



ESSENTIAL FLEET MANAGER *Magazine*

ISSUE 5 2022

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## **Avoiding un-planned VOR**

*The Car Key People*

**Remote fleet management made easy  
with innovative telematics solutions**

*Abax*



# Essential Fleet Manager - Issue 5 (2022)

Welcome to issue 5 (2022) of Essential Fleet Manager Magazine, published for fleet professionals who work for organisations that operate within the Essential Services Sector.

The Essential Fleet Sector includes: Local Authorities, Major Housing Associations, Central Government Departments & Agencies, NHS Trusts, Police & Fire Authorities, Specialist NHS Authorities, Educational Establishments, Power Generation, Gas Supply, Telecommunications, Water Authorities, Road Rail, Infrastructure Management, and Construction.

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If you would like to feature your fleet operations in a future issue of Essential Fleet Manager - get in touch, we would love to work with you on highlighting your achievements.

Regards, Debbie Cheadle - Editor



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## Operational Advice Online *for Essential Fleets*

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## Sapphire Utility Solutions makes £500,000 investment in workshop facilities to maintain specialist fleet

**Sapphire Utility Solutions have recently invested £500,000 in their workshop facilities at Bamber Bridge to maintain their specialist fleet for United Utilities.**

Five technicians will work on a 24/7/365 basis servicing the fleet to ensure it is well maintained to deliver critical maintenance activities.

The investment includes the latest equipment and technology that will enable Sapphire Utility Solutions to maintain and repair any make, type or model of truck or van. Sapphire's experienced technicians will be able to diagnose faults quickly ensuring that vehicles are returned to service at the earliest opportunity.

Newly installed tv screens within the workshop display live schedules enabling the team to manage work efficiently with jobs being issued to the technicians electronically through



their tablets.

With Sapphire Utility Solutions investment already exceeding £3m this year for new fleet and plant, and the upcoming investment of £20m in the next 3 years, the workshops will play a vital role in ensuring our fleet is maintained to the highest standard.

*"This significant investment in our new workshop facilities ensures our fleet remain compliant and fit for purpose. We have also extended our operating hours to minimise the time vehicles are off the road enabling them to spend more time undertaking the essential maintenance activities for United Utilities."*

Commented Mark Tomlinson, Director of Fleet & Plant.

## New greener London Ambulance vehicles officially 'hit the road'

**As part of a £16.6 million investment into a greener fleet of ambulances and emergency response cars, the first of London Ambulance Service's (LAS) new electric vehicles were officially 'rolled out' with a special launch event held at the Olympic Park.**

The new vehicles – which are the first of the 225 brand new greener vehicles to have been manufactured, have passed all of the relevant tests and checks and are now in use, playing a vital role in the life-saving service of the LAS teams.

Speaking at the launch event – which was held to coincide with the NHS Sustainability Day of Action, Chief Executive Daniel Elkeles, said: *"This is a really proud moment for us – as the busiest ambulance service in the world, we cover a lot of miles in providing urgent and emergency care to the people of London. Thanks to our new greener fleet, we can continue to provide great care while minimising our impact on the environment, and better protect the health and wellbeing of the people living and working in the capital."*

*"Our new vehicles are top quality, high spec emergency vehicles, so not only are they better for the environment, they're better for our patients and our teams."*

Richard Webb-Stevens, a long-serving member of the Motorcycle Response Unit and recent recipient of the prestigious Queen's Ambulance Medal for Distinguished Service, has been riding one of the new all-electric motorbikes. He said: *"I absolutely love the new electric motorbike – it does everything you need as a paramedic responding to incidents and emergency calls. It's responsive, it's quick (when you need it to be) and feels very safe. I think some keen motorbike riders might be a bit sceptical*



*The 7 new green vehicles in formation in the Olympic park*

*about losing the traditional petrol engine, but I can tell you, this bike is fantastic!"*

The new vehicles include new greener transit vans and all-electric fast response cars and motorbikes, as well as new electric vehicles for our resuscitation training teams, and new lighter emergency ambulances which use less fuel and create less emissions.

The national lead for improving the country's stock of emergency vehicles, James Cook, the Director of Community Care, Mental Health and Ambulance Improvement at NHS England/NHS Improvement, was also at the event. He said: *"It was a pleasure to learn more about each of the different types of vehicle and celebrate their arrival in time for the NHS Sustainability Day of Action, which aims to celebrate the importance of sustainable development in our national health care system. These new vehicles are a welcome addition to the LAS fleet, and it was evident just how popular they are already proving to be with staff and volunteers – they are truly impressive."*

# Cutting fleet vehicle emissions with new fuel trials and electric bin wagon



## What's thought to be the biggest trial of an emissions-cutting new fuel in Yorkshire is underway in the borough of Scarborough.

The council has started using a fuel made from waste oils and fats.

It's being used instead of traditional diesel to power more than half of the vehicles based at the Dean Road depot.

They range from large bin wagons to ride-on lawn mowers.

The new fuel – called hydrotreated vegetable oil - or HVO – will drastically reduce carbon emissions from the fleet by as much as 90 per cent in some cases.

Over the course of the 12-month trial, almost 900,000kg of carbon dioxide will be saved from harming the environment.

HVO fuel also means fewer particulates and nitrogen oxides.

As it is almost a like-for-like replacement of diesel, most vehicles

can use it without any modification.

Dean Road's vans, trucks and plant equipment currently consume 30,000 litres of diesel a month.

While HVO is made from waste oils and fats derived from restaurants, there is no odour and the fuel does not include any additives such as palm oil.

Meanwhile, the council took delivery of a fully electric bin wagon for a week-long trial.

The vehicle has been supplied by manufacturer Dennis Eagle.

Called the 'eCollect', the wagon is fitted with five packs of lithium-ion batteries which produce a combined 300KWh of power.

It fully charges overnight and in trials elsewhere in the country has worked double collection shifts with charge remaining in the battery.

The borough of Scarborough was more of a test for the vehicle because of some of the steep gradients that diesel wagons must negotiate.

Dennis Eagle will analyse the data recorded as part of the trial.

Councillor Michelle Donohue-Moncrieff, cabinet member for the environment and sustainability, said:

*"The switch to HVO fuel means we will have one of the greenest vehicle fleets in the whole of North Yorkshire."*

*"Cutting harmful emissions by 90 per cent means we will take a huge step towards our goal to minimise the harmful affect our services have on our fragile environment."*

*"Our overall CO2 emissions are the lowest they have been for more than 15 years and should be driven down further because of this trial."*

*"I am also delighted that Dennis Eagle has leant us a pure-electric bin wagon to test in the borough."*

*"It will be interesting to see how the vehicle performs in a real-world setting, especially given the challenging geography in some parts of our borough."*

# M&Y Maintenance and Construction reveals first electric vehicles



M&Y Maintenance and Construction Fleet Manager, Justin Toole

**M&Y Maintenance and Construction, one of the North West's leading providers of construction and maintenance services, has welcomed its first electric vehicles as it moves to take 25% of their fleet electric by the end of 2023.**

The company is part of the Regenda Group and manages the 180 strong fleet shared by the group subsidiaries.

40% of this fleet now have AD Blue solution added to the fuel which reduces harmful nitrous oxide by breaking it down into other gases that occur naturally in the atmosphere. By the end of 2022, a further 128 (80%) of their vehicles will have been made compatible with AD Blue an upgraded the latest Euro 6 engines, reducing carbon emissions.

With a focus on adopting greener ways of working, M&Y Maintenance and Construction are working towards having

more than 50% of vehicles in their fleet electric by 2027.

The new electric vehicles are Renault Zoe's which have a range of up to 245 miles and take just 3 hours to fully recharge. With no back seats, the vans have a large boot space and can be used by the company as small vans, perfect for their maintenance operatives.

M&Y Maintenance and Construction Fleet Manager, Justin Toole said, *"We are really excited to have our first six electric vehicles on the road. As a leading construction and maintenance company we make sustainability central to every project and service we provide. We're proud to be able to add value for our clients and customers by providing a greener service, which will only get better as we make more improvements to the fleet and explore new technologies to reduce our carbon footprint."*

In addition to this, M&Y has recently been approved as an Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) residential and commercial grant scheme installer of electric vehicle charging points. This scheme allows businesses and residents to install charging points at their properties at a heavily subsidised rate.

Commenting on the appointment, Director of Operations Kevin Moses said, *"We're a forward-thinking business that is driven to create positive change and minimise the impacts of our operations on the planet. We're reducing our carbon footprint, increasing recycling, and focusing on sustainable procurement, making great progress towards the Government target of being net zero by 2050."*

*"Becoming an approved installer for the OZEV scheme is another way we're diversifying and strengthening our business to be prepared for the future."*

## Rivus renews fleet management partnership with National Grid

**Rivus has been providing fleet management services to National Grid since 2006, being consistently appointed through competitive tenders over the last two decades. The latest contract award will see the fleet management partnership with National Grid extended until 2030.**

With a UK substantial fleet of over 2,000 vehicles, comprising of LCVs, HGVs, trailers and plant, National Grid plays

a vital role in connecting millions of people to the energy they use, while continually seeking ways to make the energy system cleaner. Its extensive fleet is critical to its business operations.

The renewed contract will see the National Grid team accessing a full suite of fleet management services through Rivus as a single provider. For the first time it will incorporate accident management and vehicle build, as well as Rivus mobile technicians delivering in-house service, repair and maintenance (SMR), rather than using a third party.

National Grid has industry leading sustainability targets, with ambitions of becoming 100% net zero by 2030. Lorna McAtear, Fleet Manager at National Grid has been instrumental in

developing their sustainability strategy. Having worked closely with Rivus and manufacturers such as Nissan to realise plans, she adds: *"It is important for us to partner with a fleet management provider that can help us achieve National Grid's ambition to move to an all-electric fleet. As Rivus can service and maintain our fleet through its in-house network, of which 70% already has capacity for EV, that's real added value for us to support achieving our aims."*

Rivus operates from 78 sites nationwide through its LCV and HGV specialist combined Garage Network. It also has over 500 Rivus Approved Garage Partners and a UK wide team of mobile technicians equipped to support fleet managers with the transition to electric vehicles.



## Octopus Electric Vehicles helps over 1,500 UK businesses switch staff to electric cars

**Octopus Electric Vehicles, the EV leasing business from the Octopus Energy Group, has hit a milestone of over 1,500 companies joining its salary sacrifice scheme in just over a year since its launch.**

The salary sacrifice scheme for electric cars provides an all-in-one service for drivers looking to make the switch. It is one of the fastest growing schemes of its kind in the UK and one of the reasons for Octopus' five-star Trustpilot rating - the best in the industry.

The scheme is the next step in the company's mission to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint and drive the UK's transition toward zero emission transport. Since launching to the market, it has grown by 22% on average each month, with companies of different sizes and sectors joining the scheme.

To manage growing demand, Octopus Electric Vehicles has also expanded its team significantly, hiring 126 new staff across its offices in London and Weybridge over the past year.

An EV salary sacrifice scheme is an attractive employee benefit where employers can offer their staff the use of a brand new electric car with a saving of 30% or more by paying through their gross salary, saving thousands of pounds on both national insurance and income tax. There is a small amount of Benefit-in-Kind (BiK) tax to pay, but it is very low compared to the savings, with the BiK rate for EVs set at 2% until 2025.

Due to these favourable tax rates, salary sacrifice on an EV works out significantly cheaper than a personal lease of a petrol or diesel car. Encouraging staff to go electric also reduces their impact on the environment and provides a visible commitment by the employer to the planet and reducing local air pollution.

