

TRUCK NEWS

June 2008 Volume 28, Issue 6

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com



A NEW APPROACH?: The proposed access road will take trucks from downtown Windsor and put them on a costly below-grade road linking Hwy. 401 with a new border crossing. The DRIC group has the support of industry, the province and the feds. But the City of Windsor says the proposal's not good enough.

DRIC group puts forth plans for new border access road

By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, Ont. – The Trucking industry's on-board. And so are a raft of companies that ship their goods by truck, like the Canadian

Vehicle Manufacturers Association, the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association, and automakers like Chrysler Canada and Ford.

All that remains for the new proposal by a four government consortium – known as the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) team – to build an ac-

cess road and new bridge between Hwy. 401 and Detroit is “crossing the T's and dotting the I's,” said Dave Wake, the Ontario

Continued on page 8 ■

Rate wars

Are trucking companies facing Darwinian extinction?

By Ingrid Phaneuf

TORONTO, Ont. – To hear trucking industry insiders describe it, the current rate crunch is Darwinian in scale – long, drawn out and threatening to change the face of the trucking industry as we know it.

And it's all thanks to rate cutting, a practice which, according to

trucking industry insiders, is spreading like cancer and causing an equivalent amount of damage.

“A tremendous amount of rate cutting is happening,” says Caravan Logistics general manager Kevin Snobel. “Between now and next year I'm predicting at least 10% of companies now in



DO YOU KNOW THIS GUY?: Carriers are putting themselves out of business by underbidding on freight and placing unsustainable pressure on rates.

existence will have folded.”

First comes rate cutting, and then comes extinction, warn those in the know.

“It's devastating, very harmful,” says Ray Haight, executive director of MacKinnon

Transport and recently elected 2008-2009 chairman of the Truckload Carriers Association. “And it's a slow death. Eventually the companies who do it go out of business. I hear the survival of the fittest argument – that eventually rates will go up when consolidation happens – but I don't think a downward pressure on rates is good for the industry at any time.”

Haight says safety is just one of the sacrifices carriers make in order to run for less.

“What I worry about is that smaller carriers will find a way to survive by putting more hours on their trucks on a daily basis than they should legally. It creates all sorts of problems for everyone,” says Haight, who also worries

Continued on page 31 ■

Report on maintenance

- Maximizing fuel mileage in the shop
- Rugged computers
- Better brakes
- On-board diagnostics – and more!

See pages 49-56



Inside This Issue...

- **Super single solution?:** It looks like higher weights will be allowed on single tires across Canada. Page 14
- **Getting to know DTNA:** We catch up with Daimler Trucks North America at the Mid-America Trucking Show to discuss key industry issues, including plans for 2010. Page 38
- **Keeping it cool:** A look at what refrigerated fleets must do to become California-compliant. Also, we check out some nifty new developments in the world of reefers. Pages 44-47
- **Dalton and the Bandit:** Mark's troubles don't end after his run-in with a thief. Page 76

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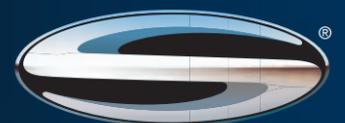


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HOW IT WORKS

Ontario Transport Minister Jim Bradley teamed up with OTA chief David Bradley at Truck World to demonstrate how to set a speed limiter.

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feature of the month...

REEFER RULES: If you haul refrigerated freight into or out of California, there are some impending new rules you should know about. Or are there?

We try to clear the air about CARB's latest rules, which may or may not come into effect.

pages 44-47



EXCLUSIVE

Truck News sits down with executives from Daimler Trucks North America to discuss the Freightliner Cascadia, DD15 engine and the company's plans for EPA2010.

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PARDON ME

Pardon? Waiver? Or neither? A look at the documentation you need to enter the US if you've had a run-in with the law. What you don't know, could get you in trouble.

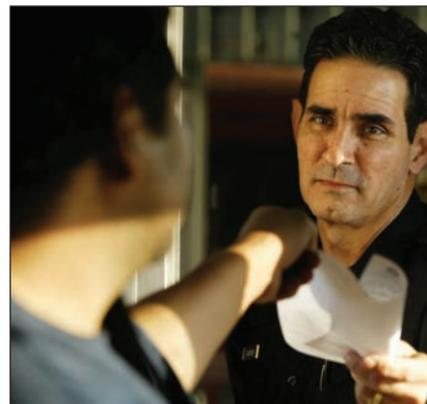
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SHOP FOCUS

In our second annual Report on Maintenance, we examine timely issues such as shortened stopping distances, saving fuel from the shop and rugged computers.

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Question of the month

Are driver medicals stringent enough?

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**Mark Dalton in...
Mark Dalton
and the Bandit
Part 1**



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monthly columns...



MORE SURVIVAL TIPS
By David Bradley
Our association's role in controlling fuel prices.

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KEEPING YOUR DRIVERS
By Dave Brown
Offering some inexpensive tips on driver retention.

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SAVING FUEL AT TAX TIME
Scott Taylor
Reducing your fuel bill is usually done on the highway. But your accountant may be able to help.

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MUSHROOMS ON THE SIDE
By Karen Bowen
Taking a look at a healthy side dish – mushrooms.

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ATHLETE'S FOOT
By Christopher Singh
A common condition for truck drivers. A look at its causes and how to prevent it.

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FINALLY!
By Bruce Richards
Some long-awaited changes are finally taking place.

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departments



OEM/DEALER NEWS: Irvine Truck Centre has once again been named tops by GM.

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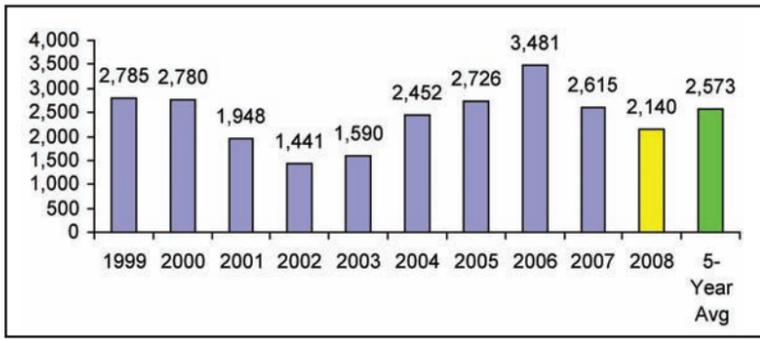
CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - Mar 08

OEM	This Month	Last Month
Freightliner	437	567
International	522	515
Kenworth	357	361
Mack	145	161
Peterbilt	229	287
Sterling	179	290
Volvo	178	229
Western Star	93	205
TOTALS	2,140	2,615

Historical Comparison - Mar 08 Sales



Motor Vehicle Production to Jan 08

	Total Prodn	For Export
International	4,444	3,729
Paccar	4,659	3,964
Sterling	17,156	14,563
TOTALS	26,259	22,256

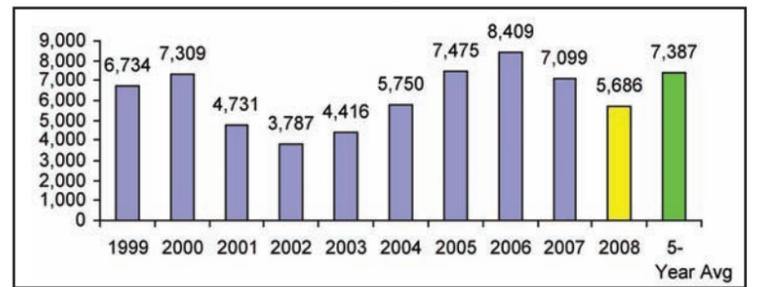
With the days of coping with parts and materials shortages and record demand for new trucks nothing but a memory, truck manufacturers instead now face continuing to bring their operations in line with the reduced sales. They also are preparing for the next jump in sales volumes as fleets and owner/operators respond to the next round of engine emissions standards in 2010 and the anticipated rebound of the North American economy.

Canadian Class 8 sales have started off quietly, coming in below last year's level and considerably below the record numbers posted in 2006 for each month in the first quarter. That's not surprising considering the impact of the pre-buy strategy many fleets used to avoid purchasing trucks with 2007 engines remains in play. Serious doubts about the economy on both sides of the border are also creating excess capacity. Still sales for March did climb above 2,000 units, avoiding the steep declines of 2001 to 2003.

Class 8 Sales (YTD Mar 08) by Province and OEM

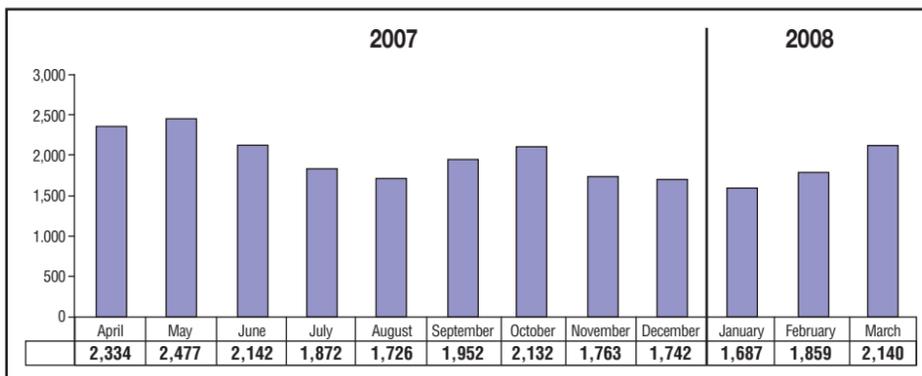
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	107	202	54	90	560	151	40	14	0	0	1,218
International	71	168	29	45	561	311	50	18	0	17	1,270
Kenworth	124	391	50	33	175	202	0	18	0	0	993
Mack	38	42	31	28	134	66	14	16	0	0	369
Peterbilt	71	207	73	40	106	86	68	6	0	0	657
Sterling	38	68	29	14	180	95	4	10	0	2	440
Volvo	28	116	19	52	192	73	15	19	0	1	515
Western Star	61	56	10	7	45	31	5	8	0	1	224
TOTALS	538	1,250	295	309	1,953	1,015	196	109	0	21	5,686

Historical Comparison - YTD



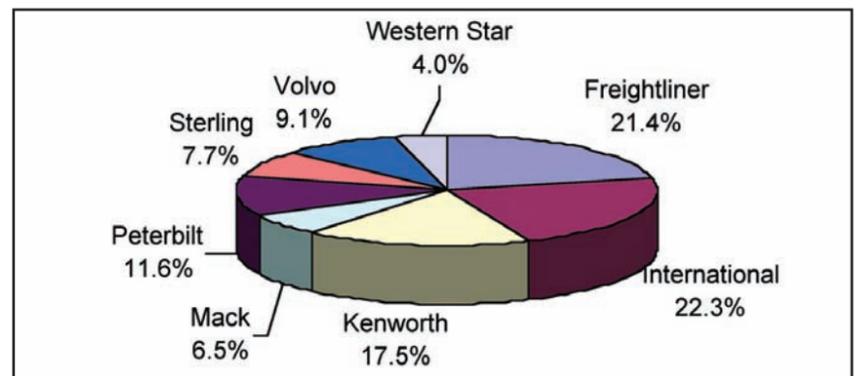
Class 8 sales after the first quarter are at 5,696, which is below last year's less-than-impressive total, way off the record sales posted in the first quarter of 2006 and almost 2,000 units off the five-year average. Currently, 2008 is shaping up as the fourth worst sales year in the past decade as the pre-buy strategy employed by many fleets combined with a slowing North American economy is giving fleets second thoughts about adding capacity.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Monthly total sales never climbed above the 3,000 mark last year, after doing so seven times in the previous record-setting year. It's highly unlikely to see such strong monthly figures this year either. The 2,140 Class 8 trucks sold in March mark the strongest sales so far this year and make for one of the best sales performances of the past 12-month period.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



Last year International wrestled the market share lead from perennial front runner Freightliner and International has jumped out of the starting blocks again with a lead in the first quarter, capturing about 22% of sales. Freightliner's share of sales has improved since the start of the year, however, keeping hard charging Kenworth in third place.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Speed limiters: Are they really necessary?

When the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) first announced its intent to usher in a law that would require the use of speed limiters, editorial director Lou Smyrlis and I couldn't agree on the merits of the idea. Here we are two and a half years later, and we are still unable to take a united stand on the subject.

Personally, I question the need for the proposed law. I question the time and resources that has been poured into this initiative. I don't consider speeding trucks to be a major problem on our highways, and as it's written, the law will only really affect speeding on 400-series highways. Dump trucks barreling through yellow lights on secondary highways, in my opinion a more serious threat to road safety, will not be affected.

I also question the potential benefits of the law. I think the environmental impact has been grossly overstated. They are based on the premise that most trucks are running at speeds well over 100 km/h. That's simply not the case anymore.

To be fair, there will be *some* fuel savings once the proposal becomes law. Slowing down obviously saves

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



fuel and even if the law causes a small percentage of the trucks on the road to slow down from speeds above 105 km/h, fuel and emissions savings will be achieved. I just don't think those savings will be as significant as the numbers being touted by OTA and other proponents of the law.

I will also concede that there may be a modest improvement in overall road safety. While I don't think the number of truck crashes will be noticeably reduced as a result of the legislation, there's a chance the severity of some crashes will be lessened. But it'll be nearly impossible to measure this.

While I don't think the speed limiter legislation is needed, and I question the real benefits of the proposed rule, I also don't subscribe to the doomsday scenarios that are feared by many owner/operators and others who continue

to resist the proposed law.

I don't think the rule will cause a mass exodus of drivers from the industry. I also don't think roads will become less safe.

I empathize with owner/operators and drivers who are convinced, rightly or wrongly, that their productivity and financial success will be threatened by the law.

There are a lot of drivers who feel this way, and their inability to make fundamental decisions on how to operate their own business is understandably frustrating.

When the OTA first floated its proposal back in 05, I admittedly didn't think it would get to this point.

But the OTA has pursued this doggedly and has seen it through. It looks like the law will become a reality in Ontario. There's still time to fight it in other jurisdictions.

Having said all that, it's not the first major regulatory change to

impact the industry and it most certainly won't be the last. Success is still possible in a post-speed limiter world.

If the law goes through as expected, it may be time to accept the change, however begrudgingly, alter your business operations as required and move forward. □

— James Menzies can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at jmenzies@trucknews.com.



Why speed limiters really are necessary

As you can tell from James Menzies' editorial running above mine, the divisiveness over Ontario's proposed speed limiter legislation extends to our newsroom. When the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) first announced its intent to push for a law that would require the use of speed limiters I, unlike James, did see the need for such legislation.

I still do.

The reasons speed limiters make a lot of sense to me have to do with both safety and the environment.

And specifically, the government and public's perception of our industry's willingness to take the lead in being a positive force on both those fronts.

According to the OTA, speed limiting trucks to 105 km/h will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 280 kilotonnes per year.

Now I haven't done the math

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



myself. I don't know if that figure is bang on or way overinflated. But let's just assume that it's overinflated and that greenhouse gas emissions will only be reduced by half that amount.

Keep in mind that transportation activities generate more than one quarter of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and, just as important, the transportation sector is the *fastest-growing* source of greenhouse gas emissions.

And that trucking is the largest emitter among the commercial modes.

Does it make sense for the industry to walk away from a plan that helps reduce greenhouse gas

emissions – to whatever degree – when that's a challenge all industries are expected to help in overcoming?

How does it look to politicians and the public when it's reported that truckers don't want to limit their speeds to five kilometres *above* the speed limit on our largest highways even though they know this will help the environment?

I realize I'm grossly oversimplifying the issue, but that's exactly how the public will see it.

And let's be honest with ourselves, although they may be a minority, there are still enough trucks out there zipping by at 130 km/h to give the industry a black eye it can do without.

Proponents of speed limiters also say it will improve highway safety.

Again, I'm not sure how much of an effect it would actually have because our highways are already

among the safest in North America. But if it can stop the crazies running at 130 km/h (and at the same time complaining about diesel prices), then why not have speed limiter legislation?

Would it be better for an accident to occur involving a truck operating at an excessive speed and to have the general media report the industry was opposed to policing its speed through speed limiters?

When issues become politicized and polarized, it's often at the cost of losing perspective.

I think it's important not to lose sight of the reality that trucking is just one industry among many competing for attention, funding and favourable treatment.

Its perception among government and the public as a good corporate citizen is not only important but will determine how it's dealt with in the future. □

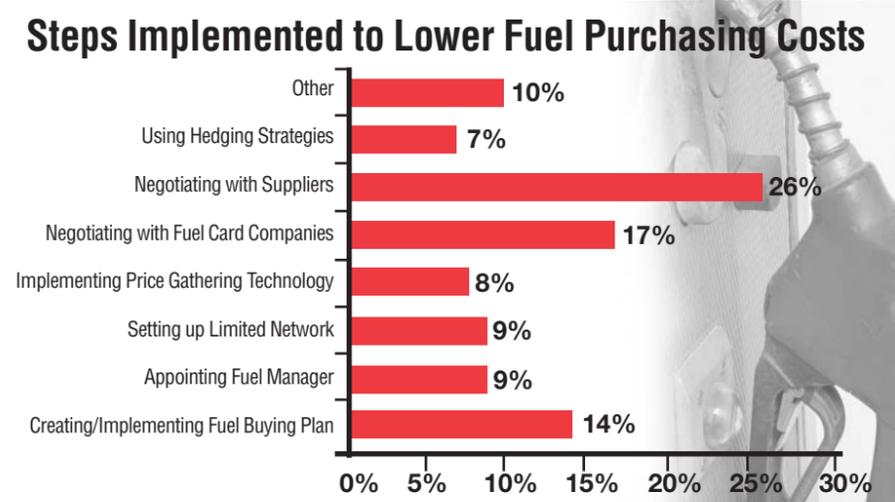
— Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@TransportationMedia.ca.

Did you know?

How fleets are dealing with fuel price volatility

Coping with continuing volatility in fuel pricing requires sound fuel purchasing strategies. Not only must the industry learn to reduce its fuel use and improve its efficiency now, it must consider long-term solutions to these issues. Research recently published by Eyefortransport details the measures implemented by North American carriers to lower their fuel costs and streamline their purchasing procedures.

Respondents were senior fleet executives from trucking and deliv-



ery fleets and from private fleets within retailers and manufacturers responsible for fuel purchasing, management and IT.

The research, released earlier this year, found that so far the more

“traditional” measures remain the most popular among fleets. More than a quarter of survey respondents cited “negotiating with suppliers” as their primary solution. The next most popular move, cited by 17% of

the managers included in the survey, cited “utilizing and negotiating with fuel card companies.” The third most common move by carriers dealing with skyrocketing fuel prices was “creating and implementing a fuel buying plan,” cited by 14% of the sample. More involved options such as “appointing a fuel manager,” “implementing the latest price gathering technology” and using “hedging strategies” were chosen by less than 10% of the sample.

About a fifth of the respondents were from for-hire TL fleets; 15% from for-hire LTL fleets; about a quarter from private fleets; 8% from postal, courier or express fleets, 3% from HazMat/tank carriers, and 3% from high-value carriers. □

City of Windsor threatens to block new border route

■ Continued from page 1

Transportation Ministry official who heads up the province's planning office on the new border access route. But officials from Ontario, the federal government, Michigan and Washington, also shouldn't underestimate one other player – the City of Windsor.

While virtually all industry groups lauded the latest version of the roughly 10-kilometre road unveiled in Windsor May 1, Windsor Mayor Eddie Francis called the so-called Windsor-Essex Parkway, a six-lane sunken freeway with 1.8 km of extended tunnels providing for more than 240 acres of parkland on top, not good enough and accused senior levels of government of building the road "on the cheap."

While government officials said the \$1.6 billion route (at \$168 million a kilometre) would be the most expensive roadway in Ontario's history, the mayor said the latest incarnation of the plan fails to address several proposals the city had earlier made through its so-called GreenLink plan for more extensive tunneling in a bid to protect adjacent neighbourhoods from noise and exhaust fumes from the international trucks that will use the freeway.

In fact, the mayor said, the length of seven of the overpasses will not change at all from DRIC's

"I don't see how anybody could not be completely pleased and ecstatic over this, and if someone isn't completely pleased and ecstatic than they're being extremely greedy."

– Gerry Fedchun, Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association

last proposal made in 2007. Of the other overpasses, one will be reduced by 50 metres, two gain 180 metres and a new tunnel will add 220 metres, for a total of 1,880 metres of tunnels, the equivalent of the lengths of three CN Towers. But the city's GreenLink – drawn up with assistance from world-renowned experts such as Sam Schwartz, the former traffic commissioner of New York City who now has an international traffic consulting firm, and Parsons Brinckerhoff, a world leader in tunnel design – would create substantially longer tunnels, some 1,220 and 1,020 metres in length, for a total of 3,830 metres.

DRIC officials said the plan is virtually complete and it expects to call tenders later this year for a construction start late in 2009. But DRIC officials also said an environmental assessment process continues and they are open to receiving citizen input "to help us refine" the concept even further.

That led mayor Francis in sever-

al interviews and on open line radio to say "the campaign continues" to oppose DRIC's plan. The city is waging a multi-media effort to have residents send postcards to senior government officials and push for a road that more resembles GreenLink. "No real change!" and "It's not too late to support GreenLink" proclaimed a double page ad in *The Windsor Star* two days after the DRIC news conference.

In front of the Holiday Inn where the DRIC announcement was made were some 150 construction workers, along with pieces of heavy equipment, there to back the DRIC proposal.

Jim Lyons, president of the Heavy Construction Association of Windsor, said his group had been given a "heads up" about the announcement and rallied the group of contractors and workers. But the mayor said the announcement essentially amounted to an "ultimatum" to paint the City of Windsor as "us against them, us

against industry."

Nevertheless, Francis said, he was representing the citizens of Windsor "to fix the mistake that was made 50 years ago" when a truck route was created through the heart of the city's west end on surface streets to the existing Ambassador Bridge, affecting residents' way of life and in particular their health.

He noted that medical authorities "have made the link" between truck emissions and health ailments like lung and heart disease. "We've got kids going to school with backpacks with air testing equipment in them," he said, referring to an ongoing survey of the region's air quality. Windsor is reputed to have one of the worst pollution problems in the country.

But DRIC's Wake suggested the greater use of tunnels by GreenLink would really not improve air quality. He said his study team went further and measured end-to-end tunneling and "found very, very minor improvements in air quality for a very small number of people immediately adjacent to the corridor."

While the city and senior governments are at odds on these issues, industry almost universally backs DRIC's position.

Lyons of the construction association said the plan does in fact incorporate some of the city's

It's a good time to evaluate border crossing procedures

By James Menzies

WINDSOR, Ont. – For the first time since 9/11, there has been a 'leveling off' of new security programs at the border, presenting carriers with a good opportunity to evaluate and improve their border crossing procedures, according to Debbie Dent, director of compliance and Customs with the Panalpina Group.

She made the remarks during the second stop of the Driving for Profit seminar series, hosted by NAL Insurance and KRTS Transportation Specialists and sponsored by SelecTrucks.

"We are in a holding pattern," Dent said, of the seemingly constant influx of new border security programs that have been put in place since 9/11. "This is a prime time to look at how you're doing business and how you should be doing business (at the border). It's time to start taking challenges and turning them into opportunities."

For starters, Dent said carriers that are FAST-approved should be pressuring their customers to take part in the program.

While driver and carrier involvement in FAST has been high, there's still a reluctance among shippers to become FAST-approved, she noted.

"If one of those elements (driver/carrier/freight) is not there, you can't take advantage of that dedicated lane," she pointed out.

Dent also suggested carriers encourage their drivers to become FAST-approved, even if they

'Having a FAST card should be as important as having a clean CDL.'

Debbie Dent, Panalpina Group

themselves are not a FAST carrier.

"Having a FAST card should be as important as having a clean CDL," said Dent. "Insist on a driver being FAST-approved even if your carrier is not."

Dent pointed out that the FAST approval process is likely to unearth any skeletons a driver may be hiding in the closet.

Carriers must also develop contingency plans for drivers that lose their FAST card, Dent suggested. She recalled the story of one driver who 'forgot' to declare several bottles of booze he purchased at duty-free. That's an automatic three-year suspension of FAST privileges, she said.

"That's huge. Now you've got to find a way to defer that driver."

Dent also offered carriers some tips on how to survive a Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) audit. She suggested pulling 10 random files and conducting a self-audit to get an idea of whether or not your fleet is in compliance.

"Every day, we see and hear of carriers that have issues with their business records," said Dent.

She suggested checking to ensure: Bills of Lading have been signed; Customs cargo documen-

tation has been stamped; lists of drivers and equipment are up to date; and that all items acquired outside Canada have been declared – including truck repairs.

Dent said one carrier incurred \$88,000 in fines because its drivers didn't know to declare tire purchases and emergency repairs conducted in the US.

There's a \$100 penalty for each repair or purchase that wasn't declared at the border, she pointed out. Carriers that uncover problems with their record-keeping processes may be able to file a "voluntary disclosure" with CBSA to buy themselves some more time to get their house in order.

Looking ahead, Dent said carriers should prepare for the roll-out of the Advanced Commercial Information (ACI) program – Canada's version of ACE.

The electronic pre-clearance program is already deployed in marine and air modes, and road transport is next, Dent said. It's expected ACI will be rolled out next summer and phased-in gradually right up until 2012.

Under the program e-Manifests will have to be submitted one hour before a Canadian-bound

load arrives at the border. Only carriers presenting under the Customs Self Assessment (CSA) release option will be exempted from the program.

Like ACE, the Canadian program will feature a Web portal – but it will not be the same portal used by ACE. Dent said carriers should embrace the new program.

"It's going to happen, we might as well accept it," she said, adding there's still time for fleets to offer feedback and suggestions.

To make the transition to ACI easier, she suggested companies submit their load information before they arrive within an hour of the border.

"Carriers have to start from the time they leave the shipper's location. Don't wait until they're one hour from the border," she advised.

She also urged them to accurately declare their arrival time. "Brokers use that information to manage their time. When I see a fax coming in from California that says it's going to be here in an hour, that doesn't help us."

Outside the implementation of ACI and changes to Partners in Protection (PIP) (see pg. 11), Dent said cross-border carriers can take some solace in the fact we appear to be in a holding pattern when it comes to new border security initiatives.

"Whatever they change now will be to improve efficiency and tweak systems," she predicted. □

GreenLink plan, by adding longer or new overpasses. He added that after years of study and various earlier proposals – which originally included a surface expressway – it's time to start construction.

"This is the most significant infrastructure proposal that we have ever seen in Ontario," he said. With construction activity down in Windsor owing to a slump in the auto industry and one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada, Lyons said "obviously we're thrilled" by the fact 12,000 jobs will be created over the four years of construction.

One of those construction workers in front of the Holiday Inn was Judy Saunders of Windsor, who drives for Di Cesare Trucking. She said the Parkway "should be a go because it's going to create a lot of work for everybody."

Noting she hauls asphalt, Saunders said not only will the access road create jobs but there will be work on new roads that cross it and other infrastructure such as the new park system that will be on top of the expressway.

The Ontario Trucking Association didn't issue an immediate endorsement, probably because senior officials were away on business. But Wake said the OTA has supported previous incarnations of the route.

"We certainly have backing from the OTA," he said.

Steve Ondejko, president of On-freight Logistics in Tecumseh, outside Windsor, with a fleet of 50

trucks shipping a variety of commodities, called the announcement, "welcome news to get this thing moving."

Ondejko said he appreciated the city's fight for a better roadway but "what's the best they possibly can (get) and what the economics are, are probably two different things" and suggested the city wasn't living in the real world. "Understand that that's the way the business world is today, it's tough out there, and you're not going to get everything you want, so understand and move on."

Gary Hillier, senior business analyst with Cole International – Ambassador Brokerage, said that he backed the Parkway.

"From what I've heard so far I'm in favour of it." He said a state-of-the-art access road and crossing will complement the electronic data filing implemented over the past half-decade. "This crossing has been on the cutting edge with the electronics, with all the new initiatives (by government Customs authorities) and the brokers have been behind it all the way."

Gerry Fedchun, president of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association, called the Parkway "great, absolutely wonderful" noting the large financial investment. "I don't see how anybody could not be completely pleased and ecstatic over this, and if someone isn't completely pleased and ecstatic than they're being extremely greedy." □

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Why trucks crash

FMCSA study yields some surprising findings on why trucks crash with cars

By James Menzies
WASHINGTON, D.C. – A study by the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has shed new light on the causes of truck/car collisions, and some of the findings are startling.

Conventional wisdom in trucking circles is that the driver of the

car is almost always to blame when there's an accident involving both a heavy-duty truck and a passenger vehicle. According to the FMCSA's Large Truck Crash Causation Study, however, the truck driver is to blame in 55% of all truck crashes while the trucker is

Continued on page 10 ■

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Driver error the most likely cause of truck crashes: FMCSA

■ Continued from page 9

at fault in 44% of two-vehicle crashes involving a truck and a passenger vehicle. The study arrived at those numbers after analyzing more than 1,000 truck/car collisions in the US between 2001 and 2003.

“There’s plenty of blame for large trucks and passenger vehicles in crashes between the two types of vehicles,” Ralph Craft, senior transportation specialist with the FMCSA said during a recent Webinar. “Trucks and passenger vehicles have plenty of mistakes to go around.”

To reach its conclusion, the FMCSA determined a ‘critical event’ in each crash – the event that made the crash unavoidable (ie. travelling too fast; other vehicle stopped in the lane; wrongfully driving through an intersection). It also assigned a ‘critical reason’ – the reason the crash took place (ie. inattention, weather, vehicle failure, medical condition). One vehicle in each crash was assigned blame for the critical reason.

