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SOLUZIONI

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Tonale is Alfa's first CUV

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A PRO LIKE YOU

WELCOME

Welcome to issue six of Soluzioni where we put the spotlight on our plans to enter the electric vehicle (EV) market with a host of model launches over the next few years.

Fleet and remarketing director Andy Waite explains why the time is right for FCA to launch the electric Ducato at the end of this year and the importance of designing and engineering all of FCA's EVs in-house. He also explains how FCA is looking to build on the recent success of Fiat Professional in the public sector.

We also look at the investments being made at the Mirafiori plant currently being developed for the large scale production of the electric 500.

Newly appointed national fleet sales manager Matt Niles talks about the restructure of the fleet department and how it will benefit customers. His priority is to get FCA's 'hidden gems' in front of more fleet end users.

Among those gems are the Jeep Renegade and Alfa Romeo Tonale. Read on to find out more about both these exciting models.

We are obsessed about delivering the highest standards of quality, safety, reliability and comfort, which means putting our models through extensive testing. We look at those test conditions, from the glaciers of Arjeplog to the deserts of South Africa, and at our Balocco Proving Ground and Orbassano Safety Centre, which ensure they perform to the most exacting standards in driving pleasure, aerodynamics, emissions and fuel consumption in the most extreme weather and road conditions.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition.



SIMON WHEELER
CORPORATE MARKETING MANAGER

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Andy Waite

FLEET AND REMARKETING DIRECTOR, FCA UK

FCA Professional has made great strides forward in the public sector, but it is not resting on its laurels, it's time to press on

FCA is looking to build on the success of Fiat Professional in the public sector following a restructure of its fleet team. Success for the van business has not happened overnight. It's been part of a long development plan over several years to engage local authorities, according to FCA fleet and remarketing director Andy Waite.

The biggest wins have come from the ambulance sector. Eleven out of 13 ambulance trusts now operate Fiat Professional vans, primarily Ducato, but also some Doblò. Initially, the trusts were attracted by the Ducato's payload advantages, but key to the on-going relationships are reliability and the aftersales service.

"Over time, we have proven our capability from a product point of view, but also our ability to focus on downtime through our Fiat Professional network which is open for extended hours so we can get vehicles back on the road as quickly as possible," Waite says.

"They need to be confident we will keep them running."

FCA has held ambulance user forums to understand product requirements for the future and also ensure the aftersales services meet user needs.

"There's an urgency from a Government perspective with pressure on public sector fleets to move away from diesel," Waite says. "We now have a better understanding of their needs for hybrid and plug-in vehicles."

FCA will start to meet those needs later this year, with the launch of its first electric van, the Ducato Electric. Orders will open before year-end with the first deliveries scheduled for early 2020. The UK, says Waite, is "a prioritised market".

With full electric capability available across the entire range and multiple configurations to match the diesel engine line-up, the Ducato tops out at 4.25 tonnes with a payload up to 1.9 tonnes.

"There will be no compromise over the capabilities offered by diesel," says Waite. "This is FCA product that is certified by FCA engineers and made in Sevel (Italy)."

Two range options will be offered thanks to a modular battery configuration. The shorter-range version has the full 1.9-tonne payload, while an extended range model that uses more batteries will travel further, but it means a lower load capacity.

However, FCA has also taken weight out of the van to compensate for the weight of the batteries. The cubic capacity is unchanged from the diesel variant.

"The electric Ducato demonstrates our future thinking," Waite says. "We expect a lot of interest, especially with the modular approach that gives flexibility so we can talk to any potential customer and meet their needs."

Nevertheless, full electric does currently create some challenges for the front-line operations of ambulance fleets.

"The nature of their operation means there are limitations to the technology that is available today. It will, instead, be a transition through the internal combustion engine (ICE) to elements of hybrid orientation in the future," says Waite. "Whether it's the vehicle or the equipment that progresses in this way remains to be seen."

He hopes that the confidence among public sector fleets built from the positive experiences with vans will cascade across FCA's car brand, including Fiat, Alfa Romeo and Jeep. He has also put in place a new structure within the fleet department to maximise the opportunities.

Previously, public sector responsibility sat with several teams; now it has been brought together under newly appointed national fleet sales manager Matt Niles, giving a clearer remit and enabling FCA to better target its communications.

"This restructure will improve the service we offer through the dealer network as well as through my team," Waite says.

Public sector business should also grow after FCA was appointed to the CCS buying framework for the police this year.

"We already supply all bluelight fleets in Italy so we have a wide range of product, from armoured Jeeps to Tipo as a standard police car," says Waite.

"We will work with HQ to see how we can support the forces in the UK like we do from a product perspective in Italy where we have proven solutions."

"This will be our focus in the second half of the year."

Looking ahead to 2020, FCA's focus moves to electric, as more models come to market. All will be designed and engineered in-house, a source of considerable pride for the company. "It isn't a third party solution," stresses Waite.

FCA has not wavered from its publicly-stated position that electric vehicles would only come to market when the market was ready to accept them. While sales levels might remain modest across Europe, interest and demand are steadily rising.

"From the fleet driver to the fleet manager, momentum is building," says Waite.

However, he is also mindful that petrol and diesel still have a role to play and FCA is not letting up in its research and development of the traditional ICE.

"We have no strategy to be internal combustion engine-free in the next few years. We will continue to improve our core combustion engine products," Waite says. "And it is still worth looking at our CNG products where we are the market leader in Europe."

"The evolution of alternative fuels has many directions and there is a place for the different powertrains with the choice dependent on the use and needs of the individual fleet."

"There's an urgency from a Government perspective with pressure on public sector fleets to move away from diesel. We now have a better understanding of their needs for hybrid and plug-in vehicles"

FCA chooses historic race circuits to stage special days

Two of Britain's most iconic racing circuits played host to FCA Group brands this year.

Alfa Romeo returned to its "spiritual UK home" at Goodwood this summer with a packed stand at the Festival of Speed.

The event gave UK audiences their first chance to see Alfa Romeo's first PHEV, the Tonale compact SUV (see page 12). Also on show were the Quadrifoglio Racing Editions of the Alfa Romeo Giulia and Stelvio, designed in partnership with Sauber Racing, and the Alfa Romeo Formula 1 car, with driver Antonio Giovinazzi on hand to answer visitors' questions.

Good wood also showcased the Jeep range including the Jeep Renegade plug-in hybrid with visitors putting the vehicles through their paces on the off road track. The Grand Cherokee Track Hawk with 710 horse power also gave guests a taste of extreme performance on the hill run.

FCA played host to more than 50 guests, drawn from leasing companies, direct fleet customers and dealer network customers, in the hospitality area, with many driving up Goodwood's hills in the Giulia and Stelvio Quadrifoglio. Members of FCA's Drivers Club also attended.

"It's a great way of showcasing our products and showing

potential customers what our brands are really about," said Simon Wheeler, FCA Group's corporate marketing manager.

FCA has also continued its long-held relationship with Silverstone. "Silverstone was the site of the first World Championship Formula 1 race ever, and Alfa Romeo was the first manufacturer to win," said Wheeler.

Before this year's British Grand Prix, Alfa Romeo Racing driver Kimi Räikkönen put the 69-year-old Alfa Romeo 158 'Alfetta' of the type Giuseppe Farina used to win that first race in 1950 through its paces on the Silverstone track.

"There is a huge amount of history at the track and we are still working with Silverstone today to showcase our premium vehicles," said Wheeler.

He said vehicles available for test drives included Quadrifoglio editions of Alfa Romeo's Giulia and Stelvio: "It is a chance for people to experience these vehicles where they are most at home."

The all-new Jeep Wrangler will also be available for test drives on Silverstone's challenging off-road circuit.

"FCA wants to show public sector fleets, such as emergency response services or the Forestry Commission, just how capable the Wrangler is in extreme conditions," said Wheeler.



FCA Fleet Hub redesigned

FCA Group has launched a new version of its FCA Fleet Hub website. The site, fcafleetandbusiness.co.uk, has been redesigned to provide a more intuitive way for potential fleet customers, company car drivers, or anyone seeking more fleet-centric information, to access what they need in one dedicated space.

The new site includes tax calculators, price guides that compare FCA Group products with the competition, and links to test drive bookings for FCA's individual brands, alongside video and social media content and informational features on topics such as grey fleet, fuel types and total cost of ownership.

Simon Wheeler, corporate marketing manager of FCA Group, said: "The FCA Fleet Hub is here to help our customers by giving them the right information and interesting articles that help them, rather than just selling our products."

"The Fleet Hub's primary mission is to become a central resource for FCA vehicles and make it easier for potential customers to overcome the challenges facing anyone who is considering a company car in the current market."



FCA co-hosts sales meetings

FCA Group has hosted the latest in its series of partners' sales meetings, this time with TCH Leasing, the leasing arm of TC Harrison Group and 29th in the FN50 list of the UK's biggest contract hire and leasing companies.

Adam Bowen, the leasing and contracts manager at FCA Group, took key members of the FCA fleet sales team to support TCH at its June national sales meeting at Hilton Puckrup Hall, Tewkesbury.

The 'get to know you better' session followed the same template as FCA's Hitachi Capital sales meeting earlier this year, with a briefing on FCA's current product ranges and future electrification plans. Test drives of the Alfa Romeo Giulia and Stelvio, Jeep Compass and the Fiat Professional Doblò were followed by a gala dinner.