Octopus Electric Vehicles offers companies over 65 models to choose from, all with an average of 215 miles in a single charge.

The package includes servicing and maintenance, breakdown cover with the AA, as well as a free charge point at their home or 5,000 miles on the public charging network. Octopus also offer an energy tariff designed for EV drivers for those who charge at home, making it a one-stop-shop for those looking to make the switch to electric. The tariff takes advantage of low cost green power when the UK sleeps, making it cheaper to fuel an EV by up to 87% vs an equivalent petrol car.

Fiona Howarth, CEO of Octopus Electric Vehicles, said: *"Demand for electric cars is soaring, with more than 65 great models now available, especially with petrol prices on the rise. It's great to see so many businesses want to take a leading role in helping their employees discover the benefits of making the switch."*

*"Launching a salary sacrifice scheme saves their employees money, letting them drive great cars, while cleaning up the local air in their communities and helping the planet."*

*"2021 was a tipping point for EVs, and now the switch to electric transport is really accelerating. We're delighted to be helping our clients and their employees as they make the switch."*

Rebecca Constable, Director, People Experience, McLaren Racing, said: *"We're delighted to be using the Octopus Electric Vehicles salary sacrifice scheme. McLaren fully supports the UK's transition towards zero emission transport and we're passionate about doing our bit to help. This is a fantastic benefit that our employees love and aligns with our internal goals to become a more sustainable business."*

**Octopus Electric Vehicles was launched in 2018 with a simple mission: to make it easy for drivers to switch to clean, electric transport. The business sits within the wider Octopus Energy Group, which is expanding rapidly having received \$900m in funding over the last year, giving it a valuation of approximately \$5bn.**



## Transport Law Updates

By: Tim Ridyard, Partner Transport and Regulatory, Ashtons Legal.

### HGV LEVY: hauliers facing likely changes

**In August 2020, the Government suspended payment of the HGV levy until August 2023. It had been in place since 2014 for heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes gvw.**

The Government intends to re-commence payment of the levy from August 2023. And, when it does so, it intends to either change its format or keep it as before.

If the basis of the levy is changed, it will be based on the vehicle's environmental performance. The Department for Transport (DfT) suggests that, in this scenario, most operators would pay the same or less, with only a small number facing a higher amount of levy.

At the point the levy was suspended (August 2020), there were no fewer than eleven payment bands each divided into two depending on the HGV's emissions class. In 2019, the Government had changed the criteria for the original levy to base this on EURO emissions. The Government wants to base the revised levy on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and environmental quality performance. There is seemingly no method of establishing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on HGVs – hence, the Government would intend to reform the levy to be based on vehicle weight, as there is said to be a broad link between weight and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Any reformed levy would also simply be based on two criteria: the vehicle weight and pollutants (the EURO emissions class) and there would only be six levy bands (3 divided into 2 each). This would mark a change from the existing levy that has been based on vehicle type, number of axles, vehicle weight and pollutants (Euro emissions class).

The proposals published by DfT would lead to reformed levy charges as follows:-

Weight Category	Newest, Cleanest Vehicles (Euro V1 or later)	Older Vehicles (Euro V or earlier)
From 12 tonnes & up to 31 tonnes	£150	£195
Above 31 tonnes & up to 38 tonnes	£360	£468
Above 38 tonnes	£576	£749

This would apply to rigid HGVs, articulated HGVs and rigid HGVs pulling trailers. Rigid HGVs pulling trailers of 4 tonnes or more would pay on the basis of the total combination weight, to determine the calculate the correct band and amount of levy.

The DfT has issued consultation documentation, seeking views for these proposals and the retention of the status quo. If the current levy rates were retained, then hauliers would pay what they paid before, whilst reform would mean them paying the same or less, with a small proportion potentially paying more.

Foreign vehicles: here, the Government intends to continue the levy, but only to charge foreign HGVs when using main roads i.e. A-roads or motorways. Further, it is intended that foreign HGVs only pay the levy on days (or part of days) when an HGV is driven on a road – not when used or kept on a road.

The consultation is open until 18th July 2022. The levy will resume in August 2023, whatever its outcome. Given any increase will affect few hauliers and most will be no worse off or benefit from lower amounts, it appears likely that reform will be implemented. The DfT believes that there will be little adverse impact for those hauliers that might see any increase in levy, as the levy represents only a small proportion of overall HGV operating costs. Whether that is a view shared by all in the road transport sector, remains to be seen.

### Brake Maintenance – testing times

**There is now a sharp focus on road transport operators being able to demonstrate robust brake maintenance systems and management. This area has been one of the most prominent compliance issues in recent years.**

As a reminder, the basic law states:

*"Every part of every braking system and the means of operation thereof fitted to a vehicle shall be maintained in good and efficient working order and be properly adjusted". (Road Vehicles (Construction) Regulations 1986)*

Failure to comply with this can lead to an unlimited fine for an operator and a driver. There is mandatory endorsement of three penalty points on the driving licence - or discretionary disqualification. However, the consequences of a failure to maintain brakes properly can be catastrophic, leading to serious accidents as well as custodial sentences where there is death and serious injury. Dangerous driving offences can be committed through use of badly maintained vehicles, not just bad driving.

The starkest example of appalling brake maintenance was the 'Bath tipper' case. On 9 February 2015, two tippers drove

down a steep road in Bath; one lost control, killing four people. Subsequent examination of the vehicle found problems with almost every brake on each axle; two did not work at all and most others were maladjusted. Supposedly, the brakes had been checked at previous inspections by the independent maintenance contractor. This could not possibly have been the case. ABS warning lights had also been ignored. The company's Director and the maintenance contractor were convicted of gross negligence manslaughter and imprisoned for 7 years 6 months and 5 years 3 months, custody respectively.

Whilst this is mercifully a rare case and contains an unusually bad catalogue of failings, it is no use batting it away as some one-off event, unlikely to be repeated. Complacency is the enemy of good management and there is no room for negligence when managing fleets.

### Operator Licencing

Over recent years, there has been heavy emphasis by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner and DVSA on ensuring operators fully engage in brake safety. It can fairly be said that brake testing is amongst the top priorities operators need to address, to ensure operator's licence compliance.

It is expected – indeed demanded – that at every maintenance inspection (PMI) an assessment of brake performance takes place. No longer is it permissible for records to be blank or evidence brake management with phrases such as 'all OK' or "yard test OK" or "tested brakes on way back from (insert location)". Proper evidence of a meaningful procedure has to be provided.

When any operator is summoned to a preliminary hearing or Public Inquiry before a Traffic Commissioner, they are obliged to submit maintenance records. These must include all brake reports and printouts. These are examined in advance of the hearing - operators are taken to task, if performance tests have not taken place at all, or not occurred at every inspection or the test data reveals unsatisfactory outcomes or information that requires follow up e.g. the brake tests are unladen or there is insufficient load or there are imbalances.

### Brake Performance Assessment

There appears to be some misunderstanding that it suffices if brake tests take place 4 times annually. This may be because DVSA guidance says that "you should get your HGV or trailers' brakes tested by a roller brake tester (RBT) at least 4 times per year including at the MOT." However, this simply states the minimum recommended number of roller brake tests.

The DVSA guide to maintaining roadworthiness expressly states:

*"As per the annual test, every safety inspection must assess the braking performance of the vehicle or trailer. It is strongly advised that a calibrated roller brake test (RBT) is used at each safety inspection to measure individual brake performance and overall braking efficiencies for the vehicle or trailer to be annual test standards. However, it is also acceptable to use an approved and calibrated decelerometer to measure overall brake efficiency values for vehicles without trailers."*

So, there is no relaxation from assessing brake performance on those service inspections when a RBT is not used. Otherwise, there would be no check at required on every other inspection.

How could the vehicle be signed off as roadworthy?

There are a number of further pointers and guidance notes for operators to consider:

- vehicles or trailers should be brake-tested in laden condition
- brake test records need to be attached to the safety inspection record and retained for a minimum of 15 months (they are part of the maintenance records to be kept).
- if the maintenance provider does not have a roller brake tester this can be carried out elsewhere within the same week as the safety inspection
- either roller brake testers or decelerometer can be used for brake efficiency testing. An electronic braking performance monitoring system (EBPMS) can be used to measure brake performance
- it is possible to carry out brake performance checks through road tests but only where it is impracticable to get a brake efficiency test or measured performance assessment. Road testing is not regarded as adequate for all safety inspections and DVSA expects a minimum four brake efficiency tests per annum, in any event

### HGV/Trailer Brake Test Report

In February 2022 DVSA issued guidance to assist operators in interpreting brake test results in its publication Understanding your HGV or Trailer's Brake Test Report. In fairness, the reports are not easy to understand, so it is imperative operators invest time in this to ensure the data can be understood. It is not acceptable simply to receive back a brake test report, only then to file it away as a maintenance record. Instead, it has to be read, analysed, understood and, where necessary, follow up needs to take place.

At any preliminary hearing or Public Inquiry hearing, a Traffic Commissioner will interrogate operators. They will expect vehicles to present laden brake tests (the minimum for DVSA is ideally 65% of total maximum weight) and see evidence of their understanding of the brake test data in their records. For example, a vehicle may exhibit a Pass, but this may be Pass (locked), where the wheels have locked during the test, leaving the results that may be inaccurate with a test load not at least 65% of the vehicle weight. Operators are expected to understand and spot these types of technical issue.

It is recommended that operators read in detail any available sector guidance e.g. the guide issued by Logistics UK together with other DVSA material that is to be found here:

1. Understanding your HGV or Trailer's Brake Test Report. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-your-hgv-or-trailers-brake-test-report/understanding-your-hgv-or-trailers-brake-test-report>
2. DVSA Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1033118/guide-to-maintaining-roadworthiness-commercial-goods-and-public-service-vehicles.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033118/guide-to-maintaining-roadworthiness-commercial-goods-and-public-service-vehicles.pdf)



# A guide to why you need effective Fleet Management Software

By: Deborah Cheadle, Publishing Director, Essential Fleet Group Ltd.

**As a fleet or transport manager operating in the 'Essential Fleet Sector' you have a requirement both legally and financially to ensure that you are operating a safe, efficient and compliant fleet.**

Micro-management is not possible within large and diverse fleets and so making the right decision on which Fleet Management Software (FMS) to implement will prove invaluable.

Many vehicles operating within the 'Essential Fleet Sector' as you know, are not returned to base and are parked at, or near to an operative's residence overnight, so there is a real need for cohesive remote monitoring and in a digital format.

Implementing a system that works to meet the needs of your fleet, will not only benefit your organisation in terms of delivering a cost-efficient operation, but it will enable your drivers and vehicles to stay operational, minimising Vehicle-Off-Road (VOR) time.

Most FMS will have key elements that address and manage different issues these include, monitoring driver behaviour, asset tracking, monitoring vehicle health, helping with

compliance and route optimisation.

FMS will enable you as fleet or transport manager to have in effect 'eyes everywhere' and if real-time monitoring is enabled this will help improve the delivery of your services, with more effective or increased response times that meet your customers' needs - helping to maintain a valued corporate image.

Preventive maintenance will help to minimise vehicle repair costs. By using the diagnostic data gained with the use of FMS, vehicle health can be remotely monitored, alerting you to schedule a repair before a vehicle develops a more costly fault. Vehicle usage is also monitored, and the FMS uses this data to schedule routine maintenance to ensure your vehicles stay compliant out on the road.

Being able to track and monitor your vehicles and therefore drivers, also helps a fleet or transport manager to get a clearer picture of an individual's driving behaviour. Monitoring can help identify for example, when a driver was, going too fast, braking harshly, missing appointments and idling.

