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**Mazda’s stylish range brightens grey skies**

**at the 2016 Fleet Show**

* Style, performance and efficiency win fleet manager plaudits at the 2016 Fleet Show.
* Further corporate growth forecast as fleet chiefs back Mazda’s stand-out range.
* New launches like the 99g/km 1.5-litre diesel Mazda3 expand the marque’s appeal.

With one of the youngest ranges in the industry combined with low CO2 emissions, Mazda’s stylish and good to drive model line-up is set to drive further fleet growth in 2016, following a trebling of corporate sales in the past three years.

Having recorded a 22 per cent year-on-year rise in fleet sales in 2015, which at more than 19,000 represented a seven-year high, Mazda arrived at the influential Fleet Show with an award-winning range and a record sales. At the Show, fleet chiefs were able to drive key corporate models from the Mazda3, Mazda6, all-new Mazda CX-3 and Mazda CX-5 ranges, plus experience the World Car of the Year winning, all-new Mazda MX-5.

The Mazda6 remains Mazda’s fleet favourite, but the brand is reporting strong interest among user-chooser company car drivers for both the all-new Mazda CX-3 and Mazda CX-5 sports utility vehicles, while demand for the Mazda3 is rising following the arrival of the 105ps 1.5-litre SKYACTIV-D model with CO2 emissions of just 99g/km.

Fleet Show visitors were able to drive the all-Mazda CX-3 and the all-new Mazda MX-5, for the first time at the event. Mazda UK’s Head of Fleet Steve Tomlinson said: “These models along with the addition of the low emission Mazda3, which offers the best power to CO2 emissions ratio in the segment, have helped further strengthen our corporate sales offering. The Mazda range delivers broad appeal whether company car drivers require a mile-munching job need vehicle or a perk car focused around lifestyle.”

Ken Waites, director of Gloucestershire-base Waites Engineering, which has a 15-strong company car fleet, drove the low emission Mazda3 and said: “With emissions of just 99g/km it is very attractive from a company car tax viewpoint as well as not attracting road tax in 2016/17. Carrying an on-the-road price from £18,895, he added: “It is very good value for money. The handling was faultless; the car was comfortable and with plenty of low down torque was very responsive. I was impressed.”

While, Colin Oliver, fleet operations manager at professional services firm PwC, which runs a user-chooser fleet of some 1,750 cars, emerged from driving a Mazda CX-3 1.5-litre SKYACTIV-D with CO2 emissions of only 105g/km and exceptional fuel economy as high as 70.6mpg, to say: “The company car benefit-in-kind tax regime is incentivising employees to drive greener vehicles.”

PwC already counts more than 60 Mazdas on its fleet and Mr Oliver said: “It was the first opportunity I’ve had to drive the CX-3. Employees have a completely open choice and SUVs are becoming more popular because of people’s lifestyles and their standout appeal in the company car market. The CX-3 performed very well. It is a good-looking car that has desirability and handled very well.”

Andrew Minham, fleet co-ordinator at Guildford Borough Council, which operates a 180-strong fleet including 50 cars, said: “We have some Mazdas on the fleet and some employees have asked out about the Mazda CX-3 and CX5. The Council offers an open choice policy so I thought it was important to familiarise myself with both cars, which each delivered first class performance.”

Tony Miller, fleet co-ordinator at Coventry-based scientific instruments company Bruker UK, which already counts four Mazda6 and three CX-5 models on its 86-strong company car fleet, drove a number of the marque’s models.

He said: “Mazda cars have a good name on our fleet, particularly for their reliability and a style and design that is different from the norm. Drivers start to see Mazdas in the company car park and it immediately prompts interest. One person’s decision to have a CX-5 led to more inquiries about the model - they are the first SUVs we have had on the fleet.

“I was particularly interested in the Mazda CX-3 to see if it would be fit-for purpose for our fleet because we particularly like vehicles with low flat boot access for ease of loading. Benefit-in-kind tax is also important to our employees so we guide them towards low emission models.”

Mr Tomlinson said: “Mazda’s corporate sales are on a role and we are delighted with the reception that our range received at this year’s Fleet Show. Mazda has a powerful line-up that fleet decision-makers and company car drivers cannot ignore.”

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