

**STATEWIDE COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
EVALUATION REPORT  
DATABASE SURVEY**

**Final Report  
Results of Survey and Conclusions**

**Prepared for:**

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The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the State of Florida Department of Transportation.

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this research project was to provide a systematic evaluation of the performance of Florida's Commuter Assistance Programs (CAP) from two perspectives:

- Impact on the commuting patterns and awareness of the general public, and
- Impact on the commuting patterns and awareness of each CAP database of commuters, which are comprised of commuters who have called or otherwise applied for commuting assistance and/or information.

In South Florida, 525 members of the South Florida Commuter Services database (350 who joined in the last year, 175 from more than a year ago) were interviewed by telephone, randomly selected from the database. In Tampa Bay, 428 members (257 members who joined in the last year and 171 from more than a year ago) were interviewed due to the smaller size of Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS) database.

In total, South Florida Commuter Services has an estimated 10,297 validated database members, and BACS has 2,493. The validation estimate is based in part on the number of invalid telephone numbers that were reached during the interview process.

Total alternative mode use for South Florida Commuter Services is at its highest point since the evaluations began in 1997. For both agencies, 48% of validated database members report using alternative modes. Each South Florida Commuter Services database member, on average, made 205 less trips in 2001 than they would have had they driven alone, and, on average, made 131 less trips due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence. This resulted in 4,309 less miles driven on average per database member, 2,996 of which were directly due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence. In total, this resulted in 1.3 million reduced trips and 30.8 million reduced miles that were due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence.

For BACS, the corresponding figures are 217 trips per database member (157 which BACS influenced) and 3,677 miles reduced per database member (2,701 due to BACS influence), for a total of 392,000 reduced trips and 5.7 million reduced miles due to BACS influence.

Bay Area Commuter Services has done a more effective job of communicating the name of the agency to their members (34% unaided awareness versus 16% for South Florida Commuter Services, 85% versus 63% aided awareness for South Florida Commuter Services), but the South

Florida Commuter Services database members are more aware of the existence of the 1-800 telephone number for rideshare assistance (virtually no unaided awareness for either, 77% aided for South Florida Commuter Services versus 43% for BACS).

In 2001, only 19% of South Florida Commuter Services database members received a “no match” letter, down significantly from 31% in the previous year. Most of this increase translated into a higher percentage (56%) of database members who received a list but took no action. The proportion that tried to use the list remained approximately steady at 12% of the database. For BACS, 36% of database members said they did not receive anything as noted above, and a further 16% received a no match letter, meaning that 50% of the applicants do not recall receiving any information that helped them match with a carpool partner. In spite of this, a much higher proportion actually tried to use the information: 18% of all database members and 36% of all of those who received usable information.

South Florida Commuter Services may want to examine how BACS provides their match information. BACS, on the other hand, may want to examine South Florida Commuter Services’ procedures of information distribution, since many more people in the South Florida Commuter Services’ database recall receiving information. It is also possible that South Florida Commuter Services recruits a wider base of commuters, including current transit riders, who are not really interested in matching but are mainly interested in the Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program.

To maximize the percentage of people using the list, both agencies should focus on the following items:

1. Re-examine the product. The fact that 82% of the people who received names in South Florida failed to take any action (and 64% of those in the BACS database) suggests that there could be something inhibiting them from taking action. For the fourth year in a row, the quality of the list has received the lowest rating of effectiveness by database members.
2. Conduct qualitative research (e.g. focus groups) with database members to identify factors that encourage or prohibit use of the match list.
3. Re-examine South Florida Commuter Services’ level of assistance in the formation of carpools from match lists.

Both South Florida Commuter Services and BACS should take a great deal of pride in the high scores they receive in information accuracy, promptness, and courtesy.

## **Introduction**

The Statewide Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) Evaluation Research Project was commissioned and funded by the Florida Department of Transportation's Research Ideas Program.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this research project was to provide a systematic evaluation of the performance of Florida's commuter assistance programs from two perspectives:

- Impact on the commuting patterns and awareness of the general public; and,
- Impact on the commuting patterns and awareness of each CAP database of commuters, which are comprised of commutes who have called or otherwise applied for commuting assistance and/or information.

## **Participation**

Participation in the evaluation by each CAP was voluntary. Only three agencies agreed to participate in the project. South Florida Commuter Services of Fort Lauderdale, Florida (serving Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach counties), Metropolitan Commuter Assistance Program of Jacksonville, Florida (serving Duval county) and Bay Area Commuter Services of Tampa, Florida (serving Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas counties) agreed to participate fully, providing database member contact information and specific survey questions related to their own market areas. Jacksonville's participation was somewhat salutary in that they did not really maintain a database of contacts and therefore had no commuters for us to survey. North Florida Commute Services (Tallahassee), West Florida Commuter Services (Pensacola), LYNX (Orlando), VOTRAN (Daytona), Suncoast Metropolitan & Rural Transportation Commuter Assistance Program (Sarasota), and SCAT (Melbourne) declined to participate.

## **Methodology**

The original plan was to interview 525 members from each database of the CAP that agreed to participate – South Florida Commuter Services of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS) of Tampa, Florida. In each case, 350 interviews were planned with members who had joined in the last year, and 175 interviews were to be conducted with members who had been in the database for over a year. The BACS database had only 1,600 people who had been in the database in the last year. Generally, at least 10 respondents in a database are required to complete one interview successfully, because of refusals, people screening calls, people chronically not being available, etc. Because of the relatively short time frame for interviewing, and the small size of the BACS database (1,640 people, or a 5-to-1 ratio of people in the database to desired completed interviews, for those who had been in the database for less than a year), fewer interviews were completed in the BACS database – only 257 for those who had been in the database for a year.

## **Database Member Commuting Patterns**

Part of the mission of Commuter Assistance Programs is to increase the number of commuters in the database. For this evaluation period, South Florida Commuter Services added 3,760 commuters in total to the database. However, about 12% of new database members contacted in this survey either said they had not signed up for Commuter Services or did not commute to either work or school. Therefore, the estimate of effective active members added in the evaluation period was revised to 3,316, and the total database size was reduced from 11,743 to 10,297.

For Bay Area Commuter Services, records submitted indicate 1,642 commuters were added to the database in the past year. However, about 32% of new database members contacted in this survey either said they had not signed up for ridematching or did not commute to either work or school. Therefore, the estimate of effective active members added in the evaluation period was revised to 1,113 and the total database size was reduced from 3,283 to 2,493.

In addition, the programs are attempting to maximize the use of commute alternatives by members of the database. Increasing both the size of the database and the rate of use of commuter alternatives by members of the database would be a formidable accomplishment. The comparison of alternative mode utilization rates is shown in Figure 1.

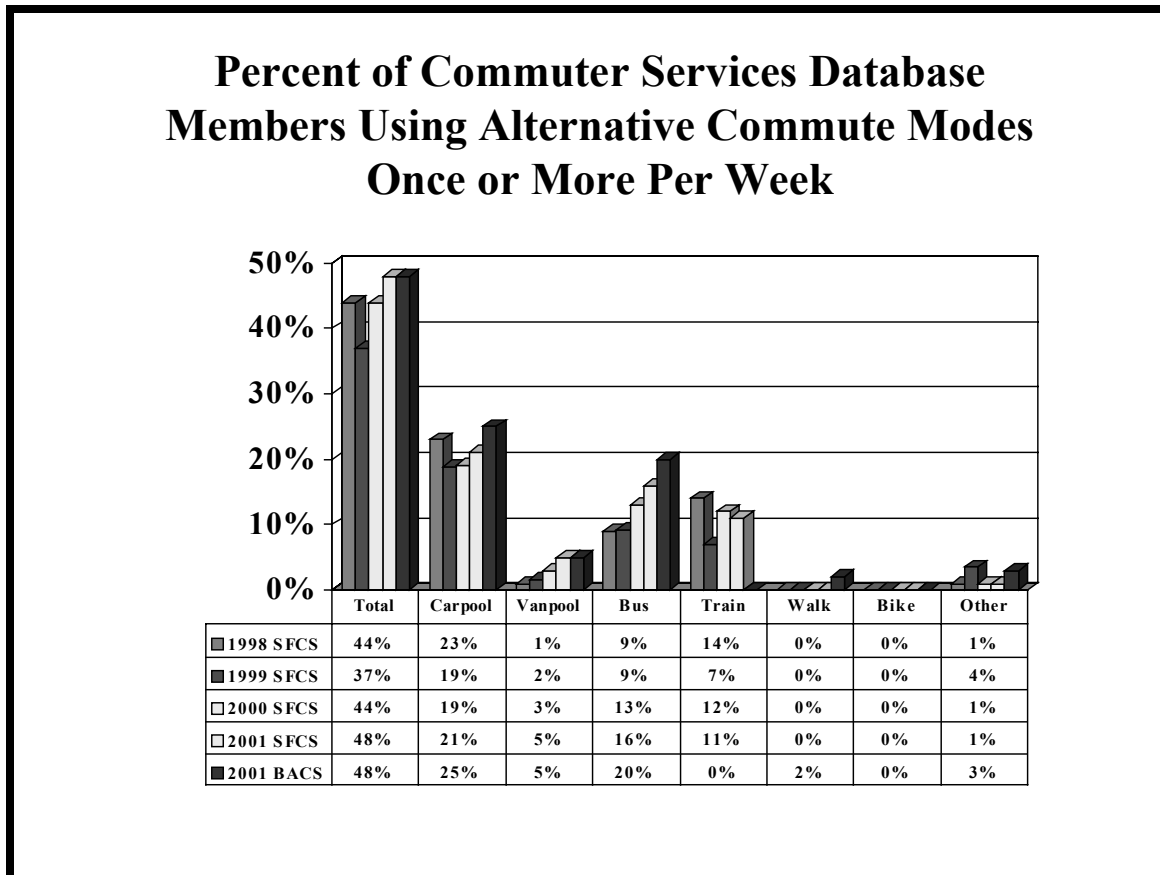


Figure 1: Percent of commuter services database members using alternative commute modes once or more per week.

