

Proceedings of PRAISE Seminar in Warsaw 24 September 2009

The seminar is part of ETSC's project on Preventing Road Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees (PRAISE) which aims to increase road safety in the work context. ETSC's first country seminar in Poland brought together companies, employers associations, government representatives and road safety experts. It was co-organised by ETSC, the Global Road Safety Partnership and ITS Poland. The seminar was hosted by the Polish-German Foundation on Cooperation and enjoyed the special patronage of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Infrastructure. The project PRAISE is co-funded by the European Commission, the German Road Safety Council and the Swiss Council for Accident Prevention.

Following presentations from the European Commission, the Deputy Minister for Transport Policy, the Chair of the road safety Parliamentary Group, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the National Road Safety Council and ETSC, work related road safety in Poland was presented by the GRSP and two employer associations. A lively discussion chaired by Mr. Kowalczyk, a journalist from the 'Business Pulse', ensued between government representatives, employers and road safety experts. The second part of the afternoon's seminar was devoted to discussing good practice from three very different companies (two multinationals active in Poland and an SME from the UK) who have taken a different approach to addressing road risk in their work place.

Key Outcomes Summed up by Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of ETSC

Something concrete needs to be undertaken by responsible actors to deal with the annual death toll of 16.7% of road traffic deaths in Poland that occur in the scope of work.

There is a need for greater levels of awareness about work related road safety not only in Poland but in the whole of the EU. This needs to be taken on board by different relevant Ministries and Parliament. It's clear that employers and their employees are both responsible. There is a legal obligation enshrined in the Polish Labour Code and in the Directive on Risk Assessment 89/391/EEC but there is also a moral obligation to act. Finally, experience has shown that it makes good business sense.

Maria Cristina Marolda of the Road Safety Unit in the European Commission explained that the European Commission is supporting PRAISE as a new field of work and research on work related road safety. She gave an overview of road safety in the EU and the specific situation relating to the road traffic accidents at work. She also presented first ideas for the upcoming Road Safety Programme which aims to place "people" at its centre. Stakeholders are welcome to contribute to the EU consultation: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/consultations/2009_11_20_ersap_2011_2020_en.htm

Mr. Jankowski, Deputy Minister for Transport Policy gave a brief intervention on the road safety situation in Poland making the link to a mining accident that had killed 17 people on the day before and comparing this to the terrible annual toll of 5,800 road deaths in Poland. This represents the total population of the village affected by the mining accident. The Polish government is focussing on improving infrastructure limiting speed of drivers, tackling drink driving amongst young people and working with NGOs to educate all citizens.

Mrs. Bublewicz , Member of Parliament and Chair of the Road Safety Committee on Road Safety, explained that the Parliament is often missing important issues on road safety. There is little social awareness and the state of company cars is worse than private cars. Companies don't pay attention to adopting internal procedures for safety. There is a need for change in order to reach road safety reduction targets. The Committee has set an objective to reduce the number of accidents caused by employees, will analyse the outcomes of the ETSC's meeting and will look at legislative options to change the situation.

Ellen Townsend of ETSC gave a brief overview of the PRAISE project presenting the aims to improve work related road safety in the EU by generating new knowledge, collecting and exchanging best practice. ETSC will be publishing 9 thematic reports on different topics over the 3 year period. An annual brunch meeting in Brussels and 6 Country Seminars will be organised to disseminate outcomes and bring stakeholders together to discuss ways of improving work related road safety. Employers will also be able to apply for an annual award for exemplary efforts for tackling road safety. Link: <http://www.etsc.eu/PRAISE.php>

Pawel Widel of the Global Road Safety Partnership presented the outcomes of recent research into fleet safety in Poland. A total of 16.7% of all road deaths in 2007 were work related. This represents 8.6% of all work related injuries. He also gave an overview of the legal obligations set out in the Polish law. The GRSP in Poland set up in 2006 a programme dealing specifically with fleet safety and has developed training materials for use by employers. He explained how the Safe Fleet approach can fundamentally change the way road safety is managed in companies and the process adopted by companies to bring about this change. More info: <http://www.pbd.org.pl>

Mrs. Staniewicz of the Polish Centre Business Club gave a short presentation stressing the need for all stakeholders to take responsibility. Employers need to take care of their employees and condition of their vehicles as part of their obligations under Health and Safety law. The basic starting point should be to check the driving licence and the number of kms driven.

Mr. Michalowicz representing an Employers Association (KPP) gave a detailed overview of the legal framework and scope of the existing regulation quoting relevant articles in the Polish Constitution and in EU law. He supported the need to raise awareness amongst employers. There is a need for better quality management especially looking at the entry/exit procedure and number of hours worked. Employers need to spot the crisis situation but also recognise that there are savings to be made.

