SCHEDULING STATE CARS

CPM PROJECT

BECKY STRAIN

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Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a computer program that will schedule state

cars that will insure each car gets at least seven hundred and fifty miles each month.

This program will be accessible to each employee, they will be able to go to their

individual computer or any computer in the office and schedule a car. When they

access the program they will follow friendly user instructions and schedule a car

when they will need it. The program will schedule the car that needs the most

mileage according to the information that is entered by the employee. The program

is a simple but yet a difficult program. As far as employees entering the information

it is only a few easy steps to follow and the computer does the rest.

This program will eliminate problems that happen now such as shortage in

clerical staff and save time for workers. This program will be available at any time;

the employees will be able to schedule the car on their own. They can schedule each

month or each day which ever they prefer. This program will insure accuracy as far

as making sure the mileage is correctly enter, if they transpose numbers the program

will not take numbers that are lower than the current mileage. If they input in the

computer they are traveling approximately two hundred miles, and when they enter

mileage it shows one hundred miles, the computer will notify the worker to make sure the miles are correct.

The program will ask certain questions to determine when, where and how long the employee will need the car. Then the car will show up on the calendar area the day that the employee needs the car, with which car they will use, and how long they will use the car.

A survey was sent to each employee to inquire problems that they have with the current procedures. The main problem that I received from the survey was the time they would have to wait when they would go to the front desk receptionist to schedule a car, a lot of times the front desk clerk was waiting on a client and they would have to wait until she was through serving the clients. With this program they can schedule the car from their desk as they need the car or they can schedule the cars in advance, it will be left up to each employee as to how they work out their schedule.

State cars are scheduled on a daily basis. The front desk receptionist handles all scheduling of state cars at the present time. When an employee needs to schedule the car, they either call or go to the reception area. Most of the time they have to wait until the receptionist is not busy with a client, which slows down the process. Employees request the date time and how long they will need the state car. They let the front desk receptionist know where they will go and if they will transport clients After making the request the receptionist will manually determine

which car needs the most miles and will assign the state car to the employee. When another employee comes and request a state car, the receptionist goes through the same steps again. She may have to move employees around on the schedule form. (Attachment A) to insure cars are rotated. Each car must have at least seven hundred and fifty miles each month. If not the state office will remove the cars from the counties.

Due to budget cuts, which caused Cherokee County to loose two clerical positions, this has created extra duties for all employees in my unit. This has caused more errors in calculating the miles at the present time. Each morning the receptionist has to calculate each state car and tally the total miles for each car for the day. She will make a list beginning with the car that needs the most miles. We have several forms that are completed daily and monthly to insure cars are meeting the required mileage of seven hundred and fifty per month. Due to the extra job duties the receptionist has taken on due to the reduction in force (rif) we've had some problems. At the cut off date we would have three or four cars with one thousand or more and the other cars with less than five hundred. Some of the errors were in the calculating of the miles each morning and other problems were not having time each morning to ensure each car is calculated and that the miles are correct.

Each employee that drives a state care fills out a form (attachment B) and gives it to the receptionist so she can calculate the miles. The receptionist has to

complete a monthly form (attachment C) that we send to our office in Columbia. As we do the scheduling now there are always problems that occur daily. It can be very time consuming and with less staff this creates problems for the front desk receptionist. She has to make sure everything is correct and she has less time to work directly with state cars. Each week the front desk receptionist keeps a summary sheet (attachment D) to ensure we are rotating the state cars. A lot of times this is where the errors come in and why some cars have more miles than the other cars.

My project consisted of creating an application on the computer that each employee would have easy access to. When they need a state car they can use their own computer or any computer in the office to request a car. On the day they need the car the program will assign the car that needs the most miles. As the employees drive the cars they will still complete the form (attachment b) and return it to the receptionist. The receptionist will key the mileage into the system.

I started the program in Lotus Approach and it had a lot of good qualities, but it would not do exactly what I needed it to do. After several practice runs, and many problems, I switch to excel. Excel is a program in Microsoft and it has a lot of extras that Lotus Approach didn't have. It has a lot more options that I can use.

One problem that I've encountered is that most employees had never worked in Excel. Some employees do not even have the program software on their computer. But if the project works we can have it added to their computers through

our state office, this will not be a problem as for as implementing the program. The program will be simple to use, the employees will click one button and then follows the easy instructions. It will walk them through the program, the first thing they would enter their name, date they need car, destination, estimated miles and what PCA/index code that will be billed. It will be friendly user. Microsoft Excel is a program that you can use to set up formulas to calculate what was needed as for as my project. Each screen will forward all information to all areas of the program. With a click of one button I can print off each report I need. It is saving time for our staff and also very useful for all the employees to use. The employees will only have access to the screens that they will use they will click one button enter all their information and click the send button. They are finished.

