

Understanding and Addressing Distracted Driving In Texas

A report to
**United Services Automobile Association
(USAA)**

Submitted by
Katie N. Womack
Center for Transportation Safety

October 2013



A Member of The Texas A&M University System

Research. Service. Results.

Understanding and Addressing Distracted Driving In Texas

Prepared for:
United Services Automobile Association
(USAA)

By:
Katie N. Womack
Center for Transportation Safety

October 2013

Texas A&M Transportation Institute
The Texas A&M University System
College Station, Texas 77843-3135

Acknowledgements

The following individuals were instrumental in the data collection, participant recruitment, data analysis, and document preparation that made this report possible. The author gratefully acknowledges:

George Cavness
Jana Childress
Brian Cox
David Dobrovolsky
Connor Fields
Stephanie Kotick
Alicia Nelson
Irene Rodriguez
Charles Triplett
Nada Trout
Diana Wallace

We would also like to thank Rhonda Balsley, Joel Camarano, Jeffrey Larkin, and Leo Luera for their support and guidance throughout the research study.

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Rhonda Balsley, CPCU
USAA UW Auto Innovation & Development

FROM: Katie N. Womack
Sr. Research Scientist, Center for Transportation Safety, TTI

SUBJECT: Task Order Deliverable

The attached report is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of Task Order 1, Master Research Agreement No. 0000004417 between Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) and United Services Automobile Association (USAA). The report documents the findings of five tasks undertaken under this agreement:

- Task 1: Develop Survey Instrument
- Task 2: Conduct Survey
- Task 3: Analyze Survey and Prepare Results Report
- Task 4: Conduct 3 Focus Groups
- Task 5: Report Focus Group Results

The contents of this report reflect the views of the author, who is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view or policies of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) or the United Services Automobile Association (USAA). This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

INTRODUCTION

The United Services Automobile Association (USAA) insurance and financial services company seeks to understand more fully the reasons drivers drive while distracted, particularly by using mobile communication devices. To more effectively serve their members by addressing this traffic safety issue, USAA contracted with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute for research investigating attitudes and self-reported behaviors of drivers throughout Texas. By better understanding the prevalence of distracted driving among various population segments, as well as the attitudes and opinions associated with this and other risky driving behaviors, USAA is better equipped to inform their corporate decision-makers on ways to address distracted driving with their members and to guide corporate policy-making.

METHODS

Two approaches were used in this project. The first was to distribute questionnaires to a cross section of the public in driver license offices throughout Texas. This approach was followed by the use of focus groups to gather more detailed information.

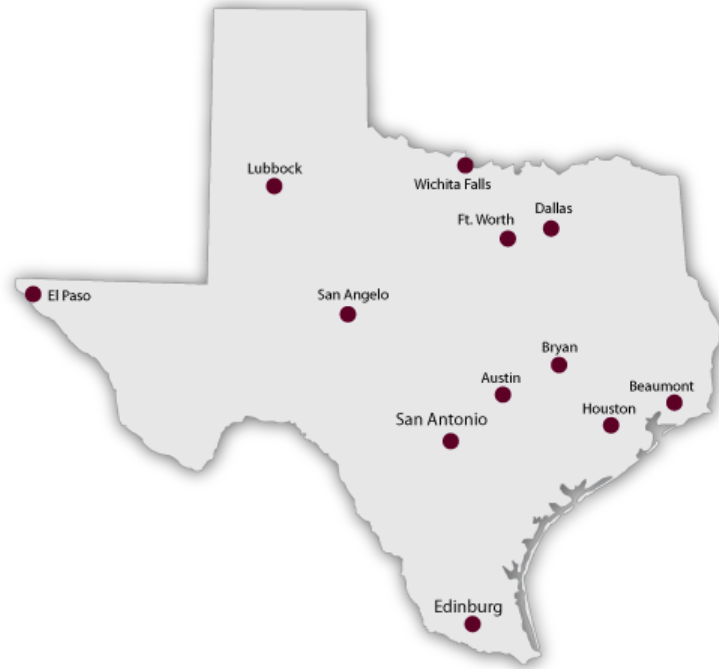
Survey

Sample. The target sample size was 3,000. The sample population was drawn from customers at 12 Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) driver license (DL) offices who were 15 years of age or older. No exclusions were made based on race/ethnicity, gender, ability to read, or ability to drive. The DL offices were all in urban areas and were selected to provide good coverage of the various geographic areas of the State. The map below indicates which cities were included.

The value of a good survey sample is that it can be used to make statements about the population from which it is drawn. This is made possible by starting with a sampling frame that includes all the population of interest, then systematically and randomly selecting sample units from the entire population. Using this procedure, the probability of selection is known, response rates can be calculated, and the degree of representativeness of the sample to the general population can be described. It is important to note that the survey sample for this study did not include a random, representative sampling design.

Specifically, neither the population of all Texans 15 years and older nor the population of drivers were considered the population pool. Instead the sample came from the population of DL office customers who visited one of the 12 offices between April 25 and May 30, 2013. Therefore, the results of the survey describe the sample, not the population. Previous experience has shown that a good cross section of respondents is achievable from the DL office venue.

Figure 1. Survey Sample Cities



Survey Approach. Potential respondents were approached while they are waiting for service. Typically, there is a wait time at DL offices which can vary from 5 to 10 minutes to several hours. Customers are usually amenable to filling out a short questionnaire during their wait, particularly when the topic is traffic safety related. DL office customers were approached by TTI survey-trained staff, who introduced themselves, very briefly explained the reason for the survey and asked if the potential respondent would participate in the survey. No attempt was made to convert or to record refusals. If the customer indicated they were willing to complete the questionnaire, they were handed a clip board with an Information Sheet providing details on the survey and required Institutional Review Board (IRB) information regarding their rights as a research participant, a pen, and the questionnaire. They were allowed to complete the questionnaire themselves, taking the amount of time they needed, and returned the form directly to the surveyor. The surveyor remained in the DL office lobby area distributing and collecting questionnaires, available to answer any questions related to the intent or sponsor of the survey or the meaning of specific words or phrases, but not to interpret or provide input on any of the survey questions. If a respondent was unable to read the form, the surveyor was allowed to assist or read the questions to them. DPS office personnel were not involved in any way, either in the distribution, collection, or assistance with completing the questionnaire.

Because the survey included minors (under 18) the survey protocol had to include a step for obtaining parental consent for the minor's participation. If a potential participant was a driver under 18, the surveyor was required to ask an accompanying parent or guardian to read a Parental Consent Form, and also to ask the teen to read a Minor Assent Form. If the parent/guardian agreed, the teen was then allowed to complete the questionnaire if they also agreed to participate.

To avoid selection bias, the survey staff was instructed to approach as many customers in the lobby waiting area as possible, without regard to appearance or perceived likelihood to respond. If overcrowding prevented the surveyor from approaching each customer, the survey staff was to systematically ask each person as they entered the lobby area in order, being careful not to bypass individuals for any reason other than the time factor. These steps help to minimize surveyor selection bias. Of note with this type of intercept survey is the possible underrepresentation of drivers who conduct licensing business by mail or over the internet, and the self-selection bias introduced by refusals.

Questionnaire. The objective of the questionnaire was to elicit data regarding: a) self-reported distracted driving; b) perceptions of risk associated with distracted driving; c) attitudes toward driving and mobile communication use; d) opinions regarding countermeasures; and c) demographic characteristics of respondents.

The questionnaire was designed to be self-administered. It consisted of 20 questions, some with multiple parts. Two questions were open-ended. Space was provided at the end of the questionnaire for comments. Although the time per respondent was not recorded, an estimate of the average time for completion was 10-15 minutes. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Attachment A. A list of the comments received is included as Attachment B.

The questionnaire was offered in English and Spanish. Additionally, Spanish-speaking surveyors administered the survey at DL offices in areas of higher concentrations of Hispanic population.

Survey Data Analysis. Survey data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and response frequencies for each item were generated. Cross-tabulations and tests of significance were used to derive one-to-one correlations of demographic and background variables with questionnaire items. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the direction and strength of associations of demographic variables with questionnaire items.

The usefulness of regression analysis is its ability to control for confounding variables. For this study, age, education, military status, race/ethnicity, and gender were used as predictor variables. Therefore, analysis of each factor controls for the others. However, variables that were not used as predictors are included in the regression function's error term. The variables that effect how survey takers respond that were not included as predictors can create bias. This limitation is inherent in survey research because it is impossible to control for every factor. Variables that reveal themselves as potentially important after the fact would need to be addressed with further study.

The sample size was large enough to provide demographic data for statistically valid analysis. However, it should be noted that even though valid, some smaller demographic units, such as currently serving military respondents, were very small relative to the total sample and the results should be interpreted with a degree of caution.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were used to further explore the issues that were included in the structured survey with a more in-depth discussion approach. These small discussion groups enabled the researchers to delve into the content of the questionnaire for a more extended period of time and in an environment more conducive to explanation of behavior and motivations.

Recruiting / Participants. Three focus groups were conducted in three different cities. The locations were selected based on survey results that indicated either higher than average distracted driving self-reported behavior or were a location with a population segment that was representative of higher than average mobile communication device users. The three cities were Austin, College Station, and Dallas.

Participants were recruited through the TTI Participant Database and through snowball recruiting among staff acquaintances. The TTI Participant Database is composed of non-TTI volunteers in locations where TTI has conducted studies previously who have agreed to be contacted for research studies. This database was used to recruit participants for the Dallas and Austin focus groups. None of the participants were subjects in prior distracted driving studies. Contact with prospective participants was made by phone. Details of the topic to be discussed were not provided or discussed with participants in advance. The general description of the study was shared as a focus group on safe and risky driving behaviors. Snowball recruiting was essentially asking acquaintances to give leads and extend invitations to others to participate in the sessions. This was the primary recruiting method for the College Station and Austin groups.

Discussion Approach. The focus groups were held in small conference rooms of the TTI office buildings in Austin, College Station, and Dallas. Each group was held in the evening and was about one-and-a-half hours long. Refreshments were provided and each participant was compensated \$25 or \$30 for participating, depending on the group they were in.

The groups were facilitated by the study director, an experienced focus group moderator. After completion of Consent Forms, introductions, and a brief explanation of the purpose of the group session, participants were asked to complete the same questionnaire that had been distributed in the 12 DL offices. The guided discussion that followed centered on the participants' interpretation of some of the questions, elaboration of their own experiences, and sharing opinions regarding distracted driving and other driving behaviors. A copy of the discussion guide is provided as Attachment C.

Focus Group Data Analysis. Each session was audio-taped. Additionally, a note-taker was present during the sessions to capture the essence of comments as the discussion occurred and to make

observations that might not otherwise be captured by the recorder. Summaries of these notes were prepared within a day or two of the group and reviewed, partly to be able to incorporate changes during the next group. Each of the recordings of the full sessions was transcribed. The transcriptions were used to quantify responses, to identify emergent themes, reveal areas of agreement/disagreement and to determine any salient factors related to the discussion items.

