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ESSENTIAL FLEET MANAGER *Magazine*

ISSUE 4 2023



The Fleet Interview - Network Rail

with James Rooney, Head of Road Fleet

Special Feature

Fleet Management Focus

Company focus

Specialist Fleet Services

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Essential Fleet Manager - Issue 4 (2023)

Welcome to Issue 4 2023 of Essential Fleet Manager Magazine, published for fleet professionals that operate the vehicle fleets that support the UK's essential services.

We've always been committed to providing the great advice and workable solutions that assist in meeting the ever greater demands on compliant, efficient and environmentally responsible operations and this issue is no exception.

Essential Fleet Manager is available in a free to view digital edition or printed paid-for subscription.

We have published a great number of Fleet Insight Interview features over the last few years and if you would like to be featured, to highlight your achievements and to share ideas with your industry colleagues, please get in touch.

For more information please email production@essentialfleetgroup.co.uk

Regards, Debbie Cheadle - Editor

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

Operator licensing: how restricted is Restricted?

Fleet operators and managers will be well aware that there are two types of operator's licence: Standard (National or International) or Restricted. Further, a Standard Licence will be required where third party goods are being carried.

So, this may feed into the (mis) understanding that: Standard Licence = carrying the goods of others; and,

Restricted Licence = carrying your own goods. However, this is not the case and some operators carrying their own goods may very well require a Standard Licence. In turn, that means two significant issues: Standard operators need a formally CPC-qualified transport manager and the need for ready access to larger financial standing resources. Standard operators need £8,000 for the first vehicle and £4,500 for additional

ones, whilst a Restricted operator needs £3,400 and £1,700 respectively.

This issue of the limits of a Restricted licence has been visited quite recently in the Traffic Commissioner public inquiry case of Pillory Down Skips Ltd, a licence in the Western traffic area. The nature of the business was skip hire.

In this case, the operator argued a Restricted licence was appropriate for the business; it accepted it was a company that did indeed transport goods as part of the business and there was payment for this. However, they did not hold or need insurance that covered carriage of goods for reward and, further, it argued there was Senior Traffic Commissioner Statutory Guidance to the effect that “where the operator only carries goods that are, or become and then remain, the operator’s own property, a restricted licence is likely to be appropriate”.

Skip companies are, of course, carriers of waste and the Traffic Commissioner presiding over this case was aware that Section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 meant that ownership of waste has to transfer to the carrier (operator) at the point it is collected. The operator’s argument was that ownership was relevant in the case given what the Senior Traffic Commissioner said in the Statutory Guidance.

So, the case advanced was that the business owned the waste and needed a Restricted licence. However, the Traffic Commissioner disagreed and produced a written decision, determining that the operations required a Standard licence.

The Traffic Commissioner noted that Regulation (EC) 1071/2009 (that remains the basis of operator licensing in the UK) sets out who requires an operator’s licence and that only ones performing transport operations with a very small impact on the transport market should not need to be included. (In the UK, those who require a licence have to have a Standard licence and those who

are exempt from having a Standard, one still need a licence i.e. a Restricted one, unless totally exempt under separate operator’s licence regulations). Further, he reminded the operator that the Regulation applies to businesses that intend to engage in the occupation of road transport operator i.e. road haulage operator and “the occupation of road haulage operator” meant transporting goods for hire or reward using the vehicles.

Applying this to the case, he further pointed out that customers paid for skips to be transported to a customer’s home, where they stayed on site to be filled, to then be taken away filled with the waste. In this set-up, payment was made for the transport to and from the customer. Or, as he put it “this skip operation is every bit a haulage operation”. In other words, a customer was paying for a transport operation carried out by the operator

Further examples were given to assist in suggesting when a Restricted licence would suffice in the areas of groundworks and scaffolding:

“If a grounds-worker uses a truck to transport a digger to site, then uses that digger himself to lay some drains or whatever, then uses the truck to bring the digger home again, that is the grounds-worker using the truck to carry his own goods (the digger) on his own account so that he can carry out his trade of conducting ground-work.”

“Where the customer is paying for the scaffolding to be erected on site, ownership of the scaffold remains that of the scaffolder and transport is merely incidental to the day job of erecting scaffold”.

The Traffic Commissioner confirmed that “where a predominant part of the service is the transportation of goods, that is likely to fall within the definition given to hire or reward...” In other words, you may need a Standard licence even though you own the goods, if transport is the main activity.

There is a separate Regulation (1072/2009) that in effect confirms what activities should not require a Standard licence and the limits of what in the UK is the ambit of the Restricted licence. There are various exemptions but relevant here is this specific one that applies where the following conditions are met:

- i. the goods carried are the property of the undertaking or have been sold, bought, let out on hire or hired, produced, extracted, processed or repaired by the undertaking;
- ii. the purpose of the journey is to carry the goods to or from the undertaking or to move them, either inside or outside the undertaking for its own requirements;
- iii. motor vehicles used for such carriage are driven by personnel employed by, or (engaged by) the undertaking;
- iv. the vehicles carrying the goods are owned by the undertaking, have been bought by it on deferred terms or have been hired.... etc; and
- v. such carriage is no more than ancillary to the overall activities of the undertaking;

NB all the conditions must be met. The final condition is of significance i.e., that the transport is no more than an ancillary activity. In the case of a skip operator, the Traffic Commissioner’s point was transport was the business, in essence.

The message to be taken from this case is the reminder that the difference between the need for a Standard and Restricted licence is not simply a question of whether you are carrying others’ goods or own goods. Your business may very well require a Standard licence even though it has ownership of the goods, unless all these conditions are fulfilled and the business is not in effect that of transporting goods for hire or reward. ●

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.

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New Sentencing Guidelines for Serious Driving Offences

Some time ago, we flagged up in Essential Fleet Manager the creation of a new road traffic offence: causing serious injury by careless or inconsiderate driving.

The offence is important for all fleet drivers, and indeed private drivers. Careless driving occurs where the driving falls 'below the standard expected of a competent and careful driver' under the Road Traffic Act 1988. (Dangerous driving occurs where it is far below the standard.) It can occur in many ways. Some examples of careless or inconsiderate driving given in Crown Prosecution Service guidance include:

- overtaking on the inside;
- driving too close to another vehicle;
- driving through a red light by mistake;
- turning into the path of another vehicle;
- the driver being avoidably distracted by tuning the radio, lighting a cigarette etc.
- flashing lights to force other drivers to give way;
- misusing lanes to gain advantage over other drivers;
- unnecessarily staying in an overtaking lane;
- unnecessarily slow driving or braking;
- dazzling other drivers with un-dipped headlights.

Importantly, the offence can occur due to a momentary lapse and no deliberately bad conduct on the part of the driver. It can easily occur. However, the carelessness can have profound consequences. The purpose of the creation of the new offence was to tackle offences of careless driving where serious injury occurred but where there was no fatality, where the offences of death by careless or inconsiderate driving would otherwise be charged.

The Sentencing Council has just introduced new and revised guidance for the appropriate penalties in all dangerous and careless driving cases. Over some years now, the range of different offences relating to dangerous and careless driving has increased, as have the penalties. Some

years ago there were gaps – but now there are offences such as causing serious injury by dangerous or careless driving covering off what appeared to be anomalies and inadequate sentencing powers.

Today, sentencing for not only road traffic/transport offences but most offences is quite formulaic. The court assesses first at the level of culpability (blameworthiness): was the driving deliberate, reckless, negligent etc and then the issue of actual harm or risk of harm is considered. The offence is categorised and a starting point for the sentence is established. The Court can move up and down from the starting point but must stay within the sentencing guidelines.

The Court considers aggravating and mitigating features and, here, driving for commercial purposes or driving an LGV, HGV or PCV are expressly listed as aggravating features. This is the case in sentencing guidelines for most road traffic offences, in fact.

The sentencing guideline for the serious injury by careless driving offence is new and an offence will be categorised as **A,B** or **C** in terms of Culpability and either **Category 1** or **2** in terms of Harm:

A

- **Standard of driving was just below threshold for dangerous driving and/or includes extreme example of a culpability B factor**

B

- **Unsafe manoeuvre or positioning**
- **Engaging in a brief but avoidable distraction**
- **Driving at a speed that is inappropriate for the prevailing road or weather conditions**
- **Driving impaired by consumption of alcohol and/or drugs**
- **Driving vehicle which is unsafe or where driver's visibility or controls are obstructed**
- **Driving impaired as a result of a known medical condition and/or in disregard of advice relating to the effects of medical condition or medication**
- **Driving when deprived of adequate sleep or rest**
- **The offender's culpability falls between the factors as described in**

culpability A and C

C

- **Standard of driving was just over threshold for careless driving**
- **Momentary lapse of concentration**

Category 1

- **Particularly grave and/or life-threatening injury caused**
- **Injury results in physical or psychological harm resulting in lifelong dependency on third party care or medical treatment**
- **Offence results in a permanent, irreversible injury or condition which has a substantial and long term effect on the victim's ability to carry out normal day to day activities or on their ability to work**

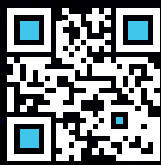
Category 2

- **All other cases**

The starting point for the worst types of causing serious injury by careless driving (A Category 1) is 12 months imprisonment (with a range of 26 weeks to 2 years custody after considering aggravating and mitigating factors). For the least serious offence (C Category 2) the starting point is a medium level Community Order that may be reduced or increased. Penalties for offences between these extremes will vary according to the A,B,C assessment and the Category.

Prior to the introduction of the offences of causing serious injury by careless driving, the courts were only able to impose fines in non-fatal cases, even though there may have been significant injury. They could also only impose 3-9 penalty points or a discretionary disqualification. Now, causing serious injury by careless driving brings an obligatory disqualification of a minimum 12 months. (It is a minimum 2 years with compulsory extended re-test where serious injury is caused by dangerous driving).

The important point here is drivers must be aware that the courts are no longer constrained by fines and penalty points for instances of careless driving where serious injury has occurred and that such injury can easily occur from a mere momentary lapse, as well as for other avoidable reasons. ●



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Terberg electric lifts spearhead Milton Keynes' emissions cuts

A new fleet of RCVs ordered by Milton Keynes City Council will slash waste collection emissions in the city with major savings delivered by Terberg electric bin lifts.

Typically, electric bin lifts lower fuel consumption by around 8 per cent which represents a major reduction in operating costs and a reduced impact on the environment.

Like all bin lifts in Terberg's electric range, the OmniDEL's design simply mirrors the market-leading hydraulic version of the lift with added technology which transforms it into the electric variant. The electric model now accounts for more than a third of Terberg bin lift sales in the UK. And this figure continues to increase as customers become aware of the benefits to both their carbon footprint and operating costs.

In addition, the OmniDEL electric is almost silent which will provide the operators in Milton Keynes – SUEZ



'The OmniDEL electric bin lifts will be fitted to 61 of the new vehicles currently on order'

Recycling and Recovery UK – with the flexibility to work in noise-sensitive locations while causing much less disturbance.

In a recent field trial, both the Hydraulic and Electric versions of the OmniDEL were used on the same vehicle, which travelled the same collection route. In each two-week period, the vehicle travelled around 2,700 miles, emptied more than 12,500 bins and collected 275 tonnes of waste.

The trial vehicle was monitored remotely using the Terberg Connected Services solution, and all data was cross-referenced with the operator's own records for verification.

The results revealed showed an impressive 9.7% reduction in the vehicle's fuel consumption when using the OmniDEL Electric lift.

This reduction is equivalent to an annual carbon saving of 3.5 tonnes per vehicle. In addition to this, further reductions in consumption, costs and emissions are expected from the highly efficient diesel engines in the Dennis Eagle Elite+ chassis when the trucks go into action in September.

"First and foremost, the OmniDEL lift does its job exceptionally efficiently, regardless of how it is powered," said Terberg Matec UK's General Sales Manager, Kevin Forbes.

"The savings in costs and emissions will directly benefit the residents of Milton Keynes. Many operators are realising, as they make their transition to low-carbon collections, that electric bin lifts are the ideal first step in their sustainability journey. They don't need to invest in recharging infrastructure, they can start saving operational costs and reducing emissions as soon as the trucks are delivered." ●

Fleet of electric cars will save carbon

Nine new all-electric vehicles will be hitting the road in Staffordshire, as part of the county council's highways fleet.

The nine Renault Zoes are 100 per cent electric, and will be used by highways officers to travel around the county making their inspections. Because these cars do not use fossil fuels, it is estimated that the county council will save around 75 per cent in fuel costs. The cars are also 40 per cent cleaner than a vehicle that uses petrol or diesel.

Added to this, each car will save around

two tonnes of CO₂ a year—the equivalent weight of two great white sharks or two of Staffordshire's carbon bubbles, directly contributing to the county council's carbon net zero target.

The vehicles are the latest innovation in Staffordshire's drive to become carbon net zero by 2050. Others in highways have included using biofuel in the majority of the county council's gritting fleet, and recycling road materials that would previously end up in landfill.

Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport David Williams said:

"A large highways operation like ours must look at options to reduce its carbon footprint, so anything we can do to move to

more environmentally-friendly alternatives will have a big impact. We are always looking at ways we can reduce our carbon output in highways, such as using biofuel in our gritters and recycling the materials we use."

Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change Simon Tagg said: *"These nine new vehicles will contribute directly to reducing the amount of carbon we generate, as well as saving us money on diesel fuel costs. The cars will also save around 18 tonnes of carbon a year between them, and will make a significant impact on our carbon output as well as helping highways inspectors get out and about across the county."* ●

Autotech Training is now accredited to deliver the IMI's Level 1 award in Hydrogen Vehicle Awareness

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Technology has received billions of pounds in investment over recent years, and a recent joint government-industry study has revealed that, by 2030, over one and a half million hydrogen powered vehicles could be on UK roads.

As part of its mission to support and upskill the automotive aftermarket as the evolution of vehicle technology and alternative fuels continues, Autotech Training is committed to working with awarding bodies to deliver the most current training courses.

Building upon the success of its electric vehicle training course offering, Autotech Training is now delivering the half a day, IMI Level 1 award in Hydrogen Vehicle Awareness course from its Milton Keynes headquarters.

Suitable for anyone who might, in their day-to-day work, come into regular contact with hydrogen vehicles, the course



covers the different types of hydrogen vehicles and the hazards associated with hydrogen vehicle systems, including how to work safely around them and refuel.

