

Running on Empty: Truck Drivers in Canada are Underpaid and Overworked

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Acknowledgements

This report was the product of years of organizing and relationship building by the driver-driven groups Justice for Truck Drivers, and West Coast Trucking Association. It was a collective effort of truck drivers and owner operators across the country as well as staff of the Labour Community Services Peel (LCSP) and Parkdale Community Legal Services (PCLS). The report would not have been possible without the drivers who have built robust networks among their colleagues and communities who participated in the survey. Members of Justice for Truck Drivers and West Coast Trucking Association mobilization committees guided the development of recommendations found in the report.

Written by Mary Gellatly with the assistance of Julie Han and Peter Gatti, Parkdale Community Legal Services.

We respectfully acknowledge that this report was prepared on lands across so-called Canada that are the territories of many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. As truck drivers organizing for better wages and working conditions, we understand the systems of exploitation and domination we are up against are inextricably linked to Canada's ongoing colonial project that continues to displace Indigenous peoples from their lands for the extraction of resources and profit.

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INTRODUCTION

Trucking moves 78% of goods in Canada.¹ This sector is the backbone of the Canadian economy, yet drivers, essential to this sector, are facing deteriorating wages and working conditions. As one driver said,

“The industry is not what it was 10 or 15 years ago. You must work 16 hours a day, continuous, in order to keep your job and make a living when you drive long haul. The rates on the loads are very low. It’s the brokers and the companies who are taking in all of the money at the expense of employees. That’s what’s changed over the last few years. That’s an incentive for wage theft. And it’s why employers are charging drivers for things they never used to before. There should be a fixed minimum wage for both local and long-haul drivers.”

This driver’s view is shared by many seasoned drivers that were interviewed for this report.

The deregulation of the trucking industry in the 1980s and 90s has led to a highly competitive industry. Without government regulation of trucking rates, shippers and brokers have substantial power to drive rates down through low-bid tendering. Transport companies have responded to lower margins by slashing labour costs and, where possible, shifting business costs onto drivers and owner-operators.

Misclassification of drivers as independent contractors is one way that companies seek to increase profit margins by cutting workers’ wages, benefits and working conditions. Industry lobby groups have focused government attention on misclassification, or Drivers Inc., because of the unfair competition it creates amongst employers.² **Missing from this policy debate, however, is the voice of truck drivers who know firsthand that misclassification is one symptom of the systemic problems in the road transport sector.**

“You must work 16 hours a day, continuous, in order to keep your job and make a living when you drive long haul.”

1. Alberta Motor Transport Authority, Building Prosperity into the Future of Trucking, October 25, 2024.

2. Canadian Trucking Alliance, Driver Inc Misclassification and Noncompliance in the Canadian Trucking Industry. Prepared for the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities (TRAN) October 2025 and, Canada Truck Operators Association (CTOA), Equal Canadians. Fair and Balanced Rules. Equal Respect. Prepared for the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

INTRODUCTION

Truck drivers have come together to address declining wages, working conditions and health and safety. Justice for Truck Drivers and West Coast Trucking Association conducted a survey of truck drivers to expose the real crisis facing drivers in this country. In 2025 over 400 drivers completed a survey, identifying key issues and changes that are needed in the trucking industry.

This report presents the findings of the survey. The findings are based on 404 completed surveys and include qualitative and quantitative responses. Thirty-five percent of drivers surveyed worked for federally-regulated carrier companies and 65% worked for provincially-regulated carriers. The majority of drivers (68%) drove long haul, while 32% of surveyed drivers drove short haul. While 30% of survey participants are owner-operators, the remaining 70% are company drivers.³



WAGES

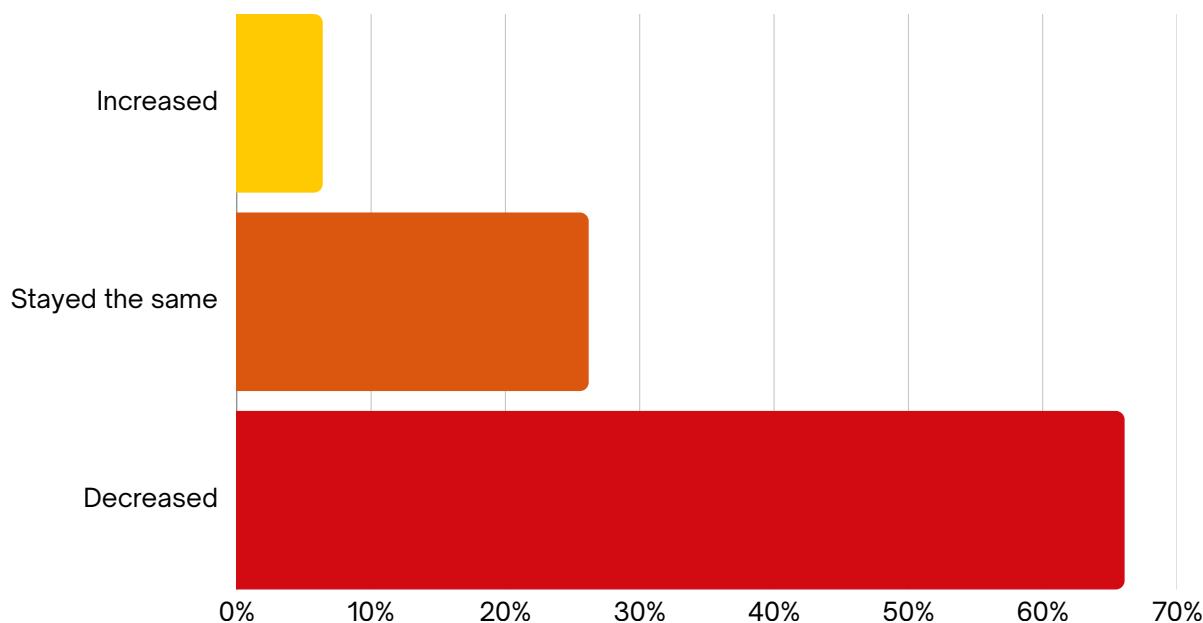
“It’s very hard to feed the family as a truck driver.”

