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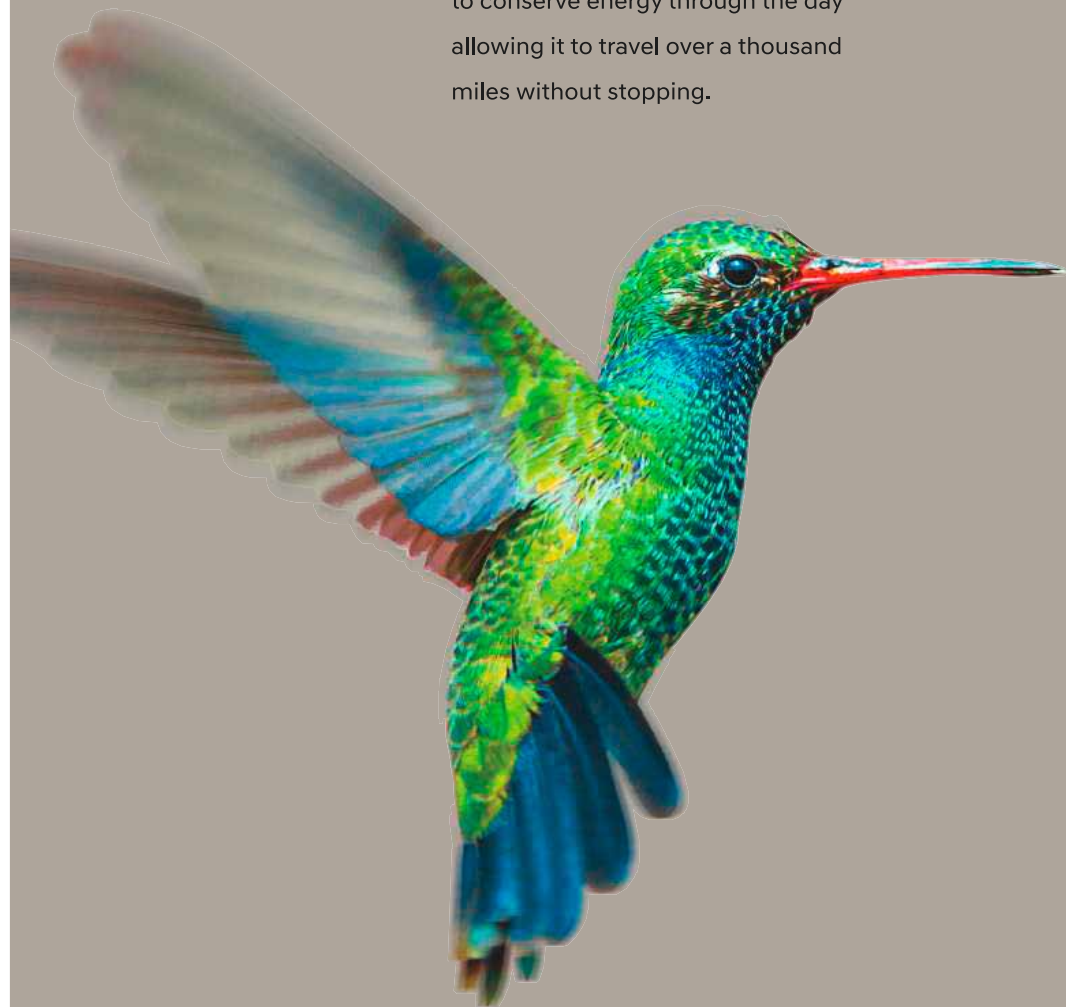
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## CONTENTS

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### NEWS

- 4** 'Bad' Budget dismays fleet bodies
- 7** Government U-turn on sal/sac cars
- 8** More WLTP-tested cars available
- 11** Report on rise of new fuel types
- 12** Delete personal data on defleet
- 14** FN50 dinner recognises top talents
- 16** Steer drivers away from 'grey fleet'

### REGULARS

- 20** Letters and editor's Big Picture
- 23** Opinion: Reaction to the Budget
- 50** Awards: Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- 58** Last word: Olivia Scott

### CAR/VAN REVIEWS

- 52** Volkswagen T-Cross
- 54** Mitsubishi Outlander
- 55** Alpha Romeo Stelvio
- 56** Long-term reports




**35**  
**Cover feature**  
**Driver health**

Do you have the right policies in place to support your drivers? We look at the legal – and moral – expectations of being an employer in our nine-page guide



**28**  
**Fleet in focus: Silverstone**

Suppliers such as JCT600's Paul Walters (left) go the extra mile to help Silverstone procurement and contracts manager Lee Thomas



**Fleet News Roundtable** **24**

Addressing the impact of electric vehicles and mobility on the role of a fleet manager



**32**  
**In the spotlight: BMW Group Mobility Services**

As arch-rivals look to team up to take on Uber, BMW's Tony Douglas says mobility is gathering pace



# Fleet organisations dismayed by Chancellor's 'bad' Budget

Treasury plans to report on the future of company car tax in the spring

By Gareth Roberts

**P**ressure will continue to be put on the Government to deliver on demands to safeguard the future of the company car and help drive the uptake of the cleanest vehicles after the Budget failed to offer the industry clarity.

Instead, Chancellor Philip Hammond announced a review into the impact of the new emissions testing regime – the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP) – on Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and company car tax.

It is due to report in the spring ahead of the Government's spring statement ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), October 29).

The delay was met with dismay, with four out of five respondents to a *Fleet News* poll labelling it a 'bad' budget for the fleet industry.

Fleet decision-makers have been on tenterhooks, having to extend company car contracts, while uncertainty surrounds benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rates beyond 2020/21.

Furthermore, company car drivers and fleet operators, already facing an increase in BIK due to increases in correlated NEDC CO<sub>2</sub> figures, wanted to know how the Treasury aims to account for the full impact of WLTP.

John Pryor, chairman of fleet representative body ACFO, said: "Historically, the Chancellor has announced company car BIK tax rates for up to four years in advance.

"The Chancellor's failure to provide clarity to fleet decision-makers and company car drivers will, ACFO fears, further encourage drivers to opt for a cash alternative instead of a company car."



*"I'll continue campaigning to change the Government's mind and will be exploring opportunities to amend the Finance Bill"*

*Neil Parish MP, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee*

## WLTP impact on CO<sub>2</sub>

From September 2018 until April 2020, the new WLTP CO<sub>2</sub> value for a vehicle is being converted to correlated NEDC figures using the EU-wide CO<sub>2</sub>MPAS equation.

However, on average, it is resulting in CO<sub>2</sub> increases of between 10% and 20%, moving many cars up a couple of BIK tax bands.

The Government has proposed that, from April 2020, full WLTP figures will be used for BIK, VED and employers' national insurance contributions.

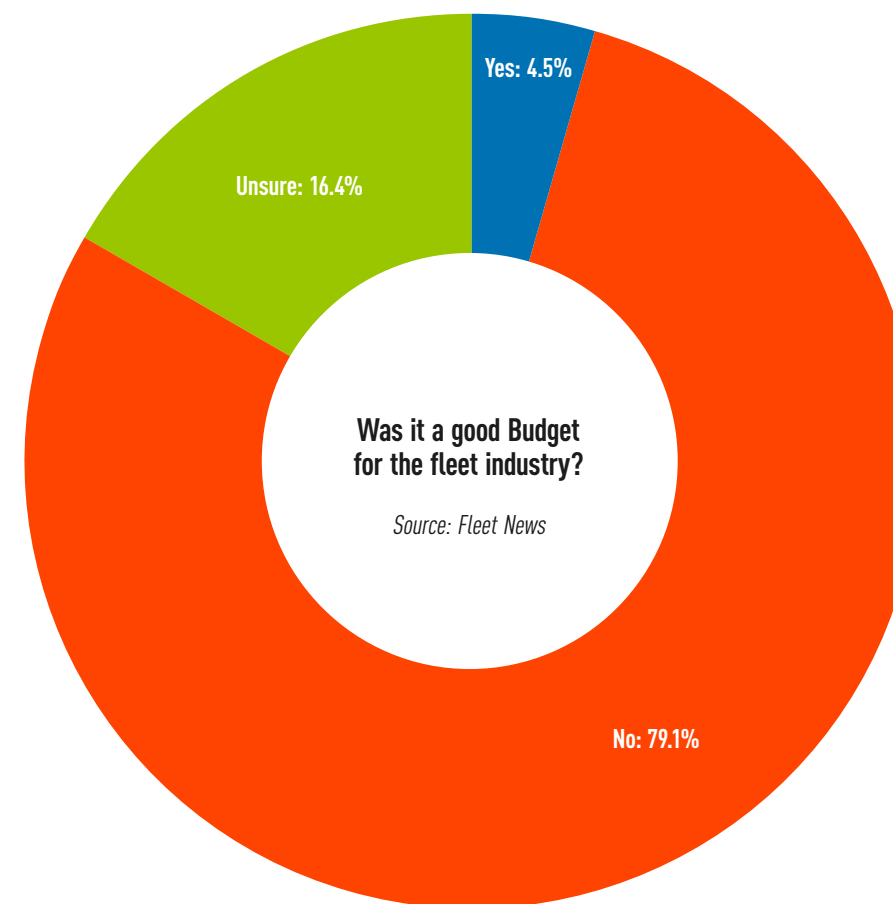
Full WLTP could result in another 10-20% rise in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, further hitting company car drivers with higher BIK taxation deductions, exacerbated by the fact that the BIK thresholds themselves will have risen by four percentage points for most cars at that juncture.

Gerry Keaney, chief executive of trade body British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) welcomed the Treasury's recognition of potential tax distortion caused by WLTP.

But he said: "It is vital that fleets and company car drivers are able to plan for the future, confident that they are working with more accurate emissions information and a fairer tax regime that rewards those who choose cleaner vehicles. These revised tax bandings can't come too soon."

WLTP uncertainty has also persuaded the Government to delay the introduction of a new VED regime for vans. Based on emissions, like the system for cars, the Treasury announced in the Budget that the new regime will now not start until April 2021, when the impact of WLTP is fully understood (see panel).

Operating a fixed list of just two cars, head of



fleet at Anglian Water, Stewart Lightbody, said BIK has not previously been a consideration for drivers at the utility company. But, he told *Fleet News* that WLTP would impact a new company car policy going live this month, which gives drivers greater choice and control to drivers over tax liabilities.

"Choice won't look like it did when I started this project as WLTP has removed a significant portion of choice, even with a pragmatic CO<sub>2</sub> limit of 119g/km," he said.

## Tax clarity

Ahead of this autumn's Budget, the fleet industry had called for a series of measures in the Fleet Budget Manifesto, which received the backing of more than 300 businesses.

*Fleet News*, together with the BVRLA and ACFO, made a submission to HM Treasury, arguing its contents could create certainty, boost the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) and allow fleets and drivers to plan with confidence.

It called for the realignment of BIK tax tables to take account of WLTP, with no distortion to tax liabilities caused by the transition and use of correlated NEDC figures for tax purposes.

It also wanted the Treasury to commit to a longer-term view of BIK – five years – and reconsider the 4% diesel supplement.

But, a request to raise incentives through a long-term commitment to plug-in grants was met with funding being cut by £1,000 for the cleanest cars and removed completely for hybrids, prior to the Budget even being delivered.

The Chancellor also ignored a request in the Fleet Budget Manifesto for the 2% BIK incentive for ULEVs to be brought forward to 2019.

Keaney said: "The Chancellor chose to ignore the overwhelming voice of fleets, motoring

groups, business organisations, environmental groups and MPs – all of whom were united in calling for this simple tax measure to support the electric vehicle market."

ACFO, the BVRLA and *Fleet News* have vowed to continue fighting for a fair taxation regime for the fleet and leasing industry, while one MP is hoping to table an amendment to the Finance Bill, which legislates for Government plans announced in the Budget.

Neil Parish MP, chair of the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs Select Committee, said: "By not bringing forward the 2% company car tax rate for zero-emitting vehicles by one year, the Government has signalled that transitioning to cleaner and greener vehicles is not a priority.

"This is a disappointing decision and will discourage company car drivers from choosing an electric vehicle until April 2020.

"Building on the strong cross-party support for this policy, I'll continue campaigning to change the Government's mind and will be exploring opportunities to amend the Finance Bill."

Keaney added: "The BVRLA's campaign has not ended with last month's Budget. Within hours of the Chancellor's statement the association was already re-engaging with Treasury officials, ensuring the voice of the fleet and leasing industry is heard clearly during the planned reviews into the company car tax and VED for vans."

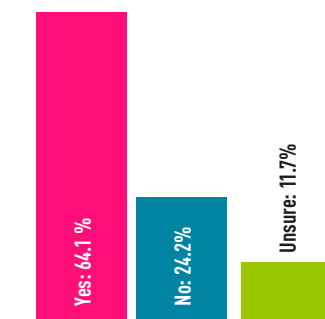
Keaney concluded: "The campaign to instil fairness back into the tax system for company car drivers will carry on until the system properly incentivises cleaner vehicle choices and offers company car drivers the visibility and certainty they need to make informed future car decisions."

See Fleet Opinion on page 23 for more 2018 Budget reaction from ACFO and Lex Autolease.

## FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

### OPINION POLL

Will the decision to leave the European Union increase fleet costs?



## FleetNews view:

When asked the same question a year ago, 58.2% respondents to our poll believed costs would increase. A year later, this has risen to 64.1% against a backdrop of uncertainty, with the UK due to leave the EU on March 29. Carmakers have warned of potential tariffs, with possible pressure on parts for service, maintenance and repair. Our view is fleets must now start assessing, as best they can, the impact of a no-deal Brexit with talks finely poised.

This week's poll: Do you have workplace charging for electric vehicles?

[fleetnews.co.uk/polls](http://fleetnews.co.uk/polls)

## MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

**Budget 2018:**  
No clarification on company car tax until spring 2019

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## NEW VAN VED REGIME BASED ON CO<sub>2</sub>

Pure electric and ultra-low emission vans will be incentivised through a new, two-tier VED regime, which will be introduced from April 2021.

Rates will be graduated by CO<sub>2</sub> when the van is first registered, followed by a standard rate for subsequent years.

The new system will also see the rates differ between small and large vans, and, given larger vans generally have higher CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, smaller rate increases between bands have been proposed for the heavier category.

Exact weight categories, CO<sub>2</sub> banding and rates will be announced ahead of their introduction in April 2021, once the impact of the new emissions testing regime – WLTP – has been fully assessed by Government.



Taxes will incentivise electric vans

All new car and lighter van models (Class I up to 1,305kgs) have been tested under WLTP rules since September 2017, with all cars and lighter vans tested under WLTP since September this year.

New types of heavier vans (N1 Class II 1,305-1,760kgs and III above 1,760kgs) have also been tested under the new regime since September.

All heavier vans (N1 Class II 1,305-1,760kgs and III above 1,760kgs) must be tested under WLTP rules from September 2019.

The Government says it will delay announcing the new bands and rates until the impact of transitioning to WLTP can be fully determined. "Van drivers should not be penalised for using an essential business tool," it said.



# Government accused of U-turn on sal/sac cars

Tax officials claim HMRC is merely correcting a 'mistake' in OpRA policy



By Gareth Roberts

One of the country's leading providers of cars via salary sacrifice maintains it remains a "unique and valuable" benefit for employees after the Government changed how schemes are taxed.

The Chancellor Philip Hammond confirmed in the recently published Finance Bill that the Government will tax the 'package' of benefits received by salary sacrifice drivers with their car.

Tusker says the impact on pricing will be marginal, but accused the Government of committing a U-turn on the policy.

Insurance, maintenance, tyres and breakdown cover, the fleet industry was told, would not be taxed when a new tax regime for so-called Optional Remuneration Arrangements (OpRA) was introduced from April 2017.

But this summer, HMRC claimed their omission was an "oversight" and they should have always been included in the original legislation ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), August 29).

Tax officials told *Fleet News* the error had not been identified during the initial consultation on the OpRA policy proposals and it was now simply correcting a "mistake", with the changes coming into force for all cars, including existing contracts, from April 2019.

Tusker CEO Paul Gilshan said: "HMRC had

confirmed in writing and during face-to-face meetings that the original Finance Bill allowed the separation of costs connected with cars.

"Following our meetings, guidance notes were updated to reflect this. So the recent Budget update is definitely a U-turn by Government."

Professional services firm EY worked with Tusker and had face-to-face meetings with HMRC and Treasury officials when the original policy was being drawn up.

It also produced a white paper in September 2017 on how OpRA legislation should be applied to the provision of a salary sacrifice company car.

Chris Sanger, EY head of tax policy, said the Government's re-examination of the rules in the summer came as a surprise, given the extensive discussions regarding "both the scope of the rules and the alignment with policy intent".

"Clearly, the Government has changed its mind and concluded that the rules now need changing, despite concluding the opposite previously," he continued.

"What is surprising, and disappointing, is that there is no grandfathering of the rules for those taxpayers who have committed to multi-year contracts on the strength of the original interpretation that HMRC publicly confirmed, and will now face higher tax charges."

The leasing industry, which has seen the funding device grow in popularity over the past

few years, had been lobbying Government to introduce a transitional arrangement or to introduce grandfathering (exemption from a new law) for those drivers that took out salary sacrifice deals from April 2017.

The Finance Bill said: "The changes ensure that when a taxable car or van is provided through OpRA, the amount foregone includes costs connected with the car or van which are regarded as part of the benefit-in-kind under normal rules. In addition, the changes adjust the value of any capital contribution towards a taxable car when the car is made available for only part of the year."

It continued: "This provides that the total amount foregone, which is to be taken into account in calculating the amount reportable for tax and NIC purposes, includes both the amount foregone with respect to being provided with the car and the amount foregone with respect to the costs connected with the car (such as insurance), which are regarded as part of the benefit-in-kind under normal rules."

"The cost of a driver and fuel are not to be included as these are chargeable under separate provisions."

Some industry estimates suggest that for those drivers affected, it could cost them an additional £100-£240 in tax per year. Employers will also end up paying more National Insurance.

However, Gilshan said: "Our modelling shows that 85% of recent orders would see no increase at all. The remaining 15% would see a small increase in monthly cost."

"We know there will still be significant savings through salary sacrifice thanks to our commitment to reducing costs and the fantastic discounts from manufacturers we are able to offer our drivers."

The fleet industry fought hard to protect the benefit when the OpRA rules were first outlined and was successful in winning an exemption for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

Gilshan concluded: "It remains a unique and valuable benefit for employees ensuring they are driving safer, cleaner cars."

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Fuel consumption data and CO<sub>2</sub> emission data are determined using the Worldwide harmonized Light vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP), and the relevant values are translated back to allow the comparability into NEDC, according to regulations R (EC) No. 715/2007, R (EU) No. 2017/1153 and R (EU) No. 2017/1151. The values do not take into account in particular use and driving conditions, equipment or options and may vary depending on the format of tyres. For more information on official fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emission values, please read the guidelines at <http://carfueldata.dft.gov.uk/> and for more information on WLTP please see [www.vauxhall.co.uk/wltp](http://www.vauxhall.co.uk/wltp). 2018/19 tax year. Vauxhall Motors Limited does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their own tax position. 3 Day Test Drive terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0330 587 8221 for full details. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (November 2018).