Craft revealed that 87% of the time when the truck was assigned the critical reason, it was related to its driver’s actions.

The study also listed ‘associated factors’ which were coded to trucks involved in collisions with cars. In some cases, multiple associated factors were tallied for each accident. These are factors that may have been present when the crash occurred, but didn’t necessarily cause the accident. For instance, 27% of the trucks involved in accidents covered by the study had a brake problem – but that ranged from a single brake out of adjustment right through to total brake failure. Most often, the brake problem was not the cause of the accident, Craft explained. The number one factor that was present for both truck drivers and four-wheelers was the presence of legal, over-the-counter drugs, how-

ever the FMCSA did not find the presence of legal drugs to be a major issue either.

“We’re all on drugs these days,” joked Craft, adding the legal drugs were rarely to blame for the accident.

The FMCSA conducted a ‘relevant risk analysis’ to find out which factors were most often to blame for the accident.

Researchers developed a formula to determine which factors were most often directly linked to the cause of the crash. The result was a list of ‘causative factors’ – the most dangerous factors and the most likely to cause an accident.

For truckers, overweight loads proved to be the most dangerous item on the list.

“When a truck is overweight, it makes them more likely to roll over and more unstable. That shows up as the number one causative factor for trucks,”

Craft said.

In addition to overweight loads, brake failure proved to be the only other equipment-related causative factor in the top 10 – all others were laid at the hands of the driver. They included: making an illegal maneuver; inadequate surveillance; travelling too fast; inattention; following too closely; misjudging speed or distance; failing to notice a required stop; and being distracted by external factors.

The FMCSA’s major finding was that most causative factors are the driver’s responsibility. Surprisingly, the study also found that truck drivers are “in better physical shape for driving than the general driving population.”

While that revelation may raise some eyebrows, Craft pointed out most professional drivers are getting more sleep than regular motorists and they are less likely to be

taking illegal drugs or drinking alcohol. The study also concluded that truck drivers are more likely to make mistakes than four-wheelers, but Craft added “they are very skilled drivers but they are driving a very large vehicle which is more difficult to control and not as maneuverable.”

The most alarming finding, however, was that eight of the top 10 causative factors in truck/car collisions were driver-related. The FMCSA has set out to find solutions to the problem, but so far that is proving to be a challenge, Craft admitted.

“It’s very difficult to outlaw these (problems). Can we make it a crime if they don’t pay attention or they misjudge somebody else’s speed? A lot of these things seem to be beyond the ability of Congress to legislate or FMCSA to regulate,” he said.

“We may need more research into basic human behaviour to learn how to convince human beings how to be safe and do safe things, above and beyond what we can legislate.”

The Administration came to the conclusion that more focus must be placed on driver training. The FMCSA is likely to place a greater emphasis on driver safety during compliance reviews and may even develop a rating system for drivers.

“We have a system that rates every motor carrier in the country and gives them a score – we need to develop that kind of system to rate drivers,” Craft suggested. He also said more research into human behaviour is required.

“We don’t know a lot about the ability of the brain to concentrate for hours on end on a particular task,” said Craft.

Finally, he said the FMCSA and other enforcement agencies should focus their equipment-related inspection efforts on areas that pose the highest risks, such as brakes, lighting and tires. □

Inside the Numbers

The following are some of the more interesting findings from the FMCSA’s Large Truck Crash Causation Study:

- Each year in the US, there are 50,000 accidents involving a truck and a single passenger vehicle that result in an injury or fatality (about 3,000 are fatal);
- Critical events (an event that makes the crash unavoidable) involved in truck crashes include: Running out of travel lane (24%); other vehicle stopped in lane (24%); crossing through an intersection (12%); travelling too fast (7%); and travelling the same direction while slowing (10%);
- The critical reason (the reason for the event, assigned to one vehicle in each collision) was the fault of the truck driver in 55% of all truck accidents included in the study and 44% of two-vehicle accidents including one truck and one passenger vehicle;
- 87% of the time a truck is assigned the critical reason, it’s driver-related;
- Truck equipment failures are to blame for just 8% of accidents in which the truck was assigned the critical reason;
- Driver fatigue was identified as a factor with the motorist 15% of the time there was a car/truck collision; the trucker was found to be fatigued in only 7% of these accidents;
- Illegal drugs were involved 7% of the time with the car driver and only 0.4% of the time among truckers involved in the collisions;
- Alcohol was a factor 9% of the time a motorist was involved in a car/truck collision; alcohol was found to be an issue with the trucker in only 0.3% of the accidents. □

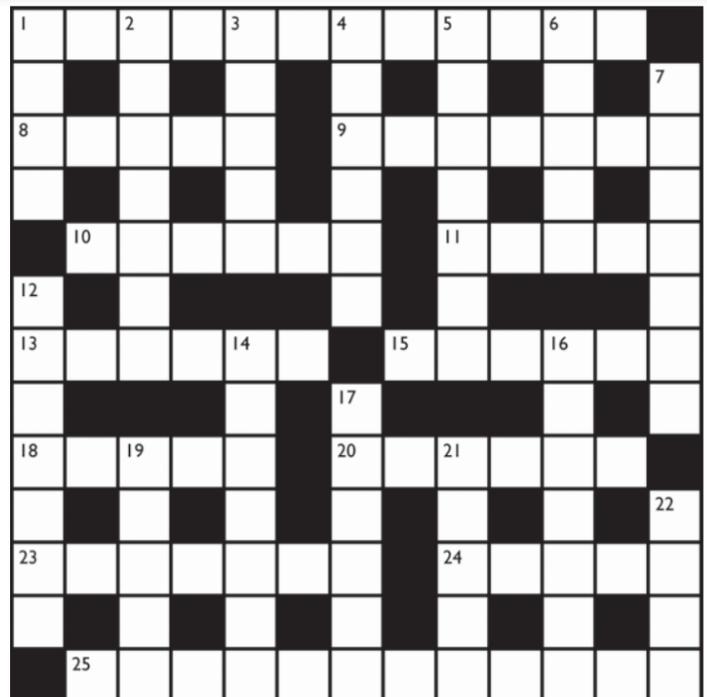
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Unmarked police cars (5,8)
8. Circular-rubber sealing device (1,4)
9. Interstate-patrolling state cop
10. “Dukes of Hazzard” tow-truck driver
11. Ohio city called The Rubber
13. See “The Last Frontier” plates here
15. Trip with frequent stops, ____ run
18. Adjusted the headlights
20. Truck-tire type
23. City known as Windy
24. “Nothing runs like a ____,” ad slogan
25. Truck-stop dessert offerings
26. Word on Manitoba plates

Down

1. Seasonal truck equipment in the Snowbelt
2. Home of “Grand Canyon State” plates
3. Dark time
4. Disc-brake-system components
5. Backyard BBQ fuel
6. A bunk-heater brand
7. Dodge- and Freightliner-branded cargo van
12. Kojak with a Kodak, in other words (5,3)
14. Medium-duty Chevrolet model
16. One-way-out street (4,3)
17. Truck line headquartered in Moncton
19. State with “Vacationland” plates
21. Brand on '70s Bighorn conventional
22. The V in truck-for-sale ad’s VGC



Answers on page 73

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Introducing the new PIP

Changes on the way as security program is aligned with C-TPAT

By James Menzies

WINDSOR, Ont. – The Partners in Protection (PIP) border security program is being refined to bring it in line with its US equivalent, the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) program.

Ron Flowers, intelligence officer with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) was on-hand at a recent Driving for Profit seminar (hosted by KRTS Transportation Specialists and NAL Insurance and sponsored by SelecTrucks) to offer some suggestions on how carriers can prepare for the impending changes.

The changes, which will align PIP with C-TPAT and provide mutual recognition on both sides of the border, will be implemented in the coming months, with applications to the revamped program accepted beginning June 30. The goal is to secure the supply chain and prevent the use of trucks in transporting drugs, weapons, tools of terrorism and dirty money.

“Big dope comes in big trucks,” Flowers told the audience, noting that drug busts at the border are on the rise. “In my 23 years (with

CBSA), I’ve never seen as many cocaine seizures as we have over the last few years.”

He said recent drug busts at the border included a 230 kg shipment that was housed in the cab of a truck.

“You don’t put that in a Neon, you put it in a tractor-trailer.”

There’s an active drug trade between Canada and the US, which mostly sees marijuana and ecstasy headed south and cocaine, guns and currency returning to Canada. Usually, smugglers transport the contraband inside false walls or trailer floors, Flowers said.

Upgrades to PIP will involve equipping inspection officers with new tools to detect illegal shipments. They will also heighten the qualification requirements for participating carriers and members can be suspended from the program if their trucks are involved in seizures.

One of the goals of the new program is to minimize the driver’s involvement with the load. Flowers said the shipper should be sealing the trailer and new seal standards are on the way.

Tips for PIP:

So you want to take part in the revamped Partners in Protection (PIP) program? Here are some tips from Ron Flowers, intelligence officer with Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) on how to – and *not* to – go about gaining acceptance into the program:

Don’t lie on the application form: “If you say you have security cameras when you don’t, that would be a lie,” said Flowers. “If you’re looking at getting cameras down the road, say that. It’s not a deal-breaker.” Flowers said all applicants must undergo a site visit prior to their admission into the program, and when the details on the application form prove to be false, “I don’t get a warm, fuzzy feeling.”

The sign says: Flowers said fleets should post signs around their facility that show ownership. “I’m a big believer in signs,” he said. Flowers has been known to visit carriers’ yards, walk right in and poke around their various trailers if there was no sign warning against doing so. In one instance, he walked right into a trailer and had access to a load of Corvette engines. The keys to the trucks in the yard were also easily accessible.

Secure the premises: Flowers said a carrier’s facility “should not be made of straw.” There should be a communication system in place so a driver can call for help in the event of an emergency. The yard should have adequate lighting and security. Fencing is not required, but it’s suggested. Traffic in and out of the facility should be monitored and there should be some sort of visitor’s log, which requires visitors to present identification. Cameras should be placed at key locations, including inside the foyer.

Review security: “If I can wander right in there off the street, so can anybody else,” Flowers pointed out. “How easy is it for someone to walk in, grab your most important asset and walk out?” The security expert said fleet managers should put themselves into the mind of a criminal. “Try to think like a bad guy.” Security reviews should be scheduled regularly, he said.

Trim the trees: Fences don’t do any good if there is overgrown brush around the perimeter, Flowers said. He pointed out a determined criminal will not hesitate to climb an overgrown tree and hop over the fence to gain entry to the yard.

Encourage drivers to speak out: Flowers said drivers are a great resource for enforcement agencies, because “They see a lot, they hear a lot and sometimes they talk a lot.” He said fleets should encourage their drivers to report suspicious activity. When a driver provides CBSA with a tip, it is noted on the carrier’s file, which is a good thing. “If I get a tip, that carrier’s file gets a check mark that shows they are still active in the program.” □

“We don’t want the drivers putting the seals on,” he said. “Ninety per cent of the time there’s drugs, it’s because the driver put them there.”

Flowers said shippers should inspect the trailer for false bottoms and walls and should use a high-tech seal to secure the load. The new seal requirement is still being developed for PIP (one already exists under C-TPAT).

Under the new program, company owners and directors will be required to provide their date of birth for potential background checks.

“We want to know if the owner of ABC Company used to be the president of the Hell’s Angels,” said Flowers.

Despite the increased scrutiny PIP members will face, there are benefits, stressed Flowers. Under the new program, participating carriers will be identifiable at the

border, meaning they should face less scrutiny.

“Right now, there’s no mechanism in place to tell our officers if you’re approved,” he pointed out. Members of the new PIP program will also qualify for C-TPAT more easily, and will require only one site visit for both programs once harmonization is achieved.

Also, members of PIP will be back in business sooner in the event of another terrorist attack. And members of PIP (and Customs Self Assessment) will automatically qualify for the FAST program.

Carriers interested in taking part in the revised PIP program should begin their preparations now, Flowers advised.

“Start the application process sooner than later, because come June, it’s going to be crazy,” he said. □

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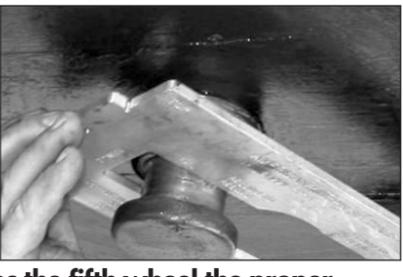

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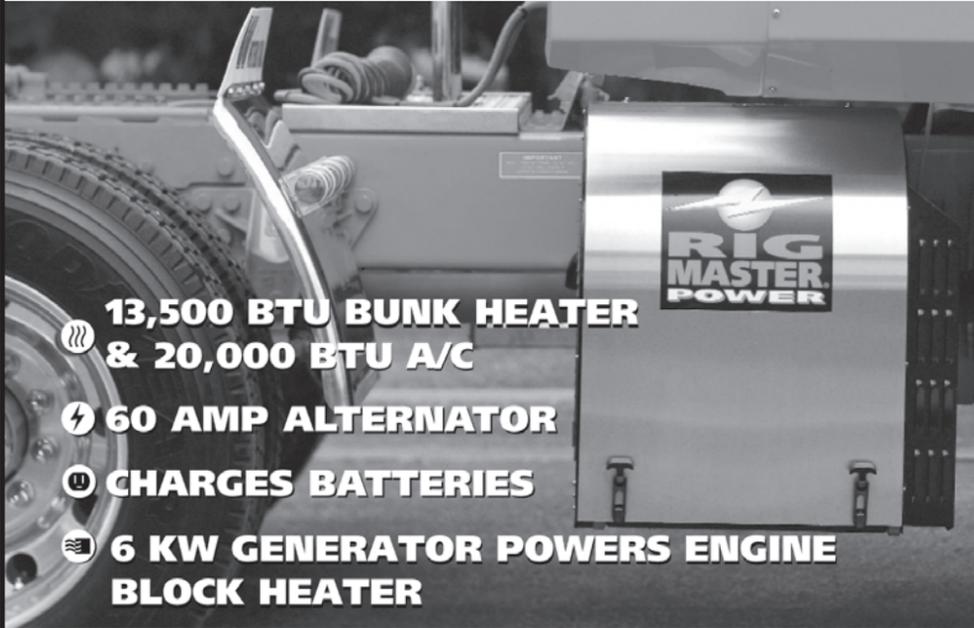
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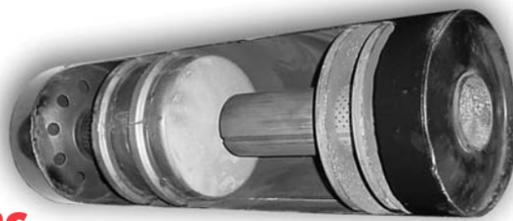
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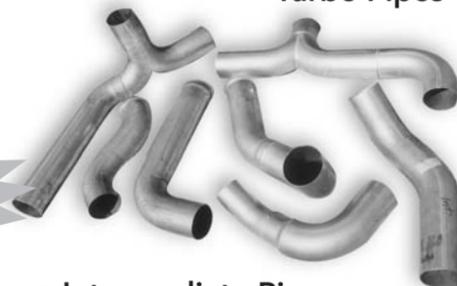
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BORDER

US truck tonnage tightens sharply in March

ARLINGTON, Va. – US truck tonnage has continued its pattern of one step forward, two steps back, with the latest figures showing a 3.3% decline in March.

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) truck tonnage index showed its lowest levels since November, 2007 in March.

Tonnage contracted 0.2% compared to March, 2007 – the first time there's been a year-over-year decrease in the index since October, 2007.

ATA chief economist Bob Costello had warned fleets not to be overly-optimistic about higher than expected tonnage numbers posted late last year and early this year.

"I've been concerned that the recent run-up in tonnage might not be sustainable, and clearly March's figures confirmed that apprehension," he said, pointing out the 3.3% drop was the largest month-to-month contraction since August, 2006.

"Truck tonnage often leads both recoveries and recessions, and the latest contraction suggests the economy and trucking are not out of the woods yet," Costello added.

"Surging diesel and gasoline prices are weighing heavily on consumers, and since trucks haul virtually all consumer goods at some point in the supply chain, the industry is going to be significantly impacted both directly through higher diesel prices and indirectly through lower freight volumes." □

NAFTA surface trade soars in February

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Amid speculation about the future of NAFTA, the latest surface trade figures were released in May, showing a 16.3% jump in February compared to the same month last year.

February's figures were also up 6.5% compared to January.

The final NAFTA surface trade figures totaled US\$69.4 billion, according to the US Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

US-Canada surface trade totaled US\$45 billion in February, up 18.1% compared to February 07. The value of exports trucked from Canada to the US was up 7.1% while the value of goods moving by truck from the US to Canada increased 10.2% compared to last year.

Most trade occurred between Canada and the state of Michigan – about US\$6.5 billion, to be exact.

To view all the figures, visit: www.dot.gov/affairs/bts2008.htm. □

US law would ensure O/Os get fuel surcharge

WASHINGTON, D.C. – New legislation put forth recently by two US Senators would require US trucking companies to pay 100% of the fuel surcharge they collect to an owner/operator, or whoever actually

pays for the fuel.

The move has garnered praise from the Owner-Operators' Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA). Senators Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) and Sherrod

Brown (D-Ohio) proposed the 'Truthful Reliable Understanding of Consumer Costs' Act.

"This Bill will go a long way toward helping truckers survive the brutal cost of fuel," responded Todd Spencer, executive vice-president of OOIDA. "And it will provide

needed assurance to shippers and ultimately consumers that higher shipping costs are actually because of higher fuel prices and not gouging by greedy middlemen."

In Canada, there is no legislation requiring carriers to pass 100% of the surcharge on to O/Os. □

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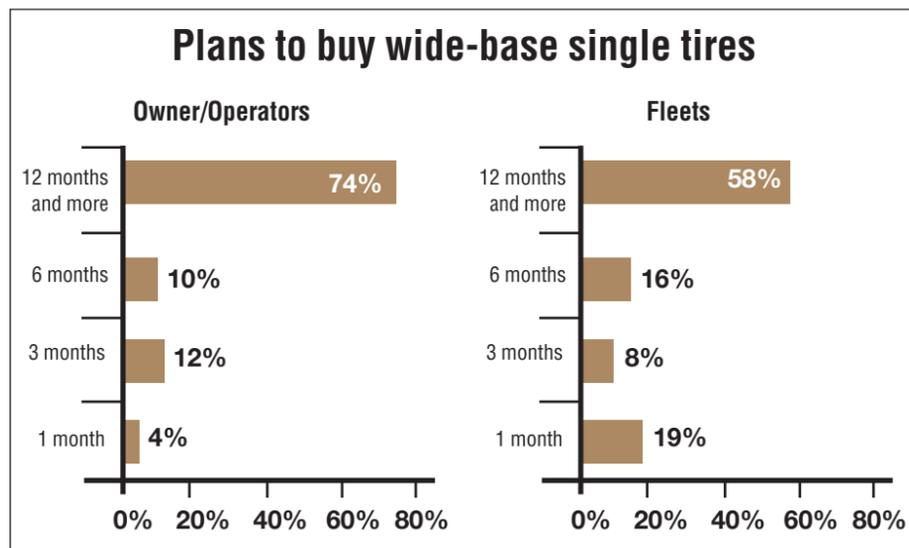
Increased weights coming for super-single tires in Canada

OTTAWA, Ont. – The Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety has approved several amendments to the MOU on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions, including increased weight limits for new generation wide-base single tires.

The changes are expected to come into effect by July 1, 2008, according to John Pearson, secretary, Task Force on VWD Policy.

The Council states in a release that while research shows the new wide-base single tire designs offer improvements in fuel-efficiency, vehicle roll stability and reduced tare weight as well as reduced impacts on pavement compared to the older wide single tires, they still appear to have “slightly higher impacts than the dual tire configuration they replace if used at dual tire loads.”

So to improve the consistency of



READY TO BUY?: The above figures show a readiness to invest in super-single tires – eventually.
Source: Transportation Media Research, 2007

weight limits applicable to use of these tires across Canada, while also protecting highway infrastruc-

ture, the national standards for weight limits on single and tandem axle groups are being increased to

the federal limits currently applicable in the US.

“According to research, this change should not have detrimental impacts on pavements in Canada, as the impacts associated with the wide single tires at the new weight limits would be no more than the impacts associated with conventional dual tire axles at their current weight limits,” the Council states.

The MOU has been amended to include the following clause that applies to axles except steering axles: Its axle loads, when an axle is fitted with two single tires, each of which has a width of 445 mm or greater, do not exceed 7,700 kg for single axles and 15,400 kg for tandem axle groups.

Three jurisdictions have registered exceptions in the MOU to the higher weight limit for single tires:

- The Northwest Territories will retain a weight limit of 3,000 kg for any single tire except on steering axles;

- In New Brunswick the weight on a single tire (except on steering axles) having a minimum width of 445 mm cannot exceed 3,080 kg on highways rated as Class 3 – Gross Vehicle Weights up to 50,000 kg and Class 4 – Gross Vehicle Weights up to 43,500 kg. The weight on a single tire (except on steering axles) having a width of less than 445 mm cannot exceed 3,000 kg on all New Brunswick highways;

- In Newfoundland and Labrador the weight on a single tire (except on steering axles) cannot exceed 3,000 kg on secondary roads within the designated route network.

Replacing dual tires with the new generation single tires on existing trailers can result in a violation of the minimum track width requirement stipulated in the MOU (2.5 m), according to the Council.

It adds that industry representatives indicate that use of axle spacers or rims with large offsets can compensate for the dimensional deficiency, but can create other problems due to higher stresses in axle and wheel bearing. (This situation can be avoided with the purchase of new trailers, as longer axles can be fitted on the trailer when single tires are to be used).

“To avoid creating potentially unsafe situations, the minimum track width requirement has been relaxed for carriers who wish to retrofit existing trailers with new wide-base single tires,” the Council states.

The MOU has been amended to include the following clauses:

- It is understood that the minimum track width for trailer axles fitted with single tires must be no less than 2.3 m for trailers built in 2007 or earlier;

- It is further understood that the minimum track width for all axles on trailers built in 2008 or later must be no less than 2.5 m.

Other changes included in the MOU include accommodation of aerodynamic devices installed on the rear of trucks and trailers and standardization of width limit allowances for auxiliary equipment. □

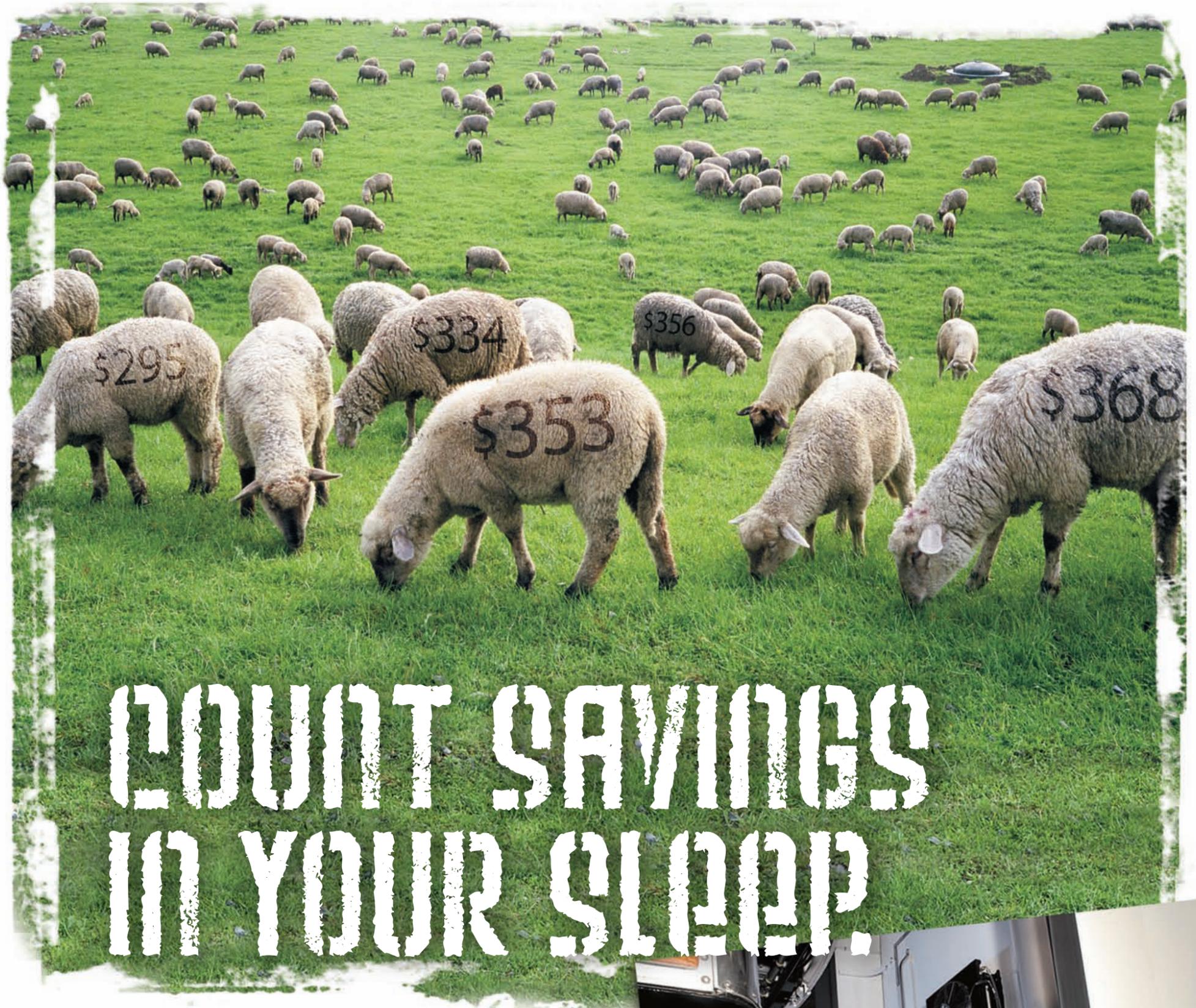


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The weight of the law: Part 1

A bad night at the scales proves disastrous for Maritime trucker

By Julia Kuzeljevich
SALISBURY, N.B. – The evening of June 7, 2006 was one that changed truck driver Robert Austin's life. It's a cautionary tale for all drivers.

It's a tale about how important the driving profession is regarded in the regulatory arena, but also how fragile a trucker's livelihood can become, as it did for Austin after one really bad night behind the wheel of his vehicle.

The events of June 7

It started innocently enough. On the 7th of June 2006, on Route #2 near the town of Salisbury, New

Brunswick, truck driver Robert Austin passed the westbound weigh-in-motion scales stationed on the route.

A company driver with 27 years of experience, Austin had received, nearly two months prior on Apr. 21, a safe driving award from his company for one full year of accident-free driving.

As Austin passed the scales, New Brunswick Department of Safety Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officer (CVEO) Annette Kinder reported to her colleague Kevin Perry that a vehicle had been alerted by a lit sign to enter the scales and was by-

passing. Perry, as he noted in his occurrence and investigation report, obtained by *Truck News*, went outside and observed a single tractor-trailer unit travelling westbound on Route #2.

The unit had been preceded by a small pick-up truck with a load of furniture.

Perry went with his marked patrol vehicle and proceeded to intercept the vehicle before it reached the Salisbury exit. Perry said he activated his lights and stayed out on the left side of the lane to ensure that the tractor-trailer driver could see that he wanted him to stop.

The Department of Public Safety was in the middle of a Road Check blitz during the time of Austin's travels through the area, and a greater percentage of

vehicles was being called to the scales.

Perry said the driver continued along the highway and then signaled before the off-ramp to Salisbury.

Perry said he thought that the driver was going to pull over on the ramp but he again failed to stop and only stopped at the stop sign. After a brief pause, the driver made a right turn and continued along the road until he reached the driveway to the fuel pumps for tractor-trailer units. The driver, said Perry, only stopped when he had pulled up to the pumps.

In an interview with *Truck News*, the way that Austin describes it, on approach to the Salisbury scales on Route #2, in the direction he was heading, the signs indicating the scales were on one side of the highway only.

"If you're from Ontario and you pass a line of trucks you will miss the indication. It's easy to miss."

Nevertheless, Austin said he knew the procedure well. "The lights flash, you go in. They didn't flash when I went by."

Instead, he believed that the lights were not flashing for him, but for the pick-up in front of him.

Austin added that upon seeing Perry's patrol vehicle, he did intend to stop, putting his blinkers on, but did not feel safe stopping on the grade, at night, on pavement that was somewhat wet, and proceeded to where he felt safe to stop, at the fuel pumps of a nearby filling station off the Salisbury exit. At the time, he didn't think it was an issue that he'd proceeded to that point before stopping.

CVEO Perry, meanwhile, approached Austin and explained that he had failed to report when signaled. At this, he noted, Austin "became upset and stated that the lights were not for him and that they had come on for the pick-up in front of him."

Perry explained about the violation for failing to stop when signaled by the van lights. He ordered Austin's vehicle to return to the eastbound scale site so that inspection and massing of the vehicle could take place.

Perry said Austin refused, was agitated and would not listen to his explanations.

"When Austin brushed past me and bumped me, he turned and told me to keep (my) hands off him. I then returned to my vehicle and requested from CVEO Annette Kinder that the RCMP or a second CVE unit attend the scene," wrote Perry.

A second CVE unit arrived and parked in front of Austin's unit.

