

EFFM

ESSENTIAL FLEET MANAGER *Magazine*

ISSUE 7 2023

Special feature:

Operating a fleet in remote locations



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Essential Fleet Manager - Issue 7 (2023)

The publications for fleet professionals that operate the vehicle fleets that support the UK's essential services

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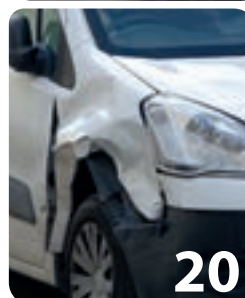
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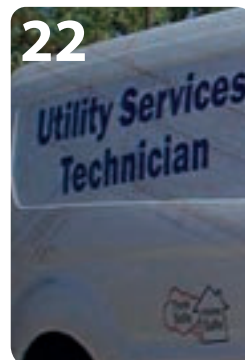
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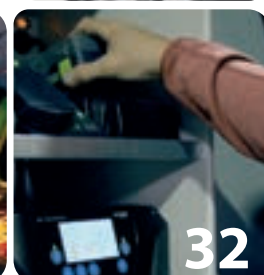
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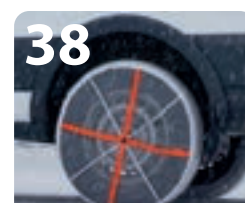
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What do the Public Charge Point Regulations mean for drivers?

Adam Hall, Director of Energy Services, Drax Energy

The Government's recently announced new electric vehicle (EV) Public Charge Point Regulations 2023 which are set to improve EV drivers' charging experience as the industry enters the crucial mass adoption phase. These include improved payment methods and a 99% reliable public rapid charging network.

This is very good news for EV drivers. Here's everything you need to know.

What are the Public Charge Point Regulations?

The Public Charge Point Regulations are the outcome of a government consultation on public EV charge points. They focus on four key areas:

making it easier to pay

- opening up chargepoint data
- using a single payment metric
- ensuring a reliable network

The regulations come at a crucial point in the transition to EVs. It's no longer just the early adopters who are making the

switch. We're in the mass adoption phase, where there's a need to remove any obstacles and make the green transport transition as easy as possible for everyone.

Until now, it's fair to say that charging an EV at a public charging station hasn't been without its challenges. EV drivers have had to deal with a whole range of tariffs. They've had to be ready to use a large number of payment apps, and they've had to cope with a lack of reliability and information about which chargers were working.

Based on feedback from real public charging stations users, and with a lot of common-sense solutions, we welcome these new regulations. Ideally, the public charging experience should be as uniform and require as little thought as filling up your car with petrol or diesel does today – the new rules go some way to making this a reality.

What do the regulations mandate?

As a result of the 2021 consultation, the Public Charge Point Regulations mandate:

Easier payment

Contactless payment will be available on all new charging stations of 8kW and above within one year. This means drivers will no longer have to fill their smartphones with an app for almost every charging network. They can simply pay for their charge in the same way as they'd pay for anything else.

In the next two years, payment roaming will also be mandated at all public charge points. This should enable drivers to

recharge at any public charger and pay with a single app. This could be linked back to their company credit card, making it even simpler to keep track of their expenses.

Using a single payment metric

Pricing transparency will guarantee a consistent pricing metric across the public network. Prices will be given at charge points in pence per kilowatt hour of charge.

From a driver's point of view, this'll make it easier to compare pricing at different charge points and achieve the best value for money. If it's a company car, it'll also make it easier to reclaim expenses as it will be clear exactly what has been paid for.

Transparent, accessible data

All chargers will have to provide real time information on their status. Transparent data will make it easier for fleet drivers to locate a public charge point nearby when they need to use one - and check in advance that it's in good working order. This'll combat any range anxiety or issues of drivers having to go out of their way to find a functioning charge point when they need to recharge.

A reliable charging network

The government is committed to improving reliability with a 99% reliable charging network across all rapid charge points including the strategic road network. There's also a requirement for a free 24/7 drivers' helpline to be provided at all charge points. ●

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Cumberland Council going greener and cleaner

Carbon-cutting steps are being taken by Cumberland Council to make more of their vehicles greener and cleaner.

They are launching a trial of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a replacement to diesel in some of its refuse and recycling collection vehicles.

HVO is a renewable fuel alternative to diesel that offers a 90% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, helping the council to meet its carbon reduction targets.

It can be used as a drop-in alternative to regular diesel with no modifications or changes necessary

to the existing fleet.

The trial will initially run for six months on four vehicles in the Whitehaven area with the option to roll this out further to other fleet vehicles and to other areas across Cumberland contributing to further carbon reductions.

The trial will deliver carbon reductions of 81 tonnes over the six months period (135 tonnes across a full year).

Cumberland Council has also added to its fleet of fully electric vehicles with a further seven new electric vans now in services across our key services, including pest services, green spaces, property and facility services, and our hostels service. The vans have replaced seven diesel vehicles and will directly contribute to carbon reductions across our fleet.

"This is an important trial that will support deliver our carbon reduction targets.

"We will monitor the progress of this trial closely and if successful we will be keen to explore options to roll this out further across other areas of Cumberland and in other fleet vehicles to further reduce carbon emissions.

"The trial also complements our other fleet carbon reduction activity as evidenced by the introduction of additional electric vehicles as direct replacement for diesel vehicles. Collectively, we are working to deliver a cleaner, greener council fleet for Cumberland."

Cumberland Councillor Denise Rollo, Executive Member for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places. ●



Hull City Council takes a big step towards sustainability with eight new electric vehicles

Hull City Council has announced the acquisition of eight new electric cars. This move is part of Hull City Council's commitment to reducing their carbon footprint, promoting sustainable practices and becoming net zero and carbon neutral.

The new electric Renault Zoe's – which are replacing eight existing petrol vehicles – will be used by members of the Hull Out of Hours team (HOOT), who provide essential services to vulnerable residents across the city. Thanks to the acquisition of these new vehicles, the team will now be able to carry out their work in

a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way.

Councillor Linda Chambers, Portfolio Holder for Adult Services and Public Health said: "These new cars will ensure a smooth and comfortable journey for our HOOTs team.

"This move demonstrates the council's commitment and leadership to achieving net zero. By switching vehicles to electric this is one practical way to demonstrate change.

"We hope that this move will inspire other councils and organisations to follow in our footsteps and make the switch to electric vehicles."

The council has invested in these new electric cars as part of its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and net zero by 2040.

As part of this, there is a progressive plan to have a zero-emission fleet by 2030.

Councillor Jack Haines, Portfolio Holder covering Climate Change said: "We're delighted with these new electric vehicles, which will be used by the adult social care team. This shows the council is leading the way on our net zero targets.

"Doing our bit to tackle climate change is vitally important for the council. Whether it's a big or small action we want to make a difference in Hull, something the residents of the city support."

The eight electric Renault Zoe's have been leased to the council by Kingstown Works Limited (KWL) 'Fleet', as part of their ongoing annual vehicle replacement program.

The cars will be based at Pryme Street Multi-story car park – the council's central electric vehicle charging hub – which has a bank of 16 7kW chargers. ●

Pictured above: (L:R:) Councillor Linda Chambers, Portfolio Holder for Adult Services and Public Health; Petra Tupling, Supporting Independence Team (SIT) Assistant Manager; Jade Oriowo, SIT Registered Manager; Reah Thompson, SIT Support Organiser; Gill Howard, SIT Support Assistant; Kevin Penn, SIT Support Assistant; Adam Fowler, Senior Decarbonisation MGMT Officer.



New fleet on the horizon for Teignbridge

A new fleet is due to arrive at Teignbridge District Council in Spring 2024, as part of the council's ongoing contract hire agreement with fleet and workshop management company Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS).

The 56-vehicle fleet includes 12 Refuse Collection Vehicles, 20 Romaquip Kerb-Sort recycling vehicles, as well as a sweeper for street cleansing and vans to facilitate other council services such as car parks and enforcement.

SFS, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, has been vehicle partner with Teignbridge for over 20 years, since 2002. The current 7-year fleet replacement and maintenance contract was agreed in 2014 and was extended for an additional three years to enable the council to review its strategy on the decarbonisation of its fleet and workshops.

Chris Braines, Waste and Cleansing Manager, Teignbridge District Council:

"The new fleet will include the latest lower emissions technologies and assist us in providing the most efficient service we can, whilst improving our sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint. We have a long-standing and successful partnership with SFS who continue to provide a very professional service and a high standard of expertise."

"With this latest fleet replacement, we have provided more than 250 vehicles to Teignbridge District Council over the past 20+ years. We look forward to delivering the new fleet and to continuing our partnership with the council."

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, SFS

SFS has an unrivalled retention record having served many of its customers for over 10 years. Other long-standing customers include Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and North Northamptonshire Council. Its fleet and plant asset list totals over 1800 items and the company maintains 800-850 refuse collection vehicles (RCVs), 200 of which belong to its vehicle hire division CTS Hire. ●

For more information visit: www.sfs.co.uk



StreetKind campaign - cleaning up Sheffield's streets with kindness

Veolia and Sheffield City Council are taking a stand to tackle unacceptable verbal and physical abuse that frontline colleagues face on a daily basis as they carry out their essential duties.

In partnership, Veolia and Sheffield City Council provide the city with recycling and waste collection services. While executing these essential duties, frontline staff reported over 40 cases of abuse from the general public in 2022. Although most people treat frontline staff with respect and kindness, a surge in physical and verbal abuse has prompted both the council and Veolia to launch this campaign.

The campaign's primary focus is to support frontline teams by creating a safer working environment. It includes a comprehensive training program designed to help staff defuse volatile situations, handle incidents effectively, and understand when to involve the police.

As part of the campaign, a series of videos using actual 360° CCTV footage from collection vehicles have been created to shed light on the abuse experienced by frontline staff. In one scenario, a van can be seen mounting the pavement to drive around the vehicle while workers are emptying bins - putting both them and the public in danger. In another instance, a

member of the public can be seen physically attacking a worker for not accepting extra waste.

Sheffield residents can actively support the campaign online by using the hashtag #StreetKind and by showing their appreciation to frontline teams in person with a smile and a wave as they go about their duties. These dedicated staff work tirelessly in all weather conditions to ensure efficient waste collection, contributing to a cleaner city, even though their essential work often goes unnoticed.

The StreetKind campaign will also focus on improving road safety and promoting safe behaviors around collection vehicles. Many incidents result from impatient drivers who do not allow workers to carry out their duties safely.

By coming together with Sheffield residents through the StreetKind campaign, the aim is to foster a caring and respectful community.

Cllr Joe Otten, Chair of the Waste and Street Scene Committee at Sheffield City Council said: "Our workers do an excellent job every day and StreetKind encourages us to show even more appreciation for their efforts. We hope through this campaign we can reduce the abuse workers can sometimes receive while delivering critical services for our city and I'm proud to support it."

"I talk to our people on a regular basis and they are passionate about their work and their teams. No one should be abused simply for doing their job and we're determined to combat this unacceptable trend. That's why I was delighted to see our StreetKind campaign win at this year's Awards for Excellence. As well as appealing to the public to show their appreciation for our teams, our campaign focuses on training and support for our employees to respond to incidents. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our teams and will take the most serious action for the most serious attacks, including criminal prosecutions, in order to build a safer workplace environment for our colleagues."

Richard Hulland, Veolia's Chief Risk & Assurance Officer, Northern Europe. ●

Powys County Council vehicles are DVSA accredited

Powys County Council has become an accredited member of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme.

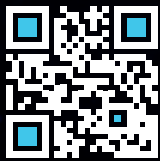
The voluntary scheme, administered by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

(DVSA), is a way for vehicle operators, such as the councils fleet service, to prove the organisation meets driver and vehicle safety standards. As an accredited member, the council have a strong track record of compliance and adherence to the regulatory requirements in running a fleet of vehicles and will regularly share performance information with DVSA.

Powys County Council are the first local authority in Wales and only the third in the UK, to achieve the standards required

to become accepted into the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme

Cllr Jackie Charlton, Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys, said: "The number of vehicles that our fleet team manage and maintain across the county is staggering. Acceptance into the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme just proves that despite being busy, we are committed to ensuring we always maintain a high standard of driver and vehicle safety." ●



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Boost productivity, efficiency AND safety with Fleetclear

Fleetclear has built a reputation for developing the most robust and reliable vehicle safety and monitoring equipment. Alongside its market leading products, which include Cyclecar, anti-roll away devices, reverse radar and LIVE camera recording systems, as well as tracking and telematics, the company offers its own end to end software solution - Fleetclear Connect.

A powerful, web-based fleet management tool that encompasses all aspects of vehicle and driver safety, operational efficiency, and compliance, Fleetclear Connect is suitable for all vehicle types.

Fleetclear Connect brings together vehicle safety hardware, and combines it with GPS tracking, telematics, advanced data analysis and processing techniques, to boost productivity and reduce operational costs.

The data is displayed on a user friendly, customisable dashboard and stored on Fleetclear's cyber secure servers, where it can be accessed via the internet.

Innovation, Integration and Collaboration

Fleetclear is committed to continually updating the system with new features and works closely with customers to meet their individual requirements. Two recent additions are remote tachograph download and heat mapping.

Chris Waller, Chief Technical Officer, Fleetclear explains:

"We have always worked in collaboration with our customers and when DCW needed tachograph information incorporated into the Fleetclear Connect system we got our development team involved.

"Tachograph data can be downloaded remotely, and our customers no longer need to retrieve the files manually from vehicles, saving both time and the potential for error. We can integrate the downloaded information with any third-party tachograph analysis provider."

A unique heat mapping feature highlights any potential safety concerns for fleet managers enabling a more proactive approach to safety. Users can view a heat map for any safety equipment, on any vehicle or multiple vehicles, and at specific times of day or drivers. The result is a comprehensive picture of vehicle operational safety, highlighting specific safety hot spots i.e. cyclist detections, roll aways, or speeding events. It is particularly useful for monitoring risk-associated events like reverse manoeuvres.

Chris Waller added: *"Fleet managers can drill down to specific events, find an exact point, and share a video of it. It's a powerful user journey and a proactive approach to safety through constant monitoring. Ultimately routes can be adjusted to reduce the risk of incidents occurring."*



South West commercial waste management and recycling company, DCW joined forces with Fleetclear and now uses LIVE camera recording systems and Fleetclear Connect. A specific requirement from DCW was that they needed tachograph information incorporated into Fleetclear Connect

"It was important for us to have tachograph information integrated into the system, although Fleetclear Connect didn't include this element at the time. However, once we mentioned it, they had no hesitation in developing and building this into the system as a feature. They threw all their resources at it. We like their collaborative, partnership way of working. They recognise that different businesses have different needs; it isn't a one size fits all approach."

Richard Smith, Commercial Waste Operations Manager, DCW



A selection of NWLDC waste collection vehicles fitted with Fleetclear Connect



One of Burnley Council's 'connected' fleet

'The driver management tools are invaluable'

Andrew Mintram, Fleet Manager, North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) commented: *"We invited suppliers to demonstrate their products and Fleetclear stood out from the start. We've been using their camera systems for years with great success and I like the fact that they have closed the loop by introducing their own software management platform. We can now get everything we need from one supplier."*

A great feature of Fleetclear Connect is the ability to customise the dashboard with the specific information that is critical for each service or operational area. In the case of NWLDC each department can now view a customised dashboard and data particular to its own needs.

