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SDDOT 1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Study SD98-17 Executive Summary

Prepared by
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16. Abstract <p>This report summarizes public perceptions of Department of Transportation performance in delivering products and services to citizens across South Dakota. It is the second survey in what is intended to be an ongoing tracking effort to monitor changes in attitudes and needs among SDDOT customers. The first Customer Satisfaction Assessment was completed in the first half of 1997. This second assessment was purposefully scheduled for the second half of 1999. This allowed researchers to determine whether public opinion is influenced by seasonal factors influencing travel.</p> <p>The study includes opinions of 734 citizens randomly selected from listed household telephone numbers across the state. An additional sample of 66 legislators provides contrasting viewpoints of elected officials responsible for oversight and funding of SDDOT products and services.</p> <p>Two objectives guided the activities and tasks undertaken to complete this study. The objectives were: to assess public opinion concerning the importance and quality of the Department of Transportation's key products and services and to recommend actions the Department of Transportation can take to improve its performance and public perception of that performance.</p> <p>By assessing the public's opinions of the SDDOT's performance and understanding its significance, this research provides the framework for development of a management Action Plan for Department response.</p>			
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The 1999 Customer Satisfaction assessment fulfills the South Dakota Department of Transportation's need to continue to assess its performance defined by the attitudes, needs, opinions and perceptions of its diverse customer base. This study was designed to understand resident assessment of DOT performance - its significance and how best the DOT can respond to become more customer focused and market driven.

Two objectives guided the activities and tasks undertaken to complete this study. They were:

- To assess public opinion concerning the importance and quality of the Department of Transportation's key products and services; and
- To recommend actions the Department of Transportation can take to improve its performance and public perception of that performance.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The South Dakota Department of Transportation commissioned MarketLine Research, Inc (MRI) to design, manage, analyze, report and facilitate action planning related to its 1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment. The work was performed between July 1999 and February 2000.

Research was completed in three phases, the first two qualitative and the third quantitative. Assessment of customer satisfaction included the following research activities:

- a) Interviews involving SDDOT management, Office of Research staff and technical panel members to gain insight and acquire background necessary for the development of a *Discussion Guide* that directed Focus Group qualitative research efforts.
- b) A series of six (6) citizen Focus Groups were held in three of four SDDOT Regions:
 - Two groups in Sioux Falls in the Mitchell Region
 - Two groups in Pierre in the Pierre Region
 - Two Groups in Rapid City in the Rapid City Region.
- c) A telephone survey assessed public opinion of 734 randomly selected citizens and additionally 66 current Legislators. Calling attempts were made to contact all legislators.

TASKS

Nine tasks were completed during the course of this study. These tasks were chronological in nature beginning with initial meetings between MarketLine Research (MRI) staff and SDDOT technical panel members to discuss outcomes of the first assessment study (1997) and desired scope and issues to assess in the current (1999) study. The final task resulted in an *Action Plan* that details SDDOT's planned response to current assessment findings. Tasks are grouped and listed as qualitative, quantitative and managerial. They included:

Qualitative

1. Meet with the project's technical panel to review the project's scope and work plan.
2. Interview selected managers and staff of SDDOT to identify important issues related to customer service and to identify actions taken in response to the Department's 1997 customer survey.
3. Conduct focus groups with members of the public to identify significant issues that should be assessed quantitatively through a statewide survey.
4. Summarize findings of interviews and focus groups, and present them to the Technical Panel and SDDOT's 10-member Executive Team.

Quantitative

5. Based on interviews, focus groups, and feedback from presentations to the technical panel and executive team develop an instrument to be used in a statewide, quantitative survey and submit it for approval of the technical panel.
6. Upon approval of the survey instrument, conduct a statewide, quantitative survey to determine the South Dakota public's opinions concerning the importance and quality of SDDOT's products and services.

Managerial

7. Conduct a workshop with the Department's Executive Team to develop a plan of action for responding to findings of the statewide survey.
8. Prepare a final report summarizing research methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
9. Make executive presentations to SDDOT's Research Review Board and Executive Team.

