

Identifying and Mitigating the Challenges Faced by Women Truck Drivers

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Pictured from left to right: Jody (*Bison Transport*), Tina (*FedEx Ground*), Molly (*Transland*), Jacqueline (*CRST*), Shandrika (*Groendyke Transport*), Gina (*Werner Enterprises*), Emily (*Prime Inc.*), Shelly Ann (*Dot Transportation, Inc.*), Dee (*Prime Inc.*), Edith Carolina (*Jetco – GTI Group*) and Patty (*Boyle Transportation*).

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ACRONYMS

AAMVA	American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators
ART	America's Road Team
ATA	American Trucking Associations
ATRI	American Transportation Research Institute
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CDL	Commercial Driver's License
CMV	Commercial Motor Vehicle
DMV	Department of Motor Vehicles
ELD	Electronic Logging Device
ELDT	Entry-Level Driver Training
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
HOS	Hours-of-Service
IC	Independent Contractor
LTL	Less-than-Truckload
MC	Motor Carrier
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
OO	Owner-Operator
OOS	Out-of-Service
OTR	Over-the-Road
RAC	Research Advisory Committee
SASH	Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment
TD	Truck Driver
TDTS	Truck Driver Training School
TL	Truckload
TMAF	Trucking Moves America Forward
TPIMS	Truck Parking Information Management System
WIM	Women In Motion
WIT	Women In Trucking
WOTAB	Women of Trucking Advisory Board

INTRODUCTION

Truck drivers play a pivotal role in supporting the nation's economy, transporting 72.6 percent of the nation's freight.¹ They endure a wide range of conditions to provide timely delivery of the necessary goods on which we all rely. Despite rewarding benefits and career opportunities within the trucking industry, women have historically been underrepresented in truck driving jobs.

The involvement of women in the trucking industry is crucial for enhancing safety and addressing workforce shortages. According to the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) 2022 update of *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement*, female truck drivers were safer than their male counterparts in every statistically significant category, as documented by fewer crashes, convictions and violations.² The discipline and patience that women bring to trucking are invaluable assets for motor carriers and roadway safety initiatives. Additionally, ATRI's annual *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry* report continues to identify the truck driver shortage as a top tier issue, ranking first from 2017 – 2021 and second for motor carriers in 2023.³

While the visibility of women in trucking advertisements has increased and the percentage of women drivers has been rising slowly over the past few decades, significant challenges persist that deter women from considering or continuing a career in trucking.⁴ These challenges arise throughout the training, hiring and operations processes. Concerns about these barriers prompted ATRI's Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to prioritize this study in March of 2023.⁵ This research report identifies key challenges, proposes practical solutions, and establishes best practices for women truck drivers, addressing both entry barriers and ongoing issues in the industry.

BACKGROUND

Estimates of the percentage of women truck drivers vary considerably by source. The Women In Trucking (WIT) Association produces an annual index, reporting the percentage of professional women drivers at 12.1 percent in 2023.⁶ Additional insights from ATRI's analysis of commercial driver's license (CDL) data revealed that only 2.7 percent of inspected CDL holders

¹ American Trucking Associations, "Economics and Industry Data" (accessed March 28, 2024), <https://www.trucking.org/economics-and-industry-data>.

² Abigail Markus and Dan Murray, *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement: 2022 Update*, American Transportation Research Institute (October 2022), <https://truckingresearch.org/2022/10/predicting-truck-crash-involvement-2022-update/>.

³ American Transportation Research Institute, *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry – 2023* (October 2023), <https://truckingresearch.org/2023/10/critical-issues-in-the-trucking-industry-2023/>.

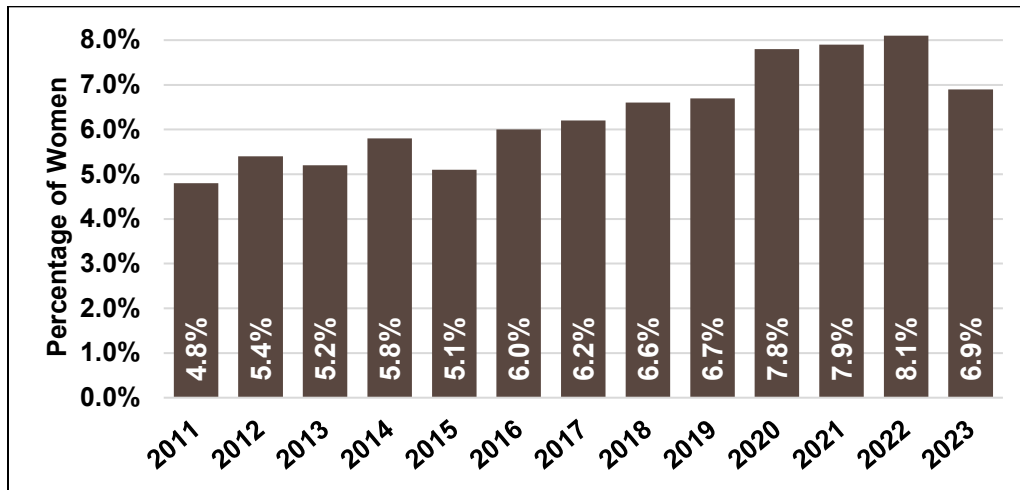
⁴ Stephanie Sicard, "Female Truck Drivers: Negotiating Identity in a Male Dominated Environment," *McNair Scholars Journal* (16), no.1 (2012), https://www.academia.edu/75442957/Female_Truck_Drivers_Negotiating_Identity_in_a_Male_Dominated_Environment.

⁵ ATRI's Research Advisory Committee is comprised of industry stakeholders representing motor carriers, trucking industry suppliers, federal government agencies, professional truck drivers, law enforcement, and academia. The RAC is charged with annually recommending a research agenda for the Institute.

⁶ Women In Trucking, "Women In Trucking Index 2023," (June 2023), <https://www.womenintrucking.org/index>.

in 2019 were women.⁷ In 2023, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported 6.9 percent of truck drivers were women, declining from 8.1 percent in 2022, as shown in Figure 1.⁸

Figure 1: Percentage of Women Truck Drivers 2011 – 2023



These percentages alone highlight the variability between sources, often depending on how the sources define “truck driver” and / or use of CDL license classes. ATRI has been working with other industry associations to clarify the percentage of women truck drivers.

Where are the women truck drivers?

There is considerable confusion, and a dearth of information, on how many women drive commercial trucks in the United States. One of the first conundrums revolves around the use of “commercial vehicle” to describe a truck. The other complexities relate to the three primary “classes” used to categorize commercial vehicles – Class A, Class B, and Class C – which relate to both vehicle size and configuration.

Different government agencies and different industry organizations publish a variety of metrics on the number of women truck drivers in the U.S., based on different driver terms and descriptions. One organization uses the term “professional driver,” and two different government metrics include non-drivers and/or non-truck drivers based on how many North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code numbers are included.

That said, commonly published statistics for the number of women truck drivers in the U.S. range from 5 percent to 14 percent.

In an effort to better define “truck driver” and identify a more accurate calculation for women truck drivers, the research team worked with multiple industry organizations and two government agencies to discuss terms and nomenclature. It was generally agreed upon that holders of CDL Class C licenses should not be included in women truck driver descriptions. There was less agreement on Class B license holders, but given the large growth in ecommerce-related straight truck deliveries, the research team tentatively is including Class B.

The research team worked with both the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and several state departments of motor vehicles (DMV) to pull CDL data by gender and class. In addition, the research team mined and analyzed the CDL data used in ATRI’s ongoing Crash Predictor research. Finally, several trucking membership organizations were asked to tabulate women truck driver statistics from their databases.

⁷ Abigail Markus and Dan Murray, *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement: 2022 Update*, American Transportation Research Institute (October 2022), <https://truckingresearch.org/2022/10/predicting-truck-crash-involvement-2022-update/>.

⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Household Data Annual Averages, 11. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity,” (accessed April 4, 2024), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>.

In summary, it was determined that women truck drivers who drive Class 7/8 tractor-trailer combination trucks only comprise between 2.6 percent and 3.2 percent of the truck driver population. Women Class B license holders, with and without a school bus endorsement, represent approximately 15 percent of all Class B license holders – which is nearly double the percent of men who hold Class B licenses.

A future task that ATRI plans to undertake in 2024 is to solicit CDL data from all 50 state DMVs, for gender and license class, and develop an extremely accurate determination of women truck drivers in the U.S.

Truck driving jobs have historically been filled by men. However, women have occupied truck driving roles going back to the early 1920s, when Luella Bates was the first documented woman to be licensed to drive a commercial truck.⁹ Over the past century, women have ascended to various positions across the trucking sector, from human resources, technicians, truck driving, dispatch and safety positions to C-suite and executive leadership roles.

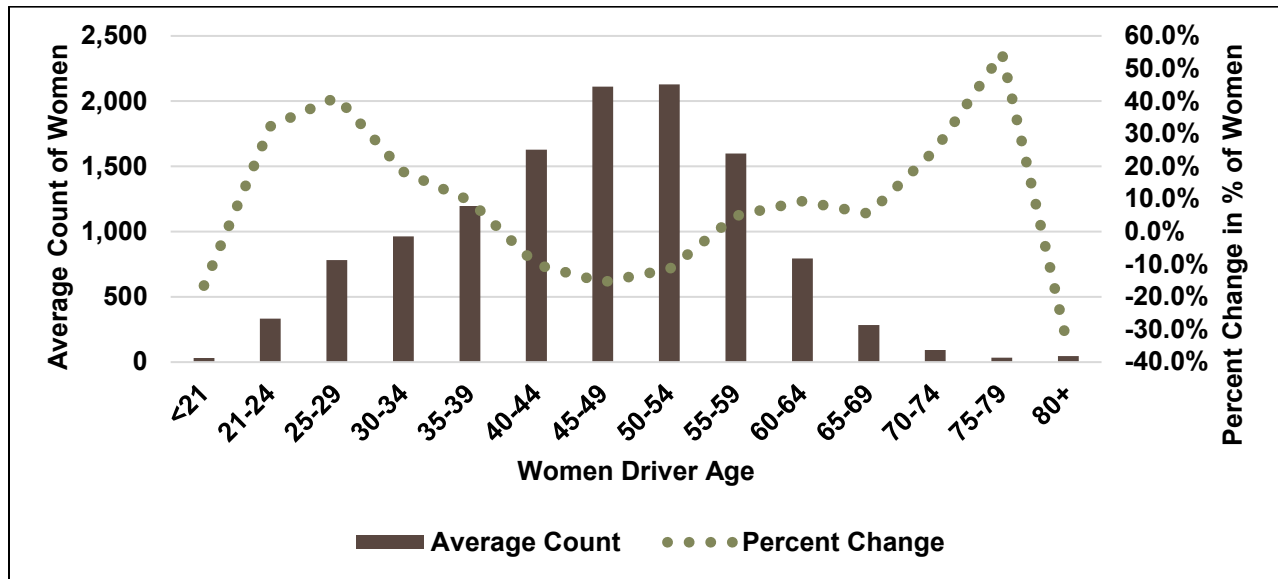
Today's truck driving profession encompasses extended hours, strict regulatory compliance and a non-traditional lifestyle characterized by independence and the opportunity to explore the country. The industry offers drivers several career paths to pursue, including local, regional or over-the-road (OTR) driving, day or night shifts, and roles within different types of trucking companies, ranging from small owner-operators (OO) to large carriers, handling a large variety of commodity types. The gradual increase of women representation within the trucking workforce reflects significant transformations in the industry's demographics and culture over recent decades, driven by efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity.

The percentage of younger women drivers is trending higher. Between 2014 and 2018, the percent of women drivers between 25 – 29 years old increased by 41.3 percent (Figure 2).¹⁰

⁹ Women In Trucking, "HERstory: First Female Truck Driver," (March 1, 2021), <https://www.womenintrucking.org/blog/herstory-first-female-truck-driver>.

¹⁰ This data was pulled from ATRI's two most recent iterations of *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement*; Abigail Markus and Dan Murray, *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement: 2022 Update*, American Transportation Research Institute (October 2022), <https://truckingresearch.org/2022/10/predicting-truck-crash-involvement-2022-update/>; Caroline Boris and Dan Murray, *Predicting Truck Crash Involvement: 2022 Update*, American Transportation Research Institute (July 2018), <https://truckingresearch.org/2018/07/predicting-truck-crash-involvement-2018-update/>.

Figure 2: Average Count of Women Drivers and Percent Change from 2014 – 2018



Nevertheless, there is an impression that women often face challenges related to stereotypes, gender bias and unequal opportunities. Efforts to address these biases through advocacy, support networks (e.g., mentorship programs) and diversity initiatives are essential to fostering greater gender equity and inclusivity in trucking. By recognizing and addressing these biases, the industry can continue to benefit from the diverse perspectives and talents that women bring to the profession. And, while women participation in truck driving careers remains relatively low compared to men, ongoing initiatives and recognition programs highlight the growing contributions and achievements of women truck drivers while underscoring the integral role of women in shaping the future of transportation and trucking.¹¹

METHODOLOGY

The initial research task was a Literature Review on women in trucking, which did not yield a substantial amount of information and insight. From there, the ATRI research team identified three populations critical to identifying challenges and practical strategies for overcoming the challenges: truck drivers; motor carriers; and truck driver training schools. Employees in all three of these populations participated in ATRI’s research through three key research tools: surveys; interviews; and a focus group. The participant count in each research tool by population is included in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Tools by Population

Population	Survey Responses	Interviews	Focus Group Participants
Truck Drivers	1,458	7	11
Motor Carriers	82	11	-
Truck Driver Training Schools	-	8	-

¹¹ Women In Trucking, “Women In Trucking” (accessed June 6, 2024), <https://www.womenintruck.org/>.

Truck Driver Survey

An ATRI survey for truck drivers (TD) was launched 1/3/2024 through 2/2/2024. The survey was promoted through ATRI’s contact database (32,000+ contacts), LinkedIn page, Sirius / XM radio shows, truck driver groups and through major trucking industry trade press. This survey targeted both men and women who currently or formerly drove a commercial truck. The survey was completed by nearly 1,500 truck drivers. The TD survey can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2 outlines the driving status, average length of haul and employee status by TD gender percentage in each demographic. There was nearly equal representation between men and women, with 50.1 percent of responses coming from women. More than half (50.3%) of women respondents have an average length of haul greater than 1,000 miles. A majority of responses came from *current* truck drivers (87.4%). Among *former* drivers, the gender composition was women at 12.2 percent and men at 13.1 percent.

Table 2: Truck Driver Survey Respondent Demographics

Driving Status	Percentage of Women	Percentage of Men
Current	87.8%	86.9%
Former	12.2%	13.1%
Average Length of Haul	Percentage of Women	Percentage of Men
Local (less than 250 miles)	15.5%	22.4%
Regional (250 - 500 miles)	14.6%	25.6%
Inter-regional (500 - 1,000 miles)	19.6%	18.6%
National (greater than 1,000 miles)	50.3%	33.4%
Employee Status	Percentage of Women	Percentage of Men
Employee driver	67.7%	52.4%
OO / Independent Contractor leased to a motor carrier	23.6%	28.7%
OO with own authority	8.7%	18.9%

Women Truck Driver Interviews

All current and former women drivers who completed the truck driver survey were given the opportunity to participate in an interview with the research team. The truck driver interviews served as a critical opportunity to bring greater context and granularity to the survey responses, explore their reasons for entering the industry and identify specific examples of recurring challenges. The ATRI research team identified 25 drivers for an interview and seven women either met with an ATRI staff member or completed the interview form on their own.

Women Truck Driver Focus Group

The research team used the driver survey data and interview findings to design a robust focus group plan. In March of 2024, ATRI invited 11 women drivers from 10 different motor carriers to participate in a focus group held in Washington, DC. The focus group was a critical component of the research as it sought to address unanswered questions from previous ATRI survey and interview research, in addition to obtaining detailed insights into women driver experiences on the road. While the truck driver survey focused primarily on quantitative data, the focus group

allowed women drivers to expand and expound on the survey and interview findings. A copy of the focus group outline and activities can be found in Appendix B.

Six participants were selected from motor carrier interviewees with the other five participants being selected from the American Trucking Associations' (ATA) America's Road Team (ART). While the participants represented a convenience sample, the selected participants provided broad and representative input and advice across a range of issues. Ten truck drivers represented six different U.S. states, and one driver represented Ontario, Canada. The 11 drivers had a combined 203 years of truck driving experience, averaging approximately 18.4 years of experience. As previously noted, the participants represented 10 companies, with eight having team driving experience and three being OO / independent contractors (IC).

