ASLEF

The train drivers' union

>>> Better Driving Cabs Report 2020

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Executive summary

>>> Introduction

The health and safety of members is clearly one of the key priorities for a trade union, and ASLEF is no different. What perhaps sets us aside is the fact that, as train drivers, our members' health and safety is inherently linked with the health and safety of thousands of others.

ASLEF therefore believes that it is in the interest of our trade union, our industry and of parliamentarians to ensure that our members' working conditions are up to standard. Our health and safety is your health and safety.

Unfortunately, too often, our members are forced to work in cabs that are too hot in the summer, too cold in the winter and poorly designed in terms of ergonomics. This can have a detrimental effect on their ability to safely go about their job.

To gauge how widespread this problem is, and work out what the key issues are, we surveyed our members. Just over a thousand drivers replied.

Confined spaces and limited options for adjustment risking musculoskeletal aches, pains, and injuries.

Window rubber deteriorated to the point of disintegration – a major source of cold draughts and noise.

Built up grime.

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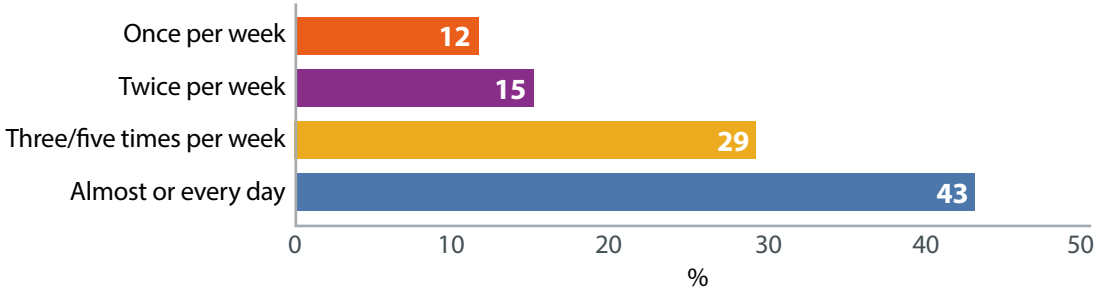
>>> Our survey of members

There were some extremely alarming results in our survey.

Heat

When asked if their cab has been **too hot** in the last two years, **85% of drivers answered yes**. Of those who said it had been too hot, almost all (99%) said this was during the summer, and 33% said during the spring.

When asked how frequently this was a problem during the periods they had identified, 43% said every day or almost every day, 29% said three to five times per week, 15% twice per week, and 12% once per week. So 72% of those responding, experienced cabs that were too hot for most of their working week during the periods they identified as problematic.

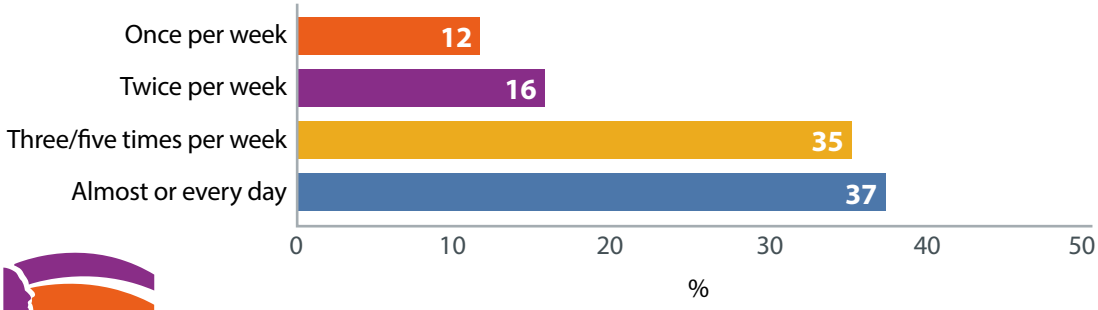


Cold

72% said it had been too cold in the cab when thinking about the previous two years.

Almost all (98%) said this was during the winter, and 44% said during the autumn. For 19%, spring was also an issue.

When asked how frequently this was a problem during the periods they had identified, 37% said almost or every day, 35% said three to five times per week, 16% twice per week, and 12% once per week. So, 72% of those responding experienced cabs that were too cold for most of their working week during the periods they identified as problematic.



BETTER DRIVING CABS

>>> The effects

The effects of exposure to extreme temperatures are very concerning.

When asked if exposure to hot or cold temperatures had caused any harmful effects, 50% of those responding to this question said that it had.

92% of these respondents said they had experienced reduced concentration or distraction, 53% reduced vigilance, 75% had experienced fatigue/ exhaustion, and 23% found themselves going slower in performing tasks. Thirty percent had felt faint or dizzy.

Eight percent said they had come close to or had been involved in a SPAD (signal passed at danger), 10% had come close to or had experienced a station overrun, and 10% had experienced or come close to another operational incident.

