FAMS – Frequently Asked Questions
v.1.0

Introduction

This document serves as a supplement to the FAMS Vehicle Spreadsheet Instructions located at https://famsportal.dgs.ca.gov and is not intended as a replacement or substitute for reading through the entire guide prior to the preparation of agency vehicle data for submission to the Fleet Asset Management System (FAMS).

FAMS is a project sponsored by the State of California Department of General Services (DGS). The purpose of FAMS is to provide a method for analyzing and reporting upon vehicular assets owned by California state agencies. The information collected is used to support information requests from the state legislature and to prepare reports for the federal government. FAMS collects information about agency vehicles including usage and fuel consumption

General Questions

Q. Do I need a user account to enter information into FAMS?
A. Yes. Contact us at famssupport@dgs.ca.gov to set up user accounts. Also, multiple user accounts can be set up for each agency.

Q. Do I need to enter the vehicles that are leased from the Department of General Services?
A. No. The Department of General Services is responsible for reporting these vehicles since it owns them.

Q. Do I need to include vehicles that are leased from rental car companies?
A. Yes, but only submit information for long-term leases. Report all vehicles leased from rental car companies if the lease is for more than seven (7) business days.

Q. Once all my fleet data is entered into FAMS, do I update the database once a year?
A. No. Beginning with January 2009 agencies are required to submit the following by the 15th of each month:

- ✓ FAMS Vehicle Spreadsheet (Only need to submit this if there are changes to your vehicle fleet such as new vehicle purchased or the disposition of a vehicle)
- ✓ FAMS Usage Spreadsheet
- ✓ FAMS Fuel File (Only need to submit if you agency has bulk fuel)

Q. Do I have to track fuel usage for each vehicle?
A. Yes.

Q. Are golf carts, riding lawnmowers, and motorcycles included in the FAMS report?
A. Yes.

Q. Electric vehicles?
A. Yes.

Q. Pick up purchased in 1952?
A. Yes.

Q. How often is Vehicle usage information turned in?
A. Every month by the 15th for that month.

Q. What is VIN decoding?
A. For model year vehicles 1980 and newer, a number of vehicle parameters such as make/model, engine configuration and related vehicle details, can be derived by FAMS from the Vehicle Information Number.

   What this means is that if the model year of a given vehicle is 1980 or newer, and a given entry field on the FAMS vehicle spreadsheet is noted as being ***Provided By VIN**, it is considered to be VIN decodable and even if referenced as 'required', no manual entry need be made.

Q. How are Voyager fuel transactions linked to vehicles?
A. DGS collects statewide voyager fuel transactions each month. The fuel transactions are linked to vehicles within FAMS by:

   1. Matching the Voyager Account ID field to the Agency's account number in a list of Agency Voyager accounts, and
   2. Comparing the Voyager Vin Num Field to the FAMS Equipment number field. If the fields match, the fuel transactions are associated with the vehicle. If there is no match the fuel transactions are associated to the Agency's dummy vehicle record.

Q. How are agency fuel transactions linked to vehicles?
A. FAMS acquires bulk fuel transactions, which are in turn linked to vehicles, from the fuel data spreadsheets uploaded into the FAMS Web App portal on a monthly basis by those agencies that have bulk fuel.

Data Entry

Q. What if the data entered in a given field is not the same as the specified format?

A. In order to upload vehicle data successfully to the FAMS database, ALL data submitted MUST conform to the specific format established for it, otherwise an upload error will result.

Sometimes there may be instances where data being retrieved from the appendix tables may be less than the total format length specified for a particular entry item, and this is acceptable, but going over will just about always result in an upload error. FAMS support staff should be contacted whenever there are questions or clarification needed for a given entry item.

Q. What are some examples of the type of data formats used in FAMS?

A. See below.

Format or Valid Values	Definition	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Alphanumeric (17)	17 digit combination of letters and numbers	1G1ND52JXX6247846	1G1ND52J6247846 1G1ND52JXX624784678 1G1ND52-XX6247846
Date (MM/DD/CCYY)	10 digit date format	05/19/2009	May 19, 2009 5/19/09 5-19-2009
Numeric (######)	Up to a 6 digit integer	6000 2500	6,000 6000.25 2,500.00
Valid Values	Off-Road, Snow Condition, Cargo Capacity,	Off-Road Snow Condition Cargo Capacity	No Roads Emergency Use Lots of Hills
Valid Values	Ground, Water, Aircraft	Ground Water Aircraft	Dump Truck Passenger Off Road
Valid Values	Yes, No	Yes No	N/A X

Q. What is data validation?
A. The FAMS application performs a number of data checks, or validation, before data is accepted for upload.

