

**A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF POOL CAR  
MANAGEMENT:  
THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS  
AND  
FORESTRY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE  
BY  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Despite crucial strategic value of fleets, most organizations have relegated the management of their vehicles as being very low on their list of priorities. Consequently, they are entrusting unsuitable people with management of their fleet. Without proper management, huge amounts of money are wasted through fuel fraud and with repairs being done too late or not at all, leaving expensive vehicles idle for months (Barrow 1999). It has been observed that managing fleets with the emphasis on bookkeeping and finance, rather than operational realities, leads to huge and unnecessary costs and massive fraud (Barrow 1998). Efficiency in fleet management is about having a fleet that works directly to support the organizational goals. It is imperative that a study was conducted to analyze the situation of pool cars in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) in the Limpopo Province to ensure the efficiency in its fleet management.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALIZATION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a background to the study and elaborates on the problem statement and objectives of the study. A hypothesis is presented while the rationale for the study, the significance and limitations of the study also receive attention. Furthermore, the research design and research methodology are discussed, while ethical issues are also considered. This chapter also contextualizes the research material.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH PROBLEM**

According to Mika (2006:1), fleet management is important in South Africa. Motor pools are meant to save money, but too many vehicles which are not used imply, under utilised cars and unnecessary cost to the organization. The researcher deemed it necessary to conduct a situational analysis of pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province. A research proposal was submitted to the Department and agreement was reached on the basis on which the research was to be conducted.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The research problem was to determine the effectiveness of the pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

How effective is the management of pool cars in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province?

## **1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.5.1 Overall objective**

The overall objective of the study was to analyze pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province.

### **1.5.2 Aims**

The following were the aims of the study:

- To determine the availability of pool cars in the department.
- To analyze the procurement system.
- To determine the effectiveness of pool car maintenance.
- To assess the pool car allocation process.
- To evaluate the planning and scheduling of pool car trips.

## **1.6 HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY**

The study was conducted with the hypothesis that effectiveness of pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry was questionable.

## **1.7 RATIONALE FOR STUDY**

The rationale for this study was based on the suspicion that pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and forestry was questionable and was causing the Department unnecessary high expenditure. The study thus aimed to analyze the pool car management and make suggestions towards more effective and efficient management.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

It is expected that the results of this study will have a positive impact on the management of pool cars within the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and that the results will be noted by other Departments within the government sector.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

The study is limited because it focused on pool car management, only while the management of subsidized vehicles within the Department was not considered.

## **1.10 DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The study followed both the quantitative and qualitative approaches in collecting data while basic data were collected with a structured questionnaire, followed by an in depth study consisting of personal and telephone interviews with the regional transport officers.

## **1.11 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

The population of the study comprised all the regional transport officers. They were all interviewed and no sample was extracted.

## **1.12 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire (Appendix I), supplemented with personal and telephone interviews.

## **1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Permission was obtained from the regional managers of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry to conduct the study.

## **1.14 CONTEXTUALIZATION**

The research report consists of five chapters:

**Chapter One** offers an overview of the study and provides the introduction, background information, and research problem statement, the objectives of the study, the hypothesis, and the rationale for the study, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, the research design and the methodology.

**Chapter Two** contains the literature review.

**Chapter Three** provides the research methodology followed in this study.

**Chapter Four** provides the results of the empirical study and presentation, analyses and interpretation of the primary data.

**Chapter Five** summarizes the study, draws conclusions and offers certain recommendation.

## CHAPTER 2

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In spite of the crucial strategic value of fleets, most organizations tend to relegate the management of their vehicles to occupy a very low place on their list of priorities and consequences of entrusting unsuitable people with their management. Without proper management, huge amounts of money are wasted through fuel fraud and with repairs being done too late or not at all, leaving expensive vehicles idle for months (Barron 1999:2). It has been observed that managing fleets with the emphasis on bookkeeping and finance, rather than operational realities, leads to huge and unnecessary costs and massive fraud (Barron1998:11).

The number of cars in the pool can be reduced by planning ahead to combine trips and preparing an action plan to monitor and manage the reduction of costs. According to Mika (2006:2), the goal is to determine the right number of vehicles to be kept in the pool. It will contain cost, optimize vehicle usage, offer users more choices, and keep its customers satisfied.

In this chapter literature is reviewed to provide background information for the empirical study (chapter 4) and to propose a systems framework for purpose-directed leadership and management of pool car operations (Chapter 5).

### 2.2 Literature Review

Pertaining to this study the literature review was divided into six sections: general background of fleet management, strategic planning, operational planning, financial planning, controlling and monitoring fleet and information management. This study was especially required to obtain knowledge and understanding of fleet management in the government sector.

### **2.2.1 General background of fleet management**

A major focus of management over the past number of years is fleet management. The fleet sector is difficult, complex and dynamic and contains organizations that are careless about seeking to be efficient and effective. The range of pressures from vehicle fleet managements' point of view is both diverse and intense.

The South African government depends on vehicles fleets to conduct its business. Therefore, fleet management contains tasks that are related to government functions such as attending and arranging meetings and workshops, in respect of traffic law enforcement, health care, education, service vehicles and inspection services.

Government have an obligation to provide services to the public and other institutions they serve and for the above reason the government owns and operates a substantial fleet of motor vehicle. The management of government motor transport in South Africa is decentralized to the nine provinces. Each province has the right to decide on their respective motor transport policies and procedures, within national laws.

Government motor transport in South Africa is in a state of flux. Different decisions are being made regarding the management of government motor transport in South Africa. Some provinces are opting for outsourcing their fleets, whilst others are decentralizing their fleets to user departments. There is a need for clarity on how to arrive at decisions that will result in the long-term financial and operational sustainability of government motor transport (Backeberg, 2002:1-10).

### **2.2.2 Strategic planning**

A strategy is the pattern or plan that integrates an organization's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. Founded strategies helps marshal and allocate an organization's resources into a unique and viable

posture based upon its relative internal competencies and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the environment, and contingent moves by intelligent opponents.

The nature of a strategy is explained by considering Mintzberg's (1987:385) five Ps for strategy. The role of strategy is dealt with in terms of an explanation of the levels of strategy in an organization. Research suggests that formal planning systems: contribute toward better strategic decision making and have a positive impact on organizational performance. Strategy as a position, concerns the determination of particular products in particular markets. Strategy as a perspective refers to the organization's way of doing things and strategy as a pattern concerns consistent behaviour over time. The essence and nature of strategy concerns the organization and its environment. Effective strategies are important to value creation for all stakeholders and above average earning for the organization. Finally strategy sets direction, focuses effort, and provides consistency.

Planning for an organization, starts at the top with the strategic plans that deal with the entire organization. Once those are in place, the strategic plans are translated into tactical plans for the different functional areas, once the tactical plans are in place, operating plans can be derived from them. Strategic planning can be defined as the process of reconciling the organization's resources (internal environment) with threats and opportunities caused by changes in the external environment. The main focus of strategic planning is on the future, not the present or the past. Because strategic planning deals with the environment that is constantly changing, an organization needs to be flexible, and put strategies in place to align the organization with the changing environment.

Strategic planning comprises unique characteristics, such as:

- Strategic planning is an ongoing activity (process).
- It requires well-developed conceptual skills and is performed mainly by top management.
- It focuses on the organization as a whole.

- It is future oriented.
- It is concerned with the organization's vision, mission, long-term goals, and strategies.
- Strategic planning aims at integrating all management functions.
- It focuses on opportunities (or threats) that may be exploited through the application of the organization's resources (Smith, 2004:53).

According to the State of Utah (1999:367), fleet management departments should have a vision, a mission, goals and objectives for them to plan strategically. An environmental analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) is very crucial for strategic planning. The vision and mission will be a guide to the department to be effective and efficient.

An environmental analysis covers factors such as a remote environment, a social environment, responding to public feedback, a political environment which requires checking the markings of cars and number plates of government for better identity, a technological environment by that seeks ways to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the fleet and to examining the ecological environment .

The State of Utah (1999:367) stated that the Department should identify opportunities available to make it responsive and conduct a critical assessment. To identify threats and weaknesses the Department should identify them and change them to future strengths.

#### **2.2.2.1 Strategic planning process**

The strategic planning process is explained separately since it remains interdependent of the other components of strategic planning. For instance, when formulating the mission statement, top management needs information on the internal and external environment.

The first step in the strategic planning process is the formulation of a vision.

A clear vision is important to an organization for the following reasons:

- It portrays the dream that the organization has for the future.
- It promotes change.
- It provides the basis for a strategic plan.
- It enhances a wide range of performance measures.
- It helps to keep decision making in context.
- It motivates individuals and facilitates the recruitment of talent.
- It has positive consequences.

The vision statement guides the formulation of the mission statement. The mission statement aligns the organization with its dream. When formulating the mission statement the following questions should be asked:

- What is our business?
- Who is our client?
- How will we provide this service?

A mission statement should ensure unanimity of purpose within the organization, and serve, amongst others, as the basis for resource allocation. It also sets the parameters within which all decisions should be made.

Organizations should address the following in their mission statement:

- The organization's intention to secure its survival through sustained growth and profitability.
- The organization's culture.
- The organization's public image.
- The self concept of the organization.
- The organization's social responsibility.

#### **2.2.2.2 Internal environment**

To ensure that the mission statement is realistic, management should evaluate the organization's capabilities as well as the opportunities and threats posed by the changing external environment. The internal analysis would identify the strategically important strengths and weaknesses on which the organization

should base its strategy. The internal analysis is a three step process. The steps in the development of an organization's profile are:

- Identify strategic internal factors.
- Evaluate strategic internal factors.
- Develop input for the strategic planning process.

