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CORONAVIRUS CAN'T STOP THE EV JUGGERNAUT, SAY FLEET OWNERS

- **66% expect COVID-19 to have no effect or change to transitioning to Electric vehicles**
- **1 in 5 fleets intend to reduce their fleet supply base with 50% looking to review their arrangements in the next 12 months**
- **Car usage could grow in favour of public transport due to COVID-19**

Fleet owners are predicting coronavirus will not stop the move to electric and are demanding suppliers give them the necessary knowledge to learn and help customers get electric vehicles on the road, according to a survey by Volkswagen Financial Services (VWFS).

A COVID-19 impact survey from VWFS of 120 fleet leaders, which investigated the market and how the fleet industry is feeling over the coming turbulent months, found that 30% are still making the switch to EV as planned with 66% saying the current health crisis will not stop the progress of EV. In fact, one in 10 said they plan to accelerate their progression.

However, the research found that more than a third (34%) are after much more supplier support to transition to an electric fleet with many asking for more information before buying.

This was not the only change as one in five fleet leaders said they will have to shrink the size of their operation due to the pandemic, with 50% intending to review their arrangements in the next twelve months. And in order to make their business more financially secure, 41% said they would be looking at flexible rental options in lieu of longer term leasing commitments – VWFS is already looking to address this with its Rent-A-Car initiative.

Carl zu Dohna, CCO of VWFS, says: “No parts of the automotive sector are immune to change from the coronavirus pandemic. All have had to make changes or

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accelerate their drive towards the future. From our survey, we can see that fleet is making strides towards that future and those one in ten that are moving even faster towards it will be at an advantage in the coming years when they are ahead of the pack.

“As a finance provider, it is important that we make the process of getting them there as smooth as possible. We can provide the flexible packages and the new ways to own vehicles, as well as providing a range of information and tools to equip fleet leaders with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions, such as online learning and calculators.”

VWFS’s survey also found that fleet leaders were anticipating huge change. Nine in ten (92%) fleet leaders questioned expect home working to increase and remain popular after restrictions are lifted, with even more (98%) saying that video conferencing will reduce business travel and face-to-face meetings.

However, fleet leaders believe that while mileage will decrease, ownership will increase. Two thirds (67%) of those asked believe employees will drive more instead of using public transport as a result of the current guidance from health ministers.

“Despite all the change, there is a lot of positivity in the market with the majority of those questioned expecting no changes to their move to EV. It is clear to us that many are crying out for greater assistance and support in making the switch to electric.

“Our fleet leaders have spoken, and it is clear that information is key to overcoming the transition to electric and progress out of this pandemic for fleets. However, this is something we are confident we can overcome with our teams working hard to create tools and information to assist in the transition to electric.”

For more information, please visit <https://www.vwfsfleet.co.uk/tools-and-guides/tools/>

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Information for editors

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