

BT Fleet

The Low Down on Accident Management

For many fleet managers, the prospect of one of their drivers being involved in an accident is an all too common occurrence. Increased congestion from growing traffic volumes and the general rise in annual mileages covered means drivers are now more at risk of being involved in an accident than ever.

So what can Fleet Managers do to reduce this? BT Fleet recommend tackling the problem at source by reviewing your drivers' history and identifying those most at risk. On-line assessments are now available to rate drivers based on their degree of risk using a combination of knowledge, attitude, mileage and type of journeys covered. Concentrate your efforts on those most at risk by offering on-road training, further computer training or even simply reviewing different routes.

Harness the power of technology and management information to identify the root cause of accidents. Don't just concentrate on the incident and cost but also look at the type of incident and the potential for harm. The consequences of reversing into a parked car at 5mph are much less than a near miss when pulling out of T junction on a busy road. And it's not all about technology; drivers don't need a PDA to inspect the condition of their tyres and tread depths every week.

But even with the best risk management policy in place, accidents will happen. Many organisations have benefited from outsourcing their accident management to a third party. But how do you select a suitable provider? Firstly they must be easy to communicate with and demonstrate a proactive approach to keeping you informed at all stages. This is particularly crucial in the latter stages of a repair, when a last minute search for parts can cause delays. If they can't demonstrate an ability to manage and reduce downtime then look to an alternative.

Cost control is one of the key benefits an accident management provider must deliver. Look for a provider with an extensive and quality repair network that is regularly audited. BT Fleet has a dedicated audit team that reviews the repairer network, the quality of work carried out and the parts replaced to ensure customers do not get charged for unnecessary work.

Meet the team to gauge their professionalism and level of expertise. And don't be fooled by 'bells and whistles' sales pitches, particularly those that concentrate on their systems capability. Ask to be shown a claim being processed from start-to-finish so you see if they are able to deliver what they say they can.

Review a selection of providers and compare on both cost control and downtime management capabilities. Don't be sucked in by cheap headline rates unless you want to be at the mercy of hidden charges and unpredictable repair costs. Ask for a full breakdown of their costs so you can see their commission and labour rates; any reputable provider will be able to do this.

Notes:

BT Fleet is one of UK's leading fleet management providers. With a fleet of in excess of 70,000 vehicles under management, including the UK's most complex commercial vehicle fleet, BT Fleet has developed an extensive knowledge base and experience. Having also recently established an in-house accident management capability and supported a cross-BT Group risk management programme, BT Fleet is ideally placed to offer guidance to companies looking reduce their fleet downtime.