

# The ripple effects of driver stress on road safety and the bottom line

A safety survey of U.S. fleet industry professionals.



GEOTAB®

MESSAGE FROM

# Sabina Martin

## Vice President Product Management



At Geotab, we're committed to road safety. Our recent research with Endeavor Business Intelligence (US) and the Angus Reid Forum reveals a critical issue: commercial driver stress. 68% of drivers report that work-related stress negatively impacts their performance, with serious implications for their wellbeing, road safety and the economy.

This stress leads to increased costs, reduced efficiency, and higher risks for everyone on the road. The financial impact is significant, including higher insurance premiums, potential legal liabilities, and increased fuel and maintenance costs. With driver retention and attraction being a serious issue, the impact on the U.S. economy could be substantial.

With access to comprehensive, high-quality data from 4.7M vehicle subscriptions, we understand how data insights and technology can drive results. Advanced telematics and AI solutions offer critical insights that help identify and mitigate risks before they happen. By promoting safer driving practices, we can protect drivers, improve efficiency and reduce costs—ultimately creating safer roads for everyone.

Every Journey a Safe Return.

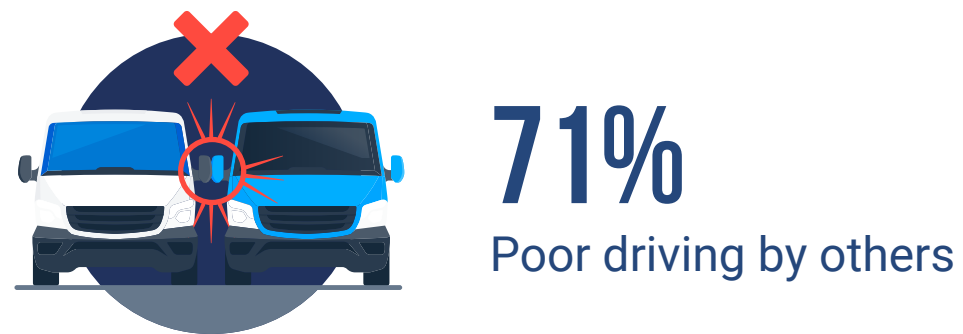
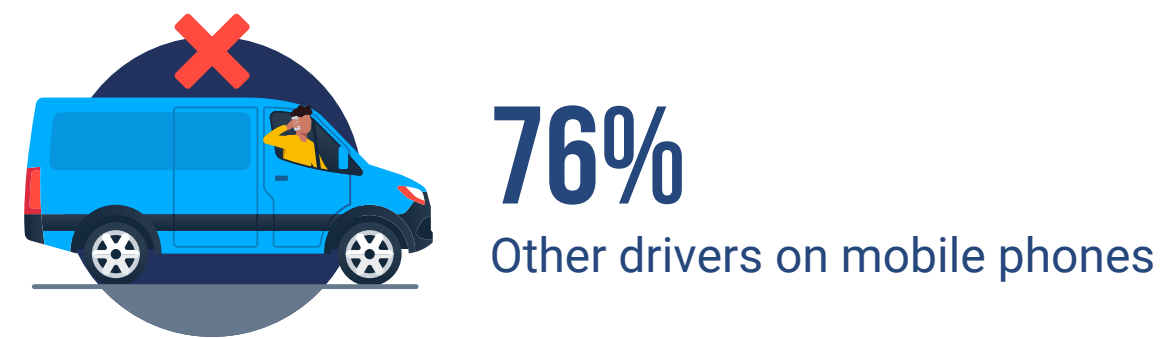
**Sabina Martin**

