

The Fleet Express

A quarterly publication for Agency Transportation Officers



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“The Only Constant... Is Change”

Now that we have entered into the new year, we will certainly be faced with a number of challenges. Someone once said “The only constant is change”... how true. As we all look to the future and the possible changes on the horizon, keep that quote in mind.

Governor McDonnell has taken an aggressive approach to reviewing how each of our agencies are structured and how we conduct business.

His Reform Commission has recently offered 133 recommendations to improve what we do, and how we do it. The following recommendations are among the list that has been endorsed by the full Commission. The recommendations highlighted in this article could have a significant effect on how we all manage and utilize vehicles:

1. 4 Day/10-hour Work Week for Government Employees- Expanding this schedule beyond the existing pilot program at the Virginia Department of Forestry. The Commonwealth could save considerable amounts of money on overtime, energy costs and increased productivity by implementing this initiative in certain state agencies.
2. Promote Expanded Use of Telework and Alternate Work Schedules for Government Employees- Similar in nature to the four day, 10-hour work week, this proposal allows additional flexibility for government employees to work on a flexible schedule or from locations other

than the office. Currently 48% of state positions are eligible for alternate work schedules.

The full report can be found here:
http://www.reform.virginia.gov/docs/12-01-10_GovernorsCommissionReport.pdf

As some of these recommendations move forward, we will work with you to manage your vehicles accordingly.

Vehicle Justification Calculator

OFMS is pleased to announce the launch of the Vehicle Justification Calculator. This online tool can be found on the OFMS website and is designed to assist you with vehicle purchase/utilization decisions. By inputting information such as vehicle costs, estimated MPG, and your expected monthly mileage you will get a clear picture of how the cost of operating a state vehicle compares to using personal reimbursement. This dynamic tool takes into account all of the vehicle lifecycle costs.

This calculator is not only for making the decision to purchase a state vehicle, but can also be used to analyze your existing fleet for cost effectiveness. You can use the tool to determine the break-even point for number of miles driven per month.

We encourage you to go to our website and try it. The calculator is still in beta form, so your feedback is appreciated in order to make this a useful tool for you. If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact us.

FROM THE VMCC:

AVOIDING DEER/CAR COLLISIONS

Cars and deer can be a disastrous combination on the highway. Each year there are approximately 500,000 deer /auto collisions. There are 100 deaths and thousands of injuries each year.

The following are defensive driving tips to avoid hitting a deer:

- Be alert in early morning and evening hours.
- Slow down and blow your horn with one long blast to frighten the deer away
- Brake firmly when a deer is in your path
- Be alert and drive with caution when you see a deer crossing zone
- Always wear your seat belt
- Look for other deer after one has crossed the road.

If your vehicle strikes a deer, do not touch the animal. Move your car off of the road, if possible, and call the VMCC.



Required vs. Premium Repairs

Most of you have experienced a visit to the local automotive repair shop for maintenance and have had additional work recommended by the shop. Is this work necessary? Is it mandatory? And, should the repair be authorized? These are difficult questions to answer and sometimes require the answer to other questions first.

- Will it affect my safety?
- How long do I plan to keep the car?
- What is the car used for?
- What is my budget?

This list is not all inclusive, however it provides us a starting point to make an informed decision. One of our many challenges at Fleet is to balance being good stewards of taxpayer dollars with required vehicle repairs. While we will not compromise safety, we do not approve premium services for fleet vehicles.

To understand the thought process involved with making repair decisions, we keep all of these questions in mind. When safety repairs are recommended by a shop, the answer is either to perform the repair or take the car out of service. This is done when cars are beyond their

life expectancy and a replacement is available.

When determining how long to keep a car, the answer for your personal vehicle will probably be a lot different than from a fleet perspective. Fleet vehicles often have an expected lifespan. In addition, factors such as past expenditures and the re-marketing value are calculated to make this decision.

Sometimes the use of the car can determine the life expectancy. For instance, an emergency response vehicle needs to be ready at a moments notice and extremely reliable. This normally requires more frequent replacement than a routine delivery vehicle.

Budget constraints can effect repair work on a vehicle as well. As an example, if you are driving a car which is past its life expectancy, a replacement vehicle may be available soon. If your vehicle needs a high dollar repair, it may be declined due to this fact. If a replacement vehicle is not readily available and this repair does not affect safety it may be deferred in anticipation of a replacement in the near future. An example would be a very minor oil leak. If a replacement vehicle is in the near future, we may defer this repair.

Now to the original question: Is the recommended work considered necessary? If it affects safety then the answer is yes.

If the repair isn't safety related, it may be considered a premium repair and not needed for a fleet vehicle. Premium repairs are those which may extend the life expectancy of the vehicle. While these are sometimes valuable for your personal car, they are rarely performed on fleet vehicles because they are not cost effective.

For pool cars or agency owned vehicles managed by the VMCC, they are staffed with personnel knowledgeable in these areas and have the data required to make these repair decisions. With the assistance of OFMS personnel, they will determine when a repair is mandatory and authorize the shop to perform the work. For additional questions, please contact Kevin Crain at 367-6982.