

## Case Study City of Chesapeake, Virginia

### How FleetFocus™ Helps Chesapeake Accomplish Its Mission to Protect the Investment of Their City's Citizens



Nestled in the heart of the Hampton Roads area of Virginia is the City of Chesapeake. Chesapeake, the third largest city in the Commonwealth, is located just 20 minutes from the Virginia Beach oceanfront, 15 minutes from downtown Norfolk, and 45 minutes from the history of Colonial Williamsburg. Over 200,000 residents enjoy the city's urban areas, as well as many square miles of protected forests and wetlands. Visitors flock to the area to enjoy its rich history, as well as many local attractions, culture, golf, waterways, and its serene natural beauty.

Helping to maintain this diverse area and provide essential services to its citizenry is the City of Chesapeake's Central Fleet Management (CFM) division. The Fleet Management team, led by Fleet Manager George Hrichak, oversees some 1800 vehicles with an annual operating budget of \$9.5 million. The CFM is guided in their work by the division's mission statement: **To provide efficient and cost-effective fleet management services for a safe, economical, and environmentally sound fleet that meets the needs of our customers and which protects the investment of our citizens.**

In 2002 the City of Chesapeake sought to modernize the technology used by the CFM and seek greater efficiency by moving from an outdated mainframe system to AssetWork's fully web-enabled fleet management solution; FleetFocus. The transition to FleetFocus provided the City with the robust maintenance and reporting capabilities needed to maintain the fleet's light and heavy duty vehicles, stationary assets, tools and even the city's boats.

"FleetFocus is very user-friendly. The technicians in the shop caught on really fast. In that regard, we had very little resistance implementing this system. It helps provide smooth processes," Hrichak said when speaking about the transition.

As with many public sector fleets, there is always a threat of privatization as financially strapped communities seek the most economical way to maintain fleet operations. By using FleetFocus, the City of Chesapeake is able to provide data that proves staff productivity and validates that the cost of maintaining the City fleet is competitive with private service providers. By utilizing the performance and auditing features of the FleetFocus solution, the City can remain competitive while also realizing improvements in efficiency that will allow more value for the taxpayer dollar. Despite fluctuations and even decreases in the Central Fleet Management division budget over the years, the Fleet Services Team has consistently met operational demands. FleetFocus is one of the tools that the City uses to learn to do more with less.

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*George Hrichak, CEM, CPFP  
Fleet Manager*

The challenges presented in maintaining an aging fleet are all too common in public sector fleets. Fleet Manager George Hrichak estimates that nearly one-third of the City fleet is old and may need to be retired. FleetFocus enabled the City of Chesapeake to flag these older vehicles as “Exceeds life” and then isolate and report on the costs associated with maintaining these specific vehicles. The result of the analysis was startling: 73% of the entire CFM budget is used to maintain just 43% of the vehicles. Armed with this information, Hrichak and his team were able to determine which vehicles should be permanently retired, sold at auction, or used for parts. Additionally, policy has now been enacted whereby any vehicle that has been flagged as ‘exceeded lifecycle’ must get departmental approval before any costly repairs are performed. These and other proactive approaches help to significantly contain expenses to the City.

Bouyed by this success and eager to make use of other features offered by the FleetFocus system, the City of Chesapeake then went on to identified several other areas where FleetFocus has been integral to their improvement and success.

**Decrease repair turnaround times by more than half.**

In 2002, it was taking an average of 10 days to complete repairs. By 2008, that had been reduced to less than 4 days. Each mechanic is responsible for one bay and since the summer of 2008, each works on a laptop with wireless access. The technicians rely on FleetFocus’ Technician Portal which gives easy access to the data they need so they can get back to working on their maintenance tasks. It also allows for easier entering of data so that the database is constantly updated with current information. Technicians are able to view work that has been assigned to them for completion, or create new work orders from scratch (depending on system access granted). The goal for 2009 is to reduce turnaround time to 2 days.

**Decrease comeback rate by more than 75%.**

Chesapeake is diligent about collecting and tracking data. Productivity for each technician is tracked daily so that the technicians and management understand the actual number of shop worked hours versus billable hours, as well as comeback rate. Before using FleetFocus, they estimate that 8-14% of vehicles returned within 30 days to have the same repair done again. Now that comeback rate had been reduced to less than 2% and each month Chesapeake recognizes employees who have zero comebacks for the month.

**Fix everything that’s broken at once.**

The City of Chesapeake estimates that that 75% of the time, a vehicle that comes in for PM needs other work, such as a light bulb replacement or something else. By fixing it all at once, they have been able reduce the downtime of that vehicle having to come into the shop more than once. This saves them on fleet labor, but more importantly, it gets that vehicle back on the road doing its job.

**Reduce overdue PM inspections per month by 75%.**

In 2002, there were over 40 PM inspections overdue each month. By providing better service and having better tracking capabilities, the number of overdue inspections each month is generally less than 10. FleetFocus also allows the City of Chesapeake to be proactive rather than reactive in scheduling PM appointments. They track all missed PM appointments and then each department talks with the offenders to try and remedy the situation.

**Use data to track parts, vehicle and service problems.**

FleetFocus is stores all its data on a single database, so that information such as parts and repair history are easily accessible. By tracking trends, supervisors have been able to recognize deficient parts and vehicles. In one case, they had trucks that continually broke down due to the same reasons. FleetFocus provided the managers with real data to address the issue with the vendor and the City of Chesapeake was able to cancel a 5 year contract that might have cost them a great deal of money and aggravation.

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**Increase overall customer satisfaction from less than 25% to well over 75%.**

In efforts to manage their services and customer satisfaction, the City of Chesapeake surveys each of its customers after completing a repair or PM service appointment. In 1998, only about 20% of the customers listed their satisfaction with the garage performance as excellent. For the last 5 years, the surveys have received an excellent rating 75% of the time. This can be attributed to the city's efforts to reduce turnaround time, fix everything at once and be more proactive with maintenance.

"The purpose of FleetFocus is to help us do our job better. That is why we survey our customers after every visit. We are proud to have over 75% of respondents say that their service was excellent. FleetFocus helps us to achieve that," stated Hrichak.

Hrichak identified several key reasons that FleetFocus is beneficial for the City of Chesapeake:

- FleetFocus is very intuitive.
- FleetFocus provides the data needed to justify existence and avoid privatization.
- FleetFocus keeps vehicles on the road.
- FleetFocus helps them make wise decisions.

In summary, Hrichak summed up FleetFocus, "Technology has made the job of a fleet manager much easier. We view this as a tool that helps us service the vehicles better, which in turn helps those vehicles serve the public better."

**Overview**

Customer  
**City of Chesapeake  
Virginia**

Industry  
**City Government**

Fleet Size and Makeup  
**1,800 on- and  
off-road vehicles**

Number of shops  
**4**

Number of Technicians  
**30**

Product  
**FleetFocus™**



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AssetWorks' applications can  
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