Having identified the core purpose of an organization, the next logical step is to pursue ways and means of fulfilling the core purpose. As the first step in identifying core strategies, key success factors need to be determined. Key success factors are the things that spell the difference between profit and loss, as well as competitive success and market failure.

A key success factor can be:

- A skill or talent or competence.
- A competitive capability.
- A condition a company must achieve.
- Something a firm has to do to satisfy its customers.

Key success factors are generic but some are industry specific. Identifying key success factors is a top priority because they are essential corner stones for a company's strategy.

### **2.2.3 Operational planning**

According to Taylor (2003:907), operational planning is: "A decision makes process where planners have to address the conflicting concerns of fleet management namely assuring adequate vehicle availability to satisfy customers and their demand while maintaining a high percentage of utilization for each vehicle in the fleet". Operational plans are developed by middle-level and lower level managers. These plans focus on carrying out tactical plans to achieve the operational goals. Operational plans are narrowly focused and have relatively short time horizons. There are two basic forms of operational plans, namely single use plans and standing plans. Single use plans are used for non-recurring activities and the plans that remain more or less unchanged for long periods are called standing plans. For example, programmes and projects, and budgets are

all single use plans. Policies, standard procedures, methods, and rules are standing plans. To formulate realistic operational plans, managers need clear guidance from strategic and tactical plans (Smith and Cronje 2002:94).

### **2.2.3.1 Product / Service planning**

Every organization aims at offering products/services that satisfy customer demand. Traditionally, these products have been classified as either goods or services. In reality every product is a package that contains both goods and services.

A serious problem for product or service planning is that the customer demand changes over time. Organizations respond to changes in demand by continually checking demand and adjusting their products. The aim of planning is to make sure that organizations continue to supply products that customers want. An area where operations management and marketing work closely together is when they assess customer demands and suggest products that would satisfy them.

For this they ask a series of questions:

- Who are our current and potential customers?
- What products/services do they want?
- What products/services can we make to satisfy them?
- How should we change existing products or services?
- What new products or services should we introduce and which old ones should we withdraw?
- How should we make these products/services?
- How do we organize the supply chain?

Texas State University-San Marcos (2001:4) elaborated that fleet management's responsibility includes review and approval of vehicle purchasing decisions, vehicle replacement decisions, maintenance decisions, repair decisions, assignment to staff, and disposal decisions.

### **2.2.3.2 Purchasing and Replacement decisions**

There are two keys in vehicle procurement which the fleet management focuses on:-

- Achieving a net reduction in cost by ensuring cost effective fleet management operations, and
- The need to reduce the overall environmental impact of fleet- the introduction of smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles, minimizing model and manufacturer range

Prior to the replacement of all vehicles a review is undertaken in conjunction with managers of the past usage of each vehicle using the fleet management system data and vehicle logs. A detailed assessment should be presented to support procurement of all replacement vehicles. The replacement policy is determined by the kilometers traveled, the engine size and vehicle cost. Vehicle cost consists of elements namely the capital purchase of the vehicle and the running cost per kilometer. When the overall cost per kilometer is not effective anymore that is the appropriate time to replace a vehicle. The kilometers traveled should only be used as a guide for the replacement of a vehicle and for planning.

### **2.2.3.3 Maintenance and Repairs decisions**

Fleet management has adopted maintenance and repair procedures with the following best practices characteristics:-

- Use of maintenance standards, such as tread depth for tires and pad depth of brakes.
- Use of a fully burdened labour rate (including a country-wide indirect cost allocation) for charging repair time internally.
- Identification of the full cost of in-house services, which is periodically compared to the cost to contract the service.
- Identification of work that is under warranty. Substantial warranty work is done by the dealer; small items are repaired in house.
- Use of a work order system that distinguishes between preventive maintenance and repairs; permits categorization of work; and uses time standards to gauge workforce efficiency.

- Scheduling of preventative maintenance with the goal of reduction vehicle downtime, such as performing the work during the evenings or on days when the operator is off duty.

It is recommended that the preventative maintenance programme include a red flag function to notify fleet management when maintenance is overdue (Department of public works, 2004:15).

Travel Smart (2003:17) states that operational strategies in fleet management are:- choosing the right vehicle, checking the efficiency to the task and maintaining the fleet by optimizing performance of regular maintenance.

#### **2.2.3.4 Scheduling decisions**

The objectives of scheduling are to meet due dates, to minimize lead time, to minimize set up time or costs, to minimize work in progress inventory and maximize machine or labour costs (Chase and Aquilano,1982:683). The programme heads and all regular users of vehicles should prepare their schedules for the next period (month). The programmes should list the trips that are planned, including the proposed dates, the numbers of people to be transported, and the places to be visited. It is important that it indicates whether dates are fixed or can be adjusted to fit in with other arrangements.

Booking system are currently being introduced to ensure that available vehicles are utilized effectively and requirements for spot requests minimized. A fully centralized booking in system would be difficult to administer, however procedures could be strengthened at sections to record availability of vehicles and allow for more effective planning of usage (e.g. dates/times required, requirements for return of vehicles to pool). Responsibility for day to day management and maintenance of these records should be assigned to head of sections. The booking system should be monitored with particular attention given to ensuring that unauthorized home to office are eliminated (Hull City Council, 2007/08:2).

All staff members who request vehicles should complete required form as soon as the need arises. The transport officer will be able to plan and co ordinate journeys to best utilize the available pool.

#### **2.2.3.4.1 Monthly schedules**

Demand management involves recognizing and managing all sources of demands for products with the objective of keeping the master scheduler posted (Adendorf and De Wit, 1997:93)

Scheduling encompasses the activities of forecasting, recording orders, making the delivery promise, determining the needs of business's subsidiaries or other as well as the need for service or the replacement of parts. Before allocation the planned maintenance schedule of the month must be taken into account. The most appropriate vehicle for each journey must be allocated and where possible trips should be combined to avoid wide detours.

#### **2.2.3.4.2 Weekly schedules**

The fleet manager should prepare a detailed plan for vehicles for the week ahead. The plan will be derived from the monthly programme and will be updated daily with new requests for transport or any other necessary changes. At the most it should be one week notice for areas out of district and three days for other requirements. The schedule should be displayed in the fleet section.

The fleet manager should be able to determine the location of all vehicles at any time by looking at the requisition form. It is imperative that the requisition form should be available to ensure that if the fleet manager is not available a delegated officer can take over.

#### **2.2.3.4.3 Prioritization**

According to Adendorff and De wit (1997:42), priority rules are used where only one vehicle or one work station is considered. The best known rules probably include the following;

- First in , first out;

- Last in; first out;
- Shortest processing time first;
- Longest processing time last;
- Earliest due time first; and
- According to the critical ratio.

When there are insufficient vehicles to meet the planned programmes, or an emergency should arise, the fleet officer should occur prioritizing will enable fleet managers to meet urgent requests.

#### **2.2.3.4.4 Comparison**

The fleet officer should compare the actual requests against the planned requests to measure failure or success. The records of the number of requests should be kept and a percentage that has been satisfied. The results will guide the fleet manager on how the section is performing (Lamola, 2006:17).

#### **2.2.4 Financial planning**

Financial planning is an important aspect of the firm's operations because it provides road maps for guiding, coordinating and controlling the firm's actions to achieve its objectives. The financial planning process begins with long-term or strategic, financial plans.

These in turn guide the formulation of short-term or operating, plans and budgets. Generally the short-term plans and budgets implement the firm's long term strategic objectives. Long-term financial plans lay out an organization's planned financial actions and the anticipated impact of those actions over periods ranging from two to ten years. They are part of an integrated strategy that, along with the production and marketing plans, guides the firm towards its strategic goals. Short term financial plans specify short term financial actions and the anticipated impact of those actions.

Advancing a successful fleet reduction begins with appreciating that fleet size drives total expenditures. Regardless of how well costs are managed and

efficiencies generated through process reengineering, fleet costs will be proportional to the overall number of vehicles. Due diligence is necessary to develop an understanding of the qualitative, operational, policy, and political dynamics that influence fleet assignment, usage, and deployment (Government Finance Review,2006:43).

### **2.2.5 Controlling and monitoring fleet**

Organizations use control procedures to ensure that they are progressing toward their goals and that their resources are being used productively. In management literature the term control has a specific meaning, namely the process whereby management ensures that the actual activities fit in with the predetermined goals and planned activities.

The aim of control, one of the fundamental management functions, is to keep deviations from planned activities and performance levels to a minimum so that the mission and goals of the organization can be achieved. Control is an important guide in the execution of plans and it measures the performance of the whole organization.

A control process is necessary in an organization for the following reasons:

- Control is exercised to ensure that all activities at all levels of the organization are in accordance with the organization's goals.
- Control is applied to ensure that the organization's resources are deployed in such a way that it reaches its goals.
- Control usually results in better quality.
- Control enables management to cope with change and uncertainty.
- Control facilitates delegation and teamwork.

There should be a fleet safety programme with the aim of providing the framework for safety management to screen new drivers, as well as to provide training for skills and knowledge.

Travel Smart (2003:17) emphasizes that monitoring of fleet means saving opportunistic costs. It is therefore important to monitor fuel consumption by checking statements and vehicle accidents. Mika (2006:2) suggests that the use of internal, interdepartmental and private consultants to control fleet department operations is crucial. In this study it was found that the auditing of the fleet department is also a control mechanism which can be used by fleet managers. The recommendation that were made by the Legislative Auditing Bureau in the United States of America after auditing the department of Administration fleet are to check state fleet levels to make the fleet smaller and more efficient. To improve accountability fleet management should tailor the mixture of pool vehicles to match demand and policies improvement to strengthen the state's ability to enforce driver and management standards.

