

# Are today's fleets really trying to be leaner and greener?

Fuel-efficiency and carbon reduction survey



Together we can  
make fleets greener,  
companies happier,  
wealthier and wiser  
and of course,  
the roads safer.

# It's not just vehicle design that lowers your fuel bill; it's also the person driving

It almost goes without saying that one of the biggest costs of running a company fleet is the bill for petrol, diesel and to a lesser extent, bio-fuels and LPG.

Couple this expenditure with your organisation striving to meet its carbon footprint targets and the choice of vehicles in the fleet seemingly becomes one of a business-critical nature. This is something not lost on vehicle manufacturers who operate in a hugely competitive market and have become focused on CO2 emission values and MPG (or litres/km) figures because of the influence they have with fleet decision makers.

But is vehicle design solely responsible for returning the CO2 and MPG figures quoted by the manufacturers?

In reality, the fuel-consumption and carbon emission figures quoted by manufacturers are the result of driving the vehicle under test conditions, something that will be virtually impossible to replicate in the everyday lives of those driving for work. Roads vary in design, traffic is constantly changing and personal driving behaviour has many nuances and imperfections.

However, an ever-present influence on fuel consumption is driver behaviour and ability. Inefficient fuel-use is likely to be a result of, amongst other factors, poor driving habits adopted over time and rarely corrected because the last driver training undertaken was possibly to pass the driving test itself. A driver's ability definitely benefits from continuous improvement, delivered through targeted training and assessment to those most in-need of intervention or at-risk on the road.

In the summer of 2013 we commissioned a survey to investigate how important environmental factors and fuel-saving were in influencing the decisions companies made regarding vehicle choice. All participants were key fleet decision makers or had some influence with the fleet decision making process. Whilst it is encouraging to see the acknowledged relevance of fuel-efficiency and environmental factors in the responses, it is concerning that relatively little is being done to facilitate the delivery of driver improvements through training and assessment.

## Some of the headlines from the results include:



- There are a variety of strategies used by organisations to try and reduce carbon emissions, but the most common are those of influence to cost reduction.
- Over half (53%) those surveyed said that environmental impact (including that of the fleet) rated quite high or most highly in their overall company aims and objectives.
- Everyone surveyed realised that driver behaviour impacted on the fleet achieving its greener objectives.
- Among those surveyed there was a large variation between whether or not driver training was provided.



- Nearly half (48%) of organisations surveyed had seen an improvement in CO2 emissions as a result of eco-driver training.

As someone who may be responsible for a fleet of vehicles and therefore either directly or indirectly for the welfare and performance of those who drive for work, your remit may also include those who use their own private vehicle for business use – your “grey fleet”.

Whilst reducing fuel consumption can benefit greatly your fleet and business objectives, it can also have huge positive benefits for your Corporate Social Responsibilities and Duty of Care obligations by cascading green initiatives to all those who drive for work, irrespective of vehicle ownership.

Increased fuel-efficiency can be maximised through re-enforcing correct driving behaviours; those that lend themselves to smooth progress and anticipation of other road users. New car technology will only achieve so much in terms of reducing CO2 and mpg – the rest is a result of driver skill.

The results of this survey will help to show just how important driver ability is to companies in terms of enabling them to meet their green objectives. Do they see driving as an employee skill that requires Continuous Professional Development (CPD), something that at IAM RoadSmart we see as vital? We hope this white paper gives you additional insight to help identify areas where your company could address carbon reduction and fuel-efficiency and immediately see the benefits of doing so. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us – we’re always happy to help.

75% of respondents said driver behaviour was very or extremely influential in a company achieving its greener fleet objectives.

# Fuel-efficiency and carbon reduction survey

IAM RoadSmart surveyed 200 businesses on their attitudes towards fuel-efficiency and carbon reduction within their fleet operation. The research shows that the vast majority recognise driver behaviour as very influential to a company achieving its greener fleet aims, but the majority of whom don't offer regular driver training to assist in realising this.



## Key findings are:

- There are a variety of strategies used by organisations to try and reduce carbon emissions, but the most common are those of influence to cost reduction.
- Over half (53%) those surveyed said that environmental impact (including that of the fleet) rated quite high or most highly in their overall company aims and objectives.
- Everyone surveyed realised that driver behaviour impacted on the fleet achieving its greener objectives.
- Among those surveyed there was a large variation between whether or not driver training was provided.
- Nearly half (48%) of organisations surveyed had seen an improvement in CO2 emissions as a result of eco-driver training.

