



Fleet survey report 2013

Part 1: young drivers



Brake provides guidance through events and other resources specifically for fleet managers working to manage their road risk. The charity has surveyed fleet managers to compare their road risk management practices.

This report publishes the first part of the results of this survey, and will be followed by three further reports on the remainder of the results.

This report – focusing on managing the risks associated with younger drivers – shows many fleet operators are aware of these risks and are taking steps to identify them within their own fleets. However, it also concludes that a worryingly high proportion of organisations are not doing enough firstly to identify higher risk young drivers in their fleet at any given time, and secondly to monitor their involvement in crashes.

220 organisations responded to the survey, operating fleets of all sizes and vehicle types, and responsible for thousands of drivers and vehicles around the globe. Respondents included subscribers to Brake as well as non-subscribers.¹



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Young drivers are at higher risk of crashing than older, more experienced drivers. For example, in the UK only one in eight driver licence holders is aged 25 or under², yet one in four drivers who die is under 25.³

Young drivers are also more likely to report risky behaviour, such as using mobile phones while driving and speeding.⁴

Despite their higher crash risk, young drivers do not necessarily learn from mistakes. Teenage drivers are 25 times more likely to be in an injury or fatal crash in their first year of driving if they have previously been in a crash that only resulted in damage to the car or other property.⁵ Targeted interventions to correct bad driving habits early on are therefore vital for young drivers.

To manage the risks associated with younger drivers, employers must be aware of the proportion of young drivers in their fleet, their involvement in crashes and near misses, and any risky behaviour they demonstrate, or are likely to demonstrate, based on individual risk assessments.

We asked:

- **what proportion of your drivers is under the age of 25?**
- **what proportion of collisions involving your vehicles or drivers involves one of your drivers under the age of 25?**

Most fleets reported a low proportion of young drivers, suggesting a reluctance to employ young drivers based on a good understanding that young drivers are higher risk.

Two-thirds (65%) of respondents said less than 10% of their drivers were under 25.

However, some fleets are unaware of the profile of their drivers' ages or crash involvement. More than one in 10 respondents (12%) did not know how many of their drivers were under the age of 25; and almost a quarter of respondents (23%) did not know what proportion of collisions involved a young driver.

This is concerning as fleets that do not record and maintain this information are unable to assess properly their risk and put in place effective measures to mitigate this risk.

Small fleets (with fewer than 50 vehicles) were less likely to employ young drivers: 82% of small fleets said less than 10% of their drivers were under 25; compared with 59% of larger fleets. This is suggestive that smaller fleets are less inclined to carry the risk of employing young drivers and the appropriately more intensive induction and training costs associated with young drivers.

However, and worryingly, despite employing a higher proportion of young drivers, larger fleets were less likely to record the extent of young driver involvement in crashes: a quarter (25%) of larger fleets did not know this information, compared to 17% of small fleets.

Subscribers to Brake were more likely to have up to date knowledge of driver ages: only 8% of subscribers did not know how many young drivers they employed, compared with 13% of non-subscribers.

This is welcome evidence that Brake subscribers are taking action to manage young driver risk in line with Brake guidance.

Les Owen, compliance consultant at fleet consultancy and licence checking organisation Licence Bureau, says:

"Companies employing young drivers should manage them proactively by checking key areas of risk reduction regularly. Showing an interest in how they drive will have a positive impact on their driving behaviour, and decrease their risk of crashing."



What fleet managers can do

To manage the risk presented by employing young, inexperienced drivers, companies should:

- keep an up to date record of drivers' ages: the risk cannot be assessed if you are unable to identify potentially higher risk drivers at any given time
- keep detailed records (including driver age) of drivers involved in crashes, to spot high-risk groups such as young drivers. Use the results to inform managers at Board level about any problem you identify relating to young drivers in your fleet and to help inform measures to address the problem
- ensure written policies and internal communications reference the vulnerability of young drivers and list measures you are undertaking to tackle the problem. Limit young and inexperienced drivers to low-risk journeys, for example avoiding night time, motorway and long-distance driving
- target specific interventions at younger drivers following individual driver risk assessments. This could include communications tailored to appeal to a younger audience for example, or pairing up younger inexperienced drivers with older, more experienced 'buddies' for a set time period



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- focus recruitment and induction assessments and training on common attitudes and behaviours of young drivers, including: over-confidence; undeveloped hazard awareness skills; speed and overtaking. You can use the messages and resources in Brake's Pledge campaign in your training and communications.

