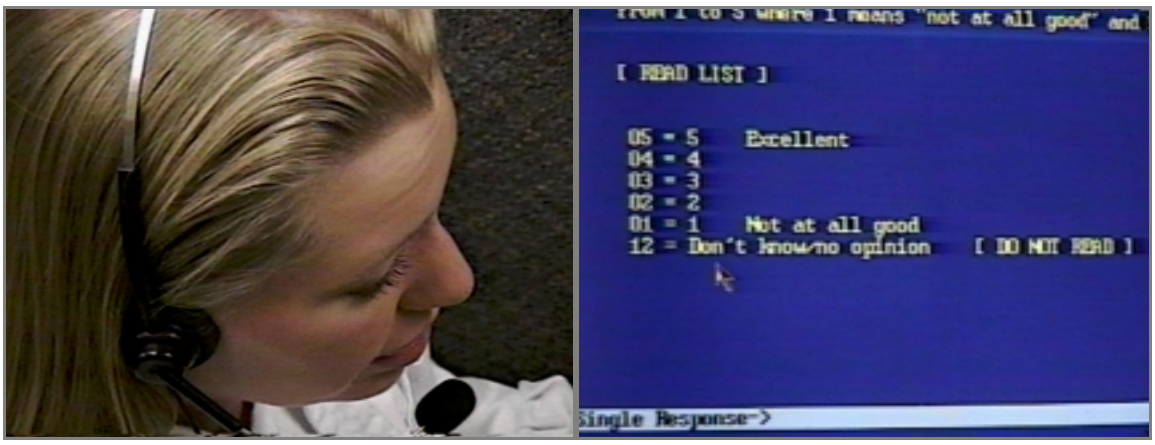
South Dakota
Department of Transportation
Office of Research

U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration

SD98-17-F



SDDOT 1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Study SD98-17
Final Report

Prepared by
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February 2000

DISCLAIMER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was performed under the supervision of the SD98-17 Technical Panel:

Jonathan Becker ..... Office of Research
Chuck Fergen ..... Fiscal & Public Assistance
Jeff Gustafson..... Mitchell Region
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Jim Keyes ... Associated General Contractors
Ben Orsbon..... Planning & Programs
Ed Rodgers .... Local Government Assistance
Todd Seaman..... Rapid City Region
Bob Sutton ... SD Highway Users Conference

The work was performed in cooperation with the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

TECHNICAL REPORT STANDARD TITLE PAGE

1. Report No. SD98-17-F	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.
4. Title and Subtitle SDDOT 1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment		5. Report Date February 29, 2000 6. Performing Organization Code
7. Author(s) David Bender & John Schamber		8. Performing Organization Report No.
9. Performing Organization Name and Address MarketLine Research 1313 5th Street SE Minneapolis, MN 55414		10. Work Unit No. 11. Contract or Grant No. 310676
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address South Dakota Department of Transportation Office of Research 700 East Broadway Avenue Pierre, SD 57501-2586		13. Type of Report and Period Covered Final Report July 1999 to February 2000 14. Sponsoring Agency Code
15. Supplementary Notes An executive summary of this report is published separately as SD98-17-X.		

16. Abstract

This report summarizes public perceptions of Department of Transportation performance in delivering products and services to residents 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.

The study includes opinions of 734 residents 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.

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.

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.

17. Keywords customer satisfaction		18. Distribution Statement No restrictions. This document is available to the public from the sponsoring agency.	
19. Security Classification (of this report) Unclassified	20. Security Classification (of this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 137	22. Price

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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.

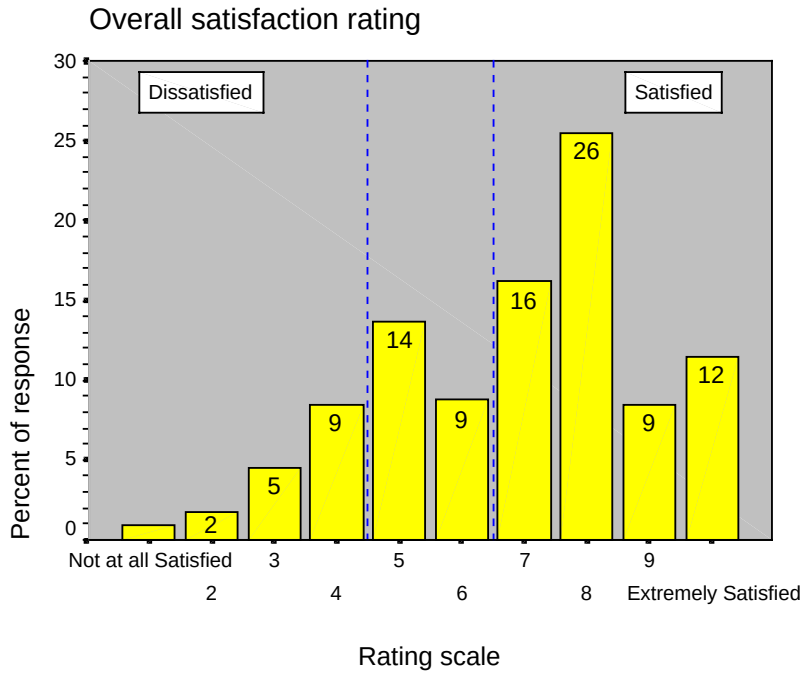
- Most residents interviewed (60%) indicated some level of satisfaction with the DOT.
- Residents are more satisfied with the DOT's snow and ice removal than with general maintenance of state roadways.

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. Legislator's 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.

<u>Driving behavior</u>

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.

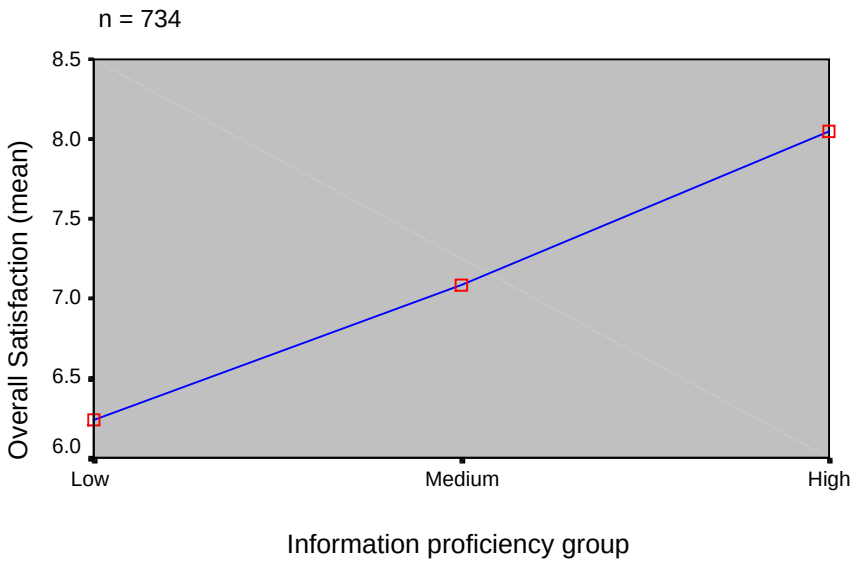
Statistically significant correlations exist between respondent ratings of satisfaction and perceived access to DOT information. Perceived proficiency at which the DOT disseminates transportation-related information influences assessment of overall performance.

Three groupings for analysis were identified based on <u>response consistency</u> 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.

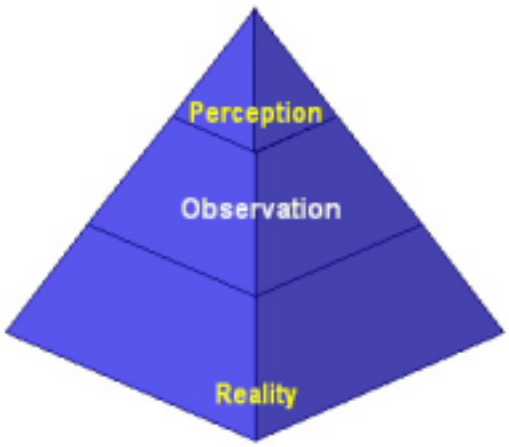
4. Perceptions of DOT consumers often don't match reality.

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

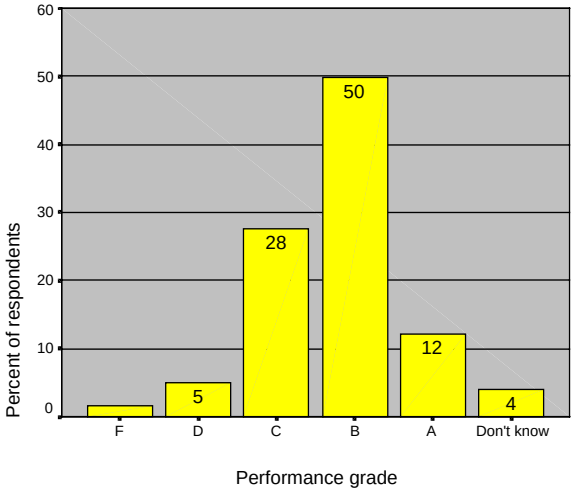
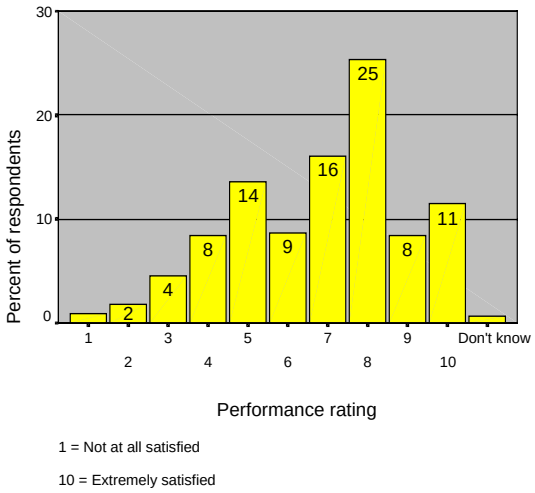


Table 3 – 1999 Satisfaction Ratings



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

Level of overall satisfaction

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

Communications audit and employee survey

60 days start to finish

Data collection communication information other states

Contacts with other states February 11th

Receipt of requested information by March 10th

Review of collected information by March 24th

Executive Summary of findings prepared by April 7th

Report to Executive Team by April 19th

Communications position and plan development

Hire communications professional by June 2000

Complete communications plan by end of December 2000

Attention to road maintenance and safety wants

Ongoing with attention to scheduled operations and existing budget cycles

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

SDDOT has begun a process by which it is positioning itself to become more and more responsive to user needs. The challenge in effectively meeting this task is to identify changes in expectations, needs and perceptions at a rate that keeps step with the dynamic market of diverse transportation users. SDDOT's services, road system and political environment have undergone a number of changes since the last assessment of user needs and attitudes. For example, taxes for certain services have been raised and new four-lane highway construction started.

Several key questions have been identified subsequent to the determination and reporting of findings from the initial customer survey fielded in 1997. The questions include:

- How has the Department of Transportation responded to issues raised in the 1997 survey? Are more proactive responses possible?

- Do public perceptions of the Department's current performance differ significantly from perceptions in 1997? If so, how?

- How does public opinion differ if assessed in the fall, rather than the spring (which in 1997 immediately followed a record severe winter)?

- Would a current survey confirm or refute the significantly different opinions expressed in 1997 by residents in the Rapid City Region? If differences are confirmed what factors underlie them?

- What other differences of opinion between demographic groups are significant?

- What are the public's opinions on current issues, including funding for transportation construction and maintenance, commercial vehicle operations?

It's <u>not enough</u> to merely assess and identify resident needs, wants, opinions and behaviors. The difficult challenge following the successful assessment of SDDOT product and service delivery and the subsequent examination of the above questions is translating the findings into long-term responsive action throughout the SDDOT. This need requires a comprehensive management authored and directed <u>*Action Plan*</u> that addresses all assessment recommendations.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess public opinion concerning the importance and quality of the Department of Transportation's key products and services.

2. To recommend actions the Department of Transportation can take to improve its performance and public perception of that performance.

The above objectives are intended to guide research efforts needed to reassess the public's opinions of the Department's performance, explain their significance, and identify how the Department can respond to them.

In meeting the specified objectives, the *1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment* allows the Department of Transportation to:

- Better understand their customer's needs, priorities and expectations for products and services;

- Effectively assess changes in service and product requirements based on current user travel behavior and attitudes; and

- Develop and implement an *Action Plan* that outlines and directs a more responsive delivery of products and services to a dynamic transportation market.

<u>Objective of Assessing Public Opinion</u>

The study used identified issues outlined in the *Problem Description*. The identified issues were used as a springboard to the development process for reaching consensus on the issues to be assessed through the new survey instrument. These identified problems were reviewed and clarified with both SDDOT staff during management interviews and during a series of focus groups. This ensured that all stated problems were properly covered in the new quantitative survey instrument.

The objective of assessing public opinion was addressed through:

a) Interviews involving management, research staff and technical panel members to gain insight and acquire background necessary for the development of a *Discussion Guide* (appears in Appendix A) that directed Focus Group qualitative research efforts.

b) A series of six (6) resident Focus Groups was held in three of four SDDOT Regions:
   - Two groups in Sioux Falls in the Mitchell Region;
   - Two groups in Pierre in the Pierre Region; and
   - Two groups in Rapid City in the Rapid City Region.

c) A telephone survey assessed public opinion of 734 randomly selected residents and additionally 66 current Legislators (list appears in Appendix C).

Objective of recommending actions

As noted in the *Problem Description*, assessment findings need to be translated into actions that can improve DOT performance and the public's perception of its performance.

The objective of recommending actions was addressed through:

a) Organization of key findings and presentation of a management briefing in Sioux Falls that laid groundwork for preparations leading up to full day action planning workshop in Pierre.

b) Facilitation of a management action planning workshop that resulted in a two year Action Plan that addresses the four (4) recommendations stemming from the *1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment.*

Extent of accomplishment of objectives

a) Sixty residents participated in the six focus groups. The clarity and consistency of attitudes and opinions expressed greatly aided the development of the quantitative assessment survey. Management's descriptions of products and services and list of issues worked well to elicit meaningful response. A number of staff assumptions were validated in the process.

b) Residents (734) were willing to spend on average twenty or more minutes responding to the survey. Some participated for 45 to 60 minutes. Twice as many legislators participated in the

1999 study as compared to the 1997 study. This was most likely a result of the Office of Research sending a letter to announce the purpose and timing of the study to each legislator.

Results of both the qualitative and quantitative phases of assessment are identical. The qualitative findings provide good insight into strength of conviction and nuisances behind the quantitatively gathered responses.

c) The Executive Team formed four task groups and developed detailed action plans addressing all four recommendations stemming from the completed research. See page 99 for actual plans.

TASK DESCRIPTIONS

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.

MRI researchers met with the panel to review objectives and establish a final work plan around which the research design was formalized. At this meeting past research results and instruments were discussed. New products and services and current statewide transportation issues were discussed and prioritized for inclusion in the *1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment*.

This phase also acquainted MRI staff with key players that were subsequently interviewed for identifying service issues and department changes taken based on the first assessments findings.

