



CTSO Technology & Operations Procurement Acceleration Survey

August 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS PROCUREMENT ACCELERATION SURVEY



More than **85%** of State DOTs have policies or requirements that **restrict or add processes** to procurement of advanced technologies.

CHALLENGES



SLOW, CUMBERSOME PROCESSES



TECHNOLOGY OUTPACES PROCUREMENT



REGULATORY, FUNDING & STAFFING



INTEGRATION & SECURITY COMPLEXITY

OPPORTUNITIES

More than half of agencies have **mechanisms to streamline or accelerate** technology procurement.



- On-call contracts
- Experimental authority
- Cooperative purchasing

TOP PRIORITIES FOR NATIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Funding flexibility

Standardized performance metrics



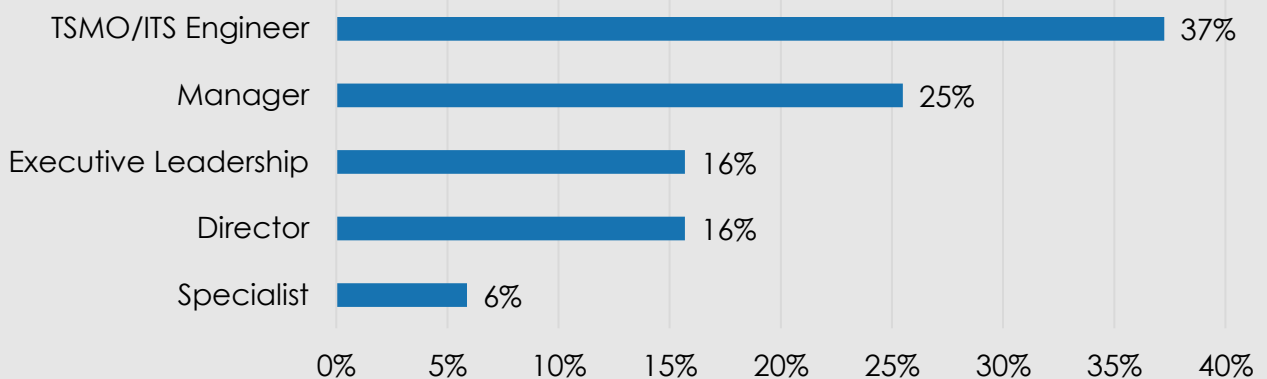
RESPONDENT PROFILE



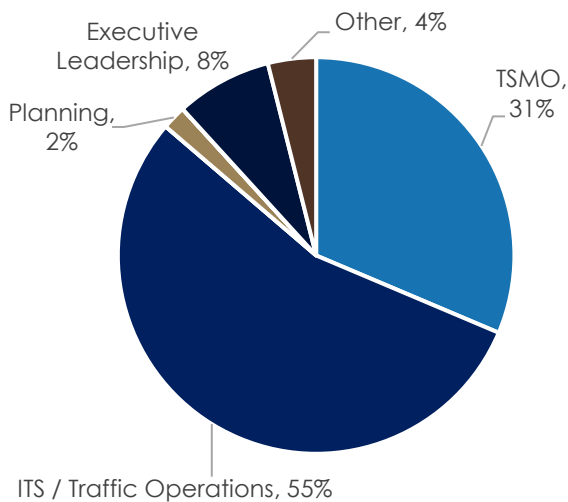
61 SURVEY RESPONSES

51 AGENCIES RESPONDED

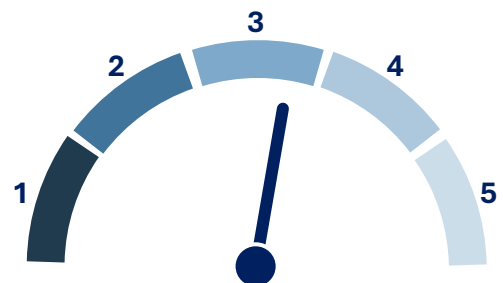
TITLE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS



PRIMARY AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



FAMILIARITY WITH AGENCY'S ITS PROCUREMENT



Average familiarity = 3.9

1: Not familiar

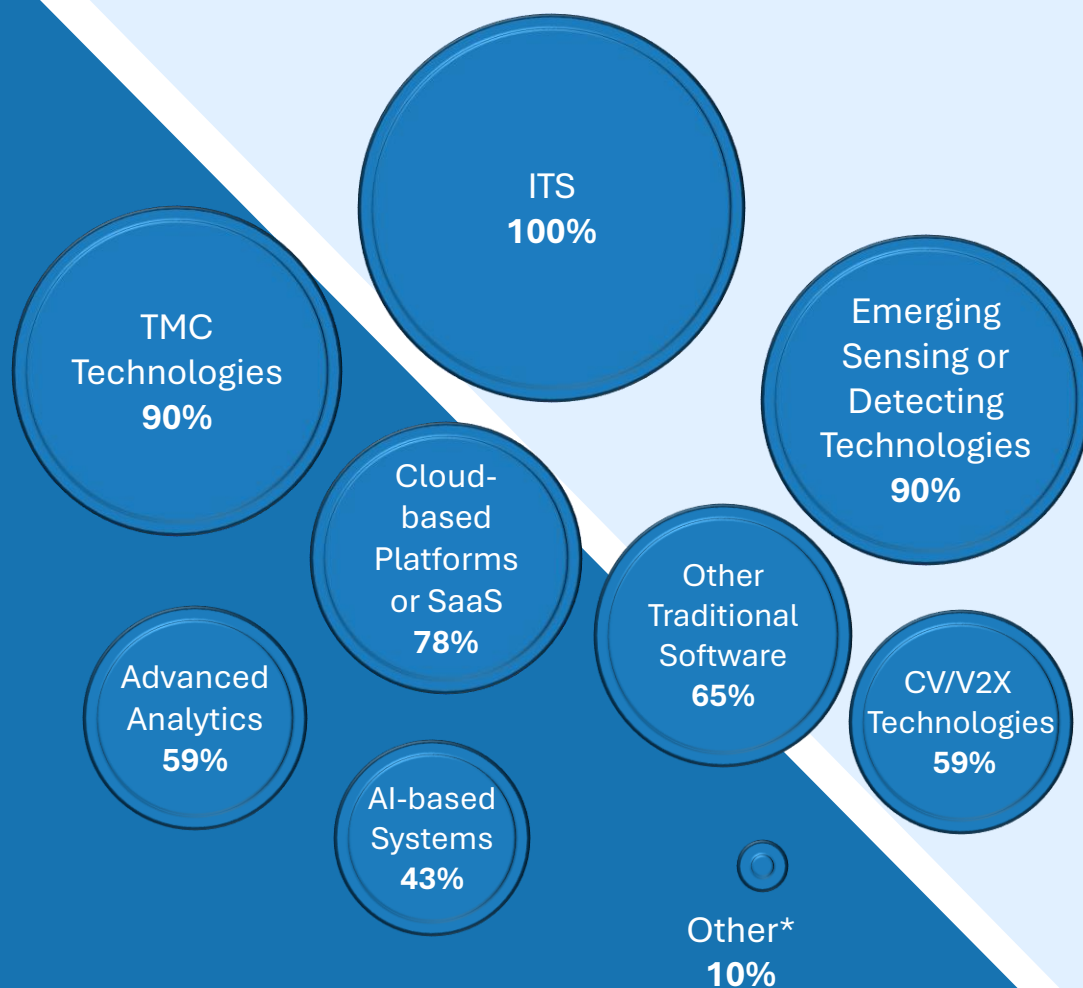
2: Slightly familiar

3: Moderately familiar

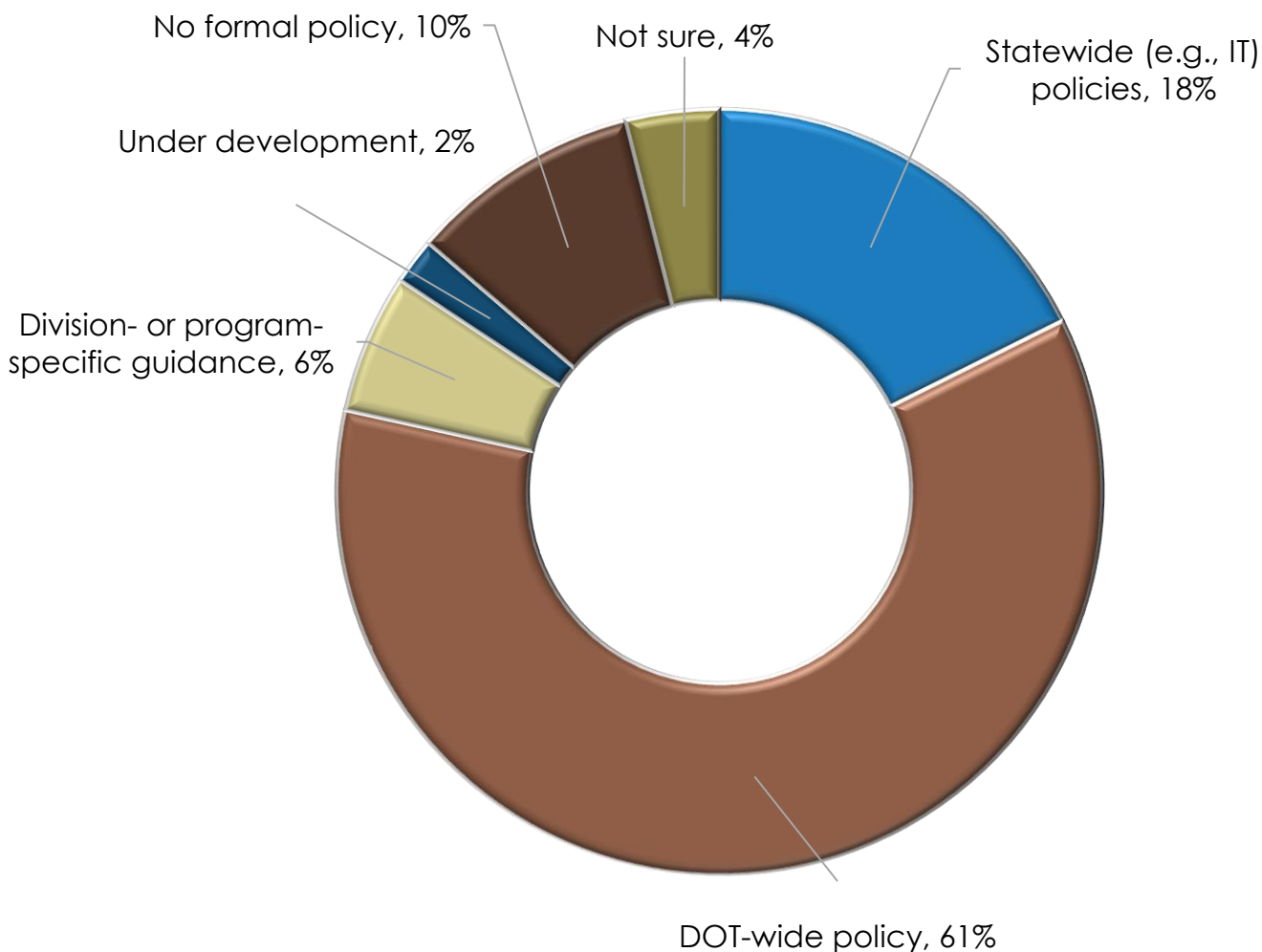
4: Very familiar

5: Extremely familiar

TECHNOLOGIES STATES ARE PROCURING

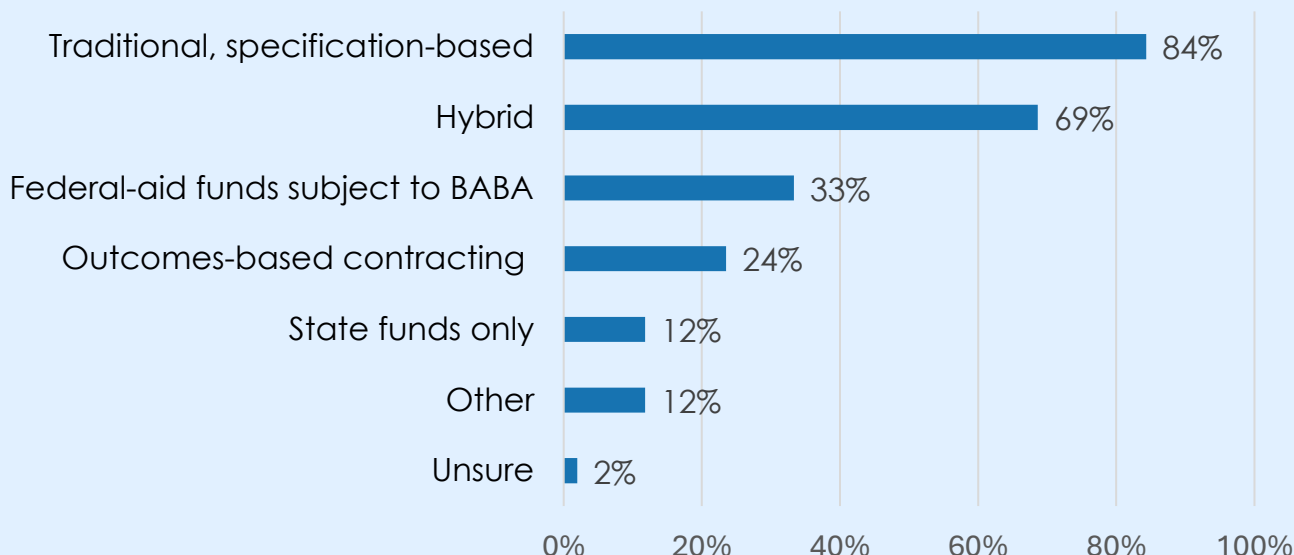


***Other technologies:** AVL systems, fiber management software, connected work zone and road user messaging solutions, work zone management platforms.

STATE REQUIREMENTS THAT RESTRICT OR ADD
PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

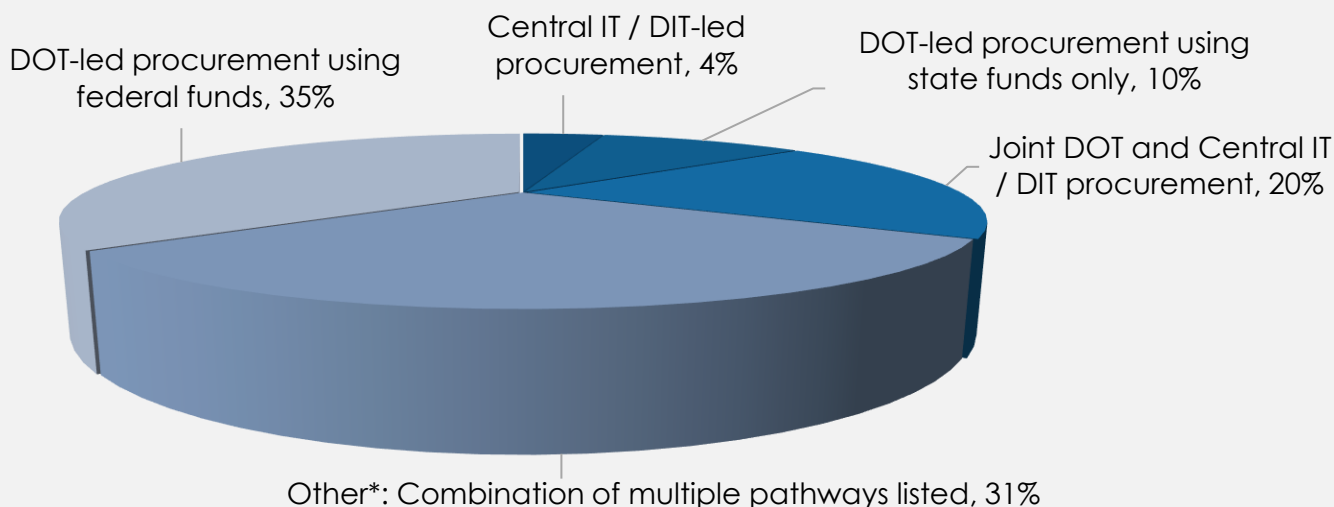
More than **85%** of State DOTs have policies, laws, administrative codes, or requirements that restrict or add additional processes to the procurement of ITS or advanced technology, including hardware, software, or data.

CURRENT ITS PROCUREMENT APPROACHES



Other procurement approaches: Best value solicitation, brand name specifications, sole source waiver, and construction projects.

