

**SEASONAL EMPLOYEE STUDY**

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This is a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the seasonal employee study prepared in response to Laws 1984, Chapter 654, Article 2, Section 8, Clause (c) (3):

Seasonal Employee Study

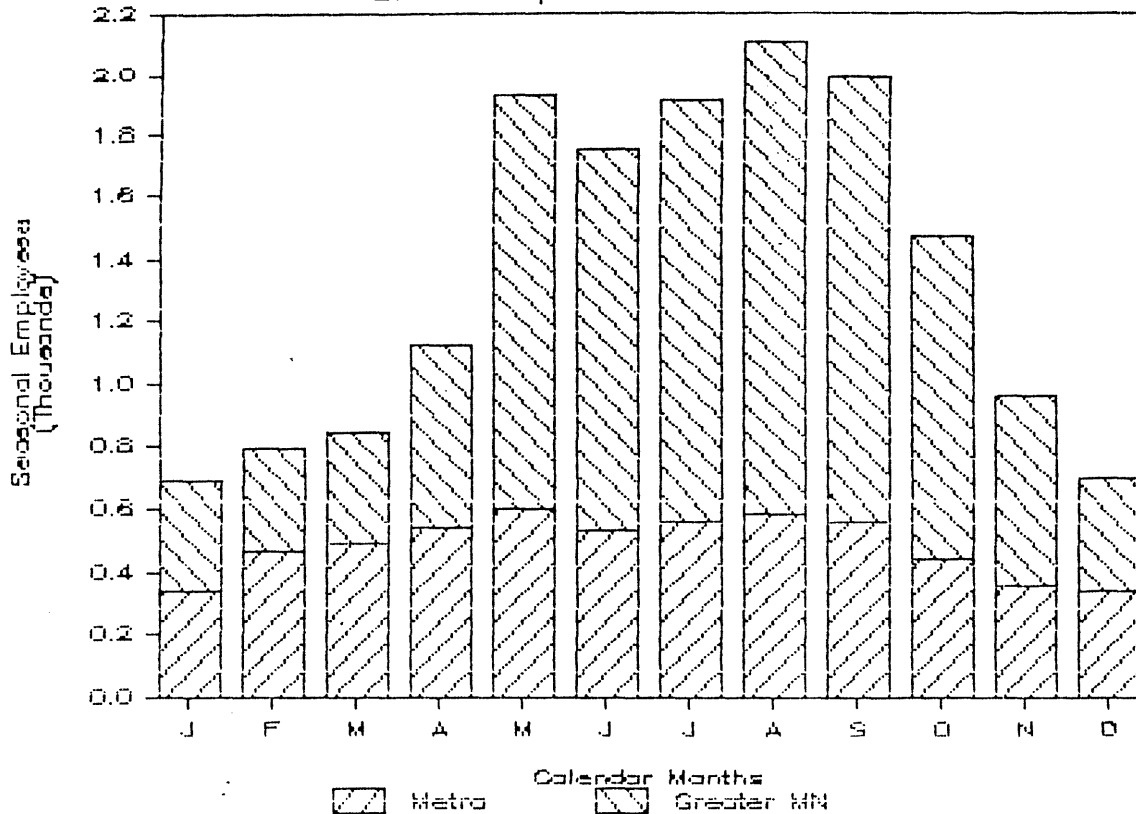
The commissioner of administration in cooperation with the commissioner of employee relations shall conduct a study to determine the operational and cost effectiveness of the extensive use of part-time and seasonal employees by the commissioner of natural resources. The study may also include similar use by the commissioners of transportation and public welfare. A report of the findings of the study and the recommendations of the commissioners of administration and employee relations must be submitted to the legislature by January 1, 1985.

Department of Administration  
Management Analysis Division  
March 27, 1985

*Recd 7/1986*

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Overall Comparison Calendar Year 1984

