

# TRUCK NEWS

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### Report from Germany

Coverage of the IAA Commercial Vehicles Show in Hannover, Germany.

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### Replacing an icon

Kenworth recently took the wraps off its new W990, replacement to its long-running W900.

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### Chasing 10 mpg

We take the new Mack Anthem on a 1,000-mile run in an attempt to capture 10 mpg.

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### A bright idea

Harnessing solar panel to eliminate idling and support the truck's primary batteries is worth considering.

## Top fleets recognized

Challenger's Topping named HR Leader of the Year

By **Sonia Straface**

### TORONTO, ONTARIO

It was a star-studded night on Oct. 11, as Trucking HR Canada hosted its annual Top Fleet Employers Gala Awards Dinner in Toronto.

The night brought together more than 300 trucking and transportation professionals to celebrate human resources (HR) best practices and shine a light on some of the best places to work in the industry.

Fifty-two fleets were celebrated as the 2018 Top Fleet Employers, but only a handful took home the coveted awards. Awards were given to celebrate the most impressive workplaces across the country, taking into consideration online applications and employee surveys, which look at a variety of HR best practices.

The Top Private Fleet Award went to Trailer Wizards. ONE For Freight was the recipient of the Top Small Fleet Award. The Top Medium

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Challenger Motor Freight founder Dan Einwechter participated in this year's convoy.

## Paris Truck Convoy raises \$75,000 for Special Olympics

Organizers set sights on \$1 million

### PARIS, ONTARIO

In its 14th edition, the Paris Truck Convoy for Special Olympics raised a whopping \$75,000.

The event, which saw 72 big rigs roll down Hwy. 401 on Sept. 15, is one of the longest-standing fundraisers of its kind in Southern Ontario. Funds raised for the event go directly to the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics to help special athletes obtain uniforms, as well as the equipment and facilities necessary for their sport of choice.

"The numbers of trucks participating are down from last year, but pledges are up," said Tammy Blackwell, event coordinator. "Our top three drivers represented \$16,600; I don't know how they do it."

New this year was a classic car show on the Friday before the convoy.

"It was organized by a retired truck driver," Blackwell said. "He had come out to the event before and thought he could help us raise more money. So, he organized the car show and it went great. There were a larger number of people here on Friday night, which is good."

To date, the convoy has raised more than \$800,000 for Special Olympics.

This year's convoy was highlighted by the fact that the Special Olympics is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

"This convoy just goes to show that it's a terrific event, but an even better community," Glenn MacDonell, CEO of Special Olympics Ontario said. "The industry sees

*Continued on page 6*

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**Lou Smyrlis**  
Director Business Development  
416-510-6881  
lou@newcom.ca

**Kathy Koras**  
Associate Publisher  
416-510-6892  
kathy@newcom.ca

**A. (Tony) Hohenadel**  
Publisher - truckandtrailer.ca  
416-614-5800  
tony@newcom.ca

**Dan Robinson**  
Director Digital Marketing  
416-510-5123  
dan@newcom.ca

## EDITORIAL

**James Menzies**  
Editor  
416-510-6896  
james@newcom.ca

**Sonia Straface**  
Associate Editor  
416-510-6890  
sonia@newcom.ca

**Derek Clouthier**  
Truck West Editor  
403-969-1506  
derek@newcom.ca

## DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Michael Chimienti, Beverley Richards,  
Carolyn Brimer, Tim Norton

## ACCOUNT MANAGERS

**Anthony Buttino**  
National Accounts Manager  
514-292-2297  
anthonyb@newcom.ca

**Nickisha Rashid**  
National Accounts Manager  
416-614-5824  
nickisha@newcom.ca

**Denis Arsenaull**  
Quebec Accounts Manager  
514-938-0639 ext. 2  
denis@newcom.ca

**Doug Copeland**  
Regional Accounts Manager  
905-715-9511  
doug@newcom.ca

**Paul Beelien**  
Regional Accounts Manager  
416-614-5806  
paul@newcom.ca

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CHAIRMAN & FOUNDER:  
**Jim Glionna**

PRESIDENT  
**Joe Glionna**

VICE-PRESIDENT  
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Director of Circulation  
**Pat Glionna**

**Subscription Inquiries**  
**Lilianna Kantor**  
Phone: 416-614-5815  
Fax: 416-614-8861  
Email: lily@newcom.ca

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# Showroom Bound

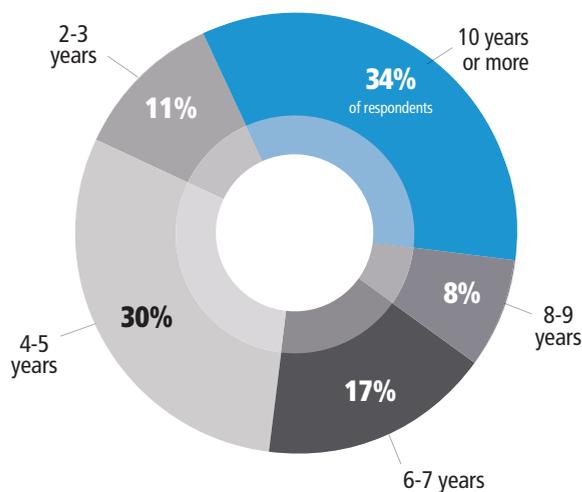
Surging economy has owner-operators in a buying mood

Canada's owner-operators, tempered by an anemic economic recovery, had long put off purchasing new heavy duty trucks. More than a third are on truck replacement cycles that are 10 years or longer. But the much improved economic picture has owner-operators once again thinking about purchasing new. Our latest annual Equipment Buying Trends Survey reveals that 38% of Canada's owner-operators are looking to be behind the wheel of a new truck in 2019.

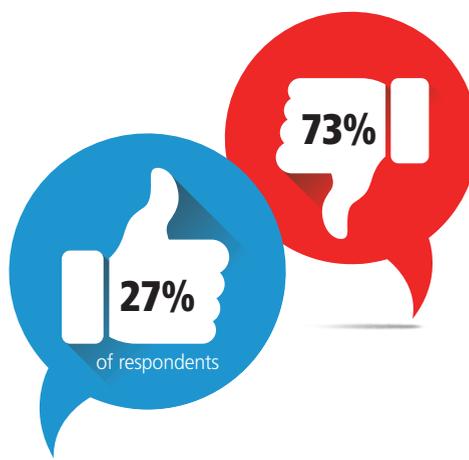


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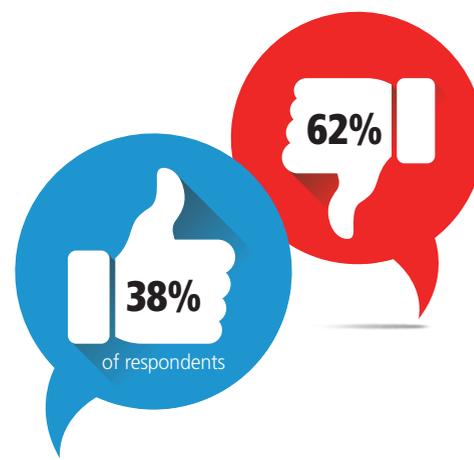
Trade in cycle for heavy duty vehicles



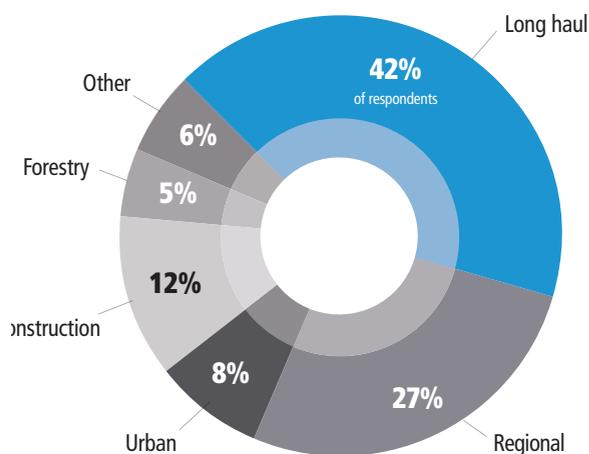
Truck replacement plans for remainder of 2018



Truck replacement plans for 2019



Types of haul engaged in



Brand of HD vehicle operating

Freightliner	23% of respondents
International	13%
Kenworth	27%
Mack	5%
Peterbilt	14%
Volvo	13%
Western Star	2%
Other/NA	3%

Brand of HD vehicle most likely to consider purchasing

Freightliner	22% of respondents
International	2%
Kenworth	33%
Mack	5%
Peterbilt	13%
Volvo	13%
Western Star	2%
Don't know/NA	13%

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# It's a good time to be small

The trucking industry is booming, and small carriers are potentially the biggest benefactors. Looking to the U.S., small fleets are growing while larger fleets are not. Speaking at Newcom's Surface Transportation Summit Oct. 10, Stifel Financial Corp.'s David Ross pointed out that small fleets are increasing revenue, while larger fleets are seeing a decline.

"Large fleets have been shrinking for some time, partially because they got too big and most of them didn't make any money," he said, noting how many turned to asset-light options like brokering trucks and warehousing.

In September, I attended the FTR Transportation Conference in Indianapolis, Ind., and there was discussion there as well about the improved outlook for small carriers. Finding and keeping drivers is the name of the game, and in a strong market, small fleets have certain advantages on this front. They can offer more perks to drivers, create family environments, and focus exclusively on driver-friendly freight and not have to chase skids from major retailers.

"Retailers that allow their operations to hold drivers for six to 16 hours are abusive in today's envi-



ronment and it happens every day in retail," said Jeff Tucker, CEO of freight broker Tucker Company.

There were also accounts of shippers – desperate for capacity – going out in pursuit of small fleets that can serve as "one lane wonders."

"If you have some dedicated runs like we do, and if you can match them with a niche carrier where that lane becomes meaningful to them, it's a great opportunity," said John Janson, director of global logistics for Sanmar. "Last year we added three different sets of one lane wonders where my transportation team

has put their sales hats on and they're out finding these carriers."

Large shippers seeking out small carriers...how times have changed. Back at the Surface Transportation Summit, I moderated a panel discussion on success strategies for small carriers. The panel consisted of: Leanne Quail, Paul Quail Transport; Brian Taylor, Liberty Linehaul; and Doug Sutherland, Sutco Transportation Specialists. All said they are enjoying improving rates and more demand than they can keep up with. The key, they agreed, is not to lose sight of your core customers.

"There's a lot of people asking for us to do business now, and I think you don't want to chase that," said Sutherland, whose company is focused on the forestry sector. He said small fleets are at an advantage in prosperous times, because they can be more agile decision makers and can offer a driver-friendly workplace easier when every employee is known by management on a first-name basis.

Taylor said Liberty Linehaul has been approached of late by large Fortune 500 shippers, looking for capacity, and asking how they can become a good customer. This is

something only the mega-carriers had experienced in the past.

Another thing small fleets have going for them is that technology is offering them the ability to cost-effectively offer services to customers that previously only the large carriers could provide, including real-time visibility of freight. Only a few years ago I wondered if the small carriers could survive without the IT resources enjoyed by the big guys. However, I now see technology as the great equalizer, and not a competitive disadvantage, thanks to the arrival of well-designed, simple apps and other tools that are now more cost-effective than ever to deploy.

I think everyone would agree it's a good time to be a trucking company – and the buoyant moods I observed among carriers at both the conferences I recently attended would support that. It could be that it's an even better time to be small. **TN**



**James Menzies** can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at james@newcom.ca. You can also follow him on Twitter @JamesMenzies.

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## A special convoy

Continued from page 1

itself as a champion for our athletes and what more can we ask but that? We have truckers from all over the country here, and what we notice from these drivers is sure, they're here doing the convoy here in Paris today, but many may very well join other convoys across Canada and the U.S. after this."

There was one very special driver this year that stood out among the others, according to Blackwell.

Dan Einwechter, founder of Challenger Motor Freight was one of the 72 drivers in the convoy this year. It's something he said he's wanted to do for a long time.

"I've always wanted to be a part of this, but just never had the time," he said. "And finally, this year it worked out."

Like all the other convoy drivers, Einwechter had an athlete join him in his truck.



**"I've always wanted to be a part of this, but just never had the time. And finally, this year it worked out."**

— Dan Einwechter, Challenger

"He is absolutely one of the busiest guys we know," Blackwell said of Einwechter. "We had our fingers crossed that he would participate. We are so happy to have Challenger as one of our sponsors; they've really amped up their participation this year and have 13 units participating today."

While Blackwell said she was thrilled about the great turnout and success of the convoy this year, her and other organizations are looking toward next year's convoy – the 15th annual – to be the greatest ever.

"The challenge in year 15 is, we want to break the \$1 million ceiling that we've been heading towards," she said. "As well in year 15, we want to break 131 trucks which will represent, 116 as our high, plus one for every year the convoy's been around. We are working on that. We want our drivers to feel good about what they've done. I can't say enough about trucking industry – we couldn't do any of this without them." **TN**

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# Convoys in Ontario raise \$115,000 for cancer research

By **Sonia Straface**

## PRESCOTT, ONTARIO

It was another successful convoy season this year in Southern Ontario.

Trucking for a Cure – which hosts two convoys every September (one in Woodstock, Ont., and another alternating between Prescott and Brockville, Ont.) – raised close to \$115,000 in support of breast cancer research for the Canadian Cancer Society.

The two convoys took place on Sept. 15 (Prescott) and Sept. 22 (Woodstock) and had 128 drivers participate.

“Our numbers are down a little,” said Joanne Mackenzie, the event organizer for both convoys. “But that happens. There seems to be a lot more trucking events happening around this industry this year, which is good, but companies can only go to so many events and donate so much money. So, I get it.”

Despite numbers being down, Mackenzie said the convoy was still one for the books.

“We did actually have seven more drivers than last year in Prescott,” she said. “It’s the smaller of the two convoys, but it’s unique in the fact that we’re not on the highway for very long. We get off the highway and actually drive through downtown Brockville and go through all the little towns back to Prescott, and everyone in the community pinks everything out for us. They get really into the spirit.”

This year, Vision Truck Group in Cambridge, Ont., provided members of the Owner-Operator Business Association of Canada (OBAC) with a brand new Mack Anthem to drive. The drivers of the new truck raised \$3,340 for the cause.

“Vision Truck Group was honored to provide a Mack Anthem model to the OBAC team for such a worthwhile cause,” said John Baker, director of sales, Vision Truck Group. “It was great to see supporters rally around the Anthem and pledge their support to help find a cure.”

Mackenzie started the convoy nine years ago after her aunt passed away from cancer.

“Breast cancer was one of the cancers she had,” she said. “And breast cancer is near and dear to my heart because I had a breast cancer scare of my own. Thankfully, I found my lump early and only needed a bit of radiation. I’m cancer-free now. But it was really my experience with my aunt that kickstarted this. And I just wanted to do something to give back and keep her closer to my heart.”

Mackenzie added that the convoys are all about cancer awareness and education, as well as to help build bridges between the reality of trucking and public perception.

“We want to show the public that we’re not a menace out on the highways,” she said. “We are humans. And we are passionate about driving. And about charities. And about things others care about. I think these convoys really bring a light to trucking, and the light on trucking hasn’t been too bright lately. So, I hope these convoys help.” **TN**



It’s tradition to “pink out” your truck in the name of breast cancer awareness at the Trucking for a Cure convoys in Southern Ontario every year.

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# Commercial traffic to be a priority at new bridge

By Ron Stang

## WINDSOR, ONTARIO

The processing of commercial traffic will be a priority when the new Gordie Howe International Bridge opens in late 2024, officials with the Crown agency overseeing the major infrastructure project linking Windsor and Detroit say.

“We feel one of the most important aspects of this project is for trade and commercial uses,” Tom Middlebrook, spokesman for Bridging North America, the consortium that will build and operate the bridge, told a news conference here Sept. 28. “Designing for commercial users has been an absolute pivotal requirement.”

The news conference was called to announce the financial close of the contract between Bridging North America and the Windsor Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA), the Canadian Crown agency overseeing the construction and future operation of the bridge. The official price tag of the new bridge was also announced: \$5.7 billion. Preliminary construction is already underway but the main construction work, starting with foundation and pier builds, gets underway later this fall.

Improving commercial traffic flow has been at the crux of almost two

decades of planning for the bridge, with notorious truck backups sometimes now stretching kilometers along a city street, Huron Church Rd., or in the U.S., along I-75 and I-96 ramps and service drives, leading to the existing Ambassador Bridge.

The new six-lane, 2.5-km Gordie Howe will instead offer seamless freeway-to-freeway links connecting Hwy. 401 to I-75, both major trade corridors.

As a result, advanced technology will be incorporated into the bridge design as well as the new massive ports of entry, which will contain Customs and tolling areas, “all with a view for mobility for commercial use,” Middlebrook said.

As well, unlike the Ambassador Bridge, the new bridge will accept hazardous materials.

Currently, Haz-Mat must be transported by the Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry, whose owner, a supporter of the Gordie Howe bridge, has said he fully accepts he will be out of business once the bridge opens.

Haz-Mat currently can also be transported across the Blue Water Bridge between Sarnia and Port Huron, 90 kms to the north.

Middlebrook said oversized loads on the Gordie Howe will also be accepted, and “there’s agri-food



A rendering of the Gordie Howe International Bridge, slated to open in late 2024.

considerations incorporated in the design with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Canadian Food Inspection Agency; they’re going to be located in the facilities.”

The new cable-stayed bridge, with a 125-year lifespan, will be wide enough to expand to eight lanes, and will feature ports of entry (POE) that will be as large as 53 hectares on the Canadian side – the largest in Canada – and 68 hectares on the U.S. side. They will have 24 Canadian and

36 American inspection booths, flexible to handle both cars and trucks.

The current Ambassador Bridge, built in 1929, and which itself is planning a replacement span, is now the largest trade crossing between the two countries, and sees almost one quarter of commercial transport. Some 7,000 trucks cross each day, or 2.5 million a year. In 2017 more than \$173 billion in bilateral trade passed through Windsor-Detroit.

The Gordie Howe bridge obviously poses a threat to the Ambassador’s toll revenues, but despite numerous court challenges, Ambassador Bridge management has been unable to stymie the Howe’s development.

Middlebrook said with the Gordie Howe bridge the benefit for truckers would be reduced wait times, bypassing municipal roads, fewer intersections to cross, and “convenient customized payment mechanisms” including expedited processing for e-manifests.

Tolling rates for the bridge have yet to be determined but the WDBA will set “competitive tolls” for all vehicle classes, WDBA spokeswoman Heather Grondin said.

The non-profit WDBA won’t receive the toll revenue but it will be passed through to the government of Canada.

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Grondin said “extensive consultation” will take place with bridge users “to get a sense of what rates we should be setting the tolls at,” and consultations will begin “in a few years.” She said rates at other border crossings will also be examined.

