

The State of Fleet Management

Insights on Priorities for Today's Fleet Managers

2025 STUDY



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BACKGROUND

In 2025, the J. J. Keller Center for Market Insights conducted its fifth annual survey to better understand transport management pain points and how they've changed over time.

With the knowledge shared here, stakeholders within the industry can better discuss the priorities and constraints of fleet managers and continue to help them succeed on the road ahead.

J. J. Keller Center for Market Insights

The J. J. Keller Center for Market Insights is the collaborative research arm of J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc. The center originated in 2019 with a focus on sharing with the public trends and insights from an abundance of safety and compliance data gathered by J. J. Keller over decades serving more than 500,000 customers across the United States.

It publishes ongoing reports to spur discussion and advancements in safe, respectful workplaces, job sites, and highways through historical data, new proprietary studies, and partnerships with reputable, research-focused third-party organizations.

To contact the J. J. Keller Center for Market Insights, email Susan Baranczyk at sbaranczyk@jjkeller.com.



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OVERVIEW

Fleet Managers' Top Concerns from the Study



Fleet managers' top-ranking concerns:

58% Drivers knowing how to safely and correctly operate their specific vehicle types

51% Employees consistently making safe choices across scenarios

48% Having accurate, well-organized driver qualification (DQ) files

#1 FLEET MANAGER CONCERN BY TOPIC AREA

The challenges fleet managers face were broadly categorized in seven areas:

DRIVER KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

How to safely and correctly operate their specific vehicle types

58%

DRIVER TRAINING

Training that is specific to the unique needs of their drivers, operations, vehicles or industry

45%

FMCSA COMPLIANCE

Having accurate, well-organized driver qualification/DQ files

48%

NEW VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

Drivers accepting and properly using new vehicle technology

43%

OVERALL SAFETY

Employees consistently making safe choices across scenarios

51%

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Knowing quickly when a vehicle or trailer is damaged or non-compliant

47%

MANAGING COMPANY EXPENSES

Effectively managing preventative maintenance to avoid losses due to breakdowns or accidents

47%

TRENDING CONCERNS (2021-2025)

Over the five years this survey has been conducted, the following **top concerns** have been a continuing theme among fleet managers.

DRIVER TRAINING

- Drivers applying what they learn in training

FMCSA COMPLIANCE

- Staying up to date on changes in regulations

OVERALL SAFETY

- Employees consistently making safe choices across scenarios

NEW VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

- Drivers accepting and properly using new vehicle technology

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

- Effectively tracking, planning and scheduling routine vehicle maintenance

MANAGING COMPANY EXPENSES

- Finding and retaining high-quality drivers



SIGNIFICANT INCREASES (2024-2025)

As advancements in vehicle technology continue, fleet managers are showing increased interest in this area. Specifically, they want their drivers to understand and embrace the technology to be sure it is used properly.

The survey revealed **significant increases in the following two areas:**

Category	Statement in Each Category Fleet Managers Found Most Important	2024	2025	Change
New Vehicle Technology	Drivers accepting and properly using new vehicle technology	35%	43%	+ 8%
New Vehicle Technology	Ensuring drivers know how factory-equipped vehicle safety systems will respond when activated	14%	20%	+ 6%

EXPERT INSIGHT

"Fleet managers will continue to be challenged by vehicle technology, from how it operates to the added expense, potential safety improvements, operational efficiencies, and the training required for drivers to use it properly. **This aspect of fleet management will likely be an increased area of importance for many years to come.**"

Daren Hansen, Sr. Editor - Transportation Safety,
J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

JOB STRESS

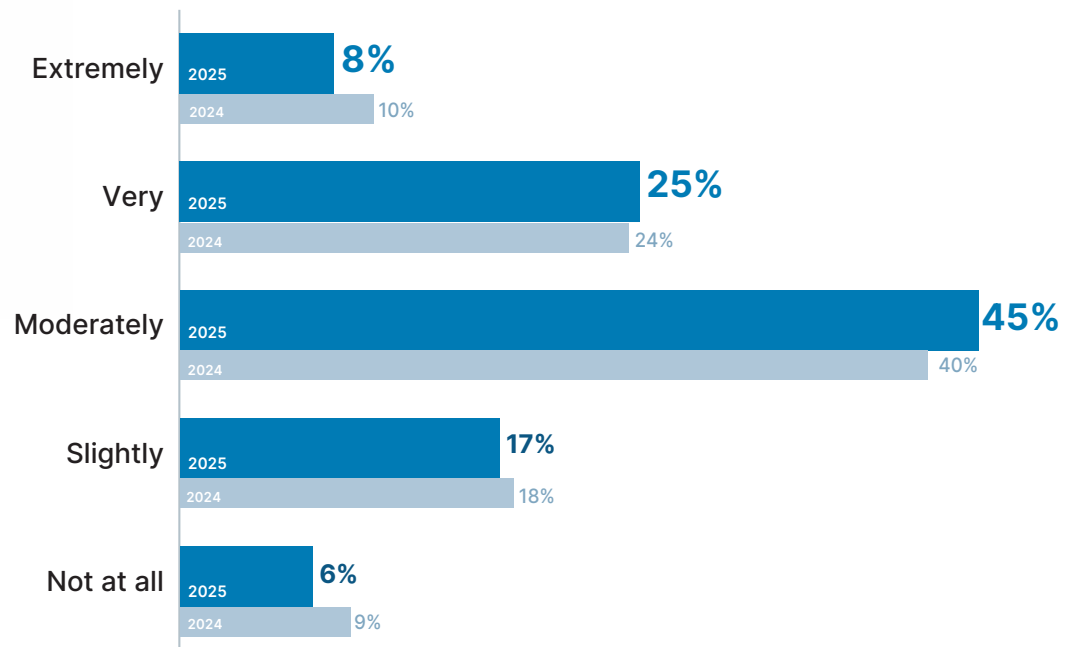
Seventy percent (70%) of fleet managers surveyed stated their job was very or moderately challenging, up 6 percentage points from 2024. Common stressors noted by fleet managers included compliance, keeping up with regulations, hiring and retaining drivers, recordkeeping, and fleet maintenance.

