WHITE PAPER

What's next for Connected Safety? Fleet Management for Rental Fleets.

Effective management of a fleet of gas detectors can often be time-consuming and overwhelming, specifically for organisations managing rental fleets. Hours spent managing different safety programs across multiple sites, checking in, assigning and recording equipment and creating relevant reports from collected data can be tiresome when undertaken manually.

Connected safety data solutions provide new ways to simplify fleet management and labour-save around this process, so that teams can focus on the more important elements of gas detection from risk management to training, safety culture and insight analysis.

CROWCON
Detecting Gas Saving Lives

Crowcon Connect - an overview for rental fleet management

Crowcon Connect gas safety and compliance insight solution offers organisations an opportunity to streamline their rental fleet management by gathering insights across the entire detector fleet. The solution has been designed to help improve productivity and efficiency for companies that want to to achieve their business objectives and streamline their processes with a minimum amount of disruption, time, money and people.

The solution can transform fleet management processes and enhance the actionable insight provided with at-a-glance gas safety reporting dashboards, alarm and fault log tracking and calibration and maintenance records and flags.

System features also include device log investigations, user administration and device allocation and reporting. These features provide gas detection teams with improved tools for those working 'on the ground' to undertake daily detection tasks with ease, as well as providing rental fleet managers with a 360 degree perspective on operations to ensure continued safety, insight analysis opportunities and worker training creation.

Maximising ongoing asset rental value per device

When managing ,rental fleets data solutions allow you to maximise device uptime and remain aware of which customers have which devices. With a variety of fleets rented out to various companies it has historically been confusing to stay up to date with device calibration due dates and maintenance scheduling requirements.

Now insight data solutions offer those managing rental fleets the chance to sigh a breath of relief due to the increased insights at their fingertips on easy to read and view dashboards. With proactive calibration functionality and device maintenance alerts teams no longer lag behind irrespective of the diversity of rental fleet operations.

Accurate risk determination

The capacity for improved record keeping across these fleet of detectors when using a data solution automatically boosts your capacity to accurately risk-assess operations. As data gathering and insight analysis is boosted with Crowcon Connect it allows for enhanced compliance and proof of compliance to industry and government legislation and protocol.

By bringing together fleetwide information all detector information is held in one place regardless of fleet size or location. With instant visibility of exceptions, teams are given the information they require to fully understand performance and compliance levels across their rental fleet. All of this information is viewable across easy to use dashboards and filtering tools which will empower actionable insight that allow you to act proactively to protect your team against incoming risk.

By being able to see up front which gas detectors are 'ready to go' (RTG) and see which has been bump tested and calibrated with all sensors working as intended you can ensure ongoing risk determination and compliance for record keeping purposes.

Since it is a heavy component of compliance, staying on top of recordkeeping in this way is another way organisations can remain ahead of the game in their gas detection fleet management.

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Maximise on device "lifespan"

Keeping on top of when rental detectors need sensors replacing and any general ongoing maintenance also helps you to maximise device lifespans and keep gas detection operations flowing smoothly with less hiccups.

Given the critical nature of gas detectors, it is crucial to know they are working correctly at all times. Many factors can affect the sensor performance in gas detection sensors, and all sensors will fail eventually, so users must be vigilant and prepared to change their sensors when required. However, changing them too early, when they have plenty of life left, can be a waste of time and money.

Crowcon Connect will keep you aware of the factors that affect all rented devices, specifically the sensor life. As time passes, they can degrade even if kept in ideal conditions (i.e. in a contaminant-free, temperature and humidity controlled environment so the period between purchase and first use should be brief.

Although data solutions give visibility around alarm events, maintenance requirements and calibration due dates users should be educated on monitoring the following factors that affect devices. These include temperature, humidity, interfering gases, physical factors, e.g. excessive vibration or impact, contamination of or damage to the sensor e.g. by incorrect cleaning products, contamination of filters or sinters e.g. by dust, sand or pests (yes spiders!), and exposure to poisoning/inhibiting compounds even when the sensor is not powered.

Most sensors suffer general wear and tear, and the damage caused is not always easy to detect, so the first rule for keeping sensors safe and in good working order is to undertake regular maintenance. This should include scheduled bump testing (also known as a gas or functional test) and calibration; while exposure to substantial volumes of gas may harm some sensors, the small amounts used in bump testing and calibration are absolutely fine.

It makes sense for users to extend the life of their sensors as far as possible; they cost time and money to replace, after all. The ability to forward-plan and predict sensor consumption also makes sensor purchasing more efficient and helps to reduce the time spare sensors are kept in storage.