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.

Interviews with selected managers and staff of SDDOT provided needed direction for survey refinement based on identification of new issues that had arisen since the survey was last administered in 1997. Additionally MRI researchers met with SDDOT regional representatives prior to the start of the Mitchell and Rapid City Region focus groups. This helped to ensure that local issues that had arisen since the first assessment were properly understood and incorporated into the research instruments. One such issue, that of resident interest in scenic versus wider roads in the Rapid City Region, was included in the survey and asked of residents of the Rapid City Region.

3. **Conduct focus groups with members of the public to identify significant issues that should be assessed quantitatively through a statewide survey.**

MRI researchers conducted six (6) focus groups with residents from across the state to identify key issues that would be quantitatively assessed through a statewide telephone survey. To provide balance for regional differences sessions were held in cities both east and west of the Missouri. The cities were Pierre, Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Two sessions were held in each location.

Sessions were audio and videotaped. Transcripts of the six sessions are available from the SDDOT Office of Research. Staff from SDDOT was able to observe groups via a closed circuit TV system.

A *Discussion Guide* for the groups was based on input from the one-on-one sessions with SDDOT personnel and input from the technical panel.

If issues arose in the quantitative phase of assessment that were not previously heard in the qualitative sessions and/or were not clearly understood, a second series of focus groups (2) was planned for the Aberdeen Region. This proved to be unnecessary.

Recruiting techniques were structured so as to draw a broader representation of SDDOT customers from both urban and rural population centers. This was in response to a more skewed representation favoring urban areas experienced in the first assessment study.

Participants had to be 18 years of age or older and have lived in South Dakota for more than six months.

4. **Summarize findings of interviews, focus groups and present them to the Technical Panel and SDDOT's 10-member Executive Team.**

A forty-six-page summary of focus group findings was provided to the Office of Research following the completion of the focus groups. No meeting specific to this task was held. Results were discussed in the context of the overall assessment of findings during a teleconference with members of the Technical Panel in late December and at an Executive Team briefing in early January in Sioux Falls.

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.**

Input from SDDOT managers and staff served the function of updating the prior survey to reflect new products and services along with questions stemming from the first study's findings that needed to be further assessed and clarified (these are noted in the *Problem Description*).

Focus groups allowed MRI and Office of Research staffs to more clearly word many of the product and service descriptions and frame many of the topical issues in terms residents could clearly understand and relate to.

MRI provided a revised draft survey for SDDOT Technical Panel review and approval. A copy of the final survey appears in Appendix B.

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.**

MarketLine Research conducted 800 telephone interviews statewide, the same number as in the first study. This number allowed for representation across all areas of population density, namely:

- Communities of 40,000 or more
- Communities of 5,000 to 40,000
- Communities of less than 5,000.

Each of SDDOT's four transportation regions was proportionately represented based on household representation. 66 of the 800 interviews were with legislators.

MRI did not establish a hookup for remote monitoring at designated times to SDDOT offices in Pierre. Instead it was deemed useful to have Office of Research staff visit MRI facilities and take part in pre-testing the survey instrument prior to full fielding of the study.

MRI provided on a weekly basis a 'Progress Monitor'. This document provided real time results of key identified questions.

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.

MRI management staff traveled to Sioux Falls to conduct a briefing with the Executive Team in preparation of the action-planning workshop. The Team was provided with written materials for consideration and workshop preparation.

A PowerPoint presentation was used to summarize key assessment findings, outline the action planning workshop process and identify management decision requirements necessary to put an Action Plan in place.

An agenda for the one-day workshop was mutually developed and agreed upon by MarketLine and SDDOT's managing Research Engineer.

Prior to the workshop, members were able to review a draft report of the *1999 Customer Satisfaction Assessment* and examine sections that have special importance or impact in their area of job responsibility.

MarketLine principals facilitated the translation of findings into an *Action Plan*. The plan identifies assigned responsibilities; required staff resources, implementation schedule, and performance measures for plan assessment.

MarketLine incorporated the first draft of this agreed upon *Action Plan* into this final report.

8. Prepare a final report summarizing research methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Based on careful statistical analysis and review of all gathered information, a top line of findings was sent to SDDOT. MRI and the members of the Technical Panel had a teleconference in late December and shared ideas, conclusions and thoughts on interpretation.

The detailed report of findings reflect a process of input that included:

- A half day workshop examining gathered data with the Technical Panel;
- A workshop on action planning with the Executive Team; and
- Final draft approval by the research technical panel in charge of the study.

9. Make executive presentations to SDDOT's Research Review Board and Executive Team.

MRI developed a PowerPoint presentation of relevant findings and conclusions that facilitated preparation of the *Action Plan* workshop with the Executive Team.

The presentation provided the Executive Team a blueprint for considerations leading up to the workshop, an outline of the process to be used during the workshop and expected outcomes stemming from the workshop.

MRI staff made an executive presentation in Pierre to the Research Review Board.

Implementation

Implementation and accomplishment of recommendations are now the responsibility of Department management.

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

Key Observations

Satisfaction with DOT

The majority of participants stated they are satisfied with the performance, delivery and balance of SDDOT products and services. The greatest interest was in maintaining the current system of roads and highways. This emphasis was closely associated with a general perception of safety that they believe results from well-maintained roadways. Comfortable travel was also associated with safe roads and good maintenance.

Role and Priorities of DOT

Generally participants across all markets expressed similar concerns, interests, perceptions and attitudes regarding the role and priorities of the SDDOT. Regional issues, needs and differences were minimal. Although east and west river distinctions were raised in a number of conversations, a great attitudinal divide did not separate participants. There was an understanding expressed by all participants of the unique needs of the various statewide SDDOT customers—urban and rural, eastern and western, trucker, farmer, rancher and tourist.

Basis of DOT Awareness

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.

Positions on Issues

Most participants expressed similar positions on issues examined.

- Greatest SDDOT challenge was seen as maintaining a roadway infrastructure across a vast sparsely populated area in a harsh climate using limited resources.

- Priority should be placed on rural road (gravel) development over expressways.

- Maintain existing roads versus adding new roads.

- DM&E was seen primarily as a safety issue and a potential inconvenience to travel in urban areas. Most were able to see an economic value to the state.

- Rapid City area participants, for the most part, favored scenic roads over wider high-speed roads, although many saw a benefit of safety in wider roads.

- Participants all agreed that overweight trucks were damaging state roads and that laws should be more strictly enforced.

- Participants viewed older aged drivers in terms of potential safety risks. Consensus was for more frequent road tests for qualification to drive.

- Most participants expressed a general feeling of unattended construction zones causing confusion, unnecessary delay and safety risks resulting from impatient drivers.

Desire for more Information

Most participants expressed a desire for greater information regarding SDDOT activities. The interest was for things beyond what can be easily observed on a daily basis by traveling the roads and highways, i.e., construction delays, road repairs and road conditions.

Identified areas for potentially further customer education included:

- How planning is done and decisions are reached;

- Division of governmental responsibilities for roadway related issues;

- Budgets and sources of funding;

- How priorities are arrived at and resources allocated;

- How to reach the appropriate contact to voice a concern or issue;

- Location and content of SDDOT website;
- SDDOT role in enforcement of roadway related laws; and
- Role of SDDOT as relates to rail and air transportation.

General Perceptions of the Image & Role of Government

Although some perceive an increase in the size of government, at both the federal and state levels, most seem to have the impression that the size of government is relatively unchanged, or perhaps even decreasing. There was little noticeable demand for "less government" among these residents.

Some appear to be unsure whether the size of the SDDOT has changed over the past few years, but many seem to be aware of staff cuts, primarily resulting in fewer snow removal workers.

Many expressed concern that these cuts would become very noticeable if South Dakota was to have a more severe winter than it has experienced over the past few years.

PROBE: ***Do you think the size of government today, compared to recent years, is increasing, decreasing or staying about the same as it was 10—20 years ago?***

<u>Federal government</u>

- Policy wise, they're increasing.
- There are more bureaucrats out there all the time.
- Well, as a percentage of the total population in the country, I don't see it's expanded any really. The population of the country has increased so much, and I don't see that the government has expanded all that much.
- I think in terms of numbers, it's less.
- I think it's stayed pretty much the same the last few years.
- I believe it was shrinking for a number of years, but I think for the last 3 or 4 years. It's held pretty much the same in size.
- I think it's increasing.
- I'd disagree. I think it's pretty much holding the same. Compared to the number of people and the amount of services that are demanded of the governmental entities, I think the state is holding its own. If anything, there are not enough people there.

State Department of Transportation

- I don't think it's changed.
- I don't either. There doesn't seem to be much change.
- It's probably actually increasing some, because highway construction has really been going.
- Some of it's decreased because a lot of the ways they do the maintenance—the plowing and that type of thing. They don't do them as year-round employees. They've changed a lot of that.
- Attrition is eating up a lot of positions in DOT, as I understand it.
- Countywide they've done that, too. They've cut down on their maintenance.
- More shrinkage in some parts with less population. I know in the Sioux Falls area, it's grown some.
- They tell us they're cutting back.
- It would be nice to see some documentation or figures for people to know if it's better or it isn't. We can all sit here and say it's probably not better, but it would be nice for them to show it. They must have documentation that they could make available. If they're not making it available, you wonder why.

Familiarity with SDDOT

Despite a broad awareness of the DOT as being responsible for road maintenance and road building, most claim to be unsure of all of the responsibilities and functions of the DOT, and even more unsure of what the DOT is planning and their decision-making process.

Any existing familiarity with the DOT is likely to be a function of exposure to road maintenance activities, and/or articles in the local press about upcoming projects or proposals—especially controversial new construction project proposals.

Limited familiarity with the DOT, many seem to agree, could be evidence that the DOT is not adequately in touch with resident needs.

Participant comments indicate:

- A widespread interest in knowing more about the DOT; its functions and responsibilities, updates on current projects and proposals, and its long-term plan or mission for the state of South Dakota;

- Limited attempts are made to directly contact the DOT. Very few claim to have ever attempted to contact the DOT. Those that have were usually inquiring about a particular road condition, or about road closings due to inclement weather; and

- The DOT web site is not widely known. Most are unaware of the existence of a DOT web site, but there appears to be considerable support for this service. Many claim to have Internet access, and claim that they would visit a web site for DOT information.

In addition to the availability of a DOT web site, most mentioned local newspapers as being a good potential source of more information about the DOT (its projects and its plans), as well as other media, such as radio and television. Other potential sources of information volunteered include direct mail, and pamphlets distributed when license tabs are obtained.

PROBE: ***What do you think about your government's ability to stay in touch with and respond to the needs of its citizens? Has its effectiveness in this area been increasing, decreasing or staying about the same?***

- There is information out there. Like I said before, sometimes people just need to work at it. We can't be spoon-fed, but just an advertisement telling us to go to the web site, I think, would be helpful.
- Citizens should look for that information and not just sit back and say, "Tell me."
- Maybe they need to make people aware of where that information is accessible. Then I share the responsibility, too but I don't know where to go to find it.
- For some reason, we're not hearing much.
- I would probably represent the people who are not as familiar as they should be on what the DOT does.
- Do they do this road every ten years and this road every five? I haven't a clue. They could do a little public relations and inform the public on some of the things they do. Or how they plan.
- It would be nice to know whom to contact when you feel that there's a dangerous intersection on the road you travel. Who to contact to file a complaint.
- Gosh that would be nice if we had the sense of where construction is going on. And AAA—I've got a map and they don't know what's going on either.
- You have no idea of where construction is in South Dakota until you hit it.
- You don't know whom to contact if you did want to contact them. You say people don't cut down to 45—well, when you have long stretches and you've got barrels in place for the same site but nobody's working. Is this a construction zone today or not? Can I go 70 today?
- And, again, I don't think the DOT is doing a very good job of letting people know that it is either only while they're working or at all times.
- They're going to have sections blocked off for a period of time. Like I said you don't get any other information.

PROBE: ***How would you prefer to get information?***

- I don't think it makes much difference who gives it to you—DOT or a newspaper reporter.
- The newspaper is probably a pretty cheap method. And news on the radio or TV. I don't think you can send out flyers to people. That's too spendy.
- Those public service announcements. I think they're great because I think they did make us appreciate those people out there more. They don't pound on the negative and say, "Don't do it." They say "You know what?"
- It would be nice if they'd stick something in the mail like the Postal Service does when they change things.
- Radio, TV or newspaper.
- I suppose they'd use something like Game, Fish & Parks does, or something like that. They get their information out, through the fairs, through the media.
- The DOT could put out a thing in the newspaper. Like every Friday, put out "These are the roads that we're working on during this time."
- An 800 number you could call.

PROBE: ***Did you know the DOT has a web site?***

- If they do have an Internet site, I don't know how to get hold of them. If they would get the address out—the Internet would be a way to go for anybody who's interested.
- What a perfect time when they've got you drawn emotionally on those commercials (PSA's) to put the web site: www.whatever on the 10 PM news.
- But the people on the Internet—aren't they in the minority? Really. They're not more than half of the population, are they?

PROBE***: Do you ever have a sense you'd like more information?***

- I think it would be great if they would, even in the paper, list what proposed projects and maybe get input from the people from different counties and stuff.
- If we all renew our vehicle license every year, why couldn't they use that source to get us information about proposed information that they're planning, and information about who to contact in your area, and what the DOT does. There isn't enough information.
- I've never stood in line for less than an hour when I get my license plates. I could read a whole bunch of information then.
- I think when it's in the newspaper its general knowledge. On radio stations, you may pick up on it. I think if they would let AAA know what's going on…
- Like a newsletter that could be sent to interested parties that have expressed an interest.

- No, but since that's seasonal, it would be a good place to do it all year round, whether it was construction or weather. Generally this time of year, we're not looking on there for weather. Once the snow starts flying, it's weather. Use the same number.
- And then if they'd advertise it on TV so people know if they need to know more…

Sources of SDDOT Awareness and Contact

In addition to daily contact through exposure to road maintenance activities, a number of other ways in which impressions are formed were expressed. Perceived or noticed lack of activity in construction zones is a strong opinion influencer. To some participants impressions are based primarily on their road experience.

PROBE: ***Where would you say your impressions or understanding of the DOT come from?***

- I think the single biggest thing that gives a person their impression of the DOT is the person who stops people and sends them through detours. That's the single person you meet when you deal with the DOT. So that's the person you want to have as a good ambassador for the state of South Dakota, and sometimes they're not.
- Driving through it and the newspaper.
- The visible signs, of which there aren't very many.
- Well, they'll have an article—if there's a big project coming up, they may publicize it or if, for some reason it's extended longer than what—either extended over the time or over the budget, then we're going to hear about it.
- I guess for me, I know some people who've retired from DOT and other people who have worked in DOT.
- I would have to say I've only lived here 9 months and I would say, in that time, I haven't seen any flyers come through the mail. I haven't seen anything. Nothing on the news.
- I know that if you go to their planning sessions, and there's 2-3 a year, where the contractors—in the contracting business, you know what's going on.
- Actually, the DOT is the face of South Dakota, because they're the first impression for everybody.
- It seems like the general picture you get is the condition of the roads.
- Probably from traveling up and down the highway.
- Does the road ride smooth? Is it plowed?
- In the wintertime, is it maintained?
- Is it a drivable surface?

