

**TRAVEL
MANAGEMENT
DIVISION**

**Vehicle maintenance
and repair options**

EVALUATION of PILOT TEST

SEPTEMBER 1999

A Management Analysis Division Report



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MINNESOTA

Department of Administration

MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS DIVISION

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The Management Analysis Division is Minnesota government's in-house fee-for-service management consulting group. We are in our second decade of helping public managers increase their organization's effectiveness and efficiency. Our highly skilled professional management consultants provide quality management consultation services to local, regional, state, and federal government agencies.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Travel Management Division conducted a 12-month pilot test to collect data for comparing costs and customer satisfaction levels of its in-house vehicle maintenance and repair services with those of a private-sector vehicle management firm. The Management Analysis Division was hired to analyze the results. This report documents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the project team.

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The Department of Administration's Travel Management Division tested alternative means of providing maintenance and repair services to the state's fleet of passenger vehicles — within Travel Management and through contracting with the private sector. Test data was collected over the 12 months of Fiscal Year 1998.

Travel Management hired the Management Analysis Division to evaluate the cost findings and conduct a customer-satisfaction survey. An analysis of pilot test expenses found no cost difference in the provision of maintenance and repair services to two groups in the experiment. Travel Management was found to employ practices similar to those in the private sector in providing quality maintenance and repair for the least cost and in reducing downtime and other inconveniences to drivers. In addition, the state's provision of other value-added services and its flexible policies received superior ratings by customers compared to the alternative.

Customer responses to a satisfaction survey indicated preference for the in-house provision of maintenance and repair services by a margin of two to one. An analysis of responses indicated superior performance by Travel Management on time and convenience factors that affect the efficiency and effectiveness of state government.

The findings and conclusions of this report apply only to the State of Minnesota's central passenger vehicle fleet and do not necessarily apply to other government fleets or organizations.

INTRODUCTION

This report documents the evaluation of a pilot test conducted during Fiscal Year 1998 by the Department of Administration's Travel Management Division. The test collected data to compare two ways of providing maintenance and repair services to the state's motor vehicle fleet — in-house and contracting out.

The pilot test included 340 vehicles divided into control and experimental groups; the control group received Travel Management's normal maintenance and repair services in-house, and the experimental group received services from a contracted outside vehicle management firm, sometimes referred to as the VMF in this report.

The Travel Management director asked the Management Analysis Division to evaluate how successful the contracted portion of the pilot test was and how its results compare with the division's own in-house service. Travel Management wanted to know how efficient and cost-effective its service was compared with that of the private sector. Further, Management Analysis was asked to recommend how future maintenance and repair services to the state's motor fleet can best be provided.

BACKGROUND

The pilot test program was recommended in a 1994 Management Analysis benchmarking report on the state's central motor fleet.¹ The report found one private-sector vehicle management firm with reported maintenance and repair costs of 2.0 cents per mile, compared with Travel Management's 3.6 cents. The report estimated a potential to save \$500,000 a year by contracting out all maintenance and repair of its 1,304-vehicle fleet.

However, the report cautioned that the private firm's prices could not be verified by a second source. Also, a National Association of Fleet Administrators benchmarking study² reported a figure of 4.0 cents per mile for the best 20 percent of performers nationally. This indicated that Travel Management was a top performer but that the private-sector firm was even better if the comparison was valid.

The 1994 report, however, did not include analysis of the costs to see if they covered the same services and functions. This cast doubt on how to interpret the data. The report recommended conducting a pilot test to measure potential savings and assess the service arrangement from the perspective of Travel Management customers.

¹ *Minnesota Travel Management: Central Motor Pool Benchmark Report*, Management Analysis Division, St. Paul, February 1994.

² *Benchmarking for Quality in Public Service Fleets*, National Association of Fleet Administrators, study conducted by David M. Griffith & Assoc., Ltd., 1994.

This report answers the questions:

- During the pilot test program, did the vehicle management firm experimental group save money for the state compared with Travel Management's in-house (control) group?
- Are results of the pilot test a reliable predictor of future outcomes?
- How do the in-house and contract services compare in customer service?
- What is the best way for the state to provide maintenance and repair services in the future?

METHODS

The Management Analysis Division conducted focus groups, interviews, and research to determine what was important to evaluate and how to compare services fairly. This included defining the services, their similarities and differences; analyzing costs; determining what customer service categories were important; and appraising the advantages and disadvantages of the two maintenance alternatives. The project team sought input from both Travel Management and the vehicle management firm staff in order to get a balanced perspective.

Management Analysis conducted a customer survey of pilot test vehicle drivers. Both Travel Management and the vehicle management firm were given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft customer survey. Management Analysis, however, had the final say in selecting survey questions.

REPORT STRUCTURE

The first section of this report describes the two service alternatives, their operations and differences. The second section describes the pilot test design. The next section evaluates how well the participants performed in providing maintenance and repair services for the least cost. The fourth section presents results of the customer survey and evaluates how well they performed according to customers. The last section includes conclusions and recommendations.

SPECIAL NOTE

The findings and conclusions of this report apply only to the State of Minnesota passenger vehicle fleet and not necessarily to any other fleets, because:

- the state's geographic size and location may compromise the effectiveness of the national accounts system used by vehicle management firms for their fleets. In smaller jurisdictions or in states with high cost-of-living indexes and smaller size, the private vehicle
-

management firm practices might work much better. Vehicle management firm practices may be better suited to other jurisdictions — areas with different population densities and dispersion.

- The state fleet is large enough to support a sophisticated vehicle management software system and to retain qualified staff to do a good job of supervising maintenance and repair and negotiating savings.
 - The state fleet is large enough to capture very competitive pricing on national accounts.
-

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE and REPAIR SERVICES

GOALS of FLEET MAINTENANCE and REPAIR SERVICES

The Travel Management Division and vehicle management firms are similar in that they have the same two main goals:

- to provide quality maintenance and repair for the least cost and
- to reduce drivers' downtime and inconvenience caused by maintenance and repair.

To achieve these goals, they both:

- supervise maintenance and repair with experienced mechanics who try to control costs by eliminating unnecessary, inadequate, or unauthorized work;
- negotiate savings — better prices on replacement parts and service they consider overpriced, and reimbursement for vehicle repairs with recently expired warranties; and
- contract with national chains to provide services and parts at a discount.

These strategies are supported with program policies about how drivers are to obtain maintenance and repair services.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Repairs and servicing of state vehicles are projected to cost \$872,000 in Fiscal Year 1999. Of this amount, approximately \$511,000, or 59 percent, will be performed by outside vendors; the rest will be provided by Travel Management's garage in St. Paul. Customers can be divided into two groups — Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.

The TWIN CITIES Travel Management operates a garage in St. Paul with 12 maintenance and repair staff. This facility services vehicles in the seven-county metropolitan area (primarily from the St. Paul Capitol complex) and any other fleet vehicles that travel to the area. The garage performs most types of maintenance and repairs necessary for the type of vehicles owned by Travel Management.

Services include regular maintenance and unscheduled repairs. Examples are oil changes, tune-ups, tire replacements, and breakdown or routine repairs. The garage also diagnoses breakdowns on vehicles and assists drivers who stop at the garage with a vehicle problem.

Major repairs such as engine overhauls are either covered by a warranty or performed by an outside vendor. Body work and painting are also contracted out. The garage performs work related to vehicle acquisition and disposal, such as installing safety features on new cars and preparing older ones for auction.

To help reduce customers' time and inconvenience, Travel Management provides free daily loaner vehicles at its St. Paul location when customers bring vehicles in for maintenance and repair. It inspects all vehicles brought in for preventive maintenance with a 20-point checklist (see Appendix A). It provides any additional minor servicing vehicles might need, such as vacuuming or washing and replacement of wiper blades, fluids, headlights, and scrapers. Some of these services are done without charge. The vehicle maintenance history is checked and updated and any overdue preventive maintenance work is done at this time.

GREATER MINNESOTA Most maintenance and repair are provided by outside vendors for drivers based outside the seven-county Twin Cities area. Travel Management tries to reduce driver downtime by allowing drivers to use the most convenient vendor outside the Twin Cities. All repairs exceeding \$35 must be approved by the Travel Management garage in advance, so that drivers will call in when servicing is needed and the vehicle's maintenance and repair history can be updated. Before giving approval, Travel Management checks the vehicle's history to ensure that unnecessary work will not be performed. In this manner, Travel Management controls how vehicles are serviced throughout the state and safeguards against vendors' taking advantage of the state as a customer. Travel Management sends reminder notices to drivers when their vehicle's preventive maintenance is past due.

Travel Management also contracts with national chains to provide certain maintenance and repair services (such as oil changes and tires) at discounts. These are available throughout the state. National chain discounted parts are supplied by Travel Management through its St. Paul garage. Outside the Twin Cities, drivers are usually allowed to take their vehicles to the most convenient facility. If the facility is not part of the network, Travel Management may negotiate discounts with it if its prices are much higher than those in Travel Management's network and will steer drivers away from facilities that overprice their services.

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT FIRM SERVICES

Vehicle management firms manage the maintenance and repair of their clients' vehicles through outside vendors and do not service vehicles themselves. They provide many of the same services for their customers as Travel Management does. Vehicle management firms are staffed with service specialists who are experienced mechanics. They must approve any

repairs exceeding \$50 before the work is done. They check and update vehicle maintenance history and may arrange for overdue preventive maintenance to be done. They also send notices to client organizations listing vehicles that have not had work done within recommended time limits. It is up to the organizations then to remind drivers to have overdue preventive maintenance performed.

Vehicle management firms provide customers with national account price discounts. Because of their large volumes, vehicle management firms are able to negotiate discounts on parts and service from national chains. Although the management firms receive a fee for this service by arrangement with the chains, the discounts to customers generally result in better pricing than they could get on their own. Customers, then, must take their vehicles to the network of specified national chain facilities in order to get the discounts.

It is the policy of vehicle management firms that drivers should take their vehicles to facilities that participate in their national network. They enforce this policy with drivers unless the client organization chooses a different policy. The vehicle management firm that participated in this pilot test recently created a convenience charge of \$20 per time for use of a non-network facility. This charge helps cover the additional cost of billing a facility not in the network or of signing the facility up.

As an additional measure of savings, vehicle management firms count staff time supervising repairs as an administrative savings to clients because it saves the client from providing or finding the service themselves.

The PILOT TEST

PILOT VEHICLE SELECTION

Travel Management selected a control group of 170 vehicles to continue receiving in-house maintenance and repair services as usual. Model types of the control group were selected proportional to their presence in the state's fleet as a whole. Travel Management then selected an experimental group of 170 matching vehicles to receive services through a vehicle management firm. The drivers of the control vehicles were not informed of their participation in the control group in order not to bias the results.

PILOT VEHICLE MANAGEMENT FIRM SELECTION

Travel Management selected the vendor to serve as the vehicle management firm to manage the maintenance and repair of the experimental group. This company was selected because it was already under contract with the state and is a large international vehicle management firm with hundreds of thousands of vehicles in its customer base.

Maintenance and repair services were provided and records were kept from July 1, 1997, to June 30, 1998, the state's 1998 fiscal year.

EVALUATION of COSTS

The evaluation of costs considered four issues:

1. Did the vehicle management firm experimental group save the state money, compared to the TMD control group?
2. How similar were the experimental and control groups?
3. Were the two groups reliable predictors of larger populations of vehicles?
4. How similar were the two agencies' cost-reduction practices?

COST DIFFERENCES

First the project team compared the cost of providing maintenance and repair to the pilot control and experimental groups. Because of differences in how the two groups serviced vehicles and accounted for costs, the team did not find directly comparable cost categories. But several facts emerged that provide a context for understanding the costs of the two groups.

1. Travel Management and the vehicle management firm reported direct maintenance and repair expenses for the pilot vehicles; Table 1 calculates the average cost per vehicle and per mile based on reported maintenance and repair expenses.

	Travel Management	Vehicle mgmt firm
Cost of maintenance and repair, including sales tax ^a	\$80,730	\$66,814
Total number of vehicles ^b	166	144
Average maintenance and repair costs per vehicle	\$486.33	\$463.99
Estimated average maintenance and repair costs per vehicle per mile (based on 16,000 miles per year)	3 cents	2.9 cents

^a Expense data covers only the time the vehicles were part of the pilot. This is true for all experimental and control vehicles including replacement and replaced vehicles

^b Calculation of vehicle numbers for cost analysis: The vehicle management firm has 227 vehicles in its data base; 65 of them have no expenses reported so they are subtracted from the total. Eighteen are replacement vehicles, meaning they were in the program less than one year. Each replacement vehicle along with its replaced vehicle were in the program one year together. Therefore, 18 vehicles are deducted from the total to avoid double counting before calculating cost figures: $227 - 65 - 18 = 144$. Travel Management has 185 vehicles in its data base; 10 of them have no expenses reported and are subtracted from the total. Fifteen are "reassignment" vehicles and were in the program less than one year. We know, however, that 6 of these 15 were replaced in May 1998, too late for their replacement vehicles to encounter costs. Therefore, 6 of the 15 have already been dropped for having no expenses and only 9 of the 15 are double counted. So 9 vehicles are deducted from the total vehicles to avoid double counting before calculating cost figures: $185 - 10 - 9 = 166$.

Maintenance and repair cost \$80,760 for Travel Management's control group and \$66,814 for the vehicle management firm's experimental group. Both figures include sales tax. When these costs were divided by the number of vehicles in the program for the pilot year, the average yearly cost was \$486.33 per Travel Management vehicle and \$463.99 per vehicle management firm vehicle. The cost per mile was 2.9 cents for the vehicle management firm vehicles and 3 cents for Travel Management vehicles, assuming average mileage of 16,000 miles per year per vehicle.

The costs appear to be very similar, but some factors cast doubt on the comparison.

The Travel Management cost figures include all costs billed to control group vehicles for repairs outside the Twin Cities garage and for the costs of parts and labor on vehicles repaired in its Twin Cities garage. The team found that the Travel Management labor rate has not been changed for several years and may not reflect the full cost of labor. The rate, then, may understate the labor cost at its Twin Cities garage. However, because Travel Management labor charges were less than 20 percent of all maintenance and repair control group costs, the effect is likely small.

On the other hand, Travel Management staff questioned whether the experimental vehicles received all the preventive maintenance they were supposed to. If not, the vehicle management firm cost figures would understate the amount of maintenance and repair that should have been done to the management firm vehicles. The customer survey discussed in the next section did not ask about this aspect of service. A few comments were written in suggesting that experimental group drivers may have omitted some preventive maintenance. However, the comments are too few to determine the extent to which this may have happened.

The vehicle management firm recommends quarterly reports to its client organizations on vehicles that have not had preventive maintenance performed within recommended time limits. The firm does not notify drivers directly; generally, driver notification is done by the client organizations. For the pilot, Travel Management did not notify the vehicle management firm drivers of overdue maintenance.

Travel Management's practice is to notify its own drivers whenever preventive maintenance is overdue. This includes checking the record of every car brought into its garage and performing all preventive maintenance that is due. It also includes doing this through vendors when vehicle repairs are called in from outside the Twin Cities area. Like Travel Management, the vehicle management firm reports that its service specialists check the vehicle history whenever repair calls come in to be sure that any overdue preventive maintenance is performed.

