

TRUCK NEWS

May 2010 Volume 30, Issue 5

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

Post-mortem of a costly recession

Driving for Profit seminar explores recession's impact

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – By now, everyone has seen the much-discussed Nike commercial in which the voice of Tiger Woods' late father said to the golfer: "I want to find out what your thinking was, I want to find out what your feelings are – and did you learn anything?"

While the question was taken out of context, the suggestion was that Tiger's late father was referring to the golfer's well-documented off-course transgressions. Meanwhile a similar scene was playing out at the Capitol Banquet Hall in Mississauga during the latest Driving for Profit seminar. Only this time it was the voice of Transportation Media editorial director Lou Smyrlis asking a panel of three courageous fleet managers what their thinking was and, of course, "did you learn anything?" from the recession.

The recession Smyrlis was referring to has hammered the trucking industry over the past couple years. While it's finally loosening its grip on the Canadian trucking industry, mistakes were made and lessons learned.

Candidly fielding questions about the impact of the recession and how to take advantage of the

Continued on page 16

Stranded

RCMP rescues stranded truckers as Manitoba winter roads suffer a sudden spring meltdown



MELTDOWN: The sudden thawing of Manitoba's winter road network left drivers stranded – and northern communities without access to vital supplies.

Photo supplied by the RCMP

WRONG LAKE, Man. – Truckers became stranded and required RCMP rescue when Manitoba's winter road network suddenly and unexpectedly

thawed in mid-March.

On March 15 at about 8:30 a.m., a trucking company called the RCMP and informed them one of its commercial drivers was unac-

counted for during a run to St. Theresa's Point First Nation.

The 52-year-old driver left St. Theresa's Point on March 12 but had not arrived in Winnipeg.

The RCMP discovered the driver's rig had become stuck in the mud and the driver was stranded without food.

The driver, who also suffered from a medical condition, needed help.

Believing the driver had become separated from a convoy of truck drivers on the winter road, the RCMP said it acted quickly and dispatched a plane to search for the missing driver. The pilot noticed a stranded semi with a flatbed carrying another semi just north of Wrong Lake and also saw the driver nearby, waving at the plane.

During a second loop, the pilot discovered several more stranded semis on the south side of Wrong Lake. The stranded drivers kept a fire going to keep warm.

"Since there is nowhere to land a plane in that area, RCMP chartered a helicopter to retrieve the driver with a nurse and RCMP officer from Bloodvein First Nation with food and water on-board," the RCMP reported after the rescue.

"At 2 p.m., the truck driver was found safe and otherwise in good health. He was transported to safety to Bloodvein First Nation where arrangements were made to fly him home."

For industry reaction on what went wrong, and the continuing difficulty of serving remote communities, see the related story on pg. 14. □

Comprehensive Mid-America coverage
Including a new T700 from Kenworth



See pgs. 43-57

Inside This Issue...

- **Ready for Roadcheck?:** Roadcheck 2010 is just around the corner. An Ontario MTO official shares some tips on how to pass the blitz with flying colours. Page 11
- **Got a dime?:** Financing criteria hasn't changed, but getting financing could be more challenging. Page 31
- **Report on Maintenance:** A special report focusing on issues related to truck maintenance, including coverage from this year's TMC annual meetings. Pages 35-42
- **Licence renewed:** Mark Dalton can't get any answers from the MTO on its senior driver policy. Page 52

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Email: _____

Number of years in trucking/commodity hauled: _____

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Number of vehicles: _____

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How do you maximize fuel efficiency?: _____

My choice is based on:

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Explain: _____

(Include additional information on separate paper if insufficient space)

Nominated by: _____ Phone: _____

Mail completed forms to "AWARD" Truck News/Truck West, Attn: Kathy Penner
12 Concorde Place, Suite 800, Toronto, Ontario M3C 4J2

FORM MUST BE FILLED IN COMPLETELY AND NOMINEE MUST HAVE CLEAN DRIVER'S ABSTRACT

CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

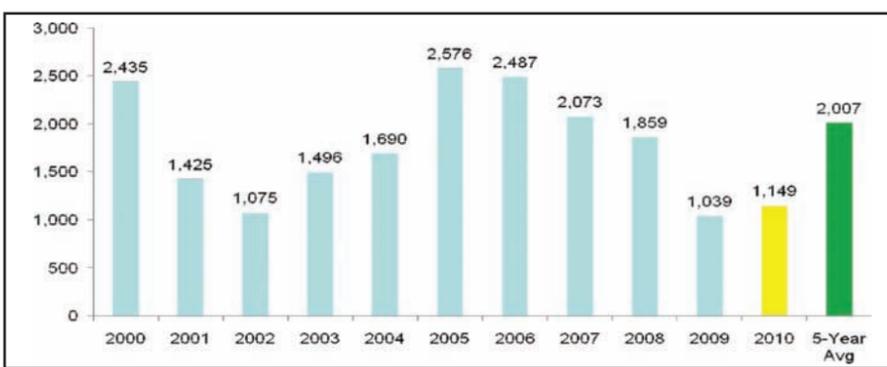
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Monthly Class 8 Sales - Feb 10

Class 8 truck manufacturers were hoping for a rebound this year from the depressed market of 2009. Two months into the year, the rebound seems to be there but, so far, it's very muted. Truck sales are up from last year but only marginally so. There were 1,149 Class 8 trucks sold in the Canadian market in February, which is an improvement over the 1,039 sold the previous February but not much of one. So far, 2010 ranks as the second worst sales year after the disastrous 2009 and is more than 800 vehicles behind the five-year average.

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	263	239
International	342	320
Kenworth	221	75
Mack	59	91
Peterbilt	130	67
Sterling	14	90
Volvo	41	101
Western Star	79	56
TOTALS	1,149	1,039

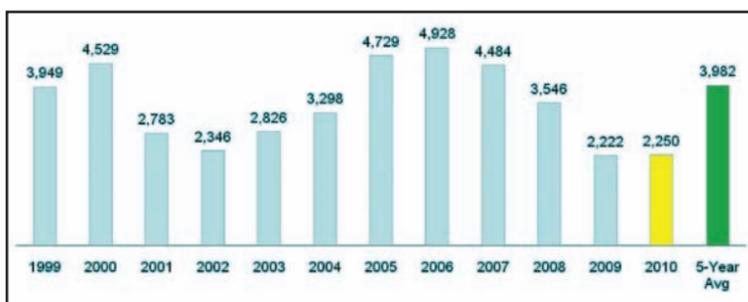
Historical Comparison - Feb 10 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Feb 10) by Province and OEM

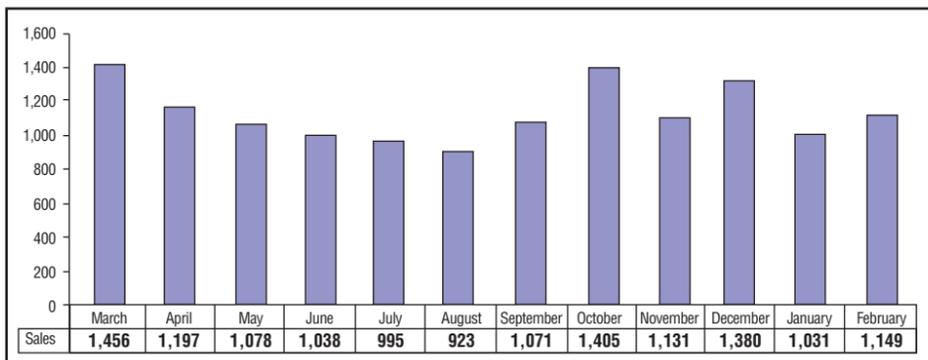
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	36	40	66	42	219	80	27	20	0	2	532
Kenworth	49	140	26	20	57	123	8	0	0	0	423
Mack	6	8	9	13	31	27	6	3	0	0	103
International	34	70	8	27	274	143	23	16	0	6	601
Peterbilt	18	36	22	21	54	78	15	6	0	0	250
Sterling	4	8	0	2	1	9	0	0	0	0	24
Volvo	2	19	8	11	77	32	17	1	0	0	167
Western Star	22	38	5	4	34	13	7	26	0	1	150
TOTALS	171	359	144	140	747	505	103	72	0	9	2,250

Historical Comparison - YTD Feb 10

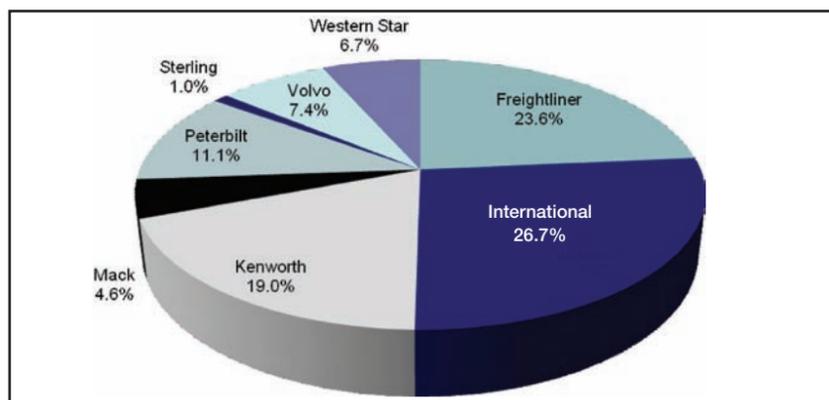


The previous year was the worst year for Canadian Class 8 truck sales of the past decade and one of the worst since the economic slowdowns of the early 90s. The first quarter of 2009 was so weak that, three months into the year, sales were about 3,000 off the five-year YTD average and about 5,000 off the banner year of 2006. Will the first quarter of 2010 prove to be similarly lacklustre? So far, the improvement in truck sales is marginal. There are signs that freight volumes are starting to grow yet trucking remains in over capacity and financing institutions are being tight fisted when it comes to lending money to small- and medium-sized companies looking to get into new equipment.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Market Share Class 8 - Feb YTD



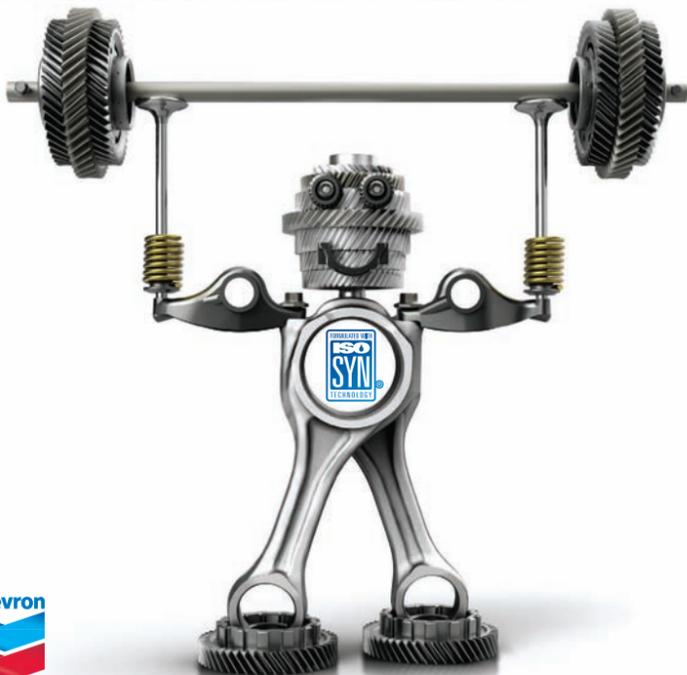
There are many reasons motor carriers remain reticent to purchase new trucks. Despite bankruptcies and fleet size reductions, there are still too many trucks chasing too little freight. Although indications are that freight volumes are growing, growth remains tentative. Pricing for trade-ins remains less than appealing and access to capital for new truck purchases remains limited. The new trucks also come with 2010 emissions standards compliant engines, which add about \$10,000 to the price of a new rig.

International, once again, captured the market share crown in the Canadian Class 8 market in 2009, ending up with a commanding 29% share of the market. But the fight for market share this year will be particularly interesting as International stands alone with its advanced EGR solution to the 2010 emissions standards compared to the SCR option all other truck manufacturers have chosen. Although it's too early in the game to determine how the market share battle will unfold, International has, again, jumped in front after Freightliner held an early lead in January.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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TRUCK NEWS

May 2010, Volume 30, Issue 5
 ISSN 0712-2683 – Truck News
 Truck News, USPS 016-248 is published monthly by BIG Magazines LP, a div. of Glacier BIG Holdings Company Ltd. 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 newspapers and business-to-business information services.
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Let's hope retailer has trucker's needs in mind

As this issue of *Truck News* was being put to bed (kicking and screaming as it was), news broke that Canadian Tire had won a deal to be the fuel provider and convenience store operator for all of Ontario's 23 service centres along the 400-series highways.

You know, those service centres the province has been shutting down in bunches with cement barriers in many cases erected to keep weary truckers from pulling off for some much-needed rest?