EXPERT INSIGHT

*"Whether you work in fleet safety, operations, management, or administration, there's never a dull moment in the transportation industry, and each day brings new challenges and stressors. When the going gets tough, **the key to success is having a good team around you and leaning on outside resources when necessary.**"*

Tom Bray, Sr. Industry Advisor, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH MY JOB IS CURRENTLY CHALLENGING



LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES

EXPERT INSIGHT

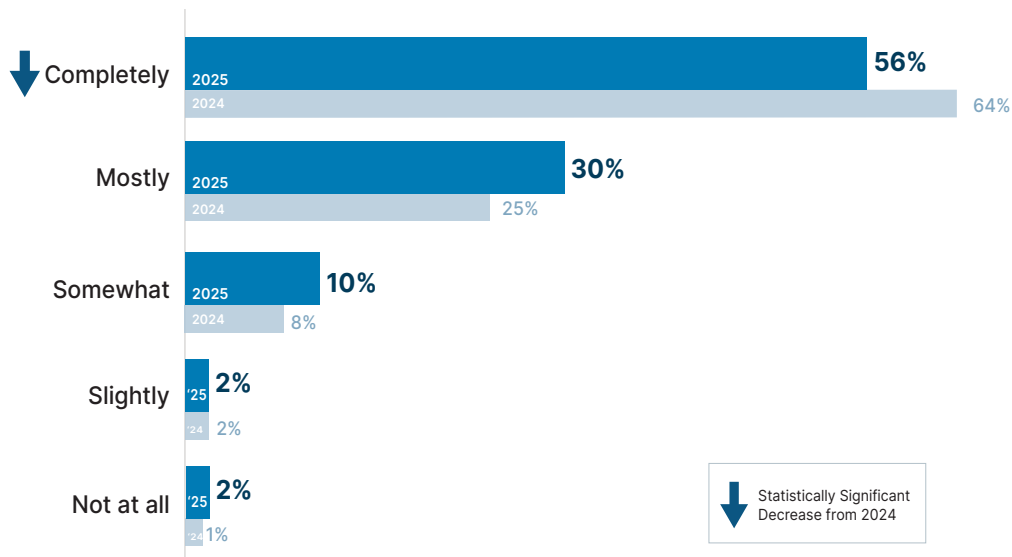
*"Gaining the support of leadership is a common hurdle for safety professionals. When upper management's attention to safety diminishes, fleet-safety teams may feel as though they're fighting an uphill battle. This disconnect often stems from differing perspectives—senior management primarily notices the expenses, while the safety team focuses on the long-term value. **The cornerstone of organizational success lies in analyzing both data and costs** to understand the impact of non-compliance or inaction."*

Tom Bray, Sr. Industry Advisor, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.



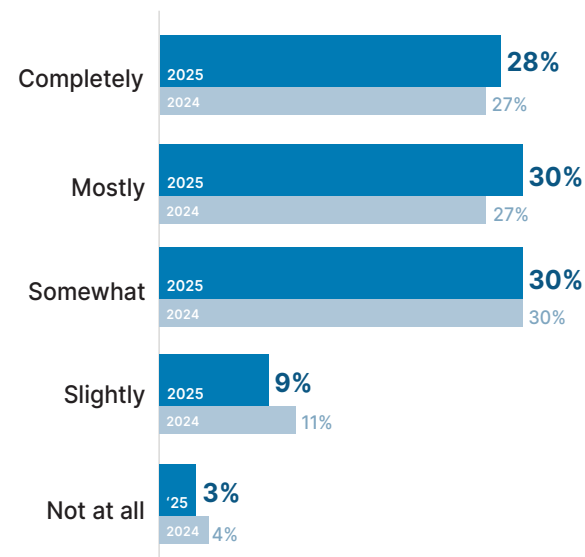
"MY COMPANY CONTINUOUSLY STRIVES TO IMPROVE DRIVER AND EMPLOYEE SAFETY."