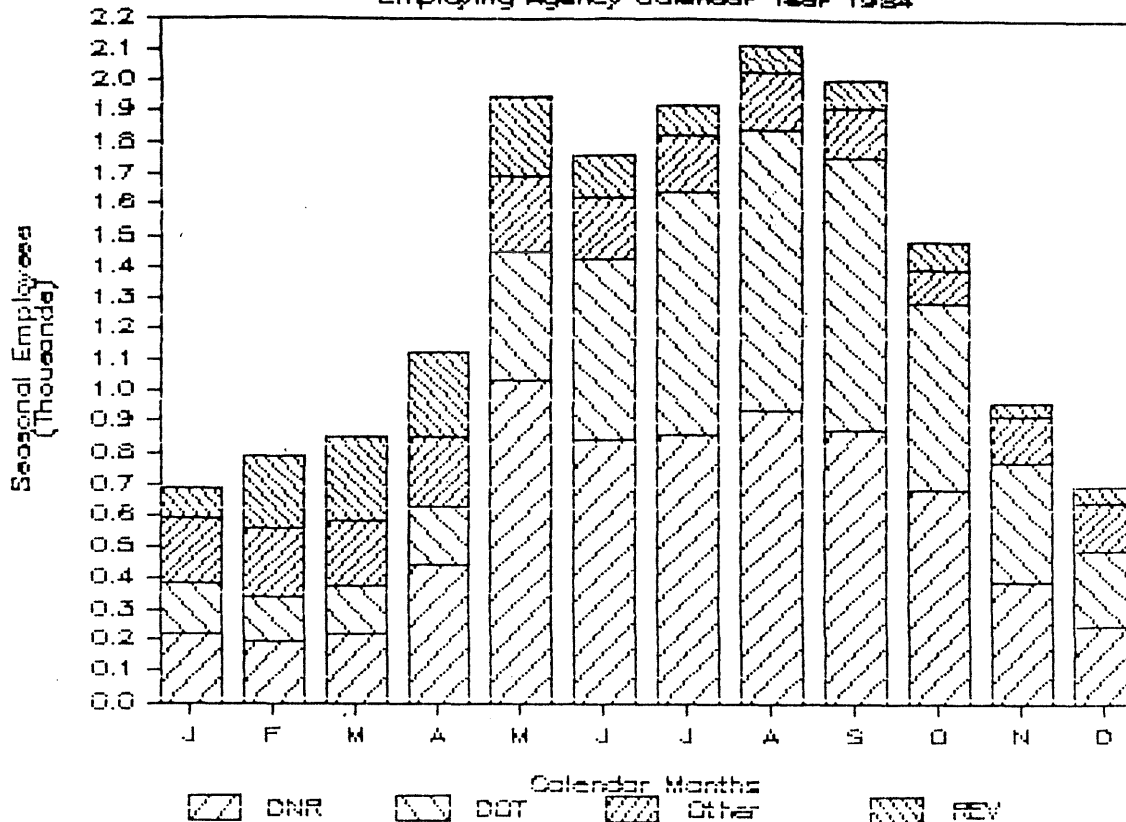


## Findings

1. Seasonal employees are used most heavily during May to October. (May to October = 68%; November to April = 32%)
2. The greatest proportion of seasonal employees are employed outside the Metro area. (64% Non-Metro 36% Metro)
3. The use of seasonal employees is more variable outside the Metropolitan area than in the Metro area.  
(Metro range is 338-605 per month)  
(Non-Metro range is 320-1519 per month)

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Employing Agency Calendar Year 1984



## Findings

1. DNR's and DOT's concentrated use of seasonal employees between May and October determines the statewide pattern.
2. DNR is the largest user of seasonal employees, with 43% of the total.
  - o DNR employs 76% of its seasonals between May and October.
  - o Employment more than doubles (134% increase) from April to May, drops slightly in June and July and then reaches a second peak in August.
3. DOT is also a large user of seasonal employees, with 33% of the total.
  - o DOT also employs 76% of its seasonals between May and October.
  - o Employment more than doubles from April to May (118% increase) then continues to rise until August and September.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY  
Summary Employment Data  
Calendar Year 1984

