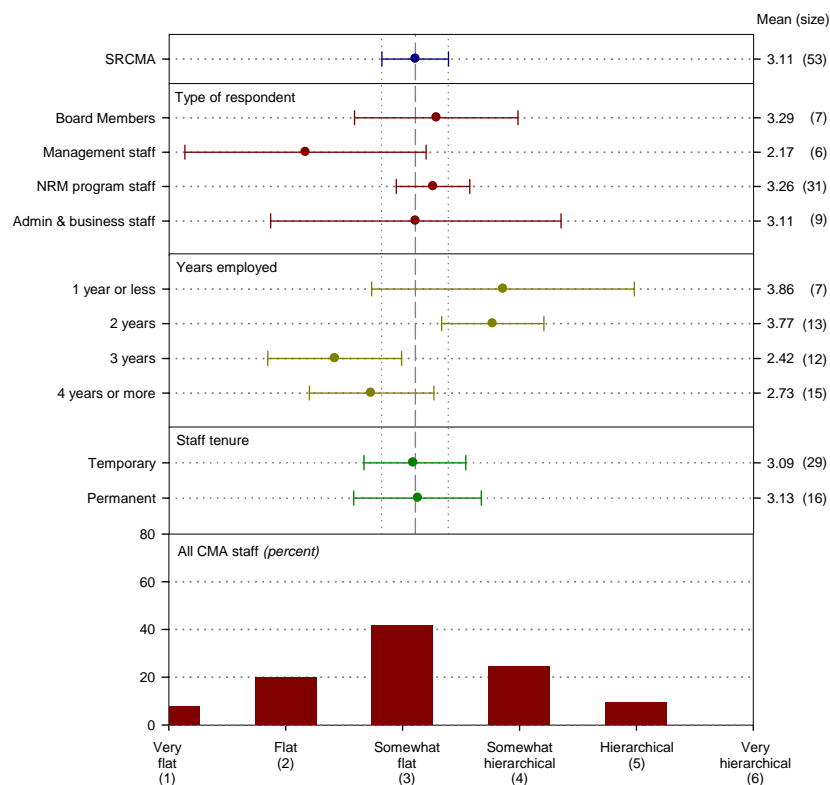


Figure 16. “In terms of its operation, I would say this CMA has an organisational structure which is...”

6.5 Job Satisfaction and Security

Two questionnaire items assessed job satisfaction and staff morale. These items included:

1. Over the last 12 months my level of job satisfaction has been...
2. Over the last 12 months I would say my morale has been...

Both questionnaire items were found to be highly correlated⁷ and as such a composite index was formed by adding and averaging across both scales.

Figure 17 shows job satisfaction and morale to be moderate to moderately-high across CMA staff and Board Members. However relatively lower job satisfaction was found amongst administration and business staff; amongst staff who had been with the CMA for three years and amongst temporary as compared to permanent staff.

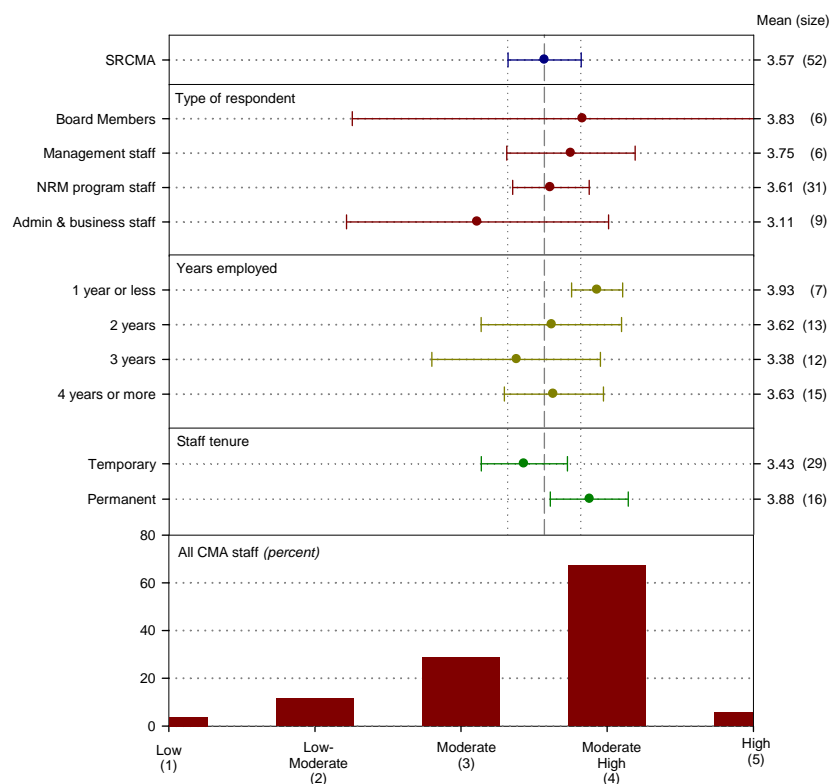


Figure 17. Composite measure of job satisfaction and morale

⁷ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.89

All staff and Board Members also made a judgement about the level of job satisfaction and staff morale as it was two years ago. As in the previous question (Figure 17) job satisfaction and morale were found to be highly correlated and as such a composite measure was formed⁸.

When comparing Figure 17 and 18, the level of job satisfaction two years ago was judged by all staff and Board Members to be higher than it was today. For instance, the overall mean score given to job satisfaction and morale for two years ago was 3.85, while the current mean for job satisfaction and morale was 3.57.

A comparison of Figure 17 and 18 also shows that the relatively lower levels of job satisfaction and morale that are currently evident, when compared to two years ago, occurs across all staff and Board Members.

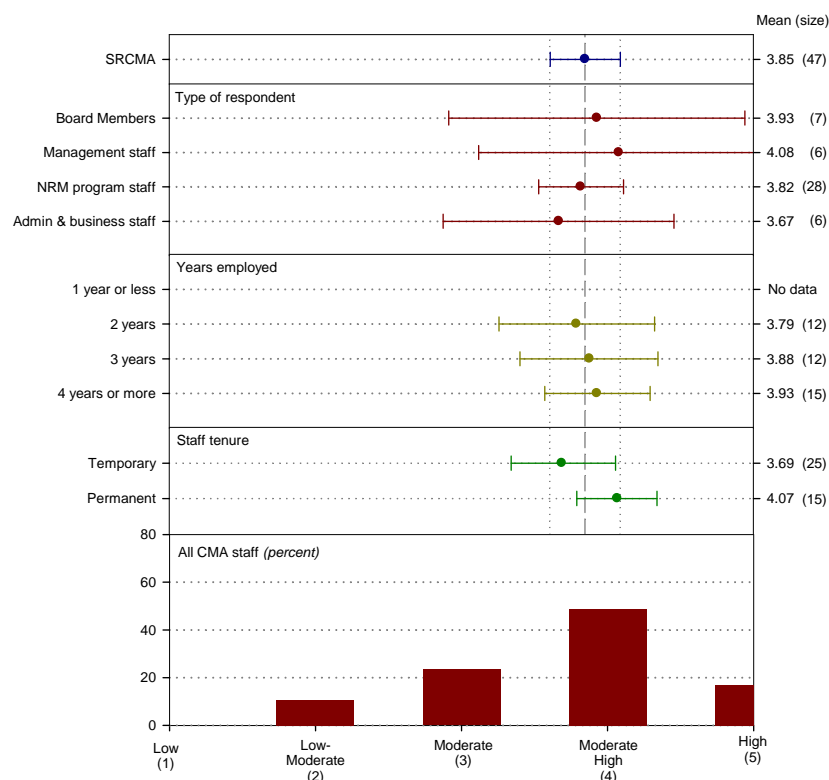


Figure 18. Composite measure of job satisfaction and morale (Comparison to two years ago)

⁸ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.87

All staff made a judgement about their perceived level of job security. Figure 19 shows that overall the level of perceived job security amongst staff is slightly below 'moderate'. It is particularly low amongst administration and business staff; amongst those staff employed by the CMA for less than two years; and as might be expected amongst temporary staff within the organisation.

As shown in Figure 19, the overall level of perceived job security across all staff within the CMA is certainly influenced by the number of temporary staff (1.99) as compared to permanent staff (4.24) within the organisation.

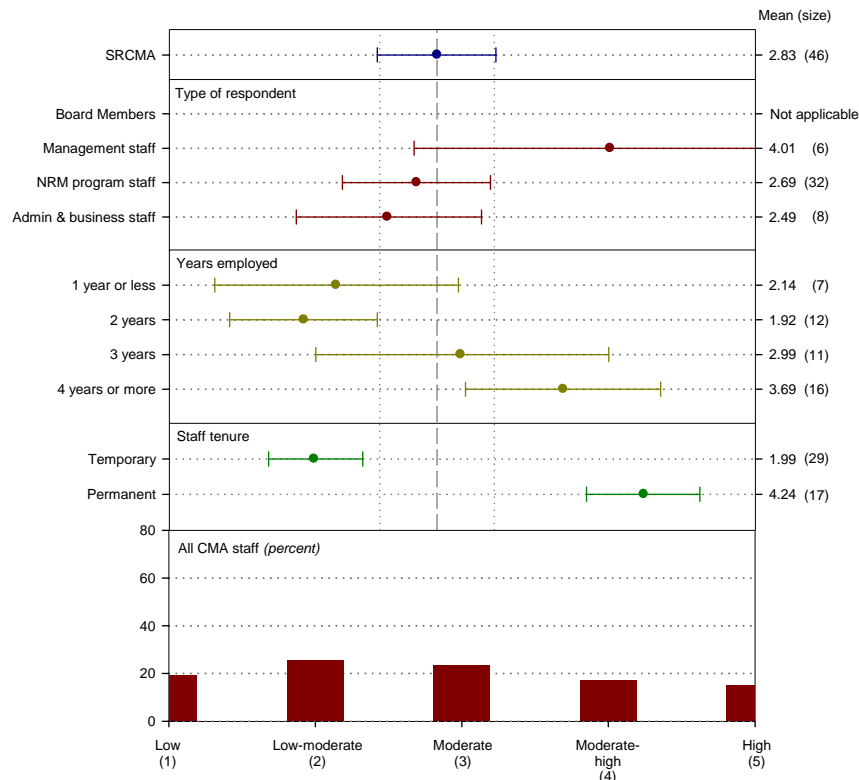


Figure 19. I feel that the level of job security that I have is... (staff only)

6.6 Workload and Work Structure

All staff and Board Members were asked to identify the percentage of time they spent in an average week on four types of activities which included:

1. NRM program activities (inc. planning, on ground support, administration & reporting)
2. Partnership development and support (inc. engagement and stakeholder relationships)
3. General office management and administration
4. Management activities (inc. staff supervision)

As shown in Figure 20, across all staff and Board Members, in an average working week 48% of their time is spent on NRM program activities; 24% on general office and administration; 22% on partnership development and support and the remaining 6% on management activities.

As might be expected Board Members spent two thirds (67%) of their time on partnership development and support; NRM program staff spent 60% of their time on NRM program activities and administration and business support staff spent 64% of their time on general office management and administration.

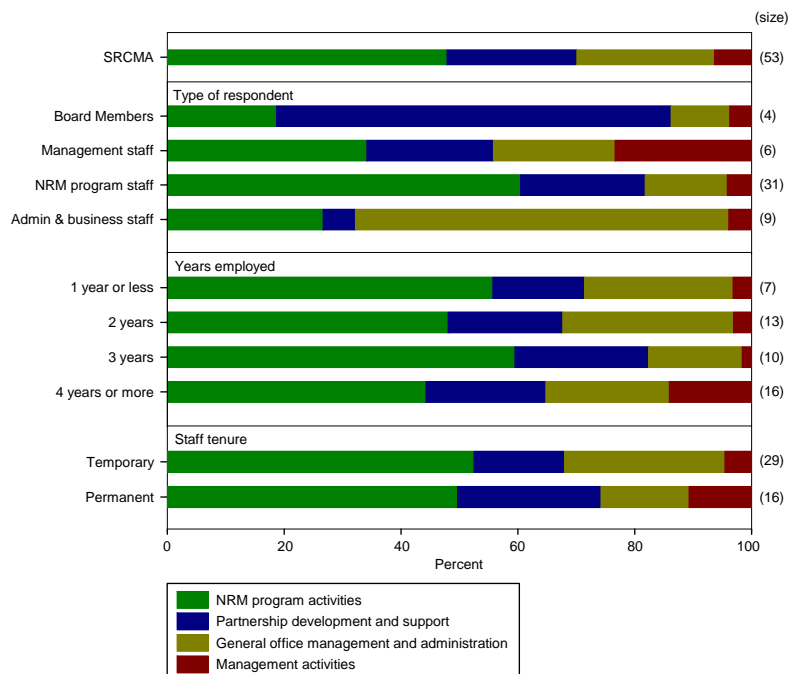


Figure 20. In an average working week, what percentage of your time would you spend on the following activities....

In addition to identifying the percentage of time they spent on current activities, all staff and Board Members were asked to identify the amount of time they believed *they should* be spending on these activities (Appendix A).

Figure 21 shows the discrepancy between time spent on current activities and the time they believed they should be spending on these activities. A positive percentage indicates a belief that more time should be spent on these activities, while a negative percentage indicates a belief that less time should be spent on these activities.

The magnitude of the discrepancy is not large, with the highest being amongst management staff who believe they should be spending approximately 7% more of their time on partnership development and support and less time on general office management and administration (Figure 21).

Figure 21 clearly shows an overall pattern with staff and Board Members believing they should spend more time on partnership development and support and less time on general office management and administration.

Interesting Figure 21 also shows that those who have been employed by the CMA for less than two years believe they should spend less time on NRM program activities, while those who have been employed by the CMA for longer than two years believe they should spend more time on these activities.

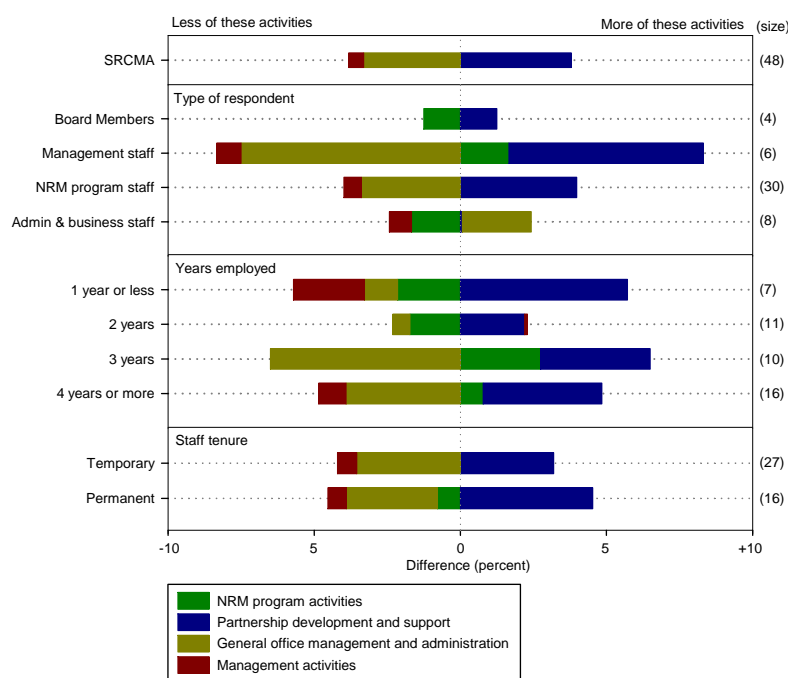


Figure 21. Difference in current time on activities and time they believe they should be undertaking on these activities

6.7 Human Resource Management

Figure 22 shows that across all staff and Board Members within the CMA, the human resource management systems that the CMA has in place were regarded as adequate.

