

**Crime on bus
routes**

08039

February 2009



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Research conducted by Synovate

1. Executive Summary

This report contains the key findings from the initial wave of research among bus drivers, which will be repeated on an annual basis, in order to evaluate the impact of policing and enforcement initiatives on bus routes across London.

Perceptions of personal safety

- Whilst the majority of drivers (56%) felt safe on bus routes, one in five (22%) said that they had felt quite or very unsafe over the previous month.
- Whilst a quarter of drivers (25%) felt safer than they did two years ago, one in five (19%) felt less safe (higher amongst older drivers and those who had witnessed an incident in the previous month).

Experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour and contact with the police via CentreComm

- Almost all bus drivers had experienced or witnessed any type of incident, anti-social behaviour or crime whilst working in the previous month (93%). However, just one in six drivers (16%) had felt the situation necessitated contact with CentreComm.
- The main issues of concern to drivers related to abuse of drivers and other members of staff, mentioned by three in ten (28%).
- Of those who did feel the situation needed a police response through CentreComm, a quarter (24%) of those who had contacted CentreComm with an urgent enquiry were very satisfied with the speed and effectiveness of the police response (a score of 8 to 10). Among those with non-urgent police contact, a similar proportion were satisfied (24%).

Awareness of and attitudes towards police / enforcement officers

- Two thirds of drivers (67%) were aware of any type of police / enforcement officer¹ on their bus routes in the previous month.
- A third (33%) of those who were aware of police / enforcement officers had had any contact with them.

¹ Police and enforcement officers include the following: police officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Revenue Protection Inspectors and other uniformed officers such as parking attendants

- A third of all drivers (34%) felt that the level of police / enforcement officers had increased in the previous month.
- Around half of drivers (51%) felt that there were not enough police / enforcement officers currently.
- Two thirds of drivers were aware of any enforcement initiatives introduced in the last 12 months in order to improve safety and security on buses, with the main mentions including CCTV (30%) and the alcohol ban (26%).
- Among drivers who had had contact with police / enforcement officers, around three in ten (28%) rated their overall satisfaction between 8 to 10, and over half (56%) gave a score of 5 to 7.
- The main improvements that were suggested by drivers related to an increased presence of police / enforcement officers.

Conclusions

Encouragingly, awareness of police / enforcement officers and initiatives was fairly high, at around two thirds – future research waves will evaluate whether this increases over time.

The findings indicate that police / enforcement officers do not appear to be interacting with drivers (and vice versa) as the majority of drivers had not approached a Police Officer or PCSO, or been approached by one, in the previous month.

A significant proportion of drivers (one in five) feel at risk when carrying out their work, and around half feel that there is a need for an increased presence of police / enforcement officers. It is also important to note that whilst the majority of drivers had experienced incidents in the previous month, only a small minority had made contact with CentreComm. Where contact was made, satisfaction levels with the police response received are fairly low. This suggests that more can be done to ensure that drivers feel supported and safe whilst carrying out their work.

2. Background and Objectives

This report is based on the key findings from the initial wave of research looking at bus drivers' perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour, and awareness of enforcement initiatives. Synovate were commissioned by Transport for London (TfL) to undertake this research on an annual basis, in order to assess the effectiveness of the TfL sponsored MPS policing initiatives (Transport Operational Command Unit (TOCU) and Safer Transport Teams (STTs) over time.

The survey work has been carried out at a time of change for the TfL sponsored MPS policing resources providing support for the buses. Following a detailed 5 Year Review the Transport Operational Command Unit (TOCU) established in 2002 was in the process of refocusing its effort by moving away from a bus corridor based approach to one where it provides reassurance through Inner London borough teams supported by pan London tasking teams. Roll out of this new model took place between April and August 2008. The TOCU continues to target crime and antisocial behaviour and congestion relating to key bus services as well as tackling illegal cab activities, traffic congestion and red route parking enforcement. Police enforcement officers (Police Officers and PCSOs) deal with incidents and provide reassurance through patrolling buses, stations and routes to deter criminal and anti-social activity, reassure passengers and staff, and ensure that bus lanes and other key roads are enforced.

TOCU has been effective in dealing with crimes on the network leading to many arrests for transport related crimes including offences such as robbery, criminal damage, bus ticket fraud and taxi touting, and in terms of issuing Fixed Penalty Notices and removing illegally parked vehicles.

Collectively there are now three TfL sponsored MPS initiatives that serve to target crime and congestion across the London bus network at a full year cost to TfL of over £90m:

- Safer Transport Teams – predominantly PCSOs covering 21 Outer London Boroughs and providing policing support to buses and other transport modes.
- TOCU – TOCU Reassurance Teams cover 11 Inner London Boroughs (excluding the City of London) plus pan-London teams to provide support to the bus network and deal with congestion and parking issues.
- Overlaid upon these is a brand new initiative launched by the new Mayor in July 2008 which is seeing the introduction of new Hub Teams at 32 interchanges across London. These teams work alongside the Safer Transport Teams and the TOCU Reassurance Teams. At the time of the survey only three pilot Hub teams were in place with the others due to be rolled out between January and July 2009. As well as buses these would also provide policing support to other modes of transport.

This research was commissioned amongst bus drivers, looking at awareness of, and attitudes towards enforcement officers on their routes. The objectives of the research are:

- To assess the performance of the TfL sponsored MPS policing in terms of satisfaction, the message of the scheme/s and the benefits that they produce
- To look at perceptions of the enforcement initiatives among bus drivers (though the drivers are not expected to distinguish between which initiative covers their route/s)
- To gather additional intelligence on issues affecting the bus network to inform police deployments (e.g. places on the route where greater enforcement levels are needed)
- To measure drivers' perception of visibility of the units and their impact on anti-social behaviour
- To identify which crimes and anti-social behaviours are of the greatest concern to drivers
- To establish a baseline measurement of how safe drivers feel and how much support they feel they are given

For the first wave, reported here, a total of 591 interviews were conducted with bus drivers in London between 3rd and 16th November 2008. Interviews took place at 23 bus depots, split as follows:

- 224 interviews at depots in Inner London boroughs supported by TOCU (hereafter referred to as Inner London depots)
- 280 interviews at depots in Outer London boroughs supported by STTs and 87 interviews at depots supported by Hub teams (hereafter referred to as Outer London depots)

This report contains the key findings from this initial wave of research. It is anticipated that the survey will be repeated on an annual basis, in order to evaluate drivers' perceptions of the ongoing impact of enforcement initiatives. Key subgroups are compared in this report, and throughout the report all differences noted between groups are statistically significant at 95% or 99%.

3. Key findings

3.1 Perceptions of personal safety

In order to set a benchmark for future waves, drivers were asked how safe they have felt whilst carrying out their job over the past month, and how this compares with two years ago.

Perceptions of safety over the previous month and in comparison with two years ago



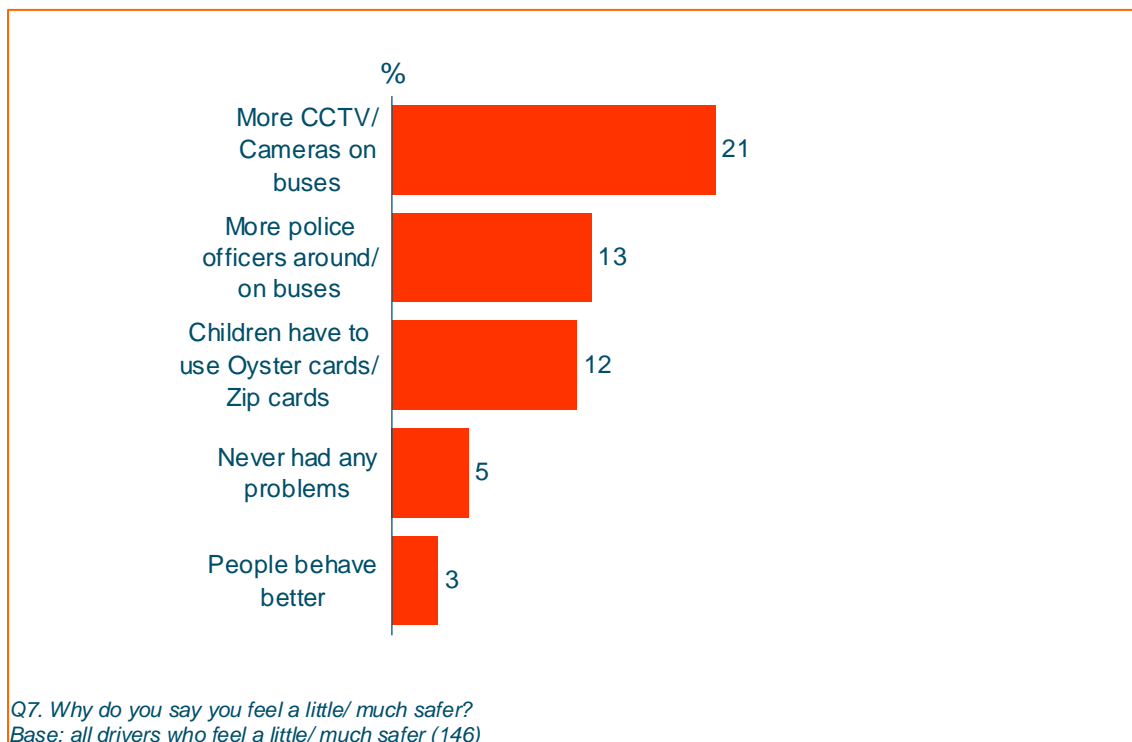
Over half of drivers (56%) said that they had felt very or fairly safe over the previous month. However, one in five (22%) felt quite or very unsafe.