Total alternative mode use for South Florida Commuter Services is at its highest point since the evaluations began. BACS has a similar level of alternative mode use. For both agencies, nearly half (48%) of validated database members report using alternative modes. For South Florida Commuter Services, transit is a major contributor (27%), whereas for BACS, use of transit is somewhat less common (20%), but use of carpooling is slightly more prevalent (25% for BACS versus 21% for South Florida Commuter Services).

The same results hold true for the percentage of trips conducted using alternative modes. The total percent of trips made by database members using alternative modes is at its highest point since evaluations began for South Florida Commuter Services, and BACS has approximately equal levels. Carpoolers are a higher share of BACS database members, whereas there are a higher proportion of transit users in South Florida Commuter Services’ database.

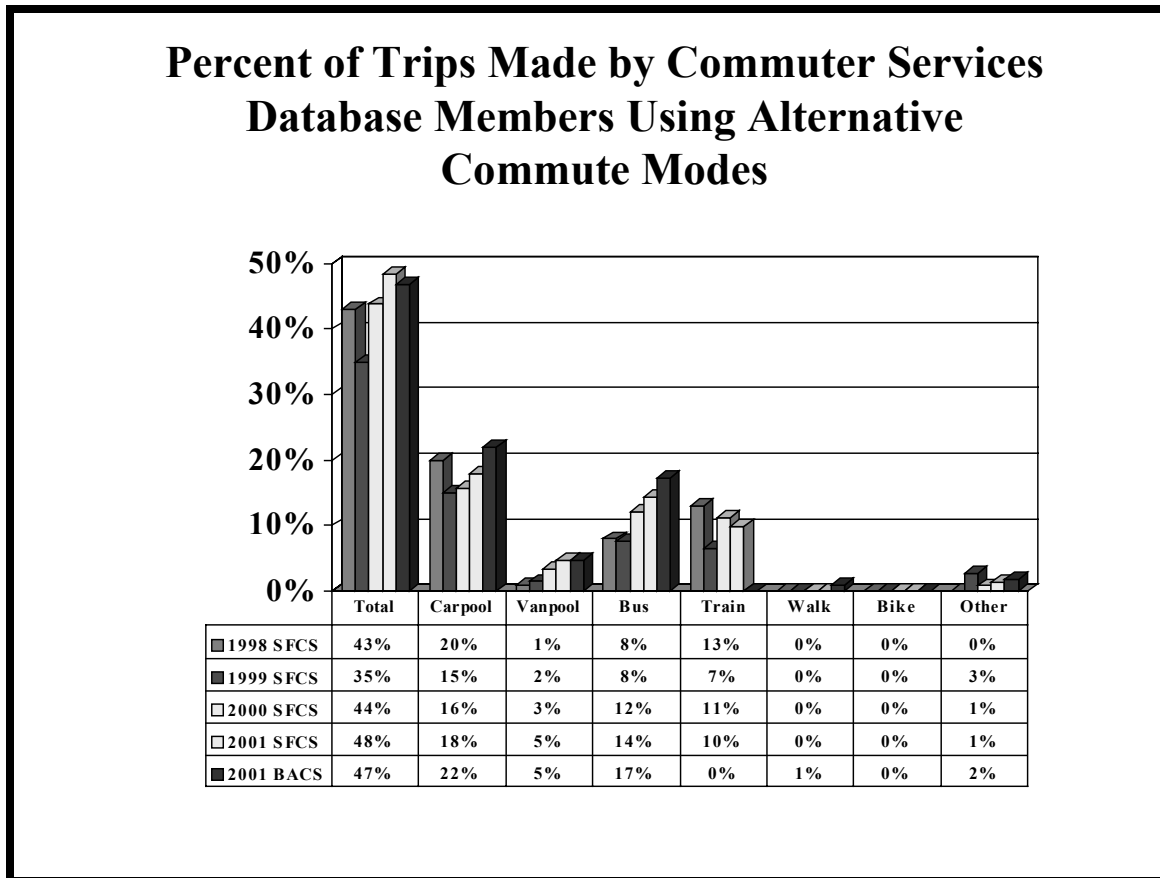


Figure 2: Percent of trips made by commuter services database members using alternative commute modes.

For 2001, the proportion of database members who have never used alternative commute modes remains at about the same level as 2000. Twenty-eight percent of South Florida Commuter Services database members have never used a commute alternative, and BACS has just about the same proportion (29%).

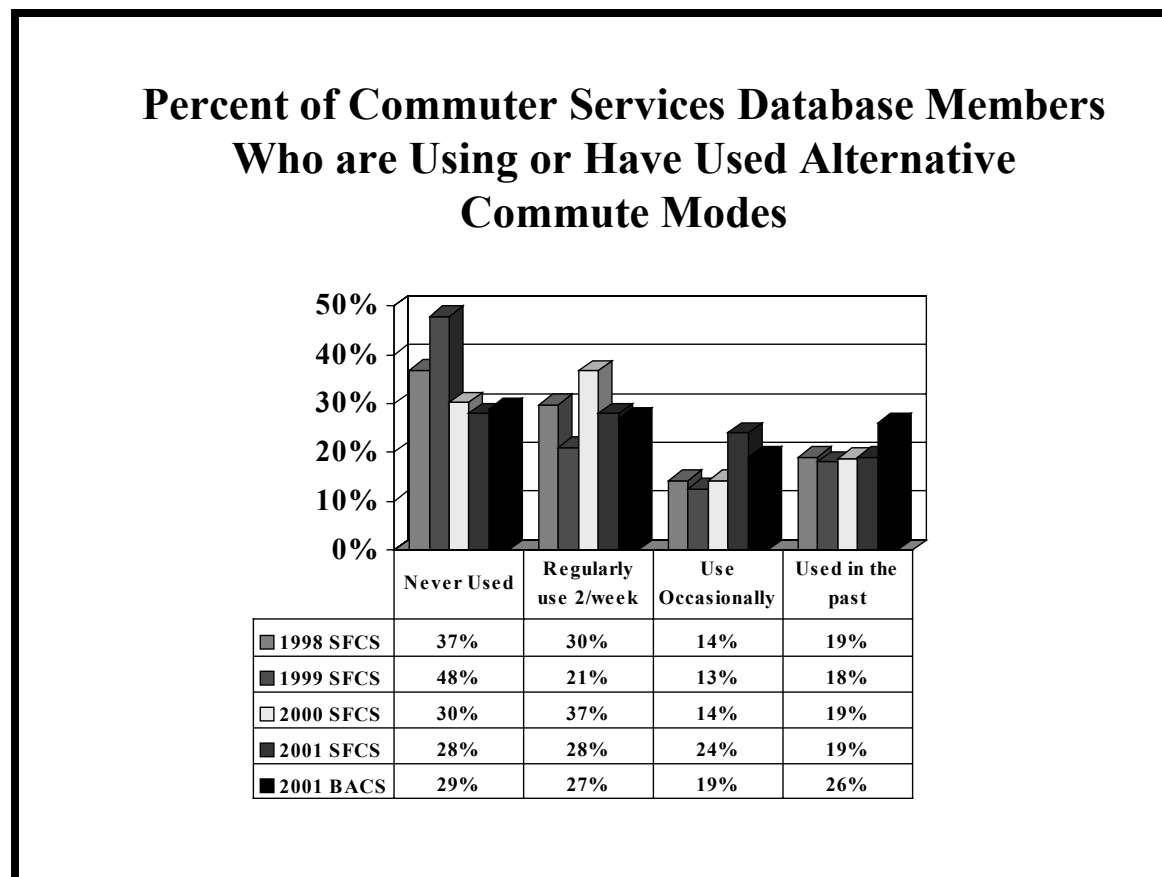
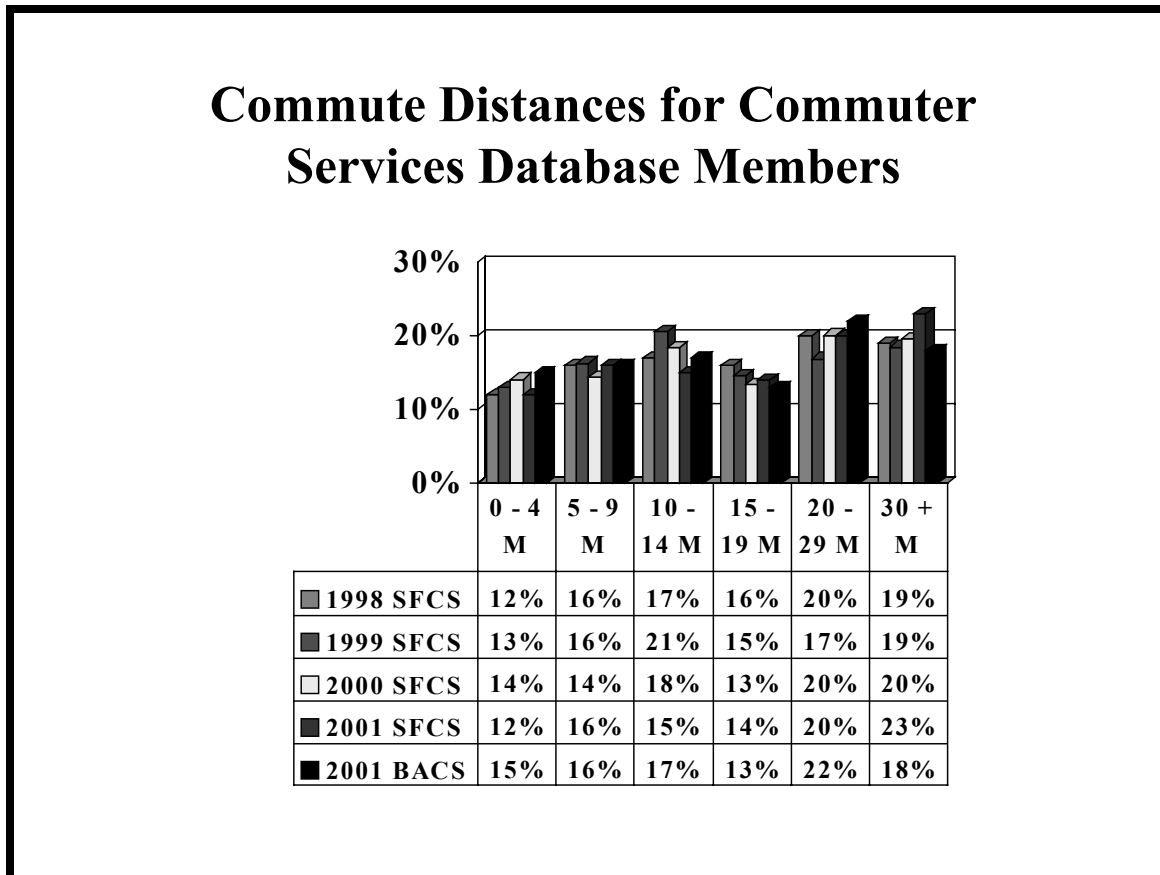


