



## Logistics (too) close to the customer !?!

In recent years, companies have been walking a tightrope between maintaining short routes to their end-users and keeping sufficient distance from the areas they live in! The migration of businesses out of urban areas is well established. Yet it is not only businesses, but also consumers who are being enticed beyond the city walls. Good transport facilities and lower land prices in these commuter belts attract not only businesses with their production facilities and logistics terminals, but also families.

Particularly in this area of potential conflict, the corresponding local authorities play a key role in dedicating land for industrial ventures and granting approvals for facilities. Basically, they have to ensure that the populations' free space is protected in accordance with the emission standards stipulated in the Austrian standard S 5021. On the other hand, revenues from taxes and duties together with the retention or creation of new jobs in the region certainly present a significant attraction.

Hence, it is not uncommon that those people who happily join in the celebrations when a foundation stone is laid, are subsequently (and with significantly less good humour) involved in "noise pollution" proceedings. In these proceedings, one party provides an expert's report as evidence of the exceeded emission values, which the other party then challenges by providing a counter assessment from a different expert. In order to reach an agreement, the principle which is commonly used in sound-proofing applies: sound insulation measures are taken firstly at the source, then at the point where the sound spreads, and finally at the place of emission.

In practice, the scope of requirements can range from emission-reducing control measures, quietening reverse warning systems on lorries, using special tyres on loading and unloading equipment, through to building noise protection walls, and even on to limiting the operating hours of certain parts of the plant during the night. However, practice has also shown that in spite of the successful conclusion of administrative proceedings, individual complaints from residents can cause huge problems for the affected company, which can involve subsequent investments in emission protection measures. With this in mind, you'll need to maintain good relations not only with the authorities, but also with your current and future neighbours.

Yours,  
Christian Schachinger

Christian Schachinger is consultant at x|vise innovative logistics GmbH in Vienna.