Those who were more likely to feel unsafe were drivers from BAME backgrounds (27% vs. 15% White), more experienced drivers (22% of those driving for more than 1 year vs. 6% of those driving for less than 1 year), and those who had experienced any crimes whilst working in the previous month (23% vs. 11% of those who had not).

When drawing comparisons with two years ago, a quarter of drivers (25%) said that they now felt safer. However, one in five (19%) felt less safe. Older drivers were more likely to feel less safe than they did two years ago (32% of over 55s compared with 18% under 55s), as were those who had experienced incidents in the previous month (20% vs. 7%).

The chart below shows the main reasons given by those drivers who did feel safer now than they did two years ago. A wide range of reasons were given, and those mentioned by three per cent of drivers or more are shown below.

Reasons for feeling a little/ much safer than two years ago

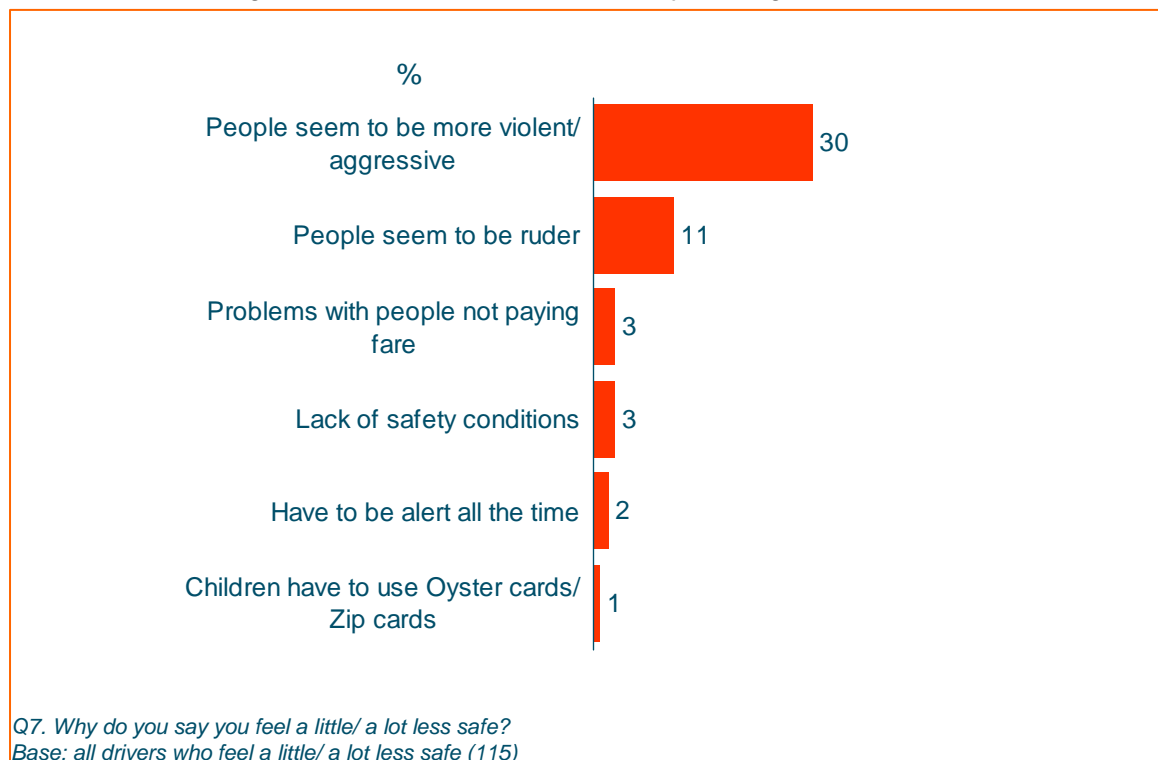


The most common reason for feeling safer was the increased presence of CCTV, mentioned by one in five (21%). Encouragingly, around one in eight (13%) mentioned that there was a greater presence of police officers on and around buses, and a similar proportion (12%) mentioned the introduction of Zip cards for children.

Those interviewed at Inner London depots were more likely to mention CCTV (35% vs. 12% of drivers interviewed at Outer London depots).

The following chart summarises the reasons for feeling less safe than two years ago.

Reasons for feeling a little/ a lot less safe than two years ago

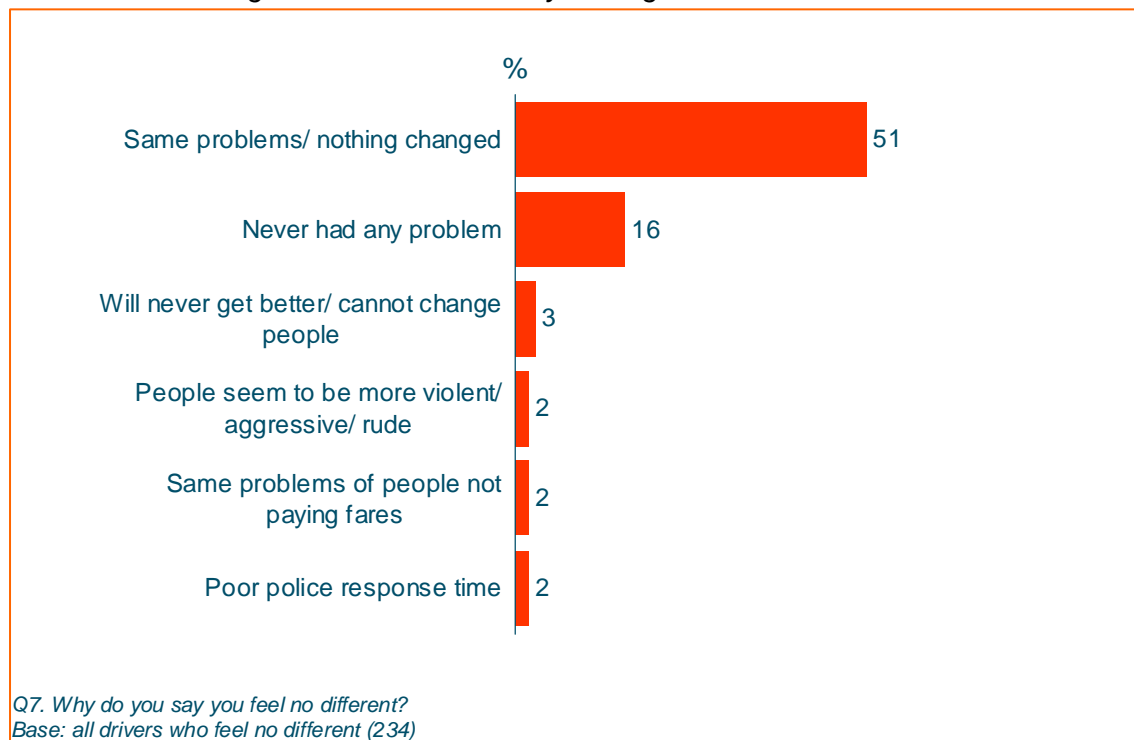


The most common reason by far for feeling less safe was that people are more violent or aggressive, mentioned by three in ten (30%). One in ten felt that people are ruder

compared with two years ago (11%). No other single area was mentioned by more than three per cent of those who felt less safe.

The below chart shows the main reasons given for feeling that things are no different from two years ago in terms of personal safety.

Reasons for feeling no different than two years ago



Around half of those saying that they felt no different said that the same problems existed (51%). However, around one in six (16%) said that they had never had any problems.

3.2 Experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour on buses and contact with the police via CentreComm

3.2.1 Incidents experienced in the previous month

The following table shows the types of crime and anti-social behaviour experienced in the previous month, incidents where drivers made contact with CentreComm, and the issue which concerns them the most. Again, these findings can be used as a baseline against which to evaluate the effectiveness of enforcement initiatives in reducing the prevalence of crime and anti-social behaviour on buses.