While this was certainly the case amongst Board Members and management staff, NRM program staff and those staff from administration and business support were relatively less inclined to believe that the human resource management systems were adequate.

Figure 22 also shows that the CMA is judged lower in terms of an adequate human resource management system when compared to both State and National averages.

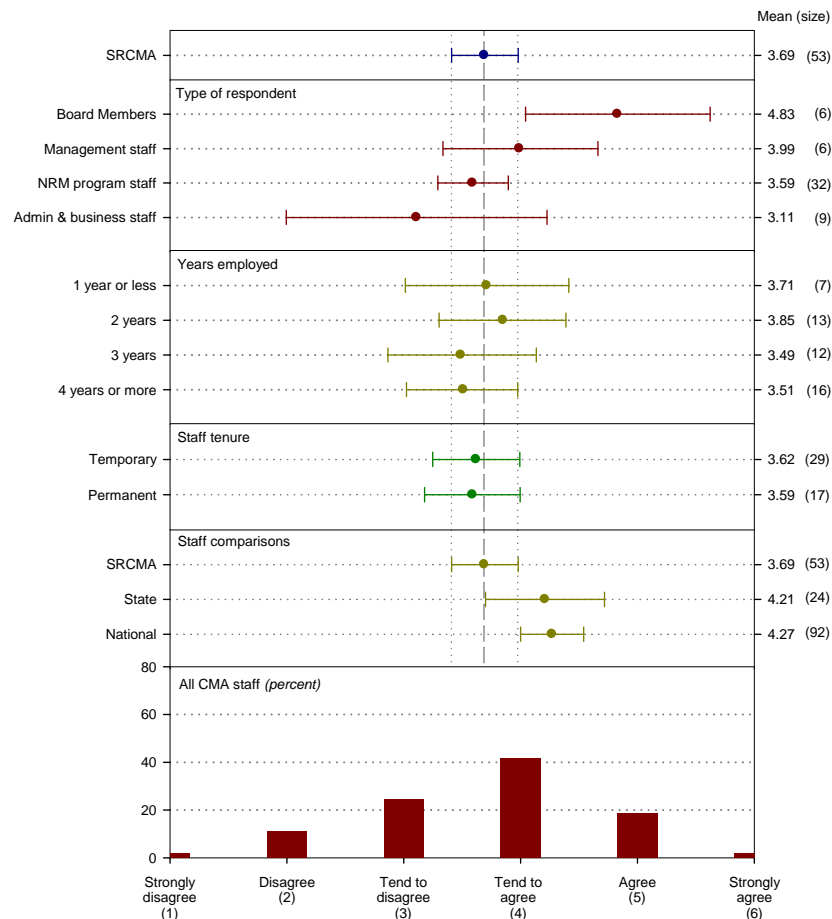


Figure 22. “The CMA has adequate human resource management systems, policies and processes in place to achieve good human resource management practices.”

6.8 Financial Management

Figure 22 shows that the financial management systems within the CMA were judged as adequate by staff and Board Members. However, Figure 22 also shows considerable variation in this judgement amongst Board Members, management staff and administration and support staff.

As was the case in relation to human resource management systems, staff and Board Members did not judge the financial management systems within the CMA as high as other regional NRM bodies at the State and National level (Figure 22),

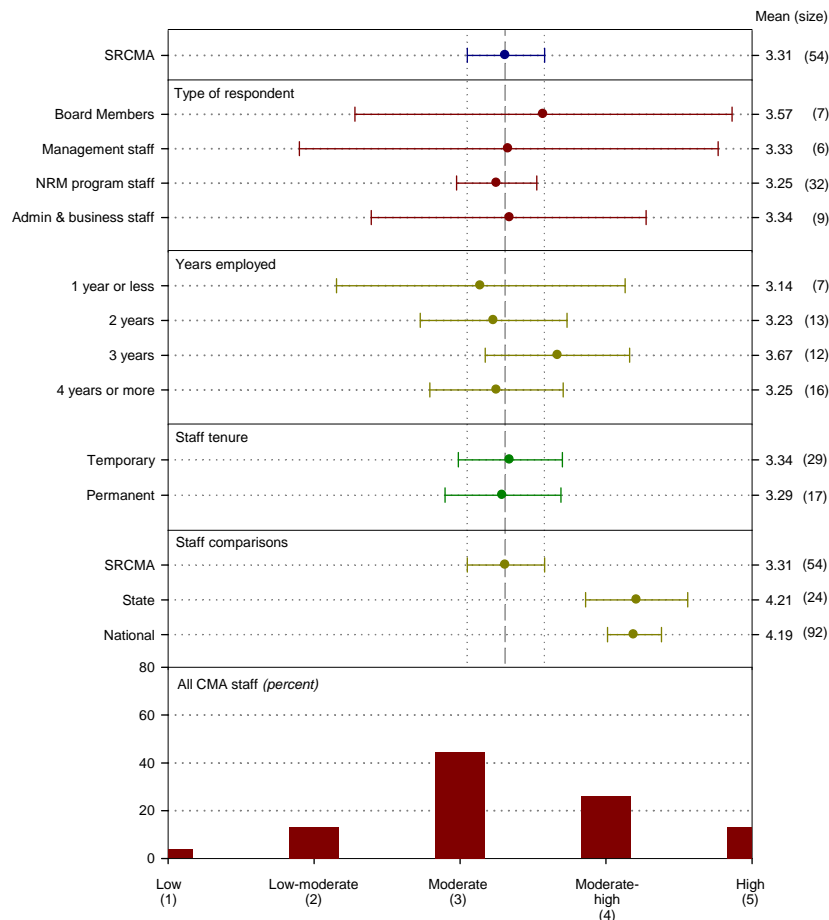


Figure 22. “What level of confidence do you currently have, that the CMA has adequate financial management systems, policies and processes in place to effectively achieve good financial management outcomes?”

Staff and Board Members were also asked to make a judgement about how adequate the financial management systems of the CMA were two years ago (Figure 23).

A comparison of Figure 22 and 23 shows there has been a significant improvement amongst staff and Board Members over the past two years in their beliefs about the adequacy of the CMAs financial management systems.

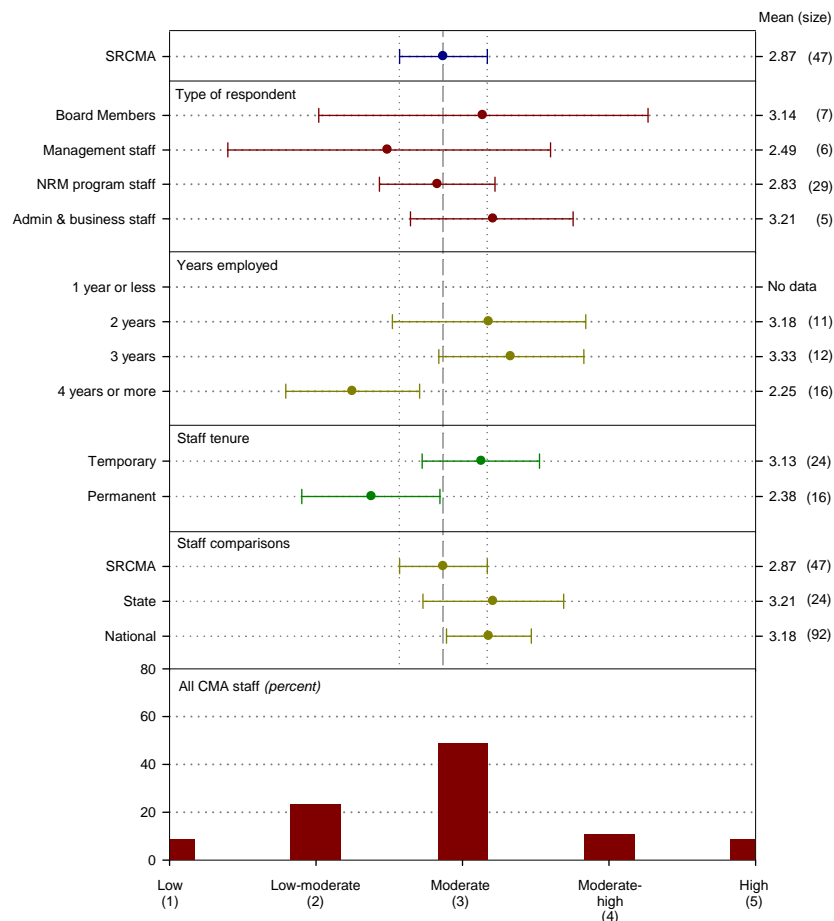


Figure 23. “If you were asked this question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

6.9 Equipment and Physical Infrastructure Requirements

All staff and Board Members were asked to identify if they believed, in undertaking their work for the CMA, there was a need for any additional equipment or physical infrastructure. Table 1 shows the three most commonly reported issues were (i) the need for remote data entry, such as PDAs; (ii) improved office space, including the size of offices, seating and the need for air conditioners; and (iii) the need for video conferencing facilities at each of the sub regional offices.

Table 1. 'In your work with the CMA, is there any additional equipment or physical infrastructure required?'

Equipment or infrastructure	Count	Percent
Remote data entry - PDAs	5	25.0
Improve office space (size, seating, AC)	4	20.0
Video conferencing facilities at each office	4	20.0
More storage for space for materials and field equipment	3	15.0
Remote email access (i.e., Blackberry)	3	15.0
More utes (inc. tray top)	2	10.0
Cameras	1	5.0
Clinometers	1	5.0
GIS system	1	5.0
Helicopter	1	5.0
Improve display materials for field days and workshops	1	5.0
Improved mobile phone reception	1	5.0
Large monitors for GIS work	1	5.0
Laser level	1	5.0
Lifting and carrying equipment	1	5.0
More laptops	1	5.0
Relevant promotional materials	1	5.0
Total	20	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table. A respondent may provide multiple responses and as such be included in multiple rows of the table. To avoid double counting table columns should not be summed.

Source: EBC (2008)

7 NRM PROGRAM CAPACITY

NRM program capacity of the Southern Rivers CMA was assessed by examining staff and Board Member beliefs in relation to:

- The achievement of intermediate outcomes (increasing NRM awareness; participation; project development; community NRM capacity; partnerships);
- NRM knowledge and skills;
- Staffing requirements to meet NRM targets and objectives;
- NRM leadership;
- Training needs;
- Additional key NRM issues that need to be addressed; and
- Barriers to achieving NRM objectives

7.1 Achievement of Intermediate Outcomes

The achievement of intermediate outcomes included all those activities and outcomes which enabled the achievement of key NRM outcomes and targets. Intermediate outcomes were represented in five beliefs statements, where staff and Board Members were asked to indicate during the last 12 months how effective the CMA had been in...

1. ...increasing awareness of NRM;
2. ...increasing community participation in NRM;
3. ...facilitating NRM project development;
4. ...increasing community capacity in NRM; and
5. ...increasing partnerships with other organisations and stakeholders

An analysis of the five belief statements indicated the scores to be highly correlated⁹ and that each of the belief statements were measuring the same underlying concept. For this reason a composite index of the 'achievement of intermediate outcomes' was formed by summing and averaging across all five belief statements.

⁹ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.84.

Figure 24 shows that the majority of staff and Board Members believed the CMA was either ‘somewhat effective’ or ‘effective’ in the achievement of intermediate outcomes. This belief tended to be highest amongst Board Members when compared to CMA staff.

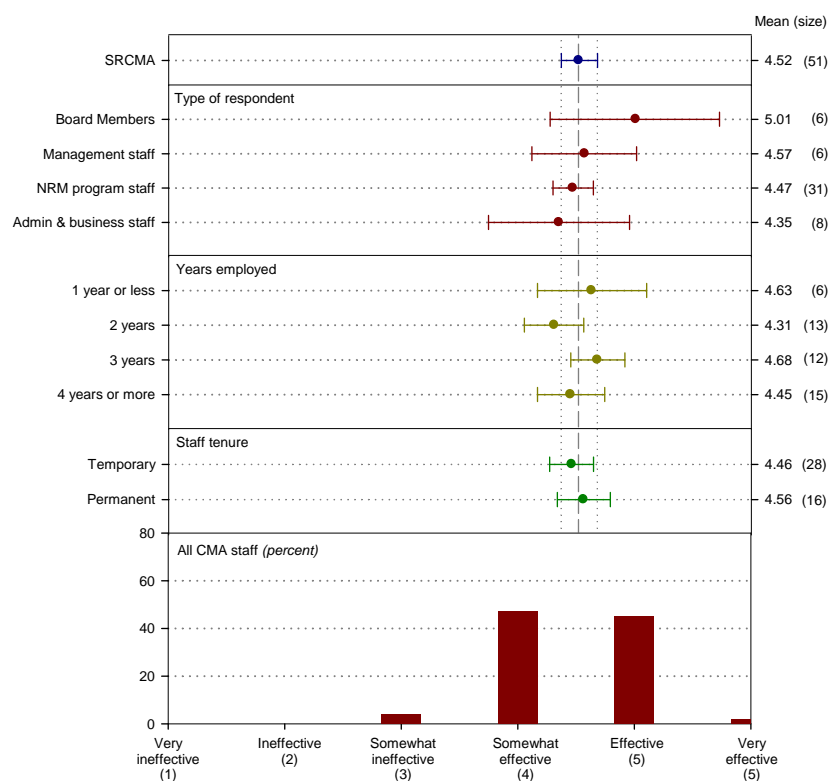


Figure 24. The achievement of intermediate outcomes (composite measure)

7.2 Knowledge and Skills

Figure 25 shows the level of knowledge and skills amongst staff and Board Members in relation to natural resource management and planning. Knowledge and skills in this area is clearly highest amongst permanent staff and those staff who have had a relatively long term appointment with the CMA.

Overall the level of knowledge and skills in relation to natural resource management and planning within the CMA is moderate to high and similar to the NSW State average, although lower than the National average.