However, some businesses have successful eco-driving and carbon reduction programmes in place and are actively seeking to improve driver skills and behaviours to assist in achieving their greener-fleet objectives.



## The survey asked:

- 1 What size fleet do you have?
- 2 Which of the following does your organisation currently have in place or would be looking to implement in the future? (tick all that apply).
- 3 In terms of priority, where does the environmental impact of your fleet sit within your organisation's aims and objectives?
- 4 How is your organisation proactively trying to run a "greener" fleet? (tick all that apply).
- 5 How influential do you think driver behaviour is to achieving your greener fleet aims and objectives?
- 6 How often do you provide driver training specifically to achieve a greener fleet ("eco-driver" training)?
- 7 What overall improvement have you seen in fuel-usage (i.e. mpg) as a result of eco-driver training?
- 8 What overall improvement have you seen in CO2 emissions as result of eco-driver training?
- 9 Will you be spending more on eco-driver training in 2013 than in previous years?
- 10 What is your role within the fleet decision making process?

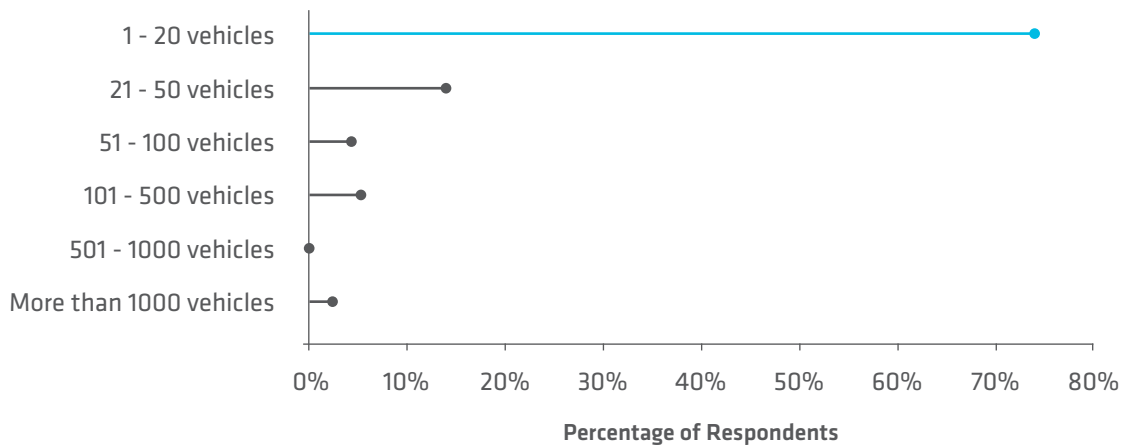
# 1. What size fleet do you have?

Although a question not directly related to fuel-efficiency, it was important to establish what size fleet (of vehicles) respondents were responsible for.

The overwhelming majority of fleet managers surveyed had small fleets of 1 - 20 vehicles and nearly 90% of those surveyed had fleets of less than 50. Fleets of 51 - 100 accounted for just 4% of those surveyed, while fleets of 100 - 500 vehicles accounted for 5% of those surveyed. None of those surveyed had fleets of between 500 - 1000 vehicles.

Large fleets of over 1000 only accounted for 2% of those surveyed. This indicates that small fleets and perhaps the Small to Medium Enterprises (SME's) running them are interested in fuel-efficiency, carbon reduction and how improved driver behaviour can contribute to reducing overall fleet costs.

## What size fleet do you have?



**Table 1**

What size fleet do you have?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
1 - 20 vehicles	100	74%
21 - 50 vehicles	19	14%
51 - 100 vehicles	6	4%
101 - 500 vehicles	7	5%
501 - 1000 vehicles	0	0%
More than 1000 vehicles	3	2%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