Andrew added: *"The driver management tools are invaluable. We were unable to identify who was driving which vehicle, and that meant we couldn't properly performance manage our driver force. Now we can incentivise and reward best driving practice as well as identify any specific training needs quickly. This helps us to mitigate vehicle damage costs and improve fuel efficiency as we can set up alerts for harsh braking, poor driving technique or speeding."*

"We started slowly and introduced the Fleetclear Connect system to our waste collection fleet first. Within weeks if not days the system had made an impact and it's continued to make life so much easier."

"We have access to much more information, and we don't need 3 or 4 logins to access it! We can track and monitor the fleet more effectively. For example, in the case of waste collections we have set up alert zones where there are weight limits, so we don't overload any of the vehicles. We can even add hire vehicles onto the same system thanks to an OBD (On Board Diagnostic) tracking unit."

Andrew concludes: *"With Fleetclear we have gained a much better understanding about how our fleet is performing council wide, by department, vehicle type and individual drivers. We can be even more proactive about safety, by keeping a close track of any alerts or potential incidents and take immediate and appropriate action."*

'We are delighted with the system'

Fleetclear began working with Burnley Council in 2020 when the authority chose to equip its fleet of 15 Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) and sweepers with the RX Lite Live Camera System. In May 2022, the council moved over to the Fleetclear Connect software platform.

"All the information we need is now easily accessed on one system. We can track our entire fleet in real time, receive operational alerts, search, and retrieve recorded footage, scrutinise fuel efficiency, optimise routes and monitor driver safety. We also receive automatic equipment health status reports, so we know if there are any problems with any of the cameras."

"We also use the system to assist with driver training. We can check the number of reversing alerts for example and check that a banksman is being utilised. We can then address any health and safety best practice issues as part of our ongoing training programme."

"We are delighted with the system. Authorised staff members can connect to the system from anywhere; all they need is an internet connection."

"The service from Fleetclear is brilliant. They check in with us regularly and are very happy to pop in to sort out any niggles or provide additional training. We will be specifying the Fleetclear system in our next vehicle procurement contract."

Tom Ormerod, Contract Manager, Streetscene, Burnley Council . ●

For more information about Fleetclear visit: www.fleetclear.com or tel: 01386 630155



Bath & North East Somerset Council invests in electric vehicles

Bath & North East Somerset Council has invested in eight electric vans as part of its new fleet of vehicles used for highway maintenance, reducing carbon emissions and saving on fuel costs.

The majority of vehicles now used by the council's highways staff are now fully electric Nissan Townstar vans. They will be used by a range of council inspectors, including highway, street works, public right of way and highway structure inspectors.

The adoption of electric vehicles for daily

highway maintenance is an example of the action the council is taking as part of its Climate Strategy and Action Plan to tackle the climate emergency.

The council's Highway Maintenance depot in Clutton, where the electric vehicles will operate from, recently underwent a redevelopment that included the installation of electric vehicle charging points.

The council hopes these vehicles will remain in service for ten years, similar to the previous fleet of vehicles which were acquired in 2014.

"We're excited to introduce our first electric vehicles into our highways fleet. These new vans will lower our fuel usage and carbon emissions significantly and support our action plan to tackle the climate emergency as we strive to become a Net Zero Council."

"These new vehicles will help our inspectors service Bath & North East Somerset sustainably for the foreseeable future."

Councillor Manda Rigby, cabinet member for Transport. ●

Penzance Council's vehicle fleet has turned electric!

Penzance Council has upgraded its fleet of vehicles to be electric and is moving away from our use of fossil fuels as part of its Climate Action Plan.

The range of electric vehicles (EVs) are helping the council deliver important services across the parish, from street weeding to playground maintenance.

In a UK first, a fully electric Etesia ET Lander started its rounds in the parish earlier this summer! At just 3.72 metres long, it's very compact with a flatbed ideal for transporting our water tank and larger gardening and maintenance equipment, all whilst running 100% on electricity.

After crunched the numbers and, by switching from the previous diesel vans

to the new electric fleet, the Council will be saving 7.3 tonnes of CO2 per year.

Like other councils and public sector organisations, Penzance Council is on a journey: to cut its carbon emissions whilst continuing to deliver important services for local people.

"This is a milestone for Penzance Council. Our Leisure & Amenities team do a great job around the parish, as witness the 5-star "Pride in Parks" rating awarded to Penlee Park for three years running."

"Investing in a fully EV fleet means they can carry on providing this service to the local community while reducing air and noise pollution, and doing their bit to protect the planet for future generations." Said Cllr Stephen Reynolds, Mayor of Penzance.

James Hardy, Penzance Town Clerk, said *"Penzance Council's switch to electric vehicles reaffirms our commitment to making tangible changes to reduce our carbon footprint."*

"Our declaration of a climate emergency



and our climate emergency action plan must be more than a paperwork exercise. Identifying a need for change and the implementation of the electric vehicles across the operational team is the most recent example of real changes that the council is making to put climate considerations at the forefront of council decision making."

Rachel Yates from Sustainable Penzance said: *"The move towards electric vehicles at Penzance Council is a step in the right direction, and an indication of how the council is still working to put its Climate Action Plan into place." ●*



From flush to fuel for United Utilities' new electric HGVs

United Utilities is the only water company in the UK taking part in the £100 million + 'Electric Freightway' project led by GRIDSERVE and funded as part of the Department for Transport and Innovate UK backed Zero Emission HGV and Infrastructure Demonstrator programme.

The water company for the North West joins a consortium of 33 companies including Sainsbury's, Amazon and the Royal Mail taking part in the industry-leading project which aims to lay the foundations for the biggest and most advanced Electric Heavy Goods Vehicle (eHGV) charging networks in the world. It is designed to reshape how goods are transported across the UK and accelerate the transition to battery powered electric HGV vehicles by kick-starting the introduction of one of the biggest and most advanced eHGV charging networks in the world.

The United Utilities vehicles will be based at the company's Bioresources Centre in Manchester where they will be used to transport sewage sludge, a by-product of sewage treatment, from other wastewater treatment facilities across the North West for processing at the Davyhulme site.

The vehicles will charge up at Davyhulme

using the renewable electricity produced on site from the processed sewage sludge. Tom Lissett, Bioresources and Green Energy Director at United Utilities explained: "This is a really exciting development and an important step towards our 100% green fleet and net zero carbon targets.

"A lot of people don't realise that at the end of the wastewater treatment process we are left with a sludge which is used to generate renewable energy. We call this 'black gold' because of the renewable energy we can release when it is processed.

"Using the vehicles to collect the sludge and then using the clean energy it generates to charge their batteries is a great way of maximising the potential of that resource. We've recently trialled one electric HGV so we know it is a good solution for us."

The biogas generated in the anaerobic digestion process goes to a combined heat and power unit where it is converted into 100% renewable energy which will be used to power the HG charging points.

The specialist charging points will be installed by GRIDSERVE as part of the demonstrator and it is expected the vehicles will be introduced in Spring 2024. United Utilities will share learnings and data with other companies to help support the UKs transition to electric vehicles.

"The UK is at the forefront of the global transition to net zero, and today marks another important milestone to decarbonise freight, one of the economy's most vital industries. That's why I'm pleased to reveal that we're investing £200 million to roll out 370 zero emission trucks, and a further £2.4 million to pioneer green tech through the Freight Innovation Fund, as we work closely with the sector to create new jobs, grow the economy and reach net zero by 2050."

**Decarbonisation Minister,
Jesse Norman. ●**

Colas continues rollout of new electric vehicle fleet in partnership with Novuna Vehicle Solutions



Pictured: (L-R) Toby Carter, National Business Development Manager - Specialist Assets, Novuna Vehicle Solutions and Trevor Evans, Area 9 Transport Manager, Colas

Colas has taken delivery of its first batch of 10 all-electric Skoda Enyaq estate cars as it continues to transition its entire fleet to alternative fuel use in the highway maintenance sector.

Following an agreement involving Colas Ltd and Novuna Vehicle Solutions, the first batch of Skoda Enyaq electric vehicles (EVs) has now been delivered to Colas, a leader in designing, constructing and maintaining the UK's road network. The move supports Colas' ambition to decarbonise its entire fleet achieving Net Zero emissions by 2040, promoting quick and emission free mobility to and from depots and across operating network locations.

The Skoda Enyaq IV 80 150kW Estate cars, which have a range of up to 328 miles, will support Colas' maintenance and response operations for National Highways in Area 9 covering the M6, M42 and M54 and strategic road network within Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire as well as parts of Gloucestershire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

The cars supplied by Novuna Vehicle Solutions are equipped with auxiliary battery powered 360-degree LED amber lighting and Chapter 8 side and rear

exterior livery, with vehicle conversions undertaken by Bri-Stor Systems Ltd.

The addition of 10 all-electric Skoda Enyaq estate cars to the Colas fleet, supplied with enhanced safety, comfort and convenience options, follows the range of EVs, compressed natural gas (CNG) and hydrated vegetable oil (HVO) vehicles previously supplied by Novuna Vehicle Solutions to support Colas to deliver cyclical maintenance, reactive maintenance and incident response works for National Highways. This move supports Novuna's goal to fully electrify its entire car and small van fleet by 2030.

Jon Lawes, Managing Director at Novuna Vehicle Solutions, said: "Handover of the first batch of all electric Skoda Enyaq cars represents a key milestone for Colas as they transform their fleet and reflects Colas' ambition to readily future proof their business operations.

"By working together to support Colas by supplying a wide range of cleaner specialist vehicles required to deliver their vital work for National Highways, we are also helping them achieve their carbon reduction targets and look forward to building on our partnership demonstrating our expertise as a total assets solutions mobility partner."

"Having a carbon free fleet is a considerable part of our overall strategy to be a carbon net zero company by 2040. It is important that when we win new contracts, we plan how we will achieve this.

"Availability of fleet and plant means we need to plan our fleet transition effectively, and our plan on Area 9 is for around 75% of the fleet to be zero carbon by quarter 2 of 2024 and the full fleet to be zero carbon by 2030. We can achieve this by partnering with organisations such as Novuna Vehicles Solutions who can help Colas to reach our targets."

Emma Murray, Environment Manager at Colas. ●

Colas will shortly be introducing additional alternative fuel vehicles to its fleet, overseen by Novuna Vehicle Solutions, with the supply of further impact protection vehicles, barrier rigs, fitters vans and a pole carrier which will be utilised across the Area 9 road network. ●

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“

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”

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*Finch et al. (1994) TRL Project Report 58: Speed, Speed Limits and Accidents



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Supporting



Autotech Training delivers customised course to upskill The Motor Ombudsman's case handlers

By leading the way in training to support EV technology the scheme will address the shortage of qualified electric vehicle technicians to help the decarbonisation of vehicle fleets

Faced with increasingly technical vehicles, and a record rise in complaints around Electric Vehicles, The Motor Ombudsman has worked with Autotech Training to equip its case handlers with a foundation of automotive technical knowledge.

In the first technical training of its kind for the automotive dispute resolution body, the *'Tech for Non Tech'* course was exclusively created by Autotech Training for The Motor Ombudsman.

The overriding objective of the course was to ensure its case handlers held a good foundation of technical knowledge to understand the common faults of both ICE vehicles and EV's which in turn would give them greater confidence in advising customers.

The Motor Ombudsman recently revealed that, between 1 April and 30 June,

motorists logged a total of 291 cases on electric vehicles with its Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service. This figure surpassed the previous tally of 273 in the first quarter of 2023, which marked the first time the service had witnessed in excess of 100 contacts about electric cars in a single month.

While the growth clearly highlights the greater number of consumers getting behind the wheel of an electric vehicle, the main concerns focused on issues including braking and the regenerative system. Challenges around EV range, with many owners reporting that they were unable to travel the distance on a full charge originally quoted by a retailer or manufacturer, was slightly less in the second quarter compared to the first. However, the greater number of complaints logged from January to March

could be attributed to the colder weather which has a detrimental impact on range.

There are many variables which can reduce the range of an electric vehicle, from using the heating or air conditioning to speed and the weight of a vehicle and for a vast proportion of new EV owners, there is a fundamental lack of knowledge which is at the root of many EV complaints.

Keen to support its customers, and help them build greater awareness, The Motor Ombudsman worked with Autotech Training to create a course which would directly meet its needs. Following an initial meeting at Motor Trader's EV Retailing Summit at the end of last year, Autotech Training designed, built, and delivered the two day *'Tech for Non Tech'* course for The Motor Ombudsman.

In total, 34 delegates were trained by



Autotech Training's own experienced trainers over a period of six days. Split into three smaller groups, each cohort received one day's training at The Motor Ombudsman's Westminster Head Office, and a second day's training at a Suzuki garage.

"While the delegates didn't require hands-on learning, as they do not repair or maintain vehicles, we felt it was vital to support the learning process that they had an opportunity to see and touch some of the vehicle components they were being trained on," comments Autotech Training's Head of Operations, Alistair McCrindle. "The Motor Ombudsman's commitment to

upskilling its case handlers will support the transition to EV and help customers as the evolution of the vehicles they drive continues at a fast pace.

"We created the course working in collaboration with The Motor Ombudsman to ensure that what we delivered directly met their needs. We also remained flexible throughout the entire process of building and delivering the course in response to specific questions and issues surrounding common faults. From developing a greater EV awareness to understanding basic diagnostics and DPS faults on an ICE vehicle."

"Despite the volume of complaints around electric vehicles creeping up, in relation to the growing numbers of EVs on the road, the figure is relatively low which demonstrates that the majority of EV owners have a positive experience. By offering advice and sharing knowledge, we can help alleviate some of their concerns and drive down complaints. This is why training our case handlers, through Autotech Training, and equipping them with a good solid foundation of knowledge has been so important."

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and MD of The Motor Ombudsman. ●



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Navigating the challenging fleet risk landscape



By: *Nigel Lawrence, Director, Client Partnerships, Applied Driving*



The latest statistics suggest that the UK road network is not becoming any safer with fatalities broadly returning to pre-pandemic trends. When you consider that around a third of all road deaths and a fifth of casualties involve someone driving for work, it is clear that fleet operations have an opportunity to make a real difference by better managing work-related road risk.

Growing Dangers for Vulnerable Road Users

Recently published figures from the Department for Transport show that deaths on UK roads increased by 8.7% last year. While significant new changes to The Highway Code came into force at the beginning of 2022, where road users most at risk in the event of a collision are prioritised in the new hierarchy, this has yet to translate into any significant reduction in collisions involving vulnerable road users (VRUs).

Cyclist deaths did see a 23.4% reduction year-on-year, but the total number killed or seriously injured rose almost 10% to 5,602, while motorcyclist, pedestrian and e-scooter fatalities also increased.

In separate figures from Transport for London (TfL), people walking, cycling and motorcycling remain the most at risk on the capital's roads, making up 80% of those people killed or seriously injured in 2022.

Moving forward, VRUs need to become a greater concern for fleets. A study, conducted by UCL and Agilysis, found that 39% of pedestrian fatalities in the UK were in collision with someone driving for work, resulting up to 11 pedestrian deaths a month. This is a staggering number, even before you factor in other VRU fatalities, and the situation is likely to get worse before it gets better.

The COVID pandemic changed a lot of mobility habits, with a lot more people walking or cycling. There was also a large increase in e-scooter users, especially in urban areas. At the same time, we have seen a significant rise in the number of "last-mile delivery" vans on the roads and people working in the gig economy, growing the number of occupational road-users that fall outside of corporate road safety and driver training strategies.

Risk Management Response

There is not a 'one-size-fits-all' solution

for any organisation when it comes to managing work-related road risk. It will largely be dependent on existing culture, job roles, vehicle types and existing communication processes, but there still must be a strategy that is implemented from the top down and targets continuous improvement.