The FCA fleet sales team followed up more than 50 sales leads resulting from the event, which was shared on social media by TCH staff.

Bowen said: "These well-received events are great at raising our profile with the fleet markets, showing them that FCA offers a multi-brand, one-stop shop solution."





Torquing PHEV at Jeep

Pioneering brand evolves into the electrified marketplace with Renegade and Compass

This year, the Jeep brand is making a major evolutionary step towards respecting the environment and reducing the total cost of ownership of its vehicles by presenting its first production-ready plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV).

The Jeep brand has always pioneered new segments and new technologies: its heritage started in 1941 with the Willys-Overland, the first 4x4 vehicle, followed in 1946 by the Willys Wagon, which introduced the concept of the Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV).

Jeep's legendary reputation for off-road capability has lasted ever since. Comfort, handling and connectivity have been increased over time, in parallel with the all-terrain performance of its SUVs.

At the Geneva Motor Show earlier this year, Jeep unveiled two plug-in hybrid models - The Compass and the Renegade with the latter due to go on sale in the UK next year.

Renegade will be the first Jeep to feature the new PHEV technology, with a market launch scheduled for the first quarter of 2020.

Under the skin of the Renegade PHEV is a 1.3-litre turbocharged petrol engine, linked to an electric motor and battery. Combined, the powertrain can deliver up to 240hp.

The new SUV will offer silent, emission-free running in cities and remain fun to drive courtesy of fast engine response and smooth acceleration delivered from the electrified powertrain.

CO₂ emissions are expected to be less than 50g/km and the Renegade should be able to travel 30 miles on

electric power alone, making it an attractive company car choice.

Performance will be the best in the current Renegade range, with a 0-60mph acceleration time of less than seven seconds.

Drivers will have the option of charging the battery using a cable, or, alternatively, they'll be able to replenish its charge using the petrol engine while driving. It will also recover lost energy through regenerative braking.

But above all, thanks to electrification, the Jeep range further improves its already class-leading off-road capability, courtesy of the greater torque offered by the electric motor and the ability to adjust it with extreme precision during take-off and while driving on the most challenging terrain, where a very low transmission ratio is needed.

Traction to the rear axle is not provided by a prop shaft but through a dedicated electric motor.

This allows the two axles to be separated and to control the torque independently in a more effective way than a mechanical system.

This means the petrol engine will exclusively drive the front wheels, while the electric motor powers those at the rear.

Renegade PHEV will feature a dedicated instrument cluster and infotainment screen, updated in order to help the driver with information related to daily hybrid driving.

The Renegade PHEV is the next step in FCA's roll-out of electrification.

It will be produced at the FCA Melfi plant in Italy. Investment for the new engine launch equates to more than €200 million and also includes a strong commitment by FCA for training all workers on the application of this new technology.

The plant facilities involved in the production will also be modernised accordingly.



No test too tough for new models

Four testing centres go to the extremes to ensure FCA vehicles are safe and sound

Ensuring every new FCA model can stand up to the harshest climates, challenging road conditions and extreme use scenarios - while still performing faultlessly - requires a global effort by engineers and technicians.

FCA puts its new models through extensive testing, from the glaciers of Arjeplog to the deserts of South Africa, and at its Balocco Proving Ground and Orbassano Safety Centre, to ensure they perform to the most exacting standards in driving pleasure, aerodynamics, emissions and fuel consumption.

The Balocco Proving Ground is one of the largest testing centres in the world. It contains 26 different test tracks totalling almost 50 miles.

Located halfway between Turin and Milan in the countryside near Vercelli, the facility was opened in 1962 by Alfa Romeo. The main test track, which is named the Alfa Romeo Track, was inspired by the tracks used in the Formula 1 World Championship.

In the past, testing of production vehicles took place along with the activities of Autodelta, the Alfa Romeo Racing department. Numerous Alfa Romeo race cars were developed at Balocco.

Today, the Balocco Proving Ground provides all the tracks necessary to complete vehicle development, from high-speed to off-road testing.

The fully-equipped facilities and personnel are operational 24-hours a day conducting some 200,000 hours of tests every year. Balocco has the ability to condense the equivalent of 10 years of wear and tear on brakes, suspensions and mechanical parts, into just five months of measured tests and simulations.

In Arjeplog, FCA engineers have the ideal conditions and facilities for testing cars in extreme low temperature conditions with temperatures reaching -40 degrees.

The presence of numerous frozen lakes offers many miles of isolated test tracks. The low temperatures are unrelenting and this makes it possible for specialised technicians to repeatedly carry out tests to fine-tune air conditioning, defrosting and demisting systems, as well as checking the performance of all materials, and the reaction times of the vehicles' many active systems.

In addition, the area's low-grip surfaces can be used to set-up a



vehicle's suspension without the issue of elasticity caused by heat.

While Arjeplog's polar temperatures offer FCA perfect cold testing conditions, Upington is ideal for brutal heat testing.

Upington lies on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, next to the huge Kgalagadi Park, a name which translates as 'the waterless place'.

It is one of the hottest areas in South Africa and provides optimal conditions for evaluating the effect of maximum temperature extremes, dust and dryness on correct vehicle performance.

To ensure reliability in all conditions, the components and systems of the vehicle are subjected to relentless testing. Engines, climate control, safety systems and materials must withstand all weather and landscape conditions.

To ensure the safety of its vehicles, FCA utilises a fourth testing site. The FCA Safety Centre in Orbassano has been in operation since 1977.

More than 20,000 crash tests have been performed by FCA brands since 1961. The latest vehicles to emerge from development achieve the highest scores in the Euro NCAP assessment.

In 40 years of activity in Orbassano, FCA has capitalised on the skills of technicians and the precision of the test methods of the safety centre to develop all models to achieve safety levels which were once unthinkable.

Having undergone full renovation in 2010, the Safety Centre crash test facility can today carry out any kind of crash test at speeds of up to 60mph.

A sophisticated new crash simulator, which can reproduce accelerations up to 60 times the force of gravity typical of those developed in a real crash without actually deforming the body, is the latest installation at the facility.

It enables the fine-tuning of components such as occupant retention systems, airbags, seatbelts dashboards and seats, and is further evidence of how FCA is working to ensure its cars remain at the leading edge of safety.

Mirafiori makes history – again!

Soon preparations for an electric-only Fiat 500 will be complete and production will start



One of the world's most historic automotive plants is being transformed to reflect a new generation of electrified vehicles (EVs) that are set to change the automotive landscape as we know it.

Fiat's Mirafiori plant is at the heart of FCA's electrification strategy. It has been producing cars for 80 years and, thanks to a €700 million (£645m) investment, is gearing up for the next chapter in Fiat's history – production of the all-new all-electric 500.

This new generation of vehicles continues the long tradition of innovative models that have rolled off the assembly lines at Mirafiori. Among these is the first Fiat 500 which began production in 1957.

Pietro Gorlier, FCA chief operating officer for the EMEA region, said: "Mirafiori has been transformed in step with the city of Turin. It shared the successes and the difficult times, but it has always found a way to get back up on its feet. And it is one of the oldest European automotive factories still in operation today."



Mirafiori has produced more than 28,700,000 vehicles to date and remains a key part of FCA's Turin production complex, which is the group's largest production hub in the world – employing more than 20,000 people with a further 40,000 working for the plant's suppliers.

The new platform being installed at Mirafiori is specific to electric cars. Its first application will be the next generation Fiat 500, which will be exclusively an electric vehicle.

The first robots have already been installed and the rest of the plant will be retooled over the coming months.

In the body shop alone, there will be a total of 200 robots enabling a fully-automated welding process.

Around 1,200 people will be dedicated to production of the new Fiat 500 and the new assembly line will have an annual capacity of 80,000 units, with the potential for further expansion.

Series production of the new electric Fiat 500 at the refurbished plant is set to begin during the second quarter of 2020.

