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Paul Brown on how a new funding method led to telematics – and massive savings

Insight: tyres



It's not just what you buy, but how you buy it that counts. We assess all the options

Fleet News Awards: LeasePlan



How the needs of customers are shaping the award winner's services

ENSERVE



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Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. General Motors UK Limited, trading as Vauxhall Motors, does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their particular tax position. * = Terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0870 240 4848 for full details. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (April 2016). † = Whole Life Cost leadership compares the following vehicles: New Astra SRi Sports Tourer 1.6CDTi 110PS ecoFLEX 92g/km, Focus Zetec S estate 15 TDCi 120PS 99g/km, Golf SE estate 1.6TDI 110PS 110g/km. New Astra Sports Tourer SRi model shown above is for illustrative purposes only and features 18° alloy wheels (£395), Dark-tinted rear windows (£275), Keyless entry and start (£395) and LED tail lights (£195) with P11D from £19.830, CO₂ from 92g/km and fuel consumption up to 807mpg.

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Tyres are central to a fleet's successful operation and the way they are procured can make a big difference. Find a purchase plan that suits your operation









What are the benefits to fleets of driver data from telematics? *Fleet News* Awards finalists discuss

New EU data regulation to protect driver privacy

Consent will be crucial to accessing information from connected vehicles

By Gareth Roberts



ew data protection rules adopted by the European Parliament last week aim to protect the privacy of drivers as the connectivity of company cars and vans increases.

There will be a much higher standard for consent, the definition of what constitutes personal data will change and there will be tougher sanctions for anybody falling foul of the rules.

Businesses have been given two years to comply with the new, stricter regime, which has been explicitly designed to deal with issues arising from connected products and services, including vehicles.

"Individuals must be empowered; they must know what their rights are and know how to defend their rights if they feel they are not respected," said Frans Timmermans, first vice-president of the European Commission.

"The new rules will ensure that the fundamental right to personal data protection is guaranteed for all."

Connectivity in cars and vans is becoming more commonplace and the majority of drivers already use apps like Google Maps and sat-navs to plan journeys.

But with experts predicting 90% of new cars will be connected by 2020, sharing real-time information on a massive scale will soon become the norm.

Vehicle manufacturers say it has the potential to offer huge economic, environmental and societal benefits.

However, with technology developing at a rapid pace, Erik Jonnaert, secretary general of the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), warned: "There are many challenges on the road ahead."

The new rules now enshrined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) only apply to personal data. But with the definition of personal data also changing, legal expert Stephan Appt says much of what will be produced will fall under the new regulation.

GDPR makes it clear that information is treated as personal data whenever individuals can be identified by online identifiers, including GPS information.

Appt, a partner at Pinsent Masons, said: "Data that identifies drivers indirectly would be considered personal data."

And if the UK votes to leave the European Union following the referendum on June 23, British fleets should not expect the new rules to be watered down for them. Appt said: "This legal framework will not only apply to data in the EU, it will apply to everybody supplying goods and services to the EU."



"Fleets should fight to retain ownership of data"

Ashley Sowerby, Chevin Fleet Solutions



"Most drivers will give their consent provided it's made clear to them what is collected, how it may be used, who can access it and that it's stored securely"

Caroline Sandall, ACFO

90% Proportion of new cars that will be connected by 2020

Number of vehicles

on which Chevin Fleet

Solutions holds data

Driver consent for data-sharing services will therefore be crucial, with the new rules making it clear that it must be "unambiguous" and communicated by "a statement or clear affirmative action", he added.

"Pre-ticked boxes will not constitute consent," said Appt. "It must be freely given and informed. The relationship between fleet – the employer – and the driver is going to be important."

The ACEA said in a strategy paper on connected vehicles released last week that manufacturers aim to design their vehicles and services so that "where possible" drivers can choose whether to share personal data.

Furthermore, it said: "Customers will be able to deactivate the geolocation functionality of their connected vehicles and in the connected services that are offered except where geolocation data must be processed to comply with contractual or legal obligations, for example emergency call."

For fleet operators, location-based data for example would be restricted to business use, much as it is today with telematics. However, Appt says the new rules will require "a balance of interest test" between the interests of the driver and the interests of the business.

Caroline Sandall, deputy chairman of fleet representative body ACFO and fleet manager at Barclays, told *Fleet News*: "Most drivers will give their consent, provided it's made clear to them what is collected, how it may be used, who can access it and that it's stored securely."

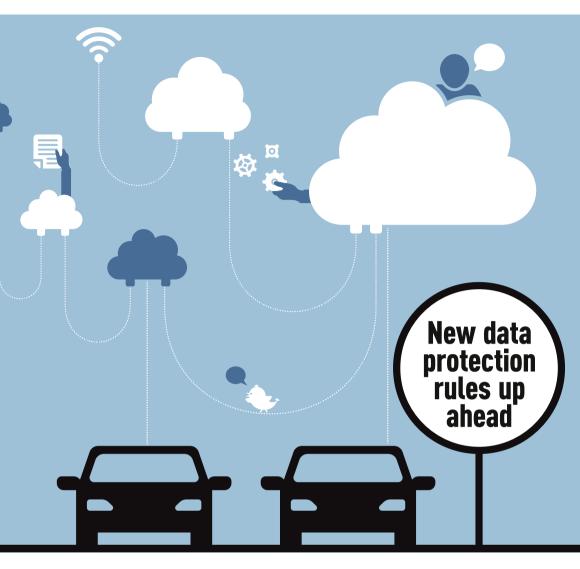
However, while she believes explaining to drivers what is collected will be fairly straightforward, explaining the potential outcomes will be more challenging.

"Information gathered could signal behaviours or inform the employer about events which could be deemed gross misconduct and lead to dismissal," said Sandall. "Trying to describe all scenarios is impossible and would lead to lengthy data protection clauses.

"Employers are going to have to think carefully about what data will be truly useful and meaningful. If that message is not clearly delivered, employees will struggle to understand what they are consenting to, which could lead to grievances or being challenged when any punitive action is taken."

Debbie Floyde, group fleet and risk manager at Bauer Media, said that, ideally, consent will be written into contracts between the leasing company and end-users.

However, she added: "I would definitely make it part of policy that they would have to share data if they want to drive on company business.



"Potentially, this would be limited to data concerning just business trips, unless it was in their interest to access data on a private trip such as in the event of an accident."

The fleet sector has previously raised concerns over the ownership of driver data produced by connected vehicles (*Fleet News*, January 7, 2016).

Appt told delegates at the Connected Fleets Europe conference in Amsterdam: "Original equipment manufacturers talk about 'my fleet', while fleet managers talk about 'my fleet, which also implies it's 'my data'. But, from a legal perspective, there is no ownership of data."

Legally, it is a question of consent and, while many are calling for an open platform so that data can be easily shared between third-party suppliers, carmakers are reluctant to give it away for free.

In its connected vehicles strategy paper, the ACEA says the EU should establish a regulatory framework for access to vehicle data that "takes account of the fact that vehicle manufacturers invest heavily in the ability of vehicles to generate data and are ultimately responsible for ensuring the vehicle's safety and integrity as well as the protection of the user's personal data and privacy".

But, Sandall said: "Drivers will view their employer as the prime custodian, regardless of who actually supplies the car, as for the most part the contractual relationship is between the driver and their employer and that's where they will go with problems and concerns."

Chevin Fleet Solutions holds operational data on more than 850,000 vehicles that are managed using its Fleet-Wave software, so understands the complexities that connected vehicle data can bring. Managing director Ashley Sowerby told *Fleet News:* "It is right that companies running vehicles, along with their drivers, should have a high degree of control and the new legislation appears to deliver a general improvement on the previous situation."

However, he has previously warned that manufacturers can gain some key benefits from connected cars, especially when it comes to influencing driver behaviour (fleetnews. co.uk, April 12). "

For example, they could flag-up servicing requirements and book the vehicle in with the nearest franchise dealer," said Sowerby.

"It is a question of creating the best balance between benefits, privacy and choice. This is why fleets should be fighting to retain overall ownership and control of their vehicle data, bearing in mind a whole range of issues from employee right to privacy through to operational policies."

For its part, the ACEA recently adopted a statement setting out five principles of data protection to which it says the industry will adhere.

These principles include transparency, customer choice, privacy by design', data security and the proportionate use of data.

Jonnaert said: "We are committed to providing customers with a high level of protection and maintaining their trust.

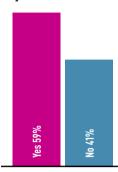
"This is essential if intelligent transport systems and the connected car are to fulfil their potential to contribute towards societal goals such as facilitating traffic management, improving road safety, reducing fuel consumption and bringing down CO₂ emissions."

Fleet roundtable: benefits of driver data, page 22.

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

UPINION PULL

Do you think all drivers should be retested when they turn 70?



FleetNews view:

Under UK law, when drivers reach 70 they are required to renew their licence every three years, with older drivers legally required to declare whether they are fit to drive. However, more than half of respondents (59%) want drivers to be retested when they turn 70. This may not have a direct impact on fleets, due to the age of employees, but any measure which could improve road safety deserves to be looked at.

This week's poll: With connectivity increasing in cars, would you be prepared to share your data? *fleetnews.co.uk/polls*

MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

Maxxia UK launches portable salary sacrifice scheme

fleetnews.co.uk/news



fuel-cost-calculator

ŠKODA





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Smart Light Assist



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skoda.co.uk

LED daytime running lights

Exterior modelshown is Superb Hatch SELExecutive 1.4 TSI 150PS ACT at £24,640 OTR with optional Sirius alloy wheels at £650, metallic paint at £335, Smart Light Assist at £950, sunroof at £850, front and rear parking sensors at £350. Interior model shown is not UK specification. *Standard on SE L Executive and Laurin & Klement, optional on SE at £1,295. 10 ptional on SE and SE L at £950 and Laurin & Klement at £100. Only available in combination with BI-Xenon headlights and electrically adjustable front seats. Information correct at time of print [04/16]. Official fuel consumption for the new ŠKODA Superb range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.4 (9.0) – 65.7 (4.3); ExtraUrban 45.6 (6.2) – 85.6 (3.3); Combined 39.2 (7.2) – 76.4 (3.7). CO₂ emissions for the new Superb range are 164 – 95g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

NHS Scotland to launch central fleet support unit

New fleet management roles created to collaborate across 22 health boards

By John Charles

new National Fleet Support Unit (NFSU) is being launched in Scotland to maximise fleet acquisition, utilisation and operating efficiency across the 10,500 vehicles serving the NHS. NFSU will be fully operational from August with an initial team of five people led by Michael Jackson, who oversaw the review of NHS Scotland fleet management

operations, including his own 1,450-strong Scottish Ambulance Service (*Fleet News*, September 17, 2012). The review's aim was to identify synergies from greater

fleet management collaboration between the 22 health boards across Scotland, without compromising operational effectiveness and ultimately achieving best value.

The shared service approach across the entire NHS Scotland fleet, which has a vehicle replacement value of £226 million with annual expenditure of £62m, will deliver "considerable financial savings" and benefits in terms of efficiencies, effectiveness and economies of scale, said Jackson.

The decision to create a national NHS unit follows the move by Scotland's police forces and fire services, which both merged their eight operating regions when forming Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue respectively in 2013.

Historically, each NHS board had its own fleet management operation, with little evidence of collaborative working, other than the use of some central procurement contracts, which included leasing, fuel cards and insurance.

That will now change with the NFSU delivering a "more effective and efficient use of NHS Scotland fleet and car leasing resources and service improvements", according to Jackson.

It will also ensure "consistent governance and resilience is embedded" across the fleet function with the ability to "adapt and respond to a changing health and social care environment", he added.

Jackson, who assumes the new role of general manager for NHS Scotland National Services Scotland (NSS) NFSU, is recruiting a national fleet manager, fleet engineer, fleet systems/administration manager and fleet administrator.