KEY FINDINGS

Most residents satisfied

Respondents were told to assess overall performance in terms of how well the DOT maintained state roadways during the past year.

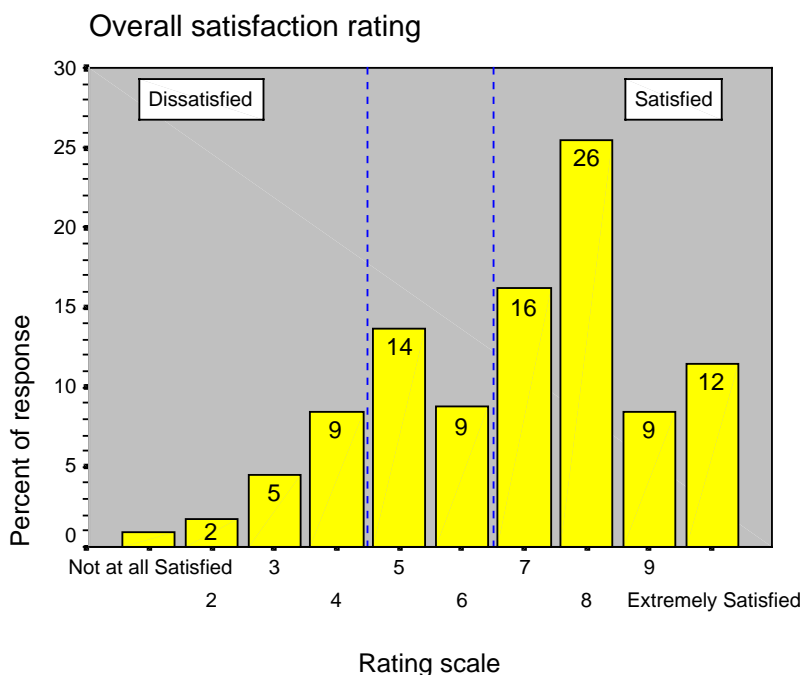
- Most residents interviewed (60%) indicated some level of satisfaction with the DOT.
- Residents are more satisfied with the DOT's snow and ice removal than with general maintenance of state roadways.

Satisfaction is strongest in the Mitchell and Aberdeen Regions. Older aged residents (55 and over) tend to rate all aspects of DOT job performance more positively than members of other age groups. They are especially more positive about the maintenance job the DOT does in removing snow and ice from roadways. Satisfaction ratings of legislators did not significantly differ from those of citizens.

Dissatisfaction

A sizable pocket of dissatisfaction exists as shown in Table 1. About one in six citizens are dissatisfied with overall DOT job performance. This represents some 40,000 plus households across South Dakota. The 16% dissatisfied resident group is significantly more dissatisfied in all areas of assessed satisfaction.

Table 1 – Distribution of Satisfaction Ratings



Attitudes towards DOT products and services

Degree of overall satisfaction with road maintenance is strongly associated with how positively or negatively a resident forms attitudes relating to other DOT offered products and services.

Satisfaction rating had a major effect on opinions about the DOT's products and services. People who are satisfied with the DOT rate each product /service related statement significantly higher than those who are neutral or dissatisfied.

- Only four of ten positively positioned product/service statements had 60% or more of the residents agreeing with the statement.
- Residents were least likely to believe that the DOT “answers questions completely” and that it “spends its budget wisely”.
- Half the legislators or more don't believe the DOT “gets construction jobs done as fast as they can” or that it is always “necessary to close down long stretches of highway for repair”.

Awareness and knowledge of SDDOT

Residents think the most important service of the DOT is maintaining the highway surface. Each assessed service was considered to have value, but some more than others. No current DOT service was rated least important by more than half the residents.

- Safety or ease of driving were primary reasons why so much importance was placed on maintaining highway surfaces.
- A service was often considered least important because “other services are more important”.