RESULTS

Survey Results

Respondents. The target number of respondents for each site was 250. The achieved sample size for each site is provided in Table 1, which also indicates the locations for responses in Spanish. A total of 3,504 people responded to at least one question on the survey. The survey was completed by 3,036 respondents. The characteristics of the survey respondents are shown in Table 2. Response percentages for each question item are provided in Attachment D.

Table 1. Survey Sites and Target Sample Sizes

DL Office Site	Number of Survey Respondents	Number of Survey Completions	Number of Spanish Surveys
Austin	288	259	22
Beaumont	286	263	5
Bryan	287	245	1
Dallas	359	275	21
Edinburg	306	266	90
El Paso	262	260	51
Ft. Worth	294	231	7
Houston	308	243	7
Lubbock	284	252	1
San Angelo	274	252	3
San Antonio	278	247	26
Wichita Falls	278	243	1
Total	3504	3036	235

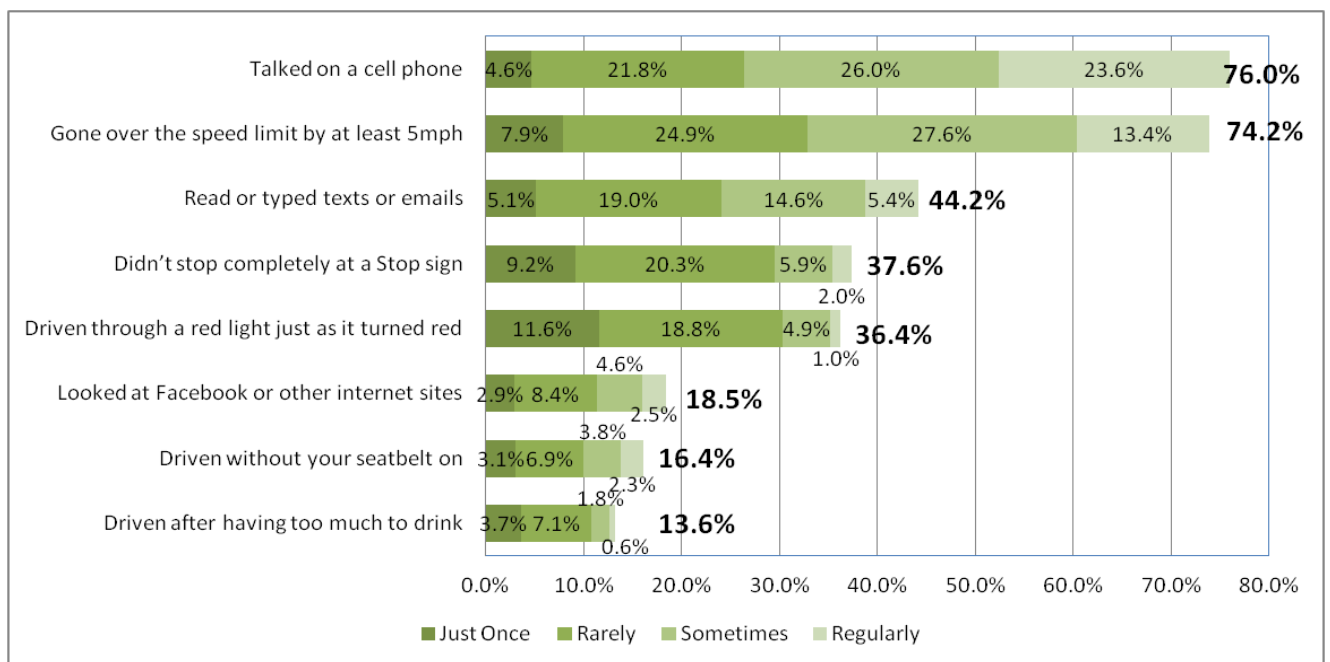
Table 2. Characteristics of Survey Sample

Variable	Survey Respondents		% in Texas (2012)
	#	%	
Gender			
Male	1417	46.7	49.6
Female	1616	53.3	50.4
Age			
15-17	75	2.4	n/a
18-21	411	13.0	8.6
22-30	788	25.0	19.0
31-45	966	30.7	32.5
46-65	742	23.6	26.7
65+	169	5.4	10.3
Race/Ethnicity			
Anglo	1245	40.4	44.5
Black	464	15.1	12.3
Hispanic	1141	37.1	38.2
Asian	126	4.1	4.2
Other	73	2.4	0.8
Mixed	32	1.0	n/a
Education			
Less than H.S.	180	6.0	18.6
High School	1475	49.5	25.2
College Degree(s)	1327	44.5	56.2
Employment			
Full time	1649	55.3	59.2
Part time	373	12.5	n/a
Retired	206	6.9	n/a
Student	368	12.3	n/a
Not employed	349	11.7	8.0
Military service			
Current	62	2.1	n/a
Previous	222	7.4	
None	2715	90.5	

Self-Reported Distracted Driving. The questionnaire asked respondents how many times during the past month they had talked on a cell phone while driving, how many times they had read or typed texts or emails, looked at Facebook or other internet sites, and five other behaviors that are traffic offenses. Figure 2 shows the results percentages for response options other than ‘Never.’

The most often reported behavior of the eight presented was talking on a cell phone, with just over three quarters of the sample (76.0 percent) reporting some activity in the past month and the corresponding lowest percent who reported never doing this activity in the past month (24.0 percent). Talking on a cell phone was slightly more often reported than exceeding the speed limit by 5 mph (74.2 percent). These two activities greatly exceeded other self-reported behaviors and traffic violations. The third most frequently reported behavior was reading or typing texts or emails, reported by 44.2 percent of the sample. Driving after drinking too much and not wearing a seat belt were the two lowest reported behaviors (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Behavior Within Past Month



Regression analysis showed that the percentage of people who reported they talk on the phone while driving increased with education. Additionally, Anglos were more likely than other groups to talk on the phone while driving. The odds that a person currently serving in the military reported talking on the phone while driving in the last month were four times the odds a civilian reported talking on the phone while driving in the last month.

Similarly, more frequent texting and driving was associated with higher levels of education. Lower percentages of texting and driving were associated with non-Whites. And as age increased, texting and driving self-reported behavior decreased. Overall, only 44.2 percent of the respondents reported any texting or emailing behavior within the past 30 days.

Looking at the internet / checking Facebook was among the bottom three behavior frequencies. Higher education was also positively associated with internet and Facebook use while driving. Hispanics were more likely than others to use the internet or check Facebook while driving. As with texting and cell phone use, the older the respondent the lower the likelihood of internet/Facebook use.

One of the survey items asked about the time taken to text or email while driving. The question was worded in such a way as to indicate an assumption that drivers text and email while driving, so what is the length of time respondents think they take their eyes off the road while texting. The number of seconds offered as options can be seen in Figure 3. Note that the last option gave the respondent the opportunity to check they did not text and drive. Almost the same percent of respondents checked the option “none, I do not text or email while driving” (56.9 percent) as those who said never in response to the list of self-reported behaviors (55.8 percent). This indicates questionnaire internal reliability.

The question of time looking away from the road was posed two ways—half the respondents were given information in the question regarding the average amount of time people take their eyes off the road to text or email—5 seconds on average. The other half was asked how long they took their eyes off the road to text or email and no other information was given. Table 3 indicates that there was not a large difference in the estimate of time whether information was given or not, although those who were given the average tended to estimate longer times. Of those who estimated their times, most respondents thought their time looking away from the road was less than average. Overall, 69 percent of the respondents who gave an estimate of how long they take their eyes off the road said less than 5 seconds.

Table 3. How Long Do You Take Your Eyes Off The Road to Read Messages?

Time	Form A— Average Given	Form B— No Average Given	All Responses
	%	%	%
Less than 2 seconds	10.4	12.3	11.3
2 to 5 seconds	19.2	17.6	18.4
About 5 seconds	7.0	6.2	6.6
6-8 seconds	4.7	3.2	3.9
More than 8 seconds	3.6	2.1	2.8
None, don't text while driving	55.2	58.6	56.9

A second question also presented in a presumptive way was “Regarding your own cell phone uses, which of the following statements apply.” Again, a list was provided with three of the options being “I do not answer the phone while driving,” and “I do not look at messages while driving,” and “I wait until I get where I’m going to check messages.” Respondents were instructed to check as many of the situations as applied to their behavior. The items and percent of respondents who checked them are listed in Table 4 in descending order of response frequency. By far the reason people checked most often for answering the phone while driving was if the caller was a family member (55.9 percent). Other frequent reasons were if business or work-related (39.0 percent), and if the caller is a friend (38.8 percent). Deterrents to phone use included bad weather (39.2 percent) and bad traffic (38.8 percent). Note that 45.4 percent of the respondents checked the item, ‘I wait until I get where I’m going to check messages,’ 36.4 percent said they do not look at messages while driving and 28.1 percent said they do not answer the phone while driving.

Table 4. Which of these apply to your cell phone use?

Behavior Statement	Percent Checked
I answer the phone when the caller is a family member.	55.9
I wait until I get where I’m going to check messages.	45.4
I don’t use my phone during bad weather.	39.2
I answer the phone when it is a business or work related call.	39.0
I don’t use my phone during bad traffic.	38.8
I answer the phone when the caller is a friend.	36.7
I do not look at messages while driving.	36.4
I check messages when stopped at a traffic light.	30.9
I do not answer the phone while driving.	28.1
I check messages when stopped in traffic.	22.8
I only use my phone in an emergency while driving.	21.2
I pull over and stop to check messages.	17.7
I answer the phone whenever it rings.	14.9
I look at incoming messages when I am expecting a call or message.	14.1
I check messages while glancing up to watch traffic frequently.	11.4
I check messages quickly as soon as they come in.	6.5
I use my cell phone when I’m bored while driving	6.4

The survey indicated that respondents were not overly confident regarding their ability to multi-task while driving. Fifty-three percent disagreed with the statement, 'I am able to multi-task well while driving,' compared to 31 percent who agreed. Similarly, 47 percent disagreed with the statement saying they drive well enough to take care of distractions without being dangerous, while 31 percent agreed.

Of the 53 percent who essentially said they were not able to multi-task while driving, 88 percent did not check the option in question number 8 which was "I do not answer the phone while driving" and 62 percent did not check the option, "I do not look at messages while driving." Additionally, of the 47 percent who disagreed that they could drive well enough to take care of distractions without being dangerous, 84 percent admitted to talking on their phones while driving and 53 percent admitted to looking at messages while driving.

