

TRUCK NEWS

January 2010 Volume 30, Issue 1

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

Outlook 2010

*Is there
anywhere to
go but up?*

By James Menzies
and Lou Smyrlis

TORONTO, Ont. – There was a saying making the rounds at the recent Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) convention that may serve as an unofficial rallying cry for the Canadian trucking industry as a whole: “We’re at a point in time, not the end of time.”

For the carriers and owner/operators who survived 2009, trucking conditions can only improve in 2010 right? While nobody’s making any promises, the general consensus seems to be that the coming year will hold moderately better things for the industry.

“Carriers should be positioning themselves to take advantage of the turnaround when it comes,” David Bradley, president of the OTA and CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance recently suggested.

Citing evidence gathered from the most recent *OTA Quarterly Business e-Pulse Survey*, Bradley said optimism is beginning to return to the trucking industry.

Continued on page 24



SLOW ROLL: DriveTest management began providing road tests for some commercial drivers in November. Here, striking DriveTest workers picket as managers provide road tests at KRTS Transportation Specialists Nov. 18. Photo by Adam Ledlow

DriveTest strikers picket commercial road tests

CALEDONIA, Ont. – On the morning of Nov. 18, DriveTest driver examiners, led by United Steelworkers Union 9511 president Jim Young, protested at KRTS Transportation Specialists headquarters to oppose DriveTest management conducting road tests on-site.

“This labour dispute needs to get fixed and fixed ASAP. I really feel for the taxpayers of Ontario. The Government of Ontario sold the farm when they contracted (Drive

Test parent company) Serco for the delivery of road tests in Ontario,” said Kim Richardson, president of KRTS. The drivers being tested Nov. 18 were clients of KRTS and had been waiting for up to 12 weeks for tests. Examiners were not testing the general public.

“I’m extremely concerned that management performs these road tests. They are not qualified or have kept up their qualifications to properly deliver these tests,” said Young.

Richardson added: “Our clients have all been educated to the highest standard in North America; the Professional Truck Driver Institute (PTDI). In my opinion, they were qualified for a profession in driving 13 weeks ago.”

It is estimated the strike has affected 300,000 people in the province. Our WebTV show, *Transportation Matters*, was on-site. You can watch the Nov. 26 episode on Trucknews.com. □

DPFs Unplugged

As DPFs come due for cleaning, we explore your options

See page 32



Inside This Issue...

- **Are you prepared?:** You're going to be hearing a lot about CSA 2010 in the months ahead. We provide an overview on how the program will affect carriers and drivers. Page 10
- **Plan your year:** Our annual calendar of events will help you plan the year ahead. It's a busy one! Page 28
- **Tire talk:** Are your tires tired? We take a look at how you can get the most out of your tires this winter through proper selection and maintenance. Page 30
- **Lost keys, found hope:** While he struggles to find his missing keys, Mark realizes it could be worse. Page 52

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Wrap the season



In this holiday season, Bison Transport would like to congratulate and express our gratitude to our professional Drivers, our Employees, and their Families. We have greatly invested in our safety program to provide our Drivers and Employees the environment and tools they need to perform safely and they have responded with firm dedication. Along with being presented the prestigious Truckload Carriers Association National Fleet Safety Award for 3 consecutive years, **543 Drivers received individual recognition** for achieving safe driving milestones representing over **211 million consecutive accident free miles**. All are professionals who have proven their skills in the prevention of accidents and their standard of performance becomes the benchmark for the industry. Bison Transport has proudly paid out over 7 million dollars to our Drivers for safe miles driven under the Safe Driving Reward Program.



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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

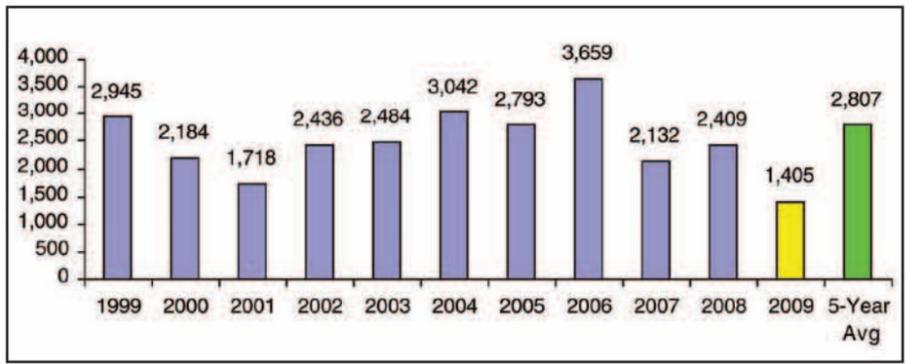
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The final quarter of 2009 started off the same as the past three quarters in this most dismal of sales years. While the 1,405 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada in October were an improvement over September's total, they still amounted to the lowest October tally of the past decade by a considerable amount. It was also about 1,400 units off the five-year average. (It should be noted that five-year average includes the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006.) and about 1,000 below last year's October sales. This is the worst recession to hit the North American market in the post war era and monthly truck sales have reflected that reality each month of 2009.

Monthly Class 8 Sales - Oct 09

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	257	529
International	449	904
Kenworth	248	271
Mack	68	105
Peterbilt	161	129
Sterling	43	176
Volvo	104	199
Western Star	75	102
TOTALS	1405	2409

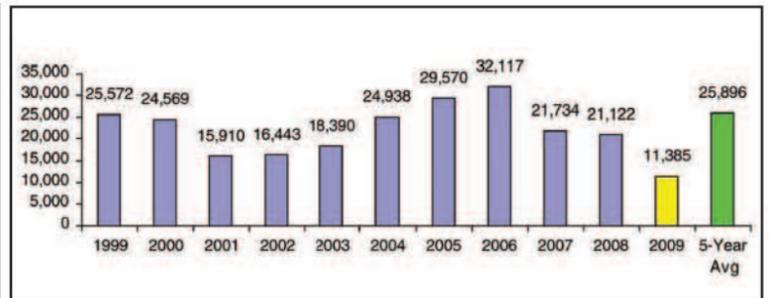
Historical Comparison - Oct 09 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Oct 09) by Province and OEM

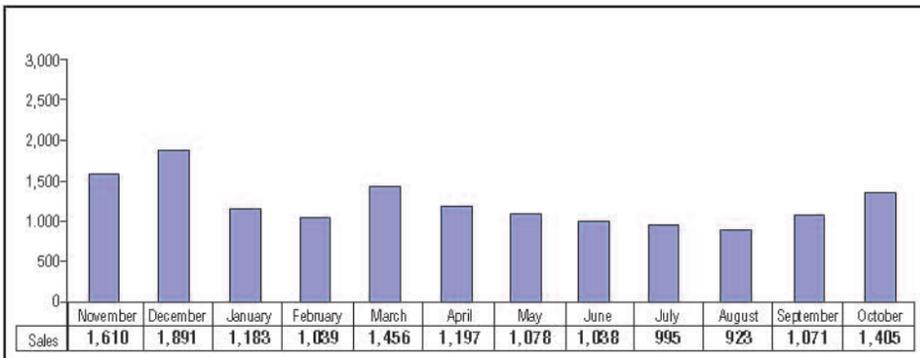
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	115	264	102	137	838	460	198	111	3	6	2,234
Kenworth	188	373	97	88	319	382	52	12	0	0	1,511
Mack	37	70	88	48	433	111	32	20	0	0	839
International	112	466	58	146	1,402	840	138	57	26	65	3,310
Peterbilt	114	208	104	96	170	141	44	25	0	0	902
Sterling	97	101	27	11	206	233	17	5	8	38	743
Volvo	53	104	82	155	420	157	59	51	0	7	1,088
Western Star	103	232	35	24	127	113	53	69	0	2	758
TOTALS	819	1,818	593	705	3,915	2,437	593	350	37	118	11,385

Historical Comparison - YTD Oct

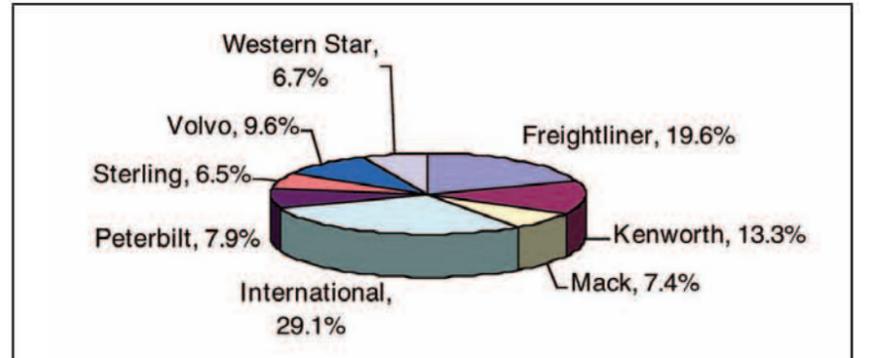


The third quarter, much like the second and first, was a disaster for Class 8 truck sales and the start of the final quarter is continuing the trend. The first quarter of the year was so weak that three months into the year sales were more than 2,000 off last year's YTD pace, hardly a banner year in itself, about 3,000 off the five-year YTD average and about 5,000 off the banner year of 2006. Ten months into the year and Canadian Class 8 truck sales are at their lowest point YTD of the past decade by a long shot. They continue to trend about 14,000 units off the five-year average, at almost half the level of last year's sales and more than 18,000 units off the banner year of 2006.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Market Share Class 8 - Oct YTD



There are many reasons motor carriers are reluctant to purchase new trucks right now. Although the recession is likely over, the rebound is not expected to be as robust as it was in past recessions and trucking will not be a leading indicator this time around. Still, high inventory to sales ratios will continue to dampen freight volumes and the trucking industry remains in over capacity, which places downward pressure on rates. General freight rates declined 5.6% YTD in 2009 from the end of last year, according to the latest research. Used truck values are also making it difficult for carriers to turn in their old trucks for new ones. In addition, the growing age of the Canadian truck fleet is misleading because mileage is down compared to the pre-recession years.

International retains its lead in this downward market, controlling slightly more than 29% of Class 8 sales in the Canadian market YTD. Freightliner, a former front runner for many years, is close to 20% of total sales. Traditionally strong performers Kenworth and Peterbilt have fallen back compared to previous years, although Kenworth's market share is rebounding. Both are strong in the west and Western Canada is no longer booming. Volvo is the only other OEM with close to 10% market share.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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January 2010, Volume 30, Issue 1
 ISSN 0712-2683 - Truck News
 Truck News, USPS 016-248 is published monthly by
 BIG Magazines LP. U.S. office of publication:
 2424 Niagara Falls Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-5709.
 Periodicals Postage Paid at Niagara Falls, NY. U.S.
 Postmaster send address corrections to:
 Truck News, P.O. Box 1118, Niagara Falls, NY 14304.
 Truck News is published 12 times a year by BIG
 Magazines LP, a leading Canadian information
 company with interests in daily and community news-
 papers and business-to-business information services.
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Circulation Manager: Mary Garufi
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CSA 2010 will bring risks, opportunities

If you drive (or send) trucks into the US, you need to quickly get up to speed on Comprehensive Safety Analysis (CSA) 2010. You can begin by reading the article on pg. 10.

In short, the US FMCSA is changing the way it measures driver and carrier safety. Under CSA 2010, every driver operating in the US will be scored on his or her roadside performance and any and all violations occurring over a 36-month period will be posted online for the world to see.

It's a whole new ball game for drivers, whose driving record will follow them from carrier to carrier. It's also a game-changer for carriers, because their own safety rating will be influenced by their drivers' ratings.

For a driver, this means their on-road performance will dictate their employability. If you have a rap sheet a mile long, good luck finding a trucking company that will employ you – the risks are simply too great.

Many recruiters will welcome the change. They'll be able to get a better read on a driver's safety record than by relying on a driver's abstract.

Once a prospective employer grants permission, the recruiter

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



will be able to log in to the FMCSA Web site Compass and view the driver's 36-month running history.

However, the program also brings increased accountability for carriers. Since your drivers will be the ones directly controlling your carrier safety rating, it's incumbent on you to hire only the best drivers.

So what does it all mean?

For one, the competition for the best drivers is going to become fiercer. A driver who maintains an impeccable CSA 2010 rating will have greater opportunities and will bring more value to a prospective employer.

And on the carrier front, the cream really will rise to the top and there will be no more flying below the radar for shoddy carriers. No longer will they be able to rest on the laurels of a DoT audit that occurred years earlier.

Like drivers, their safety record will be continuously updated

every 30 days and it too will be on the Internet, easily accessible by shippers and competitors.

The new high-tech enforcement tactics involved in CSA 2010 should be embraced by the safest drivers.

If you're a safe, clean driver, congratulations – your stock is about to go up substantially.

However the clock is ticking for drivers who bounce from carrier to carrier leaving a trail of violations and accidents in their wake. CSA

2010 will weed you out and you'll become unemployable among carriers that operate in the US.

CSA 2010 is only months away and eight states are already up and running with it. It's time to be honest with yourself about your on-road compliance and address any shortcomings before it's too late.

In the meantime, to view a complete presentation on CSA 2010, presented by

expert Jeff Davis on behalf of the Truckload Carriers Association at the most recent Driving for Profit seminar, sign up for The Driver's Seat information video series by calling CarriersEdge at 905-530-2430 or visiting www.TheDriversSeat.ca. □

– James Menzies can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at jmenzies@trucknews.com. You can also follow him on Twitter at Twitter.com/JamesMenzies.



It's deja vu all over again

Can you believe that in a couple of weeks we start a new decade? To me, it seems like yesterday that as a first-time father I was spending my December weekends shopping for the right-sized generator to provide us with power in case the Y2K bug knocked out the power grid to start off the year 2000. (Hey, I live in the country – it wasn't that bad a purchase).

Being in the mood to reminisce, I decided to look back through our magazines to the year 1999 to see just how much things have changed for the industry, or not.

Well, we all remember Y2K of course, and I wasn't the only one pressed into needless action by over-hyped concerns. One of our stories that year quoted Dennis Hamilton, CEO of Crisis Response Planning, warning "There are so many things

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



that can go wrong that the probability that something will affect some part of your business is 100%."

As is turned out, the only thing that was 100% was that a lot of computer programmers got rich that year.

Speaking of "not working out quite as planned," I found a story entitled *Is there relief at last?*, in which we wrote that "The national highway system may not end up paved in gold but all signposts suggest the federal government's next budget will put a large amount of green into

Canada's blacktop."

Liberal MP Joe Comuzzi, chairman of the National Highways Program, even told us "we're very serious." I guess in the end, they weren't quite that serious.

Funny thing is we also ran a story about the Auditor General leaving no doubt about the cost of negligence on road maintenance.

He noted that the cost of basic preventive maintenance such as sealing cracks or patching of asphalt roads is between \$500 and \$1,000 per lane kilometre. But if such preventive work is ignored, the need for rehabilitation measures will arise sooner than it should – typically at 12 years. And by then repairing the road costs \$80,000 per lane kilometre.

If only we had listened.

But it's not just politicians who learn their lessons too late. Ten years ago we were writing that fleets were in a buying mood. A strong domes-

tic economy and a booming trans-border market were giving carriers plenty of confidence to invest in new equipment. Demand for new iron was so hot in fact that order boards were suffering delays of eight months or more.

Just a few months later, Challenger's Dan Einwechter was warning that a bull market can make anyone look intelligent and worried about troubling signs ahead, a spike in diesel pricing chief among them. Within a couple of years, spiking diesel prices and insurance costs, coupled with the impact on the economy of the dot.com bubble burst saw a quarter of the nation's small carriers disappear.

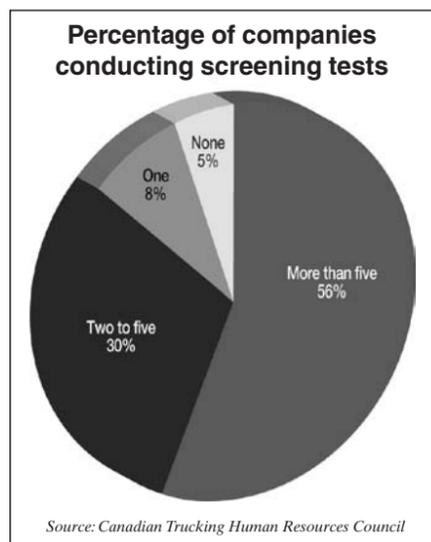
Sound familiar? □

– Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@TransportationMedia.ca. You can also follow him on Twitter at Twitter.com/LouSmyrlis.

Did you know?

How carriers weed out problem hires

Canadian business is expected to face severe labour shortages in the years to come, due to an aging workforce and limited entry into trades-related occupations. Trucking has traditionally experienced acute driver shortages during economic upturns and much of the industry's attention is focused on recruitment. However, having the procedures in place to hire the right employees can be critically important to continuity in key positions and reducing human resource-related expenses – firings can be a costly



business. Research conducted on behalf of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council found that discipline problems, poorly qualified drivers, poor driving records, and seasonal demand were the three most common reasons leading to terminations. Discipline

	For-hire	Private
Discipline problems	60%	46%
Poorly qualified drivers	47%	41%
Poor driving records	36%	27%
Seasonal demand	17%	33%
Not willing to drive long-haul routes	16%	12%
Decrease in overall business	11%	18%
Other	11%	9%

Source: Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council

issues and poor driving records proved to be particularly problematic in the for-hire sector. Screening is an important first step during the recruitment process to weed out potential problem employees and the CTHRC survey found that more than half of fleet respondents had implemented more than five different tests and/or procedures associated with the hiring process. Checking

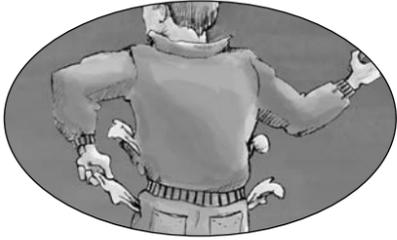
references, reviewing applications and driving records, and conducting interviews were the most commonly used screening techniques. About a quarter of respondents were employing more thorough practices such as attitude, literacy and aptitude testing. □

Question of the month

Will 2010 be a better year for the trucking industry?

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Mark Dalton in... Lost keys, found hope Part 1



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departments



OEM/DEALER NEWS: Western Star executives discuss the future of the brand.

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In Brief

Christmas group aims to help trucking families

TORONTO, Ont. – The second annual CDLOFIT Christmas Group fundraiser is now underway, aiming to raise money for trucking families in need this holiday season.

The effort is the brainchild of 'Wonderful Wayne' – a member of the CDLOFIT online social network – who came up with the concept of launching the fundraiser, according to one of its organizers, Greg Manchester.

"Wonderful Wayne thought it would be a good idea if his fellow truckers would help him set up a fund that might help some trucker families that might be in need of having a good Christmas," Manchester explained.

In the four weeks leading up to last Christmas, truck drivers raised more than \$8,000 which was distributed to 13 trucking families in need. One of the beneficiaries was Johnny 'Five' Van Lubeek, a Canadian professional driver who was coping with ALS and has been featured in past issues of *Truck News*. Van Lubeek succumbed to his illness on Jan. 27, 2009, however his family told CDLOFIT Christmas Group organizers that they helped contribute to a happy Christmas for him.

The second annual campaign is now accepting nominations and donations. For more information visit www.cdlofit.com and visit the Christmas Group link. (Registration is required).

Donations can also be made by phone, Com Check, PayPal (cdlofit@me.com), and snail mail. For details, call 417-200-4411. The organization is also accepting items that can be auctioned off, with the proceeds going towards needy families. □

Feds may allow high-sulfur diesel during future fuel shortages

OTTAWA, Ont. – The federal government has moved to help alleviate concerns about future diesel shortages by finally taking steps to implement a suggestion the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) made during the fuel crises of 2007 and 2008.

The trucking industry was nearly crippled by two fuel shortages in recent years, the first in the winter and spring of 2007 and then a year later by another in Western Canada.

At the time, the CTA suggested the feds allow on-road truckers to use off-road dyed diesel like locomotives can.

The off-road diesel contains more sulfur, however at the time most of the engines on the road were of the pre-EPA07 variety. Environment Minister of the day John Baird, said his hands were tied because there was no regulatory mechanism in place that allowed

him to allow for the use of off-road diesel in on-highway trucks.

Last month, however, regulatory language was published in the *Canada Gazette* that will give the Minister of the Environment more flexibility should the need arise again in the future.

Of course, now that EPA07 engines are more common, using high-sulfur diesel fuel has become less viable for many truck operators, as it will prematurely clog the diesel particulate filter. Nonetheless, the CTA welcomed the change.

"Better late than never, I suppose," said CTA chief David Bradley. "The regulatory amendment could provide some relief were the industry to face another diesel shortage at least in the short/medium term. Let's just hope we never again face the type of situation that made this an issue in the first place." □

HST receives formal nod of approval from OTA

TORONTO, Ont. – The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) has strongly defended a move by the province of Ontario to harmonize the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) with the Provincial Sales Tax (PST).

While much public and political opposition was voiced against the proposed Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), OTA leader David Bradley appeared before the Ontario Legislature's Standing Committee on Finance recently to voice the industry's support for the change.

"Moving to harmonize the PST and the Multi-Jurisdictional Tax (MJVT) with the GST has been a key recommendation of virtually every OTA pre-budget submission since the early 1990s," Bradley said, adding the change was "long overdue."

Bradley noted equipment buyers will benefit from the harmonization of the taxes.

"The current Ontario sales tax system for business inputs is out-dated, inefficient, stymies investment in safety and the environment and is ultimately uncompetitive," Bradley said. "Ontario-based trucking companies pay provincial sales tax on virtually all business inputs, whether in the form of the 8% PST or the complicated MJVT. These taxes are applied not only to the purchases of equipment and parts, but also on maintenance and repair labour service. The fact is that the more Ontario carriers invest in safety, in reducing their environmental footprint and in productivity, the more tax they pay."

Bradley cited a 2004 study by the Institute of International Business at the Rotman School of Management that found Ontario carriers were at a 31% tax disadvantage compared to fleets from New York, Ohio and Michigan. "The HST will give us a simpler, fairer, harmonized system that applies sales tax in a more appropriate manner that minimizes inequities and opens the way for economic growth," Bradley insisted. □

Drivers asked to weigh in on truck parking situation

OTTAWA, Ont. – It's no secret among professional drivers that there are too few places for truckers to stop for rest. Now it appears the situation is on the radar of some influential decision-makers.

