

# Fleet Manager Insight Report 2020



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# Introduction

At Verizon Connect, we can only provide the highest possible level of service to fleet managers and business owners by understanding your daily challenges and successes.

That's why, once again, we have asked you – the nation's fleet managers, what takes up your time, what keeps you awake at night and what role technology plays in helping you do your jobs.

And of course, this year, we also took the time to delve into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that's disrupted our working lives in so many ways.

Based on a nationwide survey of over 400 fleet managers and business owners across a wide range of fleet-reliant industries, The Fleet Manager Insight Report 2020 summarises the key takeaways of our research.

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# Key concerns:

## What keeps you awake at night?

We kicked off the 2020 survey as we do every year, by asking the nation's fleet managers – what keeps you awake at night?

Among the familiar answers such as fuel costs and environmental concerns, it was political and economic uncertainty that topped the pile, just as it did in 2019.



### The future remains uncertain

At the time of our most recent survey, there was little resolution on Brexit and exactly what life outside the EU would look like for fleet businesses.

This is undoubtedly a factor behind almost a quarter of our respondents expressing concern about the political and economic situation in the UK. But it is far from the only one.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on business this year and this is clearly reflected in the fleet managers concerns.

Along with economic uncertainty, redundancies, temporary business closures, hygiene and contact tracing are all keeping fleet managers up at night.

With a vaccine roll-out underway and an EU trade agreement signed, we can look to 2021 with optimism that such concerns will cause fewer sleepless nights in the year ahead.

### Costs continue to rise

The battle to control costs remains a top concern among fleet managers this year, with concerns about maintenance and fuel once again high on the agenda.

While the price of fuel, parts and repairs remains out of the fleet manager's hands, there is plenty that can be done to keep a handle on the associated costs. That so many are concerned with rising prices and fuel consumption, suggests that many fleet managers are not making use of the tools at their disposal.

Monitoring and reducing idling, speeding and harsh driving can all help to reduce fuel spend. At the same time, regular proactive servicing can reduce the risk of breakdown and associated repair bills.

### Managing external pressures

Managing external pressures and expectations are always a concern for fleet managers and this year they come in the form of demanding customers, tighter SLAs and more ambitious emissions targets.

In every case, the modern fleet is expected to do more with what it's got, whether that's providing a more flexible and transparent service to customers or maintaining its fleet size while reducing CO2 emissions. Those without the tools to manage these ever-increasing demands may struggle to compete in the modern environment and this hasn't gone unnoticed by the nation's fleet managers.

### Aside from health and safety, what are the top issues that keep you awake at night?

Political / economic uncertainty:	24%
Vehicle maintenance and associated costs:	24%
Job redundancies / furloughed staff:	24%
Increasing cost of fuel / finding reliable drivers:	20%
Temporary business closures:	20%
Use of fuel across the fleet:	16%
In-vehicle cleaning / hygiene:	15%
Reducing environmental footprint:	15%
Increasing customer expectations:	4%
Tight deadlines / SLAs:	13%
Vehicle theft:	13%
Contact tracing:	12%
Daily job allocations for drivers / vehicles:	11%
Road usage legislation e.g., ULEZ / congestion charges:	11%
Compliance with the road law (e.g., tachograph legislation):	10%
Traffic conditions:	10%
There are no top issues that keep me awake at night aside from health and safety:	3%
There are no issues whatsoever that keep me awake at night:	3%



# Where does the time go?

Fleet managers want to spend their time on the most business-critical tasks. However, when we compare the answer to our next two questions, this is not always the case.

While there is plenty of overlap between the answers to 'What tasks do you spend most of your time doing?' and 'What tasks do you wish you could spend more time on?', some notable discrepancies show the fleet manager's most precious resource is not always focused in the right place.



## The admin drain

Unsurprisingly, administrative tasks remain a staple of the fleet manager's life.

Of course, admin is a necessary chore when running a busy fleet, but it should not be such a drain on a manager's time.