Perry then asked Austin again to move his vehicle to the scales and Perry stated that Austin refused and said he did not have to report.

Two other CVE officers started to talk to Austin and Perry said he moved to the rear of the tractor-trailer unit to try to de-escalate the situation.

He returned to the front of the tractor and that's when the situation worsened.

Perry said he tried to explain

Continued on page 18 ■

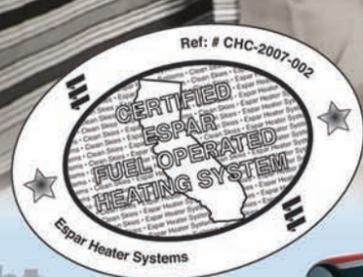


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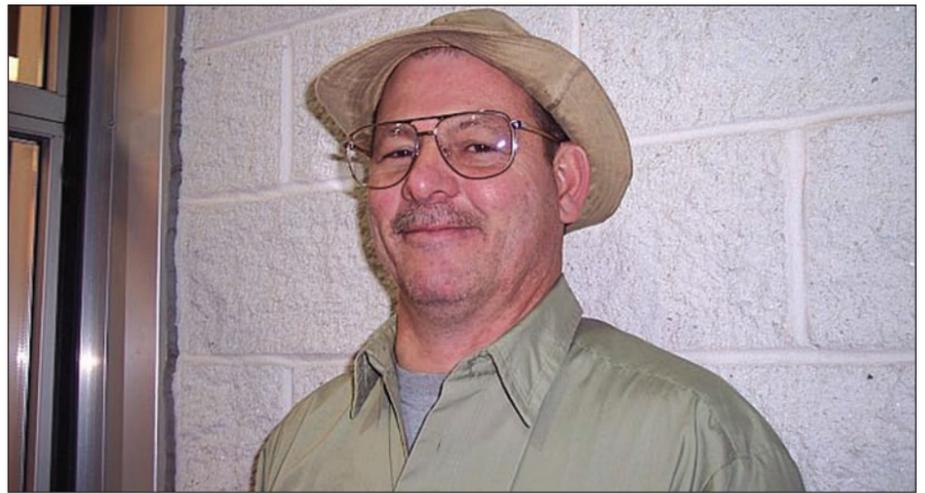
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EAST



A CAUTIONARY TALE: Robert Austin hopes others learn from his experience.

Things go from bad to worse

■ Continued from page 16

Austin's alleged violations.

"He brushed past me and struck my hand which I had raised in front of me. Austin then accused me of assault and said I had as-

saulted him three times."

Austin was the one who eventually called in the RCMP, because he said he felt threatened.

At some point, the dispatchers at Austin's company were contacted in order that they try to communicate with Austin about what he would be required to do. Before they could do so, however, Austin agreed to return to the eastbound scales for massing.

Still upset, he also contacted his operations manager and explained the situation in a voice-mail. Following the event and his communication, the next day Austin received a letter of instant dismissal.

Given that a civil suit remains pending, *Truck News* has not named the company Austin drove for at the time of the incident.

But in the letter to Austin, his former company's operations manager noted that Austin's actions were against company policy and procedure and in violation of the Motor Vehicle Act, and grounds for dismissal.

He also said that Austin had essentially admitted to the infractions in a voice-mail.

In one fell swoop, Austin lost a job that was paying him over \$50,000 a year, as well as his medical, dental and other benefits.

He thought, somehow, he'd have more of an opportunity to explain what was, for him, a gross misunderstanding that would only get worse.

Calls from *Truck News* to Austin's former operations manager (to discuss the June 7, 2006 incident) were not returned, but a media rep from Austin's former employer told *Truck News* that contracts with company drivers and owner/operators remain confidential and are set with an understanding of certain professional codes of conduct.

In the event that there are employee issues, there is a dispute resolution process available to employees through Human Resources or broker relations, she added.

But Austin believed he didn't have a chance with his company while the New Brunswick Department of Safety was against him. Austin further believed that the company was advised by the government to terminate him. □

– Next month's issue will feature the conclusion of this story.

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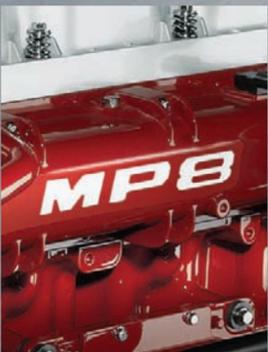
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Road Safety Year lives up to its name

By Carroll McCormick
MONTREAL, Que. – The results are in on the number of highway and off-road accidents last year, declared Road Safety Year by Transports Quebec. The Societe de l'assurance automobile du Quebec (SAAQ) reports that the total number of vehicle accidents with injuries and fatalities dropped by 5%, compared to 2006. Transport trucks beat the average, with a total reduction in injuries of 7.6% over 2006.

There were 47,940 accidents involving injuries and fatalities for all types of vehicles last year, compared to 50,484 in 2006. Since 2001, such accidents peaked at 52,188 in 2005. Transport trucks accounted for 726 of them last year, a decrease of 7.6% over the 786 transport truck accidents in 2006. The worst year for transport trucks since 2001 was 2005,

with 859 accidents involving injuries and fatalities.

Having peaked at 26 in 2005, there were only 10 fatal transport truck accidents in 2007, a decrease of 41.2% from the 17 in 2006. By comparison there was a 20.1% drop in fatal car accidents between 2006 and 2007.

There were 50 serious heavy truck accidents last year, a reduction of 20.6% over the 63 in 2006; the worst year since 2001 was 2004, with 84. Cars fared better, with a 26.8% drop between 2006 and 2007.

There were 666 heavy truck accidents with light injuries in 2006, a 5.7% drop over the 706 reported in 2005. The worst year since 2001 was 2005, with 749. Cars managed a 5.4% drop between 2006 and 2007.

Transports Quebec is continuing its emphasis on road safety this year. Several pieces of new legislation,

such as the Apr. 1 ban on the use of handheld cell phones, are intended to help. Quebec also introduced tougher penalties for excessive speeding on Apr. 1. SAAQ reports that speeding kills 250 people a year and injures 11,000 more.

SAAQ defines three categories of excessive speeding: Exceeding the speed limit in a 60 km/h or less zone by 40 km/h; exceeding the speed limit in a 60 km/h to 90 km/h zone by more than 50 km/h and; exceeding the speed limit in a 100 km/h zone by more than 60 km/h.

SAAQ has doubled the fines and the number of demerit points for the first, second and third excessive speeding offences. For example, drivers caught going 95 km/h in a 50 km/h zone would be fined \$520 and lose six demerit points. Going 145 km/h in a 90 km/h zone would cost

\$710 and 10 demerit points. Doing 180 km/h in a 100 km/h zone would cost \$1,240 and 14 demerit points.

If, within 10 years of having been convicted of excessive speeding a recalcitrant driver gets caught again, the number of demerit points will remain doubled but the fine will triple.

Sometime in the next few months the government will declare in force additional penalties for excessive speeding: There will be an immediate seven-day driver's licence suspension for a first offence. Somewhat vaguer is a promise to immediately suspend a speeder's driver's licence for 30 or 60 days for excessive speeding within 10 years of having been convicted some unspecified number of times before. The speeder's vehicle would also immediately be seized and impounded for 30 days.

Drinking and driving was also supposed to be rewarded with tougher penalties: a 90-day suspension instead of the current 60, with repeat offenders having their vehicles impounded for 30 days.

Word from SAAQ is that it has still not set up its planned 15 photo radar sites and the government has not yet declared in force the 105 km/h speed limiter legislation for trucks, part of an Apr. 1 law. The Transport Commission, as part of its 2006-2009 strategic plan, wants to develop a process for evaluating the behaviour of truck drivers and owners by 2009. □

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INTELLIGENT BORDER: Electronic signboards inform a driver to report in for inspection.

Border crossing expansion announced

LACOLLE, Que. – The federal government has announced it will spend \$10 million to expand the Canada Border Services Agency facilities at the Lacolle-Champlain border crossing.

Details are still sketchy, as construction on the project will not even begin until 2010 or 2011, with a 24- to 30-month construction time, but the goal is to improve the processing and throughput of commercial trucks and buses.

On a related note, SAAQ is still in shakedown mode for its new truck inspection station just north of Lacolle. It uses Intelligent Transportation Systems technology to automatically capture each truck's plate number, call up the carrier dossier and pick up its transponder ID. Trucks also cross over a Weigh-in-Motion scale, and more equipment measures truck height, axle spacing and determines each truck's weight category.

Trucks that inspectors determine need a hands-on inspection are notified by electronic signboards, which are currently functioning, to swing in to the station. □

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SAME ROADS – NEW CHALLENGES

October 1 & 2, 2008

Westin Bristol Place Hotel, 950 Dixon Rd., Toronto, ON

Event:	Hosted by Natural Resources Canada's ecoENERGY for Fleets (FleetSmart) and the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) SmartWay Transport Partnership.
Purpose:	Same Roads – New Challenges - This forum will provide an opportunity for transportation industry professionals to explore and discover practical solutions to today's challenge to go GREEN ; managing the issue of energy efficiency in today's on-road fleets.
The Forum Program:	Focusing on the Return on Investment; developing education, training, and technologies for success in a GREEN world. Day 1: Focus will be on calculating the return on investment in corporate operations, driver training and technologies. Day 2: Focus will be on building a GREEN plan, overcoming barriers, and managing, measuring and encouraging success. Industry experts will share their stories and show delegates how to do their own calculations.
Target Audience:	This forum is critical to Fleet Executives and Managers, Supervisors, Driver Trainers, Labour Representatives, Training Schools, Carriers and Shippers, Government Officials and consultants serving the on-road transportation industry. This is a fantastic opportunity for the trucking, bus, transit, municipal, utility and urban fleet employees to network.
Where:	Westin Bristol Place Hotel, 950 Dixon Rd., Toronto, Ontario, M9W 5N4 Tel: (416) 675-9444 or 1-800-837-5184 Room Rates: \$155.00 Reference: FleetSmart Forum
When:	September 30, 2008 (Registration only) October 1 & 2, 2008.
Registration:	Delegate fees (All prices quoted are Cdn. + GST): Early bird special \$525.00 per person for registrations prior to August 29th All sessions thereafter \$595.00 Single day purchases are also available at \$325.00 Details and registration forms are available by contacting Leah Quelch: Email: leah.quelch@antian.ca Phone: 613-233-6464 Toll free: 1-888-758-1122 Web: Antian.ca
Our Partners:	The Canadian Trucking Alliance, The Canadian Urban Transit Association, The Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada, The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, Motor Coach Canada, FP Solutions Inc and the U.S. EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership.



Big names to headline Fergus Truck Show

FERGUS, Ont. – The Fergus Truck Show has announced its entertainment lineup for this year's show, with some very recognizable names taking to the stage over the course of the event. On Friday July 25, April Wine, Kim Mitchell and David Wilcox will all perform. *Truck News* will also take to the stage Friday, to present its annual Owner/Operator of the Year Award.

The Dixie Flyers and Jessie Farrell will add a bluegrass and country flavour to the festivities on the afternoon of Saturday, July 26.

On Saturday evening, Castrol Lubricants presents Juno-nominated country music star Gord Bamford, whose hit 'Stayed til Two' has been played frequently on the airwaves. Also performing Saturday night is well-known country musician Aaron Pritchett, best known for his single 'Hold my Beer.'

Alex J. Robinson and Aaron Lines will take to the stage on Sunday. Of course, the real stars of the Fergus Truck Show will be the trucks themselves. Show organizers say more than 200 competitors will participate in the tractor pull, which pits Canadians against Americans. More than \$75,000 in prizes is up for grabs during the tractor pull. There will also be a demolition derby at this year's show, featuring vehicles in five different classes. It will be held on Sunday afternoon.

Another highlight will naturally be the Show and Shine, which is expected to feature more than 500 trucks. For more info, visit www.fergustruckshow.com or call 519-843-3412. □

New shows announced for Indian truckers

BRAMPTON, Ont. – The Indian Trucking Association will be hosting its first truck show Aug. 16. The Indian Truck Show will take place from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Powerade Centre in Brampton.

The event is set to showcase the tastes and sounds of Punjab, with exotic food service and entertainment from traditional Punjabi Bhangra dancers. The show will also provide the networking opportunities for industry professionals and host free trucking-related seminars throughout the day.

For more information call 905-672-1374 or visit www.indiantruckshow.com.

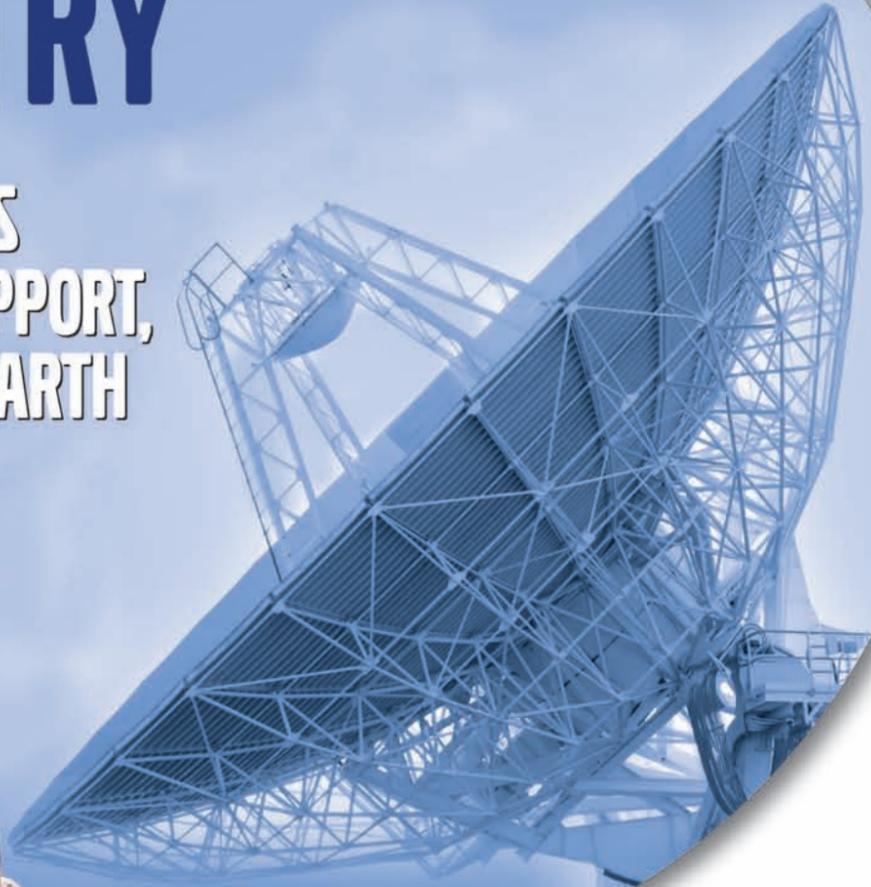
Meanwhile, Road Today, a trucking magazine which focuses on the South Asian community, will be launching the Road Today Truck Show in May 2009. The event will be organized at the Powerade Centre in Brampton May 30-31.

The event, which will take place during South Asian Heritage Month, will be a "true reflection of the changing face of the trucking industry with an ideal blend of cultural extravaganza," according to organizers. For more information visit www.roadtodaytruckshow.com. □



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Alberta Transport Minister not interested in speed limiters

By Jan Westell

BANFF, Alta. – While Ontario and Quebec forge ahead with speed limiter legislation in their respective provinces, Alberta has no plans to follow suit, Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation said at the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) management conference.

Ouellette has not changed his stance on speed limiters, which goes against the Canadian Trucking Alliance's stance, to restrict trucks to 105 km/h on provincial highways. While Ontario and Quebec have announced an intention to implement a regulation requiring all trucks over 11,000 kg to be equipped with speed limiters, Alberta Transportation is not interested.

"I know there are economic and environmental reasons for considering mandatory speed limiters, but I also know it would be very difficult to enforce."

Infrastructure funding

During his keynote address, Ouellette pointed out Alberta's Ministry of Transportation will double provincial investment in highway repaving and bridge repair over the next three years, however, he also warned about delays that will likely result from this work this year.

"Highway work will be in full swing throughout the province, including restoring older roads that are nearing the end of their surface life spans," said Ouellette.

Some of those projects include: construction of a five-lane bridge across the Athabasca River in Fort McMurray; continued twinning of Hwy. 63 near Fort McMurray; (continue) twinning eight km of Hwy. 4 at Milk River; (continue) twinning of Hwy. 21 east of Sherwood Park; extensive construction of Calgary ring road; and construction of the first phase of the Grand Prairie bypass.

Other new Alberta highway projects mentioned by the minister include: continued construction of Dunvegan suspension bridge on Hwy. 2 (oversized vehicles or wide loads are not permitted and will be redirected); replacing the Smoky River bridge on Hwy. 49; (begin) reconstruction of Hwy 625, near Nisku; and (complete) construction of the North Innisfail interchange on Hwy 2 (this fall), and the Hwy. 1 and 9 interchange near Chestermere (by September 2008).

The minister announced plans to add more rest areas along provincial highways, which are intended to benefit truckers. The project is expected to cost approximately \$100 million over a seven-year period, but is still in financial limbo.

"We've identified the locations for additional rest areas throughout the province, with a particular focus on areas with logging or other resource traffic," said Ouellette. "Now, we're working on getting the additional budget dollars for construction. This is one of our priorities."

Use it or lose it

Ouellette also warned about a lack of interest for Alberta's "ground breaking" professional driver certification program, which was

developed by the Alberta Ministry of Transportation, and Alberta Advanced Education, and offered at Red Deer College.

"I remind you that this is a pilot program, and if it's not supported – as the saying goes – use it or lose it. Let's make sure that doesn't happen. I encourage you to send your prospective drivers to this program."

Edmonton as an inland trade hub

The minister praised a \$1.5 million federal contribution to help launch Edmonton's Port Alberta project, which is aimed at developing that city as a major inland trade and transportation hub, linking Asia and North America through the port of Prince Rupert. Ouellette said that Edmonton is considered to be well positioned to take advantage of "sig-

nificant trade" coming from China to North America, with the airport a potential cargo processing centre for multiple modes of transportation.

"It will be a designated trans-shipment zone, so imported goods can move to export without traditional tariffs. On-site warehousing and logistics facilities will service North America's growing trade through NAFTA, and with Asia and Europe. This promises to have positive economic spin-offs for intermodal trucking in the years ahead."

The Alberta government is enthusiastic about the Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), which was signed by Alberta and B.C. two years ago. Alberta recently introduced Bill 1 to fully implement the trade deal with B.C. on cross-boundary business and employment issues, said the minis-

ter, who noted the agreement will benefit trucking firms through the standardization of regulations in the two provinces.

Non-committal on HoS

Ouellette also addressed hours-of-service, but the minister offered no firm regulatory commitment, and mentioned political concerns on a national level, although he noted that Alberta Transportation is seeking more input from stakeholders.

"I'm a firm believer in the need for effective highway safety programming, but I want to balance all our regulations with the need to enhance industry productivity. I also want to ensure we're doing the right thing for drivers – not just big corporations, but also for the smaller one- and two-truck operators." □

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Carrier survival tips: Part 2

What to do about high diesel fuel prices

A question that I have been asked a lot lately by both carriers and owner/operators is: What are the associations doing about the high price of diesel fuel? Or more specifically: Are we lobbying government to do something?

Short of trying to convince NATO to send the tanks into Saudi Arabia and taking control of the oilfields, what can the associations do?

Seriously, I understand full well the impact escalating fuel costs are having on carriers and owner/operators. But, in terms of fuel pricing, there is really nothing to lobby government on.

If there was, we would. And, once we solved that we'd move onto correcting the Canadian dollar and reinvigorating the US economy. Fuel prices are set on the world market. OPEC is a cartel. They have the oil and if they want to control supply to keep prices at a certain level they have the power to do it. There have been countless investigations into price fixing by the oil producers in North America, none of which have amounted to anything. Making huge profits is not against the law.

Canada has oil, but it too is sold on the world market. You may recall the National Energy Program from about 25 years ago which was designed to allow Canadians access to

Industry Issues

David Bradley



"our" oil at cheaper than market prices. The program was a political (Let the eastern bastards freeze!) and economic disaster for the country. No government, or party hoping to become a government, would contemplate such a policy again.

Some provinces have regulation over fuel pricing. It doesn't mean that fuel is any cheaper, but it is supposed to smooth out the daily price swings. The reality is it accomplishes little and can mean it takes longer for price decreases to show up at the pumps. Taxes are part of the price of fuel, and we do lobby for reduced taxation on diesel fuel at both the provincial and federal level either through elimination of all or part of the taxes or through harmonization with the GST so truckers would get a tax credit.

However, governments don't like to give up revenue. The best I can say is that we have not had an increase in the Ontario fuel tax, for example, in 17 years and the federal excise tax has not changed in about two decades. Even if we were successful in eliminating or reducing these taxes, some argue the oil producers could just fill the gap by raising prices anyway.

Also, be aware that more governments have or are considering increasing the taxes on fuel by introducing carbon taxes. Quebec did that last year and the new tax has flowed through to prices. B.C. just announced in its recent budget that it too is introducing a carbon tax.

The federal Liberals are openly talking about a national carbon tax.

We need to look at other solutions. The industry still has a very useful tool in fuel surcharges. And, while these have come under some pressure lately, they are here to stay.

The other increasingly important and unavoidable solution is conservation and improved fuel-efficiency. For carriers and owner/operators the challenge exists today – become more fuel-efficient or add risk your business.

It's as simple as that. The associations are also active on this front, and not only by supporting the activation of speed limiters. Our enviroTruck initiative (which is really all about getting incentives for fleets and owner/operators to invest in fuel efficiency devices) is starting to get some traction, as they say.

I hope this gives us all something to think about. Again, price – whether freight rates or fuel prices – is market-driven. It's all about controlling costs in a soft market. □

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– David Bradley is president of the Ontario Trucking Association and chief executive officer of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

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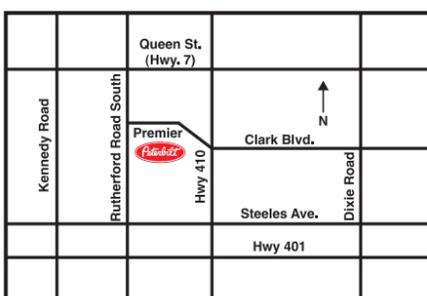
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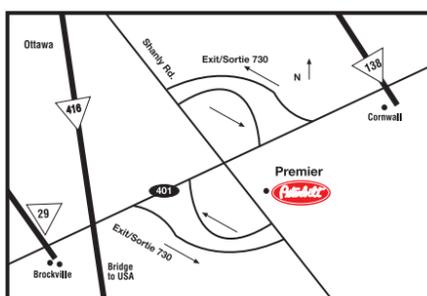
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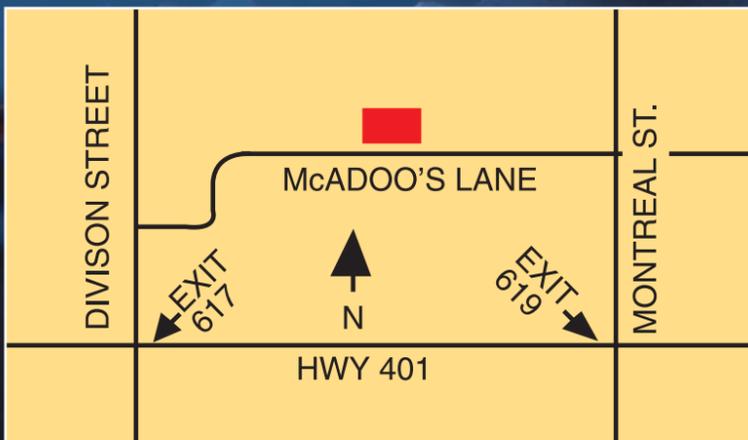
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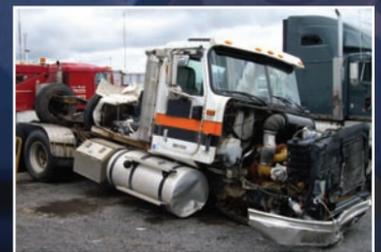


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RATES

Death by rate-cutting

'Bad business is the main culprit'

■ **Continued from page 1**
downward spiraling rates will drive truck speeds up.

"Speed limiting legislation would level the playing field of course," he says, adding the trucks in his fleet have been 105 km/h on the pedal and 102 km/h on cruise for as long as he can remember.

Snobel, meanwhile, is concerned about the long-term effects of rate cutting, namely the amount of time it will take for the industry to recover the gain it made a few years ago.

"If I'm carrying freight that's worth \$1,000 for \$850 how long will it take me to get back to the rate I should be charging? With a few percentage points increase per year it'll take five to seven years just to get back to where I need to be in the first place."

Consolidation isn't the answer, says Snobel.

"When consolidation happens, service suffers. The customer needs to understand that," he says.

But who's undercutting their rates and why? While Haight says it could be just about anyone, Snobel lays the blame squarely on inexperienced players.

"The type of carrier who cuts rates could be any carrier hauling a trailer," says Haight, "except maybe the niche carriers, like temperature control and tank carriers who are insulated a bit from the overall crunch."

"So many people hang out a shingle and just don't know how to run a business," says Snobel. "Bad business is the main culprit – just because you own two or three trucks it doesn't make you a smart business person."

So what's the solution? Are low rates here to stay or will the industry recover, one small step at a time? And how? Charging more for backhauls coming from the States is one way cross-border carriers can recover lost revenues, says Snobel.

"Rates are higher coming home now, than going out, which is the opposite of what it used to be in the past, with customers paying more for a headhaul," says Snobel, who insists the so-called capacity is overstated.

"The industry is overreacting by undercutting rates unnecessarily," he says. "There's plenty of reason for cross-border rates to stay up. It still costs money to cross the border, what with ACE and PIP and all the driver training you have to do. And driver shortages and retention are still an issue. Not to mention how much money it takes to keep good drivers happy."

Parking trucks is an option that carriers should seriously consider, says Haight. "We trim back where we have to," he says. Avoiding buying new equipment is another option. Diversifying so as not to be reliant on one kind of load is still

another, he adds. Not to mention keeping a close eye on expenses, says Haight.

'The type of carrier who cuts rates could be any carrier hauling a trailer.'

Ray Haight

"At the Truckload Carriers Association, we benchmark expenses so we can keep track of what fuel, repairs and maintenance cost," he says. "About 40-50 carriers' expenses are now

being benchmarked. It's a cheaper, better way to share knowledge and increase productivity." □

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RATES

Making sense of rates

Are you charging too much? Not enough? Or both?

By Eric Berard

MONTREAL, Que. – It's a sad reality in the trucking industry, but many carriers don't really know their exact operating costs. The result is that some trucking companies out there actually lose money operating their vehicles, because they accepted contracts that don't even cover their expenses. Moreover, by doing so they are putting pressure on prices that can negatively affect those who know how to count.

According to expert in pricing Frederik Francois, the key is to break down a fleet's expenses as much as possible in different categories, in accordance to the context where these expenses are made.

President of VISA Concept, a consulting company in the trucking industry, Francois was one of the speakers at an educational seminar organized by the Markel Insurance Company in Montreal.

"Pretty much everybody calculates their operating costs. The difference is that some do it more precisely than others," he said, adding that the most common mistake made by carriers, regardless of their size, is to assume that pricing is "costing + X%".

The customers you serve have different requirements. The equipment you use for each differs, as well as the kind of roads your vehicles travel on to get their shipments to their destination. This means that each customer has a different impact on your fuel costs (flat roads vs hills), city routes represent costs that differ from long-haul, a day cab costs less to finance than a big tractor with a sleeper and the context in which each truck is used has a direct impact on its unique maintenance costs.

In a nutshell, if you establish that your average operating costs are "X" and that you add a percentage of "Y" to make a profit, you put yourself in a position where you are charging too much to certain customers (and your competition might take them away from you) and not enough for others, actually losing money instead of making a profit.

There is a lot of number crunching to be done, but in the end it is worth doing it, insists Francois, adding that a fleet needs to take into account all of its costs when establishing rates, not only the ones generated by the operations. "Always remember to take into account all your administration costs, such as vehicle registration, permits purchase, drug and alcohol testing, etc. Also, when calculating your operating costs, make sure to involve all the departments of the company, not only accounting, because many factors can have an effect on costs."

He gives a simple example: "The cost of a driver is more than his pay and benefits. When he or she is on

vacation, you have to replace him or her, and there are costs associated with that."

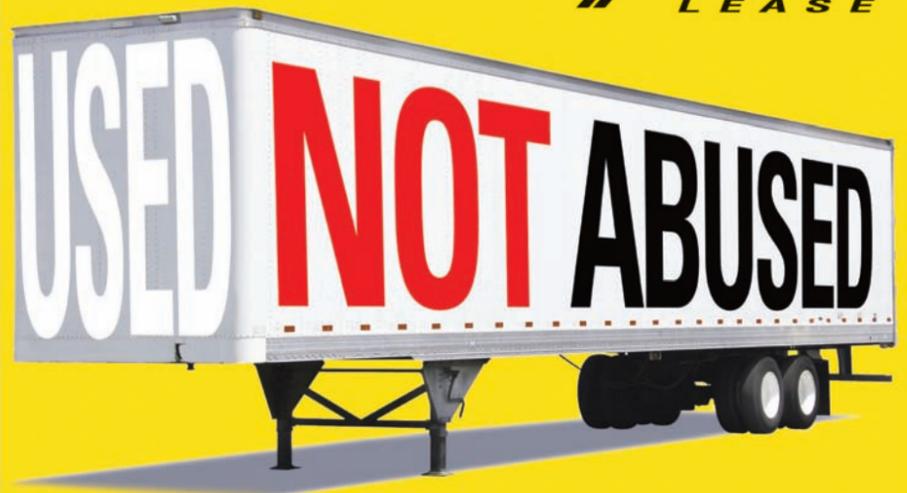
He also advises to verify how many empty runs you make and in what geographic area they occur. An empty trailer on a flat surface doesn't cost the same as an empty truck in a hilly area. Of course, specifying your trucks right for your application will help to lower the costs. This is why it is so important to know and understand every aspect of your operations.

