

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREY FLEET IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Gregory Anderson and Ron Bowles, Justice Institute of British Columbia

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Motor vehicle incidents (MVIs) are a leading cause of work-related injury, death and absence from work In British Columbia (pop. 4.4 million) MVIs are the leading cause of work-related traumatic fatalities with 22 workers fatally injured and 1,260 seriously injured and require time away from work annually. The average cost and days lost per MVI claim were \$42,000 and 91 days respectively.

Many who drive for the purposes of work contribute to the 'Grey Fleet' – any personal vehicle that is used by an employee for making a work-related journey. *“Management of grey fleet vehicles presents a multi-faceted challenge, as the organization typically has more control over the choice and working condition of its company vehicles... but many do not have any measures in place to manage the grey fleet”* (Road Safety at Work, 2012: p1).

The purpose of this project was to examine selected characteristics of the Grey Fleet and related road safety programs that are presently in place in British Columbia:

1. Define the size of the Grey Fleet in BC,
2. Define how often and for what purpose worker-owned vehicles are used,
3. Define current road safety management programs/safe work practices for the Grey Fleet.

METHODS

A “Grey Fleet Employer Survey” was distributed via email to a random sample of 15% of all employers in BC with 4 or more employees. A total of 17 branched, multi-segment questions were used which included a combination of closed and open ended questions. The survey was open for a two week period during which time three notifications were sent.

Data were analyzed by size of employer

Small (4-19 employees)

Medium (20-99 employees)

Large (100+ employees)