Most participants stated they based awareness and their impressions of SDDOT on daily observation and contact with workers in construction zones or in performance of maintenance activities. Impressions for the most part seemed to be influenced and associated with how well the roads were maintained (snow removal, signage, comfortable safe ride, etc.), and observed activity or inactivity of workers in construction zones,

Information needs

Most residents would like more information from the DOT. They would especially like information that helps them plan their trips.

- Virtually no one thinks the DOT provides too much information about future highway projects.
- One-fourth of the residents and legislators would like more information on future projects.

Mass media vehicles such as radio, newspapers and television are preferred sources of DOT information. Significant interest exists for receiving DOT information over the Internet.

Driving conditions

The increased amount of highway work this year has not caused additional problems for the residents. Only half of the residents think the level of highway construction is up this year.

- However, two thirds think they encounter highway work sites on almost every trip but don't always see visible signs of work being done.
- Most think the length of delays due to highway construction hasn't increased this year.

Some regional differences in perceptions exist.

- Residents of the Rapid City and Mitchell regions said they are more likely to encounter highway work than those in the Aberdeen and Pierre regions.
- Residents of the Rapid City region are more likely to perceive an increase in the level of highway work this year than other regions.

Positions on issues

(Resource allocation)

Most residents tend to be neutral (in the middle) when rating the fairness of funding for projects across all of South Dakota.

- Residents in Rapid City and Pierre regions are less likely than the other two regions to think that the DOT is fair.

(Roadwork priority)

There was not strong agreement on which projects should have funding priority. Overall, importance was given to some type of improvement of 2-lane highways.

(Amount of work on Interstate highways)

Residents think the DOT should do more to repair the state's Interstate highways.

(Interferences with travel safety)

Eight of nine roadway factors presented were thought to have a major impact on safe travel. Limited public transit service was not seen as having a major impact.

- Weather, an uncontrollable factor, is considered the most likely to interfere with safe travel.
- 8 in 10 residents viewed rough roads, narrow shoulders, poor pavement markings and construction as interfering with safe travel.

(Overweight trucks)

Both residents and legislators are concerned about the impact of overweight trucks on the highways.

- Legislators, rather than residents, are more likely to think enforcement of laws on overweight trucks is too strict.

(DM&E)

One fourth of all residents indicate they are not aware of this railroad issue.

For those aware of the issue, safety is the major concern residents have with expansion of the DM&E. Legislators' concerns are about adequate service to grain shippers and safety.

(Younger and older aged drivers)

Residents tend to be more concerned about the younger and older aged drivers than legislators.

- Residents tend to want more government regulation.
- Residents are undecided as to who should pay for increased regulation.

Driving behavior

Almost half the respondents said most of their trips were to and from work.

Age is a major factor in the type of trip.

- Two thirds of respondents under 55 years of age said they travel to and from work most often.
- Two thirds of respondents over 55 years of age said most of their trips are for personal and family errands or outings.

The heaviest users of South Dakota state highways are residents living in rural communities with less than 5,000 residents. Legislators drive significantly more miles annually than do residents.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Overall DOT satisfaction ratings were not influenced by factors often thought to contribute to or shape customer perceptions of performance.

Extensive statistical analysis and review of assessment findings indicates resident and legislator satisfaction ratings are not related to the following factors:

- Encountered driving conditions
 - Observed level of highway construction or maintenance
 - Location of encountered work, i.e., within or outside counties with Interstate
 - Frequency of encountering highway work
 - Visibility of work, or
 - Length of delays due to construction
- Reported driving behavior
 - Reported annual mileage
 - Type of road driven
 - Types of trips typically taken
- How residents or legislators rated highway maintenance in neighboring states
- Resident or legislator demographics (with exception of age).

