

SCEA WINTER CONVENTION SURVEYS - 2018 SUMMARY

Your opinions really do matter. So, please take the time to complete and submit these three surveys. Last winter we received only 44 responses from the 339 that attended the convention. That is less than 13% of attendees helping decide the future locations of our Winter Convention. We would really like more input. THANKS!

Survey #1

Please rate your satisfaction level with the Marina Inn at Grande Dunes in the below areas from zero to ten. Ten being very satisfied and Zero being totally not satisfied.

	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. Location	<u>9.24</u>	_____
2. Rates	<u>7.72</u>	_____
3. Cleanliness	<u>9.67</u>	_____
4. Quality of Luncheon	<u>5.46</u>	_____
5. Morning Breakfast	<u>3.45</u>	_____
6. In-House Restaurants	<u>4.89</u>	_____
7. Professionalism of Staff	<u>9.42</u>	_____
8. Overall Satisfaction	<u>7.52</u>	_____

Additional Comments on the Marina Inn Very nice property. Great location. Thursday night's dinner was worst, yet. Poor quality, overpriced, poor service. Breakfast buffet vouchers was a disaster and buffet was unacceptable.

Survey #2

The SCEA Convention Site and Finance Committee has talked with a fairly large number of properties throughout South Carolina - in the Low-country, in the Mid-Lands, in the Up-State and along the Grand Strand. We have visited over twenty properties and graded each. We have found at least three categories of properties.

- Top-grade properties with plush facilities and exquisite offerings: Rates are over \$100 per night per guest room and extra charges are applied for meeting spaces, hospitality rooms, a/v equipment, set-up and break-down of meeting rooms, food and beverages brought in, etc. These extra charges would increase the registration fees in most cases by up to 25% or more. We found these properties not very flexible and mostly unwilling to negotiate a favorable deal from their established charges and policies.
- Mid-grade properties with adequate meeting space and average or slightly above average quality of guest rooms and common spaces. We found these properties willing to negotiate and offer attractive guest room rates. In most cases, all meeting spaces and hospitality rooms were included at no charge. A few had minimal charges. Outside food and beverages were allowed in the hospitality rooms. Luncheon rates were very reasonable. Breakfast was available at a reasonable charge. These properties were found to be flexible and willing to negotiate a contract favorable to our association as well as themselves.
- Low-grade properties were found with less than desirable guest room and common area conditions and/or adequate meeting space.

With this information, the committee would like your opinions on several subjects:

1. Would you prefer having the convention in a Top Grade Property and paying more 56 or in a Mid Grade Property and paying less 36?

2. What do you consider to be more important in a convention site:
(Please rate importance from 1 to 5 with 5 being most important.)

Location 4 Low Room Rates 3.5 Low Registration Fee 3

Meeting Space 4 Lunch Quality 4.5

3. Which winter convention have you enjoyed the most in the past 10 years?

- Crown Reef - 7 Why? Great Food and Great Hospitality Room; On Beach Marina Inn - 35 Why? Very Nice Property and Very Clean
- Embassy Suites, Columbia - 5 Why? Central Location and Great Breakfast

4. Do you have a recommended location for the Winter Convention?

Charleston-3; Myrtle Beach-14; Columbia-5; Greenville-2; Marina Inn-9; Crown Reef-7; DoubleTree, MB-7; Hilton, MB-1

Additional Overall Comments:

At Marina Inn, we paid more and got less Beach Good in Winter Please Rotate between beach, Columbia, and Greenville to make it easier for Upstate to travel.

Survey #3

Please select your preferred property from the two past Winter Convention sites based on the following categories:

1. Location (Property Quality) - Marina Inn 56 Crown Reef 16
2. Room Rates - Marina Inn 47 Crown Reef 24
3. Quality of Luncheon - Marina Inn 26 Crown Reef 68
4. Hospitality Room Space - Marina Inn 35 Crown Reef 45
5. Hos. Rm. Cost - Marina Inn (\$99/night) 22 Crown Reef (no cost) 45
6. Morning Breakfast - Marina Inn 11* Crown Reef 61
7. In-House Restaurants - Marina Inn 23 Crown Reef 42
8. Overall Satisfaction - Marina Inn 50 Crown Reef 31

* Most of these said they ate off of the menu after looking at the buffet and the cost of the buffet. Two said the buffet was overpriced for the contents, but what was there, was good.

Additional Comments:

- One said that the Marina Inn is preferred and that "I can go out to eat elsewhere".
- Five or Six requested rotation between MB, Columbia, and Greenville.
- Many said that the food at the Marina Inn needs major improvement.
- Several said that they thought we would have better attendance at a lower priced venue and that they stayed at a different hotel due to higher cost.
- Many stated that the restaurants at Marina Inn are overpriced and service was poor and even mentioned that the Bar Food was too pricey, except during Happy Hour.

The SCEA Convention Site and Finance Committee thanks you for your input. Please turn in your surveys prior to departing for home or mail your survey to Woody Collins; 119 Windjammer Way; Anderson, SC 29626. E-mail: skccollins@hotmail.com.

This form will also be posted on our State Website for your inputs.

SCEA Convention Site Committee Chair's Analysis and Summary

We received 104 surveys out of the 150 we distributed at the Marina Inn and the posting on the website (three responses). There were ten that stated this was their first convention, but I assume there were others, most of which were likely new members. Not everyone answered every survey question, some because it was their first convention and others for unknown reasons.

The overall message, as I see it, is that a majority of those who attended this convention and turned in their surveys are in favor of staying in more upscale properties and paying a little more; however, with the additional cost, they do expect more in line of quality services such as the luncheon and breakfast offerings. We did have more than a 10% decrease in attendees and room nights picked up. Those that did not attend did not complete online surveys, so we are not sure why they did not attend, but it was possibly due to the increase in expense, although there could have been other reasons.

The Marina Inn proved to be a very favorable venue to those that attended with the exception of the food service. In all food related categories - breakfast, in-house restaurants, and luncheon - the scores were very low, especially when compared to the Crown Reef. In all other areas - quality of property, cleanliness, staff professionalism, and overall satisfaction - the scores were very high.

What this tells me is that those attendees that answered the survey are saying that we should choose a property at or very near the level of quality as the Marina Inn, but we should also assure that we get quality food service for our money and do not "pay more and get less" as many said.

I feel that we should consider a return to the Marina Inn, but only if we have a guarantee of greatly improved food service and perhaps some monetary concessions on last February's convention. I also believe that we should take another look at the DoubleTree Inn on the south end of Myrtle Beach, the Sheraton Convention Center in Myrtle Beach and perhaps the Embassy Suites or comparable property in Columbia and the Hilton and Marriott in Greenville. All of these properties are very close to the same quality as the Marina Inn.