The Owner-Operator Business Association of Canada (OBAC) is asking all drivers and owner/operators to complete a Transport Canada survey that will be used to help identify the scope of the problem and maybe even influence future funding.

In the words of OBAC executive director Joanne Ritchie, "Here's an opportunity to add your two cents to this most important debate. We need every driver to get involved; it's drivers themselves who can identify areas in Canada where designated truck parking is difficult to find, and help determine how shortages of parking impact your safety, productivity, and personal well-being."

She urged drivers to "Take the survey yourself, then get at least five more drivers to add their voice, even if you have to walk them to a computer and help them turn it on."

To take the survey, visit: www.surveymonkey.com/truck-parkingcanada (all one word). □

Industry asks for leniency with double drop and low bed trailers

OTTAWA, Ont. – The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is asking the National Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions (NTF) to remove the permit requirements for double drop and low bed trailers.

The CTA made its pitch during a recent presentation to the task force. Currently, double drop and low bed trailers with a wheelbase of more than 12.5 metres must move under permit and under strict conditions, meaning the trailers are built for sole purpose use.

"This proposed change will introduce productivity and efficiencies into the supply chain without compromising road safety or maintenance," suggested CTA regional vice-president (Manitoba), Bob Dolyniuk.

The CTA proposal calls upon Canadian jurisdictions to allow the use (without permit) of tandem and tridem axle double drop and low bed trailers with a minimum wheelbase of 6.25 metres and maximum overall length of 16.15 metres. CTA said that the only time a permit should be required is when an over-dimensional load is being hauled, or if the actual trailer itself is over-dimensional.

"There is a need to increase the allowable wheelbase on these trailers to allow for an increased deck well length in an effort to accommodate farm, harvesting and construction equipment which are becoming larger," said CTA vice-president of operations, Geoff Wood. □

Border

Northbound Blue Water Bridge tolls could surge 85%

OTA fights proposed 'unreasonable' toll increase

LANSING, Mich. – The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) was at a public hearing Dec. 2 to voice its condemnation of a proposed toll increase for the Blue Water Bridge. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is threatening to increase tolls for northbound commercial vehicles crossing the bridge from US\$1.75 per axle to US\$3.25/axle.

The planned increase would

come into effect Jan. 5. The OTA estimates the toll hikes would add about \$8 million in additional costs for trucks crossing into Canada using the bridge.

“Timing and approach are all wrong,” said OTA president David Bradley in the weeks leading to the public hearing. “OTA considers it entirely unreasonable and inappropriate that an 85% price hike would be imposed in one fell swoop, with such short

notice. Given the current economic times, and the stress that has already been imposed on Michigan-Ontario trade, increases of this magnitude are untimely to say the least.”

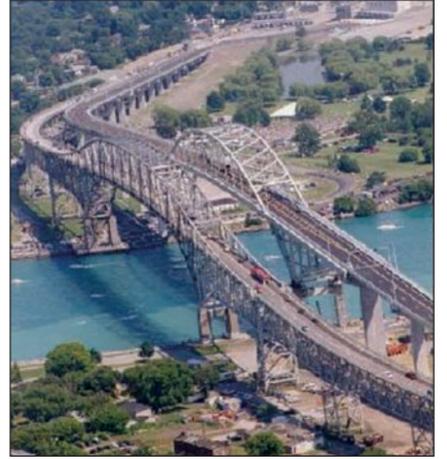
The public hearings were held at MDOT headquarters in Lansing, Mich. MDOT is defending the increase on the basis that it has the lowest tolls of any of the major bridges, has not increased its tolls for 13 years and wants to bring the tolls in line with those charged on the Canadian side of the bridge, which has higher tolls to begin with.

MDOT also needs to pay for improvements to the US plaza and a future re-decking.

While Bradley acknowledged the MDOT’s points, he noted that the tolls at other bridges, including the Canadian side of the Blue Water, had been raised gradually over many years which helped the supply chain deal with them in a more orderly and manageable fashion.

Bradley urged MDOT to withdraw its proposal or to at least provide a minimum six month notice so industry can plan for the change.

He also said that carriers using the automatic pre-paid account system should get a discount on



TOLL TROUBLE: Fees to cross the Blue Water Bridge could spike.

whatever the new tolls are – something that the MDOT proposal did not include.

Three hearings were scheduled to be held the first week of December. MDOT also told OTA that it had been receiving written comment from carriers. The OTA is encouraging its members to comment.

Concerned carriers and owner/operators are encouraged to submit their own thoughts with the MDOT at: Robert Parsons, Bureau of Transportation Planning, MDOT, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909, or e-mail him at parsonsb@michigan.gov, or fax 517-373-9255.

But act quickly, all written comments should be postmarked on or before Dec. 16, 2009. □



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Answers on page 51

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9							10				
11					12						
	13	14					15				
16											17
18				19			20		21		
22					23						
24						25					

- Across**

 1. Retreaded tires, in other words
 4. US town at St. Stephen, NB border crossing
 9. Procession of funeral vehicles
 10. Semitrailer spare-tire carriers
 11. Basis for lidar speed detection
 12. Upscale Mack Pinnacle variant
 13. See 3-Down clue
 18. Astrodome City
 20. Breakdown-warning device
 22. Engine oil offered by 8-Down company
 23. International-emblem shape
 24. Wild West teamster’s pit stop, perhaps
 25. Truck-mechanic’s task

Down

 1. Defect-related notice from truckmaker
 2. Tire-scuffing surfaces
 3. With 13-Across, drivers’ safety-related procedures
 5. Directional indicator, often
 6. Repossessed-truck sale, perhaps
 7. NB home of Atlantic Transport Training Academy
 8. Calgary-based fuel and lubricants company (5,6)
 14. Shift-lever selection
 15. Add air to a tire
 16. Driver’s eyewear, often
 17. Truck-cab component
 19. Cop-radio code for T
 21. Word on Hawaiian licence plates

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2008 MANAC 32' VAN



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(5) "New" 53' TRIDEM UTILITY REEFER VANS



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2008 TRAILMOBILE 53' x 102" ULTRA PLATE VAN



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(4) 2007 WABASH 53' REEFERS



Carrier Stealth XTC units (low hours), Stainless front panels, radius corners, rear doors, and rear bumper. Vents front and rear, 1 row recessed "E" track, air ride, aluminum wheels, extra clean.

"EAST" ALL ALUMINUM FLAT DECK



10' spread on Neway air ride suspension, aluminum wheels, 24 pairs chain tie downs, 12 winches and straps in sliding track, 4' aluminum headboard, aluminum storage box. GREAT SHAPE.

(2) 2007 UTILITY 53' x 102' REEFERS



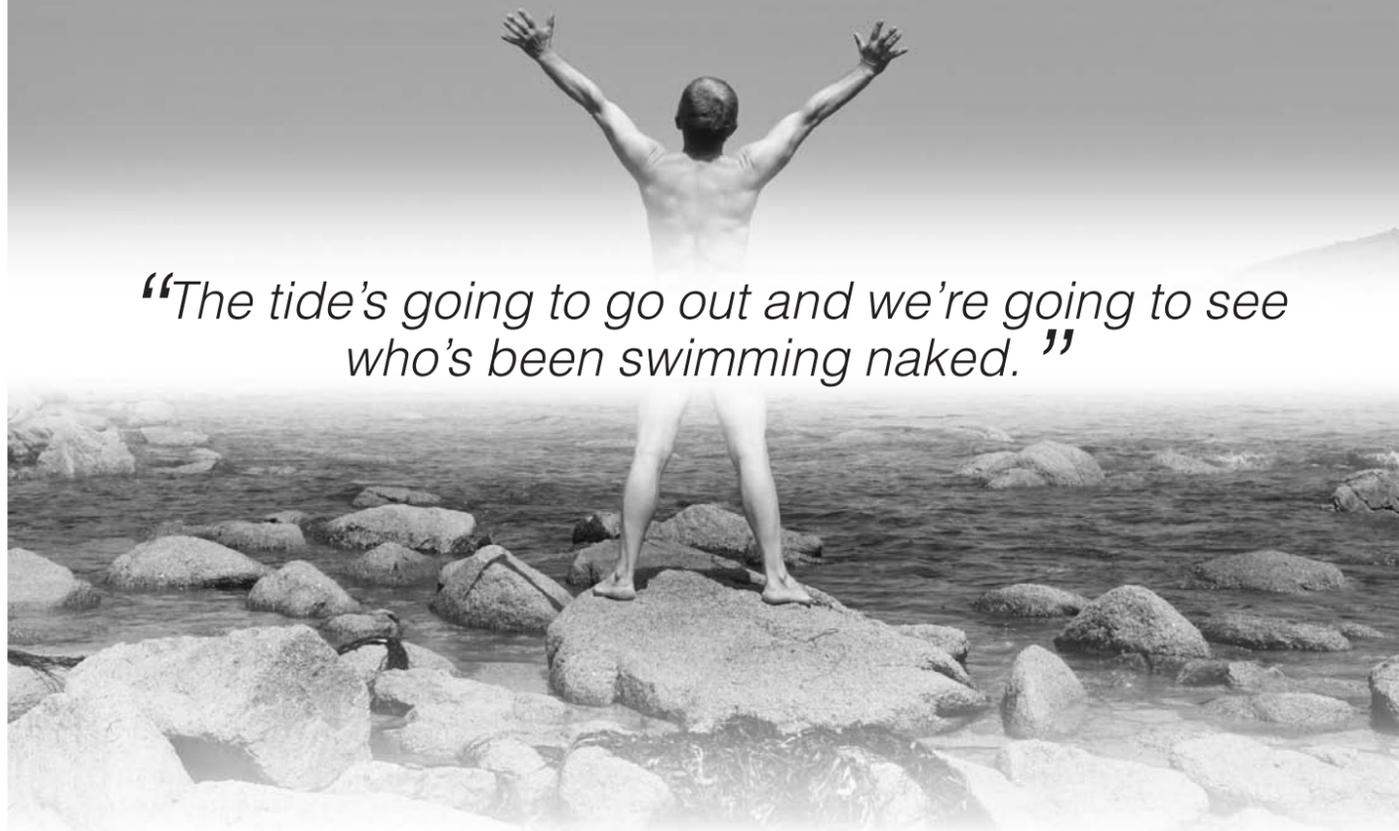
Thermo King Magnum units, Pre Painted black side panels, stainless radius corners, front panels, wing plates and rear doors, front and rear vents, Hendrickson air ride suspension, aluminum wheels, 1 row recessed "E" track, extra lites.

(50) 2005 UTILITY 53' REEFERS



Carrier Ultra units, stainless front panels, radius corners & rear doors, front and rear vents, heavy duty flat aluminum floors, 1 row of recessed "E" track, 46K Hendrickson air ride suspension, Anti dock walk, aluminum wheels, stainless bumper, well maintained units.

Getting ready for CSA 2010



“The tide’s going to go out and we’re going to see who’s been swimming naked.”

By James Menzies
TORONTO, Ont. – Mere months before a new carrier safety rating system is rolled out in the US, many Canadian carriers remain blissfully unaware of the impending

changes and how they will be affected by them. But Jeff Davis, vice-president of safety and human resources for Dayton, Ohio-based Jet Express, recently ventured to Canada to warn attendees at the

most recent Driving for Profit seminar that “we’re about to embark on the biggest change in safety and compliance in the US that we’ve had since the early ’30s.”

That, incidentally, was when log-

books were first introduced. The impending changes are known as Comprehensive Safety Analysis (CSA) 2010 – a new carrier safety rating system that will score carriers and drivers based on their roadside performance. It’s already being tested in eight states and in the process, Canadian carriers that operate there may already have been given a CSA 2010 rating.

CSA 2010 brings about three major changes, Davis explained at the Nov. 3 seminar. 1) Driver abstracts will be replaced by a continuously-updated driver performance file that lists all violations over a 36-month period. Davis likened it the back of a baseball card, which clearly displays all the player’s vital stats. 2) A driver’s performance will be the determining factor of his or her employability. “You’ll be able to go in, once the driver signs a waiver, and see that driver’s whole history of safety performance,” Davis explained, adding in some cases “it may get to the point where you’re not able to utilize them.” And 3) carriers will have to help their drivers adapt to the increased scrutiny. “This is a huge change they’ve never faced,” said Davis. Under CSA 2010, drivers as well as carriers will be electronically rated every 30 days by the FMCSA.

“That driver holding onto the wheel literally has his hands around your safety rating in the US, so you have to learn how to work with him and teach him to bring him into compliance – it’s a huge job,” said Davis.

Once a month, CSA 2010 will score both carriers and drivers and assess them one of three ratings: Continue to operate; Marginal; or Unfit. They’ll be assessed based on their performance in seven categories known as the BASICS: Unsafe Driving; Fatigued Driving; Driver Fitness; Drugs and Alcohol; Vehicle Maintenance; Cargo Securement; and Crash Experience.

The first two – Unsafe Driving and Fatigued Driving – are weighted more heavily than the others, Davis warned.

“These two BASICS are so significant that if you are deficient in one of these, you are automatically ‘unfit’ as a motor carrier,” he warned, adding a simple logbook violation could be enough to get a carrier in trouble under CSA 2010.

In the lead-up to CSA 2010, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has “severity-weighted” 3,589 different trucking violations which will help determine driver and carrier safety ratings. For instance, falsifying logbooks is worth seven points, having insufficient brake lining nets four, etc. with all points scored against both the driver and the carrier.

“Under SafeStat (the current system), any inspection that was not an out-of-service inspection was a good inspection,” said Davis. “In CSA 2010, every defect they look at will count against the motor carrier and the driver.”

If a carrier runs afoul of the FMCSA under CSA 2010, a number of measures will be taken and carriers will be held more accountable to address their problem areas.

“CSA 2010 intervention could be as little as a letter and then it goes

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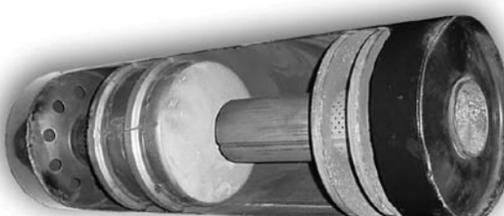


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from there," said Davis, noting that in extreme cases, the frightening-sounding term of "maximum civil forfeiture" can be applied following just one violation. "Intervention increases in severity as time goes by."

When a driver or carrier becomes deficient in any of the seven BASICS, the FMCSA opens an intervention file and will likely send a letter advising the carrier to immediately correct the problem.

"If that doesn't happen, they come in and do an on-site review of that deficient BASIC," explained Davis. Fines are likely to accompany interventions and in some cases a "consent order" will have to be filed by the carrier, promising to exceed minimum compliance requirements.

Carriers will be held more accountable than in the past when promising to take corrective measures, because under CSA 2010, their drivers' on-road performance will be under constant scrutiny, telling the true story of that carrier's ongoing safety performance. No longer will a carrier be able to rest on its laurels between satisfactory inspections.

"It's going to be all about roadside performance, it's not going to be about how good you polish and it's not going to be about how good that safety rating was you got five years ago – it's going to be what have my drivers done to me this month?" Davis explained.

So what exactly should a carrier be doing to ensure it's ready for CSA 2010? For starters, Davis said they should log onto the SafeStat Web site, enter their DoT pin number and check out their current SafeStat rating. This will give you an idea of how well your company is currently doing.

Next, carriers should take steps to trigger fewer roadside inspections. Davis said nearly all roadside inspections are triggered by an event, notably speeding, observable defects or being red-flagged for having a high inspection selection number (ISN).

The ISN is the ranking enforcement agencies use to determine which trucks to flag down for inspection. Davis summed it up this way: 0-49 = green light; 50-74 = yellow light; and anything above, "the red lights are flashing and the inspectors are foaming at the mouth because they have a criminal coming in."

Carriers should be ensuring they lower their ISN number by giving enforcement officers little reason to inspect their vehicles in the first place, Davis suggested. He warned said many carriers get caught in a vicious cycle: "The more inspections you get, the more violations you get, the higher your ISN goes, the higher your ISN goes, the more inspections you get," he said. "The only thing that changes it is clean inspections and the passage of time."

Passing inspections will slowly allow a carrier to lower its ISN score, resulting in fewer inspections. (Here's another good incentive to reduce the number of inspections your trucks are subjected to: Davis said the productivity loss incurred for each inspection costs

about \$102.05 – and that's for a pass).

"Every inspection is avoidable, that's got to be your goal – especially under this program," Davis advised.

CSA 2010 will be launched in earnest in July 2010 and rolled out right across the US by the end of next year.

All information generated by CSA 2010 will be accessible through the FMCSA's Compass portal (<https://portal.fmcsa.dot.gov/>), which is still a work in progress. Davis pointed out that ratings will be available online to shippers and competitors.

"If your numbers are bad, your competitors will take their good numbers in (to your customers) and say 'why are you using that unsafe carrier from Canada?'" Davis warned.

Davis said if all goes according to plan, CSA 2010 will provide a more effective way to identify and address risky behaviour by commercial drivers and carriers.

"CSA 2010 is such an incredible program, if the US government pulls it off," said Davis. "Sometimes, things don't always work out the way they're designed, but it appears the (FMCSA) is on the right track through the use of technology to pull something off we've never experienced before in trucking."

However, he had this final warning for Canadian carriers with high ISN numbers that are subjected to lots of inspections while operating in the US: "There are carriers in the US and Canada, big name carriers, that have high numbers and when this rock hits the pond, they're going to be in trouble. The tide's going to go out and we're going to see who's been swimming naked." □

– To see Jeff Davis' presentation in its entirety, sign up for the Driver's Seat video series powered by CarriersEdge. Subscriptions begin at just \$7.99 per month. Visit www.TheDriversSeat.ca or call CarriersEdge at 905-530-2430 to sign up.

US truck tonnage dips slightly in October

ARLINGTON, Va. – US truck tonnage took another slight dip in October, according to the latest American Trucking Associations (ATA) For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index. The latest figures showed a decline of 0.2% in October, on the heels of a 0.3% drop in September.

Compared to October 2008, tonnage was down 5.2%, the best year-over-year showing since November 2008, ATA reported. In September, truck tonnage was 7.3% off last September's pace.

"Repeating what I said last month, the trucking industry should not be alarmed by the small decreases in September and October," ATA chief economist Bob Costello said. "The economy is behaving as expected, with starts and stops. This is being reflected in truck tonnage, as well as most economic indicators."

Costello predicted further ups and downs in the months ahead. "Since consumer spending and manufacturing are not surging, trucking shouldn't expect robust growth either," Costello said. "However, both retail sales and manufacturing output are exhibiting mild upward trend lines, which is the path I expect truck freight to take."

Another indicator, meanwhile, suggested trucking conditions in the US are improving, but still remain below 'neutral.' The latest Trucking Conditions Index (TCI) by FTR Associates provides a monthly index of overall industry health based on five key trucking industry statistics. A neutral reading is zero. In October, the FTR index read -16.4, marking the highest reading since November 2008 and the third consecutive month of gains, however still anchored in negative territory. □

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Auditor General echoes trucking industry's complaints about Marine Atlantic

By John Evans

NORTH SYDNEY, N.S. – The Office of the Auditor General came down hard on Marine Atlantic in a special examination report submitted on Sept. 14, saying the Crown Corporation was at risk of being unable to provide services.

Marine Atlantic is responsible for ferry service between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador – a floating leg of the Trans-Canada Highway. The report, a performance audit required under the Financial Administration Act, identified major concerns including Marine Atlantic's aging fleet and facilities and inadequate management capacity.

Gord Peddle of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) said the report confirms what was already widely known.

"The Auditor General's report really backs up what a lot of the users and consultants and everything have said for years," said Peddle, who chairs APTA's marine committee. "The fleet is aging and needs replacement. It's broken down a fair amount of the time."

Peddle also said that repairs performed by Marine Atlantic in the past year have improved the situation somewhat.

The renovation of the fleet and shore facilities won't be cheap. The Auditor General's report said Marine Atlantic estimates it will need between \$800 million and \$1.4 billion in federal capital funding over 25 years for the fleet, plus \$150 million

for on-shore upgrades.

In a press release on Nov. 19, the chair of Marine Atlantic's board of directors released the contents of the report to the public, laid out what steps the corporation had already taken and responded to the report's 13 recommendations.

"The board acknowledges the issues raised in the special examination and supports each of the recommendations," Rob Crosbie, chair of the board, said in the release. "Indeed the audit identified many of the same important issues that the board has been working to address over the past couple of years. The board has been working with the corporation's executive management team to develop an action plan that addresses all of the issues raised in the report."

The release pointed out that Marine Atlantic had begun to make changes already. It hired a new president and CEO in October 2008, and

increased its management capacity with three new vice-presidents, responsible for customer service, operations and strategy. It also said Marine Atlantic has developed new, formal management processes, and a planning cycle and a corporate risk policy to be implemented in the spring of 2010.

As for physical capital, Marine Atlantic has brought a new two-level dock into service in Port aux Basques, Nfld. and plans upgrades to its dock in North Sydney, N.S. It has also chartered an additional ferry, the *MV Atlantic Vision*, which entered service in April. The Auditor General's report said integration of the new ferry has not been smooth, however.

It said the capital costs of running the new ship are much higher than Marine Atlantic predicted due to modifications needed to port facilities and the need to pay withholding taxes, neither of which the corpora-

tion expected.

The APTA's Peddle said he has seen some problems in *Atlantic Vision's* first season of service, but is hopeful about its potential.

"She's much larger and designed a little differently," he said of the ferry. "Therefore she doesn't fit hand-in-glove at both docks. Therefore there have been some operational challenges. For example, I think she ran most of this summer with very little or no traffic on the top deck because of ramp restraints."

Peddle said he thinks Marine Atlantic has resolved that issue, and that other problems the *Vision* has had, including a fire, were just part of the learning curve of introducing a new vessel.

"She's a faster ship, she's a bigger ship, and when she's in service she does a fantastic job of cleaning up the traffic," said Peddle.