Further administration staff will be recruited incrementally to become a team of nine by the end of 2017/18.

NFSU will be based in Lanarkshire and provide support to NHS Boards through five regional fleet management operations. The regional operations, which are currently being formed, will be supported and guided by the NFSU.

In practice, a lead NHS Board will provide the fleet management function for each region and will be responsible for ensuring all fleet requirements are met.



"NHS Scotland requires a fleet structure that is flexible and resilient"

Michael Jackson, NHS Scotland





Value of

fleet operation

NHS Scotland fleet manager role: fleetnews.co.uk/ fm-nhs-scotland The regional fleet managers, line managed by the lead NHS Board, will form part of a national fleet management team, coordinated by the NFSU, to ensure that collaborative opportunities are fully explored and executed. However, vehicles will continue to be operated by the local

boards and meet individual board requirements. One of the first tasks of the NFSU will be to introduce a

national fleet management system which will be utilised by all 22 NHS Boards and will replace 10 existing systems.

Reducing road risk will also be key. Central to that will be the implementation of a telematics system. It is planned to go out to tender in May/June. Presently, about eight of the 22 boards have fitted telematics systems, from a variety of suppliers, to about 900 vehicles.

Other key benefits from creation of the NFSU are expected to include: improvements in the utilisation of staff and vehicles; improved journey and mileage management, delivering fuel savings; standardisation of vehicle specifications; and joint national procurement and vehicle maintenance.

Jackson, a former *Fleet Van* fleet manager of the year winner, was previously general manager of the Scottish Ambulance Service, before being seconded to the Scottish Government's NHS shared services programme to undertake the review of the fleet management operation.

He said: "NHS Scotland requires a fleet structure that is flexible and resilient and has an appropriate skills mix in order to maximise service improvement, efficiencies, and ensure the operation is responsive to its future needs.

"Investment in the establishment of a National Fleet Support Unit together with the procurement of fleet systems, will ensure that agreed management and engineering duties, currently undertaken many times at NHS Board level, are carried out once nationally and consistently for NHS Scotland."

The national strategic function operating at best-in-class standards would, said Jackson, "reduce variation and deliver efficiency savings for future investment in frontline patient services to support local fleet operations".

Tesla may forego fleet as Model 3 deposits hit 400k

Lead times could run into years for new electric car, which is not due until 2017



By Simon Harris

esla could be ruling itself out of an immmediate future in fleet, despite recently appointing UK national contract hire and leasing manager Jeff Edgar, after taking almost 400,000 deposits for a new model that is not scheduled for launch for almost two years.

The electric Model 3 prototype, presented as an affordable Tesla', was unveiled at the end of March when the company began taking deposits.

By mid-April, the number of deposits was "approaching 400,000", according to some news reports, based only on the prototype's appearance and provisional specification.

Some analysts have suggested the decision to take deposits so far out from the expected launch has given the loss-making company a much-needed cash injection.

But with demand at such high levels for the Model 3, Tesla could be fulfilling orders for some years to come.

Tesla chief executive Elon Musk recently responded to Twitter questions regarding the Model 3 in the UK, saying production will begin in the US, "but we will need to build a factory in Europe to serve long-term regional demand".

This year, Tesla is on track to produce between 80,000 and 90,000 Model S and X.

The larger Model S has been on sale in the UK since 2014 and is priced from £59,035 to £92,235, depending on specification and battery range. Customers can order one today for delivery in early summer.

The Model X SUV has since been launched, with deliveries in America underway although, according to online forum reports, some customers are unhappy with build quality.

The Model 3 price is expected to be closer to £30,000 and production is scheduled to start in late 2017.

Tesla says when production begins it will start deliveries in North America on the west coast, moving east.

As production is ramped up, deliveries for Europe and the rest of the world will commence, although right-hand drive production will be behind left-hand drive.

A spokeswoman said: "It is not possible to ship to all regions simultaneously because regulators in each part of the world have slightly different production requirements.

"Staggering deliveries in this way also allows us to provide the best possible customer experience.



Approximate expected

price for Model 3

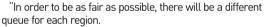
Number of Model S cars

registered in the

UK in 2015

"Fleets like certainty and the longer the lead time the greater the risk costs could change"

John Pryor, ACFO



"We're giving existing Model S and Model X customers priority in configuring their Model 3 after they've a placed a reservation as a thank you for their loyalty.

"The purchase of their vehicles helped us build Model 3 and early reservations is how we thank them," she added.

According to the DVLA, 1,428 Model S cars were registered in 2015, and three Tesla Roadsters.

ACFO chairman John Pryor said fleets would be unhappy to face a long wait for a car, despite the potential benefits in running costs and tax.

"Fleets will try to avoid long lead times in most cases as they are budgeting to timelines," he said.

"Fleets like certainty and the longer the lead time the greater the risk that vehicle costs – such as lease rates and P11D charges – could change.

"Many fleets that lease their vehicles will be tied in to what the supplying partner is able to provide and prepared to provide quotes for.

"That may often be not too long before a vehicle is ready to order, again because of uncertainty around pricing both in terms of the new vehicle and the used car market."

Pryor believes that cash purchase fleets, particularly smaller privately owned organisations, might be more willing to put up with long lead times.

"However, I suspect this is more related to the business owner using company money to fund the deposit," he adds.

"What's more, fleets will often cancel an order if a delay proves to be too long. Some years ago I recall lead times on some Audi models ran to eight or nine months because of issues linked to the supply of diesel engines and fleet orders were cancelled."



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*Saving based on switching original VW diesel fleet to Toyota and Lexus hybrids.





Safety concerns over use of all-lane motorways

Police chief believes risk is increased for some collision types leading to deaths

By Tom Seymour

mergency and breakdown recovery services have voiced major concerns about the safety of 'all-lane running' if it is to be rolled out across the UK's major roads network.

The concept for all-lane running, where the hard shoulder is also used, was originally piloted on a stretch of the M42, and 'smart' sections of motorway can now be found on the M1, M4, M5, M6 and M25 (see panel, below).

All new sections of smart motorway are expected to be based on the all-lane-running configuration.

MPs launched an inquiry into all-lane running in November 2015 to evaluate its effectiveness in managing capacity and congestion, and its impact on road safety.

Simon Wickenden, Metropolitan Police Service traffic management officer, told the Transport Committee evidence session on April 18 the risk of collision for a stationary vehicle that has broken down on an all-lane running motorway increases by 200%.

Wickenden said: "While Highways England has shown alllane running can improve journey times and has reduced some collision types, our view is that collision types where the risk has increased and are more likely to be fatal are not sufficiently mitigated against."

Wickenden gave an example of a recent fatality in March after a vehicle broke down on the all-lane running section of the M25. The incident is still under investigation by Essex Police, but the car is believed to have run out of fuel in an unlit section of the motorway and a lorry collided with the vehicle, killing the rear passenger and seriously injuring the other two occupants in the car.

Wickenden said there have been 3,700 breakdowns on the all-lane running section between J23-J27 of the M25 in the past 12 months.

Both the RAC and The AA, who also gave evidence at the committee meeting, raised concerns on the lack of understanding from drivers about adhering to the 'red X' sign, general understanding of how smart motorways work and the distance between emergency refuge areas (ERA). 200% Increase in risk of collision

for broken-down vehicles on all-lane motorways

3,700 Number of breakdowns on all-lane section of M25 in past year



71% of motorists feel smart motorways are less safe: fleetnews.co.uk/ smart-safety Edmund King, AA president, called for the amount of ERAs to be doubled on any stretch of all-lane running motorway and for each ERA to be doubled in length from 30 to 60 metres.

The current distance between ERAs on all-lane running is 1.55 miles.

King said he doesn't feel there has been "adequate consultation" on all-lane running for it to be rolled out on a wider basis.

He said: "The lack of ERAs creates an issue where some truck drivers are taking tachograph breaks there and one truck takes up the entire space.

"If there is nowhere for vehicles to go in an emergency, it creates a congestion and safety issue."

David Bizley, RAC chief engineer, said there is a problem with drivers' adherence to use of the red X over the carriageway and more needs to be done with education and enforcement.

He said: "Motorists have a poor understanding of what to look out for or what to do if they break down on all-lane running sections of the motorway."

The breakdown services' current policy is not to attend a broken down vehicle on an all-lane running motorway as it is deemed as too high a risk for their recovery teams. This means vehicles have to call 999 for aid and a recovery vehicle can attend if the lane has been closed and access is safe.

WHAT IS ALL-LANE RUNNING?

All-lane running motorways have variable speed limits, no hard shoulder, and emergency refuge areas every 1.5 miles. Highways England uses CCTV cameras and variable message signs to manage smart motorways. Depending on the type of motorway, speed restrictions can be set and lanes closed in the event of an incident or congestion. Information signs are used to warn drivers about queuing traffic and speed limits as well as being used to close lanes and divert traffic. The red X sign is used to show when a lane is closed due to an incident or obstruction. If a red X is displayed drivers must not proceed further in the lane indicated.

Carmakers seek 60% cut in car structural weight

'Light join' technology will increase EV range and reduce running costs

By Tom Seymour



issan and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) are taking advantage of a £38.2 million Government fund to reduce the structural weight of their vehicles by up to 60%. Structural weight accounts for 15-20% of a vehicle's gross weight.

The pair will receive £1.7m to research new 'light-join' technology, using techniques developed for Formula One cars and space satellites, to make their cars weigh less and be more efficient.

The results could reduce the weight of components in vehicles like the Nissan Leaf by more than half, potentially extending the distance from its current potential maximum range of 155 miles to nearly 200 miles.

Both manufacturers are part of a consortium which is using vehicle components made from composites, integrated into the right places in the vehicle to reduce weight while still maintaining strength.

Light-join's objectives include developing joining technology which could enable weight reductions of 30% compared to an all-aluminium alloy structure, and 60% compared to an all-steel structure.

A spokesman for JLR said the intention is for the technology to be used on all vehicle types if testing is successful, rather than just on hybrids and electric vehicles (EVs).

Working prototypes are expected by 2018 and could feature in passenger cars by 2020.

Nissan's Intelligent Driving System (IDS) concept, which hints at what could be the next-generation Leaf, has an estimated range of 340 miles and could be a future model to benefit from the weight saving technology.

The light-join consortium comprises nine companies: JLR, Nissan UK, Gestamp, Stadco, Scott Bader, Granta Design, TWI, Far UK and WMG.

Testing activities on the new technologies will include safety checks through crash simulations and measurement of engine noise and vibration.

The latter will help the programme to minimise the amount of damping materials required to ensure a smooth ride, and enable further weight reduction.

JLR said light-join will also help the brand to meet future targets for EU fleet average CO2 emissions.

"Light-join is the latest example of our approach. In other programmes we're optimising the internal combustion engine, producing advanced hybrid and battery-electric propulsion systems, and introducing more new, lightweight materials," said a JLR spokesman.



"It will mean lower running costs and less fuel consumption" Andrew Jones, DFT



 Finite of the set of





"We are on a very positive trajectory to reduce vehicle emissions and improve fuel economy through more efficient and downsized engines and alternative powertrains, lighter vehicles and improved vehicle energy conservation."

JLR will introduce new EV technologies into future models and is already trialling future alternative powertrains for road vehicles in its Formula E electric racing vehicles.

The spokesman continued: "The investment in Formula E will push the boundaries of electrification technology and provides a real-world, fast-track test bed for future JLR electrification technology, transferring technology from track to road."

JLR already has a hybrid version of its luxury Range Rover and is expected to expand its range of alternatively fuelled vehicles, including all-electric models, as well as plug-in hybrid versions of the XE and XJ.

