

# **MCTD asks its customers: “How are we doing?”**

A total of 1,288 customers of the Motor Carrier Transportation Division (MCTD) returned surveys this year indicating general satisfaction with staff and the service provided. Judging six key aspects of customer service, only 3% of respondents from ten customer groups rated MCTD “Poor” in terms of timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information, and overall service.

This was the fifth time in ten years that MCTD reached out to ask, “How are we doing and how can we do a better job?” Working from a customer population of 25,073, a total of 5,514 were selected (most at random) and 23% returned the surveys they received by mail. When MCTD conducted similar surveys in previous years, overall response rates ranged from 34% to 26%. Although this year’s 23% response rate is relatively low, it’s enough to provide a 95% confidence level with a 2.7% margin of error for the combined responses to questions about key aspects of customer service.

Whenever MCTD mails out its survey, it expects that many customers will take the opportunity to add frank and even colorful comments. This year was no exception as nearly 500 respondents had something to write in the space provided for suggestions.

For example, one person from the group subject to an IFTA / IRP audit offered this assessment: “Fix department!! Too much paperwork, too many hassles. Too complicated. No consistency in who you talk to. Can’t get ahold of someone in a timely manner. Can’t fax reports when I need to anymore! Give department back to PUC. They did really good job before.”

On the other hand, there were many comments like this one from a

carrier that had a truck inspected by MCTD staff: “If your department could influence other government agencies to operate in as effective and efficient manner as ODOT, people would have a lot less to be unhappy with government. This is the best government division I have ever dealt with. Best attitude, most helpful. Hard to say it, but I would give you an A.”

And this from a person who contacted the Over-Dimension Permit Unit: “I would like to commend you on your outstanding staff. Their professionalism and courtesy are a model for all customer service representatives, both public and private.”

MCTD got the best and the worst of comments this year. But overall the vast majority of customers believe service at MCTD is excellent or good. Following is a summary of noteworthy results from the surveys:

## **Oregon Companies Subject to a Safety Compliance Review or a Truck Safety Inspection**

Together, most of these companies (93%) say MCTD staff conducts inspections in a professional, courteous manner and most (95%) agree the Motor Carrier Safety Program has a positive effect on highway safety. Of those subject to a Compliance Review, 94% agree the audits influence carriers to follow regulations. Of those subject to a truck inspection, 79% agree the chances of being inspected on an average trip through Oregon are high and only 40% think inspection efforts should be increased.

Surveys were sent to 427 Oregon companies that were subject to a Safety Compliance Review in 2007, with 93 responding, and to 690 randomly-selected Oregon companies that had a truck inspected by MCTD staff in 2007, with 164 responding.

## **Oregon Truck Drivers Subject to a Safety Inspection or Receiving a Citation or Warning from a Motor Carrier Enforcement Officer**

The majority of drivers inspected (85%) agree that MCTD inspectors conduct inspections in a professional, courteous manner. More of those receiving a citation or warning (91%) agree that motor carrier enforcement officers perform their duties in a professional manner. But these two customer groups were most displeased with MCTD as 22% rate overall service only fair and 6% rate it poor.

Of the drivers inspected, 91% agree: “The company I work for gives me the information and support I need to be in compliance with safety regulations.” Of the drivers receiving a citation or warning, 76% agree that “Oregon Motor Carrier Enforcement Officers demonstrate good judgment and common sense,” 79% agree they “treat truck operators with respect,” 86% agree they’re “knowledgeable and well-trained,” 89% agree they “apply size and weight regulations fairly,” 82% agree they “enforce size and weight regulations uniformly,” and 90% agree they “give clear and concise guidance about compliance.”

Surveys were sent to 660 randomly-selected Oregon truck drivers subject to an inspection by MCTD staff in 2007, with 118 responding, and 616 randomly-selected Oregon drivers who received a citation or warning from an MCTD enforcement officer in a six-month period spanning 2007 and 2008, with 106 responding.

## **Persons Calling for Registration or Over-Dimension Permit Service**

Almost everyone calling the Registration Services Permit Analysts for truck transactions (98%) agree staff is professional, courteous, and flexible in accommodating their needs.

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For a more detailed look at survey responses — [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/MCT/SURVEY08.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/MCT/SURVEY08.shtml)

## **“How are we doing?” — MCTD asks its customers**

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In terms of the ability to provide services correctly the first time, 60% rate staff excellent, 35% good, and 5% fair.

Those calling the Permit Analysts in Over-Dimension Permits are also happy with service as 96% say their requests for single-trip permits are processed in a timely and accurate manner. “I permit many other states and Oregon is absolutely the best there is,” one person wrote.

In both the 2004 and 2006 surveys, many customers complained about phone wait times when calling the Registration Services Analysts. This year’s survey found fewer phone-related complaints. MCTD has been encouraging customers to use Trucking Online to complete their own transactions and records inquiries, which then allows the Permit Analysts to more quickly help those who must call for service. But in past surveys as many as 44% of respondents said they do business both on the phone and online. Only 24% responding to this year’s survey, however, said they do business both ways, perhaps indicating that the Internet service is trimming the need to call Salem.

Of those not using Trucking Online, some didn’t know it was available, some haven’t gotten around to signing up for it, and some don’t do

enough business with Oregon to warrant signing up. Consistent with past surveys, many say they actually like doing business by phone, mail, or fax and they don’t like doing business on the Internet.

Surveys were sent to companies who called for service during one week in May — 592 who called the Registration Services Analysts and 597 who called the Over-Dimension Permit Analysts. A total of 131 responded from the first group and 177 from the second group.

