GEORGIA DOT RESEARCH PROJECT 21-12

Final Report

2022 GDOT EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Office of Performance-based Management and Research

600 West Peachtree Street NW | Atlanta, GA 30308

April 2023

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16. Abstract:

The research team which included faculty from University of Georgia's College of Engineering and Carl Vinson Institute of Government worked in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to conduct the 2022 GDOT employee survey. This research study aimed to increase the response rate and the usefulness of the feedback from the GDOT employee survey to support organizational decisions about effective strategies for increasing its employees' satisfaction, retention, and professional advancement within GDOT. Questions pertaining to teleworking were added for the first time to survey. The research team administered the employee survey, analyzed item and open-ended survey responses, and developed the findings and recommendations offered to GDOT. Statewide, district, and division office reports were generated and presented to the agency. The response rate for the 2022 GDOT employee survey was sixty-nine percent (69%). Over three-fourths (77%) of district employees took the survey, while half (50%) of employees in divisions did. The survey findings were summarized in eight focus areas: GDOT Organization, Supervisor, Safety, Job Satisfaction, Human Resources/Training, Retention, Collaboration & Innovation, and Teleworking.

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GDOT Research Project 21-12

Final Report

2022 GDOT EMPLOYEE SURVEY

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SI* (MODERN METRIC) CONVERSION FACTORS

APPROXIMATE CONVERSIONS TO SI UNITS

Symbol	When You Know	Multiply By	To Find	Symbol
LENGTH				
in	inches	25.4	millimeters	mm
ft	feet	0.305	meters	m
yd	yards	0.914	meters	m
mi	miles	1.61	kilometers	km
AREA				
in^2	square inches	645.2	square millimeters	mm^2
ft^2	square feet	0.093	square meters	m^2
yd^2	square yard	0.836	square meters	m^2
ac	acres	0.405	hectares	ha
mi^2	square miles	2.59	square kilometers	km^2
VOLUME				
fl oz	fluid ounces	29.57	milliliters	mL
gal	gallons	3.785	liters	L
ft^3	cubic feet	0.028	cubic meters	m^3
yd^3	cubic yards	0.765	cubic meters	m^3
NOTE: volumes greater than 1000 L shall be shown in m^3				
MASS				
oz	ounces	28.35	grams	g
lb	pounds	0.454	kilograms	kg
T	short tons (2000 lb)	0.907	megagrams (or "metric ton")	Mg (or "t")
TEMPERATURE (exact degrees)				
^oF	Fahrenheit	5 (F-32)/9 or (F-32)/1.8	Celsius	^oC
ILLUMINATION				
fc	foot-candles	10.76	lux	lx
fl	foot-Lamberts	3.426	candela/m^2	cd/m^2
FORCE and PRESSURE or STRESS				
lbf	poundforce	4.45	newtons	N
lbf/in^2	poundforce per square inch	6.89	kilopascals	kPa

APPROXIMATE CONVERSIONS FROM SI UNITS

Symbol	When You Know	Multiply By	To Find	Symbol
LENGTH				
mm	millimeters	0.039	inches	in
m	meters	3.28	feet	ft
m	meters	1.09	yards	yd
km	kilometers	0.621	miles	mi
AREA				
mm^2	square millimeters	0.0016	square inches	in^2
m^2	square meters	10.764	square feet	ft^2
m^2	square meters	1.195	square yards	yd^2
ha	hectares	2.47	acres	ac
km^2	square kilometers	0.386	square miles	mi^2
VOLUME				
mL	milliliters	0.034	fluid ounces	fl oz
L	liters	0.264	gallons	gal
m^3	cubic meters	35.314	cubic feet	ft^3
m^3	cubic meters	1.307	cubic yards	yd^3
MASS				
g	grams	0.035	ounces	oz
kg	kilograms	2.202	pounds	lb
Mg (or "t")	megagrams (or "metric ton")	1.103	short tons (2000 lb)	T
TEMPERATURE (exact degrees)				
^oC	Celsius	1.8C+32	Fahrenheit	^oF
ILLUMINATION				
lx	lux	0.0929	foot-candles	fc
cd/m^2	candela/m^2	0.2919	foot-Lamberts	fl
FORCE and PRESSURE or STRESS				
N	newtons	0.225	poundforce	lbf
kPa	kilopascals	0.145	poundforce per square inch	lbf/in^2

* SI is the symbol for the International System of Units. Appropriate rounding should be made to comply with Section 4 of ASTM E380.
(Revised March 2003)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research team which included faculty from University of Georgia's College of Engineering and Carl Vinson Institute of Government worked in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to conduct the 2022 GDOT employee survey. This research study aimed to increase the response rate and the usefulness of the feedback from the GDOT employee survey to support organizational decisions about effective strategies for increasing its employees' satisfaction, retention, and professional advancement within GDOT. Questions pertaining to teleworking were added for the first time to survey. The research team administered the employee survey, analyzed item and open-ended survey responses, and developed the findings and recommendations offered to GDOT. Statewide, district, and division office reports were generated and presented to the agency.