That a third of fleet managers report spending more time on admin than anything else should be cause for concern. This suggests many are failing to digitise and automate traditionally time-consuming processes and are wasting time that could be spent on more business-critical tasks.

## Managing expectations

With customers continuing to demand more from their service providers, it's understandable that fleet managers spend much of their time managing this relationship.

The modern fleet is tasked with providing a fully transparent and flexible service. Today's consumers are accustomed to tailored, on-demand services in many aspects of their lives – and now, they expect that from your business too.

Fleet-reliant organisations must adapt to this new environment, offering greater accountability, visibility and responsiveness, or risk losing ground to those that do.

## Cutting costs

The fleet manager faces many unique challenges, but they are far from alone when it comes to trying to reduce costs. This year more than ever, businesses across all industries are looking to streamline, to do more with the resources they have and reduce outgoings as much as possible.

However, that this is one of the top drains on 27% of fleet managers' time should ring alarm bells. While many fleet costs – fuel, maintenance, wages – cannot

be avoided, they can be reduced using efficiency tools and technology.

What's more, of the tasks that fleet managers wish they could spend more time on, there is one that stands out above the rest – managing wasteful driving.

With fuel consumption and expenditure such a top concern for fleet managers, it must be a considerable source of frustration that many do not have the time to manage contributory behaviours. Once again, the tools to tackle this issue are available. That it remains a challenge suggests they are not in widespread use.

## Thinking about how you spend your workday, which are the tasks that you spend most of your time doing?

General administration:	30%
Managing customer relations / expectations:	28%
Looking for ways to reduce costs:	27%
Compliance processes:	20%
Allocating drivers and vehicles to jobs:	19%
Improving driver safety:	18%
Checking cleaning & hygiene rules are being followed:	18%
Managing or negotiating SLAs:	16%
Finding reliable drivers:	15%
Implementing initiatives to reduce environmental footprint:	15%
Scheduling vehicle maintenance:	15%
Chasing drivers, ensuring they have taken rests / breaks:	14%
Managing wasteful driving (e.g., idling, poor route decisions):	13%
Out on the road:	11%
There are no tasks I spend most of my time doing:	3%

# How safe are the nation's fleets?

The importance of fleet safety cannot be overstated. This year, however, it became a bigger priority than ever before.

Along with the usual safety concerns such as mobile phone use and vehicle checks, fleet managers were also rightly focused on issues arising from the pandemic.

Almost a third worried about losing staff to sickness, with a quarter finding social distancing to be a challenge.



## Accident and theft

The implications of vehicle accident and theft are never far from the fleet manager's mind.

This year, 28% cited collision and injury or damage to a third party as a top concern, and with good reason.

In 2020, 70% of fleets lost workdays to accidents, with almost a quarter experiencing more than a week of downtime. Leading causes of accidents include inappropriate driver behaviour and fatigue.

When it comes to stolen assets, around 40% of fleets were victims of theft in the past 12 months.

This carries a heavy cost – 77% of fleets were impacted financially by asset theft in 2020. For a quarter of these fleets costs including downtime, the value of stolen assets, and recovery charges ranged from £10,000 to £100,000.

## What are your top three health and safety concerns about your drivers in the field?

Drivers using phones / mobile devices while driving:	30%
Staff illness (due to COVID-19 or otherwise):	30%
Driver fatigue:	30%
A collision / injury or damage to a third party:	28%
Drivers not taking appropriate checks on the vehicle (e.g., walk around checks):	24%
Onsite social distancing:	24%
Appropriate driving behaviour (speeding, harsh acceleration, heavy braking etc.):	22%
In-vehicle social distancing:	19%
Drivers not taking the appropriate rest breaks:	17%
Failure of driver to acknowledge / respond to traffic signals:	17%
Other driver distractions such as eating and / or drinking while driving:	14%
Height / weight restrictions for vehicles:	11%
I have no top health and safety concerns about my drivers in the field:	4%

