



Fleet survey report 2018

Vulnerable road users

Produced by:



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About Brake Professional

Brake Professional is a low-cost global membership scheme for fleet professionals, run by Brake, the road safety charity. The Brake Professional membership scheme is open to any organisation operating any kind of vehicle, suppliers to the fleet industry and anyone else with an interest in fleet safety. Brake Professional provides its members with practical road safety guidance and tools, and free and discounted access to Brake training and events. Find out more at brakepro.org.

About this report

This report is based on the results of an online survey sponsored by Licence Bureau. The survey was completed by 107 fleet representatives. Although most respondents are based in the UK (90), responses also came from fleets based in Africa (1), Asia (2), North America (2), mainland Europe (2) and Australasia (10). Respondents manage more than 1.05 million vehicles in total, including cars, powered two-wheelers, bicycles and goods vehicles, and have more than 413,000 employees who regularly drive for work. The size of the fleets varied: the smallest were single-vehicle operators; the largest had more than 50,000 vehicles. Respondents answered questions on policy, driver awareness programmes, their use of technology and training, and how they protect vulnerable road users within their organisations.

Introduction

Cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians are some of the most vulnerable groups on the roads. In the event of a crash, they will often be exposed to the full force of the impact and will face a disproportionately high risk of death or serious injury. Protecting vulnerable road users and minimising the chance that their drivers will be involved in a crash are two of the most important steps that fleet managers can take towards raising road safety standards.

The findings from our fleet survey suggest that many fleet managers are aware of their responsibilities towards vulnerable road users. However, it is clear there is more they could do to raise awareness of these issues among their staff and enshrine positive action in their organisation's policies.

To find out more about how to manage road risk, including protecting vulnerable road users, visit the Brake Professional website (www.brakepro.org).



VULNERABLE ROAD USER PROTECTION POLICIES

World Health Organization (WHO) data shows that vulnerable road users account for 46% of global road traffic deaths.¹ In Britain in 2017, 6,043 motorcyclists, 5,604 cyclists and 1,801 pedestrians were killed or injured per billion road miles they travelled.² This compares with just 238 car occupants and 61 lorry drivers.

In its 2015 Global Status Report on Road Safety, WHO claimed that infrastructure and policy developments to protect vulnerable road users have not kept pace with rising vehicle use.³ We asked fleet operators for their views on policies and procedures in place at their organisations.

Key findings:

- More than a third (38%) of respondents believe that the fleet industry as a whole is not doing enough to look after cyclists and motorcyclists.
- Three-quarters (74%) of respondents believe their organisation has the right policies in place to protect cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.
- One in four organisations (27%) prioritises meeting delivery targets over road safety.
- Fewer than four in 10 (37%) respondents believe that government policy-makers are doing enough to protect vulnerable road users; a similar number (36%) think there is scope for further action to be taken. Major concerns for fleet managers include speed limits on rural roads, with 42% claiming these are too fast to keep cyclists safe.
- Nine out of 10 respondents (92%) said that in their opinion cyclists could do more to protect themselves on the roads. Just 4% disagreed with this statement, and not a single respondent claimed that drivers are always at fault in collisions between cyclists and motorised vehicles.

These findings suggest that fleet managers generally recognise the importance of road safety, with 84% of respondents agreeing that their directors and senior management teams support their organisation's commitment in this area. More than seven in 10 organisations (72%) claim they set realistic schedules to allow drivers to complete their journeys without being tempted to speed, and 61% tell their drivers that they will not be penalised for journeys running over time if they are delayed. Speed is a factor in many crashes and contributes to a very large number of road deaths and injuries. Encouraging drivers to travel at slower speeds will help reduce their risk of being involved in a collision.

However, it is clear that some organisations have not implemented important road safety policies and procedures. Less than a third (29%) set routes for their drivers that deliberately avoid town centres, residential areas, schools and roads known to be regularly used by cyclists wherever possible. These are locations where many dangerous collisions occur, and planning routes around them could help to reduce the number of crashes that involve vulnerable road users. A quarter of respondents (25%) said they felt that their organisation prioritises delivery schedules and sales targets over road safety, and only 65% said they felt enough time and money was being invested in road safety activities.