Q. What are some examples of the types of data validation performed by the FAMS application?
A. See below.

Leading or trailing spaces in data fields	Sometimes the only way to check for this type of data entry error is by running a *Find* operation for ' ' from the *Edit* menu.
'Hidden' Entry Field	Column (A), which is used to reference upload data in the vehicle spreadsheet and must be present for data upload to be successful, is normally 'hidden' in a FAMS vehicle spreadsheet, but mass data operations, such as copying or pasting from one spreadsheet to another, can cause it to be altered or even deleted. Call FAMS support for assistance whenever a question comes up in this area.

Q. What does this 'hidden' column (A) in the FAMS vehicle spreadsheet actually look like?
A. See below.

(A)	Fleet Asset…
Month Ending	Month Ending:
AgencyKey	Agency Key:
Space Row	
DataModelAudit	
ColumnHeader	**Vehicle Identification**
ColumnHeader	**Mobile Equipment #**
DATAROW	PU233
DATAROW	PU231
DATAROW	PU279
DATAROW	PU152
DATAROW	PU274
DATAROW	PU275
DATAROW	PU208

Q. What are some other examples of how selected data entries should be filled out?
A. See below.

4.3 Mobile Equipment

Description	Unique alphanumeric code assigned and used by state agency to identify an Asset. Code assigned by state agency must continue to be used for life of asset. *For agencies that do not use equipment numbers, please substitute with the VIN number.*
Required?	**Ground Equipment – Required** **Water Equipment – Required** **Aircraft – Required**
Format	alphanumeric (25)
Valid Values	*Assigned by agency*

Regardless of the size of your fleet, it is important to think ahead when deciding what will go in this field as the 'Mobile Equipment #' in FAMS since it will be used to reference usage and related vehicle information from that point onward. An example of one possible method to use might be one that allows you to identify and keep together different vehicle sub-category groups at a glance.

Example of using sub-category grouping within the Mobile Equipment # field:

Equipment # using Sub-Category Grouping	Description
PU100-200	Pick-Up
SUV100-200	SUV
AF100-200	Alt Fuel Vehicle
VN100-200	Van
SN100-200	Sedan

4.4 Vehicle Category

Description	Major classification of vehicle.
Required?	**Required**
Format	alphanumeric (15)
Valid Values	Ground, Water, Aircraft

Ground, Water, or Aircraft are the ONLY entries that can be made to this field. Anything else will cause a data entry error when the FAMS application attempts to upload it.

4.7 Make

Provided By VIN

Description	Vehicle manufacturer abbreviation.
Required?	**Ground Equipment – Required for Model Years 1979 and earlier. VIN decoded for equipment 1980 and later** **Water Equipment – Required** **Aircraft – Required**
Format	alphanumeric (10)
Valid Values	See Appendix B – Make/Model

With this field enter in the Make of the vehicle. **Appendix B** in the back of the FAMS Vehicle Excel File instructional manual has a partial list of Makes and Models. To find a complete list of Makes please login to the FAMS Portal and click on the Make drop down list in the Quick Search area.

6. Appendix B – Make/Model*

Vehicle Category	Make	Model
Ground Equipment	BLUE BIRD	SCHOOL/TRANSIT BUS
Ground Equipment	BUICK	CENTURY CUSTOM
Ground Equipment	BUICK	LACROSSE CX
Ground Equipment	BUICK	LESABRE LIMITED

* Please note there are more makes listed in Appendix B than what is shown for illustration above.

4.27 Acquisition Date

Provided By VIN

Description	Date the vehicle was acquired by agency.
Required?	**Ground Equipment – Required** **Water Equipment – Required** **Aircraft – Required**
Format	Date (MM/DD/CCYY)
Valid Values	*Example - 01/26/2008, 03/29/2007*

With this entry, it is very important to use the specific format as shown in the example. As far as the computer is concerned, '1/26/08' is not the same as '01/26/2008'. In other words, 'MM/DD/CCYY' is the only date format allowed.