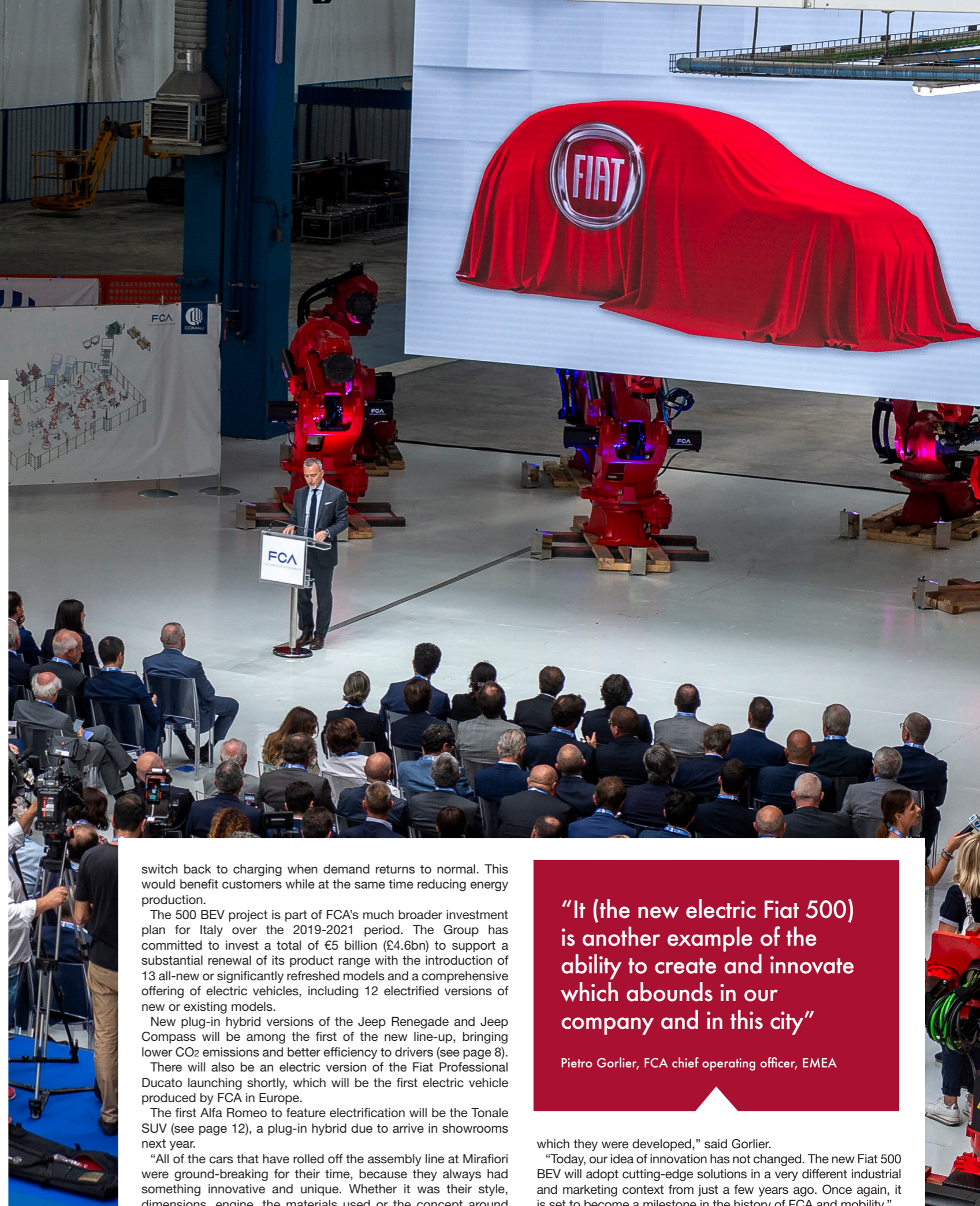
"This car was entirely conceived, designed and engineered here. It is another excellent example of the ability to create and innovate which abounds in our company and in this city," said Gorlier.

"In Turin, we are developing a new electric mobility centre of excellence which currently employs 260 people. The new Fiat 500 electric represents just the first phase of our investment plan for Mirafiori."

FCA has set up an e-Mobility unit in EMEA which will be responsible for coordinating all activities related to electrification. FCA has also recently signed agreements with Enel X and Engie which will enable it to offer solutions to simplify the lives of customers buying and using an electrified vehicle of any of the Group's brands.

In Italy, the Group has plans to install more than 900 charging stations at production sites and employee parking areas, around 1,200 at Leasys Mobility Stores and more than 1,100 at dealerships. Total investment for this project is around €33m (£30.5m).

In addition, FCA is evaluating projects based on the innovative Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) technology, which enables vehicles to return electricity to the grid when needed during peak demand and



switch back to charging when demand returns to normal. This would benefit customers while at the same time reducing energy production.

The 500 BEV project is part of FCA's much broader investment plan for Italy over the 2019-2021 period. The Group has committed to invest a total of €5 billion (£4.6bn) to support a substantial renewal of its product range with the introduction of 13 all-new or significantly refreshed models and a comprehensive offering of electric vehicles, including 12 electrified versions of new or existing models.

New plug-in hybrid versions of the Jeep Renegade and Jeep Compass will be among the first of the new line-up, bringing lower CO₂ emissions and better efficiency to drivers (see page 8).

There will also be an electric version of the Fiat Professional Ducato launching shortly, which will be the first electric vehicle produced by FCA in Europe.

The first Alfa Romeo to feature electrification will be the Tonale SUV (see page 12), a plug-in hybrid due to arrive in showrooms next year.

"All of the cars that have rolled off the assembly line at Mirafiori were ground-breaking for their time, because they always had something innovative and unique. Whether it was their style, dimensions, engine, the materials used or the concept around

"It (the new electric Fiat 500) is another example of the ability to create and innovate which abounds in our company and in this city"

Pietro Gorlier, FCA chief operating officer, EMEA

which they were developed," said Gorlier.

"Today, our idea of innovation has not changed. The new Fiat 500 BEV will adopt cutting-edge solutions in a very different industrial and marketing context from just a few years ago. Once again, it is set to become a milestone in the history of FCA and mobility."



Tonale Concept is Alfa's first compact utility vehicle

New CUV will have its own distinctive personality – not simply a small copy of the Stelvio

As with any concept, Alfa Romeo's Tonale compact crossover has drawn a lot of attention this year. Following its surprise appearance at March's Geneva Motor Show, it had its UK premiere at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in July.

But, as Alfa Romeo's first plug-in electric hybrid (PHEV), it marks a much bigger debut for the manufacturer.

The compact CUV (compact utility vehicle – Alfa Romeo's preferred term for a small SUV) will sacrifice none of the distinctive Alfa design. It has already won a Car Design Award at the Turin

Auto Show and the *Auto Express* Readers' Choice Design Award, despite not being due to enter production until next year and reach UK customers in 2020/21.

Scott Krugger, head of design for Alfa Romeo, said: "The Tonale is an incredibly important car for Alfa Romeo as it marks the first plug-in hybrid in the range and it needed to be both functional and beautiful."

Colleague Klaus Busse, head of FCA Design (EMEA) since 2015, said: "The weight on your shoulders here is huge."

It is not Alfa's first production SUV – that honour went to the larger

Stelvio, which enjoyed an enthusiastic reception when it launched in 2016 – and the brand showcased its Kamal concept at Geneva as far back as 2003.

However, the Tonale is Alfa's first electrified model, one of six lower-emission plug-in hybrids due by 2022.

Named after the Tonale Pass that links to the Stelvio Pass in the Alps, it will compete against compact crossovers such as the Range Rover Evoque, BMW X2 and Audi Q3.

Alfa is targeting 400,000 sales globally, more than double its current figure, so it clearly expects the Tonale and its hybrid siblings to make a large contribution.

That target may help to explain the speed of its introduction. Designers at Fiat's Centro Stile design studio, based in a former Fiat engine foundry in Turin, only began work on the Tonale last December and continued right up to the early March Geneva deadline.

Krugger believes the tight schedule helped the process: "We couldn't over-design and we had to prioritise elements. It was a very good process in that regard."

That hasn't stopped the designers adding some Alfa flair – on the concept version, the biscione (the snake in Alfa's logo) on the hidden rear door handles glows red during charging, and the human figure normally in its mouth is replaced by a two-pronged plug graphic with a lightning flash.

Early discussions established that the Tonale should have its own, distinctive personality.

"We didn't just want to copy the Stelvio in a smaller size," said Busse. "The Stelvio was our entry into the SUV space, and it came after the Giulia saloon, so it had to feel familiar and use a design language we were familiar with. The Tonale was a time to progress."

Krugger continued: "We asked ourselves what is an Alfa CUV in this space, what is the footprint, what are the dimensions? How extreme do we make the proportions? We decided it was paramount to make something believable, with appropriate dimensions for a very real-world segment – it needs to fit people, luggage and lifestyles."

The production Tonale will most likely use a modified Jeep Renegade platform, which would suggest a turbo 1.3-litre four-cylinder powertrain to drive the front wheels, and an electric motor driving the rear. If that's the case, expect an electric-only range of up to 31 miles, and fleet-friendly CO2 claims of less than 50g/km in a powerplant that is capable of delivering 250hp.

As well as the PHEV, expected to cost about £30,000,

"We asked ourselves what is an Alfa CUV in this space, what is the footprint, what are the dimensions?"

Scott Krugger, Alfa Romeo head of design



conventionally-powered Tonales are planned and Krugger said Alfa designs every car with a Quadrifoglio performance variant in mind, so that is also in the pipeline.

Inside the pre-production Tonale's cabin, the dashboard architecture is similar, a hybrid of Giulia and Stelvio, with a 'binocular' instrument binnacle, jet-engine air vents and the thin three-spoke steering wheel with integrated starter button and scimitar-like gear shift paddles.

There are some beautiful materials: the brushed spokes of the steering wheel are milled from solid aluminium, and when you open the door you glimpse the structure of the air vent, like shrouds for jet engines, also in aluminium.

But echoing the hi-tech nature of the hybrid powerplant being showcased, the traditionally rich Alfa craftsmanship is melded seamlessly with a 12.3-inch screen for the instrument cluster and a 10.25-inch touchscreen for the infotainment system. All the graphics were developed in-house at Centro Stile.

"We're not creating distraction, not too many buttons, it's just the information you need," explained Busse.

That simplicity extends to the powertrain controls – there is no Alfa gear lever, just the DNA drive-mode selector, its acronym evolved to fit a new electrified brief: 'Dual power', using maximum power from both internal combustion and electric motors; 'Natural', a balance between performance and efficiency; and 'advance E' for full electric mode.

