

TRUCK NEWS

October 2008 Volume 28, Issue 10

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

Election time

Fuel taxes become key election issue

By James Menzies

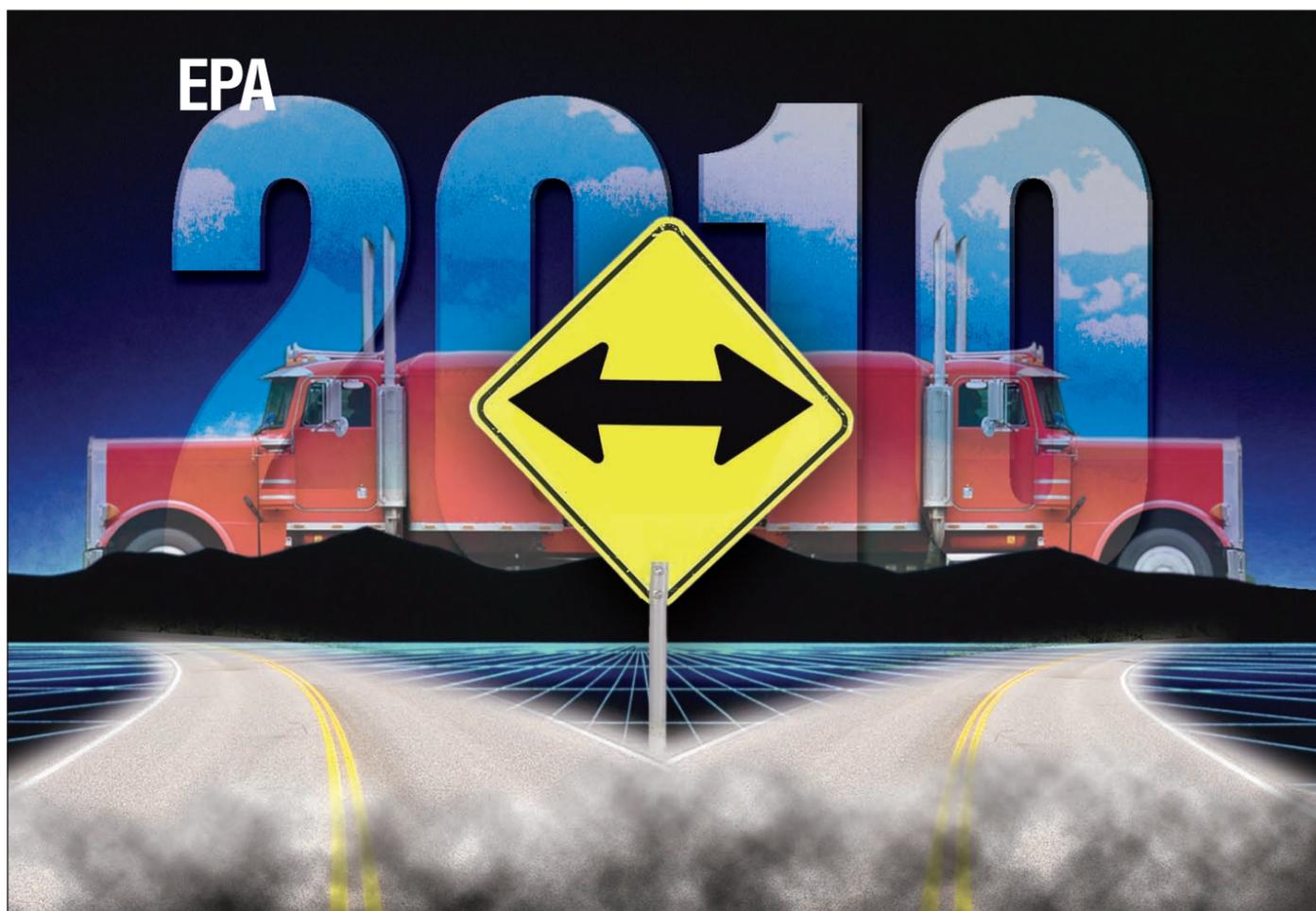
OTTAWA, Ont. – Prime Minister Stephen Harper has announced that if re-elected, he will cut the four cent per litre federal excise tax on diesel in half.

His Liberal counterpart Stephane Dion, meanwhile, has altered his party's controversial carbon tax scheme to make it more trucker-friendly. Both announcements came as the federal parties launched their campaigns for the Oct. 14 federal election.

Harper's tax cut would be phased in over four years, the PM announced during a campaign stop in Winnipeg Sept. 9. The tax cut contrasts the federal Liberals' Green Shift plan, which would increase the federal diesel tax by seven cents per litre over four years. Harper said the Conservative plan would keep the prices of consumer goods in check, while helping the transportation and manufacturing industries.

"At a time when Canadians are concerned about affordability, and energy prices are rising, we should be doing what we can to lower prices," Harper said. "This

Continued on page 10 ■



A fork in the road

An important decision lies ahead as EPA2010 emission standards loom

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Fleets and owner/operators will have a crucial decision to make in 2010, when engine manufacturers roll out two vastly different solutions to meet the EPA2010 emissions standards.

The next round of EPA regulations calls for a reduction in NOx (nitrogen oxides) to 0.2 g/bhp-hr.

One way to achieve this is through an exhaust aftertreatment process called Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR). SCR systems consist of a catalyst, a separate tank which houses urea – or diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) – and the associated plumbing. A small amount of DEF is introduced into the exhaust stream, causing a chemical reaction that breaks NOx down into

harmless water and nitrogen.

This technology, which is already widely used in Europe, will be employed by Volvo, Mack, Detroit Diesel, Paccar and Cummins. However, Navistar (parent company of International Truck and Engine) does not like SCR for a variety of reasons, and has instead focused on becoming EPA2010-

Continued on page 36 ■

Progress report

A look at where each heavy-duty engine manufacturer stands in the pursuit of 2010 emissions regulations.



See pages 38-39

Inside This Issue...

- **Dropping the dime:** Is it ever appropriate to report unsafe driving by another trucker? A driver's tale. Page 40
- **Do it for profit:** Kriska's Mark Seymour has some tips on how to survive, and maybe even thrive, in recessionary times. It all starts with a plan. Page 41
- **On the big screen:** A look at a new film produced on behalf of Navistar, which showcases life on the road behind the wheel of an International LoneStar. Page 54
- **Playing Favourites:** Mark Dalton is accused of greasing Bud's palms to get the best loads. Page 68

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page 66

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ON THE LOOKOUT

Toronto Police Service officers have been receiving training on how to identify trucks used for criminal purposes.

PAGE 17



feature of the month...

SURVIVE AND THRIVE:
Kriska's Mark Seymour shares some tips on surviving in recessionary times.

It all starts with a plan, he said during a recent Driving for Profit seminar in Kingston, Ont.

pages 40-44



TRACK SIDE

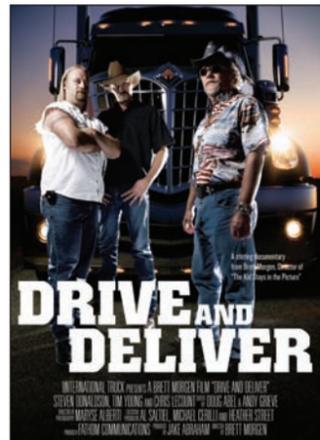
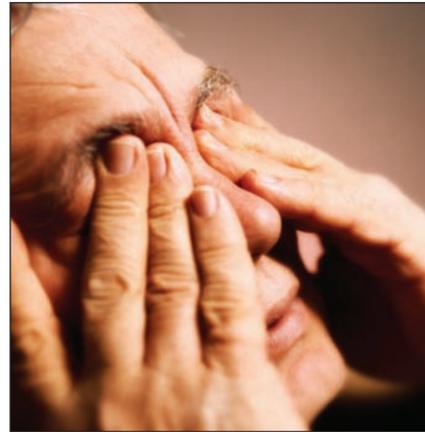
Truck News attended the annual Earl Hardy Trucking Big Rig Nationals at Grand Bend Motorplex Sept. 6. Find out who was fastest – and who was shiniest.

PAGE 20

NOW WHAT?

Owner/operators who succumb to a slow economy and high fuel prices are finding they have no place to turn for re-training or beginning a new career.

PAGE 48



ON THE BIG SCREEN

Three truckers, and their International LoneStar, are the subject of a multi-million dollar film that premiered at the Great American Truck Show. We were there.

PAGE 54

Question of the month

What would you do if you could no longer drive truck?

page 70

Mark Dalton in... Playing Favourites Part 1



page 68

monthly columns...



TO BUY OR WAIT?

By Scott Taylor

Thinking of buying a new rig? Waiting 'til next year may not be the best decision.

PAGE 22



ARE YOU SECURE?

By Jean Marie Gagnon

Everyone can play a role in preventing costly cargo theft.

PAGE 24



KUDOS TO THE DISPATCHER

By Bruce Richards

Often overlooked, dispatchers play a crucial role in a fleet's success.

PAGE 25



LISTERIA HYSTERIA

By Karen Bowen

Food poisoning can be deadly, as recent news would attest. What you need to know to stay safe.

PAGE 26



GET OUT AND VOTE!

By Joanne Ritchie

Regardless of your political views, make sure your voice is heard Oct. 14.

PAGE 30

AN ODE TO TRUCKING

By David Bradley

What I love about the trucking industry.

PAGE 32



departments



OEM/DEALER NEWS: Hino returns to the cabover engine market with the Model 155.

Pages 51-59

Truck Sales	4
Opinions	6
Border	8
Canada	10-11
East	12-13
Quebec	14
Ontario	17-20
Chris Singh	34
Fleet News	45-47
New Products	60-63
Mail	64-65
People	66
Advertiser's Index	67
Rob Wilkins	69

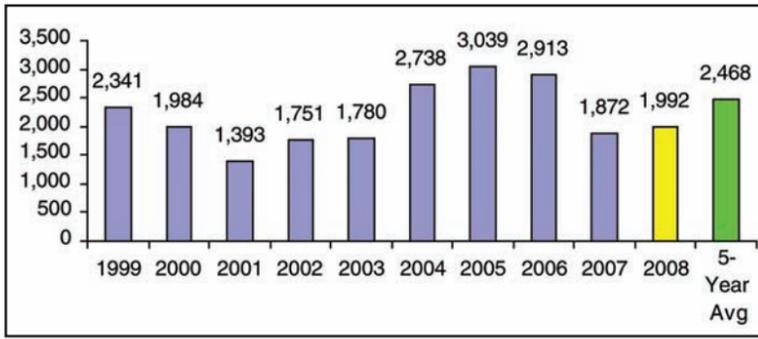
CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - July 08

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	332	328
Kenworth	285	455
Mack	150	321
International	496	108
Peterbilt	219	244
Sterling	192	186
Volvo	193	94
Western Star	125	136
TOTALS	1,992	1,872

Historical Comparison - July 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

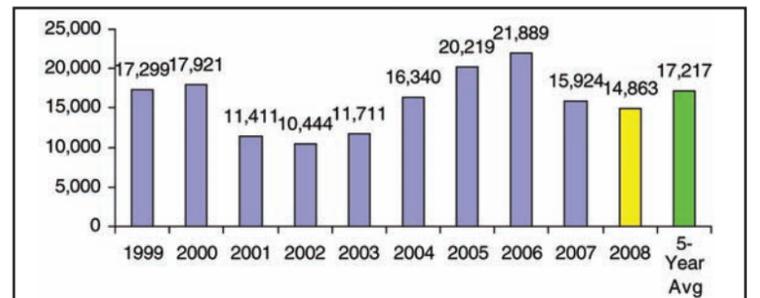
There were 1,992 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada this July, which is slightly ahead of last year's pace. Although obviously far from the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006, this was the fifth best July in terms of truck sales over the past decade. Those three banner years, however, greatly influence the 5-year average and so July sales are about 500 units below the 5-year average. Sales started off quietly in the first quarter. However, sales for March climbed above 2,000 units, avoiding the steep declines of 2001 to 2003, April's sales were higher than last year's, May's were not far off last year's pace and June's and July's were slightly better than last year's. Can this pace be sustained into the third and fourth quarter? It wasn't last year.

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.

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

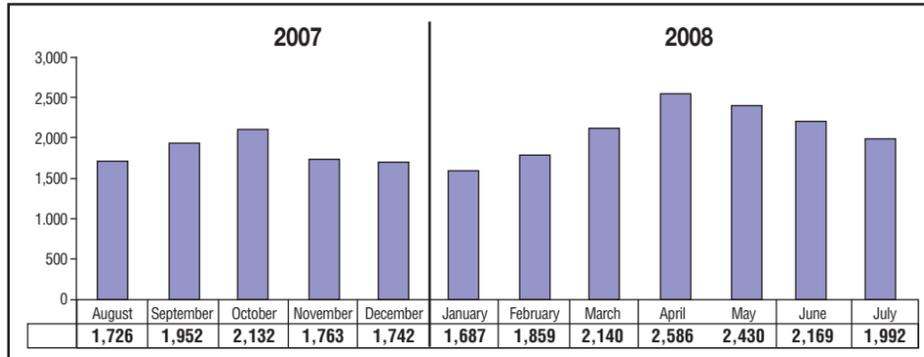
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	219	518	123	137	1,082	430	157	74	0	10	2,750
Kenworth	335	874	132	116	511	483	23	39	0	0	2,513
Mack	93	172	77	105	428	136	27	35	0	0	1,073
International	150	434	58	197	1,521	887	145	59	4	60	3,515
Peterbilt	163	500	188	95	366	200	92	37	0	0	1,641
Sterling	139	214	58	44	419	319	20	38	0	10	1,261
Volvo	92	185	89	188	516	197	41	48	0	9	1,365
Western Star	126	215	28	17	197	105	27	27	0	3	745
TOTALS	1,317	3,112	753	899	5,040	2,757	532	357	4	92	14,863

Historical Comparison - YTD



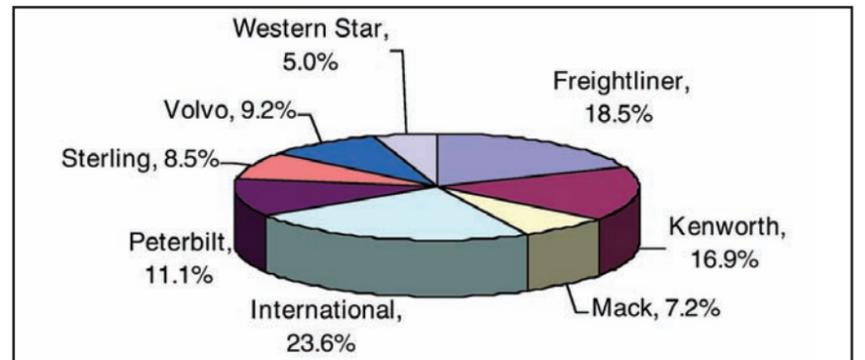
Class 8 truck sales year-to-date stand at 14,863, a bit more than 1,000 units off last year's admittedly slow pace and about 2,500 units off the 5-year average for Canada. Despite an improvement in sales starting in the spring, the market still has not been able to overcome its slow start this year and 2008 is still ranking as the fourth worst sales year of the past decade. The pre-buy strategy employed by many fleets is having its expected effect and a slowing North American economy does not bode well for hopes that even the small momentum in sales shown earlier this year will be maintained.

12 - Month Sales Trends



After four straight months of sales above the 2,000 units mark, truck sales dropped below 2,000 in July. Although July is characteristically a slow month, the drop-off in sales and sub-2,000 performance expected for August would make it exceedingly difficult for truck sales to top last year's totals. The 2,586 Class 8 trucks sold in April marked the strongest sales so far this year with May's 2,430 trucks sold the second best. The 2,169 trucks sold in June marked the third-best performance of the year and also the fourth consecutive month over the past 12-month period that monthly totals have climbed above 2,000 units sold.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



International continues to expand its lead over one-time front runner Freightliner. International, which wrestled the market share lead from Freightliner last year, jumped out of the starting blocks with a lead in the first quarter, capturing about 22% of sales. With a very strong second quarter showing, International added to that lead and now controls 23.6% of the market with Freightliner falling back to 18.5% and Kenworth to 16.9%. Peterbilt is the only other truck manufacturer with a market share greater than 10%.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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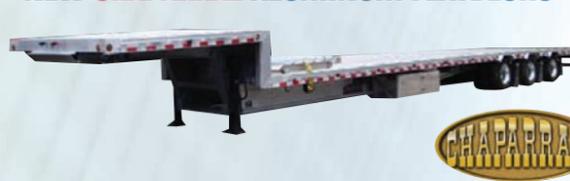
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Harper diesel tax cut would benefit trucking industry

A federal election looms large in a time of economic uncertainty, and a trucking-related issue has emerged as a key election hot point.

Let's review what each of front-running parties have promised to do in regards to fuel taxes, if elected on Oct. 14. The Liberals have laid out their plans for a carbon tax as part of their Green Shift plan. The plan will slap seven cents per litre onto the cost of diesel by the fourth year, increasing a trucker's operating cost by about \$1,700 per year, according to the party's own figures.

On the other hand, incumbent Prime Minister Stephen Harper has promised a Conservative government would cut the federal excise tax on diesel in half – from four cents per litre to two – over the same four-year period.

When viewed in tandem, these contrasting policies represent a nine cent per litre swing in diesel taxes.

Put in real terms, if you average 40 litres/100 km (7 mpg) and run 160,000 km per year (100,000 miles – I know, most of you work harder than that) then you're consuming about 64,000 litres of diesel per year. A nine cent per

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



litre fuel tax differential amounts to \$5,760 – that's money that goes straight in your pocket under the Conservative plan and up in smoke under Green Shift. If you operate a fleet of trucks, extrapolate that figure across your entire fleet and the number is even more staggering.

Now, in fairness, the Liberals claim their Green Shift plan is "revenue-neutral," meaning 100% of the carbon tax will be returned in tax breaks and 'green' incentives.

But truckers stand to be net losers under the deal, since they have no choice but to consume diesel and cannot greatly alter their consumption habits.

It should also be noted that Liberal leader Stephane Dion recently modified his Green Shift plan to make it more trucker-friendly.

He said a fund of \$250 million will be set aside over four years, to

help offset the cost of adopting environmentally-friendly technologies such as APUs, trailer skirts and fuel-efficient tires. But the funds will be spread across all transport modes – and the fisheries industry, to boot – so you figure it out, how much of this moolah will actually trickle down to the owner/operator?

Maybe, as Lou would contend, I'm over-simplifying the matter. But I see it, quite simply, as two contradicting policies: one that would save truckers a significant amount of money and another that would cost them dearly.

Green Shift would require truckers, already under enormous strains in a volatile industry and shaky economy, to shoulder an unfair portion of the load in the Liberals' quest to financially punish polluters.

It's a misguided policy, considering most truckers are already employing any and all fuel-saving tactics and devices that are currently feasible.

In a telling gesture, Dalton McGuinty, the Liberal premier of Ontario recently

refused to endorse the federal Liberal party.

Instead, he urged voters to "Vote Ontario." I'd like to paraphrase McGuinty, and urge truckers to "Vote trucking."

But most importantly, get out there and vote. □

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Call off the love fest

It's no big surprise that Stephen Harper's election promise to cut the four cent per litre federal excise tax on diesel fuel in half was warmly received in industry circles. Who would argue against a cut in their taxes?

But before we get too enamoured about Harper, let's call this announcement for what it is: a politically-motivated manoeuvre crafted and timed to curry favour as the country heads to the polls.

Of course it will give carriers a better chance of surviving the sky-high diesel prices they've had to endure the last couple of years. I'm not arguing that. But if Harper was truly sincere about helping out the trucking industry, why did he wait this long to suggest the tax cut? Where was he when diesel prices were at even higher levels? Action back then may have prevented a few bankruptcies and saved some jobs.

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



As the Prime Minister, if he truly wanted to lead, he could have done so. Ah, but then that would not have been smart politics. Politicians – and the Liberals would have been no different – worry that people have short memories and may not remember a kindness offered too far in the past.

And in our jubilation over this promise let's also not make it out be any more than it is. This is not, as some have suggested, an answer to our very real greenhouse gas emissions problem. I doubt the money saved would be used to invest in new green technologies by the majority

of fleets. If anything, the lower cost of diesel, may serve the opposite purpose.

While I support the proposed tax cut, I also think it misleading to characterize it as the polar opposite of the Liberal plan to introduce a federal carbon tax. True, the Liberals still have important questions to answer about their plan. For example, how high does the levy have to be to truly change behaviour? The tax grab on cigarettes is damn high, yet I still see plenty of folks happily puffing away on their cancer sticks. If it doesn't change behaviour, it's just a tax grab.

But we're doing ourselves no favours by quickly dismissing the carbon tax proposal as "economically punishing and crippling" just because it's a tax.

A greener economy does not have to equal a weaker economy. There are many examples of forward-thinking corporations that have gone green and come out ahead. Manufacturer Johnson & Johnson reduced its greenhouse gas emis-

sions by 7%, saving an average of about \$40 million a year, while growing its business 300% in the past eight years.

Germany created more than 250,000 jobs in the green sector in the past five years, with incentives to lure foreign companies, including a \$35 million grant for an Ontario solar cell producer, ARISE Technologies. Can a green economy go mainstream in Canada if governments don't adopt both a carrot (incentives) and stick (price on carbon emissions) approach?

I don't know. What I do know is that these are important issues for the long-term future of our industry and our country. And that we need to have a sophisticated debate about them during this election rather than just throwing our support behind the party most quick to throw bucks our way. □

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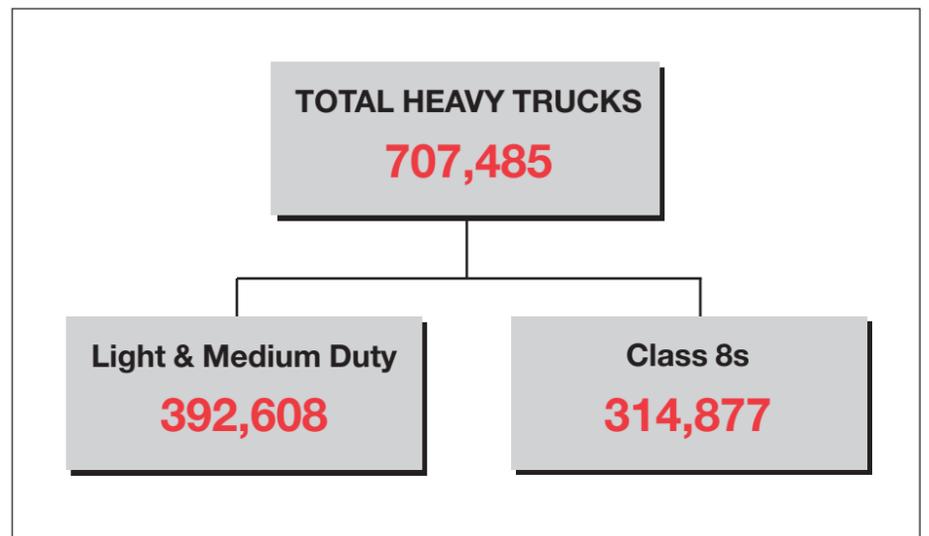
Did you know?

The size of the Canadian truck fleet

Truck freight in Canada is carried on a fleet of more than 700,000 trucks (vehicles with a registered weight of at least 4,500 kg/10,000 lbs), according to Statistics Canada's Canadian Vehicle Survey. Almost half of these are Class 8 vehicles (15,000 kg/33,000 lbs or more). Most Canadian fleets (35%) are on 4-5 year trade-in cycles for their heavy-

duty trucks. A greater percentage (42%) of owner/operators are also updating their heavy-duty iron every 4-5 years. Those cycles were likely extended for those carriers who used a pre-buy as a strategy to avoid the 2007 round of engine emissions standards.

The predominance of the largest trucks, called Class 8s (15,000 kg/33,000 lbs or more), has been growing in recent years. Their annual sales are commonly used as a barometer of industry health – 2006 was a record year for Class 8 sales with 2007 and 2008 showing significant drop-offs. The 12,871 Class 8 trucks sold by the mid-point of this year reflects the impact of the pre-buy, depressed freight volumes and an anticipated economic downturn.