# Counting the cost of COVID-19

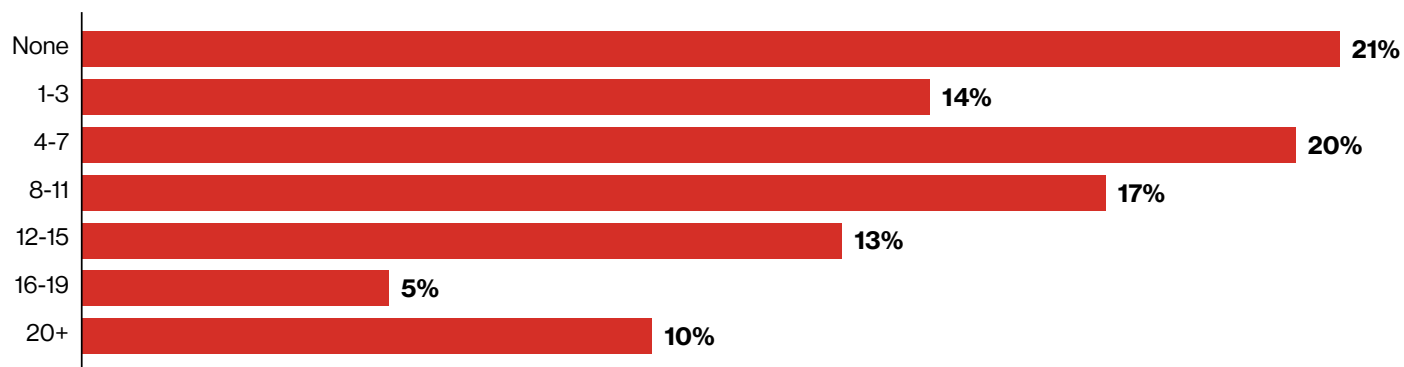
No review of the year would be complete without reflecting on the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fleet-reliant businesses faced a unique set of challenges with borders closed, national lockdowns imposed, and sanitation and social distancing measures enforced.

The impact on fleets has been far-reaching, to say the least. 74% lost working days to travel restrictions, with more than a third losing over a week. Meanwhile, over 10% of fleets lost at least three weeks' worth of work hours due to staff self-isolating.



**On average, how many working days have you or your company's drivers lost due to the following in the past 12 months?**

## Staff self-isolating



## Travel restrictions

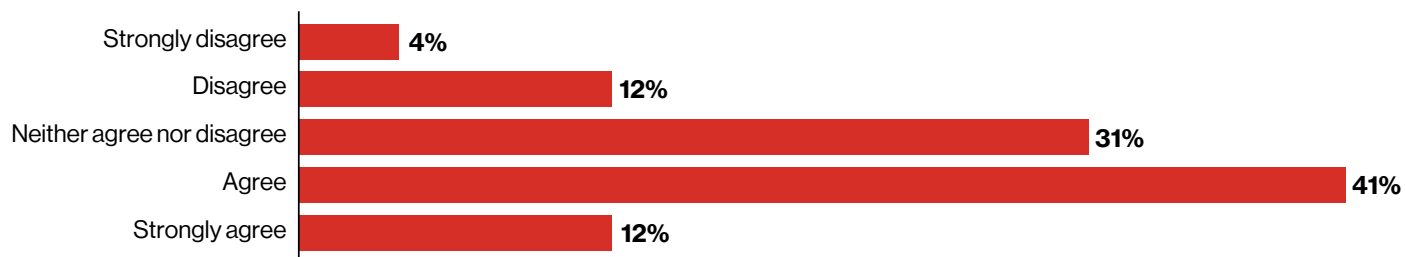


Fleet managers also reported a range of other pandemic-related challenges. Around 40% had issues with supply chain and meeting SLAs while over a third had to make budget cuts and turn to new tools to boost operational efficiency.