Procedures for buying vehicles should follow the Safer Car Purchasing Policy by the Global New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP) or similar. This policy requires operators to buy five-star rated vehicles that have been proven to meet key standards for protecting occupants and vulnerable road users. However, only a fifth (22%) of organisations' procurement policies state that all vehicles should have five-star Global NCAP ratings for safety. Almost four in 10 (39%) do not require this and 40% of respondents said they don't know whether they require it or not.

Driver handbooks and policies

It is worrying to see that just 52% of organisations have driver handbooks that include guidance on protecting vulnerable road users. Without proper guidance, drivers may struggle to know what is expected of them and may not have the required understanding of their responsibilities towards cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians. Only a fifth of organisations (20%) also have specific policies on vulnerable road users. Brake recommends that all organisations that employ drivers should have written policies for all aspects of safe and sustainable operations.

Organisations that have a specific policy on vulnerable road users appear to be offering some useful advice to drivers. More than nine in 10 (94%) highlight the importance of rigorously checking vehicle blind spots, and more than three-quarters (78%) state that drivers should leave at least 1.5m between their vehicles and riders when overtaking them — the minimum safe distance recognised by UK police forces.⁴ The vast majority of respondents (94%) told us they ask their drivers to be particularly vigilant when near schools, communities and built-up areas where they are more likely to encounter vulnerable road users.

Other safety measures in some fleet policies include fitting vehicles with appropriate vision aids or warning devices to alert drivers to pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists.



This measure is used by 72% of organisations, and the same proportion also state that vehicles should be fitted with active safety systems to help avoid or mitigate the outcome of collisions with vulnerable road users. However, certain safety measures could be more widely adopted. Just 22% ask co-drivers in double-manned vehicles to help the driver watch for vulnerable road users, while 56% tell drivers to plan their journeys to avoid cyclist commuter routes or to travel at less busy times of day.

It is reassuring to see that these policies are generally backed up with appropriate sanctions. More than six in 10 respondents (61%) said they always take disciplinary action against employees who do not adhere to their vulnerable road user policies, and 33% of respondents said they will take action whenever an incident is reported. However, 6% do not punish breaches of any kind.

Mobile phones

Worryingly, only 44% of organisations' vulnerable road user policies instruct drivers to switch off their mobile phones or set them to voicemail before starting their journeys.



Only two-thirds of policies state that drivers must not use their phones at all when driving, including hands-free devices, and just 50% of respondents believe their organisation supports an organisation-wide ban on any kind of phone use at the wheel. Driver distraction is a factor in a significant number of road crashes, and hands-free calls cause a similar level of distraction to hand-held calls.⁵

RAISING AWARENESS

Key findings:

- Just over half of organisations (52%) include guidance about protecting cyclists and motorcyclists in their driver education or awareness programmes.
- 12% of respondents are unaware of whether their organisation's driver handbook includes guidance about protecting vulnerable road users.
- Almost four in five respondents (79%) believe their organisation could do more to raise awareness among their workforce of the dangers that cyclists and motorcyclists face.

It is vital that drivers understand their organisation's commitment to road safety and employers should always recognise the importance of prioritising this culture in their work. To encourage this, fleet managers should embed messages about protecting vulnerable road users in their everyday communications, and run regular training sessions or workshops to help drivers recognise how their driving behaviour affects their risk of being involved in a crash.

The survey findings show that safe driving skills are a common topic in organisations' education and awareness programmes. Almost nine in 10 respondents (88%) told us that they inform their workforce about how to identify and check their blind spots when reversing, turning or manoeuvring. Another 65% mention checking for vulnerable road users before opening their vehicle's doors.

'Dooring' is a significant factor behind cyclist, motorcyclist and pedestrian injuries, but can be avoided by adopting simple practices such as the 'Dutch reach', which involves opening a vehicle's door with your opposite hand instead of your hand nearest the door. This forces you to turn your head so you can check for traffic before slowly opening the door.

