# **Case Study - RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd**

## Profile

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| Company Name: | RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd |
| Business Sector: | Construction |
| Postal Address: | Thompsons Yard  South Bank Road  East Middlesbrough Industrial Estate Middlesbrough  Cleveland |
| Postcode: | TS3 8RQ |
| Fleet Size Overall: | 10 |
| HGV: | 3 ton - 3  10 ton - 1 |
| LGV: | 2 |
| Company Cars: | 4 |
| Private vehicles used for business purposes: | 0 |

## Company Overview

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** is a small family run scaffold hire, sale and contract company based in Middlesbrough but supplying its services throughout the Northeast of England.  It is the only privately owned total access company in the region.  The business was set up in 1992 and has grown steadily.  Its core focus is the provision of scaffolding services to a range of clients in the construction and private sector including the erection and dismantling of scaffolding and the hiring out and sale of equipment.

In spite of the recession, the company has maintained its workforce of 14 staff.  The company is a people-focussed organisation.  It is proud to have received ***Investor in People (IiP)*** accreditation in 2001 and continues to maintain and improve its standards.  Its latest IiP assessment was carried out in Dec 2009.

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** has a business ethos which emphasizes individual responsibility and ownership of issues by members of its staff in all their business activities.  It applies this ethos particularly in regards to all health and safety issues facing the business.  The company prides itself on effective communication, both with its work force and with its clients.

Training and development of all **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** staff are key management objectives. Every opportunity is taken to make use of training programmes which are relevant to the business and which will help it develop and grow. It is the only local scaffold business which still recruits and trains Construction Industry Training Board **(CITB)** apprentices.

The aim of additional professional training is to provide individual **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** employees with a range of skills.  This allows the management greater flexibility when putting scaffolding teams together for specific tasks.  Routine reviews of individual skills take place and a "Skills Matrix" is used to identify, record and monitor the skills required across the business.

The management team also undertakes training. It has recently completed the Level 3 Construction Design and Management (CDM) qualification to ensure that there is better developed practical knowledge, including on current safety issues, across the whole organisation.

## Nature of Operation and Driving Activities

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** allocates jobs to its workforce on a daily basis.  The staff are briefed each morning on specific customer and safety issues relevant to their work on that day.  All vehicles are centrally inspected on a weekly basis.

Scaffolding teams (usually consisting of a driver and 2 scaffold erectors one of whom may be an apprentice) are allocated vehicles on the basis of the steel scaffold load required to complete a job.  While the scaffold erectors complete the loading of the vehicle, the driver is responsible for carrying out a check of the vehicle and recording this in the Vehicle Defect Report book kept in each vehicle.  The driver, at this stage, also plans his route, carries out a check list risk assessment and if necessary discusses the team's journey with management.

All members of **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** staff recognize the need for people to work safely as an example of delegated ownership for which they are individually responsible.  Once on site, **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** staff members are completely responsible for their own safety and that of others on the site.  Employees accept this responsibility.  They are able to make recommendations on how to improve efficiency and safety on the basis of their daily experience and they are encouraged to do so.

As a result there is an ethos of and desire for continuous improvement stemming from the constant review of current practices including health and safety.  One recent development was the introduction of hand rails on to wagons in response to an analysis of risk during handling/loading.

## Organisational Structure

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** is based at Thompsons Yard, Middlesbrough.  A small staff under the day to day direction of the Managing Director coordinates all the business's activities from its office.  The scaffolding teams operate from the yard and are allocated to task.

Staff are briefed daily on task specific requirements and kept up to date on all aspects of the business.  "Toolbox Talks" are held regularly to cover issues affecting health and safety.

Important issues affecting the future of the firm are dealt with at separate meetings.  All employees had recently been fully involved in the decision to reduce working hours in order to retain all staff and avoid redundancies during the recession.

## Work related Road Safety Policy and Procedures

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** is in the process of formalising its policy for work related road safety.  A Vehicle User Guide is in the final stage of production.  The company has carried out a risk assessment for all its driving activities and the Vehicle User Guide reflects clear guidance on company procedures.