Motor Carrier Survey

The motor carrier survey was designed to solicit input on carrier issues, opportunities and strategies associated with recruiting, training, and retaining women truck drivers. The survey was launched 10/19/2023 through 12/31/2023 and was distributed through ATRI's contact database, ATRI's regular Sirius / XM radio show and major trucking industry trade press. The full survey can be found in Appendix C.

A total of 82 motor carriers (MC) provided complete responses, representing Truckload (TL), Less-than-Truckload (LTL) and specialized (flatbed, reefer, tanker, concrete and intermodal) fleets. More than a third of survey responses came from fleets with 51 – 250 trucks (34.1%). The average percentage of women truck drivers among the MC respondents was 5.9 percent.

Motor Carrier Interviews

The motor carrier survey provided the respondents an opportunity to participate in more in-depth interviews with the ATRI research team. ATRI contacted all motor carrier respondents who expressed interest, completing 11 interviews with a diverse pool of motor carriers. The goal of the interviews was to generate expanded insights on the survey data in addition to identifying any additional women driver challenges. The ATRI research team scheduled online interviews over three weeks; after the first six interviews, the research team revised the interview guide by removing questions that produced repetitive responses. A copy of the condensed interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

The 11 interviewees represented a range of job titles including President / CEO, Human Resources Manager, Vice President of Safety and Compliance, and Director of Driver Recruitment. Interviewee fleet size ranged from 20 drivers to more than 2,000 drivers. Of the fleets interviewed, the percentage of women drivers ranged between 2 – 40 percent. Selected carriers were generally more successful in attracting and retaining women drivers, which provided the research team with key inputs on current, effective, and unique strategies for recruiting and retaining women drivers.

Truck Driver Training School Interviews

The ATRI research team interviewed eight truck driver training schools (TDTS) in the U.S.; the interview guides were designed to better understand the program curriculum and the perceived gender differences among training program participants. The TDTS interview guide can be found in Appendix E.

The interviewed schools represented training programs in seven U.S. states. Several notable metrics include:

- program lengths ranged from 4 to 22 weeks long;
- annual student enrollment ranged from 25 to 5,200 students; and
- percentage of women enrolled ranged from 9 percent to 30 percent.

WOMEN TRUCK DRIVERS: A SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

While trucking is certainly not a “one-size-fits-all” profession, truck driving jobs are generally viewed as providing stable incomes, solid benefits, and job variety. Drivers also experience the freedom and independence that comes with traversing the country. That said, the low industry participation rate by women corroborates that key issues and barriers do exist.

As an initial step to understand the challenges faced by women drivers, ATRI surveyed drivers on 12 specific problems initially identified through the literature review and through consultation with a panel of professional truck drivers. Survey respondents identified how frequently they experience each of the 12 problems. Women respondents experience 11 problems more frequently than men, with the sole exception of excessive detention time at customer facilities. As shown in Table 3, the most frequently occurring challenge for women is no / limited access to exercise facilities – 42.2 percent experience this daily.

Table 3: Driver-Identified Problems Experienced Daily

Problem	Women		Men	
	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent
No / Limited Access to Exercise Facilities	1	42.2%	2	30.2%
No / Limited Access to Safe Parking	2	41.1%	1	30.9%
No / Limited Access to Restroom Facilities	3	39.1%	4	23.1%
Concern over Personal Safety	4	30.2%	3	28.7%
Negative Stereotypes	5	28.5%	6	18.2%
No / Limited Mental Health Resources	6	25.2%	8	16.2%
Company or dispatchers do not give enough time for breaks (meals, restroom, showers) while on the road	7	22.8%	7	16.8%
Excessive Detention Time at Customer Facilities	8	20.4%	5	21.8%
Too Much Time Away from Home	9	20.3%	9	14.6%
Limited Advancement Opportunities	10	18.1%	10	12.1%
Harassment or Discrimination	11	17.6%	11	8.8%
Lack of Childcare	12	11.3%	12	4.9%

Based on these responses and input from drivers, carriers and training schools, the specific problems in Table 3 were distilled into six core **challenges**. For example, exercise facilities, mental health resources and too much time away from home in Table 3 are all critical components of an OTR driver’s lifestyle and have been grouped as such. Researchers then identified multiple causes or **issues** that significantly contribute to each core challenge. Table 4 summarizes the core challenges and their respective issues. The remainder of this report follows the organization of Table 4. Finally, the discussion of each issue includes **strategies**

tailored to motor carriers, truck driver training schools and truck drivers in order to provide a blueprint for action.

Table 4: Six Key Challenges and Respective Issues

Challenge	Issues
1. Negative Industry Image and Perception	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inequitable social norms 2. Misuse of social media 3. Lack of younger drivers and aging workforce
2. Unable to Complete Truck Driver Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inability to pay for training 2. Lack of driving skills, ability, or knowledge 3. No or limited access to childcare 4. Excessive travel to and from school
3. Unsatisfactory Motor Carrier Company Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unclear and inconsistent communication with drivers 2. Absence of recognition and appreciation initiatives
4. Inability to Acclimate to the OTR Driver Lifestyle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insufficient home-time 2. Inability to establish and sustain healthy habits
5. Limited Parking and Restroom Facility Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shortage of available safe parking 2. Lack of clean restrooms
6. Excessive Gender Harassment and Discrimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discrimination during training 2. Concern over personal safety

CHALLENGE 1 – Negative Industry Image and Perception

Before an individual decides to pursue a career in trucking, they will likely have a preconceived perception of the industry and job and what it entails. In November of 2022, the trucking industry’s image campaign, Trucking Moves America Forward (TMAF), released survey results that identified the public’s perception of the trucking industry.¹² The TMAF survey found three key data points:

- 97 percent of Americans believe the trucking industry plays a very important role in the country’s economy;
- 87 percent of Americans have a favorable impression of the trucking industry; and
- 72 percent of Americans regard trucking’s safety record as either “excellent” or “good.”

¹² Trucking Moves America Forward, “National Polling” (November 1, 2022).

Despite these optimistic findings from the TMAF survey, ATRI's data collection identified several factors that shape an individual's perception of the industry.

ATRI's data collection concluded that the following industry image and perception **issues** impact whether an individual is interested in pursuing a truck driving job:

- Issue 1 – Inequitable social norms
- Issue 2 – Misuse of social media
- Issue 3 – Lack of younger drivers and aging workforce

"I get judged for working instead of being a full-time mom all the time. Men are expected to work, but women don't get the same grace from society."

- Woman Truck Driver

Issue 1 – Inequitable Social Norms

The driver survey asked women respondents to explain why they believe it is more challenging for women to be truck drivers through open-ended responses. Approximately 31.3 percent of the responses pertained to attitudes other drivers, motor carriers, shippers and the general public have about women drivers or general disrespect of women. More broadly, these responses focused on discrimination, sexism, negative stereotypes, trucking being a "man's world," women being viewed as weaker than men, sexualization and the lack of respect they receive *because they are women* (Table 5).

Table 5: Reasons Women Believe it is More Challenging for Women to Be Truck Drivers

Reasons Women Believe it is More Challenging for Women Truck Drivers	Percent of Total Responses
Attitude toward women / disrespect	31.3%
Personal safety	12.6%
Restroom access	12.2%
Physical abilities	11.6%
Not more challenging for women	6.6%
Having to prove yourself	5.7%
Home-time / children	5.6%
Equipment / maintenance	3.2%
Hygiene / menstruation	2.9%
Other	8.3%

To improve inequitable social norms in trucking, Table 6 outlines the recommended **strategies** for the three populations.

Table 6: Inequitable Social Norms Strategies

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Highlight the income potential and existing pay parity in trucking	✓	✓	
Focus on women drivers in marketing materials	✓	✓	
Educate family and friends on trucking opportunities	✓	✓	✓
Stay professional and maintain a positive outlook			✓

Strategy: Highlight the Income Potential and Existing Pay Parity in Trucking

Motor carriers and training schools alike can advertise the income potential and pay parity to help women understand the financial opportunities that driving a truck offers.

Forbes Advisor estimates that women make \$0.84 to a man’s dollar in the U.S. labor force, not accounting for experience or qualifications.¹³ When controlled for job, experience and qualifications, women make \$0.99 cents to a man’s dollar.¹⁴

Trucking is one industry where this issue is less likely to occur. There are a number of factors that go into driver compensation including different pay models (e.g., per mile, per hour, per load, percentage of revenue), years of driving experience, annual miles driven, type of freight, geography, and motor carrier, among other considerations. In separate ATRI research on company drivers and OO / ICs, ATRI found that 24 percent of women company drivers made more than \$75,000 a year, and 30 percent of women OO/IC drivers made over \$100,000 a year, which is greater than twice the average income across all women workers in the U.S.¹⁵ In 2022, Walmart announced that they were hiring truck drivers with two years of safe driving history for up to \$110,000 annually.¹⁶ Focus group participants specifically mentioned the trucking industry as a “lucrative alternative to provide for their families.” One woman shared that “when [she] was a child, [she] saw the trucks on Interstate 80, near [her] home, and had always wanted to become a truck driver” – she now owns a small fleet.

“It can be hard work but very worth it. I have achieved a lot of financial goals I never would have in any other job. You need specific skills but no degree... I am proud to be really good at my job and be successful because I know there are plenty that aren’t.”

– Woman Truck Driver

The motor carrier survey respondents identified recruitment messages that they believe are *most effective* in hiring women at their fleet, while the women drivers indicated what was really *important* to them when deciding to become a truck driver. Competitive pay and benefits were cited as one of the most important deciding factors for 55.3 percent of the women survey respondents, compared to only 43.2 percent of men (Figure 3). Motor carriers correctly align with the priorities of their women drivers, with 58.7 percent of carriers indicating that pay potential is an effective recruitment strategy in advertising.

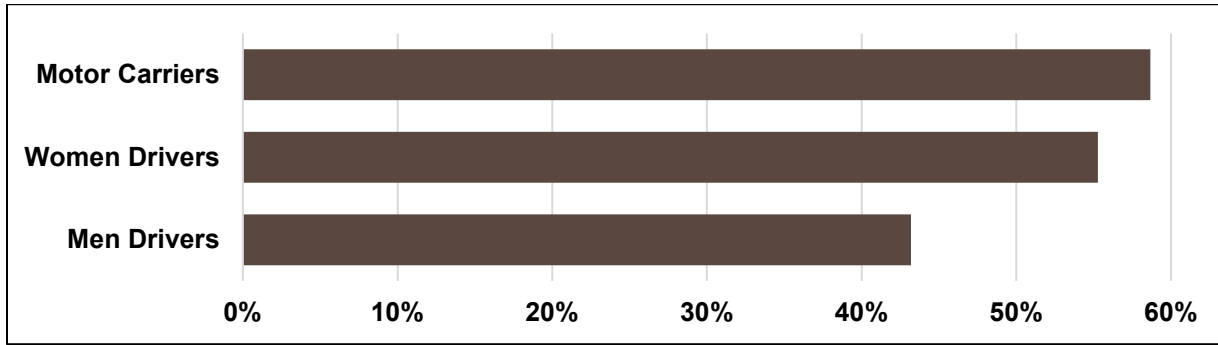
¹³ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “TED: The Economics Daily” (March 12, 2024), <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2024/womens-earnings-were-83-6-percent-of-mens-in-2023.htm>.

¹⁴ Payscale, “2024 Gender Pay Gap Report (GPGR)” (accessed June 6, 2024), <https://www.payscale.com/research-and-insights/gender-pay-gap/>.

¹⁵ Rebecca M. Brewster, “Owner-Operators / Independent Contractors in the Supply Chain,” (December 2021), <https://truckingresearch.org/2021/12/owner-operators-independent-contractors-in-the-supply-chain/>; Bureau of Labor Statistics Reports, “Highlights of women’s earnings in 2021; Report 1102” (March 2023), <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/womens-earnings/2021/home.htm>.

¹⁶ Fernando Cortes, “Drive-In Opportunity: Walmart Raises Driver Pay and Launches Private Fleet Development Program” Walmart (April 7, 2022), <https://corporate.walmart.com/news/2022/04/07/drive-in-opportunity-walmart-raises-driver-pay-and-launches-private-fleet-development-program>.

Figure 3: Importance of Highly Competitive Pay and Benefits



Strategy: Focus on Women Drivers in Marketing Materials

Including women in motor carrier and training school advertisements in magazines, on billboards and on company websites helps women see themselves as truck drivers. Several motor carrier interviewees emphasized the importance of marketing their own women drivers on their website and marketing materials; this can be a key element of building a respectable company culture.

While there has been an increase in women-focused marketing, the focus group participants expressed frustration that trucking industry marketing materials generally lacked women representation, pointing out that marketing materials for bus drivers often included women in driving positions. It was suggested that the best way to diversify the image of the industry was to show women in truck driving positions, thus creating a positive perception of women truck drivers for both genders.

More than one in four (28%) motor carrier respondents have women-specific recruitment / retention initiatives. Motor carriers with women-specific initiatives maintain a higher percentage of women drivers (8.1%) compared to motor carriers without women-specific initiatives (5.0%). Common women-specific initiatives include:

- Featuring women drivers in advertisements or on social media;
- Learning from and networking with WIT and ATA’s Women In Motion (WIM) members; and
- Organizing women-focused internal programs or clubs.

“I love this company and the integrity and professionalism the owner possesses. She really wants doors to open for more women to pursue this as a career. Her heart is in it.”

– Woman Truck Driver

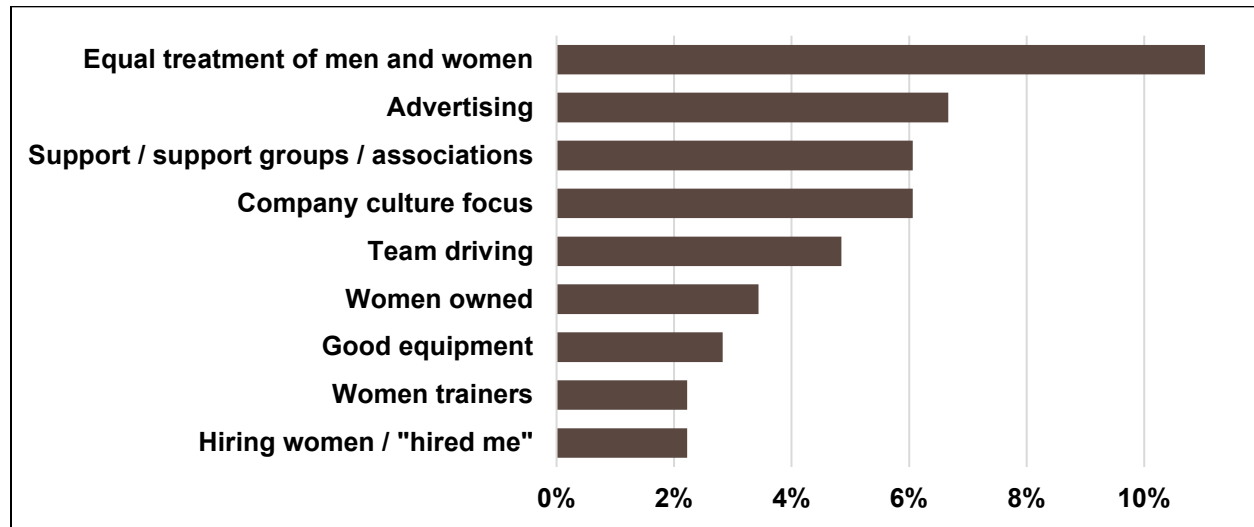
Women drivers were asked to identify women-specific initiatives at their motor carrier. Of the 495 respondents, 54.6 percent indicated that their motor carrier has no women-specific initiatives. The other 225 women provided a response identified in Figure 4. Approximately 11 percent of the women respondents believe that their carriers treat men and women equally, while featuring women in advertising (6.7%), supporting women through groups and

“My company does not have any women-specific initiatives but that’s not a bad thing. There are only so many female trainers and they are all so busy training other females that if we tried to recruit more ladies the waiting period to get on-the-road experience for the students would be much longer.”

– Woman Truck Driver

association participation (6.1%) and a clear focus on company culture (6.1%) were also mentioned as positive initiatives.

Figure 4: Percent of Women-Specific Motor Carrier Initiatives Identified by Truck Drivers



Strategy: Educate Family and Friends on Trucking Opportunities

The focus group participants and interviewees highlighted the role their family played in introducing trucking as a career option. Additionally, a smaller motor carrier interviewee emphasized that when a job opening becomes available, it is typically a friend or family member of a current employee that fills the position. The ATRI truck driver survey identified the top three influences when women consider a career in trucking. Over half of the women respondents (50.9%) identified family as one of their top three influences (Table 7). Similarly, 45.7 percent of men indicated family influencing their truck driver career choice.