Perceived Functions of SDDOT (Unaided)

When asked to describe the role of the SDDOT, most were likely to mention "road maintenance" and "building roads".

Perceived functions falling under the responsibility of the DOT, in order of mention in each of the six groups, by market, were as follows:

Table 7—Top-of-mind functions associated with SDDOT

Sioux Falls		Pierre		Rapid City	
6 PM	**8 PM**	**6 PM**	**8 PM**	**6 PM**	**8 PM**
Maintain roads	Highway maintenance	Roadway repair	Road maintenance	Maintain roads	Maintain highways
Fund new roads	New road construction	Road building	Road construction	Design/ plan	Anticipate public's needs
Traffic control	Equipment inventory	Planning	Land purchases	Road safety	Build highways
Sign placement	Road design/ engineering	Safety/road signs and markings	Law enforcement	Signage	Road safety
Allocate tax Dollars	Safety recommen-dations		Weight enforcement	Bridges	Enforcement of weight scales/con-struction police
Planning	Rules and regulations		Establish materials standards	Construction inspection	Policy making
Road safety -speed -road design -education	Truck inspections		Build runways/ railroads	Railroad crossings	Research/ traffic counts/ materials research
	Rest areas		Long term planning of roads	Driver licenses	Contracts

Although some claimed the DOT was just responsible for highways, others believed that all roads were under the DOT's responsibility, and many others just weren't sure.

It is clear that referring to “new roads” conjures up different images. Some picture a road being built where no road previously existed, some envision an existing roadway being widened, and others think of resurfaced old road as becoming a new road.

- Many seem to believe that there is probably a very limited need for creating new roads where none previously exist.

- “Maintain what we’ve got” was a common sentiment. Road reconstruction (improving road geometry), many agreed, should be a priority where population growth and changing traffic patterns demand.

PROBE: ***If you had to use one sentence to describe the role of the State DOT, what would you say, in one sentence? What are they?***

- Most important is maintaining the highway for public safety.
- Take care of the roads.
- Yeah, maintain the roads.
- It was pretty touch between the first and the second one. They involve safety.
- It relates back to safety. It shows concern for the public on their part.
- We can have snow from October to April, so keeping snow and ice off the roadways…
- Because it seems to affect the public directly, more so than these other phases of it. Weather conditions, especially; highway conditions, construction zones—that’s very important in travel.
- Maintaining the highway surface (ice and snow removal, smooth pavement, and highway stripes.
- I remember when the road was good or rough, whether it was icy.
- It’s related to safety.
- I think it’s the hardest job in this state for the DOT.
- It’s very important to be done, like some of them have said, for safety reasons. That’s what we’ll all after—highway safety.

PROBE: ***What roads is DOT responsible for?***

- I would think pretty much all of it.
- I think all of it.
- Probably all of it.
- I would think it would be all but the local.
- Highway maintenance.
- Road repair. That’s about the same as maintenance.

PROBE: ***What is meant by new road?***

- Hopefully less congestion on other roads.
- I consider a new road a regrading of the existing road of an entirely new one. I don't know where they're building entirely new roads.

PROBE: ***What's your impression of how the DOT decides what projects it's going to pursue in meeting your needs or meeting tomorrow's needs? How do they go about making that determination?***

- Driving on the roads. That's about the only thing I can think of. In all fairness, I honestly don't know how much decision-making the DOT really has. I don't know that they're too influential in determining how much money to spend on roads and things like that. Currently, I don't think of them as a decision-making body at all.
- I guess probably as an average citizen, I really don't know and sometimes, do I really care? I guess when I read the paper or see something on TV, but whether I really question what they really do, I guess I probably really don't. As long the roads I want to drive on are plowed.
- I'm not familiar at all. Not a lot. How they operate.
- I assume they decide what the high traffic roads are and those are the roads they fix first.
- I think they probably try to go around the state, so everybody is happy.

Desired Priority of SDDOT Functions

Maintenance is the number one priority. Many individuals saw maintenance and provision of motorist services as closely linked and in many cases inseparable.

When asked to rank the functions of the DOT in order of importance to them, maintaining the highway surface is considered to be most important (widely perceived as a safety issue) followed by providing motorist services (also perceived as key to providing safe traveling conditions).

Participant priorities are listed below.

Maintaining the highway surface: Includes ice and snow removal, keeping the pavement smooth and the highway stripes clearly visible.

Providing motorist services: Maintain highway signs and traffic signals, upkeep and safety of rest areas, and providing current information on weather, highway conditions, and construction zones.

Planning and construction: Planning where new highways should be built, soliciting input and working with contractors and other agencies to build highways.

Maintaining roadsides: Includes keeping plants and grasses neat and attractive, removing any trash or dead animals, providing adequate shoulder widths for emergency stopping, and eliminating weeds from the roadside.

Research: Doing research on new construction materials, maintenance techniques, and safety, and conducting public opinion polls to identify citizen needs and level of satisfaction.

Promoting air, railroad and transit services: Funding public transit services and securing funding for airport runway construction and railroad track improvements.

PROBE: ***So there seems to be the sense that their priorities are in line what you think they should be.***

- I think the emphasis should be on maintenance, filling the cracks and potholes.
- I think maintenance, too, because eventually if they focused more on maintenance, maybe they would have more money for other areas down the road.
- If you take care of the roads that you have, they're going to last longer.
- And if we don't take care of the ones we've got, why be planning on new ones.
- I think the maintenance. That's why there's all that construction all the time. That's probably what they're focusing on right now.
- Better maintenance on the roads that we have.
- More personnel to take care of the roads to maintain the existing roads.
- It relates back to safety. It shows concern for the public on their part.
- We can have snow from October to April, so keeping snow and ice off the roadways…
- It's very important to be done, like some of them have said, for safety reasons. That's what we'll all after—highway safety.

Funding & Staffing of DOT

Few ventured to even guess the annual budget of the DOT, and few, when told of the budget amount, had much reaction, either positive or negative. Hearing that the budget for fiscal 2000 ($366 million) was up significantly from 1999 ($289 million) caused many to wonder about the source of the additional funds and about the intended use of those funds.

When given a hypothetical choice among getting more services through increased taxes, maintaining the status quo, or cutting taxes and reducing some services, almost all claimed to be in favor of maintaining the status quo.

- If additional funds to the DOT were to become available, most were in favor of spending more on road maintenance. If budget cuts had to be made, most were in favor of less new road construction.

- Although gasoline taxes and license fees were often mentioned as sources of DOT funding, there appears to be considerable uncertainty about all of the funding sources available to the DOT, and the relative importance of each of those sources in the total DOT budget.

- Most appear aware of the recent gasoline tax increase, and many believed the increase to be about 3 or 4 cents per gallon. Few, however, claim to know the new total amount of the state gasoline tax, and few claim to know if the tax increase was intended to fund a particular DOT need.

- Most seem to concur that gasoline tax is probably the fairest means of funding, since heavier users of the roads will pay the most.

- Most were aware of the recent license plate fee increase, and appear to be supportive of this action. Most seem to agree that there was probably a need for this additional revenue, and many volunteered that compared to neighboring states, South Dakota drivers' fees were still relatively low.

PROBE: ***What is their (SDDOT) yearly budget?***

- Major federal dollars. There's a lot of matching funds.
- No idea.
- We generally only hear of it around here when we're out of it in the winter and there's no more money for snow removal.

PROBE: ***Where do they (SDDOT) get their money from?***

- Gas tax. Don't they tax our gas?
- I thought they did—like 40 cents a gallon or something.
- The legislature passed the gas tax. But it goes to the DOT, doesn't it?

- Property taxes.
- There's quite a lot more funding coming from the federal level. There's a substantial increase—I don't know exactly, but an increase.
- It's like a 60% increase of something.
- I've always been under the impression that the majority of the budget comes from the federal government. The drinking age, and if you don't do this or if you don't do that—there are always these strings attached to highway funds.
- I'm all for the status quo, but the impression I've got about the highway system is that it's probably one of the more confused state systems. I could cut a lot out of this state and not touch the highway department. You start talking the highway department and it affects every single person here. It is one of the few services that I can point my finger at and say at least it's mine—at least it's doing something for me.

PROBE: ***If you were told that there was going to be an increase in funding at the DOT, what would you tell them to spend that additional money on?***

- Maintaining the highways.
- I would put it with providing motorist services and maintaining highways.
- Maintaining the roads. Maintaining the current roads that they already have.
- Cut the new construction and maintain the travel corridors. Other than widening and straightening some of them.
- We have many good secondary roads, too. They're good for a quite a while.
- More than new construction. Stop worrying about the new stuff that they're planning down the road. I know that's important. You've got to go for future expansion, but the way I look at it, I'm here right now and I want the roads I'm on to be safe and I want where I and my family is going to be—I need to know they're going to be safe wherever they're going to go. So I say put the chunk of the money that you get into what you already have, and then set aside.
- I'd kind of like to see them widen a whole lot of the roads.
- I'd like to see them into maintaining and widening some of the roads.
- They need to spend some money on bridges. There are a lot of bridges in the state that are in sad shape, and you can't do anything with the roads until the bridges are right.

PROBE: ***Have you heard of any changes in the level of staffing at the DOT in the last couple years?***

- They've cut it down, I think.
- Cutting staff—in some cases, you need to cut out dead wood, but it appears that there's an extremely high turnover there. Are we trading off because we're not paying out to keep the good quality people that we need to have continuity.
- They don't have too many more people to cut. It's a mass exodus out of there in the last few years.

Topical Issues

A number of current issues identified by SDDOT management were explored to gauge public opinion and understanding. Participant positions were discussed for the following issues:

- Perceived challenges facing the SDDOT
- Need for four-lane highway between Pierre and I-90, Interstates and expressways
- Scenic highways versus wider highways in Rapid City area
- DM&E
- Overweight trucks
- Driving conditions
- Aging drivers
- Current winter expectations

Unique challenges

There appears to be a widespread understanding of a situation relatively unique to South Dakota; a very low-density population base, living across a large land area, in an often less than hospitable climate. There is a sense that this strains the recourses of the DOT budget, and requires much prioritizing. This common perception was reinforced when the actual number of South Dakota road miles was revealed to the groups.

PROBE: ***What are some of the unique challenges that SDDOT faces in South Dakota?***

- Our winters. And all the truck travel coming in, transporting stuff into us because we are fairly rural. And our population distribution.
- We have the eastern part of the state where most of it is not heavily populated and it's about half of the state. The roads have to go through the low populated areas, and they're just as good.
- I think in South Dakota, it would have to be more a fair base than a population base. So rural roads are somewhat equal to other roads.
- The other thing is there's a tremendous amount of road clearing. We're a very small population and it's non-commercial, non-industrial population.
- We're pretty spread out here. It takes a lot of money.
- It's a long ways between places. It's a lot of driving to get anywhere.
- Using their money wisely.
- Being fair with their work. Where it's needed the most. That's the choice they have to make because they can't take care of them all.
- New construction. We've probably got the best roads.

- And I see this because I travel the whole state and I'm out there by who knows where, where you hardly meet a car all day and you think, "My God. What did it cost to build this road to go to here? There are no people there.

PROBE: ***What are the challenges with so many miles for the DOT?***

- You say 83,000 miles? That means that 8 or 9 of us have to pay for each mile, then, huh? Figure 700,000 people, divide that and you've got 8-9 people supporting each mile of road.
- It's overwhelming to think that there are so many miles they have to maintain and to improve on and build new ones on top of that.
- They have to maintain so many roads with so few people.
- And I think we've got the severe cold weather and in the summer, that's when we get in trouble on our concrete roads because they explode.
- I feel there is because of the winter weather. It's a terrible strain on road surfaces.

Opinions on the four-lane highway between Pierre and I-90, expressways and Interstates

While many express skepticism about the need for a four-lane highway between the capital and Interstate 90, others believe that this existing stretch of highway can be congested and dangerous, and is in need of expansion.

- You drive that road from the interstate up to Pierre and there's very little traffic on it; but we're the only state in the union that doesn't have a 4-lane highway to their capital.

There also appears to be considerable skepticism about the need for expressways (particularly the Heartland expressway proposal), and some claim that funds should instead be focused on improving rural roads.

PROBE: ***How do you feel about the funding of expressways vs. funding for improving rural roads? Think of the allocation of funds.***

- It's more important to keep up what you've got. If you build new and don't take care of what's already there…
- I'd say expressway because we live near them, but if I was a farmer, I probably wouldn't be too happy with it.
- I don't think we're heavily enough populated for an expressway. I think what we have, as yet, handles our traffic.
- I'd rather we did the gravel roads. A well-maintained gravel road is not that bad a deal.
- I'll take improving rural roads.

- I think rural bridges are really going to be critical here in a few years with the heavier loads.
- I would say widening the gravel roads.
- But when you really get out—way out, when you're servicing the rural people and stuff, I think they've always gotten short-changed.
- What do we need an expressway for in South Dakota? You've got two interstates that you can go 75 mph on. What do you need an expressway for?
- We've got an expressway as far as we're concerned.

PROBE: ***What do you think about the emphasis on the interstates?***

- Very important because it brings a lot of revenue into the state.
- I think South Dakota has a bigger problem with the Interstate because the Interstate has at least two roads.

Scenic roads

Rapid City area respondents appear inclined to favor an emphasis on scenic highways serving the Black Hills, as opposed to high speed, wide-width highways. Scenic roadways, many volunteered, are more conducive to showcasing a valuable natural recourse, to both residents and tourists.

PROBE: ***Should the DOT maintain scenic roads in the Black Hills or widen and straightened them to improve traffic.***

- Scenic. Make them wide but keep the speed limits down.
- Is the road decent because there's only one car every other day?
- But there are a lot of gravel roads out west. There are not a lot of highways.

DM&E

There is widespread awareness of the DM & E railroad coal proposal, and it elicits considerable emotion. Key concerns are safety issues resulting from frequent, high-speed train passages through cities and small towns, and potential traffic delays when cars are waiting for the trains to pass.

PROBE: ***What issues (DM&E) are of most concern to you?***

- I just don't like it because it's dangerous, too.
- Not in my back yard.

- The one concern I've got about this is the speed of those trains.
- I think the main concern that I hear people talking about is the number of trains that are going to come through the cities or towns (I call Pierre a city); and the amount and speed of travel and the safety.
- If they start running the train through every half hour like they're talking, that's going to be a lot of inconvenience with just one place to get across. (Pierre)
- My thoughts are, are they talking about 30-40 trains a day or more? I cannot understand how they plan to run that many trains over a main highway without either an overpass or an underpass. If you go in other states on main highways, you don't stop for trains.
- I would like to see it stay out of the cities. With the amount of traffic that they're going to have on the rails, you're going to have major problems in the cities. A train goes through the city—as many trains a day as they say are going to be going through the cities—it's just a major problem.
- Waiting at a crossroad—waiting for it to get by.
- I'm in favor of the railroad.
- Yeah. If we want to look forward economically in this state, because you've got to have access to the markets; if you don't we continue to get the lowest price for all the commodities of anyone in the country.
- Hopefully, it would be better transportation for farmers.
- The coal trains and coal tracks, I don't think, are going to be hauling many of our products.
- The only people who are going to benefit will be the stockholders in DM&E. That's my feeling.
- They're creating a market where there is none now. That's for the coal.

