

# TRUCK NEWS

November 2008 Volume 28, Issue 11

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at [www.trucknews.com](http://www.trucknews.com)

## Reality check

*Economic experts at ATA deliver dire warnings, some glimmers of hope*

By Lou Smyrlis

**NEW ORLEANS, La.** – US trucking executives attending the American Trucking Associations' (ATA) popular *All Eyes on the Economy* session here recently received sober news but did leave with at least some glimmers of hope.

While all three experts on the panel – Bob Costello, chief economist and vice-president of the ATA, Mark Vitner, managing director and senior economist with Wachovia Corp, and Dr. Peter Ruane, president and CEO of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association – all share dire views of the economic picture, they did point to new opportunities to finally get politicians to address the long-standing issue of infrastructure neglect while also being positive about the future of energy pricing and rates.

Vitner confirmed executives' worst fears from the start when he told them "I clearly think we are already in a recession." Vitner said that while the export busi-

Continued on page 8 ■



**CARING CONVOY:** Truckers in Saskatchewan take part in the World's Largest Truck Convoy Sept. 20. Saskatchewan truckers raised over \$12,000 for Special Olympics and participants in three other provinces contributed to a national total of nearly \$100,000.

Photo by Ken Dumont

## Truckers answer the call

*Truckers in four provinces raise nearly \$100K in World's Largest Truck Convoy*

By Jan Westell

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Despite the high price of fuel, Canadian truck drivers in four provinces stuck to a commitment to seek financial pledges, clean up their rigs, and travel in the World's Largest Truck Convoy, an annual charitable event to raise money for Special Olympics.

In Winnipeg, 43 truck drivers participated in the event, which had the support of the Manitoba trucking industry, as well as local and regional police. The Manitoba convoy was scheduled one week before the national event of Saturday, Sept. 20, in order to coincide with National Trucking Week, according to the event organizer. Terry Hopkinson serves as the director of special projects for Special Olympics Manitoba, and was pleased with the financial results.

"We raised just over \$17,000

Continued on page 12 ■

## Keeping warm

What to consider when choosing a cab heater.

See page 50



### Inside This Issue...

- **Back on track:** The second EnergoTest is held in Quebec with a new slate of fuel-saving devices put to the test. Page 16
- **New challenges:** Environmental challenges create opportunities for fleets and shippers, according to speakers at the Same Roads...New Challenges conference. Pages 42-46
- **Keeping your cool:** A look at cab comfort systems. What's new and more importantly, what solution is best for you? We pose the question. Page 50
- **Playing Favourites:** A chance arrival by Bud puts an interesting spin on a conversation. Page 64

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## BACK ON TRACK

The second annual EnergoTest was held in Quebec to determine which aero devices actually work. We were there.

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## ROAD KNIGHTS

The Ontario Trucking Association is looking for truckers to serve as Road Knights over the next two years. We catch up with Doug Ladds to see what the experience meant to him.

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## NEW COUNCIL

Trucking in B.C. is challenging, thanks to its mountainous terrain. A newly-formed safety council aims to reduce the number of trucking-related deaths and injuries in that province.

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## FOCUS ON R&R

The annual OTR/SelecTrucks Canadian Retention Awards were presented at the sixth annual Canadian Recruiting and Retention conference. Do you recognize these winners?

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## monthly columns...



### SAFETY MEETINGS

*By Dylan Short*

Planning and executing safety meetings that are more than just lip service.

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### TIME TO TEAM UP

*By David Bradley*

Shippers and carriers need each other during this global credit crisis.

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### ALL ABOUT AUDITS

*Scott Taylor*

The number of audits is on the rise. What you need to know to protect yourself.

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### MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

*By Bruce Richards*

Don't drop association memberships during tough times. It's an investment.

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### RICE IS NICE

*By Karen Bowen*

Rice is a food staple in many parts of the world – and for good reason!

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### GREEN = GOLD

*By Joanne Ritchie*

Reducing fuel consumption is not only good for the world, but also the pocket-book.

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## feature of the month...

**GOING GREEN:** The Same Roads... New Challenges conference brought fleet managers, suppliers and shippers together to examine how implementing a green plan can improve the bottom line.

Find out what some of the greenest fleets are doing.

*pages 42-46*

## Question of the month

*What should be the priorities of our Prime Minister??*

*page 70*

## Mark Dalton in... Playing Favourites Part 2



*page 64*

## departments



**OEM/DEALER NEWS:** Larry Josie's poppy truck has a new Patriot APU donated by Simplicity Air.

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# CLASSES 8

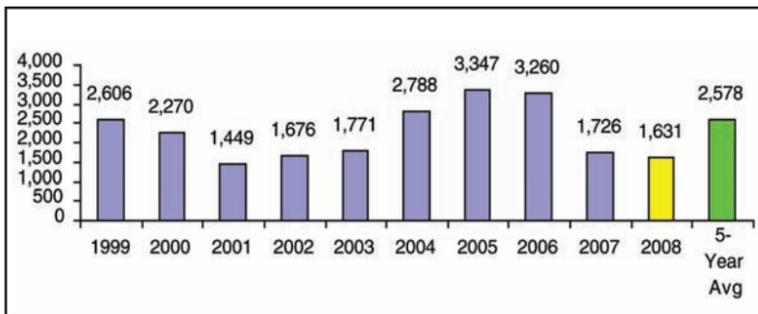
## TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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### Monthly Class 8 Sales - Aug 08

| OEM           | This Month   | Last Year    |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Freightliner  | 314          | 235          |
| Kenworth      | 270          | 467          |
| Mack          | 121          | 338          |
| International | 326          | 128          |
| Peterbilt     | 166          | 200          |
| Sterling      | 165          | 169          |
| Volvo         | 178          | 100          |
| Western Star  | 91           | 89           |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>1,631</b> | <b>1,726</b> |

### Historical Comparison - August 08 Sales



### Motor Vehicle Production to Jan 08

|               | Total Prodn   | For Export    |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| International | 4,444         | 3,729         |
| Paccar        | 4,659         | 3,964         |
| Sterling      | <b>17,156</b> | <b>14,563</b> |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>26,259</b> | <b>22,256</b> |

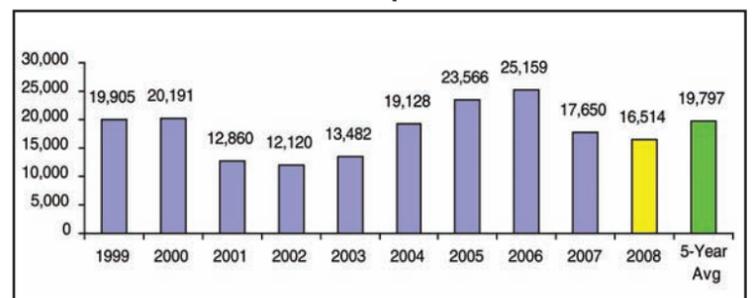
There were 1,631 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada this August, the second lowest monthly sales figure of the past decade. Only August in 2001 was worse. Sales were down about 100 units from last year's subpar performance and about 900 units off the five-year average. It should be noted, however, that five-year average includes the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006. It has been a roller coaster type of year. Sales started off quietly in the first quarter, rebounded in March (climbing above 2,000 units), 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. We've questioned previously if that pace could be sustained into the third and fourth quarter. It didn't last year and it's very unlikely it will this 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 August 08) by Province and OEM

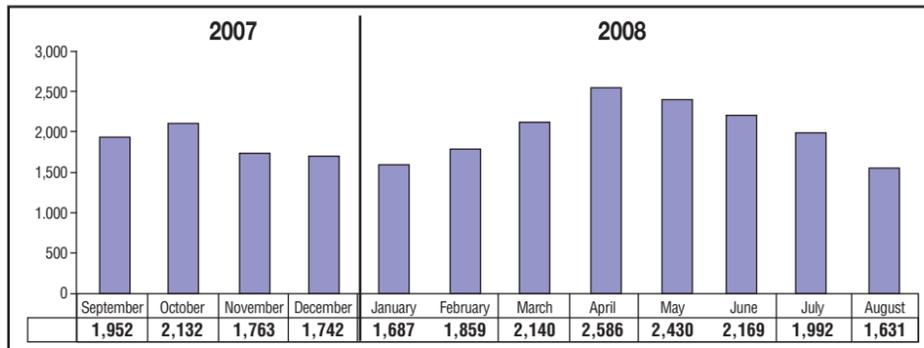
| OEM           | BC           | ALTA         | SASK       | MAN        | ONT          | QUE          | NB         | NS         | PEI      | NF         | CDA           |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|----------|------------|---------------|
| Freightliner  | 246          | 544          | 155        | 146        | 1,218        | 480          | 175        | 83         | 0        | 17         | 3,064         |
| Kenworth      | 375          | 981          | 149        | 127        | 550          | 530          | 25         | 46         | 0        | 0          | 2,783         |
| Mack          | 103          | 182          | 89         | 120        | 489          | 146          | 30         | 35         | 0        | 0          | 1,194         |
| International | 173          | 485          | 59         | 212        | 1,656        | 951          | 167        | 60         | 4        | 74         | 3,841         |
| Peterbilt     | 181          | 541          | 210        | 103        | 407          | 226          | 100        | 39         | 0        | 0          | 1,807         |
| Sterling      | 165          | 248          | 81         | 48         | 480          | 347          | 24         | 43         | 0        | 10         | 1,446         |
| Volvo         | 105          | 200          | 92         | 198        | 613          | 231          | 44         | 50         | 0        | 10         | 1,543         |
| Western Star  | 135          | 244          | 31         | 19         | 219          | 118          | 37         | 30         | 0        | 3          | 836           |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>1,483</b> | <b>3,425</b> | <b>866</b> | <b>973</b> | <b>5,632</b> | <b>3,029</b> | <b>602</b> | <b>386</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>114</b> | <b>16,514</b> |

### Historical Comparison - YTD



Class 8 truck sales year-to-date stand at 16,514, a bit more than 1,000 units off last year's admittedly slow pace and more than 2,500 units off the 5-year average for Canada. Despite an improvement in sales starting in the spring, the market has not been able to overcome its slow start this year and August sales were the second worst in a decade. In total, 2008 is 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 the now apparently spent North American economy does not bode well for hopes of a pickup in sales for the fourth quarter.

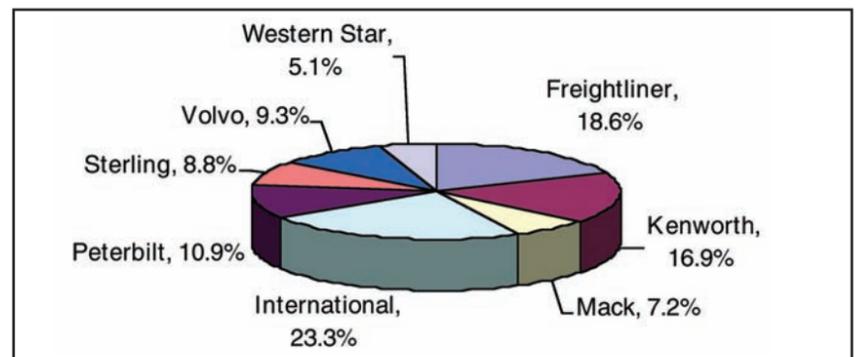
### 12 - Month Sales Trends



After four straight months of sales above the 2,000 units mark, truck sales dropped below 2,000 in July and even further in August. The drop-off in sales this August and July, combined with the economic meltdown in North America, make it unlikely 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.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

### Market Share Class 8 YTD



International appears to be entrenched in its new role as market share leaders as it continues to range significantly ahead of 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 very strong second and third quarter showings, International added to that lead and now controls 23.3% of the market with Freightliner falling back to 18.6% and Kenworth to 16.9%. Peterbilt is the only other truck manufacturer with a market share greater than 10%.

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# 'No Parking': MTO drops the ball with rest area closures

I'm getting an increasing number of frustrated calls from drivers who have no place to stop and sleep in Ontario.

The province is overhauling 23 rest areas, and in the meantime they're blocking off much-needed parking spaces.

So how exactly is a driver supposed to comply with hours-of-service regulations and ensure they get the rest they need while travelling through the province?

The most recent round of rest stop closures affected Dutton, Tilbury and Wooler.

On-road editor Harry Rudolfs makes a regular run between Toronto and Montreal, and he knows first-hand how important the Wooler Hill stop west of Trenton was, especially for drivers making that Montreal run. The parking lot there was always full, he notes.

The stretch between Toronto and Windsor is just as bad.

The few truck stops along the way fill up quickly come nightfall, leaving late arrivers without a spot to park when the music stops playing, usually fairly early in the evening.

Parking on the sides of the 401

## Editorial Comment

James Menzies



is not an option. And good luck finding a municipality that welcomes truck traffic and provides a place to park.

On pg. 23 Ingrid Phaneuf explores the issue of a shameful lack of truck parking in Ontario in more detail.

MTO media liaison Bob Nichols offers this explanation: "The Ministry of Transportation recognizes the need to provide all travellers, including truck drivers, with opportunities to stop and rest during their travel in order to find comfort and fight driver fatigue. Over the next five years, Ontario's 23 highway service centres along Highways 400 and 401 will be modernized to better serve both commercial and private motorists. In addition, there are numerous privately-operated service areas located at or near interchanges along our freeways that also provide rest opportuni-

ties for all travellers."

That's well and good, but the modernization of these facilities was poorly-planned.

Did nobody at the MTO give any thought to where truckers would park in the meantime?

Was it really necessary to put up barriers to prevent trucks from using the parking lots while work on the service centres proceeds?

And could the modernization of these facilities not have been staggered to avoid depriving truckers of all their usual options at the same time?

It looks like we have five years of this to look forward to, and that's assuming the government actually completes a project on time.

Normally, when I get a call from a reader who's experiencing a problem, I try my best to help them find a solution.

I've got no answers for this one. I guess the best you

can do is make note of the situation and plan your route accordingly.

Ontario's becoming a very uninviting place to drive truck.

Let's hope that in five years, the revamped service centres are damned well worth the wait. □

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



# Some glimmers of hope amid the doom and gloom

As I write this, the North American, Asian, and European stock markets have plunged yet again amid a massive selloff of stocks and escalating fears about not just a North American but a global recession.

I'm just back from the American Trucking Associations annual conference in New Orleans and I can honestly say I have never seen the Americans so down about their industry, their economy or their country – even after 9/11 they weren't this despondent.

A few days previous I was listening to Stephen Forbes on satellite radio saying "this is the closest to the abyss we've come since the Great Depression."

And the worst may be yet to come.

According to Mark Vitner, managing director and senior econo-

## Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis  
Editorial Director



mist with Wachovia Corp. and a panelist at ATA's popular *All Eyes on the Economy* session, all the credit problems in the economy have yet to surface and credit for business will not open up 'til sometime in 2009.

Not only are we already in recession, according to Vitner, but our economic troubles will be deep and long, much like the recessions of 1973-75 and 1981.

It took the economy 16 months to show any signs of recovery from those recessions and the toll on unemployment was considerable.

With such dark clouds on the horizon is there anything to feel good about? Actually, there is.

With economies worldwide slowing down, consumption of oil is falling like a stone and, as a result, oil prices are dropping.

While I was in New Orleans the price for crude had dropped below \$90; a few days later it was down to \$80. Vinter said that if it fell below \$70, he didn't know how far it would fall.

The industry's calls for massive improvements to the continent's infrastructure may also finally fall on receptive ears as governments on both sides of the border look for infrastructure projects to stimulate the economy.

And finally, capacity, already tight after a year of bankruptcies in the US, is going to get tighter as the economic malaise spreads to Canada and the tight credit makes

it difficult to impossible for new companies to enter the industry.

The number of trucks in the TL sector in the US shrank by 2.7% in 2007 and by 1.3% in the first six months of 2008.

And these trucks are not just being parked; they are being sold overseas, mainly to Nigeria and Russia.

(The latter purchased almost 6,000 trucks from the US in the first half of this year).

So when the North American economy does show the first signs of health, the upward pressure on rates will be substantial.

For the companies and owner/operators resilient enough to weather the next year or so, the recovery will be worth it. □

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

## Did you know?

### The career possibilities within trucking operations

Whether it's sports, business or politics, the reality is that if you look behind every successful organization you'll find a team of experts dedicated to running the show. Drivers and the many colorful company executives may be the most visible part of the trucking industry and certainly they get most of the media's attention. But trucking's position as the most efficient mode of transport also has a lot to do with the contributions of peo-

ple working behind the scenes in a variety of functions such as dispatch, safety and licensing.

A study conducted by the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute about a decade ago found 83% of drivers saw career advancement as important to them and two-thirds said they would be more satisfied with their job if it included a realistic career path. Our own research, conducted in partnership with CTHRC this summer, found widespread support among drivers for a career path that extended beyond a life behind the wheel.

For example, company drivers scored the statement "It makes sense to create a career path for drivers that includes other responsibilities beyond driving" a 4.12 out of 5 and the statement "I would

| Support Operations                  | Salary Range       | National Average |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Dispatcher                          | \$35,944-\$48,639  | \$42,278         |
| Safety & Loss Prevention Specialist | \$49,972-\$102,781 | \$78,571         |
| Sales & Fuel Tax Administrator      |                    | \$50,000         |
| Rate Clerk                          | \$35,423-\$46,610  | \$40,702         |
| Transportation/Pricing Analyst      |                    | \$50,000         |
| Licensing and Permitting Specialist | \$35,613-\$46,860  | \$41,261         |
| Traffic Manager                     | \$59,792-\$101,585 | \$86,256         |

support the creation of a career path for drivers" a 4.08 out of 5. And they scored the statement "A career path would make me feel more certain my employer cares about my long-term growth with the company" a 4.00 out of 5.

CHTRC provides job descriptions, educational requirements, training and salary information

about opportunities in a variety of areas beyond driving, including operations, cargo, maintenance and the allied trades. Included here is salary data (provided by CernoResearch) for different positions in support operations. □



IN BRIEF

## Ontario street racing law nets nearly 9,000 in first year

**TORONTO, Ont.** – A year after Ontario passed a law aimed at street racers that impounds the vehicles of drivers travelling 50 km/h over the speed limit, Ontario's top cop wonders if the law is enough of a deterrent.

While an average of 18 people are charged under the law each day, the OPP is alarmed at the number of repeat offenders.

"Some people still don't seem to get it," OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino said. "Four people have had their licence suspended and their vehicle impounded on the spot three times and another 42 have been charged twice. That's unacceptable to me and my officers and should be unacceptable to the public."

So far, 8,549 people have been charged under the law. The average age of drivers charged is 31, but 51.4% were 27 years old or younger. The most frequently occurring age of drivers charged under the law is just 21. The law also carries a mandatory fine of between \$2,000 and \$10,000.

Despite the alarmingly high number of repeat offenders, Fantino pointed out road fatalities are down 34.2% this year.

"That's a significant reduction and is related directly to the increased visibility and enforcement by the OPP," Fantino said. "Our goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries and to make our roads even safer than they are now. We'll do that one irresponsible driver at a time if necessary."

Ontario's street racing law was introduced after a rash of high-profile fatalities, one including trucker David Virgoe who selflessly drove his truck into a ditch to avoiding hitting other motorists. □

## Fuel costs, economy top concerns for trucking execs

**NEW ORLEANS, La.** – The cost of fuel and the US economy have displaced hours-of-service and the driver shortage as the two main concerns on the minds of US trucking executives.

That's according to this year's American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) survey, which polls some 5,000 trucking industry executives.

The Top 10 list of trucking industry worries included: the driver shortage and retention; government regulation; hours-of-service; congestion and tolls; and highway funding among others.

The survey also asked respondents for potential solutions to each of the challenges. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) will use that information to develop policies over the next year.

"The annual ATRI survey proves invaluable in helping us chart a course of action for the future," said incoming ATA Chairman Charles 'Shorty' Whittington. "And as ATA Chairman I will work to see that the industry-identified strategies are implemented."

"On every legislative and regulatory topic, issues come and go so quickly today," added Bill Graves, ATA president and CEO. "If we're not at the table with sound, science-based information and a common sense plan of action, then we're going to get left behind, and saddled with solutions that have no bearing on moving America's freight safely and efficiently." □

## Township of Langley greens its fleet

**LANGLEY, B.C.** – The Fraser Basin Council has awarded the Township of Langley a "silver rating" under its E3 Green Fleet Program for excellence in "greening" its vehicle fleets, making it the first municipality in B.C. to be recognized for sustainable fleet management.

The Township of Langley's key accomplishments in earning a silver rating under the E3 Fleet program include reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 14% between 2006 and 2007, and implementing new environmental practices, which include: training staff and raising awareness for employees about green practices; changing vehicle purchasing, operations and maintenance programs; introducing biodiesel to the fleet; replacing larger vehicles with Smart Cars and hybrids; and installing GPS tracking systems to increase route efficiency.

"The Township of Langley can be proud of its fleets," said David Marshall, the executive director for the Fraser Basin Council, who pre-

sented the award to the Township Council to formally recognize the silver rating.

"We are honoured to award a silver rating and to offer the Township our congratulations. This is the first time we've granted this rating to a municipality, and it's a reflection of Langley Township's leadership in fleet excellence."

E3 Fleet is a Canada-wide program established by the Fraser Basin Council, that assists public and private sector fleet vehicle operators meet green standards for performance.

The E3 Program, launched in 2006, recognizes achievements in green fleet management and performance through a rating system, the first of its kind for North American fleets.

Fleets are awarded an overall rating of bronze, silver, gold or platinum, based on several criteria, including: their fleet action plan, training and awareness, fuel data management, fuel efficiency, and greenhouse gas performance. □

## 18 Wheels of Christmas rolls on

**CALGARY, Alta.** – The 18 Wheels of Christmas campaign has launched once again, and organizers have their eyes on filling three trailers with food donations this season.

The campaign, organized by a couple of employees at Rosenau Transport, travels Alberta collecting food from transportation companies. The food is then distributed to local food banks. Last year, two 48-foot trailers were filled.

A specially-decorated trailer provided by Rosenau travels the province and attends special events through the season. It is adorned with the logos of companies that support the initiative.

This year, the food will be delivered to the Interfaith Food Bank on Dec. 19. To make a contribution, call Colleen or Shirley at 403-279-4204 or e-mail 18wheels\_xmas@rosenau.org. □

## West Vancouver truck blitz parks 13

**WEST VANCOUVER, B.C.** – Nearly half of all the commercial trucks inspected at a recent West Vancouver roadside blitz were ordered off the road for defects that police said should have been detected during the pre-trip inspection.