The response rate for the 2022 GDOT employee survey was sixty-nine percent (69%). Over three-fourths (77%) of district employees took the survey, while half (50%) of employees in divisions did. The survey findings were summarized in eight focus areas: GDOT Organization, Supervisor, Safety, Job Satisfaction, Human Resources/Training, Retention, Collaboration & Innovation, and Teleworking.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) contracted with the University of Georgia (UGA) College of Engineering and the Survey Research and Evaluation Unit in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (Institute of Government) to administer the 2022 GDOT employee survey. GDOT and UGA personnel worked together to update the survey instrument from the previous survey year (2020) and to improve distribution methods in order to increase the survey response rate. A new addition to the survey were questions pertaining to teleworking.

CHAPTER 2. SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

Consistent with 2020, the Institute of Government collaborated with GDOT personnel to create both online and paper versions of the 2022 survey. Institute of Government staff used a dedicated email account to serve as the communication channel for survey purposes. GDOT provided Institute of Government with office-level distribution emails for division personnel and employees in district offices. Institute of Government invited employees via email to take the survey online on June 27, 2022. The email from the lead researcher at Institute of Government invited employees to participate, described how their confidentiality would be protected, and provided a link to the online survey. The survey remained available online until August 19, 2022, with reminder emails sent on July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27, August 2, and August 4. The use of email groups rather than specific employee emails did not allow for individualized survey links; thus, it was not possible to ensure that participants did not complete the survey more than once. To safeguard against this, however, survey reminders stressed that respondents should complete the survey only once. A total of 1,080 online surveys were completed.

The Institute of Government also distributed 2,232 paper versions of the survey to all district personnel (except those in District Offices) and Highway Emergency Response Operators (HEROs). GDOT identified a survey coordinator in each Area to receive paper surveys. These coordinators were responsible for receiving, distributing, collecting, and returning the materials to the Institute of Government. The Institute of Government emailed each survey coordinator and provided them a summary of the survey process and instructions for their role. A package was mailed to the survey coordinator containing the following: employee surveys, pens, envelopes, instructions for administering the survey, a

survey site collection report, and return postage. Institute of Government mailed the packages so they arrived around the same time as the email invitation to all employees. Each survey coordinator distributed the surveys in his or her office. Employees were instructed to seal their completed surveys in one of the provided envelopes and either return it to the contact or mail it directly to Institute of Government themselves. The GDOT survey coordinators used the provided return postage to send the surveys they collected back to Institute of Government in the original box in which they had been mailed. Institute of Government mailed 2,232 paper surveys to 39 survey coordinators, with 1,455 completed surveys returned. Each unit was provided approximately 20% additional paper surveys in case any were accidentally destroyed or damaged.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument contained a total of 65 items. Fifty-one items asked participants to rate their level of agreement on a four-point scale, generally from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (4). These items were divided into five general headings on the survey: 1) Your Satisfaction, 2) Your Safety, 3) Your Work Environment, 4) Your Professional Development Opportunities, and 5) Your Career. From the five general headings on the survey, eight focus areas were identified:

- GDOT Organization – items that measured employees' attitudes about the agency

- Supervisor – items that measured employees' judgments of their supervisor

- Safety – items that measured perceptions of the organization's commitment to worker safety

- Job Satisfaction – items that measured how employees felt about their work experience

- Human Resources/Training – items that measured employee knowledge of the professional opportunities available to them

- Retention – items that measured how likely employees are to remain with GDOT

- Collaboration & Innovation – items that measured employees' attitudes of the Collaboration & Innovation initiative

- Teleworking – items that measured employee's attitudes towards teleworking

These groups were identified as being the most useful in identifying areas of employee satisfaction and areas needing improvement.

Six items addressed changes employees would like GDOT to implement to improve their work experience. For five of these six items, employees were provided with three to five options and asked to identify their top choice; one item allowed employees to select multiple responses. The survey contained five demographic questions for district employees and four for division employees. District personnel identified their district, area, and job function. Division personnel first identified their division and were then asked to select their office from those within the identified division. All employees were asked their GDOT tenure and position level (supervisory or non-supervisory). Finally, an open-ended question was also included in the survey so that respondents could describe any issues or concerns they had, whether those were covered by the survey or not.

RESPONSE RATE

In 2022, 2,535 of the 3,650 active full-time GDOT employees completed a survey, a response rate of 69%. By location, over three-fourths (77%) of district employees took the survey, while half (50%) of employees in divisions did. Sixty-one (61) respondents did not provide their work location. The overall response rate of 69% is a slight increase from the 64% in 2020.

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Survey responses were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software. In addition to a description of the frequency of responses, UGA used SPSS to examine associations between item responses. The UGA team collaborated with the GDOT Office of Performance-based Management and Research (OPMR) to tailor the analysis to address specific areas of interest and relationships across the data. The UGA Team provided the recommendations based on findings to OPMR at the completion of the study. To maintain confidentiality of the survey findings, the complete report with all survey findings is available internal to GDOT.

CHAPTER 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

At the completion of the project, the study team provided the following recommendations to GDOT:

- Explore methods to increase employee recognition of achievements

- Explore the continued improvement of internal communication in the organization.

- Continue ongoing efforts to support employee training. Survey results indicated a positive response to the Agency's efforts in this area.

- Continue the ongoing efforts related to teleworking. The majority of Division and District respondents reported positive experiences related to teleworking.

- Explore professional development opportunities and career advancement pathways for employees that include advancement opportunities within the department and enhancing their job skills.

- Explore team building training, constructive and directional performance evaluations, and flexible work schedules as methods to improve productivity and success.

- Use the survey results to guide further exploration.

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