% of Respondents Agreeing



"MY COMPANY IS MAINLY FOCUSED ON SOLUTIONS THAT IMPROVE THE BOTTOM LINE/PROFITABILITY."

% of Respondents Agreeing



DRIVER KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS



As in 2024, respondents overwhelmingly want their drivers to understand how to safely and correctly operate their vehicle type.

DRIVER KNOWLEDGE

- How FMCSA regulations apply to them (27%)
- How to comply with the hours-of-service (HOS) limits and use exemptions (24%)
- The correct action to take if they are in an accident (23%)

DRIVER SKILLS

- How to safely and correctly operate their specific vehicle types (58%)
- How to avoid distracted driving (24%)
- How to correctly do and record vehicle inspections (23%)

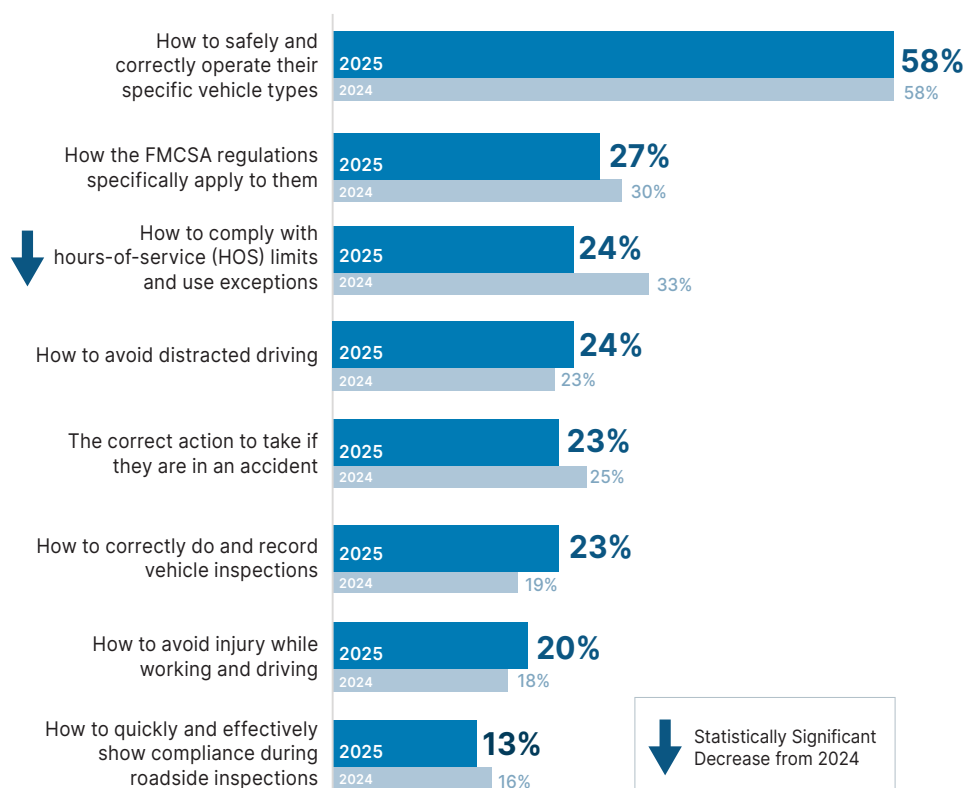
EXPERT INSIGHT

*"At its core, fleet safety revolves around mastering the basics: understanding the rules of the road, applying that knowledge to whichever type of vehicle you operate, and gaining practical insights along the way. This forms the foundation of a safe and compliant fleet. For fleet safety professionals, these findings emphasize **the need to focus on education and processes that equip drivers with practical, rule-abiding skills**. By reinforcing these fundamentals, the industry can collectively strive toward improving overall safety and performance standards."*

Jill Schultz, Sr. Editor, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

MOST IMPORTANT DRIVER KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

% of Respondents Choosing a Skill as Most Important



Multiple selections were permitted.

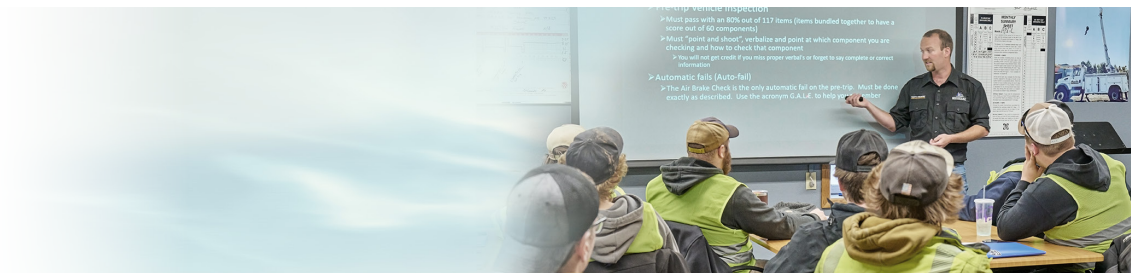
DRIVER TRAINING

When it comes to driver training, respondents believe it's most important that their **training is specific to the unique needs of their drivers, operations, vehicles, or industry** (45%) and that **drivers apply what they learn in training** (45%). These top two themes align with fleet managers' responses in 2024.

