

Fleet Forum Annual Conference 2018
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Session Notes:

The Fleet Management Journey of CRS

Presenters:

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Objective:

Describe the process and outcomes from the recently-completed consultancy CRS and Fleet Forum conducted to analyze the status of CRS' global fleet management, and recommend actions for improvements. The focus of the discussion was on next steps from organizations that have been through a similar process, and to entertain questions and comments from organizations that are considering carrying out a similar analysis of their fleets. Feedback questions were designed to elicit feedback from participants on elevating the recommendations to the CRS hierarchy for action planning and implementation.

Topics / Presenter:

DAVE: discussed the evolution of CRS' fleet management successes and challenges over the past 15 years, and the recent spate of fatal road crashes that drove management to approve the consultancy with the Fleet Forum. CRS' Global Supply Chain Management Unit (GSCMU) and its Risk Mitigation and Staff Security (RMSS) department co-funded the consultancy given the specific focus on ways to improve road safety.

Recommendations addressed (among others) strategic options for:

- a) improving Agency performance vis-à-vis road safety and security;
- b) developing standardized driver and other fleet management personnel job roles and responsibilities, orientation and on-going training activities, and recognition and rewards programs;
- c) reducing the environmental impact of the Agency's fleet operations;
- d) identifying opportunities for cost efficiencies;
- e) developing a fleet management strategy that fully supports the Agency's larger 5-year strategy;
- f) creating a centralized fleet management / advisor function;
- g) building and funding a lower-risk, more efficient and effective vehicle asset self-insurance scheme, and;
- h) CRS has authorized the FF to share the CRS consultancy Scope of Work / Terms of Reference with interested partner organizations as a model for work they may consider.

ROB: discussed the process he undertook, including:

- a) desk review of Agency policies, procedures, tools, financial reports, asset inventories and other documents;
- b) interviews in CRS HQ and via Skype of multiple senior manager stake-holders re issues of importance to them;
- c) field visits to three (3) country programs and deep-field offices (Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Madagascar) to assess local fleet management practices and staff understanding of the systems they manage;
- d) presentation of findings and recommendations to senior leaders in CRS HQ;
- e) final report.

MARTIN: presented the discussion questions and facilitated the discussions (outputs follow below).

Participant Comments / Recommendations / Discussion Points:

1) How do we ensure executive buy-in of the recommendations and action plan?

- a) Identify the particular “buttons” of some executives, and push them. E.g., if road safety is important to an exec, tell them that “We can keep doing what we’re doing now, and the results will be xxxxxx; or, we can make a few changes and the results could improve to yyyy. And the secondary outcomes from this could include zzzzz.”).
- b) Bring out the most important data points possible, and present them in an easy to understand and somewhat “shocking” visual / chart / table.
- c) Consider putting the global fleet function under a powerful department, such as Finance. Finance staff will support work to create fleet ops cost efficiencies, and a successful action will really get them on your side. Finance cares deeply about risks, liabilities, insurance costs, etc. and there are efficiencies to be had there. HR is another important champion, if cast in the light of better support of our drivers and fleet management staff, especially things that build morale and professionalism.
- d) Use social media and local press to highlight the risks of road travel in countries we work, especially anything that could be a reputational risk to CRS.
- e) Ensure responsibility and accountability for improving road safety and general fleet management performance goes across all levels of the organization. Along with accountability comes recognition and rewards for positive deviance.
- f) Fully document financial and other impacts from poor fleet management to then discuss changes that could quickly result in positive changes and reduced risk.

2) What are the steps for making a cultural shift, both at HQ and in the field?

- a) Ensure someone leads cross-department / -silo engagement on strategic fleet management opportunities and decisions, in the field and at HQ.
- b) Explain to each department / unit the value and benefits they might expect from enhanced fleet management.
- c) Understand that people feel fleet management is a “necessary evil” that must be professionalized to generate benefits.
- d) Create a good driver recognition and rewards program, at the County Program and Regional Office level, and perhaps at the Global level.
- e) Personalize for each staff member the risks of not doing better on FM, and the benefits if we do better.
- f) Look to solve a few small problems as a gateway to tackling larger issues.
- g) Communicate plans and achievements.
- h) Lead people to the conclusions and decisions you want, but do not dictate!

3) How do we deal with resistance along our journey?

- a) Dig in your heels to get a Global Fleet “Manager”; do not accept a title of “Advisor.”
- b) Leverage what other organizations, especially INGOs, have done or are doing. Several have hired a Global Fleet Manager, and are seeing successful outcomes already (e.g., GOAL, Plan International, Marie Stopes, World Vision).
- c) Work towards centralized vehicle procurement to leverage buying power and create cost efficiencies. Decentralized capital asset procurement decision-making should be the exception, not the norm.

4) How do you operate your global insurance schemes?

- a) DPKO: carry both local and int’l covers. Each vehicle pays a monthly rate that is adjusted monthly as per the % of total usage of the entire fleet.
- b) DAC commented that CRS does this through its cost allocation methodology, and increasing the rate slightly to generate revenue for a centralized self-insurance fund could be an option to consider.
- c) It is important to formalize the training of drivers and other fleet-related staff and users. Local managers must be responsible and accountable for orientation and training programs. One suggestion was to tie department budgets to performance on this (may require KPIs and other performance metrics).

5) Where should the global fleet management / advisor function reside?

- a) Change the title to Global Fleet Manager; do not accept that it be called Global Fleet Advisor. It’s a question of responsibility and authority for creating and implementing action plans.
- b) Choose a powerful department that has a lot to gain, even on a temporary basis. Several participants suggested Finance, HR or even Programming (given the tactical and strategic importance of fleet to accomplishing the larger Agency strategy outcomes).
- c) Ensure strong links to GSCMU, RMSS, internal audit and finance.
- d) Always focus on enhancing program and service delivery as the ultimate goal and outcome of improved fleet management.
- e) The Global Fleet Manager may not easily fit under one function area. One option is to separate tasks by responsible unit, and have the Fleet Manager work on those tasks with the specifically identified responsible unit.