Women are learning about truck driving opportunities from fewer outlets than men are; women are most commonly learning about the industry from people they know. Similarly, one woman truck driver shared in an interview “it’s not always what you know, but who you know” in terms of getting a job.

Women are less likely than men to enter the trucking industry *after* occupying roles in similar industries or in the military – potentially a result of a lower percentage of women in those industries as well.¹⁷

¹⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Household Data Annual Averages, 11. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity,” (accessed April 1, 2024), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/aa2022/cpsaat11.htm>; US Department of Defense, “Department of Defense Releases Annual Demographics Report – Upward Trend in Number of Women Serving Continues,” (December 14, 2022), <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3246268/department-of-defense-releases-annual-demographics-report-upward-trend-in-numbe/>.

Table 7: Truck Drivers – Industry Influences by Gender

Influence	Women	Men	Women % Difference
Family	50.9%	45.7%	11.4%
CDL / Truck Driving School	36.8%	23.1%	59.3%
Friend	34.9%	28.5%	22.5%
Other Driving Experience	26.9%	21.9%	22.8%
Similar Industry	17.8%	30.4%	-41.4%
Referrals from Existing Employees	11.4%	16.6%	-31.3%
Truck Show	8.2%	13.6%	-39.7%
Print Media Advertising	4.9%	7.2%	-31.9%
Social Media / Marketing	4.7%	4.0%	17.5%
Military Experience	4.2%	12.5%	-66.4%
Radio / TV Advertising	3.0%	3.9%	-23.1%
High School Courses	1.4%	1.8%	-22.2%

Strategy: Stay Professional and Maintain a Positive Outlook

Women survey respondents highlighted the skepticism or judgement that women sometimes receive from men *because* they are a woman in trucking. When the perception of a truck driver was discussed, the focus group participants stressed that maintaining a professional attitude and appearance was critical to receiving respect from colleagues. Many of the women felt they had to regularly prove that they were just as capable at safely driving a truck as their male counterparts.

Issue 2 – Misuse of Social Media

All the focus group participants expressed their excitement that more women were entering the industry. However, the group conveyed their collective concern about how social media has been used among some of the younger professional truck drivers entering the industry. The women indicated that their occasional use of social media was often useful for communication and learning about the industry. However, focus group participants were concerned that some new entrants, particularly women, use social media to convey their location, length of time at a location and what they were hauling. All of the veteran women in the group felt that sharing their location and what they haul was risky behavior that could lead to undesired consequences, like cargo theft or unwanted attention / harassment.

To help address concerns of drivers’ social media usage, Table 8 breaks down the recommended **strategies** for the three populations.

Table 8: Strategies to Address Misuse of Social Media

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Share positive stories and posts	✓	✓	✓
Training on improper social media usage	✓	✓	
Establish and enforce social media policies	✓		

Strategy: Share Positive Stories and Posts

Public perception can be shaped by the content and materials distributed on social media. By focusing on increased positivity through visibility, representation, education and supporting women, all three populations can make a difference.

Clarissa Rankin is a social media influencer who has been covered by several news networks regarding her experience of becoming a professional truck driver. She discusses the income potential, her daily routine and becoming an OO, but more importantly, she empowers people to pursue a truck driving career.¹⁸ Other women have followed in Clarissa’s footsteps highlighting the independence, job security and income that come with the job.¹⁹

Strategy: Training on Improper Social Media Usage

When drivers share where they are and what they are hauling, they are putting the company at risk of cargo theft, among other consequences. Communicating the potential risks that impact both the individual and the company allows drivers to understand the consequences of distributing sensitive or inappropriate information while on the road.

Strategy: Establish and Enforce Social Media Policies

In addition to training drivers on the consequences of improper social media usage, providing drivers with clear, formal social media policies *and* enforcement of the policies can improve driver safety and security.

Issue 3 – Lack of Younger Drivers and Aging Workforce

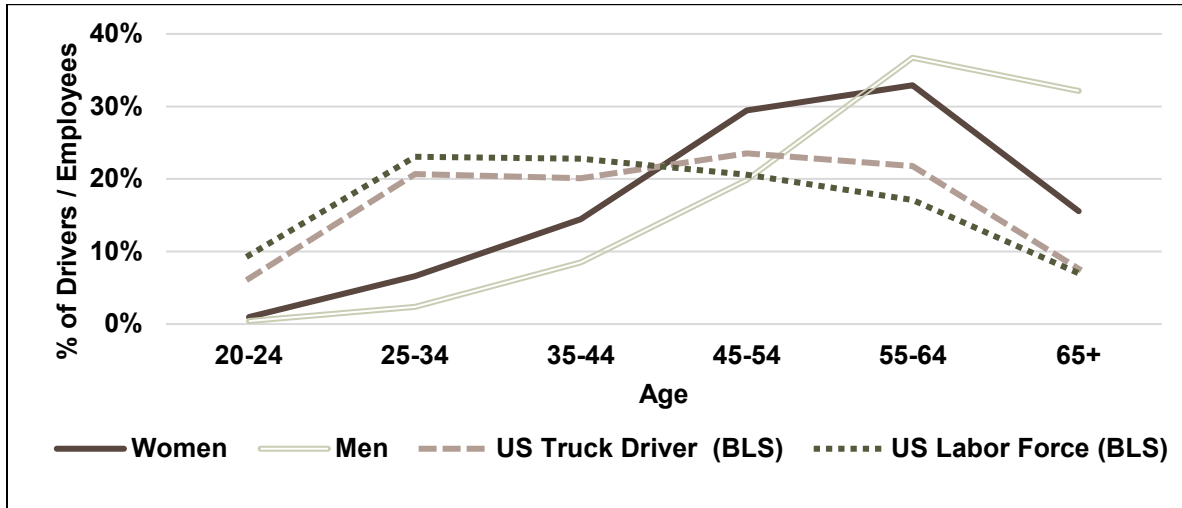
The truck driver survey respondents ranged from 23 to 87 years old. The average age for the survey respondents was 59 years old for men and 53 years old for women. The distribution of truck driver ages versus other labor sectors illustrate that the U.S. truck driver workforce is aging (Figure 5).²⁰

¹⁸ CNBC Make It, “I Bring In \$144K A Year Driving Trucks | On The Job” (November 13, 2022), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6d4Gmeh8TLE>.

¹⁹ AJ Willingham, “Female trucks have become TikTok influencers, and they’re changing the transportation game” CNN (April 10, 2021), <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/10/us/truckers-women-tiktok-social-media-trnd/index.html>.

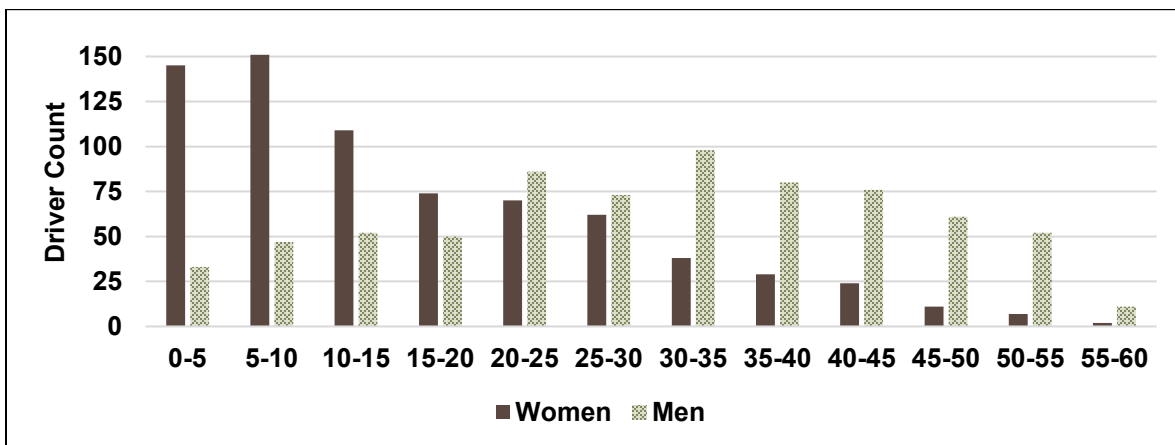
²⁰ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Household Data Annual Averages, 11. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity,” (accessed April 1, 2024), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/aa2022/cpsaat11.htm>.

Figure 5: Age of Truck Driver Survey Respondents by Gender



Approximately 88.9 percent of men who responded to the survey have at least 10 years of driving experience compared to only 59.0 percent of women respondents (Figure 6). Despite only a six-year difference in average age, men have more experience in the industry – implying that women are entering truck driving roles later than men. This was corroborated during interviews with truck driver training schools.

Figure 6: Truck Driver Years of Experience by Gender



Driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce requires drivers to be 21 years or older.²¹ However, there are efforts to increase the limited number of younger drivers entering truck driving roles to replace the aging workforce.²² ATRI enforcement data does demonstrate an increase in younger women drivers in the industry (Figure 2).

²¹ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “The Motor Carrier Safety Planner: 6.1 Hiring Qualified Drivers (Part 391)” (accessed May 31, 2024), <https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyplanner/MyFiles/Sections.aspx?ch=23&sec=66>.

²² Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “FMCSA Proposes New Under-21 Commercial Driver Pilot Program” (September 4, 2020), <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/newsroom/fmcsa-proposes-new-under-21-commercial-driver-pilot-program>.

Three **strategies** for motor carriers and truck driver training schools to consider to further increase the number of younger drivers in the industry are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Strategies to Address Lack of Younger Drivers and Aging Workforce

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Connect with high school students	✓	✓	
Identify and plan for generational differences	✓	✓	
Emphasize trucking as a lucrative alternative to college	✓	✓	

Strategy: Connect with High School Students

Previous ATRI research on integrating younger adults into trucking careers found that fleets are not frequently recruiting younger drivers through high school outreach.²³ There is an opportunity for fleets and training schools to implement programs or partnerships within their local communities to educate the next generation on the opportunities the trucking industry provides. The Next Generation in Trucking Association is working to promote CDL training programs at the high school level.²⁴

Strategy: Identify and Plan for Generational Differences

ATRI’s younger driver research also identified key differences between generations. Younger entrants appreciate transparency with clear expectations and requirements laid out in the job description. Additionally, fostering a company culture with supportive managers, clear role definitions, community-centered values and respect can improve experiences for younger drivers. This research also identified that 73 percent of drivers entered trucking through a family member already in the industry – supporting driver survey findings in Table 7.

Strategy: Emphasize Trucking as a Lucrative Alternative to College

Societal pressure to attend college has grown over the past several decades, with 86 percent of high school students feeling the need to pursue a four-year degree.²⁵ This is likely one of the reasons that fewer individuals are pursuing careers in specialized trades, such as truck driving. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) tracks the percentage of men and women who complete different levels of education.²⁶ A higher percentage of women are receiving associate’s (55.3%), bachelor’s (45.2%) and master’s (13.0%) degrees than men (Table 10). The NCES also reports average income for those between 25 – 34 years old by education level, with associate degrees at \$45,000, bachelor’s at \$61,600 and master’s at \$74,600 in 2021.²⁷

²³ Alex Leslie and Danielle Crownover, *Integrating Younger Adults into Trucking Careers*, American Transportation Research Institute (July 2022), <https://truckingresearch.org/2022/07/integrating-younger-adults-into-trucking-careers/>.

²⁴ Next Gen Trucking, “Driving The Next Generation Of Trucking Industry Professionals,” (accessed on May 31, 2024), <https://www.nextgentrucking.org/>.

²⁵ Scott Jaschik, “High School Students Are Uncertain About College,” *Inside Higher Ed* (November 14, 2021), <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2021/11/15/high-school-students-arent-sure-about-going-college>.

²⁶ National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 104.20. Percentage of persons 25 to 29 years old with selected levels of education attainment, by race/ethnicity and sex: Selected years, 1920 through 2023,” (accessed April 8, 2024), https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_104.20.asp.

²⁷ National Center for Education Statistics, “Fast Facts: Income of young adults” (accessed May 10, 2024), <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=77>.

Table 10: Education Attainment by Gender 25 to 29 Years Old

Education Attainment	Women	Men	Percent Difference
Associates or Higher	55.3%	44.3%	24.8%
Bachelors or Higher	45.2%	35.9%	25.9%
Masters or Higher	13.0%	8.3%	56.6%

Motor carriers and training schools can promote the advantages of pursuing a truck driving career over college. Driver survey respondents identified their top two or three reasons for becoming a truck driver. Fifty percent of the women selected “independence,” compared to 47.0 percent of men (Table 11). Additionally, a significant number of drivers indicated that they “enjoy driving” as a key motivator, with 51.7 percent of men and 49.0 percent of women citing this reason.

“There is something about your emotional well-being and being able to see the horizon. People are so focused [on their day-to-day], [as drivers] we get to see the horizon and the bigger picture.”

– Woman Truck Driver

Table 11: Reasons for Becoming a Truck Driver by Gender

Reason	Women	Men	Women % Difference
Independence	50.3%	47.0%	7.0%
Enjoy driving	49.0%	51.7%	-5.3%
Competitive pay	36.5%	31.6%	15.5%
Every day is different	31.7%	31.6%	0.3%
A good sense of job security	30.2%	24.3%	24.2%
Enjoy the challenges that come with the job	16.4%	18.8%	-12.9%
College degree not required	7.3%	4.5%	59.7%
Job opportunities	4.4%	5.8%	-24.2%

CHALLENGE 2 – Unable to Complete Truck Driver Training

ATRI’s *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry* research identified “truck driver training standards” as the number six issue for commercial truck drivers and the third biggest issue among law enforcement in 2023.²⁸ For men and women pursuing a career as a truck driver, their experiences in driver training may shape their outlook on the industry and job. Establishing clear standards and holding schools accountable through audits and oversight is key to promoting safe driving and adequately preparing drivers for the many challenges that arise on the road.

²⁸ American Transportation Research Institute, *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry – 2023* (October 2023), <https://truckingresearch.org/2023/10/critical-issues-in-the-trucking-industry-2023/>.

ATRI’s interviews with truck driver training schools provided a deeper dive into the experiences drivers and schools currently encounter. Most of the training schools interviewed shared that they have seen an increase in women enrolling in the program over the last 10 years; with women being slightly older on average than men. While the interviews were focused on the challenges women encounter, many of the training school interviewees focused on the experiences of both men and women as they do not generally see differences between their students.

In interviews with training schools, four key **issues** arose that contribute to students’ inability to complete a truck driver training course.

- Issue 1 – Inability to pay for training
- Issue 2 – Lack of driving skills, ability, or knowledge
- Issue 3 – No or limited access to childcare
- Issue 4 – Excessive travel to and from school

Issue 1 – Inability to Pay for Training

The interviewed training schools’ tuition ranged from \$2,000 - \$6,000. Other sources estimate the average cost of truck driver training to be \$4,000 - \$12,000.²⁹ Depending on how much savings an individual has, their ability to apply for financial assistance or the inability to continue working while in the training program, can all significantly impact an individual’s ability to attend a truck driver training program.

When students are unable to meet the financial requirements of a truck driver training program, the following **strategies** have been identified to assist new entrants (Table 12).

Table 12: Strategies to Maximize Use of Financial Resources

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Increase financial assistance awareness	✓	✓	
Promote motor carrier-sponsored CDL programs	✓		
Anticipate and plan for financial requirements			✓

Strategy: Increase Financial Assistance Awareness

Despite most truck driver training schools having available financial aid, it is not always utilized. There are scholarships available, some covering 100 percent of the program costs. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Pell Grants, student loans, scholarships and demographic-specific scholarships are typically available depending on the school. Several demographic-specific scholarships mentioned by training school interviewees include those for women, veterans, those below the poverty line, dislocated workers, and those with an agricultural background. Many motor carriers will reimburse

“I lost my job eight years ago and could get a big portion of my CDL schooling paid for through a program offered by unemployment.”

- Woman Truck Driver

²⁹ Schneider, “How much does it cost to get a CDL? What you need to know,” (accessed April 9, 2024), <https://schneiderjobs.com/blog/how-much-does-it-cost-to-get-cdl>.

drivers for truck driver training, based on length of tenure at the company. Motor carriers and truck driver training schools can increase the awareness of financial assistance opportunities by making it more available on their websites and providing details when individuals inquire about their program and opportunities.