- 2. In addition to the costs reported above, the vehicle management firm also received a management fee of \$4 per vehicle per month. This amounts to \$6,912 for the group, or .3 cent per mile. The team found no corresponding fee for Travel Management; it does not bill the management of maintenance and repair directly to vehicles; it includes it in its overall maintenance and repair costs that are recovered by a per-mile charge of 4.1 to
-

TABLE 2. Pilot vehicle maintenance and repair expense comparison with management fees

	Travel Management	Vehicle mgmt firm
Cost of maintenance and repair, including sales tax	\$80,730	\$66,814
Total number of vehicles	166	144
Average maintenance and repair costs per vehicle	\$486.33	\$463.99
Estimated average maintenance and repair costs per vehicle per mile (based on 16,000 miles per year)	3 cents	2.9 cents
Management fee per vehicle (\$4/vehicle/month; \$6,912 for the 144 experimental vehicles)	NA	\$511.99
Cost of management fee per mile	NA	.3 cents
Total cost per mile	NA	3.2 cents

Note: Table 1 contains footnotes applicable to Table 2.

5.1 cents, depending on the vehicle type. Table 2 shows the effect of these costs on per-mile rates.

The figure of 3.2 cents per mile represents the total cost paid to the vehicle management firm for services it provided to pilot vehicles. It included all direct costs billed by vendors for maintenance and repair and a \$4-per-month per-vehicle management fee. The vehicle management firm covered its costs and any profit out of the management fee and through a fee arrangement with the vendors. The 3.2 cents per mile figure, however, does not include the value of support services provided by the state, such as invoicing state agencies.

There is no exactly comparable cost category from Travel Management for the same set of services. Travel Management has total cost figures for all maintenance and repair services it provides to vehicles; those figures, however, include a number of maintenance and repair-related services that the vehicle management firm did not provide to the pilot experimental group.

3. The project team was able to calculate cost figures for all maintenance and repair-related services Travel Management provides to vehicles. Travel Management's budget and rate matrix filed with the Department of Finance each year includes all costs attributable to maintenance and repair, including management, state indirect charges, facility costs, and full labor costs. The team calculated a per-mile maintenance and repair cost varying from 4.1 to 5.1 cents per mile for three common vehicles in its fleet.

TABLE 3. Group A and B maintenance and repair cost categories for pilot test vehicles

COST CATEGORY		Travel Management		Vehicle mgmt firm	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
GROUP A SERVICES	Direct vehicle maintenance and repair costs, including taxes	✓		✓	
	Subtotal costs for all services above this line	3.0 cents		2.9 cents	
	Management of maintenance and repair program, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision of maintenance and repair • maintenance of fleet data base and vehicle history • some management reports • paying vendor bills 	✓		✓	
	Cost subtotal for all services above this line	NA		3.2 cents	
GROUP B SERVICES	Accident repair (body work, painting)	✓			✓
	Invoicing customer agencies	✓			✓
	New car preparation	✓			✓
	Auction preparation	✓			✓
	Daily loaner vehicles	✓			✓
	Routine car washes, vacuuming, window washing, etc.	✓			✓
	Emission testing and repair	✓			✓
	Driver notifications; maintenance-due notices	✓			✓
	Total of all maintenance and repair-related costs per mile for all services	4.1 - 5.1 cents*		NA	

*Travel Management costs include overhead, state indirect charges, facility costs, labor costs attributable to maintenance and repair, etc.

The overall mileage charge includes all of the categories listed in Table 3. In order to assist in the analysis, the team divided cost categories into two groups. Group A included categories of costs paid to the vehicle management firm for the pilot, most, but not all, of which could be determined for Travel Management. Group B included the additional maintenance and repair services provided by Travel Management that were not provided by the vehicle management firm. Some of them can be purchased from the vehicle management firm for additional costs, but were not purchased for this pilot program.

For example, the vehicle management firm can order new vehicles prepared with special equipment for customers. It could also have state vehicle decals and license plates attached to the cars. However, that would increase the charges for its vehicle management services.

TABLE 4. Comparison of model types

Travel Management Division group		Vehicle management firm group	
Acclaim	66	Acclaim	51
Taurus	22	Taurus	38
Mini van ^a	56	Mini van ^b	20
Olds Cutlass wagon	10	Lumina	12
Less than 10 ^c	32	Less than 10 ^d	38
Total^e	185	Total^e	159

^a Caravan, Aerostar, Voyager, Lumina APV,

^a Caravan or Voyager

^c Buick LeSabre, Cargo, Celebrity, Century, Chevy C150, Chevy Lumina, Corsica, Cutlass, Escort, F150, Intrepid, Shadow, Tempo

^d Cargo, Celebrity, Century, Corsica, Cutlass, Escort, F150, Intrepid, pick-up, Shadow, Tempo

^e Both groups started with 170 vehicles assigned to customers. During the pilot test, some cars were taken out of service. In each case, a replacement vehicle was designated and put into the program. The vehicle management firm total is based on the data available from the vehicle management firm and is reduced because some vehicles had no expenses during the year and do not figure into expense data in this report. The total number of vehicles is higher in this table than in Table 1 because all replaced and replacement vehicles that incurred expenses were included.

Because their prices are volume-sensitive, the vehicle management firm cannot say how much the charges would increase (for Group B services) without a detailed description of preparation specifications and other details about a complete fleet management contract.

VEHICLE GROUP SIMILARITIES

The second step to evaluating pilot test expenses was to determine if the two groups were comparable. Travel Management originally selected vehicle models for the control group that were proportional to their overall presence in the state fleet. Then it selected matching vehicles for the experimental group. It tried to match vehicle models, age, type of utilization and mileage. The experimental vehicles were selected from two agencies in order to keep administration of the group manageable.³

The project team compared the two groups for the number, type, and age of vehicles and found them to be similar. Both groups had large numbers of Acclaims, Tauruses, and mini vans, as shown in Table 4. These three models made up 69 percent of the experimental group

³ The vehicle management firm had to introduce its program to its users and train them. A fully random selection would have involved so many agencies and locations that the administration would have been very difficult.

TABLE 5. Age comparison of pilot test vehicle groups

Number of vehicles	MODEL YEAR								Age of group*	Total vehicles	Average age per vehicle
	90-91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98			
Travel Management	20	4	44	42	52	23	0	0	764 years	185	4.13 years
Vehicle management firm	11	3	31	35	36	24	18	1	569.5 years	159	3.58 years

* Based on the age of each model year on Jan.1, 1998, multiplied by the number of vehicles in that model year.

and 78 percent of the control group. Many of the remaining vehicles also were of the same types. Travel Management had more mini vans (56, compared with 20), which have slightly higher maintenance and repair expenses than most of the other models.

Table 5 compares the age of the two groups of vehicles. The Travel Management Division group, at an average age of 4.13 years, was about six months older than the vehicle management firm group, at an average age of 3.58 years. Analysis of the model types and ages indicated that the two groups were similar. However, the prevalence of mini vans and older age of the control group suggested that control group costs should be somewhat higher than for the experimental group.

DEGREE of REPRESENTATION

The third step in evaluating pilot test expenses was to examine whether the two groups were typical of larger populations of vehicles or if they had experienced unusually high or low maintenance and repair costs.

Table 6 shows that the estimated pilot test expenses of 2.9 cents per mile for the experimental group were within the range of what would be predicted from the three models sampled (2.56, 2.62, and 2.92 cents), but toward the upper end. Corresponding figures were not available for the control group, but the similarities of pilot test expenses for the two groups shown in Table 1 do not indicate that either group is typical of larger populations of vehicles.

Travel Management does not have data on individual models for the maintenance and repair costs of Group A services. The project team calculated a cents-per-mile maintenance and repair figure for Travel Management's Group A and B services based on classes of vehicle types in its fleet as reported in its 1998 rates package.

TABLE 6. Projected maintenance and repair costs for selected vehicles and groups of services

VEHICLE	CENTS per MILE			
	Travel Management ^a Group A services	Travel Management ^b Groups A and B services	Vehicle management firm ^c Group A services	Vehicle mgmt firm ^d Groups A and B services
Ford Taurus wagon <i>without management fee</i>	NA	4.80	2.56	NA
Chevrolet Lumina (intermediate) <i>without management fee</i>	NA	4.10	2.62	NA
Dodge Caravan (mini van) <i>without management fee</i>	NA	5.10	2.92	NA
Estimated pilot maintenance and repair only <i>without management fee</i>	3.0	NA	2.90	NA
Estimated pilot maintenance and repair <i>with management fee</i>	NA	NA	3.20	NA

^a Breakdowns of Group A maintenance and repair costs per mile were not available for individual models or classes of cars.

^b Calculated from Travel Management's 1998 rate package. Figures are for the compact wagon, intermediate, and mini van classes of vehicles.

^c From the vehicle management firm's 1998 publication of projected operating costs. The vehicle management firm had extensive maintenance and repair data on many models of cars in its data base of more than a half-million vehicles. Its projected costs were based on the data, manufacturer's recommendations, and its national accounts pricing. Figures are for the Ford Taurus, Chevrolet Lumina, and Dodge Caravan.

^d The vehicle management firm was unable to estimate costs for Group A and B services without detailed information that was unavailable for this study.

COST-REDUCTION SIMILARITIES

The fourth step was to compare cost-reduction practices. Even though maintenance and repair expenses of the experimental and control groups were similar to each other and typical of larger populations of vehicles, the project team wanted to determine if vehicle management firms use better cost-control practices that might outperform Travel Management in the future.

The project team identified three primary ways that vehicle management firms save money for clients. The first was through national accounts pricing, the second through strict management of repairs by experienced mechanics, and the third by negotiating savings with vendors.

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS PRICING The project team compared the prices available through the contract firm's national account pricing and Travel Management's discount contracts with chains. It selected three categories of parts and service because they represent common, repetitive, high-volume purchases: tires, window glass, and oil changes. Tables 7, 8, and 9 present the prices for these categories.

TABLE 7. Price comparison of frequently purchased tires

Goodyear tires	Mfr's list ^a	Travel Management ^b	Vehicle mgmt firm ^b
P-185/70R14 Regatta	\$74.99	\$31.50	\$ 69.65
P-205/75R15 S4S	66.99	37.35	70.75
LT245/75R16 Workhorse radial	114.99	73.61	123.03
Discounts from list price for non-contract tires:	Passenger Truck radials Truck bias	32% 23% 10%	0% 0% 0%
Tire balancing (per tire)		\$ 8.00	\$10.00

^a Prices include mounting but not balancing.

^b Manufacturer's list price does not include mounting or balancing.

TABLE 8. Price comparison of glass replacement

Item	Travel Management	Vehicle management firm
Discount on National Auto Glass Specifications' windshield prices	62%	46.4%
Shop rate per hour	\$8.00 - \$22.00	\$25.00
Urethane kit	\$9.95 - \$16.00	\$11.00

TABLE 9. Price comparison of oil changes

Vendor	Travel Management	Vehicle management firm
Jiffy Lube	30% off retail price \$18.89 - 5 quarts \$20.29 - 6 quarts	Street pricing by location for all Jiffy Lube services*
Goodyear	\$19.00	Street pricing by metro and/or location*

* See discussion in text for explanation of pricing response.

Table 7 compares prices of three of the most common tires used by the state's fleet of vehicles. Travel Management's price was lower for all three, varying from \$33.40 to \$49.42 less per tire than the vehicle management firm's price. Travel Management's contracts call for greater percentage discounts from list price for tires not quoted specifically in its contract.

The Travel Management Division pays less for windshield and hourly shop rates (Table 8). For urethane kits, the outside vendor offers a lower price in some areas of Minnesota and a higher price in others.

It was not possible to get prices for Jiffy Lube and Goodyear oil changes available through the vehicle management firm, as reported in Table 9. However, the management firm wrote concerning oil changes:

It has been our experience that, generally, public sector units (fed, state, local) can often obtain better local or regional pricing on such items. This is because [our] national accounts program requires national pricing from all vendors, whereas even national car care chains such as Firestone can “localize” pricing for gov’t organizations that will be operating in a relatively small, defined area, such as a single state or municipality. . . . Therefore, utilizing a “national accounts” pricing program for the State of Minnesota’s fleet could well be more costly.⁴

Travel Management’s prices were significantly better than the vehicle management firm’s for all three types of parts and service. Although the data documents the pricing difference, it does not explain it. It could well be that the smaller geographical region for state business allows better pricing than a nation-wide price. This price advantage was also noted in the 1994 study of Travel Management’s operations, where vehicle purchase discounts to the public were either limited or unavailable through private-sector service providers.

As mentioned earlier, vehicle management firms try to steer drivers into their network in order for the customer to capture the savings. (The vehicle management firm also receives fees for purchases from its network.) Travel Management, however, allows drivers to use the most convenient facility when getting repairs at a facility other than the St. Paul garage. This allows them to choose the facilities that are closest or fit in best with their work schedules and itineraries. Although these out-of-network purchases mean they are buying on the retail market, Travel Management staff try to negotiate savings from these facilities.

There are some circumstances under which the vehicle management firm would send vehicles to more than one supplier, according to the firm’s account executive⁵:

- “If the driver were at a national account or independent and the repair was covered under warranty and had to be addressed at a certified garage for that manufacturer (dealer).
- “If the shop didn’t have the capability to do the work (for example, tires at a Jiffy Lube).

⁴ The vehicle management firm’s statement elaborated on this comment: “For example, a standard \$19.95 oil change anywhere in the U.S. is a pretty good deal for fleets with cars in New York or Los Angeles, whereas the same oil change in Brainerd or Rochester, MN might be \$13.95. Therefore, utilizing a ‘national accounts’ pricing program for the State of Minnesota’s fleet could well be more costly.”

⁵ E-mail from account executive, Sept. 2, 1999.

- “If [the firm] couldn’t trust the shop (for example, his estimate was too high or he was over-selling for work that wasn’t needed at that time).
- “If the shop refused to bill through [the vehicle management firm].”

Travel Management may also send drivers to more than one supplier for similar reasons, but Travel Management staff reported that they can use their judgment in each case. The vehicle management firm reported that its customer organizations can change their policies for more flexibility; the policy would then be applied to all cases. But each time a driver used an out-of-network supplier, the state would lose the national discount and pay a \$20 convenience fee. There may be a difference, then, in how flexible the two alternatives are. This flexibility may be reflected in customer responses and may affect the time-effectiveness of the programs for state drivers.

CERTIFIED MECHANICS that REVIEW and APPROVE REPAIRS Vehicle management firms use experienced mechanics to supervise maintenance and repair. They help diagnose problems and negotiate repair work. Because large vehicle management firms can have hundreds of thousands of vehicles in their data bases, they are able to identify price gouging or unnecessary repair requests.

The pilot’s vehicle management firm’s special research report in 1995⁶ analyzed data from more than 25,000 vehicles within 47 different client fleets. Forty-two percent of these vehicles were managed by the vehicle management firm, with the rest managed by its clients or other outside maintenance control sources.

