Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Guidance

Government Buying Standards for transport 2017

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Contents

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Public sector organisations must use the product specifications set out in the Government Buying Standards (GBS) when procuring goods or services.

All central government departments and their related organisations must ensure that they meet the mandatory GBS standards when buying goods and services for the product groups covered. We also encourage the wider public sector to specify the mandatory standards in tenders.

The best practice standards have more or stricter criteria. Any organisation concerned about sustainable procurement may choose to follow them or to specify them in tenders.

Before procuring vehicles

Before undertaking any vehicle procurement, you should consider the following questions:

- are regular journeys required at all?
  - can journeys be replaced by phone, teleconference, video conference facilities?

- is a vehicle required for the function specified?
  - walking, cycling and public transport is much more sustainable than individual vehicles. Can the journeys be replaced by any of these?
  - is the need for a vehicle still valid or is it just a legacy arrangement? What are the specific job requirements to justify vehicle purchase/lease? (Business mileage, carrying goods, out of hours, operational need)
  - can journeys be better planned to improve existing vehicle utilisation and avoid further vehicle acquisition?

- if a vehicle is required, is it justified to purchase/lease one? Can car clubs or daily rental provide a more flexible and cost effective solution?

Where you still need to procure vehicles, the Government Buying Standards (GBS) for transport focus on encouraging the purchasing and leasing of the cleanest vehicles. This is because central government must play its part in reducing emissions of harmful pollutants, contributing to the achievement of statutory limit values. The revised standards also address safety and fuel efficiency.

Minimum mandatory standards

If you are procuring vehicles on behalf of a central government department or a related organisation you must meet the minimum mandatory buying standards. The wider public sector is encouraged to meet these standards.

For cars:

1. The default is zero or ultra low emission at tailpipe with alternatives considered only in exceptional circumstances: any diesel car alternative must be certified as meeting Real Driving Emissions (RDE) standards (Euro 6d-TEMP or Euro 6d) (http://carfueldata.direct.gov.uk/) where possible Euro 6d.
2. Procurement decisions contribute towards meeting the Government Fleet Commitment [footnote 1] to electrify 25% of cars in central government department fleets by 2022.
3. Fleet average of no more than 130 grams/kilometre of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions aiming for no more than 95 grams/kilometre from 2020 reflecting Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars as part of the Community' s integrated approach to reduce CO2 emissions from light-duty vehicles.
4. From 31 December 2020 new cars must have a minimum and valid 5 star Euro NCAP (https://www.euroncap.com/en/) safety rating.

For category N1 vans ('light commercial vehicles'):

1. The default is zero or ultra low emission at tailpipe with alternatives considered only in exceptional circumstances: any diesel light commercial vehicle alternative must be certified as meeting Real Driving Emissions (RDE) standards (Euro 6d-TEMP or Euro 6d) (http://carfueldata.direct.gov.uk/) where possible Euro 6d.
2. Fleet average of no more than 175 grams/kilometre of CO2 emissions aiming for no more than 147 grams/kilometre from 2020 reflecting Regulation (EU) No. 510/2011 setting emission performance standards for new light commercial vehicles as part of the Union' s integrated approach to reduce CO2 emissions from light-duty vehicles.

For all vehicles:

1. The default is zero or ultra low emission at tailpipe with all vehicles certified as meeting a minimum of Euro 6 / Euro VI emission standard.

Best practice standards

We encourage central government departments, their related organisations and the wider public sector to meet the best practice standards.

For all vehicles:

1. Zero emission at tailpipe.
2. Capability to monitor and report fuel/energy used, mileage and resulting emissions.
3. A valid 5 star Euro NCAP (https://www.euroncap.com/en/) rating.

Why we have these standards

Emissions

The government has pledged to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than it inherited it. Transport's primary impacts on the environment are through emissions of greenhouse gases and pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide that reduce air quality. Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. It is known to have more severe effects on vulnerable groups, for example the elderly, children and people already suffering from pre-existing health conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular conditions.

The most effective way of reducing these impacts is by avoiding unnecessary journeys and adopting zero or ultra low emission modes of transport, as we set out in the UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017) and the Clean Growth Strategy (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy). As well as significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, wide-scale adoption of zero or ultra low emission vehicles will improve our health and quality of life by making the air cleaner in our towns and cities.

As part of its Industrial Strategy, the government wants Britain to lead the world in electric vehicle technology and use. The government's long term ambition is for almost every car and van to be zero emission by 2050. To meet this objective, the government has announced it will end the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040.

The Government Fleet Commitment, announced in the 2017 Budget (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-budget-2017-documents/autumn-budget-2017), commits central government departments and related bodies to lead the way through its vehicle procurement policies.