2. Overall DOT satisfaction ratings are strongly related to information access.

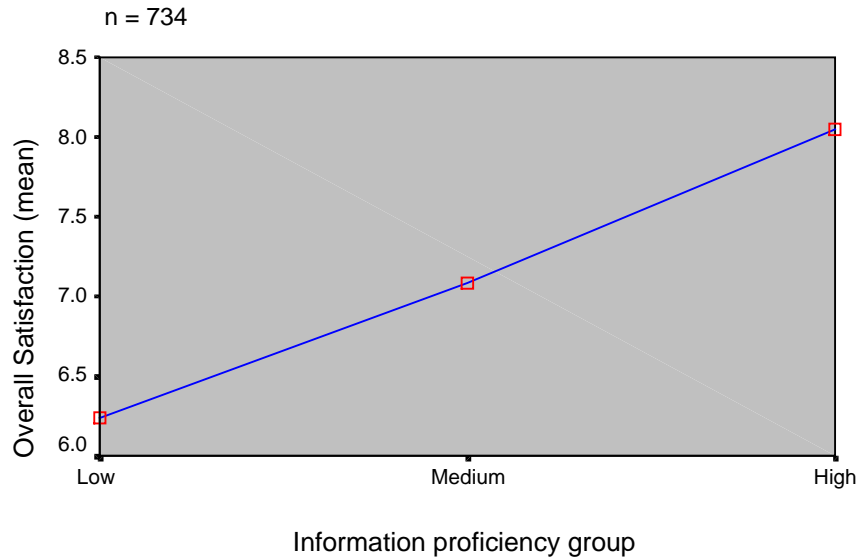
Statistically significant correlations exist between respondent ratings of satisfaction and perceived access to DOT information. Perceived proficiency at which the DOT disseminates transportation-related information influences assessment of overall performance.

Three groupings for analysis were identified based on response consistency to three information need questions asked of all survey respondents. The questions assessed:

- How easy residents felt obtaining needed information from the proper source would be;
- How residents rate the job DOT does in keeping citizens informed of current plans for highway construction and maintenance; and
- How residents rate the job DOT does in alerting drivers of delays and alternate routes.

Residents who responded positively to questions of DOT information delivery proficiency also consistently expressed the highest levels of overall satisfaction with DOT performance as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Relationship Between Overall Satisfaction and Access to Information



As perceptions of access to information become more positive so do perceptions of overall DOT performance. The implication is that informed residents make for more satisfied consumers of DOT products and services.

Which information proficiency grouping a resident is associated with is also a statistically significant predictor of likely response to questions associated with:

- Satisfaction with DOT maintenance for snow and ice removal;
- Satisfaction ratings of commercial air service quality available in South Dakota;
- Perception of DOT fairness in making funds for roadway projects available across all areas of the state; and
- Level of support for proposed expansion of DM&E railroad.

3. A positive perception of information availability correlates strongly with information dependent judgments and opinion formation.

Residents that had positive perception of information access were more likely to:

- Judge DOT statewide resource allocation as fair;
- Hold positive opinions regarding other DOT product and service attributes such as wise budget spending or undertaking the right projects or answering questions completely.

4. Perceptions of DOT consumers often don't match reality.

Observation plays a significant role in how residents form opinions and attitudes regarding DOT products and services and their related performance. This is especially true in situations where residents lack easy or meaningful access to relevant DOT product or service information.

The playing field is not flat! Not all DOT consumers are afforded the same level of information. With no centralized, coordinated communications program within the DOT, information quality, content and frequency of dissemination is bound to vary across DOT regions.

In the absence of complete information, or in some cases no information at all, observation is the prism through which users filter perceptions of reality as suggested in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Perception / Reality Model



No better example illustrates this point than the observed study differences between citizens and legislators. The gap between the perceptions of DOT provided products and services and their associated realities is significantly reduced for legislators due to better access to information. With more knowledge of SDDOT operations, the more closely perception matches reality.

5. Legislators differ from the general population on a number of key issues and perceptions.

Generally legislator opinions, attitudes and perceptions were more favorable of the DOT than those of average citizens. This relationship might suggest that better-informed residents can make for more satisfied consumers of DOT products and services.

- Legislators are heavy users of the roadway system. They are two times more likely to be high mileage drivers compared to the general population.
- This fact combined with their position and greater access to DOT related information most likely influences observed differences in perception of driving conditions from those of the general population.

