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Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. 2016/17 tax year. General Motors UK Limited, trading as Vauxhall Motors, does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their own tax position. New Insignia Elite Nav 2.0 (260PS) Turbo 4X4 auto model illustrated (P11D of £27,155) features Dark Moon Blue two-coat metallic paint (£555), VXR Styling Pack (£850) and Driving Assistance Pack Four (£595), optional at extra cost. * = Terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0330 587 8221 for full details. ** = Includes 12 months of OnStar services from date of first registration and a 3 month/3 GB Wi-Fi free trial period (whichever comes first) effective from the date the customer accepts the nominated network operator Wi-Fi Ts&Cs. OnStar services and 4G Wi-Fi Hotspot require activation and are subject to mobile network coverage and availability. Wi-Fi Hotspot service requires account with nominated mobile network operator. Charges apply after free trial period. The OnStar subscription packages could be different from the services included in the free trial package. Terms and conditions apply. Check vauxhall.co.uk/OnStar for details of availability, coverage and charges. Vehicles purchased without OnStar cannot have the required technology retro-fitted. Destination download only available on vehicles with factory installed navigation systems. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (March 2017).

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Exchanging views and ideas with her fleet peers is helping Ann-Marie Dunbar keep ahead of change in "fast-paced industry"



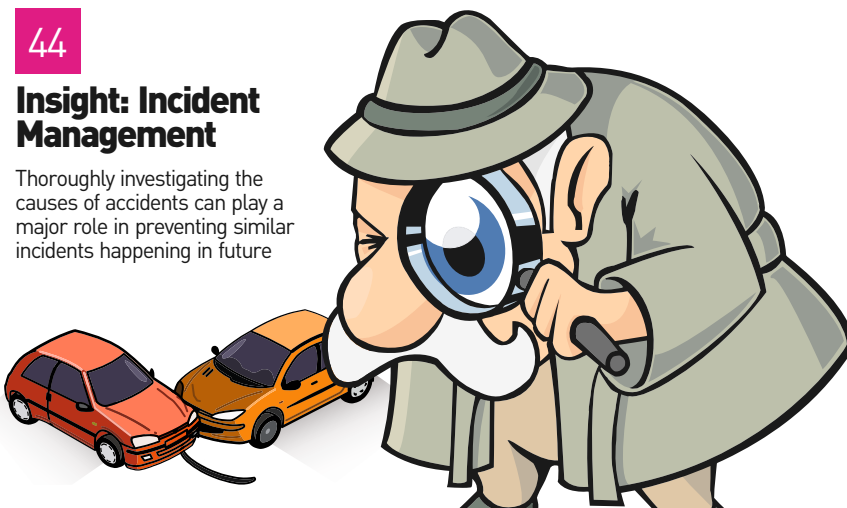
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Who excelled in which category? We reveal the very best in fleet



THE WINNERS



Budget hints at tax rise for diesels to improve air quality

Leading fleet figure urges operators to start reviewing their vehicle policies

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets are being warned to prepare for tax changes to diesel vehicles by the end of the year as part of the Government's efforts to tackle air quality concerns.

In Chancellor Philip Hammond's first, and last, spring Budget, there were no big announcements affecting the fleet industry.

The Autumn Statement had already signalled another freeze in fuel duty and paved the way for the forthcoming changes to salary sacrifice.

However, tucked away in the small print of the Budget papers was a promise to improve air quality, with a consultation on a detailed draft plan getting underway in a matter of weeks.

Alongside this, the Government says it will look at the tax treatment of diesel vehicles before announcing any changes in its first Autumn Budget later this year.

Paul Hollick, chairman of the ICFM (Institute of Car Fleet Management) and managing director of The Miles Consultancy (TMC), believes forward-thinking fleet operators should start to review current policies and plan for a future that is less dependent on diesel.



"With the Government's focus on improving air quality, the introduction of Clean Air Zones and cities globally introducing diesel car bans, it is clear that fleets must reduce their dependence on diesel power"

Paul Hollick, ICFM

"The writing is on the wall for fleet reliance on diesel vehicles – and diesel company cars specifically," he said. "With the Government's focus on improving air quality, the introduction of Clean Air Zones and cities globally introducing diesel car bans, it is clear that fleets must reduce their dependence on diesel power and develop a strategy that focuses on plug-in vehicles and ultra-low emission vehicles. A failure to do so will almost inevitably trigger an increase in the wholelife cost of operating diesel models."

The latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) suggest that concerns about the fuel type are already affecting market share.

Diesel new car registrations accounted for just 44.5% of the market in February, the lowest for many years (see graph). Petrol registrations experienced an increase – rising 5.8% to 42,826 units – while demand for diesel cars fell by 9.2% compared to the same month in 2016.

However, the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) argues that diesel vehicles remain a vital part of the fleet mix, as diesel engines are the most energy-efficient internal combustion engines.

Gerry Keaney, chief executive of the BVRLA, explained: "It is often the most appropriate powertrain for long distance journeys and non-urban freight transportation, and the latest Euro 6 diesel engines have made some major gains in reducing harmful NOx emissions."

In fact, the SMMT believes getting more Euro 6 diesels on the road can play a vital role in addressing air quality concerns and meeting climate change targets. It also says that measures announced in the Budget to reduce congestion and develop battery technology will also help.

The Chancellor allocated £90 million and £20m for the North and Midlands respectively, from a £220m fund to tackle pinch-points on the Strategic

SALARY SACRIFICE DETAIL EXPECTED IN FINANCE BILL

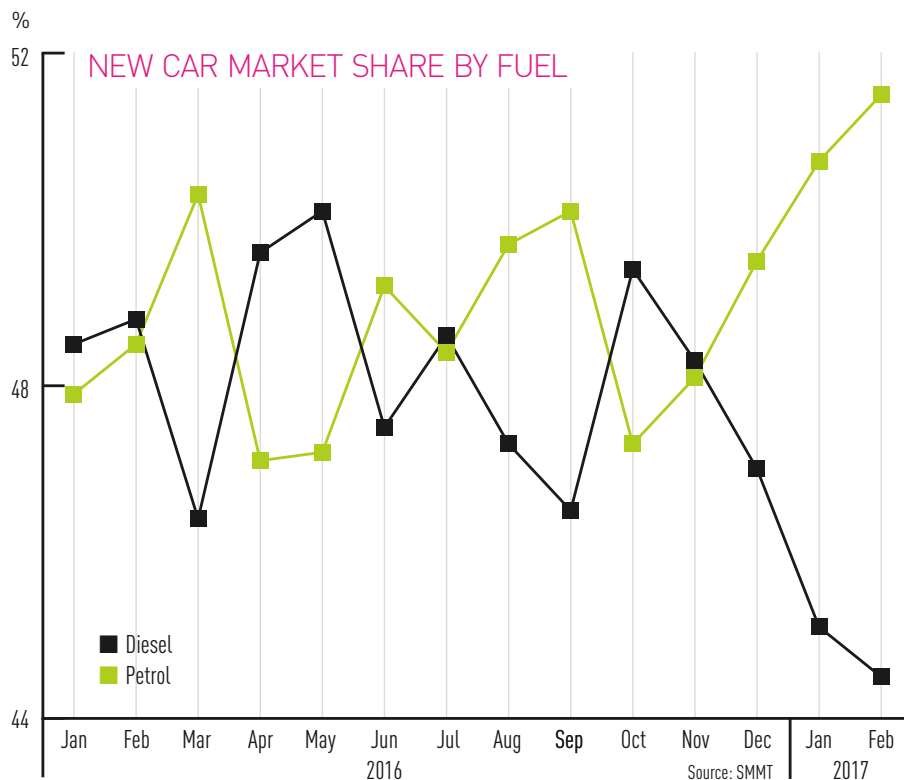
The Budget failed to give further clarification to the sweeping changes announced in the Autumn Statement on the treatment of salary sacrifice and cash allowances.

ICFM chairman Paul Hollick said: "Fleet decision-makers need clarity and with the changes due to come into effect in less than a month, companies need that information quickly to avoid making rash decisions

based on a lack of information."

It is now expected additional detail will be included in the Finance Bill on Monday (March 20).

Tax expert Alastair Kendrick told *Fleet News*: "We wait with interest the release of the updated guidance on salary sacrifice to see if there are any material changes in what was released in the Autumn Statement."



Road Network. This is supplemented by a wider £690m fund which local authorities will compete for to help them tackle urban congestion.

However, it is now clear the Chancellor wants to tackle the issue at source by making diesel a less attractive option to both the fleet industry and private motorists.

The Government had already delayed the removal of the 3% diesel supplement on company car tax from April 2016 to April 2021, in the wake of the Volkswagen emissions scandal.

Hollick told *Fleet News* the Government may consider an even higher surcharge on diesels – above the current 3% – alongside an additional higher first-year Vehicle Excise Duty (VED).

But, a diesel scrappage scheme aimed at older, more polluting vehicles (*Fleet News*, March 2), championed by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, appears to have fallen on deaf ears.

One clue from the Budget papers is that the Treasury expects revenues from fuel duty to rise by £2 billion to £30bn a year by 2021.

Hollick said: "If it wanted to be radical, it could float the idea of a higher rate of duty on diesel fuel compared with petrol. Of course that would be very unpopular with motorists, who already believe they were misled into preferring diesels.

"However from the air pollution perspective, the effects would be felt everywhere, not just in selected cities as is the case with the proposed low emission zones. There would also be very strong push-back from LGV and LCV operators, many of which are SMEs, where the Government is nervous about appearing to hold back business, especially post-Brexit."

Many believe the Chancellor sullied the Government's environmental credentials in not heeding the fleet industry's calls for a more effective approach to company car tax and VED.

Keaney said: "We are now left with company car tax and VED regimes that do little to support the

Government's green agenda or tackle the growing air quality crisis."

At the moment, a 20% taxpayer choosing between a zero-emission electric BMW i3 and a 41g/km hybrid Mitsubishi Outlander – both of which have similar P11D values and sit in the same tax band – will pay the same company car tax over the next three years.

From 2020/21, new bands and rates will be introduced, with the i3 attracting benefit-in-kind (BIK) of 2% and the Outlander 12%.

David Hosking, CEO of Tusker, was disappointed that the Chancellor didn't take the opportunity to bring forward the new 2% BIK tax rate.

"Instead, we need to wait until 2020 for this valuable incentive to kick in, by which time many thousands of new cars will be on the roads," he said. "A much higher proportion of these new cars would surely have been zero emission vehicles if Hammond had reversed the appalling decision to delay the change in BIK for another three years."

The Chancellor also chose not to defer next month's introduction of new VED rates.

Cars registered on or after April 1, 2017, will have a first-year rate according to the vehicle's CO₂ emissions, but will also be split into three bands for the subsequent standard rate: zero emission, standard (cars up to £40,000) and premium (priced above £40,000).

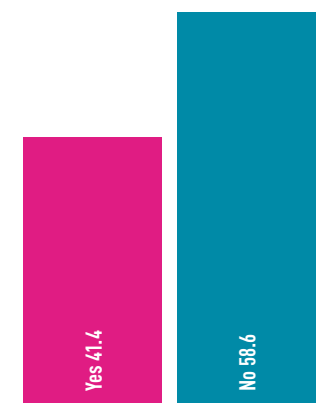
For example, a Volkswagen Tiguan 2.0 TDI SE Navigation which sits just under the 130g/km threshold at 127g/km will cost £580 over four years, rather than £330 under the previous system. But, the premium Tesla Model S which has zero emissions and would have attracted no VED over four years will now cost £930 to tax over four years.

Keaney concluded: "The [car rental] sector purchases around 324,000 cars each year, but this number is now likely to fall as our members lengthen their operating cycles in an attempt to reduce the cost impact of the new VED regime."

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

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FleetNews view:

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This week's poll: Will a change in the tax treatment of diesel vehicles make you less likely to choose the fuel type?

fleetnews.co.uk/polls

MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

HMRC makes change to advisory fuel rate after original update

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Brexit uncertainty threatens the future of Vauxhall's plants in UK

Risk of tariffs and dip in value of the pound are top concerns after PSA takeover

By Gareth Roberts

A Brexit deal which fails to secure tariff-free access to the EU could scupper the long-term prospects of Vauxhall's UK plants.

PSA Group – the French-based maker of Peugeot, Citroën and DS – announced the acquisition of Opel/Vauxhall from General Motors (GM) for €1.3 billion (£1.13bn) last week (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6).

The deal will also see GM Financial's European operation join the PSA Group in a joint venture with Arval's owner BNP Paribas for a further €0.9bn (£0.78bn).

However, experts are warning that uncertainty over the terms of any future trade deal with Europe is a major issue for the UK factories, while the fall in sterling is another worry. Although labour costs have gone down, the price of 75% of parts for a Vauxhall Astra that come from Europe has gone up.

Matthias Holweg, Professor of operations management at Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, said: "Brexit is creating many uncertainties, both in terms of the customs union and access to the single market. Potential tariffs for importing components from the single market and for exporting finished vehicles back to the single market represent a risk of considerable significance."

"At present 59% of components for vehicles made in the UK are imported, while 77% of vehicles made in the UK are exported. Free movement of parts and finished vehicles to and from continental Europe is a key prerequisite for retaining a volume car industry in the UK."

The new combined company will have 24 factories, including Ellesmere Port and Luton which together employ more than 4,000 workers and have production commitments until 2021 and 2025, respectively. But, Ian Fletcher, principal automotive analyst at IHS Markit, said some factories look more secure than others.

Fletcher explained: "Spanish sites Zaragoza and Vigo are in a good position; despite their vast size they look set to be fully utilised at this point with B- and C-segment vehicles, respectively. The Trnava (Slovakia) plant, which manufactures B-segment vehicles, will also be highly utilised, but there certainly seems to be opportunities for consolidation between other subcompact sites at Poissy (France), Madrid (Spain), and Eisenach (Germany)."

"Current forecasts show little visibility about a replacement for the Citroën C4 Cactus at Madrid, while it is thought that the Poissy site could become an electric vehicle (EV) facility building e-CMP architecture."

A number of plants that have the capability to



Vauxhall's Luton plant has production commitments until 2025



"At present 59% of components for vehicles made in the UK are imported"

Matthias Holweg, University of Oxford

build vehicles in the C and D segments are well positioned, according to IHS. These include facilities in Sochaux (France), Mulhouse (France), and Gliwice (Poland), which would be expected to start transitioning to next-generation vehicles at this point, and PSA is likely to be keen to maintain the relatively low cost and flexibility this site offers.

Questions can be raised about the future of the Rennes (France) facility as, although it has an allocation of models until 2024, choices might have to be made in an attempt to gain synergies,

with Rüsselsheim (Germany) being a more preferable location if PSA intends to use Opel's Germanic roots as a marketing tool.

Fletcher continued: "The Brexit vote does not make the future of Ellesmere Port easy to safeguard given a lack of clarity on trading arrangements between the UK and the EU."

The same can be said of the Luton facility, which currently builds light commercial vehicles based on Renault designs.

"Any consolidation is likely to mean that this relationship with Renault will be dissolved further down the line, and the vehicles built at this plant would most likely be moved onto a PSA platform already built out of Valenciennes (France), making this site favourite to build these vehicles," said Fletcher.

"Even so, (Carlos) Tavares (chairman of the managing board of PSA) gave some additional hope for the two UK sites following a hard Brexit situation, noting that if the UK Government begins to attract more component suppliers to the UK, these bases could help avoid some impact from the tariffs."

A Brexit bill is currently making its way through Parliament which is expected to become law allowing the Government to trigger Article 50 by the end of the month.

HMRC apologises for about-turn confusion on advisory fuel rate

Employers 'kept in the dark' about 2p difference that could have affected payrolls

By Gareth Roberts

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has issued an apology after fleets were given the wrong advisory fuel rate (AFR) following a quarterly update.

The new rates, which are published on HMRC's website, initially showed that the figure for petrol engined vehicles above 2000cc had fallen by 1p per mile (ppm), from 21ppm to 20ppm, and the rate for LPG vehicles above 2000cc had increased by a penny a mile, from 13ppm to 14ppm.

However, after the new rates had been widely circulated and employers had updated payroll systems ahead of the March 1 change, HMRC amended its figures again. This time it showed that the petrol rate had increased by 1ppm, not fallen as originally stated. The new rate would therefore be 22ppm.

The increase to 14ppm for LPG vehicles above 2000cc remained effective from March 1.



"HMRC must let the industry know if a mistake like this occurs again"

Debbie Floyd, ACFO

An HMRC spokesman said: "We had previously published an incorrect figure of 20ppm and apologise for the error."

Debbie Floyd, a director at fleet representative body ACFO and group fleet and risk manager at Bauer Media, told *Fleet News*: "Publishing the wrong advisory fuel rate will have caused a

major payroll headache for hundreds if not thousands of fleet operators. What's even more frustrating is HMRC didn't publicise the fact it had made an error, potentially leaving some employers still using the original figure."

Many employers use AFRs as the guide figure to reimburse company car drivers for business travel because if they don't exceed the rate there is no taxable profit and no Class 1A National Insurance to pay.

However, if they pay figures higher than the advisory rates and can't demonstrate the fuel cost per mile is higher, they will have to treat any excess as taxable profit and as earnings for Class 1 National Insurance purposes.

Company car drivers could have been out of pocket if employers had not been made aware of the subsequent change.

Floyd concluded: "HMRC must let the industry know if a mistake like this occurs again; we can't afford to be kept in the dark."

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British Gas pushes back 10% EV van target a further three years

Slow progress of technology and charging infrastructure blamed for delay

By Tom Seymour

British Gas has missed its target to have 10% of its commercial fleet as electric vehicles (EVs) this year and is pushing back the target to 2020.

The UK energy provider trialled 28 Nissan e-NV200s in 2013 and then went on to order an additional 100 on a five-year contract in 2014. At the time, the plan was to expand the electric van fleet to around 1,300 vehicles out of its 13,000 commercial vehicles. However, it currently has just 113 on fleet.

A British Gas spokesman told *Fleet News*: "We are committed to actively pushing alternative-fuelled vehicles and will endeavour to find the most economical and ecological solution."

"Unfortunately, the technology to underpin this has not developed as quickly as we need it to, as our priority must be providing the service that our customers expect and need in a home or heating emergency."

British Gas said the charging infrastructure in London was a particular issue and is "not yet of the right standard or widely available enough".

The spokesman added: "The British Gas fleet needs total reliability as our customers depend on us getting to them at any time of the day or night, so we need an infrastructure that will always support that. The infrastructure for electric vehicles is not there yet."

"These external factors have contributed to us resetting the date for 10% of our fleet to be electric to 2020. Before this period we hope to see the marketplace pick up with electric vans."

British Gas refused to comment when asked if the e-NV200s would be replaced with diesel

"We are committed to actively pushing alternative-fuelled vehicles and will endeavour to find the most economical and ecological solution"

British Gas spokesman

equivalents when the vehicles reached the end of their contract. At the time of taking on the additional 100 EVs, British Gas said they did represent a cost saving versus diesel as long as they covered more than 10,000 miles a year.

In London the cost savings could be as high as 20%, with other locations representing about a 6-10% saving over a diesel equivalent.

All British Gas e-NV200s are charged at engineers' homes as the company does not have depots.

As of October 2016, around 2,500 plug-in van grants have been claimed since the scheme began in 2012, according to Government figures. This compares with 10,264 pure EV cars sold in 2016 or 26,9750 alternative fuel cars last year.

Karl Anders, Nissan GB national EV manager for corporate sales, preferred not to comment

on British Gas's 10% target. However, he did say the rate of adoption for the electric van market is running behind cars due to the fact there are fewer manufacturers offering models and larger vans are not currently cost effective.

He said: "The larger you go with an electric van, the larger the battery you need and the benefits in whole-life costs versus a diesel equivalent become more difficult."