The report concluded that its findings “prove that the supervision of maintenance expenses by experienced mechanics has a significant impact on reducing maintenance costs. . . .” The vehicle management firm recently projected the savings to be \$17 per month per vehicle. For the 144 vehicles in the pilot test group, then, it would project savings of \$29,376.

The vehicle management firm’s mechanics have a minimum of seven years’ automotive repair experience each and are certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence; almost all are certified master mechanics.⁷ Travel Management has maintenance and repair staff that perform the same functions. They are experienced mechanics; about two-thirds of them hold or have held ASE certification as master mechanics and have over twenty years each of private-sector experience as mechanics.

Therefore, the practice of supervising repairs with experienced mechanics is used by both Travel Management and the vehicle management firm. Travel Management believes its staff

⁶ *Analysis of [vehicle management firm’s] savings*, [vehicle management firm’s] Center for Analysis and Research, July 1994.

⁷ *Ibid.*

have two advantages over the vehicle management firm: (1) The division will negotiate discounts on prices that are usual and customary by citing its own costs to suppliers and (2) their staff are familiar with the state geography as well as many of the vendors and can use judgment in directing drivers to facilities and negotiating various aspects of the services. They can analyze each case on its own merits rather than holding everyone to a particular policy.

NEGOTIATED SAVINGS The third main way vehicle management firms save money for clients is through “negotiated savings.” Whenever the company denies a repair as unnecessary or not due, negotiates a better price with the vendor, successfully pursues reimbursement for a vehicle repair that recently ran out of warranty, or reduces an over-charge, it counts it as a “negotiated savings.” It also counts the administrative time to do this as a savings because it assumes it saved time for the client.

Although this would be a savings for clients that don’t have experienced mechanics to negotiate savings, in this case Travel Management provides the same cost-reduction practice. Travel Management also negotiates savings with facilities outside its network on a case-by-case basis.

Travel Management provides essentially the same cost-reduction practices as the pilot vehicle management firm but, as mentioned above, will negotiate discounts from prices that are customary by citing its own costs.

CONCLUSIONS

The two groups of pilot vehicles appear to be similar to each other in terms of model types and age. The differences that exist in model types (Travel Management having more mini vans and vehicles on average six months older) suggest that Travel Management’s costs should be somewhat higher, but they don’t appear to be from the data.

The team found that full Travel Management maintenance and repair costs include services not provided to the vehicle management firm’s experimental group. Therefore, if the state completely contracted out maintenance and repair, these additional services would have to be either purchased for an additional cost, provided by the state even while contracting out, or discontinued. Any of these choices would raise the costs or decrease the savings of contracting out, or reduce the level of service to state drivers.

The groups were examined for whether they were typical of larger populations. The team found no evidence that expenses of the two groups were atypical.

The examination of the vehicle management firms’s cost-reduction practices found them to be very similar to Travel Management’s in that:

- Both use national accounts pricing. A sample showed that Travel Management had substantially better pricing from its chain discounts; however, its policy of allowing drivers to use the most convenient vendor may result in more retail purchasing.
- Both use experienced, qualified mechanics to supervise maintenance and repair. Travel Management has more flexibility in negotiating terms, using judgment on a case-by-case basis rather than a pre-set policy.
- Both negotiate savings. Although Travel Management does not calculate negotiated savings, it uses the same negotiation methods and processes.

The cost analysis does not show an advantage to either one, but rather supports a conclusion that they are very similar in costs. Although the data cannot definitely rule out a cost savings to the state by contracting out maintenance and repair because of differences in accounting and services, the hard data does not support a conclusion that contracting out would save the state money.

It is also clear that the full Travel Management maintenance and repair services include services not provided to the experimental group. These services would raise the cost or decrease the savings of contracting out the whole fleet or would reduce services to state drivers.

Travel Management believes its flexibility and value-added services do a better job of reducing driver downtime. Cost analysis does not address this. However, the difference in flexibility and services between the two alternatives may be reflected in customer responses and may affect the driver-time-effectiveness of these programs. These services, such as loaner vehicles; choice of most convenient vendor; notifying drivers of overdue preventive maintenance; and providing minor servicing, vehicle inspections, and preventive maintenance updates are evaluated in the next section on customer survey results.

CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS

The pilot test program was also evaluated from a customer-service perspective through a customer survey. Management Analysis developed the survey instrument to identify qualitative aspects of the two services (see Appendix B. The survey instrument had two forms — one for TMD and one for VMF. They are combined in the appendix for the reader's convenience). The survey was based on research and information gathered in interviews and focus groups with Travel Management and vehicle management firm staff. This included an earlier customer survey that the vehicle management firm had on file illustrating the types of information it thought important to evaluate. The final pilot test survey focused on several aspects of the maintenance and repair programs, including customer service, timeliness/convenience, and quality.

Draft copies of the survey were sent to both Travel Management and the vehicle management firm for review and comment. Their comments were taken into consideration in the final wording of the survey questions. Management Analysis retained final authority over the survey content. The survey included 16 multiple-choice and three short open-answer questions. The multiple-choice questions asked drivers to indicate their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with several different factors. The short-answer questions asked drivers to express their opinions about strengths of the programs, what most needed improvement, and any other comments or concerns they had about the maintenance and repair services.

In order to reduce any bias state workers might have about providing services in-house vs. contracting, the control and experimental groups were not asked to compare the two services. Each was asked independently to rate their satisfaction with the service they received: VMF customers rated the service they received from the VMF and TMD customers rated the service from TMD. The Management Analysis Division project team then compared their ratings.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATES

Table 10 on the next page shows that 191 surveys were sent out to the vehicle management firm group and 172 to the Travel Management group. Subtractions were made because some surveys were undeliverable or had no addressee. When these were subtracted, there were very high response rates of 81.6 percent for the vehicle management firm group and 82.4 percent for the Travel Management Division group.⁸

⁸ Control and experimental participants were selected in 1997 before the pilot test began. Drivers of vehicle management firm vehicles were given a red card to use for vehicle management firm services. Drivers of Travel Management vehicles used the state's blue card as always, but were not told they were part of a pilot test. In the case of both groups, drivers or vehicles that left the program before it was finished were replaced with new ones, which is why both groups had more than 170 surveys distributed. Some were

TABLE 10. Travel Management and vehicle management firm survey participation

	TMD	VMF	TOTAL
Original number of surveys distributed	172	191	363
Subtractions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undeliverable - Travel Management Division 11, vehicle management firm 16 • No addressee - Travel Management Division 36, vehicle management firm 34 	47	50	97
Total number of participants contacted	125	141	266
Number of returned surveys	103	115	218
Response rate	82.4%	81.6%	82.0%

SURVEY RESULTS

The tables presented in the text are abbreviated and rounded to the nearest full percent to simplify their presentation. Two changes were made in how numbers were calculated. First, response categories were combined: “Satisfied” and “very satisfied” were combined into one category as were “dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied.” Also, the category “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” was omitted; therefore, the responses do not total to 100 percent.⁹ Second, responses of participants with fewer than three experiences with the pilot test’s maintenance and repair services were eliminated. This was done to factor out responses based on little or no experience or knowledge of the program. This left for analysis the responses of 155 out of 218 returned surveys. Travel Management and the vehicle management firm had 77 and 78 of these responses, respectively. Appendix C shows the full survey results.

undeliverable because the driver had left state employment or couldn’t be located. Others had no contact name and were sent to the agencies where the cars were assigned. In most cases, these cars were assigned to pools of drivers rather than individuals. It is doubtful that many pool drivers had much experience with either program. These undeliverables compose a small proportion of the total participant groups and were not counted in this analysis. For Travel Management, the proportion is 20.9 percent and for the vehicle management firm 17.8 percent. Surveys were sent to all participants with addresses. Where employees left state service after they began the pilot test, the vehicle repairs were counted in this analysis but the drivers were not included in the survey. When these adjustments are made, a total of 191 surveys were sent out for the vehicle management firm group and 172 for the Travel Management group.

⁹Three vehicle maintenance firm customers did not indicate the geographic group to which they belonged. Therefore, their answers are counted only in the “overall” column. This is why the percentages don’t always correlate correctly between overall and geographic regions.

Responses were categorized into two geographical areas — the seven-county Twin Cities area and Greater Minnesota, also referred to as “all other counties.” This was done to learn if in-house or contract management of maintenance and repair might be more suitable for one or the other. Fifty-eight percent of Travel management customers and 75 percent of the vehicle management firm customers reported receiving maintenance and repair services mainly from outside the Twin Cities.

TABLE 11. Statement 1 results

1. The ability to get through to TMD/vehicle management firm staff when you called	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	88%	56%	90%	35%	85%	60%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	0%	23%	0%	41%	0%	18%

No Travel Management customers reported any dissatisfaction with getting through to service staff on the telephone. A large majority (88 percent) of Travel Management customers said they were satisfied or very satisfied with this measure. Twenty-three percent of the vehicle management firm group reported dissatisfaction.

TABLE 12. Statement 2 results

2. The courtesy of TMD/vehicle management firm staff	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	84%	63%	87%	65%	81%	61%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	7%	9%	3%	12%	10%	8%

A majority of both groups said they found the courtesy of service staff to be satisfactory or very satisfactory, although the Travel Management group indicated somewhat more satisfaction (84 percent to 63 percent). Both groups also had some cases of dissatisfaction, but with little difference between the two services: 7 percent for Travel Management and 9 percent for the vehicle management firm. Despite good satisfaction ratings, both showed enough dissatisfaction to indicate that there is room for improvement in courtesy.

TABLE 13. Statement 3 results

3. The helpfulness of TMD/vehicle management firm staff	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	84%	50%	87%	31%	81%	53%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	8%	19%	7%	25%	10%	18%

A higher proportion of Travel Management customers were satisfied with the helpfulness of staff than those of the vehicle management firm. Half of the vehicle management firm customers said they were satisfied with the helpfulness of staff, compared with 84 percent for Travel Management. There was also a higher dissatisfaction rate among vehicle management firm customers — 19 vs. 8 percent for Travel Management. This may reflect the customers' experience with other aspects of the service, such as flexibility in repair authorization and the convenience of repair facility locations. These could well affect the perception of helpfulness.

TABLE 14. Statement 4 results

4. The ease of getting repair authorization from TMD/vehicle management firm	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	78%	51%	81%	41%	76%	55%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	6%	34%	3%	53%	7%	30%

The two groups reported a large difference in satisfaction with the ease of getting repair authorization. More than three-fourths (78 percent) of the Travel Management group and about half (51 percent) of the vehicle management firm group said they were satisfied or very satisfied. The dissatisfaction rate was almost six times greater for the vehicle management firm group at 34 percent, compared with the Travel Management group at 6 percent. This is discussed later in the discussion and conclusions section.

TABLE 15. Statement 5 results

5. The flexibility to take the vehicle to a service facility that was convenient for you	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	85%	49%	83%	58%	86%	48%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	8%	37%	7%	37%	9%	36%

Satisfaction levels for the two groups on this measure were similar to repair authorization levels. About half (49%) of the vehicle management firm group said they were satisfied or very satisfied, compared with more than four-fifths (85 percent) of the Travel Management group. Dissatisfaction was reported by more than one-third (37 percent) of vehicle management firm respondents vs. less than one-tenth (8 percent) for Travel Management.

Twin Cities area and Greater Minnesota response patterns are almost the same for both experimental and control groups. Although it was expected that taking vehicles to convenient facilities would be easier in the metropolitan area and would therefore draw better ratings, this is not supported by the data. It could be due to higher service expectations in the cities. However, it is the top-ranked factor in importance for Greater Minnesota respondents of both

Travel Management and vehicle management firm groups. Twin Cities participants ranked this behind helpfulness, time in shop, the ability to have all work done at one facility, quality of the work, and availability of replacement vehicles.

TABLE 16. Statement 6 results

6. The travel time or distance you had to drive to the service facility	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	85%	60%	80%	68%	88%	61%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	1%	21%	3%	32%	0%	18%

Overall, the Travel Management group reported a high degree of satisfaction (85 percent) with travel time or distance to service facilities and a low level of dissatisfaction (1 percent). The vehicle management firm group was not as satisfied, with 60 percent reporting satisfaction and 21 percent dissatisfaction.

Geographic responses were very similar for the Travel Management group but the vehicle management firm group reported more dissatisfaction with travel time or distance in the metropolitan area (32 percent) than in Greater Minnesota (18 percent). This finding was unexpected, because Travel Management customers are encouraged to take their vehicles to the Travel Management garage in the Twin Cities (especially in the capitol complex), but can go to any facility of their choice in Greater Minnesota. Yet metropolitan area drivers were not much different from Greater Minnesota drivers in their satisfaction ratings. This may also have been influenced by the availability or lack of loaner vehicles.

All vehicle management firm customers must routinely go to participating service facilities, which are presumed to be located a shorter time and distance in the Twin Cities than in Greater Minnesota. The higher rate of dissatisfaction for metropolitan area vehicle management firm customers may again indicate higher service expectations in the cities.

TABLE 17. Statement 7 results

7. The length of time the vehicle was in the service facility.	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	83%	67%	87%	39%	81%	75%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	4%	18%	3%	50%	5%	9%

More than four-fifths (83 percent) of Travel Management customers reported satisfaction with this measure of repair time, compared with two-thirds (67 percent) of vehicle management firm customers. Dissatisfaction rates were four times greater for vehicle management firm customers (18 percent) than for Travel Management's (4 percent). Most of the low

ratings for the vehicle management firm came from the Twin Cities, where half reported dissatisfaction. Only 9 percent of vehicle management firm customers reported dissatisfaction with repair time in all other counties. By comparison, 3 percent of Travel Management’s customers reported dissatisfaction in the Twin Cities and 5 percent elsewhere. It is not clear why there are these differences.

TABLE 18. Statement 8 results

8. The ability to have all work done at one service facility	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	78%	57%	93%	39%	67%	62%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	7%	27%	3%	50%	10%	21%

More than three-fourths (78 percent) of Travel Management customers said they were satisfied with being able to get work done at one service facility, compared with slightly more than half (57 percent) of vehicle management firm customers. The difference is especially pronounced in the Twin Cities, where almost all (93 percent) Travel Management customers were satisfied and half of vehicle management firm customers were dissatisfied. Along with time in the shop and quality of work, this ranked as the most important service aspect for vehicle management firm customers in the Twin Cities.

This measure may reflect the vehicle management firm’s system of using national accounts to create savings. This is addressed in the discussion and conclusions section.

TABLE 19. Statement 9 results

9. The availability of a replacement vehicle while yours was in the service facility	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	63%	3%	82%	6%	33%	0%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	11%	48%	7%	63%	17%	36%

Overall satisfaction with replacement vehicles ran 63 percent for Travel Management, which provides replacement vehicles, and 3 percent for the vehicle management firm, which didn’t. Dissatisfaction ratings ran 11 percent for Travel Management and 48 percent for the vehicle management firm. Most of Travel Management’s satisfaction ratings came from its Twin Cities customers (82 percent). Most of the vehicle management firm’s dissatisfaction ratings also came from its Twin Cities customers (62 percent). This is not surprising because the only state drivers offered this service were Travel Management customers who get their vehicles serviced in the Twin Cities.