But Grondin said the “key advantage” of the Gordie Howe is in its “connectivity” freeway to freeway, and ports of entry will feature dedicated truck lanes.

As far as Haz-Mat, truckers will use the standard permits used at all crossings.

“We’ll be following all of the standard Department of Transportation and Ministry of Transportation requirements for safety,” Bruce Campbell of Parsons, the WDBA’s engineering consultant, said. “There are some limited materials that require what we call a closed bridge permit. Those are very few in number and it’s actually fairly easy to execute that on a border crossing, you just hold the tolls for a short period of time and you give them (trucks) some space. But they’d have to go through a permit process so the operator would know that they’re coming.”

In the final analysis, Campbell said, the project will be a game changer.

“The wonderful thing is, we’ll have a six-lane bridge, so we’ll be able to have fully dedicated lanes for both NEXUS (cars) and FAST vehicles so you can’t get stuck behind other traffic.” **TN**

# Farmers, truckers converge at Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show

By Sonia Straface

## WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO

It was an epic three days for farmers in Southern Ontario Sept. 11-13.

Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show – which bills itself as the premier outdoor agricultural showcase – took place those dates at Canada’s Outdoor Park in Woodstock, Ont. The show itself spanned more than 200 acres, with 750 exhibitors showcasing their farming equipment, new seed and crop technology, trucks, and everything else in between.

This year, the show celebrated its 25th anniversary, so it was a special one for organizers.

According to Amanda Macfarlane, communications manager for the farm show, it was expected it would reach its highest attendance ever, with more than 44,000 visitors over the course of the show.

“We are pretty excited to be celebrating 25 years this year,” she said. “Our audience here are farmers. And all 750 exhibitors are going to benefit farms and farming in some way. Our point of difference here is, we’re outdoors. Farmers work outdoors, so we are outdoors. Here, they can walk down one lane and check out a tractor from one company, and walk down another lane and check out two or three more from another company.”

The 200 acres also allows for farmers to test drive up to 20 trucks so they can make an informed decision when it comes time to choose a new tractor to buy.

“This outdoor style also allows us to do things such as truck ride and drives,” Macfarlane said. “Farmers can get into the vehicles and see how they feel on the road.”

The show also added a new component called the Innovation Showcase.



The Outdoor Farm Show celebrated its 25th anniversary this year, bringing together truckers and farmers from across Southern Ontario.

“The Innovation Showcase is new this year. Research shows the main reason why (farmers) attend farm shows is to see new technology and innovation and we know our exhibitors bring new products here to launch, so we know they are reaching the farmers,” Macfarlane explained. “So, the objective is to connect those two groups together and let the farmers see what they’re looking for or what they didn’t know existed.”

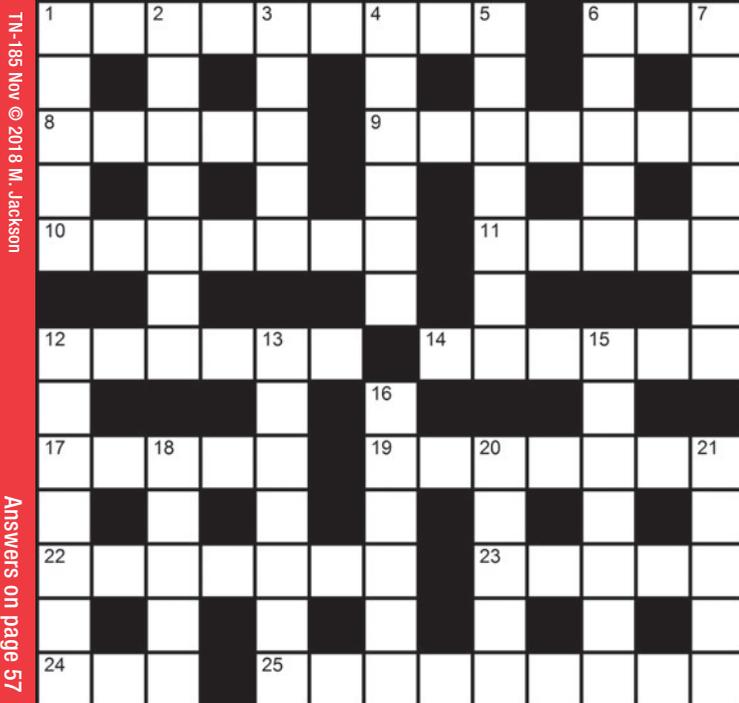
Exhibitors and attendees alike enjoyed the show.

“We’ve always sold something at the show,” said Koos Auret, a sales representative at Trans East Trailers. “We’ve been back at the show for nine years now, and we’ve either always sold or gotten really good leads and sold something after the show when we come here. And the traffic here at the show has been really busy, so that’s good.”

Richard Brooks of Easy-Kleen Pressure Systems was also having a good show. By the morning of the second day, the company had already sold three units.

“We’ve come to the show for 20 years,” he said. “And it’s always a good show for us. You get to meet a lot of people here too, which makes it nice.” **TN**

## THIS MONTH’S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TN-185 Nov © 2018 M. Jackson

Answers on page 57

### Across

- 1 Truck World or Truxpo (5,4)
- 6 Exhaust-related reservoir contents (1,1,1)
- 8 Oklahoma’s I-44 / I-244 oil city
- 9 Auxiliary axle type (3,4)
- 10 Used truck transactions
- 11 Globetrotter trim package brand
- 12 Slang term for Canadian
- 14 Moving under customs seal, cargo-wise (2,4)
- 17 O/O portion
- 19 Eighteen wheeler power unit
- 22 Brake system type (3,4)
- 23 Common cargo covers
- 24 Canada’s national route, briefly (1,1,1)
- 25 Refreshing long trip pauses (4,5)

### Down

- 1 Specialized mobile home mover
- 2 Truck transmission brand
- 3 Message from home, perhaps
- 4 Final-ride ride
- 5 Plumber or electrician transport (4,3)
- 6 Really boring hand tool
- 7 Overweight cargo, informally (3,4)
- 12 Radiator liquid
- 13 Transport company
- 15 It’s crossed by Hwy 401
- 16 Vertical exhausts
- 18 It’s up on the map
- 20 Certain transmissions, briefly
- 21 Flowers referenced on AB plates

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# CSA to get major overhaul

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Big changes are coming to the U.S. Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) safety regime.

CSA was introduced in 2010 to evaluate a carrier's likelihood of being involved in a future crash, by assigning points for roadside violations. It relies upon seven BASIC categories and flags carriers who've received a sufficiently high score in any one of those BASICs.

But the program had its shortcomings. Major revisions were made in 2015, and Congress demanded the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) work with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) think tank to find further ways to improve the program. Recommendations from the NAS are being implemented, and soon a completely new CSA program will be rolled out. (No date has been announced for the revisions).

The new program will look radically different than today's CSA, Steve Bryan, executive vice-president of Samba Safety, explained during a recent webinar.

"We're going to be asking a very different question with the new CSA," he said. "In the past, the ques-

tion that was asked was how likely you as a motor carrier are to experience future crashes. That was really the concept behind CSA...throw that out the window. That is no longer the mission of the CSA platform. The new system is designed and intended to identify a deficient safety culture in a motor carrier in an attempt to answer the question: How safe are you?"

Bryan, whose firm provides carriers with CSA scorecards to measure their performance, said the change should benefit the industry. Samba Safety has built new software to reflect the changes and will soon offer customers an opportunity to preview how they score using the new methodology.

The new program will use the science of item response theory (IRT) to determine whether or not carriers have a good safety culture.

"It's a time-tested model used in all kinds of other areas such as education, health care, psychology and other places. The IRT model is designed to answer what the statisticians call psychometric ques-



tions, like: How happy are you? How depressed are you? How optimistic are you? How intelligent are you? Questions you would think would be difficult to quantify, that's what IRT does," Bryan explained. "It's trying to evaluate the safety culture that exists at each individual motor carrier."

Roadside enforcement methods won't change. Enforcement agencies will continue to carry out inspections and will lay charges for the same 945 violations on the books today, which will be now categorized by group. The severity and time weights previously assigned under CSA will be eliminated and replaced with IRT.

"Everybody who focused the last eight or so years on managing things by CSA points will find that is no longer the lever you pull," said Bryan.

The CSA BASIC measure disappears and there will no longer be a BASIC percentile score assigned. The yellow alert symbol assigned to carriers will disappear. The seven BASIC categories, however, will remain.

"We still end up with seven scores, they're just not percentiles," Bryan said. The big difference is the FMCSA will rely on IRT science to evaluate a carrier's safety culture.

The new system should eliminate the state by state disparity that was seen using the current system, Bryan explained.

"This model does a really good job of greatly reducing that lopsidedness based on state enforcement," he said, noting speeding violations are heavily targeted in Indiana while Texas enforcement focuses on maintenance.

"The IRT machine goes to work. It's very complex science. It runs on IRT-specific software. The days of computing CSA in spreadsheets has come to a crashing end," said Bryan.

Overall, Bryan feels the new CSA system will work much better for carriers. He compared it to a safety culture fingerprint that a carrier leaves through its roadside inspections. It will continue to draw data from two years of inspections.

"We find a lot to agree with in this new methodology," he said. "We can report, out of the gate, we really like a lot of the direction this is taking us and the idea it is computing this safety culture score, how safe are you?"

Bryan admitted, however, there will be challenges out of the gate and not every carrier will agree on how it's rated.

"There are going to be a lot of questions, cases where they believe they are unfairly scored," said Bryan. His advice to carriers is to "get out in front of this now. Start to get educated and understand new ways of managing the scores. It's a very different kind of score."

Samba Safety plans to have preview capabilities available in early November, so that customers can determine how they'll be rated using the new methodology. **TN**



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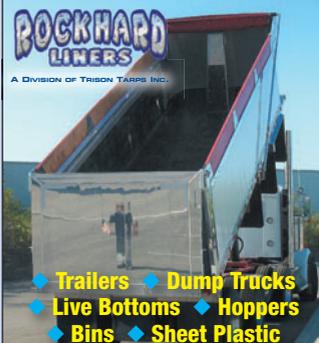




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# Ontario scraps Drive Clean to focus on trucks

## TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ontario scrapped the Drive Clean passenger vehicle program last month. Starting April 1, 2019, drivers will no longer need to get Drive Clean emissions tests for their passenger vehicles. The government of Ontario says this move is saving taxpayers up to \$40 million a year. In lieu of Drive Clean, a new program that will focus on the biggest polluting vehicles, like commercial trucks, will be put in place.

The provincial government also said the reason behind this cancellation was that "auto industry standards have significantly improved since the program was created in 1999 making this program no longer necessary."

Owners of vehicles will still be required to make sure their vehicle emissions systems are operating properly. The ministry added that it will be strengthening its on-road inspections to ensure owners are properly maintaining their vehicle emissions systems.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) is welcoming the government consultations on anti-tampering enforcement and environmental incentives.

The province of Ontario recently announced a consultation process to redesign a heavy truck emissions control program, which will include stronger roadside enforcement of anti-tampering regulations, as well as potential incentives for purchasing trucking environmental equipment.

The Environmental Registry Notice says the objective of the review is to develop an effective heavy truck testing program, while balancing the need to reduce the regulatory burden on impacted transport industries.

"The (Doug) Ford government has established an excellent tone in policy and direction for how this review is to be conducted," said OTA president Stephen Laskowski. "The outcome of a fair and level playing field program that reduces regulatory tape for the trucking industry is very much in alignment with the objectives of OTA."

The OTA plans to work with the province to determine how current MTO enforcement policies and programs can be better utilized with regards to environmental matters. It would like to see emissions system tampering be eliminated.

"Getting this technology out of our industry would be a significant victory for competitive fairness. OTA looks forward to working with the Ministry of Environment on tackling this important issue through the development of an effective program that levels the playing field without introducing an unnecessary regulatory burden for the vast majority of compliant carriers," said Laskowski.



Heavy trucks will be targeted once Ontario scraps Drive Clean for passenger vehicles.

The association says it is also encouraged about a potential incentive program that would reward fleets that buy leading-edge environmental equipment technologies. **TN**

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# No winners in trade wars: Daum

## HANNOVER, GERMANY

The business of making trucks is booming at Daimler Truck and Bus. Sales for the company were up 13% in the first half of 2018, and orders are up 38%. “That’s why we’re equally optimistic about the second half of the year,” says CEO Martin Daum. “The sentiment of our customers is strong.”

But there are still challenges to overcome – including protectionist economic policies and tariffs.

“A trade war at the end of the day will have no winners. Just losers,” Daum stressed during a media roundtable at the IAA truck show in Germany, describing himself as a proponent of open borders.

“We employ thousands of people and we invest hundreds of millions of dollars in each and every market.”

Still, it doesn’t make sense to duplicate the same activities in every one of those markets. There are business benefits to spreading manufacturing activities and expertise around the world.

A series of tariffs sparked by U.S. President Donald Trump has so far not led to any shifts in Daimler’s global supply chain strategies. Daum says the manufacturer takes a long-term view when securing the sources for all things needed to produce a truck. Over time, though, tariffs could require changes, he says.

Changing suppliers would be no small decision. New sources require

new tooling, and any new suppliers need to have their offerings tested. Truck makers also deal with relatively low purchasing volumes when compared to their automotive counterparts. And even if changes are made, such shifts tend to be accompanied by higher prices as well.

The long-term effect of tariffs is not limited to rising commodity prices alone. Trade wars could also trigger a recession, he says. And higher interest rates could dampen truck sales.

For now, bigger challenges include the supply chain’s capacity to meet strong customer demand. “We have to manage bottlenecks. This is as difficult as navigating a downturn,” Daum says. “We have a lot of suppliers where we’re really pushing the needle.”



Martin Daum

The focus on the future is broader than immediate truck sales, too. During the IAA truck show, Daimler showcased a broad array of updates to European trucks including the Actros, semi-autonomous driving systems now available today, and electrified powertrains for selected applications like transit buses.

There are also an increasing number of opportunities to adopt technologies originally developed by the company’s automotive business unit. “I see more synergies than ever,” Daum says, referring to everything from electrification to autonomous capabilities.

“Nearly everything you’ve seen today, you’ll see,” he adds, referring to IAA product launches that could soon be echoed in North America. “Things are sometimes closer than they appear.”

There are still challenges to overcome before some of the technologies are introduced, of course. Those buying a Mercedes-Benz Actros can now order a video system to replace traditional West Coast mirrors, but an outright replacement is not yet legally allowed by North American regulators.

“We are lobbying for those things because we see a certain benefit,” Daum says, referring to the combination of improved aerodynamics and visibility made possible by such systems.

“Gains have certainly been made in electrification, but it’s still not appropriate for every application,” he adds. It’s a matter of economics.

More will be coming in communications support, meanwhile.

The Daimler CEO hints at an increasing role for smartphones, replacing the need for drivers to be equipped with a second or third device.

“Hours-of-service could be put on that as well as telematics information,” he says.

Daum would also like to see trucks equipped with speech recognition tools such as those now available in Mercedes-Benz cars. “I would love to have a similar system on the trucking side.”

The data being communicated by a truck is already helping to refine the equipment on the road today.

“I don’t know how the truck in 2030 will look,” Daum said. But he was quick to add it will carry a Freightliner or Western Star badge. **TN**

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# ZF pledges to invest big bucks in electric and autonomous technologies

By **Sonia Straface**

## HANNOVER, GERMANY

ZF announced at the IAA truck show that is planning to invest €12 billion in e-mobility and autonomous driving in the next five years.

According to Wolf-Henning Scheider, CEO of ZF Friedrichshafen, modern day logistics is at a tipping point, and ZF's focus is how to make logistics and transportation more efficient and cleaner.

"Our approach is called Smart Logistics," he explained, saying the company has bundled its technologies through automation, networking, and electrification and has created attractive solutions for the complete logistics chain.

He turned to ZF's latest technologies – its Innovation Truck and its Terminal Yard tractor to show how ZF is part of the transportation solution. Both vehicles have the ability to autonomously maneuver trailers and containers without a driver. These vehicles both improve efficiency, and help address the growing shortage of qualified drivers, Scheider added.

"Driverless transport vehicles and automated functions will play a significant role, particularly in zoned areas like company terminal yards, forwarding company depots, or air and sea ports," he said. "In the near future, we will be seeing more

autonomous vehicles in such zoned areas faster than on public roads. The cost, safety, and efficiency benefits for customers will make a difference here."

Scheider also said he anticipates transportation will once again be in the spotlight this coming December as more people order packages and parcels online for the holidays.

"Last-mile deliveries are an urgent problem for logistics, especially the deliveries for packages and parcels," he said. "People want them delivered flexibly and quickly."

As such, he said ZF has turned its attention to the importance of last-mile delivery solutions through its Innovation Van. The van combines autonomous driving and an all-electric drivetrain to help make parcel deliveries an easy task in residential and city center areas.

The van is equipped with Level 4 autonomous driving functions, and can drive through cities effortlessly as it can detect lane markings, recognize traffic lights and road signs, and avoid obstacles. There's also a FollowMe function, which utilizes a tablet-based remote control and is particularly helpful for drivers. If two addresses are close enough that it makes more sense for the delivery driver to stay on foot, the Innovation Van will follow the driver as if on a virtual leash, avoiding detouring and double parking.



**ZF pledged to spend €12 billion in e-mobility and autonomous technology at the IAA show in Hannover, Germany on Sept. 19.**

"It's really a revolution for last-mile deliveries," Scheider said, adding customers are already interested

in the van. "Efficiency is number one for customers. If you have more time for the driver or operator to take care of other logistics tasks, like dispatching or organizing, that is immediately a business case for customers."

Scheider added that today, ZF equips all of types of commercial vehicles – from vans, to buses, to heavy cargo trucks, with electric drives. In heavy-duty applications, all-electric maneuvering can offer a potential fuel savings of 5-7%.

"ZF wants to make transportation clean and smart," he said. "And with these technologies, we are able to solve transportation problems worldwide." **TN**



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# Navistar already benefiting from Traton alliance

## HANNOVER, GERMANY

Navistar is already realizing the benefits of extra purchasing power made possible through a 17% equity stake secured by Volkswagen Truck and Bus – recently rebranded as Traton Group.

A related joint venture for procurement activities offered the business access to a bigger scale, Navistar president and CEO Troy Clarke said during the IAA truck show. There have also been opportunities to licence technology and participate in related research and development.

A Traton-developed powertrain is in the works for use in Navistar trucks, and is expected in 2021.

"We were the first alliance partner of what is now Traton, and that was a multi-year journey," said Clarke. "At the end of the day, (chief executive officer) Andreas Renschler and leadership at Traton said this is a company that has more good days ahead of it than bad days ahead of it."

There were certainly some challenges, but Navistar is now enjoy-

ing black ink in its business ledgers.

The business has improved its EBITDA six years in a row, and is now making net income rather than recording losses. "It's really been, financially, on a good path," said executive vice-president and chief financial officer Walter Borst.