VP Product Management, Geotab

# Increased risks on the road

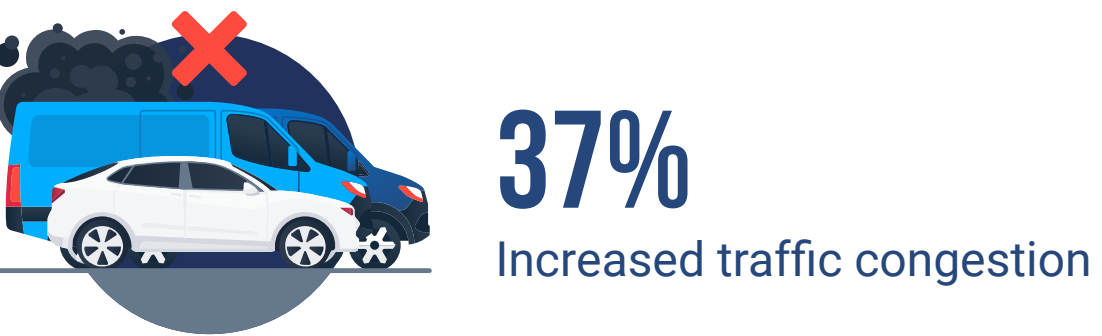
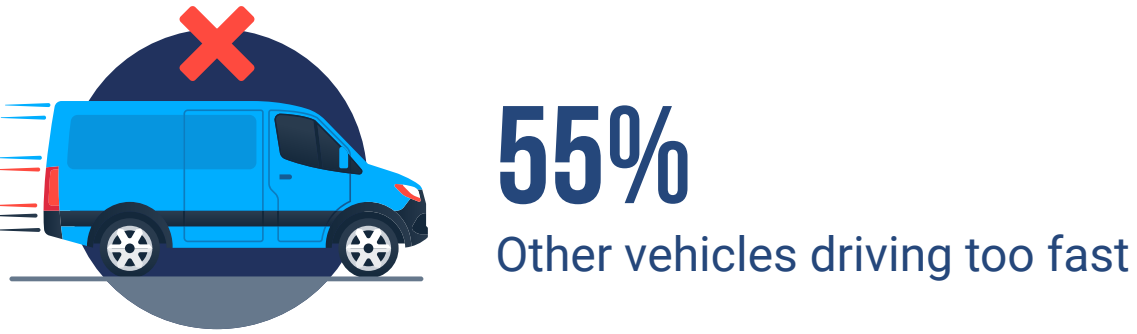
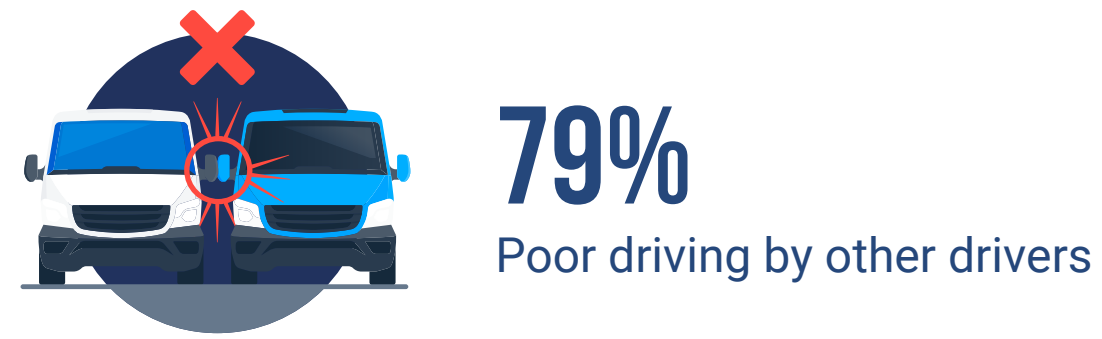
Most respondents believe the risk of driving accidents has increased over the last five years (86% total).

