



Tackling the driver shortage crisis



Our drivers bring children to schools and goods to shops every day. They spend their days driving across continents, oiling our everyday lives. We value our professional drivers and we want to make the road transport industry a great place to work.

Yet we are facing a crisis: the worst and most acute professional driver shortage in decades. It could put the very survival of many road transport businesses at risk. And because commercial road transport is the backbone of the global economy, that would have a detrimental impact on our society as a whole.

This needs to be addressed urgently.

We are working hard to inspire young women and young men to becoming professional bus, coach and truck drivers. We need their energy, creativity and motivation, particularly as the industry embraces new technologies such as automation and increasingly sophisticated Intelligent Transport Systems.

We will work with all concerned public or private stakeholders, who are willing to join us in making this vision a reality by implementing a comprehensive series of actions.

We have a very clear action list:

Stage 1: 1-2 years

1. Bi-annual survey to establish the facts and trends about the driver shortage
2. A dedicated website to provide information about driver shortage and share good practices
3. An IRU Communications Group of Experts to exchange good practices and develop joint actions
4. Launch joint initiatives with industry partners to improve the treatment of drivers
5. Formal recognition of the job of “professional driver” in CIS countries
6. Strategy to address the issues of minimum driver age and distance limitations, and analysis of the real impact of the current legislation on driver training
7. Promoting adequate, comfortable, safe and secure parking areas for long-distance truck drivers

Stage 2: 3-4 years

8. Guidelines for transport operators to help with recruitment, skills development, and driver retention
9. Standard toolkits and teaching aids for schools to introduce and build awareness of the road transport industry
10. Strategic industry reflection and studies into future mobility patterns, future transport jobs and future training needs
11. Addressing opportunities arising from automation, new technologies and changing business models
12. Address gender-based violence in the road transport industry
13. Driver-based opinion poll on relevant issues, including working conditions and work-life balance
14. Task Force of interested IRU members’ experts to address shared liability in the supply chain and increasingly complex and rigid social legislation

Stage 3: over five years

15. A joint global effort to improve the sector’s image, addressing driver shortage and attracting new professionals
16. Global awards for Best Driver, Best Employer etc.
17. Provide leadership in addressing working and social conditions in the road transport industry



We are also setting up the IRU Driver Shortage Fund, to act in four key areas:

Knowledge – to fund studies, create dedicated toolkits etc.

Training – to create driver training programmes and enrolment schemes

Image – to develop an international Driver Shortage campaign

Networking – to exchange best practices, via online repositories and events

What’s next?

We’re planning a conference to review all of this work in the second half of 2019. We’ll evaluate progress of Stage 1 and use those learnings to refine the Stage 2 activities.

The more input we have, the better the results, so please look out for information about this event.

For more information:

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