

Sharing Best Practice

One of the advantages of being a major transport group is the ability to identify and share best practice across thousands of miles.

During 2003 and 2004, our North American public transit operation introduced new technology to improve driver performance. Known as Drive-Cam, this technology measures changes in horizontal and lateral g-force and triggers photographic recordings of events such as harsh braking, collisions and aggressive driving.

Drive-Cam acts as an effective mechanism for monitoring and correcting driver performance and helps establish liability in the case of accident claims.

Reducing accidents In the United States, we quickly saw that Drive-Cam was having a positive effect on driving technique. By giving us a birds'-eye view into how safely we were operating, we could immediately recognise good defensive driving behaviour and, if necessary, retrain a driver practising incorrect techniques.

Furthermore, there were several accidents where an examination of the photographic recordings enabled our team to absolve bus drivers of responsibility.

Sharing good ideas The success of Drive-Cam in the United States prompted us to examine where else it might contribute to accident reduction.

In 2005, we trialled similar equipment in our bus garage at Perry Barr in Birmingham. A larger-scale trial will be undertaken in 2006 at Bordesley garage, where all 40 buses are to be fitted with the g-force measuring equipment technology. If the technology has been triggered, details will be automatically downloaded as the bus enters the garage, eliminating the need for the manual downloading which was a feature of the original American initiative.

"We believe that this is a good example of our philosophy of sharing, developing and implementing good practice across our operations. We intend to continue to develop this technology and to extend implementation across further vehicles in our fleet."
Mark O'Neill, National Express Group, Director of Safety

www.nationalexpressgroup.com

CCTV technology such as crystaleyes has been further developed into new technology such as Drive-Cam systems



Trains

Responding to challenges

Following the terrorist attacks in London, we have reviewed our checking and inspection regimes on trains and at stations. We have also increased our employee security briefings and have recently joined the industry personal security group which focuses on developing improved security for staff and passengers.

Customer and employee safety

The safety of our employees and customers is paramount. Transport is vulnerable to crime and despite the headline grabbing crime statistics, the majority of passengers travel without ever experiencing an incident on our services. However, with trains and stations being part of the community, we constantly look at ways to respond to the patterns of transport crime. Working with our partners, BTP, Network Rail, TfL and other key stakeholders, we endeavour to put in place initiatives and equipment and station CCTV which will help passengers travel in safety. Key safety features which we have introduced includes on-train and station CCTV, help points and improved lighting. We also believe that a graffiti free environment is also less threatening therefore we take a zero tolerance approach to graffiti. We believe a multi-dimensional approach to safety is required depending on local circumstances.

Reduced levels of crime have been experienced on our operations where police community support officers have been introduced. For 2006, we will continue to support the BTP with this initiative.

During 2005, we developed an employee slip, trip and fall toolkit to help identify and reduce risks and to assist in the development of local strategies.

On the back of an independent review of our train drivers' competence system, we continue to develop training programmes across our operations. We have introduced a new standardised programme for driver instructors to provide for greater consistency, higher overall standards and better safety performance.

Reducing the number of Signals Passed at Danger (SPADs) remains a key issue. We have introduced a 72 hour review of such incidences that take place ensuring that remedial action is taken as early as possible to avoid recurrence. Our companies were involved in 58 (17.1%) of the provisional national total of 340 SPADs in 2005. We are pleased to report the UK SPAD total saw a reduction of around 5% over 2004, with our companies performing 21% better than last year. Two of our TOCs experienced no SPADs in 2005 and there was a notable 50% improvement at Central Trains.

Due to the new EU Safety Directive, the regulatory regime for the train industry will change from a safety case regime to a system of safety certification and authorisation in 2006. We are working to make sure we have a consistent industry-leading approach.

SPAD PERFORMANCE FOR 2004/2005
(per million train miles)

