



Forestry Professional Ownership and Driver Wellbeing Program

The Professional Ownership and Driver Wellbeing (PODW) program was developed by ATSSS and KJ Training and Consulting to address the 'human factor': fatigue, inattention and complacency, which are the underlying causes of several recent crashes in heavy and light vehicles in the forest industry. POWD guides drivers to adopt a proactive, intrinsically motivated view of solutions to driving challenges.

The objective of the POWD program is to empower drivers to take control of the factors which place them at higher risk of a crash, recognising that professional drivers are at higher risk of crashes or accidents due to the nature of their work.

The program is run in an interactive manner with mixed media presentations aimed to engage drivers, encourage discussion and participation, and provide practical advice and solutions for low risk driving. It explores when drivers are at higher risk of a crash or incident, hypothesise the reasoning behind these incidents, and provide simple tips and tricks to maintain concentration and attention.

This program aligns with new Chain of Responsibility laws and can be an important part of a Safety Management System.

The POWD program

- builds on key learning outcomes from the *Heavy Vehicle Rollover Awareness Program*
- challenges participants to examine personal ownership and responsibility for their own and the community's safety and shows them how to develop a personal risk reduction plan
- assists drivers and management to collaboratively develop personal management tools
- is delivered over a 2 ½ hour session by two facilitators

Note: The program naturally complements the Rollover Program but is structured as a standalone program so that is also suitable for all parties in the supply chain and drivers that have not participated in the Rollover Program. This includes drivers of light vehicles, and operators of loaders and harvesting equipment.

Program content:

Introduction:

- Alan from ATSSS sets the scene with a discussion for crash trends within the industry and causal factors
- Explains the statistics around the high rate of crashes on Monday mornings or when returning from breaks and hypothesise that lifestyle factors have a major influence on this
- Explain that drivers in the forest industry are typically at higher risk due to the nature of their loads and the industry they work in, which in turn means they require higher level of professionalism and skills than the average driver.
- Explain that the purpose of the session is to discuss/develop tools that can assist the drivers to identify risk and manage these risks during the driving task.



Alcohol and other drugs:

- Discuss how drugs interact with our central nervous system, and how recreational use can influence driving behaviour during the working week
- Discuss alcohol and what factors influence blood alcohol content, including how long it takes for the body to metabolise alcohol
- Provide real world examples to highlight the issues surrounding alcohol use

Sleep:

- Discuss sleep, the sleep cycle and how good sleep improves concentration
- Explore sleep hygiene and how technology and alcohol and other drugs impact on sleep
- Introduce techniques to assist drivers to get better sleep – including mindfulness techniques and a discussion around health issues which can impact on sleep

Attention, concentration, and the tricks our mind plays:

- Discuss 'situational awareness' in relation to low risk driving to set the scene for the following topics
- Discuss 'autopilot', change blindness, and the Stroop Effect – psychological phenomena which impact on driving, with interactive components with real world links to driving heavy vehicles
- Provide drivers with an understanding of how our brains process information in easy to understand terms, with examples to highlight and illustrate how this occurs in real life
- Discuss optimism bias and how this impacts on drivers – especially in relation to high risk behaviours such as mobile phone use, lack of seat belt wearing, and general inattention or distraction.
- Highlight 'the blame game' and encourage drivers to utilise a professional ownership and responsibility lens when thinking about work safety.

Trauma and how the body reacts during an accident:

- Discuss 'fight versus flight' and how our bodies physically, mentally and emotionally react when an accident occurs
- Discuss the longstanding effects and signs of trauma, including how to recognise this in themselves or colleagues
- Provide avenues for support for people who have experienced trauma

Trip planning and summary:

- Discuss how trip planning, and consciously thinking about the impending journey can lower our risk and increase our awareness
- Discuss trip planning as a culmination of the prior content and summarise in a practical manner.