

ROAD SAFETY AUTHORITY



Commercial Drivers Survey 2024

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RSA Commercial Drivers Survey 2024



COMMERCIAL DRIVERS
PROFILE



DRIVING HOURS ON THE ROAD



DRIVING FOR WORK
POLICY



DANGEROUS
DRIVING



IN - VEHICLE FEATURES



ENFORCEMENT



KEY LEARNINGS

Research Background & Objectives



The RSA's core objective is to ensure high safety standards on public roads in Ireland for all their users; and the National Survey of Commercial Drivers has been conducted with the ultimate purpose of improving their safety.

The objectives of this comprehensive survey are to profile Commercial Drivers, including their working hours, and to assess their attitudes and behaviours in relation to Safety Training, including Driving for Work policies, Dangerous Driving, In Vehicle Features, and Enforcement.

The survey has been conducted online with participants recruited through RSA social and other media channels.

The fieldwork was conducted from November 2024 and achieved an impressive sample of 998 Commercial Drivers.

All participants were: resident in the Island of Ireland; own a valid Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC); a driver of a Heavy Goods Vehicle or a Bus for work; own a driving licence (B, C or D).

COMMERCIAL DRIVERS PROFILE

Commercial Drivers: Demographic Profile

Eligibility for the survey required: Resident in the Island of Ireland; own a valid Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC); Driver of a Heavy Goods Vehicle or a Bus for Work; Own a Driving Licence (B, C or D)

		All
Gender	Male	90%
	Female	10%
Age	18-24 yrs	3%
	25-34 yrs	17%
	35-44 yrs	25%
	45-54 yrs	30%
	55-64 yrs	20%
	65+ yrs	6%

		All
Region	Dublin	20%
	Rest of Leinster	33%
	Munster	23%
	Connacht/Ulster	20%
	Northern Ireland	4%
Area	Urban	70%
	Rural	30%

Commercial Drivers: Vehicle Type



Type of Vehicle

62% of the sample drive a HGV, and 47% drive either of the Bus type of vehicles. There is significant overlap across the use of vehicle types, e.g. 15% of the HGV drivers also drive either of the bus vehicle types.



‘ANY’ Bus = 47%

20% ‘Any’ Bus Drivers also drive a ‘HGV’
15% ‘HGV’ drivers also drive ‘Any’ Bus

Q.2 Which of the following do you drive for work?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Vehicle Type Profile: Employment

The vast majority of commercial drivers work for an employer on a permanent full time or part time basis and use their employers' vehicles.

	HGV	Bus 'not standing'	Bus 'Standing'	Total
EMPLOYER: ('I drive...')				
For myself	10%	7%	10%	(9%)
For single employer	75%	80%	74%	(78%)
For different employers	15%	13%	16%	(13%)
EMPLOYMENT				
Permanent full-time or part-time	93%	91%	90%	(93%)
Contract	7%	9%	10%	(7%)
VEHICLE				
Employer's vehicle/s	95%	93%	95%	(95%)
My own vehicle/s	3%	1%	1%	(2%)
Both	3%	6%	3%	(3%)

Q.10 For each of the following, please choose which statement best describes your employment status as a professional driver?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

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Vehicle Type Profile: Distance & Hours

In total, 47% of the sample also drive professionally outside the Republic of Ireland.

	HGV	Bus 'not standing'	Bus 'Standing'	Total
LOCATIONS DRIVEN				
Within ROI	99%	98%	98%	(99%)
Ex ROI (incl. NI)	55%	34%	50%	(47%)
DISTANCE DRIVEN PAST 12 MONTHS (KMs)				
Within ROI	64,464	42,210	48,857	(56,753)
Ex ROI	27,141	24,139	19,154	(24,071)
HOURS DRIVEN (ROI + EX ROI)				
Typical week (hours)	39.0 Hrs	35.2 Hrs	35.0 Hrs	(37.3 Hrs)

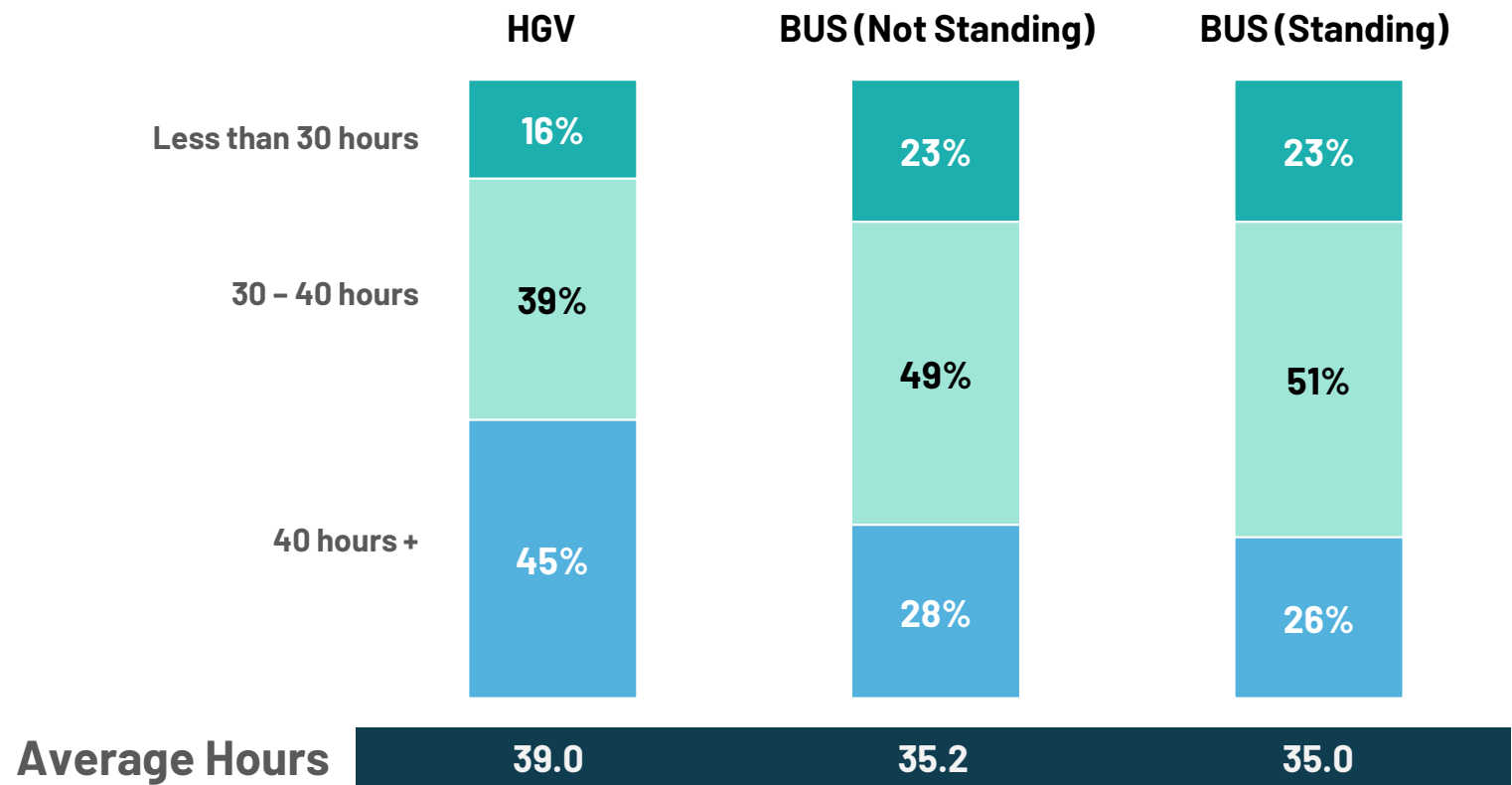
Q.11a Do you drive professionally within the Republic of Ireland? Q.11b Do you drive professionally Outside the Republic of Ireland (including Northern Ireland)?
Q.12a Approximately, how many kilometres have you driven professionally on public roads in the last 12 months - Within ROI
Q.12b Approximately, how many kilometres have you driven professionally on public roads in the last 12 months - Outside ROI
Q.13 Approximately, how many hours do you drive professionally on public roads in a typical working week? Q.14 How often are there weeks where you need to drive extra hours/ more than the average?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998



DRIVING HOURS ON THE ROAD

Hours Driven (Typical Week)

In a typical working week, commercial drivers spend 37 hours on average driving professionally; peaking for HGV drivers.