One of the main challenges is to avoid becoming complacent about driver safety, because an ongoing, evolving and proactive programme is needed that meets changes in legislation and business structure. There is also a risk that if an organisation is not fully committed to implementing and enforcing a fleet safety strategy, a serious driving incident could occur before any initiative can take effect.

Unsurprisingly, organisations vary massively in how they approach road safety and driver education. There are those that do no training whatsoever, believing that it is very much the employees responsibility to keep up-to-date with their requirements, while others are completely training centric and champion the cause. Driving for or to work is one of the most at-risk situations an employer can put their employees in, and yet this can be

commonly overlooked. Ongoing training alongside the drip feeding of safety messages is really important, but it is about getting the balance right and ensuring communication is inclusive across all staff, not just those involved in operational driving.

One discrepancy that we often see is where an organisation only focuses on certain areas of their fleet operation. For example, they might have a comprehensive programme aimed at van drivers, but completely overlook car or grey fleet drivers (something particularly ill-advised as cars continue to be the main vehicle type involved in collisions).

There needs to be an overarching strategy, including consistent training and engagement initiatives, that targets all areas of risk to safeguard all fleet drivers and other road users.

The Role of Technology

Technology is a bit of a double-edged sword when it comes to road safety. While many current tools such as fleet and video telematics are designed to help reduce collisions and mitigate fleet risk, there is also a danger of distraction from a growing number of in-vehicle systems

that can have an adverse effect on safety. By far the biggest concern is the use of mobile devices behind the wheel illegally is nowhere near being a taboo subject when compared to drink and drug driving, even though it can make you four times more likely to crash.

In fact, reaction times are two times slower if you are texting using a hands-free phone than if you drink drive, increasing to three times when using a handheld phone.

Too few organisations take a zero-tolerance view to mobile phone use, and many still operate a culture where it is okay to join audio and video meetings from a moving vehicle. Participating in long calls while driving come with huge associated risks and should never be deemed an acceptable practice. Of course, for many high-mileage drivers their vehicle is also their workplace, but it still must be a safe workplace.

Certain technology is of course playing a significant role in reducing road risk. By bringing together multiple streams of data from a range of sources including telematics, vehicle cameras and driver behaviour monitoring, it is possible

to create a holistic view of risk, and a complete picture of where the potential dangers lie. The challenge is to have the means of bringing all the relevant information together into a single system to gain actionable insight that can be used to improve the safety and performance of drivers.

However, simply bringing together the best technology within the marketplace is not enough. It is also crucial to have a robust safety strategy underpinning these systems that an organisation can get behind, identify with and work towards. If not, it is unlikely to achieve the desired results in terms of risk reduction.

Work-related road risk is a constantly changing landscape, especially after the turbulence of the last few years, so fleets need to keep on top of the latest legislative, business, and operational requirements. This will ensure they can have the programme and processes in place to contribute to a safer road network. ●

Applied Driving launches global driver challenge

Applied Driving has launched a month-long global competition to help encourage, educate and incentivise drivers to improve their driving behaviour.

The Driver Safety Challenge is open to all fleet drivers and motorists, with cash and other great prizes available for the top driving performances during November.

To participate, all companies and drivers need to do is sign-up through our website and download the Companion+ Mobile Safety app, which will be free of charge for the duration of the event.

The app will assess at-risk driving events and send Triggered Training™ in the form of a safety message, videos or e-learning modules tailored specifically to each driver's needs. Drivers will also receive weekly updates via email about their performance and current ranking



position in a global driver league table. The Driver Safety Challenge is part of Applied Driving's annual Road Safety Month, which has been launched this year to coincide with Brake's Road Safety Week 2023. Throughout November, the company will be running a series of driver safety workshops and webinars, as well as providing complimentary access to a wide range of resources. Organisations

will also be able to take advantage of free access to Applied Driving's e-learning module library and download road safety bulletins.

To sign-up to the Driver Safety Challenge, personally or on behalf of your fleet drivers, as well as view all the latest updates on Road Safety Month, visit, <https://bit.ly/adrsmp2023>



Venson highlights the bad habits causing costly damage to fleet vehicles

Driver training can help reduce unnecessary wear and tear on cars and vans caused by driving style or lack of care

Declining parts availability has led to increases in replacement prices and off-road time for fleets, according to BVRLA's half-year Industry Outlook Survey. With 92% of the BVRLA survey respondents reporting an increase in vehicle downtime, Venson Automotive Solutions is urging fleet managers to address driver bad habits which commonly cause unnecessary damage to the transmission, clutch, suspension or other expensive parts without the driver realising it's happening.

Some of the most popular driving habits which cause avoidable

damage include using gears to slow down, especially at higher speed instead of braking, heavy acceleration on a cold engine or in high gears, heavy braking and leaving a foot resting on the clutch. Overloading the vehicle, hitting potholes or speed bumps at speed or ignoring dashboard warning lights can also lead to costly damage.

Avoiding unnecessary vehicle damage can be avoided if drivers are regularly reminded of how they can improve their driving behaviour and how to maintain their vehicle to ensure it remains fit for purpose for as long as possible. Businesses relying on employees to drive company vehicles or their own cars for business purposes should consider daily or weekly vehicle walk round checks that can be recorded using an App and introducing driver training as part of continual professional development, to not only reduce avoidable damage to vehicles but also to help highlight how it increases driver safety and the efficiency of the fleet.

Bad habits can creep in soon after a driver passes their driving test and takes to the road independently for the first time, so some will take time to change. However, regular reminders through ongoing driver training, and a requirement for employees to carry out basic maintenance checks will help bring about change more quickly and better protect vehicles from anything other than the usual unavoidable wear-and-tear.

"We are probably all guilty of some laziness or bad habits behind the wheel from time to time," commented Simon Staton, Director of Client Management at Venson. "Most of us will be entirely unaware that we are damaging our car when we leave a hand resting on the gear stick after changing gear, or shift into reverse while still moving forward, for example. With budgets already stretched, the last thing fleet managers need is to be paying for avoidable vehicle repairs or end of lease wear-and-tear charges caused by driver induced damage."

"We would encourage fleet managers to ensure that their drivers receive regular refresher training as well as reminders about maintenance requirements and what faults must be reported. To add further budget protection, fleet managers could also consider implementing a fleet policy that recharges damage repair fees back to repeat offenders if issues are not reported when they happen."

Simon Staton, Director of Client Management at Venson. ●

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Unlocking the power and potential of video telematics

Technology Insight: SureCam

with Sam Footer, Partnership Director

In our latest Technology Insight Q&A, Sam Footer, Partnership Director of SureCam, discusses some of the latest developments in video telematics and how essential fleets can take advantage of the latest advances in technology.

Q: How is video telematics adapting to meet the needs of essential fleets?

With continued advances in cloud-based connectivity there is now a huge opportunity to bring together complementary systems to improve road safety, better protect drivers and enhance fleet management. We are seeing video telematics integrated with other apps, systems and tools, which is enabling fleet operators to gain greater levels of visibility, control and insight through added connectivity and seamless sharing of data.

Q: What complementary technologies can your video telematics integrate with?

We have created an ecosystem of technology systems that works seamlessly together to deliver added value above and beyond the benefits of video telematics. This growing range of solutions already includes vehicle tracking, mileage capture and compliance, claims and risk management, and driver training.

One such development has been the combination of lone worker protection with video telematics, providing drivers with a quick and easy way to request

assistance. This is helping to mitigate risk both in and outside the vehicle, offering high levels of safety and peace of mind to the people who drive for a living, and their employers. In fact, it is taking lone worker safety to the next level, adding an extra layer of protection to what is currently available using a video telematics solution.

Q: Who is already using this integrated lone worker solution?

Ringway Jacobs, a leading highway services provider, has achieved improved levels of safety and fleet risk reduction, as well as increasing the support provided to its drivers, following the roll-out of our video-enabled driver protection solution. The company needed a personal safety solution for its highway inspection team, responsible for walked, visual inspections of footways and carriageways. They are all too often seen as the 'face' of the highway authority and in danger of violent and abusive behaviour from road users, while also being at risk from slips, trips and falls, as well as traffic collisions both inside moving vehicles and at the roadside.

Drivers simply scan a QR code using

a mobile app to register their unique user ID, which confirms who is driving the vehicle. This automatically enables controllers in the ARC to access audio communication along with supporting video footage captured from cameras fitted on 163 Ringway Jacobs vans and specialist vehicles, as well as incident data, when an alarm is raised. The added audio and visual insight also ensures that the most appropriate action is taken quickly, efficiently and safely, with immediate access to emergency services if required.

Q: What further developments do you have in the pipeline?

We are continually evolving our technology proposition to provide greater value to our essential fleet customers. Distraction has been shown to be major cause of collisions, and yet, research found that almost three quarters of drivers admit to multi-tasking while driving. In the coming months, we are launching a number of AI solutions and integrated tools to detect and discourage driver distraction, as well as alert drivers to nearby vulnerable road users.

An AI camera will be introduced that

Ringway Jacobs, a leading highway services provider, has achieved improved levels of safety and fleet risk reduction, as well as increasing the support provided to its drivers, following the roll-out of our video-enabled driver protection solution



detects road and driver risk, including distractions and drowsiness, as well as a new integration with smart device security technology that will block the use of social media and messaging apps while driving. Meanwhile, we are planning an AI pedestrian and cyclist detection system that will be compliant with the Direct Vision Standard in London and support Vision Zero commitments.

Q: What advice would you give to a fleet looking to install video telematics?

Ensure you have the infrastructure and resources in place to manage correctly and take full advantage of the opportunities that exist. It is about embedding the technology into the organisation, and wherever possible integrating with other internal and external systems, to ensure that the right people have access. Video telematics can positively impact multiple areas of the business – including fleet, HR, finance and any third-party insurance partner – so make sure they are all involved from the start and receive the appropriate training and guidance.

Select a technology partner that can support you through the process and deliver ongoing assistance. It is not your role to be a video telematics specialist, that is their job. You need to be able to tap into their expertise and have confidence in their ability to implement a solution that meets your precise needs.

Q: Is driver pushback an issue and how do you gain their buy-in?

Driver concerns can be a challenge, especially if handled badly. Not everyone is supportive of change or greater use of technology, but the biggest pushback from drivers is normally around privacy issues and a belief that they are being watched all the time. Clear and transparent communication that engages with drivers from an early stage is key to overcoming any apprehension and will help you get the most out of a video telematics solution. You need to explain the reasons behind it being adopted and why it is a benefit to them.

It is also important to convince drivers that the purpose of the technology is non-punitive and primarily aimed

making them safer. Any measures should always be more carrot than stick, so recognising and incentivising drivers is an effective way of achieving measurable results. Consider combining video telematics with automated training and engagement, based on individual performance, along with league table to identify and reward those that have improved the most.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about SureCam?

SureCam is a global leader in video safety for fleets. We believe every fleet, from 5 vehicles to 5,000 should have real-time visibility into what's happening on the road. Our network-connected cameras and cloud-based software protect fleets from false driving allegations and are the first line of defence against rising claims costs. We work with clients to customise each fleet's configurations, providing visibility into the incidents and driving behaviour you care about while filtering out the noise. SureCam is trusted by some of the most recognised fleets in road transport, logistics, utilities, construction, taxi, field services and home delivery. ●

For more information visit <https://surecam.com>



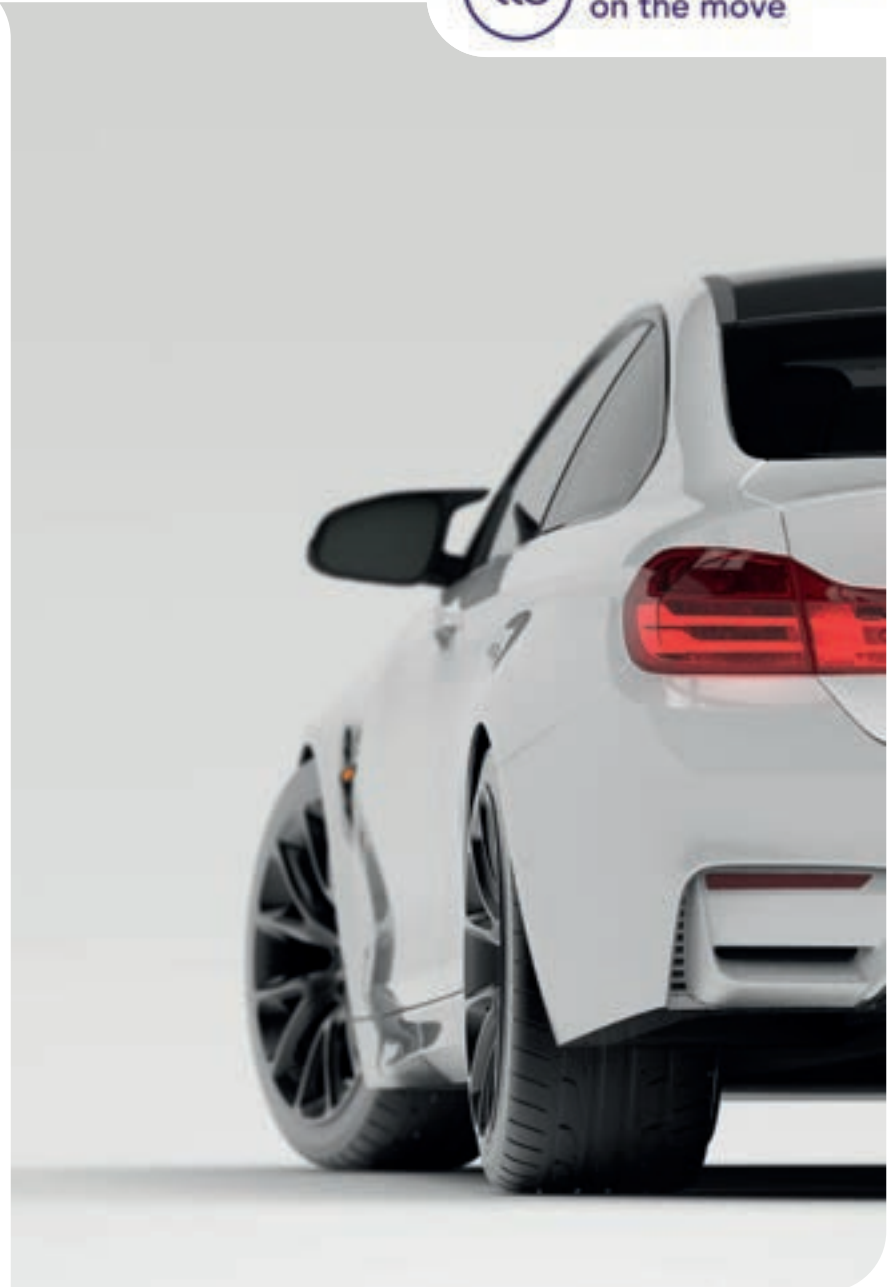
Three million grey fleet drivers could be driving with invalid car insurance

TTC data analysis spotlights the persistent risk of the uninsured 'grey fleet' and urges businesses to consider their duty of care

Data analysis conducted by fleet and driver management expert, TTC, suggests that up to three million people who drive their privately owned vehicle for work – grey fleet drivers – could unintentionally be doing so with invalid insurance. One in five grey fleet checks conducted by TTC fail, with nine in 10 of these failures due to lack of appropriate insurance cover for driving private vehicles for work purposes. With around 14 million people now choosing to use their privately owned vehicle for work instead of a company car, TTC's data highlights that a significant number of these drivers and the businesses they work for, are neglecting their duty of care.