Despite the challenges, Marine Atlantic's Crosbie expressed confidence in the Crown Corporation's response to the report.

In the press release, he said "The board of directors and the executive management team have worked closely with the government of Canada in the development of a viable revitalization strategy that will help address the issues raised in the report and enable Marine Atlantic to fulfill its mandate to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada as an important component of the national transportation infrastructure." □

Study confirms benefits of heavier weights in Maine

ARLINGTON, Va. – Increasing gross vehicle weights (GVWs) on Maine Interstates affords the trucking industry the chance to improve its miles per gallon by 14-21% and reduce its CO₂ emissions by 6-11%, according to a study by the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI).

The study used simulation modeling to compare the slightly longer Interstate route to the state highway route and found that there were significant advantages to travelling the Interstate.

"This research quantifies how the mutual goals of resource conservation and emission reductions could be advanced by allowing Maine to apply state weight laws to its Interstate highways," said Mike Card, president, Combined Transport and a member of ATRI's board of directors.

To view the full report, visit www.atri-online.org. □

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Quebec

Fuel school

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, Que. – It is almost free and there will be food! The Fuel Management 101 workshop offered by the Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency (OEE) will be held on Jan. 27, in French, at the Hotel Mortagne, 1228 rue Nobel, in Boucherville (that's across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal).

Anyone interested can visit <http://fleetsmart.nrcan.gc.ca> and click 'Workshops' to read about the event, register with FleetSmart and sign on for the workshop.

Fuel Management 101 is advertised as being for fleet managers, but do not be intimidated.

The workshop will suit small companies, even owner/operators – anyone who has the authority or responsibility for reducing their trucks' fuel consumption, organizers say.

The cost of attending is just enough to cover expenses; ie. food - as little as \$15-\$20 per participant, depending. "We like to call it a nominal fee," says Bob Smith, chief of the ecoENERGY fleet program.

Those who attend simply have to show up – no preparation is required; the hunting and gathering of fuel consumption data comes after returning to the office.

Participants will learn why they should have a fuel management plan, how to make a plan and how to benchmark their fleets' fuel consumption patterns. They will also learn how to pitch a fuel management plan to management, implement it, analyze results and keep making more improvements.

"They learn how to gather information on their fleets. The group works through a case study, learns about a typical duty cycle, how to take a fleet inventory and how to take baseline (that is, consumption before implementing a fuel-saving plan) fuel measurements," Smith says.

One section of the workshop is called 'fun with formulas,' designed for fleet managers who never had the chance to map out their fleet's vehicles and how they are used.

"We look at options, compare costs, explain fiscal versus calendar year, how to annualize fuel use and kilometres driven," Smith explains.

And as the Web site proclaims, "You will leave with many tips, ideas and a template for creating a fuel management plan for your fleet."

Another Fuel Management 101 workshop will be held in Quebec City sometime before the end of March. The way these workshops are currently organized, FleetSmart staff will wait until enough people – about 12 to 15 – have registered their interest in attending a workshop (that's done on the Web site too) then they set a date and place.

However, NRCan would like to change that, probably after April 1, and schedule, in advance, a whole year's worth of workshops, with dates and locations.

The OEE Web site is worth browsing, and is quite user-friendly. But if you get lost, just return to <http://fleetsmart.nrcan.gc.ca>. □



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Ontario

Prestigious awards handed out at OTA convention

TORONTO, Ont. – The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) once again took time during its annual convention to recognize the contributions of some special drivers and a long-time associate.

Driver of the Year

Jim Coles of MacKinnon Transport in Guelph, Ont. was presented with the 2009 OTA/Volvo Trucks Canada Driver of the Year Award. Coles has racked up 2.6 million accident-free kilometres over his 32-year career. The former Road Knight has frequently been the first to lend assistance at accident scenes and holds many work-related certifications including Natural Resources Canada's Smart Driver designation.

"Jim Coles exemplifies qualities of a professional truck driver both on and off the road," said OTA



CONGRATS: Jim Coles (right) was named Ontario's Driver of the Year. The MacKinnon driver is seen here accepting his award from Volvo Trucks Canada's Peter Currie.

president David Bradley. "It is a great honour to present him with this prestigious award in recognition of his achievement."

"It is the safety of road users with

whom I share the road that pushes me to be the best I can be," the winner said. "I will not lower my work ethic or standards because of time constraints or rush loads, there is no room for complacency when safety is involved."

Bridgestone Canada Truck Hero Award

Another driver to receive kudos during the OTA convention was Robert O'Brien of Newfoundland. He was named the Bridgestone Canadian Truck Hero for his selfless actions when he came upon an accident in the Northwest Territories on Feb. 14, 2008.

O'Brien, who works for ECL Transportation, was driving along Hwy. 1 north of Enterprise, NWT on Valentine's Day when he came across a vehicle that had hit black ice and rolled over into the ditch.

The driver escaped, but struggled to free her twin nine-and-half-month-old children from the wreckage.

O'Brien called 911 and then began digging the children from the vehicle, made difficult by the packed snow that surrounded the vehicle. Once the children were saved, O'Brien welcomed them into his truck so they could warm up while waiting for paramedics to arrive.

"Truck drivers are often unsung heroes," said Jim West, general manager, commercial products, Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions. "Our company has been honouring heroes like Mr. O'Brien since 1956. It takes an extraordinary person to do what he did, and we're proud to present him with this award."

O'Brien won a trophy and \$3,000 and Bridgestone will donate another \$3,000 on his behalf to the charity of his choice. More information on the award is available at www.truckhero.ca.

Service to Industry Award

A long-time industry veteran and former OTA staffer was named the recipient of the 2009 Shaw Tracking/OTA Service to Industry Award. Barrie Montague was surprised by the announcement which was made during the OTA dinner Nov. 19.

"Few people have contributed to the Ontario trucking industry and to the success of OTA in so many ways as Barrie Montague has," Mike Ham, vice-president business service of Shaw Tracking said while presenting the award.

During his career, Montague has served as CEO of a trucking company, as an executive committee member of the OTA board of directors and as vice-president of the association. He's now a consultant to the association and carriers.

Montague's trucking roots date back to his time with a United Kingdom-based global company that transferred him to Canada some 40 years ago. He became president of that company which was later bought by a Quebec-based tank truck carrier. Montague served as that company's executive vice-president for five years.

Montague joined the OTA staff in 1994, occupying various positions over the next 15 years.

OTA remembers Bud Barr

In other news from the convention, the OTA took a few moments during its convention luncheon to fondly remember the contribution of the late Bud Barr to the association and specifically the OTA Education Foundation.

Both OTA chair Julie Tanguay and Education Foundation chair Scott Smith of J.D. Smith & Sons made heartfelt tributes to Barr before making a toast in his honour.

"He was someone who loved this industry, loved the friends he made and certainly the opportunity convention brought to renew those friendships and strengthen them. Bud will be missed and certainly not forgotten," Smith said.

Smith also commended OTA members for raising 60% of the Education Foundation's fundraising

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goal despite trying economic times. "In spite of the tough economic times confronting our industry, we were able to raise almost 60% of our donation target," said Smith. "To those companies who helped us celebrate our 50th anniversary by generously sending a donation

our way, I would like to say thank you. Your generosity has helped us to continue our work of disbursing scholarships to students of parents who working the trucking industry." Debbie Virgoe, widow of heroic truck driver David Virgoe who

died while avoiding other traffic when street racers wreaked havoc on Hwy. 400 a couple year ago, also chipped in by donating \$7,000 raised through her memorial golf tournament. For the 2009/2010 academic year, the OTA Education Foundation

handed out nearly \$45,000 in scholarships to university and college students with ties to the trucking industry, Smith announced. To make a contribution, visit www.ontruck.org and select *Education Foundation* from under the *Training* link. □



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Ontario

Don't be caught napping

Sleep apnea screening, treatment may soon be regulated

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Imagine if 24% of your drivers were suddenly placed out-of-service due to health issues. That's a frightening scenario that could play out if the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) proceeds with proposed legislation that will require all commercial drivers operating in the US to undergo screening for sleep apnea and seek treatment within as little as 30 days.

The proposed regulation, still very much in flux, would require all commercial drivers to take a test to determine if they suffer from the common sleep disorder, which is characterized by abnormal pauses of breathing during sleep. Sleep apnea symptoms include loud snoring, restless sleep and daytime drowsiness.

Barry Kurtzer, chief medical review officer with DriverCheck, said carriers that operate in the US

when the floodgates open.

"The problem we're going to have is getting people in for the test if we're looking at a 24% fail rate...our resources here in Canada are lean," Kurtzer said during a panel discussion on the topic at the recent Ontario Trucking Association convention. "If 24% of your drivers have to go through this, what's it going to do to your company?"

Drivers who are diagnosed with sleep apnea will require treatment, which usually comes in the form of a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine that drivers must use while sleeping. It prevents the soft tissue structures in the throat from collapsing and choking off airways during sleep. Surgery is also an option.

Kurtzer said when the FMCSA finalizes its regulation (a proposed rulemaking could be published by the end of the year), Canadian carriers

'The problem we're going to have is getting people in for the test if we're looking at a 24% fail rate.'

Barry Kurtzer, DriverCheck

should prepare for the prospect of 24% of their drivers failing the first round of tests, consisting of an adjusted neck circumference measurement, body mass index reading and questionnaire. Based on the body mass index component alone, the FMCSA predicts as many as 24% of commercial drivers will fail the first test and require a full-blown medical test at a sleep centre. Worse yet, drivers may have to take the medical test (known as a polysomnogram) as many as three times to get an accurate diagnosis since it's difficult to sleep while hooked up to machines.

As the regulation is currently proposed, drivers will have just 30 days to take part in the polysomnogram before having their ticket pulled by the DoT. This raises some important issues, especially in Canada where sleep centres are few and far between and wait times would almost certainly be longer than 30 days

ers will need to implement a screening and treatment program in much the same way they test US-bound drivers for drugs and alcohol.

"It's similar to drug and alcohol testing programs, so you've already been through this and it will be easy to parallel that model," said Kurtzer.

Joel Schechter, partner with Watson Bennett Attorneys at Law, warned that once a law is passed, carriers that allow drivers with sleep apnea to operate vehicles without undergoing treatment will be at an enormous liability risk in the US. They may even be subjected to punitive damages, with decisions that can run into the tens of millions of dollars, he warned.

While the prospect of screening and treating drivers with sleep apnea may seem daunting, the FMCSA can hardly be faulted for addressing the issue. It's estimated that

Continued on page 21

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Ontario

Fleets urged to address issue

Continued from page 18

one in 15 Americans are affected by the disorder, meaning there are 20 million US sufferers and 17 million of them remain untreated. That costs the US system as much as US\$22 billion per year, Kurtzer pointed out.

Doing some rudimentary math and dividing that by 10 would suggest there are two million Canadians suffering from sleep apnea, 1.7 million of whom are untreated. The FMCSA has also found that driver sleepiness is prevalent in as many as 20% of commercial vehicle accidents. Brian Taylor, president of Liberty Linehaul, said fleets should be proactive about addressing the problem. "I think morally, we have an obligation to keep our drivers safe," he said.

Sleep study wraps up

TORONTO, Ont. – The Canadian trucking industry has been at the forefront of studying sleep apnea and fatigue management through the recently-concluded North America Fatigue Management Program. The project has been underway for eight years with participants ranging from Alberta Transportation to Transport Canada, the FMCSA and several carriers. The result of the program will be a comprehensive fatigue management program carriers can implement into their operations, Roger Clarke, executive director of vehicle safety and carriers services with Alberta Transportation, said at the OTA convention.

"We hope the results will be published within a month," Clarke said Nov. 19, adding carriers will be able to review the report and then access tools online that will enable them to calculate a return on investment and determine how best to implement the program.

Dr. Alison Smiley, president, Human Factors North and prime contractor of the North America Fatigue Management Program, divulged some of the findings from a three-carrier study. Groupe Robert, ECL Group and JB Hunt participated in the study which provided sleep apnea screening and treatment to drivers. Seventy-one per cent of participating drivers were diagnosed with sleep apnea, but Smiley pointed out the number was skewed because only drivers who were likely to be suffering from apnea in the first place actually took part in the program. In the real world, Smiley said it's expected about 28% of drivers will be affected.

Results of the study were encouraging. Following treatment, drivers who took part averaged 20 more minutes of sleep during on-duty days. The gap between the quality and duration of sleep enjoyed on rest days versus duty days narrowed, providing a better balance of sleep between work and rest days. The study also found drivers voiced fewer complaints about being fatigued and there was a significant drop in the number of drivers reporting critical events (such as hard braking or nodding off), Smiley pointed out. □

Mark Seymour, president of Kriska Holdings, revealed that he himself was affected by sleep apnea. He sought help and is amazed at how much better he feels since beginning treatment.

"It's a very personal experience for me, because it took me a long time to deal with it," Seymour said. "I knew I had a problem but it took me years to get checked out."

Seymour learned he was waking up as many as 40 times per hour while sleeping, and "you never get caught up, it builds upon itself and you never really restore your body."

Seymour said his quality of life has improved since treating the condition. "You never know how much better you can feel until you feel it," he said. "It changed my life, I feel better, I feel healthier. Let's embrace it; it's a problem you should not avoid treating." □

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By James Menzies

EDMONTON, Alta. – In November, *Truck News* learned Alberta will become the latest province to place a restriction on the commercial driver's licences held by drivers who take their road test using a truck with an automated transmission.

The province quietly announced that Class 1, 2 and 3 licence-holders who passed their road test using an automated mechanical or fully-automatic transmission would receive a restricted licence allowing them only to operate commercial vehicles with automated gearboxes.

Alberta joins a growing list of provinces that now provide a restricted licence for commercial drivers who use automated transmissions on road tests. The list now includes: B.C.; Alberta; Saskatchewan; Ontario; and Quebec. Only Manitoba and the Atlantic provinces allow full privileges for commercial drivers who haven't demonstrated an ability to operate manual transmissions during their road test.

The increased prevalence of automated transmissions in the Canadian trucking industry is forcing provinces to re-think their road test criteria. Ontario caused a stir when it introduced new equipment requirements including the use of a manual transmission last year, but that was mostly because senior drivers who in that province must be road tested every year after the age of 65 were also included.

Many gear-jamming veterans

Automatically restricted

Alberta joins growing list of provinces to place restrictions on drivers who use automated transmissions on road tests

have made the transition to automated transmissions after millions of miles of safe driving. The province acknowledged that it erred and in November exempted senior drivers from the requirement while keeping the restricted licence in place for new drivers who take their road test using an automatic.

The industry seems divided on whether provinces should be restricting professional drivers from operating certain types of equipment.

Kim Richardson, owner of Ontario truck training school KRTS Transportation Specialists, said the restrictions are a bit of a joke.

"How are they going to enforce it?" he asked. "Are they going to set up spot checks for people driving automatics? It's ridiculous in my opinion. It's just another example of poor management at the government level...as a rule, the general industry is not going to allow someone to operate equipment that they haven't had the proper

training on, regardless of whether they were tested on it."

But not everyone agrees; and in fact the trucking association from one of the few provinces that has yet to impose a restriction says it would welcome the change. Bob Dolyniuk, general manager of the Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA), says he has concerns about drivers operating equipment they may not know how to properly use. With automated transmissions becoming more popular, he said the province should impose restrictions much the same way it did when automatic transmission-equipped cars began hitting the roads.

"In those days, if you were tested on an automatic transmission, you were restricted to driving a car with an automatic transmission," said Dolyniuk. "Quite frankly, I have the same questions in mind when we're talking about someone road testing with an automated transmission today and then tomorrow afternoon being legal to operate a vehicle with a standard transmission which they may not have proven competency on."

While MTA hasn't officially lobbied the province to introduce a restricted class licence, Dolyniuk said some driving schools have expressed concern over the issue and he said "I think we're going to be entering into discussions."

Andy Roberts, owner of training school Mountain Transport Institute in Castlegar, B.C., said drivers should become proficient at shifting before they begin their driving career and welcomed the news that Alberta was introducing a restriction.

"You hear hearsay of schools in Alberta that have trucks with automated transmissions teaching people to drive in six hours," he said. "They don't teach them how to shift, they just teach them the road test route and the guy could pass the test and get a full-fledged licence and take a load of B-trains over the Coquihalla (using a manual transmission)."

Roberts is a big fan of automated transmissions, but worries they don't give new drivers a true sense of the weight they're hauling or the handling characteristics of their vehicle.

"I think the technology is fabulous but one of the challenges today is that, you look at the horsepower that's available, the braking horsepower available in the engine brake, the automated transmission – a lot of these people don't have a grasp on the weight they're dealing with because the truck is becoming so easy to drive," Roberts said. "And what happens when a truck breaks down and the rental company doesn't have an automatic? Now what do we do? You can't

legally operate that truck."

While Roberts feels some proficiency on shifting gears should be required by all professional drivers, he said he understands why trucking companies are automating their fleets. MTI runs a truck with an automated transmission and Roberts said he feels less fatigued after a trip with that truck.

"We had a guy a few years ago who counted and claimed he made 1,000 shifts from here to Hope, B.C. pulling Super-Bs," Roberts recalled. "It's not just the physical movement of the stick (that's tiring), it's the mental calculations you have to do to shift. You have to pay really close attention to that all the time."

Many fleet managers have become so enamoured by automated transmissions that it can now be difficult to find a linehaul job that doesn't come complete with an automated transmission-equipped company truck. That irks Paul Kauler, a long-time driver whose disdain for the technology has often left him on the sidelines as he turns down job opportunities that don't include a manual transmission.

"At this point, you cannot have a standard truck in a linehaul job unless you are an owner/operator," he said. Kauler firmly believes the increasing popularity of automated transmissions is creating a new breed of dangerous driver – and he speaks from experience. He was involved in a rollover while resting in the bunk running team across the prairies. He said the driver behind the wheel became inattentive because the truck had an automated transmission. That same driver never learned how to drive a standard, Kauler said, making him unfit for the job in his opinion.

Kauler said three of four drivers he has personally known who have driven only automatic trucks in their careers have been involved in serious mishaps and he wants Transport Canada to conduct a study on the true safety of automated transmissions in linehaul applications.

"The most important thing for a professional driver is, you need to have absolute control of your truck," he said. "You need to know how much torque you have on your wheels, especially in a tricky situation like on black ice."

Kauler feels provinces haven't gone far enough in restricting drivers who haven't demonstrated proficiency in shifting during road tests and would like to see a requirement for drivers to collect a certain amount of experience with manual transmissions before being allowed to drive an automatic. Think of it as a reverse restriction, which requires new drivers to operate standard transmissions until they've demonstrated their shifting proficiency and earned the right to move to an automatic.

Despite the varying opinions on the matter, it seems unlikely that the trend towards automated transmissions is going to be reversed any time soon.

KRTS's Richardson estimates 80% of his fleet customers will be fully automated within five years and some even sooner and he said provinces should be embracing the change. □

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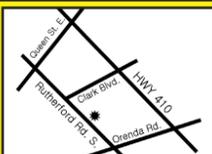
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Trucking industry, law enforcement take aim at crime

A coordinated plan of attack is now in the works

By James Menzies
OTTAWA, Ont. – Alarmed by increasing incidences of cargo theft, truck hijackings, contraband smuggling and other truck-involved criminal activity, the trucking industry and law enforcement are getting serious about working together to address the issue.

Trucking company executives, industry associations, insurers and law enforcement personnel gathered in Ottawa Nov. 23 for some serious discussions about the growing problem and to develop a coordinated plan of attack.

“This forum provided an opportunity for law enforcement (mostly RCMP program managers and Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police representatives) and industry to discuss the need for a national plan to deal with this serious

problem,” Sgt. Rob Ruiters, national Pipeline/Convoy Program coordinator told *Truck News*.

The initial forum was kept small to allow for effective discussions and it was agreed that the trucking industry must continue to work closely with law enforcement going forward, Ruiters said.

He also told *Truck News* it was agreed that police must continue educating front-line enforcement officers on commercial vehicles and the prospect of organized crime infiltration of the industry and to continue to build relationships with trucking industry officials in raising awareness of the problem.

“The policing community will work through the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police to raise the priority of this type of

criminal activity within law enforcement circles,” Ruiters vowed.

For its part, the Canadian Trucking Alliance said it will work with its provincial transportation partners to increase reporting of occurrences and with law enforcement to develop a standard reporting means.

The CTA also said it would work with the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and its Private Sector Liaison Committee to address court sentencing, current laws and to develop a media strategy. The industry must also raise awareness of the importance of reporting incidences.

“The bottom line is that there is much work to do, and no short cuts or quick fix,” Ruiters summarized. “We all agreed that continued partnerships and cooperation is needed by all moving forward.” □

Industry execs help shape Truck World

TORONTO, Ont. – Organizers of Truck World 2010 have formed a show committee consisting of key industry executives to help organize the event.

“The group’s focus is to present the industry with an exciting show, so visitors will feel they received real value for their time and money,” said Jim Glionna, president of Newcom Business Media, owner and producer of the show. “We can’t fail to deliver in 2010 with such a powerful group advising show management on an almost day-to-day basis.”

The committee includes senior staff from key fleets and suppliers. Truck World will be held at the International Centre Apr. 15-17. For info, visit www.truckworld.ca. □



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Will trucking rates rebound in 2010?

Continued from page 1

"The optimists clearly outnumber the pessimists now," he said, before tempering that remark by adding "while there has been some improvement in volume, the outlook is still shaky, confidence fragile."

Our own nationwide survey of motor carrier executives completed at the end of November found that 40% of motor carriers believed freight volumes would grow in 2010, compared to just 19% who felt likewise at the same time last year. Only 10% felt freight volumes would decrease, compared to 42% who felt likewise at the same point the previous year. Survey respondents rated their degree of optimism for their company's growth at 5.6 on a scale of one to 10, an increase from the 5.1 rating they provided the previous year.

The trajectory of the Canadian trucking industry's recovery may be largely influenced by the ability of the US economy to get back on track and the willingness of the Bank of Canada to keep the Canadian dollar in check so our exports continue to appeal to our largest trading partner. However, there seems to be lingering doubt about the US economy's ability to bounce back.