Some simple steps that may further reduce the likelihood of collisions could feature more prominently in these discussions. Just 54% of respondents said their organisation informs staff about the importance of slowing down to 20mph (30km/h) around homes, schools and town centres, while only 46% said they ask drivers to avoid taking shortcuts through areas where people live. This is disappointing because in Britain in 2017, 63% of road casualties were recorded in urban areas like these.⁶ Research shows that even a 1mph reduction in speed can cut the risk of death or fatal injury by 5%.⁷





Training

Training can also be an invaluable tool to raise awareness of the dangers that different road users face. Almost a third (31%) of respondents said they would consider running cycling awareness sessions for drivers of large vehicles to enable them to experience the road from a cyclist's perspective, and 18% already offer such training. However, another 18% ruled out this option. This is disappointing as collisions with heavy goods vehicles are extremely dangerous for cyclists, and cycling awareness training may help to mitigate this risk.⁸

Organisations were slightly more willing to offer 'changing places' initiatives than awareness training, and 37% of respondents said they would consider giving staff the opportunity to take part in these programmes, which see cyclists invited to sit in the cabs of large goods vehicles to give them a better understanding of driver blind spots. However, only 6% of organisations already run changing places initiatives with their employees and 27% said they would not consider offering them.

It is disappointing to find that just 28% of organisations recommend that employees who cycle take part in cycling training, and only 22% recommend that motorcyclists undertake post-test training. Training can help riders gain the skills they need to be safe on the roads, and it appears organisations recognise this, as almost three-quarters of respondents (74%) claim a formal training programme for cyclists would help reduce collisions and 61% think motorcyclists should go through more rigorous training and testing before being allowed on the roads.

Most organisations do offer safety advice to their employees who cycle. Six in 10 (60%) recommend cyclists always wear a helmet and 59% recommend wearing reflective, high-visibility clothing. 55% also recommend that cyclists conduct regular checks of their bikes and equipment. The number that offer motorcycling safety advice is much lower, and just 36% of respondents recommend that anyone riding a powered two-wheeler to work wears a helmet, despite helmet use being a legal requirement. Around the same number (35%) also recommend staff wear well-fitting protective clothing, including jackets and trousers, gloves and boots. This equipment can dramatically reduce the chances of sustaining serious injuries in a crash.⁹



Bike use frequency

The apparent lack of interest in these initiatives may be due to the low numbers of respondents who regularly cycle. Just 5% of respondents cycle every day, either at work or in their leisure time. A further 6% told us they cycle a few times a week and 11% cycle a couple of times a month. A third of respondents (33%) said they rarely cycle, and 31% never do. Use of powered two-wheelers, such as motorcycles, mopeds or scooters, is even lower, with only 1% of respondents riding one every day, and 3% doing so a few times a week.

Almost four in 10 (38%) organisations run 'cycle to work' schemes. However, 54% do not, and 8% are unaware of whether or not their organisation runs such a scheme. Almost half of respondents who told us that their organisation does run these initiatives said they didn't know how many of their employees are members. Not one organisation reported having any employees enrolled in 'wheels to work' or similar schemes, which provide staff with powered two-wheelers to enable them to travel to work, although 10% of respondents added that they did not know for sure whether any employees were members of this type of initiative.

Brake Pledge training

The Brake Pledge is a flexible driver training resource for organisations that want to engage their drivers with positive behavioural change.

The **Brake pledge**

The Pledge is based on six key areas of road safety (speeding, drink- and drug-driving, wearing a seatbelt, phone use, vision and sustainability), and addresses the specific issues at work-drivers face as a high-risk group on our roads. Brake offers full-day Pledge training courses for fleet managers, driver trainers and anyone else with a responsibility for managing at-work drivers. To find out more or sign up for a course, visit www.brakepro.org/take-part/pledge.



slow



sober



secure



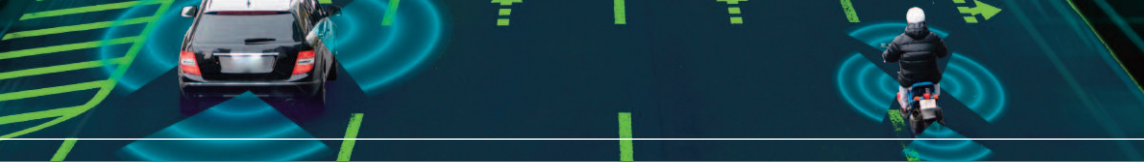
silent



sharp



sustainable



USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Key findings:

- Three-quarters (74%) of respondents claim their organisation recognises the importance of investing in safety technology to prevent crashes and mitigate the outcome of crashes.
- Only 36% of respondents think current mandatory vehicle safety features are adequate and do enough to protect vulnerable road users.