More Greater Minnesota Travel Management customers (who don't have the service available) said they were dissatisfied than did their Twin Cities counterparts. For the vehicle management firm customers, however, many more Twin Cities ratings were negative than were Greater Minnesota ratings. This is perhaps because many of the Twin Cities vehicle management firm customers had loaners available prior to the pilot test and then lost that service during the pilot test.

The response to this statement indicated that it is a source of considerable dissatisfaction for Twin City drivers when it is not available. In a later question (14), only three of 98 Greater Minnesota respondents ranked this item as one of their three most important. In the Twin Cities, 15 of 51 respondents did.

TABLE 20. Statement 10 results

10. The willingness of service facilities to accept your business as a TMD/vehicle management firm customer	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	76%	59%	74%	74%	78%	57%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	7%	24%	0%	16%	11%	23%

A majority of all customers said they were satisfied with facilities' willingness to accept their state business. More Travel Management customers were satisfied at 76 percent than were vehicle management firm customers at 59 percent. Reports of dissatisfaction came mostly from Greater Minnesota, where vehicle management firm customers reported dissatisfaction at twice the rate of Travel Management customers, 23 percent to 11 percent.

TABLE 21. Statement 11 results

11. The quality of the maintenance or repair work done	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	80%	69%	78%	50%	82%	74%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	3%	10%	6%	33%	0%	2%

Both Travel Management at 80 percent and the vehicle management firm at 69 percent had high levels of satisfaction with the quality of repair work. More customers reported dissatisfaction with the vehicle management firm-arranged service at 10 percent than Travel Management customers at 3 percent. The most significant finding, however, is that almost all dissatisfaction came from Twin Cities vehicle management firm customers and almost none from Greater Minnesota for both groups.

This geographic difference is important because it has a direct bearing on the quality of service performed by the Travel Management garage. Although 6 percent of Travel Manage-

ment customers in the metropolitan area reported dissatisfaction, because it represents just two cases of 32 it is too small a number to attach significance to. The more compelling fact is that the rest of Travel Management's Twin City customers (93 percent) were either satisfied or at least not dissatisfied. This compares with the rest of the vehicle management firm's customers (67 percent) in the Twin Cities. Although the reasons are not clear from the data, it is possible that the vehicle management firm customers may have been reflecting less satisfaction than they had previously with Travel Management before the pilot test.

TABLE 22. Statement 12 results

12. Emergency roadside assistance if you were locked out of your car, ran out of gas, or needed a jump or a tow	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	47%	21%	36%	9%	52%	36%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	18%	39%	36%	36%	9%	29%

Fewer than half of each group answered this question and fewer than half of those (47 percent for Travel Management and 21 percent for the vehicle management firm) reported satisfaction. As with other statements, more Travel Management customers said they were satisfied than did vehicle management firm customers, and fewer Travel Management customers said they were dissatisfied. However, because the vehicle management firm actually had a current contract to provide Travel Management Division customers with emergency roadside assistance after normal business hours, it is not possible to interpret the numbers. Appendix D includes comments from customers who elaborated on problems with this aspect of service.

TABLE 23. Statement 13 results

13. The TMD\Vehicle management firm maintenance and repair program overall	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
Very satisfied/satisfied	81%	44%	90%	32%	75%	51%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	4%	33%	0%	58%	7%	26%

Almost twice as many Travel Management customers as vehicle management firm customers (81 percent vs. 44 percent) were satisfied with their maintenance and repair programs overall, and more than eight times as many vehicle management firm vs. Travel Management customers said they were dissatisfied (33 percent vs. 4 percent). This variance is especially pronounced in the Twin Cities, where no Travel Management customers reported dissatisfaction but more than half (58 percent) of the vehicle management firm customers did. Outside the Twin Cities, about half (51 percent) of the vehicle management firm customers said they were satisfied, but more than one-quarter (26 percent) reported dissatisfaction.

These responses indicate a clear preference for Travel Management services over management by the contract firm.

QUESTION 14 RESULTS

Question 14 asked, “Of the maintenance and repair service aspects listed above in items (1) through (13), write the item numbers of the three most important to you or add your own.”

Both the vehicle management firm and Travel Management customers ranked time and convenience measures as two of their three most important overall — ease of getting repair authorization and flexibility to choose a convenient facility (Statements 4 and 5).

Geographically, Greater Minnesota drivers ranked Statements 4 and 5 as the two most important. Twin Cities drivers ranked three time and convenience factors in their top four — the length of time in the shop (Statement 7), flexibility to choose a convenient facility (5), and availability of a replacement vehicle (9).

QUESTION 15 RESULTS

Question 15 asked, “About how many times (different occasions) did you use maintenance, repair, or emergency services between July 1, 1997, and June 30, 1998?”

For this study, responses from those with fewer than three occasions of maintenance, repair, or emergency services were eliminated from analysis. This was done in order to focus on those with more experience and knowledge of the programs. This left the responses of 155 out of 218 returned surveys for analysis. Travel Management and the vehicle management firm had 77 and 78 of these responses, respectively.

QUESTION 16 RESULTS

Question 16 asked, “Did the vehicle(s) receive maintenance and repair services mainly in the seven-county Twin Cities area or Greater Minnesota?”

Fifty-eight percent of Travel Management’s customers and 75 percent of the vehicle management firm’s customers reported receiving maintenance and repair services mainly outside the Twin Cities. The answers to this question allowed a comparison of urban and rural drivers.

QUESTIONS 17, 18, 19 RESULTS

The written responses to these questions are included in Appendix D.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

The project team reviewed the survey findings to determine which program showed evidence of doing a better job in reducing downtime and inconvenience for drivers. Not only is this the second main goal of managing fleet maintenance and repair (following the first goal of providing quality maintenance and repair for the least cost), but it directly affects the efficiency and effectiveness of state government; it indicates the amount of time state employees have for working rather than attending to maintenance and repair.

Four questions in particular were significant because they dealt directly with differences in how the two alternatives reduce driver downtime. The responses to Statements 4 (ease of authorization), 5 (flexibility to choose a convenient facility), 6 (travel time/distance to a service facility), and 8 (ability to have all work done at one facility) were influenced by the different ways Travel Management and the vehicle management firm use their national accounts networks.

On all four of these statements of time and convenience, Travel Management received much higher satisfaction ratings (78 to 85 percent) than the vehicle management firm (49 to 60 percent). Travel Management also had much lower dissatisfaction ratings of 1 to 8 percent vs. 21 to 37 percent for the vehicle management firm.

There were several main differences in how Travel Management and the vehicle management firm practices served pilot test participants: Travel Management usually allowed customers in Greater Minnesota to choose the maintenance and repair facilities most convenient for them; whenever vehicles are in its St. Paul garage, the division provides free daily loaner vehicles and minor servicing such as car washes and vacuuming; it inspects vehicles using a 20-point checklist whenever it does preventive maintenance; and it ensures that all preventive maintenance is up-to-date by close monitoring in its garage and by sending out overdue notices to drivers. Several of these are Group B services that add value to Travel Management's service.

This makes repair authorizations easier, allows more flexibility in choosing convenient facilities, reduces travel time and distance, and allows different types of work to be done at the same service facility. The national accounts system used by the vehicle management firm restricts all four of these measures to some degree in order to continue customer use of the national accounts.

Although vehicle management firms will alter their policies to the degree desired by their client organizations, going outside their networks negates the advantages they have to offer customers. The pilot test vehicle management firm recently adopted a \$20 convenience fee for each time a driver goes outside the network. This is to cover the extra work of billing a non-network facility or adding a facility to the network. Therefore, for the state to achieve more flexibility and convenience from a vehicle management firm it would increase the costs

of contracting and defeat its advantages — advantages that Travel Management has been largely able to duplicate.

Although vehicle management firm policies allow the addition of facilities of the client’s choosing into the network as long as the facility will meet the conditions of the network, in practice (at least, in the pilot) it didn’t work very well: Written comments indicated that it was very hard to do. Ratings given to the four main time and convenience statements are repeated here:

TABLE 24. Ratings of the four main time and convenience statements

Survey statement	Overall		7-county Twin Cities area		All other counties	
	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF
4. The ease of getting repair authorization from TMD/vehicle management firm						
Very satisfied/satisfied	78%	50%	81%	41%	76%	55%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	6%	34%	3%	53%	7%	30%
5. The flexibility to take the vehicle to a service facility that was convenient for you						
Very satisfied/satisfied	85%	49%	83%	58%	86%	48%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	8%	37%	3%	32%	9%	36%
6. The travel time or distance you had to drive to the service facility						
Very satisfied/satisfied	85%	60%	80%	68%	88%	61%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	1%	21%	3%	32%	0%	18%
8. The ability to have all work done at one service facility						
Very satisfied/satisfied	78%	57%	93%	39%	67%	62%
Very dissatisfied/dissatisfied	7%	27%	3%	50%	10%	21%

Typical comments written by drivers illustrated the impact that time and convenience factors have on them. These comments are not representative of all customers; they are intended to illustrate the impact of time and convenience factors.

“[We were] directed to service centers that are out-of-the-way, very slow, and lack needed items, causing our entire team to spend many hours wasting time in a garage instead of working. [This] caused overtime more than once.”

“The person responsible for the coordination of vehicle service and repair has spent considerably more time each month either waiting for service authorizations or waiting at dealerships for needed repairs. There is no question that the Travel Management Division provided quicker service that was much more convenient to our location.”

“I live in Bemidji which has seven or eight different places that could assist with a lock-out, dead battery, etc. Instead when I called the roadside assistance number, they used a vendor who was located 25 miles north of Bemidji and said they couldn’t use anyone in town because of not having a contract with them.”

“I called three different times to get a local repair business authorized by the vehicle management firm, so I could get my oil changes done locally! Have had no satisfaction.”

“If my car needed services, I had to use a location close to my house, and they had my car most of the day, so I couldn’t do any field work or office work since they offered no replacement car like motor pool.”

“Cars were not maintained properly because private shops don’t check everything when cars are repaired. Motor pool has a 25-point check system that I think works great.”

During the pilot test, several drivers wrote letters of complaint to Travel Management about the impacts of these policies. They are included in Appendix E.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The direct costs for maintenance and repair services were similar whether provided by the vehicle management firm or the Travel Management Division. While acknowledging the limitations of the data comparisons, the project team determined there was not sufficient evidence to demonstrate a savings by contracting vehicle maintenance and repair.

The pilot test vehicles were found to be typical of larger populations of vehicles, and therefore their results were likely to predict future performance. The state service uses the same cost-control practices as the major vehicle management firms, including supervision of maintenance and repair by experienced mechanics, negotiating savings with vendors, and providing national chain discounts. Travel Management's chain discounts were found to be far superior to those provided to the experimental vehicles by the vehicle management firm. Reasons for the price advantage indicated that major vehicle management firms are unlikely to provide better discounts.

Travel Management provides a range of value-added services to its maintenance and repair service, some of which would have to be provided in some other way if the state contracted out management of its fleet maintenance and repair. To the extent the value-added services could be provided by a contract firm, they would increase the cost of maintenance and repair services. To the extent they could not, they would have to continue being provided in-house, reducing any potential savings. To the extent they were dropped, they would affect customer time and convenience.

From the customer's perspective, Travel Management outperformed the vehicle management firm in every service factor surveyed, many of them by a large margin. Overall, state customers said they preferred a Travel Management Division-provided service to a contract management service by a margin of almost two to one.

An analysis of responses to questions about the time and convenience of service indicated that Travel Management services were considered much more timely and convenient by state drivers. These are not just factors of customer satisfaction, but economic issues directly affecting the efficiency of the public sector. The trade-off was that more convenience led to more purchasing on the retail market. However, this did not lead to higher overall costs and was apparently offset by other factors.

When it came to reducing driver downtime, the state practice of allowing customers to obtain maintenance and repair at the most convenient facility outperformed the private-sector practice of sending most business to national chain facilities. There was no corresponding price benefit to the state to justify the more restrictive practice.

Customer-service ratings and written anecdotes indicated that the need to go to the vehicle management firm's national network is a built-in inefficiency. The only way to overcome this is to forgo the price advantage and increase the cost of maintenance and repair.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The state should continue to:
 - provide in-house maintenance and repair services to its fleet of state passenger vehicles under the management of the Travel Management Division;
 - operate a garage in the Twin Cities for preventive maintenance and minor or routine repair work;
 - contract out maintenance and repair services in Greater Minnesota as well as major repairs and paint and body work; and
 - continue its flexible policies that result in a high level of customer satisfaction and minimize driver downtime and inconvenience.
 2. Travel Management should review the findings of this report and individual written customer comments about its service. These comments illustrate the strengths of the division's services and identify ways to improve them.
 3. Travel Management should change the way it accounts for maintenance and repair costs. Before choosing which changes to make, it should consider not only the types of comparisons made in this report, but practices elsewhere in the maintenance and repair industry. The goal should be to record costs in a way that makes possible direct comparisons to the private sector. This would make comparisons easier and much more useful in benchmarking its practices in the future.
 4. If the state considers contracting out maintenance and repair in the future, it is imperative that it conduct a review of best practices to identify working solutions to the problems identified in private-sector services in this report. Without working solutions, contracting out the management of maintenance and repair could well lead to increased costs, increased downtime for state employees, a decrease in the quality of maintenance and repair, and deterioration of customer service.
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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A.

Twenty-point vehicle checklist

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECK OFF LIST

NOTE STARTER & ENGINE OPERATION	_____	LUBRICATE	_____
INSPECT GAUGES & ALL LIGHTS	_____	CLEAN BATTERY & TIGHTEN CABLES	_____
TEST ALL ACCESSORIES	_____	INSPECT HOSES & BELTS	_____
TEST BRAKES FOR OPERATION	_____	RAD-ANTIFREEZE PROTECTED TO	_____
TEST STEERING	_____	CLEAN INSIDE WINDOWS	_____
CHANGE OIL & FILTER	_____	CLEAN & VACUUM INSIDE OF CAR	_____
INSPECT FOR FLUID LEAKS	_____	TEST SPARE TIRE PRESSURE	_____
INSPECT BRAKE LINES & HOSES	_____	CHECK VEHICLE FOR DECALS & #s	_____
CHECK WHEEL BEARINGS	_____	NOTE ALL BODY DAMAGE	_____
INSPECT SUSPENSION & DRIVELINE	_____	TOP OFF ALL FLUID LEVELS	_____

NOTES

APPENDIX B.

Survey instrument

(14) Of the maintenance and repair service aspects listed above in items (1) through (13), write the item numbers of the three most important to you or add your own _____

	None	1-2 times	3-4 times	5-6 times	7+ times
(15) About how many times (different occasions) did you use maintenance, repair or emergency services between July 1, 1997, and June 30, 1998?	0	0	0	0	0

	7-County Twin Cities Area	All Other Counties (Greater MN)
(16) Did the vehicle(s) receive maintenance and repair services mainly in the seven-county Twin Cities area or in Greater Minnesota?	0	0

Written Comments

Your comments will be typed up verbatim except that inappropriate language, personal attacks, and wording that could identify you will be deleted.