Figure 3: Percent of commuter services database members who are using or have used alternative commute modes.

Overall, use of alternative modes among commuters in the program databases remain at very healthy levels. For South Florida Commuter Services, the levels in 2001 are as high as they have ever been. For BACS, the levels are approximately equal to the levels in South Florida Commuter Services.

An important part of the effectiveness of commuter service agencies is achieving emissions reductions results, which in turn depends on the distances traveled by database members. For that reason, it is instructive to examine trip distances for database members. That data is summarized in the next chart.



**Figure 4: Percent of commuter services database members who are using or have used alternative commute modes.**

As can be seen, distances continue to increase for members of South Florida Commuter Services from prior years, indicating a greater impact on miles reduced and overall emissions reduction for those who are ridesharing. For BACS database members, distances are not quite as long but are still comparable to South Florida Commuter Services. Compared to general public levels, BACS has 40% of database members with over 20 mile commutes, compared to 29% of the general public, and South Florida Commuter Services has 43% over 20 miles, compared to 25% of the general public.

Estimates of total trips reduced by mode and total vehicle miles reduced by mode for the past year were obtained by making the following assumptions:

1. Commuters work 49 weeks per year.
2. For all commuters who have not used an alternative mode for the last year, it is conservatively assumed that they have been using that mode for 4 months (for carpoolers and vanpoolers, the question was asked directly).
3. The number of trips reduced is 1, except for carpoolers and vanpoolers, where the number of trips reduced is:  
$$(\text{number of passengers} - 1) / \text{number of passengers}.$$

There were 525 valid responses in the survey of South Florida Commuter Services database members. This information is analyzed in two ways. The first is without respect to the mode that the commuters were using before they joined the database. This calculates the total difference between current commuting modes and what vehicle trips and miles would have been if everyone used a Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) commute mode. This is the method that FDOT requires in its procedures for evaluating CAP performance.

Table 1 shows the statistics per commuter without reference to prior mode. For the figures in this table, there is a 95% probability that the true total number of trips reduced of the South Florida Commuter Services database population lies between 185.9 (205.3-19.4) trips annually and 224.7 (205.3+19.4) trips annually per commuter *without respect to prior mode*. In 2000, South Florida Commuter Services and FDOT can be 95% confident that the South Florida Commuter Services database population’s true average reduction in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) ranges from 3,707 miles to 4,911 miles. Furthermore, there is a 95% probability that the true mean number of trips in an alternative to the SOV ranges from 215.5 trips to 257.5 trips per year per commuter.

**Table 1**

<b>Total Annual Trips and VMT Reduced Per Commuter South Florida Commuter Services Database <i>Without respect to prior mode</i></b>									
<b>Mode</b>	<b>Mean Trips Reduced</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Miles Reduced</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Trips Provided</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>
	2000	2001	2001	2000	2001	2001	2000	2001	2001
Carpool	51.4	52.8	" 9.4	923	1119	" 278	80.9	80.6	" 13.8
Vanpool	11.8	18.2	" 6.6	293	603	" 247	13.6	21.1	" 7.6
Transit	119.5	125.7	" 16.9	2324	2403	" 427	119.5	125.7	" 17.0
All Other	12.3	8.6	" 4.8	159	183	" 165	12.3	8.6	" 4.8
Total Reduced	195.0	205.3	" 19.4	3699	4309	" 602	227 provided	236 provided	" 21.5
Total Reduced – Commuter Services had influence	124.0	131.3	" 17.6	2386	2996	" 552	141.7 provided	152.8 provided	" 20.0
Total Sample	486 total trips	489 total trips	" 4.2	8278 total miles	9880 total miles	" 742	486 total trips	489 total trips	" 4.2

Table 2 takes into account the mode that commuters were using before they contacted the CAP, and thus shows only the difference between that mode and how database members commuted after contacting the CAP. In this table, only those commuters who joined in the last year are included. There is a 95% probability that the true total number of trips reduced of the south Florida Commuter Services database population lies between 79.4 and 115.2 trips annually per commuter *with respect to prior mode*; that the South Florida Commuter Services database population’s true average reduction in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) ranges from 1,657 and 2,735 miles; and that the true mean number of trips in an alternative to the SOV ranges from 86.4 to 124.8 trips per year per commuter.

**Table 2**

<b>Total Annual Trips and VMT Reduced Per Commuter</b>									
<b>South Florida Commuter Services Database</b>									
<i>With respect to prior mode</i>									
<b>Mode</b>	<b>Mean Trips Reduced</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Miles Reduced</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Trips Provided</b>		<b>95% C. I.</b>
	2000	2001	2001	2000	2001	2001	2000	2001	2001
Carpool	16.1	15.2	" 6.1	294	316	" 140	25.0	20.8	" 8.3
Vanpool	8.1	15.9	" 7.2	184	582	" 317	9.1	18.6	" 8.4
Transit	74.4	60.8	" 14.8	1372	1179	" 342	74.4	60.8	" 14.8
All Other	5.7	5.4	" 5.0	63	119	" 167	5.7	5.4	" 5.0
Total Reduced	104.4	97.3	" 17.9	1913	2196	" 539	114.2 provided	105.6 provided	" 19.2
Total Reduced–Commuter Services had influence	74.4	70.6	" 15.5	1343	1735	" 500	80.3 provided	76.9 provided	" 17.0
Total Sample	486 total trips	489 total trips	" 4.9	8278 total miles	10102 total miles	" 976	486 total trips	489 total trips	" 4.9

There were 427 valid responses in the survey of the Bay Area Commuter Services database members. Again, this information is analyzed in two ways. The first is without respect to the mode that the commuters were using before they joined the database. This calculates the total difference between current commuting modes and what vehicle trips and miles would have been if everyone used an SOV commute mode. This is the method that FDOT required by the procedures in evaluating CAP performance.

Table 3 shows the statistics per commuter without reference to prior mode. For the figures in this table, there is a 95% probability that the true total number of trips reduced within the Bay Area Commuter Services database population lies between 195.6 (216.7-22.1) trips annually and 238.8 (216.7+22.1) trips annually per commuter *without respect to prior mode*. In 2001, Bay Area Commuter Services and FDOT can be 95% confident that the Bay Area Commuter Services database population’s true average reduction in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) ranges from 3,121 miles to 4,233 miles. Furthermore, there is a 95% probability that the true mean number of trips in an alternative to the SOV ranges from 241.1 trips to 292.9 trips per year per commuter.