According to Government Finance Review (2006:44), the city of Philadelphia mitigated any negative impacts on service delivery from the vehicle reductions; the city developed an automated vehicle sharing programme. Employees can make reservations quickly via internet or telephones. Employees can access a pool of vehicle for twenty four hours seven days a week, without any administrative staff. Each driver is issued a unique credit card sized proximity card and each vehicle is outfitted with small black box that facilitates entry and tracks usage. There were major benefits such as:-

- Improved fleet usage, because drivers reserve the vehicles only for the time they need and use efficient scheduling results in improved fleet utilization. Depending on patterns of usage and the size of fleet, vehicle inventory can be reduced significantly.
- Free up personnel, with the tasks of key management, departmental billing, and fleet scheduling completely automated, personnel managing these tasks can be redeployed.
- Decrease the number of dedicated vehicles; increase pooled fleet vehicles. Because scheduling and reliable vehicle access guarantees vehicle availability.

- Eliminate paperwork. The system is completely automated with excellent real time reporting: no written logs.
- Enhance access. The entire pooled fleet is available twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally the cars can be placed in any geographic location rather than a central pool, making it more convenient and efficient for drivers.

In the USA the Department of Administration asked the Legislative Audit Bureau (LAD) to evaluate the state's vehicle fleet program and the recommendations were as follows:

- State fleet levels > to make the state fleet smaller and more efficient.
- Import accountability >To avoid misuse by drivers, the fleet manual to be updated, temporary freeze on the purchase of new vehicles, education to employees about rules and regulations to consolidate fleet management as well as maintenance services.
- Reduce dependence of vehicles to conduct state employees to have access to a broad array of electronic tools (e.g. telephone, e-mail, video/ teleconferencing) that are frequently more efficient means of communication than traveling to meetings.
- Motor pool management > to help organization tailor the mix of motor pool vehicles to match demand. Software enhancement for daily analysis of motor pool usage.
- Minimum driver standards being checked and to implement an automated monthly driver record check.
- Driver and fleet policies improvement > to strengthen the state's ability to enforce driver and management standards (Morrison, 2003:1-2).

### **2.2.6 Information Management**

Every organization needs a system for gathering and storing data, tracking key performance indicators, identifying and diagnosing problems and reporting strategy critical information. Effective companies use computer aided electronic systems share data and information at the speed of lightning. It is imperative that the availability of information is of crucial importance in determining competitiveness. Information management is mainly on gathering information for decision making. O'Brien (1990:50) describes information systems as performing three vital roles in any type of organization:-

- Support of business operations;
- Support of managerial decision making; and
- Support of strategic advantage.

According to O'Brien (1990), Strategic information system can thus help to provide strategic products and services that give a business organization a comparative advantage over its competitors. An organization's strategic objectives and its business process are usually undergoing significant and volatile changes places great pressure on organizations and their managers.

The source documentation for management information must be properly maintained. Log book and vehicle files must be updated and maintenance cost information kept (Lamola, 2006:6).

### **2.3 Summary**

This chapter reviewed relevant literature on fleet management in order to gain knowledge on and an understanding of fleet management in the government sector.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter explains how the data was approached, collected and analyzed for this research study. The quantitative method was used to collect the empirical data in order to assess the effectiveness of pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province. Structured questionnaires were designed and given to officials to complete in order to determine their involvement with pool car management in the Department. The respondents were all from the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province.

### **3.2 AIM OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

The aim of the research project was to evaluate pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in Limpopo Province.

### **3.3 OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The objectives and research questions were:

- To determine the availability of pool cars in the department.
- To analyze the procurement system.
- To determine the effectiveness of pool car maintenance.
- To assess the pool car allocation process.
- To evaluate the planning and scheduling of pool car trips.

#### **3.3.1 The research Question**

The following research question was asked:

How effective is pool car management of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province?

### **3.3.2 Secondary research questions**

The following research questions were posed:

- What do officers experience when they procure pool cars?
- What are the criteria for pool car allocation?
- What determines the allocation of pool cars?

### **3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Leedy (2003:35) a Qualitative research approach, using the descriptive survey method, has those characteristics that deal with a situation that demands the technique of observation as the main means of collecting data. A tool for observation, beyond the physical reach of the observer, is the questionnaire which was used in this study. The population of the study was carefully chosen, clearly defined and specifically delimited in order to set precise parameters for ensuring discreteness to the population. The data were analyzed using the non-parametric method.

### **3.5 RESEARCH POPULATION**

The research population included all the regional offices of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province. The Department has seven regional offices which are distinguished using the location areas where they are placed, namely: Polokwane office; Mopani office, Tzaneen office, Vhembe office, Louis Trichardt office, Sekhukhune office, and Waterberg office. Each office has a transport section within.

### **3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.6.1 Sampling**

The respondents were requested in writing and by telephone to obtain their permission to participate in the study. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has a Department of Transport with a manager who assisted in accessing the respondents. The respondents were selected according to their levels of management, namely tactical and operational. Stratified sampling was

applied. Stratification is possible when the population has specific characteristics according to which such a population can be grouped or stratified. In this case it was possible to stratify the population according to the managers of the transport Departments in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. The study consisted of a small number of individuals, less than hundred.

### **3.6.2 Tools for collecting data**

Primary data were collected through the use of a questionnaire while secondary data were gathered from the responses of the Department and other publications. The participants were grouped as transport officers and information was retrieved by telephone while interviews were conducted with the respondents using a structured questionnaire.

### **3.6.3 Analysis of the Data**

Data were presented in tabular and pie chart form and the results were expressed in numbers and percentages which facilitated analysis and interpretation.

## **3.7 Summary**

This chapter elaborated on the methods followed to gather data to determine how effective pool car management was within the Department of Water affairs and Forestry. While primary data were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire, most of the secondary data were accessed from the reports of the Department. The information was presented in tabular and pie chart form to facilitate interpretation.

# CHAPTER 4

## 4. Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Empirical Data

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses, and interprets the empirical data collected to explore pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry within the Limpopo Province. The study was based on the hypothesis that there was ineffective and inefficient management of pool cars in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry within Limpopo. The chapter also describes and analyses the management of pool cars within the Department and aims to identify existing problems.

To facilitate analysis, and interpretation, the empirical data were categorized into vision and mission, situational analysis of pool car management, strategic planning, operational planning, control, and monitoring.

### 4.2 Vision, Mission, Objectives and Goals

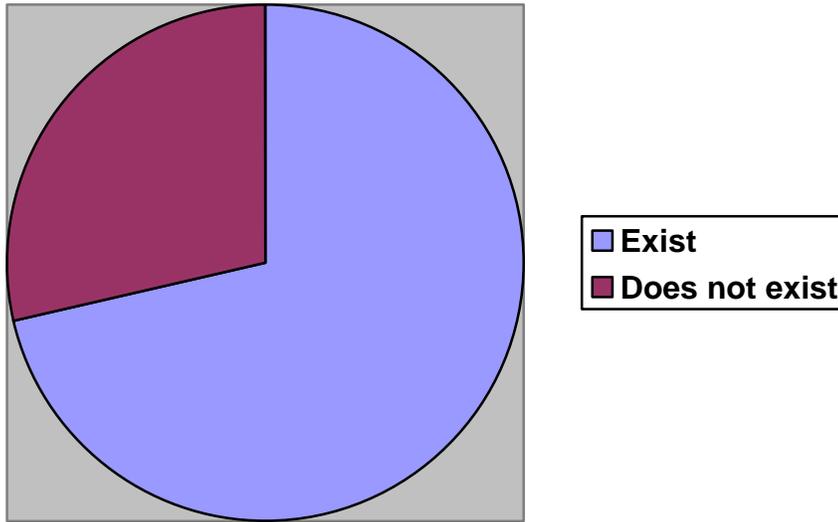
This section required the respondents to provide information about the existence of a vision and mission statements and the setting of objective and goals for their sections.

**Table 4.1 Existence of Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Goals**

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| <b>Exists</b>         | 71.4% |
| <b>Does not exist</b> | 28.6% |

Table 4.1 reflects the responses of district officers in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

**Figure 4.1 Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Goals**



From table 4.1 and figure 4.1 it is clear that a large percentage of the district offices in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry had a Vision and Mission statement and a set of objectives and goals for their departments. In fact, 71.4% indicated that they indeed had a vision and mission statement in place and that they had set objectives and goals for their department. Only 28.6% indicated that they have no vision and mission statement and that they had not set objectives and goals for their departments.

### **4.3 Pool cars situational analysis**

This section required the respondents to provide information on the pool car situation in the various district offices. The questions asked were about a vehicle register and the number and type of vehicles available.