Respondents were given an opportunity to describe their own distracted driving behavior in their own words. An open-ended question asked for examples of "things that are distracting while driving and more dangerous than being on a cell phone." A total of 508 responses were given. The most frequently reported distraction described as more dangerous than being on a cell phone was **eating**, which was reported by 127 respondents. Seventy-one people mentioned looking for something within the vehicle or retrieving/reaching for something that had been dropped. Other high frequency responses included dealing with children (52), texting (31), changing the radio (30), and dealing with makeup (28). Additionally, 30 people listed talking on a cell phone even though the question was for other than cell phone use. The remaining 199 responses were fewer than 20 each or were unique responses.

Situational Determinants. The questionnaire included items designed to examine the acceptability or perception of low risk of distraction as determined by driving situations. Three questions offered a variety of situations and asked that the respondent check if they believed them to be safe for talking on the phone, texting, or reading messages while driving. Figure 3 provides the results for these situational determinants.

Respondents were more likely to say cell phone use is safe in various driving situations compared to texting. As shown in Figure 3, the difference is substantial between perception of safe cell phone use and typing and reading messages while moving and when at a Stop sign. However, respondents were more likely to say it is safe to read messages than to talk on a cell phone or type a message at a traffic light. Talking and reading were considered equally safe while parked with the engine running, but texting was checked five percentage points less often. Two-thirds of the respondents said it is not safe to type a text message or email any time as a driver, and 63.5 percent said it is not safe to read a text or email as a driver. However, 40.2 percent checked the option 'not safe anytime' regarding cell phone use. Additionally, 41.1 percent said cell phone use is safe when using a hands-free device.

Several of the demographic variables were correlated with views of safe situation-specific wireless device use. The findings from regression analysis can be summarized as follows:

Texting

- As age increased, the likelihood of viewing texting while driving as safe decreased.
- Males were more likely than females to consider texting on straight stretches of highway with little traffic as safe.
- Anglos were more likely than other race/ethnicities to check options other than 'not safe anytime.'
- Higher education was associated with lower likelihood of saying 'not safe anytime.'
- Current military serving respondents were 2.5 times more likely than civilians to check 'not safe anytime.'

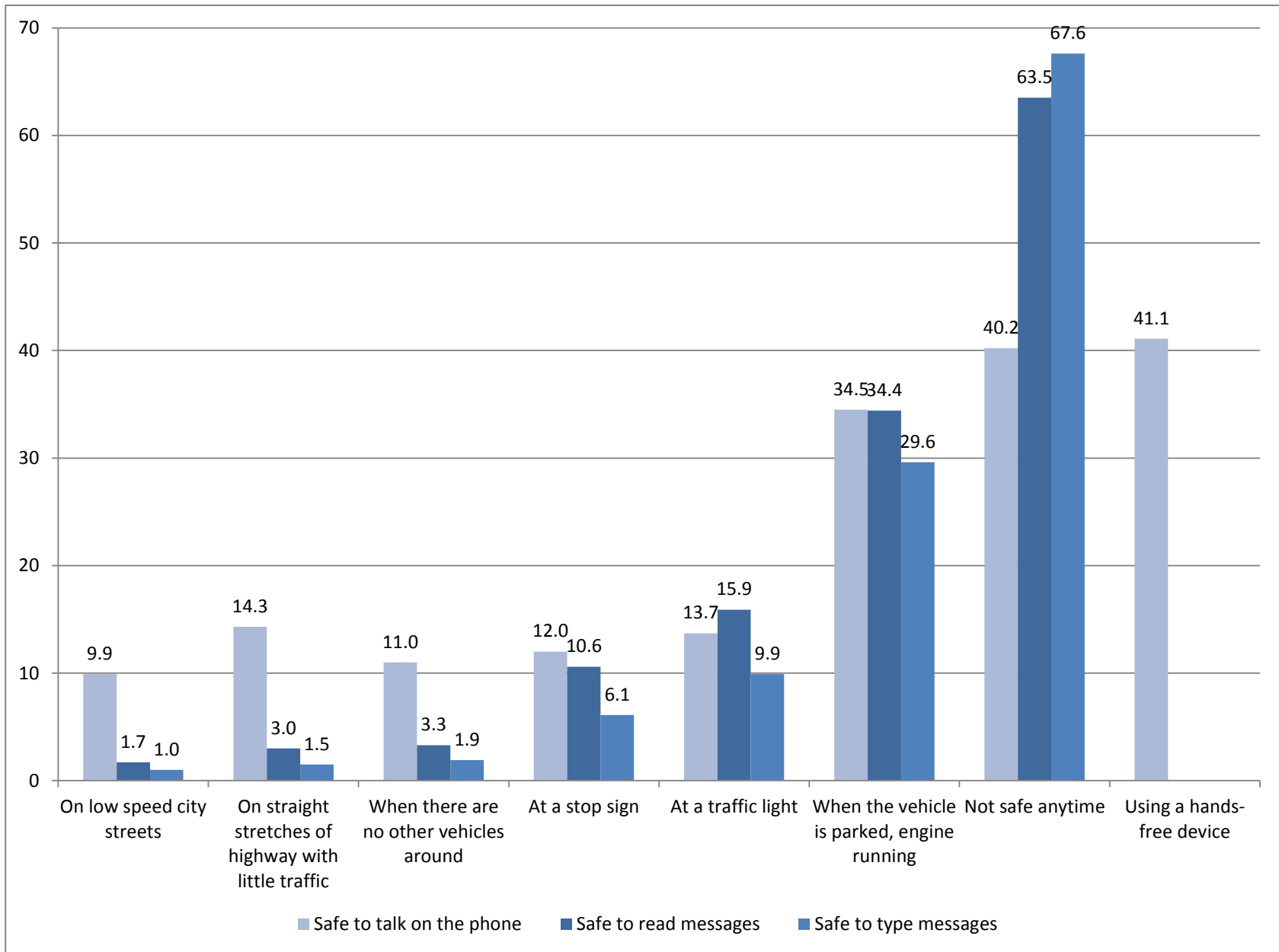
Reading Messages

- As age increased, the likelihood of viewing/reading texts or emails as safe decreased.
- Males were more likely than females to consider reading texts or emails as safe on straight stretches of highway or on roads when no other vehicles are around.
- Anglos were more likely than other race/ethnicities to check options other than 'not safe anytime.'
- Higher education associated with lower likelihood of saying 'not safe anytime.'
- Current military serving respondents were 2.9 times more likely than civilians to check 'not safe anytime.'

Talking on a Cell Phone

- As age increased, the likelihood of viewing talking on a cell phone while driving as safe decreased.
- There were no differences by gender in safe situation-specific perceptions of cell phone use.
- Anglos were least likely to say talking on a cell phone is not safe anytime.
- Higher education was associated with lower likelihood of saying 'not safe anytime.'
- There was a strong association between current military service and the likelihood of viewing cell phone use as unsafe while driving under various scenarios. Current military serving respondents were 2.35 times more likely than civilians to check 'not safe anytime.'

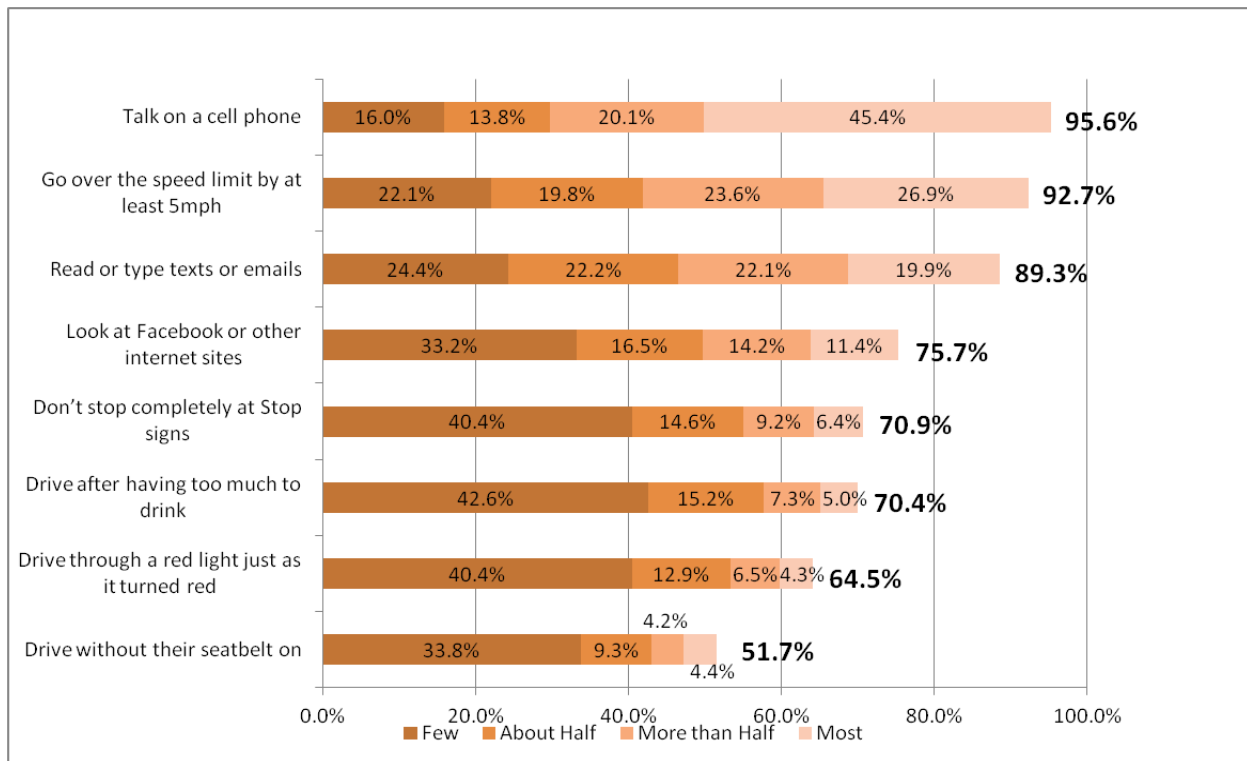
Figure 3. Situational Use of Wireless Communication Devices



What Other People Do. Survey respondents were asked how often they thought other people drive distracted and engage in illegal traffic behaviors. The question was posed, “of all the drivers you know, how many would you guess do [list of items] at least some of the time while driving.” The list included ‘talk on a cell phone,’ ‘read or typed texts or emails,’ ‘look at Facebook or other internet sites,’ and five other behaviors that are traffic offenses. Figure 4 shows the results percentages for each response option.

As with self-reported behavior, talking on a cell phone while driving was the most often reported driving behavior for others. Almost everyone thought at least some of the people they know talked on the phone while driving, and over 45 percent thought most of the drivers they know talk on a cell phone while driving. None of the other driving behaviors were said to be this prevalent, although exceeding the speed limit by 5 mph totaled 92.7%. The majority of respondents also guessed that some or most of the people they know read or typed texts or emails (89.3 percent) or looked at Facebook or other internet sites while driving (75.5 percent).