EXPERT INSIGHT

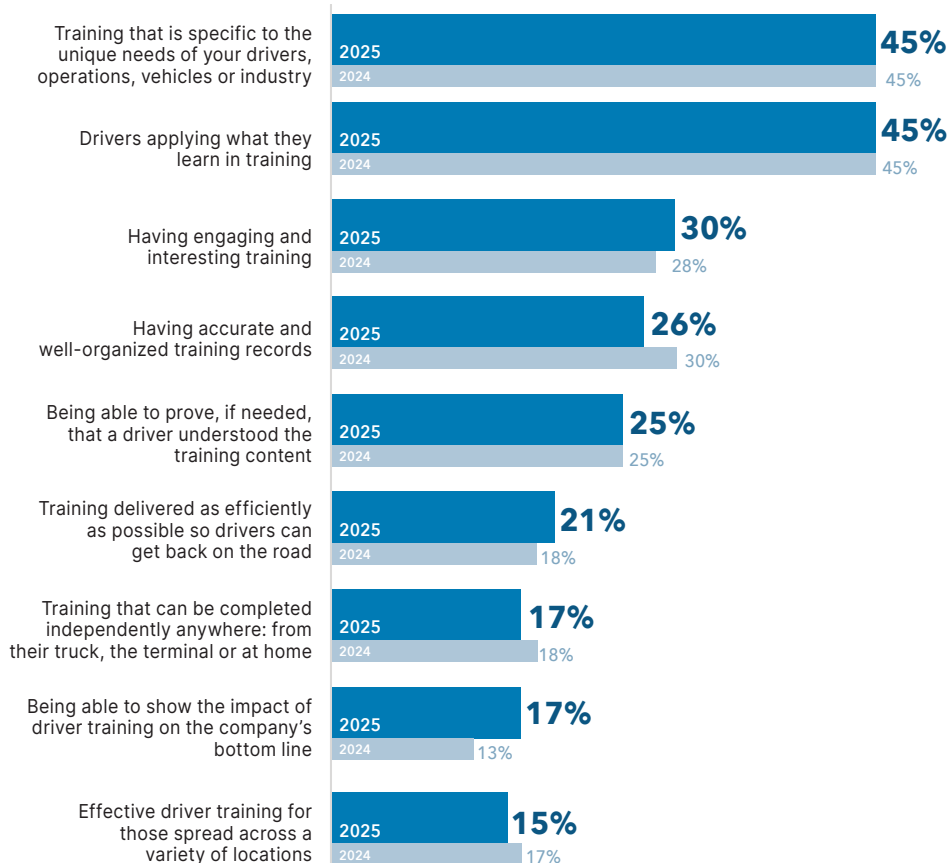
"Adopting a proactive strategy, with a strong emphasis on training, is essential for fostering a safe and compliant fleet while reducing risk. This approach supports carriers in meeting their duty to act, a critical factor in legal proceedings. The "duty to act" (also known as "duty of care") is a legal obligation to act reasonably to prevent harm to others. It means identifying and addressing potential safety issues before they escalate into accidents or incidents. Leveraging tools like ELDs and dash cams in combination with training allows for the detection and correction of unsafe behaviors like fatigued or distracted driving, log falsification, harsh braking, lane departures, or tailgating."

Jill Schultz, Sr. Editor, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.



MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF DRIVER TRAINING

% of Respondents Choosing an Aspect as Most Important



Multiple selections were permitted.

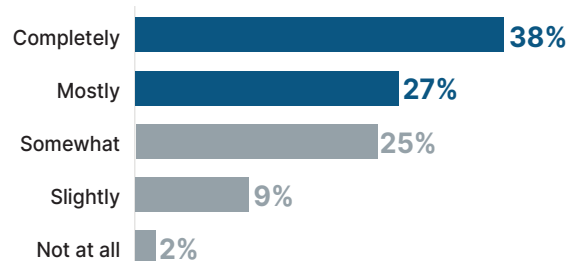
TRAINING METHODS



Sixty-five percent (65%) of those surveyed agree that continuous learning is “mostly” or “completely” emphasized by their company. However, 36% agree that their company only “somewhat,” “slightly” or “not at all” support continuous learning.

“MY COMPANY EMPHASIZES CONTINUOUS LEARNING”

% of Respondents Agreeing



EXPERT INSIGHT

“Successful carriers often use a blended approach for driver training. In-person, hands-on sessions can deliver real-time feedback and practical experience, while online or remote instruction can provide updates on regulatory or policy changes or remedial, corrective coaching.”