**Table 4.2 Vehicle Register**

| <b>Vehicle Register</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Yes</b>              | 100%              |
| <b>No</b>               | 0%                |

**Table 4.3 Number of vehicles in the pool**

| District office | No of cars | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|------------|
| Polokwane       | 60         | 35.4%      |
| Tzaneen         | 18         | 9.5%       |
| Vhembe          | 0          | 0%         |
| Louis Trichardt | 62         | 32.8%      |
| Sekhukhune      | 5          | 0.026%     |
| Waterberg       | 34         | 17.9%      |
| Mopani          | 10         | 0.05%      |

❖ *Vhembe Use subsidized vehicles only*

**Figure 4.2 Number of vehicles in the pool**

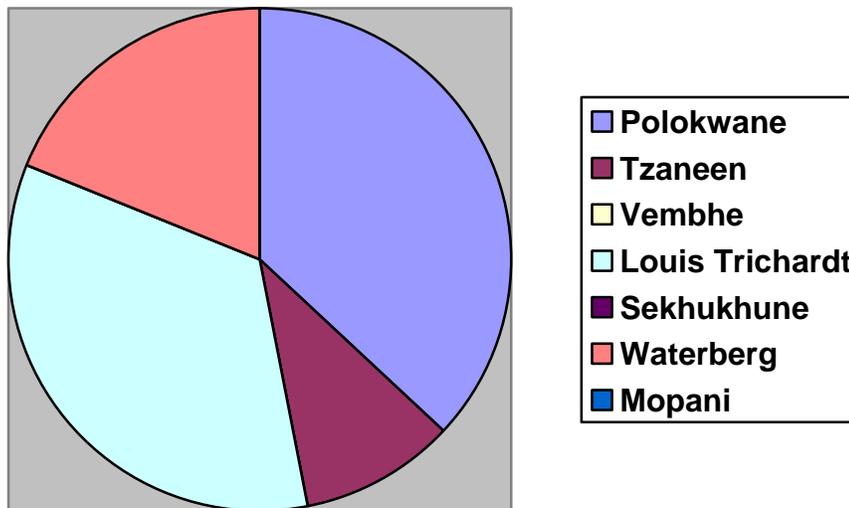


Table 4.2 reflects the response to the question whether the District Officers kept a vehicle register. All of them indicated that they were keeping a vehicle register. Table 4.3 and figure 4.2 reflect the situation in respect of the number of vehicles in each pool. Louis Trichardt is slightly ahead of Polokwane. They were managing 62 vehicles which comprised 32.8% of all the pool vehicles in the Department. Polokwane managed 60 vehicles (31,7%); Waterberg 34 vehicles (18%); Tzaneen 18 vehicles (9.5%); Mopani 10 vehicles (5.3%); Sekhukhune 5

vehicles (2.7%); while Vhembe had no vehicles in their pool at all. It should, however, be noted that all transport officials in Vhembe use only their own subsidized vehicles. They also have access to the Louis Trichardt pool vehicles.

#### 4.4 Strategic Planning

This section in the questionnaire required the respondents to provide information on their planning. The questions focused on the strategic plan, environmental factors and on the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).

**Table 4.4 Strategic Planning**

| Strategic Plan |      | Environmental Factors |       | SWOT Analysis |       |
|----------------|------|-----------------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Yes            | 100% | Yes                   | 14.3% | Yes           | 42.8% |
| No             | 0%   | No                    | 71.4% | No            | 28.6% |
| Unknown        | 0%   | Unknown               | 14.3% | Unknown       | 28.6% |

**Figure 4.3 Strategic planning**

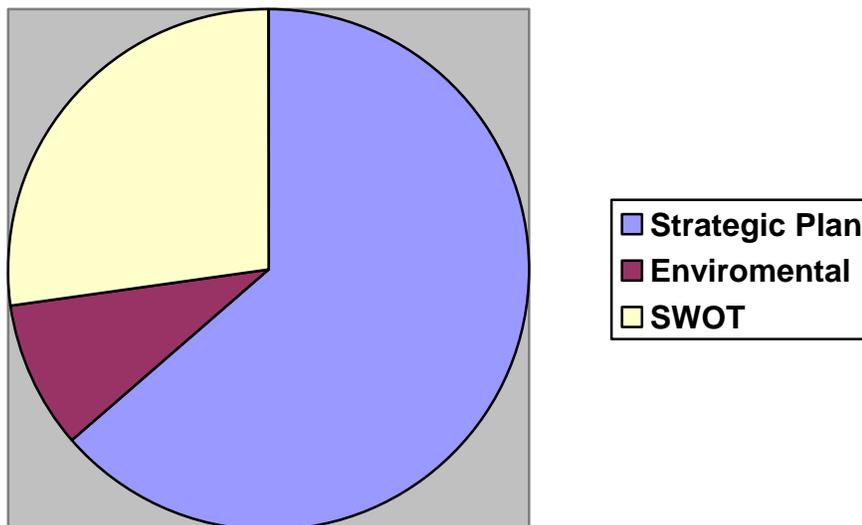


Table 4.4 reflects their responses to these questions and indicates that all of them had a strategic plan in place, but only 14.3% indicated that they had

considered environmental factors when they did their planning. The vast majority (71.4%) indicated that they had not considered environmental factors when they were doing their planning. Strangely enough, 14,3% did not know whether they had considered environmental factors or not. The researcher ascribed this to the fact that they did not understand the question or they were not familiar with the concept environmental factors.

On the question whether they considered their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats when preparing the strategic plan, 42.8% stated that they did, 28.6% said no and a further 28.6% did not know. Figure 4.3 clearly illustrates that the preparation of a strategic plan was regarded as very important by all the respondents, but that only 42.8% conducted a SWOT analysis while a small percentage considered environmental factors when they did their planning.

#### **4.5 Operational planning**

This section required the respondents to provide information about how the districts offices were planning operationally. The questions focused on the human resource structures, policies, schedules, maintenance plans, and vehicle checks.

**Table 4.5 Number of transport officers**

| <b>Name of District office</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Polokwane                      | 10            | 31.2%             |
| Tzaneen                        | 4             | 12.5%             |
| Vembhe                         | 7             | 21.8%             |
| Louis Trichardt                | 4             | 12.5%             |
| Sekhukhune                     | 3             | 9%                |
| Waterberg                      | 2             | 6.25%             |
| Mopani                         | 2             | 6.25%             |

**Figure 4.4 Number of transport officers**

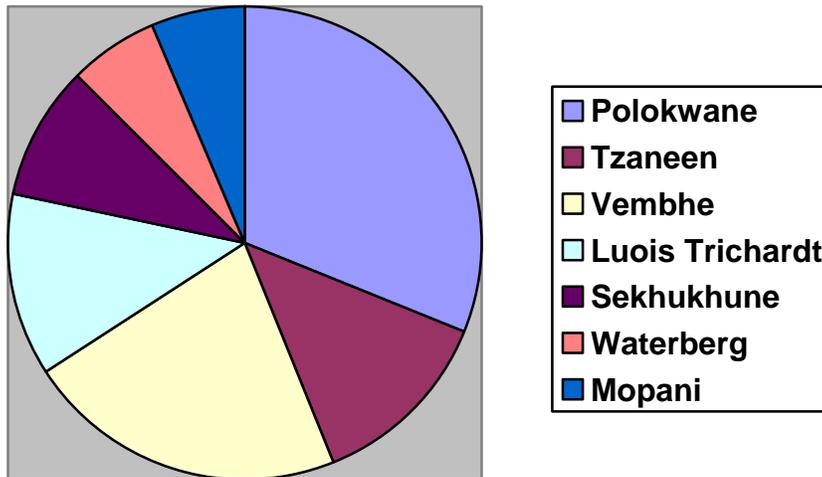


Table 4.5 and figure 4.4 reflect the number of transport officers in each district office in the province. The figures indicate that Polokwane and Vhembe have more staff than Tzaneen, Louis Trichardt, Sekhukhune, Waterberg and Mopani. What is interesting to note is that Vhembe that did not have a single vehicle, had seven transport officers just three less than Polokwane. Strangely enough, Louis Trichardt that had the largest number of vehicles only had four transport officers. However as previously mentioned, Vhembe was using subsidized vehicles and had access to Louis Trichardt pool vehicles as well.

#### 4.5.1 Transport policy

This section required the respondents to provide information on their transport policies.

**Table 4.6 Availability of transport policy**

| Availability of transport policy | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Yes                              | 100%       |
| No                               | 0%         |

Table 4.6 reflects that all the district offices in the province had a transport policy which was guiding their operations.

#### 4.5.2 Vehicle replacement policy

This section required information about the availability of a vehicle replacement policy.

**Table 4.7 Availability of vehicle replacement policy**

| Vehicle replacement policy | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Yes                        | 71.4%      |
| No                         | 28.6%      |

**Figure 4.5 Availability of replacement**

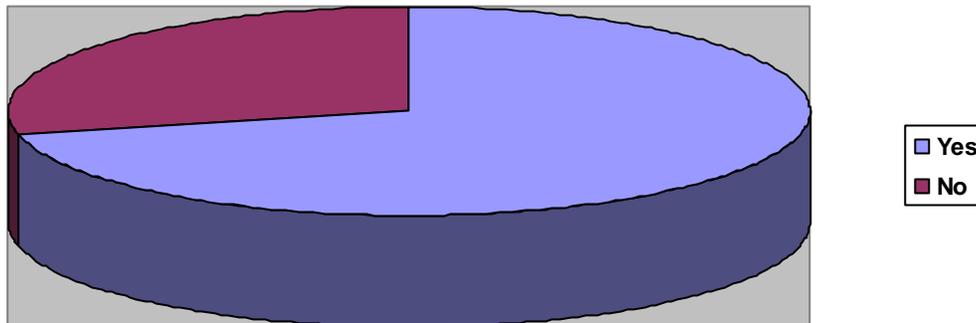


Table 4.7 and figure 4.5 indicate that 71.4% of the officers had a vehicle replacement policy in place while 28.6% did not have such a policy and that they simply replaced vehicles when they became redundant.