Experience of incidents			
	Q8: Experienced in last month %	Q9: Contacted CentreComm %	Q9a: Main Concern %
Net: Any	93	16	75
Net: Abuse on other passengers	76	2	15
Children shouting on the bus/ shouting abuse at other passengers	64	1	7
Passengers shouting abuse at other passengers	36	-	4
Passengers physically assaulting others on the bus	23	1	3
Someone being racially abusive to other passengers	19	-	1
Children bullying other children	16		-
Net: Fare evasion	75	3	9
Passengers evading the correct fare	65	3	8
Youths not validating a ZIP card	47	-	1
Net: Abuse on driver or other staff	70	4	28
Children and teenagers shouting abuse at yourself/ other LB staff	44	1	6
Passengers shouting abuse at yourself/ other LB staff	42	-	9
Suffered from physical/ verbal abuse from other road users	36	1	3
Someone being racially abusive to you	24	-	3
Someone spitting at you	17	1	4
Passengers physically assaulting yourself or other LB staff	13	1	4
Net: General anti-social behaviour	67	3	10
School children/ youths behaving badly on the bus	44	1	4
Passengers vandalising the bus	29	2	4
Other groups of people behaving badly on public transport (not children)	29	1	2
Someone not vacating priority seating for someone more in need	26	-	-
Someone spitting on the bus	24	-	-
Net: Drug/ alcohol related crimes	61	2	4
Someone being drunk on the bus	52	2	2
Someone drinking alcohol on the bus	43	-	2
Someone using illegal drugs	8	-	-
Net: Other crimes	67	2	8
Vehicles parked or driven illegally in the bus lanes or bus stops	55	1	5
General obstructions to the bus (not including lanes)	36	1	1
Attacks to the bus (e.g. things being thrown at the bus)	33	-	2
Crime or emergency happening on the street along the route	21	-	-
None of these	7	84 (not contacted)	25 (not concerned about any)

Base: all drivers (591)

Almost all drivers (93%) had experienced any of the listed incidents in the previous month. However, only one in six (16%) had felt that the situation necessitated contacting CentreComm.

Three quarters of drivers (76%) had witnessed incidents relating to abuse on other passengers in the previous month. The most common type of incident in this category was children shouting abuse at other passengers, with two thirds of drivers (64%) having witnessed this in the previous month. Drivers working on middle shifts are more likely to experience this (75%), suggesting that it is a particular issue at school closing time. Another common incident in this category is passengers other than children shouting abuse at other passengers, witnessed by around a third of drivers (37%). Those interviewed in Outer London were more likely to have witnessed events of this type (40% vs. 30% in Inner London).

Three quarters of drivers (75%) had experienced fare evasion on their bus routes over the previous month, either through passengers not paying the correct fare (65%) or youths not validating a Zip Card (47%). Fare evasion appears to be a common problem across all depot types and shift times, although those interviewed at Outer London depots are more likely to have experienced this (77% vs. 70% in Inner London).

Seven in ten drivers (70%) had personally experienced abuse, or witnessed abuse to other staff. This includes verbal abuse from teenagers or other passengers (44% and 42% respectively), as well as physical or verbal abuse from other road users (36%). Around a quarter of all drivers (24%) had personally experienced racial abuse, rising to a third of those from Asian backgrounds (36%). Once again, there were differences by area, with drivers interviewed at depots in Outer London more likely to have suffered physical or verbal abuse from other road users (40% vs. 28% in Inner London), and to have had someone spitting at them (20% vs. 12% in Inner London).

Two thirds (67%) had witnessed some other type of incident, including bad behaviour from children or youths or other passengers (44% and 29% respectively) and vandalism (29%; rising to 34% in Outer London). Around a quarter had witnessed someone not vacating priority seating (26%) or spitting on the bus (24%).

Three fifths (61%) had witnessed drug or alcohol related incidents. Two thirds (67%) had experienced some other type of issue, such as illegally parked vehicles (55%), general obstructions (36%) and attacks to the bus (33%).

Although the majority of drivers had experienced or witnessed any of the listed incidents in the previous month, only around one in six (16%) had felt that the situation necessitated contacting CentreComm. Drivers from White backgrounds were slightly more likely to contact CentreComm (20% vs. 14% BAME).

Around one in twenty drivers (4%) had contacted CentreComm regarding abuse on drivers or other staff, which equates to only six per cent of all those who had experienced this in the previous month. No more than three per cent of all drivers contacted CentreComm about any type of incident.

The main issues which concerned bus drivers related to abuse on drivers or other staff (28%), and abuse on passengers (15%). These emerged as key issues among all subgroups, although those from BAME background were more likely to be concerned about abuse on drivers and staff (31% vs. 25% White).

Amongst those who had witnessed youths not validating a ZIP card in the previous month, around two fifths (37%) had completed a youth data form. Among those who had experienced someone spitting on them, only 15% used a Spit Kit.

3.2.2 Satisfaction with police response

Those who had contacted CentreComm for an emergency response (only sixteen per cent of all drivers) were asked to rate the speed and effectiveness of the police response, as shown on the following page. A quarter (24%) were very satisfied (a score of 8 to 10), a third (34%) gave a score between 5 and 7 and a further quarter (25%) gave a score of 0 to 4.²

One in ten drivers (10%) said that they had contacted the police regarding a non-urgent enquiry. Those working on night shifts (16%) were more likely to have done so.

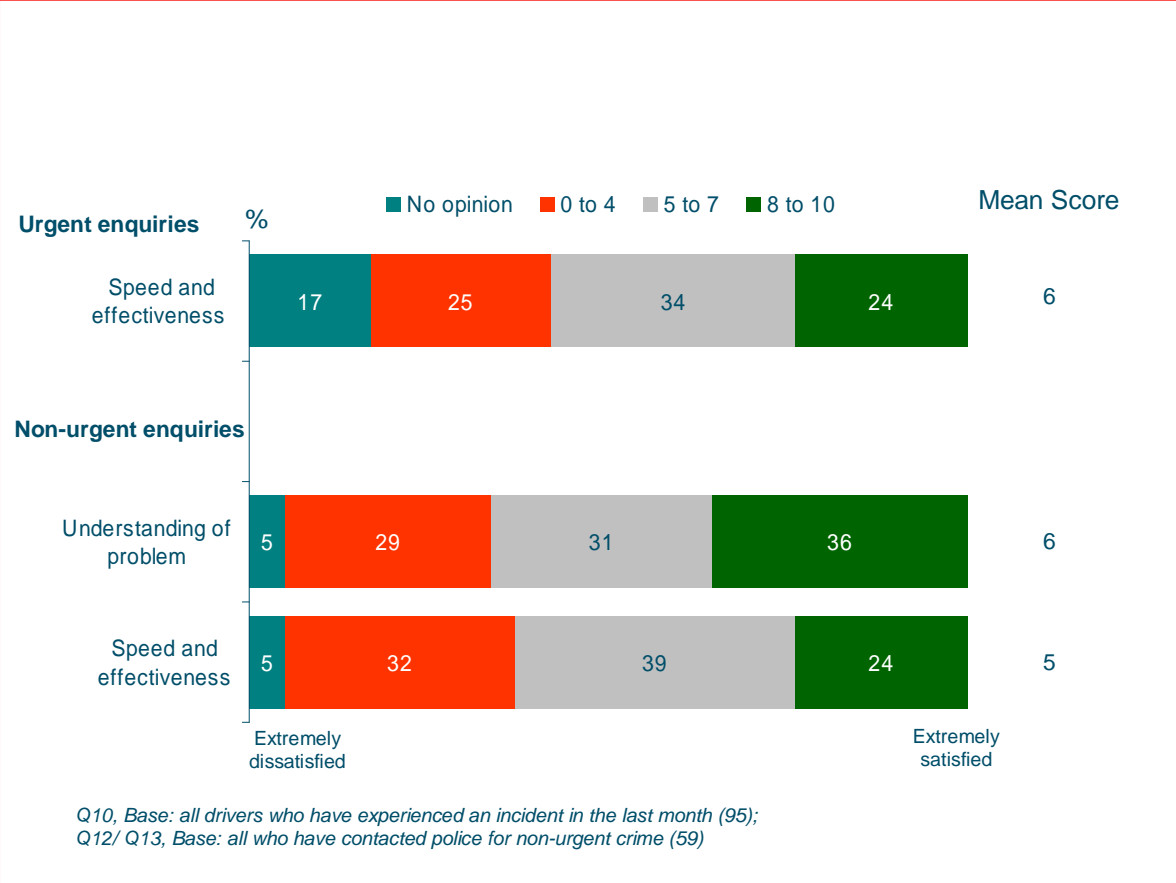
The following chart also shows levels of satisfaction amongst those who had contacted the police with non-urgent enquiries, in terms of how well the police understood their problem and in terms of speed and effectiveness of the response.

A third (36%) felt that the police understood their problem well, giving a score of 8 to 10. At the other end of the scale, three in ten (29%) gave a score of 0 to 4.

A quarter (24%) gave a score of 8 to 10 for speed and effectiveness, with four in ten (39%) giving a score of 5 to 7, and a third (32%) giving a score of 0 to 4.

² When looking at the findings for emergency police response, it is important to bear in mind this responsibility mostly falls to the relevant MPS Borough Operational Command Unit, rather than the STTs, Hub Teams and TOCU Reassurance Teams (who will support emergency responses colleagues wherever possible and follow-up any local community concerns with those affected).

