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# Drug-driving becoming more prevalent than drink-driving

Fleets urged to put adequate policies in place as police report dramatic increase in offenders

By Gareth Roberts

**F**leets are being urged to consider drug testing their drivers, as some police forces report arrests for drug-driving have surpassed drink-driving for the first time.

Nationally, the number of drug-driving prosecutions almost doubled last year, with a record 10,215 cases in England and Wales, compared with 5,368 in 2017. Some 60,000 drivers failed roadside breath tests in 2016, according to the most recent Ministry of Justice data available.

However, more recent statistics released by some individual forces show a worrying trend, with cannabis and cocaine now more prevalent than alcohol in roadside tests.

The latest data released by Suffolk Police, for example, shows that the number of arrests for drug-driving surpassed the number of drink-drive arrests for the first time in the county.

The 672 drug-driving arrests in 2018/19 represented a 20% increase on the previous 12 months, while drink-driving increased by 11.3% to 652 arrests.

Assistant chief constable Simon Megicks said: "This year is the first time our drug-drive numbers are in excess of drink-drive ones."

It was a similar story in Norfolk, where more drug-drivers were caught during its Christmas drink-drive campaign for the first time.

More than 600 people were arrested after failing a roadside drug test in the county last year, just four years earlier 37 were arrested on suspicion of drug-driving.

Meanwhile, early results from the annual drink- and drug-driving summer campaigns also show that, when used, roadside drug tests have a higher hit rate than breath tests for alcohol.

During Greater Manchester Police's 14-day summer drink and drug

campaign, it carried out 640 breath tests, with some 90 proving positive. That compared with 114 roadside drug tests, with 50 samples returning a positive reading for either cannabis or cocaine.

Figures from Cheshire Police, seen by *Fleet News*, show a huge increase in the detection of cannabis and cocaine after new legislation was introduced.

In 2014, before officers in Cheshire could perform roadside tests for cannabis or cocaine, there were 70 arrests. Four years later, in 2018, that had risen to 858.

It says cannabis and cocaine are the most prevalent drugs used by drug-drivers, with almost two-thirds (62%) testing positive for cannabis, 25% for cocaine and 13% testing positive for both substances.

More than half (62%) of positive tests were from drivers aged 30 years and below and an incredible 94% were male, much higher than the 78% for drink-driving.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for roads policing, chief constable Anthony Bangham, said he was "concerned" to see the

increase in the number of motorists testing positive for drugs.

He told *Fleet News* public perception of the issue needs to change.

"Drink-driving is considered socially unacceptable by the vast majority of the public, yet the emergence of drug-driving is perhaps not yet seen in the same way," he said.

"Anyone driving under the influence of drink or drugs is a real danger to themselves and other road users."

Four out of five respondents to a *Fleet News* poll appear to agree, believing drug-driving has become such a safety issue for fleets that they think employers should be routinely testing company car and van drivers.

The insurance industry is also taking note and urging fleets to ensure they have robust policies in place.

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) told *Fleet News* that, with the right information and the right policies, "fleet managers can help protect their drivers, other road users and their businesses".

Laurenz Gerger, motor policy

adviser at the ABI, explained: "All organisations can benefit from having formal drug and alcohol policies which clearly outline the consequences of alcohol or drug misuse at the workplace. Such a policy may include screening and testing."

"Commercial fleet insurers will work with their customers to develop solutions to reduce vulnerability and manage their road risk."

## ROADSIDE DRUG TESTING

Higher detection rates have been attributed to the introduction of roadside drug testing and an overhaul of drug-driving laws.

Changes to the offence of drug-driving came into force in England and Wales from March 2015. New legislation made it illegal to drive with specified levels of certain drugs, including legal medication, in your system.

It had been a criminal offence, under section 4 Road Traffic Act 1988, to drive a motor vehicle while being unfit to do so as a result of drug consumption. However, the new rules meant a driver could be guilty of an offence of drug-driving even if their ability to drive is not impaired as a result of drug use.

Section 5A contained the new offence of driving with a concentration of a specified controlled drug above a specified limit, with Government taking a zero-tolerance approach to cannabis, for example.

The drugs specified in the regulations consisted of eight legal medications, including diazepam and morphine, and eight illegal drugs such as cannabis and cocaine.

Drivers convicted of an offence of drug-driving are automatically banned from driving for at least one year, and can face a fine of up to £5,000, up to six months in prison, or both.

Police forces have also had access to new drug-testing kits for

94%

of drug drivers are male

10,215

drug driving prosecutions in England and Wales in 2018

use during roadside checks of suspected drivers.

D.Tec International provides police forces in England and Wales with its Drugwipe device, which uses saliva to test for cocaine and cannabis at the roadside.

The company also offers advice on corporate drug and alcohol policies and workplace testing on a range of drugs to mitigate a fleet's exposure to risk.

Ean Lewin, managing director of D.Tec International, says drug-driving poses a "very significant" risk to fleet managers.

A recent sweep at a construction company returned a positive test for drugs for more than one-in-three drivers (38%) against an industry average of 15% and an average of 6% across all industries.

"It was a shocking result, but we're catching drug-drivers on a daily basis," said Lewin. "One of the forces told me that 50% of their drug-driving arrests were at-work drivers."

## RISK MANAGEMENT

There is no legal obligation for the fleet industry to adopt specific testing policies in the workplace, but companies do have a duty of care to maintain a safe working environment under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Lewin advocates screening as part of the recruitment process, making an initial test part of a potential driver's risk assessment and his company has been working with one of the country's major insurers to help mitigate a fleet's risk.

D.Tec International is a specialist partner of Aviva Risk Management Solutions (ARMS), with the insurer offering policyholders breathalysers, drug wipes, drug and alcohol awareness courses, as well as policy guidance.

Gill Milner, technical account manager for motor and liability at Aviva, explained: "These all contribute to creating and maintaining an environment with improved management of this risk."

Aviva's liability and motor risk consultants have been trained in drug and alcohol awareness, on how to recognise the general signs of drug use, and the affect that drugs and alcohol have on driving and work performance.

They are also trained in how to use breathalysers and drug wipes.

Milner said: "Improving the knowledge of our risk consultants and providing them with breathalysers and drug wipes enables a far more proactive discussion with customers, where we can illustrate the subject and share our knowledge with greater confidence."

Introducing effective management of a robust drug and alcohol policy and screening, according to Milner, allows employers to "non-intrusively" check their safety-critical employees in a culture of openness and trust. This reduces the risk of any incident that may affect not only the organisation, but other employees, customers, suppliers and the wider public.

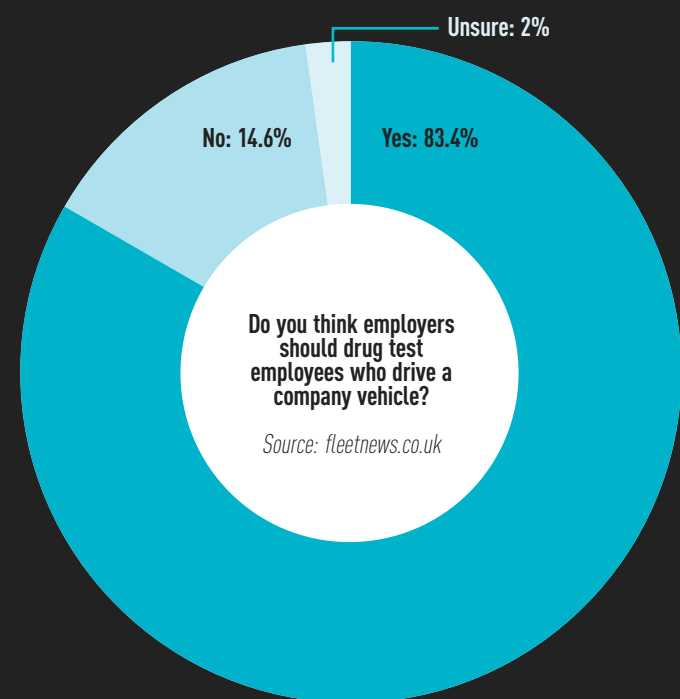
"By not addressing drug driving, there is a real risk that employers will fail in their legal duty of care ➔

DRINK-DRIVING IS  
CONSIDERED SOCIALLY  
UNACCEPTABLE, YET THE  
EMERGENCE OF DRUG-DRIVING  
IS PERHAPS NOT YET SEEN IN  
THE SAME WAY

CHIEF CONSTABLE ANTHONY BANGHAM, NPCC







for employees and others who may be affected by their activities," she said.

Another large fleet insurer, Zurich, says impairment through drugs, whether prescribed or illegal, needs to be part of the consideration of the overall work-related road risk strategy.

"The risk needs to be assessed, appropriate interventions should be deployed and a monitor and review process should be introduced," said Louise Kerrigan, casualty and motor team leader for risk engineering at Zurich.

"We would recommend introducing policies and procedures which include the provision of drug and alcohol testing for pre-employment, random, with cause and/or as a condition for access of employees or contractors to a site.

"Policies and processes should be risk-based and organisations typically find it beneficial to define a 'safety critical employee', which would include anyone who drives a vehicle for work."

#### 'GROWING' FLEET INTEREST

Milner reports growing interest from its fleet customers and is currently active in sectors including transport and distribution, construction, retail and leisure services.

"Discussing drugs and alcohol in the workplace with policyholders means we can assist in providing advice, listen to their concerns and offer a mix of solutions to tackle any

issues they have identified," she said.

"A number have already implemented drug and alcohol policies and screening. For some, the drug wipes offering was welcomed, as it is less intrusive than other screening methods and the drug and alcohol awareness training greatly increased their managers' awareness to positively and proactively manage this subject."

The road safety charity Brake had long argued for new drug driving laws before they were finally introduced in 2015.

#### PROBABLE CAUSE

It says organisations should have a comprehensive drug testing and reporting policy in place. This should require them to test all drivers for drugs at the pre-employment stage, at random thereafter, when there is a probable cause, post incident and as a condition for access of employees or contractors to a site.

"We're appealing to all employers with staff who drive for work to treat this with the seriousness that it deserves and have the necessary driving policies and practices in place to ensure their drivers are always fit to drive," said a spokesman.

"Employers using vehicles to do their business, no matter the size of their business, or the type of vehicle they use or who owns those vehicles, have a responsibility to manage the associated risks, for any related legal reason but also moral reasons to protect people from death and injury."

## Impaired? Many drivers have no idea that they may be over the drugs limit



BY PAUL LOUGHLIN,  
SPECIALIST MOTORING  
AT STEPHENSONS

Taking drugs and driving is undoubtedly highly dangerous and reckless.

However, the increase in arrests since the introduction of the new 'excess drugs', section 5A offence, cannot simply be categorised as a growing trend of drivers flouting the law.

An important factor behind the increase, in my view, is simply the more widespread use of the roadside screening process.

Historically, a field impairment test was the officer's go-to means of determining whether there may be evidence of impairment due to drink or drugs. That test is far from perfect and can often be considered subjective.

The offence of driving with excess drugs does not rely on any assessment of 'impairment'. It is now akin to an 'excess alcohol' offence where the ingredients of the offence simply involve driving, in a public place, while over the specified limit.

Taking away the element of subjectivity, the use of roadside screening devices has certainly been a major factor in seeing those arrest numbers rise.

Whether there is a fundamental lack of acknowledgement among the public in relation to the dangers of drug-driving or not is a difficult issue. But my experience in these cases does suggest that many drivers have no idea they may be over the legal limit.

Drugs such as cocaine and cannabis don't break down anywhere near as quickly as alcohol. Roadside screening devices are not sufficient to justify charges but they certainly justify the requirement for an evidential specimen of blood being taken later at the police station.

Analysis of those blood specimens means traces of drugs can often be found days after usage.

Remember, impairment is not a consideration at that stage. The limits for cannabis and cocaine are widely accepted as extremely low and appear to have been deliberately set that way.

The effect of this is that drivers can be driving days after using these substances and feel fine to drive, but still fall foul of the section 5A offence.

The consequence of all of this is that drug usage by drivers is now a public interest issue and is undoubtedly one that fleet operators should have high on their agendas.

Alcohol screening is common in the workplace and referrals can be made by employers to the Traffic Commissioner where CPC-qualified drivers may be called to a driver conduct hearing.

To protect their status as licence holders, operators will need to safeguard against seemingly impaired drivers being in a position where public safety may be at risk.



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\*Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures (known as WLTP). The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on a calculation designed to be equivalent to the outgoing (NEDC) test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. For more information, please see [seat.co.uk/wltp](http://seat.co.uk/wltp) or consult your SEAT Dealer.

NEWS: MOBILES AND THE LAW

# MPs call for change to use of mobiles law following two high profile cases

Filming, not speaking, driver wins case; senior policewoman distracted before collision

By Gareth Roberts

**T**he Government has given no indication it intends to change mobile phone laws after a driver won his case in the High Court.

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) had lodged an appeal with the High Court after Ramsey Barreto had a conviction quashed for filming a crash on his mobile phone.

The 51-year-old was prosecuted and found guilty after police saw him driving past an accident using his phone to make a video. However, he had the conviction overturned at Isleworth Crown Court, last October, after his lawyers successfully argued that the law only banned the use of mobile phones to speak or communicate while behind the wheel.

Publishing its decision last month, the High Court dismissed the DPP appeal, agreeing with Barreto's lawyers ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), August 1).

In its conclusion, the court said: "The legislation does not prohibit all use of a mobile phone held while driving. It prohibits driving while using a mobile phone or other device for calls and other interactive communication (and holding it at some stage during that process)."

However, when asked if it intended to overhaul the current legislation, the Department for Transport (DfT) declined to answer the question.

Instead, a spokesman insisted: "The law is clear that anyone driving

dangerously is committing a criminal offence."

Emma Patterson, Barreto's solicitor, who successfully argued the case, said drivers who use their phones at the wheel may still be committing an offence of driving without due care and attention, or dangerous driving, "if the standard of driving falls below that expected of a careful and competent driver".

She continued: "This is not a loophole argument. This is simply the correct application and understanding of the law as it stands."

Frank Rogers from Just Motor Law, the motoring arm of Kirwans law firm, added that contrary to some reports, the ruling is "unlikely to open the floodgates to thousands of convicted drivers".

"What it does do is set an important precedent which, in some cases, could lead to some successful appeals," he said.

Currently, the penalty for making calls on a handheld device while driving is a £200 fixed penalty notice and six points, which could lead to drivers who have already accumulated points losing their licence.

Rogers continued: "This case is not

a green light for people to start using their mobile devices while driving."

### HANDS-FREE CONVICTION

Motorists can legally make a hands-free call, but if it is detrimental to their driving, the legislation that should have been used to prosecute Barreto can also be applied to a hands-free call.

This was the case following a collision involving an assistant chief constable who was attempting to make a hands-free call to her husband ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), August 12).

Nottingham Magistrates' Court heard Kerrie Wilson, assistant chief constable of Lincolnshire Police, had just left the force's headquarters when she strayed on to the wrong side of the road, crashing into a Hyundai i30 travelling in the opposite direction.

The driver of the other car suffered whiplash and bruising and had to be taken to hospital.

The 51-year-old became distracted as she tried to find the Bluetooth button on the steering wheel of her Mini Countryman. She was unfamiliar with the controls because she had only just started driving the vehicle.

Wilson had pleaded guilty to driving without due care and attention, and was ordered to pay a total of £1,460 in fines and costs.

She also had seven points added to her licence.

### MPs DEMAND ACTION

Wilson's conviction came as MPs on the Transport Committee urged the Government to consider banning the use of hands-free mobile phones while driving ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), August 13).

Transport Committee chair Lilian Greenwood said: "There is a misleading impression that hands-free use is safe."

"The reality is that any use of a phone distracts from a driver's ability to pay full attention and the Government should consider extending the ban to reflect this."

In its *Road Safety: Driving While Using a Mobile Phone* report, the Transport Committee is also calling for tougher penalties and wants the Government to overhaul current laws on using mobile devices while driving to cover use irrespective of whether this involves sending or receiving data.



Using a mobile for phone calls can attract a fine and six points on a driver's licence

THE LEGISLATION DOES NOT PROHIBIT ALL USE OF A MOBILE PHONE HELD WHILE DRIVING

HIGH COURT RULING



# BT Fleet Solutions is sold to private equity group for undisclosed sum

New owners will continue to manage BT fleet of vehicles as part of 'long-term partnership'

By Gareth Roberts

**B**T Fleet Solutions has been sold to private equity group Aurelius Equity Opportunities by parent company BT Group for an undisclosed sum.

In the coming months, Aurelius said an operational task force will support BT Fleet Solutions as it separates from its parent company.

The business is expected to be rebranded within the next 12 months.

Going forward, Aurelius says it will work with BT Fleet Solutions' existing management team to grow the business.

Growth, it says, will be delivered through a range of initiatives, including operational improvement, investment in key business areas – such as heavy goods vehicles, accident management and vehicle funding.

Aurelius says it will also work with management to identify customer and product expansion opportunities, both organically and through acquisition.

Dirk Markus, group CEO and chairman of the executive board of Aurelius, said BT Fleet Solutions is a "strong business" with a "high calibre customer base".

He continued: "We look forward to working with management to ensure a smooth transition in the coming months, positioning the company as an independent entity that is ready to capture the significant growth opportunity available in the UK market."

Established in 2002, BT Fleet Solutions employs around 950 staff in the UK, and manages more than 80,000 vehicles for 26 blue chip customers across a range of industries.

A range of services is offered from service, maintenance and repair (SMR) and fleet management, to telematics and accident management.

Aurelius says it will continue to manage BT's own fleet, some 35,000 vehicles including the Openreach fleet (29,000 vehicles), thanks to a "long-term partnership agreement" included in the sale.



Services from BT Fleet Solutions are provided through a 65-strong, UK-wide garage network, with more than 500 partner garages and more than 50 mobile technicians.

Former BT chief executive officer Gavin Patterson announced a restructuring programme for the telecoms company last year, which will see 13,000 jobs cut, mainly in back office and middle management roles, and a move to base its operations at 30 sites around the UK.

The company had previously confirmed a deal to sell its London headquarters close to St Pauls for £210 million and to lease the building for 30 months, while it moves to a new facility at Aldgate.

It is hoped the changes will save the business £1.3 billion and allow the streamlined company to react more rapidly to market trends.

Gerry McQuade, CEO of BT's Enterprise unit, explained that the acquisition was an "exciting and significant step forward" in its development and will deliver for its customers, staff and the BT Group.

"Over the past five years, our fleet business has grown into a multi-award-winning market leader in the sector," he said.

"The unrivalled expertise and experience of its people in managing and maintaining complex fleets has been key to this success."

He continued: "With BT's renewed focus on investing in the best fixed and mobile networks in the UK, and with BT Fleet Solutions well posi-

tioned to achieve further growth, the time is right for the business to find a new home."

Commenting on the business' new owners, McQuade said that Aurelius is "ideally placed" to support the next phase of BT Fleet Solutions' development and deliver new services to its customers.

He added: "I'd like to thank our colleagues in BT Fleet Solutions for all they have done for the business and the wider BT Group, and wish them every success for the future."

Rumours the telecoms company was looking to offload the business started circulating late last year, with the asking price said to be around £200m (fleetnews.co.uk, November 9, 2018). However, it is understood that £200m sale tag was wide of the mark and the actual price of the business was in the tens of millions.

The latest published statutory accounts for 2017/18 for BT Fleet show revenues of £209.5m and profit before tax of £29.4m.

Aurelius Group is a pan-European investment group with offices in Munich, London, Stockholm, Madrid and Amsterdam. Since it was founded in 2006, it has grown from a local turnaround investor to an international multi-asset manager.

Aurelius Equity Opportunities represents the listed entity within the Aurelius Group that focuses on investing in special and turnaround situations and mid-market transaction opportunities in a broad range of industries.



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<sup>^</sup>Figure shown is for C3 Aircross PureTech 110 6-speed manual Touch. <sup>°</sup>Figures shown are for C3 Aircross BlueHDi 100 6-speed manual Feel.

\*Available as a cost option. \*Available on selected versions. Figures shown are for comparison purposes only; you should only compare these fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested using the same technical standard. The fuel consumption you achieve, and CO<sub>2</sub> produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test WLTP (Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicles Test Procedure) used to measure fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown are NEDCeq (New European Driving Cycle Equivalent), calculated using an EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDC. These NEDCeq figures are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate tax for the first registration. °Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile.

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CO<sub>2</sub> from 111g/km\* | Combined 39.2 to 53.3 mpg<sup>#</sup>

Fuel economy<sup>#</sup> and CO<sub>2</sub>\* results for the Grandland X. Combined mpg (l/100km): 39.2 (7.2) – 53.3 (5.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 128 – 111g/km.

<sup>#</sup>Fuel consumption figures are determined according to the WLTP test cycle. <sup>\*</sup>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figures are determined according to the WLTP test cycle however, a Government formula is then applied to translate these figures back to what they would have been under the outgoing NEDC test cycle, which WLTP replaces. The correct tax treatment is then applied. Figures are intended for comparability purposes only. The fuel consumption you achieve under real life driving conditions and CO<sub>2</sub> produced will depend upon a number of factors, including the accessories fitted after registration, variations in driving styles, weather conditions and vehicle load. Only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> with other vehicles tested using the same technical procedures. For more information contact your local Vauxhall Retailer. <sup>†</sup>2019/20 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 (August 2019).



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NEWS: BVRLA COMMITTEE

# BVRLA's new fleet committee will 'strengthen' lobbying voice

Leasing association sees no problems, although ACFO has pointed to conflicts of interest

By Stephen Briers

**R**oyal Mail commercial director Duncan Webb has been appointed first chairman of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association's (BVRLA) new fleet committee.

BVRLA announced its intention to open membership to end-user fleets a year ago (*Fleet News*, October 14, 2018) and the committee, introduced earlier this year, marks the next step in its plans to engage and involve fleets in its lobbying activities.

Jay Parmar, current BVRLA director of policy and membership (see panel), said the move would strengthen the association's ability to present industry issues to Government and policy advisors while also helping to shape its own agenda.

"We already do lobbying work and we represent the customer base in our work," he said. "So the obvious thing is why don't they help to shape that policy. It's a natural evolution and means we don't have to rely on third party information from members. It sharpens up our messaging."

The fleet committee is targeting a group of 10-15 "good quality" companies who will be active participants in shaping and driving the agenda. It will meet quarterly.

"Good quality means proactive and engaged, but not necessarily the large companies," said Parmar. "We want a mix of large and small to give a balanced view. We also want a good geographical spread and companies from a range of sectors."

Work has already started in a number of areas, including on the BVRLA's sometimes contentious fair

“CREATION OF A FLEET OPERATORS COMMITTEE IS A NATURAL STEP”

DUNCAN WEBB, BVRLA FLEET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



wear and tear guides. "The fleets are helping us to improve the way they are written and laid out – the customer view gives balance and makes it more objective," said Parmar.

The fleet committee has also met officials from the Department for Transport's Joint Air Quality Unit to share views on a proposed air quality portal, which is under development for launch in January 2020.

Fleets gave feedback on a vehicle checker tool that allows motorists to enter their registration to see whether they will incur a charge for entering a clean air zone and on the need to have a simple-to-use centralised payment portal with the ability to check multiple vehicles at the same time.

Parmar dismissed fears that the decision to court fleets would lead to conflict with trade associations such as ACFO and Freight Transport Association (FTA), pointing out that both already had BVRLA members, such as leasing and rental compa-

nies, within their memberships.

At the time of the announcement, ACFO said it was "surprised and disappointed", suggesting there was "bound to be conflict when an organisation attempts to represent both suppliers and customers in the same industry".

However, Parmar said: "I believe it strengthens our voice because we can present a united view. We don't see it as a conflict. We will be able to give the Government constructive feedback."

He insisted that BVRLA would continue to work alongside ACFO and FTA, among others, when lobbying Government on policy.

"We can't underestimate the power of bringing trade bodies together to lobby Government and that won't change," he said. "We are not retreating or isolating ourselves; it's a pragmatic move, not empire building."

He added: "It will also be right for us to let others lead when relevant, where they have a pool of knowledge

that strengthens the voice. We all have core competencies and there are areas where there is overlap and we will work together."

Examples of cross-association working include topics such as air quality and direct vision standards, whereas other areas, such as lease accounting rules or WLTP for vans, are being led by BVRLA.

"The fleet sector voice is not well understood; it's the manufacturer and supplier side which has the voice. But we can accelerate the goals and aspiration for the sector; it's an authentic voice that amplifies the message," said Parmar.

BVRLA stresses that it doesn't see fleet as a major revenue stream. It has kept subs low, aligned with its associate membership fees. So far, a handful of fleets have joined, although more have attended meetings.

"We have to show them where the value is; committee meetings aren't talking shops," Parmar said.

Following his appointment, Duncan Webb said: "The BVRLA has a long history of supporting its members and this has increasingly involved representing the voice of fleet operators. The creation of a fleet operators committee is a natural step to put the operators' voice into their existing influencing channels with Government policymakers and also give the BVRLA a more balanced view alongside its core membership given it is an independent association. A key outcome and objective from the operators committee will be ensuring the valued work undertaken is achieved on behalf of all fleet operators in the market."



## JAY PARMAR TO LEAVE BVRLA AFTER 19 YEARS

Jay Parmar, the driving force behind the BVRLA decision to open membership to end-user fleets, is leaving the association after 19 years.

Parmar will take up his new role as chief executive at JIB, the Joint Industry Board for the Electrical Contracting Industry, on October 1.

"I am thrilled to be given the opportunity to lead the JIB team," Parmar said. "My focus will be to ensure that the organisation remains at the forefront of the industry's fast pace of change; supporting members and further strengthening the value of membership."