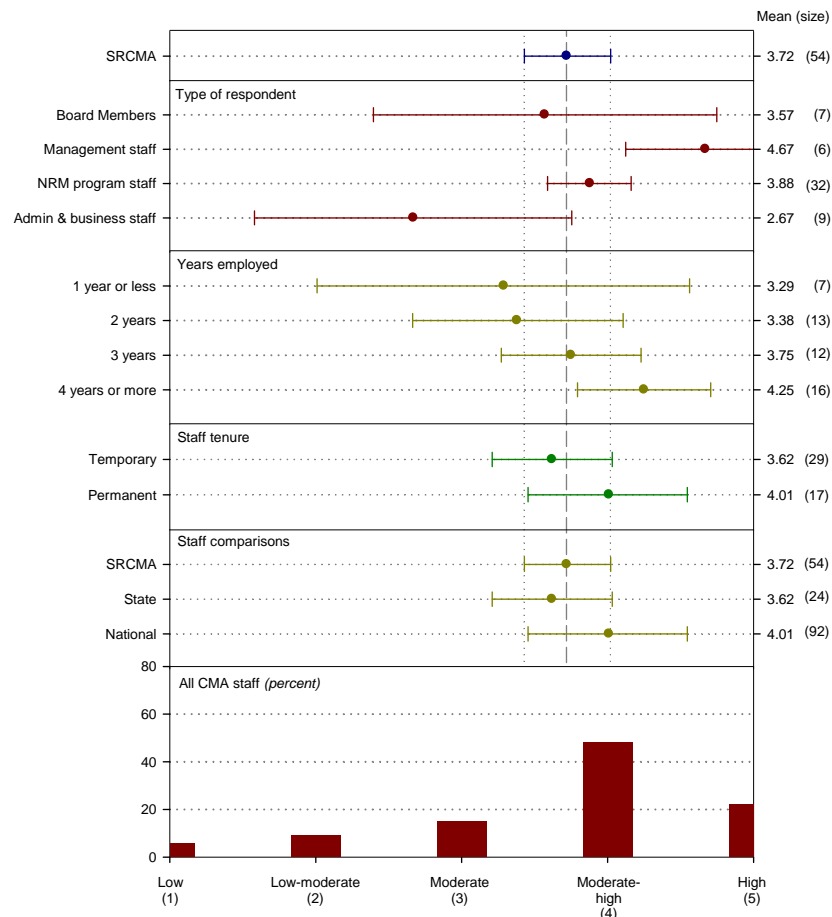


Figure 25. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in natural resource management and planning is...”

Note: The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body.

Staff and Board Member knowledge of biophysical systems is shown in Figure 26. This type of knowledge is highest amongst management and NRM program staff, amongst more permanent staff and amongst staff who have been employed by the CMA for three or more years.

While CMA knowledge of biophysical systems is moderate to high, it is nevertheless somewhat lower than both the NSW State and National averages.

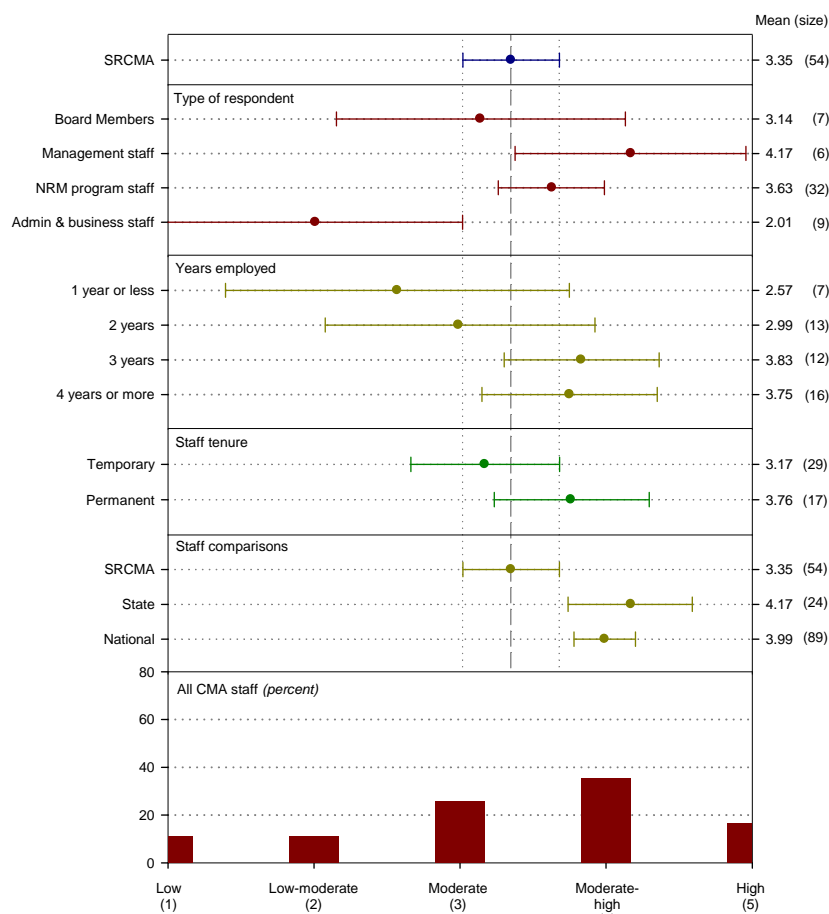


Figure 26. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in biophysical systems is...”
 Note: The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body.

The level of knowledge of economic systems amongst staff and Board Members was judged to be slightly lower than ‘moderate’ (Figure 27). While knowledge of economic systems was highest amongst Board Members and administrative and business support staff, the CMA fell significantly below the State and National averages in relation to knowledge of economic systems.

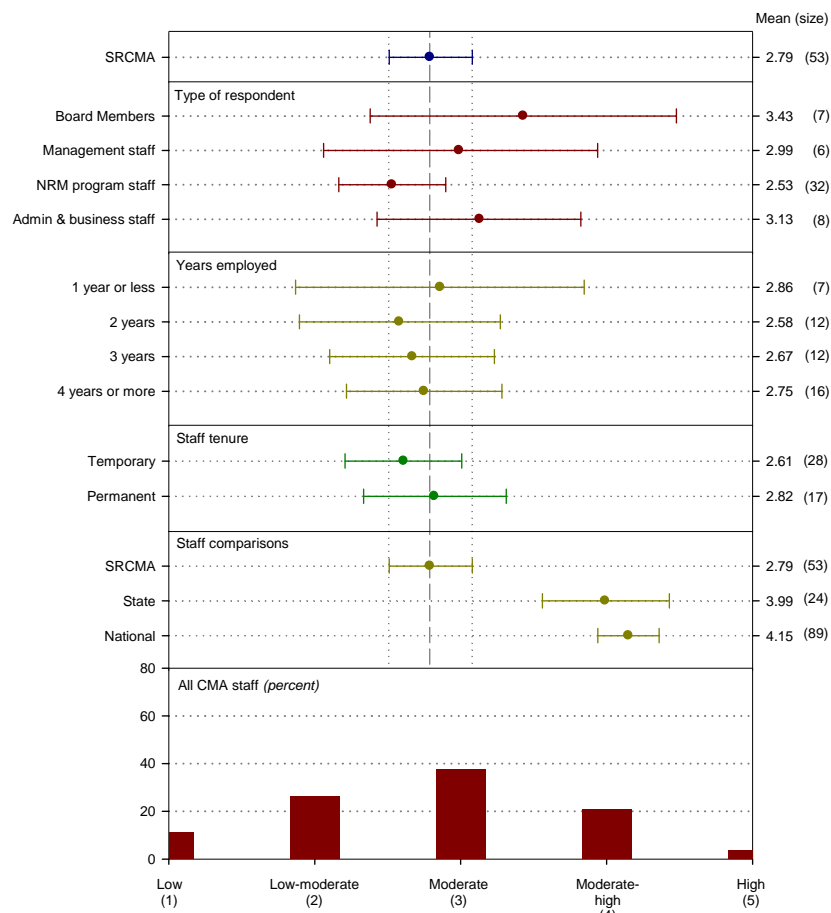


Figure 27. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in economic systems is...”
 Note: The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body.

Figure 28 shows knowledge of social systems within the CMA to be slightly above ‘moderate’, with permanent staff and Board Members having the highest relative knowledge of social systems in the CMA. Knowledge of social systems within the CMA was somewhat lower than the State and National average.

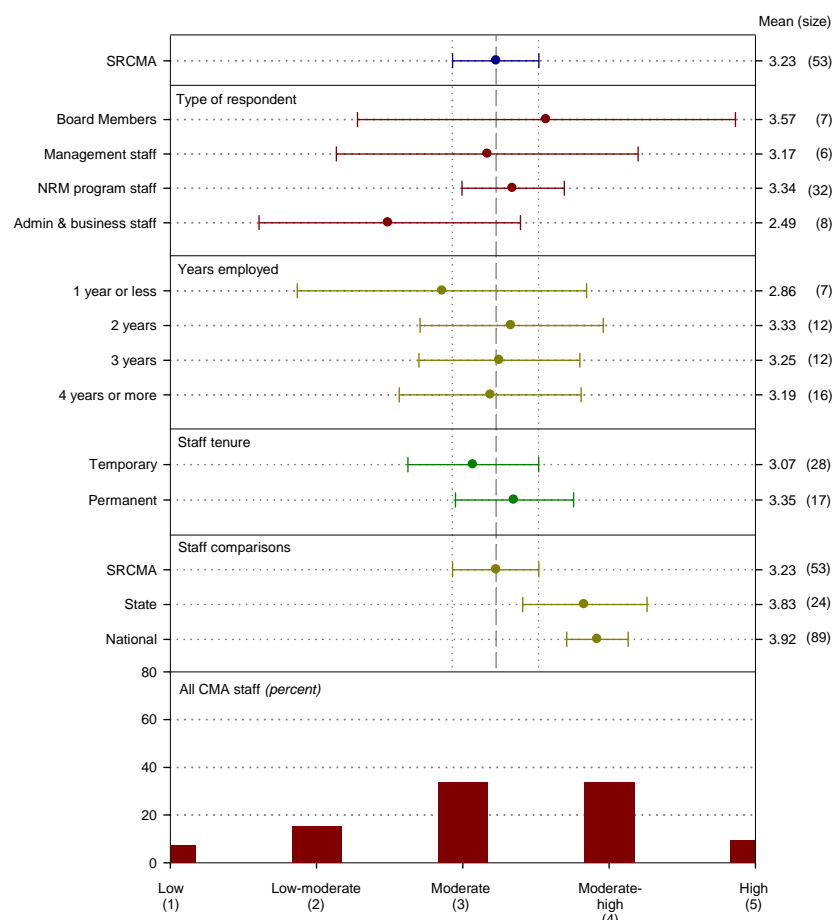


Figure 28. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in social systems is...”
 Note: The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body.

Knowledge of Aboriginal culture and communities in the region amongst staff and Board Members was slightly below ‘moderate’, although it was reasonably high amongst Board Members (Figure 29).

Although it is difficult to compare with State and National averages, as the question wording is somewhat different, the level of knowledge of Aboriginal culture and communities is below the State and National average.

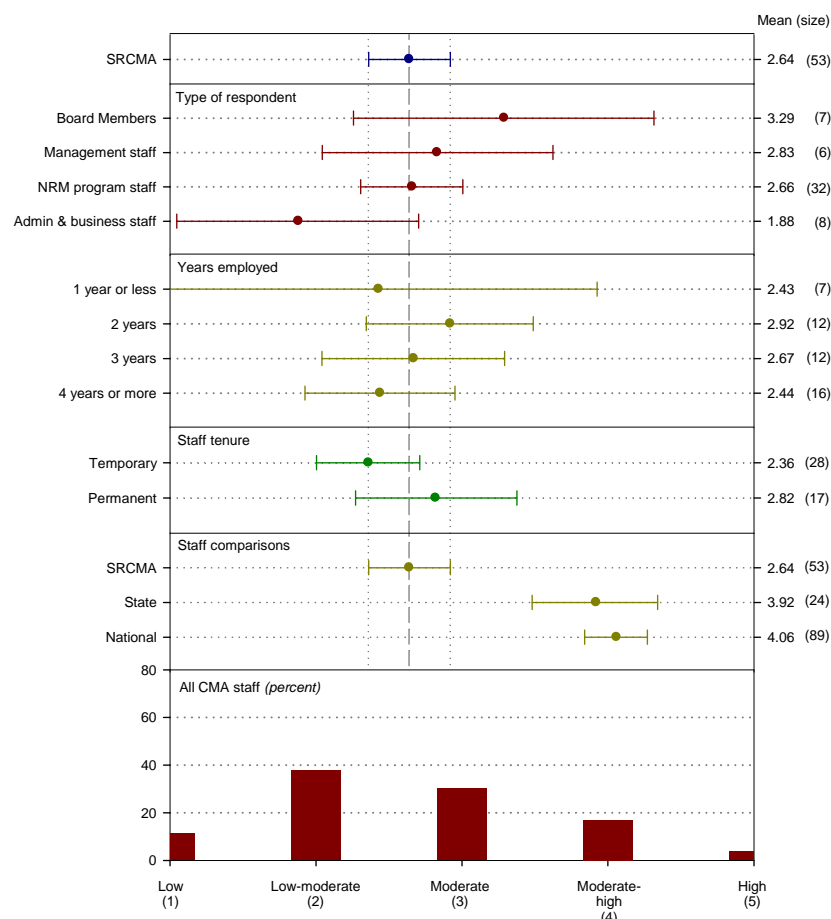


Figure 29. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in Aboriginal cultures and communities in the region is...”

Note: *The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body. In addition the State and national survey question asked only about knowledge of indigenous communities.*

Figure 30 shows CMA knowledge and skills in community engagement and partnerships to be moderate to high. Board Members, management staff and CMA staff who had been with the CMA for over 2 years had the highest level of knowledge and skills in this area.

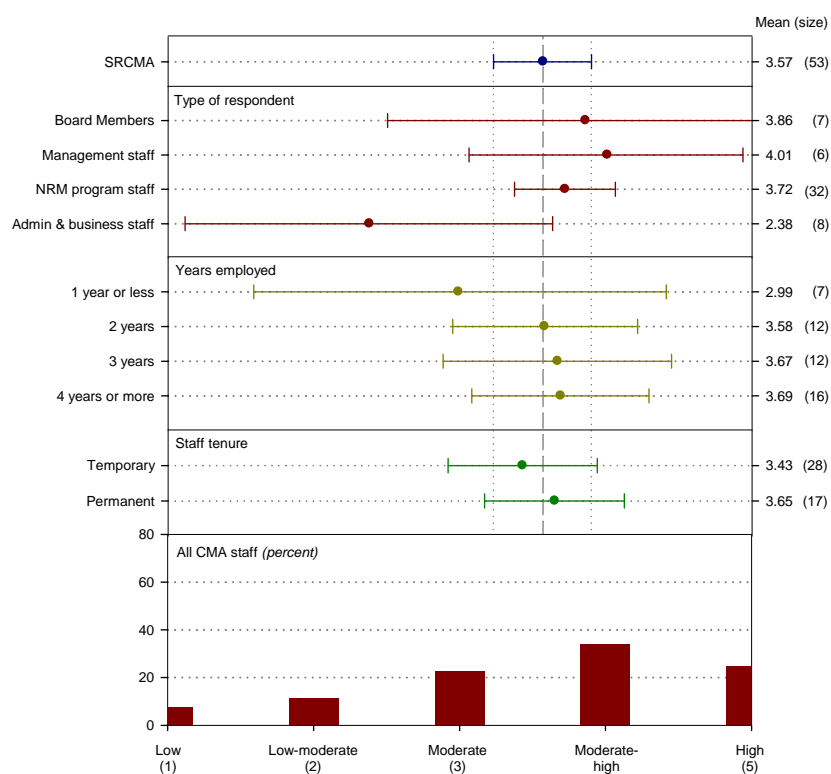


Figure 30. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in community engagement and partnerships is...”