Business car insurance covers a private car driver to use their car for any work-related purposes, over and above commuting. This includes visiting clients, travelling to meetings or moving between sites. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure business insurance is in place. In addition, throughout the UK, it is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act for any grey fleet vehicle to be verified roadworthy and legal by the driver's employer. Organisations must be able to evidence that their grey fleet employee holds a valid driving licence, business insurance, vehicle MOT and that the vehicle is taxed.

TTC helps businesses manage driver compliance, risk and learning through a simple-to-use, cloud-based platform that reduces the time and complexity of conducting and updating checks manually. It conducted close to 1 million checks last financial year, and more than 260,000 in the first quarter of this year, helping to protect its clients and their drivers from unnecessary risk while simultaneously freeing up resources to focus on the core business and fleet management requirements.



"While many businesses are following their duty of care and being responsible, a significant number are failing to do even the most basic checks on a regular basis. And with the UK's grey fleet on the rise post pandemic, it's worrying that the one in five failure rate hasn't improved since we first voiced our concerns back in 2014. There remains a fundamental need for companies to employ robust and efficient processes to manage driver compliance, and this includes ensuring their drivers are fully aware the responsibility to have adequate business insurance sits firmly with them personally."

Jim Kirkwood, CEO of TTC. ●

For more information visit: www.thettcgroup.com

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Special feature

Operating a fleet in remote locations



The Welfare Van - providing essential facilities on the move and in remote locations

It is stated in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, that if you employ anyone (however short the period) you must 'so far as is reasonably practicable', provide adequate and appropriate welfare facilities for them while they are at work. This provision also forms part of your 'Duty of Care' responsibilities

As a fleet or transport manager operating a fleet that provides essential services within the Public Sector, Utilities or Housing sector, looking after the welfare of operatives that are working in remote locations is sometimes difficult. As stated above, providing essential welfare facilities forms part of your 'Duty of Care' responsibilities.

If your vehicles are constantly on the move, and changing location daily, operatives are basically 'working out of a van'. Providing these operatives with access to essential facilities, including toilets, clean running water, a place to rest, consume food during breaks and a place to change clothing as required, is challenging, especially if they are working for a prolonged period of time in remote areas. The ideal solution is to consider a Welfare Van, sometimes referred to as a Mess Van to meet your operational needs.

Welfare Vans unlike using a static welfare unit found on worksites, are fully equipped and mobile, meaning they can simply be driven to any location, making them an efficient and cost-effective solution for a multi-site or mobile workforce.

This type of vehicle conversion has become a common solution in the Utilities sector and for infrastructure management organisations as support vehicles. The facilities provided can also be used by Healthcare frontline staff, providing safe rest areas whilst they are dealing with large scale incidents or emergency situations.

The van conversion is usually based on a LWB derivatives of vans such as the Ford Transit, or Vauxhall Movano and some leading converters are now basing the conversion on E-LCV chassis, enabling operators to fulfil legal and duty of care responsibilities within their fleet decarbonisation strategies.

Welfare Vans are manufactured to carry up to seven passengers and provide wash and mess facilities, as well as have the convenience of a WC. Many conversions include, durable non slip flooring, covered seating, microwave, fridge, hot running water, heaters, first aid kits and fire extinguishers, to mention just a few features.

One of the key aspects of driver wellbeing is safety. Ensuring your operatives can get rest, access toilet facilities and adequate protection from the elements when working in remote areas will result in a more engaged and productive workforce.

Working at remote worksites carries its own risks and it is easy to forget that practical changes can have significant impact.

A Welfare Van can be deployed to any area quickly and without the need for forward planning, meaning that your organisation can provide a mobile workforce, whenever and wherever needed. ●

Picture for illustration purposes only





Accessing remote worksites - using 4x4 vehicles

For many Utility and Infrastructure management organisations, the use of 4x4 vehicles have become essential for accessing remote worksites. In terms of advice, there are obvious and well documented risks associated with on-road driving which we have covered many times in Essential Fleet Manager Magazine, but driving off-road, across uneven and hazardous terrain, throws up its own unique challenges. 4x4 Vehicles deliver greater traction, better off-road capability, and often higher ground clearance and therefore when incorporated into a fleet, they can extend operational capability.

To help develop a further understanding Essential Fleet Manager Magazine consulted several driver trainers who have provided some basic off-road driving techniques that your drivers should adopt in order to drive safely and confidently. Such techniques form the basis of many 4x4 driver training courses - which are advisable for all those who are required to drive this type of vehicle.

Off-road driving, is in the main, about anticipation of the terrain ahead, smooth and controlled use of the accelerator and brakes and maintaining a firm grip on the steering.

Dealing with steep inclines

A common obstacle for anyone tackling uneven terrain is a steep incline. Tackling an up-hill incline can be dangerous and

should not be attempted unless the driver can be certain of a clear exit at the summit. Hazards may also be obscured as the vehicle is facing upwards and it is difficult to see the terrain below.

When approaching the incline it is advisable to select second gear and take a short run-up at low speed and to maintain a constant low speed until reaching the top of the incline - no more than a walking pace. It is also important to drive in a straight line.

The same care should be applied on the downward slope, engage first gear and let engine-braking carry you down at a slow pace - using the brakes will run the risk of them locking and the vehicle slipping. If drivers approach the bottom of the slope too quickly, they will risk burying the vehicle's front-end in the ground.

Tackling rutted muddy ground

Especially at remote and hard to access sites, the weather can quickly turn, making access difficult especially when the ground becomes saturated and muddy. When attempting to drive through a patch of mud, it is important to build up a little speed and to drive as straight as possible. Mud will obviously slow down progress, but it is advisable for drivers to keep their speed up and to select a high gear. If the vehicle does start to slip or spin the driver should ease off the acceleration. If the vehicle's tyres can't find any purchase in the mud, then it is advisable to turn the steering wheel a short way left then right in short bursts, but this is really a more advanced technique that is hard to master. If a driver has to tackle deep mud, then reducing the tyre pressure can also be helpful as it will increase traction.

Crossing water

In remote and rural areas large bodies of water can be as much an on-road hazard as an off-road one. When flooding occurs the following off-road driving techniques could also be useful to apply for on-road driving.

It is important to state that a driver should not attempt to drive through flood water unless there is no other option. Flood water prevents a driver from seeing the hazards below and can be extremely dangerous. When approaching a water hazard drivers are advised to:

- Assess the depth of the water
- Not attempt to follow other vehicles into a flooded part of the road, they should wait until any vehicle ahead has exited the water hazard
- Enter the flood water very slowly at first and then build up momentum and keep their speed constant to allow the water to dissipate around the vehicle by creating a small bow wave. This also helps to avoid flooding the engine.
- Ease off the accelerator as they reach the other side of the flood and test their brakes
- Never attempt to cross deep, fast-flowing streams
- When driving off-road, gauge how the land lies underneath the water. If you cannot be sure of a firm, driveable surface underneath, then water hazard should not be attempted

If your drivers are required to drive to remote sites using a 4x4 vehicles it is advisable to offer the correct driver training, many companies now offer on-site training so it is worth researching the courses that are available to fleets. ●

Trakm8's telematics and route AI optimisation solutions highly beneficial for managing vehicles that need to access remote locations

Telematics allows you to track the real-time location of your vehicles. This is particularly useful for vehicles accessing remote locations where it's essential to know their precise whereabouts. You can monitor vehicle positions on a map, ensuring that they are on the correct route and not deviating from the planned path.

Trakm8's route AI optimisation calculates the most efficient routes for your vehicles to reach remote locations. This minimises travel time, fuel consumption, vehicle wear and tear and Co2 emissions. Route AI Optimisation can consider various factors specific to remote locations, such as road conditions, accessibility, and remote terrain, to ensure that routes are suitable for the vehicles in question. Remote locations can have unpredictable conditions, including road closures, construction, or extreme weather. Trakm8's algorithm can make real-time adjustments to the routes as needed, if a remote road becomes inaccessible, the algorithm can

reroute the vehicle to an alternative path, preventing delays and ensuring that the remote location is still reachable.

Telematics can send alerts and notifications to fleet managers when vehicles are approaching or departing remote locations via our geofencing tool within Trakm8's Insight platform. This helps in maintaining control over the operations and ensuring timely arrivals and departures. Alerts can also be set up for situations like unexpected stops or long idle times, allowing you to respond promptly to any issues.

Telematics data can be used to ensure the safety and security of vehicles accessing remote locations. It can monitor driver behaviour, such as speeding or aggressive driving, to improve safety on challenging

roads. Additionally, remote locations can sometimes be in areas with a higher risk of theft or security concerns. Telematics data can provide a layer of security by monitoring vehicle locations and enabling quick response in case of emergencies. Telematics and route AI optimisation play a significant role in helping fleet managers ensure the duty of care for their drivers when accessing remote locations.

Telematics technology can also monitor the health of the vehicle, including engine diagnostics, fuel levels, and tyre pressure. This proactive maintenance can help prevent breakdowns in remote locations and keep drivers safe. ●



"Trakm8's telematics and route AI optimisation solutions are invaluable for managing vehicles accessing remote locations. They provide real-time visibility, route planning, dynamic adjustments, safety enhancements, and reporting capabilities to ensure that your vehicles can reach remote destinations efficiently and safely, even in challenging and unpredictable conditions."

Nick Guise, Marketing Manager at Trakm8



For more information about Trakm8's telematics and route AI optimisation solutions visit: www.trakm8.com

Finding robust 4x4 vehicles to fit with decarbonisation targets

Rugged and robust 4x4s are an essential part of any fleet operating in remote and difficult terrain. Without their capabilities, vital work simply cannot be carried out. However, fleet professionals in essential services are under tremendous pressure to decarbonise operations and many have embarked on significant fleet electrification programmes.

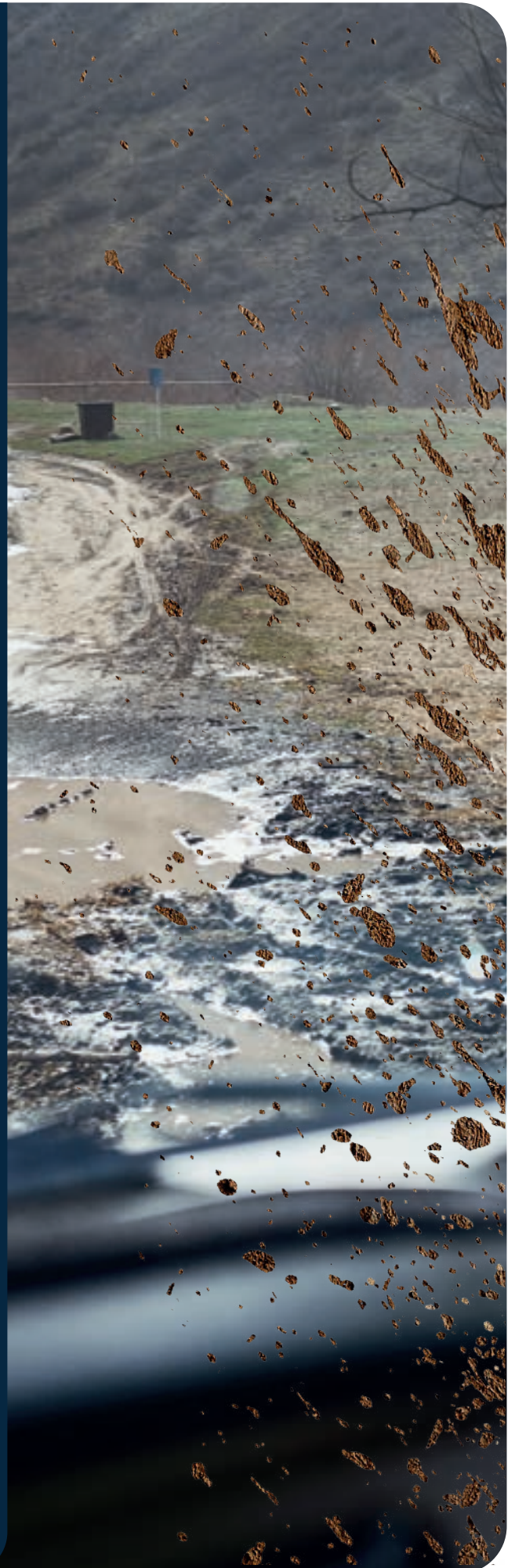
Embracing 4x4s within these strategies presents a significant challenge, as Dale Eynon, Fleet Director at The Environment Agency explained in a recent interview:

"Our main challenge to decarbonise our vehicle fleet is the lack of viable fully electric 4x4 utility pick up vehicles. We require towing capabilities of up to 3-3.5t as our incident response may involve moving strategic equipment (pumps, generators etc) to remote off-road areas where 4x4 capability combined with high ground clearance is essential. We have trialled the Maxus 2 WD pick up variant, which is suitable for some of this work but does not have the full off road capability or towing capacity at the moment. We also need to procure around 7-800 of these vehicles over the next 4 years so a good supply of fully compliant electric 4x4 vehicles remains a challenge."

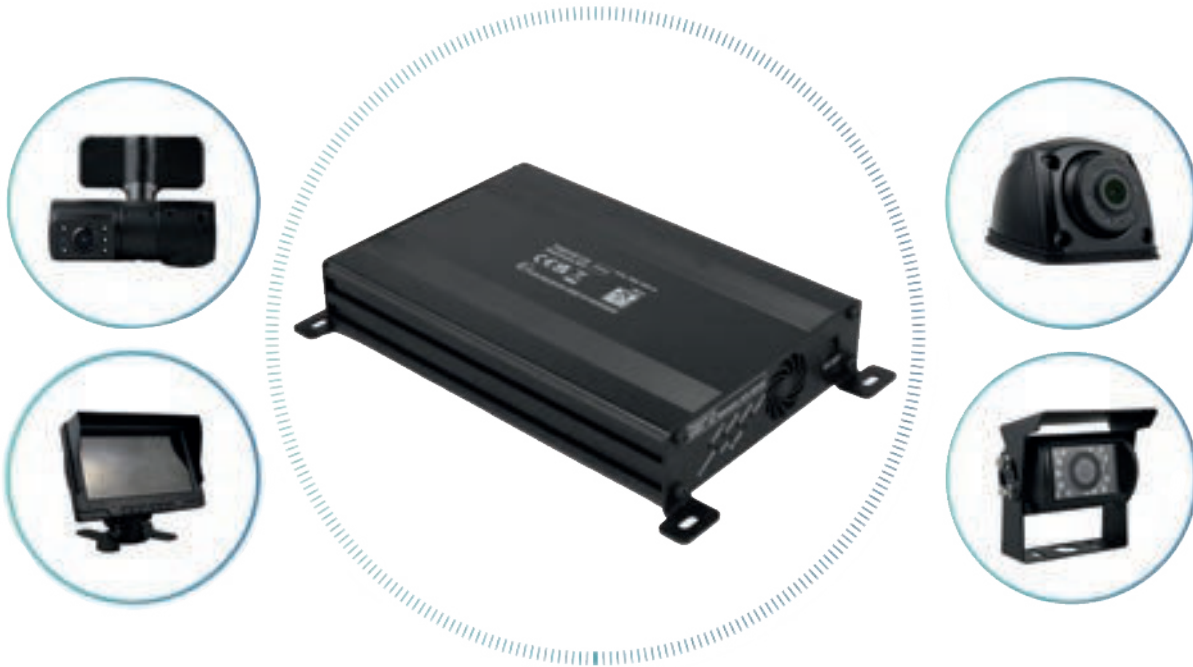
This being the case with not just The Environment Agency, but many operators across infrastructure, utilities and some Government Agencies, what steps can be taken to minimise the emissions from these fleet assets, if they cannot be removed completely? For example, it makes both environmental and financial sense to ensure that 4x4 capability can be switched to 2WD. Plainly, there is no sense in running a vehicle in 4x4 mode on perfectly good roads when travelling to a site with the extra demand on fuel and consequent increase in emissions. Of course, when reviewing vehicles during the procurement process, general fuel efficiency will also be a major factor.

