

CTR Survey Basics

The purpose of the employee survey is to measure commute choices made by employees. Employers, CTR administrators and the Legislature all benefit from consistent, accurate, timely, and valid data about the CTR program. Accurate information aids decision making, resource allocation, program development and evaluation.

Conducting the Survey

Who Should Be Surveyed?

Employers should survey all employees unless the size of the worksite would make that very difficult. In these circumstances employers have the option of surveying only employees who fit the affected definition. Surveying other variations of the worksite population is not an option. For example, a worksite cannot choose to survey the affected employee population plus only non-SOV commuters working outside the affected window.

Employees are considered affected by the CTR law if they:

- Work 35 or more hours in a week (Monday through Sunday).
- Are scheduled to report to a single worksite between 6 and 9 a.m. consistently (not on rotating shifts)
- Work on two or more weekdays (Monday through Friday).
- Work for at least 12 continuous months.

Response Rate

The CTR law sets a minimum response rate of 70% to promote confidence that the survey results are valid and meaningful. In other words, 70% of all affected employees or total employees at your worksite (depending upon the group surveyed) must return a completed survey. If your results fall below 70%, your survey calculations will be based on the assumption that all employees who did not return surveys were SOVs.

Example

Company X achieved a 60% response rate. Their survey results show an SOV rate of 80%.

| Survey Response | Non-Response up to 70% | Remainder above 70% | Calculated SOV with fill-in |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 60% x 80% | 10% x 100% | 30% x 80% | .48 + .10 + .24 = |
| .48 | .10 | .24 | 82% |

Tips for Achieving a High Response Rate

Seek support from your CEO – *See sample communication pieces*

Enlist the aid of department supervisors

Communicate clearly and in advance of the survey – *See sample communication pieces*

Use incentives to reward employees for returning completed surveys

Use a tracking system to follow-up with employees who are late in returning surveys

Survey Schedule

CTR surveys are scheduled for the same time of year every other year to minimize the impact of variables such as weather that affect employees' commute choices. WCOG will provide two survey week options in late April and early May. Each option includes a measurement week, which is followed immediately by the survey week. Employees complete their surveys during survey week. The questions on the survey ask employees how they commuted to work during the previous week, i.e. the measurement week. When you are choosing when you want to conduct your survey, please avoid unusual work weeks (holidays, shut-downs, longer/shorter workdays, etc.) that would fall during the measurement week or the survey week. If your worksite will be experiencing unusual work weeks for both of the survey schedule options, please contact WCOG staff. Off-schedule surveying is possible in extenuating circumstances.

Distributing and Collecting the Survey

Please consult **Guide to Online Surveying** or **Guide to Paper Surveying** for separate instructions. Both documents are available as PDFs at WhatcomSmartTrips.org/content/employerServices

Interpreting the Survey

Some employees may have questions about how to answer certain questions on the survey. You should be able to answer most questions, but please call our office if you're not sure about something.

Question 1. Which of the following best described your employment status?

Only employees mark the full-time response will be considered affected.

Question 2. Is your position with this employer intended to last 12 months or more?

Only employees who answer "yes" will be considered affected.

Question 3. Last week, which days were you scheduled to begin work between 6 and 9 a.m.?

Only employees who indicate that they work full-time, answer "yes" to Question 2, and who fill in two or more weekdays in Question 3 will be considered affected.

Question 4a. Last week, what type of transportation did you use each day to commute TO your usual work location?

Since the information from this question is critical to determining the SOV and VMT rate, some instructions appear next to the question. The following information may also be helpful:

If an employee reported to a different location for this employer, fill in the type of transportation used to get to that location.

Employees should fill in a response for each weekday, regardless of their work schedule and days off.

An employee who works Saturday or Sunday should fill in the information accordingly.

The survey does not give respondents the opportunity to report multiple modes used in the commute trip. They must report the mode used for the longest distance.

Question 4b. If you used a carpool or vanpool as part of your commute, or if you ride a motorcycle, how many people (age 16 or older) are usually in the vehicle, including yourself?

This question is used to calculate the average vehicle trips per person, which helps determine VMT per employee. For example, 2-person carpools count as a half of a vehicle trip. The larger the carpool is, the smaller the fraction of a vehicle trip. Vanpools of seven or more count as zero vehicle trips. If Question 4b is left blank, carpools and vanpools count as 2-person carpools, and motorcycles count as single-occupant vehicles.

Question 4c. Was last week a typical week for commuting?

This question helps respondents answer the rest of the questions accurately. For example, someone who typically bicycles to work 5 days a week, but who drive during the survey measurement week, might be tempted to indicate that they had bicycled to work. If they are able to say that that week of commuting was unusual, they will feel better about saying that they drove to work. For survey data to represent what is really happening at a worksite, everyone must provide accurate data about what they really did, not what they think they should say.

Question 5. Which of the following most fits your normal work schedule?

This question gathers information to calculate the credit for compressed workweeks. It was written to provide a broad range of responses, since so many schedule variations are possible. Only alternative schedules that eliminate commute trips receive credit. Please contact WCOG if you have employees with alternative work schedules not identified on the survey form.

Question 6a. On average, do you telework at least one full day in two weeks?

Question 6b. How many days did you telework in the last two weeks?

These two questions give credit for teleworking, when it occurs at least one day every two weeks.

Question 7a. ONE WAY, how many miles do you commute from home TO your usual work location?

“How far do you live from work?” is essentially the question. Employees should not give round trip or weekly estimates of mileage. Employees who work at home should still answer the question – how far do you live from work.

Question 7b. Last week did you ride a ferry as part of your commute?

Question 7c. Last week did you use a park-and-ride lot as part of your commute?

Park-and-ride lots include shared facilities such as church parking lots where commuters are permitted to park.

Question 7d. Last week did you pay for parking at work?

Employees who pay to park in private or public lots should also answer yes.

Question 8. What is your home zip code?

This question is not intended to identify the employee or his/her residence. Its intention is to:

Aid employers in designing their programs (knowing the general areas that employees are commuting from can make ridematching much easier)

Provide a check at the state and local level that roughly the same groups of people are responding to the survey over the course of the CTR program

Q9. If you drive alone to work, which of the following would most encourage you to try using an alternative to driving alone?

Employees who walk, bike, carpool, vanpool or ride the bus to work for every workday, should not answer this question.

Q10. How likely would you be to try the following ways of getting to work?

Questions 10 and 11 have been included to help employers design effect commute trip reduction programs.

Q11. Last week, how many one-way transit or walk-on ferry rides did you take on each service listed below for any purpose?

Only bus and walk-on ferry riders should answer this question. This question reads a little strangely because we only have one transit service operating in Whatcom County and its name (WTA) doesn't appear in the box. In many other counties, the names of several transit agencies would appear in the space at the bottom of this page. Please interpret this question for employees as:

Last week, how many one-way trips did you make on WTA buses or walk-on ferries for any purpose (not just work)?