Figure 4. How Many Others Do Behaviors



Regression analysis indicated that the tendency to say other drivers talk on the phone increased with education and decreased with age. Anglos were more likely than other race/ethnicities to believe other drivers talk on the cell phone while driving, as were respondents currently serving in the military.

Similar associations were found for texting and reading texts, and for looking at Facebook or other internet sites. Specifically, age and non-Anglo were negatively associated with believing others they know engage in these behaviors, while education and being Anglo were positively associated with his view of others. These patterns generally held true for all of the behaviors listed in this question.

In terms of how capable other drivers are of handling distractions, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "most people can drive well enough to take care of distractions quickly without being dangerous." The majority (65.3 percent) disagreed, with 39.7 percent strongly disagreeing. Those who disagreed were more likely to be older respondents.

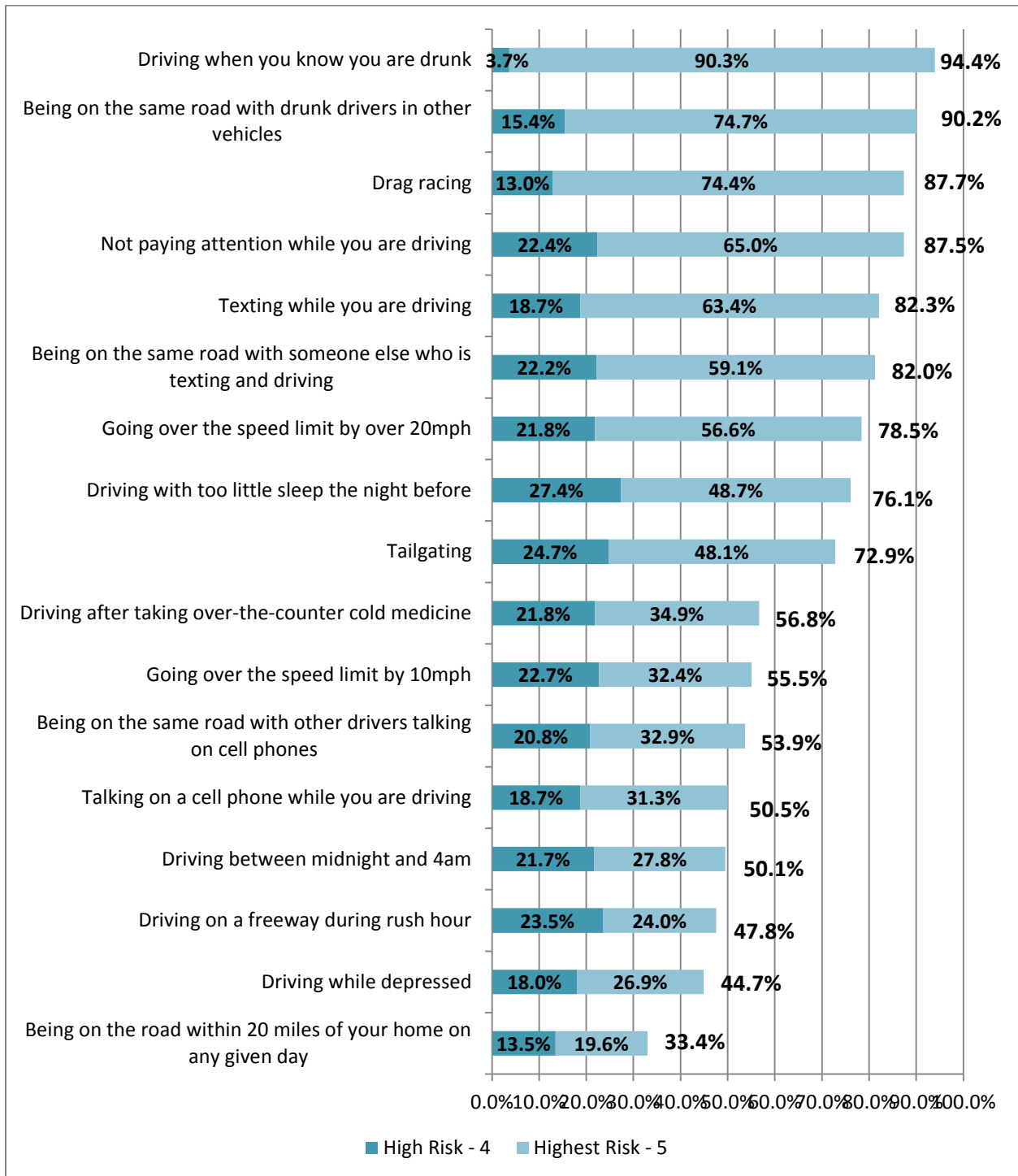
Respondents were given an opportunity to describe the distracted driving behavior of others in their own words. A second open-ended question asked for examples of "things you have seen other people do that are distracting and more dangerous than being on a cell phone while driving." This question generated 2,259 responses. Of the 2,259 responses, 526 (23.3 percent) were related to putting on makeup. Another 304 comments (13.5 percent) were related to eating. Slightly less than 7 percent (6.7 percent, 153 responses) listed reading as the distraction that had been observed in other drivers, and another 6 percent of the responses (n=137) were "texting." Rounding out the top five distracted behaviors listed were comments related to dealing with children (n=123).

Relative Risk. One objective of the survey was to assess drivers' perceptions of the risk of distracted driving, with particular attention to electronic device use distractions relative to other types of driving behaviors. The results shown in Figure 5 are limited to the response percentages on the upper end of the scale, which are the '4' and '5' rankings for high and highest risks.

The two actions viewed as most risky were alcohol impairment related. As indicated in Figure 5, over 90 percent of the respondents viewed driving drunk as a highest risk activity. Statistically equal percentages viewed being on the same road with drunk drivers and drag racing as highest risk activities. Distractions in general and texting appear in the rankings after drunk driving and drag racing. Cell phone use was viewed by approximately half the survey sample as high or highest risk activity, although slightly more than half (53.9 percent) checked being on the road with other drivers on their cell phones as highly risky.

The likelihood of seeing cell phone use as higher risk behavior increased with age but decreased with education. Females were more likely than males to see cell phone use as risky, as were military serving respondents were more likely than civilians. Anglos were less likely than other groups to view cell phone use as risky while driving. These relationships held true also for the belief that being on the road with other drivers using cell phones is highly risky. Furthermore, the same relationships were true for views on texting and driving and being on the same road with others who are texting and driving. These relationships were not found for other actions such as drag racing, drunk driving, or drowsy driving.

Figure 5. How Risky Are Actions



Relative importance of traffic safety related behaviors was also assessed by asking drivers their opinions about traffic safety priorities. The questionnaire included a list of 13 countermeasures and asked respondents to rank their top five priorities, with number one as their highest priority. Many respondents did not use number rankings or did not use a one through five numbering system. Table 5 provides the results using the responses that gave a number ranking. The items are ordered from highest to lowest based on the proportion that ranked the item as first priority.

Consistent with the previous question discussion, alcohol related issues are at the top of the list. A texting and driving law falls next in line. A cell phone ban was a relatively low priority for the majority of respondents.

Table 5. Traffic Safety Priorities

Countermeasure	Priority Number				
	1	2	3	4	5
	%	%	%	%	%
Stronger enforcement of DUI laws	23.3	20.9	10.3	7.9	6.0
Have strong penalties for drunk driving	20.9	23.3	15.2	8.9	5.6
Make it illegal to text and drive	16.7	9.1	12.1	11.7	12.3
Raising the minimum age to get a license to 18	9.6	3.3	3.8	3.7	5.8
Enforcing the child seat law	6.3	7.3	9.0	10.8	12.3
Making it illegal to talk on a cell phone and drive	5.4	10.9	7.9	8.6	5.6
Have strong penalties for causing a wreck by distracted driving	4.9	6.5	11.5	11.7	11.2
Convincing drivers to pay attention to driving	4.7	5.2	8.0	7.3	10.3
Enforcing the seat belt law	3.6	5.6	7.6	9.4	7.9
Catching speed violators	1.4	2.0	3.4	5.3	5.3
Catching red-light runners	1.3	2.0	2.6	3.7	5.4
Have strong penalties for running red lights	1.1	3.2	6.6	7.3	6.1
Have strong penalties for speeding	0.9	0.9	2.1	3.7	6.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Opinions. A significant section of the survey was designed to elicit the public’s opinion on the subject of distracted driving. Results for these Agree/Disagree statements are provided in Table 6. The highlighted results indicate that the respondents were of the opinion that distracted driving is a serious problem (indicated by 42.9 percent who strongly agreed) and that texting and driving should be illegal in Texas

(indicated by 49.2 percent who strongly agreed). Respondents tended to favor only allowing hands-free cell phone use (agreed with by 53.8 percent and neutral for 21.9 percent). Also, 38.9 percent strongly disagreed that the dangers of distracted driving have been exaggerated. Respondents were less inclined to favor making cell phone use illegal in Texas (indicated by 38.2 percent who disagreed and 20.5 percent who were neutral). The highest amount of ambivalence was with regard to better technology as a solution to distracted driving.

Table 6. Likert Scale Opinion Statements

	% Strongly Disagree	% Somewhat Disagree	% Neither Agree or Disagree	% Somewhat Agree	% Strongly Agree
The dangers of distracted driving have been exaggerated by researchers.	38.9	20.8	19.3	11.3	9.7
The dangers of distracted driving have not been emphasized enough in the U.S.	15.9	13.9	24.8	23.4	22.0
Distracted driving is a serious problem that needs more attention.	9.7	6.9	12.7	27.8	42.9
Texting and driving should be illegal in Texas.	12.6	8.6	14.7	15.0	49.2
Cell phone use of any type while driving should be illegal in Texas.	21.0	18.2	20.5	14.2	26.1
Only hands-free cell phone use while driving should be legal in Texas.	14.0	10.4	21.9	24.5	29.3
Distracted driving laws are too difficult to enforce.	15.0	13.7	26.3	27.9	17.2
The solution to distracted driving is better technology.	18.1	11.5	33.3	17.2	20.0

The opinions were analyzed with respect to correlations with the demographic variables. Key findings can be summarized as:

Dangers of Distracted Driving Exaggerated

- Older ages more likely to disagree
- Females more likely to disagree
- Hispanics more likely to agree

Dangers of Distracted Driving Not Emphasized Enough

- Older ages more likely to agree
- Higher educated more likely to agree
- Anglos more likely to agree

Distracted Driving Is a Serious Problem Needing More Attention

- Older ages more likely to agree
- Females more likely to agree
- Hispanics more likely to agree

Texting and Driving Should Be Illegal

- Older ages more likely to agree
- Females more likely to agree
- Currently serving in the military more likely to agree

Cell Phone Use While Driving Should Be Illegal

- Older ages more likely to agree
- Higher educated more likely to disagree
- Females more likely to agree
- Anglos more likely to disagree