**Average
Hours
Total 37.3**

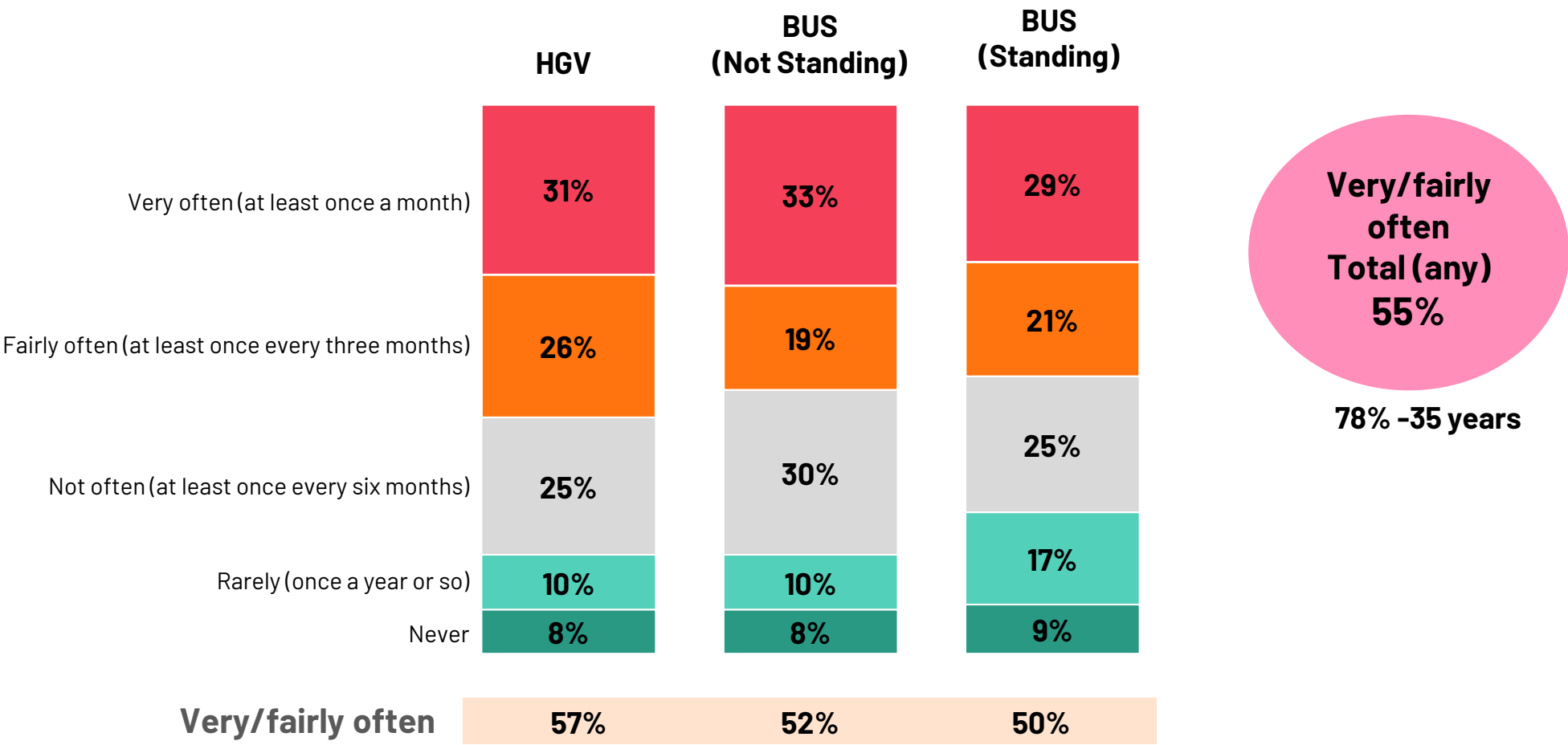
No Significant
Differences across Driver
Demographics

Q.13 Approximately, how many hours do you drive professionally on public roads in a typical working week?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N – 998

Hours Driven: Need for Overtime

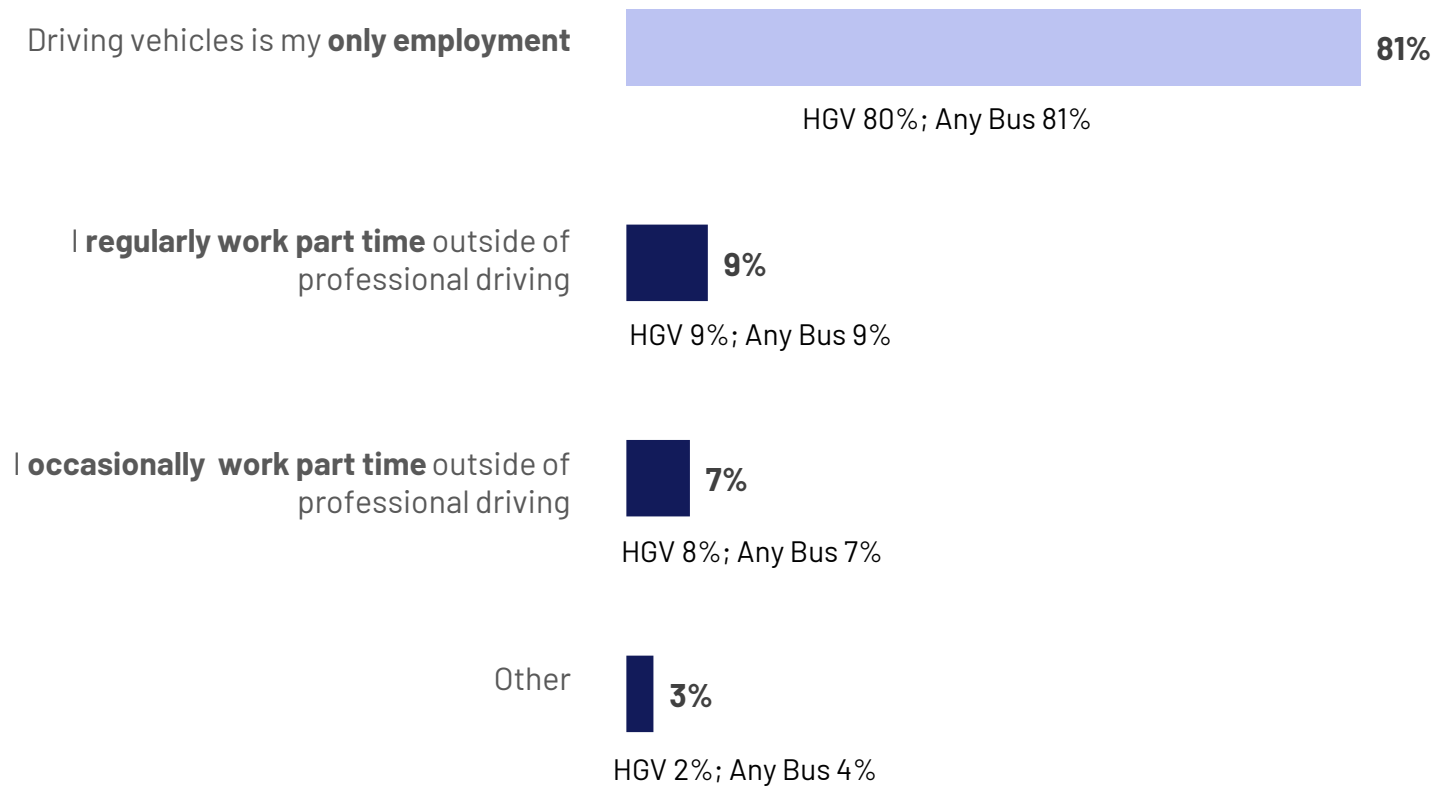
In total 55% of commercial drivers 'often' have weeks where they need to drive 'extra hours/ more than the average'. This peaks significantly for younger drivers (under 35 years).



Q.13 Approximately, how many hours do you drive professionally on public roads in a typical working week?
Q.14 How often are there weeks where you need to drive extra hours/ more than the average?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Work Outside Professional Driving

Up to 19% of commercial drivers also have additional employment (part time) outside of the profession.



Avg hours (Commercial Driver; Typical week)	Avg hours (Other role)
39.3	n/a
27.7	19.7*
33.3	9.2**
20.7	N/A