"As we accelerate towards the 2030 ban on new ICE vehicle sales, and increasing numbers of alternative fuel cell vehicles enter UK roads, it is vital that the aftermarket is equipped with the right skill level," comments Alistair McCrindle, Autotech Training's Head of Operations. *"Not only do they need training to ensure they can skilfully and safely maintain new vehicle types, but they also need to be able to effectively communicate with their customers who are purchasing electric and hydrogen cars."*

The IMI Level 1 award in Hydrogen Vehicle Awareness is available through Autotech Training ●



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Quartix



How J Tomlinson uses fleet telematics

Pictured: (R-L) Jane Hatton and members of the J Tomlinson Fleet Department, Craig Hayes and Janet Lucas.

J Tomlinson provides building solutions and has maintenance, repairs and construction teams carrying out facilities management work across the country, 24/7. J Tomlinson teams keep many business-critical services operational, while serving new and existing communities. With new starters joining every fortnight, and a fleet of over 200 leased commercial vans on the road, Fleet Manager, Jane Hatton has every need for a good fleet tracking system.

Jane and members of the J Tomlinson Fleet Department, Craig Hayes and Janet Lucas, explain how they use telematics to manage fleet operations from their Nottinghamshire head office - a warehouse steeped in automotive history, that was once used to produce 300 Scimitar GTEs per year.

Selecting Quartix as a new telematics provider

When a previous vehicle tracking supplier was not providing everything that J Tomlinson needed, Jane started looking at other options and selected Quartix's telematics system. Jane recalls, "Running a speeding report used to take me all morning. We needed to change with the times and get a more sophisticated solution. With Quartix, it's no longer a chore to get the data, and we have a lot more

reports available."

With the help of Quartix telematics, Jane's team ensures that the vans are operated safely and efficiently. Other departments in the business make use of the Quartix telematics system to supply live tracking updates to customers, and the managers use trip reports to check staff hours.

As a Fleet Manager, Jane needs to know that the team offers the business valuable, comprehensive insights and can provide full tracking data if ever there is an issue with a job or member of staff.

"The managers decide how to best act on the information we provide, and I have confidence in the system."

Quartix ran workshops for the various teams to help them get used to the system. Janet comments, "We always hear back from Quartix within minutes of an email and new trackers arrive quickly." "For the business, Quartix has ticked a lot of boxes," says Craig, "We have much more information available to us now, and it's an easy system to use."

Locating 200+ vans nationwide

Aside from knowing where vehicles are at all times and being able to easily update customers on projected arrival times for work, there have been many other benefits to installing the trackers. Over the years, J Tomlinson has experienced

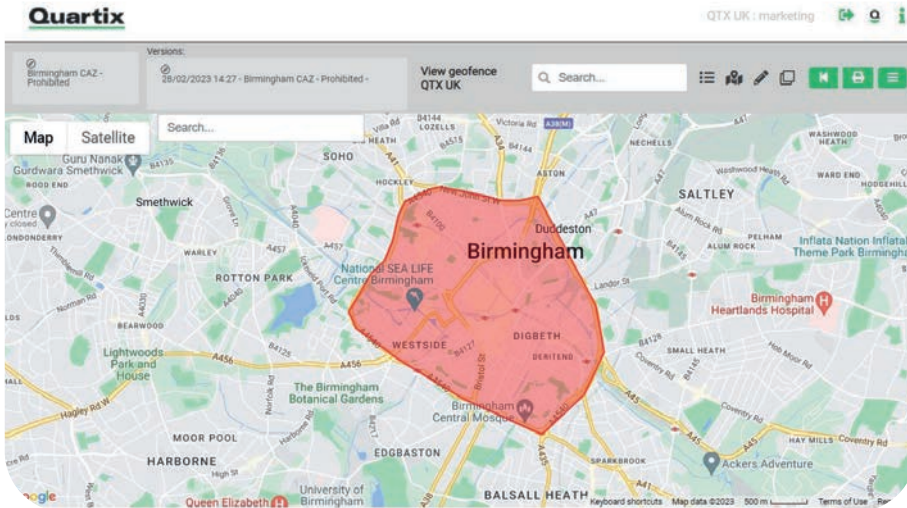
some abandoned vehicles when staff have left the business and chosen not to bring the van back to the head office. "We wouldn't have been able to find those vans without the tracker, but we were able to avoid any trouble with the insurance" says Jane.

Hardware options to meet unique needs

Having chosen the OBD Plug & Track devices, the team keep a close eye on any disconnection alerts, which are sent to all Directors and the fleet department. While the plug-in device saves the business time, Craig explains some recent experiences that have led him to trial other options too. "The Plug & Track is lovely, it's quick and simple and we don't need to be there to install it. Some of the new van models now, such as the Mercedes, have the tracker port in the passenger footwell and it can get knocked by boots and equipment. If we see that certain people have repeated disconnection alerts for whatever reason, we ask them to bring the van in to get a wired tracker," says Craig.

Monitoring personal use of vehicles

Staff take J Tomlinson vans home to park overnight and are asked not to use them for personal trips without authorisation. The business will often recruit in the areas where contracts are won, meaning vans often reside far away from the depot



once they are collected.

Having created geofences around home addresses, Craig compiles a list each week showing vehicles that travelled more than 5 miles over the weekend period. This allows for the drivers to move the vans to a different position or fill up with fuel at the weekend and highlights only significant vehicle use in the report. Craig then filters out anyone on the weekend shift rota, and sends the remaining list to J Tomlinson managers, asking them to address any unauthorised vehicle use.

Since introducing this process, the number of vehicles on the list has reduced.

“At first, we were seeing 40+ on the list each week, with hundreds of miles racked up over the weekend, so it was a big cost to us in fuel. Sometimes the drivers have been given authorisation to use their vehicles for something, such as moving a large item, or they’ve taken the van to be washed at the weekend. I highlight any trips out-of-hours so the managers can check it out – the drivers know we are checking their van’s use in this way, so it works well.”

Ensuring vehicles are driven safely

Janet runs the speeding report each week, to help managers to address any unwanted driving behaviour.

“We don’t have limiters on all our vans, so it’s important that we make sure they are driven at the correct speeds. The managers love it because it helps us spot any repeat offenders - if someone shows up two

or three times speeding, we can flag it, and that can stop a potential fine from eventually coming through. We see less speeding fines now than, say, parking fines or bus lane fines, so I think it’s had an impact.”

In a situation where the driver denies the speeding prosecution, the tracking system helps.

“We can log on to see if the driver was there at the time that the speeding ticket was given, and what speed they were travelling.”

Looking at the driving style scores across the J Tomlinson fleet, it is clear that the vehicles are driven safely, putting them in better stead with insurance companies. *“We’re a big fleet of 200 vans so it hasn’t always been easy to get insured. But our premiums came down last year – we’ve had parking sensors fitted and the tracking capabilities must have come into play here as well,”* says Jane, who hears from the managers that staff have been keen to understand how to improve their driving. *“Good driving scores reduce the wear on the tyres. If you were in the red a lot, your tyre treads would go down much faster – and engine health would suffer too,”* Craig adds.

Protecting staff and supplying evidence

Having a strong presence in some areas means J Tomlinson can often be targeted with accusations of having clipped other vehicles with their vans. Jane recalls one in particular:

“A claim went to court but luckily, with Quartix, we could prove that our van wasn’t where the incident happened. We had been in the area but not on that road, so we had evidence that we weren’t involved.”

The Quartix system has also helped staff many times when accidents have happened. Insurance claims have been avoided using the trip data to support J Tomlinson’s case, especially in one that Craig remembers, “It was clear that our member of staff was approaching a bend at low enough speeds, whereas the other driver had 500 yards of straight road in a run up to it, so they were more likely in the wrong.” Jane recalls a shocking story in which telematics was their lifeline:

“A horse once jumped over a hedge onto the bonnet of an engineer’s van. They were on a hands-free call to one of the team who heard it happen, and even though the phone cut out, the tracker enabled us to get people straight to the scene.”

J Tomlinson can use the Quartix system to prove that their staff visited a property. Jane explains:

“If our staff go out to a job and the person doesn’t answer the door, the Quartix system can prove that we visited the property, by using the reports that show ignition on and ignition off.”

Craig explains how he positions telematics to staff:

“It’s not about keeping an eye on drivers; we’re making sure the vehicles are safe.”

Jane assures her drivers that she isn’t watching their every move and the tracking simply enables them to operate an efficient fleet. ●



Quartix

To find out more about the Quartix fleet telematics system and its range of capabilities, visit quartix.com/en-gb or call 01686 806 663 to speak to one of the team.

THE FLEET INTERVIEW

with James Rooney, Head of Road Fleet - Network Rail

Network Rail is not only responsible for the 20,000 miles of track in the UK, but also for thousands of bridges, viaducts, tunnels, signals, level crossings and the twenty largest stations. Consequently, Network Rail's road fleet that supports the maintenance and safety of this vast infrastructure, is not only large, at almost 9,800 vehicles, but also complex and diverse. Teams must access a wide range of sites, from urban to remote and often over difficult and varied terrain and therefore vehicles must be up to the task in all situations. When, as part of the government, all vehicles must become zero emissions by 2030, a strategy that delivers this and allows operational demands to be met in the meantime, takes immense preparation and planning. We were therefore delighted to catch up with James Rooney, Head of Road Fleet at Network Rail since January this year, who explains how this is all to be achieved and which are the major challenges along the way.



Pictured: James Rooney, Head of Road Fleet - Network Rail

Q: What is the current breakdown of your fleet assets and could you give some examples of the range of tasks they support?

We have a huge array of assets, with the mainstay being vans. The full breakdown with a brief explanation of their use is as follows:

Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) passenger vehicles

- **Cars (894)** – used in mainly business use only, however some do have private use. All are branded and made up of a mix of Volkswagen and Ford.
- **4X4s (930)** - mostly pickups. Dual cab 4x4 with box on rear. A mix of Toyota, Isuzu and Ford.

Electric or Hybrid cars

- **(515 Hybrid), (13 Electric)** - mostly Toyota, Renault and Kia.

Internal combustion vans:

- **Small (2267)** - Ford Connect and Combo.
- **Medium (1610)** - Ford Transit Custom.
- **Large (482)** - Vauxhall Movano and Ford Transit

- **Messing vans (1900)** - Vauxhall Movano and Ford Transit.
- **Chassis Cab (758)** - Vauxhall Movano and Ford Transit.
- **ANP (10)** - Ford Transit.

Electric or Hybrid vans:

- **Safety bus (1 hybrid), Electric vans (28)** - Nissan eNV200, Vauxhall Combo and Vivaro.

HGVs

- **HGVs (97), Special (115), Welding & Grinding (249)** - Iveco, Volvo and MAN.

Network rail has a huge array of operations to support, and the above vehicles (all largely depot based) are spread amongst teams that support the following; rail welding and grinding, ballast tamping, construction projects, signalling, communications and vegetation removal. Of course there is also every other operation you would expect within that too. All the vehicles are converted to a specification that is suitable for the role they partake, with safe storage for petrol, tools, track detonators and PPE.

The vehicles live a tough life, having to

drive from depot to a track access point. Quite often that can be a gate in a farmers field! So we make sure they are fitted with M+S tyres and we service them at twice the standard spec in most cases.

We also have a number of Road Rail vehicles which sit within our plant teams. These are fascinating vehicles that are capable of driving in "rail mode" with switchable rail wheels which can be raised and lowered.

Q: What were the main objectives of the fleet strategy set out in 2021, and how had it evolved by the time that you joined in January this year? What are the headline commitments?

The fleet strategy follows that of the DfT commitments for decarbonising government vehicles. Originally set for 2030 this has now been brought back to 2027 and requires all vehicles under 3.5T to be zero emissions. When I joined we had a number of cars already fitting within that however not very many vans! The business had on order 400 zero emission vans from Vauxhall, and I have expanded that to 1,000 to help kick start the transition process.



It's a tough fleet to transition, as if you get it wrong, the railways could stop! Nonetheless, since starting I have brought together swathes of data which help identify those vehicles which could be electrified using existing technology. Happily this is quite a high figure which gives us plenty to get on with whilst we are waiting for better zero emissions solutions in the large van and 4x4 space.

Q: To meet targets, how important is regular engagement with other departments at Network Rail and with suppliers?

Hugely important. Network Rail runs a devolved model, which basically means each of the major routes in the business is within itself a miniature business. They have their own budgets and sign off procedures, and therefore get to state how much fleet they want and how it is used. My role in the central team is to provide the support function to enable them to operate with their chosen path.

Engagement is everything – we as fleet professionals need to be able to ensure the right data and vehicles are provided to their requirement. For example, down in the south we largely have 3rd rail electrified trains, whilst further north they use overhead catenary power – two completely different skillsets in completely different routes requiring different fleet and engineer talent.

Mercifully, the business has regional fleet

Cont'd on page 14...





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management which look after a few routes and working in tandem with the central team understand the local requirements, and help with the critical safety and compliance areas of running a large fleet and operators license.

Of course the nature of the engagement is now changing, as we move over to zero emissions, with more and more granular involvement now becoming the norm to help people transition not just their vehicles, but also their way of thinking with new technology.

Q: When transitioning to EVs, what preparations are necessary to sites and infrastructure and how have these changes been made?

This is an enormous area. We have over 400 depots and all of them will need charging facilities. We have a project team set up which is looking after how we site

survey, power upgrade and install these. Already this year we are set to install over 500 chargers and this will keep getting faster and faster.

Q: How do you prepare drivers for the switch to EVs and what are there any established driver behaviours that present a particular challenge?

All drivers receive training, and more recently this is now online and in cab to ensure that best practices are shared and the vehicles really have a chance at being used in their best possible scenario. Little things count like ensuring regeneration is used, heating and air conditioning are minimised and driving style is best adapted. The biggest challenge is of course the latter, and the fact that as a business, our operation is all outdoors! The van might be the only sanctuary the engineers get, and that means we do experience high idling or heating use – particularly in winter. This is factored

into our energy consumptions when specifying the van, but does mean that some areas can't be electrified yet because of the power requirement needed on site.

Q: Which parts of the fleet are currently the most straight forward to electrify?

Cars and small vans, and nearly always these have the right daily mileage too. Large vans are the problem, particularly welfare vans that need to provide light, heat and hot drinks for hours if not days at a time.

Q: With a firm commitment to a 100% zero emission fleet, how are you overcoming the challenges presented by your large and specialist vehicle assets and are you considering alternatives to battery electric vehicles?

A lot of it is forecasting what is coming



from the manufacturers and focussing on what fits now, so we have the agility and headspace to move those options over as they become available. If we delayed everything now, we would have the whole fleet transitioning in one or two years space and that wouldn't work for the manufacturers supply chains or our ability to swap vehicles! We are also looking at other options for these harder to decarbonise vehicles too – hydrogen being interesting as this may have use for train fleets and our heavy plant equipment too. We are also looking at where the power is used in these specialist vehicles, and looking at site supply such as battery storage or mobile chargers.