The effects experienced from exposure to extreme temperatures

Answer choices	Responses	
Reduced concentration or distraction	92%	419
Felt fatigued/exhausted	75%	340
Reduced vigilance	53%	243
Sweaty hands	49%	223
Found myself going slower (when performing tasks)	23%	107
Numb hands	17%	79
Felt faint	16%	74
Heat rash	15%	67
Other (please specify)	14%	64
Felt dizzy	14%	62
Heat (muscle) cramps	14%	62
Affected vision	8%	37
Came close to another operational incident	8%	36
Came close to station overun	7%	34
Came close to a SPAD	7%	30
Was involved in a station overun	3%	12
Another operation incident	2%	10
Was involved in SPAD (There is evidence of a link between temperature and SPAD incidents)	1%	3
Total Respondents: 456		

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>>> In our members' own words

"When too cold this could lead to an incident. You spend more time worrying about how cold it is rather than concentrating on driving."

"When you spend most of the shift thinking how to keep cool your mind isn't on the job at hand."

"Driving requires constant concentration, trying to cope with being freezing cold or too hot is something we shouldn't have to contend with in 2019. I've relieved drivers on early morning winter turns who have been practically blue."

"You are pressured into taking sets into traffic when the cab temperature is dangerously high for a safety critical role."

"Expected to stay alert and focused when you have sweat running into your eyes and sweat streaming down your back."

"When it's too hot I feel very fatigued, and I get very sweaty and uncomfortable, especially when it starts to run in my eyes affecting my vision."

"When it's extremely hot, the windows are open to the maximum and the noise can be overwhelming at times but it is the only option."

"Temperature often exceeds 40 degrees and on many shifts I'm left feeling physically sick due to the heat."

"I have suffered from heat exhaustion on numerous occasions leading to vomiting in one case."

"I suffered from heat exhaustion in the cab. I have little recall of the journey and no idea how I completed it without incident."

Confined spaces and limited options for adjustment risking musculoskeletal aches, pains, and injuries.

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>>> What we need

It is clear that poor cab conditions are creating a dangerous environment for our members and directly affecting their ability to drive trains.

There needs to be a maximum working temperature in law for workers, and there must be no exemption for train driving cabs.

This means train operating companies must be required to retrofit cabs to include air conditioning and suitable heating.

Some of the issues around cab conditions can be dealt with industrially, but when it comes to maximum and minimum temperatures, we need legislative change.

With passengers and rail workers at risk, these changes are urgently needed. Our safety is your safety.

The new Class 385 was originally designed with centre mounted cabs. However, with a walk through added, there are now a number of problems including the restricted view.

Good cab design – fully adjustable chair, ergonomic, and desk design based around primarily tasks.

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Full report

>>> Our objectives

ASLEF believes that every person should be able to work in a safe, clean and comfortable environment whatever their profession. Our members transport millions of passengers and billions of tonnes of freight every year and the public would be right to expect that every train driver feels warm enough, comfortable enough and safe enough to carry out their duties effectively.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Our members, representatives and negotiators have repeatedly raised concerns about poor driving conditions, and it is frequently identified as an issue at our annual conferences. Considering this, our Executive Committee has now initiated the Better Driving Cabs campaign which intends to deliver on the following objectives:

Raise awareness of the benefits of a good cab environment with industry bodies

The modern trains built today must conform to European standards and – in the case of international transit – the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs). The standards for mainline rolling stock are covered by EN 16186 (parts 1-5) and, whilst the driving cabs of trains built to these standards are a vast improvement on older 'legacy' rolling stock, there is still a lot to do.

Good cab design.

These standards and specifications however, only apply to new trains and even when an old train is refurbished, there is no requirement for the driving cab to be modernised at the same time unless it is required by the industry regulator – the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). So there is still a long way to go to ensure that every driving cab is a decent, safe, and healthy place to work.

Whilst the bargaining machinery can lead to improvements in these areas, transformational rather than piecemeal change of older 'legacy' stock across the industry will only be realised if there are changes to legislation and positive action taken by the appropriate regulatory and advisory bodies including the ORR as well the safety body, the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB).

We need our industry to change the way it thinks about train design. We need the train to be designed around the driver, rather than the driver squeezed into the train, almost as an afterthought. With the long life of rolling stock, we also need this principle to be applied retrospectively to older 'legacy' stock, not only during refurbishment, but as technology makes upgrades possible.

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Improve the training of representatives and negotiators

ASLEF recognises that with the introduction of modern rolling stock comes the introduction of new technology and, whilst we will continue to be open to these advancements, we will also be watchful of the impacts on passenger safety that any new equipment installed in driving cabs may bring.

Our experience has shown that representative involvement in the early design stages of a new train is crucial to achieving a decent working environment for our members, but we also recognise that there needs to be consistency when they apply their knowledge to cab design.

ASLEF (with the assistance of industry bodies) intends to provide a decent standard of training for our negotiators and representatives to ensure that all standards are consistent throughout the industry and that rolling stock can be cascaded at a later date, safe in the knowledge that this standard has been applied.

Improve the industry reporting process

Traditional methods to monitor the faults with a train are starting to be replaced by computer-based systems that automatically send out fault information to a maintenance team electronically. Whilst this is recognised as a step forward in many respects, it is unfortunate in that it provides little historic information to the driver, which in turn prevents our members using their professional judgement to highlight a long-running or persistent fault through internal (company) or industrial procedures. This reporting process needs to be improved on a company by company basis.