Another consideration will be on site or roadside engine idling, necessary to power on board generators that, in turn, provide the power for the use tools and equipment. There are solutions available, such as Clayton Power's LPS II; a sophisticated, rechargeable battery pack that is built into the vehicle at conversion stage and provides the power for operation of equipment and many tools, without the need for engine idling.

Industry will in the medium term, develop fully capable 4x4 EVs and when that time comes, best practice will demand that the same advice is followed, not to prevent tailpipe emissions of course, but to preserve range. In many respects, this will be even more important when it is considered that vehicles will spend a whole day on an often remote site, without any access to charge points. ●



Trakm8 revolutionises vehicle surveillance with the launch of the RH800 - the first 4G connected MDVR with full telematics!



Trakm8, a leading innovator in vehicle telematics and camera solutions, is proud to announce the groundbreaking launch of the RH800, a cutting-edge 4-channel 4G Mobile Digital Video Recorder (MDVR) that is set to redefine the world of vehicle surveillance and monitoring.

The RH800 MDVR is a game-changer, offering an unprecedented combination of features that promise to transform the way we safeguard and manage our fleets. This revolutionary device is equipped with full telematics capabilities, including live streaming, GPS vehicle tracking, driver behaviour monitoring and scoring, vehicle health insights, tachograph downloads, and more. It's a complete solution for transport operators looking to enhance safety, efficiency, and overall fleet performance.

With Full HD 1080p resolution at 20fps/25fps, the RH800 ensures the capture of crystal-clear footage, a vital component of comprehensive surveillance. Its built-in 4G connectivity provides live video streaming and remote downloads of both video and photos, providing real-time insights and instant access to critical information. The

inclusion of an internal solid-state drive (SSD), available in 1TB and 2TB options, guarantees secure and tamper-proof data storage.

The RH800's versatility shines through its compatibility with a wide array of cameras, encompassing both internal and external options, ensuring a 360° view of vehicle exterior or an in-cab view.

Seamless integration with the Insight platform means the MDVR delivers frequent server updates every 15 seconds, keeping you consistently informed with the latest information. Experience the full power of telematics with the RH800, including GPS live tracking, comprehensive vehicle health monitoring (Trakm8 Connectedcare) DTCs and battery alerts, precise driver behaviour analysis through a built-in tri-axis G-sensor and accelerometer, business/private mileage tracking, and FNOL (First Notice of Loss) notifications.

Customisation is at your fingertips with optional telematics accessories like In-Cab Driver Feedback, Driver ID options, and Tachograph Download capabilities, allowing you to tailor your setup to your specific needs. Remarkably, the RH800 maintains a compact and lightweight

design, measuring only 190mm x 122mm x 33mm and weighing just 480g. This ensures practicality without compromising on performance, making it one of the most compact and lightweight MDVR units available on the market.

Trakm8's RH800 is not just an innovative product; it's a step towards a safer, more efficient, and eco-friendly future. By equipping operators with the right tools, we empower them to meet the new Direct Vision Standard Progressive Safe System coming into force from October 2024 and Silver FORS standards, improving vision and safety on the road.

Trakm8 has also unveiled the RoadHawk DC-4 Dash Cam, an SD Card-based forward-facing dash cam that provides ultimate peace of mind on the road. With Wi-Fi connectivity, a detachable rear-view camera, and 1440p Quad HD (2K) resolution at 30fps, the RoadHawk DC-4 Dash Cam ensures you never miss a crucial moment, capturing road signs and number plates with unparalleled clarity.

Experience the future of vehicle surveillance and telematics with Trakm8's RH800 MDVR and enhance your road safety journey with the RoadHawk DC-4 Dash Cam. ●

For more information about Trakm8's 4G connected MDVR, visit: www.trakm8.com

Supplier Insight: Clayton Power

Stop idling! Carry on working with the LPS II

Introduction

Fleet operators in infrastructure services, utilities, government agencies and other essential services must, of course, go as far as possible to reduce the environmental impact of operations. Fleets in these sectors also often have the added pressure of needing to consider not only the direct impact of vehicle emissions when travelling, but also those when stationary and idling to provide power to on-board equipment and tools or to maintain battery charge to support the use of vehicle ancillaries.

For around a decade in the UK, Clayton Power has been providing mobile and off-grid power solutions for the automotive, leisure and marine sectors. Essential Fleet Manager caught up with Karl Jones, Head of UK Sales at Clayton Power, who explained the fantastic benefits of the compact but powerful Lithium Power Supply system, (currently marketed as LPS II). Developed and manufactured at Clayton Power's European Headquarters in Odense, Denmark, the system uses the latest Lithium technology to reduce the need for costly and environmentally damaging engine idling and generator usage.

Interview

Q: Could you briefly describe how LPS II works and how it reduces demands on the vehicle engine?

Put simply, the Lithium Power Supply II or LPS II, is an all-in-one lithium battery and inverter which allows the user to power all their 12V and 230V appliances, tools and equipment without having to engine idle. It's astonishing to think that there are tens of thousands of commercial vehicles on the road, that still needlessly engine

idle to power roadside operations. There are some, believe it or not, that even resort to engine idling solely to recharge laptops! It's not uncommon for fleets to be using more fuel parked up at the side of the road engine idling and running generators, than they do travelling from A to B! The good news is that this issue is easily avoidable.

Q: Which industries and sectors have the greatest demands on vehicle power and therefore gain the most from the LPS II solution?

Our products have found their way into a diverse array of applications and use cases. Whether it's utility fleets, supermarket home delivery vehicles, platform lifts, camper vans, narrow boats, mobile DJ booths or Hollywood film sets our solutions are making a mark! Our customers' power demands range from simply recharging batteries for power tools and laptops, to handling heavier tools like welders, induction hobs, compressors and hot water boilers! The benefits are just as varied; some are looking to silence their operations by getting rid of loud generators and compressors, while others are keen on reducing fuel costs and trimming down their CO2 footprint.

Q: What, in summary, does LPS II achieve for roadside operations?

In conventional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, the LPS II allows the user to turn off the engine while maintaining power to their equipment. In an electric vehicle (EV) it enables users to independently power all systems without relying on the vehicle's traction battery.

Switching to EV feels a little counter intuitive if you need to depend on a generator for power. The shift to using the LPS II has the potential to generate substantial financial savings over the lifespan of the vehicles, translating into a highly appealing ROI model for the majority of our customers – all this while drastically cutting CO2 emissions.

Q: What are the extra demands on vehicles operating off-road and on remote sites and how does the LPS II reduce and mitigate the impacts of these demands?

An often-overlooked advantage of the LPS II is its 'jumpstart' capability. In the event of a drained vehicle starter battery – say for example the driver has left their lights or blowers on by mistake – the LPS II can recharge the vehicle battery and get you back on the road in no time! This feature has been very popular among many of our customers as it avoids costly and time-wasting roadside recovery callouts!

Q: There are a range of recharging options for LPS II, that maximise the unit's effectiveness and efficiency. What are those options?

The unit has a number of recharging options, including the vehicle's alternator, mains hook up and even solar panels. Standard recharging via the alternator or mains from 0-80% takes approximately 60 minutes, a time that can be halved to around 30 minutes with the addition of our optional supercharger. The solar feature is particularly interesting – the built in solar charger means you can plug solar directly into the LPS II resulting in



a recharging time of around 90 minutes from 0-80% depending on the weather conditions and panel size (up to 400W) of course. Our experiences with solar have been remarkable – for example; over the 5 months of operating our demo van with a 360W solar panel on the roof, we have achieved 32 full recharges through the solar, surpassing the 10 full recharges via the vehicle's alternator. That equates to just over 65,000 kWh of free energy!

Q: Demands on operators reaching and working on remote sites, become even greater during the colder, winter months. Part of this is maintaining heat in vehicles when individuals or teams remain inside, often for prolonged periods. We understand that you are working with leading vehicle converters to develop a solution that provides the warmth required in the vehicle, without the need for engine idling. How does this work and what are the issues that this avoids?

That's right, we are working on some interesting initiatives when it comes to heating. A lot of our customers have been seeing substantial reductions in EV range in cold weather, a contributing factor being the excessive use of cab heating. We've collaborated with conversion companies to develop a heating pack solution. This consists of an electric heater powered by our LPS II units and the system is equipped with a thermostat for precise temperature control - similar to the way it functions in your home. It gets the cab and/or rear compartment up to temperature and shuts off ensuring valuable energy isn't wasted.

Q: How does the lightness of LPS II further benefit the operator, compared to the use of traditional power systems?

Our lightest model, the 1500Wse – 100Ah LPS II weighs just 22.5kg! To put that in perspective, a comparable set-up using an AGM system would weigh at least

three times as much. Even our 3000W – 160Ah unit at 27.5kg, is far lighter compared to the nearly 100kg equivalent in other set-ups. Not only are our systems significantly lighter and easier to install, they are also more compact, making it easier to tuck away and not use up too much of the valuable space. And let's not forget customers who are replacing generators – our solution trims down both space and weight considerably there too.

Q: How does your zero-emission technology benefit the health and welfare of teams working around vehicles?

In the past 5 years I've spent a significant amount of time out on the road closely shadowing operators. This hands-on approach has given me a genuine, real-world understanding of their day-to-day operations and the challenges they face. Throughout these experiences, I've been a first-hand witness to the downsides associated with engine idling and generator use. From the frustration of trying to get generators to start, to enduring the constant noise and fumes, the drawbacks are evident. Imagine spending hours right next to these running engines! The sad reality, very often, is that even during lunch breaks, crews will gather around the back of a van with its engine ticking over. What struck me is that these operatives, despite their discomfort, awareness of the environmental impact and significant impact on health, find themselves with no alternative.

Q: Clayton Power and LPS II contributes greatly to the need to reduce vehicle emissions,

particularly important when fleets cannot completely electrify due to operational demands. However, when electrification is possible, what are the benefits of LPS II when incorporated into an EV?

Range anxiety is a familiar concern, but what if we could lift the burden of all ancillary power needs from the vehicle? This ensures the traction battery is solely dedicated to driving! Adding a solar panel to the roof gives you a self-sufficient setup, recharging the unit from the sun!



Karl Jones, Head of UK Sales

In summary...

We've covered how LPS II addresses various challenges in different sectors. If van rackers, conversion specialists and fleet managers are looking to enhance their operations and explore the benefits of this versatile power solution, how can they reach out to Clayton Power for more information and assistance?

We would love to hear from anyone who is interested in finding out more.

Visit our website at: claytonpower.com for additional details.

If you have any questions or want to start a conversation, drop me an email at kj@claytonpower.com and we can get the ball rolling! ●



Power, where you need it - the all-in-one lithium battery and inverter, LPS II



Clock change is time to review safety

Safety specialists have called on construction, logistics and industrial businesses to look at how the clocks going back will impact them and to act to mitigate the increased risk of accidents.

As the days grow shorter, the working conditions in many industrial settings undergo a significant transformation. Safety specialists FHOSS, who provide a range of high performance, illuminated safety products for numerous industries and applications, say the annual time-change should be the trigger for action.

Andrew Kimitri, Chief Executive of FHOSS, said: *“One of the most pressing concerns is diminished natural light, which can pose serious dangers for workers. The combination of reduced visibility and the unique challenges of winter conditions presents a host of safety implications that should not be underestimated.*

“There is an increased risk of accidents in industrial workplaces. Reduced visibility due to early sunsets and overcast skies can make it difficult for workers to identify potential hazards, equipment malfunctions, or even the presence of colleagues. This heightened risk is particularly concerning in environments with heavy machinery.

“At FHOSS we have developed a range of products that use light to improve worker visibility, reduce accidents and make working environments safer.”

Lower light levels in the winter often impact productivity by slowing down work processes. Workers may struggle to read instruments, labels, or documents, leading to delays and errors. This not only affects the efficiency of operations but can also compromise the quality of products and the safety of the workplace.

Inadequate lighting is a leading contributor to slips, trips, and falls in

“It is important for employers to take proactive measures and we have been working on innovative new ways to improve safety in low light levels with vehicle mounted solutions and ways to use light to provide exclusion zones around equipment.

“These have been developed in conjunction with those who run warehouses, manufacturing plants or who work on building sites.

“This time of year, as winter approaches and natural light dwindles, is a time when industrial employers must prioritise for health and safety specialists to carry out an audit on how lower light levels will impact them and to see what new products there are now available that use technology to make the workplace safer.

Andrew Kimitri, Chief Executive of FHOSS ●

For more information visit: www.fhoss.com

Trakm8 Vehicle Camera Solutions

DC-4 Forward-Facing Wi-Fi Dash Cam With Detachable Rear View Camera

Experience ultimate peace of mind on the road with the RoadHawk DC-4. This forward-facing dash cam comes equipped with Wi-Fi, and a detachable rear view camera, providing you with high-definition footage and precise GPS data. Stay in control and capture every moment with unparalleled clarity.













-  Dual Lens
-  GPS
-  Wide-Angle
-  Wi-Fi Connectivity
-  G-Sensor



RH600 4G Integrated Telematics Camera

Combine all the benefits of a leading-edge telematics device with live video streaming over the 4G network. Packing all of this technology into **ONE device** means that fleet managers benefit from reduced hardware costs and vehicle downtime for installation.

The most advanced 4G telematics camera manufactured in the UK, The RH600 is proven to **reduce insurance claims by up to 50%**, **incident rates by up to 39%** and **improve driver behaviour** and **increase fuel economy by up to 10%**.

-  HD Video Resolution
-  Live Streaming
-  Driver Scoring
-  Geo-Fencing
-  Connectivity
-  Integrated Telematics
-  G-Sensor
-  Connectedcare™
-  FNOL
-  Optional Cameras
-  Vehicle Diagnostics
-  GPS Tracking



RH800 4 Channel MDVR With 4G Connectivity

The RH800 integrates full telematics capability with a 4 channel MDVR remote access camera with 4G connectivity.

Trakm8's RH800 connected camera solution provides up to 4 channels of HD video and image uploads. We also have an extensive range of camera lenses and accessories that allows for bespoke camera fitment requirements. This is the perfect solution to help your fleet become DVS/ FORS/CLOCS compliant.



R20235
In-Cab Monitor



R20400
Road & Driver Facing



R20410
Internal Wide-Angle



R20411
Internal Dome



R20420/R20202
Side Facing Left/Right



R20421/R20201
Rear Facing



R20422
Mini Side Facing Left/Right

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Trakm8
Data driven insights

Fleetclear launches lone worker safety solution

Fleet solution provider Fleetclear is launching its latest innovation, a new personal tracking device that can be monitored via the Fleetclear Connect software platform. The IDCard personal tracker shows the Live location and historic routes for lone workers and non-powered assets such as street cleansing barrows, bicycles and litter picking devices.

The trackers can be body worn and feature automatic man down SOS alerts, two-way call capabilities and a panic button to send an SMS or make an emergency call to request help if needed. There are 5 programmable buttons, which can be customised accordingly, and the device has a slot for an ID card.

Chris Waller, Chief Technical Officer, Fleetclear: "There are many sectors that require pedestrian or lone workers to carry out duties and until now it has been difficult to monitor or track these employees and ensure their safety. Our Personal Trackers



provide a lifeline in emergency situations and send automatic alerts in no-movement scenarios. We are delighted to be able to offer this new feature within our Fleetclear Connect platform, which enables real-time monitoring of individual workers as well as vehicles and drivers."

