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Vince Dignam is prioritising the alternatives to cut NOx – and he hopes others will follow his lead

FINAL CALL FOR ENTRIES

See page 50 for details



Special section, part 1

FLEET & SAFETY

A victim's view of road safety, the latest vehicle technology and how to exploit telematics

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FLEETS AND SAFETY

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No challenge is too complex for this family-run rental company: it claims it can convert or custom-build any vehicle for any fleet purpose and offer funding from leasing to flexi-hire

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Analysis and insight into the UK company car and van sector. Part three of a series of six



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Fleet Management Live review

More than 1,200 delegates visited the second Fleet Management Live at the NEC, Birmingham, all looking to learn and network. Planning for next year's event has already begun

The BMW 3 Series won a clear victory over the Volkswagen Golf in this year's FN50 survey



BMW 3 Series tops reliability table for

BMW also takes FN50 carmaker crown, ahead of Audi and Mercedes-Benz

By Simon Harris

The BMW 3 Series is the most reliable car for the seventh consecutive year, according to the 2016 FN50 survey.

The 3 Series, which was updated in 2015, won a clear victory over the Volkswagen Golf in second place. The Audi A4, which was relaunched a year ago, was third. BMW also topped the table of best-performing car manufacturers.

Adam Harley, national leasing manager at BMW, said: "It is an honour for the BMW 3 Series to win the overall award in the FN50 reliability survey and to do it for seven straight years is an incredible accomplishment."

"The current BMW 3 Series Saloon and the 3 Series range has been and continues to be an outstanding success for us. We hope to continue to improve the 3 Series and stay at the top of the segment."

"It is an honour for the BMW 3 Series to win the overall award... and to do it for seven straight years is an incredible accomplishment"

Adam Harley, BMW

FN50 PASSES RECORD 1.5 MILLION VEHICLES

The FN50 – a survey of the 50 largest vehicle funders in the UK – has surpassed 1.5 million cars and vans for the first time in its 23-year history.

At 1,564,501, it topped the previous record of 1,494,460 in pre-recession 2008 by a little more than 70,000. That represents an 11% rise compared with 2015, or 157,313 vehicles. The full funding total consisted of 1,201,943 cars and 362,558 vans.

Lex Autolease remained the UK's largest leasing company for the 14th consecutive year (previously as Lex Vehicle Leasing or Lloyds Autolease), after a 14.4% rise in its funded fleet.

Its five-year plan is to reach a funded

fleet of 375,000 by 2017, which represents growth of 100,000 over 2012. It appears to be on track – it topped 333,000 in this year's FN50 with a year-on-year rise of almost 42,000 vehicles.

The biggest growth in numbers was from Arval. It acquired GE Capital Fleet Services in Europe, including 28,000 of its risk fleet in the UK. That took the company to 138,000 vehicles late last year. Since then, it has continued to grow organically, reaching 157,000.

Leapfrogging Alphabet to move into third spot, the gap to second-place LeasePlan has narrowed, from almost 37,000 to just 8,678 vehicles.

BMW is going through a major period of growth in the corporate sector, with true fleet sales up 23% in the first nine months of the year, at just under 65,000 units. It is particularly popular among large fleets, with almost three-quarters of Fleet200 organisations offering BMW models on their choice list. BMW is topped only by Ford (run by almost 80% of the Fleet200).

The FN50 survey asks the 50 largest vehicle funders in the UK to rank the best-performing vehicles for reliability, based on warranty claims and breakdowns. The results are based on a combined fleet size of almost 700,000 cars, making this the biggest survey of its type in the UK.

Audi followed the A4's top three position with the A3 in fourth, while the British-built Honda Civic was fifth. Honda will be hoping to consolidate that position with the all-new Civic, due next year.

BMW's 5 Series, in sixth, was the highest-ranked executive car, while the Volkswagen Passat, due for a mid-life refresh soon, took seventh place as the best-performing mainstream upper-medium model.

The Mercedes-Benz C-Class retained eighth place, with Nissan's most successful model in Europe, the Qashqai, in ninth, having been outside the top 20 in 2015. The current model was launched in 2014, suggesting its enhanced reliability compared with the previous generation.

The Škoda Octavia took 10th, up from the 12th, while Toyota's Auris and Prius took 11th and 12th places respectively.

Audi took a third top 20 position in this year's table, with the Q5 appearing in 13th place. Nissan's compact crossover, the Juke, ranked 14th.



Mercedes-Benz Sprinter retained its number one slot as the best-performing van

or seventh year

The highest-placed Ford model was the UK's best-selling car overall, the Fiesta, in 15th, followed by a third BMW, the 4 Series, in 16th. The Toyota Avensis secured 17th place, ahead of the Mercedes-Benz A-Class.

The Jaguar XE (launched in 2015) made its first FN50 reliability appearance, in 19th place, which was held by the XF last year. The XF fell just outside the top 20 in 2016.

The final position in the top 20 was taken by the Mitsubishi Outlander, which illustrates the popularity of the model with user-choosers since the plug-in hybrid variant was launched in 2014.

In the manufacturer rankings, the top five places were in the same order as in 2015: BMW, Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen and Toyota.

However, there was a reshuffle in the bottom half of the table. Nissan was sixth, jumping from the 10th place it achieved in 2015, while Škoda fell one position compared with last year, to seventh place.

Honda also dropped a place, to eighth, while Ford held its ninth place in the rankings.

Jaguar took the final place in the top 10, up from 11th place in 2015, which indicates an improvement in its performance on the back of its new models.

■ For more analysis, see the FN50 report with this issue.

BEST-PERFORMING MANUFACTURERS (2015 in brackets)	
1	(1) BMW
2	(2) Audi
3	(3) Mercedes-Benz
4	(4) Volkswagen
5	(5) Toyota
6	(10) Nissan
7	(6) Škoda
8	(7) Honda
9	(9) Ford
10	(11) Jaguar

BEST-PERFORMING CARS (2015 in brackets)	
1	(1) BMW 3 Series
2	(2) Volkswagen Golf
3	(3) Audi A4
4	(5) Audi A3
5	(4) Honda Civic
6	(7) BMW 5 Series
7	(6) Volkswagen Passat
8	(8) Mercedes-Benz C-Class
9	(-) Nissan Qashqai
10	(12) Škoda Octavia

BEST-PERFORMING LCV MODELS (2015 in brackets)	
1	(1) Mercedes-Benz Sprinter
2	(2) Volkswagen Transporter
3	(5) Vauxhall Vivaro
4	(3) Ford Transit
5	(4) Volkswagen Caddy
6	(8) Ford Transit Custom
7	(6) Mercedes-Benz Vito
8	(12) Ford Transit Connect
9	(7) Mitsubishi L200
10	(13) Peugeot Partner

BEST-PERFORMING LCV MANUFACTURERS (2015 in brackets)	
1	(3) Ford
2	(1) Volkswagen
3	(2) Mercedes-Benz
4	(7) Renault
5	(4) Vauxhall
6	(6) Citroën
7	(8) Peugeot
8	(5) Nissan
9	(11) Fiat
10	(10) Mitsubishi

FORD VOTED THE LEADING VAN MANUFACTURER

Two manufacturers shared the honours in the van sector. Ford overtook its main commercial vehicle rivals to top the FN50 rankings as the most reliable manufacturer and the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter retained its number one slot as the best-performing model.

The results were based on a combined fleet size of 225,000 vans.

Ford leapfrogged Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz to narrowly take first place, with the latter making up ground on Volkswagen compared with last year.

In retaining the title of best-performing model, the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter came ahead of the Volkswagen Transporter.

Steve Bridge, Mercedes-Benz Vans UK managing director, said: "Sprinter keeps adding to its awards haul, even though it is far from the newest van on the block. In fact, in Europe it has defined an entire class of van – known as the Sprinter segment."

"The FN50 award for most reliable van proves that the tough, durable, dependable workhorse, which is a firm favourite for fleets, actually does what it says it's going to do."

Vauxhall's Vivaro medium panel van took third place behind its rival from Volkswagen, while the Ford Transit, which achieved third place in 2015, took fourth.

The Volkswagen Caddy van took fifth place in 2016, one lower than it reached last year, while the Ford Transit Custom rose from eighth to sixth this year.

A second showing from Mercedes-Benz, the Vito, was one place lower than in 2015, taking seventh, while the Ford Transit Connect rose from 12th to eighth, helping to consolidate Ford's position at the top of the manufacturer overall rankings, with three models in the top 10.

Mitsubishi's L200 was the highest placed pick-up truck, albeit two places lower than it achieved in 2015, taking ninth, while the Peugeot Partner secured the final position in the top 10.

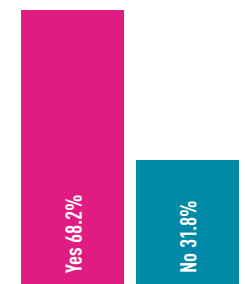


Ford was voted the most reliable manufacturer

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Has your vehicle suffered damage as a result of hitting a pothole in the past year?



FleetNews view: Drivers made at least 31,483 claims against councils for vehicle damage caused by poor road conditions in the last financial year, while the Government's own assessment is that there is a road maintenance backlog of up to £8.6 billion. Our view is the Chancellor should address this shortfall in funding in the autumn statement on November 23.

This week's poll: Do you think charging a levy for older diesel and petrol vehicles to enter air quality zones is a good way of tackling pollution?

fleetnews.co.uk/polls

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fleetnews.co.uk/costs/fuel-cost-calculator

Tribunal decision gives workers' rights to self-employed drivers

Solicitor says claim floodgates may open after ruling in favour of Uber drivers

By Tom Seymour

Rules on how temporary drivers are employed could be changed across the UK following a landmark ruling against Uber.

A London employment tribunal has ruled in favour of Uber drivers being entitled to holiday pay, national minimum wage and paid breaks – classing them as workers, rather than being self-employed.

The Uber app works by passengers requesting a pick-up from any location it operates in. Passengers pay Uber for the journey, which then passes on a percentage of that payment to the driver.

GMB, the union for professional drivers, helped to bring the case against Uber in July.

Employment lawyers Leigh Day were appointed to represent 19 drivers. James Farrar and Yaseen Aslam were used as two “test claimants” from the group of 19.

They argued they were employed by the firm but did not have access to basic workers’ rights. Uber has maintained that it is a technology and app company that helps facilitate drivers and passengers, rather than being a taxi company that has workers or employees.

Maria Ludkin, GMB legal director, said: “This is a monumental victory that will have a hugely positive impact on more than 30,000 drivers in London and across England and Wales and for thousands more in other industries where self-employment is rife.

“Uber drivers and other directed workers do have legal rights at work. The question for them now is how those rights are enforced in practice.”

Uber is appealing the decision and a spokesman for the company told *Fleet News* “nothing will change until the appeal process is complete”, adding that the current timeline for when the appeals process will be complete was “unclear at this stage”.

The spokesman continued: “While more than 40,000 people in the UK drive with Uber this decision only affects two people in London – only one of whom currently drives on the Uber app. This is a preliminary hearing, and not a final determination on the question of whether the claimants have or have not received the national minimum wage.”

Nigel Mackay, Leigh Day employment lawyer, told *Fleet News* he would expect the first stage of the appeals process to be completed before the end of Q1 2017.



“Uber will be liable for any difference in pay if there has been a shortfall in the wages so far”

Adam Pennington,
Stephensons



Drivers who gain passengers via the Uber app should be granted workers' rights, the tribunal said

40,000

people drive for Uber
in the UK

15

cities where Uber operates



The Uber app connects prospective passengers with drivers who receive a percentage of the fare

Mackay said: “This judgment acknowledges the central contribution that drivers have made to Uber’s success by confirming that its drivers are not self-employed but that they work for Uber as part of the company’s business.

“This is a ground-breaking decision. It will impact not just on the thousands of Uber drivers working in this country, but on all workers in the so-called ‘gig economy’ whose employers wrongly classify them as self-employed and deny them the rights to which they are entitled.”

Uber’s legal troubles have not stopped the company from expanding in the UK. It has gone from being in operation in seven UK cities 12 months ago, to 15 today, including Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Leicester, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield and Sunderland.

Jo Bertram, regional general manager of Uber in the UK, said Uber drivers choose to drive with the app specifically because they want to be self-employed.

Uber polled 1,000 of its drivers between September 30 and October 6 this year. The results show 89% of drivers surveyed are “very/somewhat” satisfied driving with Uber.

Adam Pennington, solicitor at law firm Stephensons, is expecting the case against Uber to impact the day-to-day running of other similar businesses in the couriership and private-hire industry.

He said: “The drivers have been deemed to be workers of the business and not self-employed, so they are entitled to receive the national minimum wage. Uber will be liable for any difference in pay if there has been a shortfall in the wages so far.

“Any workers aged 25 or over are entitled to receive the National Living Wage and, again, if there has been a shortfall in pay, the drivers will be entitled to reclaim the backdated payments they should have received in the two years prior to the ruling.”

Pennington said the floodgates could open against other businesses in similar industries. He concluded: “The serious, financial implications of this case reinforce the importance for all employers to ensure their workforce is correctly classified.”

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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

Chancellor warned: don't jeopardise air quality advances

Autumn statement could have plenty of tax changes for fleets to consider

By Gareth Roberts

Company car schemes and their positive impact on air quality could be at risk if the chancellor fails to deliver a fair deal for the fleet industry in the autumn statement.

The warning, from fleet representative body the Association of Car Fleet Operators (ACFO) and the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), comes as the Government prepares to outline its fiscal plans on Wednesday, November 23.

BVRLA chief executive Gerry Keaney said: "HM Treasury must reconsider the company car taxation regime and the impact it has on a major tax revenue-generating sector.

"Whether it's the planned salary sacrifice proposals, the incoming 2% company car tax increase from 2017-18 or the decision to push back the removal of the 3% diesel supplement until 2021, our members and their customers have been disproportionately hit with a higher tax burden than other industries."

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, will announce changes to company car tax, which should include a narrowing of benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax bands for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) and zero emissions driving capability being referenced for the first time.

Hammond's predecessor, George Osborne, failed to reveal BIK rates for 2020/21 in his last budget, forcing fleets to order company cars without knowing how much tax they will have to pay.

ACFO says this should not be allowed to happen again and has called on the new chancellor to reveal company car tax rates on ULEVs until 2028/29, while also recognising vehicle lifecycles and product availability.

Osborne also delayed the removal of the 3% diesel surcharge from 2016 to 2021 on the back of air quality concerns in last year's autumn statement. It could yet be retained beyond 2021 and increased as the Government tries to get to grips with pollution problems.

Caroline Sandall, deputy chairman of ACFO, said: "Long-term planning is essential to motor manufacturers and

"Introducing changes will make both employees and employers question the viability of car schemes"

Caroline Sandall, ACFO



650,000
drivers potentially impacted by salary sacrifice changes



Follow the very latest news and analysis on the autumn statement at www.fleetnews.co.uk

"HM Treasury must reconsider company car taxation regime and the impact it has"

Gerry Keaney, BVRLA



fleets and it is only fair to company car drivers that they select vehicles in the full knowledge of what their tax bills will be for the full lifecycle of a vehicle."

But, it is perhaps Hammond's announcement in relation to the tax treatment of salary sacrifice and car/cash allowance schemes which will be most eagerly anticipated on November 23.

The proposals could affect up to 650,000 people who have taken a salary sacrifice car or receive a vehicle as part of a cash or car benefit scheme, according to the BVRLA.

Sandall said: "Introducing changes of this scale and nature leads to uncertainty and will make both employees and employers question the viability of car schemes, leading to fewer schemes, fewer cars and quite possibly less tax revenue."

The proposed changes will also hit drivers of low emission cars the most, because they have the greater difference between their taxable BIK and their salary sacrifice amount or car allowance.

The consultation period closed on October 19 and an announcement is expected in the autumn statement, with the planned date for introduction April 2017.

Sandall said that would be "too soon" for fleets and suggested that "grandfathering rights" needed to be considered by the chancellor so employees were treated fairly.

Fleet decision-makers will also be wary of a cash-strapped Government which may be tempted to raise extra revenue by increasing fuel duty after previous freezes.

A combination of a weak pound and Brexit fears since the UK's EU referendum vote, and rising oil prices, have contributed to average diesel prices rising by 5.17p per litre from 113.48p at the beginning of October to 118.65p at the end of the month. Petrol was up 4.39p per litre, ending the month at 116.73p on average, having begun the month at 112.34p.

The average price of both fuels at the forecourt are now at their highest levels since July 2015. RAC fuel spokesman Simon Williams said: "If the chancellor has been considering tinkering with fuel duty in this month's autumn statement, the sheer volatility of prices we are currently seeing should, we hope, be enough to make him reconsider."



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Model shown is ŠKODA Octavia SE Technology Hatch 1.6 TDI 110PS, £19,925 OTR. Information correct at time of print (01/11/16)

Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA Octavia SE Technology range excluding GreenLine III in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 67.3 (4.2) – 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 78.5 (3.6) – 83.1 (3.4); Combined 76.4 (3.7) – 80.7 (3.5). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA Octavia SE Technology range are 106 – 99 g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Infiniti increases fleet team to be 'serious' premium sector player

New head of fleet and boost to overall headcount set to deliver strong growth

By Matt de Prez

Infiniti has appointed a new head of fleet and increased its fleet team's overall headcount from two to eight as it targets growth in the corporate market.

Jonathan Reynolds will lead the team, having previously worked in fleet and retail sales at Mazda, reporting directly to country director Barry Beeston.

A new role, dedicated to looking after remarketing, residual values and service, maintenance and repair costs, will be held by Paul Grimsley, who previously worked at Skoda, Volkswagen Financial Services and the Volkswagen Group.

Grimsley will be responsible for regular interaction with the key influencers in the UK and developing an enhanced remarketing strategy for the business.

Infiniti is also recruiting regional managers for the north, south and the Midlands, and plans to then add two contract hire and leasing managers (north and south) to the existing fleet team.

Beeston, who joined Infiniti from Nissan earlier this year (*Fleet News*, June 23) said: "One of the first things I wanted to do [as country director] was embark on implementing a robust fleet team of specialists and also a robust structure.

"It's fundamental that we have specialists who understand the market and a dedicated team to cover the specific areas of fleet, giving potential customers the confidence to buy our product."

Beeston calls it a "plug-and-play" approach. "They come into the business, they have the contacts, they know how the industry works, so they can leverage effect quite quickly," he said.

"The structure of the team is going to match the marketplace so it's important we have those defined roles within the team to be able to service the relevant interactions," explained Beeston, who hopes to have the full team in place early in the new year.

Business activity within Infiniti is running at a high pace.

2,500
cars registered in the
UK to date

180%
sales increase this year



For more information on
Infiniti, visit fleetnews.co.uk/infiniti-fleet



Jonathan Reynolds
feels it is a key time
for him to join Infiniti

Sales for 2016 have already increased by 180% when compared to last year and year-to-date registrations reached 2,500 by the end of September.

Reynolds added: "I feel it is a key time for me to join Infiniti and head up its fleet department, just as the product range is starting to penetrate into several areas of the fleet marketplace. The company clearly has some strong ambitions to be a serious player in the premium fleet marketplace and I am pleased to be involved with this challenge."

Two key products joined the Infiniti range earlier this year, the Sunderland-built Q30 and QX30, which gave the brand a much needed opportunity in the growing crossover market.

Alongside these models is the brand's 'halo' car, the Q60 sports coupe. Beeston is anticipating fleet interest in this model which features a 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine but stated that the Q30, QX30 and Q50 D-segment saloon will be the most popular among fleets.

All three models were on display at Fleet Management Live, at the Birmingham NEC last month. Reynolds was on the stand at the event and commented that interest in the brand and its models was "very positive".

For Beeston, exposure is core to his strategy: "There's no real rocket science in terms of building the plan. It's going to be quite straightforward. We'll over-invest in demonstrators, hold awareness seminars and we'll also increase our attendance at key industry events."

Currently the majority of Infiniti's fleet sales come from six leasing companies and both Beeston and Reynolds believe in a two-pronged approach to both increase leasing company support and target corporate customers directly.