The car manufacturers are part of 130-strong consortium of companies that have won a share of the £38.2m, announced in the recent budget, which is intended to make the UK a global leader in exporting emission-cutting technology.

Transport minister Andrew Jones said: "Our investment will help Britain become a world leader in this exciting and valuable technology sector, creating skilled jobs of the future as part of our long-term economic plan.

"It will also mean lower running costs for motorists and less fuel consumption, which is good for the environment and our economy."

The £38.2m is part of the Government's wider £600m commitment until 2020 to support the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles.

The winning projects were chosen following a competition that was launched last September (2015), which encouraged companies to propose innovative ideas to cut vehicle emissions.

The funding combines ± 30 m from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) with ± 8.2 m of additional funding from Innovate UK, who will support the schemes.



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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, Fleet News



The age-old debate about price versus service and the importance of 'value' raised its head during a recent supplier debate held by *Fleet News* with its Fleets Informed

programme partners.

The general feeling was that fleet operators are becoming more sophisticated in their relationships with suppliers, putting greater emphasis on value throughout the course of a contract, rather than securing what appears to be the cheapest price upfront.

"Fleets Informed partners recognised the need for greater transparency"

However, there are procurement-led companies that persist in taking the price-led approach. While their priority is to drive savings, a major blight, according to one delegate, was the fact that, by the virtue of having a certain size of fleet, some suppliers were willing to offer golden handshakes to secure business.

Fleets Informed partners recognised the need for greater transparency around their pricing matrices but, while some are seeing fleets unbundling services, others see calls for them to bring together products and services as a one-stop shop.

Customer service expectations are rising, they said, as fleets view their supplier relationships through their own retail experiences. The immediacy of service provided through the likes of Amazon is shaping expectations, but often fleets are not tolerant of the complexities of business.

According to one, this evolution in service expectation is even more exaggerated in salary sacrifice, where B2B crosses with B2C. It is forcing all suppliers to put much greater resource into handling complaints and resolving issues, something which should ultimately benefit all fleet operators. You can read more about these leading suppliers' views of the challenges of fleet in the May 12 issue of *Fleet News*.

YOUR LETTERS

EMISSIONS

Government not doing enough on air pollution





Gordon wrote:

Having read 'Increase diesel surcharge to clean up air pollution' (*Fleet News*, April 14), what about the unregulated diesel engines running the refrigeration units on delivery trucks, etc? This report is shortsighted. There are electric LGV alternatives. There will be many more by 2021. There is too much talk and not enough action to kerb the poisonous gases emitted into our cities and lungs. The Government should stop the poisoning and step up to the bar. Taxes won't stop big businesses or certain individuals, so you must make one rule for all vehicles and keep restricting the low emission zone principle for all. This is the only fair way to stop the worst polluters from entering the cities. Get to work on those delivery trucks, container ships and buses. That way we'll all live longer and pay more tax.

■ The editor's pick in each issue wins a £20 John Lewis voucher.

Edward Handley added:

The biggest source of pollution in cities is not actually diesel – it is congestion. Thousands of vehicles sitting in traffic queues with the engines ticking over, going nowhere pump out massive quantities of pollutants without any benefits at all.

If the kind of money that manufacturers have spent developing Euro 4, 5 and 6 engines had been invested in traffic planning, road improvements and more effective public transport in the big cities, there would have been a major improvement in air quality by now.

TD added:

If diesel vehicles are causing the pollution, then when are commercial vehicle, bus and taxi makers going to provide petrol driven engines?

MOTORWAYS

Make running out of fuel illegal

Busterrabbit wrote:

Having read 'Seven drivers a week run out of fuel in Manchester motorway roadworks' (**fleetnews.co.uk, April 15**), it is illegal to run out of fuel on a German Autobahn. It should be the same in the UK. It creates a very dangerous situation.



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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the All-New Renault Mégane GT: Urban 36.2 (7.8); Extra Urban 57.7 (4.9); Combined 47.1 (6.0). The official CO_2 emissions are 134g/km. EU Directive Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary according to driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

SALARY SACRIFICE

'Portable' schemes give more flexibility

David Fernandes wrote:

I see the team at Maxxia have launched a 'Portable salary sacrifice car scheme' (fleetnews.co.uk, April 18). SG Fleet operates a similar scheme, Novalease, which we launched in the UK back in 2012.

Under our scheme, departing employees can take their lease to their new employer, continue the lease directly with ourselves or terminate the contract. If the employee is leaving due to something outside their control, they can hand the car back to SG Fleet without a termination penalty. All this protection is available for employers and employees from the very first day of the lease. We don't shift the risk from the employer to the employee, we just don't create the risk in the first place.

Having provided novated leases in the UK for three years now, not a single customer has had to bear an unwanted termination cost. That is something SG Fleet is very proud of.

COMPANY CAR TAX

BIK bandings need to be adjusted

Sage & Onion wrote:

Having read 'Fleets face tax confusion over real-world fuel tests' (Fleet News, April 14), surely the simple solution will be for HMRC to adjust the table of CO2 bandings to make the benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax revenue more or less neutral. For example, if they know a 99g/km emitting car will return a new result of 115g/km then move the bands down so that 115g/km has the same tax percentage as 99g/km used to have, and so on. It will mean those drivers in older cars tested under the old rules will benefit. But that makes sense, because isn't it fair that drivers of older cars should pay less BIK tax for the 'benefit' of driving an older car? And it's about time HMRC gave something back to the company car driver.

EMPLOYEE CAR SCHEMES

Could salary sacrifice schemes be curtailed?

Miccon wrote:

Having read '10 things to know: salary sacrifice' (fleetnews.co.uk, May 19), as clearly noted in the last budget, the Chancellor is reviewing such schemes which are clearly beneficial primarily because of their entirely legal reduction in tax and national insurance. Despite the vociferous claims of "tax-neutrality" by those with vested interests (either through the sale of such products or advice given to interested parties), the reality is that the non-payment of taxes, even legally, is coming under intense scrutiny. It not just the letter but the spirit of the law that the Government is concerned about and, with schemes such as this seemingly adhering to the former but not the latter, they may well be amended or curtailed.



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Question What was your favourite childhood meal?

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END-OF-CONTRACT CHARGES

Standards prevent any sharp practice

By Gerry Keaney

Most successful companies have a good strategy for winning new clients, but they also understand that the 'goodbye' is just as important as the 'hello' when it comes to delivering great customer service.

For the vehicle leasing sector, the end-of-contract process is a vital part of winning the customer retention battle. How a company handles it can provide some very positive word of mouth marketing, or see a brand named and shamed on social media.

The issue of end-of-contract damage charges is an emotive topic. Many of the issues that arise - and which were highlighted in Stephen Briers' recent editorial comment (Fleet News, March 31) - are the result of poor communication or misunderstanding.

This is why the end-of-contract process, the communications around it and any problems that can arise are at the heart of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) mandatory Code of Conduct. This has been revised and updated for 2016 and backed up with a strengthened governance regime and our dispute resolution service, which is now government-accredited. It also provides customers with additional peace of mind when they lease from a BVRLA member. I would urge all fleets to bear the following in mind when leasing a vehicle.

The end-of-contract inspection can involve one or two inspections, and the standards for these are laid out in the Code of Conduct. Whether a full return appraisal is carried out upon collection from the driver or a two-stage approach sees an initial inspection followed up by a more thorough review, the customer should know what to expect. These assessments will be made to the BVRLA fair wear-and-tear standard, or any other return conditions that the leasing company and customer have agreed to.

Courtesy can be expected, but should not be confused with a vehicle being given a verbal clean bill of health. Leasing companies often outsource this process to an auction company, and I am sure the National Association of Motor Auctions (NAMA) would strongly refute accusations that its members were colluding with BVRLA members to apply unfair damage charges.

"Fair wear-and-tear should not be confused with damage, which is the result of a specific event"





Gerry Keaney

Standards for contract insp e in the BV

Damage charges and repair costs can vary according to the make of vehicle or regional labour rates. Some leasing companies will provide a matrix of charges in advance, while others will price each piece of damage individually. Similarly, some leasing companies will agree to share any profit from a car that is sold above its forecast used value. These are commercial decisions, and customers are free to choose their supplier accordingly.

Competition watchdogs would take a very dim view if the BVRLA attempted to set industry-wide standards or charges in this area. It is also worth remembering that customers always have the opportunity to make their own repairs before returning their vehicle, provided these are done to an appropriate professional standard.

The BVRLA fair wear-and-tear standard was developed by the leasing industry for its customers, to provide them with a clear understanding of what is expected. Fair wear-andtear should not be confused with damage, which occurs as a result of a specific event or series of events, such as an accidental impact, harsh treatment or negligence.

The BVRLA regularly updates its standards for cars, vans and HGVs. We do this in conjunction with a panel of members and independendent market experts. Fleet customers have been involved in this process in the past and in the last 12 months we have debated these and other issues alongside industry body ACFO representatives and leasing customers, in conjunction with Fleet News.

BVRLA membership is at a 10-year high, and the corporate car and van leasing fleet operated by these companies grew 11% to 2.5m vehicles in 2015. These are the hallmarks of a healthy sector that is delivering a valuable service and isn't taking its customers for granted. As the industry grows, it is even more important for us to continue sharing best practice while ensuring a constant and transparent dialogue with our clients.

We believe that these steps will see the BVRLA logo become even more of a quality benchmark for vehicle leasing.

fleetnews.co.uk April 28 2016 21



'I was very sceptical but telematics has been a plus'

Suppliers and fleet decision-makers talk-up cost-saving benefits of driver data

By Andrew Ryan

leets are using telematics and in-cab camera technology to improve driver behaviour and reduce collisions. Many of the 2016 *Fleet News* Awards nominees who attended our roundtable, sponsored by Škoda, are using these systems.

As well as using data from the technology to reduce fuel costs and increase safety, they have also been used to defend employees against fraudulent claims or false allegations over bad driving.

Why did you introduce telematics?

Dermot Coughlin: Our decision to adopt telematics was driven by safety and saving money on insurance, as there had to be a cost-effectiveness to it. We looked at a lot of systems and decided to go for a data-led one. It's very simple and gives us a lot of information. We have some basic KPIs and we risk manage it with a red and green arrow system, identifying where the high risks are, etc. The guys have to

"Our decision to adopt telematics was driven by safety and saving money on insurance, as there had to be a cost-effectiveness to it"

Dermot Coughlan, Kelly Fleet Services

16gb Size of memory cards in Z-Tech in-cab cameras get in the green – it's as simple as that. If a guy is in the red on a regular basis, we train them and it's a fairly simple process, taking four to six weeks. We coach the guys, tell them what they're doing wrong, build their confidence in what they're supposed to be doing, and then if they haven't improved, we'll have one of our trained assessors sit down and chat with them. We also go out with the driver and show them exactly what they're doing wrong on a drive.

Graham Telfer: I was always very sceptical about telematics in the beginning. It was the mountains of data I was afraid of and staff getting data overload. Telematics can record some things you're not interested in; I'm interested in fuel and accidents. All our vans are fitted with Lightfoot which uses a red-amber-green system, and a colour is a colour. You get red, you get a warning – it's involving the driver all the time. Telematics has been an absolute plus.

What challenges have you faced with telematics?

Dermot Kelly: The big problems we had in the past were the huge cost of having the system and suppliers always wanting three- or five-year contracts. This meant it was not for us because a lot of our work contracts are for a couple of years, so it was possible that we could end up with a few hundred telematics units which we were not able to use. However, the industry has changed quite a bit and we now use a system that doesn't have a fixed-term contract.

Norman Harding: When we first installed telematics, it turned out to be very productive. It was a new system and we could really identify areas such as improved vehicle utilisation. After the first three to six months, the benefits started



to tail off as the telematics had done its job. We've had the system for six years and we do suffer data overload with it, particularly in trying to identify driver behaviours. For example, for a simple thing such as a dustcart picking up a bin, the way the bin mechanism jerks the truck about sends spurious incidents which are hard to determine.