**Table 3**

<b>Total Annual Trips and VMT Reduced Per Commuter</b>						
<b>Bay Area Commuter Services Database</b>						
<i>Without respect to prior mode</i>						
<b>Mode</b>	<b>Mean Trips Reduced</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Miles Reduced</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Trips Provided</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>
	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001
Carpool	76.8	11.7	1460	302	121.8	17.8
Vanpool	28.6	9.1	815	289	33.8	10.7
Transit	99.1	17.4	1274	283	99.1	17.4
All Other	12.3	5.7	129	102	12.3	5.7
Total Reduced	216.7	22.1	3677	556	267 provided	25.9
Total Reduced – BACS had influence	157.4	21.3	2701	507	194 provided	25.2
Total Sample	482 total trips	5.7	8141 total miles	587	482 total trips	5.7

Table 4 takes into account the mode that commuters were using before they contacted the CAP, and thus shows only the difference between that mode and how database members commuted after contacting the CAP. In this table, only those commuters who joined in the last year are included. There is a 95% probability that the true total number of trips reduced of the Bay Area Commuter Services Database population lies between 85.9 and 140.9 trips annually per commuter *with respect to prior mode*; that the Bay Area Commuter Services database population’s true average reduction in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) ranges from 1,504 and 2,606 miles; and that the true mean number of trips in an alternative to the SOV ranges from 109.2 to 158.8 trips per year per commuter.

**Table 4**

<b>Total Annual Trips and VMT Reduced Per Commuter</b>						
<b>Bay Area Commuter Services Database</b>						
<i>With respect to prior mode</i>						
<b>Mode</b>	<b>Mean Trips Reduced</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Miles Reduced</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>	<b>Mean Trips Provided</b>	<b>95% C. I.</b>
	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001
Carpool	30.7	10.6	576	255	41.5	14.4
Vanpool	24.7	10.9	691	350	29.4	12.9
Transit	53.7	17.4	659	294	53.7	17.4
All Other	9.3	5.6	129	127	9.3	5.6
Total Reduced	118.4	22.5	2055	551	134 provided	24.8
Total Reduced – BACS had influence	84.0	19.9	1427	450	94.6 provided	21.6
Total Sample	480 total trips	8.3	7801 total miles	759	480 total trips	8.3

*Commuter Services Rideshare Database*

Awareness of the CAP and the Ride Number is shown in two ways: unaided (unprompted) and aided. It is expected, since these people are members of a database, that a reasonable proportion would be able to come up with the name of the agency or the fact that there is a Ride Number without much help, and that certainly they should be able to do so in an aided fashion.

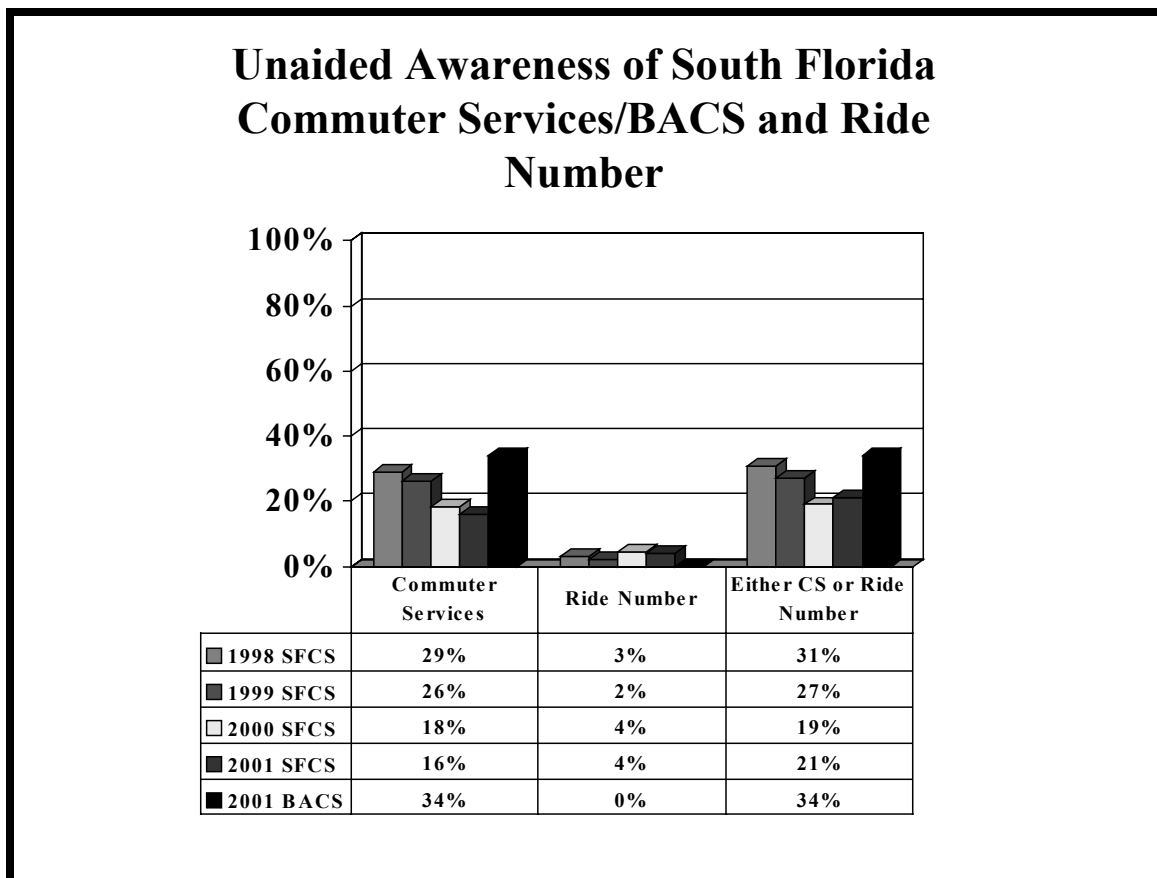


Figure 5: Unaided awareness of commuter services and Ride Number.

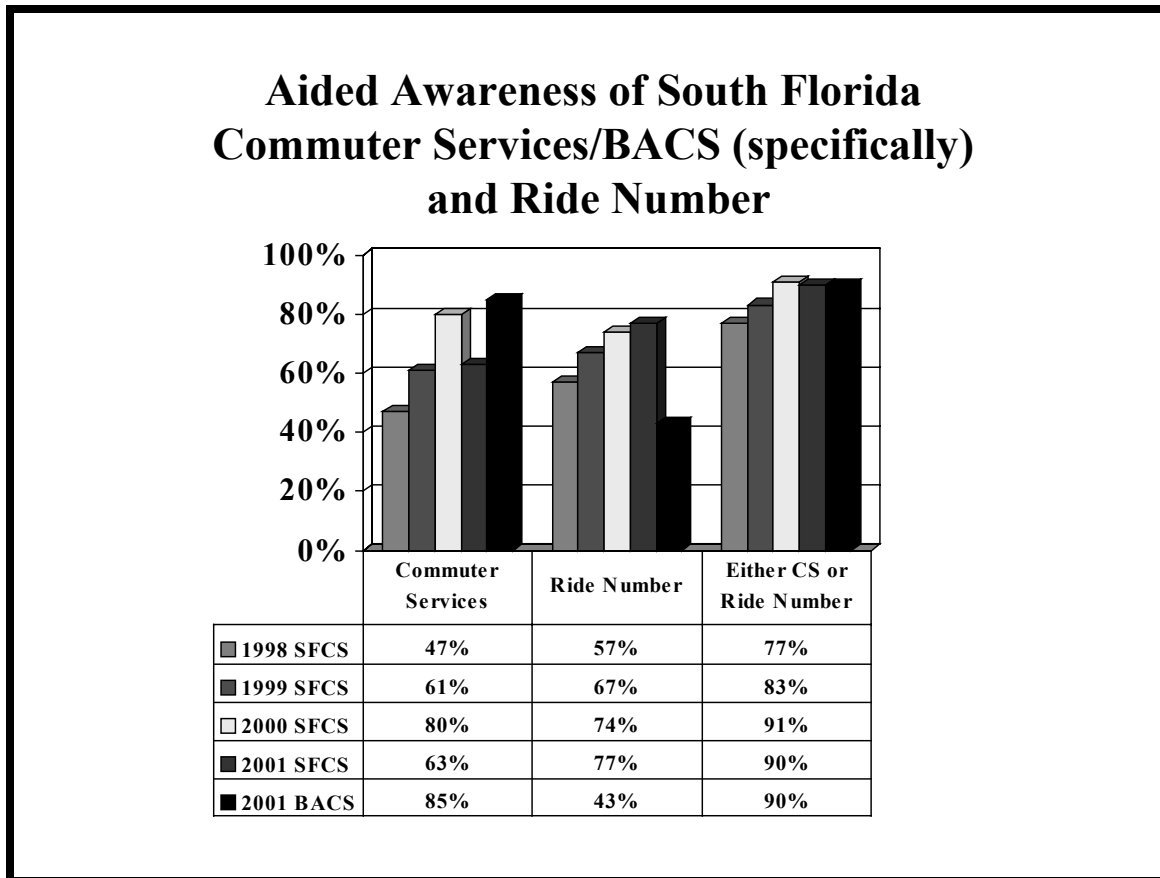


Figure 6: Aided awareness of commuter services and Ride Number.