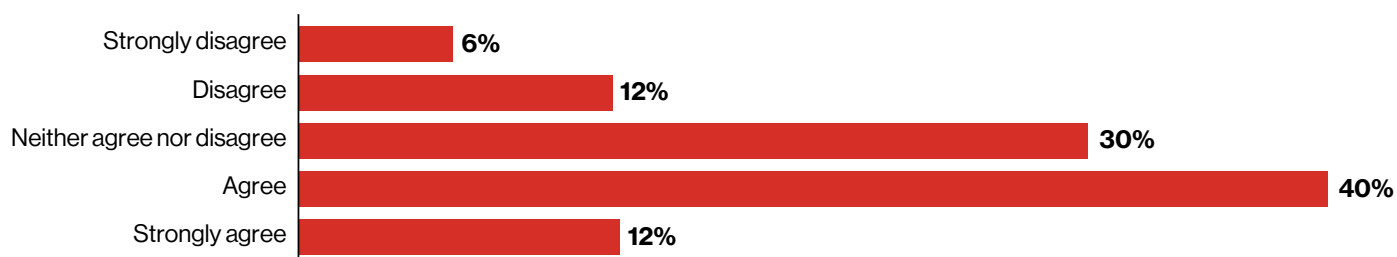


## Thinking about the impact of COVID-19 and national lockdown, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

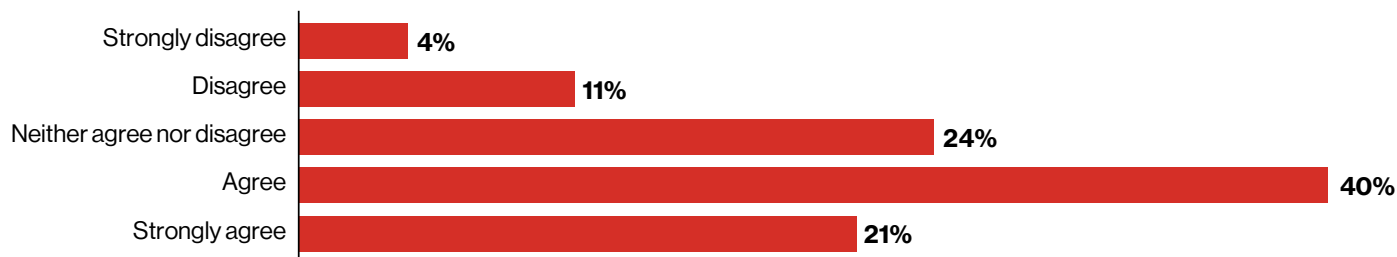
Maintaining service level agreements (SLAs) became more difficult



We adopted a fleet management solution to support contact tracing protocols where necessary

