



2022 Mixer Driver Recruitment and Retention Survey

Executive Summary

National Ready Mixed Concrete Association





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September 2022

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The *2022 Mixer Driver Recruitment and Retention Survey Executive Summary* reports five-year national trends from 20 of the 30 questions. This year's survey represents 29% of NRMCA's estimated 75,000 mixer drivers. There were 166 survey respondents, down 17%, from last year. The average response rate to all 30 questions was 92%.

The ready mixed concrete industry followed the 2021 trend, dubbed the "Year of the Great Resignation." While the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the national quit rate at 25%, the ready mixed concrete industry had a 28% mixer driver quit rate. Specifically, an estimated 21,000 mixer drivers quit, of the estimated 29,000 total departures, with a mixer driver pool remaining at 75,000. The turnover rate increased for the fifth year, to 38.2%.

Nevertheless, some factors remained the same. For the past seven years, higher pay and inconsistent daily schedules persisted as the top two reasons mixer drivers quit. When asked where former employees went, first place was tied between taking a job with a competitor and a short-haul commercial driving job out of the industry. They, too, have been in the top two for seven years.

The industry hired approximately 39% (29,000) of the U.S. mixer driver pool. With the ongoing national commercially licensed driver shortage, it was not surprising 71% reported their biggest hiring challenge was too small a hiring pool. Coming in second was finding drivers with ready mixed concrete experience.

In the past four years, producers willing to hire new CDLs grew from 51% to 68%, although the actual number hired was only 4.5% of the driver pool. In the past five years, producers willing to hire 18-21 year old CDLs increased 25%, but regional differences were dramatic, from a 93% high in the north central states, to a 36% low in the southeast.

In the five years represented in this year's survey, NRMCA calculates ready mixed concrete production grew 9%, while the mixer driver population continues to hold steady for the eighth year, at about 75,000. This might suggest why 70% of survey participants report they lost business due to their company's driver shortage. Another 2022 takeaway is data continues to swing far more geographically than by the size of the business.

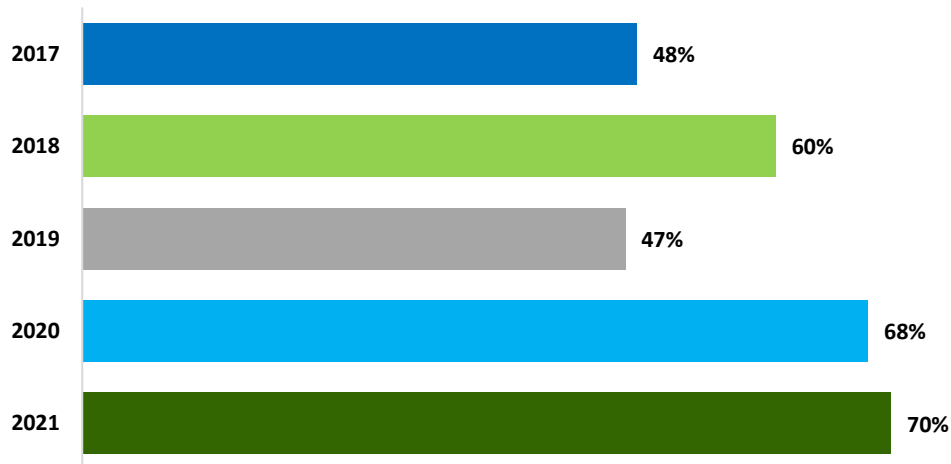
Mixer drivers' median age was 47.0 years. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported the 2021 median age of truck transportation worker at 46.4 years and 45.5 years for durable goods manufacturing: "cement, concrete, lime, and gypsum products". Tenure median continued at 7 years, while tenure for all American workers was 4.1 years, as reported by the U.S. BLS in 2020.

Survey respondents represent their company and report on their driver-employees. Respondents represent their company and report on their driver-employees. The full report can be download by all NRMCA members on NRMCA's website (www.nrmca.org) through the member portal.

I. Recruitment

Impacting recruitment efforts, 70% of producers reported they lost business solely because they did not have enough mixer drivers to deliver concrete.