Fleetclear Connect is a powerful web-based software platform which

encompasses all aspects of vehicle and driver safety, operational efficiency, and compliance. It is suitable for all vehicle types, easy to use and combines vehicle hardware and safety technology with tachograph information, GPS tracking, telematics including fuel & carbon analysis, driver behaviour, and compliance monitoring. ●

Hinckley & Bosworth Council consolidates its safety technology

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) has equipped its entire refuse vehicle fleet of 20 vehicles with the anti-roll away and Driver ID solution from Fleetclear.

Darren Moore, Waste & Business Development Manager, HBBC:

"Waste management is a high-risk area and we wanted to mitigate any risk of vehicles being stolen or rolling away, to protect the public and our crews. Having looked at what was available in the marketplace and following our procurement processes we selected the system from Fleetclear."

The system offers instant protection against roll aways and can immobilise the vehicle until an authorised driver has been identified using either RFID or a covert actuator.

Darren continued: "Drivers and crew members are facing increasingly challenging environments as roads become busier, and there is so much concentration required with vehicles now equipped with extensive safety



technology. The Fleetclear system provides reassurance and doesn't require the driver to perform any additional tasks."

An outstanding feature of the Fleetclear system is the robust, purpose-built CANBUS safety control unit, which incorporates fail-safe and internal monitoring systems to protect against component failure, sabotage, and other external influences.

Chris Waller, Technical Director, Fleetclear: "Our comprehensive solution requires minimal maintenance and prevents against post installation tampering".

Fault conditions and disconnected components are immediately reported to the driver via an audible warning message, and the system includes a daily test mode, so the driver can quickly test each major

component before starting a journey.

Chris added: "We provide these pro-active monitoring features to assure Fleet Managers that the system will leave the depot in full working condition each day."

Fleetclear has been working with HBBC for over 13 years initially providing vehicle CCTV recording systems and then growing product by product. The council now uses RXLite LIVE camera systems, Cyclecar cyclist safety equipment and anti-roll away technology, all provided by Fleetclear.

Moreover, HBBC is currently in the process of consolidating its safety technology, tracking and telematics by using Fleetclear Connect; an easy to use, web-based platform that combines hardware with advanced data analysis to ensure the fleet is safer, more efficient, and compliant. ●

For more information about Fleetclear visit: www.fleetclear.com or tel: 01386 630155

TyreFlix Presents

THE
GOOD

THE
BAD

AND THE
UNDER
INFLATED



**Are your tyres ready
for ACTION?**

Air pressure • Condition • Tread

Check your tyres once a month, every month



AutoSock - The affordable solution to keep your fleet moving in snow and ice

Introduction

All fleet management professionals, especially those in essential services, must take all necessary steps to mitigate the risk associated with winter driving and the operation of vehicles in difficult terrain. If vehicles become stranded due to snow and ice, the impact can be vastly more than simply being late for work, a meeting or with a delivery; it can result in the failure of emergency services, vital repairs to infrastructure being delayed and other significant consequences for the safety and wellbeing of communities

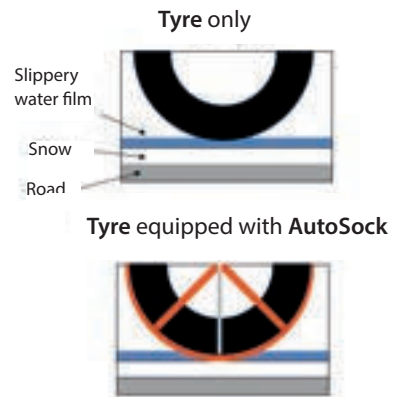
Of course, authorities will take routine precautions such as road gritting, but often vehicles will need to access, or start out from, ungritted roads or reach remote locations. Winter tyres are a great solution, but they can involve the operator in a significant cost, both in terms of the tyres themselves and storage. Therefore, a solution that is effective across all vehicle types and relatively low in cost will provide peace of mind for operators and drivers, knowing that they are prepared for those difficult conditions, however frequently or infrequently they occur.

AutoSock is just that solution. Developed in Norway, it is easy to fit by the driver, can be stored compactly in the vehicle and refitted time after time. Essential Fleet Manager spoke with Martin Gray at AutoSock who explained the wide range of benefits for fleet operators in essential services.

1 Could you explain generally how AutoSock works?

AutoSock are textile covers, sold in pairs, which you pull over the driving wheels of vehicles which need extra grip on snow-covered or icy roads. There are sizes for cars, vans, trucks, buses, coaches, fork lift trucks. They work by maximising the available dry friction –they absorb the film of water on the road surface and the unique pattern of hairs in the road contact fabric maximises the friction contact.

We think of ice as being slippery, but it's only slippery when there's a film of water on it; dry ice is actually quite sticky –most of us have experience of touching an icy metal railing with a bare hand.



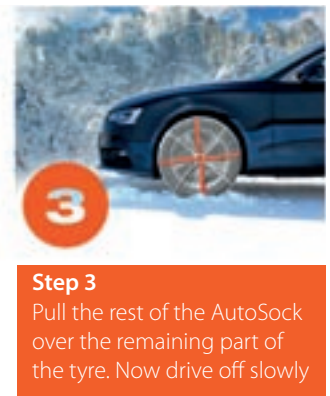
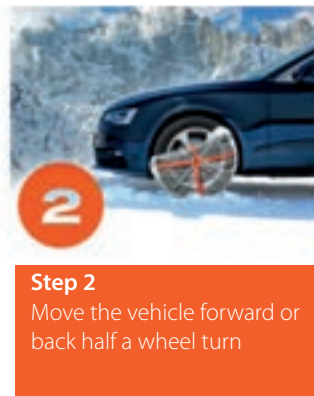
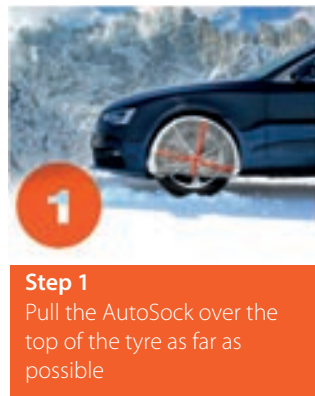
2 One of the major benefits is that the driver knows that, when required, AutoSock can be fitted by themselves. How is this done and how long does the process take?

Fitting could hardly be easier! It's safer to be on level ground, although this is not always possible. The diagram opposite explains the process step-by-step.

Fitting should only take a couple of minutes. The AutoSock will self-centre as you drive away.

When you no longer need them, usually because you've got back to salted tarmac, stop in a safe place, pull the socks off the tops

Simple and fast installation



of the wheels, drive forward so they are free of the wheels, shake the snow out of them and push them back into their waterproof storage bag, ready for next time.

3 Fleet operators in which sectors do you think stand to benefit most from AutoSock and why?

AutoSock should be of strategic interest to any business that needs to travel to its customers. Emergency services fleets are obvious candidates, but so are Utilities, as well as those who deliver food and fuel, indeed any service-based business that needs to visit its customers, especially where customers will be left vulnerable if they don't receive the service.

Vehicles which carry AutoSock should be able to keep moving safely in snowy weather, up and down hill, and rescue

themselves if they get stuck. Businesses also need to get their key staff to work, and safely back home again, so providing AutoSock for key staff vehicles also makes sense.



4 Being simple and quick to fit, can AutoSock be used as a "peace of mind" solution and contribute to safety in moderately difficult conditions?

Yes, 'peace of mind' and 'safety' are words that we associate with AutoSock. Many businesses are buying into AutoSock because they want to be confident that they've done what they reasonably can to get ready for snowfall – the reality is that it

does snow from time to time, often without much warning. At the very least business managers will want to get their staff safely back to base. Many will have no choice but to send vehicles out in snowy weather, either to attend to an emergency, solve a customer's problem, or to perform vital maintenance.

5 As well as potentially giving all fleet drivers an "as and when" snow and ice solution, does AutoSock provide extra benefits for critical service vehicles fitted with winter tyres?

Winter tyres have limitations – they generally make a massive difference to traction and safety but they lose grip in certain types of snow and on steep slopes. AutoSock are often fitted to winter tyres, for example before driving heavily loaded vehicles

down steep snowy roads, or of course up them. Many fleets now use all weather tyres, a compromise between summer and winter tyres, but here the logic for equipping key vehicles with AutoSock is even greater than it is for those which are fitted with winter tyres.



6 Most standard vehicles have inbuilt systems to aid traction and grip. Does AutoSock work in conjunction with these systems?

Yes, absolutely, when using AutoSock there's no need to turn off any electronic traction systems, as is usually recommended when using snow chains. This is because AutoSock's fabric covers the whole road contact surface of the tyre, evenly.

7 Fleet professionals will often seek data and other information that supports the claims of products, before committing to acquisition. Does AutoSock have supporting test data and/or accreditations?

Yes, AutoSock are approved as a legal alternative to snow chains for vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes GVW across most of Northern America, Europe and Asia; in Europe they exceed the recent European winter traction standard EN16662-1:2020 for passenger cars. AutoSock for Trucks are approved in many states of the USA, and in Canada, as an alternative to snowchains. Test certificates are available.

AutoSock, based in Oslo, invented and developed the whole vehicle snow sock concept, working closely with vehicle

<p>INVENTED & DESIGNED IN NORWAY</p>	<p>APPROVED BY VARIOUS CAR MANUFACTURERS & CERTIFIED BY LEADING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS</p>	<p>EASILY INSTALLED & SELF CENTRING</p>	<p>LIGHTWEIGHT & SPACE-SAVING SOLUTION</p>
<p>QUIET DRIVING WITHOUT VIBRATION</p>	<p>ALL PRODUCTS COVERED BY A LIABILITY INSURANCE</p>	<p>REUSABLE & MACHINE WASHABLE</p>	<p>CONTINUOUS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT</p>

manufacturers - they continue to supply OEM products to many vehicle manufacturers, including Chrysler, Cupra, DAF Trucks, Fiat, Genesis, Hyundai, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, Linde, NIO, Nissan, Polestar, Seat, and Volvo.

8 How would you summarise the benefits of AutoSock for fleets in essential services?

We think it makes sense for any business that needs to use vehicles as part of its daily activities to include AutoSock as part

of its winter resilience strategy. Snow happens most winters, often unexpectedly, AutoSock are quick and easy to fit, and they always work, even in slushy snow. ●

For more information about AutoSock visit www.autosock.co.uk



Operational advice: Trailers and towing best practice

Guidance for LCVs, Pick-ups and Cars

As a fleet or transport manager, knowing the towing capacity of your vehicles is absolutely critical when choosing a trailer that will meet your operational needs.

You may need to transport plant and machinery to worksites, trailers may also be required to increase the capacity of your vehicles in terms of load space. Whatever the requirements of your organisation, it is important to understand the capabilities of your existing vehicles or those you may wish to procure, to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and operated in a safe and compliant way.

Essential Fleet Magazine has put together a quick reference guide to towing, to help fleet and transport managers navigate this area and stay within the legal guidelines that are essential in operating a compliant fleet. In this guide we are making reference to either LCVs, pick-ups or cars towing a trailer that is hitched.

It is important to note that not following the guidance and ignoring the towing capacity of your vehicles will lead to damage to your vehicle's engine, tyres, and frame - often resulting in extensive and costly repairs.

In addition, unsafe towing will lead to unsafe loads being transported which will pose a risk to the vehicle's stability,

your driver's safety and that of other road users. The act of overloading when a vehicle's maximum permissible weight limit is exceeded, is also an illegal offence.

Are your drivers trained and capable of towing a trailer

As a fleet or transport manager it is within your duty of care requirements and written into to H&S guidelines to ensure your drivers and operatives are correctly trained to use the equipment they are required to use for all work purposes. In this case we are referring to the use of trailers and driving whilst towing a trailer.

Staying compliant and ensuring your driver's safety is paramount.

There have been changes driver licencing in the last few years. Drivers in the main, can now tow trailers on a standard car licence, but you will need to check when your driver passed their driving test to ensure compliance.

The rules state that if a driver got their licence before **1 January 1997** they will be able to drive a vehicle and trailer with a combined weight of up to 8,250kg Maximum Authorised Mass (MAM). They will also allowed to drive a minibus with a trailer over 750kg MAM.

If they got their licence **from 1 January 1997** they can tow a trailer that weighs up to 3,500kg MAM.

It is therefore advised that you perform a licence check on any employee that is likely to be asked to drive a vehicle plus trailer and that they are provided with the correct training.

Types of Trailers Used for Towing

There are two conventional types of trailers that can be used for towing purposes. Firstly an open trailer, this refers to a trailer that has no sides and secondly a box or enclosed trailer which is fully covered by four sides and a roof.

There are many different types of trailers available to operators, but all must be utilised using the same guidelines.

Restrictions that apply to towed trailers in the UK

- Maximum trailer width is 2.55m
- Maximum length for a trailer towed by a vehicle weighing up to 3,500kg is 7m. (Note that this doesn't include the A-frame)
- The trailer must have working indicators, lights and brakes (where fitted)
- The trailer must display the same number plate as the towing vehicle
- Load weight should be distributed and limited to fit within manufacturer guidelines
- Loads must be secured effectively
- Speed restrictions apply

Terminology explained...

Understanding the terminology referenced within your vehicles manufacturer handbook or trailer guide is important when determining your load and towing capacities. All images used below are meant for illustration purposes for this guide.

MAM - Maximum authorised mass - refers to the weight of a vehicle or trailer including the maximum load that can be carried safely when it's being used on the road. This is also known as gross vehicle weight (GVW) or permissible maximum weight.



GCWR - Gross combined weight - refers to the maximum loaded weight of your vehicle that ensures safe handling and includes, passengers, cargo and the attached trailer. This weight will be determined by the manufacturer.

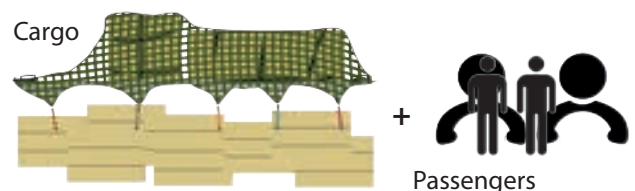
GTW - Gross Trailer Weight - refers to the total weight of the trailer and the cargo that has been loaded in it.



GVWR - Gross Vehicle Weight Rating - refers to the maximum loaded weight of your vehicle as determined by the manufacturer that it considered to be safe. This figure will include passengers, cargo and the weight of the vehicle itself. It is basically refers to the maximum loaded weight of the vehicle before any trailer has been attached.



Payload - this capacity refers to the amount of weight a vehicle can carry within the bounds of the vehicle itself and includes passengers and cargo. It provides no information about the amount of weight that can be towed by the vehicle.



Curb Weight of a vehicle - this measurement refers to is the total mass of a vehicle with standard equipment and all necessary operating consumables while not loaded with either passengers or cargo.

cont'd on page42...

...cont'd from page 41



GAWR - Gross axle weight rating - the maximum weight that the front and rear axles can withstand on a vehicle. This will be shown by two ratings, the FR rating indicates the weight for the front axles and the RR rating refers to the rear axles.



Nose Load or Tongue Weight - refers to the downward force exerted at a vehicle-trailer coupling point when your trailer is hooked up for towing. The tongue weight should be about 10-15% of the GTW.

Tow-ball coupling - the component that is fitted to the leading edge of the A-frame of your trailer, and which connects to the tow hitch on your tow vehicle.

Towing Capacity - you will need to determine your vehicles towing capacity before hitching any trailer, you will be able to locate information about your vehicle's towing capacity in the vehicle's manual, on a plate in the door jam or on the vehicle manufacturer website. Towing capacity is a measure describing the upper limit to the weight of a trailer a vehicle can tow is expressed as either **braked** or **unbraked**.