John Larkin, managing director transportation with Stiefel, Nicolaus and Co., speaking about the US economy at the recent OTA convention, had this to say about the US economic outlook: "Maybe when the snow melts we'll see some green shoots."

And at the same event, Meny Grauman, executive director and senior economist with CIBC World Markets, described the US

economy's 2010 outlook this way: "A pop and a fizzle."

While he believes the recession in the US, as with Canada, is over and third quarter growth this year is strong thanks to the impact of Washington's unprecedented economic stimulus, Grauman believes the US will find itself in a "slow crawl" out of the recession overall.

A lot has to do with the hit the US consumer has taken, Grauman said, adding that US incomes are continuing to contract as is consumer credit.

"Their incomes are dropping, their access to credit is shrinking. They got burned living off credit and they're not in a mood to shop," Grauman said. "The US consumer is very resilient. It is always dangerous to declare the US consumer down and out but sometimes you can get hit too hard."

One of the biggest questions in 2010 will be whether carriers can restore trucking rates that took a wallop last year. Average rates in most lanes took a hit in 2009, according to the Canadian General Freight Index developed by Dr. Alan Saibe, president of Supply Chain Surveys on behalf of transportation management provider Nulogx. Between December 2008 and July 2009, domestic truckload rates dropped 4.1%, cross-border LTL rates plummeted 21.4%, cross-border truckload rates fell 4.4% and overall trucking rates were down 5.6%. (Only domestic LTL rates increased, and that was a meager 1.8%).

"In 2010, supply and demand should be in better balance, setting the stage for rate adjustments," predicted Bradley.

His prediction is echoed by Nulogx, which estimated rates would bottom out in fall of 2009 and grow through the end of 2010.

"We expect that average ground freight costs will be about 4.8% higher in 2010 than they were in 2009," Saibe's recent forecast read. "Our projections show that this year-over-year increase may be as low as 1.6% and may be as high as 8.1%, depending on how quickly the world, US and Canadian economies grow." □

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CTHRC to certify driver trainers, assessors

OTTAWA, Ont. – Driver trainers and assessors are now able to have their own skills and experience recognized through a new certification program being offered by the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC).

The new certification – recognized by the Canadian Vocational Association – will reflect past work experience, a review of training materials and procedures, and the successful completion of an online exam.

"The goal is to recognize the experienced driver trainers who meet National Occupational Standards," says CTHRC executive director Linda Gauthier. "This certification program will help to establish and promote the standards for safety and professional practice, while increasing recognition for the profession of driver trainers."

The certifications are offered for those who train in the classroom only, in the cab only, or in both.

"This certification program was developed by industry stakeholders for industry," says Mayne Root, executive director of the Alberta Motor Transport Association. "It provides consistency across the industry sectors and across the country and has been developed to meet nationally recognized standards. The goal was to have a certification process that was easily accessible to anyone who wanted to participate in it, and I believe that has been accomplished."

Application fees have been set at \$300 for an in-class certification, \$300 for an in-cab certification, and \$450 for a combined in-class and in-cab certification. For more on the program, visit www.cthrc.com. □

Industry

Major issues loom for the Canadian trucking industry in 2010

Clearly, the economy will continue to be the major pre-occupation of Canadian trucking companies in 2010. While there are indications that things may have hit bottom, at least in terms of volume, things remain quite fragile. The US economy and the value of the Canadian dollar versus the US greenback continue to be major wildcards. It would probably be best to operate as if things were not likely to improve, but hope that they do.

Economic issues are not the only source of concern for 2010. A host of major policy/regulatory issues loom large. In the space afforded me here, I will concentrate on a few of the ones that I think could have the most significant impact on the industry.

Perhaps we should not have been shocked (given the previous success the anti-truck groups have had in the US courts) but it still came as a bombshell when the FMCSA announced that it would be reviewing, revising and rewriting the US hours-of-service rule in 2010. The outcome is unpredictable at this point. However, you can bet the chances of the US rule being made more flexible are slim to none. It is likely that the additional hour of driving and the 34-hour reset (modeled after a proposal developed by CTA), will be under the microscope. At the same time, FMCSA is developing its EOBR rule and one would think the pressure to come in with some sort of mandate is increased.

At this point in time, there appears to be little appetite for re-opening the HoS regulation in Canada. Indeed, there is pressure being brought to bear by some provinces (four have yet to adopt anything close to the federal regulation) to increase flexibility for certain sectors.

Whether developments in the US will cause a change in thinking here remains to be seen. In the end, it really doesn't matter since Canadian carriers and drivers who operate into and out of the US will have to comply with the US rules regardless.

CTA supports a universal EOBR mandate and is currently working with federal/provincial officials to develop a Canadian standard, which will then give Canada a basis from which to sit down with the Americans and try to come up with a North American standard.

That work is now more important than ever.

Other major safety initiatives are also expected to take shape in 2010. It seems more and more likely that the FMCSA will introduce some form of mandatory testing for sleep apnea amongst commercial drivers.

While we may not see the rule in 2010, work is continuing in this direction. At the same time, CTA is working with Canadian governments to develop a Canadian program that it is hoped would receive reciprocal treatment from the US. If (or more likely *when*) the US goes, Canadian carriers and drivers will again have to comply. Think drug testing all over again.

There is also little doubt that the US is moving towards a regulation mandating the installation of electronic stability control systems on



Industry Issues

David Bradley

heavy trucks at the factory level. Two of the major OEMs already make such devices a standard part of their vehicle package while it is an option for the others. The evidence, both empirical and, from carriers' own experiences suggests the technology works and is cheap insurance. CTA is urging Transport Canada to begin preparing now to mirror the US rules when they are introduced.

The battle against climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions is moving to the next level. While we may not see a cap-and-

trade system introduced in 2010, there will be plenty of other initiatives. In January 2010, California will start requiring trucks operating into, out of and within the state, to be equipped with SmartWay-certified fuel efficiency technologies and devices – Canadian carriers included. Will other signatories to the Western Climate Initiative – including four Canadian provinces – follow suit?

How will Canadian carriers comply when most provinces restrict the weight on wide-base single tires and no province currently allows a full boat-tail – two of the main technologies that SmartWay certifies and which are a key component of CTA's enviroTruck initiative?

The debate underway in the US over highway re-authorization funding is also one to watch. Policy-makers there have come to the realization that if in fact the measures to reduce fuel consumption succeed,

revenues from fuel taxes – the source of funding for the US highway system – will also shrink.

Other ways of raising money will have to be found. ATA favours an increase in the federal fuel tax. Others prefer tolls or vehicle weight/distance taxes.

In Canada, public sentiment seems to be turning against the huge budget deficits that every province and the federal government have rung up over the past year. Will we be able to grow our way back to fiscal balance or will governments ultimately have to look at increasing taxes?

These are some of the key issues that will dominate the policy agenda in 2010. □

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

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Industry

The mission: Safety and security

Back in 2005, Transport Canada commissioned a series of transportation security overview papers, including one that dealt with the trucking sector. The paper on trucking was prepared by Sam Barone of InterVISTAS and was based on industry stakeholder views, including those of the PMTC.

The idea behind the initiative was to assess current and future threats to the industry; what systems were in place to mitigate security threats; and how the trucking industry could be used by terrorists.

Prompted in part by recent discussions with the RCMP and the truck insurance sector about the level of infiltration by the criminal element into the trucking industry, I re-read the 2005 paper. There is a connection I believe between criminal infiltration and national security when it comes to trucking. It may not be a direct connection, but tangentially the two subjects come together at the trucking sector.

In previous articles I described how criminals infiltrate trucking and some of the safeguards that individual trucking companies and shippers have put in place to combat them. This approach – companies effectively doing their own thing – was identified in the 2005 report. That report stated “Some trucking companies...have undertaken security risk assessments and developed best practices, (but) these activities are neither uniform nor widespread.”

That situation seems not to have changed. Some carriers have willingly shared ‘best practices,’ but most are still on their own to develop and implement security procedures. In our view, those best practices could easily be compiled and made accessible to the entire trucking community. Those that have not considered security to any significant degree could certainly use the information, and those that have would likely find information that could be used to improve their efforts.

The potential impact of any coordinated attack on our infrastructure (specifically roads, bridges and border crossings) cannot be overstated. The lifestyle of North Americans depends on an efficient truck transportation system for the delivery of everything that is consumed in business or by its citizens. Disrupting that network for any significant length of time would be devastating.

If you doubt that point of view, consider that within a few years of the Smart Border Declaration of 2001, border crossing times for commercial trucks had increased by over 300%, according to the Coalition for Secure and Trade Efficient Borders, with resulting delays and frustration. And that’s with the entire infrastructure still intact! Just imagine the chaos if, for example, a border bridge were disabled.

The working group that participated in the 2005 report identified and agreed upon five areas of vulnerability in Canada’s transportation systems. These were: HazMat/Dangerous Goods; strategic infrastructure; industry fragmentation; lack of corporate infrastructure with small carriers; and recovery and response planning.

As might have been expected, the

Private Links

Bruce Richards



most significant potential threat raised was that of a terrorist attack using trucks loaded with hazardous material. That same concern was also raised in my recent discussions with the RCMP. We are not just talking about theft of cargo and its implications, but the potential for serious infrastructure damage and death if trucks are misused by criminals or terrorists.

The prevailing view still seems to be that the greatest exposure faced by trucking is not in domestic activities but on trucks bound of the Canada/US border. Cross-border shipping has of course received much attention in recent years with such security-minded programs as C-TPAT, PIP, FAST and driver checks for those hauling dangerous goods or entering port lands.

But, ironically, because there has been such heavy emphasis on cross-border movements between Canada and the US, we haven’t devoted as much attention to security of domestic transportation.

One exception may be the more proactive approach to the transportation of dangerous goods since 9/11 as evinced by Transport Canada’s activities and those of Quebec specifically.

But generally speaking, the security of our domestic transportation network doesn’t seem to have been a high priority.

Or perhaps the work that has been done has not been given much visibility. If that is the case we wonder why the industry has not been inundated with plans, ideas, suggestions or templates to help carriers and shippers organize their operational security.

But something may be afoot. Part of Transport Canada’s mission is to promote a safe and secure transportation system, and to that end the Surface and Intermodal Security Directorate (SIMS) works to enhance the security of that system.

Fair do’s, SIMS has only been in place for just over one year and so far has concentrated its efforts on rail and urban transit.

SIMS is now preparing to focus attention on a strategy for the security of surface and intermodal sectors.

This strategy will, according to Transport Canada, articulate the vision, mission and mandate of SIMS; prioritize the highest security risks in the surface and intermodal sectors; and outline policy and program priorities for SIMS to address the risks.

Recently Transport Canada announced plans to host a workshop to assess the vulnerability and impacts of various threat scenarios. PMTC will be participating and we are looking forward to helping raise the importance and visibility of domestic transportation security. □

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MILES AHEAD

2010

Calendar of Events



JANUARY

- Jan. 18-21, **Heavy-Duty Aftermarket Week**, The Mirage, Las Vegas, NV, www.hdaw.org
- Jan. 22, **Toronto Transportation Club Ski Day**, Craigeleith Ski Club, Collingwood, ON, www.torontotransportationclub.com
- Jan. 29, **OTA Ski Day**, www.ontruck.org

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 1-5, **World of Concrete**, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV, www.worldofconcrete.com
- Feb. 9-12, **ATA Technology and Maintenance Council**, Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, FL, www.truckline.com
- Feb. 17-19, **University of Manitoba Trucking Symposium**, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, MB, Paul Larson, larson@cc.umanitoba.ca
- Feb. 21-23, **APTA Truck Technology Conference**, Delta Brunswick Hotel, Saint John, N.B., www.apta.ca
- Feb. 28-March 3, **Truckload Carriers Association Convention**, Wynn Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV, www.truckload.org

MARCH

- March 5, **Toronto Trucking Association Osler Bluff Family Ski Day**, www.torontotrucking.org
- March 10-12, **The Work Truck Show**, St. Louis, MO, www.ntea.com
- March 25-27, **Mid-America Trucking Show**, Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville, KY, www.truckingshow.com

APRIL

- Apr. 5-8, **Truck Rental & Leasing Association Annual Meeting**, www.doralresort.com Doral Golf Resort & Spa, Miami, FL, www.trala.org
- Apr. 8, **Toronto Transportation Club Transportation Night**, Mississauga Convention Centre, Mississauga, ON, www.torontotransportationclub.com
- Apr. 15, **Toronto Trucking Association Annual General Meeting**, Toronto, ON, www.torontotrucking.org
- Apr. 15-17, **Truck World**, International Centre, Toronto, ON, www.truckworld.ca
- Apr. 30-May 2, **AMTA Annual General Meeting**, Rimrock Hotel, Banff, AB, www.amta.ca
- Apr. 30-May 1, **Quebec Trucking Association Annual Convention**, Hilton Hotel Lac-Leamy, Gatineau, QC, www.carrefour-acq.org

MAY

- May 4-5, **Transpo 2010**, Toronto, ON, www.cita-acti.ca
- May 10-12, **Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminars**, Markham, ON, www.cfmsonline.com
- May 16-20, **Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators Annual Meeting**, Delta Fredericton, Fredericton, NB, www.ccmta.ca
- May 19, **OTA Spring Golf Tournament**, www.ontruck.org
- May 26, **Toronto Trucking Association Spring Social**, Woodbine Racetrack, www.torontotrucking.org
- May 29-30, **Road Today Truck Show**, Powerade Centre, Brampton, ON, www.roadtodaytruckshow.com
- May 29-June 1, **Heavy-Duty Distributor Council Annual Business Conference**, Halifax Marriott Harbourfront, Halifax, NS, www.hddc.on.ca
- May 31, **PMTC Quebec Spring Golf Tournament**, www.pmtc.ca

JUNE

- June 1-3, **Roadcheck 2010**, North America-wide, www.cvsa.org
- June 3, **AMTA Annual Driver Appreciation BBQ**, Leduc Scales, Leduc, AB, www.amta.ca
- June 7, **PMTC Ontario Spring Golf Tournament**, www.pmtc.ca
- June 10, **Toronto Trucking Association Annual Golf Tournament**, Lionhead, www.torontotrucking.org
- June 15, **Truck News/Chevron Golfing for Wishes Charity Golf Tournament**, Wooden Sticks Golf Club, Uxbridge, ON, Kathy Penner (416-510-6892) or Brenda Grant (416-494-3333)
- June 17-19, **Great West Truck Show**, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV, www.truckshow.com
- June 18, **Private Motor Truck Council of Canada Convention**, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, www.pmtc.ca
- June 18-20, **Stirling Truck Show**, Stirling, ON, www.stirlingtruckshow.com

JULY

- July 22-25, **Fergus Truck Show**, Fergus, ON, www.fergustruckshow.com
- July 29-Aug. 1, **Rodeo du Camion**, Notre-Dame-du-Nord, QC, www.elrodeo.com

AUGUST

- Aug. 23, **PMTC Ontario Summer Golf Tournament**, www.pmtc.ca
- Aug. 26-29, **Great American Trucking Show**, Dallas, TX, www.gatsonline.com

SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 11, **AMTA Annual Driver Appreciation BBQ**, Balzac Scales, Balzac, AB, www.amta.ca
- Sept. 12-18, **Brake Safety Week**, North America-wide, www.cvsa.org
- Sept. 14-16, **Freight Transportation Conference**, FTR Associates, Indianapolis, IN, www.ftrassociates.com
- Sept. 15, **OTA Fall Golf Tournament**, www.ontruck.org
- Sept. 18, **World's Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics**, Paris, ON, www.sosconvoy.com
- Sept. 20-23, **CVSA Annual Conference**, Anaheim Marriott, Anaheim, CA, www.cvsa.org

OCTOBER

- Oct. 1-2, **Truxpo**, Tradex Centre, Abbotsford, B.C., www.truxpo.com
- Oct. 16-19, **ATA Management Conference & Exhibition**, Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix, AZ, www.truckline.com

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 5-7, **CamExpo**, Centre de Foires de Québec, Quebec City, QC, www.cam-expo.com
- Nov. 18, **OTA Convention**, Toronto, ON, www.ontruck.org

DECEMBER

- Dec. 2, **Toronto Transportation Club Annual Dinner**, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, ON, www.torontotransportationclub.com

Safety

Creating a culture of safety

For many carriers, every dollar spent on safety programs has resulted in a return-on-investment (ROI) of \$3, achieved through the reduction of losses, maintenance costs, downtime and driver turnover. In addition to producing a profitable ROI, safety programs can also enhance employee and public safety, protect your company's reputation and carrier safety rating, and improve your bottom line.

In order to achieve these kinds of benefits, safety needs to be understood as an attitude and a culture that begins at the top, with senior management responsible for setting the standards to which all employees adhere. Those standards need to be communicated, understood, and practiced by all employees, so that they become a way of doing business.

With the support from senior management, the safety manager needs to communicate with and obtain buy-in from all other departments to ensure that safety issues are properly addressed. In order to secure executive buy-in, they need to provide a cost-benefit analysis that demonstrates and quantifies the anticipated savings for the company.

So what resources can the safety manager use to help create a culture of safety? In most cases, these resources are already in-house, and can serve as extremely valuable assets. For example, operations is essentially all about on-time, damage-free pick-up and deliveries. These

Ask the Expert

Clive Thomson



staff members are responsible not only for driver performance management but also for safety initiatives, which can help enhance driver performance and result in increased productivity.

They also have a greater opportunity to proactively affect driver safety than one might first realize. Because they control driver assignments and have daily driver contact, they have the advantage of being able to identify emerging safety issues as they develop. Dispatchers who view themselves as a member of the safety department are a valuable resource, so educating and supporting them in their early recognition and management of driver safety issues are vital to fleet safety management.

Likewise, maintenance can also provide good support for the safety manager, as they understand that reduced equipment breakdown and damage means reduced servicing costs. They have the responsibility of ensuring that equipment is well-maintained and safe, which puts them in an ideal position to identify whether equipment failures are a result of a product defect, inadequate vehicle inspections, or over-the-road

servicing while the equipment is out of their control. Communicating these findings to all levels of management will allow for the issue to be addressed either through a revised maintenance program, alternative over-the-road servicing arrangements, or through continued driver training.

Beyond these, an additional resource for the safety manager can be their safety and training services advisor. The leading insurers have a team of some of the most experienced industry professionals who have access to vast resources of information, and they would be available to help you every step of the way. The important point to remember is that safety managers should

take advantage of all that's available to them – there's no need to go it alone. All levels of management have a responsibility to continually explore opportunities for improvement; not just the safety manager. By starting at the top and integrating safety into your entire company culture, your fleet will be better poised for success. □

– This month's expert is Clive Thomson, STS solutions manager for Markel Insurance Company of Canada. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. To read more, visit Markel's Web site at www.markel.ca and click on the Articles & Essays section.



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Tires

By Ingrid Phaneuf
TORONTO, Ont. – Winter tire maintenance is like tire maintenance all year round. But the consequences of not maintaining your tires correctly during the year's worst driving months can be much more deadly.

That's why smart fleets, owner/operators and drivers should take the following into consideration as the weather worsens:

Match the tire to the conditions

There are all kinds of commercial tires out there, for all kinds of purposes. Of course, your choice of tire should depend on what and where

Are your tires tired?

Maintenance key to safe homecoming

you're running. A dedicated winter tire may not be appropriate for running south and back, but it may be just the ticket for running through the Rockies. And obviously a four season tire is not going to cut the mustard in heavy snow, but it could be ideal for those southern runs.

"If you're crossing Canada in winter time, you are probably going to use a winter tire," says Jeff Bullock, national service manager for Hankook Tire Canada. "But if

you're driving north to south you don't want to be running a winter tire on hot pavement. What you need then is a four season."

A good grip is what winter tires provide in spades, using rubber compounds and biting edges on more aggressive tread patterns designed to cling to wintry roads.

"A more aggressive pattern with an open shoulder is more suited to severe snow conditions, while a milder design is better for a southern route," says Brian Rennie, director of sales and engineering with Bridgestone Canada.

Of course your tire choice should also depend on the rig you drive. If you run a straight truck or tractor with a single drive axle, an aggressive drive tire tread pattern is important. Lots of lugs will dig into snow and provide better traction. If you run a tandem-axle rig, you already have double the drive and traction, so depending on the road conditions, you might get enough grip with traditional over-the-road drive tires that are designed for good traction and long miles to removal.

One option for snowy or slushy conditions is to have your tires siped. Many tire dealers in the northern US and Canada have tire-siping machines, which cut grooves into your tires. It is generally believed that siped tires can produce a measur-

able improvement in traction on slippery surfaces. However, some lug tires, when siped, may be prone to tread tearing on dry pavement. And siping tires may void warranties under certain conditions. Ask your tire dealer for more information prior to siping your tires. Or buy them siped – some manufacturers are already making them that way.

Siping or no, experts say the best tires for winter driving are new ones.

"Put your best foot forward with new treads," says Tim Miller, marketing and communications manager for Goodyear Commercial Tire North America.

Of course, fuel consumption and how many miles you can get out of a tire are always a concern for truckers, one that drives manufacturers to continually explore new ways to get good traction without increasing fuel use and decreasing mileage.

"Fuel economy is one component," says John Overing, segment manager for the Michelin Canada's commercial truck division. "Reducing rolling resistance has the effect of reducing fuel consumption."

Winter tires made of softer rubber compounds and with bigger tread patterns tend to wear more quickly. Which brings us to another fundamental winter driving practice – maintenance.

Maintenance

Checking your tires is essential to safe driving all year round, but did you know that come winter, special factors make it even more important? Tread depth, for example, requires close monitoring, especially on dedicated winter tires.

"Winter tires wear more quickly and more irregularly," points out Greg Cressman, director of technical services for Yokohama Tire Canada. "That's because the compounds they're made with are softer, to provide more grip, and the tread patterns have more blocks and sipes in it, which means tires can pick up stones and wear irregularly."

Drivers need to be diligent about checking how tires are wearing and have tires rotated to extend their life.

"You've got to rotate even more with a winter tire," says Cressman. "So you've got to take the time to assess the irregular wear rate, especially on the front axles."