Figure 31 shows that nearly 50% of staff and Board Member had either ‘low’ or ‘low-moderate’ knowledge and skills in geographic information systems. The highest knowledge of geographic information systems was found amongst Board Members and NRM program staff, while staff who had been with the CMA for less than one year or for four years or more had the lowest knowledge.

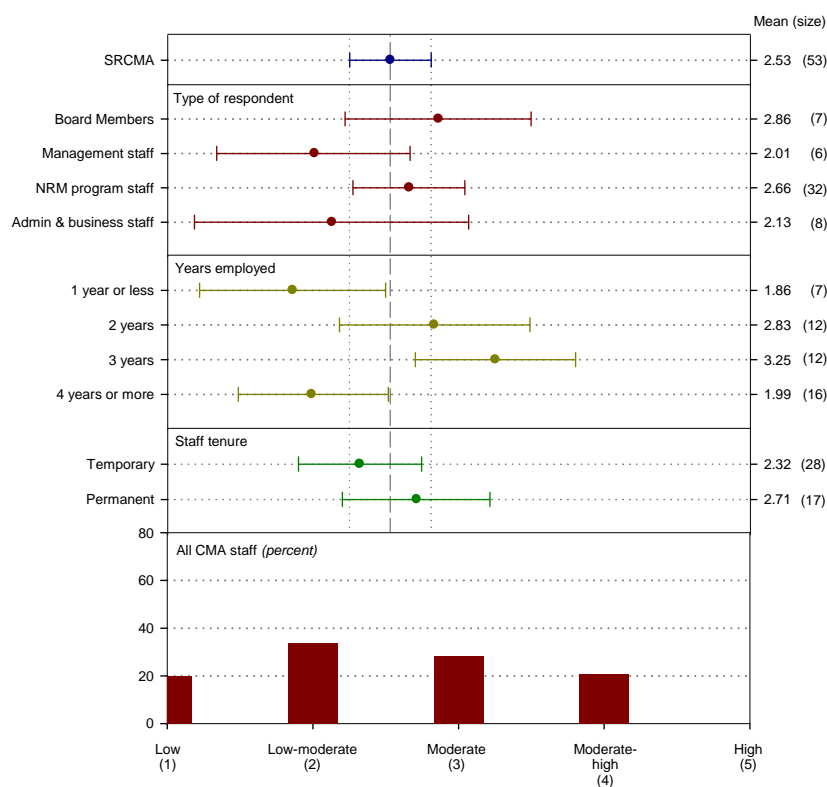


Figure 31. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in geographic information systems is...”

The level of knowledge of corporate governance; grants and contract management; monitoring; evaluation; and performance reporting amongst staff and Board Members was judged to be slightly lower than ‘moderate’ (Figure 32). While this knowledge was highest amongst Board Members; management staff; and administrative and business support staff, the CMA fell significantly below the State and National averages in relation to knowledge and skills in this area.

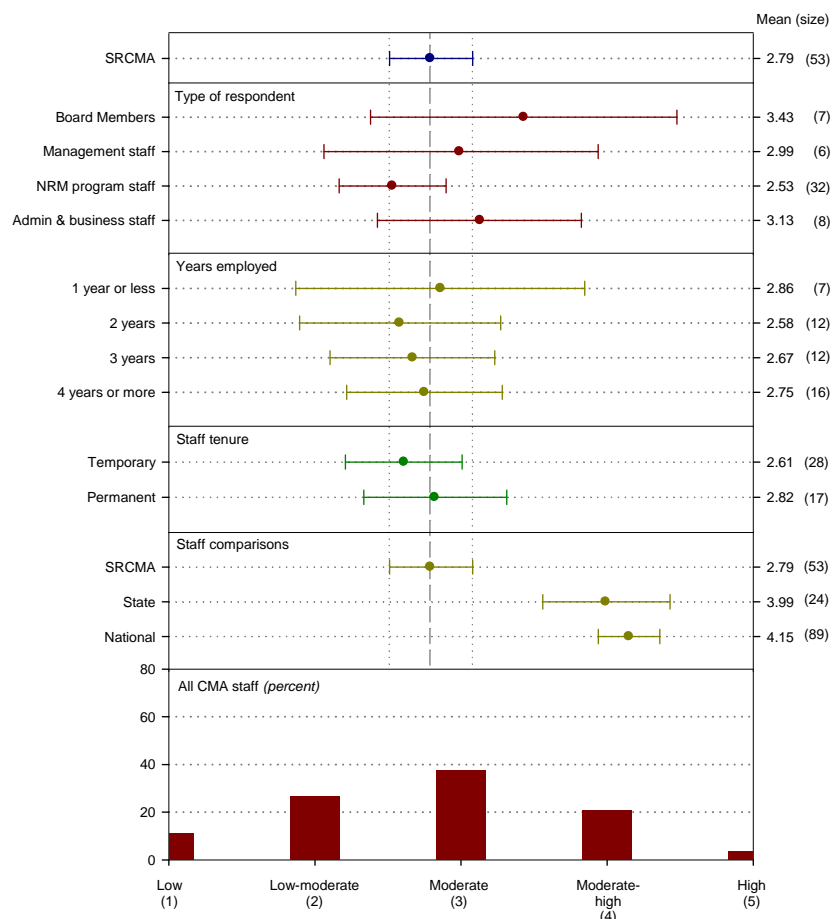


Figure 32. “Would you say your knowledge and skills in corporate governance, grants and contract management, monitoring, evaluation and performance reporting is...

Note: *The State and national averages were based on the judgments of senior staff of regional bodies who were asked to make a judgement about the level of knowledge amongst technical and professional staff within the regional NRM body.*

7.3 Staffing Requirements

As shown in Figure 33, the majority of staff and Board Members did not believe the CMA had adequate staff numbers to meet its NRM obligations and targets.

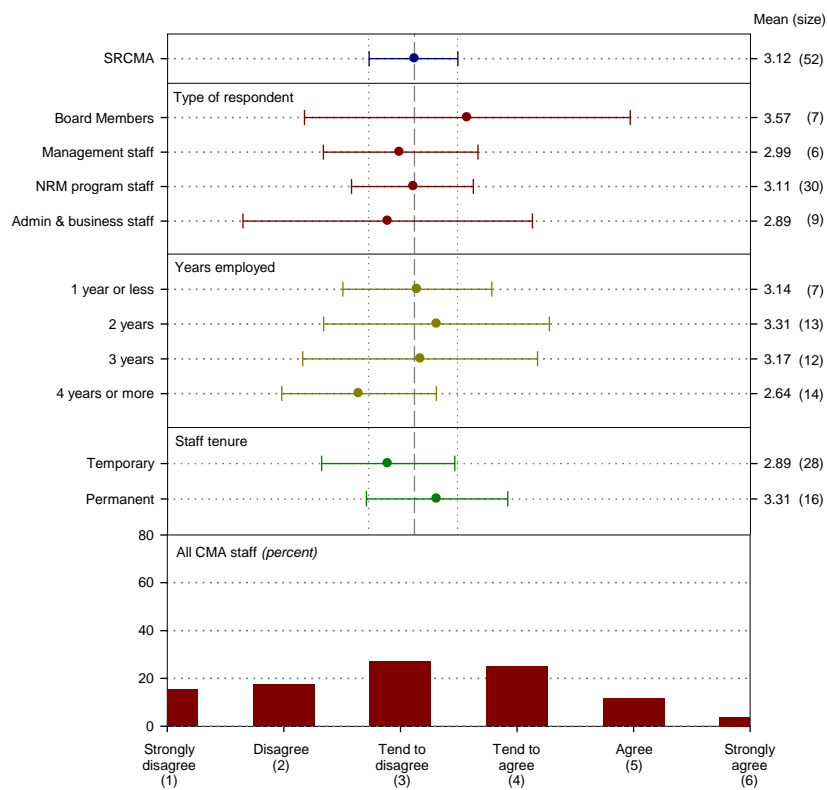


Figure 33. "To what extent do you agree with the statement, 'the CMA has adequate staff numbers to meet its NRM obligations and targets?'"

7.4 NRM Leadership

There was general agreement amongst staff and Board Members that the CMA over the past 12 months had provided effective regional leadership in relation to NRM (Figure 34). This view was held more so by Board Members when compared to staff in the CMA.

Figure 34 also shows that the CMA's regional leadership score is higher than both the State and National averages and that external stakeholders, including Landcare groups and other non-Government and Government stakeholders also independently judged the regional NRM leadership of the CMA as being high.

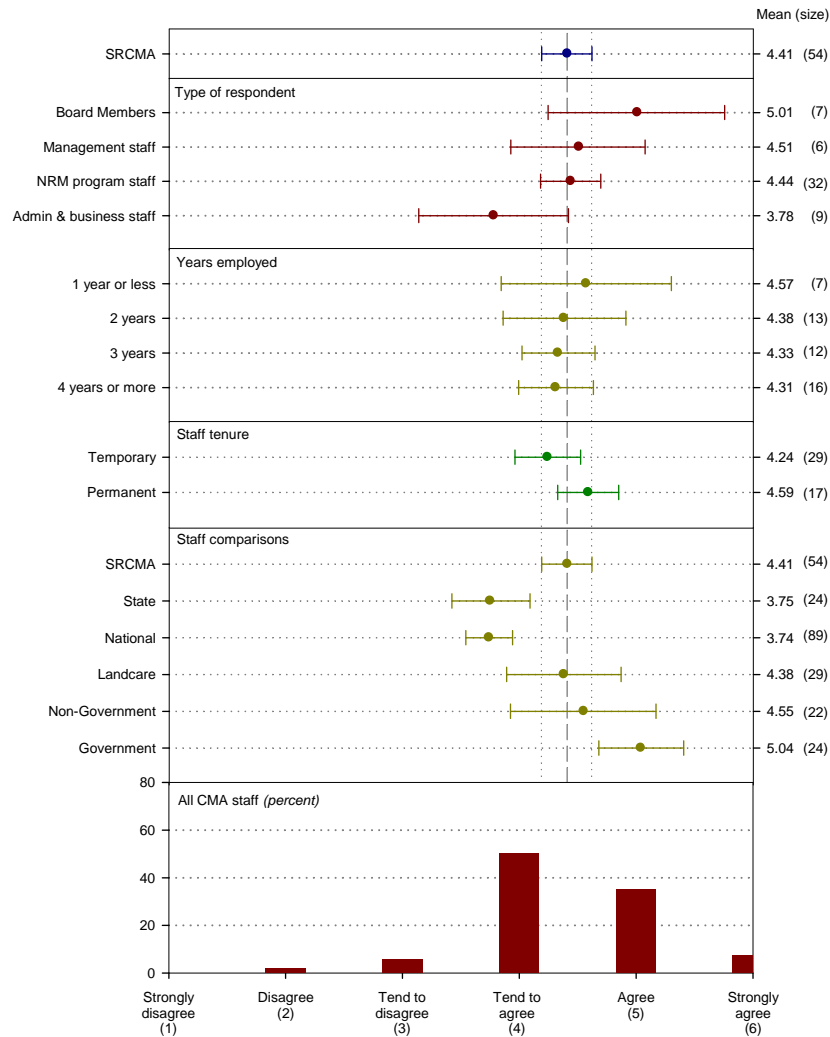


Figure 34. “To what extent do you agree with the statement, ‘that in this region over the last 12 months, the CMA has provided effective leadership in relation to NRM’”

7.5 Training Needs

All staff and Board Members were asked to identify if there was any specific training required for staff and Board Members. Table 2 shows a reasonably diverse range of training needs that were identified, however the two most commonly reported needs were (i) training in GIS and (ii) training in contract and project management.

Table 2. “In your work with the CMA, are there any areas you can identify where training may be required?”

Training required	Count	Percent
GIS	10	26.3
Contract and project management	9	23.7
Aboriginal cultural awareness	6	15.8
Specific technical training (hydrology, soil health, weed and pest control, etc)	6	15.8
Negotiation and conflict management	5	13.2
River management, process and rehabilitation	5	13.2
Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	4	10.5
Governance	3	7.9
First aid	2	5.3
Standard in house vegetation type identification	2	5.3
Time management	2	5.3
4WD training	1	2.6
Aboriginal cultural heritage	1	2.6
Aboriginal engagement in NRM	1	2.6
Climate change impacts	1	2.6
Community consultation	1	2.6
Developing management agreements	1	2.6
Environmental monitoring	1	2.6
Financial reporting	1	2.6
GPS	1	2.6
Group dynamics	1	2.6
Land management database	1	2.6
Land rehabilitation	1	2.6
Leadership training	1	2.6
Media	1	2.6
On site OH&S procedures	1	2.6
Opportunity to meet others working in similar areas	1	2.6
Pasture/grazing management	1	2.6
Social and community needs in NRM	1	2.6
Strategic NRM planning and investment	1	2.6
Threatened species conservation	1	2.6
Total	38	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table. A respondent may provide multiple responses and as such be included in multiple rows of the table. To avoid double counting table columns should not be summed.

Source: EBC (2008)

7.6 Additional Key NRM Issues that Need to be Addressed

Staff and Board Members were also asked to identify if there were any additional NRM issues, above those currently being addressed by the CMA, which also needed to be addressed. Table 3 clearly shows that the most important additional NRM issue that needed to be addressed related to climate change.

Table 3. 'In relation to NRM issues currently being addressed by the CMA, are there any additional key NRM issues which you think need to be addressed?'

Other NRM issues	Count	Percent
Climate change	12	41.4
Conservation of freshwater wetlands	4	13.7
Monitoring against CAP targets	3	10.3
Weed and pest control	3	10.3
Marine and coastal management	2	6.9
Trying to cover too much	2	6.9
Water quality	2	6.9
Aboriginal cultural in relation to NRM	1	3.4
Agro-forestry	1	3.4
Alignment of NRM outcomes between State and Commonwealth	1	3.4
Biophysical monitoring and benchmarking	1	3.4
Carbon measurement and monitoring	1	3.4
Fauna threatened species conservation	1	3.4
Improve whole of Government reporting	1	3.4
Local Government land use planning	1	3.4
Managing native pastures	1	3.4
Native grassland management	1	3.4
NRM outcomes on vegetable producers	1	3.4
Property development and sub division	1	3.4
Soil health	1	3.4
Vegetation dynamics	1	3.4
Total	29	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table. A respondent may provide multiple responses and as such be included in multiple rows of the table. To avoid double counting table columns should not be summed.