Through shared procurement the companies expect to save \$500 million over five years, and realize a \$200 million run rate by the fifth year.

"We're on track to do this," he said.

A Traton joint venture with Hino is also looking to secure savings in a similar way.

Traton has demonstrated further faith in Navistar by increasing its stake over the original 16.6%, buying shares on the open market and at rates higher than those paid when securing the first shares, Borst added. The deal involving the original equity stake closed in March 2017.

Navistar has also hinted at a new product to be launched in early November. **TN**

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# Fuel for thought

Test talk at this fall's Energotest trials covers interesting ground

By Carroll McCormick

## BLAINVILLE, QUEBEC

Who would have guessed that catered shrimp costs no more than catered sandwiches? Or that side skirt and trailer tail vendors now face competition from a tidy aerodynamic package from Michelin that reminds me of a comment from a PIT Group (Performance Innovation Transport) staffer years ago about another product: "It's so small, how could it possibly work?"

Yet there I was, nibbling shrimp under the tent by the Transport Canada test track in Blainville, Que., musing about how creative minds always figure out how to make big things smaller, and often just as effective.

I swallowed the shrimp tale whole, but Michelin, looking for the special credibility that comes with positive PIT Group results, was taking no chances: It had hired PIT Group to evaluate an aerodynamic package it calls the Michelin Energy Guard Kit at the fall 2018 Energotest.

The track trials ran from Sept. 4-14.

Michelin trucked up two trailers from South Carolina for the tests – one unadorned, the other outfitted with the Michelin Energy Guard Kit, for a side-by-side comparison. It consists of side skirts, perforated mud flaps, slim air foils (Michelin calls them fairings) on the sides and roof, at the back of the trailer, and an innocuous-looking V-shaped spoiler, as Michelin calls it, attached to the doors.

The air foils and spoiler are so slim that they would easily go unnoticed had they not been painted bright blue.

Michelin advertises a 7.4% fuel saving with the Energy Guard Kit.

Just how the whole package works is the usual aerodynamic mystery, Michelin's bubble-filled animation notwithstanding, but those with knowledge of the fuel savings associated with side skirts, super singles, and boat tails, alone or in some combination, and their cost, now have another aerodynamic product to consider.

In other Energotest business, PIT Group did tests earlier this year to better understand the fuel savings gained with various vendors' kits, including side skirts and boat tails, alone and in various combinations. While there is still much to do, and learn, about aerodynamic add-ons, fleets are again wringing their hands over the most basic, yet most baffling piece of gear: tires, according to Marc Trudeau, an industrial consultant and researcher with PIT Group.

There are more than 450 brands of 11R22.5 tires alone, Trudeau says. "How can anybody make sense of that? In some brands the differences can be minor, sometimes huge, but

we don't know. It's almost impossible for fleets to know what to do."

This fall, PIT Group worked to answer some questions, hoping to give its member fleets some clarity in their decision-making so they can focus on other worries.

"Everyone is busier than they have been in 40 years. What is smoke and mirrors?" Trudeau asks.

Of this fall's Energotest trials, Trudeau says, "We tested regional and highway tires. We convinced manufacturers to bring their best sets of tires. Our members really wanted to know about the emerging market – Asian tires. The question for them is, 'Is it worth it to retread, as opposed to buying a new tire?' Is it better to leave on the truck an aggressive (winter) tire all the next summer, versus the cost and safety issues associated with changing tires twice a year? If a fleet decides to put one brand on for the whole year, how is an Asian tire performing on the fuel scale?"

While Energotest results are generally shared only with member fleets, Trudeau offers this glimpse into one of the things that PIT Group has learned: "If you can get a 5% fuel saving, you are still better off paying the full retail price for the better-performing tire than if you got the other tire for free. That was a real eye-opener for our members."

PIT Group also did testing on additives and hydrogen kits. Of the fall test program, PIT Group reports, "More than 20,000 kilometers were driven, 800 liters of fuel consumed, 432 tires changed, and 2,700 bolts retorqued."

Two visitors to this September's trials were Jolanda Prozzi and Dr. Reza Farzaneh, from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), the largest university-based transportation research organization in the U.S. Prozzi is the division head, environment and air quality, and Dr. Farzaneh is program manager, air quality program. They traveled to Montreal to discuss potential collaboration opportunities with PIT Group.

"We have identified a number of potential areas where we can collaborate. One possible area is emissions testing. We are both doing emissions testing. We both have outside facilities. PIT has the cold (weather) and we have the hot weather. Clients may want to test in Texas instead of Montreal (in winter), or in Montreal instead of Texas (in summer). We can therefore complement each other and extend the testing period," Prozzi says. "We can also learn a lot from each other."

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute has 700 staff. TTI's research covers all modes of transportation – highway, air, water,



A trailer is prepared for testing at this year's Energotest.

34 years after he joined FPInnovations, of which PIT Group is part. He was effectively the face and voice of PIT Group and the Energotest trials ever since they first hit the test track in Blainville in 2007 and showed how scientists could come to the rescue of fleets flailing in a sea of fuel savings claims.

Provencher is now senior director, business development with Saint-Jerome, Que.-based

La Compagnie Electrique Lion, also known as the Lion Electric Co. A manufacturer of electric school and city buses, Lion will launch production of an electric Class 8 truck late this year or early in 2019. PIT Group had a hand in its development, having led a focus group composed of its members. **TN**

rail, pipeline, and automated/connected vehicles. "I don't think there is an aspect of transportation we don't cover," says Dr. Farzaneh. Prozzi adds, "We have invited the PIT Group to come and visit us, see our facilities."

Around 2 p.m., Yves Provencher dropped in for a visit. Provencher left the organization this summer,



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# ELD rollout not without problems

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The rollout of the electronic logging device (ELD) mandate in the U.S. has not gone smoothly, according to Annette Sandberg, CEO of TransSafe Consulting.

Speaking at the FTR Transportation Conference, Sandberg said: "We have seen significant problems with the ELDs."

The mandate went into effect last December, and an enforcement grace period was provided until April of this year.

"We did see some carriers take advantage of the grace period and not install anything," Sandberg said. "To be honest, the grace period was needed. The FMCSA and CVSA were not remotely ready for this to take effect. They didn't train law enforcement until November of last year and many officers weren't ready to take enforcement action."

Carriers using automatic on-board recording devices (AOBRDs) to track hours-of-service electronically since before the mandate are allowed to continue using those devices, but many inspectors are unable to differentiate between the two types of devices, Sandberg said. AOBRDs don't have to have file transfer capabilities, but enforcement officers have been fining driv-



Annette Sandberg

ers, thinking their device was an ELD.

"We have seen a significant number of violations written up at roadside where the officer writes the driver up when the driver doesn't transfer the file when the driver has an AOBRD in the truck, and an AOBRD doesn't have to do a file transfer," she explained.

She also said many drivers don't

know what type of device is in their truck.

"I expect we will see those issues until December of next year when everyone has to go to the ELD, and all those systems have to transfer files," she predicted.

There have also been issues with ELDs themselves. More than 340 vendors have "self-certified" their devices are compliant with the 460-

page technical standard published by the FMCSA.

"Most of those are companies nobody ever heard of, which in my mind immediately made them suspect," Sandberg said. "I believe some of these were created in a garage behind someone's house and believe it or not, that is somewhat borne out by what we are beginning to see."

She said many vendors are struggling to meet the requirements.

"If you're a small carrier and didn't have a lot of money to do additional due diligence and testing of devices and went with something based solely on cost, we have seen a lot of those cheap systems have difficulties and problems," Sandberg said.

The FMCSA is beginning to send ELD manufacturers reports on their systems' shortcomings related to file transfers.

"If you are looking to change systems, I'd strongly advise you to ask any vendor you are thinking about going with 'What kind of list did you receive from the FMCSA about file transfer, what were your issues and what are you doing to correct those problems?'" Sandberg suggested. "Into 2020, I think we will see a fair number of those vendors shaken out of the system." **TN**

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# Canada can learn from prior mistakes when mandating ELDs

## MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Canada's long-awaited electronic logging device (ELD) mandate should differ from the U.S. rule to avoid some of the pitfalls that befell the rollout of similar legislation there. That was the opinion of a panel that discussed the issue at the Surface Transportation Summit Oct. 10. Steven Laskowski, head of the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) and Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA), pointed out one deficiency in the U.S. rules – the fact vendors can self-certify their own devices.

Some ELDs on the market produce logs that can be easily modified.

“What we have seen and found is the ability for people to rewrite their hours-of-service,” Laskowski said. “With (some of) these devices it’s a push of a button.”

He said the Canadian industry is lobbying for third-party certification of devices to prevent this problem, but he noted the vast majority of suppliers do meet the technical requirements.

Canada's ELD regulation has been held up by bureaucratic red tape. Unlike in the U.S., where the federal government mandates interstate carriers, in Canada all provinces must handle enforcement.

“You’re not dealing at the table one-on-one with the feds, you’re dealing with seven, 10 other jurisdictions,” Laskowski said. “There was political foot-dragging on this.”

Mark Seymour, chairman of Kriska Group, shared his company's experience when rolling out ELDs voluntarily between 2011 and 2014.

“We took three years,” he said. “We wanted to do it at the right pace that didn’t disrupt the business, didn’t disrupt the people, and there were things we did to try not to choke the system.”

Seymour is a fan of the technology. “The old paper-based log system is ludicrous,” he said. “And for those we’ll be introducing to our business in years to come, to teach them a system like

that would frankly likely be enough to turn people away from our industry.”

He encouraged carriers that haven’t yet made the transition to give themselves ample time and to implement them methodically.

“To wait and rush is just a recipe for disaster,” he said.

Because Kriska was an early adopter, it lost some drivers who resisted the change.

“We had some contraction of the fleet size through that period of time, with individuals who had the opportunity to go work somewhere else under the old paper-based system,” Seymour admitted. “In many cases, when the (U.S.) mandate hit, places they went to weren’t ready, were disorganized, and in many cases they came back.”

Kriska offered drivers who volunteered to switch to e-logs pay increases. Seymour also admitted there were some operational changes required when the company converted to electronic logs. The company educated its shippers on the implications of ELDs and pushed harder against shippers to allow drivers to park at their facilities.

“Operationally, we said let the driver sleep in your yard for morning appointments or they get there when they get there,” he said. “Our drivers need a safe, convenient place to sleep and the best place to do that is in your yard if you want them there at eight in the morning. Operationally there had to be lots of consideration given to the rules by which the drivers then had to operate within in a very rigid manner.”

Barry Somerville, safety project manager at FedEx Ground, was also an early adopter of ELDs. The biggest mistake FedEx made, said Somerville, was allowing contractors to choose from a list of approved devices. That caused inconsistencies the company is still trying to clean up by moving to a single vendor. It also presented complications when drivers switched trucks and had to famil-



iarized themselves with another platform. However, he said the benefits of moving to e-logs were undeniable.

“We were manually collecting log-books and we would manually key it into the transportation management system,” he said. “It’s archaic.”

Moving to e-logs also puts more pressure on shippers to do their part to make good use of a driver’s time, Seymour said.

“It’s the appreciation and respect

of the number of hours per day that a truck driver has to work and frankly, to make a living,” he said. “It imposes upon the shipper and receiver the impact they have on that workday on things like dwell time, things like allowing drivers to sleep in the yard. Maybe providing that option of switching trailers as opposed to live unload. What piece of that day do you own and what can you do to improve upon your ownership of that piece?” **TN**



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# GTA sounds alarm about ELD manipulation

## TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is urging the government to require third-party certification when it mandates electronic logging devices (ELDs).

In the U.S., vendors are allowed to self-certify their devices to have them listed on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) website for approved devices. The CTA voted unanimously to change its position on the matter.

“Our preliminary investigation shows multiple self-certified devices in the U.S. marketplace have the capability to allow fleets and drivers to edit hours-of-service, specifically drive time. We believe there are thousands of these units installed in trucks currently traveling cross-border into the U.S.,” said Angelique Magi, national vice-president of transportation and strategic initiatives. “While we can’t speak for other insurers, I can tell you that when we discover these devices within a customer’s fleet, we require they remove these devices or risk having their insurance canceled mid-term for not meeting the U.S. federal regulations.” **TN**



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### Trucking conditions among the best since 2004

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

Trucking conditions in the U.S. are at among their strongest levels since early 2004, according to the FTR Trucking Conditions Index (TCI).

The July reading of 14.04 reflected the second strongest month the industry has seen since early 2004, and the current growth cycle is stronger in duration than in 2004, FTR reported. It predicts the index has peaked and will moderate modestly through the rest of the year.

However, the industry forecaster said key indicators – manufacturing, construction, and retail sales – remain strong and retains a positive outlook for the coming months.

“Carriers might not see stronger con-



ditions in the current cycle, but they shouldn't lose too much sleep over it," said Avery Vise, vice-president of trucking for FTR. "We expect the TCI to remain in double-digit territory into 2019. With manufacturing and construction hot and the labor market tight, it would be very difficult for capacity growth to outstrip freight demand for quite some time." TN

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# Truck orders: They're spectacular and they're real

Hot truck market 'feels different' than past cycles

By James Menzies

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Truck orders have been strong all year, but just how strong have they been? "Four of the top five order months ever have occurred this year," said Don Ake, FTR vice-president of commercial vehicles, in an update on the commercial vehicle market presented at the FTR Transportation Conference. "It's a very dynamic time, a very interesting time."

Class 8 truck orders this year have consistently been above the 2011-2017 average, and are even significantly higher than 2015, which was a strong year for orders. But retail sales have lagged, not due to lack of interest, but because suppliers to truck OEMs have struggled to keep up.

"We've had a clog in the supply chain, where we couldn't build trucks fast enough," Ake explained. "That's been alleviated some in the last two months."

He's expecting retail sales to soon spike, as those trucks make their way to dealers and end users.

"The whole system is kind of clogged up," Ake said. "Hopefully we've seen the worst (of the supply chain problems). What we can say at this point is, it was severe, and now it's improved to just very bad. But they are still shipping more trucks out."

That's the good news. The better news is that it appears the strong orderboards enjoyed by most truck manufacturers are solid, with real orders and not just dealers buying stock and fleets staking out their spots, just in case.

Susan Alt, vice-president of policy for Volvo Trucks, said "This cycle seems different."

She admitted during the last strong order year, many orders were being placed that were for dealer stock or were not real.

"We learned from that," she said. "There's real freight out there. We have a very long orderboard. If you need a truck, it's going to be a while. The orderboard is solid and that's what seems to be different. We disciplined dealers not to put in false orders or stock orders they're not sure they have a customer for."

This should eliminate any mass cancellations or a sudden correction.

"We've seen, not only are orders strong, prices are staying up, used truck prices are staying up, trucks are better built – it's just a really good time in the industry right now," said Alt.

But that doesn't mean there aren't risks. For Alt, those risks include bad government policies related to tariffs and trade, which are already having a small impact on prices.

"How much impact will it have? Right now, it's not that big, but trade policies and import tariffs could start increasing prices of other things. We don't know yet," she said.

Class 8 truck backlogs are at a record high since a new counting system was put into place in 2000. Ake said capacity utilization is at 97%, which traditionally leads to more orders. But he said supplier issues may keep a lid on things.

"The near-term outlook is restrained by component availability," he said. But FTR is projecting a strong finish to this year's Class 8 truck production, and a "tremendous" 2019.

This year's Class 8 production is expected to be 315,000 units, climbing to 340,000 units next year.

"In order to get there, suppliers have to supply," Ake noted. If they can, he said next year's 340,000-unit forecast could be exceeded. Production will then fall to 280,000 units in 2020, 250,000 in 2021, and 245,000 units in 2022.

A recession in 2022 could reduce that number down to 167,000 units, reflecting a reduction in demand of about 78,000 trucks.



Don Ake

The trailer outlook is equally good. This year, FTR is projecting trailer build of 310,500 units – an 85,000 unit increase from its own projections in 2016. This is because of higher than expected GDP growth, industrial production, and truck loadings. There have been 13.5 million more loads this year than FTR expected.

Other trends are also contributing to the strong trailer demand, including a greater emphasis on drop-and-hook operations to keep drivers moving. As on the truck side, supplier issues have held back production.

"The supplier problem hit the trailer industry quicker, but not quite as hard," Ake said, noting problems showed up around February but were largely ironed out by July. The main problem for trailer maker

suppliers was finding workers in a low-unemployment environment, in which all sectors of the economy are booming.

In the trailer industry, steel and aluminum tariffs could have an effect on pricing.

"Tariffs on Chinese goods will impact shipments of wheel-ends and forged metal parts," Ake said, adding manufacturers are also worried about tire availability.

But despite the challenges, trailers are flying off the shelf. Trailer build per day set a new all-time record in June. And trailer backlogs and orders are expected to set a new all-time high within the next few months. If FTR's projection of 310,500 units built this year comes to fruition, it will be the best year ever, surpassing 1999.

Its projections for subsequent years are: 305,000 trailers in 2019; 285,000 in 2020; 270,000 in 2021; and 260,000 in 2022. Canada should see 20,300 trailer orders in 2019 and 19,900 in 2018.

What if there's a recession in 2022? Ake said that could knock the 260,000 number down to 175,000, reflecting an 85,000-unit decrease in demand. And watch those order numbers carefully, he added.

"You should watch the trailer market for signs that the economy is slowing," he said. "It's a leading indicator. The trailer market will see this almost before anyone else will." **TN**



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# A beginner's guide to trucking in Canada

Lessons learned as a European chasing the trucking dream in Canada

By Mark Lee

A little over 10 years ago, I left behind all I knew in the United Kingdom and started my Canadian adventure. It's been a learning curve ever since.

I was lucky enough to speak the language, mostly. I still struggle with "aluminum" and a hat will never be a toque. But a lorry is now a truck, and petrol is now gas. And I have to give you guys credit for trunk; it is a trunk, how it came to be called a boot, I don't know.

On the whole, it was pretty simple to communicate. I had to slow down my speech a little as we speak very fast back in London Town, but other than that, it wasn't a problem. I had already spent a lot of my working life in other countries – none of them spoke English in any of its forms – so I had to learn the basics at least, in order to do my job.

In the days before GPS, knowing the difference between left and right could make life a whole lot easier and before I started to pick up some languages, eating was a big gamble. I don't even want to think about some of the stuff I've eaten over the years.

This is a problem the majority of newcomers to Canada face. Europeans learn English at school to some degree, as it is still the international business language. But those from further afield do not have that luxury, and it is paramount that they learn. As English speakers, we need to be patient with them and try to help them.

Imagine how frustrating it is when you are, because of the language you learned as a child, unable to communicate when you need help. I believe that directing this to English speakers rather than those that struggle is a better way to help newcomers



In Europe, they may be lorries, but Mark Lee has embraced the North American term truck.

than telling them to take an English course. Remember, nobody chooses where they're born.