Thanking Parmar for his

service, BVRLA chief executive Gerry Keaney said: "His contribution during the past two decades has helped to drive our industry forward and his commitment to delivering the highest industry standards has supported our members through times of unprecedented change and challenge."



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## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

JUL

18



### NEW DRIVERS COULD FACE BAN FROM DRIVING AT NIGHT

Graduated driver licensing, which would include not being able to drive at night, is being explored as part of a road safety action plan to reduce new driver crashes.

22



### FLEET OPERATORS ASSOCIATION ACFO APPOINTS CAROLINE SANDALL AS NEW CHAIRMAN

Caroline Sandall has been appointed as the new chairman of fleet operators association ACFO, replacing John Pryor who has stepped down from the role.

23

### VOLVO TO RECALL 70,000 DIESEL MODELS IN UK

The cars being recalled with a faulty engine component are S60, S80, S90, V40, V60, V70, V90, XC60 and XC90s produced between 2014 and 2019, which are equipped with a two-litre, four-cylinder diesel engine (likely badged D2, D3 or D4).

24



### IKER LAZZARI LEAVES NISSAN TO REJOIN VWFS

Iker Lazzari has been appointed as the new sales director for Volkswagen Financial Services (VWFS), having left his post as fleet director for Nissan UK.

25

### GRANT SHAPPS APPOINTED TRANSPORT SECRETARY

Grant Shapps has been appointed as Secretary of State for Transport in the new cabinet led by Boris Johnson. His appointment followed the sacking of Chris Grayling, who held the role between 2016 and 2019.

30



### VAUXHALL ASTRA FACELIFT: PRICES, SPECIFICATIONS AND CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS

The new powertrains are up to 19% more efficient than the outgoing units. The range kicks off with a 110PS 1.2-litre three-cylinder petrol engine, emitting 99g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>. There are also more potent 130PS and 145PS versions with the same emissions.

31

### CITY TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES WANT POWERS TO ENFORCE IDLING OFFENCES

City region transport authorities are calling on the Government to give them the power to impose penalties on vehicles to reduce the idling and stop-start conditions that cause congestion and air pollution.

AUG

1



### HIGH COURT HIGHLIGHTS MOBILE PHONE LAW LOOPHOLE

Court case highlights how legislation does not prohibit all use of a mobile phone held while driving after the Director of Public Prosecutions loses appeal at the High Court.

IN DETAIL



To view the full story go to [fleetnews.co.uk/news](https://fleetnews.co.uk/news)

5

### BT FLEET SOLUTIONS SOLD TO AURELIUS

BT Group has sold BT Fleet Solutions to private equity group Aurelius Equity Opportunities for an undisclosed sum. It comes after rumours started circulating late last year that the telecoms company was looking to offload the business.

12



### SENIOR POLICE OFFICER CRASHES INTO CAR WHILE TRYING TO MAKE HANDS-FREE PHONE CALL

Kerrie Wilson, assistant chief constable of Lincolnshire Police, had just left the force's headquarters when she strayed on to the wrong side of the road, crashing into a Hyundai i30 travelling in the opposite direction.

14

### INCREASE FUEL DUTY AND VED FOR DIESEL CARS, SAYS THINK TANK

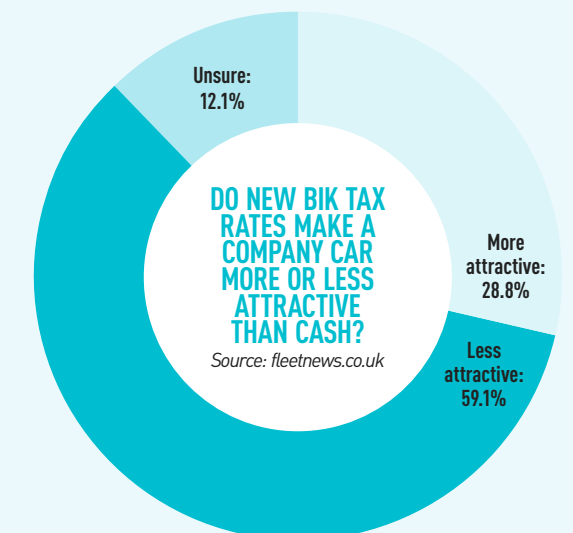
The Government should end its freeze on fuel duty and introduce a surcharge on diesel in a bid to improve air quality, says a Conservative think tank.

15

### EV CHARGING LOCATIONS SURPASS NUMBER OF FUEL STATIONS

There are now 9,300 EV charging locations compared with 8,400 fuel stations – almost 1,000 more public places to charge electric cars than there are fuel stations.

## FLEET NEWS POLL



### FLEET NEWS VIEW:

Our poll shows the majority of fleets (59.1%) remain to be convinced that new benefit-in-kind tax rates will make a company car more attractive than cash. Many had blamed a lack of clarity on company car tax rates for perk drivers making the switch towards cash. However, our view is that, with new rates now published and new low rates for ultra-low emission vehicles, the company car remains an attractive benefit and a cost-effective choice for employees.

**THIS ISSUE'S POLL:** Should newly qualified drivers be banned from driving at night?



# NEW MONDEO HYBRID ESTATE

The Ford logo is rendered in a light blue, stylized script font, positioned centrally on the right side of the advertisement. It is set against a background of two vertical blue stripes and a blurred motion effect.

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Model shown is a New Mondeo Titanium Edition Hybrid Estate 2.0 TiCVT Auto with optional Adaptive Headlamps and Power Tailgate. Fuel economy mpg (l/100km): Combined 46.3 (6.1). \*CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 113g/km.

Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. \*There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration.

VISIT: [FORD.CO.UK/MONDEO-HYBRID](http://FORD.CO.UK/MONDEO-HYBRID)



# THE BIG PICTURE

Change is afoot at the UK's two biggest fleet operators with news earlier this month that BT had sold its Fleet Solutions division to Aurelius, while Royal Mail pulled the plug on its own third party maintenance and repair aspirations due to a change in strategy.

Both organisations had contracts with some of the UK's biggest fleets who will now be considering what these changes mean for them.

Let's deal with Royal Mail first. The reason it is stopping its fleet management and SMR service two years after launch is also why it is no longer pursuing the Empty Legs (see page 76) initiative of offering space on its trucks to other companies.

The profile of Royal Mail's business is changing, with greater emphasis on distributing bigger parcels. It has a major investment plan in this area and needs both the spare space on its trucks and the spare space in its workshops to accommodate its growth aspirations.

We understand the company had double-figure customers plus strategic co-operations with Hitachi and ARI to handle their surplus SMR. All will now have to seek alternative arrangements.

Will that be with BT Fleet Solutions, expected to undergo a rebrand within the next 12 months? It's an obvious contender to fill the Royal Mail void (as is ARI), with 65 owned-workshops and 500 contracted facilities, although some of Royal Mail's customers were conquests from BT. Plus, it will no longer be able to trade on its operator status as a core competency.

The immediate challenge for Aurelius will be to retain BT's custom, worth 32,000 vehicles. BT is likely to test the market within the next year or so and several top 10 leasing companies will be keen to tender.

We hope to interview BT Fleet Solutions MD Henry Brace soon. Keep an eye on future issues.

**I'm delighted to announce that Hyundai has agreed to be the headline sponsor of the FN50, the definitive listing and analysis of the UK contract hire and leasing sector. Hyundai is one of the fastest growing manufacturers in true fleet thanks to its excellent range of cars and it's great to have the company on-board.**



*Stephen Briers*

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

# HAVE YOUR SAY

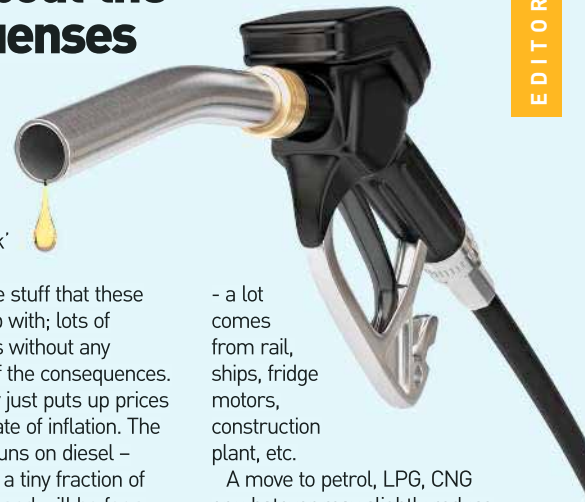
## DIESEL CARS

### Think about the consequences

**Edward Handley wrote:**

Having read 'Increase fuel duty and VED for diesel cars, says think tank' (fleetnews.co.uk, August 14), I love the stuff that these think tanks come up with; lots of ambitious measures without any proper perception of the consequences. Upping diesel duty just puts up prices and increases the rate of inflation. The transport industry runs on diesel – alternative fuels are a tiny fraction of the energy required and will be for a long time yet. Also, some of them are nowhere near as green as their advocates would have us believe.

It's not even road transport and diesel cars that create all the pollution



– a lot comes from rail, ships, fridge motors, construction plant, etc.

A move to petrol, LPG, CNG or whatever may slightly reduce particulates but only by increasing CO<sub>2</sub>. Battery electric and PHEV are fine, once you sort out the issues with power generation, but we are a long way from there.

EDITOR'S PICK

## THE EDITOR'S PICK IN EACH ISSUE WINS A £20 JOHN LEWIS VOUCHER

**Mark Williams added:**

Wouldn't it be excellent for air quality if private mileages could be cut by 95% and commuters were able to get vehicles which do 200mpg?

Well, this exists in the form of Euro VI coaches and buses, which not only knock cars' Euro 6 standard into a cocked hat, but, by sharing the fuel use, can achieve better than hybrid car levels of emissions per commuter.

The only thing stopping this revolution is the length and unreliability of PSV journeys, entirely caused by cars containing one commuter, yet none of the current clean air zones propose charging cars, only coaches get charged.

Efficient use of road space is the only

feasible method of cutting emissions and congestion, and that isn't resolved by electric cars or autonomous cars, which use 10 times as much road space per person.

**Dave continued:**

More unresearched populist nonsense from our lovely politicians. Have they not seen that modern diesel engines are cleaner than equivalent petrol ones? CO<sub>2</sub> is widely known to be less but, with introduction of RDE2 diesels, NO<sub>x</sub> is also on par, if not below, petrol levels.

HMRC has clearly done its homework as diesel subsidy dropped for RDE2. It's pre-2008 diesels that need an incentive to be scrapped and replaced with RDE2.

## PENALTY POINTS

### Blame councils, not drivers

**Paul Adey wrote:**

Having read 'Driving licence penalty points put 80,000 drivers at risk' (fleetnews.co.uk, July 17), the regional spread of driving licence endorsements has little to do with

driving standards and more to do with the attitude some councils have towards the use of speed cameras. They are frequently placed in questionable areas – nothing to do with safety, more to do with gaining revenue.

## It's not an electric car. It's an electric Audi.

The all-electric Audi e-tron.



Search Audi e-tron



e-tron

Official fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km): N/A. Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 0g/km.

These figures were obtained after the battery had been fully charged. The Audi e-tron is a battery electric vehicle requiring mains electricity for charging. There is a new test for fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range figures (known as WLTP). The electric range shown was achieved using the new test procedure. Figures shown are for comparability purposes. Only compare fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the starting charge of the battery, accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. Zero emissions while driving. Brake calipers shown not UK specification.





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# HAVE YOUR SAY

## DRIVING LICENCE

### Night driving ban – another crazy idea



**Andrew Baker wrote:**

Having read 'New drivers could face ban from driving at night' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), July 18), if a newly qualified driver works until 6pm in the winter in Scotland, where it is dark by approximately 3:30pm, this means they can't drive home or get to work in the morning as it is still dark until about 8am.

Sounds like another crazy idea dreamed up in the middle of summer by someone in London where public transport is ample unlike the rest of the country where public transport can be poor.

## BENEFIT-IN-KIND TAX

### New tax rules will increase demand



**The Engineer wrote:**

Having read 'Company car registration date could cost drivers dear' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), July 31), that is a shock, I had mistakenly complained that a post-April driver would pay less tax than a pre-April one as the rate per g/km are lower on the new table.

I didn't realise the new table would be against WLTP values which would have made me a lot worse off.

There is going to be a heck of a demand from drivers to register new vehicles just in time approaching next April.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

### Don't get carried away with numbers



**James Cunningham wrote:**

Having read 'EV charging locations surpass number of fuel stations' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), August 15), this is very interesting and encouraging but we shouldn't be too carried away with the headline numbers.

A typical petrol station will have perhaps 12-18 pumps, all of which are capable of refuelling an ICE vehicle in under 5 minutes.

You can do the maths on throughput capacity compared to charging stations which will be fully occupied for hours by one EV. The rapid chargers are only roughly 15% of the total and they still need to be occupied for an hour.

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**Burning question:**  
What do you still do that was cool when you were young, but is not cool now?

## EDITORIAL

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Watching my favourite sports teams and thinking 'one day this will be me', when in reality I'm 28 and haven't played a remotely competitive sport in two years

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Listen to my Spice Girls CDs

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Steal sweets

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Take the mickey out of friends or colleagues. No longer PC, but I still stray from time to time

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Glide along on the shopping trolley while doing the big shop

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Fuel consumption: N/A. CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions: 0 (g/km). EV Range: Up to 292 miles. EV range figures are based upon production vehicle over a standardised route. Range achieved will vary dependent on vehicle and battery condition, actual route and environment and driving style.

upon production vehicle over a standardised route. Range achieved will vary dependent on vehicle and battery condition, actual route and environment and driving style.



# FLEET LIVE

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For more details visit  
[www.fleet-live.co.uk](http://www.fleet-live.co.uk)

## Forward-thinking companies will share their experiences

Multiple break-out areas at Fleet Live 2019 will offer the chance to check the latest innovations in fleet, the best commercial fleets in the UK and give access to a free drop-in advice centre

### TOMORROW'S FLEET ZONE

The latest innovations in fleet will be on display at this year's Fleet Live as part of the Tomorrow's Fleet Zone.

Delegates will be able to interact with teams from Allstar Business Solutions, Centrica, Westfield Autonomous and more to find out about how fleets will change in the future.

Chris Jackson, Centrica head of electric vehicle (EV) strategy for fleets, will be on stand with his team to share its experiences in introducing EVs to the fleet.

Jackson said: "We want to talk about EV enablement. How we integrate the necessary infrastructure, energy and optimisation along with the vehicle so the fleet operator can transition with certainty."

Centrica's fleet, including British Gas, has already completed 1.5 million electric miles.

Centrica's Mobility ventures team will also be available to talk with delegates about developments with technology and data around charging infrastructure solutions.

Its ambition is to work with fleet operators

including buses, taxis and commercial fleets in depot and return-to-home tech solutions.

As well as a presence at the Tomorrow's Fleet Zone, Centrica Business Solutions DNO commercial manager Stuart Fowler will be presenting a seminar on Optimise Prime, the world's largest electric commercial vehicle trial, as part of Fleet Live's Strategy Theatre seminar. He will join key stakeholders to discuss the project on stage, alongside Hitachi Capital and Royal Mail.

Fowler said: "It's still early days with the project, but we will be talking about the reasons why we got involved and what we're trying to achieve."

"On the surface of it, the project has some simple goals looking at electrification of fleet vehicles, but there are many complexities around vehicle charging management, data and how this links to networks. Having the different stakeholders there at the show to present and debate will also shed light on our different objectives and perspectives."

Westfield Technology Group will showcase its autonomous POD vehicle as part of a static demo on both days. Its team will be showing video demos to delegates and will be explaining how the auton-

"THERE ARE MANY COMPLEXITIES AROUND VEHICLE CHARGING MANAGEMENT"

STUART FOWLER, CENTRICA



Westfield Technology Group will showcase its autonomous POD vehicle as part of a static demo

### ADVICE CENTRE

The Advice Centre returns for Fleet Live 2019 and will act as a dedicated zone for delegates to get free tips from peers in the industry on areas like procurement, HR and finance.

Visitors can gain a wealth of industry expertise from some of the UK's most knowledgeable and experienced managers, who will be on hand to answer questions and help find solutions.

The panel comprises of the Fleet Live advisory board members made up of experienced fleet managers from ACFO and leading companies in the UK.

Rory Morgan, Iron Mountain head of logistics support – Western Europe and Fleet Live advisory board member, said the advice centre is particularly important as fleet responsibilities are now carried out by a wide variety of job functions, including HR and procurement.

Morgan said: "It's that ostrich in the sand approach. People are aware of minor knocks, but all they see are the figures at the bottom of the profit and loss account. But if you don't measure it, you cannot manage it."



omous technology of the POD vehicle works. They will also be on hand to answer questions on how autonomous technology will fit into fleet's future.

The POD's original system has now completed more than three million miles in a live commercial environment serving Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 POD Parking.

The largest multi-vehicle trial formed part of the GATEway autonomous vehicle project in London.

The PODs navigated a two-mile route around the Greenwich Peninsula, using advanced sensors and autonomy software to detect and avoid obstacles as they picked up and dropped off passengers.

Trials have continued with the support of the Department of International Trade and the Centre for Connected Autonomous Vehicles.

Julian Turner, Westfield chief executive, said being part of the show would allow the company to showcase the cutting edge of autonomous capability. He said: "When deployed with fleet management systems, autonomous technology can provide an innovative solution to modern transport problems."

The Allstar Business Solutions team will also be on hand at the Tomorrow's Fleet zone to help fleets unpick the complexities around managing electric vehicle charging payments

The company has adapted its One fuel card to work with the growing EV charging infrastructure.

Allstar Business Solutions has put together a white paper called *Navigating the Alternatively Fuelled Future* and will be discussing key findings at the show.

### COMMERCIAL FLEET AWARDS HUB

The Commercial Fleet Awards will be held at the end of day one of Fleet Live 2019 on October 8 and the best van and truck fleets in the UK will be celebrated as part of the show across both days.

The CF Awards Hub will form a central point for those shortlisted and sponsors to network on the show floor at the NEC ahead of the awards ceremony at the National Motorcycle Museum that same evening.

Day two will then showcase all the winners, highly commended and sponsors to continue the celebrations from the previous evening.

Now in its 13th year, the Commercial Fleet Awards (formerly the Fleet Van Awards) honours the best people, companies and products in the van and truck sector.

The dinner brings together around 500 people from across the industry in a gala night.

Former winners include Royal Mail, Environment Agency and Vodafone in the fleet categories, and Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz and DAF in the van and truck categories.

Editor-in-chief Stephen Briers said: "We took the decision to bring together the awards and Fleet Live because we believe both events will benefit from the closer association. Fleet Live will get a boost from the ties we have with the van and truck sector, and the Commercial Fleet Awards will look to attract a larger audience of fleets, suppliers and manufacturers."



Visitor registration for Fleet Live is now open. Visit [fleet-live.co.uk](http://fleet-live.co.uk) for more information

Stephanie Teasdale, product marketing manager – core fuel, at Allstar parent company Fleetcor, said: "The new card is building on 90% national coverage of fuel stations across the UK by adding compatibility with EV charging networks."

"It means fleets don't have to sign up to multiple charging network memberships, they can just use one card to pay and track data for plug-in vehicles."

Allstar has already signed up with four charging providers to add compatibility with its One fuel card and is working on expanding its coverage.

Teasdale said: "We want to show that as a market leader we're adapting as the market is changing toward this new technology."

"As the plug-in vehicle market continues to take off, that will be reflected in the services we offer."

Stephen Briers, *Fleet News* editor-in-chief, said the Tomorrow's Fleet Zone creates a dedicated area for Fleet Live delegates to network and discuss future fleet strategies with access to some of the most forward-thinking companies in the UK.



# Bumps on the Road To Zero

A range of experts discuss the challenges presented by mass EV adoption at the BVRLA conference, reports *Andrew Baxter*



Members of the panel are introduced to the conference delegates

**T**he much vaunted Road To Zero initiative set out by the Government is as vital as it is noble. According to Defra's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU), air pollution is the largest environmental health risk in the UK. Indeed, the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants estimates that air pollution causes 28,000 to 36,000 deaths a year in the UK.

However, the reality of Whitehall's ambition to see at least half of new cars to be ultra-low emission by 2030 is that the journey towards that goal is far from straightforward.

Air quality was among a host of issues discussed by a diverse range of industry experts gathered to speak at this year's inaugural BVRLA (British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association) Future Mobility Congress. Included among the topics was the trade body's own Road To Zero: Report Card 2019.

The report analyses the readiness of the fleet sector to transition to ultra-low emission vehicles and recommends where further Government action may be required. Progress is assessed in five key areas: policy measures, tax benefits, new vehicles, charge points and user sentiment.

## POLICY MEASURES

Policy around EV take up can broadly be divided into supply and demand, according to Denis Naberezhnykh, technical director sustainable transport, Ricardo. He feels that, although not perfect, policies in the UK regarding demand are actually "pretty good". Supply is where it falls short.

As internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle production falls and EV production ramps up, the UK is going to be one in a long line of countries clamouring for a limited supply of EVs.

"We are going to be among many countries trying to get access to what's going to be actually a very limited supply of electric and low emission

**A LOT OF DRIVERS ARE STILL STRUGGLING TO FULLY ADOPT AND EMBRACE A ULEV OR EV**

**MARK GALLAGHER, GROSVENOR LEASING**

vehicles for the foreseeable future. It's limited for a number of reasons, but there are real constraints around the supply chain," says Naberezhnykh.

"I think there are policies that can be put in place that will encourage the sale and manufacture of vehicles in the UK, which will essentially allow us to out-compete other countries who also want those same vehicles in the same timeframe."

## TAX BENEFITS

Mark Gallagher, green fleet specialist, Grosvenor Leasing, says the delay in clarity on BIK rates plus a number of changes to the landscape over recent years, have combined to erode trust.

"A lot of drivers are still struggling to fully adopt and embrace a ULEV or EV and there's still an amount of uncertainty and lack of trust with the company car tax system with the changes we've seen in the past few years. The proposed removal of the diesel supplement, which became an increase to 4% from 3%, has eroded confidence with drivers out in the market," Gallagher says.

## NEW VEHICLES

According to BVRLA public affairs manager Rachael Hewish: "There are some serious issues with supplies and long lead-in times; it's something we're hearing over and over again."

Naberezhnykh says supply chains will need to accelerate considerably to meet demand.

"There is a very clear commitment from automotive manufacturers and their supply chains to ramp up significantly their commitments to electrification," he says.

"Some of the challenges will come back to the practical limitations of having the right supply chain built up quickly enough."

EV supply is already a consideration for Suzanne Phillips, fleet consultant, Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions. HCVS is one of eight partner organisations participating in the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem)-funded Optimise Prime project, which requires 3,000 commercial EVs.

"Vehicle supply is absolutely critical for this project. We need to get those 3,000 vehicles on the road by the end of 2020. I think we would expect manufacturers to start the supply of EVs in January next year, but we also understand that it's easier for them to deploy those outside the UK rather than within the UK," says Phillips.

## CHARGE POINTS

Interoperability and meeting demand are key issues when it comes to EV charging infrastructure. Western Power Distribution's One Nation project tracked and monitored almost 700 EV users to gain insight on their vehicle use and charging behaviour.

Jonathan Berry, innovation manager at Western Power Distribution, says: "What's really important is what that energy flow is going to look like. Regarding charge point infrastructure, from our

point of view, it's (about) understanding when they're available."

## SENTIMENT

Real-time data on charge point availability and condition will also be vital to ensure the viability of mass EV adoption and increase driver appetite and trust.

As Mark Gallagher of Grosvenor Leasing says: "The main thing we hear on a regular basis is about a lack of standardised infrastructure. On top of that there is a certain amount of anxiety, because we have been so conditioned to a five minute 'recharge' if you will, to refuel to get our range back.

"There are a lot of drivers who still can't quite get their heads around the idea that they will buy their next vehicle and it will have a range of 200, 250, or 300 miles... 'what if' they need to go 400 miles?"

## CARS IN THE CITY



The BVRLA chose the Future Mobility Congress to launch its *Cars in the City* report. It is the result of extensive consultation with private sector mobility providers, local and combined authorities, central government policymakers, academics, transport stakeholder groups and industry specialists.

*Cars in the City* makes 11 recommendations to national and local policymakers. These include policy leadership, clean air zones, spending, taxation, mobility data, parking, knowledge-sharing, urban mobility taskforces, planning, and electric vehicles.

The take-home message is quite simply: if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem...

To download a copy of the 32-page report, visit [www.bvrla.co.uk/resource/bvrla-cars-in-the-city-report.html](http://www.bvrla.co.uk/resource/bvrla-cars-in-the-city-report.html)



Jonathan Berry, Western Power's innovation manager (centre) was among the delegates

## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By **Stuart Thomas, director of fleet and SME at The AA**



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It may be a cliché, but we are in a period of unprecedented change in transport. Organisations could be forgiven for feeling frustration at the seeming lack of consistency in low emission vehicle availability, Government policy on air quality and engine standards, not to mention tax regimes and technology roll-out.

Of course, with uncertainty comes opportunity to take advantage of the multitude of data, smart solutions, innovative mobility, connectivity, electric and alternatively-fuelled vehicles hitting the market. Real-time information is not an aspiration but an expectation and, with data and insights, fleet managers can take a smart approach to vehicle selection, route planning, driver behaviour and supplier management.

Connectivity will play a big role over the coming years, with smart safety solutions paving the way towards autonomy; predictive and preventative maintenance providing greater links between vehicles and garaging networks to better manage servicing, maintenance and repair (SMR); and vehicle to infrastructure (V2X) technology helping to manage traffic flow and congestion.