Producers Lost Business Due to Lack of Mixer Drivers



Vacancy

Vacancy is defined as a company’s unmet labor demand. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) states a company’s vacancy rate is the result of employee turnover plus creation of new positions. Response rate was 93%.

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics annual Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) had large movement in 2021, dubbed the year of The Great Resignation.

Contrary to national trends, producers reported no large swings and 2020 and 2021 had the same vacancy rate, at 11%. To calculate the mixer driver vacancy rate, 8,242 was divided by the average number of drivers on May 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022.

How many vacant full-time mixer driver jobs did you have open on the last day of the survey?

National	Total Vacant	% Total		% Companies w Vacancies	Average	Median	High	Low
		US Driver Pool	Vacancy Rate					
<i>2017 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>7,068</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2018 driver population 77,000</i>	<i>9,886</i>	<i>12.8%</i>	<i>13.1%</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2019 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>6,014</i>	<i>8.0%</i>	<i>8.0%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2020 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>8,240</i>	<i>11.0%</i>	<i>10.9%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2021 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>8,242</i>	<i>11.0%</i>	<i>10.9%</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>0</i>

Companies with End-of-Year Vacancies



Industry Hiring Challenges

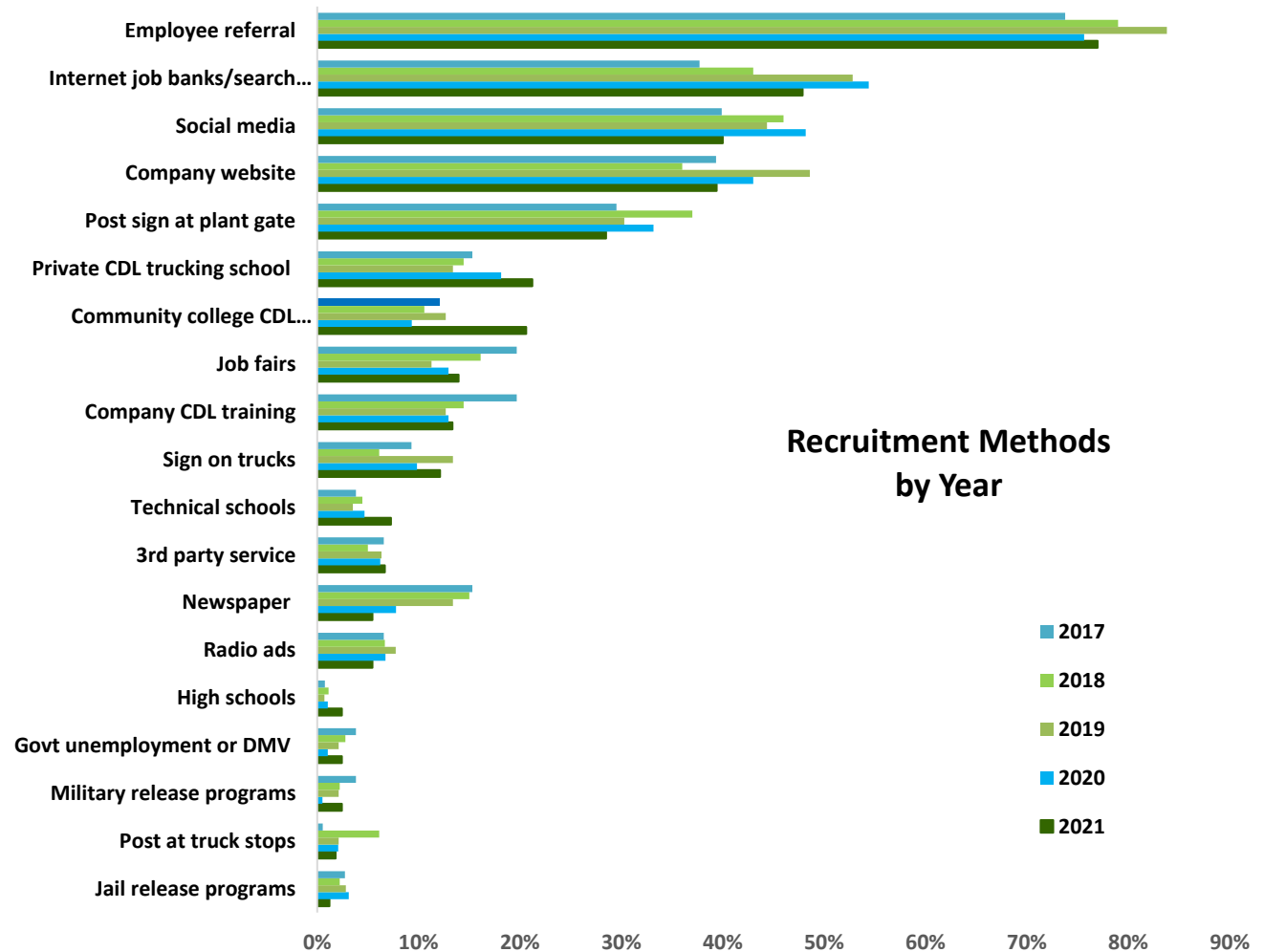
NRMCA asked survey respondents what their biggest challenges were when hiring mixer drivers. A five-year comparison follows:



Industry Recruitment Methods

After understanding the challenges, the survey analyzed how producers addressed them when recruiting. The survey listed 19 recruitment methods adapted from those commonly used across all industries, as reported by SHRM. They were revised by NRMCA’s Workforce Development Committee to dovetail with the ready mixed concrete industry. Finding show there has been little movement in the number of avenues producers used to solicit mixer driver job candidates.

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
% Reporting	99%	97%	94%	98%	100%
Average Methods Used	3	3	3	3	3
Median	3	3	3	3	3
1 Method	16%	18%	20%	17%	17%
5+ Methods	13%	26%	30%	26%	26%



Hiring Analysis

The percent of a producer’s new hires falls in the low-to-mid 30% to high 30% of the mixer driver national population over the past five years.

Details are below.

How many full-time mixer drivers did you hire between the 1st day of the survey and last day?

National	Total Hired	% Total US Driver Pool	Average Hired	Median Hired	High Hired	Low Hired
<i>2017 driver population 75,000</i>	23,384	31.2%	33	12	586	0
<i>2018 driver population 77,000</i>	28,202	36.6%	48	15	370	0
<i>2019 driver population 75,000</i>	27,330	36.4%	52	19	891	0
<i>2020 driver population 75,000</i>	25,495	34.0%	43	11	775	0
<i>2021 driver population 75,000</i>	21,666	29.0%	51	14	1173	0

Producers willing to rehire former employees and new CDLs is about the same over the past three years, yet each category represents a small percentage of those hired.

How many of last year's hires were REHIRES?

National	Total Rehired	% Rehire to Full-time Hire	% Rehires to Driver Pool	% Producers Who Rehired Drivers
<i>2018 driver hire 28,282</i>	2,674	9.5%	3.5%	56%
<i>2019 driver hire 27,330</i>	2,262	8.3%	3.0%	60%
<i>2020 driver hire 27,330</i>	2,453	9.6%	3.3%	62%
<i>2021 driver hire 29,019</i>	2,558	8.8%	3.4%	66%

How many mixer drivers hired last year were newly licensed CDL's?

National	Total New CDL Hire	% New CDLs to Total Full-time Hire	% New CDL Hires to Driver Pool	% Producers Who Hired New CDLs
<i>2018 total hire 28,202</i>	2,158	7.7%	2.8%	51%
<i>2019 total hire 27,330</i>	1,932	7.1%	2.6%	56%
<i>2020 total hire 27,330</i>	1,828	7.2%	2.4%	59%
<i>2021 total hire 29,019</i>	3,469	12.0%	4.6%	68%

Do you hire 18-21 year old mixer drivers?

	2021 Yes	2020 Yes	2019 Yes	2018 Yes	2017 Yes
<i>National</i>	60%	56%	51%	43%	35%

II. Retention

Staffing Level

The population in the survey has been stable for five years.