South Florida Commuter Services generally focuses on communicating the existence of the ride telephone number, and not so much on the name of the agency. This is clearly demonstrated in the results, which show that Bay Area Commuter Services has done a more effective job of communicating the name of the agency to their members (34% unaided versus 16% for South Florida Commuter Services, 85% aided versus 63% for South Florida Commuter Services), but that South Florida Commuter Services database members are more aware of the existence of the Ride Number (virtually no unaided awareness for either, 77% aided for South Florida Commuter Services versus 43% for BACS).

Database members were asked how they had heard about the CAP or the Ride Number rather than what messages they might have recalled. This serves to give the agency an idea of what efforts have had the most impact among database members.

In 2000, the percentage of new South Florida Commuter Services database members that did not know where they heard about or were not aware of South Florida Commuter Services decreased

significantly from 51% to 21%. In 2001 this number rose back to 37%. About 40% of the database members heard about South Florida Commuter Services at work or, specifically, transportation days, down from 49%. Also, the number that said they heard about South Florida Commuter Services from friends dropped from 9% to 3%. Other figures stayed about the same.

For BACS, many more people reported hearing about the agency through work or at a transportation day (58%), and overall awareness is higher, as noted earlier, so far less people fall into the category of not being aware of the agency. Hearing about BACS from friends or through the Yellow Pages makes up most of the remainder of the results.

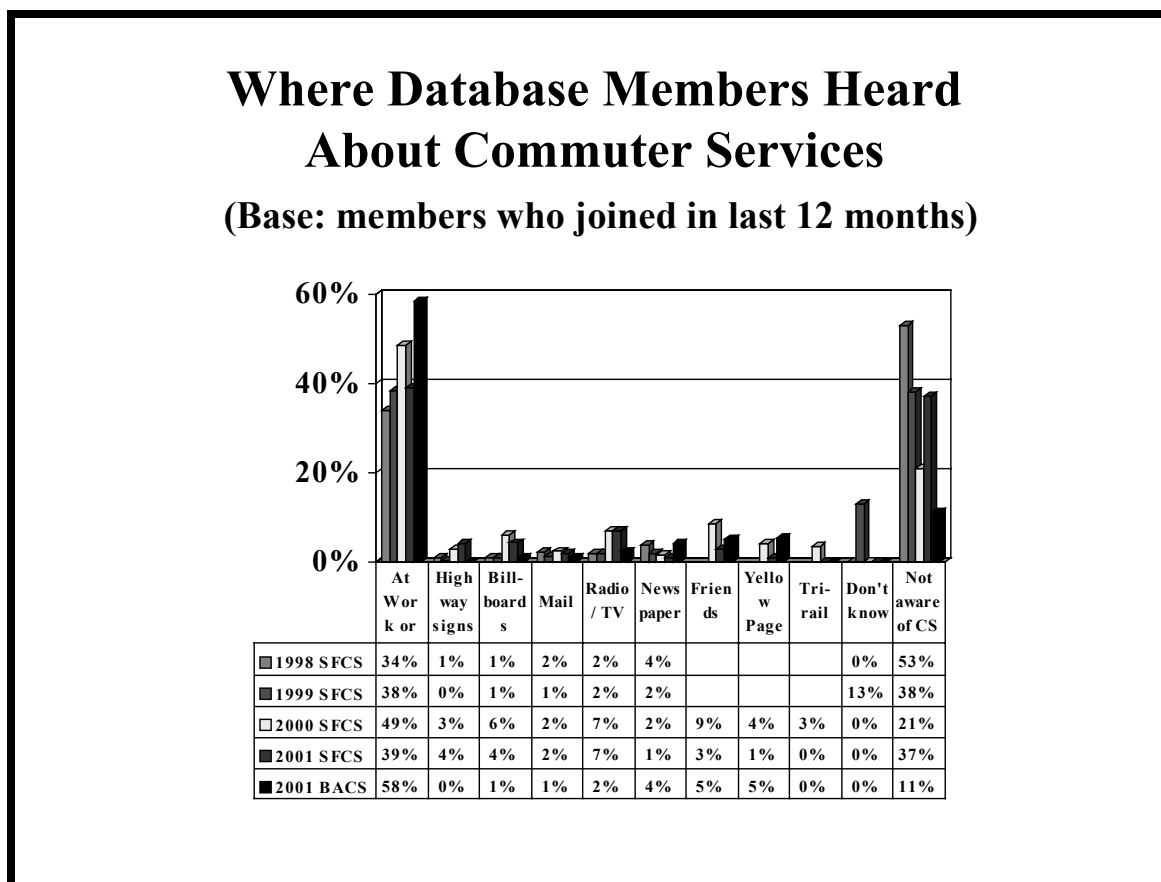


Figure 7: Where database members heard about commuter services.

For the Ride Number, results are similar, but there are far fewer people in South Florida who are not aware of the Ride Number. Most who have heard of it heard about the number at work or at a transportation day (38%), radio or TV (12%), highway signs (7%), billboards (7%) and so forth.

For BACS, awareness of the Ride Number is much lower, mainly developed through work or transportation day contacts.

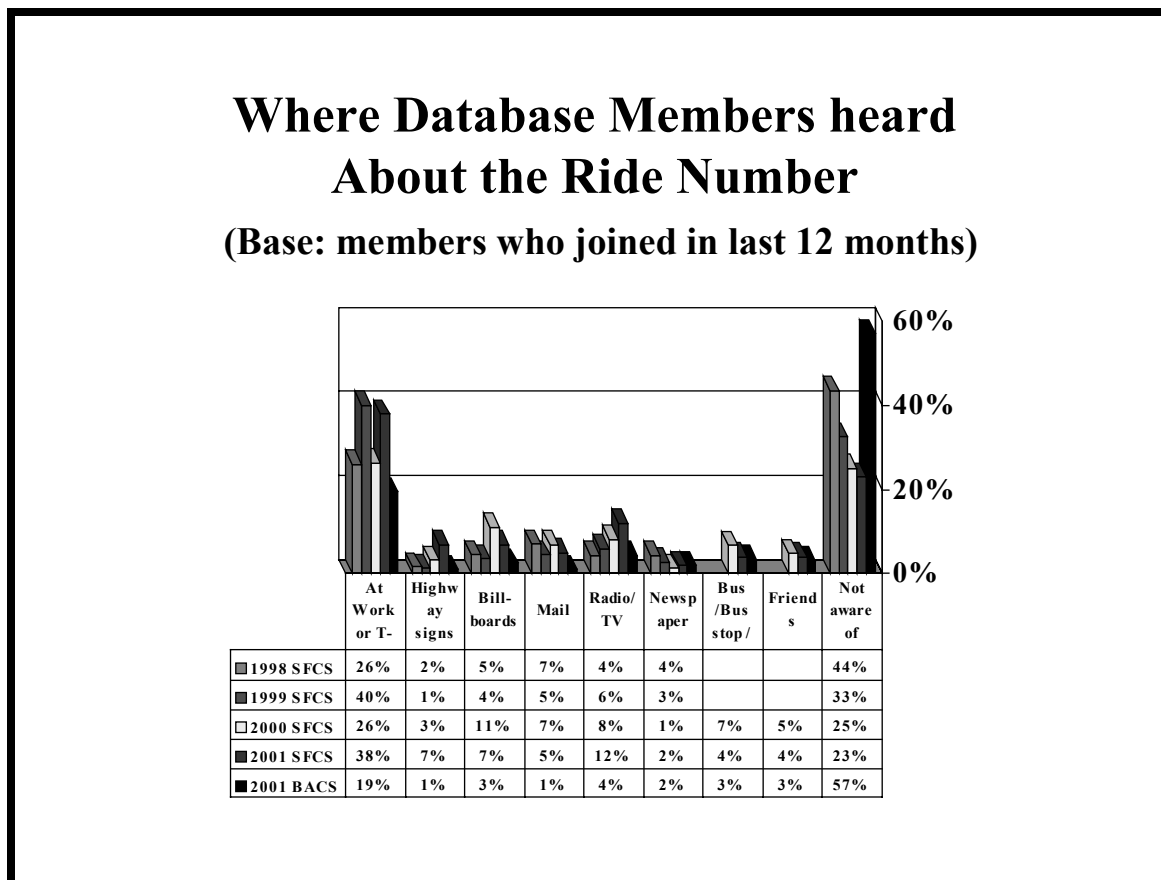
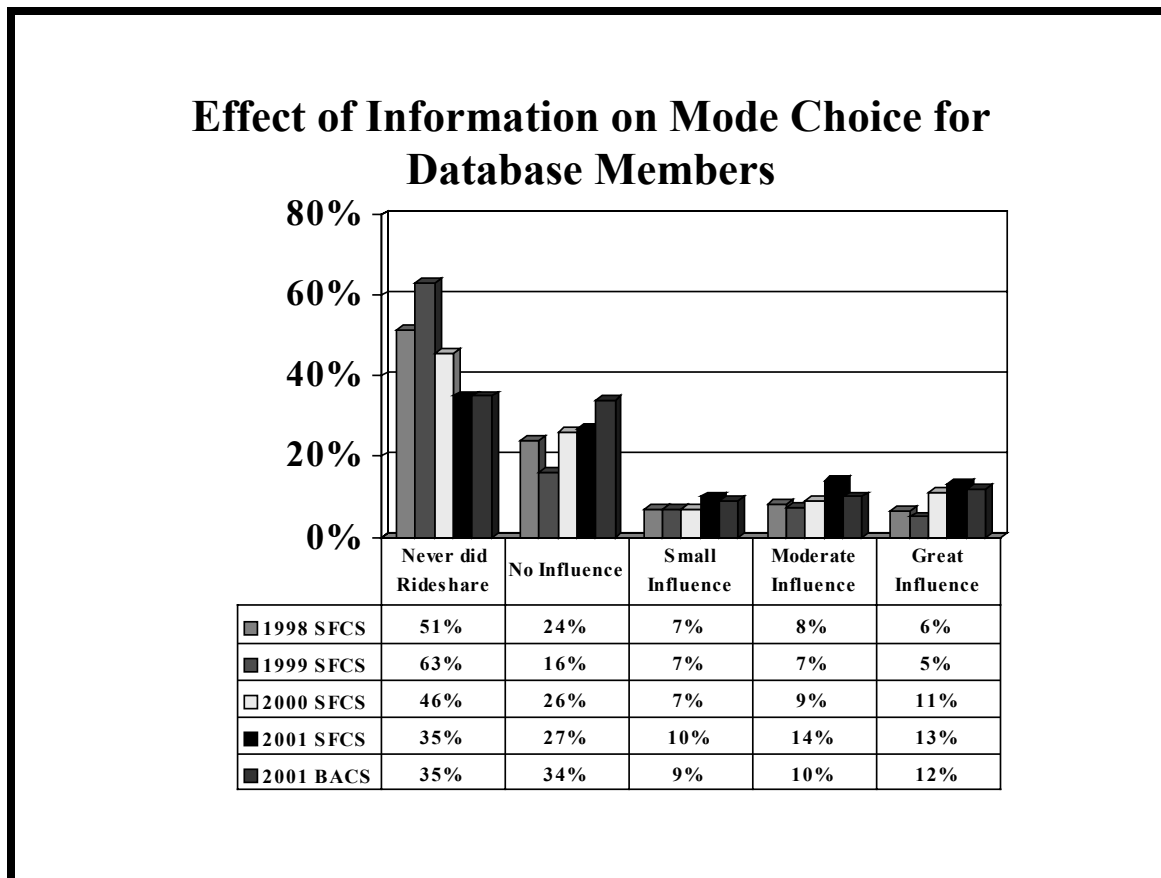


