

2.3 INTERVIEWS

The Project Team conducted a series of interviews with two groups:

- 1) Individuals employed in the transportation industry who were either former FDOT employees or could provide beneficial insight into compensation and benefits for transportation and engineering occupations.
- 2) FDOT executive staff in key leadership positions across the agency.

These interviews allowed the project team to:

- Review “as is” environment
- Identify key issues and concerns
- Review compensation philosophies
- Review competitive markets



Transportation Industry Interviews

The Project Team conducted interviews with 15 private sector transportation executives out of a potential 28 from a list provided by FDOT. Phone interviews were held from September 15th to October 13th, 2014.

The purpose of these interviews was to gather data on interviewees’ perceptions of their current compensation and benefits with their private sector employer in comparison to FDOT’s compensation and benefits package. In addition to basic demographic questions regarding current job title, salaries, length of time with both organizations, among others, interviewees were asked to provide input on the following:

- Reasons for leaving FDOT
- Amount/Percentage of salary increase upon entering the private sector, if any
- Cost of Living increases received, and if any, how often
- Comparison of current compensation to FDOT’s compensation
- Overview of private sector benefits offered, including health coverages, leave, retirement, and other benefits
- Comparison of current benefits to FDOT’s benefits

At the close of each interview, each interviewee was invited to participate in a follow-up supplemental survey to gather additional data and specifics related to their private

sector compensation and benefits package. Of the 15 interviewees, 11 submitted a follow-up survey (response rate of 73%).

Summaries of the findings from these interviews and the follow-up survey are presented in **Chapters 3.0** and **4.0** of this report.

Florida Department of Transportation Interviews

The Project Team also conducted interviews with approximately 23 FDOT executive level staff out of a potential 30 candidates selected by FDOT. The purpose of these interviews was to identify key compensation issues impacting recruitment and retention within FDOT, and other related compensation issues and concerns.

Executive staff located in Tallahassee were interviewed in person at the central office, while District Secretaries and other staff were interviewed by phone. Interviews at the central office were conducted from September 29th to October 2nd, 2014, and phone interviews were conducted from October 6th to October 22nd, 2014. FDOT interviewees were asked to provide responses on the following:

- Past experience working in the private sector
- Reason for joining or returning to FDOT
- Expectations for this external salary and benefits study
- Biggest challenges in hiring staff
- Pros and cons of FDOT employment
- Identification of specific concerns related to FDOT's compensation and benefits

These interviews also allowed the Project Team to identify issues related to specific job classifications and to ask interviewees for their own observations and recommendations. Related issues included those of recruitment, retention, salary and salary ranges assigned, classification titles, and career path and advancement.

Summaries of the findings from these interviews are presented in **Chapters 3.0** and **4.0** of this report.