"Electrification will not be a gimmick, it's something we harness," said Krugger. "It's about how it makes the vehicle better, bringing more performance."

Well pleased! Fiat has the answers on LCV tender

Pharmacy delivery company had vans on run out and contacted Fiat as part of pitch process. Guess which vans won?



Well is the third largest pharmacy provider in the UK with 798 locations and around 7,000 employees and it recently established a relationship with FCA Group after completing a tender process for 30 small vans.

The company has a fleet of 588 vehicles with a mix of light commercial vehicles (LCVs) and cars. The biggest proportion of its fleet is taken up by LCVs with 488 in total.

David Sharples, Well Pharmacy fleet manager, said: "We were on run out with our small vans and needed to look at our options."

"I met with Terry Appleyard, FCA area fleet sales manager LCV, at a fleet event in Northampton and it went from there."

"We hadn't really considered FCA Group products before but

we asked our leasing company Lex Autolease to put some quotes together after some guidance from Terry on what would be most appropriate."

Appleyard was the point of contact through the tender process and talked with Well about its requirements. While Sharples said other manufacturers may have been lower on price per vehicle, Fiat's products were the clear winner when looking at wholelife costs.

As a result, Well took on 30 Fiorino Cargo 1.3 Multijet II 80hp Tecnicos at the start of the year.

Sharples said: "We took everything into account across CO₂, fuel economy, vehicle downtime and aftersales support and Fiat performed really well compared with rivals."

He was specifically looking for a compact city van that met the needs of the business in smaller territories where there are fewer prescriptions to drop-off.

The Fiorino has a load volume of 2.8m³ and a payload of up to 610kg, giving plenty of space for Well to house its boxes of prescription medicines.

A turning circle of just 9.95m was also useful for Well drivers who need greater manoeuvrability in the city on their rounds.



Drivers had also requested a higher level of specification for the vans that were to be replaced.

The Tecnico trim includes reverse parking sensors and a five-inch touchscreen with sat-nav and air-con, both highly requested features from drivers.

The audio system also features Bluetooth hands-free connectivity, audio streaming, USB, aux MP3 and command functionality on the steering wheel.

Standard safety features include electronic stability control (ESC), Hill Holder for tricky hill starts, cruise control. Optional traction plus helps when setting off in poor grip conditions.

Sharples said: "The feedback from drivers that have been using the Fiorinos has been really good."

"We've already been fielding requests from other drivers that want to make the switch to Fiat when the time comes to replace their vehicles."

The vans are on a 48-month contract with maintenance included.

Sharples is already in discussions on making the switch away from diesel to petrol versions of the Fiorino for other vans that have inner city delivery routes.

The main reason is the amount of start-stop driving, which increases the potential for diesel particulate filter (DPF) problems, so Sharples wants to make the switch where possible.

"We will definitely be looking at whether we can make the switch to petrol where appropriate because there's not a huge difference in terms of costs for the amount of refuelling against the savings we can make on maintenance compared with a diesel engine."

The Well fleet has an average CO₂ of 108g/km and Sharples said one of the biggest challenges for fleets is to balance the pressures of operational efficiency that Euro 6 diesels offer, against the wider trend to move towards petrol or electric vehicles (EV).

"Moving to more petrol is going to push up the average CO₂ and we have to keep that in mind in terms of what we're doing to the environment with our vehicle choices," he explained.



"We've already been fielding requests from other drivers that want to make the switch to Fiat when the time comes to replace their vehicles"

David Sharples,
Well Pharmacy

"We're putting a plan together to look at where we might be able to switch to electric vans where it makes sense. But, it's really challenging as we don't have depots and a lot of our locations are in high streets where we either don't have dedicated parking to put in a charge point or it's not cost-effective to install that infrastructure."

"It's a big challenge facing the whole industry but it's something we'll have to solve, particularly as more city centre locations become vehicle emissions-free zones."

Fiat Professional has already announced plans to launch a Ducato Electric in 2020 with a 223-mile driving range. While an electric version of the Fiorino has not been confirmed, FCA Group is openly researching where it can expand its EV range in the future.

Sharples said: "Working with FCA Group and Terry Appleyard as our first point of contact has been great."

"He's been very supportive and put their products on our radar, which they weren't before."

"We're also looking at the wider range through Alfa, Jeep and models like the Fiat Tipo for our car fleet following on from the work we've already done together on LCV."

New Ducato auto will be a 'game changer'

More safety technology incorporated as Fiat Professional rolls out new range

Fiat Professional has launched its new Ducato range of vans, offering greater efficiency and more safety technology than ever.

The vehicle, which is the best-selling van in 12 European countries, will also be available with an advanced nine-speed automatic gearbox for the first time.

This will be a 'game-changer' for the range in the UK, says Richard Chamberlain, country manager of Fiat Professional, as increasing numbers of organisations are looking to procure LCVs fitted with automatic transmissions.

Ducato will also be available as a fully-electric vehicle (see panel below) – Fiat Professional's first electric model.

Alongside these new technologies, Ducato retains all its traditional strengths – versatility, low cost of ownership, the most extensive choice of wheelbase and height variants, as well as its payload, volume and axle loads which are record-breaking among front-wheel drive vehicles.

Here, we look at some of the new features which keep the MY2020 Ducato at the top of its class:

Engines

Ducato is the only model in its category to be fitted with an industrially-derived diesel engine, guaranteeing the performance and comfort levels of a car.

All models are fitted with Euro 6D-compliant engines, with the entire MultiJet 2 range comprising 2.3-litre units.

The 120hp version, teamed with the manual gearbox, offers 320Nm of torque and improves power and torque by 10% compared with the 2.0-litre engine it replaces, while the 140hp, 350Nm (9% greater than its 130 MultiJet predecessor) drivetrain – available with both manual and automatic gearboxes – constitutes the heart of the range.

The 160hp version offers 400Nm with a manual gearbox and 450Nm with the automatic transmission, while a 180hp engine tops the range. This produces 400Nm with a manual gearbox and 450Nm – an improvement of 12% compared to the previous model – with the automatic.

Ducato is also available in a methane Natural Power variant, producing 136hp and 350Nm.



DUCATO ELECTRIC

Fiat Professional has also unveiled its Ducato Electric van – its first fully-electric model – which will arrive in showrooms in 2020.

Available to pre-order in early 2020, it will come in all body variants with the same load volumes as the conventional Ducato, from 10m3 to 17m3, and a payload of up to 1,950kg.

A choice of two batteries will be offered, offering total ranges of 138 miles or 225 miles respectively, while it will

be able to take on 62 miles of charge in less than 30 minutes.

Speed will be limited to 62mph to optimise energy use. It will offer maximum power of 120hp and maximum torque of 280Nm.

While developing Ducato Electric, Fiat Professional carried out a year-long study of customer use of their vans, which found that more than 25% of the market is suited to a battery electric vehicle in terms of use, routes, dynamics and performances.



Automatic gearbox

The new nine-speed automatic torque converter transmission guarantees an enjoyable driving experience without compromising on performance.

Users can choose between three driving modes – Normal, Eco which provides a dedicated gear shift strategy to help reduce fuel consumption, and Power, which provides prompt gear shifts for optimal performance even in tough conditions.

EcoPack

EcoPack is standard across the Ducato range and includes Start&Stop, a smart alternator, an electronically-controlled fuel pump which guarantees greater combustion efficiency to reduce fuel use, and ECO mode.

Drive assist

Ducato is available with a wide range of new safety technologies, including:

- Blind spot assist, which uses radar to identify vehicles which are otherwise invisible to the driver.
- Rear Cross Path detection, which uses radar to identify vehicles approaching from the side when Ducato is reversing.
- Full brake control, which identifies obstacles and intervenes by automatically triggering emergency braking if there is imminent danger.
- Lane departure warning, which determines whether the vehicle is leaving the lane it is travelling in.
- Traffic sign recognition.
- Automatic windscreen wipers.
- Tyre pressure monitoring system.

Infotainment

A new infotainment system is available, with a seven-inch touchscreen by Mopar, USB port and digital radar. The new system includes Apple CarPlay and compatibility with Android Auto.

“New nine-speed automatic torque converter transmission guarantees an enjoyable driving experience without compromising on performance”



Coordination with Turin should mean global wins

HQ works with national sales companies to ensure deals spanning several markets have the greatest chance of success

Collaboration between FCA's Turin head office and its national sales companies in each market across the world is helping the group provide more consistent levels of service and win new global fleet deals.

Frank Damoutte, FCA head of long-term rental (leasing) and corporate sales EMEA, says the Italy headquarters has a dedicated team in place to support the UK and other markets to help generate sales and build closer ties with international corporations.

Damoutte heads up a team of international key account managers, including seven corporate account managers responsible for different global regions and three responsible for long-term rental to coordinate with leasing companies like LeasePlan and Arval.

There is also a dedicated member of the team to collaborate with FCA's Leasys division and a commercial vehicle specialist, too.

The benefit of having these close ties between the UK and Italy is that the HQ team in Turin can help to manage international tenders from big multi-nationals.

This means Fiat's teams across the world can coordinate an offer for a company and there are fewer links in the chain of communication

when discussing deals with a fleet manager or procurement director.