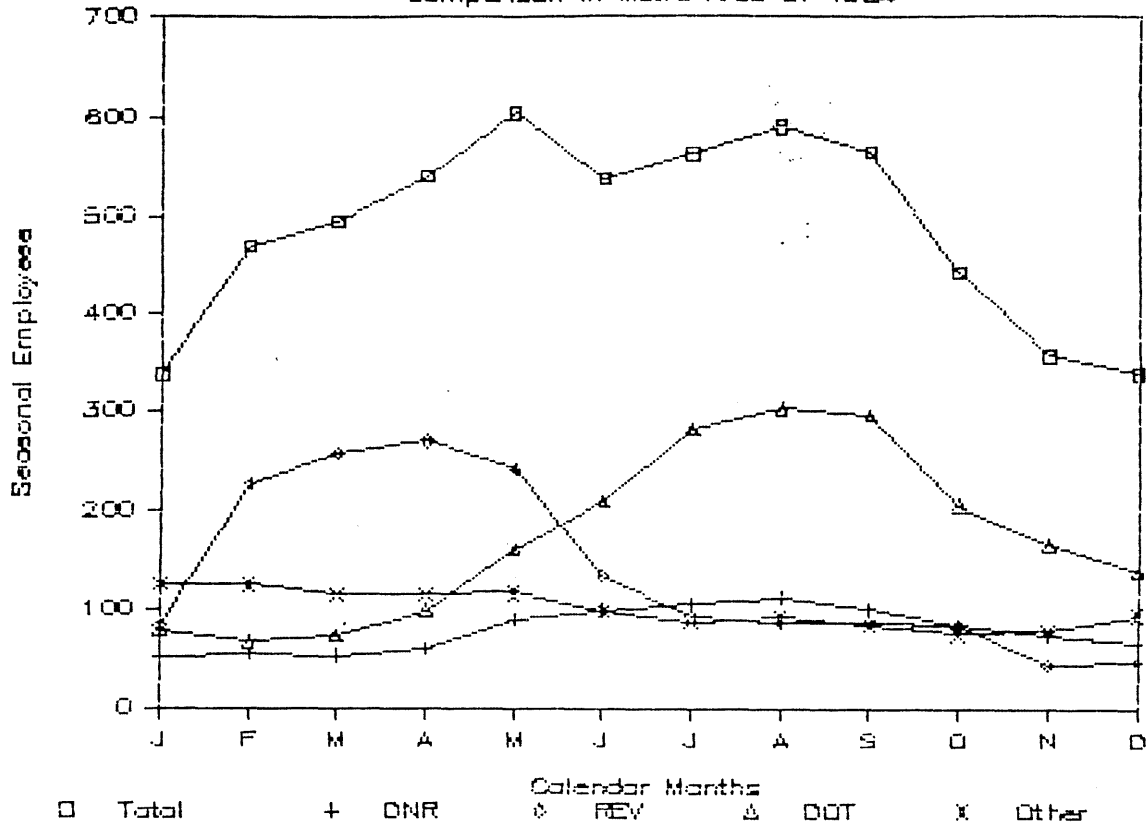
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	AVERAGE	% OF TOTAL	% OF AGENCY	RANGE MIN	RANGE MAX
Statewide	687	790	847	1125	1934	1760	1912	2110	1991	1481	962	697	16296	1358			687	2110
DNR	219	190	217	441	1034	840	861	934	874	691	389	243	6933	578	43%		190	1034
REV	87	234	263	276	248	139	95	92	91	87	46	48	1706	142	10%		46	276
DOT	160	149	155	190	415	581	780	899	879	586	389	247	5430	453	33%		149	899
Other	221	217	212	218	237	200	176	185	147	117	138	159	2227	186	14%		117	221
Metro	338	470	495	540	605	537	564	591	565	443	357	338	5843	487	36%		338	605
DNR	52	53	52	59	89	98	104	110	99	82	73	64	935	78		13%	52	110
REV	83	228	257	270	241	133	91	87	86	83	43	45	1647	137		97%	43	270
DOT	79	66	72	98	160	209	282	303	296	204	164	136	2069	172		38%	66	303
Other	124	123	114	113	115	97	87	91	84	74	77	93	1192	99		54%	74	124
Greater MN	349	320	352	585	1329	1223	1348	1519	1426	1038	605	359	10453	871	64%		320	1519
DNR	167	137	165	382	945	742	757	824	775	609	316	179	5998	500		87%	137	945
REV	4	6	6	6	7	6	4	5	5	4	3	3	59	5		3%	3	7
DOT	81	83	83	92	255	372	498	596	583	382	225	111	3361	280		62%	81	596
Other	97	94	98	105	122	103	89	94	63	43	61	66	1035	86		46%	43	122

### Findings

1. As would be expected, the geographic dispersion of each agency's seasonal employees follows the demand the agency has for peak load employees.
  - o DNR employs 87% of its seasonal employees outside the Metro area. This is consistent with the concentration of forests, parks, wildlife areas, and other facilities outside the Metro area.
  - o Revenue shows the opposite pattern, with 97% of its seasonals employed in the Metro area. This pattern corresponds to the highly centralized demand for income tax processing assistance in St. Paul.
  - o DOT displays geographic dispersion that is consistent with the concentration of roadways in the Metropolitan area, using 38% of its seasonals in the Metro area and 62% of the seasonals outside the Metro area.
  - o Other agencies (DOA and DES) roughly split their use of seasonal employees with 54% in the Metro area and 46% non-Metro.