Wear rate is also affected by the way tires flex when they roll, bending the tire's rubber and steel cords. The flexing generates heat, and tire wear is the result of friction created between the road's surface and the tread as the tire rolls along. Heat is a tire's worst enemy. Check the wear rate on your tires by rubbing your hand along the tread and sidewalls to feel for problems like flat spots, cuts, shoulder wear, bulges, sidewall damage, etc.

Inflation

Proper inflation is the single most critical factor for getting the safest and longest life out of tires. It is not the tire, but the air inside the tire that carries the weight of the vehicle, absorbs shock and keeps the tire in its proper shape so it can perform as designed. A tire that is improperly inflated does not roll as smoothly or as easily as it was designed to roll. More importantly, most tire-related

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truck accidents are caused by improper tire inflation. Tire-related accidents are avoidable, as long as truckers maintain the proper inflation for a given tire size and load.

When tires are over-inflated, excessive wear occurs at the center of the tread because it will bear the majority of the vehicle's weight.

Over-inflated tires tend to not absorb road hazards like debris in the road and potholes, increasing the risk of sustaining a puncture or impact damage.

That's why tire pressure should only be checked when a tire is cold – before a vehicle is driven (or when it has been driven less than a mile). Once a vehicle has been driven, tires warm up and there is an increase in air pressure resulting in an inaccurate reading. After driving a truck, a "hot" tire can take several hours to cool down.

Checking the pressure with the truck outside, not inside in some warm garage where the temperature of the air filling the tires may not

match road conditions, is ideal. Of course, checking the pressure in bitter cold presents another challenge, as moist air can come out of the valve and freeze on the spot, which makes the valve stick.

If that happens, by all means, check the pressure inside, but remember that when you fill the tires you'll have to compensate for a greater pressure drop in extreme cold.

At 20 or 30 degrees below zero air pressure loss is even greater than normal.

In Alaska or parts of Canada when it's 45 below, you might lose up to two psi for every seven-degree drop in ambient temperature.

If you have your truck in the shop for six hours and it's nice and warm and you fill to 70 psi, the inflation pressure may not be adequate for the kind of weight you're hauling.

You might need 90 psi or more. Conversely, because air pressures fall one pound for every 10-degree F drop in the ambient temperature, if

you check your pressures in the heat of the day they may be two or three psi lower the next morning after a night of cooler temperatures.

All the more reason to check tire pressure regularly, with a properly-calibrated tire gauge rather than kicking or hitting your tires with a baseball bat. You don't thump on the hood to see if you need oil do you?

"It's especially important to make sure you're checking the pressure in winter because the accessibility of valves may make maintenance awkward," says Rennie.

In other words, the guy or gal who drove the truck before you may have been unwilling to hunker down and check it him or herself. Don't be the one to pay the price of his or her neglect.

Chains

As for chains, with chain laws in effect in some areas, it's not a question of whether you use them, but whether you can use them without

doing serious damage to your tires.

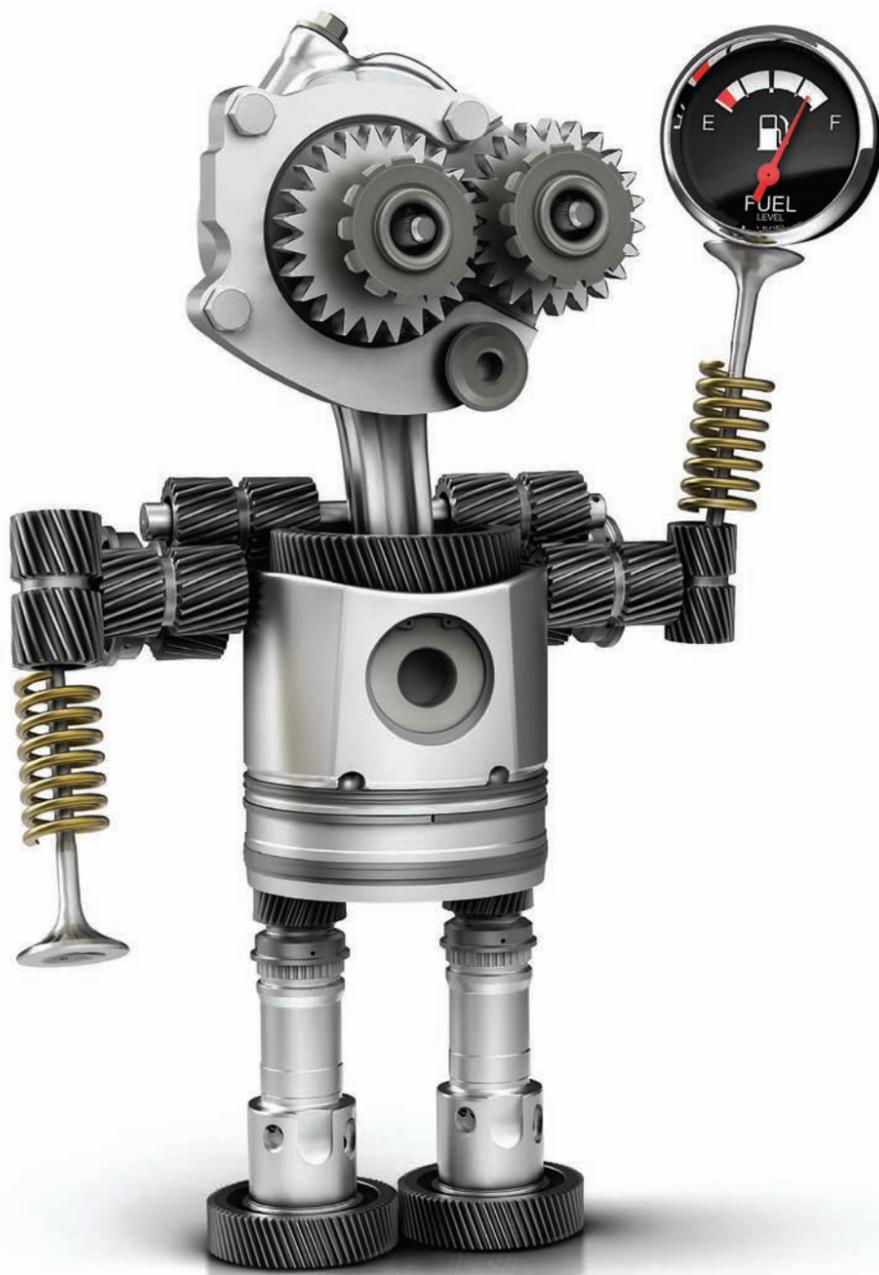
That's why fit is all important, say the experts.

"If your chains don't fit properly or they're improperly installed they can damage your tires," says Goodyear's Miller. "That's why it's important to read the instruction sheet provided by the chain manufacturer when you're installing them. Manufacturers recommend you put the chain on, drive a few hundred feet and then retighten them," adds Miller. "They may loosen."

Last but not least, when it comes picking and maintaining your tires in winter (and all year round), your tire dealer is your best source for help with tread selection, maintenance tips and best practices for tire inspection, pressure checks, and chaining techniques.

Believe it or not, when it comes to getting you home safely in all weather conditions, your tire dealer is on your side. □

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DPFs Unplugged

In the months ahead, thousands of diesel particulate filters will require their first cleaning. Do you know what your options are?

By James Menzies
TORONTO, Ont. – As the calendar flips to 2010, you could be forgiven if you find yourself thinking more about DEF than DPFs.

The first engines in North America requiring diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) are now hitting Canadian highways and customers will soon be seeking out suppliers of the urea-based solution required for engines using selective catalytic reduction (SCR). But that's a topic for another day. In the meantime, diesel particulate filters (DPFs), which will remain a fixture on all 2010 highway trucks, will be coming due for their first cleanings.

DPFs were introduced by all OEMs in response to the EPA07 emissions standards that called for a reduction in particulate matter (PM). The filters trap PM and burn it off at high temperatures, usually passively and transparently while the truck is rolling down

the highway.

By all accounts, the filters have lived up to manufacturer promises of lengthy cleaning intervals, with many still functioning at 400,000 kms or more – well beyond the 150,000 mile (240,000 km) minimum required by the EPA.

But that's not to say they've been without their problems. Kevin Beaulieu, supervisor of fuel efficiency with Bison Transport, said his company has encountered problems with injector failures triggering DPF regenerations more frequently than required, "causing the things to want to regenerate several times daily, which takes a huge toll on fuel economy."

Even so, Bison has yet to require a large-scale cleaning or exchange (and incidentally, the fleet never did make the transition to CJ-4 engine oils, which some oil companies insisted would be nec-



CHOICES: You can let your dealer service your DPF during scheduled maintenance or have it cleaned by a third-party provider, which may require you to remove the filter yourself. DPF removal is pretty simple, as demonstrated here.

essary to avoid premature clogging of the filter).

Now that the first of Bison's EPA07 engines are approaching the 400,000-km mark, the company is beginning to evaluate its DPF cleaning and replacement options. Having been quoted as much as \$500 per exchange through local vendors, the company is staring at an enormous expense, causing it to consider purchasing its own DPF cleaning equipment.

"With the number of units we have in service, it wouldn't take very long to have a payback on our own machine, even if it's centralized in one location and we ship to other terminals," pointed out Itamar Levine, director of fleet assets with Bison Transport.

But DPF cleaning machines don't come cheap, making them infeasible for most small fleets and certainly owner/operators. And even large fleets may have to factor in the cost of upping the voltage of their facilities and training staff on the use of the machines if they wish to implement an in-house cleaning program.

"That's very expensive," pointed out Tom Nelson, sales rep for DPF Cleaning Specialists, a new Windsor, Ont.-based company that offers DPF cleaning services in southern Ontario. "It could be \$75,000 or more just for set-up."

Truck and engine dealers have been launching simple cleaning

and exchange programs that minimize the downtime and disruption for fleets and owner/operators.

"For Volvo, the recommended procedure is to simply have your Volvo dealer swap out the DPF core and replace it with a remanufactured core," Volvo spokesman James McNamara explained. "This is the same procedure as today and can be done during the course of an oil change. The used cores are then shipped to our remanufacturing centre where they are restored to greater than 90% of their original efficiency. This way dealers and customers avoid the expense and bother of purchasing or operating a core cleaning system."

Cummins also offers a while-you-wait DPF cleaning service as well as an exchange program in which a customer can swap their DPF for a ReCon Particulate Filter.

"The ReCon exchange program is the simplest and most time efficient process for getting the customer back on the road quickly," suggested Christy Nycz, on-highway communications manager with Cummins. She added more than 125 Cummins distributors and many dealers have been equipped with DPF cleaning machines.

"We are confident that the service network is sufficiently prepared to accommodate customers' service needs as they

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approach the first needed cleaning interval for DPFs," she said.

While all engine suppliers are now offering convenient cleaning and exchange programs, the cleaning methods do vary. Cummins uses a pulse-air cleaner which produces pulses of air that remove excess ash from the filter, Nycz explained. Detroit Diesel, on the other hand, uses a proprietary "de-ionized water technology" to restore filters to 95% of their original capacity.

A third option for truck operators is to seek out the services of a company specializing in the cleaning of DPFs or a specialized exhaust shop that offers DPF cleaning.

DPF Cleaning Specialists, is a recently-formed company that serves the Detroit-Toronto corridor. Nelson said the company was set up to provide a convenient option for customers who wanted to continue using their own filter.

DPF Cleaning Specialists visits the fleet or owner/operator, picks up the filter (the customer must remove it and reinstall it afterwards), cleans it overnight and returns it the following day. It also applies a serial number to each filter and creates an online service record so fleets can monitor the cleaning history and mileage of each of their DPFs. DPF Cleaning Specialists encourages fleets to stock one or two additional filters so they can simply swap them out for cleaning and further reduce downtime.

The cost of a straight cleaning is about \$300 per filter (with volume discounts available to fleets) including pick-up and delivery within southern Ontario.

"The big thing is, you're getting your own filter back," Nelson said. "On an exchange program, you're getting another filter and you don't know what you're getting. You could be getting somebody's problem."

DPF Cleaning Specialists uses the high-end FSX cleaning machine and also inspects the filter for damage.

If the filter's excessively clogged due to a blown turbo or other malfunction, it may need to be baked for eight to 12 hours in a kiln, which will add to the cost of cleaning. The company says its cleaning techniques restore the filter to 97-98% of its original capacity. DPF Cleaning Specialists can be reached at 877-373-2580 or found online at www.dpfcleaningspecialists.com.

Whatever option you choose, it's a good idea to watch for signs the DPF is losing its effectiveness and get it in for a cleaning sooner than later.

"Lots of people are realizing that if you maintain the filters, you'll have them forever. If you don't maintain them, you're going to have problems," Nelson said.

If the DPF begins regenerating more frequently than usual, Nelson said that's a good sign the filter's due for a cleaning.

This could come earlier than expected in certain applications which aren't conducive to passive DPF regeneration events, such as in regional P&D or municipal duty cycles.

"Generally, the sooner you get to them the better. Get them



THE IN-HOUSE SOLUTION: Big fleets may want to consider buying their own DPF cleaning machine like this one, but they cost five figures and may require power upgrades and technician training.

cleaned at around 200,000 to 250,000 miles (320,000-400,000 kms) and keep them clean and you're not going to have problems with them," Nelson added.

"If you don't, as soon as it starts creating backpressure – that can lead to a whole host of problems."

Darry Stuart, president of DWS Fleet Management and one of the

hosts of the Technology and Maintenance Council's popular Shop Talk forum, pointed out it's also important to inspect and clean the DPF following engine problems.

"If there's an engine failure of any kind, such as an injector or turbocharger failure, the DPF should be pulled, checked and cleaned," he advised.

Otherwise, he said, it may not function properly down the road.

Stuart said DPF cleaning intervals have been a hot topic at the TMC of late, but there's still no sound data related to when they should be pulled for their first cleaning.

The one thing that is known, however, is that they'll all need to be cleaned at some time or another, so it's a good idea to explore your options early and determine which approach is the most practical and cost-effective for your own operation. □

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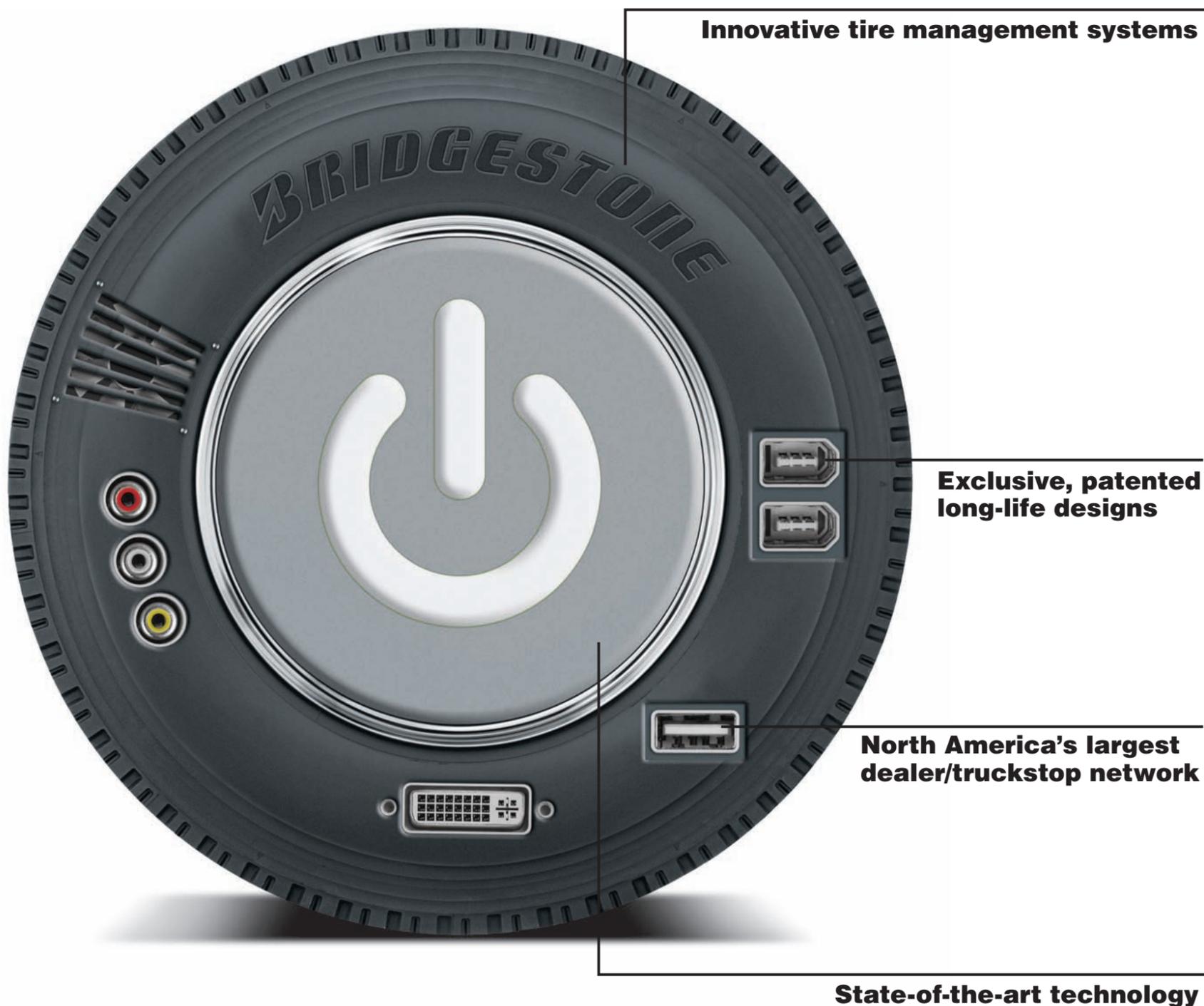
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Health

Pass the pickles, please

Pickles are a popular food – especially as a companion to many finger foods during the holiday season. Because we North Americans love pickles, we eat an average of 106 every year. That’s about nine pounds! As a complement for sandwiches, they are much healthier than a handful of chips and may still satisfy our craving for a crunchy, salty snack.

What exactly is a pickle? It’s just any food that is preserved in vinegar or brine. When processed properly, pickled foods are very handy because they can be stored for a long time.

Pickling preserves food by using acid to lower its pH to less than 4.6. This acid solution prevents the growth of harmful microorganisms (like Clostridium botulism), which can make food spoil and make people sick. As well, anti-microbial herbs and spices like garlic, mustard, dill, cinnamon or cloves can be added for flavour as well as for their ability to preserve.

This preserving acid (usually vinegar) can be added. Or, it can be produced through natural fermentation (brine) because of salt being added. For pickles, usually we think of cucumbers, but actually almost any fruit or vegetable can be pickled: beets, eggplant, carrots, turnips, green beans, cabbage, cauliflower and onions.

Most pickles are made from healthy, low-calorie foods, rich in fiber, antioxidants, and vitamins (like C). Plus, when herbs (dill and garlic) as well as natural, unprocessed vinegars (cider or wine vinegar) are added, they bring added health benefits.

Today we’re going to just consider one old favourite: the dill pickle. To begin, let’s start with the nutrition of the main ingredient, the cucumber. Cucumbers aren’t packed with nutrients like many other vegetables, but they do have their benefits. They are a very good source of Vitamin C, and a good source of potassium, manganese, folate, magnesium and dietary fiber. Cucumbers also have sterols (mostly in the peel), which have been shown to lower cholesterol.

The cucumber’s natural salts, enzymes, and vitamins are great for strong cell growth and repair. Cucumbers can help control constipation, stomach disorders, arthritis, and acne. In addition, the high mineral content in cucumber peel offers a natural source of a fresh, powerful antioxidant.

The alkalinity of the cucumber helps the body maintain a proper pH balance which helps reduce health conditions caused by increased acidity. Because of its water base, the cucumber acts as a diuretic. This effect, along with its low calorie count makes the cucumber an excellent snack for dieters.

So, the question is, does the pickling process affect the nutritional value of the cucumbers? Yes, somewhat, so be selective.

To get the most nutrition out of pickles, choose the ones that have not been heated or pasteurized. These are the ones pickled in

Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



salt brine.

These are especially healthy because the lacto-fermentation process cultivates probiotic bacteria. These beneficial microbes live in the intestines and improve digestion and the immune function. Since our usual diet of processed foods and sugars combined with stress, environmental toxins and antibiotics depletes our intestinal microflora, eating probiotic foods like brine pickles (and sauerkraut and yogurt) helps build them up.

Unfortunately, instead of being made with brine, most shelf brands are made with hot vinegar to main-

tain sterile conditions and increase the shelf life of the product.

This is convenient for the company, but not ideal for our health. So, when choosing pickles, pick the ones from the cooler with the word ‘brine’ on the label, ones which have not been processed with heat. These have retained many of the cucumber’s nutrients.

Often, the salt content of pickles is a legitimate concern. Pickles, especially brine-cured ones have a lot of salt – 359 mg in each ounce! As you know, over the past 10 years, health agencies have strongly suggested that reducing dietary sodium is good for your health. In fact, they recommend that healthy adults eat less than 2,300 mg of sodium (one teaspoon) each day. Just think, a few dill pickles would use up your salt allowance for the day.

Is that a big concern? Not for healthy adults. Now, most health professionals are becoming more individualized in their recommen-

dations regarding salt intake. Studies have shown that healthy peoples’ bodies can regulate their own salt levels quite well. Definitely, some salt is necessary for the body to regulate fluid levels and nerve impulses.

However, if you have health issues or you’re just still concerned, read the labels and select reduced-sodium brands. For sure, snacking on a couple of dill pickles is much healthier than snacking on other typical snacks, like chips or cheezies.

Certainly, over the holiday season, lots of tasty goodies will be passed around. Instead of filling up on high-calorie sweets or high-fat snack foods, why not get yourself into a pickle. Your body will thank you. Have a dilly of a New Year! □

– 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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British invasion

Allison inks deal with UK company to commercialize Infinitely Variable Transmissions

By Eric Berard

MONTREAL, Que. – Forget about the Beatles or the Rolling Stones. The British invasion in the trucking industry takes the form of a brand new generation of automatic transmissions coming from the UK.

Most of us are familiar with Continuously Variable Transmissions, or CVTs, that are becoming more common in passenger cars. As the name suggests, the transmission does not change from one gear to another but continuously varies the diameter difference between two pulleys driving a belt, thus changing the transmission's ratio in limitless ways instead

of being restricted to changing from gear A to gear B.