I'd like to share some of my own experiences and observations as a newcomer to the Canadian trucking industry. Firstly, this is Canada, it's not England, France, Germany, India, Russia, etc. Here, they do things the Canadian way; trying to change that is a waste of your time and energy.

I have seen many people who cannot get their head around this, and it usually ends with them packing up and returning to where they came from. In my case, it was mostly Brits who couldn't grasp the fact that because of the vast distances we travel here, it's not a 40-hour Monday to Friday workweek.

There were also those who had many years of experience who didn't

like the fact they had to start from the bottom. I titled one of my monthly columns *The rookie with 20 years' experience*, and that is an absolute truth. No matter what you've done and where you have done it, in Canada it will all be different.

Personally, that is why I came here – for the challenge and to fulfill my dream of driving a big rig down the interstate. I think the same applies to most European imports here, but for many that isn't the case; some move here to live the dream life that we in the western world take for granted.

Many newcomers to Canada come from countries that don't have the transport infrastructure that we have here. But they had enough savings to move across the world, pay for a place to live, buy a car, pay for their driver training to get their licence, etc.

When you first arrive in Canada, it is very easy to behave as if you are on holiday. Everything is new, and very similar to what you have seen in movies and on TV. Outside of the cities, land is relatively cheap and you can buy a 5,000 sq.-ft. house on 20 acres for the price of a one-bedroom apartment back in England.

That is like a lottery win, until you have to shovel snow from a 200-ft. driveway and then drive through snow drifts for five miles just to buy a loaf of bread or take the kids to school. It's not so much a problem for us, as we're out trucking, but the wife and kids have to deal with this every day in winter. To the best of my knowledge, nowhere in the world – apart from Canada and some of the less populated U.S. states – has properties such as this, unless you're extremely wealthy.

Vehicles are another area that can catch you out. It's very easy to get financing, even when you first arrive in Canada and have yet to gain permanent residency or citizenship. I have seen many newcomers who buy a house in the country and a big pick-up truck to park in the garage, then ATVs and sleds, and a ride-on mower for the vast expanse of grass outside their windows. They then struggle to make the payments. For some, that has been catastrophic and has led to all kinds of personal problems, divorces, bankruptcies, and more.

Another thing that I have seen cause problems is friendships; just because someone was born in the same country as you, does not mean you will like each other.

At first the sound of familiar accents and the shared experiences of moving to another coun-

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try bring you together and give you a comforting feeling. But that doesn't mean it will last. I came from England and there are around 60 million people crammed onto the tiny island. I met lots of them in the 40 years I was there, but I was close to fewer than 20 of them.

Living in a ghetto, reminiscing about the old country, is going to have an impact on how you assimilate and it will not be a positive one. There is no need to lose your identity – I will always be from England – but now I see myself as an English Canadian.

**I have seen many newcomers who buy a house in the country and a big pick-up truck to park in the garage, then ATVs and sleds, and a ride-on mower for the vast expanse of grass outside their windows. They then struggle to make the payments.**

If you don't adopt that attitude, you will always be a 'foreigner' and as such, will miss out on a lot of what this great country has to offer.

If I had only a few pieces of advice to offer anyone new to Canada, it would be this, and in this order: Think of yourself as a Canadian born in another country; learn the language and the Canadian way of doing things; remember you are here to live and work, you're not on holiday; and finally, keep a close eye on your spending until you fully settle. **TN**



Further coverage in the latest edition of

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# Truckers better educated than ever

## Knowledge of Punjabi language steadily increasing

### TORONTO, ONTARIO

Canadian truck drivers are better educated than they've ever been.

Roughly three quarters of truck drivers in Canada and Ontario now have a degree, diploma, or certificate. That's up from about 40% in 1991. Each census year since then saw the percentage of truck drivers with a degree, diploma, or certificate, rise from the previous one, reflecting a trend from the broader overall Canadian population.

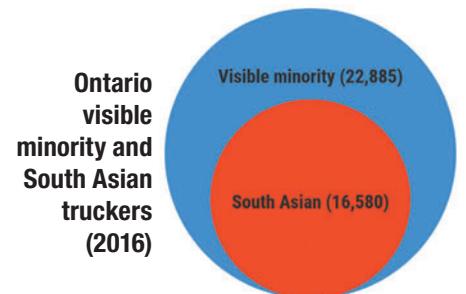
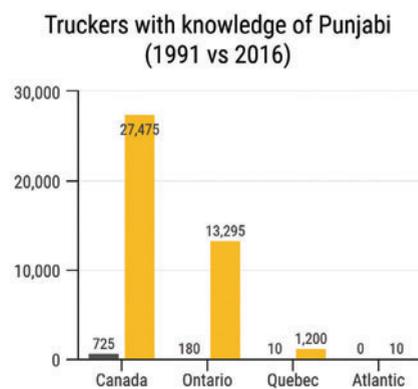
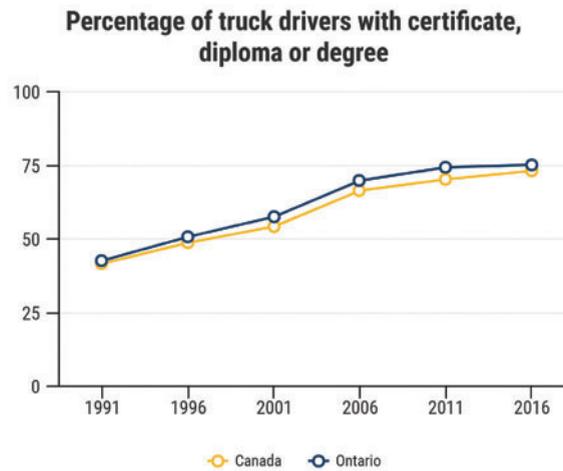
Because the South Asian driver population is exploding, it should come as no surprise that a growing number of drivers now claim an understanding of the Punjabi language. More than 100 million people worldwide speak Punjabi, which is the native language of the Punjabi people from the region of Punjab, extending from north-west India through eastern Pakistan.

In Canada, 27,475 truck drivers said they had a knowledge of Punjabi in the 2016 census. In Ontario, the

number 13,295. Going back to the 1991 census, fewer than 1,000 Canadian truck drivers claimed to have a knowledge of Punjabi.

In Canada, 1.7% of residents of South Asian descent were truck drivers, according to the 2016 census, up from 0.4% in 1996, showing members of this community are increasingly seeking opportunities in the trucking industry.

Most visible minorities in the trucking industry are of South Asian descent. In Ontario, according to 2016 census data, there were 22,885 visible minority truck drivers, 16,580 of whom were of South Asian background. In Canada, the number of truckers who identified as a visible minority surged 856% from 1996 to 2016, and in Ontario, that number climbed by 1,019% over the same time frame. **TN**



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# Kenworth unleashes the W990

By Derek Clouthier

## LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Kenworth Trucks unveiled its new W990 Sept. 27 at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. It was touted as “a driver’s truck,” adding to the company’s longest running model in its portfolio.

“The replacement of the W900, that’s a special place,” said Mike Dozier, Kenworth general manager and Paccar vice-president, during the launch. “A lot of passion, a lot of pride has gone into what we think is a very special product.”

Available in a day cab, 40-inch flat top, as well as 52- and 76-inch mid-roof sleeper configurations, the W990 is designed for linehaul, pickup-and-delivery, regional haul, and heavy-haul operations.

The truck comes standard with the proprietary Paccar powertrain, including the MX-13 engine with a rating of up to 510 hp and 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque. With a 12-speed Paccar automated transmission and 40K tandem rear axles, the W990 is built on the 2.1-meter cab platform, previously seen on the T680 and T880 models.

Driver comfort was a focal point when designing the W990. Special features include the limited-edition cab and sleeper interior and the driver’s studio package of premium options that creates a “home on the road” for the driver.

“Anything we can do to help them feel more comfortable, feel a sense of pride – that’s what we’re doing today,” said Dozier. “We are passionate about our products, our customers that depend on them, and the drivers that operate them. We know that there are many customers and drivers out there who share our passion. The Kenworth W990 represents the pride, image and freedom of trucking, and captures the spirit of what trucking is all about.”

On the exterior, the two biggest visuals on the W990 are the hood and grille designs, with a “long hood” and a cab measuring 131.5 inches from bumper to the back of cab (BBC).

“The grille is really the face of the new W990,” said Jonathan Duncan, Kenworth’s design director. “Incorporating stainless steel was important. It had to be pure Kenworth and it needed to be instantly recog-



nizable as the top-of-the-line. We maintained the traditional cathedral shape to the grille and the inset surfaces at the top to give it a refined tailored look. That powerful center spear signifies this is part of the new generation of Kenworth trucks and the tapered grille spears are there for a classic touch. It’s elegant, beau-

tiful, and full of brawn.”

Duncan said the inside of the truck boasts as much attitude as its exterior.

“Behind the wheel, the driver’s view over the hood is a huge part of the appeal of the W990,” he said. “It’s really one of the keys to the success of this design. The powerful wind-split

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(the raised center section on the hood top) is designed to accentuate the length of the hood and the dynamic shape reflects the powerful engine underneath. The side air intakes wrap over the top of the hood so that they are visible from the driver's seat. All of this creates a strong visual impact from behind the wheel."

During the unveiling, Duncan said the W990's dynamic shape helps the driver connect with the road.

"We wanted to reward the drivers with the sharpest truck and the view of the road," said Duncan. "The world's best drivers deserve and expect no less, and we had to give it to them."

Oculus Transport, a Calgary, Alta.-based carrier, started purchasing Kenworth trucks in 2011, and has stuck with the brand ever since.

"We stand out with our long hoods and bright orange paint scheme," said Cory Heck, vice-president of assets and equipment for Oculus. "We stick to our roots, and have pride in ownership. Image is so important to us and the Kenworth W900L, and now W990, support that image perfectly. When drivers are required to dwell in their truck, it is important that they feel rested and comfortable. I know that our equipment helps with driver retention, and we've seen our drivers turn up their nose at offers from other companies with lesser equipment. That really tells you something."

Oculus got the keys to its new W990 during the Las Vegas unveiling, along with only a handful of other Kenworth customers. Purchasing its trucks through Inland Kenworth in Fort St. John, B.C., Oculus' W990 is spec'd with the Paccar

MX-13 engine with 510 hp and an Eaton Ultra-Shift, 18-speed transmission.

"Everyone loves the Paccar MX engine around here," said Heck. "They've proven very reliable in our other trucks, plus they're giving us better fuel economy numbers.

The W990 with Paccar MX-13 engines is a great combination for us."

The truck comes standard with Kenworth's TruckTech+ remote diagnostics system, and a Nav+HD seven-inch display provides access to various additional features, such as navigation, roadside assistance, vehicle data, hands-free calling, and internet. Duncan said the W990 took about three years to develop, and the company employed a driver council for feedback on its design and features. Kenworth will show off the W990 on its upcoming North American road tour, which began Oct. 10 in Atlanta.

"Kenworth's long hood conventional is the enduring symbol of North American trucking for professional drivers, owner-operators and fleets. The new Kenworth W990 builds upon that strong legacy by delivering the significant, next-step evolution wrapped in traditional styling, craftsmanship, luxury and power," said Kevin Baney, Kenworth assistant general manager for sales and marketing. "During the two Kenworth road tours, we're bringing four Kenworth W990s out on the road for the world of trucking to see and experience."

In November, the tour will make three Canadian stops, the first in Montreal Nov. 2, then Grande Prairie, Alta., Nov. 8, and Leduc, Alta., the following day.

The W990 is currently in pre-production, with full production to start this coming January and rolled out to customers in 2019. Dozier said Kenworth is very methodical when it comes to its production, but does have the ability to increase production if need be. **TN**

base, but all other models on display during the test drive are offered north of the border. The second truck I got a ride in was also a W990 76-inch mid-roof, which with its 251-inch wheelbase is available in Canada.

It had a Paccar MX-13 engine with 485 hp and 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque. This engine is typically quieter than the larger Cummins engine, but based on this most recent experience, I can say both were smooth and quiet at all speeds.

With a Paccar 12-speed automated transmission, Brian Bowe, development engineer with Kenworth, said only time will tell how many W990s will have automated transmissions compared to manuals. Bowe said the previous model, the W900, was about 50/50 when it came to automated and manual transmissions, but they would have to wait and see whether carriers would opt for automated in an effort to entice new drivers.

My second test ride was with my colleague from *Transport Reporter*, Steve Bouchard, who was driving, and one thing we noticed was how difficult it was to estimate our speed. Rolling down the interstate at 65 mph seemed like we were crawling, which we guessed was due to the long hood design and slightly more boxy shape than Kenworth's T680 and T880 models.

Speaking of boxy, like the W900, the W990 has more of a square look than the company's other highway models, but has increased its aerodynamics by 7%, according to Jonathan Duncan, Kenworth's design director.

The added aerodynamics, Duncan estimated, would equate to around a 2-3% fuel savings, but he did admit that this was not the primary concern when designing the W990.

Because Kenworth is hyping the W990 as a driver's truck – and one that carriers can reward long-time drivers with as a retention tool – it's not surprising it maintained the beefier look, but added some slight aerodynamic enhancements for some added fuel efficiency.

As with any truck, whether you are attracted to it visually is a matter of personal taste. Some people like Kenworths, some Macks, and others Peterbilts...it's subjective.

One driver who saw the W990 we were test driving stopped to take a picture, saying it was "so purdy," so obviously he was a fan of the truck's appearance – but that won't be the case for everyone.

What should not be subjective is how it performs on the road.

If you're looking for something that mixes today's technologies with smooth, easy driving performance, Kenworth's W990 may be the truck for you. **TN**

## The W990 on the road

A quiet and smooth, easy ride. That's the best way to describe how Kenworth's W990 handles.

From the moment you hop into the cab, the W990 boasts a beefy feel with its long hood design. Though it blocks a little bit of the driver's view of the road, overall, there is a wide vantage point from the cab, and Kenworth is banking on the long hood being a design feature experienced highway drivers will look for in a truck.

The first model I rode in was the W990 76-inch mid-roof with a Cummins X15 engine that offers 605 hp and 2,050 lb.-ft. of torque, as well as



an 18-speed manual Eaton Fuller transmission.

This model is not available in Canada due to its 300-inch wheel-

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# Test Drive: Chasing 10 mpg

Extended run with new Mack Anthem yields excellent fuel economy – even in the hands of a novice

By James Menzies

## NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

With Hurricane Florence out of the way, I flew to Asheville, N.C. Sept. 17 with questions on my mind. A handful of editors were about to embark on a nearly 1,000-mile test drive in the new Mack Anthem, with a focus on fuel economy.

I wondered, can I hit 10 mpg? Does turbocompounding work as advertised to deliver fuel savings? And how would my fuel economy stack up against more experienced drivers, and my editor peers? It was an insightful three-day trek that featured stops in Nashville and Memphis, Tenn., Jackson, Miss., and which wrapped up in New Orleans, La.

### The trucks, the route, the food

Who ever said a test drive can't include a little fun? Our route with six Mack Anthems covered 940 miles over three days, and we took in some sights along the way. We also enjoyed some good grub – in fact, the tour was dubbed by Mack as the “Gears, Guitars and Grub” tour. It's true, the barbecue in Memphis is tough to beat.

The fleet consisted of six Mack Anthems with some key differences. Two red tractors had the MP8-445C Maxi-Cruise engine (445 hp/1,860 lb.-ft. torque) with full aero package, but without turbocompounding – or what Mack is now calling Energy Recovery Technology (ERT). More on that in a bit.

Two white tractors featured the MP8-HE-415SE (415 hp/1,760 lb.-ft. torque) engines with ERT, and Mack's HE+ aero package for maximum fuel economy. These also featured a 6x2 axle configuration with liftable pusher axle.

The two blue tractors had the MP8-HE-445SE (445 hp/1,860 lb.-ft. torque) engines with ERT and the HE+ aero package. All trucks were loaded to about 67,000 lbs – a pretty typical payload.

The HE+ package features: predictive cruise, and a full aerodynamics package including a roof fairing with adjustable trim tab, an under-bumper spoiler, and chassis fairings with ground effects.

So, from those spec's alone, you'd expect the white tractors to deliver the best fuel economy performance with the blue trucks hot on their heels and the red tractors slightly behind.

### What's turbocompound...er, ERT?

Initially introduced on the MP8 engine as turbocompounding, Mack has elected to adopt the more marketing-friendly term Energy Recov-



The #4 Mack with ERT consistently achieved the best fuel economy.

ery Technology (ERT) to describe this feature. It did so to avoid confusion with past applications of turbocompounding, which differed completely by converting previously wasted exhaust heat and turning it into additional horsepower to provide a performance benefit.

Mack flipped this model upside down and instead uses the 50 or so additional horsepower generated from previously wasted heat, and uses it to take a load off the engine, improving fuel economy. It's an efficiency-based concept, rather than performance-based.

“Mack Energy Recovery Technology is an advanced feature of Mack's MP8-HE engine that captures engine heat that would otherwise be lost, converting it to mechanical energy and delivering it back to the crankshaft in the form of torque. The additional energy allows the engine to operate at 1,000-1,100 rpm, improving fuel efficiency and

life expectancy without sacrificing performance,” Phil Cary, southeast regional fleet service manager with Mack Trucks, explained to me during our drive.

“Mack ERT is not applying turbocompounding in the traditional manner, which has been used to add more power to the engine's output, rather than to relax the engine to improve fuel efficiency and life expectancy without sacrificing performance.”

Mack touts about a 5% fuel economy improvement in trucks spec'd with ERT. But would the trucks with ERT live up to this claim on our nearly 1,000-mile route?

### Achieving fuel economy parity

It's often said that the driver can have up to a 30% impact on fuel economy, all other things being equal. I don't believe that to be the case anymore, when driving new-

er-generation trucks with all the latest technologies such as automated manual transmissions and adaptive cruise control. These technologies are the great equalizers, which allow even a novice driver to rival the fuel economy of a veteran.

I was curious to prove my theory during this drive.

Jim Park, an editor with *Heavy-Duty Trucking* and *Today's Trucking*, has two million miles over the road to his name. He knows how to coax great fuel economy out of whatever powertrain you want to put in front of him. The rest of us editors lack that over-the-road pedigree. You'd expect Park to blow our fuel economy out of the water. But that didn't happen.