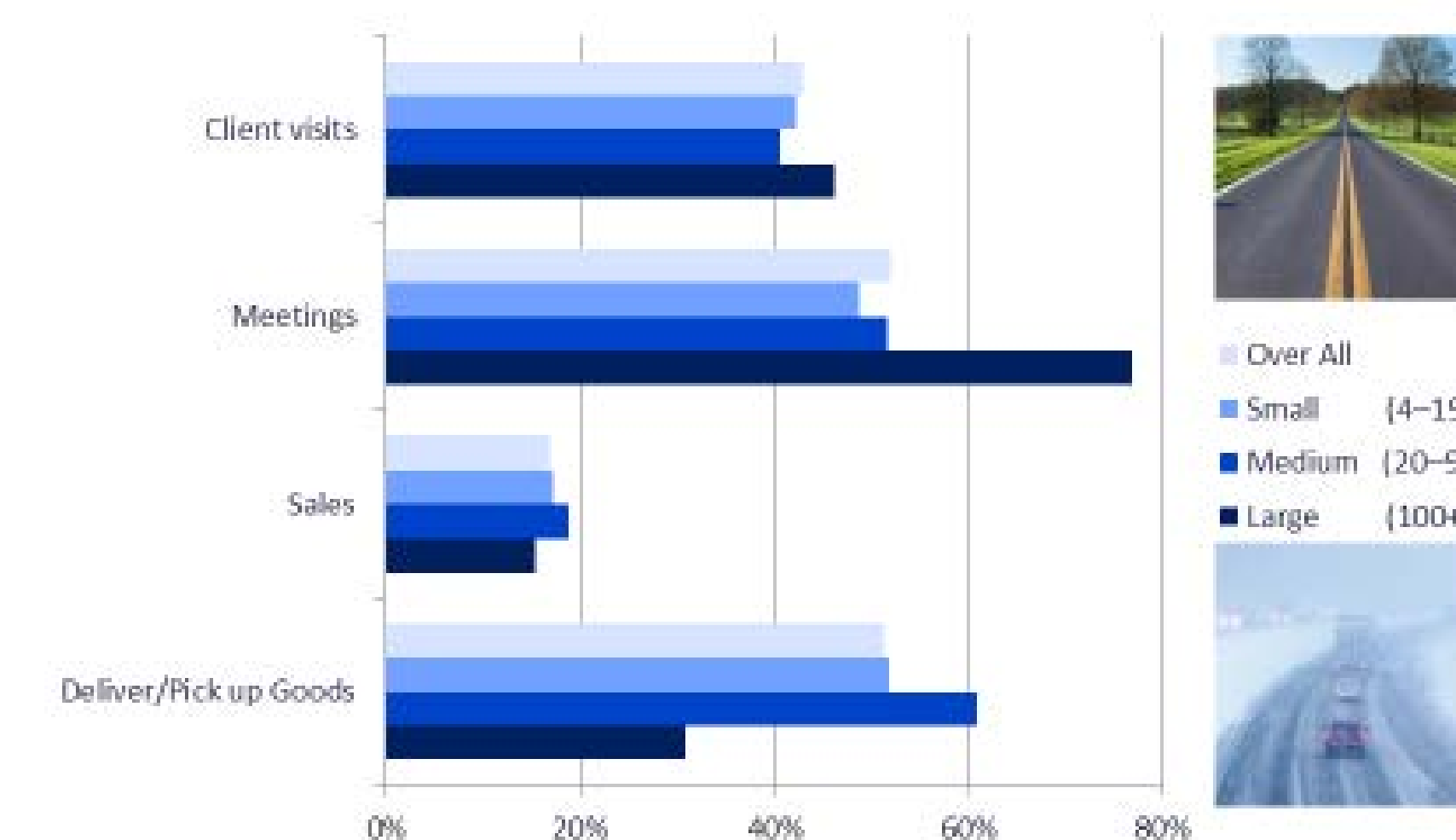
RESULTS

Of 5023 emails delivered successfully 531 responded (10.6% response), while 104 declined participation. Response rates were 12.6% for Large, 15.8% for Medium and 6.1% for Small companies, and