As it is the driver who controls the vehicle, as a fleet or transport manager you have to rely on their ability to drive efficiently and in a way that protects the assets of the business. Efficiency



Implementing a system that works to meet the needs of your fleet, will not only benefit your organisation in terms of delivering a cost-efficient operation, but it will enable your drivers and vehicles to stay operational, minimising Vehicle-Off-Road (VOR) time.

is therefore in the hands of driver behaviour. This can be rewarded as well as penalised to encourage a safe and cohesive driving culture within an organisation. The data from the FMS provides a greater insight into a driver's behaviour and ability and can flag areas that need further improvement or training. It must be remembered though that the key to delivering improvements is to act upon the data generated.

Vehicle tracking also helps you to know where your vehicles are at all times. Some systems also offer geofencing which alerts you when for example, a vehicle has left your operational area, or entered a low-emission zone. It is also used to locate vehicles needing recovery.

With fuel costs rising daily, having the ability to make full use of route optimisation is crucial. Having operatives in the right place at the right time in an efficient manner, is so important. Without effective route planning, operatives could be sent from one end of their operational area to the other, missing service visits that could be scheduled en route.

If you are thinking of opting for a new system or one to replace an existing paper-based system, it is important to trial potential FMS before implementation to ensure that it is robust enough

to meet your needs. It is quite easy to lose sight of your needs when exposed to the huge variety and range of features offered by many software packages. Investment in FMS can be costly, so ensure the system you choose is scalable and that it can be upgraded as technology advances.

Another important consideration is how the data generated from your FMS is protected, does it meet with your organisation's data privacy policy.

Finally, you need to think about what support is offered, what happens if the system crashes for example, is there a helpline with technical help offered?

FMS is designed to help you to operationally automate your fleet management tasks and strengthen communication between all stakeholders enabling your operations to work efficiently on a large scale and over a wide operational area. It is therefore vital to use and interpret the fleet data generated during your fleet operations to make full use of your investment.

This article is meant as a general overview to FMS and there are many providers out there with systems offering different levels of complexity.



## Remote fleet management made easy with innovative telematics solutions

**There's no doubt that the past couple of years have had an impact on fleet management – with challenges brought about by pandemic and the national lockdown.**

Vehicles, trailers, lorries and machinery were either sat idle at closed plants, depots, sites and yards or parked up on employees' driveways.

Fast forward to summer 2022 and while it has been a case of 'back to business as usual' for many, some companies have continued with the viable option of home, flexible or hybrid working.

So, with many companies deciding not to return to the 'old' way of working, is it time to introduce new measures and solutions to adequately manage a vehicle fleet remotely?

With staff, vehicles and assets spread over a wider area, innovative telematics solutions provider ABAX is fully aware of the challenges and headaches of managing a mixed fleet of vehicles, plants and tools.

Experts in the field, ABAX not only offers solutions through its multiple products, but delivers added value to its customers alongside 24/7 support in areas to help with time-management, driving performance and behaviour, business efficiency and security.

Through a range of tracking devices, ABAX is able to offer a one-stop-shop to fleet owners and managers regarding efficiency and productivity, as well as security and vehicle asset management.

The data and technology are tried and tested to overcome issues like vehicle tracking, minimising vehicle downtime, improving driving behaviour, cutting down on wasted administration time, curbing any vehicle misuse as well as increase security and monitoring.

*"We recognise the challenges and pain points that fleet owners and managers face – which in many cases have been heightened during and since the pandemic.*

*"As well as our multiple products, we ensure that our customers receive value from using them, and we have a great team to help get them set up with any of our tracking devices.*

*"Our innovative tracking solutions give customers more control over their assets, vehicles and machines. This in turn allows them to reduce the risk of theft, driver speeding, loss of tools, driving performance and make sure that the fleet is driving efficiently."*

*Our solutions are also greener and more sustainable for the environment."*

**Kevin Bull Commercial director for ABAX UK**

Theft continues to create issues for fleet managers, with a 2021 CensusWide study revealing that stolen vehicles or equipment costs fleet-based businesses an average of £12,250 each year.

That figure is even higher for businesses with more than 100 vehicles, with the data showing that larger fleets lose on average £21,000 each year.

The findings suggest that one of the potential contributors to the problem is a lack of tracking or inability to immobilise vehicles.

The report found that GPS asset tracking devices, which can play a significant role in helping to recover stolen assets, are used in only half (52%) of fleet vehicles.

Even fewer vehicles were shown to use GPS tracking on portable assets such as IT equipment and tools (32%), construction equipment (24%) and on cargo pallets (21%).

However, this is something that ABAX has first-hand experience and success of helping customers with, including Redcliffe Tree Surgery – which used its ABAX installed trackers to recover a van that was stolen overnight <sup>(1)</sup> from the owner Richard Boettcher's driveway.

Having reported the vehicle missing to police, Richard was able to use the ABAX app to accurately track the whereabouts of the van and alert officers to its location.

From reporting the vehicle missing to its recovery it took just 40 minutes!

While this incident occurred on



household driveway, many thefts or security breaches happen at yards, plants or depots – often where vehicles sit idle outside of working hours.

ABAX customer, Anglesey-based John Kelly Construction has introduced the innovative ABAX Geofence <sup>(2)</sup> as part of its suite of telematics solutions to help protect its assets in the event of them being moved without authorisation or even stolen.

The innovative feature creates an invisible fence around a particular site or sites. If machines or vehicles go outside the Geofence boundary, the customer is immediately notified by text and e-mail in real-time which allows quick action and peace of mind when it comes to asset security.

However, just as important as the management of the vehicles is the way in which they are being driven – with fleet managers mindful of insurance premiums and other associated costs.

Driving behaviour comes hand in hand with business efficiency, time management and of course road safety and is one of the key areas when it comes to customer expectations and

indeed requirements.

One of our fleet vehicles customers recently reported a visible reduction in the number of speeding fines issued to its drivers as a result of tracking being introduced – therefore cutting down any risk of incidents on the road.

Drivers using vehicles out of working hours or making unnecessary trips also dropped as a result.

*'We had vehicles going home with drivers and out of hours trips were costing the company money. By working with ABAX, our productivity has increased, and we are not only saving money on fuel and clocking up less mileage, but we know where our drivers are at any given time.'*

The tracking system can also offer a duty of care to staff and drivers using fleet vehicles.

On one occasion the tracker was used to locate the vehicle of an engineer that was having a heart attack, enabling emergency care to be sent directly to him after he had called his wife to raise the alarm, but didn't know his exact location.

Our customer takes up the story <sup>(3)</sup>.

## 5 ways telematics can optimise your mixed fleet

**1 Technology** will do the work for you. A connected telematics solution gives you the insight needed for optimal planning by consolidating data from all fleet assets into one single interface, meaning you know the status of every single tool, equipment, vehicle and machine in real time.

**2 Collecting data** into one unified view. By using a solution that delivers a unified view with one login, it is easier and faster to get an overview of all company assets in one map. Customers benefit from easy access to daily updates on driver performance, asset location, maintenance, fuel use and idling on all company vehicles and machinery.

**3 Asset tracking** side by side with your fleet. There are other types of assets that aren't technically part of a fleet but are no less crucial to projects like excavator buckets, power tools, generators and pumps. If assets like that are left behind at a site or get misplaced, it will delay a project. Fortunately, fleet managers can track these assets in the same platform as the main fleet.

**4 Data** will help you keep the engines running - Scheduled reports will allow customers to shift from reactive fixes to proactive maintenance. The data pulled from a customer's mixed fleet will give them a great insight to plan for upcoming maintenance and repairs, which creates a competitive advantage by keeping your largest investments fully operational.

**5 Higher availability of equipment** through optimised servicing, as well as a more efficient use of the machinery, helps an operation become more productive and profitable on every project.

For information on ABAX's smart solutions or to talk to a member of the team, visit [www.abax.com/uk](http://www.abax.com/uk)

(1) <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=597117211460684>

(2) <https://www.abax.com/uk/feature/geofence>

(3) <https://www.facebook.com/ABAXUK/videos/361920335914265/>

## Supplier Insight: The Car key People

### Avoiding un-planned Vehicle Off-Road (VOR) time



In Issue 3 of 2021, Essential Fleet Manager talked with Mark Migliaccio, founder of The Car Key People, about the impact of key loss and failure on efficient fleet operations. We're delighted that just over a year later, we've caught up with Mark once again to talk about how best to mitigate the disruption and unplanned VOR time caused by key loss and failure.

#### **Q: What are the main developments over the last year in how The Car Key People is helping fleets?**

The past twelve months have been busier than ever before for The Car Key People, with almost three times the number of fleet bookings compared to the previous period. The increased workload has required us to fine tune our internal processes to ensure all bookings are handled as effectively as possible.

We have also worked closely with the UK's largest rental companies to develop booking flow diagrams that map out all of the steps for placing bookings.

With hundreds of bookings being placed a month it is super important that processes are defined, and we have found this to be beneficial to our employees as well as our clients.

There has been some huge developments in programming software which has enabled us to offer key replacements for new manufacturers that

were previously dealer only. Many fleets have picked up on this and have been quick to jump on our services for Volvo and MG in particular.



**Q: How did the demand for your services expand or change as we emerged from Covid restrictions?**

Covid was an interesting time for The Car Key People. Prior to Covid, The Car Key People was largely a London-only operation, servicing both the general public and fleets. During the first lockdown general public retail bookings were halted and the time was utilised to develop our nation-wide fleet services.

Post lockdown we now have thirty technicians spanning the whole of the UK ready to assist fleets with their vehicle key requirements.

The growth has been phenomenal with more and more large fleets turning to us to support them with keys.

**Q: You mentioned the last time we spoke the impact of key loss/failure on income and expenses. What are the wider impacts on the efficient operations of fleets that underpin and deliver essential services?**

It seems crazy but something as simple as a broken key can prevent a vehicle from being used for days,

sometimes weeks.

If the key belongs to a technician from a utilities company that means their jobs are cancelled and the emergency they were attending is delayed.

If the key belongs to a vehicle from a leasing company, that means the vehicle cannot be rented and revenue is lost.

**Q: Key loss and failure can have as significant impact on operations as breakdowns, on-road incidents and other situations. Fleet Managers plan for by adopting a wide range of solutions and services, but do they plan for key loss and failure. Is there enough awareness of this in fleets?**

I would love to say that every fleet manager applies the required due diligence to militate against all lost key situations, but sadly that just isn't true.

Only a real small handful of the leasing companies we work with ensure they have 2 keys for each vehicle. The smartest companies we work with ensure if there is only one key that becomes lost we are booked to supply two replacement keys.

Some fleet managers keep costs low by only replacing a lost key with one new key, but it really is a case of *"a stitch in time saves nine"* when it comes to replacing keys...or quite literally *"two replacement keys now saves nine days VOR time in the future"*.

Utilities companies clearly understand the importance of a spare vehicle key, as some hold as many as four spares keys for each vehicle.

**Q: Could you compare the disruption to, and expense incurred by fleets when going down the traditional route – key replacement through a main dealer – with adoption of your solution?**

The dealer route is often unnecessarily time consuming and expensive, with some keys taking several weeks to be replaced. The main dealers require the vehicle to be at their workshop, so there is an added level of expense and VOR time whilst the vehicle is recovered in.

Our solution ensures downtime is kept to an absolute minimum, with more than

90% of our bookings completed in just 1-3 days.