Damoutte says: "If we can jointly communicate and offer experience across markets we can deliver a consistent offer."

"By having a single point of contact for our big corporate clients it makes sure we understand the strategy of the client globally and there is no loss of information when we're putting together a tender."

The work of the FCA Turin team in collaboration with others across the world has resulted in more than 60 international framework agreements for fleet deals across multiple countries, representing around 11,000 vehicles.

Damoutte wants to build on this success to work with the 150 biggest corporations on multi-market international deals.

When a large corporation launches its tender process the FCA HQ team can coordinate on behalf of all markets to put a single offer together that is appropriate for that corporation's fleet requirements in each market.

The team in Turin uses its knowledge on strategy and combines that with the local knowledge from those on the ground at each local market sales division, like FCA UK.

Damoutte says: "The FCA UK team members are the experts on that local market and we rely a lot on our colleagues, but we can work together to make sure they have everything they need and they will help us make sure the deal we put together is relevant and correct for the differences in each market. For example, taxation can vary from market to market."

Joining up across borders means FCA also isn't targeting a super aggressive offer in one market for a company and then offering the

same company something completely different elsewhere.

The benefit for large companies working with FCA on a global deal is that they might perhaps have a large footprint in the US, but, say, their UK office might not be so big. They will still benefit from the purchasing power and negotiation done on behalf of the whole corporation.

The global volume will be reflected in the offer and that weight will be factored into tender negotiations.

Damoutte says: "We might be talking to a corporation which has offices in the UK and we can then see if there's a door that can be opened to talk to them about a fleet deal, too."

"We all support each other and work through Sales Force, a customer relationship management (CRM) system, so each global team can look at where we are in the customer journey to make sure all our thinking is on the same page."

That close-knit team ethic also means if there are any issues with an offer, or any problems for customers each local market has a direct line to head office and FCA HQ can provide any support they need.

Best practice is shared each quarter and where there have been big successes, these ideas are communicated globally.

One example is road show events in Belgium for large corporate clients to road test the latest Fiats, Jeeps and Alfa Romeos. These are now being rolled out internationally.

A Privilege Programme that offered beneficial lease rates for large corporate client employees in Poland is also looking to roll out in other markets like the UK.

FCA is also working on a bridging offer for fleets that are looking to

make the switch to electric vehicles.

New models like the Fiat 500e and Jeep Wrangler Plug-in Hybrid are coming in 2020 and for fleet drivers that need to make decisions about models now, FCA is working on an offer that will let customers switch out of their traditionally-powered Fiat or Jeep into the plug-in version without attracting early termination charges.

Damoutte says: "We're still working on the final details with that one. Initiatives like this will give companies flexibility in the mid-term as new plug-in products become available."

"We can work together to make sure they (FCA UK team members) have everything they need and they will help us make sure the deal we put together is relevant"



CCIA enables FCA team to reach decision-makers

Millbrook event is perfect opportunity to display the diversity of FCA brands to committed and knowledgeable audience

Getting its broad range of Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Jeep and Fiat Professional vehicles in front of fleet decision-makers is a key part of the FCA Group's efforts to showcase the strength of its range. This is a major reason why the group has attended the Company Car in Action (CCIA) arrive and drive event, organised by *Fleet News*, for 12 out of the past 13 years. This year the brand took a wide range of vehicles to Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire, including the Fiat 500 city car, the

Alfa Romeo Giulia premium saloon, the Alfa Romeo Stelvio SUV, the Jeep Compass and the Fiat Doblò van.

A comprehensive team of specialists also attended – including those from corporate, leasing, public sector and fleet sales, as well as team members from Leasys, affinity sales and the business centre dealer liaison teams.

"It means that whoever visited our stand, we had somebody who was able to talk to them about their requirements and how we can help," says Simon Wheeler, fleet and business marketing manager.

"It was also a great opportunity for our team to talk about the latest updates to our products, and at CCIA we find there is a large number of key decision-makers we are able to engage with. We can talk with confidence about the total cost of ownership and how we are as competitive – if not more so – than most of our competitors."

Wheeler says that attending events such as CCIA helps fleet decision-makers understand how far FCA has come as a brand and

how comprehensive its range is.

He adds: "Ultimately, being able to showcase our products and demonstrate how they perform is key to being included on choice lists and generating orders."

"A good example of this was at last year's CCIA where a big utilities company running a user-chooser fleet of 2,000 vehicles came to see us. We gave its board of directors access to our full product range and, as a result of that, we were included on the user-chooser fleet."

"You need to let people see for themselves how strong your offering is to achieve results like that."

Wheeler says events such as CCIA are also important for keeping customers up to date with new developments, such as the group's global £9 billion investment in electric vehicle development.

This includes Jeep plug-in hybrids and the Ducato Electric van which will be launched next year.

"We will rapidly be going out to market with a very strong story relating to green credentials," says Wheeler.

"FCA can already demonstrate a rock solid commitment to CO₂ reduction with several of our factories already operating at a carbon neutral capacity. Our new technologies will help in offering fleets the option to reduce their carbon footprint further and CCIA will continue to provide a great opportunity to demonstrate this."

FCA Group will also be attending Fleet Live at Birmingham's NEC on October 8 and 9, and is working with the Institute of Directors in supporting their Global Business forums.

"The events have been running since May and will continue into the autumn where we are presenting Jeep and Alfa Romeo, in particular,

to a real mix of SMEs to provide expert advice on fleet management within a global context," says Wheeler.

In July, FCA invited key fleet partners to Goodwood Festival of Speed, showcasing the Jeep Renegade PHEV alongside the Alfa Romeo Tonale concept as well as demonstrating the capability of Jeep off road and the range on the track.

"We see the Goodwood Festival of Speed as Alfa Romeo's spiritual home in the UK," says Wheeler. "Alfa Romeo has got a great heritage with its racing history and pedigree but when we bring our partners to Goodwood, it's easy to demonstrate the passion the brand evokes alongside conversations around new technologies, cost of ownership and suitability for fleets."

"It was also a great opportunity for our team to talk about the latest updates to our products, and at CCIA we find there is a large number of key decision-makers we are able to engage with"

The latest trends in fleet management

From Brexit to BIK, WLTP to ULEZ, it has been an uncertain time for fleet managers and anyone running company cars. We look at four of the biggest developments in fleet over the past 12 months and what may be coming down the road.

Taxes

While the replacement of the New European Drive Cycle (NEDC) with the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP) has increased official CO₂ emission figures, the Government's recent decision to change its benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax tables will at least soften the impact of WLTP on company car tax (CCT) rates.

Following its review of WLTP, the Treasury said that for vehicles first registered from

April 6, 2020, most company car tax rates would be reduced by two percentage points.

In effect, this means that drivers of 'pure' electric vehicles (EVs) will pay no BIK tax in 2020/21, which is likely to dramatically increase the uptake of EVs by fleet drivers (see 'fuel types', facing page).

In addition to the BIK rate changes, the Treasury this year updated the terms of the Optional Remuneration Arrangement (OpRA), which affects cars taken through salary sacrifice and company cars chosen

where a cash alternative is available.

While changes in April 2017 led to a change in the taxation rules if the car is chosen instead of cash (whereby the taxable value is the greater of the amount of cash pay given up and the taxable value of the benefit), the changes made on April 6, 2019, mean OpRA now includes other elements that are packaged with the car.

This means items such as breakdown cover, maintenance and insurance are now treated and taxed as income.

Mobility

Air quality is just one of the objectives driving current urban transport policy, alongside reducing congestion, offering residents more active travel solutions and creating living and working environments that attract people and investors.

Meeting such objectives requires businesses to rethink how they move people, goods and services and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) is one possible solution.

Whether that involves directing staff to

use public transport, fly-drive, use car clubs or car-sharing apps, or even video conferencing rather than travelling at all, fleet decision-makers are likely to be the ones managing that mobility.

Helping them in that goal are experimental initiatives such as the Mobility Credits pilot scheme in Coventry, which involves drivers in the West Midlands being offered up to £3,000 a year in electronic voucher credits as an incentive to give up their cars.

The credits will be loaded on to a travel card and smartphone app to spend on alternative travel including public transport,

car sharing or green hire schemes.

Solutions are also emerging to help businesses move their people across different transport platforms in a more integrated way.

For example, Fleetondemand's Mobilleo app for business, launched in October, integrates thousands of public and private transportation providers into one platform.

It allows users to find, book and pay for their entire business journey (including parking, car hire, flights, trains, accommodation, restaurants, airport lounges, car clubs, buses and taxis), in one transaction.

Fuel types

Cheaper company car tax is likely to make EVs more attractive for company car drivers, but the growth in the sector in the next few years will also be heavily influenced by the Government's continued incentivisation of the cleanest vehicles, the car manufacturers' ability to meet demand, and the consolidation of the charge point market.

According to the latest Quarterly Leasing Survey by the BVRLA, the UK trade body for vehicle rental, leasing and fleet management companies, pure EVs gained more than 1% of market share in leased vehicles for the first time, but that is contrasted with the share of hybrids falling to 5% in Q1 2019.

In the same period, petrol's share of the

new lease car market passed 50% for the first time, hitting 52% for the first three months of 2019. Meanwhile, diesel's share fell by 15% to 40%. Across the fleet sector as a whole, diesel registrations were down 16.6% year-on-year in the first half of 2019.

