



## Professional Farm Services

### On call 24/7 – life in the farming industry

Farms and farm animals wait for no one – that’s why Professional Farm Services, a Cambridge-based sales and service company, is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Director Dave McMillan says that providing highly responsive customer service is the key to staying in business in the farm industry. And he should know: he’s been in business since 1984.

Professional Farm Services looks after dairy and dry stock farmers, lifestyle block owners, dairy factories and their farms as well as local district council town water supply facilities. The team includes technicians that install and maintain water and vacuum pumps, a full industrial electrical division, and an engineering department that do stainless steel and aluminium welding, and make on-the-spot repairs.

“We do everything for farms,” says Dave. “We’re a one stop shop. We run a fleet of about a dozen vehicles, mostly Ford Ranger utes and Toyota Hiace vans, but we also have three trucks including a HIAB rig so we can handle big water tanks up on the farms.”

When Dave heard about GPS fleet tracking, he thought it sounded like a great thing for the business and had it installed, initially into about 10 vehicles, then across the whole fleet. There are now Teletrac Navman Qubes in the vehicles, and M-Navs in all the cabs. Dave and the office staff use Teletrac Navman DIRECTOR software every day to see where all the guys and the vehicles are. Dave also uses the Teletrac Navman app on his phone.

“I’m the 24/7 response person,” says Dave. “I get the calls when an urgent job needs to be done. I can go into my phone and pull up location of the guys straight away, then send the closest person to the job. It’s fast and efficient.”

#### Managing mileage

Dave says that when they installed Teletrac Navman, the business made savings in charged-out mileage straight away.



*“We wouldn’t be without Teletrac Navman. It has smartened up a lot of things in the business.” Dave McMillan, Director.*

“We saved about \$125 per vehicle per month, which is a very significant sum of money! Before the installation, the guys would leave the shop, go to a farm, go to another farm and back to the shop. They would guess the mileage at about 20km, but that was way under.

"Now we know the mileage exactly, and can apportion it correctly to the right client. Each day we print out the mileage reports. When the guys arrive they sit down and charge out all the mileage to clients each day, so we're always on top of it. This means that we never get complaints from farmers now about mileage, because we can easily justify it. It's all in the system: when the guys start driving to a farm, when they arrive, when they leave. It's so damn simple," adds Dave.

## Rural navigation

Working in a rural environment, drivers have to navigate to some pretty remote places. Staff use the M-Navs for navigation all the time, and the in cab messaging feature makes it easier to stay in touch with staff on the road.

In the office, staff use DIRECTOR to locate vehicles, decide which vehicle is closest to the job, then route staff to the most efficient way. If materials or equipment needs to be collected, the office staff can see who will be heading through that area next, to minimise unnecessary side trips.

"Our office staff love it," says Dave. "They wouldn't part with it."

### Maintenance and management

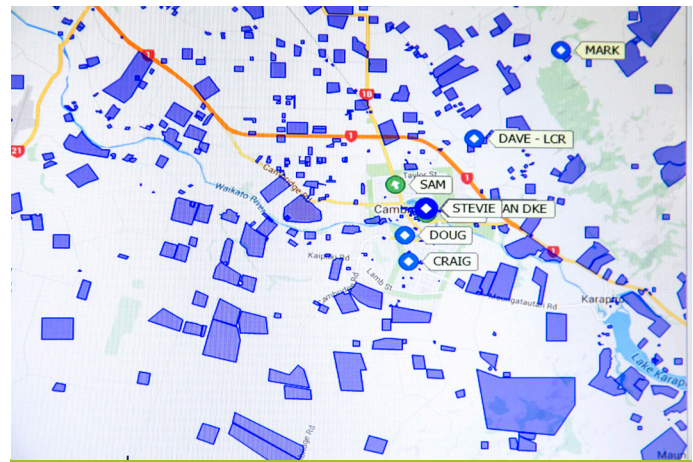
Professional Farm Services uses the Teletrac Navman DIRECTOR maintenance module to keep track of WOF, tyres, oil changes, and so forth. Dave says that the alerting functions have been very useful for staying on top of vehicle maintenance.

"We also use DIRECTOR to help us better maintain our client's equipment. We can go into the system to see how many times we have visited a particular pump to maintain and repair it. Being able to access this information also helps us to cross reference with our invoicing.

## Business longevity

Dave says that good staff relationships are very important to the business.

"We have a great team here, some of our staff have been with us for many years, in fact one staff member has been here 28 years!



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"We could probably get about 10 percent more efficiency out of our fleet, using the Teletrac Navman system, but I think you shouldn't hammer your staff too hard. I think looking after your people is more important.

"The Teletrac Navman system has become a business tool for us and we wouldn't be without it. It has smartened up a lot of things in the business."

### Benefits:

- Enables highly responsive customer service
- Provides significant cost savings through accurate mileage chargebacks
- Improves navigation and route efficiency
- Better management of maintenance