"One thing that is critical with the fleet customer is the ability to service their cars in life," explained Beeston. Therefore Infiniti is continuing to appoint dealers and authorised repairers, with a target of 25 before 2020.

"For me an authorised repairer strategy is critical and we are accelerating that to ensure fleet customers have a point of contact to maintain their cars during the life of ownership. We have 11 at the moment and are planning to have 18 appointed by the end of the fiscal year," Beeston said.

"It's fundamental that we have specialists who understand the market and a dedicated team to cover the specific areas of fleet"

Barry Beeston, Infiniti



More than half of drivers willing to pay extra to improve roads

Company car drivers also want tough action to reduce traffic congestion

By Gareth Roberts

The merits of workplace parking levies and road pricing will be investigated in a new inquiry launched by the Transport Committee into urban congestion. It comes as new research from the RAC suggests that almost three-quarters (71%) of drivers think much tougher steps should be taken to reduce traffic congestion, and more than half (53%) would be willing to pay more motoring tax if the additional revenue was ring-fenced to improve roads – a massive leap from last year's figure of 42%.

MPs on the Transport Committee hope to identify measures that could help manage limited road space in towns and cities. It particularly wants to look at the lessons learned in London from the congestion charge and how a workplace parking levy scheme, such as that employed in Nottingham, could help tackle congestion.

The levy on employers in Nottingham that provide 11 or more workplace parking place raised £25.3 million in its first three years. They are required to pay £379 for each parking space on their premises – up more than £90 since it was introduced in 2012 (*Fleet News*, September 8, 2016).

A little less than half (46%) of those interviewed as part of the RAC's Report on Motoring, said that traffic congestion and slower journey times are some of the biggest motoring challenges they face. For 15% it is their top concern, more so than the cost of fuel, the environmental impact of motoring or the availability of parking.

When asked about how transport funding should be prioritised, 24% put the maintenance of local roads as their top priority, while 18% believed targeted improvements on motorways (such as reducing known bottlenecks) should be the number one priority for Government investment.

Jenny Powley, corporate business sales director at RAC Business, told *Fleet News*: "Encouragingly, the Chancellor hinted that he might address road investment in his upcoming Autumn Statement. He recently spoke of investing in 'genuinely productivity-enhancing infrastructure' and one thing is for sure, our roads fit this criteria."

"If company car users can get to meetings on time, they will be more efficient and productive and can invest their energy in driving forward growth and new business rather than wasting away the day in costly and futile traffic jams."

"UK businesses are being affected every day by congestion and delays"

Jenny Powley, RAC



53%

of drivers would pay more motoring tax if revenue was spent on improving roads

£15bn

being invested in the road network between 2015-20

A survey of more than 700 firms by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and global infrastructure services firm, AECOM, found that three-quarters (73%) see tackling congestion on the road network as either critical or important to the future operation of their business.

The Government is spending £15 billion from 2015-20 to help tackle congestion in the first-ever Road Investment Strategy (RIS). Work is now underway to develop the second RIS – known as RIS 2 – covering the period post 2020.

However, even after a period of historic change to road funding, including the planned introduction of a Roads Fund in 2019 through the ring-fencing of revenue from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), confidence that the UK's road infrastructure will improve remains low. More than two-thirds (69%) of respondents to the CBI/AECOM survey say they are not confident that the UK's road infrastructure will improve over the course of this parliament.

Infrastructure providers working in the roads sector also have concerns about the RIS's delivery, with a third (34%) reporting they are concerned it is not currently on course.

The CBI says Government and industry need to collaborate more effectively to develop the skills and capacity needed to keep the programme on track.

Powley concluded: "While the past five years have seen the biggest investment programme on the strategic road network for almost a generation, it is clear that we still have a long way to go."

"UK businesses are being affected every day by congestion and delays. We would urge the Chancellor, Phillip Hammond, to listen to the voice of the business community which is crying out for more money to be invested in Britain's motorways and trunk roads."



Read about Nottingham's workplace parking levy, visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/Nottingham-levy



More than 70% of company car drivers favour tougher measures to reduce congestion



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Luton plant aims to add police equipment in such a way that it can be removed without damaging the car

"At Luton we have double the capacity and we have increased the number of workstations"

David Ellam, Vauxhall Special Vehicle Operations

Vauxhall moves its bluelight conversion factory in-house

More than 2,000 turnkey cars and vans will now be produced at Luton plant

By Matt de Prez

Vauxhall has moved its Special Vehicle Operations facility, which produces turnkey bluelight vehicles, to its manufacturing plant in Luton which in the long term will deliver a cost benefit.

The plant, which currently produces the Vivaro van and houses the Vauxhall commercial vehicle conversion centre, is now responsible for producing more than 2,500 police cars and vans plus vehicles for the fire and ambulance service each year.

Moving the operation in-house, from its previous location in nearby Millbrook, not only saves the brand money in the long run and gives it the opportunity to be competitive in future tenders but also gives greater capacity for expansion and control over the operation.

Dick Ellam, manager of Vauxhall's Special Vehicle Operations, told *Fleet News*: "At Millbrook we were landlocked, giving us capacity constraints. At Luton we have double the capacity and we have increased the number of workstations. Currently we only run a single shift but we can switch to double like the rest of the plant if needed."

The team of conversion specialists working at the plant produces 60 cars per week, with a single Vauxhall Astra police car taking a day to complete.

Building riot and cell vans takes longer, up to 350 hours for the most complex, but as vehicles are built to bespoke customer specification, build times can vary.

More than 2,000 vehicles will be supplied to 28 bluelight fleets by Vauxhall over the next two years through a large procurement contract, set up via the Crown Commercial Service framework – an initiative which brings together public sector groups to leverage large discounts. (*fleetnews.co.uk*, December 9, 2015)

Sarah Wood, the strategic head of transport for Staffordshire Fire and Staffordshire Police and part of the consortium, said: "Having a turnkey solution is much easier for me, there is one order, one invoice and the entire process is handled by Vauxhall. The move to Luton will speed up the delivery time and reduce the overall cost," she said

2,500
vehicles produced
each year

1
day to fully convert
a police car

Ellam added: "The biggest change we've seen is an increase in demand for a turnkey solution. Not only because of budget pressures but due to liability. We accept liability should something go wrong which takes pressure off the fleet manager.

"If they are converting their own vehicle and something goes wrong that can be quite dangerous. As they are buying turnkey cars we take that risk and concern away from them."

An array of Vauxhalls are used by the emergency services and converted at the Luton facility including Corsa, Astra, Insignia and Mokka cars, and Combo, Vivaro and Movano vans.

The vehicles are factory specification and there are no upgrades or enhancements to the drivetrain, this makes maintenance and re-sale simpler.

Residual value is becoming an increasingly important factor for bluelight fleets, according to Ellam. For the past five years his team have been working hard to integrate police equipment into the vehicles so it can be removed – again without damage.

The new Astra police car demonstrates this approach, its interior features moulded trim panels which house the additional switch pack to control the sirens and the civilian radio is removed and replaced with a police radio.

"We do not drill holes in the vehicle because when the car comes to end of life we want to get maximum residual for that vehicle. We try to come up with innovative ideas to avoid drilling holes.

"Another area we have to be careful, as it's a direct sale to the customer, is head impact. All our equipment is outside of the head impact area," explained Ellam.

Fleet News was able to test a converted police car while visiting the new factory and, other than the greatly improved behaviour of surrounding motorists, from the driving seat the police Astra Sport Tourer was almost indistinguishable from a standard model.

Ellam's team don't have a great deal of input into the design of new Vauxhall models but do specify that the brakes need to meet enhanced Government safety tests, therefore Vauxhall has incorporated this specification into standard production.



For more on Vauxhall's
Special Vehicle Operations
visit: [fleetnews.co.uk/
vauxhall-svo](http://fleetnews.co.uk/vauxhall-svo)

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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



November marks *Fleet News* safety month, with both issues dedicated to looking at duty of care, driver training, technology and everything else that will help you to run a safer fleet.

It coincides, of course, with Brake's safety week (Nov 21-27), which has as its theme the six elements of the Brake pledge: slow, sober, secure, silent, sharp and sustainable.

In this issue, we have a heart-rending account from Elaine Corner (p36), a speaker at this year's Brake conference, who sustained serious injuries after being knocked off her motorcycle by an at-work van driver.

"The devastating impact of a moment of negligence is a sobering lesson"

The devastating long-term impact of a moment of negligence by the driver – who was distracted by his hands-free mobile phone – is a sobering lesson about the importance of robust policies that staff adhere to. If you want to share the story with your drivers, email me for a PDF.

The safety theme is carried through to our Fleet200 coverage, which, in addition to focusing on trends in the bluelight/NHS and Government/public sector categories, also looks at benchmarked incident data from 37 companies (p44).

Fleets that have implemented successful safety policies are urged to enter the *Fleet News Awards*. The safety category is one of eight that are relevant for fleet decision-makers. We have extended the deadline under request – you now have until Friday November 18. Details are on page 50.

CORRECTION

In the FN50 report included with this issue we have published incorrect names for three leasing companies: Zenith, at No7; Days Fleet, at No20; and Close Brothers Vehicle Hire, at No44. Apologies for any embarrassment caused.

YOUR LETTERS

BENEFIT-IN-KIND

Tax deters drivers choosing safety technology

EDITOR'S PICK



Nigel Boyle wrote:

Having read 'Five-star NCAP ratings for new cars but Thatcham criticises optional fit' (fleetnews.co.uk, Sep 28), they fail to point out that many people will not specify these options as they have to pay benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax on them. Additional options that are purely safety should also be exempt.

BIK on company cars is so faulty it is not fit for purpose. It is supposed to tax an individual as if they bought it themselves, but the tax is based on the list price that no one pays. The next company car I am getting is probably at 20% off list to the leasing company, I could get the same deal directly with them. But tax is at 100%.

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

FUEL RATES

Cards useless for hybrids

Bob the Engineer wrote:

Having read 'Choice list integration is barrier to fleet adoption of plug-in hybrids, says Arval' (fleetnews.co.uk, Oct 26), this is not so difficult. Forget fuel cards – just pay hybrid drivers the advisory fuel rates per business mile. That typically means the driver needs to do about 39/40mpg to break even. This is possible even with big hybrids and over long distances. It also incentivises drivers to charge up. Electric miles are cheaper than petrol ones so the driver is better off running on electric. Fuel cards are useless for hybrids as the company pays the fuel no matter how much it costs so drivers have no incentive to charge up, drive with any attempt at economy or avoid buying overpriced motorway fuel.

EV/ULEV

Is EV-only lane open to abuse?

Gerry wrote:

Having read 'Electric vehicles-only lane in Nottingham will be a UK first' (Fleet News, Oct 13), if hybrids are allowed in, how can you stop them from running the engine instead of using batteries? Automatic Number Plate Recognition will only show it as a hybrid.

Gareth Roberts replied:

The council has been billing this as an EV-only lane, but in fact a better description would be a Ultra Low Emission Vehicle-only lane. It is basing eligibility for access to the lane on eligibility for the plug-in grant scheme, which means that some hybrid vehicles will qualify and there is no requirement for them to be driven in pure EV mode.



HALL OF FAME

The *Fleet News* Hall of Fame recognises and honours people who have made an outstanding contribution to the fleet sector during their career. **Andrew Mann**, JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions managing director (centre), and **Peter Roper-Hall**, recently retired after a 37-year career with Ford and Jaguar (right), were inducted at the FN50 Dinner.

Citation extract: Peter Roper-Hall started his career with Ford Motor Company in October 1978 on its graduate trainee programme. One of his early fleet roles was in Eastern Europe, where he sold Lincoln Continentals to the Moscow Police.

After developing a programme to sell Fords to SMEs, Roper-Hall moved to Jaguar, where he was responsible for residual values and SMR cost positioning.

Andrew Mann was involved in the launch of JCT600



Contracts in 1986, having already been involved in the leasing sector for 14 years with Avis, Swan National and Appleyard Contracts.

He was appointed managing director in 1996 and has overseen a consistently profitable business.

Mann has always been passionate about the leasing industry, as shown by his long service as a BVRLA member. BVRLA meetings are likely to be a tad less lively without him as he retires at the end of 2016.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS



FN50 rising star of the year
Kate Franks, team manager at Zenith, presented by Toyota and Lexus Fleet GM Neil Broad



FN50 individual customer service award winner Jayne Sheehan, account manager at Arval, with Neil Broad



FN50 customer service team of the year, Alphabet GB Customer First Team. From right: Holly Turner, Kaye Storrow and Graham Pickersgill, with Neil Broad

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Burning question:
What skill have you learnt most recently?

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FLEET OPINION

DRIVING AND THE LAW

Stop multi-tasking or face the music

By Matthew Reynolds

“We all know what it is like to be short on time and in a rush, but over the past few months we’ve seen an increasing number of stressed drivers applying make-up, programming their sat-nav and even shaving while on the move in a desperate bid to save some time.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the use of a mobile phone while behind the wheel is one of the biggest driver distractions, which is why the Department for Transport recently announced a crackdown on drivers caught using them, with fines and points set to double from next year.

The law already makes it clear that it is an offence to use a handheld phone while driving, but the Government crackdown will make the penalties for doing so even tougher, with guilty drivers being hit with six points on their driving licence and facing a fine of up to £200.

Under new regulations, which will apply to England, Scotland and Wales, more experienced drivers caught breaking the rules twice could be fined up to £1,000 and face at least a six-month driving ban. The penalties are expected to be introduced in the first half of 2017.

So dialling a number, checking emails, sending texts and, certainly, taking selfies or posting a status on Facebook while driving will all land drivers in hot water.

In addition, if you have something in your hand such as food, drink, lipstick or a razor while behind the wheel, you can be prosecuted for not being in proper control of your vehicle. And, if you kill or injure anyone because of poor driving, and it is because you were doing any of those things, you could find yourself serving a lengthy prison term.

Even something as simple as replacing a CD could put you at risk of prosecution, as the act of doing so means one hand has to be taken off the wheel and the driver has to take their eyes off the road. Therefore, it could be argued that in changing a CD you are not in proper control of your vehicle.

The safest way to protect both yourself and others from getting in trouble with the law, and from becoming involved in a road accident, is to treat driving as a task in itself rather than trying to combine it with other jobs and multi-tasking.”

“More experienced drivers caught breaking the rules twice could be fined up to £1,000”



Matthew Reynolds
solicitor at Just
Motor Law



Richard Brown
managing director of
Licence Check



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TELEMATICS

Driver consent will be critical

By Richard Brown

“With the growth in telematics along with manufacturers building vehicles that connect to, and interact with, the internet, what are the implications for fleet managers and drivers?

Knowing the whereabouts of their fleet vehicles during working hours, scheduling and service delivery, running costs, employee expenses and driving styles are all invaluable.

Connected vehicles can be an integral part of a strategy to reduce fleet costs, improve environmental profiling and drive down the number of accidents and hidden costs of such incidents. Addressing unwanted driver behaviour may also result in direct savings on insurance premiums through safety performance improvements.

The data is also attractive for leasing companies who may be interested in technical data generated by the vehicle in terms of emissions, faults and systems issues measured over time. This helps to determine leasing rates and expected residual values and provides focus on accident information, early fault indicators, breakdowns, servicing and repairs.

Data from connected vehicles can also be used to repudiate speeding charges, tickets collected by ‘cloned’ vehicles and identify ‘crash-for-cash’ scams.

But there are concerns surrounding the use of this information and the right to privacy, particularly because it could lead to the dismissal of an employee, prosecution or other disciplinary measures.

Ownership of this data is fraught with legal issues that at an individual driver level, raise issues of privacy, consent and data protection. It also brings into play wider issues of health and safety, environmental policy, management of the economy, transport and the promotion of fair competition.

There appears to be general consensus that driver consent to the specific use of data is paramount. Regarding the ownership question, there is no definite answer. It will depend upon the circumstances in each case – the parties collecting the data and the use to which it will be put.

What it might actually boil down to is how a contract is worded and whether the driver has properly consented to this use.”

“There are concerns surrounding the use of this information and the right to privacy”

ASK NIGEL

In our regular feature, Nigel Trotman, *Fleet News* Hall of Fame member and two-time *Fleet News* Award winner, gives advice on your fleet challenges and queries.

EYESIGHT

Q My driver training provider recently terminated a training session with one of our drivers because he was not able to read the number plate from 20 metres. The driver then went to his opticians who said that although he needs glasses he is legal to drive with his eyesight as it is. Given this conflicting advice, how can we be certain he is safe behind the wheel?

A Reading this question reminded me of a visit I made to a customer when I was working at Alphabet a few years back. The fleet manager talked about some of his biggest challenges, one of which was the number of agency drivers that his company used by the nature of their business.

Licence checking was obviously a fundamental, but he was also very concerned about eyesight. His answer was to have several vehicle number plates fixed to an external wall. Every time a new driver came to their premises they were asked to read one of the plates from the appropriate distance. He said that gave him the reassurance that any driver in one of his vehicles could see properly.

I appreciate this might not work for every fleet, particularly those that are geographically spread, but it does provide an example of creative solutions to this particular issue.

In recent years we have seen an increased awareness of the need for fleet managers to consider eyesight as part of a wider risk strategy. At least one major high street optical chain has promoted its services heavily to fleets and has seen some success.

I am aware of a number of fleets who have implemented the requirement for regular eyesight checks as part of their road risk strategies. In fact of course, eyesight checks don't just affect driving, and for many years regular long-term users of computer screens have been advised to have their eyes tested to establish whether they should be wearing glasses. Regular checks can therefore provide wider benefits – though at a cost.

This brings us back to that same discussion I have mentioned in previous articles – will the culture and financial managers of your business be sympathetic to the introduction of regular eyesight checks and the cost of them? Alternative approaches may involve requiring drivers to fund or part-fund the checks themselves –

“I am aware of a number of fleets who have implemented the requirement for regular eyesight checks as part of their road risk strategies”

the individual costs are not significant and eye health is a good indicator of overall health as well.

In your case, however, given that your driver training provider has alerted you to the issue you really need to ensure the driver does wear their glasses when driving. I would suggest a formal instruction, making the point that this is being done to protect the driver, the company and the general public. Failure to do so should in my view then be a disciplinary matter. This makes the position very clear and establishes an effective precedent – always a good thing where fleet drivers are concerned.

■ The next Ask Nigel will be in the December 8 issue

Nigel Trotman has more than 25 years' experience in the fleet industry.

As fleet manager at Whitbread, he scooped two *Fleet News* awards – fleet manager of the year (large fleets) and UK fleet of the year – before making the switch to consultancy at major leasing companies Lex Autolease and Alphabet. He entered the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame in 2013.

He is secretary of ACFO Midlands and is an ICFM board member.

Do you have a fleet challenge you would like Nigel to answer?

Visit fleetnews.co.uk/asknigel or email fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk

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CITY FLEET BANS DIESEL TO CUT NO_x EMISSIONS

The City of London Corporation is tackling air quality head on, with a range of initiatives it hopes other fleets will follow. *Gareth Roberts* reports



Vince Dignam's phone 'hasn't stopped ringing' as other local authorities are keen to learn from his experience

Air quality has risen up the political agenda, with a range of measures being considered to curb harmful emissions.

The most polluting vehicles face being charged to enter some cities, while fleets are being encouraged to make the switch to alternative powertrains.

The problem pollutants are nitrogen dioxides (NO_x) and tiny particles known as particulate matter (PM10), with diesel seen as the main source.

But, rather than waiting for some government diktat, the City of London Corporation has decided to take matters into its own hands by banning the adoption of any new diesel vehicles where an alternative powertrain can be used.

Vince Dignam, business improvement and

performance manager at the City of London Corporation, predicts there will be a "big switch" away from diesel within the next five to 10 years.

"I didn't think I would see it that quickly, but people are keen to use alternatives where they will work for them," he says.

"In the past, the driver (for change) has been the environment, but now people are beginning to understand how emissions impact health and that has become a major motivation for change."

Currently, 38 out of 43 geographical zones in the UK are failing EU air quality standards and, while experts predict that 35 zones will be compliant by 2020, six cities – London, Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton – are on track to fail without further improvements.

In response, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has launched a consultation on the introduction

of clean air zones in Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton.