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Comparison in Metro Area CY 1984

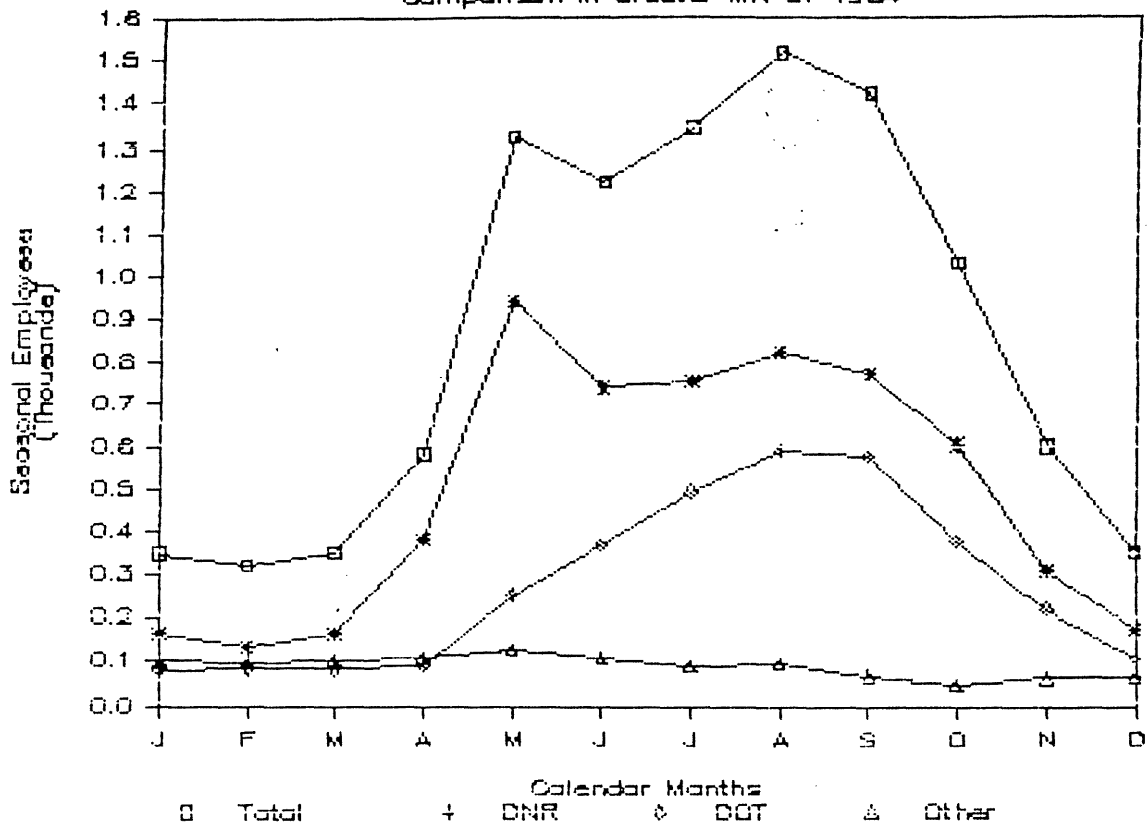


## Findings:

1. While the monthly level of seasonal employees in the Metro area is less variable than in the state as a whole, each agency has very different employment patterns.
  - o Revenue shows a concentrated need for seasonal employees from February to May when income tax return processing takes place. These employees are typically clerical and data entry operators.
  - o DOT displays an employment pattern similar to the statewide pattern with a peak season from May to October during the normal construction season. These employees are typically laborers.

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Comparison in Greater MN CY 1984