Canadian Tire? Not exactly a chain that's synonymous with serving truckers. Sure, maybe with their DIY projects around the house on those rare weekends at home, but certainly not as a major commercial cardlock operator.

One one hand, it's refreshing to see a Canadian company won the contract and it'll be good for the Canadian Tire money collections, but by the same token the announcement has left me wondering if truckers' needs even factored into the decision?

Details at this point are scarce. Rest assured, we are working on obtaining them and will have a more complete report on the im-

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



plications for truckers in the next issue.

I just hope there'll be ample truck parking and the fueling stations will be trucker-friendly. Who knows? Maybe Canadian Tire can set a new standard for trucker-friendly fueling stations in Ontario. It wouldn't be difficult. Here are just a few suggestions I received in a recent e-mail from a frustrated driver:

For starters, they could provide truck-sized squeegees with long handles and fresh windshield washer fluid. Free air for tires would be a nice feature. We all know how important maintaining proper tire pressure is for fuel economy (and hence the environment) and safety too. Put the air someplace trucks can access it.

A properly-maintained parking lot would be nice as well, with potholes filled in a timely manner

and pools of grease and oil cleaned up regularly.

When you consider the cost of a fill-up for a semi, they should be treated like the Kings and Queens of the Highway that they are when they come rolling into these fuel stations.

These provincially-owned service centres are vital to the Ontario trucking industry. Truck stop parking spaces fill up quickly and there are few other trucker-friendly places to park along Ontario's most well-travelled trucking corridors.

Truckers were rightly angered when the province pulled the rug out from under them and began closing these service centres en-masse in a poorly-planned revitalization initiative.

There's an op-

portunity here for redemption, but the devil is still in the details and it'll be some time before we know how serious the province was in making these service centres trucker-friendly. □

— 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](https://twitter.com/JamesMenzies).



Don't waste a good recession

This is a tense time for our industry. It seems we're stuck in a prolonged in-between phase with the recession technically over (the economy is growing again) but with the recovery nowhere near as robust as would have been hoped. Many of the motor carrier executives I spoke to in January and February were telling me they've seen little in terms of growth in freight volumes.

March seems to have been better, but although there is hope for the coming months, there is also a great deal of uncertainty. And, as a result, there is a great deal of anxiety. While everyone I've spoken to at recent industry events is very optimistic about 2011, no one seems to have figured out yet what 2010 will bring.

For the many carriers hanging on by their fingernails, just looking to make payroll from week to week,

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



the anxiety is obvious. But even established carriers are feeling anxious these days. Their anxiety may not be about making it through the next week, but they have real concerns about how long it will take them to repair the damage to their companies the last couple of years have wreaked. For example, rates in the truckload market over the past 24 months have dropped between 15% and 25%, exclusive of surcharges. (And our own research clearly shows that surcharges, such as detention, have also taken a distinct hit during the recession.) And, to make matters worse, many ship-

pers are trying to stretch out payment terms.

During the best years the industry has seen, trucking companies made about eight to 10 cents on the dollar. In other words, profit margins were tight at the best of times and carriers clearly didn't have much to play with. As Mark Seymour, president of Kriska Transportation, candidly told me, in a stable year you get a 5% rate increase in TL. So even healthy 5% increases compounded over the next three years are only going to take the industry back to where it was prior to the recession.

Yet such increases are far from guaranteed. They're certainly not coming this year. Our research shows the majority of both carriers and shippers expect rates to remain about the same this year as last. As Seymour and many other trucking executives have pointed out re-

peatedly over the past year, there is a lot of desperation in the market right now amongst carriers for volume, and shippers are taking advantage of that. They are bidding the business every time they think they can take another rate reduction. That's going to prove a hard habit to break as long as the industry remains in over-capacity.

What it all boils down to is a very difficult atmosphere in which to operate a trucking business with a long-term vision and continued investment. If there is anything positive in all this, it's that motor carriers have learned some very tough lessons over the past 24 months; lessons I hope they won't forget when we finally do return to better times.

That truly would be a waste of a good recession. □

— 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](https://twitter.com/LouSmyrlis).

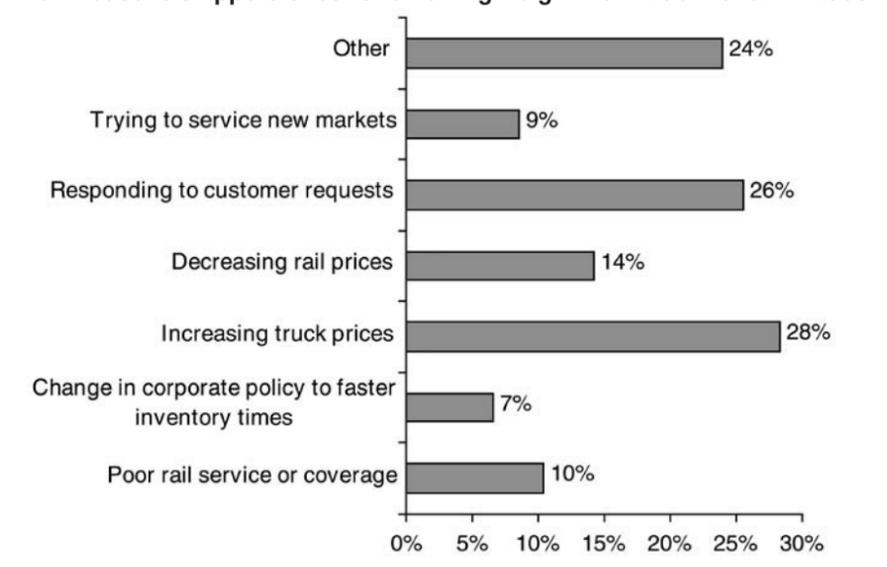
Did you know?

What portion of truck freight is up for grabs

Four in 10 shippers spend more than half their shipping budget on truck transport. Rail and intermodal have been moving aggressively in recent years to cut into this commanding share and have had some success, particularly when truck transport prices were on the rise.

More than half of shippers using trucking services in Canada feel that rail would be a viable alternative for at least a portion of their shipments, according to our annual research.

Main reasons shippers cited for diverting freight from truck to rail in 2009



About a fifth indicate that this would apply to more than 10% of their current trucking shipments.

It's well known that trucking rates

were hammered down during 2009. Motor carriers naturally hope for a strong rebound in 2010 and beyond as the economy recovers and truck-

ing sheds its current excess capacity. However, our research also shows there is a ceiling to how much trucking rates can rise. Increasing truck rates were the main reason given for switching to rail, cited by 28% of shippers who had moved away from trucking.

But in 2008, when rates were still climbing and fuel surcharges were having a greater impact on pricing, increased pricing was given as the main reason for moving away from trucking by almost 50% of respondents.

For more Canadian sourced data on modal preferences, rates, surcharges, shipment volumes, capacity and contracts see our annual Transportation Buying Trends report available for \$99 through www.trucknews.com □

TRUCK NEWS

Question of the month

Do you think the long-nose conventional tractor has a future?

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Mark Dalton in... Licence renewed Part 2



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departments



NEW PRODUCTS: Check out all the highlights from the Mid-America Trucking Show. Pages 43-57

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Behind the headlines

Truck News' weekly WebTV show *Transportation Matters* has earned top honours for the series, winning the Best of Multimedia division at the Truck Writers of North America's annual Communication Awards March 25.

The award was one of 10 won by *Transportation Matters*, *Truck News*, and its contributors – the group's best showing since the peer-judged competition started seven years ago.

The awards, held each year at the Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville, Ky., recognize excellence in trucking industry journalism in both the trade and the mainstream press, as well as excellence in communication with the industry by public relations professionals. The awards include categories for writing, graphics, broadcast, Web sites, and internal communications.

Transportation Matters won a bronze award for its "Fergus Truck Show 2008" episode in the Truck Show category, a gold award for its "Mascot Truck Parts Tour" episode in the Business cat-



Ledlow

egory, and another gold award for "TMTV – The Series" in the Series category – which eventually won Best of Multimedia for its division.

Executive editor James Menzies took home a trio of awards in the Magazine Writing division; a silver for "Traction In A Winter Wonderland" in the Technical: General category, a second silver for "Spec'ing Shunt Trucks" in the Product Application category, and a gold in the News category for "Too Restrictive?"

For outside contributors, writer Edo van Belkam's popular series "Mark Dalton: Owner/operator" won a bronze award in the Fiction category, TFS Group's Scott Taylor won a bronze for his "Tax Talk" column in the Magazine Writing – Series category, while Joanne Ritchie of the Owner-Operators Business Association of Canada took home a gold award for her column "Voice of the Owner Operator" in the same category.

"Being recognized by our peers is a highly sought-after honour. Our editorial and video production teams are dedicated to providing accurate and timely information. These awards solidify that dedication and reaffirms the direction we have taken with our editorial products," said Rob Wilkins, *Truck News* publisher. □

Grand Bend Big Rig Truck Show changes gears

GRAND BEND, Ont. – With a new date and a new name, the Grand Bend Big Rig Truck Show promises to be bigger and better than ever, according to Sherry Clarke, coordinator of what used to be the Earl Hardy Trucking Big Rig Nationals.

This year's show will be held at Grand Bend Motorplex Aug. 28-29. Friday, Aug. 27 will be a set-up day for show'n'shine, wash-and-park and trade show participants.

Show'n'shine contestants will compete for best truck and runner-up honours in more than 20 classes, Clarke announced. The wash-and-park is an opportunity for truckers to display their rigs without officially entering the show'n'shine. There will be three sizes of outdoor trade show spaces, Clarke said. As always, the event will be highlighted by non-stop racing on the quarter-mile drag strip. The big rigs will own the spotlight on Sunday, with big rig racing beginning at 11 a.m.

Clarke said the first heavy truck drag races in Ontario were held at Grand Bend Motorplex. Clarke, founder of the Fergus Truck Show, brings years of experience organizing truck shows to the table. She'll be coordinating the trade show, show'n'shine and wash-and-park. She can be reached at 519-238-7223, ext. 24, 519-843-8333 or by e-mail at truck.event@gmail.com. □

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Marine Atlantic ferry reservation system stumbles forward

By Ingrid Phaneuf

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. – The new Marine Atlantic ferry reservation system for commercial vehicles crossing to and from Newfoundland, implemented in March, is meeting with grudging acceptance from Canada's trucking industry, with some questioning whether costly fines for non-compliance with the new rules are just a money grab.

A case in point: One trucking insider claims his company was fined for turning up with reefers instead of dry vans, even though the reefers were being used as dry vans at the time.

"It's not all bad, but I don't agree with the way they're giving fines," says Louis Gaudet, a dispatcher for Armour Transport based in Moncton, N.B. "For instance, they're fining us for a change to reefers even if the reefers aren't running."

Gaudet says Marine Atlantic has given Armour a \$100 fine every time a driver has turned up with a reefer instead of a dry van. "They said they didn't have to be running to be considered reefers. We got the issue addressed after a while, but I don't know how much we paid before we said something."

Gaudet also points out flaws in the new reservation system. Reservations can only be made by phone, he says. (Marine Atlantic has stated it plans to put the system online by mid-April).

"Whenever I try to get hold of

them to cancel a reservation I can't get through," says Gaudet. "So we end up paying a fine for cancelling late."

The fine for late cancellation is also \$100 per truck, says Gaudet. "It's ridiculous. I spend hours on the phone trying to get through and then we have to pay anyway. And it's not like I can just ignore our customers when they call, I can't stay on hold forever."

While Gaudet agrees in principle with the need for a reservation sys-

"There are some who criticize the system, but there are others who say it's a good thing," says Laing. "And we are working closely with the industry to address the challenges. We estimate we should be able to address most of the issues in the next couple of months."

As for the difficulty some companies are having getting through via phone, Laing says Marine Atlantic is working to solve the problem.

"We have already added more staff to answer the phones and we

reservation," says Laing. In other words, reefers are generally for spoilables so they may get an earlier spot. Hence the fine if you tell Marine Atlantic you're bringing a reefer and then don't.

Bookings can be cancelled up to 12 hours before sailing, explains Laing. After that, companies get fined. Twelve days after the new system was implemented (March 15) no less than 670 cancellations after the 12-hour mark had already been made, she adds.

"That's nine full vessels," Laing says. "That's so significant that we went back to the industry to explain how the cancellations are affecting everyone. Vessels are leaving without being full. And other trucks can't get a reservation. So that's why we're fining them, we just want to ensure everyone has a level playing field."

Laing says Marine Atlantic is also looking at whether the deadline for cancellations needs to be increased.

Adjustments definitely have to be made, agrees Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association executive director Jean-Marc Picard, but that was widely anticipated, he says.

"There have been some bumps in the road," says Picard. "It's a huge change. There are some bugs to be worked out and hopefully with our recommendations things will get better. But this didn't come as a surprise. The industry heard about this well before it happened. Marine Atlantic was holding meetings about the change in different cities across the Maritimes months ago." □

'They're supposed to be doing this so they can fill their boats. But it just looks like a money grab to me.'