*"Only 15% of recent orders would see a small increase in monthly cost"*

*Paul Gilshan, Tusker*





# Sales recover slightly as more WLTP-test cars become available

But market remains 7.2% down in year-on-year comparisons, says the SMMT



By Matt de Prez

**F**ollowing September's significant decline of 22.49%, the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show that October registrations were down 2.9% year-on-year, leaving the market down 7.2% year-to-date.

Volkswagen suffered a drop of more than 50% in new car registrations in September due to a lack of models homologated under the new WLTP emissions standards.

In October, the German brand appeared to be back on track, with total registrations just 90 cars behind the same month last year.

However, dig a little deeper and the reason for Volkswagen's performance becomes clear: the T-Roc, which only came on sale in September. The company sold 1,736 in October (of which 613 were in fleet).

The Tiguan was also a rare beacon of success, up 52% at 3,370. Both cars helped to offset huge registrations reversals in other core models.

The Golf, for example, was down 32% (or 1,782 units) at 3,765, although it remains the UK's

second best selling model year-to-date, while the Passat fared even worse, falling almost 57% to just 501 units.

Volkswagen dealers told *Fleet News* they expect only marginal improvements in availability over the next couple of months.

Despite the SMMT figures, a spokesperson for Volkswagen insisted that its sales performance "continues to make steady progress, in line with the brand's plans for 2018".

He added: "While September's vehicle registration figures were affected by the migration to the new WLTP testing process, this was a temporary influence on the brand's performance here."

Nick Hardy, sales and marketing manager at Ogilvie Fleet, said: "Volkswagen has been working on getting more vehicles available for ordering and there has been a flurry of vehicles released. Most powertrains have now been tested and are available to order."

Hardy added that some variants of the 2.0-litre TDI engine remain unavailable to order, although some fleets have told *Fleet News* that the manual 1.6 TDI is also unavailable.

Seat and Škoda increased registrations by 2.9% and 3.1% respectively, although the latter was entirely down to the new Karoq and Fabia.

Premium brand Audi continued to struggle, with total registrations down 52.6%. The A4 (down 88%), A1 (down 71%) and Q3 (down 76%) were its worst performers.

A number of other major models lost sales in October, including the Vauxhall Insignia (down 53%), Ford Mondeo (down 48%) and Fiesta (down 23%), Nissan Qashqai (down 28%) and BMW 4 Series (down 62%).

Zenith declined to comment on specific brands but said the number of quotable cars available in its systems was increasing, with 20% more vehicles available for quoting since August.

So far this year, 1,136,082 cars have been registered to fleet and business, compared with 1,231,723 for the same period in 2017 – a fall of almost 100,000 units.

In total, 2,064,419 new cars were registered in the first 10 months of 2018, 160,000 units fewer than last year.

Electric vehicles saw impressive growth, up 86.9% in October. Hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles also enjoyed strong uplifts, growing 31% and 19.1% respectively.

SMMT chief executive Mike Hawes said: "VED upheaval, regulatory changes and confusion over diesel have all made their mark so it's good to see plug-in registrations buck the trend. Demand is still far from the levels needed to offset losses elsewhere, however, and is making the Government's decision to remove purchase incentives even more baffling."

"We need policies that encourage rather than confuse. Government's forthcoming review of WLTP's impact on taxation must ensure that buyers of the latest, cleanest cars are not unfairly penalised."



*"VED upheaval, regulatory changes and confusion over diesel have all made their mark so it's good to see plug-in registrations buck the trend. We need policies that encourage."*

Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive

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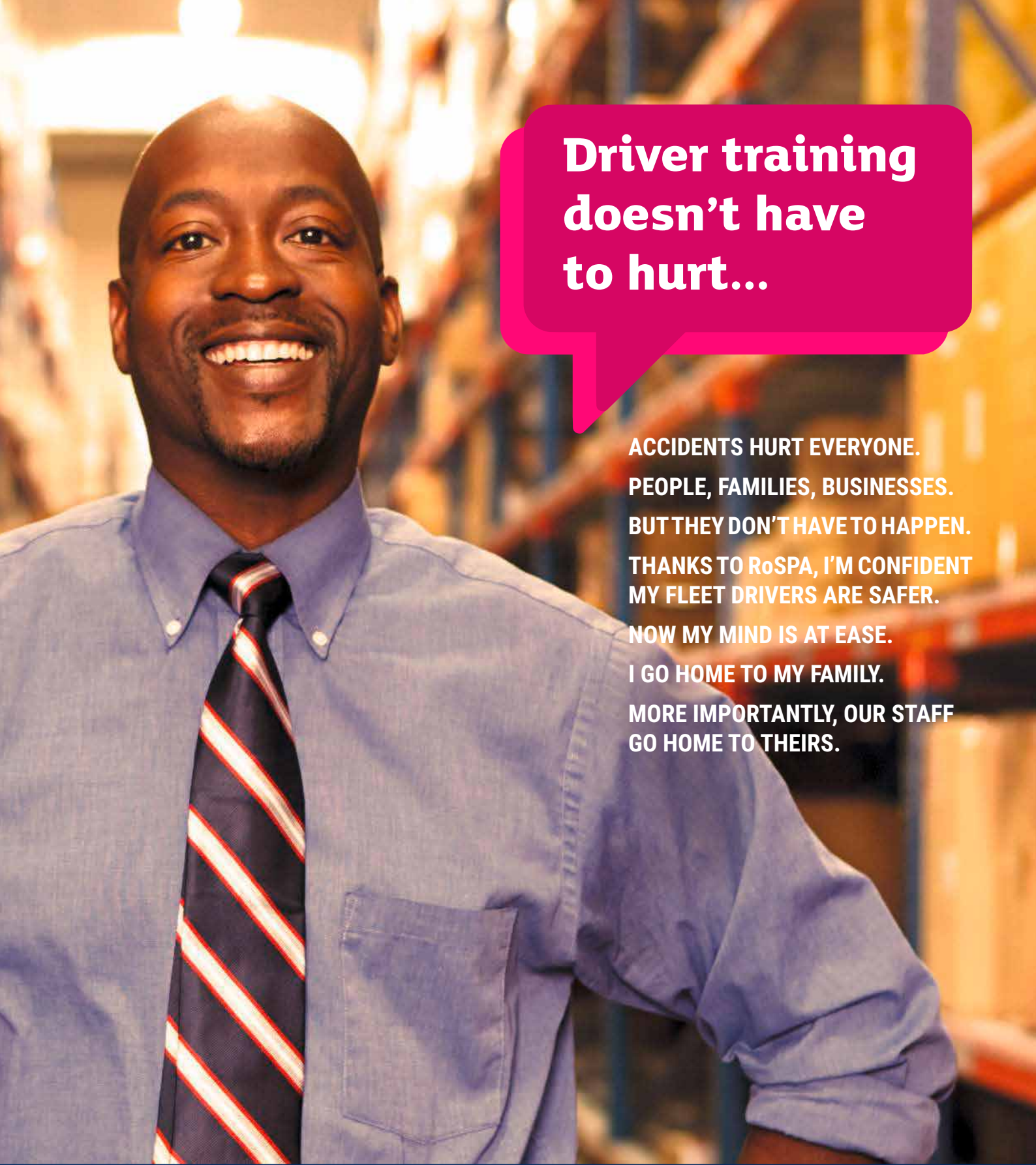
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# Majority of fleets expect to adopt new fuel types soon, says report

Fleet managers still find some senior management teams resistant to change

By Gareth Roberts

**M**ore than half (53%) of fleets expect to adopt new fuel types within the next five years, new research from Shell suggests.

In fact, more than one in four (28%) would introduce electric vehicles (EVs) to their fleets today if cost was no option, says Shell's 'Future of Fleets' report.

A further 26% would adopt vehicles powered by other alternative fuels.

Asked which fuel types they would choose for their fleet if they had an entirely free hand, almost two-thirds (64%) of fleet managers chose either electric or hybrid, not only over other types of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs), but also in preference to diesel and petrol.

Katya Atanasova, vice president of Shell Fleet Solutions, believes that by 2040, virtually all smaller vehicles are likely to be electric. Larger long-haul transport will transition to renewable and low-emission fuels.

In fact, a mosaic of different fuel types will be required to cater for different types of vehicle and usage scenarios.

Electricity, hydrogen, liquid natural gas (LNG), gas-to-liquid (GTL) and biofuels could all play a role, so comparing, benchmarking and partnering to provide the right infrastructure will be key for companies to deliver the best value and vehicle performance, says Shell.

Driving this change is a need to adapt more environmentally-friendly vehicles, because of air



*"We believe the industry  
will look radically  
different within the  
next 20 years"*

Katya Atanasova, Shell Fleet Solutions

quality concerns, particularly for the commercial sector.

Separate research by analysts Frost and Sullivan found that commercial vehicles in Europe are responsible for 20% of all vehicle-related greenhouse-gas emissions, despite only being 5% of the vehicles on the road. They are also much more likely to have a diesel engine than passenger cars are.

Atanasova said: "In the UK, the pace of change in commercial fleets is accelerating rapidly and we believe the industry will look radically different within the next 20 years."

However, over the next five years, a third (30%) of fleet managers believe preparing their organisations for the broader use of alternative fuels will be one of the biggest challenges they will face.

Shell's report – Ultra-efficiency or digital disruption? Planning for the future of fleets – highlights how a convergence of alternative fuels, new technology and services is reshaping the sector and creating new opportunities for companies to enhance their operations, boost efficiency and stay competitive.

But it also reveals, in a survey of 750 fleet managers in the UK, Germany, Netherlands and Poland, that many lack the support of senior managers to drive change.

One in four said they feel their bosses are resisting new technologies, while almost a third (30%) admitted they themselves lacked knowledge around new technologies and/or their benefits.

No surprise then that 63% said they seek additional training to keep up with industry evolution.

Atanasova said: "Alternative fuels, data analytics, automation and greater connectivity will require new business models, skills and partnerships between fleet operators, manufacturers, energy and technology providers and start-ups."

"For those responsible for managing fleets, there is also a need to engage drivers and the senior management in their organisations, to help test and capitalise on these new developments."

New vehicle types – including those running on new fuels as well as autonomous and semi-autonomous vehicles – will fundamentally change the mix of skills required of fleet managers and their teams, says the report.

Many vehicles will be self-driving, with routine maintenance via software download and artificial intelligence enabling individual fleet vehicles to take themselves to an optimal location for refuelling and overnight parking – ready for their allotted tasks the following day.

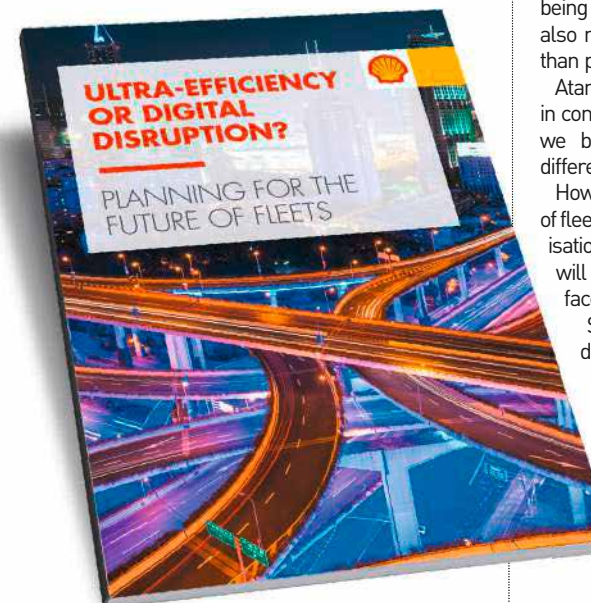
"We could see 'vehicle-less' fleets, with companies using the logistics equivalent of ride-hailing apps to manage networks of independent vehicles to share loads efficiently, manage deliveries on demand and remove the capital and operational cost of owning vehicles themselves," predicted Atanasova.

"Exponential growth in the volume of data will ensure that fleets are as efficient as possible, leading to financial and environmental gains as well as making planning and journeys easier for both managers and drivers."

Ride-hailing and sharing apps have gained traction in the consumer market, but there is huge potential in the commercial sector, according to Shell. This could see fleet professionals using technology to share loads and manage deliveries on demand. It also has the potential to remove the capital and operational costs of owning vehicles themselves.

Furthermore, aggregation of services such as fuel cards, road toll payments, discounts on tyres and repairs, and business services such as invoicing could all be combined into mobile platforms for drivers and fleet operators to use.

Shell concludes that disruptive technologies such as automated vehicles, ride-sharing, load sharing and over-the-air software and maintenance, will fundamentally alter the way fleets work.



Shell's report predicts major changes in fleet



# Defleeting a vehicle? Be sure to delete all the personal data

Cyber security agency says fleets should start treating cars like phones

By Tom Seymour

Fleets are being reminded they run the risk of breaching data protection rules by leaving personal information stored on vehicle systems when they are defleeted.

Anesh Chauhan, founder of Vehicle Data Clear (VDC), a start-up company that has been formed specifically to help clear data from company car fleets, said many fleets are not aware how much data is actually stored on modern vehicles, including phone contacts, call histories and home addresses stored in sat-nav systems.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into force on May 25, requires businesses to comply with rules designed to safeguard personal data.

As specified in Article 5 of the GDPR terms, data should be kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary. This means that the data needs clearing when a vehicle is changing owners, a vehicle has been written off and will be scrapped or if a vehicle has been rented and will be rented by someone else.

The Government's National Cyber Security Centre says the fleet industry should treat a modern car or van like any other connected

device: delete all personal data and disable the account that has been used with the car.

"Privacy is already seen as a key issue with phones, tablets, and laptops," it said. "Cars and other internet connected devices should also be added to the list."

Chauhan told *Fleet News*: "Modern vehicles have now become one of the most complex devices on earth, capable of holding enormous amounts of data. However, they are vulnerable as this data can easily be accessed."

"Vehicles are commonly transferred, sold or disposed of without proper consideration given to the data they may hold."

Under GDPR, organisations face financial penalties of up to 2% of annual global turnover or €10 million (£8.7m), whichever sum is the greatest, for minor breaches.

For breaches that are considered more serious, the penalty is up to 4% of annual turnover, or €20m (£17.4m), again whichever is the greatest. It is even possible to be fined twice in connection with the same breach.

Chauhan said many fleets appear to be unaware of their responsibilities and the amount of retained data that is left in vehicles before being transferred to a third party.

Caroline Sandall, deputy chairman of fleet representative body ACFO and a director at ESE UK Consulting, said clearing personal data from vehicles is something fleet managers should be providing clear advice to drivers about.

"There are many defleet companies who will – as standard – raise clearing personal data from vehicles with drivers at the point of collection even to the extent of including it on the collection form," explained Sandall.

"My view is that it's perhaps a leap to state that all fleets are directly responsible for ensuring that data is removed, but I would agree there is responsibility here to create processes to ensure drivers are aware and are informed and, indeed, instructed to remove any data."

"Fleets should work with their defleet providers to check with the drivers and examine the feasibility of wiping data."



ACFO's advice is to check what cars have what data stored and how effective the fleet's processes are at informing employees about GDPR and protecting the data drivers choose to load into the car and what data the car may collect.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the body responsible for policing GDPR and Sandall said fleets need to check with their legal and data protection experts to determine liability.

It is possible for fleets to clear all electronic and physical data themselves, although Chauhan argues that in many cases "it would be impractical, time consuming and risky".

He said: "Using specialist companies removes the risk, ensures experts with knowledge of a particular vehicle clear everything properly and completely and provide an insurance-backed audit trail for full peace of mind."

The VDC service is priced per vehicle in the 'tens of pounds', although Chauhan said an exact price per car is determined by volume.

He concluded: "It is a question of determining the level of risk and the impact a data breach could have on a company. Clearing data from vehicles is no exception."



*"Fleets should work with their defleet providers"*

Caroline Sandall,  
ESE Consulting  
and ACFO

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# Leasing's top talents recognised at the prestigious FN50 dinner

FN50 shows combined risk fleet of top leasing companies exceeds 1.7m vehicles



By Gareth Roberts

Leading figures from the vehicle leasing industry, the sector's best customer service teams and the profession's brightest talents were recognised at the FN50 dinner in London last week.

Former Lex Autolease boss Tim Porter was given the 2018 John Leigh outstanding achievement award, while SHB chairman Mike Street was inducted into the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame.

The event marked the unveiling of the FN50

listing, the annual guide to the largest leasing companies in the UK, including detailed analysis of the state of the fleet industry alongside the key issues facing suppliers and their customers.

It reveals that the sector's top 50 leasing companies have a combined risk fleet of 1,740,877 cars and vans, an increase on last year's total of 1,686,866 vehicles.

Lex Autolease retained top spot with 387,640 cars and vans, while Volkswagen Financial Services increased its risk fleet from 166,480 to 194,599 units to take second place from LeasePlan UK (169,695), which was ranked third.

Porter, who retired from Lex Autolease at the end of October, received the 2018 John Leigh outstanding achievement award, after growing the leasing giant's fleet by 100,000 vehicles. He has also ensured it is the leading leasing company in alternative fuels, with more than 18,000 electric and hybrid vehicles on fleet. He was instrumental in the creation of a £1 million

fund to offer contributions of £1,000 towards the cost of 1,000 electric vehicles.

Meanwhile, SHB chairman Street was recognised for some 50 years in the business by gaining entry into the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame.

Street started working in the family building business, after school and during the holidays, helping to maintain records of plant movements and sourcing hire opportunities for any equipment not being utilised.

He spotted a gap in the market, which led to the family business extending its interests into

*"Lex Autolease retained top spot with 387,640 cars and vans"*

plant and vehicle hire. Fifty years later, the company has gone from hiring one Land Rover to having a portfolio of 17,500 diverse assets and 830 employees at 16 depots across the UK.

FN50 also revealed that after an eight-year reign, the outgoing BMW 3 Series had lost its crown as the most reliable contract hire car to the Honda Civic. However, the German manufacturer did retain its 'most reliable manufacturer' title for the fourth consecutive year.

Mercedes-Benz yet again dominated the FN50 van reliability survey, continuing its reign as the leasing industry's most reliable van manufacturer. The Sprinter also continued its stronghold as the most dependable van, ranking first.

Alphabet (GB) and Arval took customer service honours.

Nominated by their employers and supported with customer testimonials, the staff members and teams were rewarded for their efforts to go above and beyond in their dedication to customer service.

Arval senior account manager Ian Walden won this year's individual customer service award, while Caroline Spackman, account manager also at Arval, was highly commended.

Walden has been with Arval for 16 years and works tirelessly to improve service excellence by ensuring product knowledge and customer focus is at the forefront of his team's performance.

Arval's Swindon corporate sales account team S5, which looks after almost 5,000 vehicles across 126 UK customers, won the team award.