To predict and plan sensor replacement, users must understand the factors that influence their sensors' performance. These will be specific to their own setting, which is why users must also be able to draw upon knowledge and experience built up through regular testing and calibration of sensors in their particular environment and applications.

There really is no substitute for user knowledge and regular maintenance, however with central data solutions like Crowcon Connect in place, teams are better placed to remain aware of when action is required to increase fleet sustainability and maximise lifespan.
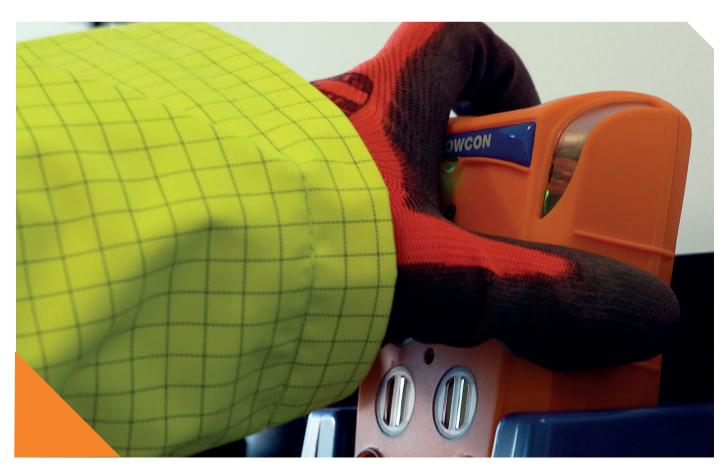
Increased asset management

One of the benefits of implementing a data solution such as Crowcon Connect is the inevitable eradication of asset management problems that cause organisations money, time and hassle.

Inefficiency means excessive costs and has an impact on the ease of asset management across your entire portable detector fleet. A well known issue that can arise is tiresome downtime incidents, specifically if calibration scheduling is not managed and completed properly. This is of course more likely when dealing with rental fleets, and large workforces working across multiple sites especially when using time consuming manual processes.

With fleetwide reporting tools available through powerful data solutions, organisations are given a bird's eye perspective across all operations. These tools show calibration due dates in advance, detector numbers and fleet utilisation and upcoming maintenance requirements. All of these provide much needed visibility and allow for forward planning and proactivity that can avoid unwanted downtime which could impact your bottom line and ultimately the safety of the people and environments within your company.

With functionality within data solutions to apply filters to review information by region, division and team, reports can be drawn up quickly, allowing to fast-track to the detail whilst overcoming historic, time-consuming manual inventory management processes and report compiling duties.

Another asset management issue which can be troublesome when it occurs is devices being lost and misplaced, if there is no visibility as to where they are and who they are assigned to. With the capacity to link users to their gas detectors and easily link between alarm events and user exposure with transparent insights on who, where and when the detectors were in use you can avoid misplacement occurrences. With data solutions like Crowcon Connect companies can also add and archive users and detectors as changes are required again to stay abreast of detector locations and utilisation.

"Calibration due dates, alarm events and 360 degree detector utilisation awareness solves maintenance scheduling issues "
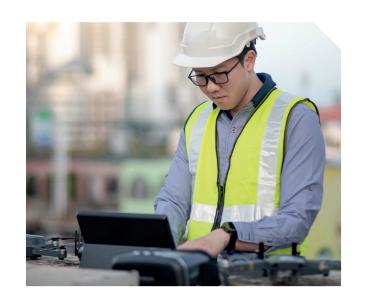
Intelligent maintenance plan, managing ongoing costs

Harnessing the actionable insight provided by central data solutions allows teams managing rental fleets to implement effective and intelligent maintenance plans. As a result, you can manage ongoing costs and make informed decisions with your eyes wide open.

Calibration due dates, alarm events and 360 degree detector utilisation awareness solves maintenance scheduling issues through fleetwide reporting tools to review these important action-dates in advance.

Staying connected and aware helps safety teams achieve safety goals, extend capabilities, and simplify the proactive management of any fleet of portable gas detection.

Intelligent maintenance planning done centrally can consolidate and streamline gas detection activities and help managers monitor gas detectors whenever docked in their charging port, maximize detector uptime and have full visibility and management of alarm activity.

Increased pool fleet availability via rapid assignment

With large rental fleets, ensuring that the detectors you have are readily available and able to be utilised as required is a necessity. By linking individual users to a specific device tracking detector movements and activities is much easier. When this is done irrespective of whether a detector has the same user each day, is shared by a team or is part of a pool fleet, line managers can be confident that pool fleets can be monitored and assigned rapidly across large teams, and various locations.

With data automatically gathered and sent to the central platform whenever a detector is charged they can be rapidly assigned to new users with the minimum of fuss and effort.