The safety check discovered that some trucks didn't have brake fluid, some had bald tires or tires with loose nuts, and others were considered overloaded. Thirteen of the 30 trucks inspected were ordered off the road. These ranged from heavy trucks to smaller landscaping trucks. Police served 23 provincial violation tickets and 26 bylaw tickets.

Sgt. Tim Kravjanski of the West Vancouver police traffic section told local media he was disappointed by the number of trucks that failed the multi-agency blitz, which included police and inspectors from the provincial commercial vehicle safety and enforcement branch. □

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# Somber mood at US trucking gathering

## Trucking execs fear they've yet to hit bottom

■ Continued from page 1

ness still has some residual strength, the domestic economy was in a downturn even before the much publicized events on Wall Street of the past month.

Adding insult to injury, the Dow Jones on the morning of his speech had plummeted 700 points and lost 1,500 points, or 14.5%, over the past five and half trading days, despite the government's approval of a massive Wall Street bailout.

He said that unlike the two most recent recessions, which were quite mild, this recession will be more like the recession of 1973-75 (which was also centred on real estate problems and lasted 16 months before recovery set in rather than the usual nine months) and that of 1981 (which saw unemployment rise to its highest level since the Depression, lasted a long time and took the economy several years to return to its pre-recessionary strength).

"We're not going to lose a decade but we are going to lose half a decade," was his dour prediction, adding he expected the US unemployment rate to rise to 8% and GDP to grow just 0.3% next year, with the next nine months being "very soft."

He explained that all the credit problems in the economy have yet to surface and predicted that credit for business will not open up until sometime in 2009.

"The bailout bill needed to be done two weeks ago to have done any good. Now it is just preventing things from just getting much worse," Vitner said.

Costello acknowledged his hopes earlier this year that the economy would rebound have been dashed.

His hopes for recovery were based on the fact that data was not showing a dramatic fall in truck tonnage similar to what happened before the last recession.

But he conceded that economic activity, instead of being dashed by one momentous event, has faced a "death of 1,000 cuts."

Those would include issues such as the lack of business confidence after the failure of so many Wall Street institutions, the expectation of much tighter credit conditions for business, the collapse of American consumer confidence,

political uncertainty, the anticipated resurgence of regulation and the downwardly spiraling economy, all at a time of high energy costs.

But even before the current crisis there have been trends that have been hurting trucking, such

as the drop in total freight tonnage consumed per person as packages get smaller (a direct result of a consumer economy increasingly being driven by electronic gadgetry - cell

phones, cameras, computers, iPods, etc.) that are being designed smaller and smaller and shipper efforts to reduce packaging to cut transportation costs in response to high fuel surcharges and the need to reduce their carbon footprint.

"You have to prepare for this cycle to get worse before it can get better," Costello counseled, soberly adding that "until we can really assess what's going on we can't assess truck tonnage. It's going to remain volatile."

But the pain won't be felt to the same degree across the entire

trucking industry, Costello said. The tank trucking business is not doing too bad, nor is the reefer business.

The flatbed business is particularly hard hit because of the collapse of the housing market and the dry van sector will get worse, he said.

And small carriers, unless they are in a niche business with good clients, will suffer.

Vitner further pointed out that 56 cents of every consumer dollar is now going to essentials such as housing, energy and food which leaves retailers like Home Depot fighting with clothing stores for the remaining change.

When moderator Stuart Varney from Fox News informed the panelists the Democrats were considering earlier that morning a second bailout package that would include investments in infrastructure as an economic stimulant, both Costello and Dr. Ruane pounced on the opportunity to vent long-held frustrations.

Investments in infrastructure were at the core of the growth in the US economy from 1950 to 1970 and can be again, Dr. Ruane said. In fact, it's appalling just how much the infrastructure has been neglected in recent decades.

One quarter of the bridges in the US are either obsolete or structurally deficient while more than 17% of the paving is considered to be of poor to mediocre quality.

Continued on page 10 ■

**'You have to prepare for this cycle to get worse before it can get better.'**

Bob Costello, ATA

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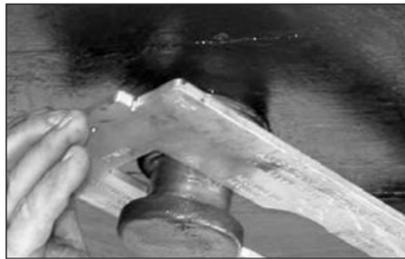
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**The good news? Lower fuel prices and shrinking capacity**

■ **Continued from page 8**

Nearly \$500 billion would need to be invested just to address the backlog of needed repairs, Dr. Ruane said.

When Varney asked if such spending is realistic considering the US has just committed to shelling out more than \$700 billion on the bailout and faces a trillion dollar deficit, Dr. Ruane countered that the current economic crisis should be seen "as an incentive to do something, not just sit there and do nothing," emphasizing the stimulative effect infrastructure spending can have on the economy.

**Infrastructure deficit**

He also stressed that the US is falling behind its international competitors when it comes to infrastructure investments. For example, he said, while China will add 53,000 miles of road by 2020 and India 25,000, the US will only add 1,130.

And while the emerging markets spend about 6% of their GDP on infrastructure, the US spends just 2%.

"These emerging markets are going to surpass us. It's a horror story," Dr. Ruane said.

Costello chimed in that infrastructure deficiencies may lead manufacturers to resort to the costly practice of holding larger amounts of inventory once again because they can't count on timely deliveries.

But Dr. Ruane said privatization is not the magic bullet for infrastructure projects but rather only part of the solution.

He characterized privatization of infrastructure as a "weapon of mass distraction" for politicians who are unwilling to put in the work necessary to find the funds –

through raising taxes, charging user fees, etc. – and just decide to hand entire projects over to the private sector.

"We need all the solutions at the table," Dr. Ruane said.

Vitner disagreed, arguing that the US trails the rest of the world in privatizing infrastructure projects. "I think privatization has been sold short," he said.

The panelists identified two more glimmers of hope for trucking executives: dropping energy costs (oil had just fallen below \$90 a barrel) and shrinking capacity, which will eventually lead to an upward push on rates.

**Global slowdown**

Vitner said China's traditional double-digit GDP growth will drop to about 3% while India will drop from 8% to 2% and Russia will have negative growth.

"Consumption of oil is falling like a stone. That's why oil prices are dropping. If (the price of crude) drops to \$70, I don't know how far it will fall," he said, adding that he had previously predicted oil prices falling to \$70 per barrel but that was before the recent calamitous economic events.

Costello meanwhile said that capacity in the trucking market will become very tight once the economy returns to health.

He said the number of trucks in the TL sector in the US shrank by 2.7% in 2007 and by 1.3% in the first six months of 2008.

And these trucks are not just being parked; they are being sold overseas, mainly to Nigeria and Russia. (The latter purchased almost 6,000 trucks from the US in the first half of this year).

"This capacity is not being idled, it's gone," he emphasized. □

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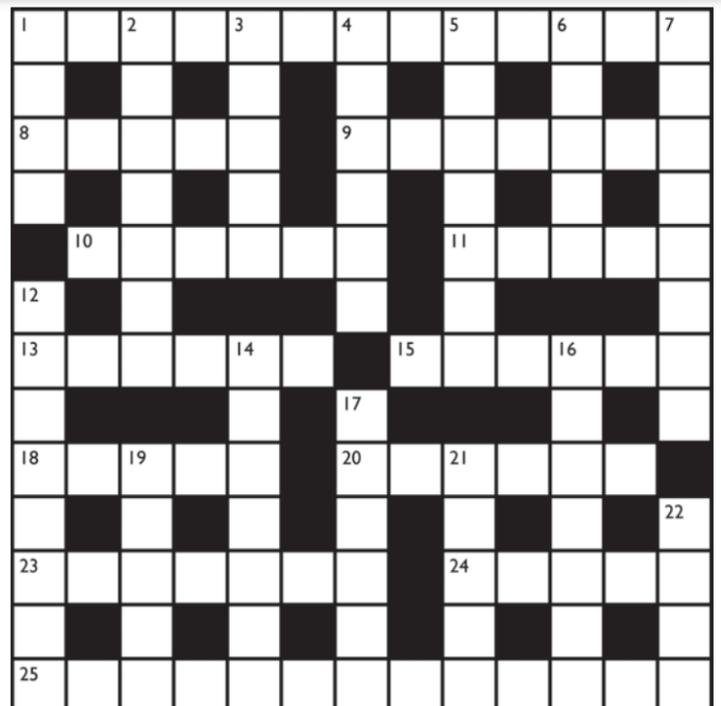
**THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**Across**

1. Controversial engine-control devices (5,8)
8. Ohio's "Rubber City"
9. Three-point seatbelt predecessor (3,4)
10. Historic maker of London's black cabs
11. International LoneStar design description
13. City-street sign, sometimes (3,3)
15. Ontario city with GM plant
18. Second O in used-truck-ad's OBO
20. Sterling trucks tagline, "\_\_\_\_\_ . Every Day" (3,3)
23. Narrow, country-road description (3,4)
24. I-95's southern terminus
25. Words seen on Texas plates (4,4,5)

**Down**

1. In-bond-trailer attachment
2. On the road, in other words (2,5)
3. Tim Hortons offering
4. Truck-stop no-no, sometimes
5. Goods hauled into Canada
6. CD-player button
7. Ontario city with Sterling plant (2,6)
12. Engine lubricant (5,3)
14. Pneumatic-suspension components
16. Home of "Heart of Dixie" plates
17. Smokey's radar gun, slangily
19. Defunct A/C refrigerant
21. Stretched cars with bars, briefly
22. Fuzzy rear-view-mirror dangles



Answers on page 69

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# 'Not sure anyone knows if we've bottomed out': ATA chairman

**By Lou Smyrlis**  
**NEW ORLEANS, La.** – For a former politician, Bill Graves, chairman and CEO of the American Trucking Associations, was uncharacteristically undiplomatic in his state of the industry address here recently as he assessed the outlook for the industry. The former two-term governor of Kansas said he considered following the pattern of most state of the industry addresses and focusing on the positives achieved during the year but abandoned that plan because he knew "the facts would still be the facts."

"Things are not going well for our industry," he said, which reflected the somber mood of many of the executives attending the ATA's annual conference this year.

He added that high fuel prices, a slumping economic climate, a credit crunch, collapse of consumer confidence, the possibility of more government regulation and political uncertainty are making for a "recipe for bad times and I'm not sure anyone knows if we've bottomed out" or how long it would take for a serious recovery to take root.

He did, however, stress that the industry has faced crisis before, and innovation has allowed it to survive.

"The very nature of our business demands that we continually evolve... There is an entirely new face to the industry compared to 25 years ago," he said, pointing to recent initiatives to push for a 65 mph national speed limit, speed limiter legislation in trucks, idling reduction strategies, and supporting the SmartWay partnership with government, all in an attempt to release the chock hold high fuel costs are having on the industry. Graves also said

there are lessons about resiliency to be learned from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which left 80% of New Orleans under water three years ago.

"Three years ago nobody would have dreamed we would be meeting here today," he pointed out. Three years ago, the ATA's meeting place, the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center situated near the riverside, served as a temporary shelter for about 20,000 displaced residents after the Superdome overflowed.

Graves said the lessons learned from Katrina, and which can be applied to the handling of all crises, are:

1. The need to have a plan for disasters, because preparation is key;
2. Teamwork is central to getting things done;
3. The importance of infrastructure and the dire consequences of ignoring it.

On that last point he stressed that Katrina revealed just how outdated the US infrastructure really is and said changing that is the ATA's most important challenge.

"The rest of the world is catching up to us and will soon surpass the US in infrastructure investment," he pointed out. □

## US truck tonnage drops sharply

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – US truck tonnage has suffered this summer, with the sharpest decline since March recorded in August.

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) truck tonnage index showed a 1.6% month-to-month drop in August.

It also adjusted its July figures to show a 0.9% drop, a sharper decline than the originally-reported 0.3%.

The August results are the lowest seasonally-adjusted results since November, 2007, ATA reports.

However, the index was still 2.6% higher in August than August, 2007, which marks 10 consecutive year-over-year gains. Year-to-date, US truck tonnage is up 3.4% over last year.

"Make no mistake about it, freight volumes are weakening," ATA chief economist Bob Costello noted.

He added the year-over-year growth is more an indication of the softness of 2007 than a strong 2008. □

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| <p><b>PETERBILT 387</b><br/>                 2004 – Raised Roof, Cat C15 475 HP, 24.5 rubber, 13 spd., 3.90 ratio, 12 &amp; 40 axles, 1,200,000 km <b>\$23,000</b></p>   | <p><b>FREIGHTLINER FLD120</b><br/>                 2000 – 70" Flat Top, Cat C12 430 HP, 24.5 rubber, 13 spd., 3.90 ratio, 12 &amp; 40 axles, 1,000,000 km. <b>\$15,000.</b></p>  | <p><b>INTERNATIONAL 9400i</b><br/>                 International 9400i<br/>                 2003 – 70" Raised Roof, Cat C15 475 HP, 24.5 rubber, 13 spd., 3.90 ratio, 12 &amp; 40 axles, 1,155,000 km. <b>\$17,500.</b></p> |

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# Fuel prices, economy reduce participation but not spirit

## Continued from page 1

net on the event – up almost 400% over the last time we held the event,” said Hopkinson, who indicated that the community of Winnipeg wholeheartedly supported the second annual convoy. Support came from many organizations, and included an RCMP escort and assistance from the Winnipeg city police and the CN/CP police, which all helped control traffic.

“They were just terrific,” added Hopkinson, of the police support.

For his part in raising \$3,750 in pledges for Special Olympics, Mike McFadden of TransX became the lead driver, an outstanding contribution, according to Hopkinson.

The Manitoba convoy travelled 62 km on a perimeter highway route, with trucks gathering for a

final celebration at the Red River Exhibition Park, where a barbecue was held, sponsored by Goodyear Tire. Athletes and drivers mixed easily, including participating in a heated soccer game that resulted in a 2-2 tie.

“The athletes just loved it,” added Hopkinson.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, Special Olympics Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Trucking Association, and the Law Enforcement Torch Run coordinated their own compassionate army of 42 truck drivers in the province’s second annual World’s Largest Truck Convoy, which raised a total of \$12,500.

The convoy travelled down Hwy. 11, from Saskatoon to Regina. The convoy was welcomed in Regina by the Special Olympics community, including athletes,



**BONJOUR!:** Some special guests help celebrate Quebec’s version of the World’s Largest Truck Convoy.

families, friends, colleagues, law enforcement officers, and other organizations and companies that make up the Saskatchewan trucking industry.

A special celebration hosted by Peterbilt included a barbecue and an awards ceremony to recognize participating truckers, and the

support of the trucking industry.

The lead truck position for the Saskatchewan convoy was awarded to Ed Wright of Kindersley Transport who raised \$1,977 in pledges. Q-line Trucking came in a close second to Kindersley Transport. While trucking industry registration was down somewhat for the Saskatchewan convoy, the event organizer considers that the high cost of fuel may have caused some reluctance to participate.

“It may have been a bit of a factor this year, and we probably lost a few trucks because of the fuel cost,” says Paul Perry, who works in the safety and compliance department of the Jay’s Group of Companies.

In Ontario, Lynn Miller from Special Olympics Ontario reports that its convoy raised an unsurpassed contribution of \$50,000. Registration was down in that province, but contributions were up.

“Our trucks were down from last year, but I would not necessarily say that it’s primarily due to the cost of fuel,” she said. “Having said that, our registration is down, (but) the revenue generated by pledges per driver was up considerably. The top three fundraising drivers this year raised almost \$25,000.”

The city of Trois-Rivieres, Que. hosted its second annual World’s Largest Truck Convoy, according to Justine Marchessault, the coordinator of communications and special events for Special Olympics Quebec. A total of 118 trucks participated in the event, an increase from 102 trucks that took part last year, raising \$18,500.

However, Special Olympics New Brunswick withdrew from the event, mainly due to a lack of volunteers, and one western province declined to participate this year, for economic reasons.

“B.C. didn’t hold a convoy because the high cost of fuel was deterring trucking companies from registering in the convoy,” says Danielle Rana, the manager of fund development for Special Olympics B.C. Alberta also sat this one out.

The total Canadian funds raised for Special Olympics from the four provinces was \$98,000, money that stays within the community where it was raised.

Norm Schneiderhan, a corporal with the Orange County Florida Sheriff’s Department, created the World’s Largest Truck Convoy. He was inspired by the powerful impact Special Olympics has had on his life through his participation in the Law Enforcement Torch Run, as well as his family’s involvement with the trucking industry.

“While we are still gathering the participation and donation totals from the various Truck Convoy events across the US and Canada, we have really been encouraged with the preliminary results,” said Schneiderhan. “Some programs reported record donations. Although we are all facing challenges with the current economic situation and gas prices, truck

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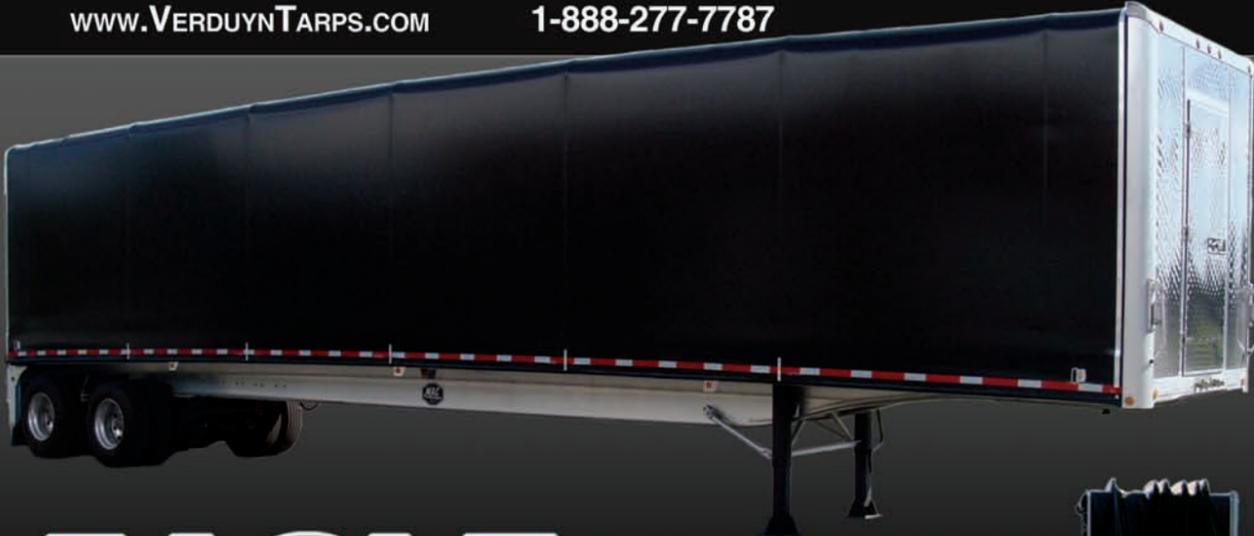
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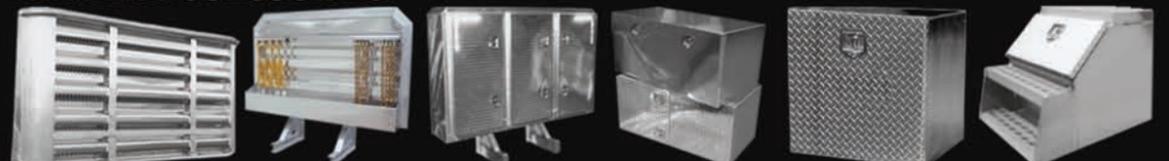
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# APTA Safety Council has strong family roots

By Carroll McCormick

**TRURO, N.S.** – Safety is practically a family business for a Truro, Nova Scotia family. It began when a career trucking industry gentleman by the name of Jack Cotterill helped found the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association Safety Council in 1980. Twenty-eight years later, his son John is in his third year as its chairman, and his daughters Kellie and Jamie pitch in at the Safety Council-hosted truck rodeo.

“It is kinda cool that my father was involved in the creation of the Safety Council 25 years ago and then later I am its chair,” says John, who’s day job is manager, safety and driver services with Clarke Road Transport in Halifax. Before becoming Safety Council chair, John was its vice-chair for two years and secretary-treasurer

for two years prior to that.

Jack came from a family of dump truck drivers in Grand Bend, Ont., spent some time as a driver and then linked up with CN in the years when it owned trucking companies around Canada, John recalls.

“In the late 1970s my father was running Husband’s Transport in London, Ontario. Then CN transferred him to Truro in 1979 to be regional manager for Eastern Transport. APTA did not have a safety council at that time and he saw the need to establish one,” he recalls

Jack did see its creation, but he died in February 1983 at the age of 38 while hauling firewood into the house with John. His funeral included a procession down Highway 102, accompanied by Eastern Transport trucks. Jack was

buried back in Ontario.

Still a Truro resident, John has been with Clarke Road for a year and a half. For 13 years before that he was with Advantage Personnel in Halifax, supplying straight truck and tractor-trailer drivers to companies in the Atlantic Provinces. He also drove cross-border for three years and locally for a year.

From the outset, the Safety Council took on major responsibilities, including co-ordinating the provincial and national truck rodeos, selecting the winner of the then Mack Driver of the Year award and carrying out safety blitzes.

Today the Safety Council’s mandate includes recommending and promoting safety in the trucking industry, promoting and co-ordinating provincial driving cham-

pionships and driver appreciation days and co-ordinating and hosting training seminars for safety professionals to ensure up to date compliance with regulatory issues.

The Safety Council gives the trucking industry a voice on matters such as hours-of-service, weights and measures and drugs and alcohol, including between Canadian and US departments of transportation.

“You need a strong voice when dealing with the government. Often we are asked to attend events hosted by the government, for example, load securement meetings,” John explains. “The Safety Council’s presence brings some reality into government bodies. It is a good two-way relationship.” The Safety Council also keeps APTA members up to date on government/industry business.

The Safety Council lets the government know about highway safety issues, such as sites of concern. “A good example is in Halifax where there are really sharp turns. Based on our advice, engineers cleared a lot of bush around some ramps so drivers can see them,” John says.