Anders wants to see more focus from the Government to help support electric vans, perhaps adjusting the structure of the plug-in van grant.

He said: "The Government does need to push things further and put more weight behind the electric van market. A flat rate for the plug-in van grant, like cars, rather than the current situation for 20% of the cost of a van, up to a maximum of £8,000 would also help."

Renault is introducing the Kango ZE+ with increased battery range from 106 to 168 miles this summer and will launch its 124-mile range Master ZE at the end of the year.

Ben Fletcher, Renault UK Z.E. manager, said the commercial EV market in the UK "definitely has more potential". However, he urged businesses not to put an arbitrary target in place for EV adoption and that the market has been limited due to the number of commercial EV models and body styles currently available.

He said: "Any targets should be put together looking at usage cycles and proportion of the fleet which is EV-friendly. For some fleets, this might be almost all their vehicles, for others it'll only be a small proportion currently, either due to range or market offering."



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New division launched to improve LeasePlan's customer service

Leasing company sets up 100-strong team in bid to answer enquiries first time

By Tom Seymour

LeasePlan has created a new business division solely focussed on improving customer service.

Matt Dyer, LeasePlan UK managing director, said the company has been working to create a combined service Engage Centre at its head office in Slough that will look to eliminate situations where customers are being passed from department to department.

He has set a first time resolution percentage average goal of 80% for the 100-strong customer service team. He said the company is already between 60-70% on enquiries around changes to options, quotation follow ups and end of contract questions.

Dyer told *Fleet News*: "The first step was to invest in our digital strategy with a new website, app and online portal. The next step requires something transformational with how you position the business."

LeasePlan is transitioning to move all customer contact across its divisions through the Engage Centre.

Dyer explained: "Previously we would have a team that would run leasing quotes for drivers but if that quote became too complex it would be handed off to a separate team. It meant there was a chain of handoffs and the more links in the chain you have there's a reduction in efficiency and potential for lack of clarity."

He wants the Engage Centre to improve consistency with customer service where enquiries from corporate, public sector, SME or personal leasing can all be dealt with in one place by one team.

LeasePlan is one of the biggest leasing companies in the UK with a risk fleet of more than 165,000 vehicles and Dyer acknowledges that expecting one team to know everything it offers is a complex task.

He said: "I don't want us to get ahead of ourselves. We know there is a lot of work to do and we are transitioning into a new way of working."



Engage Centre has been established at the company's Slough head office

The Engage Centre has staff with experience across all areas of the business and LeasePlan has recruited additional employees that will gain knowledge from the core team.

Dyer said it was important for LeasePlan to consistently invest in continued training for the Engage Centre staff to learn about all elements of the business.

The company has also built a digital "knowledge management tool" which will act as a LeasePlan 'encyclopedia' the team can reference.

LeasePlan has also invested in additional customer relationship management and workflow technology to help speed up responses.

Dyer said the average answer time for calls coming into the Engage Centre is now six seconds.

LeasePlan uses the TRI*M index of customer retention intensity to measure its customer

satisfaction. This combines overall satisfaction, likelihood to recommend, likelihood to repurchase and assessment of competitive advantage. Its latest TRI*M scores were recently announced with an increase from 81 in 2015 to 82 in 2016.

Dyer said: "This places us near the top 10% of financial companies in Northern Europe, and in the top third of all industries in the UK. We are proud in the UK of what we have achieved so far. We just know we can do more."

A major part of LeasePlan's new customer service push is aimed at the drivers themselves.

Dyer admits that while the company is rated well by fleet decision makers and fleet managers, it needs to do more work to improve relationships with drivers.

He said: "We really want to elevate the role of the driver with what we do. They are increasingly important and are decision makers in their own right and we have to respect that. They play a large role in the vehicles that are chosen or joining or leaving schemes."

Dyer said LeasePlan has 85% of drivers using its driver app and online portal tools and they increasingly expect a digital experience similar to other big brands they interact with on a daily basis.

Three-quarters of LeasePlan's driver contact is now digital, with the remaining 25% by phone (it was previously a 50/50 split).

Dyer said: "We really want to drive loyalty directly with drivers and to build that relationship over time."



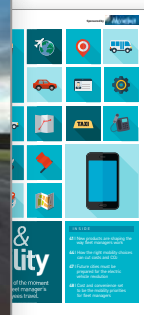
"The first step was to invest in our digital strategy with a new website, app and online portal. The next step requires something transformational"

Matt Dyer, LeasePlan

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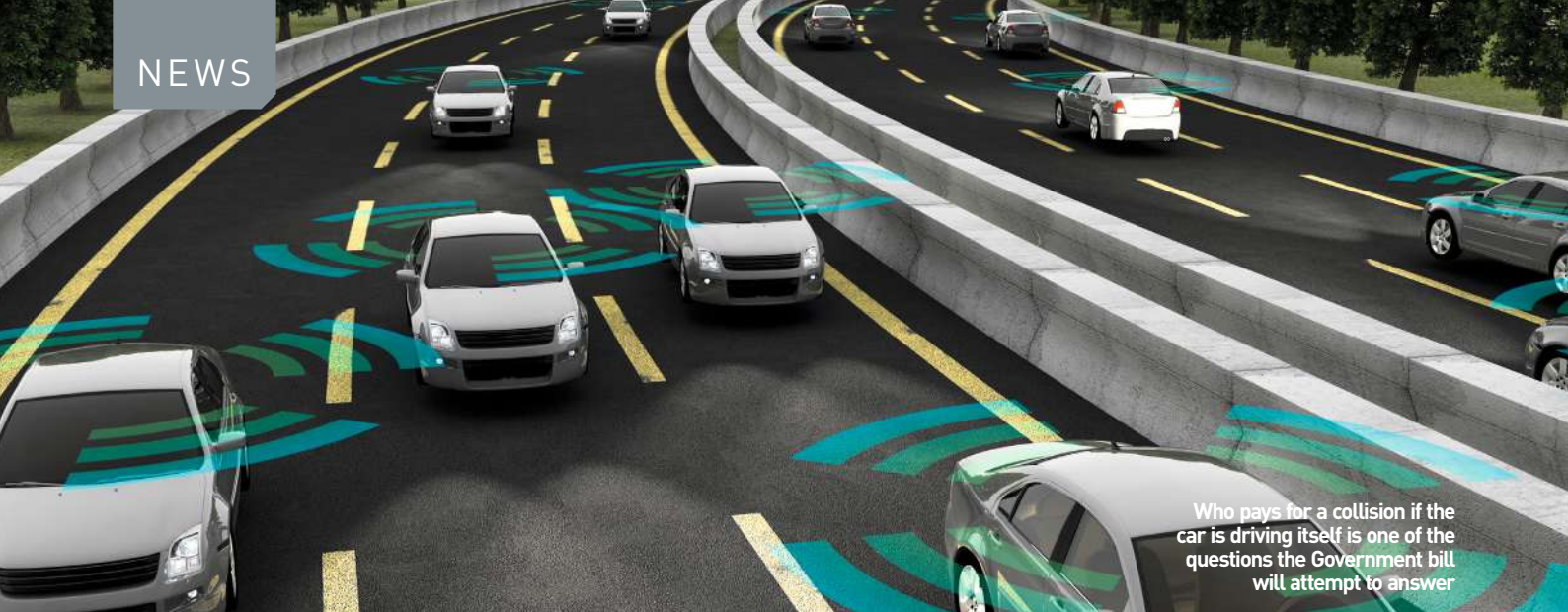
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Who pays for a collision if the car is driving itself is one of the questions the Government bill will attempt to answer

DfT pushes ahead with setting out policies on autonomous vehicles

Government will use public sector fleets as test bed to determine way forward

By Tom Seymour

The Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed it will use public sector fleets as a test bed to lead future policy to address insurance liability concerns surrounding autonomous vehicles.

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) met with the DfT on March 7 to discuss the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill 2016-17.

Patrick Cusworth, BVRLA senior policy advisor, who was present at the meeting, told *Fleet News* his concerns going into the meeting have been addressed.

He said: "We went through the bill and the DfT has confirmed to us it only applies to the public sector at this point. At the moment, there is no great change for the private sector as this will come further down the line."

The bill proposes that where an accident is caused by an automated vehicle when driving itself and the vehicle is insured at the time of the accident, the insurer will be liable for that damage.

However, the insurer would have the right to make a subsequent claim against the manufacturer of the car if it is thought to be the cause of the accident (clause 5).

At the bill's second reading, transport minister

CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE CLARITY

The bill also reference to the Government stepping in to improve clarity around the UK's EV charging infrastructure.

The DfT is looking to introduce new regulations to clarify locations, operating hours, costs, methods of payment and access, means of connection and information on whether a charge point is actually working. It has also suggested it may introduce legislation to require mandatory installation of public charge points across the UK's 'large fuel retailers'.

Grayling said: "This bill provides for much greater transparency of charge point data, making it much easier to identify the locations of the best charging points."

"In particular, it enables common technical standards and better interoperability. We will also be able to accelerate the roll-out of electric vehicle infrastructure at key locations, such as motorway service areas and large fuel retailers, and make charge points ready for the needs of the marketplace."

Chris Grayling said: "Under the provisions in the bill, it will be possible to have an insurance policy that covers both eventualities of something going wrong: when the driver is in control and when the vehicle is in autonomous mode."

"That is one of the key changes necessary to create an environment in which such vehicles can operate freely on the roads."

However, the bill states that if the vehicle has not been properly insured, the driver will be liable, even if the vehicle was driving itself. The driver will also be at fault if they have unofficially altered or failed to install software updates to the car's operating system.

Grayling said: "There are enormous possibilities ahead with these technologies. In a few years, we will all increasingly have the opportunity to use semi-automated and automated vehicles."

"However, to make these technologies a reality, we need to act now. We need to create the regimes that will help developers to bring their products to market in a safe way that protects consumers."

Grayling expects it to be at least another 10 years before fully automated vehicles will be on the roads in private use in the UK.

Cusworth said there has been no timetable set by the Government for addressing how it will change regulations for insurance in the private sector, but using the public sector as a test bed first is 'the right approach'.

He said: "This is the Government setting out its stall first before looking at the private sector."

"The DfT is waiting on international feedback from the United Nations on the Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations and this will help inform how it proceeds on this complex issue in the future."

Cusworth said that while he is happy with the DfT's approach to liability in relation to automated cars, he said the BVRLA remains concerned there has still been no clarification on connected car data access.

The DfT was unable to confirm to the BVRLA during the meeting a timeline for regulations on the ownership and access to connected car data.



"To make these technologies a reality, we need to act now"

Chris Grayling, DfT

SMH Fleet solutions is investing £16 million in its Thurleigh site, which will create up to 200 new jobs

SMH invests in the future as it predicts growth in fleet market

Big expansion in Bedfordshire plus two more sites totalling 34 acres planned

John Maslen

Anticipated growth in the fleet market caused by changes to the way cars are sourced and managed has prompted a multi-million pound investment in expansion by an industry service provider.

SMH Fleet Solutions is investing £16 million and creating up to 200 new jobs as part of its expansion plans with the building of a new 40,000 sq ft fleet management, logistics and support services centre at Thurleigh in Bedfordshire.

The investment is the latest part of a major programme to create a national network of sites offering support services to manufacturers, leasing companies, dealer groups and fleets.

SMH Fleet Solutions provides a range of outsourced solutions for fleet operators throughout the vehicle supply chain.

This includes the management, storage and preparation of press fleets and demonstrators for brands including Infiniti, Mazda, Nissan, and Vauxhall, refurbishment services for leasing companies (its customers include five of the top

10 leasing companies) and preparation and delivery of new cars for dealer groups.

It also provides storage and vehicle management services direct to fleet operators, which accounts for about 10% of its business. Additional services range from vehicle movement to condition checks, document storage, key management and licence checking.

For managing director Martin McAuley, the investment in growth reflects the increasing volume of fleet vehicles that require management support in the UK.

This covers both the traditional fleet market, where end-user fleets are increasingly outsourcing to leasing companies as part of a shift from outright purchase to leasing, and also the private market, where a growing proportion of consumers are opting for leasing as a method of vehicle funding.

McAuley said: "I can only see the fleet market getting bigger and stronger. There is an increasing interest in leasing cars for business, but also for private use and that is, essentially, fleet. I therefore see the fleet market growing versus the retail market.

"There is increasing demand from OEMs and leasing companies for high-quality outsourcing. There is also consolidation in the market as companies turn to a smaller number of high-quality suppliers. Our growth means we have the capacity to tender for the opportunities that arise."

In addition to Thurleigh, an additional nine-acre site is being developed next to its premises in Gloucester and a 25-acre site in the Midlands is expected to be ready this year.

These add to a network of sites at Bolton, Bedford, its headquarters in Worcester and Throckmorton.

In addition to a national footprint, McAuley says suppliers need to invest heavily in the right

equipment to support the complexities in providing repair and refurbishment services for modern vehicles.

SMH specialises in wear and tear damage, rather than crash repairs, but the challenges involved are still extensive.

He said: "Thurleigh is mainly a vehicle refurbishment centre. We will have smart repair equipment and the latest paint booths. We are having to deal with increasingly complex paint schemes and other challenges, such as more extensive use of aluminium and alloy wheels.

"Despite accident avoidance technology, we are still seeing the same level of repairs, because people still have bumps. In reducing the impact of accidents through semi-automated systems, this actually makes more vehicles repairable."

An additional challenge is dealing with the increasingly complex electronic systems in modern cars when making repairs.

McAuley added: "We have across all sites a range of fully-skilled master technicians who are skilled in dealing with items such as safety cameras and braking sensor systems."

In addition SMH Fleet Solutions has invested in developing an eWorkshop system, which allows all activity to be monitored in real-time through a web portal. This allows customers to track the progress of work, while vehicle movements and deliveries can also be followed online.

McAuley said that the new facility is on track to become the most advanced and modern refurbishment centre in Europe and, in addition to providing vehicle inspection, repair, logistics and refurbishment, there will be secure storage space for about 4,500 vehicles.

The investment is expected to lift turnover by £10m a year and spearhead a drive to take the business from £40m turnover in 2017 to £60m in future.



"There is an increasing interest in leasing cars for business"

Martin McAuley,
SMH Fleet Solutions



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(4.1), Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 76.3 (3.7), Combined 47.9 (5.9) – 72.4 (3.9). CO₂ emissions: 134 – 103g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures are obtained consumption and CO₂ figures correct at time of print [February 2017]. More information is available on the Audi website at www.audi.co.uk and at www.dft.gov.uk/vca Choice of wheels and other options may affect Model shown is the Audi A3 Sportback S line 2.0 TFSI 190PS with optional metallic paint (£550.00), black roof rails (£250.00), privacy glass (£375.00). The What Car? Car of the Year 2017 winning model is the

THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



Timed almost perfectly to coincide with the Geneva motor show came the announcement by PSA that it was buying the loss-making Opel/Vauxhall operation from General Motors.

The deal, which also includes the finance business in a separate agreement with Arval parent BNP Paribas, could trigger a round of global consolidations on a scale not seen since the late '90s when Daimler took on Chrysler and Ford hoovered up Volvo, Aston Martin, Jaguar and Land Rover to form the Premier Automotive Group. But this wasn't a golden period of automotive mega-mergers: none of these deals remain in place.

The industry has seen success, but it is rarely immediate. The VW Group of Volkswagen and Audi has arguably only recently made a success of Seat (bought in 1986) and Škoda (1994). Its cross-brand platform and component-sharing strategy will be mirrored by PSA which will be able spread development costs across a wider network.

Two high profile automotive bosses expect to see more mergers and acquisitions. Carlos Ghosn, whose Renault/Nissan alliance – a strategic partnership based on cross-shareholding investments – added Mitsubishi Motors last year, and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles CEO Sergio Marchionne, who tried to architect a merger with GM two years ago, have both talked openly about the need for further consolidation.

There are many reasons why: the emergence of new markets, the need for scale to improve efficiencies in a low-margin business and, in particular, the spiralling cost of investment in new technologies, such as automated cars, alternative fuels and connectivity – all things that fall outside the traditional R&D priorities of design, performance, comfort and safety.

So don't be surprised to read about more activity in the coming years, either full scale mergers or close collaborations.

Fleet News was saddened to hear about yet another loss to the automotive community with the death of Garel Rhys. He was a highly accomplished automotive guru respected on a global level. We were fortunate to work with Garel on many occasions as he chaired some of our fleet events. Our thoughts are with his family.

YOUR LETTERS

MOBILE PHONES

Time to increase the risk of getting caught

EDITOR'S PICK



Philip Somarakis, company secretary at ACFO and head of Motor Legal Defence at Gordon Dadds, wrote:

Having read 'Week-long police crackdown on phone use at the wheel as new penalties come into force' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 1), is the message going to get through?

On the first day of the penalty increase, I saw a lady with a large pink handset glued to her ear, driving an X5 on a busy arterial road which was punctuated by two pedestrian crossings. Another 'nomophobic' (fear of being without a mobile phone) driver not paying any heed to the consequences of getting caught.

The penny did finally drop, but as the call was far too important to terminate, she adopted a one-sided shrug and continued her journey with a lopsided view of the road. There were no police in view.

So I ask: if there is no increase in the number of people who get caught – albeit they might be dealt with more harshly – is this going to change the attitudes of the thousands of drivers who will continue to flout the law?

The threat of a stiffer penalty may discourage some from playing with their phones and making hands-on calls while driving, but the only way to really change attitudes surely must be increasing the risk of getting caught?

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

Kevin White added:

Here in the south-west we had a case in which Collette Carpenter, an off-duty Dorset Police Special Constable, was using her phone, which was on her lap, pull out onto a main road killing a motorcyclist.

She initially lied about being on the phone but was eventually found out via phone records.

She wasn't prosecuted for causing

death by careless or dangerous driving, even though she was talking on her mobile at the time of the crash because the Crown Prosecution Service said there was no proof she was holding the phone at the time.

How can anyone prove whether she was holding the phone or not?

Surely if she was distracted by using a phone it is enough to prosecute?

Is this going to be the latest loophole?

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[^]VED rate accurate at time of print but may change.

YOUR LETTERS

VAUXHALL

Choice list threat

Robberg wrote:

Having read 'PSA Group confirms £1.13 billion acquisition of Vauxhall/Opel' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6), I'm probably getting ahead of myself, but if they do shut the Vauxhall factories, Citroën and Peugeot will be off our choice list.

Roger added:

So another big tranche of UK motor industry will depart these shores and the tax potential with it. Just £1.13bn – was anyone here offered it before PSA said a big thank you?

The Treasury should be thinking of a country sales tax/levy to recover some taxation potential, not lose any profits against operational expenses of an inefficient organisation. But that requires some innovative thinking and British politicians have continuously shown themselves short of that ability. Despite that so-called superior education they get. Get a grip Whitehall.

BrianG added:

Bear in mind, despite assurances to the contrary by PSA's CEO, the old Ryton Plant is now a housing estate.

DIESEL SCRAPPAGE

All diesels are not the same

Petrol Paul wrote:

Having read 'Two-thirds of diesel drivers "happy" to consider scrappage deal,' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 7), as fleet we need to take care when talking about diesels. There is absolutely no point scrapping a newer Euro 5 or Euro 6 diesel with stop-start technology and comparatively low NOx emissions. All diesels are not the same. What we need to focus on with scrappage is getting older, less efficient and more polluting diesels (not just cars but vans, trucks and buses) off our roads and replacing them with clean technology.

HYDROGEN

Hydrogen makes better business sense

Jonathan Sumpton wrote:

Having read 'Greentomatocars' hydrogen car refuels at new station' (fleetnews.co.uk, February 27), there is one glaringly obvious reason why hydrogen-fuelled cars will be adopted over purely electric ones.