Q: How do you maintain the balance of delivering great change within your fleet and ensuring that services are uninterrupted within user departments in

Network Rail?

That's the art of it! The main way is communication. Tell people what's happening, explain how, then tell them again and bring them on the whole journey. The main reason disruption happens is because something goes wrong, or people don't realise what's going on and don't join the dots. I can't profess to be doing that on my own! We have some great teams centrally, in the regions and routes that are all tasked with this commitment, and we have a number of working groups and progress updates to keep us joined up. From a practical point of view, we are also making sure that vehicles delivered are drop in replacements – i.e they can be used exactly as their diesel counterparts. The only difference being their operation and charging!

Cont'd on page 16...



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Q: How do you utilise technology to manage and reduce risk in all fleet operations?

We have huge investment in their area in recent years. A new telematics system was rolled out with driver fob in/ fob out systems, in-cab light bar and front and rear facing cameras. Coupled with that an in cab display has been fitted to allow use of vehicle specific GPS (HGVs obviously need to avoid bridges!) and this also enables the digitalisation of our vehicle walk around checks which were previously paper based. We are working hard to sweat these new assets currently and get better use out of them. We are also looking at further digitalisation, such as auto FNOL and telematics forwarding maintenance requirements straight to the team so the driver doesn't even have to call in.

Q: Along with the training needed specifically for EV transition, how do you engage with drivers to maintain the highest standards in both driving and wellbeing?

We have a number of tools to do so, toolbox talks, site visits, in cab systems and our Intranet. Obviously it's a bit of a lottery with some drivers engaging more

than others, but we also have systems in place to make sure drivers have support if they are involved in an accident or near miss to make sure we don't just plonk them back in the van without checking to see if they are ok, and having a coaching session with one of our trainers. One thing I have noticed since joining Network Rail is the huge emphasis on safety, which is great to see and filters through everything we do.

Q: With global supply chain issues still in place and other possible obstacles, how will you adapt and remain on course to meet your 2027 targets?

My crystal ball sadly isn't as accurate as it used to be! This is probably the biggest issue we face, and the only way out is communication and forecasting. Making sure vehicle orders are with the manufacturers with enough time for delivery, and working with them to understand the time frames. In recent years the relationship between supplier and customer has changed, and now you need to work cooperatively rather than transactionally. I often sit down with our manufacturers and leasing company to understand new technology, time frames and pinch points. Using this you can best

put a resilient plan together to ensure delivery in the time for our 2027 target. However nothing is bullet proof and you need to have contingencies in case you have to pivot at the last moment!

Q: Finally, how do you manage the day to day challenges of operating such a large and diverse fleet and at the same time plan and implement the great changes demanded by your fleet decarbonisation strategy?

Nothing is on my own, I have a fantastic team and some great suppliers who all know the business inside out. From my point of view, the best way to get the change across without causing issues to bring everyone along on the journey and get their buy in. You will be surprised by how far reaching the effects of decarbonisation are, and if you don't involve everyone at least to some extent, you will find it may trip you up.

You need to set out the ground rules early on about what can be flexed and what is a show stopper. For example, payloads and mileage – the more you can learn about your business and what happens on the 'shop floor' the better you will be equipped to not be stopped in your tracks (no pun intended) with your strategies as you adapt them to fit. ●








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SFS starts 30th anniversary year in style!

The first quarter of 2023 has been a very positive one for contract hire and fleet management company SFS, which celebrates its 30th year in business this year!

Northampton-based fleet management company SFS provides the complete range of vehicle hire and fleet management services to both the public and private sector, including contract hire, vehicle maintenance, workshop management, technical advice, and consultancy.

With a reputation for excellent customer retention, many of SFS' local authority customer base have retained its services contract after contract.

30 YEARS
EST. 1993



Pictured: Out on the 'rounds' in Northamptonshire

North Northants announces second contract

On 1 April this year North Northamptonshire Council commenced a consecutive 7-year contract with SFS to provide and maintain an additional 45 vehicles. Of these, 10 brand new 26t Dennis Eagle refuse trucks fitted with Terberg bin lifts have already been delivered in time for the contract start.

Cllr Graham Lawman, North Northamptonshire Council's Executive

Member for Highways, Travel and Assets, said: "We are very pleased to be updating our fleet at North Northamptonshire Council with SFS, especially as we have been able to move to some electric vehicles, where possible. These new vehicles, along with the service back up, will allow us to continue serving our customers throughout the area and provide residents with an excellent waste and recycling service."

This is the second contract the authority has awarded to SFS; the first being in 2022 when the authority brought services across Wellingborough back 'in house' and SFS provided an interim fleet

through its vehicle rental division, CTS Hire, followed by a replacement fleet of 40+ vehicles.

Prior to this SFS had worked with Kettering Borough Council for 17+ years, and Corby Borough Council, and when they became part of the new unitary authority an existing vehicle replacement contract comprising 110 vehicles was novated to North Northamptonshire Council.

Dedicated technical teams continue to maintain the authority's vehicles from SFS' Kettering depot and its satellite workshop at Wellingborough.



Pictured: A selection of Spelthorne Council's vehicles

14 years at Spelthorne

Also, Spelthorne Borough Council recently announced the retention of SFS as its vehicle partner with a new 7-year contract commencing in June 2023, to replace and maintain the council's waste, recycling, and street cleansing fleet.

Cllr Richard Barratt, Chair of Spelthorne Council's Neighbourhood Services Committee, said: *"We are delighted to have signed a new seven-year contract with Specialist Fleet Services for 17 new vehicles and maintenance. We have a strong working relationship with SFS and look forward to continuing to work together to provide reliable and cost-effective refuse services for the residents of Spelthorne."*

"We have built a great working relationship with Spelthorne Borough Council. We have invested significant resources into gaining an in-depth understanding of the council's operational needs and used our many years of experience to provide a 'perfect fit' fleet, which is well maintained to maximise vehicle availability and keep services running efficiently."

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, SFS



Pictured: L to R: Kerry Williams, Head of Service Operations, WCBC & Darren Williams, Chief Officer Environment & Technical, WCBC with the CTS Hire eRCV

First Welsh council to hire CTS Hire eRCV

SFS rental division CTS Hire offers a wide range of high-quality municipal vehicles, featuring the latest technological and safety enhancements and supported by a 24/7 national mobile engineer and workshop network. The fleet includes

3.5t-26t Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs), specialist recycling vehicles, caged tippers, and two brand new 100% electric refuse vehicles (eRCV), which recently joined the fleet. Both vehicles are Renault Trucks E-Tech D Wide electric rear-steer chassis fitted with Dennis Eagle OL21 body & Terberg Xtra bin lift.

Many councils are keen to take this unique opportunity to hire an eRCV on a short-term arrangement to enable them to properly monitor how the technology

performs on rounds, before committing long term.

The latest council to take advantage is Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC), also the first Welsh council to try out this electric vehicle technology.

David Jones, Senior Transport Manager, WCBC said:

"Our diesel refuse collection vehicles perform a hugely demanding task. Every waste collection round is different and puts a different strain on vehicles and our crews, which is why it is important to give this specialist electric bin lorry a thorough test drive in real-life day to day operations."

"We're delighted to be the first local council in Wales to test this new electric refuse collection vehicle from CTS Hire and give our waste collection crews the chance to work with the latest technology."

"We're excited to see how well it works for us and will be monitoring how it performs. This will help us to understand the capabilities of electric refuse collection vehicles and make informed decisions about their viability for

...cont'd on page 20

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CTS Hire 'electric' tour

Other councils that have benefitted from CTS Hire's rental electric refuse vehicles are Preston City Council and South Tyneside Council, which was the first council in the country to hire an eRCV.

Councillor Ernest Gibson, Lead Member for Housing and Transport, South Tyneside Council said: "Our diesel refuse collection vehicles perform a hugely demanding task.

"Every waste collection round is different and puts a different strain on vehicles and our crews, which is why it is important to give this specialist electric bin lorry a thorough test drive in real-life day to day operations. We're delighted to be the first local council to test this new electric refuse collection vehicle from CTS Hire and give our waste collection crews the chance to work with the latest technology.

"We're excited to see how well it works for us and will be monitoring how it performs, particularly over the winter period and in inclement weather. This will help us to understand the capabilities of electric refuse collection vehicles and make informed decisions about their viability for potential use in South Tyneside in the future."

Of Preston City Council's experience with the eRCV Duncan Coward, Head of Waste Management, had this to say: "CTS Hire has provided us with the perfect opportunity to have an electric RCV for an extended period to gain a deeper understanding of this type of vehicle without being committed to a long-term purchase.



Pictured: CTS Hire electric refuse vehicle at South Tyneside Council depot

"We are also able to get some insight into Renault electric vehicle technology and when we do come to purchase an electric vehicle, we will be in a much better position to understand what we want. The teams at CTS Hire and Renault have been incredibly helpful and the whole process has been simple and painless."



Pictured: CTS Hire electric refuse vehicle outside Preston North End Football Club stadium.

"The electric vehicles are getting booked up fast as word spreads. It's a great opportunity for councils to see how these vehicles perform in their own collection environment and see for themselves what the transition from a diesel fleet to an electric fleet may require operationally and from an infrastructure perspective."

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, CTS Hire ●

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Council slashing carbon fuel emissions by up to 95 percent by switching vehicles to diesel alternative

Test Valley Borough Council's (TVBC) fleet of vehicles have now all switched from using diesel fuel to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), cutting carbon dioxide fuel emissions by up to 95%.

HVO is a drop-in diesel alternative that benefits from an instant reduction in carbon dioxide emissions without the need for changes to engine infrastructure or machinery.

It's also made from 100% renewable raw materials, biodegradable and is odourless.

The entire fleet, from waste collection vehicles to plant machinery, is now using HVO, after council leaders approved plans earlier this year.

In 2019, TVBC declared a climate emergency, and this is another step

towards the ambition of becoming carbon neutral as soon as possible.

Leader of Test Valley Borough Council, Cllr Phil North, said:

"Switching all of our vehicles from diesel to HVO is a huge step in the right direction as we cut our carbon emissions generated from our fleet vehicles by 95%.

"Using this biofuel does not require expensive vehicle changes and is completely fossil-free, fulfilling one of the pledges we made in our cross-party Climate Emergency action plan." ●

New electric vehicle for mental health crisis service

A mental health crisis service developed in partnership between South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS), Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary has taken delivery of its first electronic response vehicle.

The mental health crisis care service has been running for just over three years and sees a paramedic and mental health practitioner responding on blue lights to patients suffering an immediate mental health crisis including those who are about to be, or are at risk of being, detained by police for their own safety under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act.

The team had been using SCAS' standard emergency response vehicles, but now this has now been upgraded to an all-electric Mercedes Benz eVito van which has been supplied and converted in partnership with the NHS England Zero Emissions Emergency Vehicle (ZEEV) Programme. It is one of only four electric mental health service vehicles operating in England.

Graeme Matthews, Crisis Care Liaison Lead at SCAS, said: *"As an emergency response service, a significant amount of carbon emissions the Trust produces comes from its fossil-fuel powered vehicle fleet. The team and I are delighted that we now have*



a cleaner way of getting to patients who need us as quickly as possible, whilst still being able to deliver the most appropriate care and support for people in mental health crisis."

Jenny Erwin, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Autism and Children's Care Director at Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, said: *"The new electric vehicle marks another important development for the Hampshire mental health crisis service. It's been a fantastic privilege to be involved in this transformation work which has seen people in a mental health crisis getting the same level of urgent and emergency care as those in a physical health crisis. Now that the blue light response also meets our NHS commitment to net zero vehicles is further cause for celebration."*

With only four Section 136 suites in Hampshire, the mental health crisis care service ensures that patients at risk of being detained, or taken to a facility less suited to their needs (such as a hospital emergency department), can receive more appropriate care and assessment.

"On arrival to the patient the paramedic in the response vehicle will carry out a first assessment to rule out any physical injuries," says Graeme. "In the absence of physical injuries, the mental health practitioner will then takeover, carrying out an assessment, review the patient's care plan and arrange secondary care if needed. The rapid 'see and treat' service minimises the chances of the patient being taken somewhere less appropriate to their needs that could escalate the mental health crisis they are suffering."

The mental health crisis service operates from 3pm to 2am every day and the team were despatched to 863 mental health emergency call outs in 2022.

The Mercedes eVito has an average WLTP combined range of 162 miles and, with a 35-minute rapid charge to 80%, it means with a short stop to recharge, the vehicle's daily range can be extended to around 250 miles. Charging points for the eVito are at the Trust's offices in Otterbourne – where the vehicle is parked when not operational – and can be accessed by staff using an app. ●



Enfield Council adopts ground-breaking AI video telematics for electric RCV and targets road safety improvements

Enfield Council has teamed up with VisionTrack to lead the way in road safety and stay at the forefront of fleet innovation.

The London borough has worked closely with its existing video telematics partner to develop a sophisticated AI-powered vehicle camera solution for its first fully-electric refuse collection vehicle (RCV). The Renault E-Tech D Wide 26-tonne truck has been specially-designed by Enfield Council and Renault Trucks, to create the most advanced and high-performing waste management vehicle currently available.

"Our aim was to develop an electric RCV of the future that brings together class-leading technologies and helps achieve sustainability, duty of care and road safety goals," said Cllr Rick Jewell, Cabinet Member for Environment at Enfield Council. *"The collaboration with VisionTrack will provide increased protection to our residents, refuse collection teams and other road users."*

The video telematics solution combines four AI cameras, for 360-degree vision and vulnerable road user (VRU) detection, along with two wing mirror cameras and an external speaker for audible lefthand turn warnings. The intelligent detection cameras use deep learning technology to identify pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and people on scooters, while disregarding street furniture.

With configurable safety zones, blind spots around the vehicle will be eliminated and drivers alerted to the precise location of nearby VRUs. Footage will automatically be displayed on an in-cab monitor, and supplemented with an audible, spoken warning. Road safety insight – including footage of collisions, near misses and harsh driving events – will also be uploaded to the Autonomise.ai IoT platform, so Enfield Council has complete visibility of driver, vehicle and fleet risk.

The ultra-quiet Renault Trucks E-Tech D Wide Low Entry Cab, equipped with a CP

Davidson Titan refuse body, is the first of four to be delivered and will service local households. The electric RCV has been in development for over a year, with Enfield Council and Renault Trucks working in partnership to create a prototype that met the precise needs of a large, busy, London borough. It underwent extensive testing and road trials in Enfield, which demonstrated impressive performance levels, reliability and battery life.