Satisfaction with police response



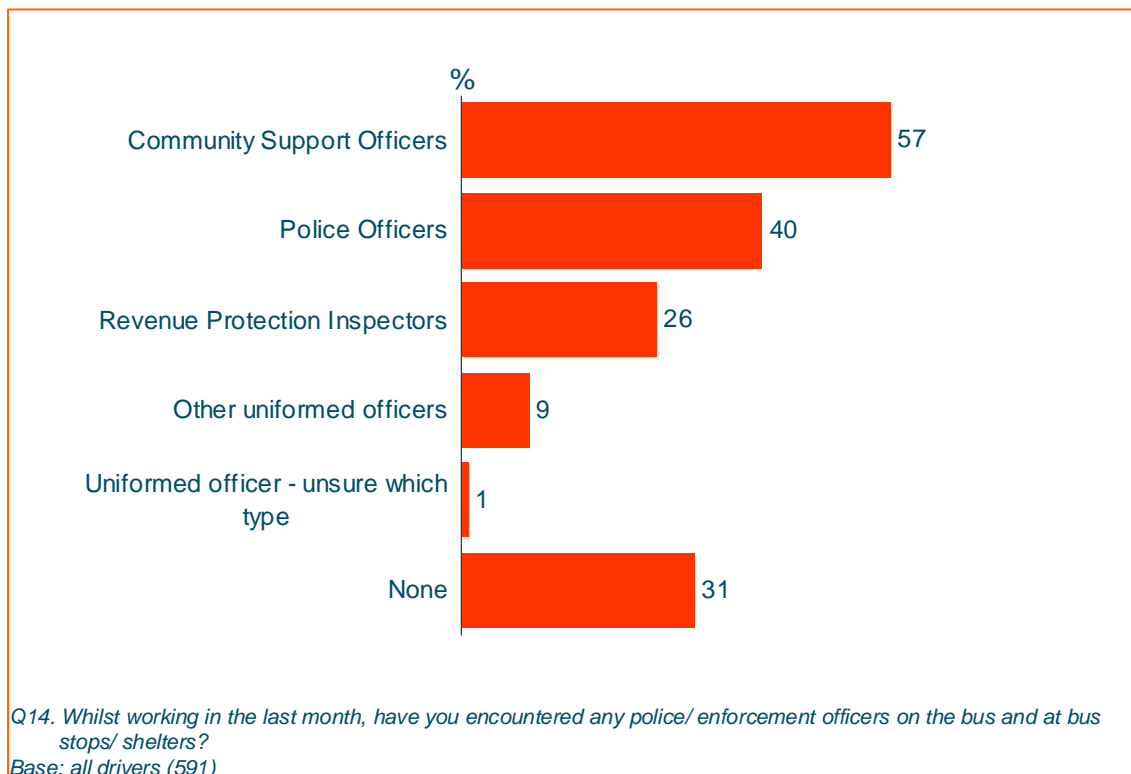
3.3 Awareness of and attitudes towards enforcement initiatives

3.3.1 Awareness of enforcement officers

Two thirds of drivers (67%) had encountered some type of police or enforcement officers whilst working in the previous month.

The most common type of enforcement officer encountered on bus routes were PCSOs, mentioned by almost three fifths (57%). Two fifths of drivers (40%) had noticed Police Officers, with those interviewed at Inner London depots more likely to have encountered them (46% vs. 37% in Outer London). A quarter of drivers (26%) had come across Revenue Protection Inspectors, and one in ten (9%) had encountered another type of uniformed officer.

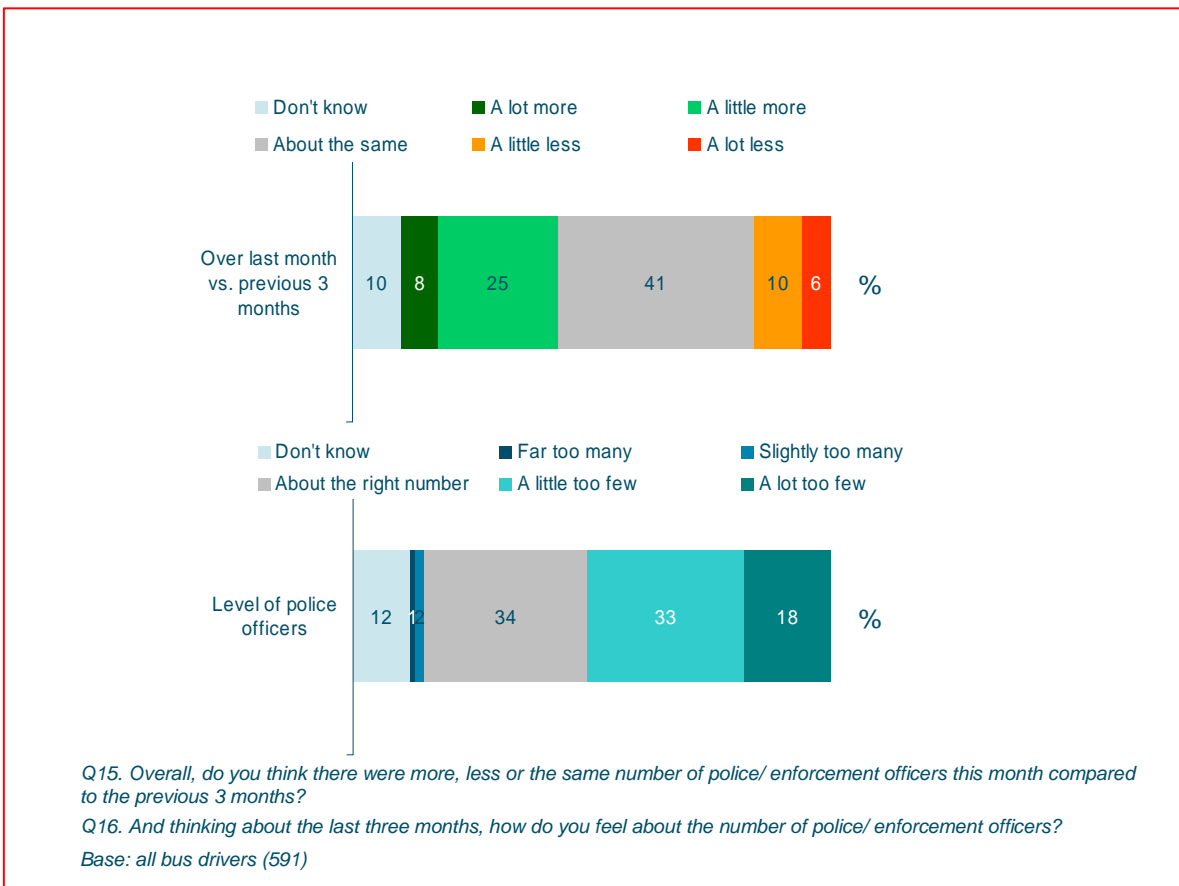
Awareness of enforcement officers (unprompted)



There were several differences between groups in terms of levels of awareness. More experienced drivers were also more likely to have encountered any type of police / enforcement officer (69% of those driving for more than one year, compared with 56% of those driving for less than a year). Those working night shifts were less likely to have encountered any officers (58%).

The following chart shows drivers' perceptions on the number of police / enforcement officers on and around buses in the previous month compared with the previous three months, and whether this level is seen as too many, too few or the right number.

Perceptions on the number of police and enforcement officers



A third of drivers (34%) felt that there were more police / enforcement officers on buses and at bus stops over the previous month (when comparing to the previous 3 months). However, two fifths (41%) felt that there were about the same number, and around one in six (16%) felt that there were less.

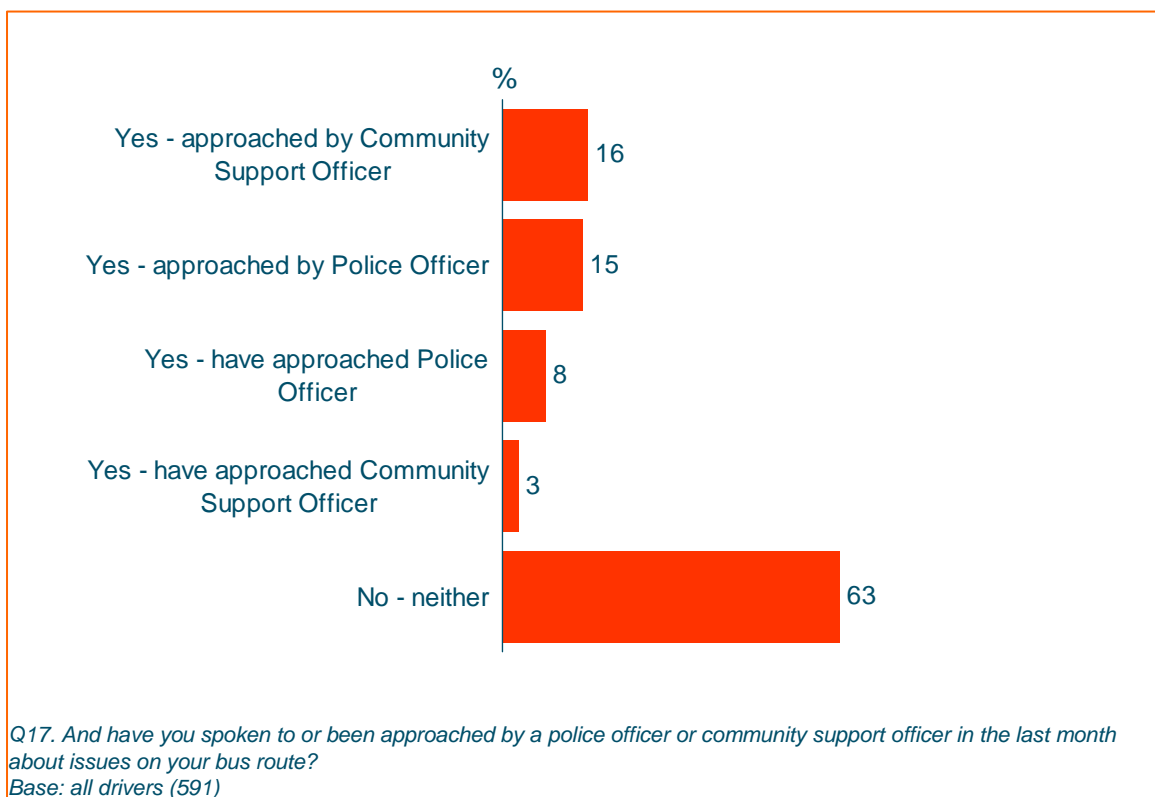
More experienced drivers were more likely to have noticed an increase in police / enforcement officers (36% of those driving buses for more than 1 year vs. 20% driving for less than 1 year).