Waiting time and the time it takes to load and unload the trucks

Continued on page 34 ■

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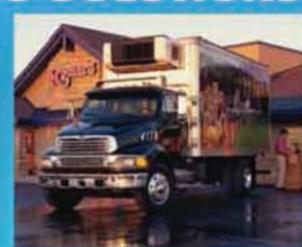
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Calculate all costs before setting a rate

Continued from page 33
are also an important source of expenses. Yet, they differ from one customer to another.

This is why it is important to calculate these and establish your rate accordingly.

Customers with effective dock crews should not be paying for lousy shippers.

When calculating your operation costs, include those generated by driver turnover.

Replacing a driver costs an average of \$10,000. Besides, it will take a while before the new hire is as productive as the experienced driver who left. This also represents a cost.

In the end, the process is quite simple. Yes, it does take time and a lot of math.

But having the most effective method of establishing rates for different customers will allow you to offer the most competitive prices to the customers who deserve it, and maybe abandon others that actually make you lose time and money, allowing your sales team to better focus on potential new markets that offer better business opportunities. □

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Five rules for maintaining profitability

Here are some tips provided by Frederik Francois, cost managing expert:

- Target the kind of customers and volume you really want.
- Stay away from customers who seem to be only interested in bargaining rates.
- Before offering a rate to a new customer, verify if there are any special procedures involved in serving them that could have an effect on your costs.
- When you propose a rate to a customer, make sure the document states the major factors that motivated that price. Then, instead of just comparing your rate to another carrier's, the customer will see that your rate is based on serious homework.
- After two weeks of serving a new customer, do an internal follow-up to verify to what extent your cost calculations reflect what it actually costs your company to serve that customer. Keep doing it on a quarterly basis afterwards and adjust as necessary. □

Worth Repeating:

The following are some comments on rates, made recently during *Decisions 2008*, our annual Shipper-Carrier Roundtable. Video of the entire discussion can be viewed on our Web site, trucknews.com. Just enter the multimedia section of the site and select the video of your choice.

"Contracts in a lot of cases don't seem to be worth the paper they are written on. No sooner do you sign it than you find there is rate action taking place and you are back revisiting the customer. Probably in 85% of the RFPs that we've responded to the incumbent carrier that had the business re-secures the business but what the shipper has been able to do is rationalize the rates to a market level. From a carrier's standpoint, also, I don't know why anyone would sign an agreement based on the volatility of currency and crude."

– Scott Johnston, former president and COO, Yanke Group Shipper-Carrier Roundtable Series, Transportation Media

"You don't do yourself any favours if your suppliers are losing money. The smart shippers understand it isn't just about price. It's about price and service."

– Robert Ballantyne, president, Canadian Industrial Transportation Association Shipper-Carrier Roundtable Series, Transportation Media

"I think trucking by nature always has had fairly low barriers to entry and there have been commodity providers that don't know the implications of their pricing and that creates a 'buyer beware' situation. I think the purchasing model sometimes is difficult because it often is not an enterprise function that considers the whole business. You have someone in a corner office that is judged by how low they can get the rates and often at risk to the business."

– Scott Smith, president, J.D. Smith & Sons Shipper-Carrier Roundtable Series, Transportation Media

"I think it would be nice if carriers and shippers could work cooperatively to deal with improving efficiencies rather than to drive down rates to below cost, which is what happens typically in such situations. When times get tough it seems it's every man for himself and shippers look to wherever they can get rate relief because they are under cost pressure themselves within their own organization."

– Doug Munro, president, M-O Freightworks Shipper-Carrier Roundtable Series, Transportation Media □

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New Canadian freight rate benchmarking service launched

By Ingrid Phaneuf
TORONTO, Ont. – When it comes to rate benchmarking, many carriers are understandably reluctant to share this kind of sensitive information, and even more reluctant to do so for fear of being accused of collusion.

But a new third-party service, claiming to be Canada's first Web-based freight rate benchmarking tool, may be just the ticket to tracking just how low rates will go.

Trans-Lucent Markets announced the launch of its AccuFreight Index (AFI), Canada's first Web-based freight rate benchmarking tool this spring.

Effective Apr. 2, 2008, shippers, carriers and third-party logistics companies (3PLs) that subscribed to the service have been able to

research freight rates for shipping lanes within Canada, and between Canada and the US.

Freight rates have been submitted voluntarily by carriers who subscribe.

"We feel that this type of system is something that the transportation industry in Canada has been demanding for some time," says Trans-Lucent president Shelina Lalani.

"Our strength currently is truckload rates however, unlike other rate management systems, we have been able to make a massive amount of less-than-truckload rate data available within AFI. We are especially proud of the ease and speed with which a member can, from their desktop, sign-in, describe a type of shipment, and receive valuable data on current market freight rates

for that shipment – it all happens intuitively and results are returned literally within seconds."

Once subscribed, members can define their searches by origin and destination, and can refine their search criteria by adding container size (for truckload searches), service level, freight class (for US-bound shipments), and "charge-by" method.

Details about equipment type and extra charges, such as fuel surcharges, can also be added to each search.

"The pool of rates we can draw on is growing daily, with more lanes and more shipment types available to be benchmarked using AFI," says Lalani, adding there are currently over 90,000 lanes of rates entered and verified.

"We feel that this will bring a

new sense of standardization and market-driven competitiveness to the transportation industry in North America."

"It's not about price fixing," adds Lalani, explaining the service grew out of a demand from shippers and manufacturers to find out average freight rates.

"But it could be used by carriers to determine what the market rates are. Basically, participating carriers provide their information and members who are doing a search on a specific lane get the average price for that lane as well as the five lowest prices for the same lane."

Shippers can also contact these carriers via the site.

Feedback from carriers so far has been good, says Lalani.

"Shippers and carriers both like it, because making calls to shippers and/or getting them from carriers is time-consuming," says Lalani, who admits the benchmarking system won't, however, prevent rate undercutting from happening

Depending on participation, however, it will give a pretty accurate picture of exactly what's happening to the industry.

And plans to expand the service to include service ratings of carriers (by shippers) are in the works, Lalani adds.

So far, 140 Canadian carriers have subscribed and submitted their rate information to Trans-Lucent, says Lalani.

For more information visit www.trans-lucent.com. □

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Want more info on rates?

Want more information on rates and shipper/carrier contracts? Check out a series of blogs written by editorial director Lou Smyrlis on the subject. They include:

- Cost increases are becoming a worrisome and long-lasting trend;
- Living on the edge of healthy profit margins;
- Dealing with rates: You reap what you sow;
- Transportation now on the wrong side of the growth hump.

Each of the blog entries, as well as others, can be viewed at www.trucknews.com.

You can also check out some video segments on the subject, from our annual Shipper/Carrier Roundtable – Decisions 2008. Part 2 focuses on rates and Part 3 on contracts.

The videos feature some of the industry's most prominent shippers and carriers.

They can be viewed by visiting 'Video Picks,' the multimedia section of trucknews.com. □



Acts of kindness

Millions of dollars are spent every year by trucking companies in finding ways to retain good drivers. There is no one simple rule of thumb to follow in order to keep our trucks filled with good drivers, but there are many simple ways of retaining these drivers without spending a lot of money. Carriers begin retaining their drivers by providing their wages and health benefits, providing a good weekly minimum amount of miles and other bonuses.

Many carriers provide a Christmas party which allows them to bring their spouse and gives everyone a night out with all the trims and fixins' – a gorgeous meal and desserts.

During the warmer months you can have a barbecue and a golf tournament, but it seems many of these small acts of kindness are slowly disappearing. Why? It costs too much money to put them on. But retention doesn't have to cost a lot of money.

Here are only a few ideas that I have tried and found to be very successful:

First, come up with a list. A list of 'small acts of kindness' can be endless if enough time is put into thinking of them. You can then separate them into two categories. The first category consists of the smaller ones, the everyday acts, followed by the second category – the 'Holy cow!' acts of kindness, used to divert a major crisis. The art of retention is

The Simple Truth

David Brown



best achieved when small acts of kindness are occurring every single day at every single opportunity. The solution to the problem of retention is not trying to solve all the retention problems all at once but keeping the smaller acts of kindness occurring on a consistent, regular basis.

Carriers and safety departments strive to keep their safety ratings the best they can be and keep their turnover rates as low as possible.

All good carriers and their recruiters exhaust their idea list in finding ways to keep their good drivers. How much does a handshake cost or 10 seconds of conversation in the driver's room by upper management? It seems like the higher the turnover rate, the more work it takes the carrier to retain their good drivers. This didn't have to happen if small acts of kindness were demonstrated on a day-to-day basis.

Small acts of kindness show appreciation for a job well-done. Many carriers don't do this or don't do this enough. I know myself that when someone tells me I've done a good job or says 'Thank-you,' I feel fantastic. When I go home at night and see

my wife the evening at home starts off on a positive note and it continues that way for the rest of the night. When you work with people, as I do, you can't help but bring your job home with you. It's an extension of you and I think that is a good thing. Don't let it turn into a bad thing.

I am always looking in the trucking magazines and newspapers to see what other carriers are doing to attract and retain drivers.

In my opinion the best thing for retention is honesty. It pays no matter what way you slice it because if you are honest with your employees and your new hires, the return will result in more money for everyone. If you are not honest with your peo-

ple then you lose money. You lose it with driver turnover, the loss of contracts, the damage of your image and reputation and finally your self-respect. Think about how you would like to be treated and then follow through. Think about nice things to say and then say them.

Think about feelings you would like to feel and then express them. This is easy to do and – it is free. Let me know if it doesn't work and I'll give you a couple of ideas. □

– David Brown is the recruiting manager for the Rosedale Group. He is also the president of Carriers Coach Solutions. You can reach him by visiting www.carrierscoach.com.

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EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

Daimler Trucks North America on SCR, hybrids and the fuel challenge

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – A new truck, a new engine and a new technology in North America. There was plenty to discuss with Daimler Trucks North America officials at this year's Mid-America Trucking Show.

Executive editor James Menzies sat down with: Melissa Kellogg, director of product marketing for Freightliner Trucks; David Siler, director of marketing for Detroit Diesel; and Christoph Hofmann, director of product strategy with Freightliner, to learn more about the Freightliner Cascadia, the DD15 and Daimler Group's intent to use SCR technology in 2010.

TN: Last year around this time, you introduced the aerodynamic Cascadia highway tractor. How has it been received?

Kellogg: The truck has been very well-received. A lot of the initial comments around the vehicle were based on the expected fuel economy, the interior, the finish and the quality of the product. We launched it last May, and there was a lot of excitement about it, not only at the press launch but also at our dealer meetings. Our dealers have really embraced it, they've stocked quite a few of them.

Now we have the DD15 and those first production combination vehicles are coming out this month and I think the excitement around the two is building.

TN: Is the interest in Canada as strong as in the US?

Kellogg: Dealers have stocked the trucks and a lot of them did go up to Canada, in fact our number one dealer that took stock of them was a Canadian dealer, so they are selling up there as well.

Hofmann: It has been an absolutely flawless launch as far as reliability is concerned. Most often with a new product, people experience some reliability issues in the first period of time and there was nothing we have seen or heard from the customers. We hit the ground running with this truck as far as reliability is concerned and that's something we're really proud of.

TN: Freightliner has been quite active on the hybrid truck scene. How big a role do you think hybrids will play in the heavy-duty, long-haul segment?

Kellogg: I see a place for them, but I honestly think it's more of a medium-duty application just based on the stops and starts of the vehicle. Medium-duty applications such as pickup-and-delivery, utility, and municipal get more of a stop-and-start kind of benefit, so I really think it's going to be more successful in medium-duty than heavy-duty in the long-term.

I'm not saying that there won't be heavy-duty sales, but I think the focus will be more on medium-duty.

Hofmann: It's not that there is no

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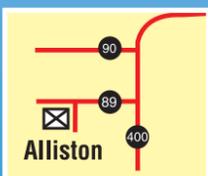


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David Siler



Christoph Hofmann

fuel efficiency to gain in heavy-duty applications, but if you look at the overall business case for the customer, you make them pay quite a bit up-front which they will recuperate very quickly in a medium-duty stop-and-go application.

But in heavy-duty long-haul applications where you rarely stop, there's not a whole lot of recuperation of energy and the fuel economy gains are much lower and usually the payback is not there to justify the up-front cost. So for the time being, we're somewhat cautious on that front.

TN: As an OEM, how concerned are you about another pre-buy in 2009? Is it inevitable?

Kellogg: I think a lot of our largest customers in 2006 purchased a lot of vehicles in advance and got out of their trade cycles, and I think that they've realized maybe the benefit wasn't there for them. I think in 2009, we're going to see a ramp-up but it's not going to be nearly as substantial as it was in 2006 and also therefore the decline in 2010 will be a lot less drastic than in 07.

TN: There's been a lot of talk lately about the cost of fuel. What's an OEM's role in helping its customers cope with the challenge of record fuel prices?

Siler: The number one place to save fuel would be engine consumption. I think we covered aerodynamics with the Cascadia. On the DD15 design, we're going to bring strong fuel savings even before 2010. Typically, the DD15, is 2-4% more fuel efficient than a current Series 60 engine, which is already at or near top of fuel efficiency food chain in North America.

The DD15 is going to take us further and by 2010 when we adopt SCR technology, there's another 3-5% fuel savings. You add all these on top of each other with the Cascadia's aerodynamics, and you're getting a lot of fuel savings – real dollars and the paybacks are pretty darn fast.

TN: With so much focus on fuel-efficiency, do you think we'll eventually see the extinction of the classic-styled, flat-nosed truck?

Kellogg: I think there will always be a segment of the market, like in vocational applications, that isn't as focused on fuel economy because their daily business doesn't really allow them to be fuel-efficient.

They're doing a lot of starts and stops, a lot of inner-city deliveries or construction, and I think that part of the market will always be a fit for more traditional vehicles.

I think long-term, we're going to see more of a push for aerodynamics, especially with the fleets because of the cost of fuel but even then, we're going to always have owner/operators that want the

traditional fit and finish of a classic-styled vehicle.

I think it might shrink over time but I think there will always be some demand.

TN: Looking ahead, which segments of the industry do you feel present the best growth opportunities for Freightliner?

Kellogg: Medium-duty for sure. The smaller-sized fleets and owner/operators – there's a lot of growth opportunities in those segments.

Continued on page 40 ■

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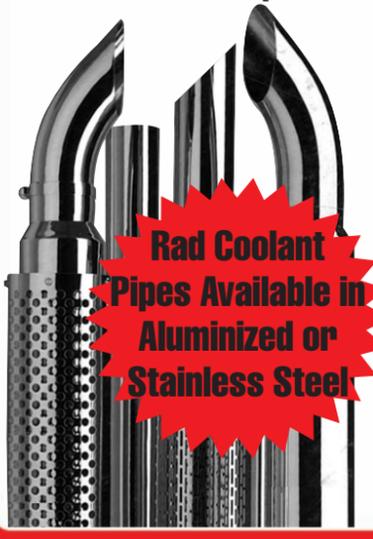
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EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

'We plan on building a lot of engines with SCR'

■ Continued from page 39

There are only so many large fleets out there and we have them all covered, so there's not a lot of growth opportunities for us in that segment right now.

TN: On the engine side, you've had some time to evaluate the performance of your EPA07 engines in the real-world. How are they performing?

Siler: Overall, very well. The fuel economy degradation, by Detroit Diesel's estimates, have been pretty much non-existent: about minus one per cent to one per cent. So there's really been almost a negligible change. There were some spotted issues of ultra low-sulfur diesel (ULSD) availability, but that's been pretty limited. That disaster that many thought would happen, never really occurred.

As far as regeneration intervals and the aftertreatment devices, there have been no major problems there at all.

TN: As we look ahead to 2010, there's some divisiveness in the industry between those engine manufacturers opting for enhanced EGR and those, like yourselves, that are going with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR). What message

would you like to convey to customers about your decision to go with SCR?

Siler: The message would be: SCR is absolutely a proven technology, there's really no debate there. Everyone we have dealt with in Europe and everyone we've interviewed in the North American market all understand the performance advantages are there. The biggest question is urea infrastructure and how to handle urea.

Urea is not a toxic substance, it's not a dangerous material. We're already starting to work closely with not only our dealer network, but also truck stop chains so there is infrastructure in place. What we would ask our customers to do is, when they're negotiating fuel contracts and discussing fuel options for the future, they need to be asking questions of their truck stop. 'Do you plan on having urea available and if not, why not? Because I plan on using an SCR engine because it's going to get me better fuel economy and a quick payback.'

Those are some of the things we need to have our customers starting to do. We want truck stops to have bulk pumping stations and that is where the investment starts to climb pretty rapidly, but if they see a chance to make money on it, they're going to do it. And we intend to show them how quickly they can pay that back. We plan on building a lot of engines with SCR starting in 2010.

TN: What about the claim that SCR increases CO₂ emissions?

Siler: That's a great question, I know we've done a lot of research on that. CO₂ emissions are reduced drastically through the use of SCR. A small amount of CO₂ happens to be created during urea synthesis, but by more than a factor of 20:1 this same amount is saved because of less diesel fuel being consumed.

CO₂ is created from the combustion of diesel fuel, and if you're going to combust 3-5% less diesel fuel, then you're going to create that much less CO₂.

TN: Have you tested SCR in cold climates, such as Canada?

Siler: Yes, we have tested it in Northern Canada. The urea would freeze, but it takes very little time to thaw it.

Hofmann: We have a heating element in the urea tank. With the start of the engine, it starts heating the urea and in a quick time liquifies it.

Siler: The bulk storage tanks at the truck stops obviously wouldn't freeze if they're below ground.

But if they're above ground, there are electric heating grids on the outside of the tanks to keep them from reaching that 12 F freezing point.

When it gets really hot, some of the ammonia separates out, but it doesn't go into the atmosphere and it can be recirculated back into the fluid. It's not nearly as troublesome as some would have you believe. □

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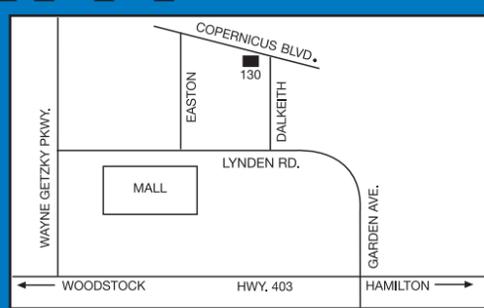
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OEM/DEALER NEWS

Bridgestone discusses Bandag integration

By Lou Smyrlis

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Ten months after its blockbuster purchase of the privately-held Bandag retread franchising business and a few weeks after the official merging of its truck tire and retreading operations, Bridgestone unveiled its newly named Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions (BBTS) business unit to dealers, distributors and press gathered here for the annual BizCon meeting. The public unveiling of the new tire powerhouse included the introduction of the new president for the business, its new home and its strategy for going to market.

Saul Solomon, who joined Bridgestone/Firestone in 1993 as general counsel rising to vice-president and general counsel of Bridgestone Americas Holding by 2000, was introduced as president of the new group. Having previously led a transition team during Bridgestone Americas' 2007 merger with Bandag, he went on to serve as chairman, CEO and president of Bridgestone Bandag, LLC beginning June 1, 2007.

BBTS will be operating out of the former headquarters of Bandag in Muscatine, Iowa, however, the sales and marketing functions will be run out of Bridgestone's Nashville headquarters and will be headed by long-time Bridgestone executive Singh Alhuwalia.

He assumes the role of president, sales and marketing for BBTS. Company officials stressed that the four company brands will retain their unique identities and continue to be marketed under their current mix of channels.

But the goal of the restructuring is to be able to provide fleets with an integrated solution that includes both new tires and retreads for all types of customers. There are four types of tire buyers, according to BBTS officials: "product buyers" who are loyal to specific products or brands; "price only buyers" who focus on cost; "life-cycle buyers," who want their tire decision to pay dividends on the bottom line over both the short- and long-term, and the "outsourcing buyers."

The Bridgestone brand will remain the premium offering with Firestone provided as a lower-priced option and Dayton set up to provide an answer to the onslaught of low-priced offshore products. Bandag

will continue with its current franchise set up. Essentially, the Bridgestone and Bandag brands will be offered in all channels. Firestone will be offered in the dealer, truck stop and government channels. Dayton will be offered in the dealer channel.

"Our go-to-market strategy will allow us the ability to compete in all these areas," said Kurt Danielson, vice-president, North American marketing

The integration has also changed the way the new company will set up its regional sales. Whereas before the integration North America was divided into four regions – Canada and the US northcentral, southeast and west, it is now divided into eight regions: Canada (directed by Jim West) and the US northeast, northcentral, Great Lakes, southeast, southcentral, southwest and northwest.

"Virtually every time we asked our dealers what we could do to deliver more value, the answer was consistently the same. We needed to be more fleet-focused and less concerned with filling our dealers' shelves. More time with the fleets, less time with the dealers," said Art Campagnoni, vice-president, North American commercial sales for truck and bus. "We listened. We took action."

Each sales region will consist of dealer sales managers, regional fleet sales managers, and territory sales managers reporting to the regional fleet sales managers.

"This structure is flatter and more focused. It isn't focused on just achieving sales numbers. It is focused on providing bundled solutions to fleet customers that buy these products and services from you," Campagnoni told the dealers and distributors in attendance.

Solomon also acknowledged during a press briefing that company executives struggled with the decision to keep Canada as just one region.

"The geography is so big but the market size is about the same as some of our other regions. And that region is working so well now. The Bandag and the Bridgestone guys are always together. But we would consider Canada East and Canada West regions if we found there was a need," he said. □

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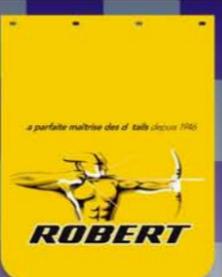
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Pardons and waivers

What works when?

By Jan Westell

MONTREAL, Que. – Canadians may be pardoned in their own country for crimes committed in the past. But the US government has a long memory, and doesn't always recognize the Canadian justice system's ability to wipe the slate clean.

Since 9/11, security has intensified at the US border and Canadian drivers who have a criminal record – even if they have been pardoned by the Canadian government – are likely to be turned back, unless they have the proper paperwork to gain access. One of the most predictable questions to be asked by US border guards is about past drug use, even for the most minor incident.

"Drugs are the big one," says Michael Ashby, founder and communications director of the National Pardon Centre (NPC), which operates offices in Montreal and Calgary.

NPC is a non-profit agency that assists those who seek a pardon from a crime, and/or seek temporary access to the US. In the latter case, the candidate will require a US entry waiver, which is granted by the US government, and allows legal access to the US – despite the existence of a criminal record – if the applicant qualifies.

In this line of work, Ashby has heard plenty of horror stories about interactions with US border guards. One incident he recalls involved a client who was asked by a border guard if he had ever used drugs. The client admitted to "smoking a joint," years ago, and was subsequently refused entry.

"It's a bit of overkill to me," says Ashby, of their response to an offence that the Canadian had never been charged with or arrested for in his own country. "To me, it's a little bit hysterical."

Ashby has helped drivers whose lucrative US long-haul careers have been sidelined, as well as clients whose family trip to Disneyland has been halted because of a minor crime, committed long ago.

"It's sad for families on holidays," he says. "For truckers, it's nasty, because all of a sudden a career can come to an end, right away."

A Canadian pardon is ultimately granted by the federal government, which seals the entire criminal record. All charges and all convictions are removed and kept separate from active criminal files stored in the RCMP database. However, Canadian pardons are not recognized by the US. If the US Department of Homeland security or FBI (which has access to RCMP files even before a pardon is granted) know about the crime before the record was sealed, the US justice agencies have this information "forever," says Ashby. Despite a pardon, there is an expectation at the US border to divulge past crimes. "You are breaking American law by not telling them," he adds.

The application process for a US waiver can be a costly and time-

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consuming process, and if approved, the time period for entry is limited to a one-, three- or five-year travel period. Yet, not all Canadians with criminal backgrounds require a US waiver according to Paulette Gauthier-Roy, of Pardons Inc., located in Sudbury and Toronto. She says that if a crime was minor in nature, and designated a "summary conviction," which is equivalent to the US "misdemeanor," crime classification, there should be no problem at the border.

"Usually with one summary conviction, (the visitor) doesn't need a waiver," says Gauthier-Roy, who creates a "travel portfolio" for frequent visitors to the US, that specifies the minor nature of the former crime and incorporates all supporting documentation.

"I do it for drivers who have a problem at the US border," she says, of a comparably minor process that still doesn't offer any guarantee at the border. "Sometimes they let them in. Sometimes they don't."

Gauthier-Roy believes there has been a misunderstanding about this minor category of crime (not related to drug use), on both sides of the border. She says that even the US Department of Homeland Security has advised Canadian applicants, after the application has been approved, that a US waiver is not required in the future, once the minor nature of the crime has been ascertained. On the other hand, a crime that has been designated an "indictment," or as it is classified in the US, a "felony," requires a waiver without question, says Gauthier-Roy.

Canadian Pardon Service (CPS) based in Toronto, offers another take on US Homeland Security regulations that determines a requirement for a waiver, whether it's a summary conviction or by indictment: "It depends on whether it's viewed as moral turpitude," says the vice-president of business and marketing, Peter Dimakos, who warns that truck drivers should pay all speeding tickets because US justice agents may take exception to unpaid tickets and possibly confiscate a licence.

"It's not revoked in Canada: It's revoked in the US," says Dimakos who had a client who was incarcerated in the US for not paying a speeding ticket in New York State, and now has a criminal record. "It's imperative that they do understand what the repercussions are," he adds.

CPS warns against crossing the border without checking on the status of a former crime, even with a juvenile charge – whether the latter was an "absolute" or a "conditional discharge" from the Canadian justice system.

"With a criminal record and without a US waiver, you may suffer the embarrassment of being arrested, detained, deported, and possibly having the vehicle you arrived at the border with, and property in it, seized, even if you are not the owner or the driver," states CPS.

For those who may require further legal assistance with this type of cross-border dilemma, Glenn Matthews of Siskinds LLP, offers unique credentials. As a lawyer who specializes in immigration services, he is also licensed in

the US, which gives him an intimate, technical understanding of the legal process to seek access to Canada's southern neighbour, he claims. Like Pardons Inc., and CPS, the London, Ont.-based lawyer advises that not all crimes require a waiver, yet not all US border personnel are necessarily cognizant of the technical idiosyncrasies of the US waiver parameters.

"In fairness to them, they are not given that training," says Matthews, who notes that one particular exception to the US waiver requirement is shoplifting, which is a crime, but one is often considered petty theft and typically "forgiven."

Fees for pardons with all the companies listed, run from \$300 to \$625 and the cost for a US waiver is \$395 to \$1,000. In addition, US application fee for a waiver is US\$545, payable to the Department of Homeland Security. □

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California-compliant?

What you need to know if you haul refrigerated freight into or out of the Golden State

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Even by California standards, this is a strange one. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has announced sweeping changes to the emissions requirements of trailer refrigeration units (what most of us simply call ‘reefers’), which will impact all refrigerated fleets that cross the state line. Phase 1 of the new regulations is slated to go into effect Dec. 31, 2008.

As part of Phase 1, TRUs with a model year of 2001 or older will need to comply with the regulation’s new low-emission standard. Normally when an equipment-related regulation is passed, existing equipment is grandfathered – or exempted – from the rule. Not in this case. In fact, older equipment is the principle target of CARB’s proposed TRU rules.

But that’s not the only thing that’s unusual about the rule. There’s also a not-so-minor detail that has yet to be ironed out. With the implementation date now just six months away, CARB still has yet to receive the necessary approval from its own parent group, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Before the impending new standards can be enforced, the federal EPA must grant a waiver of pre-emption under the federal Clean Air Act. What was supposed to be a mere formality, has now developed into a prolonged and ongoing saga that has thrown the future of the rules into question.

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) has voiced its displeasure with the proposed rules, arguing that the cost of compliance is too heavy a burden for the trucking industry to bear. With the ATA threatening legal action if the changes are approved, it appears the federal EPA is having second thoughts about providing the necessary waiver.

“This seems to be headed for some kind of legal battle

either way,” explained Ignacio Aguerrevere, director of marketing with TRU manufacturer, Carrier Transcold. “The implication for customers is that on December 31 of this year, the regulations are supposed to go into effect. If it’s denied by the EPA, then people don’t need to do anything. But if it’s approved by the EPA, it’s going to be challenged, but in the meantime it holds water.”

If you’re a refrigerated fleet that does business in California, sitting idly by and waiting for the dust to settle between CARB, the federal EPA and the ATA is not an advisable compliance strategy, Aguerrevere warned.

“Customers need to start thinking about their replacement strategies, regardless of what way it goes,” he suggested.