TYPICAL PROCUREMENT PATHWAYS

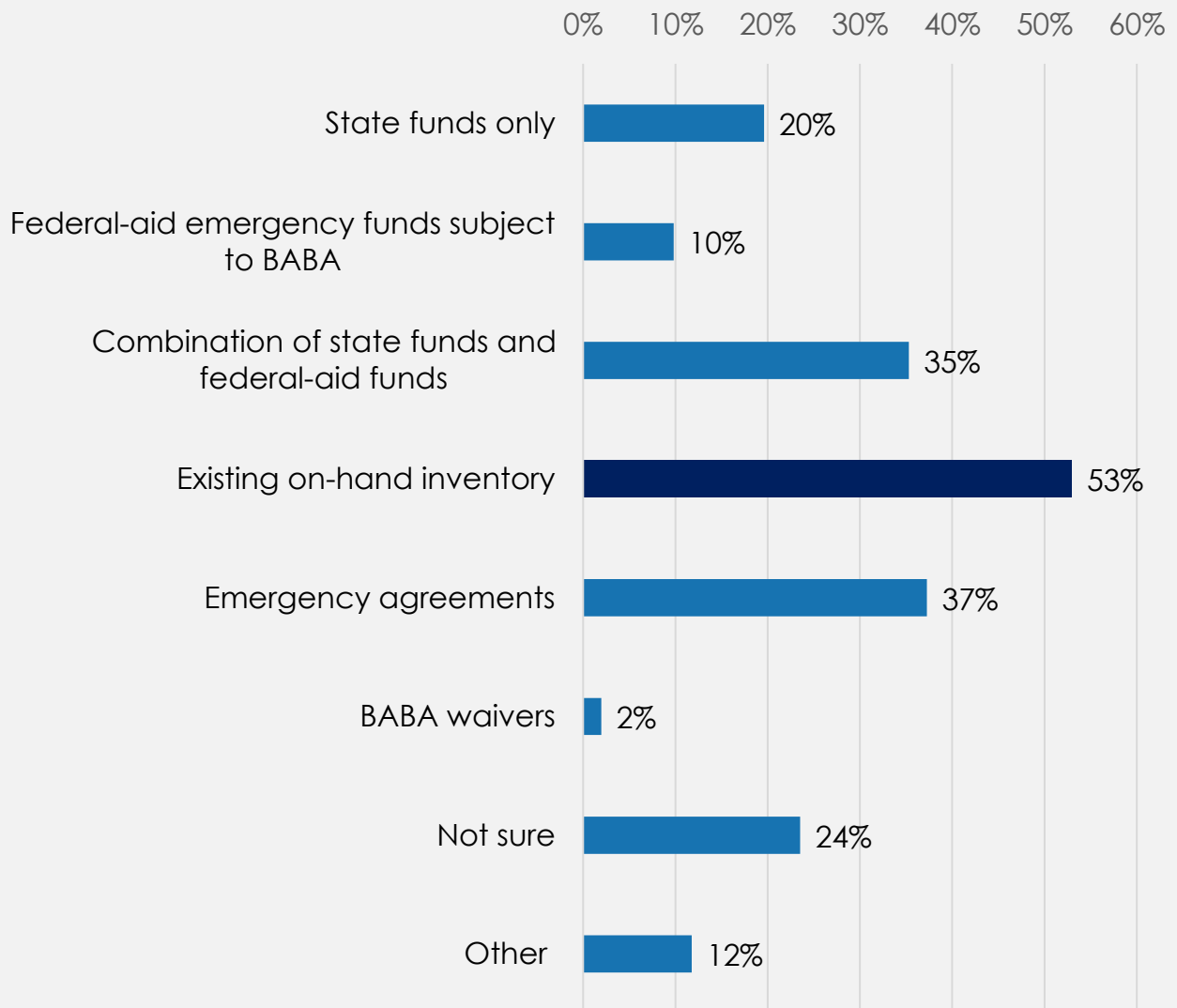


* Several states reported using a mix of procurement pathways, most commonly a combination of DOT-led procurements (state and federal funds) and cooperative agreements.

5 EMERGENCY PROCUREMENTS

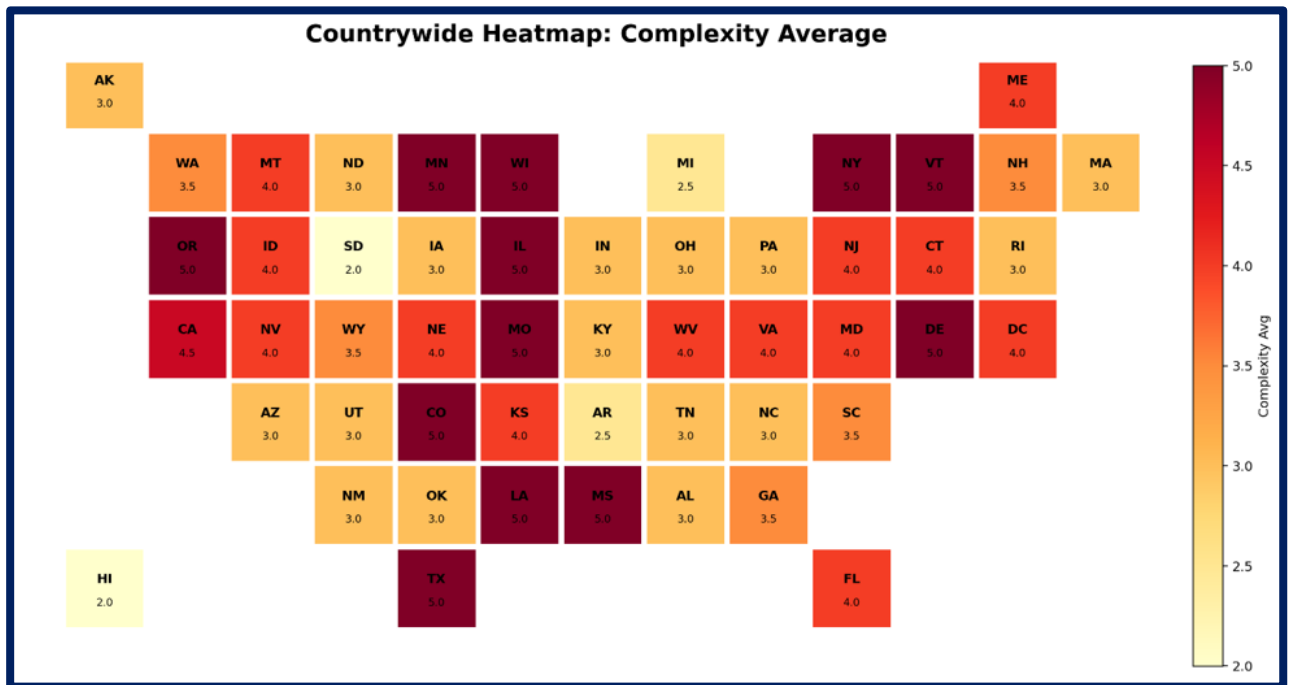
In emergency or incident response situations **more than half of all DOTs use existing on-hand inventory** or pre-positioned ITS equipment when they need ITS equipment.