Question	Survey Total	Response Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
# Full time drivers on 1.1.17	19,742	100%	108	44	1,249	0
# Full time drivers on 12.31.17	19,167	100%	105	46	996	0
Question	Survey Total	Response Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
# Full time drivers on 5.1.18	23,643	100%	126	43	1,446	0
# Full time drivers on 4.30.19	24,510	100%	130	45	1,518	0
Question	Survey Total	Response Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
# Full time drivers on 5.1.19	21,695	100%	144	52	1,516	5
# Full time drivers on 4.30.20	21,386	100%	142	58	1,521	5
Question	Survey Total	Response Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
# Full time drivers on 5.1.20	25,565	100%	128	48	1,572	0
# Full time drivers on 4.30.21	25,314	100%	127	52	1,542	1
Question	Survey Total	Response Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
# Full time drivers on 5.1.21	22,044	100%	133	57	1,531	4
# Full time drivers on 4.30.22	21,666	100%	131	48	1,578	0

Staffing Demographics

Age

In the past five years, generally, the average and median age of mixer drivers has been relatively stable.

Age by Year	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
National	46.2	46.4	46.5	46.3	46.4
	Median	Median	Median	Median	Median
National	47.0	47.0	46.0	46.0	47.0

Mixer drivers' median age was 47.0 years old, older than the U.S. BLS January 2022 estimated median age of, for "durable goods manufacturing: 'cement, concrete, lime, and gypsum products'" at 45.5 years, and 46.4 years for "truck transportation workers". In 2020, the U.S. BLS reported the median age for a full-time working male was 42.0 years. The U.S. BLS only reports median.

Tenure

Mixer driver tenure, that is, the length of company employment in years, decreased the past five years.