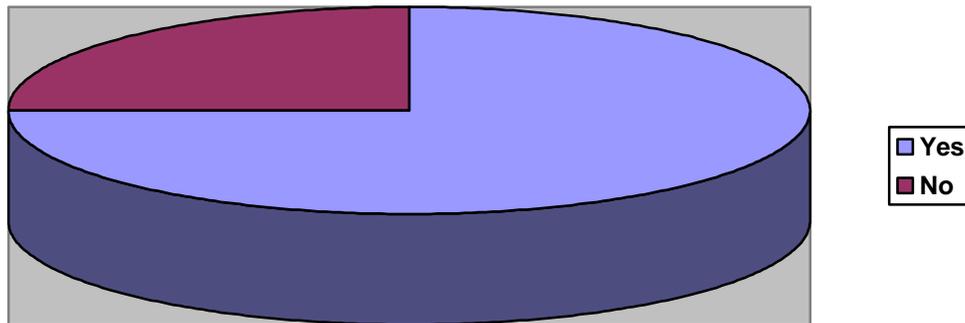
#### 4.5.3 Scheduling of trips

In this section the respondents were required to give information on the scheduling and prioritizing in the respective departments.

**Table 4.8 Availability of trips schedule**

| Availability of Trips Schedule | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Yes                            | 85.6%      |
| No                             | 14.4 %     |

**Figure 4.6 Availability of trips schedules**



When requested to respond to the question whether they were scheduling their trips, 85.6% of the respondents confirmed that they were scheduling trips on a regular basis to avoid bottle necks and associated problems. However, 14.4% kept no records in this respect, which made it difficult to trace the movements and availability of vehicles. Table 4.8 and figure 4.6 reflect this information.

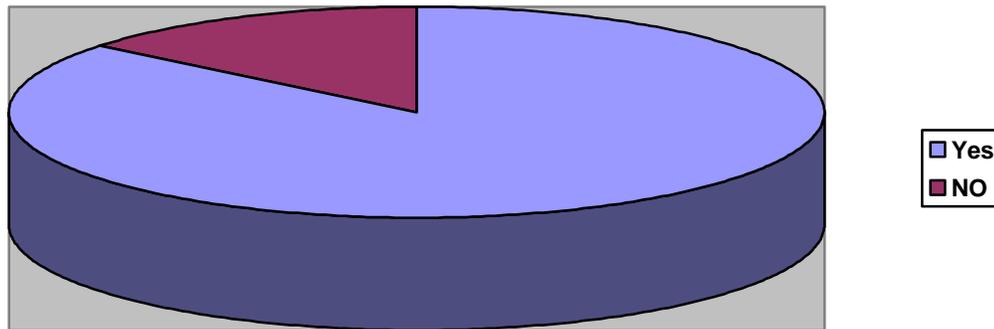
#### **4.5.4 Vehicle selection for allocation**

In this section the respondents were required to provide information on how the allocation of vehicles was performed in the respective departments.

**Table 4.9 Selection of vehicles**

| Selection | Percentage |
|-----------|------------|
| Yes       | 85.7%      |
| No        | 14.28%     |

**Figure 4.7 Selection of vehicles**



Requiring on the selection policy when allocating vehicles, 85,7% of the respondents indicated that they had a protocol system in place, and that vehicles were selected and allocated according to the position of the applicant. Only a relatively small percentage (14.3%) stated that they did not distinguish amongst applicants for a vehicle request.

#### **4.5.5 Maintenance plans**

This section required the respondents to provide information on whether the regional offices had maintenance plans.

**Table 4.10 Maintenance plans**

| <b>Maintenance Plans</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                      | 85.7%             |
| No                       | 14.3%             |

**Figure 4.8 Maintenance plans**

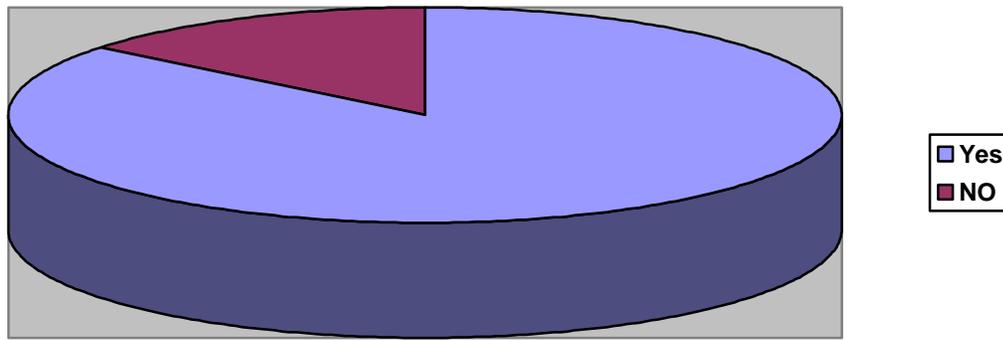


Table 4.10 and figure 4.8 reflect the responses to the question whether they had a maintenance plan in place. As with the selection of vehicles, 85.7% indicated that they had maintenance plans in place, and that they were adhering to regular service intervals.

#### **4.5.6 Vehicle checks**

The respondents were required to provide information on whether vehicle checks were done.

**Table 4.11 Vehicle checks**

| <b>Vehicle checks</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                   | 100%              |
| No                    | 0%                |

All the respondents indicated that all their vehicles were checked before and after allocation, that each vehicle has its own log book and that their vehicles were regularly inspected for mechanical problems. Table 4.11 reflects this information.

#### **4.6 Control and Monitoring**

This section required the respondents to provide information on whether the regional offices were monitoring and controlling their vehicles in terms of files, keys, petrol cards, licenses and log books.

**Table 4.12 Overall Control and monitoring**

| <b>Overall Control and monitoring</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                                   | 57.1%             |
| No                                    | 42.8%             |

**Figure 4.9 Overall Controls and monitoring**

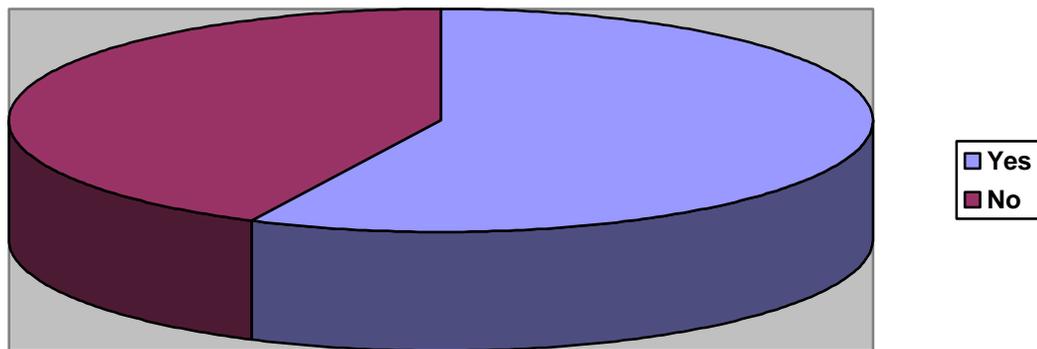


Table 4.12 and figure 4.9 reflect that 57.1% of the respondents reported to have control and monitoring measures in place while 42.8% reflected not to have such systems in place. The questions in this category were phrased to determine whether separate files were kept for each vehicle in order to control the distribution of keys, whether and how fuel cards were controlled, whether driver's licenses were registered and regularly checked, whether log books were completed for each trip; and whether vehicle usage was regularly audited.

**Table 4.12.1 Availability of vehicle files**

| <b>Availability of vehicle files</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                                  | 100%              |
| No                                   | 0%                |

All the respondents indicated that all their vehicles were checked before and after allocation, that each vehicle has its own log book and that their vehicles were regularly inspected for mechanical problems. Table 4.12.1 reflects this information.

**Table 4.12.2 Are keys controlled**

| Are keys controlled | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|
| Yes                 | 57.2%      |
| No                  | 42.8%      |

**Figure 4.9.1 Are keys controlled**

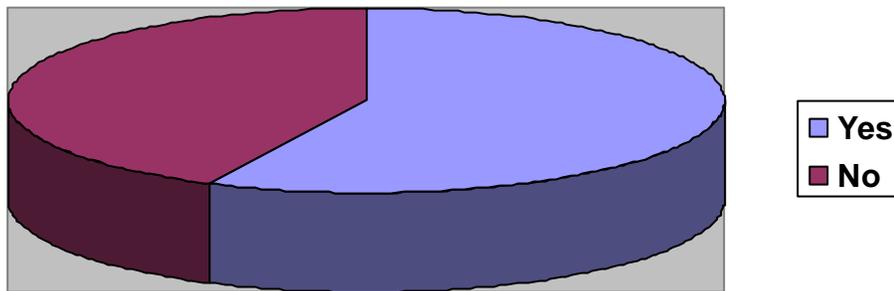


Table 4.14.2 and figure 4.9.1 reflect that 57.2% of the respondents reported to have key control measures while 42.8% reflected not to have such systems in place. The questions in this category were phrased to determine whether keys were kept for each vehicle in order to control the distribution.