Overweight Trucks

Awareness of the issue of overweight trucks (and the perceived damage they cause to the roadways) is high, and there appears to be widespread approval for stricter DOT enforcement.

PROBE: ***How about the issue of overweight truck enforcement?***

- I don't think they've been enforcing it for years.
- They're got to enforce the laws but the guy that's out there and he's 1000 or 500 pounds over, that could be a simple mistake.
- Enforce weight limits. I would bet it's the biggest damage to our roads.
- In South Dakota, the penalty is greater for taking too many walleyes on a river than it is for hammering up our roads.
- There has to be enforcement of that.
- Destruction of our roads when they're overweight.
- They're wrecking the roads.

- All you have to do is drive out here to where the elevator is when the trucks turn in, and they just push the pavement up like this.
- Actually, those truckers that are driving overweight are stealing from the public. They're stealing public funds is what they're doing.
- But I do feel that there are a lot of farmers out there that really don't really know.

Older Aged Drivers

Most agree that there is a safety problem associated with the declining abilities of many aging drivers, and there appears to be considerable support for mandatory re-testing of drivers at certain age levels, e.g. age 65 or 70.

PROBE: ***How about the issue of aging drivers?***

- Once you get to a certain age, you take your driver's test again. (Many agree).
- I think they should be tested every year rather than every 4 years (because people's health can deteriorate).
- I think an older person's responses aren't as quick as they were at one time, and I think maybe they should be tested more often.
- Maybe test them more. Instead of 4 years, two years.
- And that doesn't mean just an eye test. That means you specifically have to go out for a driver's test.
- I wouldn't argue against capability… You need to get him off the road.

Driving Conditions

Road safety is associated with surface maintenance and conditions, signage, speed, and need for education. Comfortable ride is defined in terms of safety, passing lanes, good signage, smooth roads and road maintenance.

PROBE: ***If you think of road safety, what factor do you tie most closely to road safety?***

- Surface conditions: pot holes.
- Also the width and curves and grades, but if they're hilly and curvy and people are passing, that's unsafe.
- Surface maintenance.
- When I'm on the road, having stripes I can see if I'm unfamiliar with the area.
- The road markings—not just the signs, but like the passing zones and the markings on the roadways. That's definitely a safety feature.
- A good sign.

- Controlling speed (but they don't determine the limit).

PROBE: ***When you think of the idea of comfortable travel, what determines that?***

- Safety, always safety.
- Passing lanes.
- Good roads.
- Smooth roads.
- When I'm traveling what most impacts is good signage
- If you're driving on and you're not noticing the road, then you're having a comfortable trip.
- Certainly maintenance.
- Enforce the travel laws.
- You come to rely on the location of highway signs.

Current Winter Expectations

Participants were asked if they were expecting anything different this winter.

PROBE: ***Expect anything different of DOT this winter?***

- I think when that was announced (less people last year), that was a large concern for a lot of people in South Dakota—cutting all those workers for DOT. And then, fortunately, we had a nice winter.
- If they had done that and then we'd have a winter like we had 2-3 years ago, I think there'd be a lot more people screaming.
- Depends on the kind of winter we have.

Overall Satisfaction with SDDOT

Satisfaction with the DOT, many seem to concur, is generally likely to be a function of the condition of the surface of the roadways (especially during winter months-when snow and ice compromise safety) and how the department handles road construction and road maintenance, e.g. advance warnings, ample signage, courteous employees and contractors, reasonable duration of the project, and the quality of the end product.

A commonly expressed concern, that apparently bothers many, is the perception that cones are placed along long stretches of highway (requiring reduced speeds) when there appears to be no work underway. To many, this results in a needless inconvenience to drivers, and suggests insensitivity, or poor planning, on the part of the DOT.

Despite several " hot" issues and controversial proposals, and occasional remarks about DOT funded construction workers "leaning on their shovels", the wide majority of group participants claim to be satisfied with the South Dakota DOT, and believe that it is doing a commendable job.

There appears to be an existing perception among many that 'politics" may enter much of the DOT decision-making processes when priorities are determined. This, some believe, probably impacts which roads get developed or improved, or which roads are best maintained, or most quickly cleared of ice and snow.

PROBE: ***What determines if you're satisfied with the DOT?***

- The condition of the roads you travel on. If it's pleasant looking.
- I think they're doing a pretty good job with the resources and what they have to do. I think they're making good use of the resources.
- In the summer time it's the construction; and in the wintertime, it's the condition of the roads.
- How clean they keep the roads in the wintertime.
- Maintenance of the highway. Ruts and so on.
- Maintenance.
- Service when I call.
- Responsiveness.
- My impression is driving down the road and seeing the truck and 4 guys standing around with shovels. Basically the DOT is, in my perception, a bunch of people standing around, looking around.
- Shut down with no apparent work going on.
- We've seen that time after time after time, but they must have their reasons, and I'm sure if I talked to them, they'd explain why.
- It seems like the only time I've ever really noticed them is when they're sitting in trucks on the side of the road and I drive by.
- Putting up their orange cones.
- Or six guys standing around all leaning on shovels, and one guy will be going the work. Just a stereotype.
- We don't even know what they do.

PROBE: ***What is your opinion of the job the DOT is currently doing?***

- So comparing it to any other branches or areas of government I'd say above average.
- There are things they don't do, but I would say I'm satisfied.
- Fairly satisfied. I think more communication would help.

- I think I'd be satisfied considering the number of miles of road vs. the money vs. the population vs. all those constraints. It's kind of like a compromise thing.
- I'm satisfied. I think if you'd just get the politics out of some of it, it would be even better.
- For what they're working with, I think they're doing pretty good.
- Satisfied, when you look at other states.
- Very satisfied.
- Satisfied.
- I'm satisfied most of the time.
- Mostly satisfied. Slightly dissatisfied.
- In July and August, I'm satisfied. Ask us again in January.

In discussing satisfaction, participants also identified areas where the DOT could improve its service efforts. There was strong consensus in all groups for better communication between the DOT and its customers.

Specifically, Improved communications to the public (on DOT funding issues, functions and responsibilities, current projects, long term plans, etc.) was the most commonly suggested area for improvement.

PROBE: ***How could the DOT improve service to you?***

- When I call them with a question that sticks in my mind the most. Whether I get an answer or get directions for someone who can answer the question. That's happened to me at least twice about truck weight and one other issue.
- I just couldn't get an answer from them. They weren't responsive.
- I would have to say I've only lived here 9 months and I would say, in that time, I haven't seen any flyers come through the mail. I haven't seen anything. Nothing on the news.
- For some reason, we're not hearing much.
- Do they do this road every ten years and this road every five? I haven't a clue. They could do a little public relations and inform the public on some of the things they do. Or how they plan.
- I'm actually not familiar with all they do. Name some of the things.
- It would be nice to know who to contact when you feel that there's a dangerous intersection on the road you travel. Who to contact to file a complaint.
- Gosh that would be nice if we had the sense of where construction is going on. And AAA—I've got a map and they don't know what's going on either.

PROBE: ***What could they do better?***

- Railroad crossings. There are a lot of railroads and bad corners where you can't se the train coming.

SURVEY RESULTS

Results are organized and reported by subject and not necessarily in the order in which they were presented to the respondent during the interview. Questions appear in italics at the start of each new subject.

PERFORMANCE & SATISFACTION

PART V. Performance & Satisfaction

Q34. How satisfied are you OVERALL with the job the DOT did in generally maintaining state roadways this past year? (10-point scale: 1=Not at all satisfied, 10=Extremely satisfied)

Q33. How satisfied are you with the way the DOT kept roads free of snow and ice for safe winter driving last year? (10-point scale: 1=Not at all satisfied, 10=Extremely satisfied)

Q34b. How would you rate the quality of commercial air service available to you in South Dakota? (10-point scale: 1=Very poor, 10=Extremely good)

Sixty percent of all residents 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.

Table 8—Satisfaction With Department of Transportation

Satisfaction Measured	Mean Rating	
	Resident	Legislator
Overall satisfaction with DOT	6.83	6.98
Satisfaction with way roads kept free of snow and ice for safe driving	7.11	7.18
Quality of commercial air service available in SD	5.20	4.73
Number of respondents	734	66

Rapid City and Pierre regions tended to rate satisfaction with the DOT lower than Mitchell and Aberdeen regions.

Older aged residents (55 and over) on average tend to rate all aspects of DOT job performance more positively than members of other age groups. They are especially more positive on the maintenance job the DOT does in removing snow and ice from roadways.

The overall satisfaction rating of the legislators was not significantly different than residents. One fourth of the legislators rated their overall satisfaction on the bottom half of the same 10-point scale.

Table 9—Resident Groups Based On Overall Satisfaction Rating

Satisfaction Measured	Satisfaction Level With DOT		
	Satisfied	**Neutral**	**Dissatisfied**
Overall satisfaction with DOT	8.25 mean	5.39 mean	3.30 mean
Satisfaction with way roads kept free of snow and ice for safe driving	8.02	6.27	4.78
Quality of commercial air service available in SD	5.81	4.70	3.57
Number of respondents	450	164	115

About 16 percent of the population said they are dissatisfied with the DOT.
(Rate overall satisfaction a 1, 2, 3 or 4 on a 10-point scale).

Attitudes Towards DOT Products and Services

My next questions deal with the DOT's products and services. After I read each of the following statements, please tell me how strongly you agree with each statement. (5-point scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)

Q32. I believe the DOT...?

Satisfaction rating had a major effect on opinions about the DOT's products and services. People who are satisfied with the DOT rate each statement significantly higher than those who are in the middle, or not satisfied.

Table 10—DOT Product and Service Attitude Ratings

Percent Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree

Attitude	Residents	Satisfaction Level With DOT			Legislators
		Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	
Designs safe highways	81%	88%	71%	70%	89%
Employees treat public in friendly and fair manner	73	81	63	60	82
Keeps highway construction delays to a minimum	64	73	47	50	65
Is undertaking the right projects	54	65	35	41	61
Considers and values the opinions of the public	54	62	43	39	62
Gets construction jobs done bas fast as they can	56	66	35	46	50
Answers questions completely	42	51	24	34	65
Spends its budget wisely	41	50	28	22	70
Closes down long stretches of highways for repair when it is not necessary	23	20	27	28	36
Overbuild the state highways	14	14	12	19	4
Number of respondents	734	450	164	115	66

The only statements that 60% or more of the residents agree with are: the DOT “designs safe highways,” “has friendly employees who treat the public in a friendly and fair manner,” and that it “keeps highway construction delays to a minimum.”

Residents are 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.”

Road Maintenance Compared To Neighboring States

Q8. *In which of the following states have you traveled by car in the past year?*

Q35. to Q40. *In your opinion how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with* that of (neighboring state)? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in (neighboring state)? (3-point scale: 1=Worse, 3=Better)

Minnesota is the state most residents have traveled to by car in the past year. Only 15 percent of all residents said they didn't travel by car to any neighboring state.

Road maintenance in South Dakota compares favorable with each of the neighboring states.

Table 11—DOT Road Maintenance Performance Compared With Other States

State Traveled	% of Residents Traveled By Car to Other State	% of Residents Rate SD Maintenance Better or About the Same
Minnesota	62%	62%
Nebraska	48	74
Iowa	44	67
North Dakota	32	78
Wyoming	28	74
Montana	14	74
None	15	-

Number of respondents 734

There is no relationship between overall satisfaction rating of the DOT and how a resident rated highway maintenance in SD compared to a neighboring state.

AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE

PART III. Awareness & Knowledge of SD DOT

Q16. Now I'd like you to think about the responsibilities of the DOT. Please tell me what you think the DOT does. Please feel free to mention anything.

I'm now going to read you a list of six services provided by the DOT. When I'm done, I will ask you to rate the importance of these services to you.

MAINTAINING THE HIGHWAY SURFACE -- Includes snow and ice removal, keeping pavement smooth and highway stripes clearly visible.

MAINTAINING ROADSIDES -- Includes keeping plants and grasses neat and attractive, removing trash or dead animals and eliminating roadside weeds

PROVIDING MOTORIST SERVICES -- Includes maintaining highway signs and traffic signals, upkeep and safety of rest areas, and providing current information on weather, highway conditions and construction zones.

RESEARCH -- Includes doing research on new construction materials, maintenance techniques, safety and public opinion polls.

HIGHWAY PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION -- Includes planning where new highways should be built, soliciting public input and working with contractors and other agencies to build highways.

ADMINISTRATING AIR, RAILROAD AND TRANSIT SERVICES -- Includes funding public transit services and securing funding for airport runway construction and railroad track improvements.

Q17. Based on these descriptions, please tell me which ONE of the six services is most important to you as a user of transportation in South Dakota.

Q18 Which ONE is least important to you?

Q19.—Q22. Completed the rank ordering of services

Importance of DOT Services

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

Table 12—DOT Product and Service Importance Ratings

DOT Responsibilities	Residents			Legislators		
	Most Important	Least Important	Ranking Index	Most Important	Least Important	Ranking Index
Maintaining the highway surface	80%	1%	163	68%	0%	159
Planning and construction	7	6	107	26	2	137
Providing motorist services	6	8	101	2	20	83
Maintaining roadsides	4	21	94	3	20	81
Research	1	17	77	0	11	85
Promoting air, railroad and transit services	1	42	58	0	46	55
Number of respondents	734			66		

A service was often considered least important because “other services are more important.”

Most residents said “Nothing” or “Don’t know” when asked to identify additional services the DOT could offer.

Top of mind awareness (n=734) of DOT service provision was narrowly focused and reflects the consumer’s general assessment of service importance shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13—DOT Top-of-mind Service Awareness

Service Mentioned	% of Responses	Association
Maintenance	74%	Mostly defined as maintaining existing roads, making repairs—tarring and re-grading and snow and ice removal
Highway construction	23%	
Highway safety	21%	Defined as keeping roads safe and monitoring safety
Highway planning	14%	
Motorist services	11%	Mostly defined as installing and replacing signs
Air / railroad / transit service	4%	

Resident rankings of service importance when compared show a wide spread of perceived need. Most residents view highway surface maintenance as significantly more important than any other DOT offered service.

Perceived importance in maintaining highway surfaces did not vary with how satisfied a resident was with overall DOT road maintenance performance.

Indices in Table 14 below indicate residents perceived value in all six services presented for feedback (n=734).

Table 14—Index of Service Importance

DOT Service	Index of Importance
Maintaining the highway surface	163
Highway planning and construction	107
Providing motorist services	101
Maintaining roadsides	94
Research	77
Administrating air, railroad and transit services	58

Underlying reasons given for assigning highest and lowest importance are summarized in the tables that follow.