We also believe that there needs to be a national reporting process to identify issues with specific types of rolling stock so that these can be addressed by industry organisations with a view to refurbishing the driving cabs of legacy rolling stock that fall short of current cab standards.

Consulting ASLEF and our member drivers on the proposed GWR Class 800, led to a better designed cab.

Continued...

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Campaign for a maximum cab temperature and for air conditioning in every cab

This issue has been raised on numerous occasions and is regularly among the top issues mentioned by our members. ASLEF has long campaigned for effective heating and cooling systems in driving cabs through industrial machinery.

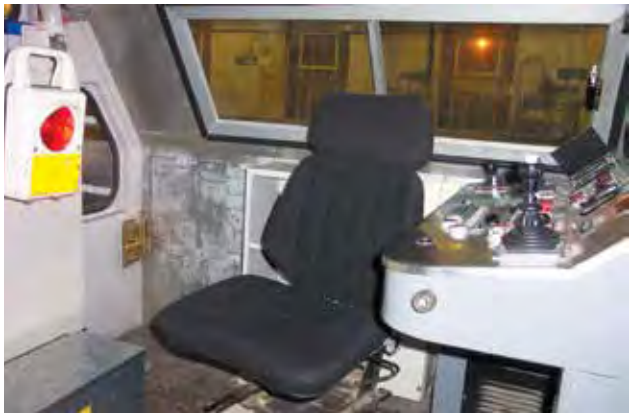
Unfortunately, there is still a lot to be done. There are a lot of driving cabs where the heating and air conditioning systems are ineffectual. Worse still, there are driving cabs that don't have any air conditioning system fitted at all. This issue has a huge impact on the health, safety and welfare of our members in the form of fatigue and stress which ultimately endangers the lives of all those who use and work on the railway.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 provide that 'during working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable'. The accompanying approved code of practice explains that 'the temperature inside the workplace should provide reasonable comfort without the need for special clothing' and 'should normally be at least 16 degrees Celsius.' There is no meaningful legal maximum temperature.

Exemptions are provided for in the law so this rather limited protection from extreme temperatures does not apply to locomotives or rolling stock leaving train drivers without any meaningful protection.

Whilst we understand that defining a meaningful maximum temperature is not practicable or even possible in certain industries, this should not be a bar to defining a maximum workplace temperature where it is practicable to do so, including in the case of train driving cabs.

Therefore, we need industry and legislative change to ensure that there is a defined minimum and maximum temperature for workplaces where this is practicable to achieve. This change would provide millions of workers (not just train drivers) with valuable protections from fatigue and exhaustion caused by excessive heat, especially important in industries where safety is paramount – like the rail industry.



Rather cramped.

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Legacy rolling stock

The UK rail network is still operating passenger trains and freight locomotives that were originally built in the 1970s, 80s and 90s when the concepts of human factors and ergonomics were not as developed as they are today. Also, legacy rolling stock (by its very nature) is often old and 'tired' and so can suffer other problems such as drafts and excessive noise through worn and loose-fitting components.

ASLEF does not expect industry to throw a train or locomotive away after 10 or 20 years, but we do expect that a driving cab should be regularly assessed and maintained in good order during its lifetime, and when new technology or ergonomic research indicates a need for, and the possibility of change, that adaptations should be carried out.

The responsibility for this lies with the relevant train or freight operating company (TOC or FOC) and the ORR.

Poor design

It is the experience of our representatives and negotiators that although modern rolling stock is built to current standards this still leaves enough latitude for a poorly designed driving cab.

Some years ago, ASLEF was invited to send a representative on the British Standards Institute (BSI) 'mirror group' for European cab standards. It was recognised by some UK industry bodies (like the RSSB) that having a train drivers' voice on the working groups and committee that set the standards was logical and would provide valuable expertise and insight.

Confined spaces and limited options for adjustment risking musculoskeletal aches, pains, and injuries.

Imagine this as your workplace.

One of the areas that needs to be changed however, is the attitude of TOCs and FOCs in relation to trade union involvement in the design of driving cabs. There should not be a reluctance to involve trade union representatives as a poorly designed cab can add additional costs down the line if modifications have to be made at a later date; drivers are harmed or injured and require time off to recover, or drivers are lost to ill-health retirement.

Cleanliness

A significant number of our members reported that the cleanliness of driving cabs is often sub-standard. This can be for a number of reasons, including a lack of training for cleaners on how to clean the driving cab, a lack of time to undertake the task, and an aversion by companies to allow cleaners to clean the cab desk (through fear that the train controls may be inadvertently pressed). All have impacted on the effectiveness of the cleaning regime.

ASLEF intends to raise awareness of this issue with TOCs and FOCs with a view to improving the quality and effectiveness of the cleaning regime carried out in driving cabs.