**Table 4.12.3 Are fuel cards controlled**

| Are fuel cards controlled | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Yes                       | 57.2%      |
| No                        | 42.8%      |

**Figure 4.9.2 Are fuel cards controlled**

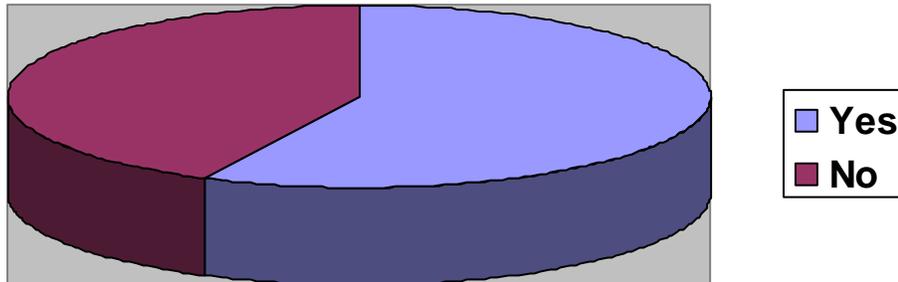


Table 4.12.3 and figure 4.9.2 reflect that 57.2% of the respondents reported to have fuel cards control measures while 42.8% reflected not to have such systems in place. The questions in this category were phrased to determine whether fuel cards were kept for each vehicle in order to control the distribution.

**Table 4.12.4 Availability of driving licenses registers**

| Availability of driving licenses registers | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Yes  | 57.2%      |
| No   | 42.8%      |

**Figure 4.9.3 Availability of driving licenses registers.**

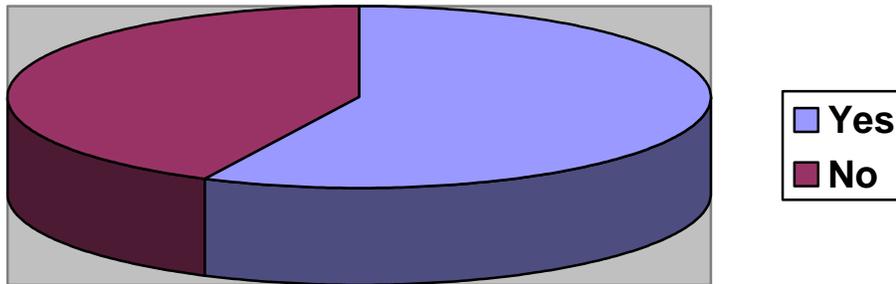


Table 4.12.4 and figure 4.9.3 reflect that 57.2% of the respondents reported to have driving license registers and are regularly checked while 42.8% reflected not to have such systems in place. The questions in this category were phrased to determine whether driver's licenses are registered and checked regularly.

**Table 4.12.5 Availability of log books**

| Availability of log books | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Yes                       | 42.8%      |
| No                        | 57.8%      |

**Figure 4.9.4 Availability of log books**

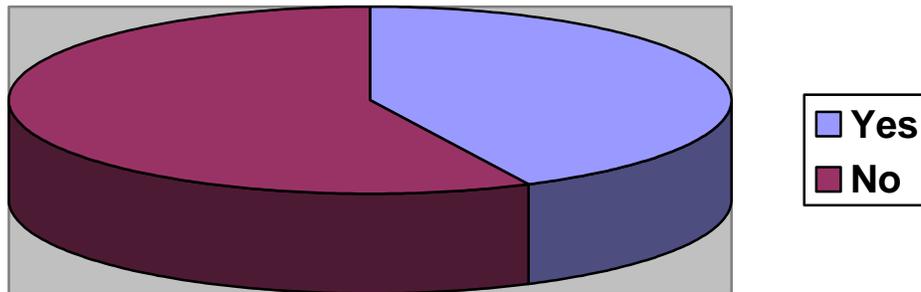


Table 4.12.5 and figure 4.9.4 reflect that 42.8% of the respondents reported to have log books kept for each vehicle while 57.2% reflected not to have such systems in place. The question in this category was phrased to determine whether log books were kept for each vehicle.

**Table 4.12.6 vehicles usage audit**

| <b>Vehicle usage audits</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                         | 57.2%             |
| No                          | 42.8%             |

**Figure 4.9.5 Vehicle usage audits**

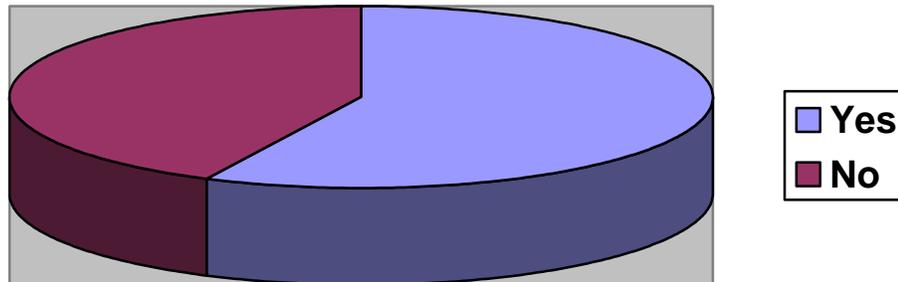


Table 4.12.6 and figure 4.9.5 reflect that 57.2% of the respondents reported to have audited vehicle usage regularly while 42.8% reflected not to have such systems in place. The questions in this category were phrased to determine whether vehicle usages were audited regularly.

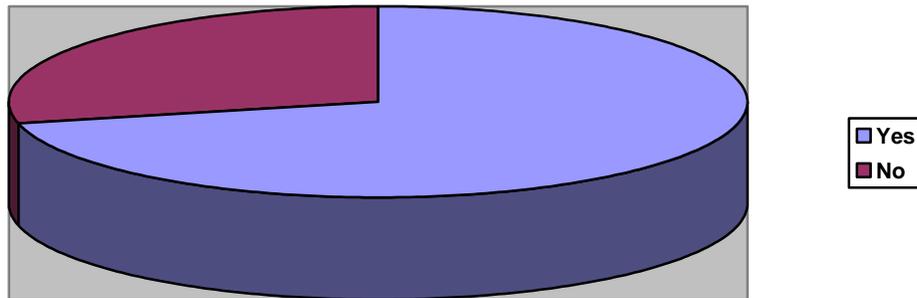
#### **4.7 Information management**

This section required the respondents to provide information on whether the regional offices had management information that they were using for future planning.

**Table 4.13 Overall information management**

| <b>Over all information management</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| Yes                                    | 71.4%             |
| No                                     | 28.6%             |

**Figure 4.10 Overall information management**

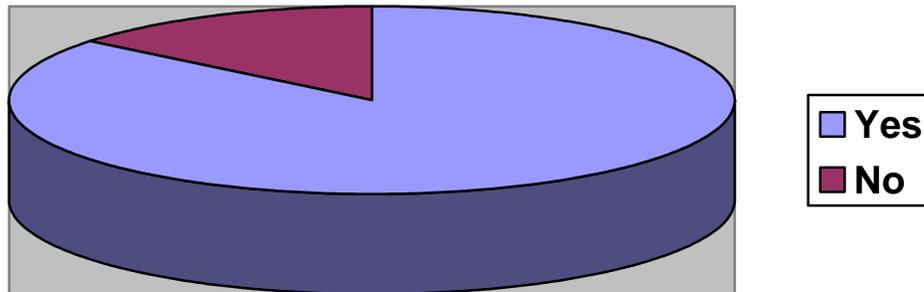


A large percentage of the respondents (71.4%) confirmed that they were keeping records of kilometers traveled per month, fuel consumption, utilization, and satisfaction of those who were patronizing their services. The same percentage also indicated that they have skills development programmes available for their employees. However, 28.6% indicated that they did not have these things in place. Table 4.13 and figure 4.10 reflect these results.

**Table 4.13 .1 Log book information management**

| <b>Log book information management</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| Yes                                    | 85.74%            |
| No                                     | 28.6%             |

**Figure 4.10.1 Log book information management**



A large percentage of the respondents (85.7%) confirmed that they were keeping records of kilometers traveled per month. The same percentage also indicated that they have skills development programmes available for their employees. However, 28.6% indicated that they did not have these things in place. Table 4.13.1 and figure 4.10.1 reflect these results.

**Table 4.13 .2 Fuel card information management**

| <b>Fuel card information management</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|
| Yes                                     | 57.2%             |
| No                                      | 42.8%             |

**Figure 4.10.2 Fuel card information management**

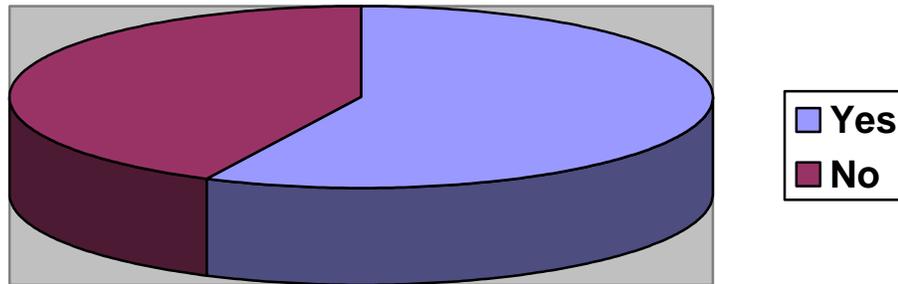


Table 4.13.2 and figure 4.10.2 reflect that 57.2% confirmed that they have fuel consumption records for decision making. However, 42.8% indicated that they did not have these records in place.

**Table 4.13 .3 kilometers traveled information management**

| Kilometers traveled | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|
| Yes                 | 100%       |
| No                  | 0%         |

All the respondents indicated that kilometers traveled were recorded for management information for decision making. Table 4.13.3 reflects this information.