At least 45% of respondents said their organisation has proximity sensors installed in some or all of their vehicles to detect vulnerable road users, and 51% are using automated lane keep assistance systems. Blind spot protection in the form of CCTV cameras that help drivers see around their vehicles to check for cyclists and motorcyclists are also present in 43% of fleets, which is encouraging because almost seven in 10 crashes involving motorcycles in Europe are at least partially caused by drivers failing to see the rider.¹⁰

Telematics systems are widely used, with 37% of respondents claiming they are installed in all their vehicles and 36% saying the technology is used in at least some of theirs as well. The clear majority (95%) of companies use their telematics systems to monitor risky driving behaviour such as speeding or harsh braking. However, four in 10 (44%) also use telematics to monitor collisions involving their drivers, and 57% of respondents told us they record all collisions, scrapes and near-misses. 34% of respondents said that someone driving on behalf of their organisation has been involved in a collision, scrape or near-miss with a cyclist or motorcyclist.

Certain technologies that could help prevent collisions are not being widely implemented. Alcolocks – which require drivers to pass an alcohol breath test before starting their vehicle – are not being used by 77% of organisations, and only 4% say they are used on some of their vehicles. From a risk perspective, preventing drivers from getting behind the wheel after consuming alcohol could have a significant impact on safety.

63% of organisations use telematics systems to monitor driving time, which is important as driver fatigue is a major factor in road crashes.¹¹ However, 67% of organisations are not using driver distraction and drowsiness recognition technology, and only 13% use it in some vehicles.

ADVICE: PROTECTING VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

It is vital that all organisations that employ at-work drivers raise awareness among their employees about the dangers that vulnerable road users face, and introduce measures to protect them. Fleet managers can reduce the risk to vulnerable road users by:

- Including guidance on protecting vulnerable road users in their driver handbooks and having clear procedures in place for what should happen in the event of a collision.
- Raising awareness among drivers of simple safety measures such as slowing down in areas where people live and work.
- Setting routes for drivers that avoid town centres and other areas with high numbers of vulnerable road users, and assuring drivers they will not be penalised for journeys running over time if they are delayed.
- Making use of active safety systems such as autonomous emergency braking that help prevent crashes and passive safety systems that protect people outside the vehicle and mitigate the outcome of crashes.
- Offering training opportunities such as changing places initiatives or cycling awareness sessions for drivers of large vehicles.
- Forming close working relationships with organisations involved in the promotion of safe and sustainable transport.
- Regularly monitoring driver health, including eyesight, alcohol and drug use.
- Lobbying local and national governments for road safety changes such as an outright ban on hands-free phone use at the wheel or greater investment in segregated cycle paths away from traffic.



About Licence Bureau

Licence Bureau is the leading UK driving licence validation provider.



Licence Bureau provides driver licence checking services to customers, using services provided by the DVLA (Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency). This service is part of the Licence Bureau Compliance Journey services covering Employee Audit, E-Consent, Licence Validation, Permit to Drive, Grey Fleet Validation, Risk Assessments, E-Learning, Classroom & In Vehicle Training. Our award-winning IT systems save you time managing your work-related road safety risks and enable you to manage your fleet professionally and compliantly.

Our services typically reduce the cost of ensuring you comply with fleet management legislation. Demonstrating you comply with the legislation can also reduce your corporate insurance costs. Licence Bureau saves you time and money, our services make good business sense, even when times are tough.

To find out more, visit www.licencebureau.co.uk.

Compliance bureau

Compliance Bureau helps businesses to manage their drivers so that they drive safely in a risk-reduced environment. To request a risk assessment and find out more, visit compliance-bureau.co.uk

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