The Safety Council still carries out safety blitzes, most recently at Murray’s Truck Stop in Woodstock on Sept. 9-10, in conjunction with National Safety Week.

The Council has revitalized the Atlantic Provinces Driving Championships, which, according to John, had badly petered out in the past 10 years. Referred to as simply ‘the rodeo’ more often than not, winners go on to compete at the National Professional Truck Driving Championships, which the Safety Council has hosted four times.

“The rodeo is a huge event, with about 80 entrants. Among the activities, Clarke Road bought a remote-controlled tractor-trailer and kids get to maneuver it through a mini-course. Kellie runs the mini-event every year,” John says.

Three years ago the Safety Council started an annual cross-border safety seminar with the Maine Motor Safety Council.

“We bring in keynote speakers and discuss best practices. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration speaks at it and government bodies from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick speak at it,” John says.

The Safety Council also hosts certified director of safety courses and accident investigation training for trucking companies’ safety officers. The highest profile and perhaps most revolutionary activity, John says, is the relationship the Safety Council has developed in the last few years with the departments of transportation in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Maine. “It has really begun to pay off and it has made drivers more comfortable dealing with them.”

John’s work has helped maintain a strong and relevant Safety Council. “The Safety Council is,” he says, “the persistent voice that ensures that drivers stay safe.” □

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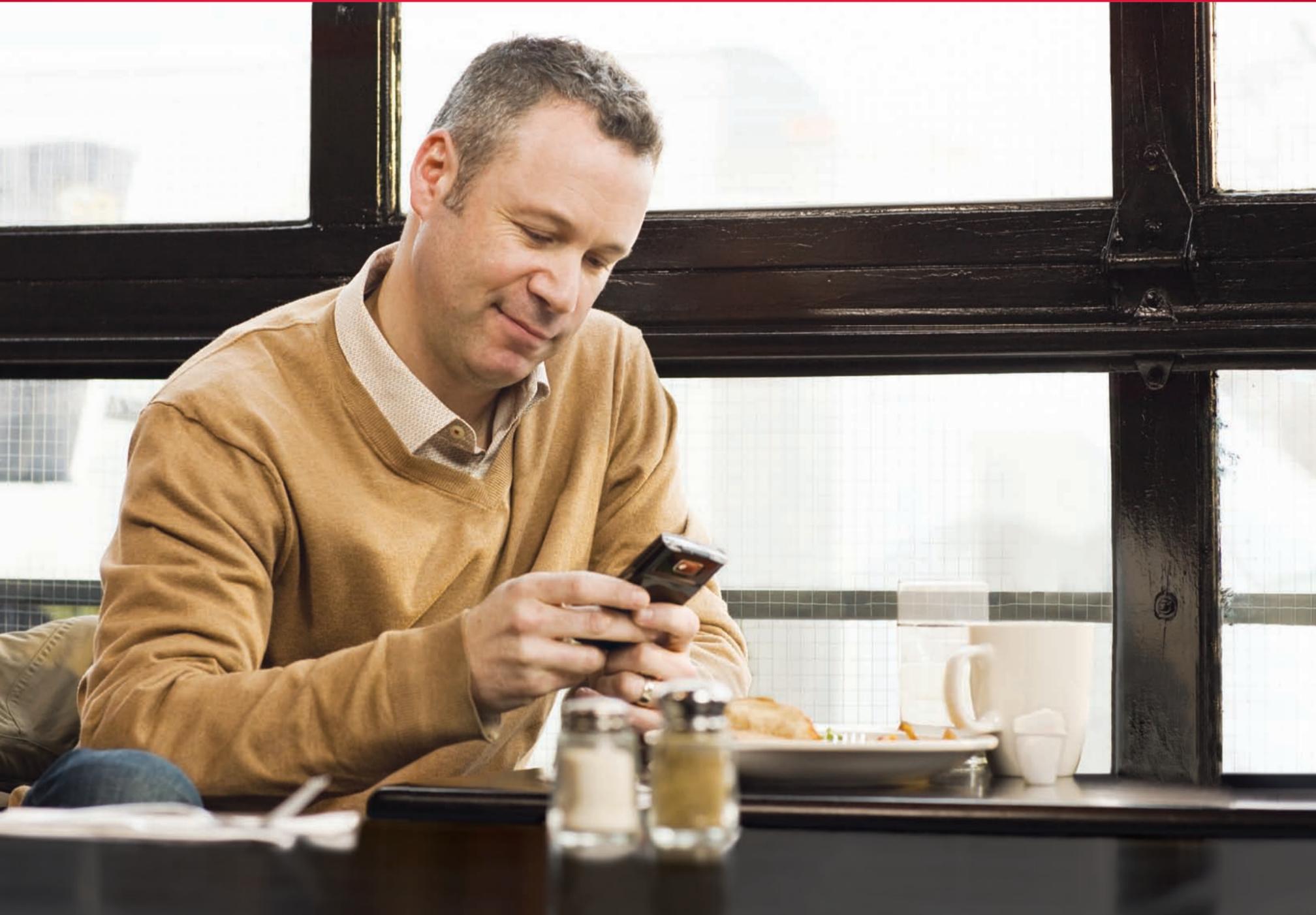
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**READY TO ROLL:** Two types of trailer skirts and a TrailerTail wait for sun and their turn on the track during the recent EnergoTest. Photo by Carroll McCormick

# A day at the track

## *EnergoTest 2008 evaluates fuel-saving technologies*

**By Carroll McCormick**

**BLAINVILLE, Que.** – The rigs were at it again this September, tooling around Transport Canada's test track in Blainville, Quebec equipped with various hardware that might reduce fuel consumption, including trailer skirts, energy-efficient tires and an exotic something called a "corrected paramagnetic precession fuel processor."

This year's trials, with a dozen products and that many more new practices that fleets wanted to try on the researchers' list, was a follow-up to the hugely-successful EnergoTest 2007.

Fleets, with their resources, teamed up with FPInnovations-Feric Division, with their organizational and research expertise, plus supportive federal and Quebec government agencies, to test products that promised to reduce fuel consumption.

FPInnovations formalized last year's inspired effort with the creation of Project Innovation Transport (PIT).

It has six fleet partners already – Bison, SLH, Bourassa, Robert, Herve Lemieux and the SAQ (Quebec's version of a liquor commission) – with more poised to sign on.

Last year, Transport Canada donated the track time and kept the media away.

This year, PIT paid the piper and called the tunes; the test campaign cost about \$250,000.

Eighty per cent of that came from the private sector, underscoring the value of fleets pooling their resources around PIT.

PIT declared a VIP day on Sept. 9 and *Truck News* was at the track with the PIT team, drivers, fleet representatives and even the inventor of the Aero-Tail, a trailer extension that reduces



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aerodynamic drag.

Inventor Lee Telnack recalls his brainstorm in a snowstorm: "The inspiration came during a road trip. We were in a bad snowstorm and driving so close to a tractor-trailer we could only see the tail lights. I could see the vortices in the snow and we were being pulled toward the trailer."

Realizing that it cost the truck energy to pull his car, or even just air, he set out to build a device that would let vortices slide off the back of the trailer.

The most recent version, made of tubular aluminum and rigid plastic, lies tight against the trailer doors at low or no speed and can be folded out of the way for cargo access.

At speed, it opens automatically. Last year a competing device, called TrailerTail, yielded a 5.1% improvement in fuel economy.

VIP day was rainy and Feric had delayed the Aero-Tail trial 'til better weather came; the strict fuel consumption test rules forbids slopping around the track in the rain.

Fortunately, some PIT members had requested less formal fuel consumption comparisons of some engines: the 15-litre, 485-hp Detroit DD15; the 15-litre, 565-hp International ProStar with Cummins ISX; and the 13-litre, 435-hp Mercedes MBE 4000.

So even though the equipment being trialed was idle, we did watch trucks zoom around the 6.4-kilometre oval track.

Fun fact: Just as the drivers hit the 1.6-kilometre long, 38-degree steep curves at 100 kilometres an hour, they must take their hands off the steering wheels – for the entire curve.

No wonder the hot lunches tasted so good and the country air smelled so sweet between trials.

Itmar Levine, the director of maintenance with Bison Transport in Winnipeg, flew in to watch some of the trials and extend his knowledge of the benefits of the Freight Wing trailer skirt, which reduced fuel consumption by 7.2% in EnergoTest 2007. Those results gave Bison the confidence to begin progressively installing Freight Wings on 850 trailers, starting last year, under a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement with Transport Canada's eco-FREIGHT program.

"The drivers tell you 'What a difference'," says Levine, who also notes, "The windier it is, the better the results you get with the skirts."

This year Levine wanted to see what kind of fuel savings Freight Wing might obtain when installed on both 53-foot trailers in a long combination vehicle configuration. "We were interested to see that if we got a 4-5% fuel improvement with one trailer, what would you get with two?"

Three ArvinMeritor representatives – two from Ontario and one from Kentucky – were on-hand as well.

"We are here to eyeball the situation and consider technologies we could bring in next year," says Brampton-based district sales manager Daniel Gagne. One idea

for a trial he mentions concerns the Meritor Tire Inflation System. "We would like to see how MTIS works in preventing loss of fuel efficiency."

Rob Jokai, transportation technician with FPInnovations Feric in Vancouver also flew in to assist with the trials.

"I will be working with PIT in Western Canada, so it will be good to get some first-hand experience with PIT here, and with the tests. We are trying to get more representation through the whole of Canada for PIT," he said.

PIT partners benefit first from the trial results and expertise within PIT to apply the appropriate technologies.

However, PIT will make public selected results from EnergoTest 2008 at CamExpo in Quebec City in November, and expects to publish all of the results sometime next spring. □

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## Quebec roads and bridges safe: Deputy Minister

**MONTREAL, Que.** – Transports Quebec says the province's roads and overpasses are safe, despite claims to the contrary by some engineers in the province.

The proclamation came during a news conference recently, two years after the collapse of a Quebec overpass killed several motorists.

In October, Michel Gagnon, president of the Quebec Association of Engineers, questioned the safety of infrastructure in the province.

"I would say that the situation is worse than before," the *Montreal Gazette* quoted him as saying.

"You have more regions than before, but you are not in a position to control them. There's a lot of work still to do."

Denys Jean, Deputy Transport Minister, downplayed the concerns, claiming "The risk is reduced to a minimum."

He pointed out the number of engineers working in Quebec has increased from 327 to 513 between 1993 and 2008. □



**SAFE?:** The Quebec transport ministry refuted claims by engineers that its roads and bridges may not be safe.

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# Knights in shining iron

## OTA Road Knights squad tirelessly promotes industry, safe driving habits

**By Jan Westell**  
**GUELPH, Ont.** – Becoming an ambassador for the Ontario Trucking Association’s Road Knights program, was a great opportunity for Doug Ladds to learn effective public relations skills, such as speaking in front of a crowd, becoming relaxed in front of a camera, and responding to questions at public gatherings.

But more so, the truck driver who works for MacKinnon Transport in Guelph, Ont., has appreciated the opportunity to promote the trucking industry’s stellar safety record, and its own safety initiative – the OTA’s ‘Sharing the Road,’ outreach program.

He particularly enjoys talking to young people who are about to get their licence, and are eager to start driving.

The professional driver realizes that he has a captive audience, and he willingly advises about

courtesy on the road, patience, and risky traffic situations.

“That’s the rewarding part to me,” says Ladds, who has been recognized in Canada and the US, for logging over 3.2 million collision-free kilometres in 23 years on the road, and is enthusiastic about spreading a message about the merits of safe driving.

“If one person gets this message and it saves one life, that’s proof positive that programs like this are working.”

The Road Knights get a variety of questions from the non-commercial driving public, about “sharing the road” with trucks. A

common theme is how to pass a commercial vehicle.

It can be an intimidating process for a new driver, especially on a rainy day when there’s a blinding spray from the truck’s 18 wheels, indicates Ladds.

“Just keep going, because you’re going to run out of it, just as soon as you get to the front of the truck,” he advises.

Ladds also discusses the four major blind spots on tractor-trailer: the front, both sides and the rear. The Road Knight recommends that when passing, “pass with intent,” after pulling into the left lane for a passing manoeuvre,

and subsequently “complete the action,” a process that may take another two seconds to follow through on.

This not only gets the passing vehicle out of the blind spot, Ladds suggest that there may be other unexpected safety considerations.

“If you come out halfway and stop, mid-section; it really puts more risk into that task than anything,” he says.

“You may not be seen (by the truck driver) if a deer jumps out, and it (requires) an evasive manoeuvre. The driver checks his clear spots right away, but if you’re in a blind spot, that’s going to be harder to pick up.”

When visiting schools, the Road Knights often take a tractor-trailer for younger students to explore and learn about the danger of playing near large commercial vehicles.

The PR specialist/truck driver also talks to adults in various service clubs, sometimes on the same topic, but with extra vehicles to prove his point, including, on occasion, a seemingly hard-to-miss yellow school bus.

“I’ll show them blind spots,” he says. “I’ll put cars (or the bus) behind the rigs, and they won’t be able to see them from the perspective of the driver. It really hits home.”

The transport spokesperson gets the same level of curiosity from the adults as he does from the younger students that he meets on his speaking tour, only with more educated and sometimes romanticized queries from the former.

The adults often ask about CB radio use, onerous long-haul schedules, and road safety situations that involve the motoring public – all questions that Ladds appreciates.

“It’s a genuine interest in the lifestyle of the drivers,” he says, adding that some questions are frequently posed, such as whether it’s advisable to follow a truck during a snow storm.

“They all want to know if that’s a practicality, if it’s safe to follow a truck driver,” says Ladds, who initially warns about tailgating, but he can understand why somebody would want to follow a commercial vehicle in foul weather.

“We have a lot of professional drivers who know what they’re doing. They know when to stay on, and when to come off the road. It’s a personal decision for everybody. If they’re not comfortable in a snow storm, then they shouldn’t be out there risking their well-being,” he says.

One fact that Ladds frequently emphasizes, is the stellar safety record of the trucking industry. He points to statistics that indicate that only 3% of all accidents in Ontario have involved the trucking industry.

Yet, he notes that a trucking incident will typically cause a media sensation, because it may disrupt traffic for an entire day and cause a spill.

Ladds indicates that the greatest problem on the road today is a

Continued on page 20 ■

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# Recruitment underway for 2009/2010 Road Knights team

■ Continued from page 18

lack of courtesy and patience, an unnecessary way of operating a vehicle, considering that he has been driving a truck that's restricted to 100 km/h, for the past 14 years. Yet despite this speed restriction, Ladds says he has never had a problem delivering his load on time. He suggests that other drivers should plan ahead to arrive at their destination on time, and without haste.

"People are impatient," he says. "They just need to sit back and relax and do the job that has to be done."

The veteran truck driver also talks about the expensive consequence of aggressive driving: lower fuel economy, extensive wear and tear on brakes, and higher overall maintenance costs.

"It's a domino effect, right



**INDUSTRY PRIDE:** Road Knight Doug Ladds (centre) has spread the road safety message far and wide, including to politicians such as MPP Monte Kwinter (left) and former Transport Minister Donna Cansfield (right).

down the line," he says.

Challenger Motor Freight based in Cambridge, Ont., has been a supporter of the Road Knights

program since its inception in 1995, and is represented on the Road Knights team by one of its own truck drivers, Mike Hahn.

Dan Einwechter, chairman and CEO of Challenger Motor Freight, indicates that the transport industry has been very good to him, and his longstanding support of the Road Knights program is an appropriate way to return his good fortune.

"I think that the Road Knights is a wonderful way for us to give back something," says Einwechter.

"At the same time as we're giving back, we get something significant. Our drivers individually get recognition. Our company gets recognition, for obviously playing some role in his safe driving, his performance and appearance. We get recognition from our peers, the general public, and our clients."

Einwechter also appreciates the positive public relations benefit that the trucking industry earns from the Road Knights' service.

"We have so many issues that are negative between the motoring public and trucks, that it's just one small way for us to try and help dispel any negative opinions or beliefs that people have," he says.

"These guys do such a good job. If you watch them when they go out to service groups, to schools, they're as passionate as I am about the message. They're great ambassadors for the industry, they're great ambassadors for the company and it helps put a different perspective on what the industry is all about when people have a chance to face these guys."

The 10 members of the Road Knights' team are all professional truck drivers who compete for the position based on their driving and safety record, and ultimately are appointed by the OTA.

The team members are all employed as full-time transport drivers and step out of the cab several days each month to meet the public. During the two-year term, Road Knights meet with community groups, business associations, driving schools, seniors organizations and service clubs, to help improve highway safety and increase awareness of the trucking industry's contribution to the provincial economy.

In addition to educating community organizations about road safety, Road Knights promote career opportunities within the trucking industry.

The Road Knights also meet with truck driving schools, to emphasize the importance of safety, professionalism and courtesy.

The OTA provides training on public speaking and media relations and also provides any required materials.

The OTA is currently seeking Road Knights for its 2009-2010 team.

If you are an OTA member and know a suitable candidate, nominate them at the OTA Web site ([www.ontruck.org](http://www.ontruck.org)) or contact Rebecka Torn at 416-249-7401 ext. 224 or by e-mail at [Rebecka.torn@ontruck.org](mailto:Rebecka.torn@ontruck.org).

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# Where to park?

## More Ontario rest areas barricaded as province launches overhaul

By Ingrid Phaneuf

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Everybody knows there aren't enough truck stops in Ontario, let alone Canada. Everybody including the provincial transport ministries. But does that mean Canadian truckers are any closer to getting regular showers, shaves, laundry facilities and decent meals for \$10, never mind the sleep required by hours-of-service rules where and when they need it?

That all depends on how quickly private investors pick up on the huge niche that's been created by an ever-growing trucking industry coupled with a dearth of places for truckers to park.

"There's nothing written in the Ontario budget as far as a commitment goes," says the Ontario Trucking Association's vice-president of public affairs, Doug Switzer. "All we've ever heard from the ministry is 'We'll take a look at it.' There's been no money set aside for this so far."

The federal government doesn't mess with highways as they are under provincial jurisdiction, so it's up to provincial trucking associations like the OTA to lobby governments to do what they can to increase truck parking along highways.

According to Switzer, nowhere is the need for adequate truck parking facilities felt more greatly than along routes in northern Ontario.

"One thing we have done recently is try to make the Ontario government aware that the parking situation for trucks is a hundred times worse in northern Ontario," says Switzer. "They've promised to look at it and they're even considering possibly turning some of the snowplow turnaround areas into rest areas in the summer, but that still doesn't take away the chronic shortage of stops in southern Ontario."

As for rest stops near the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor, Ont., Canada's biggest gateway to truck-hauled trade with the US, facilities are few and far between, says Switzer.

"There aren't really rest stops at the border, basically truck drivers have to stop on their way there," he says.

Truckers travelling from out east have no doubt already noticed the closure of some travel centres in Ontario along the 401 and 400 this summer. (When fully operative, there are 23 in total in Ontario. Unlike the US government, Canada's federal government does not track the availability of rest stops for truckers.)

According to Switzer, the Ontario government is trying to find new private operators (not oil companies, but property development companies) for these

southern Ontario travel centres "presumably offering better services, like showers, truck washes etc., better than the Wendy's/Shell combo they're currently getting," he says.

The MTO, for its part, confirms Switzer's claims, but implies any growth on the number of truck-friendly rest areas will depend largely on private investment.

"The Ministry of Transportation recognizes the need to provide all travellers, including truck drivers, with opportunities to stop and rest during their travel in order to

find comfort and fight driver fatigue," says MTO senior media liaison officer Bob Nichols. "Over the next five years, Ontario's 23 highway service centres along Highways 400 and 401 will be modernized to better serve both commercial and private motorists. In addition, there are numerous privately-operated service areas located at or near interchanges along our freeways that also provide rest opportunities for all travellers."

Nichols admits that the growing volume of truck traffic will necessitate an increase in truck parking areas. "Given that the volume of truck traffic is growing, it is reasonable to expect a corresponding increase in demand by the trucking industry for safe, accessible truck parking."

But the MTO will confine its contribution to solving the problem to the service centres that already exist, at least along the 401

and 400 highways.

"As part of the highway service centre redevelopment project, a request for proposals is currently under development that will outline our facility requirements and service expectations for a new service provider. The ministry will require that the renewal of the service centres provides adequate facilities and amenities for all motorists including commercial drivers to rest for extended periods, eat, obtain fuel and do minor vehicle inspections," says Nichols.

As for northern Ontario routes, the dearth of available parking space for tired and hungry truckers is currently "under review."

"As part of our long-term planning, the ministry will also be reviewing northern Ontario highway corridors, particularly along Highways 11 and 17 to determine strategic opportunities for rest stops for both commercial and

Continued on page 25 ■

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# Ontario rest areas to get makeover, but options limited now

## Continued from page 23

private vehicles," says Nichols. "This review is expected to result in a broad strategy and a set of guidelines for the development of rest stops across this part of the province."

Nichols did not give a timeline for the development of further rest areas in northern Ontario.

It seems that, as always, Canadian truckers are being left to grumble about a situation that shows few signs of improving.

"If anything, the situation is getting worse," says Caravan Logistics general manager, Kevin Snobel. "Probably more so because of the hours-of-service changes over the last few years."

In the meantime, some of Canada's biggest trucking companies are left to fend for themselves, and hope for an affordable solution from the private sector.

"One can't help but wonder why someone isn't seizing the opportunity," says Switzer. "A Flying J wouldn't require that much from the province – in fact, all they'd have to do is get a local municipal zoning adjacent to the highway. Of course there would be no direct highway access."

Former Erb driver, now driver-trainer, Mick Sayer agrees, and suggests some American companies are already picking up on the need for truck parking in Canada.

"Flying J is one of the largest groups in American truck stops and

'Not only is the (US) gov't selling off the assets of taxpayers, the trucking industry is paying for it.'

Ray Haight



they are building in Canada," says Sayer. "Most recently in Winnipeg, Calgary, Thunder Bay and Saskatoon – and I believe they also have a stop planned in Vancouver, which is a very bad area to park a truck."

How long before Flying J moves to Ontario, or whether Canadian

truck stops like Husky pick up on the need for truck parking in Canada's busiest cross-border province, remains to be seen.

Unfortunately, lack of direct highway access is exactly what has trucking company executives worried that private investment will result in higher operating costs.