Research by Arval's Mobility Observatory found that about half of fleets were planning to continue to operate diesel cars, but of those fleets looking to replace traditional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles with hybrids or EVs, the numbers were six times higher for diesel than for petrol.

Despite the increasing switch in the market from diesel to petrol pushing average overall CO₂ figures for new cars to a five-year high, company cars remain the cleanest cohort of vehicles on the road, according to the BVRLA.

Gerry Keaney, BVRLA chief executive, said that when the new BIK regime is

combined "with the increasing availability of RDE2-compliant diesels, which bring a further 4% reduction in CCT (RDE2 vehicles are exempt from the diesel supplement), the future looks much brighter for the company car market than it did".

Although Shaun Sadlier, head of Arval's Mobility Observatory, also told *Fleet News* recently that some RDE2 diesels coming on stream are comparable with petrol on NO_x emissions while also offering better CO₂ output and fuel economy. He added: "It appears diesel has become so inherently unpopular as the result of recent emissions controversies that there will be no large-scale resurgence in its popularity."

He said Arval's position is that the "fleet of the future" would use a diverse range of fuels, with the needs of the driver matched to the right vehicle.

Air quality and clean air zones

London became the first UK city to implement an ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ) in April, which sees non-compliant cars, vans and motorcycles charged £12.50 a day. Birmingham, Derby, Leeds,

Nottingham and Southampton have all been mandated to introduce a clean air zone (CAZ) in 2019/2020.

The Government has also named 23 local authorities where it expects pollution levels to reach legal levels by 2021. All must carry out a feasibility study to determine whether or not a CAZ is required.

The effects on fleets can be significant, involving extra charges for daily entry of non-compliant vehicles or, in instances where they upgrade their vehicles to the required standard (Euro 4 for petrol cars and Euro 6 for diesels in the case of London), they may face early termination charges from leasing agreements.

On course to improve interaction

Business Centre members are upping their game by attending special training sessions to elevate standards of care

Fleet operators are set to benefit from further improvements in the way members of the FCA Group Business Centres will interact with them. This follows the introduction of an all-new training programme aimed at further driving up the standard of care offered to customers.

Representatives from all of the fleet-focused UK sites recently took part in a two-day training event in Marlow led by the team from FCA Group headquarters in Slough and top fleet sector training specialist Alan Scott.

Simon Wheeler, the FCA Group fleet and business marketing manager, said: "Last year we slimmed down the Business Centre network to ensure that when we create opportunities at a national level and deliver enquiries into our fleet and business specialist, we have absolute confidence that our network partners will deliver a first class level of service.

"By the end of the year we plan to increase the volume of our



centres but we have to ensure those we have and those that are joining us are the very best they can be."

Wheeler said the restructured Business Centre network is now made up of the "best equipped" and "mostly highly-skilled" and said that there were still plans to expand further and double the number of sites as part of a geographically-mapped growth plan.

"The new programme got off to a great start in Marlow and we're already looking well-placed to deliver on our plans," added Wheeler. The two-day FCA Business Centre training event, which took place on July 11 and 12, focused on:

- The need to keep fleet vehicles off the road for as little time as possible during servicing and maintenance work;
- Developing an understanding of legislative changes that affect the management of small and large fleets; and
- The networking and prospecting skills needed to develop new sales leads.

Wheeler said the FCA Group was encouraging its Business Centre teams to step back from the daily dealership routine and get out to meet potential customers and make use of LinkedIn's Sales Navigator platform to identify and engage with businesses online.

"A large part of the Business Centres' challenge continues to be building awareness of the various brands and the range of needs that we can fulfil," Wheeler said. "If our Business Centres can prospect the key decision-makers within a business and present that case then we have a real opportunity to find new business."

As if to emphasise the importance of marketing the brands, the two-day training event was held at HPS Group, one of FCA's key marketing partners.

Adding further emphasis to the importance of the event was the presence of the FCA Group head of fleet by dealer sales EMEA, Giorgio Vinciguerra, and Eugenia De Luca, its EMEA fleet and country business manager.

Also among the attendees was Colin Galvin, corporate business development manager at WLMG in Reading, who described the event as "an excellent two days".

Victoria Rose, car and van fleet specialist at Jordon's of Hull, said: "Just back from a pretty intensive two days in Marlow with great colleagues from FCA HQ and the dealer network.

"I'm up to the minute with exciting news, latest updates and I'm raring to go".

While Wheeler conceded that the lack of an alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) offering in the FCA Group stable did present immediate challenges in light of the changes to BIK tax recently announced by the Government, he added: "We have those products on the way now and that is another thing that we have to make potential fleet customers aware of.

"At the moment we have to cater for the fleet market as it is today and we offer some of the best diesel vehicles available. If you have drivers that are covering large distances on a regular basis diesel is still the best solution."

Among the resources made available by FCA to help its retailers in their bid to attract fleet custom – beyond an encouragement to make use of business-focused social media – is a P11D calculator which can be integrated into their websites.

But while online tools are important, it is clear that the FCA Group acknowledges the need for its retailers to be able to offer

"I'm up to the minute with exciting news, latest updates and I'm raring to go"

Victoria Rose, Jordon's of Hull

comprehensive advice to fleet decision-makers at a time when huge changes in the sector might cause potential headaches.

David Yeats, FCA fleet and business centre programme manager, will ensure FCA's retail partners remain up-to-date on the latest tax and legislation developments affecting the decisions of fleet customers.

Alan Scott, meanwhile, will continue to work the network to help support franchisees and maintain standards set at the Business Centre training event.

Wheeler said: "It's important that we maintain the high standards of the network we currently have and I know that Alan Scott is the man to ensure that happens.

"Our intention is to grow the business centre network, but we don't want to do that at breakneck speed. It's important that our retailers have the skills and resources needed to offer the services our fleet customers expect. We have to maintain the momentum we have now, but do it in the right way."



Matt Niles

NATIONAL FLEET SALES MANAGER

Raising awareness of the FCA offering and being seen as a credible option are important to the recently appointed national fleet sales manager

The FCA group of brands – Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Jeep, Abarth and Fiat Professional – possess a number of “hidden gems”, according to newly appointed national fleet sales manager Matt Niles. It’s his job to boost their awareness among fleet decision-makers in both the public and private sector.

Niles, who joined FCA in mid-April, is very experienced in automotive financial services and leasing. His appointment coincided with a restructure of the fleet department which saw the fleet sales team brought together as a single operation. Previously it had sat across several divisions.

He describes the restructure as “an exciting opportunity for me and the business” as it brings a more co-ordinated approach to the market and enables the FCA fleet team to present the full portfolio of brands during every conversation.

“There is no conflict between the brands; they complement each other,” says Niles. “It means we can put the message out there with one team rather than have separate brand teams competing against each other.”

The national fleet sales manager role encompasses the corporate, public sector and SME (small-to-medium enterprise) customer teams and staff are expected to work across all three as necessary. It will require some upskilling, says Niles.

“The needs of customers in the three areas are broadly the same, but the conversations are slightly different,” he explains.

He expects to see a number of benefits from the new approach, not least greater consistency in the way FCA handles the market. It will also have benefits for customers.

“We will use the knowledge we get from other sectors and share it,” says Niles. “For example, the public sector is further ahead on the electric discussion so they have experiences that can be shared.”

He adds: “The new structure also fits with our USP – offering a complete fleet solution. We have a view of the entire marketplace together with our multi-brand solution. It fits.”

Niles has spent much of the past four months out in the field talking to a mixture of sectors and businesses and getting their view on the FCA brands. The overwhelming feedback is a lack of awareness about the brands and the models.

“They aren’t always aware of all our models and derivatives; we sometimes take it for granted that they are,” Niles says.

“So the priority is to get in front of more end users. We have access to a great customer base and people are interested in us as a challenger brand, but we have to have the right conversations.”

Current hot topics are the two new van products – the automatic Ducato and the electric Ducato, and electrification of Fiat 500 and Jeep product that comes to market next year. “We also unveiled the Alfa Romeo Tonale which looks stunning!” says Niles.

The automatic Ducato has opened up new markets for the large panel van, such as home delivery and fleets with an environmental requirement, while the electric version, due for launch in 2020, “give us an opportunity to have a fresh conversation – people are intrigued”.

Niles is also keen to understand the sectors where FCA is strongest, where it has the greatest potential for growth, and where its models don’t quite fit.

“It’s early days (for me), so it’s also about what the team needs to improve its abilities,” he adds.

High on the agenda is a desire to offer a ‘premium service’, a phrase used in the press release announcing Niles’ appointment. What does a premium service look like for FCA?

“We have a professional route to market where we have structured, constructive conversations around finding the right product for the customer, not the other way round,” Niles explains.

“We have to add value back to them. We listen to what they are telling us so we can understand the opportunities – it’s a two-way exchange. We have to really understand their needs and concerns so our product fits. We also have to be the benchmark and share our knowledge across our customer base.

“We have to raise our awareness and be seen as a credible option.”

This is the first step, with a measure of success of getting onto more fleet lists. Step two, once a customer is on board, is to secure repeat business. Here, the focus is on relationships, with each member of the team responsible for their own territory and their own customer base.