Are there any other ways you can avoid data overload?

Clare Cain: The data you get is good data, although some units give too much, and if you've got too much data you are not streamlining the process, you are continually fighting fires. We started off with minimum data coming in, getting that bit under control, and then we started getting more data, getting that under control before starting to tighten it down and squeezing the information that way.

Dermot Coughlin: It's really important to include in a policy what you're using telematics to look at, so if you miss something, at least you've got some mitigation to say well, that's not something we were monitoring. If, for example, you miss speeding - and nobody should - and you've got information that has identified a habitual speeder but everybody's ignored it until there is an accident, you are in serious trouble. You could be the first guy prosecuted for corporate manslaughter. Norman Harding: On that point about speed, I've been trying to negotiate with a number of telematics companies to get a system to integrate with the truck so it physically stops the vehicle from speeding. You can have an automated system which will give you an audible warning when the vehicle is speeding. Good drivers will adhere to limits wherever they can, but you always get the bad ones who just don't care and if you can get the telematics system to interact with the speed limiter, then it will be physically impossible to break the speed limit.

Alison Moriarty: My only reservation with speed limiters is that the only sustainable way to improve safety is to change driver behaviour. As soon as you rely on a mechanical thing, if the driver has to go into a vehicle that doesn't have a speed limiter fitted they may not carry on with that behaviour.

Dermot Coughlin: I completely agree. Driver behaviour is something that you can't change in one day; it's something that's over a prolonged period of time. We find six months is the time when people stop thinking about doing something and it becomes second nature thing, and I say that from personal experience. On the other hand, if you take those

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DELEGATES



Sustainable logistics manager, University of



Norman Harding Corporate fleet manager, Hackney Council



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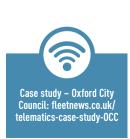
Helen Palmer-Smith Contract hire and leasing manager south, Škoda



Graham Telfer Fleet manager, Gateshead Council

"The data you get is good data, although some units give you too much"

Clare Cain. Kelly Fleet Services







Julie Madoui

Head of fleet.

Skanska



Dermot Coughlan Fleet director, Kelly Fleet Services

controls away, people will revert back over a period of time, so it's something you have to constantly manage.

Does anyone use in-cab cameras? What impact have they had on your fleet?

Luke Stanbridge: We based our decision to buy cameras on insurance premiums. We are not self-insured because we are not large enough at the moment - we're on the cusp, with 140-odd vehicles. We had a spate of accidents and if you or someone else claims, it goes on the insurance premium and that was going up and up. We looked at what we could do about this and that's when we brought in the cameras, which paid for themselves almost immediately.

We also brought in speed limiters and trackers on all new vehicles. We drastically reduced our incident rate, mainly based on the fact that people were driving more sensibly. We don't have the cameras and telematics linked together in our system. The cameras have 16gb cards and that will give over a week's data. If there is a problem, the line manager will get the driver in for a chat and also pull the card out of the camera. We sometimes get spurious complaints that a van has been driving dangerously, that it was in the wrong lane and swerved in front of someone, but using the camera we can find they are often talking about a different vehicle.

Norman Harding: Cameras and telematics are a big investment, so you've got to be sure what you want to get out of it. We tried to get our insurance company to reduce the premiums on the equipment we installed, but they are not interested in what we install or what the equipment is, what they are interested in is the incident rate. So it could have all the whistles and bells, but if it doesn't actually impact on our incident rate, then it won't bring the premium down.





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ompany Car In Action is assembling a collection of UK premieres giving fleets their first opportunity to drive models before they go on sale. The event, held at Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire, will be the only opportunity to drive some key fleet models in 2016, and will showcase the latest in alternative fuel technology.

Operators who want to evaluate a Vauxhall back-to-back with a Volkswagen will only be able to do this at Company Car In Action in 2016, as both manufacturers have selected it as their main ride and drive event for fleets this year.

One of the highlights of the event will be the first drive opportunity in the new Volvo S90. Volvo is also planning to show what it calls a 'special guest' car. The Renault Mégane will be available ahead of UK deliveries, while Hyundai will be previewing its new medium alternative fuel car, the lonig.

And attendees will be able to drive most vehicles without a carmaker representative.



CONFIRMED Jaguar F-Pace



S MB 1284

CONFIRMED Vauxhall Astra **Sports Tourer**

On sale from spring 2016, the British-built Vauxhall Astra Sports Tourer takes the high-quality package of the Vauxhall Astra five-door hatchback, with its reduced weight and lower running costs, and offers it in a practical estate car package. It will be available to drive in fuel efficient turbocharged petrol and Ecoflex diesel variants.





CONFIRMED Mercedes-Benz E-Class

The new E-Class is set to revolutionise the executive car sector, with standard automatic parking and advanced collision avoidance systems, plus autonomous emergency braking, LED headlamps and heated front seats. Optional safety features include technology that will allow the car to automatically follow and stop with the vehicle in front in traffic jams. The E220d offers C02 emissions from 102g/km and comes with nine-speed automatic transmission.





CONFIRMED Renault Mégane

The Mégane is targeting a stronger share of the fleet market for Renault, consolidating its appeal with other models such as the Clio and Kadjar. The new Mégane raises the bar for quality, and new technology brings added appeal, including a four-wheel steering system that helps improve agility and stability. The GT Line grade, which has styling cues from the top GT model, is expected to be new law with user-choosers.

CONFIRMED Volkswagen Tiguan

The second-generation is bolder than before, with more road presence and a chunkier SUV-like look. Arriving in the UK in June, this early driving opportunity for fleets will demonstrate the car's step-up in quality. as well as adopting new technology and safety features. The Tiguan will be available in 150hp diesel power with two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive variants, as well as a four-wheel drive 2.0-litre TSI petrol variants. A lower power petrol version with two-wheel drive as well as a higher-power four-wheel drive diesel will join the range later.

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CONFIRMED Volvo S90

The S90 will be offered with diesel. diesel all-wheel drive, and plug-in hybrid all-wheel drive power. As standard, even entry-level cars come with leather upholstery, LED headlights with active high beam, nine-inch touchscreen, sat-nav (including lifetime annual map updates), a voice-control system, and access to the internet and cloud-based apps. Also standard is Volvo Pilot Assist, which automatically keeps the S90 at a set speed or distance from the vehicle in front. Unlike previous versions of the system, it no longer needs to follow another car.



CONFIRMED -Hyundai loniq

Hyundai will be showing its new model that is set to shake up the alternative fuel car sector with a choice of hybrid, plug-in hybrid or battery electric. The petrol engine in the hybrid and plug-in hybrid variants matches that in the Toyota Prius for thermal efficiency. The loning plug-in offers up to 31 miles on plug-in charge, while the fully electric will travel up to 155 miles. CO2 emissions are 79g/km for the hybrid, and 32g/km for the plug-in, while the electric version has zero emissions.



104101-0

MANUFACTURERS CONFIRMED... ABARTH <u>ALFA ROMEO</u> BMW CITROËN DS AUTOMOBILES FIAT FIAT PROFESSIONAL FORD HYUNDAI JAGUAR JEEP **KIA MOTORS** LAND ROVER LEXUS MAZDA MOTORS MASERATI MERCEDES-BENZ MINI NISSAN PEUGEOT RENAULT SEAT TOYOTA VAUXHALL MOTORS VOLKSWAGEN **VOLVO CAR**



Monitoring its van fleet has enabled Enserve to reduce fuel expenditure, with another £60,000 saving expected this year. *Christopher Smith* reports



focus on funding, fit-out and compliance has kept head of group fleet Paul Brown busy since joining Enserve three years ago.

Brown has been in fleet and logistics for the past 35 years, starting as a warehouse operative before working his way up to driver, transport supervisor, transport manager and, finally, head of fleet.

The Enserve group of companies are generally specialist contractors to utility providers. Brands including Freedom Group, Meter-U and H20 Water operate nationally, with a diverse variety of fleet requirements across its 550 vans, 175 cars and 10 HGVs.

For many, including engineers at Freedom, the vans are mobile workshops. "They could be up in Scotland on a wind farm for three or four days, or working on the London Underground," says Brown. "Everything they need has to be in the back of their van."

Freedom is a specialist services contractor, working on behalf of utilities companies and infrastructure networks across long- and short-term contracts. Commercial vehicles had previously been funded on four-year contract hire deals, but Brown wanted to opt for a different kind of approach, to give him more operational flexibility, when he went out to tender last year.

"Around a year ago, we began a long-term flexi-rent deal," he says. "I've found leasing companies to be really helpful, until you sign on the dotted line. Then they become quite inflexible when you need a bit of help and support changing contracts or swapping vehicles. It's a case of 'computer says no."

Under the new deal, Brown says he can do this without any additional financial outlay.

"We went out to tender, which Northgate asked to bid for, and it came in with prices that matched the leasing companies," he says. "It can procure vehicles at the same costs as a leasing company, but it has got its rental outlet for vehicles coming back midterm. Obviously, we have to put any damage right and get them back to a rental standard, but we'd have to do that for any other leased vehicle.

"It gives us the flexibility if a contract changes, or we lose a contract, to send vehicles back – we won't end up with a depot full of empty vans. We can send up to 20% of our fleet back early each year without penalty." Brown estimates the new deal's flexibility will save the company £50,000 a year in early termination charges. The company would have saved £100,000 last year if it had been on flexi-rent, he says.

He drew on past experience with Northgate when selecting it to fund and supply Enserve's fleet.

"In a previous job, I'd worked with Northgate Vehicle Hire when we took over large scale council contracts," Brown explains. "We'd TUPE all the workers over, but never get a true picture of the fleet until we were on site. We sometimes found the mailroom driver in a box Luton van because that's all the council had at the time.

"We'd use Northgate to fill the gaps for the first three months while we established what we'd got, and then order new vehicles on a four-year lease, keeping the rental vehicles until the new ones arrived."

Brown says that Northgate had always been keen to forge longer term deals, and it was something he investigated further at Enserve. While the obvious benefits of returning vehicles mid-term

and acquiring vehicles for a new contract at short notice are key, there are other benefits, too.



Paul Brown: 'I've found leasing companies very helpful, until you sign on the dotted line'

TEN

Freedom

ENSERVE

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STRUCTURE SERVICES

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FLEET IN FOCUS: ENSERVE GROUP





"When the vehicle goes in for service to a Northgate depot, we get a replacement, and the leasing companies wouldn't

necessarily do that as they use the dealer network," says Brown.

Northgate's Tracker-based telematics system is also included, which has so far delivered a £225,000 fuel saving from removing 50 under-utilised vehicles, improving fuel economy, reducing vehicle idling and improving route planning. Brown anticipates a further fuel saving of £60,000 this year. "It [telematics] is having a massive impact," he says. "We keep telling our directors you can't get massive fuel savings like this every year, because within three years we wouldn't be spending anything on fuel. The fall in fuel prices has also contributed."

The majority of the 175 company cars are for commissioning engineers, who go out and test circuits and systems.

"We tell our directors you can't get massive fuel savings like this every year, as within three years we wouldn't be spending anything on fuel"

Paul Brown, Enserve

Brown looked at the vehicle requirements – generally a mid-range estate car – and then shortlisted vehicles based on emissions, economy, driver P11D value and cost.

The vehicles are supplied by Alphabet on a four-year/120,000-mile contract hire package, with maintenance. "Instead of having various choices, we picked one brand for a solus deal," says Brown.

"Volkswagen won based on reliability, performance and environmental impact. We

went to tender in January 2014 and Golf estates were supplied from May to September of that year."

The majority of cars on Brown's fleet are job need – he explains that the company offers an attractive cash allowance which many of those entitled to a vehicle have opted for.