Some private investors in the US have already started tolling off-ramps accessing rest stops in New York State, says Ray Haight, executive director of MacKinnon Transport, based in Guelph, Ont. and chairman of the Truckload Carriers Association.

"Not only is the (US) government selling off the assets of taxpayers, the trucking industry is paying for it," Haight says.

"The problem is the stops have all been owned by oil companies," points out Switzer. "And their priority has been to sell fuel. They could care less about whether a truck driver needs to sleep or do his laundry." □

ARTICLECATEGORY:86

## OTA announces convention lineup

**TORONTO, Ont.** – The economy will be front and center at this year's Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) convention Nov. 20-21.

This year's convention will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Toronto. The theme is 'Regaining our Edge.'

Award-winning industry forecasters James Meil (chief economist, Eaton Corp.), John Larkin (managing director, transportation, Stifel, Nicolaus and Company) and Robert Hickey (senior director, CIBC) will offer insight on how the trucking industry is coping in the US and in Canada.

Other sessions will include a look at the auto sector, as automotive industry analyst Dennis DesRosier delivers the presentation 'Is the Auto Sector Coming Back?'

Shippers will voice their concerns and expectations for 2009 and beyond in 'What Customers Want Going Forward,' organizers of the OTA convention have announced.

Meanwhile, some leading trucking company CEOs such as Darshan Kailly of Canadian Freightways, Ron Tepper of Consolidated Fastfrate and Doug Duncan of FedEx Freight will discuss the evolving economy on both sides of the border and how it is forcing them to rethink their business strategies.

Safety initiatives will also be discussed, with representatives from Bison Transport, Erb Transport, Kriska, MacKinnon Transport and Challenger Motor Freight sharing some tips on how investing in safety has delivered a payback.

'Trends and Practices in Third-Party Logistics,' and 'How to Protect Yourself from Organized Crime' will also be covered.

On the entertainment side, Great Big Sea will perform as well as comedian Mike MacDonald. For more info and to sign up, visit [www.ontruck.org/convention](http://www.ontruck.org/convention). □

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# B.C. Trucking Safety Council formed

By Jan Westell

LANGLEY, B.C. – With 63 workers from the B.C. trucking industry killed on the job in the past five years, another 281 seriously injured, and nearly 8,400 unable to work due to an injury, there came a quest to form a B.C. trucking safety council.

“BCTA as a member organization has a long history of wanting to establish a safety entity for the trucking industry and sought a partnership with WorkSafeBC,” says Bill Hubbard, a consultant who has been hired under a two-year contract to design the new B.C. Trucking Safety Council.

Considering that those work-related trucking incidents cost the B.C. trucking industry 496,000 in lost working days during that same five-year period, at a cost to the B.C. government of \$170.6 million, it’s



**SAFETY COUNCIL:** B.C. poses many hazards to truckers, including mountainous terrain. A new safety council aims to drive down trucker deaths.

not surprising that WorkSafeBC was receptive to funding a safety council for the trucking industry, a

strategy that’s been successfully developed within other sectors in B.C., according to Hubbard.

“There’s been an ongoing dialogue, and because there’s been a groundswell of interest by WorkSafe on sector occupational health and safety councils, suddenly the trucking industry was at the right place at the right time.”

Hubbard has been in discussion with the Alberta Motor Transport Association about its efforts on the same topic, and he is observing similar organizations in B.C. which have been created by other sectors that are also sponsored by WorkSafeBC. These include safety councils formed by B.C. forestry, oil and gas, construction, food processing, construction, road construction and marine employees organizations.

“All of them are at different stages of development, but all of them actually are quite impressive,” he says. “I suspect that probably B.C. stands out in terms of its development of its occupational health and safety councils right now, with WorkSafeBC a principal funding agent.”

Since his appointment earlier this year, Hubbard was required to conceptualize and draft the terms and conditions for the new council. The new board of directors is now in place, but the direction that the new governance will take has yet to be determined.

The new board is made up of trucking company representatives from all regions of the province, including Teamsters Local 31, the Insurance Corporation of B.C., the RCMP, and the B.C. Ministry of Transportation, as well as non-voting members from the B.C. Forest Safety Council, WorkSafeBC and the B.C. Trucking Association.

One of the new safety council’s goals is to establish a “centre of excellence” for the trucking industry, which will have a number of features. Part of that centre would be devoted to an information centre, or a Web-based virtual library with current research and other information related to the safety council’s mandate. This information will be collected from various sources around the world, such as WorkSafeBC, other trucking associations in North America, and safety associations throughout the world, including the southern hemisphere and western Europe.

“We’re hoping to establish and begin to populate that information centre by the end of my two-year contract,” says Hubbard.

Another part of the centre of excellence is the introduction of a WorkSafeBC incentive called the “certificate of recognition.” This is an occupational health and safety program that potentially offers insurance incentives to companies within the trucking industry that agree to create a safety management system, which is subsequently audited.

“If it is successfully audited, they get rebates of up to 15%,” he adds.

Hubbard expects funding from WSBC by January 2009 for this insurance incentive. When that happens, the safety council will develop the infrastructure, with various contacts and programs directed at those companies that are interested in the rebate program.

The safety council also intends to



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## New council examines workplace injuries

■ Continued from page 26

establish new training programs of an occupational health and safety nature, to be guided by the industry, which is expected to be developed within the next few months. Before constructing the training programs, the safety council will be undertaking systematic surveying in terms of what programs exist now, and what's required, according to Hubbard.

Otherwise, there are two growth categories that the new safety council is focused on in terms of gathering information about contributing factors to accidents, injuries and deaths. The first one is related to vehicular crashes; in other words the types of incidents that involve the driver in the truck while it's in motion.

The other category is non-driving related, or when a driver is working around a static vehicle, such as getting in and out of the truck, loading or unloading and working around warehouses. Incidents that involve this type of risk might include slips and falls, back problems related to work habits, or other soft tissue injuries. The council is also interested in injuries affecting non-driving workers in the trucking industry.

"We know the numbers of them according to the classifications, but we don't know what causes them, and how we might go about mitigating them, or reducing them," says the consultant. "That's a big push of

ours, to try to find out more about that side of the injury and death equation."

As for other vehicle incident concerns, Hubbard has been in discussion with the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) based in Ottawa, a pre-eminent research group on road crashes across Canada, according to the consultant.

"We've engaged them in a relatively longitudinal study – a 12-month study starting last May and ending next May, to really determine exactly what the vehicle crash picture looks like, with respect to trucks in B.C."

In addition to the TIRF research, the council is surveying worker compensation boards across Canada, trucking associations across North America, as well as safety organizations throughout the world, to better understand truck-related incidents that cause injury or death.

"We're interested in what's causing those injuries that contribute to lost time, injury cost, insurance costs, and what we as an occupational health and safety council are able to offer with training, better information (and) healthful guidance to these people, to see if they can reduce those kinds of problems. A lot of it has to do with just general personal health." □

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# Coquihalla Highway now toll-free

PENTICTON, B.C. – B.C. has lifted tolls on the Coquihalla Hwy., a move that will save some truckers thousands of dollars per year, the province has announced.

B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell made the announcement last month, claiming the tolls collected by highway users have now fully funded the highway's construction.

The toll road was opened in 1986 and expanded through to 1990. About 20% of vehicles using the toll route are commercial trucks, according to the province. It cost about \$848 million to construct the highway and tolls generated about

\$57 million per year.

“Removing the tolls will mean thousands of dollars in annual saving for truckers who account for 20% of traffic along the corridor but pay more than half of the total toll revenue,” Campbell said. □



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## Steer driver meetings in the right direction

Driver meetings have become a staple of the trucking industry's safety initiatives, and they certainly offer fleets an ideal venue for delivering vital information. This is where drivers can be coached to take their skills to the next level, and learn the techniques that can be applied in every area of the business.

But the meetings only achieve positive results when they are planned with an agenda and specific goals in mind.

A driver meeting that loses its focus will quickly turn into a complaint session while not accomplishing any of your goals. Companies have been known to reduce the frequency of these sessions because they go badly, but this simply leads to sessions that go badly because of their reduced frequency.

### Ask the Expert

Dylan Short



It's a vicious cycle.

The actual schedules for the regular meetings can still vary to meet the realities of an individual fleet. In some cases, the meetings are offered in the form of 15-minute "tailgate sessions" that occur once per week, a two-hour breakfast that takes place once a month, or even a half-day session that occurs every quarter.

But regardless of the specific schedules, successful meetings all share one thing in common – everyone understands the reason they are there.

Each driver meeting should begin with a discussion that explains why the related topic will apply to the people in the room. When I delivered a 20-minute presentation on managing fuel mileage, for example, I explained to a group of owner/operators that these methods would help them secure a raise without logging one extra mile. They immediately understood the impact that this information would have on their daily lives. I had their attention.

Instructors who lead these meetings also need to take the content seriously. If the leader of a session dismisses the information as nothing more than something "we're told to discuss," there is little chance that drivers will pay attention or apply anything that is said.

It is also important to ensure that drivers truly comprehend the in-

formation that is delivered, and that is where practical exercises can make a difference.

A meeting that focuses on Hours-of-Service offers a prime example of how this can work. After hearing about the latest regulations, drivers can be presented with a three-day supply of log sheets, a timeline and a sample destination for their fictional freight.

But rather than simply looking for the "right" answer in the form of a log sheet that meets the regulations, the leader of the meeting should try to reward innovative thinking. One driver might explain that he wants to cross the border at a certain time of day, when inspectors are on duty to address a specific type of freight. His counterpart may choose a route that allows him to stop in a truck stop that is known to offer better parking options. Both answers may be correct, and the drivers are demonstrating a deeper understanding of how the information will apply in a real-world environment.

Everyone, including the instructor, can learn something from the shared expertise.

Each exercise serves other purposes as well. In addition to identifying employees who may require additional training, it can lead fleet managers to reconsider specific training methods or even the trainers who run the meetings.

Everyone learns in a different way, after all. When my father taught me the art of double clutching, he explained that it was like a dance where both partners need to be in sync. I understood that explanation right away. But other drivers may require a technical explanation of how the transmission works, or maybe they will learn the art by watching and listening to shifts while heading down the highway.

At the very least, any of the content delivered through a driver meeting should reflect the specific needs of the audience. That will require instructors to customize their teaching tools, or at least remove irrelevant information from supplied information that does not apply to their fleet.

Those who are in charge of these meetings should also reach out to the people who were not in the room, including dispatchers and managers. If drivers are being told that they can only drive 11 hours per day, for example, they should be hearing the same message from dispatchers as well.

If the content is important enough for the driver's meeting, it should be important to every member of your team. □

– Dylan Short brings more than 15 years of trucking experience in various positions including owner/operator, driver trainer, senior advisor and regional manager. Dylan currently holds the role of senior manager, safety & training services. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to [info@markel.ca](mailto:info@markel.ca). Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers.



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# What drivers really want

Do you know what's on the minds of your drivers and O/Os?

By James Menzies  
**TORONTO, Ont.** – All too often, trucking company managers assume they know what's on the minds of their drivers. But when you look at research, such as our  
**Continued on page 34 ■**

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## RETENTION

### Driver panel says respect is crucial

■ Continued from page 33  
own annual *Driver Satisfaction Survey*, it becomes clear there's a disconnect between what drivers want, and what managers think they want.

At this year's *Over the Road Canadian Recruiting and Retention Conference*, organizers hosted a panel of drivers and owner/operators and put them in front of the mics so employers could get a sense of what's most important to them.

When asked what they would change about the industry, Sandy Milne, an owner/operator with Highland Transport summed it up in one word: Image.

"I'd like to see the public image of the industry come up considerably," he said.

Reg Emerson, a driver with Erb Transport agreed that truckers don't receive the respect they deserve.

Doug Ladds, a driver with MacKinnon Transport and OTA Road Knight, said there's not a lot he'd change, but he'd like to see the profession become more rewarding financially.

Rob Harding, an O/O with Trimac Transportation, expanded

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on that point and said that more communication is required between carriers and their drivers and owner/operators to ensure their success.

"In tough times such as now, I'd like to see better communication between drivers and management, to hang onto each other to get through tough times," he said. That includes sharing financial information to ensure both the company and its owner/operators remain profitable, added Harding.

"We want to do a good job for our companies so they can make a profit and I want the company to do well so I can make a profit as well," he said.

Fellow owner/op Milne agreed, adding "I'd like to see compromise between carriers and their owner/operators. We're both in the business together, to achieve a common goal and get the job done and make the customer happy."

When asked why they have chosen to remain with their current carrier, most of the drivers said it was because of a respectful relationship.

"Personal touch is number one," said Emerson. In his case, he said company founder Vernon Erb has remained approachable, and that philosophy has filtered down through the ranks.

"You're in the yard, and (Vern) is rushing out for a meeting somewhere, but he'll stop and open the door and he's halfway towards you, he addresses you by name and asks 'How's your family?'" Emerson explained, saying no price can be attached to those two minutes. "That's what his legacy is."

Emerson also said it's important to work for a carrier that's organized. During his career at Erb, Emerson said he's only made an empty backhaul twice: once due to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the other time in order to get home in time for Christmas. "It doesn't take more than 15 minutes to get our load and know where we're going," he said.

Ladds said he has stuck with his current employer because it has supported his career decisions, which have seen him put in time as a recruiter before climbing back behind the wheel.

"I have enjoyed the opportunities given to me by my employer," he said of MacKinnon. "I've always gotten support and backing all the way through."

Milne said the staff at Highland has kept him from seeking greener pastures.

"I love the work I do and I love the people I work with - that's it in a nutshell," he said.

For Harding, the challenge of hauling tankers with hazardous materials is what keeps him enjoying his job.

"I enjoy the challenge of it," he said. "I enjoy the customer service, meeting the customers and being there."

When asked about the quality of new drivers entering the industry, the panelists acknowledged there was room for improvement.

"I don't think there's a problem with the quality, it's the training," Milne said of new drivers. "There's not enough of it. I'd like to see the

Ministry do something with the quality of people graduating out of some of these driving schools that are more like puppy mills."

Ladds credited his company for attracting only the best new drivers, as a result of forging relationships with reputable training schools.

"We're taking the cream of the crop," he said. "It makes my job (as a driver-trainer) easier and our fleet look much more presentable."

Harding noted today's driver has to juggle many more tasks than simply piloting the truck down the road, and now more than ever they must be a consummate professional.

"When we started driving 20-30 years ago, driving the truck was the

hardest part of the job," he explained. "Nowadays, being a professional is the hardest part. Remaining calm when we're cut off. Not responding to the one-finger waves or irate customers when we get there a few minutes late. I'm sure we can re-

recruit (new drivers) and train them on how to be safe. But to train them how to be professional and how to have that professional attitude is the most important thing today."

Finally, when asked if management and recruiters have a good enough understanding of what a driver faces on the road each day, the question was met with a resounding 'no' - at least from the owner/operators.

"We have so many things in the

**'We have so many things in the cab that can change our day in an instant.'**

Rob Harding, O/O



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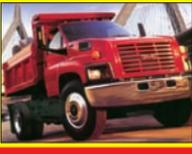
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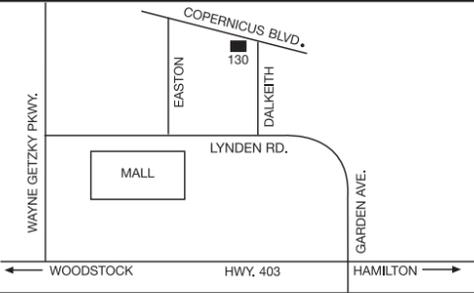
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## INDUSTRY

# It's time to work together



**Industry Issues**

**David Bradley**

The US financial system is in crisis; there is no doubt about that. The world is watching and hoping that the hotly-contested government rescue package will help stabilize things, but the job of getting things back on track will be a long and painful process.

While the rescue package might fend off a credit freeze, credit will remain tight in the US; recovery in the US housing sector is a long way off; the risk of stagflation has reared its ugly head; US consumers remain over-extended; and the US government's fiscal situation is a mess with the national debt growing into the stratosphere.

The financial crisis is not just a US problem. Just look at the bail-outs of major financial institutions that have taken place in Europe. As for Canada, the governor of the Bank of Canada recently stressed that Canadian financial institutions "are in considerably better shape than their international peers," which has allowed credit growth to remain relatively strong in Canada.

He's right about that, and that should be of some comfort to Canadian carriers and shippers. Canada's fiscal situation has also been very positive up until now.

But clearly, Canada will not be immune. No country on the planet is as vulnerable to the economic situation of one trading partner as Canada is to the United States. So, a slowdown

in US economic activity and therefore US demand for Canadian exports, will have implications for Canada's exporters and the people who move that trade.

Motor carriers realize that the same economic forces that are impacting them are being visited upon their customers. Trucking is a derived demand industry, so as the economy goes, so goes trucking. More than ever in these difficult times, cash is king – for everyone.

Unfortunately, one strategy that some shippers have chosen to use in response to this is to drag out the amount of time before they will pay their freight bills. That sort of short-term thinking could back-fire on shippers.

The trucking industry is already in a cash crunch and credit has been shrinking. Most carriers' fuel bills now have to be paid within seven days; employees need to be paid on time; and they need to be able to make payments on their equipment. Trucking capacity has already started to adjust to conditions in the freight market. By not paying carriers within reasonable timeframes, shippers are creating the conditions for a long-term capacity shortage.

Cash-strapped motor carriers, who have already seen margins squeezed and their creditors tighten the screws, could be in for a rough ride. Carriers whose balance sheets are already in need of repair will be particularly vulnerable.

Bankruptcies in the trucking industry have already been increasing significantly. Between 2006 and 2007, trucking bankruptcies in Canada increased 7.3%. Over the same period, bankruptcies in the Ontario trucking industry skyrocketed by almost 19%. In the first-half of 2008, total Canadian trucking bankruptcies already surpassed the total for all of 2007.

Many carriers have delayed investment in new equipment for the last year or more. But, ultimately, to provide the best possible service at the best price, carriers need to buy trucks and trailers. Where will the capital come from? Credit might be more available in Canada than in the US, but at what cost? Trucking is already under-capitalized.

The next 12 months or more promise to be as challenging as ever for Canadian businesses from all economic sectors. And, all economic sectors will need to work together to weather this storm. Carriers understand the challenges that their customers are confronting and want to build long-term relationships. They are only asking for the same understanding from their customers. Shippers should be looking to lock-in capacity for the long-term. □

– David Bradley is president of the OTA and CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

# Audits, audits everywhere

I've been telling people for the last few years that the wave is coming...Well, our feet are officially wet.

The wave in question is the Canada Revenue Agency's increasing scrutiny of newer small businesses.

Besides conducting more audits than ever before, they've added a layer of inquiry called a "business review."

A business review isn't an audit per se but the burden is essentially the same.

Within the first few years of operation, any "new" business in Canada may face a review to ensure that the owners are handling their bookkeeping, payroll, GST/HST, and tax filings correctly. That's right, CRA just wants to help.

In fact, the agency is concerned about fraud.

Taxpayers who claim false expenses, credits, or rebates from the government are liable not only for corrections to their tax returns and payment of the full amount of tax owing, but also to penalties and interest.

In addition, if convicted of tax evasion, they may be fined up to 200% of the tax evaded and sentenced to five years in jail.

They may also find themselves hanging in the CRA's virtual town square. The agency publishes details of court cases on its Web site. It's meant to be informative and a deterrent for the general public.

Here's an example where an Ontario couple was fined \$21,552 to recover 100% of GST refunds they fraudulently obtained:

*"GST fraud nets Glencoe pair close to \$22,000 in fines – June 2008"*

*Stephen James Mann and Christina Patricia Boudreau of Glencoe were found guilty in Ontario Court of Justice on 22 counts of fraudulently obtaining GST refunds.*

*Mann and his common-law spouse, Boudreau, both registered with CRA for separate GST accounts as each, at one time, was self-employed in the trucking industry.*

*CRA's Audit Division determined that, from 1999 to 2005, neither Mann nor Boudreau reported any self-employment income from trucking on their personal income tax returns.*

*In fact, the type of employment positions held by both Mann and Boudreau did not require them to maintain any GST registration or qualify them to claim refunds for Input Tax Credits on any GST returns filed.*

*Both Mann and Boudreau are employed as school bus drivers.*

*Mann and Boudreau each repeatedly made false statements in the 11 GST returns they each filed for quarterly periods from July 1999 to September 2005. Their scheme to obtain fraudulent GST refunds was not limited to an isolated transaction.*

*Over the years under investigation by the CRA's Enforcement*

## Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



*Division, both Mann and Boudreau each became increasingly aggressive in their reporting activities, significantly increasing the value of the fraudulent GST refunds each claimed."*

Personally, I'm happy when cheaters get caught. It makes those of us who do things right feel better.

Unfortunately, in their efforts to find cheaters, CRA is going to audit a lot of us who aren't. In terms of time and cost, it's expensive enough to just comply with

tax rules. More audits and "reviews" only add to the burden.

CRA has become more expansive with their audits as well. They used to just audit your business. Now audit letters list both your Business Number and your SIN so they can do your business and you personally at the same time. Here's a quoted sample of what they ask for:

1. All chequing and savings accounts, including personal and business accounts, bank statements, passbooks, deposit books, and cancelled cheques;

2. List of major personal and business assets (ie. real estate, vehicles, equipment, recreational assets) including cost and year of acquisition;

3. Personal and business investment statements;

4. Personal and business credit card, credit line, loan and financing statements;

5. Personal and business mort-

gage statements.

Why do they need all of this? The auditors are assembling a net worth assessment.

They want to evaluate your spending habits and judge whether your income as reported on your tax return can support them. If they can't, you'd better have answers.

Next month we'll talk about audits and the type of expenses that CRA will attack within your business statement, particularly expenses that fringe upon personal use and, oh yeah, meals. □

– 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](http://www.tfsgroup.com) or call 800-461-5970. Information about CRA tax convictions can be found at [www.cra.gc.ca/convictions](http://www.cra.gc.ca/convictions).

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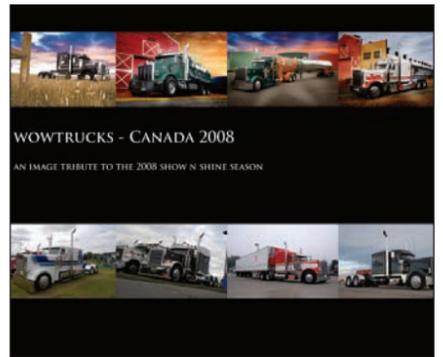
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BOOKS



## Canadian show trucks to be featured in book

**CALGARY, Alta.** – *Truck News*, *Wowtrucks.com* and *Pro-Trucker Magazine* are teaming up to publish a pictorial look back on the 2008 Show'n'Shine season.