Figure 8: Where database members heard about the Ride Number.

The tremendous growth of the database in South Florida Commuter Services relative to BACS may in some part be due to concentrating on awareness of the Ride Number and not so much on the name of the agency. Awareness of the Ride Number is higher among the general public in South Florida (36%) compared to the Tampa/St. Petersburg area (23%). BACS may want to examine South Florida Commuter Services’ strategies in this regard.

*Stated Effect of Assistance Provided by Commuter Assistance Programs on Mode Choice*

Database members were asked what effect the emergency ride home (ERH) or guaranteed ride home (GRH) information, and all of the information provided by the agency as a whole, had on their mode choice. The results are presented in the figures below.



**Figure 9: Effect of information on mode choice for database members.**

The proportion that said the information had some influence (small, moderate, or great) rose from 27% in 2000 to 37% in 2001 for South Florida Commuter Services. Correspondingly, there was an 11% drop, from 46% to 35%. of database members who said they never did rideshare since they received the information. It should be noted that this is a different result from the ‘used in the past’ result earlier because some database members used alternative modes before joining the database but have not used the modes since they received information and assistance from the CAP.

For Bay Area Commuter Services, the results are similar. The proportion of database members who said they never did rideshare is identical to the South Florida Commuter Services results. For BACS database members, 31% said the information had some influence (versus 37% for South Florida Commuter Services).

Those results labeled “no influence” indicate the percentage of respondents who did try an alternative mode, but reported that advertising messages and information had no influence on their choice.

The proportion of South Florida Commuter Services database members saying that the ERH information had “some influence” on their choice of mode increased from 27% in 2000 to 35% in 2001. This continues a trend of the increasing importance of ERH to database members. For BACS, the results are very similar – 38% said the information had some influence on their mode choice.

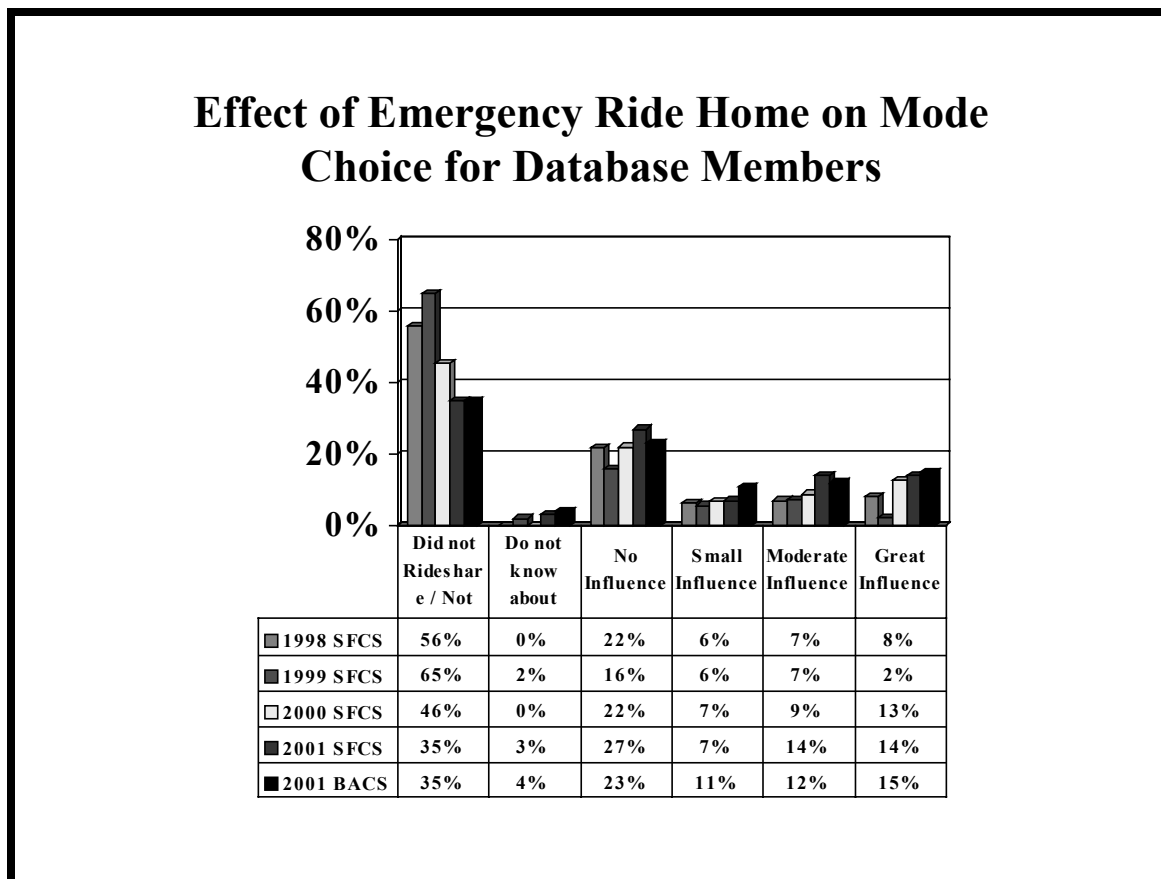


Figure 10: Effect of ERH on mode choice for database members.

The number of database members receiving ERH information continues to increase, from 80% to 84% over the last year, a 22% increase over the last four years. For BACS, that number is 72%. See the next section for more details.

*Evaluation of Commuter Assistance Programs by Database Members*

Database members evaluated the performance of the commuter service agencies in two ways: responding to questions about specific actions the agency took or did not take, and providing subjective ratings on a 1-10 scale of their satisfaction with the agency. Database members were asked what types of assistance the agency had provided to them. Specifically, if the agency had provided tips on what to do next to start carpooling, information on the ERH program, and a list of potential car/vanpoolers (or a letter stating that there were no matches).