Louis Gaudet, Armour Transport

tem for commercial vehicles, he is cynical about the fines.

"They're supposed to be doing this so they can fill their boats. But it just looks like a money grab to me." Gaudet estimates that since Marine Atlantic implemented the new system in March, so-called late cancellations for trucking companies have numbered in the hundreds. "That's stupid, if we can't even get through when we call," says Gaudet.

But Marine Atlantic is working with trucking companies to improve the situation, says Tara Laing, in customer relations.

are going online. We estimate the reservation system should be online by mid-April."

Laing says that with four vessels in the company's fleet, there's more than enough capacity for commercial vehicles, even though some, like Gaudet, say they can't get a reservation when they need one.

"When it comes to just-in-time, we are doing an analysis of the booking system and looking at the trends in the types of commodities our passengers are carrying. What you're carrying at the time of booking is what determines when you get a



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48" plywood roof runner,
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(3) "New" 53' UTILITY DX DRY FREIGHT VANS



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suspension, aluminum wheels, loaded.

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



Hendrickson air ride suspension with 6' and 6' spreads,
stainless rear doors, overlays, door hardware and bumper,
16" aluminum scuff liner quad door lock rods, heavy duty
flat floor, Armortuf side walls, 1 row recessed "E" track,
Michelin XZE 22.5 tires.

(10) 2006 UTILITY 53' DRY FREIGHT VANS



Hendrickson air ride suspension, logistic posts, some
with translucent roofs, some with aluminum roofs, all
trailers are clean and certified condition.

(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,
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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.

Quebec

Quebec vets make highway house calls

Livestock intercepted en-route to market to ensure humane transport

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, Que. – Four veterinarians and three Control Routier officers come out to greet the truck as it pulls in behind the Les Cedres eastbound check station near the Ontario border.

The officers do a walk-around and check the driver's log book. The vets climb up to peek through the ventilation holes in the sides of the huge trailer, carrying horses imported from the US.

It is the fifth livestock truck of the morning.

Four Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) vets had arrived at the check station at 6:30 this sunny March morning, ready to inspect trucks for compliance to federal animal transport regulations, educate drivers and just remind truckers that CFIA is on the job. The vets check for adequate and clean litter and whether any of the horses look ill or are lying down. They also check for anything that could injure them, such as holes in the floor, unstable flooring or broken metal inside the truck.

The Control Routier officers limit their mechanical inspection to a walk-around: They are not keen to be on the receiving end of a cow, er, horse plop or a hot piss. If they suspect that any truck is



EVERYTHING ALRIGHT IN THERE?: CFIA inspectors join truck enforcement officers at roadside to ensure livestock is being properly transported.

not in good mechanical order, they issue the driver a 48-hour warning. This obliges them to go have a mechanical inspection within 48 hours and submit the inspection to the Societe de l'assurance automobile du Quebec (SAAQ). Otherwise, the truck will no longer be allowed on the road.

Few of the 10,000 or so truck inspections CFIA did in 2009 were

at highway check stations; most are done at slaughterhouses, borders and auction houses. However, explains Dr. Marie-Claude Simard, a veterinarian program specialist with CFIA, "The awareness, education and visibility are very important to me. We do a lot of education with the truckers; for example, do they know the regulations? This is one

of the big purposes of being here.

"If we suspect something and want to unload the vehicle, we put an official seal on the truck. The truck usually goes to a federal slaughterhouse. There, the trucks can be unloaded and federal inspectors can inspect the animals. We can write a non-compliance report, which goes to an investigation in Montreal. There could be fines, advice, but this is not done here on the spot."

CFIA vets have been coming to Quebec check stations about three to four times a year for the past five years. "We have the power to inspect animals in transportation where we want, but we have to do it with SAAQ," Simard explains.

"We check the log books, where the truckers picked up the animals and how long they have been driving with them. This helps the vets, because they do not have the power of interception," explains Control Routier carrier enforcement officer Arnold Yetman.

Because animal inspection days at control stations are infrequent, Control Routier make a special effort to stop all animal trucks going in either direction.

Drivers carrying animals generally know the regulations very well, according to Simard.

Still, it is important to check how many hours the trucks have been underway; the maximum travel time is 48 hours without stopping for water, feed and rest. "Non-compliance is rare. I have seen a lot of improvement since I started doing this six years ago," Simard says.

The industry is responsible for training its drivers, but there is plenty of information and courses available. One good resource is the Certified Livestock Transport Web site (www.livestocktransport.ca).

It includes a training program, reports and information; ie., a 10-page booklet titled Livestock Transportation Requirements in Canada and a 75-page document on how to transport farm animals.

It also covers laws and codes, providing, for example, a link to the Health of Animals Regulations, Part XII, which are the federal requirements for animal transport.

Problems are more likely to be found during weather extremes. When it is cold, frostbite is a concern. Poultry trucks and trucks carrying red meat animals need tarps or covers. The length of the trips are important.

"For poultry, if the trucker stops once an hour for 15 minutes, this is an approved way to reduce the chance of frostbite," Simard explains.

In hot weather, ventilation is essential, Simard says. "If you stop, park the truck out of the sun. Try and avoid traffic problems. We have a requirement to reduce the loading density for pigs and poultry, which are particularly susceptible to overheating.

"What I like a lot about the check stations is that we can inspect trucks en-route. It is always a surprise for the truckers to see us here. They are not always happy, but if they know the regulations they have nothing to fear." □

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Ontario

MTO gearing up for Roadcheck 2010

By James Menzies

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – The North America-wide inspection blitz Roadcheck 2010 is just around the corner and drivers can expect to see plenty of action at Ontario inspection stations.

That was the message from Alf Brown, head carrier enforcement liaison with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, when he addressed the most recent Driving for Profit seminar here Apr. 6. Brown noted with pride that Ontario has the largest and hardest-working contingent of Canadian enforcement officers taking part in the annual blitz.

“Ontario has the most inspectors of any jurisdiction in Canada and does the most inspections of any jurisdiction in Canada,” Brown said. “I also think they work the hardest in Canada as well – at least during those three days.”

Roadcheck, orchestrated by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), is the largest targeted enforcement program in the world, Brown said. This year’s event will be held in all states and provinces between June 8-10. It differs from everyday enforcement activities in that the 72-hour blitz is intended to be completely random in order to give an accurate indication of how well the trucking industry as a whole is complying with rules and regulations.

“This is what we do every day, but during this 72 hours we inspect vehicles at random,” Brown said. “The other 362 days of the year, we target.” Under normal circumstances, trucks that appear to be in disrepair or those belonging to carriers with shoddy safety records are singled out for inspection.

In most cases, MTO officers will be conducting comprehensive Level 1 inspections, which include a complete vehicle and driver inspection. Drivers are expected to help out, Brown said, noting the 45 minutes or so the inspection takes will count as on-duty time for the driver.

“We need the driver to help us in the inspection procedure,” Brown said. “The Highway Traffic Act says they have to help us.”

Drivers will be required to follow instructions such as applying the

‘If all they’re doing is backing up to a wall so they can see the reflection of the lights on the wall and then emptying the ash tray – they’re not doing it.’

Alf Brown, MTO, on pre-trip inspections

brakes and activating the signal lights when asked to do so. One of three outcomes will follow an inspection: the vehicle will pass and be given a CVSA inspection decal; defects will be discovered, in which case the driver must notify the fleet manager and decide whether or not to continue on before fixing the problems; or the vehicle will be placed out-of-service.

Brown admitted inspection officers occasionally run out of inspection decals due to the high number of inspections conducted over the three-day period. In that case, drivers should carry their inspection report with them, which will be an acceptable alternative for enforcement officers. Brown said drivers shouldn’t be too concerned if the MTO runs out of inspection decals, since all the information is now available in real-time via the MTO computer system. When you pull into a weigh scale, the officers there will already know when you were last inspected and the results of that inspection, he explained.

In the event a truck is placed out-of-service, the owner will have to fix the problems on-site and then submit the vehicle for another inspection or have it towed off-site for repairs. Critical defects which present an imminent safety hazard could result in the truck being impounded – or going to “truck jail” as Brown called it.

Fortunately, the out-of-service rate has improved in recent years during Roadcheck inspection blitzes. Since the mid-90s, Ontario’s Roadcheck compliance rate has improved 47%. In 2009, the compliance rate in Ontario was 83.3% – up from 81.5% in 2008.

“The industry has really stepped up to the plate,” Brown said, noting he used to see out-of-service rates as high as 30% years ago. Still,

there’s room for improvement, he noted, with 16.7% of trucks inspected in Ontario being placed out-of-service and presenting an “imminent danger.”

“That (16.7% OOS rate) doesn’t give me a warm, fuzzy feeling,” Brown said. “We still have some room to improve.”

So what are some of the most common problems that’ll put a vehicle out-of-service? The most common problem is damaged air lines, Brown noted. He suggested carriers place an emphasis on this significant problem during safety meetings. Other common problems involve the lighting system, load securement, leaking tires, out-of-adjustment brakes and driver logs.

Brown noted drivers are required to keep 14 days’ worth of logs with them at all times and pointed out the date of this year’s Roadcheck is significant, because drivers will need to supply about a week’s worth of logs from May in addition to their June logs.

“If they have already turned in May’s log book (to the fleet), they’re going to be out-of-service,” Brown warned.

A driver found to have falsified logs will be placed out-of-service for 72 hours. Brown said inspection officers also routinely find drivers who are carrying a suspended licence.

“I always tell the officers that the fact somebody has a driver’s licence in their wallet doesn’t mean they’re licensed,” Brown said.

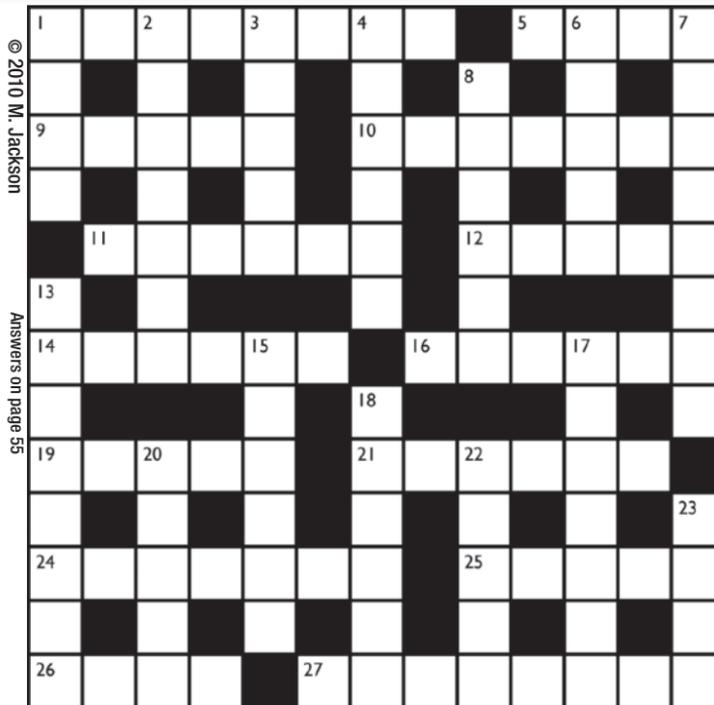
Brown said fleets can improve their odds of making June 8-10 a stress-free time by emphasizing the importance of proper pre- and post-trip inspections and ensuring drivers are familiar with the procedure. He urged fleet managers to walk through their yards and take note of how thorough their drivers’ pre-trips are.

“If all they’re doing is backing up to a wall so they can see the reflection of the lights on the wall and then emptying the ash tray – they’re not doing it,” Brown said. “Don’t be content with mediocre inspections.”

Finally, Brown invited fleets to visit a nearby inspection station during Roadcheck to see first-hand what the inspection process entails.

“This is one of the few times we invite you to come to our house and watch us work,” he said. Anyone interested in attending an inspection should pre-register by emailing cepo@ontario.ca and requesting a registration form, or calling a local inspection station. □

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Across

1. International Harvester cabover, debuted in '63
5. Sport for electric-cart drivers
9. Chrysler Canada truck brand, way back when
10. Mack construction-truck model
11. Informal roadside eateries
12. Quebec-based trailer maker
14. Former Mack model
16. Cargo-carrying conveyances
19. Speeder-snagging system
21. Modern tire type
24. Pneumatic-suspension components
25. Defunct GMC clone of Chevy Titan
26. Toddler's Tonka-truck terrain
27. Engine-block material (4,4)

Down

1. West, on a road map
2. Semitrailer-and-pup rigs (1,6)
3. Exhaust-stacks output
4. A former flat-front Freightliner
6. Mississauga manufacturer, ____ Bus Industries
7. Truck fleet operating expense (4,4)
8. Accelerator, in other words
13. Highway-spanning structure
15. Truck-usage category (2,4)
17. Word on tour-group bus
18. Eastern Ontario-based carrier
20. Heavy-duty Petro-Canada engine oil
22. Tailgate another truck
23. New-truck-related bank transaction

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Ontario

Canadian Tire to provide fueling at Ont. service stations

TORONTO, Ont. – If you aren't already collecting Canadian Tire money, you may want to start.