However, it should also be noted that Canada's economic downturn won't be as deep as that in the

US and that the trucking industry historically tends to be one of the first out of economic slumps. □

OTA looking for Road Knights

TORONTO, Ont. – The Ontario Trucking Association is seeking top professional truck drivers to serve as industry ambassadors for its upcoming 2009-2010 Road Knights team.

OTA Road Knights are professional transport drivers with first class driving records who meet with Ontario community groups to share their knowledge about how to safely share the road with trucks.

The mission is to make Ontario roadways safer by encouraging all road users to be partners in safety, according to the OTA.

The drivers also make presentations about careers in trucking and the importance of the industry to Canada's economy.

"The transport drivers who make up the team are first-class drivers who represent their peers – Ontario transport drivers who are dedicated to safety and professionalism in the industry," said OTA president and CEO, David Bradley.

"They are highly-qualified to spread the message of road safety because they travel our roadways every day and have faced every type of traffic and weather condition imaginable."

Participating as a Road Knight is considered to be an excellent promotional opportunity for the trucking industry, for two reasons: transport drivers speak on behalf

of the industry's best drivers, and carriers demonstrate a commitment to road safety education.

The time requirement is about one or two days each month, according to the OTA.

The OTA states that it provides media relations and public speaking training to the ambassadors, and arranges engagements. Sample speeches, videos and brochures are also provided by the association.

The program is open to both company drivers and owner/operators, but nominees must be based in Ontario and currently employed as a full-time truck driver by an OTA member company.

A nomination form is available from the OTA Web site.

For more about the OTA Road Knights Team program, refer to www.ontruck.org/info/knights. □

US roads getting safer: NHTSA

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The number of US highway fatalities involving heavy trucks decreased again last year, according to the latest stats collected by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The number of traffic fatalities involving large trucks decreased 4.4% in 2007 when compared to 2006. At 4,808 fatalities, it's the lowest level since 1992. Truck occupant fatalities decreased 0.4% and fatalities among occupants of other vehicles involved in a crash with a large truck dropped 5.2%. Truck-related fatalities involving people not in a vehicle (such as pedestrians) decreased 4.7%.

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) credits a number of factors for the improvement, including a tendency among carriers to drive slower to save fuel. It also feels new safety technologies played a role in the reduction, such as collision avoidance systems, lane departure warning systems, stability systems and brake stroke monitoring systems. The ATA also noted the recent improvements occurred under the current hours-of-service regime, which has been criticized by special interest groups outside the trucking industry.

"The statistics from this most recent study show that the efforts of law enforcement agencies to focus on the most likely causes of crashes, such as speeding and impaired driving, are making our highways safer," said ATA president and CEO, Bill Graves. "While we are pleased that overall fatalities have decreased, we still have room to improve safe driving habits of truck drivers and passenger vehicle drivers." □

Behind the headlines

Truck News' executive editor James Menzies and Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council executive director Linda Gauthier were recently guests on *The Lockridge Report* on Sirius Satellite Radio.

Host Evan Lockridge spoke to Menzies and Gauthier about the Driver Satisfaction Survey, conducted each year by *Truck News* and the CTHRC and sponsored by Michelin.

This year's results are currently being tabulated and will be published in the September/October issue of *Motortruck Fleet Executive*.

Editorial director Lou Smyrlis was invited to speak about changes to supply chain management at the global, transborder and domestic level at the annual meeting of CITT's Toronto chapter.

Sister publication *Canadian Transportation & Logistics* has partnered once again with CITT and the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association for the fifth annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey examining trends in shipment volumes, capacity, rates and surcharges. The three also recently completed their annual Shipper's Choice Awards Survey which asks shippers across Canada to rate the performance of their top providers in each mode across seven key performance indicators. □

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Windsor city council bans trucks from short-cut

By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, Ont. – An outcry by neighbourhood residents has resulted in the city's banning of heavy trucks making left-hand turns from one long-time truck artery onto another, which is also the city's expressway.

For a six-month period, the city will test the efficacy of a ban on trucks heading north along Dougall Ave. and turning west on to E.C. Row Expressway.

Dougall Avenue, a four-lane roadway which is in part a parkway divided by a median strip, and which also contains several strip plazas and commercial businesses, has long been one of the principal access routes for cars and trucks into Windsor. It's also the most direct route from Hwy. 401 to the Windsor-Detroit tunnel.

The neighbours have been complaining about heavy trucks causing damage to their homes, such as cracks in walls and foundations. They say truck traffic has increased in recent years, which might be a by-product of the periodic back-ups in traffic further west along the city's main truck route to the Ambassador Bridge and Detroit, Hwy. 3 and Huron Church Rd. Trucks have been circumventing those tie-ups and taking the less travelled Dougall, then cutting across town on E.C. Row which intersects Huron Church and heads further west to

the city's Ojibway industrial park.

"It may be that that forced (trucks) to look at an alternative route and then they say, 'Hey, now we like this route better,'" Drew Dilkens, the city councillor who represents the south end of the city where the road is located, said.

Trucks will still be allowed to use Dougall. They just won't be able to make a left-hand turn at the E.C. Row Expressway.

They will be able to continue north towards the tunnel or turn at other intersections.

The decision drew a rebuke from the Ontario Trucking Association. The OTA's vice-president of public affairs Doug Switzer lambasted city council for interfering with commerce and a bonafide truck route. "We wonder why we keep losing out of investment dollars, why plants and dollars are moving out," he told CKLW radio.

Ironically, the route is one of the better designed arterial roads for trucks and has some of the lightest truck traffic in the city.

Steve Kapusta, a Windsor transportation planner who worked on the file, said that with a heavy truck count of one every three minutes and a total truck count of one per minute, the street has "very light volume," noting "Dougall actually experiences less truck traffic than most other arterial roads."

Kapusta authored a report to city

council which argued against a ban, suggesting it "may do more harm than good" because it could "shift trucks to other areas of the city" at the expense of other residents. Other possible access routes to E.C. Row are Walker, Howard and Manning roads.

Dilkens suggested truckers liked turning from Dougall to E.C. Row because the ramp grade is not as steep as at other interchanges, saying "they just prefer that route for that reason."

Said Kapusta, "These people (residents) chose to live on Dougall. I don't necessarily believe it's the city's responsibility to change the context in which they already chose to live."

Another city councillor, Fulvio Valentinis, who represents a different city ward, feared truck traffic would just become more congested as trucks bypassed E.C. Row heading north and made left turns on to Tecumseh Road in the heart of the city.

"They're going to (move on) and then turn off on Tecumseh – not all of them, but enough of them to make life miserable for those people who will be impacted by that," he said.

Valentinis said numerous other arteries are plagued by much worse truck traffic, such as Wyandotte Street where light pole decorations have been clipped by trucks which

pass "literally eight feet" from second floor bedrooms.

Kapusta said the temporary ban may be a result of pent-up frustration by a city long plagued by trucks.

"I think (city council) is really sensitive to a lot of the truck issues," he said. "It's really trying to focus on looking like we're doing something or at least trying something to see if it makes any difference."

Valentinis said the time has come for the city to sit down with the trucking community and plan a rational system of truck routes "and let's cut out the short-cutting."

The city's study of trucks using Dougall found the overwhelming majority of them were making local deliveries and not crossing the border to Detroit.

The provincial and federal governments are soon expected to announce the final design and location of a west side connecting highway between Hwy. 401 and a new bridge to the United States to expedite cross-border truck traffic. □

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US truck tonnage dips in July

ARLINGTON, Va. – Truck tonnage in the US declined 0.3% in July, marking the first month-to-month drop since April.

It was still 4.4% higher than last July, however, according to the most recent figures released by the American Trucking Associations (ATA). US truck tonnage has now increased year-over-year for nine straight months. Year-to-date, tonnage is up 3.6% compared to the same period of 2007.

Chief economist Bob Costello said he is not surprised by the decline, as it validated anecdotal reports from member carriers. He warned that tonnage may be volatile in the coming months as the US economy continues to soften. However, he also pointed out that tightening capacity and lower fuel prices could help some carriers survive any downturn in freight volumes.

The ATA notes its truck tonnage index is not skewed by the high number of carrier bankruptcies. In most cases, when a trucking company fails, the freight is picked up by another carrier.

"Therefore, the recent jump in bankruptcies will only have a limited impact on our tonnage readings," the ATA said in a release. "Specifically, when a company in our sample fails, we include its final month of operation and zero it out for the following month. This assumes the remaining carriers pick up that freight. As a result, it is close to a net wash and does not end up in a false increase. Nevertheless, some carriers are picking up freight from failures, and it may have boosted the index. Due to our correction mentioned above, however, it should be limited." □

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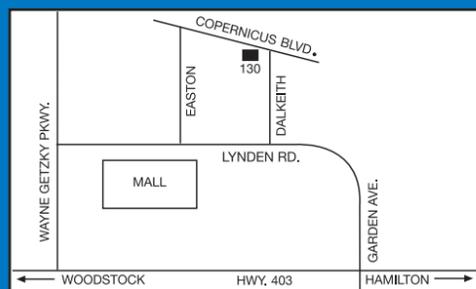
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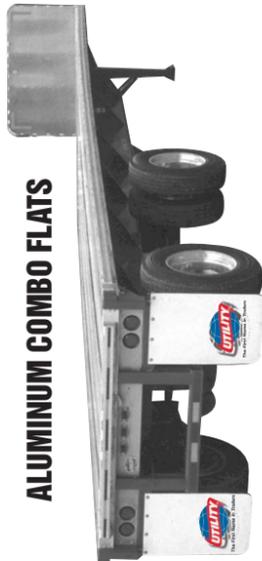
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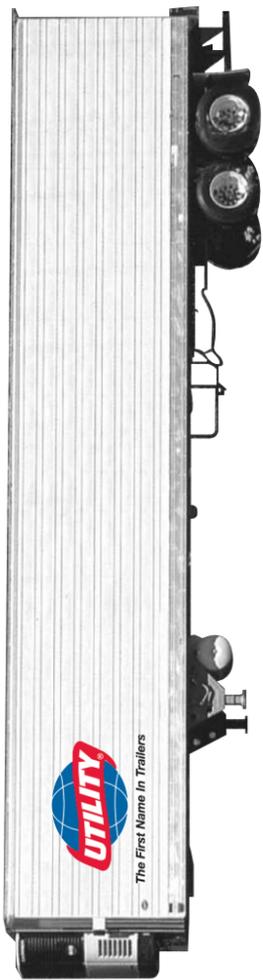
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Federal leaders spar over fuel tax issue

■ Continued from page 1

tax reduction will benefit consumers who buy virtually anything that moves by truck, train, ship or plane.”

The tax cut would also include aviation fuel, according to Harper. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) has been a vocal critic of the Liberal Green Shift plan, and the federal excise tax on

diesel in general. The tax generates over \$1 billion per year. Harper’s proposal would represent a tax cut of \$600 million per year on diesel, the Conservatives claimed. Meanwhile, the CTA has said the Liberal Green Shift plan would increase the cost of operating a truck by \$1,700 per year by the fourth year.

“This is a choice between two

very different plans,” Harper said. “We want to reduce the tax on diesel a bit. Others plan to increase the tax on diesel significantly. In fact, they plan to increase the price of everything. On a policy level, the choice is a modest, affordable reduction in the tax on diesel, or a massive carbon tax that will increase the cost of everything,” added Harper. “On a

broader level, the choice is between two opposite plans for the economy and for leading this country during uncertain times.”

The Conservatives’ announcement quickly drew praise from the CTA.

“Excise taxes on business inputs are an archaic and regressive form of taxation that should have been repealed or reformed back when

Liberal MP defends Green Shift from trucking industry attack

The Liberal Green Shift will help move Canada’s transportation sector towards a greener, more prosperous future. The fears recently expressed by the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) are based on misinformation.

I applaud the steps taken by the trucking industry to reduce emissions significantly in the last several years and believe our Green Shift will encourage and foster an even more efficient and environmentally-conscious industry.

One goal in launching this green debate is to recognize how the economy, environment and social justice are interconnected. We do not have to pit one against the other. By promoting a greener economy, we are also promoting a stronger economy.

Energy costs have risen sharply over the past two years, and the trucking sector has been especially hard hit. The response from the federal Conservatives has been denial and the lack of any coherent plan. The Liberal Green Shift is forward-looking, and recognizes the need to embrace greener technologies that will save Canadians money, and make Canada’s economy more competitive.

Under the Green Shift, there would be no increase in taxes on gasoline. That’s because gasoline already has a federal excise tax of 10 cents per litre, which is equivalent



Guest Column

Geoff Regan

lent to a carbon tax of \$42 per tonne. The Green Shift plan calls for a price on carbon of \$40 per tonne, phased in over four years.

Likewise, because there is already a tax on diesel and aviation fuel of four cents per litre, the tax on these fuels will not be increased at all in the first year and will only rise by seven cents per litre four years down the road. Contrast that to the nearly 50 cent per litre spike in diesel since the Conservatives came to power two years ago.

What our plan will do is create incentives for the transportation sector to be greener. Other countries that have put a price on pollution still have a vibrant transportation sector. In the fourth year of our plan, we anticipate that freight truckers will see a 1% increase in their overall operating costs.

With such a low marginal increase, any impact on the cost of consumer goods will be minimal. For APTA executive director Peter Nelson to suggest to Canadians that they’ll be paying \$8 for a head of lettuce is simply irresponsible.

The experts agree with us that putting a price on carbon immediately, while providing broad-based income tax cuts, will allow us to cover approximately 75% of domestic emissions. At the same time, it will allow our economy to immediately begin the needed transition to clean energy, efficiency and sustainability.

There are many technologies out there to help truckers improve fuel efficiency, and we believe the federal government should be a partner with them and other industries as they go green. Corporate tax cuts and partnership programs allow companies to re-invest in new ‘greener’ technologies that will, in turn, further improve the environment, better their bottom line and create the jobs of the future.

The real economic threat to Canada is not the Green Shift – it is this government’s failure to take the necessary actions to help Canada transition to the 21st century economy.

The Conservatives can’t hide from the fact that our economy has been shrinking recently and that they have run a deficit in the first quarter of this year. Hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers and their families are suffering.

Virtually every expert group across the entire political spectrum has condemned the Conser-

vative climate change plan as ineffectual. In fact, in early August a report issued by the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy stated that the government is overestimating how much its plan will lower greenhouse gases because it is using flawed calculations.

And it is costing Canadians more. In their own document outlining their plan, the Conservatives say Canadians can expect to bear “real costs” under their Regulatory Framework.

It states: “For the majority of individual Canadians and for businesses outside the regulated sectors, these costs will be most evident in the form of energy prices, particularly with respect to electricity and natural gas.”

The difference with our plan is that we are offering corresponding tax cuts for Canadians and Canadian businesses to help offset these rising costs.

Our plan does this because we believe that shifting Canada towards a greener, more prosperous economy is an objective that we can all accomplish together. But first, we need an honest, open debate – one that includes Atlantic Canada’s trucking industry. □

– Geoff Regan, MP for Halifax West serves as chair of the Liberal Caucus Committee on Environmental Sustainability.

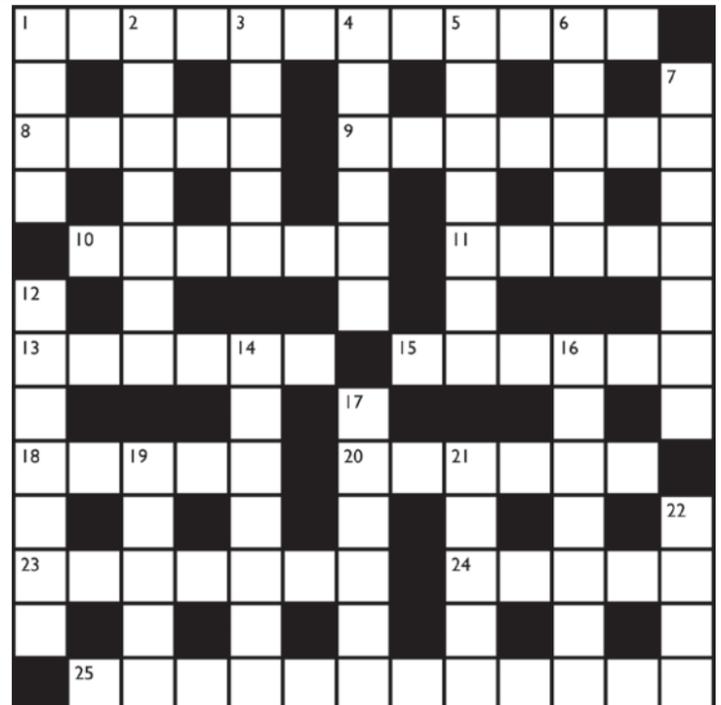
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1. Western Star sleeper family
- 8. Brand on Airtronic sleeper heaters
- 9. Restaurant or movie-theatre adjective (5,2)
- 10. Big-rig fuel
- 11. J. Cash’s Cadillac song, “One _____ at a Time”
- 13. Schneider-rig colour
- 15. Cummins offering
- 18. Frost _____, springtime roadway problem
- 20. Accelerator, in other words
- 23. Crustacean formerly found on Maine plates
- 24. Colour of UPS trucks
- 25. Drivers’ and schoolkids’ pen-pal program (7,5)

Down

- 1. Snowmobile, slangily
- 2. Scale-model truck description
- 3. Flat-deck cargo covers, commonly
- 4. Fuel-tank adjective
- 5. Tight-turn term
- 6. Four-wheeler trailer-hitch brand
- 7. Legendary motorcycle stuntman
- 12. Road-surface crater
- 14. Bridgestone-branded super single
- 16. Temporary Arctic thoroughfare (3,4)
- 17. Revive a flat battery
- 19. Red and green separator
- 21. Briefly, Michelin’s mascot man (2,3)
- 22. Annual 500-mile race since 1911



Answers on page 60

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DIVISIVE ISSUE: Fuel taxes have emerged as a key election issue, with the Conservatives and Liberals announcing contrasting policies.

the GST was introduced,” CTA CEO David Bradley said. “It’s taken a long time, but finally someone is listening.”

He added the change would bring “modest” help to truckers while lessening the “upward pressure on the price” of consumer goods.

“A two cent per litre reduction in the excise tax will not solve all our problems, but it would be an important step in the right direction,” said Bradley, adding it could result in an annual fuel savings of \$1,600-\$1,800 per truck. Industry-wide fuel tax savings could amount to \$140 million, according to the CTA.

The association was not nearly as supportive of the Liberals promise that it would modify its carbon tax plan to earmark funds the transportation industry could tap into to pay for the adoption of ‘green’ technologies.

The Green Shift revisions would set aside \$250 million for the Green Fisheries and Transportation Fund over four years. That money would be used to encourage the use of environmentally-friendly technologies such as APUs, side fairings and fuel-efficient tires.

“Through the summer, Canadians came with good ideas to improve the Liberal Green Shift plan, to make it stronger, and we listened,” said Dion.

However CTA’s Bradley said the changes fall short, especially when dispersed over four years among every transport mode as well as the fisheries industry.

“When the Liberal proposal is looked at over four years and spread across all the freight modes and the fisheries industry, it is unclear how much will really be available for the trucking industry,” Bradley pointed out. “The trucking industry is already making the shift to smog-free engines, ultra low-sulfur diesel fuel and proven and available GHG-busting technologies and devices.”

The CTA says the Green Shift plan will add seven cents per litre to the cost of diesel by year four, and will add about \$1,700 to the cost of operating a truck.

Collectively, it would cost the Canadian trucking industry as much as \$500 million per year, according to Bradley.

When viewed in tandem, the Conservative and Liberal plans

represent a nine cent per litre swing in the cost of diesel by the fourth year.

For our editors’ take on the issue, see the editorials on pg. 6. □



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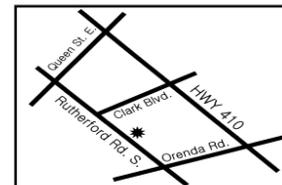
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Nova Scotia attempts to ease trucking's regulatory burden

By Carroll McCormick

HALIFAX, N.S. – By fall, Nova Scotia will be ready to introduce efficiencies to the regulations governing its trucking sector.

The province solicited comments from truckers and associations this summer under the Nova Scotia Truck Regulatory Review, part of a government-wide Better Regulation Initiative to reduce by 20% the regulatory burden of legislation, regulations, policies and procedures by 2010. Burden is defined as “any legal requirement that creates an obligation for a driver or motor carrier to do something that creates a cost.”

Having to make a two-hour drive from Annapolis Royal to Halifax to get out-of-province plates is a burden, says Stephen Orde, owner of Orde's Trucking and Excavating in Granville Ferry, and vice-chair of the Trucking Association of Nova Scotia (TANS). So is the requirement that when carriers want to obtain driver abstracts, employees must fetch their own abstracts for them from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR).

“The companies want abstracts to be more accessible to them, and to the insurance companies,” Orde says. “In our local area a worker may have to drive for an hour or two to get to an office. But if he is working, how is he to get it?”

The government sponsored a series of public consultation meetings in Coldbrook, Bridgewater, Yarmouth, Dartmouth, Truro, Antigonish and North Sydney in June, posted an online survey anyone could fill out, conducted internal interviews for ideas and hired a consultation company to orchestrate the whole process.

The government received a draft of the results of the hearings in early August, says Don Stonehouse, program manager, Weights and Dimensions Policy with TIR. “We will go through it to see what it says, and request clarifications. The final draft will be prepared in early September and sent to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.”

It is difficult to judge the enthusiasm of industry members for the exercise, which, for convenience, grouped regulations into four areas: getting started – application process; before you leave – planning a trip; on the road – complying with the rules; and back home – record-keeping requirements. Only about 75 people in all attended the seven public meetings, although TANS county representatives attended on behalf of their members. TIR also held one-on-one meetings with organizations such as TANS, the Forest Products Association and the Federation of Agriculture.

According to Stonehouse, the is-

ssues raised were generally service-related: getting permits; applying for licences; and duplication between record-keeping for the National Safety Code and other health and safety regulations.

Only four or five people filled out the online survey, which is rather curious in light of requests to make more processes available on the Internet.

“Some people are very computer literate and want Internet set-up for registration. Some want to do everything on the Net,” Stonehouse notes.

“We are in favour of any ideas that create online reporting of information,” says Dave Miller, certified director of safety with Berwick-based Eassons Transport. Too, he adds that the industry would appreciate sharing of information between any government departments that will reduce duplicate reporting.

Wayne Onda, the executive director of TANS also expressed frustration with the road trips required to do some things, and even the ability of individual offices to handle clients.

“Vehicle registrations can be had here in Truro, but it is a BS setup. There are only four tellers and 40-50 people lined up at 7:30 a.m.,” he says.

For certain services, he adds, “Everyone has to rush to Halifax

and there are line-ups again. I've never seen anything so foolish. People want more access and more offices throughout the province.”

Miller, for example, voices a desire to have “the ability to have access to commercial registrations at all Access Nova Scotia locations instead of restricting it to one location in Dartmouth.”

Onda also notes an example of how the burden has become heavier: “You used to be able to pick up oversize and overweight permits at weigh scales. Not anymore.”

Anyone who has ever done business at a Registry of Motor Vehicles in this province will nod knowingly at another Onda comment. “People have to drive all the way in from Sydney, and if they forget a piece of paper, they have to go home and get it.”

One might wish to blame such a frustration on the vehicle owner, but this frequent occurrence speaks loudly to the waste of effort and fuel chasing paper around the province in our age of Internet commerce. It will be interesting to see if the province will recognize travel time to get to Registries of Motor Vehicles and languishing in waiting rooms as the burdens they so obviously are, and take corrective action. There is no deadline for implementing any of the recommendations. □

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Former General to headline APTA event

DIEPPE, N.B. – General Rick Hillier will be a guest speaker at the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association's first ever International Transportation Summit. The event

will take place at the World Trade & Convention Centre in Halifax, N.S. Oct. 21-22. The event line-up also includes an afternoon panel discussion led by Stuart St. Clair, Roger King

and US Governor Bill Graves, CEOs of road transport associations representing Australia, the United Kingdom and the US, respectively.