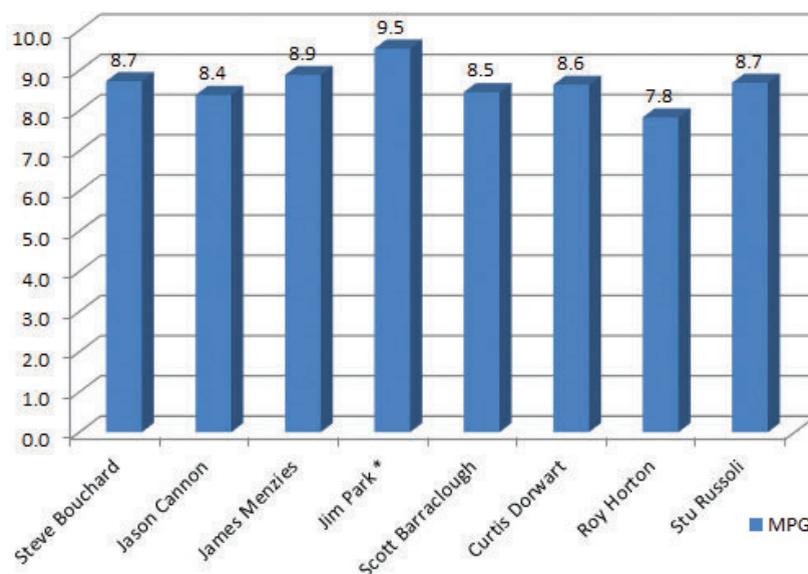
Taking the non-ERT Macks out of the picture, there was an 11% spread in fuel economy between Park – who achieved the best overall mileage at 9.5 mpg – and the rest of us. But Park had a slight advantage. The non-ERT truck he was driving on the final leg had to be taken out of service due to a mechanical gremlin, so his mpg reflected only his time in the two ERT-equipped models. So, for fun, let's take the 9.5 mpg driver out of the picture, as well as the driver of the other non-ERT Mack. Now we get a 5.6% gap between the best and worst drivers in the convoy.

As I suspected, the technology available from this powertrain brought parity to our small pool of drivers, while the veteran was still able to squeeze a little better fuel mileage out of the equipment than the rest of us. For a more direct comparison, Park got 10.5 mpg out of the same white Anthem in which I achieved 10 mpg on the nose. A 0.5 mpg improvement cannot be overlooked.

### Put the technology to work for you

My goal all along was to hit 10 mpg, something I haven't been able to achieve before. I achieved that on the final leg with truck #4, a white Anthem that consistently obtained the best fuel economy. Here are some tips that I followed to get there: I used cruise control religiously – as much as 85% of the time.

I upped the engine brake setting while in cruise by a few miles per hour in order take full advantage of the truck's momentum on downhill



Three Day Overall Results (Trip 2)

Truck #	Chas #	Elapsed Time	Miles Traveled	Fuel Used	MPG	Average Speed
1	8379	18:00	931.4	117	8.0	57
2	8378	11:44	588.6	74	8.0	49.5
3	1283	17:48	945.0	111	8.5	52.5
4	1282	18:11	946.8	97	9.8	51.5
5	8376	17:10	932.0	110	8.5	54.0
6	8377	18:32	932.5	114	8.2	50.0



**A fleet of six Mack Anthems hit the road for a 1,000-mile test drive in pursuit of excellent fuel economy.**

grades and rolling terrain. I kept my speed at the speed limit, or against the top cruise setting of 68 mph in 70 mph zones. And I tried to minimize the number of times the active braking feature of Bendix Wingman Fusion brought a stop to my momentum, by dialing back the cruise speed when approaching traffic.

### Getting comfortable with the technology

The Mack Anthems we drove were loaded with technology, including the Bendix Wingman Fusion collision mitigation system with active cruise control. It can take some time to get used to active safety systems, such as those that monitor pre-set following distances and apply the brakes when necessary to maintain them. But I clearly became more comfortable with the technology in short order, as evidenced by my increased use of cruise control on each leg of the drive – from 74% on the first leg to 78% on the next, and finally into the mid-80% by the end of the drive, when I achieved my best fuel economy.

The key to the getting comfortable with the technology is to trust it, but not to expect it to do your job for you. Of course, ideally you can avoid brake applications altogether by dialing down your cruise speed when approaching slower-moving vehicles. It also seemed to pay at times, following a brake application, to deactivate cruise and feather the accelerator to return to the set cruise speed rather than letting the truck do so in a harder-charging manner.

One mild annoyance is that anytime the adaptive cruise applied the brakes, I had to manually re-engage cruise control. This is going to be addressed with the next version of Wingman Fusion that Bendix will release next year. While adaptive cruise control isn't meant to replace the driver, it was an aid that helped me achieve better fuel economy while also providing peace of mind that I had some assistance with me in the cab in the event a sudden stop was required. These active safety systems are proven to react faster than a human can.

By contrast, Park admitted to spending more time out of cruise

control, and his driving experience enabled him to achieve better fuel economy than I did while spending almost my entire drive in cruise. It goes to show an experienced driver can still outperform the machine at times.

It should be noted the Anthems on our drive should get better fuel economy once they are fully broken in, and when the predictive cruise feature “learns” the route we were traveling, committing the terrain to memory and then taking further advantage of the truck's momentum when cresting and descending hills.

### What we learned

For those of us who write about trucks for a living, it's a rare treat

to get to spend three days and nearly 1,000 miles behind the wheel. I learned a few things during this opportunity from watching our fuel economy so attentively. One is that small decisions have big consequences. It can take hours to gain 0.2 mpg, only to see it all vanish within a couple minutes if pulling out to pass a truck going uphill or increasing your speed by just a few miles per hour.

We also confirmed that today's technology can bring relative parity to the fleet, allowing even novice drivers to compete with veterans – provided they take advantage of the technology that's available to them.

On the truck side, we learned that Mack's ERT really works as advertised. The blue trucks with ERT were on average 4% better in fuel economy than the non-ERT red trucks, and the white tractors came in at a super-impressive 14% advantage. Mack took a risk and showed tremendous faith in the technology by allowing us to put it to the test in this manner, and I'm sure they're pleased with the result.

I also learned that the 10-mpg truck is here today in the form of the latest model highway tractors, even for someone who has

never put in time as a professional driver. It took the better part of the final leg of my drive to get it up there, and it happened on the last few miles before arriving in New Orleans, where I quickly slammed the truck into park and shut down the engine before even the slightest time spent idling had the opportunity to push me back into the nines. (Who'd have thought 9+ mpg could be a disappointment?)

Finally, I learned that a truck can boast traditional styling, some hard edges, and still deliver tremendous double-digit fuel economy. And oh yeah, I learned that Memphis really does have the best barbecue. **TN**



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# The arguments for and against electric trucks

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

In studying the viability of electric trucks, Rick Mihelic has learned one thing for certain.

“Electric trucks are polarizing,” the director of future technology studies for the North American Council of Freight Efficiency (NACFE) said during the FTR Transportation Conference. “On one end of the spectrum, you have zealots telling you it’s the end of diesel as we know it today. On the other end, you have equally rabid opponents telling you electric trucks are not viable.”

The answer, Mihelic said, lays somewhere in between those two extreme views. In a Confidence Report on electric trucks released earlier this year, NACFE laid out

10 significant arguments for and against the technology. They fit into four buckets: weight, technology, cost, and charging.

### Weight

While there’s a widely held belief that electric trucks will be heavy, Mihelic said this isn’t necessarily so. About 7,847 lbs of components are taken out of a diesel truck, including the engine, transmission, fuel tank, driveshaft parts, and DEF tank.

“On the other side of that, what are you carrying in terms of freight loads?” Mihelic asked, noting only 30% of trucks operate at full 80,000-lb or above loads. “That means 70% of the loads are below that weight.”

Combining those two points means a truck can take on a lot of battery weight before total vehicle weight is a concern.

“So, it’s very feasible to build a weight-neutral electric truck that operates for the majority of the market,” Mihelic pointed out.

### Technology

Electric truck skeptics argue that the technology just isn’t ready for prime time. However, NACFE has identified more than 30 electric commercial vehicle platforms in various stages of development.

“That’s a lot of companies doing a lot of work,” Mihelic said, noting this applies also to companies developing charging infrastructure.

“Our conclusion is yes, the technology is ready,” he said, but he added a caveat. “Electric trucks are right at the start of the innovation S-curve. They need a lot more vehicles on the road, a lot more miles and field history.”

Gasoline and diesel engines have 100-plus years of real-world use behind them and because of that, future efficiency gains will be small, Mihelic noted.

“Over the course of the near future you’re going to see significant improvements on the electric side, and not so much on the diesel side.”

### Cost

The argument against electric trucks is that their acquisition cost will be much higher than that of a traditional diesel truck. Not so fast, said Mihelic.

“There are a couple manufacturers out there developing trucks from a clean sheet approach and they are looking at coming up with a cost-neutral truck,” he said, citing a partnership between UPS and Workhorse aimed at producing a cost-neutral medium-duty electric delivery truck.

When it comes to cost of operation, electric trucks could eventually come out ahead, once the early kinks are worked out.

“NACFE’s conclusion is reliability and maintenance is probably about equal to, or a little bit worse, than diesel trucks right now,” Mihelic said. “But because these electric vehicles are significantly less wear-intensive, they have the hope of being significantly less costly to maintain and operate.”

This is proving to be true in the more mature bus market, where electric buses are less expensive to maintain and operate than the diesels they replaced.

### Charging

Diesel advocates argue that the charging infrastructure is not yet developed and that there are too many unknowns. But, said Mihelic, “Roadblocks to some are business opportunities for others.”

For example, he said fleets may be able to partner with electric truck manufacturers to have charging infrastructure subsidized, in an attempt to get more electric trucks deployed. Also, installing charging infrastructure on-site gives fleets more flexibility in how it’s used.

Mihelic pointed out most fleets already use a combination of technologies, so integrating some electric trucks is not daunting.

To conclude, Mihelic said electric trucks will succeed or fail under the intense spotlight of the marketplace. While he acknowledged they are not for every market, they are viable in some, “and that list is going to grow in time.”

He also said innovation in the space will be rapid, not only for electric trucks themselves, but also for the charging infrastructure and the business models surrounding the system. **TN**

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## Third quarter best ever for Class 8 orders

Fleets rushed to secure truck availability in September, with preliminary data showing orders for 42,300 units, according to FTR.

That set an all-time high for the third quarter, with 146,800 orders, and September was the 10th best month ever. FTR says steady freight growth continues to strain capacity and fleets are placing orders a year in advance to secure trucks through 2019. Class 8 orders through the last 12 months now total 497,000 units.

"The pressure is on fleets to add capacity to keep up with a robust freight market," said Don Ake, FTR's vice-president of commercial vehicles. "The economy is surging right now, putting stress on shippers to find trucks to deliver goods on time. Fleets don't want to be stuck in the same situation next year, so they are placing huge orders for trucks well ahead of time."

Ake said the focus is now on the supply chain.

"Parts and component suppliers have struggled to keep pace with the growing OEM builds this year. Demand, as indicated by the surge in orders, will be even stronger next year. It is uncertain if suppliers can meet this challenge, as they compete for workers and materials in a vibrant economy," Ake said.

ACT Research reported preliminary numbers of 42,800 units.

"Preliminary data indicate that

in September, North American Class 8 orders were down 19% from August, but up 90% compared to year-ago September," said Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst. "Through year-to-date September, Class 8 orders have totaled 397,200 units, an average monthly order intake of 44,100 units per month. On a seasonally adjusted basis, the past three months' orders represent the three strongest order months in history, with the past three months' Class 8 orders climbing to 711,000 units SAAR. Reaching back to June, on a seasonally adjusted basis the past four months are four of the five strongest in history."

ACT reported that medium-duty orders hit a four-month high in September at 24,800 units.

Meanwhile, trailer orders exceeded the best August in history, according to preliminary data from FTR and ACT Research.

FTR reported orders of 35,300 units, exceeding expectations at 27% higher than July and up 141% year-over-year. Fleets are placing 2019 orders a few months ahead of schedule, FTR reports, with large fleets ordering substantial numbers of dry and refrigerated van trailers to reserve production slots for net year. Parts and component availability remain tight. **TN**

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# Volvo's electric trucks coming to North America in 2020

## GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo Trucks has announced it will introduce all-electric trucks to the North American market in 2020.

The launch will come through a partnership between Volvo Group, California's South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), and other industry leaders, the company announced. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) contributed US\$44.8 million to the Volvo LIGHTS (Low Impact Green Heavy Transport Solutions) project, which will involve 16 partners, including two fleets.

"This is yet another important step towards our vision zero emissions. We are convinced that electrified truck transport will be a key driver of sustainable transports, and we're proud to contribute the Volvo Group's expertise to this innovative public-private partnership," said Claes Nilsson, president of Volvo Trucks.

# Aftermarket parts sales expected to grow

## MANHASSET, NEW YORK

Aftermarket parts sales are expected to gain momentum in the coming months, according to the CMVC (Commercial Motor Vehicle Consulting) Parts Aftermarket Leading Retail Sales Indicator (PLI).

It increased 0.6% in August from July, and was 7.3% higher year-over-year, according to CMVC. The indicator rose for the 14th consecutive month and the growth rate from a year ago is increasing.

"PLI is signaling the growth rate of parts aftermarket sales will strengthen in the coming months as the truck population is operating at high utilization rates, implying trucks are depreciating at normal rates and new truck sales are above replacement demand volumes, resulting in an expansion of truck population," said Chris Brady, president of CMVC. "Accelerating parts aftermarket retail sales will strengthen output from parts manufacturers, as parts orders from the channels of distribution reflect expanding sales and a building of parts inventory levels in response to higher parts sales." **TN**

The technology will be based on the Volvo FE Electric which will be commercialized in Europe next year.

"This is an excellent opportunity to show the end-to-end potential of electrification," said Peter Voorhoeve, president of Volvo Trucks North America. "From solar energy harvesting at our customer locations, to electric vehicle uptime services, to potential second uses for batteries, this project will provide invaluable experience and data for the whole value chain." **TN**

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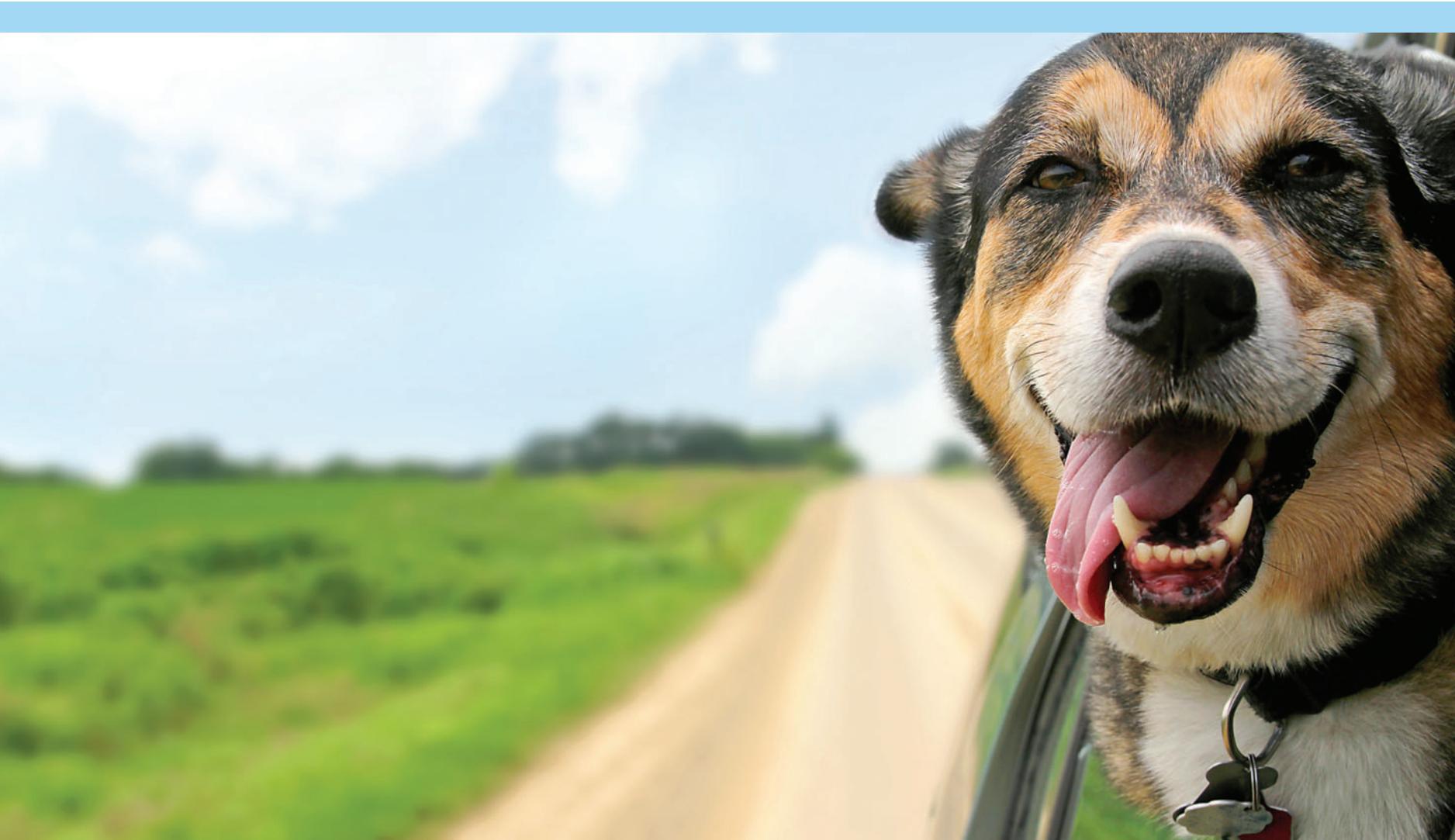
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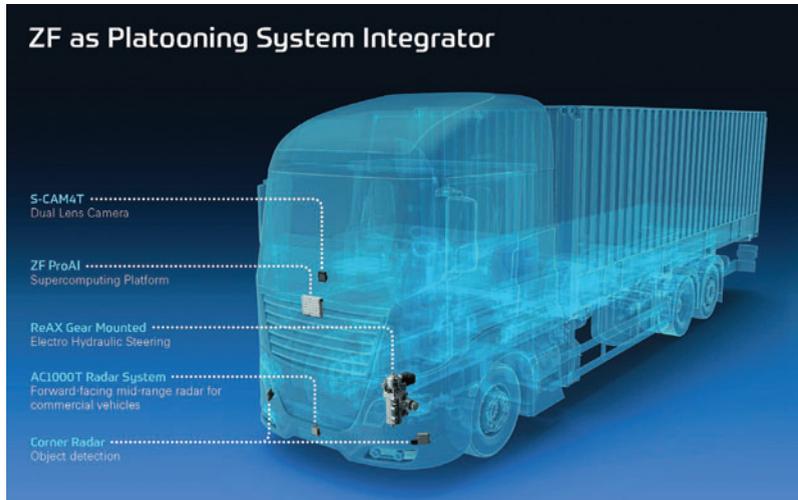
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# ZF developing platooning system



## HANNOVER, GERMANY

ZF has announced it's building a fully integrated platooning system, including sensor sets, the ZF ProAI supercomputer, ReAx electro-hydraulic steering, and the TraXon transmission.