The 23 roadside fuel stations and convenience stores under construction in Ontario will be operated by

Canadian Tire when they re-open, the company has announced.

The service centres, located along Hwys. 400 and 401, will feature modern facilities for fueling, shopping, resting and quick-service dining, the

company claims. The service stations will be operated by Host Kilmer Service Centres, with Canadian Tire providing the fueling and convenience store facilities.

"Automotive is a key differentiator for Canadian Tire and a competitive advantage," said Michael

Medline, president of Canadian Tire Automotive. "These highways are the busiest in Ontario." He confirmed Canadian Tire money will be awarded to customers. Seven sites are already under construction and as many as 20 will be open for business by the end of 2012. □



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By Jim Bray

WINNIPEG, Man. – Talk about getting bogged down at work!

In what could almost seem like a real life episode of the *Ice Road Truckers* TV show, more than 100 drivers found themselves stranded in the middle of nowhere, waiting to be rescued, as Manitoba's winter roads ran out of winter.

The roads, which date back to the 1950s, are usually open for about eight weeks and are used to deliver an entire year's worth of supplies to isolated, mostly aboriginal communities in the province's north.

The system was built by the private sector originally and freight was transported on cat trains. The province took over responsibility for construction and maintenance in 1971 and upgraded the roads to accommodate trucks.

The roadways are built over a variety of terrain, including water, muskeg and mud, and are a vital lifeline for the communities they serve, some of which don't have airstrips nearby that can be used as a back-up.

One of the communities fortunate enough to have an air strip is Red Sucker Lake, north of Red Lake, Ont., in the section of Manitoba that spreads northeastwards towards Hudson Bay. According to Bob Dolyniuk, general manager of the Manitoba Trucking Association, the community normally would be serviced by a winter road that starts at Pine Dock, some 400 kilometres away on Lake Winnipeg west of Atikaki Provincial Park.

Dolyniuk says Red Sucker Lake didn't receive all of its diesel fuel allocation before the roads closed, so the rest of its shipments will have to be flown in. "It should be okay in that regard," he says, "but it's going to be extremely expensive."

The early closure – which went into effect March 15 – has left governments scrambling not only to get the supplies in, but to get the stranded truckers out, a task accomplished sometimes by helicopter and sometimes by quad. Clearly, it's not only a dangerous situation but also a very expensive one – and if Al Gore is right and we can all expect to be surfing the breakers of the Arctic Ocean before long, the problem may not be solved any time soon.

Still, people are trying to find solutions, including one that sounds not only like a blast from the past, but something distinctly "pie in the sky."

The idea, put forward several years ago by Dr. Barry Prentice at the University of Manitoba, is to use dirigibles as airborne freighters.

Such huge, lighter-than-air craft could indeed float serenely above the muskeg and water, but the MTA's Dolyniuk points out that they could have a very serious drawback in that particular part of the world: wind. "There's a lot of it coming through there," he says.

Then there's the question of whether or not humanity is ready to embrace a technology remembered chiefly for the Hindenburg accident.

Meltdown

Manitoba truckers find themselves on thin ice, looking for answers as winter wanes

That's only one possible solution. Fortunately, there are others, though Dolyniuk acknowledges that they're limited.

"You've got to look at the whole situation and what options you have," he says. "You can use winter roads, you can build all-season roads, you can fly it in by planes or you can try dirigibles. To me those are the only options that would be available."

Time for all-seasons?

Building all-season roads would be a blessing in those years when Old Person Winter decides to take an early vacation, but it raises the issue of how cost-effective it would be, especially considering the fact that such roads would only serve relatively few individuals – about 30,000 people, according to the Province of Manitoba, spread widely over some 20 communities.

Dolyniuk says the province is looking currently at building such a road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, "but you're talking hundreds of millions of dollars," he says.

"And you're talking about crossing the Canadian Shield muskeg, bog, lakes, rivers, creeks – it's rough terrain to say the least."

Such a solution would take years to complete, too.

In the meantime, people are being left high and (with luck) dry, far from either their homes or their destinations, while isolated

communities twist in that infamous Manitoba wind.

As far as the stranded drivers are concerned, Dolyniuk says "The people that are up there now, if they haven't gotten them out, they're going to be there for the season. It's happened before, though not to the extent that we're talking about here."

And while it doesn't happen often – Dolyniuk says only one company had to leave a tractor-trailer behind last year when the season ended – it's still a major concern from a humanitarian and logistical point of view.

Financial, too: even if the people get out, the equipment ends up stranded until the following year's freeze-up.

That's not good for the owners' bottom line. Surely, there must be a point at which it becomes cheaper to build permanent roads?

A question of cost

"That's the point," Dolyniuk says, "because if you're talking about flying the supplies in there it could be millions and millions of dollars for the one season."

And even the communities like Red Sucker Lake that have landing strips are limited because often the strips aren't large enough to handle bigger transport planes and "there's a cost associated with having to use the smaller planes."

Still, it's inevitable that something will be done, someday, and

Dolyniuk thinks the eventual solution will indeed be all-season roads.

"Everything I've heard so far has been relative to that road system," he says.

"Keeping in mind that there's probably at least a good half-dozen different winter roads in the province."

Needing multiple roads makes the situation even more complicated, though the government could prioritize the road building, doing it piecemeal.

"Some of other winter roads are obviously much farther north," Dolyniuk says, pointing out that the northernmost road extends to points nearly equal in latitude to Churchill, so they should stay frozen more reliably and be more dependable than the ones farther south.

Assuming one wants to rely on the weather.

Dolyniuk says Manitoba actually did study building a road right up to Nunavut, up the west side of the province, but "they were talking about somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$2 billion."

That's a serious chunk of change in these economic times, especially considering the small population bases on either side of the border, coupled with the fact that such a road would make more sense if Nunavut were to get involved as well, extending it north from the Manitoba border.

Then there's the issue of spending limited resources as wisely as possible.

"The other side of it," says Dolyniuk, "is if there's \$2 billion to be spent would we rather see them build a road to Nunavut or improve the condition of Highway 17 through northern Ontario? Where's the majority of the traffic?"

The Manitoba Trucking Association doesn't have a dog in this hunt, officially, though Dolyniuk says it's obviously supportive of all-season roads because "road transportation is far more economical than flying freight in and looking at long-term cost benefits to the communities and the government, all-season roads would make more sense."

In the meantime, the government of Manitoba has been lobbying the feds to cover the cost of air freighting goods caused by the early closure of the winter roads. Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Steve Ashton was in Ottawa just before the roads closed to press his case with his federal counterparts.

He said in a press release before his meeting that "They have a role to play in providing for northern residents" and he urged Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to cover the cost of flying in goods.

As of press time the minister was unavailable for further comment, however.

However it ends up playing out, the eventual solution promises to be difficult and expensive – yet essential for the people who rely on those supplies to get them through the year and for the truckers who get the supplies there. □



GOING NOWHERE: Trucks that were on Manitoba's winter roads when a sudden thaw struck were bogged down in mud and unable to continue. In at least one case, the driver had to be airlifted out by RCMP.

Photo supplied by the RCMP

FMCSA publishes much-anticipated EOBR rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Trucking companies found to have a 10% hours-of-service violation rate or worse during compliance reviews will be required to monitor HoS using electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) in the US.

The US Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration published its EOBR rule on April 2, which targets companies with serious hours-of-service violations.

It’s estimated nearly 5,700 interstate carriers will require EOBRs after just one year of the new rule’s implementation, the FMCSA predicted.

The rule will be implemented June 1, 2012 and the FMCSA warned it will likely come out with a broader EOBR mandate later this year.

“We are committed to cracking down on carriers and drivers who put people on our roads and highways at risk,” said Transport Secretary Ray LaHood. “This rule gives us another tool to enforce hours-of-service restrictions on drivers who attempt to get around the rules.”

“Safety is our highest priority,” added FMCSA Administrator Anne S. Ferro. “In addition to requiring EOBRs for carriers that have already demonstrated a pattern of hours-of-service violations, we will initiate a rulemaking later this year that considers an EOBR mandate for a broader population of commercial motor carriers.”

The new rule also includes technical performance standards for EOBRs, which require them to record the date, time and location of a driver’s duty status. The rule also provided some flexibility for carriers who are voluntarily using EOBRs to track driver HoS. For instance, carriers using EOBRs will no longer have to retain toll receipts used to check the accuracy of driver logbooks. The new rule can be found at www.gpoaccess.gov. □

US seatbelt use on the rise among truckers

ARLINGTON, Va. – More truck drivers than ever before are buckling up, according to the latest data from the US Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The latest figures show 74% of commercial truck and bus drivers now wear their seatbelts, up from 65% in 2007.

“The increasing trend in safety belt usage among commercial drivers is encouraging,” said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves. “However, our advocacy won’t rest until every driver is buckling up.”

The data is based on surveys of 20,818 commercial drivers operating medium- and heavy-duty trucks and buses at 827 roadside inspections.

Seat belt use was as high as 78% in states that require them by law and dropped to 67% in states where there’s no law requiring wearing a seatbelt.

Owner/operators only buckled up 64% of the time whereas company drivers tended to use seatbelts 78% of the time, according to the data. □

US truck tonnage slides slightly in Feb.

ARLINGTON, Va. – US truck tonnage slipped 0.5% in February, following a revised 1.9% gain in January.

The For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index, compiled by the American Trucking Associations, was up 2.6% compared to February 2009.

That marked the third straight month of year-over-year gains and an increase of 3.5% for the first two months of 2010 over 2009.

Of course, 2009 was a brutal year for truck tonnage, contracting 8.7% – the largest annual decrease since 1982.

“I continue to hear from motor carriers that both the demand and supply situations are steadily improving,” said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. “Certainly it will take a while to make up the ground lost during the recession, but the industry is on the path to recovery.”

Costello predicted there will be more month-to-month volatility but expects the trend line to show moderate growth.

He also noted the winter storms that hammered the US East Coast could have contributed to the decline. □

Peace Bridge improvements underway

FORT ERIE, Ont. – Construction has begun on the Commercial Lane Traffic Improvements project at the Peace Bridge. Niagara Falls MP Rob Nicholson was on-hand to formally kick off the construction project.

“As the third busiest Canada/US commercial truck crossing, the Peace Bridge is essential to trade with the United States,” said Nicholson. “The Government of Canada is proud to have invested in this project, which is creating local jobs today in Fort Erie and the Niagara Region, while contributing to efficient trade and travel over the long term.”

The project includes construction of a fifth primary inspection lane and booth for Canada-bound trucks and a designated Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (VACIS) area. The project is expected to be concluded by this summer.

The feds are pitching in \$1 million – about 50% of the total cost – through the Gateways and Border Crossings Fund. The rest of the cost is being paid by the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority.

“The Peace Bridge Authority is pleased to be able to partner with the Canadian government on this project. Transportation infrastructure, particularly international bridges, is key to enhancing and maximizing the binational trade and tourism relationship between Canada and the US,” said Ken Schoetz, chairman of the board of the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority.

“These improvements will help expedite commercial crossings into Canada, thereby reducing congestion and traffic queues, and allowing the Peace Bridge to function more efficiently.” □



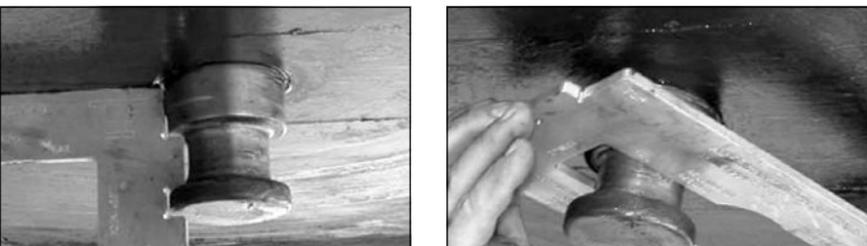
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Fleets take a look back, and ahead following recession

Continued from page 1

recovery were: Mark Bylsma, Spring Creek Carriers; Trevor Kurtz, Kurtz Trucking; and Rob Penner, Bison Transport. The three crowded onto a single sofa while a philosophical Smyrlis asked them what they've learned from the recession. Bylsma admitted Spring Creek made mistakes early on in the downturn, by adding about 30 trucks during an uncertain time.

"We recognized at that point in time that some of our growth initiatives were costing us money and new lanes we developed were running at a loss and we were taking our attention off our core lanes," Bylsma admitted. He said the company has learned to shift away from an "if we build it, they will come" mentality when building new lanes.

"We thought we'd start the lane,

let customers know and three months or six months later it will be a profitable lane," Bylsma reasoned. "We were missing the forest for the trees. Now, we haven't grown all that much, one or two trucks here or there strictly when there's a need for it with an in-house client."