Mike Street (left) was inducted into the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame by FN editor-in-chief Stephen Briers

Within Arval, the S5 team is a global account team winner and has a net promoter score way above the industry average.

Customers said the level of service is "brilliant", with account managers quickly picking up others' workloads during holidays.

Meanwhile, the rising star award went to Alphabet (GB) calculations team leader Sarah Sawyer, who has been behind a number of initiatives that have encouraged continuous improvement in customer satisfaction levels.

One customer praised her "great attitude" and said she is a "real asset" to Alphabet (GB).

"Nothing is ever too much trouble and her knowledge is second to none," said another.

Kelly Kane, head of contract management at Alphabet (GB), said that Sawyer is "extremely well regarded within the business and exhibits all the qualities one would expect from a leader".

More than 850 leasing industry professionals attended the FN50 dinner, raising in excess of £12,800 for the event's chosen charity, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

■ The FN50 2018 analysis and insight report is free with this issue.

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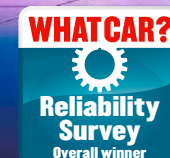
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# Almost one in four businesses carry out no grey fleet checks

Safety and emissions concerns rise as employees opt out of having a company car

By Gareth Roberts

**T**wo out of five employers fail to check the insurance of employees who drive their own car on business, while almost one in four (23.6%) carry out no checks at all.

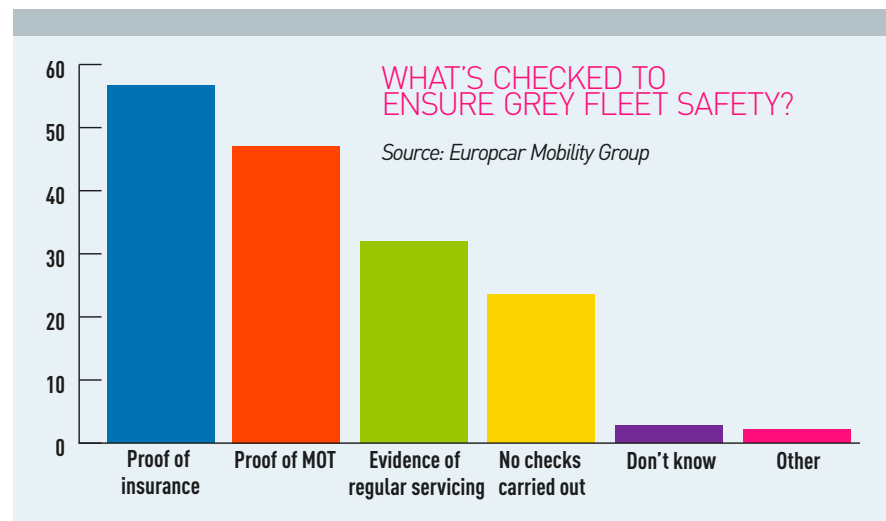
The findings, from a Europcar survey of 500 senior business decision-makers, also reveals more than half (52.9%) of respondents are failing to check for proof of a valid MOT and less than a third (31.9%) carry out roadworthiness checks.

It mirrors the results of research, commissioned by workforce management company BigChange and the road safety charity Brake, which was published to coincide with the launch of Leaders for Life, a new campaign to help business leaders promote safer driving at work.

It revealed that the grey fleet represents a significant area of vulnerability for employers, with one in five (19%) businesses making no checks in relation to grey fleet drivers.

It's an issue for employers, because in the event of a serious incident, police may seek evidence that robust policies and processes were in place to manage grey fleet risks.

Failure to provide an audit trail showing all



reasonable steps had been taken could result in a hefty fine if proved an employer had been negligent in its duty of care to its employees.

However, while 57% of business leaders surveyed in the BigChange survey said that road safety was 'very important' to the operation and reputation of their organisations, the figure increased to 63% when asked about cyber security matters.

Martin Port, CEO of BigChange, said: "More than 500 people are killed every year in the UK in crashes involving someone driving for work. Yet businesses believe cyber security to be more important than road safety and are more likely to spend time and money reducing the risk of being hacked than they are to cut the chances of their people killing someone in the course of their work."

Furthermore, the environmental impact of grey fleet vehicles is an issue that firms need to address as well as safety.

Grey fleet vehicles have an average age of 8.2 years and travel some 12 billion business miles each year. The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) says cutting grey fleet mileage by just 15% would be the equivalent of taking 225,000 cars off the road.

It is calling for a 50% reduction in grey fleet mileage and costs by 2020, and is urging ministers to help by highlighting the alternatives to grey fleet use and offering best practice guidance, particularly for public sector organisations.

There is also mounting concern that a lack of clarity around company car tax, with drivers who renew now not knowing the tax consequence beyond 2021, could persuade some to turn their back on the benefit.

Chancellor Philip Hammond is expected to provide greater clarity in the spring, but the

uncertainty in the interim will make it difficult for drivers and fleet decision-makers to commit to fleet replacements.

Ashley Barnett, head of consultancy at Lex Autolease, said: "Employees may decide that company cars are unattractive in light of this tax uncertainty, the unintended consequence being that many may be pushed towards a less-regulated grey fleet environment. In this scenario, higher emissions and safety issues create new challenges, and progress against the Government's Road to Zero strategy is slowed."

In its survey, Europcar says the company car still has a role to play for more than one in 10 businesses. There does, however, seem to be a trend towards more flexible benefits, it says, such as a travel allowance or discounts on products and services.

Flexible working hours, ranked first, was seen as one of the most important benefits by 52.5% of respondents, followed by regular pay reviews (31.7%) and a company pension (27.7%).

The company car was ranked ninth with 12.8% saying it was one of the most important benefits, just below a travel allowance (14.4%).

The company car is a higher priority for bigger businesses, with only 3% of those with less than 10 employees valuing it. It's a key focus for those with 100 to 249 employees (21%) and more than 500 staff (20%).

Interest in alternatives to the company car are certainly on the rise, with half of UK businesses interested in trying corporate mobility solutions, but just 2% would consider giving up their company cars, according to research from Arval.

When questioned, 48% of UK fleets said they would consider using car and ride sharing in the next three years, the highest percentage across the dozen European countries in the survey.



*"Businesses believe cyber security to be more important than road safety and are more likely to spend time and money reducing the risk of being hacked"*

Martin Port, BigChange

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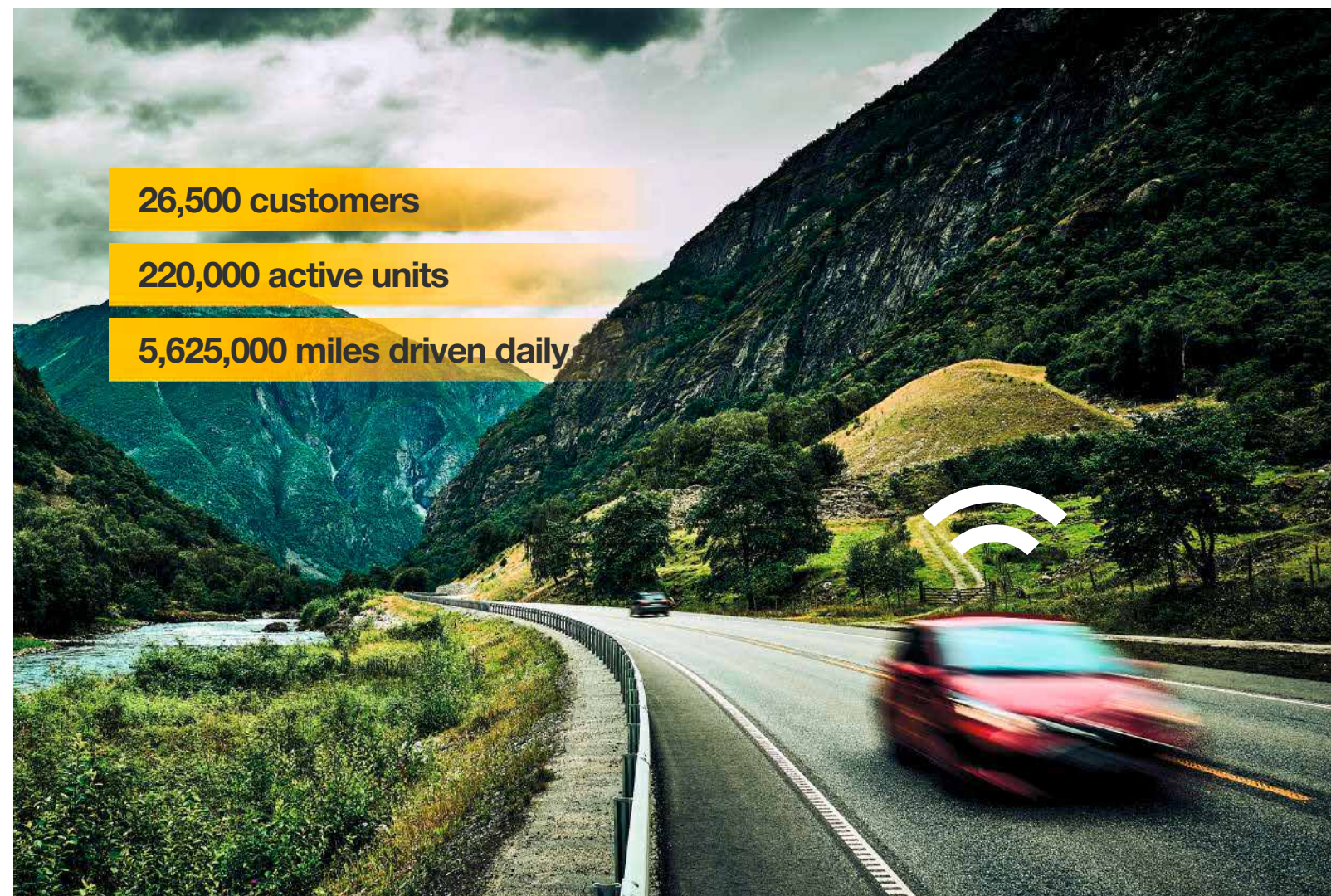
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# THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



We're usually glass half full folk, but going into a Budget always leaves us feeling glass half empty.

In this respect, Chancellor Philip Hammond didn't disappoint.

Despite all the lobbying by the fleet sector, including ourselves, there were few moments of cheer during one of the longest Budget statements on record.

No new BIK thresholds, no bringing forward of the 2% ULEV incentive, no certainty for fleets and drivers.

It wasn't entirely unexpected, not least with all the focus on Brexit.

There is still a lack of data around WLTP, with several carmakers yet to reveal figures, despite the September deadline. In addition, the Government has done little to analyse the figures that are available. Both are needed before a decision on BIK can be taken.

Meanwhile, on the 2% BIK for ULEVs, long lead times and supply shortages for many electric vehicles have convinced Hammond there is no point in taking action now.

Nevertheless, together with the £1,000 reduction in the plug-in car grant and the decision to exclude plug-in hybrids from the scheme, this decision will be a setback to the Government's Road to Zero strategy.

Fleet decision-makers remain in a state of limbo, unable to revise policy or advise their companies and drivers about the choices.

We will continue to lobby Government while it reviews the impact of WLTP on VED and company car tax in the hope that the Chancellor will announce new tax bands in the spring that will remedy any tax distortion caused by the new fuel testing regime.

**We were saddened to hear about the death of former BCA director and ICFM chairman Tom Madden, one of the true greats of the fleet sector. He was a visionary, talking as far back as 2006 about corporate travel managers, and we had the privilege of interviewing him on many occasions. The last time, following his retirement, saw Tom speak passionately about the "travesty" of senior management not recognising the "expertise and importance" of professional, fully-trained fleet decision-makers. He will be missed.**

## YOUR LETTERS

### ELECTRIC VEHICLES

## Surge in grant demand shows incentives work

#### Devon Guy wrote:

Having read 'Plug-in car grant cut early after exceptional demand' (fleetnews.co.uk, October 23), this is very disappointing and inconsistent messaging from Government and HMRC.

But should we be surprised?

If nothing else this remarkable increase in demand shows there is a direct correlation between tax incentives and incentivising green transport (as Norway and other countries can testify).

However, it is all a bit too late. An obvious compromise for HMRC would

be to bring the lower benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rates for electric and ultra-low emission vehicles forward to 2019/20, then offer either the plug-in grant or lower BIK benefit.

That way both individuals and businesses benefit equally and HMRC loses less revenue.

What has also been ignored in HMRC's calculations is that increased VAT and other indirect tax benefits from increased car sales, will offset these grants/incentive schemes.

A more business-like approach is desperately needed at HMRC.

EDITOR'S PICK



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

### VEHICLE EMISSIONS

## Common sense approach needed for emissions

#### Edward Handley wrote:

Having read 'Banning diesel too soon will slow ability to develop replacements' (fleetnews.co.uk, October 23), diesel bans are a blunt tool and, like all blunt tools, they tend to do more damage than good.

The latest diesels are remarkably clean, and are much cleaner than many petrol engines, so banning, say, Euro 5 diesels while permitting old petrol engines is ridiculous.

It is not just the age of the vehicle that is critical, it is also the way it is driven. Most modern vehicles have stop/start technology but many drivers do not understand the importance of it or do not like it, so either switch off the system, increasing pollution, or leave the vehicle in gear and so prevent it operating.

Cities also need to put their own houses in order. The biggest cause of pollution is congestion but many are obsessed with bus lanes, which reserve large portions of the road space for just a few buses an hour, or less in some notable cases, so dramatically increasing congestion.

They then have the nerve to blame drivers and businesses who work in their cities for pollution caused by their own flawed policies.

It is about time that some councillors and council chiefs realised that without businesses and customers that their towns and cities are doomed.

It is not just the internet that is killing our city centres, it is also politically motivated policies that put green painted dogma above common sense.

#### Norman Harding added:

We shouldn't be too quick to ban petrol or diesel because they still have potential to become cleaner through further development of the internal combustion engine (ICE) and the fuels potentially becoming cleaner by having the bad chemicals reduced/removed at the refinery or pre-combustion.

#### Concerned Citizen continued:

Wealthy people have more disposable income, so will find it easier to buy new petrol engine vehicles. The low-income families and small businesses will find it much more financially difficult.

Anyone trained in economics will recognise that diesel bans, financial penalties in clean air zones and low emission zones always harm small businesses and those on low incomes excessively and disproportionately.

### COMPANY CAR TAX

## Budget leaves fleets in the dark

#### Rosco wrote:

Having read 'No clarification on company car tax until spring 2019' (fleetnews.co.uk, October 29), well that was a surprise. No news, despite all the advice the Treasury has received about the issue. Perk car schemes, in particular, will either be closed or vehicle orders further postponed.

The damage this has to the motor industry will continue.

Unfortunately, it appears the Treasury simply does not understand the problem and is pushing a broken model. I suspect the delay is because of serious disagreements within the Treasury.

#### Sage & Onion added:

So, our choices right now seem to be to move to two-year life cycles, offer cash instead of a cleaner company car, or further delay setting car policies and delaying orders for another five months.

Thanks Mr Chancellor, you have no idea of the damage this is doing to the motor/fleet operator industry, and weren't car imports supposed to be a major bargaining chip in Brexit negotiations?

Or maybe that's the plan, to show the EU the damage that can be done to the likes of the Volkswagen Group, BMW, PSA and Renault by falling car sales as fleets hold back orders.

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**Burning question:**  
What's the best lesson you've learned from a work of fiction?

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**Find yourself a husband before you end up dying alone, half-eaten by an Alsatian** (Bridget Jones's Diary)

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**Just because something has always been done one way doesn't mean it's right** (Equal Rites, Terry Pratchett)

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**Pirates don't make good neighbours** (The Pirates Next Door)

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**It is possible to beat a 'system' that seems against you if you persevere and think outside the box as seen in Orr's escape to Sweden** (Catch-22)

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**Personal is not the same as important** (Men At Arms)

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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.

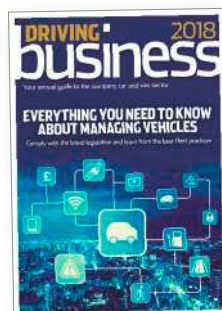
### Commercial Fleet magazine

*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](http://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 annual 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.

COMMENT

## FLEET OPINION

### BUDGET REACTION

## Days of company cars numbered?

By John Pryor

Is the Chancellor planning to kill the company car? It is a question fleet decision-makers and company car drivers could be forgiven for asking after Philip Hammond's failure to announce the long-term shape of benefit-in-kind (BIK) taxation.

In the build-up to his statement, ACFO, along with leaders of other fleet and motor industry representative groups, met with HMRC, Treasury and Department for Transport officials.

It was widely expected the Chancellor would announce company car BIK tax bands and rates beyond those already known – up to the end of 2020/21 financial year.

However, he postponed any announcement until next spring.

Furthermore, despite intensive lobbying, he ignored calls to perform a U-turn on company car BIK tax increases for zero and ultra-low emission vehicles in 2019/20 and 2020/21. That came on top of a pre-Budget announcement cutting the plug-in car grant.

From a fleet decision-maker and company car drivers' perspective the Budget provided absolutely no clarity and no basis for long-term planning, and further undermined the Government's 'green' agenda.

Indeed, by failing to make BIK announcements, Hammond has further fuelled the demise of the company car.

Figures published by HMRC already highlight a long-term reduction in the number of company car drivers and, simultaneously, a significant rise in the amount of tax paid by employees remaining loyal to what was once seen as arguably Britain's favourite employee perk.

As, specifically, perk drivers opt for cash instead of a car they will use that money to fund a vehicle that is older and less environmentally-friendly than the company car they were entitled to.

Six months – until spring 2019 – may not seem a long time, but for businesses and drivers it is long enough for some to conclude that company cars are history.

Will Hammond be the Chancellor who killed the company car? ACFO hopes not.



John Pryor  
ACFO chairman



Ashley Barnett,  
head of consultancy,  
Lex Autolease

### BUDGET REACTION

## Uncertainty adds to grey fleet risk

By Ashley Barnett

There was a sense of anticipation in the run-up to the Budget within Lex Autolease, among our customers and throughout fleet. Everyone was hopeful the Chancellor would bring some clarity, inject some confidence and give the country direction on its Road to Zero.

The early announcement of the continued fuel duty freeze was a welcome relief for businesses, but cuts to the plug-in car grant came as a surprise.

Rumours were circulating that the 2% BIK rate for pure electric vehicles might be brought forward. It wasn't to be.

This is the longest that the industry has not had sight of four years of company car taxation. Without visibility beyond 2020/21, fleet decision-makers don't have the confidence to build a strategy based around the average 48-month contract. People are unlikely to commit without assurance that the costs won't increase over its four-year lifetime.

The move from New European Driving Cycle (NEDC) values to NEDC-derived and, ultimately, the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP), also has unknown cost implications.

Emissions values are effectively increasing, which has implications for company car tax and VED. It is positive that more clarity will come in spring, but until then, uncertainty around the tax implications of WLTP will make it difficult for fleets and drivers to plan.

