



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

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Secretary of Administration

TO: The Honorable William J. Howell
Speaker of the House
Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable John H. Chichester
President Pro Tempore
Virginia State Senate

FROM: Viola O. Baskerville
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DATE: October 17, 2007

**SUBJECT: FY2007 Annual Report on the Status and Efficiency of
Telecommuting**

Consistent with the provisions of 2.2-203.2 of the Code of Virginia, we are reporting jointly to the members of the General Assembly on the status of telecommuting in the Commonwealth.

Telecommuting by Employees of State Government

- Of the 93,751 positions in the Commonwealth's Personnel Management Information System, 21,906 (23.4%) are designated eligible for telecommuting. Presently, 3,641 (3.9%) employees are telecommuting. This represents an increase of 1,192 employees or 48.7% from when we last reported to you in 2006.
- This data is based on information reported by Executive Branch agencies in the Personnel Management Information System. In August 2007 employees were determined to be eligible unless managers actively indicated that they were not. An additional 18,378 positions were added to the rolls as a result of this change. Agencies have been reminded to update all of the related information, so its accuracy,

and agencies' awareness of the importance of accurate reporting, are continuously improving.

- Because of the nature of many state agency operations, the extent of telecommuting from agency to agency varies greatly. Agency heads have to determine the feasibility of telecommuting and its compatibility with agency requirements. We continue to encourage agency heads to consider telecommuting as they develop their COOP plan and to use it whenever they can.
- Past actions related to telecommuting have included:
 - In September 2006, Governor Timothy M. Kaine signed an Executive Order creating an Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance within the Office of the Secretary of Technology. The Office encourages and promotes telework activities for public and private employers, and works to advance innovative models that expedite the deployment of “last-mile” broadband technologies throughout the Commonwealth. The Governor signed the Executive Order at the 2006 Commonwealth of Virginia *Innovative* Technology Symposium held in Roanoke.
 - DHRM established a Telecommuting link on their web site that provides information and resources to agencies in establishing and maintaining their telecommuting programs.
- There have been no requests from either localities or the private sector for assistance or advice in the planning, developing, and administering programs, projects, policies, or other activities to promote or encourage telecommuting of employees.

Telecommuting in the Private Sector

In Fiscal Year 2007, fifteen commuter assistance programs funded by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) continued to promote telework to private sector businesses as a means to reduce automobile trips, traffic congestion, air pollution, improve employee productivity and provide for improved quality of life in the Commonwealth. Additionally, Telework!VA, a private sector business financial incentive program administered by DRPT through regional partnerships with local commuter assistance programs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Transportation Management Associations was promoted in Northern Virginia, Richmond and Hampton Roads.

The average FY2007 public and private telework participation rate across the Commonwealth is currently 12% as measured by the *Virginia State of the Commute Survey (VSOC)*¹. The survey provides the first benchmark for measuring usage of telework and other alternative transportation modes across the Commonwealth. It

¹ 2007 Virginia State of the Commute Survey Results (Draft), Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, August 2007.

combines data collected through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Triennial State of the Commute Survey for Metropolitan Washington region – Northern Virginia data – with the benchmark data collected by DRPT for the remainder of the state into one complete multi-modal snapshot of the Commonwealth.

By way of comparison to the 12% teleworking percentage reported for Virginia in total (*2007 Virginia State of Commute Survey*), a survey conducted in 2006 by The Dierenger Group, on behalf of WorldatWork, estimated that, nationally, approximately 8% of American workers telework at least one day per month. (*Note this study used slightly different definition of teleworking. It is offered for directional comparison.*)

As would be expected, Northern Virginia has the highest percentage of teleworkers in Virginia. In July 2007, MWCOG reported that 20.7% of commuters in the Northern Virginia region currently teleworked² - a 57% growth in participation since 2004 (13.2%). In 2007 the state-wide frequency of telework by commuters was 1.7 days per week while in Northern Virginia, it was 1.6 days per week. This compares to 1.4 days per week reported for Northern Virginia teleworkers in the 2004 SOC study.³

The past five years have seen wholesale change with regards to telework, both nationally and in Virginia. Telework!VA was developed with regional commuter assistance programs and other business partners including local Chambers of Commerce, using a market based product development approach to define an optimal private sector telework program. The process included input from telework experts, commuter assistance program employer outreach sales representatives, employer focus groups, one-on-one CEO interviews, and industry best practices derived from telework programs in other states. After piloting the program for two years in Northern Virginia, and prior to marketing roll-out, a rigorous performance evaluation was conducted to improve the conversion ratio of inquiries to program participants. Partnering with the commuter assistance programs Ridefinders in Richmond and TRAFFIX in the Hampton Roads area to promote the program has allowed Telework!VA to be adapted to the specific business needs in those regions.

In July 2007, the new Telework!VA web site (www.teleworkva.org) was relaunched. The web site is a "one stop", self-help telework tool available to businesses throughout the state. It is a turn-key, self help business resource including benefits, myth-dispelling facts, case studies, sample telework policies, and includes "A to Z" instructions on how to set up and conduct a successful telework program. The E-Learning Tools, or online training modules, are the showcase of the revamped web site, and provide expert guidance in four categories: How to Set Up a Telework Program, How to Sell Telework to the Decision Makers at Your Organization, How to Train Teleworkers, and How to Effectively Manage Teleworkers. DRPT will continue to improve and evolve the web

² *2007 State of the Commute Survey Results from the Metropolitan Washington Region (Draft)*, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, July 2007.

³ For purposes of the State of Commute surveys, teleworkers are defined as "wage and salary employees who at least occasionally work at home or at a telework or satellite center during an entire work day, instead of traveling to their regular work place."

site based on market research and feedback, emerging web-based communication trends, and program performance measurement. DRPT's goal is to provide a market-based telework program that is flexible enough to be customized to the unique local, regional or multi-regional business needs, while addressing traffic congestion issues.

With the convergence of several large rail and road construction projects in Northern Virginia over the next several years, increased awareness of telework resources is critical. DRPT's February 2006 Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project Impact Research Study cited telework as the transportation alternative most likely to motivate SOV drivers to change their commute behavior. Focus groups in July 2007 demonstrated that employers in the Tysons Corner area are extremely concerned about the impact of upcoming road and rail construction projects on their employees' commutes and their organization's ability to recruit and retain employees. Their response indicates that the decision-makers within large corporations will be highly motivated to implement, formalize, and/or expand telework programs. These employers are motivated to be part of the solution to the construction congestion challenge in Northern Virginia.

DRPT is developing a Telework!VA micro-marketing and outreach campaign for the Tysons Corner area to launch in FY2008. It will build awareness of the Telework!VA program as a part of the solution to mitigating construction impacts caused by upcoming major rail and road projects. The campaign will be expanded to Richmond and Hampton Roads in FY2008.

DRPT will continue to track the overall incidence of telework in the Commonwealth, as well as specific urban markets, with the Virginia State of the Commute survey, which will be conducted every three years.

Additionally, DRPT will continue to participate in and assist several legislative advisory committees including the HJR144 (Telework Opportunities for State and Private Sector Employees) and the Council on Technology Services Mobile Workforce Workgroup. DRPT will also continue to work closely with the Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance and other state agencies to support telework initiatives and provide assistance as needed.