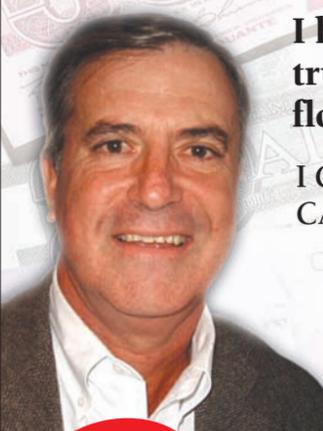
Scott Bates, aftermarket product manager with Thermo King, recently told *Truck News* “The longer the delay, the harder it is for customers to become compliant by the Dec. 31 deadline. If a customer is waiting (for the EPA waiver to be granted), they may only have a few months or less” to get ready.

Refrigerated goods transporters seem to have divided into two camps: one that is already well on its way to bringing its reefer fleet into compliance with the pending rules; and the other which is taking a wait-and-see approach.

The new rules include two performance standards: the Low-Emission TRU In-Use Performance Standard (LETRU); and the more stringent Ultra-Low Emission TRU In-Use Performance Standard (ULETRU). As of Dec. 31, 2008, all TRUs with a model year of 2001 or older must meet the LETRU standard.

Reefers with an engine built in 2002 must comply with the LETRU standard by Dec. 31, 2009. Those built in 2003 will have to go straight to ULETRU levels by Dec. 31, 2010 and all reefer motors built after 2003

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WHAT TO DO?: If you want to haul into or out of California, you may have to run newer reefer units.

have seven years from their model year to comply with ULETRU levels. The full details of the proposed regulation can be viewed at: www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/tru.htm.

The easiest, and possibly the most cost-effective way, to comply with the rules as of Dec. 31 is to adopt a seven-year life-cycle for any reefers that will be operated in California. Most larger fleets already employ shorter trade cycles, according to Jerry Duppler, trailer product manager with Thermo King.

“Historically, some of the larger long-haul fleets have determined that in five to seven years, there’s a tipping point where they feel it’s advantageous to them to bring in new equipment with new warranties,” Duppler said, adding “those trade cycles tend to change with economic conditions.”

For most Canadian carriers that haul into and out of California, that seems the most logical approach. Sending only newer-model TRU-equipped trailers to the Golden State and adopting a shorter trade-in cycle should be enough to ensure compliance with the impending rules. It’s the local fleets domiciled in California that may find the rules the most difficult to meet, Duppler pointed out.

“A lot of these fleets domiciled in California are distribution fleets and they tend to have not planned trade cycles of less than seven years, and this has put significant challenges in front of them in terms of changing their basic operating model,” he points out.

Another option is to replace only the engine on older TRUs. Aguerrevere said this is a viable option if the rest of the reefer’s components and the reefer itself remain in good shape. However, he added “If you run a lot of hours, you may want to change the reefer altogether.”

Short of replacing older reefers or their engines, the remaining compliance option is to equip older units with a CARB-approved emissions control device, such as a diesel particulate filter.

A list of approved emission control devices is available at: www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/verde.v.htm.

But DPFs and catalysts are costly add-ons, which makes this option undesirable for most fleets.

While the cost of complying with California’s impending new TRU emissions restrictions may be enough to make you cringe, the cost of non-compliance is even greater.

If you knowingly violate the rules, fines ranging from US\$1,000-\$50,000 per day – or even imprisonment – are possible. □

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REEFERS

Cool new ideas for reefer fleets

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Trailer refrigeration units are becoming more versatile and intelligent, arming fleets that haul temperature-sensitive cargo with additional tools that help improve efficiency and customer service. *Truck News* took a closer look at some new developments in the refrigerated transport world that have recently caught our attention:

Intelligent set points

Both Thermo King and Carrier Transicold now have an option available with certain controllers that provides commodity profiles, allowing a driver to easily select the optimum refrigeration temperature for whatever product happens to be on-board. Thermo King's OptiSet + is a new offering that will be available this summer on units equipped with its SR2 controller. It contains a library of nearly 500 commodities and the ideal temperature set-point for each of them. A driver can simply select the cargo he's hauling from the menu and the reefer will automatically be set at the optimum temperature for that type of freight.

Jerry Duppler, trailer product manager with Thermo King, said "The system makes it very, very easy to program the refrigeration unit for optimum refrigeration and it makes the driver's job that much easier. It will contribute to the elimination of errors, and that could be a big advantage for drivers from a peace of mind standpoint."

Since many reefer fleets try to balance the need for optimum refrigeration with their quest for maximum fuel economy, many of the profiles built into the OptiSet+ system will provide an acceptable temperature range, rather than a single set-point, Duppler explained.

"Really tight temperature control in the trailer will cost you a little more in terms of fuel consumption. If you can relax the temperature requirements a bit, you can save fuel," Duppler said. "A lot of our profiles will give an acceptable range and then our customer and the shipper can decide the desired set-point for that particular shipper. Customers may start by using our profile in the library and then modify that for a specific shipper. You can change profiles any way you want and can

create profiles from scratch."

This summer, OptiSet+ will be available for single-temperature TRUs, with a multi-temp version expected to be released in the future. Software updates will be available for older SR2 controllers, so fleets with existing Thermo King reefers can visit their dealer to receive the upgrade for their existing units.

Carrier Transicold has been offering an intelligent controller of its own for several years. Dubbed IntelliSet, the feature is an option on Carrier TRUs with the company's Advanced controller.

Ignacio Aguerrevere, director of marketing with Carrier Transicold, said the system was first launched to help fleets cope with rising driver turnover rates. It made the training process for new hires simpler and also made life easier for the driver.

"We wanted the driver focused on driving, not focused on the reefer," Aguerrevere explained.

He likens the system to the interface found on most microwave ovens, which allow you to simply select the item you're cooking rather than manually entering the time required to cook it. Once you click the popcorn button on the microwave, it knows exactly how long to cook the item based on its internal settings.

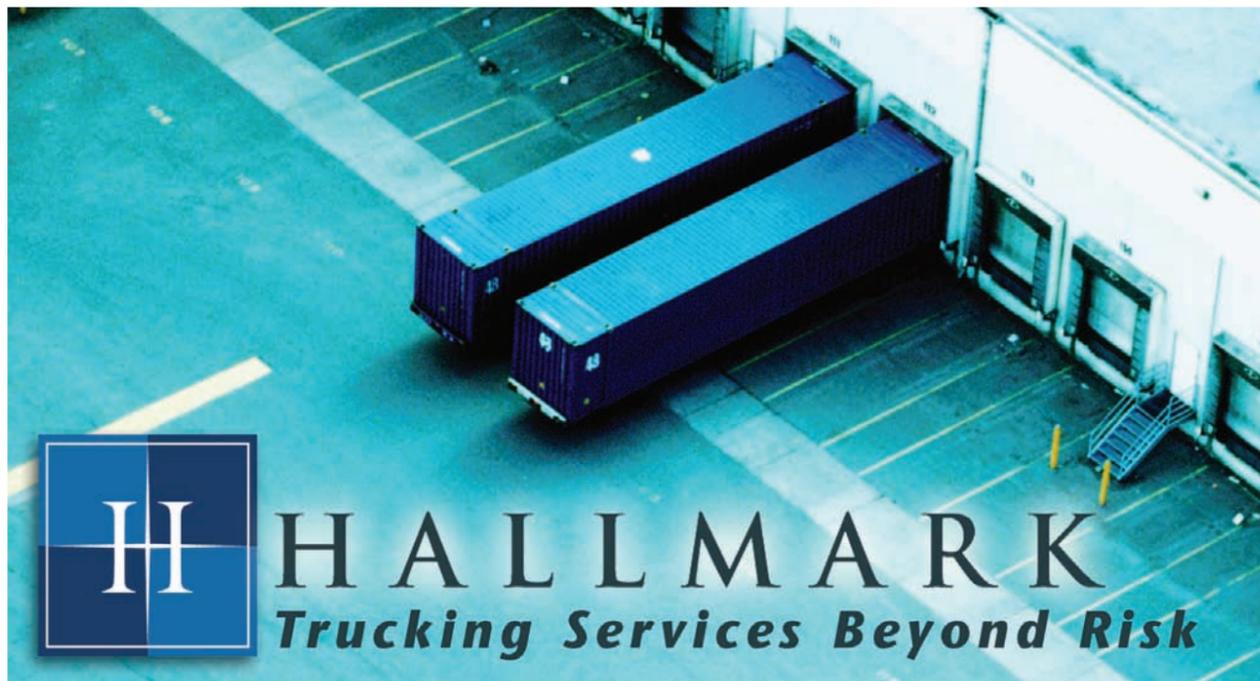
TRUs equipped with IntelliSet operate in much the same way, Aguerrevere explained.

"You can have 100 drivers, and all of them will be hauling lettuce exactly the same way, with no errors, and getting the best possible fuel consumption," he said.

Plugging it in

With record fuel prices placing enormous cost pressures on fleets, companies are taking a closer look at ways to reduce their fuel consumption. Fortunately for refrigerated fleets, significant fuel savings can be achieved by choosing a reefer with electric standby capabilities.

Carrier's Vector 1800MT TRU features the company's Deltek diesel-electric technology, which allows the operator to plug into a shore power supply when the truck is parked. Many companies in the food distribution business load their trailers overnight and then leave the reefer running in the yard until the driver shows up in the morning to





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Based on \$4/gallon diesel and current electricity prices, the cost of running a typical reefer unit in electric mode is about 66% cheaper than running the diesel engine, Aguerrevere said. But when doing a quick conversion to Canadian figures (where diesel costs more and electricity can be cheaper), the savings are even greater than promised in the US. The reefer engine typically consumes 1.1 gallon/hr (4.16 litres/hr), meaning it will cost about \$39.60 in Canuck bucks to keep the load cool for eight hours while running the diesel engine, based on \$1.19/litre diesel. By comparison, it takes 15.23 kilowatts per hour to keep a typical load refrigerated in electric mode, or 90 cents/hr at today's electricity rates in Ontario, totaling just \$7.20 for an eight-hour wait. That's an 82% reduction.

Thermo King has also noted increased interest in electric standby availability on its own reefers.

"It has gained in popularity recently and we expect it to continue," said Duppler. "We've seen a significant increase in orders of units with electric standby and inquiries about the costs of operation."

Duppler wouldn't be coaxed into providing a payback estimate for electric standby, since there are too many variables to consider. However, he did say that a payback can be achieved fairly quickly, especially if the reefer can be switched to electric mode during loading and unloading. All that's needed is a power source.

If the power cord should become disconnected when a reefer is operating on electric standby, it senses the loss of power and restarts the diesel engine. Duppler notes there are maintenance savings available as well.

When operating in electric mode, hoses, belts and other components connected to the reefer's diesel engine are at rest.

Keeping it clean

A nifty new product for refrigerated trailers caught my eye at this year's

Mid-America Trucking Show. Thermo King's parent company, Ingersoll-Rand has developed an environmental management system (EMS), which can be mounted inside a refrigerated trailer to provide continuous air purification.

The trailer version of the product, which is already widely used in warehouses and cold storage facilities, is about the size of a shoe box, Wayne Benson, director of sales and marketing for the EMS product with Ingersoll-Rand, told *Truck News*.

"We create a non-thermal plasma field, and take air from inside the (trailer) and run it across this plasma," Benson explained. "When air from the (trailer) runs across the plasma, the oxygen in the air is broken down into reactive oxygen species."

It sounds complex – and it is – but what's important is that pure air comes out the other side of the unit. Also exiting the unit are some more of these 'reactive oxygen species,' which seek and destroy bacteria and viruses throughout the entire trailer, effectively providing "surface sanitation."

The end result is a much cleaner trailer interior which can noticeably extend the shelf life of perishable cargo, Benson said.

"It slows the ripening process of fruits and vegetables," he explained, noting a truckload of berries from California will arrive in Canada looking fresher and ready to enjoy a longer shelf life.

But is it really necessary? Startlingly, Benson said refrigerated trailers are often home to some pretty nasty stuff. A reefer's evaporator coil, for instance, provides a cool, damp surface that's a perfect breeding ground for bacteria.

"We've done some testing of coils and air sampling in trailers and found very high colony-forming units per cubic metre in reefer trailers," Benson noted.

"One particular reefer trailer had the number of colony-forming units per cubic metre that was near that of a killing floor at a beef plant. It can be fairly bad." □

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FLEET NEWS

Safest petroleum haulers honoured

CALGARY, Alta. – The Canadian Petroleum Products Institute (CPPI) has recognized five transportation companies that completed the delivery of petroleum products in a safe manner during 2007, at an awards ceremony in Calgary.

The carrier safety awards recognize western division contracted carriers for: reduction in incident frequencies versus the previous calendar year; overall safety performance with related responsibilities; and the promotion of driver and fleet safety within the transportation industry.

“Our industry is safety-conscious and always tries to find ways to reduce incidences that cost time, resources, and money,” said Ted Stoner, vice-president of CPPI, after the awards ceremony, who added that the industry has enjoyed steady improvement with a reduction in the

number of unsafe incidents over the years.

The top award went to Denwill Enterprises of Burnaby, B.C., for “best overall carrier that excelled in all safety performance areas,” which was presented to the company’s general manager Jeff Salmon. He said he considered the industry recognition a “prestigious” honour, and credited the entire company, from dispatch to delivery, especially two driver-trainers who promote the company’s safety philosophy, with the company’s positive results.

“It takes a lot of coordination to orchestrate these loads, and to ensure that they’re loaded in the safest manner to each site,” said Salmon.

The other awards presented at the CPPI luncheon included: an “improvement award for reduced product mixes” which was presented to Wheeler Transport of Port Moody, B.C.; an “improvement award for reduced product spills” was awarded to Mantei’s Transport of Calgary, Alta.; an “improvement award for reduced vehicle accidents” went to Paul’s Hauling of Winnipeg, Man.; and an “improvement award for reduced personal injuries” went to Bridgeway Transport, of Nanaimo, B.C.

Collectively, these carriers made over 82,007 deliveries in 2007 on behalf of CPPI member companies in Western Canada, according to the association. □

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Seeing the light

Get ready for a new warning light when you buy engines in 2010

By John G. Smith

Anyone who ever forgot to tighten the gas cap on their family car will recognize the look of a Malfunction Indicator Light (MIL). The cryptic warning may not tell a driver the exact nature of a problem, but it certainly identifies trouble with the equipment that is used to keep exhaust levels in check. In the case of a loose gas cap, the pressure has dropped in the system used to control evaporative emissions. But who knows? Something else may be wrong.

Truckers better prepare themselves for lights of their own.

Now that equipment such as Exhaust Gas Recirculation systems is reducing the greenhouse gas that is NOx, and new Diesel Particulate Filters are capturing tiny flakes that would otherwise float out of a truck's exhaust stacks, regulators are about to introduce new sensors that will tell drivers whether this equipment is actually working.

The MIL and the diagnostic systems behind them will be phased in between 2010 and 2019, and they represent one of the newest challenges to the makers of modern truck engines.

The most popular engines will be affected first. In 2010, the light will need to be included on the dashboards of trucks that are equipped with the best-selling engine in a manufacturer's most popular engine family. By 2013, the entire engine family will be included in the rules. And by 2016, all engines will need to be equipped with the lights and sensors that come with them, explains Kenworth's Keith Doorenbos. Warranties for these new warning systems will also need to expand, beginning at five years and 160,000 km, and eventually reaching 10 years and 700,000 km.

At first, the equipment will need to spot failed components that cause a five-fold increase in emissions, but the tolerance levels will tighten with each passing year.

"These rules are actually quite complex for those of us who are manufacturing and have to go through the certification process," says Kevin Otto of Cummins.

Consider the different sensors that will be needed to power such a light. Sensors will need to watch over exhaust-cleaning components such as the EGR valves and any NOx-reducing catalysts. (The latter equipment could be required to slash NOx to levels that are even lower than those that exist today). Engine makers, meanwhile, will

need to use these sensors to generate fault codes about specific problems, says Doorenbos. Some of the monitors will run all the time, while others will need to run once per "drive cycle"—a period that includes 10 minutes of running time, 30 seconds of idling, and five minutes of operating time at a 15% load.

The sensors themselves will need to work in a few different ways, adds Tim Gundrum, who is responsible for on-board diagnostic certification and compliance at International Truck and Engine. An "out of range" sensor, for example will help to identify readings that don't make sense—such as an ambient temperature sensor that says it's 200 F outside. Rationality monitoring (also known as "in-range diagnostics") will compare a sensor's reading to other information that should come with it, such as the increase in boost pressure that should accompany higher engine torque. If the voltage on a related sensor does not jump high enough, the diagnostic system will

understand that there is a problem with the sensor.

All of this data will be delivered over a proven communications network, such as the J1939 systems used on today's truck engines, or the OBD-II systems on your family's car.

"(Exhaust Gas Recirculation) diagnostics are not new. Many of these systems have had these in place," says Greg Gillham, manager of on-board diagnostics with Detroit Diesel. Indeed, the sensors on a 2007 engine will monitor whether EGR rates are too low or too high. But there is a difference. In 2010, the sensors will need to identify specific issues such as a stuck EGR valve that will allow an engine to spew an excessive amount of particulate matter, or the high intake temperatures on an EGR cooler that can lead to higher NOx levels.

The oxygen sensors found in today's passenger vehicles will also have a heavy-duty diesel equivalent in a future NOx sensor—something that will be particularly important as NOx levels drop from 2.5 to 2.0 grams per brake horsepower hour.

This is where things get really tricky. The more sensitive the diagnostics become, the greater the chance for a false reading, explains Cummins' Ben Zwissler. A simple drop in pressure can identify a cracked or melting Diesel

Particulate Filter, but this condition could also be caused by the simple accumulation of soot or a change in temperature.

"The OBD rules will really add a significant amount of regulation to the industry. That is going to affect vehicle maintenance," Otto warns. "Understanding how these very, very complex diagnostic systems work will be critical if you're going to do a good job in troubleshooting."

The good news for fleets is that the pending rules require service tools that can read fault codes on any model of engine. Still, clearing the fault codes may be easier said than done. The lights will remain lit for three driving cycles unless they're cleared by a service tool, says Jim Roal, Caterpillar's diagnostic technical steward. Some monitors will also require road tests to determine whether a troubled component has actually been fixed.

Technicians will also need to rely more on the sensors to identify related faults, adds Zwissler. "(You) will have to trust the engine to tell you what's going on."

Drivers, meanwhile, will have to trust the technicians. The performance of the truck may seem unchanged.

The only sign of trouble will come in the form of a glowing dashboard light. □

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Refine and adapt: You can troubleshoot many VDA challenges on your own

By John G. Smith

Any modern-day mechanic should be forgiven if he shakes his head at the thought of a new service tool. Just ask him about the difficulties that have emerged when connecting a PC to one of today's Electronic Control Modules. Technical support centres are flooded by calls about Vehicle Datalink Adaptors (VDAs) that don't seem to work, even though everything promises to comply with RP1210a—a common communications standard developed through the Technology and Maintenance Council of the American Trucking Associations.

Today's adaptors are certainly better than those that existed in the mid-1990s, when every Electronic Control Module had its own proprietary connector. In those days, shops needed a web of adaptors and cables to address the various needs, says Ken DeGrant of the Dearborn Group, which produces RP1210a adaptors.

But the remaining problems can still be frustrating to a technician who is paid by the job, adds Lee Lackey of Noregon Systems, which also provides the adaptors. "They're losing valuable time fixing the problem, and spending time on hold to talk to one of us propeller heads."

And there's nothing more frustrating than the news that a supposedly "compliant" computer application will only work with a specific type of adaptor.

The good news is that there are steps to troubleshoot most VDA challenges:

1. *Have a clear idea of the application you want to use before buying an adaptor.* Remember that some applications will only work with specific models of connectors.
2. *Look to see if the application can even be configured for your adaptor.* Some applications require users to select between a J1708 and J1939 communications protocol.
3. *Check the condition of the "ini" file on a shop's Windows 3.1 computers.* "If you have an application, and

that application cannot see the adaptor you installed, you might be dealing with a mangled .ini file," DeGrant suggests. The problem comes in the form of extra commas and spaces that can sometimes appear between the names of the various adaptors. Simply remove the extra commas and spaces with Windows Notepad, or download a program that will clean the file automatically.

4. *Accept the installation wizards.* If a USB adaptor is plugged into a different port on a Windows computer, a "hardware found" wizard will appear. Instead of choosing "cancel" because you have installed the adaptor in the past, keep selecting "Next" to allow the wizard to do its job. Each port will require its own driver. Granted, this step presents one significant challenge for fleets that use Windows Vista operating systems, Lackey warns. Technicians may not have the right to install the software.

5. *Ensure the USB driver did not "flake out."* While this is not exactly a technical term, it describes a situation that can happen to some USB drivers, DeGrant says. Unplug everything, wait five seconds, and then reconnect the adaptors to see if the connection is recovered. Then try to reboot the computer before calling an adaptor supplier.

6. *Close other applications.* Some VDAs can only support a single application at a time, so ensure that other computer applications are not simply minimized.

7. *Be prepared to realize that this may be your computer's fault.* The makers of VDAs can all refer to a specific model of Compaq computer that had troublesome ports in early 2000. "Windows was never built as an operating system to do these kinds of things. It was really meant to be an office," Lackey adds.

8. *Always use a hard-wired connection since the signal from a Wi-Fi device can be affected by everything from a fluorescent light to the cycling of a nearby air conditioner.* "We all have wireless versions of adaptors," DeGrant adds. "We recommend you don't use it to flash the (Electronic Control Unit). That's an easy way to turn an ECU into a toaster." □

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Better brakes

Stopping distances are shrinking, equipment is becoming lighter. What does the future hold for your brakes?

By John G. Smith

Changes to the trucking industry's braking systems can happen in a relatively short period of time. A little more than a decade ago, everybody was still wondering whether a trailer's anti-lock brakes would require a second power cord between tractors and trailers. Some equipment configurations have even emerged with air disc brakes and stability control systems.

There are more changes on the horizon.

Despite delays in its final ruling, the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is on the verge of mandating a large cut in allowable stopping distances. Under current rules, an empty tractor-trailer that travels at 60 mph must be able to stop within 355 feet (108 metres). Regulators are pondering whether that distance should be slashed by 20, 25 or 30%.

Most industry groups have recommended a 25% cut, which could be met with changes that include larger brake linings and drums, and air disc brakes on selected vehicles, says Dan Philpott of MeritorWabco.

More torque

The shorter stopping distances will still present some challenges, however.

"Tire, suspension and chassis structures will be affected by putting more brake torque across the wheel," Philpott explains. If the brakes on a steer axle become more aggressive, there could be an impact on a steering wheel's response during a braking event. Parking brake performance could also be affected because of the reduced burnishing of the brakes on other axles.

Luckily, these issues can be addressed with today's technology. Anti-lock brakes could address the potential of lock-ups caused by higher brake torque, and stability control systems could address other response-related issues.

Regardless of the ruling, the trucking industry will need to comply with these changes within

two years.

That will hardly be the end to the new regulations that involve brake performance. Roadside inspectors, for example, can now issue out-of-service violations because of the results from a Performance-Based Brake Tester, notes Accuride technical manager Steve Howse. Rather than simply measuring the travel of a push rod, this equipment will be able to determine if the brakes will actually stop a tractor-trailer within an allowable distance.

A bigger issue may be the recent addition of anti-lock brakes into the Level 1 out-of-service criteria.

"One of the reasons is, the key to all new electronic (stability) technology is the ABS system," he explains, referring to the expanded standards.

The increasing focus on the condition of ABS components could be a challenge since a lot of the equipment is not working as it should be. A study of 1,000 vehicles found a problem with the ABS warning lights on one in six tractors and one in three trailers. That alone has led the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance to ask the US government to require trailer-mounted warning lamps beyond next March.

The light, originally designed as a back-up for in-cab warning lamps, was expected to fade away by that date.

Despite everything that has been put in place, there are bigger changes to come. Indeed, Electronically Controlled Braking Systems (ECBS) and air

disc brakes are already emerging as the technology of the future.

Each option has a lot to offer.

The ECBS equipment, for example, offers a number of advantages over a traditional pneumatic system.

"It's actually a little simpler," explains Vince Lindley of Volvo Trucks North America. A typical ECBS system includes six pneumatic connections compared to the 12 connections that are required on an ABS-equipped tractor-trailer with Automatic Traction Control. It also has four electrical circuits instead of eight.

The advantages don't end there. These systems could electronically track lining wear, integrate brakes into stability control systems, and include the load proportioning capabilities that will adjust brakes for a specific application.

"It does appear to provide a real good integrated solution for applications on hybrids," he adds, referring to how the electronic braking could maximize the amount of power stored by such a system.

Cost, however, is still a challenge. "There are fewer parts under there, but the parts are more expensive," he admits. "It's going to be a lot more than a \$40 relay valve."

In defence of discs

Air disc brakes may also be more expensive than their S-cam counterparts, but they have proven their better stopping capabilities.

"They typically have much better fade performance, they're more reliable through extreme brake applications, (and) they also have a better feel and have less propensity for pulling," says Mark Melletat of MeritorWabco.

Today's designs are far superior to the versions that came before them. Earlier disc designs faced problems including linings that wore out too quickly; pistons and caliper slide mechanisms that would bind because of vibration, distortion and corrosion; and rotor checking.

But engineers have found ways to improve the related parts. Changes to saddle mechanisms have addressed the torque on calipers and pins, and slide pins



BETTER STOPPING: Changes in stopping distance requirements for heavy trucks could mean bigger drum brakes, the switch to disc brakes, or a combination of solutions. Pictured is MeritorWabco's dual-piston disc brake (left) and single-piston option (right). The single-piston offering reduces weight and cost.

have been sealed to protect them from corrosion.

Weights and costs have also been reduced thanks to single-piston designs, which even weigh less than a high-performance drum. New calipers and carriers can be produced with 18 parts rather than the previous 39 components.

The most apparent changes will be seen whenever a mechanic changes the friction material on a disc brake. A common pad profile has replaced the need to use separate pads on the inboard and outboard sides of the brakes. And the pads can now be changed without moving the calipers.

"We're seeing significant improvement in lining and rotor life," Melletat adds. "The pad life has improved significantly."

The need to extend the life of friction material of every sort is even leading engineers to tackle the common issue of rust jacking. That problem – linked to a corroding brake shoe table – can cause a brake lining to crack and pull apart.

Fleets can even contribute to the issue by power washing equipment, since that will drive de-icing solutions into every crack and crevice.

That will attract moisture to the brake shoe table, lead to the unwanted oxidation, and eventually shorten the life of the lining.

"We are not in a position to eliminate rust jacking. There is no magic wand," says John Hawker, senior engineer at Bendix Spicer. But there are potential solutions that could slow the process, he suggests.

Engineers are considering the possibility of friction material with a higher density, although that could be more expensive than traditional formulas. Other options have included new materials such as ceramics, different coatings, new adhesives and sealants.

"We're not stopping," Hawker says of the engineering work.

Nobody is. □

The shield's sacrifice

There has been a long debate about whether or not to use dust shields. The equipment may keep dirt and grime out of the brakes, but it also makes it harder to inspect the condition of linings.

Mark Melletat of MeritorWabco suggests that the shields might have another purpose in these days of corrosive anti-icing solutions.

"It becomes your sacrificial anode," he noted during a recent meeting of the Technology and Maintenance Council. "Your dust shield ends up catching the magnesium chloride, which absorbs the water. Then it starts rusting the dust shield. And dust shields are a lot less expensive than brake shoes." □

Maintenance

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Laptop computers Are they tough enough for the shop?

By James Menzies

The laptop has become an essential tool for technicians and owner/operators alike. It's estimated that more than 60% of owner/operators own a laptop, and heavy-duty shops are trending away from proprietary-based diagnostic systems in favour of open architecture PC-based tools, according to Bill Presler, senior manager, market development with Panasonic.

However, the challenge to date has been the inability of most laptop computers to survive the harsh working environment of a maintenance shop or a truck cab. That is changing, with an expanding selection of rugged computers becoming available, which have been designed to perform in even the most punishing environments.

Panasonic has recently published a white paper exploring the advantages of rugged computers in the shop environment.

Entitled *The role of rugged mobile computing in overhaul, service and maintenance operations*, the white paper contends that fleet operators are turning to rugged computers to improve efficiencies in the shop and to enhance the productivity of technicians.

"In recent years there have been efforts to deploy laptop computers into service bay environments to improve productivity. This has reduced foot traffic between productive workshop activities in the actual service bay and centralized computers that are shared by all the mechanics in the facility," the white paper reported.

But just how rugged are the latest generation of rugged computers?

We caught up with Panasonic's Presler at this year's Technology and Maintenance Council meetings. He demonstrated the durability of one of the company's Toughbooks by dropping it on the cement floor from about three feet off the ground.

It seemed none the worse for wear when he retrieved it. Alternatively, Presler said you can drop a 2-lb steel ball on its tempered glass screen from the same height without harming it.

"This is a tool designed for the technician," stressed Presler. "It's a tool, it's rugged, it's tough and it's highly durable."

Panasonic's Toughbooks are protected by a magnesium alloy case and feature shock-mounted hard drives.

The screen comes with a replaceable film that protects it from grease and grime.

Psion Teklogix also manufactures rugged computers, both vehicle-mounted and handheld systems. James Poulton, director of product development for the company told *Truck News* that the durability of a computer is measured in various ways.

"The ability to withstand drops to concrete is one measure of ruggedness," he explained. "Another is the IP (ingress protection) rating – the ability of the device to withstand various forms of matter ingress into the housing."

Poulton said new devices are subjected to at least 26 drops on a concrete surface from various angles. The height ranges from four feet for entry-level products right up to six or seven feet for ultra-rugged models.