Only Hands-Free Cell Phone Use Should Be Legal

- Older ages more likely to agree
- Anglos more likely to disagree

Distracted Driving Laws Too Difficult To Enforce

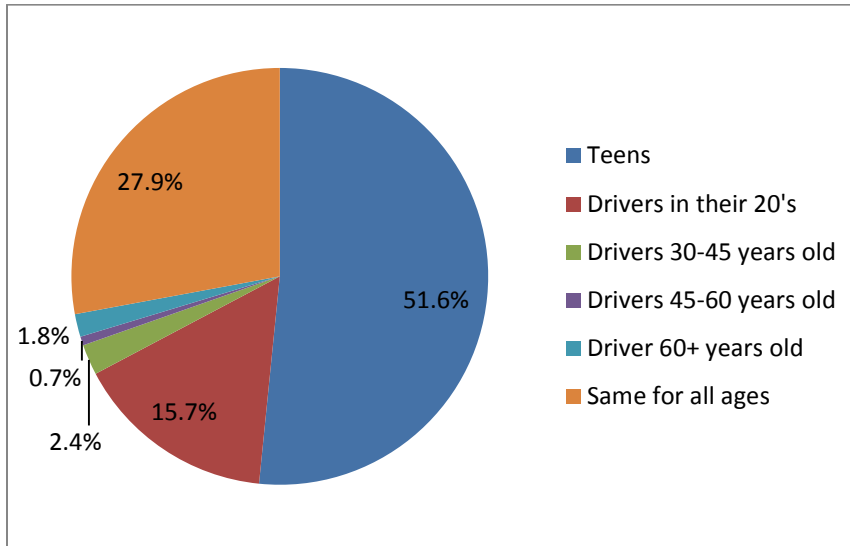
- Higher educated more likely to agree
- Females more likely to disagree
- Blacks more likely to disagree

Solution to Distracted Driving Is Better Technology

- Females more likely to disagree
- Hispanics more likely to agree
- Currently serving in the military more likely to agree

Respondents were asked their opinion regarding the age group they thought most likely to drive distracted in any way. The slight majority of respondents, across all ages, said teens are the age group most likely to drive distracted, as shown in Figure 6. Sixteen percent believed the most likely age group to drive distracted are those in their twenties. About a quarter of the respondents saw no differences in age groups on the issue. The over 30 age group all combined received about five percent of the responses, with 45-60 year-olds seen as least likely to drive distracted (at 0.7 percent).

Figure 6. Perceived Age Group Most Likely to Drive Distracted



Focus Group Results

Group Profiles. Group 1 was conducted in College Station on the Texas A&M University campus in the TTI building. There were 9 participants, ranging in age from 21 to over 65, 5 males and 4 females. The group session was held on a Thursday evening. Group 2 was conducted in Austin in a conference room at the TTI office building on a Tuesday evening. There were 8 participants, ranging in age from 19 to 70, three males and five females. Group 3 was conducted in Dallas in a conference room at the TTI office building on a Thursday evening. There were 11 participants, ranging in age from 18 to over 50, 5 males and 6 females.

Reasons for Distracted Driving. Upon finishing the questionnaire individually, the focus group moderator began the discussion by asking participants to talk about when they use their phone to talk or text and under what conditions. Six people out of all the participants in the three groups said they did not ordinarily use their cell phone while driving. In all three groups weather immediately came up as a deterrent for cell phone use. Participants typically reported that they used their cell phones for talking while driving under most conditions, **except during bad weather or in bad traffic**. Specific examples of bad weather included heavy rain, fog, snow and ice, lightening, and high winds. Both bad weather and bad traffic were given as examples of circumstances that demand the driver's attention and their hands on the steering wheel.

Most people indicated that a decision was involved as to whether or not to answer the phone while driving and, apart from weather or bad traffic conditions, *who* is calling would be a determinant. The College Station group had several participants (all of them under 30) who said they would answer the

phone in any situation. The Austin group members were more inclined to say they would answer the phone anytime if the call was work related and during working hours. Dallas participants were most apt to answer calls when the caller was a family member, and several mentioned answering only in an emergency.

Several mentions were made of the benefits of cell phones while driving. Notably, the ability to make calls in the event of an emergency, the ability to receive short but helpful messages, the phone as a resource for finding locations, and the use of phone for conversations to avoid drowsy driving were all mentioned.

Prevalence of Cell Phone Use. There were many comments that reinforced the opinion that cell phone use is common and not viewed as risky. Here are some examples:

Middle aged female: I did not grow up with that but I learned to manage it. I don't understand why people can't talk and drive. They get nervous.

Older female regular cell phone user: I wonder what we did before cell phones, actually, to be perfectly honest.

30's Male: I talk on the phone quite a bit while I'm driving. In fact, most of my friends I talk to say "you're in the car, you're in the car" and she goes "that's the only time you hear from me."

28 Year-Old Male: Talking on the phone is totally different. I mean, usually, it'll be, like, certain age ranges that can talk on the phone and drive at the same time, but then, like, older people, like, talking on the phone, like, you gotta either focus in on one or the other, and when you're younger, you're, like, you can talk on the phone and drive at the same time. And, most people that's around my age, they feel like, "well, I can do it at the same time."

Male College Student: Let me see, I guess I answer phone calls whenever people call me. I don't think it's that big of a deal.

50's Female: Well if you're talking on the phone, whether you've got it on speaker phone or if you've got it held to your ear, you can watch where you're going and talk at the same time. So for me, I don't consider it be a, as risky a behavior because I can actually walk and chew gum at the same time, so I feel like I can drive and talk.

There were several participants, however, who were not comfortable using cell phones while driving. One of the youngest group participants, a 19-year-old female, shared that she was not inclined to talk and drive in this way:

Female College Student: I pretty much never talk on the phone while driving mainly because, I know that my #1 biggest distraction, like when I make the most egregious road errors, have been like when my friends are in the car. It's really, really distracting like having people talking and talking at you, especially if you're all going somewhere together and someone is like you should have taken a left there and then you're like uhhhh, should I have taken a left there? That's exactly when bad things happen.

47 Year-Old Female: Personally for me, I don't look at my phone when I'm driving, because I know I want to. I don't even turn up the music. I'm so concentrated because you know, I'm from a different country. And I notice that here, y'all don't use turn signal indicators, right? So, that's a big, like, "what is that?" You just whoosh, like that into my lane, no indicator, and then everybody's on their phone, texting while they're doing this, you know, while they're driving. So it's something that I have taken into consideration. I have kids in the car, so I'm very alert. Yes, I answer my phone when it's my family, I'm not saying that I don't, and I answer when it's an emergency, and I perceive that it is an emergency. But typically, I do not talk on the phone and I do not text. I will give the phone to my girlfriend that's in the car and have her to answer the phone. I'm like, I don't talk on the phone. Period.

50's Male: My bar is really high, I will not talk on my cell phone in the car unless I just feel like it's really necessary...no matter...Now, I'll always see who's calling and I'll just decide right then and there "can this wait? Or can't it?" And if it can wait, I just don't answer it...if I feel like it's important, I go ahead and take it.

Participants in the two groups in the larger cities of Austin and Dallas brought up the perceived safety benefit of using Bluetooth systems. These are comments that made this point clearly:

Female 20's: So when I'm driving I'm constantly on the phone but I have Bluetooth in my car so I have my hands free device which makes it a whole lot easier too. Because of my job, people are always trying to get a hold of me. So it could be any time and I will probably be on the phone more in the car than I would like to be, but you know having the hands-free device--having the Bluetooth in the car really helps a lot.

Female: I do use a cell phone, but with a headset. I've seen quite a few scary episodes with people just, without a headset. I think it's more dangerous. I think if you're going to use a phone, use the headset, hands-free, at least.

18 Year-Old Male: A headset is the most appropriate thing to have while you're driving.

Male Over 50: I don't think you should be on the phone when you're driving, and if you have to be, I think you need to be on a headset or something hands-free. But it's still distracting, because when accidents happen, you can't really stop them.

Distinctions Between Calling and Texting. In each group the consensus was that texting is more dangerous than phone use for talking. The next quotes exemplify the thinking regarding differences between texting and cell phone talking and the risks associated with texting.

20's Male: I think that texting is a lot more dangerous than just talking because you have to concentrate using your fingers and also looking at the phone.

Middle-aged Female: As far as reading emails or texting or things like that, that's just I don't think that people should do that and yes I have done it at a stop sign before but I felt very nervous doing it.

Male: ...during the course of my day at work I'm constantly being called by work and by I talk a lot on the phone but never, never, ever have I have an alert set for emails and texts and all that. Never even bothered with them. You know, I think it's really stupid to try to read while you're driving.

Male: Talking is much safer than texting. Texting invariably takes your eyes off the road. People aren't really trying to do the kamikaze thing or you know commit suicide, but I think invariably it takes your eyes off of the road, and that defeats the whole purpose.

50's Female: I don't text at all, I don't enjoy texting on the phone, I don't enjoy seeing people text. I see long lines of traffic and when I go on the other side, because somebody's in there [making a texting gesture]. And I'm like, "Ok, so I'm getting out of that lane and I don't even want to be on the other side of you, so I'm going to go about five, six miles over the speed limit to get away from you because you're going to cause a wreck. I can't stand to see people texting. I want a hotline where we can call and report you and you shouldn't be doing other stuff...

18 Year-Old Male: I don't see the point in texting, because, like, you really can't see the road. That's, like, the whole point of driving is to watch the road, so you don't hit a car, or a person. You have to see that.

Some of the participants spoke about their own texting behaviors. The comments that follow also illustrate that receiving, checking, and sending or typing texts are viewed very differently.

20's Male: So I decided right when I started to be honest so it might upset some people who are worried about other drivers but I'm just going to be honest cause it's a focus group. I don't answer anything. I don't talk on the phone very much while I'm driving. I'm not really much of a phone talker anyway. I will check messages. I live in San Marcos and I drive during rush hour. I'm in dead traffic a lot of times for two hours a day sometimes because I work in north Austin and I drive all the way to San Marcos. I have to have music so my phone is what I play music out of so I'll turn on music or turn it off or change a song while I'm driving. I have a holster for my phone so it's up on the dash. I'll check a [text] message, not an email. Email is too much to read. I'll check a [text] message to see who it is from, what they're saying to me. I won't type one back.

50's Female: If I'm stopped, and I'm sitting in traffic, and I know that I'll read a text, because I'm just watching the taillight ahead of me. If I'm stopped in traffic that's all I'm doing is watching the taillight ahead of me, so I can keep my foot on the brake, hopefully.

30's Female: In the past I have texted while driving but I wouldn't be going full force at the normal speed limit. I live in the country so I'd probably be on a back road by myself or something like that. But it's not too often when I'll respond to a text message. But I will check and see what they have sent me.

19 Year-Old Female: I don't think I've ever responded to a text message while driving but I'll check them at stop lights, which I'm not super proud of. But a lot of times, especially if I'm going to meet someone and they send me something, I'll pause and I'll check it because it might be relevant.