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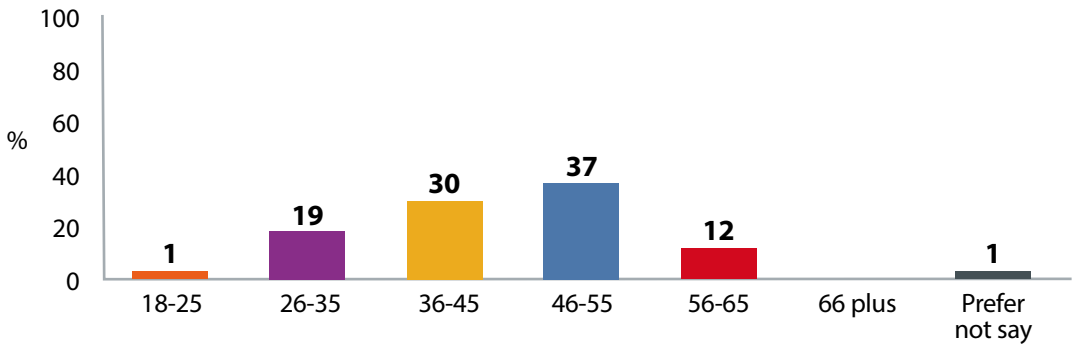
>>> The survey

In 2019, ASLEF carried out a survey to gain first-person accounts of the driving conditions experienced by our members, the details of which are contained in this report. You will be surprised by some of the comments submitted on the survey and shocked by others, but one thing is certain; ignoring the problem is not an option.

Within two weeks of the survey's launch we had just under 500 responses and obtained just over 1,000 responses in total. For a trade union of just over 20,000 active members this is a considerable response and shows that driving cab conditions are a high priority for our members.

We hope that you will support this campaign in any way that you can and help ASLEF build the railway that we all want – modern, safe and reliable.

The age of respondents



Respondents

The largest group (37%) of drivers were in the 46-55 years age range which, when combined with the age range 36-45 years (30%), account for the majority of drivers replying (67% or 657). Nineteen percent (189) were between 26-35 years old, 12% (122) identified as 56-65 years old, just 1% (11) were 25 or below. Six individuals preferred not to say, and no respondents identified as 66 plus.

BETTER DRIVING CABS

For gender, 93% (913) identified as male and 6% (56) identified as female. Four individuals identified as trans male or gender variant, and 11 (1%) preferred not to say.

The demographics of respondents to the survey correlate with the demographics of the union's total membership, so the sample can reasonably be considered to be representative of members.

Traction

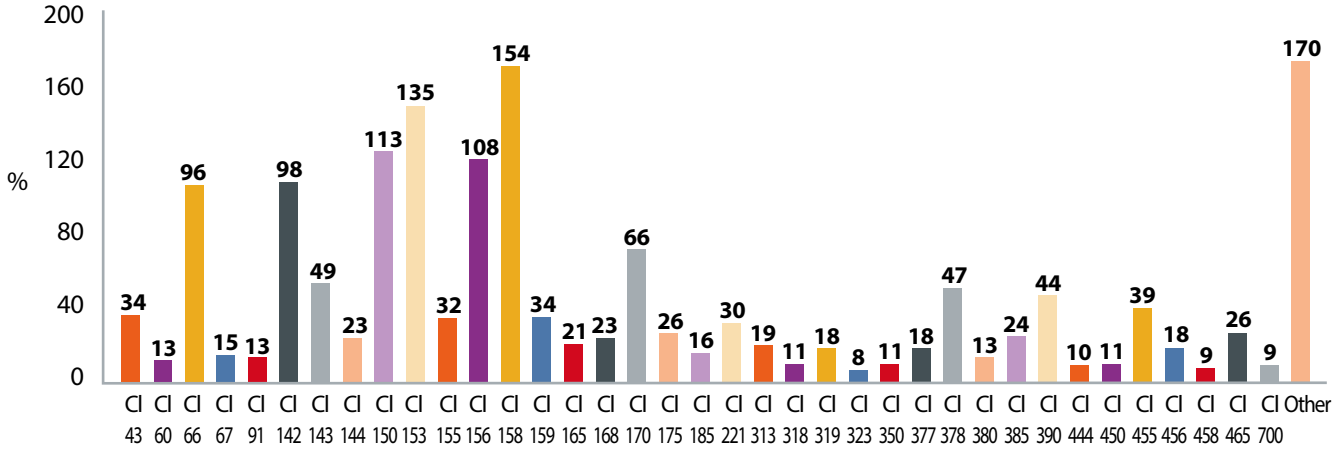
Members were asked to identify the traction they drove, and if several, the worst one. Some members identified one class of traction, but many listed two or more, sometimes identifying them as equally bad. For the purposes of analysis, any traction mentioned by seven or fewer (less than 0.7% of) drivers has been clumped together into the 'other' group along with a further seven replies where the traction was not identified.

The 1,023 respondents listed 1,604 units in their replies.

ASLEF member.

By far the most-mentioned traction was Class 158 (identified 154 times), followed by Class 153, 150, and 156. Class 150-156 account for 38% (or 388) of the units referred to by respondents. Class 158-159 account for 18% (or 188) of the units in the survey.