### **Companies Participating in the Green Light Weigh Station Preclearance Program**

The vast majority of companies say it’s easy to use Green Light to preclear weigh stations (4% disagree), it saves time by avoiding stops (5% disagree), and it saves money in truck operating costs (6% disagree). But 24% say they would not be participating in Green Light if MCTD had not given them their first transponders at no charge, and 47% are not willing to spend \$50 for each new transponder when the batteries die in the old ones. Rather, 90% say they plan to just have the Transponder Service Center in Salem replace the batteries for \$15 each.

When asked if they have a problem with the fact that Green Light allows ODOT to collect weigh station records electronically, just like it collects records manually when a truck stops at a station, 92% of the companies say that’s not a problem. When asked about ODOT using weigh station records for enforcement purposes, such as checking driver logbooks, 88% agree it is appropriate. These responses and others from this customer group were very consistent with past surveys.

Surveys were sent to 591 randomly-selected companies in Oregon, Idaho, and Washington who participate in Green Light. A total of 130 companies responded.

### **Companies Designated as Oregon Trusted Carrier Partners**

All but one of the companies responding say they take pride in being a Trusted Carrier and 94% say they

clearly derive benefits from that.

Three-fourths of the companies (78%) say putting Trusted Carrier plates on their Green Light transponder-equipped trucks helps them retain drivers and 91% say displaying a Trusted Carrier plate enhances their company’s image in the eyes of the general public and helps them market their product.

When asked if the Trusted Carrier plate has a positive effect on the way Oregon weigh station operators treat their drivers, 87% say it does.

Similarly, the companies believe it has a positive effect on the way Oregon law enforcement officers treat their drivers (84% say it does). Fewer (80%) believe it affects how drivers are treated outside Oregon, however.

The vast majority of the companies say the Trusted Carrier designation is a major incentive to maintain a good safety record (96%) and a major incentive to stay in compliance with other regulations like registration and road-use tax reporting (95%).

Surveys were sent to 598 randomly-selected companies in Oregon, Idaho, and Washington who qualify as Trusted Carrier Partners. A total of 211 companies responded.

### **Companies Subject to a Weight- Mile Tax, IRP and/or IFTA Audit**

Almost all of the companies responding to this survey say they were given enough time to prepare for their audit, whether it was a check of weight-mile tax records or those related to the International Registration Plan and Fuel Tax Agreement (97% agree). The vast majority say the audit was completed in a timely manner (94%). Most say their auditor was fair and impartial (7% disagree) and helpful answering questions about reporting requirements and offering tips about good record keeping (8% disagree).

Surveys were sent to 587 companies subject to a weight-mile tax audit in the past year and 156 companies subject to an IRP and/or IFTA audit. A total of 113 responded from the first group and 45 from the second group.

## **Methodology and Cost**

MCTD spent just \$2,957 in postage and printing for its surveys. It saved money by using forms developed by staff and assigning one person to collect surveys and report results. Survey responses varied by customer group so the margin of error ranges from 6% to 9%, with a 95% confidence level. But for the six questions about key aspects of customer service, the total responses combined together are sufficient for a 2.7% margin of error.

# MCTD scores high in key aspects of customer service

The vast majority of Motor Carrier Transportation Division customers responded favorably to six questions that appeared on every customer satisfaction survey form mailed out this year. Surveys were sent to ten different customer groups, but they each were asked to rate the Division in terms of key aspects of service — timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information, and overall service.

When examined together, customers were most critical of the availability of information. In that regard, 39% of respondents rate the Division excellent, 46% rate it good, 12% rate it fair, and 3% rate it poor.

But as far as overall quality of service, 39% rate the Division excellent, 50% rate it good, 9% rate it fair, and 2% rate it poor. When assessing responses, a “Fair” rating is considered to be a negative response.

When survey responses are examined separately,

general satisfaction was highest among those who transacted business with the Salem Permit Analysts in Registration Services and Over-Dimension Permits. Taken together, 97% of those respondents rate this staff excellent or good for overall service.

Satisfaction was lowest among two groups of truck drivers — those subject to a safety inspection and those who received a citation or warning from a motor carrier enforcement officer. Together, only 72% of the drivers responding rate staff excellent or good. Two other groups — motor carriers subject to a Safety Compliance Review and carriers subject to a truck inspection — were also somewhat dissatisfied as 87% offer a positive rating.

Since 2006, these six questions have been part of customer surveys conducted by every Oregon state government agency in order to allow for comparing one agency with another.

<b>Regarding Motor Carrier Division staff and service provided . . .</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
<b>TIMELINESS</b> 1. How do you rate the timeliness of the services provided by the Motor Carrier Transportation Division? 1,264 responses	<b>41%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>ACCURACY</b> 2. How do you rate the ability of the Motor Carrier Transportation Division to provide services correctly the first time? 1,266 responses	<b>42%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>HELPFULNESS</b> 3. How do you rate the helpfulness of Motor Carrier Transportation Division employees? 1,264 responses	<b>50%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>EXPERTISE</b> 4. How do you rate the knowledge and expertise of Motor Carrier Transportation Division employees? 1,248 responses	<b>42%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION</b> 5. How do you rate the availability of information at the Motor Carrier Transportation Division? 1,247 responses	<b>39%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>OVERALL SERVICE</b> 6. How do you rate the overall quality of service provided by the Motor Carrier Transportation Division? 1,260 responses	<b>39%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2%</b>