**Q: As a reminder to our readers, what is the full range of services that make up The Car Key People solution for fleets?**

The Car Key People provide a completely mobile nation-wide solution for replacing lost, stolen and broken vehicle keys. Our services cover:

- Spare vehicle keys - for the savviest of fleet managers .
- Lost key replacement, when all keys have been lost.
- Vehicle entry, when keys have been locked inside.
- Lock repair and replacement.
- Vehicle investigation, when there is concern a non authorised key may have been coded to the vehicle.
- Key erasing and reprogramming, providing security by ensuring only the keys onsite can be used for the vehicle.
- Temporary key storage and secure postage of spare keys.

**Q: Do you have any current examples that best demonstrate how your solution has worked to minimise fleet operational disruption and VOR time?**

The case study we covered when we last featured in your magazine probably still stands out as the best example of VOR time reduction.

Siemens approached us to supply spare keys for their whole fleet of engineer vehicles.

We managed the whole process to ensure the engineers were met either at their home address before they left for work, or whilst out on a booking. This ensured there was zero downtime for the Siemens engineers, and also protects them against potential future downtime when a key should become lost.

Another great example would be the work we recently completed for Enterprise Flex E Rent who booked us to supply spare keys for 50 new vehicles

going out to a customer.

We attended their branch over the course of 2 days to supply the new spare keys onsite, all ready for when the customer received the vehicles.

**Q: How do you see your business developing over the short and medium term?**

We are currently expanding our London team and have vacancies for a trainee auto locksmith and part time bookings manager at our North London office. Our 30 strong nationwide team are the first choice for a large number of the UK's leading fleets, we look forward to working with even more new fleets over the coming months.

The biggest hurdle we have faced is moving fleet managers away from main the dealers solution and other household named vendors. Almost all of the fleets we support today previously utilised an alternative solution, but have since moved over to The Car Key People, and cite speed of response and reduction in downtime as the primary reason.



For more information visit: [carkeypeople.co.uk](http://carkeypeople.co.uk)

# Veolia adds new technologies to boost maintenance services and industrial productivity

**Leading resource management company, Veolia, has now extended the capabilities of its Industrial Site Services (ISS) team with the introduction of the latest vehicle technologies. By limiting any process downtime these will also help industrial sites to boost cost-efficient productivity.**

Designed to tackle complex site process cleaning projects in sectors such as petrochemical, water utility, chemical, food and beverage and construction, the latest in vacuum technology will widen the capabilities for the removal and handling of hazardous and non-hazardous powders, sludges or solids. These two new specialist units are designed especially for suck and blow operations of wet or dry material, and will be used in operations such as filtration media removal, tank desludging, catalyst handling and other processes. Materials from these site operations are compliantly treated or disposed of using Veolia's specialised facilities.

To help the effectiveness of site maintenance shutdown periods the new truck-mounted, high pressure, high flow water jetting unit is capable of creating pressures of up to 1,000 bar at 262 litres per minute using the 500 horsepower engine. This will advance the efficiency of site maintenance





shutdown periods by delivering remote heat exchanger jetting, tank and column cleaning, and pipe and tube bundle cleaning, and manual blasting work within the petrochemical and chemical manufacturing sectors.

Supporting these are new ATEX-rated CCTV inspection and survey units equipped with the latest technology for inspecting drainage systems, chemical pipelines and the underground infrastructure of complex systems. This will deliver the detailed survey information required to plan maintenance works and ensure system safety and site production.

Commenting on the extended capabilities from this technology, John Abraham, Chief Operating Officer - Veolia UK & Ireland - Industrial, Water & Energy said:

*"We know that our industrial customers rely on effective maintenance of their complex site processes to maintain output and commercial success. By using this latest technology our specialist Industrial Site Services team have extended their capabilities to help industrial sites limit down time and maintain their process lines. This will further help productivity and maintenance, and enhance safety for our customers sites."*

Veolia's ISS team complete hundreds of operations every year across a wide range of industrial and commercial sites and provides a guaranteed response to emergency incidents 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This covers all types of incidents arising from chemical and hazardous materials to fuel and oil spills or contaminated land, both on customer sites or as a result of a road traffic accident. The service is delivered through the dedicated call centre that deploys the necessary response teams, technical staff, and specialised equipment and vehicles that are on standby at six strategically-placed depots across the UK.



For more information visit  
[www.veolia.co.uk](http://www.veolia.co.uk)



## Transport Law Updates

By: Tim Ridyard, Partner Transport and Regulatory, Ashtons Legal.

# Road Traffic: New careless driving offence

**Goods and passenger transport operators need to alert their vocational and other staff drivers about road traffic offence changes in force from 28 June 2022.**

A significant development is the introduction of a new category of careless driving offence: causing serious injury by careless or by inconsiderate driving. (The equivalent dangerous driving offence has already been in force for some time.)

It is intended to address careless or inconsiderate driving offences that result in serious injury outcomes. Until now, the simple offence of careless or inconsiderate driving has covered all non-fatal such offences, regardless of injury caused. The driving force behind this has been the inadequacy of penalties

that could be imposed against drivers. This new offence is long-awaited – a consultation about it was published in 2016 and highlighted by the writer here.

The test of whether a driver's standard of driving is careless is whether it falls below the standard of the competent and careful driver.

### **What is "serious injury"?**

In England & Wales, this is defined as physical harm that amounts to grievous bodily harm (GBH) for the purposes of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861. In Scotland it means severe physical injury.

### **Penalties for the new offence**

Conviction for the basic offence of careless or inconsiderate

driving results in the maximum possible penalty of a fine, as well as the endorsement of 3 to 9 penalty points on the driving record, unless the Court imposes a discretionary disqualification, instead of points.

However, the new serious injury offence is significantly different - it is both imprisonable and it brings a mandatory driving disqualification. So, any serious injury occurring as the result of the driver's careless or inconsiderate driving shifts the potential sentencing outcomes dramatically.

The Magistrates Court in England and Wales can impose a fine or custody of max 12 months. The Crown Court can impose a fine or up to 2 years' imprisonment. The mandatory 12 month driving disqualification will always be imposed, unless in rare cases 'special reasons' exist for not disqualifying, in which case the Court can impose 3 to 11 penalty points. (NB If a driver causes injury by dangerous driving, by way of comparison, a driver faces a maximum of 5 years imprisonment.) To be clear: if a driver pleads Guilty to the offence or is convicted after trial, a driving ban of a minimum 12 months will follow.

How implementation of the new offence will play out, remains to be seen. Drivers involved in careless non-fatal incidents that have caused serious injury, will now face the prospect of stiffer penalties and disqualification. Unintended outcomes may arise. A minor incident or momentary lapse in a course of otherwise good driving may lead to serious injury, whereas far worse driving (falling short of dangerous driving) that causes major road risk may cause little (if any) injury. In the former case, the driver must be banned – in the latter, a ban will be discretionary. There will be a need for consistency and fairness in sentencing – but the Court will not, save in rare cases, be able to have any discretion not to disqualify.

It is clear that the seriousness of the injury will therefore determine the charge and the outcome, regardless of the degree of the carelessness itself. Bad careless driving, where there is no serious injury, will still be dealt with by a fine and points (or possible driving ban with no minimum period.)

Time limits: there is normally a 6-month prosecution time limit for most offences that can only be heard in the Magistrates Court (i.e. 'summary' offences), but this time limit does not apply to the new offence category – this is because the case can be heard either in the Magistrates Court or the Crown Court.

Careless or inconsiderate driving offences are, in summary:

- Causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving; (max 5 yrs custody)
- Causing serious injury by careless or inconsiderate driving; (max 2 yrs custody)
- Careless or inconsiderate driving; (only non-imprisonable offence)\*

- Causing death by driving: unlicensed, or uninsured drivers; (max 4 yrs custody)
- Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs. (\*\*max life imprisonment)

*\*The only offence that does not carry a mandatory driving disqualification is the basic offence of careless or inconsiderate driving.*

*\*\*The changes introduced on 28 June 2022 were brought about through the Police Crime and Sentencing Act 2022 that also makes changes to the maximum possible sentence for the offences of causing death by dangerous driving and causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs. These increase to possible life imprisonment, from a previous maximum 14 years imprisonment. It is unclear what actual impact this will have in terms of sentences implemented and in how many cases.*

As ever, it will be vital to take legal advice, in the event of a prosecution for the new careless driving offence, not least because of the mandatory driving disqualification. It is also imperative that road transport operators update and inform their drivers about these developments.



## Ashtons Legal advice and representation

If you require any advice with regard to Goods and Passenger Operator Licencing, including advice concerning DVSA Investigations, correspondence with the Office of The Traffic Commissioner or Traffic Commissioner Preliminary Hearing/Public Inquiry work, then please get in touch.

**Contact: Tim Ridyard, Partner Transport and Regulatory T: 01284 732111 E: [Tim.Ridyard@ashtonslegal.co.uk](mailto:Tim.Ridyard@ashtonslegal.co.uk)**

# Handheld or wearable – pay attention to driver distraction

We have seen in this issue's Legal Advice that it is now more important than ever to ensure that drivers do not operate "without due care and attention", with custodial sentences planned for incidents that result in serious injury or death. Fleet Managers and drivers must be aware of both the generally distracting activity that lies behind this and that activity that is illegal in itself. In this piece, Venson Automotive Solutions highlight the fact that wearable technology falls into exactly the same category as smart phones and tablets when driving and the importance of communicating this with any mobile workforce.

**Changes to the Highway Code introduced this Spring includes an on-the-spot £200 fixed penalty notice and six points on a licence for motorists caught using a hand-held device that can send and receive data whilst driving, including smartphones, sat-navs and tablets. However, many are unaware that these changes include checking smartwatches and wearables.**

A new survey by Venson Automotive Solutions worryingly reveals that 37% of motorists wear a smartwatch or wearable that delivers text messages and notifications and one in three interact with these devices whilst driving. Men are more likely to interact with their smartwatch or wearable than women; 25% of men confirmed they check notifications compared to just 8% of women.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers have a duty to manage occupational road risks as part of their wider management responsibilities. Communicating the updates to the Highway Code and having an up to date Workplace Transport Risk Assessment and Policy in place, are highly recommended.

Alison Bell, Operations Director for Venson Automotive Solutions commented, "The majority of company car and van driver policies provided by fleet managers and businesses will have already addressed the use of smartphones whilst driving. However, many may have overlooked the risk that smartwatches and wearables pose to drivers and other road users. Indeed, checking for notifications or reading text messages on such a device could be considered a crime as it can constitute as careless or distracted driving.

"Using a mobile phone to make a call whilst driving has been an offence since 2003, but today, drivers are no longer allowed to take photos or videos, scroll through playlists or play games on their phones when driving. For HGV drivers the penalties are even more severe if caught. They face an instant ban and face a maximum fine of £2,500."

The good news is that smart devices can be used if secured in a cradle and 33% of motorists surveyed by Venson said they use one. Another 39% said they place their phone out of reach to avoid the temptation of picking it up. However, that still leaves more than one in four people admitting to balancing their phone in a cupholder, door pocket or on their lap for ease of use.

Continues Alison Bell, "It is important for all businesses utilising



company car and van fleets, as well as those allowing employees to use private cars for business use, that it is illegal to 'cause or permit' an employee to use a hand-held device while driving. An employer who requires employees to use a handheld device when driving is just as liable as the driver."

As a final word of caution, Venson adds that driving without due care and attention extends beyond the use of smart devices, and can incur penalties of either a disqualification, or between 3 and 9 points. Respondents to its latest survey admitted to being distracted whilst driving by adjusting seat, mirror and steering wheel positions (61%), eating whilst driving (39%) and using a vehicle's in-car infotainment system (28%).