Other People. Several comments were made regarding the capabilities to drivers, noting who tends to drive distracted. Like the survey respondents, the focus group participants tended to check teens as most likely to drive distracted, followed by all groups equally. However, the discussion turned more often to older drivers. The following are provided as examples:

70 Year-Old Male: I'm sitting here thinking but I think it is a generational thing because excuse me, I didn't grow up with a cell phone. There were no cell phones when I was a teenager for example. That was back a few years ago but there were no cell phones so there was no texting. There was nothing you had. So you waited if there was an important message of some kind. You just wait and get it when you got it.

30 Year-Old Male: That also has to do with the user too. I mean, because if you think about, like, everyone can play a video game but not everyone has the hand-eye coordination to actually be good at that game. Like I know a lot of people who don't even have to look at the screen or phone to text, like, they, they just know where everything is on it.

College Age Male: It took me like 3 weeks to teach my dad how to use an iPhone once he first got one, so, I mean, if you're trying to figure it out while you're driving it's going to take a lot, so more distraction until you know how it works when you're going.

21 Year-Old Female: ...we recently gave my great aunt a telephone and she doesn't really know how to use it so whenever it goes off she thinks it's like the fire alarm or something. And so, she has a much more severe reaction to it and I imagine that that follows when she's in the car. She doesn't know how to put it on silent.

20 Year-Old Female: I think it's like a mid-life crisis kind of thing. You see the older generation with the hot rod, and the sports car, and they have the latest gadget in technology and all that, and I'm over here, and I'm 20, and I'm like, I don't even do half of the things this person over here, and she's speeding, like, Speedy Gonzales on a phone, like, I think it's like a mid-life kind of thing. They have to be young, have to have the latest thing, have to be, all this and that. I don't know, I think it might be just one of those things.

Countermeasures. To conclude the discussion session, the topic of what are appropriate ways to decrease distracted driving was discussed. Although not every individual agreed within each group, there were some similar opinions that characterized each of the three groups. The College Station group was in favor of education, particularly driver education, to counter texting and driving. This group was opposed to a ban on cell phone use but in favor of a law against texting. In general, however, this group did not think a texting ban could be enforced.

The Austin group was also in favor of education and commercials with age group targeted messages. This group was by and large strongly opposed to any legislative approach. The opinion was given and agreed with that a ban would promote racial profiling.

The Dallas group agreed that hard-hitting commercials should be used to impact drivers and raise their awareness of distracted driving consequences. They were generally in favor of making texting illegal and assessing stiff penalties for violators.

Common Themes. The three groups were composed of a fairly wide range of participants in terms of ages, race/ethnicities, and occupations. As expected, there was no consensus on every topic. However, some common and noteworthy themes emerged from the discussion sessions.

While not everyone shared this opinion, the majority viewed cell phone use for talking while driving as common and acceptable, and sometimes even beneficial or necessary. Cell phone talking was viewed as safer by many of the participants with the use of Bluetooth or a headset. The use of the phone for emergencies, for avoiding the risk of drowsy driving, and for way-finding were cited as good reasons for cell phone use.

Unacceptable distractions were noted as behaviors that put others in danger—drinking and driving, driving too slow, drag racing, not paying attention, and especially texting and driving. Text typing was considered more dangerous and more unacceptable than reading or checking messages.

All three groups agreed that texting is more distracting than cell phone talking because texting takes your eyes off of the road. Texting was generally viewed as dangerous, although some participants admitted to texting while driving. Those who were most opposed to texting and driving either had experienced a tragedy involving distracted driving, knew personally of someone who had, or were impacted by a tragedy portrayed in the media.

Common perceptions were that older people are slower operating mobile communication devices. Younger drivers were said to manipulate devices faster because they are practiced and have quicker reflexes.

The group consensus was that texting in school zones should not be allowed. There was also agreement that texting and driving should be illegal. However, enforcing a texting or cell phone ban would be problematic. There was no widespread support for banning cell phones. Education and public information efforts were approved methods to combat distracted driving.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Using a cell phone while driving is a common activity. Self-reported cell phone use increases with education and decreases with age. Anglos are more likely than other race/ethnicities to use their cell phones while driving. Current military service personnel were four times more likely to report talking on a cell phone while driving than civilians.

While 76.0 percent of survey respondents reported they had talked on their cell phone while driving during the past 30 days, only 44.2 percent reported they had read or typed texts, and 18.5 percent had looked at something on the internet as a driver. Each of these activities was more likely to be done by drivers with higher education, and less often by older respondents.

Those who say they text and drive have a lower estimation of the time their eyes are off the road than the estimated average from research studies. They are more likely than others to disagree that they are capable of multi-tasking and drive well enough to take care of distractions without being dangerous.

The likelihood of engaging in wireless device use was not found to mirror views on how safe it is to engage in the behavior among military personnel. As mentioned previously, current military service personnel were four times more likely than civilians to report talking on a cell phone while driving. However, they were 2.35 times more likely than civilians to check the response that talking on a cell phone while driving is 'not safe anytime.'

Males more often than females viewed texting as safe in some situations. There were no statistically significant gender differences in the view of risk for cell phone talking.

Respondents viewed others as more involved in distracted driving than themselves. About half believed that the group most often distracted is teens.

In terms of a traffic safety priority, making texting and driving illegal fell just below strengthening and enforcing impaired driving laws. Of 13 options, making texting and driving illegal was ranked first priority by 16.7 percent of the respondents. Most of the focus group participants agreed that texting should be illegal, although enforcement was cited as a challenge.

To summarize, the study indicated that many people believe drivers are capable of being attentive under normal driving conditions while talking on the phone. People believe most other people they know talk on the phone while driving. Hands-free talking is considered safer. Texting, on the other hand, is viewed as unsafe, particularly typing or sending messages, and there is general support for a ban on texting and driving. Distracted driving behavior was more often admitted to and supported by Anglos and those with higher educations. These relationships should be explored more fully as public information and education efforts are developed and as countermeasure approaches are considered.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Questionnaire
- B. Comments from Survey
- C. Focus Group Discussion Guide
- D. Questionnaire results

ATTACHMENT B
Comments

1. About time to have a survey like this. 😊
2. Alcohol is well known as a dangerous substance during driving. Lack of sleep, texting, and cell phone use need greater attention.
3. All of my answers widely vary based on the person in question. Some people allowed to drive shouldn't! Cell phone or not! Fix that first!
4. Apply same rules for police officers when they are working.
5. As a motorcyclist, the inattentiveness of drivers is very important and I notice it.
6. As long as the driver doesn't, we will avoid a lot of the accidents.
7. As long as you stay active at any subjects that are raised in the modern world, you're doing your job more than adequate.
8. Ban cell phone use in the car.
9. Ban texting and driving! Too dangerous.
10. Be more aware of people using their cell phones when they are driving.
11. Best wishes in your efforts to make driving safer.
12. Bluetooth enabled cars and devices allow me to make and receive any phone calls and even text hands free! (and eyes free – I never have to look at the phone)
13. Build some kind of sensor that detects people texting and driving.
14. Car insurance should be a little cheaper for younger drivers. I think a person over sixty is a higher risk driver.
15. Cell phone use anywhere in the U.S. should be illegal while driving.
16. Cell phones aren't the biggest distraction, other passengers in the vehicle are.
17. Cell phones do not belong in the hands of careless drivers.
18. Cell phones, talking, texting, and webbing are true dangers not closely realized because we are so high-tech oriented and have the unreal assumption of staying in touch – life & relationships are different if dead. Also, roads need improving; traffic lights needed, wider lanes, etc.
19. Cell phone laws that apply to CDL drivers should apply to class C drivers as well.
20. Cell phones should not be able to text when driving over 30mph.
21. Children found standing up on cars or in seats without car seats (age 5 and under) need heavy fines & calls to the Dept. of Family & Protective Services.
22. College students party, get drunk, and drive; need more police officers on the road Friday and Saturday night, especially near the Texas A&M area.
23. Concerned with other drivers who cruise below the speed limit in the passing lanes and drivers failing to use turn signals.
24. Definitely enforce the law to stop texting while driving.
25. Definitely would like to see laws banning texting while driving.
26. Do not criminalize texting/cell phone use in Texas.
27. Doing a great job by carrying out this survey to minimize the road accidents, where many claim lives and destruction of properties.
28. Don't like questions 14-20 before this comments section and #9 across.
29. Drive carefully and be a courteous driver; be safe.
30. Driver with a dog or cat in their lap while driving, especially large animals that are not in the back seat.
31. Drivers are less educated about the need to concentrate while driving. It takes skills to be a good driver. Better Drivers Ed would be a good starting place.

32. Driver's licenses are a privilege to us; if lost for our negligence, it is hard to get around without your driver's license privilege.
33. Drivers make decisions to use the phone while driving or wearing their seat belts. They must pay if they cause harm to someone or themselves.
34. Driving using your 5 senses is the correct thing to do: no texting, no drunk drivers, and drive without the effect of alcohol!
35. Driving with Bluetooth should be legal.
36. Education is key.
37. Enforce distracted driving by penalties. How can one prove the driver was distracted?
38. Enforce existing laws, not make more.
39. Enforce responsible drinking before driving.
40. Enforce safe driving laws. Thanks you.
41. Enforce talk/text not to be illegal in Texas.
42. Enforcement for people who text and drive.
43. Enforce cell phone laws: texting, talking, etc.
44. Even my kid – I get so mad if she texts when I am driving! I agree: illegal texting while driving.
45. For number 9, I felt like my options were limited and although I did select and rank 5 options, a few options I chose because I had to choose 5.
46. For the safety of all ignoring the rules of driving because it's causing many people pain.
47. Give candy to people taking your surveys.
48. Give penalties to those who deserve it.
49. Glad for surveys like this.
50. Glad to take this survey.
51. Good idea, this survey!
52. Good questions.
53. Good research topic.
54. Good survey.
55. Great job guys.
56. Great survey.
57. Great survey!
58. Good survey – I think cell phone use can be safe when done hands free – no different than talking to a passenger in your car.
59. Great survey and hopefully it makes a difference.
60. Hands free cell phone use only!
61. Hands free communication.
62. Hands free is the way to go!
63. Hands free cell phones are much less of a problem, but texting should not be done while moving.
64. Hit and run accidents need stronger penalties and drunk drivers have too many chances.
65. Hope everyone takes the times to complete this survey.
66. Hope this helps & changes are made to protect drivers & people.
67. Hope this helps new laws that will save lives!
68. Hopefully there is a reduction in distracted driving – too many innocent lives are cut short.
69. Hopefully this will enforce safe driving.
70. Hoping texting will be made illegal.