Imagine you own a petrol station and have 10sqm to devote to either a recharging point for an electric car or a hydrogen pump, a hydrogen car refuels in three minutes, an electric car in 90. Which will you choose? A hydrogen pump will generate vastly better footfall through your payment kiosk than an electric car so you will sell more 'meal deals', papers and magazines. Space is money.



EMISSIONS

Hold VW to account

Driver chap:

Having read 'VW boss branded a liar after giving "Alice in Wonderland" evidence to MPs' (fleetnews.co.uk, February 24), he (Paul Willis) is not wrong. You can't compare the situation in Europe to that in the US. There, the government agencies held VW to account. Here they certainly aren't and VW assumes it's getting away with it.

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Contact us

Fleet News, Media House, Lynch Wood, Peterborough, PE2 6EA.
Email – fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk

Burning question:

Name one thing in your life you would least like to repeat?

Editorial

Editor-in-chief

Stephen Briers 01733 468024
stephen.briers@bauermedia.co.uk

Riding Oblivion at Alton Towers

Deputy editor

Sarah Tooze 01733 468901
sarah.tooze@bauermedia.co.uk

My shorthand exam

News editor

Gareth Roberts 01733 468314
gareth.roberts@bauermedia.co.uk

A 23-hour flight to the UK from New Zealand via Australia, Thailand and Dubai

Features editor

Andrew Ryan 01733 468308
andrew.ryan@bauermedia.co.uk

Out of the office

Head of digital

Jeremy Bennett 01733 468655
jeremy.bennett@bauermedia.co.uk

My A-levels: English, History, Biology

Staff writer

Matt de Prez 01733 468277
matt.deprez@bauermedia.co.uk

Canoeing

Photos Chris Lowndes

Production

Head of publishing

Luke Neal 01733 468262

Getting my fingers caught in a sanding machine at school

Production editors

David Buckley 01733 468310

Having a prostate examination. Fear of what might be found terrified me

Finbarr O'Reilly 01733 468267

Norovirus

Designer

Erika Small 01733 468312

Flying a helicopter. I was petrified of taking the controls and flying it myself

Advertising

Commercial director

Carlota Huddell 01733 366466

B2B commercial manager

Sheryl Graham 01733 366467

Account directors

Sean Hamill 01733 366472

Lisa Turner 01733 366471

Stuart Wakeling 01733 366470

Account managers

Liam Sancier 01733 363219

Karl Houghton 01733 366309

Kate Atkinson 01733 363218

Telesales/recruitment

01733 468275/01733 468328

Head of project management

Leanne Patterson 01733 468332

Project managers

Lucy Peacock 01733 468327

Kerry Unwin 01733 468578

Katie Lightfoot 01733 468338

Events

Event director

Chris Lester

Event manager

Sandra Evitt 01733 468123

Senior event planner

Kate Howard 01733 468146

Publishing

Managing director

Tim Lucas 01733 468340

Group marketing manager

Bev Mason 01733 468295

Office manager

Jane Hill 01733 468319

Group managing director

Rob Munro-Hall

Chief executive officer

Paul Keenan

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FLEET OPINION

ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED

Time to understand accessible transport

By Leyton Jordan

“In sectors such as private patient transport, special needs schools and councils, transport managers already have to manage minibuses and other vehicles suitable for conveying the disabled as part of their fleet responsibilities.

The requirement for providing accessible transport is growing fast given there are around 3.5 million disabled people in the UK workforce, up from 2.9 million in 2013.

As this trend continues, many fleet managers will have to get to grips with accessible requirements sooner rather than later. In fact, corporate vehicles will need to be as open to employee diversity as company buildings.

That means understanding the compliance regime.

Accessible vehicles have specialist equipment such as passenger lifts for wheelchairs which require extensive testing and maintenance to fall within legal (and manufacturer) guidelines.

And these aren't the only add-ons needed: accessible vehicles are often equipped with cyclist and pedestrian detection equipment or CCTV security systems so fleets can monitor both employee and passenger safety.

Organisations will also need similarly equipped replacement vehicles when their own are being repaired or serviced.

Duty of care is, unsurprisingly, top of the agenda when it comes to transporting disabled people.

In addition, there can be issues with driving licences. Following a change to the law, from 1997, new drivers do not automatically receive D1 entitlement to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats. So if a fleet has younger drivers who passed their test after 1997, it's entirely possible they're not legally able to take out larger accessible vehicles.

It's not uncommon for customers to request smaller models because older drivers have retired or left the organisation.

Transport is going to be an increasingly important factor as more disabled people become involved in an ever more diverse UK workforce – as industry bodies such as Motability have already shown.

Fleet managers should start understanding accessibility if they want to stay ahead of the curve.”

“Corporate vehicles will need to be as open to employee diversity as company buildings”



Leyton Jordan depot manager Accessible Division UK, Enterprise Flex-e-Rent



Philip Swift managing director, Claims Management and Adjusting

SPURIOUS CLAIMS

Crown property shenanigans

By Philip Swift

“Much of my life over the past few years has been spent challenging costs presented for damage to Crown property following a crash, spillage or fire.

If one of your vehicles collides with a motorway barrier or bends a traffic sign, you or your insurer will be presented with a bill, usually from a council, Highways England, Transport for London or a contractor.

Fair enough you might think if the driver was to blame. That's the first problem. We're seeing a worrying rise in 'swerve to avoid' incidents and it is often the innocent party who ends up crashing, while the truly at-fault driver (the one who veered towards them) continues merrily on their way.

Then there's debris. We find ourselves in the crazy situation where Highways England contractors are presenting claims for barrier repairs potentially caused by debris they're paid to clear, but haven't.

That brings me to the sheer volume of inaccurate claims. We're seeing wildly varying rates for the same service and hefty charges for spurious additional items.

Last year, 10 invoices from one contractor were almost halved, simply on being queried. There was a £56,000 claim for resurfacing, where we demonstrated that a larger spill had been addressed for just £750, and a £42,000 claim three times what it should have been because the barrier was calculated in meters instead of feet. In a not insignificant number of cases, no payment is warranted at all.

We recently discovered that a pick-up truck supposedly used by a Highways England contractor in a motorway repair was listed as stolen at the time. The Highways England contractor blamed a typo in the VRM and provided a new, slightly different one for a Mercedes-Benz E350 AMG convertible.

It's an amusing inaccuracy, but it reveals serious problems: The contractor seems to be guessing at the VRM and Highways England appear willing to accept what they're presented.

Their systems are not robust enough to detect even obvious anomalies and they urgently need to review their processes. In the meantime, don't take these claims at face value, engage a specialist to scrutinise them.”

“A pick-up truck supposedly used by a Highways England contractor was listed as stolen”



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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.

INCREASED MONTHLY RENTALS

Q My leasing provider has increased its monthly rentals and this appears to be based on the uncertainty caused by Brexit and the impact on exchange rates. How do I challenge my provider about this and ensure I am not subject to more increases? Or am I supposed to just accept the uplift? In which case, how do I explain to my drivers that certain cars no longer fall within their grade?

A Throughout my time in fleet management there has been a succession of sets of economic factors that have been given as the reason for changes in fleet costs – usually causing an increase.

I well recall during the economic turbulence of 2008/9 the major concerns expressed about the impact of the plunge in residual values and the “difficult” conversations that the leasing companies were having with their customers in a bid to avoid significant losses.

However, one thing I have learned from all these events is that it always pays to look behind the headlines and to understand exactly what is going on and ensure that this is not just a supplier looking to make a little extra margin.

Therefore, my initial reaction to your question is that you certainly should challenge your provider to justify any uplift – particularly given that a large amount of the economic news that has emerged since June has been broadly positive for the UK.

I would suggest you ask your provider some targeted questions:

- If overall lease rates have increased, which element(s) of the rate calculation have been affected?
- Can you please provide a before and after calculation for a benchmark vehicle to illustrate this?
- Have your residual value assumptions changed significantly – and if so why?
- What specific impact has a change in exchange rates had – and why?

Any leasing provider worth its salt should be able to provide clear responses to all these questions in order to justify the proposed increases and to allow you to decide whether you are being treated reasonably.

Taking this approach also allows you to set some rules with your provider as to how they propose to communicate future changes (and rates can actually go down as well as up).

I would also suggest you use your personal fleet manager network to understand whether other

“I also included a very clear message in the policy which stated that lists were subject to regular review and cars could move in and out of grades”

leasing providers are adopting the same approach.

The final part of your question is one that never goes away, as there are many factors that can cause a car to move in and out of a grade.

I always took the view that part of the process should be to choose cars that fall well within grade bands, reducing the risk of cars moving outside. However, I also included a very clear message in the policy which stated that lists were subject to regular review and cars could move in and out of grades. That did not prevent complaints, but gave me a consistent answer.

Hopefully this advice will assist and may help you to build a better relationship with your leasing provider (or indicate that you may even need to consider choosing a different one).

■ The next Ask Nigel will be in the April 13 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



THE WINNERS

Thirty-two winners were crowned at the 2017 Fleet News Awards, cheered on by an audience of more than 1,400 fleet and industry executives. Two plug-in car categories were introduced this year recognising the growing importance of ultra-low emission electric and hybrid cars for fleets. Full details below.

FLEET CATEGORIES

Fleet of the year up to 250 vehicles

Sponsored by Toyota & Lexus Fleet
Winner: London & Quadrant Housing Trust

Fleet of the year 251-1,000 vehicles

Sponsored by Toyota & Lexus Fleet
Winner: Enserve Group
Highly commended: Britvic

Fleet of the year 1,001-plus vehicles

Sponsored by Toyota & Lexus Fleet
Winner: Environment Agency

Cost saving initiative of the year

Sponsored by Zenith
Winner: Royal Mail
Highly commended: Speedy Hire

Most improved fleet of the year

Sponsored by Reflex
Winner: London & Quadrant Housing Trust
Highly commended: Wates Group

Safe fleet of the year

Sponsored by Appy Fleet
Winner: Skanska
Highly commended: Iron Mountain and Royal Mail

Green fleet of the year

Sponsored by BMW Group (UK)
Winner: Panasonic Europe
Highly commended: Z-Tech Contol Systems

MANUFACTURER CATEGORIES

Best Small Car

Winner: Citroën C3
Highly commended: Audi A1 and Ford Fiesta

Best Lower-Medium Car

Winner: Vauxhall Astra
Highly commended: Ford Focus and Škoda Octavia

Best Upper-Medium Car

Winner: Škoda Superb

Best Large SUV

Winner: Jaguar F-Pace
Highly commended: Mercedes-Benz GLC and Volvo XC90

Best Compact SUV

Winner: Nissan Juke
Highly commended: Audi Q2

Best Mid-size SUV

Winner: Seat Ateca
Highly commended: Peugeot 3008

Best Compact Premium Car

Winner: Audi A3

Best Premium Car

Winner: Audi A4
Highly commended: Alfa Romeo Giulia

Best Executive Car

Winner: Mercedes-Benz E-Class
Highly commended: Volvo S90/V90



WINNERS

To see all the images
from the night visit:
fleetnews.co.uk/fnawards17

Full awards coverage will
be included in the March 30
issue of Fleet News

Sponsored by Thrifty Car & Van Rental

Best Plug-in Car (0g/km)

Winner: Hyundai Ioniq
Highly commended: BMW i3

Best Plug-in Car (1-50g/km)

Winner: BMW i3 Range Extender

Green Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

Winner: Hyundai Motor UK
Highly commended: Nissan Motor
(GB) and Toyota (GB)

Most Improved Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

Winner: Fiat Chrysler
Automobiles UK
Highly commended: Volvo Car UK

SUPPLIER CATEGORIES

Leasing Company of the Year – up to 20,000 vehicles

Sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover
Winner: Activa Contracts
Highly commended:
Marshall Leasing

Leasing Company of the Year – more than 20,000 vehicles

Sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover
Winner: Zenith

Customer Service Award

Sponsored by Škoda UK
Winner: The Automobile Association
Highly commended:
Thrifty Car & Van Rental
and Zenith

Best Rental Company of the Year

Sponsored by easi-Fleet Management
by the Grosvenor Group
Winner: Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Most Innovative New Product or Service

Sponsored by Fleet News Buying Group
Winner: Freight Transport
Association
Highly commended: Fleet Assist

Fleet Dealer of the Year

Sponsored by Automotive Management
Winner: Swansway Group

Fleet Specialist Services Supplier of the Year

Winner: FleetCheck

HEADLINE CATEGORIES

Fleet Manager of the Year

Sponsored by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles UK
Winner: Jo Hammonds, Mears Group

Fleet Supplier of the Year

Sponsored by Toyota & Lexus Fleet
Winner: BT Fleet
Highly commended: The AA

New Company Car of the Year

Sponsored by LeasePlan UK
Winner: Mercedes-Benz E-Class

Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

Sponsored by KeeResources
Winner: Audi

Fleet News Hall of Fame

Sponsored by The AA
Winner: Colin Marriott



Toyota & Lexus Fleet





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Official fuel consumption figures for the Maserati Ghibli Diesel MY17 in mpg (l/100 km): Urban 36.7 (7.7), Extra Urban 57.6 standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.*Business Contract Hire. Maserati excl. VAT & maintenance. Based on 9,000 miles pa. Excess mileage charges apply. Vehicles must be registered between



MASERATI

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[4.9), Combined 47.9 (5.9). CO2 emissions on combined cycle: 158 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO2 figures are based on Ghibli MY17 V6d 4dr Auto (including mica paint at £660). Initial rental of £4,788, followed by 47 monthly rentals of £399, 13/01/17 and 31/03/17. Subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Ts&Cs apply. Maserati Contract Hire, SL1 0WU.

'NETWORKING DRIVES FLEET EFFICIENCY'

Exchanging views and ideas with her fleet peers helps keep Ann-Marie Dunbar ahead of change. "It's a fast-paced industry," she tells *Stephen Briers*

Networking is often seen as a hackneyed word associated with dinners and events. But, done properly, it can unearth untold benefits. For Ann-Marie Dunbar, networking has been a mainstay of her drive towards continuous fleet improvement.

Since her appointment as Vodafone's first dedicated fleet manager in 2013, Dunbar has been on a steep learning curve: initially getting to grips with 1,500 company cars, then being handed the multitude complexities of 500 light commercial vehicles after Vodafone acquired Cable & Wireless.

"There has been a relentless focus on processes and efficiencies," says Dunbar, who spent the previous decade in HR (see panel overleaf).

"I learned early on that as a fleet manager you have to manage all sorts of stakeholders and understand their perspectives – finance directors, HR directors, procurement; you have to be all things to all people. That's one of the things I like about the role."

A key part of her learning and development has been networking with other fleet managers, both externally with those in other organisations and internally, as part of Vodafone's global business.

"I link into my Vodafone group counterparts, representing the UK at a global level, and I am also out in the industry under-

standing the direction we are heading and the legislation coming our way," Dunbar says.

"I try to network as much as possible with other fleet operators via our fleet provider and our other suppliers. It's such a fast-paced industry, there are many things to consider in addition to keeping the fleet ticking over operationally."

She also turns to her contacts abroad to seek best practice: "For example, mobility – where the Netherlands is ahead; we are working with fleets there to understand solutions we can trial that would work for our employees."

Dunbar's meetings with other fleets tend to be structured around the Vodafone fleet strategy and current priorities; for example, introducing telematics to the van fleet, which she did in 2014.

The opportunity to liaise with Vodafone fleet decision-makers in other countries is a more recent occurrence. The networking group consists of 8-10 fleets in key markets.

"In some areas the UK is more mature, but there are also ways we can learn," Dunbar says.

Dunbar has implemented a host of initiatives since taking on the role. Her first priority was to look at the ageing job requirement car policy with the purpose of tightening up controls in areas such as mileage capture. Then she turned to the user-chooser policy, and in particular the wide range of cars on the options list.



Ann-Marie Dunbar is always willing to talk to outside fleet professionals and colleagues in the pursuit of best practice



FACTFILE

Company Vodafone

Fleet manager Ann-Marie Dunbar

Time in role four years

Fleet size 2,200: 1,100 job-requirement cars, 600 company cars, 500 vans

Average car CO₂ emissions 112g/km

Funding method contract hire with maintenance

Replacement cycle cars – four years; vans – five years



"My experience in HR put me in a good position to understand where the balance sits within the business," she says. "We look to give people what they want but I also wear the finance hat which means looking after the cost base."

Dunbar analysed the models drivers were ordering and condensed the user-chooser list down to 14 vehicles. The majority of the fleet now centres on four key manufacturers.

The fixed list gives Vodafone the flexibility to meet demand for non-typical cars, such as people carriers and 4x4s, but drivers have to make a contribution dependent on their choice.

"That gives us the balance," Dunbar explains. "It worked really well because drivers knew we were listening to them but also I was giving the stakeholders what they wanted."

She reviews the list annually, having "open conversations" with each manufacturer to discuss their performance on the fleet and their future products, as well as sharing Vodafone's business needs in order to identify the right vehicles to add to the list.

Every car includes a standard list of options paid for by Vodafone, including sat-nav, metallic paint, Bluetooth and rear parking sensors. Employees can choose to pay for other extras themselves.

No sooner had Dunbar finalised the company car policy, along came her next big test: light commercial vehicles. She reverted to her winning formula of meeting other fleet

KEY CONSIDERATIONS ON DUNBAR'S AGENDA

Mobility and connected cars are high on Ann-Marie Dunbar's agenda. Vodafone has a mobility policy around business travel for those not eligible for a company car (the threshold is 10,000 annual business miles), which currently prioritises the use of hire cars.

"I started looking at journey patterns to identify opportunities where we can work smart," Dunbar says. "The safest thing is to stay at your desk, but we want to help our employees by utilising different mobility solutions rather than

the standard hire car. It will also reduce costs, CO₂ and fuel use."

Dunbar is also keeping a close watch on car connectivity and, in particular, the implications for employee data.

She says there is "some nervousness" over data access, but adds: "It's an area we need to understand with manufacturers, finding out what is being introduced, how it is being used and how it will be stored. This extends beyond the car: everything will be linked and it can't be looked at in isolation."

managers experienced in running large van fleets to improve her knowledge.

"We modelled our success on what we saw with other fleets. People were open about what they had achieved and also what didn't work – the mistakes they made helped me to avoid them. I couldn't have done it without them," she says.

"We did case studies on what worked for them, especially on branding, telematics, driver alerts and taxation for private use. Within six months I went from having no knowledge to understanding best practice, writing an LCV policy and taking my recommendations to the stakeholders."

One of the recommendations was the introduction of telematics, which was duly signed

off. The full roll-out took place during 2014.

It has presented a number of challenges around data handling and management. "You have to know what your priorities are with the data. We're still learning and this is a focus going forward, so we are looking at how other companies are using it for driver behaviour, accident reporting and real-time reporting."

Dunbar has one fleet member of staff who is responsible for crunching the telematics data for stakeholders, as well as managing the mileage capture information and exception reporting.

Key measurements are fuel efficiency, speeding and time spent driving, with Dunbar working closely with the health and safety team. Drivers can access the data themselves – they also have in-cab units that issue alerts – as can line managers.

"It's all fully auditable," Dunbar says. "We look at it as their data; we just control how it is used."

Arguably Dunbar's finest achievement during her short time managing the Vodafone fleet is the creation two years ago of the Road Smart, Road Safe programme.

The annual events take place at Vodafone hubs across the country and saw 3,000 employees participate last year – a quarter of Vodafone's UK workforce. They are intended to give employees access to new cars and other services as well as share fleet knowledge.

"It's an opportunity for us to reinforce our safety culture, share technology and innovations, show our green initiatives and also our other services, such as discounted tyres and

THE SWITCH FROM HR TO FLEET MANAGEMENT

When Vodafone senior management asked if anyone wanted to take responsibility for the car fleet in 2013, Ann-Marie Dunbar answered the call.

