

NEWS RELEASE

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HOW TO REDUCE FUEL COSTS

Meryl Gilbert, Head of Business Development- Fuel at Arval comments:

Introduce fuel cards:

“Fuel cards provide an essential tool in managing fleet fuel usage and therefore costs. Fuel card reporting is the most accurate way to map fleet mileage from a total level down to individual vehicles or drivers. Without this information the fleet manager loses visibility of where drivers are purchasing fuel, volumes they are purchasing, the price and their mpg performance.

Companies that are serious about cutting their fuel costs need to understand what their costs are today so that they can set realistic savings goals. Fuel cards then provide an essential tool to track performance against these targets, pinpointing where any corrective action is necessary along the way.

However, fleets must ensure that they select a fuel card with good network coverage so that drivers don't need to deviate from their route to find a forecourt where they can fill up. Being forced to travel off route to use a particular brand of fuel card wastes fuel, time and money.”

Target the low cost sites:

“Within a location drivers can make significant fuel savings by consistently filling up at the cheapest fuel sites. The price differential between the most expensive and the cheapest fuel forecourt can be several pence per litre which demonstrates that drivers can make significant ongoing savings by being selective about where they refuel.

If a driver has no option but to re-fuel at a higher cost site, for example on a motorway, they should be encouraged to only take enough fuel to get to a cheaper fuel station where they can fill up.”

Clear fuel policy:

“A written fuel policy is important in setting out drivers' responsibility to operate in the most cost-effective way. Without giving drivers advice and clarity around efficient use of fuel, it is unlikely that they will manage their fuel effectively, let alone reduce spend. “

Communicate with drivers:

“Regular and ongoing communication to influence driving style and fuel purchasing behaviour is essential in keeping control of fuel costs. Managing the way that employees drive can reduce fuel cost but only if fleets secure driver buy-in. A clear and consistent communications policy is essential in embedding this message across an organisation and providing the driver with the tools that they need to manage their fuel use.”

Driver training:

“Trained drivers will understand how to drive in a sustainable manner and by driving less aggressively they have the potential to save between 10 and 15% of fuel consumption, translating into savings at the pump. Organisations can even set a benchmark, using certain individuals or groups of individuals as examples of how to operate”

Journey planning:

“Journey planning is something that every driver should do before they set off on a business trip. Drivers can make significant cost savings by considering the quickest and cheapest route to take, when to travel to avoid congestion and whether anyone else is taking the journey at the same time making car share a viable option.”

Vehicle selection:

“Whether they are petrol, diesel or hybrids, selecting fuel efficient vehicles or enforcing restrictions within the company car policy gives fleet managers the power to ensure that vehicles used by company drivers provide acceptable mpg performance, reducing fuel expenditure.”

Well maintained vehicles:

“Well maintained vehicles will operate efficiently and ensure that running costs are kept to a minimum, including fuel. While the fleet manager must ensure that vehicles are regularly serviced, drivers should also be encouraged to maintain their vehicles, focusing on areas such as oil levels and tyre pressures.”

Check your tyres:

“Poor tyre pressure can have a substantial affect on fuel economy and overly worn tyres present a significant road safety issue. To put this into perspective, tyre manufacturers state that 75% of tyre blow-outs are caused by incorrectly inflated tyres. If tyres are not regularly checked, a company will take a hit on its fuel expenditure so at work tyre checks can pay off.”

Cut out unnecessary journeys:

“Employees should be asking themselves if travelling by car is the best way to make the journey and whether the journey needs to take place at all. We are seeing more companies

evaluating techniques such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing as a means of reducing mileage, managing cost and demonstrating duty of care to their employees.”

Ends