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## **SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT ARE HIGH ON RENTAL PRIORITY LIST SAYS AVIS**

Avis is experiencing a greater emphasis on safety and the environment when its corporate clients are enquiring about and using its range of rental services.

There has been a noticeable shift, particularly in the last four months, and Avis believes it is a direct result of companies finally taking their Duty of Care responsibilities more seriously.

Avis has identified a 10% rise in companies putting employees into a rental car rather than letting them use their own car on company business. The biggest increase has been in the large fleet area, with more companies tightening up their Health and Safety related procedures.

"A lot has been written in the press about pool car fleets being a thing of the past, but reality says we are seeing more companies hiring a car for their employees who need to travel on work business, rather than letting them use their own vehicle," explained Penny Stoolman, Director of Sales and Marketing at Avis.

"Some have said to us that for the sake of a rental cost of £40 per day they can rest in the knowledge that the car has been safety checked and is in excellent working order, thus adhering to Duty of Care recommendations. In the long term they see £40 as an investment, compared with the long term impact on a business of an employee causing a serious accident."

"Some SMEs are using rental for the first time and in London we are seeing them take advantage of our Urbigo service where drivers can hire a car for a few hours and just pay for the time and mileage. They are using Urbigo to transport drivers to client meetings and even to do the post and bank run at the end of each day. For them this is a much cheaper option than running a pool car or risking them taking a director's car" said Stoolman.

All Avis cars receive a 59-point safety check before being sent out to their next customer and every car is equipped with a safety card reinforcing where all the key controls are on each car and encouraging all drivers to take care when they use a rental car that could be different to the car they drive on a daily basis.



On the environmental side Avis has found those fleets signing a corporate rental agreement which defines the cars its drivers can hire are opting for larger, less fuel efficient vehicles such as MPVs or executive cars only when they really need them.

"There has certainly been a tightening up by companies as to which cars their drivers can hire. Our corporate rental agreement stipulates on our Wizard worldwide booking system the type of cars specified by head office, so our staff can see anywhere in the world the car groups the drivers have access to" explained Stoolman.

"Drivers who would commonly insist on driving a Mondeo size car, even if they were driving solo on a short journey for a short distance are now being put into a Fiesta or Focus. Not only do companies want to reduce fuel usage, they also want to control costs more effectively."

Avis has worked with the leading climate change company Future Forests for the last seven years and has made its head office car fleet CarbonNeutral and is seeing more companies interested in becoming more environmentally friendly. The environment seems to be higher up company priority lists now and Avis has seen new customers such as Atkins come on board because of its Future Forests and general environmental associations.

Each time a driver rents a car from Avis they can tackle the carbon dioxide emissions created from the entire time with the car and make the rental CarbonNeutral. Atkins has adopted this initiative with every corporate rental.



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