"The processors, radios, antennas, displays – they all have to emerge in perfect working order," he said.

The IP measures resistance to two forms of matter: dust and water. An IP rating of 54 (five-four), for instance, means the computer scores a five out of seven for dust exposure and a four out of eight when it comes to water resistance.

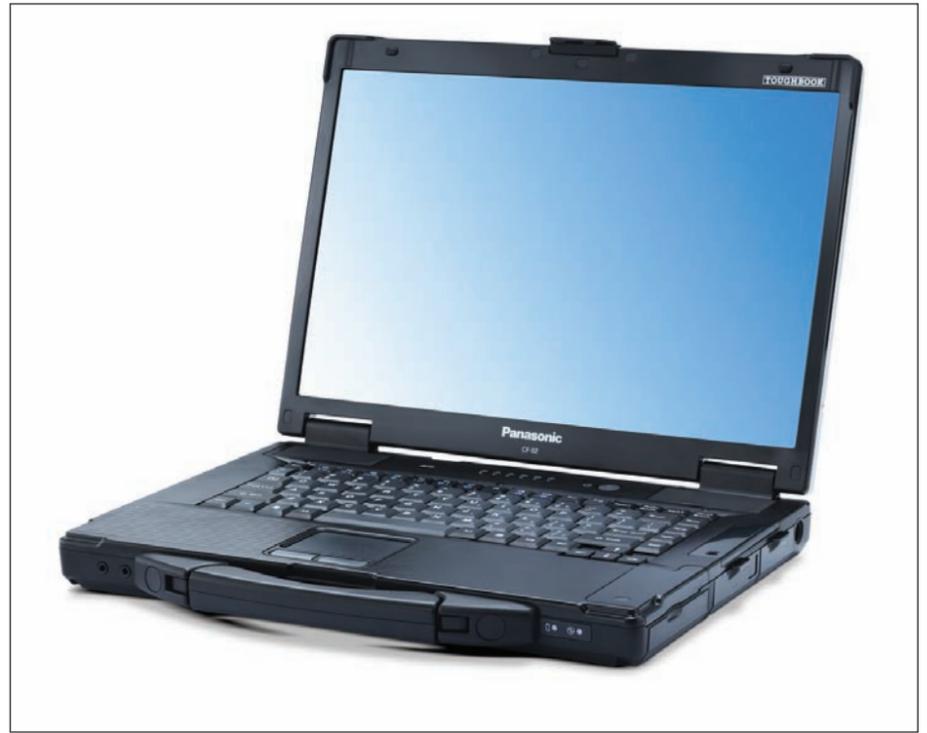
To put it in perspective, a score of seven in the dust category means the device is "absolutely sealed" explained Poulton, and a best possible score of eight in the water category means it can survive prolonged submersion in two metres of water.

If you're choosing a computer for a shop environment, dust is likely more of a concern than water exposure, Poulton noted. For vehicle-mounted computers, which may be attached to forklifts or service trucks, long-term shock and vibration resistance should also be considered.

"Shock and vibrations are much more ongoing," Poulton pointed out.

The durability of today's rugged computers is one reason for their more widespread adoption into maintenance operations. Another is their increased capabilities.

"Handheld computers are packing incredible amounts of processing power relative to their size," said Poulton, noting even everyday devices such as a BlackBerry or PDA are becoming



DURABLE: Rugged computers feature a tough external shell and shock-mounted components so they can survive being dropped on the shop floor.

more powerful.

Fleets and maintenance operations that are making the switch to rugged mobile computing solutions are generally achieving a payback in under a year, Poulton said.

However, there are many variables at play so it will vary from operation to operation.

In addition to having the ability to improve technician productivity, the computers boast a longer life than their traditional non-rugged counterparts.

Instead of a three-year life-cycle, Poulton said most of Psion Teklogix's customers are achieving five- and seven-year life spans from their rugged computers.

Panasonic's white paper noted that notebooks and PCs have an annual failure rate of 15% in their first year of use climbing to 22% by year four. Problem areas generally include:

motherboards; hard drives; l a t c h e s ; hinges; keyboards; and screens – each of which are protected on rugged devices.

When choosing a system, it's also

important to consider the future requirements of the device.

"Make sure you choose a platform that meets your needs today, but has some flexibility to meet your unknown needs going forward," suggested Poulton. This is especially important, given the longer life-cycles of rugged computers.

Technological advancements – the emergence of RFID for instance – may require you to upgrade your system before it has reached the end of its useful life.

"The mobile market is so dynamic – changes can occur within your business that you didn't even initiate, so you should future-proof the solution, allow it to evolve," Poulton suggested.

That way, when an upgrade or a new capability is launched, you can simply download or install the new module and keep your system up-to-date.

Some well-known companies have begun making the transition from traditional computing systems to rugged mobile devices. Navistar, for instance, has equipped nearly 1,000 of its International Truck dealerships with Panasonic's Toughbooks. The computers are used on the shop floor to diagnose mechanical problems.

They have built-in wireless Internet capabilities, so technicians can access details such as vehicle history, warranty coverage and parts availability.

In Panasonic's white paper, Gerry Beronja, director of global marketing with Snap-on Diagnostics said Web accessibility is one more reason fleets and shops will continue to make the switch.

"The trend is quickly moving towards having access to a PC in every service bay," he said. "As applications and automotive reprogramming software move to the Web, technicians need to have access to the Web while at the fender of the vehicle. Rugged notebooks provide a way to connect to vehicles (via wireless and USB connections) while getting information from the Web. Service information is critical to technicians. This is especially true as manufacturer and aftermarket equipment providers move away from CD and DVD solutions to Web solutions." □

'Handheld computers are packing incredible amounts of processing power relative to their size.'

James Poulton, Psion Teklogix



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Maintenance

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6 Ways to improve fuel mileage

In the shop

By James Menzies

Diesel prices well in excess of a buck a litre appear to be the new reality for fleets and owner/operators in Canada. Survival in these trying times will hinge on your ability to recover fuel price increases from your customers and maximize fuel mileage as much as possible.

Much of a fleet's fuel economy performance is ultimately in the hands of the guy or gal behind the wheel – but optimizing fuel mileage begins in the shop.

Simply put, a well-maintained vehicle performs better, and consequently achieves better fuel mileage, than a poorly-maintained truck. Here are a few tips owner/operators or maintenance managers can employ to improve their MPG.

Maintain proper tire pressures

One of the simplest ways to maximize fuel mileage is to keep tires inflated to the proper pressure.

"Tire pressure can significantly affect fuel mileage, and requires a closer inspection than a thump with a baseball bat," says Ed Saxman, Volvo marketing product manager, drivetrain. "The time it takes to periodically air up all 18 tires to a recommended pressure is well worth it."

For every 10 psi a tire is under-inflated, a driver is penalized with a 1% drop in fuel economy.

Trailer tires have the biggest impact on fuel mileage, and yet these are often the most neglected tires on a tractor-trailer combination. Check tire pressures on tractors and trailers whenever they visit the shop and be sure to insist that drivers perform daily pressure checks to improve fuel mileage.

Check vehicle alignment

To get the best possible fuel mileage, it's crucial the tires are pointed straight down the highway. "A tire that deviates only 1/4 degree from straight ahead will try to travel 10-15 feet sideways for each mile the vehicle travels

forward," according to *Secrets of Better Fuel Economy* a guide on fuel mileage published by Cummins.

Tests performed by Cummins show a tractor-trailer with a steer tire toe-in of 3/8" and a drive axle that's an inch out of alignment will punish fuel mileage to the tune of 2.2%.

It also causes premature tire wear, another unnecessary expense.

Inspect the fan

It takes between 10 and 70 horsepower to drive the fan on a heavy-duty truck engine.

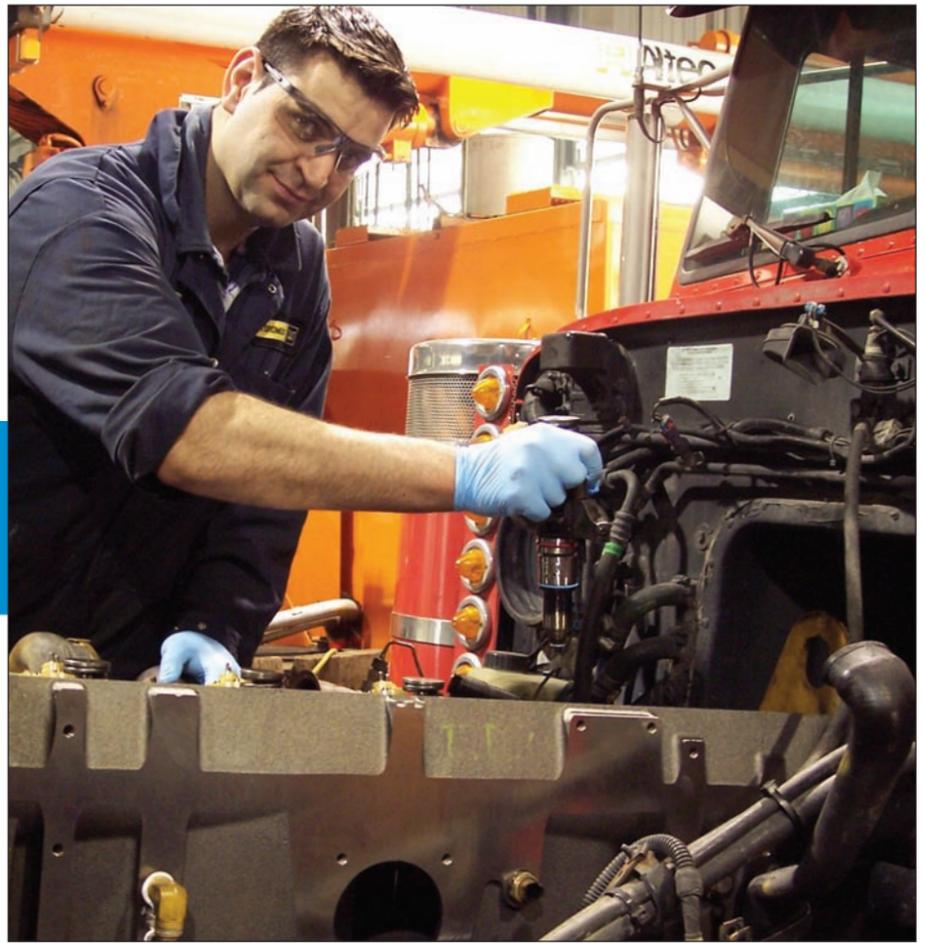
Typically, the fan will run 5-7% of the time the engine is on (depending on the time of year), but a problematic fan will run much more frequently.

Cummins *Secrets of Better Fuel Economy* says common fan problems include: an inoperative fan clutch; faulty thermostatic switch; or low coolant levels. Each of these can increase fan-on time and consume fuel unnecessarily.

About 50% of fan-on time is attributed to the freon compressor operation, according to Cummins. An overcharged system, defective or incorrect head pressure switches or a failed condenser can all cause fuel mileage to suffer.

Limit vehicle speeds

Setting an engine's speed limiter is a simple process, and one that's already employed by many of the best-run Canadian trucking companies. It soon may be law in



SAVING FUEL FROM THE SHOP: While the driver is responsible for maximizing fuel economy from behind the wheel, the maintenance staff also has a role to play. Good maintenance practices can have a significant impact on the amount of diesel burned by a fleet of trucks.

Photo by Adam Ledlow

Ontario and Quebec, but it's not necessary to wait until proposed speed limiter legislation is effective before taking action.

All engines built since the mid-90s have the capability – you simply need to plug into the engine's ECM and manually set the desired top speed.

Slowing truck speeds from 113 km/h to 105 km/h improves mileage by about half a mile per gallon, according to Caterpillar.

The company claims fuel economy suffers about one-tenth of a mile per gallon for every 1 mph (1.6 km/h) over 55 mph (89 km/h) that the truck runs.

Check for air leaks

Leaks in a tractor-trailer's air system can cause the air compressor to overwork, resulting in an increased horsepower draw.

A loaded tractor-trailer driven at 1,500 RPM will require 4.5 hp to operate the air compressor, according to Cummins.

That's fine, but reducing usage

of the compressor will noticeably save fuel.

Cummins states in its MPG guide that an air compressor should run about 5% of the engine run time with 10 to 12 minutes between cycles.

If it's running more frequently than that, there could be a costly problem such as an air leak. Excessive operation of the air compressor can cause a 2% reduction in fuel mileage.

Gear fast, run slow

The gearing of a truck is particularly important if you hope to maximize fuel economy. Trucks spec'd for optimum fuel mileage should be set up to "gear fast, run slow."

For instance, a Cummins ISX running line-haul with loads slightly less than 80,000 lbs would normally be geared to run at 1,450 RPM at normal highway speeds.

If geared for maximum fuel mileage, however, it will be set to run at 1,400 RPM in the top gears. Keeping the RPMs down at highway speeds is a good way to save fuel.

Transmission and rear axle ratios and even tire size are all part of the fuel mileage equation.

Unfortunately, trade-offs are sometimes necessary when gearing for fuel mileage.

Performance characteristics such as startability, torque, gradeability and cruise speed may be impacted by setting the gearing for improved fuel mileage. However, with the cost of diesel now hovering at \$1.20/litre, those are trades that may be worth considering. □

Fuel-saving maintenance tips from Kenworth

Kenworth has published a white paper on maximizing fuel mileage. Included are the following maintenance tips:

- Maintain tire pressure and check tire wear;
- Replace air and fuel filters at proper intervals;
- Keep axles properly aligned;
- Repair any body damage. That front corner of the dinged-up bumper hanging down hurts the vehicle's aerodynamics and fuel economy;
- Use a good synthetic or semi-synthetic oil in the engine and drive axles. Also use a good synthetic transmission fluid;
- Don't use a higher viscosity oil than actually needed for the operating conditions. □



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Maintenance

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Owner/operators: Dare to compare?

How do your maintenance practices stack up? Transportation Media conducts an annual Buying Trends Survey which offers a glimpse into the maintenance practices of fleets and owner/operators. The statistics on this page reflect owner/operator responses to questions about their tire and heavy-duty engine oil purchasing and maintenance procedures.

Tires

Most owner/operators (59%) prefer to outsource their tire maintenance to a third-party such as a dealer, according to our research.

Our research also found that price will have an influence on tire purchasing decisions 33% of the time among owner/ops. Fifty-one per cent will use a strategy involving in-house tire preventive maintenance services such as fleet inspection, flat checks and pressure maintenance as their top way to control tire costs. Only 16% plan to control tire costs by purchasing a better product.

When it comes to tire failures, uneven tread wear is the biggest problem on steer tires. Punctures are the biggest threat to owner/operator drive tires and tread/ply separation poses the biggest risk on trailer tires.

Oils

Only 19% of owner/operators are using synthetic heavy-duty engine oils, according to our research. Forty-eight per cent select a premium mineral-based HDEO and 33% use a conventional mineral-based oil.

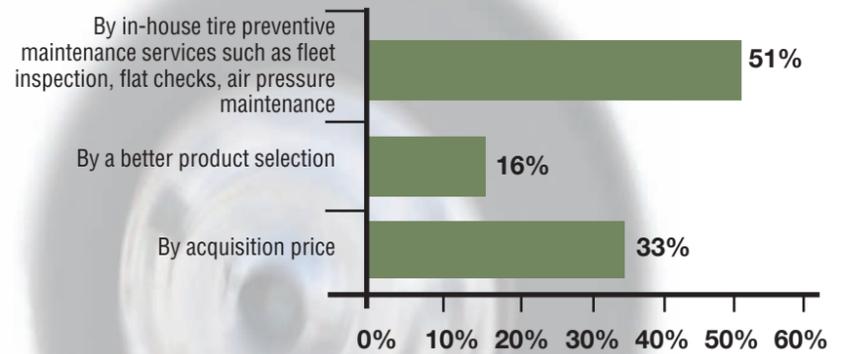
Oil analysis is important to 55% of owner/operators, with most opting for quarterly analyses.

When it comes to oil change intervals, 24% of owner/operators have a 20,001-25,000-km interval while 23% change their oil slightly more frequently, between 15,001-20,000 km. Twenty per cent of respondents change their oil between 10,001-15,000 km while another 20% change their oil every 10,000 km or less. □

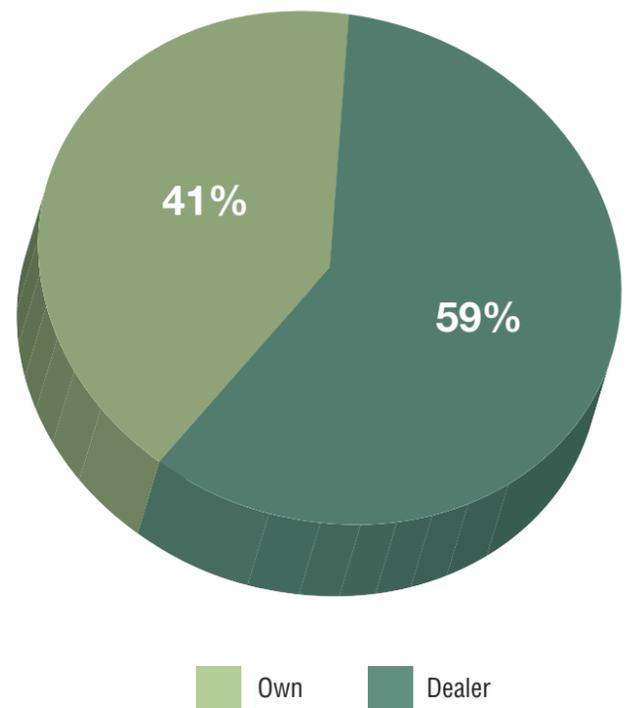
Most Prevalent Problems at each tire position

Owner/Operators	Steer Tires	Drive Tires	Trailer Tires
Uneven tread wear	81%	28%	31%
Nail/glass cuts and punctures	10%	56%	28%
Sidewall damage	11%	20%	31%
Tread/ply separation	4%	24%	34%

Tire Cost Optimization Strategies



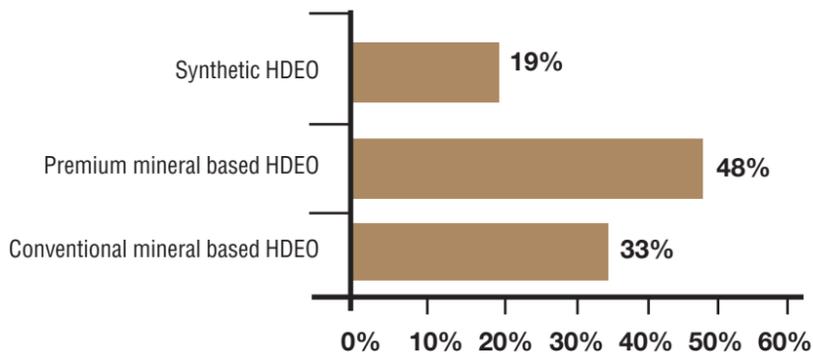
Preference for in-house vs outsourced tire maintenance



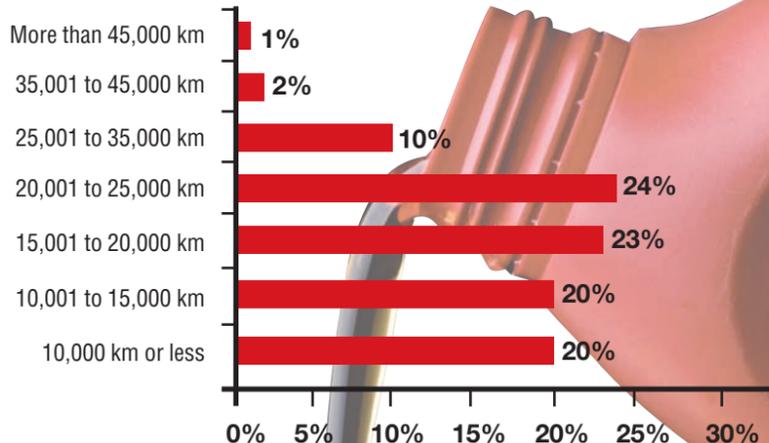
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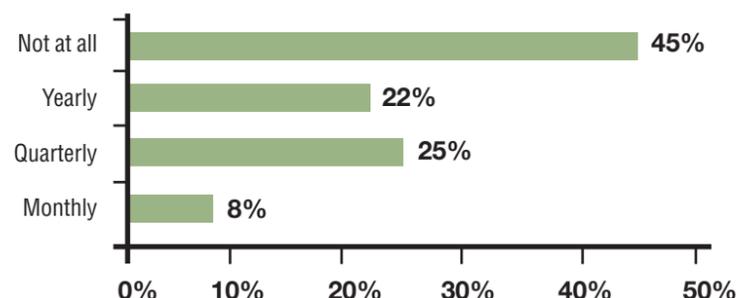
Types of Motor Oils Used



Oil Change Intervals



Oil Analysis Frequency



DEM/DEALER NEWS



TOPS IN MEDIUM-DUTY SALES: Pictured from left to right are: Frank Gallagher, commercial truck sales manager, Ontario region and Atlantic; Russ White, Irvine truck sales representative; Mike Mintsopoulos, Irvine general manager; Joe Aiello, national manager, GM commercial truck sales and field operations; and Manny Caruso, Irvine new truck sales manager. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

Irvine, Gold Key repeat winners in GM sales

By Adam Ledlow

MARKHAM, Ont. – Both Irvine Truck Centre of Markham, Ont. and Gold Key’s commercial truck centre in Surrey, B.C., have once again been named the top dealerships in their respective classes. Irvine generated the highest sales of any medium-duty GM dealership in Canada for 2007, while Gold Key accomplished the same feat for W-series low cab-forward trucks.

Irvine, which beat out 74 other medium-duty dealerships to claim top spot, had the best sales numbers in 2006 as well, achieving an all-time high in that year. Irvine sales representative Russ White was also able to defend his title as top performing salesperson in the nation.

Gold Key delivered 124 units in 2007 and was a repeat winner, like Irvine. “This impressive feat is due to Gold Key’s outstanding customer service and overall business performance as well as the 110% effort and valuable work contributions that are made by over 100 committed members of the Gold Key Team,” officials said. □



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Show & Shine Registration – Thursday July 24, 10 am – 9 pm (for pre-registered)

Trade Show – Set-up Wednesday & Thursday, 9 am – 9 pm

Music in the Park – Friday Night – April Wine, Kim Mitchell, David Wilcox
– Saturday Afternoon – The Dixie Flyers, Jessie Farrell
– Saturday Evening – Gord Bamford, Aaron Pritchett
– Sunday – Alex J. Robinson, Aaron Lines

Truckpulls – Canada’s Largest Truck & Tractor Pull – featuring North America’s greatest pullers
– Thursday July 24, 7 pm, Great Lakes Truck & Tractor Pullers Association
– Friday July 25, 7 pm, Pro Pulling League – Empire State Pullers
– Saturday July 26, 10 am, Garden Tractor, single engine mods, mini rods & heavies
– Saturday July 26, 6 pm, Pro Pulling League – Empire State Pullers
– Sunday July 27, 12 noon Demolition Derby

Saturday night BBQ – 6 pm – 8 pm

Sunday Morning Breakfast – 8 am – 10:30 am

Show & Shine Awards – Sunday July 27

Family Area – Entertainment and activities for kids, Sunday morning church service with “Transport for Christ”

Gates Open

Thursday July 24, 6 pm (Truck pulls only)
Friday July 25, noon
Saturday July 26, 9 am
Sunday July 27, 7:30 am

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Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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David Wilcox	Cathy Korpi	
	Dawson Reigns	
	Jessie Farrell	
	Gord Bamford	
	Aaron Pritchett	

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An accountant's guide to cutting fuel costs

Slow down. Don't over-rev the engine. Cut your idling time. There's no shortage of advice from fleet managers, driver-trainers, or even your own gut about how to control the cost of fuel.

But what does your accountant have to say?

I don't drive a truck for a living. But I do see good ideas and decisions reflected in the balance sheets of owner/operators and small fleet managers who are finding ways to reduce the impact of volatile fuel prices on their business.

Talk to your accountant about fuel-saving strategies off the road. Here are four questions to ask:

What percentage of my operating cost is diesel fuel?

Fuel traditionally represents 15% to 30% of a carrier's operating cost. A recent report from the Ontario Trucking Association says that figure is closer to 45% today. At many carriers in Canada and the US, the cost of fuel outstrips the cost of labour.

Because fuel is rising at a greater rate than other operating expenses (the price of diesel has jumped 250% over the last five years), it makes sense to monitor fuel as a percentage of your overall operating cost. If you receive a fuel surcharge, or are setting rates, it gives you a more precise idea of whether what you're charging is enough to recoup your cost.

Should taxes affect where I buy my fuel?

When you buy diesel, various taxes are buried in the price. The US and Canada both levy a federal fuel tax; in Canada, you pay

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



GST or HST as well.

Then there are state and provincial taxes which vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

You don't really know how much fuel costs unless you take all the taxes out. If you're an owner/operator leased to a carrier that's responsible for fuel tax and reporting for your vehicle, your only concern is finding the lower pump price. But if the carrier charges you when you owe fuel taxes or pays you when you're due a refund, you may be able to reduce costs by purchasing fuel in jurisdictions with the best net price (we post an up-to-date fuel-price comparison chart at www.tfsgroup.com/tfs/wheretobuy-fuel.html).

Is my draw a fixed cost or a variable one?

With fuel through the roof, insurance premiums continuing to increase, and normal inflation, one of the few expenses that is probably not heading upward is your salary.

If you're an incorporated owner/operator, your labour costs are the total of the T4 wage expense and dividends you pay to yourself. If you're a sole proprietor, your labour cost is your net profit – the number at the bottom of your P&L that you just paid tax on.

I know a lot of business owners wrestle with whether to take home less in order to pay for unanticipated costs. Faced with raising prices, cutting employees, or simply eating the cost themselves, they choose the latter. Maybe that's a reality of being self-employed.

Or perhaps, if you commit to paying yourself \$60,000 a year, you draw that \$5,000 a month no matter what. In addition to paying household expenses, you continue investing a portion of that income so each contribution compounds and strengthens your personal savings. And you find other ways

to save on the business.

What does my contract say about fuel surcharges?

Among owner/operators and the carriers they're leased to, the debate over fuel surcharges has moved beyond how they are calculated to how they are treated on broker settlement statements.

Some carriers show fuel surcharges on their broker statements with the revenue, others show it as a reimbursement. A surcharge is an additional, variable cost that's added to the basic rate for the service. It's separate from the rate, fluctuates with the price of fuel, and in theory will go away once fuel prices decline.

In my opinion, it's not income. Reporting it as such creates additional, unwarranted expenses for the owner/operator. For example, the carrier may charge its owner/operators for insurance based on their gross income. Factoring a surcharge into this figure would inflate the insurance fee and unfairly reduce the fuel surcharge's affect of compensating for higher fuel costs.

Fair or not, some carriers will do whatever they want. It's hard to pin them down to broker agreements that they themselves wrote and generally are able to change at any time.

When it comes to comparing carriers to work with, you can't only look at one number but must consider the whole pay package. If your carrier isn't treating you fairly with fuel surcharges, perhaps it's time for a change. There is no point in staying loyal to someone that's not loyal to you.

Don't believe the old trucker's tale that all carriers are the same. But don't get fooled by one part of a pay package, either. Review all the charges and paid-for items to determine how much you'd make at another carrier versus where you are now. Your accountant should be able to help you with this. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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Perfect storm hit harder, faster than anyone expected

The mess we're in today didn't happen overnight. Some of the complicating factors occurred surprisingly quickly and took a lot of us by surprise, but the signs were there. The difficulty, as always, comes in making the necessary adjustments. As I talk with the folks on the road, it's difficult to ignore the anguish and total frustration in their voices.

Yet, the suffering isn't universal. Some are doing surprisingly well today – carriers and owner/operators alike. Maybe they saw it coming and took steps sooner, or reacted differently. Who knows? Whatever made the difference will give rise to some interesting analysis when all this is over, but I'd bet those who weather the storm best will be the smart operators who value business relationships and understand that you just can't truck for nothing.

For the benefit of those still wondering what happened to trucking over the past 18 months, here's how experts explain it.

Canadians got creamed when the US dollar imploded last spring. The exchange rate evaporated in the space of about six months, taking with it the premium we enjoyed on freight rates. The Yanks stopped buying Canadian goods just as our appetite for American stuff boomed. Southbound loads were moving at fire sale prices, and because of the cost of deadheading south to get

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



freight destined for Canada, we found ourselves at a competitive disadvantage in the northbound lanes.

Two years earlier, truck makers had begun ramping up production in response to the 07 pre-buy demand. While demand for trucking service was dropping, roughly 100,000 more new trucks than usual hit the street between 2005 and 2006. This caused a glut in capacity that penny-pinching shippers were eager to take advantage of.

It was not a pretty picture: banks were tightening up on credit, the US was heading into a recession, and with US freight volumes down, American truckers were grabbing what had traditionally been our freight.

And then the price of fuel went through the roof.

Fuel prices had been climbing steadily since 9/11, but the increases have been more or less manageable until recently. You can deal with steady, slow increases by adjusting rates and surcharges as you go, but with the spikes we've experienced since the beginning of 2008, we've simply been unable to adjust.

I heard some scary numbers last month at Truck World in Toronto from Steve Russell, chair and CEO of Celadon, the Indianapolis-based truckload carrier with terminals and operations in Mexico and Canada. In his "State of the Industry" speech he pointed out that fuel costs on 120,000 miles a year have increased by \$56,000 since 9/11. That's fifty-six-thousand dollars more than it cost to run 120,000 miles in 2001.