(17) In your opinion, what were the key strengths of the TMD/VMF maintenance and repair program? Please provide details or mention any incidents that highlight these strengths.

(18) In your opinion, what most needs improvement in TMD's/VMF'S maintenance and repair program? Please provide details or mention any incidents that highlight the needed improvement.

(19) What other comments or concerns do you have about the maintenance and repair service? _____

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it to the Minnesota Department of Administration-Management Analysis Division, 203 Administration Building, 50 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55155.

APPENDIX C.

Survey results

	TMD	VMF	7-County Twin Cities Area		All Other Counties (Greater MN)		No Answer
			TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	
1. The ability to get through to TMD/VMF staff when you called. Very Satisfied\Satisfied Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied Totals	87.5% 63	55.7% 39	90.3% 28	35.3% 6	85.4% 35	60.0% 30	100.0% 3
	12.5% 9	21.4% 15	9.7% 3	23.5% 4	14.6% 6	22.0% 11	0.0% 0
	0.0% 0	22.9% 16	0.0% 0	41.2% 7	0.0% 0	18.0% 9	0.0% 0
	100.0% 72	100.0% 70	100.0% 31	100.0% 17	100.0% 41	100.0% 50	100.0% 3
2. The courtesy of TMD/VMF staff Very Satisfied\Satisfied Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied Totals	83.6% 61	63.4% 45	87.1% 27	64.7% 11	81.0% 34	60.8% 31	100.0% 3
	9.6% 7	28.2% 20	9.7% 3	23.5% 4	9.5% 4	31.4% 16	0.0% 0
	6.8% 5	8.5% 6	3.2% 1	11.8% 2	9.5% 4	7.8% 4	0.0% 0
	100.0% 73	100.0% 71	100.0% 31	100.0% 17	100.0% 42	100.0% 51	100.0% 3
3. The helpfulness of TMD/VMF staff Very Satisfied\Satisfied Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied Totals	83.6% 61	50.0% 35	87.1% 27	31.2% 5	81.0% 34	52.9% 27	100.0% 3
	8.2% 6	31.4% 22	6.5% 2	43.8% 7	9.5% 4	29.4% 15	0.0% 0
	8.2% 6	18.6% 13	6.5% 2	25.0% 4	9.5% 4	17.6% 9	0.0% 0
	100.0% 73	100.0% 70	100.0% 31	100.0% 16	100.0% 42	100.0% 51	100.0% 3
4. The ease of getting repair authorization from TMD/VMF Very Satisfied\Satisfied Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied Totals	78.1% 57	50.7% 37	80.6% 25	41.2% 7	76.2% 32	54.7% 29	33.3% 1
	16.4% 12	15.1% 11	16.1% 5	5.9% 1	16.7% 7	15.1% 8	66.7% 2
	5.5% 4	34.2% 25	3.2% 1	52.9% 9	7.1% 3	30.2% 16	0.0% 0
	100.0% 73	100.0% 73	100.0% 31	100.0% 17	100.0% 42	100.0% 53	100.0% 3
5. The flexibility to take the vehicle to a service facility that was convenient for you Very Satisfied\Satisfied	84.9% 62	48.7% 38	82.8% 24	57.9% 11	86.4% 38	48.2% 27	0.0% 0

	TMD	VMF	7-County Twin Cities Area		All Other Counties (Greater MN)		No Answer
			TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	6.8%	14.1%	10.3%	5.3%	4.5%	16.1%	33.3%
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	8.2%	37.2%	6.9%	36.8%	9.1%	35.7%	66.7%
Totals	100.0%	73	100.0%	19	100.0%	56	100.0%
6. The travel time or distance you had to drive to the service facility							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	84.7%	60.3%	80.0%	68.4%	88.1%	60.7%	0.0%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	13.9%	19.2%	16.7%	0.0%	11.9%	21.4%	100.0%
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	1.4%	20.5%	3.3%	31.6%	0.0%	17.9%	0.0%
Totals	100.0%	72	100.0%	19	100.0%	56	100.0%
7. The length of time the vehicle was in the service facility							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	83.3%	67.1%	86.7%	38.9%	81.0%	74.5%	100.0%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	12.5%	14.5%	10.0%	11.1%	14.3%	16.4%	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	4.2%	18.4%	3.3%	50.0%	4.8%	9.1%	0.0%
Totals	100.0%	72	100.0%	18	100.0%	55	100.0%
8. The ability to have all work done at one service facility							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	77.8%	56.8%	93.3%	38.9%	66.7%	62.3%	66.7%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	15.3%	16.2%	3.3%	11.1%	23.8%	17.0%	33.3%
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	6.9%	27.0%	3.3%	50.0%	9.5%	20.8%	0.0%
Totals	100.0%	72	100.0%	18	100.0%	53	100.0%
9. The availability of a replacement vehicle while yours was in the service facility							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	63.0%	3.2%	82.1%	6.2%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	26.1%	48.4%	10.7%	31.2%	50.0%	64.3%	100.0%

	TMD	VMF	7-County Twin Cities Area		All Other Counties (Greater MN)		No Answer
			TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	10.9% 5	48.4% 15	7.1% 2	62.5% 10	16.7% 3	35.7% 5	0.0% 0
Totals	100.0% 46	100.0% 31	100.0% 28	100.0% 16	100.0% 18	100.0% 14	100.0% 1
10. The willingness of service facilities to accept your business as a TMD/VMF customer							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	76.4% 55	59.0% 46	74.1% 20	73.7% 14	77.8% 35	57.1% 32	0.0% 0
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	16.7% 12	16.7% 13	25.9% 7	10.5% 2	11.1% 5	19.6% 11	0.0% 0
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	6.9% 5	24.4% 19	0.0% 0	15.8% 3	11.1% 5	23.2% 13	100.0% 3
Totals	100.0% 72	100.0% 78	100.0% 27	100.0% 19	100.0% 45	100.0% 56	100.0% 3
11. The quality of the maintenance or repair work done							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	80.3% 61	68.9% 51	78.1% 25	50.0% 9	81.8% 36	73.6% 39	100.0% 3
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	17.1% 13	21.6% 16	15.6% 5	16.7% 3	18.2% 8	24.5% 13	0.0% 0
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	2.6% 2	9.5% 7	6.2% 2	33.3% 6	0.0% 0	1.9% 1	0.0% 0
Totals	100.0% 76	100.0% 74	100.0% 32	100.0% 18	100.0% 44	100.0% 53	100.0% 3
12. Emergency roadside assistance if you were locked out of your car, ran out of gas, or needed a jump or a tow							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	47.1% 16	21.4% 6	36.4% 4	9.1% 1	52.2% 12	35.7% 5	0.0% 0
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	35.3% 12	39.3% 11	27.3% 3	54.5% 6	39.1% 9	35.7% 5	0.0% 0
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	17.6% 6	39.3% 11	36.4% 4	36.4% 4	8.7% 2	28.6% 4	100.0% 3
Totals	100.0% 34	100.0% 28	100.0% 11	100.0% 11	100.0% 23	100.0% 14	100.0% 3
13. The TMD/VMF maintenance and repair program overall							
Very Satisfied\Satisfied	81.3% 61	44.0% 33	90.3% 28	31.6% 6	75.0% 33	50.9% 27	0.0% 0
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	14.7% 11	22.7% 17	9.7% 3	10.5% 2	18.2% 8	22.6% 12	100.0% 3

	TMD	VMF	7-County Twin Cities Area		All Other Counties (Greater MN)		No Answer
			TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	
Very Dissatisfied\Dissatisfied	4.0% 3	33.3% 25	0.0% 0	57.9% 11	6.8% 3	26.4% 14	0.0% 0
Totals	100.0% 75	100.0% 75	100.0% 31	100.0% 19	100.0% 44	100.0% 53	100.0% 3
14. Of the maintenance and repair service aspects listed above in items (1)							
Q1 Ability to get through to staff	35.6% 26	31.9% 23	29.0% 9	16.7% 3	40.5% 17	33.3% 17	100.0% 3
Q2 Courtesy of staff	20.5% 15	0.0% 0	22.6% 7	0.0% 0	19.0% 8	0.0% 0	0.0% 0
Q3 Helpfulness of staff	39.7% 29	4.2% 3	51.6% 16	0.0% 0	31.0% 13	5.9% 3	0.0% 0
Q4 Ease of repair authorization	38.4% 28	41.7% 30	16.1% 5	5.6% 1	54.8% 23	56.9% 29	0.0% 0
Q5 Flexibility to use a convenient facility	47.9% 35	62.5% 45	29.0% 9	33.3% 6	61.9% 26	70.6% 36	100.0% 3
Q6 Travel time/distance to facility	13.7% 10	29.2% 21	12.9% 4	33.3% 6	14.3% 6	29.4% 15	0.0% 0
Q7 Length of time in facility	19.2% 14	19.4% 14	29.0% 9	44.4% 8	11.9% 5	11.8% 6	0.0% 0
Q8 Ability to use only one facility	16.4% 12	27.8% 20	16.1% 5	44.4% 8	16.7% 7	23.5% 12	0.0% 0
Q9 Availability of replacement vehicle	13.7% 10	11.1% 8	25.8% 8	38.9% 7	4.8% 2	2.0% 1	0.0% 0
Q10 Facility willingness to accept TMD/VMF business	17.8% 13	26.4% 19	16.1% 5	27.8% 5	19.0% 8	27.5% 14	0.0% 0
Q11 Quality of work done	19.2% 14	20.8% 15	25.8% 8	44.4% 8	14.3% 6	13.7% 7	0.0% 0
Q12 Emergency roadside assistance	9.6% 7	16.7% 12	19.4% 6	11.1% 2	2.4% 1	13.7% 7	100.0% 3
Q13The TMD/VMF program overall	5.5% 4	4.2% 3	6.5% 2	0.0% 0	4.8% 2	5.9% 3	0.0% 0
Other	0.0% 0	2.8% 2	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	3.9% 2	0.0% 0
Totals	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
15. About how many times (different occasions) did you use maintenance, repair or emergency services between July 1, 1997 and June 30, 1998							
None	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0

	TMD	VMF	7-County Twin Cities Area		All Other Counties (Greater MN)		No Answer
			TMD	VMF	TMD	VMF	
1-2 times	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3-4 times	37.3%	28	53.1%	17	25.6%	11	0.0%
5-6 times	30.7%	23	21.9%	7	37.2%	16	0.0%
7+ times	32.0%	24	25.0%	8	37.2%	16	100.0%
Totals	100.0%	75	100.0%	32	100.0%	43	100.0%
16. Did the vehicle(s) receive maintenance and repair services mainly in the services mainly in the seven-county Twin Cities area or Greater Minnesota?							
7-County Twin Cities Area	41.6%	32	100.0%	32	0.0%	0	0
All Other Counties (Greater MN)	58.4%	45	0.0%	0	100.0%	45	0
Totals	100.0%	77	100.0%	32	100.0%	45	0

* Note: Multiple answers can total over 100%.

APPENDIX D

Replies to open-ended survey questions

All replies have been edited to ensure respondents' anonymity.

Question 17. *In your opinion, what were the key strengths of TMD's [or the vehicle management firm's] maintenance and repair program? Please provide details or mention any incidents that highlight these strengths.*

Travel Management Division customers

- Customer-friendly.
 - As the vehicle was stationed outstate, the ability to get through to TMD staff when calling is very important and is very good. The staff made good decisions, so repairs would be made quickly. The outstate vendors were able to do business with TMD, so repairs and billing went well.
 - Fast, courteous service at motor pool when I had problems with the air conditioner. All other maintenance handled by Clusian Motors.
 - When I called TMD, I was treated in a respectable and courteous manner. I never had to wait to have repairs done. I like that.
 - I can take vehicle to service facility of my choice for typical maintenance needs.
 - Key strengths are availability (at least by phone) if I have trouble and the ability to get repairs in Greater Minnesota.
 - Ability to have repairs and maintenance done locally — local service providers have been happy to do business.
 - Note: I have a blue card, but I live in outstate Minnesota and thus had all my work done locally. Key strengths: The service manager where the majority of the work is performed is very satisfied with the cooperation he receives when he calls in to [name omitted] at TMD.
 - The ease of scheduling a vehicle for maintenance. TMD is accommodating when more than one vehicle needs an oil change. It's possible to bring another car in exchange.
 - The unit I am provided with is a good unit. I have no major complaints about TMD. But I take care of the unit as if it were my own. The partnership between TMD and myself works well.
 - Willingness to provide assistance.
 - Lower costs if they were passed on to the cost of the leaser of the car.
 - The TMD maintenance and repair program always fits you into the schedule. They are very accommodating at TMD, regarding scheduling.
 - The helpfulness of the staff.
 - Easy access by cell phone. Talking to a person who is helpful and if does not have the answer refers you to someone who can help or at least has an answer.
-

- I'm less than 20 minutes from the facility, which makes it convenient to drive in for wash, scheduled service, or consultation if I have a mechanical problem.
 - Being able to have service providers deal directly with TMD.
 - Courteous, helpful staff.
 - Ease of repair authorization.
 - Your staff is excellent. Very pleasant and helpful at even the most difficult times.
 - The program offers an alternative to outstate workers to take vehicles to local service facility.
 - Additional staff. There's much more organization now, [name omitted] does a very good job of managing and staying on top of things.
 - Willingness to assist. Timely manner in which repairs can be completed. Would like to be able to schedule oil change, tire rotation, etc., and get in and out quickly. At new location staff has been real nice to offer access to break room to work while waiting; very much appreciated.
 - The reminders for service were helpful. The ease of getting maintenance scheduled. The convenience of the service facilities being close by.
 - [Name omitted] has a good handle on what needs to happen and is very easy to work with.
 - Both [names omitted] have been very helpful in setting up oil changes and other maintenance.
 - Speedy transactions and knowing help is only one phone call away!
 - Staff is always courteous and knowledgeable. Even when I know I'm being a pest, such as anticipating a new car.
 - Their staff have always been very helpful and flexible. Keep up the great work!
 - They are always there to help. The program is very good.
 - Bringing vehicle to service station, having them diagnose problem and deal directly with TMD rather than through vehicle's driver.
 - Always great service from TMD.
 - Overall, I am pleased. The service provided during this time frame did improve. If I had rated the service the last 12 months instead of 12 - 18 months ago, my ratings would have been higher.
 - [Names omitted] are a great help and they are both very nice — give them a raise!
 - They are close by and they seem to get the work done fast — with ours, mainly oil changes.
 - The knowledge they have of the state system and ability to service state vehicles.
 - I did not have any work done, except general maintenance at my home station.
 - We had staffing changes in our work unit, and I was assigned to fleet management. Since this was a new responsibility for me, I appreciated the patience and assistance of the TMD maintenance staff.
 - Get authorization on my repairing TMD vehicles here, where we need our fleet up at all times for moving staff and customers.
 - Being an out-of-town agency, we do all our maintenance on state vehicles except for warranty work. What is important to me is the great communications that I have with all your staff. [Names omitted] in the shop are the best you could find. Always helpful and professional.
-

