Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information Request

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act which was received on 19 September 2017. I can confirm that we hold the information you have requested. You asked the following questions, reproduced in bold below:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and in respect of the policy your organisation has in relation to replacement of vehicle tyres.

This might be on fleets directly managed or fleets managed on behalf of the organisation by an external provider or relate to the guidance or instruction given to employees or contractors in the event of a personal vehicle being used for a work purpose.

Specifically I am interested to learn:
- What is the number of vehicles is owned by your organisation (vehicle fleets both directly managed by the organisation or by an external organisation)?

Pleased see attached list

- What are the types of vehicle owned by your organisation (e.g. car, small delivery van, larger delivery vehicle, 4x4, special purpose vehicle etc.)?

Pleased see attached list

- Is there a minimum tread depth at which tyres must be replaced? This might be at a tread depth greater than the 1.6mm legal minimum or it might be that drivers are reminded of the legal minimum. – tyres are replaced at 3mm

- If an instruction is not in place, is there advice or guidance given and if so, what is that guidance? – see above
- If the organisation has vehicles that provide an emergency response and/or have to contend with specific conditions, e.g. sometimes operate off-road, as well as vehicles involved in routine journeys, please provide details if there a variance between the instruction and/or advice given. – Snow and mud tyres are fitted to Land-rovers and are also replaced at 3mm.

- If some or all of the vehicles used for a work purpose are managed by an external provider, please detail whether the policy on tyre replacement is that of your organisation or something in place from that provider. - Officers cars that respond to emergencies are also replaced at 3mm and cross climate tyres are fitted to those vehicles and the rapid response cars. All other operational leased vehicles, such as a stores/equipment van, are written off at 1.6mm as they do not respond on blue lights.

- Please provide details of any related instructions and/or guidance related to tyres - for example (though not exhaustive) how regularly tyre checks (tread, wear, inflation, damage) should happen? whether winter tyres and summer tyres are used during the appropriate seasons? and so on. - Winter tyres are fitted to all Patient Transport Service and A&E vehicles all year round. Cross climate tyres are fitted to the rapid response cars and the officer cars all year round.

It is the responsibility of the driver of all vehicles to check the tyres before the start of his or her shift and this is recorded on the VDI (visual daily inspection) form. ATS are employed to carry out site visits and spot checks and report tyre depths 7 days a week. All of the operational vehicles that respond or carry patients are serviced every 6 or 12 weeks and the tyres are also checked.

- Please provide details if tyres used on vehicles for a work purpose have to be from an identified list of manufacturers or might be recommended to be from an identified list of manufacturers or whether there is more general guidance, e.g. 'only premium tyres should be fitted' or 'budget tyres are not advised'. Please provide this information covering vehicles that might be directly managed or managed by an external provider or in the circumstance of a private vehicle being used for a work purpose - identifying any variance on the requirement or advice in every instance. – ATS were awarded the tender from the National Crown Commercial Services contract. The Trust chose to use Michelin tyres after analysing wear and performance. The cross climate tyres were tested back to back with other makes and types at MIRA and they were by far the best all round tyre for the Trusts’ needs.

Leased cars that are used to respond and for personal use come with OEM equipment according to the manufacturer’s specifications. The Trust fits the cross climate tyres to these cars when they arrive or soon after they arrive. This is to ensure optimum performance all year round.

If you are not satisfied with the information we have provided, you can request an internal review which will be carried out by someone not involved with your original request. Mr Paul Aitken-Fell is the Trust’s Consultant Paramedic, his contact details are:

Paul Aitken-Fell
Consultant Paramedic
North East Ambulance Service NHS FT Trust
Bernicia House
Goldcrest Way
Newburn Riverside
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NY
If you remain unhappy with the outcome of the review, you can ultimately complain to:

The Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Mark Cotton
Freedom of Information Lead