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Atlas Concrete Ltd

ACC Fleet Saver: The Way to Go

Atlas Concrete is a family-owned business with 70 years of industry experience under their belt. With a driver safety programme in place to address the inherent risks of driving concrete trucks and a commitment to eco-friendly practices such as reducing emissions, the move to ACC Fleet Saver was a natural one. The ACC levy reduction was an obvious benefit to Leighton Wynyard, Health and Safety Advisor at Atlas, but joining ACC Fleet Saver has consolidated their twin goals of safety and reduced environmental impact.

Leighton Wynyard, Health and Safety Advisor at Atlas, was first introduced to ACC Fleet Saver by a health and safety advisor from another transport company. "She told me it's a good way to keep an eye on the fleet and drivers, and along with the cost savings, there's serious benefits," says Leighton. "She said, 'You'll want to give it a go,' and I thought, 'I couldn't agree more!'"

Joining ACC Fleet Saver is part of Atlas Concrete's wider safety infrastructure and commitment to eco-friendly business practices. By monitoring driver fuel efficiency and ensuring vehicles are consistently of the highest standard, Atlas ensures that their trucks have minimal environmental impact. "Our CEO, unlike many CEOs, has an intimate knowledge of the company because his father owned it," says Leighton. Coming into the company at the age of 20, CEO Graham Collie knows the company inside and out. "And he realises that having modern, fuel-efficient, economical trucks on the road is the way to go."

Vehicles that are well cared for are not only more efficient, they're also safer. "Well-maintained vehicles are important because when you're driving a concrete truck you can't afford to have rattles and knocks - it's just way too dangerous," says Leighton. "A truck of that size and that weight doesn't stop on a sixpence." Truck drivers always have a lot to

consider when manoeuvring heavy vehicles, but extra caution is required when driving concrete trucks, as Leighton explains. "The trouble with the concrete bowl is that it rotates the same way as the camber of the road. So all the weight's on the left-hand side as you're going around a right-hand corner. You've got to make sure your speed and driving skills are spot on, otherwise the truck can quickly flip."

Leighton believes in keeping everyone involved in safety; "If you don't, you're just doing it the wrong way 'round." As well as new logbooks, designed in co-operation with drivers and managers, Atlas' in-house Training Academy is about to launch a special training course specifically aimed at what their drivers do every day. "You've got to always involve the people that are doing the work," Leighton says. Driver training for concrete truck drivers is quite different to what long-haul drivers would do, since the job is more physical.

Atlas Concrete has recently purchased new, self-washing concrete bowls for the trucks which meet their goals of safety and eco-friendliness. Unlike earlier models, it's impossible to reverse these bowls while the truck is in motion – meaning there's no risk of concrete being ejected while driving. "They use less fuel for the vehicles, so they're more eco-friendly," says Leighton. "The emissions of the truck are lessened."

While ACC Fleet Saver has a "good cost saving in it" for Atlas, Leighton appreciates that the scheme gives the company a chance to raise their game in two major areas: maintaining their fleet and monitoring the safety and fuel efficiency of their drivers. Safety is particularly important for concrete truck drivers. "A fully-laden concrete truck weighs 22 tonnes, and when it's empty it weighs half that. So the biggest thing about driving concrete trucks is that when you're driving, half your weight is moving all the time, because it's going around," says Leighton. GPS printouts of each driver's route are examined monthly, so Atlas can assess driving techniques and recommend further training where necessary.

Since Leighton has found ACC Fleet Saver to be closely related to WSMP Tertiary, integrating ACC Fleet Saver into current health and safety policies wasn't a problem. "ACC Fleet Saver is health and safety. We already have ACC WSMP Tertiary, so we're acutely aware of the health and safety situation we have. Now we've just got to merge ACC Fleet Saver with it and it's very similar. We just marry them together - which gives us a more holistic approach to health and safety. They sit side by side."

ACC Fleet Saver's fleet maintenance component makes sense to Atlas, who have long known the benefits of having well-maintained vehicles for the safety of their drivers and other users on the road. It also means that Atlas Concrete are able to on-sell their vehicles to local & overseas buyers. "We do very well, because when we sell our vehicles, there's a queue waiting to buy them. We send a lot overseas," says Leighton.

Leighton would happily pass on his recommendation to other businesses to join ACC Fleet Saver. "It's very expensive to keep a truck on the road. The cost of tyres and maintenance are just huge." However, the levy incentive alone makes it worthwhile. "When you multiply it by 100 trucks or so, it becomes quite a significant saving." Safer, fuel-efficient drivers and vehicles make sense to Atlas. "You look after them, and have good systems in place, and ACC will make sure that your levies are reduced."

See what other businesses have to say about ACC Fleet Saver (</casestudies/>)

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