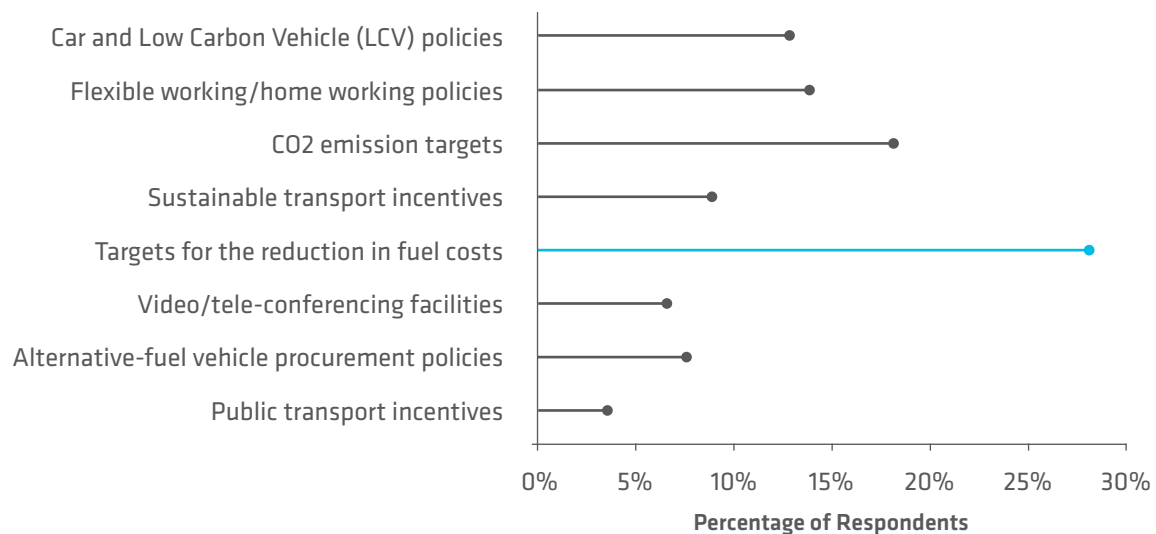
\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

## 2. Which of the following does your organisation currently have in place or would be looking to implement in the future?

There are a variety of environment policies that organisations currently have or are looking to implement. The most common policy is a target for the reduction of fuel costs which 28% of those surveyed had already or were looking to implement shortly.

Other popular policies relating to the environment were CO2 emission targets (21%) and flexible working policies (16%). Public transport incentives (4%) and video/teleconference facilities (7%) were the least utilised amongst those surveyed.

### Which of the following does your organisation currently have in place or would be looking to implement in the future?



**Table 2**

Which of the following does your organisation currently have in place or would be looking to implement in the future? (tick all that apply)	Number	Percentage of Respondents
Car and Low Carbon Vehicle (LCV) policies	39	13%
Flexible working/home working policies	42	14%
CO2 emission targets	55	18%
Sustainable transport incentives	27	9%
Targets for the reduction in fuel costs	85	28%
Video/tele-conferencing facilities	20	7%
Alternative-fuel vehicle procurement policies	23	8%
Public transport incentives	11	4%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>302</b>	



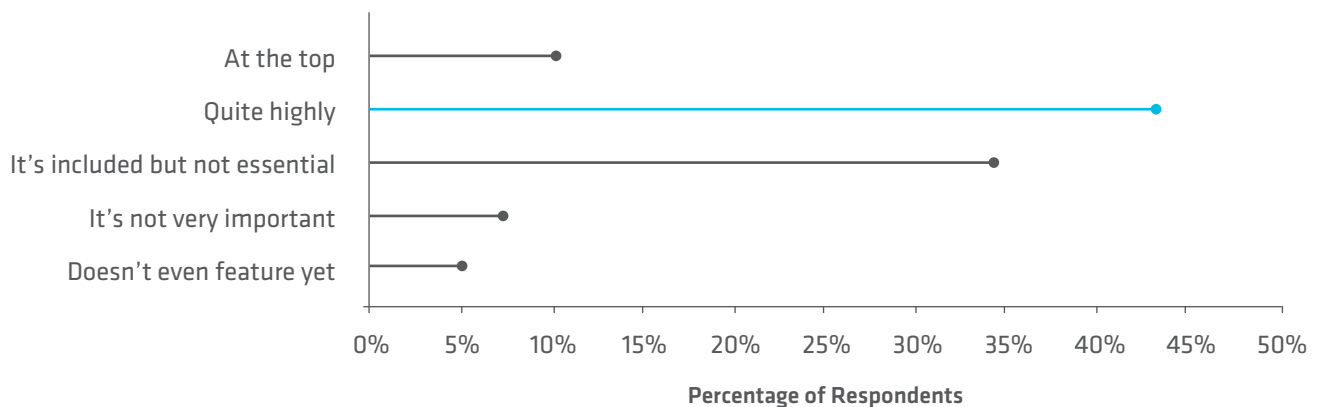
### 3. In terms of priority, where does the environmental impact of your fleet sit within your organisation's aims and objectives?