Declining Wages

Almost 70% of drivers reported that they were dissatisfied with the wages they earn. Only 16% of drivers were satisfied with wages. Wages are not only inadequate, they are declining. Sixty-six percent of drivers report that wage rates have decreased over the past three years while 26% report they have stayed the same over that same period. Only 6% of drivers report that their wages have increased over the past three years. Rising maintenance costs for owner-operators are not reflected in freight rates or driver compensation.

Drivers explained that it is not just declining and stagnant wages, but it is also the insecurity of earnings. As one driver points out, “we do not get proper pay rates – every time there are different rates for our trips.” Owner-operators report being punished for refusing low-paid loads, “[t]he company won’t give you work for a couple days.” Scheduling of work is uncertain for many drivers; if business is slow, there is less work.

Figure 1: How would you describe the change in your wages over the past 3 years?



WAGES

Unpaid hours of work fuels wage theft

The pay structure for drivers' work can vary among companies but generally drivers are paid by distance driven and/or by the hour worked. Mileage is rarely based on the actual kilometers driven; more likely it is based on app-based calculations or shortest route calculations. This does not account for route diversions due to traffic, accidents, construction, heavy load restrictions etc. Hourly pay is often not based on all hours worked in driving and non-driving activities; in many cases, for non-driving work, it is based on an estimate. There may be other payment forms including percentage of load, flat fees for layovers or trip rates.

Federally-regulated drivers were more likely to be paid by mileage than provincially-regulated drivers (77% compared to 51%). While provincial drivers were more likely to be paid by hour (25%) than federally-regulated drivers (12%).

Pay system practices in the road transport sector have been established by employers that do not compensate drivers for all the distance driven or the actual hours worked.

“Here we don’t get paid for waiting hours at shipper and receiver. Sometimes we have to spend one day outside sitting because there is no haul back available. Border delays are not paid. On top of this the wages are not inflation-adjusted. Unlawful deductions happen. No extra pay for working on public holidays. No particular schedule.”



WAGES

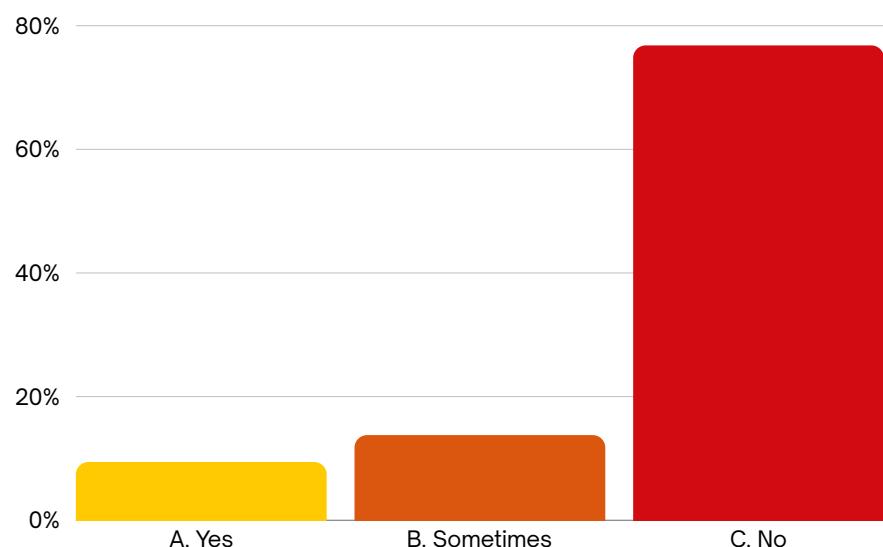
Drivers widely report working unpaid hours of work. Almost 3 out of 4 federally regulated drivers (74%) report not being paid for all the hours worked. Only 11% of drivers report being paid for all the hours worked. This non-paid work creates stress for drivers. Many drivers do not get paid hourly wages for the actual time worked doing required non-driving activities such as loading and unloading, vehicle inspections, maintenance, waiting periods at borders etc. This demonstrates that unpaid work time is systemic, linked to essential tasks in trucking work, and baked into the pay structures of the industry.

Provincially-regulated drivers do not fare much better. Sixty-eight percent of drivers report unpaid work time, while only 16% of drivers report being paid for their work time.

Long-haul drivers (federal and provincial) have a higher rate of unpaid hours of work (77%). Yet over half (56%) of short-haul drivers also work unpaid hours.

3 out of 4 federally regulated drivers are NOT being paid for all hours worked

Figure 2: Long-haul drivers - are you paid for all hours worked?



