



NHVR Final Report

4 Points of Contact

2022

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Executive summary

Shift Training's proposal for round 4 of the HVSI funding initiative was for a study and education campaign targeted at new heavy vehicle drivers. The aim of the course was to establish if participants in the course (*4 points of contact*) had a greater understanding of the key elements after completing the course. The program offered training free of charge to new heavy vehicle drivers in the key elements of fatigue management, vehicle inspections, load restraint and chain of responsibility.

The rationale behind choosing the four (4) elements was to educate new heavy vehicle drivers in areas that are not part of the current licence regime in Queensland. To obtain a heavy vehicle licence in Queensland, participants are only required to complete a heavy vehicle knowledge test consisting of ten (10) multiple choice questions, with a pass rate of 80% being acceptable.

There are no requirements to undertake any training in any of the classes for a heavy vehicle licence apart from the multi combination (*TLIC4006*) which must be conducted through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). As a stakeholder for over 25 years, Shift believes that this current methodology of obtaining a heavy vehicle licence is severely lacking and puts the drivers and other road at risk in what is considered a highly skilled and challenging occupation that is overly complicated in terms of compliance, especially when it comes to Chain of responsibility and fatigue management.

The initial proposal '4 Points of Contact' was a two-day training program that new heavy vehicle drivers would undertake to ensure their knowledge on these safety topics are up to date and relevant.

As our heavy vehicle drivers are the grassroots of the heavy vehicle transport industry and as demand for more drivers grow, there has been a steady trend for new drivers to acquire their licence in the cheapest manner and quickest time possible. As such, many new drivers are taking to our roads under skilled and without the essential knowledge that contributes to safer roads for not only heavy vehicles operators but all who share the road with them.

To undertake the course, participants would agree to a pre training assessment of their knowledge to ascertain a survey of 'standards' in new drivers post licence success. On completing the course, the drivers would receive a Certificate of Attendance that would add standing to their driving credentials, however they would also be required to participate in ongoing survey of their driving experience for a further 18 months. The participation in the 'surveys' was voluntary with support service offered along the way if required.

The initial project proposed a group of up to 1000 new heavy vehicle drivers to participate in face-to-face training and survey collection. The outcomes of the further 18-month study of the drivers will be used as evidence for mandatory regulation of a training program like the 4 points of contact, for all new heavy vehicle drivers.

With the advent of Covid-19 and the subsequent lock downs, mandatory quarantine and lack of confidence and direction around face-to-face training, the course was moved to an online platform to continue to deliver the program.

As stated earlier, the program was to train and educate newly licenced heavy vehicle drivers and train them in elements that are not currently part of the heavy vehicle licensing regime. These elements include, fatigue management, load restraint, vehicle inspections and CoR (chain of responsibility). Transport and Main Roads in Qld (*TMR*), currently require no training in any of the elements as were part of the program, nor do they require any training in a heavy vehicle prior to taking the practical driving test (*other than a 10 question multiple choice knowledge assessment*).

Whilst the benefit to the participants who undertook the program is immeasurable, the underlying aim of the program was to create a useful and relevant program that industry and Government bodies could look at as a way of raising the standard of heavy vehicle licensing.

The program 'four points of contact' was initially marketed through radio advertising, news media and print namely Big Rigs along with online marketing on platforms such as Facebook with a significant investment on google via an AdWords campaign. Radio and direct marketing were also used to bring awareness to the program and encourage enrolment.

Interest within the program was high, with many enquiries fielded by our office in relation to the purpose of the course and why is it "free" and that there must some catch, or scam involved. By explaining the purpose of the HVSI and the direct involvement with the NHVR helped alleviate some concerns. Although some were not convinced and thought it was a trick by the NHVR to gather 'data'.

Since moving to an online version of the program, Shift has been able to pass on the 'scorm files' of the course to various transport companies so that they can implement into their own LMS system. The course files were offered free of charge and Shift will continue to offer these files as requested.

Delivery of Program

Classroom Delivery

The face-to-face portion of the program attracted a total 163 participants across a variety of delivery sites, including, class numbers were capped at 12 with some sites having up to 6 sessions (*Logan City*) as demand was quite high.

- Logan City
- Toowoomba
- Ipswich
- Gold Coast
- Sunshine Coast

Marketing

Marketing to attract participants and attract interest in the program included:

- Radio advertising
- Facebook paid add campaigns
- Google AdWords campaign
- Print media – BIGRIGS editorial and advertising campaigns
- Direct email campaign to transport companies
- Driving school and training organisations invitations

Survey Results

Participation in the surveys proved to be the most challenging, as the program was “free of charge” there was no real incentive after the program for participants to complete the surveys, as such the number of surveys collected diminished as time progresses. Shift encouraged participants to complete, with regular emails and phone calls.

Feedback

Feedback from participants at the completion of the face-to-face course was encouraging and the program was highly regarded as a great initiative, and it was suggested by many that the course needed to be implemented (*mandatory*) prior to getting a heavy vehicle licence as participants had limited knowledge in the elements that were delivered. The course was seen as a great benefit to many who attended.

Online Delivery

A Brisbane based IT Company Croomo, now known as Compono was engaged to create the online program. The course files were in a “scorm” format and were then integrated into a LMS portal. Students were able to access the course and complete the surveys from this platform.