The draft framework states that the levels of charges for vehicles entering a clean air zone will be set by local authorities and details on which vehicles will be targeted are yet to be finalised.

London, meanwhile, is consulting on the possible expansion and earlier introduction of an ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ), which would see the most polluting vehicles paying a charge to enter the city.

Dignam says it is crucial that the local authority sets an example when it comes to emissions and its ban on diesel vehicles is just the latest in a series of initiatives it has introduced aimed at improving air quality.

In May it announced plans for a crackdown on drivers who leave their engines idling, following a series of successful trials in the City of London.

And last year, it agreed a deal with London's



biggest private hire firm, Addison Lee, to automatically switch hybrid taxis to 'electric mode' in key areas of London's financial capital, known as the Square Mile.

It has also created City Air app, which gives low pollution travel routes to some 15,000 Londoners, and introduced a city-wide 20mph zone, while new procurement rules have brought in tight restrictions on harmful emissions.

The ban on diesel vehicles however, has caught the attention of fleet operators, with Dignam suggesting that other local authorities in London could follow suit. "To be honest, the phone hasn't stopped ringing," he says.

Dignam started his career as a fleet engineer before working his way through the ranks to become the City of London's business improvement manager.

He looks after the local authority's cleansing, waste and recycling contract, as well as all corporate transport. The latter includes a

"People are beginning to understand how emissions impact health and that has become a major motivation for change"

Vince Dignam, City of London Corporation

fleet of 270 vehicles, consisting of 32 cars, 48 vans, four trucks and a further 186 others, such as golf buggies and quad bikes. In addition he oversees 900 items of plant.

The majority (90%) of the vehicles are outright purchase, with the remaining 10% evenly split between contract hire and finance lease.

Some elements of the fleet are managed in-house, while others are outsourced to Amey. Dignam explains: "Amey carries out

the administration of the City's fleet management system and some of the maintenance of its vehicles and plant."

In 2011, Amey took ownership of 70 vehicles involved in the local authority's waste, recycling and street cleansing operation. Prior to that, it had provided a labour-only contract for the service, with vehicles leased from the local authority at a peppercorn rent.

Key to the subsequent





contract was a continuous improvement clause, which included reducing the CO₂ impact of the fleet.

In the first 18 months, it reduced the carbon footprint by 55% after adopting larger refuse vehicles which could also perform a recycling role, allowing overall numbers to fall.

The corporate fleet policy though, is managed in-house, with budgets and decisions on purchase and disposal of local authority-owned vehicles and plant also managed in-house.

The local authority is responsible for the Square Mile and maintains around 10,000 acres (40 km²) of public green spaces in Greater London and the surrounding counties. The most well-known of the conservation areas are Hampstead Heath and Epping

"I still see a big problem with the LGV market because it is extremely difficult to get the power needed from an alternative source. CNG could provide the answer"

Vince Dignam, City of London Corporation

Forest. Other areas include Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches, Highgate Wood and the City Commons – seven commons in south London.

It inevitably means its fleet is employed in a wide range of roles and over a large area. But this hasn't stopped it reducing NO_x and PM₁₀ by more than 40% and 50% respectively since 2009, due to a reduction in overall fleet numbers and the purchase of newer and cleaner vehicles. The diesel ban aims to bring its emissions down further.

Dignam explains that anybody wanting to replace an existing vehicle of the organisation's fleet must complete a questionnaire.

"What we've changed is the criteria for diesel vehicles," he says. "We want to know whether they actually need the vehicle; whether there's a smarter way of doing things and, if they're requesting a diesel, evidence as



Vince Dignam oversees a fleet covering an area much bigger than London's Square Mile

to why there's no alternative available."

The process provides information on potential alternative powertrains such as electric, hybrid and compressed natural gas (CNG).

The corporation currently operates eight hybrid, one LPG and one hydrogen vehicle, but these are expected to be added to as the new procurement rules take effect.

A diesel LGV has been retrofitted with a hydrogen dual fuel system and, while it has only been on the fleet for a couple of months, Dignam says previous trials have suggested it's cleaner than Euro 6 and should give it a 10% increase in fuel economy.

The local authority has also just completed a trial of a fully electric van and minibus from Chinese manufacturer BYD Auto.

"Fully electric vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes aren't perfect," he explains. "They haven't



FACTFILE

Business improvement and performance manager Vince Dignam

Time in role five years, two months

Fleet size 270 – 32 cars, 48 vans, 4 trucks, 186 other vehicles, including golf buggies and quad bikes, and 900 items of plant

Funding method 90% outright purchase, 5% finance lease, 5% contract hire

Operating cycle outright purchase 5-10 years, up to 10,000 miles per year; lease/contract hire 3-4 years, up to 10,000 miles per year

got great ranges, but they work and do what you need them to do – the technology is getting better."

However, cost can still be a major barrier to adoption, admits Dignam, with a diesel/petrol minibus costing £45,000 compared to £110,000 for an electric alternative.

"This is the problem everyone's got," he says. "When the finances of local authorities are being squeezed, it makes that sort of additional cost difficult to meet.

"Prices are beginning to drop though, and that will make choosing these sorts of vehicles easier. Just look at the Nissan Leaf and e-NV200, they are more affordable now and that's where we need to be.

"However, I still see a big problem with the LGV market because it's extremely difficult to get the power needed from an alternative source. CNG could provide the answer, but there has to be the infrastructure to make it work."

Whatever the technology, Government support will remain essential to help fleets make the switch, says Dignam, as well as initiatives such as LoCity, launched by Transport for London (TfL) this year.

Over the next five years, LoCity will be working with freight and fleet operators, vehicle manufacturers, infrastructure providers and procurers to increase the availability and uptake of low emission commercial vehicles. It will also be launching a fleet advice programme, offering guidance, tools, training and support.

A founder member of the scheme, Dignam says: "LoCity will help drive the adoption of cleaner technologies, just as CLOCS has helped vehicle safety."

CLOCS was formed in response to the Construction Logistics and Cyclist Safety report published in 2013, to improve the management of work-related road risk and embed a road safety culture across the industry.

The corporation is a CLOCS supporter and has also gained gold accreditation with the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS).



For more fleet profiles, visit:
fleetnews.co.uk/industry-profiles

FLEET VEHICLES 'MARKED' AT AN HISTORIC CEREMONY

The City of London Corporation's focus switches from its own fleet once a year, when it plays host to the historic Cart Marking ceremony at the Guildhall.

Transport has long been the lifeblood of commerce in the capital and the City of London Corporation has exercised its rights over carts and carriers since its inception – it was regulating the trade of a fellowship of Carmen as long ago as 1277, while the Cart Marking ceremony dates back to 1665.

Carmen continue to bring their horse-drawn wagons and carriages, steamers, buses and coaches, as well as vans and trucks new and old, to be inspected by the Master then branded – or 'marked' – with a red-hot iron, on a wooden plate, with the year letter.



Master Carman Lt Col Paul Hodder marks the Mercedes-Benz Econic high visibility safety truck at last year's Cart Marking ceremony

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74.3 (3.8); Combined from 31.7 (8.9) – 65.7 (4.3). CO₂ emissions 90g/km – 222 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes. Ducato 2.3 130 HP MultiJet II with an initial rental of £894 followed by 35 monthly rentals of £149. Talento 1.6 120 HP MultiJet II SWB 12 Euro 6 with an initial rental of £1,845 followed by 35 monthly rentals of £205. Fiorino 1.3 95 HP MultiJet II with an initial rental of £1,199 followed by 23 monthly rentals of £139. Rentals shown above exclude VAT and maintenance, based on 10,000 miles per annum, except the Fullback which is 8,000 miles per annum. Excess mileage charges apply. Vehicles must be returned with full tank of fuel. All vehicle images are for illustration purposes only and may include options or body paint colours, which incur an additional cost. †Anticipated dispatch from UK port within 14 days.

NO CHALLENGE TOO COMPLEX FOR SHB HIRE

Versatile family-run company claims it can convert or custom-build any vehicle for any purpose, reports *Matt de Prez*

For many companies, fleet sizes are in a constant state of flux. From cars for new starters to complex vans for new contracts, the need to acquire, and often dispose of, vehicles efficiently and at short notice is a key challenge.

SHB Hire aims to meet this challenge and its policy is clear: anything is for hire. The family-run business has developed its service level and fleet over the past 40 years and now believes it can meet almost any rental request.

Mike Street, SHB's chairman and founder, explains: "We cover pretty much every niche – refrigeration, mobility, access, welfare, traffic management, 4x4, dowers, tractors. There's not a lot we won't get involved in. We have some big customers that use us across the board."

Few other rental companies offer such a wide range of vehicles and this approach has seen the company achieve substantial organic growth of 10% year-on-year since 2009 while its turnover has jumped from £52 million in 2011 to £84m last year.

The approach isn't limited to vehicle choice either, SHB will tailor its funding options to suit any business need also.

Paul Street, SHB managing director, says: "We go to listen to the customers' requirements. We can do contract hire, flexible hire, daily rental, buy and rent back, servicing and rent top-up [extra seasonal vehicles used to bolster a fleet]. If the customer and the opportunity arrive then we will flex our solution to suit them."

"We can't try to force our ideas or one specific method. Its industry-led so we look at our customer and how they are funded. Some may have limited budget to spend within a certain time period and others who are cash rich might buy outright and just use us for top ups or to cover vehicle off-road time."

To meet the growing requests SHB now receives, the company has invested in a number of site expansions. Most recently was the opening of its largest depot to date in Gloucester. The five-acre facility follows the format of SHB's 13 other sites, which have full workshop, body building and MOT facilities. It also recently acquired the Wiltshire-based traffic management equipment supplier Acklea.

By keeping all vehicle operations in-house, SHB is able to offer a complete proposition to the market which includes on-site – or mobile – servicing and repair of all its rented vehicles and, more crucially, the ability to convert or custom-build any vehicle for any purpose.

SHB originated from a plant hire business established in 1979. It has always applied the same mentality for reducing downtime and maintaining efficiency that the construction industry demands.

"This diversification allows us to sell a service to a customer rather than just a standalone vehicle. That's still the approach today, so we try to lock in a customer rather than lock a customer to a vehicle," says Paul Street.

FACTFILE

Chairman Mike Street

Director Paul Street

Fleet size 15,000

Turnover £84 million (2015)

Established 1979

Headquarters Romsey, Hampshire

Branches 14

10%
year-on-year organic
growth in turnover
since 2009

£84m
turnover last year



To read more about SHB's new, largest depot in Gloucester visit fleetnews.co.uk/shb-investment



From Land Rovers to vans, lorries to golf carts – just a few examples of the versatility of the SHB Hire fleet

When it comes to cars, the story began with SHB's first ever vehicle rental – a Land Rover. At the time demand for off-roads was small; however renting 4x4s has always been a core part of the business. SHB has more than 3,000 on the fleet today – including some fully-restored 1960s models.

Mike Street adds: "When we first started renting vehicles the 4x4 market was very limited. As the market grew the 4x4s became more like cars. We would now class a Discovery as a car, for example."

The Discovery sits in one of the company's most popular hire groups, large 4x4s. They are used by film and TV companies (including the BBC), corporate hospitality providers, project engineers, telecommunication companies and many others who need four-wheel drive for at least part of their journey.

Another area where SHB has experienced increased growth is providing pre-contract cars for company car fleets.

Paul Street explains: "Our biggest customer has awarded us a deal whereby it offers new starters a pre-contract car. When it takes on a new person during the probation period it provides the new recruit with a car from us. This is from the start date up until that person's contract hire car is delivered – so it could be from three to five months."

The company has also seen a noticeable shift in demand from diesel back to petrol, especially on smaller cars with 70% now requesting them. That said, some of SHB's fleet customers are still running a diesel-only policy, which Paul Street thinks is a costly error.

"On the smaller cars the petrol models are holding their values much better, and for the diesels you pay a premium in the first place. If you consider the fuel economy difference, which sometimes isn't a lot, pound per mile you'll get the same running costs from a petrol."

He agrees that diesel is still the best fuel for the higher mileage driver, but points out that a lot of the diesel cars SHB rents are group A models like the Ford Fiesta and are only



Mike and Paul Street head the family-owned business

covering around 10,000 miles per year. Alternative fuel vehicles are also increasing on the SHB fleet. The company started renting hybrid Toyota Prius models in 2009 and alternative fuel now powers 10% of the fleet, around 1,500 vehicles.

"We are doing more and more electric vehicles, both cars and vans. We supply electric vans to Heathrow Airport, and it has taken electric cars for the last two years as well, plus lots of hybrids," says Paul Street.

"At Heathrow they have them on long term lease (four-five years). They cover low mileages and have lots of charge points, so it's a good solution.

"But if you've got someone doing 40,000 miles per year – it's not a lot of good at the moment."

"When it (an electric vehicle) costs £40,000 new and is worth nothing at the end, it's going to affect the rental rate"

Paul Street, SHB Hire

For SHB the most pressing issue with electric cars is who picks up the risk of worn batteries once they are out of warranty. Paul Street explains: "That's the big thing at the minute. What's going to happen when these batteries are out of warranty? Who is going to deal with the scrappage? We don't know all this yet.

"Ultimately it comes down to cost. If you are writing the residual value of that vehicle in four years' time but the warranty is only three, you almost have to write it down to nothing because you just don't know.

"If the price and practicality matched that of a diesel or petrol car then it could be justified. You can write it down after four years in that scenario. But when it costs £40,000 new and is worth nothing at the end, it's going to affect the rental rate."

SHB's biggest contracts are still related to the plant hire and construction industry.

One of its key clients is Highways England. This contract is a prime example of how SHB has worked to meet the demands of its customer by renting anything it needs on a flexible basis from a panel van to a custom-built traffic management vehicle.

"A major problem for contractors is that they are looking for ways to screw down costs and when they win a contract there is no guarantee how much work they will get from it," says Mike Street.

"Therefore they require more and more flexibility, so one month they might need a load of traffic management vehicles and the next month they might not have any work for them. Instead they might need drain cleaners, for example, so, by renting, they can switch the vehicles out."

In order to offer such flexibility the company will run vehicle utilisation as low as 60%, which in part is due to the seasonal demands for certain vehicle types such as gritters. For standard panel vans the level is more in-line with the rest of the industry at 80%.



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FLEETS AND SAFETY

A victim's view of road safety, how latest vehicle technologies can reduce crashes and an examination of the positive impact of telematics ... these form our nine-page look at all things safety related

INSIDE

36 | Why fleet managers must take safety seriously

How accident involving van driver using a hands-free phone turned Army veteran's world upside down

38 | Technology to keep your drivers safe

We look at some of the safety devices being installed as standard or as an extra in modern vehicles

42 | Three ways telematics can help improve safety

Incident rates almost certain to drop, training can be targeted and good driving can be rewarded



THE REALITY OF ROAD SAFETY

Elaine Corner sustained serious injuries after being knocked off her motorbike by an at-work driver. Here she shares her story and explains why fleet managers need to treat road safety seriously

Nobody goes out thinking an accident is going to happen to them. Everyone thinks their vehicle and its load are safe. They feel they can still concentrate on driving while fiddling with the radio, using the phone or recovering from one too many beers the night before.

But the reality is there are consequences to not concentrating when you are driving, to not having a safe vehicle, to not being in full control of that vehicle.

In March 2011 I was involved in a collision caused by a fleet vehicle. I was knocked off my motorbike when a van pulled out on to the main road.

There was good visibility at the junction. If the driver had looked, he would have seen me and he would have seen my mate on his motorbike behind me.

But he didn't look because he was distracted. He was using his mobile phone. It was hands-free, but he was still distracted.

He pulled out and hit me on the side. I went about 30 yards down the road and ended up face down on the grass verge. I was about six feet away from my bike.

My mate was lucky. He was far enough behind to avoid the van and ring 999. The driver of the van was unhurt. He was just wandering around saying 'huh, I didn't see them'.

It seemed like forever when I was waiting for the ambulance to turn up. It was actually about 10 minutes. It was the longest 10 minutes of my life.

I was in lots of pain from my foot and my back. I'd done first aid training, I knew not to move in case of injuries I didn't know about.

When the paramedics turned up, they cut my kit off. You feel very vulnerable lying at the side of the road without your clothes on. It was at the edge of Salisbury Plain, the Army training area. There was the noise of army helicopters flying around. And then it sounded like one was landing.

When the policeman confirmed that it was the air ambulance, I realised maybe I was a little more seriously injured than I first thought.



Scene of the accident about 30 yards down the road from where the collision happened



ABOUT ELAINE

Elaine Corner served in the Army for more than 25 years before being medically discharged following a crash with an at-work driver who was using their mobile phone. She is a volunteer with Wiltshire Safe Drive, Stay Alive – a roadshow based around powerful personal testimonies designed to make the audience aware of the suffering caused by road traffic collisions. She is passionate about supporting wounded service personnel and veterans in Wiltshire to undertake volunteering as part of their recovery process.

25
years was the time Elaine Corner spent in the Army before her medical discharge

£165
the fine for careless driving handed to the van driver who also lost his job

And then the paramedics filled me full of drugs and the next thing I knew I woke up the next morning in intensive care with my husband at my bedside.

That's when I found out what my injuries were. I had tendon damage to my right ankle. I had fractured ribs. I had two fractured vertebrae. I had a fractured sacrum, that's the bit where your spine goes to your pelvis. I had internal bleeding in that area.

My foot had also been amputated. As you can see from the X-ray (right), they weren't going to be able to save my foot. It had been crushed between the van and my bike.

I spent the next eight weeks in hospital, and with that came the stress that caused my husband, visiting me every day, with my family travelling from Yorkshire to be with me.

I had five further operations which resulted in my foot being amputated to the level it is now. I had 15 months of rehabilitation, learning how to walk again, learning how to live with my injuries.



SPONSOR'S COMMENT

Selwyn Cooper, head of business sales for Volvo Car UK



"We at Volvo have a vision that no one will be seriously injured or killed in one of our vehicles by 2020. Our pioneering safety technology is driving down costs as well as saving lives:

"Volvo's history in developing new technologies has always been safety focused; the three-point seatbelt was introduced by us in 1959, with an estimated one million lives saved by the harness. Today, driver-supporting technology is commonplace, with tools such as collision and lane departure appearing on new models nearly 10 years ago.

"Looking at the vehicle selection policy from a safety point of view is something that more and more businesses are starting to do as they understand what a dramatic impact this can have on both collision and cost reduction.

"Volvo's history in developing new technologies has always been safety focused"

"For example, fitted as standard on all models in our fleet range, Volvo's City Safety system has reduced insurance claims for rear-end frontal collisions by 28%.

"And it's not just the number of collisions that's reduced, but also the severity. This means fewer whiplash and other neck-related injuries, and less accident damage to cars, all of which is translating into lower insurance premiums, with insurers offering discounts of between 20-25% on premiums for Volvo drivers.

"Under Volvo's 'Intellisafe' umbrella, the City Safety system features autonomous emergency braking (AEB) with pedestrian and cyclist detection and now the new S90, V90 and XC90 feature world firsts of Run-off Road Mitigation and Large Animal Detection. Meanwhile, Pilot Assist, which operates at speeds of up to 80mph, supports the driver with steering, accelerator and brake inputs to keep the car in its lane and at the desired speed.

"In a Volvo, safety is the result of a complete, integrated solution, where every system and component works in unison with all the others."

For more information call the Volvo Car Business Centre on 0345 600 4027



I had another operation just when I thought I was getting my life back, so I had to spend another month in a wheelchair.

I'm still in constant pain with my lower back. I have pain and weakness in my right ankle. I get phantom limb pain. It can feel like someone is smashing into my foot with a sledgehammer, or giving me an electric shock.

It is sufficient to sit me bolt upright in bed and stop me from sleeping.

I have days when my stump is too sore to be able to put my leg on, so I'm back in the wheelchair.

Regardless of what people say, the world isn't accessible nowadays. It's very hard work getting round in a wheelchair, so I tend to just stay at home.

Because of my injuries, I was medically discharged from the Army. And because of the disrupted sleep and the constant pain, I can't work full-time now, so I can't earn as much as I used to.

I had to move away from my friends because of access problems to my old house. I had to sell my car. For eight months I was taking too many prescription drugs to be in a fit state to drive and I had to rely on other people to take me everywhere.