**Table 4.13 .4 Fuel utilization**

| Fuel utilization | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|
| Yes              | 42.8%      |
| No               | 57.2%      |

**Figure 4.10.3 Fuel utilization records.**

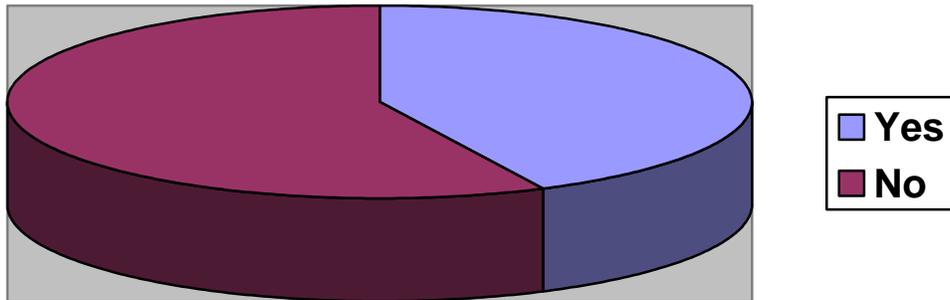


Table 4.13.2 and figure 4.10.2 reflect that 42.8% respondents confirmed that they have fuel consumption records for decision making. However, 57.2% indicated that they did not have these records in place.

**Table 4.13 .5 Running costs**

| Running costs | Percentage |
|---------------|------------|
| Yes           | 57.2%      |
| No            | 42.8%      |

**Figure 4.10.4 Running costs**

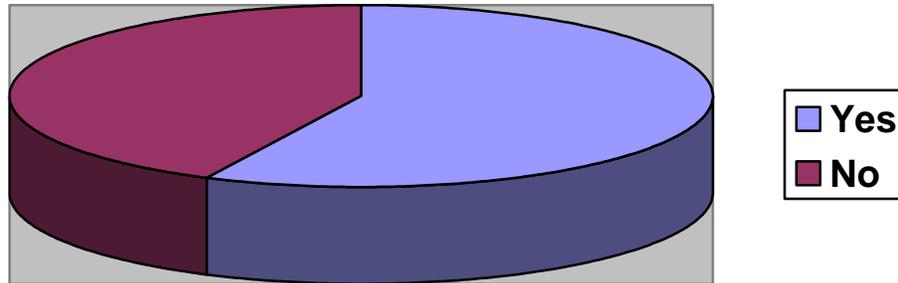
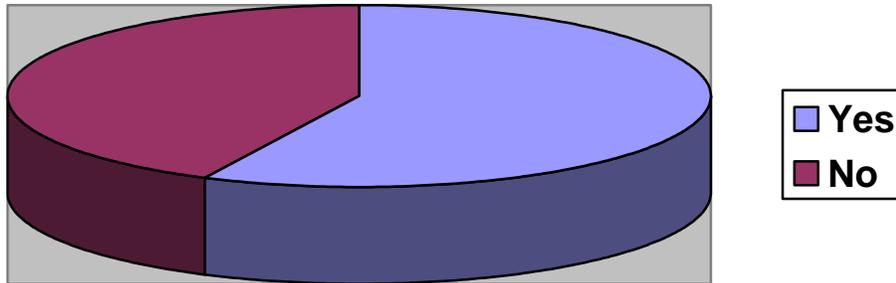


Table 4.13.5 and figure 4.10.4 reflect that 57.2% respondents confirmed that they have running costs records for decision making. However, 42.8% indicated that they did not have these records in place.

**Table 4.13 .6 Vehicle utilization rate**

| Vehicle utilization rate | Percentage |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Yes                      | 57.2%      |
| No                       | 42.8%      |

**Figure 4.10.5 Vehicle utilization rate**

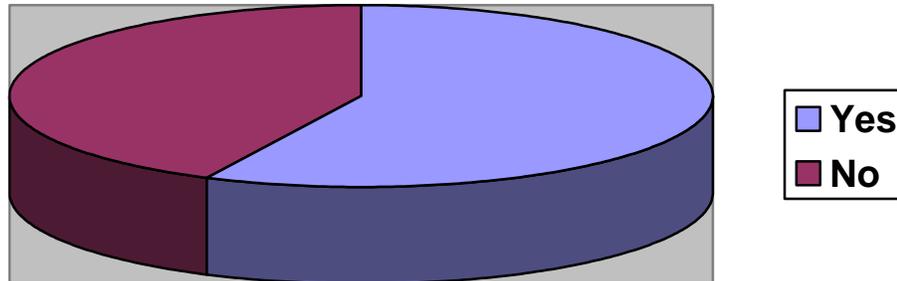


The respondents of 57.2% confirmed that they have vehicle utilization records for decision making. However, 42.8% indicated that they did not have these records in place. Table 4.13.6 and figure 4.10.5 reflect these results.

**Table 4.13 .7 Client satisfaction rate**

| <b>Client satisfaction rate</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Yes                             | 57.2%             |
| No                              | 42.8%             |

**Figure 4.10.6 Client satisfaction rate**



About 57.2% of the respondents confirmed that they have client satisfaction records for decision making. However, 48.2% indicated that they did not have these records in place. Table 4.13.6 and figure 4.10.5 reflect these results.

#### **4.8 Summary**

An analysis of the empirical data confirmed that the vast majority of district offices of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has measures in place to monitor and manage their pool car situation effectively. However, the fact that 28% indicated that they did not have vision and mission statements and that they had not set objectives and goals for their departments, should cause concern. What is even more alarming is the fact that only 14% indicated that they consider environmental factors when they were planning and that only 43% were analyzing their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the planning process.

# Chapter 5

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary

The main purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze the situation of pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. The intended purpose was achieved through the collection of data and analyzing those, using tables and charts. Questionnaires were distributed to transport officers in the district offices of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in Limpopo in order to collect empirical data.

All the sections in Chapter four depict the situation of pool car management in the Department. The discussion and results were not repeated in this chapter, but were supplemented with additional comments based on theoretical information derived, from chapter two. This information was also considered to draw conclusions and to offer recommendations.

### 5.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

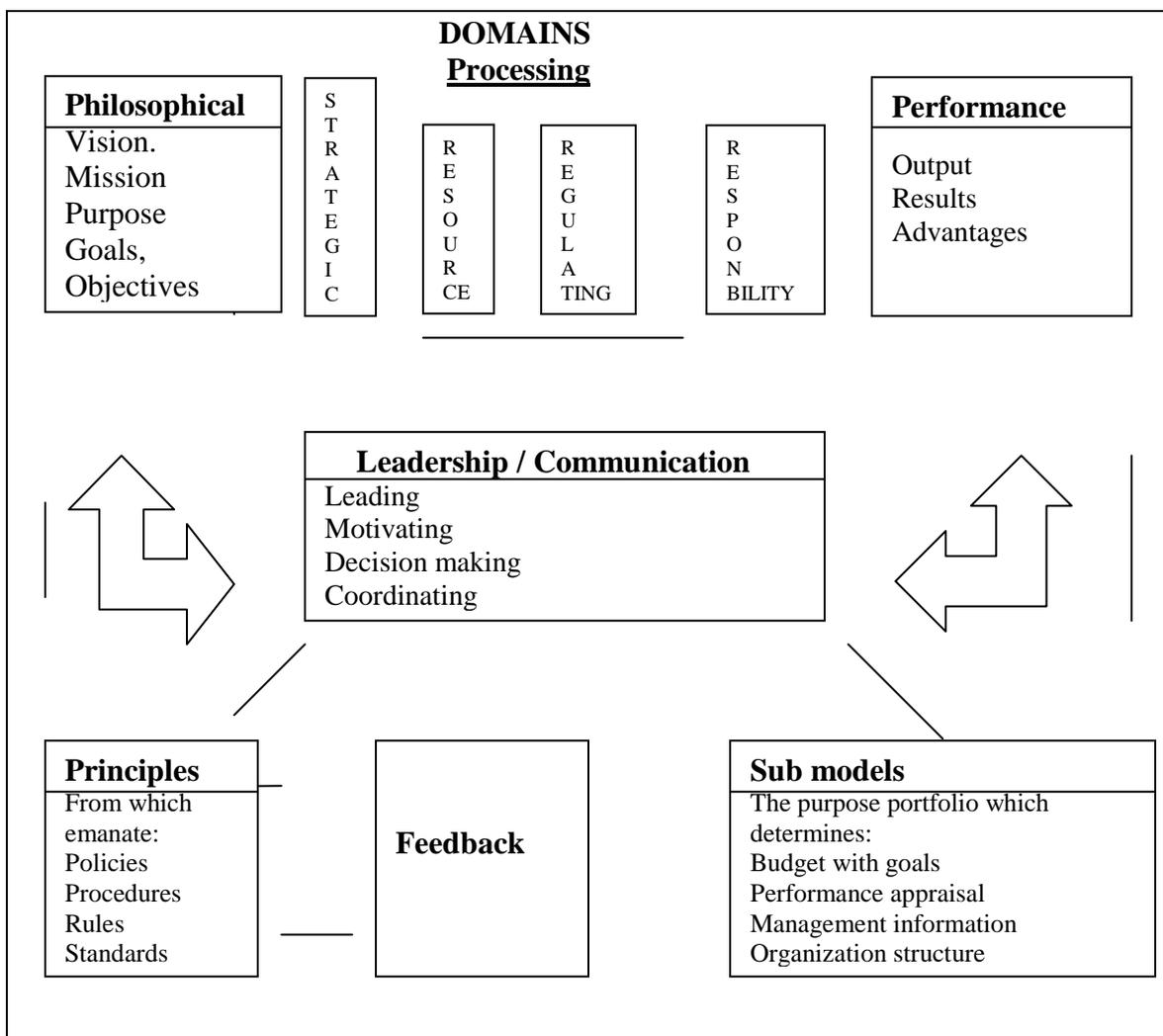
To enhance pool car management in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in Limpopo, it is recommended that the Department adopts the systems framework for purpose directed leadership and management (Backenberg 2002). This framework is illustrated in figure 5.2.1. The systems framework is structured around four domains.

