



**Maricopa County**  
Air Quality Department

**Substantive Policy Statement: SPS-2018-003  
Travel Reduction Program Regional Task Force  
Survey Response Rate Policy**

Approved by:

**Jerry Geering, Chairman  
Travel Reduction Program Regional Task Force**

A substantive policy statement is advisory only. A substantive policy statement does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal procedures of the county and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules or ordinances adopted pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) Title 49 (The Environment), Chapter 3 (Air Quality) [A.R.S. §§ 11-1601(8), 49-471(17)]

If you believe that this substantive policy statement does impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may petition the agency under A.R.S. § 41-1033 for a review of the statement. [A.R.S. § 41-1033]

An applicant for a license subject to A.R.S. Title 11 (Counties), Chapter 11 (County Regulations), Article 1 (General Provisions) may request a county to clarify its interpretation or application of a statute, ordinance, regulation, delegation agreement or authorized substantive policy statement affecting the procurement of that license by providing the county with a written request that satisfies the requirements of A.R.S. § 11-1609(A) [A.R.S. § 11-1609]

**I. Purpose**

To establish a minimum survey response rate for employers and schools that administer the annual Travel Reduction Program (TRP) commute questionnaire.

**II. Applicability**

This substantive policy statement applies to employers and schools that administer the annual TRP commute questionnaire.

**III. Definitions**

**A. Alternative Mode User (AMU)** – A commuter who uses any mode of transportation other than a single occupancy vehicle.

**B. Employee** – An employee who works at or reports to a single work site during any 24-hour period for at least three days per week during at least six months of the year (as defined as “Full-Time Employee” in A.R.S. § 49-581).

**C. Confidence Level** – The percentage of all possible samples that can be expected to include the true population parameters. The confidence interval can take any number of probabilities, with the most common being 95% or 99%. A 95% confidence level implies that 95% of the confidence intervals would include the true population parameter.

- D. Margin Of Error** – The maximum expected difference between the true population and a sample estimate of that parameter. An allowance for slight error or miscalculation or changing circumstances.
- E. Ordinance Measures** – Highly-effective measures/incentives as outlined in Maricopa County Trip Reduction Ordinance P-7, Section 7C.
- F. Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV)** – A drive alone commuter.
- G. Staff** – Maricopa County TRP staff.
- H. Statistical Penalty** – An arithmetical factor applied to the summary analysis SOV/MT rates for sites that do not meet the required response rate. All non-respondents for a site are recorded as an SOV commuter when calculating the analysis.
- I. Task Force** – The Travel Reduction Regional Task Force designated by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors as the responsible agency to implement and enforce Maricopa County Trip Reduction Ordinance P-7 and established in Maricopa County by Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 49, Chapter 3, Article 8.
- J. Transportation Coordinator (TC)** – A person designated by a major employer or school to serve as the lead person in developing and implementing a Travel Reduction Program.
- K. Valid Questionnaire** – A TRP survey form that was completed solely by the employee with all questions filled-in with valid answers.

#### **IV. Discussion**

The Task Force directs staff to process and evaluate valid TRP questionnaires following the procedures and criteria identified in this policy. Obtaining complete and accurate responses from a sufficient number of employees is vital to generating useful results that employers and schools can use to develop their annual TRP plan. A minimum response rate also ensures an employer or school cannot selectively survey a handful of alternative mode users to obtain a single occupant vehicle rate that exempts the employer or school from having to initiate/continue ordinance measures.

#### **V. Statutory Authority**

- A.** A.R.S. §§ 49-581 – 49-593 [Title 49-The Environment, Chapter 3-Air Quality, Article 8-Travel Reduction Programs]

#### **VI. Procedures**

##### **A. Processing and Calculating**

1. Employers and schools are asked to distribute to every employee the TRP questionnaire and are instructed to have each commuter complete their own form. Once the Transportation Coordinator (TC) collects and returns the survey forms, staff will:
  - a. Extract any blank (unused) forms.

- b. Count the completed forms to assess the initial response rate.
  - c. Adjust the employer's and school's count (if the TC reports a different employee count than originally provided).
  - d. Process the completed forms through the scanner or electronically.
2. Once the data is processed, program software automatically calculates the response rate and determines whether a statistical penalty should be applied, i.e. valid returned questionnaires divided by employee count, originally reported by TC.

#### **B. Establishing and Communicating the Minimum Response Rate**

1. The average employer (non-school) participating in the TRP has approximately 500 employees. Using a 5% margin of error and 99% confidence level would require each employer to return approximately 60% of questionnaires. For consistency, staff will continue to use the 60% return rate to determine if the statistical penalty should be applied to the results.
2. All survey related training and outreach materials provided to an employer and school will encourage 100% participation in the survey process, as well as, communicate the 60% minimum survey response rate and statistical penalty that will be applied if an employer or school fails to achieve a 60% response rate for employee sites.

#### **C. Requests to Conduct a Resurvey**

Requests to conduct a resurvey (to avoid the statistical penalty) will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Program Manager, e.g. TC has to go on emergency leave, new TC is assigned in the middle of the survey process, or surveys are misplaced or similar circumstance.

### **VII. Divisions Affected**

- A. Travel Reduction Program

### **VIII. References**

- A. <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>

This web link leads to an online survey sample size calculator provided by Raosoft, Inc. Raosoft, Inc. is a developer of database software with statistical capacities for evaluation and interpretation of survey data.

- B. <http://stattrek.com/>

This web link leads to the website of Stat Trek. The Stat Trek site offers analytical information and training tools on statistics, probability and survey sampling.

## IX. Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Description of Revision
1	06-24-2014	Initial version
2	05-25-2018	Changed format, changed "Trip Reduction Program" to "Travel Reduction Program" throughout, deleted the definition of "Organization", and changed "organization" to "employers and schools" throughout
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