Stephen Stradling, emeritus professor, Transport Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University, says:

"Young novice drivers need re-calibrating: the driving task is, from time to time, more demanding than young drivers think it is. This is partly because young drivers don't feel as much fear as their older counterparts⁶ and partly because they are not as competent as they think they are in concentrating, observing, anticipating and manoeuvring. As a result they often underestimate task demand, overestimate their capability to cope, and drive with reduced safety margins, for example, too fast.



"Managers should take note of the particular difficulties research shows are experienced by young drivers. These include attention allocation, visual search, hazard detection, anticipation, perception of risk, reacting instinctively to potential hazards (e.g. by slowing down), vehicle control and self-assessment."

End Notes

- 1 78 respondents (35%) were subscribers, 101 (46%) were non-subscribers, 41 (19%) did not state
- 2 Figures obtained Driving Standards Agency's press office, 2008
- 3 Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2011, DfT, 2012, p.155. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9280/rctgb2011-complete.pdf
- 4 Direct Line and Brake (2011) Report on Safe Driving: Young Drivers. Available at: http://www.brake.org.uk/assets/docs/dl_reports/DLreport6-YoungDrivers-pt1-Dec11.pdf
- 5 Malchose, D. & Vachal, K. (2011) Identifying Factors That Predict Teen Driver Crashes. Rural Transportation Safety and Security Center, North Dakota State University [online]. Available at: <http://www.mountain-plains.org/pubs/pdf/MPC11-232.pdf>
- 6 Kinnear (2009)
Kinnear, N. & Stradling, S.G. (2010) Young, novice drivers and the development of somatic markers for risk on the road. In D.A.Hennessy (Ed.) Traffic Psychology & Driver Behavior, New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
Kinnear, N., Kelly, S., Stradling, S. & Thomson, J. (2012) Understanding how drivers learn to anticipate risk on the road: A laboratory experiment of affective anticipation of road hazards. Accident Analysis and Prevention

Case study Deloitte Belgium

Deloitte Belgium is a management consultancy operating 2,250 cars. Each year the company hires 300 employees aged 22 to 28, with little or no driving experience.



All new employees receive a company car as a standard part of their employment. The company introduced a program in 2011 to manage the risks of this policy.

The program begins with an initial risk assessment of each new employee, and tracks their driving performance for three years. This monitoring and assessment includes: a driver licence check; an introduction to the Deloitte fleet safety program and driver guidance; an online risk assessment module, including instant feedback on risk factors; and one-to-one follow-up from incident reporting.

The online risk assessment module covers: the participant's driver, vehicle and journey-based risk exposure levels; attitude; behaviour; knowledge; and hazard perception.

If drivers are assessed as medium or high risk they have a one-to-one follow-up with their manager. This is done via an online system which provides coaching and prompts for participating managers and drivers, and enables managers to set a range of potential interventions. Interventions include a selection of short (15-20 minute) online training modules targeting scenarios including: alcohol; bad weather; blind spots; driving while distracted; eco driving; fatigue; and speed.

The program is part of the company's shift from its historical approach of penalising risky drivers, which had been found to be ineffective, towards a preventative approach. The young driver program's introduction was also seen as a way to encourage cultural change across the organisation, as young drivers find it easier to change their attitudes and behaviour than more experienced drivers. Encouraging good habits early on is beneficial to Deloitte as some of its new employees will be future partners of the firm.

Deloitte Belgium achieved a reduction in its incident rate for young drivers of 17% in one year; from 0.84 incidents per car in 2010 to 0.72 in 2011. Crash-related costs also reduced as a result of the program, saving almost €300,000 in 2011.

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