




# Zonar 2021 Road Safety Consumer Sentiment Report

# Situational Analysis

Commercial truck drivers share the road with hundreds of millions of licensed drivers on our highway systems each year. While transporting goods from point A to point B is typically the mission, their top priority is to do it safely and as good stewards of the road. In Zonar's inaugural Road Safety Consumer Sentiment Survey, American drivers reflected on how safe they feel while driving on the road alongside commercial trucks. The findings of this survey, commissioned by Zonar and conducted online by The Harris Poll among over 1,800 U.S. licensed drivers, indicate that overall American drivers feel that they can drive confidently and safely—even alongside these sometimes intimidating and powerful vehicles just feet away in the next lane.

Safety in commercial trucking has come a long way, especially over the last couple of decades and even more so during the pandemic. Now more than ever, drivers must prioritize implementing and executing on safety best practices and protocols to ensure the roads they operate on stay safe. According to the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#) (FMCSA), from 2005-2009, there was a **34% decrease** in the number of fatal crashes involving large trucks or buses, however in the near decade that followed (2009-2018) **fatal crashes increased 45%**.

 At the rate we're going, the [World Health Organization projects that by 2030 road crashes are expected to become the fifth leading cause of death worldwide](#). These statistics alone can make driving on the road an unsettling experience for anyone behind the wheel. **Something must be done.**

Today, smart fleet management technologies, such as advanced driver-assistance and coaching, Electronic Driver Vehicle Inspection reports (EVIR) and compliance solutions, predictive maintenance solutions and electronic logging devices/in-cab tablets have been introduced to help commercial truck drivers travel at top performance—not just for themselves but also for those around them. These innovative applications, mobile inspection checklists and over the air system updates are also making commercial trucking more efficient—streamlining operations so goods move between points A and B without interruption while maintaining public safety for all on the road.

Despite advancements in technology and a majority of driver's projected comfortability sharing the roadway, the findings of our inaugural report on consumer sentiment indicate that there's significant room for improvement industry wide. While very few drivers on the road today have a truly spotless driving record, driving habits and safety need to be greatly improved to reduce these numbers and keep our roads safe for all drivers.



# Key Findings From Zonar's Road Safety Consumer Sentiment Survey

**65% of American drivers agree to feeling safe on the highway with commercial trucks.**



The commercial trucking industry follows stringent safety procedures and guidelines.

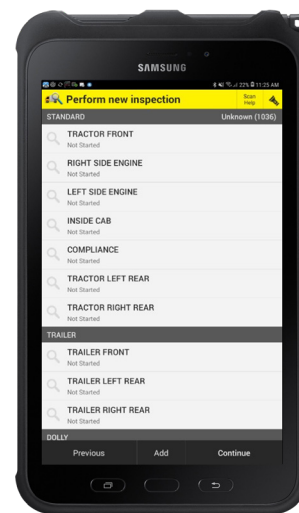


We consistently hear from fleet managers and the average driver that there are still concerns with cargo loads falling off trucks and unsafe driving practices, such as speed limit

variation, tailgating, lane drifting, hard acceleration or breaking, cell phone use (and other driver distractions). While fatigue is a common factor of truck accidents, [tire defects account for around 30%](#) (the most common cause) of all truck-related accidents, including when retread tire comes off and hits cars or causes a lane obstruction.

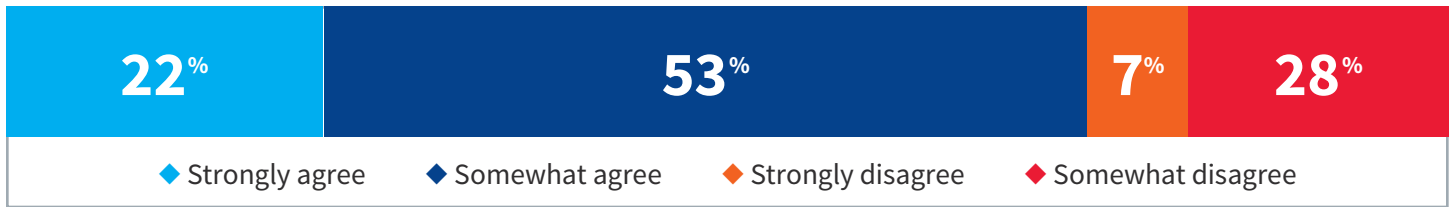
Truck drivers and fleet managers need to continue to implement preventative measures in following proper pre- and post-trip inspections, preferably electronically to eliminate potentially messy paper trails and verified to help ensure inspections take place when and where they are supposed to. These inspections are critical in catching vehicle defects like deflated tires, brake problems, engine/transmission problems, and defective steering wheels, among others.

Fleet managers are adopting innovative technology to improve safety conditions on the road, according to a [Fleet Management Technology Report from GPS Insights](#), **30-40% of commercial trucking organizations deployed telematics technology in 2017**. We expect those figures to grow exponentially as fleet managers get savvy about mobile verification and inspection reporting and AI-enabled in-cab coaching of driver behavior.



