

Nationwide Packaging & Distribution Ltd

Nationwide Packaging & Distribution Limited T/A NPD Light Haulage is a 3.5t flatbed haulage company operating out of a yard in Sheffield. The business specialises in the nationwide delivery of a range of goods including utility products, water tanks and various machinery and metal work for example. We operate sixteen 3.5 tonne vehicles that complete mainly one drop deliveries but occasionally small multi drop deliveries. Two of the vehicles have HI-AB offloading facilities.

The director of NPD Light Haulage, Joe Barber, has seen first-hand how gaining FORS accreditation has benefited the company. “We first heard about the FORS scheme from one of our customers who had the requirement to deliver goods to a FORS only access site. Once we read into what FORS was all about, we knew straight away that it would be good for the business to utilise the FORS standard of working practices.

Once we had put everything in place and completed all the relevant training to pass the bronze audit, the organisation of policies and procedures made the structure of the company much simpler. Also, the extra training for the drivers gave them much more to think about regarding safety and best working practices. This also gave the drivers more knowledge about how their driving and decisions on the road can affect fuel consumption, emissions emitted and above all the safety of vulnerable road users.

These factors became evident when looking at the figures for fuel consumption and emissions. We have seen a year on year decrease in fuel consumption, CO₂, NO_x and Particulate Matter emissions. NPD have got and have always had an excellent road safety and transport related fine record and this has been backed up by ongoing e-learning provided by FORS.

We were told about FORS in June 2018 by one of our customers who we were doing deliveries for, to a site in London. The sites rules changed meaning we would not be allowed access without FORS Bronze. Therefore, we decided to join FORS to fulfil our customers’ requirements. Once we did some research into what FORS included we quickly realised it would be greatly beneficial, not only for our customer’s needs, but for the added WRRR training and knowledge that it would provide to our drivers.



For NPD Light Haulage completing the bronze audit in 2018 was beneficial for the company as it opened our eyes to a lot of policies and procedures that were not in place that could improve the companies working practices. Some of which were easy to implement, and others took a bit more work. It also showed us that our systems were not as organised as they could be and since then we have made significant improvements to our systems and the way we keep and distribute data; these changes have made things a lot easier for us.



At first, the Bronze accreditation was enough to access all the sites that we were required to deliver to. But with the start of HS2, many sites were not allowing access without Silver accreditation. The reasons for going for gold are similar and our customers are requiring deliveries to be made to FORS Gold sites. Although we did see this change coming and we had planned to progress further than Bronze, the customers' needs have pushed us to complete these faster than we anticipated.

Once we achieved Bronze, we really made use of the benefits on offer such as the DVLA driving licence checking which took the headaches out of physically reviewing licences, and Fleetcheck TMS which allows the drivers to use the daily vehicle check app. The TMS is linked to FORS and all the data we require is easily accessible. We also took full advantage of the discounts available for additional vehicle safety equipment such as proximity sensors and camera systems. We see FORS as a fundamental tool to achieving best practices and ensure the safety not only of our staff but of vulnerable road users too. Since we have completed our FORS Silver accreditation, we have been more focused on monitoring our progression and maintaining good working practices. The added training that the drivers have completed has improved their knowledge of their job and the safety of vulnerable road users, it has shown them the important factors they have to think about to complete their job safely and correctly.

Also, it has shown us how to monitor and compare our fuel and emission data. Monitoring this will not only save us money but also help minimise our impact on the environment.

Callum Barber is on course to complete the FORS Practitioner workshops

“The FORS Practitioner workshops are very helpful and give an increased awareness of WRR, better environmental impact awareness and improved collision investigation skills; - Callum Barber

The E-learning resources available for our drivers have also helped them become more engaged in the business. The modules on FORS have helped our drivers expand their knowledge and safety skills on the road. By having our drivers complete the appropriate modules, we have managed to improve on fuel efficiency and increase road safety within the fleet.

“Our drivers are much more aware of vulnerable road users after completing the Van Smart Course and E-learning Courses; - Joe Barber

We have partnered with Fleetcheck who supply FORS transport management software, this has helped us improve our performance data:



See below for our performance data since 01/04/2019 to the end of March 2022 (latest data at submission). The figures show a 14% increase in MPG and a constant decrease in CO2, NOx and PM10, with our fleet increasing from 13 to 16 vehicles.

	MPG	Incidents per 100,000 Kms	CO2	NOx	PM10	Number of PCNs	Proportion of fleet that uses alternative fuels
2019/20	27	0	289	1539	26	2	0%
2020/21	28	0	319	1561	26	4	0%
2021/22	32	0	261	1458	25	5	0%
Percentage improvement	14%	0%	18%	7%	4%		0%

NPD are communicating with staff more regularly regarding health and fitness as a direct result of FORS certification. Much of this is due to the yearly health and fitness declarations, 6 monthly eyesight tests and the increase in conversation through both formal and informal training and Toolbox talks. NPD have also focussed on mental wellbeing as a health and safety risk through both risk assessment and training and Callum Barber our Fleet Manager has completed a Mental Health Awareness course.

NPD have a great history of job retention, partly due to our drivers feeling valued through investment of time and money and as such we can be sure that our employees have an extensive understanding of our current procedures. When we do require additional drivers, we use the Indeed job platform and specify that all drivers must have a minimum of 5 years commercial driving experience and a clean licence. Our interview process is tried and trusted and is backed up by Industry standard recommendations.

Annual noise assessments have brought attention to a previously little thought aspect of driving. However, as we operate from a commercial purpose built yard, we are not required to take out measures in this area. That being said, all staff are now better trained on what noise pollution means and how to prevent this, as well as the company monitoring the situation in a structured way. We have invested in a battery operated forklift to keep noise to a minimum while loading/unloading. We constantly liaise with customers and organise delivery times between the hours of 8am and 5pm.

As we operate vans which are 3.5 tonnes and deliver daily the length and breadth of the country, switching to electric vehicles is not an option at the present time, although we are constantly in discussions with the leading manufacturers. We have purchased a lithium battery powered forklift to replace our old diesel powered truck.

We consider more efficient fuel options, such as electric, regularly and shall most likely look to go down this route once a suitable alternative becomes available, in the meantime we continue to stick with our policy of replacing all our vehicles for new every three years, so we always have the most up to date and efficient engines. We have also introduced car sharing to and from our yard whenever it is possible to do so.



We positively promote FORS by displaying the FORS logo on all our correspondence and our website, all our vehicles display the FORS logo, and we regularly have a flyer campaign that promotes FORS. We hope that when we achieve the FORS Gold accreditation we can participate in a press release that will not only promote the company but also the value we place in FORS.

For NPD achieving FORS Gold will really emphasise to our customers and supply chain our ongoing commitment to Health and Safety and our ambition to be the best company we possibly can be.

In summary we feel that the benefits to our drivers, managers and office staff in achieving FORS Gold will give them a platform to succeed.

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