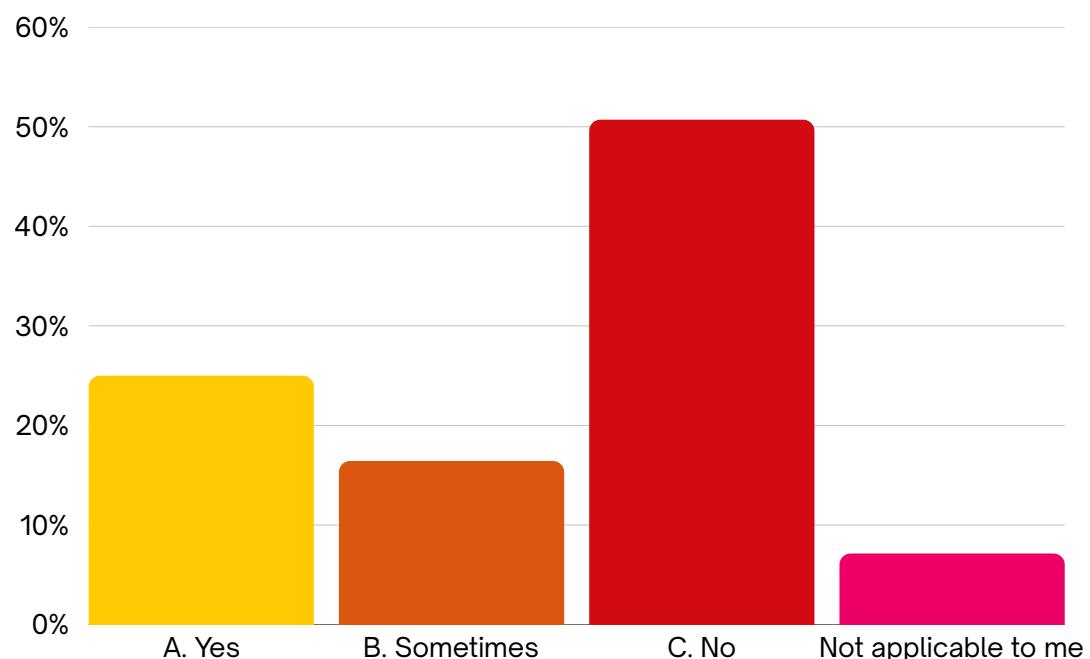
WAGES

For those drivers who are paid by mileage, 41% of drivers reported that they are not paid for the actual kilometres/miles driven. The rate of unpaid mileage is higher for federally-regulated drivers. Fifty-one percent of federally-regulated drivers report not being paid for actual miles driven and only 1 in 4 drivers (25%) report being paid for actual miles driven.

Drivers often do not get paid for the miles actually driven because some companies use theoretical routes to calculate pay. This method does not compensate drivers for the actual miles driven which are affected by many factors such as construction detours, traffic diversions, and bad weather. Nor does it account for the time drivers spend on increasingly congested roads.

Employers have long justified the pay system for miles driven or delivery completed on the basis that it could not monitor drivers to ensure productivity. With GPS and other on-board electronic monitoring, this is no longer the case. Employers know exactly where the truck is at all times.

Figure 3: Federally-regulated drivers - are you paid for actual mileage (rather than an estimate)?



WAGES

63%

**of drivers reported
one or more
experiences of
wage theft**

Unpaid wages

“There are immense problems with wage theft in the industry and it takes over a year for a complaint to be heard. That allows employers to continue with wage theft with no care about consequences. If you complain then you pay the price.”

As one driver said, “wage theft is the biggest problem facing drivers right now. There are no repercussions for not paying and employers are misusing soft laws.” Wage theft by large and small companies is rampant for the drivers surveyed. Almost two-thirds (63%) of drivers reported one or more experiences of wage theft.

Wage theft is more widespread for federally-regulated drivers – 70% of these long-haul drivers reported unpaid wages. This is consistent with the extensive violations in the federal trucking sector. While trucking only makes up 17% of federally-regulated employment, 85% of all confirmed Canada Labour Code violations were against trucking employers.⁴

Almost half of Canadian residents (47%) are living paycheque to paycheque.⁵ Unpaid or late wages, therefore, might mean that a worker cannot pay rent or buy groceries. Wage theft causes financial stress for drivers and their families.