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## Research shows four in ten motorists do not know the drink-drive limit

### Potentially millions of motorists could be unknowingly getting behind the wheel while over the drink-drive limit.

That's according to research commissioned by the UK's leading independent road safety charity, IAM RoadSmart, which has revealed that up to four in ten drivers (42 per cent) of the 1,004 motorists surveyed do not know the legal drink-drive limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This potentially represents over 15 million of the 35 million people who possess a full driving licence in the UK.

Alarmingly, only around one in five (23 per cent) of those surveyed knew the correct drink-drive limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland - that being 35 micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath. Meanwhile awareness in Scotland was higher with six in ten (60 per cent) of those surveyed knowing the limit which currently stands at 22 micrograms of

alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath.

In addition, of the 585 who answered that they knew the drink-drive limit for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, less than half (40 per cent) actually answered correctly.

These findings have concerned IAM RoadSmart, who are reminding drivers that while they may think they know how many drinks will typically tip them over the limit, that amount could actually fail a breathalyser test.

Neil Greig, Director of Policy and Research at IAM RoadSmart, commented: "Our research highlights that there is still a real lack of awareness regarding how much alcohol is too much before it is illegal to drive. We would like to remind drivers that individual characteristics such as body weight, food consumption, gender and metabolism will also have an impact on the reading. This is why we will always recommend 'none for the road.'"

The survey's findings have also led the charity to reiterate its plea to the government to roll out a smarter package of longer-term measures to help drive down the number of drink-drivers on Britain's roads. This includes a lower drink-drive limit across the UK, in line with Scotland's limit to reinforce good behaviour, a fast track of evidential roadside testing machines to release police resources and compulsory drink-drive rehabilitation courses for all drivers caught over the limit.

Neil concluded: "A prosecution for drink-driving will impact the rest of your life through public humiliation, loss of earnings, family break up and a criminal record, as well as adding real danger to our roads. At IAM RoadSmart we estimate that the last drink that takes you over the limit could cost you up to £70,000! If that isn't a sobering thought, then nothing is."

To learn more about IAM RoadSmart, visit [www.iamroadsmart.com](http://www.iamroadsmart.com).

# Ctrack teams up with Fast Lean Smart to support field service fleet operations



## Ctrack by Inseego and FLS – FAST LEAN SMART have entered into a technology partnership to deliver dynamic field service scheduling solutions for mobile FM and engineering teams in the UK.

Under the agreement, the companies will integrate their respective fleet telematics and field service management software solutions to enable organisations to effectively coordinate remote teams in real-time using precise tracking data.

*"We have teamed up with Ctrack, so we can provide an extra layer of accuracy to customers that are looking to intelligently and dynamically optimise their schedules and fleet resources,"* explains Simon Spriggs, UK Partnerships Manager at FLS. *"As approved partners, we can now work closely with Ctrack to take advantage of our complementary technologies and deliver even greater value to field service operations."*

FLS' workforce management solution combines instant-response scheduling and dynamic route planning, using algorithmic analysis methods to achieve intelligent predictions for appointment durations and arrival times. This includes required technical skills, time-of-day driving speeds and self-learning AI, so appointment accuracy is continuously improved while taking the latest call data into account. FLS will now be able to use live tracking from web-based fleet telematics software, Ctrack Online, to help re-optimize schedules in real-time to better coordinate planned and reactive appointments.

Jason Laight, Head of Indirect Sales at

Ctrack by Inseego commented: *"FLS is a technology leader that has proven expertise in workforce management, so our partnership will deliver advanced solutions to new and existing customers. We have a longstanding presence within the essential services fleet sector, and as such, understand the pressures faced by organisations with remote teams. This latest agreement, will provide us with added tools to create fleet mobility solutions that support highly efficient and effective service management operations."*

Ctrack has significant experience integrating its fleet telematics software with leading third-party applications such as ERP, routing and scheduling, work management, GIS and transport management. Using an application programming interface (API), the company's development team can create bespoke solutions that export live data into other back-office software tools, opening up a whole new layer of capability for intelligent reporting.



## Plugging in to an electric future

**Beverley Wise, Regional Director UK & Ireland for Webfleet, considers the future of electrification for essential fleets and explains how telematics data is supporting Oxford City Council's decarbonisation efforts.**

Shrewd decision-making is a prerequisite for fleets setting their stall out to decarbonise and cost-effectively transition to electric vehicles (EVs), which, in turn, calls for meaningful, actionable insights.

Thanks to advances in dedicated EV software solutions, this has now been made possible.

Telematics data can help answer a range of critical questions to support the electrification process – from which journeys and operational activities are best suited to EVs and what charging infrastructure is needed to how organisations can make the most of their electric miles, minimise costs and vehicle downtime while optimising service delivery.

The environmental case for EVs is unequivocal, and the financial case is becoming equally compelling.



costs may be continuing to rise, but pump prices have also soared, and with electricity constituting a smaller element of a vehicle's total cost of ownership (TCO) than petrol and diesel, the cost advantages of EVs are ever more pronounced.

We should remember, however, that the electrification of transport is still in its infancy.

Local authorities, for example, may have grown their electric fleets almost fivefold in the last five years, but a freedom of information request at the turn of the year found that more than half of UK councils had yet to start their EV journey.

### Innovation setting standards

Blazing a trail for decarbonisation has been Oxford City Council, which introduced Britain's first Zero Emission Zone pilot earlier this year in a bid to reduce transport emissions and air pollution.

Supporting the move, Oxford Direct Services (ODS), which manages more than 300 vehicles to maintain the council's housing stock, parks, highways, streets and waste disposal, has begun leveraging telematics data.

Vehicle insights from Webfleet are now being fed into Oxford's Fleet Reporting Database, with outputs used to support learning and evaluation at Energy Superhub Oxford, an ambitious initiative to decarbonise Oxford by 2040.

Owain Pearce, Transport Manager at Oxford Direct Services, has pointed out how the published ranges of EVs, based on dynamometer testing, can often be lower in 'real world' conditions, with load, temperature, terrain and driving behaviour all affecting performance. But ODS can now see what daily 'real world' mileages are being achieved by both ICE and electric vehicles, along with criteria ranging from road types to standstill times, signposting vehicles' true EV potential, total cost of ownership and emissions savings.

The telematics insights can also help ODS plan for the most cost-effective EV charging strategies.

Tina Mould, the council's Capital Programme Project Manager, has explained how 4pm to 7pm is usually the most expensive time to charge, but that drivers returning to depots at the

end of the day may be prone to plug-in immediately. The telematics platform is helping educate their team, while enabling them to better predict how many charge points will be needed in the future.

### Informed decision making

It's becoming increasingly clear that – as has long been the case for traditional internal combustion fleets – data insights are crucial to helping managers make the right decisions at the right times.

Operationally, telematics solutions can allow workflow planning to be optimised with real time battery levels and remaining driving ranges available for every fleet vehicle. Access to EV health data is enabling pre-emptive maintenance, while on the road, mapped charging infrastructure means charging points can be pinpointed via drivers'

business sat navs.

Energy Consumption Reports raise the bar even higher, providing an analysis of energy usage in kWh per vehicle, per day. With this information at their fingertips, fleet managers can compare vehicles' energy performance, and identify and address cases of inefficient operation.

Breakdowns of the energy used for driving and other purposes can also be provided, such as the powering of auxiliary equipment. What's more, the kinetic energy recovered through regenerative braking is available, helping fleets measure and improve driving performance to optimise vehicle kWh.

With access to such data intelligence, the journey to an electric transport future that is both environmentally and financially sustainable promises to be less challenging and all the more rewarding.



For more information visit [www.webfleet.com/en\\_gb/webfleet/](http://www.webfleet.com/en_gb/webfleet/)

## Six top tips for local authorities to navigate the rollout of EV charging infrastructure



*Pictured: Neil Isaacson, CEO of public charge point operator (CPO), Liberty Charge*

**As more and more local authorities address the urgent need to accelerate the EV infrastructure roll out, clarity and straightforward objective advice on how to plan, implement and maintain a local EV charging network is in short supply.**

Supporting local authorities is essential if the Government's ambition to install 300,000 charge points by 2030 is to be met, when the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles will cease.

Neil Isaacson, CEO of public charge point operator (CPO), Liberty Charge, provides six top tips on how local authorities can deploy charge points at pace and at scale, and deliver a UK-wide publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure network.

## **1 Raise awareness of benefits to residents**

Members of the public who don't yet own an EV, don't tend to want charging infrastructure outside their homes. They don't want what they don't yet know they will need, and without positive reinforcement of the benefits that the EV charging rollout will bring, resident push back is likely to remain.

Local authorities should and do use public consultations to promote the benefits of the EV charging rollout, such as reduced noise and air pollution. However, some local authorities lack budgets and resources to create the necessary hard-hitting campaigns. Local businesses can help by electrifying their fleets and providing at-work charging. But the shift in attitudes in favour of owning and maintaining an EV should sit with national Government.

Indeed, in our soon-to-be-released Local Authority Insight Report, 'Transforming the delivery of local charging networks across the UK', many Councillors echoed this sentiment, believing that more support was required from Government to shift driver attitudes away from polluting petrol and diesel vehicles.

## **2 Understand the timescales**

While 2030 is more than seven years away, creating the necessary policies and strategies, undertaking the required due diligence, conducting public consultations, and charge point build and deployment can take 12 months and sometimes as long as three years.

And 2030 is not the deadline. We need infrastructure to be in place to instil consumer confidence to make the switch. We also need to accommodate the growing demands for charging from the increased volume of EVs. When looking at timescales of years not months, the time has to be now to change that.

## **3 Use data to identify the right locations**

It can be challenging for local authorities to identify and prioritise public charge point locations, often with an incomplete picture of local demand to work from. While the current needs and wants of residents is important, taking an objective, scientific approach that also considers the future adoption of EVs and anticipates demand, will ensure supply meets both immediate and

future requirements.

Liberty Charge has a proprietary data-led solution which provides insights on which residents will be reliant on on-street charging, as well as logistical data on pavement width, planning regulations and power supply, to inform local authorities of the number and the exact on-street location of charge points required.

## **4 Attract private sector funding**

There is growing appetite from the private sector to invest in EV infrastructure. However, some sites continue to present challenges, often due to high installation costs or lower forecast levels of demand.

Given the significant growth in the number of public chargers required over the coming years, and the limited amount of public funding available, a key role for Councils will be to ensure they attract sufficient levels of private funding to deliver this vital infrastructure.

In order to do this, local authorities will need to make sure what they bring to market is commercially viable, for example with sufficiently long contracts for CPOs to be able to recover their investment. An effective approach to achieving this is for the local authority to offer a portfolio of sites to the market as a concession contract, including a combination of sites with mixed commercial viability.

## **5 Avoid exclusivity clauses**

Exclusivity clauses are obviously beneficial to the winning CPO, but rarely a good thing for residents or local authorities. While they may offer some short-term contractual benefits, the trade-off is less competition in a local area, which in typical market conditions often results in higher tariff costs and a poorer service. Lack of competition is also less likely to incentivise CPOs to compete to achieve better reliability when maintaining and future-proofing the local network.

If exclusivity clauses are agreed, then there should be provision in the contract for local authorities to introduce an additional supplier if the original supplier falls short of a stated uptime of at least 95%. It will be this risk that keeps CPOs that were awarded exclusivity focused on on-going delivery.

## **6 Carefully assess a CPO's credentials**

As the marketplace matures and the private sector takes on a greater role in delivering much needed EV infrastructure, public-private partnership contracts are likely to be long-term: ~15 years. Due diligence is essential to ensure partners are capable of meeting the needs of their residents. Asking the right questions in a tender process is only the start; it's about creating partnerships built on trust.

