

HAMMER & DOLLY

January 2015
Volume 9, No. 1
\$5.95

WMABA
Washington Metropolitan Auto Body Association
www.wmaba.com

HOW HEALTHY ARE *YOUR* NUMBERS?

INSIDE WMABA'S NEW LABOR RATE SURVEY

Part 1

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ALSO THIS ISSUE

- LEARNING IN ASHBURN: INSIDE AUDI'S ALUMINUM TRAINING PROGRAM
- WMABA MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION: GET YOUR QUARTER BACK

YOUR NUMBERS ARE IN:

Inside WMABA's New Labor Rate Survey – Part 1

What is the current financial health of the Washington Metropolitan auto body industry? Let's find out.

In an effort to gain critical insight into the rates charged by shops in its member states, WMABA spent the fall of 2014 conducting a far-reaching Labor Rate Survey. Focusing on greater areas of interest than ever before (with results split between this issue and next), the association worked to offer a more comprehensive overview of rates, trends and procedural practices than what was presented in the 2012 and 2013 Surveys. (Questions are listed at right.) Like previous installments, the results of this most recent Survey are reflected in eight different regions: The Baltimore area, Annapolis area, Hagerstown area, Washington DC area, Virginia Beach area, Charlottesville area, Richmond area and Roanoke area.

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From aluminum repair to the use of a P&M calculator, WMABA investigates the practices that define today's auto body marketplace.

WHAT IS YOUR RETAIL HOURLY BODY LABOR RATE?

WHAT IS YOUR RETAIL HOURLY FRAME/STRUCTURAL LABOR RATE?

WHAT IS YOUR RETAIL HOURLY PAINT/REFINISH LABOR RATE?

WHAT IS YOUR RETAIL HOURLY PAINT MATERIAL RATE?

DO YOU USE A PAINT & MATERIAL CALCULATOR SUCH AS PMC LOGIC, MITCHELL RMC OR PAINT LOGIC? (YES/NO)

WHAT IS YOUR RETAIL HOURLY MECHANICAL LABOR RATE?

DO YOU HAVE A CERTIFIED ALUMINUM STRUCTURAL REPAIR AREA? (YES/NO)

WHAT IS YOUR DAILY STORAGE RATE? (INSIDE & OUTSIDE)

WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF TECHNICIANS EMPLOYED (BODY, PAINT AND MECHANICAL)?

WHAT IS THE SQUARE FOOTAGE OF YOUR COLLISION FACILITY?

WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ESTIMATORS EMPLOYED?

WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFICE STAFF EMPLOYED?

REGION 1 BALTIMORE AREA

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD ■ CARROLL COUNTY, MD ■ CECIL COUNTY, MD ■ HARFORD COUNTY, MD
HOWARD COUNTY, MD ■ THE CITY OF BALTIMORE, MD

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 52 | \$40 - 48 | \$40 - 75 | Body Labor | \$44.07 | \$43.07 | \$43.64 | 2.33% |
| Frame Labor | \$42 - 68 | \$45 - 85 | \$40 - 88 | Frame Labor | \$52.93 | \$52.05 | \$51.04 | 1.69% |
| Paint Labor | \$28 - 50 | \$40 - 48 | \$26 - 60 | Paint Labor | \$43.95 | \$43.13 | \$42.42 | 1.9% |
| Paint Material | \$26 - 36 | \$25 - 32 | \$20 - 42 | Paint Material | \$29.11 | \$27.65 | \$27.26 | 5.28% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$76 - 120 | \$75 - 129 | \$65 - 129 | Mechanical Labor | \$96.96 | \$94.95 | \$90.30 | 2.12% |
| Inside Storage | \$25 - 120 | \$25 - 80 | \$25 - 150 | Inside Storage | \$56.70 | \$46.75 | \$46.04 | 21.27% |
| Outside Storage | \$25 - 55 | \$25 - 55 | \$15 - 75 | Outside Storage | \$39.75 | \$36.86 | \$36.07 | 7.83% |
| Square Feet | 1,500 - 68,000 | | | Square Feet | 12,730 | 12,381.13 | 11,670.44 | 2.82% |
| # of Techs | 1 - 28 | 2 - 18 | 1 - 15 | # of Techs | 6.76 | 7.1 | 5.75 | -4.32% |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 6 | | | # of Estimators | 2.06 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 11 | | | # of Office Staff | 2.21 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
5 to 8