Strategy: Promote Motor Carrier-Sponsored CDL Programs

Some carriers offer a company-sponsored truck driver training program that covers a student’s training school expenses when they sign up for that company. There is generally no up-front money required since the company will typically require participants to become company drivers upon completion of their training.³⁰

Strategy: Anticipate and Plan for Financial Requirements

Financially supporting oneself is a critical component of completing a training program. If someone decides to become a truck driver, they should research the entrance requirements, and identify a training school and its financial requirements. Incoming students should research their options including company-sponsored programs, the scholarships available and what would follow after completion of a training program.

Issue 2 – Lack of Driving Skills, Ability or Knowledge

While the interviewed schools vary greatly in truck driver student class size, most programs reported similar completion rates among the men and women students. However, two of the eight interviewed schools had lower completion rates for women.

To make sure truck driving students are adequately prepared for the skills they will need, and the proficiency to perform the job (and potential lifestyle expectations), three **strategies** have been identified in Table 13.

Table 13: Lack of Driving Skills, Ability or Knowledge Strategies

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Incentivize well performing / attentive students	✓	✓	
Encourage continuous practice of difficult skills	✓	✓	✓
Educate students on drug testing requirements early on	✓	✓	

Strategy: Incentivize Well Performing / Attentive Students

Incentivizing well performing and / or attentive students can help motivate and empower students to listen better and put forth more effort. This can be done through financial incentives, a recognition system or advance employment opportunities. Motor carriers and training schools alike can pinpoint what motivates their students and help

“Compared to the men, women had a stronger work ethic and saw the advantages for their future. The men wanted everything on their time and were not as dedicated. This may not have been a gender issue, rather an attitude issue.”

- CDL Trainer (Man)

³⁰ Prime Inc. “Company Paid CDL Training vs. Private Truck Driving School: What’s the Difference?” (accessed May 9, 2024), <https://www.primeinc.com/trucking-blogs/company-paid-cdl-training-program/>.

them reach their goals while also accomplishing the overall company / school goals.

All of the trainers agreed that women are generally very good students; they are more likely to ask questions, keep a discussion going and are not afraid to ask for assistance when they need it. This was corroborated in the focus group with women drivers. A statement of “women are less likely to take risks when compared with men” was read aloud and all 11 women strongly agreed with this statement. A statement of “women take more risks” was read aloud to the trainer interviewees, and all either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Another statement posed to the women focus group participants was, “women are engaged and enthusiastic” students. There was unanimous agreement that women truck drivers are engaged and enthusiastic in the classroom and on the road. Women are more likely to take notes in the classroom and ask analytic questions like “could you explain why this is happening?” One woman motor carrier shared that women are great listeners and are not afraid to seek help; demonstrating that the enthusiasm and engagement that women possess transfers from the classroom to the job.

“Women are better at listening and men are more likely to try to figure it out themselves before asking for help.”

- Motor Carrier Employee (Woman)

Strategy: Encourage Continuous Practice of Difficult Skills

The women involved in the focus group were asked to identify whether they agree or disagree with the statement “women are capable of performing all tasks necessary to be a truck driver.” While most women strongly agreed with this statement, one driver disagreed with this statement and indicated that there is equipment that she has not been able to operate and needed to ask for assistance. Likely resulting from the earlier finding that women truck drivers sometimes do not feel respected, one driver who strongly agreed with the statement said she “was not willing to ask for assistance if her life depended on it,” since asking for help might be interpreted as being unskilled, uneducated, and unprepared – thus having to further prove herself as capable. Ostensibly, women may feel more comfortable asking for assistance once they are respected as drivers.

Backing a truck up to a loading dock or at a parking location was commonly described as the only driving task more challenging for women in both the motor carrier and truck driver training school interviews.

ATRI’s younger driver research found that younger drivers find hands-on training to be the most helpful aspect of training.³¹ Motor carriers and truck driver training schools should provide adequate time to learn and practice skills to establish safe driving behaviors. There were numerous scenarios discussed by the motor carriers, training schools and truck drivers to encourage drivers to continue improving backing skills.

Example 1: One of the focus group participants needed backing practice when first starting at her motor carrier. She asked a customer facility for permission to practice at an open dock while waiting for her cargo unloading time. Other truck drivers came over to assist and provide guidance as she practiced.

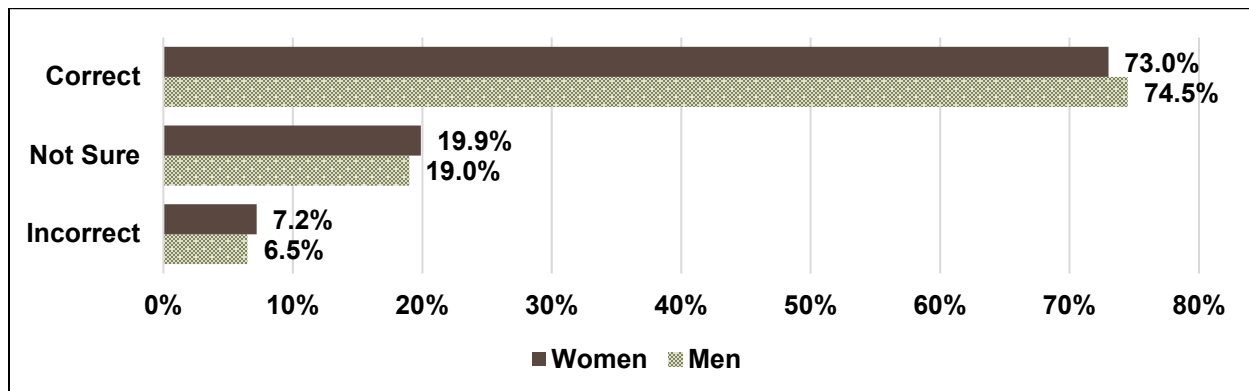
³¹ Alex Leslie and Danielle Crownover, *Integrating Younger Adults into Trucking Careers*, American Transportation Research Institute (July 2022), <https://truckingresearch.org/2022/07/integrating-younger-adults-into-trucking-careers/>.

Example 2: For team-driving situations, several women admitted to letting their co-driver (frequently their partner or spouse) do the “exterior” work while they did the “interior.” Exterior work was categorized as the pre-trip equipment inspection, fueling, backing, etc., while the interior was defined as route planning, budgeting and other administrative tasks. This can lead to women becoming less familiar with essential exterior tasks. Several motor carriers encouraged women to practice these commonly “skipped skills,” like inspections and backing because there may be occasions or instances when they are alone, or their co-driver is not available to perform that skill.

Strategy: Educate Students on Drug Testing Requirements Early On

In June 2023 ATRI released an update to a previous study addressing the impacts of marijuana legalization on the trucking industry.³² The study found that 25.6 percent of drivers either did not know (19.1%) or incorrectly believed (6.6%) that they could use recreational marijuana if it was legal in their state.³³ When analyzing this data by gender, there is no noticeable difference between men and women (Figure 7), implying the need for further education for both men and women drivers.

Figure 7: Accuracy of Drug Regulation Knowledge by Gender



If schools and fleets do not already make applicants aware of the regulations when applying, they should immediately do so to avoid wasting time, money, and resources. Interviewed training schools indicated that marijuana regulations for truck drivers are typically discussed on day one of a training program.

Several truck driver training school interviewees indicated that most of their students do not realize that marijuana use of any kind is prohibited for CDL holders under federal law. One training school reported they lose approximately 10 percent of their students to the drug and alcohol regulations. Several trainers did, however, share that men test positive for marijuana more frequently than women. In fact, several interviewed schools had not ever had a woman test positive for marijuana.

³² Jeffery Short and Alexa Pupillo, Impacts of Marijuana Legalization on the Trucking Industry, American Transportation Research Institute (June 2023), <https://truckingresearch.org/2023/06/impacts-of-marijuana-legalization-on-the-trucking-industry/>.

³³ Ibid; CDL Holders are prohibited by FMCSR 382 from using marijuana.; Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “49 CFR Part 382-Controlled Substances and Alcohol Use and Testing” (October 1, 2023), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2023-title49-vol5/pdf/CFR-2023-title49-vol5-part382.pdf>.

Issue 3 – No or Limited Access to Childcare

Truck driver training is generally scheduled in advance, giving students adequate time to arrange childcare if needed. Some training programs even offer childcare at the school. However, finding affordable and stable childcare can be extremely challenging. In 2022, estimated annual childcare costs ranged from \$5,357 to \$17,171 depending on child’s age and childcare location (home or center-based).³⁴ Several trainers reported instances where students left the program because their childcare arrangements were no longer available. This issue expands beyond training and trucking, as a Pew Research study found that 48 percent of respondents who left their job in 2021 did so because childcare was either a major (24%) or minor (24%) issue.³⁵

Truck driving students who are unable to find childcare or lose childcare during the course of training need to find an alternative. The **strategies** recommended throughout ATRI’s research are in Table 14.

Table 14: Strategies to Assist with Limited Childcare

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Identify and promote childcare resources		✓	
Timely communication with students		✓	

Strategy: Identify and Promote Childcare Resources

Several training school interviewees shared that their school – oftentimes a public technical college – offers childcare services. Promoting such services may attract additional students otherwise hesitant to pursue truck driver training due to a lack of accessible childcare.

Strategy: Timely Communication with Students

Regardless of the length of a training program, truck driver training schools can be diligent in distributing schedules, requirements and expectations for the duration of the program. For families requiring childcare, clear and timely communication with future students makes accommodating childcare easier to plan for.

Issue 4 – Excessive Travel to and from School

Based on the limited number of truck driver training schools, student candidates may have to travel considerable distances. Students attending a school in an urban location typically travel fewer than 30 minutes, while students attending schools in rural locations can travel up to 100 miles. One school shared that in every class they lose one student out of 20 due to maintenance issues with their personal vehicle.

Strategies identified by truck driver training schools in their interviews are shown in Table 15.

³⁴ Christin Landivar, “New Childcare Data Shows Prices Are Untenable for Families,” US Department of Labor Blog (January 24, 2023), <https://blog.dol.gov/2023/01/24/new-childcare-data-shows-prices-are-untenable-for-families>.

³⁵ Kim Parker and Juliana Menasce Horowitz, “Majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 cite low pay, no opportunities for advancement, feeling disrespected,” Pew Research Center (March 9, 2022), <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected/>.

Table 15: Strategies to Address Excessive Travel Distance

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Driver
Consider all available training program options			✓
Offer the theory portion online		✓	
Facilitate housing accommodations		✓	

Strategy: Consider All Available Training Program Options

Depending on location, individuals might have numerous truck driver training school programs from which to choose. There is a considerable amount of variety in programs (e.g., private versus public, schedule, hours required, amount of driving time, etc.) and researching ideal programs to weigh options can improve outcomes. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Training Provider Registry contains a list and map of training programs throughout the U.S.³⁶

Strategy: Offer the Theory Portion Online

There has been a shift in recent years to make the theory portion of CDL training virtual, largely because learning was pushed online as a result of COVID-19. This helps reduce the number of times a student has to travel to and from the campus. There are potential negative impacts, however, as one training school experienced a decrease in student engagement and performance when shifting to an online learning environment for theory material.

Strategy: Facilitate Housing Accommodations

For students that cannot commute unmanageable distances, training schools might facilitate or provide short-term housing options for students. This may include short-term lodging, and on-or-off-campus housing.

CHALLENGE 3 – Unsatisfactory Motor Carrier Company Culture

A LinkedIn Market Research study found that 82 percent of workers agree it is important to work for a company in which the culture and values align with their own.³⁷ Additionally, companies that focus on creating and maintaining a supportive company culture generally see an increase in retention.³⁸

*“What is the reason drivers **continue** working for us? Our company culture. Our business is family-oriented, we make a point to get to know our drivers and make them feel included.”*

- Motor Carrier Employee (Woman)

³⁶ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “Welcome to the Training Provider Registry” (accessed May 9, 2024), <https://tpr.fmcsa.dot.gov/>.

³⁷ George Anders, “Why 8 in 10 U.S. workers want employers’ values to match theirs” LinkedIn Market Research (April 19, 2023), <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-8-10-us-workers-want-employers-values-match-theirs-george-anders/>.

³⁸ TH Herbert, “Improving Employee Retention In 2023 With A Positive Workplace Culture” Forbes (March 8, 2023), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2023/03/08/improving-employee-retention-in-2023-with-a-positive-workplace-culture/?sh=1f4a481c3478>.

The focus group participants were asked to identify the top three best ways a motor carrier can support them (Figure 8). Driver responses generated a word cloud where more frequently provided responses are larger. Carriers that provide adequate home-time, intently listen to their perspectives, and provide them with fair and equal pay were among the most frequent responses.

Figure 8: The Best Support a Motor Carrier Can Give a Truck Driver



The motor carriers were asked to identify what recruitment messages are *most effective* in hiring women at their fleet, while the drivers were asked what was *most important* to them when deciding to become a truck driver. Highly competitive pay and benefits were ranked first by both populations (Table 16). However, women drivers ranked flexible hours and routes as their second highest motivator, generally implying that women prefer schedule and route flexibility over the guaranteed nightly home time (which they ranked 5th overall).

All of these priorities are important when developing and maintaining an effective company culture. Awareness of driver preferences, goals and values can help to create work environments most beneficial for them. The imperfect alignment between women drivers and motor carriers implies a need for motor carriers to reevaluate their recruitment assumptions.

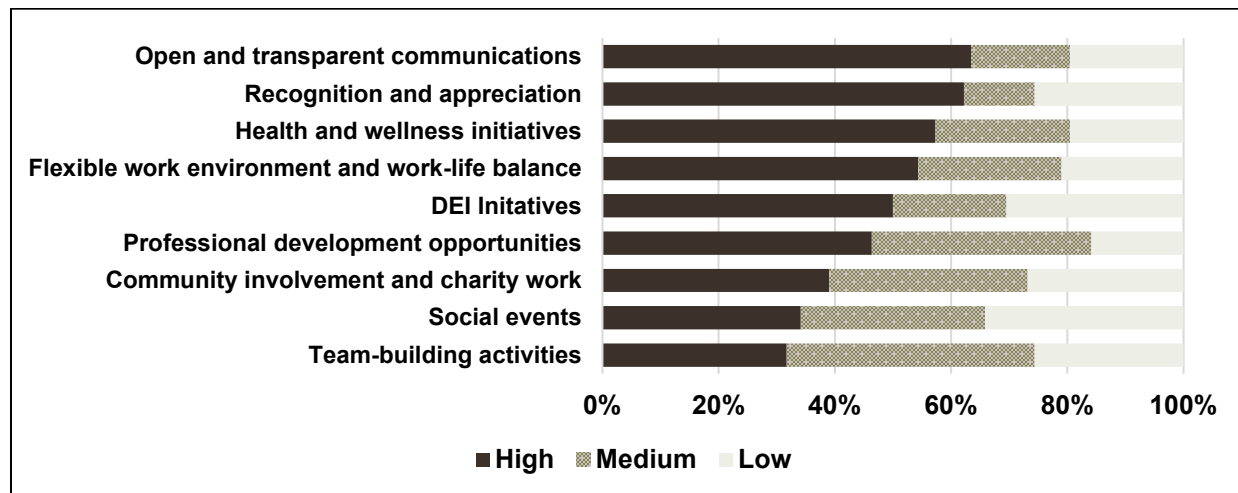
Table 16: Priorities for Women Truck Drivers Ranked by Drivers and Carriers

Priorities for Women Truck Drivers	Most Important to Women Truck Drivers		What Motor Carriers Believe Women Drivers Want	
	Rank	%	Rank	%
Highly competitive pay and benefits	1	55.3%	1	58.7%
Flexible hours and routes	2	35.4%	4	46.7%
Advancement opportunities	3	18.6%	5	20.0%
Strong emphasis on safety systems and personal security	4	18.2%	2	52.0%
Opportunity to get home every night	5	9.4%	3	48.0%
Offering a hiring bonus	6	8.5%	6	9.3%
Offering child-care services	7	0.7%	7	2.7%

Prior ATRI research on OO / IC found that more than 80 percent of company drivers and OO / IC were motivated by income potential in their decision to become a truck driver, corroborating these findings.³⁹

In the motor carrier survey, respondents ranked what their fleet prioritizes to create a positive environment for all drivers (Figure 9). The two highest ranked priorities for motor carriers are open and transparent communications (63.4%) and recognition and appreciation for their drivers (62.2%).

Figure 9: Motor Carrier Priority Rankings for Creating Positive Work Environment



Based on the key priorities in Figure 9 and the misalignment between drivers and fleets in Table 16, the research team identified two key **issues** for motor carriers, truck driving training schools and truck drivers to address.