Whatever technological developments we see, issues like driver safety, fleet productivity and operational cost-effectiveness remain at the fore. The challenge for all of us remains: how we can make the driving experience better, for fleets and businesses, every day?

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# UPPING THE PACE OF AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE CHANGE

Drivers from the Royal Borough of Greenwich have played a vital role in helping Move UK accelerate the development of AV technology. *Andrew Ryan* reports

**F**leet vehicle drivers with London's Royal Borough of Greenwich have played a key role in a project which aims to accelerate the development of automated driving technologies.

During the three-year Move UK project, funded by Government and industry, which ended last month (June), council employees drove five Land Rover Discovery Sport models for more than 120,000 miles on public roads largely around the south-east London borough.

These were fitted with cameras and advanced sensors to give a 360-degree view around the cars, allowing them to record video and gather information on the behaviour of surrounding vehicles.

This data, says Move UK, will be fundamental to speed up the development of safe automated driving features, as well as fully autonomous vehicles.

"There is a danger autonomous vehicles could be overly cautious," says Simon Morley, lead project manager for Move UK.

"If they are like that in reality and they are just sitting at a roundabout not going anywhere, the public just won't take to them and public acceptance is a massive part in moving forward in this area.

"We need to make sure they do detect the kind of driving a normal driver would expect to see from these systems, and that is the information we have got from this project."

Move UK recorded more than 8,500 hours of driving during the three years, says Jolyon Carroll, head of automated vehicles, at TRL, one of seven partners taking part in the Bosch-led project (see panel on facing page).

"Statistics show that an average driver drives their car for 140 hours each year, so we've got the equivalent of 60 years' worth of data from this project," he says.

The consortium used a 'connected validation' methodology to limit the amount of information collected by just recording data from the most relevant events, such as harsh braking and vehicles changing lanes in front of the Move UK cars.

This meant the 8,500 hours of driving could be distilled into just 450 short driving sequences where on-board systems

detected a potential hazard. Of these incidents, just 25 were classed as 'critical' braking situations where autonomous emergency braking (AEB) systems would have been activated.

"Each of the sequences was recorded from 15 seconds before the event and five seconds after, so from 8,500 hours of footage we've got two-and-a-half hours of video which has reduced the amount of data we have to consider by more than 3,000 times," says Carroll.

"When we broke down those events in more detail, we found that about one-third of them were because a driver was responding and trying to avoid an impact."

The ability to limit the information analysed will significantly reduce the time taken to process the data, as well as – ultimately – bring roadworthy autonomous driving technology to market.

Move UK says conventional approaches to analysing test data typically involve engineers poring over thousands of hours of information captured mainly from track testing, but the huge amounts of information generated by driverless systems make these more traditional methods impractical.

The ability to gather test data from real-world driving situations will also provide a comprehensive picture of what autonomous technology will have to deal with on public roads, according to Richard Cuerden, academy director at TRL.

"There is only so much testing you can do on a test track," he says.

"An example is where a pedestrian would come across the front of a vehicle.

"You could test that scenario on a test track where the person walks in a straight line, but in the real world the pedestrian might not be as obliging. They might come at you diagonally, walk towards you, or come from a blindspot behind a vehicle.

"One of the classic challenges is how does an automated vehicle merge into traffic? Usually, there would be some human interaction between drivers such as a nod to know that you were being let in.

"It's quite difficult for an autonomous vehicle to do that. If you are collecting that data in the real world you start to understand how you can manage those scenarios better."

Connectivity should provide the solution, with two AVs 'talking' to each other to allow merging.

Another advantage of using real-world driving data is potential hazards and situations can be quickly identified and used in the development of autonomous technology.

"We don't have to wait for collisions to happen to define a test, we can collect the data, we can see what goes wrong or nearly goes wrong from maybe just a few incidents and do something about it," adds Cuerden.

"If you wait until enough people are run over to get the statistical power to define a test, you've got to run over a lot of people – hundreds or thousands.

"We don't want to do that. We can use this type of technology and this sort of monitoring to learn much quicker."

Morley says the connected validation methodology used during the trial will now be used by Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) and Bosch to develop autonomous technologies, while it is also possible it could also be used to monitor the safety performance of systems fitted to end-user vehicles.

Bosch plans to use the 25 critical event video sequences to validate the next AEB it is developing, while JLR has indicated it will use the data to help ensure their driver assistance systems behave in a "natural way".

The research programme also allowed consortium partners Direct Line Group and The Flook to build more accurate insurance models which will help provide future insurance products and pricing that is more closely linked to risk.

**WE'VE GOT THE EQUIVALENT OF 60 YEARS' WORTH OF (DRIVING) DATA FROM THIS PROJECT**

**JOLYON CARROLL, TRL**



## ABOUT MOVE UK

Move UK is a three-year, £5.5 million project which aims to address key barriers to the development of autonomous vehicles.

It has been funded by its seven consortium partners together with £3.4m from the Government's £100m Intelligent Mobility fund.

These are the consortium partners and their roles in the project:

■ **Bosch** – lead partner, providing sensor technology, data recording equipment, cloud software and data analysis tools.

■ **TRL** – managing trials, hosting UK-based server software development, data analysis, assessing the requirement for new vehicle regulation.

■ **Jaguar Land Rover** – providing vehicles, technical support, data analysis.

■ **Direct Line Group** – insuring vehicles/equipment and leading insurance research aspects of project.

■ **The Flook** – telematics tracking of vehicles (to build up data for assessing insurance risk) and provision of background geospatial, behavioural and risk data.

■ **Royal Borough of Greenwich** – managing vehicle fleet, maintaining vehicles, providing drivers and real-world driving environment.

## THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS:

**7** PARTNERS

**3** YEARS

**120,000** MILES DRIVEN

**8,500** HOURS OF DATA

**£5.5** MILLION BUDGET

**1,000** EVENTS TRIGGERED



# TECHNOLOGY ON TRIAL

As well as the Royal Borough of Greenwich taking part in the Move UK project (see previous page), many other fleets around the country are helping to develop new technologies. *Andrew Ryan* looks at five projects

## TRIAL 1

### POWERTRAIN

**Which fleets were involved?** Addison Lee Group, Autoglass, British Gas, Clancy Plant, DPD, Heathrow Airport, Interserve, Mears Group, Metropolitan Police, M Group Services, RNLI, Royal Mail, Speedy Hire, Sky, Transport for London and Vodafone.

**What did the trial involve?** The 12-month initiative, which was supported by a £4.7 million grant from the Government-funded Advanced Propulsion Centre, saw businesses use 20 Ford Transit Custom Plug-in Hybrid vans – which have an electric-only range of up to 31 miles – to cover 150,000 miles.

The fleets represented a cross-section of city-based businesses and were able to integrate the PHEV into their day-to-day operations.

It found that 75% of all mileage travelled by vans in Central London and 49% in Greater London could be done using the fully-electric range of a plug-in hybrid van.

Mark Harvey, director of the Urban Electrified Van programme at Ford, says: "We know that businesses still have legitimate concerns about the range of fully-electric vehicles, as well as their cost-effectiveness and reliability. These trials have helped Ford and its customers to investigate the extent to which PHEVs can help to achieve urban air quality goals, while not compromising on productivity."

## TRIAL 2

### MAPPING ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

**Which fleet is involved?** Northumbrian Water

**What does the trial involve?** The project aims to create the country's first detailed roadside infrastructure dataset.

Vans and cars on Northumbrian Water's fleet have been fitted with Mobileye's 8 Connect camera-based mapping technology to capture a street-level view of the roadside infrastructure network across the north east.

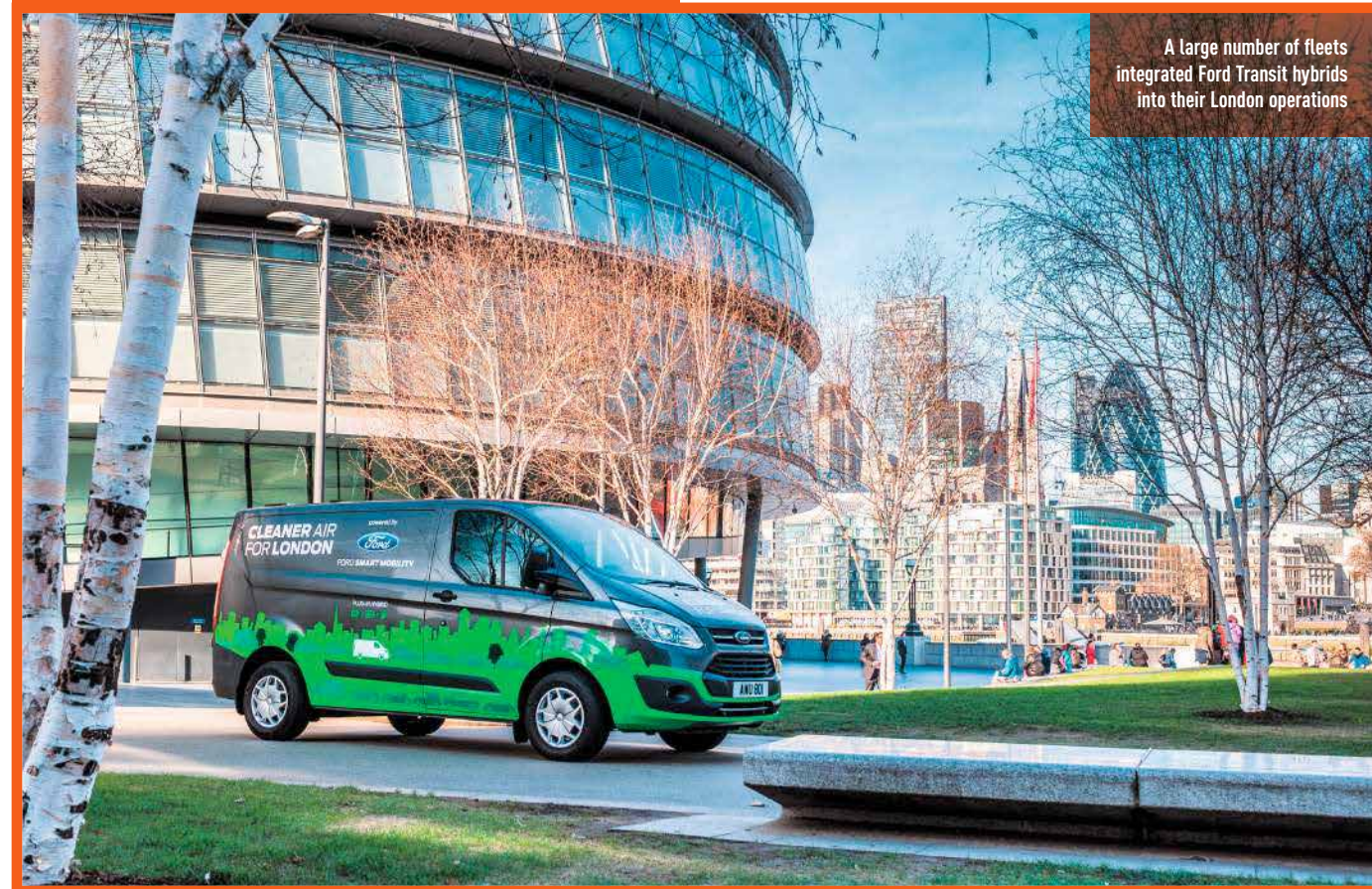
This will include road markings, network boxes, traffic lights, road signs, lamp and telegraph posts, bollards, manhole covers and drainage grates.

The vehicles will process the data and send it to the cloud for aggregation before it is provided to Ordnance Survey, which will cross-reference the data with its existing datasets.

The project, which will continue over the summer, aims to make it faster and simpler for Northumbrian Water to identify and link above-ground and underground assets.

It will also allow the water company to monitor the condition of its assets, saving it money and time when planning asset maintenance programmes.

A large number of fleets integrated Ford Transit hybrids into their London operations


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## TRIAL 3

## LAST MILE DELIVERY

**Which fleet is taking part?** Gnewt

**What does the trial involve?** A new digital delivery service being trialled by Ford in partnership with Gnewt by Menzies Distribution is turning vans into 'warehouses on wheels'.

The trial sees Gnewt's last-mile delivery service being driven by Ford's cloud-based multi-modal routing and logistics software ModeLink, which manages all aspects of parcel delivery from depot to doorstep.

The delivery company's vans collect orders from a depot before briefly stopping at locations determined to be the most efficient for each batch of parcels.

Ford's software platform coordinates with nearby foot couriers – or potentially with bicycle couriers, drones and autonomous robots in the future – to fulfil the last leg of each delivery.

Sam Clarke, founder and head of business development at Gnewt, says: "We are keen to understand how multi modal deliveries can benefit our business, our customers, and – by promoting active travel and the associated health and environmental benefits of walking and cycling – our employees too."

In the future, the use of a 'warehouse on wheels' could help couriers, fleet managers, logistics and food delivery companies to optimise processes and increase van utilisation, saving time and money while boosting capacity.

The service could also improve delivery windows and reduce costs, speeding time from order to delivery by enabling vans to make more frequent round trips back to the depot while not compromising on productivity."



Foot couriers pick up packages from the 'warehouse on wheels' before completing the final leg of the delivery process

## TRIAL 4

## ROAD MAINTENANCE

**Which fleet is taking part?** Suffolk Highways

**What does the trial involve?** Suffolk County Council has teamed up with Finnish AI company Vaisala for a project aimed at better assessing the state of its roads.

The local authority currently uses a laser-based sensor which costs £170,000 a year to hire, but the trial sees five highways crews' vans use smartphones as video cameras to collect data on the condition of road surfaces, potholes, drainage, sign visibility and the extent of hedgerow growth, while carrying out their duties.

The data means the degradation of roads can be monitored, problems spotted earlier and maintenance work carried out sooner.

Mary Evans, cabinet member for highways at the council, says: "The data being recorded is now starting to show good correlation with the results that are normally found from the more expensive national system for machine-driven surveys."

"If this works it will save us about £2 million over 10 years."



Red meets green as Royal Mail trials EVs



deliver letters and parcels across selected locations in the capital and the south-east.

Nicole Thompson, director, social innovation and co-creation partnerships at Hitachi Vantara, adds: "By sharing data and collaborating with this industry-led initiative, Royal Mail is helping pave the way for the mass adoption of EVs in the UK."

Key stakeholders from Optimise Prime will be presenting at this year's Fleet Live on October 8-9. Visit [fleet-live.co.uk](http://fleet-live.co.uk) for more details.

## TRIAL 5

## ELECTRIC COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

**Which fleets are involved?** Centrica, Royal Mail and Uber

**What is it?** The Optimise Prime project aims to bring together leading power, technology, fleet and transport companies to test and implement the best approaches to EV rollout for commercial enterprises (see [page 20](#)).

As well as the fleets, it also involves UK Power Networks and data business Hitachi Vantara, supported by SSE and Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions.

Ian Cameron, UK Power Networks head of Innovation, forecasts the number of plug-in vehicles will rise to more than four million by 2030, with 70% of charging taking place at home, 20% at work and 10% while travelling.

Launched earlier this year, the three-year project is the world's biggest trial of commercial electric vehicles and will look at 3,000 EVs in three use cases: home charging, depot charging and public charging.

It seeks to understand and minimise the impact the electrification of commercial vehicles will have on distribution networks, and ultimately aims to develop tools that will make it easier for fleets to switch to EVs.

Royal Mail, one of the fleets taking part, last month almost tripled the number of EVs it runs by adding a further 190 electric vans to its 100-strong electric fleet liveried in green combined with its traditional red.

The mix of Mercedes-Benz eVito and Peugeot Partner vans will be used to

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## Fleet News and UK100 launch CAZ roundtables

**UK: 100**

Opportunity for fleets to debate key clean air issues with council policymakers



By Stephen Briers

**F**leet News has joined forces with UK100 to run two clean air zone (CAZ) roundtables in Birmingham and London, bringing together UK business fleets with council leaders and city mayors.

UK100 is a local government leaders network which has pledged to shift to 100% clean energy by 2050.

Many CAZs are being taken forward in England by local and combined authorities after lengthy periods of consultation, while others are about start engagement on proposals.

Although their plans sit within the Government's Clean Air Framework, there is a lack of consistency among authorities and a paucity of funding for initiatives that is likely to inhibit the

ambitions of national fleet operators, businesses and local authorities.

Working in partnership would enable the promotion of a shared voice between local authorities, transport operators and business, and assist in creating successful air quality solutions.

While enhancing the delivery of local plans, partnership would also help promote a powerful voice to

inform the Government Spending Review later this year.

Consequently, the *Fleet News*/UK100 CAZ roundtable discussions (sponsored by ALD, Enterprise and Geotab) have been designed with a clear objective in mind: to create political momentum for the delivery of Clean Air Zones by securing consensus on challenges and opportunities, with advocacy by national government and commitments to action from local authorities, business and transport operators.

Delegates, including UK business and local authorities, will agree to sign up to a Clean Air Zone Declaration to underline their commitment to delivering improvements in air quality.

This will result in a shared agreement between local authorities, transport operators and business on priorities that are needed locally and nationally to successfully take forward CAZs, together with commitments to action.

**Fleets interested in attending one of the CAZ roundtables (dates alongside) should email *Fleet News* editor-in-chief Stephen Briers: [stephen.briers@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:stephen.briers@bauermedia.co.uk)**

### INTERNATIONAL AIR QUALITY EVENT

Between 22 and 25 October, London mayor Sadiq Khan will host an international air quality event and C40 air quality network meeting involving up to 15 world cities.

This four-day event will offer the opportunity for London to share its experience, expertise and influence. The event aims to support and encourage other UK and global cities and governments to develop policies and adopt legislation that will drive action towards meeting

WHO-based air quality targets.

The third National Air Quality Summit, which is being arranged with UK100, is proposed to run in parallel with the international component of this event.

The added support and attention generated by the summit will reinforce pressure for the Government to adopt strong clean air legislation as it considers the Environment Bill, including adopting legally-binding WHO air quality standards for the UK.

### CAZ ROUNDTABLES

■ **October 8: at Fleet Live in Birmingham** – for lead officers, council cabinet members and UK fleets.

■ **October 23: in London** – for council leaders, city mayors and UK fleets. This workshop will form part of the International Air Quality event hosted by the Mayor of London between October 22-25.

### CAZ BRIEFING EVENT

■ **October 9: at Fleet Live in Birmingham** – for UK fleets.



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\*\*\*Compatible smartphones only.



# Blueprint for ECO success

Cost savings, tax efficiency and greater choice for drivers are all benefits of Schneider Electric's move to an innovative blended ECO/company car scheme. *Andrew Baxter* reports

**A** lot has changed in the 14 years since Mandi Nicol, fleet manager UK&I for Schneider Electric, joined the company as reward advisor. Not least the fact that she is now the manager of a fleet of more than 1,300 cars, 250 CVs and a small, but growing, number of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

On joining the multi-billion pound multinational on Valentine's Day 2005, Nicol's remit focused on compensation and benefits, having moved from Barclays where she was a reward consultant. Her role at Schneider developed and Nicol became HR shared services and reward manager.

It was while in this role that a project in 2010 to amalgamate three 'disparate' car schemes, led her on a path to becoming the company's fleet manager.

These schemes were run by three very different businesses acquired by Schneider Electric over time, which were to become one scheme under the group's 'One Schneider' ethos. A complex undertaking, the process included representatives from each of the three divisions, plus the HR and finance directors.

Nicol explains: "It was quite an extensive project to amalgamate those three disparate schemes into one and quite a lengthy one. Including tender, it took nearly two years because each division's policy was coming from a different place."

In Nicol's case, this 'different place' meant differing company car schemes, allowances and policies. This, in turn, meant differing perspectives from some staff on what an amalgamated scheme should look like.

"Some lost the use of a vehicle because it didn't align with the policy, and one of the divisions had seen more people taking a cash allowance because they were given a choice – in our scheme there isn't a choice,

it's more prescriptive to ensure compliance with HMRC rules," she explains.

Fast forward to 2019 and Schneider Electric is the proud winner of Fleet News Awards' Most Improved Fleet of the Year.

The accolade came as the result of an innovative blended employee car ownership (ECO)/company car scheme that utilises tax efficiency, savings to the company and choice for drivers. The scheme is fully compliant with HMRC regulations and, due to Schneider's fleet size and four-year change cycle, is set to deliver significant annual savings.

The move to an ECO offer has required education for some drivers along with a healthy dose of 'myth busting'.

Nicol says: "It's quite different to a traditional company car where the relationship is between the employer and the lease company. With ECO, it's a relationship between the lease company and the driver, because it's held together by a credit sale agreement and the ownership of the vehicle transfers to the driver from day one. Essentially, it's their personal car – that's how HMRC views it."

Because Schneider's leasing company, Hitachi, takes on the finance risk, FCA regulations stipulate employees must undergo a credit check. There is, of course, an underlying indemnity from Schneider to Hitachi while the employee is with the company. The potential risk, therefore, comes should that person leave and retain the vehicle.

Schneider underwrites the cost of the scheme and the employees' costs are funded by driver contributions and tax/NIC-free mileage allowances.

The mileage allowances are capped and paid as appropriate to offset the employee's actual motoring expenditure. Any unrelieved mileage allowances are rolled forward each month and used to satisfy



Mandi Nicol was tasked with bringing three disparate car schemes together



## SPOTLIGHT: SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC

the practical issue of variable mileage claims throughout the tax year.

Nicol acknowledges that, initially, the scheme was not well-understood by all drivers, especially those who were previously offered contract hire or cash.

"They just didn't embrace ECO – they really went into the small print," she says.

As with any corporate cultural change, reluctance is greatly reduced once employees are fully aware of the facts.

As Nicol explains: "It's an education piece, which is something I'm working on currently with the team. There are myths around the scheme, as with any, especially around CO<sub>2</sub> given the escalating BIK charges linked to CO<sub>2</sub> over the past few years.

"Some of our drivers who are going for renewal today are looking at an increase in cost of 13% – because an ECO driver contributes towards the cost of the car, a four-year average BIK charge. So, over the lifetime of the lease, an ECO driver and a contract hire driver pay the same towards the car.

"I talk to a lot of staff individually, I also talk to management teams to get them to understand the scheme enough to filter some of the queries that come through – this also helps during recruitment, as they understand the scheme and can explain it."

Enrolment onto the ECO scheme is automatic for drivers covering 7,500 miles or more a year (at job need level). A number of benchmarks determine their allowance at each level and employees can trade up 25% of their allowance, with no badge restrictions. In fact, the choice is so open that Nicol herself has had the flexibility to choose "a two-door cabriolet" should she wish.

The top five most popular brands on the

Mandi Nicol's route into fleet management was typically unusual

**ORGANISATION:** Schneider Electric  
**FEET MANAGER:** Mandi Nicol  
**FLEET SIZE:** 1,326 cars; 250 vans  
**FUNDING METHOD:** ECO, contract hire, cash, commercial  
**REPLACEMENT CYCLE:** four years: 85,000/120,000 miles

fleet are Audi (148 cars), Volkswagen (148), BMW (121), Kia (110) and Land Rover (90).

There are currently 111 cars on order, with models from Volkswagen leading the order list (24 cars) followed by BMW (17), Toyota (12) and Peugeot (11).

All drivers who have an unsuccessful credit check can still benefit from a company vehicle by being offered a contract hire, although this doesn't provide an option to trade up.

Additionally, there are certain roles within the business – often project-based – which do not meet the mileage criteria, but still require a car. These are classed as 'protected roles' and also go onto contract hire.

Finally, to qualify for job benefit (rather than job need), drivers must cover a minimum of 3,000 business miles per year. If they are unable to achieve that mileage they are provided with cash in lieu.

While Schneider's car fleet is still based on a legacy of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, as a sustainable company "leading the digital transformation of energy management and automation", Schneider has introduced EVs into the fleet as it looks constantly to reduce its carbon footprint, aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Average CO<sub>2</sub> across the car fleet is 133g/km, with Nicol tasked to reduce this by 10% a year. To help this reduction, the company launched a 12-month ULEV pilot in June this year. As with the ICE fleet, it's an open market. However, as Nicol acknowledges, "the choice from the market is quite restricted today from an affordability point of view and also availability".

Indeed, the models from Kia and Hyundai picked for benchmarking are no longer available due to high demand. Lead times also inform the choices available, which in Schneider's case has been set at six months, given renewals start six months ahead of time.

As part of its environmental commitment, Schneider is increasing the number of charging points at its main UK sites. Unusually for a company looking to increase provision in this way for its EV fleet, Schneider has the advantage of being a global leader in energy management and the production of EV-charging solutions.

Not content with generating substantial annual savings each year through the blended ECO scheme, Nicol and her colleagues recently undertook a review of the company's CV fleet to identify potential efficiencies and cost reductions within that vehicle class.

An audit-and-needs assessment of the company's van fleet identified a number of vans being used unnecessarily by the company's meter-reading staff. As the payload did not justify the need for a van, this element of the fleet was moved across to Kia Picantos. This has realised a saving of £61,000 a year, along with further efficiencies such as fuel savings. "We like making savings, both in terms of energy and, of course, money," says Nicol with a smile.

# NICOL ON...

## ...Risk assessment and training

Risk assessment, mitigation and training figure highly on Schneider's agenda.

Indeed, it was one of the first companies in the country to be awarded ISO 39001 – Road Traffic Safety Management System, back in 2013.

Mandi Nicol says: "I work closely with the H&S team as they do the driver risk assessments in conjunction with Driver Metrics. In the past five years since we've had a driver intervention programme, there have been 2,500 risk assessments carried out and 1,000 employees trained either in the classroom or the one-to-one advanced sessions as a result of the assessments."