The systems framework for purpose directed leadership and management provides a basis for analysis. It also puts most of the management environment, and depicts a process for continuous improvement.

The philosophical domain defines a fleet management purpose structure, which contains the main elements of vision and mission, the goals and the primary objectives of the organization. The purpose structure consists of both output and

input goals. Output goals focus on providing services and goods so as to pursue the purpose, while the inputs goals ensure that the necessary means and inward support are available to pursue the output goals.

The first step of the systems approach is to identify a containing whole of the system. A framework to this effect is illustrated in figure 5.2.1. Vehicle fleet management within the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry could therefore be discussed with the assistance of this framework which could also be regarded as a model for effective vehicle fleet management.



**Figure 5.2.1 The systems framework for purpose-directed leadership and management (Backenberg 2002: 153).**

The processing domains embrace strategic, resource, regulating and responsibility domains. The strategic domain includes fleet strategic objectives and plans. Resource domain includes fleet operational planning focusing at service planning, purchase/replacement decisions, maintenance/ repairs decisions and schedule decision. Resource domain focuses on financial planning as it provides road maps for guiding, coordinating and controlling the organization to achieve its objectives.

Regulating domain includes the controlling and monitoring which have a control process. Performance domain includes out-put from the philosophical and processing domains. Both philosophical domain and performance domain feed into leadership domain which consists of leading, motivating, decision making and coordinating as part of management. The sub models and principles are to support the domains. The sub models includes fleet budget with goals, performance appraisals, management information and organization structure. The principles supporting domains are fleet management policies, procedures, rules and standards. The system framework demonstrates how the integrated fleet management could be applied in practice. According to Backenberg, 2002 overseas entities do practice system thinking in some instances. It could, therefore, be concluded that government could also apply this framework. Therefore, it is recommended that the department of Water Affairs and Forestry should consider using the framework as a guiding tool to improve their fleet management.

The material under this heading was sub-categorized into:

- Vision, mission, objectives and goals.
- Strategic planning.
- Vehicle replacement policy and maintenance plans
- Vehicle selection and scheduling trips.
- Control and monitoring.

### **5.2.1 Vision, mission, objectives and goals**

Twenty eight percent of the population of the study reported not to have vision and mission statements. However, according to chapter two, pool car management should have vision, and mission statements and should set goals and objectives for their departments in order to plan strategically. The vision and mission statements of the departments serve as a guide to plan and monitor performance.

#### **5.2.1.1 Recommendation**

**Polokwane and Mopani transport departments indicated not to have vision and mission statements. These offices should have vision and mission statements and should set realistic goals and objectives to gauge their performance. Literature emphasize the importance of a clear vision, because having clear vision, helps to portray the future, promote change, enhance a wide range of performance, motivate individuals and has a positive consequence. A mission statement ensures unanimity of purpose within the organization and serves as the basis for resource allocation.**

### **5.2.2 Strategic Planning**

Only 14.3% of the population of the study reported considering environmental factors when planning. According to chapter two, an environmental analysis covers factors such as remote environment, social environment which includes responses to public feedback, political environment which relates to checking the markings of cars and number plates of government vehicles for better identity, technological environment which requires looking for ways to increase the effectiveness and efficiency, and the ecological environment which relates to preserving the environment.

An environmental analysis and looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) are very crucial for strategic planning. The State of Utah (1999:367) stated that departments should identify opportunities available to them in order to enable them to be responsive and also to enable

them to conduct a critical assessment of their situation. Threats and weaknesses identified should be changed to future opportunities and strengths.

#### **5.2.2.1 Recommendation**

**The following offices; Loius Trichard, Mopani, Tzaneen and Sekhukhune indicated that they do not have strategic plans in their transport units. In order to be competitive, all the regional offices should have a strategic plan which is structured around their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and which considers environmental factors as well.**

#### **5.2.3 Vehicle replacement policy and maintenance plans**

Only 28.6% of the respondents reported not to have a vehicle replacement policy in place. According to chapter two, fleet management's responsibilities include the review and approval of vehicle purchasing decisions, vehicle replacement decisions, maintenance decisions, repair decisions, assignment to staff decisions, and disposal decisions.

#### **5.2.3.1 Recommendation**

**Tzaneen and Waterberg regional offices indicated that they do not have replacement policy and maintenance plans guiding them. Fleet managers of the respective offices should ensure that they have a well structured replacement policy/protocol in place and that their maintenance plans are well communicated, executed and managed in order to be effective.**

#### **5.2.4 Vehicle selection and scheduling of trips**

Only 14.8% of the population reported not having vehicle selection criteria and that they did not schedule their trips. According to literature operational strategies in fleet management embrace choosing the right vehicle, checking the efficiency for the task and maintaining the fleet by optimizing the performance of regular maintenance. Having fewer cars in the pool can be made more effective by

planning ahead, combining trips, preparing an action plan to monitor and manage the reduction of costs.

The goal should be to determine the right number of vehicles to keep in the pool. It will contain costs, optimize vehicle usage, and offer users more choice and keep customers satisfied. Guidelines for the number of pool cars to be maintained are to measure organization metrics which are the number of customers in relation to the number and type of jobs and the vehicle type.

#### **5.2.4.1 Recommendation**

**Polokwane and Tzaneen indicated that they do not consider the routes to be traveled when vehicle selection and scheduling of trips is done as they consider first come first serve. Establishing sound vehicle selection criteria and working towards creating the optimum number of cars in a pool, should receive priority consideration from all the regional fleet managers. Scheduling of combination trips as a part of a vehicle reduction policy should also receive preferential treatment.**

#### **5.2.5 Control and monitoring**

A relatively large percentage (42.8%) of the population reported not to have control and monitoring measures in place. According to literature, organizations use control procedures to ensure that they are progressing toward their goals and that their resources are being used productively. The term control has a specific meaning, namely the process whereby management ensures that the actual activities fit in with the predetermined goals and planned activities.

##### **5.2.5.1 Recommendation**

**Sekhukhune office indicated that it does not have control measures for their keys, fuel cards and no registers for drivers' licenses and no vehicle usage audit records. Tzaneen office indicated that they have only files of their vehicles and do not have control measures of keys, fuel cards and no register for drivers' licenses and no vehicle usage audits records.**

**Polokwane office indicated that they have only files of their vehicles and do not have control measures of keys, fuel cards and no register for drivers' licenses and no vehicle usage audits records. Vhembhe office indicated that they do not have control measures for fuel cards and no registers of driver licenses are available. Lastly Mopani office indicated that they do not have control measures of fuel cards, log book and no vehicle usage audit records. It is hardly imaginable that in a pool car situation management would not consider effective control and monitoring measures to ensure their goals. Therefore, it is recommended that in situations where such control and monitoring measures exist, fleet management puts a control and monitoring process in place to ensure that the actual results fit in with the predetermined goals and requirements.**

#### **5.2.6 The research question**

Having tested criteria to address the research question, namely: "Is fleet management in the department of Water Affairs and Forestry effective", the conclusion may be drawn that although a large percentage of the regional fleet officers abide by the criteria for effectiveness, there is still work to be done to progress towards complete satisfaction especially control and monitoring.

Polokwane and Mopani need more attention as compared to the other offices which needs attention.

Therefore, it is recommended that the following aspects should receive attention:

- Vision, mission, objective, and goals;
- Strategic planning;
- Vehicle replacement and maintenance plans;
- Vehicle selection and scheduling of trips;
- Control and monitoring. These elements should be enshrined in the department's policy for effective pool car management and these criteria should constantly be communicated to, and tested against, the performance of all stake holders.



Do you have a system of prioritizing vehicle requests?

If yes, please elaborate .....

**Vehicle selection for allocation** **Yes/No**

Do you check the purpose of the trip?

Do you check the routes to be traveled?

**Maintenance** **Yes/No**

Do you have maintenance plans?

What is the service interval?

Do you adhere to service intervals?

**Vehicle checks** **Yes/No**

Are your vehicles inspected before and after allocation?

Are vehicles log books available in all vehicles?

Are your vehicles regularly mechanically inspected?

**5. Control and monitoring** **Yes/No**

Do you have files for each vehicle in your pool?

Does the transport officer control the keys?

Are fuel cards controlled?

Are driving licenses registered and checked regularly?

Are log books completed for every trip?

Do you audit your vehicle usage regularly?

**6. Information Management**

**Sources of information**

How do you gather information to monitor vehicle usage? Log books/  
fuel cards and other (specify) .....

Is all information concerning the following available?

Kilometers traveled per month Y/N Fuel Utilization Y/N

Running costs Y/N Utilization Y/N Needs Y/N Satisfaction Y/N

## **INFORMATION FOR THE RESPONDENTS**

**TOPIC: A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF POOL CAR MANAGEMENT:  
THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY,  
LIMPOPO, FOCUS.**

### **PURPOSE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The purpose of the study is to evaluate how fleet management in the Departmental pool cars in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Limpopo Province is done. The intention of the researcher is to identify problem areas and recommend and to applaud where management is effective and efficient. Respondents are requested to answer all questions in order to get the true reflection of how the fleet is managed.

### **Please Note:**

The names of the respondents are not requested.

The information provided will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

The information provided in the research will be used for proper research purposes and nothing more.

The researcher would like to thank you in advance for your time, patience and believe that the results will be to the benefit of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry Limpopo Province.

Thank you and GOD bless!!

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