Bison's Penner is hopeful other trucking companies have also learned valuable lessons about managing growth – but he remains skeptical.

"I'd like to say growth is one of those things that our industry has learned, but I don't necessarily believe that," he said, admitting Bison itself "hasn't been labeled conservative in too many things and growth is one of them." Penner added "We are going to get pressured into making decisions and

taking chances, and our economy and successful organizations have always grown and done well because they take risks."

Penner said it's too early to be considering growth strategies, however, when rates have been hammered by 20% or more and gaining back lost ground may take years. Bylsma said Spring Creek has managed to maintain its rates with most of its direct customers.

"At a certain point in time, you have to put a value on your service and it needs to be reflected in your rates," he said. What Bylsma has noted is not only downward pressure on rates, but corresponding upward pressure on service. Shippers paying LTL rates, for instance, are expecting next day deliveries to Toronto from the Great Lakes states – essentially expecting expedited service at LTL rates.

dedicated service at LTL rates.

"Once you've done it once or twice, they come to expect next day delivery," he said. "All of a sudden, your third-party LTL rate and your expedited service becomes the expectation."

All three trucking company executives admitted the industry is still suffering the effects of excess capacity, which is exacerbated by the low cost of used equipment.

"You can buy a reefer now for next to nothing, so there were a lot of guys that went out and bought one and figured 'Hey, I'm going to haul pharmaceuticals or HazMat'," said Kurtz.

Injecting some humour into the seminar, Penner shared his own highly-scientific capacity barometer: "We know there's still too many trucks out there because our competitors are still working."

Once the chuckles subsided, he said volumes seem to be picking up and the company is beginning to gain some traction when discussing rates with customers. But it'll be a long time before rates reach pre-recession levels, he predicted. Kurtz agreed.

"You can name your price going to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, but trying to go to Chicago, Atlanta and those places is still brutal," he said. "It's going to be a long time before those heavy lanes come around. Squeezing rates up is next to impossible right now and we're working every day just to keep what we've got."

On coping with the recession, the three fleets on the panel all employed different strategies. Kurtz said his company froze salaries and had to scrap a "second trip" bonus – but driver pay rates remained in tact. The recession hit Kurtz Trucking later than most, Kurtz said, but when it did hit, it hit hard.

"For the first time ever in the history of our company, we were going through the numbers and saying 'How are we going to become more efficient and still allow all these guys to make their house payments?'" he recalled. "That was the biggest battle. My brothers and I would meet every two weeks, go over what we did last week and what we're going to do next week to right-size things."

Bylsma said Spring Creek didn't have to lay off any employees, although it left certain positions unfilled when people left the company. It didn't reduce salaries but it froze driver pay rates and salaries.

Penner said Bison also made it through without reducing pay for drivers or other staff.

"We didn't roll back anyone's wages in any way, shape or form," he said. "We've taken the approach of having the right number of trucks and keeping them rolling. We kept our pay-for-performance strategies in tact."

Penner said Bison did eliminate about 200 trucks – mostly company trucks – from its fleet by simply letting the leases expire. The benefit of leasing trucks on four-year cycles is that the fleet can contract by 25% in any given year, he pointed out.

Continued on page 18

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Feature

Long road back

'Educate the client' when trying to restore rates to pre-recession levels

Continued from page 16

Penner took issue with fleets that downsize on the backs of their owner/operators, which does nothing to address excess capacity in the marketplace.

"One thing we found odd when talking to different fleets about reducing capacity over the last two years is the first trucks they shed are the owner/operators," Penner said. "But that doesn't reduce capacity it just forces them into taking another job somewhere. If we all relied on owner/operators, we'd never have much hope of managing

our capacity. Our decision to let them go isn't their decision to go out of business, they will now compete against me tomorrow."

A surprising benefit of the recent hard times for Bison Transport was that it provided opportunities for everyone to step up and contribute to the ongoing success of the company. Management employed a bottom-up strategy for improving efficiency and controlling costs, which has resulted in great ideas from some unexpected sources.

"We're developing our next level of leadership," Penner said, "some that we expected, some that are complete surprises."

Going forward, Smyrlis asked for advice on how trucking companies can gain back some of the rate losses they suffered through the recession.

"Educate the client," advised Bylsma. "On the direct client basis, it is all about the relationship. On the 3PL side, it's linked 100% to capacity and as that shifts, we'll be able to command higher rates."

Bylsma said he shows customers bulletins from industry associations that call for rate increases and tries to educate them on the cost pressures facing the trucking industry.

Kurtz echoed those remarks, noting the best customers want to be informed about industry issues such as the costly new emissions requirements and CSA 2010.

"If you just go in and say 'I need a rate increase to buy new trucks and pay for fuel,' they don't care," he said. "My customers who have stuck with me want to know what's going on. They care." As for the others, "I can't wait for the day I don't have a truck for them," he admitted.

"Information is key," added Penner. "It's a lot more science than it is guts, like it once was and I think you have to have lots of good tools and systems and communication to ensure people understand why we're doing what we're doing and asking for what we're asking for."

Did any good come of the recession and the difficulties of the past couple years? Bylsma thinks so. "I look at our survival as a success story," he said. "We had to get more involved in the organizational side of things. We got back into a micro-managing situation where we're keeping an eye on every expense and consolidating loads where we have to. How do we get more freight on the truck? How do we get more deliveries and pickups out of our drivers? We (management) often wonder how well-off would we be today if we were this efficient five years ago?"

"If I was this efficient in 2004 and 2005, I'd be retired – and I ain't that old," joked Kurtz. "I'm excited about the future. If we can stay this efficient and stay positive and keep everyone focused on what they're doing...when this ship turns around I think we're all going to win." □



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Over the Road

Understanding and controlling the winter blues

I caught a rather severe case of the winter blues this year.

I had feelings of irritability, a craving for comfort foods, loss of interest in usually enjoyable activities, poor concentration and loss of energy.

After the high of the Christmas season, feeling a little down in January has become part of the normal seasonal work cycle for me. By the end of January, I am normally in the groove of a new year and the bluesy feeling has passed. But not this year.

This year the feeling of simply being tired is clinging to me. That feeling of fatigue aggravates the normal daily irritations I face on the road each day often blowing them out of proportion. So I had to face the question: What has changed?

I spent more time on the road in 2009 than what I would consider normal and that trend continues to the present day.

This revelation comes as no surprise; it is a direct result of the downturn in the economy. As I investigated this line of thought, I realized that the quality of my time on the road has also changed dramatically.

It is the quality and not the quantity of time I am spending on the job that has a far greater effect on my state of mind.

My last trip to Michigan is a good example of this. It was short but not sweet.

I left my home terminal in Ayr, Ont. at 8:00 p.m. It was a simple, straightforward load. I was switching trailers in Kalamazoo, Mich. then heading up to Grand Rapids for a load that was ready the following evening. Simple. No time issues or hours-of-service issues to deal with.

I planned to be in Grand Rapids by 2:30 the following morning, get a good night's sleep, then kill the balance of the day before hooking on to the load that evening and making the five-hour trip back to Ayr. The problem was that 25 kms after leaving the terminal in Ayr, I got a Check Engine light and then - bingo - the engine derated. I contacted dispatch, flipped around and headed back to the terminal.

Luckily there was another high-way tractor in the yard. I slid my gear into it, while dispatch modified the Customs documents. Then I was off again; but now it was almost midnight.

The Kalamazoo load had to be delivered by eight in the morning. At this point I had plenty of time - but not plenty of energy. I crossed the border, grabbed a 90-minute nap at the first rest area and had the trailer in the dock in Kalamazoo by 7:45. I grabbed an empty trailer out of the yard in Kalamazoo and made it up to Grand Rapids well within my 14-hour window.

It was 9:45 in the morning. My load was scheduled for eight or nine that evening.

You would think after having been up most of the night, sleeping wouldn't be a problem. But



Over the Road

Al Goodhall

that short nap in the middle of the night combined with the bright sun, warm spring weather, and the hustle and bustle of a busy day taking place around me made sleeping difficult.

It was 9 p.m. when I started rolling out of Grand Rapids. By the time I arrived at the port of entry in Sarnia, I had been fighting off the waves of fatigue for over an hour.

Ironic isn't it? You can operate well within the hours-of-service rules and still not be fit to be on

the road. This is a circumstance that is more common than any of us like to admit. It goes to show that longer trips do not equate with more fatigue. It's all about the quality of time we spend within each and every day.

I have come to understand over the last couple of weeks that I'm not suffering from the winter blues. I'm dealing with a type of shift work sleep disorder. According to the National Sleep Foundation I have most of the symptoms: Insomnia; disrupted sleep schedules; irritability; reduced performance; and excessive sleepiness.

Understanding this makes me feel a little better but I still have to cope with it.

I can't lay the blame for this situation at the feet of my employer

or anyone else for that matter.

In fact my employer has bent over backwards to keep us all moving out here and financially I had a good year last year. Obviously it has come at a price though.

It goes to show that despite all the procedural issues and regulatory changes we are facing in this industry each and every one of us is responsible for making the decisions that affect our individual health and well-being. That will never change. □

- Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at <http://truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com> and you can follow him on Twitter at Twitter.com/Al_Goodhall.

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CSA 2010 offers tools to improve safety, profitability

The fear mongers appear to be hard at work. As the US prepares to introduce a new safety rating system under CSA 2010, fleets and drivers are being rocked by false rumours that suggest they will be declared unfit, insurance will be denied, or that employees will even be arrested at roadside scales.

In reality, the new initiative being applied to every cross-border trucker is something that informed fleets will embrace. It offers a new array of tools that can play a key role in successful recruiting strategies, identifies the challenges associated with high-risk drivers and makes it possible to address the hidden issues that would otherwise lead to costly losses.

There is simply no question that the related Safety Management System will offer a more detailed analysis than today's SafeStat measurements.

The new system – being introduced this July – will track details about every crash and safety-related violations within seven Behaviour Analysis Safety Improvement Categories (BASICS). And these seven BASICS will sound very familiar to any fleet that monitors safety performance.

Regulators will now be tracking reports of unsafe driving, fatigued driving, driver fitness, controlled substances and alcohol use, vehicle maintenance, cargo-related issues and reportable crashes.

All of these details will be stored in the Motor Carrier Management Information System that will track five years of crash data and three years of inspection data such as out-of-service violations.

But unlike a simple count of the number of incidents, CSA 2010 will also weigh the severity of individual violations and the timing of each event. A recent violation will be weighed more heavily than one that took place several years ago, and each measurement will be used to identify the specific factors that increase the likelihood of a crash.

The scores that emerge will then be compared against the performance of similar fleets, establishing meaningful benchmarks along the way. The work behind CSA 2010 has also introduced some impressive planning tools to help fleets maintain favourable ratings.

The US Department of Transportation, for example, has unveiled a clearly identified Safety Management Cycle which will walk any fleet through the individual steps that can improve performance. The checklist helps to identify written policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, qualification and hiring, training and communication, monitoring and tracking, and finally a form of meaningful action that will address any safety-related concerns.

And one of the biggest changes of all comes in the form of a system that will measure and record the performance of individual drivers for the very first time.

Under existing operating records, a newly-hired driver could add six unwanted points to a company's profile, lose their job, and then take their bad habits to the next unsus-

Ask the Expert

Rick Geller



pecting employer. Meanwhile, the fleet that hired them in the first place will need to live with the points for as long as 30 months.

But the new CSA 2010 reporting system will hold drivers accountable for their actions and share the related details through the Pre-employment Screening Program (PSP).

A recruiter will be able to tap into the records as long as a job candidate has signed the required consent form.

Of course, this initiative involves more than addressing the actions of a single driver. The data available through CSA 2010 can be used to

support a variety of programs, whether they involve refining training efforts across a fleet or other interventions that can take place before a crash ever occurs.

Rather than taking a shotgun approach to addressing as many safety-related issues as possible, a training initiative will now have the chance of honing in on specific challenges that increase the likelihood of a loss.

They are the types of initiatives that can have a direct impact on profitability, even in the midst of a struggling economy. After all, fleets that have introduced Markel's high risk driver strategies have been known to reduce their losses by as much as 75%.

The financial impact of related incidents will undoubtedly take many companies by surprise. I recently asked one fleet to circle May 26 on every calendar because each dollar made up to that point was being

used to offset safety-related losses. Think of it like the Tax Free Day that businesses will use to determine how much money they need to make before covering their tax bills. Think of it as proof that CSA 2010 can lead to the strategies that will improve a fleet's bottom line. □

– This month's expert is Rick Geller. Rick is the director of safety and signature services for Markel Insurance Company of Canada and has more than 25 years experience providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance Company of Canada, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers. Markel is the country's largest trucking insurer providing more than 50 years of continuous service to the transportation industry.