Zonar EVIR® – Electronic Verified Inspection Reporting

# 75% of American drivers agree that the commercial trucking industry follows safe driving practices.



There is a renewed focus on Federal and local regulations as well as the increase in technology adoption among fleets.

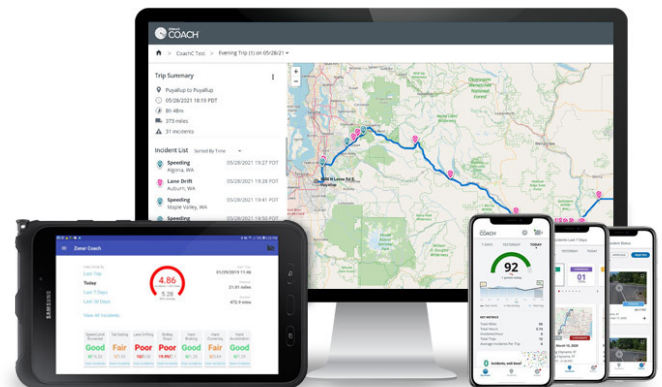
While technology cannot prevent every accident, proactive technology can save lives and money. Solutions, such as in-cab coaching, with audible violation alerts can help drivers take corrective action when necessary. This innovative, intelligent behavior assessment and video technology can help provide an objective, digital platform by capturing data and video tire footage in real time to help fleets and drivers define clear goals, monitor performance, track progress, and most importantly, prevent accidents or capture real-time data when accidents do occur.

In fact, a recently released study by the [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety \(IIHS\)](#) found that existing safety technology could dramatically reduce serious injuries and fatalities in truck accidents. The IIHS study says that the safety systems would also lower the risk of serious injuries and fatalities in the rear-end collisions that do occur by reducing the speeds at which the big rigs strike the other vehicles.

In addition, with pre-and post-trip inspections mandated by the FMCSA, EVIR solutions can help increase efficiency and ensure compliance and safety for all trucks and drivers on the road. It has never been easier to do paperless inspections with EVIR mobile solutions – and fleet managers can get real-time inspection data with a click of a button when audited.

The American Trucking Association (ATA) is also rallying support for various safety technologies and the potential safety benefits of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS). Earlier this year FMCSA released several training and educational materials to accelerate the adoption of ADAS. The FMCSA Tech-Celerate Now program is being applauded for its wide distribution of these resources and technologies and the lifesaving impacts they’ll have on highway transportation.

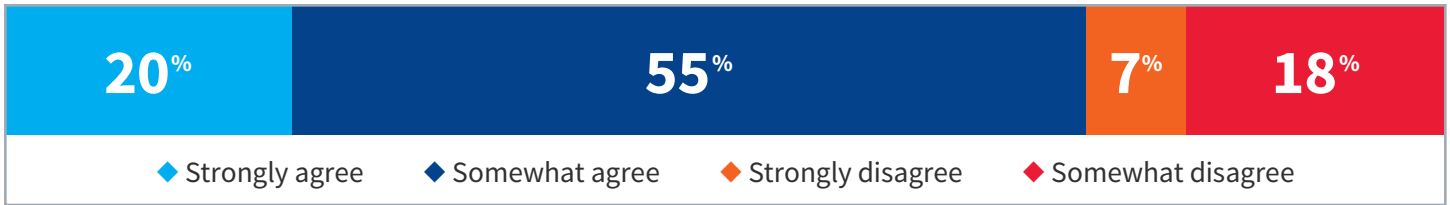
The Law Enforcement Advisory Board (LEAB), an entity established by the ATA, is calling on the industry and United States policymakers to advance priorities toward protecting the highways and motorists who traverse them. The call to action includes turning attention to the enhancement of commercial motor vehicle safety and security and improved access to training for drivers, law enforcement and company safety personnel through innovative technologies.



Zonar Coach™



## 25% of American drivers do not agree that commercial truckers drive responsibly.



The trucking industry needs to improve consumer perception. While truckers follow many safe driving guidelines, regulations, and compliance rules, perception is what matters to ensure drivers are safer—and feel safer. The LEAB, which is made up of law enforcement members and truckers from across the nation, as well as retired law enforcement officers that are now in the trucking industry and vice versa, was specifically formed to improve partnerships and education so that every organization aims to operate as safely as possible to protect the company, workforce and public with well-informed and effective safety programs.

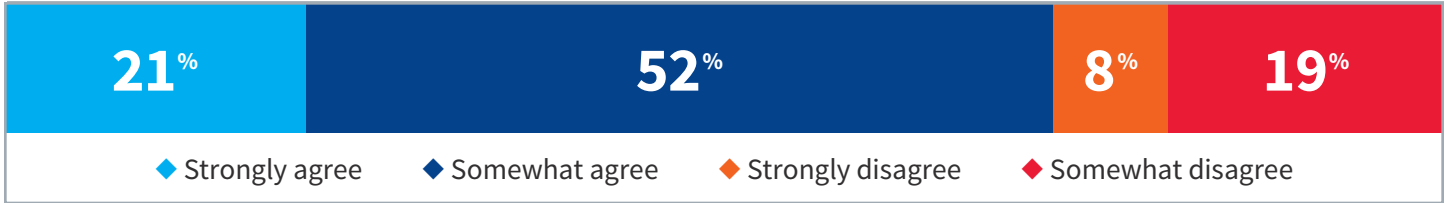
With that comes the further responsibility of the truck drivers themselves. Tools, such as driver assistance and coaching can help drivers better understand how safe their driving is and take responsibility to improve the safety and efficiency of their driving with audible violation alerts and tracking capabilities.