As significant purchasing decisions are being delayed and contracts extended until there is more clarity, new vehicle registrations are down. More employees are also moving towards a less-regulated grey fleet environment, delaying the uptake of ultra-low and zero-emission vehicles.

Fleets have been early adopters of the latest, cleanest and safest technology, but ongoing concerns in the market are limiting their potential to bring about sustainable change.

Carefully managed choice lists and relatively short renewal cycles not only help organisations manage their own emissions, but can also contribute positively towards wider Government targets around air quality, as well as feeding the 36 million-strong secondhand market with newer, cleaner models.



For more fleet opinion from the industry, visit [fleetnews.co.uk/opinion](http://fleetnews.co.uk/opinion)

*“Will Hammond be the Chancellor who killed the company car? ACFO hopes not”*

*“People are unlikely to commit without assurance that costs won't increase over four years”*





## ROUND FleetNews TABLE

# Roundtable addresses impact of electric vehicles and mobility

Fleet decision-makers also discuss cash or company car options and car clubs

By Andrew Ryan

**R**egistrations of plug-in electric vehicles have consistently hit record highs this year, with many organisations keen to adopt them for cost and environmental reasons.

The latest Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) figures show that this year up to the end of September, 44,854 were registered, 22% up on the same period in 2017.

This has been driven largely through lower costs for employers and employees, as well as improvements in vehicle capability and availability.

However, issues still remain over their suitability for many fleet roles and the EV charging infrastructure.

These were among the topics debated at a recent roundtable, sponsored by Shell, which took place at Oulton Hall Hotel, Leeds.

**Fleet News: What issues are you finding through introducing electrified vehicles on to your fleets?**

**Steve Wormald, finance director, Whitby Seafoods:** Thirty-one of our 50 vehicles are hybrid or electric now and people have done it because of the lower benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax. The company wins because of the first year allowances etc., but with the BIK taxes scaling up and becoming closer to petrol cars, and with hybrids costing about £10,000 more than the

equivalent petrol model, small fleets will start moving back in four or five years' time. We give the driver a choice and if they don't see that they will have more cash in their pockets, they are going to choose a petrol car because it will save them money. The electric vehicle charging infrastructure is also terrible.

**Steven Openshaw, group fleet and transport manager, Eric Wright Group:** I've been driving electric vehicles for six years. The way I looked at it was that it was going to save me a fortune, but I could also pilot the technology and show our

*"We found a lot of our perk drivers are saying that they can't get the same benefit from having a car as they used to and it is getting very expensive for them"*

*Damion Bennett, GE Global Operations*

drivers that they could live with EVs. You need to have an EV champion, or a few EV champions, in your company who use them and they can talk to other drivers about their experiences.

**Damion Bennett, fleet manager, GE Global Operations:** Before you implement an electric vehicle strategy you need to make sure you've thought about what you're getting yourself into.

**Samantha Ryall, purchasing manager, B Braun Medical:** We are right at the start of introducing electric cars. We will get some demonstrators in for drivers to try, but a big concern of ours is the driver behaviour. We know drivers are going to choose the car for the lower BIK tax, but if they don't charge the cars that could actually increase our fuel cost (on hybrids). We need to look at how we can incorporate charging into a strategy.

**Steven Openshaw:** For me, the biggest point here is the fully funded driver who gets a fuel card so it doesn't matter if they charge up or not because they will get all their fuel paid for. Our car drivers are on a pay and reclaim system and that makes them drive more economically. They put a business mileage claim in and we pay them at the Government's advisory fuel rates for the equivalent petrol engine. If they want to flog the car and burn through fuel they are just going to hit themselves in the pocket, but if they drive economically they are either going to break even or possibly be in credit.

**FN: Is anyone finding that drivers are taking the cash option instead of a company car?**

**Damion Bennett:** We found a lot of our perk drivers are saying that they can't get the same benefit from having a car as they used to and it is getting very expensive for them. We are trying to come up with alternative solutions like affinity schemes. We don't see many of the perk drivers re-ordering in the next couple of years. That may change post 2020, but right now it's too expensive for them, especially for those where it is not the main family car or they are not doing a lot of mileage.

**Caroline Newton, European fleet specialist, Smith & Nephew:** We have a couple of hundred perk car drivers and we've removed the option of cars to them this year. They'll go to cash at the end of their contracts.

**Paul Tate, commodity manager, Siemens:** We offered our perk drivers the option to take the cash or a car, but if they took the car it had to be an ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV). We did that because if you go for anything with CO<sub>2</sub> of 75g/km or above then you enter into the new OpRA financing regulations where the employee gets taxed on whichever is the greater of the cash sum sacrificed or the BIK tax for the car. You also have the complications of trying to explain to the employee why their tax bill has gone up one year, down the next and then up again, and it is just something you don't need. If you stop at ULEV or cash for perk drivers and contract hire for anyone else, that removes that complexity.

**Steven Openshaw:** We made it so whichever option our drivers took, it would be cash-neutral for us.

**FN: What impact has the move towards mobility had on your fleet operation?**

**Damion Bennett:** Historically, fleet has always been separate from the travel team, but the business is going through a restructure and, as part

## DELEGATES



**Karl Brown,**  
director, NEP  
Nationwide Express



**Paul Tate,**  
commodity manager,  
Siemens



**Tom Ford,**  
fleet administrator,  
Walker Fire UK



**John Holford,**  
field-based account  
manager, Shell



**Simon Binks,**  
fleet manager,  
Innserve



**Steve Wormald,**  
finance director,  
Whitby Seafoods



**Tony Deus,**  
engineering services  
manager,  
Merseyside Police



**Caroline Newton,**  
European fleet  
specialist,  
Smith & Nephew



**Lesley Bond,**  
category lead,  
HMRC



**Claire Richardson,**  
fleet manager,  
B Braun Medical



**Stephen Jackson,**  
head of plant  
and transport,  
O'Connor Plant



**Samantha Ryall,**  
purchasing  
manager,  
B Braun Medical



**Helen Maurier,**  
fleet manager,  
officer, WDH



**Damion Bennett,**  
fleet manager, GE  
Global Operations



**Steven Openshaw,**  
group fleet and  
transport manager,  
Eric Wright Group



**Janet Banks,**  
senior commercial  
manager, HMRC



**Mick Sweetmore,**  
head of fleet,  
Merseyside Police



**Mike Inkson,**  
field-based account  
manager, Shell

of the revised strategy, we are grouping the teams together. We will have a combined travel and fleet sourcing team and a travel and fleet operations team. We will be combining trains, planes, cars, hotels, rental – everything. It is early days and there are still a lot of considerations, but it will be a mobility team in the future.

**Janet Banks, senior commercial manager, HMRC:** What you need is a combined tool so for mobility you put your journey in and it combines vehicles and trains to give you the best mobility solution.

**Paul Tate:** I think the success of a mobility solution will be regionalised. Places like London will be prime for it: if you are living in London you will probably be working in London, the transport infrastructure is there, it is reliable and easy to get around. If you are looking at offering a mobility solution to someone who lives in a rural area then it is more of a challenge. For example, it would probably take me two-and-a-half hours on a bus or train to get from home to where I work in Manchester, but only 30 minutes if I went by car. That's a massive difference.

**Steven Openshaw:** In Britain we don't have the public network infrastructure and until we get that, the mobility thing won't work.

**Paul Tate:** Cities will be in a different league for mobility. We have got 50 members of staff in London who have got a budget because they don't want a car as there's nowhere to park.

**Damion Bennett:** If you think about a traditional company car driver, like an engineer, asking them to pick up a car using a 'mobility' card would not be suitable because of the equipment they carry.

**FN: Does anybody use car clubs or have a corporate car sharing scheme?**

**Claire Richardson, fleet manager, B Braun Medical:** We have three AlphaCity corporate car sharing scheme cars for non-company car drivers to use to save on rental or having pool cars. Drivers need to have a membership card and can use an online booking system to reserve a car. That works really well and has enabled us to get rid of all our spare cars.

**Paul Tate:** The only concern I've got in relation to car shares and multiple users is the duty of care as an employer. You don't have to only weigh up the financial benefit of having these vehicle shares, but you also have to consider who else is using them and how. Can you control that, and what is the state of the vehicle when your employee gets into it?



FleetNews

AWARDS  
2019

# SEVEN PERSONAL AND BUSINESS PERKS OF ENTERING THE FLEET NEWS AWARDS

**F**leet News reveals seven perks of entering its prestigious awards in March 2019 that you probably didn't know about.

The awards, now in its 31th year, represents the pinnacle of fleet achievement. Last year saw 1,400 guests don their glad rags and celebrate the industry's success – and this year is set to be even bigger.

Given the ever-growing popularity of the event, we decided to clue you in on seven things about the Fleet News Awards 2019 you may not have known ahead of the November 23 entry deadline:

## THE SUBMISSION FORMS ARE MUCH SHORTER

Thanks to feedback on the entry process, we have shortened the entry form, making it easier for fleets to submit their application in no time at all.

Gone are the days when making a Fleet News Awards submission would have you reaching for the coffee!

## A FREE INVITE TO THE AWARDS NIGHT, COURTESY OF FLEET NEWS

It seems only fair that if a fleet decision-maker is shortlisted for an award, then they should be treated to free entry to the Grosvenor Hotel, London on March 20, 2019.

## NO NEED TO BOOK A HOTEL

There's no need to fret about finding a hotel in London, because we will put you up (courtesy of Škoda). Now you can rest assured, as any fleet decision-makers shortlisted will be given the full VIP treatment, including a free meal and a free hotel.

## AFTER-DINNER ENTERTAINMENT

The likes of Jimmy Carr, Al Murray and Marcus Brigstocke are among the long list of comedians who have entertained guests at the Fleet News Awards and next year's, as yet unnamed, comedian will no doubt be equally brilliant and hilarious. If you haven't already guessed, this is also included in our 'shortlisters' freebie' package. It is often said that the best things in life are free...

## A COMPLIMENTARY THREE-COURSE MEAL WITH A BOTTLE OF WINE

We wouldn't dream of having a shortlisted fleet decision-maker foot the bill for their own dinner. Let *Fleet News* pick up the cheque while you enjoy a delicious three-course meal, complete with a bottle of wine – on the house.

## THE CHANCE TO WIN A PRESTIGIOUS AND SOUGHT-AFTER TROPHY

Whether it will be on your mantelpiece at home or taking pride of place in the office, attendees

will be in with a chance of taking one of these coveted awards away. Simply being shortlisted can boost staff morale and increase the likelihood of winning new business; you'll be unstoppable if you win!

## EXCLUSIVELY FEATURED IN FLEET NEWS

We like to show off our winners and highlight all of their hard work and contributions to the industry. Every winner is interviewed and featured in the magazine.

The deadline for fleet submissions is rapidly approaching (November 23), and many are due to miss out on the perks of being shortlisted.

Increase your chances of winning an award by entering at [awards.fleetnews.co.uk](http://awards.fleetnews.co.uk).

Who knows, maybe you will be treated to a free night of luxury courtesy of *Fleet News*.

NOW OPEN  
FOR ENTRIES AT:  
[fleetnewsawards.com](http://fleetnewsawards.com)

## AWARDS 2019 TIMELINE

NOVEMBER 23 2018

Entry deadline for  
all categories  
(no extensions given)

MID-DECEMBER 2018

Entries to  
judges

JANUARY 23-24 2019

Judging day for  
manufacturer and  
supplier awards

JANUARY

30-31 2019  
Fleet manager  
interviews take place

MID-FEBRUARY 2019

Shortlist  
revealed

MARCH 20 2019

Winners announced  
at Fleet News Awards  
ceremony

## THE CATEGORIES

### FLEET AWARDS

#### Fleet of the Year – up to 1,000 vehicles

2018 winner: Freedom Group of Companies  
*Sponsored by Reflex*

#### Fleet of the Year – 1,001-plus vehicles

2018 winner: Royal Mail  
*Sponsored by Zenith*

#### Most Improved Fleet

2018 winner: Rexel UK

#### Safe Fleet Award

2018 winner: Skanska UK

#### Ultra-low Emission Fleet

2018 winner (Eco Fleet Award): Farmdrop  
*Sponsored by BMW (UK)*

#### Travel and Mobility Initiative – NEW FOR 2018

### MANUFACTURER AWARDS

#### Best Small Car

2018 winner: Ford Fiesta

#### Best Lower Medium Car

2018 winner: Volkswagen Golf

#### Best Upper Medium Car

2018 winner: Škoda Superb

#### Best Compact SUV

2018 winner: Volkswagen T-Roc

#### Best Mid-size SUV

2018 winner: Škoda Karoq

#### Best People Carrier

2018 winner: Ford S-Max

#### Best Compact Premium Car

2018 winner: Audi A3

#### Best Premium Car

2018 winner: Audi A4

#### Best Executive Car

2018 winner: BMW 5 Series

#### Best Zero Emission Car

2018 winner: BMW i3

#### Green Fleet Manufacturer

2018 winner: Toyota (GB)

#### Most Improved Fleet Manufacturer

2018 winner: Seat UK

### SUPPLIER AWARDS

#### Leasing Company – up to 20,000 vehicles

2018 winner: Marshall Leasing

#### Leasing Company – more than 20,000 vehicles

2018 winner: Alphabet (GB)

#### Rental Company of the Year

2018 winner: Enterprise Rent-A-Car  
*Sponsored by Interactive Fleet Management*

#### Customer Service Award

2018 winner: FMG

#### Fleet Dealer of the Year

2018 winner: TrustFord

### HEADLINE AWARDS

#### Fleet Manager of the Year

2018 winner: Julie Madoui

#### Fleet Supplier of the year

2018 winner: The AA  
*Sponsored by Hyundai Motor UK*

#### New Company Car of the Year

2018 winner: BMW 5 Series  
*Sponsored by Halfords Autocentres*

#### Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

2018 winner: Mercedes-Benz  
Cars UK  
*Sponsored by KeeResources*

#### Fleet Champion of the Year – NEW FOR 2018

#### Fleet News Hall of Fame

2018 winners: Phil Clifford/  
Maurice Elford



Awards sponsored by

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [FLEETNEWSAWARDS.COM](http://FLEETNEWSAWARDS.COM) OR CONTACT EMMA BUNCE ON 01733 395133 OR [EMMA.BUNCE@BAUERMEDIA.CO.UK](mailto:EMMA.BUNCE@BAUERMEDIA.CO.UK)



# SUPPLIERS GO THE EXTRA MILE TO KEEP US ON TRACK

Silverstone is home to the British Formula 1 Grand Prix, but it also hosts many other high-speed events throughout the year. Having a reliable fleet is a must.

*John Maslen* reports

# S

ome of the richest people in the world visit the iconic Silverstone race circuit in Northamptonshire each year. But, when it comes to operating the fleet that keeps

the races on track, every penny counts.

The venue is home to the Formula 1 British Grand Prix, the UK's largest single day sporting event, which this year saw 350,000 people watch Lewis Hamilton just beaten to the chequered flag by Sebastian Vettel.

Across the year, the circuit plays host to more than a million visitors who come to watch hundreds of races and events.

But keeping the circuit operational and the crowds safe and well-fed requires an army of staff in addition to a fleet that is a world away from the high-tech machines that grace the track.

The job of sourcing the right cars and vans to keep the circuit moving falls to procurement and contracts manager Lee Thomas.

This isn't his first role in the motor racing world. Thomas spent seven years with the Honda Formula 1 team, based in Brackley.

He also acquired important purchasing experience during previous roles in the food and beverage industry.

This provides valuable insight for the wide-ranging roles the fleet plays at Silverstone, with vehicles used for several purposes, from

fire tenders to fast response ambulances, VIP transport, relocating temporary structures and support for on-site catering across its 600 acres.

There are around 200 vehicles in the Silverstone fleet, mostly commercial vehicles including 4x4s, which can be multi-use or allocated to specific departmental roles.

They rarely leave the circuit and cover relatively low mileage during their four-year lifecycle, driving as little as 3,500 miles per year. A range of funding methods are used to acquire the fleet, from outright to hire purchase, leasing and even contra deals with manufacturers keen to expose their brands to the thousands of fans at the circuit.

Thomas says: "People want to be seen here. It's a showcase."

Sourcing is typically through traditional channels and Thomas relies on the support of suppliers to provide the expertise needed to acquire the best vehicles for the right price.

He says: "We aim to work with suppliers that understand the unique requirements of the fleet and can support us in getting the best fit for our needs. This recently led to us changing fleet management suppliers."

He was impressed by the proactive approach of Bradford-based JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions (VLS), a stand-alone business within dealer group JCT600.

The dealer group sells many of the world's most respected brands including Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, BMW/Mini, Ferrari,

Maserati, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Vauxhall and Volkswagen.

It also has a racing heritage as the business was founded by renowned rally driver, Jack Tordoff, who won the Circuit of Ireland Rally in 1973.

However, it was the attention to detail and support, when engaging drivers in the procurement process that secured backing from Thomas.

JCT600 VLS proactively discussed fleet management ideas with Thomas to secure a place on a supplier shortlist. Its support included hosting a demonstration day to showcase different brands and models to obtain driver feedback.

Thomas says: "JCT600 went the extra mile. They were keen to meet face-to-face and really wanted to look into our requirements. They suggested manufacturers that were the best fit and were also involved in getting us the best deal."

"It is important to get drivers' views on vehicle choices as they will be using them every day and will be able to identify any issues with a particular model. Their feedback is very important."

"We were extremely impressed by the amount of hard work and time JCT600 VLS put in and the on-site demo day it organised enabled personnel from our various departments to try out a number of makes and models for themselves."

Paul Walters (left), managing director of JCT600 VLS, with Lee Thomas, procurement and contracts manager for Silverstone





## FACTFILE

**Fleet:** Silverstone Race Circuit  
**Fleet size:** 200  
**Cars:** Ford (plus Aston Martin, Ferrari and single seat racing cars)  
**Commercial vehicles:** Mitsubishi and Renault  
**Funding:** Mixed  
**Key supplier:** JCT600 VLS



He adds: "JCT600 VLS helped me to do my job. It took our requirements and wanted to help us. I trusted it to get us to the point of delivery. It has continued to provide a high level of personal service."

This trust is a vital aspect in choosing suppliers, as the seasonal nature of the circuit means delays can be costly.

Vehicles had to be delivered within a tight time period and their arrival had to coincide with the removal of the old fleet.

Thomas adds: "JCT600 VLS made the transition easy when it could have been quite difficult ordering these vehicles and getting them delivered within four-six weeks."

"We don't have a lot of spare vehicles, so the change had to be concise and reliable."

So far, JCT600 has supplied just short of 40 vehicles – 21 Mitsubishi L200 pick-up trucks, two refrigerated Renault vans, one Ford Focus and 15 Renault Master vans and Kangoo Maxi vans.

Paul Walters, managing director for JCT600 VLS, says: "We were also able to work within Silverstone's time frame, with the vehicles ordered, liveried and delivered within just three months."

A majority of the fleet has been fitted with hands-free kits and parking sensors to minimise incident damage.