This questions looks company culture by asking about the importance of their fleet's impact. CO2 targets are becoming a more common feature of fleet monitoring in organisations, with over half of all those surveyed having it a quite high (43%) or top (10%) priority.

Another 34% of those surveyed noted the environmental impact of the fleet is a consideration in their organisation.

Only 5% of those surveyed didn't have environmental impact as a consideration in their organisation. This shows there is a good awareness amongst organisations about the impact of their fleets on the environment and there is a willingness to improve on this.

 **In terms of priority, where does the environmental impact of your fleet sit within your organisation's aims and objectives?**



**Table 3**

In terms of priority, where does the environmental impact of your fleet sit within your organisation's aims and objectives?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
At the top	14	10%
Quite highly	58	43%
It's included but not essential	46	34%
It's not very important	10	7%
Doesn't even feature yet	7	5%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

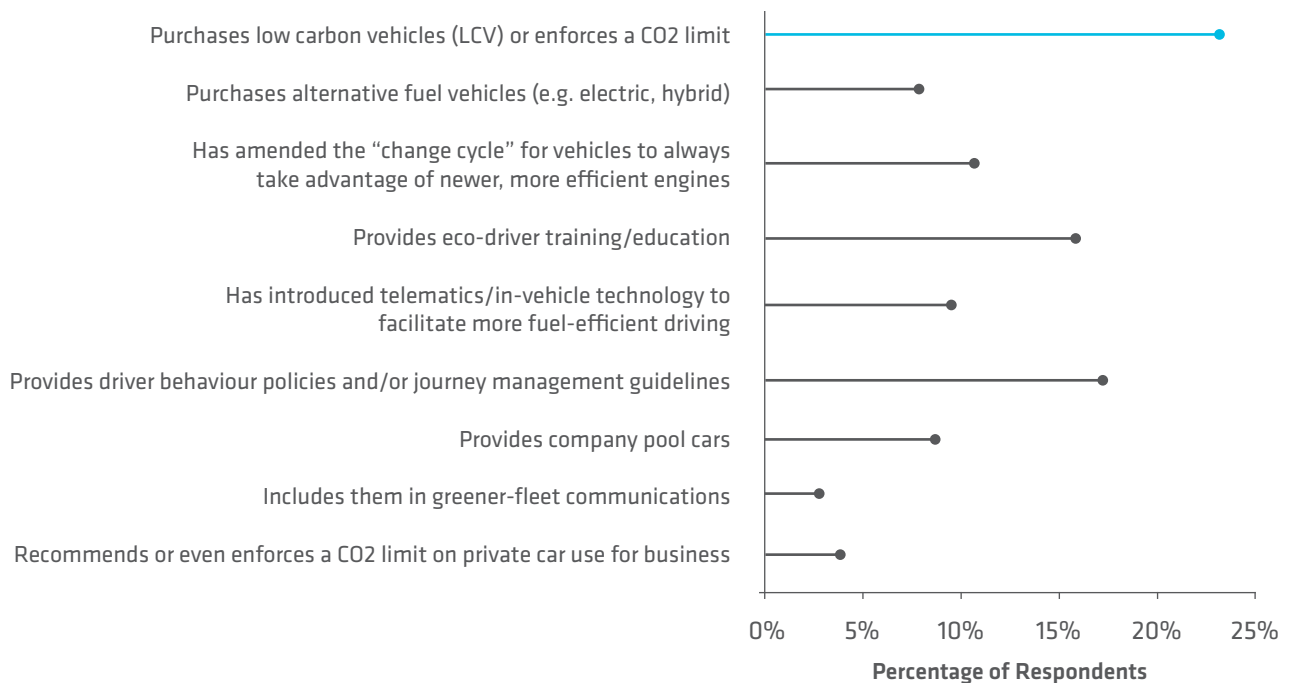
## 4. How is your organisation trying to proactively run a “greener” fleet?

All those surveyed said their organisation was trying to proactively run a “greener” fleet. The most popular way of doing this is through purchasing low carbon vehicles or enforcing a CO2 limit.

However, improving driver behaviour through policies and journey management (17%) and driver education and training (16%) also featured quite prominently.

Very few organisations reported including greener-fleet communications (3%) and only slightly more recommended or enforced CO2 limits for private car-use (for business).