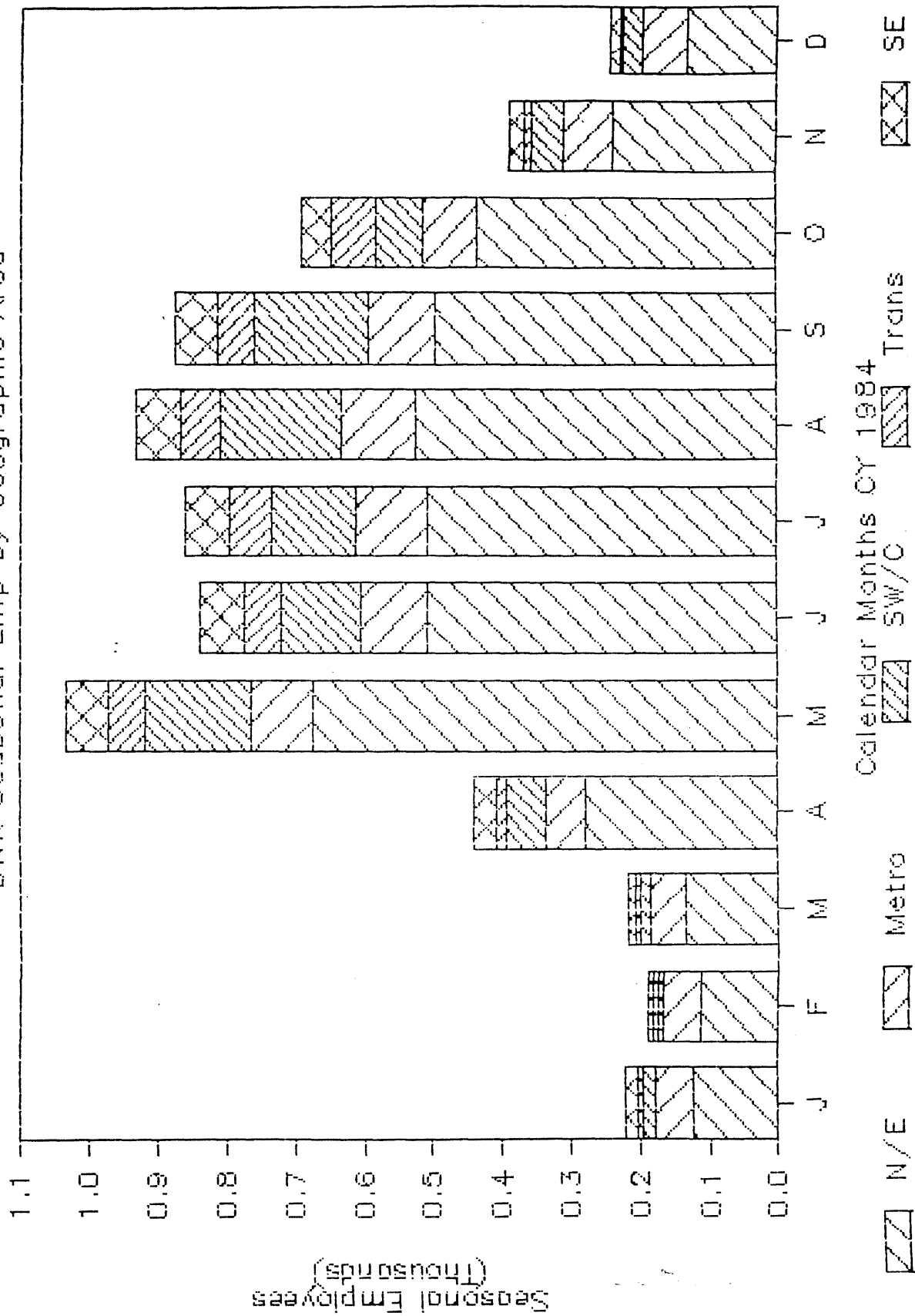


## Findings

1. The use of seasonal employees in Greater Minnesota reflects the statewide pattern of concentrated need from May to October.