Very few drivers (3%) felt that there were too many police / enforcement officers. A third (34%) felt that the level of enforcement was about right, although half of drivers (51%) felt that there were too few police / enforcement officers.

Those who had experienced incidents in the previous month were also more likely to feel this (52% vs. 39% of those who had not experienced any incidents).

The following chart shows the proportion of drivers that had spoken to or been approached by a Police Officer or PCSO in the previous month (based on those aware of these enforcement officers).

Contact with Police and PCSOs

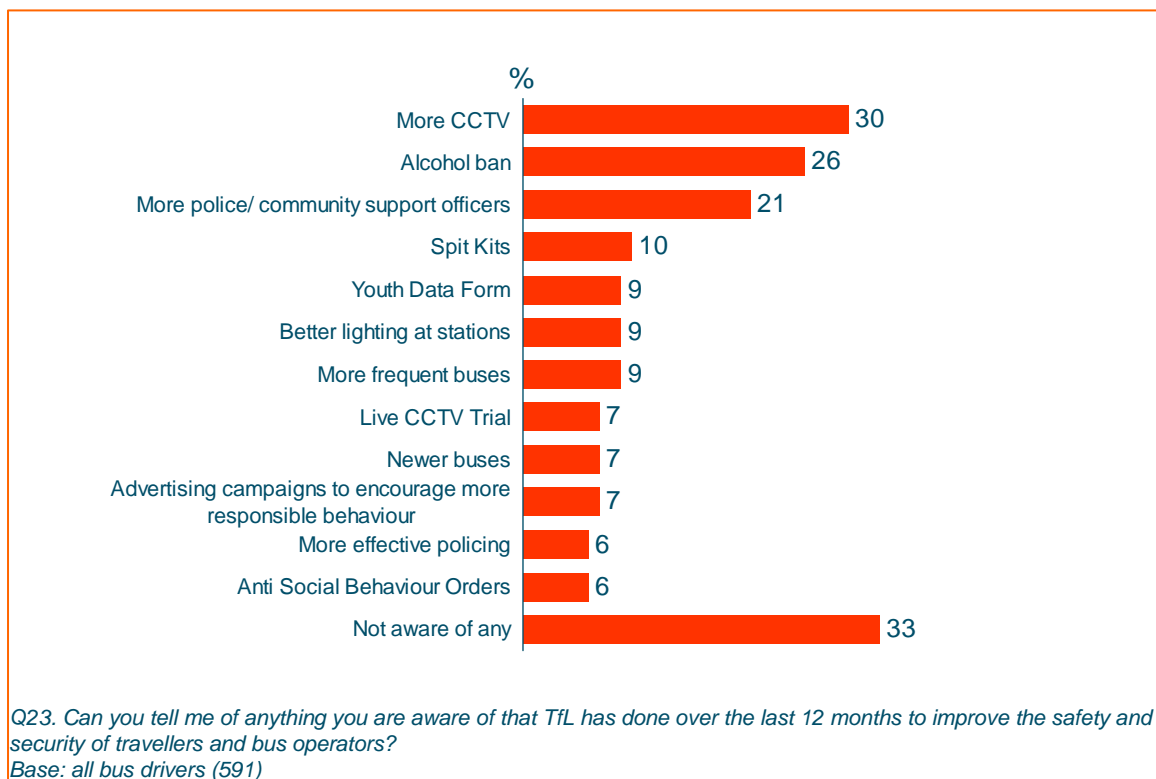


A third of those who were aware of the presence of Police or PCSOs on their routes in the previous month (33%) had had any contact with them. Around one in six had been approached by a PCSO (16%), with a similar proportion having been approached by a Police Officer (15%). Those interviewed at Inner London depots were more likely to have been approached by a Police Officer (22% vs. 11% in Outer London). Drivers do not appear to be proactively making contact with the enforcement officers, with just eight per cent having actively approached a Police Officer, and three per cent having approached a PCSO.

3.3.2 Awareness of community safety, enforcement and policing initiatives

All drivers were asked whether they were aware of any initiatives that TfL has introduced over the last twelve month to improve safety and security on buses.

Awareness of TfL initiatives to improve safety and security on buses (unprompted)



Three in ten drivers (30%) mentioned the increased presence of CCTV on buses. Those from BAME backgrounds were more likely to mention CCTV (35% vs. 25% White) A quarter of drivers (26%) mentioned the alcohol ban, and one in five (21%) were aware that a greater presence of police and PCSOs had been introduced. Around one in ten were aware of Spit Kits (10%) and the Youth Data Form (9%). A third of drivers (33%) were not aware of any initiatives.

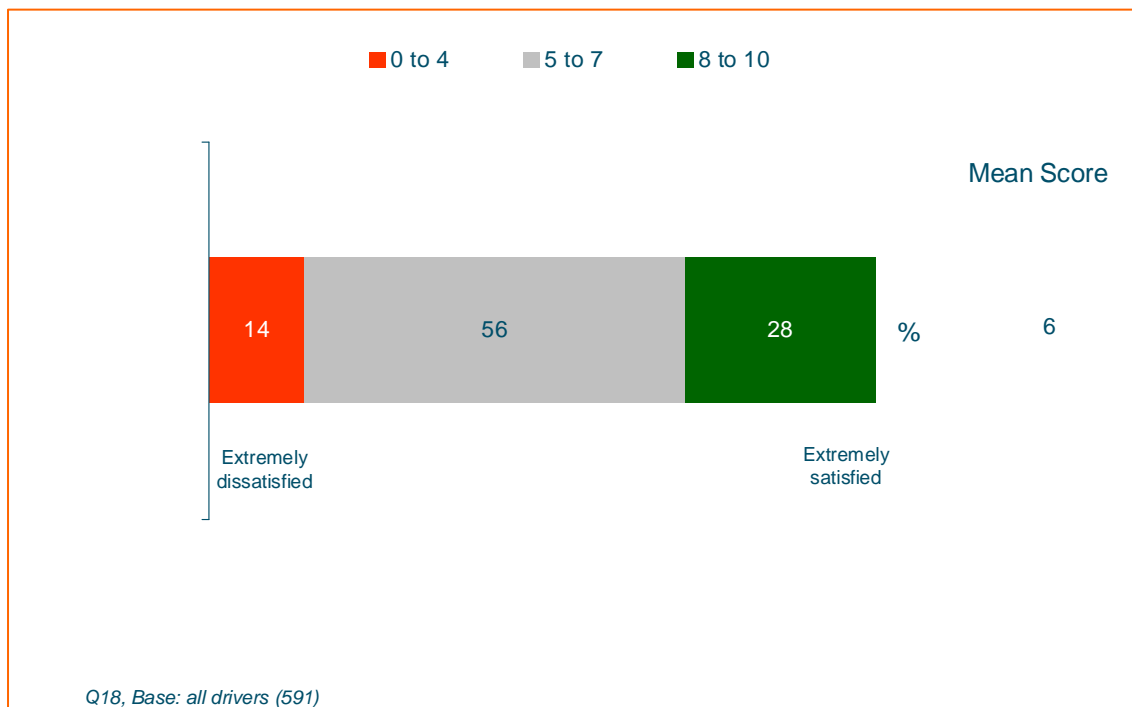
There were some differences by area. Those interviewed at Inner London depots were more likely to mention CCTV (36% vs. 27% in Outer London) and Spit Kits (13% vs.

8%), whereas those in Outer London were more likely to mention better lighting at stations (11% vs. 6%).

3.3.3 Attitudes towards police / enforcement officers

Those who had had any dealings with police / enforcement officers were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the overall service provided.