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 10.53% | 12.7% | 16.0% |

The overall percentage of those surveyed who have an operating dedicated structural aluminum repair area is: **5.95%**

REGION 2 ANNAPOLIS AREA

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MD ■ CALVERT COUNTY, MD ■ CAROLINE COUNTY, MD ■ DORCHESTER COUNTY, MD ■ KENT COUNTY, MD ■ QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY, MD ■ TALBOT COUNTY, MD

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 48 | \$40 - 48 | \$40 - 52 | Body Labor | \$44.94 | \$43.80 | \$43.51 | 2.6% |
| Frame Labor | \$48 - 68 | \$45 - 65 | \$42 - 85 | Frame Labor | \$53.94 | \$49.62 | \$51.41 | 8.7% |
| Paint Labor | \$42 - 48 | \$40 - 48 | \$40 - 52 | Paint Labor | \$43.88 | \$43.80 | \$43.44 | 0.18% |
| Paint Material | \$26 - 32 | \$24 - 34 | \$16 - 32 | Paint Material | \$29.53 | \$27.45 | \$27.11 | 7.58% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$70 - 130 | \$65 - 115 | \$50 - 140 | Mechanical Labor | \$97.12 | \$92.36 | \$91.33 | 5.15% |
| Inside Storage | \$35 - 75 | \$25 - 70 | \$25 - 100 | Inside Storage | \$49.69 | \$45.69 | \$44.86 | 8.76% |
| Outside Storage | \$35 - 55 | \$20 - 55 | \$20 - 60 | Outside Storage | \$41.18 | \$36.83 | \$35.13 | 11.8% |
| Square Feet | 1,800 - 44,000 | | | Square Feet | 14,358 | 12,843.18 | 16,701.43 | 11.8% |
| # of Techs | 3 - 31 | 3 - 17 | 1 - 25 | # of Techs | 7.375 | 7.7 | 7.31 | -4.22% |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 6 | | | # of Estimators | 2.19 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 10 | | | # of Office Staff | 2.27 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
3 to 5

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 11.76% | 29.2% | 15.4% |

REGION 3 HAGERSTOWN AREA

ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD ■ CLARKE COUNTY, VA
 ■ FREDERICK COUNTY, MD ■ FREDERICK COUNTY,
 VA ■ GARRETT COUNTY, MD ■ LOUDOUN COUNTY,
 VA ■ WARREN COUNTY, VA ■ WASHINGTON
 COUNTY, MD

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 65 | \$40 - 50 | \$40 - 52 |
| Frame Labor | \$48 - 80 | \$45 - 110 | \$44 - 99 |
| Paint Labor | \$42 - 65 | \$28 - 50 | \$28 - 52 |
| Paint Material | \$28 - 48 | \$20 - 44 | \$24 - 44 |
| Mechanical Labor | \$60 - 100 | \$55 - 105 | \$44 - 105 |
| Inside Storage | \$25 - 75 | \$20 - 80 | \$20 - 85 |
| Outside Storage | \$12 - 50 | \$20 - 65 | \$20 - 65 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------|--------|
| Square Feet | 1,200 - 30,000 | | |
| # of Techs | 2 - 17 | 1-15 | 1 - 20 |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 4 | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 10 | | |

| Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Body Labor | \$45.26 | \$43.70 | \$43.59 | 3.56% |
| Frame Labor | \$57.91 | \$55.19 | \$55.27 | 4.92% |
| Paint Labor | \$45.26 | \$43.04 | \$42.92 | 5.17% |
| Paint Material | \$30.78 | \$29.00 | \$29.08 | 6.14% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$83.13 | \$86.06 | \$81.57 | -3.40% |
| Inside Storage | \$51.89 | \$54.26 | \$49.43 | -4.37% |
| Outside Storage | \$38.86 | \$45.19 | \$39.86 | -14.01% |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Square Feet | 11,197.55 | 12,692.67 | 15,570.00 | -11.78% |
| # of Techs | 6.61 | 7.6 | 8.16 | -13.36% |
| # of Estimators | 1.96 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1.67 | | | |