Source: EBC (2008)

7.7 Barriers to Achieving NRM Outcomes

When staff and Board Members were asked to identify the key barriers to achieving NRM outcomes, the two most common barriers identified were (i) the lack of funding and uncertainty over the level of funding and funding cycles and (ii) Government policies, strategies and processes.

Table 4. "In relation to achieving NRM outcomes can you identify any major barriers you believe the CMA confronts in achieving its objectives?"

Major barriers	Count	Percent
Lack of funding, uncertainty over funding levels and cycles	20	46.5
Government policies, strategies, processes	7	16.3
Lack of job security	5	11.6
Lack of staff	5	11.6
Ability of landholders to contribute to on ground works	2	4.7
Lack of coordination and management of projects	2	4.7
Lack of State agency support or commitment	2	4.7
Understanding of the CMA in the community	2	4.7
Ability of staff to monitor projects	1	2.3
Better targeting to meet needs of landholders	1	2.3
CAP targets unrealistic	1	2.3
CMA staff structure too bottom heavy	1	2.3
Community/landholder capacity and motivation	1	2.3
Drought and other community pressures	1	2.3
Excessive levels of reporting	1	2.3
Implementation of business management system	1	2.3
Lack of field staff	1	2.3
Lack of staff with scientific knowledge	1	2.3
Land development on the coast	1	2.3
Need for landscape managers	1	2.3
Poor compliance with Native Veg act	1	2.3
Total	43	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table. A respondent may provide multiple responses and as such be included in multiple rows of the table. To avoid double counting table columns should not be summed.

Source: EBC (2008)

8 EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

The quality, extent and characteristics of the Southern Rivers CMA's external relationships was assessed by examining staff and Board Member attitudes and beliefs in relation to the CMA's relationship with:

- The Australian Government;
- State Government agencies and departments;
- Regional stakeholder organisations; and
- Aboriginal people.

8.1 CMA Relationship with the Australian Government

Figure 35 shows that the majority of staff and Board Members understood the formal relationship between the CMA and the Australian Government. As might be expected, Board Members and management staff had a greater understanding of this relationship than all other staff.

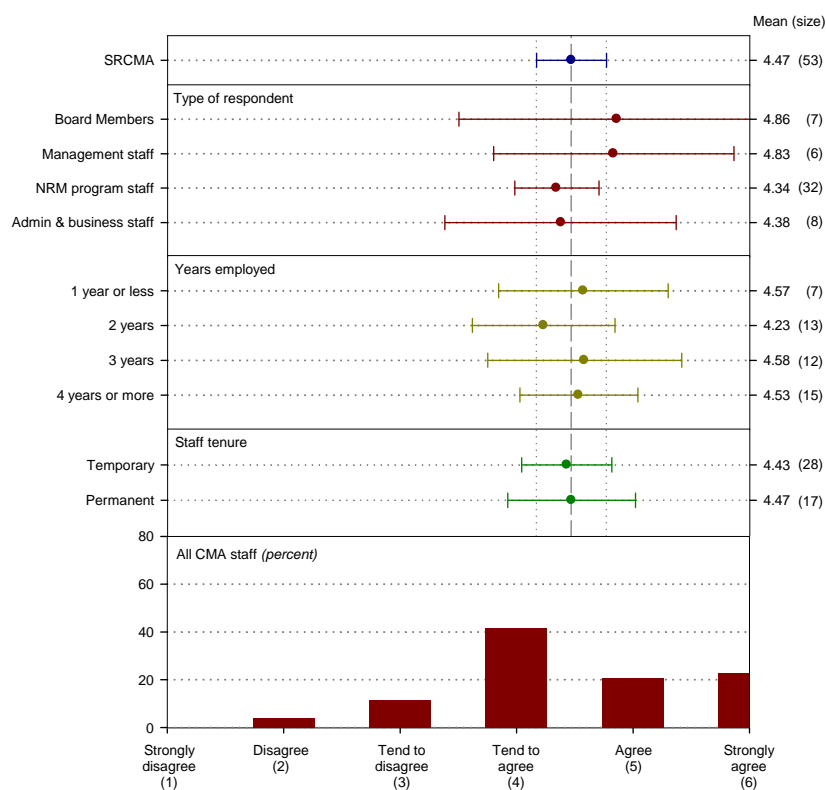


Figure 35. "I think I understand the formal relationship between the CMA and the Australian Government"

8.2 CMA Relationship with State Government

Figure 36 also shows that the majority of staff believed they understood the formal relationship between the CMA and the State Government. As with understanding the CMAs relationship with the Australian Government, Board Members and management staff had a greater understanding of the CMAs relationship with the State Government than all other staff.

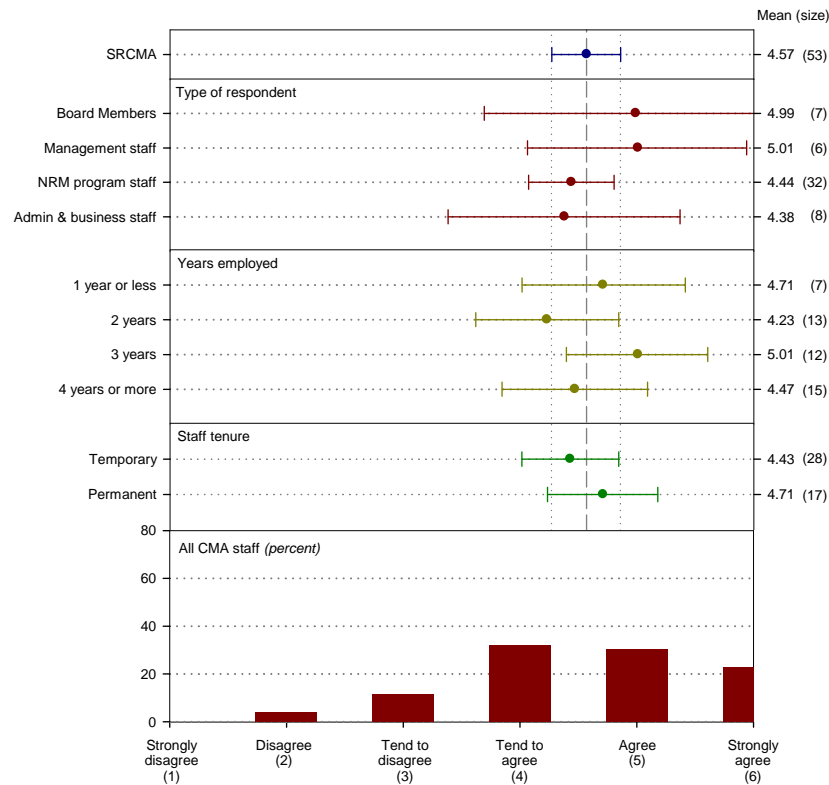


Figure 36. "I think I understand the formal relationship between the CMA and the State Government"

Staff and Board Members were asked six questions which focussed on the quality of the relationship between the CMA and State Government agencies and departments. These questions addressed issues related to trust; the effectiveness of communications; the transparency and flexibility of decision making; consistency of policy information; and the effectiveness of the partnership. The specific questions included:

1. *Trust:* As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in the relationship with most State Government NRM Agencies and Departments.
2. *Communication:* In my experience, I would say there is effective communication with most State Government NRM Agencies and Departments.
3. *Transparency:* In my experience, I would say there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes used by most State Government Agencies and Departments.
4. *Flexibility:* In my experience, most State Government Agencies and Departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA.

5. *Consistency*: In my experience, there is consistent policy information provided to this CMA across most State Government Agencies and Departments.
6. *Partnership*: I think there has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most State Government Agencies and Departments.

An analysis of the six belief statements indicated the scores to be highly correlated¹⁰ and that each of the belief statements were measuring the same underlying concept. For this reason a composite index was formed by summing and averaging across all six belief statements.

Figure 37 shows the quality of the relationship between the CMA and State Government agencies and departments to be ‘average’; although management staff, relative to Board Members and other CMA staff, judged the quality of the relationship as somewhat lower than average.

Interestingly, although the quality of the relationship may be defined as ‘average’ it was still higher than both the State and National averages.

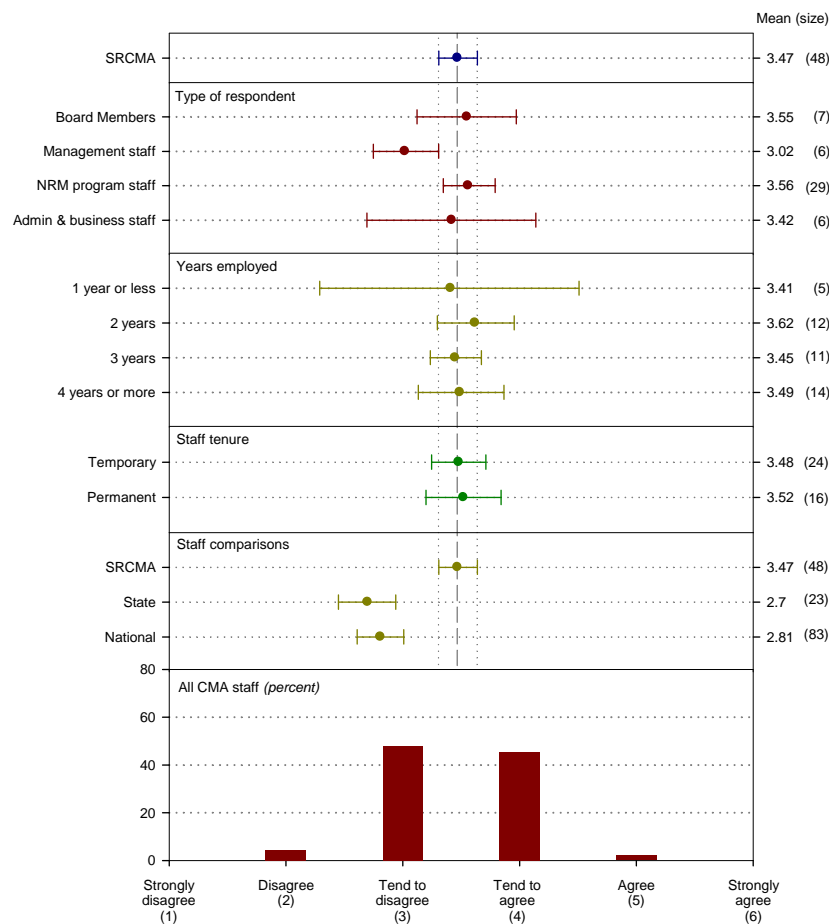


Figure 37. Quality of the CMA-State relationship (composite index)

¹⁰ Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of inter-item correlation and varies between 0.00 (no correlation) and 1.00 (perfect correlation) was found to be 0.82.

Although based only on judgements of the effectiveness of the partnership between the CMA and State Government agencies and departments, a comparison of Figures 37 and 38 shows that there has been little change over the past two years in the quality of the relationship between the CMA and State Government agencies and departments.

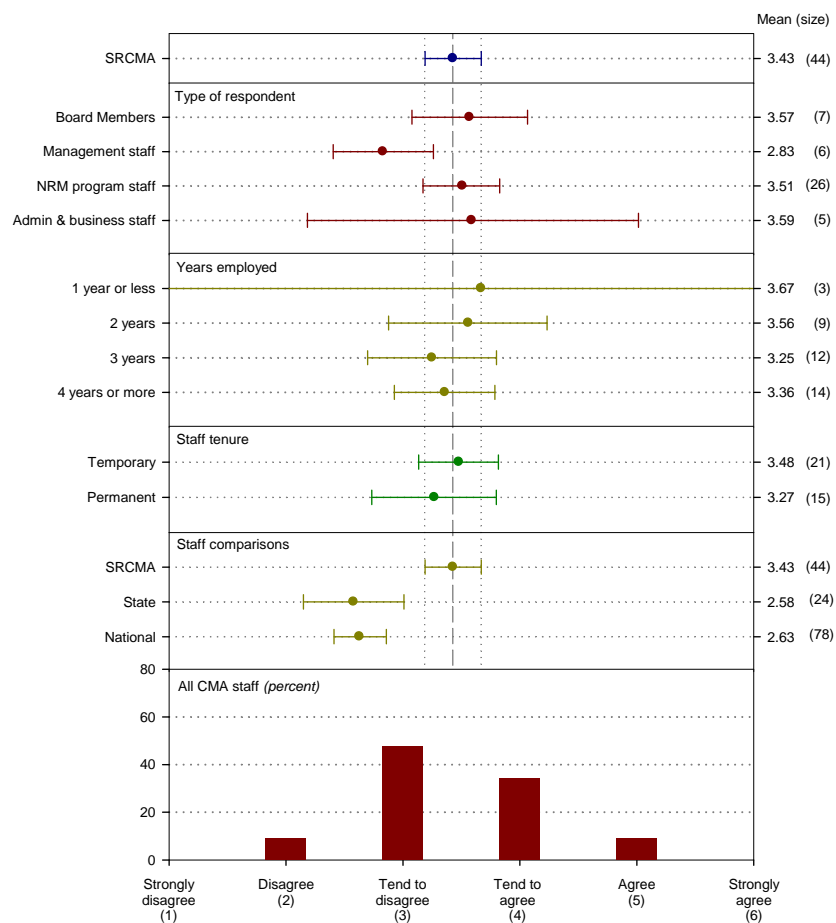


Figure 38. "I think there has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most State Government Agencies and Departments... if you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?"

8.3 CMA Relationship with Stakeholder Organisations

Figure 39 shows that the majority of staff and Board Members have a high level of trust in their relationship with most stakeholder organisations.

Landcare groups also have the same level of trust in the CMA as the CMA has in external stakeholder organisations. In addition both non-Government and Government stakeholder organisations have a higher level of trust in the CMA than the CMA has in them.