Richard Kent, President of Global Sales at VisionTrack commented: *"As a longstanding partner of Enfield Council, we have been supporting their road safety strategy for a number of years with our proven video telematics technologies. This latest initiative uses the latest advances in AI to deliver a ground-breaking solution for a revolutionary waste collection vehicle. It will demonstrate the potential of intelligent camera solutions – especially for heavy vehicles in the urban environment – in terms of 360 visibility, people detection and fleet risk reduction."* ●

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

£15m 'boost' will increase the number of Welsh electric vehicle charging points

The funding, confirmed earlier this month by Deputy Climate Change Minister Lee Waters, will be used to help local authorities increase the number of charging facilities ahead of fossil fuel vehicles being phased out in 2030.

The new funding follows the £26m already invested in charging infrastructure across Wales since 2021 which has created more than 1,600 charging points – enough for one in six battery electric vehicles.

Deputy Minister for Climate Change, with a responsibility for transport, Lee Waters said:

"Drivers need to have the confidence to make the switch to electric vehicles as demand increases and that's why we are committed to creating high quality electric vehicle infrastructure across Wales."

Most of this work will be delivered by the private sector but our role is to facilitate private sector investments across Wales and ensure equality of access.

To help with this, we have created a private sector taskforce which will engage with the market, break down any barriers to investment and accelerate the roll out of charging infrastructure.

The announced funding is another step in the right direction but we have further to go - we will continue to work with local authorities and the private sector so that Wales keeps up with the rapid increase in the number of electric vehicles.

The announcement complements the Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) fund which has already kick-started many EV projects as the Welsh Government aims to reach its target of providing charging points for every 20 miles of the strategic trunk network across Wales by 2025.

Wrexham Council has received £1.86 million over two years to roll-out EV charging facilities at a charging hub in



the city centre as well as sites in remote, more rural locations across the county.

Cardiff Council has received £900,000 for the next two years to roll out EV charging in the region and provide rapid charging infrastructure at Lamby Way depot for twelve electric Refuse Collection Vehicles, as part of Cardiff Council's fleet of 78 Refuse Collection Vehicles.

This transition supports the councils target of having a zero-emission fleet by 2030, in line with Welsh Governments Low Carbon Delivery Plan.

Cllr David A Bithell, Deputy Leader and Climate Champion at Wrexham

Council, said:

"We are pleased to receive this funding which will enable us to continue our work to help people to move to Electric Vehicles through both the creation of a mobility hub in the city centre and also supporting some of our smaller and more rural communities with facilities to charge EVs where they may not have access to off road parking."

"As part of this project we are also looking to add some increased provision to support active travel and nature."

"We are keen to make a start on this important step on the road to lower carbon transport for Wrexham." ●



Hyndburn Council Ditch the Diesel in Favour of VegFuel

Fleet vehicles and some plant equipment will be ditching diesel in favour of HVO (Hydro-treated vegetable oil) going forward, marking a major step in the aim of net-zero carbon emissions.

A recent assessment calculated that the Council's 54 vehicles previously equated to approximately 19% of the total CO₂

emissions. Therefore, this single change results in up to 90% reduction in CO₂ emissions from the vehicles, meaning cleaner air for the local community and a smaller carbon footprint for the council.

Cllr Zak Khan, Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, said:

"This is a tremendous step forward for Hyndburn Council's net zero ambitions and shows a commitment to implementing real, tangible change that promises a green and sustainable future for the area. It is so important that we are constantly assessing all areas of the Council's carbon emissions to see what changes can be made at every level to help fight climate change."

This switch was recommended by the Council's Net Zero Working Group. The Net Zero Working Group was created in June 2022 to provide the Council with advice and support on climate change, the green agenda and achieving net zero. Made up of members and Council officers, they consider policies and strategies to propose new environmental projects and initiatives such as community tree planting schemes and decarbonising the council's operations.

Cllr Steven Smithson, Joint Deputy Leader of the Council, said:

"It is really promising to see Council members and officers working together to bring about this level of environmental change. This is a clear indication that the council will continue to prioritise climate action plans, and it is a pleasure to be part of a Council that are striving to make the Borough a cleaner and greener place for people to enjoy. I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in making this change."

This action follows Hyndburn Council's declaration of a climate emergency back in 2019, where they pledged to look at all areas where they could reduce their carbon footprint to become completely net-zero in their carbon emissions by 2030. ●

BVRLA warns against taking Electric Van transition for granted

On Thursday 4 May, OZEV confirmed that the limit of PIVG orders per end user has been increased from 1,000 units to 1,500 per financial year. The limit was implemented in December 2021 "to ensure best value for money for the taxpayer, as well as ensuring budgets were protected and distributed as fairly as possible.

Commenting on the announcement,

Gerry Keane, BVRLA Chief Executive, said:

"Van fleets are struggling to make the zero-emission transition and the 2030 Phase Out target for internal combustion engine vehicles is at serious risk. Fleet-friendly public charging infrastructure is scarce and operators are struggling to find electric vehicles that can match their diesel counterparts when it comes to cost of ownership, payload or range."

"The Government is listening and today's Plug-in Van Grant extension will be welcomed by the largest fleet operators. The Grant is a vital tool in bringing more electric LCVs to UK roads, but it is not a silver bullet."The Zero Emission

Vehicle Mandate that comes into force next year will encourage manufacturers to produce more affordable and capable electric vans. In the meantime, we need to see a huge effort in rolling out a more affordable, reliable and accessible van fleet-friendly charging infrastructure. We need a new Electric Van Plan."

"The BVRLA continues to campaign on this topic and is in regular contact with OZEV and other bodies to share the concerns of van operators and drivers. Our ongoing research projects are quantifying these challenges and giving tangible solutions that we are working to implement."●

Rising fleet costs giving pause for thought? It's time to go to tender

Nine suggestions for a successful fleet tender process

According to Simon Staton, Director of Client Management, Venson Automotive Solutions

Escalating costs of fleet management are forcing businesses large and small to reassess fleet partners. After salaries, fleets can be one of the biggest operational costs, so careful selection of outsourced expertise can make a massive difference to the bottom line. Whether seeking a new supplier, or simply benchmarking the market, the procurement process cannot be rushed. A well thought-out tender document will help to secure the right partnership, value for money and the level of service needed to meet operational objectives.

Here are some top tips on delivering a successful tender:

- 1. Collaboration is key** – the tender document needs to be written in collaboration with those who have the necessary knowledge and experience. Even if the procurement department take the lead in the process, it is vital that they take advice from key parties with appropriate skill sets who also understand the wider market as well as their own organisation and how it operates its fleet. E.g., the fleet manager, finance department, HR, H&S, environmental manager and legal.
- 2. Define the requirement** – Establish the aim of what is to be achieved by going out to tender, as well as opportunities for improvement within the current fleet structure. Priorities and strategies will vary for every business across a wide range of factors such as value for money, quality, reliability and service. Discussing and listing the agreed priorities will help to streamline the tender process.
- 3. Do your homework** – read the fleet press, talk to peers, attend industry meetings and network to find the handful of organisations that are likely to be the most suitable supplier to meet requirements. Incumbent providers should not be ignored unless there has been severe service or contractual issues.
- 4. Consider pre-qualification** – issued prior to the invitation to tender, a pre-qualification document can improve efficiency by defining the 'best fit' shortlist of bidders to progress to the tender stage. Pre-qualification meetings can begin a dialogue and help potential suppliers to 'get under the skin' of the organisation and truly understand its goals.
- 5. Seek a future-proof supplier** – selecting suppliers with knowledge of the latest marketplace developments, and that are investing in innovative solutions, allows fleets to make the right decision that will be effective in the longer term.
- 6. Carefully consider the tender content** – key questions should focus on operational delivery; what's important to the fleet operator, fleet department and the organisation. The tender document should reflect what is happening within the fleet and tackle specifics. Potential suppliers can then deliver solutions that address those issues.
- 7. Create a structured tender** – good, advanced planning and a concise, clearly structured and well thought-through, tender document will reduce the likelihood of suppliers asking numerous questions, which would lengthen the tender process unnecessarily.
- 8. Meet the bidders** – a visit to the shortlisted suppliers' premises helps to understand more about the supplier. Their business set-up, the experience of the teams who will be supporting the contract and how they interact and manage their existing customers.
- 9. See the bigger picture** – Even when the reason for going to tender is to reduce costs, don't get caught up in the upfront cost – every supplier offers something different, as well as different added-value options and a different level of value for money. Focus on choosing the best partner for the current and future business needs, even if that does not come at the lowest upfront cost

Tendering takes precious time, but it's so important to get it right. Remember, tender documents that ask ill-informed questions, request irrelevant information, and have no focus as to why the process is being undertaken can lead to suppliers deciding not to respond to the tender, or providing an inaccurate response. This can leave an organisation with an arrangement that is no better, or potentially worse, than their current one. No business can afford that.

Intelligent, focused questions will enable suppliers to provide detailed answers that in turn will enable organisations to truly focus on implementing the most appropriate solution for their fleet requirements. ●

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Vehicle Sacrifice Car Schemes

Essential Fleet Manager recently spoke with Alison Argall, business development director at Tusker, part of Lloyds Banking Group to find out more about Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Schemes and how they can deliver a cost neutral benefit, contribute to better employee retention and incentivise the up-take of low emission vehicles within the fleet.

Q: All organisations know how hard it is to manage 'grey fleet' drivers - but how does adopting a vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme for employees help with this?

Grey fleets, or personal vehicles which are used by an employee for business purposes, can be very tricky to manage. But under a salary sacrifice scheme, all legal and duty of care requirements for the employer are met by the scheme.

An employer can be safe in the knowledge that its staff are driving a

brand-new vehicle which is fully serviced, MOT tested, and insured for business travel – whether that's to attend a conference or drop off a letter off at the post office. The scheme provider will conduct a full licence check, removing the administrative burden for an employer. The vehicles will also be kept fully maintained under a robust policy, so tyres are replaced and any repairs are covered should the vehicle break down.

Q: Could you explain further the tax

implications for an employee from having a vehicle through a company vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme and does it differ from having a traditional company leased vehicle? For example, is a Salary Sacrifice car classed as a personal vehicle or a company vehicle?

A vehicle leased under a salary sacrifice scheme is a company car rather than a personal vehicle. However, an employee can use it just the same as if it was a personal car, to take their children to



school or go on days out across the UK. Unlike in a company car scheme, the employee pays for the car and is legally responsible for it.

There are three ways a company usually provides colleagues with access to a vehicle – either as a company car, which the company own and pay for, and the employee just pays Benefit in Kind (BiK) tax on; a salary sacrifice scheme, where an employee will agree to a monthly reduction of their salary in exchange for a car; or as a cash allowance added to their salary, which the employee can use to lease or purchase a car that they will own. Usually only very senior staff or those who need a vehicle for their job are offered a company car.

Whether an employee has a company car or leases a vehicle through a salary sacrifice scheme, they will pay BiK on their salary. Lower emissions vehicles benefit from lower rates of BiK.

In a salary sacrifice scheme, the agreed amount for the car is taken direct from the employee's salary before income tax and national insurance, meaning the employee pays less tax on their income. It means they will have a larger amount to spend on a vehicle than a colleague who receives a cash allowance and leases a vehicle privately, as the cash allowance will be subject to tax and National Insurance. A salary sacrifice scheme enables employees to save between 32% to 47% on the cost of a vehicle as a result.

Q: How does a company scheme such as a vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme help fleets to transition to ultra-low emission or zero emission vehicles? Are there any special schemes available?

Employees choose a salary sacrifice scheme for a number of reasons. They may already have a company car, but want to access a second vehicle for a family member. It may be a colleague who was previously taking a cash allowance to pay for their car, but who decides to switch to reap the tax saving. Or it may be an employee who wouldn't usually be eligible for a company car or cash allowance and is using it as a more cost-effective way to access a vehicle. No matter the reason, colleagues will be able to make cost savings, and these savings are even more substantial if the vehicle is zero-emission.

People tend to vote with their wallet, so are increasingly opting for lower

emissions vehicles on a salary sacrifice scheme, driving fleets to become greener. Across our fleet of cars leased under salary sacrifice, 85 per cent are ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) and of those vehicles, 75 per cent are pure electric (EVs).

By keeping BiK rates on ULEVs low, the Government has helped to incentivise employees to choose these vehicles, helping reduce the emissions of fleets. Likewise, companies offering a salary sacrifice scheme can also benefit from a decrease in their Class 1 National Insurance contributions, and these savings are the greatest when it's on a zero-emission vehicle. This has encouraged many employers to opt for an EV only scheme, or cap the emissions of the vehicles they offer under the scheme.

Q: How long do vehicle Salary Sacrifice agreements typically last for and what happens if an employee leaves the organisation, either voluntarily or if their employment is terminated?

A vehicle agreement under a salary sacrifice scheme typically lasts between three and four years. However, an employer can choose to place restrictions on this so that only certain agreement lengths are available to employees. It's then down to the employee to choose which best suits their needs.

Most salary sacrifice schemes will include a level of early termination or lifestyle protection. Typically, resignation, redundancy and ill health are all included under these protections, but caveats or terms and conditions will vary dependent on the provider, so it's always important to check exactly what is and isn't included under any protection and when in the agreement term they will apply from.

Q: Are there any restrictions or minimum salary requirements for an employee to join a vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme?

To join a salary sacrifice scheme, a person must be in full-time employment within a business. HMRC also won't allow anyone to take a car on via salary sacrifice that would result in them receiving a salary below the National Living Wage for the duration of an agreement. This means employees will need to be mindful of any other salary sacrifice arrangements they may have in place that might simultaneously be reducing their salary. Scheme providers are usually able to set their system to ensure that cars aren't

shown to employees who that don't meet the affordability criteria, based on the information they've provided.

Q: Away from the benefits to the employee what are the full range of benefits for an employer if they adopt a vehicle Salary Scheme? For example are there any additional costs / risks for an organisation offering such a Scheme.

All costs for a vehicle leased under a salary sacrifice scheme should be met by the employee, meaning there shouldn't be any additional costs to the employer, and the scheme should be free to set up.

As salary sacrifice schemes incentivise employees to choose an ULEV, they can help employers reduce the emissions of their fleet, bringing reputational benefits, cost savings on fuelling its vehicles, and enabling businesses to meet carbon reduction targets. An employer can save on National Insurance contributions when an ultra-low emissions car is ordered, and public sector organisations can also make savings on pensions.

Salary sacrifice schemes help remove the risks, cost, administrative burden and inconvenience of managing a grey fleet.

Offering a salary sacrifice scheme can also help attract and retain talent. It enables employees to access a more premium or electric vehicle which may have been out of their price range otherwise, expanding the number of employees who can access a car via their employer. It's a tangible and relevant benefit, which helps reassure colleagues that they are getting the best deal from their current employer.