Schneider Electric has won multiple driver and road safety awards from both RoSPA and Brake.

## ...CV fleet telematics

Telematics are installed in all 250 commercial fleet vehicles. The benefits have been clear to see:

- Improved driver behaviour
- Reduction in incident rate/risk
- Reduction in fuel spend
- Reduction in maintenance costs
- Route-planning optimisation

The challenge now is to make better use of captured data. Nicol explains: "An API feed goes straight into the mileage capture tool. This frees up drivers' time as they don't need to submit mileage."

"THERE ARE MYTHS AROUND THE SCHEME, AS WITH ANY, ESPECIALLY AROUND CO<sub>2</sub> GIVEN THE ESCALATING BIK CHARGES LINKED TO CO<sub>2</sub> OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS"

MANDI NICOL,  
SCHNEIDER ELECTRICS



Mandi Nicol, fleet manager, Schneider Electric (left), receives the award from Caroline Sandall, judge and chairman of ACFO



**MOST IMPROVED FLEET OF THE YEAR WINNER: SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC**

### JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Innovation should be at the heart of the fleet manager's DNA. Schneider has innovated by changing its lease scheme to ECO but it has also demonstrated huge savings in multiple areas of its fleet which makes the company a worthy winner.



# Widening company car choice lists ‘plays into Volvo’s hands’

Award-winning XC40 is playing key role in reaching wider audience, reports *Andrew Ryan*

**V**olvo is a brand that has come a long way in a short time. Traditionally renowned for its approach to safety, in recent years its critically-acclaimed range and ambitious electrification plans have helped position it as a serious challenger in the premium brand sector.

“Old Volvo is very different to new Volvo,” says Steve Beattie, head of business sales at Volvo Car UK. “It’s not that old Volvo wasn’t very good – it was – but it’s a massive point to be able to say to a fleet manager ‘try this car, you’ll be surprised’, and they are.”

Its progress was further recognised at the Fleet News Awards earlier this year when the XC40 became the first SUV to be named new company car of the year, voted for by fleet decision-makers.

“It was a really big award for us: it was the one I really wanted to win,” adds Beattie. “The XC40 has been received amazingly well, fleets have been so open to it.”

“In Q1 it accounted for about 20% of our true fleet registrations and has created almost a halo effect because it’s helped open doors to new customers. For a small SUV it’s really punching above its weight.”

Beattie expects the model’s fleet appeal to grow further at the turn of the year when a T5 Twin Engine plug-in hybrid variant is launched.

**TRUE FLEET FOCUS**

Growing the brand’s presence in the true fleet market has been a core focus for Beattie since he joined in September 2017 after working as national contract hire and leasing manager at Vauxhall Motors. This policy has borne fruit.

In the first six months of this year, Volvo was the fastest-growing car manufacturer in this sector – which excludes Motability, rental, retailer demonstrators and internal cars – with registrations increasing 43% year-on-year to more than 8,500. Last year, it also secured business from more

than 640 companies that had not bought a Volvo in the previous four years, if ever.

“A big part of [driving true fleet sales] has been changing the dynamic to make sure we are adding value to people’s meetings,” says Beattie.

“We want fleet managers to know that when they have a meeting with us in their diary, they know they are going to see someone who isn’t just going to take them through a presentation of a new car and go.

“We are going to get into the details of their [choice list] policy, understand where they are facing difficulties, what cars they are not able to offer, and where we need to support them in order to give a full offering to their drivers.

“That’s what we’ve driven the team to question a lot more: if it fits outside of policy, what extra support do they need to get our cars into the grade?”

Beattie says a recent trend which has “played into our hands” is organisations increasing the number of brands on its choice list.

“If you go back three, four or five years, companies had restricted badge policies with only one, two or three brands on there, and it was limited in what a driver could have,” he adds.

“What I’ve noticed in the past 12 months, which has played right into our hands, is that fleet and procurement managers have opened up their fleet policies to have maybe six badges on there.

“So they are still slightly restricting it, but they have been looking for alternative brands and because we are in such a good place from product and sustainability points of view, fleet managers want to talk to us.”

**RESTRUCTURED FLEET TEAM**

Beattie has also overseen a restructuring of Volvo’s fleet team to give differentiated services to large corporate customers and small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs).

This has included appointing Carl Stanton as new

business sales manager and launching a virtual sales team to support SME customers.

Stanton’s role focuses on seeking new contact opportunities with businesses that may not have purchased Volvos for a number of years.

“Who are the large corporate fleets in the UK that we are not talking to but might be buying some Volvo cars on standard leasing terms? Why don’t we have a direct relationship with them?” asks Beattie.

“We’ve now got someone who is concentrating on that to drive us forward.”

Beattie has also identified SMEs as an important part of Volvo’s fleet business and the manufacturer introduced a virtual sales team at the beginning of the year to improve its service in this area.

This initiative sees a dedicated virtual sales manager working with the client – identified through an online or call centre-generated lead – to identify their vehicle needs, source the cars and facilitate the acquisition process with the Volvo retailer network.

“We’ve seen growth in online sales and how brokers sell cars, and our strategy is not about how we can combat those, it’s more about how we can understand that we can support the SME better,” says Beattie.

**MANUFACTURER:** VOLVO CARS UK  
**HEAD OF BUSINESS SALES:** STEVE BEATTIE  
**DATE APPOINTED:** SEPTEMBER 2017  
**KEY FLEET MODELS:** XC40, XC60, S60, V70  
**TOTAL FLEET REGISTRATIONS TO END OF Q2 (2018):** 19,553 (17,932)

“If you look at SMEs, they’ve typically got eight vehicles and the person responsible for those is probably the MD and they will be very busy people.

“What we do is talk to them, arrange quotes, send demonstrators to them. We arrange all the information and specs and send them walkaround videos of the car.

“The initiatives we’ve introduced are all about being easy to do business with. Certainly, when I buy something and the product and service is good, I go back and buy again. For me, it is about being the easiest premium car manufacturer to deal with.”



**NEW COMPANY CAR OF THE YEAR WINNER: VOLVO XC40**

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** Distinctive styling and competitive running costs make the new XC40 highly desirable. With a range of petrol and diesel engines, there is a model to suit all needs. Even entry-level models come highly equipped and the XC40 is among the safest cars ever tested by Euro NCAP.

Steve Beattie, head of business sales, Volvo Car UK (left), collected the award from Pete Marden, fleet director, Halfords Autocentres



## HOW VOLVO MANAGES TO INCREASE RVs

Volvo’s strategy to manage residual values (RVs) goes against the oft-used method of reducing rental registrations.

Instead its policy is to “control” rental volumes so these vehicles go back into the dealer network to be resold, says Steve Beattie.

“When I joined, our daily rental volumes were maybe 70% buyback, and this year it will be 93%,” he adds.

“That gives us control over the used cars. So, if I can bring them back into our network, I can give them to our retailers, and actually we can drive supply and demand with that.

“Therefore, if the pricing of the used cars goes up, the Black Book values increase, that drives Gold Book which supports our RV strategy.”



# How SG Fleet expanded to fulfil FN50 ambition

Acquisitions played a part in company's rise up the leasing league table, reports *Sarah Tooze*

**S**ix years ago, when *Fleet News* previously profiled SG Fleet, it was a relative unknown in the UK market, but had an established business in Australia with its salary sacrifice product, Novalease.

Back then, we claimed the company was "re-writing the rules for salary sacrifice". Unlike rival schemes, Novalease uses a novated lease – a direct agreement with the employee rather than a contract hire arrangement.

SG Fleet sat at number 44 in the FN50 at the time, with a risk fleet of around 2,000 vehicles, but the then managing director David Fernandes told us he had ambitions to move into the top 25 within five years.

That was achieved in 2016 (reaching number 21), after acquiring Fleet Hire and its risk fleet of around 6,500 vehicles in August that year.

By December, it had also bought Motiva Group, adding about another 4,800 vehicles to its books.

Today, it has a risk fleet size of more than 13,000 vehicles (9,603 cars and 3,477 vans in FN50 2018) and has Peter Davenport, former MD and founder of Motiva, at the helm in the UK.

Fernandes has moved to a global role (group head of operations) and is involved in running the business across Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

Davenport reports to CEO Robbie Blau and is also guided by non-executive chairman Sir Trevor Chinn, who joined the board last November.

Chinn, says Davenport, recognises that "the UK business is a successful one" and "he thinks he can help us become more successful". The pair

meet every two or three weeks to discuss industry developments.

Davenport acknowledges that in the current market it is "difficult to forecast too much growth".

"We're looking at both our markets – fleet solutions and consumer," he says. "I think most contract hire companies have seen growth in personal contract hire (PCH).

"We are pushing our schemes to what we call 'controlled communities' where we've got employee bases within customers that we can offer PCH to. That's working very well. I think we will see some growth, just not very much because of the UK's political and economic situation."

## WLTP HAS 'UPSET THE MARKETPLACE'

Added to that is the fact the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP), which applied to all new car registrations from September last year, has "upset the marketplace" and is still an issue in Davenport's view.

"We're helping customers to rebuild their choice lists and that's deferred some orders," he says.

Where the company car tax option no longer works for cash allowance drivers, they are "definitely moving to PCH" and he believes this trend will continue.

SG Fleet is also targeting this group with a more conventional salary sacrifice scheme, called Car Salary Exchange, which it swept up with the acquisition of Fleet Hire.

Davenport is less concerned about WLTP for vans (which will apply to all new van registrations

from next month) as it won't impact drivers in the same way.

Vans are a key focus for growth. SG Fleet's new premises in Sandyford near Stoke-on-Trent, which opened in June this year, is now the company's "LCV centre of excellence".

"It was a skillset of Motiva: we've always been very active in vans and that's going to continue," Davenport says. "We've got facilities on site for demonstrating the capabilities we have around fit-outs and we've got some internal space where we can spec vehicles with customers to understand what they might want."

The new premises also provides space for used cars for the Motiva Direct brand which remarkets some of SG Fleet's end of contract cars to the retail market (the majority still go through the traditional auction houses).

"Although prices have come back a little, the used car market remains pretty strong and we're definitely forecasting growth (for Motiva Direct)," Davenport says. "We have space to store three times as many cars inside at our new premises."

However, there will not come a point where all of SG Fleet's vehicles are remarketed through Motiva Direct.

"We won't have the capacity to take all of them and that's not where we want to go," Davenport says. "We choose certain vehicles to sell through the channel and I think that's where we'll stay."

"We have a couple of other retail channels we sell through, too. We've been providing warranties

SG Fleet has moved up the FN50 rankings on the back of two major acquisitions



**Company:** SG Fleet  
**HO:** Hampton in Arden, West Midlands  
**Number of staff:** 98  
**UK managing director:** Peter Davenport  
**Time in role:** seven months  
**Risk fleet size:** 13,080 (FN50 2018)

“(MOTIVA) NEEDED MORE CLOUT, MORE FINANCIAL BACKING AND MORE INVESTMENT IN TECHNOLOGY TO TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL”

PETER DAVENPORT, SG FLEET

## CONSULTANCY ADVISES ON ZERO EMISSIONS FLEETS

SG Fleet has launched a consultancy service this year called eStart to help businesses plan and budget for transitioning to a zero emission fleet.

It covers an assessment of the company's goals, a vehicle-by-vehicle review, site inspections, infrastructure upgrades and installation.

"Anyone who is taking a new vehicle has got to consider either a full electric or a hybrid," Peter Davenport says.

He suggests that as the range electric vehicles can travel improves, charging infrastructure develops and leasing companies understand the future values better and "get the cost right", more people will switch to pure electric.

"I think the progression to electric is going to be quicker than we originally presumed," he adds.

Davenport acknowledges that with the latter, the optional remuneration arrangement (OpRA) tax changes in 2017 affected SG Fleet's customer base and salary sacrifice became "less interesting" to the marketplace. However, he says that as SG Fleet's salary sacrifice solution was already a regulated product "we were able to deliver a PCH proposition fairly easily out of that product".

SG Fleet has invested heavily in its online capability, which pieces together car sharing, daily rental, grey fleet management and electric vehicle management through its customer platform, Fleet Intelligence. Telematics data feeds into the dashboard to help customers maximise vehicle utilisation.

Davenport can see a time when the platform incorporates all of the "true mobility touchpoints", including trains, bike hire, planes and hotels, but it is "an ongoing evolution".

"We're looking at workshops and innovation hubs to ensure they are solutions that need developing," he says. "We want to make sure that what we're doing solves a problem for the customers. We have to make sure it adds some values and efficiency for the customer."

and financing to drivers to enable them to buy their company car and we've definitely seen an increase in driver sales."

On the new car side, SG Fleet is doing more affinity sales. It has launched a PCH product called SoccerLease for season ticket holders at a number of football clubs.

"That's worked quite well; we've done good levels of business through it," Davenport says.

Prior to becoming MD of SG Fleet and Motiva Direct last year, Davenport was executive director for fleet solutions and was responsible for integrating the corporate proposition.

"SG Fleet basically said 'let's look to get best practice out of the three companies' so I was reviewing the processes, reviewing the customer service elements and reviewing the products and people we had to integrate best practice," he says. It was new territory for Davenport as although Motiva had attempted a few acquisitions it had never completed one.

He chose to sell Motiva to SG Fleet because the business had reached a point where it "needed more clout, more financial backing and more investment in technology to take it to the next level".

"We had been talking to SG for some time and we liked the people there, we felt they operated in a similar way even though we were much smaller (in the UK)," he says.

"We liked how they saw technology and they also had an innovative employee benefits proposition we didn't have. Generally, it seemed like a good fit."

SG Fleet also committed to retaining the business in Stoke-on-Trent (Motiva was based at Longton) – a promise it has kept with the new facility.

Its head office is now Hampton in Arden (the former Fleet Hire offices). SG Fleet's Solihull office closed and staff were transferred across.

There were "a few" redundancies and reshaping of roles, but customers continued to have the same customer relationship director.

"We've got teams in Stoke and teams in Hampton in Arden who are managing the customers who originally sat in those locations so, from the customer's point of view, nothing too much has changed," Davenport says.

## NEW ROLES LEAD TO 'SLICKER SERVICE'

However, there is now a "slicker service", thanks to the customer service team now having a customer service officer, purchasing person and someone to handle in-life technical issues.

"We recognised that we needed to do something special to retain the level of customer service that Motiva and Fleet Hire had got," Davenport says. "Both businesses had great retention on the back of customer service and with an enlarged business we didn't want to lose that focus."

Products have been retained from all three businesses, including Motiva's flexible contract product and its telematics offering, Motrak. (SG Fleet has also been successful with in-cab cameras over the past few years, according to Davenport), Fleet Hire's "total outsource solution" and SG Fleet's Novalease.



Peter Davenport joined SG Fleet after it bought his Motiva company



# How good is your grey fleet?

Grey fleet can be a cost and duty of care nightmare for organisations, but how does your operation measure up? Take part in this simple quiz to find out how good yours is – or whether you need to take action to improve it.

*Ben Booth* reports

## DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY GREY FLEET DRIVERS YOU HAVE?

**YES**

It's imperative that you know who drives their own car on company business, even if they do so only occasionally. It's equally important to remember the term 'grey fleet' is now used to describe any vehicles that do not belong to a company, but which are used for business travel. Consequently, grey fleet also includes those vehicles bought via an employee ownership scheme, a privately-rented vehicle as well as privately-owned vehicles. When they are driven on company business – often in return for a cash allowance or fuel expense – these vehicles fall under the responsibility

**NO**

of an employer. "Ownership of the asset is irrelevant," says Caroline Sandall, chair of fleet operators association ACFO. "Businesses, as responsible operators, have a duty of care to extend management of a fleet to those who may only drive occasionally. "The grey fleet requires managing and the fleet team is best placed to undertake the task." RoSPA fleet consultant John Greenhough agrees. "While the vehicle – and any mileage claim – may have a different classification for tax purpose, the use is not classed any differently for health and safety purposes," he adds. "It must be subject to the same policies of safety that apply to the company's own vehicles that includes: insurance, tax, MOT, service and licence status."

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DRIVING?

**YES**

## DO YOU PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON WHAT THEY ARE DRIVING?

There are many reasons an employer may wish to restrict the type of grey fleet vehicle a driver uses, including safety, efficiency and brand image. The road safety charity Brake recommends fleets stipulate minimum Euro NCAP safety ratings, vehicle age, emission levels, required safety features and essential breakdown cover. "Many companies have minimum standards when it comes to choosing company vehicles – like age, engine size and fuel type," says John Greenhough, of RoSPA. "This is easy for a company to manage as they are responsible for the purchasing and disposal process. "For a grey fleet vehicle, this may not be so easy as the driver may not be able to afford a new vehicle or less able to exchange on a regular basis. "Nonetheless, companies can take

According to the BVRLA, private cars used for work purposes tend to be an average 8.2 years old with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 152g/km. In contrast, the average CO<sub>2</sub> of Lex Autolease's company car risk fleet in July 2019 was 107g/km. As well as more efficient, company cars also tend to be safer: their age means they are more likely to be fitted with advanced driver assistance systems than grey fleet vehicles, reducing risk. "Understanding the make-up of the grey fleet is essential for accurate reporting on all measures – not just environmental impact – and can be achieved through a comprehensive grey fleet

**NO**

audit," says Paul Coley, of Lex Autolease. "This audit then forms the foundation of a managed grey fleet policy, to ensure that these vehicles are not only fit for purpose but remain that way." John Greenhough, of RoSPA, adds that a simple spreadsheet can suffice when it comes to performing this audit. He adds: "Older vehicles may run on older Euro standards – Euro 6 is the current standard. "They might also have higher emission levels and lower safety standards. "But it's worth bearing in mind that at the time of first registration they met the standards of the day and as long they meet the current MOT standards they remain compliant."

**YES**

the decision to enforce certain criteria on the use of a vehicle – provided they have suitable alternatives for an employee to use for work purposes if required. "Among the primary objections to using a vehicle would be the type – for example, no soft top convertibles due to ease of entry or higher risk of injury in a roll-over collision. "And then, of course, there's the whole question surrounding emissions – this is more the case now than ever before with many towns and cities charging an emissions tax on vehicles, or a vehicle not meeting the company policy on carbon emissions." Greenhough adds that the age of the vehicle can be less of an issue. "It would be easy to pillory older vehicles on the road," he says. "But – as with all risk assessments and recommendations – solutions need to be reasonably practicable. "And it would be financially ruinous for most businesses to enforce all drivers to have a modern car that's less than three-to-five years old."

**NO**

## DO YOU KNOW WHY AND HOW FAR THEY ARE DRIVING?

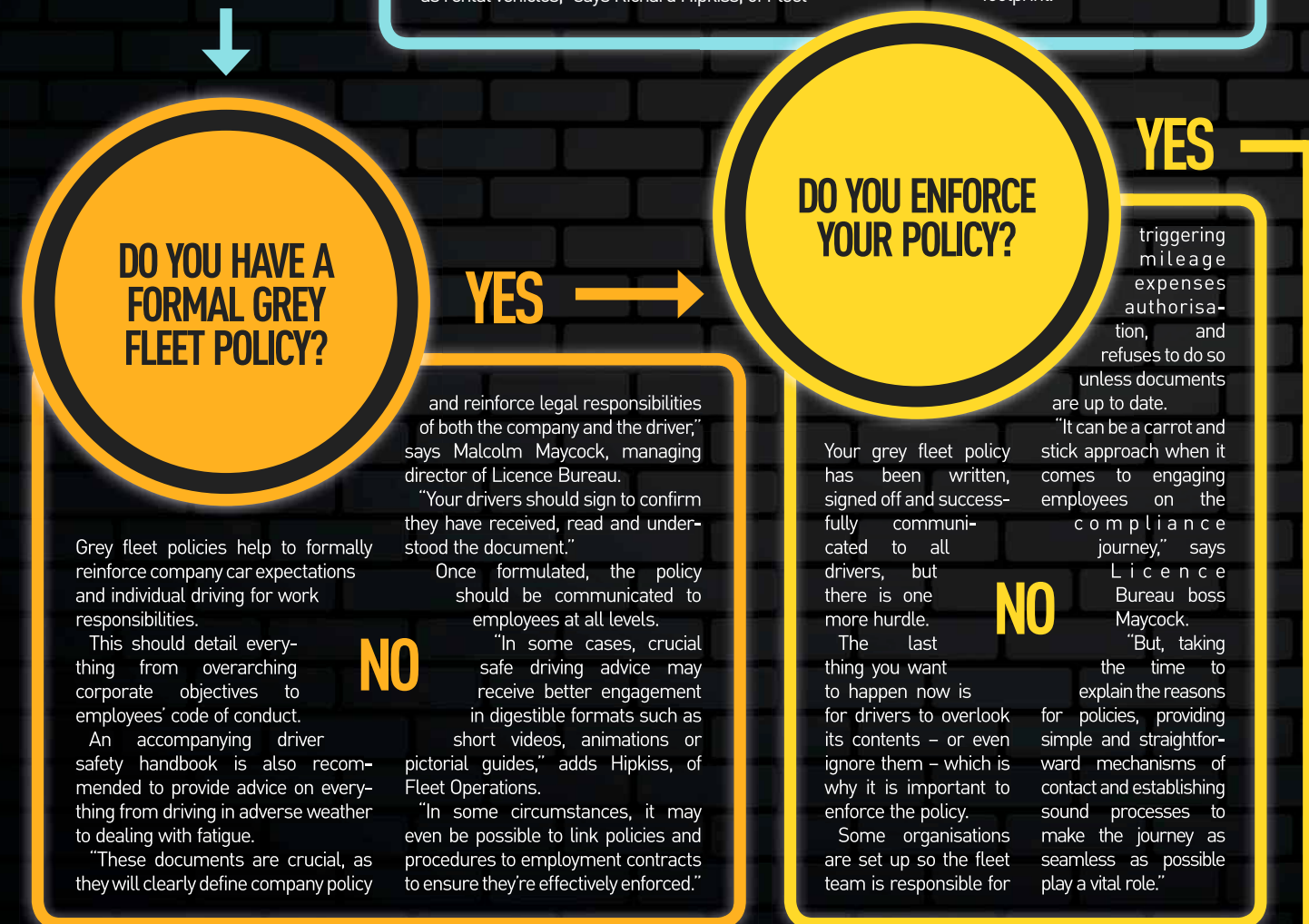
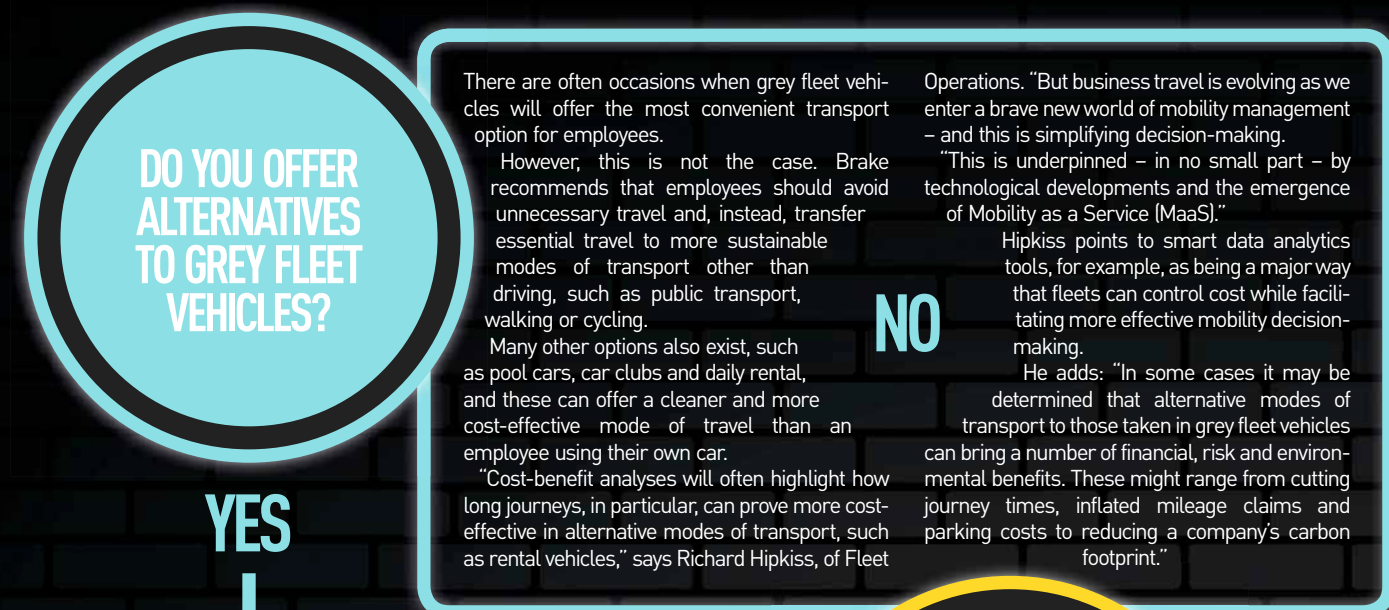
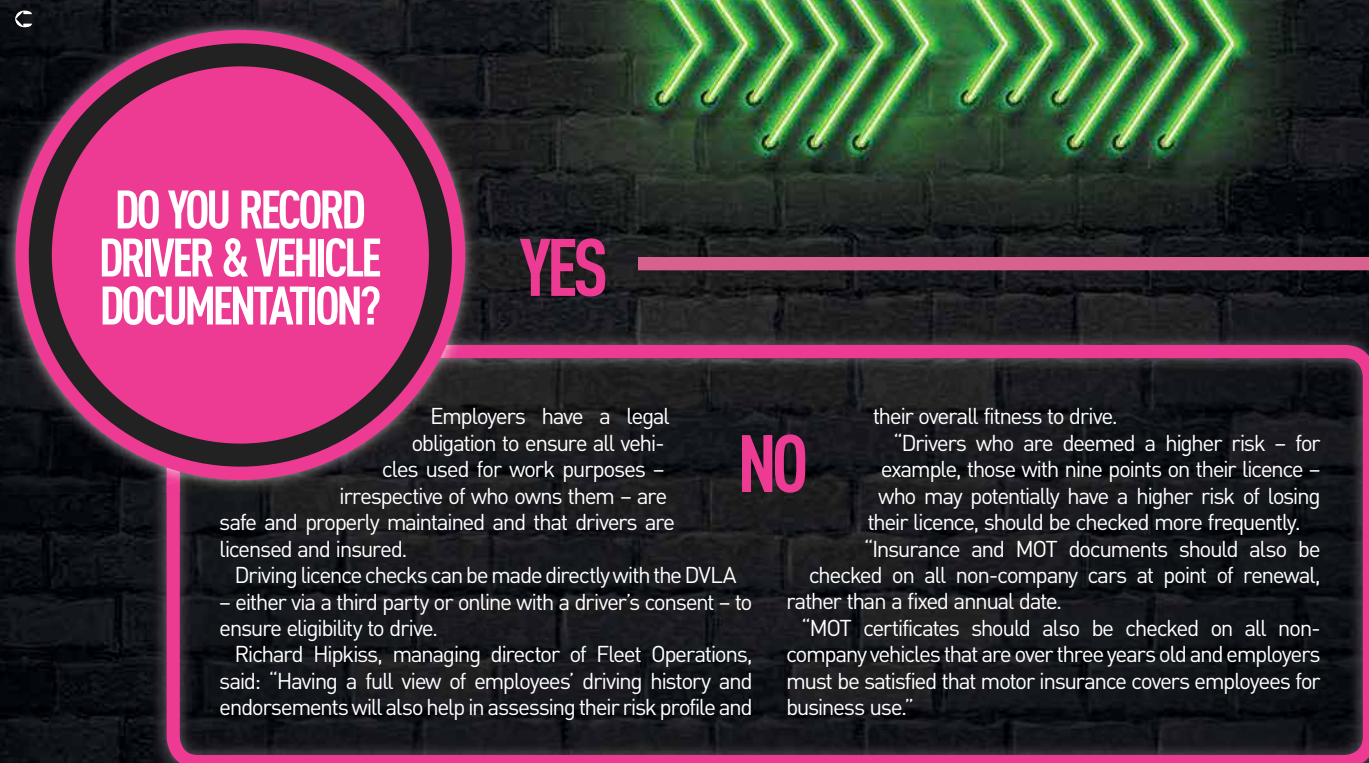
**YES**

An organisation is not going to be able to control its grey fleet until it understands how and why employees use their own cars for business. Sometimes it may simply be for convenience or that the staff member doesn't know any better, but without a mileage claims system that records every trip, more cost-effective and safer alternatives cannot be put in place. Journey patterns and mileage can also be collected automatically by using telematics or a mobile phone app. "Employees who 'guess-timate' or even exaggerate the distance covered will cost a business more," says Lex Autolease principal consultant Paul Coley. "Monitoring mileage claims and having checks

**NO**

in place – such as cross-referencing mileage against an employee's diary – can help uncover these situations and ensure mileage is kept under control. "Equally, identifying specific activities or clients that are high-mileage can help businesses drive efficiency, possibly via phone and web links instead of face-to-face meetings." Coley adds that a grey fleet driver's mileage requirements can also help inform the most appropriate transport solution for them. "Up to a certain limit, a daily hire car can be more cost-effective than a grey fleet vehicle and, for longer trips, public transport might be better," he says. "Where ad hoc drivers are covering more than 6,000 business miles per year in grey fleet vehicles, an organisation should look at why they don't have a company car or a cash allowance option." ➔





## HOW DID YOU SCORE?

How many questions did you answer 'yes' to?