A total of over 1200 students were contacted directly by Shift using our own database and new students were encouraged to participate. The online portion of the program attracted a total of 882 participants from all regions throughout Queensland. Interest was taken from interstate, however as the program was directed at Queensland residents specifically, participants were encouraged not to enrol. Locations as per the face-to-face delivery sites were well represented, along with regional centres such as:

- Mackay
- Townsville
- Charters Towers
- Bundaberg
- Mt. Isa

Marketing

Marketing to attract participants and attract interest in the program included:

- Facebook paid add campaigns
- Google AdWords campaign
- Print media – BIGRIGS editorial and advertising campaigns
- Direct email campaign to transport companies
- Driving school and training organisations invitations
- Shift’s own data base of newly licenced students

Survey Results

As with the face-to-face program, participation in the surveys proved to be the most challenging, as the program was “free of charge” there was no real incentive after the program for participants to complete the surveys, as such the number of surveys collected diminished as time progresses. Shift encouraged participants to complete, with regular emails and phone calls.

Feedback

Feedback from online participants was positive and encouraging that the course should be mandated prior to obtaining a heavy vehicle licence. Both programs, face-to-face and online were well received and many participants stated that they gained a great deal of knowledge that would help them in the transport industry.

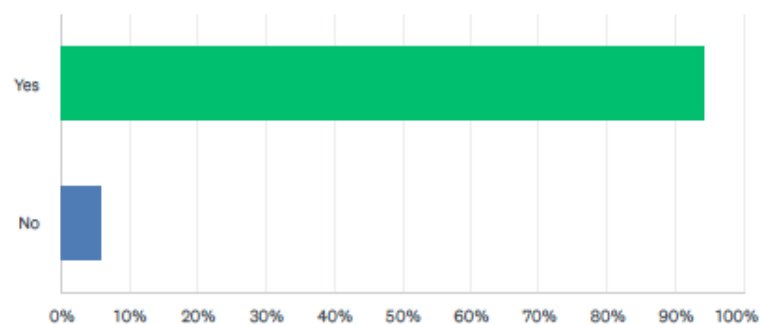
Findings

Below is a 'snapshot' of the participants survey results that are most relevant prior to completing the course.

Holding a Heavy Vehicle Licence

The main criteria for the program were for participants to hold a heavy vehicle licence, whilst this was adhered to on enrolment, however there was some flexibility around persons who were in the process of obtaining a heavy vehicle licence being allowed to participate.

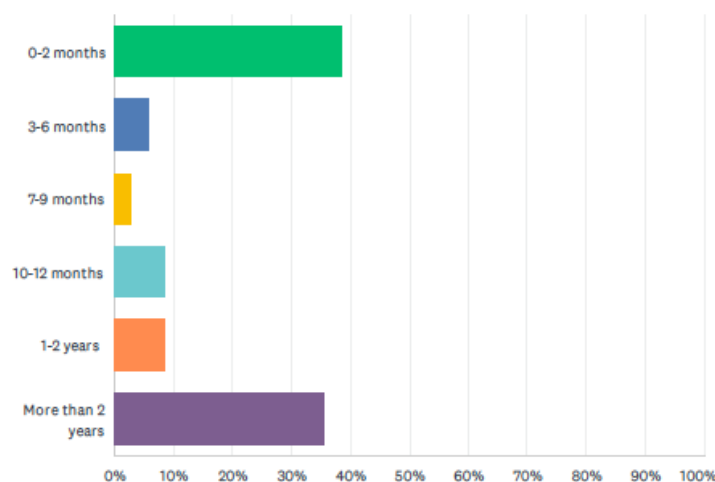
Do you currently hold a heavy vehicle licence?



Licence Tenure

The program was aimed at attracting participants who were newly licenced, it was found that over 75% were 2 years or less, showing interest for a course such as 4 points is warranted in newly licenced drivers.

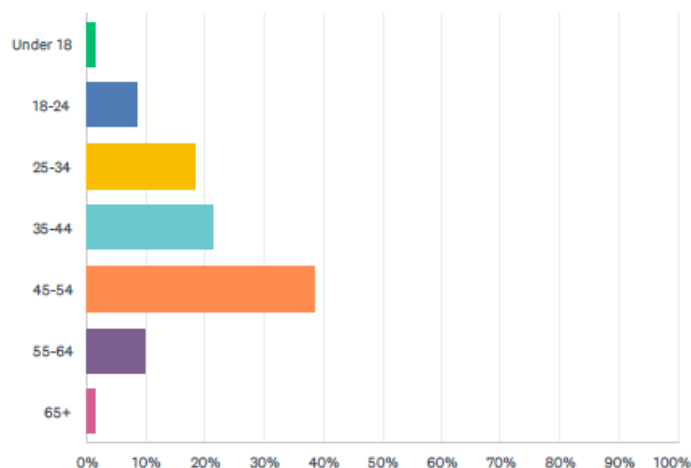
How long have you held your heavy vehicle licence for?



Age group

The participants most represented was in the 45 – 54 age bracket. This is somewhat surprising and does not align with Shift's own data, it was anticipated that more interest would have been shown from the 25 – 34 age brackets.

What is your age group?

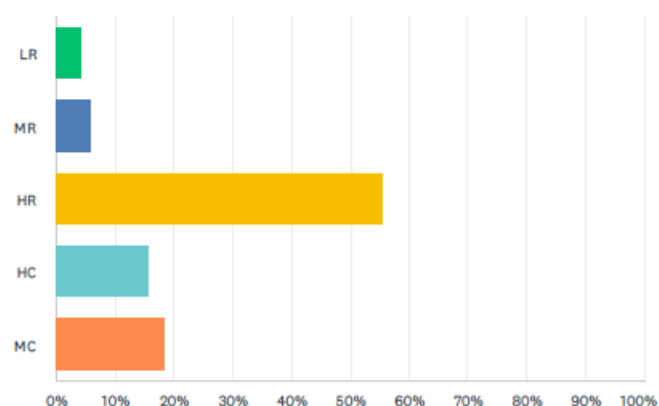


Licence Class Held

Participants holding a heavy rigid (*HR*) licence class were the most represented of the program with over 54%. This was to be expected as the HR is the most popular class of licence as for new drivers. In Queensland a person upgrade from a car licence (*C class*) to HR licence after holding their car licence for a period of 2 years or more.