As a group they rate DOT's proficiency in disseminating information higher than the general population.

- They are more likely to view getting information from the DOT as easier.
- They are more likely to feel the DOT keeps citizens informed, than citizens feel they are.
- However, they are slightly more negative than the general population when asked whether they believe the DOT alerts residents of delays.

As a group legislators are more knowledgeable of DOT provided services. Legislator priorities for DOT provided services differed from those of the general population.

- As a group they are less likely to rate 'maintaining highway surfaces' as the most important provided service.
- Rather as a group, they are five times more likely to see 'planning and construction first in order of importance.
- They are three times more likely to view 'providing motorist services' as the least important priority.

Legislators are about twice as likely to suggest the DOT should provide construction information—specifically notification of construction areas.

Opinion differences on transportation issues were also observed. As a group, legislators are:

- Twice as likely to feel enforcement of overweight truck laws is too strict.
- Twice as likely to support DM&E railroad expansion.
- About twice as likely to be concerned about adequate service to grain shippers in considering the DM&E expansion.

As a group they are less likely to favor mandatory drivers education for younger drivers or mandatory road testing of older drivers.

6. Consistencies and inconsistencies are present in 1999 and 1997 assessments.

Background

The 1999 survey was redesigned to achieve long range tracking objectives; consequently, the number of comparable questions is limited to twenty-two items, seven of which are demographic in nature. Core questions of the newly designed survey are intended to remain the same and serve as a solid baseline going forward. Only limited changes or additions should be needed when addressing new issues of interest.

Sample comparison

A total of 734 resident responses to the current 1999 survey were compared for consistencies and inconsistencies with 769 resident responses gathered during the 1997 survey.

Observed consistencies

Both assessments indicate:

- A majority of respondents (63% in 1997 and 60% in 1999) rate overall DOT job performance satisfactory;
- Older residents are more positive about DOT performance than younger residents;
- Respondent's number one priority is maintenance of highway surfaces,
- Respondents seek more DOT provided information; and
- Legislators are better informed.

Observed inconsistencies

Reported levels of satisfaction (performance rating) are shown below in Tables 2 and 3. Top two box scores of satisfaction are similar, but differences exist in dissatisfaction levels.

Table 2 – 1997 Satisfaction Ratings

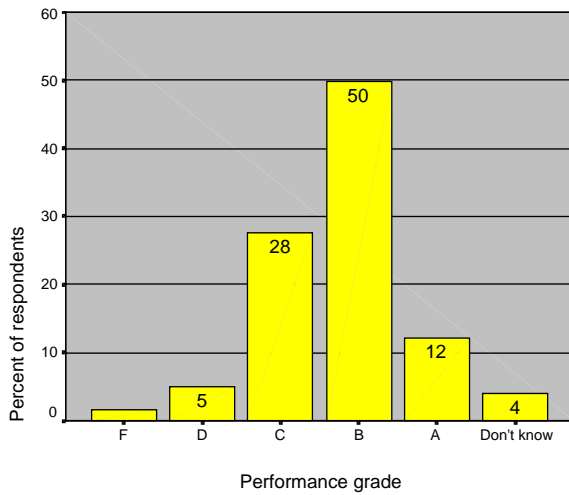
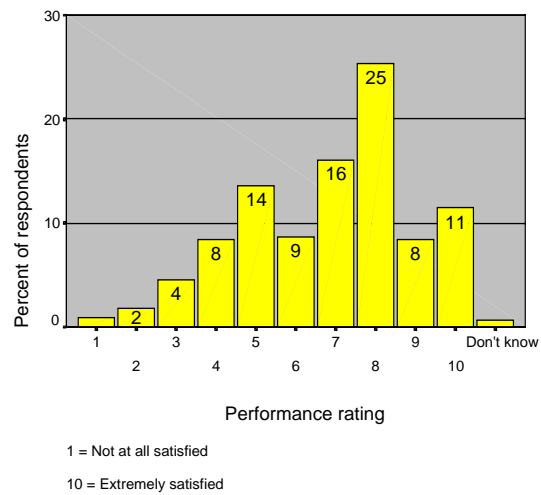


Table 3 – 1999 Satisfaction Ratings



Scale data from both studies was normalized and recoded into three groups ‘dissatisfied’, ‘neutral’ and ‘satisfied’. Detailed comparison of overall satisfaction shows inconsistencies in assessed dissatisfaction levels. Differences in levels of dissatisfaction are highlighted in Table 4.

