



Top tips for fleets in a pandemic



During the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, reviewing mobility options, reducing operating costs and keeping drivers safe have all been of critical importance for fleets. Here, Sue Branston, Country Head for Fleet Logistics UK and Ireland, identifies top tips to help fleet operators manage their fleets more effectively.

1. Use this time to begin the mobility journey

Review the powertrain mix and assess whether you can adopt EVs earlier than planned. At the same time, review driver profiles to identify early adopters to trial mobility budgets and build different scenarios taking into account current use and future needs.

Gather data on how commutes and business journeys now look for different locations – such as urban areas where walking and cycling have been adopted. Build the case for change looking at financial aspects, CSR and carbon emissions. Review the market to see what solutions are out there for each city/country and learn from other countries.

2. Look at contract re-writes

More reliance on working from home will undoubtedly affect the contract and type of vehicles chosen. There may be major savings to be had from re-writing contracts based on accurate actual mileages for each driver, given that many will now be doing fewer business miles than previously. This is particularly relevant to fleets still writing contracts on benchmark parameters.

During the restrictions that many areas now face, more vehicles will be off the road, meaning this year's mileage may be even further reduced. Businesses should carefully identify those under-mileage drivers and the contracts that can be re-written, as the savings can be considerable.



3. Avoid early terminations

Early terminations incur a penalty charge so should be avoided if at all possible. If no other solution can be found, vehicles should be returned as close to the end of their contracts as possible to minimise the charges. Investigate re-allocating or swapping vehicles to different parts of the business, or between drivers, to avoid these potentially punitive charges.

4. Extending contracts

Fleets can ask their leasing company supplier for informal or formal vehicle contract extensions, rather than returning vehicles at the end of contract and replacing them. Leasing companies are ready to offer support to both their business and personal clients.

5. Vehicle safety

It is important to ensure that vehicles are maintained, serviced and MOT'd for driver and public safety, and in line with manufacturer warranties to preserve cover. This aspect has never been more important as, despite coronavirus, vehicles must still be kept in a roadworthy condition.

6. Train your drivers

Fleet Logistics believes now is the perfect time to train drivers as downtime or furlough presents the perfect opportunity, especially as an employers' duty of care to its employees remains during social distancing.

Fleet Logistics Group is offering support to fleets with one of its health and safety partners which comprises free-of-charge training for a period of three months.

The offer is through a partnership with Applied Driving Techniques (ADT), a multi-award-winning, global provider of driver safety and risk management solutions. Details here: <https://www.fleetlogistics.com/en/industry-update/>

The offer includes three training modules on Driver Fatigue, Speed Awareness and Emotional Distractions, which also includes reporting, an audit trail and ADT customer service.

Sue Branston adds that there are still many challenges facing businesses.

She says: "The complexity of operating a fleet is increasing all the time, and businesses need to consider whether they feel confident in tackling these challenges themselves.

"Or do they feel that it makes sense to consider the advantages of getting advice from an independent fleet management partner, with the knowledge and experience to help guide them through these unprecedented and challenging times."