Mrs. Klimczak-Nowacka, Ministry of Labour, stated that this topic falls under the responsibility of the Labour Inspectorates which are separate from the Ministry of Labour. The legal situation governing fleet drivers is still complex and needs specific regulation. The Social Insurance Act includes a definition of a road traffic accident at work and includes a journey from the office to another place of work. There is a need to take action to eliminate these dangers and a need to record these in the register of accidents at work which is regulated by the Social Insurance Act and is linked to compensation for injury to body and property.

Mr. Gregorczyk Head, of the National Road Safety Council noted problems existing in Poland in observing road safety legislation. The new package including measures to introduce a network of safety cameras is blocked and at present being investigated by the Constitutional Court. He gave an overview of various measures being undertaken to tackle road safety including infrastructure management, campaigns to tackle drink driving and driving around public holidays. He also gave an overview of the latest figures which showed a 17% drop in road traffic deaths during the first half of 2009 compared with the first half of 2008.

Discussion covered a range of issues. The Ministry of Labour confirmed that commuting is covered by the Act of Law as driving for work. Personal experience was expressed of a basic driving licence checks by employers when handing out company car minimal instead given advice on petrol and garage. It was confirmed that driving licence must be checked by law by employers. Another participant said that the high rate of road deaths on Poland's roads should also warrant the need to expand these basic driving licence check to include a medical check. The Ministry of Labour confirmed that the legal frame was not bad but the key is to respect the law. The Business Centre Club stated that it is not what we 'must do but what we can do'. There was a need expressed for gathering more data and better data analysis and clarity on the definition on a work related road accident. One employer also requested more information for others on how to proceed after an accident. Other questions included issues indirectly related to work related road safety such as enforcement of the traffic law for non-resident drivers, technical inspections of vehicles and aggression of drivers. There was a plea for more effort to address the causes of road deaths, the need to invest in infrastructure, influence behaviour without great expense including also the need for more enforcement and the roll out of safety cameras. A need to invest in a 'culture of safety' was emphasised.

The second part of the day was an interesting presentation of three case studies from companies who had already addressed work related road safety.

Jerzy Wroblewski and Mathew Johnson from Nestle Poland

Nestle has invested in so-called 'Green Boxes' which are used for tracking and monitoring vehicle data which can generate reports that can be used as a basis for training and needs assessment and as a management tool. Started in March 2008 it has now been rolled out to 70 vehicles. The reports generated look at fuel efficiency, safety and operational information. The safety elements covered include: harsh braking, service brake / engine brake, over revving, speeding, out of gear coasting, reversing and seatbelt use. Most impressive results for safety came in managing harsh braking which was reduced by 20%. The implementation of the Green Box scheme has had clear commercial benefits with fuel consumption reductions of 5%, CO2 reductions and reductions of maintenance costs. Safety benefits also included a reduction of major accidents from 19 to 9 in the surveyed time frame, improved driving, and the ability to focus on driver best practices as well as encourage and reward the high safety driving standards.

Rafal Jaskolski ABB Poland

ABB Poland focussed on presenting its e-learning programme which is part of a greater variety of activities focussing on managing road risk in their work place. The e-learning

scheme is part of ABB's Global Training System and enables training to take place at any time all over the world and to tailor training to the individual. The initial training takes one hour and focuses on knowledge and awareness raising. The knowledge part focuses on preparing to drive and the rules and regulations, preparing for reacting in an unusual or accident situation, a review of the driving rules and the consequences of breaking the law.

Adrian Kilvington M&G Vehicle Hire

M&G is a vehicle hire company with 130 staff that hires out 5,000 vehicles, most of which are vans. Work related road safety used to start with a fundamental check of the driving licence. Five years ago procedures were revised and took advice in minimising own risk to drivers. Everything started by taking part in a Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) two day course on 'driver assessment and training' which proved to be an eye-opening experience. All employees now take part in the course and will then take a refresher course if needed. M&G is responsible for all its staff: those who drive for work but also those who drive to work. This has had many benefits including high staff retention levels. M&G Vehicle Hire is a Champion of the UK's Initiative of "Driving for Better Business" and a signatory of the EU's Road Safety Charter.

All PPT presentations are available on ETSC's PRAISE Country Seminar Poland website: <http://www.etsc.eu/PRAISE-events.php>

Follow Up to the Seminar:

Participants are welcome to continue to participate in PRAISE by:

- Using and disseminating ETSC's Thematic Reports and Fact Sheets
- Participating in upcoming Country Seminars in other Countries
- Participating in the annual Brunch in Brussels
- Entering and proposing employers who should be considered for the Award Competition



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