



Briefing 15-40 August 2015

Fleet maintenance remuneration and market supplements

APSE members frequently make use of the Network Query Service, allowing questions to be put anonymously to officers and members from other authorities working in the same sphere. Pay and remuneration is a recurring topic and this briefing brings together the results from recent queries. With many areas of the economy showing growth, employment opportunities for qualified mechanics are likely to increase, meaning local authority pay and conditions need to remain competitive.

Key issues:

- The average basic salary for a vehicle fitter is currently around £23,067
- Overtime is not paid at a premium, other than for bank holidays, although shift allowances are commonplace
- Market supplements to attract skilled mechanics are rare but should be considered where recruitment is difficult and competitive.

Introduction

Fleet and maintenance services is an area of local authority provision that is key to ensuring that local government services are delivered effectively. It is also a service that has directly comparable private sector equivalents.

As the economy continues to improve, there is likely to be an increased demand for skilled staff including mechanics. This may present an opportunity for local authorities to offer their facilities for external work and to generate an income. It may however see the competing wages of mechanics rise, tempting some to take employment elsewhere.

APSE put a general query to members as a snapshot of the current trends. At this point in time, most were reporting a skills shortage and finding employment of fitters increasingly difficult. In a few cases the local authority is paying market supplements to retain and attract staff

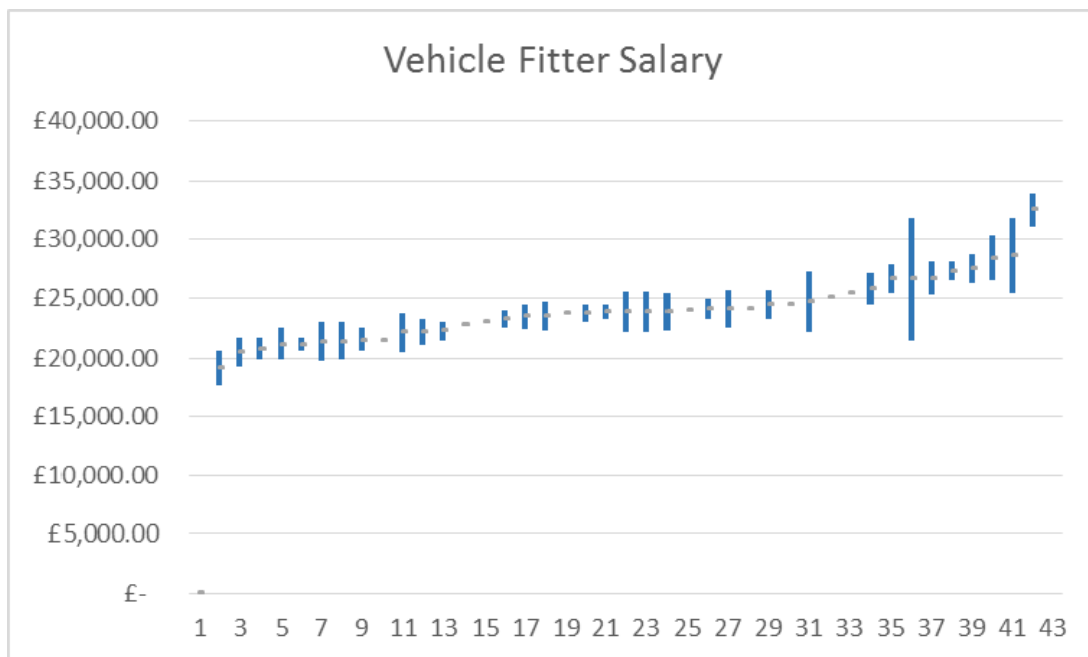
No guarantee is made that the values given here are for positions that are completely on a 'like for like' basis. Most will offer the Local Government pension scheme. Fleets differ widely in their composition.

Basic Salary

Average reported salary was £23,067 with a minimum of £17,682 and maximum of £33,990
Those at the lower scale work mainly on fleets containing light vehicles with salaries for work on HGV several points higher.

Many employ charge-hands / supervisors and these salaries were excluded where possible so as not to skew the sample. Similarly Apprentices and those on training were not included

The graph shows the range of salary paid, including any enhancements, but not overtime. Most include several 3 or 4 increment levels within the range and others many more.



The average salary is therefore found around NJC scale point 26/27: Individual authority median salaries ranged between SCP 21 and SCP 37

SCP	1 Jan 15
19	£ 18,376
20	£ 19,048
21	£ 19,742
22	£ 20,253
23	£ 20,849
24	£ 21,530
25	£ 22,212
26	£ 22,937
27	£ 23,698
28	£ 24,472
29	£ 25,440
30	£ 26,293
31	£ 27,123
32	£ 27,924
33	£ 28,746
34	£ 29,558
35	£ 30,178
36	£ 30,978
37	£ 31,846
38	£ 32,778

Working week

A typical working week is 36 or 37 hours. One council quoted 40 hours.
In one case contractual overtime of 5 hours is added to the basic 37 making 42 hours.

Shift allowance

There is a large variation in shift allowances paid. Many authorities pay nothing in addition, with others quoting figure of 10%, 15%, 20%, 30% and 33%. One council pays a night shift allowance of 30% and another an unsocial hours allowance of 20% between 20:00 and 06:00. One authority pays an annualised shift allowance of £1986.99 in addition to basic salary.

Stand-by

For those expected to cover stand-by shifts, allowances vary. Figures of £95.68 to £149 were quoted for one week standby. Any hours worked whilst in receipt of the allowance are at standard time.

Over-time

Mainly due to pay harmonisation during the 2000's, overtime does not attract increased rates in the majority of cases. However one authority quoted 25% and double time can be found for those working a bank holiday.

Shift patterns

2 shift rotas are commonplace with hours including:

07:00 to 15:00 and 13:00 to 21:00

Or;

06:00 to 14:00 and 13:30 to 21:30 Monday-Thurs

06:00 to 13:30 and 11.30 to 19:00 Friday

Others have some imaginative systems including a rota day off every 4 weeks (although no leave in allowed within the same week) Some have a mix of 4 day and 5 day working. Another allows a proportion of the workforce to work 10 hours for 3 days and 7 hours on a Saturday

Other allowances

Small allowances are made to MOT testers and First Aiders

Tool allowances have often been incorporated into wages, however where they remain separate a typical value is £6.95 / week

Market supplements

Market supplements are seen as a method of attracting and retaining qualified staff with higher pay rates where local conditions are such that other better paid opportunities exist with alternative employers. One authority has paid a 16% supplement for the last 6 years, however the practice remains scarce. Where there is a 'squeeze' on the availability of local labour it appears to be driven by level of remoteness combined with a specific local industry e.g. Oil

APSE Comment

Job Evaluation broke down many of the traditional pay structures that had evolved within fleet maintenance services. Management structures have also been simplified with fewer 'grades' surviving. The structures that now exist contain fewer additional allowances although shift working is paid a premium in many instances. Pay will always remain a sensitive issue and councils must be prepared to compete to retain skills and where possible invest in apprentices for the future.

In-house facilities will always offer the most flexible option for maintaining fleet vehicles. The vast majority will also provide the best value for money given good management. With a continuing squeeze on resources, local authorities must be prepared to look at their entire fleet maintenance facility and ensure that the asset is utilised efficiently and to the full. (See APSE Briefing 15-13 Maximising Income Generation in Transport Maintenance Services)

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