If employees fail to enter the required information they will not be able to leave the screen. This is a safety feature to insure all information is entered that is required to complete the monthly reports. On the actual time and day that the worker will need the state car they will have to pick up the keys from the clerical staff at the front desk. This is the central location for the keys; so all staff can access them easy. The computer at the front desk will have a page that will show the state car that the worker will use. When the worker returns to the office they will return the keys to the car and the mileage form (see attachment B) to the receptionist area.

The clerical staff will key the ending mileage into the computer. This will be keyed daily to insure the cars mileage is up to date. If it is not keyed daily this will

cause incorrect information in the computer and the formulas will not work properly, as designed. Each car is required to have seven hundred and fifty miles at the end of the month. If the required mileage is not met each month, state office will research and find out why and there is a possibility that the cars will have to be turned in. It is stressed to the employees how important it is to drive a state car, verses driving their own personal car. You have higher insurance requirements if you drive your own car, especially when you are transporting clients. Driving a state car is required when the cars are available, if employees drive their personal car and a state car is available, then the employee will not get reimbursed for the mileage in their car. It is always better to drive a state car, if transporting or even if you are traveling for training or for any reason. Our staff development and training (SD & T) department offers eight and four hour training classes for all employees that are required to drive state cars (attachment E) If the employee receives tickets for speeding or reckless driving they are required to take the class again before they can drive a state car. It is recommended that all employees take the four-hour class after three years of driving a state car.

Several employees have in the past chosen to drive their own cars, due to the fact that they would have to wait for the receptionist to finish with the client before they were waited on. Sometimes all the state cars are scheduled out with other workers and some employees may have to take their personal cars. It is recommended that the employees stop taking their personal car, unless there is no

state car available. Some of the state cars are not getting the required mileage because workers choose to drive their own car. Our county had to turn in a state car in October 2003 due to the fact that we had three or more cars over an average of three months that did not meet the required mileage. Employees would just use their own personal car, because they were in a hurry and did not want to take time to schedule the state car.

With this computer program I hope it will eliminate the wait, and each employee will be able to go on their own computer and schedule a state car, when it is convenient for them. A lot of times the workers will know weeks and some times months in advance to the date they need the car. With this program they will be able to schedule the car when they schedule the training, this way everything is took care of at one time. I have talked with several employees that do a lot of traveling and they seem to like the idea of being able to schedule the state car when ever they want to or when time permits them to. There are a lot of employees that have to do monthly contacts with their clients, and they are excited about this program. They said, "they can schedule the state car at the same time they set up the home visit with their clients, that way every thing is taken care of at one time".

This program will require some adjusting to, and a lot of employees will not like the thoughts of doing something new on the computer. Each employee will be trained on using the program and they will have a chance to practice on the program before it is implemented. There have been several problems that I have encountered

during this process that has caused problems with implementing the program at this time. The program was started in Lotus Approach and it seemed to be a good choice until trying to set the formulas to rotate the car to insure required mileage is met.

After consulting with a friend that sets up a lot of programs for different companies, he thought it would be better using Microsoft Excel. So I met with him on several occasions and we began transferring the information from Approach to Excel. Excel seemed to be more advanced in different areas, and it seemed it was the best choice to set up the program.   At this time we have encountered several different problems, the formulas seem to work with this program, but when it needs to rotate to the car that needs the most mileage, it is not calculating properly. We are doing practice runs and also keeping up with the paper work as before to insure the program is working correctly. A lot of times it will schedule the car that we were showing that needed the miles, but then the next time it seems to just pick one. Also the program is suppose to allow us to transfer the information that is keyed in daily to the reports that state office require us to send them. There reports are due monthly and the program is only transferring the information that is actually keyed in the same day that we are trying to transfer.

Each car has to have routine maintenance, so the program is suppose to notify the clerical staff that schedules this. One example of this is when the car needs the oil changed, the program will send an email to the clerical staff and let her know that the certain car is due for the routine oil change. At that time she will be

able to go to the program and schedule the car for the maintenance and she will be able to override the computer's formula by entering a code word. There is a list of code words that are used for different things, if the car is in the shop, she will type a code word in and this car will come out of rotation until she overrides the code word. These job functions will be protected under password codes also, and only a certain number of clerical staff will have access to this function. The reasoning behind this is the workers could use this function to schedule certain cars. We have some cars that certain employees want to drive and some cars that no one really likes to drive. The good thing with this program is, the computer will schedule the car that needs the mileage and the worker will not be able to change it. This way each car should meet the required mileage each month. There will be several things and problems that we will face once the program in implemented. We have decide to do another practice run with the computer and give access to on a few employees to see if the program is going to work. After the practice run, I plan to survey the workers that participated in the program and get some input from them to see if changes need to be made. This way before it actually goes out to all staff, I will be able to make changes and improvements before the program is used. I plan to do a survey after the first three months of using the program to see if there are changes that need to be made. If the program seems to be working properly I plan to share it with other counties in the department if they would like to try it. It will be easy to set up their information so it will track their group of state cars. Also we

will offer training for the other counties and will assist them in setting the program up on their computers. Hopefully the program will assist all employees of our agency.