Maria Luisa O'Connell, president of the Canada-United States-Mexico Border Trade Alliance, will

deliver remarks at a noon hour luncheon. Morning events will include a presentation by Peter Vigue, CEO of Cianbro, on his company's proposed billion-dollar toll road through Maine. For more info, visit www.apta.ca. □



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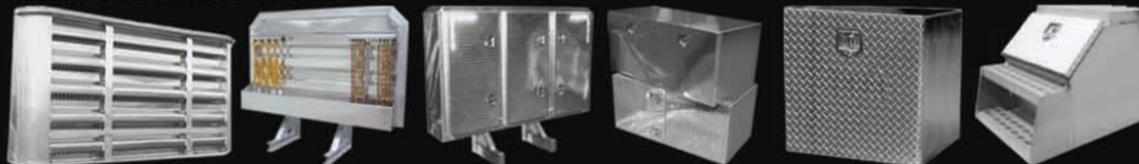
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OVERSIZE LOAD



Administrative nightmare for obligatory training to end

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, Que. – A newly-created co-operative will soon relieve Quebec companies of the crippling administrative burden associated with their legal obligation to spend a minimum amount on employee training. The co-op for the transportation industry sector will be owned and run by Camo-route, a provincial carrier-labour organization mandated by the Quebec government to ensure the qualification and quantification of labour for the road transportation sector.

For some 12 years, Quebec companies with annual payrolls over \$1 million have had to either spend 1% of their payroll on employee training or turn the money over to the government. Although the spirit of this law was perhaps benevolent, in practice, the reporting

requirements Revenue Quebec hatched are so burdensome that for many companies, the paperwork cost more than the training.

“A lot of companies send the government a cheque and then do the training without reporting it. Many have said, ‘what is the use?’” says Claude Chouinard, director general of Camo-route.

This January, the government authorized an overhaul of the training funds program. Camo-route has been busy setting up the co-op, which also resembles a trust fund and will officially launch it at CamExpo, which runs Nov. 7-9 in Quebec City.

The modus operandi of the co-op, as described by Chouinard, appears so elegant that it surely could not have come from the nimble minds of government bureaucrats, and in fact it did not. It was the brainchild

of the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (Labour Market Partnership Commission), which operates with some independence from the government. Within this industry-labour umbrella organization are 31 industry sectors, each represented by a sector council. Transportation is one of the sectors, and Camo-route is its sector council.

“The government has said it will allow each industry (sector) to manage its own funds...companies can tell the co-op to administer their 1%,” says Chouinard. As well, companies with payrolls under \$1 million will be allowed to participate.

In other words, rather than companies spending and shovelling paperwork, or throwing up their hands and remitting their 1%, they can simply deposit their training

funds into their co-op accounts.

“The co-op will do the paperwork and will be the only place where government officials can come to do an audit,” Chouinard says. Employers need only show on their tax return that they have deposited the required funds into the co-op. The co-op, which is not-for-profit, will be allowed to use up to 10% of the training funds to run itself.

Unlike the current set-up, where employers must spend or surrender their 1% every year, regardless of their training requirements, the new structure will give them five years in which to use the funds they submit to the co-op. Consider a scenario where a company is required to spend \$20,000 a year: If, in year one, it does only \$3,000 worth of training, the co-op holds the leftover \$17,000. The next year the company deposits \$20,000 more and spends none of it. In year three, say, it has massive training needs. It already has \$37,000 ‘banked,’ plus the \$20,000 it must set aside in year three, giving it \$57,000 to spend.

Another plus, which may be particularly attractive to new companies with high up-front training costs, is that companies can borrow from the fund. For example, a company pays in \$15,000 one year but needs \$25,000 worth of training. The co-op ‘fronts’ the company the \$10,000, which pays it back from its next years’ deposits, with the balance of any debt due at the end of the five years.

“Your cash flow will not be affected. The only money coming out of your company each year is the 1%,” Chouinard explains.

The co-op will maintain one file per employee per company. When they move to other companies, their files and proof of training will move with them. The co-op will also enjoy economies of scale and have access to public funds that are generally not available, Chouinard explains.

“For example, a company that needs to train five guys at \$500 a piece may not be able to access public funds. But the co-op might be able to say that it has 1,000 companies, each with five employees. We will be able to help the small carriers.”

The co-op will also be able to provide more efficient and frequent training to companies in outlying areas.

To illustrate the ease with which the system could work, Chouinard sketches this scenario: “For cash flow purposes, the easiest way to remit the money to the co-op is to have the company’s administrator cut a cheque for 1% of the payroll every two weeks and send it to the co-op. If the company (purchases) training, the co-op will pay it back.”

Any money that companies do not spend in the next five years will stay in their industry sector as the property of the co-op, which can spend it on training, equipment or “whatever.”

For more information, contact Claude Chouinard at 514-593-5811, 866-927-6883 or visit: www.camo-route.com. □

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Toronto police learn to identify truck-related crime

Industry helps police initiative by providing trucks for training

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – With the help of the trucking industry, some City of Toronto police officers are gaining a better understanding of how transport trucks are being used to move contraband.

On Sept. 9, Toronto police officers had the chance to inspect a straight truck provided by Total Transportation Solutions. For many, it was their first time in a truck, said Sgt. Rob Whalen, 55 Division Traffic Sgt.

“There are some officers who in 30 years on the job have never stopped a tractor-trailer, and it’s only because they’re not comfortable with it,” said Whalen. “The truck driver can generally out-talk the average officer, but once an officer gets familiar with the paperwork a truck driver must have and the normal routine of a truck driver, they become much more efficient at interdicting illegal product.”

Law enforcement agencies have seen an increase in the number of commercial vehicle busts in recent years, involving everything from drugs and weapons, to counterfeit goods and cash.

“I think we’re getting better at catching them,” Whalen said. “We saw a real big decrease around 9/11 because of the extra border security around terrorism, it had a spillover effect into the criminal element. Now that things are back to routine, it’s starting to perk up a bit.”

The officers that gathered at the Toronto Police Service’s 23 Division came from across the city for a two-day course on detecting illegal activity that utilizes Canada’s transportation system. Whalen said fleet managers should also keep their eyes out for telltale signs of criminal activity and report anything suspicious to police.

“There are a lot of little signs to look for,” said Whalen. “Once you know the signs, you can drive down the road and just look at a truck a lot of times and say ‘You know what, there’s something odd about that truck.’ That’s what fleet managers should be looking for – abnormalities.”

Trucks with modified components such as smoke stacks or extended fuel tanks – any compartment where contraband can be hidden – may indicate illegal activity, Whalen noted.

In some cases, legitimate truckers may find themselves unwittingly smuggling contraband, but Whalen said they’re usually actively involved in the process.

“These guys will go to a bar and all of a sudden someone comes up and says ‘You’re pissed at your company? You want to make a couple hundred bucks? Just let us put a package on your load and you don’t even have to know what it is,’” said Whalen. “It’s usually the driver

who’s down on his luck a bit.”

In order to continue training officers on how to detect trucks that are involved in hauling contraband, Whalen said trucking industry support is needed.

Total Transportation Solutions, for instance, has extended an open offer to provide trucks for training purposes after the company’s managers attended a conference where Whalen spoke on the subject of truck-related crime.

The fleet was so inspired by the lecture, they invited him to visit their facility to ensure it was secure. □

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HIDE AND SEEK: Sgt. Rob Whalen hides fake contraband on this Total Transportation Solutions truck as part of a training exercise.



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REFLECTIONS OF INDIA: Attendees at the first annual Indian Truck Show soaked in both the sights and the sun on a clear-skied afternoon Aug. 30. The event offered the best in Indian culture, including live music, dancers and food, while truckers from the Indian community showcased their custom rigs. Shown here is a truck from Pannu Transport, which has its grille decorated with multiple Khanda symbols, an important religious symbol in Sikh culture. □

Photo by Adam Ledlow



AND THEY'RE OFF: Truckers enjoyed a full day of drag racing under clear skies at the Earl Hardy Trucking Big Rig Nationals Sept. 6. Photos by James Menzies



BEST IN SHOW: Frank Bergen's 200 Kenworth won Best in Show in the Team Truck Centre Show'n'Shine.



READY, SET...: Rivals line up on the quarter-mile drag strip at Grand Bend Motorplex.

Rippin' it up in Grand Bend

By James Menzies

GRAND BEND, Ont. – Under clear skies and a deceptively potent sun (as my sunburn would attest), racers and show'n'shine participants once again converged at Grand Bend Motorplex Sept. 6 in the spirit of competition.

The annual Earl Hardy Trucking Big Rig Nationals, sponsored by *Truck News*, provide a rare opportunity for truckers to test the mettle of their machines and pit their rigs against each other on the quarter-mile drag strip.

Mark Shephard piloted his 1997 Freightliner to the top spot as champion of this year's event. He was followed closely by runner-up, Lance Riley who raced his 2001 Peterbilt.

In the parking lot, a competition of another variety was taking place: the Team Truck Centre Show'n'Shine.

Frank Bergen's 2000 Kenworth was the runaway winner as Best in Show.

The highly-customized rig also took top honours in the category of Best Kenworth.

Other winners included: DJ Jackson, Best Fleet; Larry Serre, 2005 Peterbilt, Best Interior and Best Paint; Jeff Carsey, Peterbilt, Best Dump Truck; Mason Wilkins, Peterbilt tractor, trailer, Best Truck/Trailer; Gary Falconer, '68 GMC, Best Vintage; Jonathon Hardy, 2003 Kenworth, Best Earl Hardy Truck; Henry Neustaeter, '88 Freightliner, Best Day Cab and Best Freightliner; Jay Bird, 1996 Pete, Bad-Ass Truck and Best Peterbilt; Les Thompson, 2007 Western Star, Best Western Star; A.C. Hunter, 2006 Sterling, Best Sterling; Dave Walzack, 2005 Mack, Best Mack; Mike Windas, '04 International, Best International; and Ron Jarritt's homemade truck took Best Sport Truck. □

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OTA, MTO, police launch campaign to catch aggressive motorists

TORONTO, Ont. – The Ontario Trucking Association, along with the Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, recently kicked off a new campaign designed to encourage car and truck drivers to report aggressive motorists to the police.

The campaign is the brainchild of Dean and Debbie Virgoe, who are brother and wife of David Virgoe. David was killed on Highway 400 in the spring of 2007 when his truck was struck and he was forced to swerve to avoid other vehicles in front of him. Police officers who investigated the crash called Virgoe, then 48 and a grandfather, a hero who sacrificed his own life for the safety of others.

The campaign involves a 12"x20" decal to be applied to tractor-trailers which displays the message: "Help Keep Our Workplace Safe – Report Aggressive Motorists, Call Police."

"My husband feared an increase in roadway deaths caused by the aggressive drivers that he saw almost every day on the roads," says Debbie Virgoe. "Unfortunately it was his life that was lost in a collision caused by aggressive drivers."

"My husband's death might have been prevented if someone had called the police to report the drivers that caused the crash that horrible day. All drivers need to know they should call police if they see people driving aggressively – it



STOP AGGRESSIVE DRIVING: Debbie Virgoe, widow of heroic trucker David Virgoe, affixes the first decal to a trailer as part of a campaign to put the brakes on aggressive driving. More than 2,000 decals have been made available for truckers on a first-come, first-served basis. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

could save the life of someone you love."

OTA president David Bradley says the entire trucking industry was impacted by Virgoe's tragic death. "There is always a lot of attention on the safety performance of truck drivers; but the fact is that as a class truck drivers are the safest drivers on our highways and in the majority of the fatal collisions they are involved in, it is the car driver, not the truck driver that is at fault."

"Ask any truck driver and he will tell you that the aggressive driving by motorists is getting worse, creating a hazard for all road users in-

cluding truckers whose workplace is the road. We hope that by encouraging people to call the police when they see aggressive driving that we can help save lives of truckers and the people we share the highways with."

"Aggressive driving causes road tragedies – avoidable tragedies," added Ontario Transportation Minister Jim Bradley. "Today we are asking motorists to report aggressive drivers to police so that we can all enjoy safer highways."

"Aggressive driving is a major cause of injuries and deaths on our roadways. We can cut down on

collisions and deaths across the Province by ensuring motorists, police, and the trucking industry work together to get drivers who endanger their fellow motorists off the road," said Deputy Chief Chuck Mercier of the Durham Regional Police Service and vice-president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police.

"We all have an important role to play in traffic safety," Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Julian Fantino added. "The OPP takes its responsibility seriously and appreciates the help we receive from concerned motorists."

"This OTA project will bring further visibility to traffic safety, reminding motorists to watch for aggressive drivers, those who are speeding excessively or otherwise endangering other motorists," Fantino added.

Decals will be made available by the OTA to operators of transport trucks. Over 2,000 decals will be distributed free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis. After that decals will be made available on a cost-recovery basis. (To order, e-mail: truckdecal@ontruck.org. Decals must be picked up from the OTA office or arrangements made for courier pickup at your expense).

To watch our live coverage of the event, watch the Sept. 18 episode of *Transportation Matters* on Trucknews.com. □

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Wait 'til next year?

If you're buying a truck, it could be a flawed strategy

A lot truck owners are holding out for 2009 to buy new iron.

They want to beat the 2010 deadline for tougher restrictions on diesel exhaust emissions because those engines will be more expensive to acquire and maybe even to operate.

If you're serious about savings, and you're in a position to buy, think about making your purchase this year instead of waiting for 2009.

Never mind that dealers are eager to make a sale now, or that truck manufacturers are raising prices in 2009.

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



Purchasing equipment close to the end of your fiscal year may help reduce your tax bill.

That's because the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) lets you expense a half-year's depreciation on the vehicle even though you may have had it for only a month or two.

When you purchase a new truck, CRA allows a 20% depreciation expense during the first year.

That's a good chunk of change on a new vehicle.

You could write off far more than you actually paid out during the short time you've owned it. It's a nice benefit, a "bonus" business expense you can incorporate into your tax-planning strategies.

However, this strategy only works as long as you're financing the purchase of the vehicle with a loan and not leasing it.

People in the trucking industry have used the terms "buying" and "leasing" interchangeably. But we can't anymore.

If your accountant advises you to go buy a new truck, you'd better not lease it.

Leasing your new vehicle close to year's end doesn't offer the same tax-related benefit.

In fact, if you lease your truck, it

may be better to add the vehicle at the beginning of your business year, not the end of it.

CRA considers that big initial lease payment a pre-paid deposit that you expense and write off over time.

You divide that downstroke by the number of months in your contract and expense the amount each month in addition to your regular lease payment and sales taxes.

If you put down \$20,000 in cash and/or trade on a five-year lease, you need to expense an extra \$333.34 over the next 60 months on top of your monthly payment.

If you end the lease early for any reason, you need to write off the remaining balance of the down payment at that time.

So if you trade in your leased vehicle after 48 months instead of carrying it to the full term of 60 months, you still have 12 months times \$333.34 (equaling roughly \$4,000 of value) to expense.

Of course, when you compare write-offs on leases and purchases, what you're really talking about is tax deferral, not tax elimination.

If you spend \$130,000 on a commercial truck, then you have \$130,000 to expense. The difference between buying and leasing is just in the timing of the expense.

That "bonus" expense during the year of purchase is an example. But taking the first-year depreciation amount on the Capital Cost Allowance schedule means you'll have less for later years. Heavy CCA claims in the first two years of owning equipment are great for reducing tax bills, but those smaller CCA claims for the remaining years will mean higher taxes.

That's why many people run into tax problems in years four and five of their loan and buy replacement equipment to get back to the higher CCA claims again. Leasing expenses, on the other hand, are evenly distributed throughout the term of the financing.

The write-off for your truck payment is predictable year after year.

Your accountant should be able to walk you through the tax implications of trading in your equipment.

So now, as you contemplate whether to take on a new truck this year or next, the simple rule of thumb is to contact your accountant before you proceed in purchasing or leasing equipment.

You may be ready to drop Ol' Betsy at the used truck lot and ride off in a shiny new model before the sun sets on 2008.

In doing so, you don't want any lingering doubts about the tax implications for you and your business. □

— 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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Everyone holds a key to anti-theft strategies

It is easy to understand why trucks and their cargo represent an attractive target for thieves. In addition to consolidating a large volume of goods in one spot, the products are already on wheels and ready to travel.

The sad reality is that truck, trailer and cargo theft continues to be big business. According to the Ontario Trucking Association, North America's related losses and claims add up to about \$10 billion per year.

But by developing a theft-prevention policy with your insurance company, you can help to ensure that your fleet does not contribute to the statistics.

The recent theft of \$140,000 of beef from a Montreal fleet yard illustrates the issues that can be overlooked. The yard had no fence or padlock, the trailer's king pin was easily accessed, and there were no security guards in sight. The layout of the yard even allowed thieves to drive in, hook up to the load and drive out another gate that offered quick access to a nearby highway.

This fleet learned its lessons the hard way.

Today, the terminal is enclosed with a fence and gate, drivers are issued individual passes to a cardlock, and cameras monitor activities around the clock. The king pin on every dropped trailer is also well protected by a pin lock.

Technology can also play a role in the security of a high-value load. Modern GPS equipment, for example, offers dispatchers a valuable tool for tracking stolen loads. Coupled with a "geofencing" system, the technology can even sound an alarm whenever freight strays too far away from an identified route, while sensors can be used to flag changes in vehicle weight or opened doors.

As important as these physical tools can be, however, a theft prevention strategy also needs to include management practices. Job candidates should be required to incorporate a criminal background check, while recruiters should be wary of anyone who seems to shift employers every few months. And paperwork should be properly secured so that information is only available on a need-to-know basis.

Customers have a role to play in your theft-prevention efforts as well. While some shippers may think of signage on the trailer as a great marketing opportunity, it may also be advertising the contents of a high-value load.

Of course, some loads will represent bigger targets than others. Goods such as consumer electronics and alcohol can be easily resold by crooks, but some surprising cargo can represent a higher risk at specific times of the year. Meat, for example, is often targeted during holidays like Easter or Christmas, while aluminum and copper have recently become valued targets because of soaring commodity prices.

Any security personnel should be informed about the specific threats so they can increase their

Ask the Expert

Jean Marie Gagnon



vigilance around individual loads. They should also be given a complete list of equipment that should be in the yard at any given time, so they can raise the alarm about any unusual activities or missing trailers.

The layout of a yard itself can help to discourage potential thieves if it is surrounded by a well-anchored fence that is at least six feet high, with access offered through a controlled gate. But the security efforts do not end at the home terminal – and infor-

mation can be as powerful as the key to a lock.

Drivers need to be trained to protect details about their loads and destinations whenever they stop at a truck stop. The questions from a fellow driver may appear to be innocent enough, but these strangers may be probing for information that is needed to hijack a load. Equally, drivers should be sticking to well-lit and high-traffic areas of any parking area.

When loads are particularly valuable, drivers should be reporting to their dispatchers at regular intervals, and they should even know a simple code word that could be used in the event that a theft is in progress.

(Instead of having them memorize the phrase from a war movie, have them reference the name of

a fictional dispatcher).

After all, an effective anti-theft strategy will be designed to protect your employees as well as the loads they carry. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:3361;

– This month's expert is Jean Marie Gagnon. Jean Marie is the manager of Markel's Safety and Training Services, Eastern Canada (Quebec and Atlantic Provinces), and has over 25 years of experience in safety, training, and management positions. 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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Consider the dispatcher

Over the past couple of years, prior to the price of fuel rising at alarming rates, one of the bigger concerns facing fleet operators has been the shortage of qualified drivers.

There have been plenty of articles in the trade press on the subject, and lots of op-ed pieces by industry experts trying to explain the phenomenon, with no definitive solutions being offered. Carriers have therefore taken a variety of approaches to attracting and keeping good drivers, including adjusting rates of pay, adding bonuses, immigration, and actually listening to drivers' suggestions for improving operations.

There have been seminars and publications dedicated to providing all the information a fleet manager might need to help ensure a constant supply of qualified drivers. In fact so much ink and airtime has been used

Private Links

Bruce Richards



on the subject of the qualified driver shortage that we have almost overlooked shortages in what may well be the most critical position in the industry: the dispatcher.

During my time in this industry, I have always clung to the belief that dispatcher may be the worst job or at the very least the most under-appreciated job in trucking. It takes an individual with an extraordinary ability to constantly juggle a boatload of activities and conflicting demands, while responding to questions from inside and outside the

organization. Burn-out and job dissatisfaction are often the norm, contributing to regular turnover.

Let's face it, the dispatcher is at the centre of everything that the fleet does.

They hear from irate customers when the load is late, from irate drivers who don't like something about their assignment, from irate bosses or salespeople who are chasing down one single shipment among the many the dispatcher is concerned with. And on the odd day that everything goes smoothly, all shipments delivered on time, and all drivers happy, does anyone remember to say thanks or acknowledge a job well done?

No, dispatchers need particularly thick skin, organizational skills beyond the comprehension of most mortals, and enormous patience to do the job well. And for the most part, they are put in that role without any real training beyond a few days with the incumbent (if he hasn't

already quit in frustration). They deserve better, and wise managers make sure they get it.

In most companies it is standard practice, in fact almost mandatory that employees maintain a continuous learning path, often paid for by the company. It's good business sense and there is generally a net benefit to the employer in terms of performance and retention.

But those same employers seldom if ever think about the benefits of offering formal training for their dispatchers. Beyond the talents I've already described, a dispatcher needs to be a supervisor, a motivator, a coach, a disciplinarian, an expert on labour and safety regulations, a recruiter, and over-riding all of this, needs well-developed interpersonal skills to deal with frustrated or angry customers, drivers and internal staff. They are often expected to somehow accumulate these skills through on-the-job experience.

Those demands, coupled with limited training, make it difficult for fleets to find and, as importantly, retain good dispatchers. It seems ironic to me that an individual in such a critical position, with so much riding on their decisions and on their skills, would be left on their own to figure out the nuances of the job. Fortunately, there are alternatives to learn-as-you-go that are utilized by progressive companies.

For example, Transcom Fleet Services (www.transcomfleetservices.com) offers two-day and eight-day interactive courses that address over 40 topics with which every competent dispatcher should be familiar. These seminars, with a very limited enrollment numbers to encourage participation, have proven very popular and are sold-out on a regular basis.

Also, the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (www.cthrc.com) offers an e-learning course, that teaches interpersonal skills such as conflict resolution, motivation, managing stress, and professional skills such as HR management, profitable routing, and legal requirements of shipping.

Some people, such as Shaw Tracking's vice-president of business services, Mike Ham, get it. A number of years ago Shaw introduced Dispatcher of the Year awards, presented through various provincial trucking associations, and a National Dispatcher of the Year award.

The awards, based on input from customers, drivers, and employers, emphasize the importance of the position.

"The award provides much-deserved recognition to outstanding dispatchers," according to Ham, who went on to say "The most significant form of recognition is that of your peers and your customers." And he is absolutely correct.

So why don't more companies invest in their dispatchers? If dispatchers are part of your team you might want to ask yourself that same question. □

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The listeria hysteria

Recent headline stories have identified a serious food poisoning outbreak in North America,

resulting from people eating organisms or toxins in contaminated food.

Although our food supply is usually considered the safest in the world, people still get food poisoning. Fortunately, serious outbreaks are rare. However, when they do happen, the very young and old, and those with a

serious medical condition, like kidney disease or diabetes, or immune system weaknesses are affected the most. If you have any of those conditions, you should be extra cautious.

Continued on page 28 ■



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Take steps to protect yourself from food poisoning

■ Continued from page 26

If you are in good health, why not exercise caution, even though your own immune system could likely fight most contaminants?

Raw foods, for example, often carry harmful bacteria. Raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, as well as spinach, lettuce, tomatoes, sprouts and melon frequently become contaminated while being grown, harvested, processed, stored, shipped or prepared for sale. Nevertheless, don't avoid them, since they carry valuable nutrients – just handle them properly. Usually, thorough washing and/or cooking is good enough.

If you're cooking your food, cook it thoroughly then eat it right away.

Leaving it on the counter at room temperature for over two hours could potentially lead to a case of food poisoning because this is an ideal environment for bacteria to flourish. Unfortunately, this bacteria growth often goes unnoticed because foods do not immediately begin to smell, look or feel rotten.

To slow down bacteria growth, refrigerate foods. To kill bacteria, thoroughly cook foods. If you've got raw meat, poultry, or fish that's been in the fridge for longer than one or two days, throw it out. Freeze anything that needs to be stored longer. Freezing slows or

Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



stops the bacteria's growth. But when the food thaws, the microbes will start multiplying again, so don't store thawed foods long. For best results, keep the refrigerator set at 40 F and your freezer at or below 0 F.