4. ATIP-A-2022-01434. Data extracted August 11, 2022

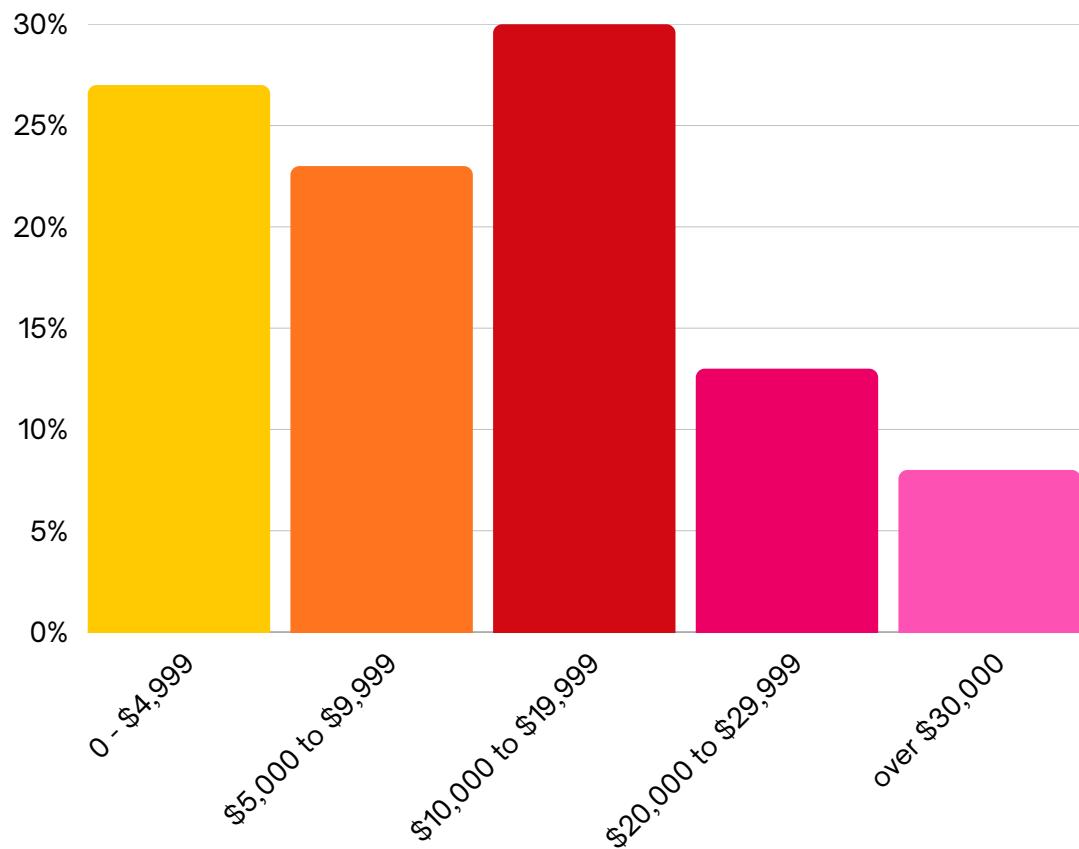
5. Leger Marketing Inc. (2023) [Household Finances and Economic Recession](#)

WAGES

The amount of wages that go unpaid for these drivers is quite substantial. The average amount of unpaid wages among those surveyed is \$10,000. Fifty-three percent of federally-regulated drivers had unpaid wages over \$10,000 while the rate was 48% for provincially-regulated drivers.

As many drivers reported, the employer holds back two to four weeks of pay when drivers start work (for damages), then the employer delays or only pays part of the wages owed and makes lots of promises. By the time a driver quits because of unpaid wages or is fired for asking for unpaid wages, it adds up to thousands of dollars.

Figure 4: Average range of amount of unpaid wages owed



WAGES

Late pay

Employers are required to pay employees on a regularly established pay day to provide certainty and continuity for workers. Over 1 in 3 drivers (35%) reported that their pay is late and 17% report that their pay is sometimes late. Only 45% of drivers reported that they are paid on their regular pay day.

“It is rare that I get paid on time. Companies think it's okay to not pay their people while they save their own money. Their employees are out here driving insane amounts all to have to wait two months for a cheque. So many drivers including myself have families and mortgages to pay, but I struggle because my company cares more for profit than the employees.”

Of those drivers facing illegal deductions, the most common deductions were for security/damage deposits and forced purchase of insurance for drivers misclassified as independent contractors. One driver reported that they were “deducted \$5,000 for an insurance accident deductible” while another paid for repairs that “had nothing to do with me”. Another common illegal deduction is for drivers that have been in a road accident or the truck has been damaged. Forty percent of drivers are forced to pay for damages out of their own pocket as the employer does not want to use their insurance to pay for the repairs.

Illegal deductions

Federal and provincial jurisdictions generally prohibit non-statutory deductions from wages with some exceptions (e.g., must be agreed to in writing for specific deduction). In response to the question asking drivers if they have had money deducted from their pay that had not been agreed to, 40% of drivers said yes and 16% said such deductions happened sometimes.



WAGES

Misclassification

“Misclassification in the trucking industry not only affects the individual drivers but also has broader economic and social implications. It leads to unfair wages, poor working conditions, and a potential erosion of industry standards that can affect safety, competitiveness, and long-term worker welfare. Addressing misclassification is essential for creating a more equitable and sustainable labor market.”

Misclassification of employees as independent contractors is rampant in the road transport sector. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) states that the misclassification rate for federally regulated trucking companies is 40% nationally, with a high of 62% in Ontario.⁶

Employment status is important because it determines whether companies are required to treat workers as employees or independent contractors. As an employer, companies are required to provide employees with statutory entitlements such as paid vacation, public holiday pay, job protected leaves, overtime pay and the requirement to pay at least minimum wage for all hours worked among other standards. Misclassification is done by companies to evade these statutory requirements and reduce their costs for workers compensation premiums as well as Canadian Pension Plan and Employment Insurance costs. **The CTA estimates that companies that misclassify employees save at least \$20,000 to \$30,000 per driver annually.⁷**

42%
of drivers are misclassified in their current while **25%** were misclassified in a previous job

6. Canadian Trucking Alliance, Drive Inc. Misclassification and Noncompliance in the Canadian Trucking Industry. Prepared for the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities (TRAN). October 2025. <https://cantruck.ca/house-committee-hearings-expose-driver-inc-widespread-safety-and-compliance-failures-in-trucking/>

7. Ibid.

WAGES

Misclassification is a common experience among the drivers surveyed. Forty-two percent report that they are misclassified in their current job. A further 25% report that they have been misclassified in the past. That is, 67% of drivers are misclassified in their current or previous job. Only 17% of drivers report never being misclassified.