ITS EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT DURING EMERGENCIES

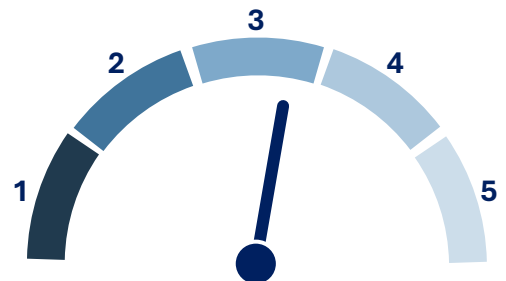




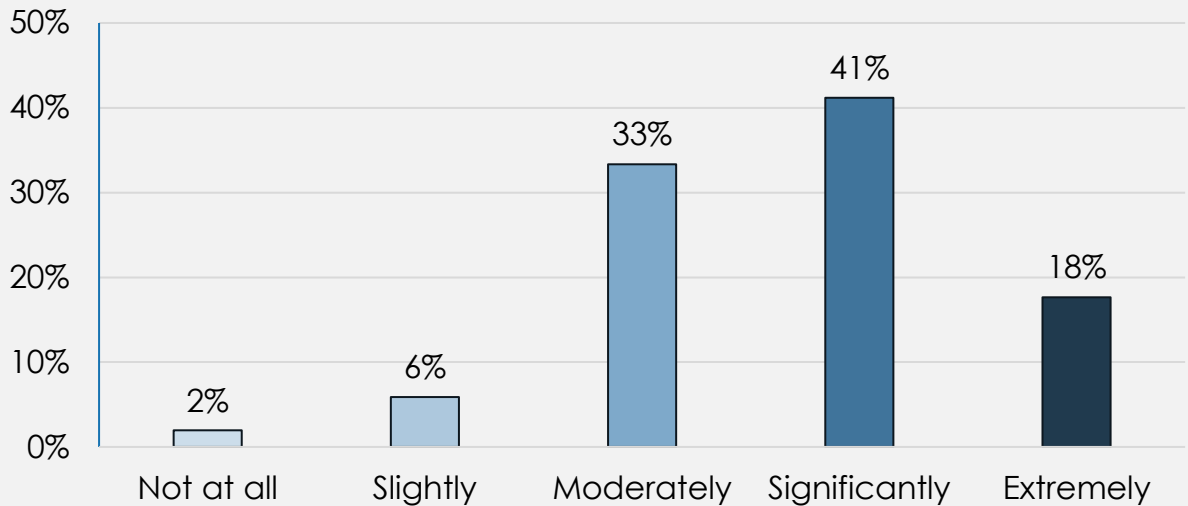
57% of State DOTs would characterize the overall complexity of their ITS and technology procurement process as complex (4) or very complex (5).



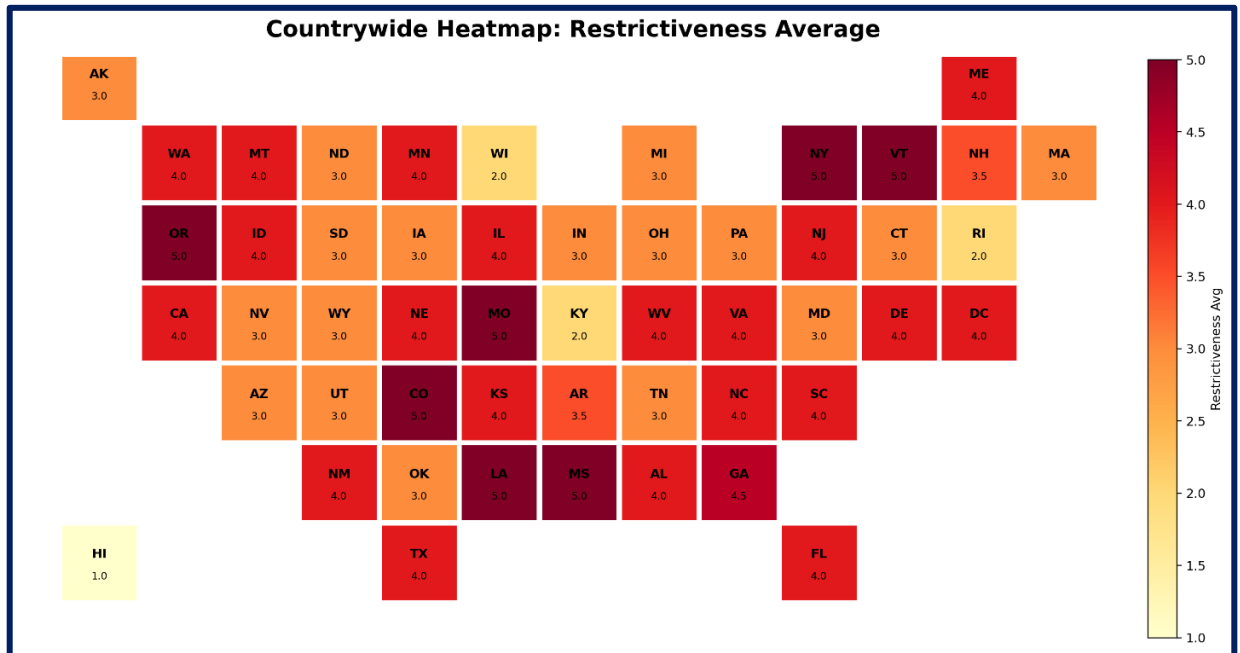
AVERAGE COMPLEXITY
SCORE FOR 51 AGENCIES: **3.8**