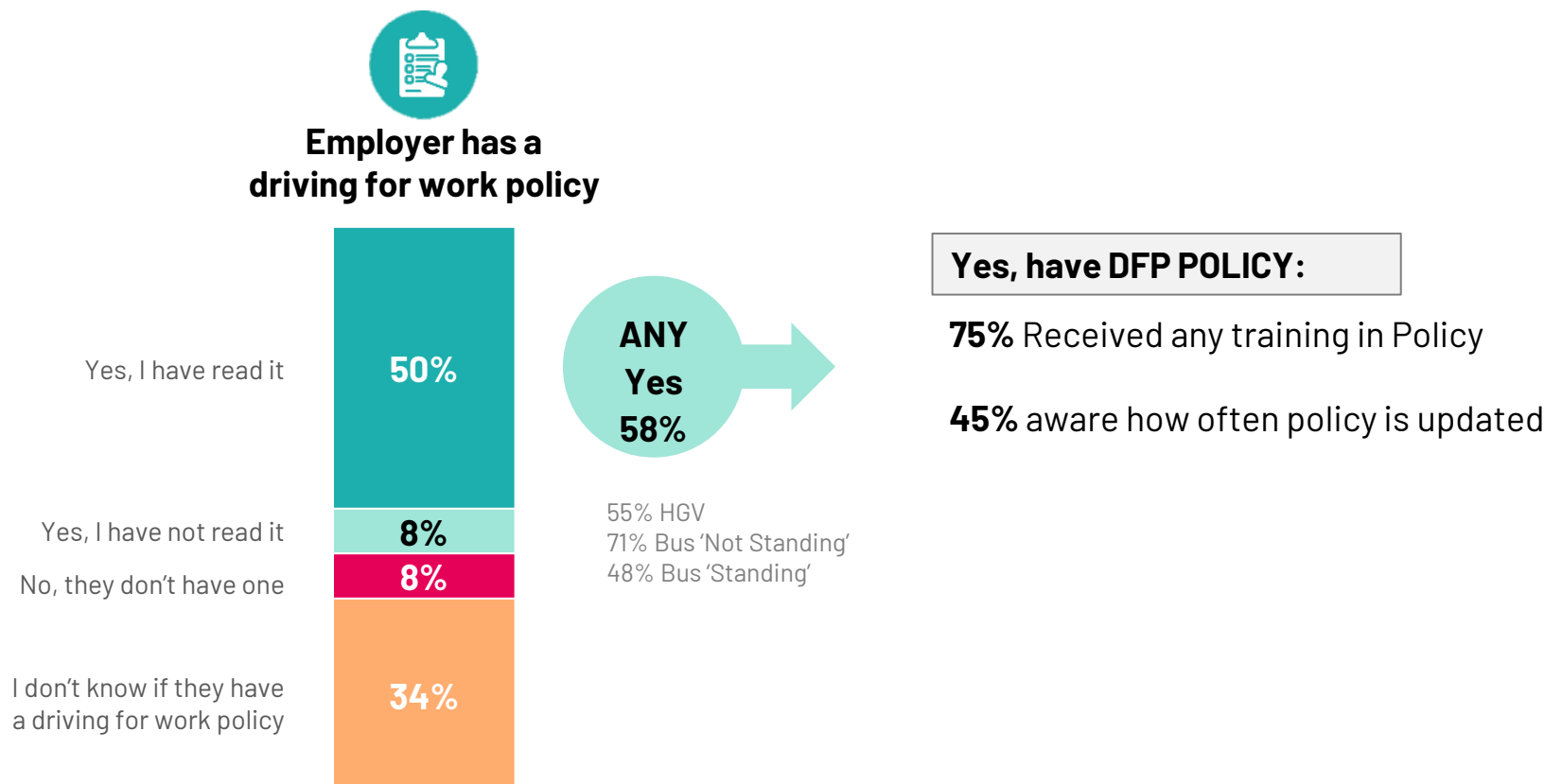
Q.13 Approximately, how many hours do you drive professionally on public roads in a typical working week?
Q.15 And which of the following statements best describes the role that driving plays in your working life?
Q.16 Approximately, how many hours do you work in a typical working week in any other roles you have?
Q.17 How many hours did you work in the most recent week when you worked in this other role?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

*Avg Hours in 'a typical working week'
** Hrs in 'the most recent week'

DRIVING FOR WORK POLICY

Driving for Work Policy

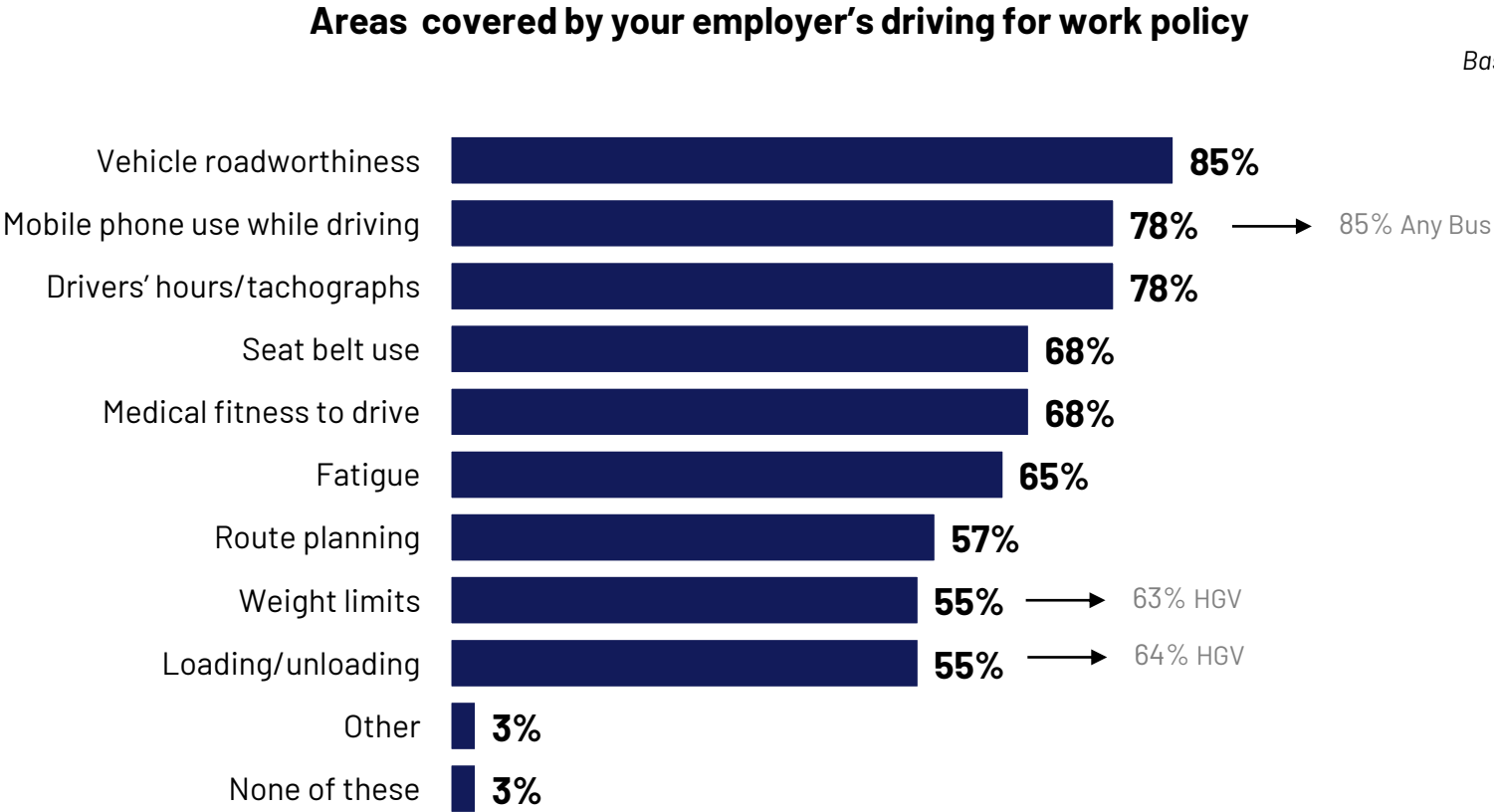
42% of those who drive for an employer, do not know if or believe their employer does not have a driving for work policy.



Q.18 Do you know if your employer has a driving for work policy?
Q.20 Have you had any training related to your employer's driving for work policy?
Q.21 Are you aware how often your employer's driving for work policy is updated?
Base: All Drive for Employer N-904

Driving for Work Policy

Vehicle roadworthiness, mobile phone use and drivers hours/ tachographs are the areas most likely to be recalled as being covered in employers' driving for work policies.



Knowledge of DFW Policy	
Have Read (50%)	Not Read (8%)
448	75
%	%
87	75
80	69
81	63
70	55
71	52
67	49
59	41
56	47
58	43
3	1
2	8

Has driver been given clear information/training on

Commercial drivers are most likely to have been given clear information/ training on responsibility for vehicle roadworthiness, mobile phone use and walk around checks. They are least likely to have been given such clarity on the transportation of dangerous goods and the EC mobility package.



Given clear information/training on..



Base:

HGV	Bus 'Not Standing'	Bus 'Standing'
620	243	317
%	%	%
80	91	89
71	87	80
72	84	77
64	81	69
56	78	66
61	56	69
61	54	44
50	55	51
63	38	33
43	67	57
59	34	24
43	32	21
30	31	28