Jill Schultz, Sr. Editor, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

TOP COMPANY TRAINING METHODS

% of Respondents Using the Training Methods Below

BY AN IN-PERSON INSTRUCTOR
68%

THROUGH BOOKS OR EMPLOYEE MANUALS
23%

BY A REMOTE INSTRUCTOR
23%

ONLINE
50%

THROUGH EMAILS
15%

INFORMALLY AND AS NEEDED
32%

THROUGH A DVD
10%

THROUGH A DIGITAL TRAINING BOOK
7%

Multiple selections were permitted.

OVERALL SAFETY

According to fleet managers in 2025, the most important aspect of overall safety they want to see is **employees consistently making safe choices across scenarios** (51%).

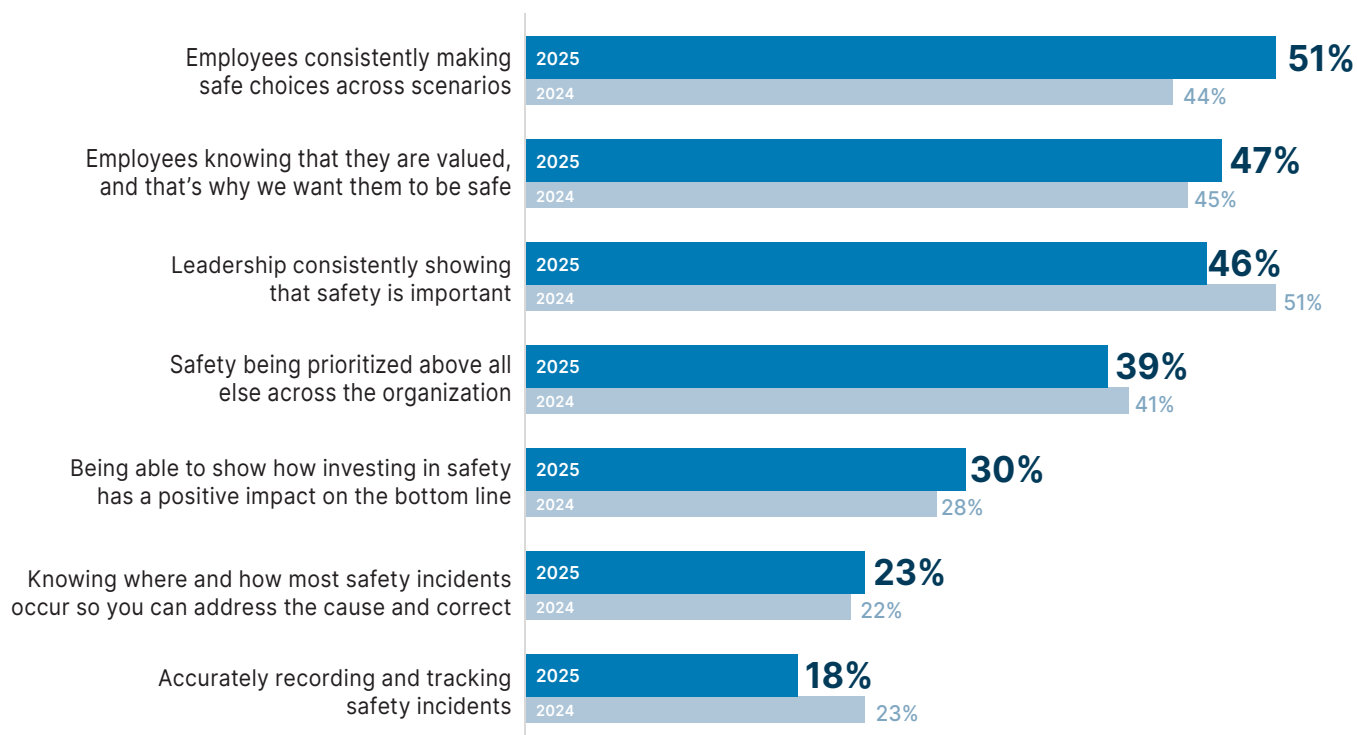
That's followed closely by **employees knowing that they are valued and that's why fleet managers want them to be safe** (47%).



Watch the Safe & Smart® Driver Training Program in action!

MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF OVERALL SAFETY

% of Respondents Choosing Aspects as Most Important



Multiple selections were permitted.

COMPLIANCE

For the third year in a row, fleet managers said the most important aspects of FMCSA compliance are **having accurate and well-organized driver files** and **staying up-to-date on changes in regulations**.