Are you making \$56,000 more than you did in 2001/2002?

Celadon's fuel surcharge was 59 cents/mile in April when fuel was at \$4.05/gallon (\$1.07/litre). That was on top of what he says was the company's average rate of \$1.55/mile. But in the last three months of last year, Russell says the average rate paid by a Celadon customer went down by a nickel a mile to \$1.50. That may not sound like much, but it cost his company \$3 million in the fourth quarter of 2007.

Yet despite skyrocketing fuel costs, I hear every day about one carrier or another actually *cutting* fuel surcharges. Unbelievable. They're cutting mileage rates, too, and some are even trying to shorten the distance between two points on the map. But when I state the obvious – don't take the cut if you can't afford it – some owner/ops argue it's unreasonable to expect 50- to 60-cent surcharges

from carriers and customers. Only you can make that call because you know your costs, but if the big outfits are charging and getting 59 cents, why aren't you?

In his Truck World speech, Russell also noted that historically, about 100 small fleets in the US fail in a typical quarter. Compare that with the first three months of this year when 400 fleets went belly-up. He watches stuff like that.

Watching the signs is part or knowing your market, one of the seven habits of successful owner/operators – or any business operator for that matter.

And speaking of watching the signs, lest you become one of the statistics Russell cites in his next speech, keep a sharp eye open for clues that your business partners might be experiencing difficulties. If cheques are withheld or don't clear the bank, or if you're seeing unexplained deductions, there's probably a cash flow problem.

If your fuel cards are capped or limited, be wary. You wouldn't want to be halfway across the country when the fuel company – or worse, the insurance company – pulls the plug. Know the big picture. But, say the pundits, don't expect the view to change anytime soon. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. What's your view? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free 888-794-9990.

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Guest column: The full story on speed limiters

By Barry E. Prentice

Transportation policy changes can affect everyone and have to be weighed carefully in terms of safety, security, environmental impact and economics. The lobby to impose mandatory speed governors on transport trucks in Ontario is leading to legislation that could have pervasive effects on the travelling public.

Speeding is dangerous driving behaviour, and transport trucks are involved in highway fatalities. However the linkage is more tenuous. Car drivers are more often responsible for accidents involving trucks than the professional driver in the cab.

For those who remember the famous TV show *Cannonball*, the star was a careful and safe driver, who did not speed or take unnecessary chances. Not every driver is Cannonball Mike Malone, but the stereotype of careful, professional truck operators is well-deserved.

The leading trucking companies in Canada have already installed electronic speed governors on their fleets and the trucks of owner/operators as a fuel-saving measure. The argument that mandatory speed governors increase safety is weak, but some environmental savings could be possible because lower fuel consumption equates to reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The net reduction in GHG emissions attributable to speed limiters assumes that the remainder of the traffic flow is not affected. If speed governors on trucks cause increased traffic congestion or force more speed adjustments by cars and light trucks, GHG emissions could increase. Accelerating and decelerating creates more emissions than travelling at a constant speed.

Bottlenecks are created and congestion results when vehicles travel at different speeds over the same network. The most acute problems would occur on two-lane roads, but

four-lane divided highways would be affected, too. The impact of voluntary truck governors is already visible on busy corridors like Ontario's Hwy. 400.

Passenger cars and delivery vehicles queue up behind tractor-trailers that are slowly grinding past one another. Movement around these mobile bottlenecks creates acceleration and deceleration of the non-truck traffic flow. The GHG emissions savings of tractor-trailers might be exceeded easily by the increased emissions of other vehicles on the road.

On two-lane roads, truck governors could pose increased safety risks and more GHG emissions. If trucks cannot achieve a safe passing speed, vehicles moving at less than the speed limit could force the trucks to operate at their speed, too. Imagine a conga line of transport trucks following a family hauling an RV on vacation. These impacts are likely to be magnified if the terrain is hilly or the road is winding where it

is more difficult for passenger cars to overtake them.

If speed governors cannot be supported on safety or environmental grounds, then the only remaining argument is economic. The creation of a level playing field has intuitive appeal, but it depends on whether it improves competition and efficiency. If governors are mandated in Ontario and perhaps Quebec, can this regulation be extended to trucks coming from the US and neighbouring provinces?

The US could view such regulation as a non-tariff barrier to trade. In Canada the federal government has constitutional control over extra-provincial transport. If speed limiter regulation cannot be imposed on trucks from other jurisdictions, then regulated carriers could suffer a competitive disadvantage inside and outside their jurisdiction.

Individuals that own a highway tractor and contract with a larger trucking firm to haul loads on their behalf (owner/operators) view mandatory governors negatively.

A survey of 15,327 owner/operators in the US by the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) found that safety and congestion were four of their top five concerns: lack of passing speed; increased congestion; fear of being rear-ended; and more frequent passing by automobiles. The other major concern was income: the need to drive longer to get miles. The majority of the owner/operators are paid by the mile, and the next largest group is paid by the trip. Owner/operator earnings fall if it takes longer to complete the trip, unless their compensation is increased.

Large carriers that already have speed limiters may offer better pay or benefits, such that the economic trade-off is less important, but the OOIDA survey found that 81% of the O/Os would choose the non-governed carriers if everything else was equal. The use of voluntary speed governors is a competitive disadvantage in a labour market of chronic driver shortage. This may explain the lack of unanimity on the issue within the trucking industry.

Better speed enforcement is possible and need not be prohibitively expensive. Programming a system to measure and record speed, location and distance could be devised, with a requirement for periodic reporting at weigh stations. Fines could be levied if the driver exceeds the maximum speeds more than five or 10% of the time. This would allow the drivers to obtain a safe passing speed without facilitating excess speeding behaviour.

The public debate prompted by the issue of mandatory governors on trucks is beneficial because speeding does cause accidents. The problem is that dividing the traffic flow into two distinct groups moving at different speeds causes congestion, raises safety issues and may increase GHG emissions. If speed limiters on trucks become mandatory, it is only a question of time before pressure will mount for mandatory speed governors on private automobiles and light trucks. □

— Barry E. Prentice is a professor at the Transport Institute at the University of Manitoba.





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On speed limiters, foreign powers and getting stuck in Wawa

A couple of matters are nagging me. The first thing is the speed limiter debate: despite all the energy expended by the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) and others to make truck speed limiters mandatory in Ontario, the exercise oozes irony. It's really not necessary anymore since we are running at 105 km/h! Things have changed in recent months: impaling fuel prices for one thing, and the fact that the large majority of fleet owners (80% my guess) do have their equipment electronically governed.

There's still the odd cowboy rolling at a buck twenty but this is a rarity – and the rocket ship pilots are pretty well gone (at least on the stretch of 401 I drive between Toronto and Montreal).

The perception among some drivers that a 105 top end is going to decrease road safety is plain wrong. There are no studies to suggest governed trucks will make the roads less safe. However, random checks of the electronic settings in trucks coming across the border will be sure to piss off a lot of owner/operators. In my view, privacy issues regarding black boxes haven't been addressed. A ministry official will tell you plainly that they won't use any other information extracted from a truck's CPU, but I remain skeptical.

The issue is doubly ironic as the OTA is on record as being allergic to the Kyoto Protocol but touting this as an environmental issue that will save hundreds of kilotonnes in greenhouse gas emissions.

If only the lobbyists would have spent some of their vigour on a subject that really is a scourge to public safety. Handheld phone blabbing is illegal while driving motor vehicles in provinces like Quebec and Newfoundland – why not Ontario?

No shortage of studies to show a correlation between accidents and handheld phones, and truck drivers are some of the worst offenders. You see this at the truck docks where some drivers think they can blindside better with a flip phone pressed against the side of their face. These are often 20- and 30-year-old somethings and I'm tired of mentioning it to them. They don't care. It's endemic to this generation of truck drivers and there ought to be a law.

Secondly, I was talking to my friend Ross Mackie the other day, patriarch of Mackie Moving Systems in Oshawa, Ont., and he was decrying the sorry state of the North American economy, particularly the loss of good manufacturing jobs.

When was the last time that you heard anyone say "Buy Canadian" – 15 years ago? Is globalism so entrenched that we don't even hear a whimper about supporting our homegrown industries? As Mackie mentioned, "Canadians have a short memory." And may I add, little foresight. What we're doing is slowly choking ourselves to death.

It doesn't matter if a company's head office is in Bentonville, Ark.

On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



or Brampton, Ont. If 90% of the consumer goods sold at that department store are produced by an Asian nation, that company is in effect owned and controlled by that offshore power.

Have we really just given up? My opinion is that some measure of dignity and jobs could be saved if we were smarter about where we spent our money and chose to buy products still made on this continent, before there aren't any left to buy.

Yep, things are changing fast in this old world, just look at winnowing going on in the trucking industry. Once again, carriers and

transport providers have to regroup and surround the wagons. Maybe we should all pull up stakes and try growing ethanol.

Lastly, I want to ask our readers for help with a book project I've been working on called *Stuck in Wawa: A Generation on the Road*. It's a collection of stories from people that thumbed and/or offered rides during the golden era of hitchhiking, the 1960s and 70s. I also have stories from other eras and continents but the main body is situated alongside the Trans-Canada in those decades.

Those were different times. Thousands of young people (mostly males) stuck out their thumbs and went wandering. It was one of the rare times in history when a social movement and technology came together. A system of youth hostels supported by government LIP grants made it possible to travel across the coun-

try for little or no money. I was one of those kids on the road worried about my pimples trying to catch a ride to Vancouver. Every summer I would get the urge to hit the road. Maybe that's one reason I've chosen trucking as a career.

I miss those days to some degree. Unfortunately, new Canadians and young people these days don't have the same urge to see their county and I think that's somewhat of a shame. A lot of my contemporaries shared this experience and it influenced the way we see the world. I think the time has come to tell those stories. If you've got a hitchhiking story, I'd like to hear it. Please contact me at hrudolfs@rogers.com. □

– Harry Rudolfs is on-road editor with *Truck News* and a full-time professional driver. He can be reached at hrudolfs@rogers.com.

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Mushrooms on the side

Mushrooms have been popping up in health discussions a lot lately.

Interestingly, mushrooms are neither plants nor animals. Although they share some qualities of both, they belong to the fungi family, which are composed of simple organisms.

Over the past 50 years, much medical advancement had hinged on simple organisms, like: mould, yeast and fungi. In fact, the first antibiotics (penicillin, tetracycline and auremycin) were created from moulds and used as miracle cures for infections and communicable diseases. Recently, a drug derived from fungus (Cyclosporin) has been used to prevent rejection after organ transplants.

You may be surprised at how many common foods use simple organisms for their production, such as: bread, beer, wine, cheese, organic acids, and even some vitamins.

Lately, mushrooms in particular

Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



have been drawing attention because of their health-building qualities. Studies show that some mushrooms have antiviral, antibacterial and anticancer features. Mushrooms also have a number of nutrients: vegetable proteins, fibre, pantothenic acid, vitamins (thymine, riboflavin, niacin, biotin, B complex and C), minerals (iron, zinc, calcium, and copper) and antioxidants.

Interestingly, mushrooms are the only natural fresh vegetable or fruit with Vitamin D.

They are ideal for the weight-conscious, since they are about 90% water and have only 100

cal/oz. They are very low in sodium and fat, and very high in fibre.

Traditional Chinese medicine has used mushrooms to promote good health and vitality, believing they make your body more resilient when stressed. Current studies support this idea. Mushrooms are considered probiotic, meaning that they help the body strengthen itself and fight off disease by keeping the body systems balanced. They contain compounds called Host Defense Potentiators (HDP) which build your immune system. These are included in cancer treatments in Japan and China and are being considered for use in North America and Europe now.

Often mushrooms are ignored when we plan our menus because we focus on the brightly coloured fruits and vegetables since we know they are full of nutrition. However, this narrow focus leaves mushrooms in the dark, even though mushrooms share many of the same important nutrients and are just as healthy.

One particular nutrient that stands out is selenium. Selenium is a mineral that protects body cells from the damage that leads to heart disease, diabetes, obesity, some cancers (prostate, colorectal), and age-related diseases. Selenium is also critical for immune system health, and improves male fertility. Even though meats and grains are good sources of selenium, mushrooms are one of the richest sources, giving up to 22 mcg/serving (depending on the soil they were grown on).

To be sure to get these vital nutrients, toss a few mushrooms in your grocery cart. The produce department has some different types to choose from.

North America's favourite is the white button mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*). Two other kinds of *Agaricus bisporus* are brown mushrooms (Crimini) which have an earthier flavour and a firmer texture, and Portabella mushrooms which have a meaty flavour along with a large umbrella-shaped cap. Notably, one medium portabella mushroom has even more potassium than a banana or a glass of orange juice.

Another popular type is the Reishi mushroom. They contain ingredients that can reduce tumour growth. They also work as painkillers, anti-inflammatories, antioxidants, antibacterials and antivirals. They can lower blood pressure, prevent lung congestion and maintain liver health.

Shiitake mushrooms contain lentinan, which has been licensed in Japan as an anti-cancer drug. These have can be helpful for treating certain cancers: bowel, liver, stomach, ovarian and lung. They contain several anti-oxidants (selenium, Vitamins A, E, and C) as well as Vitamin D.

One strong point making mushrooms popular is their availability. No matter the season, you can find mushrooms in the grocery store: canned, dried, frozen or fresh.

When shopping for mushrooms, handle them with care. Bruises affect their taste and decrease their nutritional value. Look for small to medium mushrooms that have their caps closed around the stem. As well, the top of their cap should be white, creamy or light brown in colour, with no dark spots. Over-ripe mushrooms have wide open caps and dark gills underneath. Damaged mushrooms may have caps with dents or dark blotches.

When you get your mushrooms home, store them in the fridge in the same package you bought them in. The best idea is to put them in a paper bag and leave them in it. They need to breathe, so don't pack them too tightly. Don't store them in a plastic bag or in the crisper. The crisper is moist, so they will rot quickly there. Usually fresh mushrooms stored properly will stay fresh for about a week.

Use mushrooms as a main course or add them to soups and salads. When on the road, centre on your health and order mushrooms on the side. □

– Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant and she can be reached by e-mail at karen_bowen@yahoo.com.

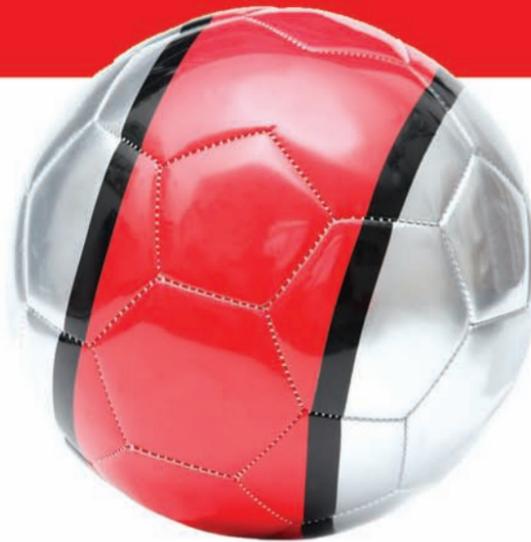
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Welcome to construction season

By Scott Creighton

The ice and snow are melting away after one of the worst winters on record, but truck drivers understand the threat of the other Canadian season that is now upon us. It's called construction season.

Overnight, construction zones can emerge as quickly as any storm front ever could.

Within a few kilometres of the first warning sign, well-travelled lanes can disappear behind walls of jersey barriers, flag people and construction equipment.

All the traffic will slow down to a crawl, and any hope of a Just-in-Time delivery will evaporate like the steam that rises from a freshly applied layer of asphalt.

It can be a frustrating – and dangerous – situation.

According to research conducted by the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), work zones represent a particular risk to commercial vehicles. Trucks may account for just over 10% of the traffic on the highway, but they also account for one-quarter of fatal construction zone incidents.

And while commercial vehicles usually account for 17% of the collisions that involve at least two vehicles, they are involved in 31% of such collisions that occur in work zones.

These numbers indicate only part of the problem. After all, the statistics may not reflect many of the collisions that happen outside an officially-marked work area, even if the appearance of a construction zone was responsible for a sudden change in vehicle speeds.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised about the overall risk. As the lanes begin to disappear, some motorists refuse to merge with other traffic until the last possible minute.

Despite the visible markings that exist, they appear determined to squeeze into any space that remains. (Assuming they are paying attention in the first place). And the most common form of collision involves one vehicle side-swiping another.

The challenges will be particularly apparent to those who haul oversized loads and have trouble fitting within a standard 12-foot lane. In a construction zone, an active lane might be as little as 10 feet wide, and that will force oversized vehicles to cross the all-important center line throughout the work area.

The best defensive tool for any truck driver will come in the form of information that warns about pending construction work. This can require dispatchers to keep in touch with government hotlines

that announce the timing of the projects, and distribute any related information over satellite units as soon as possible. But, sometimes, we need to recognize that this might not be enough. News of last-minute road repairs may need to come from local radio reports and be shared by truckers over the cell phone or CB.

Everybody plays a role in giving fellow truckers a chance to alter routes, inform customers about potential delays, or avoid the last-minute steering corrections that can cause a rollover.

In terms of actions at the wheel, drivers need to embrace all of their well-honed defensive driving techniques. Indeed, the appearance of a work zone's warning sign indicates that it is time to gear down and be prepared to stop. Narrowing and disappearing lanes will also require drivers to leave a little extra space between their bumper and the vehicle in front of them.

Since a significant number of work zone collisions involve rear-end crashes, it is particularly important for drivers to keep a close eye on the reflections in their West Coast mirrors, while maintaining the all-important escape route in case another motorist begins to squeeze into their lane.

Ignoring such defensive driving

practices will come at a cost – both in the form of potential collisions and steeper penalties. If workers are on the job in an Ontario construction zone, for example, an extra 30 km/h of speed could be met with a \$420 fine and four demerit points. By ignoring the signals from a flag person, a driver could face a \$500 fine and three points.

We all need to accept that the challenges of construction zones are hardly about to end anytime soon. North America's infrastructure will continue to crumble, and that means last-minute repairs will continue to be a reality.

We may not be able to predict the amount of snow that will fall next winter, but we can be certain that the challenges of construction season will be with us from one year to the next. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:3361;

– This month's expert is Scott Creighton, advisor in the safety and training services department. Scott has more than 20 years of experience as a driver and a safety supervisor including 18 years working for an over-dimensional carrier. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance Company of Canada, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers.



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Athlete's foot

**Back behind
the wheel**



**Dr. Christopher
Singh**

This month I am going to briefly discuss an important condition for truck drivers: athlete's foot.

Athlete's foot, also known as tinea pedis, is a common fungal infection of the foot that affects many people at some point in their lives.

Athlete's foot easily spreads in public places such as communal showers, locker rooms and gymnasiums. As a result, this is very common condition for truck drivers as many shower at public truck stops or rest areas.

In most cases, athlete's foot affects the spaces between the toes, but can spread to the rest of the foot including the toenails. This condition can be caused by several different fungi all of which thrive in warm, humid conditions.

Due to this, athlete's foot often affects people who wear enclosed footwear such as work boots, for extended periods of time. Again, this applies to many truck drivers who must wear protective footwear during their work day.

The signs and symptoms of athlete's foot can vary from person to person but most people report itching, stinging and burning between the toes, especially the fourth and fifth. Other people experience cracking and peeling skin most often on the soles of the feet. In rarer cases, the nails will become thick, ragged and/or discoloured.

You should seek medical help if you have a rash on your foot that does not improve after attempting self-care steps. In addition, you should see your doctor if you notice any major swelling or redness.

Once at your doctor's office, he/she will take a detailed medical history to determine if your symptoms are being caused by athlete's foot or by another skin condition. If necessary, your doctor may take a skin scraping to be viewed under a microscope.

If you do have athlete's foot, your doctor may advise you to use an antifungal ointment, lotion, spray or powder. It is important to continue using these medications for a few days after the symptoms have cleared up to make sure that the infection is completely eradicated. Most cases respond very well to these medications.

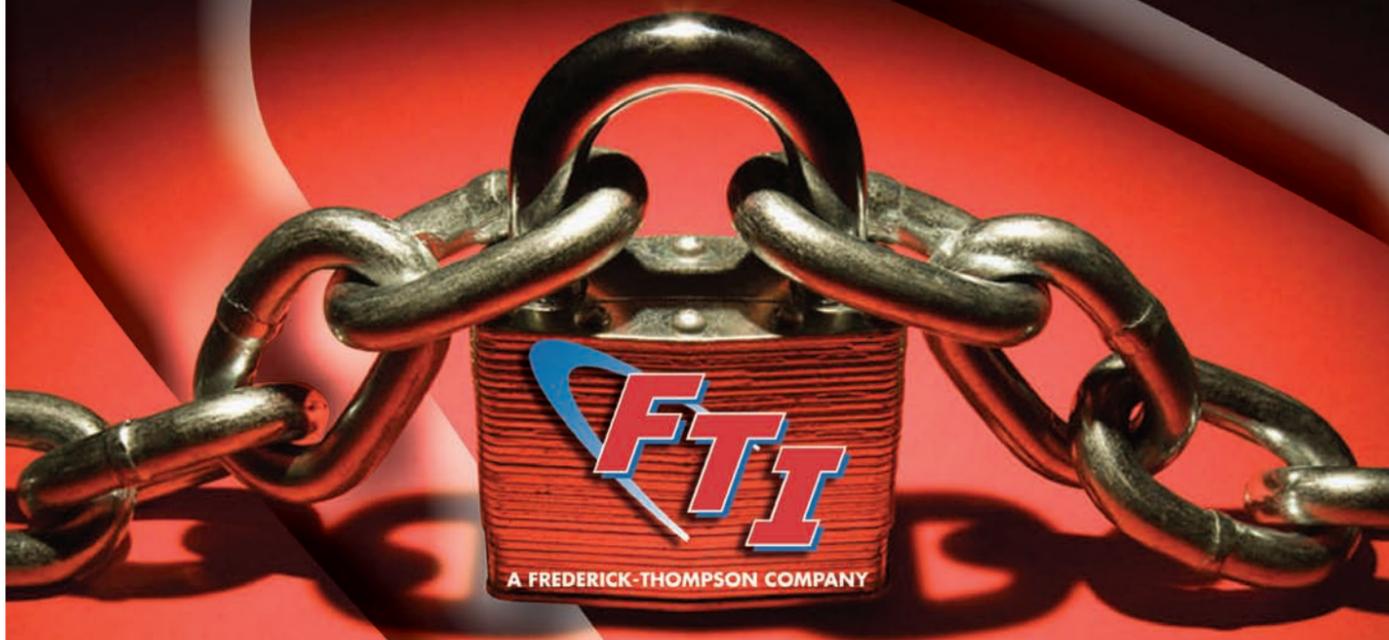
However, if your infection does not clear up after using these topical medications, your doctor may prescribe an oral antibiotic.

Here are a few tips to prevent athlete's foot: wear light, well-ventilated shoes/boots; wear sandals or shower shoes in public showers; keep your feet dry, especially between your toes; do not share shoes; and change socks regularly (up to twice a day during summer). □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:862;

— Dr. Chris Singh, B. Kin., D.C., runs Trans-Canada Chiropractic at 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

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INDUSTRY

Sometimes it's worth the wait

A couple of significant and troublesome issues with Ontario's system of licensing commercial truck drivers are well underway to being resolved – and while it took a while, perhaps it was worth the wait.

In a letter dated Apr. 24, the Ministry announced the introduction of a new restrictive licence condition for Class A drivers.

The restriction will apply to those who pass the Class A test with a small truck-trailer configuration, such as a pick-up truck and a horse trailer, and will prohibit the holder of the licence from operating larger, more complex tractor-trailers.

This new restriction takes effect June 16 and addresses a long-held industry concern. That being that people were opting to obtain a Class A licence without having the necessary skills to actually drive a tractor-trailer. It was a gap in the law, a rather large one, and some people took full advantage of it.

The issue had been brought to the attention of the Ministry on countless occasions, dating all the way back to a specific recommendation in Target '97, and perhaps even earlier. That's a long time to get a very important issue resolved.

Among industry professionals who kept hammering way at this loophole was Wayne Campbell. Wayne runs Adanac Truck Training near Toronto and has been tireless in his efforts to get the loophole closed.

Many other industry professionals and associations have raised the issue and received acknowledgements from the Ministry that the situation needed correcting, but until now nothing had been done. Until that is, the dreaded public exposure!

A short time ago Global Television ran a three-part series on its evening news broadcast exposing some of the ills of the driver training and licensing situation in Ontario.

During this series, a female reporter, who confessed to not having driven a tractor-trailer, received her Class A licence. The outrage that followed would have been humorous if it wasn't just downright laughable to those in the industry.

After all the years of the industry telling the Ministry about this particular concern and requesting that it be corrected, it took a television report to embarrass the Ministry into action. Within only a few months of the exposure, the Ministry announced the change to a new restrictive code.

Now the Ministry has embarked on a review of another controversial commercial driver licensing policy. This is the one that compels drivers who have reached the age of 65 to renew their licence on an annual basis, including the need to complete the written and road tests.

This particular policy has raised the ire of many in the industry, and not just the affected drivers.

It is hard to imagine why a person who could have been a commercial driver for many years would need to pass a written test

Private Links

Bruce Richards



just because they turned 65 years of age. This resulted in drivers leaving the industry or accepting a downgrade in their licence.

The timing couldn't have been worse for the industry at a time when experienced Class A drivers are at a premium. With so many drivers leaving the industry and so few entering, it's difficult to understand the thinking behind such an affront to the men and women who keep the freight moving.

The requirement to renew annually wasn't driven by an individual's poor on-road experience vis-a-vis collisions or points – which would have been completely un-

derstandable – but was simply triggered by a birthday.

There have been many articles written on the subject and I have yet to read one that supported the Ministry's position. In fact, I'm not even clear on the rationale that led to the policy.

In any event the policy is now under review and the industry is being consulted. We can all hope that the review will lead to a policy that addresses the actual need for re-testing, one based more on the driver's on-road and medical record and less on an arbitrary number like 65.

So, it's all good news and lots to look forward to. But to paraphrase the poet Bob Dylan, 'I just wish we didn't have to try so hard.' □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:861;

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– *The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Your comments or questions can be addressed to trucks@pmtc.ca.*

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NEW PRODUCTS

Total Lubricants enters Canadian marketplace

TORONTO, Ont. – Total Lubricants was at Truck World to announce its launch into the Canadian trucking industry. Total, the world's fourth largest oil company, acquired Quebec-based Tribospec Corporation in December, 2007. Now the company is rolling out a full line of lubricants for the heavy-duty truck market, which the company claims can improve fuel mileage by as much as 3%.

Total's FE (fuel economy) lubricants are already widely used in Europe, and the company says the product line has been adapted for the North American market. The cornerstone of the product line is Total's Rubia 7900 FE 10W30 CJ-4 motor oil. Combined with Total's transmission and axle lubricants, fleets and owner/operators can realize significant fuel savings, the company claims.

Total also offers semi- and full-synthetic lubricants, for applications that demand improved extreme weather performance.

While Total is a relatively new player in the Canadian market, the company is well-established in more than 130 countries around the world and is actively involved in the exploration, refining and production of oil and gas products, says Claude Van Kessel, marketing director with Total Lubricants. The company is headquartered in Montreal and it operates facilities in Pickering, Ont. and Quebec City, Que.

For more information, visit www.tribospec.com or www.total-us.com. □

Digital mud flaps now available

TORONTO, Ont. – Toronto Digital Imaging (TDI) has come up with a new concept that allows for the economical production of customized mud flaps. Using digital imaging technology, TDI has developed the AdFlap – a fully-customizable plastic mud flap which can be offered for under \$15 each with no minimum order.

Traditionally, mud flaps had to be screen printed, which involved a costly set-up fee as well as high-volume minimum orders.

Mario Isgro of TDI said the company can now offer customized flaps at a much lower cost thanks to the advantages of digital imaging, which requires no set-up. All that's needed is a digital image in an accepted format.

Owner/operators now will be able to order mud flaps with personal messages or pictures of their families on them. Private fleets as well have been jumping on-board, since they can have their logo placed on the mud flaps at a reasonable cost.

The mud flaps are made of plastic, but Isgro said they have been tested extensively and have proven to be very durable. They are provided by an industry-leading mud flap supplier. For more information, visit www.tdi-imaging.com or call 800-550-9925. □



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Yeti snow removal system showcased at Truck World

TORONTO, Ont. – The age-old problem of how to clear trailer roofs of snow and ice without risking life and limb appears to have spawned another creative solution.

The Yeti Trailer Snow Removal System was showcased for the first time at Truck World in April. Michael Cyr, director of marketing with Yeti, demonstrated the system to *Truck News*. It consists of an overhead, triple-auger device with an integrated snow blower. A driver pulls up to the system and then gets out of the cab to ensure the system is lined up with the roof of the trailer. He then drives through slowly, allowing the Yeti to direct snow and ice to the snow blower, which then throws it as much as 30 feet away from the vehicle.

The Yeti features three augers: the first breaks up snow and ice; the second directs the snow to the snow blower; and the third sweeps up any leftover snow and directs it back towards the snow blower.

Cyr explained the addition of the snow blower is what makes the Yeti system unique, and advantageous over existing systems that simply scrape the snow off the trailer roof, dumping it alongside the vehicle.

"It gets the snow out of the way and it gets your trucks on the road," said Cyr, noting it takes about a minute and a half to run a truck through the system.