- **Braked or Unbraked towing capacity** - in simple terms there are terms there are two types of listed towing

capacities for vehicles which refer to either braked or unbraked capability of the trailer being used. All trailers that have their own braking system which is connected via a cable to the towing vehicle, are referred to as braked. If the trailer has its own braking system then this adds to the capacity on the load that can be towed. If the trailer is unbraked then logically it follows that such a trailer will have to rely on the braking ability of the towing vehicle and therefore the load capacity is reduced.

Good towing practice - when towing a trailer, drivers should always take into account the effects on a vehicle's general handling, braking and general stability. Drivers should lower their speed and allow more time for braking and manoeuvring. Loading a trailer should be done in line with the manufacturers guidelines and accordance to the safe loading guide which is generally accepted as 60/40 rule, where your heaviest cargo, where possible, is positioned towards the front of the trailer, keeping the nose load within the recommended limits. A correctly weighted and distributed load will help to prevent 'sway', which is when the trailer starts to move side-to-side sometimes referred to as 'fishtailing', which could in extreme cases, be extremely dangerous, causing the towing vehicle to overturn. Loading a trailer with the correct weight distribution will help to reduce this risk. Your load or cargo also needs to be tied down or restrained correctly to prevent it from coming loose or falling from the trailer. There also must be no load projections outside the trailer that might cause danger to other road users. Safe loading and unloading practices should also be adhered to especially with small plant, more information on this topic can be found on the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport.



This diagram is for illustration purposes only for this guide, you should always follow the manufacturers guidelines for each trailer model.

Trailer speed limits are:

- Built-up areas in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland (30mph), in Wales a new lower speed limit of (20mph) now applies
- Single carriageway roads (50mph)
- Motorways and dual carriageways (60mph)
- On the motorway, a vehicle towing a trailer is not permitted to use the right hand (offside) lane on a motorway, which has three or more lanes open for use. ●

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TRAILERS



SsangYong Motor UK Introduces more Musso - 12 inches more...

The revised SsangYong Motor UK Musso range has the addition of the Saracen+ variant with a longer bed length, making the award-winning Musso available with four specifications. The EX, Rebel and Saracen remain available in the standard bed length.

The long bed Saracen+ uses the same chassis and platform as its regular double cab variants however the new-spec model features an increased volume capacity in the load area. Plastic lined and with a sturdy rear tailgate, the load area is capable of hauling greater loads whilst the double cab's spacious interior can still seat five adults in comfort.

As well the extra 12-inches in length, its exterior styling has been upgraded with black finished door mirrors, beltline and tailgate finisher. More dramatically, SsangYong has added new, stylish, black 18" alloy wheels and 255/60 tyres increasing its road presence.

Underneath its bold exterior, all Musso variants are powered by an e-XDi220

engine, delivering 202ps at 3,800rpm and maximum torque of 441Nm at 1,600 to 2,600rpm combined with either a 6-speed manual or automatic transmission. This highly efficient, quiet, and proven engine delivers progressive acceleration from a standing start, and strong low-end torque, typical of all SsangYong power units. A new addition to the Musso Saracen+ and upgrade in line with the rest of the range is the addition of double wishbone suspension, and dual coil springs, ensuring impressive towing and payload capabilities – Musso is the only truck to legally tow 3.5-tonnes and carry more than 1-tonne simultaneously.

The range specification line-up is now as follows:

Musso EX

The Euro 6d compliant short-bed EX offers the market-entry vehicle that is built for a hard day's work at an unbeatable price. It comes with newly designed 17" alloy wheels, a DAB audio/Bluetooth system, 6- airbags, electric

windows, remote central locking that includes the tailgate, manual air conditioning, automatic headlights, rain sensing wipers and AdBlue. The EX is available with manual transmission only.

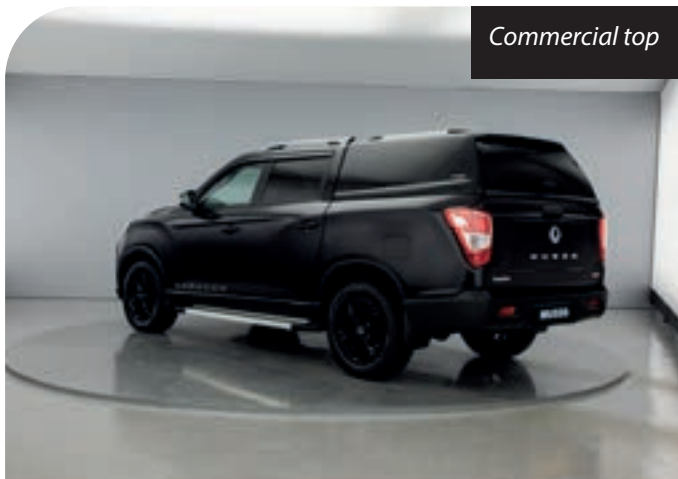
Musso Rebel

The short bed Rebel builds on the EX specification, adding roof rails, an 8" smart audio infotainment system with Google CarPlay and Android Auto, a rear-view reversing camera, leather-look seats, front seats that are both heated and ventilated, heated leather steering wheel, black and silver side steps, new triple LED front fog lights and Rebel graphics. The Rebel is available with automatic transmission only.

Musso Saracen

Adding a premium feel, short bed Saracen is instantly recognisable black exterior pack, its newly designed 18-inch black alloy wheels, Nappa leather seats, power adjustable drivers and front passenger seats, heated rear seats, dual zone automatic climate control, a 9.2" screen with TomTom navigation, cruise

A selection of accessories available for the Musso...



Commercial top



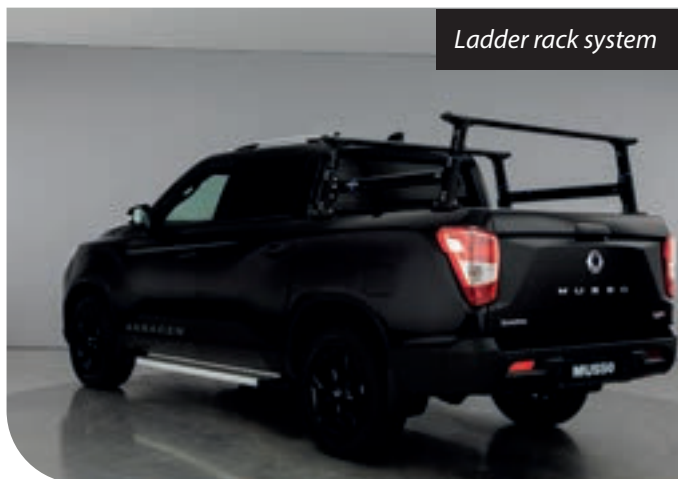
Top roll cover



Sliding load bed



Electric top roll cover



Ladder rack system



Rear seat undertray

control, front and rear parking sensors and Saracen graphics. Saracen also boasts an upgraded instrument panel, projection headlamps, LED daylight running lights, triple LED fog lights, dark tinted rear privacy glass, Blind Spot Detection (BSD), Lane Change Assist (LCA) and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA).

The Saracen is available with automatic transmission only.

Musso Saracen+

The Musso Saracen+ offers the comprehensive specification of the Saracen possessing each of the aforementioned features, with the addition of increased bed length and

wheelbase, extra payload, ground clearance and Saracen+ graphics. Featuring new styling pack, new wheels and tyres, coil springs and wishbone suspension. The Saracen+ is undoubtedly a must try for anyone looking for a capable utility vehicle. Available with automatic transmission only. ●

For more information visit: www.ssangyonggb.co.uk

Volkswagen Amarok: five years of servicing and MOTs, warranty and roadside assistance

Fleet managers facing higher maintenance costs might be interested in Volkswagen's '5+ promise' included with the new Amarok, which offers five years servicing and an extended five year warranty.

In terms of style, the new Amarok's front end is characterised by bold horizontal upper radiator grille crossbars, while the rear end is distinguished by new

C-shaped rear lights. The length and longer wheelbase creates more room in the cab, while shorter overhangs improve the off-road ability. Add in new technology – including 30 driver assistance features - and the second-generation Amarok redefines the premium pick-up sector, offering a reliable companion for customers seeking comfort without sacrificing load-lugging or off-road capabilities.

The new Amarok is available in a choice of four trims – Life, Style, PanAmericana and Aventura

The entry-level trim, Life, focuses on Comfort, featuring 17-inch Combra silver alloy wheels, LED headlamps, a 10-inch infotainment screen and a key safety feature of a rear-view camera system.

Style, builds on the features of the Amarok Life, while adding greater design to the aesthetic, including 18-inch Amadora silver alloy wheels, a Chrome styling bar and black side steps with a chrome insert for a more premium feel. It also includes an upgraded 12-inch central

infotainment screen with navigation, as well as additional safety features, such as Area View 360° camera.

The PanAmericana focuses on off-road ability. The driveline features a rear locking differential, underride guard, as well as the comfort suspension system. Upgraded 18-inch black Amadora alloy wheels, and the premium bumper with black 'X' insert add to the design enhancements.

The range-topping Aventura stands out for its design, with 21-inch Varberg silver alloy wheels, chrome-plated exterior mirror and door handles, and premium bumper with silver 'X' insert.

All new Amaroks will also come as standard with Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' 'the 5+ Promise' which gives customers five years' peace of mind with five services (three Oil Change, two Oil Change and Inspection plus three MOTs), a five year warranty (extended from the standard three year warranty) and five years' roadside assistance (extended from standard three). ●



For more information visit: www.volkswagen-vans.co.uk



...coming in 2025



First Ever Ranger Plug-in Hybrid; Pro Power Onboard further boosts Off-Grid capability

When its available, Ford will offer customers a plug-in hybrid version of its Ranger, combining electric driving capability with adventure-ready versatility and the work-ready dependability customers have come to expect from Europe's best-selling pickup.

Production of the first ever Ranger Plug-in Hybrid starts in late 2024 with deliveries

to customers in early 2025. The new model will mark a significant step forward in Ford's plans to offer a full range of powertrain options for customers in the mid-sized pick-up truck segment.

Ranger Plug-in Hybrid customers will also benefit from the Ford Pro ecosystem of solutions – simplifying the transition to electric vehicles with charging, software and service options to help their businesses thrive.

It will deliver more torque than any other Ranger by combining a 2.3-litre Ford EcoBoost petrol engine with an electric motor and rechargeable battery system – also enabling it to be driven in pure electric mode for a targeted driving range of more than 45 kilometres.¹ Pure electric drive capability opens new possibilities for business owners in growing numbers of towns and cities with low emissions zones.

The maximum braked towing capacity of

the Ranger Plug-In Hybrid is a targeted 3,500 kg – the same as the rest of the Ranger line-up.

Ranger Plug-in Hybrid will also offer Pro Power Onboard, enabling customers to power their high-draw power tools and appliances on a worksite or remote campsite by plugging them into power outlets embedded in both the cargo bed as well as the cabin. That means noisy, bulky, heavy generators can be left at home, leaving more space in the cargo bed for other gear and equipment.

In addition to having on-demand electricity, Ranger Plug-in Hybrid's EV drive modes 4 will give customers more flexibility in deciding how and when to use the EV battery power.

The Ranger Plug-In Hybrid will also come equipped with the Ranger's proven four-wheel drive off-road capability, 5 selectable drive modes and advanced driver safety and driver assist features. ●

For more information visit: www.ford.co.uk

The updated Isuzu D-Max range

The Isuzu D-Max range has proved a real hit within the 'Essential Fleet' sector offering off-road capability and high levels of comfort.

This year, the pick-up was updated with fresh cosmetic changes to maintain its appeal. Each trim level has received significant visual enhancements, including a freshly styled front grille.

The versatile D-Max's combination of impressive capability, durability, and reliability, along with a rear differential lock, means it can handle any situation drivers can throw at it.

The Business range is built for performance under the most demanding working conditions. The Utility model combines durability with new levels of safety and comfort. It is the smart choice for professionals who put their pick-up to work. The range features D-Max Utility which comes in single, extended, or double cab options. It is designed for a working environment with durable steel wheels, black plastic bumpers, door mirrors, and handles. It has a rear bumper step for easy access to the load area and a tailgate damper for Double Cabs.

The Utility model comes equipped with automatic headlights, rain-sensing wipers, speed-sensitive power steering, and a Stop & Start system that enhances fuel efficiency while reducing emissions. Vinyl flooring and cloth upholstery paired with an ergonomic seat design and adjustable features ensure comfort and reduced fatigue for multiple drivers. The cabin is equipped with air conditioning, cruise control, DAB, and Bluetooth® for a

convenient working environment.

The Isuzu D-Max Utility can handle heavy workloads with ease, boasting a 1.1-tonne payload capacity and a towing capacity of 3.5 tonnes (4x4 models only). It also features trailer sway control to ensure safety on the road while towing. The 4x4 version of the Utility model has 4WD shift-on-the-fly with three settings for different terrains. On top of that, the pick-up comes equipped with Hill Start Assist, Hill Descent Control, and underbody protection for safe off-road travel.

The new D-Max has helped Isuzu power into new territory within the pick-up segment by achieving the maximum five-star safety rating in the tough new Euro NCAP test. This is the first pick-up in the UK to feature class-leading Advanced Driver Assist Systems (ADAS) safety systems as standard across the range. Peace of mind is further enhanced with a five-year / 125,000-mile warranty and five-year roadside assistance. ●



For more information visit: www.isuzu.co.uk



FIAT Professional unveils the new Ducato

The new fully new electric version of the FIAT Ducato is launched alongside a renewed range of diesel engines to give operators a choice in terms of performance, reliability, reduced fuel consumption and CO2.

One of the major innovations brought by the E-Ducato 2024, is the new 110-kWh battery which ensures a best-in-class zero emission experience thanks to its autonomy up to 420km in the WLTP cycle, which makes the E-Ducato a top-performing within its category. A new power unit capable of releasing up to 200kW of power (270hp) combined with 410Nm of torque completes the new powertrain system along with the battery.

The charging system is also completely new and presents two standard onboard chargers, capable of accepting up to 11kW AC or up to 150kW DC for fast battery charging in as little as 55 minutes.

The new E-Ducato is equipped with a particularly high-performance power unit, and three driving modes - Eco, Normal, and Power - which ensure the perfect balance between performance and range.

The E-coasting level can be selected through specific paddles on the steering wheel to choose between

the most regenerative braking or the freewheeling mode.

The extensive line-up of diesel engines is confirmed with the latest generation of MultiJet engines, compliant with Euro 6E regulations, always at the top for performance and durability: 6-speed manual transmission paired with three power levels (120, 140, 180 hp) and new 8-speed automatic transmission in combination with 140 and 180 hp. The Heavy-Duty range with Euro VI Step E homologation is articulated in the two power levels 140 and 180 hp, both combined with a 6-speed manual transmission and an 8-speed automatic transmission.

Thanks to the new electric architecture, the new E-Ducato also introduces a full array of new ADAS. The Full Brake Control System, Traffic Sign Recognition, Lane Departure Warning, Attention Assist, and Intelligent Speed Assist become standard on all versions.

Thanks to the introduction of several aerodynamic improvements, the new Ducato ensures a reduction in terms of fuel consumption and CO2 by up to 9% compared to the previous generation. This, without sacrificing the renowned performance of its powertrain capable of delivering up to 450Nm of torque, is a best-in-class value in its segment. And no matter which engine customers choose, the new Ducato maintains its cargo load capacity of up to 17 m3 and payload of up to 1.500 kg.

The refreshed interior includes a

redesigned dashboard and steering wheel, new more functional storage space and a new single-zone automatic climate control system.