It felt like I was 16 again.

I'm a Duke of Edinburgh Award leader and have been for the past 12 years. I can't drive the minibus anymore. I can't go hill walking with the young people like I used to, so it's put extra pressure on the other leaders.

But I'm lucky. I'm still here. I can still ride a motorbike. I have a suitable car now. I can still be with family and friends.

Think about those who aren't so lucky. Those who are killed, paralysed, have serious brain injuries because they were hit by someone and it wasn't their fault. Somebody who wasn't concentrating. Somebody who wasn't in full control of their vehicle.

Think about your policies and your training. Are they sufficient to stop things like this happening to someone else? To some other family?

The guy who hit me got six points and a £165 fine for careless driving. He also lost his job. I have a lifetime of pain, of disability. That's the reality of road safety.

Below: X-Ray shows why Elaine Corner's left foot had to be amputated



"I have days when my stump is too sore to be able to put my leg on, so I'm back in the wheelchair"

Elaine Corner



TECHNOLOGY TO KEEP YOUR DRIVERS SAFE

Manufacturers are developing ever-more sophisticated systems to cut the number of collisions. *Simon Harris* looks at some of the latest technology

The speed at which car technology has advanced on the road to autonomous vehicles is astonishing.

As we outline some of the safety features available now on an increasing number of vehicles, it's worth remembering that, if this were written just 10 years ago – less than two typical car generations – more than half of them wouldn't exist.

With much of the technology available only as an option or included in a more expensive safety or assistance pack, there could be a cost associated with the feature that grabs your interest.

But it is worth pointing out that choosing a higher specification car because it has a particular safety feature as standard could see insurance costs cut.

Already, fleets choosing autonomous emergency braking have seen a reduction in car park prangs and low-speed bumps that come within insurance policy excesses or defleet recharges, and have a direct impact on the bottom line.

Other technology could help high-mileage drivers avoid fatigue but the value is perhaps more difficult to quantify. And some are building blocks on the road to fully autonomous cars that drivers will ultimately become familiar with as the systems permeate down from premium models to mainstream versions.

There are some features we now take for granted, so the list focuses on those items that are beginning to appear more frequently.

But it also begs the question that if we were writing this in 2026, could we even imagine what technology we would then be discussing?



Volvo's City Safety feature will apply the brakes if the driver fails to react to hazards

AUTONOMOUS EMERGENCY BRAKING (AEB)

What is it? Applies hard braking in an emergency without intervention from the driver. While the technology has the generic AEB tag, manufacturers will often give it another name, such as Volvo's City Safety.

How does it work? Laser and radar sensors continuously monitor the road ahead, and pick up any obstacles, which can include cyclists and pedestrians. If the system deems that a crash is imminent, it will give the driver an audible and visual warning, and if the driver doesn't intervene, it will apply a significant braking force to try to avoid it. Euro NCAP research has found that the technology leads to a 38% reduction in rear-end crashes.

What is it available on? The technology is increasingly available, and is now offered by most manufacturers, often as standard equipment, as a result of Euro NCAP tests favouring cars with it fitted. The most sophisticated version can also help prevent collisions with crossing traffic at junctions.

What does it cost? Often standard, but when optional, usually between £250 and £400. Cars with it as standard usually have lower insurance groups than equivalent variants without it.

360° CAMERAS/FRONT CAMERA

What is it? Cameras placed around the car provide a comprehensive view of surroundings, shown on the dashboard screen.

How does it work? Rear-mounted cameras with the view displayed on the dashboard screen have been available for 15 years or more, but as cameras have become smaller with better picture quality, as well as less expensive, it has become possible to display the view all around the car when parking, or left and right ahead of the car when approaching junctions. It's usually possible to switch between different views using the car's touchscreen.

What is it available on? Many mainstream cars now offer this function as well as most premium cars, with the popular Nissan Qashqai perhaps making it most accessible as standard on a special edition.

What does it cost? A rear-view-only camera typically costs around £250 as an option, but full surround monitoring can be less than £400, even on some premium cars.



LEAD THE WAY

A LASTING IMPRESSION

Our new range of premium executive cars is designed to stand out from the competition. With elegant lines, high-quality finish and the use of natural materials, the 90 series models draw extensively on our Swedish heritage to embrace a sense of calm, quiet confidence – inside and out.

SAFETY THROUGH INNOVATION

With City Safety, Run-off Road Mitigation and other world-leading safety features, the new S90, V90 and XC90 constantly work to keep drivers safe. In a step towards autonomous driving, Pilot Assist combines Adaptive Cruise Control with Lane Keeping Assistance to maintain speed or distance from the car in front, while keeping the car within lane markings.

SEAMLESS CONNECTIVITY

The 90 series makes it easier for drivers to stay connected to their digital world. Smartphone integration makes it simple to safely access many of their devices' functions whilst on the move – through a touchscreen interface or voice command.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUCCESS

Success isn't just about performance. It's also about beautiful design, staying sustainable, keeping drivers and other road users safe, and developing technologies that make everyday life simpler and better.

“Understated Swedish elegance, next-generation safety and support technology, impressive finance figures. These are fleet cars that simply don’t compromise on anything.”



Dominic Gill, Business Sales Operations Manager at Volvo Car UK, assesses the new 90 series.



[VOLVOCARS.CO.UK/VQMAGAZINE](https://volvocars.co.uk/vqmagazine)



VOLVO CAR BUSINESS CENTRE: 0345 600 4027



Lane markings are monitored to help stop unintentional lane switching

LANE DEPARTURE WARNING

What is it? The driver is alerted if the car appears to unintentionally drift out of its lane, to prevent the vehicle veering into the path of other traffic.

How does it work? Lane markings are monitored and if the car moves close to the line without the driver indicating, a visible alert in the instrument display, sometimes combined with an audible alert or a vibration through the steering wheel is triggered.

What is it available on? Now available on most cars.

What does it cost? Varies from £500-£700 as a standalone option or as part of a more expensive driver assistance pack, but is standard on some high-specification mainstream cars.

TRAFFIC JAM ASSISTANCE

What is it? A semi-autonomous mode that allows the car to keep pace with frequent-stopping, slow-moving traffic, maintaining a safe distance to the vehicle in front and remaining within the lane without driver intervention.

How does it work? Usually a combination of autonomous braking and lane-keeping assistance systems monitor the road ahead and the edges of the lane to ensure the car deals with stop-start traffic autonomously. The most sophisticated versions of the technology recognise if the vehicle in front is turning off at a junction and won't follow it, instead catching up to the next vehicle in front.

What is it available on? Most premium cars offer a version of it, even on compact- and medium-sized vehicles. Less common among mainstream brand cars for now.

What does it cost? Usually features as part of a driver assistance pack with prices around £1,000.

BLIND SPOT WARNING

What is it? Detects vehicles approaching from the rear in the driver's blind spot, alerting the driver should he or she be planning a lane change.

How does it work? When introduced by Volvo, it relied on cameras mounted under the door mirrors, which could often be fouled by grime. Now, it's more common to use radar sensors that continuously monitor behind the car and illuminate a warning light in or around the door mirror on the side where traffic is approaching. Should this have been missed and the driver indicates to warn of a lane change, an audible warning sounds.

What is it available on? Originally on Volvo and premium badge cars, it is now more widespread on mainstream medium models, either as an option or part of a safety pack, and sometimes as standard on higher equipment grades.

What does it cost? Around £500-£600 but often in a pack that includes other features. For example, in a Ford Focus it's £525, but includes power folding mirrors and one-touch electric windows front and rear.

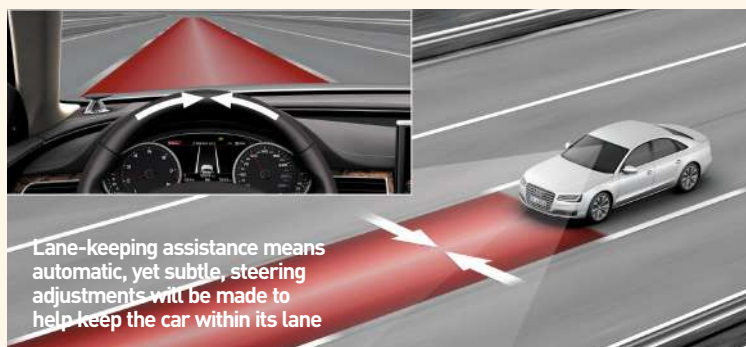
LANE-KEEPING ASSISTANCE

What is it? Prevents the car from drifting unintentionally out of its lane.

How does it work? Linked to the same technology that monitors the edges of the lane, the car can make subtle steering inputs to prevent it from leaving the lane unintentionally. The steering correction can be overridden by the driver, and the system relinquishes control if it thinks the driver isn't holding the steering wheel. Most systems are based on electric power steering systems, where it's possible for the car to correct the steering using the power steering motor. Where it's available on cars with hydraulic power steering, it makes the corrections to the car's trajectory with subtle application of the brake on the corresponding front wheel to bring the vehicle back into line.

What is it available on? Offered as an option or part of an optional safety pack on most premium cars. Available on many mainstream cars, usually as an option, or sometimes standard.

What does it cost? Can be around £500-£1,000 as an option, or part of a more expensive safety pack, although it is fitted as standard to some high-specification mainstream cars.



Lane-keeping assistance means automatic, yet subtle, steering adjustments will be made to help keep the car within its lane

AUTOMATIC HIGH-BEAM

What is it? Enables the selection of main beam at night full time without dazzling other road users.

How does it work? There are a few versions of this feature with varying levels of sophistication. The simplest one uses a forward-facing camera to detect lights of other vehicles or cyclists in the road ahead, then switches to dipped headlamp until the view is clear again. It is possible to offer a more complex version, especially with LED headlamps, where the main beam is masked from traffic ahead only in their location, with the dipped area moving with the other road user. It means most of what the driver sees is still lit with the high beam.

What is it available on? Some form of automatic high beam is available on most cars that feature automatic headlamps, usually as an option. The more complex versions are typically offered on premium-badge cars and often as part of a lighting pack upgrade.

What does it cost? Around £100-£150 as a standalone option, but usually included as part of a lighting pack, which can be less than £500, but sometimes £1,000 or more.

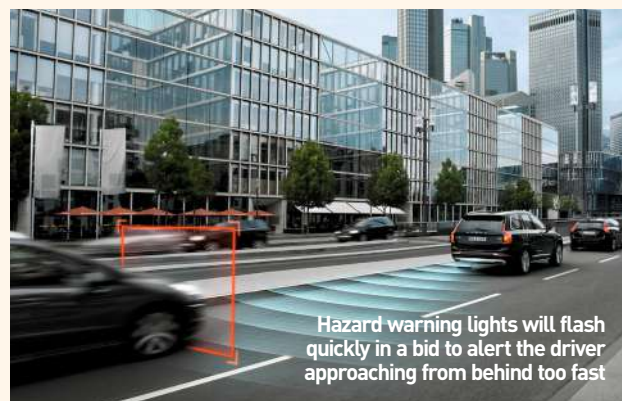
REAR COLLISION WARNING

What is it? At low speeds or when stopped in traffic, it can warn a fast approaching vehicle behind to slow down or stop.

How does it work? Sensors at the rear monitor for approaching vehicles, and if their speed is too high and risks a rear-end collision, it will flash the hazard warning lights quickly to attract the attention of the driver in the vehicle behind and warn them to slow or stop. If sensors predict a collision is imminent, the seat belt pretensioners are activated and the brakes are also applied, to help reduce the risk of whiplash injury and reduce the distance travelled after being hit.

What is it available on? Available on some premium cars, such as the Mercedes-Benz E-Class, usually as part of a wider safety pack.

How much does it cost? On the new E-Class, part of the Driver Assistance Plus package, priced at £1,695.



Hazard warning lights will flash quickly in a bid to alert the driver approaching from behind too fast

REAR CROSS TRAFFIC ALERT

What is it? When reversing out of a car park space, the driver is alerted to approaching vehicles and the car is prevented from moving.

How does it work? Activated when reverse gear is selected, sensors monitor the areas to the left and right of the rear end of the car and alert the driver if an approaching vehicle is detected. It might also be able to detect smaller objects such as cyclists or pedestrians.

What is it available on? Many mainstream cars now offer this function as an option or part of a driver assistance or safety pack. The technology is linked to the blind spot information system, so will be linked to that feature.

What does it cost? Around £500 when part of the blind spot warning system.



Reversing back and unable to see clearly? This feature may save the day

EVASIVE STEERING ASSISTANCE

What is it? Monitors the road ahead on a single carriageway and prevents the car from veering into the path of an oncoming vehicle or other road users.

How does it work? Forward sensors linked to autonomous braking technology can prompt the car to alter its line smoothly to avoid a pedestrian suddenly stepping into the road, and return to the original line afterwards.

What is it available on? Mercedes-Benz offers it on some models, and it is likely to become more widespread.

What does it cost? Usually part of a more expensive safety pack. For example, included in the Driving Assistance Plus Package on the new E-Class for £1,695.

SPEED LIMIT DETECTION

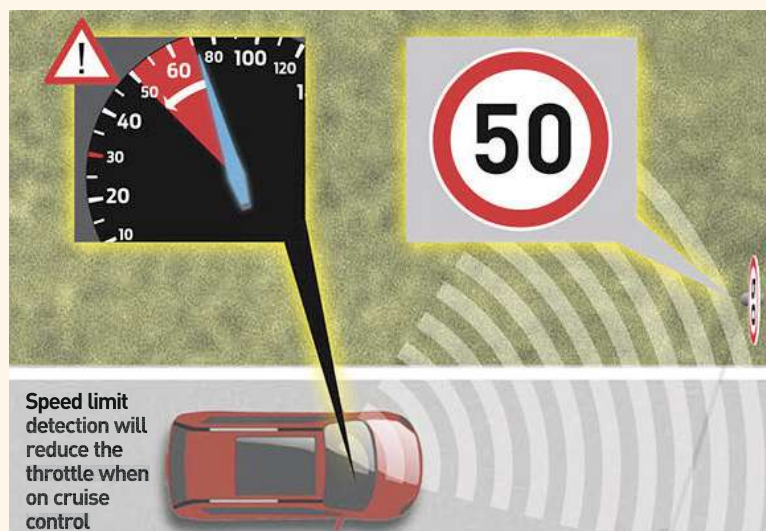
What is it? Monitors road signs and subtly adjusts the cruise control if set higher than the speed limit.

How does it work? The camera that picks up the speed limit signs to display the speed limit in the car's instrument display or dashboard screen also relays the information to the car's adaptive cruise control system and gradually reduces speed through reducing throttle input. It will allow the cruise control to be set up to 5mph higher than the speed limit.

What is it available on? A number of mainstream cars now offer this technology. It made its debut with Ford on the latest S-Max.

What does it cost? Usually included as part of adaptive cruise control, but this can be standard on certain high-specification cars.

What does it cost? Included in the Advanced Parking Package on the BMW 7 Series for £1,100, or part of the Autopilot Convenience Pack with Tesla for £2,200.

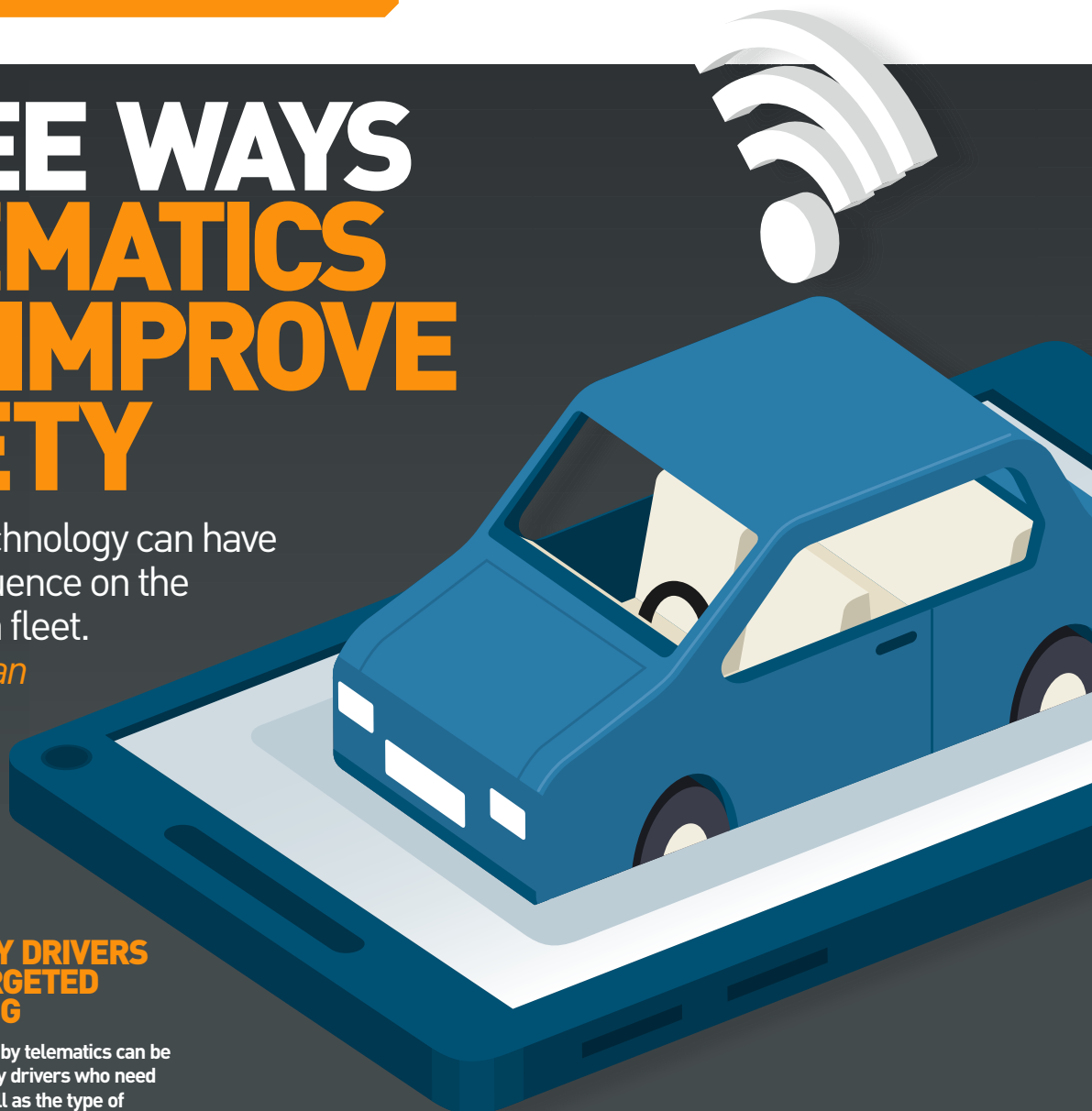


Speed limit detection will reduce the throttle when on cruise control

THREE WAYS TELEMATICS CAN IMPROVE SAFETY

Installing the technology can have a significant influence on the incident rate of a fleet.

Here *Andrew Ryan* looks at how you should use the data



IDENTIFY DRIVERS FOR TARGETED TRAINING

Data captured by telematics can be used to identify drivers who need training as well as the type of coaching required.

The technology can be configured to record a variety of events such as harsh acceleration, sudden braking or hard cornering – all manoeuvres which increase the risk of a collision.

"Using these insights, businesses can identify where training might be required to improve driving behaviour and, in turn, help lower costs across the fleet," says Jonathan Hewett, vice-president of Octo Telematics.

Andy Phillips, director of Applied Driving Techniques, adds: "Telematics is an effective way of identifying certain driving events, but it is then about analysing this data to identify regular issues and patterns.

"For example, if someone is consistently harsh braking at high speed, then they could be driving too close to the vehicle in front.

"However, it is not simply about looking for poor driving behaviour, but also the root cause that is contributing to higher levels of risk.

"By looking for patterns at certain times of the day, a fleet operator can establish if there is a problem with fatigue.

"Meanwhile, excessive events at month-end or year-end could suggest employees are under pressure to meet targets, which is contributing to increased risk."