### How is your organisation proactively trying to run a “greener” fleet?



**Table 4**

How is your organisation proactively trying to run a “greener” fleet?	Number	Percentage of Respondents
Purchases low carbon vehicles (LCV) or enforces a CO2 limit	67	23%
Purchases alternative fuel vehicles (e.g. electric, hybrid)	23	8%
Has amended the “change cycle” for vehicles to always take advantage of newer, more efficient engines	31	11%
Provides eco-driver training/education	46	16%
Has introduced telematics/in-vehicle technology to facilitate more fuel-efficient driving	28	10%
Provides driver behaviour policies and/or journey management guidelines	50	17%
Provides company pool cars	25	9%
Includes them in greener-fleet communications	8	3%
Recommends or even enforces a CO2 limit on private car use for business	11	4%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>289</b>	

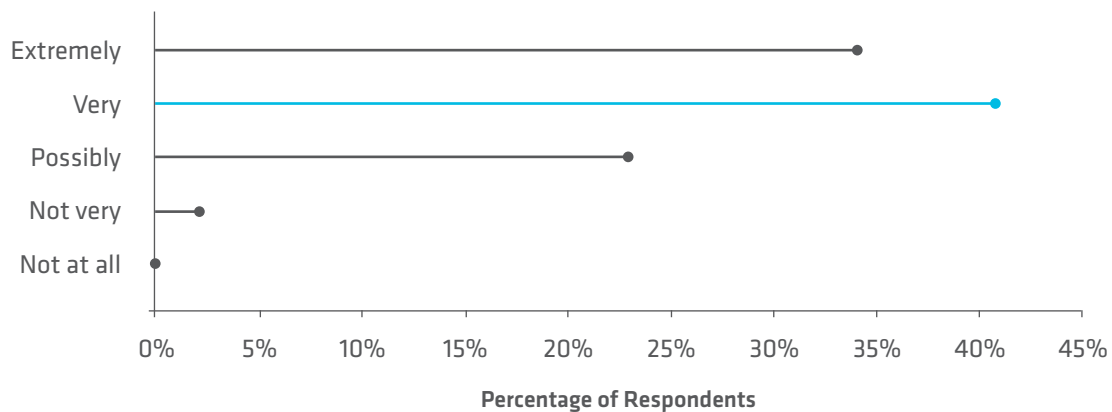
# 5. How influential do you think driver behaviour is to achieving your greener fleet aims and objectives?

It was recognised amongst the vast majority of those surveyed that driver behaviour had a strong impact on achieving greener fleet aims, reinforcing the theory that it cannot be advances in car technology alone that delivers a lower fleet fuel bill.

75% of those surveyed thought that driver behaviour was extremely (34%) or very (41%) influential for achieving these aims. Nobody surveyed thought that driver behaviour had no influence and only 2% thought that driver behaviour was not very influential.

It is positive to see that most people understand that driver behaviour can have a significant impact on trying to run a more fuel-efficient fleet.

 **How influential do you think driver behaviour is to achieving your greener fleet aims and objectives?**



**Table 5**

How influential do you think driver behaviour is to achieving your greener fleet aims and objectives?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
Extremely	46	34%
Very	55	41%
Possibly	31	23%
Not very	3	2%
Not at all	0	0%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

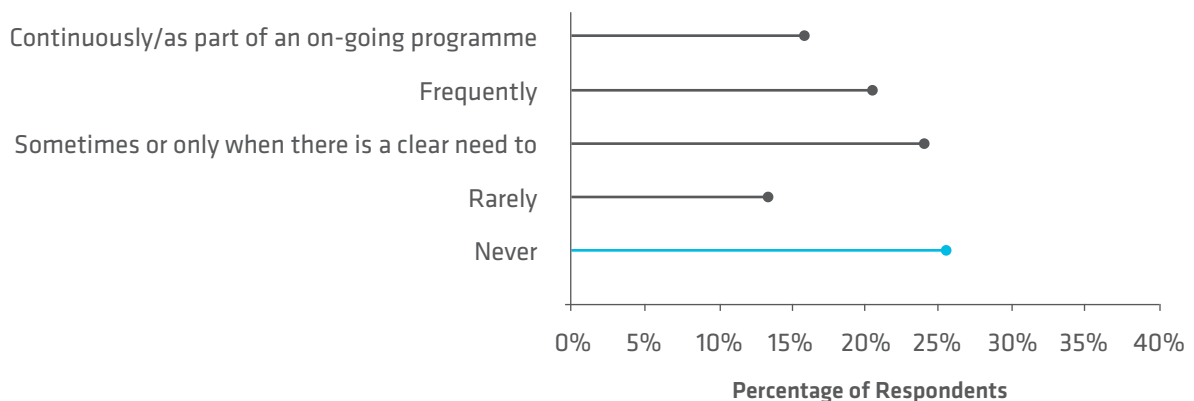
## 6. How often do you provide driver training specifically to achieve a greener fleet (“eco-driver” training)?