In addition to working more smoothly with the engine than a traditional automatic transmission, a CVT also offers the advantage of enhancing the fuel economy of the vehicle (roughly 5% in passenger cars), because it always runs at peak performance.

So, why don't we have CVTs on trucks? *Truck News* asked Andre Laramee. The man knows a few things about CVTs, since his Drummondville, Que. company CVTech, has been chosen by the Indian Tata Motors to equip its famous Nano micro car with a CVT transmission.

"We use regular belts and absolutely no lube is needed for the transmission. They would not work on a truck with much higher torque," he says. "In this kind of application, the metal belt needs to be lubricated but, because of the high torque and the metal shearing that occurs, the oil deteriorates very rapidly. There is still a lot of work to be done to find a lube that will handle all that."

It definitely seems like there are still challenges. Here is what Paul Olexa, vice-president driveline sales and marketing at ZF, had to say: "ZF developed several CVTs and had them in production for passenger cars. In commercial trucks, the torque and cost would be a concern. From a commercial vehicle point of view, we are still focused on conventionally geared transmissions."

From CVT to IVT: Allison steps in

After years of research and development, a company called Torotrak based in Lancashire, U.K., found the solution to the puzzle and came up with a CVT-derived transmission that's called an Infinitely Variable Transmission, or IVT.

Truck News got in touch with Torotrak's marketing manager Lin Collier and asked her what the difference is between a CVT and an IVT. Here's what she had to say: "The core of any transmission using Torotrak's technology is the traction drive 'toroidal variator.' Unlike conventional manual or automatic gearboxes with their toothed gears, this variator incor-



KEY DIFFERENCE: This is the CVT transmission CVTech developed for India's Tata Motors Nano micro car. All is in the two pulleys' diameter variation.

porates smooth, saucer-shaped discs and circular rollers. The variator allows the transmission to deliver a stepless range of ratios to meet all driving conditions. The simplest form of transmission using a toroidal variator is a CVT. This offers a ratio spread of approximately seven and requires a starting device such as a clutch or torque converter to launch the vehicle from rest.

"An IVT is a more sophisticated form of transmission where the variator is used in conjunction with an epicyclic gear set to provide a 'geared neutral' function with a seamless transition from reverse to forward motion. A typical IVT is configured to provide a ratio spread in excess of seven and provides high levels of overdrive gearing. With an IVT, no starting device is required. A specially-developed oil-like fluid, with unusual lubricating and traction properties, ensures grip between the rotating rollers

Eaton's been down that road before

By Eric Berard

MONTREAL, Que. – While Allison is the first major transmission company to commercialize IVTs, it's certainly not the first one to have contemplated this option. As early as 1989, manual transmission maker Eaton was looking at developing this kind of automatic transmission for trucks. *Truck News* confirmed this information with Wayne Higashi, president and CEO of a California-based company called Epilogics.

Just like Torotrak, Epilogics is a licensing company. It does research and development but doesn't commercialize the applications of its findings. It sells the manufacturing licence to another corporate entity, in this case Eaton.

Epilogics' president told us: "In 1989, Eaton Corp., the largest manufacturer of heavy-duty transmissions in North America, licensed the IVT for heavy-duty truck transmission applications. They paid us a million dollars in license fees and committed to a 5% royalty payment on sales of transmissions utilizing our IVT technology. After five years of development effort, Eaton failed to build a commercially viable prototype transmission based on this technology and abandoned the project."

When asked why it didn't work out, Higashi explains: "Eaton had technical problems with robustness/durability that would require the transmission to be much larger and heavier (and more expensive) than needed for commercialization."

Since then, Epilogics has been working on different projects, such as this one: "One of the technologies developed for the IVT, the Mechanical Diode one-way clutch, was licensed to Means Industries and was used in Ford's rear drive passenger car and light truck transmissions from 1997 to 2007 – 15 million units shipped over a 10-year period with zero defects!"

When asked about its experience with IVTs, an Eaton spokesperson declined to comment. Yet, a couple of weeks earlier, an internal source at Eaton said "To the best of my knowledge, we aren't really working on this technology anymore."

And the rest is history. Eaton decided to focus on its core expertise: mechanical transmissions. A few years later, the AutoShift was born. It's an automated manual transmission that only requires the use of the clutch to launch the vehicle and to stop it. The rest of the time gears are changed without any intervention by the driver. A second generation was called the UltraShift. Once again, the gear changes were automated but the improvement was that there was no more clutch to activate, only two pedals: the throttle and brake. And recently, Eaton launched its third generation AMT, this time called the UltraShift Plus, with features that get it closer than ever to a "real" automatic transmission. □





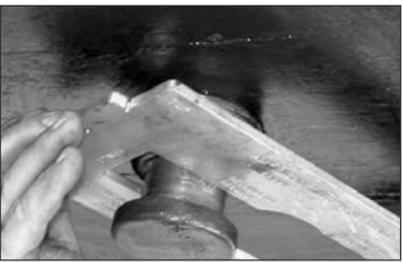

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and discs to transfer torque through the transmission from the engine to the driven wheels. The result is smooth power delivery, faster acceleration, improved fuel economy and reduced emissions.”

Seems complicated? Indeed it is. But the most important thing is that it does work. Enough for Allison to invest a huge amount of money to acquire the right to manufacture and sell these IVTs on the North American market and around the world.

We’re talking big money here, points out Collier: “The total value of the licence fees to be paid to Torotrak under the agreement, should Allison take up all of the licensing and exclusivity options on offer, will be in the region of £18m to £28m (CDN\$32 to 50 million). Additionally, royalty payments will be made to Torotrak for every Allison transmission sold under the new arrangement.”

At the signing of the deal, Dick Elsy, Torotrak’s chief executive, said: “This is the most significant endorsement of our technology thus far. Allison is the world leader in commercial vehicle transmissions and the agreement provides us with access to large production volumes in this high value sector. Torotrak will now focus its technical expertise on transferring skills and knowledge to Allison to help it achieve volume production in the shortest possible timescale.”

Lawrence E. Dewey, Allison’s chairman and CEO, added: “We are excited about working with

Torotrak to incorporate their unique technology into a new family of products that will offer our customers around the world new features and benefits.”

Major fuel savings on the horizon

Among these benefits will be fuel savings. James Batchelor is the commercial director at Torotrak. He confirms the figures evoked by his colleague when she said: “When applied to a mid-sized bus, Torotrak’s transmission technology has demonstrated fuel savings of 19% (when compared to the standard production model) over the official UK bus cycle.”

But what about trucks? Batchelor says: “Fuel savings depend heavily upon the duty cycle of the vehicle (and, of course, that the transmission is subjected to). For distribution-type trucks, we would expect the fuel saving to be similar to that achieved in our prototype bus application. For heavy haulage applications, the high efficiency of a Torotrak 4-mode IVT combined with the very tall overdrive ratios that the IVT enables is also expected to provide substantive economy gains over today’s technology.”

Better than an AT, at a lower cost than an AMT

When we asked Batchelor to range the price of an IVT transmission (even though the final decision will be made by Allison, since it will be the corporation selling them), he indicates: “The final cost (or selling

price) will depend greatly upon the application, the manufacturing/sales volumes and the cost-to-manufacture performance of our various licensees.”

“However, as a guide, we would expect the manufactured cost of a commercial vehicle IVT to be very much closer to the cost for an equivalent automated manual transmission (AMT) than it would be to the cost of an existing (planetary gear-set based) automatic transmission (AT). In short, all of the benefits – and more – of an AT but a cost close to that of existing, less expensive AMTs. And, of course, as sales volumes of IVTs increase in this sector, then we would expect further unit-cost reduction as a consequence of greater industrialization, scale economies, increasing design experience, commercialization pressures, and so on.”

According to Batchelor, it will take at least a year before Allison is ready to launch the IVT transmission on the market.

Tata Motors and a Euro manufacturer in the race

Allison is not the only licensee of Torotrak’s IVT technology. In fact there are three of them. Torotrak also sold the licence to Tata Motors and to a major European bus and truck manufacturer whose name couldn’t be disclosed for confidentiality reasons.

Truck News asked Tata Motors to elaborate on how it would use the IVT technology in its commer-

cial trucks but the Indian company didn’t want to comment, obviously for competitive reasons.

“Tata Motors does not have any information to share at this stage”, said Debasis Ray, head of corporate communications, yet confirming: “Yes, Tata Motors is a licensee of Torotrak’s IVT technology.”

As for the “mysterious” European truck and bus manufacturer, Daimler doesn’t seem to be the one. “IVT is not a system we offer within our Mercedes-Benz Truck products,” said Uta Leitner, from the Stuttgart-based Global Business Communications Daimler Trucks and Buses department.

No official confirmation yet, but all signs tend to point that Volvo is not involved either – the Swedish company invested a lot of time and resources in its I-Shift automated manual transmission.

Buyer’s market?

With the proliferation of truck transmission offerings – Allison already offers fully automatics with torque converters, Eaton has a complete line of manual transmissions, automated manual transmissions from the UltraShift family and now the “almost automatic” UltraShift Plus, Allison is getting ready to market its IVT – one might think that the competition will be fiercer than ever on the transmission front.

And hopefully for fleets and owner/operators, this might translate into price reductions. □

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Opinion

If you aren't at the table, you're on the menu

When it comes to making regulations for trucking – or any other aspect of life in a modern democracy, frankly – the title of this column really says it all. It's not always about who has the right ideas, or finding the best ways to achieve an objective; it often comes down to who participates in the deliberations and how effectively they can make their case. If you have a point of view and some territory to protect, you need to be at the table. You can rest assured others will be there protecting their interests – perhaps at your expense.

I attended three meetings during the last week of November where input from drivers actually mattered. First was CVSA's North American Cargo Securement Harmonization Public Forum, held in Montreal.

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance holds two such gatherings each year, and participation is unrestricted and open to all stakeholders and interested persons including law enforcement, regulators, carriers and drivers.

Anyone who attends is free to comment on work currently under evaluation, or to bring new issues to the table.

The next day, I sat in on a CCM-TA Weights and Dimensions Committee Task Force meeting. While access to these sessions is somewhat restricted, comments and suggestions are welcome. While making or changing regulations of this nature isn't done

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



overnight, the committee does consider most suggestions, and welcomes input from concerned parties, like OBAC.

A couple of days later, I was in Fredericton for a meeting of the New Brunswick Working Group on Trucking Service Improvements.

The N.B. government has made red tape reduction a cornerstone of its long-term prosperity plan, and is genuinely trying to streamline and minimize the hassle factor in highly-regulated industries like trucking.

It's not very often you hear regulators asking truckers "how will this affect your business?" or "if you were regulating cell phone use, what would the rule look like?"

There was vigorous participation from owner/operators and really small fleet owners during the one-day session, and there was genuine interest in the opinions and ideas that were brought forward. It was a very refreshing session, and I wish there were more like it around the country.

Getting back to my point, input from the steering wheel crowd is vital at such sessions. Regulations affect everyone, but drivers are on

the front line when it comes to compliance, and ultimately to enforcement. If we aren't there when the rules are crafted, they may not reflect our needs and concerns. The vehicle inspection regs illustrate this principle well.

It's one thing to require a driver to check out a truck before taking it on the highway, but it's quite another to hold that person responsible for anything and everything that might be deficient – especially in the case of a company driver with absolutely no say in the fleet's maintenance and repair policies.

That's where the rules let drivers down. While giving credit where it's due with respect to the new vehicle inspection regs with major and minor defect classifications, the regs still pit drivers against maintenance managers – and often dispatchers – when it comes to fixing freshly discovered defects.

Time constraints often delay the needed repairs, or they are put off until the truck is back in the fleet's own shop.

The rules, unfortunately, are silent on what a driver is supposed to do when up against a recalcitrant boss.

Building some kind of driver protection mechanism into the regulations would have been a priority if we'd been at the table when those rules were written.

There's no question that anyone operating a truck on a public roadway has an obligation to do

that job as safely as possible, but others in the supply chain need to be held accountable too, and when problems arise, it shouldn't be the driver who always bears the full burden of compliance.

There's no shortage of regulation in trucking where the table tilts just a little too far one way for my comfort, but, without driver input, can we expect anything different?

Don't get me wrong; simply "showing up" at the table isn't what makes a difference.

When we sit down with policy-makers and regulators, we need to be well-informed, have our facts and figures right, and our research done.

And more than anything, we need the insight and vision that comes from years of experience and millions of miles of real-world trucking.

Some significant rule changes are on the regulatory horizon (EOBRs, medical requirements, and others) as we move into 2010. OBAC will be at the table this time around, and your support is vital. For every issue on the table, we can add value to the debate with a driver's eye view. In many cases, we're not on a different side of the issue than others in the room, but we're always on a different side of the steering wheel – and that, my friends, makes all the difference. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. What's on your 2010 menu? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free 888-794-9990.



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Tax Talk

Open the mail – and other resolutions for taxpayers

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has a special place on its Web site where it makes examples of cheats and lawbreakers – a perp-walk of sorts. (You'll find the link – and maybe your neighbour – here: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/nwsrm/cnvctns). Among the most recent entries:

- Scott Hudson of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., was fined \$8,562 for evading \$17,111 of federal income tax and \$5,474 for evading \$10,948 of GST. Hudson, who built decks and did other carpentry jobs, failed to file tax returns from 1999 to 2004.

- Edward LeBlanc, an independent security guard and animal control officer from New Glasgow, N.S., was fined \$23,568 for not reporting almost \$75,000 in income from 2000 to 2002, as well as over \$12,724 in Harmonized Sales Tax he collected from customers. LeBlanc was using multiple bank accounts to hide income.

- Yeoun-Kyu Jang, a Winnipeg retailer was fined \$63,200 after CRA investigators found that he used two sets of financial records in an attempt to avoid payment of income tax for the 2003 through 2005 tax years. Jang kept one ledger with the “real” numbers and another showing lower cash sales, on which he based his returns. Jang failed to report more than \$196,000 of business income and \$19,600 of GST.

CRA says it publicizes convictions “to maintain confidence in the integrity of the self-assessment system and to increase compliance with the law through the deterrent effect of such publicity.”

In short, they do it to scare people. Income tax reporting in Canada is based on the honour system. The government can't audit everyone, so it counts on individuals and corporations to accurately and honestly assess their taxable income and pay what they owe, on time.

Those who are guilty of evading tax or filing fraudulent returns must pay the full amount of the taxes owed, plus interest and any penalties CRA assesses.

In cases of gross negligence, the Income Tax Act and Excise Tax Act allow a penalty of up to 50% of the unpaid tax or the improperly claimed benefit. Additionally, convictions can result in court-imposed fines of up to twice the taxes evaded plus jail time (up to 12 months for each count).

Federal tax evasion and tax fraud cases are rare but the prosecution rate is high.

Most people are convicted because of some type of deceptive scheme – the double-booker from Winnipeg, for example. Others wanted to deceive only themselves.

They let deadlines pass, ignored notices, thought they could slip through the cracks, and finally ended up in court.

Such cases are extreme versions of a handful of new clients we get every year, folks who haven't filed

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



a return in a year or more and want to get back into compliance. Catching up takes a lot of work and it's not always easy to pay what you owe, but you can do it. If you're in the mood for New Year's resolutions, here are four steps you can take to help you get squared away with the tax authorities:

Open the mail: If you receive a letter from a tax agency, read it and respond within the time allowed. If you have a question, set aside the time to call. Ask for an extension if necessary. Let the credit card offers and catalogs pile up, but don't ignore correspondence about your tax obligations.

Don't plan on hiding: Tax agencies review and share more information than ever before. Auditors will cross-reference your Social Insurance Number to any of your federal tax accounts – GST/HST, payroll, income, and excise – and make sure there are no overdue balances. Investigators auditing a carrier can review broker payments to make sure they correspond to businesses that are valid and up to date in their filings.

Come clean before CRA calls: Under CRA's Voluntary Disclosures Program, you can come forward and correct inaccurate or incomplete information or disclose information you haven't reported before. You're still obligated to pay any tax owing, plus interest, but you can do it without penalty or prosecution. More information is available here: www.cra.gc.ca/voluntarydisclosures.

Talk to an expert: Not your buddy who says he's never filed a return, or the pamphlet pusher who questions the government's authority to collect taxes. The fees can be expensive but a good accountant will pay for himself many times over.

With tax season looming, the time, effort, hassle, and expense of filing your tax return may easily turn you into a rebel.

But it's never worth it. The stress and problems will only get bigger. This is Canada after all. Snow, death, and taxes are the only certainties of life. □

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

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Health

Do your joints ache? It could be bursitis

This month I have decided to talk about a common condition called bursitis. In order to understand bursitis, we must first discuss a little bit of anatomy.

Around the joints of the body, there are small fluid-filled pads called bursas that function as cushions for the bones, tendons and muscles.

Bursitis occurs when a bursa becomes swollen and inflamed. Bursitis is a painful and common condition that affects most people at some point during their lifetime. Although it is possible to have bursitis around any joint in the body, the most common locations are the shoulders, elbows, hips and knees.

The reason for this is that these

Back behind the wheel

Dr. Chris Singh



are the joints that most frequently perform repetitive movements.

The most obvious symptom of bursitis is a swollen joint that is red and hot.

Often the joint will feel extremely stiff and painful.

The causes of bursitis usually involve some sort of repetitive movement or position that puts pressure on the bursas surrounding a joint.

Car haulers at risk

For example, I treat many car haulers for shoulder bursitis because they are constantly using their shoulder joints when chaining down the vehicles.

Another common example in truck drivers is left elbow bursitis that is caused by resting the arm on the window ledge for extended periods of time.

Bursitis is more common in middle-aged people who suffer from an underlying condition such as arthritis, gout and diabetes.

The good news is that the treatment of bursitis is usually very simple and effective.

The first thing to do if you suspect that you have bursitis is to rest and immobilize the affected area.

Next, apply ice to reduce the inflammation. In some cases, your doctor will prescribe anti-inflammatory medications to help relieve the pain and swelling.

Not life-threatening

If these conservative treatments are unsuccessful, your doctor may inject a corticosteroid drug directly into the bursa.

Usually, one injection is sufficient to cure bursitis.

Although bursitis is not a life-threatening condition, it is important to seek medical attention if you experience pain for more than two weeks, excessive swelling or bruising in the affected area and/or fever.

Obviously, it is impossible to prevent bursitis completely. However, you can greatly reduce your chances by being careful while you perform physical tasks.

First, lift using proper form. Failing to do this may put extra stress on the bursae around your joints.

Secondly, take frequent breaks if possible.

Lastly, avoid putting excess pressure on your knees and elbows.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Until next month, drive safely! □

– Dr. Chris Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont. He can be reached by e-mail at csingh@cmcc.ca.

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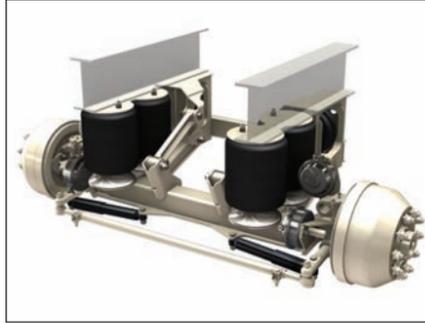
SKF Automotive Division has developed a **wheel-end monitor** designed to detect early stage wheel bearing damage in heavy-duty trucks and trailers. The device is mounted on the outboard side of the wheel where it monitors vibration changes and alerts the driver of an impending bearing failure via a flashing red warning signal. The SKF Wheel End Monitor attaches to the wheel's studs and the driver or maintenance manager can read the results by holding a magnet that comes with the system to the monitor which activates a blinking signal that informs the user of the bearing's status, the company says. For more info, visit www.skf.com.

Michelin Retread Technologies (MRT) is now offering **retreads for Michelin's X One XZU S** tire commonly used in refuse and urban applications. MRT has introduced the Michelin X One XZU S Pre-Mold Retread aimed at refuse and urban fleets operating in high-scrub conditions. MRT's newest retread is available in a 390/430 tread size. The retreader says it uses Co-EX technology – a two-layer compound designed to minimize casing temperature for longer casing life – and features a wing tread design for added shoulder protection. The retread is designed for all-weather traction and extra protection against stone drilling.

Components

With winter arriving, Paccar Parts is promoting its **Roadleveler brakes** which it says are resistant to the corrosive properties found in road de-icing agents such as magnesium chloride and calcium chloride. The Roadleveler brand of new and remanufactured brakes are marketed as all-make replacement parts including shoes and hardware kits for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. All products meet or exceed federal requirements. They feature an anti-corrosion hydroplex enamel coating that protects surfaces from exposure to contaminants such as chemical de-icers while also preventing rustjacking, according to the company. For more details, visit a Kenworth or Peterbilt dealer.

Ridewell has come out with a **20K steerable trailer axle** designed to Canadian SPIF standards. The Ridewell RSS-232T-20K is a self-steering, liftable auxiliary axle suspension system with a capacity rating of 20,000 lbs. It's available



in ride heights ranging from eight to 21 inches and includes a lightweight, fully-integrated axle. The new offering also uses Kaiser King Pins for reduced maintenance and up to four times longer life, Ridewell claims. Other features include: 12.5" of total axle travel; seven inches of up travel at 15-inch ride height; long-life urethane bushings; high tensile steel construction; two degrees of wheel cut; it's 135 lbs lighter than traditional self-steer combinations; and perhaps most importantly it's approved for use on SPIF trailers, the company says. For more info, call 800-641-4122 or visit www.ridewellcorp.com.

Accessories

The **2010 Wowtrucks Calendar** is now available for order. Created by professional photographer and truck enthusiast David Benjatschek, the calendar features some of the nicest show trucks in Canada. Each of them won their way into the calendar through competitions at various Canadian show'n'shines. The calendar can be purchased for \$15 at www.wowtrucks.com, including shipping.

