

# PRAISE

## Preventing Road Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees

### Case Study: Bolk Transport

ETSC's PRAISE project addresses the safety aspects of driving at work and driving to work. Its aim is to promote best practice in order to help employers secure high road safety standards for their employees.

In this case study, **Marco Koopman, Driver and Material Manager in charge of Quality, Environmental, Health, and Safety Policy at Bolk**, discusses the organisation's approach to work related road risk in an SME.

#### FACTFILE

Company: Bolk Transport

Sector: International Transport/Logistics

Fleet: 190 trucks, 400 trailers and 350 employees

Bolk is an international transport company based in the Netherlands, with a variety of different activities, including container transport, distribution, warehousing and logistic services. It employs about 300 people and runs some 180 trucks and 400 trailers. Bolk operates its own garage with mechanics who undertake all maintenance tasks. Bolk won the 2014 PRAISE Award in the SME category.



## **How do you approach work-related road risk at Bolk?**

As an international transport company it is very important for us to have the best safety for all employees and we always try to use the best qualitative technologies to improve safety.

Implementing standards through a coherent risk management programme has helped us to prevent unclear situations and provided more structure for employees who are better informed of company procedures and our safety culture. Adopting these standards is important for our employees' safety and health management but also serves to add value for customers.

In 2014 we adopted the standards set out in ISO 9001. We followed this by beginning work in 2015 on ISO 14001 (concerning the environment) and OSHAS 18001<sup>1</sup> (concerning safety and risk management). We have also worked on implementing code 95, which stipulates that every truck driver in the European Union must undertake a course every five years so as to keep their licence valid.

Our driving instruction is delivered in-company using our own instructor. We find this to be beneficial as the instructor knows the drivers and the jobs they do and can use this to improve their personal training.

Any accidents or injuries that occur are logged in a form, which helps us to understand what happened, in a systematic way. This serves to keep a record but also helps us to devise solutions to prevent future incidents.

## **What kind of road safety initiatives has Bolk started?**

At Bolk we are always looking at new innovations to improve road safety and personal safety. We have implemented a number of initiatives and standards to help improve the safety of our drivers and vehicles.

All trucks are equipped with a hands-free calling device and an on-board computer for communication and real-time monitoring. In 2011 we started installing Dräger alcohol interlocks in our trucks, which check the driver for alcohol consumption via a breathalyser before he can start the truck. All of our trucks bought since 2011 have an interlock installed.

All our trucks are equipped with 'stand airco'. When the truck is standing and the engine is not running, the driver can turn this function on to keep the cabin cool and comfortable during rest periods in hot weather. As of 2012, all new trucks are equipped with ACC (adaptive cruise control) and it is now a standard for our company when we buy new trucks.

We have installed tyre pressure measuring devices on the premises of the company. The machine has two sensors in the floor which the trucks drive over. Within 1 minute it shows the driver the exact pressure of all tyres on the truck and trailer. They can then fill the tyres if necessary.

Since 2012, we monitor all of our drivers using the data we get from our trucks and we give all drivers a monthly analysis based on their driving style. This is combined with tips and advice on how to improve their driving. For example, we give advice on issues such as the use of cruise control, the effects of harsh braking, high RPM and long idling.

In 2013 we installed a device for measuring the height of the combined truck and trailer, the system is accurate to within 0.7 cm and allows drivers to ascertain if the vehicle is overloaded. We also constructed a bridge which goes over the vehicle and allows drivers to remove ice and snow from the roof before leaving the yard during winter.

---

<sup>1</sup> Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series

Also on the premises is a place for adjusting the mirrors in the right way so that the drivers have the best visibility. Our company rules also forbid the use of dashboard tables and similar windscreen mounted objects which reduce visibility for the driver.

### **Do you have targets for reducing collisions, incidents or insurance claims?**

We stay in close contact with our insurance company and talk every few months about which drivers are at greater risk than others. Drivers who have caused damage to their vehicle will be informed about the costs and we discuss with them what they could have done to prevent it.

### **Maintenance is an important factor for safety – who is responsible for this at Bolk?**

Every driver is responsible for the truck and trailer that they drive and must check them before departure on every journey. Our trucks and trailers undergo mandatory annual checks in our garage, and we also check them a few times each year for maintenance purposes.

### **Do you think tiredness is a risk factor? How do you make sure that the Bolk Transport drivers are well rested?**

Every month we check all driving times and any faults made by the driver that contravene the law. Then we discuss with drivers what they can do to prevent these faults from happening again.

Resting time is very important to us and our drivers and will always be arranged. As mentioned above, the stand airco system helps to maximise the comfort of drivers during rest periods.

### **Have there been any economic effects after the improvement of road safety in your company?**

At Bolk, we never hesitate to invest in safety and we do not have a limited budget for safety issues. Our company policy is to always look carefully when it is necessary to invest in order to address specific problems.

It is difficult to estimate the economic effect, but it is clearly beneficial. For example, we monitor our drivers' driving styles monthly. By doing this we saved a lot of fuel consumption and also reduced tyre wear and maintenance costs.

### **Has the improvement of safety levels led to a reduction of vehicle damage, collision or personal injury within your organisation?**

We do not have real data for evidence that damage and personal injuries are reducing. Although we monitor our initiatives it is difficult to say that a reduction is due to a specific investment. However, in general, damage and personal injury is very low.

## **How is responsibility for developing and implementing road safety processes and initiatives defined within your company?**

I (Marco Koopman) am the Quality, Environmental, Health and Safety manager at Bolk, and I am also a driver and material manager. As such, I'm responsible for implementing the ISOs and safety features and also for ensuring that the drivers get the right instructions and the right personal protective equipment. I'm supported in this role by those higher up in the management chain.

Our director is also working on the ISO and wants the best safety for all employees. This is included in our manuals and company rules, which we have written together to secure the best safety results.

## **What are Bolk Transport's plans for the future?**

We are continuing to renew the fleet, with old trucks being replaced every year. All of our new trucks are fitted with safety features including lane departure warning, ESC, ACC and AEB. We are committed to continuing our driver training and to monitor progress in the years to come.

## **Partners**

**FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE**



**Dräger Foundation**

**[www.etsc.eu/praise](http://www.etsc.eu/praise)**