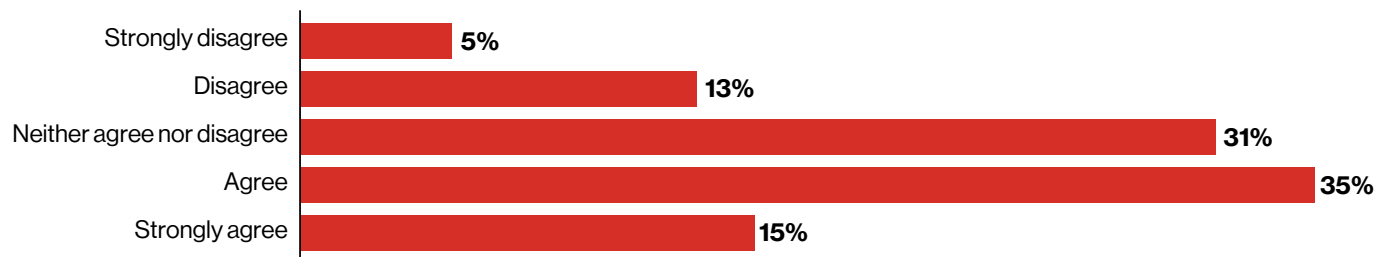


Our supply chains were disrupted

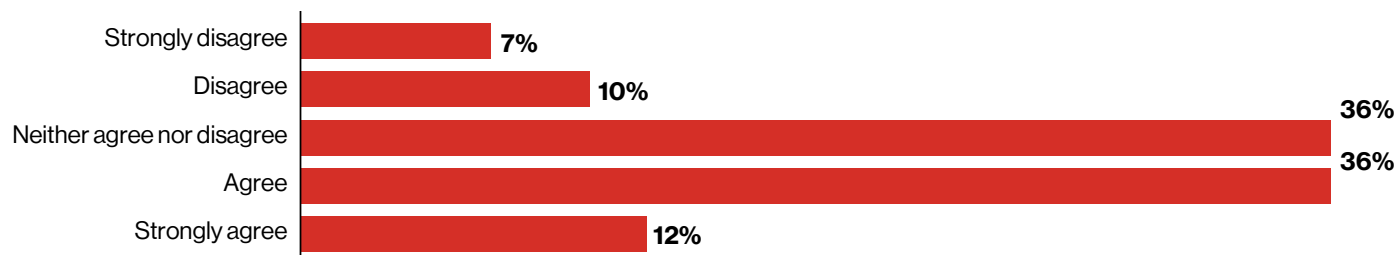


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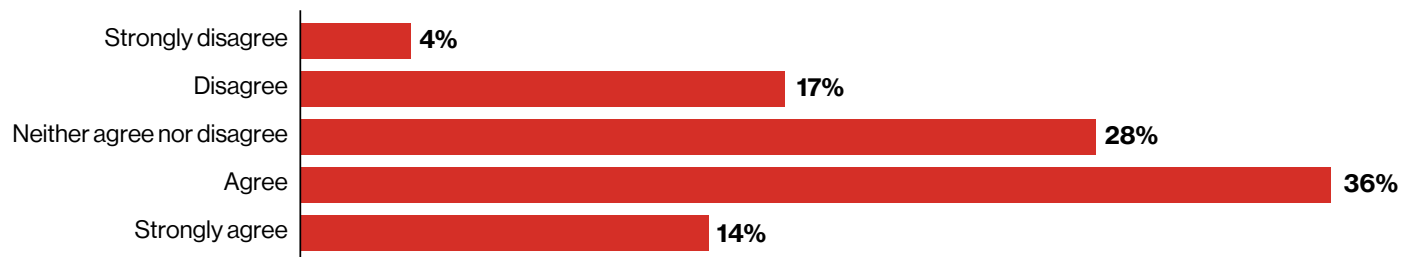
We adopted new tools to boost efficiency



Our pre-existing fleet management solution had the functionality to support contact tracing protocols where necessary



We made significant cuts to our operational budget



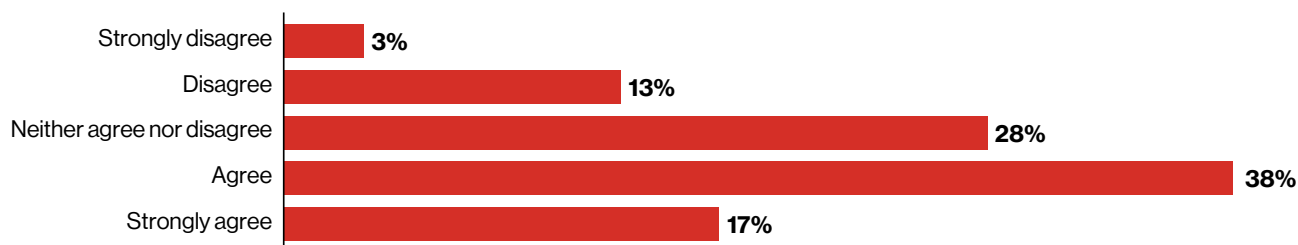


# Embracing new technologies

It may have taken a global pandemic, but it can only be positive that so many fleets turned to new tools and technologies to improve efficiency over the last year. And many of the fleets with such systems in place report that the technology helped to weather the storm that was 2020.