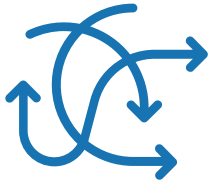


RESTRICTIVE AND TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS/POLICY



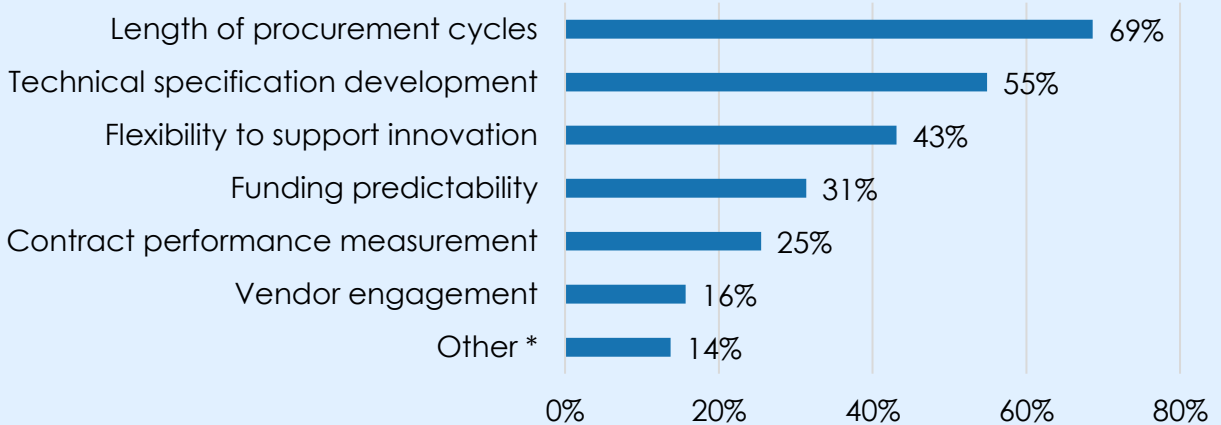
AVERAGE RESTRICTIVENESS RATING: 3.7





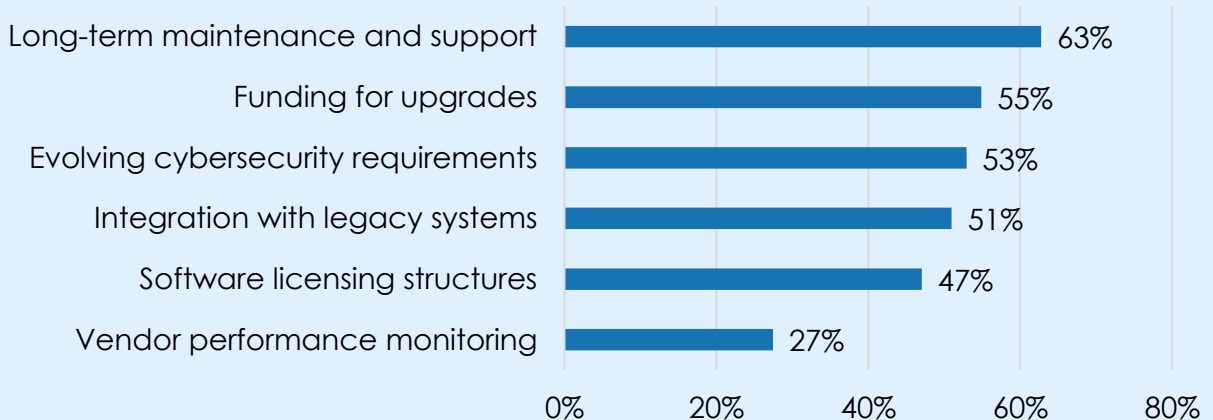
At least **63%** of agencies have experienced challenges applying traditional procurement frameworks to ITS technology procurements.

TOP CHALLENGES

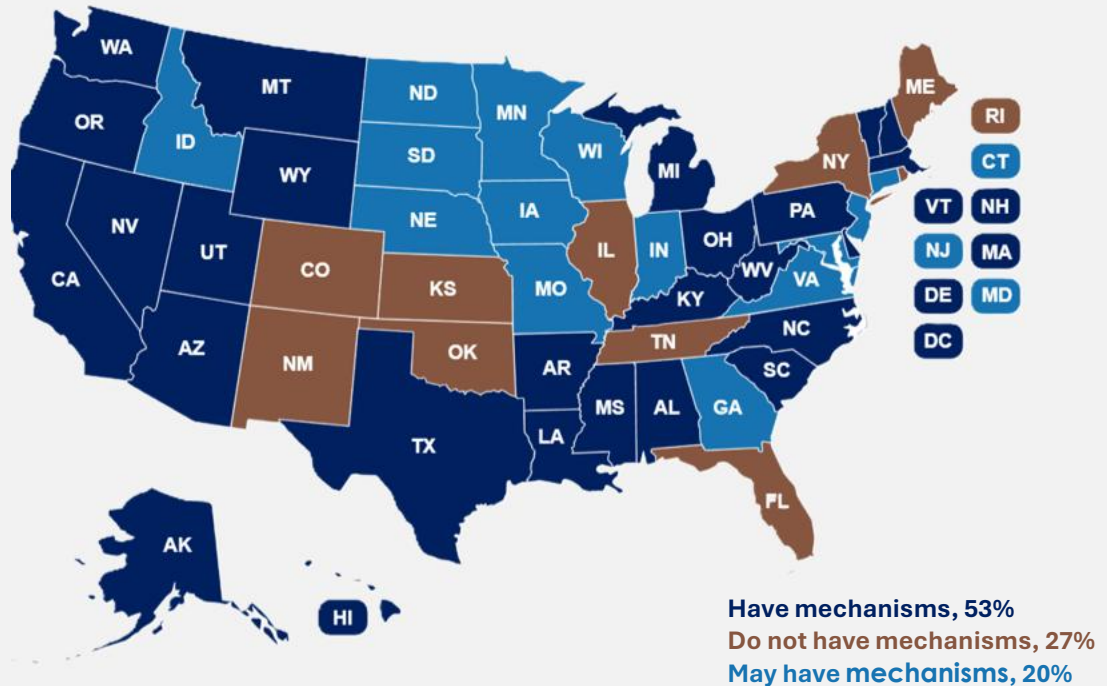


***Other:** BABA compliance, funding and administrative requirements, state IT oversight, and dissimilarity compared to traditional DOT purchasing.