Fourteen percent of drivers reported that they were unsure if they are, or have been, misclassified. This indicates that education is needed to assist workers to know if they are being properly classified by their employers.

The rate of misclassification is slightly higher among provincially-regulated drivers at 45% than federally regulated drivers at 38%. However, the rate of misclassification is similar for long-haul drivers (42%) and short-haul drivers (44%).

When asked about how drivers are paid, 65% reported that they were paid through their own corporation. Only 34% of drivers were on the payroll of their employer. As 30% of respondents are owner-operators, that leaves 35% of company drivers that were paid under their own corporation indicating that they were likely being misclassified as independent contractors.



“I like to work on payroll system but we are forced to work on Driver Corporation Inc, because employers don’t want to give benefits, vacation pay, overtime etc. Truck driving industry is the most exploitative industry in Canada.”

WAGES

As this driver's comment indicates, the inherent power imbalance between workers and employers results in employees having little power to prevent their employers from misclassifying them.

“Owners try to claim you are not an employee and make deductions from your pay cheque that they couldn’t do if you were an employee. If you complain they keep your hold-back pay of two weeks and current pay owing and fire you.”

Not only does misclassification deny employment protections, but it also creates barriers to remedies when wage theft occurs.

“When the employer doesn’t pay on time or they don’t pay at all, the labour court doesn’t help you because you are not an employee as per classification. Me and my many colleagues have lost more than \$20k in the past because the company refused to pay and we couldn’t do anything about it.”



WAGES

Owner-operators

Owner-operators also raised the issue of the power imbalance between them and companies. They report not having the power to negotiate wages and working conditions with companies. As one owner-operator said:

“Companies will hire an owner-operator as a contractor but the contract’s terms and conditions are only one sided. Owner-operators don’t have a choice. It’s for all the companies, everything is in favour of the company.”

Owner-operators are disciplined just like employees.

“Companies are behaving like they own us owner-operators. There is no respect for truckers. Companies will pay you less if you deny taking a load because of low pay. The Company won’t give you work for a couple of days just to punish you for denying. And many other topics like this.”

Owner-operators report the same problems as company drivers in terms of declining wages, unpaid hours of work, and unpaid mileage. However, they have the additional challenge of purchasing and maintaining their truck. As one driver said, “owner-operators are the most neglected lot. In our profession, the wages decrease and the maintenance costs increase.”

HEALTH AND SAFETY

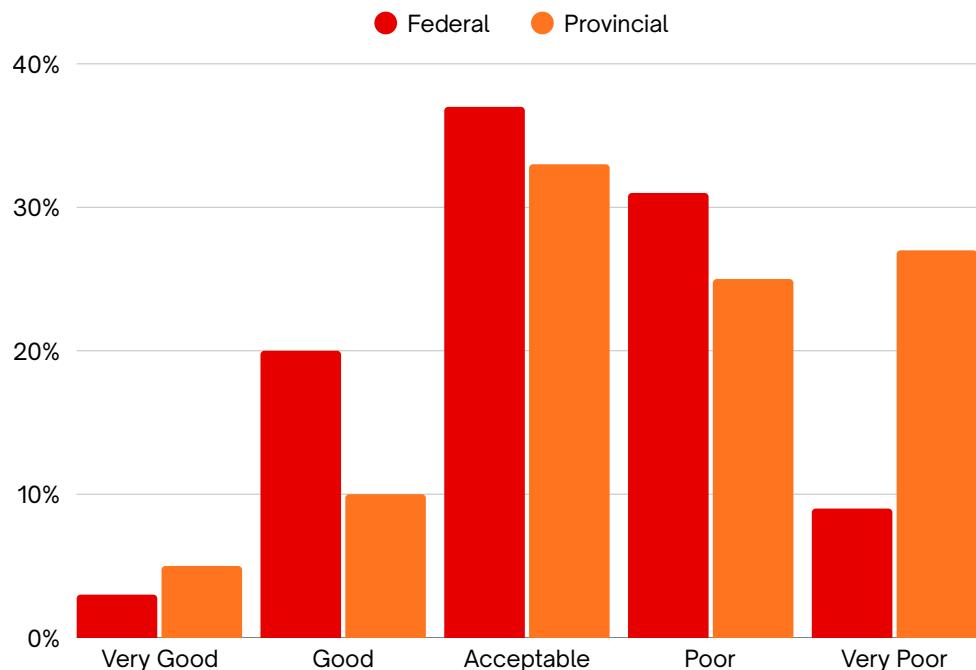
Infrastructure

After deregulation of the road transport sector in 1987, responsibility for road safety was enshrined in a National Safety Code for federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions. Employers are responsible for the health and safety of its employees and proper maintenance of trucks.

Poorly maintained roads accelerate vehicle wear and tear, increasing maintenance, tire, suspension, and inspection costs, costs that owner-operators must absorb while remaining compliant with safety and regulatory requirements. Winter conditions, including uncleared and icy roads, routinely cause delays, yet drivers are not compensated for lost time and are often pressured to maintain delivery schedules regardless of safety risks. Compliance with safety inspections becomes more expensive due to infrastructure-related damage.