Q. 23 Has an employer given you clear information/training on each of the following ?
Base: Drive for Employer N - 904

DANGEROUS DRIVING

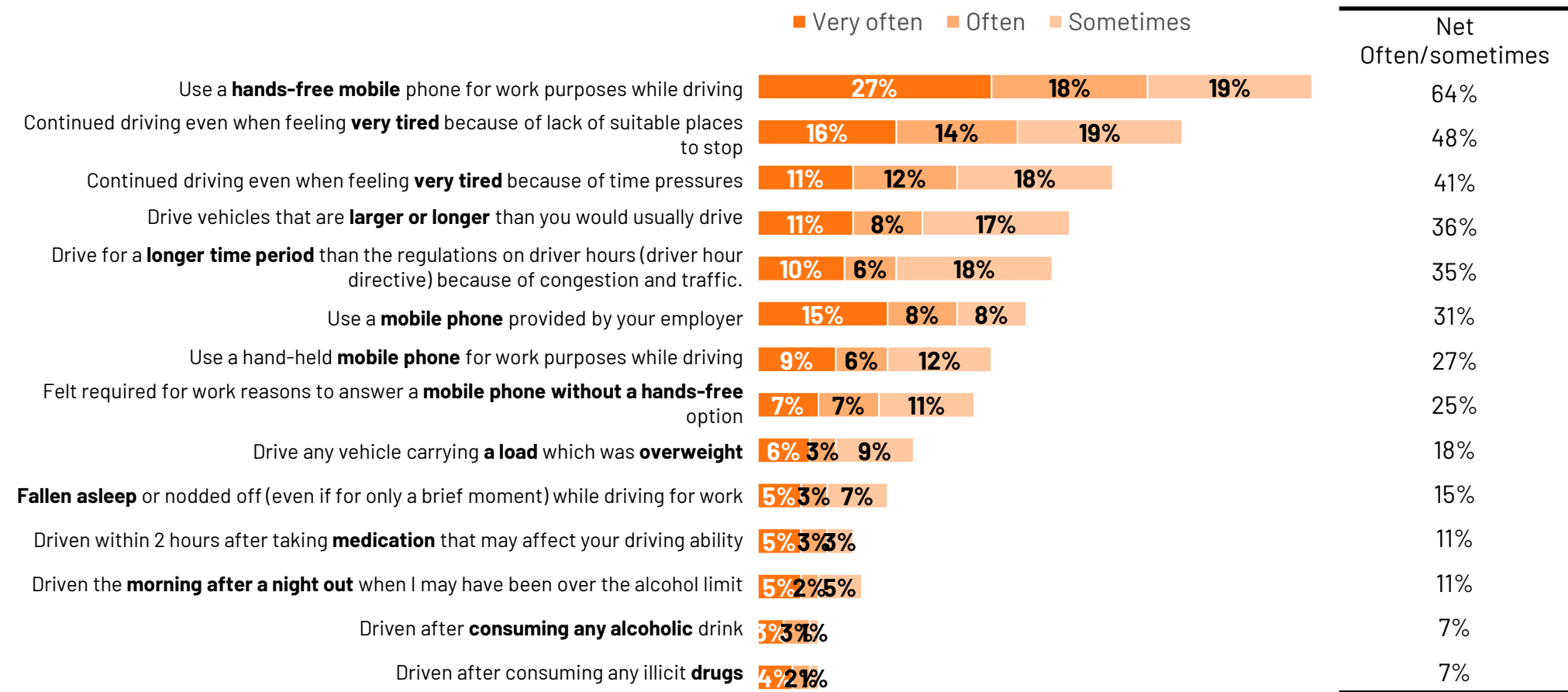
Dangerous Behaviours: Overview

DRUGS 	FATIGUE 	MOBILE PHONE 	VEHICLE 
Driven after consuming any alcoholic drink	Drive for a longer time period than the regulations on driver hours (driver hour directive) because of congestion and traffic.	Use a mobile phone provided by your employer	Drive any vehicle carrying a load which was overweight
Driven after consuming any illicit drugs	Fallen asleep or nodded off (even if for only a brief moment) while driving for work	Use a hands-free mobile phone for work purposes while driving	Drive vehicles that are larger or longer than you would usually drive
Driven within 2 hours after taking medication that may affect your driving ability	Continued driving even when feeling very tired because of lack of suitable places to stop	Use a hand-held mobile phone for work purposes while driving	
Driven the morning after a night out when I may have been over the alcohol limit	Continued driving even when feeling very tired because of time pressures	Felt required for work reasons to answer a mobile phone without a hands-free option	

Q. 24 How often do you do each of the following while driving a bus/ truck on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?
 Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 904

Dangerous Driving Behaviours

The prominence of fatigue related behaviors is noteworthy: both instances of continuing to drive even when feeling very tired and driving for longer time periods than the regulations are within the top five listed behaviors.

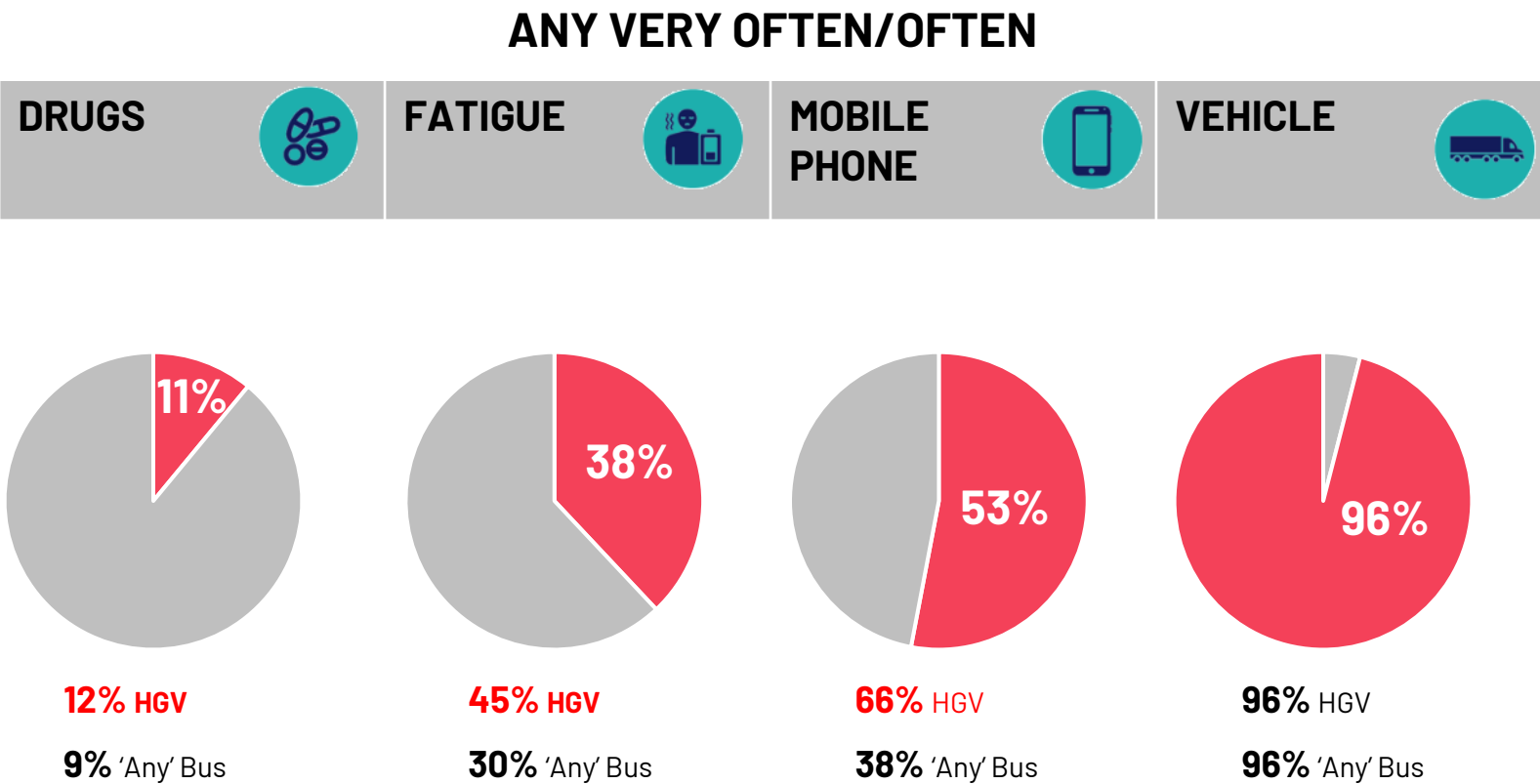


Q. 24 How often do you do each of the following while driving a bus/ truck on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998



Dangerous Behaviours: Summary

HGV drivers over index on frequent behaviors relating to the grouped categories of drugs, driver fatigue, and mobile phone use.



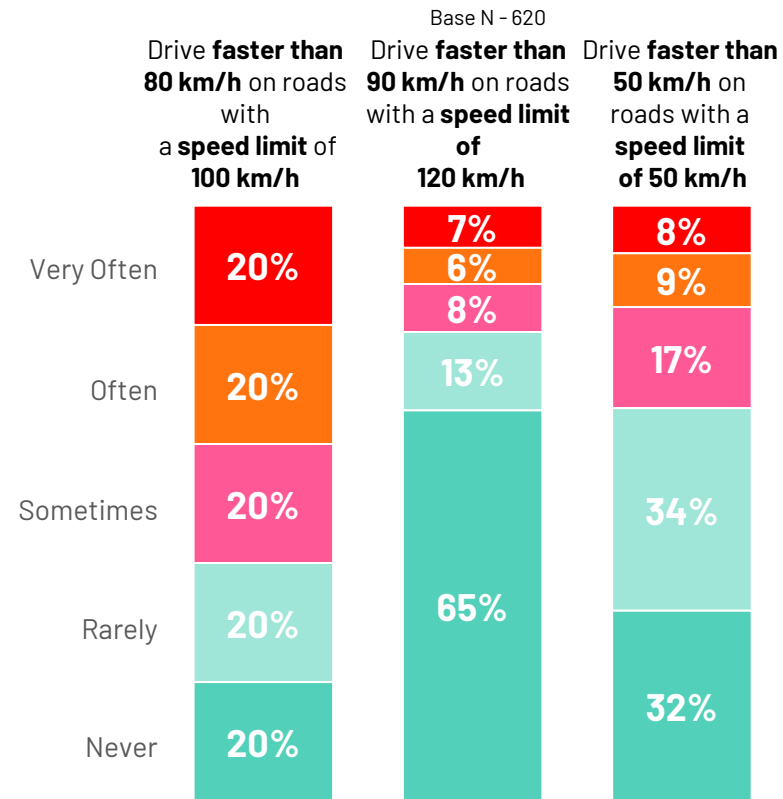
Q. 24 How often do you do each of the following while driving a bus/ truck on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N – 998

Speeding Frequency

66% of HGV drivers drive faster than their various vehicle speed limits (with some level of frequency); the same is true for over half of bus drivers ('not standing').