- Dissatisfaction appears twice as high in the 1999 study as was found in the 1997 study.

Table 4 – Comparison of Satisfaction Levels 1999 to 1997

WAVE		Level of overall satisfaction				
			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1997	Valid	Dissatisfied	51	6.6	6.9	6.9
		Neutral	216	28.1	29.3	36.2
		Satisfied	470	61.2	63.8	100.0
		Total	737	96.0	100.0	
	Missing	System	31	4.0		
Total			768	100.0		
1999	Valid	Dissatisfied	115	15.7	15.8	15.8
		Neutral	164	22.3	22.5	38.3
		Satisfied	450	61.3	61.7	100.0
		Total	729	99.3	100.0	
	Missing	System	5	.7		
Total			734	100.0		

A number of attribute measures have decreased slightly since the 1997 assessment. Those highlighted in red in Table 5 are statistically significant at .05.

7. Questions that remain as result of the first assessment study.

The extent of survey redesign to achieve tracking objectives greatly limited comparison.

- Where comparisons were possible it appears a number of perceptions related to performance have changed as noted in comparison of assessments.
- Dissatisfaction in 1997 may have been understated. This could be due to a positive seasonality effect.
- The prior study occurred after a severe winter and many respondents were quick to comment and qualify assessments in terms of a good job given severe winter.

Differences between demographic groups are limited and exhibit no noticeable pattern. The significant Rapid City Region differences identified in the 1997 assessment do not appear in the current year assessment. Prior observed differences could be an artifact of sample or survey design or some environmental condition present at the time and localized in the Rapid City Region.

Table 5 – Average Responses Summarized

Attribute	Wave	N	Mean
Q32b. DOT considers and values public opinion	1997	771	3.82
	1999	761	3.62
Q32c. DOT undertaking right projects	1997	740	3.78
	1999	769	3.64
Q32d. DOT overbuilds state highways	1997	749	2.32
	1999	707	2.36
Q32e. DOT designs safe highways	1997	794	4.39
	1999	789	4.19
Q32f. DOT keeps highway construction delays to a minimum	1997	786	3.67
	1999	793	3.73
Q32g. DOT gets construction jobs done as fast as possible	1997	785	3.62
	1999	791	3.58
Q32h. DOT closes down long stretches of highways for repair	1997	785	2.68
	1999	778	2.63
Q32i. DOT spends budget wisely	1997	719	3.49
	1999	713	3.47
Q32j. DOT answers questions completely	1997	705	3.85
	1999	700	3.56

8. Interest in road maintenance strongly relates to safety.

Overall reactions to safe travel conditions are summarized in Table 6 below. As previously noted, the weather factor is uncontrollable. The operational factors that SDDOT can control and leverage to influence resident perceptions of safety are: rough roads, pavement markings and narrow shoulders. To receive credit, the DOT should communicate any increased efforts in these areas of interest. An effective message would be one that links these road maintenance efforts to

concern for improved public safety. A well-maintained road offering a smooth travel experience is what most residents are seeking as indicated in reasons given for assigning road maintenance their number one priority.