How would you rate the quality and safety of road infrastructure?



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Availability of proper rest areas

Adequate and accessible rest areas are a countermeasure for driver fatigue. Truck drivers in Canada are required to take regular breaks to comply with Hours-of-Service rules⁸ and to stay safe. However, finding legal and safe resting areas is often not easy. Drivers face full parking lots, locked rest rooms, or unclear rules making rest stops stressful and risky. Insufficient rest stops can contribute to fatigue-related accidents.

More than 70% of drivers reported that there was very poor (42%) or poor (29%) availability of proper rest areas (including parking). Short-haul drivers were more likely than long-haul drivers to report poor availability of rest areas.

When you spend 5 or 6 days on the road, adequate rest areas are essential. As one driver said, *“Truckers are human, not animals. Make proper rest areas, don’t just dig a hole in the ground and say it is a toilet.”*

The severe shortage of safe truck parking and clean, accessible rest areas leaves drivers struggling to find legal places to stop, access washrooms, or obtain hot food/coffee and basic necessities. This undermines Hours-of-Service compliance, increases fatigue, and negatively impacts driver health and public safety.

Over 70%
of drivers reported
very poor or poor
availability of
**proper rest
areas**

8. The Canada Hours of Service regulations are federal rules that govern the maximum number of hours a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) driver can operate within a given timeframe. These regulations also mandate specific rest periods to ensure drivers remain alert and safe while on the road.

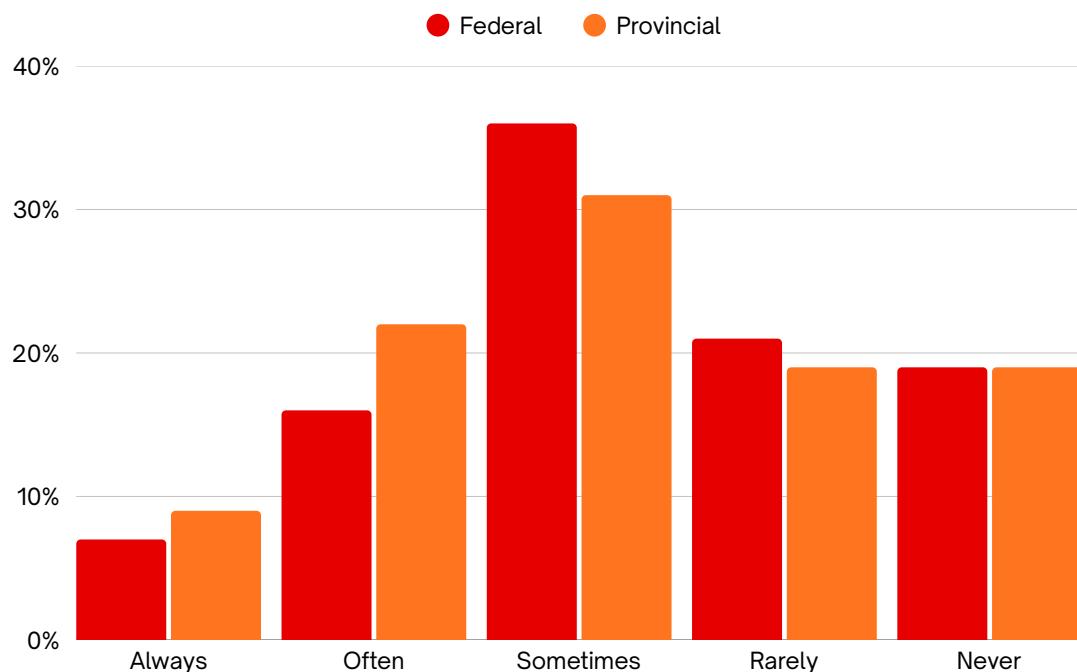
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Improperly maintained equipment

Drivers were asked how often they had to drive equipment that was not properly maintained. Alarmingly, only 39% of drivers report never (19%) or rarely (20%) being forced to drive improperly maintained vehicles. The majority of drivers reported being forced to drive poorly maintained trucks. Thirty-two percent were sometimes required; 20% were often required and 8% were always required to drive improperly maintained equipment.

As one driver reported, carrier companies are trying to compensate for low-bid tendering by brokers and shippers through improper maintenance of equipment. Another driver said that there should be *“more strict regulation of companies to operate equipment in excellent conditions.”*

How often have you had to drive equipment that was not properly maintained (e.g., brakes, tires, lights, etc.)?