If a collision occurs, its cause is reviewed and plans laid to avoid repeats. Silverstone also collects eye witness statements.

JCT600 VLS provides an online portal for maintenance scheduling and management.

General repairs and servicing arrangements are managed by an in-house fleet assistant, while suppliers are kept engaged with quarterly reviews, where any issues are raised and also vehicle requirements are

considered ahead of annual budget meetings.

One of the most important roles for the fleet at Silverstone is related to safety, as vehicles will be the critical platform for first responders in the event of an incident.

Track safety equipment is carried by single cab pick-ups, acting as fire tenders and emergency response. Every corner on the circuit has a fire tender when the track is live, totalling 18 vehicles.

In addition, the fleet includes crew cabs with Truckman tops that are used for carrying stretchers and cutting equipment.

Although they carry out a number of specialist roles, the vehicles themselves are standard models without modifications.

Firefighting equipment is transferable, with Silverstone ensuring that any new models have the right size of flatbeds. Thomas adds: "We buy the base vehicle and make sure it fits our equipment by providing the measurements."

*"JCT600 VLS made the transition easy when it could have been quite difficult ordering these vehicles"*

Lee Thomas, Silverstone



For more fleet profiles, visit:  
[fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles](http://fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles)

For visibility, vehicles may be fitted with additional equipment, including yellow and even blue beacons if they are needed for emergency response.

Emergency vehicles are only used on the private land around the track, so they can be fitted with blue flashing lights, which are prohibited on public roads.

It is unusual for any civilian vehicle to have blue lights, so the circuit had to confirm that vehicles would not be used on the road and provide confirmation to both JCT600 and dealers involved in delivery before they would agree to fit them.

Their use is valuable if emergency vehicles are called into action on race days, as it ensures immediate recognition from pedestrians to reduce vehicle travelling time around the site.

As part of the development of the emergency fleet, Silverstone is currently specifying new ambulances and fast response vehicles that are fitted with refrigeration equipment. These will allow them to transport drugs and other emergency medical supplies that need to be kept cool.

The fleet is currently all diesel and it uses on-site refuelling supplied by Gulf, with Thomas saying that electric vehicles are on the radar, but the timing is not yet right.

"Electric vehicles are definitely something important we need to look at and I have looked at electric vans, but the build quality wasn't there for this cycle. It is definitely something for the future," he says.

Energy capacity is currently being expanded across the Silverstone site, as it is adding new leisure facilities and an experience centre from 2019.

Thomas says: "EVs make sense, but there is a question over how we get there. I think it is an issue for the whole industry."

## FLEET SHOPPING LIST INCLUDES ASTON MARTINS AND FERRARIS

Among his fleet buying responsibilities, Lee Thomas acquires some of the most desirable – and quickest – cars on the planet.

Its Silverstone Experience fleet currently includes 10 Aston Martin DB11s and 10 Ferrari F430s, along with 20 single-seater open-wheel racing cars.

Funding is usually through hire purchase and the fleet is 10 years old, with vehicles

typically doing 6,000 miles a year.

Thomas says: "They are kept to a very strict maintenance regime, with frequent changes to brake discs, oil and tyres. Parts, including the discs, are also updated and because we keep them so well, they remain in good condition and reliable."

Aston Martin recently announced it was making the Silverstone circuit its home for

testing and development, with the opening of a new test centre.

To celebrate the arrival of Aston Martin at the circuit, Silverstone has purchased a full fleet of the brand new V8 Vantage sports car. Seven of the 510PS, 4.0-litre twin turbo sports cars that can reach 60mph in 3.7 secs are now available for driving experience customers.

# FleetNews

## EVENTS



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# BMW-DAIMLER JOINT VENTURE WILL TAKE MOBILITY 'TO NEXT LEVEL'

As arch-rivals await US approval to team up and take on Uber, BMW's Tony Douglas says the mobility revolution is gathering pace. *Sarah Tooze* reports

**T**ony Douglas, head of brand, BMW Group Mobility Services, likes to tell anecdotes. About his mum in his Scottish homeland who makes use of on-demand buses (a simple phone call gets her taken directly to the city rather than waiting around at a bus stop); his kids, who have a range of travel options, not just "dad's taxi"; and about the time he drove down a narrow lane getting a "hand massage" from a rival car's steering wheel when he couldn't turn the lane departure warning off.

But the anecdote that may resonate most with businesses comes from his first few weeks at BMW, more than 15 years ago.

He had a meeting in downtown Munich and

decided to use the city's S-Bahn train service to get there.

He was met by his displeased boss, who bellowed: "Douglas! You're working for a car manufacturer, next time take the car to the meeting."

Today, no one would bat an eyelid if an employee chose to use public transport to get to a meeting. Businesses would rather staff used the 'smartest' mode of travel and even to question whether a face-to-face meeting is necessary or whether a tele or video conference could take place instead.

BMW Group Mobility Services would prefer you to get to the meeting using DriveNow – the brand's flexible car-sharing service – or, if you're in China or America, its on-demand service, ReachNow.

The merger of BMW Group and Daimler AG's respective mobility services businesses

has been approved by the European Commission (see [fleetnews.co.uk/November 9](http://fleetnews.co.uk/November 9)) but was still awaiting the greenlight by the anti-trust authorities in America as *Fleet News* went to press.

When it does, Daimler's Car2go and Moovel will be added to BMW's car-sharing and on-demand mobility mix in Europe.

The deal will also mean combined ride hailing services, parking and electric vehicle charging.

It's an interesting move considering BMW and Daimler have been fierce rivals for the past 100 years.

But Douglas points out that they will remain competitors in their core businesses, saying "we're not going to work together to build cars".

However, bringing together their mobility offerings in a 50/50 joint venture allows them to scale their businesses.

"We're doing okay but we're not at critical mass in the market, we're nowhere near Uber," he says. "That's why both parties (BMW and Daimler) looked at each other and said 'well, actually we could do this together, it would make a lot more sense to take us to the next level'."

When BMW started its mobility services business eight years ago it had just five employees. Today that has grown to almost 1,000 and it has a global customer base of more than 26 million for its brands DriveNow, ReachNow, ParkNow and ChargeNow.

DriveNow operates in nine countries and has brought new customers to BMW and Mini (85% of its customer base were not in touch with the brands beforehand).

ParkNow operates in 11 countries (in the UK it is branded as Parkmobile and RingGo), and ChargeNow is in more than 100.

DriveNow and ParkNow are primarily B2C (business to consumer) while ChargeNow is B2B (business to business), aimed at providing charging solutions to other OEMs.

Fleet customers are mainly served through Alphabet's corporate car sharing service, AlphaCity, although DriveNow does have business customers.

Being in mobility services is a logical

## FACTFILE

**Organisation:** BMW Group Mobility Services

**Head of brand, marketing and communications:** Tony Douglas

**Brands:** DriveNow, ReachNow, ParkNow, ChargeNow

**Fleet size:** More than 6,000

progression for BMW. Douglas says the brand started in the "owning economy" (the "business of selling cars for cash"), got into the "financing economy" with the launch of BMW Financial Services in 1971, and is now heading to the "on-demand economy".

The latter is attractive because it's no longer about selling "one customer one car". Instead, "you're basically selling one car a thousand times", he says.

While major corporates won't move away entirely from providing one company car to one driver, Douglas believes the next generation of employees will demand choice, particularly in urban areas.

He points out that there are already international companies which give employees a 'mobility budget' instead of a company car or a cash allowance.

Alphabet has customers in the Netherlands, for example, who give employees a set amount per month to lease a car or to use public transport.

That's due to the Netherlands having joined-up public transport infrastructure and "a real congestion issue", Douglas says.

"If you've got that kind of pain on the roads, you're pretty keen to find solutions and to drive change and, this sounds simple and it's not, you either need a very strong vision or the pain is high enough. If the pain is high enough, people will change."

He adds: "I always thought London was going to go through enough pain, but somehow it keeps on going..."

Cities, Douglas says, are concerned with "increasing throughput" because "if you can't move around the city, the city slowly dies. No one comes there, lives there or invests there".

That is intrinsically linked to air quality.

"Sustainability is a big issue and it's always been underestimated," Douglas says. "If you cannot breathe [clean] air in the city it's just not the place to be and I think it's correct that the authorities are clamping down on the air quality issue."

"People are talking about electric mobility, but it's all about clean air, to be honest."

Oxford has already proposed a 'zero emis-



*"If you've got that kind of pain on the roads (as experienced in the Netherlands), you're pretty keen to find solutions"*

Tony Douglas, BMW Group Mobility Services

sion zone' in its city centre, starting with some vehicle types and a small number of streets in 2020, and expanding to all vehicle types across the whole city centre in 2035, and Douglas believes others will follow.

DriveNow has experienced the push for electric vehicles (EVs) from cities.

"If I didn't have electric cars on the fleet no city would let me in to operate my business," Douglas says.

Currently, 15% of the DriveNow fleet of more than 6,000 vehicles is electric. In Copenhagen alone it put in 350 BMW i3s "overnight", which "changed the whole landscape of that city", Douglas says.

BMW could make the DriveNow fleet 100% electric now "if we wanted to burn lots of money".

"The only way to do this stuff sustainably is to make money out of it," Douglas says. "We can't just play the good guy and finance a whole bunch of it and then go bust. No one

gains from that so it's trying to get a sustainable offering as soon as possible. We fleet in as many [EVs] as we can as soon as we can."

He adds: "When we get the next generation (of electric cars) out, when the cars can be driven four or five times longer than they are now, that would help a lot."

Working with city authorities, particularly the London boroughs, involves "talking, talking, talking", according to Douglas.

BMW has a team called the Center of Competence Urban Mobility which meets with city representatives.

"Basically we try to set up public-private partnerships with the city," Douglas says. "We say 'we're quite prepared to invest upfront to bring electric cars into your city, if you can guarantee you will accelerate your building and roll out of electrical charging infrastructure and re-dedicate parking towards shared fleets'."

DriveNow recently had a breakthrough with five London boroughs – Barnet, Brent, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Westminster – granting it an operating licence (see [fleetnews.co.uk/November 5](http://fleetnews.co.uk/November 5)).

This will see the fleet grow by another 410 vehicles to 720 in total and extend DriveNow to nine boroughs (the others are Hackney, Haringey, Islington, and Waltham Forest).

Eighty i3s will join the fleet in January (in addition to the 50 EVs already on the fleet).

BMW benefits from having EVs in use with DriveNow as it is a way to do market research and to accelerate their awareness.

As Douglas points out "it's not your typical 20-minute test drive round the block".

He admits that when DriveNow launched it was "too cheap" and it is now positioned as 'premium mobility'.

"We upped the price and there was hardly any impact on the business," he says.

"You've got to position this as a lifestyle choice and not a utility. We'd always try to position ourselves as being a slightly premium offering, that is what BMW Group has always been doing, we play to our strengths."

■ What does Douglas think of autonomous vehicles? See [fleetnews.co.uk/bmw-mobility](http://fleetnews.co.uk/bmw-mobility)





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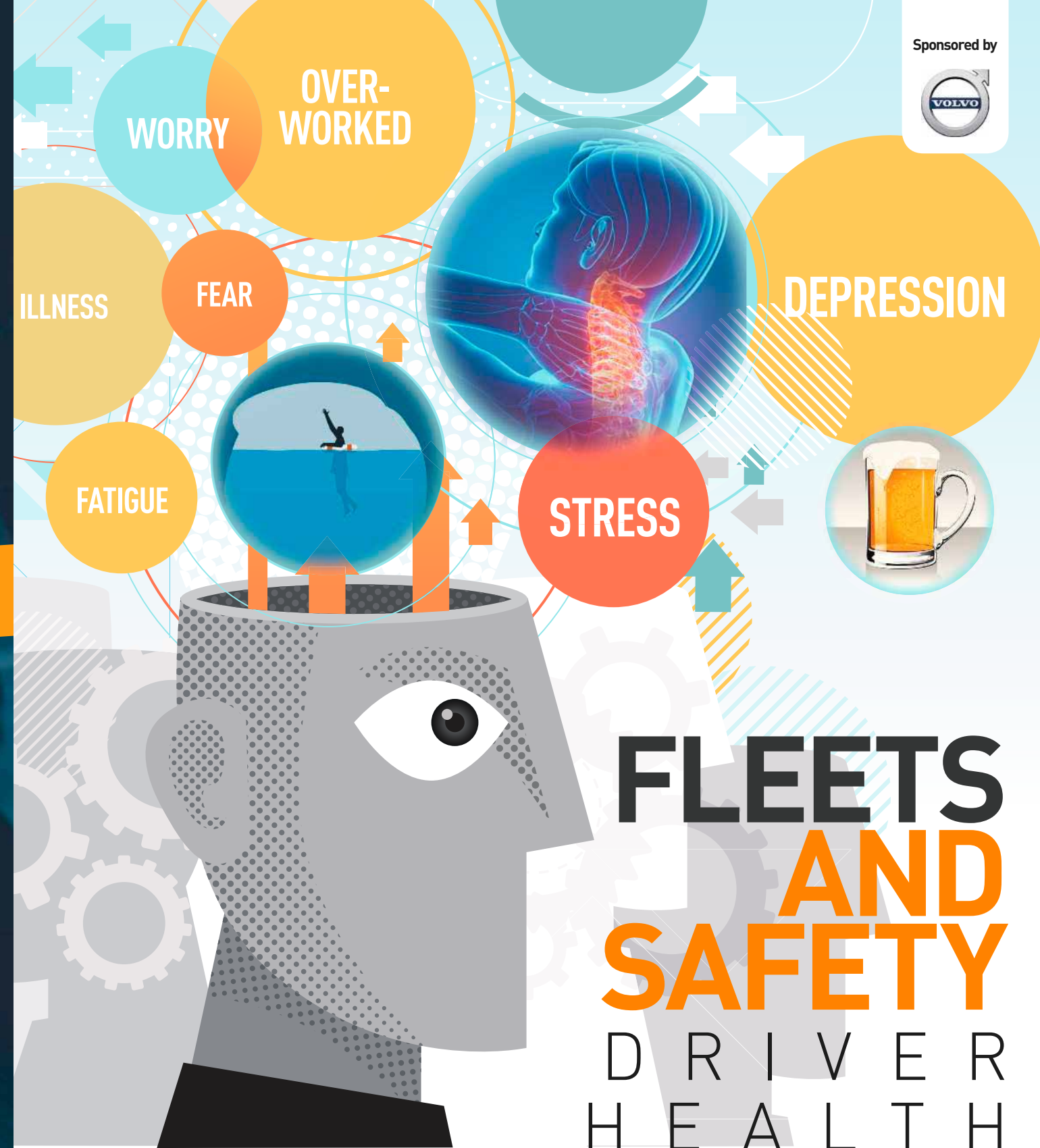
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# FLEETS AND SAFETY DRIVER HEALTH

Do you have the right policies in place to support your drivers? In this nine-page guide we look at the legal – and moral – expectations of being a good employer

## INSIDE

### 36 | How are you?

It's a simple question which could help improve the mental well-being – and performance – of drivers

### 41 | Fit to drive?

Ensuring drivers are in good health has an important part to play in road safety

### 43 | Drink/drug-driving

Driving under the influence costs lives. We look at the law and policies fleet operators should implement

### 46 | Safety of cyclists

During its annual road safety week, charity Brake is urging fleets to be Bike Smart and protect cyclists



# HOW ARE YOU?

A simple question, but one which could help improve the mental well-being – and performance – of your drivers. *Andrew Ryan* reports

If a vehicle develops a fault or is damaged in some way, then both the problem and the fix are usually simple to identify. However, if a driver is under-performing then the reasons why may not be as clear.

"If I came to work with a broken leg, you'd see the plaster," says Andy Neale, director of driver risk management company NFE Group. "If I came to work stressed, there may be no visible signs."

However stress – together with fatigue – is a major factor in the mental well-being of a driver. And if this is poor, then it can have a significant effect on their performance: stress, for example, means a driver will take more risks.

"Make no mistake, if you are not managing fatigue, stress and driver well-being, it is having an impact on your operation," says Paul Jackson, head of impairment research at TRL.

"There is a whole range of costs to the operation caused by poor driving performance.

"There is the bent metal costs, bumps and scrapes, damaged wing mirrors and increased insurance costs, while research in other industries has shown that tired and stressed drivers use up far more fuel."

There is also a human cost, which will not show up as obviously on an organisation's balance sheet. This can sometimes manifest itself through poor customer service, harming the reputation of the company, and usually leads to an employee unhappy in their work.

"Eventually people take days off sick," adds Jackson. "If people don't necessarily take days off through sickness, they will take days off just through absenteeism."

"And even those that are in the office or working may be guilty of presenteeism – they may be there, but they are not particularly functional."

"As we often say in the fatigue world, the lights are on, but nobody is home."

"Then we have people deciding 'do you know what, I've had enough of this' and so people leave, which means that recruitment and training costs go up."

Jackson says he spoke with a delivery company which recruits 150 drivers each week and puts them through a 12-week training programme.

However, within four weeks of completing the course, 75% of those employees were leaving the company.

"It costs £2,000 to put each person through that course: that's £300,000 a week being spent on training and recruitment only for most of those people to leave in less than a month, and this is part of their operational practice," says Jackson.

"No one had asked why they were spending £300,000 a week on this problem or if there was a better way of doing it."

"Their concern was that they were recruiting the wrong kind of people. The reality is that they were recruiting exactly the right kind of people, but their operational practices were wrong. Many organisations just don't get that."

He adds: "The sad reality is most people don't calculate the extent to which fatigue and stress are impacting on the bottom line."

## WHAT AFFECTS DRIVER WELL-BEING?

Stress and fatigue are the two major contributors to driver mental well-being, and these can be caused by factors both inside and outside work. "The thing with stress is that it doesn't matter where it comes from, it can be a problem at work," says Neale.

Possible sources can be a poor work/life balance, domestic/personal issues, poor work organisation and uncertain roles and the demands of the job.



## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

Steve Beattie, head of business sales, Volvo Car UK



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Issues which are more specific to drivers are unrealistic delivery schedules, congestion and the behaviour of other drivers.

Stress can impair sleep quality, which increases the likelihood of fatigue, which, in turn, can heighten feelings of stress.

TRL identifies seven elements that contribute to mental well-being and, within these, Jackson says there are questions an employer needs to ask themselves about their working practices:

**Emotional** are support services available for drivers?

**Physical** are there opportunities for exercise?

**Community** do long hours make social activities difficult?

**Friends and family** do long periods away from home increase isolation, depression?

**Career** do work practices increase stress and anxiety?

**Financial** do pay rates and pay structure increase fatigue?

**Values** do company and individual values align?

### HOW WIDESPREAD IS THE ISSUE?

Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that mental health conditions, such as work-related stress, depression or anxiety, accounted for 15.8 million sick days last year.

And although an organisation may not be aware of a problem with driver well-being, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist as many people feel uncomfortable talking about mental health.