She had spent the previous decade mainly in HR working in benefits but saw an opportunity to take a good look at a car policy which had remained largely unchanged during her time at the company.

"The leadership team asked and I said 'why not?'," she says. "We had a company car policy that was steady but had been the same for many years. There had been no deep dive or look at other

companies to see what they were doing."

Dunbar focuses on balancing her stakeholder requirements with the needs of the drivers and the broader business.

"Fleet sits within the HR function so because we are not in finance or procurement, it gives me a neutral position which helps me to give a balanced view of the fleet," she says.

"This strategic approach has delivered significant cost efficiencies to the business while maintaining a strong focus on great customer experience for our employees – keeping them mobile and connected is an absolute priority."



Vodafone reviews everything about its fleet each year – “it’s the right thing to do,” says Ann-Marie Dunbar

servicing and winter driving packs,” Dunbar says.

“Employees can speak to manufacturers about their next car, they can look at static vehicles for new technology and safety features, and they can speak to our health and safety team.”

Road Smart, Road Safe is open to all staff, not just company vehicle drivers, and has raised the profile of fleet within the business. Understanding of company policy noticeably rises from pre- to post-event, with excellent feedback from staff.

The events have also helped Vodafone to promote the benefits of plug-in hybrids as part of its environmental drive. The number of pure EVs and plug-in hybrids has risen to 69, just over 11% of the company car fleet. Dunbar hopes to increase this to 20% by the end of the year.

To support uptake, Vodafone has invested in charging points at a number of sites, which are available to all employees, not just

“It’s such a fast-paced industry, there are many things to consider in addition to keeping the fleet ticking over”

Ann-Marie Dunbar, Vodafone

company car drivers. Dunbar has also negotiated long-term test cars with a number of manufacturers to give drivers extended experience of living with electric vehicles.

“We’ve seen a real shift in attitude towards plug-in cars,” says Dunbar. “The next step is to look at electric vans, especially with the changes in London. I hope to get some in on trial this year.”

The Vodafone fleet is funded on a single-source contract hire with maintenance agreement through Arval, although some vehicles are still with legacy providers. It’s a global contract that offers volume of scale benefits, but also one that gives Dunbar more opportunities to tap into her counterparts at other fleets during focus group meetings.

“We have an outsource model; the majority of our day-to-day interaction with drivers is managed by our fleet partner,” she says. This frees up time to focus on strategy and new initiatives.

“I spend 40% of my time looking back and 60% looking forward, often over a two- or three-year timescale,” Dunbar says.

“I invest a lot of thinking time, but also networking or internal meetings with group colleagues. We review everything each year, from replacement cycles to policies, governance and compliance. With all the change in the industry, this is the right thing to do.”

'WE WANT TO IMPROVE THE CREDIT HIRE EXPERIENCE FOR THE CUSTOMER'

Edam Group has ambitious plans to double in size over the next three years and its dedicated fleet team is just the start. *Andrew Ryan* reports

The word 'focus' crops up often when Marc Lafferty talks about Edam Group's ambitious plans, particularly when referring to its recent move into fleet.

Maintaining focus on the credit hire company's core services, focus on its strengths and focus on further improvement.

"Focus is a word I use a lot in our organisation," says Lafferty, Edam chief revenue officer. "There are a lot of people in our world who are trying to be all things to all men. They will see an opportunity and invent a new division or a new capability and try to do it. My experience is that to be successful, you pick something and do it really well."

"We are adamant that we are a credit hire business: we will focus on that and aim to be the best provider in the marketplace for that service. That's where we want to be."

Most fleets use credit hire, although they may not be aware of it with many services white-labelled via a leasing or accident management company. The supplier can often secure some revenue through the relationship as well as offer a better service to the fleet.

The key benefit compared to taking a replacement car from a bodyshop is the like-for-like model replacement. Rather than a supermini courtesy car, drivers get the same – or similar – size and type of model, giving them a better experience.

"If you are big enough and have the capacity to manage a number of different types of relationships, then you are likely to access credit hire," Lafferty says.

Edam Group was founded in 2001 by brothers Simon and Daniel Bellamy with three staff and five vehicles.

Today it is a £55 million a year business, has around 300 employees and four depots around the country, and operates a fleet of 1,500 vehicles, all less than a year old.

"We are very ambitious in terms of where we want to take the company," says Lafferty.

"We want to double its size over the next three years. For some businesses that may sound overly-ambitious, particularly if they've got a significant market share, but ours is less than 5% and we think it's doable."

"I think there is some underlying growth in the credit hire market, while access to credit hire will increase as well. Enough to make quite a difference to the industry."

"At the moment probably only half of the people who can access credit hire services do so, and I think that will grow, not dramatically, but it will increase."

One major development in the company's recent history was the appointment of Steve Turner as CEO in 2015, which led to Edam Group taking on Lafferty, around seven months ago, and Ken McPherson as chief financial officer.

"That was a bit of a statement of intent in getting new people into the business," says Lafferty.

The company decided to make a concerted effort to move into the fleet sector which, Lafferty says, Edam Group has been looking at for 'six to 12 months'.

"We looked internally and had a long, hard conversation about what we do, what we do well, and what we don't do."

"Traditionally we've focused on the more relationship-type markets, but we've got the opportunity to move now into some markets that we've sort of neglected, not through design but just because that's the way it's worked out," he adds.

"The existing shareholders haven't felt that they've had to compete in those spaces, and

that's why, when you look at Edam Group, you can think 'where have they been for the past five years?'."

"In that time we've been growing our business nicely without going into new sectors, so we haven't expanded in that way, but that's about to change and has started to change."

Edam Group wants to win more business in the fleet sector, as well as the insurance and broker sectors.

Lafferty says the company is having "active conversations" with three of the UK's 10 largest leasing providers and early feedback has been encouraging.

"We do have some business [in the fleet sector], so it's not completely new for us, but we are just on the point of developing relationships," he adds.

The main product offering will continue to be credit hire, maintaining that focus on the core business. However, Edam Group does also have a personal injury practice which can offer support to customers if required.

"We also do some FNOL [first notification of loss], but we are not a claims management company and we don't want to be. But we can handle calls and direct them onto providers," Lafferty says.

He is no stranger to the fleet sector. Before joining Edam Group, Lafferty worked as group head of sales for Belron, which owns Autoglass in the UK.

"I owned the relationships with our international fleet lease customers at the time, the likes of LeasePlan and Alphabet, and then I also spent some time with Auto Windscreens in the UK, so I know the fleet sector reasonably well," he says.

"I'm very familiar with selling fundamentally a premium service into fleet operators and fleet companies."

Lafferty believes the credit hire sector is undergoing "an evolution" from being a commercially-driven, price-led service – "let's get the best deal, it ticks a couple of boxes so we're fine" – to one where leasing companies recognise that the driver experience is a key element in their ability to sell the service to fleets.

"We aim to be the best provider in the marketplace for credit hire services"

Marc Lafferty, Edam Group



Marc Lafferty had experience of fleet before joining Edam Group as chief revenue officer

FACTFILE

Company Edam Group

CEO Steve Turner

Chief financial officer Ken McPherson

Chief revenue officer Marc Lafferty

Fleet 1,500

Employees 300

"People are at different points on that curve and we have slightly different conversations, but all are increasingly recognising they need to deliver a great experience to their drivers, particularly when something goes wrong," he says.

Lafferty expresses surprise that the credit hire sector does not measure customer satisfaction via Net Promoter Scores (NPS) and suggests it shows a lack of focus on the customer journey.

"There's a real opportunity to drive that service and set the expectations around the driver experience, so we are now using NPS [it scores more than 70].

"I think there is this vacuum in the credit hire industry in terms of a real service-led proposition. I don't believe anyone has grabbed the high ground in terms of delivering an outstanding service; our ambition is to try to grab that space."

Lafferty hopes to secure at least two major contracts with top 15 leasing businesses, but adds: "I'm being a bit cautious with that as I think we could do better."

In preparation for expansion, Edam Group has invested heavily in its structure, including setting up a dedicated team of 10 to focus on the fleet sector.

"We've tried to understand that if we want to scale our business, what are the challenges in terms of managing that growth," says Lafferty.

"The biggest challenges are around staff: getting high quality people in, training them, getting them familiar with us and for them to actually deliver the service.

"When we talk to a big fleet company it is typically talking about a significant amount of work for us.

"It could be 10% of our existing business, so we can't engage with them and then say 'if we win, we will recruit a load of people and see you in six months' time.

"With our fleet, there are some challenges about getting additional vehicles in, but we don't see that as a constraint, we can do that quicker than getting people in.

"We've got direct relationships with manufacturers and have flexibility within those purchasing agreements so we can access vehicles quickly if we need to.

"There is a leap of faith where we have to invest in our capability, but we need to know we have got the capacity within our business to match future requirements."



New Citroën C3 makes your fleet unique

Citroën's new supermini offers drivers and fleets an experience that is cool, calm and connected

The New Citroën C3 is the supermini that makes a big impression with fleet decision-makers by giving user-choosers the choice they deserve.

The latest incarnation of Citroën's best-selling model can adapt to the personality of the fleet and driver as an antidote to the corporate clones clogging up the company car park.

Its audacious exterior, with striking two-tier headlights and flashes of bright colours, is designed to make a lasting impression. But it is the individual touches

that can make every New C3 special to its owner.

There are nine exterior colours that can be combined with three alternative paint colours for the roof with splashes of colour stretching to the fog light surrounds, door mirrors and rear quarter panels. A total of 36 combinations can reflect a driver's personality or even a company's culture.

But that is only the start. The New C3 also comes with the option of Airbump® panels, first made famous by the Cactus, which are Citroën's fun-yet-practical air-

filled pockets that protect the exterior of the car. They add an additional touch of design flair with a white or red graphic motif dependent on roof colour.

The combination delivers an exterior that bursts with energy and personality from front to back that will inspire owners every time they take in the fluid curves that combine design flair with a sense of strength and solidity.

At the front, double chrome strips extend from the Citroën chevrons and go all the way across to the LED daytime running lights. The sturdy front bumper blends into the rest of the bodywork to enhance the sense of height and width at the front for a 'go-anywhere' look and feel.

In profile, black windscreen pillars and a 'floating roof' accentuate the dynamic outline of the New C3.

The car's protective character is evident in the balanced proportions between the body panels and the glazed areas. The styling on the sides of the car continue the deliberately high bonnet line, producing a reassuring posture, while the wheel arches are fitted with extensions for a crossover appearance. At the rear, the muscular wings give the car a dynamic look, while even its 3D rear lights show its personality to the rivals it leaves behind.

The innovation is more than skin deep as the car continues to deliver excitement when drivers open the door using the keyless entry system (^).

The welcoming interior, bathed in light from the panoramic sunroof (^), delivers an infectious feeling of excitement about the drive ahead and the experience can be made all the more personal with optional ambiances that enhance the passenger

Rallying pedigree of New C3

The New C3 will continue Citroën's international success in the World Rally Championship.

The C3 WRC has started a new chapter in an amazing history of wins in the motor sport, with Kris Meeke and Paul Nagle piloting the car for the 2017 season.

To date, Citroën has 96 victories and 16 world titles in the sport.

Under the bonnet of the C3 WRC is a four-cylinder 1.6-litre direct injection turbo engine, producing 385PS, driving a state-of-the-art four-wheel-drive system.





environment with contrasting seat trims, dashboard elements and door straps.

From the first moment in the car, drivers and passengers also begin to experience the benefits of Citroën Advanced Comfort®, a series of innovations designed to emphasise a feeling of reassurance, comfort and calm.

The atmosphere is enhanced by trim level options, ranging from Touch to Feel and top-of-the-range Flair, that reflect the sensual nature of the cabin.

There is a sense of space and comfort throughout the New C3, including seats that are uniquely wide and generous, helped by an extra 2cm of elbow room.

The New C3 is the world's first car to have a factory-fitted camera, the ConnectedCAM Citroën™, that allows people to take inspiring images of their journeys that can then be shared with friends or colleagues (see panel).

There is also the option of Connect Nav navigation, controlled by voice recognition or through the beautiful seven-inch touchscreen. The system offers an additional set of eyes and ears on the road, delivering real-time traffic information, location and pricing at car parks and fuel stops plus weather news.

The Mirror Screen function also allows drivers to link their Android or Apple smartphones to the car and access functions through the touchscreen, which is within easy reach of driver or passenger.

The beautifully sculpted steering wheel

New C3 offers world-first technology

The New Citroën C3 is full of great new technological innovations that benefit drivers and fleet managers.

One of the most eye-catching features is the ConnectedCAM Citroën™, the world's first factory-fitted in-car camera that enables people to film and take photos from their car.

The system, which can take still photographs or video, provides two distinct benefits. Drivers can share images on social media of their driving experiences, but there is also an important health and safety element.

In the event of an impact, the wide angle, full HD two million pixel camera automatically records the 30 seconds before and 60 seconds after the incident, to provide important evidence to help support insurance claims.

It can also be manually triggered to capture any incidents that drivers need to record and feed back to their managers.

Stored content is directly accessible via the free ConnectedCAM Citroën™ app.

The app allows drivers to locate their vehicle and store its position to ensure they can find it in unfamiliar or busy places.

Drivers also benefit from a lane departure warning system that guards against driver fatigue or inattention, an optional blind-spot monitoring system and driver coffee break alert, which offers a reminder when a break is needed after two hours of uninterrupted driving at speeds above 45mph.

Automatic speed sign recognition identifies posted speed limits and displays the information to drivers (^).

Citroën C3 fuel consumption and emissions

| TRIM | ENGINE | CO ₂ (g/km) | MPG |
|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|------|
| Touch | PureTech 68 manual | 108 | 60.1 |
| | PureTech 82 manual | 108 | 60.1 |
| | BlueHDi 75 S&S manual | 92 | 80.7 |
| Feel | PureTech 68 manual | 109 | 60.1 |
| | PureTech 82 manual | 109 | 60.1 |
| | PureTech 110 S&S manual | 103 | 61.4 |
| | BlueHDi 75 S&S manual | 93 | 78.5 |
| | BlueHDi 100 S&S manual | 95 | 76.3 |
| Flair | PureTech 82 manual | 109 | 60.1 |
| | PureTech 110 S&S manual | 103 | 61.4 |
| | BlueHDi 100 S&S manual | 95 | 76.3 |

**MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.*

and gearlever connect the driver to a unique blend of performance and comfort that is essential in modern driving.

Engineers have tailored the suspension to be the most comfortable on the market, while soundproofing is enhanced to filter out unnecessary distractions to ensure a pure, but relaxed, driving experience.

Power and efficiency are delivered through a choice of petrol and diesel engines that have been engineered with a range of outputs to reflect the bespoke requirements of drivers and their fleet managers.

The 1.2-litre PureTech petrol engine, an international engine of the year, offers average combined fuel economy of 60.1-

61.4mpg and CO₂ emissions of 103-108g/km, while diesel variants achieve 76.3-80.7mpg and CO₂ emissions of 92-95g/km.

As a result, whichever options drivers choose, with manual or automatic gearboxes, they can be assured of low company car tax bills, with rates for the New C3 starting from £33 a month for a 20% taxpayer.

Jason Maynard, UK Product Manager for New C3, said: "Customer feedback on every aspect of the car has been very good. Everyone has been positive about the styling and they are impressed how much it stands out against segment rivals."

Prices for the New Citroën C3 start from £10,995.

Visit citroen.co.uk or call the Citroën Fleetline on 0800 285 1704*

* Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones. If you are calling from a business phone, you should check with your provider whether there will be a charge for calling an 0800 number.

^ Specification varies by model and may be standard, optional at extra cost or unavailable feature depending on trim level chosen.

The UK's biggest fleet event grows again

The industry show for car and commercial fleets will break new records in 2017



Car and commercial fleets, both large and small, will reap the rewards of exciting changes and innovations coming to Fleet Management LIVE for 2017.

Managers with a combined fleet of more than 500,000 vehicles are expected to attend the expanded *Fleet News* event which has grown to incorporate the *Commercial Fleet Van & Truck Show* to cover every area of the industry.

The show now provides everything a fleet needs under one roof, whether you operate cars or commercial vehicles and whether your role is fleet or any other essential fleet-related role, such as HR, procurement, purchasing, finance, risk management, transport, corporate mobility or business travel.

With an increased number of suppliers and exhibitors, along with a redesigned programme of expert talks and advice, the changes consolidate Fleet Management LIVE as the biggest and best event on the annual fleet calendar.

To accommodate the growth, it has moved to a new, larger hall at the NEC to make this year's show the largest ever.

The expansion reflects the wishes of vehicle operators, many of whom operate both cars and commercial vehicles.

It also ensures visitors can extract the maximum value from their day by meeting a range of suppliers covering all their needs, while also networking, discovering the latest innovations, learning industry best practice and obtaining important advice on future fleet developments.

Chris Lester, event director, said: "Fleet Management LIVE has been designed by the industry, for the industry. Managers from every area of the market visit to assess, evaluate and learn, in areas from fleet management to finance, HR to procurement. Our growth reflects the interest shown by fleet operators who attend this event and benefit enormously from what it has to offer."

Fleet Management LIVE provided a great learning and sharing opportunity for both those new to fleet and the more experienced. There was something for just about everyone"

Nigel Trotman, ACFO

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DRIVING
business

FLEET MANAGEMENT LIVE



Exhibitor listing so far

BMW
Jaguar
Land Rover
Lexus
Mini
Seat
Toyota
Vauxhall
Volvo
AA DriveTech
Agility Fleet
AID Fuel Oils Group
ALD Automotive
Alphabet
Appy Fleet
Arnold Clark Vehicle Management
Arval
AssetWorks
Autoglass
BP Oil
BT Fleet
Carbaya
CC Keys
Chevin Fleet Solutions
CVM Group
Daimler Fleet Management
Dash Witness
Drive Software Solutions
FleetCheck
Fleetcor
Fleet Evolution
FORS
Fourways Vehicles Solutions
Fuelmate
GEFCO
Interactive Fleet Management
Jaama
Keytracker
Lex Autolease
Licence Bureau
Lookers Leasing
Marshall Leasing
Nexus Vehicle Rental
Parksafe Automotive
Probuild Transport Systems
Reflex Vans
RingGo Corporate
Scorpion Automotive
Selsia Vehicle Accident Centres
Sortimo
TCH Leasing
Total Motion Vehicle Management
Venson Automotive Solutions
vGroup International
Volkswagen Financial Services | Fleet
Zenith

OCTOBER 3-4, 2017 NEC BIRMINGHAM

Best practice sessions to fine-tune your fleet

Managers will be briefed on the critical strategies and steps for running an effective and efficient fleet during Fleet Management Live.

A series of best practice sessions will provide a perfect opportunity for managers to benchmark their operations against the best practice guidance of other industry experts.

Each session is designed to meet fleets' needs by offering a best practice blueprint, but then allowing delegates to ask questions about their business-

specific requirements. Best practice sessions are run throughout the two-day show in the main hall.

Sessions will cover:

- Fleet compliance
- Risk management
- Funding
- Rental
- Telematics





Visitor advisory board puts industry at heart of show

Fleet professionals have played an important role in developing Fleet Management LIVE through the visitor advisory board.

The board comprises a panel of fleets who provide essential feedback on the shape of the two-day event and also suggest and test new ideas.

The board meets regularly to review show plans and will be involved in shaping its content right up to the October event.

They will attend the show to experience its benefits and provide ongoing feedback as the event is developed for the future.

Chris Lester, event director, said: "A significant part of the success of Fleet Management LIVE can be attributed to the support of our advisory panel. They are an essential part of the event and I would like to thank them for their time and advice."