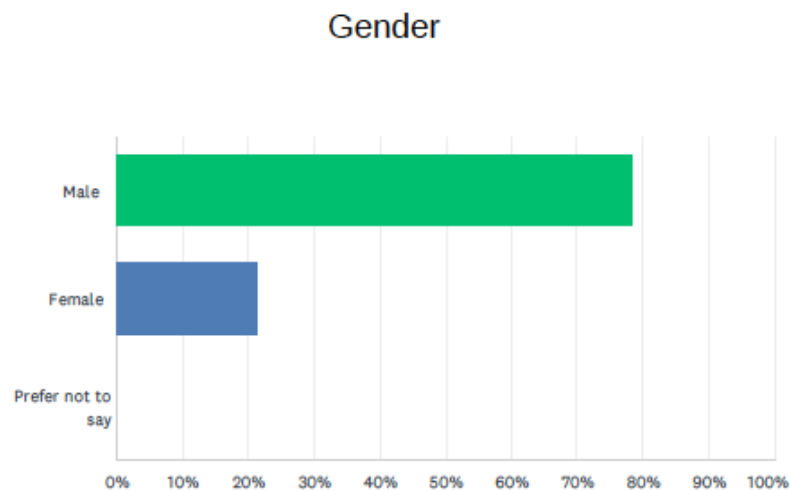
Encouragingly, around 18% of participants had a MC (*multi combination*) licence showing the need for additional training.

What class of heavy vehicle licence do you currently hold?



Gender

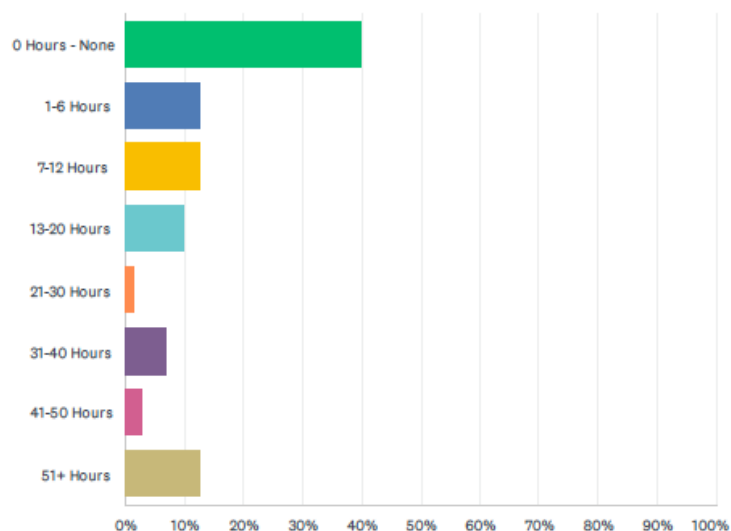
As expected, male participants represented higher at 78% compared to female participants 22%, this is in line with the transport industry, however there is a campaign amongst most transport companies to increase female participation.



Average driving hours

40% of participants have stated that they do not drive a heavy vehicle whilst less than 10% state they work 31 – 40 hours per week.

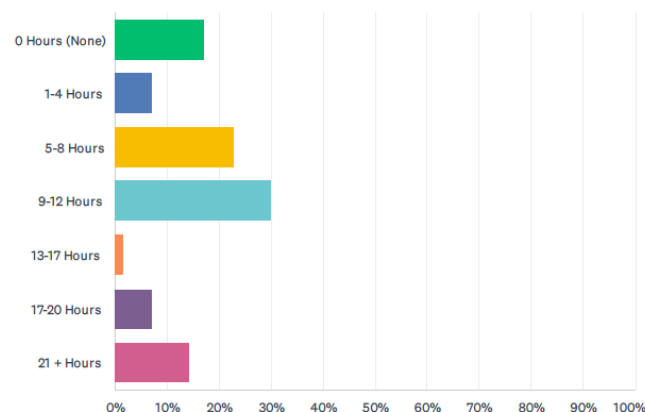
Since obtaining your heavy vehicle licence, how much heavy vehicle driving do you average PER WEEK?



Average training hours

30% of participants have stated that they have completed 9 - 12 hours of training prior to obtaining a heavy vehicle licence. This is inline with current training hours, however this represents on road driving and not classroom time in learning the key elements as discussed in the program.

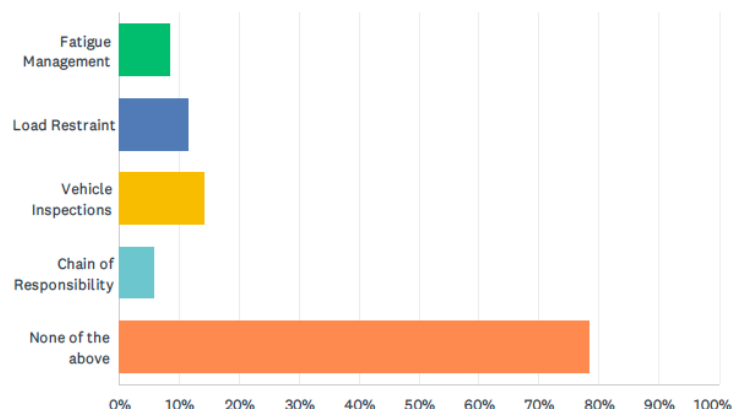
Prior to obtaining your heavy vehicle licence, how many hours of on-road, practical training did you completed with a driving SCHOOL or other training organisation?