Recordkeeping

- Having accurate and well-organized driver qualification/DQ files (48%)
- Having all files together in one place so you can easily prove compliance (29%)
- Having accurate and well-organized drug and alcohol testing records (26%)

Compliance Knowledge

- Staying up-to-date on changes in regulations (41%)
- Understanding how FMCSA changes specifically impact your business (25%)

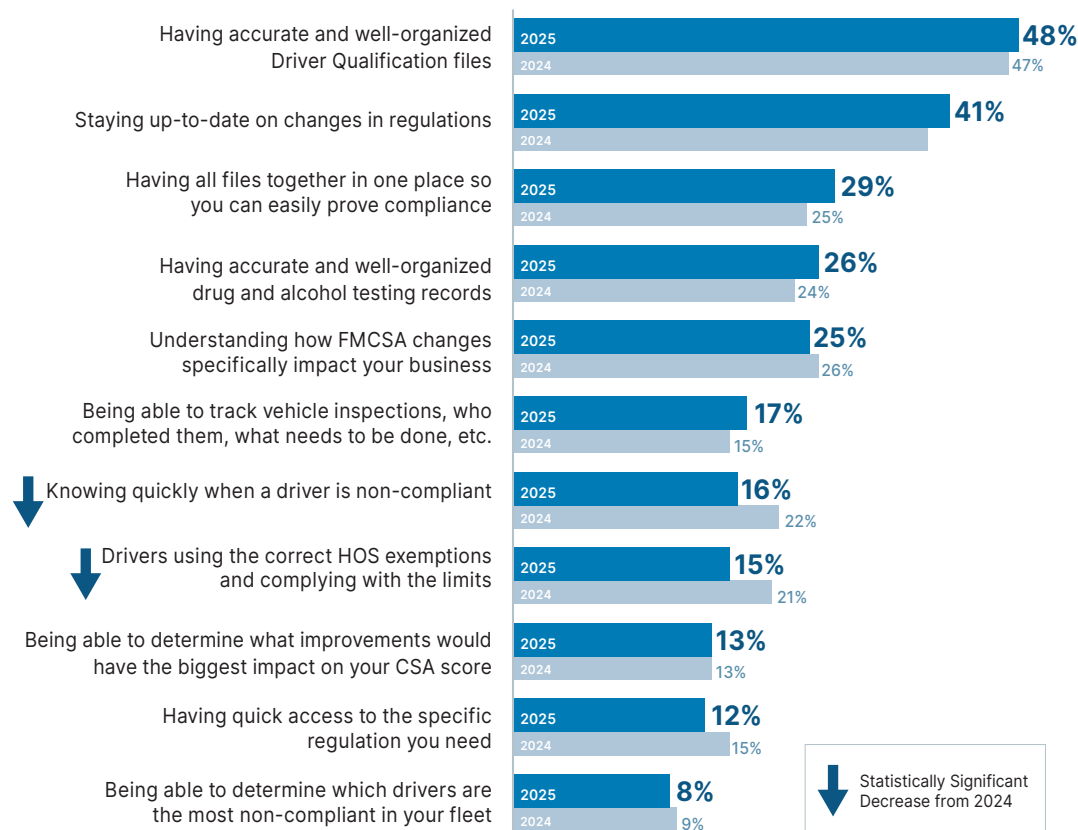
EXPERT INSIGHT

*"The safest fleets know the vital importance — and value — of a systematic recordkeeping system that goes far beyond 'mere compliance.' Meticulous documentation coupled with data collection and analysis not only reduces risk but allows you to **gain actionable insights to drive operational and safety improvements.**"*

Daren Hansen, Sr. Editor - Transportation Safety,
J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF FMCSA COMPLIANCE

% of Respondents Choosing an Aspect as Most Important



Multiple selections were permitted.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Knowing when a vehicle or trailer is damaged or non-compliant (47%) and effectively tracking, planning and scheduling routine vehicle maintenance (38%) ranked as the top two most important vehicle maintenance concerns.

These were followed by knowing when a repair is needed before a breakdown or accident occurs (36%) and easily tracking vehicle inspections, knowing when they are done, by who, what needs to be done as a result, etc (33%).