The Ontario Trucking Association has partnered with Pandemic 101 to provide fleets with the tools needed to develop a **pandemic plan**. The endorsement comes after a pilot involving three OTA fleets that used and evaluated Pandemic 101's Web-based toolkit. MSM Transportation, Challenger Motor Freight and Tibbs Transport all found the toolkit to be useful in developing a pandemic plan. OTA members qualify for a

10% rebate from Pandemic 101 by signing up via the OTA Web site at www.ontruck.org. The association notes many government agencies and business are now requiring proof of pandemic and emergency preparedness from their service providers. For more info, e-mail joanne.benac@ontruck.org.

Vigillo, an online risk management solutions provider, has created a **CSA 2010 Preview Scorecard** which will allow fleets to preview their rating under the FMCSA's new safety ratings system months before the program takes effect. The CSA 2010 Preview Scorecard is available to new Vigillo customers and as an upgrade for existing customers. CSA 2010 is a new system of measuring fleet safety, slated to replace SafeStat. It is currently undergoing testing in six states and Canadian carriers operating in those regions are already being rated. Individual drivers are scored on seven categories and their rating will reflect that of the fleet for which they drive. For more, visit www.vigillo.com. □

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New Products

Tiwi provides in-cab mentoring

By James Menzies
TORONTO, Ont. – Inthinc Technology Solutions, a company best known for its development of crash data recorder technologies, has introduced a new driver safety and fleet management system that uses verbal alerts to correct poor driving behaviour in real-time.

The tiwi system consists of a hardware device that mounts to the windshield and contains an internal GPS and accelerometer. It plugs into the vehicle's data bus allowing it to read speed, RPM, fuel consumption, seatbelt usage and other parameters. The system then issues an audible alert when a driver performs an unsafe maneuver such as hard braking, aggressive acceleration or speeding.

Jeffrey Harvey, chief administration officer and executive vice-president of inthinc, recently demonstrated the system to *Truck News*. He explained the company has

established a proprietary database of North American speed limits, which he refers to as "the largest database of speed information anywhere in the world," giving it the unique ability to notify fleet managers of speeding violations.

(While it's not being marketed as such, it's interesting to note that the tiwi system and its North America-wide speed limit database could be coupled with an aftermarket governor to prevent vehicles from exceeding the speed limit anywhere they operate).

The system's GPS capabilities allow fleets to monitor the location of their vehicles as well as how they're being driven. Harvey said the tiwi system provides a payback in three ways: by improving driver safety; making drivers more efficient (ie. reducing idle-time); and by improving productivity (ie. by enabling fleets to utilize their equipment more productively through improved routing).

Fleet managers can view their vehicles in real-time via a Web portal and can also be notified when a violation occurs by phone call, e-mail or text message. The portal can also create a driver scorecard for each driver using proprietary algorithms that take into account factors such as number of violations, violation frequency, severity of violations, kilometres driven, etc. Fleets can then proactively offer training to drivers who are the most at risk of being involved in an accident. "It gives a very accurate representation of driver performance," said Harvey, adding "this is all about changing behaviour, not about getting people in trouble."

The tiwi device also doubles as a hands-free communication device. Currently, it can be programmed with one phone number (company dispatch, for instance) and the driver can simply press a button to dial the pre-programmed number. The device also has the ability to store the last 30 seconds of data it receives, so if power is disrupted in the event of an accident, the fleet

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manager will be able to retrieve the vital last-second information that can be crucial in reconstructing an accident.

Data is transmitted to the database by cellular modem. Driver hours-of-service are not yet integrated into the device, but it's something inthinc is considering, Harvey noted.

The Web portal is user-friendly and offers as much – or as little – information as the fleet manager requires. To help interpret the data, inthinc offers a quarterly business review in which the company's experts help customers identify trends and compare their performance to industry benchmarks.

The tiwi system is aimed at all vehicle fleets of any size. In fact, Harvey said small fleets stand to benefit as much as larger fleets because "one crash could put that company out of business."

Customers can pay for the hardware (US\$749 per unit) up-front along with a subscription fee of US\$29.95 per month or they can amortize the cost of the units into the monthly payments, paying US\$199 per unit up-front and US\$59.99 per month over a three-year term.

In field testing, companies averaged a payback in seven to nine months, Harvey said. "The rates of return on this are significant," he claimed. The tiwi system is just now entering full-scale production and it kicked off its launch by offering a guaranteed fuel savings program in partnership with Valvoline. For more on that program, see article on this page. For more information on tiwi, visit www.inthinc.com. □

Valvoline, tiwi launch guaranteed fuel savings program

By Adam Ledlow

DALLAS, Texas – Engine oil manufacturer Valvoline has teamed up with tiwi, a provider of telematics and driver-mentoring systems, to launch a program officials say has been proven to deliver up to 4% fuel savings.

The program is backed by the companies' Fuel Proof Guarantee, which covers a 120-day customer demonstration period and is being offered to fleet operators with a minimum demo of 30 trucks. Valvoline and tiwi work with fleet maintenance managers to establish baseline data, using the tiwi on-board driver improvement system. Valvoline's Premium Blue Extreme engine oil and Syn Gard FE gear oil are then installed. Additionally, the tiwi verbal-coaching system is activated to provide drivers with real-time verbal mentoring about speeding violations, aggressive driving, other inefficient habits, seat belt use and more.

After the completion of the Fuel Proof customer demonstration period, if the fleet has not shown an increase in fuel economy, Valvoline and tiwi will remove their products from the vehicles used in the demonstration and reimburse the fleet for any incremental costs.

Valvoline says its program is set apart from competitive claims that offer vague or unsubstantiated data. As part of the testing process, the company enlisted two independent test facilities and multiple real-life customers to



PERFECT PAIR?: Valvoline and inthinc say combining their products is guaranteed to save fleets money.

validate miles per gallon (mpg) gains, using the EPA SmartWay-approved J1321 protocol.

Tests were conducted with vehicles operating with Valvoline's Premium Blue Extreme SAE 5W-40 full synthetic engine oil and Syn Gard FE gear oil. Results varied depending on loads, routes and drivers, according to officials, with less-than-truckload applications and P&D operations achieving the highest fuel economy improvement. However, officials said adding tiwi vehicle monitoring and driver mentoring is expected to yield greater gains in virtually every type of fleet operation.

John Noal, vice-president of international and commercial platforms for Valvoline, explains the

need for a mileage improvement guarantee: "Fleet customers are understandably highly skeptical about mpg claims. They need proof that they're going to get better mpg with their own drivers, in their own operations. The limited Fuel Proof Guarantee is a risk-free way for fleets to prove that our mpg gains are for real."

Todd Follmer, chief executive for tiwi, noted, "According to EPA statistics, driving habits affect mpg by as much as 35%. Fleet testing has proven that using tiwi in-vehicle mentoring will decrease aggressive driving events by 89% and speeding violations by 86%. The EPA reports that simply obeying posted speed limits will increase fuel efficiency by as much as 23%." □



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The realignment of Stars

Western Star execs discuss the future of the brand

By Paul Hartley

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – The simple, overarching message Western Star officials delivered at the company's recent dealer meeting in Las Vegas, Nev., could be summed up as a paraphrase of Mark Twain's famous line: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

The company is very much not dead, executives told reporters during a press event, nor are there any plans to kill it.

In fact, Western Star has apparently been given the opportunity to chart its own strategic course, without clearing every budgeting and marketing decision with its corporate parent, Daimler Trucks North America. The change would put it on par with the status of Freightliner Custom Chassis Corp. and Thomas



NOT GOING ANYWHERE: Executives recently assured the trade press that Western Star isn't going to disappear. *Photo by Paul Hartley*

Built Buses.

At first glance, this reorganization seems to be a mere shift in account-

ing practices.

Managers stressed, however, that their newly found freedom would

affect everything from dealer relationships to market-segment expansion to research and development. Heading up this charge is a fresh, independent management team composed of: Michael Jackson, general manager; Ann Demitruk, director of marketing; James Looyesen, sales manager; and Richard Shearing, director of product planning.

Many of the company's detailed plans for the future – some based on suggestions gleaned at the dealer meeting – are still a bit fluid. Nevertheless, the four top executives laid out their near- and long-term goals for Western Star during an hour-long chat with members of the trucking industry media. Here are the highlights from that conversation:

On overall plans:

Jackson: "We are renewing our interest in Western Star. We want to get people pumped up about the brand again...and to put the emphasis on the segments where we really play well."

Demitruk: "From a marketing strategy, we intend to partner with our dealers to host (ride and drive) events that bring in customers and put them behind the wheel." These events will be held at dealerships, truck stops and customer facilities.

Looyesen: "We've previously focused on our historic markets. We now plan to expand (into other segments), putting more emphasis on body builders as well. We think our product line fits well there. It's very body-builder friendly, but it's often been overlooked in the past."

Shearing: "Like everyone else, we're very much focused on EPA2010 in the near term, making sure we have a complete product line-up to carry through from EPA07 to '10. And even though we are really close to the change-over date, there is still a lot of work to do. Beyond that, we're monitoring the activities of the California Air Resource Board, the EPA's SmartWay program and Canada's enviroTruck program. We're taking a hard look at our products to determine what we might need to do, in terms of aerodynamics and fuel economy."

On the benefits of greater corporate independence:

Looyesen: "To be a true premium brand, you need to be flexible and quick, and the new organizational structure will allow that. The processes you have in a big corporation are good for a company like Freightliner. But for Western Star to retain its premium identity, we needed to break away to offer customers a quicker, more nimble approach."

On challenges in preparing for 2010 and beyond:

Shearing: From an engineering standpoint, "mining trucks have probably been one of the toughest (design challenges), for both the 4900 and 6900. We have our Tier III off-highway engine to supplement that business, but there are plenty of applications requiring EPA2010 on-highway certification." Some of these operations are quite remote so the hardware must be particularly robust, and the dealer organization needs to be capable of providing support wherever customers are located.

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Jackson: "As we mentioned, we're also adapting our products for SmartWay certification. We need to better understand that process and, maybe, change a little bit of the aerodynamic packaging of the Western Star product to make it a little bit more competitive in the on-highway business as (future) regulations start kicking in."

"In terms of pure aerodynamics, I think Freightliner's Cascadia is probably the leader. Western Star isn't going to introduce a truck that will compete with the Cascadia. Our roll is within the traditional market. At the same time, we need to be sensitive to some of the changes coming along, then create aerodynamic improvements based on a traditionally-designed truck."

On product line expansion

Looyzen: "We're looking at everything. There might be a place for a lighter Western Star, but I don't know that 'medium-duty' would be the best definition of that. We are, however, trying to determine if we can be a little more competitive in a somewhat lower GVW. If we did build something lighter, it would have to be in line with segments where we're already strong or plan to be strong. Western Star will never be an overall market share leader. We're targeting only those applications for which our trucks are best engineered."

Shearing: "It's safe to say that we're not going after the 'commodity' markets of the medium business."

On Sterling's departure from the market:

Jackson: "Some dealers were greatly affected by Sterling's closure. Our goal is to ensure that Western Star offers those (Sterling) customers a complete product line-up that fulfills their needs, allowing (dealers and buyers) to be profitable. Right now, we're looking at the former Sterling dealers and trying to determine what voids Western Star can fulfill. At this point, we don't yet have all of those solutions."

On builds with 2010 engines

Shearing: "We'll be building trucks with 2010 Detroit Diesel engines when the new year starts." Cummins engines will be available a little bit later, and some of the specialty vehicle engines are expected to arrive about mid-year.

On the owner/operator market

Jackson: "We haven't seen anything suggesting that the owner/operator market will go away. That will continue to be one of our focus markets."

On buyer behaviour

Demitruk: "Enthusiasm for square hoods 'has tapered off a little bit since 2007, but the numbers aren't significant. That might be telling. A lot of our buyers are in vocational markets where fuel mileage isn't (as critical) as it is in long-haul trucking."

There is some overlap with Western Star and Freightliner products in certain market segments, "but we know that a typical Western Star buyer would rarely consider a Freightliner, and the opposite is also true." □

Volvo, Mack receive EPA, CARB engine certification

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Volvo and Mack's 2010 heavy-duty engines have received the green light from the EPA and CARB.

The Mack MP7 and MP8 and Volvo's D11 and D13 have all been certified by the US EPA and California Air Resources Board, complying with the impending near-zero emissions standards.

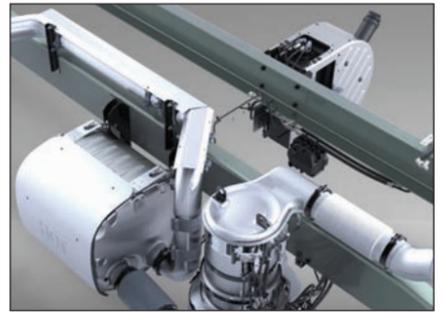
"Achieving certification involved many dedicated employees working for many years," said Kevin Flaherty, Mack senior vice-president. "It's critical that our MP engines continue to deliver the power, performance, durability and reliability for which they are known. Our customers now not only have the cleanest engines in the world, they also have the performance they expect from Mack."

"EPA's certification of these en-

gines is a crucial milestone in Volvo's journey to producing the cleanest diesel engines in the world," said Scott Kress, senior vice-president of sales and marketing. "We are already building EPA2010 trucks and are fully on track for large-scale production next year, which will help make the air cleaner, use fuel more efficiently and save money for our customers."

Both Mack and Volvo will be using selective catalytic reduction (SCR) and claim there will be fuel economy benefits for customers. They also claim the technology essentially eliminates active regenerations of the diesel particulate filter (DPF).

"Volvo Trucks has complete confidence in our engines and SCR technology," Kress said. "We've used our global resources



GOOD TO GO: CARB and the EPA have approved Volvo and Mack's 2010 emissions system.

to develop leading engine and emission technologies as the standards became increasingly tighter in 2002, 2007 and now 2010. In these challenging times, our customers need very reliable, productive and efficient products, and that is what Volvo's experience and capability delivered for 2010." □

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Glasvan Great Dane practices what it preaches

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Glasvan Great Dane is not only a dealer for Capacity's new PHETT hybrid-electric shunt truck, it's also a customer.

The company announced it has purchased the very first hybrid shunt truck for use in its own trailer shunting operations.

"We really investigated PHETT technology before deciding to offer the product to our customers, and we truly believe in not only the PHETT shunt tractor, but also the true environmental and cost-savings benefits," said George Cobham Jr., vice-president of sales and marketing for Glasvan. "We are expecting delivery of our PHETT early next spring, and we are looking forward to integrating it into our operation and building a more sustainable business."

Compared to a conventional shunt truck, Glasvan Great Dane has calculated the following potential savings for the first year alone: 8,200 litres of diesel; 160 litres of engine oil; and the complete elimina-



A DEALER AND A CUSTOMER: The Capacity PHETT hybrid made its Canadian debut at an open house at Glasvan Great Dane this past summer.

tion of transmission lubricant. The company also says the PHETT will reduce hydrocarbon and NOx emissions by 195 kg and CO₂ emissions by 6,500 kg.

To find out more about the Capacity PHETT hybrid shunt

truck you can check out the Sept. 10, 2009 episode of our WebTV show *Transportation Matters* at Trucknews.com. Or you can contact Glasvan Great Dane at 888-GLASVAN or visit its Web site at www.glasvangreatdane.com/phett. □

Volvo delivers first EPA2010 engine

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Talon Logistics has taken delivery of the first EPA2010-certified production truck to roll off Volvo Trucks North America's assembly line.

The delivery was made Nov. 17 and was the first of 23 EPA2010 Volvo trucks ordered by Talon, which is a division of US grocery chain Giant Eagle.

"This is a great moment for everyone who cares about the air that we, our children and grandchildren breathe," said Scott Kress, Volvo Trucks senior vice-president, sales and marketing. "These are the cleanest diesel-powered heavy-duty trucks ever built and are the first of a new generation of trucks to serve our society with near-zero emissions, better fuel economy and lower greenhouse gas emissions."

Talon Logistics has partnered with Volvo to field test 2010 trucks and engines using selective catalytic reduction (SCR). The company has racked up about 6.5 million miles with its 2010 test trucks, Volvo claims.



FIRST OF MANY: Talon Logistics recently took delivery of this, its first of 23 EPA2010 Volvo VNs.

"Sustainability and dynamic energy management are two components of Giant Eagle's environmental commitment," said Bill Parry, vice-president of logistics for Giant Eagle. "That includes operating the cleanest and most fuel-efficient trucks, and helping to develop these technologies. Our work with Volvo demonstrated that SCR is effective and reliable, and we expect to benefit from that experience with our new Volvo VNs." □

Arrow Truck Sales prepares for strong recovery

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Arrow Truck Sales is placing more emphasis on helping build more Volvo/Mack Premium Used Truck Dealers' wholesale and retail businesses in preparation for the economic upturn, the company has announced.

The company has promoted Marty Crawford to the position of senior account manager for dealer sales development to help accomplish its goal. Crawford, formerly Mack remarketer, will be responsible for supporting and growing dealers' used truck business. He'll implement strategies in all areas to assist dealers with used truck sales, according to the company.

"Momentum is building as our clients gain confidence in the strength of the economic recovery," said Pete Monize, vice-president of purchasing and wholesale for Arrow Truck Sales. "We are prepared to lead the industry and serve the needs of the used truck buyer when the demand grows. Marty brings a wealth of experience to dealers." □



Crawford

Reefer Sales and Service expands

STONEY CREEK, Ont. – Reefer Sales and Service has expanded its Ontario service network by adding a new facility in Stoney Creek.

The new location was formerly L&J Refrigeration and is located at 624 Arvin Ave.

It boasts an expanded parts department as well as a 24/7 mobile service. More info is available by calling Dylan at 905-643-0199. □

TransCore, Riviera Finance mark \$100 million milestone

TORONTO, Ont. – TransCore Link Logistics' partnership with Riviera Finance is paying off for customers – to the tune of about \$100 million since the companies teamed up in 2003. The companies have announced TransCore users have received \$100 million in funding through the load funding program, which has served as a reliable source of cash flow for carriers through the recession.

The program between Riviera Finance and TransCore Link Logistics provides an online credit guarantee for customers. Loads accompanied by the QuickPay icon on TransCore's loadboard allow carriers to factor the loads through Riviera and receive payment within 24 hours on a non-recourse basis, resulting in no risk to carriers, the companies claim.

"Our customers appreciate the prompt application process and services offered to them by Riviera Finance. This strong relationship between TransCore and Riviera Finance has multiple benefits for Loadlink clients who may be looking at alternative receivable options for their invoices," said Claudia Milicevic, general manager of TransCore Link Logistics.

"Two main concerns for carriers are cash flow and broker credit," added Tom Smith, vice-president, Riviera Finance. "The QuickPay product addresses them both, quickly and easily." □

National Truck League alters name

LONDON, Ont. – National Truck League has rebranded itself to better reflect the scope of its service offerings. The company will now be known as National Truck League Insurance Solutions, the company has announced.

"National Truck League is known across Canada as a leading trucking industry insurance specialist. We want our brand synonymous with our reputation and will now be known as National Truck League Insurance Solutions," announced president Rod Stiller.

He said the new brand will reinforce the company's focus on providing carriers and owner/operators with personal protection, group benefits and truck insurance for both individuals and fleets.

"We find there are some in the trucking industry who are not aware of the range of risk management solutions we provide with our insurance products and services," Stiller explained. "In response to this, we are repositioning our sales team efforts, marketing, and customer service to ensure our clients receive the full benefit of our expertise and access to some of the best products in the industry to keep their businesses stable and competitive."

National Truck League can be reached at 519-434-4944 or online at www.nationaltruckleague.com. □



TRUCKPRO PIONEERS: TruckPro celebrated its fifth anniversary recently at its annual meeting at Queen's Landing in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Company representatives gathered there Oct. 23-24 to conduct some business and mark the occasion. TruckPro also took the opportunity to recognize its pioneer members who each received Five-Year Fidelity Awards. Pictured, from left to right: Rick Blaine; Richard O'Brien vice-president, central/western region; Brad Willsey; Shawn Johns; Glen Dunn; Daniel Montmarquette, national manager TruckPro banner; and Mike Dwhyte. □

Fleet News

Teamsters try to rally Challenger workers

CAMBRIDGE, Ont. – The Teamsters Union served notice in early December that it is campaigning to organize workers from Challenger Motor Freight

and its subsidiaries, Elgin Motor Freight and Lodwick Transport.

The union said in a statement that it has received complaints from Challenger workers and has

established a team to enter into contact with them.

“The truckers have had enough of their employer’s arbitrary decisions and contacted us since we are the leading union in the road transport industry in Canada,” Robert Bouvier, presi-

dent of Teamsters Canada said in a release.

“Some of these individuals allegedly suffer undue pressure from their bosses; we consider this to be unacceptable behaviour that will be corrected in the very near future.” □



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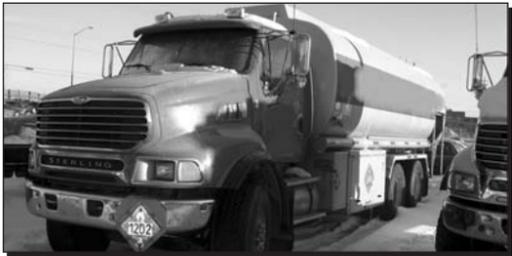
2009 WESTERN STAR 4800 SA Western Star, 430 Series 60, c/w a 20,000 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, dual pump and metering, all new piping, air manifold, bottom load, vapor recovery, Midcom.



2010 INTERNATIONAL 7400 Max Force engine, c/w 20,000 liter 4 compartment aluminum tank, dual pump and meter, you choose temperature compensated meters, you choose colour.



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2000 INTERNATIONAL, DT466, c/w 13,000 4 cpt aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering, Midcom, DOT safetied and certified. Stock #502



1999 STERLING c/w 19,000 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, Dual Pumping, DOT, CSA-B620, B/L rough In. Stock #595



2002 FORD F550, Power Stroke Diesel, AUTOMATIC 4500 liter two compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping, hydraulic pumps, CSA-B620, DOT, Air operated safety rails. Stock #607



1999 INTERNATIONAL 4900, DT466, c/w 12,000 4 cpt aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering, DOT safetied and certified. Stock #580



2004 STERLING c/w 13,000 aluminum 4 cpt. tank, dual pumping and metering equipment, Midcom, DOT certified, CSA-B620. Stock #596



1999 INTERNATIONAL, Brand New Rebuilt Engine, 20,000 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping, bottom load, vapour recovery, Midcom ETC, DOT certified, Tank CSA-B620. Stock #584



1997 FORD, 13,000 4 compartment tank, bottom load, vapor, Midcom, DOT certified. Stock 603



2000 FREIGHTLINER c/w 3,000 gallon cpt. aluminum tank set up for construction, Pump for Clean Fuel, Pump for Dyed Fuel, Lincoln pumps for Hydraulic Fluid, Pump for Grease, side tank for motor oil, DOT Certified, CSA-B620. Stock #599



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Fleet News

UPS unveils \$72 million distribution centre expansion

VAUGHAN, Ont. – After more than two years of work, UPS Canada has formally unveiled the \$72 million expansion of its Toronto distribution centre.