HEALTH AND SAFETY

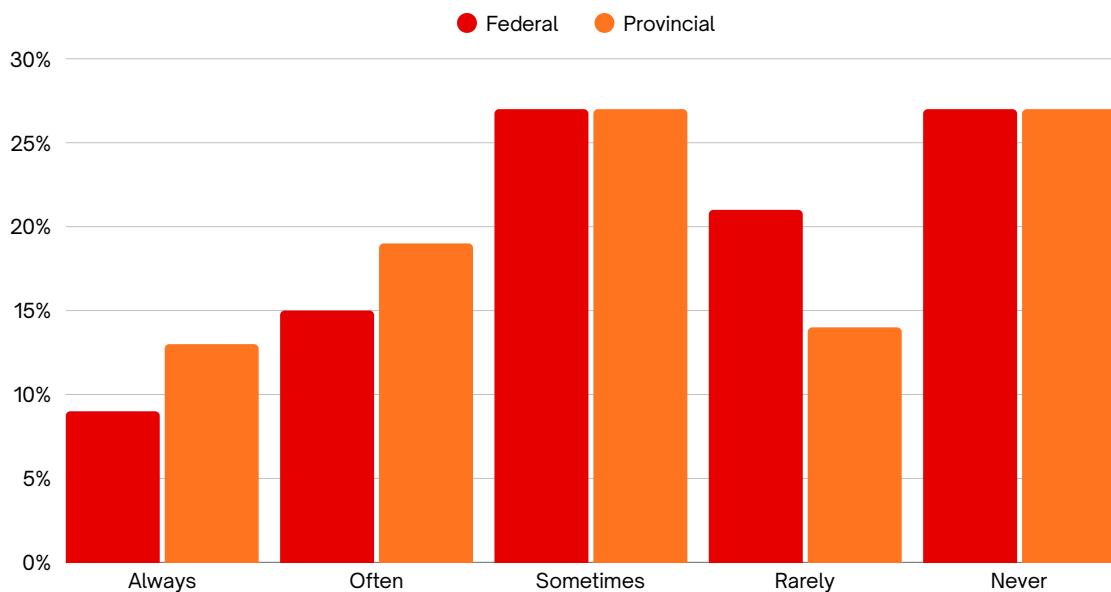
Company pressure on drivers

40%
**of drivers were
 always or
 frequently
 forced
 to take risks
 by their employer**

Drivers were asked how often their employer forced them to take risks when working (e.g., overloading, dangerous goods loads, skipping breaks, driving in extreme conditions, driving over the legal limit of hours, etc.). Alarmingly, 29% of drivers reported that they were or are frequently forced to take risks. Eleven percent said that they are always forced to take risks, and 18% said they are often forced to take risks. Another 27% of drivers reported sometimes being forced to take risks. Only 43% of drivers rarely (16%) or never (27%) were forced to take risks by their employer.

“One of the biggest problems is safety. Dispatch pressures us to run in dangerous weather, to rush, to drive faster, to get back quickly for the next load. If anything goes wrong, the company points the finger at the driver. If we refuse unsafe work, we’re punished – no loads, delayed trips, or even withheld pay. If I speak up, I lose work. If I stay quiet, I risk my life. No one should have to make that choice.”

How often has your employer forced you to take risks when working (e.g., overloading, dangerous goods loads, skipping breaks, driving in extreme conditions, driving over the legal limit of hours)?



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Drivers and owner-operators alike have little authority to delay or refuse loads in unsafe conditions. Refusing unsafe trips often results in loss of work, delayed dispatch, or withheld pay. This economic retaliation discourages reporting unsafe conditions. Even when drivers try to make safe decisions, these are often overridden by dispatch and the company due to delivery deadlines.

“Sleepiness kills. And we are forced to drive no matter what, it could be forced dispatch, strict shipment times, lack of rest areas, not enough parking keeps us going on the road. No flexible HOS so the driver can take a nap when he feels sleepy. Not when dispatch tells you when to sleep. Sleep is not a switch that someone is going to flick it and you sleep. It comes naturally and when you need to sleep you have enough parking and facilities for a truck to stop and rest rather than killing someone on the road.”

Smaller, undercapitalized companies may, in this highly competitive sector, pressure drivers to take risks, in order to increase their profits. These companies can escape judgement through filing bankruptcy and reopening under new names.

Drivers have little power to resist such pressure. One driver commented that *“misclassified drivers may be expected to work longer hours or take on additional responsibilities without proper compensation or support, increasing their workload and potential safety risks.”*

Shippers and brokers may prioritize speed and cost over safety in low-bid tendering as these parties' liability is protected through contracting.

The combination of unsafe infrastructure, limited rest facilities, and lack of decision-making power places drivers in an impossible position forced to choose between safety compliance and economic survival. Addressing these infrastructure gaps and power differentials is essential to improving safety outcomes, reducing costs, and stabilizing the trucking workforce.

DRIVERS' VOICE IN THE SECTOR

“Government is only listening to the giant corporations, not a small driver like us.”

As the results of this survey demonstrate, drivers are fed up with low wages, unpaid hours of work, misclassification, disrespect and health and safety risks. As one federally regulated driver said,

“Canadian drivers need to stand united, now more than ever. But the reality is that we have not been – the government and employers are taking full advantage of that. Take my situation for example: I make five trips to California every month, working as part of a team. I’m only home for about five days a month. We’re constantly on the road, doing one of the hardest and most demanding jobs out there, putting our health and safety on the line. It’s time the government acknowledged the reality of this industry – and it’s time drivers stood together to demand the respect and support we deserve.”

Sixty-two percent of federally regulated and 57% of provincially regulated drivers said that they do not feel that drivers have proper representation in the government and industry to improve safety, wages and working conditions.

“Employers fire drivers when they demand pay increases. Senior drivers are fired or refused work and new ones are brought in to exploit.”

When asked what would strengthen drivers' voice, 47% of federally regulated drivers and 43% of provincially regulated drivers said “make it easier to join a union”. Only 18% of federal drivers are unionized which is low compared to other transport workers (75% of rail transport, 60% of maritime transport, and 55% of air transport employees are unionized).⁹ The relatively low union density in road transport is likely due to a variety of factors including deregulation and dominance of small firm size in the sector. Regardless, the low unionization rate in road transport leaves workers with little voice and power to address labour standards, wages and working conditions on a firm or sectoral basis.