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

DNR Seasonal Emp by Geographic Area

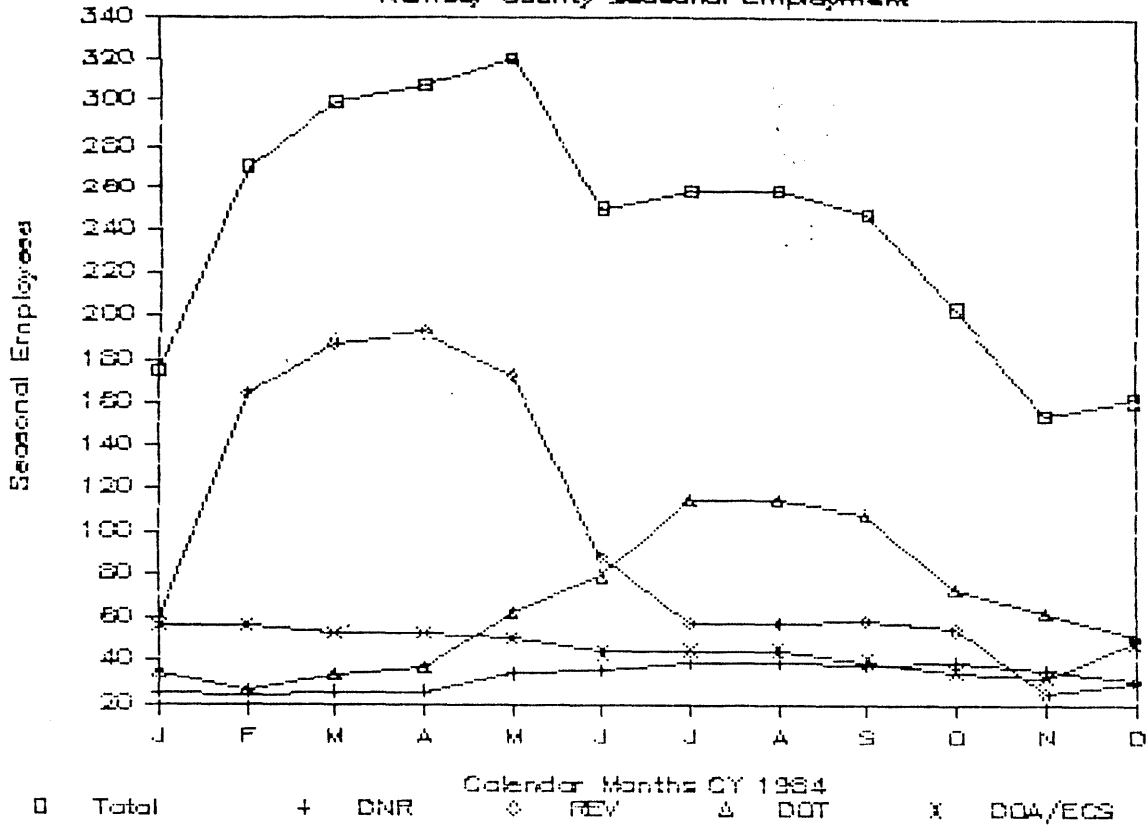


## Findings

1. DNR concentrates its use of seasonal employees where it is responsible for the greatest quantity of resources:
  - o 60% of all DNR's seasonals are used in the north-east, corresponding to the predominance of parks, forested lands, and fish and wildlife areas
  - o 14% are employed in the southwest central area
  - o 13% are employed in the metro area
  - o 7% are employed in the southeast area
  - o 6% are employed in the transitional area.
2. DNR's use of seasonals varies widely by discipline and is highly dependent on the time of year work can be accomplished.
3. DNR uses seasonal employees for three broad categories of work, technicians, clerks and parks workers, and laborers, but tasks vary widely within those categories.
  - o Technicians are used by parks to operate parks under the supervision of a park supervisor; by fisheries to conduct lake and stream surveys; by forestry to assist in timber appraisal and scaling, supervision of site preparation contracts, and fire suppression.
  - o Clerks and parks workers are used by parks to handle office duties, sell park permits, assign campsites, bundle and sell fire wood, remove garbage and refuse, provide trail maintenance and perform general maintenance; by fisheries to interview anglers and collect fish tissue samples.
  - o Laborers are used by parks to provide general park and vehicle maintenance, clean and paint buildings, grade roads, mow grass, haul garbage, maintain sewage disposal systems; by fisheries to clip fins, provide night watch at hatcheries, assist in netting and stocking, transport fish, strip fish eggs, remove rough fish; by forestry and trails to repair equipment, operate heavy equipment, cut brush, and plant trees.

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Ramsey County Seasonal Employment