The results showed there were no trends to providing driver training. 37% of those surveyed provided driver training on a continuous basis (16%) or at least frequently (21%).

However, nearly 40% don't deliver driver training on what could be considered an effective basis; over a quarter (26%) of those surveyed never provide driver training, while another 13% said that driver training was rarely provided.

It is perhaps surprising that training is not more common across fleets given that most of those surveyed had green targets and understood the positive impact of driver behaviour on these.

### How often do you provide driver training specifically to achieve a greener fleet (“eco-driver” training)?



**Table 6**

How often do you provide driver training specifically to achieve a greener fleet (“eco-driver” training)?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
Continuously/as part of an on-going programme	21	16%
Frequently	28	21%
Sometimes or only when there is a clear need to	33	24%
Rarely	18	13%
Never	35	26%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

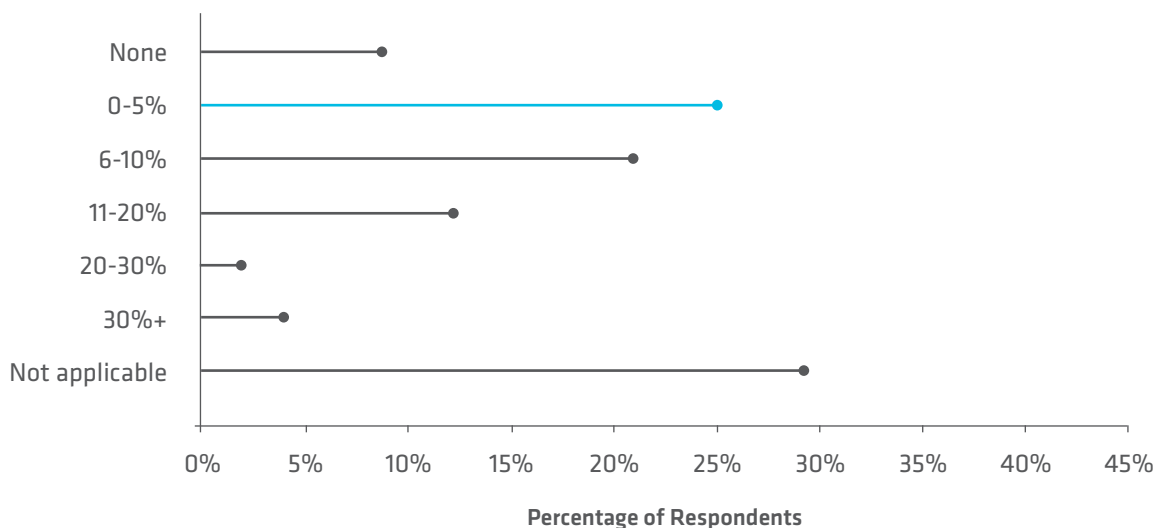
## 7. What overall improvement have you seen in fuel-usage (i.e. mpg) as a result of eco-driver training?

Generally, a significant proportion of respondents (29%) declared this information is either unavailable or is perhaps confidential or not measured.

Of those surveyed 38% found there was a greater than 6% improvement in fuel usage, while a quarter reported seeing smaller improvements.

The results indicate that over 60% of companies are making savings as a result of eco-driver training, although the trend is perhaps skewed towards smaller gains.