Additional Training – with driving school

Remarkably, 78% of participants had **not** completed any training in the 4 elements as part of the program.

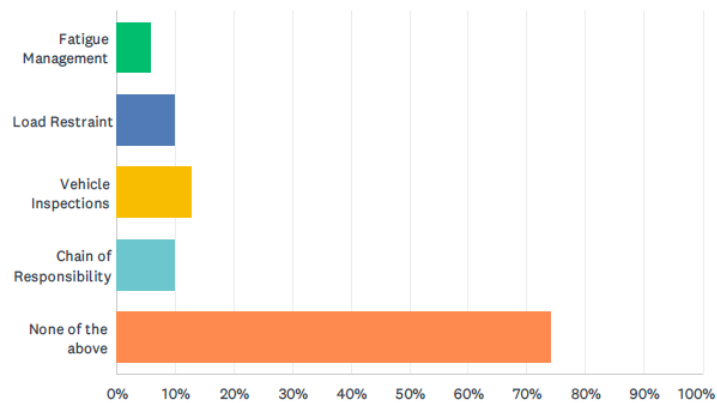
Prior to obtaining your heavy vehicle licence did you complete any training on the topics listed below with a driving SCHOOL or other training organisation? (Tick all that apply)



Additional Training – with employer

As with the above statistic, 74% of participants had not completed any training in the 4 elements as part of the program with an employer.

Prior to obtaining your heavy vehicle licence did you complete any training on the topics listed below with your employer or others in the transport industry and NOT a driving school or other training organisation?
(Tick all that apply)

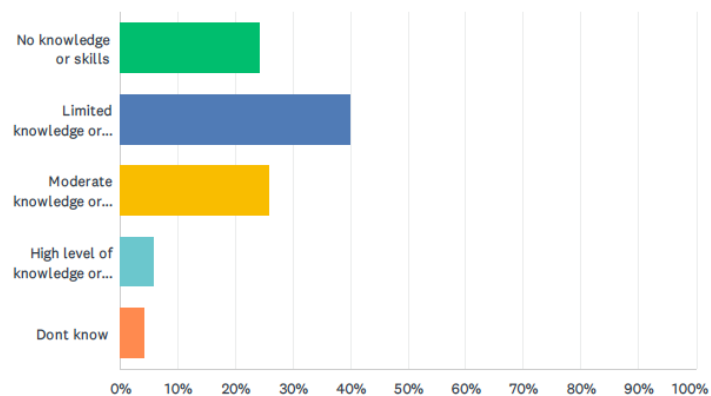


Understanding Fatigue Management

Below is a 'snapshot' of the participants survey results that are most relevant prior to completing the course and after.

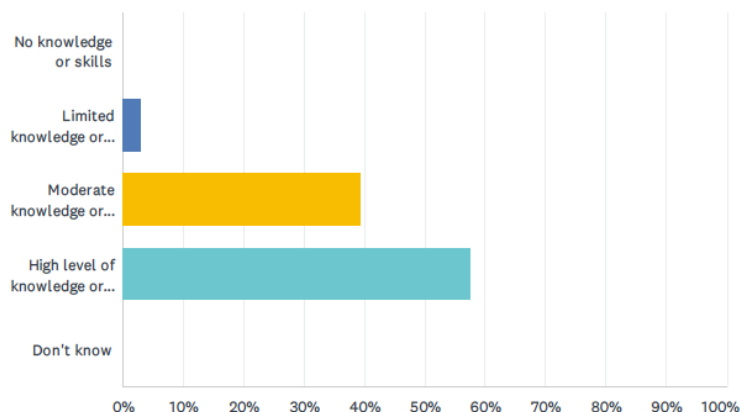
Prior to completing the course, around 25% of participants state they have moderate knowledge, whilst 30% have no knowledge or skills. Fatigue management is a major concern for the transport industry.

In fatigue management, such as understanding the cause and effect of fatigue, proper fatigue management systems, national work diary requirements and completing day sheets?



After completing the course, around 58% of participants state a high level of knowledge.

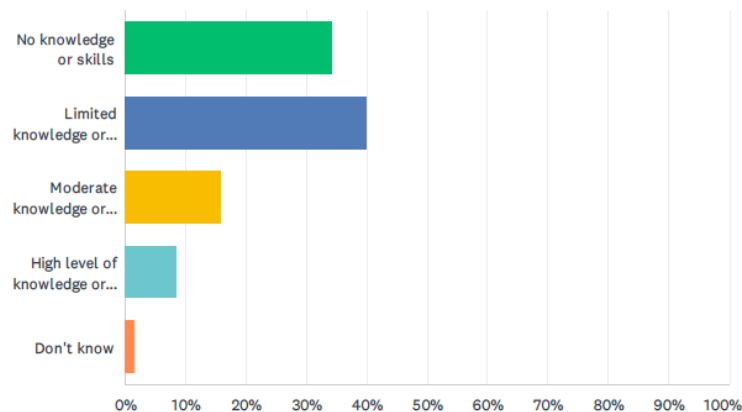
In fatigue management, such as understanding the cause and effect of fatigue, proper fatigue management systems, national work diary requirements and completing day sheets?