**2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
5 to 9**

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 21.74% | 11.1% | 22.9% |

REGION 4 WASHINGTON, DC AREA

ALEXANDRIA CITY, VA ■ ARLINGTON, VA ■
 CHARLES COUNTY, MD ■ CULPEPER COUNTY, VA ■
 FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA ■ FAUQUIER COUNTY, VA ■
 FREDERICKSBURG CITY, VA ■ KING GEORGE
 COUNTY, VA ■ MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD ■
 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD ■ PRINCE WILLIAM
 COUNTY, VA ■ RAPPAHANNOCK, VA ■
 SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VA ■ STAFFORD COUNTY,
 VA ■ ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MD ■ THE CITY OF WASH-
 INGTON, DC ■ WESTMORELAND COUNTY, VA

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 50 | \$40 - 55 | \$38 - 50 |
| Frame Labor | \$42 - 88 | \$40 - 100 | \$38 - 90 |
| Paint Labor | \$30 - 50 | \$26 - 55 | \$25 - 50 |
| Paint Material | \$26 - 35 | \$22 - 45 | \$18 - 95 |
| Mechanical Labor | \$65 - 132 | \$50 - 130 | \$28 - 128 |
| Inside Storage | \$35 - 125 | \$20 - 150 | \$16 - 100 |
| Outside Storage | \$20 - 85 | \$20 - 100 | \$25 - 100 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Square Feet | 1,600 - 66,000 | | |
| # of Techs | 1 - 37 | 1 - 37 | 1 - 57 |
| # of Estimators | 1-9 | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1-11 | | |

| Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Body Labor | \$44.42 | \$43.59 | \$43.35 | 1.90% |
| Frame Labor | \$53.54 | \$52.79 | \$51.67 | 1.42% |
| Paint Labor | \$44.01 | \$43.34 | \$42.80 | 1.54% |
| Paint Material | \$30.19 | \$29.38 | \$28.89 | 2.75% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$96.38 | \$91.88 | \$92.44 | 4.90% |
| Inside Storage | \$59.94 | \$53.55 | \$55.02 | 11.93% |
| Outside Storage | \$50.60 | \$46.05 | \$45.67 | 9.87% |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Square Feet | 14,088 | 14,885.15 | 14,646.36 | -5.36% |
| # of Techs | 7.67 | 8.9 | 9.96 | -14.14% |
| # of Estimators | 2.13 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 2.15 | | | |

**2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
5 to 9**

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 14.12% | 23.9% | 29.4% |



REGION 5 VIRGINIA BEACH AREA

ACCOMACK COUNTY, VA ■ CHESAPEAKE CITY, VA ■ FRANKLIN CITY, VA ■ GLOUCESTER COUNTY, VA ■ HAMPTON CITY, VA ■ ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, VA ■ MATHEWS COUNTY, VA ■ NEWPORT NEWS CITY, VA ■ NORFOLK CITY, VA ■ NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, VA ■ PORTSMOUTH CITY, VA ■ SOMERSET COUNTY, MD ■ SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY, VA ■ SUFFOLK CITY, VA ■ SURRY COUNTY, VA ■ VIRGINIA BEACH CITY, VA ■ WICOMICO COUNTY, MD ■ WORCESTER COUNTY, MD ■ YORK COUNTY, VA

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 48 | \$40 - 55 | \$42 - 55 |
| Frame Labor | \$45 - 65 | \$40 - 85 | \$42 - 85 |
| Paint Labor | \$42 - 48 | \$28 - 60 | \$32 - 55 |
| Paint Material | \$28 - 35 | \$22 - 34 | \$25 - 44 |
| Mechanical Labor | \$65 - 98 | \$40 - 110 | \$30 - 108 |
| Inside Storage | \$25 - 65 | \$15 - 100 | \$15 - 100 |
| Outside Storage | \$25 - 50 | \$10 - 50 | \$15 - 85 |
| Square Feet | 3,000 - 22,000 | | |
| # of Techs | 1 - 20 | 1 - 28 | 1 - 20 |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 4 | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 5 | | |

| Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$44.59 | \$44.27 | \$44.41 | 0.72% |
| Frame Labor | \$54.62 | \$52.78 | \$56.63 | 3.48% |
| Paint Labor | \$44.03 | \$44.76 | \$44.17 | -1.62% |
| Paint Material | \$30.82 | \$29.35 | \$30.28 | 5.02% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$85.83 | \$84.51 | \$82.50 | 1.56% |
| Inside Storage | \$39.62 | \$40.50 | \$42.69 | -2.17% |
| Outside Storage | \$34.57 | \$31.69 | \$33.54 | 9.07% |
| Square Feet | 9,308.7 | 11,228.29 | 12,681.69 | -17.10% |
| # of Techs | 6.34 | 8.0 | 6.95 | -20.75% |
| # of Estimators | 2.04 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 2.11 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
2 to 3

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 13.79% | 25.0% | 22.0% |

REGION 6 CHARLOTTESVILLE AREA

ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VA ■ AUGUSTA COUNTY, VA ■ BUCKINGHAM COUNTY, VA ■ CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY, VA ■ FLUVANNA COUNTY, VA ■ GREENE COUNTY, VA ■ HARRISONBURG CITY, VA ■ LOUISA COUNTY, VA ■ MADISON COUNTY, VA ■ NELSON COUNTY, VA ■ ORANGÉ COUNTY, VA ■ ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, VA ■ SHENANDOAH COUNTY, VA

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|
| Body Labor | \$44 - 50 | \$44 - 50 | \$42 - 45 |
| Frame Labor | \$50 - 75 | \$46 - 75 | \$50 - 80 |
| Paint Labor | \$42 - 50 | \$44 - 50 | \$35 - 45 |
| Paint Material | \$30 - 42 | \$32 - 46 | \$28 - 35 |
| Mechanical Labor | \$50 - 85 | \$55 - 95 | \$50 - 95 |
| Inside Storage | \$35 - 75 | \$20 - 100 | \$25 - 75 |
| Outside Storage | \$10 - 50 | \$10 - 50 | \$20 - 65 |
| Square Feet | 2,400 - 15,000 | | |
| # of Techs | 1 - 10 | 1 - 15 | 1 - 18 |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 2 | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 5 | | |

| Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|---------|----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$47.47 | \$45.33 | \$44.28 | 4.71% |
| Frame Labor | \$63.71 | \$61.17 | \$58.00 | 4.16% |
| Paint Labor | \$46.59 | \$45.33 | \$43.72 | 2.77% |
| Paint Material | \$35.00 | \$33.83 | \$31.83 | 3.45% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$70.38 | \$70.24 | \$70.33 | 0.21% |
| Inside Storage | \$49.58 | \$51.92 | \$46.88 | -4.51% |
| Outside Storage | \$36.65 | \$36.25 | \$38.13 | 1.10% |
| Square Feet | 7,150 | 7,307.69 | 13,158.33 | -2.16% |
| # of Techs | 4.76 | 4.7 | 5.61 | 2% |
| # of Estimators | 1.65 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1.83 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
3 to 4

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 17.65% | 16.7% | 16.7% |

REGION 7 RICHMOND AREA

AMELIA COUNTY, VA ■ BRUNSWICK COUNTY, VA ■ CAROLINE COUNTY, VA ■ CHARLES CITY COUNTY, VA ■ CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VA ■ CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VA ■ CUMBERLAND COUNTY, VA ■ DINWIDDIE COUNTY, VA ■ ESSEX COUNTY, VA ■ GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA ■ GREENE COUNTY, VA ■ HANOVER COUNTY, VA ■ HENRICO COUNTY, VA ■ JAMES CITY COUNTY, VA ■ KING AND QUEEN COUNTY, VA ■ KING WILLIAM COUNTY, VA ■ LANCASTER COUNTY, VA ■ LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA ■ MECKLENBURG COUNTY, VA ■ NEW KENT COUNTY, VA ■ NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, VA ■ NOTTOWAY COUNTY, VA ■ PETERSBURG CITY, VA ■ POWHATAN COUNTY, VA ■ PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, VA ■ PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY, VA ■ RICHMOND CITY, VA ■ RICHMOND COUNTY, VA ■ SUSSEX COUNTY, VA

| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 50 | \$42 - 56 | \$42 - 65 | Body Labor | \$44.73 | \$44.16 | \$45.34 | 1.29% |
| Frame Labor | \$45 - 68 | \$48 - 78 | \$44 - 75 | Frame Labor | \$57.00 | \$56.66 | \$57.64 | 0.60% |
| Paint Labor | \$42 - 50 | \$32 - 56 | \$32 - 65 | Paint Labor | \$44.56 | \$43.62 | \$44.96 | 2.15% |
| Paint Material | \$30 - 42 | \$26 - 42 | \$15 - 45 | Paint Material | \$34.15 | \$32.56 | \$32.86 | 4.88% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$60 - 119 | \$52 - 110 | \$52 - 106 | Mechanical Labor | \$83.46 | \$80.10 | \$80.98 | 4.20% |
| Inside Storage | \$25 - 95 | \$20 - 100 | \$25 - 85 | Inside Storage | \$45.13 | \$47.22 | \$43.82 | -4.43% |
| Outside Storage | \$20 - 65 | \$20 - 50 | \$15 - 56.25 | Outside Storage | \$37.24 | \$37.31 | \$35.63 | -0.18% |
| Square Feet | 1,400 - 118,000 | | | Square Feet | 10,241.25 | 15,851.61 | 11,656.52 | -35.39% |
| # of Techs | 1 - 30 | 1 - 22 | 1 - 19 | # of Techs | 5.52 | 6.3 | 6.68 | -12.95% |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 4 | | | # of Estimators | 1.67 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 3 | | | # of Office Staff | 1.78 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
5 to 8

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 10.42% | 12.1% | 24.3% |

REGION 8 ROANOKE AREA

ALLEGHANY COUNTY, VA ■ AMHERST COUNTY, VA ■ APPOMATTOX COUNTY, VA ■ BATH COUNTY, VA ■ BEDFORD COUNTY, VA ■ BLAND COUNTY, VA ■ BOTETOURT COUNTY, VA ■ BRISTOL, VA ■ BUCHANAN COUNTY, VA ■ CAMPBELL COUNTY, VA ■ CARROLL COUNTY, VA ■ CITY OF SALEM, VA ■ COVINGTON CITY, VA ■ DANVILLE CITY, VA ■ DICKENSON COUNTY, VA ■ FLOYD COUNTY, VA ■ FRANKLIN COUNTY, VA ■ GILES COUNTY, VA ■ GRAYSON COUNTY, VA ■ HALIFAX COUNTY, VA ■ HENRY COUNTY, VA ■ HIGHLAND COUNTY, VA ■ LEE COUNTY, VA ■ LYNCHBURG CITY, VA ■ MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA ■ NORTON CITY, VA ■ PAGE COUNTY, VA ■ PATRICK COUNTY, VA ■ PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VA ■ PULASKI COUNTY, VA ■ ROANOKE COUNTY, VA ■ ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VA ■ RUSSELL COUNTY, VA ■ SCOTT COUNTY, VA ■ SMYTH COUNTY, VA ■ TAZEVELL COUNTY, VA ■ WASHINGTON COUNTY, VA ■ WISE COUNTY, VA ■ WYTHE COUNTY, VA

