

A commitment to safe chemical transportation

Written by Sheq Management

Monday, 12 March 2018 00:00 - Last Updated Monday, 12 March 2018 06:59



The transportation of hazardous fuels and chemicals requires careful attention to detail and specialised supply chain and transport logistics services that adhere to safety, health, environment, and quality (SHEQ) systems. Nkosini Ngwenya explores the topic from two perspectives.

The risks involved in the transportation of hazardous materials require a mitigation strategy that will ensure risk-management systems are put in place to identify and control any risks. Failure to do so can result in extensive damage to the environment, property and the loss of lives in the unfortunate event of an accident.

Thus, it is essential for hauliers and logistics service providers of fuels and chemicals to have risk-management systems in place as stipulated by the Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA).

In its pledge to improve SHEQ performance, CAIA launched the Responsible Care programme in South Africa during 1994.

“The Responsible Care, Safety and Quality Assessment System Southern Africa (SQAS-SA) is designed to evaluate the quality, safety and environmental performance of hauliers, logistics service providers and chemical distributors by means of standardised assessments,” says Deidré Penfold, executive director of CAIA.

CAIA members pledge their support for this cause by voluntarily signing the CAIA Responsible Care public commitment.

By signing the pledge, the companies commit to “conducting all operations, including the transport of hazardous materials, in a safe and environmentally sustainable manner and to incorporate the Responsible Care ethics and requirements into their business strategy,

A commitment to safe chemical transportation

Written by Sheq Management

Monday, 12 March 2018 00:00 - Last Updated Monday, 12 March 2018 06:59

management system and daily operations,” explains Penfold.



In addition, SQAS-SA was developed specifically with local conditions in mind. As such, SQAS-SA covers many elements of the ISO standards and more. It looks at things like legal compliance, driver employment, driver training, driver wellness, emergency procedures, risk assessments, vehicle maintenance, tyre maintenance, operational controls, security, on-road behaviour of drivers and the quality of the vehicle itself.

“The principle behind it is that a company will implement the management system and an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the system every two years to ensure quality and safety for all,” says Richard Durrant, owner of Transheq and an independent consultant to CAIA on transport safety.

The SQAS-SA auditing process covers three important sectors: road transportation, warehousing operations and tanker washing facilities. Although traditionally SQAS-SA auditing focused on audits related to road transport, the increase in the number of warehouses storing hazardous materials in South Africa has necessitated the need for local warehouse auditing.

Consequently, strict compliance to quality standards for storing and transporting fuel and chemical products is expected from warehouse providers and hauliers with health and safety of the environment in mind.

This is the case with haulier Cargo Carriers, whose long and close affiliation with South Africa’s steel, fuel, chemicals, powders and sugar industries bears testament to its unrelenting commitment to SHEQ, as explained by Elmarie Ollewagen, business development and communications manager at Cargo Carriers.

“Cargo Carriers has been a leading logistics service provider for fuel and chemical products for over 60 years. We have managed to retain and renew most of our contracts because our clients have full confidence in us and in our management systems... Some of our clients have been

A commitment to safe chemical transportation

Written by Sheq Management

Monday, 12 March 2018 00:00 - Last Updated Monday, 12 March 2018 06:59

with us for many years and they continue to trust us with their products,” Ollewagen explains..

It comes as no surprise that two companies operating in the local fuel and chemical industries recently renewed their contracts with Cargo Carriers. The company’s ability to meet the high safety and environmental health standards in the industry played an important role in the renewal of its contract to transport a raw-tar product, or “black fuel” (a classified hazardous product) for an important client in this industrial market segment.

Ollewagen also points out that the company’s leading position in the larger fuel industry is characterised by its load-and-route optimisation, enhanced load security and delivery visibility capabilities.

In addition, the company’s sophisticated technologies, including the latest vehicle and trailer configurations, have helped reduce emissions in the large-transport component of the industry’s value chain. This is in line with the growing “green” consciousness that has placed significant onus on businesses, especially fossil-fuel based sectors, to reduce their carbon footprints.

These technologies have also contributed to increased payload and reduced fuel burn, helping players in this increasingly competitive industry to contain logistics costs and, therefore, improve efficiencies.

These capabilities are augmented by improved turnaround times on last-mile distribution operations, preloading vehicles and offloading procedures, as well as ensuring close to 100-percent vehicle availability, due to a sound preventative and structured maintenance regime.

Meanwhile, the focus on SHEQ has also been a key component of the company’s efficient and safe delivery of flocculants, acids, fertilisers and heavy oils. It is also the preferred transporter of oxygen, nitrogen, argon and carbon dioxide.

The gravitas Cargo Carriers places on maintaining its high SHEQ standards is further motivated by the extensive audits it undergoes by the local and German-based DEKRA-ITS certification

A commitment to safe chemical transportation

Written by Sheq Management

Monday, 12 March 2018 00:00 - Last Updated Monday, 12 March 2018 06:59

services.

This complements the company's ISO 9001:2015; ISO 14001:2015 and OHSAS 18001:2007 accreditation and affiliation to the CAIA.

The Sasolburg branch of Cargo Carriers has been rated as an "accredited haulier" meeting CAIA's stringent criteria. The Sasolburg operation is one of the branches from which the company coordinates deliveries throughout South Africa and as far afield as Zambia and Malawi. Importantly, the company is also a signatory to SQAS and Responsible Care.