The complete system is in pre-production, and it will be used to support multi-brand platooning in Europe. The company hopes to launch multi-brand platooning in Europe by 2021.

"Driving functions like platooning are enabled by innovative ZF technology," said Fredrik Staedtler, head of the Commercial Vehicle Technology Division at ZF. "We are already providing truck manufacturers with networking support that is making transport more efficient

and positively impacting the total cost of ownership."

ZF said it plans to bring its platooning technology to North America in the coming years. **TN**

# Canadian Forces take delivery of Mack trucks



## PETAWAWA, ONTARIO

The Canadian Department of National Defence recently took delivery of its first Medium Support Vehicle System (MSVS) Standard Military Pattern (SMP) trucks from Mack Defense.

The trucks were handed over during a special ceremony at the Canadian Forces base in Petawawa, Ont.

Canadian Minister of Defence Harjit Sajjan and other senior departmental officials were on-hand for the event.

Mack Defense will deliver more than 1,500 8x8 trucks and will support the trucks once delivered. The trucks' features include cargo areas, material handling cranes, load handling systems, and mobile repair capabilities. **TN**

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Over The Road

# Trucking industry needs to acknowledge role in climate change



We don't talk a lot about climate change or climate science in our business, which is at odds with the fact the transportation industry is a massive consumer of fossil fuels. What we do talk a lot about is reducing our fuel costs and becoming increasingly more efficient and profitable.

We also talk a lot about how we can attract young people into the trucking industry and how difficult that is in this day and age. What we don't talk a lot about is how climate change is the existential issue of our times to the same young people we are trying to attract.

Why would a young person today want to be part of an industry that is seen to be contributing to climate change without taking responsibility for it?

As an industry insider, I know that this is not the case. There are many trucking companies adopting technologies to reduce emissions and fuel costs out of a sense of social responsibility as much as out of a need to be fiscally responsible.

We also know that young people want to be the change they want to see in the world and that need to change is becoming increasingly urgent because the effects of climate change are going to impact their lives directly.

It's time to stop thinking of attracting young people to our industry just to drive trucks. We need to be able to show that it's possible to make a positive change in the world from the inside of a truck cab.

At times, we can be our own worst enemy. As we have adopted technology that is more fuel-efficient, we have also presented it as something that is superior in performance to that of an experienced driver.

It is not enough to say to us (drivers), "Come and sit in the midst of our fancy technology and see how wonderful it is – enjoy the ride." We

need to be able to interact with technology, to make it more than what it is, to be able to enhance our lives and the lives of others, to feel that we are making the world a better place through what we do every day.

All of that may sound idealistic, even utopian, but we all want to make something of ourselves and contribute to the world around us.

When it comes to the issues of climate change action and improved fuel efficiency, I believe the driver is the key. This is also where the solution to the driver shortage can be found.

For this to happen we need to first realize that driver training goes far beyond skills training and implementing rules and systems that govern individual actions.

## We need to take a leading role in reducing carbon emissions and sing that from the rooftops.

Over the years I've learned that in order to enhance my performance, I need to have autonomy and be empowered with the responsibility to make decisions out here on the road. When treated with trust and respect, most of us respond with commitment and loyalty. That has been my experience. I have been fortunate in that respect.

Somehow we need to pull all of these things together. We need to take a leading role in reducing carbon emissions and sing that from the rooftops. We need to open up our industry to new blood by letting people know that they can be the change they want to see in the future, that their personal contributions in the trucking industry can have signifi-

cant and immediate impacts. We need to treat people well. We need national training programs that are universally available to drivers and carriers that support the full trucking experience.

That's not asking for much, is it? But it's where we need to go. Settling for less at this point in time is not an option. **TN**

**Al Goodhall** has been a professional longhaul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his blog at [www.truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com](http://www.truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com). You can follow him on Twitter at [@Al\\_Goodhall](https://twitter.com/Al_Goodhall).

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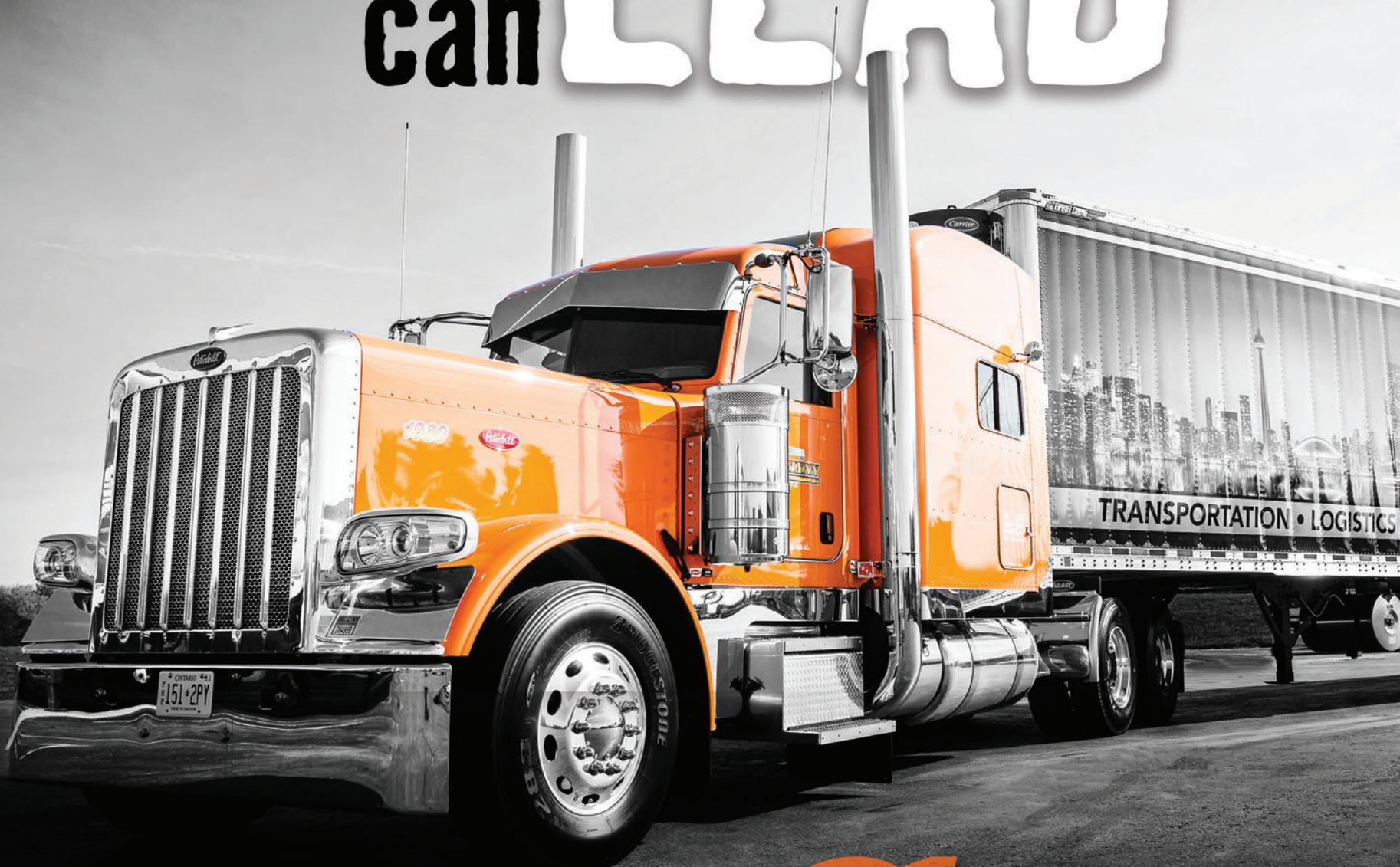
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## Lighting

# Lights on

LEDs and incandescent lamps have pros and cons, but maintenance and product quality are key

By Eric Berard

Being blinded by upcoming traffic headlights that are too strong can be as dangerous for a truck driver as it is for a motorist following a truck not being able to see the taillights at the rear of a trailer. Too much light can be as bad as too little; it's a matter of balance and choices.

A choice that fleets encounter when it comes to lighting is opting for regular incandescent bulbs or light-emitting diode (LED) lamps. The latter have become increasingly popular in spite of their higher cost, because of the numerous benefits they provide: they draw less current, last longer, are generally brighter, and less vulnerable to vibrations. Incandescent bulbs also have advantages, including a major one in a country that can be snowy almost six months a year: they generate heat that can melt snow and ice so visibility isn't compromised.

According to Mark Russell, professor and program coordinator, truck and coach technician apprentice at Fanshawe College in London, Ont., fleet managers shouldn't be in a one-size-fits-all state of mind when it comes to lighting purchases. It depends on where lights are located on the truck. For instance, he prefers high-intensity discharge (HID) halogen incandescent lamps for headlights in most applications. They tend to have a longer range than LEDs and won't get blocked by snow, thanks to the heat they generate.

Stephane Ferland, major account manager at Centre du Camion Ste-Marie, an Uptime Certified Volvo and Mack dealer in Boucherville, Que., is of a similar opinion. Though he admits the popularity of LED headlights is ever growing among fleets and owner-operators, Ferland says they provide "more luminosity, but on a shorter distance, with a wider beam," which allows better visibility around the front area of the truck.

LEDs also consume less power than incandescent bulbs, which means that smaller gauge wiring can be used, as well as a smaller alternator.

At the back of a truck or of a trailer, the LED's brightness may be preferred to incandescent, but the absence of heat remains a problem in the winter. That's the reason why many carriers, according to Ferland, will opt for a "hybrid" approach consisting of installing LEDs side by side with

Continued on page 40

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## Lighting

### Bright ideas

Continued from page 39

incandescent lamps to get the best of both worlds: LED luminosity and incandescent snow-melting ability.

#### Resistance is futile

Mixing LEDs and incandescent might seem a great solution from a safety perspective, but it can also lead to maintenance challenges as the two kinds of lamps draw different amounts of current and offer different resistance levels – both being higher with the incandescent – on a single circuit, which can require the addition of a resistance on the LED side to balance the circuit.

The LED's lower current draw and resistance is the reason why some technicians will often install them on otherwise all-incandescent lighted vehicles. Even if the electrical system is in bad shape, the LED offers so little resistance that it will still light, whereas an incandescent bulb wouldn't and the problem seems to be fixed.

"Shops are doing that now, because if they can't find the high resistance connection to stop those lights from blinking or pulsing, then they put an LED lamp. It allows the lights to function again but the problem with that is when the issue shows back up again, you can't mask it again for the second time; otherwise you're just



creating more problems in the electrical system," Russell says.

Besides, a quick LED installation will not always be a solution. If resistance is too high in a circuit, an LED might simply not light at all, contrary to an incandescent. "They'll dim, you can barely see them but they still flash. They might flash erratic, but you're still gonna have illumination," the Fanshawe professor says of incandescent lamps.

#### Rust never sleeps

One way to eliminate unwanted resistance in a circuit is to keep the connectors clean and free of corrosion. "A regular inspection and lubrication of the connectors with sprays such as dielectric grease is the key," says Ferland, adding that such lubricants should never be used on electronic module connectors, which are more sensitive to chemicals. Russell suggests using only electrical clean-

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ers and lubes that are recommended by your OEM. Using a wire brush to clean corrosion off connectors is not necessarily a good idea, he adds, as you might be taking off some of the conductive metal at the same time as rust, creating more resistance in the circuit, which is what you wanted to correct in the first place.

“The best thing is to plainly replace bad connectors, there’s nothing else to do once they’re attacked by corrosion. No matter how hard you clean them, some resistance will always remain,” Ferland says.

Just ignoring the corrosion on terminals is not an option either, according to Enrico Fontaine, service manager at Centre du Camion Ste-Marie. “Rust will eventually rot the terminal and prevent it to feed current to the lights,” he says.

Road debris and calcium can also accelerate corrosion and be a source of unwanted electrical resistance. Wire harnesses should be washed on a regular basis, using water only, Ferland advises. And when using a pressure washer, never aim the water jet directly at connectors. There are grommets and other types of insulation materials to protect them, but there are limits to what they can take.

A damaged wire could also explain why a light does go on but stays dim. “If you only have a couple of filaments left, your amps don’t have a path to go through anymore,” Ferland explains.

When replacing a damaged wire portion, always connect both ends with quality heat shrink butt connectors, advises Russell. Forget about marettes – humidity traps, he says – or manual splicing with tape on top. A bad connection or small wire gauge will only add resistance and potential problems to an electrical circuit.

When troubleshooting an intermittent electrical problem, an amp clamp will give better results than poking a wire with a multimeter spike, which will only open the door to water, corrosion and unwanted resistance. Another good way to circumscribe and locate the problem zone would be to examine the OEM’s electrical diagram and then proceed by elimination, Fontaine suggests.

Russell estimates that “probably 85% of chassis-related problems – lighting and other – are related to chassis grounds.” So, ensure that all grounds you create have a perfect bare metal-to-metal connection. No form of rust, grease, or paint allowed. Once a good clean ground is in place, then it’s okay to protect it with a sealant. Enamel paint can be a good option as it completely seals out oxygen, which eliminates the likelihood of corrosion, Russel underlines.

One thing that Ferland, Fontaine and Russell all agree on is that, in the lighting industry just like in any other, you get what you pay for. Often, the debate is not so much about LED vs. incandescent but poor-quality material vs. good components that will keep your truck on the road, generating revenue. **TN**

## Heating LEDs

LED lamps last longer, light brighter and withstand vibration better. Their only weakness is that they don’t generate heat, which allows snow and ice to accumulate on them.

A New York State company called Maxxima says it has solved the problem by incorporating heated lenses to its commercial vehicle LED products (headlights, taillights, etc.) to provide the best of both worlds.

When the temperature drops below 10 C, a heating element goes on and heats the LED lens up to a temperature of roughly 30 C to melt any snow or ice on the surface. The heating system automatically shuts down when the outside temperature rises, claims the manufacturer. **TN**



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## Insights

Human Factors

# Building your future workforce

It seems like every trucking association meeting or industry convention has a panel or guest speaker on how to attract the next generation of Canadian workers. Everyone listens intently for solutions: we need to get into the high schools; we need to better connect with guidance counsellors; drivers need higher wages; we need to recognize the skills of the occupation; we need to appeal to women, Indigenous people, and immigrants.

The list goes on, but there's no one clear answer.

Recruiting and retention have been issues in trucking for decades but today the sense of urgency has never been greater. For many employers, building a strong workforce feels like an absolute necessity if they're going to survive, let alone succeed. Fleets are turning away loads, striving to maintain current contractual obligations, and leaving no stone unturned in the recruitment of drivers.

**Recruiting and retention have been issues in trucking for decades but today the sense of urgency has never been greater.**

At Trucking HR Canada, we have tools that can help. We can provide strategies and practical tips for everything from building a respectful workplace culture to supporting an increasingly diverse workforce.

For example, if you're committed to hiring more women, particularly as drivers, I want to highlight a program called Women Building Futures (WBF). Those who have attended our Women with Drive Leadership summits are likely familiar with WBF, but for those who have not, let's take a closer look.

Established in 1998, WBF is a social purpose organization and registered charity that provides women who are unemployed and/or underemployed with the skills they need for a prosperous career. Its vision is to help women out of poverty by training them for careers that lead to economic freedom, personal confidence, and growth.

WBF is positioning traditionally male-dominated industry jobs such as construction workers, plumbers,



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heavy equipment operators, and, as of 2017, truck driving as first-choice career and lifestyle options for women.

Their approach is working and more women are entering and staying in these occupations as a direct result.

Today, the organization is a leader at increasing the participation of women in male-dominated occupations. With women representing 48% of our labor force, WBF and its efforts are worth your attention.

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- There is a 95% likelihood that a WBF graduate would recommend the program she completed;
- 35% of WBF students identify as Indigenous, providing an effective connection to an important community.

In 2017, WBF's Class 1 driver training program debuted with a 100% graduation rate. Thirty women drivers have now gone through the program and are working with employer partners.

Caron Transport and Westcan Bulk Transport were the first two employers to take the chance on the program. Rosenau Transport, Trimac Transportation, and more are now joining in. I hope this list continues to grow because it means the industry isn't just sitting back and listening to calls for more diversity as we build a future workforce. We're actually doing something about it.

With women playing a key role in meeting our future workforce needs, programs like Women Building Futures are vitally important. You can learn more by visiting [women-buildingfutures.com](http://women-buildingfutures.com), and be sure to put March 7, 2019, in your calendar for our Women with Drive Leadership Summit. **TN**



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## Fleet News

# HR awards

*Continued from page 1*

Fleet Award went to Saskatchewan's Q-Line Trucking, and rounding out the fleet awards was Bison Transport, which took the Top Large Fleet Award.

The Achievement of Excellence Awards are broken down into five categories to highlight leaders in specific HR areas. The recipient of the Workplace Culture Award was Canada Cartage. Ryder Canada Supply Chain Solutions took home the Award for Workplace Diversity. The recipient of HR Innovation Award was Arrow Transportation Systems. The Employee Engagement Award went to Sutco Transportation Specialists, and taking home the Award for Training and Skills Development was Caron Transportation Systems.

The night's most anticipated award – the HR Leader of the Year Award – was presented to Challenger Motor Freight's Geoff Topping. Topping is an industry veteran, and currently the vice-president of human resources at Challenger. He started his career in the trucking industry as an owner-operator.



**Challenger's Geoff Topping (left) was named HR Leader of the Year.**

"I'm not usually speechless, but wow," said Topping upon accepting the award. "Thank you to Trucking HR Canada, and all my team at Challenger. And thank you to our industry. We always say it's a people industry and it really is. I'm sure there's lots of equipment and things, but when you take it all away, it's really about people. The trucking industry has the best bunch of people you could possibly get. If you look around the room today, we're all friends and competitors and we all share best practices with each other. We should all be proud of this industry. I love this industry, it's been great to me, and thanks so much."

Trucking HR Canada's CEO Angela Splinter added: "We are honored to highlight organizations who work year-round to provide great workplaces for all their employees. And, with fleets under pressure to attract and recruit workers, being a Top Fleet Employer certainly helps these fleets stand out from the crowd."

Applications for the Top Fleet Employers Program open Oct. 15, and any Canadian fleet is eligible to apply. **TN**



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Private Matters

# We need you, driver!

Driver assisted vehicles are here, but autonomous vehicles are a long way off

It seems it's almost impossible to pick up a magazine (trucking industry publications, included) or tune into the news without reading a story about the next great breakthrough in autonomous technologies – complete with opinions on when the vehicles will be commonly roaming our highways with no driver in sight.

So many predicted timelines have gone by without a mention – it's like an Elon Musk prediction, no one really expects the predicted date to be delivered on.