The coffee table-style book will highlight hundreds of show trucks that attended Canada's most well-known Show'n'Shines, such as the Fergus Truck Show, Rodeo du Camion and the B.C. and Alberta Big Rig Weekends.

Photographer David Benjatschek, founder of *Wowtrucks.com*, took hundreds of photos at the shows and wanted to honour the trucks he photographed through publication of a photo tribute.

The 10"x8" collector's item will be available for purchase online in both hardcover and softcover editions.

Orders will be taken by Nov. 15 and will ship on time for Christmas. The plan is to publish an annual edition of the book.

"Chances are that if you entered your truck at one of the four major Show'n'Shines across the country, it will be captured in this book," says Benjatschek.

Trucks from regional shows such as the Vancouver Island Truck Show, the Forestry Expo in Prince George, B.C., the 1,000 Islands truck show and the Stirling Truck Show are also included.

"*Wowtrucks: Canada 2008* recognizes a great mix of working trucks, show trucks and some of those incredible race trucks like Canada's own Gord Cooper in his Smokin' Gun Kenworth," says Benjatschek.

"We're thrilled to be partnering with *Wowtrucks* and *Pro-Trucker* to offer this photographic tribute to Canadian show trucks," added James Menzies, executive editor of *Truck News*. "As summer turns to fall, Canada's summer show'n'shines become a distant memory. But now show-goers will have a real collector's item to keep and cherish for years to come. And Canadian truckers will be able to take great pride in having their truck showcased in this unique book, which will serve as a tribute to all the hard work they put into getting their rig show-ready."

*Trucknews.com* will have further updates, including ordering information, as details become available.

You can also check out Benjatschek's work by visiting his Web site: [www.wowtrucks.com](http://www.wowtrucks.com). □

# An investment during difficult times

Okay, I would agree with those who suggest that writing about being in difficult times may seem redundant, or at least a little obvious. As I write this the TSX has just experienced its biggest one-day drop (800+ points), and the DOW and other world markets are in free-fall as the result of the US House of Representatives having turned down the Bush administration's proposal to bail out the financial sector.

Manufacturing jobs are disappearing in Ontario and there is real concern that North America could be moving toward the dreaded "R" word. There's plenty of proof for those who need it that the economy is struggling.

On the other hand, Saskatchewan is booming, so much so that a delegation of employers and government officials recently staged a job fair in Ontario hoping to entice workers to head west. Indeed, we are getting mixed messages, but for the most part it's grim news.

But while accepting the premise that we are in difficult times with increasing demands for constraints on expenditures, even cost-conscious managers would have to agree that there are times when spending money is truly an investment, and not simply an expense.

I believe that membership in associations that offer education, advice, and information sharing is an example of a valuable investment – an investment with an ROI that could be equal to or better than most that are discussed in the board rooms of the nation. Industry associations of this type certainly exist in the world of trucking, and progressive companies not only join them, but they take full advantage of their membership to stay current with all of the issues of the day.

The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, and other associations such as the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) and Owner-Operator's Business Association of Canada (OBAC) are examples of the type of associations that deliver real value.

Active members have a broad-based source of information at hand to serve their needs. The experience and technical information available from the office and membership of these groups represent a valuable resource for any fleet operator and/or owner/operator.

The collective membership of these organizations include individuals and businesses with experience in every conceivable aspect of fleet management. The proven willingness of members to share that experience with other members provides an unparalleled resource that can be accessed by a telephone call. You can think of association membership as your pipeline to a pool of experts.

Along with the opportunity to access those resources, association members receive regular publications and electronic bulletins that keep them current with regulatory changes and other important infor-

## Private Links

Bruce Richards



mation that matters – another source of necessary information for fleet operators.

Additionally, seminars and conferences deliver experts on a variety of topics throughout the year – sessions that help members do their jobs a little better. But perhaps even more valuable is the resource pool I referred to above.

Association members that operate private fleets are more than willing to share experiences, discuss ideas, and help other members solve problems. In the case of the

PMTC member companies often do not compete with one another – at least not on the trucking level – and so there is a certain freedom to share information on trucking issues.

Associate and allied trades members offer equipment, personnel, and anything else you can think of that is consumed in the operation of truck fleets.

Speaking for our own group, while the PMTC office can and does address questions from members directly, often using our contacts within various ministries, we frequently put members in touch with other members who may have already dealt with, or share an interest in an issue.

The combined resources of the office and members generate a valuable information pool. And we

share a common bond – we are all in the business of effective fleet management.

So, acknowledging that everyone needs to watch the pennies in this economic cycle we are currently experiencing, it is important not to lose sight of the simple fact that economies rebound, and while that rebound is in process fleet managers need the help of trucking associations like the PMTC.

If your company is not yet a member of a trucking association, there is no better time to consider the return on such an investment. It's like adding an inexpensive group of experts to your staff.

In trying times the value becomes even more apparent. □

*– The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Your comments or questions can be addressed to [trucks@pmtc.ca](mailto:trucks@pmtc.ca).*



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# Rice: It's more than just a side dish

More than half of the world depends on rice as a food staple. In Burma, the average person eats an unbelievable 500 lbs of rice a year, or 1.25 lbs a day! In North America, the amount consumed is significantly lower, about 25 lbs per year per person, and about four pounds of that amount goes towards brewing beer.

However, North Americans are now eating twice as much rice as 10 years ago. Why? We are becoming more aware of its health benefits. Rice is high in complex carbohydrates, which means it is digested slowly, allowing the body to utilize the energy released over a longer period, making it nutritionally efficient.

Rice contains almost no fat, is cholesterol-free, and low in sodium (unless you add salt to the

## Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



cooking water). Rice is gluten-free and easily digested, making it a good choice for infants and people with wheat allergies or digestion problems

As well, rice contains all eight essential amino acids, making it a fair source of protein. Since it is fairly low in the amino acid lysine, which is found in beans, the classic combination of the complementary proteins in rice and beans creates a particularly healthful dish.

Although there are around 40,000 varieties of rice, let's

just consider these two basic categories: white and brown. Generally both white and brown rice are considered a good source of vitamins and minerals. Their calorie count is also very similar. A half-cup of cooked white rice provides 82 calories and a half-cup of brown rice provides 89. So, besides the colour, what is the difference between them?

White rice is what remains of a whole grain of rice after the bran layer is removed during milling. The process of converting brown rice to white rice destroys most of the vitamins B3, B1, and B6 naturally found in rice, and half of the manganese, phosphorus, and iron, as well as all the dietary fiber and essential fatty acids. Ninety per cent of this rice, if grown in North America, is later enriched with

many of these same nutrients, including: thiamine, niacin and iron and sometimes with riboflavin, Vitamin D and calcium. Because of the enrichment process, white rice has more added iron and thiamine than brown rice.

However, I recommend brown rice. All that's been removed from the whole grain of brown rice is the outside hull, leaving the inside nutrients in tact. Brown rice has five times more Vitamin E and three times more magnesium than white. As well, brown rice has twice as much fiber. Even so, brown rice is still not considered to be an especially high fiber source. Yet, rice bran on its own is an excellent source of fiber.

Eating brown rice as a consistent part of your diet has been shown to improve health in the following ways: It can reduce constipation because of its fiber; reduce asthma symptoms because of its anti-inflammatory compounds; reduce the risk of developing diabetes because its magnesium balances glucose and insulin secretion; reduce the risk of heart attack because its oil minimizes cholesterol; help control weight gain and avoid colon cancer because of its fiber; increase energy levels because of its compound carbohydrate composition; help maintain a healthy blood pressure because its magnesium maintains relaxed blood vessels; and help prevent gall stones because it ensures a healthy amount of secreted bile.

Interestingly, if you soak brown rice for two hours before cooking it, the rice becomes more nutritious because the water stimulates germination which increases the protein content of the grain. Soaking also makes rice taste sweeter.

Now, if you've decided to switch to brown rice, the transition should be quite easy with these simple adjustments. Because it is less refined than white, brown rice takes about twice as long to cook. It also takes more liquid. Add at least three-quarters of a cup more to your usual liquid measurement. Making these adjustments to your rice recipes should allow you to use the healthier brown rice in your favourite dishes. Everything from rice pudding to Spanish rice can be made just as well with brown rice.

I recently bought a rice cooker and have found it ideal for creating perfect rice every time. Using the cooker, I can make the rice in just water, or be creative by adding other ingredients such as: soup powders; soy sauce; onion; celery; other vegetables and/or spices. My cooker allows me to make rice and keep it fresh and warm for up to 18 hours. Really. If you're serious about adding brown rice to your diet, consider a decent rice cooker as a good investment.

Whether at home or on the road, when it comes to rice – don't be afraid to be called a browner. □

– 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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# Understanding Bell's palsy

During the past few month's I have had several patients come into my clinic who have be suffering from Bell's palsy, a condition that arises when there is damage to a facial nerve. The facial nerves are responsible for the muscles of the face as well as taste sensation in the front of the tongue. In Bell's palsy, one of the two facial nerves is damaged, compressed or inflamed which results in weakness of the facial muscles and causes the eyelid and corner of the mouth to droop on one side.

For many people experiencing these symptoms, their first reaction is that they are having a stroke. However, strokes are associated with muscle weakness and paralysis of muscles in other parts of the body as well as the face.

In order to understand the cause of Bell's palsy it is important to look at the anatomy of the skull. The facial nerve passes through a narrow opening in the skull on its way to the face. If this nerve becomes swollen and enlarged it will get pinched in this tight corridor leading to a decrease in nerve flow to the face. This in turn causes muscle weakness and other symptoms. The most common causes of this condition are the herpes simplex and herpes zoster viruses. These are the viruses that are responsible for cold sores and chicken pox respectively. In rare cases, Bell's palsy may be caused by a tumour called an acoustic neuroma. Other conditions such as being pregnant, having diabetes or an upper respiratory tract infection will also increase your risk of getting Bell's palsy.

In most cases the symptoms will develop over 24 hours. The symptoms may include: sudden onset of paralysis or weakness of the muscles on one side of the face; pain behind the ear on the affected side of the face; headache; impairment of taste; facial droop and difficulty with facial expression; changes in the amount of saliva your body produces.

The diagnosis of Bell's palsy is usually determined from the symptoms alone as there is no specific laboratory test to identify this condition. However, if your doctor suspects that a tumour is the cause, then he or she may arrange a CT scan or MRI. Nerve conduction tests are also used to determine the extent of nerve damage. Although most people with Bell's palsy recover fully with or without treatment, your doctor may prescribe medications or physical therapy to help speed up your recovery. The most common medication prescribed for Bell's palsy is corticosteroids such as prednisone. It helps reduce the swelling of the nerve. However, if the cause is a virus then an antiviral drug such as acyclovir may be prescribed to stop its progression. Massage and exercises are also helpful to prevent muscle wasting.

If your eye is affected, your doctor may recommend artificial tears and will probably advise you to tape your eye closed when you sleep to prevent permanent damage to the cornea of your eye. Interestingly, some people obtain good results from alternative therapies such as relaxation and acupuncture. Finally,

## Back behind the wheel

**Dr. Christopher Singh**



if all other treatments fail, decompression surgery is used to relieve the pressure on the facial nerve.

The prognosis of Bell's palsy is usually very good. With appropriate treatment, symptoms will improve in about two weeks. However, it may take several months to achieve a full recovery. Bell's palsy is not usually a serious condition however it does cause some discomfort. □

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



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**ENVIRONMENT**

**There's opportunity in tackling environmental problems**

**By Lou Smyrlis**  
**TORONTO, Ont.** – The freight transportation industry's sizeable carbon footprint presents both a pressing issue and an opportunity, Gary Whicker, senior vice-president of engineering services at J.B. Hunt Transport told the *Same Roads...New Challenges* conference in Toronto at the start of October.

"Freight transportation is the fastest growing use of transportation but the flip side of that is that it is 100% powered by diesel fuel. How many of you think you're going to see a wind-powered tractor any time soon?" he asked the audience. "But in every pressing issue, there is an opportunity."

Since that opportunity is not like-

ly, at least in the near future, to be found in a technological breakthrough, a more concentrated focus on energy conservation is the smartest strategy, according to Whicker.

"If you're a carrier and operating at 5 MPG, 6 MPG or 7 MPG as fuel prices go up, the differences in your operation will get bigger. If you're operating at 7 MPG you're going to be increasingly at a competitive advantage," said Whicker.

The two-day conference was held by the SmartWay Transport Partnership in coordination with several industry groups. It brought a host of carriers and shippers together to discuss the challenges, costs and benefits of their green plans. Speakers included an eclectic mix of carriers, shippers, industry suppliers, consultants and Canadian and US government representatives.

Whicker suggested the first step to reducing a company's carbon footprint is to figure out how much carbon is produced by its operations and then identify possible improvements. But he cautioned that how the problem is defined is critical. For example, if the focus is solely on defining how to improve MPG, you may be missing opportunities such as those to be gained by looking at how to also increase payload.

For carriers adapting more green solutions, Whicker stressed three strategic areas that must be addressed:

1. Investing in the right technologies such as APUs;
2. Investing in the right processes to manage the technology;
3. Investing in changing behaviour.

"We have 10,000 tractors at J.B. Hunt. The driver has to have the right behaviour to achieve the return on investment we believe is there," Whicker said. Changing the traditional trucking executive mindset to consider the efficiencies offered by moving freight intermodally is another area Whicker pointed to, adding that half of J.B. Hunt's revenue now comes from its intermodal division.

In fact, although J.B. Hunt started as a TL carrier ("you call and we haul," as Whicker characterized it) it has transformed itself into one of the largest drayage fleets in North America. He said that while truck transportation is about eight times more energy efficient than air transport, rail is about four times more efficient than truck transportation. And water transport is four times more efficient than rail – "generally, the faster you go, the less energy efficient you are," he said.

Don Streuber, president of Bison Transport, widely hailed as one of the industry's leaders in sustainable transportation practices, pointed out that the push towards more environmentally-friendly practices is coming not just from government and shippers but from trucking's own workforce.

"We are in a state of flux. Young

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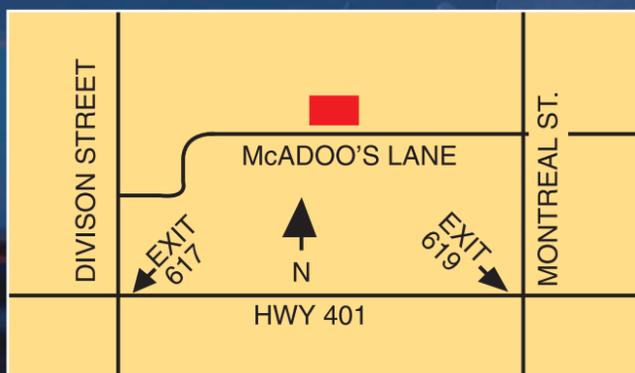
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employees today ask different questions about their companies than they did 10 years ago. They want to know how the business is acting to help the environment and they are asking that before they ask about their dental plan," he said. "We need to continually look around us and elevate our own standards."

He related how when faced with a crisis of rising fuel costs, Bison turned to its drivers for a solution and it was the drivers who suggested reducing driving speeds.

"Contrary to the gut feeling of management there was no problem with the drivers. It made common sense to them," Streuber said.

Whicker also had advice for shippers. He outlined four areas for shippers to attack in reducing their carbon footprint:

1. Eliminate miles through network realignment and route optimization;
2. Increase payload by maximizing cube and/or weight on every shipment;
3. Convert to the energy-efficient, cost-effective modes;
4. Use the most efficient carriers. "Do you want to pick someone who is driving the equivalent of a Prius or someone driving the equivalent of a Hummer?"

Olivier Joubert, director of logistics at Wal-Mart Canada, pointed out that shippers, particularly the larger ones, can and are starting to play a major role in driving environmentally-sustainable transportation and other business practices. For example, Wal-Mart is the largest commercial buyer of green power in Canada and is now powering the equivalent of six of its stores energy-free.

"We understand that we must play a role in making alternative energy more mainstream," Joubert said.

He added that Wal-Mart stores being built from 2009 and onwards will be using materials and technologies that will make them 30% more energy efficient than the current ones.

Wal-Mart is of course famous in transportation circles for its environmental scorecard for carriers, which examines carrier performance in a variety of areas such as adoption of efficient equipment, recycling, idling and company vision for sustainability. Its move to switch 23 of its Eastern Canada stores from truck to rail transportation as a way to reduce transportation costs and cut greenhouse gas emissions was another recent move motor carriers could not ignore.

But Joubert said environmental sustainability is also about taking on small projects that make sense. For example, by abandoning cardboard shipping boxes in favour of plastic shipping boxes, which last about 60 times longer, Wal-Mart Canada figures it is saving \$4.5 million over five years and reducing waste by more than 1,400 tonnes.

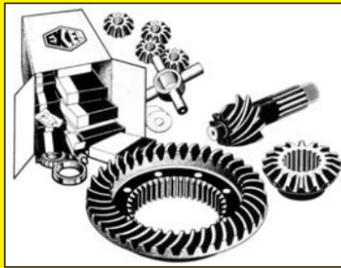
But whether they're small-scale or large-scale, Whicker was honest about the challenges carriers face in adopting sustainable transportation practices, even after they have gone through the considerable work involved in evaluating the different

Continued on page 44 ■

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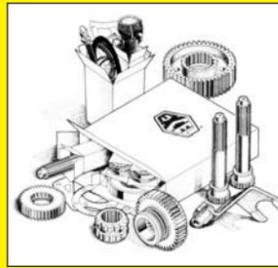
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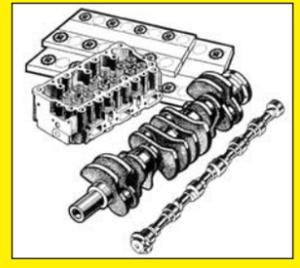
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## ENVIRONMENT

### Calculating a payback on going green

■ Continued from page 43

technologies – APUs, trailer skirts, roof air deflectors, tractor-trailer gap reducers, tires, etc.

“You can do the math and build the business case but you still have to sell it,” he said, pointing out there could be many organizational impediments, from the executives to the maintenance department, who become concerned about the cost of new equipment. “They don’t like being yelled at when trucks are not available (due to repairs). Do you think they want another engine to maintain with the APU?” he asked.

He stressed that sustainable transportation projects don’t get done if the economics behind them are not sustainable.

“Transportation is a low margin business. You don’t want to make the wrong investment decision,” he said, adding that as a result, often carriers decide to play it conserva-

tive and do nothing.

He provided an example of how intricate and difficult decisions about investing in green technologies can be when a company gets down to the numbers by sharing J.B. Hunt’s experience with APUs.

With an initial cost of about \$6,700 per unit and ongoing maintenance expenses of \$300 per year, he calculated that it would cost his fleet about \$8,300 over a five-year period to install an APU on one of its trucks.

J.B. Hunt currently has an idle program, which pays a bonus to its drivers for reducing idling. Installing the APUs would save J.B. Hunt the money it currently pays towards that bonus and so those savings can be quantified. But the other key consideration – exactly how much fuel would be saved by going to APUs – remains an elusive calculation, according to Whicker.

“We’ve studied this to death and we still don’t have a number we are comfortable with in terms of actual savings to take to the president,” he acknowledged. “If you’re going to pitch the person who holds the purse strings, it helps to have the numbers and if you are not confident the cost-benefit analysis is within your grasp, it will be a tough sell, even if it’s the right thing on paper.”

Sometimes, however, the cost-benefit analysis requires taking a bold step in changing management strategy.

An 1,800 mile TL shipment on average will generate about three tonnes of carbon emissions. Idling reductions (to 16 hours) can cut it back to 2.87 tonnes, and reducing empty miles (by 10%) can bring it down to 2.86 tonnes. But switching to intermodal can cut emissions by half – down to 1.50 tonnes for that 1,800-mile trip, according to Whicker.

“If intermodal reduces costs more than your lowest-cost alternatives, then intermodal is the right solution,” Whicker said.

Similarly, Streuber spoke about making the bold move to allowing longer combination vehicles (LCVs) to operate across Canada and through the US as a way to instantly introduce large fuel efficiencies.

“What’s the thing that will make the biggest difference? Pulling two trailers behind one tractor. If you say you want to dramatically change efficiency, then this is the most logical progression,” Streuber said.

Streuber figures LCVs can reduce a truck’s greenhouse gas emissions by 38%, compared to 5% for APUs, 4% for aerodynamic devices, 2% for fuel efficiency training, and 2% for aerodynamic tractor designs.

He added that safety is not an issue if carriers running turnpike doubles adhere to proper safety practices. He pointed out that Bison Transport, which runs a considerable number of LCVs in the West, has been selected as the safest fleet in North America for the third year in a row. □

– We are working with Natural Resources Canada on an e-learning initiative stemming from the conference. This e-learning initiative will be released later this year.




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# Plans that pay

## Communication is key when rolling out 'green' initiatives

**By James Menzies**  
**TORONTO, Ont.** – The best laid energy conservation plans can blow up in your face if they aren't properly communicated.

Brian Death, vice-president of human resources administration with J.D. Smith and Sons knows this all too well. His company, in its efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and lower energy costs, has accomplished some remarkable feats, which have earned it a Transport Canada Green Supply Chain award.

However, there have been some missteps along the way, he admitted during the SmartWay Transport Partnership's *Same Roads...New Challenges* conference. One of the company's green initiatives involved using on-board computers and scorecards to track drivers' fuel efficiency.

"We hadn't really talked to the guys about the scorecard and we had a major, major kerfuffle over this," admitted Death. "It basically blew up and we threw it away. The lesson there was to consult with the community you're measuring."

### Employee pushback

The company encountered similar resistance when pursuing other projects as well, including one that involved upgrading the heaters at its warehouse to lower the cost of heating for the eight hours per day the facility was not in use. An employee committee voiced concerns that working conditions would suffer if temperatures were decreased.

"We didn't do a good job communicating what was happening and that we were really looking to make the biggest gain when they were home sleeping," said Death.