CASE STUDY: IRON MOUNTAIN



Information storage and management specialist Iron Mountain uses telematics to identify drivers who need coaching.

"Our supplier's scoring method is to achieve less than 20 'events' per 10 hours of driving, which it regards as safer driving," says Rory Morgan, head of logistics support, Western Europe, for Iron Mountain.

The company aimed for less than 10 when the system was introduced in 2011

as it "was a more acceptable target", but in the past couple of years has changed this to less than five.

"We felt we could go further by moving the target again," says Morgan.

"We monitor these scores daily at a local level, but also have a weekly report which precedes a conference call to discuss the previous seven days and highlights all scores and violations."

Drivers also have annual driving assessments carried out by Iron Mountain's regional driver trainers.

"The scores from the telematics system, along with the driving assessments, are fed into a data system which also carries a driving licence history, incident history, tachograph infringements and road traffic incidents," adds Morgan.

"These are then collated and a risk profile score produced for every driver. We then use this data to prioritise both individuals and areas of concern."

Trainers are used to guide and coach both drivers and managers.

He adds: "The operations in the UK, Ireland, Germany and Spain consistently average around four most weeks."

CASE STUDY: GREEN TOMATO CARS



Green Tomato Cars this year introduced a GreenRoad telematics system across its fleet to improve driver behaviour and reduce collisions.

The telematics system detects when a driver performs a manoeuvre such as sharp cornering, swerving, harsh braking or sudden acceleration.

It features a 'traffic light' system that sits on the vehicle's dashboard: a green light means driving is safe,

amber that it is straying away from the safest driving practices and a red light indicates that a risky manoeuvre has just been undertaken.

"The telematics has had a massive impact on our accident costs," says Sophie Jacobsen, head of service delivery at the private hire company.

"Last year our accident costs were £3,200 per active driver over the course of a year. Now we are looking at £2,300."

Across the fleet, this means an annual saving of around £250,000. Jacobsen says the display serves as a constant reminder to drivers of how they need to perform. In the first six months of operation, drivers recorded a 33% improvement in their telematics scores.

Habtamu Behailu, a driver at Green Tomato Cars, adds: "[The telematics] has certainly helped me improve as a driver as it gives tips to improve my driving and has made me more aware of my actions, which is good for me and good for passenger safety."

"Accident costs were £3,200 per active driver over the course of a year. Now we are looking at £2,300"

Sophie Jacobsen, Green Tomato Cars



POSITIVELY INFLUENCE DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

Employees will often drive more safely if they know they are being monitored.

"This draws on some elements of the psychological phenomenon, the Hawthorne Effect," says Nicola Ridgeway, consultant psychologist and clinical director at West Suffolk

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Service.

She adds: "This study demonstrated that people alter their behaviour when they have an awareness of being observed. The Hawthorne Effect may well explain why telematics drivers will, on the whole, drive more safely."

Masternaut's customers have seen significant improvements in speeding and harsh driving just through installing telematics, says Mike Hemming, head of consultancy at the company.

"It is a reminder that the company takes driver safety and driving behaviour seriously," he adds.

A number of telematics systems give drivers a visual reminder they are being monitored by having green, amber and red lights in the cab to give instant feedback to drivers on their performance.

Masternaut has carried out a study on the impact on in-cab feedback directly to the driver compared to just tracking, using vehicles from more than 400 companies over a period of three months.

Over the course of the study, cars with in-cab feedback had 25% fewer harsh driving events than cars with no immediate feedback.



ENCOURAGE COMPETITION TO IMPROVE DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

Harnessing the competitive spirit of drivers can be used to encourage them to improve their performance.

Data recorded by telematics systems can be used to produce league tables, with rewards such as gift vouchers available for the best performers.

"Any incentive scheme should not simply focus on the best drivers, but look at ways of rewarding the most improved employees," says Andy Phillips, director

at Applied Driving Techniques.

"A driver of the year competition may seem like an excellent way of promoting road safety best practice, but, in reality, it will stimulate only a small proportion of drivers who are already driving in a safe manner.

"The remainder, including the worst performing drivers, will ignore the scheme because they have no means of winning.

"Instead, consider a way that celebrates the greatest improvement, because what you really want is a continuously upward trend across the entire fleet."

Sam Footer, head of international business and strategic development at Intelligent Telematics, adds: "Any league table needs to reflect the varying demands placed on different employees.

"Someone that predominantly drives in an urban environment will face very different challenges and risks when compared to someone who spends most of their time on motorways or rural roads.

"Therefore, it is important that any incentive scheme is fair and does not penalise certain groups of drivers."

CASE STUDY: ENSERVE GROUP



Introducing a driver league table using data recorded by its telematics system was "one of the best initiatives we have introduced", according to Paul Brown, fleet manager at Enserve Group.

The system allows the company to compare drivers in a number of areas such as speeding, sharp cornering and idling. The league tables were initially introduced in one of the business's depots.

"We ran the scores in a league table with a football focus, so it's like Premier

League, Championship and Conference league, with Sunday league at the bottom," says Brown.

"Without doing anything else, the peer pressure between grown blokes was doing more to drive the accident stats down than we could have done.

"There were football chants about how the other drivers had performed, and that put them under pressure not to be in that position the week after.

"Little bets were also being made like 'if I beat you in the driver league then you wash my van on Friday'. Nobody wanted to be the loser.

"The accident stats came down by around 25% in that depot. The guys were driving a little slower, they were more cautious, they weren't idling, and we've got to the stage where it's now become part of the main board initiative across all divisions."

The company rewards the best performing drivers with vouchers.

The fleet initiatives helping to bring down incident rates

Robust reporting, vehicle technology and financial penalties 'concentrate drivers' minds', say the fleets with the lowest number of incidents

NEED TO KNOW

- Car rates range from less than 10% to more than 100%
- Peak van incident rate is 59%
- Just over half of car incidents are own-fault crashes

By John Charles

Crashers involving company cars operated by Fleet200 companies are on the increase, but van collisions have fractionally reduced in the past 12 months, according to 2016 data. Those are the headline findings among Fleet200 public and private sector organisations who gave incident information.

Nevertheless, despite the apparent rise in overall company car collision rates, a number of fleets have been hugely successful in cutting crashes involving company vehicles with the introduction of a range of risk-reducing initiatives.

That said, fewer than one in five employers in the Fleet200 (39) provided incident data information for the 2016 report making year-on-year conclusions difficult to draw.

Data provided by 37 Fleet200 organisations running company cars suggests an average incident rate of 40% over the past 12 months, up on last year's average of 33.3%.

Of those incidents an average of just more than half (51%) were deemed to be own-fault crashes, 29% third party, 19% an unknown third party and 1% 'other' such as an act of God.

Equivalent data provided by 25 Fleet200 organisations operating vans suggests an average incident rate over the past 12 months of 36%, which is slightly reduced from last year's reported 37.6% rate.

Of those incidents an average 53% were deemed to be own-fault crashes, 27% third party, 15% an unknown third party and 6% 'other' such as an act of God.

One apparent trend across Fleet200 car and van fleets is that the split between own-fault and third-party crashes is relatively similar.

That is a change from last year, when data indicated that the split on car fleets was between a third and a half of incidents were third-party-related, while for van fleets the figure was significantly lower at less than a third.

However, data shows that across Fleet200 organisations reporting crash information there is a vast difference in incident rates. While some employers highlight single figure incident rates, at the opposite end of the spectrum one fleet reported a company car incident rate above 100% and several between 50% and 90%. Van incident rates were typically concentrated in a much narrower band with the highest reported being 59%.

Work-related road safety expert Will Murray, research director, eDriving Fleet, says: "It's notoriously difficult to compare collision rates due to different definitions used by different organisations. Incident rates vary by sector, by vehicle type, and depend on what is included in the figures."

Murray, who played a key role in developing

"Drivers know they have to report incidents to me. I ask questions and can be quite ruthless"

Claire Bowman,
Rolls-Royce

VAN INCIDENTS

36%

average incident rate over the past 12 months, down from 37.6% last year

53%

own-fault crashes

27%

third party

15%

unknown third party

6%

other

the free-to-use Fleet Safety Benchmarking tool – www.fleetsafetybenchmarking.net – launched earlier this year, says: "The key thing is for organisations to start monitoring and discussing the data internally and with others, from which some common standards and trends will evolve. Comparing processes is important as well as outcomes."

Fleet Safety Benchmarking enables employers across the public, private and voluntary sectors to measure their at-work road safety performance against a wide-range of other organisations. Live summary collision data benchmarking results from more than 70 organisations reveal an average per vehicle rate of 34%, a per driver rate of 23% and a number of incidents per million miles driven of 19.44.

Derby-based Rolls-Royce, which produces power systems used in industries such as aerospace, marine and civil nuclear power, operates a contract hire fleet of some 2,450 vehicles comprising 2,350 company cars and 100 vans.

Reporting a single figure incident rate for both company car and van operations, fleet manager Claire Bowman says the record was not due to any radical measures but came as a result of "common sense basic fleet management".

Highlighting the benefits of an in-house fleet manager fully focused on the organisation's company car and van operation, Bowman says: "Drivers know they have to report incidents to me. I ask questions and can be quite ruthless. Rolls-Royce is a close-knit organisation, employees talk to each other and they know incidents are investigated. As a result, drivers are more cautious because they are conscious of having to report an incident claim. It is not the same as simply contacting a third party. We are not a faceless fleet department."

The company, which self-insures, has been able to negotiate a "quite generous end-of-contract damage waiver" with its contract hire suppliers, which means that wheel and bumper damage and other small 'dings and scrapes' are not recorded and so excluded from incident rate data.

As a result, says Bowman, a fleet manager for 17 years: "Our end-of-contract terms cover 98% of defleet damage which makes a massive difference when making claims to our insurers. It would take quite a major incident for an insurance claim to be lodged."

In the 12 months under review, Rolls-Royce reported just 200 company car-related claims of which fewer than a third were own-fault. Just five van incidents triggered a claim.

Other factors highlighted by Bowman in helping Rolls-Royce to have the lowest company car and van incident rate across Fleet200 organisations were: the maturity of drivers with an average age of around the mid-40s, the engineering skill sets of drivers made them "sensible" when on the road,

and average company car mileage being 50,000 miles over three years (vans four years/80,000 miles).

Rolls-Royce has a largely perk fleet that "does not clock up horrendously high mileage", according to Bowman. The company operates a total ban on mobile phone use when driving, regarding it as a "distraction". It also manages the times of





day employees are allowed to drive on business. If any vehicle journey has to be started before 6am or completed/made after 10pm employees must make alternative arrangements such as travel by train, arrange to be driven, travel the previous day or book an overnight stay.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, which covers North Wales, operates a fleet of 1,100 cars and 150 commercial vehicles and has seen its annual car incident rate reduce to just 14%, significantly lower than the Fleet200 average.

Transport manager Trystan Lewis cites the decision to fit all vehicles when they join the fleet with reverse parking sensors as the most significant measure to date.

He says: "In one 12-month period 200 insurance claims related to reversing incidents. Over the past four years, as vehicles have been replaced, we have fitted reverse parking sensors and those incidents have virtually stopped."

That has generated "significant" insurance premium savings for the authority and further reductions are expected following the decision to incorporate adaptive cruise control in vehicles where the feature is available as an option.

Many of the health board's cars are Ford Fiesta and Volkswagen Polo models where adaptive cruise control uses in-built sensors to detect traffic slowing ahead and automatically reduces a vehicle's speed to match.

The vast majority of its fleet comprises pool cars driven by employees during the working week with annual mileage ranging from 6,000-15,000 miles a year.

While that may not be a typical fleet, the technology measures taken – some vehicles are also equipped with front parking sensors – are more than paying for themselves with the insurance premium savings made. The health board also fits vans with reverse parking cameras.

With public sector budgets continuing to be analysed in the smallest detail, Lewis says: "The savings we have generated are paying for further measures to be taken. We anticipate further premium savings feeding through next year with the fitment of adaptive cruise control."

Hatfield-headquartered IT infrastructure services and consulting provider Computacenter reported an incident rate of just 20% across its 1,200-strong company car fleet in the past 12 months and only 25 claims relating to incidents involving its 100-strong van fleet.

Fleet manager Keith Cook, who is also deputy financial controller, says drivers are made financially responsible for any own-fault damage caused and that "concentrates minds".

Employees' driving licences are checked and online assessments undertaken at the time of recruitment with Cook explaining: "We treat driving as a behaviour and we measure employees on their driving competency."

That could extend to putting interventions in place such as driver training, while also taking into account the status of employees' driving licences, their historical incident record and the number of miles driven. Post-accident investigations by line managers are also undertaken.

However, the "blunt instrument" is that, in the event of an incident, employees pay the insurance excess applicable to their vehicle grade – drivers have one 'free' at-fault incident in a two-year period and the excess is halved if the incident is reported within 24-hours, enabling third parties to be approached quickly. Additionally, employees pay any end-of-contract damage charges when vehicles are deflected.

Cook says: "Drivers cannot escape returning a vehicle in good condition. I am aware of drivers who, when going to the supermarket, find a parking space away from other vehicles because they know if their vehicle is damaged it will cost them money."

"Employees know their driving is being monitored. Driving has a focus in the boardroom which helps massively. If a business has good board level sponsorship it filters down."

BT Group operates a fleet of more than 31,000 company cars and commercial vehicles. It did not give incident data in the Fleet200 report, but has worked closely with Murray to reduce incident rates. In the past 15 years the company has seen its claims per vehicle rate reduce from 70.8% in 2001/02 to 31.6% in 2015/16.

Murray says: "BT counts everything, even the most minor damage. It is one of the best organisations around and has monitored incident rates for a long time."

Dave Wallington, BT Group safety advisor, says: "Our 15-plus year partnership with eDriving Fleet has, to date, engaged more than 130,000 drivers, being the 'glue' behind the processes that has helped us cut our collision rates."

CAR INCIDENTS

40%

average incident rate over the past 12 months, up from 33.3% last year

51%

own-fault crashes

29%

third party

19%

unknown third party

1%
other



Better utilisation remains mantra of bluelight sector

Vehicles are travelling further and being retained longer as emergency services fleets take better care and keep a closer eye on expenditure

NEED TO KNOW

- Van replacement cycles average more than five years
- Just 17% use contract hire as preferred funding method
- Less than 1% of vehicles are hybrid, plug-in or electric

By Christopher Smith

It's all change at the top of the bluelight and NHS sector of the Fleet200 in 2016. NHS Scotland has brought all its fleet operations together under the care of a central fleet support unit.

The move means Scottish Ambulance Service's former fleet general manager Michael Jackson is now responsible for the largest bluelight and NHS fleet in the UK, overtaking that of the Metropolitan Police in London.

The medical fleet catapults itself to joint seventh in the overall Fleet200, and the fleet merger follows in the footsteps of other bluelight bodies in Scotland – Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue.

Unlike those arrangements, however, the constituent parts of the fleet – 22 health boards and the ambulance service – will remain independent, with only vehicle services shared.

The fleets will be supported by a central team, with key regional fleet managers sitting across the country.

The programme will introduce a national fleet management system which will be utilised by all 22 NHS boards and will replace 10 existing systems. In addition it will involve tendering for – and planning to – implement telematics.

Just eight of the 22 NHS boards currently have the system in place, operating on around 900 vehicles, which equates to 12% of the fleet.

Jackson told *Fleet News* in May that the new initiative would



"For the first time we've dipped under 1,000 vehicles so we are getting better utilisation out of the existing fleet, which is saving us a lot of money"

Steve Thompson, West Yorkshire Police

115,000

is the figure average mileage cycles has increased to

"reduce variation and deliver efficiency savings for future investment in frontline patient services to support local fleet operations".

Moving into the Fleet200 this year are London Ambulance Service, and South East Coast Ambulance Service. Both based in the South East, these services are predominantly ambulance based, with vans outnumbering cars around 3:1.

The bluelight and NHS sector sees high utilisation of vehicles, from ambulances to police cars. It is a sector in which the role of an expert fleet or transport manager remains crucial, with many vehicles operating 24 hours a day in emergency situations, across some of the longest replacement cycles in the Fleet200.

Van replacement cycles remain just over five years on average – marginally less than other public sector and Government vehicles – but generally see more than 5,000 additional miles covered in their working life compared to other public sector counterparts.

Overall mileage has increased, too, on last year, with average cycles now up to 115,000 from 112,000.

Bluelight and NHS cars are typically younger than vans – with a replacement cycle of just over four years, but operating for similar mileages – averaging around 107,000 miles before replacement, a slight fall on last year.

Cars are the predominant force in the sector; just 20% of vehicles on fleet are vans.

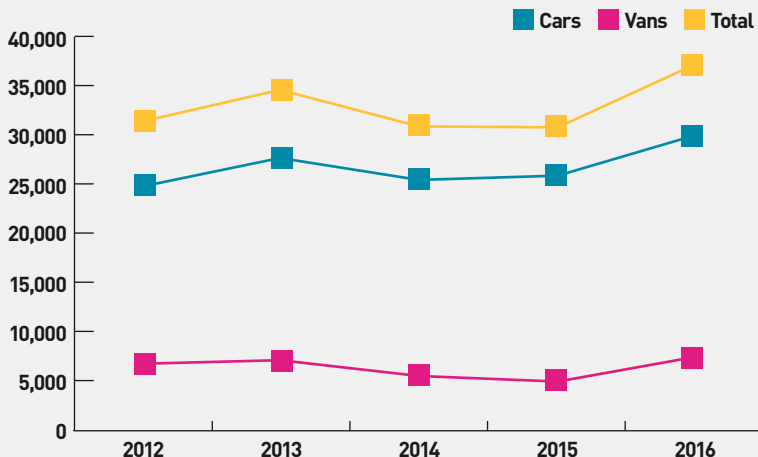
In light of the tough life of these vehicles, outright purchase continues to reign supreme with 78% of fleet vehicles in the sector being bought by their operating authorities. Just 17% use contract hire. Heavy use, the potential for damage and a long, high mileage operating cycle means, in many cases, a leasing contract would be unviable.

But fleets are implementing new technologies and schemes to reduce wear and tear.

South East Coast Ambulance Service has introduced dynamic speed controllers on ambulances, which restrict vehicle speed to 62mph, but disengage in 'bluelight' mode, while also controlling torque and engine revs. Additionally, as the vehicle's acceleration profile is controlled, wear and tear is improved, as is ride comfort.

Further north, West Midlands Ambulance Service cut its annual maintenance bill by £300,000 by fitting alloy wheels

TOP 20 FIVE-YEAR SECTOR TRACKER



Cars dominate the sector where just 20% of the vehicles on fleet are vans. The total for both vans and cars is at a five-year peak.

TOP 10 BLUELIGHT/NHS

	Fleet200 Ranking	Organisation	Cars/LCV fleet total	Cars	Vans/LCV	Job-need car to perk user ratio	CO2 avg (cars)	No of car brands on fleet	No of van brands on fleet
1	=7	NHS Scotland	7,500	6,000	1,500	100:0	n/a	5	8
2	17	Metropolitan Police	5,470	4,500	970	100:0	120	30	n/a
3	39	Police Scotland	3,360	2,960	400	100:0	n/a	3	1
4	58	Chiltern Transport Consortium	2,406	1,964	442	99:1	136	17	4
5	68	Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS	2,134	1,878	256	100:0	n/a	6	7
6	=70	Essex and Kent Transport Services	2,000	1,700	300	100:0	n/a	4	2
7	75	Greater Manchester Police	1,981	1,689	292	100:0	n/a	22	16
8	=85	Surrey and Sussex Police Joint Transport Service	1,800	1,300	500	100:0	120	11	5
9	127	Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust	1,205	1,200	5	100:0	115	7	4
10	138	Avon & Somerset Constabulary	1,070	925	145	100:0	132	23	6

to its 368 ambulances. It found that alloys provide better heat dispersion than standard steel wheels, which reduces wear and tear on brake discs and pads.

These fleets are almost entirely operated on a job-need basis. Just one top 10 bluelight and NHS fleet reported perk cars, and these amounted to just 1% of the total.

This does bring its advantages in terms of procurement. Police fleets, in particular, tend to have less than five brands on fleet, offering savings in purchasing and better buying power, especially as regional forces pool their vehicles.