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Industry

Some important topics to consider

A few items of interest have crossed our desk recently that will interest the trucking community. First, there is a minor tempest brewing in the HazMat community that we hope will be resolved before it escalates into something out of proportion. If you're in the business of transporting dangerous goods in Canada, you know that your drivers are required to undergo training on the products being transported and must carry on their person employer-issued certification of that training.

Things are a little different south of the border in that US drivers need to be trained to a standard set out in CFR49 172700-704, but they are not required to carry certification of that training on their person. That certification is maintained by the employer in the employee's file. There is also an endorsement on the driver's CDL.

Private Links

Bruce Richards



So, what's the big deal you ask?

Well, there are rumblings in some Canadian jurisdictions that US drivers transporting dangerous goods in Canada (aka HazMat) should, like Canadian drivers, be compelled to carry certification of the training they have received. Since that is not a requirement of US law, we have a discussion point that, hopefully, will be resolved quickly before the constitutional and NAFTA constraints come into play.

A Transport Canada official took time to discuss the issue with me and advised that negotiations are pro-

ceeding nicely with FMCSA. A couple of possible solutions came to mind during our conversation:

One such solution could be to have US carriers transporting HazMat to Canada provide their drivers with a certificate of training. While the training required under CFR49 172700-704 is not everything Canada would like to see (i.e., it's not product-specific and doesn't require recurring training), that is a possible compromise that could be negotiated. Canadian officials could also elect to accept the HazMat endorsement on the driver's CDL, possibly retaining the right to ask the employer for further proof, or simply ask that the employer fax a copy of the training certification to the closest inspection station.

For a more futuristic resolution, we wonder whether the electronic trip manifest, which identifies the presence of HazMat, could also include a driver profile certifying that the driver has had the requisite

training? Absent that certification, the driver would simply not be allowed to proceed into Canada. As we continue to move toward an electronic border crossing world, this would seem to be a relatively simple fix to the issue.

On another topic, back when it introduced its new facility audit in April 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Transportation committed to conducting a six- and 12-month evaluation of the program. It has now been decided that due to a lack of resources and audit data it may be premature to conduct a review.

Instead, the Ministry has elected to conduct a two-phase evaluation of the new audit program. The first part, which they describe as qualitative, will begin in mid-April with stakeholders like PMTC discussing key questions in preparation for broader consultations with the industry. That will be followed by the qualitative phase in which data collected from audits will be analyzed.

The planned approach seems to be ordered, and given the lack of data currently available, it is reasonable to wait until there is something to analyze.

That also leaves additional time for carriers to provide their input on the program. With that in mind, I'd like to suggest that if you have a constructive opinion or suggestion to offer on the subject, you contact your trucking association. If you are not a member of a trucking association (and we would wonder why not?) feel free to e-mail your thoughts to the PMTC office.

Lastly, the subject of mandatory Electronic On-Board Recorders (EOBRs) is back in the news as CCMTA embarks on its study of the issue. PMTC and other interested parties have provided CCMTA with our thoughts on the matter.

What the end result of the deliberations will be, and whether the US and Canadian rules will be harmonized, is anyone's guess, but here are a few thoughts from the PMTC submission. EOBRs are already in widespread use by responsible carriers, which is not to say that every carrier without them is irresponsible. One idea could be a phased-in approach that would initially mandate EOBRs for carriers (including bus operators) with a history of hours-of-service infractions or other safety issues. The difficulty with that approach is that there are insufficient enforcement resources to identify all the carriers that flaunt the rules, which in turn argues in favour of EOBRs for all carriers.

We also need to be aware of privacy issues, which are paramount in our society. PMTC feels that this subject demands in-depth discussion to determine what information should be available and what safeguards are in place to protect it.

It is also important that carriers already using EOBRs not be immediately required to replace them if a new standard were to be introduced. Those carriers have already demonstrated their commitment to safety and should be allowed to continue with their current equipment for its useful life. □

- The PMTC is dedicated to the private trucking community. Your comments or questions can be addressed to trucks@pmtc.ca.

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* Modern Tire Dealer, 2008

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Addressing myths about head lice

Due to their lifestyles on the road, professional truck drivers are more susceptible to catching head lice than many other professionals.

It is important to note that getting lice is not a sign of poor hygiene or an unclean living environment. In the case of the truck driver, it is more an issue of a transient lifestyle and the frequent use of public washrooms. Head lice are tiny, parasitic insects that live and feed on the blood from your scalp. Fortunately, head lice are not a serious condition as they do not spread disease from person to person. However, the symptoms of a head lice infestation can be quite annoying.

The most common symptom of head lice is intense itching of the scalp. This itching is an allergic reaction to the saliva that the lice inject into the scalp during feeding. This usually results in itchy red bumps on the scalp, neck and shoulders.

In order to confirm a case of head lice you must find live lice. In good light, gently part the hair and look closely at the roots. Head lice can move very fast and are sometimes hard to see. Adult lice are approximately the size and colour of a sesame seed. Lice eggs which are called nits are whitish-grey, tan or yellow ovals approximately the size of a grain of sand. They stick to the hair close to the scalp and are often mistaken for dandruff. Interestingly, adult lice can live for up to 30 days on a person's head, but will die with-

Back behind the wheel

Dr. Chris Singh



in three days away from the scalp.

Contrary to popular belief, lice cannot fly or jump. They are spread by physical contact or via contact with contaminated personal belongings or furniture. As a result, sharing personal belongings such as hats, combs and brushes is not recommended. Luckily, there are no major complications from head lice. The worst that may happen is that the itching may cause you to scratch your head so much that you break the skin.

The most common treatment for head lice is over-the-counter shampoos that contain insecticides that kill the lice. If you do not want to use insecticides, a fine-toothed or nit comb can physically remove the lice from wet hair. This routine must be repeated every three to four days for at least two weeks. Unfortunately, preventing the spread of head lice is difficult. However, if you know that you have head lice, it is best that you remain at home and not go to public places until you are cured. □

– Dr. Christopher H. Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

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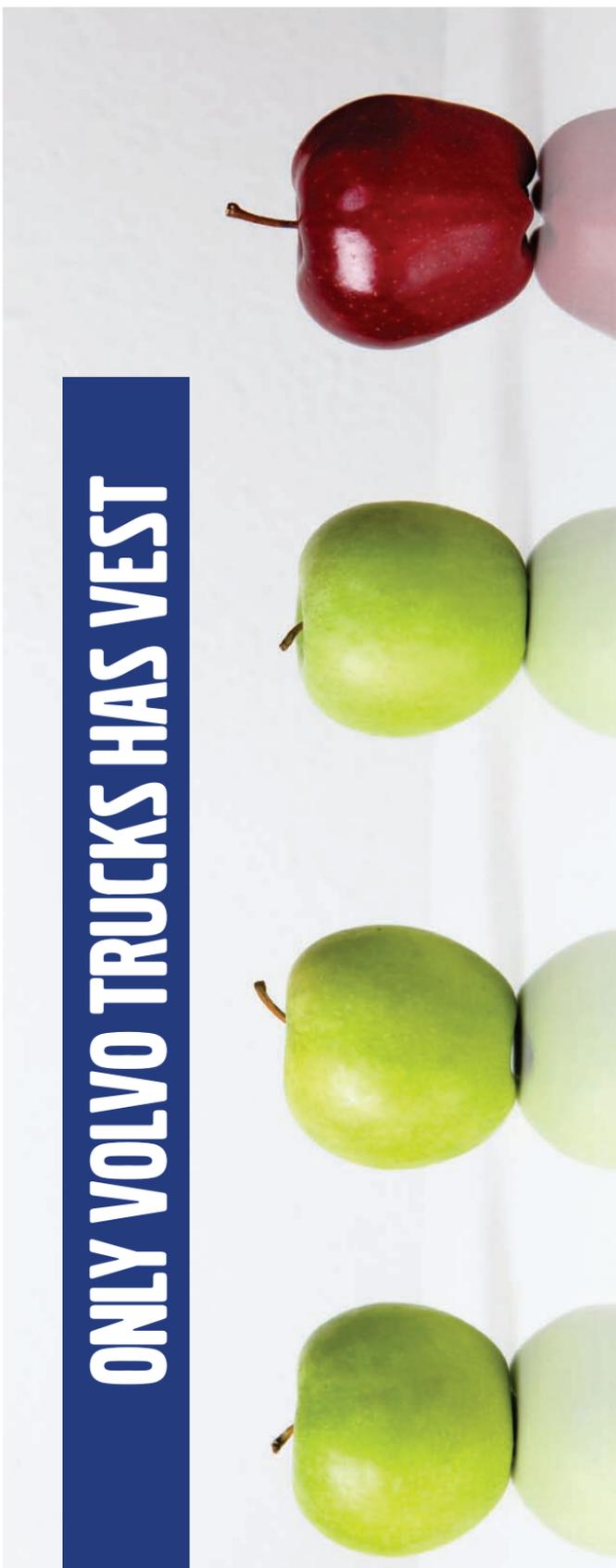
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Industry

Future of new, second crossing at Windsor-Detroit rests with Michigan Legislature

After all the debate, the studies and public hearings, the future of the new, publicly-owned bridge at Windsor-Detroit currently rests with the Michigan Legislature.

By June 1, we will know whether the so-called DRIC (Detroit River International Crossing, though I think we should start calling it the Gordie Howe Bridge) project will be built, or whether it will be relegated to the back burner and, perhaps, never constructed – at least not in most of our lifetimes.

While it took a while, and we had our own political battles on this side of the border, all three Canadian levels of government are now solidly behind the project and the province of Ontario has already embarked upon construction of the freeway linkages to the site of the new bridge.

Last year, the Michigan Legislature enacted a law mandating the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to provide two things to state legislators by May 1, 2010: "Investment grade" traffic data; and indications from the private sector of a serious interest in partnering to build all or parts of the DRIC project. Another complicating factor is that Michigan does not have the legislative authority to enter into public-private partnerships (P3s); so a legislative fix is needed for that as well. A successful P3 arrangement could remove any need for taxpayers' money to be used to build the bridge. This point has been made by Canada's Transport Minister, John Baird and by MDOT director Kirk Steudle. The law indicates the Michigan legislature intends to approve or disapprove the DRIC by June 1. That is not a lot of time.

The people who do not want DRIC to proceed, point to the fact that the Ambassador Bridge folks say they want to twin their bridge. But, saying you want to build a second span and actually getting the approvals to do it, are two different things. As it stands now, the Ambassador Bridge does not have the approvals needed to proceed.

If it were to file a serious application, it might get them, in time. Then again it might not.

For example, the US Coast Guard recently announced it was terminating the Ambassador Bridge's permit application process. The reason given was that, despite several meetings between the

Industry Issues

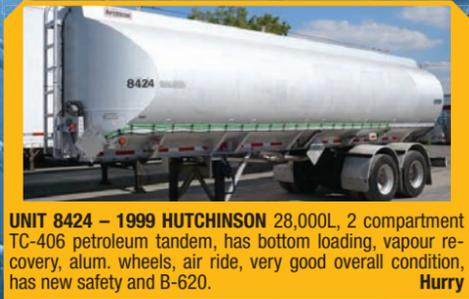
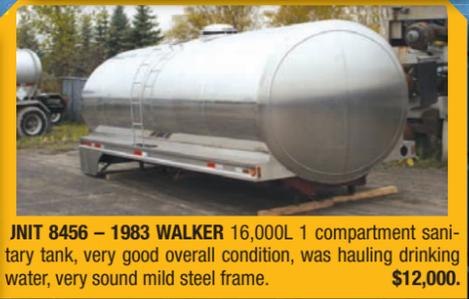
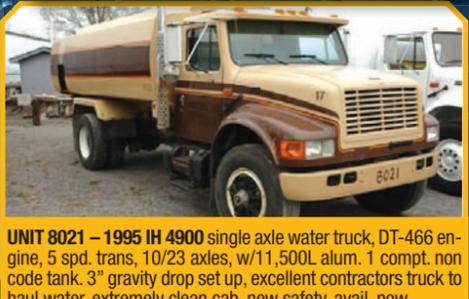


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Coast Guard and the Ambassador Bridge representatives, there had been no movement by the Bridge on a number of critical issues that the Coast Guard identified last June.

As a representative of private sector associations, in principle I have no problem with privately-owned infrastructure. If we were being offered two efficient crossings, I'd say the more the better. But that is not what the opponents of DRIC are proposing.

Under their plan, the Ambassador Bridge would retain its monopoly as the sole bridge crossing between Windsor and Detroit. We do not support this situation. It would not resolve the problems associated with a lack of freeway-to-freeway access that currently exists. It would not provide the redundancy needed to keep the border open in the event of a security breach.

DRIC is the only actionable project at the moment. It must be built – for economic and for security reasons. There is a lot at stake for Canada, for Ontario, for Michigan and for the US. Sure, trade has fallen off due to the recession but it is beginning to show signs of rebounding. We need to think ahead.