A salary sacrifice scheme also helps promote colleagues' mental and financial wellbeing. It's a fixed cost that comes out of an employee's salary each month before they receive it, with all maintenance included, removing the fear of unexpected costs.

Key risks to be aware of are around early terminations, and what is offered will vary by provider. It's important to ensure this risk is either completely removed or kept to an absolute minimum when negotiating an agreement with a provider. ●

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Minimising Vehicle Off Road (VOR) time

Regular servicing, maintenance and repair is the most important method of reducing vehicle downtime.

All fleet operators face the inevitable prospect of VOR time. The larger and more diverse the fleet, the more complex the issue and across the Public Sector and Essential Services, unplanned downtime may have a serious impact on service delivery and vital repairs to the infrastructure.

Planned downtime for regular vehicle maintenance or servicing can be managed, but what are the causes of the unplanned events and how can they be minimised?

Road Traffic Incidents

No Fleet Manager can plan for an accident, but steps can be taken to much reduce the chances and risk of a damaging incident. Assuming that a vehicle is well maintained, the solution lies with Driver Training and education. Drivers who are taught techniques in safe and efficient driving styles will subject vehicles to less wear and tear, obvious issues being the extra wear on brakes and tyres resulting from aggressive driving. They will also be less inclined to take risks that can lead to serious collisions.

Not only is there a wide variety of highly professional training organisations but once this has taken place, reward systems can be put in place via vehicle telematics. As well as highlighting problem drivers, safe drivers can also be identified through the use of data and a culture of "driving excellence" can be created. This will have a positive effect on vehicle downtime and across a number of other important issues. The same reward system will also act as a catalyst to improving driving behaviour where there is an issue.

Drivers also need to conduct daily pre-use checks on vehicles. This is a vital safety requirement and will identify any concerns with the vehicle that may lead to an incident on the road or unplanned maintenance. Apps are available that not only provide real-time reporting during pre-use checks, but also prove that the check is being carried out.

Vehicle Wear & Tear

Any good Fleet Manager will have

systems in place for maintenance scheduling and will also have a reasonable expectation as to what constitutes fair wear and tear. Of course, this is vital in ensuring that unexpected end-of-life costs are avoided, but it will also help identify if the demands on the vehicle have changed. For example, if during a regular check, cosmetic damage may be noticed. This may not seem serious at the time but might indicate that extra demands are being placed on the vehicle and if not addressed, this can develop into serious damage, leading to the vehicle being off the road. It is therefore essential to identify the cause of all types of damage and establish if they are likely to become part of a pattern.

It is also important to have processes in place those unforeseen incidents that are extremely difficult to plan for, such as discovering tyre damage that is not part of expected wear and tear. The best tyre suppliers that may be engaged directly or be a partner to your fleet management provider, will have systems to mitigate the disruption and attend as quickly as possible.

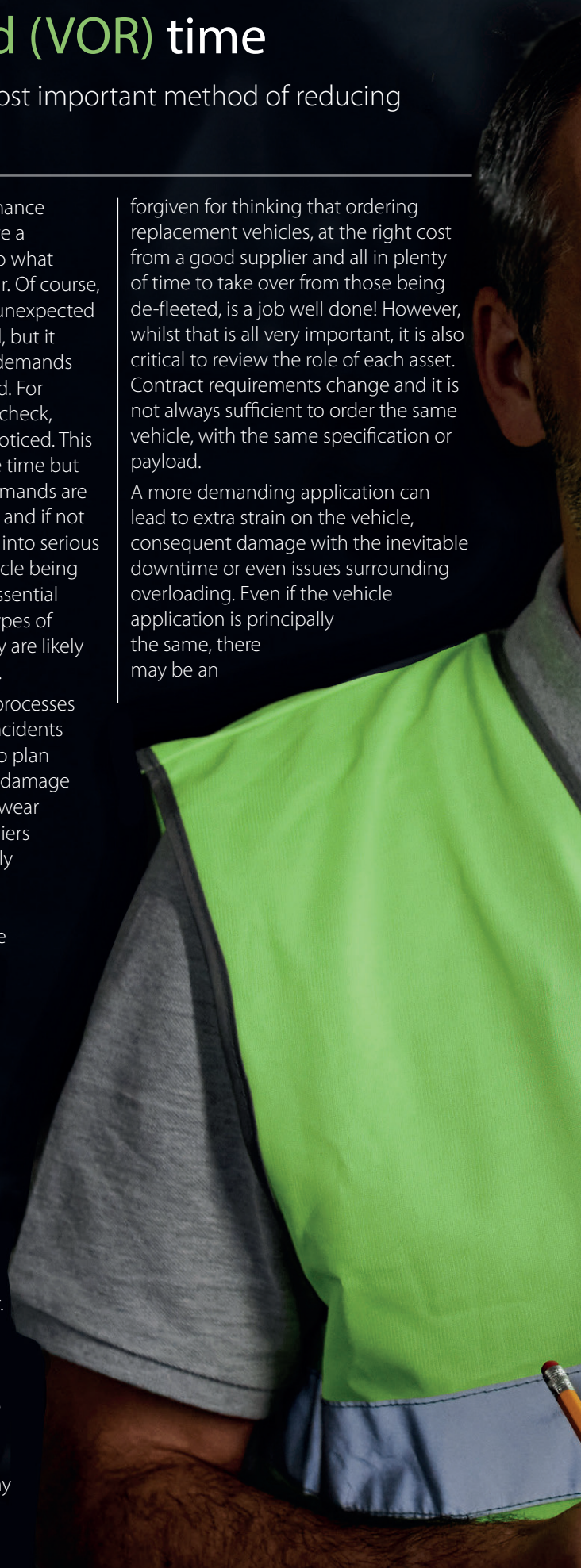
Another example is key loss or failure. In these situations, an otherwise sound vehicle will be off the road for as long as it takes to replace the key. If these situations are treated as and when they arise, fleet managers may have to resort to costly and time-consuming solutions with a main dealer. There are mobile services that will attend the affected vehicle at its location and by use of technology, create duplicate keys in a shortest possible time, very much minimising the impact of any key loss or failure.

New Vehicle Specification

Fleet Managers could be

forgiven for thinking that ordering replacement vehicles, at the right cost from a good supplier and all in plenty of time to take over from those being de-fleeted, is a job well done! However, whilst that is all very important, it is also critical to review the role of each asset. Contract requirements change and it is not always sufficient to order the same vehicle, with the same specification or payload.

A more demanding application can lead to extra strain on the vehicle, consequent damage with the inevitable downtime or even issues surrounding overloading. Even if the vehicle application is principally the same, there may be an





innovative piece of on-board equipment that may help reduce wear and tear and consequently reduce the risk of unforeseen downtime. It is also important to replace vehicles at the right time. If they have been outright purchased, their value will be written down over a period of time. However, if a vehicle develops issues that often take it off the road, it may be worth considering an early replacement. Although there may be an extra cost associated with the early capital outlay, it may well avoid far greater costs that result from frequent vehicle downtime.

Prevention

Rigorous SMR processes are essential. Although planned maintenance or servicing will inevitably take a vehicle off the road, they can be carried out at times of low demand on the vehicle, such as evenings or weekends. Mobile servicing units can also greatly assist with reducing downtime. Major LCV OEMs, through their dealer chains, are now expanding the availability of mobile servicing which is a great addition to other services. When this is not an option, choosing a garage network with multiple sites near your operational areas will also be of great benefit.

Action

When the Fleet Manager employs technology and communicates effectively with drivers, the most important thing is to act on the information. This will lead to the application of solutions that will prevent unplanned downtime and promote a safe and efficient fleet culture.

Fleet Managers must also develop a collaborative relationship with suppliers, if not already doing so. This means that any new services can be considered and implemented where appropriate as quickly as possible and with the maximum support. It is also important to stay informed of developments at suppliers not currently being utilised and consequently be aware of as many services that help as possible.

Future Opportunities

Many fleet operators are well on the way to embracing the opportunities presented by electric vehicles. Where it is cost effective and practical to replace an ICE van with an EV there are not only the huge environmental benefits, but also the prospect of very much simplified maintenance schedules and much lower risk of vehicles developing faults. This results from the relatively low number of moving parts and an EV is, in engineering terms, far less complex than ICE counterparts.

Although issues with EVs are less frequent than those with ICEs, it is absolutely vital that the skill base within vehicle maintenance and repair sector of EVs increases in line with the sharp increase in EV adoption, so that it doesn't impact servicing requirements.

The move towards fleet electrification also throws up issues with having vehicles being 'ready to work' in other words, fully charged. Charging can be complex and managing it is becoming to be an increasingly intensive task within fleet management. ●

Minimising the impact of **key loss** or **failure**

with *Car Key People* Founder, Mark Migliaccio.

The consequences of dealing with Key loss or failure has already been highlighted in this issue of EFM Magazine. Should this occur, the disruption to service levels can be significant. There are though, a few preventative steps and processes that can be put in place that will minimise the off road period, support continued service delivery, increase efficiency and in many cases, protect an organisation's reputation.

EFM Magazine was delighted to speak recently with Car Key People Founder, Mark Migliaccio, about the impacts of key loss or failure and their key replacement solution, a highly efficient alternative to using a traditional main dealer and how fleet operators are increasingly using this service to help minimise Vehicle Off Road time.



Q: What are the potential impacts of key loss or failure on fleet operations?

For some reason, awareness of the potential impacts is sometimes not what it should be, but when you think about it a lost key is just as damaging and disruptive as, for example, a vehicle break-in or anything else that keeps the vehicle off road. This will lead to a delay in service delivery and within the public sector, social housing maintenance and utilities, the delay could easily be to an urgent repair or other essential work. There is not only the disruption and financial waste to consider but, in many cases, distress and frustration. Corporate reputation can also be affected. If, for example, you are a social housing tenant expecting vital work to be carried out and that work is delayed because of a key loss, then the fleet operator cannot expect a sympathetic or understanding response from the tenant. These instances are sensitive and there are many within the media hungry for the opportunity

to highlight stories of inadequate service delivery!

Q: What is the traditional main dealer solution to key loss or failure and what are the pitfalls?

If a fleet operator does not plan for the possibility of key loss or failure, then they are firstly looking at a costly vehicle recovery. Once recovered, the replacement key must be ordered from the factory, wherever that may be, with often a long lead time and with the cost for the key alone, running into hundreds of pounds. Even when the key has finally been delivered, the disruption doesn't stop there, with the operator responsible for delivering the vehicle in question to the main dealer for the key to be programmed. That's more time lost and further costs, along with a driver prevented from carrying out core tasks.

Q: By comparison, how does The Car Key People's solution work and how does it provide a fast, at the roadside solution

for fleet operators?

Essentially, we are carrying out exactly the same technical process as a main dealer, but how that process is delivered is significantly different. The fundamental phrase here is 'at the roadside'. In other words, when it is discovered that a key is lost or has failed, we can be notified of the vehicle description and location. On attending the location, we will have a vehicle compatible key ready for programming. We can do this because in many respects, we already have the components in place and at hand, ahead of any requirement. Put simply, when we engage with a fleet operator we will have a full breakdown of their assets, so all vehicles. This allows us to order compatible keys from the factories and hold them in stock. When we have notification of failure or loss, we will arrive at the vehicle location and as skilled automotive locksmiths, we then programme the keys and therefore get the vehicle moving again

in the shortest possible space of time. This will be usually 24-48 hours from notification and can be as immediate as same day; a huge improvement on the traditional alternative! In summary then, we remove the need and excess cost of factory ordered keys, because we already hold stock and remove the requirement to firstly recover a vehicle and then to deliver it to a dealer site, because we attend the vehicle location.

Q: Clearly then, potential key loss is an issue that is vitally important to address for fleet operators. As you have developed the business and work with more and more fleets, has it been a challenge along the way get them to view this in the same way as any other event that may lead to a vehicle being off road?

A huge increase in our partnerships with fleets and fleet management companies suggests that awareness of the issue and our solution has improved dramatically. However, there are still instances when an organisation, that is otherwise well prepared for other incidents such as anything tyre related, will not see the need for similar due diligence when it comes to keys. It's a question of keeping the conversations going, developing new relationships, and broadening awareness of the issue. At the same time, as we develop our systems to continually fine tune our services and as programming software develops to allow us to work with vehicles that until now, have only had a main dealer solution available, we have an increasingly positive message for fleets which widens our opportunities and the level of service we provide.

It's well worth saying that when we seek



new opportunities, we're very conscious of the need to understand that today's fleet manager is faced with an ever-increasing weight of responsibility. Not only do all the established day to day tasks remain, that are vital in managing risk, efficiency and meeting compliance, but there are now many involved in great strategic change, such as fleet electrification. All this might be a quite understandable reason as to why the issue of key loss, on its own, has been sometimes obscured. Having said that, this is all the more reason to have this issue covered and avoid completely unnecessary expenditure and Vehicle Off Road Time.

Q: Much of what we've already said talks about key loss and how you react to minimise impact. With your help, what preventative steps can be taken that will mean a vehicle can remain in operation, despite a key being lost?

This really is as simple as ensuring that each vehicle has more than one key! It sounds fundamental, but there are still some leasing companies who only supply a single key. When that is the case, the smart thing to do if that key has failed or has been lost, is to have us replace it with two. That will cost more in the very short term but may well prevent unnecessary expense in the future. We can also help fleets plan by supplying spare keys ahead of any specific need, as we did with Enterprise Flexirent when in just two days, fifty Transits were supplied with spares in time for them arriving with a major customer. As things stand at the moment, we've seen that of the various fleet sectors, the utilities seem to lead the way, often having as many as four keys for each vehicle!

Q: How do you see things developing for The Car Key People?

We've already gone from a small operation, working with retail customers in just London and the South-East, to a nationwide service delivering solutions to many of the country's most notable fleet

operators. Not only do they value our services that address key loss, but also our expertise in vehicle security. A full list of services is basically as follows:

- Spare vehicle keys – preventative measure
- Lost/Failed key replacement – on-site service delivered from same day to 48 hours after notification in majority of cases
- Vehicle entry when keys locked inside
- Lock repair or replacement
- Vehicle investigation – when it is suspected that an unauthorised key has been coded to a vehicle
- Key erasing and reprogramming – to provide security and ensure that only on-site keys can be used
- Temporary key storage and secure postage of replacement keys

We therefore offer a 360 degree service around all issues associated with key loss, failure and security. All this is provided in the most cost effective and efficient way possible and The Car Key People will without doubt, increase our valued range of fleet customers, in line with increased awareness of the issues and their impact. ●



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Connected vehicles and the data-powered future of fleet management

By Greg Hanson, VP of EMEA & LATAM, Informatica

Inflation, soaring fuel costs and supply chain disruptions are creating major challenges for public sector fleet managers. There are also some obvious bumps in the road ahead. At COP26, governments around the world signed a declaration which promised to ensure that all new cars and vans sold globally are zero emission by 2040. There will be growing pressure to reduce emissions and move towards a decarbonised fleet going forward.