Understanding Loading and Load Restraint

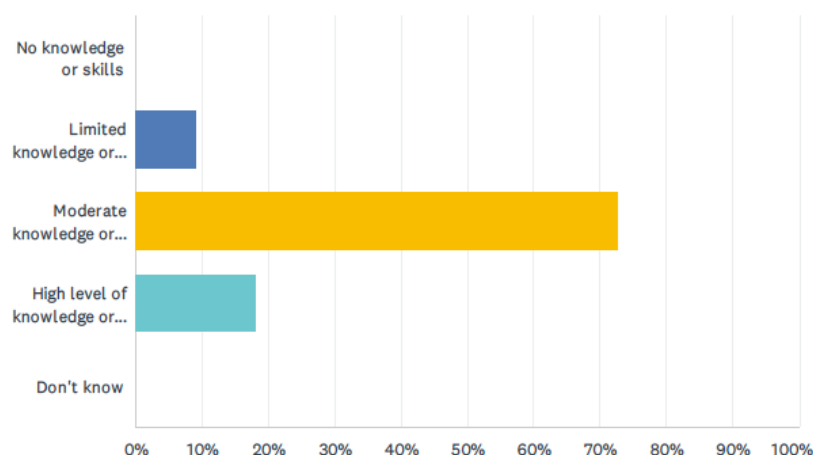
Around 40% of participants have limited knowledge, whilst 35% have no knowledge or skills. Loading is an integral part of driving a heavy vehicle.

In loading heavy vehicles, where loading heavy vehicles is understanding how to correctly load and unload vehicles considering axle weights, dimensions and legal requirements?



After completing the course, around 72% of participants of state moderate knowledge with 18% a high level of knowledge.

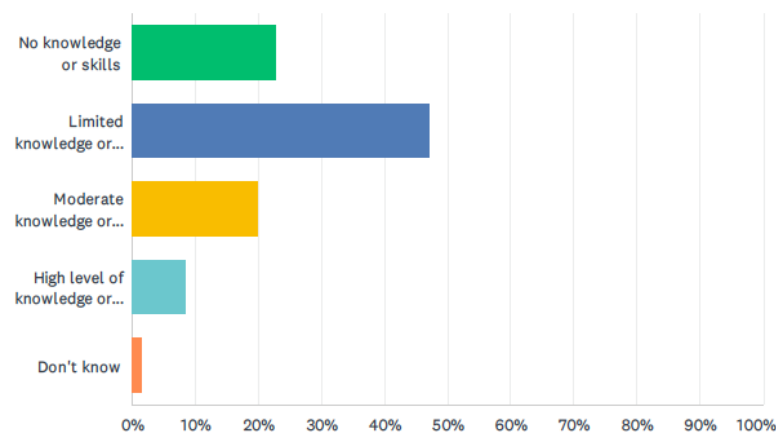
In loading heavy vehicles, where loading heavy vehicles is understanding how to correctly load and unload vehicles considering axle weights, dimensions and legal requirements?



Understanding Loading and Load Restraint

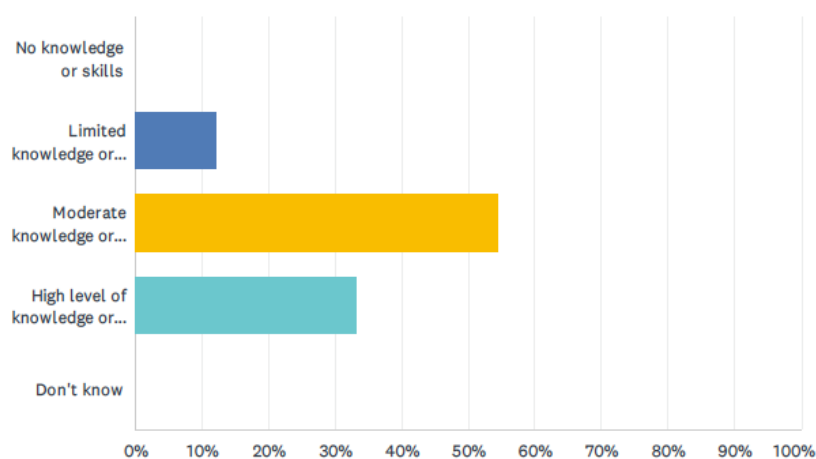
Around 48% of participants have limited knowledge, whilst 20% have no knowledge or skills. Load restraint is essential for the safety and security of loads.

In load restraint, where load restraint is correctly securing loads using recognised load restraint equipment suitable for the type of load?



After completing the course, around 54% of participants of stated a moderate knowledge with 32% a high level of knowledge.

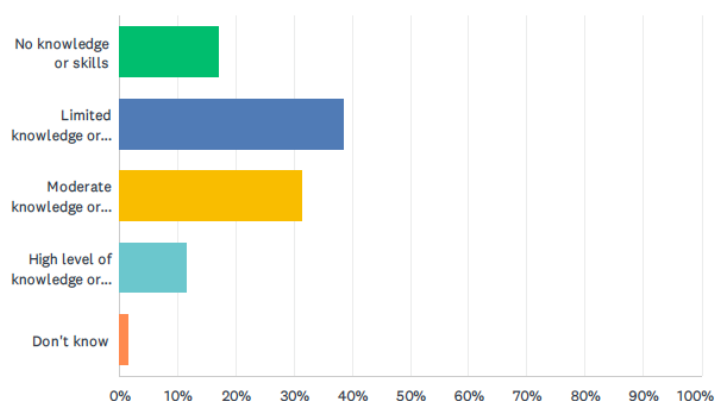
In load restraint, where load restraint is correctly securing loads using recognised load restraint equipment suitable for the type of load?