9. Labour Relations Program, Collective bargaining in federally regulated workplaces: Results from the 2022 Survey of Employees under Federal Jurisdiction. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/labour-relations/reports/survey-results-collective-bargaining.html>

DRIVER DEMANDS

The survey did not ask specific questions about what changes drivers sought. However, three key themes have emerged from the quantitative and qualitative responses. First, drivers want a minimum floor of pay rates that no company should fall below for both owner-operators and employee drivers. Second, like most other employees in the country, drivers believe that they too should be paid for all work time. Third, drivers want governments to close the gaps in labour standards and effectively enforce employment standards for all drivers.

Almost 70% of drivers report inadequate wages. As one driver said, *“there is no standard pay structure. Each trip has different pay rates.”* Wages in the sector have not just stagnated, they have declined in real dollars. The cost of living crisis for all drivers and rising fuel and maintenance costs for owner-operators are leaving many drivers in despair. It can no longer be left up to employers to determine pay structures for the sector.

Some drivers recommend minimum pay rates for both hourly and mileage pay. Others suggest that all drivers should be paid by hour only (no mileage) given the road congestion, construction and weather delays, and various jurisdictional speed limits for truckers among other reasons.

“There should be a fixed minimum wage for both local and long-haul drivers. If drivers are paid hourly, they should receive a specific minimum hourly rate. If they are paid by the mile, there should be a specific minimum rate in cents per mile.”

“The Canadian government has to make some rules for truckers’ pay. First, they all have to get paid hourly – doesn’t matter if you are working local or long haul. And pay should be a minimum of 40\$ per hour because it’s dangerous to drive on the highway and you can lose your life.”

- 1. Set minimum PAY RATES**
- 2. Pay for ALL WORK TIME**
- 3. Close the GAPS in labour standards and effective ENFORCEMENT**



DRIVER DEMANDS

1. Set minimum **PAY RATES**

2. Pay for **ALL WORK TIME**

3. Close the **GAPS** in labour standards and effective **ENFORCEMENT**

“If any company pays less than these minimum rates, claiming they can only afford to pay drivers a certain amount due to insufficient work, this should be considered unacceptable. Companies should not exploit drivers by underpaying them.”

To address deteriorating wages in the sector, some drivers propose that the government establish rate regulations.

“We need the government to regulate rates. Nowadays companies are running loads at cheaper prices. After posting a load from brokers, companies are trying to get that load at cheaper prices than other quotes and these days brokers are leveraging multiple offers from trucking companies to drive down the cost – that drives down wages. There should be a base rate for hauling loads by the government.”

A fair rate structure should ensure that owner-operators can cover the rising costs of operating a truck and prevent exploitation for all drivers. Fair rates also ensure a level playing field for employers. Models of regulated pay structures for trucking already exist in British Columbia under the *Container Trucking Act*.

As the Minister of Jobs and Families, Honourable Patty Hajdu, said on September 15, 2025, “**Nobody should work for free in this country.**”¹⁰ While this was in connection to documented unpaid work time in the airline industry, the same commitment should hold for the road transport sector and, indeed, all employees.

10. Employment and Social Development Canada, [News Release](#), Government of Canada update: Probe on unpaid work in the airline sector. September 15, 2025.

DRIVER DEMANDS

Provincial and federal jurisdictions require that workers be paid for the time worked. Unpaid work is rampant in the road transport sector according to survey respondents. Seventy-four percent of federally regulated drivers and 68% of provincial regulated drivers report not getting paid for the actual hours worked. Fifty-one percent of federally regulated drivers and 36% of provincially regulated workers do not get paid for the actual mileage driven. Unpaid work constitutes a substantial loss of earnings for these workers and must be remedied.

Wage theft goes unchecked by provincial and federal labour standards enforcement agencies. The deterioration in wages and working conditions reported by drivers is, in part, due to the confidence employers have that they can practice wage theft and get away with it without penalty.

In addition to the unpaid work time noted above, 63% of drivers reported one or more experiences of unpaid wages, 56% had illegal deductions made from their pay and less than half (43%) of workers were paid on time. These are all violations of employment standards in federal, territorial and provincial jurisdictions.

As one driver said, “fixing Driver Inc. will not solve the problem. Drivers Inc. is just one branch of a rotten tree. The real rot is weak enforcement, slow investigations, shell companies, and laws that let wage theft happen without consequences.”

Drivers want to be able to file complaints and have them resolved quickly and effectively. There must be meaningful consequences for employers that break the law. Gaps in the law must be addressed to stop companies from avoiding liability through subcontracting, corporate veils and bankruptcy.

- 1. Set minimum PAY RATES**
- 2. Pay for ALL WORK TIME**
- 3. Close the GAPS in labour standards and effective ENFORCEMENT**



APPENDIX

Survey methods

The survey of truck drivers was conducted in 2025. To reach drivers who are hard to reach in traditional surveys, the online survey was available in English and Punjabi. In-person outreach to drivers was also done at truck stops and community events.

Thirty-two percent of respondents completed the survey in Punjabi and the rest (68%) completed the survey in English. This sampling method enabled us to obtain 404 completed surveys.