- Issue 1 – Unclear and inconsistent communication with drivers
- Issue 2 – Absence of recognition and appreciation initiatives

Issue 1 – Unclear and Inconsistent Communication with Drivers

Sustaining open and transparent communications with truck drivers is critical to ensuring timely deliveries, keeping up on training needs and to better understand personal and professional obstacles. Transparency stretches from the onboarding process when drivers have questions about pay and benefits, to expectations while on the road. Motor carriers and truck drivers identified current **strategies** that improve communication with their drivers (Table 17).

“Pick your company carefully. Safety is a huge deal, and [drivers] need to have a company that backs [them] with communication and commitment.”

- Motor Carrier Employee (Woman)

³⁹ Rebecca Brewster, *Owner-Operators / Independent Contractors in the Supply Chain*, American Transportation Research Institute, (December 2021), <https://truckingresearch.org/2021/12/owner-operators-independent-contractors-in-the-supply-chain/>.

Table 17: Strategies to Improve Communications with Drivers

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Develop a mentorship program	✓		✓
Establish a women-specific group or coalition	✓		✓
Articulate clear expectations of employees	✓		
Implement an open-door policy	✓		
Institute regular virtual learning sessions	✓	✓	
Design a professional development curriculum		✓	

Strategy: Develop a Mentorship Program

Driver mentorship programs were identified as an effective tool for improving communications, creating a sense of community and for providing guidance from experienced drivers when necessary. Truck driver survey and focus group responses emphasized that mentors could provide real-world insights beyond what is covered in training or at other motor carriers.

Strategy: Establish a Women-Specific Group or Coalition

Motor carrier interviewees emphasized the importance that women committees or coalitions play in improving conditions for women employees, specifically drivers. Beyond mentorship programs, these initiatives allow women to get more engaged, and talk with one another.

Strategy: Articulate Clear Expectations of Employees

Throughout on-boarding and tenure, motor carriers should articulate clear expectations and the company’s preferred channels of communication so that drivers are best equipped for success. Whether communications are through a dedicated platform or website, regular check-ins with drivers are critical for monitoring employee issues and satisfaction levels, and for distributing important information. When making company-wide changes, carriers should clearly communicate *what* is changing and *why*. This transparency ensures that drivers are not caught unaware of new policies and are informed of how changes may impact them.⁴⁰

Strategy: Implement an Open-Door Policy

Motor carrier interviewees emphasized the importance of “open-door policies,” especially at larger motor carriers. Each interviewee indicated that women are more likely than men to take advantage of this policy to ask questions.

Strategy: Institute Regular Virtual Learning Sessions

Motor carriers can offer virtual and in-person sessions to connect drivers with resources, other company employees or helpful information to improve their job satisfaction. The topic and frequency of informational webinars may vary by motor carrier, but the occurrence of such sessions provides drivers with a sense of community, and the ability to stay in touch with other employees and company events/values.

⁴⁰ Morgan Galbraith, “Don’t Just Tell Employees Organizational Changes Are Coming – Explain Why” Harvard Business Review (October 5, 2018), <https://hbr.org/2018/10/dont-just-tell-employees-organizational-changes-are-coming-explain-why>.

A number of the interviewed truck driver training schools emphasized the value of connecting students with motor carriers and drivers / former students through learning sessions. These connections allow drivers to learn about employment opportunities, ask questions and see a glimpse into different CDL driving opportunities.

Strategy: Design a Professional Development Curriculum

Beyond the criteria outlined in the FMCSA Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) standards, training schools can offer drivers “job skills” that go beyond driving a truck.⁴¹ Interviewed schools indicated that “open-houses” with fleets, resume development and mock-interviews can be critical in helping students find CMV driving jobs.

Most training school interviewees also emphasized the importance of creating a training component on the lifestyle of an OTR driver during the training course. Training programs sometimes take students to a truck stop for a “field trip” to help educate them on weight scales, fueling, personal safety, and even personal hygiene activities.

Issue 2 – Absence of Recognition and Appreciation Initiatives

Employee recognition and appreciation in any job is crucial for employee retention. One study found that 46 percent of employees have left a position because they felt underappreciated – highlighting the importance that appreciation has on job satisfaction.⁴² In trucking, approximately 17.6 percent of men and 22.1 percent of the women drivers left their positions due to feelings of underappreciation or disrespect (Figure 10).

Strategy: Implement Driver Reward / Recognition Programs

Many motor carriers have implemented meaningful driver reward and / or recognition programs, ensuring higher than average driver satisfaction. For example, motor carriers often use social media to highlight or “shout-out” high-performing drivers. One motor carrier interviewee awards drivers who achieve the lowest idling times, cleanest truck, and highest fuel efficiency. There are other common awards relating to safety and miles driven, but finding innovative ways to incentivize drivers to maximize safety and efficiency is described as a “win-win situation.”

CHALLENGE 4 – Inability to Acclimate to the OTR Driver Lifestyle

An OTR driver’s lifestyle typically requires a complicated “work-life balance.” OTR drivers can spend weeks on the road, connecting electronically with family and friends, sleeping in their truck, accessing restrooms and showers where they can, and often experiencing long detention times at customer facilities. Many factors in a driver’s day are unpredictable, yet they must continue to drive under many conditions and scenarios.

According to the focus group participants, two of the most common **issues** a woman OTR driver experiences are:

- Issue 1 – Insufficient home-time
- Issue 2 – Inability to establish and sustain healthy habits

⁴¹ FMCSA, “Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT)” (February 8, 2022), <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/commercial-drivers-license/entry-level-driver-training-eldt>.

⁴² Bonusly, “What Employees Want: More Appreciation at Work,” (March 2, 2022), <https://bonusly.com/post/employee-appreciation-survey>.

Issue 1 – Insufficient Home-Time

OTR drivers can spend anywhere from a few nights to a few weeks away from home. This is particularly challenging if an individual is the primary caregiver in their home.

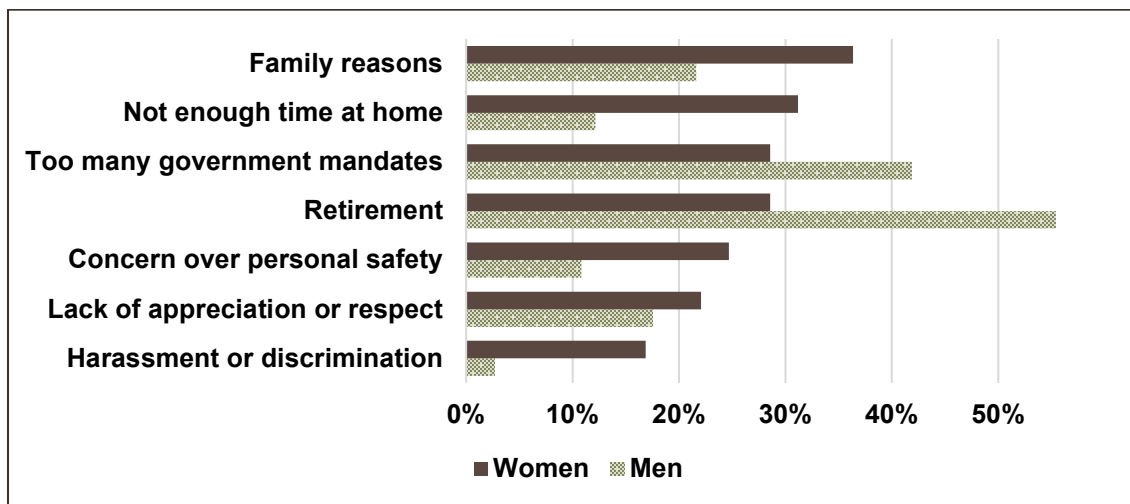
Former truck driver survey respondents identified their top three reasons for leaving the industry (Figure 10). Among women respondents, the top three reasons were:

- 1) Family commitments (36.4%);
- 2) Desire for increased home-time (31.2%); and
- 3) Too many government mandates (28.6%).

“If you don’t like your alone time or being away from home, trucking may not be for you.”
- Woman Truck Driver

Additionally, there is a considerable difference in the percentage of women survey respondents who left the industry over concerns for their personal safety and harassment / discrimination when compared to men.

Figure 10: Former Truck Drivers: Reasons for Leaving by Gender



To address drivers’ insufficient home-time issue, the following **strategies** were recommended by multiple participants throughout the research (Table 18).

Table 18: Strategies to Improve / Maximize OTR Driver Home-Time

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Develop reasonable schedules and routes	✓		
Educate students on job opportunities for CDL holders		✓	
Identify innovative methods to connect with family			✓
Communicate / advocate for personal needs			✓

Strategy: Develop Reasonable Schedules and Routes

Women drivers should work closely with dispatchers and managers to develop work schedules and routes that optimize their needs. Motor carriers that listen to and accommodate their truck drivers’ needs instantly create a more welcoming environment.⁴³

Strategy: Educate Students on Job Opportunities for CDL Holders

Training school interviewees have developed “industry partners” that lease trucks and other equipment for driver training. In exchange, the industry partners will come in to discuss job opportunities, give students the opportunity to ask questions, and learn more about the company’s culture and range of truck driving opportunities.

Strategy: Identify Innovative Methods to Connect with Family

The focus group participants acknowledged that more home-time would be nice, however they conceded that different trucking operations generate different home-time schedules, and that each individual driver needs to find what works for them. Staying in touch with family via FaceTime, Snapchat, Zoom or Teams, etc. was critical for maintaining a connection with friends and family back home.⁴⁴ One of the key tips all the focus group participants agreed on was the importance of organizing and planning. Whether it was planning their routes, schedules or time-off, ensuring a work-life balance between time away from home and being home or connected to home was critical.

Strategy: Communicate / Advocate for Personal Needs

Proactively advocating for one’s needs can improve both personal attitudes and professional experiences. The focus group participants often emphasized the importance of being honest with their fleet manager when they need something, particularly time-off.

Issue 2 – Inability to Establish and Sustain Healthy Habits

Health issues stemming from lack of exercise, insufficient sleep, high stress, and poor diets were recurring concerns in the truck driver survey. Seven percent of the women specifically cited issues finding nutritious food while on the road. Given the combination of limited healthy food choices and the lack of exercise opportunities, multiple focus group participants cautioned aspiring women drivers about the significant challenge of avoiding weight gain while on the job.

“As a woman, the challenges I face are the need to shower daily, and to be able to exercise in order to maintain a healthy weight. I am sitting for 11 hours or more a day.”

- Woman Truck Driver

One women driver emphasized that this issue affects both men and women, stating, “women and men really need access to walking trails or similar amenities for regular exercise. We are often limited to eating at the same fast-food chains and lack safe places to walk.” These cited health issues can be addressed through the **strategies** outlined in Table 19.

⁴³ Southern Oregon University, “The Importance of Listening to Your Employees” (June 10, 2020), <https://online.sou.edu/degrees/business/mba/general/importance-of-listening-to-your-employees/>.

⁴⁴ TrueNorth, “Women in Trucking: Tips and Best Practices for Work-Life Balance” (accessed May 9, 2024), <https://www.gettruenorth.com/articles/business/women-in-trucking-tips-and-best-practices-for-work-life-balance>.

Table 19: Strategies to Address Driver Health Issues

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Train drivers to build a routine of healthy habits		✓	
Establish an exercise program	✓		✓
Advocate for mental health support	✓		✓
Prioritize rest and minimize fatigue	✓		✓
Locate and plan for healthy and sustainable meal options			✓
Maintain good hygiene			✓

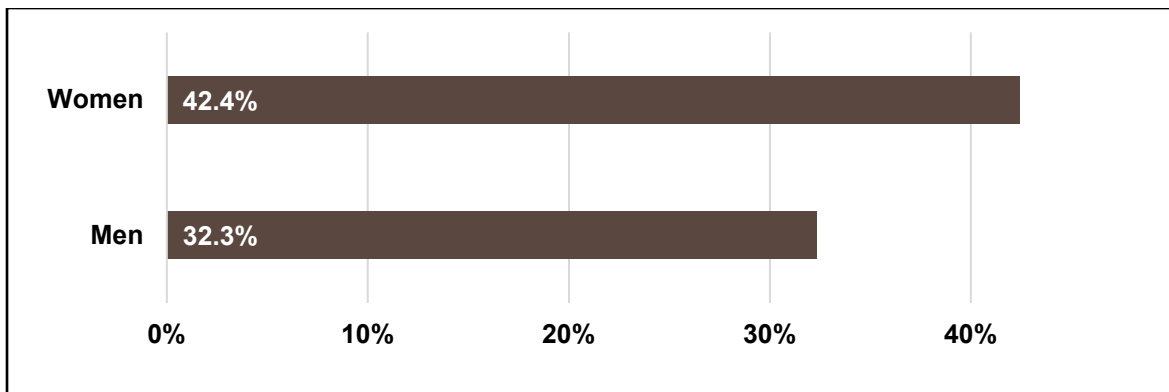
Strategy: Train Drivers to Build a Routine of Healthy Habits

OTR truck drivers need to quickly acclimate to the OTR lifestyle. Training schools can include a section in their curriculum about the OTR lifestyle and ways to better prepare new entrants for the job. Educating training school students about OTR driving schedules, time away from home and the necessity to maintain healthy habits helps to set clear expectations about the OTR career path.

Strategy: Establish an Exercise Program

Exercise options while on the road are quite limited. A survey from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that three out of four truck drivers do not get the recommended amount of physical activity.⁴⁵ Getting at least two and a half hours of vigorous physical activity a week has been found to “improve sleep, reduce stress, enhance alertness and reduce the chance of a crash.”⁴⁶ Approximately 42.4 percent of women indicated no or limited access to exercise facilities every day compared to 32.3 percent of men (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Daily No / Limited Access to Exercise Facilities by Gender



The focus group participants had a number of recommendations for remaining active while on the road. The women all agreed that truck stop gyms were not ideal due to safety and comfort concerns related to unwanted attention while working out. The trucking industry has a responsibility to steward safe spaces and deter harassment, as discussed in Challenges 5 and 6; that said, there are several initiatives that women drivers can take to improve safety

⁴⁵ Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “Health – Long Haul Truck Drivers” (March 13, 2018), <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/truck/health.html>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

themselves. Many of the women mentioned taking walks at rest stops or parks. Also, having a dog in their truck forced them to get out and walk more. Additionally, exercises that can be done in the cab of the truck were also suggested, especially during inclement weather or if the driver did not feel they were in a safe place to leave their truck. These exercises can be provided by motor carriers or sourced through other drivers or online searches.⁴⁷

Strategy: Advocate for Mental Health Support

Driver survey respondents shared the frequency of having no or limited access to mental health resources. Nearly a quarter of current women drivers (24.5%) have daily issues accessing mental health resources, compared to 17.5 percent of current men drivers.

It is common for truck drivers to spend many hours alone in their truck each day. The isolation of long-haul driving can contribute to feelings of melancholy and disconnection, which can take a toll on mental health over time. Moreover, promoting awareness about mental health resources and providing support networks within the industry can play a pivotal role in improving the overall well-being of all truck drivers.

When the discussion shifted to addressing access to mental health resources, many of the focus group women felt the industry was becoming more sensitive to supporting driver mental health. Some of the women discussed overcoming their own stigmas when it came to the discussion of mental health or seeking mental health resources. One driver shared that “more companies are starting to take mental health seriously, it used to be they would just tell you to go home.”

Strategy: Prioritize Rest and Minimize Fatigue

Combating boredom and fatigue while driving was another challenge identified in the surveys, interviews and focus group. The focus group participants said that listening to audio books while driving helped to keep them engaged and alert. Many of the drivers expressed the importance of dedicating time to their hobbies to help break up the monotony of each day, particularly for those driving similar routes or needing more variety in their day-to-day life. They also suggested maintaining a set bedtime whenever possible to reduce fatigue.

Strategy: Locate and Plan for Healthy and Sustainable Meal Options

Healthy food options are extremely limited while on the road. Focus group participants stated they often completed food preparations ahead of time at home, by freezing food and portioning it in containers for reheating. Some women cooked in their truck, however many felt this resulted in weight gain due to the lack of portion control. Preparing food in advance not only helped with portion control, but also helped save a considerable amount of money. Multiple drivers noted the limited availability and high cost of healthy food options at truck stops. All the women felt drinking water was the best and healthiest option for staying hydrated.

Strategy: Maintain Good Hygiene

The focus group women were adamant about not wanting to be treated differently than men, but they did acknowledge that women have unique health factors, such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), menstruation, and menopause that they felt fleet managers should be more sensitive to if a woman driver needs time off. Additionally, while bathroom access is an issue for all truck

⁴⁷ Schneider, “7 practical pieces of truck driver exercise equipment” (accessed May 19, 2024), <https://schneiderjobs.com/blog/truck-driver-exercise-equipment>.

drivers, the focus group participants admitted that they used camping toilets if restroom facilities were not readily available or to avoid having to get out of their truck late at night to go to a restroom.

