

Optimising Fleet Costs Through Data Cleansing

The client

Our client is a charitable trust and disability support provider operating a distributed vehicle fleet across multiple regions. The organisation relies on its fleet to deliver essential services to clients and communities, making vehicle availability, cost control and operational continuity critical to day-to-day service delivery.

The client engaged ERA Group to review its fleet operating costs and fuel management practices. While headline reporting suggested that fleet costs were within a reasonable range, inconsistent data and fragmented records made it difficult to understand the true cost of each vehicle.

The challenge

The client lacked clear visibility into its total fleet cost per kilometre. Odometer data was inconsistent, records were spread across multiple systems and similar vehicles showed wide variations in fuel economy.

Initial reporting showed an average cost of \$0.14 per kilometre. However, after ERA Group completed a data-cleansing exercise, the true average increased to \$0.19 per kilometre, with some vehicles approaching \$0.72 per kilometre. This revealed that fleet costs were materially higher than standard reporting suggested.

Additional challenges included missing or fragmented records, varying fuel economy across similar vehicles, limited visibility of cost by age, model, fuel type and user, unclear fuel card discount performance, premium fuel use without a clear operational need, and exposure to fuel misuse, control leakage and reporting gaps.

Certain waste streams also required strict handling, storage and disposal procedures under biosecurity and environmental regulations. The fragmented supplier base and varying levels of reporting maturity made it difficult for the university to accurately assess value for money, demonstrate compliance and establish reliable ESG reporting.



The solution

ERA Group conducted a structured data discovery and baseline analysis to identify the true cost of operating the fleet.

Fuel, maintenance, depreciation and insurance data were consolidated into a total cost-per-kilometre model, creating a master key structure for data matching and benchmarking fuel efficiency by make, model and hybrid status. ERA Group also reviewed fuel card discounts against competitor pricing.

The team analysed fuelling behaviour by region and route, identified high-cost vehicles and modelled the optimal vehicle lifecycle profile, including purchase age, mileage and disposal timing.

This data-led approach provided the client with greater cost intelligence and a clearer framework for future fleet management and vehicle replacement decisions.

The result

Replacing vehicles with a higher-than-average cost per kilometre resulted in an **18% saving**. The engagement also gave the client clearer visibility of total fleet costs across fuel, maintenance, depreciation and insurance, enabling more informed vehicle replacement decisions.

Hybrid optimisation and behavioural insights identified opportunities to improve fuel performance, while benchmarking fuel card discounts and brand price differences highlighted opportunities to strengthen commercial outcomes.

Improved odometer reporting and data capture also established stronger governance for ongoing fleet monitoring. By adopting a data-led fleet optimisation strategy, the client was able to reduce unnecessary fleet costs while improving transparency, governance and long-term replacement planning.