In addition to these features, the new E-Ducato will offer the following contents aimed at improving the working lives of professionals and enriching their driving experience: a wireless charger; dual USB A + C for charging smartphones; a 230-volt high-voltage power outlet centrally located on the dashboard and easily recognised by all front seat occupants; heated windshield with internal electric heating element for quick defrosting. The Digital rearview mirror and 360° parking sensors come as a further help when driving and parking blind or fully loaded vans.

Exterior updates, both on the electric and internal combustion engine versions, have been concentrated on the front of the vehicle, with the purpose not to modify an overall aspect that is considered among the best looking in the segment. Major refresh involves the entire front grille of the Ducato, which now features new bumpers, new skid plates, and an innovative front grille with a modern design in body color for FIAT, aimed to improve aerodynamic efficiency.

The E-Ducato now offers Full LED headlights, enhancing its nighttime visibility while imparting a contemporary and assertive appearance. The exterior refresh is further complemented by updated rear headlights featuring black accents and new logos. ●

For more information visit: www.fiatprofessional.com/uk



The new FIAT Scudo - Compact on the outside, big on the inside

The new Scudo takes another step toward excellence with a revamped design, improved efficiency, state-of-the-art connectivity, and more sophisticated driving aids.

Available with a 100% electric powertrain and a last-generation diesel engine.

It comes with a new front style and redesigned full-LED headlights, plus the brand-new body color Titanium Grey.

The driving position of the new Scudo provides significantly greater comfort and practicality.

There is digital instrument cluster and large 10" central touchscreen and storage that is spacious, especially at the top of the dashboard and on the center console. The ingenious design of the cupholders at the ends of the dashboard allows customers to position their smartphones in an upright position.

With a height of only 190 cm, the volume

is significantly spacious and possesses outstanding load-bearing capability despite the compactness of the vehicle's exterior: up to 6.6 m³ of cargo capacity and up to 1.4 tons of payload.

With the Magic Cargo functionality, drivers will be able to extend the loading area: up to 3.67 m in the standard version, and a maximum of 4.02 m in the Maxi version. In addition, it is possible to adjust the front seat and use it as a table for a computer and tablet or support for having lunch in maximum comfort.

Among all the solutions that the new Scudo has to offer, it is possible to choose the front passenger seats that best suit the needs of every worker.

Thanks to its new 100-kW electric engine, and the immediately available torque of 260 Nm, it means optimal performance is achieved in any load situation.

To optimise range, the new Scudo is equipped with a regenerative braking system that can be activated according to four different regeneration patterns using the paddles located behind the steering wheel.

Customers can also choose between two battery sizes, 50 or 75 kWh, according to their needs. The 50-kWh battery provides autonomy up to 224 km (in the WLTP mixed cycle) of maximum autonomy guaranteed.

The 75-kWh battery maintains the same speed and maximum torque while ensuring the remarkable threshold of 350 km of maximum range in the WLTP mixed cycle.

A wide range of state-of-the-art diesel engines is also offered on the new Scudo, with three power steps and dual transmission available: manual or 8-speed automatic. The electric version benefits from up to 1.25 tons of payload while the diesel version boasts up to close to 1.4 tons.

The new FIAT Professional Scudo comes equipped with new connectivity and infotainment features.

The standard radio is equipped with a 5" touchscreen DAB radio with one USB port integrated.

The premium infotainment system, available with or without integrated navigation, features a 10" color touchscreen display, a DAB car system, an MP3 player, 4 USB inputs, and a WIFI connection. In addition, the predisposition for Apple CarPlay and Android Auto™ systems allows customers to stay connected to their smartphone safely and without being distracted from driving.

In terms of driving assistance systems, the new Magic Mirror is a new function that displays on a new digital rearview

mirror two different views so that the driver can perform any maneuver safely. The images come from two cameras, one under the side right mirror and one above the rear doors. This provides a rear view while driving and a side view on the blind area right side, helping professionals with their daily maneuvers. A unique tool that allows the system to give the driver a perfect view of the rear of the vehicle but also the areas surrounding the vehicle on the passenger side.

The new Scudo comes equipped with standard Advanced Driver Assistance Systems aimed at ensuring the utmost comfort and safety during the journey. These systems include features such as ISA, Intelligent Speed Assist with speed limit Recognition, Driver Attention Alert, and Lane Keep Assist, which can detect road edges even at higher speeds and issue both audio and visual warnings if the vehicle is veering out of its lane. Additionally, it features an Emergency Braking System equipped with pedestrian and cyclist detection, along with Intelligent Speed Assist to assist drivers in adhering to speed limits.

Thanks to the Send&Go functionality, customers can send their destination to the Infotainment system beforehand directly from their smartphone, and easily reach it thanks to the navigation system provided, while always staying informed of the remaining charge of the battery.

With the Fiat App, it is possible to manage several functions remotely, such as locating the position of the vehicle and locking and unlocking its doors. For more comfort, the cabin of electric vehicles can be preheated in cold weather or cooled on very hot days. Connected services also allow customers to communicate the GPS position of their vehicle and get

in contact with an operator to receive assistance, if necessary, or receive a real-time notification in the event of attempted theft or kidnapping of the vehicle.

In addition to E-Call, all vehicles come with an exclusive standard preventive maintenance package. By connecting to the Fiat App or the FIAT Professional web portal, it is possible to get the vehicle information: a good way to anticipate maintenance periods.

Completing the offering are “fit for mission” connectivity packages that can meet a wide variety of customer needs, from sole proprietorships to large fleets.

To optimize working and travel times, there are different levels of Connected Services available for fleet managers. The **first level**, referred to as task management, allows fleet managers to create a list of tasks to be accomplished by the driver during the day including time, destination, and other useful details. Once the tasks are assigned, the driver receives a notification on the vehicle and can access the complete list of tasks. In addition, the driver will also be able to send his destination directly to the navigator or send updates on task progress to the fleet manager.

The **second level**, Task management with route optimization, in addition to the basic service, tasks are reordered through an algorithm to reduce traveled distance.

For electric vehicle fleets, there's the **third**

level, Task management with route optimization for EVs includes all the features of the previous levels but goes a step further. The algorithm evaluates whether the vehicle charge is sufficient to perform the assigned tasks and, if not, it inserts a stop between different tasks to charge the vehicle.

These “fit for mission” pack features can be managed through the Free2move portal.

To support Fiat Professional LCV customers, Free2move Charge offers a 360° integrated charging ecosystem that delivers tailor-made and seamless EV charging and energy management anywhere and in any way. Customers can access different charging solutions at home, at the workplace, and on the go, including hardware, software, installation, and services thanks to recommended partners. Making it easy to Always Be Charged (the e-ABC Promise), Free2move Charge also makes it smart, understanding users' needs and optimizing overall energy management to improve efficiency, reliability, and access, reducing the total cost of ownership and maximizing environmental benefits. ●



For more information visit: www.fiatprofessional.com/uk



Updates made to Vauxhall Combo, Vivaro and Movano models, alongside fully-electric equivalents

Vauxhall has announced a series of updates to its latest generation of light commercial vehicles (LCVs). With new versions of the compact Combo, mid-size Vivaro and large Movano vans, the updated models offer a new exterior style and redesigned cockpit, while the battery-electric versions will continue to offer class-leading driving range. In addition, Movano will also be available as a hydrogen fuel cell vehicle in the near future.

Vauxhall's LCV models will feature a new 'Vizor' front-end, mirroring the latest design found across the latest generation of passenger models. The Vizor integrates the Griffin brand emblem with the signature front lighting systems, creating a single visual unit that stretches fully across the face of the vehicle.

Inside, a refreshed cockpit will provide drivers with an upgraded infotainment

system that includes a new 10-inch touchscreen featuring wireless Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™.

The updates to Vauxhall's LCV range will be available across diesel and electric models of each van.

The battery-electric versions of the new Vauxhall Combo, Vauxhall Vivaro and Vauxhall Movano will continue to offer uncompromised usability similar to that of the respective combustion engine variants. Thanks to state-of-the-art battery technologies and enhancements such as further improved drivetrain efficiency, all three will therefore continue to offer class-leading, locally emissions-free battery-electric range.

The new range of Vauxhall light commercial vehicles will carry over all the strengths of their predecessors. These include a wide range of advanced driver

assistance systems to make journeys and manoeuvring more comfortable and above all safer. Furthermore, the trio will be available in various lengths, heights and body types to meet all professional needs, and they will maintain their convincing load volumes, payloads and towing capacities. Vauxhall will reveal more details about the individual vehicle lines in the coming weeks.

Vauxhall, along with its sister Stellantis brands, is the only manufacturer to make vans in the United Kingdom and proudly does so at its Luton and Ellesmere Port plants – the latter having recently been upgraded to be the UK's first electric-only vehicle plant, manufacturing the Vauxhall Combo Electric.

Vauxhall is one of few brands to offer a fully electric variant across its entire LCV line-up. ●

For more information visit: www.vauxhall.co.uk

New entry-level 'Design' trim for Vauxhall Astra Electric and Mokka Electric



Vauxhall has announced the introduction of new Design entry-level versions of the Astra Electric and Mokka Electric, making Vauxhall's electric range more accessible than ever. Order books are open now, with deliveries for the Astra Electric Design and Mokka Electric Design starting from January 2024.

The new Design versions of Astra Electric and Mokka Electric makes Vauxhall's electric range more accessible to consumers looking to start their electric journey, whilst continuing to deliver a high level of specification. Both models come with a comprehensive suite of driver aids and safety technologies as standard, including lane departure warning, speed sign recognition, driver drowsiness alert and forward collision alert.

The Mokka Electric Design is equipped

with 17-inch alloy wheels and features a seven-inch touchscreen with Android Auto™ and Apple CarPlay™ compatibility. For added convenience, this trim also features rear parking sensors, a panoramic rear view camera and automatic lights and wipers.

The Astra Electric Design is fitted with 18-inch bi-colour alloy wheels and benefits from Vauxhall's Pure Panel interior, which features a 10-inch touchscreen with voice-activated satellite navigation and a 10-inch digital instrument cluster. Rear parking sensors, keyless start and automatic lights and wipers further enhance ease of use.

As with all electrified Vauxhall models, the new Design versions are also available with Vauxhall's 'Plug & Go' offer, allowing customers to choose a wallbox from one of Vauxhall's three

approved national suppliers and spread the

cost across the length of their finance agreement. Other Plug & Go benefits include eight years' roadside assistance, an eight-year battery warranty, and an Octopus Electroverse card, providing access to over half a million public chargers across the UK and Europe.

As the best-selling small electric SUV in the UK, the inclusion of the Mokka Electric in Design trim will open up the popular model to even more UK motorists, who are looking for zero-emissions style and practicality. The Mokka Electric Design is available with an electric motor which delivers 100kW (136PS) and 260Nm of torque, and a 50kWh lithium-ion battery which delivers range of up to 209 miles (WLTP).

The Astra Electric Design is powered by a 54kWh lithium-ion battery and 115kW (156PS) electric motor for improved performance, with up to 258 miles of range between charges (WLTP). ●



For more information visit: www.vauxhall.co.uk



Nine months of growth for Britain’s new van market but chargepoint plan still needed

REGISTRATIONS OF VANS plus HCVs 3.5T-6T by MONTH

	Sep-23	Sep-22	% change
Pickups	6,349	3,863	64.4%
4x4s	1,296	536	141.8%
Vans <= 2.0t	880	1,016	-13.4%
Vans > 2.0 - 2.5t	7,085	3,748	89.0%
Vans > 2.5 - 3.5t	29,150	25,787	13.0%
All Vans to 3.5t	44,760	34,950	28.1%
Rigid > 3.5 - 6.0t	797	485	64.0%

Britain’s new light commercial vehicle (LCV) market grew for the ninth month in a row in September, up 28.1% with 44,760 of the latest vans, pickups and 4x4s joining UK roads, according to the latest figures published today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). One of the most popular months for new van purchases, plate change September saw robust demand round off 20.8% growth in the year to date, with 257,979 units registered in the first nine months.

Operators continue to opt for payload and fuel efficiencies, with the largest vans – weighing greater than 2.5 tonnes to 3.5 tonnes – remaining the biggest market for new buyers in September, rising 13.0% to 29,150 units. Medium-sized vans also saw significant growth, up 89.0% to 7,085 units, while demand for pickups and 4x4s increased by 64.4% and 141.8% respectively. Deliveries of the smallest vans, meanwhile, fell -13.4% to 880 units. The Plug-in Van Grant, competitive

running costs and increasing model choice continued to boost demand for battery electric vans (BEVs) in September, with deliveries up 85.9% to 2,882 units – accounting for one in 16 new vans registered in the month. With 25 zero emission van models now available in the UK, these vehicles already carry out a wide range of roles for operators, from local businesses to some of the country’s largest organisations.

As a result, a UK record 14,296 electric vans have been registered since January, commanding 5.5% of the overall market. As manufacturers now face new zero emission van sales quotas starting at 10% in January, however, there is a clear need for a national plan that gives more van operators the confidence to make net zero investments. In particular, public charging infrastructure must be suitable for vans of all shapes and sizes so that van drivers – like their passenger car counterparts – can realise the full benefits of zero emission motoring.

Vans are irreplaceable workhorses that keep Britain on the move, so a bumper September capping nine months of growing fleet renewal is good news for the economy, the environment and society. Decarbonising this sector is fundamental to the wider net zero transition and, as vans are business critical, urgent measures are needed to grow operator confidence to invest now, in 2024 and beyond. In particular, the specific needs of van operators must be considered when planning public charging strategies.

Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive. ●



Crown
Commercial
Service

New Lot for Conversion of Bespoke and Specialist Vehicles replaces Crown Commercial Service's Vehicle Conversion Dynamic Purchasing System Agreement

Crown Commercial Service's (CCS) Purchase of Standard and Specialist Vehicles agreement (RM6244) allows the central government and wider public sector to buy standard, converted, and specialist vehicles of all sizes, specifications, and fuel types.

The agreement provides access to a full range of motor vehicles, which includes vehicles that are both currently available and those that will be developed and brought to market during the term of this agreement.

You can also access a wide range of specialist bespoke vehicles and conversion services, such as specification design, body build, testing, and associated maintenance. In addition, you can buy bespoke vehicles from a vehicle manufacturer or a converter, who can make changes to standard vehicles through direct award or

further competition.

New lot for conversion of bespoke and specialist vehicles

Public sector fleet teams frequently need to convert their vehicles to be suitable for different operational purposes. While the vehicle manufacturer supports some level of vehicle modification, many vehicle changes require a specialist conversion.

In August 2023, CCS's Vehicle Conversion Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) (RM3814) expired. Lot 10 of CCS's Purchase of Standard and Specialist Vehicles agreement (RM6244) replaces the expiring Vehicle Conversions DPS.

To view visit: : <https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6244>

Using Lot 10 of the agreement, Conversion of Bespoke and Specialist Vehicles, you can buy bespoke and specialist vehicles within the following types/categories:

- **M1** vehicles (Passenger cars)
- **N1** vehicles: (Light goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes),
- **N2** vehicles (used for the carriage of goods from 3.5 tonnes to 12 tonnes);
- **N3** vehicles (used for the carriage of goods 12 tonnes and above)
- ambulances, including accident and emergency double crew and other stretcher-bearing vehicles
- bluelight conversions
- other services such as design, consultancy, livery, electrical, communications, welfare vehicles, heating, cooling, ventilation, utilities, and drainage ●

If you require further information, please contact CCS at info@crowncommercial.gov.uk or 0345 410 2222

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ESSENTIAL FLEET MANAGER *Magazine*



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