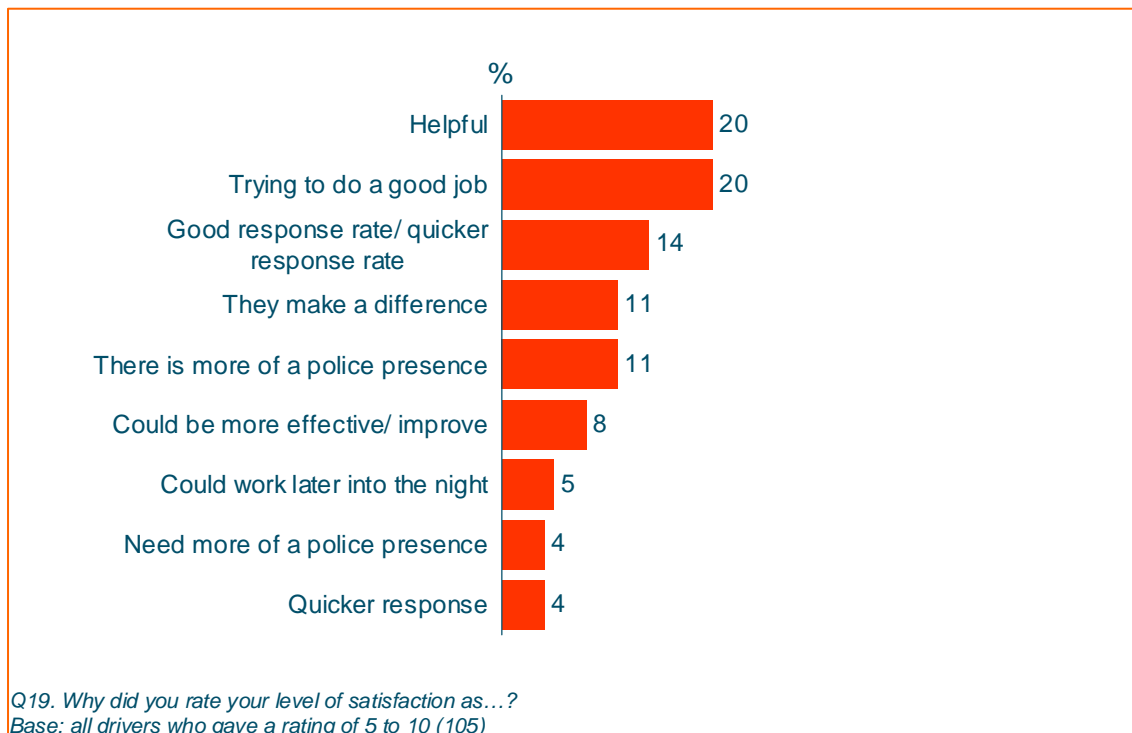
Satisfaction with overall service provided by police / enforcement officers



The mean satisfaction score was six out of ten. 28% gave a rating of 8 to 10, and over half (56%) gave a score of 5 to 7. One in seven were dissatisfied, giving a score of 0 to 4. There were no significant differences between groups in terms of satisfaction.

The following chart shows reasons given by drivers for their level of satisfaction.

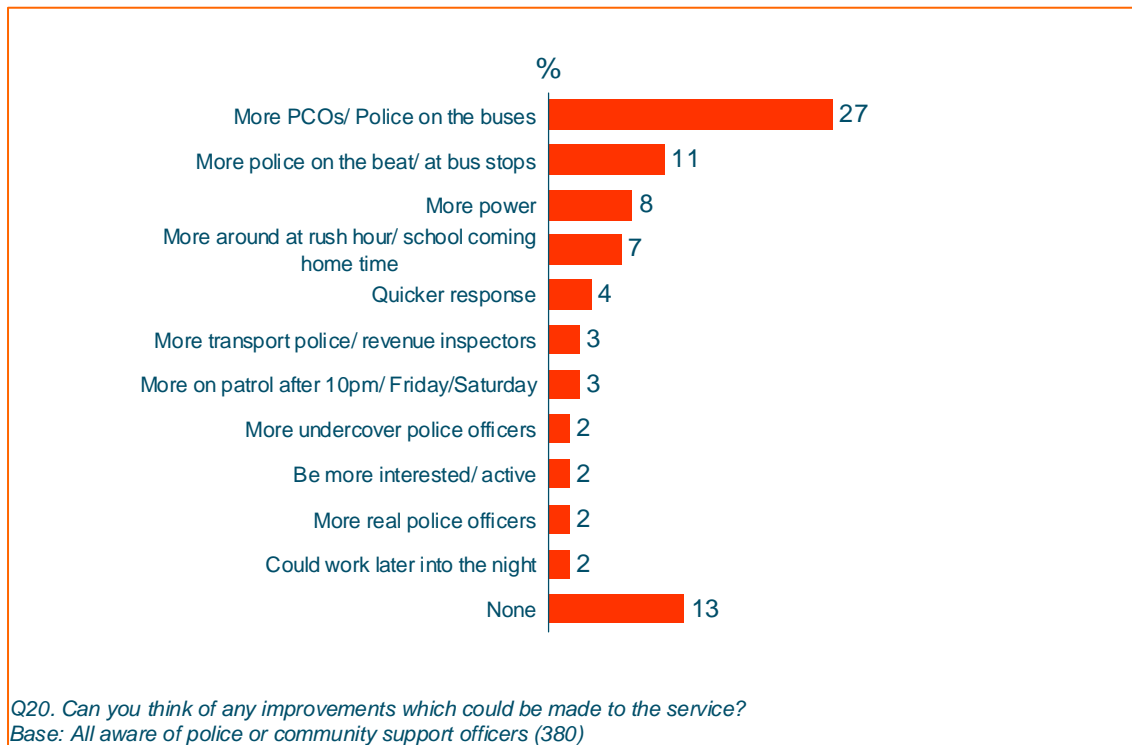
Reasons for satisfaction rating



Positive comments include the helpfulness of the officers and the fact that they are trying to do a good job, mentioned by 17%. One in eight (12%) felt that the response rate was now quicker, and one in ten (10%) felt that the officers make a difference generally or that there is now a greater police presence. Negative comments related to the perceived effectiveness of the officers (10%), a need for a greater presence generally (5%) or that the enforcement officers could work later into the night (4%).

Drivers who were aware of the enforcement officers were asked to suggest any improvements which could be made to the service provided.

Suggested improvements to the service provided by police / PCSOs



A wide range of suggestions were made, although one in eight (13%) were unable to come up with any improvements.

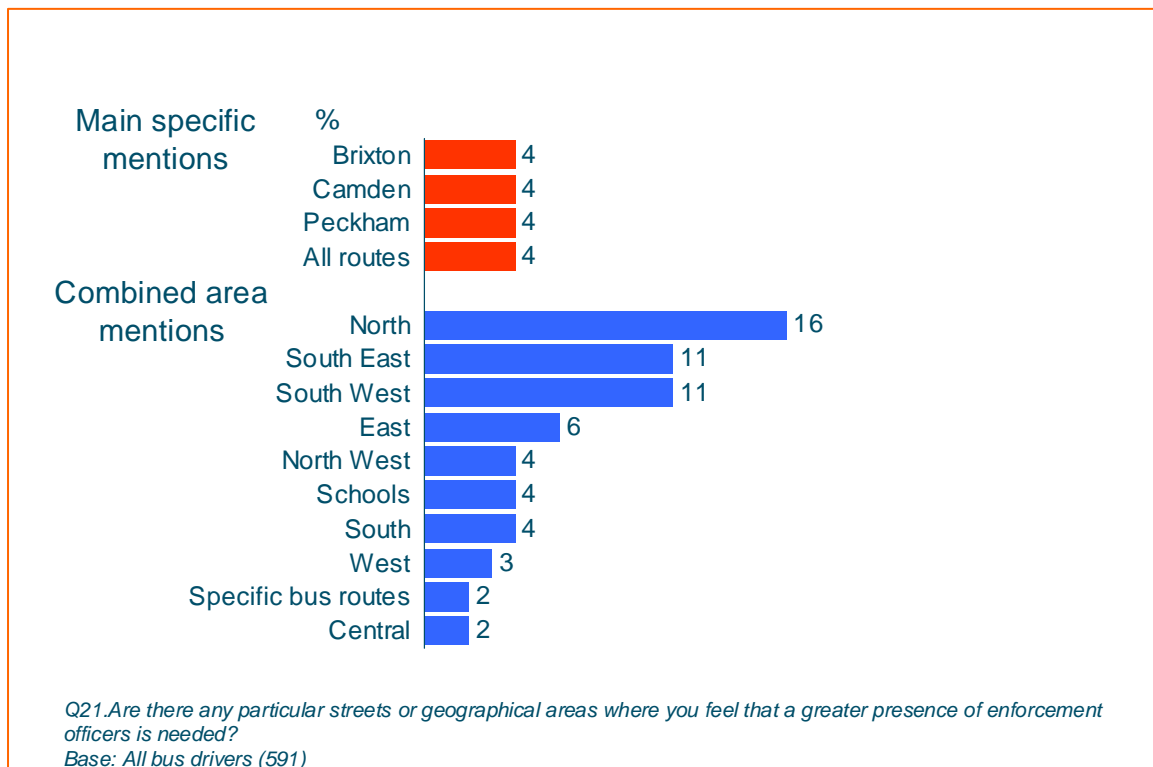
The most common suggestions related to increasing the presence of enforcement officers. A quarter (27%) felt that more PCSOs and Police were required on the buses, and around one in ten suggested increasing the number of police on the beat or at bus stops (11%).

