

ECTA

ECTA Driver Shortage

Follow up communication to the ECTA position paper on driver shortage

Common Industry objective:

To secure the movements of chemicals by road and combined transport now and in the future, all stakeholders need to make the chemical truck driver job more attractive and productive across the chemical industry.

Observations:

The chemical industry is losing more and more truck drivers because

- 30% of chemical truck shipments do have a residence time of more than 3 hours at loading and unloading places
- The work-life balance of a chemical truck driver job is below average compared to other sectors
- Truck drivers are not only confronted with very strict loading/unloading procedures at (un)loading sites, often they are also inconsistent and in contradiction leading to discussions with site operators
- Truck drivers are forced to wait due to inflexible time slots or short opening hours
- The overall truck drivers' infrastructure could be much improved and should be made gender friendly
- There is an increasing gap in understanding between the people operating the loading and/or unloading sites and the people making contractual commitments.
- Not all chemical truck drivers are considered as a valuable and scarce resource that needs to be treated with respect and we need to prepare all stakeholders to be open to female drivers (facilities etc.).

Driver shortage is a collaborative industry problem

The driver shortage problem is not a problem transport companies can solve on their own because the working conditions of a chemical truck driver are mainly defined by the many loading and unloading touch points across Europe. These touch points are out of the control of transport companies, and much tighter collaboration with all stakeholders along the logistics chain is required to resolve this driver shortage problem structurally..

Industry recommendations :

- Revise/extend opening hours at loading/unloading sites
- Take responsibility for the outsourcing of site operations
- Create time slot booking flexibility
- Adapt site inventory level requirements
- Handle drivers with more respect
- Support initiatives for digital gate registration

ECTA focus and collaborative industry action plan

The focus of the ECTA collaborative action plan is built around the loading and unloading places, whereby

1. An ECTA tool will be created in the coming months to provide chemical drivers with the possibility to register data about loading and unloading sites in Europe. These data will be

ECTA

ECTA Driver Shortage

used to identify the best and worst in class. Specific attention is given to the problem of unacceptable delays at loading and unloading sites.

2. The daily job of a chemical truck driver is not well understood by all stakeholders. ECTA will define a communication plan and strategy to communicate more about the positive aspects of being a chemical truck driver while promoting industry best practices.
3. ECTA will communicate the factual findings described in 1. to individual chemical stakeholders. Summaries of the findings will also be shared with all ECTA members and – through social media – with the professional public.
4. ECTA will actively support chemical producers in their efforts to come to structural improvements and to bring down the waiting times outside the gate and on the premises of loading and unloading sites. ECTA further expects that individual chemical companies take responsibility for communication and improvement towards the companies to which loading and/or unloading activities are contracted out.

Conclusion

ECTA reaches out to all stakeholders to join forces to improve the truck driver job image, job attractiveness and productivity. The driver shortage problem is a big industry opportunity where each of the chemical stakeholders needs to take responsibility and consider truck drivers as a very valuable and scarce resource.