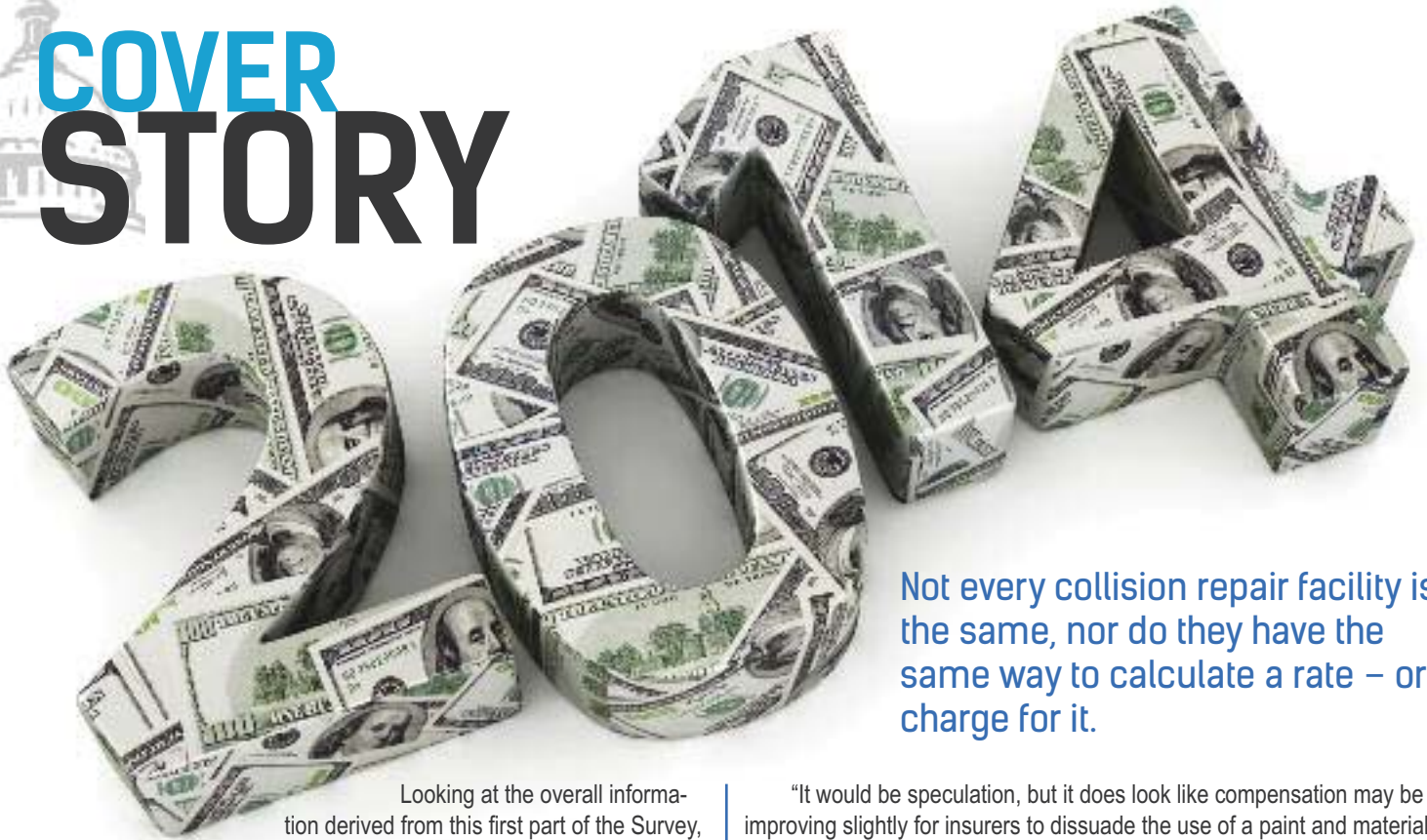
| Range | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Average | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | Change (from 2013) |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Body Labor | \$42 - 48 | \$40 - 55 | \$27.50 - 50 | Body Labor | \$45.58 | \$44.01 | \$43.34 | 3.57% |
| Frame Labor | \$50 - 75 | \$44 - 96 | \$44 - 75 | Frame Labor | \$58.58 | \$54.42 | \$55.54 | 7.65% |
| Paint Labor | \$34 - 48 | \$30 - 55 | \$27.50 - 50 | Paint Labor | \$34.93 | \$43.64 | \$42.64 | -19.96% |
| Paint Material | \$30 - 42 | \$24 - 42 | \$28 - 44 | Paint Material | \$33.88 | \$30.46 | \$32.38 | 11.22% |
| Mechanical Labor | \$55 - 105 | \$50 - 139 | \$27.50 - 92 | Mechanical Labor | \$70.47 | \$83.14 | \$63.55 | -15.24% |
| Inside Storage | \$25 - 75 | \$20 - 125 | \$20 - 100 | Inside Storage | \$48.04 | \$53.44 | \$44.82 | -10.10% |
| Outside Storage | \$15 - 55 | \$20 - 75 | \$10 - 50 | Outside Storage | \$36.67 | \$42.64 | \$30.52 | -14.01% |
| Square Feet | 2,000 - 38,000 | | | Square Feet | 8,538.04 | 9,798.18 | 22,442.97 | -12.86% |
| # of Techs | 1 - 18 | 1 - 40 | 1 - 11 | # of Techs | 5.37 | 6.3 | 3.86 | -15.07% |
| # of Estimators | 1 - 6 | | | # of Estimators | 1.72 | | | |
| # of Office Staff | 1 - 4 | | | # of Office Staff | 1.41 | | | |