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** emphasizes that a good understanding and implementation of the Highway Code is the start point for all driving activity.  In addition, the company stresses the following:

* Responsibility -All staff members are expected to carry out their duties in a responsible and safe manner.
* Licence Check -Licences are checked on joining the company and thereafter every 6 months.  The company ethos is based on trust.  All drivers are required to notify the company of any endorsements on their licences gained during private driving.
* Training -All drivers are trained on the vehicle they are to drive.

## Work related Road Safety Guidance for Drivers

The authorities responsible for supervising commercial vehicle use generally hold the view that scaffolding firms have a poor reputation with regards to the maintenance of their vehicles and to the driving habits of their employees.

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** is keen to distance itself from this reputation.

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** encourages its staff to apply the same standards of safety and good practice to all work related driving activities as they do in their scaffolding activities.  The **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** Vehicle User Guide is intended as a user friendly device for reminding drivers and occupants of their responsibilities.  It has been developed and is laid out to make it accessible and understandable to those who use it.  It addresses the key issues of:

* Driver Competence.
* Driver Actions.
* Driver Health.
* Driver Training.
* Vehicle Maintenance.
* Vehicle Condition.
* Vehicle Safety Equipment.
* Loading/Unloading the Vehicle.
* Goods in Transit.
* Journey Time, Distance, Route and records.
* Weather Conditions.
* Vehicle Breakdown Procedures.
* Vehicle Accident.

## Specific examples of procedures

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** provides its scaffolding teams with duty mobile phones.  It has a clear policy of no mobile use while driving.  As all members of the scaffolding teams travel in the cab with the driver, the company is clear that the responsibility for answering calls lies with them and not the driver, even though he may be the team leader.

Gaining access to sites has been identified as a particular risk for the scaffolding teams.  As a result the **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** Vehicle User Guide covers the key issues associated with parking and manoeuvring in tight areas.

## Auditing and review

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** maintains a constant over watch of all its Vehicle Defect Report books because these reflect both the attention paid to maintenance by individuals and the history of individual driving performance.  In such a small business, an individual's aberration in driving is very noticeably obvious to all members of the company.

The standard of driving to be achieved within the company is clearly laid down.  It is attained by self regulation and on the basis of trust and acceptance of responsibility.

## Performance measures

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** vehicles cover some 125000 miles each year, much of it in built up areas.  In the pre-Recession years, this mileage was a high as 250000 miles.  Given this mileage the number of incidents each year is small.

However, fact that **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd.** operates in small teams means that there is considerable determination, pride and an element of competition between teams.  This ensures that their performance standards remain high and that the incidents involving individual teams are minimized.

## Accident reduction

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** has a good road safety record. There have been no major incidents and very few minor incidents involving driving. It is keen to maintain this record.

## Financial and other benefits

**RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** enjoys a good relationship with its insurer Teesside Insurance and its premiums have been constant over the past 3 years reflecting the performance of its drivers.

The main benefits **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** enjoys as a result of managing its driving for work activity, are in the reduction of costs associated with damage to property and vehicle insurance costs.

A prompt response from staff ensures a quick resolution to any problems directly with those parties affected.  This reduces the added costs and time involving solicitors or insurance companies.  Unavoidable insurance claims are promptly handled in cooperation with **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd**'s broker Teesside Insurance.  Incidents are generally very minor and are usually resolved at the time to the satisfaction of the insurance company.

## Lessons learned

During the process of compiling the new Vehicle User Guide, the management of **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** gained a greater understanding of how most effectively to make use of "best practice".  As a result, the management is scrutinising its own processes to make sure that nothing is taken for granted or overlooked.  The management of **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** hope that by putting what it has learnt into practice with their staff it will help them to think more about the dangers involved in getting to and from the job; to identify what processes need to be improved and, in addition, provide them support should an incident happen.

## Current and future developments

Once the new Vehicle User Guide is implemented **RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd** management will take on board comments made by staff and make changes to the Vehicle User Guide based on feedback and new legislation as required.  Due to the requirement of HGV drivers RES Teesdale Scaffold Ltd will continue to be proactive with driver training.