Advisory board panel

Chairman: Stephen Briers,
editor-in-chief, *Fleet News*

Vice-chairman: Peter Weston,
independent fleet consultant

Dale Eynon, head of fleet services,
Defra Group

John Gorton, head of transport,
Kent & Essex Police

Simon Gray, head of fleet
management, Mitie

Jo Hammonds, fleet manager,
Mears Group

Denise Lane, head of group fleet,
Capita Procurement Solutions

Stewart Lightbody, head of fleet
services, Anglian Water

Rory Morgan, head of logistics support
– Western Europe, Iron Mountain

Alison Moriarty, fleet risk and
compliance manager, Skanska

David Oliver, procurement manager,
Red Bull Company

John Pryor, group fleet & travel
manager, Arcadia Group

Caroline Sandall, ACFO deputy
chairman

Martin Saxton, national transport
manager, Carillion

Val South, fleet manager, Xerox

Paul Taylor, fleet manager, Morgan

Sindall

Lorna McAtear, fleet supply manager,
Royal Mail

Debbie Floyd, fleet & risk manager,
Bauer Media

Briefings for non-fleet managers at the Discover Fleet Theatre

Briefings for non-fleet managers attending the show will be an important part of the programme at Fleet Management LIVE.

Discover Fleet: skills for HR/Finance/Procurement/SMEs, is designed to offer insight specifically for managers who have involvement with vehicles but are outside the core fleet role.

The sessions will provide briefings which concentrate on the issues that matter to executives working in departments throughout a business who have involvement in fleet, including HR, finance and procurement.

For SMEs, where managers often have to juggle numerous operational roles, the sessions will focus on the essential aspects of fleet management they need to control to ensure they have a safe and effective fleet.

The Discover Fleet Theatre will be hosting presentations throughout the two-day show.

Intelligent Fleet Technology Zone provides window on the future

A new zone at Fleet Management LIVE will showcase the technology that is changing the shape of the fleet market.

From new software and vehicle equipment to new fuel technology, the Intelligent Fleet Technology Zone will provide new inspiration for the initiatives you can introduce on your fleet.

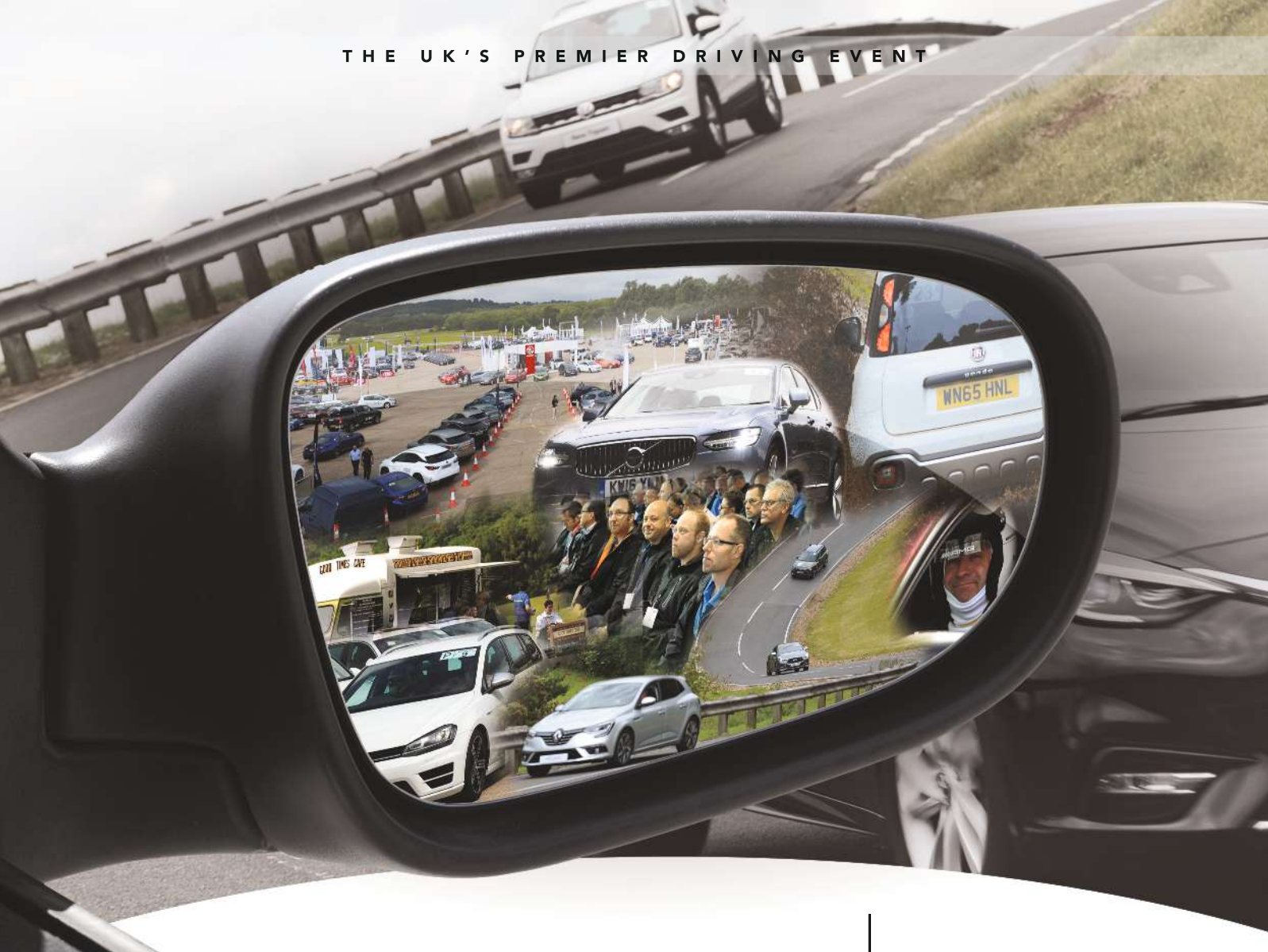
Who should attend?

**FLEET
FINANCE
PROCUREMENT
TRANSPORT
BUSINESS
TRAVEL
CORPORATE
MOBILITY
HR**

96%

of last year's attendees at Fleet Management LIVE, said they were likely to attend again. Their comments have directly shaped this year's show to ensure it is a must-attend event for every executive in the industry.

THE UK'S PREMIER DRIVING EVENT



Drive, compare, decide

Company Car in Action is the UK's most comprehensive driving event exclusively for fleet decision makers. No other event gives you the opportunity to meet so many manufacturers; test drive so many vehicles on Millbrook's real-life test tracks; and compare models back to back.

Register today

companycarinaction.co.uk/register

Get a clear view of your future fleet at CCIA



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**UNACCOMPANIED
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EV REVIEW ZONE



DEBATES



**EXCLUSIVELY FOR
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MILLBROOK PROVING GROUND

FleetNews



AWARDS 2017

The AA attends more than 3.4 million breakdowns per year – that's equivalent to one every nine seconds. Our vans carry nearly 1,800 parts, tools and consumables to help get customers on their way – all backed up by exclusive Bosch diagnostics technology. Our patrols fix eight out of 10 vehicles at the roadside and complete all roadside repairs in just under half an hour, on average.

The AA's award-winning business breakdown cover is available throughout the UK and in Europe and our commitment to customer service is well known. In August 2016, *Which?* re-awarded the AA 'Recommended Provider' status for breakdown cover, an accolade we have enjoyed for many years. The AA is the current holder of the *Fleet News* Fleet Supplier of the Year Award for the second consecutive year.

The AA is the UK's most popular breakdown cover provider. Trusted by millions, it provides 24/7, 365-day assistance to 65% of the top 20 fleets in the UK. The AA's expert knowledge is backed by funding with a £44m investment drive in technology in 2016 alone. Plus, the AA is working closely with manufacturers and its clients to implement route management, driving training, risk management and operational vehicle technology to help reduce the risk drivers face on UK roads.

SPONSOR PROFILE



Driving success

Keeping a fleet of cars, vans and trucks moving is crucial to the success of any business. With rising pressures on fleet managers to not only maintain a smoothly-run, economic fleet but also take into account ever-changing legislation and driver safety, it's no wonder today's fleets are looking for ways to streamline processes.

The AA recognises that fleet managers have a responsibility to improve company performance and a duty of care towards employees. In 2016 the AA invested £150 million into its systems. A large proportion of this has gone into frontline services to improve its offer to fleet and SME customers.

For SMEs, in particular, the costs involved in running a fleet can be prohibitive. But, there are a number of ways in which businesses can increase overall efficiency.

Plan the direction of travel

There are many route planning tools on the market, from simple postcode maps to sophisticated time management software. However, they really pay dividends when it comes to plotting the best route from A to B. You might not always know how long a job is going to take, but taking a strategic approach to plotting appointments means mileage can be kept to a minimum, reducing the time spent on the road and allowing staff to focus as much of the working day on fee-earning work.

The latest in-vehicle navigation systems from the AA all feature live traffic information, so blackspots can be avoided, while job updates can be sent straight to drivers on the road so they don't have to keep returning to base between appointments. With the latest fleet management and telematics technologies, managers can keep an eye

"A few key actions can make all the difference when taking charge of costs"

For more information please call 0800 55 11 88, visit



successful fleet management

on all vehicles and make sure that the most time-effective route is taken.

Drive responsibly

As the Government looks to increase penalties for driving offences including mobile phone use and speeding, it is vital drivers realise the implications of responsive and responsible driving.

Not only does poor driver behaviour increase the risk of an accident, an erratic driving style can reduce fuel economy and increase wear and tear on gears, brakes and tyres. Department for Transport figures state vehicles use up to 9% more fuel driving at 70mph than at 60mph, and up to 15% more fuel than driving at 50mph.

To keep motoring costs down, it is important to maintain a steady speed, accelerate and brake slowly, exploit stop and start technology to reduce idling time and switch off the engine when stuck in traffic. Many vehicles come fitted with monitoring technology that provides real-time driver feedback to see how well vehicles are performing against fuel consumption targets and smooth driving

objectives. The secret to achieving a high mpg figure is driving at the lowest speed you can, safely, in the highest possible gear.

Maintaining standards

Regular servicing might seem a hassle, but taking the time to make sure vehicles are in top condition can really prevent unnecessary downtime. Keeping tyres fully inflated, all fluid levels topped up and removing heavy objects when they are not needed can both help save fuel while keeping the engine running reliably, helping to avoid preventable breakdowns.

Get covered

No matter how much care is taken, there is always the chance of breakdown – usually at the most inconvenient moment. This could mean jobs are missed, the chance to earn is lost and customers are dissatisfied. Not to mention that drivers are left hanging around at the side of the road. Communication is key and it is crucial that everyone taking a business vehicle out on the road understands what to do when anything goes wrong.

Best practice indicates an SME should review its breakdown provider to ensure it has the correct level of cover in line with the changing requirements of the business. How vehicles are used will determine the policy needed and a quick call to your breakdown provider should provide the answers. Just one breakdown on the motorway could cost a business more than £250, not including loss of earnings, whereas ongoing business breakdown cover would see repairs and parts covered on the spot.

Take charge of motoring costs

For staff keen to get on with the job in hand, unexpected motoring costs can prove a distraction. Alongside the expected fuel and servicing costs, unplanned downtime and repair bills can have a significant impact on a company's business – whether that's a fleet of hundreds or a single vehicle failing to make it to the appointment.

A few key actions – route planning, driving style, regular maintenance and breakdown cover – can make all the difference when taking charge of costs.



TURNING DETECTIVE

Collisions are a costly part of business life, but thoroughly investigating why they happen can prevent similar incidents occurring again. *Ben Rooth* reports

Dealing with road collisions is an unfortunate part of a fleet manager's life. As well as the safety implication of having drivers involved in incidents, the employer also faces costs from repairs, vehicle off-road time and lost productivity.

But while a collision is never good news, fleet managers can use the opportunity to find out the underlying reason for it and this information, in turn, can be used to prevent similar events occurring in future.

"Investigating road collisions provides the evidence base to understand how future collisions can be prevented or injuries mitigated," says Richard Cuerden, chief scientist in engineering and technology at TRL, which runs a CPD-accredited vehicle accident investigation course for fleet operations and health and safety managers.

"Part of an active collision prevention strategy must involve learning lessons from previous incidents, identifying the trends and the priority areas to address."

Cuerden adds: "The ultimate benefit is a safer fleet, happier and safer employees, and lower operating costs."

Incidents happen suddenly and without warning, says the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), so managing their consequences and learning from them requires the ability to act quickly and efficiently to avoid learning opportunities being missed.

This means organisations need well thought out and rehearsed processes for responding to incidents and near misses effectively.

Different companies may take different approaches, but RoSPA, which also offers a collision investigation course for fleet managers, says the essence of good investigation is to gather evidence from physical sources, documentation and witness interviews, and then reach conclusions, make recommendations, and communicate and implement any necessary improvements.



SET A CLEAR POLICY

RoSPA says the starting point for any organisation is to ensure a comprehensive accident and incident reporting and investigation policy is in place, and forms part of its 'driving for work' document.

This should define the terms used to describe different events. RoSPA uses 'accident', 'incident' and 'near miss':

■ Accident is an event that results in personal injury to a staff member or another person, or results in property damage, categorised according to severity.

■ Incident is a dangerous occurrence that breaches the organisation's driving for work policy or safe driving practice and could include a motoring offence, or data from a telematics system.

■ Near miss is a dangerous occurrence that has the potential to result in personal injury to a staff member or another person, or to result in property damage.

This policy should state that all work-related collisions and near misses (including damage-only ones and ones involving grey fleet vehicles) must be reported to a line manager or other nominated manager.

It should also state that all collisions, incidents and near misses will be investigated to establish how and why they occurred and to learn how to prevent them in the future.

INVESTIGATING AN INCIDENT

In essence, the purpose of an investigation is to establish what happened, when, where, how, why, to who and with what consequences.

A fleet manager who is considering investigating incidents for the first time should "keep it simple", says Cuerden.

"It is important to investigate all incidents regardless of whether anyone was injured or whether the extent of the damage or costs was low," he adds.

"All incidents should be treated as opportunities to learn and improve. Start with the basics and by collecting facts.

"Following a collision, there will be a lot of opinion and even blame and this can be confusing and emotions can be charged, leading to a dilution of the facts.

"However, you must have clarity about why you're investigating the incidents and what you want to objectively record – the aim being to measure risk."

Rick Wood, head of fleet safety at RoSPA, says it is important to make it clear to drivers that any investigation is not a finger-pointing exercise.

"There can be a positive change in culture if investigations are carried out with transparency and without blame," he adds.

WHAT CAN COMPROMISE INVESTIGATIONS

■ Only concentrating on immediate causes and not underlying root causes.

■ A lack of understanding and skill by investigators.

■ Not using structured methods to integrate evidence.

■ A tendency to only seek to attribute blame.

■ Only seeking evidence that satisfies preconceptions and stopping investigation too soon.

■ Failure to gather all the evidence (particularly poor interviewing techniques).

■ Fear of recrimination and traumatised victims and witnesses inhibiting openness.

■ Not scaling investigations to the seriousness or learning potential of the accident or incident (investigating everything in the same way).

■ Poor communication of lessons learned.

■ Failure to implement recommendations from investigation.

Source: RoSPA



"When incidents happen, the instinct is for drivers to try to deflect blame or even try to hide what's happened."

"The issue with this is that if an unsafe practice isn't dealt with early it can lead to something much more serious occurring in the future."

"The benefits of creating a culture of preventability are that lessons can be learned to avoid repetition and spread best practice throughout the organisation."

RoSPA says incident reporting and investigation procedures should include:

- The initial response to an accident or incident – including emergency action.
 - When an accident, incident or near miss needs to be reported.
 - Who should report it; to whom it should be reported both internally and externally; and how this reporting should take place.
 - The timescales within which it must be reported.
 - The roles and responsibilities of the staff and managers involved.
 - How the procedure works with the organisation's HR policies, including its disciplinary policy.
 - How the level of investigation is decided – according to its safety significance and learning potential – and who decides.
 - The nature of the investigation and the resources that will be devoted to it.
 - The evidence – including physical, witness interviews, documentation, telematics, dash cams – to be gathered.
 - How the evidence will be analysed and integrated.
 - The departments and managers who need to be kept informed.
 - How the investigation, its conclusions and recommendations will be recorded and signed off.
 - How the recommendations and conclusions that result from the investigation will be implemented.
- Wood says it is vital that investigations discover "the true root cause" of any incident. "This is rarely a lack of driving skill and is much more likely to be about the internal and external motivators and beliefs that affect how a driver behaves," he says.
- "Look at the journey, the vehicle and the driver to establish what the risks are and how they can be mitigated."
- "Most important is to identify the pressures exerted on the driver by the organisation – particularly the line manager."
- "And pay particular attention to time pressures that may

"If an unsafe practice isn't dealt with early it can lead to something much more serious occurring in the future"

Rick Wood, RoSPA

come from both the organisation and from within the driver themselves."

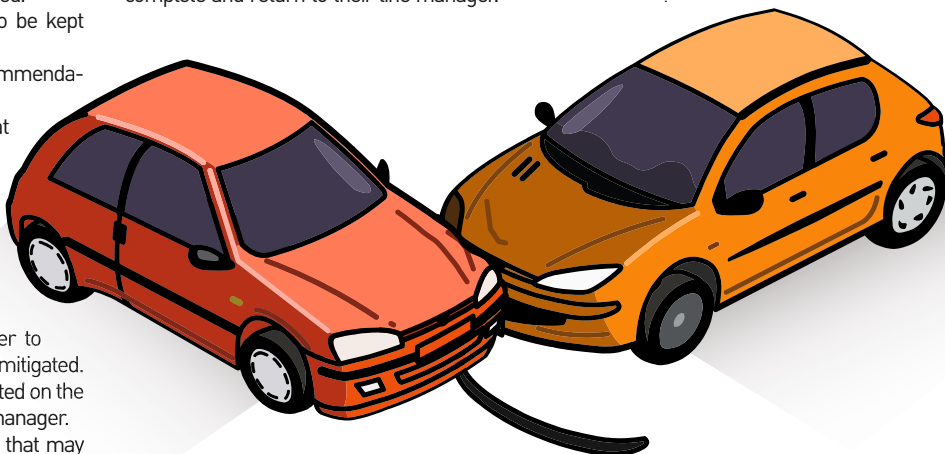
Wood and Cuerden say the onus is on each organisation to decide for itself what information is of fundamental importance for it to ascertain what's happened.

This needs to be clearly defined in its accident and incident reporting and investigation policy.

This data frequently includes driver and witness statements, photographic evidence, relevant details from insurers, telematics reports, dash cam evidence as well as professionally commissioned reports on individual driver's abilities.

RoSPA says it is essential drivers know what they should do in the event of an incident.

One way to do this is to provide an accident/incident information pack to be kept in the vehicle, which drivers should complete and return to their line manager.



CASE STUDY: BT GROUP



BT Group has witnessed a 50% reduction in the number of accidents its vehicles are involved in over the past decade as a result of analysing collision data.

Operating a fleet of 22,000 vans, the telecommunication giant's investigation procedures have been established to identify driver behaviour categorised as 'at risk'.

Whenever it receives a report of a collision where people have been injured or there's the potential for litigation, it launches an investigation in accordance with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines.

On these occasions, BT Group interviews

the driver and uses its own assessors to appraise the damage to document all relevant data surrounding the incident without attributing blame.

In addition, any unreported damage to vans is picked up and logged during routine service and maintenance.

BT Group subsequently combines this accident data with behaviour-based driver safety statistics collated on its behalf by eDriving Fleet.

"What we're looking for is driver behaviour that indicates someone is at risk," says Dave Wallington, head of safety at BT Group.