A survey of more than 2,000 van operators and drivers



*"If I came to work stressed, there may be no visible signs"*

Andy Neale, NFE Group

by Mercedes-Benz Vans UK earlier this year found that 56% said there is a stigma attached to discussing mental health at work, while only 28% of managers said an employee had spoken to them about the issue.

These findings were supported by research carried out by the Mental Health Foundation. Its survey of 2,000 British workers found 38% of respondents wouldn't talk openly about a mental health problem for fear it would affect their career prospects or job security.

Some 45% of workers also said they would be likely to make up an excuse such as stomach ache or back problems for absence if they needed to take time off for mental health reasons, which could mask the scale of the issue.

"Lots of people, men and women, shy away from taking about mental health," says Andrew Brown, director of corporate partnerships at mental health charity CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably), which is partnering with the FTA's Van Excellence on a campaign to raise awareness of the issue.

"Men, specifically, are really poor. They don't want to make others worry, whether it is their partner or family and, crucially, they don't know how to talk about what they're feeling.

"Consequently, this leads to the statistic that more than 40% of men in the UK under 45 have considered taking their own life, and under half of them don't tell anyone."

He adds: "Blokes are three times more likely to take their own lives than women are. When you start to drill down into the actual numbers, it equates to one man taking his own life every two hours in the UK. That's 12 a day, 84 a week. It's almost an epidemic."

The latest Government figures (ONS Report 2001-2013) shows that if you are a man between 20 and 49, you are more likely to die from suicide than cancer, road accidents or heart disease, and suicide rates in men aged between 45 and 59 have also now begun to rise, increasing to their highest levels since 1981.

### SPOTTING THE SIGNS

It is vital that any mental well-being problems are identified so an employee can get the help they need to manage their symptoms, and reduce the risk to themselves and other road users.

A sign that a driver is having an issue could be that something about the way they behave around people or carry out their job has changed.

"Are they doing more work? Are they doing less? A change in how they are could be a sign that something isn't right," says Andy Price, director of Fleet Safety Management.

"If you see a friend or a colleague who you think may be suffering from something, ask them how they are.

"It may be that everything is all right, and that's the answer you get, but unless you ask, you are never going to know.

"Asking that simple question can be the first step to helping them get the right support."

Research by mental health charity Time to Change has shown that when asked how they are, three-quarters of people will say 'I'm fine' even if they are struggling with a mental health problem.

"We are encouraging everybody to ask twice," says Jo Loughran, director of Time to Change. "Asking twice – 'Are you sure you're ok?' – means people are much more likely to open up in conversation."

Price says it helps if an organisation has an infrastructure in place to deal with mental health issues such as confidential employee helplines or trained managers.







If this is not the case, then employees can talk to a manager if they see a change in a colleague's behaviour.

"It may be a little bit awkward, it may be a little bit uncomfortable, but it could be the first step to getting that person some help and support," he adds.

Another indicator that there could be a problem could be a change in an employee's driving behaviour.

"If you've got telematics in your vehicles and you can see a change in the number of exceptions, or a trend going back to a certain date, that could be a great way to spot that someone is having a problem," says Price.

"If you do post-incident reviews, you could be looking for mental health conditions that have contributed to that person having a crash."

### WHAT CAN AN EMPLOYER DO?

Many organisations have a range of support services in place for their employees such as occupational health, or a mechanism to refer an employee to the NHS.

However, a key step is to create an environment in which drivers can feel confident that they can report mental health issues without any negative consequences.

They need reassurance that health problems will be treated sympathetically and that appropriate occupational health advice will be available, otherwise they may simply avoid reporting problems.

"You have to get the conversations normalised, you have to get people thinking that they can talk about mental health because it's normal to do so," says Brown.

"You need to make sure people – men and women – are totally comfortable talking about their emotions and asking people how they are feeling without it seeming like they are criticising in some way.

"We need to engage staff in that dialogue and educate them in terms of what's going on, so they can spot signs others, they become more practical in terms of informal support and, where that informal support doesn't evolve, you have to provide practical off-site and on-site support."

A number of organisations have trained staff to be mental health first aid ambassadors to give them the skills to spot signs of stress and anxiety among drivers, with Post Office (see panel, right) and Skanska just two of the companies to have done this.

Skanska has held a number of 'tea and talk' events, where drivers were encouraged to share advice and experiences.

There are also more formal, operational steps which can be taken to improve driver well-being: road safety charity RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) says employers should include driving for work within the scope of their stress risk assessments.

RoSPA also recommends that organisations:

- Ensure that working regimes and tasks do not exert undue pressure on staff that is likely to cause or magnify stress.
- Driving schedules should be planned so they do not require staff to drive too far, too long or too fast, and without adequate rest breaks.
- Assess drivers to identify potential sources of stress. Stress can be caused by requiring an individual to undertake duties for which they do not feel competent. This may include driving particular vehicles or particular types of journeys.
- Train managers to recognise signs of health changes, including sudden mood or behaviour changes, unusual irritability or aggression, worsening relationships with colleagues and others, impaired job performance or an increase in poor timekeeping and short-term sickness absence.
- Train managers in the 'soft skills' needed when dealing with health issues and the need to respect medical confidentiality.



### CASE STUDY: POST OFFICE



Tom Fallon, transport manager, Post Office

Post Office has set up a team of mental health ambassadors throughout the company as part of its programme to improve the well-being of employees.

As ambassadors and not counsellors, their local-level role is to promote guidance and information of the support and assistance that is available, not to involve themselves with representing individual cases, but to increase awareness and signpost people to the help they can access internally and externally.

One of these ambassadors is Tom Fallon, transport manager at Post Office.

"The welfare of the driver is key to performance and part of that understanding is to have the skillset to speak to the drivers, make yourself available and understand some of the issues that affect their performance," he says.

"This has enabled us as a business to support an individual while they are still in an operational role, whereas before we wouldn't firstly capture what the issue was and, secondly, we couldn't have provided support because we wouldn't have known about it.

"Research suggests that a driver with poor mental health can lead to increased costs for the employer, so there is very much a reward to be had at the end of it, but that is not your goal.

"Your goal is to provide well-being, but on the back of it you do have so many benefits for the company."



# FIT TO DRIVE?

Ensuring drivers are in good health has an important part to play in road safety. *Andrew Ryan* looks at three key areas



### EYESIGHT

Good eyesight is a basic requirement for safe driving, with poor vision increasing the risk of collisions due to the driver's inability to recognise and react in time to a hazard or the behaviour of other road users.

Drivers must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after September 1, 2001, from 20 metres (65ft) – approximately five car lengths or the width of eight parking bays.

But after passing their test, drivers do not have to take another eye test for the rest of their lives.

Joshua Harris, director of campaigns for road safety charity Brake, said: "It is, frankly, madness that there is no mandatory requirement on drivers to have an eye test throughout the course of their driving life. Only by introducing rigorous and professional eye tests can we fully tackle the problem of unsafe drivers on our roads."

Another safety charity, RoSPA, recommends organisations should advise staff to have their eyes tested at least every two years, or more often if advised by an ophthalmologist.

Wyn Parry, senior doctor at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), said: "The number plate test is a simple and effective way for people to check their eyesight meets the required standards for driving.

"Eyesight can naturally deteriorate over time so anyone concerned about their eyesight should visit their optician – don't wait for your next check-up."



### DEHYDRATION

Even mild dehydration is equivalent to being over the alcohol drink-driving limit in terms of the number of driver errors committed, according to research from Loughborough University.

"The results suggested mild hypohydration (the uncompensated loss of body water) produced a significant increase in minor driving errors during a prolonged, monotonous drive, compared to that observed while performing the same task in a hydrated condition," says Ron Maughan, emeritus professor of sport and exercise nutrition. The levels of driver errors found were similar to those found in people with a blood alcohol content at the England, Wales and Northern Ireland legal driving limit. "In other words, drivers who are not properly hydrated could make the same number of errors as people over the drink-drive limit," he adds.



*"Eyesight can deteriorate over time so anyone concerned about their eyesight should visit their optician – don't wait for the next check-up"*

Wyn Parry, DVLA



Elbows should be bent at a 30° to 40° angle

65ft

the distance a driver should be able to read a number plate from

The human body loses and needs to replace two to three litres of water a day. However, as every individual's body responds differently and weather conditions and activity levels also influence dehydration rates, experts say there is no set amount of water that drivers should consume on a daily basis to remain hydrated.

Instead, says Maughan, driver education programmes should encourage hydration practices.

"Drinking should be sufficient to meet needs and deliberate restriction because of access to toilets should be avoided," he says.



### MUSCULOSKELETAL ISSUES

A poor driving position, such as a badly adjusted seat, can lead to postural problems and neck, arm, leg and back pain, which can exacerbate an existing condition or cause a long-term health problem.

A correctly adjusted head restraint can prevent whiplash issues. RoSPA says staff should be given advice or training on how to ensure that their driving position is correct and head restraints properly used.

Drivers who load goods, or help passengers into and out of vehicles, should also receive manual handling training.

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy has produced a Drive Free of Pain guide which includes advice for drivers on ensuring they have the correct car set-up and ways to improve posture, plus some simple stretches for when drivers take a break from the wheel.

Recommendations include the driver raising their seat as high as possible for a maximum view of the road, moving the seat forward so the pedal can be depressed fully and being close enough to the steering wheel so that their elbows are bent at a 30° to 40° angle.



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**2025**

**To have put one million electrified vehicles on the roads**

**2025**

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# WAYS TO ELIMINATE DRINK/DRUG-DRIVING

Driving under the influence costs lives. *Andrew Don* looks at the law and the policies fleet operators should implement

**D**riving with alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medicines and some over-the-counter formulations in the blood is an unpalatable cocktail.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) says driving is the most dangerous work activity that most people do and it contributes to far more work-related accidental deaths and serious injuries than anything else.

The legal drink-drive limit is 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and 50mg in Scotland. RoSPA points out, however, that the risk of crashing increases well below the legal limit.

Drivers with a blood alcohol level between 20mg per 100ml and 50mg per 100ml are three times more likely to be killed in a crash than those who have no alcohol in their blood, the safety charity says.

### EFFECTS OF DRINK AND DRUGS

RoSPA, in a guidance document produced with the support of the Department for Transport, Driving for Work – Drink and Drugs, says intoxicants impair judgment, make drivers overconfident and therefore more likely to take risks, slow reactions, increase stopping distances, affect judgment of speed and distance and reduce field of vision.

They can also cause poorer concentration and confused thinking, distorted perception, poor co-ordination, erratic behaviour, aggression, panic attacks, paranoia, blurred vision, tremors, dizziness, cramps and severe fatigue the following day.

Even a small amount, well below the legal limit, seriously affects the ability to drive safely, and taking alcohol and drugs together can multiply the effects, RoSPA says.

When it comes to liquor, "never rely on trying to calculate accurately how much alcohol is in your body, and whether you are above or below the drink-drive limit," it adds.

This is because the speed at which alcohol is absorbed

*"If methods of detecting misuse are not implemented and an accident occurs, it is clear that employers could be held liable"*

Susannah Robin,  
AlcoDigital

varies dependent on a person's size, age, weight and gender and whether they have eaten. The same amount of alcohol creates different blood alcohol levels in different people.

John Greenhough, RoSPA fleet safety consultant, adds that all drugs impair the body's reactions in much the same way as alcohol does whether they are prescribed over the counter or recreational.

### THE LAW

Businesses need to be aware not only of their requirement to deliver on their own health and safety/drug usage policies, but also to ensure their drivers and contractors adhere to Section 4 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

This concerns "driving, or being in charge, when under influence of drink and drugs", and addresses the offence of driving a vehicle while impaired through consumption of drugs or alcohol.

Section 5 allows for specified limits for how much alcohol can be present in a driver's breath, blood or urine.

"Until recently, there was no equivalent for drug levels in drivers," says Paul Yates, business development director of portable drug testing firm Intelligent Fingerprinting.





This changed in 2015 through implementation of new rules – Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988 which prescribed upper limits for the level of specific controlled drugs, including the likes of painkiller codeine and tranquilliser diazepam in a driver's blood as well as the biggies, such as heroin, speed and cocaine.

Susannah Robin, an alcohol and drug safety expert at AlcoDigital, which provides professional training and certified drugs and alcohol testing to organisations, points out that Codeine, for example, is found in common over-the-counter medicines, such as Nurofen Plus, Panadol Ultra and Syndol.

#### DUTY OF CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

No legal obligation exists for the industry to adopt specific testing policies in their workplace, says Robin, but companies do have a duty of care to maintain a safe working environment under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

"If methods for detecting misuse are not implemented and an accident occurs, it is clear that employers could be held liable," she warns.

Neil Greig, policy and research director at road-safety charity IAM RoadSmart, believes corporate manslaughter would be difficult to prove in the case of an accident that resulted in someone's death "except in the most blatant of circumstances, such as if it could be proved the employer knowingly allowed a driver to get behind the wheel while clearly drunk or high".

#### ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Andrew Drewary, road risk manager and consultant collision analyst, says there is no legal requirement for employers to undertake testing of staff.

However, he believes they should follow an approach of engagement, education and re-education.

"We should train people so they have an understanding of the legislation; train people so they have an understanding of what the potential consequences are for themselves or for the company and other individuals involved," he says. "This is a far better way of getting the point across."

Drewary says employers should start asking awkward questions. "If they have an issue with a member of staff they need to tackle this head on."

When it comes to testing

*"Having an effective alcohol/drug screening and testing service should be a critical element of any workplace drug policy"*

*Paul Yates, Intelligent Fingerprinting*

**22%**

of employers in the commercial and logistics industry do testing

**9,040**

killed or injured in drink-drive incidents in Great Britain in 2016

employees for drugs and alcohol, the figures are depressing from a health and safety standpoint. Drewary has carried out research that shows only about 22% of employers undertake some sort of testing process in the commercial and logistics industry.

He adds: "Within the company car industry I would say it's not even half that amount. From a duty of care point of view, if an employer thinks somebody's got a particular issue they are within their rights to ask the question. Then it comes down to internal processes and disciplinary processes."

"If someone refuses to take a test, the most sensible way for the company to deal with it is say 'while we suspect you may have a problem, we are not going to allow you to go out and about and drive'."

Yates says a written policy ensures there is no miscommunication or misunderstanding about where an organisation sits on alcohol and drug abuse at work.

The policy should consider five key elements: aims and definition, responsibility, rules and disciplinary action, safeguards and confidentiality linked with help.

"Having an effective alcohol/drug screening and testing service should be a critical element of any workplace drug policy," he says. "One of the main objectives of a good policy should be to establish an effective deterrent to stop the employee turning up unfit for work."

Only regular random testing can achieve this, he says. "Given that the drug and alcohol policy forms part of the employee's terms and conditions, a requirement for employee permissions isn't required."

Amey is one firm that does random testing. Julie Davies, group fleet and plant compliance manager in the company's Fleet and Plant Group, says: "Testing is carried out randomly across all operations including all office-based staff. Tests are also carried out after any road traffic incident."

The company's alcohol and drugs policy says random testing is "impartial, genuinely random and affects everyone at all levels".

Statistics from the Department for Transport, issued in August, show an estimated 9,040 people were killed or injured in drink-drive accidents in Great Britain in 2016 – the latest figures available.

That is a huge number of grieving fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, siblings and grandparents – a sobering thought.



FleetNews



AWARDS  
2019

20th March 2019  
Grosvenor House  
Park Lane, London



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# BE BIKE SMART

During its annual road safety week, charity Brake is urging fleets to be Bike Smart. *Ben Rooth* reports

**A** fleet decision-maker's main duty of care may be towards their own drivers, but they also have a responsibility to help keep other road users – such as cyclists and motorcyclists – safe.

That's the message from road safety charity Brake, which has made raising the awareness of the importance of protecting those on two wheels the theme of its annual road safety week, which will take place from November 19 to 25.

Fundamental to Brake's campaign, entitled Bike Smart, is educating drivers to cut casualties by driving safely and utilising the latest life-saving technologies.

According to the most recently audited figures from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), in 2016, 18,477 cyclists were injured in reported road accidents, including 3,499 who were killed or seriously injured.

In 2016, the number of miles cycled in this country – 3.5 billion – was 23% more than 10 years earlier and 6.3% more than the miles cycled in 2015.

"The numbers of those travelling on two wheels is ever-increasing and yet bike riders remain incredibly vulnerable to death and injury on our roads," says Joshua Harris, director of campaigns for Brake.

"Small changes can help save countless lives and it's time for us to make a step-change in bike safety in the UK."

Fleets can reduce the risk to cyclists and motorcyclists through a mix of education and training, while a policy should clearly show the organisation's commitment to road safety for all road users, says John Greenhough, fleet consultant at RoSPA.

**18,477**  
cyclists were injured  
in reported road  
accidents in 2016

**3,499**  
cyclists were killed  
or seriously injured  
in 2016

"Any legal duties relating to safety or compliance need to be highlighted," he adds.

"While the Highway Code is the source document for many of our road traffic regulations, it doesn't need to be recreated – but a copy should be made available.

"For larger vehicles, diagrams showing the extent of blind spots would be helpful. Signage in the cab area – or on the door mirrors – to remind the driver to look for smaller two-wheel vehicles is also a good idea."

Driver education programmes should cover awareness training regarding vulnerable road users, such as cyclists and motorcyclists.

They can be a mix of theoretical and practical, as demonstrated by the Safe Urban Driving Course (see case study) which is approved by the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) and Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS).

As well as a classroom theory module, it also includes a practical cycling module where drivers experience a cyclist's view of the road.

Andy Phillips, director of risk management at training company Applied Driving Techniques, says: "Drivers could undertake an e-learning module covering vulnerable road users in the first instance and this can be supplemented with classroom-based activity as part of a wider risk reduction programme. Simulators can also be used.

"Risk also increases substantially if a driver has to move to a larger vehicle, so compulsory training should be introduced when someone switches to a van from a car to ensure they are aware of the additional dangers such as added blind spots.



## USE 'DUTCH REACH' METHOD

Fleets are being encouraged to teach their drivers the 'Dutch Reach' way of opening a vehicle door to reduce the number of cyclist casualties.

Last month, the Government announced that future editions of the Highway Code will highlight how to avoid the dangers of close passing while also encouraging people to adopt the Dutch Reach.

It works like this: when someone is about to exit the vehicle, they reach across their body for the door handle with their far or opposite hand.

This forces them to turn toward the side view mirror, out and then back over their shoulder to be sure a cyclist is not coming from behind. Only then do they slowly open the door.

Jeff Boulton, whose son Sam died after being hit by the door of a taxi while cycling, is calling for fleets to train drivers to use the Dutch Reach.

"People need to be aware of the life-threatening dangers of opening their car doors on to the road without carefully checking for cyclists first," he says.

Boulton has formed the Sam Says campaign, which distributes specially-produced car stickers to remind people to check for cyclists before they exit vehicles.

"Ultimately we'd like to see these stickers in fleet vehicles, taxis and family cars as a reminder to drivers and passengers to take care when opening their doors," he adds.