- TMD is very good about telling you what normal maintenance is due. They have always been courteous and willing to do all they can to help their customers in any way they can.
 - Travel Management personnel have always been helpful.
 - TMD staff is very accommodating, educated, and experienced. In 12 years, there has never been a bad experience. TMD is in top condition and capable. TMD can be only as good as the auto leasers allow them to be. Many leasers fail to report mileage, damage, visible defects, tire damage from curb scuffing, etc.
 - Being outstate, it is a good idea to have several places where the vehicles can be serviced and that they know and understand the procedure that the TMD requires of them in regard to permission to do things and be paid.
 - Good staff.
 - They do a great job and are eager to please.
 - Allowing use of other service facilities.
 - The ease of getting the work done locally.
 - Did all work at approved sites near Anoka.
 - Allow us to utilize another motor pool vehicle as we transport consumers to school, work, doctor's appointments, etc. Question ease of locating a replacement vehicle.
 - State-operated — own fleet — state-employee-run.
 - Moving TMD motor pool to Chester Street has been very convenient for my needs. The staff in garage is very courteous and helpful!
 - The ability to use a local facility that took care of the P.O.s issued and work authorizations, without my involvement.
 - Routine maintenance prevents breakdowns.
 - The system seems to be working well! Good people make a good program. Your Web site is an asset to all of us.
 - The ability to get service done locally with prompt authorization.
 - TMD works well overall.
 - TMD provides their staff with more than sufficient knowledge about mechanics of the car and who needs to work on it, dealer or TMD.
 - No opinion — use out-of-state centers for repair.
 - Ability to allow maintenance in areas other than the central motor pool.
 - No problem getting vehicle in for necessary service. Easy to obtain replacement vehicle.
 - Network and response to outstate repair needs.
 - During this time, the state vehicle assigned to me was serviced once at Travel Management. They were flexible enough to take the car in at a time when I was at a two-day conference in the Twin Cities; this was done with little advance notice. People are always friendly and willing to help.
 - I have found the repair staff to be helpful, friendly, and efficient. However, getting past the “front office” folks so that I can speak directly to repair staff has gotten increasingly difficult. Repair has been satisfactory.
 - [Names omitted] are very good — very helpful and are willing to answer any questions or problems that I have.
 - The staff at TMD has always been helpful. I like the new facility.
-

- This is in behalf of our office fleet of vehicles. The staff in the repair/maintenance section understand the vehicles we drive quite well and can provide guidance on what repairs are needed and quick authorization to complete them.
- Ease with which to get authorization for repair.
- Overall — staff at TMD are very courteous, friendly, professional.
- Ease of arranging for service or repair at the Central Motor Pool.

Vehicle management firm (VMF) customers

- Could be fixed most places without calls.
 - The card program was simple for me to use and was convenient since I did not have to worry about going to the Twin Cities for repairs.
 - None, based on the little contact with VMF in comparison to TMD.
 - Able to use different service centers for needed maintenance.
 - Reduced paperwork required by drivers.
 - Gas was fine. Leaving for a five-hour drive — one way — I needed a [repair performed]. After it was done, I presented my red card. The garage (where I had always had service) called VMF. I was told I couldn't go to this garage. How was I to know that? I had not been notified. I paid for it myself and was reimbursed by Travel Management.
 - No strengths identified.
 - The helpfulness of the VMF staff was tremendous and they figured out a way to get the help you needed and get it as fast as possible.
 - None that I could see. Added additional time for arranging service and took away from time for jobs and duties that needed to be done.
 - The facility did not have to get an authorization, and it saved me worrying about getting approval. It just took the worry out of getting service.
 - Bills come back to us personally as unpaid, months later after service. Directed to service centers that are out-of-the-way, very slow, and lack needed items, causing our entire team to spend many hours wasting time in a garage instead of working. Caused overtime more than once.
 - Similar to the typical/usual credit card.
 - I didn't have to spend huge amounts of time getting authorization for repairs and wasn't constantly being asked to bring the car into St. Paul for repairs.
 - Fine for oil change or tire rotation only.
 - I cannot think of one positive outcome of the program. On one occasion, I asked to have the oil changed and tires rotated on our vehicle. On the next visit, the same maintenance shop recommended having our tires rotated. I was also informed by our state garage service person that many other basic repairs hadn't taken place during this trial program. He put a lot of time into repairs that should have been done at these shops.
 - When I needed emergency roadside service, there was a toll-free number to call and they provided service quite quickly.
 - It was not owned by me personally. I did not like it. (Red) I now have a blue VMF and I have not had trouble — so far.
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- Widely accepted.
 - Prior to implementation of the VMF program, I had several years' experience with the Travel Management Division's vehicle servicing and repair program. I supervise the overall state vehicle program for my division of this state agency. Two other persons in this division carry out the day-to-day scheduling and maintenance of the vehicles. In comparing the two programs, there is clear[ly] no advantage to the VMF program.
 - Being able to take vehicle to location close to home. I take my car home at night. However, I missed being able to run to motor pool to wash and clean my car (a lot).
 - VMF directed me to the nearest contract vendor. The vendors accepted the VMF card. There was little or no paperwork.
 - Accepted for gasoline at unlimited locations.
 - Ability to have car maintenance locally. The willingness of the business to accept the VMF card.
 - Convenience. To get the work done when it fit into my schedule. Not having to bring the car downtown and get a loaner, find a place to park and pick car up again. Most of my time is spent in the field.
 - Authorization for repairs takes too long.
 - Could go to the fast oil change places — Jiffy Lube, etc.
 - There are none.
 - Knowledge of maintenance and repair programs for the vehicle.
 - By calling the East Coast for authorization, the customer service person has no idea of logistics or proximities in Minnesota. Called from Waseca for tire change, and the CSR tried to get a service vehicle from Faribault with a three-hour wait!! After much explaining, there was a service vehicle in Waseca.
 - The work was done fast and right so I didn't have to worry about bringing the vehicle back for the same job.
 - It provides one place to call and removes the burden of decision making.
 - I only used the card to purchase gas, oil changes, and tire rotation. I used a local gas station for oil and tires and that made things very easy.
 - Easy to reach when needed.
 - Staff was courteous and repair instructions were clear.
 - None.
 - None.
 - The red VMF card was a real pain. Prior to the red card, I could drop my car off at a service station near my office. They would repair, change oil, grease, rotate tires, vacuum, and wash my vehicle while I was at work. They did a great job and got me in on short notice.
 - Flexibility. Convenience. Higher limit (\$) for maintenance. Easier to get approval.
 - VMF staff were very helpful for both routine maintenance and non-routine and more friendly than TM staff.
 - Oil change, with complete overhaul.
 - With the VMF card you were able to use more service stations. That was the only good thing.
 - (1) Ability to choose facility that was convenient to me. (2) Ability of choosing facility
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that performed required service in minimal amount of time.

- The red card program was not a good idea. State cars did not get the proper maintenance. We did not see any strengths to this program.
 - The call for repairs and authorization did not have to go through me. The service station/repair station made the call and got the authorization.
 - I was able to get the maintenance work done without traveling to the metro to do it.
 - Ability to schedule regular maintenance repairs without prior authorization. I'm referring to only minimum maintenance — oil change, wheel rotation, headlight replacement.
 - Was easier to get service, incidentals like window wipers, etc.
 - There were no strengths. This was a bad program for us!
 - One central number where I received assistance and was directed to closest service in my area.
 - The card is readily accepted locally for repair and maintenance.
 - Knowledge of the customer service representative regarding vehicles, maintenance requirements, and warranty information.
 - I've only used it for gas and oil changes.
 - Good acceptance at most locations.
 - The number of service facilities authorized to do the work. (This needs to increase.)
 - Ease of filling with fuel and car washes. Acceptable at most locations.
 - Being able to charge an oil change and tire rotation without authorization from VMF. Before this came into being, I would have to stand and wait up to 30 minutes while the company I was dealing with would call VMF for approval. It was not a swift process, and the vendors I dealt with did not like it.
 - Convenience — oil change and tire rotation at one location close to home or office.
 - The two main shops I like to use accept the card.
 - Ease of use and acceptance.
 - I was able to continue having the state car serviced at the same garage as before. Not having to fill out field purchase order.
 - Never had to use VMF for repair, only use for gas and car wash.
 - It's hard to remember, as it was so long ago, but the help was always good.
 - I had no problems. It was easy to use as long as the vendor accepted the card.
 - Actually, entire VMF system is less convenient, but I am sure it is more manageable at your end. Vendors HATE having to call to get an oil change authorized!
 - I don't have any.
 - Taken at many details throughout my travels.
 - The key strength is the ability to utilize the card in most places, which was not the case with the old state system. Gas service was previously difficult in small towns throughout Greater Minnesota.
 - I only had one flat tire and routine oil changes. Garage staff called, not me, so I don't know about service quality.
 - I think this would be good in a multi-state area. When you are in a familiar area they aren't helpful.
 - This program had no strengths. And its weaknesses are too numerous to list here.
 - Little or no difference.
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Question 18. *In your opinion, what most needs improvement in TMD's [or the vehicle management firm's] maintenance and repair program? Please provide details or mention any incidents that highlight the needed improvement.*

Travel Management Division customers

- Cars need to be cleaned on the inside, not just run through the car wash.
 - The phone conversations I have had with TMD personnel lead me to believe your records are a myth. I have my own record on my computer, because I could not get information from TMD. When my vehicle has high miles, it's impossible to get results and information as to when it will be repaired. Nobody seems to know what is going on.
 - I have no complaints on this matter.
 - Nothing — seems to be working fine.
 - If we could be provided a checklist on what intervals and such that maintenance work is to be done. Like what kind of work is needed or provided.
 - Responses of some people (women) when calling in to get maintenance done.
 - I used to use TMD's facility on a very regular basis when I was in St. Paul when they were located on Robert Street for fuel, car wash, service, etc. Now the location is too unhandy and since fuel isn't offered, I go elsewhere. And the car doesn't get washed nearly as often.
 - Most service providers question the authorization process. It's time-consuming, and they must wait for payment. The service providers would prefer the use of credit card payment.
 - TMD has a right for watching expenses. But do not like when my word is no good and an attendant at a gas station is. I needed wiper blades and TMD wouldn't let me put them on until they had talked with the station attendant. What on earth would I do with used wiper blades? If I was to take something off the unit it wouldn't be wiper blades!
 - Emergency assistance. I live in [City X], which has seven or eight different places that could assist with a lockout, dead battery, etc. Instead when I called the roadside assistance number, they used a vendor who was located 25 miles north and said they couldn't use anyone in town because of not having a contract with them. It was like using managed care for car repairs. It ended up being a very frustrating experience. [Note: this response actually pertains to the VMF's emergency assistance service.]
 - The courtesy of the maintenance and realization that in Greater Minnesota there may not be a location appropriate to the motor pool close by. The choices are lacking in Greater Minnesota.
 - TMD's largest weakness is by far customer service. They treat fellow state employees as if they are doing us a favor by fixing the state vehicle. The TMD staff are very unfriendly. They border on being downright rude.
 - Program is excellent as is.
 - Add a few special-skills people (transmission and acceleration area) to lighten workload on regular crew.
 - Customer service rude. [Names omitted] are great. [Name omitted] has a lot to learn —
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has an attitude.

- Loaner cars were always missing snow brushes/scrapers.
 - Don't think cars should be kept in service so long. Some people hesitant to take older cars.
 - We have to take our car to a Good Year dealer for new tires. But by the time they add for mounting, balancing, and disposal, the price is just as high or higher than if we get the tires from my local service station.
 - Better technical skills; do better job fixing cars.
 - Preventive maintenance needs to be improved. As an all-call employee, I am out and about in all weather conditions and times of day or night. Traveling to incidents all over the state. Preventive maintenance offers peace of mind and ensures added safety of the operator.
 - Request for vehicles. Having vehicles available for daily use. When requesting a vehicle I've been told on numerous occasions that there aren't any vehicles available when there's a fleet "sitting" idle in the lot.
 - I have not had many major repairs. I have found the staff to be great and eager to assist when I have brought my car in. Usually small things such as wiper blades, repair or replace a tire, problem with glove compartment flying open, etc.
 - Ensure that repairs are thoroughly tested before returning to the customer. We had to take our car in three times for the same repairs before the problem was fixed. This resulted in unavailability of the car, not to mention loss of staff time dropping the vehicle off and picking it up.
 - At times the mechanics show up late and sometimes not at all. This puts a hardship on the supervisors and the customer who is waiting.
 - Arbitrary cancellation of TMD travel card was very disconcerting.
 - I don't care about anonymity. I believe I received my new state unit after the survey period, but: When it arrived I was notified and picked it up. On the drive home I wasn't able to get the cruise control to work. When I took it to the dealer I was told it wasn't equipped with the feature. Knowing that wasn't supposed to be the case, I took the car to the very dealer which fulfilled the fleet order for TMD. I received an apology and was told "these cars are checked before they leave, this kind of thing should have been caught." One person at TMD told me also, "This should have been caught before it went out," and expressed considerable concern that it hadn't been. He said he'd be talking to some people about it. I guess this is the long way to say a much needed improvement is related to job performance. As a state employee for nearly 20 years, it's easy to get complacent knowing our job security isn't based on performance anymore. If we were reminded of that more often perhaps we'd do our jobs better.
 - I can't think of a single complaint. They do an excellent job!
 - Should not put limitations on where to get the tires fixed. We should have more choices. Some of the places make you wait hours for replacing the tires. Have red cards for all the vehicles so we do not have to call Travel Management every time we need to change the oil.
 - Less scrutiny by some staff to get a control number. Some questions asked were plainly not appropriate and had nothing to do with getting the car repaired/serviced. On two
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occasions I listened in on the line when control numbers were asked for. Both times were after incidents where St. Paul asked questions and interrogated the caller. On all three occasions, we hung up and tried later and asked for a different person in St. Paul. Then we were not put through the third degree!