We strongly advise that local authorities scrutinise investors, funding, business plans and supply chains of potential suppliers and speak to existing customers to learn first-hand how they have performed, and how easy they are to work with. All credible suppliers should be willing to provide you with at least three contacts.

For more information visit 'The EV infrastructure hub' - a free online resource for local authorities  
<https://evinfrastructurehub.org/>



## Emergency Services Workshop Technicians Need to Prioritise EV Training

**Fleet electrification is playing a vital role in driving the EV market and the emergency services are setting the standard for this electric revolution. However, the same barriers that are impeding consumer adoption of EVs are magnified for emergency fleet operators. Autotech training explains why.**

**Q:** Why are some emergency services still hesitant about utilising electric vehicles?

There are still uncertainties over range and the availability of charging infrastructure, which is still not where it needs to be. For fleet companies in general, this could render fleet electrification a 'tick the box' exercise, but this isn't an option for the emergency services. Not only is this sector seeing its fleets electrified as part of the transition to zero-emission road transport by 2030, but its response vehicles need to be reliable and constantly operate under time constraints to meet public demand.

**Q: Is it just the vehicle technicians within the workshop who need EV training?**

Absolutely not. Everyone should receive some level of training. The high voltage nature of electric vehicles introduces new hazards; therefore, EV awareness training should be planned for all members of staff to enable them to safely work alongside these vehicles.

**Q: What training is available?**

There are four levels of EV training available through the IMI, starting at Level 1 which provides an overview of the technology and the essential functions of the vehicle, while also helping to alleviate any anxieties people may have about EV's. Level 2 is designed to give learners the knowledge and skills required to work safely on electric/hybrid vehicles whilst carrying out routine maintenance and repairs, while Level 3 delves into more diagnostic work. At Level 4, delegates who have completed all the previous stages can learn how to work on live high voltage electrical components and systems safely.

**Q: Are the emergency services undertaking EV training?**

Yes, we are seeing an increase in enquiries and have recently worked with West Midlands' Fire Service (WMFS) to train their

workshop technicians to IMI Level 2 and 3 Electric/Hybrid vehicle accreditation. The Principal Workshop Technician organised the courses to get workshop technicians up to speed with how to service and repair EV's safely after switching its pool of cars and internal vans to electric. As with a lot of emergency services, WMFS try to keep all service work in-house.

**Q: What sort of repair work will emergency fleet workshop employers expect to undertake?**

In the short term, with many electric vehicles still under manufacturer warranty, workshops may not see a large volume of work, but having the skill set to carry out even the most basic of repairs, including the maintenance of brakes, tyres and wipers, will be essential. Consequently, most technicians working within an emergency services workshop should receive IMI Level 2 or Level 3 Electric/Hybrid vehicle training. This will enable them to safely isolate the high voltage system from the rest of the vehicle, carry out any maintenance safely, and correctly re-instating it. These courses also cover off the right tools which are needed to carry out EV repair work - such as insulated rubber gloves and plastic tools.

For further information visit [www.autotechtraining.co.uk](http://www.autotechtraining.co.uk)



**ELECTRIFYING YOUR FLEET? DON'T COMPROMISE THE SAFETY OF YOUR STAFF.**

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EST. 2016  
 SKILLS THAT KEEP WORKSHOPS RUNNING

## M Group Services making great progress towards achieving net-zero targets



**M Group Services, the leading service provider to essential infrastructure in the UK, has been reflecting on its positive progress towards halving its carbon emissions by 2030 and becoming net-zero by 2050.**

The Group has been forging ahead on its commitment to the environment and operating in the most effective and sustainable ways. The positive changes the Group has made were recognised earlier this year, when it received a top public ESG rating from independent, international rating agency, Sustainalytics.

M Group Services pledged to support efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C and cut carbon emissions by signing a letter of intent to cut down on carbon emissions in support of the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) in March.

The Group also committed to joining the UN Global Compact in April, becoming part of the world's largest sustainability initiative, which will ensure 10 principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption are part of business strategy, culture and day-to-day operations.

M Group Services is leading the way with its approach to environmental, social and governance (ESG) risk management. The Sustainalytics ESG risk rating of 9.6 makes the Group a leader in the business services support sector, compared to a sector average of 21.9. It also places the Group in the top one per cent of global companies for its commitment to the environment and sustainability, managing the impact on and support for local communities and its commitment to established policies and procedures, with a 'negligible risk' of reputational and operational risks through its direct and indirect suppliers.

Jim Arnold, M Group Services' Chief Executive, said: *"Supporting a sustainable future and the UK's target to achieve net-zero by 2050 is fundamental for M Group Services. I am proud of the progress we are continuing to make across all our divisions and operating businesses towards achieving our net-zero aspirations and those of our clients."*

*"It is more crucial than ever we fulfil our commitments to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) and the United Nations Global Compact by achieving our own net-zero target."*

Recent net-zero progress includes:

- **A PPE recycling scheme** that enables every Group operating business to sustainably dispose of the more than 200,000 items of PPE used each year. Covering all types of PPE, it will be recycled into car roof insulation, panel linings and compressed mattress fillings.
- **M Group Services Plant & Fleet Solutions** has recently completed a three-month carbon-reduction roadshow

visiting nine venues nationwide and demonstrating a range of electric and battery-powered equipment available to use on site, including the fully electric Vauxhall Vivaro, electric 109te mini excavator, battery-powered rammer, cut off saws, hammer drills, battery-powered LED light towers and groundhog units. Some of our clients joined people from our operating businesses to find out about the positive changes the business is implementing.

- **The Micheldever Road materials Recycling Facility** is a partnership between Milestone Infrastructure and Hampshire County Council providing a sustainable solution to decarbonise highways. In the first full year, the facility is predicted to recycle 35,000t of construction waste into Industry Highway Standard materials and save 665t CO<sub>2</sub>e. Read more about the facility from Milestone's Head of Sustainability, Ed Godsiffe, [here](#).
- **Dyer & Butler**, is moving away from non-renewable petrol-power and towards battery-powered tools, having successfully conducted a fossil fuel-free project. When urgent work was needed to clear a rockfall away from a railway line, the Wales minor team used battery-powered tools to remove excess vegetation from a steep rock cutting. Following the success of the trial, the Dyer & Butler team is adopting these battery-powered tools going forward.
- **Morrison Energy Services** entered a framework agreement in May with electric vehicle (EV) charging provider Be.EV to help deliver more than 1,000 chargers and four big charging hubs across the North of England.
- **PMP Utilities** recently used its expertise in confined space engineering to design a bespoke solution and install new hydraulically actuated valves on the Glasgow Sludge Line. This solution will cut operational costs, reduce health and safety risks to operatives and improve durability of the pipeline for Scottish Water (SW). The company dries and pelletises sludge into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) for incineration to produce electricity for the country.
- **Avonline Networks** announced the success of an innovative workplace app in March. The app, which provides a real-time flow of communication between engineers and office-based staff on the progress of works, has reduced delays for our people, increased customer satisfaction and reduced return visits, resulting in less vehicle miles on the road therefore saving on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

These are just a few of the initiatives happening across M Group Services.

*For more information visit: [www.mgroupservices.com](http://www.mgroupservices.com)*



## Welsh Senedd gives green light for 20mph legislation

**Legislation to lower the default national speed limit on residential roads and busy pedestrian streets from 30mph to 20mph has been approved by the Senedd.**

Wales becomes the first UK nation to make the move - helping to save lives, develop safer communities, improve the quality of life and encourage more people to make more sustainable and active travel choices.

The new slower speed limits are currently being trialled in eight communities across Wales and will be rolled out nationally in September 2023.

The new legislation will not apply a

blanket speed limit on all roads, it will simply make the default limit 20mph, leaving local authorities, who know their area best, to engage with the local community to decide which roads should remain at 30mph.

Currently, just 2.5% of Welsh roads have a speed limit of 20mph, but from next year this is expected to increase to approximately 35%, helping to create safer roads and communities across Wales.

Speaking after the vote, Minister for Climate Change, Julie James said:

*"I am delighted that the move to 20mph has received cross-party support across the*

*Welsh Parliament today.*

*"The evidence is clear, decreasing speeds not only reduces accidents and saves lives, but helps improve people's quality of life - making our streets and communities a safer and more welcoming place for cyclists and pedestrians, whilst helping reduce our environmental impact.*

*"We know this move won't be easy - it's as much about changing hearts and minds as it is about enforcement - but over time 20mph will become the norm, just like the restrictions we've introduced before on carrier bag charges and organ donation.*

*"Once again Wales is leading the way for other UK nations to follow."*

# It's a new era for mental health at work – but out on the road, are drivers being forgotten about?

By Chris Black, Commercial Director at vehicle leasing experts LeasePlan UK

**We all know that feeling: the sense of gloom that builds inside as you join a long tailback on the motorway. It often comes at the worst possible time – you're in a rush to get somewhere or at the end of a lengthy journey. No matter your situation, the punishment feels just as harsh. All you can do now is surrender and hope it starts to move within 20 minutes.**

Fortunately for most people this is something you only have to endure on the odd occasion. But for job-need fleet drivers, it can be an almost daily occurrence.

Whether you're a delivery driver, public sector worker or small business owner, life out on the road can be challenging and unpredictable. And it's not just traffic jams. Many fleet-operating businesses now face reduced teams due to covid or higher-than-normal vacancy rates, which means that drivers are doing longer, more frequent trips, often without adequate breaks.

The stresses and strains put on the driver, both mentally and physically, can be overlooked, as fleet managers and business owners focus on key performance indicators and profits. That's not to say that they don't care. Indeed, most companies value their employees' wellbeing and are supportive of their mental health. But is there too often the assumption that any issues will be flagged by management or the driver themselves?

Thankfully, there is a growing consensus within the fleet industry that things need to get better. In a recent LeasePlan UK survey of 500 fleet managers, one in five stated that they don't think their company puts enough emphasis on driver safety, wellbeing and health. As the government and private sector companies work together to create a better awareness of the support that's needed, I expect that this number will increase.

For business owners and fleet managers asking what more they can do to support their drivers' mental health, the first thing I'd say to them is to make sure your wellbeing policies centre around a more human approach. Fleet management as a business operation has been transformed by data. But when it comes to wellbeing management, your people are your best asset.

Many job-need drivers will spend much of their time alone. Therefore, it's important that they feel a sense of support and community from the wider team. In recent years employers have gotten much better at encouraging their employees to speak openly about mental health at work and spotting any red flags, but out on the road there's a risk that, despite a business' best intentions, drivers will slip through the cracks. That's why open communication and regular check-ins are so vital. Every driver will have their own individual needs, so it's important that management is attuned to these nuances.

Fleet managers should make sure that their drivers know who they can speak to if they need a confidential ear outside of the work environment. This is important for any sensitive issues, or in the event of a crisis. At LeasePlan we've teamed up with wellbeing charity Mind to provide a large number of wellbeing resources which provide both general mental health and fleet-specific support.

Additionally, fleet managers should spend time optimising the driving experience for each of their drivers and making sure they're not being put under any undue stress. While you can't foresee every issue a driver will face while out on the job, you can ensure that they're operating within the best possible working conditions. Getting enough rest and sleep are crucial here, as are proper nutrition and hydration. It's down to management to make sure that the correct policies are in place and that they're being adhered to.

Likewise, it's the responsibility of the fleet manager to ensure that drivers are matched with the right vehicle. This involves careful consideration of driver profiles and the type of journeys they make, to ensure the vehicle they're in is both comfortable and efficient.

