

TRUCKERS – ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL!!!



TruckSure By Trevor Tohill

When it comes to the transport industry it would be fair to say that nothing is normal – I guess that covers the rigs and the freight just as much as it does the operators.

I have to say that over the 37 years I have been insuring trucks, loads, and operators I have never been bored, never had a dull moment and thoroughly enjoyed the clients and contacts made, What other insurance broker could say that and mean it?

I chose to specialize in this industry when I arrived in Sydney as a bit of a rookie broker with Marsh back in the early 70's. It was a baptism by fire, coming from little old Wanganui to the big smoke, and man you had to be a quick learner. Although I have to say that competing with the Aussies was a bit of a breeze. Within a couple of years my clients included Australia's largest concrete contracting company with a fleet of agitators and pumps in the hundreds, road trains running the outback and mind boggling mining and earth moving machines.

The variety did not stop there and within four years I was right up to my neck at the business end of insuring transporters' unique trucking requirements as insurance manager with the NSW Long Distance Road Transport Assn. This really capped off my real understanding of the industry that I had chosen to be a part of!

A lot has really changed over the years – the rigs are bigger, brighter, and more powerful....and much more specialized in the tasks that they perform – a logger is not geared up to run line haul as much as a stock truck can't run containers to the wharf. There are literally hundreds of engines, chassis, and cab specs and

combinations each designed to do its own special task.....and it doesn't stop there. What about the oils, lubes, tyres, additives, loading devices, in cab and mechanical technology, etc,etc.

The point I am trying to make is that every single transport operator is unique - no two are the same. That goes the same for fleet operators as much as it does for the owner operator.

So why is it then that some insurance brokers promote the advantages of the 'group scheme'?

In other words dumping all of a transport client's owner operators into one big pot with the resulting loss of each client's own unique individuality – the line haul specialist is in there along with the urban delivery specialist, the experienced alongside the novice, the careful next to the careless.

The results keep repeating themselves time over time – the good operators subsidize the bad and eventually the group scheme gets a big shake up or goes down the dunny. The net outcome is the same – everyone in the scheme ends up paying more than is needed to make up for the poor claims experience of the few.

Only in the last couple of weeks my phone started to ring off the hook as word got around from some owner drivers of one of the larger schemes. The scheme was under review, premiums were hiked upwards and a not so popular change of insurance company was being promoted.

Some of the better operators did not want any of this and the result was that a number of them opted for change. They wanted to be responsible for their own decision. They

wanted their own good driving and claim history to count for something and not to subsidize a sub-standard driver's lousy record. In all cases TruckSure were able to show considerable premium savings by treating each client personally and individually. Not only that, we were also able to discuss one on one the policy conditions and update unit values – something that got lost in the impersonality of the group scheme.

So I guess what I am saying is that if you are an owner operator or small fleet owner with a good driving and claims record, don't be fooled by the lure of the group scheme promoters. Get busy on the phone and secure a couple of quotes.

I can just about guarantee that you will obtain individual, unique and competitive premiums and conditions and know that they are your terms and they are not going to be badly influenced by any of the industry cowboys.

One thing to consider – New Zealand is a very small market by world standards. In my opinion we only have three specialty commercial transport motor insurers and two insurance brokerages dedicated to truckers unique requirements – very happy to point you in the right direction.

After all said and done I would hate to see you penalized and persevering in an obsolete group scheme, or perhaps even worse – making the change to a broker or insurer that has absolutely no clue about your unique business – transport.

The views expressed above are my personal opinions and do not necessarily reflect those of MultiSure Ltd, TruckSure Ltd or the Insurers represented. 



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