Understanding Vehicle Inspections

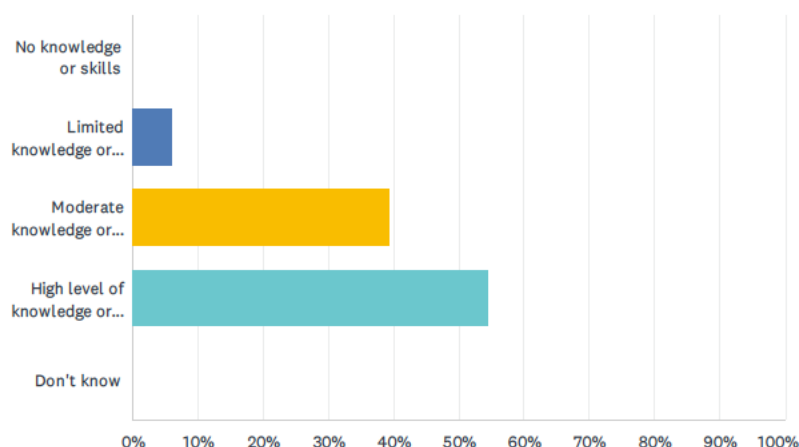
Around 38% of participants have limited knowledge, whilst 18% have no knowledge or skills in vehicle inspections or how to complete a prestart check.

In conducting vehicle inspections, where that is understanding the importance of conducting vehicle inspections and completing them competently?



After completing the course, around 53% of participants of stated a high level of knowledge with 39% a moderate level of knowledge.

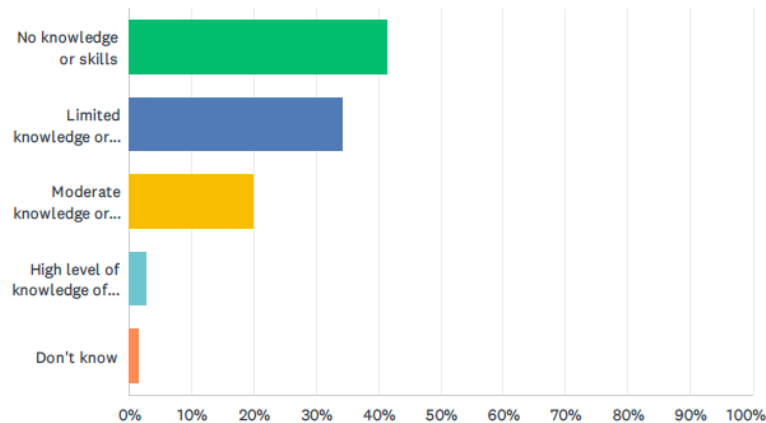
In conducting vehicle inspections, where that is understanding the importance of conducting vehicle inspections and completing them competently?



Understanding CoR (Chain of Responsibility)

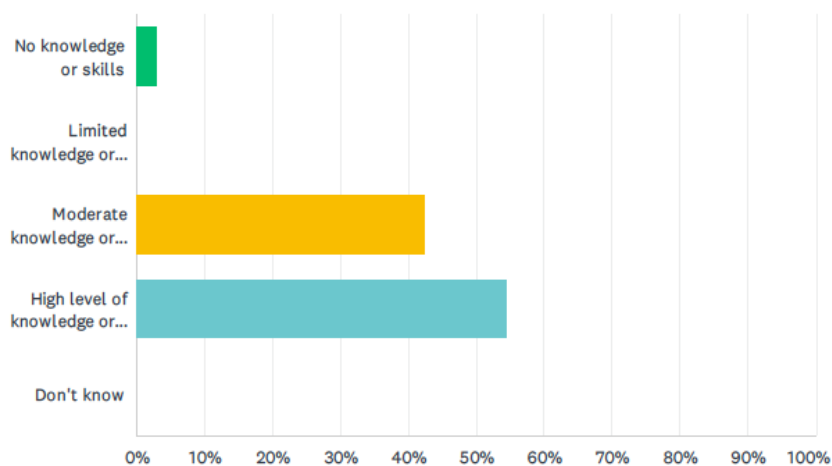
Alarming, over 40% of participants have limited knowledge in CoR.

In Chain of Responsibility (CoR), where that is understanding the CoR regulations and how to report incidents under those regulations?



After completing the course, around 53% of participants stated a high level of knowledge with 42% a moderate level of knowledge.

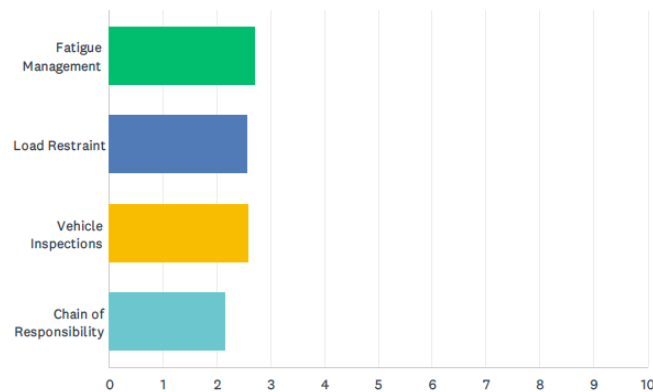
In Chain of Responsibility (CoR), where that is understanding the CoR regulations and how to report incidents under those regulations?



Opinions on Key Elements

A surprising result, participants have given equal importance to all 4 elements.

