



FLEET NUMBERS AND THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

BY KRIS COLIN

Change in For-Hire Drivers						
January 2020 to December 2020						
	1-6 Truck Fleets	7-19 Truck Fleets	20-100 Truck Fleets	101-500 Truck Fleets	501+ Truck Fleets	All Truck Fleets
For-Hire Drivers	-68,756 drivers	-3,739 drivers	-16,924 drivers	+19,507 drivers	+58,956 drivers	-7,096 drivers

Source: FMCSA, Qualified Carriers, and Tucker Company Worldwide

For a decade smaller fleets had grown rapidly, attracting drivers that large fleets were not able to reach or hold. That pace continued into early 2020, where small fleets added drivers at a rate of a 2:1 ratio over fleets of 500+ trucks. As with almost everything that changed in 2020.

With reaching the highest number of drivers in early 2020, the pandemic wiped out almost 163,697 drivers. Most gains, as shown by FMCSA data in early 2020, have not returned, however larger fleets (101-500+) were able to close the year with a 7.1% net driver gain. Although as a whole, 2020 closed with 7,096 fewer drivers than the end of 2019, equating to a 5.3% decline from early 2020.

Change in Equipment						
July 2020 to December 2020						
	1-6 Truck Fleets	7-19 Truck Fleets	20-100 Truck Fleets	101-500 Truck Fleets	501+ Truck Fleets	All Truck Fleets
Number of Owner Trailers	+ 24,684 owned trailers	- 6,512 owned trailers	- 7,016 owned trailers	+ 3,724 owned trailers	+70,352 owned trailers	+85,232 owned trailers
Number of Leased Trailers	+ 6,624 leased trailers	+ 3,007 leased trailers	- 1,314 leased trailers	+ 9,449 leased trailers	+195,402 leased trailers	+213,168 leased trailers
Total Power Units	+ 59,327 total power units	-4,255 total power units	-12,674 total power units	+22,269 total power units	+594,307 total power units	+658,974 total power units

Source: FMCSA, Qualified Carriers, and Tucker Company Worldwide

In comparison to the driver market, the equipment market saw significant net growth. The close out of 2020 saw nearly 500,000 more tractors than drivers. This equated to equipment growth closing out at 23% higher in 2020 over 2019.

Sources

FMCSA

Trucking by the Numbers in 2020: the Smallest Fleets Struggled the Most as a Great Driver Migration Occurred | Tucker Company Worldwide

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