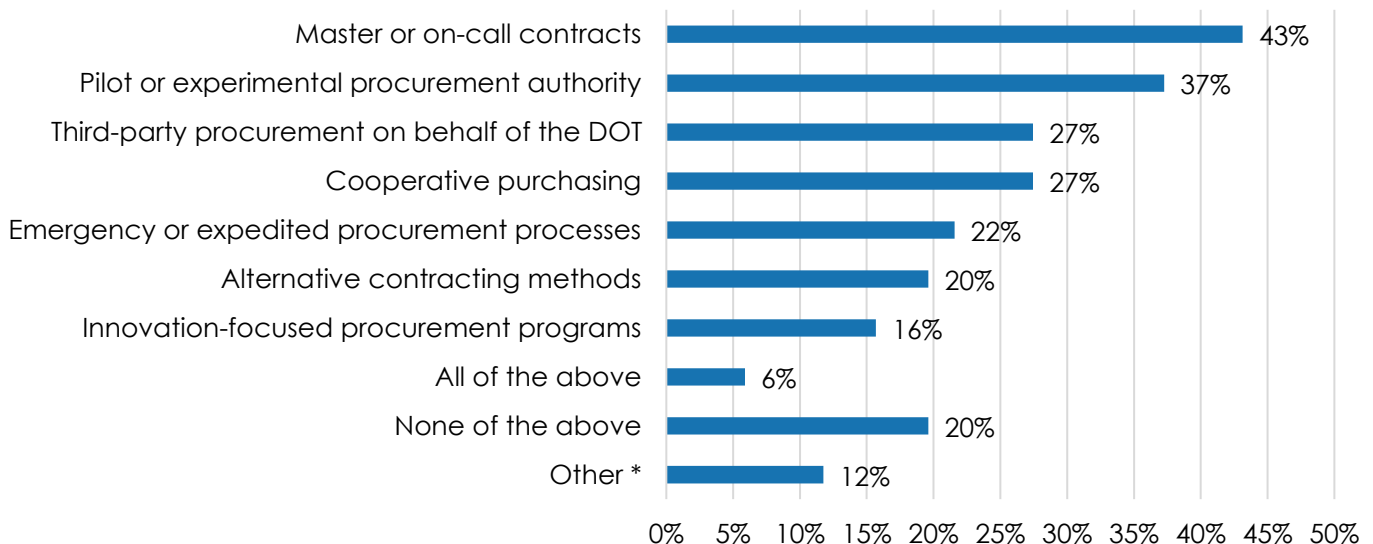
SIGNIFICANT LIFECYCLE CHALLENGES



DOTS WITH MECHANISMS TO STREAMLINE PROCUREMENT



MECHANISMS USED TO STREAMLINE PROCUREMENT

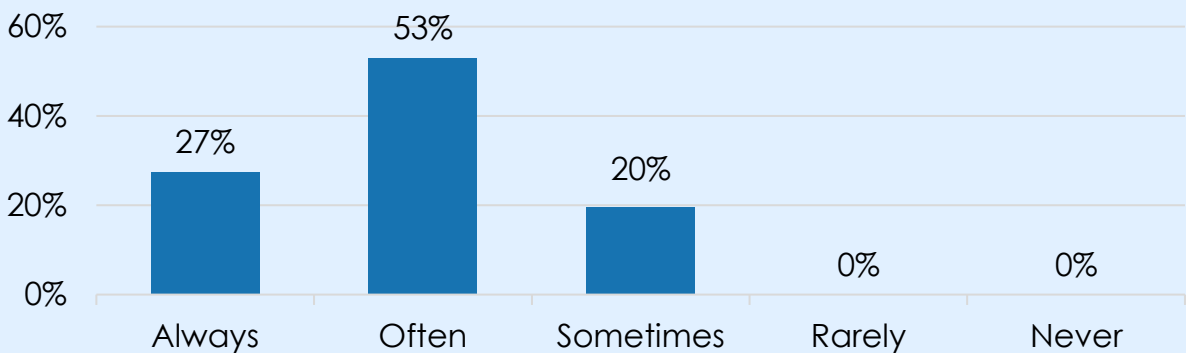


* **Other:** Blanket purchase orders, brand-name specifications, sole-source agreements and waivers, information systems product exemptions, and use of statewide contracts and ITS standards.



100% of DOTs report using data or analysis before at least some ITS procurements.

USE OF DATA AND ANALYTICS TO INFORM PROCUREMENT



MOST COMMON PRE-PURCHASE ANALYSES

% DOTs

01	Pilot or proof-of-concept evaluations	84%
02 (tie)	Performance or operational data analysis	78%
	Vendor demonstrations or market research	
04	Safety or crash analysis	59%
05	Cost-benefit analysis	55%