Traction driven



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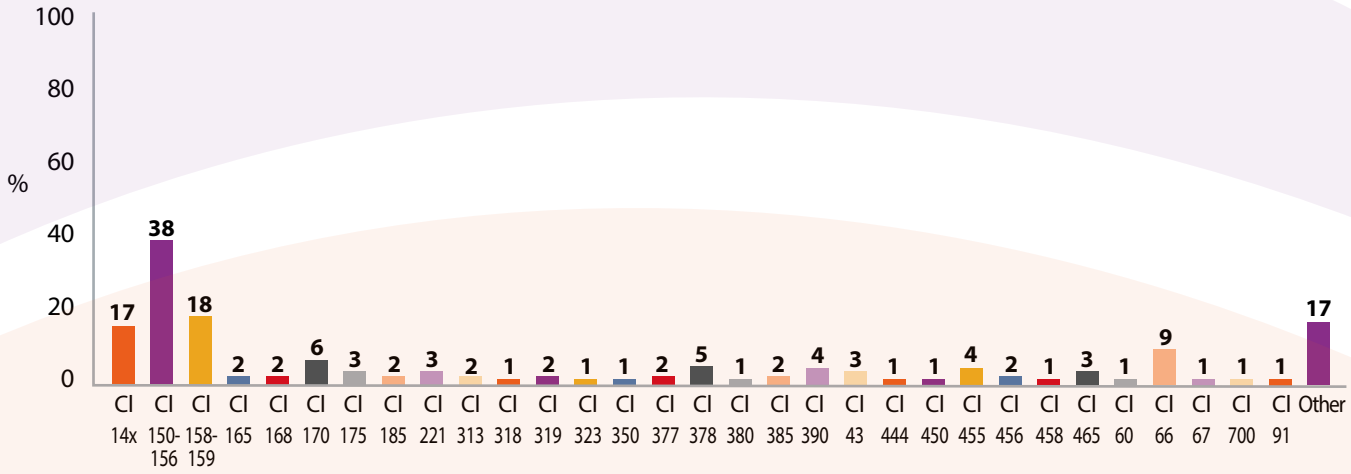
Class 142 was mentioned by 98 respondents which, when combined with similar units Class 143 and Class 144, total 170 (or 17%) of units.

Class 66 was also frequently identified by respondents, some 96 times, amounting to 9% of the units.

Cramped and built up grime – imagine working here.

Traction driven (partially grouped by class)



BETTER DRIVING CABS

>>> The in-cab experience

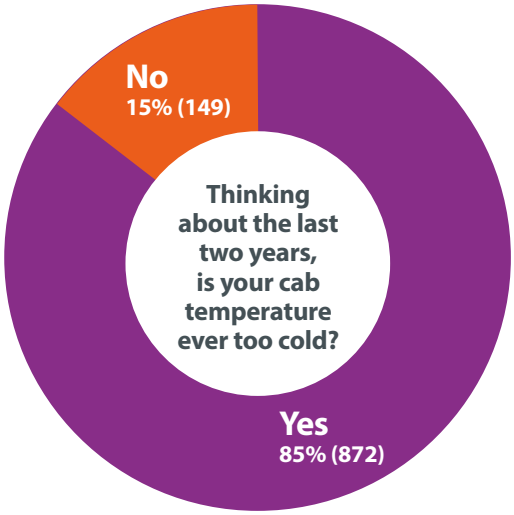
Cabs too hot

A regular concern expressed about driving cabs is the in-cab temperature. In the survey, we asked whether, over the previous two years, the cab temperature had ever been too hot or too cold.

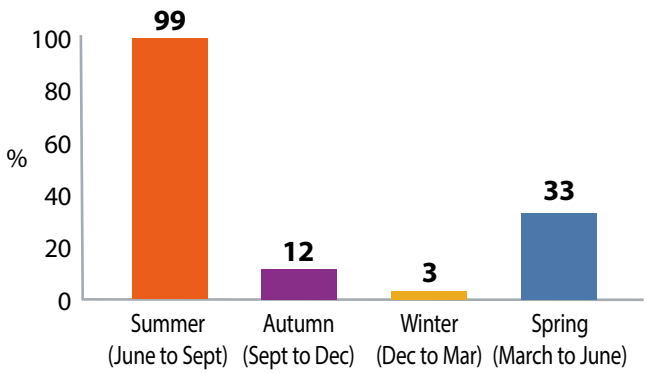
Of those responding, 85% (872) said it had been too hot, and 15% had said it had never been too hot. Only two respondents did not answer this question.

Of those who said it had been too hot and gave further information, almost all (99%) said this was during the summer, and 33% said during the spring. For 12%, hot cab temperatures were also an issue during the autumn.

When asked how frequently this was a problem, during the periods they had identified, 43% said almost or every day, 29% said three to five times per week, 15% twice per week, and 12% once per week. So, 72% of those responding experienced cabs that were too hot for most of their working week during the periods they identified as problematic.