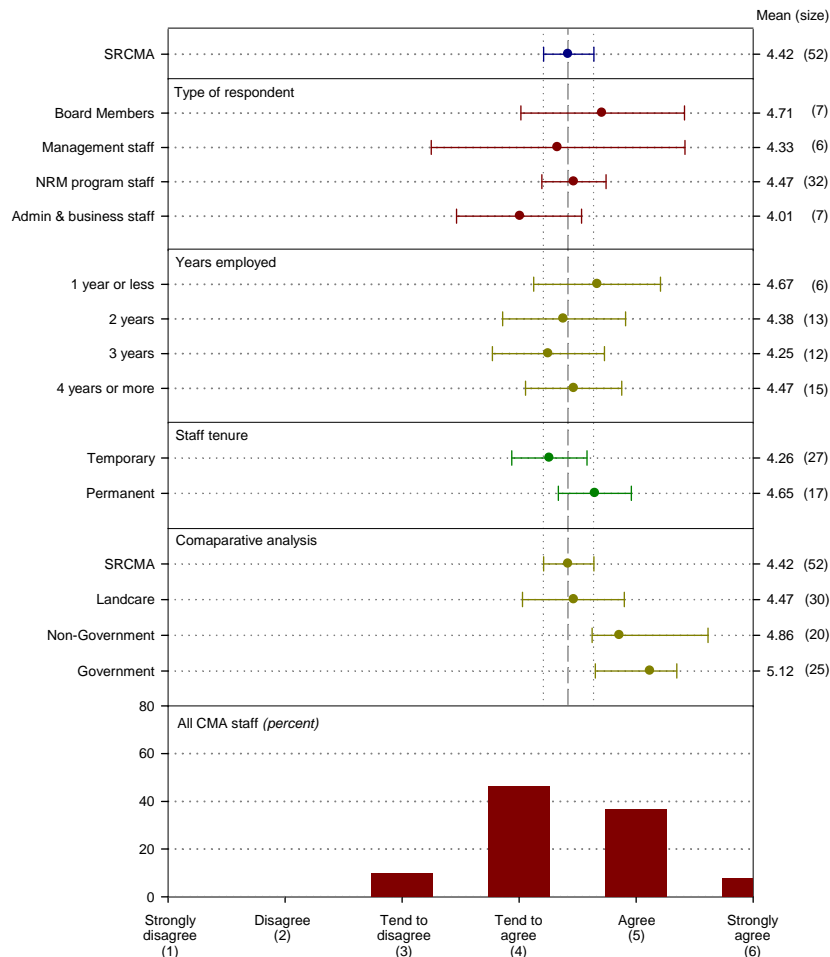


Figure 39. “I think there has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most State Government Agencies and Departments... if you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

Staff and Board Members of the CMA also indicated there had been effective communication between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations (Figure 40).

Landcare groups again indicated the same level of effective communication towards the CMA as the CMA had towards other stakeholder organisations. However non-Government and Government stakeholders believed they had more effective communication with the CMA, than the CMA believed they had with them.

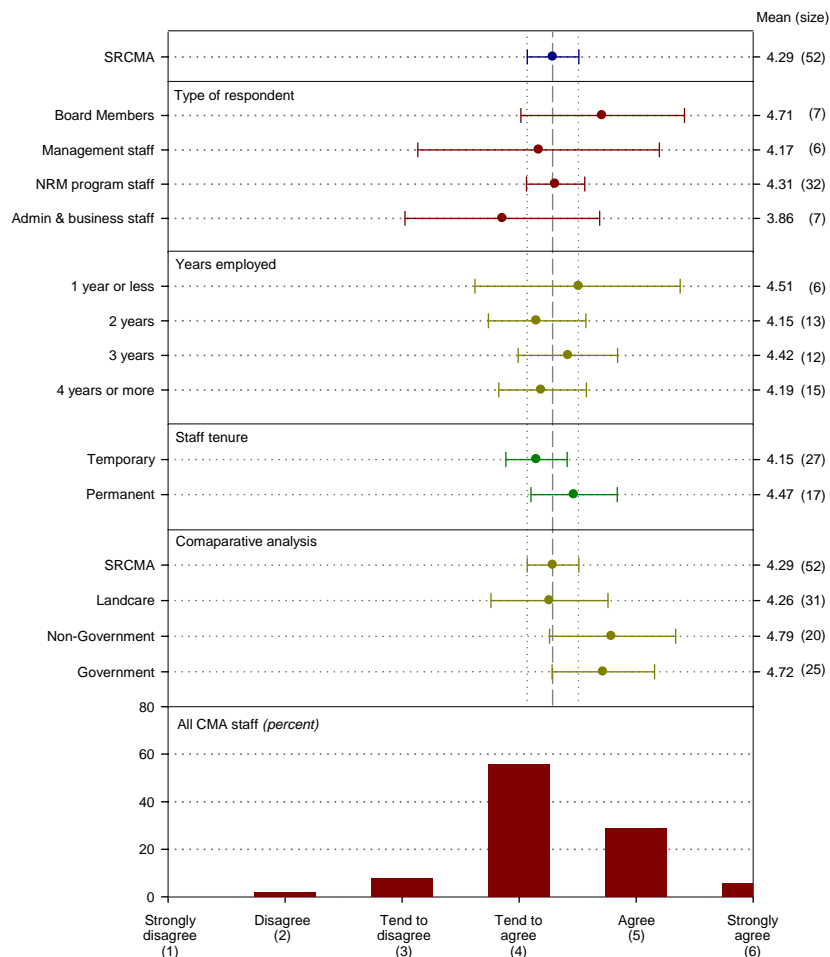


Figure 40. "In my experience, I would say there has been effective communication between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations"

Figure 41 shows that the majority of CMA staff and Board Members believed most stakeholder organisations had been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA.

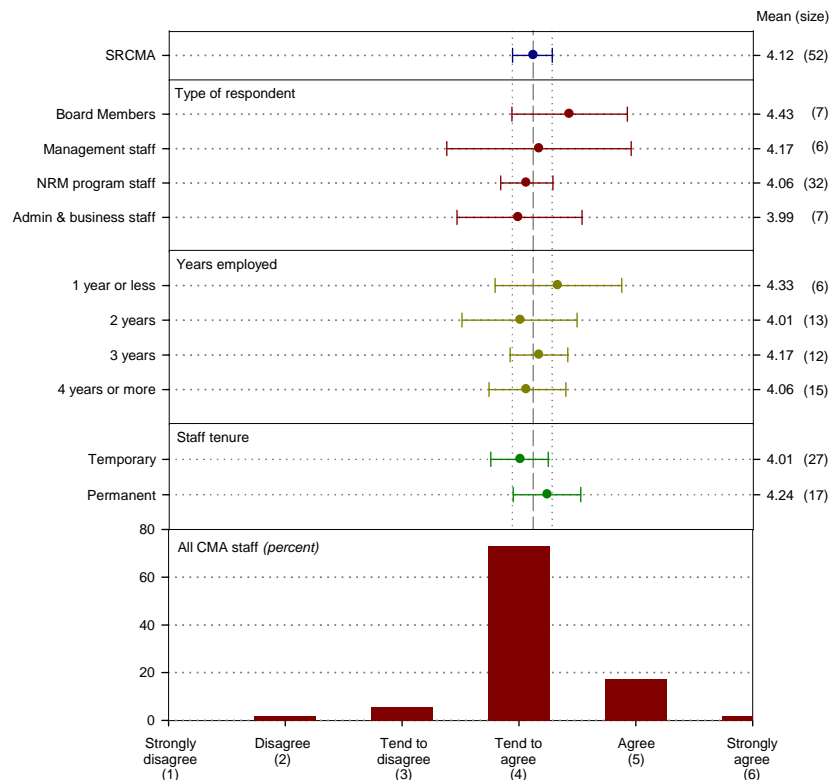


Figure 41. “In my experience, most stakeholder organisations have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA”

Staff and Board Members also believed there had been an effective partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations (Figure 42). Interestingly Landcare groups and other non-Government and Government stakeholder organisations rated the effectiveness of their partnership with the CMA higher than the CMA rated the effectiveness of its partnership with most stakeholder organisations.

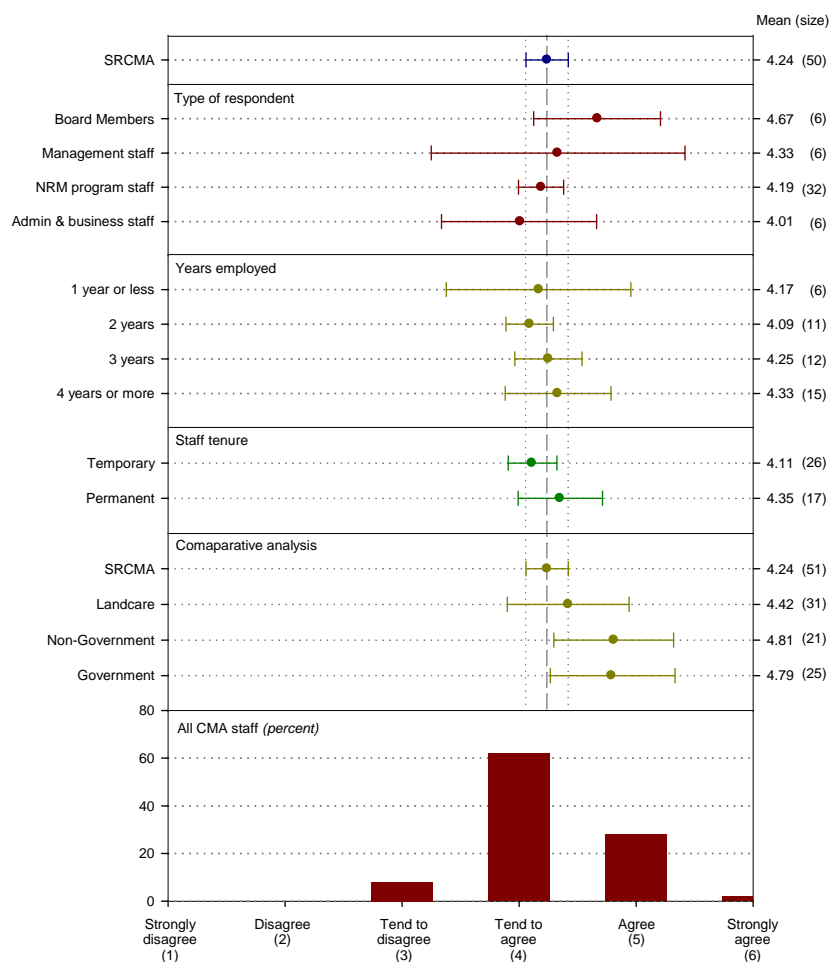


Figure 42. “There has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations”

All staff and Board Members were also asked how effective the partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations had been two years ago (Figure 42). While the partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations two years ago was still regarded as effective, partnerships were however seen as less effective than they were today.

A comparison of Figures 42 and 43 shows non-Government stakeholder organisations report the most significant improvement in effective partnerships with the CMA. In contrast, Landcare groups and Government stakeholder organisations reported only a minor increase in effectiveness over the past two years.

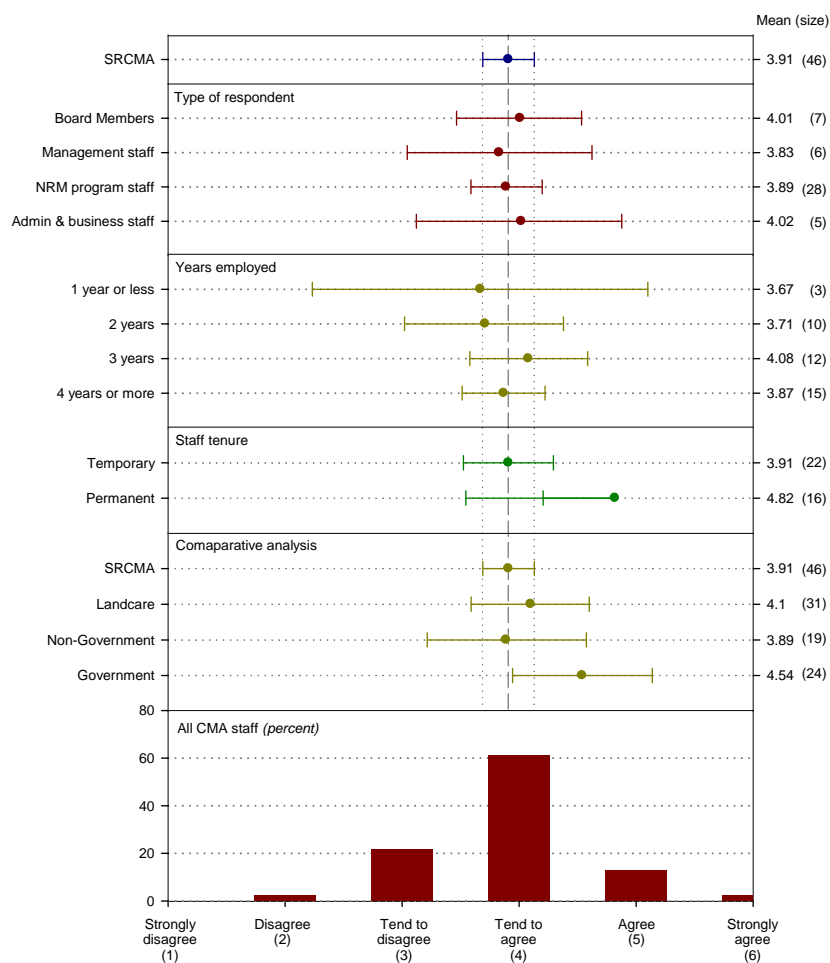


Figure 42. “There has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations... if you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

Figure 43 shows that most staff and Board Members ‘tend to agree’ with the statement that “the CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with stakeholders”. However, relatively higher agreement with this statement was found amongst Government stakeholder organisations and amongst CMA Board Members and management staff.

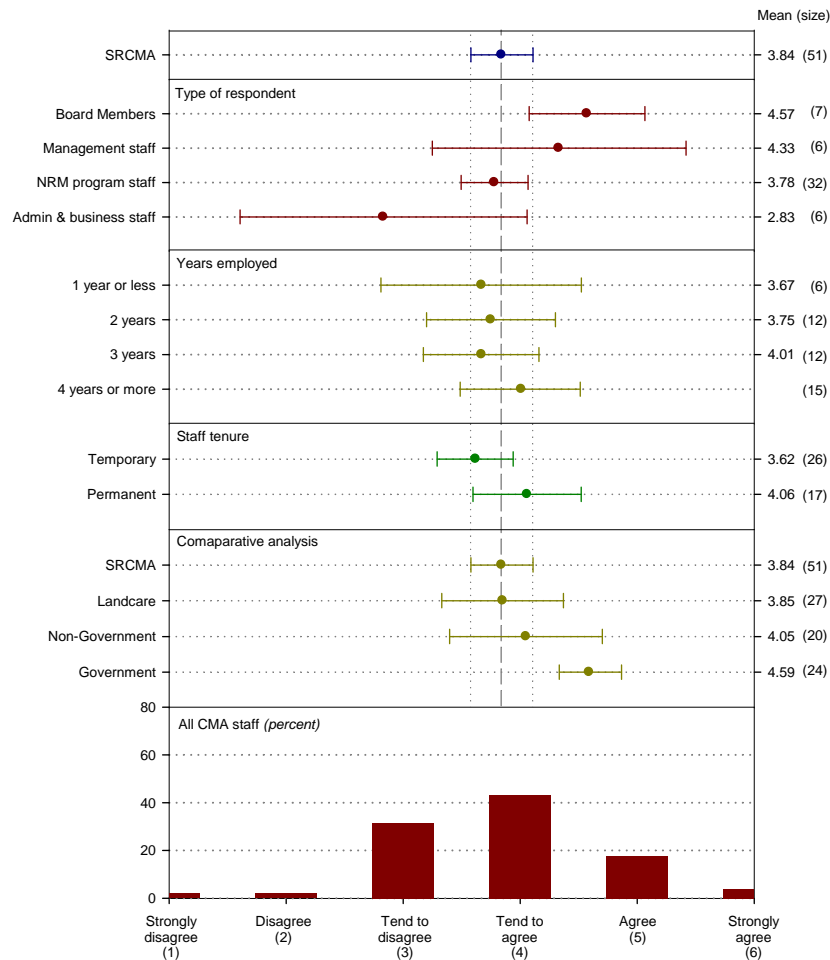


Figure 43. “The CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with stakeholders”

Overall, Figure 44 shows that the majority of staff and Board Members believe that the CMA’s approach to engaging with stakeholders tends to be more opportunistic than strategic. However, management staff, permanent staff and Landcare groups are more likely to believe the CMA has a more strategic approach to engaging within stakeholders.