Table 15—Maintaining the Highway Surface: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=591	Reasons Most Important	%	N=6	Reasons Least Important	%
	Ease of driving	53	small	Lack of need	83
	Safety reasons	47	sample!	Other services more important	17
	Effects on car	11		Cost factor	4
	Effect on road	6			

Safety and ease of driving are primary reasons why so much importance is placed on maintaining highway surfaces.

- Older residents are more likely to associate safety with the need for (importance) maintaining highway surfaces.

- Younger residents are more likely to view ease of driving or travel as the main need for maintaining road surfaces.

Table 16—Providing Motorists Services: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=47	Reasons Most Important	%	N=51	Reasons Least Important	%
	Safety reasons	34		Lack of need	39
	Other reasons	8		Other services more important	27
		10		Responsibility of others	4

Table 17—Planning & Construction: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=38	Reasons Most Important	%	N=48	Reasons Least Important	%
small	Need for planning	50		Lack of need	50
sample!	Need of highways	18		Cost factor	10
	Wise use of money	10			4

Table 18—Maintaining Roadsides: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=30	Reasons Most Important	%	N=152	Reasons Least Important	%
Small	Dead animals	33		Lack of need	42
Sample!	Weeds and grass	13		Other services more important	39
				Money factor	4
				Research available elsewhere	9

Table 19—Research: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=11	Reasons Most Important	%	N=128	Reasons Least Important	%
Small	Safety reasons	34		Other services more important	27
Sample!	Dead animals	33		Lack of need	26
	Weeds and grass	13		Cost factor	24
	Effect on road	6		Research available elsewhere	9

Table 20—Promoting Air, Railroad and Transit Service: Reasons for Importance Rating

N=4	Reasons Most Important	%	N=302	Reasons Least Important	%
Small	Don't drive	25		Lack of need	73
Sample!	Pilot	25			
	Need to fly	25			
	Other reasons	25			

When asked what other products or services could the DOT offer, responses were sparse and wide-ranging. The most common responses (n=59) were residents seeking 'motorist services'. Thirty residents specifically mentioned current or better information. A number of other responses in other service categories also indicated a desire for additional information.
The group comprising residents that are dissatisfied with overall DOT road maintenance performance consistently asked for information relating to road construction and road conditions.

Responses to the question 'what types of information should the DOT provide' indicate residents believe the DOT should be providing information on road conditions (n=278) and construction information (n=246).

INFORMATION NEEDS

PART IV. Information Needs

Q29. If you needed to obtain information from the DOT how easy do you feel it would be to get information from the proper source? (10-point scale: 1=Not at all easy, 10=Extremely easy)

Q30. How would you rate the job the DOT does in keeping citizens informed of current plans for Highway construction and maintenance? (10-point scale: 1=Very poor job, 10=Extremely good job)

Q31. How would you rate the job the state DOT does in alerting you of delays and alternate routes before traveling through current highway construction projects?

(10-point scale: 1=Very poor job, 10=Extremely good job)

Perception of DOT Providing Information

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

Table 21—DOT Information Performance Ratings

Information Performance	Residents	Satisfaction Level With DOT			Legislators
		Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	
Mean—obtain information from DOT	6.66	7.05	5.78	6.35	7.17
Mean—keeping citizens informed	6.37	7.00	5.37	5.31	6.98
Mean—alerting of delays / alternate routes	6.00	6.58	5.02	5.07	5.61
Number of respondents	734	450	164	115	66

Information About Future Projects

Q28. Do you think the amount of information the DOT provides for future highway projects is too much, too little, or about right.

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.

Table 22—Amount of DOT Provided Information

Level of Information	Residents	Satisfaction Level With DOT			Legislators
		Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	
Too much	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%
About right	71	78	59	64	76
Too little	24	19	33	24	24
Number of respondents	734	450	164	115	66

Interest in road condition information being provided by the DOT increases with age. Persons fifty-five and older are twice as likely as younger residents under thirty-five to suggest the DOT should provide road condition information.

Preferred Sources for DOT Information

Q27. From which of the following sources would you prefer to obtain DOT information?

Mass media vehicles such as radio, newspapers and television are preferred sources of DOT information - residents want to see, read and hear.

Table 23—Preferred Sources of Information

Media Vehicle	Residents
Radio	84%
Newspapers	83
Television	81
Telephone number	68
Mailings	53
Internet	50
Cell phone number	44
Flyers	40
Billboards	35
Number of respondents	734

Internet Access

Q78. Do you have access to the Internet?

Q79. How interested are you in receiving transportation information from the SD DOT over the Internet? (4-point scale: 1=Not at all interested, 4=Very interested)

Six of 10 residents said they have access to the Internet and two thirds of these people have interest in receiving DOT information over the Internet.

Table 24—Access to the Internet

Internet Access	Residents	Legislators
Yes	58%	82%
Number of respondents	734	66

Table 25—Interest in Receiving Transportation Information Via Internet

Interest Level	Residents	Legislators
Somewhat or Very interested in transportation information via the Internet	61%	72%
Number of respondents	734	66

DRIVING CONDITIONS

PART II. Driving Conditions

Q10. Do you think the level of HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE this year increased, decreased or stayed about the same as compared to last year?

Q9. How often in the past three months have you encountered highway work such as construction or maintenance in South Dakota?

Q11. How often do you feel you slow down for highway work zones when there is no visible Work being done?

Q13. Do you feel the length of delays caused by highway construction and maintenance this year has increased, decreased or stayed about the same as compared to last year?

Amount of Highway Work and Its Effects

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.

One fourth of the legislators think the level of highway construction this year is about the same as last year.

Table 26—Highway Work Conditions

Condition	Level of Change	Residents	Legislators
Level of highway construction and maintenance			
	Increased	45%	76%
	Stayed about same	48	24
Encounter highway work			
	Always	65%	77%
	Very seldom / never	8	2
Slow down when no visible work			
	Always / almost always	64%	77%
	Very seldom / almost never	12	11
Length of delays			
	Increased	22%	38%
	Stayed about the same	69	60
	Number of respondents	734	66

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.

There is no relationship between overall satisfaction rating of the DOT and the level of highway construction or, frequency of encountering highway work, visibility of work, or length of delays due to construction.

Tolerance for Road Construction Delays

Q14. Please describe your level of tolerance for the length of delays you generally experience. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where "1" means you really don't mind and "10" means that the delays are intolerable: what number represents how you feel about the length of delays you experienced this past year?

Q15. How long a delay is acceptable for typical highway construction and maintenance you experience?

A majority of residents indicate that they aren't bothered much by the length of delays due to highway construction. Most residents think that a 10-minute delay for road construction is acceptable, even those who are dissatisfied with the DOT.

Tolerance for delays appears to increase with increasing age. The youngest aged drivers (under 35) are the least tolerant of delays.

Table 27—Tolerance for Delays

Tolerance	DOT Region				
	Residents	Aberdeen	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City
Mean—level of tolerance for length of delays	3.15	3.14	3.46	2.47	2.84
Mean—acceptable length of delay	10.43	11.79	8.98	11.86	11.01
Number of respondents	734	208	294	51	172

Slow Down or Detour for Road Construction

Q12. If you came upon a highway construction or maintenance site, would you rather…

Residents would prefer to drive through road construction than have to detour around it.

Table 28—Travel Through Road Construction Zone

Preference	Residents
Drive through it at a reduced speed	81%
Detour around it on a different road	16
Number of respondents	734

POSITIONS ON ISSUES

PART VI. Positions On Issues

Equitable Use Resources

Q64. In your opinion, how fair is the DOT in making available highway funds for roadway projects across all areas of South Dakota? (10-point scale: 1=Not at all fair, 10=Extremely fair)

Q65. How fair is the DOT in making available funds for air, rail and transit projects across all areas of South Dakota? (10-point scale: 1=Not at all fair, 10=Extremely fair)

Most residents are in the middle (neutral) when rating the fairness of funding for projects across all areas of SD. Residents in the Rapid City and Pierre regions are less likely than the other two regions to think that the DOT is fair.

Table 29—Resource Allocation Ratings

Mean Rating	Residents	DOT Regions				Legislators
		Aberdeen	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City	
Equitable funding for roadway projects across all areas of SD	5.98	6.18	6.39	5.28	5.34	7.21
Equitable funding for air, rail and transit projects across all areas of SD	5.68	5.87	5.92	5.52	5.19	6.50
Number of respondents	734	208	294	51	172	66

Residents were more than twice as likely to judge DOT statewide allocation of roadway project funding as fair (22%) compared to not fair (10%).

- Residents judging allocation to be fair are more likely to be satisfied overall with DOT road maintenance performance.

- Residents judging allocation as not fair are more likely to be 'neutral' or 'dissatisfied' with overall DOT road maintenance performance.

Funding Priority

Q43. Which ONE of the following would you give priority funding to if you could choose only ONE?

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

- 33% favored resurfacing and repairing 2-lane highways to make them smoother
- 30% favored resurfacing and repairing 2-lane highways to make them wider and straighter
- 23% favored repairing Interstate highways

Table 30—Resident Funding Priorities

Funding Priority	Residents	DOT Regions				Legislators
		Aberdeen	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City	
Resurfacing and repairing 2-lane highways to make them smoother	33%	34%	31%	49%	31%	17%
Rebuilding 2-lane highways to make them wider and straighter	30	32	29	29	31	39
Rebuilding and repairing Interstate Highways	23	10	31	18	24	33
Building new 4-lane expressways	17	25	12	16	18	8
Number of respondents	734	208	294	51	172	66

Amount of Work on Interstate Highways

Q44. Do you feel the DOT is doing too much work, not enough work, or about the right amount of work to repair the state's Interstate highways? (3-point scale: 1=Not enough work, 3=Too much work)

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

More than three-quarters (77%) of surveyed residents judged the DOT to be doing 'about the right amount' of work to repair South Dakota Interstate highways. The 15% who felt more work could be done on the Interstate highways were more likely to be 'neutral' or 'dissatisfied' overall with DOT road maintenance performance.

Table 31—Interest in Interstate Repairs

Work Level	Residents	DOT Regions				Legislators
		Aberdeen	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City	
Mean—amount of work to repair state's Interstate highways	1.87	1.91	1.92	1.96	1.71	1.87
Number of respondents	734	208	294	51	172	66

Interferences With Travel Safety

Q45. to Q53. How likely do you feel each of the following can interfere with safe travel? (5-point scale: 1=Not at all likely, 5=Very likely)

Q54 Which ONE of these conditions do you feel interferes MOST with safe travel?

Except for "limited public transit service," each of the factors was thought to have a major impact on safe travel. Weather, an uncontrollable factor, is considered the most likely to interfere with safe travel.

Table 32—Factors Affecting Safe Travel

Interference	% Think Somewhat or Very Likely Interfere with Safe Travel	% Think Interfere Most with Safe Travel
Water conditions	90%	34%
Rough roads	89	15
Traffic congestion commercially developed areas	77	14
Narrow shoulders	82	9
Construction activity	83	7
Poor pavement markings	81	6
Railroad crossings	70	6
Poor road signage	67	5
Limited public transit	34	1
Number of respondents	734	734

There was very limited variation in response between segments 'general population' and 'legislative', 'satisfied' and 'dissatisfied', gender, age, community sizes and regions.

The one exception was 'winter conditions', the condition felt to interfere the most by the majority of residents.

- Residents in larger communities were more likely to see it as the top problem
- Residents in the Pierre region were half as likely to see it as the number one problem, as were residents in the other three regions. Pierre residents were more likely to view 'rough roads' as interfering the most with safe travel.
- Women residents were slightly more likely to see 'winter conditions' as interfering the most compared to male residents.
- Younger residents (under 35 years of age) were more likely to see it a problem than were other aged residents.

'Winter conditions' and 'rough roads' were seen by most as the conditions <u>most likely</u> to interfere with safe travel.

Overweight Trucks

Q55. How much of a concern to you is impact of overweight trucks on South Dakota highways.

Q56. Would you say the current enforcement of laws for overweight trucks on South Dakota highways is too strict, not strict enough or about right?

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.

Table 33—Impact of Overweight Trucks

Issue	Position	Residents	Legislators
% Who have a Major or Minor concern about the impact of overweight trucks on highways			
	Major	87%	95%
	Minor		
% Who think enforcement of laws for overweight trucks is			
	Not strict enough	23%	20%
	Too strict	10	23
Number of respondents		734	66

Concern with the impact of overweight trucks varied between numbers of demographic groups. Observed differences include:

- Significantly less a concern in rural communities;
- A higher concern for male residents;
- An increasingly higher concern with increasing resident age, residents over 55 most concerned; and
- Residents 'dissatisfied' with overall DOT road maintenance more likely to be concerned.

Views of enforcement laws vary. A number of segments are more likely to view enforcement as too strict. These include:

- Legislators as a group are twice as likely;

- Residents in Aberdeen and Pierre regions are twice and three times as likely, respectively, compared to the other two DOT regions;
- Residents in communities under 5,000 were twice as likely;
- Residents 'neutral' or 'dissatisfied' with overall DOT road maintenance performance; and
- Male residents

Awareness of DM&E Issue

Q57. How aware are you of the proposed expansion of the DM&E railroad? (5-point scale: 1=Not at all aware, 5=Extremely aware)

Q58. How would you describe your level of support for the proposed expansion of the DM&E railroad? (5-point scale: 1=Not at all supportive, 5=Extremely supportive)

One fourth of the residents indicated that they are not at all aware of the DM&E railroad issue.

Table 34—DM&E Issue Awareness

Issue Awareness	Residents	Legislators
Mean—level of awareness of proposed DM&E expansion	2.61	4.44
Number of respondents	734	66

Top awareness of the DM&E expansion was found to vary somewhat:

- Residents in the Mitchell region were half or more as likely to be 'Very to extremely' aware as residents in other regions;
- Residents in communities over 40,000 were less likely to be 'Very to extremely' aware;
- Males were almost twice as likely to be 'Very to extremely' aware;
- Higher awareness increases with resident age; and
- Legislators as a group were four times as likely to be 'Very to extremely aware'.

Differences in support for DM&E mirror those of awareness with the exception of community size. Highest support is seen in communities of 5,000 to 40,000 residents and among rural residents. Safety is the greatest concern among all survey segments.

Table 35—DM&E Issue Support

Issue Support	Residents	Legislators
Mean—level of support for proposed DM&E expansion	3.06	3.89
Number of respondents	545	66

Concerns Over DM&E Expansion

Q59. I'm going to read you a list of factors about the DM&E expansion that may or may not be a concern to you. (3-point scale: 1=No concern, 3=Major concern)

Safety is the major concern of residents with expansion of the DM&E. Legislators' major concerns are about adequate service to grain shippers and safety.

Table 36—Comparison of Resident & Legislator DM&E Concerns

DM&E Concerns	% Rate Major Concern	
	Resident	Legislator
Safety	63%	73%
Adequate service to grain shippers	47	82
Delays at city railroad crossings	35	44
Dust and dirt	23	23
Noise	22	20
Number of respondents	734	66

Younger and Older Aged Driver Issue

Q66. How much of a safety concern to you are the driving abilities of younger age drivers on the roads and highways of South Dakota?

Q69. How much of a safety concern to you are the driving abilities of older age drivers on the roads and highways of South Dakota?

