



KING COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

August 4, 2017

Follow Up on Light Duty Fleet

TO:

Metropolitan
King County
Councilmembers

FROM:

Kymber Waltmunson,
County Auditor

County agencies have completed or made progress on the implementation of all seven recommendations from our 2015 audit. This has resulted in the improved reliability of fuel data, more effective vehicle utilization policy implementation, and better information from which to make fleet decisions. For example, both the Transit Division and Solid Waste Division updated fuel data entry and monitoring processes, which the agencies report have allowed staff to more readily identify errors and potential issues. Additionally, Fleet Administration (Fleet) has been working with its partner agencies and the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget to update the vehicle utilization review process, which Fleet reports has helped simplify the review process and align vehicle usage more clearly to budget considerations.

Fleet and the King County Sheriff's Office have made progress toward analyzing the potential for anti-idling technology in patrol vehicles. Fleet has also made progress toward implementing a vehicle use data system and updating the county vehicle acquisition policy. Continuing to make progress on these recommendations will help county agencies improve business practices and reduce underutilized vehicles and fuel use.

Of the seven audit recommendations:



3
DONE

Fully implemented
Auditor will no longer monitor.



4
PROGRESS

Partially implemented
Auditor will continue to monitor.



0
OPEN

Remain unresolved
Auditor will no longer monitor.

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.



King County

Recommendation 1

PROGRESS 

To help better utilize vehicles and rightsize the fleet, the County should automate vehicle use data by doing the following:

- a. Fleet Administration should assess the options for automating vehicle data, including its current technology pilots. The assessment should include lessons learned about implementing the two types of technology. The documentation of this assessment should be shared with the Transit, Solid Waste, and King County International Airport Divisions.**
- b. Based on this assessment, the County Executive should create and implement a plan to automate vehicle use data.**

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet) has completed and assessed the technology pilots in the Assessor's Office and the Road Services Division. The results of the assessments were included in discussions with county agencies and leaders about potential automatic vehicle location (AVL) and data solutions in 2016. Fleet and Information Technology (KCIT) requested funding for the procurement and implementation of AVL technology for 1,600 light and heavy duty non-revenue vehicles in the Transit, Airport, and Solid Waste Divisions in an enterprise level project, which County Council approved as part of the 2017-2018 budget. The efforts so far have helped further coordination among multiple agencies that make decisions about non-revenue vehicle purchase and usage. Fleet plans to roll out AVL implementation in several steps and plans to finish implementing its plan by December 2018. This recommendation will be considered complete when the AVL plan has been implemented. Fully implementing the AVL plan will help county agencies improve business practices and reduce underutilized vehicles.

Recommendation 2

DONE 

The County Executive should update the Light Duty Utilization Policy to ensure that agencies quantify their business need for any underutilized vehicle in terms of the benefit to agency or county goals.

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet), in coordination with its customer agencies and the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget (PSB), has instituted a new vehicle utilization review process as of May 2016. Fleet and PSB will now collect and analyze data about vehicle usage as part of the budget process and discuss with agencies whether underutilized vehicles are still needed for business purposes. Updated vehicle utilization policy language will be added to the new Vehicle and Equipment Acquisition Policy (see Recommendation 6). This change simplifies the review process and aligns vehicle usage more clearly to budget considerations.

Recommendation 3

DONE 

Fleet Administration should evaluate whether the use of private car-sharing programs could be a cost-effective way of providing options for employee business travel requirements. The evaluation should include an analysis of which agencies could most benefit from a private car-sharing program, and a cost comparison of private car-sharing versus continuing to use low-mileage county vehicles.

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet) evaluated the use of Local Motion, an enterprise car-sharing option from Zipcar designed to optimize internal vehicle utilization. Fleet found this system to be comparable to its existing motor pool dispatch system, but at a higher cost. Fleet also explored the possibility of positioning Zipcars at various sites across the county, but the evaluation showed the cost and minimum usage requirement did not result in a cost-effective benefit. Fleet may re-evaluate options in the future. Implementing this recommendation provided Fleet with additional information about options available to meet employee business travel requirements.

Recommendation 4

PROGRESS 

The King County Sheriff's Office should develop and implement a plan to reduce idle time by its patrol vehicles. Initial analysis should include a cost-benefit analysis of anti-idling technology options.

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet) and the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) developed and started implementing a pilot program for anti-idling technology in patrol vehicles. Both agencies discussed lessons learned from other law enforcement agencies, such as the Seattle and Bellevue police departments, which have implemented similar programs. Idle management systems were installed on a select number of KCSO patrol vehicles to test the technology, and Fleet is gathering the idle data from these vehicles to present for discussion and next steps with KCSO in 2017. This recommendation will be considered complete when an analysis of the pilot program is complete and KCSO has made a decision about anti-idling practices based on the analysis. Implementing an effective anti-idling plan for patrol vehicles could save cost and emissions from thousands of gallons of fuel per year.

Recommendation 5

DONE 

Transit and Solid Waste Divisions should improve the fuel data entry and monitoring processes and be able to demonstrate the accuracy of this data.

STATUS UPDATE: The Transit and Solid Waste (SWD) Divisions have updated fuel data entry and monitoring processes, which improved the reliability of data and reduced the risk of a misuse of county resources. Specifically, Transit installed a new fueling system in 2016, which provides data for monitoring fuel consumption and mileage. Staff generates a daily report that allows Transit to validate odometer information collected by the system and identify and correct data errors. The new system also has the ability to identify issues with the meter readings at the time of fueling. A Vehicle Maintenance data management group also runs reports to review mileage and usage information.

SWD updated its fuel purchasing and monitoring processes in 2015 for light duty vehicles. Staff enters fuel quantities from SWD's transaction system into its vehicle data system, which allows staff to monitor the reliability of fuel data. Staff also produce regular reports that are reviewed for errors or potential issues.

Recommendation 6

PROGRESS 

The County Executive should update the Vehicle and Equipment Acquisition Policy to ensure that vehicles are purchased at the lowest effective life cycle cost, including a clearly articulated process for when life cycle cost analysis is required, such as for higher-risk purchases.

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet) has completed a draft revision of the policy with language guiding vehicle acquisition and the use of life cycle cost analysis. This draft also includes reference to the revised vehicle utilization review that will occur as part of the biennial budget process. The draft will be circulated among Fleet's stakeholders for review and feedback prior to acceptance and implementation by the County Executive. This recommendation will be considered complete when the policy has been accepted. Completing this recommendation will help ensure the effective use of life cycle cost analysis and improve the ability of agencies to reach county financial and environmental goals.

Recommendation 7

PROGRESS 

Fleet Administration should complete its efforts to update and implement its vehicle replacement model.

STATUS UPDATE: Fleet Administration (Fleet) is working with the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget to evaluate Utilimark as an alternative vehicle replacement model. Fleet plans to complete this evaluation and start implementing its model by February 2018 for the 2019-2020 biennial budget rate development. This recommendation will be considered done when the model has been implemented. Completing this recommendation will help ensure that vehicle replacements are chosen based on the most up-to-date cost and usage information.

Elise Garvey, Senior Management Auditor, conducted this review. Please contact Elise at 206-477-1038 if you have any questions about the issues discussed in this letter.

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