



Experiences in commercial transport

Nora Källström

Strategic Development Manager

DB Schenker Sweden

On October 19, 2004, just after 7 pm, there was a violent traffic accident in the south of Sweden.

A drunk Hungarian truck driver steered his truck onto the wrong side of the highway and crashed into two passenger cars.

A 51-year-old female medical doctor was killed.

And an entire family: mom, 26, dad, 25, and their two children, a 21-month-old boy and a two-week infant.

Ironically, the 25-year-old male was about to finish his studies as a therapist for drug and alcohol abusers.

Starting out...



Starting in 2005, DB Schenker Sweden introduced random breathalyzer tests for our professional drivers – and the tests will continue until most of our trucks have alcolocks installed.

From January 1, 2006, our own hauler company, Schenker Åkeri, decided to start implementing alcolocks in our own truck fleet, in all new trucks.

Crunching numbers



543 vehicles total, whereof 490 trucks and 53 smaller, distribution vehicles.

305 trucks have alcolocks installed today, another 41 will be installed before the end of the year.

We plan to reach 100 % within a few years, exchanging on average 10 % of our trucks per year (it normally takes about eight to ten years to exchange our entire fleet).

Total cost per alcolock is about €1500.

Our smaller distribution vehicles all already have alcolocks installed – and the life cycle for the vehicle is shorter than for a truck - but when the vehicle is exchanged, the alcolock is moved over to the new vehicle, so there is no new investment.

We count on the alcolock to last as long as the “longhaul” truck lasts (8-10 years).

Soon we can end the random breathalyzer tests, which we pay for today.

Is it worth the investment?

How much would you be willing to pay to save a life?

Initially, we had our drivers try three or four different alcolock models – and decided to go with the one they liked the best.

We chose an alcolock that, once installed, stays with the truck until either one needs to be exchanged.

Installing the alcolock takes about an hour.

By picking one contractor to deliver all alcolocks we have several advantages such as “buying power” – and it makes it easier for our drivers to switch vehicles, having familiar equipment in all trucks.

Coincidentally, we use the same equipment as the Swedish police force does. If our equipment gives a deflection, so would the police’s equipment, should there be a test at a police checkpoint.

The union has nothing against alcolocks. However, initially, they questioned our initiative to have random breathalyzer tests, saying it threatened the driver's personal integrity.

Realizing that it takes a long time for us to install alcolocks in such a large fleet, the union made an exception, allowing breathalyzer tests until most alcolocks are installed.

Our drivers have never questioned the use of alcolocks – rather the opposite.

They say it adds to their professional pride.

Our ambition:
get rid of the abuse
– keep the employee

We don't use alcolocks because we think our drivers are drunk.

We use alcolocks because we want to make sure that no one drives drunk.

Ever.