If too hot, is this during:



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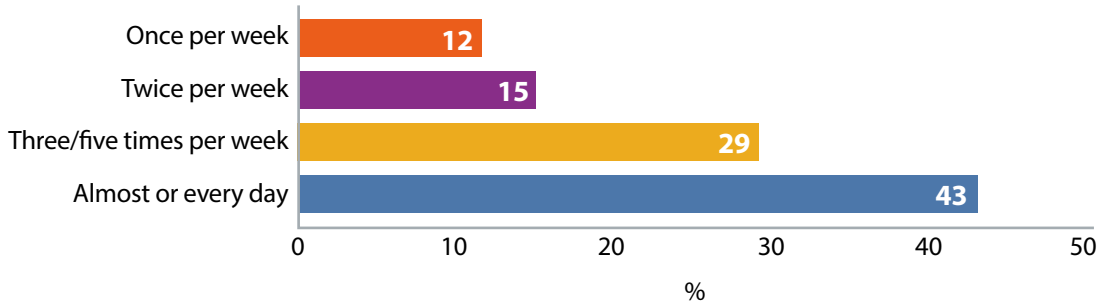
During the period/s you have identified in the above question, how often on average is it too hot in your cab?



Of those (135) who had recorded the temperature when too hot:

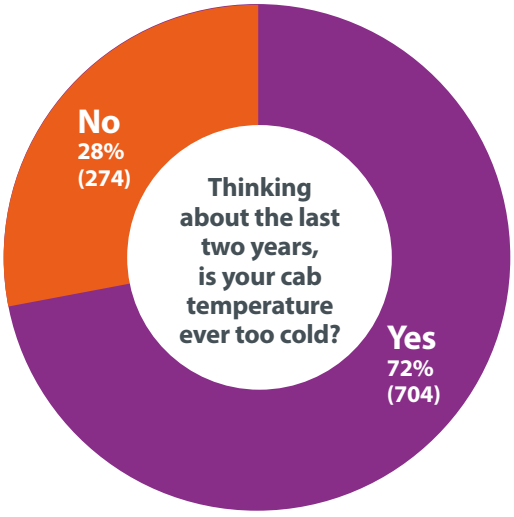
- 17% (23) reported recording 26°-30° Celsius,
- 53% (71) recorded temperatures between 31°-39° Celsius,
- 25% (34) had recorded between 40°-45° Celsius, and
- 3% (four) drivers had recorded temperatures of 46° Celsius or more.

Cabs too cold

Of those responding, 72% (704) said it had been too cold in the cab when thinking about the previous two years; 28% had said it had never been too cold. Forty-five respondents did not answer this question.

Of those who said it had been too cold and gave further information, almost all (98%) said this was during the winter, and 44% said during the autumn. For 19%, cold cab temperatures were also an issue during the spring.

When asked how frequently this was a problem, during the periods they had identified, 37% said almost or every day, 35% said three to five times per week, 16% twice per week, and 12% once per week. So, 72% of those responding experienced cabs that were too cold for most of their working week during the periods they identified as problematic.



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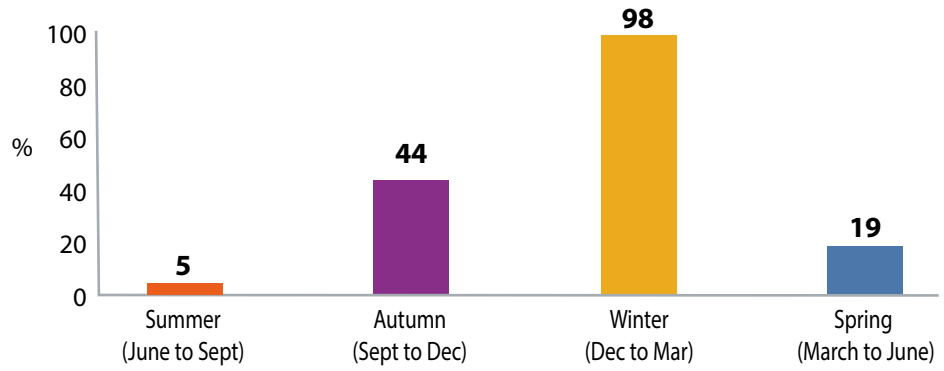
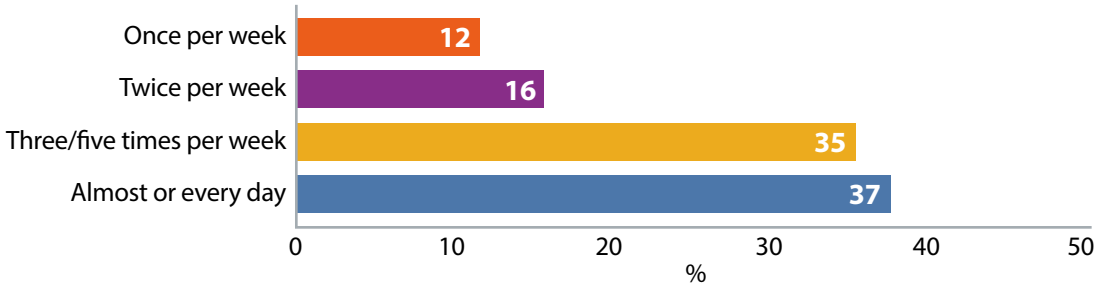
If too cold, is this during:



During the period/s you have identified in the above question, how often on average is it too hot in your cab?