**8** Congratulations, you are operating an efficient and compliant grey fleet, but keep up the good work – there is no room for complacency.

**4-7** Good effort. You've made huge strides towards minimising any risk that your grey fleet is not safe and efficient, but there is still work to do.

**0-3** Oh dear. There are likely to be some huge holes in your grey fleet policy and there is plenty you need to do to bring it up to scratch

## Advertisement feature



# Grey fleet – compliance and cost management

The term 'grey fleet' was never meant to mean 'out of sight, out of mind', but for many businesses this is exactly the case. TTC Group technical delivery director Andy Wheeler explains why effective grey fleet management is good for business

Grey fleet is when an employee uses their private vehicle for work-related journeys. These drivers play a crucial role for many businesses and provide a number of benefits, such as reduced costs of not running a fleet of vehicles and a cost-effective solution when faced with a rising tax burden and uncertainty over benefit-in-kind levies.

### Proactive approach

Without effective control, however, grey fleet could compromise safety and result in fines – and even prosecution – should

an incident occur.

TTC strongly advocates taking a proactive approach by putting the correct control measures in place. As a minimum, employers must ensure:

- the vehicle is suitable for the job
- the driver is maintaining the vehicle in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- the vehicle has a valid MOT (where applicable to the age of the vehicle)
- the vehicle is taxed
- the driver has business cover included on the insurance policy

- the driver is carrying out suitable pre-drive safety checks

### Right practices

Managing grey fleet is, therefore, a business-critical requirement but it doesn't need to be daunting if digital automated solutions are deployed. We tell our clients it's all about taking stock of what you have in place, plugging any gaps in your duty of care obligations and with the right practices, processes and systems, the management of your grey fleet drivers is achievable.

TTC Group educates nearly 500,000 road users every year. To learn more, contact us on 03330 113 113, [contactus@ttc-uk.com](mailto:contactus@ttc-uk.com) or visit [www.thettcgroup.com](http://www.thettcgroup.com)





# HAVE A CLEAR POLICY ON USE OF MOBILES WHILE DRIVING

Bosses split on whether employees should take calls while on the road, says DfBB's *Simon Turner*

Last month we looked at data from a survey carried out by Driving for Better Business (DfBB) into leadership attitudes to a variety of driving-at-work risk factors. The report highlighted some worrying findings regarding directors' (lack of) awareness of risk, what needed to be in a policy, and the communication of that policy.

The responses from more than 250 executive directors and 1,000 drivers indicated that many directors were simply not aware of the significant risks to their business from failing to discharge their duty of care correctly and were, therefore, not managing those risks.

The article was written before the findings were published. However, when the data was released to the media, the subject that caught most attention was the attitudes and behaviours considered acceptable around mobile phone calls to employees while they were driving for work.

RISK OF DISTRACTION

The research showed that nearly a half of the leaders polled (49%) expect their employees to answer their phone at any time, including the times when the employee is at the wheel during a business journey. While using a hands-free phone is legal, it is now widely accepted there is still a significant risk of distraction.

The survey results indicate that not only do some leaders fail to appreciate this potential for distraction, a large number (56%) of those polled consider it safe to continue a conversation with an employee using a hands-free solution while driving.

And that distraction appears to have real consequences – from both a staff safety and wellbeing perspective, as well as increased business costs.

A little less than half of employees surveyed

DRIVERS THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO TAKE A CALL ON THE HARD SHOULDER OF A MOTORWAY

(45%) said they experience stress when they receive a call from their boss while driving and 37% said a phone call from a colleague while they are driving can cause them stress.

Employees cite this not only as a source of stress, but they also consider the distraction to be a contributing factor to causing incidents while driving, potentially jeopardising their safety.

On average one-in-six (17%) of drivers surveyed had been involved in an incident due to taking a call from a colleague while driving for work with men slightly more prone to incidents at close to one-in-five (19%) than women at 15%.

THE AGE PROFILE

That figure of one-in-five male drivers reportedly being involved in an incident while on the phone is staggering in itself. However, it was even more striking when DfBB looked at the age profile.

The subject of young drivers and their greater likelihood of crashing has again been in the news over recent weeks with restrictions on carrying passengers and/or driving at night offered as possible ways of reducing the risk.

Within the 25-34 age group, the proportion of

drivers saying they'd been involved in an incident while driving and taking a call rose to one-in-four (25%) and among those under 24 it rose still further to a concerning one-in-three (34%).

Not only do these incidents put the drivers at significant risk, they also represent a significant risk to the business for both disruption and cost. Any incident resulting in damage to the vehicle is going to disrupt the rest of the day's schedule with delays to meetings or deliveries.

Then there is the obvious repair costs and time spent dealing with insurers and rental companies for a replacement vehicle. Less obvious, but the biggest hidden cost to the company, is staff absence following a more serious incident.

SOMEWHERE SAFE TO STOP

While close to half of directors expect their staff to answer a call while driving, only three-in-five said they would carry on the conversation once they knew the employee was driving with almost two-thirds of directors saying they would ask the employee to call them back once they had found somewhere safe to stop.

Unfortunately, drivers don't always find a safe place to stop. Two-in-five said they only sometimes find a safe place and 6% said they rarely find one.

But therein lies another potentially fatal finding. One-in-20 bosses and a hard to believe one-in-eight drivers thought it was safe to stop and take a call on the hard shoulder of a motorway.

Stopping on the hard shoulder to take a call is illegal. A driver will very likely be picked up on CCTV and either the police or a traffic officer alerted to attend in case the driver is in trouble. If you are simply on the phone, the error of your ways will be explained in rather blunt terms and you will be quickly moved on.

SEPTEMBER TOPIC: JOURNEY MANAGEMENT

Think about the number of times you have seen an HGV, maybe on foreign plates, wandering around in its lane, occasionally crossing the white line. Perhaps the driver is fatigued, or on the phone themselves. Now imagine them wandering enough to strike a vehicle parked on the hard shoulder – it happens more than you might like to think.

A comprehensive 'driving at work' policy should cover mobile phone use and motorway driving making it clear that the hard shoulder is not a safe place to stop and take a call.

What is clear from the research is that leaders need to better understand the risks of employees receiving (and making) calls while driving for work. Employees should also be empowered to influence and implement changes in policies on driving for work.

While the survey did not explore whether the organisations polled include specific guidelines on making or receiving calls as part of their organisational driving policies, experience tells us that most companies that have gone to the trouble of creating a proper driving for work policy have recognised that mobile phone use is a risk and have included guidance on use, whether that be allowing hands-free calls or banning calls altogether.

One of the key problems is communication. All but 10% of the drivers surveyed identified themselves as grey fleet and just less than half of them said they hadn't been shown the company's driving for work policy.

That leaves a significant number of drivers, using their own cars, who have no idea how their employer wants them to deal with mobile phone calls when driving.

Many companies that have banned phones while driving for work have learnt to work in different ways so there is minimal loss.

CONCISE MESSAGES

One such company is DfBB Champion and winner of the Fleet News Large Fleet of the Year award, Royal Mail. As reported in January's *Fleet News*, Mark Bromhall, Royal Mail's road safety manager, confirmed that communication was key – promoting concise messages, with executive support, across an array of different media involving briefings, emails, films, even WhatsApp was crucial to winning hearts and minds.

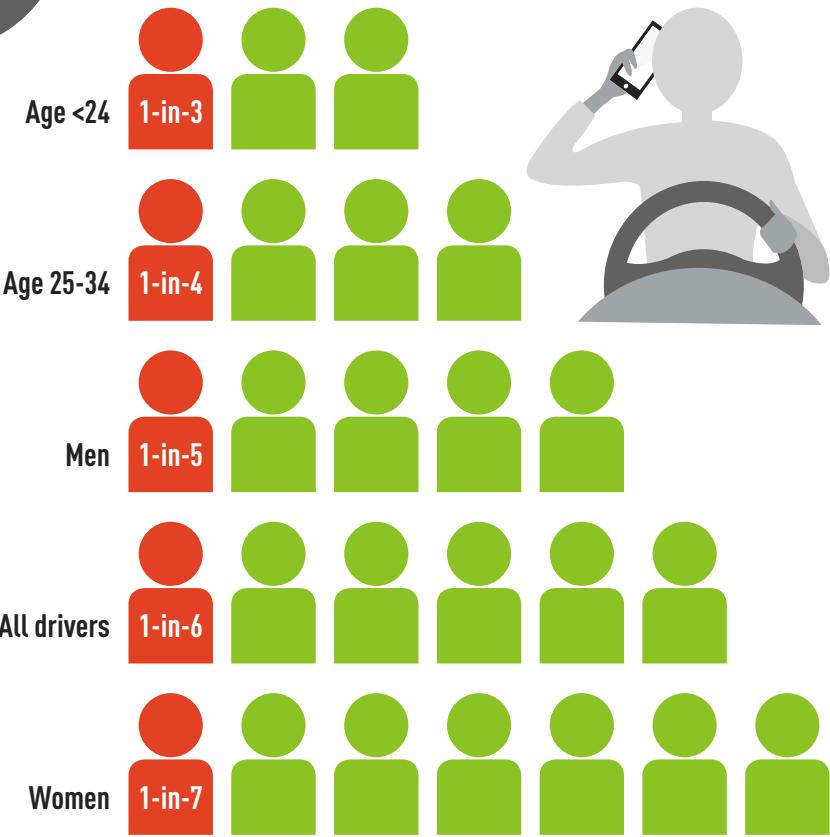
Royal Mail also engaged with its managers as it knew this was an essential part of showing drivers how serious it was.

Of those companies who have completed the DfBB online fleet risk assessment, 46% of companies had banned staff from using mobile phones while driving, but only 26% had also told office-based staff not to phone their drivers.

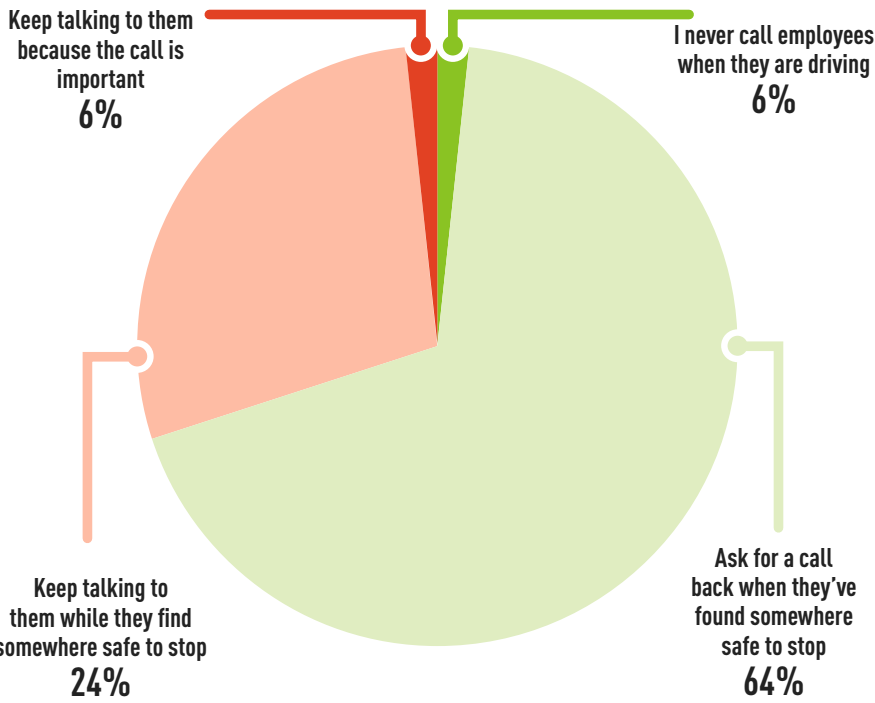
This presents a significant – and stressful – dilemma for drivers who have been told not to use the phone, yet whose managers keep calling them. How likely are those drivers to obey the policy if doing so risks upsetting their manager?

Using a hands-free mobile phone while driving is legal and there is unlikely to be new legislation in the foreseeable future to ban them. It is therefore up to fleet risk decision-makers and company directors to ensure they recognise all the risks and put policies in place to manage those risks.

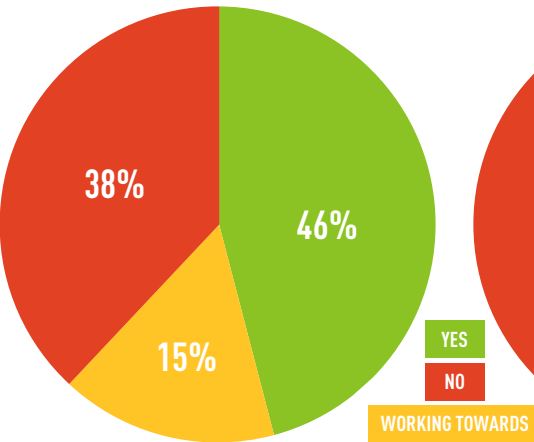
DRIVERS INVOLVED IN AN INCIDENT DUE TO TAKING A CALL FROM A COLLEAGUE WHILE DRIVING FOR WORK



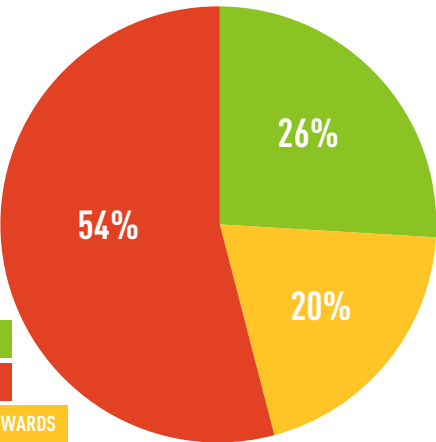
IF YOU CALL AN EMPLOYEE, AND YOU REALISE THEY ARE DRIVING, WHAT DO YOU DO?



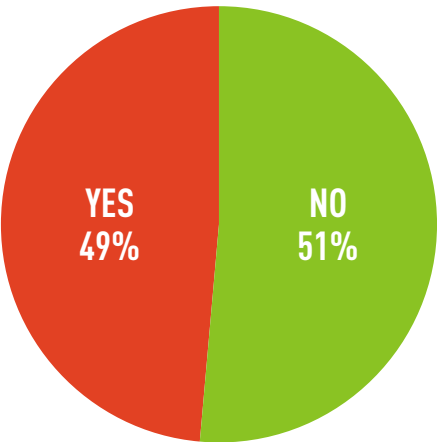
Do you prohibit the use of mobile phones while driving, even if hands-free?



Do you advise managers and other staff not to call colleagues while they are driving?



Do you expect employees to answer their phone at any time while driving for work?





# PREPARING FOR THE MOBILITY Revolution

ICFM director *Peter Eldridge* urges fleet managers to embrace the new world of BMaaS

SEPTEMBER TOPIC:  
SKILLS FOR  
NEW AGE FLEET  
MANAGEMENT

**T**he journey towards Business Mobility-as-a-Service (BMaaS) is gathering momentum and it will not be too long before it becomes the norm for fleet managers to evolve into corporate mobility managers, controlling the logistics and analysing the cost of journeys made by employees.

Today's fleet managers need to prepare themselves for this exciting new world of mobility management that is a million miles away from that of old school fleet management principles.

For many, this change could be viewed as daunting and they could perhaps be forgiven for initially feeling that they are being morphed into travel agents!

Transition is always a challenge and when I started working in the fleet industry in the early 1970s, the world of transport was in a very different place to that I know today.

Only employees who needed to be mobile in the course of their employment, or very senior executives and directors were provided with cars. While a degree of personal use was permitted, employees were expected to pay for any fuel used. There was no taxation of this benefit and the allocation of a company car became a much valued feature of many employments.

The vehicles were different, too, and their current appeal as 'barn finds' and cherished 'classics' is far removed from the reality of operating them as fleet vehicles back in the day.

Reliability was of a much lower standard than today's modern equivalents and this, coupled with service intervals every 2,500/5,000 miles, resulted in service, maintenance and repair activities that were a predominant consumer of time and resources.

To add to the mix, inevitably, the provision of a company car became viewed as a status symbol,

reflecting an employee's seniority within a business and, on the flip side, businesses were able to promote and enhance their image in a competitive environment by selecting the type of cars provided to their employees, who, frequently had little choice in what car was offered – not even the colour!

The arrival of the Finance Act of 1976 introduced the concept of a taxation liability for all employees provided with private use of a company-owned motor car and in the late 1990s, the environmental impact of cars also became recognised.

So why do I mention these elements? Well, simply because they became the tapestry for fleet department activities and, not surprisingly, fleet management focus was predominantly all about how best to manage increasing driver aspirations, what went on under the bonnet and benefit-in-kind taxation, a trend that has remained in place for the past 20 years or so.

In more recent times, the change to identifying the total cost of ownership, as represented by an average monthly value, has become a more realistic approach and this has perhaps – in part – steered us to a BMaaS future.

Whether we like it or not, the worlds of fleet management and travel management are merging at a rapid rate, driven by technology and 'big data' that is underpinning BMaaS and the move to a total cost of mobility concept.

So from a fleet management perspective, this requires a very different set of skills and knowledge and requires a complete understanding of the elements required to control the full cost of employees travelling from A to B – not just the

vehicle cost. Telematics is one of the key drivers in the process and there is far greater reliance on communication platforms, which are fuelled by the big data revolution.

Overall, the business model is shifting from being asset focused (the vehicle) to being much more employee movements driven, so fleet managers need to evolve their operational position to follow suit.

Companies must now look to set a mobility budget for each employee that will influence the mode of transport they take – company car, car club, car share, car hire, public transport – and this will be based on a range of factors including fitness-for-purpose, cost, convenience and safety.

Using a web portal or perhaps mobility card functionality, employees will be able to select the most appropriate mode of travel for their planned journey to meet both their business and personal requirements.

Businesses will be able to set a 'mobility budget' for individual staff, irrespective of whether or not they are entitled to a company car, and this will be initiated purely by virtue of their job function and associated travel requirements.

Each 'booking' made by the employee will provide cost against budget information and help managers to drive significant efficiencies' across their businesses and this will gain momentum as better travel choices are progressively selected.

So where does this leave the current fleet manager?

The ICFM believes there is still a role for fleet managers in this new world of BMaaS, but inevitably the job title and range of responsibilities

**“THE TITLE OF FLEET MANAGER WILL MOST LIKELY MORPH INTO ‘MOBILITY MANAGER’ AND THE CURRENT ROLE AS WE KNOW IT WILL CEASE TO EXIST”**

will evolve to meet the changing requirements of the job.

The traditional job title of fleet manager will most likely morph into 'mobility manager' and in that sense the current role as we know it will cease to exist.

So my message to all fleet managers is quite simple – don't be phased or feel uncertain about the future: embrace it!

Yes, arguably this is one of the most challenging times for fleet managers, but it also one of the most exciting ones and a favourite quote from President John F. Kennedy sums this up perfectly: "Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

Here are my five tips to start the process of moving seamlessly towards a successful BMaaS future:

1. Embrace change – don't resist it.
2. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Encourage other colleagues with fleet responsibility to provide input – specifically HR since mobility is part of an employee's benefits package that influences recruitment and staff retention.
3. Acknowledge that the key to unlocking BMaaS opportunities is data and information obtained from supply chain partners within the vehicle provision and travel sectors.
4. Interrogate your current fleet and start to draw up change management plans that take full account of the current industry spiral into poor long-term business mobility planning – a rise in 'grey fleet' usage off the back of an increase in demand for cash-for-car in particular.
5. Consider 'what good should look like' with respect to embracing the plug-in and zero emission vehicle revolution; the use of car clubs, car share, car hire, non-vehicle transport options and the like.

Finally, take on board that skill, knowledge and expertise are essential requirements for the effective management of a BMaaS solution. If you would like to know more then there is no better place to start than the ICFM.

Join today via our website [www.icfm.com](http://www.icfm.com) or contact [administration@icfm.com](mailto:administration@icfm.com) for further information.

## WHO IS PETER ELDRIDGE?



Peter Eldridge joined ICFM in 1993, making him one of its longest-serving members. The ICFM was founded in 1992 and remains the UK's only independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to furthering the education, recognising the achievements and advancing the profession of car and light commercial fleet management.

Eldridge joined the ICFM steering committee in 1996 and became a full council member in 1997.

He was appointed a director in April 1999 and is regarded as one of the institute's strongest lead tutors. In 2011, he was inducted as an honorary fellow.

Courses include introductory programme, intermediate training, advanced diploma and distance learning. Please mention *Fleet News* if booking.

For information about ICFM leadership and management training, go to [www.icfm.com](http://www.icfm.com)





# HOW DO YOUR FLEET POLICIES SHAPE UP AGAINST THE REST?

Benchmarking survey allows policymakers to gauge how their peers are managing their fleets, reports *Stephen Briers*

**U**K business has opened its fleet list to a widening range of car manufacturers, according to the findings of exclusive *Fleet News* research, with the biggest companies most likely to offer the greatest number of choices.

The benchmarking survey, sponsored by Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions, interviewed 100 fleet decision-makers on an extensive range of policies.

In this first article (part two will be published in the September 26 issue of *Fleet News*), we look at vehicle choice and restrictions applied, perk car versus job-need and the criteria for essential users, and driver eligibility. The research enables companies to compare and contrast policies with those of their peers, by fleet size and industry sector.

Almost half of respondents (46%) say they offer 10-plus brands on their car choice list. The proportion rises as fleet size increases, peaking at 90% for those running more than 500 vehicles.

In contrast, just 7% of fleets with up to 25 vehicles allow such a broad range of options. Instead, these small operators tend to favour tight restrictions, with 19% allowing just one brand.

With small fleets unable to flex the purchasing muscle of large businesses, opting for one brand gives them the best chance of securing a better discount. Among the sub-25 vehicle fleets, 71% offer no more than five brands to their drivers.