- Nothing.
 - Now I can just drop off the car and not have to make any calls myself.
 - I would like to be able to know exactly when a tune-up or other services are needed so I can bring the vehicle to the correct service place for services. But this is not a real problem, because I can call anytime and check.
 - The one thing as I recall is the time spent waiting for a tow or jumpstart. It seemed we would wait around two hours (that was a while back and we haven't needed a jump for a while). I understand that it may be contracted out to Budget towing.
 - Information on emergency roadside repair. The van broke down outside [City B]. I called 911 for tow and then called Travel Management. It was after hours and I was unable to contact anyone. I authorized repairs to the vehicle in the town so I could get back to the city. Need to have guidelines made available if car breaks down in evening. Also what to do if car can't be fixed for a week.
 - The only thing I can think of that would help me out would be a shuttle service to return me to my office while repairs are being performed. I can't normally stay and wait for servicing. Leaving vehicles "all day" gives the shop more flexibility, too. But in order to do this, I have to enlist another employee vehicle for drop-off and pick-up.
 - A faster way to order new or replacement vehicles — 90 - 120 days is too long of a wait.
 - Greater choice of who does work. Time it takes for service or repair.
 - The only thing that I would have a problem with is the oil change policy. Used to be 5,000 miles. Now it's three months or 5,000 miles, whichever comes first. Unless there is a mechanical reason for this, I thought 5,000 miles was working great.
 - Reminder phone calls to customers periodically to remind them of what regular maintenance is coming or past due.
 - Being able to buy windshield washer with the card would help when out of the area.
 - More advisory circulars telling, for example, that windshield wipers are damaged when blades are frozen to windshield, then turned on. Make sure wipers are in a parked position when ignition is turned off. More advisory on ABS systems — duty as a driver, cost of auto or truck if needed, a free defensive driving course from the Minnesota State Patrol.
 - Was very happy with how things have been handled this past year.
 - I am assigned a 1996 Plymouth van which seems to have special windshield wipers. Gas stations do not seem to have them and original wipers are worthless. Also, for safety's sake, winter wiper blades would be greatly appreciated. Why doesn't TMD have some to send out to outstate workers? I would be happy to install my own and save the state some money.
 - Some confusion in record keeping — we were notified that mileage indicated time for LOF. Work was done, but mileage was 200 miles less than required. Therefore TMD did not pay.
 - Closer to capitol complex.
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- They cannot do (front end) alignment service. Car must be brought to a dealer for this work. TMD should get the equipment to do this!
- When work was required to be done in St. Paul, there was not pick-up or delivery, nor any after-hours arrangements possible. Valuable time was wasted in my having to “ferry” the car to and from St. Paul.
- When I am in St. Paul and able to use the TMD facility, the work done does not seem to become part of the vehicle record, because I still get reminders for service.
- Being able to get authorizations for repair after 5 p.m.
- I feel that the gas card should also be able to be used for minor repairs such as car washes, replacement of light bulbs, etc., as otherwise these items may sometimes get neglected.
- It would be nice to be able to get oil changes at a Jiffy Lube or other such facility.
- The fact that you have to go to a contract facility. (For example, I blew a tire in front of a tire dealer on a main highway. I had it removed and a new one put on in 20 minutes. When I called TMD, they made me remove the tire, ride on a doughnut to a contract facility 15 miles away.)
- Enable people to reach repair staff directly instead of the current button-pushing. Allow minor purchases on credit card (headlight, tire repair, etc.). Improve the invoice process — I had to take the car to a tire shop for repair and the dealer had so much trouble getting the person from TMD to give him the appropriate information so he could draw up the invoice that he told me he hopes he never has to work with you folks again. This was after the repair staff OKed the repair and told me to go to this tire shop. You really need to improve your billing process (I suspect this is not the repair people).
- Everything is good at your end. The main problem is the service stations calling and doing things the correct way.
- Don’t know, it seems OK to me.
- Recognize that staff who drive the vehicles know quite a bit about cars too. I had a vehicle which the [part] had fallen off from. I called to get authorization for repairs and the person I spoke with wouldn’t take my word on what was wrong with the vehicle and told me to have the garage check it out. If the [part] is sitting in the truck, I know what is the problem.
- Make it easy to get vehicles serviced at places other than TMD in Greater Minnesota.
- More convenient tire contracts. My hometown has only one contract place and they are the busiest, so it would be more convenient if we had more. On two occasions I had to pay for tire repair myself.
- I am satisfied now.
- None.

Vehicle management firm customers

- In Duluth, the service facility is about two miles from the office and an oil change takes about one hour 15 minutes, unless you arrange to be picked up/dropped off. Under the previous program our service center was next door to the government services center.
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- We need a list of stations that is accurate. Just for gasoline the card did not work at many stations. Service was better once a place figured out the way to use the card.
 - Reminders of routine service needs would help. This vehicle is driven by six different employees, making a maintenance record system difficult to maintain. An e-mail reminder to the designated employee would assist in assuring proper maintenance.
 - Don't use them or at least let people know where they can go — that might be quite a job in a large state.
 - Telephone responsiveness. I was not able to reach anyone for routine repair questions. This concerns me if I need emergency service. This process was also confusing to service dealer.
 - They do not look at or evaluate the whole vehicle. They only fix what is broken.
 - Local representatives who know where you are when in rural areas of Minnesota and who can provide knowledgeable assistance to get service in the rural areas without having to wait hours for a tow to another city over an hour away! Also, a list of rural area repair services would also be handy.
 - Knowledge of state geography. Being interested in helping rather than treating your call as an annoyance. Timely payment of bills submitted. Keeping track of paperwork — have called us on the job to ask about things (tire purchase after a blowout) months later and didn't even know where we had purchased it (after authorization)! Put oil changes and windshield wiper blades back on card without authorization.
 - Personal service; knowledge of state of Minnesota vehicle drivers' routines, needs, dilemmas, etc.
 - Nothing except it needs to be reinstated!
 - Too much waiting for approvals for repairs (for example, catalytic converter, new tires, alternator).
 - Taking away any possibility of the garages/maintenance shops charging us (the state) for repairs that were not done. Knowing what preventative service is needed and when it's recommended would have helped.
 - Having the authorization process not so difficult and if you're in Greater Minnesota and the only person to do the work is not an authorized provider, what do you do?
 - All service stations recognize the VMF card.
 - Policy consistency.
 - The person responsible for the coordination of vehicle service and repair has spent considerably more time each month either waiting for service authorizations or waiting at dealerships for needed repairs. There is no question that the Travel Management Division provided quicker service that was much more convenient to our location. We feel that it is a fair assessment that the VMF system has no strengths when compared to the Travel Management Division.
 - Requested repairs or maintenance that wasn't needed. I went in for a flat repair at around 35,000 miles. I left with two new tires and all maintenance that was required at 50,000 miles. I didn't need tires, but VMF set it all up with the repair shop before I knew what was happening.
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- I appreciate being able to call St. Paul and talk to Travel Management about my car or have my car serviced when in the Twin Cities. Calling the VMF person seemed too impersonal and long distance.
 - Was sent to a facility for brake work. VMF staff did not like the assessment and estimate. Was sent to another facility, where the work was finally completed. The cost ended up being the same as the first estimate.
 - The state needs to provide a simpler way to get things done. A nationally recognized corporate credit card (Visa, American Express, Master Card) billed directly to Travel Management would be much more convenient for us.
 - The card was not readily accepted in small towns in Greater Minnesota. If my car needed services, I had to use a location close to my house, and they had my car most of the day, so I couldn't do any field work or office work since they offered no replacement car like motor pool.
 - The only thing I needed while I had the red card was oil changes, so I didn't really "challenge" the system. Using the convenience oil change centers was fast, but I don't know if they do as thorough a job as other places. And we couldn't use the service garage that was closest to all — office.
 - This system leaves a lot to be desired. Occasionally we receive red cards that are good for certain maintenance up to \$50. Then we get blue cards which are good for nothing but gas. Where or what do we do for oil, washer fluid, car washes, and other small miscellaneous items? Some repair is done under Travel Management and some under VMF, which is very confusing. Most service centers want nothing to do with the cardholders, because they haven't gotten paid in the past. I've waited for a wrecker for two hours after VMF finally found one in their system that was within 30 miles of where I was. Some facilities will take red but not blue and most none at all. I think VMF should lay down the rules to its service centers of getting a P.O. prior to doing the work so they will not reject our cards because of lack of payment. I think we need one card that covers everything.
 - Better acceptance of the card. Faster emergency response for breakdowns. More vendors. Knowledge of cities and counties in Minnesota so VMF can respond better.
 - The service representatives — VMF — seem to question needs for repairs and costs without any practical knowledge of the parts or labor, other than obviously what is scripted or read from a book.
 - None.
 - There needs to be more participating vendors and VMF needs to be more familiar with the areas we may break down in. In my case I was unfamiliar with the area and so were they.
 - Need to consolidate work, that is, why do I need to have a wrecker come change my tire when I'm in meetings all day and would rather the tire and van be moved to a facility so it can be repaired all at once — without my having to wait for wrecker — then try to locate tire shop. Also nearest tow trucks or dealers are not always used.
 - Nothing I'm aware of.
 - No problem with our local service and maintenance. But when we need to call for roadside assistance, your program is not acceptable, that is, people couldn't come till the next
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day and they were several towns away. In one case, another state was called for towing to a place (dealer) in our state when car broke down in middle of nowhere. Luckily we had a personal cell phone, but then spent 45 minutes trying to arrange for help. Couldn't have been more inefficient for roadside help. Reimbursement requests seem to confuse our financial people when they are on our expense account sheets, with one issue in January 1999.

- We had to go to two different stations for oil and headlight repair, then the headlight couldn't be done there, as we needed the dealer. Many calls to VMF — hard to get through to them, line often busy. Also wheel alignment couldn't be done at Jiffy Lube. With going to different garage, no one had record of maintenance done and what still needed to be done.
 - They had outdated lists of who to take the car to.
 - Most vendors don't like to take the VMF card, because VMF takes 10 percent off the service bills and is very slow with payment to the vendors.
 - None, extremely satisfied.
 - I had no problems, but would like to be notified when other than oil changes are needed.
 - The VMF was very helpful! In my situation I spent too much time driving to different dealerships. I think they should have one dealership to take all Fords and another to take all Chryslers.
 - Program worked fine for my application. Very satisfied with the VMF red card program.
 - The best improvement you could do is to stay with the blue card program and let Travel Management maintain state cars! They do a very good job!!
 - Some gas stations will not accept the card. I have had two instances where I filled with gas only to find out they do not accept the VMF card.
 - It seems that our contracts with providers are too expensive. If I stopped in to an oil change station while they were running a sale, they still charged full price because they said it was contractual. We should be getting discount prices.
 - VMF red card maintenance was great. Maintenance was done without the hassle from Travel Management. I had one conversation with an employee who was rude to me concerning replacing a headlight without prior authorization. This is a safety concern and I feel I'm capable of identifying a burned-out headlight!
 - It's a little late to be asking these questions, especially for someone with a poor memory!
 - The best improvement you could do is to drop the red card program and let Travel Management (motor pool) maintain state vehicles.
 - I had no negative experiences using the program.
 - Seems to work fine.
 - Additional vendors in convenient locations. Faster response for emergency roadside assistance.
 - No problems or concerns.
 - Flexibility in other vendors being used!!!
 - Allow more dealers in the program — local outstate dealers. I am sure that in the seven-county metro area there are plenty of well-qualified places to take the vehicles for repair. In our area they are few and far between. I cannot use a place next to our office, because the approval takes me too long to get.
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- Additional vendors in convenient locations. Faster response for emergency roadside assistance.
- Nothing — worked great for me.
- Fortunately, I haven't had major problems, so I can't comment from personal experience. From what I hear from other users is that we need more flexibility in choosing who and where we require services to be done.
- (1) Direct communication with drivers via e-mails, voice mail, or fax regarding changes on the program that affect use of the card. (2) It's tough for a representative miles away to relate to needs or repair work, resulting in wasting a lot of time on the phone.
- Every time something comes up, have to dig up information, who to call, etc. It just seems more complicated than calling motor pool.
- I tried calling the 1-800 number on a couple of occasions, but was never able to connect with anyone.
- I cannot recall anything in particular except don't forget that outstate doesn't have all the same businesses for oil changes, etc.
- Certain vendors who always took out card now do not (Union Oil in Cook, Minn., for example).
- Access the real person.
- Appears to currently provide services with limited difficulty. Any changes should be directed at further expansion of use areas, availability, etc.
- Many gas stations still won't take the card. I travel the whole state and always have to ask before I pump!
- More personal choice. When you know the dealers, etc., you can make a choice more advantageous to the state.
- When getting oil changes, the maintenance people did not have to take time and get approval.
- There is no way to improve it. Scrap it and start over. Calling another state to get the OK to change oil (a No. 20 proposition) is absolutely ridiculous!!
- Return to this system.
- Many gas stations would not honor the VMF red card for gas or service.
- It was my experience that when I took the car into the specific maintenance provider that they were far more expensive than if I took them to a regular mechanic. For example, to replace a taillight bulb it cost \$17-some!

Question 19. *What other comments or concerns do you have about the maintenance and repair service?*

Travel Management Division customers

- In the outstate area TMD is doing a good job.
 - The TMD cannot get my address right, even after I have sent in two different changes.
 - Seems to be working fine as far as I am concerned.
 - When calling for service authorization, I have been treated rudely three of four times.
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- TMD staff are very friendly, helpful, and quick to get state cars in for maintenance.
 - The DOT drives primarily on blacktop roads with four-wheel drives. We get one-wheel wonders. I'm not saying we need four-wheel drives, but how about posi-traction or anti-slip rear ends! As for the operators of the units, we should have some input so the unit matches the application. Now bids for units can cost too much money. Low fuel mileage, high maintenance. We move through deep snow, deep mud, rough tough roads; meet the needs of the application for a lasting unit. The unit will bring more resale, which will offset purchase.
 - The availability of choice of vehicle, options included, would greatly be appreciated. The maintenance and repair service to speed up payment to the provider of the service.
 - I feel that TMD should do all their own work, instead of sending most of it out to the dealerships.
 - None to date.
 - None, but I have a comment about this survey. Because I coordinate the usage of several vehicles, I received three of these surveys. You may want to check your lists next time to avoid sending out duplicate copies of surveys and other correspondence. Thanks.
 - Hoses, belts, and batteries should have periodic replacement at higher mileage periods. Why wait for the hose or belt to break to have it replaced? All employees are not working Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - I've noticed that maintenance of our vehicles is now managed; the reminder notices are much appreciated!
 - Both [names omitted] have been really good to assist me and the whole staff seems to really be making an effort to improve an image that seemed to be bad in the past. I've been pleased and feel the service has been enhanced since moving to new building. Thanks for asking.
 - Stamping overdue maintenance reminders once is sufficient. I received a reminder about three weeks ago (the only reminder I received) and it was stamped OVERDUE, in red, at least three times. It might help to send notices to an individual rather than just the office.
 - It would be nice to be able to do routine maintenance, such as oil changes, tire rotation, on the credit card.
 - I believe that oil changes should be done every 3,000 miles not 5,000. If you expect an engine to run right, 5,000 miles is too much.
 - Thank them for a job well done!
 - I'd hate to see it dissolved.
 - I have received excellent service from our in-house staff. The thought of their jobs being contracted out does not settle very well. Stay with the blue and allow these people to continue to provide this great service!!!
 - Keep up the good work.
 - Get rid of the VMF card. All vendors outstate use system differently and causes confusion.
 - VMF card is more widely accepted, but I have had instances where I could not buy washer fluid or have the car washed. I can't buy wiper blades with it — why pay \$20 when I can get them for \$5?
 - Everything is great.
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- The mechanic work is good, but do you do body work? And to what extent?
 - I think it's great having the system on the Internet to track when service is needed. I also think it's a benefit to have our own repair shop, which is especially convenient for units in the capitol complex area. The freedom to use outside vendors becomes more convenient I assume for work sites further from St. Paul.
 - Keep up the good work, [names omitted] and staff.
 - TMD maintenance has been excellent. They should be thanked for a job well done.
 - Adding [name omitted] to your staff was the best thing you could have done. Also, reporting mileage logs on the Internet is a great feature. [Name omitted] has also been great in any and all contact I've had with her.
 - You're doing a great job! Thank you!
 - Our experience: Many vendors consider a Minnesota purchase order or charge card a "license to steal." Although many vendors are honest, it's your money and duty to check work done before signing invoice. For example, our driver had a loose or broken alternator belt. Our bill included a battery 600 CCA for \$85.
 - I was very glad this past year when my service center said that the tires needed to be replaced. I was told to go to our local Goodyear Service Center where they knew all the proper procedures to take care of ordering new tires and the billing process. Many thanks for your concern as to the car's care and safety.
 - Road service is poor.
 - I like the fact our service facility can call for prior approval.
 - Great job and friendly service. Way to go, TMD team! Can I bring in my private vehicle? Maybe the state could make an honest buck off of regulated auto repair.
 - Service has been very good, overall!
 - TMD should aggressively train/inform vendors on how to process claims. I have had to spend an inordinate amount of time explaining to vendors how to process claims. I feel that service should be done on a 3,000-mile basis, not 5,000 miles. All of the manuals that I have seen for the last three new cars that I have bought (Ford Taurus) recommend this. Vehicles should be replaced at an earlier mileage and the lease charge seems high. It is also a real hassle for staff to go through the approval process for every \$10 wiper blade replacement. It would be easier to process this on the credit card.
 - The gas card should allow for minor repairs such as windshield wipers and washes at a greater variety of vendors. In our area only SA will accept any credit card for washes. They are not a "preferred brand." As a result of the difficulty in getting the vehicle washed, it rusted prematurely.
 - I would like to see oil changes done after 3,000 miles instead of 5,000 miles.
 - When the vehicle is in for service it would be nice if the inside of the vehicle was completely cleaned, otherwise it isn't going to happen in the field.
 - I enjoy the friendliness and timeliness of the staff.
 - I'm concerned that garages may take advantage with price gouging knowing that the vehicle is a state vehicle. I have changed vendors on at least one occasion due to what I thought was abuse. I think there is some confusion regarding maintenance on the state cars. I try to monitor them so that oil changes occur about 5,000 miles. On occasion I will receive cards that the car is overdue for service and then I become confused as to if I need to take it in again for service.
-