Of those (54) who had recorded the temperature when too cold:

- 15% (eight) reported 11° Celsius or more,
- 17% (nine) had recorded temperatures of between 6°-9° Celsius,
- 37% (20) recorded temperatures between 1°-5° Celsius,
- 25% (14) drivers had recorded temperatures of 0°- ¯9° Celsius or more, and
- 6% (three) drivers had recorded a temperature of ¯10° Celsius or more.

Detrimental effects

When asked if exposure to hot or cold temperatures had caused any harmful effects, 50% of those responding to this question said that it had.

When asked for further information, 92% (419) of these respondents said they had experienced reduced concentration or distraction, 53% (243) indicated reduced vigilance, 75% (340) had suffered fatigue/exhaustion, and 23% (107) found themselves going slower in performance of tasks. Nearly a third (30%) had felt faint or dizzy.

Eight percent said they had come close to or had been involved in a SPAD, 10% had come close to or had experienced a station overrun, and 10% had experienced or come close to another operational incident.

The effects experienced from exposure to extreme temperatures

Answer choices	Responses	
Reduced concentration or distraction	92%	419
Felt fatigued/exhausted	75%	340
Reduced vigilance	53%	243
Sweaty hands	49%	223
Found myself going slower (when performing tasks)	23%	107
Numb hands	17%	79
Felt faint	16%	74
Heat rash	15%	67
Other (please specify)	14%	64
Felt dizzy	14%	62
Heat (muscle) cramps	14%	62
Affected vision	8%	37
Came close to another operational incident	8%	36
Came close to station overun	7%	34
Came close to a SPAD	7%	30
Was involved in a station overun	3%	12
Another operation incident	2%	10
Was involved in SPAD (There is evidence of a link between temperature and SPAD incidents)	1%	3
Total Respondents: 456		

Other symptoms included heat/muscle cramps, heat rash, sweaty or numb hands.

Additional comments included:

- experiencing joint, limb, or muscle pain, stiffness, or numbness;
- excessive sweating, even leading to sores and embarrassment;
- mood changes;
- shivering;
- dry eyes or dry throat, and eczema;
- dehydration, drinking lots and then difficulties with needing the toilet;
- noise and sunburn from open windows;
- headaches;
- feeling sick;
- three drivers reporting heat exhaustion or passing out.

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>>> In drivers' own words

Trying to cope with a too hot or too cold cab

When asked to detail their concerns, experiences, and/or incidents, including how they tried to cope with a too hot or too cold cab, 688 drivers (67% of all respondents) provided further information.

Drivers reported faulty or ineffective heaters which cannot cope with the drafts that the cabs let in from around the doors or desk, and of using newspapers, hand towels and tape to try to keep out the drafts.

Wearing outside clothing inside the cab to keep warm was frequently mentioned by drivers, including coats, gloves, hats and thermals. Several extra layers were often worn, with coats or blankets sometimes used to cover their legs. Three drivers resorted to stuffing scrunched up newspaper inside their clothing, placing their legs within a bin bag, or wearing a survival bag. Resorting to these methods to keep warm was mentioned 111 times.

> *"Very often there is quite a draught coming from under the drivers desk, straight onto your legs and face which you cannot hide from so end up freezing cold. Many drivers carry bin bags or wrap an extra coat round their legs to keep warm. I keep some camping gel heat pads and often drive wearing gloves. I have also in the past filled a hot water bottle and placed it inside my coat to maintain a bit of heat."*

But external winter clothing caused other problems, with bulky or slippery gloves making it more difficult to use controls. And as one driver said:

> *"When it's cold in a 14x I have worn gloves and even sat on my hands at times to keep warm. It is ridiculous driving traction like this in 2019."*

The danger cannot be overemphasised as the following quotes show:

> *"When too cold this could lead to an incident. You spend more time worrying about how cold it is rather than concentrating on driving."*

> *"When you spend most of the shift thinking how to keep cool your mind isn't on the job at hand."*

> *"Quite often the heaters can't cope with the draughts so you're constantly fidgeting to try and move your hands/legs and anywhere else affected, out of the draughts, which reduces your concentration."*

> *"Driving requires constant concentration, trying to cope with being freezing cold or too hot is something we shouldn't have to contend with in 2019. I've relieved drivers on early morning winter turns who have been practically blue."*

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The same applies when it is too hot within the cab, with air cooling not working or ineffective, and fans just circulating hot air. Drivers comments included:

> ***You are pressured into taking sets into traffic when the cab temperature is dangerously high for a safety critical role.***

> ***Expected to stay alert and focused when you have sweat running into your eyes and sweat streaming down your back.***

> ***Hands become sweaty and slip off the controls.***

> ***In the past I have nearly missed request stops due to loss of concentration.***

> ***When it's too hot I feel very fatigued, and I get very sweaty and uncomfortable, especially when it starts to run in my eyes affecting my vision.***

> ***When it's extremely hot, the windows are open to the maximum and the noise can be overwhelming at times but it is the only option.***

Noise is something that was also frequently mentioned. Both heaters and fans can be too noisy which can be uncomfortable for the driver, but more seriously can make it difficult to hear buzzers and alarms which are required for safe operation.