Be cautious at picnics, school cafeterias, and large social functions because in these situations food is often left at room temperature too long and is not prepared using proper food-handling techniques.

Common foods available in these settings are also at fault, such as: undercooked meats; dairy products; or food containing mayonnaise such as coleslaw or potato salad, which has become warm. Avoid them.

Both at home and on the road, foods can become contaminated. When at home, take these precautionary steps to protect yourself:

Begin by thoroughly washing your hands before touching any foods. Next, use only clean utensils, dishes and work surfaces. Include a meat thermometer as one of your regular cooking tools and then use it. When inserted

into the core of your cooked meat, the thermometer should read at least 160 F for beef, 180 F for poultry, and 140 F for fish. Later, put your cooked meat on a fresh plate, not the one that the uncooked meat or fish was on.

Examine what you're planning to cook. Check the expiry dates on packages, throw out expired foods.

Check packages to ensure the seal is intact – a broken seal means the food is no longer sterile. Avoid cans that are dented or bulging, this may indicate a build-up of gasses from bacteria growth. Trust your eyes and nose. If a food looks or smells unusual, don't eat it!

On the road, eat in clean, reputable establishments. If you've eaten safely at a truck stop for years, keep going to it. Remember where drivers complain about feeling sick at after eating there. In a restaurant, choose well-cooked meat dishes.

When brown-bagging it, wash your raw fruit and vegetables and keep them in a small fridge or cooler. Even pre-packaged foods can be hazardous; if possible, microwave them to kill any hidden bacteria.

Unfortunately, even if you're cautious, about two to six hours after eating contaminated food, you may feel the following symptoms of food poisoning: nausea

and vomiting; abdominal cramps; diarrhea; fever; weakness; headache; dehydration. Don't panic. Usually, you'll get over it on your own by drinking extra fluids (not milk or caffeinated drinks).

However, you should call your doctor if: you have diarrhea, but cannot drink fluids due to nausea or vomiting; you are on diuretics and have diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting; your diarrhea lasts for more than two or three days; you have blood in your stools; or you have a fever over 101 F.

You could be very sick and should call 9-1-1 if: you have signs of dehydration, such as feeling thirsty, dizzy, light-headed, or faint; you have excessive bleeding or your stools are maroon or black; you have trouble breathing; your heart is racing, pounding, or skipping; you have trouble swallowing; or you have symptoms related to your nervous system - symptoms, like: weakness, double vision, difficulty speaking, or paralysis.

Usually food poisoning is just an unpleasant inconvenience. However, if you feel you need medical treatment, don't take a chance, go with your gut. □

– 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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Here we go again. With yet another general election looming – our third in just over four years and seven trips to provincial polls in

just over a year – it's sometimes difficult to determine when the campaigning stops and the governing starts.

And here I come again, haranguing you to get off your butts and vote. There's no excuse anymore why you can't. Voting in a

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If for some reason you don't receive a card, a toll-free call to Elections Canada (800-463-6868) will get you on the list. But even without a card, you can still register to vote at the polling station on election day by proving your identity and address.

If you can't vote on election day (Oct. 14), you can vote earlier at an advance poll (Oct. 3, 4 and 6), or you can skip the line-ups altogether and vote by mail. To do this, you'll need a special ballot which you can get from Elections Canada, either through the Web site (www.elections.ca) or by telephone. You can mail that ballot anytime, from anywhere in the world, in the envelope provided.

Promises fill the air during a campaign – some even include the word “trucking” to get us excited. But is Stephen Harper's promise to cut the federal excise tax on fuel from four cents to two cents a litre – over four years – going to solve the industry's cost-related problems? Is Stephane Dion's second-thought addition of a bundle of rebates and incentives enough to sell us on his Green Shift plan which would *increase* the federal diesel tax by seven cents a litre?

Is any of Jack Layton's \$8 billion funding for green-collar jobs coming your way?

Most of us old enough to have a few elections under our belts are sceptical or downright cynical when it comes to election promises. It's not without reason truckers often feel invisible; our day-to-day concerns can easily get lost in discussions on key issues like the economy, the environment, leadership, and consumer confidence.

Even the promise of fuel tax cuts and green incentive programs for trucking aren't for the benefit of truckers themselves – you're supposed to pass the benefits on to consumers by lowering the price of moving their stuff by truck. Since when are truckers not consumers too?

But before I get any more cynical about being cynical, I want to point out that elections are about a lot more than which political party we'll vote into office.

The whole campaign process provides a perfect opportunity to raise trucking issues with the politicians who'll be knocking at your door looking for your vote.

Our “first past the post” electoral system means that the candidate who wins your riding will represent you in Parliament, regardless of which party forms the government. When the dust settles, that person is the one who will be sitting in the House, working on committees, debating issues, and voting on Bills.

Although trucking issues aren't likely to top the Prime Minister's priority list, an MP who understands this industry and its issues will be more helpful than one who doesn't know trucking from page two.

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



While the federal government has relatively little jurisdiction over transportation compared to provincial governments, there is no shortage of issues for truckers to discuss with political hopefuls.

The environment? Canada needs a comprehensive green plan, not a mish-mash of conflicting policies and regulations. We need practical, accessible, incentive programs that will support small business truck owners who are struggling with the high cost of adopting green technologies.

Our crumbling infrastructure and lack of rest areas and truck parking puts drivers at risk on a daily basis. It's time the feds

showed some leadership in addressing these problems, rather than squabbling with provinces over funding and jurisdiction.

When they're laying out their plans for economic renewal, politicians need to be reminded that the economy moves by truck. Shippers rely on Canadian truckers to move 75% of the freight with our largest trading partner to the south, and Ottawa can't continue to ignore the ever-thickening Canada/US border that adds cost and inefficiencies to cross-border trucking.

And perhaps it's time to dust off the report of the Federal Labour Standards Review Commission for another look labour issues in inter-provincial trucking – including the Pandora's box of driver pay.

We're still waiting for fair treatment for sole proprietor owner/operators with respect to meal tax allowances, and we need a government with the guts to give Marine Atlantic a good shake-up rather

than tax the trucking industry with rate hikes to pay for the crown corporation's inefficiencies.

And the list goes on. So when the candidates come around asking for your support, let them know what's on your mind.

Talk to them about the industry and what changes you want to see, then ask them how they're prepared to support you.

I know cliches about exercising your right to vote start to wear thin after awhile, but here's one to think about: bad politicians are elected by good people who don't vote. Still not convinced that your vote can make a difference? Just ask Elizabeth May what can happen when Canadians get mad and speak up. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Are you ready for a debate? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.



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In the spirit of National Trucking Week

A look at some of the things I love about the trucking industry

Autumn is a special time for the Canadian trucking industry. The season kicks off with two of the industry's key national events – the National Truck Driving Championships and National Trucking Week.

That is followed up by several important events including a number of association conventions.

In some parts of the country, economic conditions are such that it may seem like there is little to celebrate this year, but perhaps a change in the season will also bring a change in prospects.

Every challenge presents opportunities.

Industry Issues

David Bradley



And, as we know full well in the trucking industry there is never a shortage of challenges.

You have to look for the opportunities and stay positive.

For me, there are and always will be lots of positives and lots to celebrate.

Here are some of the things that I love about trucking:

Tenacious: Is there an industry whose people are more tenacious or work harder?

I don't know of one. When the times get tough, this industry shows its true mettle.

Resilient: Few industries are as susceptible to the winds that blow through the economy.

Think about it. The dollar. High fuel prices. Tightening credit. Stagnant demand. Capacity and balance issues.

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While the road may be rocky and while the risks are sometimes significant, this is an industry of survivors.

Underdog: It can seem like the cards are always stacked against truckers. Think how many times

over the past couple of decades some people have been prepared to write-off the Canadian trucking industry.

There is always someone (competitor, shipper, supplier, government) bigger and more powerful, but trucking always seems to win at the end of the day.

Competitive: If there is an industry more competitive than trucking, I'd like to know exactly what it is.

With such low concentration and low barriers to entry, this industry is a case study in textbook 101 competition.

As an association person I am always struck by how cut-throat competitors can still come together through their associations and work towards common goals.

I can tell you this doesn't happen nearly to the same extent in associations where there are only a few major players.

Knights of the Road: Okay, it's not the 50s or 60s, and there are lots of reasons why it's not always feasible or safe to stop and help by the side of the road anymore. And, there are some drivers who give everyone a black eye.

But, for all the criticism that is thrown their way, there is no class of driver or vehicle that is as safe, responsible, skilled and productive than the Canadian truck driver and the Canadian fleet of heavy vehicles.

They are the best.

Innovative: To the ill-informed, trucking is as simple as moving goods from A to B. But to those of us in the industry we know it's much more than that.

Even with some of the restrictive regulations that the industry must comply with, (ie. vehicle configurations, systems or strategies) some of the most innovative people in Canadian business are found in the trucking industry.

No job too tough: This is an industry that gets it done. That's the bottom line. Trucking is the definition of service.

Go for it: Trucking is one of the last great bastions of Canadian entrepreneurship.

This is not an industry for the timid or feint-hearted. What's more this is an industry where if you're going to do it, do it right – the first time and every time. Spare no effort.

It is often said that the trucking industry is an easy one to get into, and a hard one to get out of. That once you are in, there may be easier ways to make a living, but the diesel fuel gets in your blood.

That may be true, but for me it's the people that make this industry what it is and why so many of us want to work nowhere else than in trucking. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:863;

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

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Hypertension 101

Let me ask you a question: Would you drive your truck down the road with too much air in your tires? I am sure your answer was 'No!' Just like your tires, your arteries have an ideal operating pressure and if you increase the pressure too much, problems will arise. Blood pressure is simply a measure of the volume of blood your heart has to pump and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries. Basically, the more blood your heart has to pump and the narrower your arteries, the higher your blood pressure.

Most people live with high blood pressure for many years without being aware of it. However, if elevated blood pressure goes undetected for too long, it can increase your risk of serious health problems such as cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Generally, people do not experience many symptoms until their

Back behind the wheel



Dr. Christopher Singh

blood pressure reaches dangerous levels. At that point, they may complain of headaches, dizzy spells or frequent nosebleeds. If you regularly experience these symptoms, it is important to consult with your doctor as soon as possible. If you are unable to get into your regular doctor's office, try getting into a local walk-in clinic or even a drug store as many of them have blood pressure gauges.

There are two main categories of hypertension: primary; and secondary. The majority of people have primary hypertension. This type of hypertension has no identifiable cause and tends to develop gradually over years. Secondary hypertension is caused by an underlying condition such as kidney and heart disorders.

Scientists have identified several risk factors for hypertension, some of which you can control and others you can not. Age, race and family are among the risk factors that you can not control. As for the others, firstly, maintaining a health body weight is essential. The more you weigh the more blood you need to supply oxygen and nutrients to your tissues.

Physical activity will not only help keep your weight down but will also strengthen your heart which in turn will reduce your blood pressure. A major risk factor of concern for truck drivers is the use of tobacco. Tobacco not only immediately raises your blood pressure but also damages the walls of your arteries causing them to become narrower.

Uncontrolled hypertension can lead to many health conditions involving the organs of the body as well as the cardiovascular system. Aneurysms and heart failure are common with excessive blood pressure which is sustained over a long period of time. Other problems such as reduced brain function and eye and kidney complications are also concerns of hypertension.

Blood pressure is usually taken using an inflatable arm cuff and a pressure gauge. Your health care professional will measure two numbers. The first number is called 'systolic pressure' and it measures the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats. The second number is called 'diastolic pressure' and it measures the amount of pressure in your arteries between heart beats. Ideal blood pressure is 120/80 mm Hg. Once your blood pressure reaches 140/90, you are in Stage 1 hypertension and once you reach 160/100 mm Hg you are in Stage 2 hypertension.

Lifestyle modification can greatly reduce your blood pressure. However, sometimes changing your lifestyle is not enough. In that case, your doctor will prescribe medications to help bring your blood pressure down to normal limits. □

- Dr. Chris Singh, B. Kin., D.C., runs Trans-Canada Chiropractic at 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

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Meals on wheels

New study looks at how to transport hogs humanely and with minimal stress

By Jan Westell

GUELPH, Ont. – Transportation can be stressful on pigs, especially when confined to a vehicle on a long distance haul under extreme Canadian weather conditions. It's a situation being examined by a team of Canadian researchers who are hoping to curb transport stress for pigs. Dr. Renee Bergeron, an associate professor in the Animal and Poultry Science department at the University of Guelph, is part of a research team led by Dr. Harold Gonyou, of the University of Saskatchewan, that is studying the effects of transport on pigs in Canada. The researchers have monitored the pigs before, during, and after transport, and are paying special attention to situations that might adversely affect the animals, such as distance and climate.

"There are some problems with transportation, and heat stress seems to be a major concern," said Bergeron. "We also have a concern about truck and loading facility design."

The first part of the five-year research program had the team analyze the effects of vehicle type on transport losses, blood stress indicators and meat quality in pigs. A total of 1,878 crossbred pigs were transported over a six-week period through June and July, 2007. The pigs travelled from a commercial growing/finishing unit to a slaughter plant. It was a two-hour journey, using two types of vehicles" a 'pot-belly' trailer; and a compact double flat deck truck. A sub-population of 396 pigs was randomly chosen for the pork quality assessment.

The results indicate that pigs transported on the pot-belly trailer are more likely to die or to suffer from fatigue during transport. Overall, pork quality was good, states the research abstract presented at the last meeting of the Canadian Society of Animal Science, but the use of the pot-belly trailer increased the incidence of darker loins.

Another part of the hog transport research evaluated thermal responses to environmental conditions. The objective of that study was to determine core body temperatures of pigs during transport to a commercial abattoir using temperature loggers (Thermocron iButton), which are slightly larger than a dime and located in the stomach. Over six weekly trials, (through June to July, 2007), loggers were orally administered to 252 trial pigs. The results indicated that pigs loaded into the top deck compartments of the pot-belly trailer are at a greater risk for heat stress than pigs in other areas of either truck. This could be due to higher heat load and/or exertion required to climb to these compartments, according to the study.

The overall objective of the research program is to identify contributors to the stressfulness of current handling and transport

practices under Canadian conditions, and to develop and assess means to reduce those stressors.

Ultimately, it is the goal of the research project to develop methods of handling and transporting pigs that will improve animal welfare, and reduce losses due to death, trim losses, and poor meat quality. The research program seeks to improve the handling of pigs during marketing by:

- Assessing the stressfulness of loading pigs under current commercial conditions in order to identify critical control points for handling;
- Developing alternative handling methods to reduce the stressfulness

of loading;

- Assessing the reduction in handling stress, after the application of these new methods under commercial conditions.

The research program also seeks to reduce the stressfulness of transportation during marketing by:

- Assessing the effects of vehicle design on the pigs' micro-environment during transport under various weather conditions, the behavioural responses of pigs to these conditions, and the impact on carcass and meat quality;

- Developing alternative vehicle design and/or management during transport to reduce transport stress;

- Assessing the effectiveness of these changes on the stressfulness of transport under various weather conditions.

According to the researchers, the research program will have many potential benefits for producers and the pork industry in general. First of all, better handling will help speed

up the loading process and allow the trucker to do more trips per day. Better transportation conditions will likely help reduce mortality rates, especially during critical weather. Improvements in meat quality and reduction of trim losses will result in economic benefits, above that involved in reduced death losses.

"What we are trying to see here, is what the animal will feel when being transported," said Jorge Correa, a grad student who is working on the project with the research team. "It has never been done before in North America."

Furthermore, the researchers note that animal welfare concerns extend beyond the issue of death losses and carcass and meat quality. Consumer groups and international organizations such as the OIE are seeking higher standards for animal care during marketing. This research program seeks to identify means to achieve these standards within the context of Canadian conditions. □



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Cummins shakes up 2010 picture, will use SCR after all

■ Continued from page 1

compliant by simply employing higher levels of Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR), the technology currently in use today. (Caterpillar announced this summer that it will no longer supply heavy-duty on-highway engines for the North American market in 2010).

Those with their feet firmly planted in the SCR camp call Navistar's approach 'massive EGR'. Navistar prefers 'mature EGR.'

Tim Schick, director of marketing for International's big bore engine business, says the company will increase the amount of exhaust gas recirculated through the engine by 10% compared to today's engines. Contrary to reports, he insists EGR levels will be "way below 50%, even in the most extreme cases."

He says advances in engine

technology have allowed the company to become 2010-compliant without SCR by enhancing its EGR system and developing a high-pressure common rail fuel system that will boost pressures above 30,000 psi. The International MaxxForce's durable compacted-graphite iron block will allow it

to withstand the higher firing pressures, Schick says, adding the company will move to a five-stage injection cycle.

"We're taking advantage of technology that just didn't exist before," explains Schick. "Our program is going very, very well and with time we have found

more security with this path, rather than less."

Navistar was originally joined on the EGR side of the fence by Cummins, but the industry's market share leader dropped a bombshell on Aug. 13 when it announced it was switching paths in favour of SCR on its heavy-duty

engine line. Cummins already was planning to adopt SCR on its mid-range engines, which should make the mid-flight

reversal easier to execute.

In a conference call with the trade press, Cummins said it decided to change course for two

'We don't feel we're going to have issues passively regenerating our engine for 2010.'

Tim Schick, Navistar



Tame the Road



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reasons: record fuel prices, which have made fuel economy a priority; and the emergence of a new catalyst material that Cummins says eliminates NOx more efficiently than traditional materials.

By using a copper-zeolite catalyst material, Cummins found it could improve fuel consumption by up to 5% compared to its EGR solution, Steve Charlton, vice-president of heavy-duty engineering with Cummins says.

Ed Pence, vice-president and general manager of Cummins heavy-duty engine business, adds "The business case for delivering industry-leading fuel economy performance from our products was too compelling for us to overlook, and therefore drove this decision."

It should be noted, Cummins steadfastly denies that it encountered problems in developing its in-cylinder solution.

"That product was all set to launch in January, 2010," said Charlton. "The program was performing well, the product was performing well and we were hitting all our targets." (See pg. 55 for more).

Navistar seems unfazed by the Cummins announcement. Schick says International trucks will still be available with the Cummins ISX with SCR in 2010, so the development simply broadens the options for International truck customers.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing Navistar is not meeting EPA2010 emissions standards, but fending off criticism from the SCR crowd, which continues to question the viability of an in-cylinder solution.

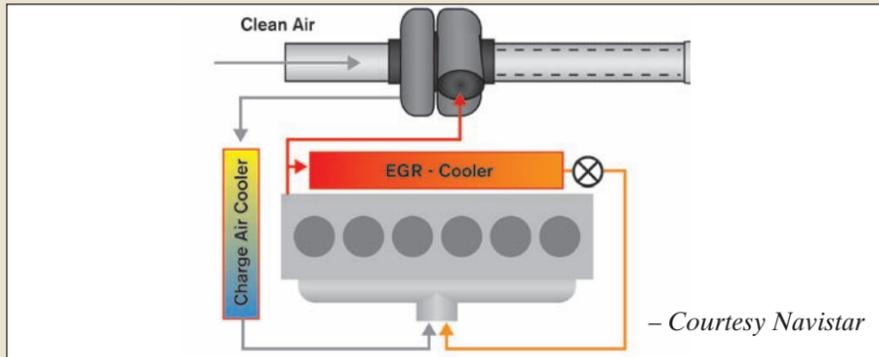
Randy Fleming, powertrain sales manager with Volvo Trucks Canada for one, has questioned whether an EGR solution will be able to achieve passive Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) regenerations. He points out that NOx plays an important role in facilitating passive DPF regens. Actively regenerating the DPF consumes about 2.5 litres of diesel, he says.

Eliminating NOx in-cylinder means "near-zero passive regenerations," Fleming said during a seminar at the Private Motor Truck Council's annual conference in June. With SCR, on the other hand, engine manufacturers can produce as much NOx as necessary within the cylinder, take advantage of its chemical properties to conduct an efficient passive DPF regeneration and then eliminate the NOx downstream in the SCR catalyst. Navistar's Schick insists International engines will continue to achieve passive regenerations.

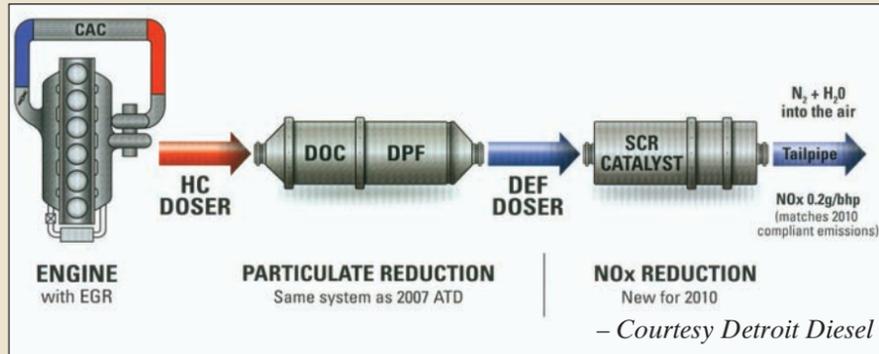
"We don't feel we're going to have issues passively regenerating our engine for 2010," he says. "When they say you need NOx to regenerate, what they're really saying is you need heat. Yes, taken on the surface, less NOx out equals less heat out."

However, Shick adds the new high-pressure common rail fuel system will produce less NOx than today's engines in the first place and the regeneration process should not be impacted. Navistar

How the systems work:



EGR: About 30-40% of exhaust gas will be cooled and recirculated back through the engine, diluting the amount of oxygen in the intake charge, reducing the temperature of combustion and discouraging the formation of NOx. A Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) traps and burns particulates.



SCR: EGR will continue to be used, with less exhaust recirculated for cooling. A diesel particulate filter (DPF) will remain, to trap and burn off particulates. After exhaust gases leave the DPF, they are dosed with a Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) solution, causing a chemical reaction that produces ammonia. The ammonia and NOx react in the catalyst to form harmless water and nitrogen.

also finds itself having to defend its use of 'credits' to become EPA2010-compliant.

"The folks not using SCR will not be meeting the EPA's tailpipe emission levels," says David Siler, director of marketing with Detroit Diesel. "They'll be compliant, but not necessarily the cleanest. To meet the 0.2 g/bhp-hr NOx tailpipe limit, the only way to get there is with SCR."

Engine manufacturers in the US have earned credits for surpassing previous emissions standards, and Navistar admits it will be cashing in some of those credits in 2010 to bring it into compliance. The company makes no apologies for doing so, since that's why the system was put into place, says Schick.

"The inclination is there was a loophole somewhere, that it's not a good thing and we found this loophole to produce dirty engines," he counters. "We really have to back up and say that we hold, and the EPA holds, that this is a positive. They set up a program that rewards

producing engines that are cleaner than they need to be at any given time. They very much promote achieving lower emissions early and they reward for that."

For its part, SCR has not been immune to criticism itself. The widespread availability of urea has been voiced as a major concern, however engine manufacturers that will adopt SCR downplay the issue.

David McKenna, powertrain sales and marketing manager with Mack, points out that urea will be consumed at an approximately 3% urea-to-diesel ratio, so for every 100 gallons of diesel burned, a truck will require just three gallons of DEF.

"On a typical highway truck with a 13-gallon urea reservoir, at 6.5 mpg you'll be able to run all the way from New York to Los Angeles and back to Denver, Colorado on 13 gallons of urea," he says. The amount of urea required varies slightly by manufacturer. Cummins, for instance, touts a 2% urea-to-diesel ratio, which equates to

about 6,000 miles between fill-ups based on a 20-gallon urea tank.

"We will optimize that ratio for the lowest cost of operation," says Volvo's Fleming. It's expected DEF will be available at truck stops and truck dealers across North America, both in bulk and in portable containers similar to those containing windshield washer fluid. Currently, urea costs about three-quarters the price of diesel, Fleming notes, adding more than 100 million tonnes of the solution were produced worldwide last year.

As per EPA requirements, engines using SCR will be downgraded if the urea tank runs dry, meaning the driver will have to keep on top of monitoring tank levels and replacing the fluid when required. That driver interaction will be a deterrent for some fleets, Navistar hopes.

"All the emissions controls up until now have been passive, they don't require direct driver involvement," says Schick. "Now this one is active and (fleets are saying) 'We're not sure we want to go that route and add that extra complexity - this is going to provide an inconvenience we'd rather

not have'."