Connected vehicles will play a significant role in addressing these challenges by giving managers access to unprecedented data-powered insights. The information generated by each vehicle includes familiar metrics such as fuel level and mileage value. Sensors can also detect damage and indicate when maintenance is necessary. In the future, technological advancements will unlock even more capabilities and benefits, ranging from increased safety for drivers to improved fleet-wide emissions measurement.

Connected vehicles will revolutionise fleet management and make life easier

for the humans that work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep their vehicles on the road and doing their job. Leaders that understand how to unlock the power of the data available to them will be better placed to cope with the immediate challenges of 2023 and plot a course towards a low-carbon future.

A single view of fleets

A connected vehicle generates vast amounts of data. This can be gathered from GPS and navigation systems as well as information from Internet of Things (IoT) sensors. These are small, connected sensors designed to collect and transmit data in order to deliver accurate, real-time data about many aspects of a vehicle. When collected and analysed centrally, granular information about individual vehicles can provide a holistic picture of the performance of an entire fleet. Managers can also capture trends about the ongoing performance of a vehicle, allowing them to zero in on the performance of individual drivers, assessing whether they are driving dangerously, braking harshly or wasting fuel.

To use this data to gain valuable insights that fuel innovation, public sector fleet managers need to be prepared and rethink the way they consume and distribute data with a robust data management platform. Data from connected vehicles needs to be collected and collated with data from external events or operations. With the right data foundations in place, powerful technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) can then be applied to allow public sector fleet managers to start building more complex assessments with trusted information.

Retrofitting sensors offers a relatively low-cost way for fleet managers to gather accurate data. Growing numbers of original manufacturers are also embedding sophisticated data-collection and transmission capabilities directly into their vehicles. In the future, telematics data from the thousands of sensors placed on the outside of electric vehicles will be able to accurately predict its battery range by analysing temperature and wind speed to give drivers a real-time, intelligent view of battery life. Car sensors will collect information on weather patterns



across the country, giving them the ability to understand conditions in real time. This aggregated information could even be shared with third parties. Every fleet operator could effectively become an automated weather forecaster, with sensors transmitting information without requiring human intervention. The possibilities are almost endless.

The growing power of data

Currently, a well-used waste collection truck requires physical inspection and many other manual processes before it is allowed to leave the depot. Its fuel usage is analysed to drive mileage optimisation so that the council can make the best decision about which vehicle to give to a driver. Predictive maintenance is also important so that vehicles at risk of mechanical or electrical problems can be identified and repaired quickly.

Technology liberates humans from the manual work involved in these processes. Checks can be automated so that data from sensors indicate when a vehicle requires maintenance. Data is also a great enabler of personalisation. Take, for example, a recycling fleet.

Using connected vehicles, technology can assess the performance of vehicles and drivers in unprecedented detail. If one driver typically uses more fuel than an average employee, for instance, this behaviour can be recognised so that they are given a vehicle which is more fuel efficient. In connected rental cars, technology is already in place to automatically set mirrors to the correct angle when certain drivers climb in and can even ensure the seat is reclined to their preferred incline.

A connected vehicle can also drive improved safety by sending alerts if the data suggests a driver is fatigued - a capability which will prove invaluable to emergency services. It can cut emissions and save costs by collecting data about speed, steering, and braking to inform fuel-efficient driving or suggest alternative routes which reduce the time spent waiting in traffic or cut the distance involved in an emergency response. Diagnostic data can continuously assess the health of a vehicle and notify drivers when a service is needed using in-car voice communication.

And to ensure drivers can easily benefit from everything from the latest infotainment system, tweaks to the display, and personalisation of the driving assistance and lighting system, many manufacturers are implementing over the air software updates. Looking to the future, these over the air updates could be used to continuously evaluate telematics data and make changes that would help maintain fuel efficiency or reduce wear and tear.

These are just some of the advantages of connected vehicles, which are not powered by a technology that belongs to the distant future, but one that can be harnessed today. Public sector fleet managers that make the correct technological investments will unlock immediate benefits, driving improved safety, reducing costs and enabling better maintenance. They will also lay strong foundations for the future. Data is the low-emission fuel which can power better outcomes for fleet managers working in every area of the public sector. Without a data management platform to convert this fuel, these powerful insights will be wasted. ●

Council switching more fleet vehicles to electric

Telford & Wrekin Council marked Clean Air Day by announcing that it has added a further eight electric vehicles to its fleet.



The announcement comes just days after the news that Telford has been ranked in second place out of England's 55 largest urban centres for air quality, according to a Green Cities Index report by environmental publication, ENDS Report.

The council is transferring its fleet over to more sustainable power to further improve air quality in the borough and as part of its commitment to make its operations carbon neutral by 2030.

The council's new electric cars, vans, minibuses and Town Park ranger vehicles have replaced old fossil-fuelled vehicles, meaning the council now has 17 electric vehicles in its fleet, being used across a range of teams including highways, enforcement, libraries,

outdoor education and in Telford Town Park.

The council estimates its transition to electric vehicles has saved around 30 tonnes of carbon emissions so far.

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Telford & Wrekin Council has successfully reduced its overall operational carbon emissions by 57%, and is actively working to support the wider community to work towards the same goal.

To support community uptake of electric vehicles, the local authority successfully bid for more than £600,000 in government funding earlier this year which will enable them to install 140 charging points in 21 public car parks across the borough.

CLlr Carolyn Healy (Lab), cabinet member for climate action, green spaces, heritage and leisure, said:

"Protecting our residents is one of the pillars of our work as a council, and that includes ensuring they have the cleanest air to breathe. We are also looking for every opportunity to reduce our operational carbon emissions, so transitioning our fleet across to electric vehicles is a win-win."

"I was delighted with Telford's recent ranking in the Green Cities report – taking ninth place overall, and second place for air quality – but that doesn't mean our work is done. We will continue, with our community and our partners, to strive for an even greener Telford and Wrekin." ●

Cut emissions and fuel costs by cutting unnecessary idling

By identifying instances of idling, fleet and transport managers can identify where additional training is needed to help drivers reduce fuel consumption and air pollution.

Most of the focus in the current climate is for fleet or transport managers to accelerate their transition to electric vehicles (EVs). But the majority of operators will still be running mixed fleets for many years to come.

Looking for ways to save on fuel costs is a top priority for those who operate within the Essential Services sector and tackling idling is a way to achieve this. For a fleet or transport manager idling can have a significant impact not only on your vehicle's fuel economy, but also for the wider environment that your vehicles operate in.

It shouldn't be forgotten that there is a tremendous focus on public health and the impact of roadside emissions and tackling the issue should be part of any organisation's corporate social responsibility policy.

If a driver is running a vehicle's engine when the vehicle isn't moving it is termed as "idling", it is a common occurrence especially when a driver is stopped at a red light or stuck in traffic.

The amount of fuel a vehicle consumes while idling obviously varies as it depends on factors such as the vehicles weight, engine size, and the type of fuel it takes.

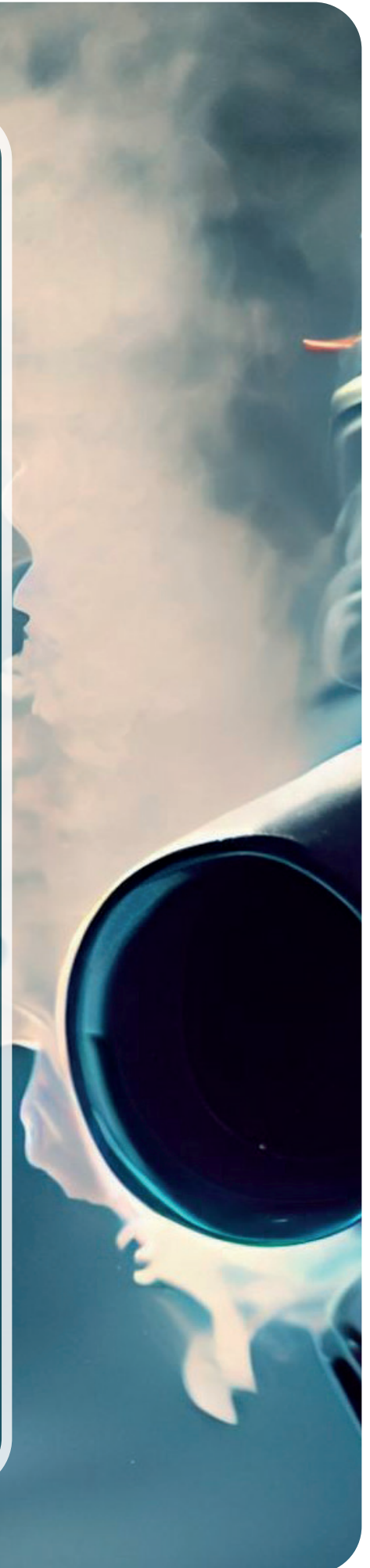
Reducing the amount of time your vehicles spend idling also has the added bonus of helping to reduce engine wear-and-tear over time, resulting in lower maintenance costs.

To reduce the impact of harmful pollutants, there are laws to discourage drivers from idling, for example stationary idling is an offence under Section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

The act enforces Rule 123 of the Highway Code, which states: "You must not leave a vehicle's engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road." Fleet Managers must be fully aware of the detail of the legislation and at the same time ensure that drivers are also aware and following the rules.

Idling can be tackled by implementing technology such as GPS fleet tracking software. By using the data obtained, fleet or transport managers can identify drivers that need to change their driving behaviours. By encouraging better driving practice, tangible fuel savings can be enjoyed across your fleet.

Engine idling has tremendous negative impact on the environment and should be tackled as a priority. At the end of the day, if unnecessary idling is eradicated, costs are reduced, public health is improved and corporate image is protected. ●



Upsize to a HGV fleet for greener motoring, says Venson



Investing in a vehicle fleet greater than 3.5T Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) with drivers qualified to handle them could improve a business's carbon footprint and its bottom line

As the UK gets to grips with a revamped government strategy to meet its 2030 emissions cut target, the pressure is on for fleet decision-makers to run a more flexible, environmentally friendly fleet. Whilst upgrading a fleet to larger vehicles may not seem an obvious answer to achieving this ambition, Venson Automotive Solutions argues that they come with many advantages.

"It may not fit every business model, but upsizing can not only improve a business's carbon footprint but reduce costs and boost productivity," says Simon Staton, Client Management Director for Venson. *"Furthermore, the socio-economic aspect of an upsize can give a competitive edge by demonstrating a responsible corporate image. It's understandable that fleet managers may feel unsure of the process involved with upsizing, but with careful planning and strategic thinking, coupled*

with relevant guidance, evolving a fleet can be done smoothly and efficiently."

Driver recruitment, vehicle and company compliance, licences and the complexities of moving up to commercial vehicles beyond 3.5t are all discussed in Venson's free whitepaper 'Operating Commercial Vehicles Beyond 3.5t GVW whitepaper'.

Upskilling investment is an important factor businesses need to take into consideration, but one that will save in the longer term and play a considerable role in replenishing the UK's diminished Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) skills sector. Most standard passenger car driver licences only entitle their holders to drive vans up to 3.5t GVW. To drive a vehicle beyond 3.5t up to 7.5t GVW, requires a C1 licence, whilst a driver must be in possession of a specific HGV Class 2 licence to drive a truck over 7.5t GVW. However, a driver with a Class 2 licence can drive any rigid truck way beyond 7.5t, so once this driver investment is made, a business can increase the size of its fleet vehicles if the business requirement

were there.

Individuals that drive HGVs and Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs) weighing 3.5ts GVW and upwards professionally are also required to hold a Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) qualification as a legal requirement. This is obtained by completing 35 hours of training followed by competency exams. This process needs repeating every five years for the driver to maintain legal compliance.

However, Venson stresses the significant benefits to be had from upsizing. Simon Staton concludes, "An average large delivery van can carry a load weighing 1,000 to 1,800kg, yet a 7.5 GVW truck can manage 3,000 to 4,500kg, a two to threefold increase, meaning the potential to run two less vehicles to carry out a similar workload is a viable option. When you factor in that a 16-tonne GVW rigid trucks' carbon footprint isn't usually vastly different to a 7.5t truck, then it's even easier to comprehend the financial and emissions savings to be gained." ●



Venson's checklist to planning and expanding a fleet beyond a 3.5T GVW

Lay out key requirements and ensure clear reasoning as to why new vehicles are required and what they'll allow your company to achieve.

- Get the right administration people and drivers in place by re-training current staff or recruiting new staff.
- Carefully research the best base vehicle to suit the new needs. Considerations should include

availability, list price, maintenance facility location, projected running costs and suitability for intended role.

- Body and Equipment – Are your needs met by off-the-shelf conversions? If not, your fleet management provider can help with defining a vehicle specification and sourcing a reputable bodybuilder.
- Understand impact on operating base, is it already appropriate or is a move required?
- Decide on the preferred method of financing to suit your company needs with the help of external experts and your own accounting.
- Reporting – Ensure that any systems

for vehicle and driver reporting are in place and a team member is empowered to carry this out as part of their daily routine.

- Maintenance – It is vital that a clear and well-managed maintenance plan is put in place and adhered to.
- Management – As the jobs and vehicles become more complex, so does the task of managing them, and their drivers. Ensuring clarity with regards responsibilities is paramount.
- Compliance – Driver, vehicle, licences, ancillary equipment and operating base all have to be compliant with the laws of the road and the land. ●

Download a copy of 'Operating Commercial Vehicles Beyond 3.5t GVW whitepaper'
<https://www.venson.com/white-papers/>



The new Ford Puma ST Powershift delivers the real ST driving experience alongside even greater convenience in the compact SUV segment

Responsive, rewarding, fun-to-drive performance dynamics are now set to be enjoyed by even greater numbers of SUV customers with the new Puma ST Powershift from Ford which introduces the most powerful version of its multi-award-winning 1.0litre EcoBoost engine.

Enhanced using 48-volt mild hybrid technology to deliver up to 170 PS peak power and 248 Nm peak torque, the 1.0-litre engine is combined with a paddle-shift-operable, seven-speed, dual-clutch Ford Powershift transmission – seamlessly fusing energised driving experiences and everyday usability.