**What overall improvement have you seen in fuel-usage (i.e. mpg) as a result of eco-driver training? as a result of eco-driver training?**



**Table 7**

What overall improvement have you seen in fuel-usage (i.e. mpg) as a result of eco-driver training?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
None	11	8%
0-5%	34	25%
6-10%	28	21%
11-20%	16	12%
20-30%	3	2%
30%+	4	3%
Not applicable	39	29%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

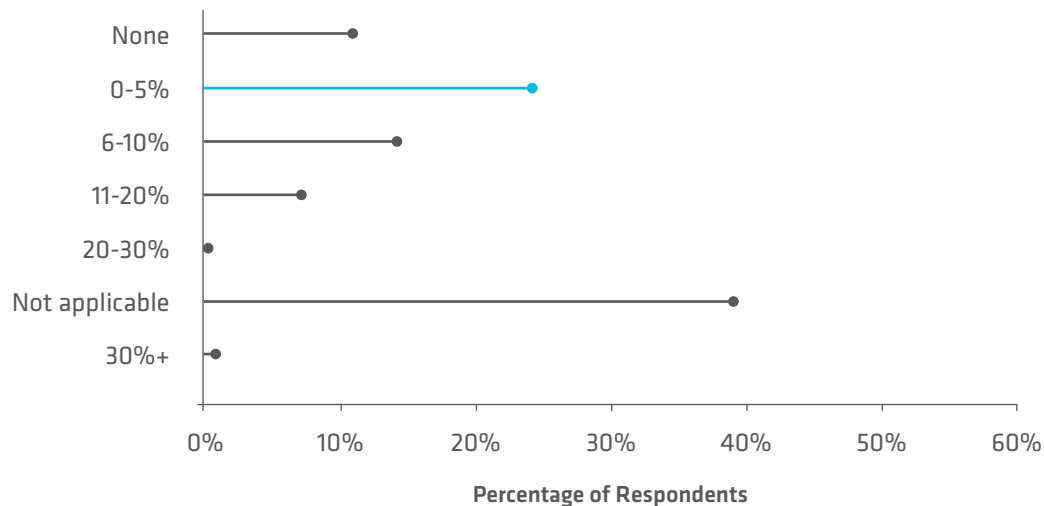
\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

## 8. What overall improvement have you seen in CO2 emissions as a result of eco-driver training?

There is a similar pattern here to the results regarding reductions in fuel-usage in that nearly 40% didn't or couldn't provide an answer. Nearly a quarter (24%) of organisations surveyed had seen a small improvement in CO2 emissions as a result of eco-driver training.

Another 22% of those surveyed had seen greater improvements CO2 emissions - between 6% and 30% reduction.

### What overall improvement have you seen in CO2 emissions as a result of eco-driver training?



**Table 8**

What overall improvement have you seen in CO2 emissions as result of eco-driver training?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
None	15	11%
0-5%	33	24%
6-10%	19	14%
11-20%	10	7%
20-30%	2	1%
Not applicable	53	39%
30%+	3	2%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

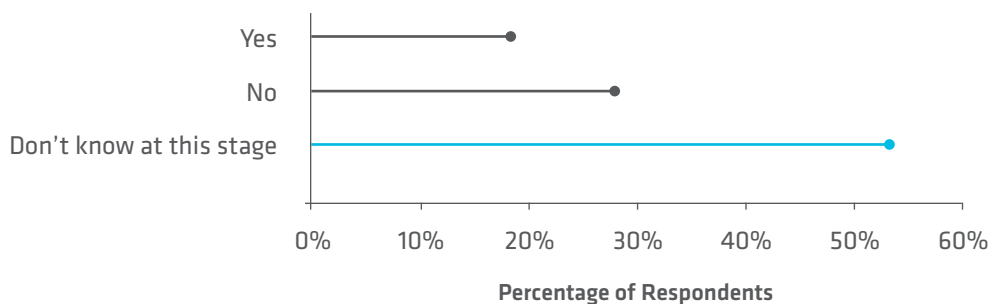
## 9. Will you be spending more on eco-driver training in 2013 than in previous years?

Over half (53%) of those surveyed were unsure how their eco-driver training budget would look in the next financial year and over a quarter (28%) were not expecting to spend more than this year.

Perhaps the tendency for smaller gains in MPG and CO2 (see Q8 and Q9) reflect a low take-up of driver training. Previous evidence suggests greater reductions would be achieved with the added benefit of driver training.

However, just under a fifth (19%) had already decided that they would be expecting to spend more than this year on eco-driver training.