These operators are also the most likely to operate essential user vehicles, with 96% reporting

job-need cars against an overall average of 83%.

There is little difference among key industry segments when it comes to vehicle choice, with more than 40% of construction/utilities, transport/retail/distribution, business services, public sector and other services offering 10-plus brands on fleet.

However, almost half of public sector fleets (49%) are more prescriptive, offering up to a maximum of six brands, by far the largest proportion to limit choice to a handful of preferred suppliers.

A decade ago, as the UK emerged from recession, the priority swung away from HR-influenced policies towards finance-led decisions, with many businesses reducing choice lists as they looked to eke the greatest amount of volume-based discount from their manufacturer partners.

Drivers accepted these moves as employment opportunities were limited. Were the days of the car (perk or job-need) as a valued benefit over?

The *Fleet News* survey suggests emphatically not, as companies look to exploit the car as a way to recruit and retain the best staff by adding more brands to their lists. Some businesses are also reacting against a rise in interest for taking cash, particularly among higher rate taxpayers, by making their choices more attractive to employees.

Greater choice also means greater opportunity to offer more low emission options, including plug-in hybrid and full electric, to drivers looking to minimise their tax bills. More on this next time.

The need to appeal to staff appears undimin-



ished by whether they are perk car drivers or essential users, with the latter accounting for 83% of drivers, although it is likely that perk car drivers will have access to the widest choice.

Larger fleets tend to have the most perk drivers. Those with 251-500 cars report that 30% are perk, while 501-plus fleets declare 22%.

Companies across all industry sectors say at least 80% of their drivers are essential users, with public sector reporting the lowest proportion at 80% and other services the highest, at 94%.

This is much higher than in the *Fleet News* Fleet200. Among the UK's biggest fleets, 71% of drivers are essential user; 29% are perk. Those proportions will be hoisted by the presence within the Fleet200 of more companies in financial services, retail and communications where perk proportions are higher.

Job role is the overwhelming criterion used to define an essential user. Almost nine out of 10 (89%) respondents base their decision on this yardstick. However, 18% say annual mileage is also a factor and 12% take salary into consideration.

The largest fleets (501-plus) are most likely to base decisions partly on mileage – 50% said this was a key criterion compared with 79% using job role. This group was also the only one to consider the number of external meetings per year (7%).

These businesses were all in the transport/retail/distribution industry sector, which used the broadest range of criteria to define essential users: 90% job role, 25% annual mileage, 10% salary and 5% external meetings. No other criteria were considered by any of the fleets surveyed.

Companies in the other services segment were most likely to use two criteria: job role (100%) and salary (25%), while construction/utilities often applied up to three: job role (88%), annual mileage (19%) and salary (19%).

When cross-tabulating the criteria with funding

HOW MANY LCV MANUFACTURER BRANDS DO YOU HAVE ON YOUR FLEET?						
Nº of van brands	Total	BY SECTOR				
		Primary, Manufacturing, Construction, Utilities	Transport, Wholesale, Retail, Distribution, Information, Communication	Business services	Public administration and Defence, NHS Trusts, Bluelight	Other services
1	16%	19%	11%	50%	5%	33%
2	23%	19%	32%	-	20%	33%
3	16%	19%	11%	-	20%	33%
4	17%	19%	21%	17%	15%	-
5	10%	13%	11%	-	10%	-
6	3%	-	-	-	15%	-
7	1%	-	-	-	5%	-
8	2%	3%	-	17%	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	-	-
10+	11%	9%	14%	17%	10%	-

methods, companies that leased their cars without maintenance tended to apply the most indices to their essential users, with all of them using job role, 40% also applying annual mileage, 20% salary and 20% external meetings.

It's no surprise that van choice is far more restricted than cars among UK business. These tools of the trade are selected for their suitability for the job as well as their total cost of ownership. Driver appeal sits further down the agenda.

The survey reveals that 82% of companies operate five or fewer van brands, while 39% have just one or two manufacturer options.

The only antithesis is among 501-plus fleets

where 42% have more than 10 light commercial vehicle brands. That's possibly because they have a wider range of operational needs each of which requires specific models for the task.

Those operating the broadest range tend to be in the business services and transport/retail/distribution sectors.

Despite expanding their company car choice lists, businesses are still implementing a number of restrictions to control the type of models their drivers can select. These often have an environmental message. Just over half (51%) implement a CO<sub>2</sub> cap, 40% dictate fuel type and 42% limit body style options.

## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Jon Lawes, managing director, Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions



Fleets today appear to be designed for necessity over luxury. The vast majority of them are now for essential use, showing the growing importance and changing role mobility plays in today's business landscape.

The rising demand for delivery and logistical capability has also shaped the balance of fleet needs. However, with recent benefit-in-kind tax changes, it will be interesting to see if this incentive to drive an electric vehicle increases perk users.

Fleet managers will also have to respond to significant changes in demographics and infrastructure. For example, projections from the United Nations estimate that the proportion of the global population living in urban areas will increase by 12% by 2050 – up to 68% – which will have a profound impact on how people want to travel.

It is encouraging to see that fleets are providing an extensive variety of makes and models. Having a wide choice of vehicles on the company car list can be a vital recruitment and retention tool as employees can choose a car that they are both happy with, and that meets the needs of their role.

This is also true for vans, although, as the research highlights, there is still significant room to increase the number of choices available among fleets.

Business are also implementing policies to make sure they are playing their part environmentally, but with only 51% placing a CO<sub>2</sub> cap on cars there is still a great opportunity for businesses to blend PHEVs and EVs into corporate fleet schemes.

Advances in technology mean lower CO<sub>2</sub>-emitting vehicles do not have to equal a compromised driving experience and, as infrastructure and EV range improves, the future will be electric, regardless of perk or essential use.

While it can be a daunting prospect electrifying a fleet, we are working with our customers to review their current fleet emissions and policies to ensure their scheme is fit for the future.

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**Vehicle Solutions**



Fleets in the public sector are most likely to have a CO<sub>2</sub> cap (67%) as they work to reduce their impact on the environment in line with Government expectations, followed by those in business services at 57%. Least likely are businesses in other services – just 25% employ a CO<sub>2</sub> limit.

Caps are much more likely to be in place for fleets that use some form of leasing product, with more than half of those funding via finance lease or operational lease implementing one. In contrast, just 38% of fleets buying outright have a CO<sub>2</sub> cap.

Fewer companies have a restriction on fuel when it comes to their car fleets. Most still offer an open choice of petrol or diesel and, increasingly, electric, whether hybrid, plug-in hybrid or full EV. Some have moved away from diesel, but equally, some still specify diesel as the only option – indeed 90% of respondents say they have diesels on fleet.

Fleets employ a range of policies when it comes to eligibility to drive company cars. Just 13% restrict access only to the driver for essential user cars, and 14% for perk cars.

More than half (55%) say other company drivers are eligible to drive essential cars, while 55% grant access to the driver's spouse or partner – there's likely to be substantial crossover between the two. However, it's a different matter for children, with 8% of companies allowing them to drive, while just 8% say anyone can get behind the wheel with the driver's permission.

The largest fleets (501-plus) are most lenient, with 70% permitting other company drivers and driver's spouses/partners, 15% their offspring and 10% anyone with the driver's permission.

Meanwhile, organisations in the public sector are least likely to give the green light. More than one quarter (26%) say no one else may drive the car, and just 32% allow spouses/partners.

Construction/utilities fleets are most likely to allow other company drivers and spouses/part-

**FEWER COMPANIES HAVE A RESTRICTION ON FUEL WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR CAR FLEETS**

ners to drive an essential user car – 65% say both groups are fine.

The figures for perk cars reveal a much wider mix of policies. At one extreme are the handful of companies in other services, all of which say anyone can drive the car with the driver's permission. However, 20% of public sector fleets and 20% of transport/retail/distribution fleets say no one else can drive their cars.

On average, 45% of fleets say spouses/partners can drive a perk car, 10 percentage points lower than for essential user cars. Construction/utilities and business services are most likely, with 63%

DOES YOUR CAR FLEET POLICY SPECIFY RESTRICTIONS ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?						
Break %	Total	SECTOR				
Respondents		Primary, Manufacturing, Construction, Utilities	Transport, Wholesale, Retail, Distribution, Information, Communication	Business services	Public administration and Defence, NHS Trusts, Bluelight	Other services
CO <sub>2</sub> level						
YES	51%	47%	46%	56%	67%	25%
NO	49%	53%	54%	44%	33%	75%
Fuel type						
YES	40%	31%	42%	33%	48%	75%
NO	60%	69%	58%	67%	52%	25%
Body style						
YES	42%	47%	42%	33%	43%	25%
NO	58%	53%	58%	67%	57%	75%

IN ADDITION TO THE DRIVER THAT THE VEHICLE IS ASSIGNED TO, WHO ELSE IS ELIGIBLE TO DRIVE THAT CAR (ESSENTIAL USER)?						
Respondents	Total	SECTOR				
		Primary, Manufacturing, Construction, Utilities	Transport, Wholesale, Retail, Distribution, Information, Communication	Business services	Public administration and Defence, NHS Trusts, Bluelight	Other services
Any other company car/van driver	55%	65%	50%	44%	53%	50%
Driver's Spouse/ Partner	55%	65%	54%	78%	32%	50%
Driver's Children	8%	6%	4%	22%	11%	-
Anyone with the driver's permission	8%	3%	8%	-	16%	25%
No one else	13%	3%	19%	11%	26%	-

and 50% respectively – both are lower than essential users.

It's not entirely clear why companies are more prescriptive about perk cars than they are essential user cars; perhaps it's because these cars are more likely to be premium and, therefore, more expensive to insure for multi-driver usage.

Whatever the reason, for vans the picture is clearer: 74% say no one else can drive the vehicle. While it's no bombshell to discover that spouses, children etc. are denied access, it is a surprise that so few companies allow other company drivers behind the wheel.

Just 18% permit this, with the largest proportion

in construction/utilities (23%) and business services (20%) where multi-driver vans are more common.

Interestingly, 19% of construction/utilities businesses also allow spouses/partners to drive company vans; the only other companies to allow are the 5% in transport/retail/distribution.

**In part two of the benchmarking survey, sponsored by Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions, we analyse funding methods, including trade up/down policies, cash takers and grey fleet restrictions, fuels and electric vehicle uptake. Look out for the September 26 issue of *Fleet News*.**

Visit: [hitachicapitalvehiclesolutions.co.uk](https://hitachicapitalvehiclesolutions.co.uk) or call: 01225 569 450

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The Government has, at last, provided clarity on the company car tax bands for the next three years, enabling fleet operators and drivers to make better informed decisions about what their next company car will cost.

While the announcement has been welcomed by the industry, it brings with it a new set of challenges for fleet managers. There will be two BIK tables running side-by-side until 2022, as a result of the switch from NEDC to WLTP emissions standards.

From April next year, the relevant BIK rate will depend on when a vehicle was registered. For vehicles registered from the date the new rates take effect (6 April 2020), most company car tax rates will be reduced by two percentage points.

This is to account for the uplift in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions caused by the changeover from NEDC-correlated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to WLTP for the purposes of taxation, which comes into effect at the same time.

Vehicles are currently taxed based on their NEDC-correlated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which can be between 10% and 20% lower than the WLTP figure – so it's likely drivers will face increases in costs regardless of when their vehicle was registered.

Diesel cars continue to attract a 4% surcharge too, unless they meet the RDE2 standard for real-world emissions.

To encourage the uptake of zero-emission vehicles, fully-electric cars will attract no BIK in 2020/21 tax year and 1% the year after.

Fleet industry bodies, such as ACFO and ICFM, commend the decision to reduce BIK for EVs, but fear drivers are still being charged unfairly for petrol and diesel models.

“We can help fleet managers understand where EVs fit into their fleet and we can help identify which job roles will suit EV”

These changes will encourage more drivers to switch to electric cars, but SEAT believes petrol and diesel cars, particularly those that are RDE2-compliant, still make a strong case for themselves as company cars.

There are a number of exciting new electric cars expected over the coming 18 months, but currently there are very few vehicles available for company car drivers to take delivery of now. Demand is set to outstrip supply for the foreseeable future.

Equally, the UK's charging infrastructure needs to be expanded and upgraded to support higher-speed charging, if business users are going to be able to make the most of the new models.

Aaron Cardoso, SEAT Fleet business development manager, said: “Trying to keep one eye on the future is something we have to do. Once the product supply is there I'm not sure there will be anything to stop a mass move to electric cars.

“We have a job to do. We can help fleet managers understand where EVs fit into their fleet and we can help identify which

job roles will suit EV. The direction of travel is changing quicker than we might have expected a couple of years ago.”

Many drivers could already make the switch with little or no compromise, but a lack of availability or, simply, knowledge has prevented that move.

SEAT will help the situation by taking a consultative role and helping fleet operators to understand where the opportunities to move to electric are, as well as highlighting other changes that could reduce a business's carbon footprint.

SEAT will position itself as the ‘affordable’ electric brand in the VW Group, with the ambition of becoming leaders in the electric company car space.

While in recent years BiK increases have caused a shift towards company car drivers taking a cash allowance over a company car, with the move to electric vehicles and low BiK, SEAT expects more drivers in the future to take a company car.

With an exciting product agenda over the coming 12-18 months, it will launch a new generation of vehicles that will provide company car drivers with all the current benefits of an existing SEAT model, but with significantly lower associated costs.



Visit SEAT's Company Car Tax Calculator to see the costs for yourself  
<https://www.seat.co.uk/fleet-cars/business/fleet-cost-calculators/car-tax-calculator.html>



IGNITION: FIRST DRIVE

# ŠKODA SUPERB

No major changes inside or out, but award-winning Superb continues to live up to its name

By Matt de Prez

**C**ompany car drivers seeking a cost-effective mile-muncher would have a hard time finding a more suitable car than the Škoda Superb. It's so good – in fact – that we've named it the best car in its class on four occasions at the Fleet News Awards. So, what has Škoda done to improve a seemingly perfect fleet car? Well, not a lot is the answer – at least on the face of it.

The external changes are minimal. New bumpers add eight millimetres to the car's overall length and give it a refreshed look.

Perhaps the big changes have been saved for the interior then? Well, no. That's the same too, aside from a revised sat-nav screen and a new digital instrument cluster for top-spec models.

It's not really a problem though. The Superb still looks slick, exuding a premium look and feel despite its seemingly low pricing.

The interior isn't going to upset the likes of Volvo or BMW, but it's functional, spacious and comfort-



No big changes to the interior, but perhaps they weren't required

able. The seats are a particular highlight. Wide and supportive, Superb drivers can enjoy a well-adjusted driving position that shouldn't cause aches and pains on long journeys.

Prices are up across the range, with the cheapest model now costing around £900 more than the outgoing car.

That is coupled with an upgrade in the standard specification. All models now get a LED headlights and an eight-inch touchscreen as standard, although sat-nav and parking sensors aren't fitted to base S models so we would suggest fleets avoid those.

The SE is a better choice, offering adaptive cruise control, automatic headlights, front and rear sensors and electric folding door mirrors.

Škoda expects the SE L to be the best-selling model. It has heated front seats, leather upholstery, blind spot monitor and sat-nav.

There is also a sporty Sportline Plus trim and range-topping Laurin & Klement.

The big news on the engine front is a new version of the ubiquitous 2.0-litre diesel. Known as the TDI

Evo, it develops 150PS like before, but promises greater efficiency.

Prices, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and fuel efficiency figures are yet to be confirmed for this model.

We were able to test the car, however, and found it to be quieter than the old unit it replaces. Power delivery is smooth and our test route showed that 50mpg should be easy to achieve.

We'd estimate it will offer emissions close to 100g/km and is likely to cost around £25,000.

Elsewhere in the range, the 1.6-litre TDI remains with 120PS and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 110g/km (DSG models). There is also a more potent 190PS diesel and a new 190PS petrol. The range-topping 272PS TSI engine also remains with all-wheel drive.

Most of the line-up should be available with a six-speed manual, but Škoda has only published details for DSG-equipped versions as we write.

There will also be a plug-in hybrid for the first time, coming next year.

We expect the Superb will hold its position as the best car in its class, but it is hard to say until all the figures and costs are revealed.

IGNITION: FIRST DRIVE

# MG ZS EV

Introduction of electric version of the ZS is timely and its price will attract much interest



By Matt de Prez

**M**G is looking to revolutionise the car market by launching what it says is the first "truly affordable, family-friendly electric car".

A bold claim, but one that could find favour in the fleet market.

The new model is based on the ZS that launched last year, although MG says the platform was designed for electrification from day one.

It means there is no loss of practicality or boot space as a result of the 44.5kWh battery pack being installed in the car's floor.

The problem with the original ZS is that its 1.5-litre petrol engine has emissions of 140g/km, making it unsuitable for most fleets.

With the launch of the ZS EV coinciding with the Government's announcement that electric cars will attract no benefit-in-kind tax in 2020, MG's timing was fairly apt.

Pricing starts at £28,495 (OTR), but reduces to £24,995 with the Government grant.



ZS EV's interior is lifted from the regular ZS but features a new rotary gear selector

MG is offering a further £3,500 discount on the first 1,000 ZS EVs sold, but only to retail customers. By comparison, a Nissan Leaf – which, MG says, is the closest rival – costs £26,635 with the grant.

The ZS EV looks identical to a regular ZS, so drivers looking to keep their environmental credentials under-the-radar may be attracted to the small SUV.

It's a sharp-looking car that could be mistaken for a Mazda CX-5 from certain angles.

MG has integrated the charging point into the front grille, which, it says, adds convenience for those charging at home. In our experience, we'd prefer the charging point at the rear to enable reverse parking.

The battery provides a range of 163 miles (WLTP), which is competitive for a vehicle in this price bracket. It's nowhere near that of the Kia e-Niro or Hyundai Kona, but the ZS is much cheaper and, more importantly, available in the UK without excessive lead times. In China, MG owners SAIC has opened a new battery factory capable of producing 300,000 units per year.

MG Motor UK wouldn't give specific figures but stated that it has "no supply issues" with the new electric model.

The electric motor develops 143PS and 353Nm, providing a decent surge of power with seamless delivery.

Our test route was confined to London, so we'll need to get behind the wheel for longer before we can give a definitive review of the ZS EV's on-road manners.

Given its close ties to the regular ZS, and weight penalty, the car feels slightly firmer than its conventionally-fuelled brother and provides less crisp handling.

The car is compatible with 50kW rapid chargers and can add 80% capacity in just 40 minutes. The battery is also water-cooled, which should maintain performance in varied climates and allow for frequent rapid charges.

Specification levels are high, with base Excite and Exclusive (£2,000 extra) available. Neither offers the highest levels of quality, but at this price point that is to be expected.





# AUDI A4

New diesel engine leads CO2 emissions battle, but little else has changed

**By Matt de Prez**

When the previous Audi A4 was launched in 2015, its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of less than 100g/km were a headline grabber. Company car drivers poured over the new model with the promise of lower tax. Since then, we've witnessed the introduction of the new WLTP standards, alongside the confusing 'halfway house' that is NEDC-correlated. The result is a new A4 that is significantly cleaner and more efficient than ever before, but still likely to have CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of around 100g/km (NEDC-correlated). At least that's what we're expecting, because the official figures are yet to be confirmed. If it's true, then the A4 will have its direct competition beaten on the key measure. The facelifted A4 range is powered by mild-hybrid engines, with diesel and petrol models offered from launch. There's no word of a plug-in hybrid, either.

FLEET PICK A4 35 TDI S-TRONIC TECHNIK	
SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D price	£34,975
Monthly BIK (20%)	28%/£163
Class 1A NIC	£1,351
Annual VED	£170 then £145
RV (4yr/80k)	£9,225 (26%)
Fuel cost (ppm)	10.63
AFR (ppm)	12
Running cost (4yr/80k)	48.49ppm
CO <sub>2</sub> (g/km)	101
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	55.4



Biggest interior update sees a new infotainment system

A new 2.0-litre diesel motor is available in 136PS (30 TDI) and 163PS (35 TDI) outputs, with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions expected from 100g/km on the latter when combined with an automatic gearbox. There is also a 190PS diesel (40 TDI) and even the S4 now gets mild hybrid technology, with a V6 diesel. Petrol models use a 2.0-litre turbocharged unit, with 150PS, 190PS and 245PS. These will be badged 35 TFSI, 40 TFSI and 45 TFSI respectively. Those underwhelmed by the styling changes will be similarly disappointed to learn the A4's interior is largely unchanged too, although that's no bad thing as its one of the best out there. The biggest update is a new infotainment system. It features a high-resolution 10.1-inch screen and the latest software from Audi's new models. Specification levels have been improved, with all versions of the A4 now getting the Audi Virtual Cockpit as standard. A new entry-level Technik trim boosts the specification of the old SE. Key fleet equipment, such

as sat-nav, reversing camera, LED headlights and heated front seats are now standard. We're still waiting for prices to be announced for the line-up, but Audi has said the entry-level 35 TFSI saloon will cost less than £31,000. Estate and Allroad versions will also be offered. The fleet pick is likely to be the 35 TDI, which should be the most efficient, based on the limited consumption data we've seen. When we drove the car its balance of power and refinement impressed. On the motorway, the A4 does its work best. It's quiet and comfortable, especially with the optional adaptive dampers. We'd recommend the entry-level car as it rides best on smaller wheels and comes with most of the features company car drivers could need. It's a shame there is no plug-in hybrid offered, but the A4 does well to provide low emission (from what we've seen so far) choices from its petrol and diesel engines. Even the S4 could be a consideration for a driver, with 155g/km it's more efficient than some mainstream SUVs.



# MAZDA CX-30

Latest crossover drives like a Mazda3, but the petrol engine lacks a little oomph

**By Matt de Prez**

So impressed were we by the new Mazda3, we named it the "manufacturer's best" when we drove it for the first time at the beginning of the year. The only problem? It isn't a crossover, and for some reason UK drivers seem to rather like those. Perhaps, then, that is why Mazda decided to build the CX-30; as a sort of halfway house between the 3 and CX-5. In keeping with Mazda's driver focus, the CX-30 is one of those lower-riding and more car-like crossovers, a bit like the BMW X2. It's not as practical as a proper SUV but its sleeker body should provide greater handling and efficiency. We were impressed by the CX-30's on-road manners during our testing. It really does drive like a regular Mazda3; i.e. really well. There are levels of detail in its design that other manufacturers simply don't address. The dashboard and door panels, for example, are styled to

FLEET PICK CX-30 SE-L LUX SKYACTIV-G	
SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D price	£24,000 (est)
Monthly BIK (20%)	27%/£108 (est)
Class 1A NIC	£894 (est)
Annual VED	£170 then £145
RV (4yr/80k)	TBC
Fuel cost (ppm)	TBC
AFR (ppm)	15
Running cost (4yr/80k)	TBC
CO <sub>2</sub> (g/km)	116
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	55.3



Interior levels of refinement are among the best

line up with the road markings, tricking your subconscious into taking a better road position. The weighting of the pedals, steering and gear lever is perfectly balanced, and the driving position is optimised to provide comfort, but also make the driver feel at one with the car. It sounds a bit like marketing fluff, but, on the road, it really is apparent. What soured the experience for us, somewhat, is the engine line-up. There are two petrols and one diesel available. The Skyactiv-G petrol is a 2.0-litre naturally aspirated unit with 122PS. Despite its large capacity, the powertrain feels lethargic and fails to deliver the low-down punch that these heavier crossovers require to really get moving. The 1.8-litre diesel is more suited to everyday driving, although Mazda only expects it to account for a small proportion of sales. Both engines have CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 116g/km meaning running costs are similar. You will also be able to order the CX-30 with Mazda's new Skyactiv-X petrol engine. It's packed with clever technology that is meant to give it the

fuel economy of a diesel and the performance and refinement of a petrol. Our first experience of the powertrain left us underwhelmed, though. It needs to be worked hard, which is fine in a car like the MX-5, but not the ticket in a family crossover. Mazda hasn't confirmed the final specs of the engine yet, but in the 3 it offers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 96g/km, making it a more attractive fleet choice. The interior has a premium feel and the refinement levels are among the best out there. There is plenty of room for four adults inside, too. Pricing has not been announced yet. The CX-30 won't be available in the UK until the end of the year, but we'd expect a £2,000-£3,000 uplift on the current Mazda3's prices, meaning it will be priced to compete with the likes of the Skoda Karoq. The CX-30 may not be the obvious choice, but it has a lot of positive attributes. While the Skyactiv-X feels a little lacking in oomph, it's still significantly more powerful than the downsized turbo-petrol motors used in rival models and should provide similar running costs.



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### IGNITION: OUR FLEET



**NISSAN QASHQAI**  
N CONNECTA

#### By Sarah Tooze

The Nissan Qashqai is one of the most popular SUVs, but it faces fierce competition from a host of rivals when looking at wholelife costs.

Comparing our 1.3-litre petrol Qashqai N-Connecta (P11D of £24,375) with the 1.0 TSi Škoda Karoq SE Technology (P11D of £21,720), the 1.2 T Vauxhall Grandland X Business Edition (P11D of £23,690) and the 1.5 TSi Volkswagen Tiguan Match (P11D of £27,105) over four years and 80,000 miles, the Qashqai is the second most expensive for benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax. It costs the 20% taxpayer in England £1,463 per year, £184 more than the Grandland X (£1,279) and £247 more than

the Karoq (£1,216). However, the Tiguan is the most expensive at £1,626.

For the employer, the Karoq has the lowest Class 1A NIC (£839), £170 less than the Qashqai (£1,009). However, the Qashqai is £113 cheaper than the Tiguan (£1,122). The Grandland X is the closest to the Karoq (£883).

