



## Aperam Stainless Belgium, Genk Plant

**Award:** Safety

**Category:** Accident Analysis; Safety Training

### Increasing Safety-Awareness with Transport Companies

#### Challenge

Besides own co-workers, Aperam has felt that also with his subcontractors there is a further challenge and potential to increase safety-awareness and behaviour and thus to reduce incidents at our sites. One of these groups is the transport companies that transport our finished products, i.e. stainless steel coils and sheets, to our customers. The drivers that enter our plants are a very heterogeneous group of people, coming from different places around Europe and performing a series of risk bearing activities.

In 2015, we registered one Lost Time Injury (LTI) at the plant and one in January 2016. In the same periods we detected more than 10 serious near-misses. The situation was unacceptable.

The objective was to change the behaviour of both the truck drivers and our employees who work with them. The scope of the action plan included personal behaviour, the level of knowledge of the safety rules and the compliance with safety rules and the mitigation of the hazardous situations.

We are, more than ever, convinced that zero accidents is attainable.

#### Action

At Aperam Genk, in the department in charge of the loading of our finished products in the trucks to carry them to the customer, we registered 1 LTI of a truck driver in 2015, 1 in 2016 and also different near-misses.

The truck drivers perform a series of risk bearing activities:

- Entering and descending trucks;
- Loading and unloading;
- Opening and closing trucks, securing loads.

Typical risks that are related to these activities are falling from trucks, getting crunched or getting cut by the sharp edges of the material. Besides this, not correctly secured loads, introduce risks at transporting the goods.

At Genk, with an average of more than 150 loads per weekday and more than 25 transport

companies and their subcontractors, the aim was to bring them on the same level as we request from our staff. Since many years, a “Cargo Securing” procedure, applied in the Aperam plants, imposes a list of Safety actions to secure the loading, unloading and transport.

The situation, at this time, showed us that it was unacceptable. We analysed the situation, taking into account the different configurations and pointed out 3 areas of improvement:

- Technical safety;
- Behaviour, both of the truck drivers as well as our own staff
- Communication, i.e. increasing awareness at the managerial level of the transport companies.

Obviously, we shared the analysis with the other Aperam plants during our periodic exchange meetings. The same objectives and the same conclusions were designed.

The different improvements were:

- Seminars with transporters and their

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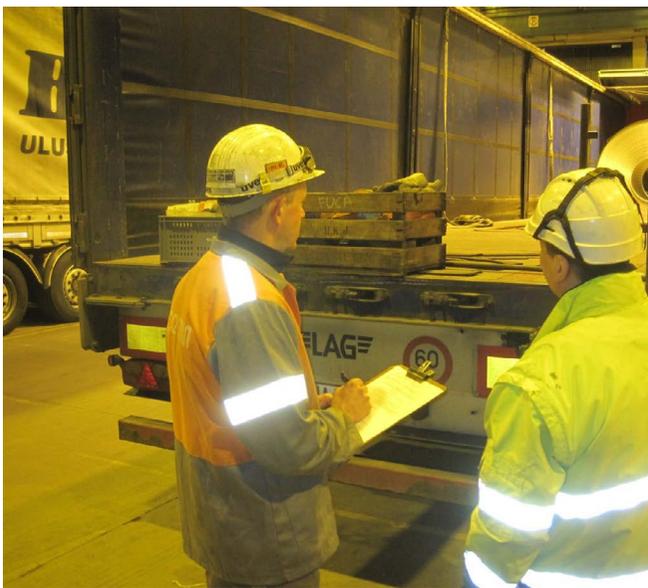
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- management to increase the awareness and exchanging on best practices.
- Working on technical safety: list of authorized tools to be used, staircases to mount trucks, separate areas for drivers to wait during loading/unloading. Trucks that were not appropriate or that are not appropriately equipped are immediately banned from the plant.
- An instruction movie that has been distributed to the companies and available at our truck entries in different languages. Zero-tolerance of alcohol abuse.
- Local audits at several levels: audit campaign by an external, regular safety audits by the management and operational audit loop for every load to be loaded.
- Regular feedback of the audit remarks to transport companies. Companies that have been performing well are congratulated (e.g. Award of best transporter of the year). Companies are formally requested for action plans. In the case of severe misbehaviour or non-execution of an improvement plan, economical sanctions are taken
- Regular boss-to-boss meetings between plant

- management and transport management.
- This fair play policy has become a part of our regular evaluation of the transport companies and we defined safety as an essential element in our purchasing besides cost and service.

To become a sustainable safe company, this action is declared as a priority.



*Aperam Genk Truck Audit*

### Outcome

By having this multi-approach (technical safety, communication, behaviour safety) and working on as well truck drivers, their management as well as local operational people, we have succeeded to increase the safety awareness and are now one year without incidents after having one LTI in 2015 and one in January 2016.

By means of our audit system, we were able to capture over 2500 remarks in 2016 that have been analysed by our truck companies and where we had action.

Truck companies that were not willing to follow this improvement cycle are banned and for some of them we already see improvement of the safety statistics (decrease in number of remarks) and where needed improvement of the fleet. At Genk, this resulted now in one year without any serious incident (LTI or declared accident).



*Operational tool for reporting remarks*