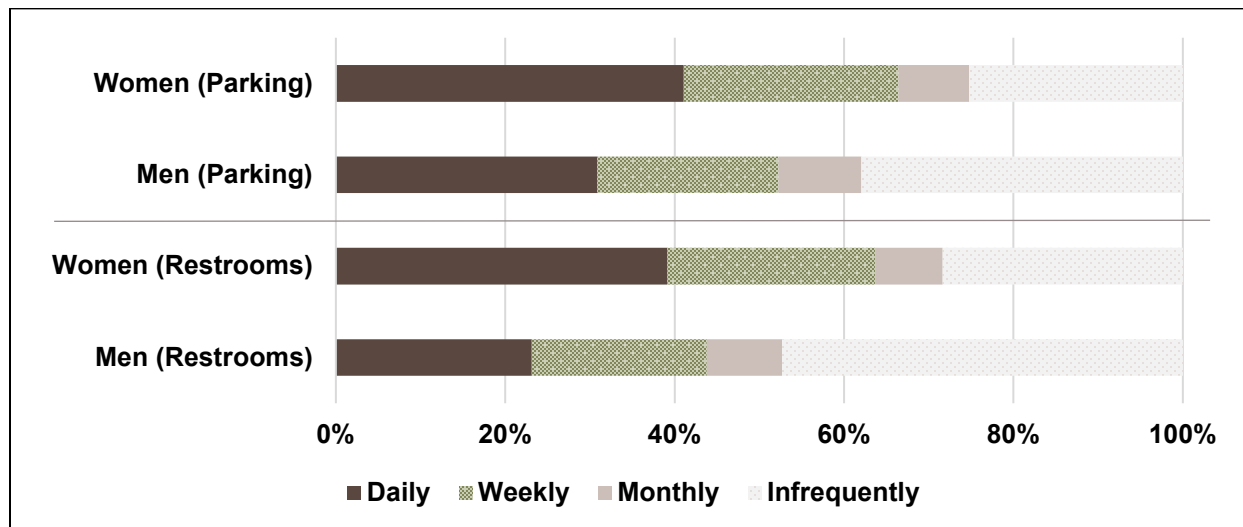
CHALLENGE 5 – Limited Parking and Restroom Facility Access

Finding available, safe truck parking and clean restrooms is a daily challenge for all truck drivers, but particularly so for women. According to data from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), there is one parking space for every 11 truck drivers and drivers report truck parking shortages in every state.⁴⁸ While drivers stop for any number of reasons, including bathroom breaks and meals, the federal law requires that drivers take daily rest breaks as detailed in the Hours-of-Service (HOS) rules.⁴⁹ However, finding available safe parking, especially for required rest breaks, is a continuous challenge, and the inability to find safe parking often leads to trucks being dangerously parked on shoulders and freeway ramps. Challenge Five arises from these two **issues**.

- Issue 1 – Shortage of safe parking
- Issue 2 – Lack of clean restrooms

Truck driver survey respondents identified how frequently they have no or limited access to safe parking and restroom facilities. The women respondents indicate that they struggle finding these facilities more frequently than men (Figure 12). Every day, approximately 41.1 percent of women struggle to find access to safe parking, and 39.1 percent of women struggle to find clean restrooms. The parking and restroom access percentages more closely align for women than men, likely implying that women rely on parking facilities for restroom access.

Figure 12: Frequency of No / Limited Access to Safe Parking and Restrooms by Gender



⁴⁸ Federal Highway Administration, “Jason’s Law Commercial Motor Vehicle Parking Survey and Comparative Assessment,” (December 1, 2020), https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/Freight/infrastructure/truck_parking/coalition/2020/mtg/jasons_law_results.pdf

⁴⁹ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “Hours of Service (HOS),” (April 30, 2024), <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hours-of-service>.

Issue 1 – Shortage of Safe Parking

ATRI’s annual *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry* captures the top issues in the industry from various stakeholders throughout every sector of the trucking industry. In 2023, truck parking was ranked the second highest issue for the industry; the highest it has ever ranked. The report also analyzed how truck drivers rank the issues versus how motor carriers rank the issues.⁵⁰ Focus group participants were asked to take the top 10 issues identified by commercial drivers in the 2023 survey and apply their own ranking to better understand differences or commonalities specifically among the women drivers and the greater commercial driver population. Among focus group participants, truck parking was ranked as the top concern (Table 20).

Table 20: Top Industry Issues Ranking Comparison

ATRI Driver Top Industry Issues	Women Focus Group Ranking	Commercial Drivers Ranking
Truck Parking	1	2
Driver Compensation	2	1
Detention / Delay at Customer Facilities	3	5
Fuel Prices	4	3
Driver Training Standards	5	6
Economy	6	7
Electronic Logging Device (ELD) Mandate	7	9
Speed Limiters	8	4
Broker Issues	9	8
Autonomous Trucks	10	10

Additionally, motor carrier interviewees consistently listed truck parking as a top challenge for all of their drivers but cited bathrooms and personal safety as a top concern specifically for women when they are parked. Feedback from the surveys and focus group honed-in on the need for parking areas to be well-lit in order to improve safety.

The following **strategies** were identified to improve truck parking capacity and safety (Table 21).

⁵⁰ American Transportation Research Institute, *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry – 2023* (October 2023), <https://truckingresearch.org/2023/10/critical-issues-in-the-trucking-industry-2023/>.

Table 21: Strategies to Improve Parking Capacity and Safety

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Educate drivers on personal safety strategies when parking	✓	✓	
Utilize technology to assist drivers in locating parking	✓		✓
Establish schedules / routes that allow drivers to park early	✓		✓
Advocate for dedicated infrastructure funding to increase truck parking capacity	✓	✓	✓

Strategy: Educate Drivers on Personal Safety Strategies when Parking

When drivers are forced to park in unsafe locations, including highway shoulders and ramps, the impact to personal safety can be detrimental for not only the truck driver but to the motoring public as well.⁵¹ According to FMCSA, two-thirds of truck-car rear-end fatalities involve the car rear-ending the truck.⁵²

To ensure their safety while parked at truck stops or rest areas, focus group participants always lock their trucks, exude confidence when exiting the truck, park in well-lit locations, and often carry pepper spray (if permitted by company) or wasp spray. Motor carriers and drivers alike emphasized using tools to ensure driver and passenger doors remain closed if someone tries to break in, whether that be a seat belt or tarping strap.

Strategy: Utilize Technology to Assist Drivers in Locating Parking

Drivers use a variety of resources to find available truck parking. Smart phone applications are one of the top methods truck drivers use when planning their routes and where they may stop.⁵³ Participants in the focus group corroborated the use of parking apps to find available parking.

Research has shown that drivers’ top-preferred source of parking availability information are roadside message signs.⁵⁴ These Truck Parking Information Management Systems (TPIMS) allow the real-time monitoring of truck parking occupancy via built-in sensors or cameras that communicate whether or not a truck parking space is occupied. This information is then relayed to a roadside changeable message sign to show the number of spots available, allowing drivers to identify parking availability at an upcoming location.

Strategy: Establish Schedules / Routes that Allow Drivers to Park Early

Women drivers in both the surveys and the focus group indicated they stopped driving earlier than necessary, despite still having available drive time, so that they could safely park. One driver remarked that “most people are starting their days at 3:00 to 5:00 AM just so they can shut down early and get a spot.” Previous ATRI truck parking research found that drivers

⁵¹ Graeme Massie, “Passengers describe chaotic scenes as Greyhound bus crash leaves three dead and 14 injured,” *Independent*, (July 13, 2023), <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/greyhound-bus-crash-deaths-illinois-b2374151.html>.

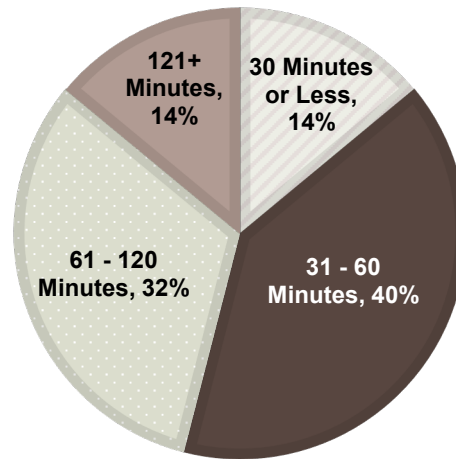
⁵² Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “Report to Congress on the Large Truck Crash Causation Study” (March 2006), <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/docs/ltccs-2006.pdf>.

⁵³ American Transportation Research Institute, “MAASTO Truck Parking Survey Analysis - February 2020,” Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials (2020), <https://trucksparkhere.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2019-MAASTO-Survey-Report-FINAL.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Ibid

parked an average of 56 minutes earlier than necessary (Figure 13).⁵⁵ This loss in productive drive time can cost the average driver more than \$6,800 a year in lost wages.⁵⁶

Figure 13: Average Remaining Drive Time When Parking



While drivers can anticipate shortages of parking through prior experiences and trip planning, motor carriers can help drivers through their operational design. Depending on a motor carrier’s flexibility, they can establish schedules, routes and jobs for drivers that accommodate the limited parking later in the day. Drivers can also seek out companies and jobs that better accommodate their preferences and desired schedules.

Strategy: Advocate for Dedicated Infrastructure Funding to Increase Truck Parking Capacity

Jason’s Law, first passed in October 2012, was the first significant federal legislation to acknowledge the lack of truck parking and start to address the issue.⁵⁷ Jason Rivenburg was a truck driver who was killed during a robbery when he was parked at an abandoned gas station. The legislation led FHWA to inventory and quantify truck parking shortages across the nation.

Now, more than a decade after passage of the first Jason’s Law report, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed in November 2021 requires states to include a commercial vehicle parking assessment in each State Freight Plan.⁵⁸

At the time of the most recent update of the Jason’s Law report released by FHWA in 2020, there were roughly 313,000 truck parking spaces nationwide. The inventory found that between 2014 and 2019 there was a 6 percent increase in the number of public truck parking spaces and

⁵⁵ Caroline Boris and Rebecca M. Brewster, Managing Critical Truck Parking Case Study – Real World Insights from Truck Parking Diaries, ATRI (December 2016), <https://truckingresearch.org/2016/12/5342/>.

⁵⁶ Alex Leslie and Dan Murray, An Analysis of the Operational Costs of Trucking: 2023 Update. American Transportation Research Institute. June 2023, <https://truckingresearch.org/atri-research/operational-costs-of-trucking/>.

⁵⁷ U.S. Congress, “House, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21),” HR 4348, 112th Cong., 2nd sess., introduced in House January 3, 2012, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-112hr4348enr/html/BILLS-112hr4348enr.htm>.

⁵⁸ Congress.gov. “H.R. 3684 – 117th Congress (2021 – 2022): Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.” November, 15, 2021. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3684>.

a 11 percent increase in private truck parking spaces.⁵⁹ With funding being one of the major hurdles states face when expanding truck parking, there are several discretionary grants and Federal-aid highway funding programs that states can utilize to expand truck parking facilities.⁶⁰ At the time of this report's publishing, the U.S. House of Representatives were considering a \$755 million bill for dedicated truck parking.⁶¹

On another note, ATA recently created a WIM Council that advocates for and empowers women in the transportation industry.⁶² In April 2024, 18 members of WIM met with members of Congress and White House officials. WIM members advocated for safer truck parking in the U.S., among other key issues women truck drivers encounter.⁶³ One driver shared with policymakers that "we need safe parking, safe rest break facilities and access to accommodations," further echoing this issue.

Focus group participants had several additional suggestions to help combat the lack of truck parking:

- Re-open closed rest areas or keep weigh stations open for overnight parking;
- Truck stops should have dedicated short-term parking spots available with a 10-minute limit for restroom breaks for drivers who operate at night;
- Provide separate parking spots for bobtail (no trailer) trucks so they do not occupy a large spot meant for tractor-trailer combination.

Issue 2 – Lack of Clean Restrooms

Truck drivers often face challenges when it comes to accessing clean restroom facilities while on the road.⁶⁴ The availability of clean restrooms can vary widely depending on the location and type of facility. Unfortunately, there are many instances where truck drivers encounter restrooms that are not well maintained or sanitary. This can be particularly challenging for long-haul drivers who spend extended periods on the road and rely on these facilities.



⁵⁹ Federal Highway Administration, "National Coalition on Truck Parking: 5th Meeting" (December 1, 2020), https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/Freight/infrastructure/truck_parking/coalition/2020/mtg/mtg12012020.htm.

⁶⁰ Martin Knopp and Tom Keane, "INFORMATION: Eligibility of Title 23 and Title 49 Federal Funds for Commercial Motor Vehicle Parking (Updated)," Federal Highway Administration and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, (September 20, 2022), https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/Freight/infrastructure/truck_parking/title23fundscmv/title23_49_funds_cmv.pdf.

⁶¹ "H.R. 2367, Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act" (June 22, 2023), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/59285>.

⁶² American Trucking Associations, "Women In Motion Council" (accessed May 10, 2024), <https://www.trucking.org/women-in-motion-council>.

⁶³ American Trucking Associations, "Women Trucking Leaders Meet with Top Washington Policymakers" (April 17, 2024), <https://www.trucking.org/news-insights/women-trucking-leaders-meet-top-washington-policymakers>.

⁶⁴ Hannah Towey and Grace Kay, "Trucks say they're denied bathrooms on the job, forcing female drivers to take creative measures to relieve themselves" Business Insider (February 7, 2022), <https://www.businessinsider.com/truckers-denied-bathroom-access-warehouses-restrooms-impact-on-female-drivers-2022-2>.

Restroom access at customer facilities continues to be a major issue as well. Motor carriers and drivers alike commented on the signs posted at customer facilities prohibiting truck drivers from using the customer facility restrooms.

The following **strategies** were identified to address lack of clean restrooms (Table 22).

Table 22: Strategies to Address Lack of Clean Restrooms

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Advocate on behalf of drivers to ensure driver access at customer facilities	✓		
Utilize crowd-sourced information to locate clean restrooms			✓

Strategy: Advocate on Behalf of Drivers to Ensure Driver Access at Customer Facilities

Focus group participants unanimously shared their frustration for instances where drivers that service customer facilities are rarely allowed to park there and / or use the restroom facilities at these locations. Drivers consider this a big “missed opportunity,” and strongly believe that motor carriers need to actively engage with their customers on the issue.

In recognition of these challenges, Washington State passed legislation guaranteeing driver access to restrooms at customer facilities. House Bill 1457 requires that shippers and consignees “provide restroom access to drivers if the restroom is located in an area where providing access would not create an obvious health or safety risk to the motor carriers, and allowing the driver to access the restroom does not pose an obvious security, health or safety risk to the shipper, consignee, or its employees.⁶⁵ At the federal level, H.R.3869 – Trucker Bathroom Access Act – has been introduced and would require businesses to make their restrooms available to truck drivers when they pick-up or drop-off freight.⁶⁶

“Restroom access at customer facilities is a major concern for drivers. Sometimes customer facilities will have porta-potties which can be unsanitary and particularly challenging in colder weather. Shippers will also put-up signs telling drivers to not ask to use the restroom. One time I did ask; it was a reluctant yes.”

- Woman Truck Driver

Detention at customer facilities is a top industry concern, ranking eighth in ATRI’s top industry issues survey, fifth among commercial drivers and third among the focus group participants.⁶⁷ Additionally, motor carrier interviewees specifically identified detention as a top concern for their company. Being detained for extended periods of time at a customer facility makes bathroom access even more critical. Prior ATRI research examining detention impacts found that women were delayed more frequently than their male counterparts. Additionally, women were 83.3 percent more likely to be detained six or more hours than men.⁶⁸ Motor carriers are uniquely

⁶⁵ Health and Safety Magazine, “Washington state law gives truckers access to restrooms” (June 1, 2023), <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/washington-state-law-gives-truckers-access-to-restrooms>.

⁶⁶ “H.R.3869 – Trucker Bathroom Access Act” (introduced June 6, 2023), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/3869>.

⁶⁷ ATRI, *Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry – 2023* (October 2023), <https://truckingresearch.org/2023/10/critical-issues-in-the-trucking-industry-2023/>.