Preferential terms are also available through the Government's Crown Commercial Service frameworks.

John Gorton, head of transport at Kent and Essex Police, says: "The move towards vehicle buying frameworks means we are operating with the efficiencies of a 44,000-vehicle fleet. The more efficiencies we can drive, the more we can save."

Bluelight and NHS fleets are more likely than many to have retained their own workshops, as higher mileage means that maintenance needs to be meticulous and thorough to reduce the potential risk of downtime.

Fleets are sweating their assets more, too – getting the most out of the equipment they already operate and reducing the number of assets held.

West Yorkshire Police has been using telematics to monitor usage and increase utilisation.

Head of transport Steve Thompson told *Fleet News*: "We have geofences set up all around our police station and we can now see how the vehicles are being used. That has allowed us to revisit how many vehicles we keep on the fleet.

"We started with a fleet of 1,200, now for the first time we've dipped under 1,000 vehicles so we are getting better utilisation out of the existing fleet, which is saving us a lot of money."

Several fleets reported continuing budget restraints, and said finding capital to replace vehicles and manage their lifecycle was sometimes a challenge.

One fleet cited uncertainty surrounding petrol and diesel policy, while others expressed a desire to update their telematics system, or introduce dashcams.

Fleets are predicting that their fleet size, in most cases, will stay the same or decrease over the next year, with just 14% expecting an increase.

The specialised nature of bluelight work means the sector will have a much greater number than average of high performance vehicles, which means that bluelight and NHS fleet average emissions are higher than every other industry the Fleet200 profiles, though it is falling gradually.

However, this year's reduction is just 1g/km, suggesting that CO2 improvements are slowing.



The Metropolitan Police: second biggest bluelight fleet with 5,470 vehicles

78%

of vehicles in the sector are bought outright

Chiltern Transport Consortium, which looks after vehicles for four police forces, bucked the trend. It saw a 4g/km average increase due to a number of vehicles from previously separate specialised units coming into the fleet mix.

While the high performance vehicles skewed the figure, Sam Sloan, head of the consortium, explained that rapidly reducing CO2 output from other fleet areas helped to soften the blow.

He says: "The increase was mitigated by the bulk of the core fleet of Corsa and Astra models reducing emissions."

The emergency nature of many bluelight vehicles also means that plug-in vehicles are considerably less practical – having a vehicle out of action or with depleted range for three hours is far less viable than in other sectors – another reason why several sectors have seen reductions in average CO2 that this industry finds harder to deploy.

Fleet200 figures estimate that less than 1% of bluelight and NHS fleet vehicles are hybrid, plug-in or electric, with little change in numbers since last year – and this looks unlikely to change in the short term.

It remains to be seen how continuing budgetary and environmental pressures will impact on the bluelight and NHS sectors in future years, but for now it seems business is pretty much as usual.

Pressure on spending likely to reduce fleet budgets further

That's the sentiment in the public sector as more than half of respondents say they expect the decline in expenditure to continue into next year

NEED TO KNOW

- MoD wants to achieve cuts of £100m over six years
- Defra bodies unite in a group fleet services department
- TfL pledges to have 120 EVs on its fleet by 2018

By Sarah Tooze

The squeeze on public sector spending looks set to continue as more than half (56%) of Fleet200 survey respondents in the government/public sector/education/health category believe their overall fleet budget will decrease in the next 12 months.

Fleet operators in this sector are arguably under the greatest pressure; in no other sector did so many respondents predict a reduction. The closest was wholesale/retail/food, with around two-fifths (41%) of respondents forecasting a drop.

In contrast, 50% of respondents in the transport/communications/distribution sector and 47% in architecture/construction/building believe their overall fleet budget is set to increase.

In the wake of reduced spending, public sector fleet operators are setting ever more ambitious cost saving targets.

The biggest fleet in this sector, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), has more than 10,000 cars and vans and sits at number four in the overall Fleet200 table. It has tasked its fleet management provider Babcock with achieving a saving of £100 million over six years for vehicle hiring and leasing across its cars, vans, trucks and specialist vehicles in the UK and Northern Europe, and its short-term hire around the world.



"We've always wanted to be ahead of the curve in terms of carbon reduction. We set ourselves a target for our car fleet, for example, to have an average of below 100g/km [CO₂] by March 2017"

Dale Eynon, Defra

The target has been set as part of a new £47m contract which initially takes effect in the UK and Northern Ireland, followed by MoD short-term hire vehicles in the rest of the world in April 2017.

It covers the management of the fleet, including the procurement of vehicles via the Crown Commercial Services, incident management, administrative services, including vehicle registration, and service, maintenance and repair management.

Greater use of scheduled transport services and vehicle sharing will help meet the target.

Defence secretary Michael Fallon has pledged he wants the MoD to "meet and exceed the £100m target" and that the savings are to be "reinvested into a defence budget that keeps Britain safe".

As well as using outsourced providers to make savings, public sector fleets are streamlining their fleet departments.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) recently adopted a shared service approach to fleet, which it hopes will deliver savings of £500,000 in the first year of operation.

Rather than different Defra bodies having their own fleet department there is now a group fleet services department, headed by Dale Eynon, previously head of fleet services at the Environment Agency.

Eynon says it was the "logical choice" for the Environment Agency to take the lead as it has the biggest number of people and largest asset base.

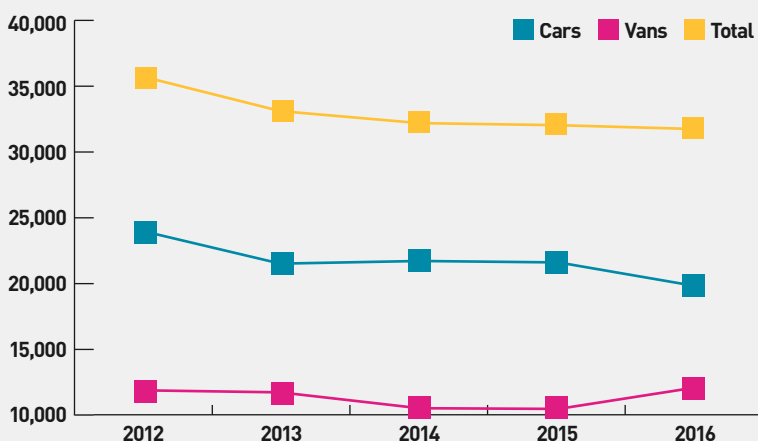
Under the new structure, there is no mandate for Defra bodies to use the new group fleet services department and if they do so they have to pay a proportional contribution. However, Eynon argues that "a small contribution gets you big savings".

"Even with that contribution, the benefits they'll gain much, much outweigh that – and we can back that up with evidence," he says.

Eynon believes additional savings can be achieved through demand management, grey fleet, and mobility solutions.

He also wants to develop environmental and health and safety benefits across the fleets.

TOP 20 FIVE-YEAR SECTOR TRACKER



Overall numbers are down slightly as the government/public sector/education/health category continues to face pressure on budgets

TOP 10 GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC SECTOR/EDUCATION/HEALTH

	Fleet200 Ranking	Organisation	Cars/LCV fleet total	Cars	Vans/ LCV	Job-need car to perk user ratio	CO ₂ avg (cars)	No of car brands on fleet	No of van brands on fleet
1	4	Ministry of Defence	10,591	7,424	3,167	100:0	n/a	8	5
2	22	Environment Agency	4,955	3,638	1,317	100:0	105	6	6
3	77	HM Revenue & Customs	1,911	1,800	111	n/a	n/a	7	3
4	=92	National Crime Agency	1,650	1,450	200	100:0	n/a	n/a	n/a
5	118	Ministry of Justice Transport Unit	1,286	846	440	100:0	n/a	17	10
6	121	Fife Council	1,270	157	1,113	100:0	n/a	8	8
7	=122	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	1,250	1,100	150	50:50	102	30	16
8	130	Kent County Council	1,133	533	600	100:0	n/a	14	14
9	137	Cornwall County Council	1,082	314	768	100:0	n/a	7	1
10	141	Southwark Borough Council	1,034	655	379	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

The Environment Agency has always focused on the environmental performance of its fleet, with Eynon explaining that "it's in our DNA".

"We've always wanted to be ahead of the curve in terms of carbon reduction. We set ourselves a target for our car fleet, for example, to have an average of below 100g/km [CO₂] by March 2017," he says.

Already, the Environment Agency's average CO₂ emissions are at 105g/km and are forecast to be 100g/km at the end of the year. This compares to an average of 109g/km in last year's Fleet200 survey.

The government/public sector/education/health category has the lowest average emissions (102g/km) in the Fleet200 – something it achieved in last year's Fleet200, although there have been a number of changes to the make-up of the Fleet200 (see *Fleet News*, October 13).

Five councils (Essex, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Suffolk and Manchester) have left the government/public sector/education/health category this year, replaced by Southwark Borough Council, Glasgow City Council, Hull City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, and the London Borough of Hackney.

The latter has improved the environmental performance of its fleet by using biodiesel in its commercial vehicles. The biodiesel has been created from used cooking oils, and fats, oils and greases.

Electric vehicles are a popular choice for public sector fleets operating in London.

Transport for London (TfL) has pledged that by 2018 it will have 120 vehicles on its fleet, up from 16 today.

Overall, the government/public sector/education/health sector has the second highest number of pure electric vehicles (after the utilities/energy/water/forestry/fishing sector).

However, it lags behind five other sectors in terms of the number of hybrid vehicles it operates.

The Environment Agency is one of the exceptions. It has 180 hybrid cars and 16 hybrid vans.

Eynon points out that there is now "a much bigger variety of plug-in hybrids available". The Environment Agency has also added pure electric vehicles its choice list this year but there are strict criteria to ensure that employees who opt for them are suited to EVs.

"Our vehicle management company tests their suitability, including whether we will be able to fit a charging point at their home," Eynon says.

"It's only when all of their answers meet the requirements that they can order that vehicle. It's important because we want to avoid the so-called 'green wash', where people think they're doing the right thing but they're actually missing the point."



The Environment Agency is taking the lead in streamlining its fleet

A new £7.5m workplace charging scheme, recently announced by transport minister John Hayes, will help the uptake of EVs.

A further £2m has been awarded to public and private sector organisations to deploy hydrogen fuel cell vehicles with Aberdeen City Council among the 14 fleets to receive a share of the cash.

However, public sector organisations risk undermining their work to lower the average CO₂ emissions of their fleet as they operate the longest average replacement cycles in the Fleet200.

It is the only sector to keep cars for five years, on average, while its vans are kept for six years, on average (like the utilities/energy/water/forestry/fishing sector).

This is likely to be due to funding method as nearly half (47%) of the cars acquired by public sector fleets are outright purchased (contract hire is the second most popular method at 35%), and 75% of vans are bought (with 25% on contract hire). This approach means that operators tend to favour longer cycles, with some running their vans for eight years.

This approach also works because fleets in this sector do not have high mileage, on average. Average business mileage for cars in this sector is the lowest in the Fleet200 (11,433 miles), while for vans it is 15,192 miles – the second lowest in the Fleet200, after the insurance/accountancy/banking/finance/other sector.

10,591

combined total of vehicles run by Fleet200 No 4 ranked Ministry of Defence

11,433

miles is the lowest average business mileage for cars in the Fleet200



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Best practice, new cars and 100+ exhibitors attract more than 1,200 to show

By Sarah Tooze, Gareth Roberts, Andrew Ryan, Christopher Smith and Matt de Prez

The second Fleet Management Live attracted 16% more visitors to the NEC, Birmingham, with a number of new exhibitors, features and seminar content. More than 1,200 fleet industry professionals attended the annual event on October 19-20, which featured in excess of 100 exhibitors (52 of which were first-time participants), and saw the industry come together to network and share best practice.

"We saw a huge 30% growth in floor space as more exhibitors supported the show or expanded their stands to display even more

products and services this year," said Chris Lester, events director at *Fleet News*. "It was great to see Fleet Management Live becoming a launch pad for so many new vehicles and products, such as the Audi A5 and Q2, Honda Civic and Land Rover Discovery."

Members of fleet representative body ACFO attended an on-site briefing, while local SMEs joined a fleet breakfast briefing, which was jointly-hosted with the Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

Finance, procurement and HR managers benefited from tailored sessions hosted by HR Grapevine, and those new to fleet management attended the Breakfast for Beginners session,

run by the Institute of Car Fleet Management.

Fleet News' columnist Nigel Trotman was on hand at the *Fleet News* Hub to offer advice to fleet managers, while England cricketing legend Graham Gooch shared his leadership tips on the busy *Fleet News* hub.

Fleet Management Live will return to the NEC on October 4-5, 2017.

Lester said: "We are planning to create even stronger features and partnerships for the 2017 event to grow the audience in line with the exhibitor base. We have some exciting new features now in development to discuss with exhibiting companies for next year."





Ross Jackson,
Fleet Operations



BEST PRACTICE SESSIONS

FLEET COMPLIANCE



Managers should be clear about data gathered and what to do with it

Effective use of data is key to helping fleets meet demands for greater productivity and compliance at a lower cost, said Richard Evans, head of business development at Jaama.

He told visitors that the number of sources fleet managers can gain data from has increased significantly over the past 10 years, and this has added another dimension to the challenge of management.

"As fleet professionals, you need to ensure the data collected is the strategic information you need," said Evans.

"It is important to be methodical in your approach, be clear on the objectives for collecting it and, more importantly, be clear on what are you going to do with the data when you have it.

"Collecting data and not doing anything with it can be as bad, or potentially worse, than not collecting it in the first place."

He added: "It is essential all data is centralised so you have a holistic view of your entire fleet operation and you are not a slave to a number of disparate systems that may become overwhelming, which may lead to trends being missed."

RISK MANAGEMENT



Worst times – and places – to be working driver aged under 30

AA DriveTech reported on its latest road safety analysis, studying the risk profile of young working drivers.

David Richards, head of marketing at AA DriveTech, said the study looked at 40,000 recorded incidents on UK roads over the past five years, involving those driving for work aged under 30.

The young working car driver is 127% more likely than a normal working driver to be involved in an incident between 6-9am, while the young van or professional vehicle driver sees their risk of an accident increase from midnight to 9am.

The study also identified rural roads as more of a risk for young working drivers. Richards said: "There is something about rural roads, with more open spaces and opportunities to overtake that increases the danger for young drivers."

Nervousness was a strong causation factor for these drivers – with accidents 161% more likely to be related to nervousness than a typical working driver.

OUTSOURCING



Dangerous to overlook internal expertise in favour of outsourcing

Businesses often see outsourcing the management of their fleet as a "utopia". But if internal expertise is not retained it can be "quite dangerous" according to Ross Jackson, chief executive officer of fleet management and consultancy firm Fleet Operations.

"By all means, seek external advice that says 'this what you should do and this is why you should do it' but in a business you need to make decisions about your business, about your people, about your investment strategy, about what it needs to retain and attract the right people to your business," Jackson said.

He cited one example where a business had "outsourced fleet to the nth degree" and no one in the organisation understood how the fleet operated. "We had to re-teach that organisation how to manage fleet," he said.

If fleet is core to your business then "think long and hard" about what impact outsourcing could have, Jackson advised. He said: "Understand the importance of what you need to retain in your organisation. Be honest and look at what sits best internally and what sits best externally. It's rare everything sits best externally."

REMARKETING



Factors that combine to produce the 'perfect storm' for car remarketing

Fleet managers and leasing companies are facing a "perfect storm" in the marketplace and may need to change the way they remarket cars to maximise residual values, according to Martin Potter, remarketing director at Aston Barclay.

"We have a perfect storm here where we've got an increase in the total used car volume, we've got an increase in personal contract purchase product that will generate a lot more 'late and low' mileage cars and we've got an increase in that fleet profile, putting pressure on the cars you are trying to remarket," Potter said.

He predicted that by 2018 there could be 31% more three-year-old cars in the marketplace than there were in 2015 and 28.3% more four-year-old cars. By 2019, the number of four-year-old cars could rise to 36.4%.

One way to counter the rise could be 'upstreaming', whereby the car is sold before it reaches the end of its lease, potentially to the driver or a family member, the open market or a particular dealership group.

"The day it is deflected it is already pre-sold so we already know the condition it is going to come back in, and that will help you to get your cashflow sorted out and also alleviate that massive amount of stock coming into one channel later on," Potter said.



Richard Evans,
Jaama



David Richards,
AA DriveTech



Claire Evans
(standing), Zenith

SAFETY



Combined approach to managing driver risk in the real world

Managing risk is a fundamental issue for fleet operators because a vehicle involved in a crash not only affects the fleet, the entire business can be affected by the associated losses and legal implications, plus there's the reputational damage that can occur.

Melvyn Hodgetts, risk and safety consultant at Visiontrack, explained to delegates at Fleet Management Live the benefits of using a combined video-telematics system to manage risk.

"Changing driver culture is about looking at the way things are done. Camera technology puts you in the cab," he said.

Not only can vehicles be tracked for speed, location and driving style but clips can be recorded and instantly uploaded for a fleet operator to view at any time, giving total transparency of a fleet.

According to Hodgetts, four times as many people die while driving for work than are killed at a physical workplace. He said fleets should be interested in driver behaviour and style if they want to reduce crashes, and video-based systems offer the best technology platform to do so.

TELEMATICS



The truly 'smart' technology many fleets cannot do without

Telematics is fast becoming the 'must have' technology for the fleet industry, according to ALD Automotive.

Research from the leasing company shows that almost nine out of 10 fleets with 500-plus employees have introduced telematics.

But, with fleets of all sizes adopting the technology, Rhys Harray, telematics product manager at ALD Automotive, said: "It will become a fundamental part of fleet management over the next few years."

He explained that telematics can help tackle four of the biggest issues facing fleets: cost control, risk management, carbon reduction, and fleet productivity.

"We ought to know how our assets are being used, especially when they cost so much," said Harray.

"Telematics isn't the be all and end all, but I think it's the one solution that stands out as being the single most cost-effective answer to help deliver these goals."

He helped visitors understand the growing functionality of telematics and how to overcome some of the fundamental obstacles to adoption. He also looked at the impact of smartphones.

FUNDING



Cutting CO₂ emissions will help reduce impact of tax changes

Reducing CO₂ emissions will be an effective way of minimising the impact of forthcoming tax changes, said Claire Evans, head of fleet consultancy at Zenith.

Delegates were told changes to company car tax bands, vehicle excise rates, lease accounting and salary sacrifice are either being introduced or proposed.

Evans said: "If reducing CO₂ caps is an option, that would help reduce higher costs. You can speak to your leasing company for assistance, find out what the impact of the changes will be and look at what vehicles are available on your policy. You need to understand when those changes are coming so you can plan for them."

Evans said key questions fleet managers should consider include:

- How many car options currently available on fleet are between 110g/km and 130g/km?
- How can drivers be encouraged to take lower CO₂ cars through policy changes?
- Do ultra low emitting vehicles fit into the car policy? And how do they compare to the vehicles currently available to drivers?

ADAS



Windscreen replacements require extra care so safety devices work

Fleets should ensure advanced driver safety assistance system (ADAS) sensors are recalibrated after repairs to make sure they work correctly, said Steve Greenway, senior partnership manager at Nationwide Windscreen Services.

All new cars are being equipped with some form of ADAS, according to Greenway. These include autonomous emergency braking, lane keep assist and adaptive cruise control, many of which rely on sensors mounted behind windscreens.

Their accuracy can be affected by certain repairs or maintenance tasks, such as windscreen replacement and wheel alignment, as well as mechanical and accident repairs which affect the geometry of a vehicle.

Neil Hilton, head of business development, garage equipment, at Hella Gutmann, said: "If sensors are not calibrated correctly, then occasionally you will get warning lights on the dashboard, but more often the most common symptom is incorrect function and then you get deactivation of the corresponding ADAS system. It is a best practice requirement for sensors to be recalibrated."

FLEET INSIGHT THEATRE SESSIONS

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SME) SESSION



Dan Abbott,
LeasePlan Go

The 'hot potato' fleet decisions that will not go away

Grey fleet is vital to SMEs, but needs to be correctly managed, according to the BVRLA's director of policy Jay Parmar.