71. How does one monitor all the distractions of driving? Is eating or smoking equal to texting or talking on the phone or to each other?
72. I agree with any laws that prohibit TEXTING while driving, but talking with a headset should be fine.
73. I agree with law enforcement for violators.
74. I agree with Oprah, cars should be no-phone-zones.
75. I agree: texting and driving can be dangerous, but I believe laws on it are too difficult to enforce.
76. I almost had an accident the other day because a lady ran the red light and she was texting.
77. I am happy to see this being done. I pray it will make a difference. ☺
78. I am really worried about driving safety for our children because mobile technologies increase usage, especially for younger children.
79. I applaud all the efforts to educate the citizenry about the danger of distracted driving/drunken driving/drowsy driving. I think, however, that it is not so reasonable to expect law enforcement officers to be able to discover what a person is doing with their cell phone (for example, a person who is using a GPS app). So making things "illegal" may make folks feel good, but instead of doing something useful, they complicate things. Having strong penalties for people who cause accidents that can be proven to have occurred while texting or talking on a cell phone is a better approach, in my opinion.
80. I believe people drive drunk because they need to get their car and themselves home. No one trusts leaving their car in some other area.
81. I believe texting and driving is a serious problem; talking on the cell phone can be distracting also, but I do think a hands free device should be allowed. Music could be considered just as distracting as long as your hands & eyes are alert.
82. I changed my mind as I was filling this out. More information helps a lot.
83. I do agree that something should be done about distracted driving; it's really dangerous and people die.
84. I do these things even though I know they are dangerous.
85. I don't have a cell phone.
86. I don't believe better technology would be the answer. I personally believe just not texting or emailing at all – it is a danger to yourself and all other drivers.
87. I don't like tailgaters. -_-
88. I don't think speaking on the phone is as dangerous as texting. People just need to be more aware!
89. I don't think talking should be illegal, but I do think texting is a lot more distractive and should be illegal.
90. I feel this survey may have a bias appeal for some better technology or the ignorance of the middle class.
91. I had a good friend die, texting & driving – I would support making this illegal!!!!
92. I haven't driven at all in the last month. I have been incarcerated for 17 months. And I don't have a driver's license yet.
93. I haven't driven in more than 30 years.
94. I hope I helped with your survey!!
95. I hope, I can do better with this survey, helping others.
96. I hope some of this stuff turns into some kind of law for cell phones.
97. I hope something does get done about texting and driving and talking.
98. I hope Texas does pass a law about cell phone use while driving. It is very important for the younger generation to realize that, thanks.

99. I hope that these compilations of facts prove to be advantageous.
100. I hope to see more done about the cell situation while driving (Text while driving).
101. I hope we get stronger laws out there against texting and talking while driving.
102. I like that surveys are conducted because maybe the streets will be safer if they apply and enforce the laws.
103. I really think that people, or, well, kids that are 16 shouldn't be able to drive without an adult 21 or over in the car – that will help them stay focused on the road; it should really be enforced.
104. I see most people don't give signals while changing lanes, this is very scary. Strict laws should be enforced.
105. I see people of all ages using their cell phones while driving. Heard a school teacher here in Wichita Falls plays Candy Crush on her phone while driving to school every day praying for all of us!
106. I support this venture whole-heartedly.
107. I sure hope y'all will make it against the law for driving while texting and putting makeup on.
108. I thank you if something gets done about texting & driving, for I ride a motorcycle FULL time. Thank you.
109. I think any laws applied to us should be followed by law enforcement officers also.
110. I think everyone getting a license should take this survey.
111. I think it is important that people are aware that when you drive distracted, drunk or reading texts, etc., you could cause a crash and it is very good that people get to voice their opinion with this survey.
112. I think it should be a stiffer penalty for drivers who text and talk on the phone while driving on the road.
113. I think it's great you took the time and effort to create this survey.
114. I think people get distracted by various things just the same as cell phones! As for cell phones, they are only distracting when people let them be!
115. I think talking and texting should be illegal with stiff penalties.
116. I think texting is safe if you are parked or hands free talking while driving is safe.
117. I think texting should be outlawed; talking on the phone doesn't seem as dangerous as texting because you can still look at the road and talk. Texting takes eyes off of the road – it is dangerous.
118. I think that texting is a major distraction; everyone seems to do it and older people should be checked more for health problems because it's causing more accidents at this time because only their vision is checked.
119. I think that if you know you are not comfortable enough to talk and drive at the same time, then you should limit yourself to just one thing. While driving I don't hold long conversations, I just check what the person wants and tell them I will call them later if the situation calls for that. Sometimes you do have emergencies and have to answer while driving. But keep it short and sweet – safety first!
120. I think the State of Texas is doing a great job on the issues of distracted drivers.
121. I think the state should be more concerned with DRUNK DRIVERS than people on their PHONES!
122. I think the use of cell phones is good when people don't have to hold it.
123. I think there should be more laws in place to enforce no cell phone usage while driving.
124. I think there should be some kind of hot line for people to call when they see distracted driving. Report the license plate number.
125. I think we should concentrate on educating people on how to make good decisions while driving because anything (including thinking about your bad day) can cause a wreck.

126. I think with the increase in speed limits, more attention should be given to people distracted by driving.
127. I understand texting and distracted driving is a problem, but more laws will not help. People need to be responsible for their actions and no law will make that happen – people need common sense training, not laws.
128. I was married to a police officer for 21 years. I am well aware that police officers and prominent “public figures” are let go for drunk driving all the time. Something should be done about this. My children’s safety was compromised for many years because of this underhanded practice. It makes me sick.
129. I will work on using my phone while driving. ☺
130. I wish they would ban cell phones all together while driving and get fined if talking while driving; not just school zones only.
131. I would agree with some people’s multitasking skills being better than others, but losing your life or someone else’s isn’t worth any message.
132. I would like to see people stop texting and driving!
133. If people could hang up and drive, traffic would move better. Need to start a campaign to “hang up, shut up, stop texting, and we can all get there alive and sooner!”
134. If police officers were to focus more on finding distracted drivers, then they would become distracted drivers. Police even have laptops in their patrol cars; I’ve seen a few using them while driving. Distracted driving police.
135. If you take away cell phone, then I think all technology in police cars should be illegal.
136. In general, people are terrible drivers.
137. In reference to question 10, while I see more teens being distracted while driving, all drivers have some form of distractions while driving, i.e., putting on makeup, children, etc.
138. In states that have banned texting and driving, crash rates due to drivers texting has gone up. Instead of having the cell phone up on the steering wheel, drivers put their phones in their laps to avoid getting caught and take their eyes further off the road.
139. Interesting survey, we do not need more laws.
140. Investigate officers that show partnership to friends while driving!!!
141. It has been a true pleasure.
142. It is very important to continue to educate people in safely driving using seat belts for children.
143. It was very good.
144. It’s good research for the public’s security.
145. It’s hard to enforce a law on texting and driving since the ability to hide it is easy. One way to enforce it is to go under cover or in lifted vehicles to see it being done. This also takes away manpower that could be used on other problems or more severe ones. But it could also be a deterrent to a more serious accident.
146. It’s helpful.
147. It’s not just about cell phones – some people can’t chew gum and drive!
148. It’s safer and more fun to be in the passenger seat sometimes because driving can get boring. Driving stick (manual) is the best solution for texting while driving.
149. I’ve seen a teenager in a suburban area texting and driving; the car swerved more than a drunk driver.
150. Jail frequent offenders.
151. Just moved to Texas from Illinois. Cannot believe Texas does not have laws restricting use of cell phones/texting while driving!!
152. Just visiting but a very good survey.

153. Just want to make sure that everyone knows this is real and people can get hurt...
154. Keep the older people off the street. They shouldn't drive at all.
155. Keep up the good work.
156. Laws should be stricter for drunk drivers!
157. Legislation is not the answer; less government would be a step in the right direction.
158. Less laws.
159. Let the idiots crash, the good and smart people will survive. It's good population control...
160. Let's all be safe
161. Let's bring back the red light cameras!! So people know not to run red lights...
162. Life is short, so we should be careful with our actions.
163. Long survey.
164. Mainly focus on being stricter on the teenagers' driving for them to learn the consequences.
165. Make a law quickly for texting and driving.
166. Make it a law in Texas: no cell phones while in the car!
167. Make law: no texting.
168. Make streets safer so innocent lives can be saved.
169. Make Texas safer!
170. Make the use of cell phones while driving illegal.
171. Making things illegal doesn't stop people with no respect for authority.
172. Many people, I have encountered, do not know or obey basic traffic driving rules. Turn signals, right of way, etc. Maybe an exam should be administered every ten years.
173. May I suggest that we should have stricter laws on alcohol? I feel that alcohol should of never been legalized, nor marijuana, texting, or talking on cell phones. Safety comes first; peoples' lives first.
174. Men seem more distracted while driving (less able to multitask generally). Maybe if they don't allow texting/talking except when stopped (at light, sign, traffic), but hard to enforce.
175. Military personnel have been in the most tragic accidents: too young, no experience, bad influence, takes to drinking and doing drugs, far from home, etc. from peers.
176. More attention concerning texting and driving will get results to that problem.
177. More laws regarding cell phone use while driving.
178. Stricter with who is authorized to drive, more screening. I don't use my cell phone while driving.
179. More accidents are caused by idiot who do not know what they are doing: book smarts only goes so far.
180. Most non-driving movement in a car can wait until the car is not being used.
181. Most people think they are more capable and less distracted than they are.
182. Most people who I see driving badly on the road end up being on their phones.
183. My advice to motorists is to be more careful while driving and to obey all the traffic signs are traffic laws.
184. My mother in law was killed by a person who was speeding and had been drinking.
185. My profession is training CDL drivers; the two things that we have zero tolerance on are use of cell phones and not getting proper rest. 100% of all accidents are avoidable. Distractions are our number one cause of accidents.
186. Need to invent car seats where children cannot reach them & remove the car seat seatbelt from car.
187. Never knew I was really doing wrong, but texting & driving is a major problem...
188. Never take your eyes off the road. Be more aware of your driving.
189. Nice survey. We should be more aware of "distracted driving."