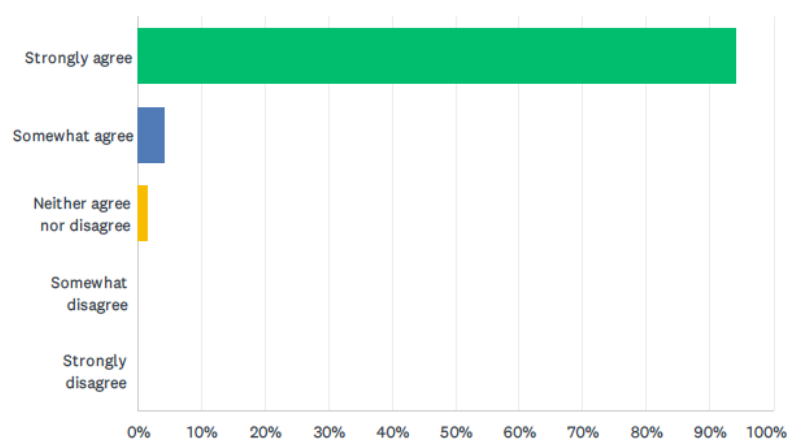
In your opinion, how would you rank the following units in order of importance for a newly licenced heavy vehicle driver, where number 1 is the most important and number 4 is the least important.



Training

Over 90% of participants strongly agree that training in the 4 key elements of the program would be beneficial.

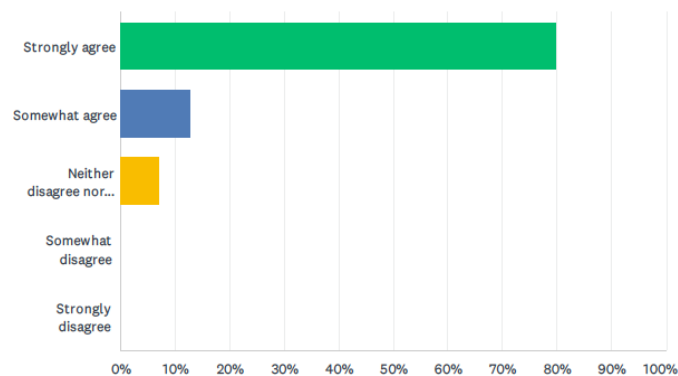
To what extent do you agree or disagree that training in the units of Fatigue management, Load restraint, Vehicle inspections and Chain of Responsibility would be beneficial to a newly licenced heavy vehicle driver?



Training

80% of participants strongly agree that training in the 4 key elements of the program would be beneficial.

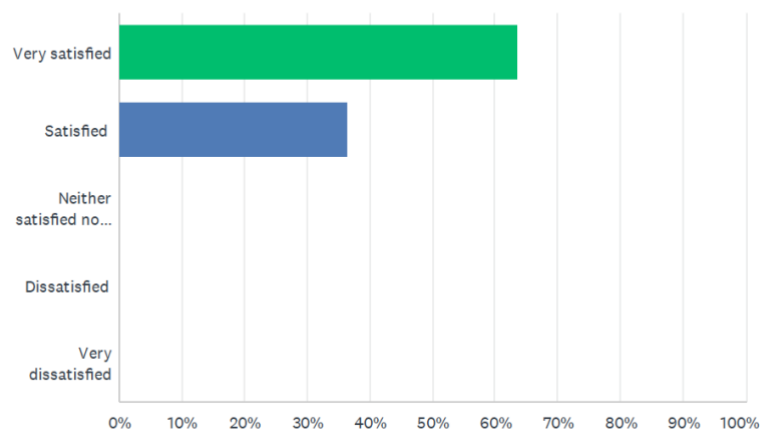
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Government should implement mandatory training in the units of Fatigue management, Load restraint, Vehicle inspections, Chain of Responsibility prior to granting a heavy vehicle licence?



Satisfaction of Training Program

65% of participants state that they were very satisfied with the training whilst 35% were satisfied.

How satisfied were you with the delivery of the program?



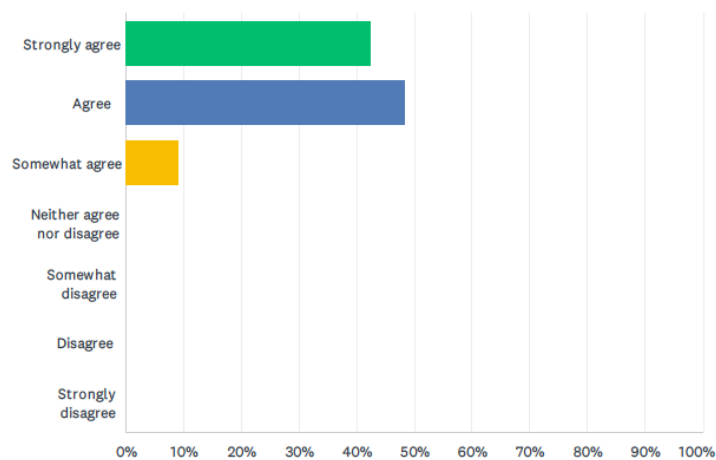
Findings and Statistics

Below is a 'snapshot' of the participants survey results that are most relevant after completing the course.

Safer drivers after program

All participants agree to some extent that after training they are safer heavy vehicle drivers.

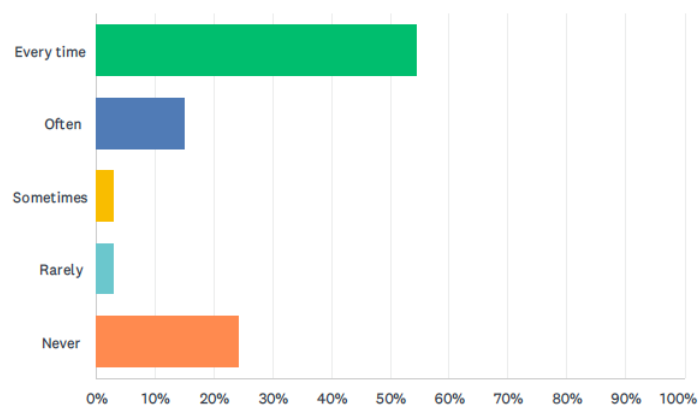
Thinking about your driving before and after the Four Points of Contact Training, do you agree or disagree that the Program has made you a safer heavy vehicle driver?