WORKFORCE IMPACT TO ITS PROCUREMENT SUCCESS

Average impact on ITS procurement success • Rated 1–5

Limited ITS procurement expertise



Insufficient training on innovative procurement approaches



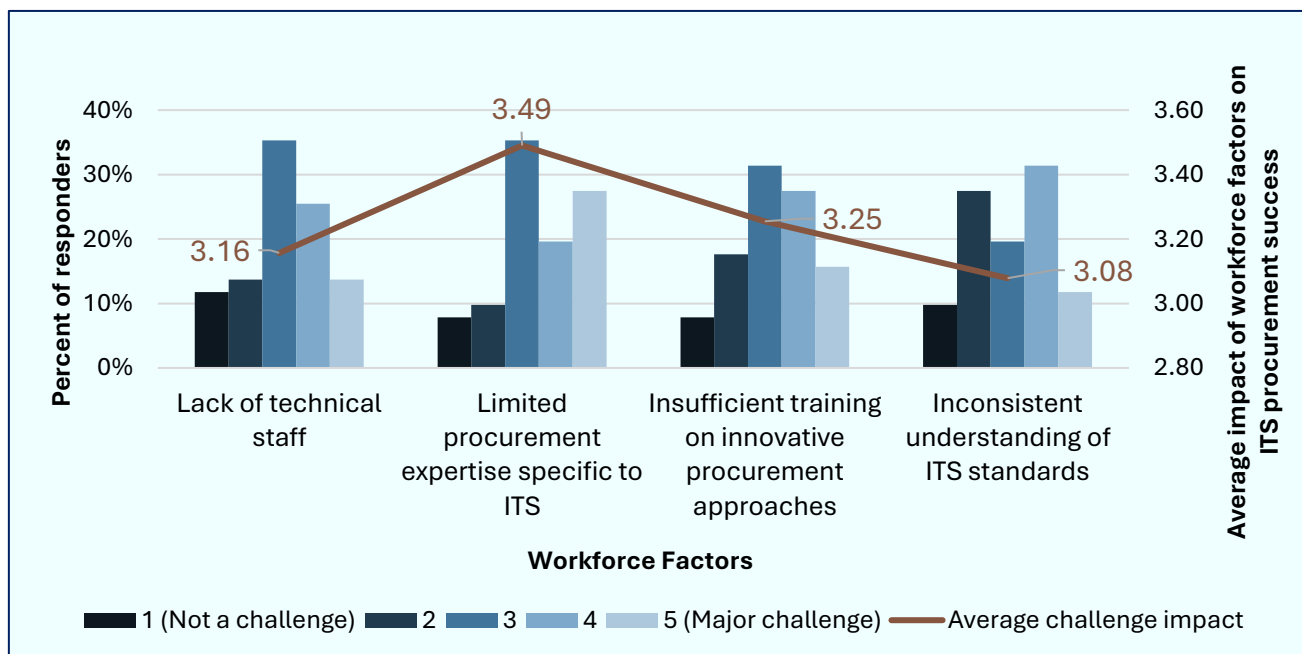
Lack of technical staffing



Understanding of ITS standards



WORKFORCE IMPACT



TOP
PRIORITIES

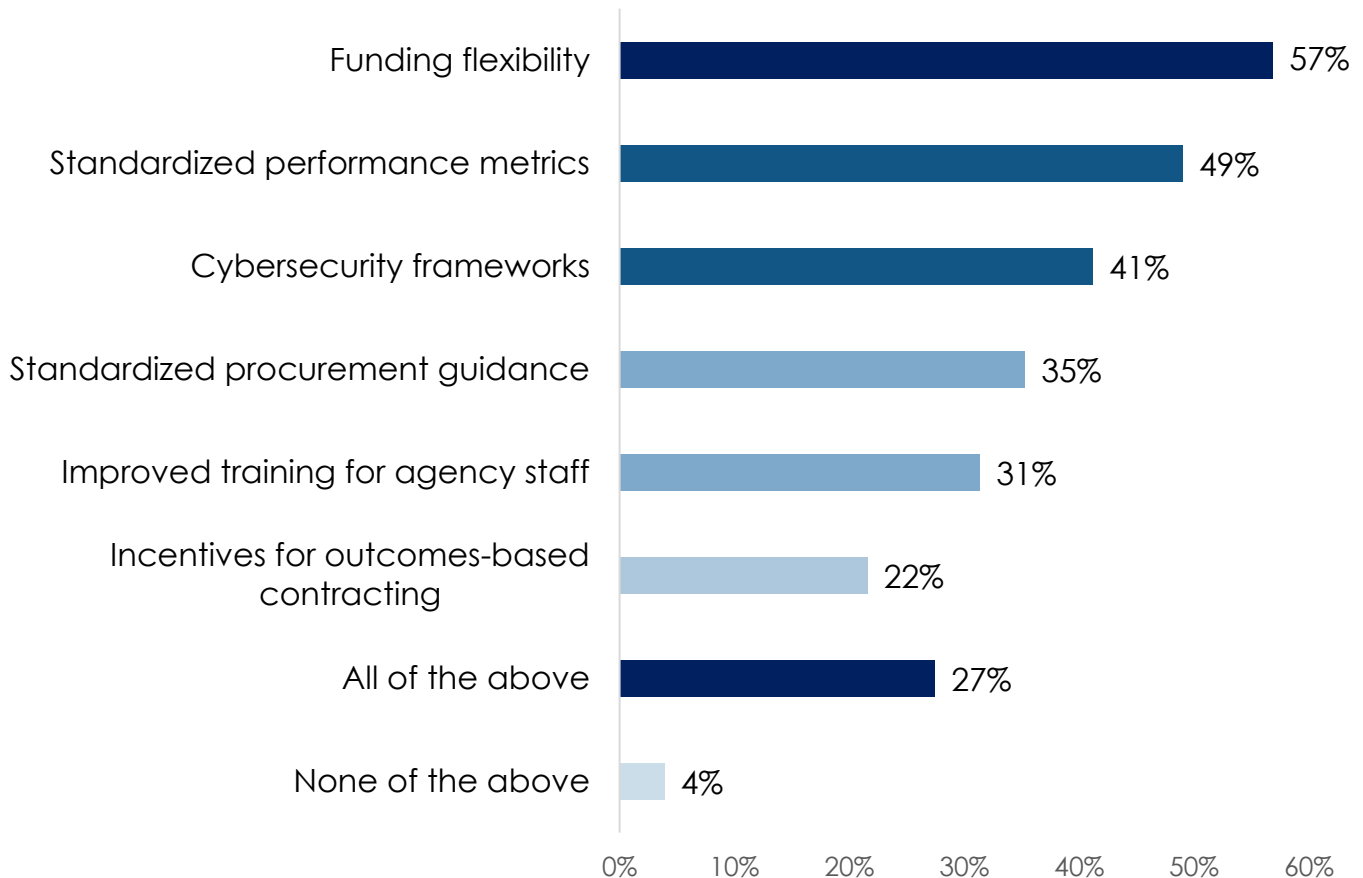
Funding flexibility

57%

Standardized performance metrics

49%

PRIORITIES SELECTED BY RESPONDENTS



27% indicated that **ALL OF THE ABOVE** should be prioritized to accelerate ITS procurement improvements.

IMPACTS OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROCUREMENT CHALLENGES

Four key agency challenges compound, affecting operations and performance.

CORE CONSTRAINTS



SLOW, CUMBERSOME PROCESSES

Procurement does not keep pace with ITS/TSMO needs.



TECHNOLOGY OUTPACES PROCUREMENT

Technology changes faster than procurement can keep up.



REGULATORY, FUNDING & STAFFING

These constraints create significant barriers to progress.



INTEGRATION & SECURITY COMPLEXITY

Cybersecurity, integration, and IT considerations add complexity.

OPERATIONAL CONSEQUENCE

Together, these challenges affect transportation operations delivery and public service.

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY PROCUREMENT

A three-stage path from survey findings to shared progress across state DOTs.

ACTIONS



SHARE THE FINDINGS

- Publish the survey report for the CTSO and TSMO community.
- Compile best practices in a shared repository.



CONVENE THE COMMUNITY

- Host webinars and peer roundtables with state DOTs.
- Designate state DOT points of contact for follow-up.



ADVANCE THE PRIORITIES

- Prioritize shared pain points for future discussion.
- Re-survey agencies in 12-18 months to measure adoption.



FASTER, MORE CONSISTENT PROCUREMENT OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES NATIONWIDE

THANK YOU to the 61 transportation leaders across all 50 states and the District of Columbia whose survey responses informed the findings in this report.