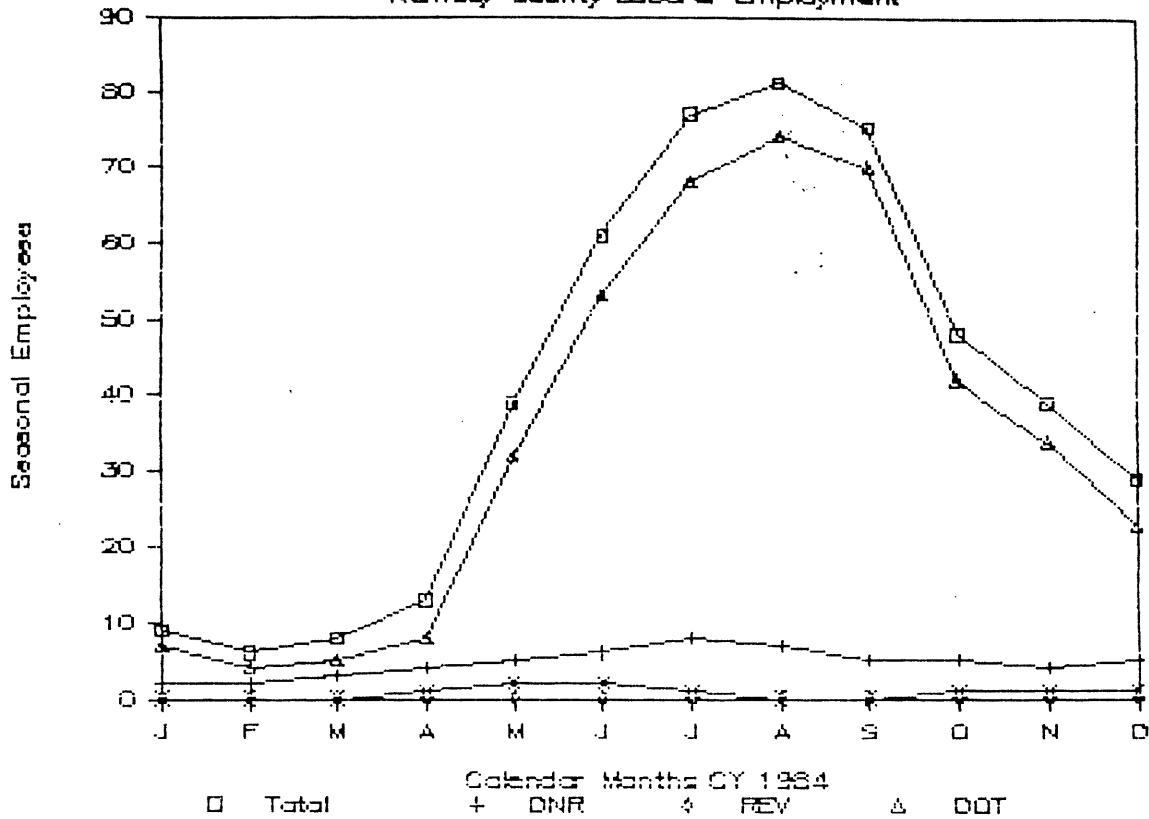


## Findings

1. The State's use of seasonal employees in Ramsey County shows seasonals are required on a year-round basis with a monthly average of 241 and range of 155 to 321.
2. DNR, DOA and DES show a relatively constant use of seasonal employees for the entire year.
3. DOT and Revenue employment patterns are dependent on their respective "season"; Revenue needs additional workers to process income tax returns in February through May; DOT needs maintenance and construction workers from May to December.