Despite those early miscues, Death said the staff at J.D. Smith and Sons has come to appreciate the company's environmental initiatives. They took great pride in the award and the company is now enjoying significant savings thanks to three energy management plans that were implemented at its facilities.

In one, the heating system at a warehouse was upgraded with a programmable thermostat to reduce the temperature during non-working hours. The program cost \$18,000 to implement and delivered \$27,000 in savings the first year for an eight-month payback.

The second project implemented by J.D. Smith and Sons was the conversion of high-pressure sodium light bulbs in its warehouse to the more energy-efficient fluorescent variety. The project cost

Continued on page 46 ■



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# 'Involve your employees early and often'

## Fleets share experiences at Same Roads...New Challenges conference

### ■ Continued from page 45

\$197,000 to implement and now delivers annual savings of \$74,000 per year for a 2.6-year payback.

Most recently, the company used those savings to fund upgrades to the heating system at its head office which also houses a six-bay garage.

It's too early to pin down an ROI for that project, but Death said the company expects to reduce its \$90,000 per year natural gas bill by 60%. Death said the key to successfully rolling out a green plan of any type is to "involve your employees early and often at every level. We learned that lesson the hard way."

It's a sentiment shared by Ellen Knickle, business improvement manager with RST Industries, a

specialized transportation company that operates under the Irving umbrella. When pressed to reduce the fleet's fuel costs, management decided it had no choice but to raise its owner/operator fuel cap.

"We had not increased the fuel cap in seven years and we determined we had to look at that," explained Knickle. "That was the biggest change and the biggest risk that the project identified. We had some long, hard discussions to talk about whether we could afford to do that. Yes, it was going to decrease

our costs but would we lose drivers as a result?"

RST decided to announce the fuel cap increase to owner/operators face-to-face, and the company's general manager attended all but one of the regional meetings in person to take the heat.

"We wanted to be able to address questions up front and face-to-face," said Knickle. "The

critical factor, we felt, was that everyone gets the same message at the same time."

It was a bold move, but Knickle said the company felt it was nec-

'As far as I'm concerned, we have 300 buyers of fuel and 300 fuel managers.'

Jean-Pierre Rabbath

essary in order to bring the importance of fuel management into the spotlight.

"We thought long and hard about incentives," she said. "But we felt that it would be very difficult to manage because there are a lot of variables that will impact MPG. So we took a bit of a hard-ass stance and said we're going to offer a disincentive to really get their attention."

In addition, the fleet worked with its company drivers and owner/operators to improve their fuel mileage. Company trucks were governed at 60 mph, Tadger devices were installed on the fuel lines and driver scorecards that determine a driver's bonus were revised to place more emphasis on fuel economy.

For owner/operators, RST: paid for Tadger devices; invited engine manufacturers to meet with O/Os to discuss maximizing their engines' efficiency; and downloaded and discussed engine data to see where driving behaviour could be improved for better fuel efficiency.

The company also added a new line to its owner/operator pay statements, which shows year-to-date fuel purchased, fuel consumed, MPG and fuel as a percentage of revenue.

"We felt information is power, we wanted to ensure our owner/operators had the data at their fingertips," Knickle explained.

RST's fuel management program was rolled out in July. During the first two months, the company says it saved \$147,094 in fuel. Fuel mileage has improved modestly as well: 0.1 MPG for tri-axles; 0.16 MPG B-train; and 0.51 MPG on quads.

"Our MPG is not where we want it to be yet," Knickle admitted. "We have a ways to go and we're still working on that."

### 90% People-ology

Jean-Pierre Rabbath, director of energy efficiency for SGT 2000, took a philosophical approach to fuel economy.

"We're in the business of converting litres into kilometres," he reasoned.

Since there can be a 30% fuel mileage gap between a fleet's best and worst drivers, SGT 2000's fuel mileage program consisted of "10% technology and 90% people-ology," Rabbath explained. The fleet slowed its trucks to 98 km/h in 1993 and installed cab heaters for warmth.

It also began to track and monitor its drivers' fuel mileage while preaching an anti-idling philosophy. SGT 2000 has instilled a corporate culture of environmental awareness, and has developed an "Idle Trail" in its community where it plants four trees for every employee.

Rabbath said the keys to successfully implementing a fuel management plan was to get buy-in from the top, right on down to the company's 300 drivers.

"As far as I'm concerned, we have 300 buyers of fuel and 300 fuel managers," he said. □

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# Hiding the bomb

## HazMat trucking industry safe, but secretive

**TORONTO, Ont.** – On the morning of August 8, 2008, just before 4 a.m., a series of furious explosions leveled the Sunrise Propane and Industrial Gases facility on Murray Road in northwest Toronto. It blew out windows and ravaged homes and buildings in the Keele and Wilson area.

The biggest blast shook my house and the concussion opened the screen door – and I live nine kilometres away.

Emergency personnel didn't know how much propane was still stored on the premises. As a result, the OPP responded by closing the 401 between Hwy. 400 and the Don Valley Parkway. In total, 12,000 people were evacuated.

Because it happened on a Sunday and so early, only one part-time worker died at the scene. Using DNA samples, it took police four weeks to identify the remains of Parminder Singh Saini, a 25-year-old international student from India. As well, Toronto firefighter Bob Leek died while responding to the call.

What's disturbing is that a truck-to-truck transfer was reportedly going on at the time, and this could have been a contributing factor to the disaster. This procedure is banned in Ontario but allowed in the other provinces. Apparently, this type of activity was commonplace at this facility.

Generally speaking, truck-to-truck transfers might be considered riskier because more couplings are involved and safety procedures could be more easily bypassed than when filling at a storage tank.

But even Transport Canada believes that this procedure can be conducted safely if done properly.

"Grounding or bonding is one important element of safe truck-to-truck transfers for propane," according to Transport Canada spokesperson Maryse Durette.

Whether the trucks were

### On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



grounded or not, something clearly went wrong that Sunday morning. According to media reports, employee Felipe De Leon noticed smoke and ran for his life, after also warning his co-worker Saini to flee. In all likelihood the "smoke" De Leon was seeing was propane vapour condensing in the early morning air.

"All it takes is a small hole," says Olev Trass, professor emeritus in chemical engineering at the University of Toronto. "The vapour seeks the spark."

Trass speculates that a leak must have occurred somewhere during the transfer and that the gas would have clung close to the ground (because propane is heavier than air). The vapour and air would have created an explosive mixture that could have been ignited by static electricity.

"My presumption is that one explosion occurred and put pressure on a tank, enough to break a weld or connection and then four or five explosions occurred, probably in rapid succession," says Trass.

Indeed, this appears to be what happened. Check out the YouTube videos of the event. A series of smaller explosions are followed by a huge blast and fireball over about a 20-minute period.

But frightening as this disaster was, it was an extremely rare occurrence. The cylindrical propane tanks on trailers or B-trains are spec'd to withstand outrageous tolerances. The pressure relief valve will vent long before a tank would blow, as has been attested

Continued on page 48 ■

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# HazMat loads are challenging but safe

■ Continued from page 47  
in many highway mishaps over decades.

John (Scotty) Patterson, driver-trainer for Liquid Cargo Lines in Mississauga, Ont. takes a diligent approach to safety through training.

"We teach people here how to run a tanker. If they leave the back of a tank they're responsible for anything that happens. You see something you don't like, you shut it down and wait for them to come to you."

Liquid Cargo Lines hauls a variety of products and some dangerous goods, most of it in straight-through shotgun tankers (this makes them easier to clean when they have to be purged between loads).

The lack of baffles makes the cargo especially tricky to handle.

"Forty-five thousand pounds will knock you forward so damn hard and then slap back against the rear of the tank so you almost stall out if you're going up a hill," says Patterson.

Patterson picks excellent drivers to start. They are then put through an intensive training program that includes a minimum of two weeks one-on-one instruction, classroom seminars, and specialized product orientation at the customer's site. "We're pretty particular about the people we hire."

Since everything moves by truck at one time or another, that also includes the nasty stuff. That's the stuff most people don't want to know about: acids and chemicals; explosives, noxious liquids and gases; contaminated oils and waste waters; radioactive byproducts and pesticides.

Bulk dangerous goods loads can be molten or frozen, burn your hide raw, freeze you solid, or lay you out cold from just one whiff. Transport Canada estimates there are 30 million shipments of dangerous goods every year, and that 45% of that tonnage is carried by truck.

On the whole, HazMat drivers are very well trained and practices are extremely safe. Unless something goes wrong – a coupler or a joint pipe leaks, or a driver unwittingly unloads a tanker of the wrong fluid into the wrong intake pipe, or a collision causes a rupture or spill.

My friend Bill Weatherstone, now retired, recalls delivering acid to a plant in Montreal. The acid had been heated to 300 degrees, but the unloader at the site used a plastic fitting to connect to the hose, which soon melted.

Hot acid began gushing and spraying out of the trailer and a river of it was running under the tanker, acid fumes filled the yard. Quick-thinking Bill couldn't get

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*"Forty-five thousand pounds will knock you forward so damn hard and then slap back against the rear of the tank so you almost stall out if you're going up a hill,"*

— John 'Scotty' Patterson, Liquid Cargo Lines

at the shut-off tap at the front of the trailer. With acid spraying from the back of the tank, he jumped over a retaining wall and was able to hit a valve and release the hydraulic pressure stopping the flow (you can read this story and others on his Web site: [www.thedieselgypsy.com](http://www.thedieselgypsy.com)).

Another friend of mine (who prefers to remain anonymous), let's call him Igor, has been specializing in hauling cryogenic products for years. These are compressed gases like hydrogen and helium, whose liquid temperatures sit just above absolute zero (about -250 degrees C).

Needless to say, handling gases like argon, oxygen and carbon dioxide requires special procedures. For instance, acetylene cylinders have to be loaded underwater. And if you're delivering hydrogen, the line has to be purged of oxygen or an explosion could result. Hydrogen reacts with oxygen and is the preferred fuel for NASA's rockets.

More than once, Igor has been woken up in his hotel room after someone complained that his truck was venting (this occurs normally with the truck shut off).

Some motel owners are reluctant to allow "socially unacceptable" loads into their parking lots, but others are happy for the business. Igor calls this "hiding the bomb" and knows a few motels in Eastern Canada that have a spot for him to park out back. His company has gotten rid of sleeper cabs and adheres strictly to hours-of-service regs, making motel stays a regular part of the job.

Overall, trucking dangerous goods is not only safe, but rewarding. Most companies pay a premium for the work and those working with industrial gases are paid even better. It's also an industry that seems to be recession-proof. Refineries never shut down, and as manufacturing processes get more efficient and sophisticated, the need for industrial chemicals and gases keeps increasing.

No doubt, the Downsview explosion will probably lead to better enforcement and perhaps regulatory changes. The great Mississauga train derailment of 1979, involving propane and chlorine tankers, caused the evacuation of 218,000 people. Shortly afterwards, the federal government got serious about the transportation of dangerous goods and introduced a placarding and classification system that's in use today.

One criticism of the HazMat industry might be its inherent secretiveness. With few exceptions, industrial gas suppliers are reluctant to talk about the transportation of their products. As the general manager of a large Canadian propane carrier told me, "It's one of those things you feel like you shouldn't say a whole lot about."

And the US Department of Homeland Security doesn't make it any easier on carriers hauling dangerous goods into the States. Every southbound load has to be logged as to loading and departure times.

"It's been hard on us since 9/11," says Patterson. "We have to comply with so many rules and regulations."

A friend of mine was once complaining about 200 trucks of Toronto's garbage rolling down the 401 to Michigan every day. So I took him to the overpass on Keele Street and we counted 200 trailers in about six minutes. "You see, 200 more trucks in 24 hours isn't going to make any difference."

But the point I should have made is that it's being done safely 24/7 and we don't hear about it. And until we figure out a better way to do things, our society needs what's in those tankers and cylinders. But a little more openness from a transportation sector that should be proud of its safety record might go a long way in reassuring a public that's still a little shaky after the Downsview blast. □

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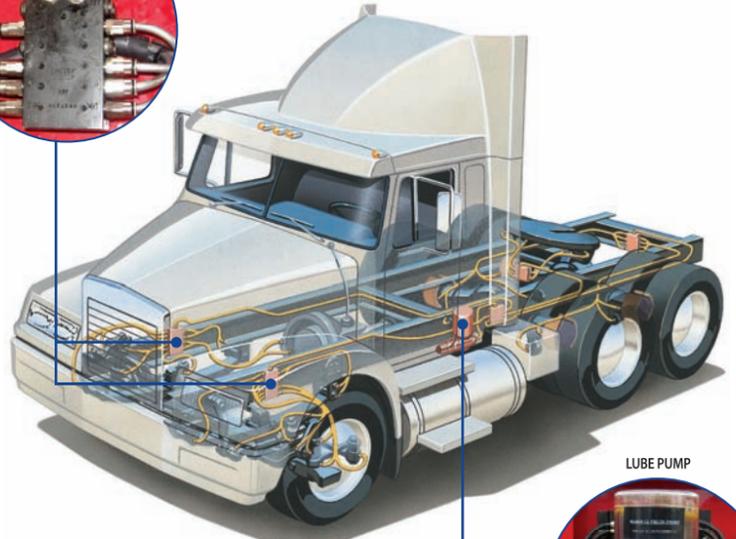
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**TORONTO, Ont.** – The inconvenient truth may be that Earth is getting warmer. But the reality is that it still gets cold in Canada during the winter. An auxiliary cab heater has proven to be among the most economical ways to provide cab comfort during the winter.

According to a study by the American Transportation Research Institute, 32% of a truck's idle-time is spent keeping the sleeper warm.

Here in Canada, that number could be even higher.

While auxiliary heaters don't of-

fer the luxury of hotel-load power or cooling, they can be used in combination with other solutions to provide year-round comfort.

A well-constructed auxiliary heater from a reputable supplier such as Espar, Webasto or Teleflex can be an ideal solution for keeping warm this winter.

Brian Curliss, product manager for Teleflex Power Systems, says there are several options when choosing an auxiliary heater.

Firstly, truckers must choose between several solutions: a diesel-fired heater that provides cab warmth but doesn't warm the engine block; a heavy-duty coolant heater that circulates truck engine coolant through a heat exchanger, warming the cab and also keeping the engine block heated for easy starts in cold weather; and light-duty coolant heaters which keep the engine warm, but lack the capacity to warm the cab. Alternatively, you can opt for both a separate light-duty coolant heater for the engine and a diesel-fired heater for cab warmth.

Webasto's Josh Lupu said he often recommends combining a cab heater with a coolant heater to eliminate the need to idle the truck to warm up the engine while also keeping the driver warm.

Once you decide on the type of heater that is best for your specific use, Curliss said truckers should consider the heating capacity required of their heater.

To keep a sleeper comfortable when it's zero degrees celcius outside, about 20 BTUs are required for every cubic foot of space.

So if you have an 80-inch double bunk sleeper with 320 cubic feet, you'll require a heater with

**Continued on page 52 ■**

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**AUXILIARY HEATERS**

**Measuring a payback**

Continued from page 50  
 at least a 6,400 BTU heating capacity. In general, Curliss said a heater that pumps out 6,000-7,000 BTUs should be adequate to keep most sleepers warm. The quality of the truck's insulation and the use of thermal curtains can also impact the heating capacity required.

A heater with a high BTU will ultimately consume more fuel, Curliss admitted, however it will also get the cab or engine warmed up more quickly than a lower-powered heater.

Another consideration is find-

ing adequate room for installation. A heavy-duty coolant heater will need to be installed on the frame rail while most light-duty coolant heaters can go under the hood and in-cab heaters can be installed inside the cab.

Webasto's Lupu said it's well worth having a reputable supplier complete the installation, since there are obvious risks involved when you're dealing with fuel lines.

However, the installation itself isn't overly complex, he said.

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**COZY CAB:** Wayne Love, an owner/operator with Mullen Transport, uses a Teleflex cab heater to keep his bunk warm during the harsh western Canadian winters.

protecting yourself from voiding any warranties on the unit or vehicle.

It takes an authorized technician about four hours to install an air heater, according to Curliss.

Once you've chosen a heating solution, it's important to track its performance and determine a payback.

Curliss said capacity, length of time in use and cost of fuel all enter the equation when measuring return on investment.

Teleflex's Proheat Air A2, for instance, has a capacity of 6,800 BTUs and consumes about a half-cup of diesel per hour, which is a 97% savings over idling the truck's main engine.

Using the heater for eight hours

a day, five months of the year results in a savings of about US\$3,200 per year if diesel costs US\$4.25 per gallon, the company claims.

Espar's Airtronic D2 can run for 21 to 23 hours on a single gallon of diesel, the company claims. It has a fuel-savings calculator on its Web site ([www.espar.com](http://www.espar.com)) which allows prospective customers to find out exactly how

much they'll save based on their own operating conditions.

For its part, Webasto claims its Air Top 2000 heater with a 7,000 BTU capacity burns one gallon of diesel for every 20 hours of use while it's more powerful cousin, the Air Top 3500 uses a gallon of diesel to provide 10 hours of heating while pumping out 12,000 BTUs.

Most cab heaters are easy to

maintain, needing only an annual inspection.

Lupu also said customers should choose a heater from a reputable company that will support its products through an expansive dealer network. A low-price solution may not deliver good value if it's frequently broken down and requiring repairs, he pointed out. □

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**FLEET NEWS**



**LESS THAN 100 UNITS:** Brian Taylor and Theresa Barclay of Liberty Linehaul accept their retention award from Nevio Turchet of SelecTrucks Canada.

**Carriers capture retention awards**

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Two respected Canadian carriers captured the 2008 *Over the Road/SelecTrucks of Canada Canadian Retention Awards* at the sixth Annual Canadian Recruiting and Retention Conference. The event was held at the Doubletree

International Plaza Hotel in Toronto Sep. 22-24.

Liberty Linehaul of Ayr, Ont. won in the Fewer than 100 Power Units category. In presenting the award, SelecTrucks of Canada manager Nevio Turchet pointed to the company's commitment to maintaining its strict hiring criteria and commitment to home time and family as reasons behind the company's retention success. Liberty Linehaul president Brian Taylor and human resources manager Theresa Barclay accepted the award on behalf of the company.

The award in the 100 Power Units or More category was presented to the Erb Group of Companies of New Hamburg, Ont.

In presenting the award Turchet commented, "This company's retention efforts begin with effective recruiting and continue through the driver's time with the company, including an excellent and thorough driver orientation program and family involvement programs that are like no other. They take extra steps to let their drivers know that they are appreciated such as their 'best doctors' service (a service which helps their drivers stop smoking), and their Sup-Erb awards program which recognizes their drivers for their accomplishments and performance."

Dave Dietrich accepted the award on behalf of the Erb Group, which previously won the award in 2005.

Both awards recognize the carriers who best demonstrate overall, the lowest driver turnover rate, the most improved driver turnover rate, and the best effort to improve driver retention over a number of years.

Also honoured at the event was Niki Brown, dispatcher for Elgin Motor Freight of London, Ont., who was presented with the 2008 OTR/KRTS Canadian Dispatcher of the Year Award.

The award recognizes an outstanding individual working in the field of dispatch and is presented annually to the dispatcher who best demonstrates a commitment to customer service, safety, driver well-being, courtesy, teamwork and problem solving.

In presenting the award, KRTS president Kim Richardson said, "This year's winner continues this award's tradition of exemplifying dispatching excellence."

Brown is the second consecutive female to win the award. □

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## Challenger CEO takes aim at rumours

**TORONTO, Ont.** – Rumours of Challenger Motor Freight's demise are "complete hog wash," the company's chairman and CEO said during the sixth annual Recruiting and Retention Conference hosted by *Over the Road*.

Company founder Dan Einwechter admitted his company is struggling with the same challenges as everyone else in the industry.

However, he said his company will survive the current downturn, thanks in part to the equity it has built in its massive Cambridge, Ont. headquarters.

"People said when we built this facility, we had finally lost it, we could never pay for it, we'll go out of business," Einwechter said.

"It has doubled in value in three years and I cannot imagine at all...going through the tumultuous times we've had in this industry without having this as part of our arsenal of weapons we used in the challenges we've faced."

Einwechter said the last two years have been "the absolute toughest that I have witnessed" in 33 years in the trucking industry. However, he also said he has faith the industry will rebound.

"I think that many companies that survived have learned from it and will go on to be bigger, better companies and go on to manage their capacity in a better fashion," he said.

As far as the rumours are concerned, Einwechter said the trucking industry is "the master of misinformation and rumours."

"As much as we're collegial and very close with each other, we're also highly competitive and it creates a unique environment for rumour-mongering," Einwechter told fleet managers and HR professionals gathered for the three-day conference.

The company has been addressing the rumours head-on by distributing audiobooks carrying state-of-the-company addresses and posting frequent updates on monitors at its headquarters.

Einwechter said he feels Canada's trucking industry is well-positioned for a recovery.

"I think it'll get better. Rates are going up with capacity restrictions. I think we're going to be in a sweet spot if the Canadian dollar stays exactly where it is," he said. "But the US problem with this \$700 billion issue and fuel (prices) can make me a liar overnight."

The majority of Einwechter's presentation centered around Challenger's driver retention strategies, which earned the fleet an OTR/SelecTrucks of Canada Canadian Retention Award last year.

Watch future episodes of our WebTV show *Transportation Matters* on Trucknews.com for segments of Einwechter's speech. □

## B&B Transport constructing new terminal

**ST-HYACINTHE, Que.** – B&B Transport is constructing a new 22,900 sq.-ft. terminal here that will be built with driver amenities in mind, the company has announced. The new state-of-the-art terminal is being constructed at a cost of \$2.5 million, the company says.

"The new facility is mainly focused on our employees' comforts and demands," B&B Transport announced. It will feature fully-equipped wash bays with new "ultra-modern" tank cleaning systems. There will be a covered fueling/inspection area, large service bays with pits, driver relaxation rooms and offices with large windows, the company says.

"We worked a lot with employees and customers on the development of this terminal," B&B management told *Truck News*. B&B Transport is sister company of Bess Tank Lines and part of the Rouillard Group of Companies.