“We are a brand in the moment, but we have to be clear about our strategy. It’s a medium-term plan to get into corporates, SMEs and public sector and it takes time,” says Niles.

“Our activity levels are good and we have access to the market but the proof will be the conversion of our conversations into sales and then getting repeat business from those customers.

“I’ve been amazed by our product line-up and our customer base, which is very broad. We play in all the sectors so we have the start position and it is now about building from there.”

“We have a professional route to market where we have structured, constructive conversations around finding the right product for the customer, not the other way round”

Goal for Ducato Ambulances is 100% of the market

Hospital efficiency report favours use of panel vans which save on fuel and conversion costs

Fiat Professional is looking to build on the success it has achieved with UK ambulance service trusts over the past five years. More and more are making the switch to the Ducato.

There are 13 trusts in the UK – three cover Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with the remaining 10 in England.

Fiat Professional started working with West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust in 2015 and the relationship has grown to the stage where that trust now only uses Fiat products.

Ducato Ambulance accounts for around 70% of the business of the remaining trusts across England and this is growing.

Part of this growth has been influenced by the Lord Carter report into hospital efficiency that advised ambulance trusts to use panel vans, rather than box alternatives, due to savings on fuel and the reductions in the cost of converting.

The report, published in September last year, said using lighter panel vans would save up to £5 million a year on fuel and £56m on conversion costs over a five-year period – £11.2m annually.

The Ducato has a gross vehicle weight of 4.25 tonnes and a maximum payload of 2,065kg so it can easily handle the extra kit required when the van is converted to include ambulance-specific items like stretchers, monitors and other medical equipment.

Other unique selling propositions for the Ducato Ambulance include the fact that it's a flat-sided panel van, which adds stability and stops the vehicle rolling in the event of an accident. The Ducato also has a lower ride height due to being front-wheel drive. This means converters don't need to fit a tail lift, but can, instead, convert the van to have a fold-out wedge ramp when the rear doors are opened.

All Ducato Ambulances can also be fitted with air suspension to help lower the ride height even further.

Mike Duggan, FCA National LCV Corporate Fleet Manager, said: "Now panel vans have been rubber-stamped by the Lord Carter report we're working towards a 100% sole-supply with all trusts in the future."

"We've been working very closely with the trusts for years and we've registered an increase in the number looking to replace vehicles with Fiats since the report was published."

"While the Carter report has obviously given us a boost, Fiat Professional has won that business due to total cost of ownership on Ducato. It's a combination of reliability, safety, fuel economy, payload, pricing and the support we offer customers."

Duggan heads up a team of dedicated account managers for each trust. This ensures there's a single point of contact for each and they can act as a key liaison between Fiat Professional, build supply logistics from FCA's head office in Turin, the UK dealer network and the converter that will turn the Ducato into an ambulance ready for service.

Trusts generally have a fleet of between 250 and 350 ambulances. This equates to around 3,000 vehicles across the entire ambulance trust market.

These vans are driven at speed to get to incidents and they're covering high mileages of 35,000 on average. Contracts are between five and seven years. The replacement cycle sees around 500 vehicles changed each year.

Duggan knows of one Ducato Ambulance in operation that has covered more than 350,000 miles, acting as a testimony to the van's durability and reliability.

While minimising vehicle downtime is extremely important for any fleet, for bluelight services it can be the difference between life and death.

Many trusts will have their own servicing departments to keep their vehicles in top shape.

Fiat Professional supports with access to the latest diagnostic equipment for the trusts' own technicians to help with servicing their Ducatos.

For warranty or more heavy duty repairs, the Ducato ambulances are looked after by the Fiat Professional dealer network.

Duggan said: "We make sure dealers in the network have all the parts ambulances need in stock, things like brake pads and drive-shafts that are likely to need replacing due to the high mileages these vehicles are doing."

"It means if a Ducato Ambulance comes in for work, there will likely never be a wait for parts delivery so work can be carried out straight away and the van can get back to helping to save lives."

Duggan said the trusts are very exacting when it comes to vehicle downtime with a target of 95% utilisation.

Duggan said: "The fact our market share is more than 70% and growing shows there is trust that the network will deliver when they need to get a vehicle back on the road as soon as possible."



Get full peace of mind with Fiat Professional's 5-5-5 offer

Warranty extended plus longer free servicing and roadside assistance at no extra cost

Fiat is offering its retail customers additional peace of mind and vastly reduced operating costs with its 5-5-5 offer on new Fiat Professional models.

When purchasing a new Fiat Professional vehicle, buyers now get a five-year warranty, five years of free servicing and five years' roadside assistance, for no extra cost.

The 5-5-5 offer is available across the Fiat Professional range on models in Technico and Sportivo grades.

The new deal applies to any eligible Fiat Professional van sold from July 2019 onwards.

Richard Chamberlain, FCA commercial vehicle director, said: "With our new 5-5-5 campaign, we can offer business users complete peace of mind when running one or a fleet of Fiat Professional vehicles. With our extensive range we have the flexibility to suit all requirements."

"The 5-5-5 campaign is confirmation that Fiat Professional is able to offer a full ownership package to any business, large or small."

Included in the new campaign are vehicles such as the 2020 Fiat Ducato which now comes with new Euro 6D engines and automatic gearboxes which deliver improved CO2 figures and fuel efficiency. It also features advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS).

The Talento offers comfort, technology and functionality, Doblo offers the best capacity and functionality in the segment and finally there is the smallest van, Fiorino, which is ideal for city deliveries and small business users.

Terms and conditions: Standard warranty for three years plus additional two years extended warranty. Roadside assistance for one year plus an additional four years' roadside assistance. Valid until the expiry of five years from the date of first registration or the vehicle has travelled 100,000 miles (for Fiorino and Doblo) or 125,000 miles (for Ducato and Talento), whichever occurs first. Free servicing covers the costs of parts, lubricants and labour required as part of the manufacturer's scheduled servicing until the expiry of five years or a maximum of 100,000 miles, whichever occurs first. Five-year warranty, roadside assistance and free servicing available on Sportivo and Technico versions only. Retail sales only. Not available in conjunction with any other offer.

Warranty (MOPAR Max Care)

- Two extra years of free warranty in addition to the standard three-year warranty
- Fiorino/Doblo: five years or 100,000 miles, whichever comes first
- Talento/Ducato: five years or 125,000 miles, whichever comes first

Servicing (MOPAR Easy Care)

- Covers the cost of parts, lubricants and labour, required for each service
- Fiorino/Doblo petrol: every 18,000 miles or once per two years, whichever comes first
- Fiorino/Doblo diesel: every 21,000 miles or once per two years, whichever comes first
- Talento: every 25,000 miles or once per two years, whichever comes first
- Ducato: every 30,000 miles or once per two years, whichever comes first

Roadside assistance

- 24 hours a day, every day
- Hotel and travel expenses cover
- Towing and courtesy car available

Fiat Panda 4x4 and Lounge

KEY STATS: Fiat Panda 4x4

● MPG 37.7 ● CO₂ 129 ● P11D £14,755 ● BIK 29%



The Fiat Panda is the city car with space for all the family. Its compact dimensions house a spacious interior that provides practicality and comfort for an affordable price.

Its 1.2-litre petrol engine has 69hp and emits 114g/km of CO₂. Combined fuel consumption of 44.1mpg ensures the Panda has low running costs.

The range-topping Lounge version comes highly-equipped with air conditioning, alloy wheels, Bluetooth and audio controls on the steering wheel.

For those that want a more robust Panda, the 4x4 version offers a raised ride height and all-wheel drive traction.

The lightweight five-seat off-roader is powered by a 0.9-litre TwinAir petrol engine with 90hp.

It provides the same level of practicality for city driving but gives drivers the confidence that they can keep going no matter what the conditions.

The Panda Cross 4x4 takes things a step further with front and rear skid plates for added protection and a more striking look.

Fiat 500 DolceVita edition

Following the success of the luxurious Fiat 500 Riva, the new DolceVita edition is set to continue the car's premium positioning.

The unique model is designed to reflect Italian lifestyle, taking inspiration from cinema, fashion and fine art.

Convertible versions feature a striped roof, designed to look like the deck chairs and umbrellas of the Italian Riviera.

There is also a new wooden dashboard trim and leather upholstery, specific to this model, to enhance the luxurious feel of the interior.

The exclusive version is only available in Bossa Nova White Pastel, with a high level of standard specification based on the 500 Star.

Additional features of the DolceVita include 16-inch white alloy wheels, chrome trim on the bonnet and door mirrors, climate control and unique floor mats.

The 500 DolceVita is fitted with a 1.2-litre 69hp petrol engine, available with either a manual or dualogic transmission.