Safety

In 2015, the government's Road Safety Statement (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-working-together-to-build-a-safer-road-system) set out a range of actions to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads, including "to improve the safety of the public sector fleet…by updating the Government Buying Standards".

The Department for Transport (DfT) has since worked with the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and consulted together consulting major vehicle manufacturers and academic experts and public sector fleet managers on how best to achieve safer vehicle procurement whilst offering value for money. DfT has also taken account of conclusions in the Parliamentary Advisory Committee on Transport Safety (PACTS) report (http://www.pacts.org.uk/2017/05/uk-road-safety-seizing-the-opportunities/) concerning safer vehicles.

As a result, the Government Buying Standards include the requirement that, from 31 December 2020 all new cars procured by central Government departments and their associated agencies must have a valid 5 star (Euro NCAP) rating. The standard will not apply to cars procured before 31 December 2020. You can check new cars against their star ratings by visiting the Euro NCAP website (https://www.euroncap.com/en) and searching the online database of cars which have been tested and rated by them. The online database gives results of ratings by make, model, year of test and ratings. Euro NCAP refer to valid ratings in page 1, section 2 of their published protocol entitled application of star ratings (https://cdn.euroncap.com/media/31392/application-of-star-ratings-v15.pdf).

Government departments and their agencies will not be permitted to procure vehicles which do not meet the new standard. It may be possible for manufacturers to submit their vehicles to Euro NCAP and obtain the appropriate safety rating, but that would be a commercial decision for them. If a given model and make of car has been tested more than once please refer to the most recent rating.

The standard will only apply to cars which are 'category M1' vehicles as defined in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe – Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Vehicles (R.E.3) (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/wp29/wp29resolutions/ECE-TRANS-WP29-78-r3e.pdf). The standard will not apply to buses, car-derived vans, coaches, Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs), pickup trucks or motorbikes.

There are likely to be exceptional circumstances where a car has specific technical features that enable it to perform a function that requires special arrangements or equipment, and which may mean it will not meet the safety standard. In such cases the car will be considered to be exempt from the standard. Decisions on new car procurement remain the responsibility of those managing the Government fleets and these should include seeking the best options in terms of value for money for the taxpayer, in addition to reducing emissions and increasing safety.

Euro NCAP is an independent, not-for-profit, organisation that provides, through its website (http://www.euroncap.com/en), objective information on the crash safety of passenger cars. The 1-5 star rating system is based upon the potential of the vehicle to limit the injuries to vehicle occupants and pedestrians. Having initially focussed on crash protection, the test protocols are reviewed regularly to reflect evolving technologies, and are now increasingly influential in accelerating the penetration of crash avoidance technology into the market. It helps consumers and businesses compare the safety potential of different models enabling safety to be included in their purchasing decision. Euro NCAP regularly review their safety rating system to ensure it evolves as technology matures and new innovations become available. This means that tests are updated regularly, new tests are added to the system and star levels adjusted. This has the additional benefit of working with the advancing regulatory framework to continuously drive improvements in vehicle safety standards. More information is available in Euro NCAP's Rating Reviews (https://www.euroncap.com/en/for-engineers/technical-papers/).

Telematics

The Greening Government Commitments 2016-2020 include the commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 32% from a 2009 to 2010 baseline (in line with individual departmental targets). In addition, the Clean Growth Strategy outlines a path for reducing emissions to 2050. Where fleet managers determine that vehicle procurement continues to be necessary for operations, they need to consider how vehicle usage data will be collected.

Fleet operators will need to monitor and report the energy usage (either traditional gaseous fuels and/or electricity), mileage and resulting emissions by vehicle, from point of purchase to vehicle retirement. A number of different technologies are available for this task. Telemetry is the most widely known of these: a range of telematics technologies can be specified when procuring fleet vehicles or retrofitted, allowing the required information to be easily and efficiently collected. Alternately, various app-based products exist to track key variables using GPS data. Further guidance on available technologies and appropriateness for different fleets can be found in the upcoming Telematics Guide (expected 2018).

The collected data, aggregated, is essential in enabling reporting of government's progress against its commitments to improved air quality for future generations.

Support for procurement of zero and ultra low emission vehicles

Public sector procurers and fleet managers can use the Crown Commercial Service Fleet Portal (https://fleetportal.crowncommercial.gov.uk/home.mth). This gives access to a wide range of vehicle technical data as well as commercial information including list prices, discounts, live lease rates and other aspects which make up the whole life costs of vehicles.

The Fleet Portal reflects all vehicles and fuel trains available within the UK market, which includes zero and ultra low emissions vehicles. The technical information is updated daily with changes in the market and the available lease costs are quoted live.

Other advice is available through the Energy Saving Trust (http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/travel/electric-vehicles).

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1. Section 5.4 Next Generation Vehicles of the 2017 Budget (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-budget-2017-

documents/autumn-budget-2017)