### Top reasons cited include:

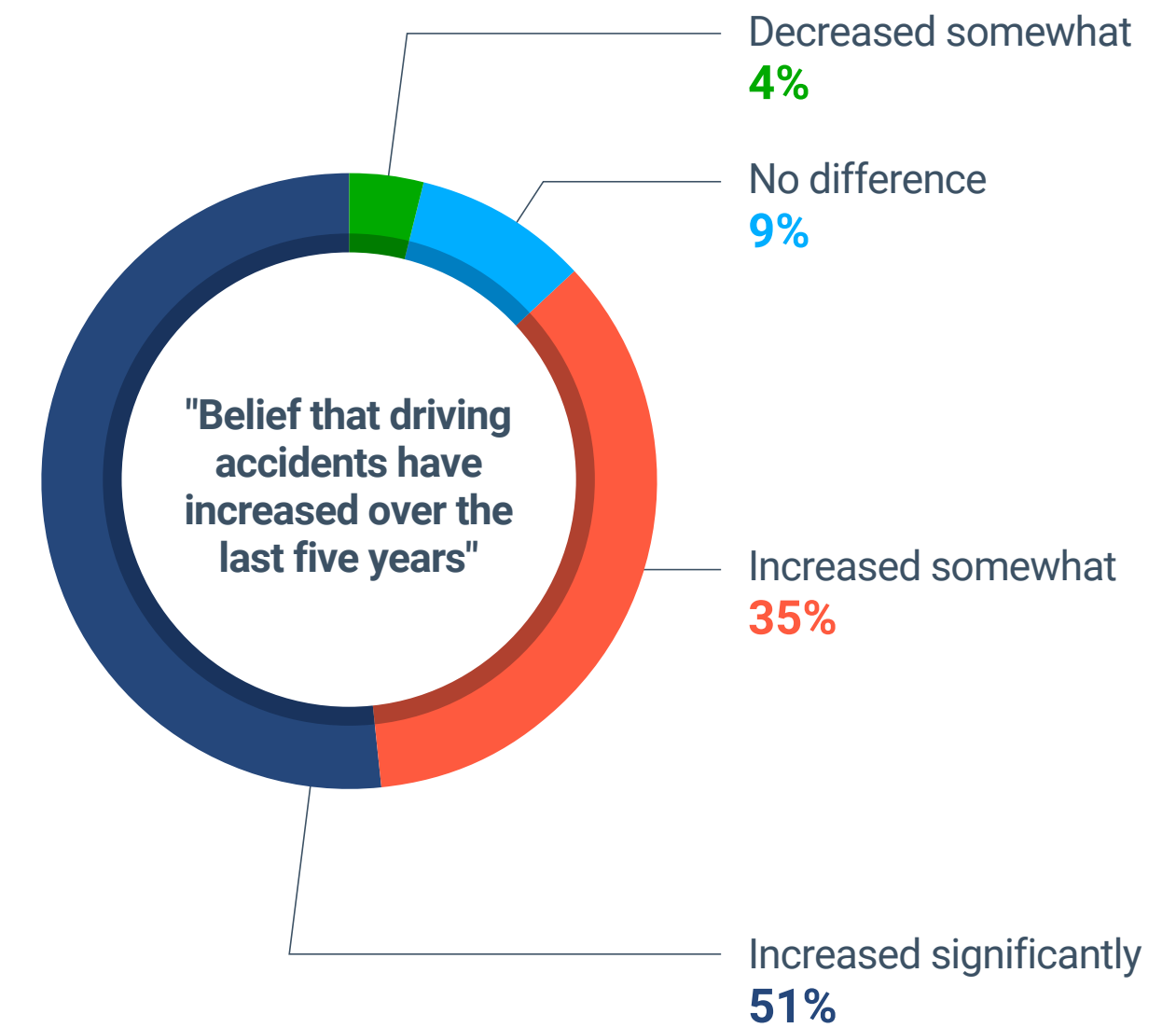


Consumer research conducted by the Angus Reid Forum corroborates industry findings: **2 in 3** of the general population using the road also believe that the risk of driving accidents has increased over the past five years.