According to the US Final Environmental Impact Statement, DRIC will create more than 40,000 direct and indirect jobs during the construction period. It will bring billions of dollars in investment to the area and help secure the future prosperity and relevance of the region where there is perhaps more integration of manufacturing processes than anywhere else in the world.

During a speech given at an automotive industry dinner on March 15 in Michigan, Chrysler Group CEO, Sergio Marchionne, said his company “supports the partnership between the governments of Michigan and Ontario, as well as Canada and the United States, as they work toward securing a new gateway at Detroit/Windsor.

“The automotive industry continues to support the proposed Detroit River International

Crossing, or DRIC. This proposed new crossing would add redundancy and unimpeded access from Ontario’s highways to Michigan’s interstates...In the coming months, the Michigan Legislature will consider a bill to authorize construction of the new DRIC bridge. It is my sincere hope that the Legislature will pass the bill by the June 1 deadline. The need for an additional crossing to handle current and future trade flows is widely acknowledged and it is imperative that this new crossing be completed as soon as possible. It’s important to our collective future!”

Truckers agree. A recent survey of OTA trucking company members found that, while there are some improvements needed at all the major border crossings between Ontario and the US, by far the highest priority is the construction of a second bridge at Windsor-Detroit. Seventy-three per cent of respondents ranked Windsor-

Detroit as the most important border crossing in terms of overall economic impact.

Almost 60% said they expect that crossing to have the most delays and the most congestion when the economy recovers. When asked what border crossing ranked highest in terms of needed infrastructure improvement, 68% said Windsor-Detroit.

When asked what specific infrastructure improvements are most urgently required at Windsor-Detroit to avoid future congestion problems, 79% said a second bridge is required, compared to 14% who wanted additional FAST lanes and 4% who called for Customs plaza improvements.

When given a choice between DRIC and a second span at the Ambassador Bridge, again, the trucking industry was very clear in terms of which option it supports with 71% favouring the building of the DRIC crossing. Eighty-four per

cent of respondents said that building a second, publicly-owned bridge at Windsor-Detroit is either extremely important or very important to the long-term economic well-being of Ontario.

Given the amount of trade flowing between Michigan and Ontario by truck (some \$26 billion even in last year’s down economy) the same is no doubt true for Michigan’s long-term economic prospects. In 2009, 83% of Michigan’s \$14 billion in exports by all land modes to Ontario was moved by truck.

While up until now, the voice of the opponents of DRIC seems to have garnered most of the attention, given the economic enormity of this issue, I expect things to heat up in the weeks ahead. Stay tuned. □

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

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Keeping the spring in your step

Your feet; every year, you put many miles on them. You count on them to take you wherever you want to go, yet you probably don't think about them unless they hurt. I bet your trailer tires get more visual inspections than your feet do. So far, they've been carrying their weight (and yours).

Consider the following common foot conditions and stay on a healthy foot path.

Fungal and bacterial conditions are common for truck drivers because germs get picked up in shared areas where people walk barefoot, such as public showers. They then flourish in warm, moist environments, such as work boots. They can cause blisters, itching, peeling and dry, inflamed skin. If you treat a bacterial or fungal condition right away, you can cure it. If not, it may be hard to cure and will probably come back again and again.

To prevent infections, keep your feet – especially the area between your toes – clean and dry. Change your shoes and socks often to help keep your feet dry.

Wear socks made of a wicking material to draw the moisture away from your skin. If you think you've caught a foot infection, try dusting your feet daily with foot powder.

Keep the skin between your toes dry by separating your toes with cotton batting. However, if your foot condition does not get better within two weeks, see your doctor.

You may find out you just have dry skin, which is easier to take care of. If your feet itch and burn but are not infected, start using a milder soap and rub your feet and lower legs daily with a moisturizing cream or lotion. Using bath oils can also help, but be careful – they'll make your feet and bathtub very slippery.

Warts are another condition caused by a virus. Depending on where they are on your feet, they may or may not be painful. However, if untreated, they often spread.

When they grow on a weight-bearing area of the foot, your body weight can cause them to grow deeply into the foot tissue. Although there are many anecdotal and over-the-counter remedies for warts, for permanent removal, often a doctor's treatment is required.

Corns and calluses are also common foot complaints and are caused by shoes or boots that don't fit properly. Because of this, parts of the foot rub against the footwear and the bony parts of the foot build up tissue in these areas. Choosing better-fitting shoes is a great start to fixing this problem. There are also corn pads available in stores to place on corns and calluses to prevent rubbing and allow the skin to go back to normal.

There are also chemical treatments available to remove the excess skin, but if the fit of the shoe remains the same, the corns and calluses will just return.



Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen

Bunions are also quite common and seem to run in families. They happen when the joints in the big toe don't fit together properly. If surgery is not necessary, you can manage this by taping your foot into a proper position, wearing an adhesive pad that cushions the bunion, or simply buying footwear that allows enough room around the toe for the toe to move freely. Sometimes orthotics or shoe inserts are helpful. In severe cases, a doctor may prescribe anti-inflammatory drugs or corti-

sone injections.

Unlike a bunion, a hammer toe affects the second toe, but is usually caused by a bunion on the big toes. With a hammer toe, the middle part of the toe points upward, often at the first joint of the second toe. Over time, the tendons that control toe movement shorten and the joint stiffens, affecting balance. If you have one, be sure that your shoes and socks give your toes enough room to move. If your case is very serious, your doctor may suggest surgery.

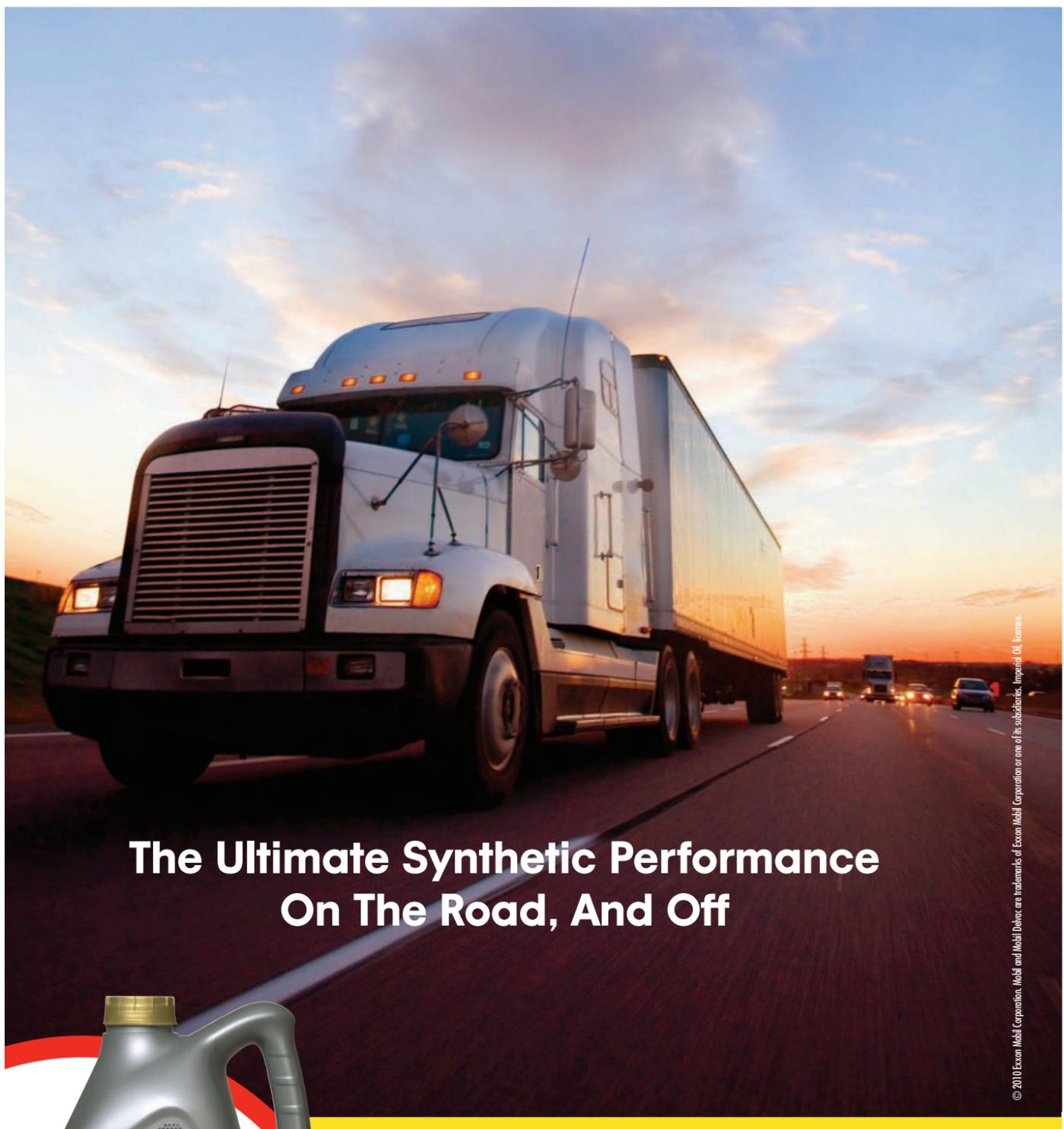
Ingrown toenails also affect the toes. Although not usually very serious, they can become quite painful, especially if they become infected. It is recommended that to avoid ingrown toenails, you carefully cut your toenails straight across on level with the top of your toe.

Spurs are another foot complaint. They are calcium growths that develop because of muscle strain on the feet. The most common causes are: standing for long periods of time, wearing shoes that don't fit and/or being overweight. They aren't necessarily painful, but if they are, you may try foot supports, heel pads or cups. Very rarely surgery is needed.

If the above foot conditions seem like just a nuisance, lucky you. However, if you have diabetes or a circulatory issue, be sure to have your doctor regularly take a look at your feet, too. With these additional health conditions, foot conditions can become very serious.

Put your best foot forward – they're in it for the long haul. □

– 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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Tax Talk

Why you should plan ahead for the July 1 HST deadline

When it comes to HST, planning pays

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) is coming to Ontario on July 1 and the government is selling the idea that blending the 5% GST and 8% PST in Ontario is going to save manufacturers, restaurants, retailers, and other businesses so much money that they'll be able to lower their prices and we'll all benefit.

Stop laughing. That's what they're saying.

Personally, I figure there'll be more to gain during the rush to beat the deadline on purchases that will cost more after the HST takes effect.

Think about your local gas station. Gasoline already has GST in the price, so if gas is \$1 a litre on June 30 it's going to be \$1.08 on July 1. I'll see you in line.

Industry lobbyists have been calling for an HST in the province for years, saying the current system is inefficient and regressive. The basic principle is that HST is fully-refundable whereas PST is not. HST is also simpler to administer. Right now, truckers face at least three different sales tax regimes: the PST, the Multi-Jurisdictional Tax (MJVT, a special PST on IRP vehicles), and the federal GST.

Probably the easiest way to think about how HST will affect you is to look at IRP and non-IRP operations.

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



For IRP fleets

When Ontario introduced IRP in 2001, one selling feature was that PST is not applied to repairs and maintenance or the purchase and leasing of equipment.

Just show the dealership your Cab Card and you were PST-exempt. Instead, PST (renamed MJVT) is paid annually with your IRP plate renewal. After July 1, IRP vehicles will now have to pay HST on all of these items.

Because HST is fully-refundable, owner/operators and fleets will get their money back. But isn't it better not to pay it at all, to have the purchase be tax-exempt, rather than to pay the cash and wait three months to claim an input tax credit on the HST? It's a step sideways, not ahead or backwards.

For non-IRP fleets

Non-IRP fleets will be able to claim the HST as fully-refundable instead of having to pay non-re-

fundable PST on everything, potentially a big savings.

For example, a \$100 repair for an IRP vehicle costs \$105 with \$5 refundable through GST. For non-IRP vehicles, that same repair costs \$113 with \$5 refundable. Starting on July 1, everyone will pay \$100 for the repair plus \$13 HST and then file to have the \$13 refunded.

The numbers get bigger on capital purchases. For example, that non-IRP truck that cost \$100,000 plus \$8,000 PST will cost \$100,000 after the \$13,000 HST refund. That's where the government is gambling that the HST will have its biggest effect.

Those savings on capital purchases may entice companies to stay in Ontario, creating jobs and reducing unemployment.

Bad timing

The existing tax on multi-jurisdictional vehicles would no longer apply to renewals or new registrations of these vehicles under IRP on or after July 1.

In addition, these vehicles will no longer be subject to RST (exit tax) when they cease to be registered under the IRP on or after July 1.

Ontario has told IRP jurisdictions that they will no longer be required to charge the annual prorated sales tax on behalf of Ontario for renewals or new reg-

istrations under IRP if the registration year begins on or after July 1.

What about vehicles registered before July 1? If your IRP fee structure covers May 2010 to April 2011, will Ontario refund tax for months beyond June 2010? We've asked IRP officials and no one knows the answer.