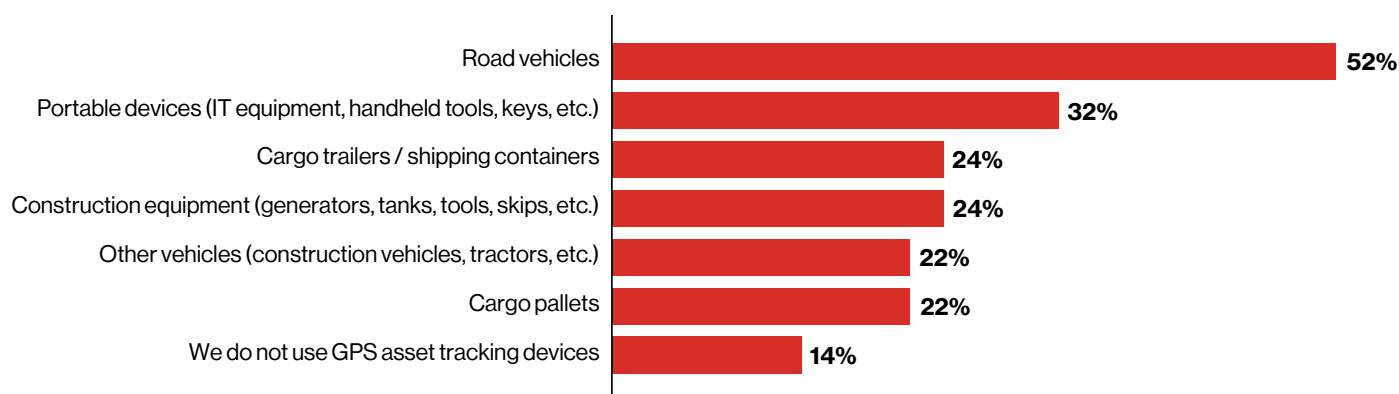
## Following health and safety regulations (i.e. social distancing) made staff less productive



However, despite many reports of the benefits of fleet management tools, a surprising number are still not using this technology to its full effect.

Only a little over half of the fleets we surveyed use a fleet management solution to monitor their road vehicles, with even fewer using such a system to track devices, equipment, and cargo.

## What do you currently track, or plan to track via GPS asset tracking devices, if anything? (Tick all that apply)



Even among fleets that report regular use of fleet management technology, many are still working with relatively basic systems.

Over a third cannot set geofences to monitor whether vehicles remain in authorised areas, only half can immobilise vehicles remotely and 35% are unable to use their system to monitor diagnostics and manage preventative maintenance.

This should concern the fleet managers in question for two reasons. For one, more comprehensive fleet management systems can help to improve efficiency and service levels and reduce costs. And two, these systems are already in place among competitors, potentially giving them an advantage in the field.

# Take control of your fleet with Verizon Connect

While the adoption of new technology is increasing, many fleets are still not using every tool at their disposal. For as long as this situation remains, fleet-reliant businesses will likely struggle to control costs, automate time-consuming processes and improve efficiency.

This does not have to be the case.

Verizon Connect's in-depth data analysis and intuitive dashboards allow you to quickly spot areas for improvement and measure successes against your benchmarks and those of your industry.

Location data can be used to improve customer service with greater visibility and more accurate ETAs. Google Maps integration allows for route optimisation. And alerts and reporting on numerous aspects of vehicle health and driver behaviour can help managers highlight inefficiencies to promote safety and performance, and potentially lower fuel spend.



**There is another way.  
Talk to Verizon Connect today.**

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0800 975 4566**



## About Verizon Connect

Our full suite of industry-defining solutions and services put innovation, automation and connected data to work for customers and help them be safer, more efficient and more productive. With more than 3,500 dedicated employees in 15 countries, we deliver leading mobile technology platforms and solutions.