NHS leaders and doctors have warned of a 'second pandemic' in the form of a mental health crisis – and the fleet industry is not immune. But through regular face-to-face meetings, clear signposting to all available support services, and the proper policies in place, fleet managers can help to create a safe and secure environment for their drivers. This will then support a strategy of prevention, rather than intervention.



## VAN DRIVER TOOLKIT: DRIVING LICENCES

# DRIVING LICENCE CATEGORIES & CODES

## Did you Know?

- Driving without the correct entitlement to drive may result in a driver being issued with 3-6 penalty points and a fine of up to £1,000.
- Penalty points are not displayed on the driving licence photocard.
- Drivers who accrue 12 penalty points or more on their licence within 3 years will be disqualified from driving for 6 months. However this can be longer if they have had a previous disqualification within 3 years.
- Drivers can have their licence revoked (withdrawn), if they build up 6 or more penalty points within 2 years of passing their driving test.



Driving licence categories explain what vehicles a driver can drive. Each category of vehicle is represented by a letter or a letter and a number. In total, there are 26 driving licence categories. They can be found on the back of the driving licence.

Driving licence information/restriction codes, also found on the back of the driving licence specify what conditions must be met to drive a vehicle. There are around 50 driving licence codes

## Best practice tips

- Always keep your driving licence safe and whenever possible, carry it with you when driving.
- Know your driving licence number.
- Know what categories of vehicles you are entitled to drive.
- Know what endorsements and penalty points are on your driving licence.
- Drivers with a photocard driving licence can view their driving licence record and details of penalty points and the time remaining until they expire, online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) at any time.



If a driver passed their test before the 1st of January 1997, they are usually permitted to drive a vehicle and trailer combination up to 8,250kg Maximum authorised mass (MAM).



If a driver passed their driving test on or after 1 January 1997, they are permitted to tow trailers up to 3,500kg MAM.

## Ford reveals concerns over electric van ownership are down to lack of up-to-date



**Ford's latest Go Electric report has uncovered that, while there are more electric vehicles on the road, the UK's knowledge of electric vans still lags behind.**

The report includes the views of 500 van drivers in the UK and found considerable gaps in their knowledge of electric vans and the benefits to their businesses, leading to barriers preventing full electric adoption. This comes as the first jumbo E-Transits are delivered and the smaller E-Transit Custom is announced.

Range anxiety is seen as one of the main concerns of van drivers, with the average range of an electric van thought to be under 70 miles. This is three times less than the actual range of the E-Transit, offering a range of up to 196 miles.

The pressures around time management continue, with almost half (44%) of van drivers believing they wouldn't be able to fit charging time into their working

schedule. This may stem from a lack of charging options available, with only 20% of respondents saying there are always charging points available at work, and over half (52%) saying they don't have access at home. On top of this, only 42 per cent of van drivers said they knew how to charge an electric vehicle.

Drivers of company owned electric vans were concerned about being out-of-pocket with 7-in-10 (71%) flagging they're unsure how they'd get reimbursed for electricity costs if they charged their company vehicle at home. As the UK edges closer to 2030, when the ban on the sale of new combustion engine powered vehicles will come into force, cost still remains a concern among van drivers, with the outright cost of new vehicles (16%) being the biggest financial concern.

For businesses, almost one-third (29%) stated that the initial infrastructure cost of introducing electric vans would be too

much of a burden for themselves or their business. In fact, recent statistics from the SMMT revealed that commercial vehicles account for 13% of vehicles on the road (4,604,861), yet data from 2021 showed only 0.3% were fully electric or plug in hybrids (source: SMMT, May 2021).

Despite some drivers having concerns, there is optimism around the future of electric vans too, with almost half (49 per cent) believing electric vans will be the most common type of van on Britain's roads within the next 10 years – with only nine per cent disagreeing. On this, more than a third (36%) said they or their employer plan on switching to electric vans within the next four to six months and nearly two-fifths (38 per cent) said they thought it was a smart investment.

Showcasing the power of the green pound, over a quarter (26%) of van drivers believed their company would be perceived more positively for driving electric vans. Similarly, almost half (48%)



believed if their colleagues or friends were to buy an electric vehicle, it would positively impact their work and lifestyle.

Over half (52%), also agreed with the statement that they, or their company, is planning on making the switch to an electric van because they're "really cool"!

Mandy Dean, Commercial Vehicle Director, Ford of Britain, said: *"With the Ford Transit being the best-selling vehicle in the UK, tackling the concerns of Britain's workforce is an important task in helping the nation go green and make the switch to electric. Understanding people's perceptions of electric vehicles is vital to making sure we're all on board, including within the vital commercial vehicle segment which is so important for keeping the UK's economy growing. Our research report shows while there are concerns about the switch, van drivers seem willing to embark on the journey to go green and Ford Pro has the capabilities to make the switch easier"*

*"With concerns around being out pocket a key worry for drivers, we've introduced simplified billing and administration via Ford Pro Charging software which means that fleet drivers can charge at home and the energy cost will be exactly calculated and sent to their business for your reimbursement."*

Busting some of the misconceptions around range anxiety and reducing vehicle down time, the newly introduced Ford Pro software, available on E-Transit and E-Transit Custom to come, has a host of new features to help support van drivers:

- Ford Pro Intelligence includes integrated features within their vehicles that enable customers to better manage and maintain their fleets, such as live vehicle health and telematics data, improved vehicle uptime, safety, and security, and improving overall productivity
- Ford Pro also helps businesses

setup and map out the charging infrastructure, be it at home, depot or on the public network, and Ford telematics tools keep an eye on range, nearest charge points and any required maintenance on an individual vehicle

- Charging network operators combine into one "Blue Oval" network, helping fleet systems to identify at home charging and reimburse drivers
- Digital dashboards help businesses manage when to start and stop charging vehicles, to avoid peak times. Charging can also be assigned per route, so vehicles aren't fully charged when they won't need it
- Smart support through FordLiive can access the latest 60 days of vehicle health to provide the best advice, anticipate upcoming maintenance needs and reduce turnaround times



## VAN DRIVER TOOLKIT: RESTRICTIONS

# LOADING KNOW YOUR LIMITS



## Did you Know?

- A driver can be fined up to £300 or get a court summons if their van exceeds its maximum permitted axle weight.
- Exceeding the manufacturer's load limit can put serious strain on the vehicle and may invalidate insurance cover.
- Overloaded vans are a common issue in the UK, 89% of vans stopped by DVSA are overloaded.

Remember it's easy to overload the front axle of a van by removing load from behind the back axle. Think of it like a seesaw! It is the responsibility of a van driver to stay within the weight limits.

When loading a van, it is not the size of the boxes/load or how full the van is that matters – it is the weight of the boxes/load and where they are placed that is important.

A driver should not exceed their van's legal maximum loaded weight.

If the vehicle is overloaded to the point where it is a hazard to other road users, the driver can be charged with dangerous driving and the offence may carry a prison sentence.



## Best practice tips

- Drivers should know their van's axle weights as it is extremely important that any load is distributed correctly across both axles.
- Each axle has a weight limit. If the vehicle exceeds either front or rear axle weights, it is breaking the law.
- Drivers should regularly get their van weighed at a local weighbridge.

When a van is empty but fuelled, its weight is called the 'unladen weight' or the 'kerb weight'.

The 'payload' is any load carried by a vehicle. It is the total weight of what a driver can safely load into the van and includes all passengers, luggage, tools, etc.

A van's performance and safety will be affected when a driver overloads it or its individual axles.

A van has a 'gross vehicle weight (GVW)' or 'maximum authorised mass' (MAM) which can be found on the VIN plate. This is the maximum weight that a van is legally allowed to weigh when loaded. It includes: the van, the fuel, the driver and any passengers and any load being carried. It will be listed in the owner's manual and is normally shown on a manufacturer's plate or sticker fitted to the vehicle. The position of the plate does vary but the most common location is inside the front door panel.

## Calculate your Payload

To calculate a payload while staying within the legal GVW limit, drivers can do a simple calculation by subtracting the van's unladen weight from the van's gross vehicle weight (GVW). An example of this would be;

**GVW of 3500kg minus the unladen weight of 2210kg  
= a payload of 1290kg.**



For more information and to download the latest Van Driver Toolkit guides visit [www.vandrivertoolkit.co.uk](http://www.vandrivertoolkit.co.uk)



## June marks sixth month of decline for van market as supply chain shortages hold market back

**The UK new light commercial vehicle (LCV) market declined for the sixth consecutive month in June, falling -23.0% to 26,443 units and rounding off a challenging first half of the year. According to the latest figures published by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), some 144,384 new vans, pickups and 4x4s were registered in the first six months of 2022, down by almost a quarter (-24.6%) compared with the same period last year, amid the ongoing global supply chain shortages, most obviously of semiconductors.**

The half-year decline is, in part, exacerbated by comparison with 2021, which saw the third best start to a year as pent-up demand for online delivery vehicles and a bounce-back in the construction sector boosted registrations. While demand has been robust for most of this year, components shortages have impacted deliveries and lead times, with the market remaining -26.5% below pre-pandemic levels.<sup>1</sup>

During June, there were decreases in registrations across all segments. Some 20,449 vans weighing above 2.5 tonnes up to 3.5 tonnes joined UK roads in the month, a decline of -16.3%, while the

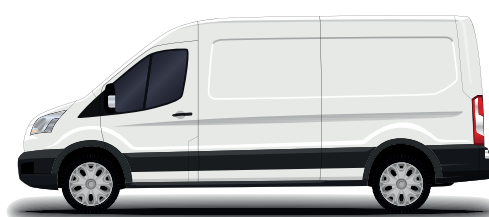
number of lighter vans weighing less than or equal to 2.0 tonnes fell by -30.7%, and those weighing more than 2.0 tonnes to 2.5 tonnes dropped by -43.7%.

Despite the ongoing supply challenges, growth in battery electric vans (BEVs) continued in June, up 52.4% to 2,015 units – a trend seen across the first six months of 2022, with registrations at 8,100 units, a 60.0% increase on the same period last year. 2022 has seen a raft of electric van model launches, as manufacturers prioritise production of their latest, greenest vehicles to meet growing demand from operators keen to make running cost and efficiency savings.

However, BEVs still represent only one in 13 new van registrations in the UK this year, and with ambitious zero emissions regulations coming into effect in 2024 and 2030, action is urgently needed to boost consumer confidence and ensure uptake is at the speed required for a successful transition. This means specific commercial vehicle charging infrastructure built ahead of need, in all regions of the UK, along with continued incentives for electric van buyers.<sup>2</sup>

Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, “The impact of the global shortage of semiconductors is severe, constraining supplies and extending lead times for

commercial vehicles. While electric vehicle registrations are growing in response to an ever wider choice of plug-in models, a successful transition means accelerating uptake at pace, and this task could not come at a more difficult time. With inflation and energy costs hitting the pockets of UK van buyers, as well as the industry, operators need to be assured that charging infrastructure can meet their needs and that fiscal and grant incentives are in place for the long term.”





# Guide to Fair Wear and Tear

**If you drive a lease vehicle as part of your employment, or through private arrangement you may well be subject to end-of lease charges. Keeping these charges to a minimum therefore makes financial sense, for you and the organisation you work for.**

Most leasing companies follow the BVRLA's guide to fair wear and tear. All vehicles will have the odd scratch here and there on return but it is important to note what is considered fair wear and tear and what isn't.

## Defining Fair Wear and Tear

Fair wear and tear occurs when normal usage causes deterioration to a vehicle. It is not to be confused with damage, which occurs as a result of a specific event or series of events such as an impact, harsh-treatment, or a negligent act.

## End-of lease charges

These charges will occur when the vehicle, its equipment or accessories are not used, maintained or looked after as originally agreed at the start of the contract. The charges compensate the leasing company for the cost of rectifying damage or replacing missing items such as keys.