There is one area where the Qashqai comes out top – SMR. It costs 3.76p per mile compared with the Karoq's 3.90ppm, Tiguan's 4.30ppm and Grandland X's 4.64ppm.

Overall, the Karoq is the cheapest to run at 34.37ppm; the Grandland X is 38.02ppm, the Qashqai 39.35ppm and Tiguan 41.54ppm.



**VOLVO XC40**  
D3 INSCRIPTION

#### By Andrew Baxter

Winning the 2019 Fleet News Award for New Company Car of the Year is no mean feat. Exclusively voted for by fleet-decision makers, it takes something special to scoop this accolade.

This year's worthy winner was Volvo's highly popular compact SUV offering, the XC40. So, it was with some anticipation that I awaited delivery of our new long term test XC40 D3 Inscription.

The XC40 comes in three variants: Momentum; R-Design; and Inscription, with higher-spec'd 'Pro' versions available in both R-Design and Inscription.

According to the marketing spiel "Momentum is a proud expression of urban style; R-Design is the XC40 in its most dynamic, sporty form; while

Inscription embodies modern Swedish luxury at its most progressive".

All come with an impressive standard spec-list including a nine-inch centre console touchscreen, sat-nav with European mapping, voice-activated control, digital radio, Bluetooth handsfree system, hill start assist, power parking (hand) brake with auto hold function, hill descent control, and keyless start.

As you'd expect, there's also an impressive list of safety features included as standard.

It will be interesting to see how well suited the D3 engine and auto 'box are. These could either make for relaxed mile-munching, or a frustrating lack of oomph. Time to hit the road and find out.



**BMW 320D**  
M SPORT SALOON

#### By Gareth Roberts

The new BMW 3 Series offers another step-up in technology from the outgoing model with a range of digital services, including voice control.

It marks a new era for the BMW Group in which it says drivers will increasingly be able to operate their car and access its functions and information simply by speaking.

BMW's Intelligent Personal Assistant, which is available with Live Cockpit Professional (a standard feature on the M Sport), rivals the Mercedes system and responds to the prompt 'Hey BMW'. However, unlike other digital assistants, drivers in the BMW can give the Intelligent Personal Assistant a name (a christening ceremony, however, is optional).

The German manufacturer says this creates even greater individuality and personality, which is perhaps stretching it a little, but all the same it is a clever bit of tech.

The new system will learn favoured settings and frequently-used navigation destinations.

For example, saying "Hey BMW, I'm cold," will prompt the BMW Intelligent Personal Assistant to adjust the temperature inside the car accordingly.

Furthermore, through connecting with the sat-nav, the digital assistant can find parking spaces at the destination, provide information on traffic jams along the route and remind the driver when they need to set off.

Navigation is also connected, offering a range of digital services that aims to make route planning both in the car and away from it, much easier.

Choosing the technology pack for an extra £1,800 and, along with head-up display and wireless charging, the car will come with gesture control.

Turning the volume up on the stereo with a turn of a finger is akin to witchcraft, but I soon discovered that it can also be a bit hit or miss.

Having successfully increased the volume to its highest setting, my finger twirling became increasingly frantic as I struggled to turn it down.

I eventually gave in and resorted to reducing the volume manually rather than have passers-by thinking I was hard of hearing with Test Match Special booming out of our long-term test car.







By Andrew Ryan

Two months and almost 4,000 miles into our long-term test of the new Ford Focus, and the traditional, new car 'feelgood factor' has not dimmed in the slightest. If anything, I'm a bigger fan of it now than when I first took the keys.

It's continued to be a joy to drive – our ST-Line X model offers a great balance between comfort and sportiness, with the weight and accuracy of both its steering and gearshift particularly impressive.

Its sporty character is further enhanced by the revvy nature and power delivery of its 1.0 EcoBoost 125PS petrol engine.

The three-cylinder unit is also proving to be

efficient. So far I'm averaging 48.7mpg, which sits in the middle of the WLTP fuel economy figures of 46.3mpg-49.6mpg.

The past month has also seen the Focus's credentials as a family car put to the test.

My brother and his family came over from Ireland for a week, so it was constantly on the move, ferrying children and adults on various daytrips.

All were very complimentary about the amount of head and legroom they had.

The Focus continues to prove that it was a worthy winner of the best lower medium car honour at this year's Fleet News Awards.



By Trevor Gehlcken

The Vauxhall Combo has had several incarnations over the years. Starting out as a van version of the old Astra in the 1980s, it morphed into a CV in its own right in 1993, based on the Corsa chassis.

Come 2011 and Vauxhall teamed up with Fiat to produce a model that was a rebadged Doblò Cargo.

Now with PSA at the helm in Luton, the doughty small van has emerged as a clone of the Citroën Berlingo/Peugeot Partner.

As the aforementioned French contenders have been among the best selling small vans in Europe since their launch in 1996, it seems the pedigree of the Combo is pretty much assured among Britain's van fleet buyers.

Eager to show off its new product, Vauxhall chose *Fleet News* to be one of the first to test out a Combo for a lengthy period.

Our test model is the short wheelbase version which turned up with just 170 miles on the clock in a dazzling metallic pillar box red and with a snazzy set of alloys, both of which turned out to be a standard fitment. How times have changed in the world of commercial vehicles!

Under the bonnet, our van has a brand new 1.5-litre turbodiesel powerplant pumping out a hefty 132PS. And despite all this power, the van is slated to return a tad less than 65mpg on the combined cycle. Will it achieve this feat in the real world? Watch this space.



## PEUGEOT 508

1.5-LITRE BLUE HDI

By Stephen Briers

In our previous test we praised the 508's extensive range of safety systems, many of which are standard on our Allure trim (which sits just above the entry-level Active). They include electronic brake force distribution, emergency brake assist (EBA), which increases braking pressure in an emergency, and electronic stability control, which reduces the risk of skidding through loss of traction.

The one system that is a little too meddling for my liking is the lane-keeping assist. Any slight deviation from the centre of the lane seems to result in a firm tug at the wheel. The system defaults to 'on' for every start-up, but, thankfully, is easily switched off by a button to the right of the steering wheel.

Of much greater value is the lane departure warning. Due to the 508's sloping roofline, the interior lining hides the corners of the rear windscreen, resulting in a wide blind spot around the C pillar that is near impossible to completely eliminate by adjusting the wing mirrors.

The warning system acts as a second safety net (the first being a quick look over the shoulder before changing lanes) and certainly compensates for the poor rear vision.

Related to safety are the seats. In a previous test, I mentioned that they were supportive. It seems that view is not universally endorsed. Several front seat passengers of late have struggled to find the comfy spot, and have complained of backache on longer journeys.

Both front seats have multi-way electric adjustment, including lumbar support, although I have found that it doesn't quite nestle snugly against the spine.

We have encountered our first defect. The windscreen washer has run dry but there was no early warning from the car. Fortunately, the windscreen was fairly clean when I noticed, so the vessel has been refilled with washer fluid without causing any blurry vision while driving.

Peugeot has been keen to promote the significant step-up in quality on the 508 so we'll keep an eye on this to see whether it is a temporary gremlin or a sign of things to come.



By Matt de Prez

The three-day heatwave we experienced at the end of July – or 'summer' as it's more likely to be remembered – gave me a chance to realise there are more benefits to the E 300 de than just the cost savings.

Being a plug-in hybrid, the car's heating and air conditioning system works independently of the engine – so it can operate when the car is driving on electric, or more interestingly, when parked.

The car is also 'connected', so by using the Mercedes Me app on my phone I can remotely activate the climate control within seconds.

It can heat and defrost the car in winter, or chill

it to a comfortable 18-degrees in the height of an all-too-brief summer.

You can also activate the system from inside the car, either via a timer or if you are stopping at the shops but want to keep the cool air pumping out.

The Mercedes Me app also allows me to unlock and lock the car, see the remaining diesel and battery levels, check the service status and see where the car is located on a map.

Other useful services available via the connected element of the infotainment system include internet radio streaming and weather forecasts, plus live traffic and fuel prices that appear on the sat-nav map.



By Luke Neal

For the past two weeks I've been driving a SsangYong Musso, a vehicle that couldn't be more different when compared with the T-Roc. SsangYong may be considered a budget brand but the Musso had some great extras including heated and air-conditioned seats, built in sat-nav and an excellent reversing camera.

I've missed these extras since being back in the SE model T-Roc. It doesn't have such luxuries, not even built in sat-nav, something I've always considered a 'must have'.

Volkswagen has, instead, equipped the T-Roc with Android Auto and Apple Car Play. It's a system I've never liked, or never *thought* I'd like.

Having no choice but to use it in the T-Roc I now realise how wrong I was.

Android Auto is a revelation, not only does Google Maps provide a high level of clear turn-by-turn navigation, but also gives live traffic updates and alternative routes where possible to avoid traffic.

It also accesses all your mobile phone functions so as well and taking and receiving calls and linking to your music library, Android Auto will also read out messages and allow you to voice respond so you can keep your eyes on the road at all times.

Still want a reversing camera or heated seats? These are available on the T-Roc as optional extras at £185 for the camera and £300 for heated seats (as part of the winter pack).



## THINKING CAP

By Martin Ward, Cap HPI manufacturer relationships manager

This month I've been...

...to the Isuzu Import Centre, Sheerness

This is where the D-Max pick-ups arrive in the UK. I had no idea just how much is involved at these places. Isuzu offers a 'one-stop-shop' for all types of conversions, on-site at the centre. Anything from bluelight vehicles, to mobile workshops, to cherry-pickers – whatever can be put on the back of a pick-up, you name it – and Isuzu will make it for you, and the converted vehicles carry the same warranty.

...to drive the Mazda CX-30 Compact SUV in Frankfurt

Mazda's CX-30 Compact SUV is a pretty little car (4,395mm, about the same as a Nissan Qashqai). Even so, it's not so compact on the inside, in fact it's quite spacious. It sits between the CX-3 and CX-5, so, in theory, should be called the CX-4, but four is an unlucky number in Japan. I don't think this will be an unlucky car in the UK as it ticks all the right boxes. With its economical petrol engines, it should be a popular fleet car.

...to drive the MG ZS Electric

Being in Marylebone, London, I didn't drive it far, due to heavy traffic, which, of course, we did expect. But the city driving we did prove this is a very capable EV that was perfect for the surroundings. MG owners, SAIC, has a battery Gigafactory capable of producing 300,000 EV batteries per year.

...researching mis-fuelling

What to do if you mis-fuel a car or van? It seems the best thing is call in a company that will sort it on the spot at the fuel pump for around £100. Or, if it has been driven briefly, it will cost around £200 to have it cleaned out. Another alternative is to have it taken to the dealer, where it can cost thousands to have new parts fitted. If you can get it done for £100-£200, snap the man's hands off. Does your company have a policy on mis-fuelling? Does it pay? Does the driver pay? Is it covered by insurance? How about the leasing company paying? If you don't have a policy, I suggest you get one quickly.

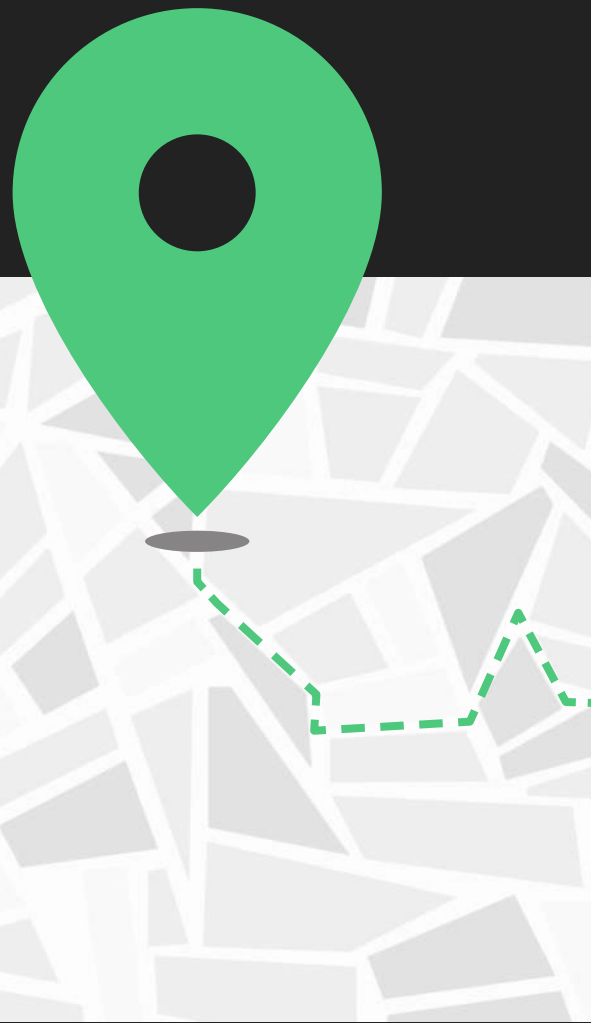
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Model shown New Vivaro Sportive L1 Panel Van in Amber Red (no-cost option). <sup>#</sup>Fuel consumption data and CO<sub>2</sub> emission data are determined using the WLTP test cycle, and the relevant values are translated back to allow the comparability into NEDC. 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 contact your local Retailer.

– 56.5 (5.0), Extra-urban: 54.3 (5.2) – 61.4 (4.6), Combined: 50.4 (5.6) – 60.1 (4.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 125 – 152g/km.<sup>#</sup>  
are translated back to allow the comparability into NEDC. 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 contact your local Retailer.



# Drivers risk licence suspension if they fail to hit training targets

Fleets urged to get drivers to take a 'rolling approach' to training hours

**By Gareth Roberts**

**T**housands of truck drivers risk not being able to drive if they fail to complete training prior to the Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) deadline.

For many professional drivers the deadline to complete their training and maintain their current Driver Qualification Card (DQC) is September 9. They must have completed and recorded 35 hours of periodic training by that date.

However, figures suggest that a third of drivers may still need to complete their training to continue to drive professionally, or they may face time off the road.

It is illegal for professional drivers to drive without a DQC, carrying a maximum fine of £1,000 for both the driver and the operator licence holder. These offences will be referred to the Traffic Commissioner who will then consider what action to take. This could include suspending

both the driver's licence and the operator's licence.

Head of national standards and accreditation at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Bob Hannigan, said: "We encourage all drivers to plan ahead and complete their training in good time. Don't leave it to the last minute when demand for training courses will be high."

"Missing the deadline will mean time off the road or being faced with a £1,000 fine for driving illegally, without a valid DQC."

The CPC qualification was introduced in 2009 for professional bus, coach and lorry drivers, with the aim of improving road safety and maintaining high standards of driving. It states 35 hours of periodic training must be completed every five years.

Drivers with acquired rights – those with vocational licences pre-September 2009 – have a deadline of September 9 to complete the next phase of their training.

Prior to September 2014, DVSA had issued around 700,000 DQCs to drivers with acquired rights. These cards will expire on September 9. DVSA has issued about 600,000 DQCs to all drivers since September 2014.

In a survey of some 200 fleet professionals, conducted by CPC training provider Fleet Source at the beginning of August, more than half (53%) said they were worried about the availability of fully CPC-trained drivers after the September deadline.

The survey also showed that with just one month to go, almost a third of drivers still needed to complete their mandatory 35 hours of training.

The majority of transport managers who responded to the survey – some 71% – said their contracted drivers had already completed their 35 hours.

Nick Caesari, chief executive officer at Fleet Source, said: "The bigger picture is that there is a clear concern in the industry that there

will be a shortfall in CPC-compliant drivers after September 9.

"Some two-thirds of fleet professionals who responded to our survey, rightly said that it was the drivers' responsibility to complete the required training, but employers also know that they must ensure that their contracted drivers are compliant."

The Fleet Source survey showed that the vast majority of transport managers favoured spreading the required 35 hours training evenly across the five-year period, or across three to four years, rather than playing catch-up in the final year.

Caesari continued: "Our customers are already scheduling their next five-year training programmes and we are seeing a marked preference for the one course per year option."

"We think that will be the trend across the industry as many respondents to our survey cited difficulty in finding suitable courses and trainers with capacity in recent months."

Analysis of CPC training figures by Keith Gray, general manager for training, audits and standards at the Freight Transport Association (FTA),



Trainers with capacity are likely to be in short supply as the deadline approaches

highlights the shortfall in training when compared with previous years.

He says that from 2016, there has been about two million fewer training hours taken by drivers compared with five years ago.

He also believes Brexit could, in part, be to blame for some drivers not having completed their training.

Many wrongly believed that the UK's exit from the European Union (EU) would mean the CPC requirement, an EU directive, would be scrapped.

However, the Government and the DVSA have made clear that, following the UK's withdrawal, professional drivers of lorries, buses and coaches will still need a valid CPC to continue to operate in the UK.

Furthermore, Gray said: "One of the problems for the industry is that those passing the licence after 2009 get their own five-year period – it's an administrative nightmare."

However, with those drivers who had 'acquired rates' and share the five-year period ending September 9 eventually leaving the industry, he believes the periodic peak will eventually "flatten out".

potentially have retired or at least are likely to in the preceding five years.

"Therefore, demand for CPC is more likely to be flat as drivers look to meet their training requirement within their own cycle."

For example, 182,000 DQCs have been issued to newly qualified drivers since 2014, and each of these drivers will have their own individual renewal date.

"This is a really important shift," says John Keelan Edwards, driver risk management director at Driver Hire. "In the past year, around 3,300 new commercial licences have been issued each month."

"The number of individual deadlines is increasing all the time, so instead of focusing on one date, smart fleet managers need to take a rolling approach to driver CPC."

There are more than 3,000 CPC training courses to choose from covering a range of topics, such as customer service or best practice when accommodating disabled passengers and ensuring the safety of vulnerable road users or avoiding bridge strikes.



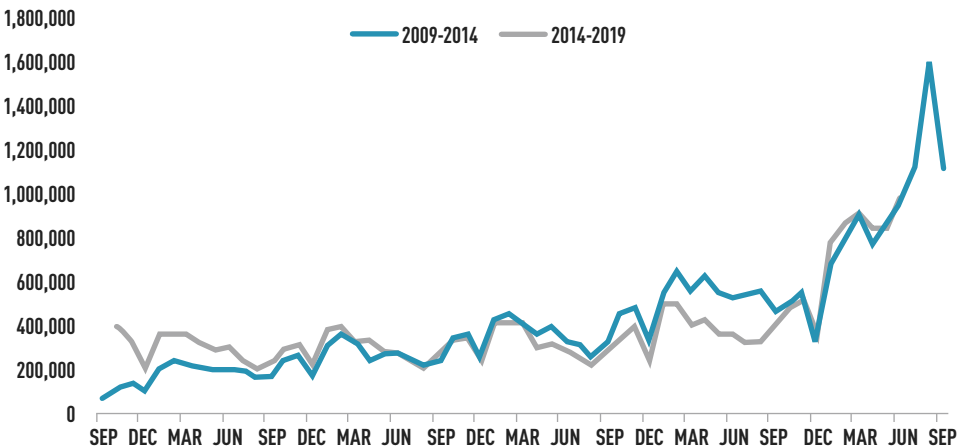
THERE IS A CONCERN THAT THERE WILL BE A SHORTFALL IN CPC-COMPLIANT DRIVERS

NICK CAESARI, FLEET SOURCE

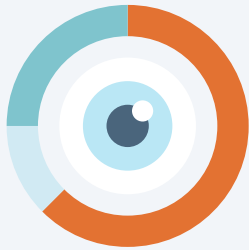
Mark Taylor, head of learning and development in England and Wales for the Road Haulage Association (RHA), agrees.

He told *Commercial Fleet*: "The 2024 cycle is likely to be the last peak as many of these drivers will

## DRIVER CPC 2009-2019



The graph shows a comparison between the two five-year cycles, 2009-2014 and 2014-2019. Between March 2012 and 2017, the two lines diverge and don't come back together until December 2013 and 2018. Although the gap doesn't look significant, it equates to more than two million fewer hours being uploaded versus the same period five years ago. Source: FTA



PUBLIC EYE

In our regular column, an experienced fleet manager gives his take on the issues facing the public sector. This month: tyres – the weak link in fleet management

Tyres are, in my view, the least well managed fleet-specific element in any organisation.

Indeed, the DfT is consulting on legislation to make it illegal for vehicles to run with a tyre aged 10 years or over.

That to be very important and it does, of course, need addressing, but age profiling tyres is not the only issue.

As an organisation, we conduct maybe 2,500 tests a year on cars and car-derived vans, including grey fleet, as well as a van fleet. Of those, around 70% have tyre defects.

If an alloy rim is damaged on a vehicle – be that fleet, lease, or private – that impacts the driver or the owner who will be concerned about the visual impact and the cost of repair.

However, there's little thought for the damage they may have caused to the tyre, because it's still inflated.

In addition to standard wear, tyres are subjected to huge amounts of force and impact: be it as a result of lateral twisting or impact damage from high kerbs.

It's also not unusual to see tyre wall cracking on tyres that are only four-five years old because they've had a lot of impact damage on high kerbs.

I know from experience that fleet managers need an absolutely cast iron reason to change a tyre. If they are 1-2 mm above your minimum tread depth policy there will be an expectation that those tyres remain. But there could be a 20,000 mile gap until they're next checked – not adequate.

A more holistic approach to tyre maintenance is required, where it is the driver's, the fleet manager's and the tyre company's responsibility to manage it.



## NEW TRANSIT CUSTOM PLUG-IN HYBRID

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\*Based on full charge. Estimated range using Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP) applies to an available configuration. Actual range varies with conditions such as external elements, driving behaviours, vehicle maintenance, and lithium-ion battery age. Final WLTP figures will be available in 2020.

**SEARCH: NEW TRANSIT  
CUSTOM PLUG-IN HYBRID**

## COMMERCIAL FLEET: COMPLIANCE

# FTA ADVICE

By Ray Marshall, senior transport advisor, FTA

**Q** Our van driver has just come in and said that he needs a log book to record his driving time when on the road in France. Is this correct?

**A** According to the French Transport Code, all drivers operating goods vehicles up to 3.5t or passengers' vehicles with a maximum nine seats, including foreign drivers posted to France, must keep an individual control book, 'Livret Individuel de Contrôle' (LIC), in the vehicle and provide it to officers in case of controls. It is up to the driver to complete his own LIC daily. The employer is responsible for the respect of working and rest hours, and must check the driver's LICs, and sign weekly, monthly and quarterly reports.

The individual control book has to be used to register and control working and rest hours, according to Article R 3312-58 of the French Transport Code.

**Q** Would we be able to send a van/non-vocational driver on the Driver CPC course as some of the course material would apply to them?

**A** As you are aware, the CPC courses are designed for holders of vocational license and periodic training is a requirement if you wish to continue to drive a vocational vehicle in scope of CPC requirements.

There is no reason why you cannot send van/non-vocational drivers on these courses, and your training provider could advise you further, but be aware that there would be no evidence of the training as you can only attach the training to holders of vocational licenses.

You may be able to speak to the training provider, however, to see if they would issue an attendance certificate or similar to say the candidates had attended.

**Q** We have a Ford Transit Connect and the driver has been penalised for speeding, but was this correct? We believed it to be a car-derived van. It has a gross weight not exceeding two tonnes and has been recorded at 60mph on an A road with a national speed limit sign in England.

**A** A Ford Transit Connect is a rigid goods vehicle for speed

limit purposes. To meet the criteria for a car-derived van, it needs to be either based on a car or built on a platform which was designed to be built as a car or van by the same manufacturer.

As the national speed limit for a rigid goods vehicle up to 7.5 tonnes in England is 50mph, then the penalty appears to have been correctly applied.



**Q** Our driver left his digital card in the tachograph unit when the vehicle that he was driving broke down.

The breakdown company told us the driver would be unable get access to the vehicle to remove his card until the vehicle is back at the workshops. The vehicle will sit in a yard until such times.

However, we would like the driver to be able to continue and wanted to double-check if he is able to drive based on print outs?

**A** Unfortunately, the driver is not allowed to continue to drive using manual records while their digital card is awaiting removal. Manual records are only permitted when the card is lost, stolen or malfunctioning and has been reported to the DVLA. If the engineer determines that the digital card has been damaged while removing it from tachograph unit, the driver is permitted carry on driving and use manual records for 15 calendar days.

## The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 (the Noise Regulations) came into force for all industry sectors in Great Britain on 6 April 2006 (except for the music and entertainment sectors where they came into force on 6 April 2008).

The aim of the Noise Regulations is to ensure that workers' hearing is protected from excessive noise at their place of work, which could cause them to lose their hearing and/or to suffer from tinnitus (permanent ringing in the ears).

The Control of Noise at Work

Regulations 2005 replaced the Noise at Work Regulations 1989.

The level at which employers must provide hearing protection and hearing protection zones is now 85 decibels (daily or weekly average exposure) and the level at which employers must assess the risk to

workers' health and provide them with information and training is now 80 decibels. There is also an exposure limit value of 87 decibels, taking account of any reduction in exposure provided by hearing protection, above which workers must not be exposed.

## New road sign to improve road safety and protect animals

The Transport Secretary has unveiled a new traffic sign, featuring a hedgehog, which warns road users of hazards due to animals in the road ahead, and could be placed in areas where accident rates are highest.

He is calling on local authorities and animal welfare groups to identify hotspots where the sign should be located.

The road sign is designed to

reverse the decline in wildlife numbers; particularly hedgehogs whose population in rural areas has halved since 2000.

The Transport Secretary said: "We have some of the safest roads in the world, but we are always looking at how we can make them safer. Motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users are particularly at risk. The new small mammal warning sign should help

to reduce the number of people killed and injured, as well as helping our precious small wild mammal population to flourish."