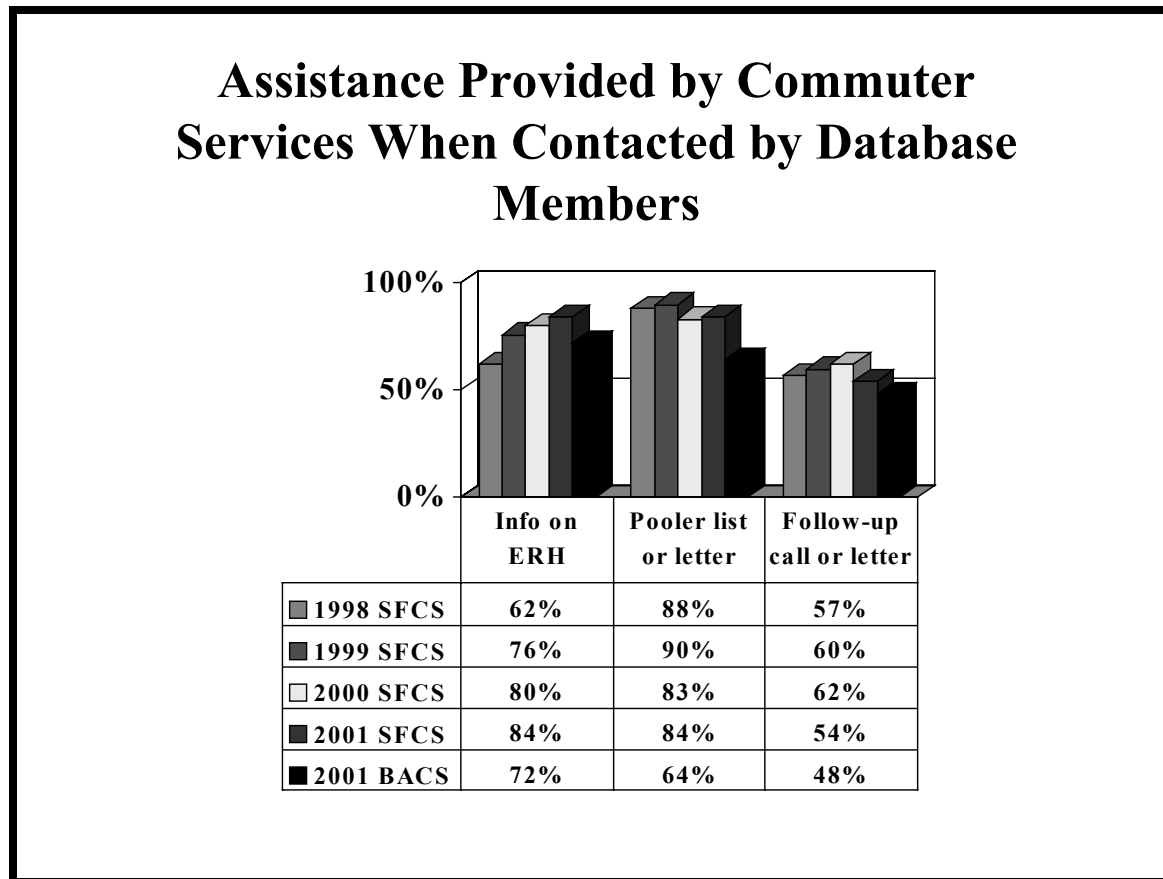


Figure 11: Assistance provided by commuter services when contacted by database members.

The results of South Florida Commuter Services’ efforts at following up with database members dropped off in the last year, down to 54% remembering that they had a follow-up call or letter.

The proportion receiving a list of potential carpoolers or vanpoolers held steady at 84%. All of these figures are slightly lower for BACS database members, with 64% reporting receiving a list of matches and 48% receiving a follow-up call.

In 2001, only 19% of South Florida Commuter Services database members received a “no match” letter, down significantly from 31% in the previous year. Unfortunately, most of this increase translated into a higher percentage (56%) of database members who received a list but took no action. The proportion that tried to use the list remained approximately steady at 12%.

For BACS, 36% said they did not receive anything as noted above, and a further 16% received a no match letter, meaning that 50% of the applicants do not recall receiving any information that helped them match with a carpool partner. In spite of this, a much higher proportion actually tried to use the information: 18% of all database members (compared to 12% for South Florida Commuter Services) and 36% of all of those who received useable information (compared to about 18% for South Florida Commuter Services).

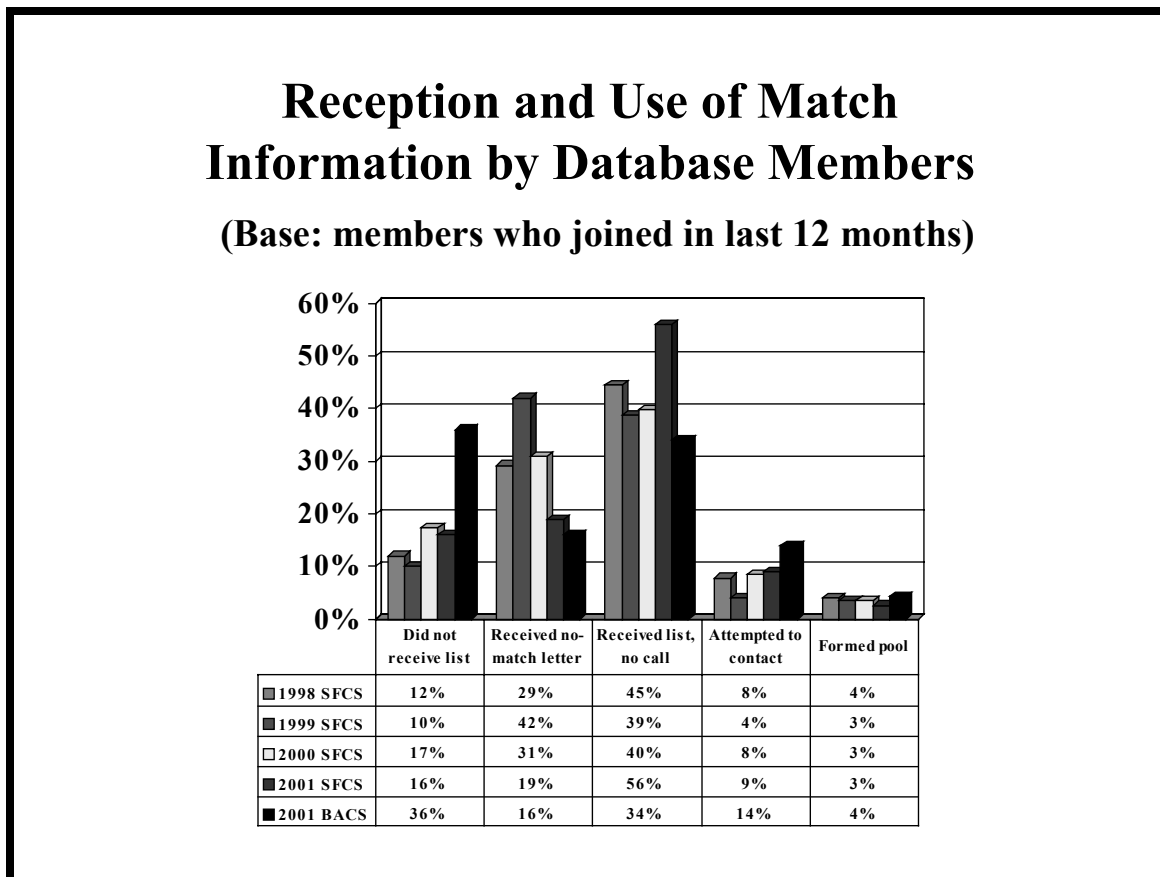


Figure 12: Reception and use of match information by database members.

South Florida Commuter Services may want to examine how BACS provides their match information, since a much larger proportion of people who receive a match list use the information. BACS, on the other hand, may want to examine South Florida Commuter Services' procedures of information distribution, since many more people in the South Florida Commuter Services database recall receiving information. It is also possible that South Florida Commuter Services recruits a wider base of commuters, including current transit riders, who are not really interested in matching but are mainly interested in the ERH program.

To maximize the percentage of people using the list, both agencies should focus on the following items:

1. Re-examine the product. The fact that 82% of the people who receive names in South Florida fail to take any action (and 64% of those in the BACS database) suggests that there could be something inhibiting them from taking action. For the fourth year in a row, the quality of the list has received the lowest rating of effectiveness by database members.
2. Conduct qualitative research (e.g. focus groups) with database members to identify factors that encourage or prohibit use of the match list. If database members understand the steps necessary to form a carpool, what is preventing them from taking the initiative to act?
3. Re-examine the level of assistance in the formation of carpools from match lists. Do database members require greater assistance and follow-up to form carpools?