Leicester City Council will introduce the stickers across its fleet of more than 720 vehicles, while Iron Mountain will begin to put them in 200 vehicles in its UK fleet during road safety week. It will support this with briefings, posters and leaflets which it has produced in association with Brake.

## CASE STUDY: TRAVIS PERKINS



Travis Perkins saw "significant improvements" in road safety in the 12 months after it introduced a Safe Urban Driving course.

The course was designed by FORS – of which Travis Perkins was a founding member – in conjunction with Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) and Transport for London (TfL).

So far, more than 4,000 employees, including 1,500 van and 2,500 HGV drivers, have completed the course, which involves getting drivers on their bikes to see the road from a cyclist's perspective.

This on-road cycle element follows a half-day classroom-based course, and the results have been overwhelmingly positive, according to Graham Bellman (left), group fleet director at Travis Perkins.

He says: "From the start, we've been encouraged and delighted to find that our

drivers have got a great deal out of this training.

"Within the first 12 months, we have seen a great return on the investment with significant improvements in safe driving, and a reduction in the number of road incidents."

Bellman says the seven-hour course – which qualifies as part of a drivers' CPC and is revisited every five years – gives drivers a better perspective of what the road is like for other, more vulnerable users.

He adds: "As a FORS Gold-accredited business, we want to keep improving and consistently ensure that we offer the right content to our drivers.

"We keep investing in safety equipment for our vehicles, which have been fitted with all-round cameras since 2013.

"We're doing it everywhere to ensure that our drivers consistently operate as safely as possible across the country."

"In some areas, road surfaces are poor and getting worse, so drivers need to be prepared for potential sudden movement or swerves."

In addition, fleets are increasingly using new technology to ensure that drivers have maximum opportunity to identify the presence of cyclists and motorcyclists.

Richard Lane, commercial director at vehicle camera and telematics company VisionTrack, says: "Vehicle cameras can now provide all-round visibility with an in-vehicle monitor being activated when a car or van is turning right, left or reversing.

"Side scan systems can be integrated that can detect cyclists and motorcyclists in close proximity, providing the driver with an audio-visual alert.

"Such systems are mandatory for the FORS gold and silver standards as well as the CLOCS standard, which are relevant for van operations.

"In addition, advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) can be used alongside the vehicle camera technology to alert to any forward collision warnings, vulnerable road user detection and lane departure."

Greenhough adds: "Technology on its own will not prevent collisions and neither will training.

"But combining the two and ensuring they are employed effectively will help further reduce, but not totally eliminate, collisions. The more that is done, the more it will help."

*"Combining technology and training and ensuring they are employed effectively will help further reduce, but not totally eliminate, collisions"*

*John Greenhough,  
RoSPA*



# FleetNews shines the spotlight on fleet strategy and operations

Changes to print and website will identify and reflect new ways to move people, goods and services about

## By Stephen Briers

In line with the transformation gathering pace across the fleet sector, with new regulations, new technology and a host of new pressures on the way businesses move their people, goods and services around, *Fleet News* is undertaking its own transformation with a complete overhaul of content in print, on the website and in its newsletters.

## Print magazine

The magazine will see the biggest changes with a new frequency from January (15 times a year – the last Friday of every month with additional editions at the busiest times of the year, in March, September and November) and new sections focusing on strategy (Tomorrow's Fleet) and operations/best practice (Today's Fleet).

We will also be integrating *Commercial Fleet* into *Fleet News* in recognition of the fact that the topics of greatest relevance to fleet are relevant no matter whether the business operates cars, vans or trucks – and many are running all three.

*Fleet News* will introduce a dedicated *Commercial Fleet* section in the magazine and retain the *Commercial Fleet* website to give a home to the issues of greatest importance to van and truck operators, such as compliance and legislation.

However, content throughout the new *Fleet News* magazine, including fleet profiles, technology and new mobility services, will be relevant to all fleets, including those running trucks.

The Commercial Fleet Awards, which recognises and honours fleets, manufacturers and suppliers in the van and truck sector, will also continue in the current format.

We have run a number of fleet focus groups

*"Moving Commercial Fleet into Fleet News makes sense because fleet management is so much more cross-functional regarding the big issues, so the solutions are more cross-functional – for cars, vans and trucks, but also within the business, with HR, finance and procurement"*

Lorna McAtear, head of supply and internal accounts, Royal Mail



and spoken to many decision-makers about our plans and received an overwhelming vote of confidence in the changes.

In addition to news analysis, thought-provoking opinion pieces and detailed interviews with fleet decision-makers, manufacturers and key suppliers, *Fleet News* will divide its content into two key areas.

## Tomorrow's Fleet (strategy insight)

This section will focus on tomorrow – the technology, policies, regulations and trends that will influence the way companies move people, goods and services around.

It will also enable us to engage with a wider decision-making unit, such as finance directors, procurement directors, HR directors, operations directors and mobility managers who are increasingly involved in deciding policy about company cars, vans and trucks.

Topics will range from last-mile distribution

solutions to clean air zone regulations, and from mobility as a service (MaaS) and vehicle user-ship apps to autonomous, connected and electric vehicles.

## Today's Fleet (operations insight)

This section will focus on best practice, features, benchmarking and skills insight to enable the decision-maker to run an efficient and effective fleet of vehicles.

Drawing on its vast pool of knowledgeable fleet and industry experts, *Fleet News* will uncover solutions to operational issues, share information on cost-saving initiatives and draw attention to the best ways to improve safety and address environmental concerns.

## Website enhancements

In addition to the changes to the print magazine, *Fleet News* will be looking to increase engagement in its digital products and services with greater insight into our news articles, improved newsletters and new fleet management tools.

The website becomes increasingly important as we reduce the frequency of our print communications and engagement with fleet decision-makers.

Therefore, we will be looking to tailor our content to fleets' needs. We will be creating a user experience that will enable us to better understand fleets' requirements and improve our services to them via enhanced functionality. We will also improve the presentation and content on our newsletters.

Digital channels enable *Fleet News* to keep users up to speed with the latest developments, whereas print enables it to add analysis, context and insight into the key stories. These will continue to be priorities for the new publication.

*"As an operator of a mixed fleet, (merging Fleet News and Commercial Fleet) suits me perfectly"*

Stewart Lightbody, head of fleet, Anglian Water



COMING  
SOON

THE NEW  
**FleetNews**

*"This is a good move. Fleet News in all its formats is vital for me to keep up-to-date, through the email daily news links to the more in-depth printed magazine to read away from my screen. The website and print mix allows me to digest the most relevant and up-to-date content when I need it"*

David Oliver, procurement manager, Red Bull







*"It takes a significant amount of time and investment to make sure the customer can access the services that are appropriate"*

Adrian Bewley,  
Enterprise Rent-A-Car

WINNER: **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**

# 'We have a huge opportunity to advise fleets how to travel'

New services are enabling Enterprise Rent-A Car to simplify the customer journey and offer the best travel options

By Matt de Prez

**E**nterprise Rent-A-Car has undergone a business transformation in recent years. The global short-term hire company now aims to provide any type of vehicle over any time period – through its fleet of more than 100,000 vehicles – after putting business mobility at the heart of its strategy.

It retained more than 90% of its customers last year, while expanding its broad range of services even further.

Enterprise Travel Direct (ETD) launched in September, following a 12-month pilot programme in partnership with several of the UK's largest public sector fleets.

It was specifically developed to help organisations better manage how their employees travel for work.

The company also works collaboratively with businesses to help them move away from unmanaged grey fleets, with pool fleet utilisation improvements of up to 40%.

In the UK, Enterprise has more than 5,000 employees and operates 470 fully-staffed branch locations.

According to Experian, there is an Enterprise vehicle within 10 miles of 93% of the UK population.

Customers can access all of Enterprise's services through one online booking platform, be it car, van or HGV.

**Fleet News:** How have you improved your customer service offering?

**Adrian Bewley, director of Business Mobility, UK and Ireland at Enterprise Rent-A-Car:** Customer service is at the forefront of everything we do. Our employees and our customers drive us forward.

The mobility landscape is changing quite rapidly. We have tried to provide greater access to all our services. It sounds easy, but it takes a significant amount of time and investment to make sure the customer can access the services that are appropriate for their circumstances as they arise.

We have also invested in technology that binds our services together.

We have a diverse range of products, including

flexi rent, car club and daily rental. What we have tried to do is simplify the customer journey and create a funnel approach.

Our car club offering is, effectively, rental-on-demand and is now available in 40 of our branches. It makes those locations a 24/7 access point. That is a result of our customer demands changing.

By August next year, we will have 170 locations with Enterprise car club vehicles. Where most other providers are contracting their access points, we are investing to become closer to our customers.

In the past 12 months, we have made a huge investment in our tablet technology. It enables our staff to become a mobile office. They can see data of impending reservations and can transact with the customer at any point. It gives our customers greater choice, flexibility and convenience.

**FN:** How are the needs of fleet customers changing?

**AB:** Customers want an easy access point for all derivatives of transport. We are trying to simplify the job of the fleet manager. It seems like the role is morphing into something that might have a different title in the future.

It seems that a fleet manager is now looking at new ways



**Jo Vickers, head of sales – fleet, leasing and accident management at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, picked up the trophy from Andy Reed, operations director of Interactive Fleet Management, which sponsored the award**



**Adrian Bewley (front row, left) celebrates the best rental company win with members of his team**

to move people and goods around – that is the way the world is going. There has been more interaction and challenges posed to us in the past 18 months compared with the past five years.

**FN:** Could fleets move away from a traditional funding model towards an on-demand service?

**AB:** There are more signs this year than last year. It hasn't shifted massively, but it feels like we are on an evolution that our customers will be looking for a greater breadth of choice. The 'old' model is definitely on the way out.

Businesses want to make sure they are making the best decision about travel and that includes cost, productivity and duty of care.

Our ETD booking tool enables any employee to not just book a car but to say 'I'm travelling from A to B, what is the best way to get there?' It can present various options including an hourly rental, daily rental and the cost of using their own car.

We are enabling people to choose the right method of travel, but you have to provide them with the right tools to do that as lots of different choices could lead to confusion.

The agility of Enterprise, with the huge number of access points, effectively allows our customer to be a lot more selective towards their shorter trips.

**FN:** How are you implementing electric and hybrid vehicles on the fleet?

**AB:** We've just doubled our hybrid fleet in the past year. There is definitely a modal shift towards different types of fuels. Driven by the diesel conundrum, our customers are looking for a greater degree of choice.

Electric vehicles are still a little bit tepid, but hybrid is a lot more prevalent than it was 18 months ago.

We see this area really galvanising over the next six-to-12 months. A hybrid vehicle is pretty straightforward to integrate into our daily rental fleet. I think electric works well in other sectors and access points, as in via leasing companies, but not yet in the rental market.

The big elements that are driving change are the clean air zones (CAZs) and I think they will bring it all to a head in the next year or so. We are now engaging with city councils to talk about how they can create sustainable transport options, while also being a thought leader. There is no point

in a council having a CAZ if they are using vehicles that will cause them to be fined in their own zones.

**FN:** What else will you look at over the next 12-18 months?

**AB:** We do believe the way customers access our services will change. We see subscription models becoming a reality in the next year. We also see huge growth within the grey fleet market place.

We are a viable option for organisations to move people and goods around for the shorter journeys. There is a huge expenditure in private and public organisations in moving people around who do less than 10,000 miles per year. The BVRLA research shows there was £3bn worth of grey fleet mileage last year and we see that as an opportunity for the future.

I'm incredibly optimistic about the next five years. With the introduction of new restrictions and legislation affecting vehicle emissions, we have a huge opportunity to advise fleets how to travel.

**E**nterprise Rent-A-Car has been relentless in its efforts to provide fleets with more efficient and easier to use solutions.

Its Joined Up Travel initiative, in partnership with train operator LNER, sees car club vehicles conveniently located at four major train stations – Durham, Doncaster, Peterborough and Wakefield with more to come – making it easier for business travellers to continue their onward journey.

Enterprise has also launched its own accident management service to assist companies with the efficient processing of claims and repairs. The technology allows information to be easily shared between insurers, repairers and vehicle providers.

By further integrating its rental branch network with its car club fleet, Enterprise is giving businesses access to round-the-clock mobility. Car club is now available in 40 major cities, with cars ready to be booked for immediate use via web or app. Due to its extensive network, Enterprise is able to offer fixed price delivery and collection or a free pick up service which helps reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and is often vital for last-minute rentals.

Customer satisfaction scores are religiously monitored and made transparent across the business.

## FACTFILE

**Company:** Enterprise Rent-A-Car  
**UK headquarters:** Egham, Surrey  
**Founded:** 1957  
**Number of branches:** 470  
**Fleet size:** 100,000+

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Last year's winner, Enterprise Rent-A-Car continues to impress with its coverage, ability to help customers cut costs, and its simple and easy-to-use tool for assessing vehicle damage. It is supporting a joined-up approach to travel through a new partnership to provide car club vehicles at small city train stations.



ON SALE: FEBRUARY 2019

# VOLKSWAGEN T-CROSS

T-Cross has Toureg-inspired styling and offers increased personalisation

By Christopher Smith

**V**olkswagen's latest vehicle is another SUV, perhaps not a surprise when you consider the company believes that, by 2025, one in two vehicles it sells will be a high rider.

The compact T-Cross completes the brand's SUV line-up (for now, at least), with the new vehicle following in the footsteps of its stablemates, the Audi Q2 and the Seat Arona.

It's a way for Volkswagen to keep supermini drivers happy by offering a fraction more space, a higher seating position and an on-trend bodystyle.

When arriving in the UK market, the car will be available in S, SE, SE-L and R-Line trim levels, with pricing expected to start around £17,000.

CO<sub>2</sub> emission and fuel economy figures are not yet available and are likely to be published when order books open in February 2019.

First deliveries are expected in the spring.

## SAFETY

The T-Cross has a strong bank of standard safety equipment. 'Front Assist' packages back up pedestrian monitoring and city emergency braking.

Lane-keep assist is joined by hill start assist and rear traffic assist. Options available include adaptive cruise control, blind spot assist, drowsiness alert and park assist.

Safety ratings have not been announced, but the brand claims the T-Cross has excellent occupant protection, so expect a high Euro NCAP rating.

*"It's a way to keep supermini drivers happy by offering a fraction more space, a high seating position and an on-trend body style"*

## EXTERIOR

The car is 127mm shorter than its most recently launched T-Roc crossover sister, and the stance is quite different, too. The T-Cross is 97mm taller than a Polo supermini and its posture makes it appear narrower.

Volkswagen head of design Klaus Bischoff said the vehicle has a short overhang to increase visibility and manoeuvrability, tall bonnet for an imposing look, and longer 2.56m wheelbase for increased passenger room. It is built on the MQB platform.

Full LED front headlights complete the 'face' of the car, wrapping round to the creases along the vehicle's chiselled side. Large wheel arches and copious plastic mouldings increase the chunky nature of the car.

Bischoff says the styling is inspired by the largest Volkswagen SUV, the Touareg.

The LED headlights can be specified with Light Assist, for automatic control of the main beam when faced with oncoming traffic.

At the back, the bold styling continues with a wraparound light panel encompassing the whole of the car – particularly increasing contrast on the lighter and brighter colours.

Personalisation is back on the agenda, too – 12 bold and bright colours are available, along with a broad range of alloy wheels, including blue- and orange-trimmed specimens.

## INTERIOR

The interior is dominated by technology – a large eight-inch touchscreen visually fills the dashboard, along with a digital instrument panel.

Four USB ports are fitted – two in the front, two in the back, along with wireless charging option and a 300w Beats Audio optional sound system with subwoofer. Keyless entry and wireless inductive phone charging are further options.

Practicality is a strength of the new model, with a rear sliding bench that can move 14cm to increase boot space or legroom for passengers as required.

Both drivers and passengers sit high up, with a 652mm rear vantage point, and 597mm height in the front, for a good view of the road ahead.

A stylish new steering wheel is fitted, with a flat bottom in the R-Line trim.

The boot is usefully sized, between 385 and 455 litres dependent on seat position, which is similar to sector rivals – with a flat boot floor. Rear seats can also be split 60:40. When folded, 1,281 litres of space is available – just 10 litres less than the larger T-Roc.

Personalisation continues on the inside, too – with exterior colours carried over to the dashboard for certain hues, and a range of two-tone seat fabrics.



The eight-inch touchscreen appears to fill the dashboard



Large wheel arches and plastic mouldings add to the chunky look

The T-Cross has a tall bonnet to give it an imposing look

## ENGINES AND TRANSMISSION

The car shares most of its running gear with the Polo and will be available with Volkswagen's 1.0-litre turbocharged TSI engine from launch, in 95PS and 115PS variants – both fitted with petrol particulate filters.

Five- and six-speed manuals will be available, along with a seven-speed DSG automatic.

All versions are front-wheel drive. Perhaps not surprisingly, a diesel variant is not in current plans for the UK launch – but a 1.6-litre TDI is available in mainland Europe.

There is also a 1.5-litre TSI petrol with 150PS available in Europe, but Volkswagen has not confirmed it will be available in the UK.

The car is available in front-wheel drive only – to keep the cost affordable and in acknowledgment that much of its use will be in towns and cities.

## THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi



**Tuesday** Up to Glasgow for the press drive of the Alfa Romeo Stelvio

Quadrifoglio – not easy to spell. We set off from the airport and headed out into the glorious countryside.

The Stelvio is Alfa's first SUV and this addition to the range lives up to Alfa's reputation and tradition of producing quick and powerful cars.

The Quadrifoglio is powered by a 2.9 V6 petrol engine that produces 510PS, goes from 0-62mph in 3.8 seconds, and has a top speed of 176mph, where permitted, certainly not in Scotland.

Irrespective of all this power, it is very meek and mild, and very controllable in heavy traffic or going through small villages, not the monster you would expect.

It has brilliant handling and braking and is surprisingly comfortable. It is full of extras and standard spec, and seemed to be pretty good on fuel. You get the looks, and all that oomph for less than £70,000, not bad, but I doubt it will make many fleet lists.

*"Assisting the launch was Cara Delevingne – someone I have never heard of"*

**Thursday/Friday** A quick flight to Amsterdam for the world premiere of the Volkswagen T-Cross which is 4,107mm in length, the smaller brother of the T-Roc (4,234mm), but bigger brother to the Polo (4,053mm).

Due in the UK next spring, it will initially be available with a 1.0-litre petrol engine.

Aby assisting with the launch was famous model and actress Cara Delevingne – someone I had never heard of. Call me old-fashioned.

She drove the T-Cross off the stage, eventually, after a few false starts, and a bit of 'kangerooing'. But, despite that little hiccup, the T-Cross is a great looking baby of the VW SUV family. It is bound to do well, especially with company car drivers, as it ticks so many boxes. I had a good look around it, and the lines are brilliant, so crisp and precise, the way VW has pressed the metal is a masterpiece, so clever.



The newest Outlander has had an external refresh

# MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER

For commuting, or as a family car, Outlander's electric range is more than adequate

By Matt de Prez

There has been much controversy in the fleet sector over the Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV. Some fleet managers love them, while others have banished them from car lists over 'unrealistic' fuel economy expectations.