"We moved away from various car grades and now have just two – either a Golf or a Passat," he says.



all grey fleet into the company's fleet department

"We limited the colours to business colours to avoid problems reallocating to new managers. Drivers cannot choose options – but we choose the top spec so there's not really anything to complain about."

Enserve has 200 cash allowance drivers, but in the past these were not closely monitored.

"We had a policy that was written by HR, but never properly policed," Brown says. "HR believed operations were policing it, and operations believed HR were policing it. In the end, no one policed it.

"The car is meant to be under five years old, insured for business use, fully maintained with breakdown cover."

After replacing the company cars, Brown's next priority was the grey fleet.

"When we looked into the grey fleet, it was a minefield," he says.

"We helped write the new policy with HR, but the minute a new employee joined the



FACTFILE

Company Enserve Group Headquarters Macclesfield Fleet size Vans 550, Cars 175, HGVs 10 Funding method Flexi-rent (vans); contract hire (cars) Head of group fleet Paul Brown Time with company Three years Brands include Freedom, H20 Water and Meter-U

FLEET CHAMPIONS ACROSS THE BUSINESS

Brown operates the Enserve fleet from Freedom's headquarters in Wakefield with support from fleet adminstrator Diane Maddocks, but each of the company's 50 sites in the UK has a fleet contact. "They don't look after fleet full time, but will be our point of contact in the depots," Brown says.

He sees the fleet contacts as valuable cornerstones in the operation – feeding information both to the fleet team in the office, and vice versa back to drivers.

"One of the fleet contacts started displaying the driver league table off the telematics system and put up on the wall with a football focus, grouping the drivers from Sunday League to Premier League," says Brown.

"It put drivers in a position where they didn't want to be at the bottom of the table. Drivers were having their own little challenges – for example: 'if I am above you by the end of the week you wash my van'.

"Accident stats reduced by around 25% in that depot, purely because of the

business and accepted that policy, the management and policing would sit purely under fleet. There are now no grey areas."

Brown took a hard line, bringing all drivers under the fleet department, and giving them time to comply. "We set up a 'grey fleet amnesty period', and gave drivers 120 days' notice that we would be enforcing the policy," he explains. "There were people who said 'I haven't been saving my allowance' – well, sorry, it's a car allowance."

If a driver hadn't complied, their allowance was suspended. "While a driver is on probation, we're not forcing them to go out and buy a brand new car, so they get a three-month grace period," says Brown.

"We check it's insured, and their driving licence is in place, but it can be older in that time. We follow up when they're ending their probation to ensure their new car is compliant – it gives them time to build a deposit.

"We now perform an annual audit, where we check all the paperwork and do a licence check."

With improvements in the offerings of

tables. The initiative is now part of a board level initiative across the business, and we're now looking to reward the best drivers."

A fleet contact at a different depot developed another idea to check the eyesight of drivers.

"We've had guys who clipped their wing mirrors every time they parked up," says Brown. "Many of our vans have sensors and reversing cameras now, and if a driver is still doing it, we give them a Specsavers eye test voucher. It's a quick fix and they get some glasses if they need them. People often know they need glasses for reading, but often don't associate it with judging distance.

"Our fleet contact in our Birmingham depot found some old number plates and put them on the wall at the end of the corridor and got drivers to read out the plates. Some drivers got clever and told their mates, so they ended up swapping the plates every few days, and it worked really well."

leasing companies, the fleet has come to rely on its service providers to perform many of the tasks previously undertaken in-house – over the past decade, the fleet team has shrunk from 10 to two.

"The business needed to operate its own workshops – and renewing tax discs was pretty much a full time job," Brown says.

Now, maintenance of cars is through dealer networks, commercial vehicles are looked after through Northgate's rental depot network and accident management is handled by FMG, to whom calls involving vehicle accidents are forwarded from Enserve's safety hotline.

"It's a case of working smarter not harder," says Brown. "If we can get someone else to take on that workload, and it's included in our costings, why wouldn't we?"





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Shop around for a tyre purchase plan that suits you

Tyres have a vital role to play in the smooth operation of a business and the way they are acquired can have a significant impact on fleet costs. *Ben Rooth* reports

NEED TO KNOW

- No one-size-fits-all tyre solution for all fleets
- Agreement with leasing provider can reduce costs
- Fleet management companies and fast fits also options

yres have an enormous impact on the operation of a fleet.

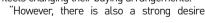
As well as the safety benefits of having the right tyres in the right condition, buying them has significant cost implications: they can account for more than 50% of a fleet's service, maintenance and repair (SMR) budget.

And this could increase further with the relentless growth in specialised wheel and tyre sizes as they become more model specific, says Ashley Sowerby, managing director of fleet management software provider Chevin Fleet Solutions.

"When you look at operational data, this is not just a question of bigger tyres being more expensive, but also seemingly more susceptible to accidental damage and even more likely to be stolen," he adds.

"All of these factors lead to higher costs and fleets are increasingly trying to take managerial control in this area.

"This is something that is being seen on a wider industry basis with some of the largest fleets changing their buying arrangements.





INSIGHT: TYRES



among fleets to take a greater amount of operational control over tyre costs." Choosing the right method of tyre procurement can have signifi-

cant cost benefits: for example, estate agent Countryside has saved more than £100,000 since switching from pay-onuse to a fixed monthly fee in 2010 (see case study, page 33).

However, John Pryor, chairman of fleet operators' association ACFO, says there is no one-size-fits-all solution for all fleets.

"Any decision taken over tyre policies should depend entirely on the diversity of each individual fleet," he says.

"But I suspect that many fleets still think, when they lease vehicles, that they want to include tyres in that policy.

"In my experience, most of the largest fleets have contracts in place with the leasing companies and tyre manufacturers, while smaller fleets tend to deal with fast-fits and dealers directly.

"But all aspects of the deal in place should be examined regularly to ensure that it's right for each fleet."

Here we look at the three main ways fleets procure their tyres.

LEASING COMPANY AGREEMENTS

Fleets who lease their vehicles usually have the option to add tyres to their package, and these are often contained within an SMR agreement.

These give companies a fixed monthly cost which enables budgets to be maintained, while the agreements typically include unlimited tyre use, including those damaged through normal use like punctures and sidewall damage.

Vandalised, stolen tyres, or those damaged in an accident, are normally covered by the customer's vehicle insurance policy although some leasing companies offer a separate tyre insurance policy.

The fixed monthly cost means fleets are protected against any increase in tyre or fitment costs, according to Toni



"Any decision taken over tyre policies should depend on the diversity of each individual fleet"

John Pryor, ACFO

PROS AND CONS OF PROCURING TYRES THROUGH ...

LEASING CONTRACTS:

PROS

One supplier manages all aspects of the tyre procurement and maintenance for a fixed monthly cost.

All risk transferred to the leasing company.

CONS

Paying for tyres that don't require changing – especially on new vehicles during the first year of the contract.

Potential for rebates enjoyed by leasing companies not to be passed on to customers.

FLEET MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

PROS

 Potential cost savings due to bulk buying power and high level of expertise.
 Policies can be tailored to meet individual needs – including option to pay-as-you-go.

CONS

 Occasional lack of clarity surrounding cost of a tyre policy within a SMR budget
 Check the smallprint: contract might not include tyre impact and sidewall damage or any damage caused by driver error.

FAST-FITS OR DEALERS

depth limit for when tyres are changed," he says.

are changed for the same brand and tread pattern." Pilcher says leasing companies also provide additional

Landauro, strategic account manager at Hitachi Capital

Leasing companies will also manage suppliers from ordering parts to final fitment, which can be done by a mobile

"Billing is also centrally consolidated, reducing admin time

Another benefit of having a tyre agreement in place with a

leasing company is that it also guarantees a high level of

service, says Simon Pilcher, supplier manager at LeasePlan. "We're able to capture driver feedback and measure

service delivery at tyre centre level," he says. "Our own independent driver contact centre enables us to use the

feedback we gather to direct our customers to the best-

Landauro adds that some customers still wrongly believe

"We work with our customers to set and enforce a tread

"Some operators opt for a 3mm depth, whereas others may opt for 2mm but, when the key depth is reached, tyres

that leasing companies will change tyres "unnecessarily or

fitter at the workplace, reducing vehicle downtime.

on the customer side," adds Landauro.

PROS

 Ease and convenience: fleet drivers simply go to the nearest fast-fit or dealer.
 Outstanding level of knowledge with many fast-fits enjoying longstanding relationships with tyre manufacturers.

CONS

 With the sizes of tyres constantly burgeoning, there's a possibility that a desired tyre might not be in stock.
 Reliant on drivers reporting issues.



Vehicle Solutions.

performing centres."

ahead of schedule".



CASE STUDY: COUNTRYWIDE



Britain's largest estate agency Countrywide has made savings of more than £100,000 on the cost of its tyres since 2010 after switching from

pay-on-use to a fixed monthly fee.

Countrywide became the first customer to piggyback a deal between Zenith, then trading as Leasedrive, and Kwik Fit in order to cut costs without losing the convenience of using a fast-fit.

Group fleet manager Peter Jardine presented the potential cost savings arising from changing Countrywide's tyre policy to the group's chief financial officer after taking up his position in 2010.

Today, the fleet consists of 4,998 vehicles, which are all cars apart from 50 vans and six motorbikes. Jardine says: "I could see clear savings that would ultimately result from this policy with Zenith and this has proved to be the case.

"But, on paper, it wasn't the best deal in terms of value in its first year as around 50% of our fleet, which are all on four-year cycles, was replaced.

"Experience told me that new vehicles don't generally need their tyres replacing so regularly and this was the case in that first year.

"Nonetheless, the decision has been vindicated since and I can't recommend this approach enough for large fleets looking to make savings."

Today, Countrywide's drivers know that their tyres will be replaced or repaired by Kwik Fit if the tread has reached 2mm, if they've suffered a puncture or if the tyre has been damaged through being kerbed or vandalised.

"I could see clear savings that would result from this insurance policy with Zenith and this has proved to be the case"

Peter Jardine, Countrywide

services that are not routinely available to fleets going directly to fast-fits or dealers, such as 24/7 emergency cover, mobile fitment, guaranteed booking times and fleet safety checks.

However, Justin Patterson, head of operations at Londonbased private hire taxi firm Addison Lee, believes there are drawbacks to using leasing companies to supply tyres.

"In my experience, the large leasing companies give no visibility of tyre costs within their SMR budgets, and the majority do not pass on their rebates that are commonly negotiated with tyre manufacturers and distributors," he says.

"As tyres can form more than 50% of an SMR budget, it is a critical element of cost to understand.

"As a customer of a leasing company you are paying for tyres the moment your new vehicle arrives within the SMR monthly charge, when the reality is that you may not require any tyre expenditure until year two of ownership."

Addison Lee uses family-owned fast-fit Universal Tyre and Autocentres to fit Michelin tyres across the majority of its 5,000-strong fleet on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis.

FLEET MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Procuring your tyres through a fleet management company has many of the same benefits as opting to buy them via a leasing company.

Fleet management companies also sell their services on the basis that they have significant buying power with suppliers and tyre manufacturers, which can result in them being able to secure

good deals.

50% Proportion of SMR budget typically taken up by tyres

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Andy Fern, head of fleet, Michelin



"If you buy cheap, you buy twice." An old phrase, but one that still rings true today – especially when it comes to fleet management. From vehicle type and specification to

insurance package and maintenance options, fleet managers have an immense workload.

As such, any steps that can help ease that burden should be considered – especially when such a step can help save money, cut down on red tape and keep drivers safer.

That's where premium tyres come in. By fitting premium tyres such as Michelin, fleet managers enjoy advantages in longevity, durability, fuel efficiency and safety that cheaper fitments will likely struggle to match. At Michelin, we call it 'Total Performance'.