Database members were also asked to subjectively evaluate their agencies performance in a number of different areas based on their experiences. These results are shown below:

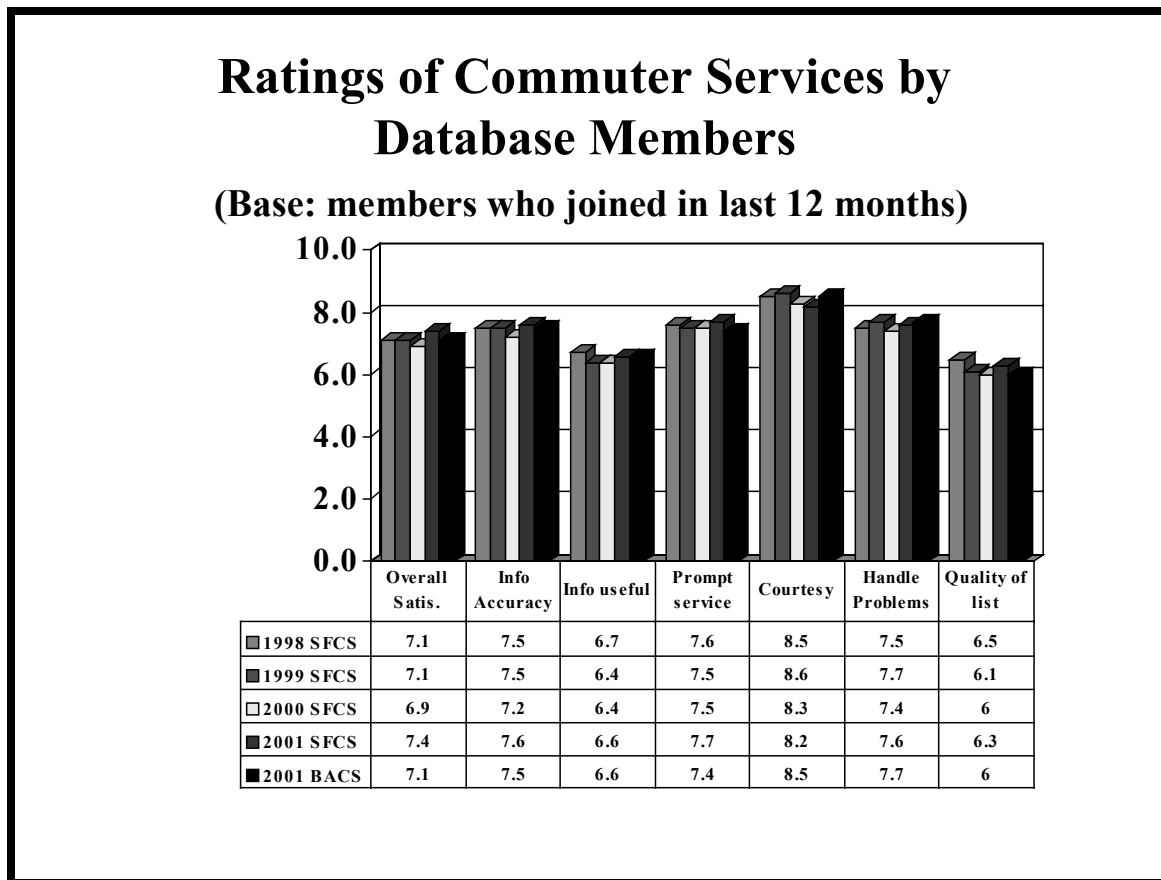


Figure 13: Ratings of commuter services by database members.

As in previous years, the lowest scores continue to come on the usefulness of the information and the quality of the lists. Commuter service agencies can control the quality of the list by making sure the people on it are still interested in the service at periodic intervals, and ensuring that the addresses and telephone numbers are up-to-date. However, some elements, such as the quantity of matches provided, are to a large extent beyond the agency’s control.

As a rule of thumb in these types of surveys, a result of 7.0-7.2 indicates a reasonably good score. Both South Florida Commuter Services and BACS should take a great deal of pride in the high scores they receive in information accuracy, promptness, and courtesy.

Finally, database members were asked if they would recommend South Florida Commuter Services or BACS to other people seeking assistance in carpooling or vanpooling. South Florida

Commuter Services' results rose to their highest levels, with 80% of the database members probably or definitely would recommend South Florida Commuter Services to others. For BACS, the number was similar, with 78% saying they would definitely or probably recommend BACS to others.

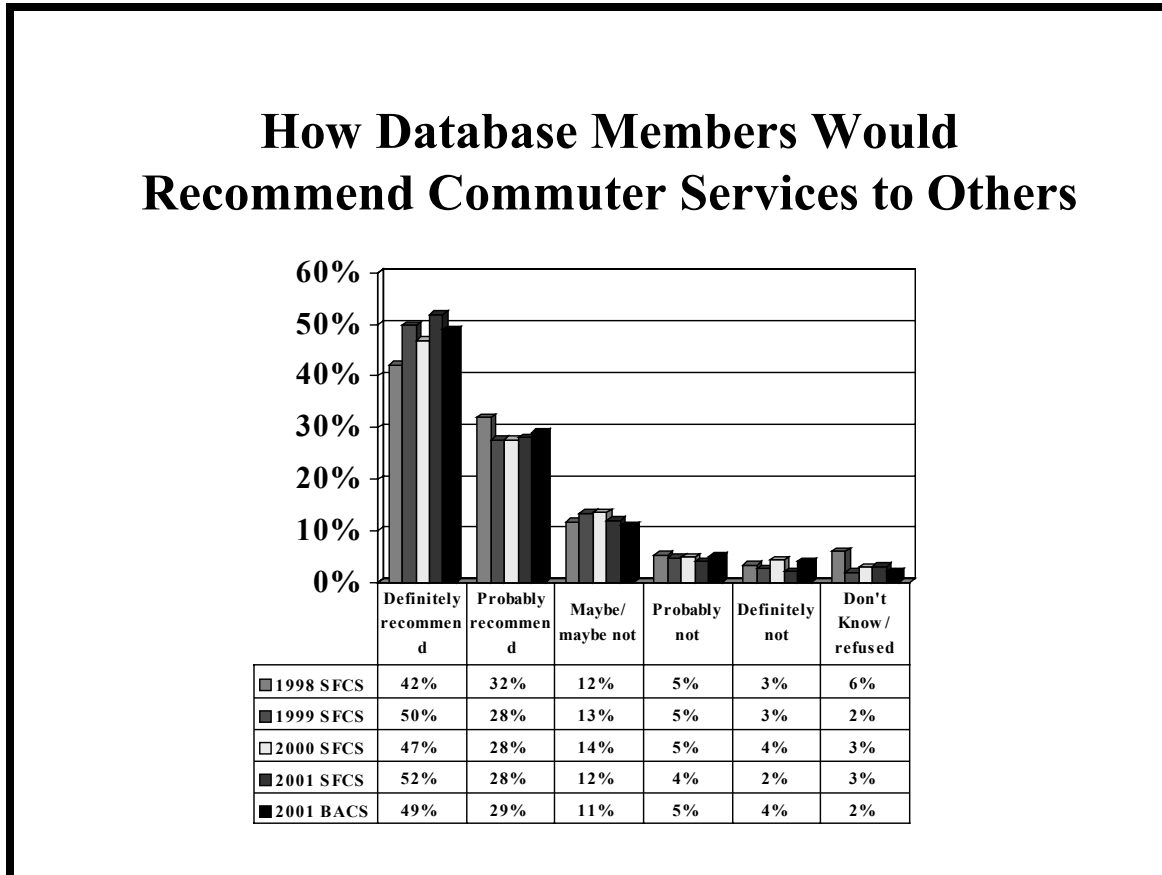


Figure 14: How database members would recommend commuter services to others.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Total alternative mode use for South Florida Commuter Services is at its highest point since the evaluations began in 1998. For both agencies, 48% of validated database members report using alternative modes. For South Florida Commuter Services, transit is a major contributor (27%), whereas for BACS, use of transit is somewhat less common (20%) but use of carpooling is slightly more prevalent (25% for BACS versus 21% for South Florida Commuter Services).

An analysis of trip patterns and mode use reveals that each South Florida Commuter Services database member, on average, made 205 less trips in 2001 than they would have had they driven alone, and on average made 131 less trips due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence. This resulted in 4,309 less miles driven on average per database member, 2,996 of which were directly due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence. In total, this resulted in 1.3 million reduced trips and 30.8 million reduced miles that were due to South Florida Commuter Services' influence. For BACS, the corresponding figures are 217 trips per database member (157 which BACS influenced) and 3,677 miles reduced per database member (2,701 due to BACS influence), for a total of 392,000 reduced trips and 5.7 million reduced miles due to BACS influence.

South Florida Commuter Services generally focuses on communicating the existence of the Ride Number, and not so much on the name of the agency. This is clearly demonstrated in the results, which show that Bay Area Commuter Services has done a more effective job of communicating the name of the agency to their members (34% unaided versus 16% for South Florida Commuter Services, 85% aided versus 63% for South Florida Commuter Services), but that South Florida Commuter Services database members are more aware of the existence of the Ride Number (virtually no unaided awareness for either, 77% aided for South Florida Commuter Services versus 43% for BACS).

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helped them match with a carpool partner. In spite of this, a much higher proportion actually tried to use the information: 18% of all database members (compared to 12% for South Florida Commuter Services) and 36% of all of those who received useable information (compared to about 18% for South Florida Commuter Services).

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To maximize the percentage of people using the list, both agencies should focus on the following items:

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2. Conduct qualitative research (e.g. focus groups) with database members to identify factors that encourage or prohibit use of the match list.
3. Re-examine South Florida Commuter Services' level of assistance in the formation of carpools from match lists.

Both South Florida Commuter Services and BACS should take a great deal of pride in the high scores they receive in information accuracy, promptness, and courtesy.

**Appendix A: Survey Instrument**