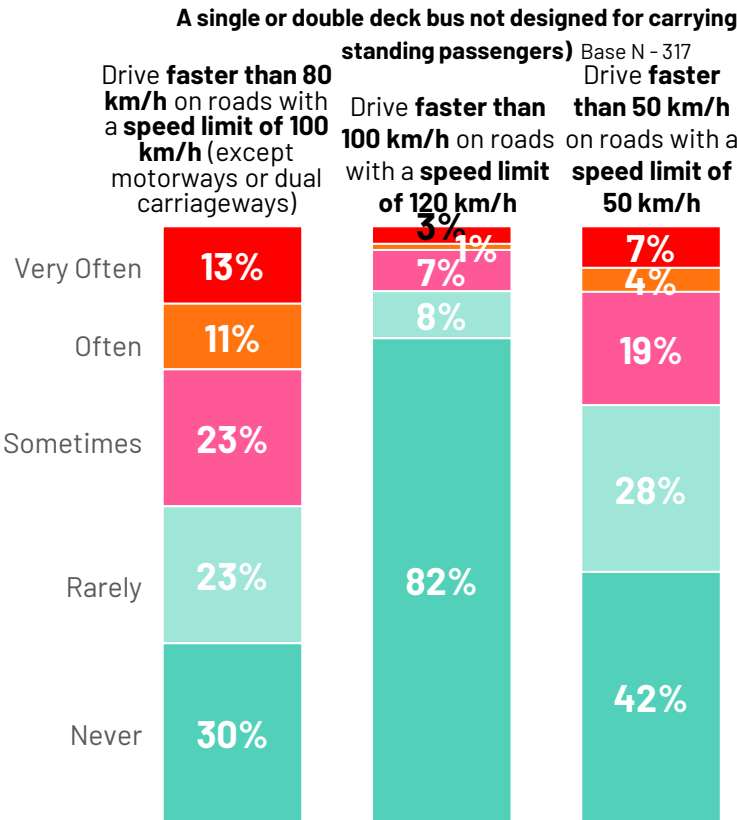
Heavy Goods Vehicle



Any Often/
Sometimes
66%

75% -35 years

Bus



Any Often/
Sometimes
53%

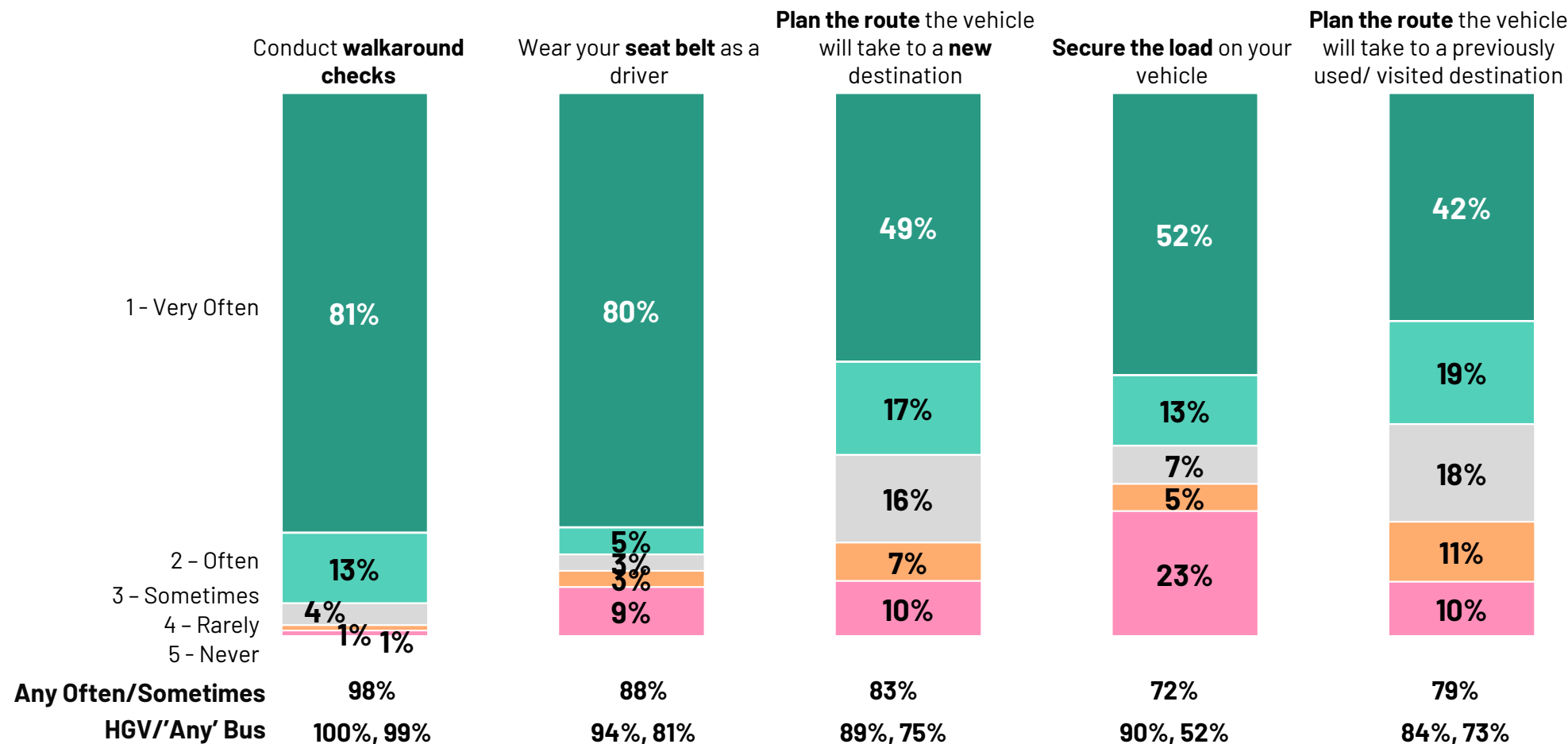
Any Often/ Sometimes	59%	21%	34%
Awareness of Speed Limit (Yes)	91%	92%	-

Any Often/Sometimes	47%	10%	30%
Awareness of Speed Limit (Yes)	92%	94%	-

Q.26 How often do you do each of the following while driving a Heavy Goods Vehicle
Q.27 Were you aware that the following speed limits apply to Heavy Goods Vehicles?
Q.28 How often do you do each of the following while driving a Bus
Q.29 Were you aware that the following speed limits apply to single or double deck buses or coaches (not designed for carrying standing passengers)?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Positive Driving Behaviours

The conduct of walkaround checks is especially prominent. The wearing of seatbelts does show significant differences between HGV and 'any' bus drivers.



Q.13 Approximately, how many hours do you drive professionally on public roads in a typical working week?
Q.14 How often are there weeks where you need to drive extra hours/ more than the average?
Base: All commercial drivers N - 998

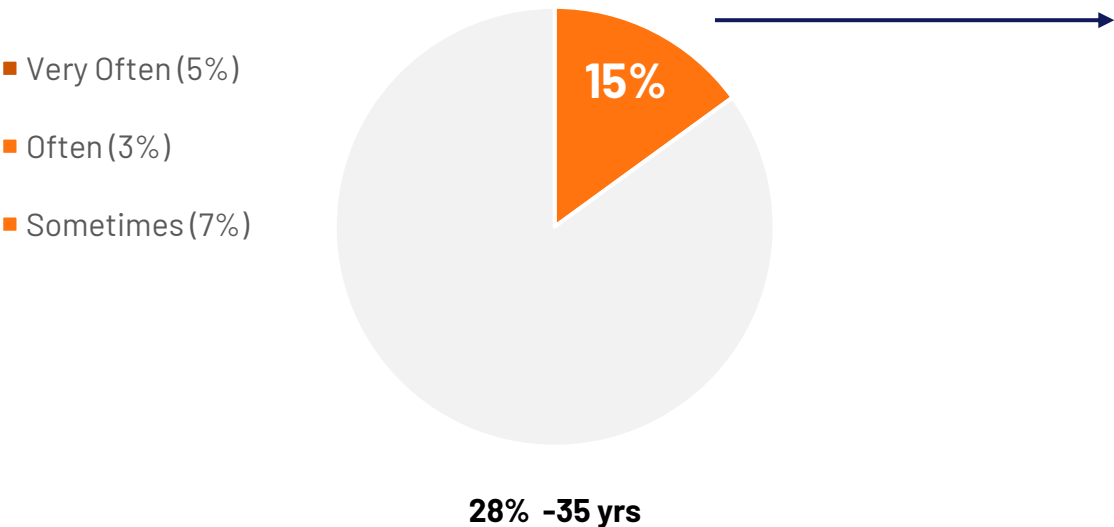


Commercial Driver Fatigue

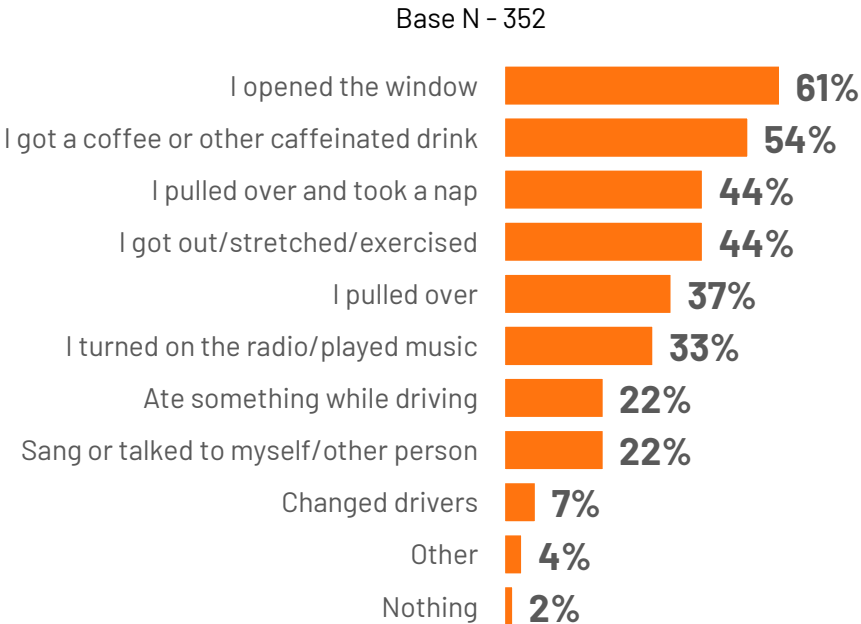
15% of commercial drivers have fallen asleep or nodded off while driving for work. On average, drivers respond by doing 3 of the listed behaviours: the most frequently bundled behaviours are: 'Pulled Over/ and took a nap'; opened the window; got a coffee or other caffeinated drink; got out/stretched/exercised.