⁶⁸ Erin Speltz and Dan Murray, *Driver Detention Impacts on Safety and Productivity*, American Transportation Research Institute (September 2019), <https://truckingresearch.org/2019/09/driver-detention-impacts-on-safety-and-productivity/>.

positioned to advocate on behalf of their drivers with their customers to ensure their drivers are allowed to park at the facility and access the restrooms, particularly when the drivers are detained by the customer.

Strategy: Utilize Crowd-Sourced Information to Locate Clean Restrooms

Truck drivers from all three data collection tools recommended utilizing available resources such as apps, social media platforms, online reviews and personal connections for valuable advice and support, including information on restroom facilities.

For drivers active on social media, drivers recommend joining groups and chats that share best practices, experiences, advice, and encouragement, especially tailored toward women drivers. These communities offer a supportive network and valuable information while on the road. There are communities across different platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Reddit where drivers consistently share anecdotes and advice. There are also truck driver “influencers” who commonly post videos providing advice on TikTok, YouTube and Instagram.

In addition to traditional public and private truck parking facilities, truck drivers may also need to explore alternative parking options. Several interviewees recommended additional locations, such as casinos and gyms, as viable alternatives for parking. Whether or not a driver intends to utilize the amenities inside these establishments, they offer services that can be beneficial after extended periods on the road.

CHALLENGE 6 – Excessive Gender Harassment and Discrimination

A WIT whitepaper on gender bias and harassment in the trucking industry found that over 55 percent of respondents agreed that trucking is a safe industry to be employed in with less than 18 percent disagreeing with this statement.⁶⁹ This is true for ATRI’s research findings as well, with all focus group participants conveying that truck driving was a safe job for women but some conceded that they had experienced harassment or felt more vulnerable in certain environments.

Driver survey respondents identified how frequently they encounter harassment or discrimination, ranging from daily to never. Women experience harassment or discrimination more frequently than men, with 16.9 percent, or about one in six women experiencing it daily compared to 8.4 percent of men (Table 23). On the contrary, 63.5 percent of men respondents have never been harassed or discriminated against, compared to only 30.8 percent of women respondents. The truck driver survey respondents were not asked about harassment or discrimination by *gender*, but their responses indicate that gender likely plays a role.

Table 23: Harassment or Discrimination Frequency by Gender

Frequency	Women	Men	Women % More
Daily	16.9%	8.4%	100.2%
Weekly	12.4%	5.0%	148.8%
Monthly	10.4%	5.2%	102.0%
Quarterly	8.4%	4.1%	104.4%
Annually	8.3%	6.2%	33.6%
Once	12.7%	7.6%	68.3%
Never	30.8%	63.5%	-51.5%

Throughout this research, motor carriers, truck driver training schools and truck drivers highlighted two key **issues** relating to harassment and discrimination.

- Issue 1 – Discrimination during training
- Issue 2 – Concern over personal safety

Issue 1 – Discrimination During Training

In February 2022, FMCSA announced the creation of a Women of Trucking Advisory Board (WOTAB), comprised of women in various trucking roles. WOTAB was tasked with identifying recommendations to improve the experiences of women in trucking.⁶⁹ Numerous recommendations from the committee centered around harassment during training at motor carriers. Specifically, WOTAB indicated that gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the truck industry typically comes in two forms – culture and training.⁷⁰

In November of 2022, FMCSA published *Crime Prevention for Truckers*, research focused on identification of the prevalence and type of sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH) experienced by women and minority male truck drivers.⁷¹ The study came under criticism for its definitions of SASH and for the study populations included – even from members of WOTAB.⁷²

More recently, FMCSA released a request for information for a new SASH study.⁷³ Ideally, the upcoming research will quantify the prevalence and severity of SASH in the industry. This research will help support regulatory or policy measures needed to improve driver safety during training and beyond.

Table 24 highlights specific **strategies** that truck drivers and motor carriers can implement to reduce the occurrence of discrimination during training (Table 24).

⁶⁹ Women In Trucking, “Same Gender Training Policy: Recruiting and Protection Female Drivers” (accessed April 26, 2024), <https://www.womenintrucking.org/safety-harassment-series>.

⁷⁰ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “WOTAB Report to FMCSA” (last updated April 18, 2024), <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/advisory-committees/wotab/wotab-report-fmcsa>.

⁷¹ Filmon, Habtemichael, Alessandra Egor, and Bob Krile, “Crime Prevention for Truckers Study” Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (November 1, 2022), <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/64915>.

⁷² John Gallagher, “Women of trucking criticize FMCSA crime study” FreightWaves (November 9, 2022), <https://www.freightwaves.com/news/women-of-trucking-criticize-fmcsa-crime-study>.

⁷³ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, “Request for Information: Study of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Commercial Motor Vehicle Industry” (February 7, 2024), <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FMCSA-2024-0061-0001>.

Table 24: Strategies to Eliminate Discrimination During Training

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Research motor carrier culture			✓
Evaluate same-sex training policies	✓		
Establish vetting system for trainers	✓	✓	

Strategy: Research Motor Carrier Culture

Women truck drivers should research motor carriers, their business models and their corporate culture to identify training and operational expectations, company policies and values, and benefits offered. A few examples of this include reviewing websites, marketing materials, participating in a ride-along or asking detailed questions during the interview process.

“Before getting into the industry, do a ride-along or job shadow. Get a feel for the non-driving tasks and responsibilities. Understand the cost of getting into the industry and what it takes to succeed.

- Motor Carrier Employee (Woman)

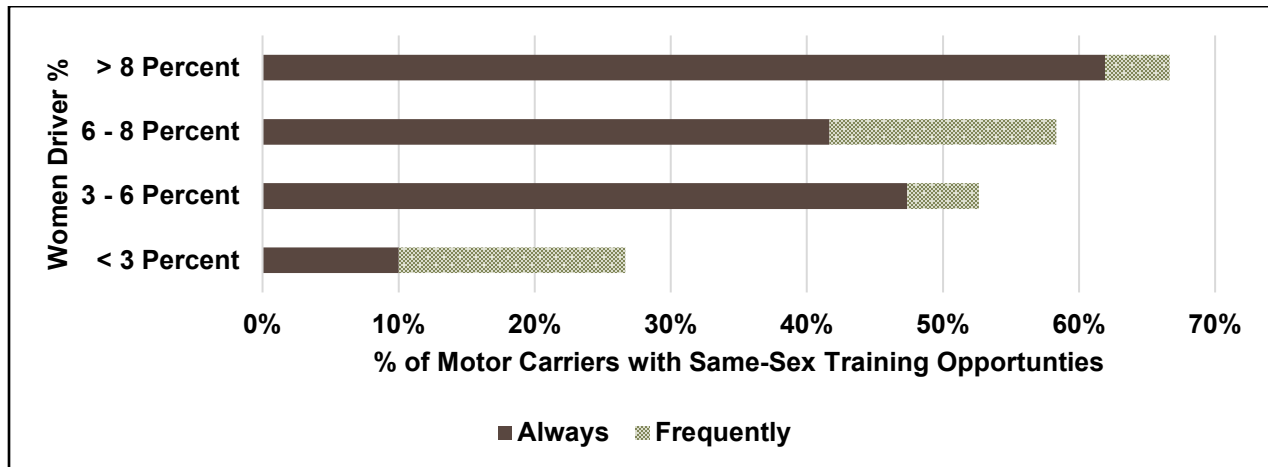
Strategy: Evaluate Same-Sex Training Policies

The lack of gender diversity in the trucking industry has led to situations where women drivers have experienced harassment, discrimination and in some cases, assault, while training.⁷⁴ By implementing a same-sex training policy, motor carriers can mitigate the possibility of these incidents for their women trainees. However, like truck drivers, there is a shortage of available women trainers, making a same-sex training policy challenging. Unfortunately, motor carriers who maintain this policy may have to delay driver training for weeks or months while waiting for a woman trainer to become available.

Motor carrier survey respondents identified how frequently they offer same-sex training to their drivers. The companies with a higher percentage of women drivers have more frequent same-sex training opportunities for women; 61.9 percent of fleets with more than eight percent women drivers *always* offer women trainers (Figure 14). On the contrary, only 10.0 percent of fleets with fewer than three percent women drivers offer same-sex training. With a smaller percentage of women at these fleets, there are fewer women to serve as driver trainers.

⁷⁴ Women In Trucking, “Addressing Gender Bias and Harassment in the Trucking Industry” (May 17, 2022), <https://www.womenintruck.org/press-releases/women-in-trucking-association-publishes-whitepaper-on-addressing-gender-bias-and-harassment-toward-professional-drivers>; Filmon, Habtemichael, Alessandra Egor, and Bob Krile, “Crime Prevention for Truckers Study” Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (November 1, 2022), <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/64915>.

Figure 14: Women Trainer Opportunities Frequency by Women Driver Percentage



Strategy: Establish Vetting System for Trainers

Despite the potential benefits, same-sex training has been controversial, with a 2014 federal court ruling that same-sex training policies were discriminatory and violated federal law.⁷⁵ New entrant women drivers have sued motor carriers after either being denied jobs or left waiting for training since there were no available women trainers. Critics of same-sex training policies believe the focus should be on better vetting of trainers, expanded anti-harassment policies and paying for trainees to sleep in a hotel.

Apart from enacting transparent policies and procedures, other strategies include pairing trainees with compatible mentors, setting distinct boundaries and expectations, and ensuring regular check-ins. Finally, motor carriers should consider sleeping arrangements. During the interviews, several motor carriers highlighted the significance of providing comfortable and safe sleeping arrangements, recommending that carriers offer the option for trainees to stay at a hotel if they prefer. Furthermore, a woman trainer emphasized that certain women may feel uneasy having a man trainer, stressing the importance of aligning trainee personalities with their trainers.

Issue 2 – Concern over Personal Safety

Concerns over personal safety prompted one in four (24.7%) former women survey respondents to exit the industry, a proportion significantly higher than the 11 percent reported by men respondents. To help improve driver safety and situational awareness on the road, the following **strategies** were identified through the various tasks conducted in this research (Table 25).

⁷⁵ U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, “Federal Judge Rules Prime Trucking’s Same-Sex Training Policy Violated Federal Law” (August 18, 2014), <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/federal-judge-rules-prime-truckings-same-sex-training-policy-violates-federal-law>

Table 25: Strategies to Address Personal Safety Concerns

Strategy	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers
Improve situational awareness when parked			✓
Bring a dog on the road			✓
Operate as a team driver			✓
Offer / promote self-defense opportunities	✓		

Strategy: Improve Situational Awareness when Parked

Focus group participants highlighted the importance of continuously being aware of their surroundings, behaviors, and actions. It is important for women truck drivers to consider specific clothing options and behaviors to minimize the risk of harassment and uphold professionalism on the job. By refraining from wearing provocative clothing, consistently maintaining professionalism, establishing clear boundaries, and remaining vigilant, focus group participants indicated that women can proactively prevent harassment from other drivers. Despite these efforts, it is important to acknowledge that there will always be individuals who harass others regardless of preventative measures – and it is up to drivers and employers to hold those individuals accountable when identified.

Strategy: Bring a Dog on the Road

Having a dog can give drivers the opportunity to stop more, get outside and walk, provide companionship, and even provide a degree of security. Women drivers emphasized the importance and benefits of having a dog as a companion on the road.⁷⁶ Many motor carriers allow truck drivers to bring pets with them on the road, which multiple respondents mentioned as a benefit of the job.⁷⁷ The fact that dogs can also help women feel safer should be considered an additional benefit of such policies.

Strategy: Operate as a Team Driver

Eight of the 11 focus group participants either currently or previously operated in a team-driving situation. Additionally, several carrier interviewees offer team driving positions. Depending on the carrier, they may either require drivers to come with a driving partner or they have a system in place for pairing individuals.

Team driving has several benefits. Team drivers tend to be less lonely than solo drivers, they have the opportunity to make more money since the wheels are turning more frequently and there is a higher degree of safety at truck stops / rest areas because they are not alone.⁷⁸ This was echoed by the women truck driver survey respondents; their advice given to women drivers

⁷⁶ Grace Kay and Hannah Towey, “Female truckers describe the extra precautions they take to stay safe on the road – from disguising their gender and avoiding tight clothes to carrying weapons,” (February 26, 2022), <https://www.businessinsider.com/female-truckers-describe-how-to-stay-safe-trucker-shortage-2022-2>.

⁷⁷ Truckstop Group LLC, “Truckstop Survey Finds 50% of Professional Truck Drivers Travel with Their Pets for Emotional Support,” PR Newswire (June 20, 2023), <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/truckstop-survey-finds-50-of-professional-truck-drivers-travel-with-their-pets-for-emotional-support-301854488.html>.

⁷⁸ TransForce, “Top Benefits of Team Truck Driving,” (May 6, 2022), <https://www.transforce.com/drivers/driver-resources/top-benefits-team-truck-driving>.

was to go into team driving, particularly with a spouse/partner. Safety was not the only reason given.

Strategy: Offer / Promote Self-Defense Opportunities

Self-defense classes were also mentioned as an effective proactive measure for drivers – specifically women – to take. Motor carriers will sometimes teach self-defense programs during training or connect drivers with community resources.

CONCLUSIONS

Through multiple research tools – surveys, interviews and a focus group – the ATRI research team identified six key challenges that regularly impact the success of women truck drivers.

1. Negative Industry Image and Perception
2. Unable to Complete Truck Driver Training
3. Unsatisfactory Motor Carrier Company Culture
4. Inability to Acclimate to the OTR Driver Lifestyle
5. Limited Parking and Restroom Facility Access
6. Excessive Gender Harassment and Discrimination

Women who have struggled to enter the industry, who are currently in the industry and those who have left the industry can attest to the challenges, issues and strategies identified throughout this research. Key findings are described below, followed by a detailed action plan with discrete steps for motor carriers, truck driver training schools and truck drivers to increase the number of women truck drivers entering and staying in the industry.

Key findings pertaining to the recruitment of women drivers:

- **How women enter the industry** – Nearly 51 percent of women survey respondents got into trucking through a family member.
- **Truck driver motivators** – Women commonly enter the industry because they are seeking competitive and equal pay, and they enjoy the independence and variability from day-to-day.
- **Pay parity** – Trucking offers competitive pay and benefits for truck drivers. Drivers rank compensation as a top motivator and motor carriers acknowledge its importance for driver recruitment and retention. Pay parity for women drivers compared to men drivers was a common theme among research participants.
- **Research training and employment options** – There is an abundance of truck driver training school and motor carrier options available across the U.S. Finding both a training program and employer that meets their needs, properly prepares them, and treats them fairly can make a significant difference in their experience and tenure as a truck driver.

Key findings pertaining to the retention of women drivers:

- **Women-specific initiatives** – Motor carriers with women-specific initiatives maintain a higher percentage of women drivers (8.1%) compared to those without women-specific initiatives (5.0%). Initiatives may consist of featuring women in marketing materials, mentorship programs, and involvement in women's groups.
- **Motor carrier top priorities to improve company culture** – Motor carriers perceive open / transparent communications and driver recognition / appreciation as the top priorities for creating a positive work environment.
- **Building healthy habits on the road** – Inability to access exercise facilities was the most frequently reported issue among women, as 42.2 percent of women encounter this *daily*. Additionally, women drivers emphasized the need to prepare meals in advance to minimize snacking and improve diet.

- **Access to safe parking** –Truck parking was ranked as the top issue by focus group participants. More than 41 percent of women drivers struggle to find parking daily. Finding a safe place to park – let alone a legal place to park – has its challenges. Several opportunities to increase personal safety at parking facilities include bringing a dog, having a co-driver, parking in well-lit areas, and researching parking facilities in advance.
- **Access to clean restrooms** – More than 39 percent of women drivers struggle to access restroom facilities daily. Among all the reasons given for why it is more challenging for women to be truck drivers, 12.2 percent of women responses related to restrooms access / cleanliness.
- **Harassment and discrimination** – Nearly 17 percent of women experience harassment or discrimination daily compared to 8.4 percent of men. Despite many women drivers indicating that they are respected and treated fairly, this is not a universal experience. Research participants in the survey, interviews and focus group indicated that they encounter disrespectful truck and passenger car drivers, trainers, shippers, and motor carriers.
- **Reasons for leaving** – Family and not enough home time were the top two reasons women survey respondents left truck driving roles.

The following industry action plan offers strategies to be deployed by motor carriers, truck driver training schools and truck drivers to address the six key challenges that regularly impact the success of women truck drivers (Table 26).