KEY STATS:

Fiat 500 DolceVita

● MPG 45.6-50.4

● CO₂ 108-114

● P11D TBC

● BIK TBC

Jeep Compass Night Eagle



KEY STATS:

Jeep Compass 1.6 MultiJet II Night Eagle

● MPG 47.9

● CO₂ 128

● P11D £27,685

● BIK 33%

The Compass perfectly fuses Jeep's legendary off-road capability with advanced lightweight design to deliver leading driving dynamics and efficiency. In Night Eagle trim, the Compass is further enhanced with a striking new look. The fog lights, grille and window surrounds are finished in gloss black along with the "Jeep" and "4x4" badges. In addition, 18-inch gloss black aluminium alloy wheels add to the car's aggressive stance. Inside, it is both stylish and comfortable with faux leather and premium cloth seats, alongside gloss black bezels. The Uconnect 8.4-inch touchscreen provides sat-nav, Apple Car Play and Android Auto, enabling drivers to be fully connected on the go. A choice of turbocharged petrol and diesel powertrains rewards the driver with high performance and low emissions. It is available with a 1.4-litre 140hp petrol and a 1.6- or 2.0-litre diesel. The latter comes with unrivalled Jeep 4x4 technology. The most efficient model emits from 128g/km of CO₂ and can achieve up to 47.9mpg

Jeep Renegade

Instantly recognisable as a Jeep, the Renegade has rugged, yet chic, styling that reflects its ability to perform both in the city and off-road.

The best-selling model has been updated for 2019 and now features a more efficient, refined powertrain line up, and refreshed styling.

A new 1.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine delivers 120hp and is joined by a 1.3-litre unit with 150hp.

The existing 1.6-litre and 2.0-litre diesel engines remain available, but have been updated to reduce emissions.

The engine range on the new 2019 Renegade can be paired with a six-speed manual, DDCT (Dual Dry Clutch Transmission) and nine-speed automatic transmissions for a smooth, comfortable driving experience.

The new Jeep Renegade is available in two configurations, with two- or four-wheel drive. Legendary Jeep off-road capability is guaranteed by two advanced 4x4 systems, Jeep Active Drive and Jeep Active Drive Low which secure benchmark performance in all conditions.



KEY STATS:

Jeep Renegade 1.0 GSE Sport

● MPG 39.8

● CO₂ 138

● P11D £19,480

● BIK 31%

Fiat Tipo Sport

KEY STATS:

Fiat Tipo 1.4 MPI Sport

● MPG 40.4

● CO₂ 135

● P11D £18,990

● BIK 31%



The Fiat Tipo offers exceptional roominess, high specification and efficiency, at a price that makes it a viable fleet car.

Practicality is key in the C-segment, therefore the Tipo was designed from the ground up to be a spacious and useable car.

A seven-inch Uconnect infotainment system offers the very latest technology including Apple Car Plat and Android Auto connectivity, Bluetooth handsfree and audio streaming, satellite navigation with live traffic reports and digital radio.

The Fiat Tipo Sport has host of dedicated and exclusive design elements to emphasise its dynamic style. It sits at the top of the range and features new front and rear bumpers, side skirts, a black front grille, 18-inch alloy wheels with diamond-cut finish, tinted rear windows, a rear diffuser and a spoiler.

Inside, the passenger compartment is enhanced with exclusive black leather and fabric seats and cross-pattern techno-leather upholstery on the steering wheel and gear lever knob.

The new Tipo Sport is available with a 1.4-litre 95hp or 1.4-litre 120hp T-Jet engine.

Abarth 595 Pista edition

KEY STATS:

Abarth 595 Pista 70th

● MPG 36.7-38.7

● CO₂ 149-155

● P11D £18,425

● BIK 35%



Enhancing the Abarth 595 line-up this year is the new Pista 70th model. It replaces the Trofeo and brings a range of upgrades to the model.

Power from the 1.4-litre petrol engine is increased to 165hp thanks to a new Garrett turbo and the engine note is enhanced by a Monza exhaust.

The car's door mirrors, bumper inserts and brake calipers are painted in contrasting colours to the body, with a choice of red, green, yellow or black.

There are also new 17-inch alloy wheels to further enhance the car's style.

Fiat Professional Ducato



KEY STATS:
Fiat Professional Ducato 35 MH2 2.3 MultiJet II 140
 ● MPG 39.7
 ● CO₂ 186
 ● CV OTR £29,620
 ● Payload 1,540kg

Having entered production in 1981, the Ducato has become a worldwide icon. It is sold in more than 80 countries with in excess of 10,000 configurations available.

Ducato is one of the most versatile commercial vehicles on the market with class-leading payload, volume and axle loads combined with an extensive choice of wheelbase, length and height variants making it suitable for everything from carrying passengers, to making deliveries and refrigerated vehicles to camping.

The latest-generation Ducato offers class-leading efficiency, thanks to its new fuel-efficient Euro 6D-Temp diesel engines.

The 2.3-litre MultiJet II is used throughout the range and features a new turbocharger that adapts its fluid dynamics to the speed of

the engine and to driving styles, thanks to the implementation of a series of mobile blades situated along the radius of the turbine. This controls the flow of exhaust gas and, consequently, the speed and force of the compressor, to provide the right performance at all times.

Power outputs range from 120hp up to the range-topping 180hp version. A nine-speed automatic transmission is available across the range (excluding 120hp).

A suite of advanced driver assistance systems are available on the new Ducato. These include Blind Spot Assist and Rear Cross Path Detection, Full Brake Control – an autonomous emergency braking system, Lane Departure Warning, Traffic Sign Recognition and automatic headlight activation with high beam control.

Fiat Professional Doblò

The fourth-generation Doblò Cargo comes with a choice of 1.3-litre and 1.6-litre turbo-diesel engines offering an equal balance of responsiveness and efficiency.

Eco Pack is now standard across the 80hp 1.3 MultiJet II, 95hp 1.3 MultiJet II and 105hp 1.6 MultiJet II, now making it possible to achieve combined fuel consumption of up to 53.3 mpg and CO₂ emissions of up to 150 g/km.

There is also a 1.4-litre MPI petrol version with 95hp.

Safety is also a top priority and the Doblò offers a full suite of standard driver aids including Electronic Stability Control, Hydraulic Brake Assist and a Hill-Holder system.

With one of the widest ranges of load volume and carrying capacity derivatives in the compact van market there are versions to suit all needs including short- and long-wheelbase versions of low- and high-roof models, Combi variants with a second row of seating and the Doblò Work-up.



KEY STATS:
Fiat Doblò Cargo 1.3 MultiJet II
 ● MPG 53.3
 ● CO₂ 139
 ● CV OTR £16,345
 ● Payload up to 1,005kg

Doblò's load bay is defined by a flat floor with minimal wheel arch intrusions. It has a maximum payload of up to one tonne and the load area can be specified up to 5m³.

Standard features on all Doblò versions include a full bulkhead, overhead storage, electric windows, central locking and a speed limiter.

Giulia Nero Edizioni

KEY STATS:
Alfa Romeo Giulia 2.0T Nero Edizione
 ● MPG 36.2
 ● CO₂ 153
 ● P11D £35,410
 ● BIK 34%



Available exclusively with the 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine, the Giulia Nero Edizione is a car that will get pulses racing. Priced at £35,995 (OTR), it sits on 18-inch dark finish alloy wheels and features discreet gloss black detailing including exhaust tailpipes, door mirror caps, window surrounds and front grille.

The rear Giulia badge is also finished in gloss black, to accentuate the special edition trim level.

Based on the generously equipped Super version, the Giulia Nero Edizione additionally features xenon headlamps with adaptive front lighting system, run-flat tyres and privacy tinted rear windows.

It also has Active Cruise Control to assist the driver, while Alfa Romeo's new connected service with smartphone app compatibility provides a range of additional functions.

All Giulia models feature Alfa Connect navigation with an 8.8" display, dual zone climate control, rear parking sensors and forward collision warning.

Inside, the Giulia Nero Edizione features aluminium sports pedals and kick, while split-folding rear seats provide greater flexibility.

Customers can upgrade the looks further with 19-inch alloy wheels and a range of options and packs, including painted brake calipers.

With 200hp available through an eight speed automatic transmission, acceleration from 0-60mph takes just 6.6 seconds.

What's more, the Giulia Nero Edizione can still return 36.2mpg and emits 153g/km of CO₂.

Stelvio Ti

The first affordable SUV to combine sports car-like handling with crossover practicality is also the first SUV from Alfa Romeo.

From its Italian-styled exterior to its premium interior, the Stelvio looks as good as it drives.

Perfect 50/50 weight distribution and extensive use of aluminium mean this tall and spacious family SUV handles like a nimble performance car.

Further peace of mind comes from the five-star Euro NCAP rating, which places the Stelvio among the safest cars ever tested.

Enhancing the line-up is a name synonymous in Alfa Romeo's history, the Ti, or Turismo Internazionale, represents the pinnacle of luxury, exclusivity and performance.

The Ti sits beneath the range-topping Quadrifoglio and features subtle enhancements such as red brake calipers and carbon fibre on the grille surround and door mirrors.

The interior provides sports leather seats with six-way power adjustment that ensure both comfort over long distances and support when cornering. The luxury feel continues with the leather dashboard.

Two powertrains are offered: a 280hp petrol or 210hp diesel engine. Both employ Alfa's 'Q4' AWD system which is naturally rear-drive, but can send up to 50% of the power to the front wheels on demand.

Ti models also benefit from Alfa's FSD (Frequency Selective Damping) suspension, which uses valves to adjust the ride dependent on the surface – ensuring a compliant feel on rough surfaces but increased firmness when cornering.

KEY STATS:
Alfa Romeo Stelvio 2.2TD 210hp Ti
 ● MPG 43.5
 ● CO₂ 147
 ● P11D £46,760
 ● BIK 37%



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