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

Ramsey County Laborer Employment

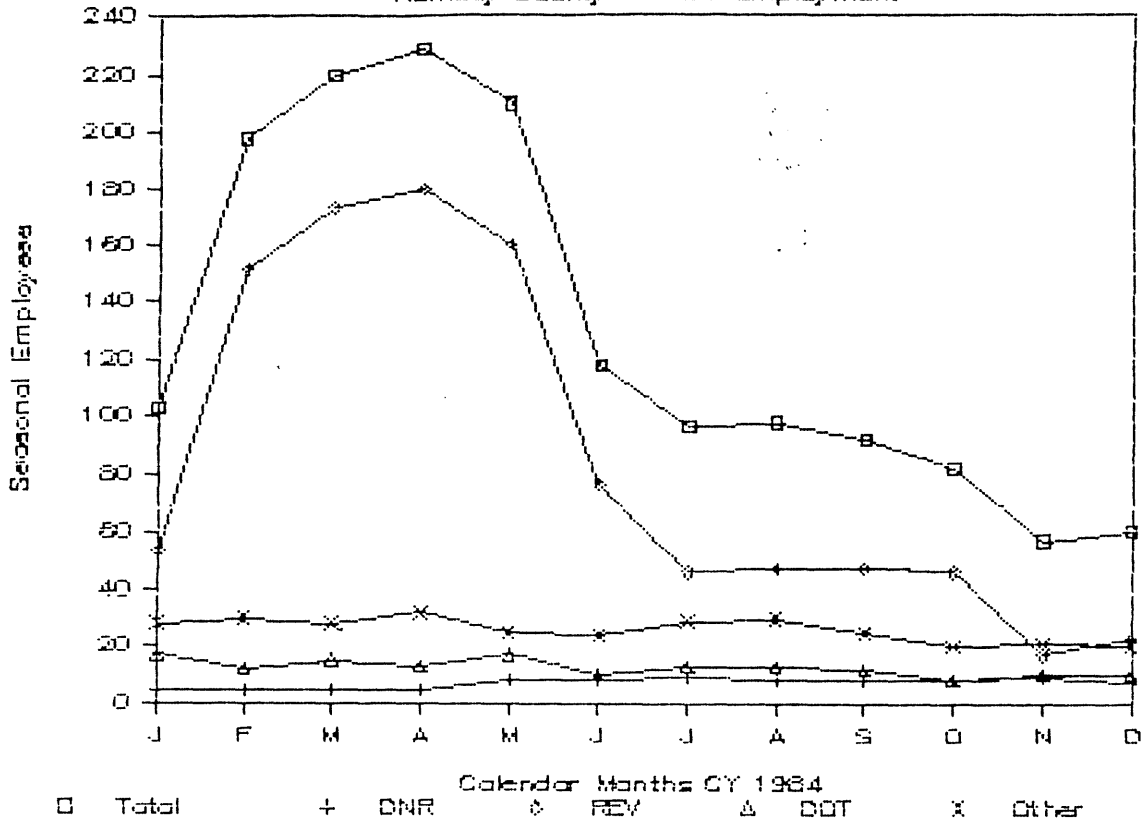


## Findings

1. DOT's need for highway project labor determines the pattern for seasonal laborers in Ramsey County.
2. While DNR employs seasonal laborers every month, they use very small numbers (2 to 8 per month).

# SEASONAL EMPLOYEES STUDY

## Ramsey County Clerical Employment



### Findings

1. Revenue's need for clerical and data entry workers determines the pattern of seasonal clerical workers in Ramsey County.
2. Aside from Revenue's time limited demand for income tax processing assistance from February to May, DNR, Revenue, DOT, DOA and DES appear to use a relatively constant number of clericals on a year-round basis.

## Conclusions:

1. Agencies are appropriately using seasonal workers to manage peak work load demands during specific periods of the year. The work assigned to seasonal employees is in fact "seasonal" and cannot be spread throughout the entire year.
2. Overall, it is more cost effective to continue the use of seasonal employees than to convert seasonal positions to year-round positions or to pay overtime wages to current full-time employees. On a position by position basis, agencies may be able to make those adjustments, but would realize minimal savings.
3. There are limited ways to smooth out the pattern of seasonal employment, or to lower the costs on an administrative level.
  - o First, the work is, in fact, seasonal.
  - o Second, current unemployment compensation laws dictate costs that are not controlled by state agencies.
  - o Third, the geographic dispersion of work sites across the state make it impractical to move workers from site to site in order to extend their "season." Aside from the labor contract "35-mile rule," travel cost associated with such action quickly surpasses any potential savings in unemployment compensation.
4. The greatest concentration of seasonal workers within a 35-mile radius occurs within Ramsey County due to concentration of state offices in the Capitol Complex. Within this area, there appears to be continuous low level use of clerical employees throughout the year. (50 seasonal employees/month out of a monthly statewide average of 1358.)
5. This study was constrained by the data available from the state payroll and personnel systems. Several data elements regarding costs and full or part-time employment by individual employees were not readily available. This same constraint impairs agency managers from obtaining meaningful management information on their use of seasonal employees.

**Recommendations:**

1. The state personnel and payroll systems should routinely provide information regarding seasonal employees:
  - salary and fringe dollars and unemployment compensation dollars/employee
  - work location information
  - job classification
  - number of hours worked/pay period/employee

The information should be aggregated from month to month and summarized for management reports.

2. The Department of Employee Relations (DOER) should investigate and, if feasible and cost effective, establish an experimental clerical pool for the agencies located in the Capitol Complex. The pool should be available to all agencies to draw upon in lieu of each agency employing its own seasonal employees during sporadic changes in work load.

Such a pool would not eliminate the need for seasonal clerical employees, since many agencies will continue to have peak work load demands that exceed the capabilities of a pool.

It is suggested that the hourly rate charged an agency for pool employees include salary, fringe and an overhead rate sufficient to meet the pool's anticipated administrative costs.

**Implementation:**

DOER should determine specific requirements for a pool from July to December 1985. Operation of the pool should begin in January, 1986. DOER's investigation should include:

- o assessment of demand by agencies
- o interest of current seasonal and temporary employees in converting to full-time employment
- o determination of skills best suited to a pool
- o possible use of state employees receiving workers' compensation
- o negotiation of labor contract provisions, if required
- o determination of an appropriate billing rate for pool employees

Beginning January 1986, DOER will also need authority to establish a revolving fund for this purpose and will require additional revolving fund complement authority.