Table 6 – Conditions Perceived to Interfere the Most With Safe Driving

Condition	% 'Somewhat to Very likely'	Average rating
Winter conditions	90	3.54
Rough roads	89	3.35
Poor pavement markings	81	3.20
Narrow shoulders	85	3.15
Congestion in commercial areas	77	3.10
Construction activity	83	3.06
Poor road signage	67	2.93
Railroad crossings	70	2.91
Limited public transit	34	2.27

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 – Statewide Communications Audit

Establish a baseline departmental measure of where communications efforts currently stand throughout the Department of Transportation. Such an audit of how and what communications are handled on a region by region basis will help to identify strengths and weaknesses in how the SDDOT currently communicates with its customer base. The audit should examine:

- Past communication of transportation related programs, projects and issues, identifying successes and failures and supporting reasons.
- How channels of communications are utilized on a user-by-user segment basis.
- What vehicles and types of messages are typically employed?
- Who has taken responsibility for communicating SDDOT product and service information?

Analysis of customer satisfaction assessment data identified access to information as the most closely linked influence on a resident's overall satisfaction with SDDOT. Improved information access was also identified as a significant need in the 1997 assessment.

A resident's view of access to information or fulfillment of information needs was highly correlated to their assessment of DOT overall performance. As perceptions of access to information become more positive so do perceptions of DOT performance. The implication is that informed residents make for more satisfied consumers of DOT products and services.

Qualitative and quantitative data consistently and clearly indicated a public desire for easier information access and greater information availability. Citizens indicated they want to better understand:

- Where to look for DOT information;
- What information is available to them; and
- How to make contact with the DOT.

Currently there is no SDDOT Communications Office with staff and a statewide plan for addressing communication needs. Given this fact, a communications audit will begin to establish how internal mechanisms have informally evolved throughout the system to address customer information needs.

Recommendation 2 – Research Communication Efforts of Other DOTs

Examine the resources, organization and scope of communication programs administered by other state’s departments of transportation. Begin an internal discussion and review of how other transportation departments are seeking to keep their customers informed.

As a result of a commitment to become more customer-focused and market driven, many state DOT’s have developed public information programs of varying complexity. The SDDOT can learn from and model startup efforts after other states having similar diverse user segments such as rural, agricultural, urban, tourist and professional driver groups. Surrounding Midwestern states with comparable sized media markets and sophistication would offer good models.

Research should focus both on how communication programs are internally administered and how transportation customers obtain and use information.

Internal focus should seek to identify sources of information relating to:

- Staffing position descriptions with detailed responsibilities;
- Budgets outlining staffing and program expenditures;
- Organizational lines of communication;
- Examples of statewide Communication Plans; and
- Mechanisms used to assess program performance.

External end user focus should seek to identify sources of information relating to:

- End user Communication Studies;
- Tracking mechanisms and reports of communication program outcomes; and
- Public awareness studies of other DOT product and service offerings.

Recommendation 3 – Communication Staff Position & Plan

Create a position having statewide SDDOT responsibility for integration, facilitation and management of all internal and external departmental communications. Make communications planning a high priority.

Currently there is no SDDOT Communications Office with staff and a statewide plan for addressing communication needs.

- Given this fact, a communications audit serves to establish how internal mechanisms have informally evolved throughout the system to address customer information needs.

Based on findings of a communication audit, a communications professional can begin to establish procedures, standards and relationships that result in a smooth flow of information and a more consistent exchange of information.

- The need is to replace existing informal communication mechanisms with a more professional managed approach.

The fulfillment of this need over time should make possible:

- Stronger more proactive media relations;
- Increased public awareness of SDDOT products and services;
- Perceptions of easier and more comprehensive access to DOT information;
- Reduction of customer dissatisfaction stemming from lack of information; and
- A more cohesive departmental image, eliciting customer trust.

A key responsibility and vehicle for internal communications management is the development of an annual or biennial communications plan. This communications staff position should have the time, resources and accountability for implementing such a plan.

A cohesive communications plan directed by a communications professional can have significant impact on customer perceptions of performance.

- Assessment research indicated that the likelihood of a positive attitude toward DOT products and services increases when the resident has a clear perspective grounded in information.

Recommendation 4 – Respond To Customer Safety Wants

Road maintenance efforts should when practical focus on improved pavement markings, signage and provision for wide shoulders. The DOT can positively impact customer perceptions of performance by increased attention to maintaining roadway surfaces.

