

Driving down risk, driving up safety and performance

Metropolitan Express Transport Services (METS) in close cooperation with Zurich Risk Engineering has significantly improved safety and operational efficiency since 2009. METS have demonstrated they are empowered and focused on improvement and innovation and continuously strive to improve the risks to the business and safety and wellbeing of their employees.



About Metropolitan Express Transport Services

Metropolitan Express Transport Services (METS) is a privately owned local transport business. The company has been trading since 1986 and as its name suggests is dedicated to supplying local transport solutions including most regional locations. Over the years, the company has grown from a fleet of twelve vehicles in its first year, to now running in excess of 200 vehicles, ranging in size from small courier vans, to semi tautliners.

METS has now developed into four main operating divisions – Couriers, Taxi Truck, Construction and Warehousing. Each division has been identified as a future market and development stream for the business.

METS has been insured with Zurich since 2009 and sees the insurance firm and its insurance broker as key business partners. METS started actively working with Zurich Risk Engineering in 2009. A key objective for METS was to improve the management of their work-related road risks in order to:

- Reduce the risk of harm to employees and others
- Reduce the number of incidents and claims
- Reduce costs
- Fulfil and exceed their legal duty under Health & Safety legislation
- Meet planned corporate social responsibility objectives

Assessing the risk

As part of the insurance quoting process, Zurich's risk engineers undertook the initial heavy vehicle risk assessment in 2009.

Three fundamental areas of heavy vehicle road risks were assessed (via 27 risk factors): the driver, the journeys they make and the vehicles they use. This included the core driving competencies for drivers: attitude, behaviour, knowledge and hazard recognition skills.

The assessment provided a comprehensive insight into the risks faced, allowing METS to prioritise where action was needed and what interventions were required.

Managing the risk

From this assessment METS introduced a number of innovative practices which have directly impacted upon their risk grading, safety performance and motor vehicle claims performance. As such, the following Risk Factors for Motor-Fleet-Truck have all improved significantly.

- Driver Profile
- Driver Maturity & Health Management
- Driver Work Conditions & Turnover
- Mobile Phones / Distractions
- Vehicle Maintenance & Inspections
- Safety Management & Quality Assurance
- Drug / Alcohol Policy & Controls

A strong commitment from METS management was there from the beginning. They saw the value in prevention and embedding risk management more strongly into their culture.

During this time, METS has introduced a number of innovative practices which have directly impacted upon their safety performance. The grading for Motor-Fleet-Truck has improved from Good in 2009 to Excellent (since 2011).

The results

Improved claims performance

There has been a major improvement in the motor vehicle claims performance. Over the last 6 years, claims frequency has been reduced by 44% and the average cost of a claim has reduced by 12%.

Performance has been driven by the following changes:

- Use of agency drivers has ceased
- Driver and load audit program introduced with 50% of loads audited every week and driver and vehicle audits also conducted with these load checks. The audit plan is provided to the customer and a formal visitation schedule is developed.
- Driver Handbook has been rewritten with formalised testing for the content and annual refreshers for inductions.
- 6-monthly checks of driver licenses for demerit points
- Driver health management enhancements including pre-employment and on-going driver medical assessment program adopted and identification of drivers with sleep disorders found. Focusing on improvement, these cases have undergone successful treatment and then undertaken job reallocation.
- Performance (service and safety) based, graduated pay structure for drivers including an internal demerit point system
- Saliva based random D&A testing has been established with a minimum of 5% of the fleet tested randomly every month.
- Driver assessment and training resources have been significantly boosted from a single, in-house, non-certified driver assessor-trainer to a Driver Support Team of 7 people (2 x trainer-assessors and 5 x senior drivers)
- BFM accreditation focused on safety management has been introduced for all drivers (even though work schedules do not trigger a regulatory requirement for such)
- Safety Assist program (general safety in Shorthaul trucking) supported by WorkSafe Vic, the TWU and the VTA now delivered to drivers annually
- Improved document controls
- Driver team turnover reduced by approximately

Everyone loves a good news story. Zurich has responded favourably, not only due to the reduced incident frequency and severity, but also because our Risk Engineering Grading (risk 'profiling') confirmed that the initiatives introduced by METS were reducing exposures and improving management controls. So we acted: Insurance premium cost per vehicle (what we charge) has also reduced by half (~50%).

Onwards and upwards

METS are looking to introduce Zurich's driver performance / risk management system, Zurich Fleet Intelligence (ZFI), to their fleet operations. This system embraces telematics and is part of the larger Virtual Risk Manager system which will enable drivers to monitor their own driving performance (with regards to service and safety) and compare it 'live' across the entire fleet.

"When we first assessed Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd in 2009, they were on the way to transforming the business from a significant change in ownership structure. Whilst there were many improvement initiatives already underway, management embraced our risk assessments and utilised our risk grading (and improvement advice) as a structured framework for guiding and reporting progress over the years.

I continue to be impressed with the passion and drive of the Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd management team who are focused on true risk management (well beyond minimal regulatory compliance) and indeed are industry leaders." [Peter Johansson, Zurich Risk Engineer](#)

"I've had the privilege to work with the team at Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd and in particular Sam and Tony over the last few years, I've seen the company evolve as both directors have shown tremendous passion not only for their business but the industry as a whole. They have demonstrated these qualities through risk mitigating measures but also with Safety being a number one priority. Like any business, Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd has huge risk exposures but given the attitude of the two directors we have been able to partner with them to assist in risk migration work via Zurich Insurance to help achieve a win, win outcome.

It is without a doubt, we need more clients to tackle insurance and risk in this same manner and consider insurance as an investment then a cost with no return. Through the hard work and commitment we have seen great premium relief but more importantly Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd has become a company that tackles risk head on which creates a safer and better environment for their staff.

We applaud Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd on their achievements!" [Arbel Eyvaz, Fortitude Insurance Brokers](#)

"The Victorian Transport Association has been working with Sam, Tony and the Team at Metropolitan Express Transport Services Pty Ltd for many years. We have seen this company grow and prosper. Like any business, METS has huge risk exposures but given the attitude of the two directors we have seen them tackle in risk migration head on and work via Zurich Insurance to help achieve a win, win outcome.

Metropolitan Express Transport Services has continually strived to improve its environment of safety for many years. It has achieved outstanding results in worker safety and sustainability due to the passion and disciplines of its directors. It is without a doubt that METS have consistently demonstrated the qualities of leadership in work health measures that benefit the employees, the business and their customers.

It is a privilege to have METS as a member of the VTA and we applaud their work with Zurich Insurance to continue to achieve improvement in risk management and premium relief." [Peter Anderson, Chief Executive Officer](#)



Credit: Thanks to Metropolitan Express Transport Services for their corporate images.

Date of production: September 2015

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