I will continue to work on the program in Microsoft Excel to insure that this project is giving a chance to succeed. This will make things accessible to employees, it will be a time management step in scheduling the state cars and also will be a tool once the employees get used to using the program to help schedule their work and the transportation all in one step. As budget cuts continue, we need programs like this to help soften the workload on the remainder employees that are left to carry out the mission of the agency. This, project hopefully will be completed and implemented at the beginning of the fiscal year 2004 –2005. At the present time I am working on some formulas to correct the problems that we've already experienced. I project that once these problems are fixed, the program will be ready to do the practice run. Each employee has been hand selected to participate in the program so I have a variety of workers. I have chosen employees that do a lot of travel, some that do less travel, and some that have computer knowledge and some employees that do not know as much on the computer and are not comfortable using something new on the computer. I hope that this will give me a true reading of the program, to make sure that it is simple yet very useful from scheduling to calculating to insuring that all cars receive the required mileage.

In conclusion, I feel that the program will be a success and I intend to do all I can to implement this program July 1, 2004. This is a simple yet complicated program and it has good potential and can help each employee in our county.

DAILY CAR LOG

DATE:_____

Time:	Blue Wagon	Green Wagon	Buick Century	Mini Van	Corsica	Tempo(FI)	Cheverolet-SG
8:00							
8:30							
9:00							
9:30							
10:00							
10:30							
11:00							
11:30							
12:00							
12:30							
1:00							
1:30							
2:00							
2:30							
3:00							
3:30							
4:00							
4:30							
5:00							

Attachment A

Attachment B

TRIP LOG

Ford Wagon

VEHICLE   DATE:

_____   _____   _____

DRIVER   COST CENTER   NO.OF PASS.

ODOMETER READING   _____   _____

                                        BEGINNING MILES   ENDING MILES
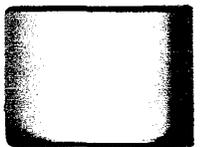
TRAVEL: _____   _____

                                                FROM   TO

ARE MORE COPIES OF THIS TRIP LOG NEEDED IN THIS CAR?   YES_____   NO_____

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
BUDGET AND CONTROL BOARD
DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE MANAGEMENT

Page 1 of _____ pages.

1022 Senate Street
Columbia, S.C. 29202

VEHICLE TAG NUMBER   YEAR   MONTH   AGENCY CODE   MONTH ENDING MILEAGE

IDLE TIME   DOWN TIME   CONDITION   [1]   [A] [1]   COMMUTING MILEAGE   STARTING MILEAGE

I certify that all entries are true and correct in every matter and conforms with the requirements of State laws, rules and regulations.

MILES USED

_____ _____
Signature of Driver   Signature of Approving Supervisor

Date	Driver's Name	Odometer Reading		Travel		Job Function Performed	No. of Pass.
		Beginning	Ending	From	To		

Instructions on Back   MONTHLY TRIP LOG   Attachment C   DMVM Form 3-78

MONTH/YEAR_____

State Car Mileage
Summary Sheet

	BEGINNING MILEAGE	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	TOTAL FOR MONTH
BLAZER 77							
White WAGON							
2000 FORD TAURUS							
MINI VAN							
PLYMOUTH							
BLAZER 70							
GREEN CAVALIER							
GOLD TAURUS							
GOLD CAVALIER							
1999 FORD TAURUS							

Attachment D.

South Carolina Department of Social Services

TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT T04-029
March 10, 2004

TO: Executive Staff
County Directors
Division Directors

FROM: Staff Development and Training Division

SUBJECT: Defensive Driving Course (DDC) 8-Hour Training
York County Complex - Rock Hill, SC

The purpose of this training is to enhance the general knowledge, alertness, foresight, judgment and skill of agency employees driving state-owned vehicles. An SD&T trainer who has been certified through the South Carolina Chapter of the National Safety Council will present this 8-hour training course.

Who is **Required** to Attend:	Per the State of South Carolina Fleet Safety Program Manual, the following people are **REQUIRED** to attend this course.

    A. New employees whose State position requires them to be routine drivers must attend within ninety days of date of employment.

    B. Employees who are permanently assigned a State-owned vehicle must attend within ninety days of the date of such vehicle assignment.

    C. Employees who an agency accident review board finds at fault in a preventable collision must complete the full 8-hour session within ninety days of such finding.

    D. Employees found to have accumulated 9-10 traffic violation points or two State vehicle collisions must complete the full 8-hour session within ninety days of the discovery of their driving history.

Who **Should** Attend:

    A. Any permanent DSS employee in a position, which requires driving a state-owned vehicle at any time.

    B. Any temporary DSS employee in a position, which requires driving a state-owned vehicle at any time.

    C. Employees who have:

- been involved in more than two accidents in the last three years;
- more than **six** current violation points; or
- not attended the 8-hour Defensive Driving Course during their DSS employment tenure

Attachment E