Schick also contends Navistar's non-SCR approach appeals to body builders, who loathe the idea of losing frame rail space to SCR components. However, McKenna says the SCR system has been packaged "very efficiently."

At the end of the day, manufacturers using SCR say fuel mileage will drive many customers to embrace the technology, especially when fuel savings of 3-5% are being promised.

Detroit Diesel's Siler explains that without limiting engine-out NOx, manufacturers are able to better optimize their engines' operating parameters.

"So essentially we're getting better performance within the cylinder and also better performance in the particulate regeneration cycle," he says. In testing, Siler claims Detroit Diesel's DD15 with SCR is achieving about 3% better fuel mileage than its non-SCR equivalent.

"If you can move your truck from 6 mpg to 6.3 or 6.5 mpg, if you can put three, four, five cents per mile in your pocket at 100,000 miles per year, you're not talking

Continued on page 38 ■



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ENGINES

SCR vs EGR debate heats up

■ **Continued from page 37**
 chump change,” adds Mack’s McKenna. “We’re seeing improvements of about 3-4%, including the cost of urea.”

Navistar doesn’t dispute the fuel-saving potential of SCR, however it does question the overall cost savings.

“We would recognize that there is the potential to re-tune the engines with SCR for greater fuel economy, we don’t dispute that,” Schick says. “But are the cost savings real? The fuel savings may be, but are the cost savings real? There, we do have an alternative view.”

He contends the cost savings achieved by burning less fuel may be offset by the cost of urea and the added complexity SCR presents.

The other knock against urea is its tendency to freeze at 12 F, which Schick says has not been lost on Canadian fleets, and those “in the northern tier” of the US.

Volvo’s Fleming says while urea does freeze, it won’t be an issue.

“Europe has an environment that’s every bit as cold as Canada. It’ll take no more time than now to get started,” he says. “The exhaust will immediately melt a few CCs, and the rest will be melted in the (heated) tank.”

So while the debate rages on, customers find themselves quickly approaching a major fork in the road. For the first time since the EPA began cracking down on

heavy-duty diesel engine emissions, truck owners will have to choose between two radically different solutions.

The SCR camp remains confident escalating fuel prices will drive customers towards its more fuel-efficient solution.

“We explored all three of the known technologies at the beginning: NOx adsorbers; SCR; and massive EGR,” McKenna explains. “We decided to go with SCR for two reasons: number one, we can get down below the EPA2010 regulations with SCR relatively easily; and number two, we can improve fuel economy. With all that in mind, I really don’t see a down side to SCR, outside it’s one more thing for a driver to do. But if you have to replenish a very small SCR tank every second or third fill-up, and you can get 3-4% better fuel economy, what’s the question?”

Navistar, now the lone carrier of the non-SCR torch, counters that the complexity of SCR and the necessary driver involvement will make its EGR solution a winner.

“We view that we offer a very viable alternative to SCR, which we recognize is a valid technology. Our alternative is one of simplicity versus complexity and we feel there is no real operating cost disadvantage to that,” Schick surmises. □

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Where they’re at:

The following is a report on engine manufacturers’ progress towards EPA2010 compliance:



Cummins

Despite a reversal in course for Cummins heavy-duty engines, the company expects an easy transition to producing SCR engines. Cummins was already developing SCR for its mid-range products, and it has about 200,000 engines with SCR in place worldwide, the company says. Cummins also benefits from having an offshoot of the company – Cummins Emission Solutions – that is already in the business of designing and building SCR systems.

Its 2010 engines will still use EGR – just less of it. The base engine remains the same. However, now that it can re-tune its engines for optimal performance, Cummins has scrapped plans to develop a 16-litre ISX. Steve Charlton, vice-president of heavy-duty engineering with Cummins, says the higher displacement engine is no longer required to

meet all the horsepower ratings the company plans to offer.

Mark Karrasch, a division manager with Cummins, says current test engines with the in-cylinder solution can be converted to carry SCR quite easily.



Detroit Diesel

We caught up with David Siler, director of marketing with Detroit Diesel at a Sterling Trucks event in August. He said extensive field testing of Detroit Diesel engines with BlueTec (Daimler’s term for its SCR technology) is already well underway and going smoothly.

“We’re going to be launching our customer demonstration units, which will put 2010 BlueTec vehicles in customers’ hands by the fourth quarter of this year,” Siler said. “We want to make sure we have an optimal package before we deliver them, so we’re still going through extensive development and validation.”

He said the DD15 will remain much the same as it is today, but

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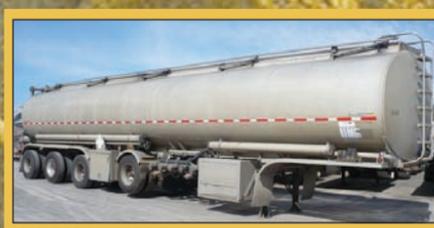
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EGR levels will be dialed back allowing the company to fine-tune its performance parameters.

"But there will be no hardware changes to speak of," he said. "All the changes will be electronic and downstream aftertreatment changes."



Mack

David McKenna, powertrain sales and marketing manager with Mack, described Mack's progress to us at the Great American Trucking Show in late August.

"We've got field test units right now that we've had in service for almost seven months, and I'm going to say we're averaging adding about one to 1.5 trucks into the test fleet every week," McKenna said.

Mack had yet to deploy any test trucks in Canada, however its engines with SCR were holding up well in the upper peninsula of Michigan where they were hauling loads of 160,000 lbs, McKenna said.

He said the first Mack engines with SCR would be hitting Canadian roads by the end of September. Early results are showing improvements in power and fuel economy, McKenna said, adding horsepower will be increased in some of Mack's 2010 engines thanks to its ability to produce NOx in-cylinder and tinker with engine settings to optimize performance.



Navistar

The International MaxxForce engine continues to be refined to comply with EPA2010 emissions standards without SCR. International's Tim Schick said the maturation of EGR technology has made for a smooth transition.

The 2010 engine will see EGR levels increase by about 10%, Schick said. The cooling capacity will be increased and in some applications the air intake will be enlarged, but highway trucks with International's 2010 engine will look the same as they do today, Schick said.

"The only thing you will notice is that it will look a lot like a 2009 vehicle," he insisted.

He noted the EGR valve will be housed in a water jacket to protect it from overheating. He also said refinements will be made to the combustion process: a five-stage injection cycle consisting of two pre-burns, a main burn and two

post-burns will replace today's three-stage injection process.

Currently, the MaxxForce's fuel pressure is about 26,000 psi. That will be boosted to over 30,000 psi in 2010, Schick said. However, the engine's compacted-iron graphite block is more than able to withstand the higher firing pressures, he added.

Paccar

Paccar will be introducing its MX 12.9-litre engine, based on the European DAF engine, to North America in 2010. Its engines will also use SCR, says Paccar's Alan Treasure.

"Our engine program is progressing on schedule," he said, adding field tests have been conducted in the Northwest Territories and the Canadian Rockies. "We have a really comprehensive testing program in many different applications and conditions, including in Canada."

Paccar is building an engine plant in the US which is designed specifically to manufacture EPA2010-com-



pliant engines, Treasure noted. Because it's a brand new plant, "we don't have any constraints with any manufacturing or tooling limitations," he said.

Treasure said based on testing, customers will enjoy excellent fuel mileage and responsiveness as well as quiet operation.

Volvo

Volvo Trucks North America has about a dozen trucks in customer hands, spokesman James McNamara told Truck News in early September.

"Those are in addition to all the



trucks we have in corporate testing and those are in addition to about 150,000 trucks we have in Europe running with SCR," he said. "Right now, there's not a lot of customer comments to report, because other than when they are adding the DEF to the vehicles, it's transparent to them."

The company expects fuel mileage improvements of 3% compared to non-SCR engines.

By mid-October, McNamara said Volvo will have accrued close to a million miles on SCR-equipped customer test vehicles. □

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Dropping the dime

When is it appropriate to report on another driver?

Trying to keep my truck from dropping off the shoulder, all I could do was watch helplessly as the trailer's tail lights diminished into the distance, my heart racing and my head steaming with anger.

A few minutes before, everything had been going along swimmingly. It was a beautiful moonless night, very little traffic on the 401 at one in the morning somewhere between Brockville and Kingston, Ont.

A tractor-trailer had pulled out to pass and I thought nothing of it. He was slowly gaining on me, but about halfway past he suddenly put his right signal on.

The thought struck me immediately: he's coming over and he's going to take out my driver's side. I stood on the brakes while swerving violently. Time slowed almost to a standstill as I gripped the wheel and waited for a collision. Somehow, the corner of his trailer just missed clipping my front end by millimetres.

I could only get a couple of numbers off his trailer. My truck only goes 100 km/h and he was

On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



probably doing 105. Nothing I could do but watch him disappear down the road while I flashed my high beams and fumed.

That would have been the end of the story except about 20 minutes later I see him pulling into the westbound Gananoque scales, which are closed as usual that time in the morning. I couldn't just let this thing go; it was gnawing at my insides. I had to find out why he tried to run me into the rhubarb.

I pulled over past the scales and backed up. Let me tell you, I was feeling plenty of anxiety as I approached his window.

The laws of physics are predictable, but human beings are another thing. You can accurately predict how long it will take you to stop at a certain speed, but

when it comes to human behaviour, anything is possible.

He opened the window a crack. "You almost killed me back there," I told him. "What's your problem?"

He was only a young man, late 20s, probably driving a broker's truck, and evidently a new Canadian with limited abilities in English. "You...was...back?"

"Why did you cut me off?" I asked. He replied with a sheepish smile and rolled up the window. Still fuming and shaking, I walked back to my truck after memorizing the licence plate.

There's a pretty good Tim Horton's in Gananoque south of the casino. I know a few drivers who stop there and who switch in the No Frills parking lot at night. My colleague James Parrish was at the counter. He suggested that I "shake it off and let it go. I have close calls out there all the time."

"Yeah, but this was outrageous," I replied.

Nothing to do but call the OPP from the phone booth (I'm one of those dinosaurs who refuses to get a cell phone). A receptionist answered and took down the information.

The OPP will tell you they try to act on every call of this nature, if they have the licence number and if they have the manpower to respond.

Otherwise, the complaint is at least registered in a data bank.

At any rate I didn't hear back

from them.

The next morning I waited until 10 a.m. and called the company the driver worked for.

The dispatcher promised to forward my concerns, and about a week later I got a call from the owner.

He operates a small- to medium-sized fleet that primarily runs the 401 between Dorval and Toronto. I went over the details again and he said he would speak to the driver.

Surprise! A few hours later, I got a call from the driver himself. "Why you call my boss?"

"Because you're a bad driver." "You call my boss. Now I am fired. No job."

So I have to admit to having mixed feelings about this episode. I never did find out why he cut me off and an apology in broken English would have been enough. But I certainly didn't want to get him fired.

And the owner should not have given out my phone number, but he clearly had a duty to investigate my complaint.

Here's how a professional safety manager would have handled the situation: "Usually it's a motorist calling in about something a truck driver has done, but we have to take every complaint seriously," says Francois Rochon, safety preventionist for Robert Transport in Boucherville, Que.

Rochon takes a detailed report from the offended party and then approaches the driver to get his/her side of the incident.

"If a driver admits to making a mistake and it's the first complaint, we advise them to try better in the future. After all, they're driving a 53-foot business card. If another complaint is received, there could be disciplinary action.

"Someone usually calls in because they think the situation is serious," adds Rochon. "Sometimes it's as a result of something the car driver has done and a lack of understanding of how trucks operate. Other times it's impossible to determine fault. But we are obligated to investigate every complaint and give them feedback if they want it. And we would never give out their phone number."

Informing management on another driver is never easy. I think in 30 years of trucking this is maybe the only time I've gone this far.

Though I can recall getting written up once myself, for allegedly passing recklessly on the inside lane on the 417 in Ottawa.

It should never be done frivolously, but if you are going to call in on a driver you should do it in a professional manner, providing accurate details while remaining respectful and articulate.

I'm still not sure if I did the right thing in this case and I'd like to hear from you.

When is it ethical to drop the dime on a fellow driver, and what's the best way to go about it? E-mail me at hrudolfs@rogers.com. □

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— Harry Rudolfs is a full-time professional driver and on-road editor for Truck News.

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Survival strategies

"In this type of environment and economy, if you don't plan to grow, you better plan to shrink,"

— Mark Seymour, Kriska

By James Menzies

KINGSTON, Ont.— Whether or not the US and Canadian economies are technically in recession has been the subject of much debate amongst economists. However, nobody that runs a trucking company needs an economist to tell them the transportation industry is coping with recessionary conditions.

Kriska president Mark Seymour summed up the industry's challenges at a recent Driving For Profit seminar (the third installment of a four-part series hosted by KRTS Transportation Specialists and NAL Insurance and sponsored by SelecTrucks).

The deflated US dollar has hurt cross-border carriers that are paid in US funds; the cost of fuel has reached record highs and for the first time has surpassed wages as a fleet's top operating expense; a shortage of qualified drivers remains an issue; unbalanced freight movements have created pricing challenges; and credit has become harder to obtain.

"All by themselves, these issues are big enough. But put them on top of one another and we have very difficult times," Seymour said.

Carrier bankruptcies south of the border have reached epic heights, with a truck population the size of all of B.C.'s wiped from the map. Here in Canada, recognizable names such as Al's Cartage have fallen victim in recent months and many other carriers continue to struggle for survival. However, Kriska's Seymour said there are steps fleets can take to not only survive, but prosper in a tough operating environment. It all starts with a plan.

Every year, Kriska develops a simple strategic plan. This year's plan is not unlike the ones devised in better times. It consists of an inverted triangle that features 'Service Excellence' at the top.

Service excellence

Seymour said it's important to ask customers what it is they want from your company and then to be sure to deliver it.

"We diligently follow a process of making sure we clearly know what our customers want, by asking them," he said. "If we assume we know what they want, we're putting that relationship and that business at risk."

By ensuring your company is living up to customer expectations, you protect yourself from some of the risks that are ever-present during tough times, especially rate-cutting.

"If your relationship with customers is based on price, it's a very fragile relationship," Seymour said. "It's only going to last until the next guy comes along and undercuts your rates."

Instead, Seymour said to focus on "value" when in discussions with customers.

"If you can stay away from the price conversation and talk about value proposition, you get away from comparing two numbers," he explained. "You don't want to get into a numbers war — it's too risky. In an unsophisticated environment that's deregulated, with so many entrepreneurial wildcats out there, it's a war that you're potentially not going to win."

Business development

Second on Kriska's strategic plan is Business Development. That remains a priority for Kriska, even when most fleets are simply trying to survive, often downsizing in the process.

"In this type of environment and economy, if you don't plan to grow, you better plan to shrink," said Seymour. "Volume will be lost through attrition, customers will be lost through failure."

Downsizing is achieved through cost-cutting, which Seymour said creates an unhealthy environment. Instead, Kriska has positioned itself to grow during the current downturn, but that doesn't necessarily mean putting more trucks on the road.

"Our plan is not to grow in terms of adding trucks or adding trailers," explained Seymour. "Our plan is to grow by improving our asset utilization, improving revenue-per-mile

and improving profitability. That's what growth means to Kriska this year."

Priority projects

The third item on Kriska's strategic plan is to establish priority projects. One of these involved making salespeople more accountable for retaining or developing new business.

"We know who's looking after what now," Seymour said. Under the new structure, Kriska's Paul Dean is responsible for retaining current customers while Seymour himself is charged with bringing in new business.

"He has a team, I have a team — there's no misunderstanding who is responsible for what," said Seymour.

Meanwhile, Kriska also rolled out a new recruiting and retention strategy. Every employee must go on at least one run per year with a driver; drivers now have a driver service rep they can go to with problems; and

Continued on page 42 ■



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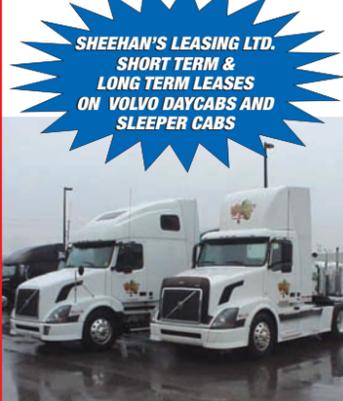
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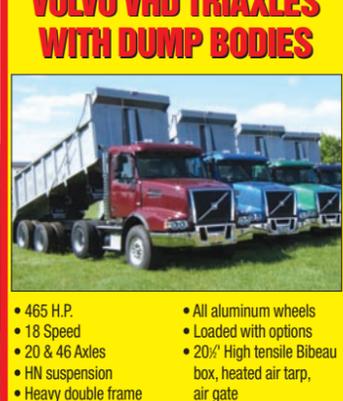


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Have a plan: Seymour

■ Continued from page 41

exit interviews are now conducted with departing drivers.

Seymour said Kriska has also developed a hiring pipeline, so new drivers are constantly being developed, much like a farm system in a pro sports league.

“If you wait until your truck is unseated before you go looking for someone, you’re reacting to the situation,” Seymour said, adding it was much simpler back in the days when his father could just go down to the pool hall when he needed a driver.

“It can be six weeks to six months before you turn somebody loose, so you better have a pipeline.”

Fuel management

The current economic climate has necessitated other changes at Kriska as well, none greater than the need to reduce fuel consumption. In Kriska’s case, that meant implementing strict speed and idle control initiatives.

“We have far more influence on consumption than we do cost (of fuel),” reasoned Seymour. “Fuel’s

our biggest cost. If we can reduce fuel by 2%, it’s different than reducing toiler paper by 2%.”

Kriska limits the speed of its company-owned trucks and is equipping the fleet with auxiliary power units (APUs) to reduce idling.

Since implementing these measures, Kriska has improved its fleet fuel mileage to 7.71 mpg while decreasing its idle-time from 40% to just 8%. Seymour said the company lays out its fuel economy expectations and requires its drivers to comply.

“We don’t reward for it, it’s a condition of employment,” he said.

On the operations side, fleets must continue to pass increased fuel costs on to the shipper, Seymour noted.

“If you have a bad fuel surcharge, it’s your own fault,” he said, without much sympathy. “You brought it on with undisciplined decisions along the way. You can’t blame your competitor. The reality is, it’s your problem. The person you blame for causing it is not going to be there to help you fix it.”

When you’ve priced with discipline, you stand a better chance of making customers accept any necessary rate adjustments down the road, Seymour said. He pointed out southbound rates from Ontario/Quebec to Pennsylvania have dropped from \$2.85/mile in January, 2007 to \$2.35/mile in March, 2008.

“We gave back 50 cents to the market,” he said. “You have got to go back to your customers and you

gotta get it back.”

The only way to do that is to support your position with accurate data and charts, which clearly show a customer why a rate adjustment is required, Seymour explained.

“If you show them a picture that they trust, then it’s worth 1,000 words: ‘You need to give me a rate increase and this is why.’”

Empower your people

Kriska has also turned to technology to find ways of empowering its employees to make real-time decisions that help the fleet become more efficient. It has a dashboard of sorts, called ‘Results Now’, which displays in real-time key figures such as: revenue-per-mile; miles-per-unit; empty mile percentage; truck revenue-per-day; and about a dozen other items.

Beside each item is the company’s target number as well as the real-time figure for each unit. Dispatchers and other employees in operations are urged to monitor those numbers, and make adjustments as required to bring the number back on target.

According to Seymour, it’s much more effective than having upper management react to data that’s weeks – or even months – old before it even hits their desk. “Generally speaking, people care,” he said. “If you give them the tools, the goals, the information – there’s a really good chance it’s going to motivate them to make better decisions because they really do care.”

While Kriska isn’t immune to the current economic downturn, the company is able to weather the storm better than most, by developing, communicating and executing a simple strategic plan, Seymour surmised. Seymour and his co-host Len Anderson of KPMG Enterprise will present on this topic again at the next Driving for Profit seminar in Toronto, Oct. 21. To register, visit www.drivingforprofit.com. □

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Keys to survival:

Kriska president Mark Seymour offers the following tips on how to survive in recessionary times:

- **Stay true to your corporate culture:** “Every organization has a culture and that is something that has been crafted and developed over a long time. When things get tough, you don’t want to tinker with your culture and you don’t want to get away from your core values. Make sure you’re always in a position to defend what you’re doing, against someone who may say you’re compromising your core values and principles.”

- **Continue investing:** “Don’t stop investing in the business or the people will see it. You have to continue to demonstrate and show a degree of optimism and a degree of confidence. If you get down, depressed and pessimistic and start showing those cracks and signs of weakness, it’s going to put your business at risk.”

- **Prepare for recovery:** “Everything that goes down, eventually goes up. Think strategically and position yourself for recovery.” □

A new formula

Re-evaluating the revenue-per-mile equation

By James Menzies

KINGSTON, Ont.— One of the keys to Kriska's success has been revisiting the way it measures profitability. Like most trucking companies, Kriska used to determine profitability using the traditional revenue-per-mile formula.

"We used revenue-per-mile until we saw what caused us to look elsewhere, when revenue-per-mile was going up and profit was going down," Kriska president Mark Seymour said at a recent Driving for Profit seminar, hosted by KRTS Transportation Specialists and NAL Insurance and sponsored by SelecTrucks. While Seymour said the traditional revenue-per-mile equation is a good place to start when measuring profitability, "It's not entirely right and it's not scientific."

Two to three years ago, Kriska set out to find a tool that would allow the carrier to measure profitability in a more sophisticated manner.

"Revenue-per-mile is not dynamic enough, it doesn't include variable costs," Seymour explained. "If you're going from A to B and they pay you \$500 and somebody else pays you \$600, one would think the guy paying \$600 is better. But that's not true if it takes you twice as long to do the \$600 transaction."

With equipment routinely being detained by shippers and other delays encountered along the way, Seymour said Kriska needed to find a way to incorporate 'time lost' into the equation.

"Time has a value to it and a cost," he said. "If it takes you twice as long to do something, it needs to be identified in the cost. Revenue-per-mile does not drill down to cost. Toronto-to-Montreal is very simple, it should take seven or eight hours to facilitate that transaction. If, thanks to the shippers at either end, it takes you four days, that needs to be calculated into the rate."

Kriska found a software solution called Netwise, which helped the company measure 'Yield,' the combination of all the margins along a full truckload trip.

For instance on a run from Kingston to Boston that pays \$1,500 there and \$600 back, there is a positive margin on the headhaul and a negative margin on the backhaul.

The 'yield' focuses on the net margin after the entire trip, including subsequent deliveries.

"You need that (\$600) price in the middle to generate two very positive margins on either side," Seymour explained. "You need to minimize your negative margins, lower them, and improve your positive margins and the net effect of that is you're improving your yield. Yield measures the combination of margins so

Continued on page 44 ■

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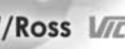
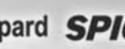
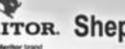
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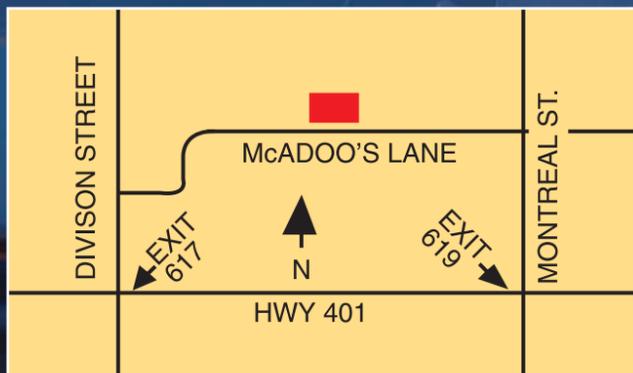
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Revenue-per-mile not a true indicator of profit

Continued from page 43

you don't just deal with the wide swings in rates."

For years, the southbound trip was what generated the positive margins, with many carriers taking a hit on the backhaul. The rise of the Canadian dollar (and the fall of its US counterpart) has reversed that trend, Seymour said. However, the principle remains the same and there are times when it's necessary to offer discount rates to get where you need to go. Seymour suggested that carriers refrain from accusing other fleets of rate-cutting when they may simply be taking a holistic

approach to pricing.