Many drivers reported having to open windows to try and reduce the temperature within the cab, but this can also make it too noisy for the drivers and, more seriously, make it difficult to hear vigilance and warning

Built up grime.

systems. Forty-three drivers raised this as a concern. Opening windows could cause doors to fly open or slam shut, and not necessarily make the cab any cooler. Drivers of the Class 66 said that opening a window allowed hot air in from the engines.

Drivers took extra drinking water into the cab, but said that food quickly became unfit for consumption. Cool water soon became cab temperature and refills weren't always available. Besides, many said that there was a limit to how much they can drink because diagrams and turn arounds allowed them little time to access a toilet.

Several drivers gave further detail about more serious health consequences:

> ***Temperature often exceeds 40 degrees and on many shifts I'm left feeling physically sick due to the heat.***

> ***I have suffered from heat exhaustion on numerous occasions leading to vomiting in one case.***

> ***I suffered from heat exhaustion in the cab. I have little recall of the journey and no idea how I completed it without incident.***

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Built up grime.

Missing back rest, so the driver had to sit against the metal frame.

Frayed seating, with minimal back support, and no adjustment.

Other cab related issues and concerns

When asked about other cab related issues of concern:

- almost 200 drivers (27% of those responding to this question) mentioned drivers' chairs that were uncomfortable, broken including sharp edges, worn, difficult or not possible to adjust or position correctly. This led to them experiencing musculoskeletal pains and injury.

- 15% also referred to the ergonomics of the cab, covering many issues but all demonstrating that the cabs were not built to fit around the driver. Drivers reported having no legroom and so having to twist their legs to the side or bruising them. A lack of space or adjustment meant that drivers across the height spectrum had to adopt poor postures, lean, and/or twist to fit in the cab and/or to use or reach the controls. Again, this led to musculoskeletal pains and injury. Twenty-seven respondents used the word 'pain' to describe the effect on them, a further 12 used the word 'ache'.

- 25% of drivers responding to this question said that the level of ground-in dirt all around the cab was a concern for them. Six drivers mentioned fleas, bugs or insects and five mentioned damp and mould or fungi. Twenty-five drivers raised further concern about diesel, fumes, soot or black dust and any consequent carcinogenic risks; with the Class 170 most often referred to here.

- Dirty windscreens were also identified as an issue by 21 drivers, with several others mentioning old/worn/damaged windscreens hampering a clear view which is an obvious safety concern. Forty-two drivers complained that the wipers or windscreen washers were ineffective.

- 10% of drivers (72) found the level of noise within the cab of concern. The majority reported a whistling or other noise from draughts or even rattling caused by failing or missing window or door seals. Other fittings vibrating and rattling also contributed to the noise pollution. Three drivers reported that the noisy cabs meant that they couldn't hear the vigilance alarm. Some drivers reported pain and three tinnitus – all three drive a Class 66 – and a further 15 drivers expressed concern about the noise on a Class 66.

- 47 drivers mentioned the ingress of rain, usually due to failing window or door seals, but also through the roof. Drivers could experience rain/water dripping on them, which was at least distracting, kit bags got soaked through, and one driver reported being given a unit with a bin liner covering a sodden seat.

- 30 drivers referred to the DSD (Drivers Safety Device) peddle – either its positioning, or that it was stiff or slippery.

BETTER DRIVING CABS ✓

- 26 drivers identified windows that did not shut, open or were stiff to adjust, sometimes to the point of causing a musculoskeletal injury. These also led to issues with the cab temperature (either being too hot or too cold) and where trains were driver-only operated (DOO) when opening a window might be necessary for operations.

- 21 drivers said that sun blinds were either missing, ill-fitting, or would not stay in place.

Dials or warning lights that were too bright or too dim, sharp metal or broken edges and protrusions, doors opening by themselves, insecure cabs or faulty locks, and distracting noise coming from the passenger compartment, were all mentioned in single figures. Seven drivers said that the Automatic Warning System (AWS) was too loud.

>>> The state of play

Train driving has often been seen as a childhood dream. The experiences of many ASLEF members, however, show that the reality of driving a train can be far from the romantic image, with some issues even impinging on safety.

It is likely that a survey of this nature is self-selecting, with those with concerns far more likely to complete it. Lots of the modern traction our members drive, especially where there has been good consultation with and welcomed input from ASLEF reps, provide a welcoming driving experience. But, as this survey reveals, for many drivers on old or poorly designed traction, there is much room for improvement both to avoid damaging the health, safety and welfare of the driver and to reduce risks within this safety-critical industry.

Missing armrest so no ergonomic support.

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