### Will you be spending more on eco-driver training in 2013 than in previous years?



**Table 9**

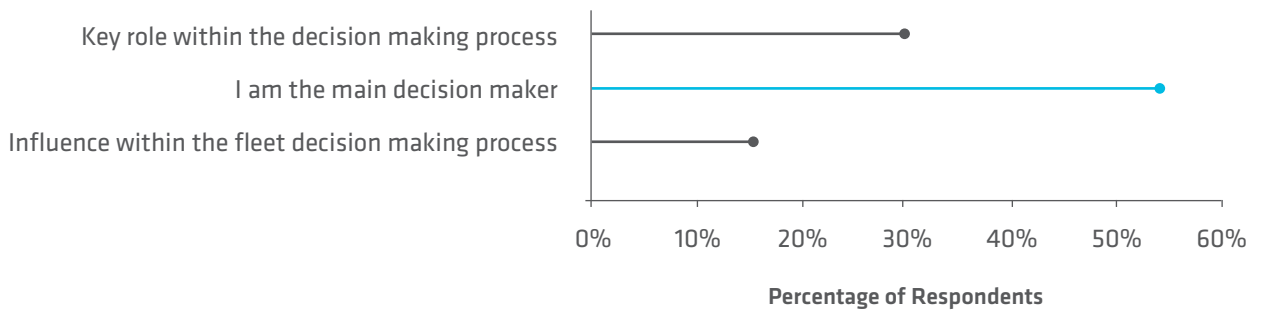
Will you be spending more on eco-driver training in 2013 than in previous years?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	25	19%
No	38	28%
Don't know at this stage	72	53%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond

# 10. What is your role within the fleet decision making process?

The results of this show that those surveyed (84%) were an important decision maker, if not the key decision maker.

## What is your role within the fleet decision making process?



**Table 10**

What is your role within the fleet decision making process?	Number*	Percentage of Respondents
Key role within the decision making process	41	30%
I am the main decision maker	73	54%
Influence within the fleet decision making process	21	16%
<b>No. respondents</b>	<b>135</b>	

\* Not all of the 200 companies asked chose to respond



# IAM RoadSmart – Products and Services

Of course, managing the fuel efficiency of any fleet is not cost-free. Although the aim is primarily about helping the environment, an increasingly important benefit is a reduction in spending as a result. There are significant benefits and a considerable return on investment to be had for deploying the correct fuel-efficiency initiatives.

Evidence shows that poorly trained drivers cost more money through higher fuel bills and an increased on-road incident rate, so sending out safer and more fuel-efficient drivers is well worth the investment.

Fortunately, many companies are starting to see the link between improving the driving skills of their employees and squeezing every drop of fuel and safety from their fleet. Skilled and trained drivers have a better attitude and look after their vehicles more carefully. With less wear and tear to the engine, tyres and brakes, the vehicles have lower running costs and a greater residual value too.

## **Learn more at a free IAM RoadSmart seminar**

Interventions such as training and assessments are clearly beneficial and relatively easy to implement. To assist companies in gaining a full understanding of how such interventions can help them, their fleet and their drivers. IAM RoadSmart regularly holds free seminars around the UK. Led by expert speakers, these half-day events provide delegates with a firm understanding of their company's risk exposure and the next steps needed to create a robust Driver Risk Management (DRM) programme. DRM can underpin many key elements of running a fleet by controlling and monitoring driver performance and behaviour – essential for any fleet or transport manager.

## **The IAM RoadSmart holistic approach to DRM allows an employer to:**

- Risk-assess its entire driver workforce in an efficient and cost-effective way
- Easily identify those drivers most at-risk and prioritise any necessary actions
- Minimise incidents on the road
- Reduce vehicle-related costs
- Improve overall driver safety and encourage a culture of road safety at the workplace.

## **In addition, IAM RoadSmart has one of the most comprehensive ranges of occupational driver training and driver risk management products in the UK, including:**

- online risk assessments
- e-learning modules
- face-to-face seminars
- comprehensive on-road driver training
- driver CPC compliance

By working with IAM RoadSmart, companies can ensure their drivers have the appropriate skills required to meet legal obligations and be better, safer drivers. They are receiving training of the highest standard from an organisation with pedigree and with enormous experience of improving commercial driver behaviour.

The new IAM RoadSmart website has a wealth of FREE information to help all those who work with or have responsibility for fleets and drivers, including:

- A self-assessment into company Driver Risk Management
- Insight guides into occupational driving policies and procedures
- Industry white papers and business-focused surveys
- Company drivers blog and driving-for-work tips
- Driver Risk Management and Fuel Efficiency seminars

**For further details and to find out how IAM RoadSmart can assist you, your drivers and your fleet, contact us:**

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