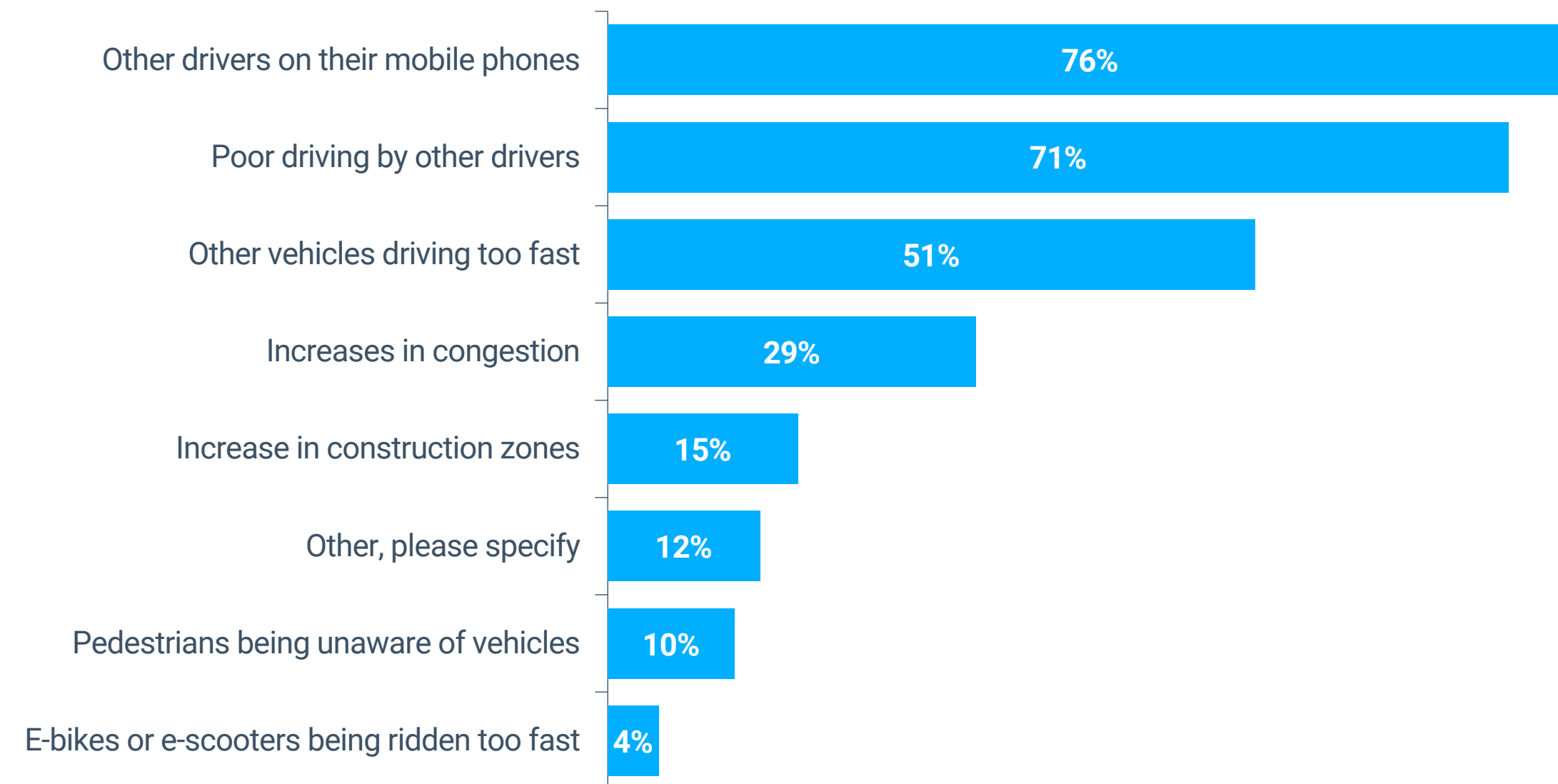
### The dangerous behaviors noticed most include:



### Belief that driving accidents have increased over the last five years:



### What dangerous behaviors do you notice most regularly on the road?



# Impacts of stress on driving performance

68%

of respondents reported that work-related stress negatively impacts their driving.

78%

believe stress and mental health contribute to road dangers.

34%

have considered leaving their job in the past year.

68%

of respondents support new technology that will help with their driving performance.

Research highlights how various interconnected factors—ranging from road conditions and risky driving behaviors—affect road safety. Addressing these issues can lead to:

- **Fewer accidents and fatalities**, saving lives and reducing the burden on healthcare systems.
- **Improved workplace productivity and morale**, potentially contributing to less job turnover.
- **Better public health outcomes**, as improved road safety and mental health support create a healthier population overall.
- **Economic savings**, including reduced healthcare costs, less damage to vehicles, fewer insurance claims, and less retraining.



“  
 Our research shows a direct, and critical link between driver wellbeing and overall performance. Prioritizing driver support is a strategic necessity for carriers to attract, and retain drivers, leading to better business outcomes and safer roads.  
 ”

**Vik Sridhar**  
 Product Leader at Geotab

### To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Stress and mental health are a contributing factor to increased dangers on the road



I would support new technology that helps improve overall driving performance



■ Strongly agree   
 ■ Somewhat agree   
 ■ Slightly agree   
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree   
 ■ Slightly disagree   
 ■ Somewhat disagree   
 ■ Strongly disagree   
 ■ Prefer not to say / Unsure



# The economic impact of driving under pressure



**60%** of respondents noted that traffic and road work have made job completion more difficult.



**26%** admitted to regularly breaking speed limits to meet deadlines.

Poor driving practices, such as speeding, overloading, and rough handling of vehicles, can lead to higher maintenance costs and faster wear and tear. Aggressive driving, especially in stop-and-go traffic, can reduce fuel efficiency by 10-40%, further inflating expenses. Additionally, poor road conditions like potholes and uneven surfaces exacerbate these issues, increasing fuel consumption, operating costs, and travel time. In 2023, the cost of trucking reached an all-time high of \$2.27 per mile, driven by inflation, rising fuel prices, and truck costs.

