

The Challenge

This London-based taxi business has grown steadily over the past forty years, both organically and through acquisitions. Its owners are now seeking ways to run the enterprise more efficiently, with particular focus on garage operations.

The company has a fleet of more than five thousand vehicles. All repairs are made at a single site in West London, which currently operates well above capacity. The congestion this causes has led to the under-utilisation of vehicles, with only 86% presently on the road. Ameo was engaged to review the site's operation, to analyse workflows from start to finish and to help the company achieve its goal of 95% fleet utilisation.

The Outcome

During a six-week engagement, we developed a blueprint for a smarter maintenance operation.

We revised the workflow to allow a more efficient flow of vehicles through the site, and we supported this with 'as is' and 'to be' process maps, developed in conjunction with the company's own team.

We made recommendations for improving the site layout, setting out the optimum activities to be allocated to each area. This included redesigning the multi-storey car park and staff parking bays.

Our approach focused strongly on engaging with staff, both on the front line and in management. As a result, the company now has a clear road map to more efficient working, which is owned and understood by the business and its people.

The Engagement

We took a four-staged approach to this piece of work: 1) orientation and agreement of scope, 2) mapping of 'as is' processes, 3) designing the future state of operations, 4) recommending improvements (including a high-level plan). This ensured we left our client with a sound understanding of where it was at present, together with a clear roadmap for future improvement.

To deliver our review, we deployed a small team of Lean / Six Sigma specialists, and we followed a Lean / Six approach throughout the project. Our level of industry knowledge surprised our client: both our team members had experience in the fleet / transport field and were able to engage with staff on a technical, as well as operational, level.

We delivered our work over the summer, which happened to be our client's busiest time of year. This meant we were unable to organise a formal programme of engagement events. Instead, we spent much time on the shop floor, speaking to staff as they were working. This was a resounding success: it allowed us to engage with a good cross-section of workers and managers and to witness their challenges first hand at peak times.

Alongside our site recommendations, we also suggested some improvements the company could make to its data analytics.