One in twelve felt that the enforcement officers needed greater power (8%). Seven per cent felt that a greater presence was needed at particular times of day, such as rush hour and school closing time.

3.3.4 Areas where greater enforcement is considered necessary

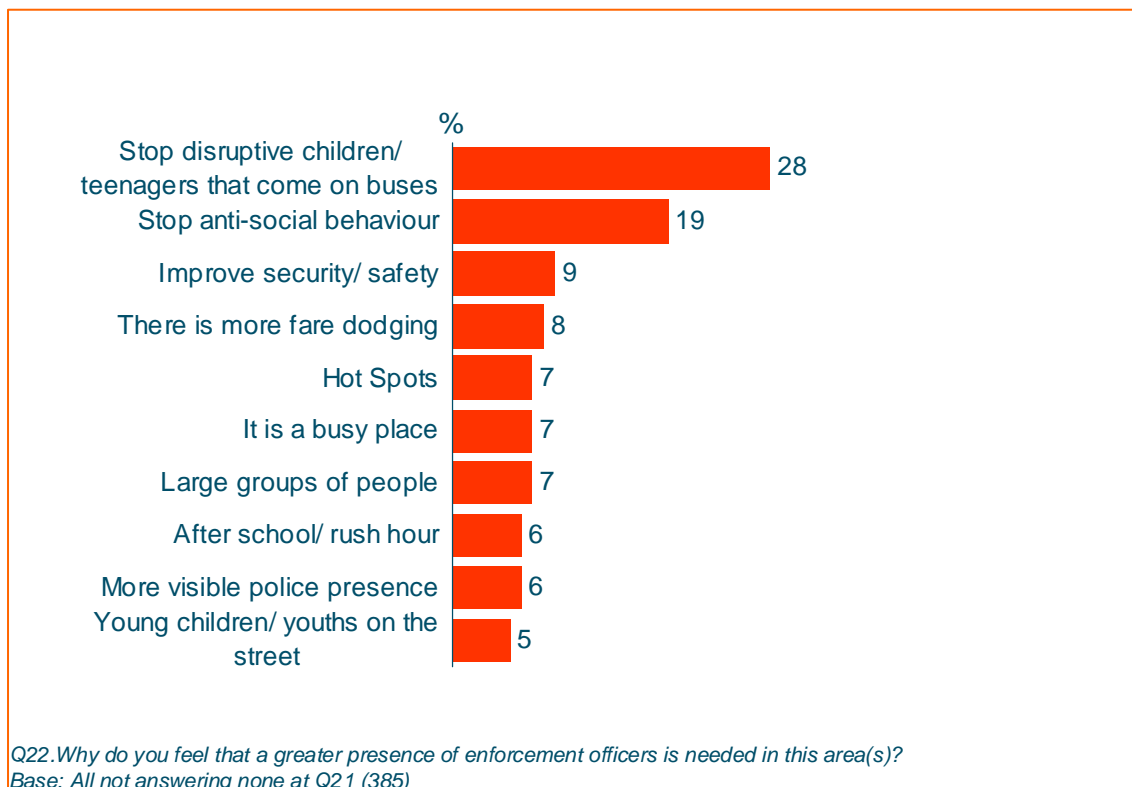
Drivers were also asked to suggest any particular areas or streets where they felt that a greater presence of enforcement officers were required. A wide range of areas and streets were mentioned, with around one in twenty drivers (4%) feeling that a greater presence is needed in Brixton, Camden and Peckham, or on all bus routes. The following chart groups answers into broad geographical areas.

Areas where a greater presence of enforcement officers is considered necessary



When asked to state the reasons for feeling that a greater level of enforcement was required, again a wide range of reasons were given.

Reasons for feeling that a greater presence of enforcement officers is needed



The most common reason for feeling that greater enforcement was required in a particular area was to stop disruptive children or teenagers, mentioned by 28%. Around one in five (19%) mentioned anti-social behaviour more generally, and around one in ten felt that it would improve security or safety (9%) or that fare dodging was more frequent in the specific areas they mentioned (8%).

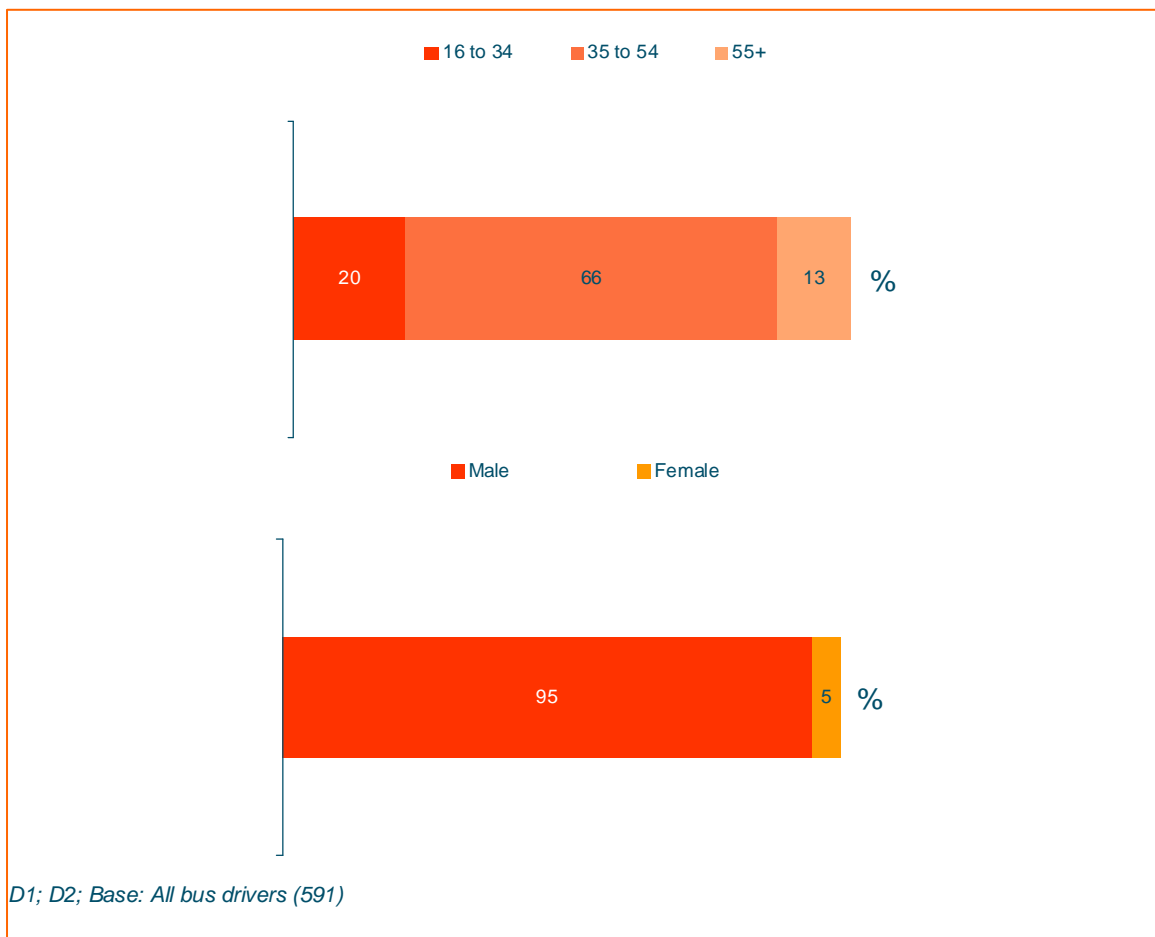
3.4 Respondent Profile

3.4.1 Demographic Profile

A fifth of drivers were aged 16 to 34 (20%), two thirds were aged 35 to 54 (66%) and the remainder (13%) were aged 55 and above.