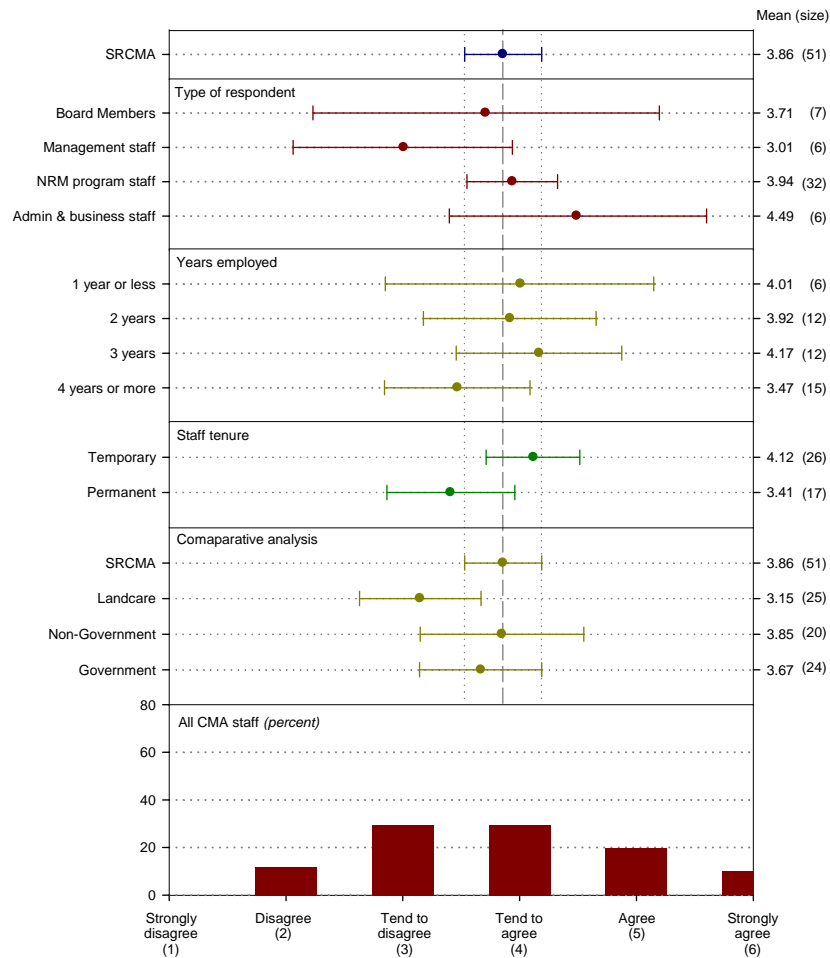


Figure 44. “The CMA’s approach in engaging with stakeholders tends to be more opportunistic than strategic”

8.4 Aboriginal People

Figure 45 shows that CMA staff and Board Members agreed with the statement that ‘Aboriginal people should have the right to access lands for management and traditional cultural practices’. As might be expected, Aboriginal people themselves also agreed with this statement. However and as shown in Figure 45, the majority of landholders tended to disagree with the statement.

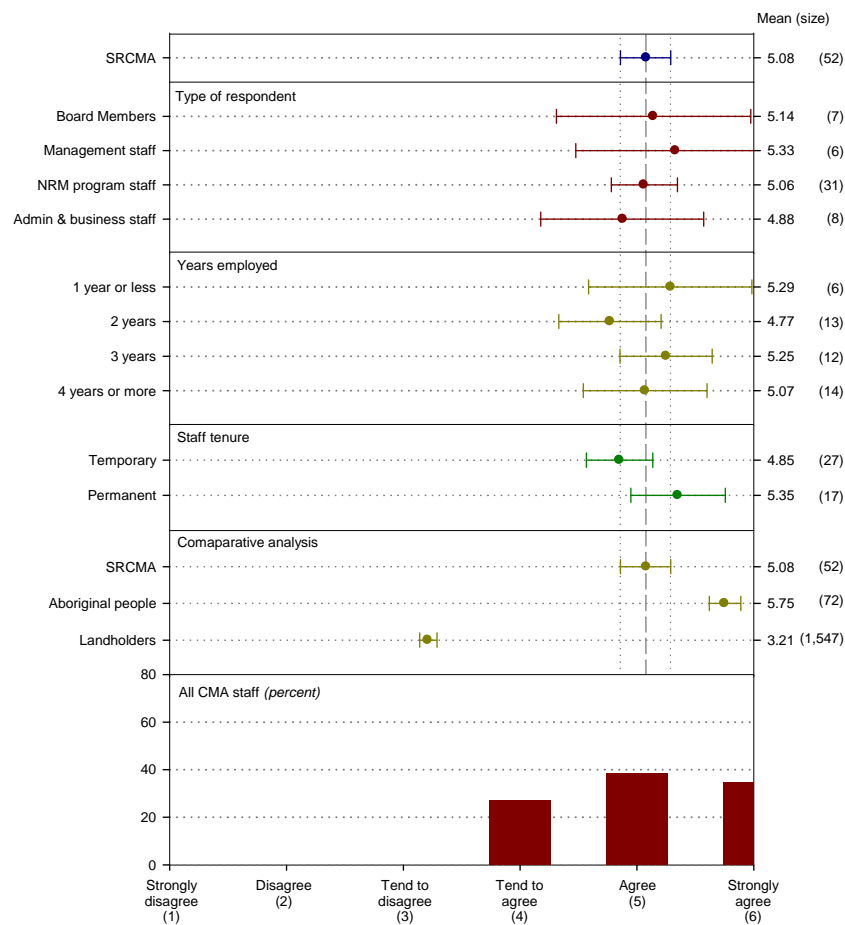


Figure 45. “Aboriginal people should have the right to access traditional lands for management and traditional cultural practices”

Note: Data for Aboriginal people were derived from a benchmarking survey of the Aboriginal community and data for landholders were derived from the benchmarking survey of landholders in the Southern Rivers NRM region.

The majority of staff and Board Members of the CMA also agreed with the statement that “as Traditional Owners of the land, Aboriginal people possess traditional ecological knowledge which may benefit the broader NRM landscape” (Figure 46).

As shown in Figure 46, while there was general agreement with this belief statement amongst staff and Board Members, landholders were less likely to agree with the statement.

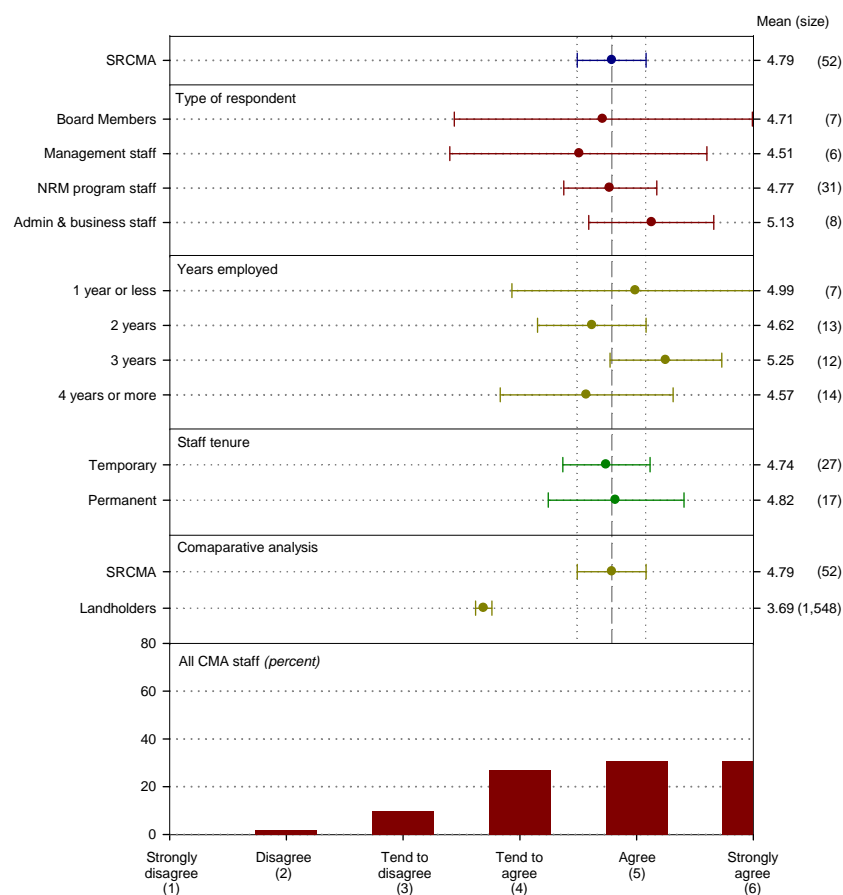


Figure 46. “As Traditional Owners of the land, Aboriginal people possess Traditional ecological knowledge which may benefit the broader NRM landscape?”
 Note: Data for landholders were derived from the benchmarking survey of landholders in the Southern Rivers NRM region.

Figure 47 also shows that staff and Board Members believed that the CMA was sensitive to the cultural requirements of Aboriginal people.

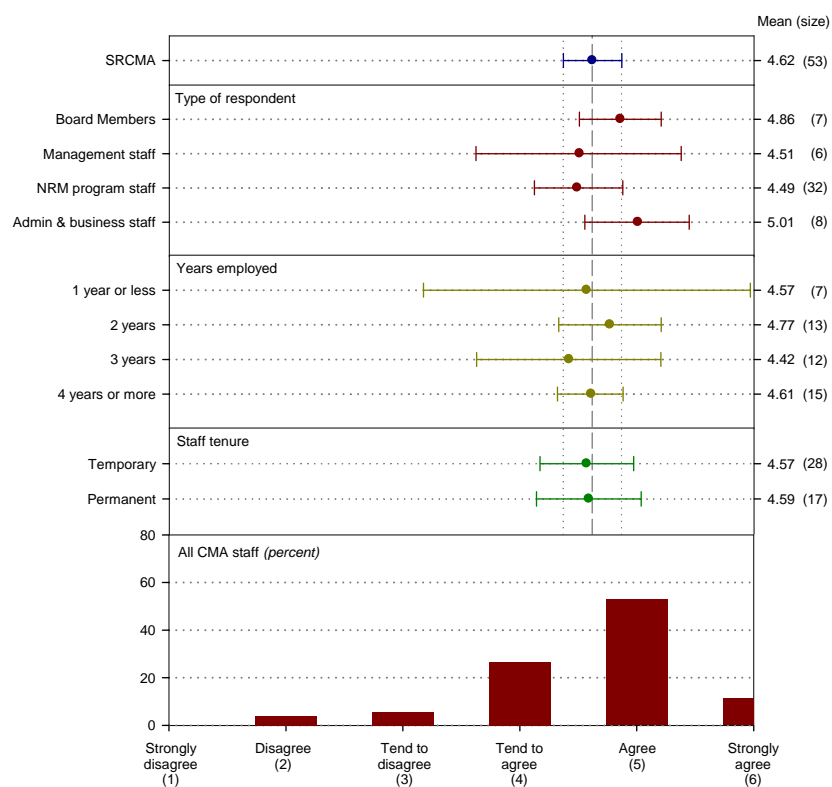


Figure 47. "Overall, I think the CMA is sensitive to the cultural requirements of Aboriginal people"

9 THE CMAs COMMUNITY SUPPORT TEAM

Four questions were used to assess staff and Board Member beliefs about the CMA's community support team and whether the community support team had been effective and had the necessary resources to achieve its objectives.

Staff and Board Members were equally divided in relation to whether the community support team had sufficient staff numbers to achieve its objectives (Figure 48). Fifty-one percent of staff and Board Members believed the community support team had sufficient staff, while 49% believed the community support team did not have sufficient staff.

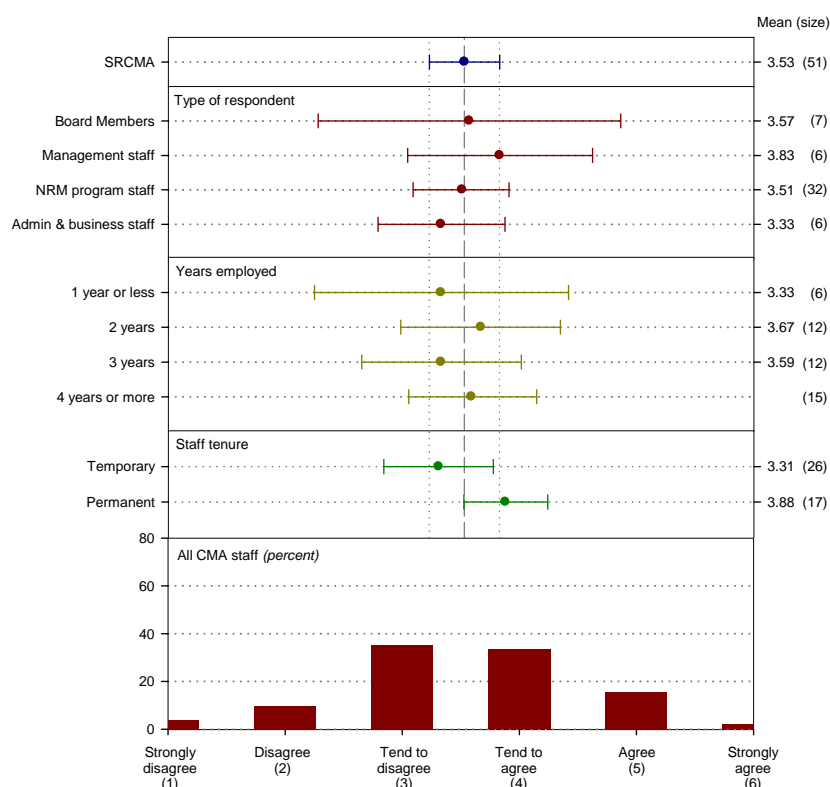


Figure 48. “In supporting stakeholders and landholders to achieve their NRM objectives, the community support team... has sufficient staff numbers to achieve its objectives”

Ninety-two percent of staff and Board Members believed the community support team had the necessary skills and resources to provide stakeholders and landholders (Figure 49).