The new powertrain fully embraces the Sports Technologies moniker alongside existing performance-enhancing features from the optimised chassis of the 1.5-litre EcoBoost Puma ST – launched in 2020 – including bespoke twist-beam and

anti-roll bar settings, and patented force vectoring springs.

Coupled with the compact SUV's comfort, uncompromised interior space and innovative practical solutions including the Ford MegaBox, the versatile new Puma ST Powershift brings Ford Performance driving experiences within reach for an even greater numbers of enthusiasts – delivering responsive 7.4-second 0-100 km/h acceleration alongside 6.3 l/100 km fuel efficiency and 144 g/km CO₂.

The mild hybrid system engages energy recovery more quickly than in other applications for faster recharging of the 48-volt lithium-ion battery pack. In addition, the increased energy recuperation allows for further electric assist to boost peak power, delivering up to 170 PS at 5,750 rpm and up to 248 Nm of torque at 3,000 rpm.

Developed to work seamlessly with Ford's 1.0-litre EcoBoost Hybrid engines, the seven-speed Ford Powershift transmission is optimised with revised software strategies that can maximise performance and efficiency.

In fully automatic mode, the dual-clutch gearbox provides smooth-shifting, effortless convenience and comfort – particularly stop-start traffic – and helps to keep the mild hybrid powertrain at the optimum rpm for efficiency. However, for truly exploiting the engine's performance, triple downshifts enable faster overtaking when drivers request maximum acceleration. With Sport Drive Mode engaged, the transmission also holds lower gears for longer, for sportier responses. In addition, steering wheel paddle shifters allow manual control of shift points for full driver engagement. The Powershift automatic also enables



Stop & Go functionality for the available Adaptive Cruise Control, which can bring the vehicle to a complete halt in stop-start traffic and automatically pull away if the stopping duration is less than three seconds, or resume after three seconds with the touch of a button or the accelerator.

On the outside, a Ford Performance-embossed splitter integrated into the front bumper not only makes the Puma ST Powershift's sports credentials immediately clear, but also increases front end down-force by almost 80 per cent versus the standard Puma. A large rear roof spoiler and distinctive rear diffuser also feature, while signature ST upper and lower front grilles are designed to maximise engine cooling capability and efficiency.

Puma ST Powershift introduces a new ST-exclusive Azura Blue signature colour among six exterior paint options. Complemented by an available gloss black finish for the roof and standard black grille surrounds, side spears, door mirror caps and rear roof spoiler, the SUV also offers a Magnetite finish on the standard 19-inch alloy wheels.

Inside, standard highlights include Ford Performance-developed sports seats finished in premium Sensico synthetic



leather-effect material, a wireless charging pad, Quick clear heated windscreen, front and rear parking sensors, rain-sensing wipers, FordPass Connect modem, and Ford's SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system, compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto™. Available driver assistance technologies include Pre-Collision Assist with Active Braking, Active Park Assist, 4 Cross Traffic

Alert with Active Braking, and Intelligent Speed Limiter.

Underlining the Ford Performance model's versatility, Puma ST Powershift retains full Puma space and practicality, offering 456 litres of load space with the rear seats in place as well as the innovative Ford MegaBox that provides an 80-litre storage space beneath the boot floor. ●

New Jeep® Avenger

New electric powertrain combines unique 400-volt electric motor to offer a stress-free range of up to 400 km WLTP and up to 550 km in city driving.

The all-new fully electric Jeep Avenger is the right choice for those looking for a compact and robust car which offers state-of-the-art technology, space and comfort - a car that can 'do anything' and 'go anywhere.'

The Avenger packs the Jeep DNA into a compact SUV with a unique combination of capability, style, and functionality. It has been designed to perfectly fit the needs of its customers with features including:

Functional design: Avenger has been designed to offer 360° protection and full freedom of movement. Its 360-degree shock protection encased protected lights and colour-moulded skid plates make it the ideal travel companion in urban and off-road driving.

Compact dimensions: at 4.08 meters it is the most compact Jeep and can comfortably fit five people with their stuff.

Roomy & versatile interior: the interior of the Jeep Avenger continues the "design to function" premise and has lots of space for everyday objects. It offers 34 litres of interior storage, the equivalent of a carry-on bag. The 1 meter-wide, square-shaped boot is also spacious and extremely versatile. Each compartment has been designed with flexibility: the central tunnel can be organised in multiple modular storage pockets by means of a divider that can be moved – or even removed. Thanks to original solutions like the flexible cupholder divider and the foldable magnetic cover, the entire content of a cabin baggage can be stored in these boxes.

Sustainable powertrain: Avenger offers zero emissions and 100% adventure and passion with an electric range of up to 400km WLTP and up to 550km in town to really go anywhere. Standard fast charging mode allows to recharge 30 km (average daily need) in 3 minutes, and to go from 20 to 80% in 24 minutes.

Cutting edge technology: All-terrain and

all-weather capability translates into fun and safety and Avenger leads in the B-UV segment in both respects. A complete series of safety and ADAS features which in the electric version provide level-2 driving autonomy include: Blind Spot Monitoring, Autonomous Emergency Braking with Vulnerable Road Users (pedestrian and cyclist) protection, automatic parking and 180-degree rear camera with drone view.

Fully Connected: made for "always connected" customers, the new Jeep Avenger ensures a great digital on-board experience. A 10.25-inch radio screen Uconnect Infotainment combined with full digital cluster available in two variants (7 and 10.25 inches) comes as standard.

The infotainment system has been designed to deliver a smart phone-like user experience, with wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay smart phone projection, "mix&match" function to build your own interface (up to 5 pages, up to 12 widgets per page), embedded navigation powered by TomTom with enhanced natural voice recognition and over-the-air update.

Thanks to the Uconnect™ Services and the Jeep® mobile app, customer can keep in touch with Avenger everywhere and every time. With the JEEP Mobile App, users can locate their car, lock and unlock the doors, check the battery level, program the battery charge and activate climate control. All this directly from their smart phone, tapping the screen or even asking their voice assistant.

Avenger offers class-leading energy consumption at 15.4 kWh per 100 km in the WLTP cycle. This result is made possible by the extreme efficiency of the new propulsion system, but also by the extreme lightness of the vehicle – only 1,500 kilograms.

Another key element of Avenger's electric propulsion is the charging system. The standard on-board charger delivers 100 kW in direct current



(corresponding to 20 to 80% charge in 24 minutes in fast-charging mode), and 11 kW in alternating current (corresponding to 0 to 100% charge in 5 hours and a half when connected to a public station).

With Avenger, distinctive features come standard from the entry level with **four-trim range** to made capability, safety, and connectivity standard, and differentiate the trims according to their specific mission.

Avenger, the new adventurer, features 10.25-inch infotainment display offering "i-phone-like" experience. It comes with Select Terrain and Hill Descent Control for all-road, all-weather driving – ...as this is a "given" on a JEEP.

In addition, it also integrates new-generation safety systems such as Autonomous Emergency Braking, Traffic Sign Recognition and Lane Keep Assist.

Longitude embodies the cool side of capability, offering more style and more



convenience with 16-inch alloy wheels, and rear parking sensor.

Altitude is delivering more technology and exclusiveness, with Premium seats matching the dedicated silver dashboard and interior accents, 10.25-inch digital cluster and hands-free power tailgate.

Summit, the freedom manifesto, represents the top of the range and includes full LED headlights and taillights, multi-coloured ambient light, level 2 autonomous driving, 360-degree parking sensors and rear camera with top drone-like view.

The colour palette – where colours are corresponding to nature elements - is composed by Ruby (red), Volcano (black), Stone (sand grey), Lake (light blue) Sun, Granite, and Snow. All colours – except for the Volcano - can be combined with a black roof. ●



NEW PEUGEOT 2008 - updated design and new electric performance with up to 406 km of range



The Peugeot 2008 has now taken a new step forward in terms of design, technology and electrification. The new 2008 will go on sale in the summer of 2023 with a range based on three versions - ACTIVE, ALLURE, GT - and four engines, including a new 115kW/156bhp all-electric engine with a range of up to 406 km (WLTP combined cycle). The range will be expanded in 2024 with the arrival of a new hybrid engine.

The 2008 is the second model to adopt the new Peugeot signature light. This is characterised by three vertical light claws which are integrated into the gloss black inserts on the bumper on the new 2008. In the GT versions, the striking effect of the three claws is extended for the first time in the lighting of the full

LED headlamps through the use of three light modules.

The new LED rear lights on all versions are made up of three superimposed horizontal double slats. The reversing lights and indicators are also LED.

The new front end, features the new Peugeot emblem. On the ACTIVE version, the front end is embellished with a horizontal pattern in a gloss black colour. On the ALLURE and GT versions, the front end has a vertical pattern in the same colour as the bodywork.

The new 2008 is available in six body colours: Selenium Grey, Artense Grey, Okenite White, Black Perla Nera, Elixir Red and Vertigo Blue. All versions of the new 2008 have renewed seat fabrics, illustrating a real move upmarket, like

the new Alcantara upholstery available as an option on the GT versions. The GT version comes with a black bi-tone roof as standard. All new 2008 models feature black mirrors, regardless of the body colour chosen.

A key element of the cabin, the Peugeot i-Cockpit® is one of the strongest features of the brand's models. It has been improved upon and modernised to optimise its ergonomics and driving pleasure. All 2008 models now come with a 10-inch central touch screen as standard (previously 7 inches on the first two trim levels). It can be used to control radio and telephone functions (ACTIVE version) or the latest generation of the Peugeot i-Connect® and PEUGEOT i-Connect® Advanced infotainment systems. On the ALLURE and GT versions, the central

screen is HD technology. Under the central screen, the piano keys have been kept for quick access to key functions.

The interior of the new 2008 GT has ambient lighting that can be customised in eight different colours, some of which are new, which are now coordinated with those of the central touch screen and take into account the selected driving mode.

The E-2008 is the pioneer of 100% electric SUVs in the B-segment, with the new engine already adopted by the E-208 and E-308. Maximum power is up 15% from 100 kW/136 hp to 115 kW/156 hp, while the battery is increased from 50 kWh to 54 kWh. A major effort on efficiency allows the increase in performance to be complemented by an increase in range, which reaches up to 406 km compared to 345 km previously (WLTP mixed cycle).

Two types of on-board chargers are available on the new PEUGEOT E-2008, to suit all uses and all charging solutions: as standard, a single-phase 7.4kW charger and, as an option, a three-phase 11 kW charger.

Estimated recharge times from 20% to 80% are 30 minutes from a public charging point (100 kW), 4 hours and 40 minutes from a Wall Box (7.4kW) and 11 hours and 10 minutes from a reinforced socket (3.2 kW).

At the beginning of 2024, the new 2008 will receive the new 48V HYBRID powertrain, which consists of a new-generation 136 bhp PureTech petrol engine, coupled with a new 6-speed dual-clutch electrified gearbox that includes an electric engine. Thanks to a battery that recharges while driving, this technology offers extra torque at low engine speeds and up to 15% lower fuel consumption. In urban driving, the new 2008 equipped with the HYBRID system

can operate more than 50% of the time in 100% zero-emission electric mode.

In addition to the electrified engines described above, the range of the new 2008 offers a choice of petrol and diesel engines that enables each customer to find the model that suits their needs:

- **PureTech 100:** the 3-cylinder petrol engine with 1.2 litres of displacement and 100 bhp, equipped with a Stop & Start system, is combined with a 6-speed manual gearbox.
- **PureTech 130:** the 130 bhp, 3-cylinder, 1.2-litre petrol engine with a Stop & Start system can be combined with the EAT8 8-speed automatic gearbox or a 6-speed manual gearbox.
- **BlueHDi 130 EAT8:** the 130 bhp, 1.5-litre, 4-cylinder diesel engine with Stop & Start system is combined with the EAT8 8-speed automatic gearbox.

The new 2008 offers its user a number of devices that make driving safer and easier...

- Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop and Go function and adjustable inter-vehicle distance setting.
- Automatic emergency braking with collision warning: detects pedestrians and cyclists, day and night, from 7 km/h to 140 km/h.
- Extended recognition and display of traffic signs in the digital instrument cluster: stop sign, one-way traffic sign, no overtaking sign, end of overtaking sign, in addition to the usual speed-related signs.
- Active lane departure warning with lane correction.
- Driver Attention Alert, which detects impaired alertness over long periods

of driving and at speeds above 65 km/h, by analysing micro-movements of the steering wheel.

- Blind spot monitoring.
- Enhanced traction with Grip Control, which provides access to three driving modes: sand, mud and snow. Depending on the country, this grip control offer is combined with '3PMSF' all-season tyres.

To make it easier for customers to choose, the range of the new 2008 is simpler, with three versions: ACTIVE, ALLURE and GT, with the main standard equipment being:

- **ACTIVE:** new light signature with 3 claws at the front and 3 double LEDs at the rear, rear parking assistance, automatic air conditioning, electric front and rear windows, electric door mirrors, PEUGEOT i-Cockpit® with 10-inch central touch screen, a USB-C socket at the front.
- **ALLURE:** same as ACTIVE + 17-inch alloy wheels "KARAKOY", body-coloured grille, front and rear parking assistance, PEUGEOT i-Cockpit® with 10-inch digital instrument cluster and 10-inch high-definition central touch screen, PEUGEOT i-Connect® infotainment system with full smartphone connectivity, 2 USB-C sockets at the front, 1 USB-C socket and 1 USB-A socket at the rear...
- **GT:** same as ALLURE + full LED front headlights, high-definition parking camera, keyless access and start, electrically folding mirrors with welcome lighting, Black Diamond roof, GT monograms...

The new 2008 retains the same exterior dimensions: 4.30 m long, 1.987 m wide (including mirrors), 1.55 m high. The boot volume is unchanged at 434 litres (under the parcel shelf). ●



Ford Pro: The smarter, fully connected, all-electric E-Transit Courier

The all-new E-Transit Courier, is a **ground-up new all-electric commercial vehicle bringing enhanced connectivity and productivity for compact van customers.**

It comes fully integrated with Ford Pro's platform of software and connected services to further drive efficient operation including end-to-end charging solutions and management tools.

To further boost productivity, it has been completely redesigned around a larger, more flexible cargo area that delivers 26 per cent more load volume than the outgoing model, plus enhanced capability including increased payload and space for two Euro pallets.

All-electric productivity and charging solutions

E-Transit Courier's all-electric powertrain has been engineered to deliver an uncompromised driving experience for customers, including a powerful 100kW (136PS) motor and one-pedal driving capability. Full performance and range details will be confirmed closer to launch.

Ford Pro expects E-Transit Courier to be popular with customers who charge at home; Ford Pro Charging is targeting an 11 kW AC overnight home charge in 5.7 hours, and charging can be scheduled to take advantage of cheaper overnight energy using the in-vehicle touch screen or depot charging software.

