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TITLE: How the Public Views DMV

DATE: May 1975

AUTHOR(S): Research Staff

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FUNDING SOURCE: Departmental Budget

PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To conduct a survey to determine the general public's view of DMV.

SUMMARY:

Personal in-home inter-views were completed with 1,053 California adults aged 18 years or over who resided in residential dwelling units. The survey data was collected by the Field Research Corporation under the auspices of the Research & Planning Section. This survey is intended to fulfill the first of two the objectives outlined in the proposal Public Views DMV," presented to the Director on March 5, 1975.

The initial question on the survey regarding the possession of a California drivers license was used to verify the methodology used by the contractor in developing his sample base.

Demographic data derived from this survey was compared to the 1970 Census data to verify the composition of the various groups. Section III contains a listing of the demographic variables with the comparisons. The survey questions were also analyzed for accuracy of response by comparing the question replies to 100 similarly conducted surveys.

Three primary questions were used to evaluate the Department's image with the public. They were (in abbreviated text): 1. How courteous and friendly were OMV employees? 2. Based on what you have seen or heard, how would you rate the job that DMV is doing? 3. Compared with other state agencies or departments, how would you rate DMV? The first primary question was asked only if the respondent indicated that he had visited a field office within the last year or two. A follow-up question to determine the services obtained (Reg., D.L.) was asked when the response of "Not at all courteous and friendly" was received. All survey subjects were asked the second and third primary questions. An "open response" type of follow-up question was used to evaluate the subject's answer to the second primary question. This allowed the subject to express his own opinion on what was good, or bad, about the job that DMV is doing. There was no follow-up on the third primary question.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

In general, more than 72% of the surveyed population had either an average ~ above average opinion of DMV -54% indicated average and 18% had an above average opinion. The highest number of above average responses was recorded for the question pertaining to the job that DMV is doing (69%). Fifty-six percent of the survey population gave an above average rating for the DMV employees' courteous and friendly attitude, while 30% rated DMV above average when compared to other state agencies or departments they have dealt with.

The main areas of customer dissatisfaction can be placed into three categories: 1. Low expenditure -high yield areas involving the modifications of employee attitudes towards the customer. 2. High expenditure items including additional employees, revised counter service

techniques and modifications to office designs that decrease the length of time it takes to service the customer. 3. Legislative and/or major policy changes directed at eliminating the "red tape" items. Obtaining an overall rating of 70% (20% above a considered 'average' rating) indicates that the public's contact with this department has been a satisfying experience.

The primary decision to be made at this time is: What level of service should be considered optimum for a public agency that provides consumer protection, revenue collection and traffic safety functions for over 20 million people (adults and children)? Discussions with the Bank of America, Public Relations and Marketing Research Division, indicate that this type of decision needs to be made within the framework of an established track record and not on the basis of one study. A baseline must be established and considerations must be given to additional costs imposed on the taxpayer to achieve the level of service decided upon.

The marketing research analyst at Bank of America also suggested that the department's field offices be divided into major geographical areas and that each area be allowed to set their own objectives concerning customer satisfaction. The field office areas would in effect be competing against each other in meeting the objectives established. Surveys would be accomplished within each area to determine which group of field offices were providing the best service. This would provide a very useful information base and allow for the development and testing of several ideas and the subsequent adoption of the most effective techniques on a statewide basis. The Bank of America uses this method with very satisfactory results.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

None.