Table 26: Action Plan for Motor Carriers, Truck Driver Training Schools and Truck Drivers

Challenge	Issue	Strategies	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers	
Negative Industry Image and Perception	Inequitable social norms	Highlight the income potential and existing pay parity in trucking	✓	✓		
		Focus on women drivers in marketing materials	✓	✓		
		Educate family and friends on trucking opportunities	✓	✓	✓	
		Stay professional and maintain a positive outlook			✓	
	Misuse of social media	Share positive stories and posts	✓	✓	✓	
		Training on improper social media usage	✓	✓		
		Establish and enforce social media policies	✓			
	Lack of younger drivers and aging workforce	Connect with high school students	✓	✓		
		Identify and plan for generational differences	✓	✓		
		Emphasize trucking as a lucrative alternative to college	✓	✓		
Unable to Complete Truck Driver Training	Inability to pay for training	Increase financial assistance awareness	✓	✓		
		Promote motor carrier-sponsored CDL programs	✓			
		Anticipate and plan for financial requirements			✓	
	Lack of driving skills, ability or knowledge	Incentivize well performing / attentive students	✓	✓		
		Encourage continuous practice of difficult skills	✓	✓	✓	
		Educate students on drug testing requirements early on	✓	✓		
	No or limited access to childcare	Identify and promote childcare resources		✓		
		Timely communication with students		✓		
	Excessive travel to and from school	Consider all available training program options				✓
		Offer the theory portion online			✓	
Facilitate housing accommodations				✓		

Challenge	Issue	Strategies	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers	
Unsatisfactory Motor Carrier Company Culture	Unclear and inconsistent communication with drivers	Develop a mentorship program	✓		✓	
		Establish a women-specific group or coalition	✓		✓	
		Articulate clear expectations of employees	✓			
		Implement an open-door policy	✓			
		Institute regular virtual learning sessions	✓	✓		
		Design a professional development curriculum		✓		
	Absence of recognition and appreciation initiatives	Implement driver reward / recognition programs	✓			
Inability to Acclimate to the OTR Driver Lifestyle	Insufficient home-time	Develop reasonable schedules and routes	✓			
		Educate students on job opportunities for CDL holders		✓		
		Identify innovative methods to connect with family			✓	
		Communicate / advocate for personal needs			✓	
	Inability to establish and sustain healthy habits	Train drivers to build a routine of healthy habits			✓	
		Establish an exercise program	✓		✓	
		Advocate for mental health support	✓		✓	
		Prioritize rest and minimize fatigue	✓		✓	
		Locate and plan for healthy and sustainable meal options			✓	
		Maintain good hygiene			✓	
Limited Parking and Restroom Facility Access	Shortage of safe parking	Educate drivers on personal safety strategies when parking	✓	✓		
		Utilize technology to assist drivers in locating parking	✓		✓	
		Establish schedules / routes that allow drivers to park early	✓		✓	
		Advocate for dedicated infrastructure funding to increase truck parking capacity	✓	✓	✓	
	Lack of clean restrooms	Advocate on behalf of drivers to ensure driver access at customer facilities	✓			
		Utilize crowd-sourced information to locate clean restrooms			✓	

Challenge	Issue	Strategies	Motor Carriers	Truck Driver Training Schools	Truck Drivers	
Excessive Gender Harassment and Discrimination	Discrimination during training	Research motor carrier culture			✓	
		Evaluate same-sex training policies	✓			
		Establish vetting system for trainers	✓	✓		
	Concern over personal safety	Improve situational awareness when parked				✓
		Bring a dog on the road				✓
		Operate as a team driver				✓
		Offer / promote self-defense opportunities	✓			

APPENDIX A: TRUCK DRIVER SURVEY QUESTIONS

In order to compare and contrast the different experiences that women and men truck drivers face, ATRI is seeking input from all professional truck drivers. **CURRENT AND PREVIOUS** CDL holders are asked to share their input below. All information provided will be kept **COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL** and only reported in an aggregated, non-identifying format.

Demographics

1. Are you a current or former professional truck driver with a CDL?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your current age?
4. How many motor carriers have you worked for in your truck driving career?
5. How many years have you been a truck driver?
6. *Former*: In what year did you stop driving a truck?
7. What is your current average length of haul?
8. What is your primary sector of current/most recent employment?
9. Which best describes the commercial truck you currently/most recently drive/drove?
10. Which of the following best describes your current/most recent truck driving job?
11. Please estimate how many truck drivers work for your current motor carrier (employees plus OO / IC).

Before Becoming a Professional Truck Driver

12. When you considered a career as a truck driver, what influenced your decision most? Identify and rank your top three influences, with 1 indicating the most influential.
Influences: CDL / truck driving school, family, friend, high school courses, military experience, other driving experience (e.g.: ridesharing, courier, bus), print media advertising (newspapers, magazines), radio / TV advertising, referrals from existing employees, similar industry (e.g.: construction, manufacturing, agriculture), social media / marketing, truck shows and other (please describe and rank)
13. Please identify what was important to you in deciding to become a truck driver (select all that apply).
Options: advancement opportunities, flexible hours / routes, highly competitive pay / benefits, offering a hiring bonus, offering childcare services, opportunity to get home every night, opportunity to train with a same-sex instructor, strong emphasis on safety systems and personal security and other (please describe)

While a Professional Truck Driver

14. Please indicate how frequently you encounter / did encounter the following challenges or issues as a truck driver (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, once or never.)
Challenges: company or dispatchers do not give enough time for breaks (meals, restroom, showers) while on the road, concern over personal safety, excessive detention time at customer facilities, harassment or discrimination, lack of childcare, limited advancement opportunities, negative stereotypes, no / limited access to exercise

facilities, no / limited access to restroom facilities, no / limited access to safe parking, no / limited mental health resources and too much time away from home

15. As a truck driver, on average, how many nights a month are/were you away from home?
16. Do you know women truck drivers who have left the industry?
17. Is there anything else you would like to share about challenges that truck drivers face?

Current Driver Questions

18. Have you considered leaving your job as a professional truck driver?
19. What are the top three reasons you continue to drive a truck?
Options: a good sense of job security, college degree not required, competitive pay, enjoy driving, enjoy the challenges that come with the job, every day is different, independence, job opportunities

Previous Driver Questions

20. When you ended your career as a truck driver, what were your reasons for leaving? Rank up to your top three reasons, with 1 being the most influential reason. You do not need to select three if fewer apply.
Options: concern over personal safety, detention / delay at shipper facilities, expired medica card / unable to renew, family reasons, harassment or discrimination, higher pay elsewhere, lack of appreciation or respect, lack of available safe truck parking, lack of same-sex training opportunities, left for a different industry, left for a different job in the trucking industry, limited opportunities for advancement, not enough home-time, retirement, too many mandates / government oversight and other (please specify and rank)

Women Truck Drivers

21. What three recommendations would you give another woman who might consider a career as a truck driver?
22. Please indicate the top three reasons it is more challenging for women (than men) to drive a truck.
23. What does / did your trucking company do to get more women in truck driving jobs?
24. Following the completion of the truck driver survey, ATRI will conduct virtual interviews to get additional insight into the challenges women truck drivers encounter. If you are interested in participating in these interviews, please provide your information.

APPENDIX B: TRUCK DRIVER FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE

Time Spent	Activity	Details
60 minutes	Overview and introductory open-ended questions	An overview of ATRI's mission, structure and research. Drivers were then asked a series of introductory questions.
45 minutes	Seven trucking-specific challenges on poster boards	Drivers were asked to go to each of the seven poster boards (parking, health, personal safety, truck driver image/perception, training, home-time and other) to contribute specific examples they have encountered for each challenge in addition to any best practices or advice for navigating that challenge.
15 minutes	Break	
20 minutes	Conversation with Chris Spear	Discussion with the ATA President and CEO Chris Spear on the importance of their job, the mission of ATA and the work that ATRI is doing.
60 minutes	Small and large group discussions	Small groups: the ATRI staff split the 11 drivers into three groups to have small group discussions. These conversations focused on notable experiences, getting into trucking and their lifestyle. Large group discussion: the drivers re-grouped to discuss interesting conversations from their small group, questions they had for other drivers and additional questions from ATRI.
40 Minutes	Spectrum activity to identify where drivers stand on certain topics	Drivers were asked to identify how much they agree or disagree with certain statements from the research team. The statements focused on overall women truck driver strengths, performance and abilities.
45 Minutes	Lunch	
20 Minutes	Online survey completion	Drivers completed an online survey that was later discussed. The word cloud in this report was produced through this survey.
40 Minutes	Review ATRI Survey Findings	To understand findings from the truck driver survey, ATRI previewed data on the 12 key challenges to get insight from their experiences on the results.
25 Minutes	Review online survey data	Drivers completed an online survey with five different word clouds and seven additional questions related to their experiences on the road as a truck driver. This time was spent reviewing and discussing the results.
20 Minutes	Wrap-up discussion	To wrap up the day, the drivers were asked a handful of questions to close out the conversation.

APPENDIX C: MOTOR CARRIER SURVEY QUESTIONS

ATRI, the trucking industry's not-for-profit research organization, is seeking input from motor carriers regarding current recruitment and retention efforts for women truck drivers. All information provided will be kept **COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL** and survey responses will only be presented in an aggregated, non-identifying format.

Demographics

1. What best describes your role in trucking?
2. In what sector does your fleet primary operation?
3. How many power units are operated by your fleet?
4. What is your gender?
5. How many truck drivers does your fleet employ or have under contract?
6. What percentage of your truck drivers are women?

Recruitment and Training

7. When recruiting both men and women truck drivers, what communication channels are most effective? Rank the following communication channels, with 1 indicating the most effective. Please do not rank any recruitment communication channels that you have not used.
Rankings included: CDL / truck driving schools, high school / technical college outreach, job boards / job aggregators, print media advertising, radio / TV advertising, referrals from existing employees, social media, third-party driver recruitment management system, truck shows and other (please describe and rank)
8. When recruiting women truck drivers, identify three recruitment messages that are most effective for your fleet.
Recruitment message options: advancement opportunities, collaboration / membership / partnerships with women's organizations, flexible hours and routes, highly competitive pay and benefits, offering a hiring bonus, offering child-care services, opportunity to get home every night, opportunity to train with a woman instructor, strong emphasis on safety systems / personal security and women representation in marketing materials and other (please specify)
9. Has your fleet undertaken recruitment initiatives to specifically target women truck drivers?
10. Does your fleet give truck drivers the option to pick a same-sex trainer?
11. Please estimate your fleet's overall annualized truck driver turnover rate (%).

Company Culture

12. In the following table, please rank how your fleet prioritizes benefits and initiatives to create a positive environment for all drivers. Please assign a priority rating of 1 (high priority) to 5 (low priority) and add comments as necessary.
Priorities: Community involvement / charity work, diversity / equity / and inclusion initiatives, flexible work environment / work-life balance, health / wellness programs, open / transparent communications, professional development opportunities, social events, recognition / appreciation and team-building activities
13. What are the top three reasons drivers continue driving for your fleet?
14. What are the top three reasons drivers quit driving for your fleet?

15. Please identify the top three motivators for men truck drivers (e.g.: money, stability, work-life balance).
16. Please identify the top three motivators for women truck drivers (e.g.: money, stability, work-life balance).
17. According to ATRI's most recent iteration of Predicting Truck Crash Involvement, women make up 2.7 percent of OTR drivers. If fleets commit to innovative and effective strategies focused on recruitment and retention of women truck drivers, what percentage of the industry's truck drivers do you believe will be women in 10 years? In 25 years?

Optional

18. The next task of this research involves gathering qualitative data from motor carriers through virtual interviews. This data is crucial for understanding the efforts that motor carriers have made toward creating more satisfying and inclusive work environments for women truck drivers.

Would you be interested in participating in an interview that will be scheduled over the next few months? If so, please provide your contact information. Your information will be kept strictly confidential.

APPENDIX D: MOTOR CARRIER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The first portion of this interview will involve questions and answers from the motor carrier survey launched in October. Your responses have been inserted for certain questions. We will discuss these further during the interview process; they are **BOLDED** throughout.

Motor Carrier Survey Responses

ATRI pulled the survey responses for the interviewed motor carriers to further investigate their responses.

1. Percentage of women drivers: has this percentage changed over time? What percentage of men get home every night? Women?
2. Communication channels: do you notice a difference in what attracts men and women truck drivers?
3. Recruitment messaging: please explain your selections. In what ways do you display these recruitment messages and how do you know they are effective in getting women's attention?
4. Company priorities: please explain your selections. Provide an example of your top priorities. In what ways do these top priorities resonate differently with your men and women drivers?
5. Can you explain why you ranked your men and women driver motivators similarly? Differently?

Challenges and Solutions

6. What are the top 3 – 5 challenges you hear most about from drivers? What challenges are unique to your women drivers?
7. Training –
 - a. What experience is required of your drivers when they are hired?
 - b. What does your training consist of (timeframe, topics, company policies, personal safety, vehicle maintenance, other?)
 - c. What reoccurring issues do you see as a result of training schools improperly teaching drivers? Or not teaching at all?
 - d. What skills are men better / worse at?
8. In what ways do you women drivers communicate their concerns and questions to management / dispatchers differently than your men drivers?
9. In what ways can organizations, companies, associations and agencies work together to create a more welcoming industry for women who wish to be truck drivers?
10. As a woman in trucking –
 - a. What advice would you give to a woman who is interested in becoming a truck driver?
 - b. What perspective do you have, that men do not have, that allows you to advocate for women truck drivers?

APPENDIX E: TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING SCHOOL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewing truck driver training schools will allow ATRI to identify recruitment and training issues that women truck drivers might be encountering that impacts recruitment of women truck drivers.

Demographics

1. Name
2. Truck driver training school name
3. Location of training school (city, state, location count)
4. In what year did your training school open? (your location, first location)
5. How many trainers work at your school?
6. What type of training do you offer? Class A, B, C and endorsements

Driver Recruitment, Exposure and Preferences

7. How do your students typically hear about your training program? (e.g.: word of mouth, social media)
8. What is the average age of students who enroll in your program by gender?
9. What percentage of your students were familiar with the trucking industry when starting your program by gender? (e.g.: FMCSRs, routine of an OTR driver)
10. What percentage of your students are interested in truck driving, as opposed to a bus, motorcoach or other CMVs by gender?
11. Truck drivers will sometimes indicate that the distance traveled for truck driver training school is a barrier to entry. Do you notice a difference in who is willing to travel further for training? Men or women?

Program Enrollment and Completion

12. How many students enroll in your program in an average year by gender?
13. How many students complete your program in an average year by gender?
14. If there's a difference in the percentage of one gender starting and completing the program versus the other, do you have an explanation for that difference?
15. Over the last 10 years, have you seen an increase in the number of **women** enrolled in your training program?
16. Over the last 10 years, have you seen an increase in the number of **women** who complete your training program?
17. Do you see a difference in the percentage of men and women hired into truck driving jobs once they complete your program? If yes, please explain.
18. For programs that teach multiple classifications: Do you notice a difference between the percentage of women/men who complete a class A, class B, and class C program? (For example, 80 percent of men might be enrolled in the Class A program while only 60 percent of the women are.) If yes, please explain.
19. How many students do you lose due to the marijuana regulation? Is there a difference between men and women?

Statements About Women Truck Drivers

20. Please indicate on a range from strongly disagree to strongly agree how the following statement apply to your experiences teaching CMV driver students –
- Women take less risks than men.
 - Women are more likely than men to drive a bus than a truck.
 - Women are physically capable of performing all the tasks needed to be a CMV driver.
 - Women are enthusiastic and engaged students.
 - Women face more challenges than men do as a truck driver.

Program Structure

21. What is the structure of your training program? Have you noticed any recurring barriers or challenges with the schedule or structure of your program that women in particular encounter?
- Total classroom hours
 - Total hours behind-the-wheel
 - Total number of weeks to complete training
22. What funding exists to help get students through your program?
23. In what ways do you educate your students about the existing jobs for CDL holders? (The different types of driving jobs that exist, e.g., truck driving, bus driving, garbage truck, etc.)
24. What are a few unique ways your school prepares your student drivers for “life on the road”? (e.g., sleeper berth best practices, parking safety, personal hygiene pointers)

Comparing Men and Women Drivers

This final section will ask you to provide various lists pertaining to your experiences with men and women CMV driver students. If you have not noticed a difference between your program’s men and women students, please provide a single list generalizing your driver student population.

25. What are three areas in which your students are generally successful?
26. What are three areas in which your students generally struggle?
27. What are the top three reasons students DO NOT complete your program?
28. What are the top three reasons your students want to drive a CMV? (e.g., pay, enjoys driving, independence, change of career, etc.)
29. In terms of communication and learning styles, do you notice a difference between your men and women students? If so, please explain.
30. What, if any, is one major change to the driver training industry you would recommend to recruit more women students and help them complete the program?



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