"Down the years, we've found that a good indicator that crashes are going to occur is when crashes have already occurred."

"Consequently, we use the data to work out whether there's an issue with the way a driver is approaching hazards or whether their driving style might be classed as too enthusiastic."

Wallington adds that it's imperative to

respond to a report of a crash immediately to ensure the data gathered from a driver and other key witnesses is accurate.

This data also has two distinct functions. "First it's important to gather evidence that demonstrates your organisation's compliance," he says.

"We'd want to find out precisely what happened to discover whether the driver had received the right training or whether their vehicle was properly maintained."

"The second function of this data is to prevent similar incidents occurring. The only way you can do that is by gathering the most accurate and relevant data in the first place."

He adds: "The advantages of proactively analysing collision data are clear in terms of being able to identify where you are likely to have further incidents occurring and responding accordingly."

"This is the essence of good vehicle management and ensures you're HSE compliant too."



Fleet managers should draw up a list of the information drivers should collect as soon as possible after the event and provide a simple form to help drivers record the required information.

This should include:

- Date, time, place.
- Purpose of journey.
- Starting time.
- Environmental conditions (visibility, road surface condition and so on).
- Exact location (with reference to a fixed point).
- Sketch or a photograph of the accident scene.
- Position and direction of travel of vehicles and other parties.
- A brief account of what happened using clear language.
- Registration number, model and colour of other vehicle(s).
- Other driver's name and address and contact details.
- Other party's insurance company details.
- Damage to driver's and other vehicle(s) and/or property.
- Injury to driver and/or passenger.
- Injuries to other parties.
- Names and addresses of any witnesses.
- Any other relevant factors such as personal health, stress, fatigue, etc.

APPROPRIATE MEASURES

RoSPA says when the information has been gathered, it should be entered into the organisation's recording system for analysis.

This will help a fleet manager identify and measure trends and key risks, which will enable appropriate measures, such as targeted training, to be implemented.

RoSPA suggests that the findings of an investigation and the recommendations for action to prevent the event happening again should also be shared with all staff, for example through internal communications such as the intranet and noticeboards.

Wood says: "Many incidents are similar in nature and lessons learned can lead to a reduction in their frequency.

"For instance, manoeuvring incidents can be reduced at

CASE STUDY: CLANCY GROUP

National construction business Clancy Group has embedded the Goals for Driver Education (GDE) matrix into its collision investigation process.

Borne out of extensive EU research, the matrix sets a hierarchy of four skills which are important for drivers to possess in order to remain safe: vehicle manoeuvring, mastery of traffic situations, goals within the context of driving, and goals for life and skills for living.

Colin Knight, head of fleet safety management and compliance for Clancy Plant, says: "By examining what's happened within the context of the GDE matrix we've found that we get an accurate and unprejudiced picture which can be used as part of the learning process.

"Most importantly, because this matrix is recognised to be absolutely fair and unbiased, our approach to collision investigation has been bought into by everyone at every level across Clancy Plant, Clancy Docwra and Clancy Developments."

Clancy Plant operates a fleet of 1,300 vans as well as 160 vehicles over 3.5 tonnes and 460 company cars across seven depots nationally.

In the event of a collision, drivers know to refer to the latest edition of the Clancy Group's 'On the Road' driver manual which fully details the collision investigation process.

"After being alerted that a collision had occurred at the earliest opportunity, we'd look at our online risk management system to check how many previous collisions a driver had been involved in before checking their licence data," says Knight.

"If relevant, we'd also look at the telematics data and speak to the driver personally to find out from them what had happened.

"Within 24 hours, we'd aim to have captured the most holistic picture possible of what's occurred within the context of the GDE matrix."

The results of the investigation are conveyed to the driver's line manager and, if appropriate, any learning points are either communicated directly to colleagues or turned into video toolbox talks that can be accessed on the Clancy Group's intranet.



Colin Knight says the Goals for Driver Education matrix has buy-in at every level

points of delivery if a best practice method can be identified and communicated to all drivers.

"And if you can reduce repetitive incidents this can lead to cost reductions – particularly those that are hidden such as admin, downtime, hire-in of replacement drivers and vehicles plus any necessary time off work.

"These hidden costs are generally taken to be up to four times the bent metal costs."

Cuerden adds: "I think the best advice for organisations is to seek the input of road safety professionals who can ensure that their data reporting is timely, efficient and effective. But all information collected must be kept within data protection guidelines to ensure its legitimacy.

"Furthermore, a proactive analysis of the information is vital and a relational database must be established to securely store the information.

"It can then be used for statistical analysis as well as to sign-off and manage all incidents and provide feedback to the involved employees, such as offering follow-up training, advice or tips if required.

"If organisations follow these guidelines it shows comprehensively they're proactively seeking to reduce collisions."

1,300
vans operated by
Clancy Plant

50%
reduction in the number of
accidents experienced by
BT Group in past decade

FleetNews

AWARDS
2017

LeasePlan is a leading fleet management and driver mobility company of Dutch origin. Our full-service offering consists of financing and operational fleet management services for a diverse client base.

Established in 1963, our global franchise manages 1.6 million multi-brand vehicles and provides fleet management and driver mobility services in 32 countries.

The UK division of the company operates a serviced fleet in excess of 180,000 vehicles, including more than 55,000 commercial vehicles.

At LeasePlan, we know every customer is different and so we've organised our business into four distinct brands. So, whether you know us better as LeasePlan, Automotive Leasing, LeasePlan Go or Network, you'll know that we are committed to putting the needs of our customers at the very heart of everything we do.

It's an approach which is best summed up in our brand promise: 'It's easier to leaseplan'.

From simple funding to full outsourcing, and everything in between, our solutions will help you achieve your goals. In fact, whatever business you're in – small, large, private or public sector – you can be confident that fleet isn't just part of what we do, it's everything we do. No distractions, no complications, just expert advice, solutions that really work and 100% commitment to service.

SPONSOR PROFILE



It's easier to leaseplan

LeasePlan – redefining

Research continues to show that while some larger companies employ a dedicated fleet specialist, for many it's a role that's increasingly being picked up as just one part of an individual's overall remit.

With less time, resource or internal expertise to call on, there's clearly a demand for leasing companies to be more creative in how they support the needs of modern business fleet operators – and, just as important, their drivers.

For LeasePlan this has meant transforming our business to better serve our customers.

Transforming our service delivery

We have been running an internal initiative called 'Engage', looking at everything we are doing to serve our customers better – from transforming our service delivery through our customer service centre – to introducing digital driver self-serve capabilities.

We know that for our customers, having their queries resolved first time is hugely important. It is therefore a key focus area for us that should our customers contact us by phone, find us online or access our services via the LeasePlan Driver app and portal, they can be confident they will receive the support they require.

To do that we've improved access to all our services by investing heavily in our new Customer Service Centre – concentrating our knowledge and expertise to provide a single, one stop shop where our customer service representatives are able to access expert information, solve issues, and give advice, without passing the customer around the organisation.

Crucially, our new Customer Service Centre is a tangible sign of our commitment to continuous service improvement. It helps us solve queries rapidly by sharing knowledge across the entire service and support team, helping to deliver a consistent, first class service every time.

Digital by design

By embarking on a journey to serve our customers better – we're using digital



capabilities to provide more and more online service to drivers. This will result in drivers having access to the information they need and can act at a time which suits them.

Additionally, this will benefit those who manage company vehicles, as management of drivers often comes with the job. As a result, drivers who perform more self-serve online can only be a good thing for all.

The results speak for themselves, so far we have more than 34,000 drivers signed up to our app and portal, and we're confident that continuing with these initiatives will put us at the leading edge

Call 01753 802 098

improving our customer experience



"As a one-stop shop for both fleet administrator and drivers they excel. Having recently taken over fleet management I am impressed at the number of ways drivers are encouraged to contact LeasePlan direct – this takes the pressure off me as the sole point of contact. It also gives me confidence that drivers are managing their vehicles to the correct standard and schedule."

Rachael, Fleet Manager



of fleet management in the digital age.

Bringing digital capabilities into the overall LeasePlan customer experience improves access to our services; enabling our customers (companies and drivers) to focus on the things that matter – by ensuring that we are always available, and easy to interact with on any channel.

The world of data

As the worlds of technology and automotive design evolve, we're seeing an increase in the possibilities surrounding in-vehicle wireless connectivity. In fact, the technology is accelerating so rapidly it's predicted that one in five vehicles will have some kind

of wireless network connection by 2020.

So what does that mean for people who manage fleets? Connected car technology has the potential to allow us to understand almost every aspect of a vehicle's operation in real time, including speed, acceleration and deceleration, mapping, engine performance and fuel usage, among many other factors.

LeasePlan is currently exploring the depth of new data available to us and conducting research into how certain aspects such as proactive vehicle maintenance can improve the service we deliver to our customers while keeping in mind the issue of data security.

LeasePlan has always led the way in creating innovative fleet management solutions that have transformed the way people think about mobility. But, while LeasePlan's products and services go a long way to addressing the challenges facing customers today, we are committed to delivering continuous innovation.

We are constantly working on a cycle of developments that will deliver new and enhanced products and services on a regular basis. Business, and our industry, is constantly evolving and, with the right people and continued investment, LeasePlan intends to stay at the forefront of mobility services.



Geneva reflects SUV surge

The autonomous future and ultra-low emissions also grabbed the headlines but PSA's Opel/Vauxhall deal was the talk of the show. [Stephen Briers](#) and [Simon Harris](#) report

SUVs, ultra-low emissions and autonomous/connected vehicles were the dominant features at the 2017 Geneva Motor Show. Those and speculation about what PSA's purchase of Opel/Vauxhall would mean, of course.

Our show review features eight SUVs and two concepts as this segment shows no signs of slowing up. We also carried out interviews with the growing number of autonomous experts employed by manufacturers to find out what their views were for the future of travel.

In short, autonomy is already here in a mild form; by 2025 it will be available in full form on production vehicles. Find out more in our news coverage in future issues and via our website.

Back to the metal and, as ever, there is plenty to interest fleets. We were particularly impressed with the DS 7 Crossback SUV and Suzuki Swift; the latter is intended to spearhead Suzuki's attack on the fleet sector and coincides with the appointment of its first ever head of fleet, Graeme Jenkins.

■ For more Geneva news, go to the [Fleet News website](#) – [fleetnews.co.uk](#)

FAMILY CARS

VW ARTEON

On sale Autumn

Price From £30,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 2.0 TDI

Efficiency From 110g/km (estimated)

Volkswagen will introduce a new upmarket model line later this year in an attempt to square off against premium-badge rivals.

While the Passat CC might have evolved into the CC, the only mention of Passat in Volkswagen's marketing material for the new Arteon merely emphasises that this model sits clearly above it.

Lower, longer and wider than a Passat saloon, and with a longer wheelbase, the Arteon is intended as an alternative to premium user-choser cars such



as the BMW 4 Series Gran Coupé and Audi A5 Sportback, while it also might lure drivers away from traditional upmarket saloons too.

It will be offered with power outputs from 150PS to 280PS, with the least powerful variants offered with 1.5 TSI petrol or 2.0 TDI diesel engines. Other diesel options include 190PS and 240PS versions of the 2.0 TDI, the latter equipped with DSG automatic and 4Motion all-wheel drive and its official emissions figures are 152g/km.

The Arteon will be offered with hi-tech driver assistance features, digital cockpit and gesture control, while the car's variable service schedule could see 37,000 miles or two years pass between major services, with an intermediate oil change needed as late as 18,000 miles, according to the dashboard indicator.





VAUXHALL INSIGNIA GRAND SPORT

On sale summer

Price from £17,115

Key fleet engine 1.5-litre petrol, 1.6-litre diesel

Efficiency petrol 133g/km; diesel 105g/km

Vauxhall has prioritised design, technology and efficiency with the all-new Insignia, now called the Insignia Grand Sport.

The new car is up to 175kg lighter than the ongoing model, while class-leading aerodynamics help to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Available as a five-door hatch and Sports Tourer estate, with a rugged Country Tourer estate due later in the year, the range starts at £17,115 for a new 1.5-litre 138PS turbo petrol model, almost £1,500 below the current entry price. The Sports Tourer starts at £18,615.

Among the diesel offering is the 1.6-litre 110PS Turbo D Ecotec model (priced from £18,485) with CO₂ emissions of 105g/km.

A new eight-speed automatic transmission available with an

all-wheel drive option is said to improve efficiency and offer smoother shift changes.

A raft of technologies makes the Insignia Grand Sport safer, more relaxing and more comfortable, including IntelliLux LED matrix lighting (with 32 LED segments to improve the quality of light distribution and intensity), lane keep assist, head-up display, front- and rear-seat heating and a heated windshield. Occupants will enjoy more legroom thanks to a 92mm increase in wheelbase.

It will also be the first Vauxhall with an active aluminium bonnet, improving pedestrian protection.

As befitting a car with a reputation as a 'repmobile', the seats are certified by AGR (the Campaign for Healthy Backs). They combine side bolster settings, massage, memory and ventilation functions.

Entertainment and connectivity are provided by the latest Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatible IntelliLink systems, while Vauxhall OnStar offers services ranging from Automatic Crash Response to Stolen Vehicle Assistance, plus a new concierge service for hotel bookings.



HYUNDAI I30 TOURER

On sale Summer

Price From £17,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 1.6 CRDi 110

Efficiency From 95g/km

The i30 Tourer is the second bodystyle in the third-generation i30 family, combining extra practicality with all the new features introduced in the i30 hatchback in February.

Almost 25cm longer than the hatchback, the Tourer offers a minimum of 602 litres of luggage

space, rising to 1,650 litres up to roof height with the rear seats folded. It will be offered with a 110PD 1.6-litre diesel engine, as well as a choice of two turbocharged petrol engines.

New technology includes autonomous emergency braking, driver attention alert, adaptive cruise control, blindspot alert, rear cross-traffic alert and lane-keeping assistance.

Hyundai has targeted CO₂ emissions of 95g/km for the diesel, subject to homologation.



KIA OPTIMA SPORTSWAGON PLUG-IN HYBRID

On sale Q3 2017

Price tbc

Key fleet engine 2.0-litre petrol with 50kW electric motor and 11.26kWh lithium-ion polymer battery

Efficiency 34g/km

The Optima Sportswagon Plug-in Hybrid, due on-sale across Europe from Q3, combines the tourer versatility with the high-efficiency powertrain found in the Optima Plug-in Hybrid sedan.

The new model is built exclusively for the European market and offers 440 litres of cargo space – 133 litres more than the Optima Plug-in Hybrid sedan – for maximum practicality.

The powertrain combines an efficient 2.0-litre

'Nu' four-cylinder GDI engine with a 50kW electric motor and 11.26kWh lithium-ion polymer battery pack.

With a total power output of 205PS and 375Nm torque, the Optima Sportswagon Plug-in Hybrid gives drivers a pure electric range of more than 60 kilometres (37 miles), and emits just 34g/km CO₂.

The car's low running costs will enhance the Optima's appeal among fleet buyers.

The car is equipped with an eight-inch touchscreen infotainment system available with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, as well as Kia Connected Services powered by TomTom, which provides live traffic updates,



speed camera alerts and weather forecasts.

The Optima Sportswagon Plug-in Hybrid is available with Kia's wireless smartphone charger, letting users charge mobile devices on the move. A suite of active safety technologies will help drivers avoid or mitigate the effects of a collision.

SUVs



VAUXHALL CROSSLAND X

On sale Autumn**Price** From £15,000 (estimated)**Key fleet engine** 1.6 CDTi**Efficiency** tbc

The Crossland X and the forthcoming Grandland X (to be revealed later this year) will be key to Vauxhall maintaining market share in 2017 as it scales back rental and Motability activity.

Based on the Peugeot 2008 and more compact than the Mokka X, the Crossland X

gives Vauxhall an affordable SUV to add to its range, in a sector that continues to grow strongly.

It might not offer all-wheel drive, but customers who need that can choose the Mokka X. A Vauxhall take on Peugeot's sophisticated Grip Control will no doubt be available in some versions to offer enhanced two-wheel drive traction.

By the end of the year it will be joined by the Peugeot 3008-based Grandland X, which

demonstrates the extent of PSA's cooperation with Opel before the French take-over was announced ahead of the show.

The Crossland X is available with the same hi-tech features found in the Peugeot, including a rear-view camera, advanced parking assistance, forward collision alert with pedestrian detection and autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning, speed sign recognition and blind-spot alert, as well as a head-up display.



DS 7 CROSSBACK

On sale January 2018 **Price** £30,000 estimated**Key fleet engine** 200PS petrol with two 80kW motors**Efficiency** Less than 50g/km

PSA's high end brand DS is showcasing its Gallic flair with a move into the burgeoning SUV sector. The DS 7 Crossback combines "refined styling with advanced technology", according to DS CEO Yves Bonnefont.

Targeting the likes of the Audi Q5 and BMW X3, the Crossback puts the emphasis on style and refinement.

Take the lights – three LED units glow purple and spin 180 degrees to face outwards when the car is unlocked. Five modes include a beam-extending motorway option while the units can rotate up and down as well as side to side.

The show car featured a plug-in hybrid engine (E-Tense) which mates a 200PS THP petrol engine to two 80kW motors, one at the front and one at the rear. Combined, the output totals 300PS with four-wheel drive. It can travel up to 40 miles in electric-only mode and should emit less than 50g/km.

The hybrid is expected in 2019. From 2018, buyers will be able to choose from a 1.2-litre three-cylinder petrol, two 1.6-litre THP engines and two diesels. Eight-speed auto will be standard on all but the entry-level models.

ALL-NEW SUBARU XV

On sale Summer **Price** From £23,000 (estimated)**Key fleet engine** 2.0-litre diesel (TBC) **Efficiency** Less than 140g/km

Subaru has unveiled a new XV crossover, developed on a new platform that introduces technology to the range for the first time.

Shown with a new 156PS 2.0-litre petrol engine with CVT Lineartronic transmission, the XV is also expected to be available with Subaru's 2.0-litre diesel.

The Impreza-sized XV has a stiffer body than the outgoing model, which should improve the driving experience as well as help reduce noise intrusion, while the steering is more direct, making the car feel more responsive.

The car has a new eight-inch dashboard screen and smartphone integration, and a more sophisticated all-wheel drive system featuring hill descent control, while safety kit include pre-collision braking, adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assistance, auto-dimming high beam, steering headlamps and rear cross traffic alert.

"Impreza-sized XV has a stiffer body than outgoing model, which should improve the driving experience"





MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE CROSS

On sale Early 2018

Price £17,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 2.2-litre diesel

Efficiency tbc

Mitsubishi will add a sophisticated new medium SUV to its range next year when the new Eclipse Cross goes on sale.

Slightly larger than the ASX (although perhaps the larger of two cars that could ultimately replace the current model), the Eclipse Cross will come with a choice of a new 1.5-litre turbocharged petrol engine, or the 2.2-litre diesel as used in the ASX and Outlander.

The former will be available with a new CVT automatic that has an eight-speed shift mode, while the latter gains a new eight-speed automatic transmission.

The car will be compatible with Apple Carplay and Android Auto smartphone link systems, and will be offered with a touchpad controller and head-up display.

With Mitsubishi's heritage in four-wheel drive systems, it's perhaps no surprise to that the Eclipse Cross will feature all-wheel drive capability sending drive to the rear wheels automatically when needed.

By the time the Eclipse Cross arrives in the UK it will be four years since it launched the Outlander PHEV.

The company wouldn't confirm whether the Eclipse Cross will feature a plug-in hybrid powertrain, but we expect it could arrive during the car's lifecycle. At the Paris motor show a hybrid concept with emissions of less than 40g/km was shown.