Speaking at Fleet Management Live's Insight Theatre, Parmar outlined the organisation's grey fleet report, and emphasised the ways SMEs can help to reduce the costs and risk associated with drivers using private cars for business.

The average grey fleet vehicle is more than eight years old, with average CO₂ emissions of 152g/km – not as clean or green as the average fleet car, so Parmar called on SMEs to measure mileage, cut

excess travel, and look to make the most of existing vehicles.

Other speakers included Simon Down, tax director at Deloitte, who explained that, in real terms, company car tax has stayed broadly static, thanks to reducing CO₂ emissions of vehicles. He warned that the current company car tax consultation was likely to increase costs for both businesses and drivers.

Parmar also covered the consultation, saying the BVRLA and the fleet industry was calling for a clear five-year tax band cycle, to allow for four-year vehicle replacement cycles and ensure

drivers were aware of their tax liability for the entirety of the vehicle term.

LeasePlan Go's Dan Abbott, said that for SMEs, fleet was the 'hot potato' that can be passed around as often as a business likes, but warned that fleet decisions have to be made and 'do not go away'.

Lesley Upham, commercial director at IAM RoadSmart, spoke about the importance of targeted actions when it comes to driver training – not necessarily a blanket approach. She said a businesses's staff needed to be 'prepared for learning', and that senior managers should lead by example.

FINANCE SESSION

Wholelife costs are vital to obtaining value from a fleet

The focus was on wholelife costs and how they are essential to obtaining best value from a fleet during the finance session at the Fleet Insight Theatre.

Jo Hammonds, fleet manager at Mears Group, said: "Wholelife costs can sway the way you look at a vehicle. The best value is derived from all things considered. The cheapest is not always the best."

He recommended fleets look at fuel economy, depreciation, tax and servicing costs when considering vehicles as often a slightly higher list price will balance against cheaper running costs.

Hammonds also warned of the importance of getting your fleet

policy right before looking at vehicles. He said once a fleet knows its strategy it can start trying to leverage discounts with suppliers and working out which vehicles will be the most efficient.

Delegates were told by David Rawlings, director of BCF Wessex consultants, that company cars still provide great value to employees and despite the threat of imminent tax rises. He said both the employee and employer can benefit from a value focussed fleet.

Rawlings also said that running a good cash allowance fleet is a lot more difficult than a company car fleet. "Keep it simple, if you try to suck every penny from your fleet

you will end up replacing it with admin," he concluded.

Matthew Walters, head of consultancy at LeasePlan, also spoke. He agreed with Hammonds that wholelife costs should be the new focus for fleet operators, calling it "the next logical step".

The proposed changes to benefit-in-kind (BIK) taxation were also raised by Walters. "All tax-free benefits are at risk," he said.

Addressing cash allowance in lieu of a company car is part of the Government's focus, and Walters said company car tax is well established and works, so LeasePlan believes it should be left alone.



Jo Hammonds,
Mears Group



HR SESSION

Calum Di Lieto, HR Grapevine; Andrew Stephenson, Lookers; and Brian Cooper, EY



HR fleet role can drive 'dramatic' change

Fleet management should sit within Human Resources (HR) if employers want the best return on company car provision, according to experts at this year's HR debate at Fleet Management Live.

Too often, they argued, traditional fleet managers focussed on managing costs rather than the employee experience of those receiving the benefit.

Instead, Brian Cooper, a senior manager at professional services firm EY, told visitors to the show that HR should own the policy.

"There is still a role for the fleet managers, but in terms of delivering the benefit it should sit within HR," he said.

"HR is far better positioned and experienced to be able to deliver the 'drama' required for the benefit being provided."

It was a focus on improving the employee experience which drove huge gains for high street retailer DFS. Andrew Stephenson, a former HR director at DFS and now HR and customer director at Lookers, managed to cut fleet costs by £1 million, reduce CO₂ emissions by 25% and double employee engagement during his seven-year tenure with the firm.

Stephenson told delegates at the debate, hosted by Calum Di Lieto, editor of event partner HR Grapevine, if you want to offer consumers a world class experience you have to be world class with your employees, and that included company car provision.

He introduced a wider vehicle choice by ditching a solus badge deal and, working with his lease provider, delivered an online platform which treated employees like consumers.

He also spoke to local dealer groups to ensure the handover experience was improved to give employees a sense of ownership of the vehicle.

Stevenson is convinced that if he had approached the fleet overhaul from a procurement perspective he would have saved money and driven other improvements. However, by approaching it from an HR perspective, he argued the impact was much more dramatic.

"That's why I say HR should run fleet. But if it doesn't, fleet managers should take a much more people-centric view," he said. "Stop thinking of the company car as a laptop; start thinking of it as a real emotive benefit for your employees."

BREAKFAST FOR BEGINNERS

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Understand the needs before thinking of funds

Running a fleet is no longer a 'doing' job it's a 'strategic' job, delegates at the Breakfast for Beginners session were told.

The session focussed on finance and Paul Hollick, chairman of the Institute of Car Fleet Management (ICFM), gave insight into the various funding options available to fleets.

"The first thing fleet managers need to do is think about the reasons why their business needs company cars or vans. Once you know, then you can think about funding," he said.

According to Hollick a blended funding approach is the most effective because different parts of the business will have different vehicle requirements and potential life spans.

Delegates also heard from Peter Eldridge, ICFM board member, about how to manage a fleet effectively.

"Interrogate your business structure. There is a lot of habit in fleet and traditionally people seem to do as they always have done. Don't be afraid to ask questions, take the time and effort to find out what's happening now," he said.

Big data was also discussed and Eldridge said data is the most powerful tool for fleets when planning for the future. By using predictive modelling, he said data enables fleets to predict the future using information from the past.

His final point was about mobility management. He questioned whether businesses put focus on the real cost of travel and considered the cheapest option to travel for each journey or if they even needed to travel at all.



Paul Hollick, ICFM



Peter Eldridge, ICFM



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FUTURE OF FLEET DEBATE

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Be prepared for 'unprecedented levels of change' in fleet

Fleet managers will face unprecedented levels of change in the industry over the next few years, largely driven by technology, alternative fuels and the Government's approach to company car tax.

That's the view of ACFO deputy chairman Caroline Sandall, who was speaking at the Future of Fleet debate at Fleet Management Live.

Referring to the Government's recent consultations on salary sacrifice and the company car tax treatment of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), she said: "What the Government is talking about doing may or may not come off. But I think there is a huge amount of change coming."

Ashley Sowerby, managing director at Chevin Fleet Solutions, predicted that in 20 years' time fleet managers will look back on petrol and diesel "as we look back on coal and steam power".

"In my opinion electric vehicles will win," he said. "The barriers that currently exist will get replaced and overcome very quickly. There will be a [battery] technology change, perhaps away from lithium-ion. Technologies such as graphene are starting to be used for batteries, and graphene would allow much higher capacity and much faster recharge times and those sorts of things could be complete game-changers."

Autonomous vehicles also have the potential to transform the fleet market. The panel predicted that the 'fully' autonomous vehicle "will come" but there will be a number of stages first, starting



From left: Ashley Sowerby, Chevin Fleet Solutions; Ian Featherstone, Energy Saving Trust; Jon Hunt, Toyota & Lexus Fleet Services; Caroline Sandall, ACFO; with Fleet News editor-in-chief Stephen Briers

with a greater number of autonomous features and the use of autonomous vehicles in taxi fleets.

Drivers' fears and concerns need to be overcome before there is widespread adoption, according to Sandall.

"Government will largely dictate that so if it introduces legislation and targets that force industry to react then we might see changes quicker, but fully autonomous is 20 to 30-plus years away," she said.

Sowerby added: "It's critical about where you try to use the technology. If you try to use it down a busy high street or past a school that's not the right place but I think there will be a gradual adoption on motorways and highways."

Car connectivity is increasingly developing and the fleet industry will have to overcome the challenge of data management.

"There are changes in data protection legislation coming in that will create a greater burden on employers to make sure that their employees adequately understand how their data is going to be used and give consent appropriately which is going to be quite a big challenge," Sandall said. "But, equally, that data can drive efficiency, can support the driver, can support the fleet."

Sowerby feels car connectivity offers a "tremendous opportunity". He added: "There is so much data we would love to have access to from a vehicle, things like fault codes and driver business trips. What it also does is change the market. It moves manufacturers into the recurring revenue market. Beyond the supply of the vehicle they will then have an on-going relationship direct with the customer and that, in itself, will be a game-changer."

MANUFACTURER ROUND-UP

Delegates get a first look at a whole host of ground-breaking models

Several manufacturers used Fleet Management Live as an opportunity to introduce fleet buyers and decision-makers to new models.

The new Land Rover Discovery made its first UK appearance after its Paris motor show launch, in striking First Edition trim. Based on the highest specification model, and featuring a TD6 3.0-litre model, the car made an impact, although fleets are more likely to opt for the 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel (turn to pages 64-65 for more). Jaguar's XE was also on display.

There were two new models on the Audi stand, the Q2 small SUV and the A5 Sportback. The Q2 launches in dealers this month, with the A5 arriving on British shores in January.

Honda gave fleet managers the first public look at the new UK-built Civic, which will be offered with a new 1.0-litre turbo petrol, alongside the existing 1.6-litre diesel.

The Infiniti Q30 and QX30 were joined by the new Q60 coupe, on sale later this year.

The hydrogen fuel cell Toyota Mirai returned for a second year, and was joined by the new Toyota C-HR crossover, for which deliveries begin in the new year.

BMW was showcasing the power of electrification, with iPerformance models including the 330e, 225xe and 740e on display. Mini's fleet-focused Clubman One D was also displayed, with emissions from 99g/km.

Vauxhall was demonstrating its Onstar assistance technology in an Astra Sport Tourer, alongside a heritage Astra model to compare old and new.

Fleet Management Live gave fleet decision-makers a chance to see both the new S90 and V90 models from Volvo together, alongside the larger XC90.

Tesla's Model X electric SUV drew a crowd with its gull-wing doors, while the Alfa Romeo Giulia attracted interest as a credible compact saloon alternative.

Seat's entry to the crossover market, the Ateca, was also on display in some of its various specifications.



FleetNews

AWARDS
2016

74,768

fleet sales in 2015

10,398

van sales in 2015

NISSAN QASHQAI

'We're not just doing volume for volume's sake'

UK-based manufacturer increases fleet appeal through a wealth of new product and a renewed customer focus

By Gareth Roberts

An expanded corporate sales team, a new product range and a fleet-focused network will help bring Nissan continued sales success. That's according to Nissan UK sales director Darren Payne, who joined from Renault six months ago, replacing Barry Beeston who is now country director at sister brand Infiniti.

Payne explains: "I want to ensure those customers that aren't currently dealing with us consider us because of the UK manufacturing base we offer; consider us because of our strong position in the market; and consider us because of the quality support we offer to fleet customers and the breadth of product we now have."

Nissan built almost half a million cars in the UK last year, with Juke, Leaf, Note and the winner of the best mid-size SUV category at this year's *Fleet News* Awards – Qashqai

– all produced at its Sunderland plant. The north-east factory opened in 1986 and its future was secured just last week when it was announced that it will produce next generation Qashqai and X-Trail.

The Qashqai has been a phenomenal success for Nissan, helping the business achieve a record market share of more than 5% last year.

Payne wants to build on that growth this year, but explains: "What's really important to us is the quality of business that we're doing. We're not just doing volume for volume's sake."

Core fleet and leasing volume is up 22% year-on-year, while its commercial vehicle division reported a 68% year-on-year rise which has been helped by the new Navara.

Fleet sales figures show a 5.6% share of the fleet car market, unchanged from 2015 despite volume growth, and a 5.3% share of the commercial vehicle market, up from 3.5% last year.

Fleet News: Where is your fleet sales growth coming from?

Darren Payne: It's partly coming from Motability. We see Motability as a key, quality sales channel for us. It represents three-year business and it's maintained through the dealer network.

We've had quite a big engagement plan with the network for a while now and one of the key things we've done is we now target our network on Motability.

Part of that is ensuring our dealers are really focused on Motability customers and that we have the right level of training within the dealerships so that those customers get the best treatment.

FN: What about your 'true fleet' performance?

DP: We've also had a very strong performance across the core fleet and contract hire area, with a 36% increase [in volume] overall, a 49% increase in crossover and an 113% increase in Navara from April to September, compared to the same six-month period in 2015.

The message is that our growth is coming from those core fleet parts of the market – the quality parts – and our intention is to grow that area of our business.

FN: How do you intend to achieve that?

DP: We intend to do less rental this year than we did in the previous one. The reduction is in the thousands so it is significant.

We will also continue to invest in our people. Plus we will invest in our business dealer network to ensure they're



Barry Beeston, former corporate sales director, Nissan (left), is presented with the award by Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, *Fleet News*



Darren Payne was appointed to the newly formed role of UK sales director, with responsibility for network and corporate sales, in May

"Our growth is coming from those core fleet parts of the market – the quality parts – and our intention is to grow that area"

Darren Payne, Nissan

meeting the needs of customers and new product launches.

We've got eight area fleet managers with a new prospecting platform so there's a real focus on those fleets of between 50 and 300 vehicles.

On top of that, the number of people we have that are focused on the dealers will increase from five to eight and they're there to work with the local fleet specialists we have at the business centres to pick up the volume at the smaller end of the market – typically the sub-50 fleets. Obviously, we also have a keen eye on those fleets operating more than 300 vehicles as well.

FN: How big is Nissan's fleet sales team?

DP: We now have more than 50 people which includes the six corporate sales managers who are looking after the 300-plus fleets.

We've got a real specialism in EV, with two fleet EV managers who can spend time with customers, and there are four contract hire and leasing managers as we need to improve the relationship we have with the leasing sector.

We've also got a dedicated fleet marketing team, which not every competitor will have, and we have LCV and special vehicle operation support looking after conversions, etc.

FN: How big is Nissan's business centre network now and how do you intend to develop it?

DP: We want to grow the business centre network. At the moment we have 57 business centres, 63 local fleet specialists and a dealer fleet team of five supporting the network. But we want to develop that further by increasing our business centre network to 70, the number of local fleet specialists to 100 and the dealer fleet team to eight. That will be supported by a new customer promise which we're currently working on.

FN: How are you changing your model line-up to increase fleet appeal?

DP: We're introducing a new, higher powered 2.0-litre diesel engine for the X-Trail to widen its appeal. What we've found is quite a number of customers, particularly in the fleet sector, have asked for a bigger, more powerful diesel engine, an auto option and an auto on 4x4.

With the 1.6 diesel we have today we only really have access to 24% of the market, this will open up another half – 47% – increasing our access to the market to 71%. It's a huge opportunity for us.

We're just launching the NV300 into the biggest segment of the van market which gives us one of the broadest ranges in the market, with NV200, NV400, Navara and the NT400. It comes with the five-year 100,000-mile warranty and has four versions: panel van, crew van, combi and platform.

New Micra, moving from A to B segment, will also open up a huge part of the market we're currently not in. It has a fantastic amount of personalisation which is important for this segment. It drives really well and the interior quality is fantastic.

FN: You have also decided to re-align your pricing on Pulsar on average by £2,000, why did you make this move?

DP: The C-sector is under considerable pressure so we've looked at it again and talking to our network we've agreed on a repositioning of the car. It's the same car, the same great technology, but now at a much lower price which improves our competitive position.

FN: What's your four-year plan for increasing the autonomy of your vehicles?

DP: Stage one will be Qashqai which will involve single lane control in 2017 and over the next four years we will increase the capability into multiple lane control [which can autonomously negotiate hazards and change lanes during motorway driving].

By the end of the decade, we will have inner-city autonomy, enabling vehicles to negotiate cross-roads and intersections without driver intervention.

Nissan will also offer its own telematics solution for the first time after striking a deal with Telogis to offer connected car services, last month.

The system will initially be fitted to vehicles after they have left the factory, but will be factory fitted from 2017/18. Pricing is yet to be announced.

"So far it's mainly been commercial vehicles that have used the technology, but we see an opportunity with cars," says Payne.

The Nissan telematics system will connect the car or van to Telogis' mobile resource management (MRM) software platform.

It will analyse proprietary data from each vehicle, including driver and vehicle performance history, and turn it into actionable information to help fleets of all sizes make more informed business decisions.

Payne concludes: "We need to maximise the opportunities that we have within the market."

FACTFILE

Organisation Nissan UK
UK sales director Darren Payne
Fleet sales director Robert Tweedie
Fleet car sales (2015) 74,768
Overall car sales (2015) 153,937
LCV sales (2015) 10,398
Fleet car market share (2015) 5.68%
Overall car market share (2015) 5.85%

Judges' comments

“A fleet staple vehicle with a wide range of engines, the Qashqai has the styling and appeal of an SUV with the pricing of a C-sector car. With bags of driver appeal and low total cost of ownership, it is still the benchmark in this category.”

“ If Hyundai were taking tests for customer satisfaction, they’d pass every time ”

Dan Tattersall – Fleet & Operations Manager, MSL Group

Dan works for MSL Group, a company that provides vehicles for the specialist chauffeur and driving school markets. They lead the way in supplying dual control vehicles for individual and large driving school fleets. If you want to test how well a car’s built, this is definitely the place to do it.

When Dan buys cars for his business he looks first and foremost at the ease of working with the manufacturer and the support they offer him. He can’t afford to have cars off the road, so servicing and maintenance must be quick and easy too. The fact that Dan has been working with



since 1997 tells you how well we are doing on matching his expectations.

Our cars are intuitive and very easy to drive, making them a real favourite with the driving schools MSL work with. Dan is impressed too. Not only are MSL now buying more Hyundai’s, so are a lot of his friends and family.

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To find out more about our multi-award winning fleet service and vehicles visit hyundai.co.uk/business



NEW THINKING.
HYUNDAI NEW POSSIBILITIES.

CITROËN C3

Work to be done but it's out with the bland, in with the bold as C3 bids to shine



The new Citroën C3 has its styling influenced by the C1 and C4 Cactus

NEED TO KNOW

- Stylish new C3 design influenced by C4 Cactus
- CO₂ emissions from 92g/km for diesel variants
- Safety features often found on larger cars

By Simon Harris

If you had to point to a particular model in the Citroën range that was underperforming versus the rest of the market, the C3 stands out.

Now that the DS 3 is a DS in its own right rather than a Citroën, the C3's sales of less than 10% of the brand's total in a segment that accounts for around a quarter of new car registrations, suggests there is some work that needs to be done.

The C1 city car has been a success and the stylish C4 Cactus is also proving popular, but the outgoing C3 – fair to say also one of the blandest cars Citroën has ever produced – would get firm C-minus on its report card even with the kindest spin on its abilities.

The new C3 seeks to change the image of Citroën's compact hatchback and, with the DS 3 in another part of the showroom, it has the opportunity to come out from under the latter's shadow.

There are styling cues from both the C1 and the C4 Cactus, plus a choice of nine body colours with two-tone options, with alternative colours for the roof.

The C3 can also be specified with a version of the Cactus's 'Airbump' cushioned body protection. Unlike the C4 Cactus, C3 customers will have the choice.

Citroën also plans to stand out from rivals with a new emphasis on comfort for driver and other occupants, from the support of the seats, suppression of noise and the car's ride quality, perhaps rediscovering what were considered typical Citroën characteristics a few decades ago.

The C3 is also big on safety features. All models feature lane departure warning as standard, while higher grades

COSTS

P11D price	£13,690
BIK tax band (2016/17)	18%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£493/£986
Class 1A NIC	£340
Annual VED 0 then	£20
RV (4yr/80k)	£3,225/24%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.47
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	24.13ppm

SPEC

Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)	82/87
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	109
Top speed (mph)	104
0-62mph (sec)	12.8
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	61.4

KEY RIVAL

Vauxhall Corsa 1.4i Ecoflex 90 SRI	
P11D price:	£13,340
BIK tax band (2016/17)	20%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£534/£1,067
Class 1A NIC	£368
Annual VED 0 then	£30
RV (4yr/80k)	£3,350/25%
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.19
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	24.58ppm

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



The C3's interior is cleaner and slightly bigger than in its previous incarnation

also feature blindspot warning and driver break prompt which creates an alert after two hours' continuous driving above 45mph.