I deplore the word 'autonomous,' hence my term driver assisted vehicles. The mass media's penchant for using the term autonomous – and too many of us in the trucking industry following suit – is not helping us recruit tomorrow's drivers into today's trucking industry.

In recent years, this has been a tough industry to get the youth excited about. However, helping portray the belief that we won't need drivers in five years as these trucks will be driving themselves by then, isn't exactly your A-list recruiting material. We, as an industry, are already suffering through a shortage of talent, and helping pull the trigger of the gun that is shooting us in the foot.

For this reason, we need to start, en-masse, promoting these vehicles for what they are: highly-advanced, finely-tuned, highly-technological vehicles, that when teamed up with a highly-skilled operator, can be the safest and most efficient trucks we have ever seen on the road.

When equipped with systems such as adaptive cruise control, forward collision mitigation, lane departure warnings, blind spot detection, anti-rollover, amongst others, they have been proven to reduce accidents, and reduce the severity of the ones they can't eliminate.

In North America, with our infrastructure the way it is, "AVs" must rely on sensors, radar, GPS and lidar to operate their systems. At this point,

these devices have proven extremely unreliable in adverse weather conditions such as snow, ice, fog, and rain. Is this technology improving? Yes. But even according to the manufacturers, these devices are a ways off from being able to operate in full autonomous mode via sensors and GPS.

In order for a vehicle to be truly autonomous, it needs to be connected to an advanced infrastructure through sensors and guides. AV infrastructure is being constructed in certain jurisdictions in small areas for testing purposes. If it proves feasible, in time I can see more of these types of autonomous vehicle operation centers, however even then, I still see people being present for the foreseeable future, mainly for reasons of public perception and liability.

For long-distance travel, is it realistic at this point to develop a coast-to-coast network constructed for autonomous or connected vehicle operations? I can't see this any time soon. We can't even get a national standard for such

things as highway construction or the paint and reflective material that is used for marking signs and roads. Have you ever driven on an Ontario highway in the rain and tried to figure out what lane you are in?

The lines literally disappear from view, and I personally have asked the province to review the paint they use and come up with a more reflective and visible option. In more than three years, even that hasn't been accomplished.

I don't mean to sound dismissive when it comes to these vehicles. I just think we all need a shot of reality. Do my views mean I think we should forget about this technology? No. Quite the opposite. I believe we will see further adoption in controlled environments such as mining, forestry and oilfield.

I believe we need to make systems such as adaptive cruise control, forward collision mitigation, and others mentioned earlier, mandatory. These driver assistance technologies have proven their worth.



**Mike Millian** is president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, the only national association that represents the views and interests of the private fleet industry. He can be reached at trucks@pmtc.ca.

These tools, coupled with a skilled driver, improve public safety immensely. We should ensure we have regulations that allow further testing of technologies, but also keep public safety in mind. Let's all embrace technology, but be realistic at the same time. If we use the current state of advancement in our vehicles properly, we can actually use this as a recruiting device for tomorrow's driver. The role of the driver is always going to be needed, the occupation is just going to change going forward. The driver of the future may be more in line with that of an airline pilot today, but still needed. This type of technology is what excites today's youth. Let's market this properly and change the narrative. **TN**



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# Stay hip

Truck drivers need to take care of their hips due to long hours of sitting

In the driver's seat, you retain control over many aspects of your day: your route, load, schedule, etc. However, sitting in the driver's seat for extended periods may also bring unexpected outcomes, like a painful hip condition. More than 100 million North Americans complain of chronic pain – most commonly lower back pain, which is often related to hip issues.

All structures in your hips are essential for maintaining balanced movement and distributing weight evenly across your pelvis when standing, walking, and sitting. The rounded head of the femur rotates in the hip socket. Flexor muscles coordinate hip joint movement. Cartilage surrounds the joint, preventing bones from rubbing against each other. Lubricating synovial fluid maintains smooth movement. Tendons and ligaments stabilize the joint.

Because hips are weight-bearing joints, each of these structures is susceptible to injury, inflammation and pain. Common conditions impacting hips include: extended sitting, femoroacetabular impingement (FAI), arthritis, bursitis, tendinitis, sciatica, and systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE).

When you sit for a long time, especially with poor posture in non-ergonomic seats, your hip flexor muscles can shorten, destabilizing the joint and increasing the chance of painful injury. As well, adjusting your seat too low can cause FAI, which occurs when the labrum (thick cartilage cushioning the head of the femur) wears thin, causing a popping or "catching" in the hip socket when you move your leg.

Arthritis can also cause hip pain. Osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, autoimmune disorders which deteriorate the hip car-

tilage, may flare up sporadically and worsen over time, eventually allowing painful bone to bone contact.

Bursitis can trigger hip pain as well, especially if you are older or involved in repetitive motion activities (climbing in and out of your rig). When the bursa (synovial fluid-filled sacs that cushion the movement of the hip joint) become irritated and inflamed, they trigger symptoms similar to osteoarthritis – pain and tenderness on the outside of the hip which moves to the back of the hip and down the leg.

Tendinitis, a less common cause of hip pain, is triggered by repetitive motion activities too.

Over time, the tendons surrounding the joint may become irritated, inflamed and painful, especially when movement takes place after you've sat for few hours.

Sciatica, caused by piriformis syndrome, can also cause hip pain. The



**Karen Bowen** is a professional health and nutrition consultant, and she can be reached at karen\_bowen@yahoo.com.

piriformis – a small band of muscle that attaches to the base of the spine and travels across the sciatic nerve – allows you to extend your legs and extend and flex your feet. When the piriformis becomes tight, strained or compromised, and contacts the sciatic nerve, it causes shooting pain whether sitting, standing, lying down or walking.

As well, systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), the most common form of lupus, can cause your body to attack and damage its own hip joint. If you have SLE, you'll likely experience sporadic painful episodes that increase in number and intensity over time.

To avoid minor hip pain, practice self-care. After driving for a few hours, stop and loosen your hips with a stretch – cross your legs and squeeze to gently stretch the outer hip muscles; or, pull the soles of your feet together in front of you and gently move your knees up and down. Take a short walk. Every day, complete 20 front and side lunges to strengthen your hip muscles.

To relieve minor hip pain, avoid: frequent bending at the hip; direct pressure on the hip; prolonged sitting; and/or sleeping on the affected side. Use over-the-counter pain relievers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) and naproxen sodium (Aleve). Treat the painful area with ice and/or heat, using ice cubes and/or a warm bath/shower.

For chronic hip conditions or severe hip pain/injury, get medical help, especially if your hip suddenly swells or appears deformed; you can't move your leg; you can't bear weight on a leg; and/or you have fever, chills or redness.

Maintaining your hips – it should sit well with you. **TN**

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## Back Behind the Wheel

# Healing the heel

During the past few weeks, I have treated several truck drivers complaining of heel pain. Heel pain is a fairly common occurrence in professional truck drivers. Although there are several causes of heel pain, for the purpose of this article, I will be concentrating on one specific condition called Achilles tendinitis.

In order to understand this injury, you must first understand the anatomy of the area.

The Achilles tendon is a fibrous band of tissue that connects the calf muscles to the heel bone.

This tendon is important for locomotion and is used in many activities such as walking, running and jumping.

Due to the high-tensile forces that it must endure, the Achilles tendon is very strong and rigid. In fact, it is one of the strongest tendons in the human body.

Achilles tendinitis is simply inflammation of the Achilles tendon. In most cases, this injury occurs when the tendon is strained from excessive force or overuse.

For truck drivers, there are a few common causes of Achilles tendinitis, which include using improper technique when getting in and out of the truck and jumping off the back of the trailer. In addition, operating the accelerator for many hours may cause micro-trauma and irritation to the tendon over time.

There are several risk factors that may increase the chances of developing this type of tendinitis. First of all, poor flexibility of the calf muscles and flat arches will decrease the ability of the Achilles tendon to absorb shock. To add to this, not warming up before physical activity and wearing inappropriate footwear will also increase the likelihood of straining the tendon. As you can see, professional truck drivers are at a higher risk of developing this type of tendinitis due to their job demands.

The most common symptom of Achilles tendinitis is pain at the back of the heel bone that develops gradually and worsens over time. Some people experience a dull ache in the back of the leg above the heel after participating in physical activity.

On visual inspection, you may notice swelling or a lump on the Achilles tendon. Often, the affected tendon will be significantly larger than the other.

It is important to address this injury at its onset in order to avoid developing a more serious condition. Most of the time, a health care professional will be able to assess and diagnose this condition after taking a detailed history of the injury and performing a thorough physical examination. Advanced diagnostic testing such as ultrasounds and MRIs may be necessary to identify and confirm the diagnosis.

The treatment of Achilles tendinitis is usually simple. The first line of treatment consists of rest and ice to reduce the inflammation.

In addition, your doctor may recommend anti-inflammatory medications to further reduce inflammation and decrease pain.

Gentle stretches may also promote healing of the tendon.

As I always say, prevention is the best treatment. It is important for drivers to use proper footwear which provides adequate cushioning for the heel and support for the arch.

Warming up before performing any physical activity will loosen up the muscles and tendons of the legs. I recommend that drivers walk around their truck five to 10 times as



**Dr. Christopher H. Singh** runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont. He can be reached at 519-421-2024.

a good warm-up. Until next time, drive safely. **TN**



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# Seeing the light

Solar panels can help power anti-idling systems, extend battery life

By James Menzies

Some new light has been shed on how to enhance the performance of battery-powered auxiliary power units (APUs), and it was right there above us all along. Using solar panels mounted to the roof fairing of a tractor can produce enough power to extend the operation of a battery-powered HVAC system and hotel load power for an additional three to four hours. A 300-watt roof fairing-mounted solar panel can also power the liftgate and maintain the charge in the truck's primary batteries, according to Jeff Kauffman of Tahoe Ventures, who was speaking at the FTR Transportation Conference in September.

Even a smaller, 65-watt panel (measuring just three feet by 1.5 feet) can generate 250-400 watts per day, enough to reduce parasitic hotel loads and run telematics, at an acquisition cost of less than \$600.

Kauffman said it's time for fleets to begin thinking about new ways to incorporate solar power, and one of the greatest opportunities is to extend the capabilities of battery-powered APUs, which often don't last the entire duration of a driver's 10-hour rest period.

The North American Council for Freight Efficiency (NACFE) recently published a Confidence Report on solar power, concluding that "fleets should seriously consider investing in solar systems."

It noted solar panels designed for the transportation industry are thin and flexible, and able to be installed against the curve of a roof fairing, for instance.

"The roof fairing of the tractor has historically gone unused and has ideal access to sunlight," the report read.

But not all solar panels are created equal.

"The right technology and the right design make a world of difference," said Paul Kroes, power solutions business development manager for Thermo King. "Customers go out there, go online or to Canadian Tire and get a panel for \$100 that looks like it's going to do the job. It comes down to the design for the environment. The solar industry only ever designed for stationary applications, they never had to worry about going down the road, vibrating, 70 mph winds, rock debris, tree limbs, corrosion. All that stuff destroys your standard solar system very quickly and a lot of people don't understand that."

Kroes said Thermo King designs its solar panels to last the entire life of a trailer, or 15-20 years, and there have been continuous improvements made to the design.

Steve Carlson, director of sales and business development with



power inverter supplier Xantrex, agreed that solar power, coupled with a lithium-ion battery, is a good option when running battery-powered APUs or inverters. Currently, diesel-powered APUs dominate the market because they can run indefinitely without draining the truck's batteries. However, diesel-fired APUs still produce noise, pollution, and consume costly fuel. They're also restricted in some areas.

"Battery-powered APUs have historically been at a disadvantage – especially when operating in the summer in southern states," Carlson wrote in a recent white paper on the topic. "They simply can run out of juice, then the trucker will need to fire up the main engine to keep cool, while recharging the batteries. What's more, it can take six to 12 hours to recharge the batteries for an all-electric APU, either by running the truck engine or plugging directly into an outlet."

Thermo King offers both battery-powered and diesel-fired APUs, but in Eastern Canada the diesel variety accounts for the majority of sales. But the company says solar can provide a benefit in those applications as well.

"It's still a big advantage for diesel-powered APUs," said Joe Rabak, national parts and procurement manager for Thermo King Eastern Canada. "We offer a solar solution for customers operating diesel-fired APUs, but the benefits are different. For electric, it's extending run time and if you have a diesel, you're trying to minimize the amount of time that diesel APU has to run to do its job."

Kroes went so far as to say "You don't want to ever spec' an electric APU without a solar panel." He said



a solar panel not only extends its run time, but also battery life.

Carlson's preference for lithium-ion batteries is derived from their ability to allow the system to use almost the entire charge, whereas traditional lead acid batteries should not be drained beyond 50%. They also provide about twice the cycles compared to lead acid batteries and are about 60-80% lighter-weight.

Regardless of the battery type, solar remains an option for powering the truck without idling.

"As an OEM for the trucking industry, we've been promoting solar for years because it simply makes a lot of sense," said Carlson, noting that sensors and electronic devices continuously draw power when the truck is turned off. "Adding a solar panel – even a small one that can trickle charge and offset parasitic load, helps to keep charge levels stable."

And in addition to extending the idle-free run time of an APU, solar panels also reduce the load on the alternator the next morning, which results in fuel savings.

Henry Albert, an owner-operator in the U.S., is a big believer. He runs eight batteries, four of which power his Parksmart electric HVAC system.

"They cost me hundreds of dollars each, so I'd like them to last," he said of the batteries. He uses the eNow solar system to keep the batteries topped off so they are never in a discharged state.

"I think this has already extended the battery life and should continue to extend it," he said, adding he expects all eight batteries to last three to four years. He's counting on an 18-month payback due to reduced battery issues. And he's also pleased with his ability to extend the run time of his Parksmart.

"My truck is my home away from home and I have a lot of appliances, communications systems, and telematics," he said. So far, he hasn't encountered any mechanical issues with the solar system.

"Inclement weather, extreme temperatures, truck washes – nothing has reduced its performance," he said. **TN**

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**2015 WESTERN STAR 4700SB PROPANE TRUCK**  
103,000 MILES! HP CUMMINS, AUTO., 3,499 USG (13,000 L) STEEL LPG TANK, DELIVERY HOSE, LCR II REGISTER, LAP-PAD, SLIP PRINTER IN CAB. -1266896

**1999 FREIGHTLINER - 125,000 KM'S!**  
CAT ENGINE, 330 HP, 10-SPEED. EQUIPPED WITH: 21,000 L 4-C TANK, MECH. MANIFOLD WITH BOTTOM LOAD, VAPOUR RECOVERY, DUAL PUMPING SYSTEM, LCR-II REGISTERS. -1266869

**2005 FREIGHTLINER M2**  
238,000 MILES. CAT ENGINE, 250 HP, 10-SPEED. EQUIPPED WITH: 3,000 GALLON PROPANE TANK. LCR-II REGISTER. REAR FILL AND DELIVERY HOSE. -1266428

**2007 FREIGHTLINER**  
413,000 MILES. MERCEDES 450 HP ENGINE, 13-SPEED, 66,000 LB. GVWR. 5,300 GALLON 4-COMP. DOT TANK. DUAL PUMPS, METERS, MIDCOM REGISTERS. AIR MANIFOLD WITH BOTTOM LOAD, VAPOR RECOVERY. -1271710

**2008 HINO PROPANE TRUCK**  
95,000 MILES! 260 HP 6-SPEED MANUAL, 3,499 USG (13,000 L) STEEL LPG TANK, 100' DELIVERY HOSE, LCR II REGISTER, SLIP PRINTER IN CAB. RUNS WELL. -1266963

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**2011 INTERNATIONAL**  
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**2009 INTERNATIONAL**  
370 HP ENGINE, RUNS WELL, 10-SPEED, 20,000 L 4-C TANK. AIR MANIFOLD WITH BOTTOM LOAD & GRAVITY, DUAL PUMPS & METERS. -1264820

**2006 STERLING**  
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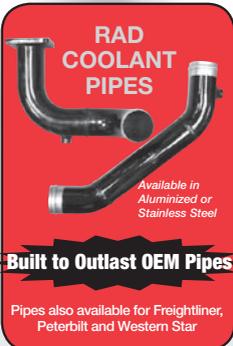
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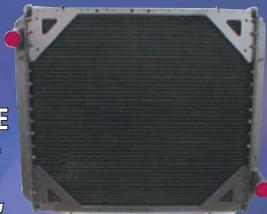
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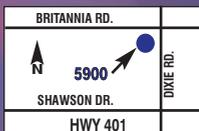
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## Announcements

Snowden retires from **CIFFA**; Provencher leaves **PIT Group**; Timken names Canadian rep; and **Transcourt** and **Trailcon** announce promotions.

The Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association (CIFFA) announced that executive director **Ruth Snowden** has notified the board of directors of her intention to retire from the association by mid-2019.



The Executive Committee of the board has already met and succession planning is well underway, a process in which Snowden is fully engaged.

Transcourt Tank Leasing announced that **Shawn Rogers** has been named vice-president of business



development for North America. Rogers has been a senior sales rep leader for more than 20 years in the transportation industry. Most recently, he served as the commercial leader for Canada at Train Trailer.

In this new role, along with being a member of the senior executive team, Rogers will lead the business development and marketing teams and their aggressive growth strategies across North America, the company said. He will be based at Transcourt's head office in Oakville, Ont.

Trailcon has announced that **Dave Ambrock**, its Edmonton branch manager, will be retiring on Dec. 31. Ambrock will be replaced by **Laine Hrechuk**, who began work with Trailcon on Oct. 1, and will shadow Ambrock until the end of the year when he will assume the title of branch manager, Edmonton.

Hrechuk comes to Trailcon with many years of experience, previously serving as a transport division manager and transport sales manager for Edmonton's Thermo King Western Inc., and in sales with Pro-West Refrigeration and Epoch West-

ern Canada. His tenure as branch manager, Edmonton begins on Jan. 1, 2019.

Trailcon also named **Jerry Brown** senior vice-president and general manager, effective Oct. 1. Brown has more than 30 years of experience within the transportation sector and joins Trailcon from Ryder, where he served as vice-president and general manager, responsible for the Canadian Fleet Management Solutions (FMS) division.



Timken has named **Albert Mammarella** the national sales manager, automotive and commercial vehicle aftermarket, in a role that will have him focusing on Canada. Mammarella brings 30 years of industry experience to the role, said the supplier of bearings and power transmission products.

Much of his career was spent as the owner and operator of Magnum Automotive. Before that he was a sales manager for Motorcade Industries and Albatross Automotive.

FPIInnovations announced that **Yves Provencher**, the industrial sector leader, emerging markets, is no longer with the company.

After 34 years at FPIInnovations, Provencher decided to seek new challenges and has accepted the position of senior director, business development at La Compagnie Electrique Lion, a manufacturer of electric heavy trucks.