Scott Davis, chairman and CEO of UPS, and Mike Tierney, president of UPS Canada, presided over the official opening of the newly expanded 463,024 sq.-ft. facility – the equivalent to about eight football fields. Officials say the expansion, which more than doubles UPS's package processing capacity, was designed to facilitate international commerce between Canadian businesses and their overseas counterparts.

In opening the expanded facility, Davis noted it might seem strange that UPS would invest \$72 million "in the middle of the worst recession in recent history."

"But there's a simple answer," the CEO continued. "UPS sees the same kind of possibilities in Canada that we saw more than 30 years ago when it began UPS operations. We see amazing potential – a strong and resilient Canadian economy, the unstoppable force of global commerce and a nation of companies ready to emerge stronger from the recession into a new era of global growth."

"You can't look at this building as a stand-alone facility," Davis added. "It's part of a global web of air and ground facilities, freight



BIGGER BROWN: UPS Canada has more than doubled its package processing capacity with the expansion of its Toronto distribution centre.

and airline fleets, warehouses and retail stores connecting each business to more than 200 countries and territories around the world."

The expanded Toronto hub is located on Toronto's northern border within the rapidly growing city of Vaughan, where UPS is the second largest employer. It will process freight shipments in addition to small package volume.

"This newly expanded facility will serve as a local economic driver, creating several hundred

jobs for local and regional residents," said Tierney. "In addition, it will contribute to the tax base and offer the city a state-of-the-art building in line with environmental standards."

The building includes numerous eco-features, including skylights for more natural light; an energy management system for climate control that automatically detects the amount of sunlight in the building and adjusts the internal temperature accordingly; the expansion of

the propane fueling area to facilitate a broader use of propane fuel; and a comprehensive storm water management system. □

Bison promotes mechanic safety

WINNIPEG, Man. – Bison Transport, already well-known for its on-road safety record, is expanding its safety programs into the shop.

The company has developed a Mechanic Safety Award Program designed to promote, improve and reward Bison mechanics who meet the company's stringent safety standards.

Under the program, mechanics will be recognized quarterly and annually for contributing to a safe workplace, the company says. They'll be measured on safe consecutive working hours while exposed to a high-risk work environment. The overall goal is to reduce injuries and damage to equipment, Bison announced.

"At Bison, safety is our top priority," said Don Streuber, president and CEO of Bison Transport. "The very best training and equipment would be meaningless if we did not empower our people to make those decisions that impact safety." □

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 Van Other _____

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Opinion

As far as I'm concerned, it's always a good point in time

Well 2009 is coming to a close and while I was planning to leave it at that and focus on the many initiatives we have coming up in 2010, I decided to stay in 2009 for one more column.

I'm not sure where I first heard the quote "This isn't the end of time, it's a point in time." I think it gained currency because it puts things in perspective.

It makes you look at your situation both in business and personally in a different light.

I wondered if I could look back on 2009 and say I managed that point in time in a way I could be proud of – or at least not ashamed of. Personally I had some health issues. On top of that my knee is so wonky I can barely walk around the



block. In fact I was forced to spend so much time at home my dog was getting sick of me, let alone my wife. On the other hand, I don't think I moped too badly and I did pick up some worthwhile habits.

For instance, I did a lot of non-business reading, which is something I seemed not to have time for. Okay, I had a lot of people come over to keep me "company" and yes, I've always had time for that. All and all a passing grade.

On the business front we all know what happened. Truck sales were well below the norm for the past

five years and that held true for most indicators.

Capable as we at *Truck News* believe we are, we did know we couldn't fix the economy so we did what we usually do and in most ways much more.

Our Web presence grew dramatically. This isn't synonymous with making profits as my bosses point out, but it goes a long way to keeping us front and centre as the leading source for all things trucking. We've even expanded our blogs and we're active on social media sites including Twitter.

We expanded our weekly WebTV show, *Transportation Matters* and quite frankly it improves weekly.

You can even catch us on YouTube. In fact we won the Best Video Award in October as part of the Canadian Online Publishing Awards. That, as they

said, is "pretty cool."

We developed a new subscription-based online information video series at www.TheDriversSeat.ca and published our first comprehensive collection of industry stats and trends, *Inside the Numbers*.

Another first was our live coverage of the OTA Convention in November. You can view the transcript under Knowledge Centres on Trucknews.com.

To be honest I have yet another perspective. Yes this industry was down and none of us were immune. On the other hand, I spent 2009 working with the best team in the best industry on earth. If you're the publisher of *Truck News* it's always a good point in time. □

– Rob Wilkins is the publisher of *Truck News* and he can be reached at 416-510-5123.

Fleet News

MSM shares its secrets to success

BOLTON, Ont. – As MSM Transportation celebrates its 20th anniversary, the carrier also took a moment to reflect back on some of the keys to its success. The provider of commercial trucking and expedited freight services turned 20 Nov. 16.

"We started MSM Transportation in 1989 as an alternative to the large American trucking companies that dominated the US/Canada transborder market at the time," said Bob Murray, president and chief operating officer. "There was room for a Canadian carrier that combined excellent customer service with a commitment to moving freight across the border efficiently, securely, and with the fastest transit times possible."

Murray said the company has been successful due to the following key principles: empower the customer; guarantee satisfaction; deliver expertise; be easy to do business with; be good corporate citizens; and maintain financial stability. □



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Mail

Cops target truckers everywhere

Dear Editor:

In regards to your editorial comment on police antagonizing truckers, this is nothing new. Our company recently had these charges in New York State: not having reflective tape on tractor mud flaps (with a trailer) twice!; not stopping completely at a stop sign; and one of our drivers got a speeding ticket in Michigan for doing 63 mph in a 60 zone.

And it's not just New York and Michigan, it seems to be everywhere you go. If you get the good fortune of being pulled into a scale, I'll almost guarantee you'll get a ticket for something. And you could take it to court and perhaps win, but, win, lose or draw, it costs you time and money.

It's all about the money! I've been at this trucking for over 45 years and believe me, the fun is all gone. It's just a job now and I'm just staying a couple more years until I retire. □

Ed Wesselius
Guelph, Ont.

Enforcement efforts have gone too far

Dear Editor:

James, I really enjoyed your latest editorial in *Truck News* and I would say you have hit the nail right on the head.

I run a truck stop in the Sarnia area and I used to be a driver as well. We are hearing the same thing out there about the OPP.

A friend of mine was stopped for no apparent reason and received a log book violation.

That is all the OPP could find and did not give a reason for stopping him.

One other comment, the drivers have no problem with the cell phone issue but they have a major problem with the CB ban.

The majority are saying they

won't be calling in to the OPP about suspected drunk drivers or accidents or anything else that could put them at risk of a fine for using their cell phones or CBs.

I don't like where this Ontario government is going, it seems like they hate all the trucks and are going to make the drivers' lives pure hell.

Mandatory testing at age 65, smoking in the cab of their own vehicles, hours-of-service, OPP, MTO and so on is enough to get a driver to find a new career.

I drove from 1976 until 2004 and would not go back to it unless I was starving to death. □

Name withheld
Via e-mail

Power-tripping police

Dear Editor:

Regarding your latest editorial, my compliments to you on an article that could have been written a while back. I am the owner of a small Ontario-based fleet and you are correct in your perspective of needless enforcement of silly rules while real crime goes unattended.

We recently had a vehicle placed OOS by an OPP officer who was being trained in CVSA inspections and happened to come across one of our trucks and an air line problem. While we weren't charged, we did have to repair the air line at the inspection station and were of course placed OOS.

We investigate any occurrence very thoroughly here and I was convinced the air line was not un-serviceable, based on the hard copy of CVSA standards I keep close by in my office and the opinion of both our mechanic and my safety and compliance manger. I left two phone messages for the officer to return my call and he

never did so.

Finally I wrote a very strong letter asking him to reverse his OOS report and that if need be, we would settle for a noted defect.

He finally did call and after a very vigorous discussion on the phone, he absolutely would not amend his report.

Let me assure you that no truck in North America would pass his inspection based on his interpretation of a faulty air line. I still have the air line in my possession as proof of how silly things are now. Thanks for an excellent article and keep up the good work. □

Rick Way
Via e-mail

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 e-mail jmenzies@trucknews.com. □

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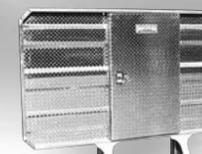
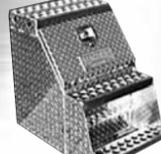
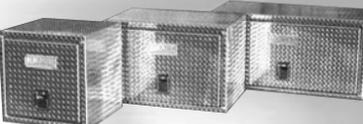
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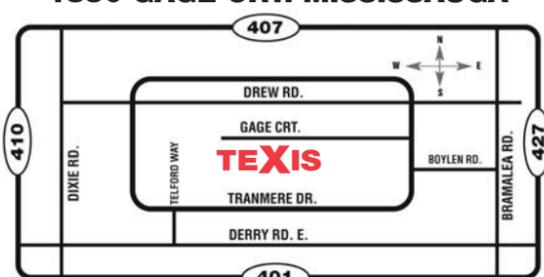
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Mark Dalton: Owner Operator

Lost keys, found hope

By Edo van Belkom

Mark was between loads, enjoying a healthy breakfast over a morning edition of *The Toronto Sun*.

The big news of the day was about some scandal uncovered at the truck yard he'd been working at as a shunt driver. People there were being investigated for a whole laundry list of crimes from fraud to murder.

The police said they were operating on a tip they'd received from a member of the public, someone who may or may not be employed in the trucking industry, but so far no one had come forward.

And no one would either, thought Mark. This was definitely one time where staying anonymous was a good idea. It was one thing to appear in television and in print after delivering a baby on the side of some highway in Quebec, but it was another thing completely to take credit for disrupting some organized crime venture where people had already been killed for even suggesting they might go to the police. No, Mark was happy to get as far away from that truck yard as he could and if that meant waiting a few days for a load into California or Texas, then so be it. He could do with a few days of rest, maybe take in a ball game or go to some concert.

Mark finished reading the paper with a peek at the Sunshine girl and was surprised to learn she aspired to be a veterinarian, loved shopping for clothes, and was currently single.

"Maybe I'll look her up and give her a call," Mark muttered under his breath as he put some money down on the table to cover his bill.

As he fished in his pants pocket for change for the tip, Mark caught sight of a man staring at him from across the restaurant. The guy was dressed in black and had a dark shadowy face, but his eyes were bright as lasers and he was staring right at Mark.

Mark's skin suddenly felt damp under his clothes and he wondered if someone had followed him from the truck yard, tailing him across the country until he stopped on some deserted stretch of highway to relieve himself just as a pick-up truck or some big black car pulls up and four men jump out, and while he's still doing his business they administer some rough justice for what he'd done to their operation.

But then the shadowy man's girlfriend appeared to Mark's left and the man said, "Don't forget the ketchup, hon," and she turned back and the man's gaze turned to the newspaper on the table in front of him.

Mark, his body damp with sweat and tingles of fear still trickling down his spine, shook his head and said aloud, "I've got to get somewhere far, far away."

With a sigh, he turned to leave the restaurant.

Out in the parking lot on his way to Mother Load, Mark slipped a hand into his pocket for his keys. They weren't there. He checked the other pocket of his jeans. They weren't there either.

He stopped where he was and began a systematic search of all his pockets, starting again with his jeans and then moving on to the inside and outside pockets of his jacket, then finally to his shirt pocket.

Nothing but loose change and his cell phone. He checked his jeans again, not expecting to find the keys there after checking them twice already, but compelled to check those pockets because that was where he always kept them.

They still weren't there.

"Where the hell could they have gone?" he wondered aloud.

In all his years as a driver, he'd never misplaced his keys. He'd locked them in his truck plenty of times, but on those occasions he knew exactly where the keys were. This time, he didn't have a clue.

Must have left them somewhere, he thought. But where?

He would have to retrace his steps. Obviously he'd had the keys when he arrived at the truck stop so he'd lost them somewhere between this moment and the time he parked his truck.

He turned around and headed back into the restaurant. There was already someone sitting at his table so he asked them if there had been any keys at the table when they got there.

"No," said the man. "Just this newspaper. You want it back?"

"No thanks."

At the cash register he caught up with the waitress who'd served him. "You didn't find any keys on the table when you cleared it did you?"

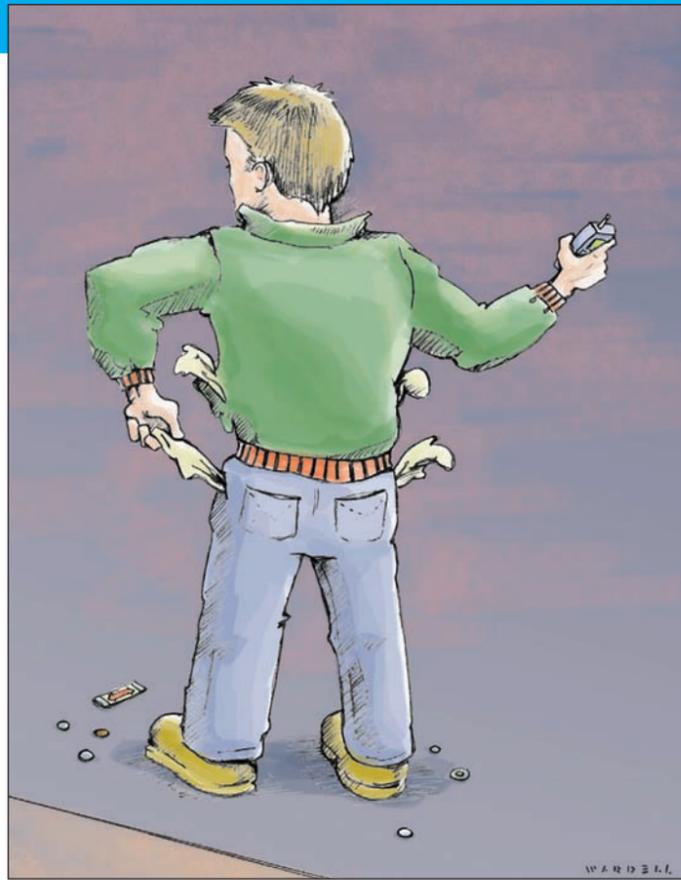
She stared at him. "Nope, just the money for the bill."

Mark realized that while he'd intended to leave a tip, he hadn't actually done it. He reached into his pocket for some change and handed it to her.

She smiled and her face suddenly brightened. "Thanks," she said. "And I'll keep an eye out for them."

"Thanks."

"In the meantime you might want to check our lost and found box," she pointed to a wooden case by the door,



"you drivers are losing keys all the time."

Mark walked over to the box and opened it.

"What the..."

The box was full of all kinds of keys, from single ignition keys to full key rings with a dozen or more keys on them in all shapes and sizes.

"How in the world does anyone leave this place?" Mark said as he searched through the keys in the box. Obviously they'd all been in there a long time and none of them were his. Who knew? Maybe his keys would turn up inside the box in a couple of days, maybe even a month. Great, but they'd be no use to him then. He needed them now. But if the keys weren't in the restaurant, then perhaps he'd lost them in the washroom, where he'd gone to clean up before breakfast.

As usual, there were a dozen or so drivers in the room, several in front of the mirrors and the rest doing their business at the urinals or inside the stalls. He counted the stalls and remembered he'd used the fifth one from the door.

Since he couldn't see any feet beneath the door he gave it a gentle push.

A man wearing big leather boots and a large black cowboy hat looked at Mark, nodded and said, "Howdy!"

Mark closed the door immediately and said, "Sorry, I'm looking for my keys."

"Sorry pardner," the man said from behind the door. "Nothing in here but me and the commode."

"Right," Mark said.

He left the washroom, exited the restaurant again, and headed back to Mother Load. When he was halfway to his truck, his cell phone rang.

"Hi Bud," Mark said.

"You're in luck," said the dispatcher. "I've got a trailer full of machine parts

for Sacramento ready this afternoon."

"Great," Mark said, the word sounding like it had escaped from a well worn inner tube.

"What's wrong? I thought you'd be happy. It's just what you wanted."

"It's a great load and I do want it, it's just that...well, I can't find my keys."

"Don't you have a spare taped up under the hood or something?"

"No..." Mark

felt stupid inside. He'd always meant to hide a spare somewhere on his truck, but since he'd never misplaced his keys in so many years he never bothered.

"Well, let me know when you find them. A load like this pays well and I've got five or six guys who'll take it in a heartbeat."

"I hear you," Mark said. "I'll call you in an hour one way or another."

"Good luck," Bud said.

Mark hung up the phone and searched his pockets again.

Of course, the keys weren't there. If he didn't find them soon, he'd have to get someone to jimmy the door of Mother Load, then he'd have to get a replacement key made, or worse still, have the entire ignition system replaced.

Mark walked over to a bench outside the restaurant that overlooked the parking lot and sat down with his head in his hands.

"This is the worst thing that could happen," he said.

Just then, a rig pulled into the lot and eased to a stop right in front of the spot where Mark was sitting.

Mark looked up.

Just a few feet from his face was a Child Find poster fixed to the side of the trailer. Mark looked at the poster and sighed.

"Okay," he said, "the second worst thing that could happen." □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of Lost keys, found hope.

Did you know that there are two full-length novels featuring Mark Dalton?: Mark Dalton "SmartDriver" and Mark Dalton "Troubleload." For your free copy register with ecoENERGY for Fleets (Fleet Smart) at fleetsmart.gc.ca

The continuing adventures of *Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator*

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People

A Bison Transport driver has been recognized for accruing two million consecutive accident-free safe driving miles with the company. **Roger Maltman** of Winnipeg received the safe driving award at the company's annual awards banquet. He has been driving for Bison since

1994 and pilots the company's long combination vehicles (LCVs) along Bison's prairie LCV network.

"As a professional driver, Roger is a role model setting a benchmark in safety that very few achieve," said Garth Pitzel, director of safety and

driver development for Bison.

ATBS Canada has expanded its presence in eastern Canada by teaming up with **Carl Fiander** of Profile Solutions to represent ATBS clients in the east.

Profile Solutions will now offer a

suite of products for owner/operators, including services such as business consulting, monthly profit-and-loss statements, GST return filing and tax returns, ATBS has announced. Customers in eastern Canada can contact Profile Solutions by calling 800-267-8006. □



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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – As the year winds to a close, no doubt we will soon be bombarded with a variety of “year’s best” lists. But list compilers may have their work cut out for them this time ’round, as there was little good to write about 2009 – at least economically – which saw one of the worst recessions in decades.

The trucking industry was hit hard, with many trucking companies folding and some drivers opting to get out of the biz altogether. Most economists agree that the general feeling coming into 2010 is one of guarded optimism, but will trucking be able to return to its former glory? We went to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to find out how drivers think the trucking industry will perform in 2010.

Paul Auger, a driver with SGT in St. Germain, Que., says he thinks it will take a while for trucking to bounce back.



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

How will the trucking industry fare in 2010?

“The government and the Minister of Transport, I’m sure they say things are really looking up, but I think, personally, it’s going to take a while to bounce back from the recession,” he said. “Freight has started to move and everything, but the repercussions of the recession are still going on.”

Don Haines, owner and driver for Mobile Home Express in Exeter, Ont., thinks it will take another year for things to turn around, adding that his own company is down about 40% since the recession hit.



Don Haines

“Everything is going down, yet not coming up. People aren’t spending money. (Our cargo) is a high line thing for cottages and stuff. Mine is going to a KOA

camp – they rent them out. We find it’s pretty slow. Insurance and fuel don’t go down though. We keep telling them we should be paying by the day and they say no for insurance.”



Jamie Haines

Jamie Haines is only slightly more positive than his father Don, saying that things will be at least a little better in 2010.

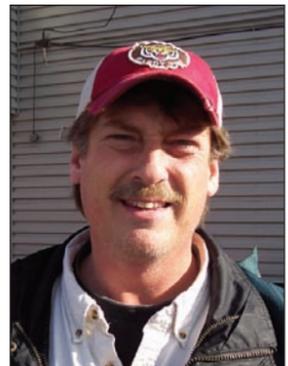
“I think everyone is just starting to loosen up a little bit and things are just starting to pick up a little bit, but it’s going to take quite a while to get everyone back being not nervous to spend money, if they have any left.”

For himself, 2009 was not exactly a banner year: “Not very good at all,” he said. “It was quite slow, and any money you did have saved, you used up, or any investments you had seemed to go right down.”

Keith Banks, an owner/operator from Markdale, Ont. says out-of-control taxes are going to kill any chance the industry has to pull themselves up quickly.

“One word: HST. That’s going to kill us. The provincial government doesn’t seem to care – all they want to do is tax, tax, tax. How much more can we take? Not just truckers, but everybody. You can’t just keep taking out of our pockets; there’s nothing more there.”

As for the government providing companies like AIG and GM bailout money, Banks says, “It’s the biggest kick in the head that you could ever get.”



Darren Meiklejohn

Darren Meiklejohn, a driver with XTL Transportation out of Etobicoke, Ont., says the industry will eventually return to its former status, adding that his own company has been able to keep quite busy despite the downturn.

“Our company has got numerous different products that we carry on more than one lane, so they’ve kept us actually fairly busy for the most part. It has slowed down a little bit, but myself, I’ve had pretty steady miles. I haven’t really felt the tension as much as a lot of guys have.” □

– Adam Ledlow is now on Twitter! Join today and follow his tweets at twitter.com/adamledlow.

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N14 mechanical, 15 spd., 20/40 axles.



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