A premium tyre can go further and deliver superior on-road performance and efficiency, thanks to decades of research and development into casing structure and rubber compounds – all of which adds up to a low total cost of ownership over time.

Plus, a premium tyre manufacturer's range is far more likely to offer the perfect fitment for individual vehicle types. For example, the road-holding performance of Michelin's Pilot Sport 4 for high-end, powerful diesel and hybrid passenger cars, or the company's unique CrossClimate tyre – which clinched the *Fleet News* Award for best new product in 2016 – for fleets that want the performance of a summer tyre, but with guaranteed winter performance built-in.

Conversely, while it's easy to be taken in by the cost-saving promise of fitting cheaper tyres, fleet managers should be wary of the false economy such a decision creates.

Cheaper tyres may offer an up-front saving, but typically lack the considerable investment of time and resources that goes into developing and manufacturing premium tyres – elements which offer improved tyre life and better on-road safety as a result. As such, over the whole life of the fleet vehicle, those cheaper tyres may not actually work out to be cost-effective.







Like leasing companies, many offer all-in-one packages with the client paying a fixed monthly cost for a range of SMR services that includes tyre procurement.

Mike Cooke, fleet operations manager at FleetEurope, says many fleet management companies also bring with them a "level of expertise in formulating tyre policies" which ultimately ensures the most appropriate deal.

"Where tyre suppliers, garages and tyre manufacturers will push certain tyres to retail buyers throughout the year at extremely competitive prices in order to balance stock levels, our price is consistent throughout the year for one brand of tyre in a specific size, no matter where the fleet is located," he says.

"This helps to ensure costs can be effectively managed from both the client's and fleet management provider's perspective."

As a general rule, all regular and irregular tyre wear – as well as punctures – are included in these policies.

Companies such as FleetEurope also arrange for adjustments to be made to tracking at a suitable time for the client.

But some fleet management company agreements don't include any impact and sidewall damage, damage caused by driver error or any habits behind the wheel that directly impact on the tyres' condition.

In addition, some offer a pay-as-you-go option, where clients receive the same service, but on a pay-on-use basis rather than a fixed monthly fee.

Cooke adds: "We ensure that repairs are made at a location to suit the client, minimising downtime and expense to their business.

"We also provide bespoke reporting for clients, tailored to their needs, in order to see where they can improve overall efficiency, analysing areas such as replacement and damage trends."

FAST-FIT OR FRANCHISED DEALERS

Many fleets opt to procure tyres directly from fast-fit or franchised dealers due to the greater cost transparency they feel it gives them.

In short, they simply pay for what's used or repaired and this price isn't tied into a SMR package or insurance product.

Fast-fits are also responding to market pressures to ensure that they provide the best possible service.

For example, Kwik Fit uses marketplace intelligence and customer order profiling to ensure that its 600-plus centres are stocked with the most popular tyres across different sizes and brands.

Peter Lambert, fleet director at Kwik Fit, says: "A solesupply business partnership with a fast-fit supplier delivers financial savings related to the volume of tyres purchased and, critically, business efficiency benefits as vehicle downtime and driver inconvenience will be reduced.

"A sole-supply arrangement enables us to plan ahead and order the appropriate volume of tyres, brands and sizes related to the individual fleet profile potentially 12 months in advance based on historical fitment data and knowledge.

"What's more, the tyres can be conveniently stored at centres appropriate to a fleet in readiness.

"Advance ordering of appropriate brands and sizes of tyres is becoming increasingly important as the breadth of tyres across the marketplace continues to rapidly expand."

Over the next few weeks, Kwik Fit is due to launch a fleet web booking service which will enable drivers to make an appointment at a centre of their choice after checking its tyre stock.

David Howe, manager of UK fleet business

CASE STUDY: RHODAR



When Steve Haigh took up his position as group transport manager at Rhodar in 2010 one of his priorities was to re-structure how the company's tyres

were procured.

Until then, the company had sourced its tyres through leasing companies, which Haigh didn't believe always resulted in the best products being fitted or, indeed , the best economies being enjoyed.

Tyres were therefore removed from the contracts to allow Rhodar to choose which brand of tyre was fitted on a pay-on-use basis.

Today, the specialist asbestos removal company operates 180 vans and 80 cars with Michelin tyres fitted by ATS Euromaster across the entire fleet. In addition to being able to take their vehicle to one of the fast fit's premises, ATS Euromaster's team also visits Rhodar's sites regularly to carry out tyre safety checks.

Also, if a driver experiences a blow-out, ATS is contracted to replace or repair that tyre at the roadside.

"In my experience, if you buy a premium tyre you get a length of use from it that you might not otherwise get – and that ultimately proves to be most cost-effective," says Haigh.

"Our tyre bill undoubtedly went up over the first 12 months, but after that we started making savings as the tyres needed changing far less than had previously been the case.

"ATS has consistently gone the extra mile for us – for example, when they come to our depots they check our trailers' tyres in addition to our fleet vehicles."



"A sole-supply business partnership with a fast-fit supplier delivers financial savings related to the volume of tyres purchased"

Peter Lambert, Kwik Fit



Amount saved by estate agent Countryside by switching to a monthly tyre procurement fee

FAST-FIT

101111

for Goodyear Dunlop, adds that some fleets find it beneficial to maintain separate relationships with a tyre manufacturer and a fast-fit provider to allow them to "focus on different areas".

"Ultimately, this maximises the value of each relationship," he says. "For example, ensuring the tyre policy for the vehicle portfolio and operations of the fleet is optimised with the tyre manufacturer, while focusing on customer service and the customer journey with the fast-fit provider.

"There is no right delivery model – it will depend completely on the size and operations of the fleet and the preference of the operator."

Landauro says fleets should always look for their fast-fit or dealer to "add value".

"If a customer can find a local fitter with the right tyre in stock, they may be able to purchase it from a local supplier at a lower cost, but this price will be hard to predict," he says.

"Operators who choose to procure tyres directly are also often reliant on their drivers reporting issues.

"These are often reported to line managers before being passed on to finance departments for approval.

"This approach is somewhat flawed, reliant on those whose function is not primarily focused on vehicle safety.

"These checks are often additional responsibilities, therefore not considered a priority, which is completely the wrong attitude to have when it comes to vehicle maintenance and safety."

> More on tyre management at: fleetnews.co.uk/tyre-management

Fleets should continue their role as electric vehicle pioneers

UK businesses continue to drive boom in electric vehicle sales

o Ultra Low, the joint government and industry campaign for electric vehicles, is urging fleets to continue their role as early adopters of new technologies and continue the push towards an electric future. Last year, 28,188 electric vehicles (EVs) were registered in the UK, a figure which surpassed the previous five years combined.

Batteries proven to be reliable and long-lasting

Electric vehicle batteries have proven to be more reliable and long-lasting than some critics expected.

Last year Nissan announced that in the five years and 35,000 sales since the launch of its all-electric Leaf, 99.99% of its battery units remained entirely fit for purpose.

This high level of reliability is an experience shared by Lex Autolease, said Chris Chandler. "We took on our first Nissan Leaf in Q2 2011 and scaremongers were talking about battery failures etc.," he said. "However, we haven't had a battery failure or a significant incident with any of our plug-in vehicles, so they are proving to be reliable." Fleets were responsible for almost twothirds of those registrations and will have a pivotal role to play if the Government's EV ambitions are to be realised.

Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, said: "Electric car sales are booming and fleets are leading the charge. Every business should have an electric vehicle on its fleet and offer electric cars as company cars too. It is clear that electric vehicles can save both businesses and employees money."

Electric cars are now more popular than ever before.

New figures show that on average an electric car was sold every 13 minutes in the first three months of 2016.

The CO₂-based company car tax regime has meant fleets have consistently been ahead of the retail market when it comes to adopting lowemission vehicles, and this trend has continued with EVs.

Greater awareness of EVs is also contributing to their increasing uptake, while advances in plug-in technology have also had an impact.

This means that they are now a practical option for many business uses as the range of models on offer increases.

More fleet decision-makers are also discovering that running EVs no longer requires compromises on whole life costs, practicality, reliability, or popularity with drivers. Chris Chandler, principal consultant at Lex Autolease, said the greater choice of plug-in vehicles has also had an effect: there are now more than 30 electric vehicles available in the UK, from family hatchbacks and city runarounds to 4x4s and sports cars.

Lex Autolease has seen the number of EVs on its fleet more than double from 2,000 in summer last year to 4,400 now, and Chandler expects this figure to continue rising.

"With CO₂-based company car tax and fuel costs such as they are, we are finding ourselves being asked more and more about EVs, and we are finding more and more scenarios where they are the best-fit vehicles," Chandler said.

He added: "Typically, fleets have been early adopters of new technologies and long may that continue."

The UK is now the second largest EV market in Europe and one of the fastest-growing regions in the world for electrification and low emission motoring.

The Government has increased its support for plug-in vehicles to £600 million to cut emissions, create jobs and support the UK's cutting-edge industries.

To find out more about adding electric vehicles to your fleet, visit: goultralow.com/fleet Gottitra Low



FleetNews









147,276 Risk fleet in FN50 2015

LEASEPLAN

'Our future will be shaped by the needs of customers'

It's not all about cost savings for fleets, says MD Matt Dyer, who has launched new products based on client feedback

By Gareth Roberts

utting the customer at the heart of its business has paid dividends for LeasePlan UK and helped hundreds of fleets achieve significant cost savings.

The leasing and vehicle management company grew its leased fleet by more than 10% last year as it secured new business while retaining existing clients. In addition, it identified £40 million worth of potential savings for customers, realising £27m across corporate, SME and public sector clients.

However, it's not all been about cost savings, according to managing director Matt Dyer. "It's also around driver satisfaction, it's around areas we've improved with the business and the advice we've put on the table," he says. "You have to know your customer to know what is going

to be achievable and what is going to work."

Every corporate customer has a dedicated account manager, who is continually looking to improve their business with cost savings, while having access to its enhanced online offering. LeasePlan Digital provides personalised digital services for both fleet decision-makers and drivers, making it easier to manage vehicle-related tasks.

The fleet manager portal provides a single source of management information and fleet trends data, including third party information. The driver portal is personalised and allows access to key information about vehicles and services, while a mobile app gives them access to the same information through their smartphone, with GPS allowing quick identification of driver location for breakdown and recovery.

But while Lease Plan has recognised the need to enhance it digital offering, it's also not shied away from taking an innovative approach to existing services. In terms of tyres, it has revamped and expanded its fitter network, enhanced its LCV offering, launched same day mobile fitting and now ensures tyres are available on arrival.

Products and services have been shaped by customer feedback and by engaging with its own employees. Board members sponsored focus groups so that staff could give the company a view of what sort of experience and level of service they would expect. "The key thing that came out of the process was people expect a consumer experience and the service to support it," says Dyer.

LeasePlan also launched the business development division and innovation council last year, giving a route for customer opinions to feed back into the business and be acted upon. "We're increasingly aware that our future will be shaped by the needs and demands our customers," Dyer says. "It is our role to listen to them, to understand what it is they need and then to invest and change on the back of it. That's why the business development division and new product team are really important."

Fleet News: What new products or services have come out of this process?

Matt Dyer: We launched LeasePlan Flexible last year, our long-term rental solution. Organisations are having to be much more adaptable and there are times when committing to a vehicle over three, four or five years makes absolute sense, particularly when you have a vehicle that needs to be tuned into the purpose of the job. However, there are some people who do not want to commit to three, four or five years and they're willing to accept less choice for having flex on the term.

"When we talk about putting the customer at the heart of the business, it's about the individual as well as the client"

Matt Dyer, LeasePlan UK





I really see this becoming a blend of the overall mix and having great potential.

FN: Where else are you seeing opportunities?