Residents of all ages are equally concerned with driving abilities of younger aged drivers. Residents tend to be more concerned about the younger and older aged drivers than Legislators. And, residents tend to want more government regulation. However, residents are undecided as to who should pay if these regulations are implemented.

Driving abilities of older aged drivers are more a major safety concern for:

- The general population compared to legislators as a group;
- Residents in non-rural communities;
- Drivers with low annual mileage
- Female residents; and
- Residents under 55 years of age.

Younger aged drivers appear to be more of a safety concern to:

- Residents living in cities of 5,000 or more;
- Among low annual mileage drivers; and
- Female residents

Table 37—Concern Over Younger and Older Aged Drivers

Concern Over Younger and Older Aged Driver	% Rate Major Concern	
	Resident	Legislator
Concern about driving abilities of younger age drivers	70%	64%
Concern about driving abilities of older age drivers	56	44
Number of respondents	734	66

Support of Mandatory Regulation

Q67. Do you favor mandatory driver's education for younger aged drivers?

Q70. Do you favor mandatory road testing of driver's over age 70?

A greater percentage of the general population (92%) favors mandatory driver's education than do legislators as a group (68%).

Table 38—Interest in Regulation of Younger / Older Aged Drivers

Regulation Interest	Resident	Legislator
Favor drivers education for younger drivers	92%	68%
Favor testing for drivers over age 70	74	50
Number of respondents	734	66

A greater percentage of the general population (74%) favors mandatory road testing of drivers over age 70 than do legislators as a group (50%). It is also more likely to be favored in non-rural communities and among residents under 55 years of age. Older aged residents (55 and over) are not as concerned as about the abilities of older aged drivers and are three times more likely to not favor mandatory testing of drivers over age 70.

Regulation Funding

Q68. Do you feel the cost of driver's education should be a driver expense or taxpayer expense?

Q71. Do you feel the cost of additional road testing should be a driver expense or taxpayer expense?

Table 39—Funding Attitudes for Regulation of Younger / Older Aged Drivers

Attitude	Residents	Legislators
Favor education of younger drivers at:		
Driver expense	50%	56%
Taxpayer expense	45	36
Favor testing of older drivers at:		
Driver expense	50%	65%
Taxpayer expense	45	30
Number of respondents	734	66

Younger aged residents are much more likely to feel the cost of driver's education should be a driver expense and not a taxpayer.

DRIVING BEHAVIOR

PART I: Driving Behavior

Q4. To begin, which ONE of the following statements best describes the type of traveling you do MOST often?

Purpose of Trips

Almost half the respondents say most of their trips are to and from work. However, age is a major factor in the type of trip.

Table 40—Types of Trips Taken

Type of Trip	Residents
Traveling to and from work	48%
Personal and family errands or outings	32
Work related trips such as sales calls or deliveries	6
Farm or agriculture related trips	6
Traveling to and from school	4
Professional driving of truck or bus	2
Do not drive	1
Number of respondents	734

Two thirds of respondents under 55 years of age said they travel to and from work most often. In contrast, almost two thirds of respondents over 55 years old said most of their trips are for personal and family errands or outings. Only 1 percent of all residents said that they don't drive.

Type of Road Driven Most Often

Q6. In general, would you say MOST of the miles you drive each day are on:

People in communities of less than 5,000 residents tend to drive more miles on state highways than residents of the larger communities.

Table 41—Road Use by Type

Type of Road	Residents
Local city streets	40%
County or township roads	19
State highways	27
Interstate highways	14
Number of respondents	734

All age groups are equally likely to use any of the types of roads in the roadway system.

Annual Number of Miles Driven

Q5. How many miles do you, yourself, typically drive per year? Please include miles driven for business.

There was not a relationship between miles driven and overall satisfaction rating of the DOT. People in smaller communities drive the most miles.

Table 42 —Annual Mileage Comparison Residents and Legislators

Average Annual Miles Driven	Resident	Legislator
Mileage	16,270 miles	26,409 miles
Number of respondents	734	66

As might be expected age correlates with type of driving and miles driven.

- Older residents (55+) are 5 times more likely to do most traveling for personal and family errands or outings
- Older residents (55+) report driving the fewest annual miles

Table 43—Annual Mileage By Community Size

Community Size	Average Mileage
40,000 residents or more	12,964 miles
5,000 to 40,000 residents	14,634
Less than 5,000 residents	18,639
A rural area outside city limits	19,400
Number of respondents	800

Rural residents are the heaviest users of South Dakota roadways.

Table 44—Comparison of Annual Mileage By DOT Region

	DOT Regions			
	Aberdeen	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City
Annual mileage	14,873	16,109	23,424	16,092
Number of respondents	208	294	51	172

Level of household income showed a correlation to annual miles driven. High annual mileage was associated with higher income levels and conversely, lower income with low annual mileage.

Table 45—Resident Mileage Groups

Mileage Group	Residents
High (17,000 miles or more)	33%
Medium (10,000 to 16,999)	36
Low (less than 10,000 miles)	28
Number of respondents	734

The Residents divided almost equally into three groups. Annual mileage group did not relate to overall satisfaction with SDDOT. The low mileage group was no more likely to be satisfied or dissatisfied than the high or medium mileage groups.

Use of Public Transportation

Q7. During the past 12 months have you used public transit such as buses for mobility within South Dakota?

Public transportation is used by a small percentage of South Dakota residents.

Table 46—Public Transportation Use

Usage	Residents
Yes	3%
No	97
Number of respondents	734

RESIDENT DEMOGRAPHICS / CLASSIFICATION

PART VII. Demographics / Classification

There was not a relationship between demographic characteristics and overall satisfaction rating of the DOT.

Q72. In what county do you live?

The sampling technique was based on household population and provided good representation across the state of South Dakota. Interviews were completed with residents in 64 of the 66 counties. No interviews were completed in Dewey and Hyde counties.

Community Size

Q73. Would you describe the area you live in as a…?

Table 47—Sample Representation By Community Size

Community Size	Residents
40,000 residents or more	27%
5,000 to 40,000 residents	26
Less than 5,000 residents	19
A rural area outside city limits	28
Number of respondents	734

Age and Length of Residency

Q74. What year were you born?

Q2. How long have you been a resident of South Dakota?

The average age of the general population surveyed was 49 years.

Table 48—Average Age of Residents Surveyed

Measure	Residents
Mean—year born	1950
Mean—number of years a resident	29 years
Number of respondents	734

Almost 43 percent of the general population interviews were completed with people who said they have been a resident of South Dakota for 40 years or more. This compares to 71 percent of the legislators who said that they have been residents for 40 years or more.

Education

Q75. What was the last grade of school you completed?

Education was not a factor in residents perceived overall DOT road maintenance performance.

Table 49—Education of Residents Surveyed

Level of Education	Residents
Grade school or less	3%
Some high school	4
High school graduate	28
Some college or technical school	22
Technical school graduate	7
College graduate	22
Post graduate	13
Number of respondents	734

Q76. Are you employed full or part time outside the home?

Employment status was not a factor in residents perceived overall DOT road maintenance performance.

Table 50—Employment Profile of Residents Surveyed

Employment Status	Residents
Full time	55%
Part time	13
Not employed outside the home	10
Retired	20
Student	2
Number of respondents	734

Q77. What was your 1998 total household income before taxes?

Income level was not a factor in how a resident perceived overall DOT road maintenance performance.

Table 51—Annual Household Income Profile of Residents Surveyed

Income Category	Residents
Under $20,000	14%
$20,000, but less than $35,000	21
$35,000, but less than $50,000	25
$50,000, but less than $65,000	12
$65,000 or more	16
Number of respondents	734

Q81. Record gender

Overall satisfaction with SDDOT was not related to gender.

Table 52—Gender of Residents Surveyed

Gender	Residents
Female	51%
Male	49
Number of respondents	734

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 the exception of age).

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

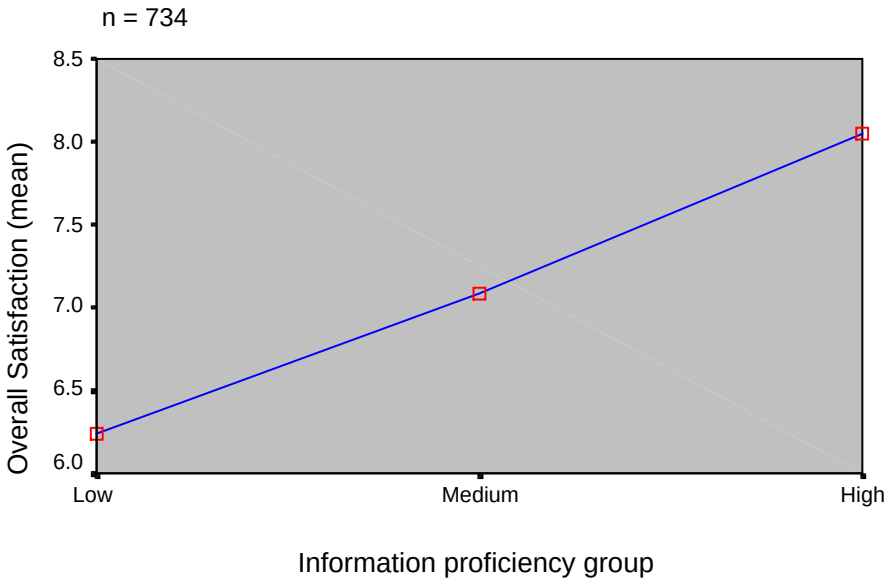
Statistically significant correlations exist between respondent ratings of satisfaction and perceived access to DOT information. Perceived proficiency at which the DOT disseminates transportation related information influences assessment of overall performance.

Three groupings for analysis were identified based on <u>response consistency</u> 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 3.

Figure 3—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.

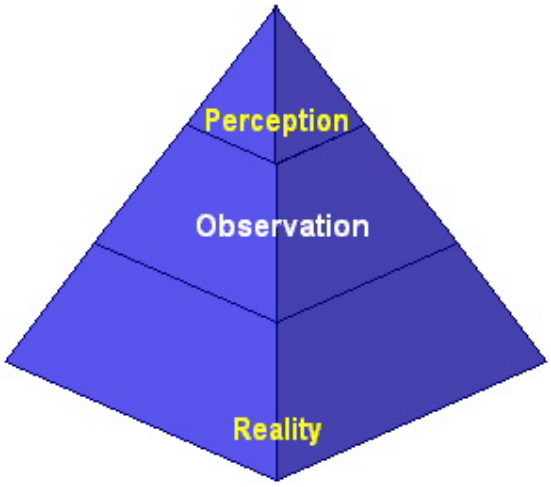
4. Perceptions of DOT consumers often don't match reality.

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 4.

Figure 4—Perception / Reality Model



No better example illustrates this point than the observed study differences between residents 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 to the DOT than those of average residents. 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 residents 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 53 and 54. Top two box scores of satisfaction are similar, but differences exist in dissatisfaction levels.

Table 53—1997 Satisfaction Ratings

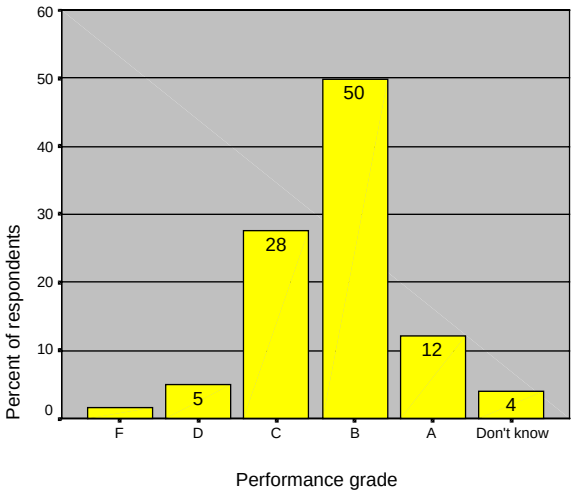
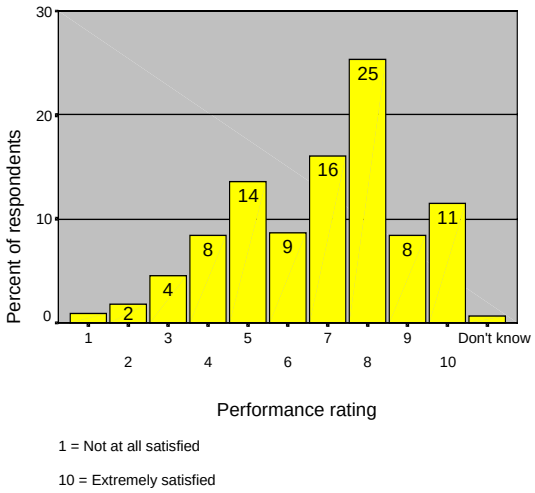


Table 54—1999 Satisfaction Ratings



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 55.

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

Table 55—Comparison of Satisfaction Levels 1999 to 1997

Level of overall satisfaction

WAVE			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 56 are statistically significant at .05.

Table 56—Average Responses Summarized

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

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 the 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.

8. Interest in road maintenance strongly relates to safety.

Overall reactions to safe travel conditions are summarized in Table 57 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 57—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. Residents 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 assess 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.

RIGOROUS decision-making

During Session 1 the Executive Team explored the following customer satisfaction related questions:

Resource commitment—To what extent should and can the DOT commit resources to attaining and sustaining customer satisfaction of residents statewide?

Importance to DOT—Just how important is a customer's satisfaction to overall attainment of short-term and long-term DOT product and service goals and objectives?

Goals of DOT—What are achievable and sustainable goals that will satisfy most DOT customers statewide?

Outcomes for success—What outcomes are anticipated as a result of successful implementation of DOT's customer satisfaction strategy?

Results management—How can the DOT measure and track customer satisfaction so as to manage for success?

Team discussion of RIGOROUS decision-making model elements generated a consensus view that the organization's goal needs to focus on continuous attention to improvement of resident satisfaction with all products and services the department provides. This represents a non-numerical target—one of attaining and sustaining an attitude for attention to resident satisfaction. It was the Team's view that this attitude needs to permeate SDDOT organizational structure from top to bottom. Every employee who has opportunity to provide a moment of contact with a SDDOT customer needs to be educated and sensitized to this thinking for it to succeed.

Action Planning

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.

Plan Elements

Each action plan response consists of five elements.

Major issues—These are the issues identified through the qualitative and quantitative information gathering associated with the Customer Satisfaction Assessment. They constitute the key findings for which action plan strategies are designed to address.

Strategies—These are concrete, incremental actions occurring over an identified period of time that are carried out by specific DOT units and/or individuals to address identified issues.

Outcomes—These are observable and measurable management-identified results that are anticipated as a result of successful strategy implementation.

Timetables—These are management's guides to tracking implementation of strategy steps throughout the action-planning period.

Performance Measures—These are specific management means designed to assess whether anticipated outcomes are being successfully achieved.

OUTCOMES

The following observable and measurable outcomes were identified by action planning teams. These outcomes are anticipated as a result of successful and ongoing implementation of planned strategies addressing major issues identified in this assessment of resident satisfaction with the SDDOT.