The new facility will be situated near the rail hub and rail connections will be part of Phase 2 of the project, scheduled to be operational by Summer, 2009. Phase 1, construction of the new terminal, is nearing completion and should be operational by November. □

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**Tires & Wheels**



Toyo has introduced the M154 premium all-steel **regional highway tire** to the market as well as the M137 **high-performance steer tire** for long-haul applications. Both tires were created using e-balance, according to the company, a design technique which improves tire life, endurance and resistance to irregular wear. The company notes it was recently named number one brand for medium truck tires by Tire Review magazine. The award was based on surveys of North American tire dealers. For more info, see [www.toyotires.ca](http://www.toyotires.ca).

Advantage PressurePro has introduced a **tire pressure monitoring system** for drop-and-hook applications. The company claims its system is the first drop-and-hook product in the market. It has been designed for fleets that use multiple trailers and frequently tether and untether their equipment. The system consists of: an intelligent monitor; intelligent repeater; and sensors. The repeater is located on the trailer, and communicates tire pressures to the in-cab monitor when the tractor and trailer are connected. When the trailer is unhooked, the monitor "forgets" that trailer and begins looking for new readings, the company says. For details visit [www.advantagepressurepro.com](http://www.advantagepressurepro.com).

Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions has added two sizes to its line of **Firestone FD690 Plus deep drive axle radial tires**, intended for pickup and delivery fleets seeking long mileage. A 225/70R19.5 and 245/70R19.5 offering has been introduced to round out the product line, the company announced. The FD690 features a continuous shoulder design to combat irregular wear. For more info, see your dealer.



PeopleNet has enhanced its **BLU on-board platform**, which features a powerful Driver Center display. The company says its BLU platform has been improved to deliver: text-to-speech capability; driver shortcuts; safe-mode options; and in-cab navigation. The PeopleNet BLU platform aims to provide drivers with a powerful, intuitive interface along with an open platform for fleet-specific applications

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and devices, according to the company. A seven-inch screen displays information and allows drivers to make selections at the touch of a button. So far, more than 35 fleets in Canada and the US are using the system, PeopleNet claims. For info, see [www.peoplenetonline.com](http://www.peoplenetonline.com).

TransCore introduced upgrades to its line of **GlobalWave satellite tracking** products at the recent American Trucking Associations convention. Upgrades to the GlobalWave portfolio include: the Slap & Track mobile terminal with field-replaceable battery packs; a new stop-start sensor for all GlobalWave mobile terminals; and enhancements to the CabLink system including integrated Google maps and optional electronic driver logs. The company says the new options increase the flexibility and choices available to truck fleets, allowing them to select the right combination for their own tracking needs. For info, visit [www.transcore.com](http://www.transcore.com).



Springmade Mattress Manufacturing Company has announced it is entering the trucking market. The company, which has 11 years experience manufacturing mattresses, says **truck sleeper mattresses** do not have to be difficult to find and expensive to purchase. The company is offering a foam mattress constructed of various types of foam to provide a soft mat-

tress on one side and a firmer surface on the other. The company says its foam mattresses are also less likely to hold bacteria than some alternatives. The company has a truck-accessible showroom at 110 Norfinch Drive in North York, Ont. Custom-orders are accepted and can be ready in three days, the company says. Initially, the mattresses will only be offered in Ontario, but the company says it plans to expand across Canada. For more information, visit [www.springmade.ca](http://www.springmade.ca) or call Chris at 416-575-9808 or Joe at 416-736-9003.

CarriersEdge has expanded its **video library** to include new courses from KRTS Transportation Specialists. Courses on pre-trip inspections and coupling/uncoupling will be the initial video offerings through CarriersEdge, available beginning in the fourth quarter of 2008. For details, visit [www.carriersedge.com](http://www.carriersedge.com).

Task Tools and Abrasives has expanded its **cargo securement** line of products to include towing tools, tie-downs and accessories and bungee cords. The company says it has colour-coded its tie-downs and towing tools by break strength and length to make them easy to identify. The tie-down and accessory category includes 24 products that vary by function and break strength, the company says. They include ratcheting tie-downs, adjustable tie straps, axle straps and winch straps. The company says its new cargo secure-



ment products are available now through stores in the US and Canada.



Phillips Industries has developed a **three-hose holder** for tractor-trailers. The Qwik-Snap uses a single closing action to hold three hoses in place and can be operated easily with a gloved hand, the company says. It's made of non-corrosive, durable nylon and can withstand extreme temperatures, according to the company. It is available through Phillips dealers. For more info, visit [www.phillipsind.com](http://www.phillipsind.com).

Snap-On and its subsidiary NEX-IQ Technologies have developed a new **diagnostic software application** for Navistar engines.

NAVPAK replaces the current Navistar MD32 Master Diagnostics Fleet software, the company says. NAVPAK is a PC-based application for technicians that provides diagnostic analysis and reprogramming capabilities for all International engines built since 1994. The new International MaxxForce engines, however, are not yet covered by the application. For info, visit [www.nexiq.com](http://www.nexiq.com).

Kenworth has released a new **brochure** highlighting its Class 8 and medium-duty vehicles. The brochure is available through Canadian and US Kenworth dealers, the company announced. The new brochure folds out to a large poster-sized format, featuring a group shot of many of Kenworth's models. To see the brochure, visit your Kenworth dealer.



Utility Trailer has announced the impending release of its 4000D-X Composite – a **composite wall trailer** that will be produced beginning in January. The company says the standard side wall on the new trailer will share the same durability characteristics of a common plate trailer while increasing payload, improving load securement and providing a longer life. It also boasts a lower TARE weight, the company claims. For more information, visit [www.utilitytrailer.com](http://www.utilitytrailer.com).

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# Green is the new gold

You shouldn't need me to tell you there are some serious gains to be made in adopting an aggressive fuel conservation strategy. Call it going green if you want – and what marketer or politician isn't playing the green card these days – but there are some smart folks in trucking who are finding ways of spinning all that green into gold.

You can roll your eyes at tree-hugging trucking, and there are still those who think climate change is some kind of conspiracy, but there is no question that reducing fuel consumption reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Let's face it, saving the planet is not the trucking industry's highest priority at the moment, but simply put, going green saves you money. That's the great thing about it: while you're putting money in your jeans, you can't help but do the atmosphere a favour in

## Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



the process.

Earlier this month, the US EPA SmartWay Transport Partnership and a host of Canadian organizations teamed up for a joint conference that got to the nitty-gritty of return on investment for greening your fleet. The two-day forum brought industry professionals from Canada and the US together to explore some very practical and money-making solutions to managing energy efficiency in on-road transportation.

The program went well beyond lectures about investing in idle-re-

duction technology and slowing down to save fuel, although those tools played a big part in some of the more comprehensive strategies presenters shared with us. All of the speakers were quite open and frank, some surprisingly so.

For example, David Konopka, director of quality for A.D. Transport Express, a Michigan-based auto parts hauler, described the more or less accidental discovery he made that more than a quarter of his 500-truck fleet was idling 50% of the time; some had idle rates as high as 69%. That's an extraordinary admission, really.

The problem? Trucks idling on-site in hot and cold weather awaiting dispatch orders from the fleet's principle customer. The solution? A fleet full of freshly installed APUs that's making Konopka pretty happy. Now it's on to the next step: working with the customer to improve logistics for an even more significant payback.

The other end of the spectrum is

the great lengths US truckload giant J.B. Hunt goes to in analyzing and justifying a gain in efficiency or reduction in operating costs before they spend dime one. The company's senior vice-president of engineering services, Gary Whicker, explained that defining the problem is critical to finding the right solution.

If efficiency improvements are necessary on certain lanes, the company might propose a simple improvement in fuel economy, then undertake a detailed analysis of how to achieve those gains and what it would cost. Or they'll look at an increase in payload (a revenue gain), and weigh that against the barriers posed by weights and dimensions regulations. And they could also look at reducing mileage by refining logistics in an effort to minimize deadhead and empty miles.

That obviously requires a little more effort than just hanging an APU on a truck – in fact, an APU might not be a solution at all, any more than improved aerodynamics might have helped A.D. Transport Express.

The point is that no one is doing these things just for the green of it. These are first and foremost business decisions and any fleet or individual truck owner wants to see a solid return on investment for any efforts they undertake.

The truth is, not all solutions will work effectively in every application – except one. As far as I'm concerned, Andy Roberts of B.C.'s Mountain Transport Institute made that pretty clear in his presentation on the value of driver training in the fuel-efficiency equation.

At the end of the day, all those investments in idle-reduction technology, speed management programs, logistics planning, and spec'ing a truck to the nth degree for fuel economy, could be lost if the driver doesn't understand or isn't aware of how to drive for dollars. Driver training solutions designed to enhance fuel consumption reduction techniques are ultimately more cost effective and usually produce lasting results – especially if the fleet is prepared to reward its drivers for improved performance.

But here's the kicker. Even though we know incentive programs offer fleets an innovative and progressive way to achieve fuel performance goals, research conducted recently by *eyefortransport* revealed that only 11% of the fleets surveyed have fully maintained incentive schemes in place. And while a few offer some kind of *ad hoc* incentive, and a few more are giving it some thought, 42% of the fleets have no plans for implementing incentive programs.

So while it's very cool to see a roomful of carriers listening to, sharing, and getting excited about each other's ideas, we need to find some way to spell it out for the 90% of the industry who just doesn't get it. I mean, how many ways can you spell cha-ching? □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Are you driving for dollars? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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# Navistar dedicates heavy-duty engine plant

**By James Menzies**  
**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.** – The business sections of most newspapers may be bursting with doom and gloom these days, but that didn't deter Navistar from celebrating the dedication of its Class 8 engine plant here in September.

It was a refreshing dose of good news, as the company dedicated a massive high-tech engine plant as part of its 75th anniversary as a diesel engine manufacturer.

The International MaxxForce 11- and 13-litre engines will be built at this 300,000 sq.-ft. plant, which was constructed last year.

"Since we announced our plans in 2005, these new engines have commanded the attention of the heavy truck industry," Navistar Engine Group president Jack Allen told a gathering of nearly 600 customers, OEMs, plant employees and members of the press. "Now, these advanced products, the culmination of our 75 years of diesel leadership, will command the respect of heavy truck owners and drivers as they deliver on their promise."

Huntsville was chosen as the site for the engine plant thanks to a cooperative government, strong workforce and an adjacent existing Navistar plant which builds V6 and V8 engines for light-duty vehicles, buses and RVs.

"Huntsville was selected to produce these new big bore diesel engines because of the talented and

dedicated workforce here and its clear track record of building high-quality engines at a competitive cost," Allen said to a crowd that included Alabama Governor Bob Riley.

The well-lit (and even air conditioned) plant has the capacity to build 30,000 MaxxForce engines per year with one shift active, company officials explained at the gathering.

The MaxxForce 11 and 13 are offered only on International ProStar, TranStar and WorkStar trucks and will also be available on the newest member of the International family, the LoneStar.

The engine is 400 lbs lighter than competitive models, Navistar officials claim, and has earned a reputation for being quiet and responsive.

The first Class 8 MaxxForce engine was delivered to a customer in Minnesota earlier this year.

Navistar officials also took the opportunity to provide an update on their current performance. Daniel Ustian, Navistar president, chairman and CEO, said the company's goal is to control 60% market share in the bus industry, 40% in the medium-duty segment and 20% of the Class 8 market in Canada and the US.

He said when averaged out through the three segments, Navistar has achieved its goal.

It has now turned its attention



**IN PRODUCTION:** The big bore International MaxxForce engine is now rolling off the production line at Navistar's Huntsville, Ala. plant.

to recapturing market share in those segments where it falls short, such as in the medium-duty segment where its piece of the market has slipped to about 36-37%, Ustian said.

In Canada, Ustian said Navistar enjoys a slightly higher market share than in the US.

He also said the truck market is not as soft in Canada as it is south of the border. Allen attributed this to the strength of the energy market.

"The energy aspect of the Canadian market is one of those things that is keeping the market stronger there," he said. Ustian added the lumber and reefer segments remain strong in Canada. He also said the current credit crisis does not immediately threaten Navistar's operations. □

## Children of Volvo drivers eligible for scholarship

**GREENSBORO, N.C.** – Volvo Trucks North America has launched a scholarship program that will award \$35,000 to the children of truckers who drive a Volvo. The 'Great Minds' scholarship program will award three scholarships – one for \$20,000, one for \$10,000 and another for \$5,000 – to college or university students in the US or Canada, the company has announced.

Eligible recipients must have a parent or guardian who drives a Volvo truck for a living.

"Every parent knows the future lives through our children, especially in the trucking industry where so many businesses have strong family ties," said Scott Kress, Volvo senior vice-president, sales and marketing. "The current economic situation has many families struggling to find a way to pay college expenses. Our customers help provide Volvo's future, so we want to help them secure their children's future."

Eligible students must be already in, or entering, a college or university program in Fall, 2009. To compete for the scholarships, students must submit an essay on 'What has trucking meant to my family?' Applications will be accepted until March 27, 2009. Visit [www.volvotrucksgreatminds.com](http://www.volvotrucksgreatminds.com). □

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OEM/DEALER NEWS

## Poppy truck now even cooler with addition of Patriot APU

ANCASTER, Ont. – Simplicity Air and its sister company Canadian Extreme Climate Systems, have donated and installed an auxiliary power unit (APU) on Larry Josie's popular 'poppy truck.'

Josie's poppy truck, a moving tribute to Canada's fallen soldiers, has been busy attending events over the past year. Josie, in addition to earning a living as an owner/operator, has been paying for the fuel to attend industry events out of pocket.

Simplicity Air, which specializes in providing climate control systems including the Patriot APU manufactured by Canadian Extreme Climate Systems, wanted to get involved after its owner Brian Bassindale read about the poppy truck in the November, 2007 issue of *Truck News*.

Bassindale and sales manager, John Cowan, contacted Josie to see how they could help him spread his

message. They learned that the cost of fuel was a drain on Josie and decided they could help by providing an APU and reducing his need to idle. It seemed like a perfect fit, since their APU was called the "Patriot."

"Everyone has someone they know that either is or have been in the Armed Forces and it is about time that some recognition from the public is portrayed on a moving billboard," says Bassindale. "The part that amazed me was that Larry has been putting forth most of the effort himself by attending as many functions as possible and still trying to earn a living like every other truck owner."

The APU was installed on the poppy truck in January, 2008 by Simplicity Air.

"I've really enjoyed the Patriot over this past year," says a grateful Josie. "It has been very reliable for heating, air-conditioning and 110-



**NOW COOLER:** Larry Josie's poppy truck now uses less fuel while attending events, thanks to a Patriot APU donated by Simplicity Air.

volt power. What I like most is its simplicity. There are no fancy controls, just turn on and turn off."

Bassindale adds, "We are proud to support Larry and the poppy truck in his endeavor and hope that many other individuals will do the same." □

## Urea distribution network begins to take form

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Pilot Travel Centers has announced it will offer diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) – or urea – "at the pump" for customers that will use trucks equipped with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) in 2010.

The fluid, which is required by SCR systems, will be available at more than 100 Pilot truck stops by late 2009, the company says.

It claims its decision to make DEF available at the pump will maximize affordability and convenience for customers using engines with SCR. Pilot also announced all of its truck stops will offer DEF in pre-packaged containers for top-ups.

"By working with Detroit Diesel Corporation and Daimler Trucks North America, as well as other OEMs, we've begun to learn a lot more about SCR and the infrastructure needed to support this beneficial new technology," said Mark Hazelwood, executive vice-president of Pilot.

"We believe this product will create efficiencies for trucking companies which will, in essence, increase their MPG and save them money. This product offering also helps Pilot to continue its Pilot 'green' initiatives and commitment to becoming the first environmentally-friendly travel center network."

Meanwhile, a lobby group aimed at promoting SCR has set up an information Web site at [www.factsaboutscr.com](http://www.factsaboutscr.com).

The North American SCR Stakeholders Group launched the site, which provides updates on SCR development in North America while debunking some of the myths surrounding the technology. Topics covered by the site include: what is SCR?; SCR performance advantages; the environment; public health impact; and DEF.

"While we know SCR will be the emissions control technology of choice for the majority of the commercial trucking industry," said Kim Doran, chair of the communications sub-committee of the North American SCR Stakeholders Group, editor of [factsaboutscr.com](http://factsaboutscr.com) and CEO of Quixote Group, "we also recognize that education will be key to understanding SCR's benefits and features. [factsaboutscr.com](http://factsaboutscr.com) will keep the industry and interested public updated as EPA 2010 and stringent regulations come into effect and the inevitable implementation of SCR becomes a reality."

SCR is an exhaust aftertreatment system that will be rolled out in 2010 and requires the use of urea. □

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**NOW OPEN:** Employees gather to celebrate the opening of Kenworth Grand-Mere, located about 20 miles north of Trois-Rivieres.

## Kenworth Grand-Mere now open

**GRAND-MERE, Que.** – A new Kenworth parts and service dealer has been established in the Mauricie Region of Quebec, which is located about 20 miles north of Trois-Rivieres (at the intersection of Highway 55 and Highway 40), which is a major transportation corridor between Montreal and Quebec City.

The new Quebec dealership has been developed to enhance customer support, and will utilize an approximately 10,000 sq.-ft. facility, with five drive-through service bays and a parts department. Furthermore, the dealership serves as an official Province of Quebec truck inspection station, and is the only one in the area. Kenworth Grand-Mere is the newest addition to the 300-location Kenworth dealer network in Canada and the US. According to Luc Goudreault, the president and dealer principal of Kenworth Grand-Mere, Kenworth's solid reputation made joining the network an easy decision.

"Many truck operators in the Mauricie Region own or drive Kenworth trucks, which are engineered to handle the rigors of over-the-road and vocational applications," he says. "Kenworth Grand-Mere will offer those Kenworth operators and other customers the convenience of outstanding Kenworth parts and service support."

Kenworth Grand-Mere is located at 3000 2e Rue off Highway 55 on the northwest side of Grand-Mere. The parts and service facility is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday. The phone number is 819-533-4996. □

## US O/Os document travels in Cascadia

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – Three American owner/operators have been handed the keys to a new Freightliner Cascadia, and asked to document their experiences online for a year.

The 'Slice of Life' program will allow the participating truckers to drive a brand new Cascadia for a year.

In turn they will blog about their real-life experiences and travels on the newly-formed Web site: [www.sliceoftruckerlife.com](http://www.sliceoftruckerlife.com).

"The Cascadia and DD15 pairing results in an extremely fuel efficient on-highway commercial vehicle that will positively impact bottom lines," said Melissa Clausen, director of product marketing for Freightliner Trucks.

"Through this unique program, we are pleased to help these owner/operators meet their business needs while they test out the Cascadia in their day-to-day lives."

The three participating owner/operators are: Henry Albert, 44, of Statesville, N.C.; Dick McCorkle, 63, Noblesville, Ind.; and Kurt Grove, 49, of Sapulpa, Okla.

"I am honoured that Freightliner chose me to participate in this project," Albert said. "I'm really looking forward to experiencing just how fuel efficient we can get these trucks to operate. I also am anxious to drive the Cascadia because of how quiet it will be."

The owner/operators have had their Cascadias since Aug. 19.

"The Slice of Life trucks are already generating significant interest among other truckers who want to know more about what it is Kurt, Dick and Henry are a part of," said Jamie Cabrera, manager, owner/operator product marketing for Freightliner Trucks. The trucks and drivers will be available at the Mid-America Trucking Show March 19-21 in Louisville, Ky. □

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OEM/DEALER NEWS

# Navistar stands firm on commitment to EGR for 2010

## Company downplays cost-saving potential of SCR

By James Menzies

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.** – During the recent dedication of the Navistar engine plant here, several high-ranking executives made themselves available to field questions from trade press editors. Of course, with EPA2010 emissions standards looming, it's no surprise Navistar's decision to meet the impending regulations without exhaust aftertreatment was the primary subject of discussion.

Jack Allen, president of Navistar's engine group, defended his company's decision to avoid urea-based Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR), referring to it as "the most onerous aftertreatment solution customers will have ever seen – way more onerous than diesel particulate filters."

He contended the cost of urea will mitigate any fuel mileage savings offered by re-tuned engines using lower levels of exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) in combination with SCR.

"It is our belief that the total cost of ownership between SCR and non-SCR is going to be indistinguishable to the customer," he said from the floor of Navistar's Huntsville, Alabama plant, which is now producing International MaxxForce big bore engines.

When asked if he was concerned about Cummins decision

to adopt SCR on its heavy-duty engines, a strategic change of course that was announced in August, Allen said "We stand by our decision – our decision was made independent of Cummins."

In fact, he said a recent decision by MAN and Scania in Europe to offer a non-SCR Euro 5 engine validates Navistar's strategy.

Both European manufacturers had already introduced Euro 5-compliant SCR engines, but they announced at the Hanover truck show in September that they would make an EGR option available as well. Euro 5 NOx standards are more restrictive than EPA07 limits, but not as stringent as EPA2010 regulations, Allen said.

"If there had been a great customer acceptance of (SCR), neither one of those companies would have felt compelled to invest the engineering dollars into making a non-SCR version," he reasoned.

Tim Shick, director of marketing of Navistar's engine group, was also available to discuss the

nuts and bolts of Navistar's 2010 emissions solution. He said advances in EGR technology have enabled the company to become EPA2010-compliant without SCR, specifically: the development of a High Pressure Common Rail (HPCR) fuel system that will boost fuel pressures to above 30,000 psi; and a metered injection process.

The fuel will be injected in five stages, Shick explained, which reduces the explosive effect of combustion and allows for a more efficient burn, creating less NOx in the first place.

"So we retain fuel economy by making the fuel more burnable, when the engine needs it most at low speeds," Shick explained of the HPCR fuel system.

He conceded more exhaust gas will have to be recirculated through the engine, to the tune of about 10%. That brings the total EGR rate to about 40%, he explained.

He also responded to concerns the engine will run hotter as a result of the higher EGR levels

required in 2010.

"Is the heat load going up? The answer to that is yes, just like it has gone up the past 20 years as we've added air-conditioning, bigger alternators and all the things we've added to trucks that increase the load on the engine," Shick explained. "(But) the engines themselves will not run hotter than they do today, they'll just require bigger cooling systems."

International trucks will come with larger rads in 2010, and heat-sensitive components such as EGR valves will be wrapped in a water jacket, Shick said.

He dismissed concerns that increasing EGR levels may cause piston or cylinder wear.

"People say 'Don't put the exhaust back in the cylinder.' Well, that's where it came from, it's not going to damage the cylinder."

He likened the warning to advising someone not to swallow saliva, which is produced in the mouth to begin with.