"Do you know what they're doing with their truck after (the initial delivery)?" he asked. "They need to get there to get the big margin coming back. It may appear to a competitor that we've priced something very undisciplined, but that's how we price it. We may price it very low if it gets us where we need to go because from there, we're priced very high."

In the end, said Seymour, shifting focus from revenue-per-mile to yield, has allowed Kriska to better achieve the one item that matters most: profit. □

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FLEET NEWS

Q2 a mixed bag for public fleets

TORONTO, Ont. – Contrans Income Fund credits its diversity for its ability to post strong Q2 financial results in the face of a challenging operating environment. The company posted net earnings of \$10.2 million for the three-month period ending June 30, compared to \$1.5 million in the same period of 07. The six-month period resulted in a profit of \$15.2 million compared to \$9.6 million in the first half of last year.

“Contrans’ solid second quarter results are largely attributable to management’s ability to react quickly and effectively to changing market conditions,” said Stan Dunford, chairman and CEO of Contrans Income Fund. “In recent years we have acquired companies that have customer bases that are less susceptible to economic downturns. This has added to an already diverse customer base, something that has always made Contrans unique in the freight transportation industry.”

The company’s van segment was not immune to the economic slowdown, however. Van operations saw a \$6.3 million revenue decline in Q2 and for the six-month period, van revenue dropped \$11.5 million compared to 07.

Trimac down

Trimac Income Fund suffered a drop in net earnings and revenue during the second quarter and first half of 2007. Revenue for the second quarter was down \$1.2 million compared to the same period a year earlier, but net earnings for the quarter dropped from \$7.9 million to \$2.6 million. In the first half of 08, Trimac’s profit fell from \$9.4 million to \$3.2 million.

Trimac reported its total loads hauled declined due to reduced demand, however, volumes remained relatively strong in Western Canada.

“The bulk trucking operations experienced some reduction in customer demand translating into reduced loads hauled and lower profitability,” explained Jeffrey McCaig, chairman, president and CEO of Trimac. “Fuel surcharges in the current period increased by \$5.1 million or 55% over the prior period. This increase in revenue is primarily a cost recovery. When prior period one-time events are considered, consolidated net earnings are very similar to 2007 for the current period.”

McCaig said the company foresees “the continuation of the current operating environment” as it looks ahead.

Clarke remains profitable

Clarke Inc. saw its profits drop in the second quarter and first half of 2008, but its principal freight subsidiaries remained profitable, the company reported.

Overall, Clarke reported a Q2 net income of \$12.4 million, down from \$28.1 million over the same period last year. However, Clarke Transport and Clarke Road Transport “performed well despite a challenging operating environment characterized by rising fuel costs,” the company claimed. □

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FLEET NEWS

Fuel bonus

Training for fuel efficiency yields safety benefits as well, fleet finds

By Jan Westell

GREEN BAY, Wis. – There may be a silver lining to the high cost of fuel that the transportation industry is presently coping with.

Fleets such as Schneider National are experiencing safety and environmental benefits as a result of their quest to improve driver fuel efficiency.

Schneider has trained approximately 1,000 drivers in fuel management, and its vice-president of safety and driver training Don Osterberg says the company has reaped a 0.2 mpg improvement since the training. Osterberg explains that when the company monitors the mpg performance of its fleet, it also recognizes that different applications will have a different mean and median mpg result.

“So if you’re a local operator doing a lot of metropolitan driving, they’ll have a different mpg profile than the over-the-road fleet,” he says. Schneider National has done a great deal of analysis on its fleet’s mpg improvement. The company lists its drivers from the best mpg performers to the worst. As fuel prices continued to go up, Schneider identified its 1,000 worst drivers for mpg.

“With that group, we’ve actually measured and have seen a sustained improvement of about 0.2 mpg,” says Osterberg. “While that sounds like a small number, when you look across our fleet and the number of miles that we drive, the 0.2 improvement represents a dramatic reduction in our fuel costs. We’ve been very pleased with that.”

Part of the training program involves the use of a simulator. Osterberg says new and experienced drivers were required to spend about 15 hours on the simulator, developing fuel-efficient driving techniques. If Schneider National used a conventional truck, that exercise would require about 2.2 gallons per hour of fuel for each student, which amounts to about 34 gallons the company saves per student trained.

“Just using simulation as opposed to putting the drivers’ over-the-road for those 15 hours, has saved us almost a million gallons of fuel in the two-and-a-half years that we have been using simulation,” he says.

“We burn less fuel when we’re training with simulators versus in an actual truck. And the training that we conduct on fuel management has also yielded additional fuel savings for us.”

Osterberg says that fuel management training by simulation “is one of those gifts that keep on giving”

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since the company is not only reducing the amount of fuel that it burns, but also reducing its carbon footprint.

“So we’re really serving, not only the financial benefit of the organization by reducing fuel consumption and fuel cost, but we also have the second positive effect of reducing harmful emissions to the environment. So this is kind of a classic win/win from our perspective,” says Osterberg. The safety and driver training specialist advises that there are a few key ways to improve fuel mileage. First, Osterberg recommends that drivers carefully spec’ and understand their equipment, matching the engines and transmissions for ideal shifting.

“You train your drivers to shift in that optimal torque range,” he suggests.

But while equipment spec’s are an important part of fuel management training, driver behaviour is also a consideration. Schneider recently reduced the maximum speed of its fleet, and speed measurement is now a component of the drivers’ bonus program. While there’s a number of key tenants to fuel management, Osterberg says the number one thing a driver can do to improve fuel consumption is to slow down.

Slowing down has also produced some impressive safety benefits.

“So far this year to date, we’ve had 11.43% fewer preventable accidents per million miles than we had last year,” says Osterberg.

The company has enjoyed other impressive safety achievements attributed to its fuel management strategy. One of those is what the safety and driver training department calls its “preventable major accident frequency.” Those are accidents that have either serious injury, fatality, or monetary exposure worth greater than \$100,000.

“We’ve had 59.4% fewer preventable major accidents than we had last year,” says Osterberg.

Further, Schneider National has achieved: 32.56% fewer lane change accidents than a year ago; 50% fewer rollovers; and 25.29% fewer rear-

end collisions.

“Let’s face it, there are multiple things that contribute to that,” says Osterberg. “Certainly reducing speed helps. Reduced congestion by virtue of there is less traffic helps. The sum of all those things yields the results that I just summarized, but we’re certainly seeing improved safety.”

Schneider National did another analysis that strongly supports a correlation between fuel management and safety. The safety and driver education department compared its best 100 drivers with its worst 100 drivers, for mpg efficiency. Its best 100 drivers for mpg had 37% fewer accidents than the company’s worst 100 mpg drivers. The company expanded this study to another level and compared its best 500 drivers with its worst 500 drivers for mpg. The best mpg drivers had an accident rate 23% lower than the bottom 500 drivers for mpg. The education department took the analysis to a third level, and examined the 1,000 best drivers for mpg versus its 1,000 worst drivers, and the best drivers had a 21% lower accident rate.

“I know that driving behaviour manifests itself in multiple ways,” says Osterberg. “But suffice it to say, if you can improve the mpg of your fleet, you will have an ancillary positive benefit of reducing crash rates with that group of drivers. So, there’s a multiplier in terms of the benefit that goes beyond fuel cost itself, (including) environmental impacts and it really penetrates into the safety realm as well.”

The safety and driver training specialist is obviously pleased with the company’s fuel management strategy, but Osterberg enjoys even greater personal satisfaction with the improvements the company has achieved with its safety record, especially a reduction in traffic incidents.

“In this business one is too many,” he says. “One accident, one injury is too many and we strive for a goal of zero and we work hard toward that. But when you’re talking about double-digit improvement year-over-year, yes I’m delighted with that.” □



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Now what?

Owner/operators who can't survive the downturn find few places to turn for alternative career options.

By Jan Westell

BARRIE, Ont. – The high cost of fuel is taking its toll on owner/operators, causing many to look at careers outside trucking. However, a shortage of programs to assist them with the transition has left some truckers feeling trapped.

Alternative career opportunities are slim, says the wife of one Ontario-based owner/operator, who in the past regularly hauled general freight to Quebec. Tobi and Kevin Johnson are now struggling to maintain their small trucking business, but if that fails there seems to be few opportunities available for a 43-year-old truck driver. Tobi says that employed workers in other industries might be laid off, but they have access to federally-funded unemployment insurance – and the associated government services, such as retraining programs and job placement – that are designed to get workers back into the job market.

“Well, put that mindset to our owner/operators,” says the mother of four. “They too have limited ‘talents’ pertaining only to their job.”

Tobi says working conditions are not favourable for today's owner/operators, who must cope with an erratic workday, often without scheduled breaks or meals. While regulations are in place dictating the number of hours truck drivers can work in a day, Tobi says they are often ignored in order to meet delivery schedules and pay the mortgage.

“Well let me say that (those HoS) regulations are put on the back burner,” she says.

Tobi points out that an unskilled worker, like those who work in a factory, may get a pink slip informing them about an upcoming layoff, while owner/operators are “lucky to get a 24-hour courtesy call.”

When that happens, she says owner/operators often find themselves potentially defaulting on their truck payments, losing an expensive rig to creditors. Johnson suggests the future looks bleak for those who are driven out of business due to high fuel costs, and O/Os should be prepared to face a tough reality.

“We are scared,” she says.

Her husband has been in the trucking business for 22 years, and before that her father-in-law was in the same business, but was unskilled for any other job beyond driving. The elder Johnson died recently, and at his funeral, Tobi was surprised to talk to many others from the same industry with a similar problem. Those friends of the family had experienced the same fate: suffering from an economic downturn, with high fuel prices and now facing an uncertain future with no other skills to fall back on.

“It's a tough lifestyle,” says the owner/operator's wife, who attributes the present challenges to the many expenses associated with the business – especially the fuel bill, which can't be delayed.

“The cost of fuel is killing owner/operators,” she laments.

Owner/operators don't necessarily benefit from a fuel surcharge either, she points out. That's an add-on levied by the carrier that sometimes only benefits the company the

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While the Johnsons say that they have a great relationship with their company's creditor, there is no leeway about deferral of loans. Last year, Tobi worked full-time just to make the truck payments. "It's such a big expense."

Her husband is only 43, but with one skill: truck driving, and no alternative prospects. The family has obvious concerns. "For us, it's just devastating," she says.

Joanne Ritchie, executive director of the Owner-Operators' Business Association of Canada (OBAC), says she has never given much thought to the issue of retraining O/Os.

"It's usually the other way around, trying to get funding for training for those who want to get into the business, not for those seeking retraining because they've left," says Ritchie.

Ritchie indicates that education and training are under the jurisdiction of provincial governments, although many of their programs receive federal funding through Labour Market Agreements, funded by HRSDC (now Service Canada). Ritchie speculates that the sticking point is possibly not lack of funding for truck drivers, but rather lack of retraining for owner/operators, due to their status as self-employed business people rather than company drivers or employees.

As for financial hardships during these tough economic times, Ritchie says she's heard many stories about owner/ops going under, but doesn't personally know any whose businesses have actually failed. She has, however, talked to many O/Os who have considered packing it in.

"I also know owner/operators

who have parked their trucks, temporarily, and taken jobs as company drivers. There may still be a truck payment to make, but if the truck is sitting still, there are no other operating costs," she says.

On the flip side, Ritchie also knows many owner/ops who are actually "doing quite well," especially with shippers willing to pay appropriate fuel surcharges.

"The key is, of course, that these owner/ops are already running efficient businesses, know their costs to the penny, and aren't moving freight that doesn't pay," she says. "They are usually those who also have a solid customer base, or work for a carrier

who has, and are able to show their customers the numbers that justify increased rates and higher fuel surcharges. But 'doing quite well' is relative; no one is rolling in dough. Costs are up and profits are down, but at least the good ones are still able to cover their costs."

As for what Ritchie refers to as the "reprehensible practice of carriers collecting a fuel surcharge from their customers, and not passing it on," the OBAC executive director, acknowledges that it happens.

"Or sometimes the carrier doesn't collect a fuel surcharge, which means they can undercut the fair market rate because they can still get the owner/operators to take the hit. Even in today's market, there are carriers out there telling their owner/ops that the customers won't pay a fuel surcharge. I find this hard

to believe. Even a year or so ago when fuel was half the price it is today, surveys indicated that the vast majority of shippers were paying fuel surcharges," adds Ritchie.

"If the carrier can afford to haul the freight today without a fuel surcharge, are we to infer that their profits were skyrocketing when fuel and other costs were much lower? I don't think so."

Ritchie corrects one bit of misinformation about surcharges, that "there is some kind of law that requires a carrier to pass on fuel surcharges they collect," which she says is simply not the case.

"The only protection small business truckers have from this and other unscrupulous business practices, is their own business smarts. No one is forcing them to haul the freight. Again, it all comes down to knowing their costs, and refusing to haul freight that doesn't pay what they need. That said, they need to make sure their costs are realistic. No one is going to pay more to compensate them for inefficiencies, like poor fuel economy."

Ritchie says she also hears from carriers who claim they're losing loads to rate-cutting competitors, so it's not just owner/ops who are struggling. However, she says carriers who are slashing rates get away with it because they're able to find someone willing to get behind the wheel and move the freight.

"As long as we continue to keep a big pool of cheap labour out there,

we're keeping the bad apples in business."

Ritchie recently discussed trucking bankruptcies with government officials who indicated Industry Canada insolvency stats aren't as high in trucking as suspected. "I pointed out that not everyone who goes out of business declares bankruptcy, so this probably isn't a true picture of who is leaving the industry," she says.

Linda Gauthier, executive director of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council, indicates that funds for training can be found in any province through community programs that offer skills development, employment opportunities, and other services.

"Most of the funds that are available may be targeted to help employers train their employees, but I believe there is potentially some small business funding available through the economic development offices in the provinces," says Gauthier. "A lot depends on the type of retraining that is required, and which province you are in. Each province is deciding on how to help the workforce remain skilled and efficient."

Service Canada does offer employment programs across the country, but as Johnson attests, "the skills development program provides a negotiated amount of financial support for skills training to Employment Insurance-eligible individuals," according to the federal government's Web site on this topic. However Service Canada does offer other employment programs to the general population. □

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Tobi Johnson

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Study suggests biodiesel reduces CO₂ emissions

DALLAS, Texas – The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) shared early results of a study on the impact biodiesel has on CO₂ emissions at the Great American Trucking Show.

Two months into a six-month pilot with California-based States Logistics, the NBB says trucks using B100 biodiesel produce 78% less CO₂ emissions than those running traditional diesel. The results are being collected and analyzed by Indigenous Energy, developers of an emissions-tracking system.

As part of the study, States Logistics is running seven trucks using either B5 or B99 biodiesel. In May and June, those seven trucks reduced their CO₂ output by 16.5 tonnes, according to Indigenous Energy. Full results of the study will be released at the Mid-America Trucking Show in March, 2009. The current study uses soy-based biodiesel and measures the total CO₂ involved from the time the crop is planted until it's burned as fuel.

"The pilot program uses our patent-pending technology and reporting system with inputs from States Logistics' over-the-road activity to show carbon and emissions reduction," explained Peter Probst, president and director of research and development with Indigenous Energy.

The NBB is hoping the study will eventually be used to assist trucking companies in selling carbon credits under a cap-and-trade system. For now, it says it will use the data to arm biodiesel-using fleets with evidence of their environmental stewardship. The NBB says biodiesel has a 3.5:1 ration of energy gained to energy used to produce it, meaning for every unit of fossil energy required to produce biodiesel, 3.5 units of energy are produced. □

Navistar, GM opt out of medium-duty truck deal

WARRENVILLE, Ill. – In a short notice posted on its Web site recently, Navistar announced it would no longer acquire GM's medium-duty truck business.

The company said it would allow a memorandum of understanding to take over the business expire, "due to significant marketplace and economic changes."

The complete release said: "Due to significant marketplace and economic changes, GM and Navistar have decided not to renew the memorandum of understanding to purchase GM's medium-duty truck business, which has expired. GM will continue to run the medium duty business as it has in the past, including providing sales, service and marketing support to GM dealers for its medium duty trucks. GM will continue to review strategic options for the business, including continued discussions with Navistar." □

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IT'S BACK: Hino hosted a recent ride-and-drive to showcase the return of its cabover engine. The Model 155 COE has a tight turning radius and excellent visibility compared to conventional-styled trucks.

Photo by James Menzies

Hino returns to COE roots

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Hino held a ride-and-drive event here recently to re-introduce customers to its cabover engine (COE) 155.

Hino abandoned the cabover design in favour of the conventional-styled appearance in 2004, opening the door to competitors such as Isuzu and Sterling, who stepped in with COE offerings of their own. Now, Hino says it's back in the cabover market and will continue to also offer its conventional-styled medium-duty trucks.

"We're back to re-claim this market," national sales manager, Brad Sproule announced at the event.

The Hino Model 155 COE is available in four wheelbases and with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) of 14,700 lbs. Hino officials say the lightweight design of the 155 gives it one of the greatest payload capacities in its class.

Hino's latest offering is powered by its J-Series engine rated at up to 175 hp and 376 lb.-ft. of torque. It comes standard with an Aisin four-speed automatic transmission.

Sproule said the cabover will be marketed toward courier, food delivery, greenhouse and towing applications.

It's ideal for city driving, with its tight turning radius (44.1" tighter than its conventional-styled counterpart, Hino says) and large windshield.

The 155 also comes with a standard engine brake which will extend service brake life, according to Sproule. Those service brakes are hydraulic disc brakes on both the front and rear axles.

The Hino 155 COE will be assembled at the company's Woodstock, Ont. plant alongside the company's full line of conventional-styled medium-duty trucks.

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Peterbilt delivers first production hybrid vehicles

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Peterbilt's first production medium-duty hybrid trucks have been delivered to wine country, where they will be used by VinLux Fine Wine Transport to deliver wine to customers in urban areas such as San Francisco.

Peterbilt delivered two Hybrid Model 335 production trucks to the VinLux, which is a joint venture between Biagi Bros. and Jackson Family Estates.

"We applaud VinLux's adoption of Peterbilt Hybrid vehicles, as well as their innovative business model and commitment to environmental responsibility," said Bill Jackson, Peterbilt general manager and PACCAR vice-president. "Our medium-duty hybrid vehicles have proven to not only provide a 30-50% increase in fuel efficiency, depending upon the application, but also dramatically reduce tailpipe emissions of hydrocarbon (HC), carbon monoxide (CO), and oxides of nitrogen (NOx)."

The Class 7 trucks use Eaton's hybrid-electric drive system which assists the PACCAR PX-6 diesel during acceleration. The system harnesses energy through regenerative braking, stores it in a battery pack and then uses the energy to apply torque upon acceleration.

"We're committed to going green and protecting the Californian environment, and the Peterbilt hybrids are a perfect solution for us," said Fred Biagi, owner, VinLux Fine Wine Transport. "By adding hybrid vehicles to our fleet, we expect our investment will be returned in as little as two years, based on the rapidly escalating price of fuel." □

Raydan reports loss for 2008

EDMONTON, Alta. – Canadian suspension builder Raydan Manufacturing, reported a loss of \$897,606 for its fiscal year ended Apr. 30. That was a drop from a net profit of \$220,561 the previous year. However in the fourth quarter, Raydan suffered a loss of just \$8,000 compared to a loss of \$256,000 for Q4 the previous year.

The company reported its decreasing revenue was attributable to the slowdown in North American truck sales. In Ontario, a 10% decrease in revenue was blamed on a downturn in the economy and a delay in obtaining a new location for a chassis modification facility.

However, Raydan has secured a new facility in Ontario and will begin work there in October. Raydan continues to fulfill orders for the Canadian military and to work with ArvinMeritor to manufacture and distribute the Air Link suspension.

The company says it will be unveiling several new products for the Air Link suspension which will expand the market for Raydan. □

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Navistar premieres trucking film to showcase LoneStar

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – A film that showcases the International LoneStar as well as the truckers who drive it premiered to a packed theatre at the Great American Trucking Show in August.

The 45-minute *Drive and Deliver*, produced by Academy Award-nominated director Brett Morgen, documents the lives of three American truckers as they made the inaugural deliveries hauled by a prototype International LoneStar.

“One of the goals of the film is to showcase truck drivers as a vital and proud breed of the American workforce,” said Al Saltiel, vice-president of marketing for International’s parent company, Navistar. “It chronicles three truck drivers, in varying stages in life, yet all passionate about their profession and the

role they play in the economy.”

More than 700 truck drivers were interviewed for the roles, with three being selected. They included: Steve Donaldson, a 58-year-old owner/operator with a real passion for trucking; Tim Young, a family man from Alabama; and Chris LeCount, a karaoke-singing trucker from Goshen, Ind. The film follows them on the road as they cope with the daily grind faced by today’s professional drivers.

In a press conference prior to the premiere, Morgen said “I’m a big fan of westerns and a big fan of cowboys and to me, truckers sort of personified that part of American mythology.”

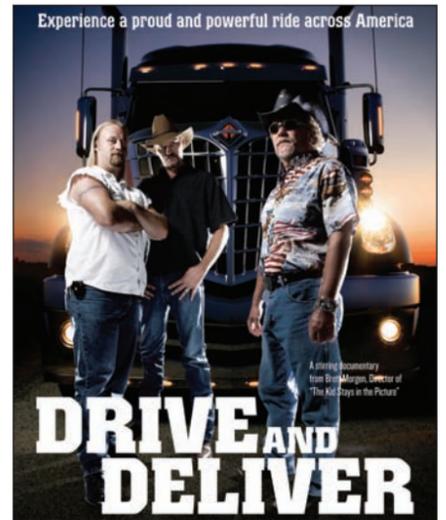
He accompanied each of the drivers on the road as they made real-life deliveries, and spent countless hours interviewing them in what he called the “floating confessional box.” The film was

shot using four cameras: one aboard a helicopter; one inside the cab; another strategically set up at scenic locations; and another in a car that would follow or lead the LoneStar, sometimes shooting from as little as four-inches from its front bumper as they rolled down the highway.

For Morgen, it was the first time he travelled the country by truck, which he said was an eye-opening experience – especially having to dine on truck stop food every day.

The truckers, salt-of-the-earth-type guys, said being involved in a film shoot took some getting used to. Morgen said “These guys are all used to being their own boss and now there’s a film crew there and they’re not alone. We had to get certain shots now and again, and they’re not used to people telling them what to do.”

“I never had a boss, and all of a sudden I had 30 bosses,”



FILM DEBUT: Chris LeCount, Tim Young and Steve Donaldson (L-R) star in the film *Drive and Deliver*.

Donaldson added.

Morgen admitted he got off to a rocky start with Donaldson, but they worked out their differences after enough time spent together in the cab.

While the film showcased the call of the open road and featured breathtaking scenery, it didn’t sugar-coat the real-life challenges faced by today’s owner/operators.

“I think people think of us as second-class citizens,” Donaldson told trucking media before the showing. “There are people who literally lay their lives down on the road to make sure people get their groceries the next day. Without us out here, the world would stand still – but we’re the most discriminated people out there.”

The fourth star of the film was the International LoneStar itself. While Morgen said Navistar gave him carte blanche in determining how much – or little – of the LoneStar to show, the truck featured prominently in the film.

The distinct-looking retro-style tractor turned plenty of heads on the road and prompted a lot of inquiries from other drivers. “It was a love-fest everywhere we went,” said Morgen.

The truckers in the film said they also fell in love with the truck.

“At first, I was skeptical of the truck,” admitted Donaldson. “I wondered ‘What’s this going to cost me to fix?’ But I fell instantly in love with that truck, especially the front air suspension with the torsion bar. I’ve never had a truck handle like that.”

He said he parked alongside the highway in the desert one night, lit up the chicken lights and slept on the ground next to the rig.

The film itself, shot at a cost of about \$3 million, will be released on DVD in early October.

It will be available for purchase online at www.international-trucks.com/shop and through online retailers such as Amazon.com.

A portion of the proceeds will go towards an American Trucking Associations program that matches military veterans with jobs in the trucking industry.

To view the trailer and find out more about the film, visit www.internationaltrucks.com/film. □

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Cummins changes course, will use SCR in 2010

By James Menzies
COLUMBUS, Ind. – Unprecedented fuel prices and the discovery of a new copper-zeolite catalyst material have driven Cummins to change directions on its path to EPA2010 heavy-duty engine compliance.