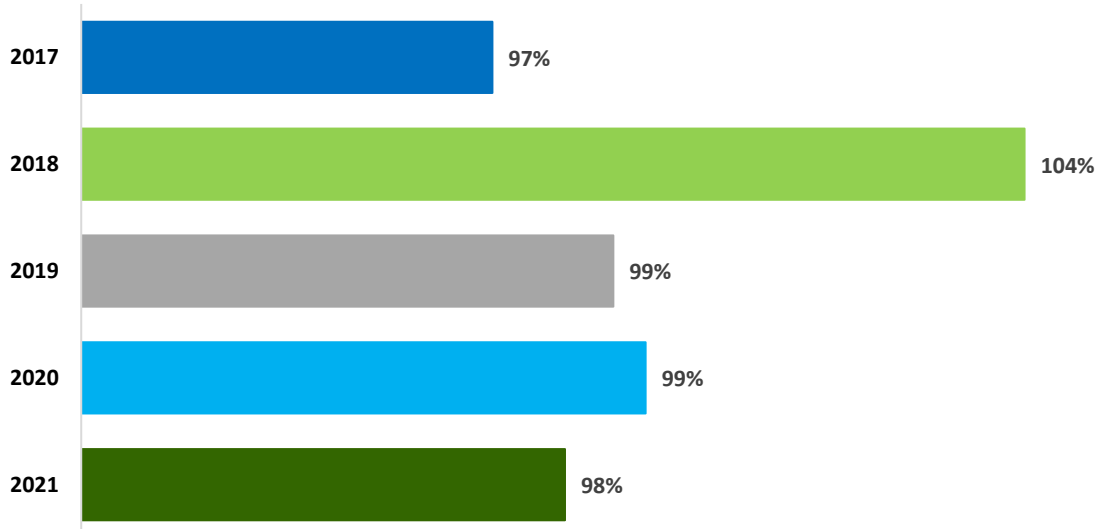
Median Tenure in Years



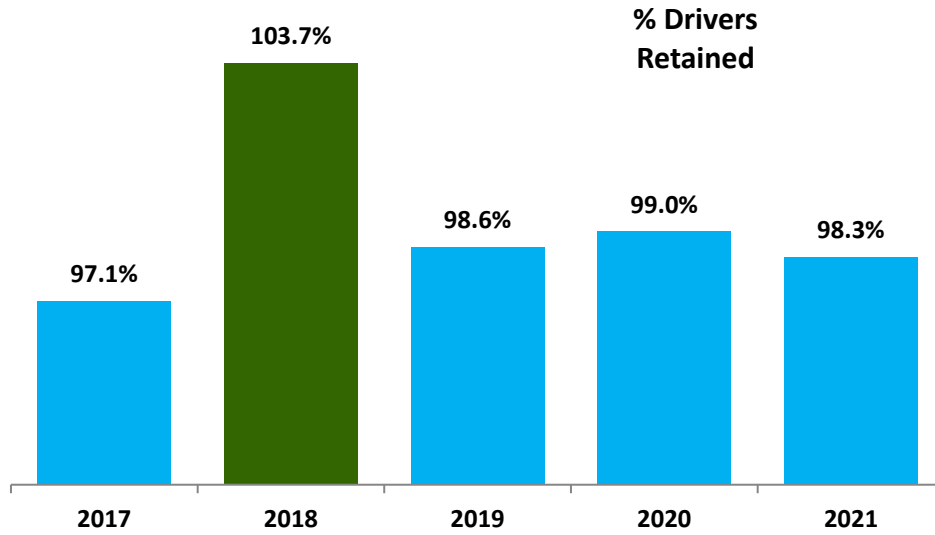
Rate of Retention

The rate of retention, also called the “stability index,” measures the retention of a specific group of employees over a specified period. To ascertain the success of that endeavor, the Society for Human Resource Management set a protocol, called the *rate of retention*. It is calculated by taking the number of “stayers” at the end of the calculation period divided by the number of employees at the beginning of the calculation period. It is reported as a percentage.

Mixer Driver Annual Rate of Retention



In the 2022 survey, the 21,666 drivers employed on April 30, 2022 were divided by the 22,044 drivers employed on May 1, 2021. The decrease of the survey pool’s mixer drivers between those two dates, or a retention rate of 98.3%



Turnover Rate

Turnover tells an employer how many times a single position was occupied by a different employee throughout the designated period. It looks at the company’s employee volatility or “churn.”

This survey’s mixer driver turnover rate was calculated by dividing the total of all drivers who left by the average number of mixer drivers on the first day of the survey, May 1, 2021, and on the last day, April 30, 2022. It is the highest percentage of drivers leaving in five years, quit and released combined, at 38.5%, equating to the highest annual turnover rate of 38.2%.

How many full-time mixer drivers left your company between the 1st day of the survey and the last day?

National	Total left	% Total US Driver Pool	Turnover Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
<i>2017 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>22,151</i>	<i>29.5%</i>	<i>29.1%</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>617</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2018 driver population 77,000</i>	<i>25,031</i>	<i>32.5%</i>	<i>33.1%</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>674</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2019 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>25,201</i>	<i>33.6%</i>	<i>33.4%</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2020 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>26,493</i>	<i>35.3%</i>	<i>35.2%</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>869</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2021 driver population 75,000</i>	<i>28,901</i>	<i>38.5%</i>	<i>38.2%</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>1029</i>	<i>0</i>

Below reports a comparison (permanently quit and released) between tenured drivers and new hire turnover within the same year. The number is a composite of drivers who quit and permanently released.

National	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Total Mixer Driver Departures	28,901	26,493	25,201	25,031	22,151
New Hires Left Same Year	11,496	7,576	6,491	9,785	6,746
Drivers 1+ Years Tenure Left	17,405	18,917	18,710	15,246	15,405
% Drivers 1+ Years Tenure Left to Total	60%	71%	74%	61%	70%

Voluntary Turnover (Quits) Rate

The voluntary turnover rate was calculated by taking the number of quits divided by the average of the total of drivers on May 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022.

How many full-time mixer drivers quit your company between the 1st day of the survey and the last day?