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

Responsibilities:

- Gather information from employees (supervisors) regarding media contacts over the next 60-day period.
- Gather information from employees (supervisors) regarding what training they have received in media relations.
- Gather information on the effectiveness of the media contacts identified during 60-day period.
- Contact media for their evaluation of DOT communications.

Team managing response to Recommendation 2

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

Responsibilities:

- Contact selected states (AZ, CO, KS, MN, ND, NM, WA and WY) and request information on communications staffing, salaries, communications plans, measures of effectiveness and staff training.
- Compile information and prepare an executive summary of findings and recommendations.
- Contact and interview Sioux Falls city engineer, a former Wyoming DOT worker.
- Provide copy of Executive Summary and Recommendations to contacted states.

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

Responsibilities:

- Research other public information and public relations positions in South Dakota state government and other states.
- Draft a job description for a new communications staff position.
- Meet with the Governor's Office press secretary, for input on position and responsibilities.
- Advertise to interview candidates and hire communications professional.
- Education DOT internal communication users on new position.
- Educate new communications hire on operations and policies of DOT.
- Work with newly hired communications person to develop a statewide DOT communications plan.
- Promote communications plan internally and externally.
- Have new communications person participate in Executive Team meetings.

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

Responsibilities:

- Review current operational practices, equipment needs and schedules for opportunities to meet resident safety wants.
- Review will focus in five areas: narrow shoulders, rough roads, pavement markings, winter maintenance and signage.
  - Narrow shoulders
    - Consider projects that widen roads with no or narrow shoulders in construction programs
    - At employee meetings, inform Department of residents' concerns about narrow shoulders
    - Issue news releases to inform public that the Department is addressing the concern
  - Rough roads
    - Improve response to emergency roughness: potholes and frost heaves
    - At employee meetings, inform Department of residents' concerns about roughness
    - Review needs for equipment to correct roughness problems
    - Consider correcting serious roughness and rutting problems with maintenance, even if construction is scheduled in coming years
  - Pavement markings
    - Consider earlier completion of pavement striping after winter, especially where (Black Hills, urban areas) wear is severe
    - Emphasize hand work (turn arrows, etc.)
    - Consider greater use of longer-lived marking materials in high traffic locations
    - Consider greater use of 8" edge stripes on roads with narrow shoulders
  - Winter maintenance
    - Review needs for winter maintenance equipment
    - Review use of chemicals to improve winter maintenance
    - Review standards for winter maintenance
    - Emphasize response time in performance measurements
    - Encourage and listen to input from users
  - Signage
    - Review policies on signing within construction zones
    - Length of closures
    - Presence of work activity

- Training of Department and contractor staff
- Enforcement of signing plans
- Review policies on permanent signing
- Review policies and quality of highway delineation
- Review policies on removal of obsolete signs

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Progress will be monitored in the following ways:

Recommendation 1—Count of contacts, amount of staff time required, and getting 75% of employee surveys returned.

Recommendation 2—Staffing information, communications plans, measures of effectiveness, salary information, and media relations training information will be obtained for selected states. A summary of findings and recommendations will be provided to the Executive team by April 19th.

Recommendations 3 & 4—Conduct annual customer satisfaction assessment studies.

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.

Communications audit and employee survey

60 days start to finish

Data collection communication information other states

Contacts with other states February 11th

Receipt of requested information by March 10th

Review of collected information by March 24th

Executive Summary of findings prepared by April 7th

Report to Executive Team by April 19th

Communications position and plan development

Hire communications professional by June 2000

Complete communications plan by end of December 2000

Attention to road maintenance and safety wants

Ongoing with attention to scheduled operations and existing budget cycles

END NOTES

ANOVA—An acronym standing for analysis of variance. A statistical test used to determine significant differences among the means of two or more variables.

CATI—Computer-assisted telephone interviewing used to more effectively collect quantitative survey data.

COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT—An internal assessment of an organizations past and current communications activity. Scope includes examination of related practices, processes, structure, effectiveness and challenges.

INDEPENDENT T-TEST—A statistical test used to determine significant differences in means of two non-related variables.

SPSS—A statistical software package used for analysis of survey data. MarketLine Research currently uses version 10.0.

APPENDIX A—QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DISCUSSION GUIDE

I.	Introduction	[5-10 min.]

A. Purpose of research/sponsored by SDDOT/ground rules/procedures

B Respondent introductions/name/occupation/# years as resident of SD

II.	General perceptions of the image/role of government	[10 min.]

A. In general, do you believe that the size of government in our society is increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing over the past few years? Nationally vs. the state of South Dakota? The state DOT? How do you feel about that?

B. How would you describe your government's ability to stay in touch with and respond to the needs of its citizens? Has its effectiveness in this area been increasing, decreasing or staying about the same? Why do you say that?

C. When thinking about a particular agency, in this case the state DOT, how would you describe its ability to stay in touch with and respond to your needs?

How does the DOT decide what projects it will pursue in meeting today's needs and anticipating future needs?

III.	Familiarity with SDDOT/sources of awareness	[10-15 min.]

A. How familiar would you say you are with the role and function of the State Department of Transportation? Very familiar? Somewhat? Not very? If not very familiar, do you feel a need or desire for more information about them and their activities? Why or why not? Are they doing enough to keep the public informed?

B. Where does your impression or understanding of the DOT come from? Where do you see or hear about their activities? Have you seen or heard any PSA's from the SDDOT? What did they say or show?

How would you prefer to be updated on activities and issues related to the DOT? [PROBES] Directly from the DOT? From another government spokesperson? From media sources covering this agency? From some other source? Why do you say that?

C. Have you ever called or tried to contact the SDDOT? What information or action were you seeking? What response did you get? What response did you expect? Were you satisfied? If not, why not?

D. Are you aware of the DOT website? If so, how did you hear about it? What is your interest in this? Do you have Internet access? Where? Did you access the DOT site? If so, what were you looking for? What was your reaction to what you saw?

IV.	Perceived/desired function of SDDOT	[30-40- min.]

A. Using one sentence, how would you describe the role of the state DOT?

B. [UNAIDED FUNCTIONS] What specific functions or responsibilities do you associate with the DOT? [LIST RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART] What others?

C. [AIDED FUNCTIONS] Here is a list, in no particular order, of 6 general areas covering the responsibilities of the SDDOT. [REFER TO LIST ON CHART]

First of all, are there any surprises when looking at this list? Anything that you didn't expect to see? Anything missing?

Maintaining the highway surface: Includes ice and snow removal, keeping the pavement smooth and the highway stripes clearly visible.

Maintaining roadsides: Includes keeping plants and grasses neat and attractive, removing any trash or dead animals, providing adequate shoulder widths for emergency stopping, and eliminating weeds from the roadside.

Providing motorist services: Maintain highway signs and traffic signals, upkeep and safety of rest areas, and providing current information on weather, highway conditions, and construction zones.

Research: Doing research on new construction materials, maintenance techniques, and safety, and conducting public opinion polls to identify citizen needs and level of satisfaction.

Planning and construction: Planning where new highways should be built, soliciting input and working with contractors and other agencies to build highways.

Promoting air, railroad and transit services: Funding public transit services and securing funding for airport runway construction and railroad track improvements.
[HAND OUT A COPY OF THE LIST TO EACH PARTICIPANT]

D. How would you prioritize these responsibilities in the order of importance to you?

Please place a “1” next to the area you think is most important, a “2” next to the second most important function, etc., until all have been ranked 1-6.

Now lets briefly talk about each area.

[ASK FOR EACH AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY ON LIST]

-How high did you rank this area in the order of importance? Why?
-What function within this area, do you believe, is most important? Why?

[AFTER COVERING ALL 6 AREAS]

If I told you that there was to be an increase of funding to the DOT, what would you tell them to spend the money on? Would it be one of the areas we just covered, or in some other area not covered? Please explain.

If I told you that the DOT budget was going to be cut, where should the DOT budget be cut? Why?

Right now, are you more inclined to favor improving DOT services through raising taxes, maintaining the status quo, or cutting taxes and reducing some DOT services?

V.	Funding/staffing of state DOT	[10 min.]

A. I’d like to explore your understanding of the state DOT funding, and some of the issues related to funding. [PROBES]

-About what would you estimate to be their yearly budget? The current yearly budget is $_____. Does that seem about right? Too high? Too low? Why do you say that?

-What percent of your total tax dollars go to the state DOT? The actual percentage is %___. Does that sound like a reasonable or appropriate percent? If not, what would be?

-What types of taxes are used to fund the DOT? Which tax is the primary funding source? Does that seem appropriate to you?

-Are you aware of the gasoline tax increase that occurred this past year?
What is your reaction to this? Do you know where the additional money was allocated? Where should it have been allocated?

-Are you aware of the license plate fee enacted to help fund local DOT needs, such as road maintenance in rural areas? What was the amount of that fee? What is your reaction to this? On what, specifically, should this money be spent?

B. Are you aware of any changes in the level of staffing at the state DOT in the past couple of years? If so, what? How many are aware of a 40% cut in the number of maintenance workers? What is your reaction to that?

C. Are you aware of any changes in the level of federal funding for the South Dakota DOT over the past year? If so, what? How many are aware of an increase of federal funding of $_____. with a 40% match by the DOT? How would you like to see that money spent? What should be a priority?

VI. Topical issues [10-15 min.]

A. Do you believe that there are challenges somewhat unique to South Dakota that the state DOT must always consider? Please explain. About how many miles of roadway, would you estimate, exist in South Dakota?

B. When you hear that a "new road" is going in, what do you think is meant by that? What does a "new road" mean to you? How would you define it?

[PROBES] Does a "new road" mean that a road will be built where no road previously exists? Does it mean that an old road will be dug out and a new base put in, or are you more inclined to believe that a "new road" means repairing holes, or putting down a coat of tar over the existing road?

How do you think that DOT highway funds should be allocated between the more major replacing of road bases vs. doing overlays and pothole repairs? Please explain.

C. How do you feel about the funding of expressways vs. funding for improving rural gravel roads? What allocation of funds is most appropriate? Why?

D. Are you familiar with the DMNE coal proposal that railroad to haul coal across the state? What do you think of this proposal?

VII. Satisfaction with SDDOT [10-15 min.]

A. What determines how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the DOT? Is there one area in which their performance most determines how you evaluate how they are doing? Which area?

-Overall, would you say that you are very satisfied, mostly satisfied, neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the DOT? Why?

B. How would you define the DOT's role in providing road safety? What can they do to maximize road safety?

How about the idea of comfortable travel? How would you define that?
What is the DOT's role in providing comfortable travel?

C. How would you rate the DOT's performance on highway maintenance?
Are you aware of the 3-mile cone policy? What are your reactions to this?

VIII.	Wrap-up/final comments/suggestions	[5 min.]

A. Are you expecting anything different this winter from the DOT?

B. What if any changes would you like to see? What else?

APPENDIX B—QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINAL SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is [YOUR NAME] with MarketLine Research. We are talking to residents about the work and services of the South Dakota State Department of Transportation. We are not selling anything -- this is strictly a market research study sponsored by the Department of Transportation. We would like to include your opinions. [IF ASKED: INTERVIEW WILL LAST ABOUT 20 MINUTES].

SCREEN FOR QUALIFICATION

1. We need to make sure we talk to a variety of people in this study. Are you at least 18 years of age?

   Yes
   No [ASK TO SPEAK TO PERSON 18 OR OLDER, IF NONE, THANK AND TERMINATE]

2. How long have you been a resident of South Dakota?

   Less than 6 months [THANK AND TERMINATE,]
   6—12 months
   1—5 years
   5—10 years
   10—15 years
   15—20 years
   20—25 years
   25—30 years
   30—35 years
   35—40 years
   More than 40 years.

3. Do you or does anyone in your household or your immediate family work for:
   [IMMEDIATE FAMILY INCLUDES: PARENTS, CHILDREN AND UNCLES, AUNTS, BROTHERS, SISTERS OR GRANDPARENTS]

   [READ LIST]
   [IF YES TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING, THANK AND TERMINATE]
   The South Dakota State DOT
   The South Dakota State Highway Patrol
   A city or county Public Works Department, or
   A contractor that does roadwork for the DOT
   None

PART I: DRIVING BEHAVIOR

4. To begin, which ONE of the following statements best describes the type of traveling you do MOST often? Would you say …
[READ LIST, RECORD ONLY ONE]

Traveling to and from work
Traveling to and from school
Work related trips such as sales calls or deliveries
Personal and family errands or outings
Farm or agriculture related trips
Professional driving of truck or bus, or
Do not drive KIP TO Q7.
[DO NOT READ] Don't know
[DO NOT READ] Refused
[DO NOT READ] Other GO TO 4b.

4b. Other type of driving.
[RECORD VERBATIM]

5. How many miles do you, yourself typically drive per year? Please include miles driven for business.
[RECORD EXACT NUMBER]
[IF RESPONDENT SAYS 'DON'T KNOW' ASK FOR THEIR BEST GUESS]

None (don't drive) SKIP TO Q7.

6. In general, would you say MOST of the miles you drive each day are on:
[READ LIST]

Local city streets
County or township roads
State highways, or
Interstate Highways
[DO NOT READ] Something Else GOTO Q6b.
[DO NOT READ] Don't Know
[DO NOT READ] Refused

6b. Other driving roads mentioned.
[RECORD VERBATIM]

7. During the past 12 months have you used public transit such as buses for mobility within South Dakota?

Yes
No
Don't recall

8. In which of the following states have you traveled by car in the past year?
[READ LIST AND CHECK ALL MENTIONS]

Iowa
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
North Dakota
Wyoming
None

PART II. DRIVING CONDITIONS

For my next series of questions I'd like you to think about recent highway conditions you have experienced.

9. How often in the past three months have you encountered highway work such as construction or maintenance in South Dakota? Would you say…
[READ LIST]

Always
Almost always
Occasionally
Very seldom, or
Never
None
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

10. Do you think the level of HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE this year increased, decreased or stayed about the same as compared to last year?

Increased
Decreased
Stayed about the same
Don't know

11. How often do you feel you slow down for highway work zones when there is no visible work being done? Would you say it occurs always, almost always, occasionally, very seldom or never?

Always
Almost always
Occasionally
Very seldom, or
Never
Don't know

12. If you came upon a highway construction or maintenance site, would you rather…
[READ LIST]

Drive through it at a reduced speed, or
Detour around it on a different route
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

13. Do you feel the length of delays caused by highway construction and maintenance this year has increased, decreased or stayed about the same as compared to last year?

Increased
Decreased
Stayed about the same
Don't know

14. Please describe your level of tolerance for the length of delays you generally experience. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where "1" means you really don't mind and "10" means that the delays are intolerable: what number represents how you feel about the length of delays you experienced this past year?

Don't mind								Intolerable	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. How long a delay is acceptable for typical highway construction and maintenance you experience?

[RECORD EXACT NUMBER OF MINUTES, 2 DIGITS]

PART III. AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE OF SD DOT

Now I'd like you to think about the responsibilities of the DOT.

