

Argus Tracking delivers prudent IHC improved savings

Pilot trials provided all the proof a cautious IHC needed to get over the starting line and go nationwide with Argus Tracking's GPS technology; a decision that will keep them moving forward.



As New Zealand's largest provider of services to people with intellectual disabilities, IHC has to be sure it's making good business decisions with its large fleet serving service users nationwide "A not-for-profit organisation needs to spend wisely," says IHC Fleet Manager, Lisa Parata. "We don't have a lot of money and that's why it took us so long to get over the line with Argus Tracking. But they wouldn't have got the contract if they didn't offer real value."

The first Argus Tracking devices installed in two pilot areas quickly made it clear that IHC vehicles were not running at capacity. "Why do you need to take out a ten-seater van if there are always only four passengers?" Parata asks. "Vans cost at least double to run."

That question and others were put to the IHC branches and resulted in a new way of thinking. Speeding and parking fine offenders were identified, and odometers from Kaitaia to Invercargill began to show savings as Argus Tracking was rolled out nationwide. "It reduced the kilometres vehicles travel," says Parata. "All our drivers know now that we know where they are going. And, it stops someone from whipping down to the bank at lunchtime. There's been a big change in culture."

Analysis of GPS data has also brought change in fleet numbers. "We've been able to pull vehicles out of the system," says Parata, who is in her tenth year as IHC's Fleet Manager. "A vehicle needs to do 20,000 km a year to justify having it, and we found we didn't need all the vehicles."

National Transport Manager Sam Devlin agrees that Argus Tracking has proven its usefulness. IHC's fuel bill has dropped 9% since he oversaw the nationwide rollout in 2013. "

"The GPS data comes into its own when we can put black-and-white facts and figures in front of staff, managers and families. Fourteen vehicles were removed after the two pilot studies and another 19 have been removed since going nationwide; 33 in total."

Removing under utilised assets is only one part of it. We have been able to use the fleet we have more efficiently by knowing exactly what is needed and where. We can move assets within the organisation to ensure we have the right mix of vehicle in each area and the high use vehicles are not aging prematurely.



"Moreover, savings are on-going. Passenger numbers have increased but we've kept our current vehicle numbers static by filling them better." Says Sam Devlin.

Both Devlin and Parata acknowledge that Argus Tracking software has been crucial in ensuring vans are driven at their full capacity. "A touch screen in every vehicle keeps track of passenger numbers," explains Parata. "Staff log on with a unique ID, inputting how many passengers are on board for every trip. Every time a van door slides open or closed, a prompt comes up on the screen querying if the driver needs to add or subtract a passenger."

If a driver forgets to enter an ID, a reminder buzzer sounds until the ID is entered or the vehicle is turned off. "With all information being recorded electronically, says Devlin, Argus Tracking does away with our need for manual logbooks."

Parata is convinced that choosing Argus Tracking was the right thing to do, freeing up funds and improving safety for IHC's vulnerable clients and their families. "It's very satisfying making savings for an organisation whose whole focus is to make lives better for people with intellectual disabilities," concludes Parata. "When we do fleet replacement programmes we have the devices moved into the new vehicles. The Argus Tracking devices have a longer life than our vehicles, and their durability helps us to brighten clients' lives."



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