RENAULT CAPTUR

On sale Summer **Price** From £15,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 1.5 dCi diesel **Efficiency** 95g/km

Renault's Captur will have more of an SUV look when the revised version goes on sale this summer, as well as more upmarket versions and new safety systems.

The new look includes a more rugged profile and design cues bringing it in line with the Kadjar SUV, and a new LED daytime running light signature.

The Captur will be available with a high-spec Signature S Nav variant for the first time, and some can be specified with a fixed panoramic glass roof. Upgraded interior materials give the Captur a more sophisticated appearance and feel, while the Signature S Nav has Nappa leather seats.

New technology includes a blindspot warning system and hands-free parking, both standard in the Signature S Nav, while the car is also offered with a Bose premium audio system for the first time.



NISSAN QASHQAI FACELIFT

On sale Spring

Price From £19,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 1.5 dCi 110 diesel

Efficiency 99g/km

Nissan's Qashqai has received a mid-life facelift for its second generation, also marking the 10th anniversary of the original Qashqai's introduction.

The revised car has new technology and more premium features, to ensure it remains attractive in an increasingly competitive sector.

Autonomous emergency braking has been upgraded with pedestrian protection, while rear cross-traffic alert, warning the driver of approaching vehicles when reversing out of a parking space, is available for the first time.

Higher quality materials are used inside, with a new range-topping Tekna+ grade including premium Nappa leather with a quilted stitching design for inner seat panels, while there is a new user interface and the option of a Bose audio system.

Refinement should also be improved with additional noise absorption materials and increased thickness of the rear glass.

SSANGYONG XAVL CONCEPT

The Ssangyong XAVL Concept was created to signpost SsangYong's future design and product development direction. It has been styled to look tough and rugged like an SUV, but offers MPV practicality thanks to seven independent seats.

Powered by either a 1.5-litre petrol or new clean-burning 1.6-litre diesel engine, with a choice of manual or automatic gearboxes, the two-wheel-drive XAVL will offer CO₂ emissions from 120g/km.



"It has been styled to look tough and rugged like an SUV, but offers MPV practicality"

HYUNDAI FE FUELCELL

Hyundai has reaffirmed its commitment to fuel cell vehicle development with the FE FuelCell concept.

Its vision is to produce 14 new environmentally-friendly models by 2020, including a Fuel Cell SUV next year which Hyundai says will be influenced by elements of the FE Fuel Cell Concept.

The car is designed to run for 500 miles between refuelling, acknowledging the current limited hydrogen infrastructure.



CITROËN C-AIRCROSS

On sale Q4, 2017

Price From £15,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 1.2 petrol and 1.6 diesel

Efficiency from 100g/km (estimated)

Although badged the C-Aircross, this concept car points heavily in the direction of the next C3 Picasso, due later this year.

Mirroring the moves made by stablemate Peugeot with the 3008 and 5008, the next generation C3 Picasso is moving from MPV to SUV in its styling. It will now rival the likes of the Nissan Juke in the compact crossover segment.

The concept's dashboard features a 12-inch infotainment

system while the traditional driver gauges have been replaced by a head-up vision board display.

The car will sit on the same underpinnings as the Vauxhall Crossland X – an indication of things to come with PSA's recent announcement that it was acquiring Opel/Vauxhall. It shares styling cues with both the C3 and C4 Cactus, including the airbump panels running along the doors.

According to Citroën, every surface has been designed to improve efficiency, with multiple air inlets and a rear diffuser to aid aerodynamics.

Engines are likely to be shared with the C3, which means 1.2-litre petrol in two outputs and 1.6-litre diesel. We understand Citroën has no plans for an all-wheel drive version.

VOLVO XC60

On sale Summer

Price From £35,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 2.0 D4 diesel

Efficiency tbc

Volvo's range update will continue in 2017 with the introduction of a new XC60 SUV marking the first new model of the '60' range on its new platform.

With styling cues similar to the XC90, but with a sleeker appearance, the XC60 will be available with a choice of 190PS D4 and 235PS D5 diesels, as well as a 254PS T5 petrol engine.

It has the same safety features as other Volvo models, as well as a new 'steer assist' added to the City Safety system.

A new safety system called 'oncoming lane mitigation' uses steer assist to help reduce the risk or severity of head-on collisions, while Volvo's blindspot warning now uses steer assist to reduce the risk of lane-changing collisions.

Pilot Assist, Volvo's semi-autonomous driver assistance system, which takes care of steering, acceleration and braking on well-marked roads up to motorway speeds, is available in the new XC60 as an option.





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FleetNews PORTFOLIO

WHAT WE DO IN YOUR INDUSTRY

Fleet News magazine

The leading business publication for the fleet sector, offering insight, analysis, best practice and in-depth profiles of fleets and suppliers every fortnight. But don't take our word for it: 96% of readers say *Fleet News* is the most useful fleet publication (*Fleet News* reader survey). Every issue is packed with information that helps companies to run efficient and effective fleets – and our readership of 16,000 is restricted to named decision-makers, running fleets of 10-plus vehicles.

Commercial Fleet magazine

Commercial Fleet offers insight into the world of light commercial vehicles and trucks to provide operators with detailed analysis on key topics such as operations, safety, remarketing and the environment. Case studies in every issue provide best practice advice to help you to improve your efficiency. The magazine is supported by the commercialfleet.org website and events.



Fleet events

Fleet News events are the biggest and best in the sector. Our annual awards night attracts more than 1,500 people; the FN50 Dinner sees 950 leasing, manufacturer, rental and supplier companies networking and *Commercial Fleet* Summit provide insight into key areas of fleet operation; monthly roundtables enable 10-15 fleets to discuss issues and share solutions.



Driving Business magazine

This quarterly magazine is sent to managing directors and finance directors at 25,000 small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that are running fewer than 50 vehicles. Focusing on the key elements of running cars and vans, *Driving Business* provides practical advice to reduce cost and improve safety with a minimum of time and effort.

Websites and newsletters

The *Fleet News* website is an extensive library of best practice advice, fleet case studies, news and tools. Compare car and van running costs, check how much tax employees will pay and find out which models use the least fuel with our easy-to-use tools. We also send *Ignition*, a monthly newsletter which contains car reviews and interviews not included with our print magazine.

Fleet Leasing magazine

Fleet Leasing provides insight and analysis to board level executives, senior management and regional sales staff at contract hire and leasing companies. Its objective is to inform and educate about fleet trends, new models and technological developments, once a quarter, supported by a website regularly updated with the latest leasing news.

Bespoke publications

Magazines, supplements, brochures and digital products are produced for commercial partners. These bespoke publications inform fleets about companies and topics relevant to their business. They include manufacturer and supplier reports, in which *Fleet News* journalists interview key personnel to unearth the developments of interest to fleet operators.

SMALL CARS



KIA PICANTO

On sale April

Price From £9,000 (estimated)

Key fleet engine 1.0-litre/1.25-litre petrol

Efficiency from 89g/km

Although 80% of Picanto registrations are expected to go to retail buyers, the car will have greater appeal for fleets than the outgoing model, particularly those with younger drivers.

Kia has put more focus into the design of the car giving it a recognisable "youthful and energetic" look.

A performance-enhanced GT Line model will also be offered for the first time.

From launch in April, the new Picanto will be available with 1.0- and 1.25-litre petrol engines, with CO₂ emissions from just 89g/km. In Q4, Kia will add

its new 1.0-litre turbocharged direct injection (T-GDI) petrol unit, which produces 100PS.

The new car has a much bigger interior than its predecessor, including the largest boot in class (255 litres), which is "critical to anyone downsizing", according to Kia president and CEO Paul Philpott.

"This car is chalk and cheese with the old one," he added, pointing to the upmarket interior.

New in-car technologies and connectivity features include Android Auto, Apple CarPlay and a wireless smartphone charger.

Kia has made safety a priority. In addition to offering autonomous emergency braking, the car has a stronger bodysell featuring twice the proportion of advanced high strength steel.

Refinement has been enhanced with improvements to noise, vibration and harshness.

SUZUKI SWIFT

On sale June

Price announced in May

Key fleet engine 1.0-litre Boosterjet; 1.2-litre Dualjet

Efficiency from 97g/km

Suzuki has set an initial fleet target of 20% of Swift sales, equating to 4,000 of the 20,000 cars it plans to bring to the UK in the first 12 months from launch.

The car will only be available as five-door with three engine options: a new 1.0-litre 111PS Boosterjet (CO₂ of 104g/km, 61.4mpg), a 1.2-litre 90PS Dualjet (98g/km, 65.7mpg) and a 1.2-litre mild hybrid which will have emissions of 97g/km.

The mild hybrid has an integrated start generator which is engineered to run the car at zero emissions below 10mph and results in a smoother stop-start system. It features a lithium-ion battery with regenerative technology and gives 30-second blasts of extra power under full throttle.

Key to the Swift's success will be test drives; Suzuki claims a 70-80% conversion rate. It predicts that the mid-grade SZ-T Boosterjet engine



will account for the majority of sales, between 60% and 70% of total volume.

A Suzuki spokesman said: "The new Swift has more interior space. It is lighter, wider and shorter, with a 25% increase in boot capacity. The basic car weighs 890kg which is 125kg lighter than the current one."

The weight reduction is due to greater use of ultra-high tensile steel and high tensile steel which reduces welds and also results in a more rigid shell. Suzuki claims this results in the lightest car in its class.

HONDA NEUV, CONCEPT

The Neuv, or New Electric Urban Vehicle, is a fully-electric car which can function as a ride-sharing vehicle when not being used by its owner.

Honda says ownership could be financially beneficial to customers, as privately owned vehicles sit unused for 96% of the time.



TOYOTA I-TRIL CONCEPT

Designed to inject passion into electric vehicles, the i-Tril is a 600kg three-seat electric car. Maximum range is 185 miles and the car uses active lean technology, allowing it to corner like a motorcycle.

Steering, acceleration and braking are all controlled by drive-by-wire joysticks, so there are no pedals.



PEUGEOT INSTINCT CONCEPT

The Peugeot Instinct uses a 300PS plug-in hybrid drivetrain with four-wheel drive. It has been developed to showcase a potential future styling direction for the brand.

Different drive modes allow an immersive driving experience or full autonomy and hint at how the technology could make its way into future models.



FleetNews

AWARDS
2017
ŠKODA:
Driven by Something Different

ŠKODA is one of the world's oldest car manufacturers, proudly celebrating more than 120 years of production. We hold a distinctive position, offering outstanding products that perfectly blend specification with value, strong whole-life costs, an open and approachable team and a style of operating that puts collaboration at the heart of all customer and partner relationships.

Our model range offers something for everyone. From the Citigo, through the Fabia, new Octavia, Superb and Yeti to the impressive all-new Kodiaq SUV, we have a model to suit every need and aspiration.

The SE Technology trim lines for the new Octavia, Superb and all-new Kodiaq ranges are specifically designed with fleet operators and drivers in mind, with standard specification tailored for the business user.

To back everything up, we have a highly experienced and professional fleet team to meet your requirements. As a fleet team we are professional, consultative and experts in our field, coupled with our passion for ŠKODA.

SPONSOR PROFILE



ŠKODA

ŠKODA SE Technology

Now available on new Octavia, Superb



Superb

ŠKODA SE Technology models are designed with business users in mind, and come with fleet-orientated additional specification at prices that are the same as the equivalent SE trim.

Features such as satellite navigation, cruise control and Bluetooth® are all fitted as standard, eliminating the need to specify them as options with the resultant impact on drivers' benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax liabilities. The SE technology range has everything the business driver needs, helping you and your drivers make the most of ŠKODA's renowned cost efficiency and low whole-life costs.

As well as the new Octavia, the SE Technology range includes the all-new Kodiaq – ŠKODA's highly acclaimed full-size SUV – and the renowned Superb.

For 2017, ŠKODA's award-winning ways continue, as the Superb Estate was crowned Best Estate at the 2017 *What Car?*

Car of the Year awards for the third year in a row, and the all-new Kodiaq took the Best Large SUV award.

The new ŠKODA Octavia SE Technology

Refreshed styling, more equipment, new connectivity and driver assistance features mark out the latest ŠKODA Octavia.

And with 8" touchscreen satellite navigation, adaptive cruise control with front assist, front and rear parking sensors and light and rain sensors, the new Octavia SE Technology is exceptionally well-equipped for business use.

All new Octavia models come as standard with predictive pedestrian protection and front assist as well as new ŠKODA SmartLink+, supporting Apple CarPlay and Android Auto to ensure you are always connected.

True to ŠKODA values, the new Octavia

"Superb Estate was crowned Best Estate at the 2017 *What Car?* Car of the Year awards"

gy: tailored for the business user

and all-new Kodiaq SUV



remains one of the most spacious models in its sector, with the Hatch and Estate load areas offering 590 and 610 litres respectively, extending to 1,580 and 1,740 litres with the rear seats folded down.

SE Technology Hatch and Estate body styles offer 1.6 TDI 115PS or 2.0 TDI 150PS engines, with P11D prices from £20,395 giving BIK tax as low as £72 a month in 2016/17.

The ŠKODA Superb SE Technology

The ŠKODA Superb Hatch and Estate models are available with business-orientated SE Technology trim, with P11D prices from £22,725.

Building on SE specification, which includes 17-inch Stratos alloy wheels, dual-zone climate control, adaptive cruise control, SmartLink+ connectivity and rear parking sensors, SE Technology models come with 6.5-inch touchscreen Amundsen

satellite navigation, Alcantara/leather upholstery, LED rear lights and dark-tinted sunset glass from the B-pillar rearwards at no extra cost compared with SE.

A choice of 1.6 TDI 120PS or 2.0 TDI 150PS engines is available with either manual six-speed or seven-speed DSG transmission. The 1.6 TDI 120PS Greenline SCR model, available in both Hatch and Estate body styles, offers additional specification including 17-inch Drakon alloy wheels, and with CO₂ emissions as low as 96g/km for the Hatch, BIK taxation starts in the 19% band in 2016/17.

The all-new ŠKODA Kodiaq SE Technology

It's ŠKODA's first seven-seat SUV and with bold, expressive design, strong lines and dynamic looks the all-new Kodiaq offers true dual-purpose practicality for business and family commitments.



Kodiaq



All models come with LED rear lights, a DAB digital radio and SmartLink+ smartphone capability with touchscreen operation for primary controls on SE trim upwards.

SE models also include dual-zone climate control, rain and light sensors and rear parking sensors.

For business users, the SE Technology – with P11D prices from £26,860 and BIK banding from just 26% – builds on the SE trim and adds 18-inch Triton alloy wheels, 8-inch touchscreen Amundsen satellite navigation and front and rear parking sensors at no extra cost.

Both front-wheel-drive and 4x4 models are available, powered by a 2.0 TDI 150PS engine. The Kodiaq SE Technology 4x4 is available with six-speed manual or seven-speed DSG transmissions, while the front-wheel-drive models come with a DSG gearbox.

All images are for illustration purposes only and are not UK specification. Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA Superb range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.4 (9.0) - 65.7 (4.3); Extra Urban 45.6 (6.2) - 85.6 (3.3); Combined 39.2 (7.2) - 76.4 (3.7). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA Superb range are 164 - 96 g/km. Official fuel consumption for the new ŠKODA Octavia range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 33.2 (8.5) - 67.3 (4.2); Extra Urban 51.4 (5.5) - 74.3 (3.8); Combined 42.8 (6.6) - 72.4 (3.9). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA Octavia range are 149-103g/km. Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA Kodiaq range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.0 (9.1) to 48.7 (5.8); Extra Urban 44.1 (6.4) to 61.4 (4.6); Combined 38.2 (7.4) to 56.5 (5.0). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA Kodiaq range are 170-131g/km. Standard EU test figures are for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

To find your ŠKODA fleet representative visit skoda.co.uk/fleet

SEAT IBIZA

All new fifth generation car retains fun factor while becoming more functional

By Matt de Prez

The new Seat Ibiza will go on sale in July taking on fierce competition from a range of new models in the B-segment. To succeed it needs to outshine the new Nissan Micra and Ford Fiesta, plus take on the upcoming Volkswagen Polo with which it will share a platform.

To help the new car gain traction in the market, the Ibiza will be the

first car from parent company VW Group to use its all-new MQB A0 platform. It means the fifth-generation Ibiza benefits from the latest technology and engines within the group.

The Ibiza is lighter and 30% stiffer than before, meaning far better driving dynamics along with reduced fuel consumption and emissions. The car has grown in width by 84mm which should provide greater stability.

Seat says the Ibiza is "a completely fresh model that was created with several ambitious goals in mind: to move major steps forward in safety, design, performance and comfort".

There will be four models in the UK line-up: S, SE, FR and Xcellence.

Thomas Schauer, who works on powertrains and chassis at Seat, told *Fleet News*: "We have a new strategy to offer a luxury version called Xcellence. It has a more comfortable suspension set-up

compared with the FR version, which is sportier. We launched Xcellence with Ateca and realised that the market wants this split."

He also promised the new Ibiza has not lost its fun factor by becoming more functional, saying: "This platform is still very dynamic but it's also comfortable. There is usability too. The boot volume is increased and now has a flat load floor."



An 84mm increase in width will give the new Ibiza greater stability



The eight-inch infotainment screen and system will improve connectivity

INTERIOR

Perhaps the area most in need of improvement was the old Ibiza interior. In the new model, inspiration has been drawn from the Ateca and everything is of a much higher standard.

Technology has been key in the development of the new Ibiza and it features an eight-inch Full-Link infotainment system with Apple CarPlay, Mirrorlink and Android Auto which allows drivers to connect more than one device at a time.

Clever packaging means legroom in the back has increased by 35mm and the boot has been enlarged by 63 litres, bringing its total capacity to 355 litres. This is despite the vehicle being 2mm shorter overall.

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi

Saturday/Sunday Rented a car in France, a diesel. It sounded terrible on start-up and gradually got worse, then we realised it had been mis-fuelled. We took it back to the rental company. It said it is happening more and more, despite 'safe-fillers' being made standard. It said customers call into the nearest fuel station to the airport, fill-up quickly as they are normally in a rush, and don't care what they put in the tank, leaving the problem with the next renter. What rental companies can do to address this is unclear, but it does need sorting.

"This Alfa (Romeo Giulia diesel) is probably maker's first real fleet contender"



Tuesday/Wednesday To Barcelona to drive the MK5 Land Rover Discovery, and what an excellent vehicle it is. It

shouldn't really be called Discovery, as it is far too good for that name. We drove it on motorways, through villages and on an off-road (quite scary) course in the mountains above the city. It was perfect in all conditions, and going up and down some very steep slopes it was amazing just how well the systems coped. Seven full-sized seats are standard, and the interior is so luxurious. We drove the 2.0-litre 240PS diesel and it had plenty of power, but the V6 diesel will be the most popular.

Friday To the Cotswolds to drive the all-new Alfa Romeo Giulia diesel. We have driven the Quadrifoglio petrol 510PS before and that's a monster. But time to drive the sensible version. It is quiet, refined and a pleasure to drive. The standard eight-speed auto is so smooth. This Alfa is probably the maker's first real fleet contender. For years it has wanted to get onto fleet lists, and never really managed it, but the Giulia has everything to change that. It will appeal to those wanting something a bit different, that houses Italian flair and style, and looks great in the car park or on the drive at home.



The exterior retains the sporty character

EXTERIOR

The Ibiza's design isn't revolutionary; it's now more closely related to the Leon than ever before. It will only be available as a five-door rather than a three- and five-door. However, it retains a sporty character.

At the front, the lines are sharp and triangle full-LED headlamps are fitted along with signature daytime running lights.

In profile the front and rear overhangs are very short, pushing the wheels into the corners making room for larger doors.

A softer approach is taken at the rear, although FR models get twin exhaust tailpipes.

To set Xcellence versions apart from the rest of the range, extra chrome details are included along with unique alloy wheels.