MD: There are areas that continue to emerge and evolve. Commercial vehicles, for example, are extremely important. There is still more we want to do to adapt our proposition, but the fleet leasing marketplace is growing partly because commercial vehicle operators are increasingly leasing rather than buying. Their needs need to be reflected, recognised and invested in. But, there are probably pretty sophisticated commercial fleets that still need the reassurance and conviction in terms of what leasing companies can do for them so we have to keep working hard to make that case as strong as we can.

FN: Does the SME market hold similar possibilities?

MD: This is one area I truly believe we are a market leader. Our commitment to the SME sector and our commitment to support SME businesses that want to lease their vehicles is second-to-none.

It's a very fast growing part of the market; still fewer SMEs lease than own [their vehicles] which is unbelievable considering the progress that has been made.

FN: Does having a standalone SME brand in LeasePlan Go help you when dealing with that sector?

MD: Part of it is branding, but it's also about understanding that what an SME is looking for is different. They've got a different mindset, they've got different priorities and they've got different challenges.

In the past, this is an area where banks should have been looking after their needs and they didn't. I think we're better able now having developed sufficiently to look after the interests of small businesses in a far better way.

FN: How else is the fleet market changing and what are you doing to adapt?

MD: When we talk about putting the customer at the heart of the business, it's about the individual [driver] as well as the client. So much of what we do now is impacted by the individual. We can have the best corporate offering but we also have to make sure we're looking after the needs of the individual driver, because they are increasingly being offered the chance to stay within a scheme or a cash alternative, for example. We have to appeal and bring a strong proposition to the driver as well as at client level.

FN: How have you improved the services you provide at the driver level?

MD: Seven or eight years ago, our online quote and order tool was great if you were a fleet manager and you knew very specifically what you wanted to order. But it was a pretty poor experience if you were a driver and you wanted to know what you could get through your scheme or within your allowance.

Recognising that the individual is demanding more, but having the digital capability to do it in a way that is affordable and scalable means that somebody can now go on to our quotation and order tool and get a far better understanding than they ever had before.

There used to be teams of people communicating with drivers. Now we have the ability to do that in a relatively straight-forward way. It leaves fleet managers free to define policy rather than spending time on administration.

easePlan's approach has been good news for its business and customers alike, and has helped it secure the coveted title of leasing company of the year, for the more than 15,000 vehicles category, at this year's *Fleet News* Awards.

It was, according to Dyer, was a great endorsement of the hard work of everybody involved.

"It meant a huge amount to us as a business," he says. "But it's not just about LeasePlan and our employees; it's also about our suppliers and our customers, and the impact they've had.

"The way we collaborate and the way they push us in terms of what they're looking for have allowed us to be in the position where we've received this recognition. We've put a lot of hard work in over the past few years and this shows us we're on the right path, but there is still work to do."



FACTFILE

Organisation LeasePlan UK Managing director Matt Dyer Headquarters Slough Risk fleet 147,276 FN50 ranking 2

Judges' comments

LeasePlan has identified significant cost savings for its customers through its consultancy service and has set up dashboards allowing customers to monitor and report on the savings. The creation of an 'Innovation Council' has led to new products that address customer challenges. Its staff are incentivised on customer satisfaction and its suppliers are closely managed, with drivers able to rate experiences at the point of service. A new multi-supply approach for tyres and a wider fuel card network are among LeasePlan's enhancements to its service offering.



VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN

Popular SUV gets more space, new technology and a robust new look

NEED TO KNOW

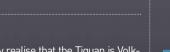
More rugged look for second generation Volkswagen medium SUV

CO2 emissions from 125g/km (2WD) Larger, roomier but slightly lighter than predecessor

Orders now open with further derivatives in May

and June this year

By Simon Harris



ew people may realise that the Tiguan is Volkswagen's third most popular car in the UK, with almost 22,000 registered in 2015. And as the first major new model launch

under the brand in Europe since the so-called 'dieselgate' crisis, it is more critical to get everything right from the start than it otherwise might have been.





For full running costs, visit fleetnews.co.uk/ running-costs



Like several other SUVs and 'crossovers' of this size, fleet sales are pretty important, and Volkswagen thinks around half the new Tiguans registered in the UK will be taken by fleet operators. The model also runs ahead of the segment average for four-wheel drive take-up at around 75%, compared with the typical 50%.

The particular part of the SUV sector the Tiguan competes in has grown by almost 200% in the past eight years, and now accounts for almost 300,000 UK sales and more than 11% of the UK new car market, while all SUV and crossover sub-sectors (of which there are apparently five) combined are expected to make up 28% of the UK market by 2018.

Using the same modular component set as the latest Golf, Touran and Passat, the Tiguan gains new technology as well as a small increase in size and on-road presence.

It isn't quite as tall as its predecessor, but is longer and wider, and its wheelbase has been lengthened by 77mm, improving interior space.

Luggage volume is also greater than before. The rear seat can slide forward to increase this further without the need for folding the rear seat, although the maximum available with the rear seats folded is 1,655 litres - which would be among the best estate cars you could buy for this money.

Towing capacity has been beefed up, reaching up to 2,500kg – depending on engine and specification – which is unusual in this medium SUV class.

There are new safety features on the Tiguan, with forward monitoring and autonomous emergency braking with pedestrian protection standard across the range.

There's also an active bonnet, which pops up 50mm if the car comes into contact with pedestrians or cyclists to reduce the risk of serious head injury - assuming the car's autonomous braking has been caught out and has been unable to stop the car hitting them.



"On the motorway and in urban traffic, the Tiguan proved comfortable, refined and responsive"

Additional optional features include a range of cameras around the car to provide all-round monitoring for driving off-road or parking manoeuvres, trailer assist, a head-up display and LED headlamps.

The four-wheel drive system is more sophisticated than before, too, helping the car tackle more challenging off-road terrain.

CO2 emissions start at 125g/km for the 150hp diesel with front-wheel drive, and 146g/km or 149g/km for 4Motion and adding DSG auto to four-wheel drive models.

If these figures don't seem spectacular – after all, many two-wheel drive SUVs of this size have succeeded in falling below 120g/km – perhaps Volkswagen is now extra cautious when it comes to stating CO₂ and fuel economy figures.

We didn't try the Tiguan on a great variety of roads, but on our route, which combined short motorway driving stints and urban traffic, it proved to be comfortable, refined and responsive.

However, we did spend time on a specially created off-road section, which put the car to the test, and demonstrated some of the benefits of the 360° camera features available as an option. Of course, it was unlikely to get stuck in a course created for it, but it certainly showed it was capable of far more than most owners will ever expect.

The interior is spacious and the quality of the materials is up to Volkswagen's typical standard – which is better than most mainstream rivals.

Around 95% of Tiguans sold in the UK are expected to be diesel (the entry level car and price point will be a 1.4-litre, two-wheel drive petrol), while the DSG auto is expected to have a relatively high take-up of 40%.

The UK range will be badged S, SE, SE Navigation, SEL and R-Line, with the most popular model expected to be the manual 2.0-litre TDI 150 SE 4Motion.

COSTS

P11D price £30,280 BIK tax band (2016/17) 29% Annual BIK tax (20%) £1,756 Class 1A NIC £1,212 Annual VED £145 RV (4yr/80K) £9,475/31% Fuel cost (ppm) 9.28 AFR (ppm) 10 Running cost (4yr/80K) 41.32pm

SPEC

 Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft) 150/251

 CO2 emissions (g/km) 149

 Top speed (mph) 125

 0-62mph (sec) 9.3

 Fuel efficiency (mpg) 49.6

KEY RIVAL

 Honda CR-V 1.6 i-DTEC SE Nav

 DASP auto

 P11D price: £30,825

 BIK tax band (2016/17) 26%

 Annual BIK tax (20%) £1,603

 Class 1A NIC £1,106

 Annual VED £130

 RV (4yr/80k) £9,400/30%

 Fuel cost (ppm) 8.3

 AFR (ppm) 8

 Running cost (4yr/80k) \$38,9ppm

Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

THINKING CAP



Monday/Tuesday Over to PSA HQ in Velizy, South of Paris. The company has just changed its name from PSA Peugeot Citroën, to PSA Groupe, and gets a new logo. We went to discuss future products with the fleet and product teams. But we also compared some 36 month/ 60,000-mile ex-lease PSA cars with some similar mileage competitors' cars. We had a good look around them in the workshop, and then drove them on motorways, through towns and villages, to get a feel to see if they stood the test of time, and mileage. All were pretty good - no squeaks or rattles - and ran almost as well as they were when new, including the French models.

"If you thought the current Tiguan was good, wait till you drive the new one"

Wednesday/Thursday To the international press launch of the all-new, longer, wider Volkswagen Tiguan (see review, opposite). Over 2.8 million Tiguans have been sold since 2007 and, if you thought the current car was good, wait till you drive this.

The Tiguan's exterior design is great, with some very nice lines, a high waistline and a crisp shoulder line. The interior is very Volkswagen: comfortable, good solid materials and ergonomics. The rear hatch is 7% larger and the rear seat slides back and forth for either more leg room, or a bigger boot. We drove a 2.0-litre TDI sixspeed manual two-wheel drive and sevenspeed DSG 4Motion. My preference would be the manual – it just seemed to work better. I would recommend the 2.0-litre TDI manual SE Nav two-wheel drive.

Friday Went to the optician and, after all the tests, he prescribed some night time glasses with anti-glare lenses, making driving in the dark so much easier. Are your fleet drivers' vision levels legal? And are they checked regularly and often? Do they, like me, need a bit of help? It might be worth checking.

MASERATI LEVANTE

First foray into SUV market brings Italian style, agility and comfort



NEED TO KNOW

Maserati's first SUV arrives in November 275km discal anging has COs of 170m //www.

- 275hp diesel engine has CO2 of 179g/km
- Targets Porsche Cayenne and BMW X5/X6

By Simon Harris

y now we have surely got beyond the idea that sportscar manufacturers shouldn't be producing SUVs. It's almost 20 years since Mercedes-Benz and BMW decided to introduce road-oriented four-wheel drive vehicles.

Many others, including Porsche, and more recently Jaguar and Bentley, have done the same.

Brands with a rich heritage in motorsport can carry it off and make a success of it. And Maserati is about to follow suit with the Levante. The name comes from a Mediterranean easterly wind, and its task is to offer an Italian alternative to high-end, driver-focused SUVs such as the Porsche Cayenne, BMW X6 and Range Rover Sport.

The Cayenne was the benchmark for optimum driving, but the Range Rover Sport is the leader in this category in the UK when it comes to sales. And, although slightly larger, the Levante could be seen as a rival for the V6 diesel Jaguar F-Pace. Maserati is still a low-volume player in the UK, although it has been engaging with fleets since the launch of the Ghibli saloon in 2014, which also coincided with the brand's first diesel engine.

That 275hp 3.0-litre engine will be offered in the UK, and could help double Maserati sales to around 3,000. Bosses initially decided against bringing the Ferrari-designed 3.0-litre petrol engine to the UK, but that decision is under review and it could be that both engines are offered by the time right-hand drive cars are ready in late-November.

Maserati has focused on running costs since the launch of the Ghibli, especially on the diesel version and, although prices are yet to be confirmed, we can expect costs to be

COSTS

 P11D price £54,000 (estimated)

 BIK tax band (2016/17) 35%

 Annual BIK tax (40%) £7,560

 Class 1A NIC £2,608

 Annual VED £300 then £210

 RV (4yr/80K) n/a

 Fuel cost (ppm) n/a

 AFR (ppm) 11

 Running cost (4yr/80K) n/a

SPEC

 Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft) 275/443

 CO2 emissions (g/km) 179

 Top speed (mph) 143

 O-62mph (sec) 6.9

 Fuel efficiency (mpg) 39.2

KEY RIVAL

 Porsche Cayenne diesel

 P11D price: £50,441

 BIK tax band (2016/17) 34%

 Annual BIK tax (40%) £6,860

 Class 1A NIC £2,367

 Annual VED £300 then £210

 RV (4yr/80k) £0,852/41%

 Fuel cost (ppm) 11.08

 AFR (ppm) 11

 Running cost (4yr/80k) 58.77ppm

Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)



3.0 275

competitive with rivals on depreciation, fuel and service, maintenance and repair.

