



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Motor
Carrier Safety
Administration**

Seat Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers (SBUCMVD) 2013 Survey

Executive Summary
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The Seat Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers (SBUCMVD) Survey is a nationally representative field data collection program that provides estimates of safety belt use by drivers and other occupants of medium and heavy duty commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). The work is conducted on behalf of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) under NHTSA contract DTNH22-13-D-0284. This survey of CMVs was conducted using the sample design and field data collection methodologies similar to those used in the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) of passenger vehicle occupants. Surveys were conducted for four consecutive years (2007 - 2010) and again in 2013 after a two-year break. The surveys are based upon a statistically valid research design that includes medium duty, class 7, and class 8 CMVs observed from roadsides. Data collection sites were chosen from a randomly selected sample of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs, which are a county or group of counties) across the United States. In 2007 the SBUCMVD survey sample contained 22 PSUs, in 2008 the sample was increased to 28 PSUs, and in 2010 the sample was increased further to 34 PSUs. The same 34 PSUs were also used in 2013.

The following are some highlights of the results from the study:

- A total of 27,157 CMVs, 27,157 drivers, and 1,730 other occupants were observed at 1,004 sites.
- The overall safety belt usage rate for drivers of all medium and heavy duty trucks and buses rose from 78% in 2010 to 84% in 2013.
- The usage rate for CMV other occupants also increased from 64% in 2010 to 73% in 2013.
- Continuing the trend seen in previous studies, safety belt use was observed to be higher in states governed by primary belt use laws (85%) than secondary belt use laws (78%).
- Also, as seen in previous years, safety belt usage among drivers and other occupants in units identified as part of a fleet (86%) was observed to be higher than for independent owner-operators (75%).

Observations on the use of safety belts were conducted on a sample of arterial roads (ART) and limited access highways (LAH) by trained Data Collectors and the data collection protocol remained the same as in 2010. All data were collected on HTC Flyer Tablets utilizing a customized data collection program. Independent traffic counts were also recorded to help calibrate the estimates. Additional data items were collected, including:

- Type of CMV: e.g., straight van, articulated single tanker, hazmat carrier, commercial bus, etc.
- Location: urban, suburban, or rural
- Weather conditions: clear, light precipitation, or light fog
- Speed of observed vehicles at a given site: 30 miles per hour (mph) or less, 31-50 mph, or over 50 mph
- Drivers' and other occupants' characteristics: race, gender, approximate age
- Driver use of cell phones and other handheld electronic devices
- Time of day

Precise schedules dictated that sites be visited between 7:00 AM and 6:30 PM on weekdays and weekend days as was done in prior years. Half of the morning weekdays were scheduled to begin at 7:00 AM and half at 8:00 AM so as to accumulate more rush-hour observations.

The target population of the survey can be viewed as a 'snapshot' of all medium and heavy duty CMVs on the road at a particular point in time. This report describes the overall design of the study, the methods used to collect the data, and the estimation and tabulation processes. Highlights from the analyses are contained in the body of the report. Tables of the results of the study have been reported to the FMCSA under separate cover.

To obtain a copy of the full report, Safety Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers (SBU CMVD) 2013, contact Nichole Causey at (202) 366-0627 or via email at Nichole.Causey@dot.gov.