

CASE STUDY:

AIR LIQUIDE NEW ZEALAND

DRIVING FATIGUE MANAGEMENT
AROUND THE ISLE



OPTALERT®
Alert & Alive

As the world's leading supplier of gases for industry, medical and the environment, Air Liquide takes safety as seriously as it does its business objectives. With a presence in over 80 countries, Air Liquide's New Zealand site is now following their Australian counterparts by employing a leading edge approach to fatigue management - the Optalert System - to ensure they mitigate the risks of fatigue related accidents on site and public roads.



Keeping up the enthusiasm and momentum towards safety is a priority for Air Liquide New Zealand's goal of a zero harm profile, and Optalert's Change Management support is helping to achieve that.

Air Liquide work hard to ensure the safe delivery of gases to customer sites all around the country, meaning that some long haul semi trailer operators can work up to 11 hours per shift.

"Our geography poses some unique challenges of its own," said David Nash - Air Liquide National Supply Chain Manager - New Zealand. Our roads are quite different to those of our Australian sites. The road quality is not as good, we have many more hills and narrow roads to battle with and as you get out of the main centres, the roads seem to deteriorate to even lower levels. That's why it is so important that our guys are totally alert whilst driving."

Taking their "Zero Harm" goals seriously, Air Liquide New Zealand searched for a high tech and reliable fatigue management solution to ensure the safety of their operators and the public. "We saw the success that our Australian counterparts had with Optalert so we decided to investigate this further for our own region. Ultimately we decided to invest in Optalert to make sure our guys got home safely at the end of the day. That is certainly our top priority - and the results in Australia looked impressive.

"The main driver for me was to choose a system that aligned with our safety targets. Our guys drive for some pretty long hours. There's a lot of time alone, so we wanted to make sure they were safe while on that journey.

"We don't want our guys to have accidents... certainly not fatigue related ones. So Optalert is really our tool to measure that and to put a policy in place to prevent drowsy driving. If we see patterns that concern us we take action. That's really where Optalert comes in," he said.

David and the Air Liquide team in New Zealand have a strong belief in the Optalert system's capacity to save lives, however he attributes the successful rollout of the system as the key driver to achieving their safety goals.

"The first risk we saw was the guys not wearing the glasses," he said. "When they are not wearing the glasses they are not protected, it's as simple as that. Their buy in was critical for this to be successful. Otherwise we would have found ourselves running into a brick wall," he said.

"...WE ARE REALLY HAPPY TO KNOW THAT THE DRIVERS ACTUALLY DO HAVE THEIR DROWSINESS UNDER CONTROL... WHICH IS SOMETHING THAT WE COULDN'T BE SURE OF TWO AND A HALF MONTHS AGO."

A diligent management structure and a cooperative team effort has seen Optalert fully embraced onsite, with ongoing support of the system enhanced by the implementation of an incentive strategy to encourage usage.

“We have incentivised the guys to see who gets the highest average glasses worn percentage. The winner gets gift vouchers. I think the incentive has been good in getting them interested in finding out how well their usage time has tracked. We have also been very diligent with anyone who has fallen outside of the benchmark. On the whole it has worked really well!

“IT’S REALLY PLEASING TO BE ACTUALLY EXCEEDING OUR TARGET ‘GLASSES WORN’ PERCENTAGE. WE WANT TO SEE THAT CONTINUE.”

Keeping up the enthusiasm and momentum towards safety is a priority for Air Liquide’s goal of a zero harm profile and Optalert’s Change Management support is helping to achieve that.

“We have been looking at the daily reports from Optalert and anyone who hasn’t performed has been asked why and we’re trying to get the message across that it’s not about us, it’s really about them. As a whole we really haven’t had to do too much.

We look at the items we’re interested in on the data that comes through, the glasses worn percentage is something that is of interest and the other one is fatigue warnings. We review the reports every morning, we are really trying to pick up patterns to see if one operator is getting a whole heap of warnings on the same shift or anyone is not doing particularly well on the first day of his shift. Then we can look to make changes based on that information.”

David adds “At the moment, we haven’t had any data that has been concerning enough that we have felt like we have had to make a change, which is really pleasing, but if we start seeing these high alert warnings all of the time then we will see what we need to do differently.

Ultimately we are really happy to know that the drivers actually do have their drowsiness under control and they are definitely staying alert, which is something that we couldn’t be sure of two and a half months ago,” David concludes confidently.



Air Liquide works hard to ensure the safe delivery of gases to customer sites all around New Zealand, with some long haul semi trailer operators working up to 11 hours per shift often driving on difficult stretches of narrow and hilly roads.