SDDOT customers clearly and frequently, in both qualitative and quantitative research responses, defined satisfaction with the DOT in terms of a safe travel experience on smooth South Dakota roads that are well maintained.

- Most residents equate rough roads with unsafe travel
- Poor pavement markings and narrow shoulders are also considered unsafe conditions by most.

The number one priority of most residents is for the DOT to repair and maintain existing roadways, principally two-lane highways.

- The research indicated that attention to and communication of efforts toward this goal should have a strong impact on customer satisfaction.

ACTION PLANNING

SDDOT MANAGEMENT’S DETAILED RESPONSE TO KEY FINDINGS IDENTIFIED IN THE 1999 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT.

PROCESS

The Executive Team was introduced to the planning process with a briefing of study findings and proposed workshop format on January 9th 2000 in Sioux Falls. Key areas for consideration were identified and members were given one month to review findings and formulate initial reactions.

MarketLine Research staff facilitated a full day of planning held during two half-day workshop sessions scheduled February 8th and 9th 2000 in Pierre. All members of the Executive Team participated in both sessions along with David Huft of the Office of Research.

Session 1 focused on articulating management’s position and related thoughts on the overall importance and scope of DOT efforts to achieve customer satisfaction. This common consensus building helped to define the playing field and organizational environment in which specific *Action Plan* initiatives were proposed and agreed to during Session 2.

Team discussion generated a consensus view that the organization's goal needs to focus on continuous attention to improvement of citizen satisfaction with all products and services the department provides.

At the start of Session 2, MarketLine Research staff outlined the action planning process to be used by the Executive Team. Needed plan elements were identified and explained by way of use of two prototypical action plan strategies developed to illustrate possible action planning response to issues relating to recommendations 2 and 4.

Work teams were then formed to address each of the four recommendations outlined in this report. A one-hour strategy development work session followed. Teams presented preliminary plans for full group discussion and refinement.

OUTCOMES

The following observable and measurable outcomes were identified by action planning teams.

Recommendation 1 –

- Internal and external communications audit completed and summarized
- Employee public relations training identified and summarized

Recommendation 2 –

- Position descriptions, organizational charts and qualifications obtained from contacted states
- Samples of other states' communications plans available for review
- Measures of effectiveness identified
- Training programs for communications function outlined
- Recommendations for SDDOT communications program implementation made to Executive Team

Recommendation 3 –

- PI / PR staff person identified and hired
- Formal department wide communications plan developed

Recommendation 4 –

- Reductions in accidents tracked and identified
- Improvements in safety made to roads
- Improved driver comfort evidenced
- Better road structure and life resulting from operational emphasis
- Fewer driver complaints

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Team formed teams of two to three individuals to recommend and manage *Action Plan* initiatives that address each of the *Final Report's* four recommendations. Teams will continuously guide and facilitate efforts to successfully achieve all desired strategy outcomes. Each team has a designated lead member. It was management's collective view that the Executive Team must take ownership and actively work to implement the *Action Plan* in order realize the best possible success.

Teams and their respective responsibilities are summarized below.

Team managing response to Recommendation 1

Members: Roxanne Rice, Director, Division of Fiscal & Public Assistance (lead member) and Larry Weiss, State Highway Engineer

Team managing response to Recommendation 2

Members: Larry Engbrecht, Pierre Region Engineer (lead member), Dave Huft, Research Engineer and Tom Week, Mitchell Region Engineer

Team managing response to Recommendation 3

Members: Peggy Laurenz, Personnel Specialist (lead member), Dennis Landguth, Deputy Secretary and Leon Schochenmaier, Director, Division of Planning/Engineering

Team managing response to Recommendation 4

Members: Larry Afdahl, Aberdeen Region Engineer (lead member) and Todd Seaman, Acting Rapid City Region Engineer and Mike Durick, Director, Division of Operations

TIMETABLE

Action planning teams identified desired target dates for completing all tasks associated with implementing identified strategies that address recommendations that form the basis for management's *Action Plan*. A timetable of target milestones for all plan elements follows.