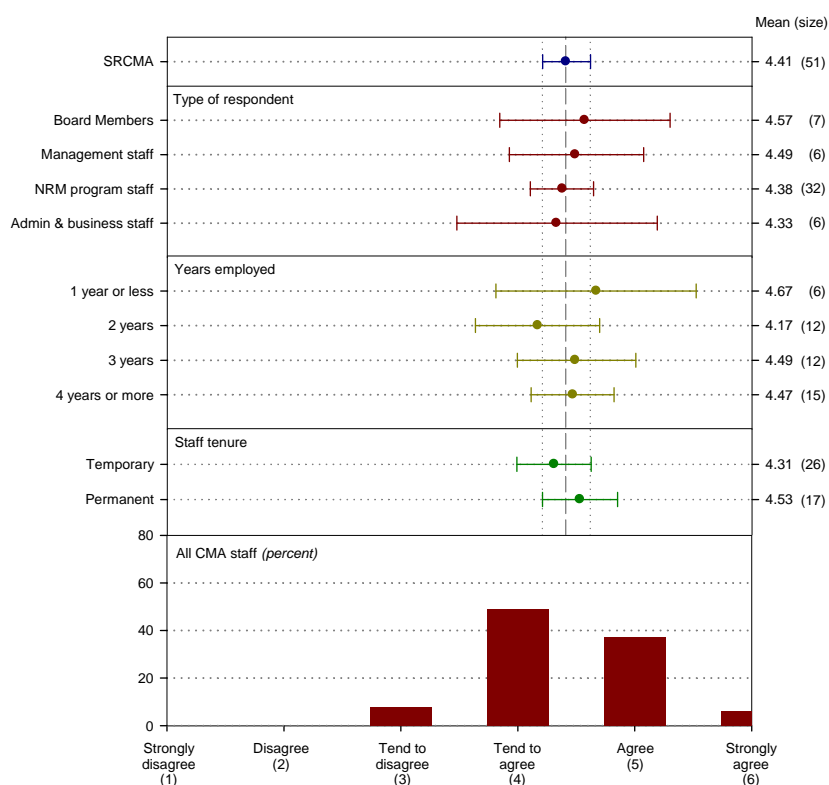


Figure 49. "In supporting stakeholders and landholders to achieve their NRM objectives, the community support team... has the necessary skills and resources to provide stakeholders and landholders"

Figure 50 shows that 98% of staff and Board Members believed the community support team understood the needs of stakeholders and landholders. This belief was relatively higher amongst Board Members and management staff when compared to other staff within the CMA.

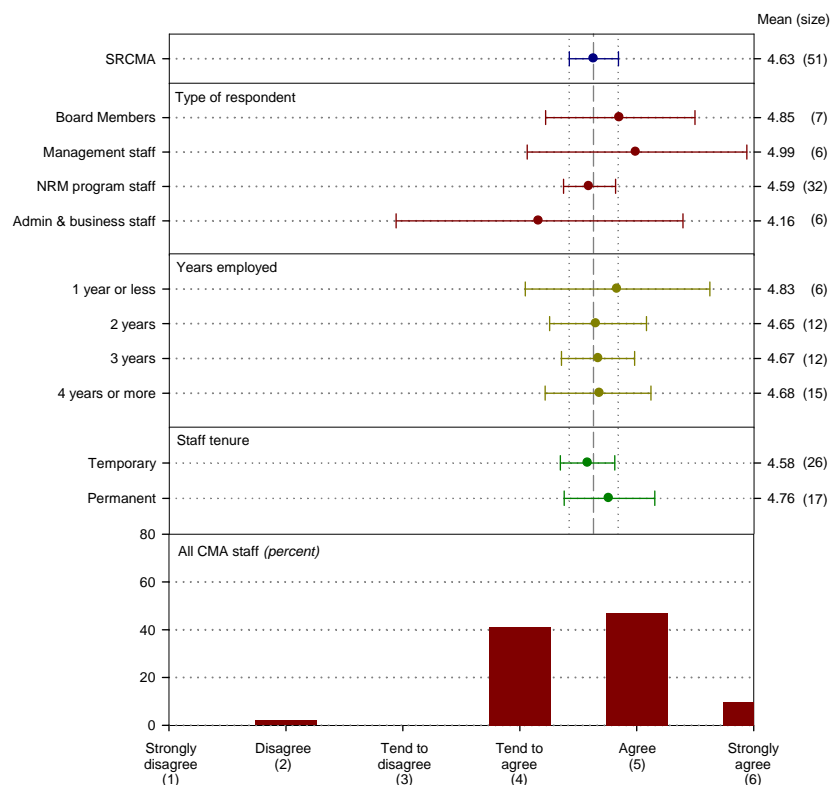


Figure 50. “In supporting stakeholders and landholders to achieve their NRM objectives, the community support team... understands the needs of stakeholders and landholders”

The majority of staff and Board Members also considered the community support team had been effective in developing the capacity of stakeholders and landholders (Figure 51).

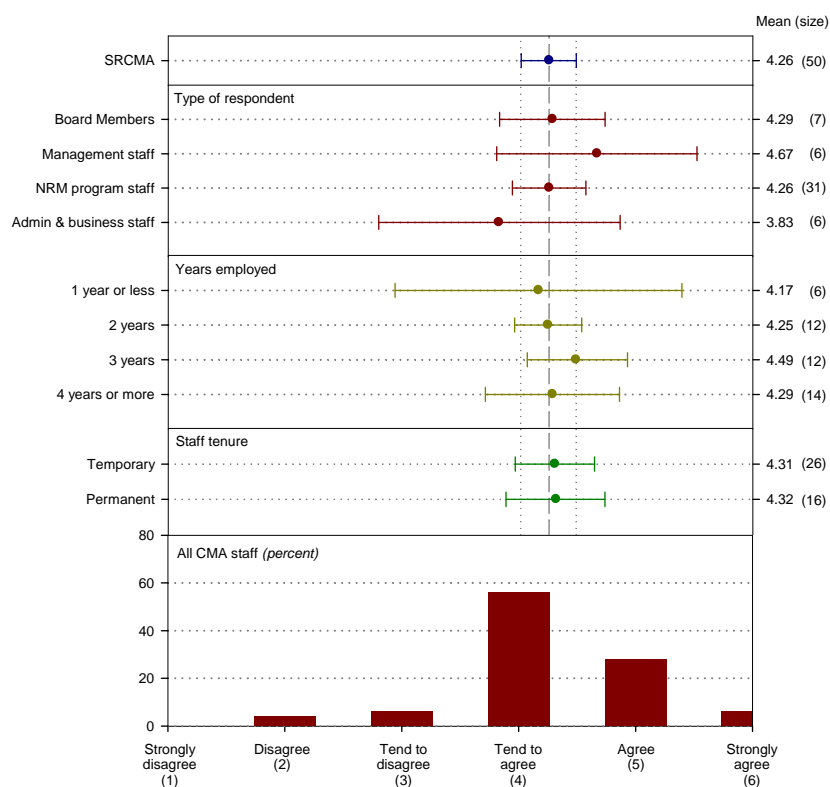


Figure 51. “In supporting stakeholders and landholders to achieve their NRM objectives, the community support team... has been effective in developing the capacity of stakeholders and landholders”

Appendix A
Southern Rivers CMA Staff and Board
Member Questionnaire

(Some minor modification to the format of the questionnaire as presented in Appendix A may have occurred as the questionnaire was distributed as an Acrobat form)



SOUTHERN RIVERS NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (NRM) BENCHMARK SURVEY: STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER SURVEY

This survey, which includes all staff and Board Members, is being undertaken for the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority. The objective of the survey is to provide a baseline against which to monitor changes in the effectiveness and capacity of the CMA in the future. The questionnaire includes an assessment of staff and Board member beliefs about the:

- Management capacity of the CMA;
- NRM program capacity of the CMA;
- The quality of external relationships and partnerships; and
- The effectiveness of the CMA

The questionnaire should take you no longer than 20 minutes to complete. Try and answer all questions. However, there may be some questions which you cannot answer. In this case leave the question blank.

You are not required to give your name and all information is confidential.

Please complete and submit this form by

If you require assistance please contact:

Mark Fenton

EBC

Phone: 07 47722544

Mobile: 0412098514

Facsimile: 07 47726335

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CMA

3. Think about the CMAs progress towards and achievement of NRM targets. On a scale from one (1) to ten (10), with one (1) being very unsuccessful and ten (10) being very successful, what score would you give the CMA?

Score ____

☐ Don't know

4. If you were asked this question two years ago what score would you have given the CMA?

Score ____

☐ Don't know (inc. wasn't here)

5. In two years time how do you think you will answer the question?

Score ____

☐ Don't know

6. Think about the CMA and the relationships and partnerships that have been developed with other organisations. On a scale from one (1) to ten (10), with one (1) being very unsuccessful and ten (10) being very successful, what score would you give the CMA?

Score ____

☐ Don't know

7. If you were asked this question two years ago what score would you have given the CMA?

Score ____

☐ Don't know (inc. wasn't here)

8. In two years time how do you think you will answer the question?

Score ____

☐ Don't know

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

9. The CMA has the appropriate decision making processes in place to achieve its objectives.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

10. An appropriate mix of people are involved in decision making within the CMA

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

11. The decision making processes within the CMA are working well

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. In terms of its operation, I would say this CMA has an organisational structure which is...

☐ Very hierarchical ☐ Hierarchical ☐ Somewhat hierarchical ☐ Somewhat flat ☐ Flat ☐ Very flat

13. When the CMA makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

14. A shared NRM vision is held by most staff within the CMA

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

15. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

16. A shared NRM vision is held by most Board Members...

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

17. To what extent do you agree with the statement that, "Within the last 12 months Staff and Board Members have had the same shared NRM vision"?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

18. I would describe the working relationship between staff and the CMA Board as...

☐ Very close ☐ Close ☐ Somewhat close ☐ Somewhat remote ☐ Remote ☐ Very remote

Over the last 12 months I think most senior staff within the CMA....

19. ...have worked to achieve the objectives of the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

20. ...have made well informed decisions

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

21. ...have provided a clear strategic direction for the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

22. ...have worked well with others outside the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

23. ...have communicated well with staff within the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

24. ...have been flexible and adaptive in their decision making

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

25. ...have provided consistent messages to staff in the CMA

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

26. Over the last 12 months my level of job satisfaction has been...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

27. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

28. Over the last 12 months I would say my morale has been...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

29. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

30. The CMA has adequate human resource management systems, policies and processes in place to achieve good human resource management practices.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

31. In an average working week, what percentage of your time would you spend on the following...

NRM program activities (inc. planning, on-ground support, administration and reporting) _____ %

Partnership development and support (inc. engagement and stakeholder relationships)..... _____ %

General office management and administration _____ %

Management activities (inc. staff supervision) _____ %

Total **100%**

32. In an average working week, what percentage of your time do you think *you should be spending on each of the following* in order to meet your objectives?

NRM program activities (inc. planning, on-ground support, administration and reporting) _____ %

Partnership development and support (inc. engagement and stakeholder relationships)..... _____ %

General office management and administration _____ %

Management activities (inc. staff supervision) _____ %

Total **100%**

33. What level of confidence do you currently have, that the CMA has adequate financial management systems, policies and processes in place to effectively achieve good financial management outcomes?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

34. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

35. I feel that the level of job security that I have is...(staff only)

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

36. I think the corporate reputation of the CMA in the region is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

PROGRAM CAPACITY

During the last 12 months how effective do you think the CMA been in....

37. ...increasing awareness of NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

38. ...increasing community participation in NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

39. ...facilitating NRM project development?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

40. ...increasing community capacity in NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

41. ...increasing partnership with other organisations and stakeholders?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

Would you say your knowledge and skills in...

42. natural resource management and planning is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

43. biophysical systems is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

44. economic systems is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

45. social systems is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

46. Aboriginal culture and communities in the region is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

47. community engagement and partnerships...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

48. geographic information systems...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

49. ...corporate governance, grants and contract management monitoring, evaluation and performance reporting is...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

50. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "that the CMA has adequate staff numbers to meet its NRM obligations and targets"

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

51. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "that in this region over the last 12 months, the CMA has provided effective leadership in relation to NRM"

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

52. In your work with the CMA, are there any areas you can identify where training may be required?

☐ No

☐ Yes...these areas include...

1. _____

2. _____

53. In your work with the CMA, is there any additional equipment or physical infrastructure required?

☐ No

☐ Yes...this includes...

1. _____

2. _____

54. In relation to NRM issues currently being addressed by the CMA, are there any additional key NRM issues which you think need to be addressed?

☐ No

☐ Yes...these include...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

55. In relation to achieving NRM outcomes can you identify any major barriers you believe the CMA confronts in achieving its objectives?

☐ No

☐ Yes...these include...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

I am going to read out some statements. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Over the last 12 months...

56. I think I understand the formal relationship between the CMA and the Australian Government

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

57. I think I understand the formal relationship between the CMA and the State Government

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

58. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in the relationship with most State Government NRM Agencies and Departments.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

59. In my experience, I would say there is effective communication with most State Government NRM Agencies and Departments

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

60. In my experience, I would say there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes used by most State Government Agencies and Departments.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

61. In my experience, most State Government Agencies and Departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

62. In my experience, there is consistent policy information provided to this CMA across most State Government Agencies and Departments

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

63. I think there has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most State Government Agencies and Departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
64. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
65. I have a high level trust in my relationship with most stakeholder organisations
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
66. In my experience, I would say there has been effective communication between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
67. In my experience, most stakeholder organisations have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the CMA.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
68. The CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with stakeholders
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
69. The CMAs approach in engaging with stakeholders tends to be more opportunistic than strategic
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
70. There has been an effective partnership between the CMA and most stakeholder organisations
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
71. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In supporting stakeholders and landholders to achieve their NRM objectives, the community support team...

72. ...has sufficient staff numbers to achieve its objectives
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
73. ...has been effective in developing the capacity of stakeholders and landholders
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
74. ...has the necessary skills and resources to provide stakeholders and landholders
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
75. ...understands the needs of stakeholders and landholders
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

OTHER QUESTIONS

76. How effective do you think the CMA has been in enabling landholders and other stakeholders to achieve good NRM outcomes?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

77. Aboriginal people should have the right to access traditional lands for management and traditional cultural practices.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

78. As Traditional Owners of the land, Aboriginal people possess Traditional ecological knowledge which may benefit the broader NRM landscape?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

79. Overall, I think the CMA is sensitive to the cultural requirements of Aboriginal people

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

80. In which category would you place yourself...

- ☐ Board member
- ☐ Management staff
- ☐ NRM program and project staff
- ☐ Administrative and business support staff

81. How long have you worked for the CMA? (*Staff only*)

___ Years (if less than 1 year record 1 year)

82. What is the location of your current office? (*Staff only*)

- ☐ Bateman's Bay
- ☐ Bega
- ☐ Braidwood
- ☐ Cooma
- ☐ Nowra
- ☐ Wollongong

83. Is your position... (*Staff only*)

- ☐ Temporary or
- ☐ Permanent