Company car tax has been the deciding factor for most drivers, helping the Outlander to become the UK's best-selling plug-in hybrid.

Mitsubishi says this new version is the most technologically advanced car it has made and features a new, larger 2.4-litre petrol engine, bigger batteries and more powerful electric motors.

It's more efficient than the outgoing 2.0-litre version, with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 40g/km and an electric range of 33 miles.

With prices aligned to the previous model (albeit now without the plug-in grant), company car tax remains at a palatable £90 per month (20% taxpayer) for the mid-range 4hs model.

Most driving can be done using one or both of the electric motors. There is one mounted on each axle, providing all-wheel drive when required.

## FLEET PICK MODEL

MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER PHEV 4HS

### SPECIFICATIONS

P11D Price	£41,545
Annual BIK	13%/£1,080
Class 1A NIC	£745
Annual VED	£0 then £440
RV (4yr/80k)	£11,500/27.7%
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.82
AFR (ppm)	12
Running cost (4yr/80k)	51.02ppm
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)	40
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	159.5

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



Switches in random places make the Outlander's controls something of a trial

EV mode allows the driver to force the car not to use the petrol engine. Unlike other cars we've tested, the Outlander actually allows you to use full acceleration on electricity alone meaning you can reach and maintain motorway speeds fairly briskly, without burning any fossil fuel.

In hybrid mode, the car intelligently selects the best propulsion method. It favours fully electric but can bring in the petrol engine to act as a generator, topping up the batteries as required. The engine can also drive the wheels if more power is needed.

In a week of mixed driving – with sensible charging – we barely used any fuel in the Outlander, averaging a claimed 90mpg.

Careful driving allows the battery level to be maintained with the engine only needed for prolonged high-speed motorway work.

When running on battery power alone the Outlander PHEV is, frankly, brilliant. It performs well, is near-silent and costs pennies to run.

Firing up the engine doesn't deliver the neck-snapping pace that you may experience in other plug-in vehicles. With just 135PS on tap (220PS total output) and a CVT gearbox to contend with, it certainly isn't 'dynamic'.

That's not really an issue though, as the Outlander is much better used as a commuter or family car where its size and electric range are fully beneficial.

The facelift brings an external refresh and interior updates, though the Outlander still looks and feels a little agricultural compared with rivals.

Little has been done to the interior; it is still awash with switches in random places. The driving modes, for example, are spread between an 'Eco' button on the dash, a 'Sport' button on the centre console and a range of switches around the gear selector. It isn't a horrible place to be though; there is additional sound proofing and more comfortable seats.

Higher spec models feel more luxurious with leather trim and come with a range of extras, including a high-power stereo, adaptive cruise control and LED headlights.

Even the base Juro model gets heated seats, keyless entry and smartphone connectivity.

If used correctly, the Outlander PHEV can save business and driver significant sums. However, caution still needs to be exercised with anyone looking to take on a plug-in hybrid to ensure they are able to charge and drive it effectively.

2.2 TURBO DIESEL 210 SPECIALE

# ALFA ROMEO STELVIO

Alfa's SUV newcomer won't disappoint drivers



Most of the power goes to the rear wheels, giving a greater feeling of stability

By Matt de Prez

It has taken Alfa Romeo quite a while to get around to making an SUV – a segment it could no longer afford to avoid.

With mixed opinions of the brand across the fleet sector, the Stelvio may not be at the top of everyone's shopping list – but it is a car that, in our opinion, should not be overlooked.

There is no shortage of very good SUVs at the moment. Some are cheaper than the Stelvio, some are more efficient and some are more practical – but they all follow the same mould and none is particularly interesting.

Germanic precision has its appeal, sure, but if you have to drive something every day for four years then why not make it something you love?

Naysayers will tell you this will result in compromises such as discomfort, poor reliability or crippling running costs.

With the Stelvio, none of these is a concern.

It can do practicality and efficiency as well as any BMW, Mercedes or Audi, and, when it comes to driveability, the Alfa is up there with the Porsche Macan.

You can happily plod up and down the motorway, getting 40-plus mpg, in its comfortable and refined cabin, with the satisfaction of knowing that, if things do go wrong, you're in one of the safest cars on sale – according to Euro NCAP.



The central display offers less clarity than some of Stelvio's rivals

*"You can happily plod up and down the motorway, getting 40-plus mpg, in its comfortable and refined cabin"*

Turn off the motorway and onto a country lane and you'll quickly find out why the Stelvio was named after one of Italy's most iconic switchback mountain roads.

It remains composed in even the sharpest of bends with no noticeable body roll. The steering is fast and precise too, meaning the Stelvio darts into corners and feels nimble.

The all-wheel drive system puts most of the power to the rear wheels, giving a greater sense of stability and keener cornering than most of its rivals.

With 210PS, the 2.2-litre diesel engine can accelerate the SUV to 60mph in just 6.6 seconds. It emits 149g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>, which is slightly more than the X3 and Q5, but less than a Jaguar F-Pace (see table for comparison).

Officially, the car returns 49.5mpg. During our testing we achieved 45mpg on longer motorway runs and around 40mpg on shorter trips.

A more frugal rear-wheel drive version with 190PS is also available, emitting 139g/km, and is probably the better option for fleet drivers although Alfa believes the 210PS will be the bigger seller overall.

Most of the interior is lifted straight from the Giulia and if there are any flies in the Stelvio's 'ointment' they lie here.

The main issue is the infotainment system. Its central display offers less clarity than rivals' systems and it's not especially intuitive to use.

Also, the gear selector feels a little cheap in comparison to the rest of the materials used in the car.

Foibles aside, the Stelvio is excellent first attempt at an SUV from Alfa Romeo and one that drivers will not be disappointed by.

## THE RIVALS

- Audi Q5 Quattro 40 TDI S Line Tech
- BMW X3 xDrive20d M Sport
- Jaguar F-Pace 2.0d 180 R Sport

## P11D PRICE

X3	£42,050
F-Pace	£42,315
Stelvio	£42,820
Q5	£43,325

## BIK TAX AND CO<sub>2</sub>

X3	33%/144g/km
Q5	34%/146g/km
Stelvio	34%/149g/km
F-Pace	37%/162g/km

## FUEL COSTS

X3	51.4mpg/11.88ppm
Q5	51.4mpg/11.88ppm
Stelvio	49.5mpg/12.34ppm
F-Pace	46.3mpg/13.19ppm

## DEPRECIATION

F-Pace	32.55ppm
Q5	33.03ppm
X3	35.38ppm
Stelvio	37.21ppm

## SMR

F-Pace	6.35ppm
Q5	6.48ppm
Stelvio	6.72ppm
X3	6.90ppm

## RUNNING COSTS

Q5	51.39ppm
F-Pace	52.09ppm
X3	54.16ppm
Stelvio	56.27ppm

## VERDICT

The Stelvio's extra performance harms its chances in the comparison, with BMW's new X3 taking the lead in the most categories. Although the Alfa offers the worst depreciation, it's worth noting just how close it comes to the segment leaders in other categories.

**Winner: BMW X3**

Running cost: KeeResources (4yr/80k)



## MINI COUNTRYMAN COOPER SE ALL4 PHEV



Our Mini Countryman PHEV has been attracting attention over the past few weeks.

I've had people come up to me on four separate occasions to ask what I think of it.

Some had clocked that it's a plug-in hybrid and wanted to know how it compares to a conventional petrol or diesel.

The answer to that is the fuel economy is still on the disappointing side (currently 41.1mpg) and it's necessary to charge at the office in order to do my daily commute (11 miles each way) on pure electric.

Now we're into autumn and colder weather, the car's available range is typically 19 miles on a full charge (down from 25 miles in the summer).

However, the Countryman PHEV still retains Mini's superb handling and is fun to drive, accelerating from 0-62mph in less than seven seconds.

Others wanted to know what the interior and boot space is like (one Mini Cooper driver even stopped me at the petrol station and asked to have a look inside).

Passengers benefit from 5cm more leg room than in the previous Countryman and the batteries are mounted under the rear seats meaning the Countryman PHEV has a decent 405-litre boot, which increases to 1,275 with the seats folded (compared to 450 litres and 1,390 litres in the standard Countryman).

However, thanks to the batteries, the fuel tank is on the small side (36 litres compared with 51), which means more trips to the petrol station – and, potentially, more questions!

**Sarah Tooze**

*"Others wanted to know what the interior and boot space is like"*



Lots of positives with some negatives – our initial reaction to the Audi A6

## AUDI A6

40 S LINE

### Headlights are best ever, but Audi is slow to get going

**By Stephen Briers**

I was preparing the last review of our Volvo S90 T8 (see opposite) when the opportunity came to test another car in this class, the new Audi A6.

Having tested the BMW 5 Series, Jaguar XF and Mercedes-Benz E-Class within the past 12 months, the A6 offered a chance to complete the missing piece in the executive car jigsaw.

My S90 review was due to focus on its performance, which is exceptional thanks to the added punch of the battery power. My comment was "the S90 explodes from standstill, hitting 62mph in just 4.8 seconds".

I mention this because the contrast with the Audi A6 could not be more striking. The A6 also packs a punch, thanks to its 204PS 2.0-litre diesel engine, but it's not instantaneous like the S90. The transmission is lethargic from standstill and takes an age to engage, especially from stop/start and when selecting reverse.

*"Transmission is lethargic from standstill and takes an age to engage"*

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

TEST TIMELINE



End

It feels like a couple of seconds pass before you get underway. Mid-gear, the DSG is seamless, but we'll keep an eye on this in subsequent reviews.

Our Audi A6 is the £41,110 40 S Line seven-speed S Tronic, with 62.8mpg and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 117g/km.

We've deliberately kept the optional equipment low to ensure the price is competitive, choosing only the £1,495 Technology Pack (eight-inch touchscreen display with Google 3D maps, seven-inch virtual cockpit, wireless phone charging). Audi added £475 privacy glass.

The Tech Pack is well worth the money, with faultless topographical sat-nav and digital displays up with the best.

Even better are the headlights, the finest we've experienced. Individual LED lights constantly flash on and off, reacting to oncoming traffic, pedestrians, bends and different road types to ensure maximum illumination of the route ahead without dazzling other road users. It's intelligent technology at its best.

First driving impressions are also excellent. The car feels agile and lighter than its BMW and Mercedes-Benz rivals, although the 5 Series arguably offers a better all-round driving experience (we'll report back once more miles are on the clock).

Initial impressions, then, are lots of positives, with some negatives. We'll delve into these in more detail over the coming months.

## VOLVO S90

T8 R DESIGN PRO

### Powertrain is star of an excellent show from Volvo



In Bursting blue and with bursting acceleration we will be sorry to see the Volvo S90 leave our line-up

#### COSTS

**P11D price** £57,650  
**BIK tax band (2018/19)** 13%  
**Annual BIK tax (40%)** £3,003  
**Class 1A NIC** £1,036  
**Annual VED** £0 then £440  
**RV (4yr/80k)** £16,000  
**Fuel cost (ppm)** 8.72  
**AFR (ppm)** 15  
**Running cost (ppm)** 67.46

#### SPEC

**Engine (cc)** 1,969  
**Power (PS)** 390  
**Torque (Nm)** 640  
**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 49  
**Manufacturer mpg** 128.4  
**Electric range (miles)** 28  
**Test mpg** 42.5  
**Max speed (mph)** 155  
**0-62mph (sec)** 4.9  
**Current mileage** 6,100

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

TEST TIMELINE



### AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET



#### Škoda Karoq 1.6 TDI SE

As the weather finally begins to turn, heated seats are a welcome addition.



#### Volkswagen e-Golf

The cold weather has knocked around 20 miles off the estimated range of the e-Golf when fully charged.



#### Vauxhall Grandland X 1.5TD Tech Line

Proving a smooth drive with lots of safety equipment – reassuring on dark morning and evening commutes

## FORD FIESTA 1.0 ECOBOOST 125 ST LINE



The Ford Fiesta comes with a number of handy features to make life easy for the driver.

One of our favourites is the heated front windscreen, which comes as standard on the ST Line model.

It's a feature a number of other manufacturers neglect to offer, even in the premium segments, but it is crucial as winter draws closer.

Heated seats are, unfortunately, an option that we forgot to add, having ordered the car in the spring. They come as part of the comfort pack, which includes a heated steering wheel, and costs an extra £250.

It isn't so much of a bother though as the petrol engine gets up to temperature quickly and the car is toasty within minutes of starting.

One feature we did add was the door edge protectors. Costing just £100, these clever devices extend from the door edge when the door is opened to protect the lip.

When you close the door they disappear. It's a great way to avoid potentially costly damage recharges at the end of a lease.

Similarly, the electric folding door mirrors, which come bundled with the rear parking sensors (£350), are another useful option – again helping to avoid unnecessary damage.

The Fiesta also benefits from Ford's Easy Fuel system, which prevents misfuelling. It does without a traditional fuel filler cap helping to make fill-ups quicker and less messy.

**Matt de Prez**





## OLIVIA SCOTT

AREA FLEET MANAGER, ŠKODA UK

Scott loves to travel. As a youngster, she had ambitions to be a pilot so she could travel the world. Now she is happy to just help people get around – even if it is at a more sedate speed

The vehicles I would like in my garage are a Range Rover, Aston Martin Vanquish S Coupe, 1960s Škoda Felicia (convertible) and a Golf R.

A book I would recommend others read is *The Chimp Paradox* by Dr Steve Peters – you can only understand others if you understand yourself.

My hobbies and interests are the gym (I am very competitive), travelling to new places and spending time in the south of France.

I want to be remembered as someone who was passionate, enthusiastic and always trying to be my best towards others.

My pet hate is mess. I am OCD when it comes to cleanliness.

My first memory associated with a car was every holiday, all of my family packed into the car road-tripping to the south of France or Northumberland for a holiday. It's how I holiday now.

The pivotal moment in my life was when I moved to Paris to work at 18. After living in a small village in Gloucestershire for all of my life it was quite a change.

If I were Prime Minister for the day I would review policies on the public sector, for example the NHS.

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is to take every opportunity when it arises and never regret a decision.

My favourite film is *The Shawshank Redemption* – it's a classic.

**Your first fleet role** I started a few years ago as a communications graduate in the Škoda fleet team. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the brand and after the end of the graduate programme, I joined as an area fleet manager.

**Career goals** To continue to progress further in the fleet sector, specifically within sales, and to play my part in shaping Škoda and the wider automotive industry.

**Biggest achievement in business** The best achievements are always those of attracting new customers to the brand, to see how genuinely delighted they are with the new products, and ultimately having a tangible impact on increasing our corporate volume.

**Career influence** I am still in the early stages of my career so I am sure there will be people I can reflect on in years to come, but in terms of driving my ambition to get a foothold into the automotive industry I would have to say my dad has had the biggest influence.

**Biggest mistake in business** Not so much a mistake, but I constantly remind myself that I am new into the industry and I need to learn from others and their experiences.

**Leadership style** I like to offer a consultative approach, whether dealing with customers or my colleagues, and be ready with solutions rather than focus on problems.

**If I wasn't in fleet** I actually always wanted to work in the airline industry. If you look at it pragmatically, cars, like planes, are an enabler for getting from one place to another, so I guess I am in the right profession.

**Childhood ambition** As a child I wanted to be a pilot. It was the idea of being able to travel all over the world and fly yourself there, which was a simply amazing concept to my younger self.



## New Tourneo Courier hits Euro 6.2 emissions mark

The new to the UK Ford Tourneo Courier Zetec people mover brings stylish new design, more fuel-efficient powertrains and advanced new driver assistance technologies to the Tourneo family.

The five-seat Tourneo Courier Zetec is the smallest member of Ford's Tourneo family, but boasts an extremely flexible and roomy rear compartment.

Inside, the centre console is ergonomically designed, available with an optional six-inch colour touchscreen with Ford's SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system, positioned close to the driver

for improved visibility and ease-of-use.

Meeting Euro 6.2 emissions standards, the powertrain line-up offers the choice of fuel-efficient 1.5-litre Duratorq TDCi diesel or Ford's multi-award-winning 1.0-litre EcoBoost petrol engine with cylinder de-activation, which helps it achieve CO<sub>2</sub> emission test figures from 122g/km.

The Tourneo Courier Zetec features Ford's all-new six-speed manual transmission, offering improved shift quality and refinement and contributing to better real-world fuel-efficiency.

For the ultimate in low running costs, a new fuel-efficiency package is offered as

standard on diesel models, which integrates optimised aerodynamics with an Active Grille Shutter that improves warm-up times and reduces aero-drag.

To help further reduce fuel consumption and emissions, both powertrains are available with optional Auto Start Stop.

The new Tourneo Courier Zetec provides outstanding luggage and passenger space. The flexible rear compartment features 60/40 split rear seats with a convenient tip/tumble folding mechanism, providing 1,656 litres of space with the seats folded down, and excellent access to the rear seats through twin sliding doors.

### FIRST MONDEO HYBRID WILL GO ON SALE NEXT YEAR

Ford has announced the first Mondeo Hybrid estate, combining the efficiency and refinement of an electric powertrain with the driving range and freedom offered by a traditional combustion engine.

Specification and pricing for the enhanced Mondeo Hybrid range – which will deliver attractive fuel efficiency and CO<sub>2</sub> emission

performance, and a compelling alternative to diesel powertrains for fleet customers – will be released closer to its 2019 on-sale date.

The Mondeo Hybrid powertrain's electric motor supports the 2.0-litre Atkinson cycle petrol engine in driving the wheels, and a generator to enable regenerative charging of the 1.4kWh lithium-ion, air-cooled, recyclable

battery. Regenerative braking captures up to 90% of the energy normally lost during braking to replenish the battery.

The Mondeo Hybrid is capable of driving in pure electric mode, delivering ultimate refinement and efficiency particularly in city and stop-start driving. The hybrid powertrain delivers 187PS, supported by a continuously variable automatic transmission.

Next issue: Elaine Pringle, vehicle operations manager, Scottish Water



Go Further



# ALL-NEW FOCUS

TOGETHER WE GO FURTHER



## YOUR FLEET'S FINANCES TOTALLY TRANSFORMED

To keep running costs at a minimum the All-New Focus range delivers highly competitive low emissions from 91g/km CO<sub>2</sub>. Plus, you and your drivers will benefit from a combined fuel economy of up to 80.7mpg.

Discover more at [ford.co.uk/new-focus](http://ford.co.uk/new-focus) or contact the Ford Business Centre: 03457 23 23 23 | [flinform@ford.com](mailto:flinform@ford.com)

### P11D

£30,390-£18,100

### BIK

28%-22%

### CO<sub>2</sub>

137-91g/km

### COMBINED MPG

46.3-80.7



Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the All-New Ford Focus range: urban 36.7-74.3 (7.7-3.8), extra urban 55.4-85.6 (5.1-3.3), combined 46.3-80.7 (6.1-3.5). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 137-91g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Regulation 715/2007 and 692/2008 as last amended), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. Information correct at time of going to print.