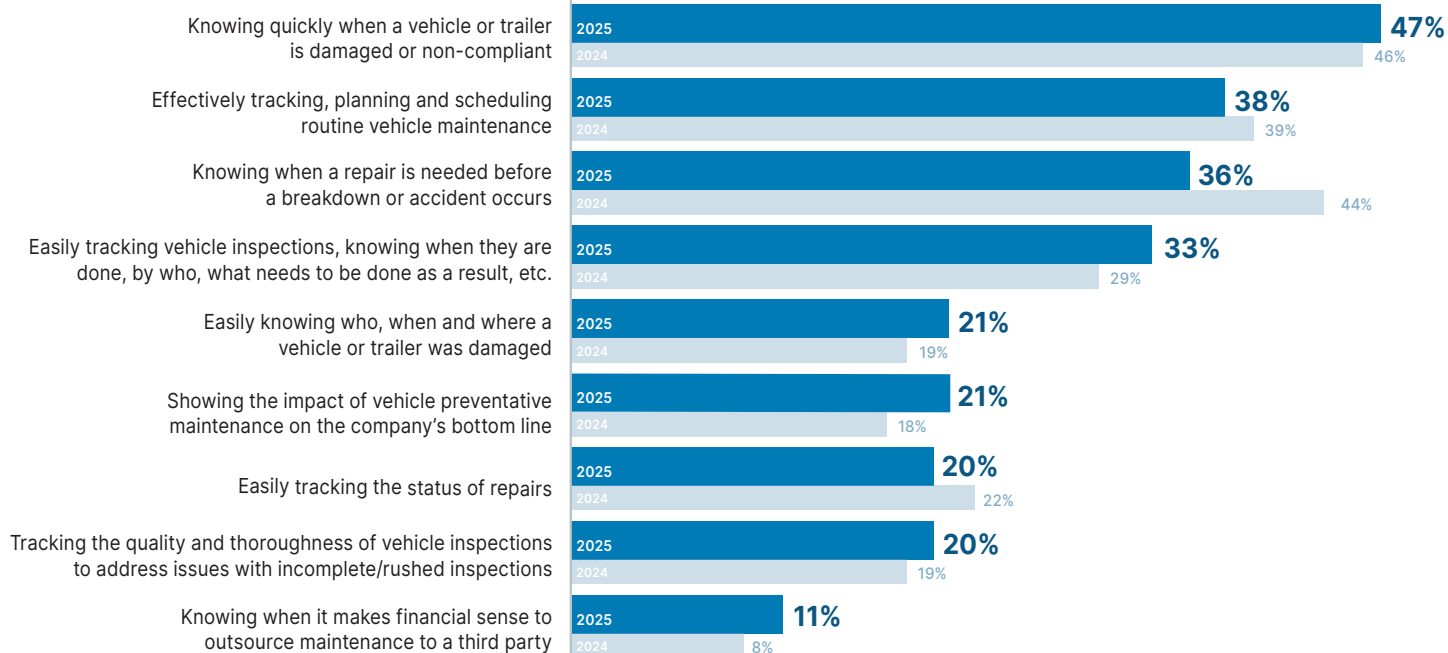
EDITOR INSIGHT

*"Too many motor carriers are reactive when it comes to their vehicle maintenance. They fix things after they break. But **keeping vehicles safe, compliant, and earning as much money as possible takes a proactive system** with regular, thorough inspections, ongoing preventive maintenance, and preemptive parts replacement, before problems result in a breakdown or out-of-service order. Even small issues need to be identified and addressed before they turn into major concerns."*

Daren Hansen, Sr. Editor -
Transportation Safety,
J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

MOST IMPORTANT: VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

% Most Important



RESPONDENT COMMENTS

Common challenges noted by fleet managers include compliance, keeping up with regulations, hiring & retaining drivers, recordkeeping and fleet maintenance.



MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF A FLEET MANAGER'S JOB

Open-Ended Comments

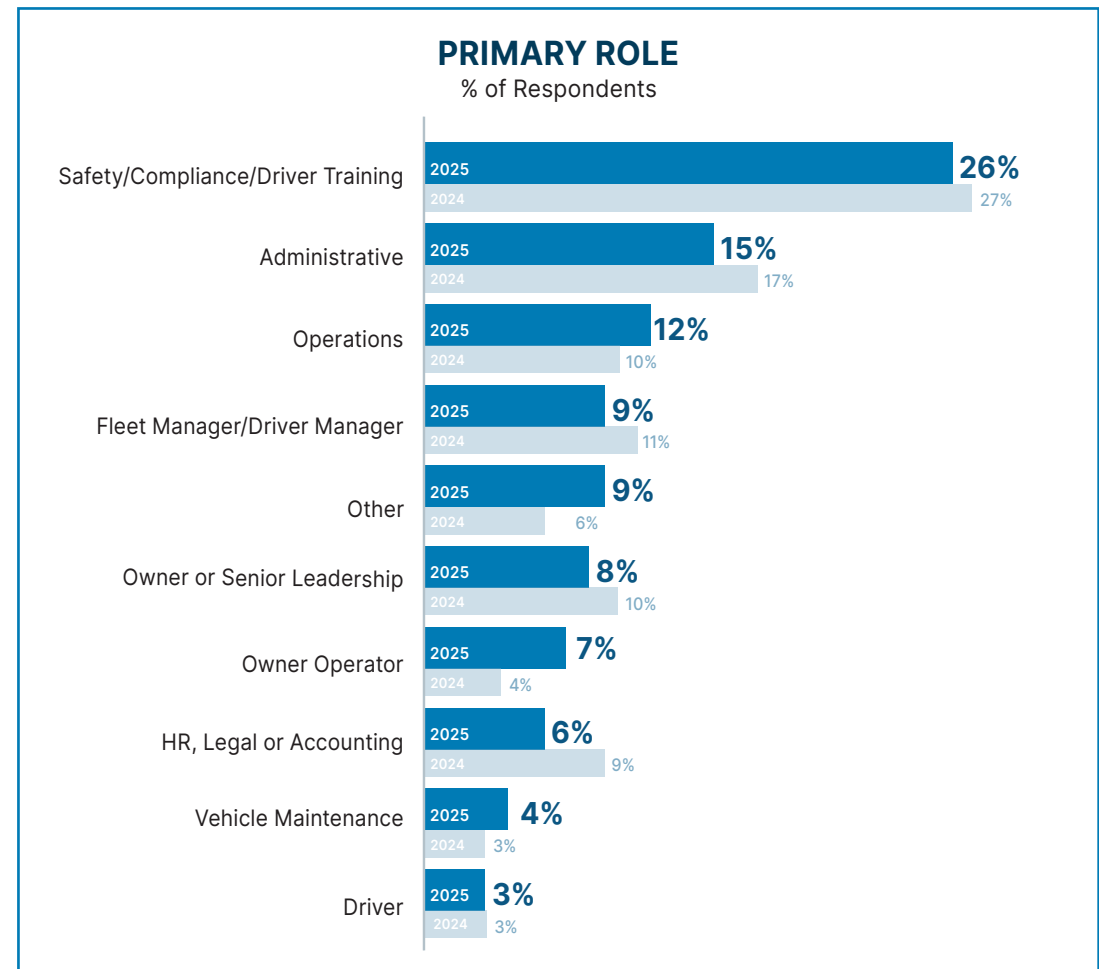
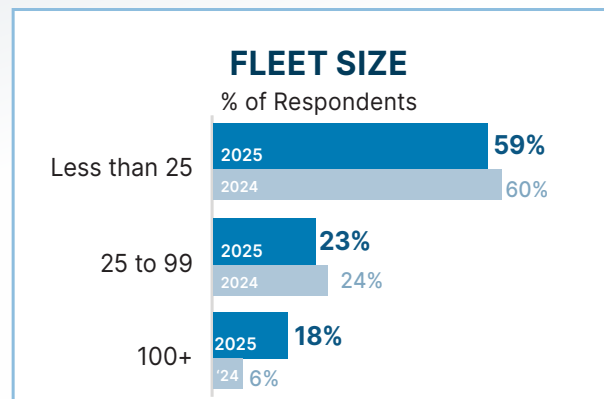
Fleet Management & Maintenance	Hiring & Retaining Good Drivers	Staying Up-to-Date on Regulatory Changes	Paperwork and Recordkeeping
<p>"Truck maintenance in both quality as well as the timely nature of repairs."</p>	<p>"Attracting and maintaining drivers."</p>	<p>"Keeping up with all the latest FMCSA and DOT changes and updates to stay compliant."</p>	<p>"Driver file accuracy."</p>
<p>"When vehicles break down and the amount of time it takes to fix then. The out of service hours while waiting for parts to arrive in order to fix the vehicle."</p>	<p>"Employee engagement and attracting grade A talent."</p>	<p>"Keeping up with the forever changing rules and regulations."</p>	<p>"Keeping track of driver files and vehicle maintenance files."</p>
	<p>"Hiring and retaining high performing drivers."</p>	<p>"The most challenging aspect would be getting our team to comply with current changes."</p>	<p>"Getting proper paperwork / documentation from our employees."</p>