16. Please tell me what you think the DOT does. Please feel free to mention anything.

[PROBE FULLY AND RECORD VERBATIM]

Q. QUESTIONS 19—25 ARE ROTATED: SAME ROTATION ACROSS ALL QUESTIONS

I'm now going to read you a list of six services provided by the DOT.
When I'm done, I will ask you to rate the importance of these services to you.
[READ STATEMENTS]

MAINTAINING THE HIGHWAY SURFACE -- Includes snow and ice removal, keeping pavement smooth and highway stripes clearly visible.

MAINTAINING ROADSIDES -- Includes keeping plants and grasses neat and attractive, removing trash or dead animals and eliminating roadside weeds.

PROVIDING MOTORIST SERVICES -- Includes maintaining highway signs and traffic signals, upkeep and safety of rest areas, and providing current information on weather, highway conditions and construction zones.

RESEARCH -- Includes doing research on new construction materials, maintenance techniques, safety and public opinion polls.

HIGHWAY PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION -- Includes planning where new highways should be built, soliciting public input and working with contractors and other agencies to build highways.

ADMINISTRATING AIR, RAILROAD AND TRANSIT SERVICES -- Includes funding public transit services and securing funding for airport runway construction and railroad track improvements.

17. Based on these descriptions, please tell me which ONE of the six services is most important to you as a user of transportation in South Dakota. Would you say…
[READ LIST, RECORD ONE]

Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

18. Which ONE is least important to you?
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

19. Of these remaining four services, which is most important to you?
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

20. Of these remaining three services, which is least important to you?
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]
Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

21. Of the two remaining services, which is most important to you?
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]
Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

22. [INTERVIEWER RECORD REMAINING SERVICE]
Maintaining the highway surface
Maintaining roadsides
Providing motorist services
Research
Planning and construction, or
Promoting air, railroad and transit services.

23. You said |Q17| was the most important service. Why do you say this?
[RECORD VERBATIM]

24. You stated |Q22| was the least important of all the services. Why do you say this?
[RECORD VERBATIM]

25. What other products or services could the State DOT offer you? Please feel free to mention anything.
[PROBE AND CLARIFY] [RECORD VERBATIM]

PART IV. INFORMATION NEEDS

26. In your opinion, what types of transportation information should the DOT provide you?
[RECORD VERBATIM]

27. From which of the following sources would you prefer to obtain DOT information?
[READ LIST, CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

Billboards
Cell phone number
Flyers
Internet
Mailings
Newspapers
Radio
Telephone number
Television
Other TO Q27b.

27b. Other source of information mentioned.

[RECORD VERBATIM]

29. If you needed to obtain information from the DOT how easy do you feel it would be to get information from the proper source? Use a “1” to “10” scale, where 1 is not at all easy and 10 is extremely easy. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Not at all easy									Extremely easy
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

30. How would you rate the job the DOT does in keeping citizens informed of current plans for Highway construction and maintenance? Use a “1” to “10” scale, where 1 is a very poor job and 10 is an extremely good job. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Very poor job							Extremely good job		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

31. How would you rate the job the state DOT does in alerting you of delays and alternate routes before traveling through current highway construction projects? Use a “1” to “10” scale, where 1 is a very poor job and 10 is an extremely good job. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Very poor job							Extremely good job		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

28. Do you think the amount of information the DOT provides for future highway projects is too much, too little, or about right.

Too much
Too little
About right
Don’t know

PART V. PERFORMANCE & SATISFACTION

[ROTATE ISSUES]
My next questions deal with the DOT’s products and services. After I read each of the following statements, please tell me how strongly you agree with each statement. Use a 5 point scale where ‘5’ means Strongly Agree, ‘4’ means Agree Somewhat, ‘3’ means Neither Agree nor Disagree, ‘2’ means Disagree Somewhat and ‘1’ means Strongly Disagree with the statement?

32. I believe the DOT

Has employees who treat the public in a friendly and fair manner
Considers and values the opinions of the public
Is undertaking the right projects
Overbuilds the state highways
Designs safe highways.
Keeps highway construction delays to a minimum
Gets construction jobs done as fast as they can
Closes down long stretches of highways for repair when it is not necessary
Spends its budget wisely
Answers questions completely

34. How satisfied are you OVERALL with the job the DOT did in generally maintaining state roadways this past year? Use a "1" to "10" scale, where 1 is not at all satisfied and 10 is extremely satisfied. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Not at all satisfied									Extremely satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

33. How satisfied are you with the way the DOT kept roads free of snow and ice for safe winter driving last year? Use a "1" to "10" scale, where 1 is not at all satisfied and 10 is extremely satisfied. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Not at all satisfied									Extremely satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

34b. How would you rate the quality of commercial air service available to you in South Dakota? Use a "1" to "10" scale, where 1 is a very poor and 10 is an extremely good. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Very poor									Extremely good
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

ASK IF RESPONSE TO Q34b is 4 OR LESS

34c. Why do you say that?

[RECORD VERBATIM]

QUESTIONS 35-40 ASKED DEPENDING ON RESPONSE TO Q8.—STATES DRIVEN

35. In your opinion how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of Iowa? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in Iowa?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

36. In your opinion, how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of Minnesota? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in Minnesota?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

37. In your opinion, how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of Montana? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in Montana?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

38. In your opinion, how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of North Dakota? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in North Dakota?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

39. In your opinion how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of Nebraska? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in Nebraska?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

40. In your opinion, how does highway maintenance in South Dakota compare with that of Wyoming? Would you say road maintenance in South Dakota is better, worse, or about the same as in Wyoming?

Better
Worse
About the same
No opinion / don't know

41. In your opinion, what does South Dakota's DOT do better than neighboring states?
[RECORD VERBATIM]

42. In your opinion, what do DOT's of neighboring states do better than South Dakota?
[RECORD VERBATIM]

PART VI. POSITIONS ON ISSUES

For the last series of questions I'd like your opinion on some key transportation issues affecting residents of South Dakota.

Funding Priority

43. Which ONE of the following would you give priority funding to if you could choose only ONE?
[READ LIST, RECORD ONE]

Rebuilding and repairing Interstate Highways
Building new 4-lane expressways
Rebuilding 2-lane highways to make them wider and straighter, or
Resurfacing and repairing 2-lane highways to make them smoother
[DO NOT READ] None of the above
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

44. Do you feel the DOT is doing too much work, not enough work, or about the right amount of work to repair the state's Interstate highways?

Too much work
Not enough work
About the right amount of work
Don't know

Safety

45. How likely do you feel each of the following can interfere with safe travel?
Traffic congestion in commercially developed areas. Would you say…

[READ LIST]
Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

46. Construction activity
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

47. Limited public transit service
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
Don't know

48. Poor road signage
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

49. Rough roads
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

50. Winter conditions
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

51. Narrow shoulders
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

52. Poor pavement markings
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

53. Railroad crossings
[READ LIST IF NECESSARY]

Very likely
Somewhat likely
Not very likely, or
Not at all likely
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

54. Which ONE of these conditions do you feel interferes MOST with safe travel?
[RECORD ONE RESPONSE]

Traffic congestion in commercially developed areas
Construction activity
Limited public transit service
Poor road signage
Rough roads
Winter conditions
Narrow shoulders
Pavement markings, or
Railroad crossings
Don't know

Overweight trucks

55. How much of a concern to you is the impact of overweight trucks on South Dakota highways. Would you say it is a major concern, minor concern or no concern to you?

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

56. Would you say the current enforcement of laws for overweight trucks on South Dakota highways is too strict, not strict enough or about right?

Is too strict
Not strict enough
About right
Don't know

DM&E

57. How aware are you of the proposed expansion of the DM&E railroad? Would you say you are…
[READ LIST]

Extremely aware
Very aware
Somewhat aware
Not very aware, or
Not at all aware SKIP TO Q64.

58. How would you describe your level of support for the proposed expansion of the DM&E railroad? Would you say you are…
[READ LIST]

Extremely supportive
Very supportive
Somewhat supportive
Not very supportive
Not at all supportive
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

59. I'm going to read you a list of factors about the DM&E expansion that may or may not be a concern to you. For each please tell me if it is a major, minor, or of no concern to you personally.
[READ CONCERN, RECORD RESPONSE]

Adequate service to grain shippers

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

60. Delays at city railroad crossings

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

61. Dust and dirt

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

62. Noise

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

63. Safety

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

Equitable Use Resources

64. In your opinion, how fair is the DOT in making available highway funds for roadway projects across all areas of South Dakota? Use a "1" to "10" scale, where 1 is not at all fair and 10 is extremely fair. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Not at all fair									Extremely fair
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

65. How fair is the DOT in making available funds for air, rail and transit projects across all areas of South Dakota? Use a "1" to "10" scale, where 1 is not at all fair and 10 is extremely fair. You may use any number from 1 to 10.

Not at all fair									Extremely fair
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

ROTATE Q66 - 71

Younger and older aged drivers

66. How much of a safety concern to you are the driving abilities of younger age drivers on the roads and highways of South Dakota? Would you say it is a major concern, minor concern or of no concern to you?

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

67. Do you favor mandatory driver's education for younger aged drivers?

Yes
No
Don't know

68. Do you feel the cost of driver's education should be a driver expense or taxpayer expense?

Driver expense
Taxpayer expense
Don't know

69. How much of a safety concern to you are the driving abilities of older age drivers on the roads and highways of South Dakota? Would you say it is a major concern, minor concern or of no concern to you?

Major concern
Minor concern
No concern
Don't know

70. Do you favor mandatory road testing of driver's over age 70?

Yes
No
Don't know

71. Do you feel the cost of additional road testing should be a driver expense or taxpayer expense?

Driver expense
Taxpayer expense
Don't know

PART VII. DEMOGRAPHICS

Q. Finally I would like to ask you some questions for classification purposes. We collect this information to make sure we have gathered opinions from a variety of South Dakota residents.

72. In what county do you live?
[CHECK FROM LIST]

73. Would you describe the area you live in as…?
[READ LIST]

a community of 40,000 residents or more
a community with 5,000 to 40,000 residents
a community of less than 5,000 residents, or
a rural area outside city limits
[DO NOT READ] Refused

74. What year were you born?
[RECORD YEAR, 4 DIGITS]

Don't Know
Refused

75. What was the last grade of school you completed? Was it…
[READ LIST]

Grade school or less
Some high school
High school graduate
Some college or technical school
Technical school graduate
College graduate, or
Post graduate
[DO NOT READ] Refused

76. Are you employed full or part time outside the home?
[RECORD ONE RESPONSE]

Yes, full time
Yes, part time
Not employed outside the home
Retired
Student
Other GOTO 76b.
Refused

76b. Other employment.

[RECORD VERBATIM]

77. What was your 1998 total household income before taxes? Please stop me when I get to the right range.
[READ LIST]

Under $20,000
$20,000, but less than $35,000
$35,000, but less than $50,000
$50,000, but less than $65,000
$65,000 or more
Don't know
Refused

78. Do you have access to the Internet?

Yes
No SKIP TO Q80.

79. How interested are you in receiving transportation information from the SD DOT over the Internet? Would you say you are…
[READ LIST]

Very interested
Somewhat interested
Not very interested, or
Not at all interested
[DO NOT READ] Don't know

80. What is your zip code?
[RECORD 5 DIGITS]

81. Thank you very much. That is all the questions I have.
[RECORD GENDER]

Female
Male

82. Did respondent make any additional comments?

Yes GOTO 82b.
No

82b. Additional comments.
[RECORD COMMENTS]

83. [CLOSING FOR TERMINATION ON SCREENING QUESTIONS]
Thank you we have already filled our quota for this group. Have a good day!

APPENDIX C—LEGISLATIVE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Name	Party	Dist.	Legislative
Gary Hanson	D	01	House
Paul Symens	D	01	Senate
Steve Cutler	R	02	House
Duane Sutton	R	02	House
Jim Lawler	D	03	Senate
Al Waltman	D	03	House
Larry Diedrich	R	04	House
Robert Weber	R	04	House
Don Brosz	R	05	Senate
Claire Konald	R	05	House
Doug Kazmerzak	R	06	House
Art Fryslie	R	06	House
Arnold Brown	R	07	Senate
Gerald Lange	D	08	Senate
Daniel Sutton	D	08	House
Dale Slaughter	R	08	House
Dennis Daugaard	R	09	Senate
Roger Brooks	R	10	House
Roger Hunt	R	10	House
Kristie Fiegen	R	11	House
Dick Hainje	R	11	Senate
Hal Wick	R	12	House
David Munson	R	12	Senate
Kermit Staggers	R	13	Senate
Mary Patterson	D	13	House
Barbara Everist	R	14	Senate

Name	Party	Dist.	Legislative
Gary Moore	D	18	Senate
Donald Munson	R	18	House
J.E. "Jim" Putman	R	19	House
Mel Olson	D	20	Senate
Lou Sebert	R	20	House
Charles Flowers	D	21	Senate
Pat Haley	D	21	House
Robert Duxbury	D	22	Senate
Joanne Lockner	D	22	House
Jay Duenwald	R	23	House
Bob Drake	R	23	Senate
Jarvis Brown	R	23	House
William Cerny	D	25	House
Jim Hutmacher	D	25	Senate
Robert Benson	R	26	Senate
Kent Juhnke	R	26	House
John Koskan	R	26	House
Larry Lucas	D	27	House
Ted Klaudt	R	28	House
Marguerite Kleven	R	29	Senate
Willard Pummel	R	29	House
Kenneth McNenny	R	29	House
Jim Lintz	R	30	House
Mike Koehn	R	30	House
Jim Dunn	R	31	Senate
Jerry Apa	R	31	House

APPENDIX C—LEGISLATIVE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED

Bill Peterson	R	14	House	Mark Young	R	31	House
Richard "Dick" Brown	R	14	House	Thomas Hennies	R	32	House
Kay Davis	D	15	House	J.P. Duniphan	R	33	House
Michael Broderick Jr.	R	15	House	Carol Fitzgerald	R	33	House
Kenneth Albers	R	16	House	Michael Derby	R	34	House
H. Junior Engbrecht	R	17	House	Jerry Shoener	R	34	Senate
John Reedy	D	17	Senate	Cheryl Madden	R	35	Senate

APPENDIX D—CALLING DISPOSITION TABLE

Call Result	Total Number	Total Percent	Resident Number	Resident Percent	Legislator Number	Legislator Percent
Total number of dials	6019	100%	5610	100.0%	409	100.0%
Wrong number	9	0.2%	0	0.0%	9	2.2%
Fax / modem	62	1.0%	58	1.0%	4	1.0%
Disconnected / not working	432	7.2%	431	7.7%	1	0.2%
Phone location not qualified	52	0.9%	52	0.9%	0	0.0%
Refused to begin	555	9.2%	546	9.7%	9	2.2%
Terminate	127	2.1%	126	2.3%	1	0.2%
Non-qualified records	171	2.8%	170	3.0%	1	0.2%
Call backs	853	14.2%	739	13.2%	114	27.9%
Busy	253	4.2%	229	4.1%	24	5.9%
Answering machine / voice mail	819	13.6%	730	13.0%	89	21.8%
No answer	1886	31.3%	1795	32.0%	91	22.3%
Completed interviews	800	13.3%	734	13.1%	66	16.1%
TOTAL RECORDS USED	**3624**		**3521**		**103**	