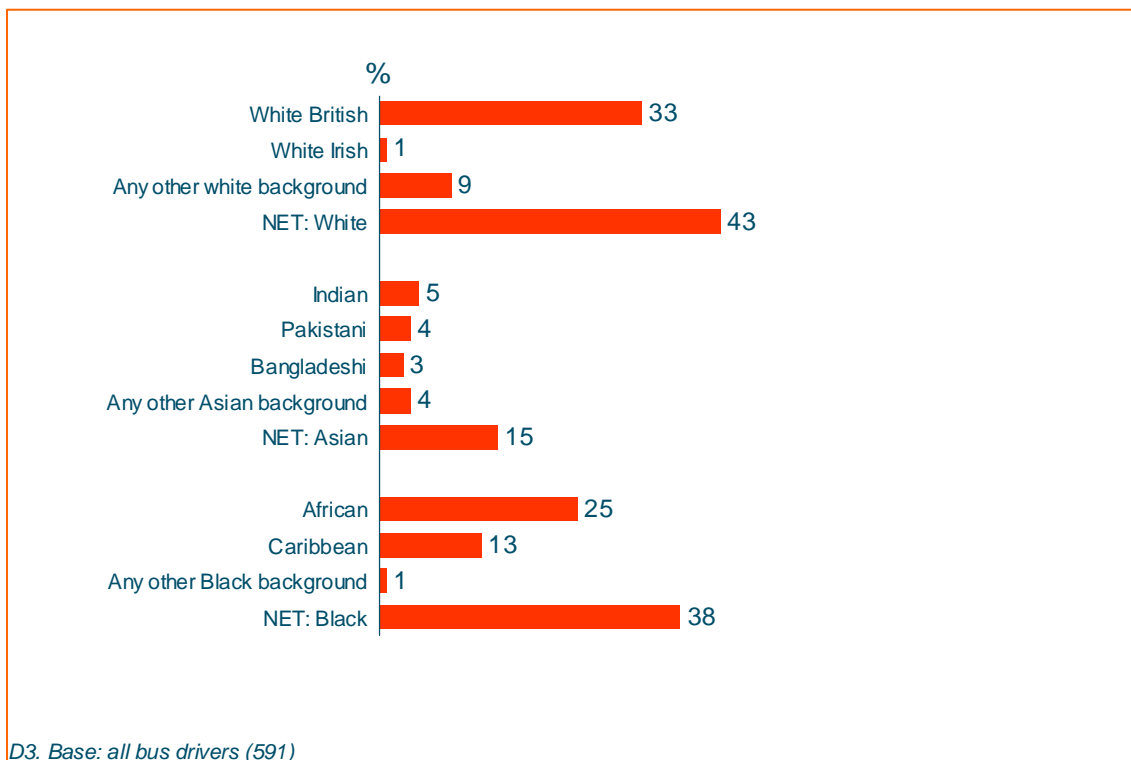
The large majority of drivers are male, with just one in twenty (5%) females.

Age and Gender



The ethnic origin of drivers is shown below. Around two fifths of drivers were from white backgrounds (43%). Over half (56%) were from BAME groups.

Ethnic Origin

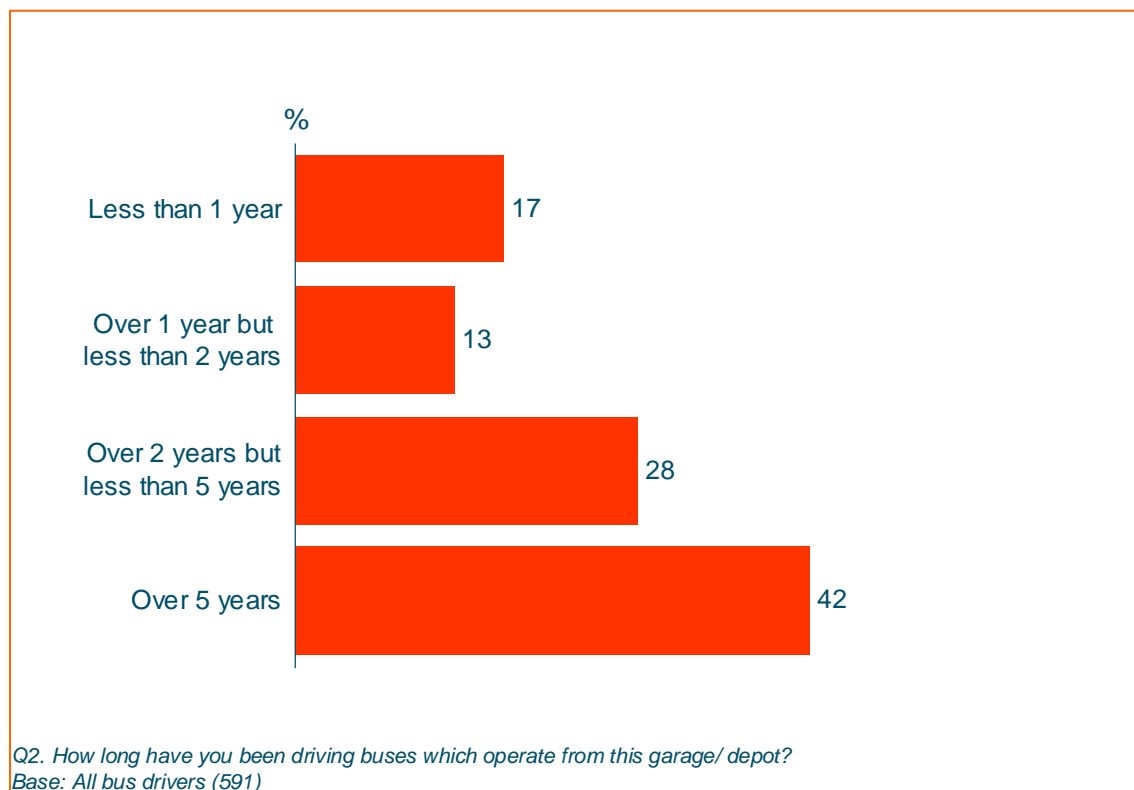


Interviewers were asked to rate whether there were any language difficulties when carrying out the interview. The large majority (92%) experienced no difficulties, and eight per cent had to have a few words and phrases explained to them.

3.4.2. Driver experience

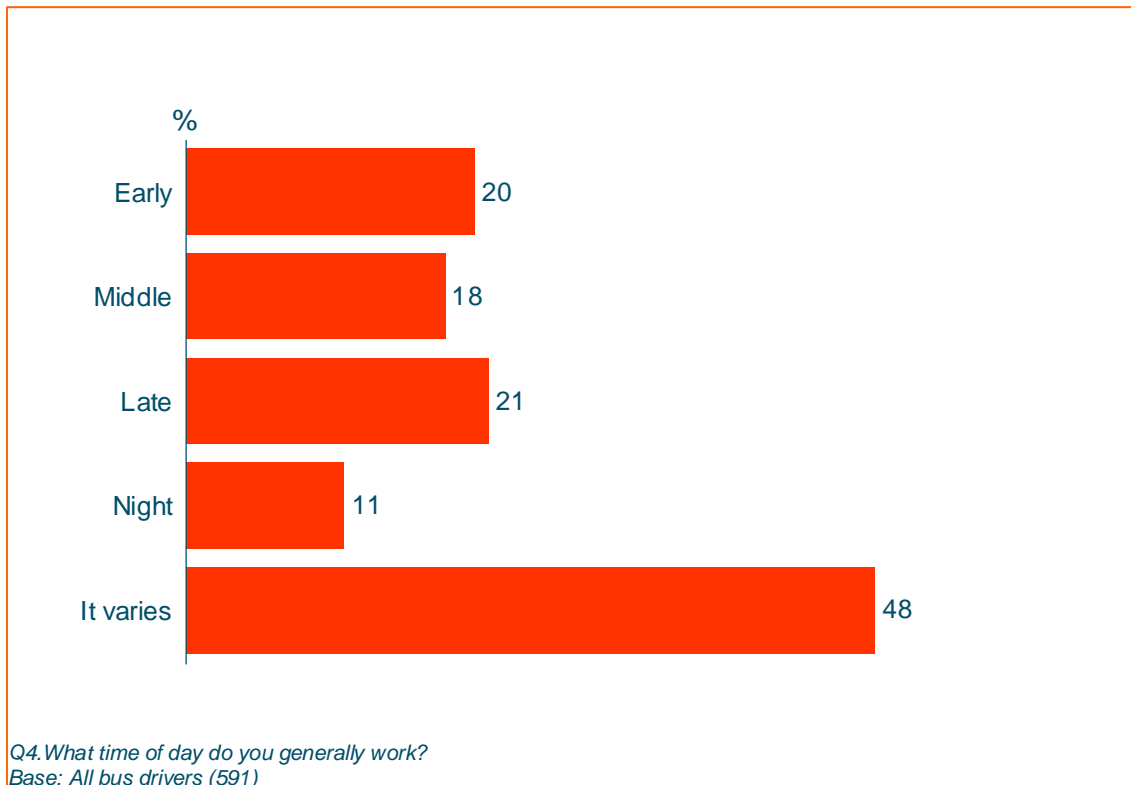
Just under a fifth of drivers (17%) had been in the job for less than a year. At the other end of the scale, two fifths (42%) had been driving for more than five years.

Length of time have been driving buses which pass through this depot



Around half of drivers (48%) worked on a range of different shifts. One in ten (11%) worked on night shifts.

Times of day worked



Appendix A: Fieldwork locations

Location	No. of Interviews
INNER LONDON (TOCU) TOTAL	224
Westbourne Park	55
Stockwell	46
Holloway	29
Catford	30
Bow	15
Alperton	15
Norwood	14
Walworth	20
OUTER LONDON TOTAL	367
STT TOTAL	280
Plumstead	30
Northumberland Park	36
Orpington	27
Leyton	30
Tottenham	15
Willesden	26
Hounslow	17
Thornton Heath	14
Dagenham	8
Sutton	31
Brentford	16
Twickenham	15
Barking	15
HUB TOTAL	87
Wood Green	45
Croydon	15
South Croydon	27