To support efficient public charging, the vehicle offers DC fast charge capability up to 100kW. Ford expects the system to add 54 miles of range in 10 minutes, and charge from 10-80 per cent in less than 35 minutes. It also comes with a year of complimentary access to the BlueOval Charge Network, which is set to include 500,000 public chargers by 2024.

Customer-focused design

Its all-new body design delivers increased load capacity in all dimensions. Width between the rear wheel arches is

1,220mm, enabling the compact van to carry two Euro pallets for the first time. Total cargo volume is now 2.9 m³, 26 per cent more than the outgoing model. This can be further increased using the new load-through bulkhead feature, which enables customers to carry items such as planks or pipe over 2,600mm long. Maximum payload for the all-electric model is 700kg, with a maximum towing weight of 750kg.

The all-new model offers a very comprehensive standard equipment specification including unique cabin features with "squirle" steering wheel

design to improve leg room and visibility for the driver, as well as a column-mounted gear shifter, push-button ignition and an electronic handbrake to deliver increased configurable storage space.

The "digiboard" instrument panel contains a 12-inch digital cluster and 12-inch centre touch screen with Ford's latest SYNC 4 system. 6 Subscription-based Connected Navigation can boost productivity and reduce driver workload with updates on traffic, parking, charging and local hazards. Wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay compatibility is standard. An innovative,



class-unique Office Pack includes a foldaway flat work surface and lighting to make using a laptop, filling in paperwork or taking a break in the cab easier and more comfortable.

Every Courier features a built-in modem as standard, enabling always-on connectivity with the Ford Pro ecosystem and wireless software updates that can evolve the vehicle's capability over time without requiring a dealer visit.

Improved security and cost of ownership

After activating the built-in modem,

operators can benefit from enhanced vehicle security alerts for collisions and break-ins via Ford Pro Software. With Fleet Start Inhibit, fleet managers can remotely enable and disable E-Transit Courier to help prevent theft or unauthorised use outside of work hours.

To improve security without the time and cost of aftermarket solutions, Ford Pro partnered with vehicle security experts TVL to offer factory-fit lock packs for E-Transit Courier. The packs include secondary hook locks to mitigate against "peel and steal" attacks, as well as auto-locking for the sliding side door to reduce

driver workload and shave seconds off each delivery.

The vehicle is first available in 2023 with a range of fuel-efficient petrol and diesel engines. The line-up features a choice of attractive series including the high-specification Limited and Active models. ●



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FIAT Professional: New Doblo and first all-electric iteration, the E-Doblo

In addition to its diesel and petrol versions, the Doblo enters the world of e-mobility with an electric motor capable of guaranteeing efficient, smooth and responsive driving up to 175 miles, courtesy of the van's 50kWh battery.

The E-Doblo boasts rapid DC charging capabilities as standard, allowing for 80% charge to be reached in 30 minutes.

Technology and Safety - 18 ADAS features

Both the new Fiat Professional E-Doblo and Doblo feature new connectivity, infotainment and safety technologies that help drivers overcome all the daily challenges and obstacles they may face.

The stand-out safety feature on both products is the Magic Mirror, which thanks to two cameras - one under the right rear-view mirror and the other above the rear doors - ensures the driver has three different views (displayed on a five inch digital rear-view mirror) to perform the most complicated manoeuvre in the safest possible fashion.

The E-Doblo and Doblo also benefit from a new Head-Up Display, ensuring that drivers can monitor all key driving information without taking their eyes off the road. With its digital transparent panel, drivers will be able to drive safely and monitor key information such as speed, their navigation status and receive signal warnings including speed limits and fuel consumption.

Additional ADAS safety features include Adaptive Cruise Control; adapting the vehicle's speed to that of the vehicle in front, Lane Keeping Assist; warning the driver if a longitudinal lane marking on the ground is accidentally crossed, and Blind Spot Detection; informing the driver if another vehicle is present in the van's blind spot.

Both vans are available with a safety pack as standard which includes advanced emergency braking, lane departure warning and traffic sign recognition.

Powertrains

New E-Doblo and Doblo come in three different guises: all-electric, diesel or petrol.

The New E-Doblo is equipped with a 100kW electric motor and a 50kWh battery which allows up to 175 miles in the WLTP cycle.

It also offers charging capabilities up to 100kW, which allows the van to reach 80% charge in just 30 minutes.

The driver can also choose between different driving modes: Normal, Eco, Power and B-Mode.

Each mode modifies the vehicle's driving response, enhancing, and optimising vehicle performance, depending on the job at hand.

Normal is recommended for driving under regular, everyday driving conditions. **Eco** improves the van's economy, extending the van's range. **Power** improves the peak power of the vehicle and should be used when the van has a heavy load, while **B-Mode** allows for maximum battery regeneration.

Configurations

In recognition of their flexibility, the New E-Doblo and Doblo and are available in two lengths and two different configurations – Panel and Crew Cab.

The short wheelbase Panel van has a cargo volume of 3.3m³ and an external length of 4.4m, while the long wheelbase version has a cargo volume of 3.9m³ with a length of 4.75m.

Meanwhile, the Crew Cab – only available with a long wheelbase - possess a cargo volume of 3.5m³ and a length of 4.75m.

Design that matters: "Magic features"

Modularity and safety is at its best with the New Doblo's "Magic" features.

New E-Doblo and Doblo are equipped with a Magic Cargo feature which improves the versatility of the vehicle's interior.



Fiat Professional's new feature allows owners to carry up to three people in the front seats or increase the length and working volume. It is possible to raise the seat on the passenger side and use the compartment underneath for boxes or fragile objects.

On the Panel van, the cargo capacity can increase by 0.5m³, allowing customers to carry up to 3.8m³ on the short wheelbase version and 4.4m³ on the long wheelbase version. The load volume on the Crew Cab increases to 4m³.

Fiat Professional's Magic Plug, only available on the E-Doblo, makes it possible to use the battery's electric energy for power tools or other electric appliances.

The New E-Doblo and Doblo are available in two trim levels, standard and primo.

Both configurations can be customised even further by adding other packs with ADAS systems and improved functionality, all of which are designed to make both vehicles tailor-made for client requirements.

E-Doblo still benefits from the same 800 KG payload, one tonne towing capacity and 3.44m of load length that its ICE counterpart possesses.

Comfort

The entire space of the New E-Doblo and Doblo are tailored to driver and

passenger needs.

Versatile and modular, the New E-Doblo and Doblo is the commercial vehicle at the top of its category that offers different seating and space configurations, providing maximum comfort when driving and transporting the most varied goods.

Great attention is also given to acoustic comfort in both the New E-Doblo and Doblo, reducing the average noise level inside the cabin, ensuring a more pleasant driving experience. ●



E-Doblo still benefits from the same **800 KG payload**, **one tonne towing** capacity and **3.44m of load length** that its ICE counterpart

MAY 2023

NEW LCV REGISTRATIONS

TOTAL: 25,359

15.3%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



Category	Registrations	Year-on-Year Change
Pickups	2,959	13.3%
4x4s	615	698.7%
Vans <=2.0t	469	-42.3%
Vans >2.0-2.5t	4,143	57.2%
Vans >2.5-3.5t	17,173	8.3%
Rigids >3.5-6.0t	386	-24.5%



New van market maintains growth in May

The number of UK light commercial vehicles (LCVs) registered in the UK grew by 15.3% in May compared with last year, reaching 25,359 units, according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

It represents the fifth consecutive month of rising deliveries as the market rebounds from a tough 2022 as supply chain challenges continue to ease, although registrations remain -13.0% below the pre-pandemic 2019 level.

Registrations of the largest LCVs, weighing greater than 2.5 to 3.5 tonnes, rose by 8.3% to 17,173 units, representing nearly seven in 10 (67.7%) new vans, while deliveries of medium-sized vans weighing more than 2.0 to 2.5 tonnes reached 4,143 units, up 57.2%. As fleet operators continue to opt for models with larger payloads, demand for small vans at or below 2.0 tonnes fell by -42.3%, while the number

of newly registered pickup vans increased by 13.3%. Meanwhile, deliveries of new 4x4s surged by 698.7% to 615 units last month, evidence of the diverse range of LCVs that keep Britain on the move.

More businesses switched to zero emission workhorses, too, with the battery electric vehicle (BEV) market up 19.7% to 1,041 units, representing around one in 24 new vans. Rising demand means that 7,028 all-electric vans have been registered so far in 2023, an increase of 15.5% on the same period last year. With more than 25 electric van models now available in the UK, operators have a wealth of choice in zero emission solutions. Despite the strong progress made by the sector, demand for electric vans remains some distance behind the new car market, where the BEV market share is three times greater. Next year, the launch of the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate will set a minimum quota for new ZEV registrations

for every manufacturer, however, the greatest barrier to increased BEVs on UK roads is charging anxiety – the fear of being unable to find a suitable, available and working chargepoint wherever and whenever needed – a particularly acute concern for commercial vehicle operators.

As such, the UK must form a national plan to deliver the zero emission van transition and do so urgently. This can be achieved via a supportive fiscal framework, simplified planning processes, faster grid connections and the provision of a nationwide network of reliable, affordable chargepoints. In addition, regulated infrastructure targets that are commensurate with new vehicle registration mandates would help to reassure van operators that their specific business needs can be met with a battery electric van. Investment is undoubtedly coming for the car sector, but the van sector cannot be left behind. ●

A van market rebound is an opportunity to deliver an increasingly environmentally sustainable recovery and a boost to the economy. But every lever must be pulled to support the electric switch. With the forthcoming ZEV Mandate, we also need a national plan to deliver public charging infrastructure that encourages plug-in van uptake, to give the UK confidence over what can – and must – be a stable, successful transition for businesses up and down the country.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT
Chief Executive**



Restrictions on 4.25 Tonne Electric Vans Causing Issues for Operators, says AFP

Operational restrictions and uncertainties are creating issues for fleets adopting new 4.25 tonne electric vans, the Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP) is reporting.

A special concession was created by the Department of Transport for electric light commercial vehicles in 2019. Normally, the holder of a standard B licence would only be able to drive a van up to 3.5 tonnes but recognising the extra weight added by batteries, this was extended to 4.25 tonnes. Such vehicles are also exempt from O licence rules.

However, fleets are finding that a range of other restrictions still apply. Because the van is classed as an HGV, it needs an MOT test after 12 months and is also speed

restricted, while tachograph regulations come into effect if the vehicle travels more than 100kms from base.

There are further layers of complication. Technically, the 2019 licence derogation lapsed in May and has not been renewed. Although it seems likely it is still in effect, this has not been officially confirmed. Also, for fleets operating in Northern Ireland, the 4.25 tonne exemptions stop at the border for those travelling from the North into the South and the vehicle needs to be covered by an international O licence.

AFP chair Paul Hollick said: *"The whole 4.25 tonne concept is a sensible one, we believe, meaning that operators who would normally adopt 3.5 tonners can easily use larger electric vans while avoiding the central compromise on payload caused by battery weight. However, the real world experience of fleets is that there are still serious obstacles to clear.*

"In many cases, commercial users of 3.5 tonne vans are engineers of different types who travel across relatively wide areas, so

the speed and tachograph restrictions are especially difficult in day-to-day terms while, we believe, adding nothing in terms of safety for a vehicle of this type.

"If the idea of the concession is that fleets can easily choose a 4.25 tonne electric van instead of a 3.5 tonne diesel one, then that is not currently possible. There are just too many additional responsibilities and regulatory uncertainties."

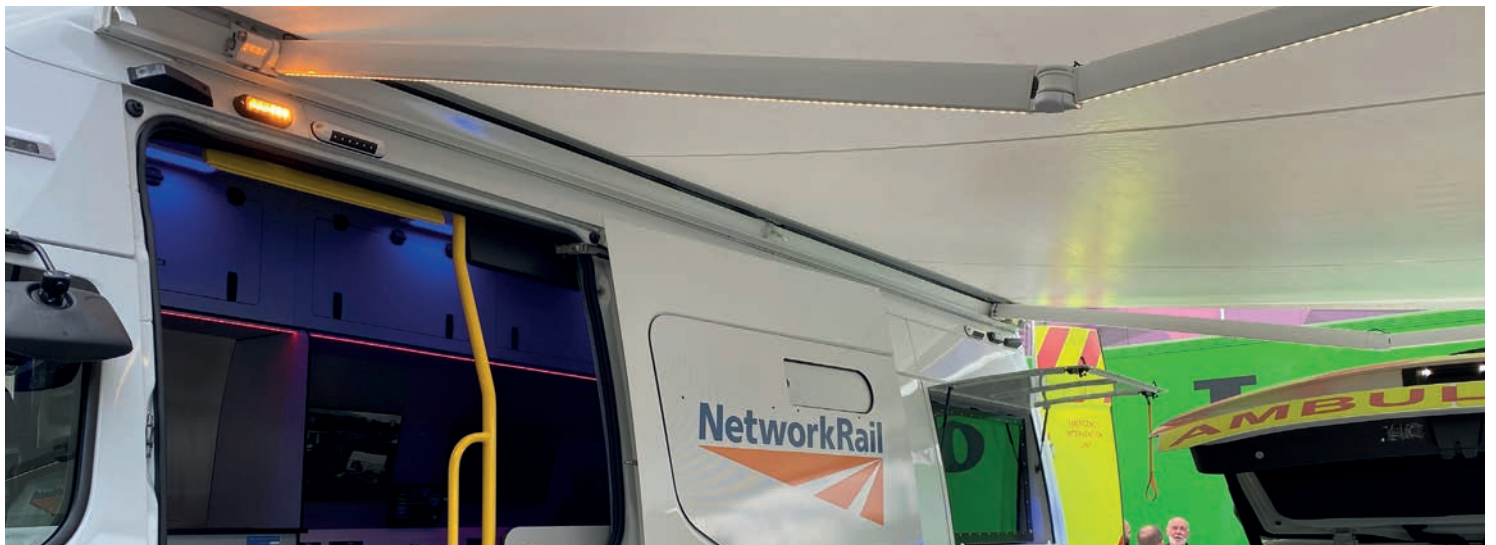
Paul said the AFP would lobby for the rule to be changed because the present situation served as a disincentive for fleets looking to acquire larger electric vans.

"As the AFP has detailed in recent months, electric van adoption is generally proving much more difficult for many fleets than electric cars. This is especially true given concerns over range and payload, while unnecessary problems such as these 4.25 tonne issues create additional hurdles that are often difficult to resolve. We'll be campaigning for the necessary changes and asking other industry bodies to support our efforts." ●



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