The container fleet industry is where trucking responsibility hits a gray area. The trucking industry delivers **71% of all freight in the U.S. annually**. With **over 25 billion containers** moved annually in North America alone, the container industry has a complex chain of command between companies, assets, drivers, etc., causing breakdowns in who is responsible for pre- and post-trip inspections as ownership of containers and trailers quickly shifts and often remains unclear.



GPS tracking of fleet assets

# 73% of American drivers strongly agree or agree that the commercial trucking industry does everything it can to keep them safe while on the road with commercial trucks.



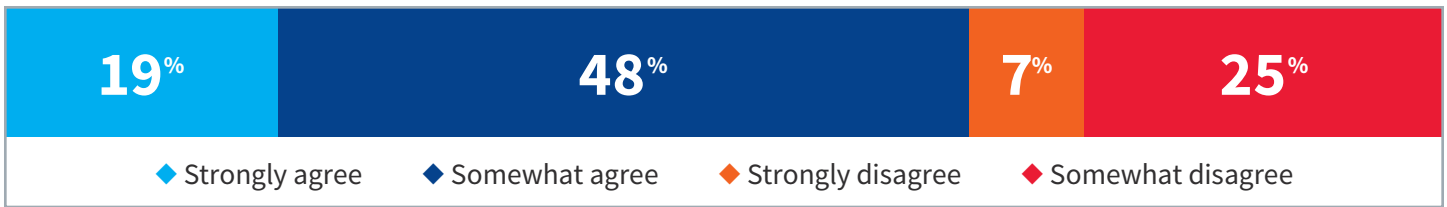
The trucking industry continues to look for ways to get ahead of unplanned incidents on the road by implementing technology solutions to predict maintenance needs and trip outcomes. Online, predictive maintenance platforms are helping fleets monitor overall fleet health by analyzing fault codes down to each and every vehicle’s health and safety. Fleets can know what’s happening, where to schedule necessary repairs and prevent roadside breakdowns, reduce frequency of towing and maintenance fees, and improve overall efficiency and safety on the road.

Law enforcement, trucking associations and boards, and fleet management organizations also work in close partnership to provide proper inspection and roadside assistance for truckers alongside the road. Technology advancements include the use of Electronic Logging Devices, mandated by FMCSA in the U.S. since December 16, 2019. The Canadian ELD mandate is also going into effect this summer with the intention to help create a safer work environment for drivers, and make it easier and faster to accurately track, manage, and share records of duty status (RODS) data.



Zonar Logs™

# 68% of American drivers agree that commercial trucks are some of the most technologically advanced vehicles on the road.



Commercial trucks today have sensors tracking more data than anyone would imagine. Computerized engines for electric vehicles, driver coaching tablets, and autonomous vehicle technologies continue to advance in the trucking industry. As such, drivers and fleet managers should be looking to technology improve any current pain points across the organization, including:

- Tracking vehicle uptime
- Reviewing driver trip performance data, incident footage maps and locations of incidents for insurance purposes
- Logging fault codes for preventative maintenance
- Managing hours of service, driver time, next loads and routes through Electronic Logging Devices (ELD)

Artificial intelligence plays a large role in predictive maintenance solutions for truck drivers – everything from tire pressure systems to reefer monitoring for refrigerated trucks that specialize in the transportation of foods and products that require a temperature-controlled means of transport. But, with the increasing volume of data through various technological channels ([approximately 25 gigabytes every hour, and an expected increase fifty-fold within the next decade](#)), drivers and fleet managers have to sift through and analyze the most important and relevant data to improve safety and efficiency and avoid distracted driving. In fact, [in 2020, 35% of fleets reported employing data analysts or information technology experts](#).



Zonar FaultIQ™



## Conclusion

Despite misconceptions, the trucking industry is never trying to avoid road laws, drivers know their vehicle size and have been known to drive more cautiously than passenger cars on the highway. Much of the advancement to commercial trucking when it comes to public safety speaks directly to protecting the highways for all drivers in addition to ensuring the safety and compliance of every American fleet supporting the trucking industry's day-to-day operations. If the average driver truly knew about all that goes into fleet management technology and commercial trucking safety and compliance, we believe everyone would feel safer on the roadway.

Our goal with this data is twofold: first, we hope to inform and enlighten drivers nationwide of the rolling data centers that are integral in transporting goods to their local stores and doorsteps; and second, encourage every driver, professional or not, to appreciate the power of technology and innovation in making our roads safer nationwide.

## Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Zonar from May 24-26, 2021 among 2,074 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, of whom 1,806 are licensed drivers. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact [info@zonarsystems.com](mailto:info@zonarsystems.com).