FPI said: "We thank Yves for his significant contribution to FPIInnovations as well as to PIT Group's success that is in fact celebrating its 10th anniversary this October. The organization is booming and will continue to expand its impact and its services in the industry across North America." **TN**

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Mark Dalton: Owner-Operator

By Edo van Belkom

**M**ark was heading east through Ontario, coming to the end of a long-haul run that had taken him from Vancouver, to Calgary, to Regina, and then Winnipeg. Northern Ontario had passed him by in what seemed like no time at all and now he was on his way to Toronto.

Being so close to the end, Mark figured he'd be getting a call at any moment from his dispatcher, Bud. The man always had an uncanny ability to know when Mark was in need of a new load and always seemed to call on cue.

This time, it was no different.

Mark's cellphone buzzed on the console next to him and a moment later the phone engaged the hands-free system he'd recently had installed and all Mark had to do was touch a button on his steering wheel and he was on the phone.

"Hello?" he said.

"Mark, it's Bud."

Mark couldn't resist. "Bud who?"

"Your best Bud, that's who."

Mark was already suspicious. He was being a bit *too* friendly, and Mark figured something was up. "What do you want?" he asked.

"What do you mean, what do I want? Can't I just call a friend to say hello?"

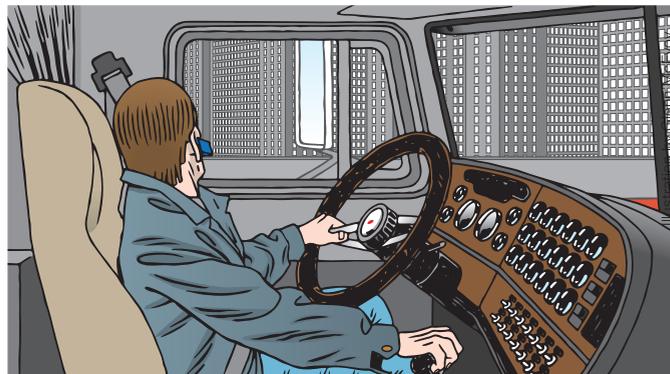
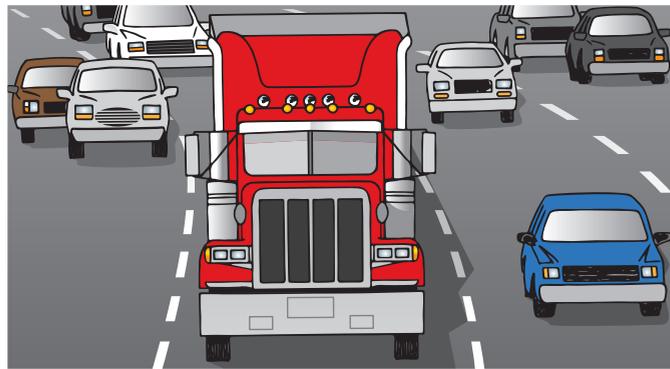
Now Mark was *convinced* Bud was calling because he wanted something. "Of course you can call just to talk, but you're not very good at chit chat."

"Yes, I am," said Bud. "Just watch me." A lengthy pause, and then. "How's it going, Mark?"

"Great, Bud," Mark said. "How about you?"

"I'm good," Bud answered.

Then the phone connection between them was silent for a long and very awkward time. Mark could hear Bud breathing on the other end, like he was trying really, really hard to think of something to say.



## Dalton is hailed a cab – Part 1 –

Finally, Bud said, "Okay, okay, I suck at small talk, so I'm just going to come out and say it. I have a favor to ask you."

"I knew it!"

"Okay...so you know me well enough to know when I want something from you," Bud said. "So then you also know that I wouldn't call you like this if I didn't really need your help."

Mark sighed. "What is it?"

"There's a friend of mine..."

"You have a friend?"

"As a matter of fact, I do. Anyway, he's been getting a lot of calls for city stuff that all – you know – needed to be done in a hurry."

"Yeah?" Mark could just imagine. If there was one thing about city driving it's that everyone wants their stuff delivered either yesterday or first thing in the morning.

"So, he's thinking of designating

one of his short trailers for just this kind of work."

"You mean like a taxi truck?"

"That's the idea."

"So why me?"

"He wants to give this thing the best chance he can to succeed. So, he needs a good driver that can, how can I say this, smooth over the rough spots and make sure everything gets done."

Mark shook his head, even though Bud wasn't there to see it. "But I drive longhaul."

"I know, I know. But you're always talking about how you'd like to give city driving a try. You know, home every night and all that."

Mark was confused. "I've never said anything like that in my life."

"No?" Bud asked.

"No," Mark said. "And, by the way, I live out of my truck, so I'm already home every night."

"Okay, so maybe I'm confusing you with someone else. Don't I always say 'Mark who?' Anyway, the point is you're the guy for the job."

Bud might have been sure, but Mark wasn't as certain. "Mother Load is not good for city driving."

"He's got a truck for you. It's got the right gearing, fully automatic, practically drives itself."

"Okay, but what about my long-haul work? We both have regular customers that need to be taken care of."

"Funny thing about that," Bud said. "I've got no long hauls right now."

"Really?" Mark said, trying to make himself sound as sarcastic as possible.

"Yeah, really. But I do have a Vancouver run at the end of the week, which just happens to be when this taxi truck gig will be ending."

"You don't say?"

"I know, right?" Bud said. "It's crazy how well this thing works out."

Mark thought about it. He was always up for something new, and as they say, a change is as good as a switch...or something like that. Still, there was just one more thing he was worried about.

"Okay, but if I agree to do this there's one more thing...there's a lot of loading and unloading with this kind of work and I'm not getting any younger."

"Oh, yeah, I forgot to tell you. You get a helper, big guy, strong as an ox. Does everything he's told."

Mark was silent.

"Please."

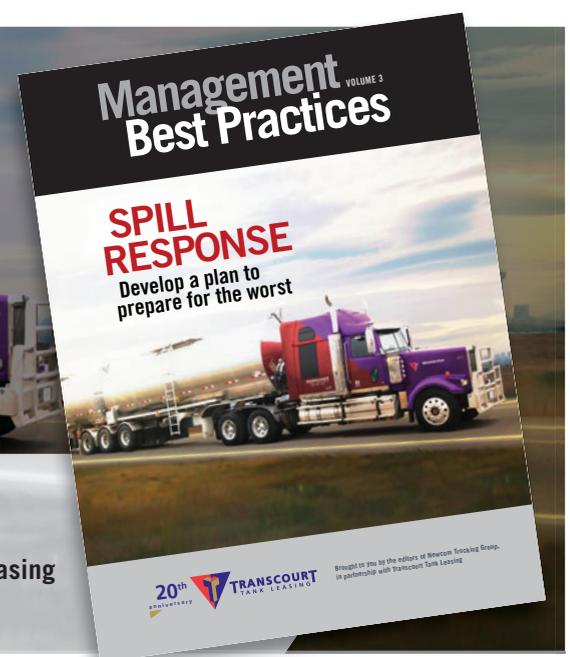
"Alright, okay, I'll do it...for you, as a favor."

After all, thought Mark, it's just for a few days. How much could go wrong in such a short amount of time? **TN**

*Mark Dalton returns next month in part two of Dalton is hailed a cab.*

# SPILL RESPONSE

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# The Adventures of NEWLAND TRANSPORT

By Edo Van Belkom

Vic has welcomed his cousin at the airport after the man immigrated to Canada to start a new life as a Canadian. Because he had been a truck driver in Africa, and attended a driving school in Africa, Vic contacted Bud about getting him a job once he got his AZ licence in Ontario.

Vic took his cousin to the driver testing center for a test, but the whole test was over before he even got behind the wheel.

On the way home from the testing center, Vic asks his cousin what happened.

“How can he know if I’m a good driver or not if I didn’t even *drive* for him?”



Vic thinks he knows what happened, but he needs to put his theory to the test. On the way, Vic stops in the empty parking lot of a warehouse and parks the truck in an isolated corner of the lot.

“Why are we stopping?” his cousin asks.

“I want to see if you know anything about driving trucks.”

“If I know anything?” he asks, his tone suggesting he’s offended.

“I’ve been driving for ten years.”

“I know you have,” Vic says. “But I want you to do a circle check to see how much you know?”

Vic asks, “What about the tires?”

“They’re good.”

“How do you know?”

“Because I can see them! They are right there and they are good.”

“All right,” Vic says. “Let’s move on down the truck.”

Vic’s cousin kneels down points under the truck and says, “No leaks.”

Again Vic asks, “How do you know?”

This time the man just looks at Vic.

Obviously, he doesn’t have an answer.

“What did they teach you at this driving school?”

“How to get my licence.”

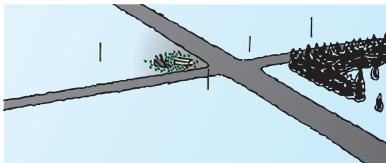


“Lights. Tires. Mirrors.”



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

It was just as Vic had thought, only worse. There were some truck driving schools out there teaching new drivers just enough to pass their tests, but not nearly enough to turn them into safe drivers. He’d heard people talk about such schools and about how new students often had only three questions about getting their truck-driving licence -- How much would it cost? How long would it take? And, when is the test? Apparently his cousin had gone to one of these schools, and while he probably would make an excellent driver once he got behind the wheel, he hadn’t learned nearly enough about trucks and truck driving to get his licence, regardless of what he’d learned in “school.”



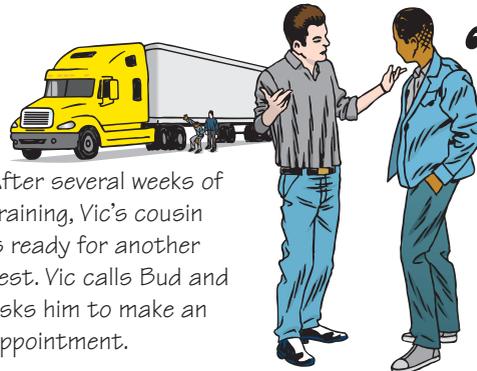
It was the kind of training that led to accidents like the one that had turned the Humboldt Broncos hockey team into a Canadian tragedy.

“I’ll teach you,” Vic says. “When I’m finished, you’ll be ready for the road.”

“You must keep a safe stopping distance between yourself and vehicle in front of you so you will be able...”



...to stop safely in an emergency.



After several weeks of training, Vic’s cousin is ready for another test. Vic calls Bud and asks him to make an appointment.

“He did fantastic!” Bud says. “If you trained him, you should be getting paid to train drivers. I’ve never seen a guy more knowledgeable and prepared.”

Vic wonders if maybe he should branch out as a trainer for when times are slow.

**Maintenance Best Practices**

**Driving Uptime**

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# Driving Uptime

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# A trucker's guide to CPP

Most people in Canada between the ages of 18 and 70 who earn more than \$3,500 a year contribute to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) – except in Quebec, where the Quebec Pension Plan provides benefits. Like an insurance plan, CPP is designed to provide a monthly retirement or disability benefit or, if you die, a survivor benefit to your spouse and children.

Unlike insurance, CPP isn't optional. It is, in effect, a forced savings plan. I have clients who diligently set aside a portion of their wages for a rainy day or retirement, and to them CPP is a four-letter word.

But most Canadians are counting on CPP to pay the bills once they stop working. A CIBC survey earlier this year said 19% of Canadians have saved less than \$50,000 for retirement, and 30% have no retirement savings at all.

If CPP is part of your retirement plan, you'll want to learn as much as you can about how the program works and what you can expect as a pension.

## Do the math

How much you receive from CPP is based on your earnings, how many contributions you've made, and your age when you stop working.

The normal age for receiving a CPP retirement pension is 65. If you start your CPP retirement pension then, you'll get the full pension amount you're eligible to receive. For 2018, the maximum is \$1,134.17 per month.

You can, however, start drawing a retirement pension as early as age 60 (at a reduced rate) or wait until as late as 70 (and get a premium).

Taking your pension early will cost you 0.6% per month. If you start receiving your CPP pension at the age of 60, your total amount will be 36% less than it would have been if you had taken it at 65.

Conversely, after age 65 your monthly CPP retirement pension amount will increase by 0.7% per

month. If you start receiving your pension at the age of 70, your amount will be 42% more than it would have been if you had taken it at 65.

## Taking CPP while you work

The age when you decide to start taking your CPP retirement pension depends on your savings, debt, job satisfaction, health, family, the lifestyle you lead, and other factors.

If you're between 65 and 70 and work while drawing your CPP retirement pension, you can choose to make CPP contributions if you want to. If you decide to do so, your employer will also have to as well.

If you decide to receive your pension before age 65 without any work interruption, you and your employer are required to make CPP contributions.

## CPP for owner-operators

For sole proprietor owner-operators, the amount you pay into CPP is based on your net income after expenses. So low income equals low CPP contribution. You can't choose to pay more into it; the contribution amount is a set percentage of your income.

I'm constantly reminding our incorporated owner-operator clients that CPP is only payable as part of any wages they are paid by their company. CPP is not payable on dividends. Although dividends can produce an overall smaller total tax bill, that's mostly because there is no CPP being paid.

## Look online

The simplest way to learn more about your eligibility and benefits is to visit [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca) and review your CPP statement. It will show the total amount of your CPP contributions by year and your pensionable earnings on which they are based. It will also estimate what your pension or benefit would be if you were eligible to receive it now.

Ask your accountant or financial advisor for help, especially if you're counting on tapping into your government pension before you turn 65.

A wise client once told me, "I have no money but I always pay my bills." So, treat your retirement savings like a bill. Make it a routine to regularly stuff your mattress, RRSP, TFSA, or some other place to park your money until your working days are over.



**Scott Taylor** is vice-president of TFS Group, providing accounting, book-keeping, tax return preparation, and other business services for owner-operators. Learn more at [www.tfsgroup.com](http://www.tfsgroup.com) or call 800-461-5970.

CPP may force you to save, but you'll probably need more than a government pension to fund your retirement. **TN**

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# GAME CHANGERS

## PART I

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# Stayin' small

Why Flash Freight would rather remain a small trucking firm

## GUELPH, ONTARIO

For some, the road to success is a winding one. For others, it's one that's straight and narrow.

Flash Freight Systems' road falls closer to the latter.

The business was started in 1998 as a part of Spruce Brook Farms – a supplier of agricultural commodities and ingredients. In 2004, the Gerber family, who had been in the transportation industry for years, purchased Flash Freight.

In 2004, Flash Freight had 13 trucks and 18 trailers. Today, co-owners David, Geoff, and Tony, have 53 trucks and 120 trailers.

"Not ridiculous, rapid growth," Tony Gerber said of Flash Freight. "But consistent, sustainable growth, which has really become kind of our mantra here."

Flash Freight, unsurprisingly, is still tied to its roots, and hauls agricultural products across the continental U.S., as well as Canada. It also hauls pet food and pet supplies as well as office furniture.

"It took us 10 years to tweak that mix, but we are happy with where we've landed," Gerber said. "It's a freight mix that has eliminated seasonality for us, which is good all around."

As far as drivers go, Gerber said all Flash Freight drivers are company drivers, and are paid as employees, not contractors.

"We are not fans of the Driver Inc. model at all," he adds.

Most of Flash Freight's drivers have been with the company for almost a decade and its turnover rate is lower than 20%. And this is for a variety of reasons, according to Gerber.

"I think overall, why our drivers stay, is the same reason why our customer turnover is low as well," he said. "It's our focus on accountability, integrity and service. Our pay package is extremely competitive. We offer a good mix of miles

and home time, which is one of the holy grails in trucking. Our goal is to ensure our drivers utilize the maximum amount of hours available and can still have resets at home with their family. We are not a trucking company that expects our drivers to be out for three to four weeks at a time."

The other thing Gerber hears often from drivers is that they appreciate the honesty that Flash Freight expresses throughout a driver's tenure with the company.

"We always do what we say we're going to do," he said. "And there's no change from recruitment to qualification, to the first trip, to the 10th year. There's not a lot of smoke and mirrors here. We are pretty realistic about the negative things that happen in the industry."

The company also makes sure its drivers have a pain-free experience when crossing the U.S.-Canada border.

"We are on the national carriers list for a number of brokers, and we work hard to make sure we are proactive in making sure by the time the driver reaches the border, the shipment has already cleared," he said. "We don't ask the driver to handle any clearances themselves."

As for its success, the company wouldn't be where it is today, Gerber says, if it wasn't for Flash Freight's people, and their "commitment to our vision of service excellence."

"And it's not just our drivers I'm talking about," he said. "It's our operations staff, administrative staff, and warehouse staff, too."

He recalls one time when a customer, a large food distributor, ran into some problems in 2008. The company was switching warehouse facilities and ran a few days behind schedule.

"At this point, we were using almost 25 trucks per day for them," he said. "And as soon as we heard about the problem, our operations



Tony Gerber, co-owner of Flash Freight Systems says its goal is slow, steady growth for years to come.

staff left the office, moved their computers and desks to the customer's warehouse and spent the next week and a half making sure there were no barriers to communication or barriers to keep our drivers moving. Ultimately, our people knew there was a problem, jumped in and said 'We won't leave until it's fixed.'"

But its not all rosy at Flash Freight. It still has challenges, like every other carrier out there. For Flash Freight, Gerber says the biggest challenge it deals with today in the industry is low barriers to entry.

"There's far too many shortcuts for compliance," he said. "And far too many shortcuts for building sustainable business models – and pricing can be impacted by companies that take those shortcuts."

He also said that while the company isn't feeling the full effect of the driver shortage yet, he is starting to see the impact.

"With our low turnover rate, we don't feel the shortage quite as acutely," he said. "What we're seeing now is a lower availability of higher quality drivers. We used to be fully seated and today we're not. And of course, we're not looking at a large number of trucks parked up

against the fence, but we can tell there's a shift. And I think it's mainly to do with the demographic of typical drivers, who are all starting to retire now."

In the future, Gerber said his one hope, which normally raises a few eyebrows, is to "not be on the Top 100 list."

"Because truthfully, I believe one of the things that I think has helped us build our success is the fact that we are genuinely a small family business," he explained. "So, my hope for the future is to have that same, consistent, solid growth, organically. And to get it more in a manner that enables us to deliver a higher quality of life for our employees, rather than growth for the sake of growth." **TN**



Sonia Straface is the associate editor of *Truck News*. She has been covering the Canadian trucking industry since 2014.

An advertisement for Michelin tires. The background is a scenic landscape with rolling green hills and a paved road that curves into the distance. The text "TECHNOLOGY. INNOVATION." is written in bold, black, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, "THE RIGHT TIRE FOR YOU" is written in a similar font, with "TIRE" enclosed in a blue-outlined box. At the bottom, "SERVICES. SOLUTIONS. PROGRAMS." is written in bold, black, sans-serif font. The Michelin Man logo is visible in the bottom right corner, and the word "MICHELIN" is written in its signature blue font below it. A white hand icon is pointing towards the text on the left side of the image.

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