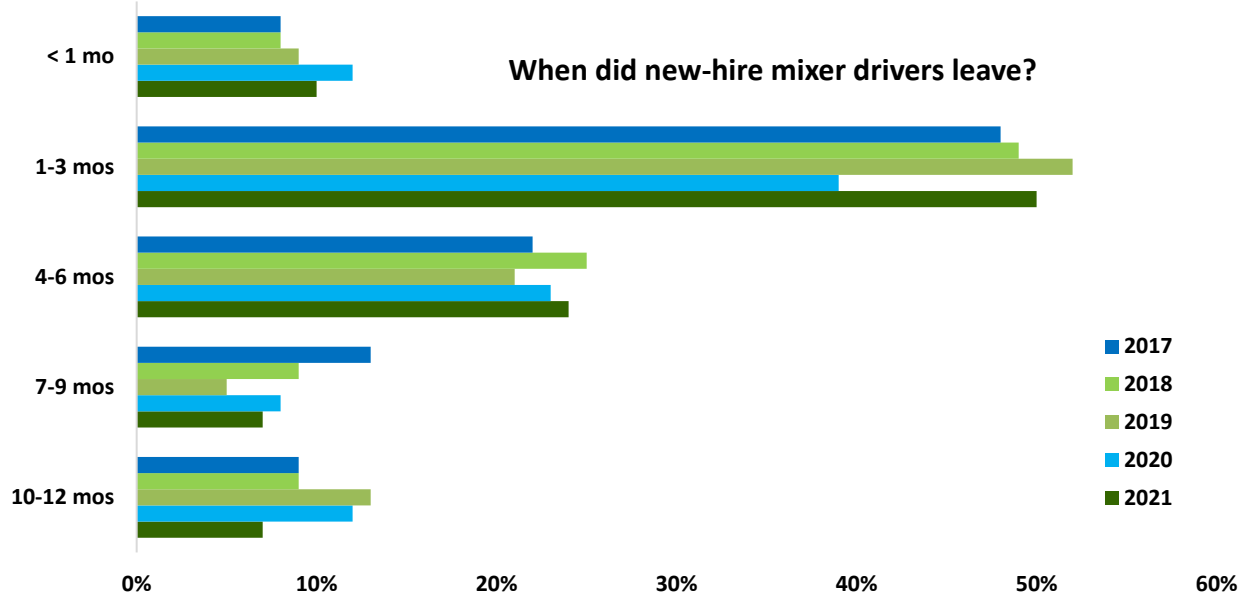
National	Total left	% Total US Driver Pool	Voluntary Turnover Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
<i>2017 driver population 75,000</i>	13,738	18.3%	18.0%	20	6	386	0
<i>2018 driver population 77,000</i>	16,693	21.7%	22.0%	29	9	419	0
<i>2019 driver population 75,000</i>	15,866	21.2%	21.0%	30	11	419	0
<i>2020 driver population 75,000</i>	15,981	21.3%	21.2%	28	9	455	0
<i>2021 driver population 75,000</i>	21,009	28.0%	27.8%	37	11	644	0

New Hire Voluntary (Quits) Rate

Last year saw a big increase in new-hire quits.

National	Total Hired	Total New Hire Quit	Hired/Quit Turnover Rate	% New Hire Quit to Total Quit	Average	Median	High	Low
<i>2017 driver population 75,000</i>	23,384	6,746	28.8%	49.1%	10	3	145	0
<i>2018 driver population 77,000</i>	28,202	9,785	34.7%	58.6%	17	5	322	0
<i>2019 driver population 75,000</i>	27,330	6,491	23.8%	40.9%	13	5	245	0
<i>2020 driver population 75,000</i>	25,495	7,576	29.7%	47.4%	13	4	207	0
<i>2021 driver population 75,000</i>	29,019	11,496	39.6%	54.7%	21	6	347	0

Further insight shows while the first six months were critical, the first three months are even more so.



Why Mixer Drivers Quit

Respondents were asked to rank the top five reasons their mixer drivers quit. Generally, there was consistency over time. **RED** ranked **first**; **BLUE** ranked **second**; **GREEN** ranked **third**.

What are the top 5 reasons your mixer drivers quit?					
	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Higher pay	68%	65%	62%	60%	42%
Inconsistent daily schedule	58%	48%	36%	44%	15%
Wkend work	51%	38%	29%	25%	27%
Reason not listed	47%	17%	2%	14%	9%
Retired	39%	26%	8%	25%	21%
Moved	38%	18%	4%	14%	10%
Total pkg	37%	56%	63%	64%	58%
High stress	34%	31%	21%	25%	22%
Company policy	33%	29%	17%	30%	26%
Work nights	31%	39%	15%	29%	22%
Only deliver concrete	31%	24%	10%	23%	17%
12 mo income	30%	46%	33%	38%	28%
Quit before issue solved	29%	24%	8%	21%	14%
Seasonal layoff	28%	40%	22%	31%	28%
Lack of advancement	25%	33%	19%	22%	27%
CDL issues	22%	30%	28%	30%	24%
Supervisor	22%	34%	31%	37%	39%
Not safe	16%	31%	14%	24%	26%
Lack training	15%	31%	13%	26%	21%