were distributed proportionately across primary resources, manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing, trade, service and other categories.

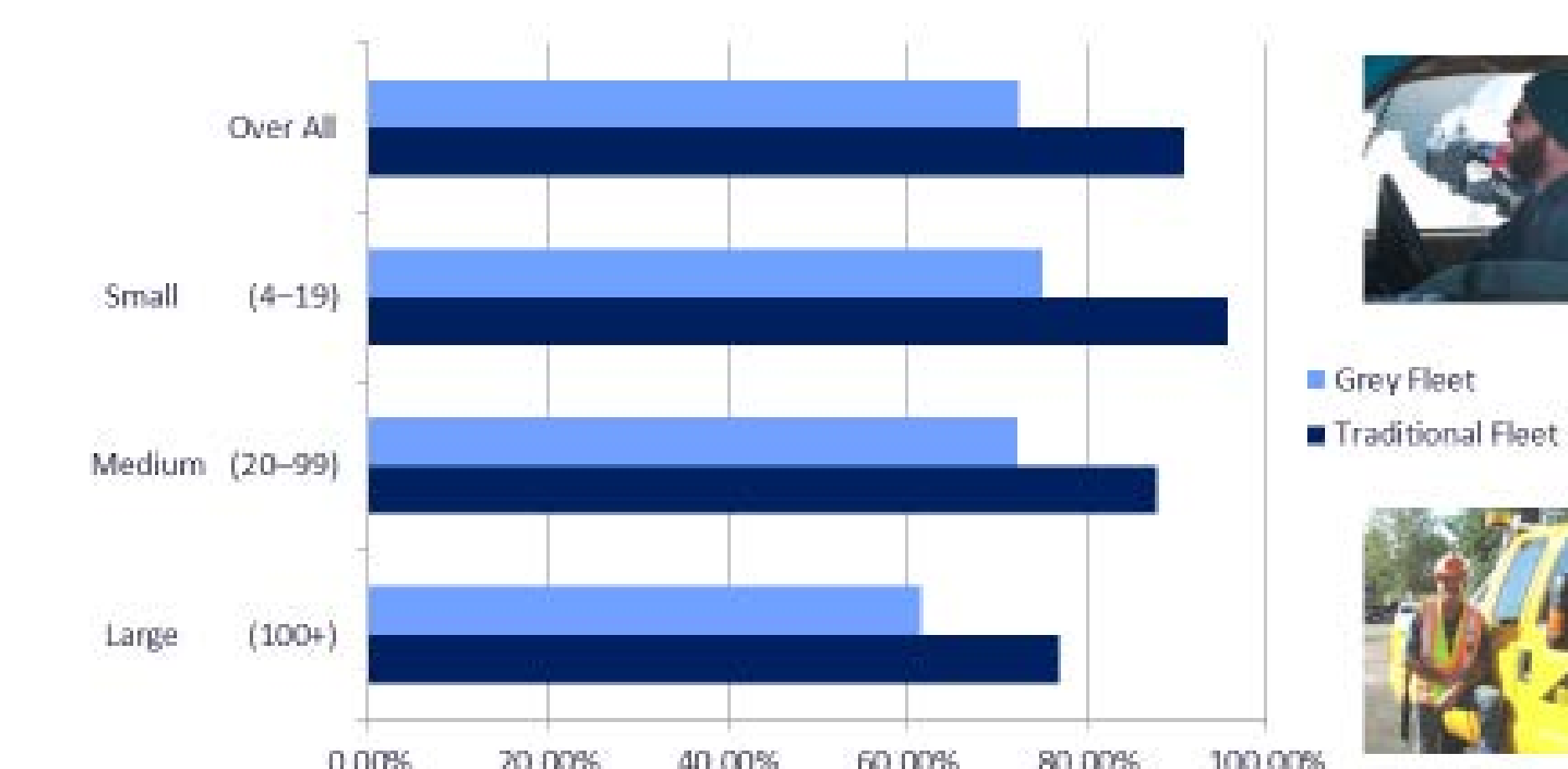
Grey Fleet size by stratified employer size