The Transport Secretary is also meeting road safety experts, including Brake, The AA and the RAC, together with animal protection groups including the Wildlife Trust, to discuss the scale of the problem. The move comes shortly before a refreshed Road



Safety Statement and two-year action plan are published. These will look at further ways to reduce the number of deaths on the roads.



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PEUGEOT

**PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL** Official fuel consumption (in mpg and l/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions obtained for the PEUGEOT Expert van range are: Combined 35.9 (7.9) – 44.2 (6.4) and CO<sub>2</sub> 148 – 130 g/km.

The fuel consumption you achieve, and CO<sub>2</sub> produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test (WLTP) used to measure fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The fuel consumption figures shown in this advert are calculated under the WLTP test. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown are NEDC equivalent (NEDCeq), calculated using EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDC figures, however, these NEDCeq figures are based on the outgoing test cycle (NEDC) and will be used to calculate tax for first registration. Figures shown are for comparison purposes; you should only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested using the same technical standard. \*WLTP – Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure. \*\*NEDC – New European Driving Cycle. Model shown is PEUGEOT Expert Professional Standard panel van, shown with front foglights available as a cost option at £120 and in Cumulus Grey metallic paint available as a cost option at £460 (prices correct at time of going to print and excl VAT at 20%). \*Available on certain versions. \*Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones. If you are calling from a business phone, you should check with your provider whether there will be a charge for calling an 0800 number.

COMMERCIAL FLEET: NEWS

# Trends having a huge impact on trucks – and their tyres

Goodyear launches its Total Mobility offering as industry expert talks about ‘reinvention’

By Andrew Ryan

**T**he changing mobility landscape will have a transformational effect on many aspects of the truck industry.

Diesel-powered vehicles will be joined by hydrogen fuel cell and battery electric LGVs and HGVs, while autonomous and connected technologies will driver greater efficiencies and lower operating costs for fleet operators in the future, said Mubarak Moosa, consulting director at Frost and Sullivan mobility analysts.

Moosa was speaking at the launch of Goodyear Total Mobility, which is the tyre manufacturer's new end-to-end offering which brings together its range of truck tyres, preventive maintenance solutions and 2,000 TruckForce service network locations across Europe to reduce costs and vehicle downtime.

“Trucking and commercial vehicles may not be a glamorous sector in comparison with passenger cars, but it is definitely the backbone for societal and economic development,” Moosa added.

“Mega trends such as urbanisation, connectivity, digitalisation, online retail and new business models will impact and require a well-established trucking sector to reinvent itself.

“And we believe in the future, fleet managers will adopt smart, eco-friendly and connected technologies

which will allow them to improve total cost of ownership and, at the same time, improve efficiency.”

Tyres have a key role to play in the shifting mobility landscape, said David Anckaert, vice-president Goodyear Commercial Europe.

“Autonomous technologies will see us working with vehicle manufacturers to understand how they are developing robotrucks and what they are thinking about platooning so we understand how we can support those trends,” he added.

“Connected technologies can allow the fleet manager to get connected to the tyre because if, for example, the conditions become slippery, the tyres are going to have the first information about what is happening on the road.

“There will be major changes in the powertrain and this will be electric and hydrogen fuel cell technology.

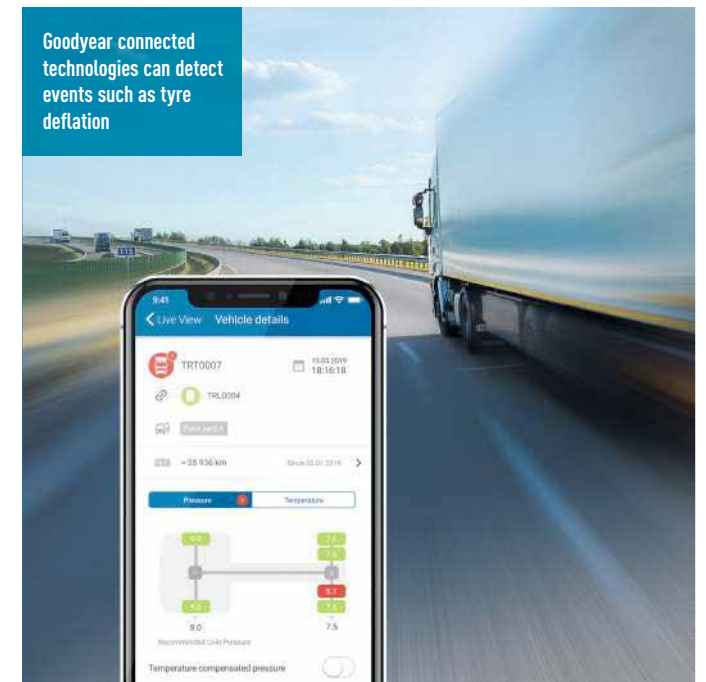
“When Goodyear looks at these trucks we see a need for battery space, so it is going to change the way we think about the size and load-carrying capacity of those tyres.

“Electric motors also have high torque, so we are always thinking about what we are going to do with the traction that is required.

“These are key trends that have a direct impact on us providing a total mobility offer to our fleet customers.”

While many of these developments remain challenges for the future, Anckaert said Goodyear has

Goodyear connected technologies can detect events such as tyre deflation



launched its Total Mobility product to tackle many of the issues faced by fleets today.

A Road Haulage Association (RHA) survey of goods vehicle costs found the purchase price of tyres typically accounts for just 3% of the operating cost of a truck (30% driver wages, 26% fuel, 5% maintenance, 10% depreciation, 6% insurance, 20% others including tax and interest), but they can affect much more.

“Our Total Mobility solution will be able to influence more than 40% of the total operating cost of a fleet,” said Anckaert.

“As well as tyres we can impact fuel consumption, driver retention and maintenance cost. We can help our fleets do their jobs better.”

At the Goodyear Total Mobility launch event held at its Mireval testing facility in France, the tyre manufacturer also demonstrated its Drive-Over Reader.

This uses a ground-mounted sensor to scan the tyre and vehicle parameters when driving over, analysing tyre pressure, tread depth, axle load and total weight.

The reader is able to read licence

plates and reports its findings directly to the fleet manager, allowing them to address any issues identified.

Goodyear says this will help reduce the number of tyre-related breakdowns and incidents, fuel consumption due to under-inflated tyres, frequency of tyre renewal, tyre maintenance costs, human errors in manual measuring and financial penalties incurred for overload and late deliveries.

The company also launched two truck tyre ranges: KMax Gen-2 and FuelMax Gen-2. These replace the existing KMax and FuelMax products, which were launched in 2013.

Goodyear says KMax Gen-2 offers up to 25% better all-weather capability than its predecessor, as well as 15% more damage resistance and 5% higher fuel efficiency.

FuelMax Gen-2 provides up to 10% improved mileage, 30% greater all-weather capability as well as less noise than FuelMax, but retains the same level of fuel efficiency said Goodyear.

■ See also Public Eye column on page 71.

Goodyear's Drive-Over Reader can scan a tyre to check for pressure and tread depth







# RUNNING ON EMPTY?

How freight collaboration can reduce congestion and emissions. *Matt de Prez* reports

**L**oad sharing and back hauling are not new concepts. In fact, it seems fairly logical that operators would seek to fill empty trucks and vans that are on their way back to a depot, be that with internal or external work.

For a logistics company, an empty truck is doing nothing but harming profits, while for a business with its own fleet, empty trucks are adding unnecessary costs.

As fleets face increasing pressure to decarbonise and local authorities look to reduce urban congestion, the benefits of consolidation become more apparent.

Despite this, the latest figures from the Department for Transport (DfT) show that empty running is beginning to stagnate at around 29% of HGV journeys. Articulated vehicles are utilised marginally better, running empty 28% of the time, versus rigid trucks that are empty for 30% of the time.

But, figures dating back 18 years suggest there

has been little improvement made (see table on page 78).

Christopher Snelling, head of policy at the Freight Transport Association (FTA), says: "Our perspective is that we are better than the EU average. There is less empty running here in the UK than the EU average, there is less here than in places such as Germany."

"What frustrates us most in the debate around empty running is there is almost an assumption that there is loads of it and, if the logistics industry would do something about it, we could all reduce our carbon emissions and road congestion."

"How much it's talked about is very frustrating because the industry has made great strides in doing it and, of course, it would because it's a massive way to save money."

Snelling believes if no operators bothered to do anything proactive, the natural level of empty running would be somewhere in excess of 50%.

"In fact, the level in Britain shows the extent of

how much is filled. Even that underestimates what is achieved, because there are parts of the industry that will only ever be full one way, such as the oil tanker, because there is nothing else you can put in it," he adds.

## COLLABORATION

For operators who are unable to schedule their deliveries in such a way that empty running is avoided, there is a breadth of platforms available that enables operators to share loads by utilising spare capacity or back haul goods for others.

Freight exchanges enable businesses to advertise loads and many hauliers use them as a means of finding work. Through profit-driven optimisation, those operating in the haulage and transport sectors have the lowest instances of empty running.

If an operator has a one-way load, rather than hauling themselves they could advertise it on a freight exchange and let another operator who

already has a job going the other way take it on. While they will have to pay that operator for their services, they will make savings by not using their own fleet.

Nationwide haulier Ivinghoe Haulage has managed to greatly improve its capacity since joining Haulage Exchange, a freight exchange platform operated by the Transport Exchange Group.

Sue Levy, the company's transport manager, says: "We use Haulage Exchange for load building and return journeys. We already have a large customer base so, most of the time, we're not relying on the exchange for that first load of the day."

"Before we began using Haulage Exchange, if, say, our driver had dropped off in Daventry, there would be no guarantee we would be able to find him another load and there's every chance he might have no choice to return to base empty."

"However, Haulage Exchange helps us build on that first consignment."

The platform offers a 'smart matching' system to seek out compatible loads.

"Travelling home empty can really eat into margins," Levy adds. "We use the exchange's real-time matching technology to find loads for our drivers which take them home. It's great because the live tracking map pinpoints available and suitable loads in real-time without us having to phone bash – which is what we were doing before. Since we've been using Haulage Exchange, it's rare that we don't secure a return load at least part of the way home."

The Transport Research Laboratory's Freight Collaboration Study report states: "There is a key distinction between those companies with logistics as their sole activity (hire and reward operators) and those who run HGVs as a means to facilitate their core business (own account)."

While using a third-party haulier is pretty clear cut, the study found there were a number of areas for potential collaboration between own account

fleets in different sectors of the industry.

Both parcel and construction fleets felt they were best suited to internal collaboration, by maximising load capacity through shared fleet and resource usage.

The study also found that retailers were using reverse logistics to a high degree, by backhauling their own waste and returning assets from store to operating base. But it felt there was potential to grow the level of backhauling to fully utilise capacity.

While operators are keen to realise the benefits of collaboration, many are constrained by service-level agreements, incompatibility of IT systems and regional imbalances.

Snelling says: "Cities consume and goods are produced outside of cities, so there will always be an imbalance in the quantity of goods that need to go from A to B and then back from B to A. So, empty running is unavoidable in some sub-sectors and a degree of it, in those sectors"



where it is available, is sometimes unavoidable due to the flow of goods.

"There is always the potential to do that a bit more. That is what logistics does, it finds that extra 0.5% here or 1% there. For an individual operator, if you can find someone that matches your movement so you can do a backload, even if it means doing a bit of a triangle route rather than direct, that can be massively commercially worthwhile. Plus there are the social benefits of emissions reduction, congestion reduction and all those other things."

#### OPTIMISATION

On average, HGVs have a loading factor of 61% according to DfT figures (see table below). This is based on the amount of goods moved versus the total amount of goods that could have been moved if the vehicle was fully laden.

It means most vehicles have at least a third capacity spare, which can be used to haul additional loads such as those found on freight exchanges.

By consolidating road freight into fewer trucks, the result is less congestion, less emissions and more profitable fleets.

The Transport Research Laboratory found the cost savings achieved by reducing mileage by 1% were not effective when compared to the cost of subscribing to a freight exchange. But, if operators can achieve a 5% reduction in base mileage, they can expect to save more than £3,000 per vehicle over six years.

Back in January, Royal Mail head of fleet operations Debbie Rivers outlined how the organisation's 'empty legs' initiative was offering a solution to the big distribution challenge of running empty or part-empty vehicles after making deliveries.

"We have sold space to more than 150 customers on empty legs, carrying everything from baked beans to bubble bath, from Inverness to the south-west. We have fixed routes that we run and also an element of flexing with extra routes," she says.

"Some customers buy a guarantee on the route; others are ad hoc requests. Year-to-date, our empty legs project has saved 55,000 miles for our customers."

The concept worked well, although Royal Mail has since scaled back its proposition due to

growth in its own business, particularly on the parcel side.

It has invested in three automated parcel hubs to support this expansion, which is limiting the opportunity to offer other customers space on its trucks, according to Duncan Webb, Royal Mail Fleet commercial director.

"This year, we will do 800-1,000 empty legs fulfilments with other businesses, so it's a smaller part of our business," Webb says. "It is hard to unlock in our core business because we are moving parcels around the country all the time and we don't run back empty."

"We were filling true empty space, not filling (part-loaded) space. But, because of our next-day deliveries, we can't have trucks stopping to collect other people's goods."

Nevertheless, Webb believes "it works as a concept, especially when it's regular business so you have a time and place to collect."

The issues arise when customers don't work to the same strict collection and delivery times. "There's always a tolerance of acceptability, but they may not make the [agreed] time," Webb explains. "We aren't used to that in our business."

#### THE SHARING ECONOMY

People transport has been revolutionised by digital services that connect drivers and passengers with their smartphone app, such as Uber.

These platforms improve the efficiency of people transport by connecting passengers to the nearest available taxi, rather than passengers calling for a random taxi which may not be the nearest one.

The modern freight exchange platform uses technology to connect haulage operators with empty vehicles to companies with goods that need delivering.

Richard Newbold, founder of freight exchange platform Returnloads.net, says: "In the early years freight exchanges were nothing more than load boards for hauliers to find extra work but, as technology has advanced, so has the freight exchange."

In a similar way to Uber, a freight exchange will automatically alert a haulage operator when a load is added that matches their requirements. It also works the other way around and alerts the supplier when a vehicle is available that could deliver their goods."

Freight exchanges can now seamlessly integrate into transport management systems and telematics systems, making the whole process of filling empty vehicles and subcontracting out delivery work quicker and easier.

Mubarak Moosa, consulting director at Frost & Sullivan, estimates there is about 55% under-utilisation in freight, when empty running and partial loading is taken into account.

"Now imagine the power of connectivity and digitalisation. If we could create a seamless connection between the supply and demand side, then you could remove this empty load and this, we believe, could stabilise and increase efficiency to more than 60%."

"This is where we see new business models coming into the picture."

One of the disrupters looking to achieve so-called 'digital freight' is OnTruck. It seeks to optimise the routes taken by its hauliers by offering them loads via a mobile app.

The company's algorithms can plan the most efficient routes that enable vehicles to maximise capacity while fulfilling the needs of businesses.

"Digital freight is so fresh in the UK," says Samuel McGuirk, head of UK operations at OnTruck. "For us, we specialise in the lower number of pallets that you don't want to do yourself. There is no one competing in that space

because it is usually seen as not profitable."

"We want to focus in high-density high-volume areas, where the journeys are typically short haul and we can group and multi-route those jobs to create a healthy ecosystem that spans from artics to vans."

The Spanish company, which launched in the UK in September 2017, handles around 2,000 shipments per month.

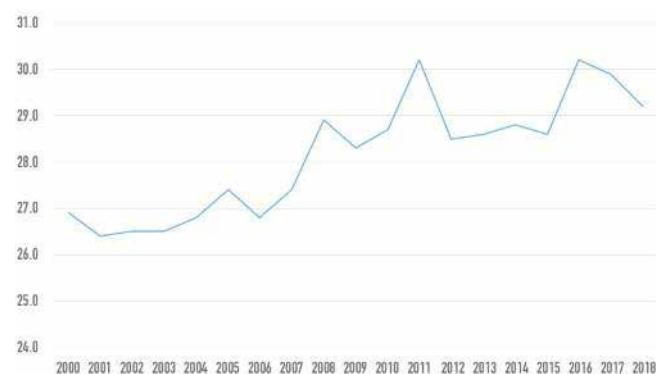
McGuirk believes digital freight has the potential to be 10 times the size of Uber with its main advantage being no limit to its scale or flexibility.

He says: "You can never assume that things will be normal. Amazon, for example can see huge unexpected spikes in demand. A typical haulier has a cap on the amount of journeys they do. For us, we can absorb the additional work into the platform."

"The feedback we've had is really strong, considering we are the new kids on the block from a freight perspective."

"The biggest challenge is changing mind-sets. Once we get the data we can show what we can do, but pushing people over the line to trust the technology and change their model relies on you taking them on that journey."

#### HGV EMPTY RUNNING %



#### HGV UTILISATION

Source: Department for Transport







# RENAULT TRAFIC

Largely unchanged for nearly two decades, but newest Trafic is on the ball for emissions requirements

By Matt de Prez

The Renault Trafic is a familiar sight on UK roads, not just because of strong sales but also as it has remained largely unchanged since 2001. Over the years, there have been various guises of the van wearing Vauxhall, Nissan and Fiat badges. While the latter two continue, Vauxhall has decided to use new parent company PSA Group's platform for its latest Vivaro. Despite using an older foundation, the Trafic is still a modern-looking and feeling van. In its latest update, the exterior changes are limited to a new grille and some LED headlights. Inside, there is a new infotainment system and a step up in the quality of materials used – much of which is borrowed from its passenger car range. The biggest change is a new engine. Gone is the old 1.6-litre unit, replaced by an all-new 2.0-litre one. It is offered with 120PS, 145PS and 170PS. There is also an automatic gearbox available. All versions meet the latest, more stringent, Euro 6d-Temp emissions requirements and promise improved fuel consumption.

FLEET PICK	
SL30 ENERGY DCI 120 BUSINESS	
SPECIFICATIONS	
CV OTR price	£23,300
Power/torque	120PS/320Nm
Payload (kg)	1,198
Gross vehicle weight (kg)	3,000
Load volume (cu m)	5.2
Fuel cost (ppm)	n/a
SMR (ppm)	n/a
Running cost (ppm)	n/a
Combined fuel economy	52.3mpg



Much of the interior styling is borrowed from Renault's passenger cars

We sampled the 145PS and 170PS versions and were impressed by the engine's performance, with impressive torque outputs of 350Nm and 380Nm respectively. Engine noise and vibration is kept to a minimum, although we think the old 1.6-litre engine was a little smoother. Still, noise intrusion is minimal and there is a relaxed environment in the cab, even at motorway speeds. Our test route gave limited opportunity to test fuel economy, but with a reasonable load in the back we were seeing more than 40mpg on the trip computer. With its light controls the Trafic is easy to manoeuvre around town. Driveability overall is very good and should get no complaints from drivers. The seven-speed EDC automatic complements the new engine well, too. The new infotainment system is better than before, but still no match for the latest ones found in Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz products. Final specifications have not been confirmed yet,

but three trim levels are offered: Business, Business + and Sport. We'd expect the new Trafic to closely mirror the outgoing model, so Business + is likely to welcome air-con and parking sensors, while range-topping Sport will be fully kitted out. Our test models featured the optional sat-nav (standard on Sport), but other versions are available with a touchscreen that offers Android Auto and Apple Carplay smartphone connectivity. LED headlights are also standard fit across the range, giving enhanced visibility at night. Prices start at £22,800 (CV OTR), which is about £750 more than the outgoing entry-level model, although that had a 95PS 1.6-litre engine, not a 2.0-litre 120PS unit. A total of 58 versions are offered, with two lengths and two heights. There is also a crew cab, minibus and chassis cab. While not class-leading in terms of payload or load volume, the Trafic is a worthy contender in its segment and one of the only vehicles to meet the latest emissions standards.



# ATEGO

Mercedes-Benz Atego gets an 'A' for cab comfort

By Tim Campbell

The world of 7.5 tonners has undergone key changes over the past couple of decades, resulting in a gradual decline in their numbers mainly due to driver licencing changes and the introduction of the Driver CPC. That said, the sector covering 7-to-7.5 tonnes remains a key market and forms a dividing line in many people eyes between light and heavy trucks, therefore, products in this sector have evolved. Perhaps the most obvious example of this "morphing" is the very definite dual offerings provided by a couple of manufacturers, working alongside the emergence of Asian-influenced lighter weight chassis. These are mainly driven by the payload squeeze witnessed in the higher kerbweights required by the introduction of increasingly sophisticated after-treatment systems needed to pass the demanding euro emission standards. Two great examples of the dual offering are from Mercedes-Benz (technically Daimler) and Iveco who each have had a "traditional" European-based product in the Atego and EuroCargo, respectively. The two then have a more payload-friendly offering in the guise of the Canter and Daily. Taking the above into consideration it could be argued Atego's biggest competition is its cousin the 7.5-tonne Canter, but that's not really the case as on most occasions an operator is in either the payload-sensitive bracket or not.

## THE RANGE

The Atego distribution offering is primarily made up of four engine power variants ranging from 158PS to 234PS on the OM934 engine and five wheelbases starting at a tipper-based 3,020mm to a very distribution friendly 4,820mm. As far as driver comfort is concerned, there are, in theory, four cab types although for distribution the "S" day, extended day and "L" sleeper cab are the realistic options. We looked at one of the most popular variants, the 818 4x2 S day with ClassicSpace on the back. It was a traditional 20-foot Curtainsider from Cartwrights, with a Dhollandia one-tonne tuck-away tail-lift giving rear access.

## DRIVELINE

Powering the 818 is the familiar Mercedes-Benz OM934 5.1-litre Euro VI engine developing 179PS (130 kW) of power with 750Nm of torque developed at a rev range between 1,200 – 1,600rpm, and behind the inline four cylinder engine is the in-house G70 six-speed Powershift 3 automated gearbox with an overdrive sixth gear.

## CHASSIS

To fit the Cartwright 6.1m Curtainsider body the 818 had a 4.22m wheelbase chassis with a front axle plated to 3.8 tonne and rear axle at 5.7 tonne offering a good chassis-load tolerance within the 7.49 tonne gross vehicle weight.

The fuel tank was a single "plastic" 120 litre and AdBlue was provided by a 25-litre tank.

## SAFETY / BRAKING

The service brakes take the form of disc brakes (335mm dia) on the front and rear axles, with the standard dual circuit air system and a load-sensing valve on the rear axle. An optional engine brake system is available.

## CAB

Of the three main distribution cab variants the lead-in 2.3m wide "S" cab was the one for our road test. While a 2.3m cab looks narrow on a 44-tonner, it looks decidedly wide on a 7.5-tonner. As with most German-based automotive products, the base specification can be seen as a little "mean" but our trucks had all the niceties you want and more. The interior options included air conditioning, CD radio with Bluetooth, driver's airbag, driver's suspension comfort seat and remote central locking. On the exterior there was a factory-fitted air deflector, LED light pack and reverse warning system.

## ON THE ROAD

While the climb into the Atego is a little higher than its Japanese cousins, once inside, the effort is worthwhile as the suspended driver's seat and the padded seat cushion provide a comfortable driving experience. There's a multifunctional steering wheel in front of the driver with controls for the central LCD screen on the left and the right side is for the cruise controls.

## WARRANTY

It has a 12-month bumper-to-bumper unlimited mileage warranty and a second and third year driveline (engine, gearbox, propshaft and axle) warranty up to 250,000km.



# THE LAST WORD

## LUCY WOODS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AX

After spending her career in telecommunications, Woods came out of retirement to join accident management and software business AX. This enthusiastic drummer is still picking up the tempo of the role

If I were made transport minister for the day I would study inventions for fantastic 'working from home' communication methods. The time we waste moving ourselves around to and from work strikes me as very inefficient and this would leave the transport system to cope with freight, ease congestion and make necessary journeys easier.

The song I would have on my driving playlist is *No One Knows* by Queen of the Stone Age. Why? I am a drummer – it's awesome to play.

If money was no object, the car I would have in my driveway is a Ferrari California.

My hobbies and interests are drumming.

My first memory associated with a car was back when we were students. My husband and I had a Moskvitch van – we carpeted it because it was so noisy on the road we couldn't hear the cassette player! (This dates me, doesn't it?)

A book I would recommend others read is anything by David Baldacci. He is my favourite author.

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is be an investment banker.

My favourite movie quote is *Terminator* – "I'll be back". I like the tenacity.

My pet hates are laziness and liver.

### Why fleet

I had been retired for a couple of years and was missing the challenges of business. When I was asked to join AX, I was excited to do something that was not telecoms-related – almost my whole career has been in telecommunications. It is very refreshing to be involved in something new in which you don't have preconceived views.

### How I got here

I got a degree in mechanical engineering and then joined the telecoms industry. I've always preferred to be in roles where change was needed. I slowly gained a reputation for being very effective at business improvement and my last three roles as a CEO in the industry were all significant turnaround challenges.

### Latest products, developments and achievements

AX is growing strongly and is profitable. We have rebranded the business – changing the name from Accident Exchange to AX – and created two divisions: AX Automotive, providing accident aftercare assistance and replacement vehicles; and AX Innovation, providing intelligent software management and connected devices to maximise vehicle utilisation and protection.

### My company in three words

Driven, Dynamic and Committed.

### Career influence

My partner, my parents and my mentors.

### What makes a good CEO?

Ability to absorb the big picture and also work in detail where required. Think ahead, lead the team and be brave enough to take a hard path where necessary. Focus on results for the shareholders, customers and your staff.

### Advice to fleet newcomers

I wouldn't give advice, as I am still new myself!

### If I wasn't in fleet

Healthcare.



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Next issue: David Slack, commercial director, Driver Hire



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