## Service History

Many vehicles have set servicing intervals, while others have variable intervals that flag up on the car's trip computer, as and when needed. Ensuring that you get the vehicle serviced on time and in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations will help to ensure you have a full service history and that your vehicle is maintained correctly.

## Preparing for the end of your contract

Before handing your vehicle back it is advisable to carry out an appraisal yourself, this should be done 10-12 weeks before contract end so that you can arrange for any repairs for unacceptable wear and tear to be rectified.

Appraise the vehicle as honestly as you can and be objective.

Choose place with good light, this is how the leasing company will examine your vehicle. Appraisals carried out in poor light invariably miss some faults.

Before appraising the vehicle, make sure that it has been washed and is thoroughly clean but remember to allow time for it to dry. Water on the paintwork can mask faults.

To establish the best option, you may want to ask your leasing company how much they'd charge for a scraped alloy wheel or a big dent – or whatever damage your car may have – so you can compare that with getting it repaired yourself.

Your contract length will influence any inspection and what is considered to be acceptable fair wear and tear. If you're returning it after a two-year, 5,000-mile-per-year contract it should still look pretty new. If, however, you are handing the car back after a four-year, 80,000-mile contract then wear to the seats from years of use are likely to be perfectly acceptable.

In most cases the collection agent is not a qualified vehicle inspector and will not be able to tell you if damage falls outside the BVRLA 'Fair Wear and Tear' conditions, so it is important for you to point out any damage you have noticed and to keep your own record of this for reference.

Customers are not charged at end of lease for any refurbishment that arises from normal wear and tear.

Returned vehicles must have a current MOT certificate.

A charge will be levied for vehicles returned without a current MOT certificate.

Lastly before collection, remove your personal items from the vehicle and ensure all personal data is wiped from any on-board systems. Ensure you hand back the keys and that all accessories that were included and fitted within the vehicle are back in the correct place.

The following page provides examples as a guide.

# Examples of what is acceptable and not acceptable Fair Wear and Tear



## Bodywork and Bumpers

Walk all the way around the vehicle and examine closely each panel including the roof, bonnet, doors, and body for significant damage. Observe where the light is reflected differently from dents and scratches.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Large stone chips or scratches.

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Small areas of chipping. Light scratches up to 25mm in length, relative to the vehicle's age. Dents up to 10mm providing paint is not broken.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Dented or cracked areas on bumper. Deep scuffs where paint surface has been broken.

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Minor scuffing up to 25mm in length on the bumper.



## Windscreen, Lenses and Mirrors

Inspect lamps, lenses, windows and mirrors for chips, cracks and holes.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Any damage to the windscreen within the driver's direct line of sight.

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Small scratches to the windscreen outside of the driver's line of sight.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Door Mirrors missing, cracked or damaged

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Door Mirrors with minor scuffing, providing paint is not broken



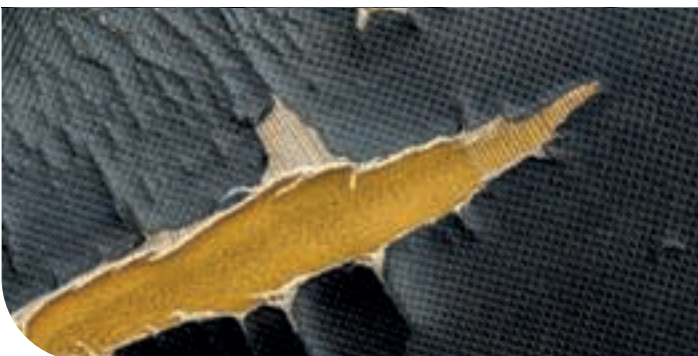
## Wheels and Tyres

Check the tyres (including spare) for damage. Check that the wear on the tread across each tyre is even.

Inspect wheels, wheel trims and wheel spokes for scratches and deterioration.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Scoring and other damage to wheel surface. Damage to side walls or uneven tread wear.

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Minor scuffing is acceptable up to 25mm in length. Tyres must meet minimum legal requirements.



## Upolstery

Clean and valet the interior and check upholstered areas for odours, tears, burns, stains and wear.

**X NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Burns, tears or permanent staining. Any damage caused by fitting of equipment such as mobile phones.

**✓ ACCEPTABLE:** Appearance should be clean and tidy with only slight wear and soiling through normal use.

For more information and to download the latest guides visit [www.bvrla.co.uk](http://www.bvrla.co.uk)

# Remember to ACT- Air pressure, Condition and Tread

**If you are heading out for a longer journey this summer, whether that be for a well-earned break or for a planned business meeting, tyre-related incidents are likely to cause you a real headache especially if it means being stuck at the side of the road in hot weather.**

Extra passengers and luggage add additional strain on tyres and if they have any defects they are more likely to fail. It is quick and easy to check your tyres before heading off and this is something that should be part of your weekly routine at all times of the year.

Have a good look at each tyre and see if there are any signs of cracking in the sidewall or in the tread. If you spot any cracking this is a sign of the tyres hardening, this will reduce grip and may allow moisture to seep into the tyre causing its metal components to rust and weaken. It is absolutely essential to have them checked by a professional if you see any signs of this type of 'crazing' effect.

Bulges in a tyre indicates its inner structure has been compromised. Typically, this happens when it's kerbed and the radial wires in the tyre are cut as the wheel rim pinches them against the kerb. Without that essential structural support, only rubber keeps the tyre from bursting, which is

extremely dangerous. Again, you should seek a professional's opinion if you spot a bulge in any of the tyres.

However, the most common fault is underinflation of the tyres – in other words, not having the pressures at the setting recommended by the vehicle manufacturer. Research shows 57% of tyres are underinflated on Britain's roads. Add in extra weight and longer distances and there is an increased risk of failure.

The pressures of a vehicle should be set according to the weight it is carrying. Inside the driver's door shut, filler cap or handbook, there will be at least two settings recommended for each wheel and tyre size available for that vehicle. For family holiday travel, it's typically the higher pressure that is needed but refer to the vehicle manufacturer's recommendation to check.

Check is to see whether you have a spare wheel before you starting off. The vast majority of cars come with a 'space saver' or an emergency puncture repair kit which includes a cylinder of fluid to be connected with an air compressor. These are designed only for short term and low speed usage – maximum 50mph for 50 miles - to get you to a tyre outlet where the issue can be dealt with properly.

Remember, you should never change your wheel by the side of a motorway or dual carriageway.

One final check is to ensure all tyres have more than 1.6mm of tread to stay legal. However, if they are below 2mm, it really is time to start thinking about replacing them, especially if you are off on a long journey.

Stuart Jackson, TyreSafe Chair, said: *"Britain's roads are never busier than during the summer months, which leads to congestion, hold-ups and traffic jams, which we can't do anything about. But we can minimise the chances of having an unwanted stop due to tyre defects by carrying out checks before we set off. They only take a few minutes."*





## Pool vehicles - Shared use, means shared responsibility

**In defining what is classed as a pool vehicle, HMRC is very clear. Pool vehicles should be viewed as asset available for shared use and driven for business purposes only.**

Vehicles should not be made available for the exclusive use of one person and they should also remain on the business premises overnight. A certain amount of private use is allowed if it is 'incidental' to the business use, for example a pool vehicle is being used for an early morning business trip and is taken to the employees home overnight.

As pool vehicles don't attract any Benefit-in-Kind tax, an employee should not see them as a way of side stepping this tax.

Whether a vehicle is defined as a company vehicle or for pool use, it is important to remember that the vehicles must be maintained, regularly serviced and inspected, so that as an organisation, you are meeting the required duty of care standards.

All pool vehicle use should be well documented, with accurate records being kept on each vehicle. Employees should be encouraged to sign in and out of their usage so that the information is available for audit.

The provision of pool vehicles is one way an organisation can tackle the risks associated with 'grey fleet', which is when an employee uses their privately owned vehicle for business purposes and claims back mileage expenses.

It is important to remember that allowing any employee out on the road in any vehicle regardless of ownership for business purposes carries the same amount of responsibility as far as the law is concerned in meeting your duty of care requirements.

Providing vehicles that you know are well maintained to employees for shared business use is one way to show that you have taken steps to demonstrate your commitment to mitigating your risk.

A well run scheme can benefit the whole organisation in terms of cost reduction, lowering emissions and reducing risk. Employees must also play their part and take ownership of their time spent behind the wheel of a pool vehicle - shared use means shared responsibility.

If an organisation is considering introducing hybrid or fully electric vehicles in to their fleet, providing them as part of their pool vehicle scheme is an excellent way to encourage more drivers to make to switch the electric.



## See vehicle innovation and technology at The Emergency Services Show

**The Emergency Services Show returns to the NEC, Birmingham on 21 and 22 September 2022, showcasing how technology and innovation are transforming emergency response for all blue light services and first responders. Vehicle and vehicle equipment suppliers are prominent among more than 450 organisations exhibiting at the UK's largest emergency services event.**

The show is the perfect place to research the latest innovations, products and services for anyone responsible for specifying and procuring vehicles and fleet equipment for the emergency services and allied organisations. On show will be the latest in electric, hybrid and decarbonised vehicles for emergency service applications, as well as smart and connected vehicles that serve as communications hubs and mobile incident command units.

The Emerging Technologies and Vehicle Innovation Theatre will also showcase how the emergency services can manage and leverage communications, data and technology more efficiently

and effectively.

Leading vehicle suppliers at the show include Ford Motor Company, Venari, Mercedes Benz Trucks, Saab, Volvo Trucks and Yamaha Motor Europe as well as a wide range of chassis manufacturers and specialist vehicle converters including Cartwright Vehicle Conversions and Wilker UK Ltd. Isuzu will be displaying their new pick-up, the All-New Isuzu D-Max.

Emergency One, Rosenbauer, Terberg and Volvo Trucks are among manufacturers bringing their latest fire appliances to the show. Angloco will demonstrate its ladder and other fire fighting vehicles in the Outside Area. Emergency One will be showing its new E1 EV0 fire appliance for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The zero-emission electric vehicle has the same capability and equipment as a diesel model and is the first to feature an innovative all-electric rear drive axle installation. It has a range of approximately 220 miles with an 80% charge, while the optional onboard smart charger provides resilience at protracted incidents.

Among the many ambulance suppliers

exhibiting this year are Ford, Venari, Blue Light Services, MAN Truck and Bus, VCS, WAS UK and Wilker UK. Alfa Dropbox will showcase its ground-level loading ambulances.

Emergency and rescue vehicles of virtually every other type, including search and rescue appliances, fleet cars, motorbikes, boats and UAVs or drones will all be on display.

The show also features providers of all types of in and on-vehicle ancillary equipment and systems including lightbars; vehicle livery; battery management; driver training and more. Standby RSG will display their lighting, hazard warning systems products and solutions and VUE will be showcasing its fleet risk management solutions - CCTV and telematics hardware and easy-to-use software systems.

The Extrication and Trauma Challenges return as interactive experience for participants. Hosted by West Midlands Fire Service, the challenges showcase the latest technology and equipment in action, live streamed to large screens within the exhibition hall.

September 21-22, NEC, Birmingham

<https://www.emergencyuk.com/>

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# TYRE SAFETY CHECKS: What's stopping you?



Remember to **ACT** on tyre safety



**Air Pressure**

**Check** the air pressure on all your tyres.



**Condition**

**Check** for cracks and any bulges.



**Tread**

**Check** tread depths using the 20p test.

Check your tyres **at least once a month** and **before a long journey**



**TyreSafe**  
tyresafe.org