Beyond the financial impact, poor driving behaviors also have serious safety implications, contributing to thousands of fatalities annually. The average cost of a large truck crash involving a fatality can reach up to \$3.6 million, according to the FMCSA. Moreover, driver stress and inefficiency can lead to high turnover rates, with research from PDA - People. Data. Analytics. indicating that losing a single driver can cost companies between \$10,000 and \$20,000. The consequences of neglecting driver wellbeing affect both safety and company finances.



# A call to action: recommendations to improve commercial driving

## Telematics solutions: Data for safer roads

Telematics isn't just about tracking a vehicle—it's about understanding a driver's behavior, the performance of the vehicle, and real-time road conditions. By leveraging this data, fleet managers can intervene proactively, addressing risky behaviors before they lead to costly accidents. This approach can also support drivers by ensuring compliance with regulations like ELDs, helping them avoid unnecessary stress while staying on track with their schedules.



## Driver-focused apps: Empowering drivers with real-time support

Imagine an app that offers not just driving feedback, but holistic support—real-time driving tips, mental health resources, and even stress management techniques. These apps can serve as a “companion” on the road, providing tools drivers need to stay safe, stay focused, and stay happy. Personalized driver coaching, delivered in-app, offers tailored tips and strategies based on individual driving habits, helping drivers improve their skills and stay focused on the road.



## Advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS)

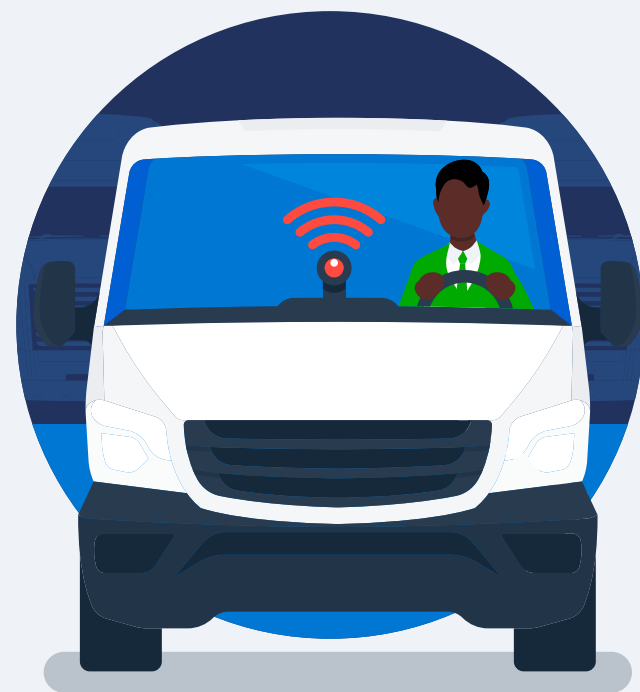
By integrating ADAS technologies, such as lane departure warnings, automatic emergency braking, and adaptive cruise control, drivers can gain an extra layer of support on the road. These systems help prevent accidents, lower stress levels, and make long hours behind the wheel safer and more comfortable. With less need to constantly react to every road hazard, drivers can stay focused and calm, improving their overall driving performance and quality of life on the road.





### **Dashcams: An objective ally on the road**

Dashcams aren't just about recording incidents—they're about protecting drivers. In the event of an accident, dashcam footage provides an irrefutable account of what happened, offering both peace of mind for drivers and vital learning material for training. They also help exonerate drivers in the case of false claims, ensuring that those doing things right are recognized, not penalized.



### **Virtual reality (VR) training: Safe, engaging, and effective skill building**

What if training could be both fun and incredibly effective? VR simulations allow drivers to face high-pressure scenarios in a controlled environment, honing their skills without the risk. Whether it's navigating tricky weather conditions or dealing with an emergency, VR provides drivers with the chance to practice and improve in ways that traditional methods can't match. This innovative approach makes learning both engaging and impactful.



### **Autonomous driving technologies: The future of stress-free driving**

While fully autonomous vehicles are still on the horizon, we're already seeing advancements in features like lane-keeping assist and self-parking that significantly reduce the stress and mental load of driving. These technologies allow drivers to focus on the road with more confidence, ultimately leading to a safer and more relaxed driving experience.



These technologies enhance fleet efficiency and reduce costs by optimizing operations and improving safety. By leveraging real-time data, fleets can proactively address issues before they lead to accidents, reducing insurance premiums and repair expenses. Driver assistance tools, training programs, and monitoring systems minimize the risk of costly mistakes while improving driver performance. With the help of these innovations, fleets can streamline operations, lower overhead costs, and maintain a safer, more productive environment for drivers, ultimately leading to long-term savings.

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