The Levante certainly looks part of the Maserati family, with an aggressive looking front end, and a softer, more elegant rear. The interior can accommodate five in comfort, although is especially spacious for four. Everything looks and feels like it belongs in a premium car.

The company's priority with its first SUV was that it should still feel 100% Maserati. The sometimes conflicting attributes of comfort and agility have been balanced by an electronically controlled suspension that also varies the ride height according to road conditions. It can be lowered for improved aerodynamics or to reduce the centre of gravity on-road, or raised to ensure it clears obstacles off-road. The default setting combines enough comfort for most with excellent body control and sharp steering responses.

Essentially, the Levante will corner pretty much as well as the Ghibli saloon, but offer the added dimension of go-anywhere ability.

Prices will be confirmed closer to the car's UK introduction, but somewhere between £53,000 and £55,000 is likely to be the level.

2.0 TDI SE BUSINESS

ŠKODA SUPERB

Big and smooth, with impressive mpg



COSTS*

 P11D price £22,725

 BIK tax band 21%

 Annual BIK tax (20%) £954

 Class 1A NIC £658

 Annual VED £0 then £20

 RV (4yr/80k) £7,044/31%

 Fuel cost (ppm) 6.94

 AFR (ppm) 10

 Running cost (4yr/80k) 30.45ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc) 2,000 Power (hp) 150 Torque (lb-ft) 340 CO2 emissions (g/km) 108 Fuel efficiency (mpg) 68.9 Max speed (mph) 137 O-62mph (sec) 8.8 Test mpg 59-63 Current mileage 2,870

*Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

By Stephen Briers

ince the badge was revived by Škoda in 2001, the Superb has collected numerous awards, including four *Fleet News* trophies. The latest came this year for the third-generation model, launched in 2015.

Our new long-term test car is the 2.0-litre TDI 150hp SE Business hatch with six-speed manual transmission, priced at £22,725 with two options: petrol blue metallic paint at £535 and a temporary spare wheel at £100.

Business is, as it suggests, the trim targeted at the company car driver. Among the generous list of equipment are fleet favourites such as Bluetooth, sat-nav, electronic stability control with multi-collision brake and autohold, front and rear parking sensors, front assist with automatic braking function, stop-start and tyre pressure monitoring.

Škoda is pitching the Superb against the likes of the Ford Mondeo and Vauxhall Insignia (although don't rule out a few Audi A4 and BMW 3-Series drivers taking a peek). So, our initial thoughts?

The first thing you notice is the size: it's a big car with ample rear leg, head and arm room. The boot space is cavernous at 625 litres, compared to, for example, the Ford Mondeo (541 litres), Vauxhall Insignia (530 litres), Volkswagen Passat (586 litres) or Audi A4 (480 litres). It's bigger than most cars in the class above.

Despite the size, the driving experience is outstanding. Not in the tyre squealing, ESC-bothering sense; this car's forte is its smoothness. So smooth, in fact, that it actively encourages you to follow suit with restrained, moderate driving.

Further promoting this behaviour is the gear-change alert, keeping revs low and progress efficient. So far we have managed to average just under 60mpg, rising to more than 63mpg on a handful of longer journeys – less than 10% off the official figure. Our car is barely out of nappies, though, having not yet hit 3,000 miles.

"The driving experience is outstanding. Not in the tyre squealing, ESC-bothering sense; this car's forte is its smoothness"



Nissan Pulsar N-TEC 1.5 DCI

After nearly a year on our test fleet, it's time to say goodbye to the Pulsar N-Tec. It's not just goodbye to our car, though – in the latter months of the test, Nissan has replaced the N-Tec technology-focused trim level with the new N-Connecta trim.

The changes are mostly in name – though sadly the new trim omits the LED headlights that I found provided a really clear view of the road ahead.

There's a small list price increase, too, from £20,895 to £21,115. The new model fails to rectify the curious omission of parking sensors, only including a reversing camera. The camera isn't great either, getting mucky rather quickly and with a fairly low resolution (see below).

But these are fairly minor bugbears on an otherwise good car. It's difficult to describe it as anything more than 'good' though – there's nothing wrong with it but, as we've mentioned before, it's fairly uninspiring.

"The new model fails to rectify the omission of parking sensors"

It soaks up long motorway journeys with ease, returning impressive fuel economy from 55-60 depending on the driver, with seats that remain comfortable throughout, with little sign of aches and pains. That replacement trim level also adds lumbar support in the front seats.

Rear legroom is also pretty good, and a large, square boot makes lugging loads easy.

The choice of C-sector hatchbacks is fairly crowded – and many buyers of those vehicles have instead opted to move into crossovers like its sister Qashqai. However, the Pulsar is a solid offering – even if it elicits little emotion from its drivers.

Christopher Smith



See extended long-term tests at fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/

PETER ORMSBY

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, CHEVIN FLEET SOLUTIONS

Any car will do for Chevin's Peter Ormsby, as long as it's an Aston Martin, and although the computing expert says a good work-life balance is vital, he will stand in for Lewis Hamilton

If I were Prime Minister for a day I would listen, learn and deliver – absorb the information throughout the day to use it in the future. It's the IT mantra: listen to what is required, learn how to do it, and deliver it.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage are a daily driver, a utility type for the weekends and something hairraising for those "oh yeah" moments. So three Aston Martins should do it!

I love all sorts of films. I could be here all day. Probably something like *The Shawshank Redemption*. It's a story of triumph over desperation – a journey.

Away from the office, I'm extremely family-oriented. I spend a lot of time with the kids. I enjoy the outdoors, cricket and watching Formula 1.

I would tell my 18-year-old self to go for it. Don't be afraid to be wrong sometimes. Live a little. A book I would recommend is Michael Gerber's *The E-Myth Revisited*. It should be required reading for anyone thinking about starting a business or for those who have already taken that step.

One of my earliest memories associated with a car was breaking down. We had a Hillman Imp which was my father's company car, but it used to break down all the time.

The most pivotal moment in my life would be the moment I decided to go into computing. I was blown away with some of the stuff you could do.

> I'm very forgiving, but my pet hate would be those who exhibit a lack of zest to do jobs.

> > I'd like to be remembered for being a supportive, assertive and good person to be around.

Career goals at Chevin To expand and streamline the business

further. Chevin is a very busy organisation, with products that can be used for a very wide range of asset management and datarecording functions. The system's flexibility, along with its customer service, has been one of its biggest successes – and I'm looking forward to using my skills to promote this at Chevin.

Biggest achievement in business

If I had to pick something specific, it would be developing and delivering international services to some great blue-chip clients. It wasn't always easy, but it was successful. However, I think some of my biggest achievements are yet to come. I'm looking to achieve more tomorrow than I did today and I can't wait for the next challenge.

Biggest career influence My father was an entrepreneur who inspired me greatly. He taught me to champion the customer at every stage, go the extra mile and provide the value they cannot find elsewhere.

Biggest mistake in business

Making mistakes isn't always bad – as long as you learn from them. If you never make any mistakes, you'll never make anything at all. One thing I learned was to make sure the balance between work and home life is correctly weighted. It makes a big difference – it can be incredibly valuable for both areas.

Leadership style I always lead by example. I believe that everybody is your teacher; there's something to be learned from all occasions.

If I wasn't in fleet I love what I do. Lewis Hamilton's job would be great, though.

Childhood ambition I wanted to be a farmer. My family had a farm, and this was really their influence. I liked the start-to-end process. I liked seeing where the food came from and where it went.

Next issue: Jacob Telemacque, fleet manager, Kings Security Systems

Advertisement feature

Fuel savings of more than 12% versus current Euro 5 models



Ford Transit gets new low emission engine

new 2.0-litre TDCi Euro 6 engine means more power, lower emissions, better fuel economy, improved SMR costs and reduced downtime for Ford Transit and Ford Transit Custom. The new, quieter, EcoBlue engine not only reduces nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions but also fully meets the 2020 Ultra Low Emission Zone clean air requirements designed to encourage the use of newer, cleaner vehicles in London.

The new engine – in 105PS, 130PS and 170PS variants – brings significant fuel

savings of more than 12% versus current Euro 5 models, reducing operator fuel bills over four years/80,000 miles by up to £1,000 (at £1.10 per litre).

Increased service intervals from two years/30,000 miles to two years/36,000 miles reduces vehicle downtime.

The 105PS version of the engine has 5PS more power than the engine it replaces, 16% more torque at 1250rpm and up to 23g/km less CO2; the 130PS version has an extra 5PS and 35Nm with up to 21g/km less CO2; the 170PS engine gives 15PS more power, 20Nm more torque and up to 16g/km less CO2.

Both the Ford Transit and Transit Custom have been enhanced with an array of new Ford Smart Technologies, designed to make driving safer by reducing the likelihood and severity of accidents.

Roll Stability Control and Side Wind Mitigation are standard, while options include Adaptive Cruise Control, Pre Collision Assist with Auto Braking and Traffic Sign Recognition. There is also a new four-inch screen with SYNC audio standard from Trend models upwards.

NEW ENGINE DESIGNED IN BRITAIN

The new-generation Euro 6 engine has been designed and developed in Britain, by teams at Ford's Dagenham diesel centre and Dunton technical centre, with an investment of £475 million and the creation of 318 new jobs.

The new engine has been on show this week at the CV Show at the NEC, Birmingham, alongside a number of Transit and Transit Custom models, including a new Transit L2 standard dropside.

The Euro 6 engine will also power Transit's one stop shop range, which now comprises single cab standard dropside, single cab premium dropside, double cab premium dropside, one-way and three-way tippers, box vans and Lutons.





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Tuesday:

The ACFO Debate – Another Fine Mess

Fines for parking and motoring offences are an administrative nightmare for fleet decision-makers. They are issued on an 'industrial scale' and there is widespread concern around processing and administration handling.

Caroline Sheppard, chief adjudicator of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, chairs the debate, which will include panelists from:

- Highways England
- Independent Parking Committee
- Parking Eye
- A Daily Rental Company
- An ACFO Fleet Manager



Wednesday:

The Great Fleet Management Debate – In-house or outsource?

In-house or outsource is one of the biggest debates in fleet. Views often centre on a fleet's core purpose, a business philosophy over risk and control or from a previous bad experience.

This debate will look at the options, ask which is best for you and consider some of the pitfalls to avoid. The panel includes:

- Jo Hammonds, group fleet manager, Mears Group
- Mike Vickers, fleet manager, Portsmouth City Council
- Stuart Donnelly, international sales director, Fleet Logistics
- Caroline Sandall, deputy chairman, ACFO
- The leasing view



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GLASS'S

The experts from Glass's will be on hand to provide free residual value forecast data on every car being presented at the event. Take away all the information you need to make considered decisions on the future of your fleet.

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Book your 1-2-1 session with manufacturers to delve more deeply into a particular vehicle's performance, or explore the range of vehicles they offer.

Fleet200 meeting and networking



The operators of the 200 largest fleets in the UK will meet at CCIA to share best practice with their peers whilst also hearing from speakers on the latest hot topics.

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Do you operate a fleet of more than 700 vehicles? Grab a free upgrade and join the CCIA Concierge Club! You'll get full access to the Concierge Club Lounge with rolling refrectments: a dedicated betters will see ordinate your

rolling refreshments; a dedicated hostess will co-ordinate your VIP drives direct with manufacturers; plus priority seating to hear the debates.

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