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The primary roles of survey respondents range from safety and compliance to driver training, administration, operations, fleet/driver management, driving and warehouse/yard responsibilities.

The survey was fielded January 6 - 29, 2025 and included 666 unique respondents.

Eighty-two percent (82%) work in fleets with less than 100 trucks, and 59% work in fleets with less than 25 trucks.



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Reduce Accidents with Defensive Driver Training

J. J. Keller's **Safe & Smart® Principles of Defensive Driving** program is tailored to help your specific operation improve fleet safety and reduce the risk of crashes.

The in-depth curriculum—delivered by veteran instructors—combines online courses, classroom instruction, behind-the-wheel, range training, vehicle inspections and a road test, with **options for direct-to-driver training or certification of your in-house trainers.**



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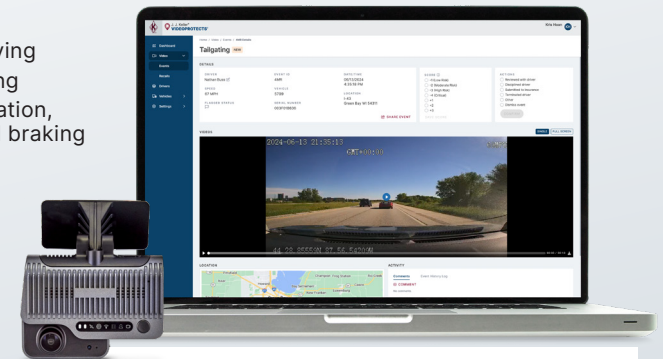
A dash cam with a safety perspective

The VideoProtects® Fleet Camera System protects your driver and operation, **minimizes your risk** in and out of the courtroom, and **enhances your safety efforts.**

VideoProtects offers insight into risky driving events through its continuous recording (engine on) dual-facing dash camera with artificial intelligence.

The **VideoProtects** system works with any fleet, regardless of ELD provider. Its user-friendly back office delivers a **powerful remote driver coaching workflow** that allows you to review, score, and prioritize events. It's an innovative solution that promotes driver accountability and reduces risky driving events, like:

- Forward collision
- Tailgating
- Distracted driving
- Fatigued driving
- Harsh acceleration, cornering, and braking
- Cellphone use
- Seat belt use, and more!



In addition to the platform-independent system, Encompass- and Geotab-compatible systems are also available for full fleet compliance.

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