"We are working on autonomous driving technology but we don't want a repeat of dieselgate by releasing this system early"

ENGINES

There will be three engines available starting with a 1.0-litre three-cylinder petrol TSI with a choice of either 95 or 115PS outputs.

Diesel power will come courtesy of a new 1.6-litre unit, with AdBlue for lower emissions. It will offer either 80 or 95PS.

A larger four-cylinder 1.5-litre petrol engine with 150PS will top the range later in the year.

Schauer admitted the emissions scandal had affected powertrain development at Seat. He said: "We are still working hard to win back trust. We will only launch a car when it's inside the official tolerances and our internal tolerances are much tighter."

SAFETY

Official crash test results are yet to be released, but Seat is expecting the Ibiza to achieve a five star Euro NCAP rating.

A number of driving assistance systems that are present in the Leon and Ateca will also be available in the Ibiza. These include Front Assist, adaptive cruise control, keyless entry, front and rear parking sensors and a rear view camera.

When asked about autonomy, Schauer said: "We are working on autonomous driving technology but we don't want a repeat of dieselgate by releasing this system early, so we will only launch it when it is 100% safe."

FleetNews

AWARDS
2017

FCA Fleet and Business is honoured to sponsor the Fleet Manager category of the Fleet News Awards 2017.

While 2016 was a great year for Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), 2017 is already looking to be even better for fleet and business customers.

The multi-brand offering from Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Abarth, Fiat Professional commercial vehicles and Jeep means an unrivalled award-winning line-up for business users. In addition, the company is building on the significant improvements made in 2016 to the whole life costs of running an FCA product and introduced a plethora of exciting new products.

The year ahead sees an exciting expansion of the FCA range including the UK launch of two luxury SUVs, the All-New Alfa Romeo Stelvio and Jeep Compass. With these exciting arrivals we will widen the appeal of our multi-brand range, enter new segments and continue to provide business customers with distinctive vehicles that appeal to both head and heart.

With a dealer support network featuring a core of dealer fleet specialists; expert in providing mobility and financial solutions for local business and backed by a national team of FCA Fleet and Corporate sales professionals, FCA is putting the fleet customer at the heart of its operations.

Award-winning line-up with models to fit all business requirements

Alfa Romeo

Alfa Romeo has long been renowned for producing cars that pull on the heart strings of true motoring fans and is the go-to choice for fleet customers who want something to ignite their passion coupled with sharp Italian styling.

Launched in 2016, the multi-award winning all-new Alfa Romeo Giulia compact executive saloon comes in five trim levels, with the Tecnica aimed at the business market.

Built around Alfa Romeo's all-new rear-wheel drive architecture, the Giulia offers an ultimate combination of classic Italian styling, sporty handling and impressive running costs. As well as perfect 50/50 weight distribution and a five-star Euro NCAP rating.

The business-focused Tecnica model comes with an enhanced specification including dual zone climate control, cruise control, rear parking sensors and a

cooled glove box – all with the benefit of a low benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rate.

Prices for the Alfa Romeo Giulia Tecnica start at £31,840 P11D for the 150bhp 2.2 diesel.

Innovations aren't just limited to the Giulia. The smaller Giulietta Tecnica is a stand-out choice in the C-segment, with CO₂ figures from 99g/km. The Tecnica model is designed specifically with business and efficiency in mind, featuring the Uconnect infotainment system with live traffic updates to reduce time and fuel wasted in queues. It also allows real time feedback on driving style and economy to ensure fuel use is minimised.

Alfa Romeo is set to launch its first SUV to the market later this year. The Alfa Romeo Stelvio; named after the Stelvio Pass in northern Italy, combining Italian style, performance and craftsmanship with an SUV that meets



SPONSOR PROFILE



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Our dedicated business centre is on hand to help find a solution



“Alfa Romeo is the go-to choice for fleet customers who want something to ignite their passion coupled with sharp Italian styling”

the demands of both driving enthusiasts and everyday life on the road. Making it the perfect choice for executives who spend a lot of time on the road.

Fiat

With the launch of Tipo in 2016; taking Fiat back into the all-important C Segment, the manufacturer is once again offering a unique solution for businesses looking for a stylish, yet practical, hatchback and station wagon that delivers exceptional value.

The business-focused Elite model includes an Eco pack that means the car emits just 89g/km CO₂, making it a great choice if you have an eye on the tax bill.

It combines Fiat design with exceptional equipment levels that gives drivers great value for money. It also offers class-leading interior space, meaning it doubles comfortably as a family car at weekends, with a choice of reliable, efficient engines.

The Fiat Tipo Elite Edition is also equipped with a comprehensive suite of safety features including advanced ESP, six airbags, rear parking sensors, AEB (autonomous emergency braking) and

adaptive cruise control which uses radar technology to maintain a safe distance to the vehicle in front, all as standard.

2017 will see the launch of the Fiat Fullback which comes with either a six-speed manual gearbox or a five-speed automatic gearbox, with four-wheel drive as standard across the range. It's rugged, reliable and practical, offering one tonne of loading capacity and a 1.52m-long cargo bed.

With a 2.4 litre diesel engine available in either 150bhp or 180bhp versions, and a towing capacity of up to 3.1 tonnes, the Fullback still offers low fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions. In fact, both versions deliver all the power, torque and efficiency demanded of a pick-up.

At the other end of the spectrum, fleet buyers have been captivated by the Fiat 124 Spider which has received accolades for its stunning looks and exhilarating drive.

2017 also sees the 50th anniversary of Fiat's much-loved Fiat 500 – still a firm favourite among fleet buyers.



Jeep

Jeep celebrated its 75th anniversary last year which gave the opportunity to reminisce on the original rugged capability and heritage of the brand over the decades; with styling cues which can be seen in every Jeep today.

Combining this 75 years of adventure with modern technology and styling the Jeep product range continues to excite and prove its abilities, recently winning 4x4 of the Year for the second year running with the Renegade.

The Jeep Grand Cherokee is the world's most awarded SUV and is enjoying rising popularity with fleet customers thanks to outstanding levels of luxury coupled with total off-road ability.

2017 will see the launch of the all new Jeep Compass set to arrive in the UK later in the year.

LAND ROVER
DISCOVERY SPORT

There is no shortage of options when it comes to large SUVs. When deliberating this category for the *Fleet News Awards*, the judges had to select a winner from 25 models offered by 15 manufacturers.

The Discovery Sport comfortably made the final six, although it was edged off the top spot by stablemate Jaguar's F-Pace. The reasons are perhaps as much personal taste as any shortcomings on the Land Rover's part.

Arguably, the Discovery Sport is a head rather than heart buy, occupying the more functional end of the SUV spectrum in contrast to the F-Pace at the sporty and luxurious end.

That's not to say the Discovery Sport doesn't offer drivers a refined experience and a high quality cockpit – it does. The ride is controlled and comfortable while the steering is accurate. Grip is outstanding despite the body roll, while we know from previous experience that the off-road performance is exceptional.

The high quality grained leather interior is set off by chrome accents on the steering wheel and bordering the central dash controls, dropping from the eight-inch touchscreen to surround the gearstick. It's an airy and well laid out environment.

But where Discovery Sport has an upright, squared styling that suggests ruggedness and robustness, the F-Pace features sharp lines which point to a sporty pedigree. The Land Rover doesn't tug at the heart-strings in quite the same way.

Our car has the entry-level 150PS 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel engine which gets a bit breathless when pushed hard but is generally a willing companion. Available only with six-speed manual, a decent gearbox, it is the most efficient model in the line-up.

However, against an official combined figure of 57.7mpg we are currently averaging 39.2mpg, albeit primarily on the daily commute – 32% off the pace. We'll re-set for our next long journey to see how far into the 40s we can get.

Stephen Briers



The Mini's optional Media Pack XL builds on the trend towards touchscreens

MINI CLUBMAN

COOPER 2.0D 150

Happy to navigate way around the screen options

By Sarah Tooze

COSTS

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| P11D price | £26,165 |
| BIK tax band | 22% |
| Annual BIK tax (20%) | £1,151 |
| Class 1A NIC | £794 |
| Annual VED | £0 then £30 |
| RV (4yr/80k) | £7,650 |
| Fuel cost (ppm) | 8.46 |
| AFR (ppm) | 11 |
| Running cost (ppm) | 36.01 |

SPEC

| | |
|--|-------|
| Engine (cc) | 1,995 |
| Power (PS) | 150 |
| Torque (Nm) | 330 |
| CO₂ emissions (g/km) | 113 |
| Fuel efficiency (mpg) | 65.7 |
| Max speed (mph) | 132 |
| 0-62mph (sec) | 8.6 |
| Test mpg | 48.3 |
| Current mileage | 4,202 |

Touchscreens are becoming increasingly popular in new cars (my previous long-term test cars, the Ford Focus and Volkswagen Tiguan, both had them), and now Mini has got in on the act.

Its optional Media Pack XL has been revamped to include an 8.8-inch touchscreen instead of an 8.8-inch screen and controller, and is available on the Clubman and Countryman for £950.

The pack also includes sat-nav with 3D mapping, enhanced Bluetooth with wireless charging, Mini Connected XL and a 20 gigabyte Jukebox hard drive.

We took delivery of the Clubman before this pack became available and when a colleague tested the Clubman he wasn't a fan of the controller system (which is a version of parent company BMW's iDrive infotainment) due to the number of stages you have to go through to get

to certain options. For him, the new touchscreen, which also has a new user interface, should be favoured.

However, I have no complaints about selecting options having become accustomed to iDrive in our previous Mini (the five-door hatch).

My only gripe is that the edge of the screen on the right is obscured by the central LED ring. This isn't a problem for most functions but when using the sat-nav it means a small part of the map (or the directions when using the split-screen) is hidden.

That minor point aside, I continue to enjoy driving the Mini. Shifting between gears was awkward at first as the gearstick seemed stiff but it has eased over time.

I'm also been pleased to note that switching to 'sport' mode rather than 'mid' for my daily commute hasn't resulted in a drop in fuel economy, although using 'eco' mode gives the best part of another 3mpg (51mpg rather than 48.3mpg).

"I'm also pleased to note that switching to 'sport' mode rather than 'mid' for my daily commute hasn't resulted in a drop in fuel economy"

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

TEST TIMELINE

Start

End



FORD FOCUS

1.5 TDCI TITANIUM

Popularity with fleets is well deserved



A practical, hassle-free and efficient hatchback

COSTS

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| P11D price | £22,040 |
| BIK tax band | 19% |
| Annual BIK tax (20%) | £838 |
| Class 1A NIC | £578 |
| Annual VED | £0 |
| RV (4yr/80k) | £5,175/23% |
| Fuel cost (ppm) | 7.48 |
| AFR (ppm) | 9 |
| Running cost (ppm) | 31.96 |

SPEC

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Engine (cc) | 1,499 |
| Power (PS) | 120 |
| Torque (Nm) | 270 |
| CO ₂ emissions (g/km) | 99 |
| Fuel efficiency (mpg) | 74.3 |
| Max speed (mph) | 120 |
| 0-62mph (sec) | 10.5 |
| Test mpg | 58.9 |
| Final mileage | 13,192 |

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

By Andrew Ryan

The Ford Focus has consistently been one of the best-selling cars in the fleet sector since its launch.

Much of this is due to the financial appeal of the range to companies, but the 10 months we've spent with a 1.5 TDCi Titanium hatchback has shown that the car has plenty of appeal for a driver, too.

Our test model has now returned to Ford, but over the 13,192 miles it covered while with us it proved to be a largely practical, hassle-free and efficient hatchback, often returning around 60mpg per tank of diesel.

This compares to a combined cycle fuel economy of 74.3mpg from the official NEDC tests, which also gave the Focus a CO₂ emissions figure of 99g/km.

These emissions put it in the 19% benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax band, meaning a 20% taxpayer currently faces a monthly bill of £70. Though this will change next month.

It is also exempt from VED.

However, while the Focus's efficiency makes it economical to run, it doesn't impair the enjoyment of driving it.

It offers a decent level of refinement, a comfortable ride and is an engaging drive, while the 120PS engine provides punchy performance, making the car adept at both urban and motorway journeys.

The cabin is well-designed, too, with the infotainment system both capable and straightforward to operate.

However, I found the optional leather seats too hard to begin with, while passengers had complained rear legroom was tight.

Despite those minor niggles, our ownership experience proved to be largely hassle-free, with no reliability or build quality issues.

Overall, the Focus is an impressive all-rounder and its position as one of the best-sellers in the fleet sector is well deserved.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA TOURER SRI 1.6CDTI



Our long-term Zafira Tourer comes equipped with the Vauxhall Onstar system. Vauxhall calls it a personal on-board assistant, but what exactly does it do?

First, and most important, is the automatic crash response function which, in the event of your airbag being deployed automatically connects you to an Onstar advisor.

The system also sends a report to the advisor, including your location, travel direction, vehicle colour and the extent of the damage.

The emergency services will be sent to your location immediately if your vehicle report warrants it.

The car is also equipped with two buttons, a red SOS one which gives you a priority line to an Onstar advisor for emergency assistance and a blue ON button for non-emergency support such as destination download where the advisor can send your chosen destination directly to your navigation system.

Other benefits include:

Wi-Fi hotspot for connectivity on the move, available free for three months or 3GB, whichever comes first, with data packages bought separately thereafter.

Stolen vehicle assistance which can locate and immobilise the vehicle in the event of it being stolen.

Vehicle diagnostics – Onstar can send you a monthly email updating you on the condition of your car including oil life and tyre pressures. Or, if a warning light appears you can contact the Onstar team for advice on how severe the problem is and the best course of action to take.

You can also access Onstar via the smartphone app which has useful functions including fuel level check and also allows you to send navigation details direct to the car.

Luke Neal

TEST TIMELINE

Start ————— End

AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET



Fiat Tipo 1.6 multijet

A few longer trips have failed to yield an improvement in fuel consumption, which peaks at 51mpg against an official figure of 76.3mpg.



Seat Ateca SE 1.6 TDi Ecomotive

The 510-litre boot compares well to rivals. It proved its worth with a recent trip to the recycling centre.



Mazda CX-3 1.5D SE-L Nav

The CX-3 feels smaller than expected and lacks the kerb appeal of its bigger brother, the excellent CX-5.

BEVERLEY WISE

SALES DIRECTOR - UK AND IRELAND, TOMTOM TELEMATICS

Integrity is an attribute this fan of Wasps rugby rates highly. Possessing it served Beverley Wise well when she returned to work after taking a career break to have a family

My earliest memory associated with a car was when I was at nursery school, my dad drove a blue Austin Cambridge. He came home one day with a Dinky toy replica for me – the exact same colour with whitewall tyres but a ‘friend’ at nursery took the tyres off and lost them – I was inconsolable. With such a distressing memory, who’d have ever thought I’d forge a fleet automotive career?

The most pivotal moment in my life was returning to work following a career break to have children. I knew I had to confront employer concerns and traditional workplace barriers. I made a major statement of intent with a fleet job that demanded long working hours. My dedication to the role set me on course for a successful fleet career.

The three cars I’d like most in my garage ... my passionate self would choose an Audi R8, the environmentalist in me would choose a Tesla and to appease my practical side, I’d also opt for a Volvo V60.

I’d like to be remembered for my honesty, passion, care and integrity and for never asking anyone to do something that I wouldn’t be prepared to roll my sleeves up and do myself.

My favourite film is *The Shawshank Redemption*, a movie that illustrates how you can hold on to your beliefs and remain positive in the face of adversity.

If I was Prime Minister for the day I would improve care for the elderly and homeless. Our care sector seems driven by profit, not compassion. Nobody should be without a roof over their head or food in their stomach.

I was quite impetuous as a teenager so I’d tell my 18-year-old self be more reflective and tolerant of others. Age and experience has taught me not to act in haste but to take a more considered approach to life.

I’m a big fan of Wasps RFC, having followed them for many years through thick and thin. Cooking and reading come a close second and third.

I love books you can’t put down so the one I would recommend is *A Tourist in the Yucatan*, a real page-turner about Mexican drug barons.

I value integrity highly so I’d dump people who promise to do things, but fail to do them, into Room 101.



First fleet role My first foray into a fleet automotive role was quite a challenge. On returning to work after my second child, I was tasked with establishing a fleet department at a Ford dealership in Southport. It was hard work but a very exciting undertaking, and I have never looked back.

Career goals at TomTom Telematics My commitment to spearheading the growth of TomTom within the UK market is underpinned by a drive to help businesses achieve ever higher levels of efficiency and productivity.

Biggest achievement in business In my former role as corporate sales director at Lex Autolease I secured the business of a major international broadcaster – against all the expectations of those who were close to the deal.

Biggest career influence Vahid Daemi, former CEO of LeasePlan, epitomised the benefits of adopting a supportive and collaborative approach to business and it was a privilege to work for him.

Biggest mistake in business Taking a leasing franchise without sufficient due diligence or scrutiny of the shortcomings of the master franchisor. I am a ‘glass half-full’ individual but I have learnt that there are times when this proclivity should be tempered.

Leadership style I look to treat others as I like to be treated – in a supportive, collaborative, and inclusive manner.

If I wasn’t in fleet I have a real passion for women’s rugby union which wasn’t as prevalent when I was a teenager. Had it been, I would certainly have played and, who knows, I may have become a rugby coach!

Childhood ambition I really wanted to be a travel courier. Travel and meeting a wide variety of people really appealed.

Next issue: Stuart Houlston, commercial and IT director, LeasePlan

More than a dozen Transits will be on view at the CV Show next month



Ford plans a CV show of force by Transits at NEC

Ford is showcasing its most comprehensive-ever commercial vehicle range at the CV Show next month, including Transit and Transit Custom vans with new six-speed automatic transmission and Transit with All-Wheel Drive.

Ford's imposing stand in Hall 5 at Birmingham's NEC will display a dozen vehicles on each of the three days of the show, which runs from 25-27 April, and there will be many more on convertor and bodybuilder stands around the show.

The Transits scheduled for display are a van, a Double Cab in Van, 11-seat bus, an

AWD double cab dropside and a fully-kitted mobile service van – in a combination of L2, L3 and L4 wheelbases.

The three Transit Customs on the stand will be a van, a Double Cab in Van and a Custom Tourneo with six-speed automatic transmission.

Passenger-carrying variants of Transit Custom and Tourneo Custom models with the EcoBlue diesel engine can now be specified with factory-fitted rear air suspension. It is ideal for shuttle and executive travel applications where passenger and luggage loading can vary by as much as one tonne.

One of the two Transit Connect vans on the stand will feature Ford's new slimline bulkhead, which allows easier side access.

Both L1 and L2 models will be displayed, one with manual transmission and the other automatic.

Also on the stand will be a Ford Courier van and a Ford Ranger pickup, offering driver-selectable four-wheel drive (4WD) featuring a two-speed transfer box, which enables drivers to switch between rear-wheel drive and four-wheel drive high-range with a knob on the centre console at speeds of up to 70mph.

MULTI-DROP FLEETS WILL RELISH THIS TRANSIT'S QUICK GET-AWAYS

Transit front-wheel drive and Transit/Tourneo Custom customers can choose a six-speed SelectShift automatic transmission in place of the standard manual gearbox.

The new transmission can be specified with the 130PS and 170PS versions of the Ford EcoBlue engine,

and Auto-Start-Stop is standard.

The enhanced convenience and comfort it offers customers in predominantly urban drive cycles will appeal particularly to multi-drop delivery and courier fleets.

Electronically-controlled for smooth, fast gear changes, the transmission is

optimised for maximum fuel efficiency, with CO₂ emissions from 174g/km on Transit Custom.

It is tuned for commercial vehicle usage, with an on-demand electric pump to maintain transmission pressure so the driver can pull away as soon as the engine has restarted.



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