Where Mixer Drivers Went

NATIONAL	Producer	Short-haul	Retired	Non-driving job	Long-haul	Quit no job	Other	School
2017	34%	37%	25%	22%	25%	14%	3%	XXX
2018	58%	64%	32%	45%	34%	26%	3%	XXX
2019	50%	48%	38%	28%	39%	25%	5%	7%
2020	50%	58%	42%	34%	39%	29%	4%	12%
2021	56%	56%	43%	41%	33%	29%	12%	7%

Involuntary Turnover

The involuntary turnover relates to the employer's decision to release a mixer driver. The rate was calculated by taking the total number of involuntary separations divided by the average number of mixer drivers on May 1, 2019 and April 30, 2020. The question's response rate was 97%.

How many full-time mixer drivers were involuntarily released?
Include permanently released and temporary layoffs.

National	Total Released	% Total US Driver Pool	Involuntary Turnover Rate	Average	Median	High	Low
2017 driver population 75,000	6,331	8.6%	8.4%	9	3	127	0
2018 driver population 77,000	7,596	9.9%	10.0%	13	5	255	0
2019 driver population 75,000	8,280	11.0%	11.0%	16	5	405	0
2020 driver population 75,000	7,531	10.0%	10.0%	13	3	272	0
2021 driver population 75,000	6,747	9.0%	8.9%	12	3	393	0

Rank the top 3 reasons drivers were permanently and involuntarily released.

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Performance - driving	72%	72%	68%	75%	66%
Performance - poor work ethic	72%	74%	63%	72%	67%
CDL issues	35%	36%	22%	26%	20%
Performance - technical	34%	32%	24%	31%	35%
Co Policy Change	34%	32%	21%	29%	20%
Not listed	32%	29%	17%	34%	19%
Illness or injury	30%	19%	6%	16%	16%
Only drive a truck	25%	21%	8%	18%	11%
Business slow down	17%	21%	4%	14%	12%

Epilogue

The ready mixed concrete industry's mixer driver shortage is backed by The Conference Board's 2022 report, "US Labor Shortages: A Plan to Tackle the Challenges." It states, "85% of companies in mostly blue-collar industries report recruiting and retention difficulties. Several long-term demographic trends contributed to a tight labor supply, including meager growth in the number of working-age Americans, the shrinking number of working-age adults without college degrees, and historically low US birth rates, all projected to continue beyond 2040."

Correspondingly, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and Gallup research show a significant reduction of males with high school educations or less, participating at lower rates in the labor market. This reduces the supply of workers in occupations that typically hire young and less-educated workers. Finally, the post-COVID-19 job marketplace is redefining essential job factors, from pay level to work culture.

One solution is to hire younger mixer drivers. That is a challenge on several fronts. NRMCA members report a lack of awareness of the driver-job itself among jobseekers, yet the industry does not have the tradition of growing-their-own starting in high school, as other skilled, licensed trades, to build that awareness. Furthermore, producers who are not self-insured are influenced by coverage rates for younger and inexperienced drivers. As well, producers must be aware of the impact of the new federal requirement where drivers must pass pre-employment and random drug screenings. Additionally for youngsters interested in short haul driving jobs, UPS, FedEx, and Amazon have been very aggressively recruiting. Many of those driving jobs do not require a CDL. Finally, research shows younger age males, and females, are more attracted to the expanding warehousing sector because it is friendlier to work-life balance.

According to the National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools, in 2020, the average age for a new truck driving student was 30 years old+, meaning the person was on a new career path, perhaps their third or fourth. It might mean more time and effort when onboarding or providing a mentor. Another factor to remember is commercial driving schools closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, graduating at least 50% fewer drivers in 2019-2020. With this report finding 68% of producers willing to hire new CDLs, this could be a concern.

Thoughtfulness toward a host of challenges for over 50% of the ready mixed concrete workforce is essential for business to remain healthy.

Annually, NRMCA's Workforce Development Committee conducts the Mixer Driver Recruitment and Retention Survey in early summer; the report is released in early fall. Participation is open to the entire ready mixed concrete industry.