- Please tell [name omitted] to order me a RED car (Ha! Ha!).
- There's no preventive maintenance; all repairs are at set miles or weeks.
- Panel vans do not have adequate heat. In the last 10 years I never had a vehicle that gave good heat when it was 0 degrees or colder. Air conditioning needs improvement on the vans also.
- Staff are good, very friendly.
- I've always been satisfied. My car is very reliable so I haven't had too many unforeseen mishaps.
- [Name omitted] should get an achievement award or a promotion.
- For emergency services, understand how far it is from rural Minnesota to St. Paul. If you break down in northern Minnesota you don't just get someone to tow the vehicle to St. Paul.
- I would like a checklist giving me all the maintenance needed each year (for example, oil change at \$5,000, tire rotation at X miles, etc.).
- Very good.

Vehicle management firm customers

- I don't think it is appropriate to have the service provider determining what work needs to be done on the vehicle. In two instances, work was done on my vehicle that I did not believe was needed but VMF approved based on the advice of the service provider. It seems as though there is great potential for abuse.
 - According to information I've received, other than service at VMF-authorized centers, the only purchase which can be made is gasoline. How about oil, car washes, and windshield cleaning fluid?
 - The blue card is great.
 - Over the 20 years of driving a state vehicle, I have enjoyed the pleasant and helpful conversations with Travel Management. I wonder why this system is being replaced with an unknown entity.
 - I saw other people needing to spend a lot of time trying to contact for authorization.
 - Leave the maintenance with Travel Management. Scrap the program. Not efficient, rude, don't-give-a-darn staff, and lack of prompt payment not good. Have had stations tell us they "used to" accept the card but won't now, because it's too much trouble and too long trying to get paid!
 - I am not in favor of "out-sourcing." State of Minnesota vehicles and vehicle use should be handled by state of Minnesota employees.
 - I think and others I've talked to would rather put off needed repairs than deal with the motor pool for authorization.
 - Not allowed to have engine tuned up over 40,000 miles of usage.
 - With all the negative publicity on auto repair rip-offs, why would we even consider putting state vehicles into the hands of mechanics that could rob us blind? We also need to consider that some of the mechanics might not be pro-government. What else might they have the potential of doing to the vehicles?
-

- No services needed other than normal oil changes. Either program suits me fine!
 - Basically I was satisfied with the service of the red card.
 - This division has tracked the time spent by the person responsible for servicing our vehicles.
 - My vehicle got stuck once on a construction site. The front end was loaded with dirt. The front end shimmied. I went to a repair shop. Estimate two hours to clean out. VMF wouldn't authorize. VMF told me I shouldn't have gotten the car stuck and to take the vehicle home and clean it myself. Time to remove all four tires, wash, and clean up dirt in my driveway — 4.5 hours.
 - I get the feeling that vendors feel somewhat reluctant to have to call TMD for purchase order information under the non-VMF system. Example: I had a difficult time with a vendor to get them to call TMD for a purchase order to rotate tires and change oil. I finally convinced them that we could not use the present VMF card. So they called TMD. An hour later they called TMD again and a month later they called me asking for my fleet credit card number. I again referred them to TMD.
 - Would like a written schedule for when to take car for maintenance. I do an oil change every 5,000 miles but do not know the schedule for tune-ups, tire rotation, etc. When the red card ended I received an overdue notice about a tune-up and tire check/rotation. Why didn't the "red card" notify me of this earlier?
 - Would like to be able to have repairs done close to the Duluth Department of Health building, instead of going across town. When out of town, in the backwoods of Minnesota, repairs need to be able to be done at the closest service.
 - I don't think the "routine" stuff was maintained as well as it should have for a year. I used to let motor pool take care of the regular stuff and I never worried about it. With the red card, I had to use more of my time to schedule repairs and it appeared as though I wasn't spending as much time doing my job.
 - On occasion, users feel they spend valuable time on the phone waiting for answers.
 - I did not have any troubles or exceptional experiences!
 - Some stations' costs were exorbitant — just to change burned-out light — \$20.
 - I really had no problems with the card. Sometimes if I forgot to fill up at an acceptable station, it was bothersome. The car was new so few servicing problems.
 - Go back to the red card. It is much easier to use in Greater Minnesota.
 - For more convenience.
 - When bringing the car to get an oil change, that's all the service center would do. When you bring the car to motor pool they have a checklist they go over. And I think that helps prevent further problems. Plus they keep everything on computer — what has been done and what needs to be done to the car.
 - (1) Service at Minnesota facility not convenient. (2) Service at Minnesota facility consumes too much time, too much of my time. On paper, the oil is cheap! My time is not factored into the cost of maintenance.
 - When I received blue VMF card and needed pre-authorization for regular maintenance, I received strong complaint from both shops the state car was taken to concerning the rudeness of the state employee when talked to on the phone for pre-authorization. This is not necessary; it is difficult to service vehicle locally then.
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- Really, haven't had any problems.
 - Our vehicles were not maintained properly. When we took them in for service the cars were not completely checked over. We would get the cars back and a few weeks later they would break down again. Now that we are back on the blue card, motor pool checks everything and our vehicles are reliable again.
 - I'm overall very happy with your programs.
 - Have not had any problems other than that early cards were not accepted by all card readers.
 - Luckily I have not had any repairs to the vehicle I drive. So far oil changes and tire rotation is all I have needed. The only repairs I have had are covered under warranty work by the dealer and VMF has not been involved. In the instances before the \$35 no approval needed, the VMF people were an unnecessary middle step to getting work done.
 - From other VMF card users who have had major problems, I have heard comments primarily concerning VMF's inability to use local vendors. I also share the view that a person several states away wouldn't understand local conditions.
 - The red card took away the convenience of doing any repair work without interfering with the driver's work schedule. Making arrangements to obtain another car is one of the best customer service offers. I was very disappointed when the red card was not accepted at the gas station. Lucky for me I had my checkbook with me, otherwise I would have had to wait till someone came by to pay for the gas purchase.
 - This is late.
 - I called three different times to get a local repair business authorized by VMF, so I could get my oil changes done locally! Have had no satisfaction.
 - Travel Management staff has always provided exceptional service.
 - I'm glad I found out about emergency road service. I had a flat tire and was locked out once but didn't realize I could call the state plan for help!!
 - Motor pool concept has worked well in the past.
 - Why not trust vehicle operators to choose a convenient and reputable service center to make repairs? Note: I tossed the first survey because thinking about this stupid system got me so frustrated I couldn't bear it!
 - Consistency — establish policies and maintain, avoid frequent change of protocol (instructions and phone numbers).
 - Now we have switched back to the blue card.
 - I have an advantage in getting a state car serviced, as I use one mechanic who does all types of service on the car vs. one who can only do a specific task — the latter requiring more trips to different dealers. The mechanic who deals with my car usually was not an authorized red card — thus it was difficult for me to use the card, as it meant going to various service providers.
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APPENDIX E

Customer letters

Red Card Complaint - February 26, 1998

Reported to TMD on March 6, 1998

Health Department

[Name] and [Name], Department of Health, assigned to their Duluth office, called to report the following incident involving vehicle #1696 and the VMF Red Card. The vehicle, a mini-van, stalled in Aurora, MN, when they were traveling with two other people. They used a personal cell phone to call VMF. Initially, VMF looked for a Chevrolet dealer who was part of their network. They couldn't find one and had trouble understanding geographics of the Duluth area. One of the people in the van thought for sure the closest Chev dealer would be in Duluth. Duluth is an hour and fifteen minutes from Aurora, where the vehicle had stalled. VMF accepted that this was the closest Chevrolet Dealer. VMF then transferred them to another person to arrange for towing of the Vehicle to Duluth. Again, VMF was unable to find a local towing company that was part of the VMF network. Ultimately, VMF arranged for a tow truck to come out of Aloese, WI, which was even further away than Duluth. Now that this had been all arranged, [Name] and her colleagues arranged with VMF to leave keys to the vehicle with a local business, where the tow-truck operator could retrieve them. At this point, the four state employees had to find their own way back to Duluth. Fortunately, a local businessman was headed to Duluth and offered them a ride. [Name] said that the people from VMF were all very nice, but that it should not have taken 35 minutes on the phone to arrange these details. She and her colleagues also question the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of not using the maintenance and towing facilities in the Aurora and the surrounding rural communities.

[Name] and [Name] were two of the four people in the van when this occurred.

[Name]

Dept. of Health, Duluth

[Name]

Dept. of Health, Duluth

August 4, 1998

Mr. Dan Oehmke
Dept. of Administration
Travel Management Division
296 Chestnut
St. Paul, MN 55107

Subject: VMF Service Contract Trial — Hidden Costs

Dear Mr. Oehmke:

This letter is intended to provide some feedback from a state vehicle user who has experienced a great deal of wasted work hours waiting for service to be performed on the state vehicle that is assigned to me. I am a District Engineer for the Section of Drinking Water Protection assigned to cover four counties from my office location in St. Paul. I drive about 2,000 miles per month in Unit CW39, which is a 1991 Oldsmobile station wagon. I have taken the vehicle to Goodyear Service locations for most of the service work over the past 15 months. For an oil change, it may take me 45 - 60 minutes on average, which amounts to about 8 hours of work time annually. I usually wait for the vehicle since it is generally on my way to an inspection when I get the oil changed.

As for vehicle emission testing, which I have had to do twice, I waited at least 30 minutes each time I was tested. The second time the vehicle did not pass the emission test, so I ended up at a Goodyear garage for 5 hours while the entire exhaust system and catalytic converter was replaced. Then I had to return to the emission testing facility and have the vehicle re-tested. This was a significant loss of work time. Again this past week I was at a Goodyear to have the tire inspected for wear, since the vehicle was approaching 97,000 miles and I was unable to establish any tire history on the vehicle from talking to VMF. It took me about 30 minutes to find out that two tire[s] were worn out and then another hour waiting for Goodyear to get a phone approval from VMF so they could put on new tires. After the approval was obtained, it was another hour for the tires to be mounted, balanced and the paper work cleared through the computer.

I would imagine that all total I have given up at least 40 work hours attending to the proper servicing of this vehicle, not including all the time spent on using self-service gas pumps, car wash lines and keeping the vehicle clean and operating in a safe condition. At my present wage, this amounts to about \$1,100 in costs that should be added to the bill of what it costs to keep this vehicle serviced using the VMF service contract. I don't believe this is a good way to spend the tax dollar and would discourage the continuation of this experiment using State vehicles. I think the previous use of the central motor pool is more efficient and values my time as a public health engineer. Please relate this matter to the legislative body that has directed that such an approach be evaluated. I would like to see how the VMF vendor was selected as well. It seems inappropriate to use an out-of-state contractor to manage a fleet of

vehicles that are in Minnesota.

One final word from a seasoned Minnesota worker who tries to avoid vehicle problems with appropriate vehicle maintenance. When I took my vehicle into a service location and asked for a tune-up before last winter, the VMF telephone agent would not approve of any service on the vehicle because it was running OK. I responded that I was wanting the vehicle to be checked so it would continue to run OK and not fail me on the road when it is extremely cold weather. I don't believe in driving a vehicle until it needs a tow or causes me to become stranded on the highway. Perhaps this sums up my concern for my continued use of a state vehicle — we seem to be developing a HMO mentality for cars when it comes to caring for state-owned vehicles — don't prevent a car problem, just call VMF for a tow truck and sit at the service station until it is ready.

Sincerely,

[Name]

District Engineer

Section of Drinking Water Protection

From: [Name]
to: Oehmke, Dan
Subject: VMF
Date: Thursday, January 15, 1998 2:43 PM

I just want to give my input regarding the use of the VMF cards:

My car is one of the chosen few who were given the use of the VMF cards. It has not been very conducive to use the card, particularly at times when I have to make more than one phone call to get arrangements to get the car serviced. It used to be relatively simple to call over to motor pool, get a time for service and have motor pool keep track of all the records and evaluate the service needs. It is much more time consuming for me to call "Firestone," then call VMF for authorization, etc. I was able to utilize motor pool services and still be able to do work at my office here in Metro Square, so really, no State time was wasted. Now, I have to have it serviced in my local hometown, and most times they have it all day, leaving me no opportunity to do field work and no access to my office space. I don't think that the car is being taken care of as well as before, because it's more difficult to have work done as stated above. I'm sure I'm not having tune-ups, tire rotations etc. done at the appropriate times, as motor pool would evaluate this for me.

I know this card is part of a study to determine the need for staff people at motor pool, but being located here in Metro Square, it is much harder to service the car than before. Also, it was convenient to get gas at motor pool and it's not always easy to find a service station that will take the VMF card in Greater Minnesota when I'm doing my field work.

It is my hope that this input will be used to help evaluate the use of VMF. I also hope the best decision will be made that serves the most frequent users of state owned vehicles. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at [number]. [Name]