Shick also challenged the cost-savings being touted by the SCR camp, which has promised its engines will achieve 3-5% better fuel economy. The rising cost of diesel was one of Cummins main motivators behind switching paths earlier this summer.

Shick admitted engines with SCR may consume less diesel, but he said "For every gallon of diesel fuel you don't use through more

'To operate a truck with EGR for a year we think is going to be less expensive than SCR.'

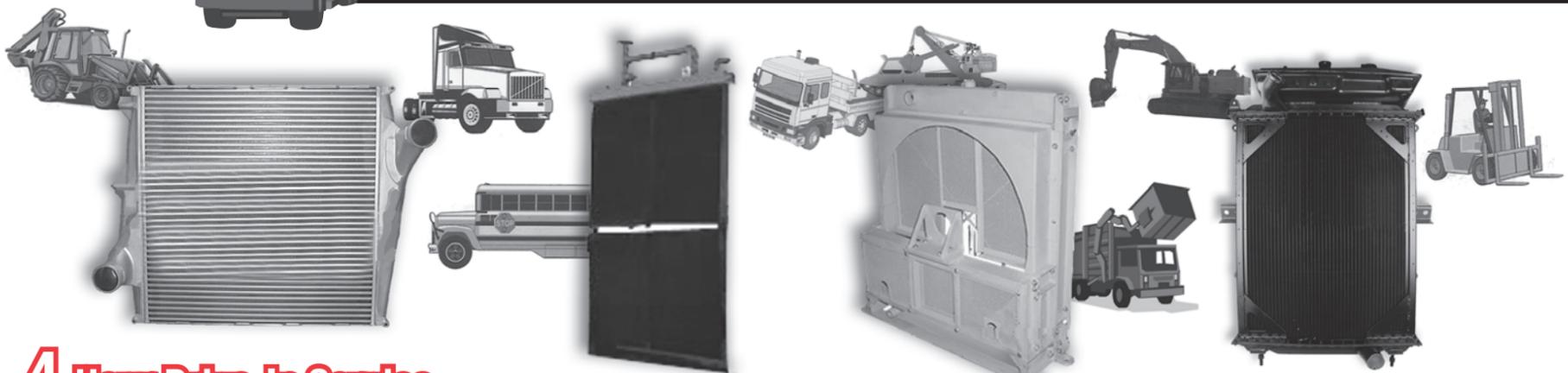
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aggressive tuning of that engine, you're going to have to add a gallon of urea to render down the NOx."

He said both 2010 options will use the same amount of fluid going down the highway, but "the challenge is, how much is urea going to cost?"

"Those who offer SCR are pretty consistent in their expectations of 2-3% fuel economy improvement. For every 100 gallons diesel fuel consumed by a pre-2010 engine, they say the 2010 SCR engine will consume only 97 gallons or 98 gallons of diesel fuel due to more aggressive engine tuning," Shick explained.

"Our work shows that the resulting higher level of engine-out NOx with this scenario would require two to three gallons of urea to neutralize. Plus another gallon of urea is needed at base to improve the pre-2010 engine to 2010 emission levels with no improvement in fuel economy. So you have a total 2010 requirement of three to four gallons of urea to save two to three gallons of diesel fuel."

Whether or not SCR-equipped engines will deliver lower cost of operation depends on whether or not the cost of urea will be less than diesel, Shick insisted.

Allen added urea costs as much as \$12/gallon in parts of Germany, not taking into account volume discounts.

SCR proponents have insisted urea will cost less than diesel when rolled out across North America.

As far as the purchase price of 2010 vehicles is concerned, Shick said it's too early to determine, as the company is still working with suppliers to finalize pricing of the necessary components.

But when it comes to cost of operation, he said "To operate a truck with EGR for a year we think is going to be less expensive than SCR." □

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By Edo van Belkom

**The story so far...**

**Mark has a coffee with two other drivers who work for Bud. One of the drivers, a constant complainer named Manny Giron, wants to know why Bud gives Mark all the best loads while he's getting only local runs? Mark can't speak for Bud, and takes offense to Manny's assertion that Mark is paying Bud kickbacks. Just as the conversation starts to get heated, Bud enters the coffee shop.**

Mark Dalton sat in silence at the table along with two other men, a younger driver named Manny Giron who felt he wasn't getting any good loads, and a suicide jockey named Franco who hauled anything that was flammable or explosive, preferably both. All their eyes were on Bud – the man who dispatched all of their loads – as he ordered a coffee and donut up at the counter.

As Bud neared the table, Franco pulled up a chair for the man to sit down. "You're right on time, Bud. We were just talking about you."

"So that's why my ears were burning," Bud said. He looked at each of the men in turn, then made a face. "This can't be good."

"We're just talking," Franco said.

Mark waited for Manny to ask Bud about his loads, but he said nothing. Mark wasn't all that surprised by Manny's silence. For as long as he'd known the man – which wasn't very long at all – the guy had been a lot of talk without much action. Sure he'd gripe and complain to a bunch of drivers about the way he felt he was being treated, but he'd never have the backbone to confront the problem head-on. That's why Mark decided to give him a hand.

"Manny here has been complaining about the loads he's been getting," Mark said.

Manny's face seem to pale slightly. "Is that true?" Bud asked, taking a sip of coffee and a bite of his donut.

"Well, a little."  
"Are you kidding me?" Mark said. "Why, just a few minutes ago Manny here was saying I get all the best loads because I'm either paying you a kick-back or plying you with booze."

Bud looked at Manny, a hint of disappointment in his eyes. "That true?" Franco nodded.

Manny seemed to shrink back in his chair. "He does get a lot of sweet loads." "I see," was all Bud said.

"And, well, I don't know. Maybe I could get myself one of those good loads every once in a while."

Bud said nothing for the longest time, taking several sips of his coffee and polishing off his donut with just a few bites. He slowly wiped the crumbs off his hands, then pushed them off the table with a wipe of a paper napkin. Finally, once the table was clean, he took one

last sip of coffee and said, "You've been working for me steady for a while now, right?"

"Ten months tomorrow."  
"And every time you call I've got a load for you?"

"Yes."  
"And you've even had so much work that you've had to turn me down a couple of times."

"I do have a life."  
"I'm not saying you don't," Bud reasoned. "And I don't have a problem with you saying 'no' every once in a while. People should have some balance in their lives. I'm just asking so everything's clear."

"So what's clear?" Manny asked, his eyes wide with fear.

"I want to make sure all the facts are straight before I start talking, because I don't want you to start backtracking once I get going."

Mark smiled.  
Franco said, "This ought to be good."

"First of all, Mark Dalton never refuses a load. He might ask me for something special, he might choose one load over another, or he might ask me not to call him for a couple of days when he decides to take a few off, but he's never said 'no' to me."

Mark raised his head and tried to think back to a time when he might have turned Bud down. For all his efforts, he couldn't think of one.

"Not once?" Manny said in disbelief.  
"Nope," Bud said with a slight shake of his head. "Now, he's not always my first choice for certain loads..."

Mark did a slight double-take.  
"But I've never had to tell one of my customers that I've got no-one to take a load because in the end I know I can always call Mark and he'll help me out."

Manny didn't seem all that impressed. "But you do give him a lot of the best loads?" he said.

"Of course I do," Bud snapped. "He takes whatever I give him, even last minute loads..." Bud leaned forward so his face was closer to Manny's. "And he never complains."

Everyone looked at Manny.  
"What? I don't complain...that much."

Franco laughed out loud. Mark kept his laughter under his breath.

"No?" Bud said with a sneer. "Every time I talk to you there's something wrong. 'Do you know how long I had to wait for the shipper to let me back up to

the loading dock.' 'It was a no touch load, but they were so slow unloading I had to give them a hand.'"

Franco was still laughing. In fact everyone at the table was enjoying Bud's rant, except for Manny. He was shrinking back into his chair, appearing to get smaller with each passing second.

"Even what you're doing now," Bud continued. "I'd call that complaining."

"Me too," said Franco.  
"But I'm being a bit unfair singling you out like this..."

Manny was happy to hear that, sitting a little straighter in his seat.

"I've got a half-dozen drivers who are worse than you, calling in sick every time it rains, or whenever the sun is shining – take your pick. They don't want to ever touch a load. They won't take anything they have to strap down and check every hundred miles or so. They won't

"Like that time in Pennsylvania when you had a flat at two in the morning. Instead of handling it yourself, you called me up in the middle of the night to tell me you had a flat tire."

Manny shrugged. "I don't know anybody in Pennsylvania. Who else am I going to call?"

"So, like the good boss I am, I start calling around to get someone out to change your tire." He paused a moment. "But were you there when the tire man arrived?" Another, shorter pause. "Nooooo!"

Both Mark and Franco groaned at that.

"I found somebody to fix the tire."  
"But you never called to let me know."

"I didn't think you were doing anything."

"And you never thought to ask."

Manny said nothing, but Mark and Franco filled the void by saying, "You gotta call."

"Then there was that time I asked you to do a load to Edmonton...and you refused."

"My girlfriend was coming into town."

Bud smiled. "Sure, that's important, but I need you to drive for me when I need you, not just when it's good for you."  
"But if you gave me better loads, I'd be more willing to take whatever loads you offered me."

Bud shook his head. "It doesn't work that way."  
Mark thought about his next load,

what it was and where it was going, then cracked open his cell phone to check if he still had a certain number. When the number was there, Mark decided that maybe Manny deserved to take his load. Then, before Bud could start in on another rant, Mark spoke up. "Manny," he said. "Where's your next load going?"

"Buffalo, why?"  
"Mine's going to Tampa. If it's alright with Bud, why don't we switch loads?"

Manny eyed Mark suspiciously. "There's got to be something wrong."

"Nothing wrong. A nice long haul into Tampa and as many days layover you want. I hear it's quite warm there this time of year."

Manny looked at Bud. "Is this on the level?"

"Sure, why not?"

Manny reached across the table and shook hands with Mark. "Deal."

**- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3 of Playing Favourites.**



The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator  
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**PEOPLE**

**Clayton Gording** has been named president of Reimer Express Lines.

Vice-president of operations since 2001, Gording was responsible for all service centre operations, line-haul operations, vehicle purchasing, company-wide vehicle maintenance and labour relations. He began his career with Reimer Express in 1966 serving in a variety of clerical positions at the Regina, Sask. service centre. Outside of his professional duties at Reimer Express, Gording has also served in industry director and executive roles, including president of the Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) from 2006-08. He currently serves as past-president.

Canadian **Darren Christle**, executive director, motor carrier division of Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation, was elected president of the North America-wide enforcement agency, the CVSA, at its annual meeting Sept. 2.

Previously, Christle has served as

secretary treasurer and vice-president of the CVSA. He has been involved in private and public sectors of the transportation industry for over 20 years. Currently, he's in charge of commercial motor vehicle safety, regulation and enforcement in Manitoba. Christle is also a past chairman of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators Standing Committee on Compliance and Regulatory Affairs, and he has represented Manitoba on the CCMTA for 12 years.

ArvinMeritor has named **Craig Cartmill** its new general manager, operations of its Worldwide Commercial Vehicle Aftermarket group. Cartmill will be responsible for leading global operations for the group and will also be charged with deploying lean business principles.

Cartmill served 27 years with Daimler Trucks North America, most recently as director of parts distribution operations. □

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PEOPLE

**Top Canadian drivers honoured at national championships**

OTTAWA, Ont. – Top truck drivers from across Canada came out in full force at the 2008 National Professional Truck Driving Championships, held in Ottawa, Ont. Sept. 13. The Ontario Truck Driving Championships played host to the event, which pits truckers against each other in a variety of skills competitions.

“Not only did they demonstrate their excellent driving skills, but they displayed safety skills, courtesy, knowledge, and the professionalism required to conduct business on our highways,” said event organizers. “We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the many people and organizations that helped to make the 2008 NPTDC a huge success.”

Walking away with top honours at the event was *Mario Desjardins* of L. Simard Transport in Quebec, who was crowned Grand Champion.

Rookie of the Year honours went to *Shawn Matheson* of Home Hardware Stores in Ontario, while the best performers in the Team Trophy competition hailed from British Columbia.

The remaining winners in the six driving categories were as follows:

**Step Van**

- 1st: *Julius Swecera* of Reimer Express Lines in B.C.;
- 2nd: *Karen Porter* of Purolator in Ontario;
- 3rd: *Garth Deschamps* of Canadian Freightways in Manitoba.

**Straight Truck**

- 1st: *Kevin Franklin* of Canadian Freightways in Alberta;
- 2nd: *Larry Radons* of Reimer Express Lines in Saskatchewan;
- 3rd: *Stewart Jutzi* of Erb Transport in Ontario.

**Single axle**

- 1st: *Darren Tychkowsky* of Reimer Express Lines in Alberta;
- 2nd: *Brent Rose* of SLH Transport in Ontario;
- 3rd: *Claude Guerin* of Transport Bourassa in Quebec.

**Single Tandem**

- 1st: *Dean Grant* of Agrifoods International in B.C.;
- 2nd: *Harvey Gording* of Reimer Express Lines in Saskatchewan;
- 3rd: *Richard Harris* of Con-Way Canada in Quebec.

**Tandem**

- 1st: *Mario Desjardins* of L. Simard Transport in Quebec;
- 2nd: *Shawn Matheson* of Home Hardware Stores in Ontario;
- 3rd: *Bob Balen* of Canadian Freightways in B.C.

**Train**

- 1st: *Ken Wiebe* of EBD Transport in Manitoba;
- 2nd: *Keith Atherton* of SLH Transport in Saskatchewan;
- 3rd: *Ernest Streicher* of Home Hardware Store in Ontario. □

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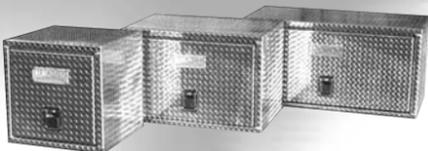


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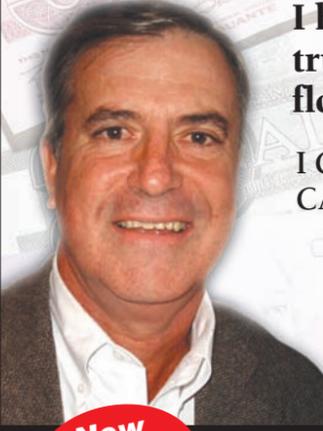
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## Truckers earn long-overdue respect

It seems that truckers may finally get the respect they deserve. Unfortunately, there are those that feel a catastrophic event must occur before it happens. The *Toronto Star* carried an article on Oct. 8 talking about the after-effects of “when” a flu pandemic hits. What really bothered me was the wording *when* not *if*. Apparently the people “in the know” feel it’s inevitable. Scary stuff.

The story quotes a major bioethics study that determined utility workers and truck drivers have been deemed equally important as doctors and nurses in order for society to survive if such an event occurs. It seems that the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has shown us that “the after-effects of a disaster can be as damaging as the precipitating event,” according to the study.

“Just-in-time” delivery will create shortages on just about everything we take for granted. Access to the necessities of life will be society’s number one priority. Guess what? Without truckers, there won’t be any necessities on store shelves. Just about everything we take for granted is delivered by truck. Drivers will be given medical priority – if you hold an A/Z licence, be prepared to go to the head of the vaccine line (and your families as well, I hope). Without you, society will be hard-pressed to continue. I know it sounds like a Hollywood blockbuster, but think about it. It will truly be a

### Publisher’s Comment

**Rob Wilkins**



whole new world. Maybe not like the classic sci-fi flick ‘Mad Max’ but things will change.

It’s refreshing that the mainstream media finally picked up on a trucking story that doesn’t involve an accident. To be prioritized on the same level as doctors and nurses speaks volumes on how important you really are. Not to put myself down but I think publishers will likely be put to the back of the line. I’m fine with it, for the greater good and all that. I’d just want to make sure the bonehead politicians are behind me. After listening to them yap over the last few months, I am as undecided as ever. But, I digress.

The moral of this editorial – be proud of what you do. If (notice I say *if*) this pandemic does hit, you will be our lifeline and I’m betting you won’t be seeing any more articles slamming the industry. It’s just too bad that it may take this to wake people up. □

– 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](mailto:rwilkins@trucknews.com).

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# Not a fan of automatics

Dear Editor:

I apologize for my delayed response to your article about UltraShift automated transmissions published in the August issue of *Truck News*.

Just recently, I got off a relatively new International ProStar equipped with a 13-speed UltraShift automated tranny so I can understand the excitement these transmissions may cause in a casual driver.

Unfortunately the reality turns out quite different, when you drive these things seven days a week.

I have been driving the same truck you drove at Purolator, an International 9200i with 10-speed UltraShift, for over two years in linehaul now.

One can get use to the slightly different driving technique with an automatic relatively quickly, and even the occasional erratic shifting or jerking clutch on older units.

The built-in delay of clutch engagement, however, becomes more problematic. In other words, the response of the truck to its accelerator is too slow.

This becomes quite hazardous when you try to fit in front of approaching traffic.

The reduced maneuverability of all automatics is another issue which becomes critical, especially in the winter.

I experienced situations when I got stuck with my tractor in snow, or on an icy patch and had to call for a tow truck in situations where getting out with a standard truck would have been a piece of cake.

Many reviews cite the fuel economy of automated transmissions without providing any concrete data to support their claim. I have not noticed any fuel savings at all.

One mid-size, Ontario-based carrier has been a strict user of automatics in its linehaul operations for several years. Yes, it is true, it may have helped driver recruitment.

The automatics attracted many less skilled, inexperienced drivers. The company experienced an es-

calation of accident rates, and an increase of rollovers. The carrier's CVOR was downgraded and it lost customers.

During the recent slump in the trucking industry, the company was forced to re-evaluate its hiring strategy.

Now it employs more experienced drivers, but it faces increased resentment from its drivers against its automatic trucks. Many drivers (including myself) are willing to drive automatics only in the summer and will take winter off, or switch to another carrier on a standard truck because the automatic transmission's reduced maneuverability is simply too dangerous in winter.

Automatics are a safety concern for two reasons. Firstly, it allows those people that should not be driving at all, to drive trucks. Secondly, there is an issue of reduced alertness during linehaul operations.

Thiffault and Bergeron, researchers from the University of Montreal have demonstrated that increased monotony of long trips impacts safety by reducing driver's alertness. There is nothing more monotonous than driving an automatic! □

**Paul Kauler**  
Via e-mail

*Editor's note: Thanks for the response. Automated transmissions aren't for everyone, but most drivers I've spoken to – even the most cynical of them – have warmed to the technology over time. It goes without saying that hiring standards should never be compromised, no matter what driver aids are put in the cab.*

## Letters to the editor

Have you got a complaint, compliment, criticism or question?

We'd like to hear about it.

Send your letters to the editor to *Truck News*, 12 Concorde Place, Toronto, Ontario, M3C 4J2. Or fax your letter to 416-510-5143. You can also e-mail [jmenzies@trucknews.com](mailto:jmenzies@trucknews.com). □

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**BOWMANVILLE, Ont.** – Canadians headed to the polls Oct. 14. and while politicians have been talking tough on issues ranging from economic uncertainty to youth crime to funding for the arts, truckers in Canada have been discussing a few issues of their own. This past year saw the transportation industry debating how to deal with the high price of diesel and wondering exactly how a proposed carbon tax will effect them. *Truck News* went to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to find out what drivers think our next Prime Minister should make a top priority.

**Kyle Harris**, a driver with Equipment Express in Ayr, Ont. said the top priority should be fuel prices. “I mean something’s wrong, if you do a comparison to when the price of a drum was at its highest to what we were paying at the pump. It doesn’t equal to what we’re paying now. Something’s just not right.”



**Truck Stop Question**

**Jason Sahlani**  
Special to Truck News

*What should the top priority be for the winner of the federal election?*

Harris also noted that unless steps are taken to normalize the price of fuel, the additional costs associated with high fuel prices will just be passed along to the consumer, making almost every product bought in Canada more expensive.

**Wayne Diotte**, who drives for DMD Transportation in Gananoque, Ont. also focused on the high price of fuel. “It controls the whole country, the whole car industry and everything else,” he said.

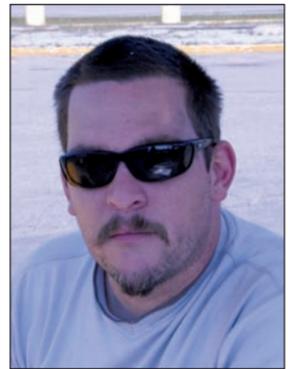
Diotte also thought that the government should step in to regulate



**Wayne Diotte**

the cost of fuel to help stabilize the rising prices Canadians are seeing coast-to-coast, and offered a solution to the problem himself. “Why

don’t we build more refineries here? All of our crude oil goes to the states, there are even pipelines going down to refineries, and then they sell it back to us. What the heck is that?”



**Dan Blankenship**

**Dan Blankenship**, a driver with Celadon Canada in Kitchener, Ont., was quick to note that the regulations are hurting the industry just as much as high fuel costs. “Now I’m a rookie but it is unbelievable how many fines there are and how much those fines cost,” Blankenship said. “These days, a fine could end up as the good part of a month, sometimes two months worth of salary.”

**Jason Fleming** agrees that government regulations should be a top priority for the next Prime Minister, but he also thinks the government should be more involved.

“A driver’s pay needs to be regulated to make sure we get paid for what we do,” said the driver for Hamilton-based Douma. “They scream in regards to our Hours-of-Service but what about loading times, off-loading times, waiting for others before getting loaded? We don’t get paid for that.”

Fleming said that considering all the other tasks involved in getting product from point A to B it doesn’t make sense for truckers to continue to be paid by the mile.



**Dave Bradbury**

After 25 years of driving truck **Dave Bradbury** thinks the next Prime Minister should straighten out the industry so that regulations actually address the problems.

“There are too many amateurs behind the wheel in this industry. They drive (trucks) like cars, they’re tailgating, and it’s not the way it used to be. It’s dangerous, very dangerous,” said the driver for Burlington-based Cupido. “The OTA stuck their nose in where it doesn’t belong and cut truck (speed) back to 105 km/h, but they don’t want to regulate pay and start paying an hourly wage.” □

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– Jason Sahlani is enrolled in Humber College’s Accelerated Journalism program and will be working this fall as an intern at Business Information Group. He can be reached at jsahlani@bizinfogroup.ca.

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