Safer drivers after program

Over 55% of participants use the training every time.

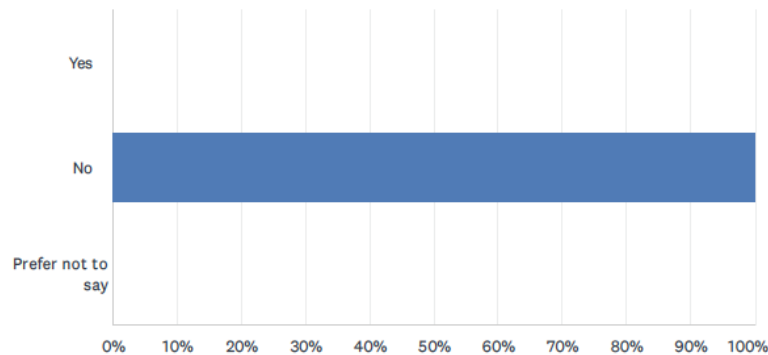
Since completing the Four Points of Contact Training, how often would you say you have put aspects of your training to practical use when driving and preparing to drive a heavy vehicle?



Safer drivers after program

100% of participants have not been involved in any incidents since completing the program.

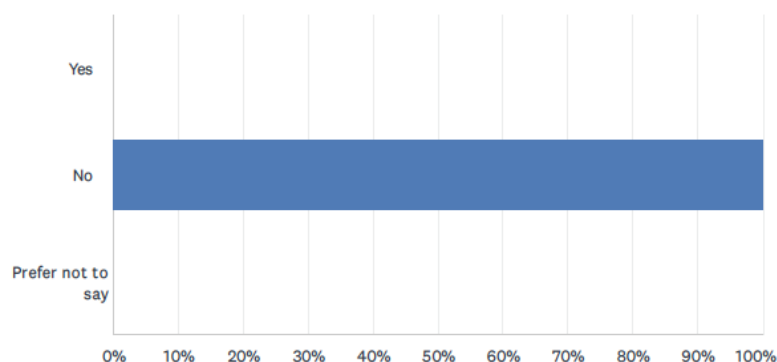
Since completing the Four Points of Contact Training, have you been involved in any incidents while in control of a heavy vehicle? (An incident is an unplanned undesirable happening, that can be prevented in the future with planning.)



Safer drivers after program

100% of participants have not been involved in any accidents since completing the program

Since completing the Four Points of Contact Training, have you been involved in any accidents whilst in control of a heavy vehicle? (An accident is an unplanned undesirable happening that cannot be prevented or predicted in the future.)



Recommendations

Through the programs duration it was evident that there needs to be additional training around obtaining a heavy vehicle licence in Queensland. Numerous discussions have taken place with TMR at a ministerial level to no avail.

A change in thinking on the part of TMR is warranted to ensure heavy vehicle drivers are given the skills and knowledge prior to obtaining a heavy vehicle licence. For the most part, participants are happy to receive this training and making it mandatory would be a step in the right direction.

The 4 points of program focused on:

- Fatigue management
- Chain of responsibility
- Vehicle inspections
- Load restraint

These four elements are key to having safer and compliant drivers on the road, which in turn will lead to less accidents and incidents, which in turn will benefit the community at large. Another key element of road safety for heavy vehicle drivers would be to instigate a road rules refresher assessment each time a licence is up for renewal, thus ensuring that all drivers, not just heavy vehicle drivers are keeping up to date and refreshing on a vital element of driving a vehicle.

Conclusion

Program Success

The program was completed as per the contract terms and conditions with some challenges along the way including moving the program from face to face to an online model. Overall, the program was immensely successful in educating heavy vehicle drivers in the key elements required to safely operate and perform their job roles.

What worked well

Both the face to face and online worked well for different reasons, when considering the face-to-face option, participants gained extra benefit by having trainers to discuss the elements and topics from an experience in industry point of view. Practical activities were well received with many participants not having completed any of the practical tasks prior to the course.

The online program meant that a larger percentage of participants were able to enrol in the program, however they missed out on the trainer lead activities and knowledge from an industry perspective. Online enrolments need to be 'encouraged' to complete.

Roadblocks

Difficulties faced during the program including Covid-19, along with many businesses it was a trying time for all. As the program was offered free of charge, there was resistance to

enrol as it was seen as 'too good to be true' for some. The survey collection was challenging, as there was no requirement to complete or incentive after the training has ceased.

Lessons learnt

The program content, structure and delivery methods worked well; I would not foresee any changes at this point. Regarding the survey collection, I would reduce the number of surveys and number of questions to make it more attractive for participants to complete.

Final Word

The 4 points of contact program was a great success in proving that there is a need and thirst for a training program that gives more than just the basics prior to obtaining a heavy vehicle licence. Participants who completed the program have gone away more educated, confident, and safer drivers with more knowledge than they came with. If we can save one life or accident through the program, then it was a success.

All stakeholders, including representatives from TMR, industry and the public believe that this program, or one similar would be of great benefit not only to heavy vehicle drivers but the community at large and contribute to safer road and less accidents or incidents.

It is our belief that the program, or one similar, must be mandatory prior to obtaining a heavy vehicle licence, whilst this will come at a cost to participants, the cost of not completing a well thought out and delivered training program would be much more.

Stu Gluyas
Shift Training P/L