So far, about a half dozen units have been placed in service – some with fleets, and others at distribution centres.

They don't come cheap. But Cyr said the price tag (the MSRP is less than \$80,000) is worth the investment when you calculate the cost of snow removal by other methods.

According to Yeti's calculations, a 60-truck fleet will spend \$65,000 per year on snow removal based on 20 snowfalls per winter averaging 10 cm per snowfall.

The system also reduces the chance of incurring fines and injuries to drivers.

When choosing a snow removal system, Cyr said customers should calculate value based on how many tractor-trailers can be run through the system per hour, rather than per minute. Since the Yeti system gets the snow well out of the way, this is where the system demonstrates value, Cyr explained.

If the price tag still seems too steep, Cyr pointed out the company is planning to integrate credit card swiping technology so owners can offer a user-pay system.

For more information on the Yeti, call 877-347-5521. □

Security system now allows for remote speed limiter control

By James Menzies
CALGARY, Alta. – A new capability available through Magtec's M5K truck security system now allows fleets to remotely activate and deactivate a truck's speed limiter.

This new function offers fleets the ability to comply with Ontario's proposed speed limiter legislation once it becomes law, while allowing drivers the ability to drive faster in other jurisdictions where the speed limit is higher, Bob Morisset, president of Magtec confirmed to *Truck News*.

Magtec's new Speed and Idle Management (SIM) feature allows carriers to set and control speed thresholds as well as idle-time on all trucks equipped with the company's M5K security system.

"While speed limiters are already built into most engines, it requires someone to service each truck to set or adjust them," said Morisset. "With

SIM, the dispatcher simply sends a signal to the M5K on a vehicle to remotely and instantly set speed thresholds or idle-time."

Magtec, a Canadian company with mostly US-based customers, didn't develop the latest capability solely because of Ontario's pending speed limiter law, which, if passed, will require all trucks operating in the province to be mechanically limited to 105 km/h.

However, its latest capability does allow its fleet customers to use ge-fencing to automatically activate speed limiters on all trucks operating within Ontario and then deactivate the limiters once those trucks leave the province. Alternatively, a fleet manager or dispatcher can adjust the speed limiter remotely when a truck enters or leaves Ontario. Until now, there was no known way to do this, Morisset said.

It's also tamper-proof, another requirement under Ontario's proposed law. "If anybody tampers with the system, it automatically secures the vehicle and sends an alert back to dispatch," Morisset said.

While SIM is included standard on all new M5K systems, fleets must first purchase the dash-mounted security system in order to take advantage of its latest capability. The cost varies depending on volume, but is generally less than \$2,000 per unit, installed.

With over-the-air capabilities through Magtec's proprietary FleetControl system, the cost climbs to about \$3,000 (plus a monthly fee), but the system is also compatible with communications systems from suppliers such as Qualcomm, Shaw Tracking and PeopleNet. For more information on the company, visit www.magtecproducts.com. □

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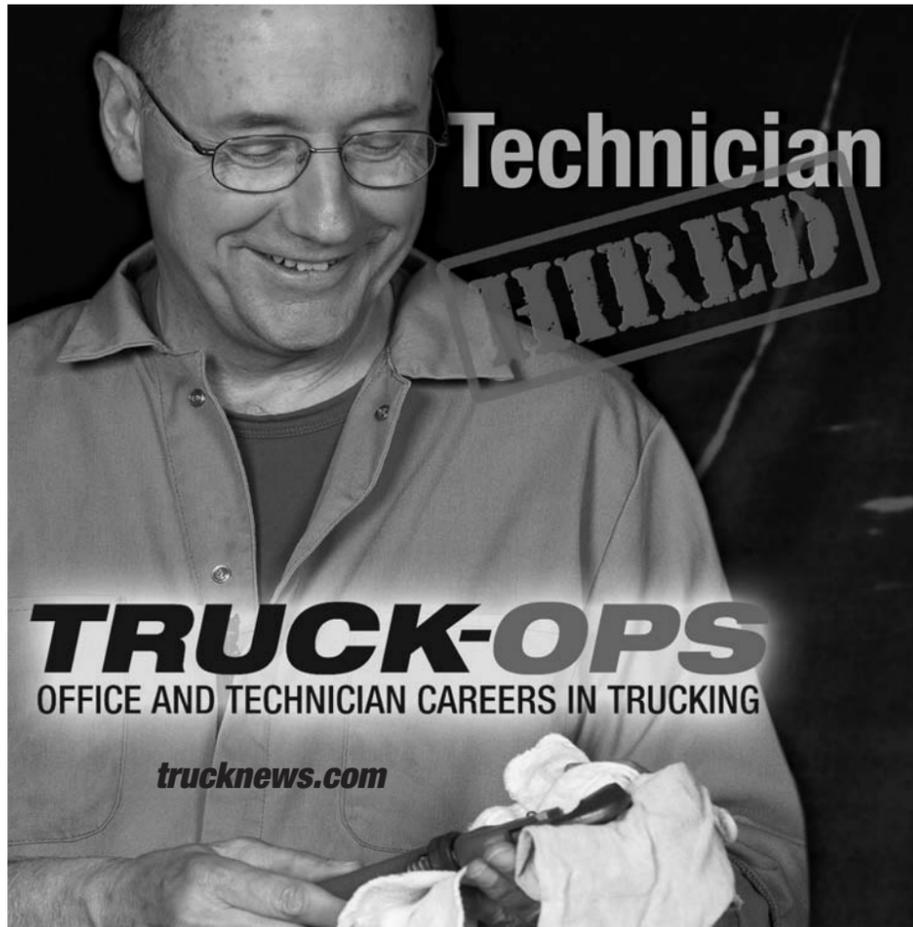


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PMTCC encouraged by legislation that targets questionable training schools

Dear Editor:

Re: Regulation of truck training schools.

The article by Mr. Rosen in the May issue of *Truck News* was good reading, and explains clearly a piece of legislation that was long overdue.

Too many 'graduates' of truck training schools don't have the skills required by the industry, and there have even been examples of schools issuing accreditation to people who hadn't even taken training. Now there is legislation to protect those that may be considering truck driver training from those types of schools, as well as other users of the roads.

Consumer protection and highway safety are paramount. Those who pay for training deserve to get

their money's worth, and until now students who felt under-served had little recourse. The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada brought this to the attention of the then Minister of Transportation for Ontario years ago but received only an acknowledgement that there was a problem.

It is the other side of the training business that gets little press and deserves credit. Schools accredited by the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, the Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario, and other reputable training associations invest heavily in providing legitimate training. They fight a continuous and uphill battle against unregulated, cut-rate schools that under-deliver. We need to protect the good guys for the long-term good of the industry.

The trucking industry needs qualified drivers and if this legislation puts some licensing mills out of business, so much the better. Let's hope the initiative spreads to other jurisdictions. □

Bruce J. Richards
President,
Private Motor Truck Council
of Canada



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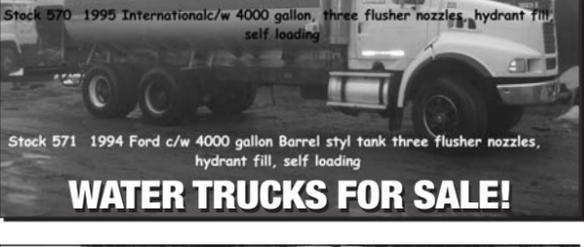
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Please give new drivers a chance

Dear Editor:

In regards to the 'driver shortage,' the companies are bringing it upon themselves. There are drivers out there looking for a chance, like myself. But, upon contacting the recruiters, I get told, 'You need at least one year of experience.'

Hmm, seems to me that if they would put a little time into green drivers, then after three months probation, they would have their drivers. No one wants to put any time into new drivers, they all just want to complain about a "shortage" of drivers.

What's wrong with this picture? Is it the fault of the new drivers that companies just won't run them? I understand many new drivers are also new to driving altogether. There are those of us who have driven over a million kilometres in a past career. We are not 'new' to driving.

It doesn't mean I have no driving skills. Sure, I may not know the procedure to cross the US border in a big rig, or the procedures at shippers and receivers. Isn't that what driver-trainers are for? I know for a fact if I had two weeks with a driver-trainer at any of these companies, I would prove my skills and abilities to be hired. All in all, the driver shortage isn't really that. It's a lack of companies willing to take the new drivers under their wing and show them the ropes. □

Sean Jaatinen
Via e-mail

OTA carriers take issue with comment

Dear Editor:

In your May 2008 edition, in reference to speed limiters, Joanne Ritchie, executive director of OBAC, states that: "MTO is pandering to a handful of carriers who are either too cheap, too lazy or too greedy to compete fairly. Rather than pay their drivers a decent rate, invest in training, and anti-idle technology, and implement internal safety and compliance regimes, these carriers have bamboozled government into taking these responsibilities off their shoulders."

Such insulting comments do nothing to advance the pursuit of constructive debate on speed limiter activation or any other issue, nor do we believe they reflect the views of the vast majority of the thousands of employees and owner/operators who collectively work for our companies. It is obvious that Ms. Ritchie is upset because she has failed to convince most people that her arguments against the mandatory activation of speed limiters hold water.

We are not asking MTO to take responsibility off of our shoulders, as Ms. Ritchie suggests. Rather, we are asking them to help us to ensure that everyone in the industry takes more responsibility for highway safety and the environment. For many years we and other carriers have, under the banner of OTA, carried the burden of responsibility for the actions of the entire industry.

Stooping to tactics that are better left in the gutter is easy, but it is not an effective or constructive way of advancing one's cause. We will not stoop to that level. Instead, we will continue to partner with those people who are prepared to work with us in building a better trucking industry for all. □

Written on behalf of:

Gary Babcock, Quik X Transportation; Dave Belley, Hyndman Transport; Jeff Bryan, Jeff Bryan Transport; Mark Bylsma, Spring Creek Carriers; Robert Casarsa, RIMS Transportation; John Caseley, Trendway Transportation Services; Craig Cottrell, CSI Logistics Canada; Dave Deshane, HBC Logistics; Peter DiTecco, Armbro Transport; Dan Einwechter, Challenger Motor Freight; Dennis Forsythe, Transfreight; Gord Foss, G.A. Foss Transport; Rick Gaetz, Vitran Corporation; Gord Grant, Grant's Transport; Willie Hamel, Trimac Transportation; Harold Heffernan, Celadon Canada; David Hunniford, Compass Rose International; Paul Kingma, Empire Transportation; Paul Leader, Atlas Van Lines; Rodger Leslie, Canada Cartage; Gerry Lodwick, Lodwick Transport; Norm Mackie, Mackie Moving Systems; Evan MacKinnon, MacKinnon Transport; Ron Martin, Bridgeland Terminals; Louisa McAlpine, Snowbird Transportation Systems; Michael McCarron, MSM Transportation; Rob McDonald, Apps Transport Group; John McKeivitt, McKeivitt Trucking; Evan Meyers, Meyers Transport; Robin Miller, Ram Contract Carriers; Doug Munro, Maritime-Ontario Freight Lines; Jeff Odway, L.

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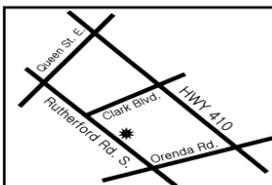
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Taking exception to comments from OBAC leader Ritchie

Dear Editor:

I'd like to respond to comments published on pg. 12 of your May 2008 edition of *Truck News*.

For one, I question how the publishing of insults does anything to better our industry or further any legitimate cause. It is one thing to allow editorial space to fairly represent all sides of a business issue...It is quite another to put name calling to print, at least in a legitimate business publication.

The latest comments made by (OBAC executive director) Joanne Ritchie in the May edition of *Truck News* are completely uncalled for, even under the "guise" of free speech.

The comment I refer to, is: "MTO is pandering to a handful of carriers who are either too

cheap, too lazy or too greedy to compete fairly. Rather than pay their drivers a decent rate, invest in training, and anti-idle technology, and implement internal safety and compliance regimes, these carriers have bamboozled government into taking these responsibilities off their shoulders."

When someone who is supposed to be representing any part of our industry goes on record to say "as industry, we are cheap, lazy and greedy," they damage the credibility of everyone, including the vital group of owner/operators that she has been chosen to represent.

Imagine what the shippers, who themselves are desperately struggling under the burden of high energy costs must think when reading Ms. Ritchie's comments.

They are aware that these same

large fleets "establish" the market here in Ontario.

Are these carriers really under-invested? Are they wasteful and in a position of profit, at my expense?

Am I being fed a line to justify the fact that the fuel surcharge is now almost a third of my transportation spend and carriers are greedily profiting at my expense?

Thankfully, the industry has done a remarkable job progressing on all fronts, and if one bothered to do 15 minutes of legitimate research they can see that this industry, headed up by many upstanding fleets who work tirelessly with OTA to make sure our industry is secure, is neither cheap, lazy or greedy.

This industry has never been more invested than it is today and collectively we have never

worked harder for such meager returns.

These same fleets are investing in fuel-efficient technology such as tires, trailer belly fairings and other advanced aerodynamics. They are passing along the savings of bulk purchasing for things such as APUs, fuel, tires and maintenance.

They provide and share fuel optimization software to help minimize off route miles and make smart fuel purchases known.

And finally, as fleets research and adopt fuel-saving technology it becomes cheaper and more affordable for all.

All of these things have a direct benefit for any owner/operator associated with them or this industry.

Our drivers and owner/operators are the most educated, well-trained and safest in all of North America. They are also among the highest paid, to the point where our competition to the south now holds a considerable advantage when competing for international freight.

And if we are talking about competition, we should be worried about modes of transportation and finding ways to support our shippers and protect our very industry.

I am not concerned about competing with other truckers as much as I am concerned about developing a sustainable transportation strategy that is affordable and keeps my customers in business so I have a chance to be profitable long-term.

These policies make strong safety and economic sense and represent sound business practices which I am sure our customers look at with genuine appreciation. I understand both sides of the speed limiter issue and recognize the disappointment in one's perceived right to decide how to run their own business, but in this case the good outweighs the bad.

I believe all of the relevant business points have been debated and for the sake of our entire industry, please feel free to publish those over and over again.

Save Ms. Ritchie's name-calling excerpts for the *National Enquirer*, as they only serve to cast doubt on an industry that is literally carrying our nation's economy on our backs. We have earned the right to be treated fairly and with respect. □

Robert Penner
Vice-president, operations
Bison Transport

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Letters to the editor

Have you got a complaint, compliment, criticism or question? We'd like to hear about it.

Send your 'letters to the editor' to *Truck News*, 12 Concorde Place, Toronto, Ontario, M3C 4J2. Or fax your letter to 416-510-5143. You can also e-mail jmenzies@trucknews.com. □

Bring on the speed limiters

Dear Editor:

I read your magazine every month and I enjoy it very much. I have had a Class 1 licence for 44 years and I have taught HET apprenticeship for 25 years. I think that speed limiters should be adopted Canada-wide. The large carriers understand how many millions can be saved by dropping speeds from 120 km/h to 105 km/h, and the resulting massive decrease in tire wear.

Owner/operators need an education campaign so that they can help their bottom line! I am tired of being passed by 20-year-olds with two weeks' training in a driving school and they are doing 140 km/h on the QE2 in a loaded B-train between Calgary and Edmonton! ☐

Roy McMurren
Lethbridge, Alta.

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OPINION

'Green' message is getting through

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



Earth Hour, Earth Day, year, decade, century...whatever the time frame, there are a number of "green" initiatives which raise global warming awareness. For me, and I've said it before, I'm all-in for reducing our footprint.

This year, Earth Hour arrived at 8 p.m. Saturday March 29. Wanting to be part of the solution, not the problem, at 7:59 p.m. I did my part and ran around the house turning off the lights, furnace, computer, stereo...anything that was using electricity.

I was even on my way to power-off the kitchen appliances until I realized that turning them off meant pulling each away from the wall to gain access to their plugs. I decided to pass since my back wouldn't appreciate it.

Also, turning them off meant turning them back on. I wasn't in the mood to watch the blinking '12:00s' for days. To make up for my paranoia and lack of technical expertise, I promised myself I wouldn't open the refrigerator door - on a Saturday night, no less!

At 8:05 p.m. I looked out my door and of the dozen or so houses I could see, only two had their lights blazing. Not bad, it felt good knowing our street was part of the program.

Sounds like we did a good job, not perfect but good. (Okay, I admit it, the hockey game stayed on, but I couldn't find the converter in the darkness...ya, that's it).

To give you an example of how green-conscious we have become, during the recent Truck World show I was asked why we were handing out plastic bags?

"They contain our publications and will provide you with something to carry your show pickings in," was my response. Turns out, I was way off track.

They didn't care why we were handing the bags out, only why they were made of plastic. I believe their response was "So you're too cheap to give us the re-usable cloth ones?" Yikes!

Next, one of our staff was concerned that we were serving coffee in Styrofoam cups. She went out the next day and out of her own pocket, purchased the recyclable cardboard kind.

It didn't end there; yet another asked if we really needed all the booth lights turned on...he suggested it wouldn't hurt to turn a few off and save on electricity.

Whoever is in charge of the world's 'green' awareness program, congratulations. I think it's working. □

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- Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck News and he can be reached at 416-510-5123.

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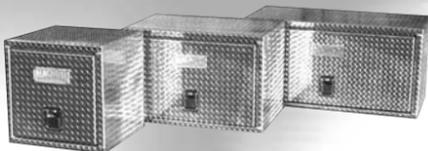


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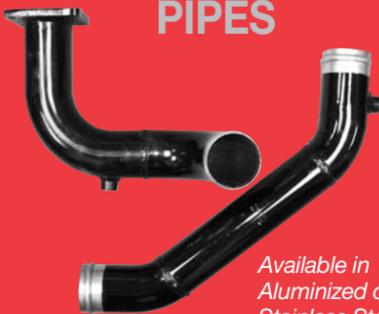
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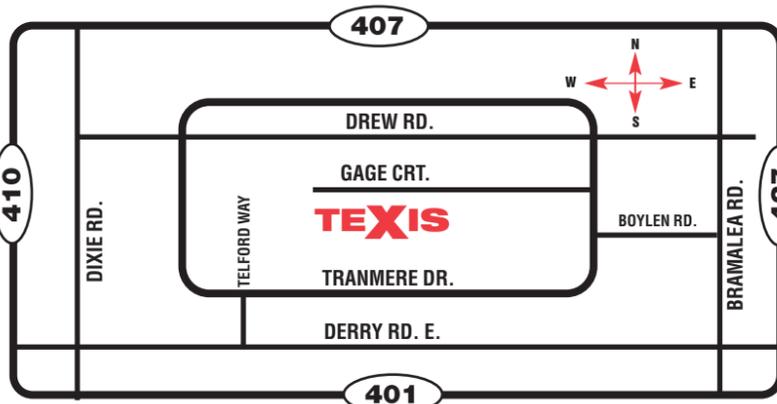


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Dalton and the Bandit

FICTION

PART 1

By Edo van Belkom

Mark was headed west. At the Salisbury Big Stop outside Moncton, he'd nearly caught a thief who had broken into Mother Load. He'd chased the guy through the parking lot and down onto the Trans-Canada, and just when he was starting to gain on the guy, a car pulled up on them. The guy hopped in and a second later they were gone...the guy and Mark's stuff.

After that Mark wanted nothing else but to pick up loads, drive west, and make money. But just because that's what Mark wanted didn't mean things would work out that way. Sure, Mark was minding his own business, but trouble always seemed to have a way of finding him no matter how hard he tried to hide from it.

That night Mark was at a truck stop just outside Thunder Bay, preparing to turn in for the night. The temperature outside was just above freezing and the forecast was calling for a drop of five or more degrees before sunrise. That was colder than it had been the past few nights and Mark would have to start up his auxiliary power unit if he wanted to stay warm through the night.

There had been a time when Mark laughed at drivers who'd spent thousands of dollars on APUs when leaving the engine idling kept the cab just as warm without the use of any extra of special equipment. But then someone explained the numbers to him and he'd been sold. For example, auxiliary heaters use 5% the fuel of an idling engine, so the fuel that an idling engine uses in one hour can run an auxiliary heater for 20 hours. If you left your engine idling overnight for say, six hours, you could run an auxiliary heater on the same amount of fuel for 120 hours. It didn't take a genius to figure out that an APU was a money saver, so Mark had had one installed years ago. As a result his idle time was down to less than 5%, which meant nearly all of his fuel costs went to hauling loads.

Mark turned on the heater and listened. It was a bit noisy, especially when he first started it up, but it would quiet down later on when it warmed up and everything was running hot. It probably wouldn't hurt to get the thing looked at, but in the meantime the noise was soft and comforting – white noise that helped him to fall asleep.

Just after sunrise, Mark awoke refreshed. The cab was toasty and the auxiliary heater was still running, softly humming now as opposed to the hard grinding it had done when he'd first got

it started. Mark got into his driving clothes, tidied up his sleeper, then climbed into the driver's seat. The truck stop he was at had a restaurant, but he knew of this other stop down the highway that provided customers with free Internet access while serving the best chocolate chip pancakes on the Trans-Canada. He turned the key, let the glow plugs warm up, then scanned the gauges to check that everything was in order.

That's when something strange caught his eye.

"That can't be right," he muttered under his breath.

He leaned forward for a closer look and tapped the glass, but the needle on his fuel gauge didn't move. It was still all the way to the left – Empty.

That was impossible. He'd filled his tanks last night before turning in. They'd been full then, and empty now.

How?

Mark turned off the ignition and got out of the truck. Maybe the tank was cracked or had a leak, or a fuel line was broken and the fuel had drained out overnight. If that were the case he'd be able to smell the fuel, nevermind see evidence of it on the ground, but there was no sign of spilled fuel anywhere on the pavement beneath Mother Load. Mark got down onto the ground and crawled under his truck, but there was no sign of a leak or any damage to his tanks. He got back up and pulled the engine cowling forward to check all of his lines and hoses. All of them were in tact and dry.

He closed and secured the cowling then looked again at the tank, this time checking the cap on top of it. Aha! The cap was slightly askew and off-center. Mark tried to turn it, but it was stuck. Stuck as if someone had tried putting it back in a hurry, but gave up when the threads misaligned and the thing wouldn't turn anymore.

For a moment Mark wondered if he'd put the cap on that way himself and the fuel had evaporated from the tank, but

that was silly. Hundreds of gallons of diesel didn't dry up overnight. Obviously he'd been robbed.

"Son of a..." he muttered under his breath.

How could one trucker steal another trucker's fuel?

Mark let out a long sigh. He knew the answer.

To make money in the trucking business you had to either increase revenue or decrease expenses. Increasing revenue wasn't easy because that meant new customers, something that took time and hard work. On the other hand, the money saved by cutting fuel went directly into a driver's pocket and there was always some way to use less fuel. So,

low trucker while he'd been sleeping inside his truck just a few feet away. After breakfast, Mark logged onto the Internet to check his e-mail. Like chocolate chip pancakes, the Internet was quickly becoming one of his guilty pleasures. From e-mail to Facebook, from Google to Myspace, the Internet was a way for him to visit friends, learn about the world around him, or just to pass some time during a reset. YouTube was Mark's favourite for that, and he logged onto the video sharing site on a regular basis, always finding something to make him smile. He usually typed things like "stupid people" or "silly animals" into the search engine, but today he tried "stupid truckers" and



if you paid nothing for fuel because you stole it, then just about everything you earned was profit. It was a brilliant business strategy, but as dishonest as a three-dollar bill. What made it worse was that to do it, you had to steal from a fellow trucker, a brother, one of your own.

Mark was furious. While he could understand, maybe even tolerate someone stealing loose change and CDs from his cab, stealing fuel out of his tanks was like taking food out of his mouth, money out of his pocket.

Mark didn't know how, but he would even the score...after breakfast.

The chocolate chip pancakes were like comfort food for Mark, helping him forget how he'd been ripped off by a fel-

"idiot truckers."

What he saw were clips of truckers driving the wrong way, getting caught under low bridges, or stuck in the mud. There were also semis in highway crashes and trucks that drove away without anyone behind the wheel. It always made Mark feel good to see other truckers in worse shape than he was. It was a good feeling, but today it was short-lived. That's because before getting underway, Mark had to top up his tanks again, and as he did the anger he'd felt earlier came over him all over again.

Sure, YouTube could make him laugh, but paying for fuel twice made him mad...in every sense of the word. □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of Dalton and the Bandit

The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator brought to you by MICHELIN NORTH AMERICA (CANADA) INC.





CTA names executive committee members, chairman

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – The Canadian Trucking Alliance has announced its executive committee line-up for 2008-2010. The announcement was made at the CTA annual spring meeting here.

“The new executive committee reflects a restructuring of the CTA governance model and contains a number of fresh faces as well as seasoned veterans of the committee,” said CTA officials in a release.

A new feature of the executive committee composition is the inclusion of the association managers of all seven provincial trucking associations. Among the appointments was Bruno Muller, CEO of Caron Transportation Systems of Sherwood Park, Alta., who was named chairman of the CTA’s board of directors.

CTA officials call Muller “a visionary leader” who built Caron

Transportation Systems, a specialty hauler of bulk commodities, into one of the most successful carriers in Western Canada. Caron services western, central and northern Canada as well as the northwestern US. Muller has been a fixture on the CTA board of directors since its inception 10 years ago and a member of its executive committee for the past six years.

“CTA has completed the most effective and productive period of its history since it became an alliance of the provincial associations in 1997,” Muller said. “We have been blessed by strong, progressive leadership both at the carrier and the staff level; we will continue to build on our strengths and ensure CTA has the resources it needs to do the job in helping to shape our industry and the regulatory environment it operates in.”

David Bradley, CEO of the Alliance calls Muller “an ideal steward for CTA at this point in the Alliance and the industry’s history.”

“Bruno is a dynamic and progressive leader. He is well-known for his trademark style in which he provides thoughtful strategic direction while empowering those who work on his team with great responsibility. This will dovetail extremely well in his role with CTA,” Bradley said.

The remainder of the new CTA executive committee comprises:

Officers:

1st vice-chairman – **Paul Easson**, Easson’s Transport, Berwick, N.S.;

2nd vice-chairman – **Scott Johnston**, Siemens Group of Companies, Saskatoon, Sask.;

Secretary – **Mark Seymour**, Kriska Transportation, Prescott, Ont.;

Treasurer – **Don Streuber**, Bison Transportation, Winnipeg, Man.;

CEO – **David Bradley**, Canadian Trucking Alliance.

At-Large:

Gord Peddle, D & D Transport, Mount Pearl, Nfld.;

Gene Orlick, Orlick Transport, Calgary, Alta.;

Eric Gignac, Transport Guilbault, Boucherville, Que.;

Scott Smith, JD Smith & Sons, Concord, Ont.

Past chairmen:

Immediate past chairman – **Claude Robert**, Robert Transport, Boucherville, Que.;

John Stollery, Transforce Income Fund, Montreal, Que.;

Dan Einwechter, Challenger Motor Freight, Cambridge, Ont.;

Allan Robison, Reimer Express Lines, Winnipeg, Man.;

Evan MacKinnon, MacKinnon Transport, Guelph, Ont. □



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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – On March 31, a truck driver made headlines after driving 20 km in the wrong direction on Yellowhead Trail in Edmonton before plunging to his death over an overpass. The incident was captured on camera by another motorist and the resulting viral video lead to speculation about the 25-year-old driver's intent.

While some called it a malicious plot or suicide attempt, his family defended the victim, saying he had Type 1 diabetes and sometimes suffered hypoglycemic reactions which caused seizures and blackouts. Though the final toxicology reports won't be released for several more weeks, the accident opened the debate on the role of mandatory medicals drivers must undergo to be deemed "safe" for the road. Was the accident an isolated event or could it have been prevented through medical intervention? *Truck News* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see if



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

Are truck driver medical examinations strict enough?

drivers think medical examinations for truck drivers are strict enough.

John Pell, an O/O with his own company, J&R Trucking, says that truckers shouldn't be permitted to operate while on most medications.

"With some medication, you get dizzy, you hallucinate, and you lose your coordination. I think truck drivers shouldn't take any medication other than an Aspirin," he says.

"(The industry needs) new standards for medication (and) doctors that follow rules, because it's life or death out there. And when a doctor

let's an (unfit) patient go, he's the killer."



Brian Reed

Brian Reed, a driver with Kriska Transportation out of Prescott, Ont., says the outcome of a driver's medical is based heavily on the individual conducting the exam.

"The medical itself is strict enough but a lot of it is left up to the physician that's doing the examination. It all depends on whether the physician himself lets it slide," he says.



Don Knight

Don Knight, drives for JP Transport, based out of Aubigny, Man. He says that while examinations are thorough enough, there are still many truckers driving in ill health.

"Those who can't fit in the booth at the restaurant or have trouble getting behind the wheel, how those people get passed at the doctor's office is amazing," Knight says.



Pat Bailey

Pat Bailey, a driver with Kriska Transportation, based out of Mississauga, Ont., says that while truckers suffering from diseases like diabetes shouldn't be banned from driving altogether, they should perhaps get themselves to the doctor more often than required.

"I think (the case of the Edmonton driver) is just one that slipped through the cracks (but) if he was diabetic, he should have been aware of what was going on with himself, right?"



Michael O'Connor

Michael O'Connor, who drives for TST Truckload Express out of Mississauga, Ont., says that while the Edmonton crash, if caused by diabetes, was probably an isolated case, it should be a combined effort between drivers and physicians to keep roads safe.

That said, O'Connor believes that a lack of decent medical coverage in the industry may discourage drivers from getting the treatment they need – often to disastrous ends. □

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