Fallen asleep or nodded off (even if for only a brief moment) while driving for work (Any very often/often/sometimes)



Felt sleepy while driving, what did you do?



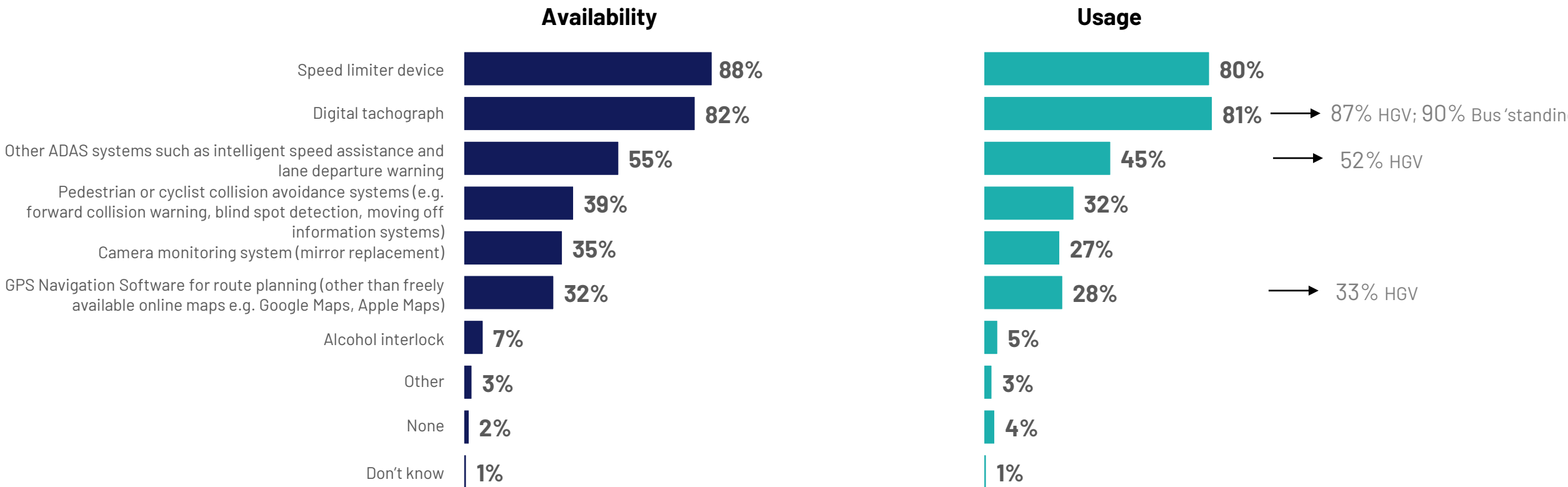
Q. 24 How often do you do each of the following while driving a bus/ truck on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?
Q.25b Thinking about the last time you felt sleepy while driving for work, what (if anything) did you do?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Average number of behaviours	3.3
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VEHICLES FEATURES

In Vehicle Features: Availability & Usage

The availability of in vehicle features is clearly segmented with speed limiters and digital tachographs being most prominently available, followed, somewhat behind, by other ADAS systems

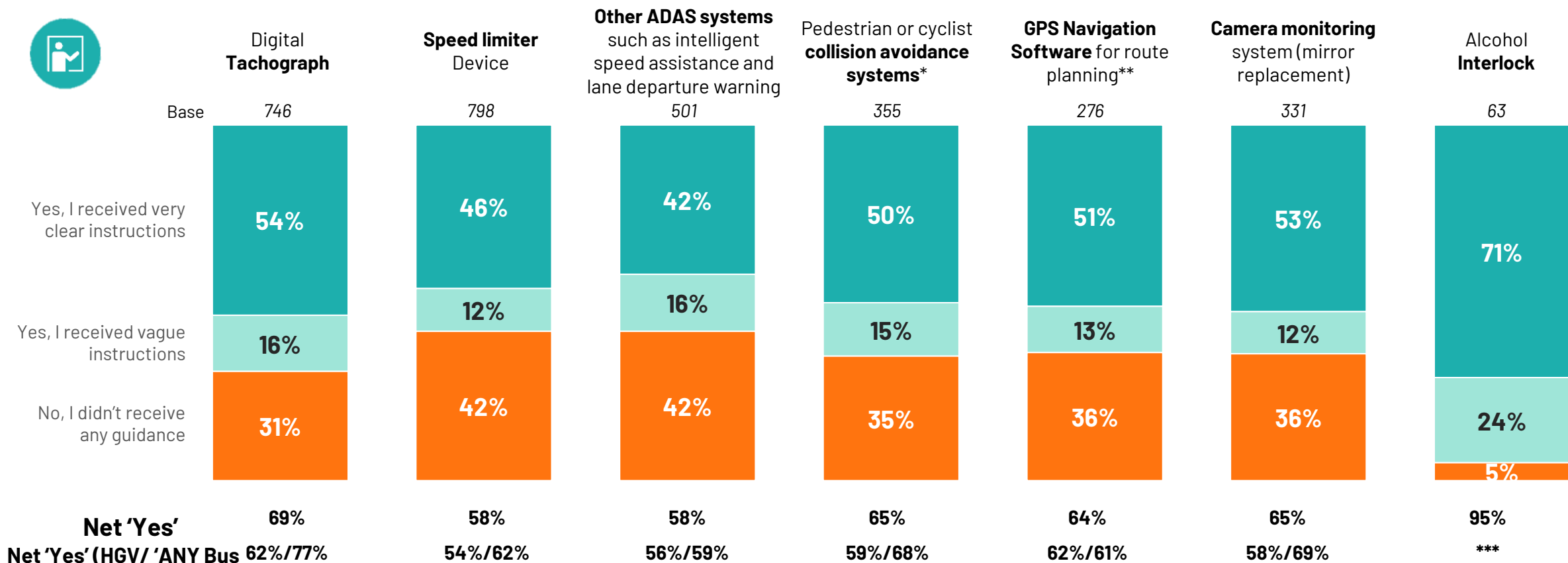


Q.30 Which, if any, of the following features, do you have in the type of bus/ truck you typically drive?
Q.31 And which, if any, of these in-vehicle features have you used?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N = 998



In Vehicle Features: Guidance & Training Received

Only c.1 in 2 of drivers have received 'very clear' instructions for the in vehicle features available to them.



Q.32 Did you receive any guidance/training on how to use this feature from your employer?
Base: Drive for Employer/Feature available in vehicle

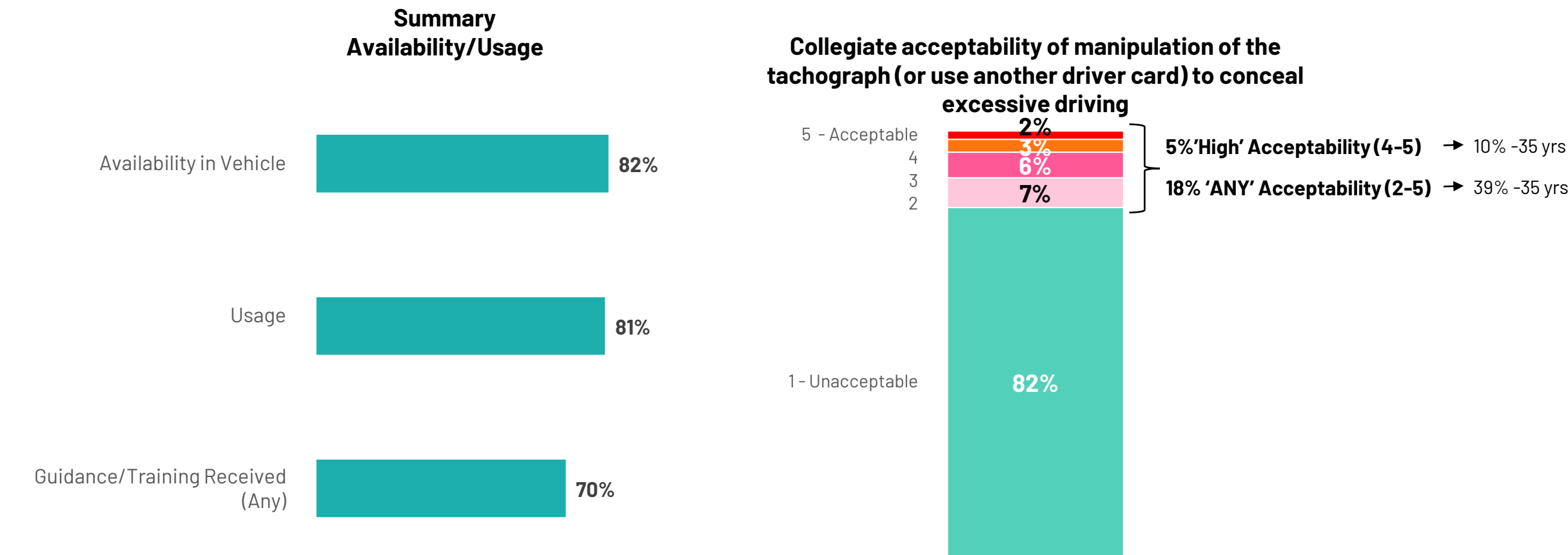
*(e.g. forward collision warning, blind spot detection, moving off information systems)