The company explained its mid-August decision to adopt urea-based Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) during a conference call with trade journalists. Steve Charlton, vice-president of heavy-duty engineering with Cummins, explained the discovery of copper-zeolite as an improved SCR catalyst material was the key enabler.

“Copper-zeolite is the key technology that’s allowed us to make this change,” he said, noting it has a far better NOx efficiency rate and is more durable in high temperatures than the iron-zeolite alternative that’s widely used today.

The copper-zeolite material will be coated onto the honeycomb ceramic substrate within the SCR catalyst, providing improved NOx-reducing capabilities, Charlton explained. As a result, he said Cummins can now provide up to 5% better fuel mileage using SCR than it could with the in-cylinder solution it was previously pursuing.

Combine the improved efficiency offered by the copper-zeolite SCR catalyst material with record fuel prices, and Cummins felt it simply had to change course for its heavy-duty engine line. It was already developing SCR engines for its mid-

range products, which should make the transition easier.

“The business case for delivering industry-leading fuel economy performance from our products was too compelling for us to overlook, and therefore drove this decision,” said Ed Pence, vice-president and general manager of Cummins heavy-duty engine business. “We believe this decision demonstrates Cummins decisiveness to do what’s right, to offer the right technology and it demonstrates our agility, which we hold as a core value around here.”

Cummins decision to adopt SCR leaves Navistar as the only North American engine manufacturer that plans to meet EPA2010 emissions standards without exhaust after-treatment. Cummins officials insisted they could have met the 2010 requirements with their in-cylinder solution, had they chosen to continue pursuing it.

“That product was all set to launch in January, 2010,” said Charlton. “The program was performing well, the product was performing well and we were hitting all our targets.”

But current fuel prices have made fuel economy the top priority for customers, Cummins officials acknowledged, which made it necessary to change paths.

“The first thing (customers) want to talk about is how we can help them improve their operating cost, and primarily fuel economy,” Jeff Jones, vice-president of sales and marketing communications said.

“Whether you’re a fleet or owner/operator, the value of a percentage or two fuel economy improvement is a big number.”

He pointed out that a truck consuming 20,000 gallons of diesel per year stands to save about \$1,000 each year for every percentage that fuel economy can be improved.

Charlton said the work Cummins has done to date on its in-cylinder solution, has not been a wasted effort. Cummins 2010 engines with SCR will still use EGR, although smaller amounts of exhaust will be recirculated. This will result in less heat rejection, he explained.

The base engine will remain the same and Cummins will continue to offer a full range of horsepower ratings, he stressed.

However, plans to introduce a 16-litre ISX have been shelved, since Charlton said the company no longer needs the higher-displacement engine to meet all the horsepower ratings it intends to offer.

Charlton also pointed out that Cummins won’t be playing catch-up, since it has already been developing an SCR solution for its mid-range line, and has about 200,000 units with SCR already in use in other parts of the world. In fact, a division of the company – Cummins Emission Solutions – is already in the business of designing and building SCR systems.

Recently, Cummins inked a deal with Daimler Trucks North America which would provide customers with an alternative to SCR. However,

company officials are not concerned they will lose ground due to their decision to change paths. Pence said Cummins will continue to differentiate itself based on quality and service, if not technology.

“Differentiation comes in a lot of different forms...it’s not necessarily defined by what technology you use versus what other people are using,” said Pence.

He noted that Cummins has gained market share in both the mid-range and heavy-duty market segments since the launch of EPA07 product line, despite the fact all manufacturers employ a similar architecture.

“Differentiation with the 07 product line was defined on the customer side by performance, reliability, durability and how we support our customers and OEM partners with our product,” he added.

When Cummins first rejected the idea of adopting SCR, it was partly due to concerns about the availability of urea.

However, Jones pointed out a truck will run at least 6,000 miles before its urea tank runs dry. Visible and audible warnings will give drivers plenty of notice, as per EPA requirements.

Cummins officials say they are already working with their OEM partners to ensure they are ready to roll by January, 2010. The company says it is already field-testing some engines with SCR and will be conducting cold-weather testing this winter. □

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New options announced for Western Star trucks

DALLAS, Texas – A new motor, a day cab conversion kit and new stainless steel accessories were all made available on Western Star trucks at the Great American Trucking Show.

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) announced Western Star trucks will now be available with the Detroit Diesel DD15 engine under the hood. The DD15 is known for its instantaneous torque response and excellent fuel mileage, thanks in part to a technology called turbocompounding.

Turbocompounding turns normally wasted exhaust gas into reusable power, providing 50 'bonus' horsepower, Detroit Diesel officials explain. Currently, it's only available on the DD15. Turbocompounding combines with an Amplified Common Rail Fuel System (ACRS) to provide improved fuel mileage over the

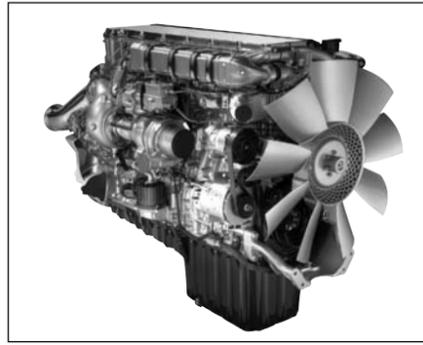
Series 60, the company says.

The DD15 also boasts excellent torque, reaching 90% peak torque in just 1.5 seconds thanks to a turbocharger and dual overhead cams, according to Detroit Diesel. The DD15 will be available in horsepower ratings of 450-560 with 1,550-1,850 lb.-ft. of torque.

Also new to Western Star is a day cab conversion kit, which transforms trucks with a Stratosphere sleeper into a day cab. The kit includes: a new overhead console; a new, reinforced roof cap; a new headliner; and a new back wall and trim panel as well as a rear window.

The company says the kit allows the conversion to take place while maintaining a distinct Western Star look.

It makes used Western Star highway trucks more practical for a second life in many vocational segments.



NEW POWER: Western Star trucks can now be ordered with the Detroit Diesel DD15.

"Stratosphere sleeper owners are loyal to their trucks, so we wanted to make the trucks even more versatile," said Richard Shearing, manager of product strategy with Western Star.

"Now owners can enjoy their trucks for new uses, or take advantage of the increased resale value that converting the trucks can provide."

The conversion kit will soon be available for order through Western Star dealers, the company announced.

A new premium line of stainless steel accessories was also introduced by Western Star at the Great American Trucking Show. The line includes more than 300 mirror-finish items specifically designed for Western Star.

"We are excited to offer our customers new stainless steel accessory options that match the premium quality of their Western Star truck," said Angelique Deas, product manager for Western Star accessories. "Highly customizable for every design preference, we continue to meet our customer's needs by enhancing our product offerings at every level."

The accessories are constructed with high-quality non-magnetic 304 stainless steel, giving them corrosion resistant properties that even stand up to road salt and other anti-icing agents, the company claims.

The accessories will be available through Western Star dealers beginning in mid-October, the company says. □

Kenworth, Peterbilt make synthetic axle lube standard

DALLAS, Texas – Kenworth and Peterbilt have announced their customers will achieve a 1% improvement in fuel mileage once the truck makers make a new full-synthetic axle lube standard on all Class 5-8 models.

The truck manufacturers, both owned by Paccar, will make the new synthetic lube standard beginning this summer. Cognis EMGARD FE 75W-90 axle lubes will be used by both companies. They claim the axle lube will offer better operating performance, increased gear life, extended drains and all-season lubrication and reduced maintenance and downtime.

In addition, the manufacturers are claiming a 1% fuel mileage improvement will result.

"Fuel economy is extremely important to customers today and an estimated gain of up to 1% in fuel efficiency can help produce significant annual savings for a truck fleet or owner/operator," said Gary Moore, Kenworth assistant general manager for marketing and sales.

Peterbilt says a 1% fuel mileage improvement will translate to yearly savings of about \$900 per truck based on current fuel prices.

"The Cognis synthetic lube helps customers offset rising and unstable fuel costs by providing end-users significant and quantifiable fuel savings," announced Larry Reding, assistant general manager of sales and marketing with Peterbilt. □

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HARPER GROWS AGAIN: The Harper Group has expanded its reach in Southern Ontario, with the opening of a new regional service centre in Niagara Falls. Located at 7302 Kalar Road, the facility features three full-size bays, a new wash bay, a fueling station and a fully-gated yard for increased security. The facility is open Monday-Sunday from 6 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. and provides emergency services. The phone number is 905-354-7606. Pictured is a recent open house hosted by the Harper Group at its newest location. ■

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Volvo, Mack streamline operations

LEHIGH VALLEY, Penn. – Volvo Group has announced it will streamline its North American Volvo and Mack operations to improve efficiencies. The restructuring will cost US\$60 million but will further the company’s competitiveness, the company said in a release.

“Through hard work and substantial investment over the last seven years, Mack now has a completely revitalized vehicle line-up, an entirely new engine range, and a dealer network that’s stronger than ever,” said Dennis R. Slagle, Mack president and CEO. “But our focus is on long-term leadership in a very challenging market, regulatory and economic environment, and this demands that we continue to improve our profitability and competitiveness.”

As part of the restructuring, Mack’s administrative headquarters will be relocated from Allentown, Penn. to Greensboro, N.C. where Volvo is currently based. That will occur in 2009, the company says. Mack’s highway trucks will be assembled at the company’s Macungie, Penn. plant rather than the current New River Valley, Va. plant, beginning in the fourth quarter of 2008. Volvo trucks will continue to be assembled at New River Valley, however.

The product development and purchasing functions will be moved from the Allentown Engineering Development and Test Center to Volvo’s tech center in Greensboro. And the parts distribution network will be restructured to include a new Volvo Group North America central warehouse. Mack officials said the company will inject US\$20 million into its Macungie plant’s paint operation and a further US\$50 million will be spent to install a new engine block machining line at the company’s Hagerstown, Md. powertrain facility. □

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WORTH A LOOK?: Mack officials claim the latest disc brakes offer advantages over drums.

Mack touts disc brakes

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – Mack Trucks was at the Great American Trucking Show in August, highlighting the recent availability of air disc brakes and dispelling some myths about the product.

Jerry Warmkessel of Mack Trucks said there has been a lot of interest in disc brakes, especially with new stopping distance requirements under development by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. He said disc brakes can stop a truck 20-30% sooner than drum brakes, adding “The faster the truck is going, the more effective disc brakes are.”

However, he admitted customers still express concerns about the cost of disc brakes as well as the increased weight. Addressing the weight issue, Warmkessel said while disc brakes weigh slightly more than today’s drum brakes, they are actually lighter than the larger drum brakes that will be required to meet the impending shortened stopping distances.

Equipping a tractor with today’s disc brakes can save 158 lbs versus the larger drum brakes that will be required to meet the new stopping distance requirements, Warmkessel explained. Specifically, a tractor with 16.5”x5” drums on the front and 16.5”x8.6” drums on the drive axles will carry 1,594 lbs in brake weight while the same truck with the ADB22X disc brake from Bendix on the front and rear axles will carry only 1,436 lbs, for a net savings of 158 lbs.

Opting for the disc brake on the front axle only can still save a truck owner 47 lbs, Warmkessel said. He said that disc brakes also result in less maintenance, a more user-friendly passenger car-type feel, improved stability while stopping and they are not subject to brake fade.

Warmkessel said one customer has found that 90% of its trucks equipped with disc brakes had the same pads on them at 600,000 miles.

As far as cost is concerned, Warmkessel admitted they are more expensive than drums, with the OEs setting the price. However, he added “In the long run, it’s well worth the value added by the products.”

Air disc brakes are currently available on Mack trucks with 12,000-lb front and 40,000-lb rear axles.

“We will be working up to the heavier axles as customer demand increases,” Warmkessel said. □

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claims are more compact, lighter and more powerful than previous designs. The new design was made in response to EPA07 emission standards as well as a move towards tapered steel, composite and air springs in medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks. Timbren said it has not sacrificed ease of installation or ride quality. For more information, call 800-263-3113 or visit www.timbren.com.



Cooper Hand Tools has introduced a new **ratcheting load binder** which the company claims is easier to adjust than traditional lever-style binders. It features eight inches of take-up for a wide range of adjustments and it is approved for use with both 5/16" and 3/8" transport chains. The Grade 70 load binder has a 6,600-lb working load limit and a 26,400-lb breaking strength, according to the company. The binder also meets US DoT requirements 393.100-393.102. For more details, visit www.cooperhandtools.com.



Freightliner has introduced a new line of **chrome accessories** for the Cascadia highway tractor. Produced by Panelite, the line includes stainless steel accessories for: cab panels; marker lights; fender and grille trim; and interior lights. The new accessories will be available for order in October, Freightliner says. Talk to your dealer for more info.

Scraper Systems, a **snow removal device** for trailers, will now be distributed in Canada by Denex Industrial, the companies announced. Scraper Systems was developed to remove snow and ice from trailer-tops, which improves road safety and can also reduce trailer weights by as much as 2,600 lbs, according to the company. As a truck approaches the system, the driver gets out and lowers the blade to the roof of the trailer. He then drives through, removing the snow and then returns the blade to its original position, the company explains. For details, contact Jon Denman at 902-880-7941 or call toll-free at 866-554-6555.

A new **watch device**, the Sleeptracker Pro, has been introduced to help truckers wake up from their sleep more refreshed and alert. The company says the device detects the movements associated with a light sleep stage and then gently wakes the individual wearing the device using an alarm, vibration or combination of the two. The result, the company claims, is a more rested driver thanks to an easier transition from sleep to wake. PC software is also

available that allows a driver to upload and track their sleep data so they can analyze factors that may provide for more restful sleep. For more info, visit www.sleeptracker.com.

TruckWeight has announced that its Smart Scale **wireless on-board scale** is now compatible with mechanical spring suspensions. That opens the door to applications such as bulk distribution, agriculture, construction, forestry and containerized loads, the company says. The scale has been available for trailers with air suspensions since 2005. The system includes three components: an axle-mounted load sensor; a low-powered radio transmitter; and a small, handheld wireless receiver. The company says its load readings are accurate to within 1% compared to a certified in-ground scale. For more details, visit www.truckweight.com. □



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NEW PRODUCTS

Latest X One made with Canada in mind

By James Menzies

DALLAS, Texas – Michelin has expanded its line of X One wide-base tires to include a drive tire that optimizes traction, an ideal fit for the Canadian market, according to the company.

Don Baldwin, product marketing manager for Michelin, said the release of the latest member of the X One family wasn't specifically timed to coincide with the new rules in Canada which pave the way for the more widespread use of single tires. However, he said Canadian customers will appreciate the improved traction as well as the tire's long life and low rolling resistance.

The X One XDN2 tire is the first to incorporate Michelin's award-winning Michelin Durable Technologies, specifically Matrix Siping Technology. The technology features corrugated grooves in the tread block which lock the tread block to minimize horizontal and vertical stresses, Baldwin explained at the Great American Trucking Show. By doing so, the tire reduces wear and also generates less heat, resulting in better fuel mileage.

Like other X One tires, the X One XDN2 also features Michelin's InfiniCoil, a steel cord more than a quarter-mile in length, that's wrapped around the tire to stabilize the contact patch. The InfiniCoil gives the crown of the tire increased stiffness, reducing premature and inconsistent wear and providing better handling, said Baldwin.



MORE TRACTION: The open shoulder design improves traction in wet and snowy conditions, Michelin says.

"This tire takes the traditional compromise between traction, long life and fuel efficiency, and throws it out the window," said Marc Laferriere, vice-president of marketing, Michelin Americas Truck Tires. "By utilizing two different Michelin Durable Technologies, the X One XDN2 tire delivers significantly increased tire life and exceptional, uncompromised traction, complementing the significant fuel efficiency gains of a Michelin X One wide single tire."

An open-shoulder tread design is ideal for carving through water, slush and snow, Baldwin noted, making it ideal for Canadian conditions.

The X One XDN2 wide-base single drive tire will be available in November in a 445/50R22.5 size (equivalent to a 275/80R22.5 size), with a 455/55R22.5 size (equivalent to an 11R22.5 size) becoming available in December, the company said. It will ultimately replace the X One XDA-HT Plus tire. □



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Volvo launches fuel management program for fleet customers

DALLAS, Texas – Volvo has launched a new fuel economy program, which takes a four-pronged approach to maximizing fuel efficiency.

Fuelwatch focuses on: vehicle spec'ing; maintenance; performance monitoring; and driver training in an effort to help fleets optimize the fuel-efficiency of their equipment. While the company has always assisted customers in properly spec'ing and maintaining their trucks, the Fuelwatch program goes a step further and will also address driver behaviour. Beginning in early 2009, Volvo will have driver-trainers available to educate fleets and their drivers on how to maximize fuel mileage through fuel-efficient driving techniques. The program is being targeted towards small- and mid-sized fleets, which may not have the resources to assign a staff member to driver training.

“Our customers are telling us ‘I want Volvo to give me the most fuel-efficient truck possible. We need every bit of help we can get’ to survive the escalation in diesel prices,” Scott Kress, senior vice-president of sales and marketing, said at the Great American Trucking Show. “But we realized we can give them far more than the truck. Fuelwatch is our way to bring Volvo’s deep knowledge of fuel economy to customers in a way that delivers these benefits throughout the entire life and operation of their trucks.”

The four elements of Fuelwatch include:

Proper spec'ing: Volvo dealers will work with customers using the company’s Predictor software tool to select the most fuel-efficient spec’s for the job. Factors such as terrain, desired cruise speed, loads and applications will all be taken into consideration, the company says.

Maintenance: Once the truck’s on the road, Fuelwatch will help customers keep up with scheduled preventive maintenance. The company says improper wheel alignment and neglected fuel and cooling systems can each reduce a truck’s fuel efficiency by up to 3%. Volvo also says air system losses can account for another 4% reduction in fuel mileage. Fuelwatch will also involve reprogramming the engine power ratings to match changes in application.

Monitoring performance: Volvo Link and Sentry will provide fleet managers with information that allows them to monitor and measure their results, according to the company. Eventually, logged vehicle data (LVD) will allow a fleet manager to compare the performance of his trucks against an industry-wide benchmark which draws on the data of the entire population of similarly-spec'd trucks.

Driver development: It’s been said that the driver can swing fuel economy up to 30% in either direction. Volvo says its driver-trainers will provide hands-on training sessions beginning next year. The company also offers tips through its in-dash display, which uses icons that advise a driver to adjust his behaviour when required.

“We think the days of inexpensive fuel are over, and the trucking industry must adapt to this new reality,” Kress said. “Fuelwatch is not a switch that fleets can throw or a part they can bolt on a truck. This is a partnership between Volvo, our customers and our dealers involving a comprehensive approach to improving fuel economy tailored to the individual customer.”

Volvo officials at the Great American Trucking Show said there’d be a charge for the driver training component of the program.

“It’s a nominal fee and one that will pay back many, many times,” said Kress.

Owner/operators can also take advantage of the training, however it will only be offered to groups, the company said. □

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Let the police worry about speeding trucks

Dear Editor:

I first started in the transportation business in 1983 as a driver-trainer for a large school bus company. Since then I've been working as a director of safety for a large bulk TDG transport company.

I also served 15 years as a senior loss prevention representative for insurance companies.

Since 2004 I have been a safety consultant with 20 clients in various areas of Ontario.

I have a huge problem with the MTO and their speed limiter legislation.

Any carrier today trying to survive fuel prices and the inflated costs of trucking has their fleet limited to 100 km/h.

I drove part-time for SLH Transport from 1989 to 2002 and

all their company trucks were reduced to 95 km/h. We don't have a speeding problem in Ontario with large trucks.

We have an enforcement problems not pulling over speeding trucks.

Ask any Ontario carrier who drives in Michigan, Ohio or New York State and see if they speed? These states closely monitor the truck traffic and aren't afraid of charging truckers for being in the wrong lane or exceeding the speed limit.

This speed limiter legislation is feel-good politics that does nothing to reduce bad driving behaviour.

Let's not even talk about this saving "greenhouse" gases because the feds have no clue how much it will save.

I also have a hard time believing that they are going to enforce the speed limiter rule on non-Ontario plated trucks.

At this time the MTO can't even enforce the newly required pre-trip inspection report from the trucks south of the border.

It's time to get the OPP out on the road and pull over speeding trucks just like they do cars. □

Mark Richardson
Safety consultant
Via e-mail

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No such thing as a driver shortage

Dear Editor:

I read with interest, your recent column about the driver shortage. As a 27-year veteran of the trucking industry, it has been my personal challenge to expose this myth for what it is: smoke and mirrors – a myth perpetuated by our industry captains.

Is there actually a driver shortage, or simply an over-abundance of (PPF) poor paying freight?

PPF in my opinion is responsible for the lack of entry-level employees in the transport industry – poor paying freight equals poorly paid drivers.

Why would anyone want to join an industry that treats their employees this way?

Regulated to death, responsibility to no end and the average driver working 300 hours per month with no overtime pay and very little in the way of benefits, not even an auxiliary pension fund to contribute to.

Everything from poor pay to lack of parking contributes to the degradation of this industry and yet you don't hear the CTA, OTA or any other provincial association for that matter, saying a single word to our government about those issues. We are left on our own to contend with the never ending lack of services. There is not a driver shortage, there is a shortage of people applying for this crappy job. Importing drivers from around the world does nothing to address the root of the problem, it simply perpetuates the problem. □

Larry James Hall
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PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

2) How many vehicles are based at or controlled from this location? Please indicate quantities by type:

— No. of Straight Trucks _____ No. of Trailers _____
 — No. of Truck-Tractors _____ No. of Buses _____
 — No. of Off-Road Vehicles _____

3) Does this location operate, control or administer one or more vehicles in any of the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) categories? Please check YES or NO:

14,969 kg. & over (33,001 lbs. & over)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.).....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

4) This location operates, controls or administers:

Diesel powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Refrigerated vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Pickups or Utility Vans.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Propane powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

5) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? YES NO
 IF YES, do you employ mechanics?..... YES NO

6) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

a) <input type="checkbox"/> For Hire/Contract Trucking (hauling for others)
b) <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/Rental
c) <input type="checkbox"/> Food Production / Distribution / Beverages
d) <input type="checkbox"/> Farming
e) <input type="checkbox"/> Government (Fed., Prov., Local)
f) <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utility (electric, gas, telephone)
g) <input type="checkbox"/> Construction / Mining / Sand & Gravel
h) <input type="checkbox"/> Petroleum / Dry Bulk / Chemicals / Tank
i) <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing / Processing
j) <input type="checkbox"/> Retail
ji) <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale
k) <input type="checkbox"/> Logging / Lumber
l) <input type="checkbox"/> Bus Transportation
m) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____

7) Are you involved in the purchase of equipment or replacement parts? YES NO

8) Are you responsible either directly or indirectly for equipment maintenance? YES NO

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More thoughts on speed limiters

Dear Editor:

I can not help but add my comments about the legislation of speed limiters. I consider myself to be relatively green as a driver.

I have driven long-haul since 2000. In that short time I have travelled Canada from coast to coast and all of the mainland US, with the exception of Alaska.

All the trucks I have driven were limited to 64 mph.

In my opinion, the difference between 100 km/h and 115 km/h is a few less stops at Timmy's.

It is the story of the tortoise and the hare. Many times I have left the yard, headed west on the 401 to Toronto and have been passed two or three times by the same truck. In my travels I have found that driving a 64 mph truck in a state or province that has a higher speed limit to be no problem.

As a last thought I would like to comment on an article in your August issue written by Joanne Ritchie. In her article she quotes a study made by the University of Waterloo.

She quotes the study as stating that trucks with speed limiters would cause a "reduction in safety."

The question that comes to my mind is this: If the speed limit on the QEW is 100 km/h what leap of logic brings someone to the con-

clusion that trucks slowed by limiters to 105 km/h (5 km/h above the speed limit) could cause a "reduction in safety."

A reduction in safety is not caused by those doing the speed limit.

A reduction in safety is caused by those who drive a phone booth for a vehicle, who do not know how to change lanes or merge, those who do not know what turn signals are and lastly those who think the fast lane belongs to them and speed limits are for everyone else.