2014 Ratio of office staff to technicians
4 to 7

% "YES" to Yes/No Question

| | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Paint Calc. | 15.00% | 12.8% | 18.4% |

COVER STORY



Not every collision repair facility is the same, nor do they have the same way to calculate a rate – or charge for it.

Looking at the overall information derived from this first part of the Survey, WMABA Executive Director Jordan Hendler notes that much of the data is reminiscent of past endeavors – especially when considering a customary +/-5 percent accuracy for the results.

“Similar to the two years prior, we are seeing virtually no change across the board, with the exception of a few sporadic categories in some areas of the region,” she reports. “As we’ll report in the next issue where we delve into the remainder of the survey, the industry response is that the general economic state is well below average.”

Additionally, the Survey results indicate that aluminum vehicle repair – one of the hottest topics to hit the national industry in recent times – has yet to make a considerable impact among shops in the WMABA region.

“There are still only a few shops that are already participating in the structural aluminum repair part of the business,” offers Hendler. “It sounds as though many are in the process or not interested, when follow-up was made to those who expressed interest in that part of the Survey. To forecast, I think that next year, or even the following, will possibly have an increased number.”

Despite the area industry’s apparent reluctance to embrace aluminum at this time, Hendler notes that the Survey still offers some positive food for thought.

“The ranges have gotten a little wider in some categories, which may be attributable to individual repairers determining their own Labor Rate based on their accounting principles and costs,” she explains. “They may be looking more inward - rather than to the rest of the marketplace - to determine what their own rate of repair categories would be.”

The issues surrounding paint and material reimbursement is also showcased in the Survey, with the Washington, DC region being of particular interest: While the use of a paint calculator went down, the Paint Labor & Material Rate continues to increase slightly each year, making one suspect that this might be the result of insurers raising their rates to get shops away from utilizing a P&M cost accounting program.

“It would be speculation, but it does look like compensation may be improving slightly for insurers to dissuade the use of a paint and material calculator,” offers the executive director. “A calculator does make it more difficult to give concessions on paint and materials, as you know exactly what materials were used. If the actual invoice is there, it is harder to arbitrarily throw out a number.”

Unfortunately, the Survey also reveals that the number of technicians working in shops is going down in almost all regions.

“I’m not sure if the reason for the reduction in average number of techs is due to streamlining of processes, lack of work, loss of techs to other industries or even another reason,” Hendler says. “If there are fewer techs to do the work, but there is an increase in administrative roles, then it leads me to believe that there will have to be some sort of managerial shift in the costs associated with employees.”

While rocky at times, the numbers offered in this Survey benefit from one very important element: Reality.

As Hendler says, “This is information that was gathered without any unknown algorithms, contractual agreements or other factors that can lead to results that are not accurate. We simply asked for the cash, posted or retail rates for any respondent. We believe it gives a clearer result of the regions.”

Hendler has an important message for those shops who were unavailable – or unwilling – to take part in this Survey:

“If you are not a participant in the Survey, then you are not a part of the gathering to better the industry. The more information the industry has to understand, the better off everyone in it is. You cannot know where to go without first knowing where you are. Identifying where you are in your own region and what your individual shop rates are can help to show factors that may be different for your peers than for you. Not every collision repair facility is the same, nor do they have the same way to calculate a rate – or charge for it. There are too many variables that come into play to believe there should be a set rate for any market.”

Look for Part Two of the WMABA Labor Rate Survey results in next month’s Hammer & Dolly. **H&D**