** (other than freely available online maps e.g. Google Maps, Apple Maps)

*** (Bases per vehicle type too low)

In Vehicle Features: Digital Tachographs

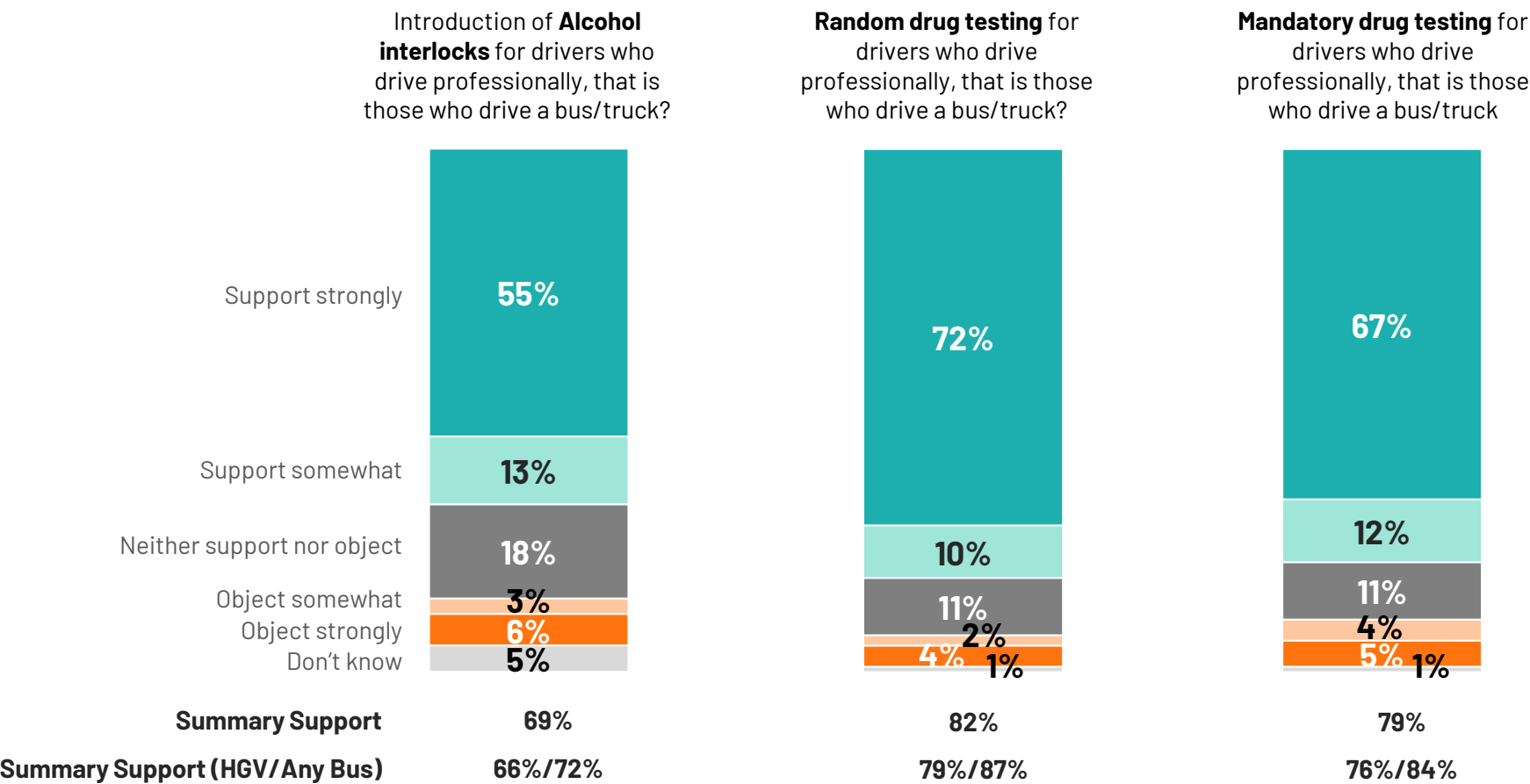
5% of commercial drivers clearly believe (score 4-5) their peers consider it acceptable to manipulate the tachograph to conceal excessive driving; 18% believe their peers consider it in some way acceptable (score 2-5).



ENFORCEMENT

Driver Monitoring & Testing: Support for alcohol interlocks & drug testing

While the support for random and mandatory drug testing is relatively high among commercial drivers, support for the introduction of alcohol interlocks is more equivocal (note: only 5% currently use).



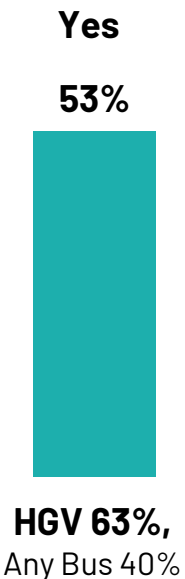
Q.33 To what extent do you support or object to the introduction of Alcohol interlocks for drivers who drive professionally, that is those who drive a bus/truck?
Q.34 To what extent do you support or object to random drug testing for drivers who drive professionally, that is those who drive a bus/truck?
Q.35 To what extent do you support or object to mandatory drug testing for drivers who drive professionally, that is those who drive a bus/truck?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Commercial Checks (by RSA or AGS)

53% of drivers have been stopped for commercial checks by either the RSA or An Garda Síochána in the past three years. For 28% of these drivers an issue was identified; where an issue was identified, 1 in 3 of those drivers received a sanction.

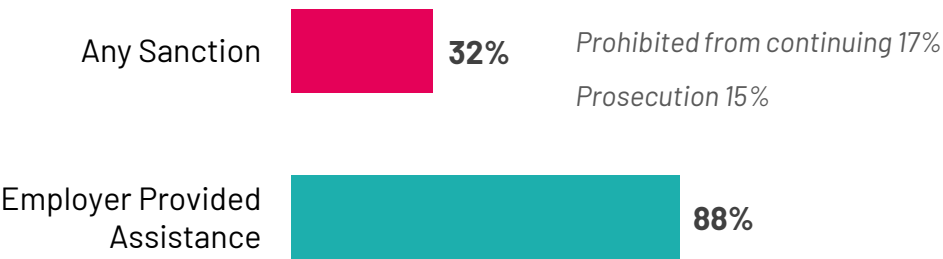
Awareness: Driver is liable for any sanction which results from a commercial check = 93%

**Stopped for Commercial
Check Past 3 Years**



Any Issues Identified
(Base: 53% Stopped for check)