The truth of the matter is this: By forcing the O/O to slow down, their productivity will be affected. And therefore their income. Period. Arguments about pros and cons of safety and costs are just excuses. □

Brian Reed
Mallorytown, Ont.
Via e-mail

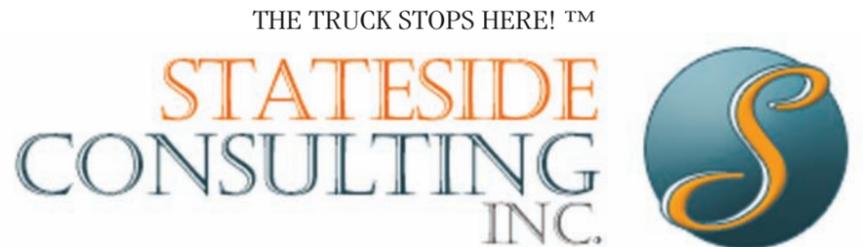
Letters to the editor

Have you got a complaint, compliment, criticism or question?

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You can also e-mail them to jmenzies@trucknews.com. □



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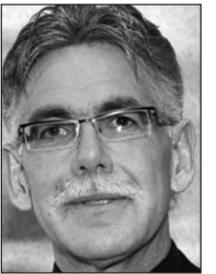
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PEOPLE

The Hallmark Insurance Group has appointed well-known transportation safety expert **Chris Harris** to The Transit Authority, as both an account executive and safety specialist. Harris has over 16 years trucking operational management experience, 10 years in hospitality management, and for the past seven years he has been senior safety rep for a major trucking insurer.



Harris

An active volunteer in the industry, Harris is past chairman of the Career Path Committee, guest member on the Truck Driver Apprenticeship Industry Committee, member of the Safety Committee at the Ontario Trucking Association, and is a NATMI-certified instructor who still drives a tractor-trailer periodically. Harris can be reached at charris@hallmarkins.com.

RigMaster Power has announced that **Tori M. Harper** has been appointed president of the RigMaster Power group of companies.

The new president most recently served as executive director of Harper Group, the parent company of RigMaster Power Corp. and other affiliated companies.

In this capacity, Harper was actively involved in major acquisitions and business development, the company says. RigMaster Power is a supplier of stand-alone APUs.

Jones DesLauriers Insurance Management (JDIMI) has paired with fleet safety consultant **Brian Botham** to expand its services to include safety consulting.

Botham has 25 years of experience educating and resolving issues for numerous companies, including GAP, CVOR and injury analysis, proactive risk assessments, and driver training. □

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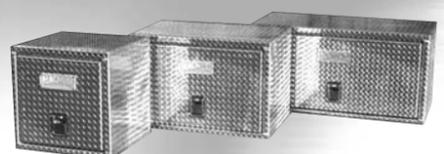


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ADVERTISERS' PRODUCT/SERVICE INDEX

AIR CONDITIONING

- Manwin Enterprises7
- Niagara Service & Supply7
- PKS Truck Centre
Thermodiesel44
- Wilson Instruments7

AUCTIONEERS

- Ritchie Bros.47

BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

- C.U.T.C.60
- Stateside Consulting65
- Transport Financial Services . .44

**CAREER OPPORTUNITIES . . .48,49,
. . . .50,51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59**

- Glasvan Great Dane48
- Toromont Cat20

**Truck News Recruitment/
Driver Link65**

CHILD FIND47

CLASSIFIED46,66

CLIMATE CONTROL

- Manwin Enterprises7
- Niagara Service & Supply7
- Wilson Instruments7

COLLISION REPAIRS

- Metro Collision60
- Paling Industries46

CROSSWORD

- Oct 08 Crossword Puzzle . . .10
- Oct 08 Crossword Solution . .60

DRIVER EDUCATION/TRAINING

- Stateside Consulting65

ENGINES

- Caterpillar24,25

EXHAUST

- Taxis Truck Exhaust66
- The Truck Exhaust Place . . .42

FINANCING

- CIT19

GPS TRACKING SYSTEMS

- ZeroYourX.com45

HEATERS

- Arctic Traveler (Canada)
Service37
- Espar14
- Manwin Enterprises7
- Niagara Service & Supply7
- PKS Truck Centre
Thermodiesel44
- Wilson Instruments7

INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- Glasvan Great Dane48
- Toromont Cat20
- Truck-ops48,57

INSURANCE

- Burrowes Insurance Brokers .40
- Dan Lawrie Insurance63
- Hallmark Insurance37
- Hargraft Schofield LP61
- Innovative Insurance Agencies .46
- Nalpath11,34
- Stateside Consulting65

LANDING GEAR

- SAF-Holland22

LUBRICANTS

- Castrol/Wakefield Canada . . .35
- Centerline Truck Lube32
- Chevron Global Lubricants . .4,29
- FLO Components47
- Howes Lubricator20
- Shell Canada Products23

MEDICAL SERVICES

- Ontario Drivers Medical64

RADIATORS

- Atlantis Radiator Truck Auto
Service42
- King Radiator60
- XL Radiators11

TANKER SALES (NEW & USED)

- Dependable Tank63
- Robica Tank28
- Tankmart International38
- Tremcar26

TARPS

- Trison Tarps8
- Verduyn Tarps13

TIRES & TIRE SERVICE

- Bridgestone-Firestone33
- Goodyear16,27
- Hankook Tire36
- Michelin21
- OK Tire12

TRAILER LEASING & RENTAL

- Action Trailer Sales9
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Tremcar26

TRAILER PARTS & SERVICE

- Action Trailer Sales9
- Glasvan Great Dane5,48
- Kingpin Specialists62
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Tremcar26

TRAILER SALES (NEW)

- Action Trailer Sales9
- Glasvan Great Dane5

TRAILER SALES (NEW) Cont'd.

- Great Dane Trailers71
- Markham Equipment Sales . .70
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Transport Trailer Sales61
- Tremcar26
- Valley Equipment62

TRAILER SALES (USED)

- Action Trailers Sales10
- Glasvan Great Dane5,48
- Markham Equipment Sales . .70
- Transport Trailer Sales61
- Valley Equipment62
- Tremcar26

TRUCK BODIES

- Dependable Tank63
- Robica Tank28
- Tremcar26

TRUCK LEASING

- Altruck International30
- Carrier Truck Centers30
- Sheehan's Truck Centres . . .41

TRUCK NEWS SUBSCRIPTION . .64

TRUCK PARTS

- Altruck International30
- Canada-Wide Parts Dist. . . .43
- Carrier Truck Centers30
- Mack Trucks17
- Manwin Enterprises77
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts .43
- Niagara Service & Supply7
- SAF-Holland22
- Sheehan's Truck Centres . . .41
- Toromont Cat69
- TruckPro39
- Volvo31
- Wilson Instruments7
- XL Radiators11

TRUCK SALES (NEW)

- Altruck International30
- Carrier Truck Centers30
- Hino Canada18
- Mack Canada72
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Sheehan's Truck Centre41
- Valley Equipment62
- Volvo15
- Western Star2

**TRUCK SALES (SHUNTS, YARD
TRACTORS)**

- Glasvan Capacity45

TRUCK SALES (USED)

- Altruck International30
- Carrier Truck Centers30
- Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts .43
- Paling Industries46
- Sheehan's Truck Centres . . .41
- Valley Equipment62

TRUCK SERVICE & REPAIR

- Altruck International30
- Carrier Truck Centers30
- Co-Up Auto Body Repairs . .45
- Mack Trucks17
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- PKS Truck Centre
Thermodiesel44
- Paling Industries46
- SAF-Holland22
- Sheehan's Truck Centres . . .41
- Toromont Cat69
- TruckPro39

U.S. IMMIGRATION WAIVERS

- Siskinds The Law Firm62

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ADVERTISERS

- A-Z Technical Bldg.66
- Action Trailer Sales9
- Ads Employment51
- Altruck International Truck Centres .30
- Arctic Traveler (Canada) Service . . .37
- Atlantis Radiator Truck Auto Service .42
- Bison Transport49
- Bridgestone/Firestone33
- Burrowes Insurance Brokers40
- CIT19
- C.U.T.C.60
- Canada-Wide Parts Distributors43
- Career Opportunities48,49,50,51,
.52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59**
- Carrier Truck Centres30
- Castrol/Wakefield Canada35
- Caterpillar24,25
- Celadon Canada54
- Centerline Truck Lube32
- Challenger Motor Freight50
- Chevron Global Lubricants4,29
- Child Find Ontario47**

- Classified46,66**
- Co-Up Auto Body Repairs45
- Crossword Puzzle10,60**
- Dan Lawrie Insurance63
- Deluxe Freight Services53
- Dependable Tank63
- Direct Fleet Management58
- Direct Right 200158
- Espar14
- F.T.C. Transport59
- FTI59
- Fleetsmart44
- FLO Components47
- Galaxy Transport53
- Glasvan Capacity45
- Glasvan Great Dane5,48
- Goodyear16,27
- Great Dane Trailers71
- Hallmark Insurance Group37
- Hankook Tire36
- Hargraft Schofield LP61
- Highland Transport56

- Hino Motors Canada18
- Hopefield Trucking52
- Howes Lubricator20
- Industry Opportunities20,48**
- Innovative Insurance46
- KDI Transportation58
- King Radiator60
- Kingpin Specialists62
- Laidlaw Carriers (Bulk/Dump)57
- Laidlaw Carriers (Van)53
- Mack Canada72
- Mack Trucks17
- Markham Equipment Sales70
- Maxim Truck & Trailer34
- Metro Collision60
- Michelin21
- Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts43
- Nal Path11,34
- Nolan Transport51
- NZR National Zephyr Research66
- O.K. Tire12
- Ontario Drivers Medical64

- PKS T.C. Thermodiesel44
- Paling Industries46
- Retire In Five Years52
- Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers47
- Robica Tank28
- SAF-Holland22
- Sheehan's Truck Centres41
- Shell Canada Products23
- Siskinds LLP62
- Snowbirds Auto Connection55
- Stateside Consulting65
- Tankmart International38
- Taxis Truck Exhaust66
- TFX International48
- The Rosedale Group58
- The Truck Exhaust Place42
- Toromont Cat20,69
- Transport Financial Services44
- Transport Trailer Sales61
- Travelers Transportation51
- Tremcar26

- Trison Tarps8
- Truboy Freight55
- TruckMaster47
- Truck News-Recruitment/
Driverlink65**
- Truck News - Subscription64**
- Truck-Ops48,57**
- TruckPro39
- Two Shoes Specialized55
- Valley Equipment62
- Vandermarel Trucking58
- Verduyn Tarps13
- Volvo Parts31
- Volvo Trucks15
- Western Star2
- White Oak Transport58
- Wiersma Trucking55
- Wilson Instruments7
- Woodcock Brothers52
- XL Radiators11
- ZeroYourX.com45

By Edo van Belkom

The Tim Horton's was like every other one in the country, except for one thing. This Tim's was located out by Pearson International Airport and was frequented by all the truck drivers who carried containers for the numerous shipping yards in the area. There were a few drivers Mark recognized sitting at one of the tables in the far corner of the shop and they nodded hello at him as he took his place in line.

He ordered an apple fritter and a medium double-double with sweetener (he had cut the sugar from his daily coffee in the name of health and fitness, but he wasn't about to go without the cream – that was the stuff that made it taste so good), then made his way over to the table to chat with his friends.

"Hi guys," Mark said, shaking hands.

"Mark Dalton," one of the drivers said, a man named Franco who drove flammable liquids like gas and propane. Mark thought he was a little different, maybe a bit off, but his personality was probably a necessary evil for hauling the loads he did.

"The Mark Dalton," echoed Manny Giron, a young driver who'd been an owner/operator for less than a year, but acted as if he'd been driving for all of his 25.

"What's going on?" Mark said.

"We were just talking about loads,"

Franco said with a slight jerk of his head.

"Where are you goin' next?"

"Tampa," Mark answered.

"Tampa?" Manny asked. "What are you taking there?"

"Carpet, made in Spain."

"Don't they have their own carpet in Florida?"

"How should I know? All I need to know is someone wants a truckload of Spanish carpet delivered to a location in Tampa."

Manny was shaking his head.

"Florida in the winter. Nice..."

Mark shrugged. "I just drive where Bud sends me."

"Sure you do," Manny said.

"Why? What's wrong?"

This time it was Franco who spoke.

"We were just talking about the kinds of loads we get. Me, I don't care. Not too many drivers like to carry explosives..."

He laughed then, a sort of maniacal laugh that would be better suited to a serial killer. "So I get my pick of places. But Manny here says you get the best loads to all the best places."

"That's not true."

"And not just once in a while," Franco continued, "but all the time."

"I don't ask for any special treatment,"

Mark said.

"No, but you get it." Manny leaned forward and rested his arms on the table. "How many times you been to Florida in the past couple of months."

"Three times."

"How about California?"

"Once."

"And British Columbia?"

"I don't know. Five or six."

Manny turned to Franco. "See, I told you."

Franco turned his head to one side.

"Maybe you got a point."

"Me, all I get are local runs to one side of the city and the other. You know how much time and fuel I waste sitting in traffic?"

"Maybe that's all Bud's got when you call," Mark said. He wasn't comfortable speaking for Bud, but someone had to say something in his defense. Bud was a good man and an even better dispatcher and if he was giving Manny shorter city loads, there had to be a reason for it.

"That's crap and you know it."

Manny's voice was getting louder.

"When I'm driving across the city in rush hour you're cruising across the Prairies putting miles under your wheels."

"Maybe you should take this up with Bud," Mark suggested.

"I have. And every time I do, he gives me a decent load, and then it's back to the same old city driving. If I lose my rig, it'll be his fault."

"Now wait a minute," Mark said. "If you lose your rig, that's nobody's fault but your own."

"I would agree with that," Franco said. "You are an owner/operator, your own boss!"

Mark took a sip of his coffee and found it had cooled. "If you don't like the loads Bud is giving you, then maybe you should find another dispatcher. I'm sure there are plenty of companies out there who would be thrilled to have a driver of your experience and...temperament."

"I've thought about it," Manny said,

Mark's insult seemingly lost on the young man. "And I've also thought about why you get all the best loads."

"Oh yeah," Mark said. "And what did you come up with?"

"I've heard Bud likes a drink now and then...Maybe you bring him back a bottle every time he sends you down south."

"Are you saying I'm giving Bud kickbacks?"

"If a couple of bottles of booze every few months are a kickback, then yeah. I wouldn't be surprised if you're paying Bud for better loads."

and it's up to me to keep track of my income and expenses. If I bring a dozen donuts to some boys on a loading dock, or give out a few bottles of wine at Christmas, that's not a kickback, it's called doing business. Companies do it all the time."

"I saw you give Bud a bottle of Glenfiddich once... in July."

"I did that," Mark admitted. "I bought it at the duty-free because Bud asked me to. He even gave me the money for it. That's not a kickback, it's just what friends do for each other. You might know that if you had some."

This time Manny caught the insult and slammed his paper coffee cup onto the table. It hit the table with a muted pop and sent a geyser of coffee shooting up through the opening in the top of the cup.

"Hey, take it easy guys," Franco said, wiping the table down with a napkin. "This is nothing to get into a fight over."

"Look at it this way, Manny," Mark said, putting added emphasis on the man's name. "I've worked for Bud for years and if he gives me a choice load or two every once in a while, then I've earned it. When you've worked for the man for as long as I have, then maybe you'll get better loads too."

Manny was still visibly upset, but at least he was listening.

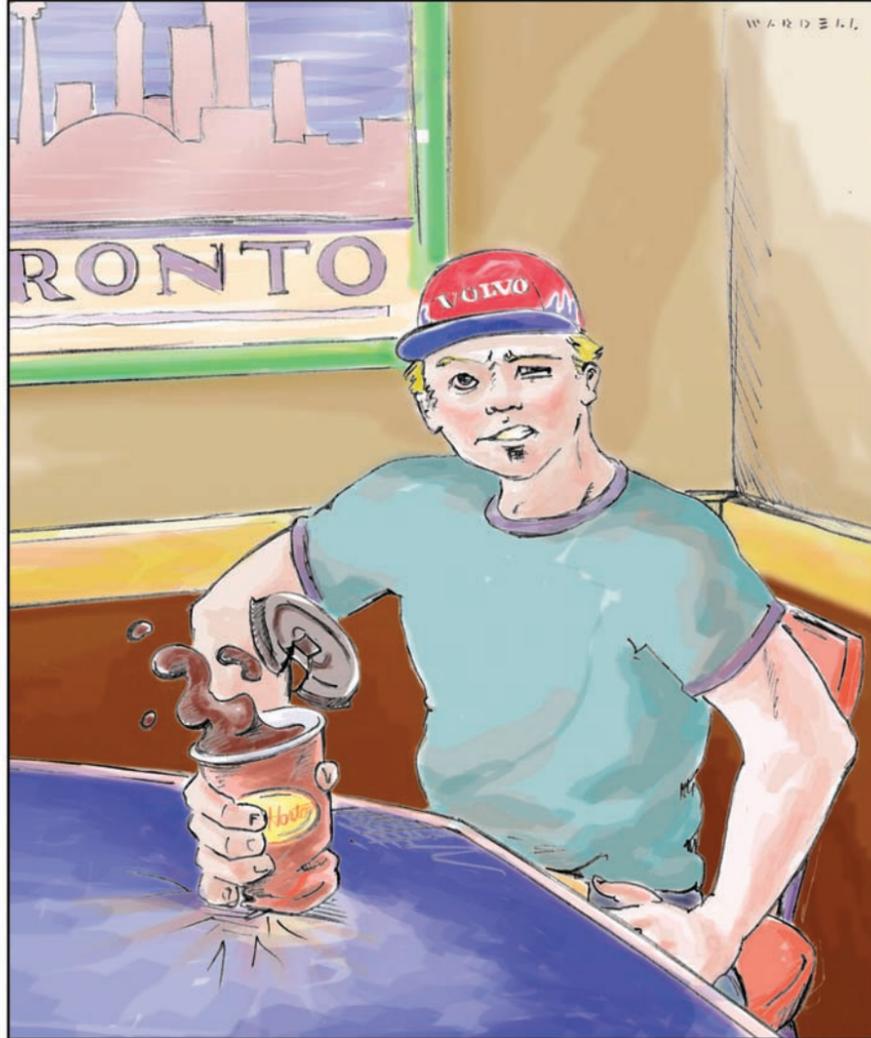
"But in the end, what Bud does with the loads he gets is entirely up to Bud. I don't know why Bud gives certain loads to certain drivers. To be honest, I've never really thought about it much...that is, until I sat down at this table."

"Well, maybe I will talk to him about it," Manny said, his face contorted in a sneer.

Just then the door to the coffee shop opened up and Bud himself ambled in.

"What timing," Mark said, gesturing over to the door. "There's the man now, why don't you ask him yourself." □

- Check back next month for Part 2 of **Playing Favourites.**



Mark took a deep breath to keep himself calm.

Franco must have felt the tension around the table thicken. "Maybe you should just worry about your own business," he told Manny. "And let other people worry about theirs."

"I am worried about my business," Manny said. "I'm doing the same job he is, but I'm not making the same money."

Franco looked over at Mark in anticipation.

"First of all," Mark said, cool and even. "If I let Bud take a few extra tenths of a per cent commission, that would be my business. Other drivers do it, but I don't. But even if I did, that would be up to me. You see, my truck is my company

The continuing adventures of *Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator*
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Internet scammers can be found in the most unlikely of places

For years I've been receiving e-mails promising me a tonne-o-money if I helped someone a world away process his or her multi-million dollar inheritance. The various Internet rip-off scams are everywhere and some are presented in some very clever ways.

Although I can say I've never been "taken" by the scum-suckers that generate this junk, I've learned that rip-offs can take many different forms.

A few months ago, I received a message from my Internet security software company informing me that my recent version of their software wasn't so recent.

Not wanting to let it lapse and expose myself to the various Gremlins that live in hyperspace, I clicked on the link and was taken to their site.

Once there, I clicked on a new

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



and improved version, gave my credit card number and downloaded the program.

'Wonderful,' I thought. 'I'm protected for another year.'

A few days later I received my American Express bill and noticed that they had double-dipped.

They charged me \$70-odd dollars for an "auto renewal" on the old program and \$50-odd dollars for the new version I had recently downloaded.

Of course I immediately e-mailed their customer service

department and explained the problem.

One day later I received an e-mail informing me that the problem would be looked into.

The response to my second, third and fourth e-mail was that my complaint had been "escalated" and would be dealt with as soon as possible.

E-mail five, six, seven and eight told me the same thing.

Nine, 10 and 11 promised a decision would be forthcoming.

I lost it on 12.

I explained that every e-mail had been saved and was on its way to the consumer watch editors of the various Toronto newspapers and TV news departments.

I was tired of the run-around and wasn't going to surrender to their brush-off tactics.

Go figure, number 13 informed

me that my refund would be processed within the next 10 business days.

Ironically, they probably got the last laugh.

Their "state-of-the-art" security program wasn't so "state-of-the-art."

It let a virus get through labeled "Antivirus XP." It ran a fake diagnostic of my computer and claimed it was full of viruses.

A pop-up window appeared urging me to click on a link, give them my credit card and download yet another new "state-of-the-art" security program.

Nice try. □

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– Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck News and he can be reached at 416-510-5123 or by e-mail at rwilkins@trucknews.com.



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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – It's tough times for the trucking industry, with high fuel prices, a faltering economy and increased operating costs threatening many trucker's livelihoods. Owner/operators are feeling an especially tight pinch on their wallets, causing many to consider leaving the industry altogether, or worse, being laid off outright by their employers. (For a story on the plight of unemployed O/Os see pg. 48).

For many, being a trucker has been a lifelong occupation and the prospect of moving into another field is daunting. But do drivers have a contingency plan if they find themselves pushed out of trucking? *Truck News* went to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to find out if drivers have plans for life after trucking.

Leonard Ouellet, a driver with Laidlaw in Quebec, says he would do anything in his power to stay be-



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

What would you do for work if you could no longer be a trucker?



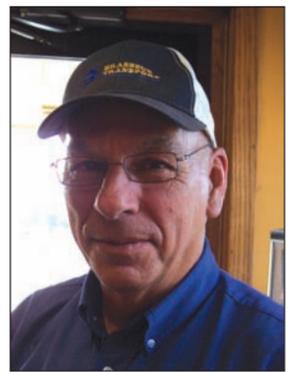
Leonard Ouellet

hind the wheel. "I've been driving a truck for 42 years and I still love it," he says. "I've never done anything

else but that all my life. I don't think I would change. I like what I do. I like to be alone. I'm my own boss, that's my own truck."

If push came to shove, Ouellet says he would still try to find work doing something on the road, as he still gets a charge out of the beautiful scenery he sees every day on the job.

Mario Canuel, a driver with Brasseur Transport in La Prairie, Que., agrees with Ouellet, saying the transition to another type of job would be difficult.



Mario Canuel

"I really don't know what I would do. It's all I've known all my life," said Canuel, a driver for 31 years. Though Canuel found work as a dispatcher for seven years, he likely wouldn't entertain it as an option and would rather continue truck driving for as long as he possibly can.



Tony Fareh

Tony Fareh, a Montreal-based owner/operator, is relatively new to the industry, having just gotten behind the wheel two years ago. If finances made it impossible to continue, Fareh says he would likely go back to his former occupation as the owner of a body shop.

Stephen Charette, a driver with WJD in Stoney Creek, Ont., has already tried to take a break from trucking, but wasn't able to stay away.

"I did try to be a store manager for five years, but I came back to trucking," said the driver of 18 years. However, Charette says the hassle of dealing with employees and managing a business drove him back to trucking. Like many drivers *Truck News* spoke with, Charette didn't have much in terms of a back-up plan.



Craig Hallman

One driver who seemed to have an unending list of back-up plans was **Craig Hallman**, a trucker who hauls sensitive equipment for high-profile clients out of Ayr, Ont. "I would be a geological systems engineer, that's a passion of mine," Hallman said first.

But if science fell through, rock star wasn't trailing far behind, followed by international business trade, adding that he could sit at a computer all day and trade. With the future of many truckers and trucking companies at risk, it's nice to know that some drivers still dare to dream beyond the driver's seat. □

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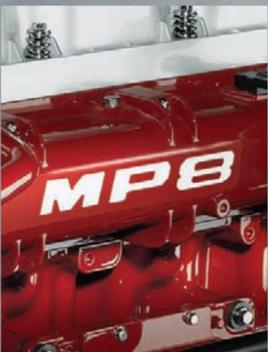
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