190. No texting and hands free talking.
191. No texting and auto-answer cell phone after you park and are out of car.
192. Not only do you see people in their cars texting or talking on a cell, but very often the policemen, firemen, etc. on their cells also – very poor example they are setting! Plus 18-wheeler drivers!!
193. Often see drivers swerving because they're texting.
194. Outlaw text or phone usage totally.
195. Overall enforcing cell phone use while driving is comparable to drinking and driving – meaning some can multitask and some cannot. To be totally safe would be to make it illegal for all.
196. Passing a law to not text or talk on the phone would decrease the wrecks in the U.S.
197. Penalties on any kind of action should be equal for any race, gender, or finances. Just because you can afford a good attorney should not change the consequence to a lesser penalty.
198. People being more considerate of others would stop a lot of accidents.
199. People change their signal light and then turn the other way. People that turn without using a signal light should be fined.
200. People need to use their turn signals and stop using cell phones completely while driving.
201. People seem to pull out into oncoming traffic in right lanes all the time. Never see anyone pulled over. I work at a hospital and see accident victims a lot. I'm from Las Vegas (NV) and I thought they were bad drivers there! Not as bad as here. Not enough enforcement. Very aggressive drivers here. Won't let my teens drive here.
202. People should never text while driving.
203. People should not text at all while driving or look at the internet, etc.
204. People will always drive crazy.
205. Phones need a red alert button that notifies the person calling or texting that you are unable to respond at the moment.
206. Please don't ticket us for driving 10 miles over the speed limit. I got pulled over for going 5 miles over the limit before; 5-10 miles over the speed limit isn't dangerous.
207. Please don't make cell phone use illegal.
208. Please enforce laws to keep phones away from any age group when in a car.
209. Please enforce, through legislation, laws that make roads safer. Thank you.
210. Please let texting and talking be illegal while driving, especially in school zones.
211. Please make talking on the cell phone & texting illegal in the State of Texas.
212. Please set up a law to ban texting or answering the call while driving just like in the EU.
213. Pretty interesting survey.
214. Re #4: I talk & text hands free, eyes stay on road.
215. Re #6&8: Don't drive; I do not allow friends or family members to have their phone while I am in the car because they would be putting my life at risk; my daughter only has one mother.
216. Re #6A: hands free
217. Re #6D: A lot yrs ago, not anymore; Re #9c: Stricter on bars serving, they must be responsible - they would serve me MANY shots & know I'm driving home - I'm lucky I didn't wreck or kill someone - I'd advocate for this (409) 926-7685
218. Re #7: Having young children in the car should be listed; it's a 4 or 5; Re #11L: Phones know through GPS that you are moving fast and could disable.
219. Re #7E: added "6" – Fun Stuff. Makes you think.
220. Re #8: use a Bluetooth – this is a great survey.

221. Re #8: my phone is a speaker phone in my car that comes through the car radio. Re #9: allow speaker phones that do not require the use of hands or anything in your car. Most distractions that seem to cause "near" accidents are someone on their hand held cell.
222. Re #9: police use good judgment instead of automatic tickets (head light out, license plate covers Texas, fast changing red light, etc.) "Are we not all Americans?" Re #11: plead the 5th :)...do we need a law - educate – how about a smarter populace?
223. Safe driving is very important; thank you for making it a big deal.
224. Safety first.
225. Should outlaw texting & driving.
226. Signs painted over the road (lines!) are nearly ignored by most drivers. They change and invade lanes. They turn left over double median lines. They make u-turns with no regard to median lanes. The turn left on double lines, next to left lane, left turns, etc. Check zip code 78589 for examples.
227. Smoking can cause a serious distraction – looking for and lighting a cigarette.
228. Some of these questions are complicated; need to specify better.
229. Strongly agree: cell phone usage and texting should be illegal in the State of Texas.
230. Survey results only prove what the generator determines by the questions. Safety in Texas would be better if law enforcement was engaged in pursuit of reckless driving on our roadways. Biggest problem in Texas!
231. TAFF laws can make drivers be careful!
232. Take the texters off the road.
233. Talking is not as dangerous as texting. While not moving it's ok, but texting while moving is the worst thing you can do.
234. Technology is key.
235. Teenagers drive most dangerously, but some people who are more than 80 years old driver dangerously too, and also people who take strong medications.
236. Texting & emails are very different to me: the questions where those things were combined were difficult to answer.
237. Texting and driving and drinking and driving should have harsher punishments due to many unneeded deaths.
238. Texting and driving is very dangerous.
239. Texting and driving needs to go away. However, talking on the cell phone while driving is ok; same as talking with a passenger. Are we going to outlaw talking to a passenger while we drive?
240. Texting and driving should be made illegal everywhere. Too many people crash and die because of it.
241. Texting can be replaced by voice typing, which has been applied to smart phones.
242. Texting has to be addressed and stopped while driving.
243. Texting on long strips of highway or stopped is ok. No emails, Facebook, or internet due to all the steps.
244. Texting should be restricted, and talking is less risky than texting.
245. Texting while driving = disaster.
246. Texting while driving is dangerous and should be fixed.
247. Texting while driving should be illegal. People on prescription medications that aren't in pain who are driving should get DUI's or DWI's.
248. Texting/cell phone use while driving should be illegal everywhere.
249. (5) Thank you.
250. Thank you so much.

251. Thank you!
252. Thank you.
253. Thank you for doing this so we can be more aware of all that we are doing be it bad or good.
254. Thank you for conducting this research! I know I need to do a better job at not texting while driving and will try harder after taking this survey!
255. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.
256. Thank you for trying to enforce the law on drinking and driving and texting or just on being the phone, but also you should force the law on people who throw cigarettes out the window while driving.
257. (2) Thanks.
258. Thanks for caring, keep up the good work 😊
259. Thanks for handing out this survey! 😊
260. Thanks for letting me take this test.
261. Thanks for making me take this test.
262. Thanks for making me take this.
263. Thanks for making/taking this survey.
264. Thank-you.
265. Thanks for taking the time to ask!
266. Thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts.
267. Thanks for the opportunity to share my voice.
268. Thanks for the survey, it sure does open my eyes on how much I do wrong while driving.
269. Thanks for working to get roads safer.
270. Thank you for my info; keep up the good work.
271. The challenge is human nature.
272. The Department of Public Safety should enforce more laws on texting and driving.
273. The lady that gave this to me was friendly and very happy about her job.
274. The law should be enforced on drunk drivers.
275. The most important was text messaging and driving. I just want to say it's better to not do that.
276. The only reason I answered that I'm good at multi-tasking and handling distractions is because I drive an ambulance (work in EMS) where I have to do that every day.
277. There are a lot of people that talk on the phone while they drive that is not new and sending texts. That is why accidents happen to children that are walking and the elderly people get hit.
278. There are many serious distractions that occur more than texting/talking on a cell phone while driving. I believe some of the above noted distractions in items 12 & 13 take eyes off the roadway longer and also affect steering corrections that are much more dangerous.
279. There is so much roadwork going on that it increased the risk of an accident along with making it harder to get around the city.
280. There is too much technology that we can carry with us nowadays – people seem to have something to do while driving instead of paying attention to driving – too much texting.
281. There should be car seat safety classes free at the DMV.
282. They control the licenses for Hispanics and immigrants and they know who has more accidents or when we do something wrong or someone causes an accident and the police will give us a ticket even if we are not at fault.
283. They need to be tougher on the laws for people who drive drunk and/or with their phone in hand, and with the elderly who drive because most of the time they need help.
284. They should just make people not use their cell phones while driving.
285. This is a good survey. People need to be more honest with danger issues.

286. This is a good survey. They should apply it to more people in other places.
287. This is a great survey to make our streets safer.
288. This is cool but long.
289. This survey is a little too long and redundant at times.
290. This survey is too long due to redundancy.
291. This survey should have random behavioral questions not related to driving and texting. A correlation between behaviors might provide insights into potential solutions.
292. This survey was totally true and cell phone use should be completely terminated while driving.
293. This survey will bring awareness to those whom utilize their cell phones while driving.
294. This was interesting.
295. This was very informative.
296. Totally in agreement with everything.
297. Unclear signs and unmarked roads also cause people to drive less safely. I think that these are issues in Texas as well.
298. Very glad to see this type of survey! Keep it moving! ☺
299. Very interesting survey.
300. We all need to quit driving. Boycott oil monsters. Horse and muggy (they are manipulating us all!)
301. We can't emphasize enough how dangerous cell phones or any other electronic usage in cars is.
302. We need more DPS officers on our Texas highways.
303. We need more enforcement before we need more laws. Accountability for causing a wreck is more important than special laws for the root cause, i.e.: DUI, distractions, etc.
304. We need more rules.
305. Well I think everyone should not drive drunk or talk on their cell phone because it could be dangerous on the road.
306. Would like to see the use of cell phones being used while driving outlawed; make it illegal to save lives.
307. Y'all picked the right place for this survey.
308. You can't judge all drivers by a select few morons.
309. You can't legislate "distraction."
310. You need to enforce laws we have now. An example is: left lane is for PASSING only.
311. You need to read and speak English in order to have driver's license in the U.S. so one can read street signs and be able to communicate with other drivers and law enforcement.
312. You should mail this form to every person who has a driver's license.

ATTACHMENT C
USAA FOCUS GROUP
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Prior to start:
Fill out consent forms
Invite to have refreshments
Check recorder

I. Welcome and Introductions

- A. Hello / welcome, etc.
- B. Introductions of TTI moderator and assistant
- C. Ground rules – everybody talks, everybody speaks up, step back if you sense that you are saying more than other people are, no judgments, this is truly an occasion where everyone’s opinion is valid and is actually your reason for being here
- D. Round-the-table introductions (check voice levels, warm-up)
Tell your first name and your occupation, open discussion going forward

II. Purpose of the focus group

- A. Background of the USAA study. Want to serve their members better. I don’t have any affiliation with USAA, except am committed to providing them with good information so they can make informed decisions.
- B. Study is two-stages. First was to conduct a relatively large-scale survey of people across the state. Surveyed over 3,000 people in DL offices as they waited for service.

III. Complete the questionnaire

- A. Want to give you the same opportunity. Won’t be calling you out on any of your individual answers. Want to see if this group is typical and use as a starting point for discussion. Don’t over-analyze your own answers yet.
- B. Fill out the form – 10 minutes

IV. Discussion objectives

Now that you’ve had a chance to do the survey, what we’re going to be doing tonight is really delving more deeply into these subject areas. We couldn’t really design the questionnaire to ask everything in detail, and we’re left with questions ourselves as to what is underneath some of the responses.

I’ll be watching the clock pretty carefully as I want to make sure we cover all the things we must in the limited time we have. And we may not get to talk about every interesting thing that could be on the list.

V. First topic - Distracted Driving Self-Reported Behavior

People tend to talk or text in some situations. For example, a lot of people said when the caller is a family member. Talk to me about some of your choices.

How did you interpret “messages”?

What if it's two conflicting things going on? A family member is calling, or work is calling. And it's bad weather. Does the weather or road condition trump the caller?

Is there a difference in your mind between stopped in traffic and stopped at a traffic light, in terms of checking something on your phone or making/taking a call.

Talking comes closer to top of the list for people on straight stretches of highway with little traffic. Why would that be the case?

VI. Talking on a cell phone vs. texting or typing

Why is there a difference?

VII. Risky behaviors relative to each other

Impaired / drunk driving at the top of the list

Drag racing

Not paying attention

Texting

VIII. Who does it?

Everybody said teens, even teens. Next group was the 20-somethings. Interesting that over 60 came in higher than the middle-agers. Anyone care to weigh in on why that is?

IX. Solutions

Laws

Technology

Education

What are your comments on these?

X. Other items that you'd like to elaborate on regarding the [?].

Other distractions.

XI. Closing and Thanks. Reminder to pick up cash.