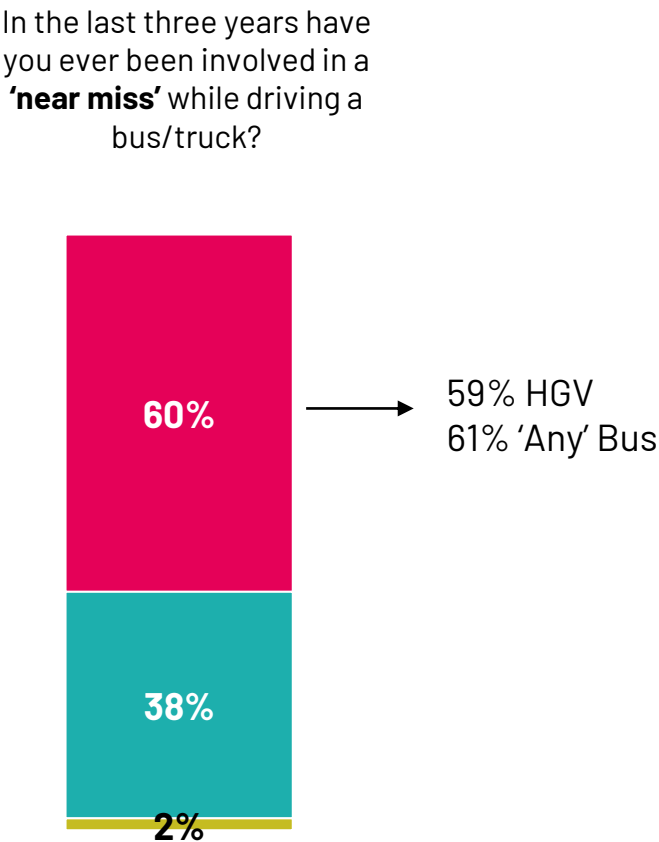
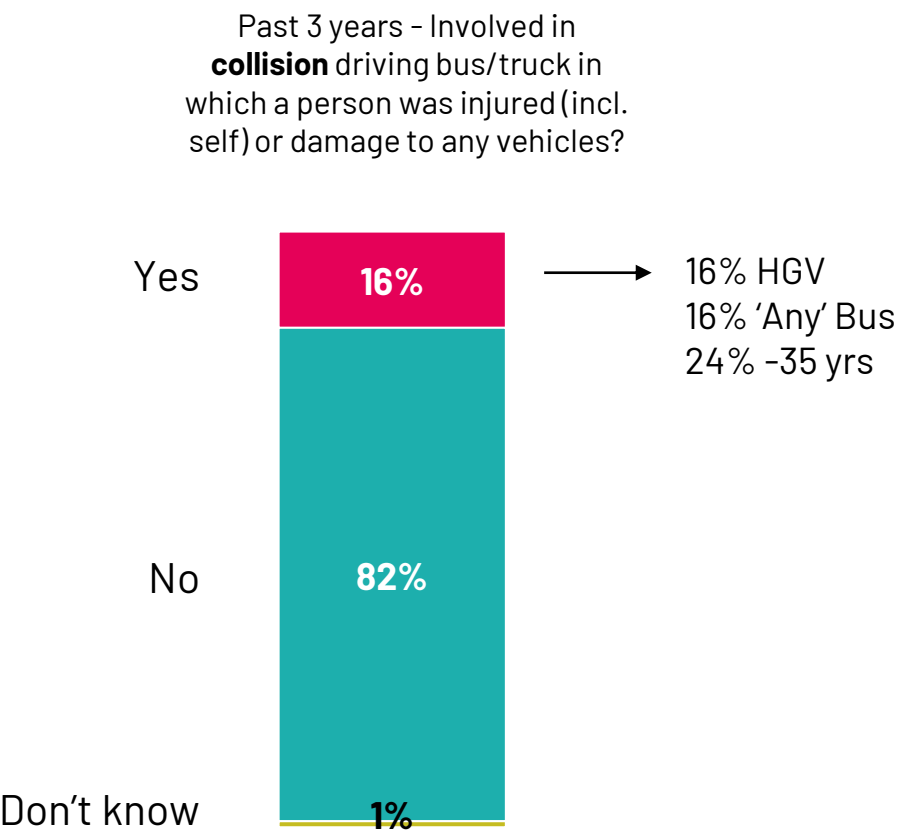
Any Issues	28%
Vehicle Roadworthiness	20%
Driver Hours/Tachograph	13%
Other Issues	2%



Q.36 In the past 3 years have you been stopped for commercial checks by either the Road Safety Authority or An Garda Síochána when driving a bus/truck?
Q.37 During those checks of your vehicle, were any of the following issues identified?
Q.38 Did the issues identified during those checks of your vehicle result in any of the following?
Q.39 Aware if issue is identified during stop by RSA / Garda, driver can be liable to receive related sanctions, penalty points and fines?
Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

Collisions & Near Misses

In the past three years 16% of commercial drivers have been involved in a collision, and 60% in a near miss while driving a bus/ truck. The incidence of collisions rises to 24% of those under the age of 35 years.



Q.41 Past 3 years - Involved in collision driving bus/truck in which a person was injured (incl. self) or damage to any vehicles?

Q.42 In the last three years have you ever been involved in a 'near miss' while driving a bus/truck?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

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Note: Relevant incidences from the RSA Driver Attitudes & Behaviour National Survey (among motorists) were: Any Collision past 5 years - 9%, Any near miss as driver past 5 years - 38%

Difficult Road Conditions

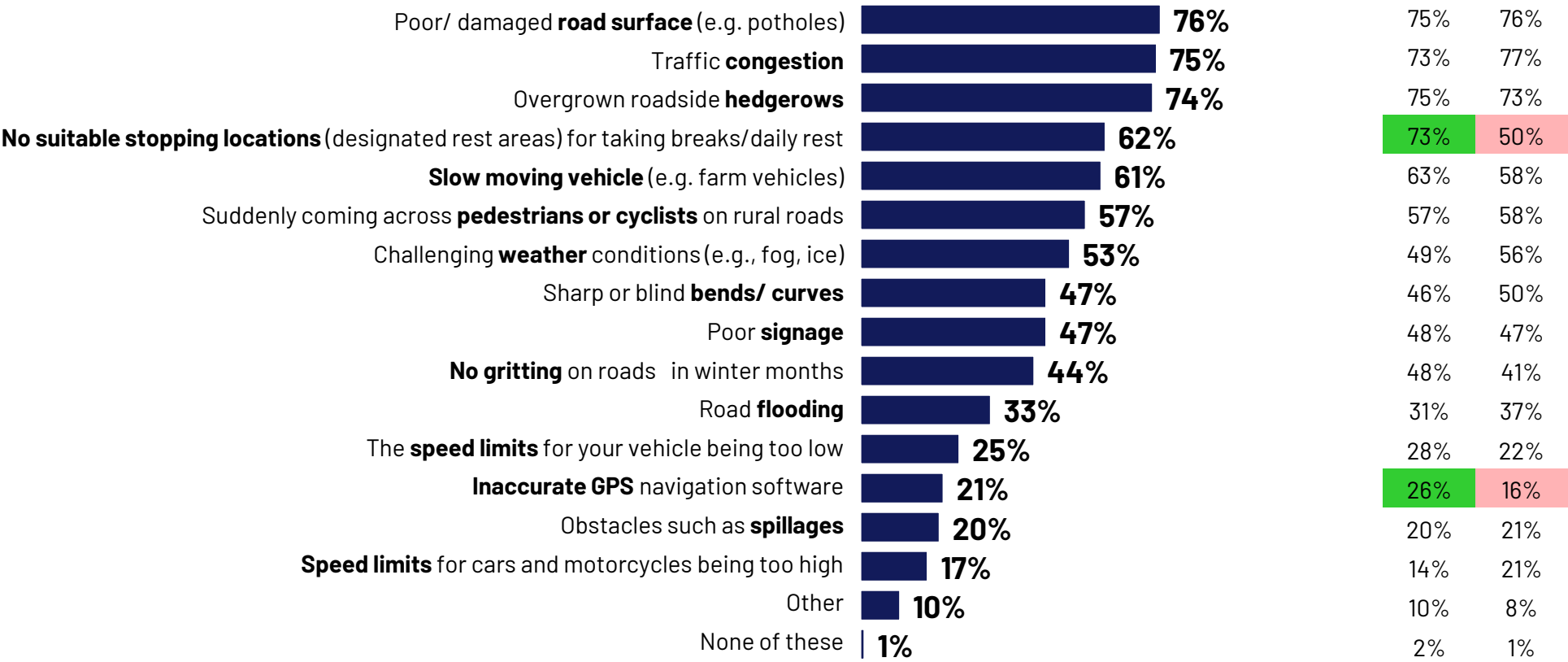
An extensive range of road/ traffic conditions are challenging with the top 3 being poor road surfaces, traffic congestion and overgrown roadside hedgerows. HGV drivers are especially likely to bemoan a lack of suitable locations for rest breaks.



Road/ traffic conditions have you found to be challenging while driving bus/ trucks

Vehicle Type

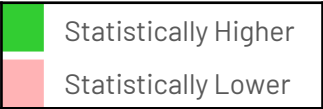
HGV 'Any' Bus



Q.43 Which of the following road/ traffic conditions have you found to be challenging while driving bus/ trucks?

Base: All Commercial Drivers N - 998

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KEY LEARNINGS

Commercial Drivers Survey 2024 – Key Learnings

Workload

Near 1 in 2 commercial drivers also drive professionally outside the Republic of Ireland. 55% often have weeks where they need to drive 'extra hours/ more than the average' and up to 19% have additional employment outside of commercial driving.

Fatigue

The prominence of fatigue related behaviors is noteworthy: both instances of continuing to drive even when feeling very tired and driving for longer time periods than the regulations are within the top five listed 'dangerous' behaviors. 15% have fallen asleep or 'nodded off' while driving for work.

Driving for Work Policies

42% who drive for an employer, do not know if or believe their employer does not have a Driving for Work policy. For those who can recall the policies, vehicle roadworthiness, mobile phone use and drivers hours/ tachographs are most likely to be recalled as areas covered.

Dangerous Behaviours

A range of the tested 'dangerous' behaviours are more prominent among HGV drivers. HGV drivers over index on frequent behaviors relating to each of the categories of drugs, driver fatigue, and mobile phone use. 66% of HGV drivers drive faster than their various vehicle speed limits with some level of frequency.

In Vehicle Features

Only c.1 in 2 of drivers have received 'very clear' instructions for the in vehicle features available to them. Digital tachographs are one of the most widely available features, and 5% of drivers clearly believe their peers consider it acceptable to manipulate the tachograph to conceal excessive driving.

Enforcement

While the support for random and mandatory drug testing is relatively high, support for the introduction of alcohol interlocks is more equivocal. 53% of drivers have been stopped for commercial checks by either the RSA or An Garda Síochana in the past three years. For 28% of these drivers an issue was identified during the check.

THANK YOU

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