	# Employees Reported	# Who Participate in Grey Fleet	% Who Participate in Grey Fleet
Large (100+)	13,078	1,597	12.2%
Medium (20-99)	2,503	525	21.0%
Small (4-19)	1,371	501	36.6%
Over All	16,952	2,623	15.5%

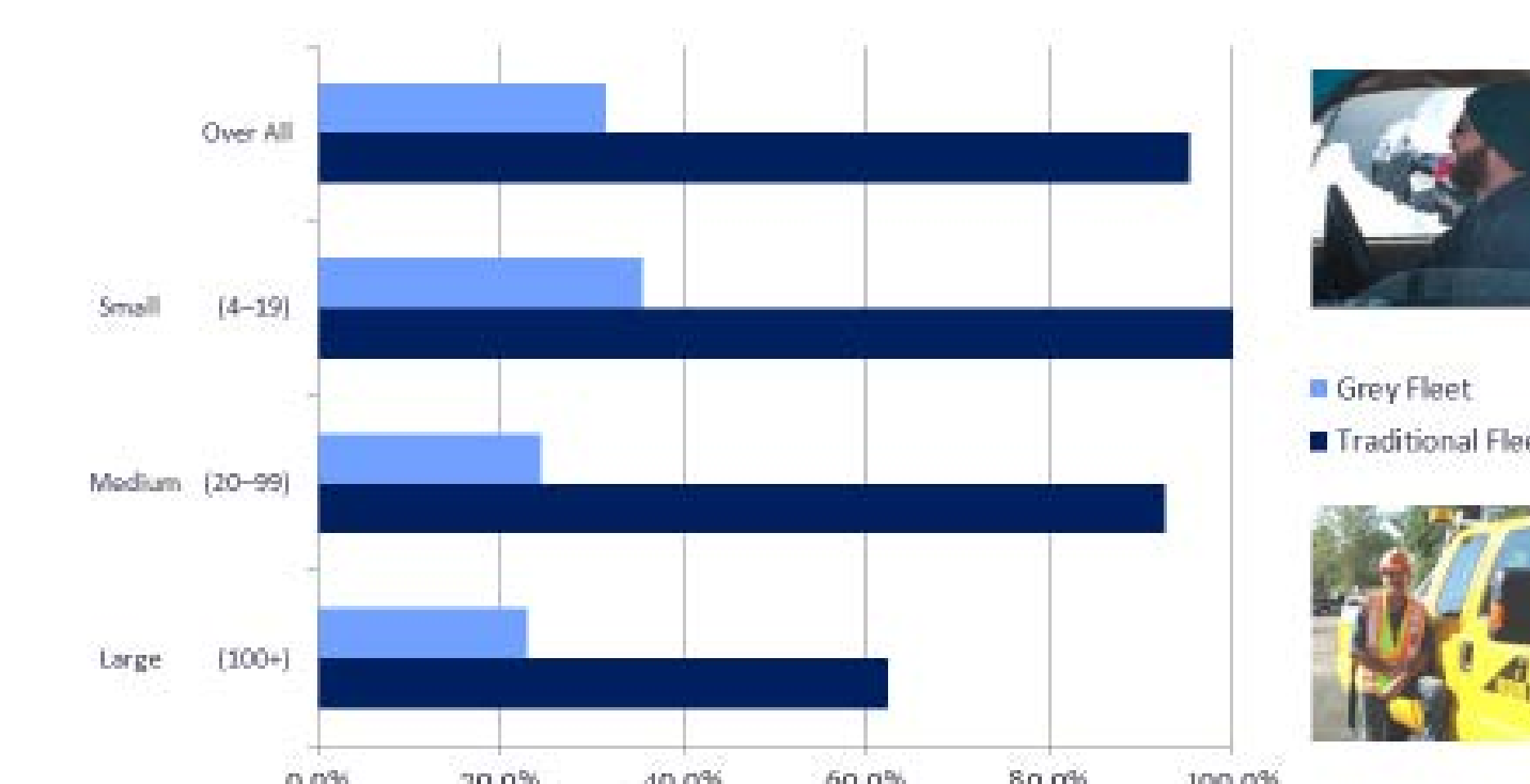
Purpose of travel



Traditional v Grey Fleet license check



Traditional v Grey Fleet vehicle inspections



DISCUSSION

There is a significant Grey Fleet in British Columbia. Of those responding 64.6% of employers report using a grey fleet, while 48% had traditional fleets. The Grey Fleet includes 15.5% of employees in BC, or 365,000 drivers (17.8% previously reported). This represents 14% of those with BC drivers licenses between the ages of 16 and 65 years of age.

Companies reporting daily use were more likely to be small (27.6%) or medium (17.1%) sized rather than large (4.1%). Delivery and/or pick up was the primary reason for travel in small and medium sized companies, while meetings were the primary purpose in large companies. Employees were more than twice as likely to be traveling within a city or town for under 25 kilometers than any other location and distance.

Employers were more likely to check for a valid driver's license than perform vehicle safety inspections. However, many employers felt that they did not have a responsibility to check employees' licenses and vehicles. There is a lack of awareness concerning duty of care amongst those employing a grey fleet in British Columbia.

APPLICATION

If there are 365,000 grey fleet drivers in British Columbia, and 25% of them were in a motor vehicle incident (MVI), it is estimated that 91,000 – 112,000 Grey Fleet MVIs would occur annually. With 19.6% of MVIs reporting casualties in British Columbia (ICBC, 2013), and a payment made for injury or fatality in 47% of claims, then 8,390 – 10,320 MVIs should be reported to WorkSafeBC annually that include time loss claims. With the average cost and days lost per MVI claim being \$42,000 and 91 days, it can be estimated that the total cost would be between \$353 - 434 million, and account for 1.6 - 2.0 million days off of work.

CONCLUSION

Multiple data sets and surveys would suggest that the size of the Grey Fleet in British Columbia is substantial, and that many incidents are not reported or claimed as work-related. Further, employers who use Grey Fleets are not certain of their legal requirements under Worker's Compensation Act (duty of care), and in response education and training are required concerning the employer and employee responsibilities concerning driving safety.

KEY REFERENCES

ICBC (2013). Quick Statistics: September 2013

Road Safety at Work (2012). Grey fleet research project literature review.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Funding for this project was provided by Road Safety at Work, WorkSafeBC.