During the initial setup there is also the option, with Crowcon Connect, to prepopulate users and detectors as well as to add and archive users and detectors as changes are required. This not only provides the all important link between alarm events and user exposure, but also ensures assignment is already taken care of at the beginning of the setup process.

Having control over your rental fleet can be an obstacle for managers in the gas detection sector, as they endeavour to ensure their fleet is ready to go to avoid equipment availability issues and unnecessary downtime. Keeping track of and sustaining the usage of hundreds of devices can be difficult and so ensuring there is a central system in place that ensures easy tracking, assignment and reporting process is a great way to help streamline what can be a cumbersome task.

Central fleet management can not only increase pool fleet availability but also help teams stay ahead of maintenance issues and ensure proactive scheduling. By doing this managers, stakeholders, workers and supervisors are aware of what and when things will occur. This awareness removes stress and anxiety around device availability, functionality and reporting.

With 50 years experience in the field we are ideally placed to meet your needs, offer peace of mind to you and your team and offer advice and suggestions for effective and secure gas detection within your environment.

Devices can be issued as a pool fleet, whilst still gathering accurate individual data (providing the asset is docked)

Issuing devices as a pool fleet can be a great way to reduce the size of rental fleets, whilst maintaining accurate data collection and recording processes.

Pool fleets managed via a data solution, such as Crowcon Connect, allow for the monitoring of efficiency levels as you are able to ensure you have the right number of detectors in your fleet. This is easily done by reviewing detector utilisation on the dashboard.

You can link users to devices, whether a detector has the same user each day, is shared by a team or is part of a pool fleet. As long as detectors are docked at the end of the day, data is gathered irrespective of the way you utilise your fleet and so teams can stay abreast of all processes and report upon them easily through central review. The charger ports also double up as data upload points, and so whether employees are on or off site, their daily activities will be automatically uploaded to the Crowcon Connect act with no user intervention.

This ensures actionable gas safety insight is delivered for pool fleets wherever employees are located, in whatever types of environments.

With this type of powerful user assignment it can not only shrink the size of gas detector fleets, it also reduces hassle surrounding fleet management. Electronic records illustrate who has which instrument and it becomes much easier to work with a pool of gas detectors as all involved can remain aware of the fleet, rather than having to assign one to each individual. Therefore management can greatly reduce the size of fleets by planning for how many people will need gas detectors at one time instead of the total number of workers.

With central data solutions like Crowcon Connect allowing gas detection teams to harness the powers of pool fleets, there is less need to check equipment, arrange replacements, deal with repairs and of course this lowers costs and hassle.

Utilising pool fleets allows companies to consider that they may not require as many spare gas detectors because replacement equipment can arrive within days of any problem that arises. The health of devices can be accurately monitored and maintained via a central system to make sure that the ones they do have are being utilised in line with company safety policies.

It is also worth noting that ensuring the detectors linked with the central system are robust and multi-functional is important, for example the T4 4 in 1 multi gas detector can withstand harsh environments, detect multiple gases simultaneously and is long lasting. Therefore there is a less frequent need for significant maintenance. With the improvements in assigning users, your team now can manage the total number of simultaneous users, instead of the total number of field employees. This again lessons the complexity of your processes.

These changes can lead to savings of equipment costs and help the safety manager reduce the amount of time they have to spend on report compiling, maintenance management and alarm scheduling.

Now you can focus on analysing important data and acting on recorded insights to keep employees and environments safe.

"Accessing near real-time data for tracking trends and identifying potential issues smooths all gas detection processes and puts teams in better positions."

Final thoughts

As the tasks associated with fleet management for rental fleets expand and grow in complexity, it is the companies who are able to harness data insight solutions that will be able to stay ahead of the curve and ensure the ongoing safety and successful operations of their team.

With 360 visibility, rapid assignment capabilities and accurate reporting functionality managers can leverage these solutions to ensure successful control over their fleet, irrespective of the size or working environment.

By avoiding the need to assign specific devices for a period of time rental fleets can be managed more efficiently and unnecessary purchases can be reduced. Very importantly, central systems drive management accountability to stay abreast of all activities and ensure proactive action across all areas of rental fleets.

Accessing near real-time data for tracking trends and identifying potential issues smooths all gas detection processes and puts teams in better positions to ensure and enforce rigorous safety practices and an overall positive safety culture.

This type of technology really transforms the capacity for accountability and enhances rental fleet management operations in diverse ways, as we have explored here. If you are looking to evolve your rental fleet management processes and are keen to implement a new, connected way of working then get in touch with the Crowcon team to find out more.