The interior has a much cleaner look than before, and offers a little more space. But also features distinctive touches like C4 Cactus-style door pull straps.

We didn't try a diesel version, but the 1.6 BlueHDi engine, available in 75hp and 100hp variants, offers CO₂ emissions of 92g/km or 95g/km dependent on output, and will be familiar to anyone who has tried recent small cars in the Peugeot and Citroën ranges.

The three-cylinder petrol engines will appeal to many fleet operators because of the price premium on a diesel small car, and we tried the 82hp and 110hp versions. Both are smooth for three-cylinder motors, and the 82hp variant has more than adequate performance for a car of this size.

The C3 has all the ingredients to make a compelling case for itself as small car on a fleet, and has enough style for driver to feel they are driving something beyond the status of a compact hatchback.

MAZDA3

It is no 'facelift', but subtle styling changes and engineering tweaks are welcome



Mazda3 still has much to commend it in a crowded sector

NEED TO KNOW

- New technology for smoother driving experience
- Interior quality improvements
- Technology reduces 'knock' noise in diesel engines

By Simon Harris

Some car manufacturers describe facelifts in rather dramatic terms. Often we are told a car is a 'new generation' three years into its lifecycle, and it can be difficult to discern differences from outward appearances.

Nowhere in the maker's press material does it claim the Mazda3 is undergoing a facelift, although it would be quite understandable to expect one since the car was launched early in 2014.

Instead we have the 2017 Mazda3, with some subtle styling changes, interior enhancements and a few engineering tweaks, too.

It isn't that long since we tried the Mazda3 – the new 105hp 1.5-litre diesel spent a week with us earlier in the year.

But both that and the 2.2-litre diesel benefit from changes for 2017. Technology Mazda calls 'transient control' works to eliminate turbo lag, and deliver a sharper, more consistent response from the engine under acceleration.

Mazda has also improved refinement at low speed with technology that reduces 'knock' noise in diesel engines, as well as additional noise suppression material elsewhere.

The whole range also has a new torque distribution system, called G-Vectoring Control, which optimises power delivery at individual wheels for more precise handling. Other new technology includes full colour graphics on the optional head-up display, and optional adaptive LED headlamps.

The interior updates give the Mazda3 a better quality feel, although the new surround for the base of the dashboard screen, intended to give it a more integrated appearance has created a counter-productive 'bolt-on' look.

The Mazda3 is still at its most impressive on the move, with

COSTS

P11D price	£22,940
BIK tax band (2016/17)	21%
Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)	£963/£1,927
Class 1A NIC	£665
Annual VED	£0 then £20
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,950/30%
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.47
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (4yr/80k)	32.83ppm

SPEC

Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)	150/280
CO2 emissions (g/km)	107
Top speed (mph)	130
0-62mph (sec)	8.1
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	68.9

KEY RIVAL

Seat Leon 2.0 TDI 150 FR Technology	
P11D price:	£23,385
BIK tax band (2016/17)	22%
Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)	£1,029/£2,058
Class 1A NIC	£710
Annual VED	£0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k)	£5,800/25%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.02
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	33.18ppm

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



Interior has a better quality feel although dashboard screen base looks like a bolt-on

smooth, assured performance from the 2.2-litre diesel, delivering strong acceleration in hushed surroundings.

Intuitive steering feel and sharp responses deliver one of the most enjoyable driving experiences in a car of this type, but not at the expense of a forgiving ride.

We've come to expect involving driving experiences from Mazda passenger cars in the past 15 years, and the latest incarnation of the Mazda3 does so with few compromises.

It's worth noting that the four-door 'Fastback', which accounts for around 20% of UK sales, has lower CO2 emissions than the hatchback when fitted with the 2.2-litre engine, coming in at 104g/km instead of 107g/km. And, given that there's no price difference between the two, there would be a strong case for choosing the Fastback over the hatchback as a company car in saving the driver on benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax and the company on Class 1A national insurance contributions. The downside is slightly more depreciation for the saloon (£300 lower, according to our data at four years/80,000 miles), as medium hatchbacks tend to be more desirable used cars.

It might compete in a crowded and talented sector (we believe there are around 30 lower-medium hatchback choices), but the Mazda3 still has much to commend it.

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LAND ROVER DISCOVERY

Bigger and faster but new engine cuts diesel consumption

By Matt de Prez

The new Land Rover Discovery is bigger and faster than ever, yet the fifth generation model is the most efficient to date thanks to the fitment of Jaguar Land Rover's Ingenium diesel engine. Fleet managers had the chance to see the car up close at Fleet Management Live (see pages 51-57 for more on the event).

Aluminium panels and a structure design derived from the Jaguar F-Type sports car mean the new car is lighter than the outgoing model. In fact it is 480kg lighter than if it were made from conventional steel.

For fleets the result is a CO₂ figure of 171g/km for the 2.0-litre four-cylinder powered vehicle, making it the most fleet-friendly version ever produced.

Jeremy Hicks, UK managing director of Jaguar Land Rover, says: "The new vehicle takes absolutely everything that is great about Discovery from its design, its versatility, its go anywhere, do anything credentials and builds on them to make it better in every way."

"With the addition of the Ingenium 2.0 litre engine, we're also looking forward to talking to more fleet and business users across the country."

Prices start at £43,495 for the entry-level S model but can rise to £65,695 for the highest spec.

Gerry McGovern, chief design officer at Land Rover, adds: "We have revolutionised the Discovery DNA to create a highly desirable, extremely versatile and hugely capable premium SUV."

EQUIPMENT

Technology has played a key part in the Discovery's development and its equipment list includes a number of new features.

A 10-inch touchscreen display adorns the dashboard and features sat-nav in all but base-spec models. There are a number of connected services available including on-board WiFi and a feature to forward the final destination directions to a smartphone if the address is not accessible by car.

Smartphone connectivity also allows remote locking or unlocking, setting of the climate control and tracking. For those who like outdoor activities, a waterproof smartwatch can replace the traditional key fob.



ENGINES

The most frugal Discovery SD4 uses the new Jaguar Land Rover Ingenium diesel engine which manages to return 43.5mpg while developing 240ps and 500Nm of torque. It has enough power to accelerate from 0-60mph in eight seconds but has a benefit-in-kind (BIK) rating of 34%, meaning a mid-range model will cost £278 per month in company car tax (20% taxpayer).

A more powerful 3.0-litre TD6 unit is also available, it offers only a mediocre increase in power (258ps) but has an extra 100nm of torque. There will also be a 340bhp petrol powered Discovery which manages 26mpg and has CO₂ emissions of 256g/km.

SAFETY

Autonomous technology is becoming synonymous with the car industry especially among luxury models. The Discovery manages autonomy to a degree but mainly utilises assist features such as lane departure warning and blind spot monitoring.

New developments include Closing Vehicle Sensing which warns of fast approaching vehicles coming from behind in adjacent lanes. The Blind Spot Assist can also avoid collision by providing counter steering if the driver attempts to move into the path of another vehicle.

There is also autonomous emergency braking with adaptive cruise control which includes the ability to read road signs and limit the vehicle's speed to the speed limit.





EXTERIOR

The exterior design is not entirely ground breaking; if you squint it is hard to differentiate the Discovery from the rest of the Land Rover range. That's no bad thing, however as the current line-up consists of handsome vehicles befitting of both an urban and countryside setting.

One clear difference between the Discovery and its stablemates is proportion. Its gargantuan dimensions mean a Range Rover will almost sit in its shadow. Length is a whisker under five metres (4,970mm) which is 29mm short of the Range Rover and its width of 2,220mm mirror-to-mirror is identical to its bigger brother.



INTERIOR

Seven seats are fitted as standard to all Discovery models and they can all be folded and arranged electronically using a mobile app. It is also possible to specify heating in all the seats and cooling for the first two rows.

Land Rover states that the third row seating is proper seats and will accommodate 95th percentile adults (males 1.9metres tall).

All models, except the base, get leather upholstery as part of the package and the boot can accommodate 258 litres with all the seats in place, or up to 2,406 litres with the two rear rows folded.

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi



Monday/Tuesday Up the A1 to North Yorkshire to the Jeep (derived from name

general purpose in WWII) 75th anniversary press event and what a treat was in store.

We drove from the picturesque village of Helmsley to a farm overlooking Robin Hood's Bay and took a Grand Cherokee on a fairly scary off-road course, but the Grand was just grand.

Then off to another location, in the hills this time in a Renegade. We drove on the Queen's highway, a proper road, but full of steep hills, inclines, large rocks and boulders, and at times we thought it would be absolutely impossible for a vehicle to go over such an ambitious and impassable road. But somehow, and I have no idea how, it did. Yes, there were at times a few scraping noises from underneath, but the compact Renegade took all that was in front of it, quite amazing.

"Musso in Korean means rhinoceros – a tough, robust animal but not the prettiest"

Wednesday Down the M1 to a truckers' café at the junction of the A5 and A43 to drive the new SsangYong Musso pick-up which is powered by a new 2.2-litre Euro 6 turbo-diesel engine that produces 178ps and is available with either a six-speed manual or six-speed Aisin Auto. The ride was a bit choppy, but it is a true well-priced workhorse with a one-tonne payload and towing capacity up to three tonnes. Musso in Korean means rhinoceros – a tough robust animal, but not the prettiest. It is well named. Prices start from £17,995+VAT with a five-year limitless mileage warranty.

Friday Considering WLTP (Worldwide harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure) which many may not have heard of before. At Cap HPI we are working hard, talking to all concerned to ensure the new system's introduction next September is as seamless and easy to understand as possible.

BMW 5 SERIES

New version of firm favourite owes much to technology of its bigger brother

By Christopher Smith

It may look familiar, but the latest iteration of BMW's 5 Series is new from the bottom up. The underlying platform means the new car is 100kg lighter than its predecessor, and it integrates many features and technologies from its bigger 7 Series sibling.

BMW UK product manager Alex Morgan told *Fleet News* that the car's specification has been heavily tailored to UK demands, given it is the car's second biggest market.

The model and engine line-up has been simplified from 60 to 12, with SE and M Sport now the only trim levels. Morgan expects the M Sport trim to account for 60% of UK sales.

EXTERIOR

Front and rear LED lights are fitted as standard, and the car includes 'active kidney grilles' to regulate air flow to the engine. Styling changes are subtle, but sharpen the look of the car.

Adaptive LED headlights which block out areas of light to avoid dazzling oncoming traffic and offer visibility of up to 500m are available as an option.

The 17-inch alloy wheels are fitted as standard on the SE model, for ride quality and optimum CO₂, while the 530d and M Sport models feature larger alloys.

ENGINES AND POWERTRAINS

The car can now be specified with xDrive all-wheel drive across the range – including the 520d – and all vehicles now feature an automatic transmission as standard.

An 190hp 2.0-litre diesel EfficientDynamics edition offers emissions from 102g/km, set to square up against the Mercedes-Benz E-Class.

A 530e plug-in hybrid variant is to follow shortly after launch, offering emissions of 46g/km, and a pure electric range of 27 miles, set to be priced comparably to the 530d model.

The manufacturer has not ruled out the reintroduction of a 518d model in the future, subject to customer demand.

The 5 Series now includes AdBlue.



"The car's specification has been heavily tailored to UK demands, given it is the car's second biggest market"



INTERIOR

BMW says it wants to lead the segment with the 5 Series, and the interior has taken a step up in quality accordingly. Leather seats are standard, with the M Sport trim including a leather dash.

The saloon offers a 530-litre boot.

A colour head-up display is available as part of the Tech Pack, for which BMW expects 15% take-up. The display offers a viewing area 70% larger than previous incarnations.

SAFETY AND AUTONOMY

The 5 Series builds on the autonomous driving technology in the 7 Series, and offers up to 30 seconds of hands-off driving – double that of its brother. The car can steer autonomously, and change lane to keep up with the flow of traffic.

The stop-start system is now more intelligent, using information from the navigation system, stereo camera and radar to prevent the engine being switched off inefficiently, such as at roundabouts or T-junctions.

The 7 Series' display key, which provides vehicle status and allows the vehicle to be parked remotely, is available as an option in the Driving Assistance Plus Pack.

This pack also offers wrong-way warning, which detects if the driver is driving the wrong way onto a motorway or onto a roundabout, or is heading the wrong way down a one-way street, and cross traffic assist, which uses radar to check for approaching traffic at junctions with poor visibility.

Another Plus Pack feature is evasion aid, which operates at speeds of up to 99mph, supports the necessary evasive steering action for a faster response in case of an obstacle in the vehicle's path.

The car also includes an active bonnet system as standard.

Pyrotechnic actuators in the bonnet hinges and locks raise the bonnet if the vehicle collides with a pedestrian, creating more deformation space between the bonnet and the subframe of the vehicle.



CONNECTIVITY

All UK 5 Series models will include Professional Nav as standard, which includes a wider 10.2-inch screen with calendar integration from Outlook for journey planning, and direct connection to music streaming services.

Gesture commands are carried over from the 7 Series, and speech recognition is improved, allowing instructions to be given in a conversational manner.

The car is also the first to include a wireless Apple CarPlay link, and when a mobile phone is placed in the centre tray, phone signal is boosted through the car's aerial.

The car's connected services do not require a subscription.

The new 5 Series can also link to the connected home, and services like Nest, to allow your heating to be activated as you get closer to your property.



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2.0TDI SE ECOMOTIVE

SEAT ALHAMBRA

Not a heart-stealer but well built and reliable



Optional rear sliding doors and tailgate are well worth considering on the Alhambra

COSTS*

P11D price	£31,820
BIK tax band	26%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,497
Class 1A NIC	£1,033
Annual VED	£130
RV (4yr/80k)	£7,900
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.24
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (4yr/80k)	38.84ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc)	1,968
Power (hp)	148
Torque (lb-ft)	251
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	132
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	55.4
Max speed (mph)	126
0-62mph (sec)	10.2
Test mpg	40
Current mileage	2,850

By Luke Neal

After three months and 1,600 miles the Alhambra is on its way back to Seat. Its place on the *Fleet News* long-term fleet will be taken by Seat's newest launch, the Ateca, so watch this space.

During my time with the Alhambra I have grown to appreciate its usefulness and its practical design but I haven't become attached to the people carrier.

The powered, sliding rear doors and tailgate are a worthwhile £1,020 optional extra, making tight car parking spaces much more manageable in such a big car (4,854mm long x 1,904mm wide, almost the same as a Volkswagen Transporter). The doors can be operated from the key fob, the doors themselves or from the cabin. You can even open the sliding side doors and the tailgate from the dashboard. Just be sure you have enough clearance behind the car before pushing the boot release button.

The 2.0-litre engine gives an enjoyable performance with a good turn of speed for overtaking. It is quiet and refined at motorway speeds and the car as a whole is a pleasant and comfortable place to be, even on long journeys. Ample legroom for all and separate climate controls for rear passengers make travelling in the back more comfortable. There are also plenty of storage compartments including under the seats and in the floor, although it's worth noting that the roof storage in our Alhambra is a £130 optional extra.

Aside from the disappointing fuel economy I have mentioned in previous reviews (around 38-40mpg) there have only been minor niggles.

After reversing, the rear view camera remains active for a long period, more often than not needing to be turned off and the parking sensors occasionally spring into life when there is nothing close to the car. You can also drive off with the sliding doors open without getting an audible warning, which I found surprising. But these are small niggles in an otherwise well-built and reliable car.

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

"It is quiet and refined at motorway speeds and the car as a whole is a pleasant and comfortable place to be, even on long journeys"

Mazda CX-3 1.5D SE-L Nav



The Mazda CX-3 comes with generous standard equipment throughout its five level structure spanning SE, SE Nav,

SE-L, SE-L Nav and Sport Nav.

With the SE-L Nav on test, that includes lane departure warning, autonomous emergency braking and, with winter approaching, the welcome addition of heated front seats.

SE models feature 16-inch alloy wheels, plus heated and power-folding mirrors, while SE-L models add rear privacy glass, front LED fog lights, automatic climate control and rain-sensing wipers. At the top of the range, the Sport Nav also comes with LED headlights.

Inside, there is a seven-inch colour touchscreen, DAB radio, Bluetooth and a multifunction steering wheel across all models, while Sport Nav ups the technology tally with navigation, Bose surround sound, smart keyless entry and, in a first for the sector, Mazda's head-up display system.

The CX-3 also boasts impressive active safety equipment, with hill hold assist, tyre pressure monitoring system and dynamic stability control as standard across the range, while SE-L and Sport Nav models feature Mazda's lane departure warning system and Smart City Brake Support.

Gareth Roberts

Ford Focus 1.5TDCi Titanium



After seven months in the Ford Focus, I will shortly be handing the keys to a colleague and taking the Mini Clubman on long-term test.

During the 7,000-plus miles clocked up on the Focus it has proved enjoyable to drive and reliable, bar a few technology inconsistencies.

The traffic sign recognition feature (available as part of a £350 Driver Assistance Pack) generally identifies the correct speed limit but there are certain roads where it flashes up 10mph instead of the posted 30mph, and displays 60mph in a 50mph. When passing a European HGV with a speed limit on the back it reads it as a sign and displays the speed limit in km/h.

However, other optional technology, such as the blind spot monitoring system and cross traffic alert (which warns you if another car is coming when you are reversing), have proved useful. Active city stop (which helps prevent low speed rear end shunts, and can be useful for insurance purposes) and rear parking sensors are standard.

Fuel economy has generally been around 60mpg, with the current average 58.9mpg, making it around 10mpg below the official combined figure (70.6mpg).

Sarah Tooze

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

RUPERT ARMITAGE

MANAGING DIRECTOR, AUTO WINDSCREENS

When shoppers are not trying to trip Armitage up with their small, wheeled trolley bags he puts great store in trusting his instincts and being open and honest with customers

The most pivotal moment in my life was a chance meeting with the owner of a business who gave me my first job despite having no relevant qualifications. I guess he liked what he saw and ever since I have relied a lot on instinct like he did.

I'd like to be remembered for being successful yet approachable, for being serious yet friendly and for having earned the respect of all the people I have worked with and for.

My favourite film is *Field of Dreams*. It's simply a feel-good movie about a guy who trusts his instincts and yet has the support of his family.

The three cars I'd like most? I own a Range Rover but also would like a Land Rover Defender and BMW i8.

I would tell my 18-year-old self to work hard every day and rewards will come.

One of my earliest memories associated with a car was when I was riding in the back, leaning between the two front seats with no seatbelt on (not something I would advise).

The book I would recommend is *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel García Márquez. An ex-girlfriend convinced me to read it and it affected me in a way no other novel has.

If I were Prime Minister for the day I would award Auto Windscreens sole supplier status to all Government departments.

My pet hate is I really dislike small, wheeled trolley bags that people pull around and trip you up with.

Away from the office I enjoy watching and coaching rugby, cricket and skiing.



First fleet role I started working in the sector when I began at Auto Windscreens this year, so I'm a relative 'newbie'. I've had to learn quickly and understand the issues faced by fleets. I am enjoying the challenge of delivering an ever-improving service to operators in a rapidly developing automotive arena.

Career goals at Auto Windscreens

I want to take Auto Windscreens to the next level, making it the number one windscreen repair business in the UK. We are in an extremely strong position having altered our business operations to include new UK-wide fitting hubs and area deployment centres, plus we have introduced a designated fleet team in our contact centre.

Biggest achievement in business

Starting as a trainee stockbroker with no experience or qualifications and ending up on the board of a listed investment bank.

Biggest career influence My father. He instilled a strong work ethic in me to do a job until it's done and not put it off until another time.

Biggest mistake in business

Trusting someone when my instinct told me otherwise. I learned never to do it again and always trust my initial instinct now.

Leadership style Open and approachable. Staff at Auto Windscreens appreciate openness and so, too, do our customers. Being honest always leads to better results. I also always encourage individuals to take ownership of the areas they are responsible for.

If I wasn't in fleet Sports administration because I believe that, in many cases, the people at the top of sports are passionate about what they do but are ultimately poor businessmen.

Childhood ambition To be a farmer. Five generations of my family have been farmers. When other kids were on holiday I was out harvesting.

Next Issue: Paul Walters, sales director, JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions

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