I do know this: carriers are delaying some capital purchases – trucks and trailers – until July when they feel they will be cheaper due to HST.

The transition to HST won't be easy, and you should talk to your accountant about how to manage the process with respect to taxes on your own billing – like, if you pick up a load on June 29 and deliver it on July 3, how do you apply the taxes?

But let's hope auto companies and other manufacturers in Ontario see the benefits and decide to stick around.

And hey, since they're saving so much money because of HST, maybe they'll pay more for your service. Stop laughing! □

– 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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Financing

Lenders say they're open for business

But freight shortage means few are buying

By Ingrid Phaneuf

TORONTO, Ont. – When it comes to access to credit in the wake of the economic downturn, the good news is it's slowly becoming more accessible. The bad news is, it's only becoming more accessible for larger carriers who have already managed to weather the storm.

"Is access to credit getting easier?" asks Vince Piccolo, vice-president of sales at CIT Financial, which specializes in lending to O/Os. "From our point of view, the answer is no." Repos may be slowing down but they're still happening he says. "We do our best to try to avoid them so that our clients can keep on operating, but we're still not seeing any considerable improvement in the market," Piccolo says.

Piccolo blames downward pressure on rates and the shift to east-west routing from cross-border traffic for decimating Canadian O/Os in recent months. "It's been really hard on the little guys," he says, adding dry van truckers have been hit the hardest, while flatbed and reefer operators are doing marginally better. "There aren't a lot of reefers or flatbeds on the market so they're more in demand for freight," he says.

CIT is really only taking new business from carriers who've been in business for at least five years, adds Piccolo.

"Our criteria hasn't changed, we're still taking 10% down from owner/operators we feel good about, and offering them the same interest rates, depending on how reliable they are."

Still, Piccolo does hope to see overall economic improvement for the trucking industry in the next year or so, something that lenders who deal with larger carriers are already eagerly anticipating.

In fact, GE Capital has already geared up for new business, by becoming Navistar's preferred

provider of retail financing for trucks and buses in the US (GE Capital has held the same status in Canada since 1986). The company's new financing relationship, announced March 9, is a clear indication that the economic tide is turning.

"Rate volatility has stabilized and we are cautiously optimistic about the Canadian economy going into the spring," says Patrick Palerme, president and CEO of GE Capital Canada. "It is trending the right way."

Credit is available and it's business as usual at GE Capital, Palerme says, as long as carriers can show they've made the right decisions during recent hard times.

"We haven't changed our under-

writing criteria," he adds. Still, carriers who come shopping for a loan may find themselves being scrutinized slightly more thoroughly than in better times.

"Because we have observed a significant deterioration of companies' balance sheets as a consequence of the poor economic conditions, we are now asking for more information that will help us reveal trends in financial stability and stable operations," says Palerme. "For example, even if over 36 months there is an indication of a downward trend, there may be more information that will show that the right actions were taken that will point towards a reasonable forecast of an upward trend and, in such a way, assure creditworthiness."

Companies may be asked about their latest financial trends, not just annual, but quarterly and monthly, their operations and cash flow (ie. fuel surcharges, accessorial charges for wait times, etc.) and about their business plans.

"We want to see whether the results match their projections, to get a good feel for the company and how it is performing through the current cycle," says Palerme.

When it comes to lending, Daimler Truck Financial execs are also cautiously optimistic.

"Recovery is slow, and we expect it to remain so throughout 2010," says managing director, Ian Loveless. "So credit crunch wise, yes, things are slowly getting better." But Loveless also insists that the company's lending criteria has not changed throughout the crisis. "We are part of the Daimler Group and as such we have a responsibility to support our dealers and customers,

Continued on page 32

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Financing

There are steps you can take to improve your credit-worthiness

Continued from page 31

so through the last two years, where we've been able to find fundamentals, we've continued to lend."

Basic fundamentals include regularly-maintained balance sheets, good operating ratios and working capital.

"For companies with good track records and good plans, and for fleets who've been addressing their issues and needs and have strong balance sheets there's no need to cut back on our lending practices. The same goes for O/Os. As long as they've been keeping up with their payment requirements, we have no reason to alter our standard practices," says Loveless.

Still, repossession rates have been higher of late, Loveless admits. "But it's the same situation as in the 2000s, where the industry hit a bump in the road. Our activities are not out of the norm for a cyclical type of business such as trucking."

When it comes to O/Os, Daimler Financial assesses each operator according to his or her own merits, says Loveless.

"We're typically not into lending for a high-risk deal," says Loveless. "We don't typically charge a higher rate or ask for a larger down payment in order to be able put a deal together." That said, Loveless says he's seen the O/O market shrink in Canada. "The customers we're seeing have come through tough times, weathered the storm and are still a

fairly good risk."

The issue is still overcapacity, he adds. "Sales are down and that's because of excess capacity that still exists today. It's also resulted in smaller companies being shuffled out of the business. There's just not the demand to support them."

Indeed, the Ontario Trucking Association reported at the end of last year that 34% of carriers suffered freight volume losses of 20% or more in 2009. And as far as purchasing equipment goes, OTA reports 64% of fleets say they will not change their net number of tractors or trailers, while 26% say they'll add tractors and 29% say they'll be buying trailers. OTA says those numbers are improvements over previous surveys.

Still, some lenders are already looking forward to the recovery. Multiple mergers may be just around the corner as the economy picks up and capacity starts to diminish, points out Elian Turner, director of investment banking for Scotia Capital.

"What people don't realize is that through 2009, banks were in contraction mode, but now that they've done their housekeeping, they're looking to grow their assets and lending books. Banks are looking for good companies to invest in and there is no reason to preclude trucking when it comes to mergers and acquisitions." Still, Turner admits he is not yet seeing many new deals

coming up in the trucking sector.

"Clearly, there is still a capacity issue," says Turner. "But things are getting better. While many carriers were parking trucks during the last 12 or 15 months, we haven't seen as many bankruptcies as had been envisioned of late. But there still isn't any reason for people to purchase new equipment when it comes to general freight."

But Turner expects to see an earlier recovery in some areas of the industry, specifically by carriers who've weathered the storm and are looking to ride the next wave.

"We will start seeing a greater meeting of minds between buyers and sellers, a number of owners of businesses probably realize they've left a lot of value on the table," says Turner.

"We had tremendous value creation over the last decade with companies benefiting from strong volumes and strong rates. Earnings were high and so were valuations because private equity firms had money invested in the income trust sector. A lot of owners who consolidated and held during the last 12 months are now asking themselves how long it will be until they return to those potential peak valuations? They're asking themselves what their earnings will have to look like?"

Mergers and acquisitions in the trucking industry certainly haven't been happening in the last 12

months and won't be happening anytime soon, says Turner. But Turner is still looking forward to the next upswing, where he expects a renewed confidence for buyers and financiers alike.

In the meantime, here's what you can do to get credit now:

- 1) Diversify your sources to mitigate risk and benefit from the specialization and/or expertise of your lender.
- 2) Know what your needs are for the year, and on a quarterly basis.
- 3) Sit down with your financial partners early on to discuss your financing needs and set up a pre-approved line of credit.
- 4) Reassess your needs on a quarterly basis.
- 5) Stay in communication with your financial partners and don't hesitate to ask them about financial solutions.
- 6) Have a business plan and discuss it, along with your financing needs, with your financial partner.
- 7) Tell your lender about your projections and your results.
- 8) Show how trends in your operations indicate that you have control over your operations and you have an understanding of the business environment you are operating in.
- 9) Be proactive.
- 10) Always have your financial statements in order and auditable if not already audited. □

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Inform - Educate - Entertain

Feature

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – There’s a storm of controversy brewing over the declaration that the long-nose traditional-styled truck has reached the end of its usefulness and will soon be put out to pasture.

The notion was first declared by outspoken Navistar exec Jim Hebe at the Technology and Maintenance Council meetings in February.

“We’re in a whole new world today,” he said during a keynote address. Noting that classic-styled long-nose Class 8 tractors have decreased in market share from 25% in 2000 to just 5.8% today, Hebe said it’s a trend that won’t be reversed.

“It ain’t coming back. That truck is going to be rather unique on the highway,” he said, suggesting that traditional buyers of the equipment will have trouble getting financing.

The theme was revived at this year’s Mid-America Trucking Show. In an interview with *Truck News*, Mark Lampert, senior vice-president of sales and marketing with Daimler Trucks North America said he agrees the owner/operator is going through a transitional phase and will shy away from traditional-styled trucks.

“I think a lot of people are calling the owner/operator dead. We fundamentally do not believe that. What we do believe is the owner/operator is going through a transition,” Lampert explained.

“We would formerly describe him very generically as a guy who bought a set-forward axle with a big sleeper – that’s not an owner/operator today. An O/O today is buying a much more aerodynamic truck, he’s much more business-oriented, much more fuel-economy sensitized – he may be running day cabs in heavy haul applications. I totally believe you’ll see a heckuva lot fewer set-forward axle, 600 hp, raised roof sleeper configurations than you ever have in the past, but I’d say the owner/operator is going through a change, buying different equipment than he would buy five years ago.”

Interesting comments coming from a truck maker whose stable includes Western Star – a brand that builds this type of truck exclusively.

Also participating in that interview was Elmar Boeckenhoff, DTNA’s senior vice-president, engineering and technology and he too had opinions on the future of long-nose conventional tractors. Responding to Hebe’s remarks at TMC, Boeckenhoff said “He will probably not dare to say that again over there in the parking lot where all these long and tall guys meet.”

Boeckenhoff went on to say: “There’s some tradition, some heritage that we have to take seriously, because there’s some soul in a truck that’s not only a machine for operating, but there’s a driver who has to identify himself with that truck.”

He continued: “Long and tall, from my perspective, will stay in this market, although it will change. It will not be a dinosaur that’s extinct by 2015. There’s no reason long and tall can’t be intelligent and fuel-efficient as well. And long

Long and tall dead and gone?

Not so fast, traditional-styled truck enthusiasts counter

and tall can also be predictive, can also be innovative. Long and tall is an answer to a market need and nothing an OEM imposes on a customer base. The answer is not with us, it’s with the customers who will or will not buy these trucks.”

To explore the issue further, our WebTV show *Transportation Matters* caught up with Hebe and with the camera rolling and in the midst of an owner/operator-packed crowd, he stood by his TMC position without so much as casting a glance over his shoulder. When asked why long-nose traditional-styled trucks have reached the end of their usefulness, he said: “Firstly, they’re pretty expensive, the days of going out and spending \$20,000-\$30,000 more just to have a long hood is just not in the cards. Secondly, the fuel economy difference between a traditional square-nosed conventional and what you can do with a ProStar or an aerodynamic product from one of our competitors is so substantially different from a cost-per-mile, that there’s just not the revenue there (to justify it). At the end of the day, if it makes good sense for a major fleet to be running an aerodynamic product then (it makes sense for an) owner/operator too.”

Hebe also pointed out the International LoneStar offers the best of both worlds, a classic-styled appearance that’s fuel-efficient too. Lou Smyrlis, in his April editorial in *Truck News*, sided with Hebe in the great debate and also declared that long and tall was nearing the end of its reign.

“To be honest, the only thing I find shocking about Hebe’s comments is that it has taken this long to come to this conclusion,” Smyrlis wrote. He pointed out long-nose conventional tractors are diesel-

guzzlers and that using them to attract and retain drivers does little more than attract the wrong type of driver – those who prefer chrome over fuel-efficiency.

“The long-nose conventional has been an icon in our industry for decades. But its time has come and gone. It may have taken the outspoken Hebe to say it; but I think most people in this industry can agree with it.”

Well, that prompted some rather passionate responses from readers who argued it’s too early to be writing the death certificate for long-nose conventional tractors.

“So now you’re onto hating long-nose conventionals?” blasted reader Jeff Long of Ingersoll, Ont. “Why don’t you just admit you hate trucking period? Just when our industry and professional drivers have been kicked down from a recession and more government interference than ever before, we pick up the *Truck News* and have to read about

another possible setback.”

And another reader weighed in with a defense of his own. “Only a truck driver could tell you the pride he feels when he’s behind the wheel of a beautifully-polished long-nose Pete, Kenworth or Freightliner,” wrote Dave Neubuhr. “You are more than willing to put in the extra effort to keep that truck looking that way when you hear the responses of the other drivers telling you how nice that truck is, or the adoration of your boss for keeping his equipment looking top notch. There will always be a market, and yes I agree it’s shrinking, for drivers who want to drive long-nose trucks.”

So with the lines clearly drawn in the sand, *Truck News* decided to take to the street, er, truck stop to get some more driver opinions. You can read them in Adam Ledlow’s Truck Stop Question on pg. 62, but perhaps the strongest comment came from Pete 379 owner Kevin Wilkins.

“I have no intentions of running a slippery truck ever,” he said. “I will rebuild my Peterbilt 100 times before I’ll buy a truck like that.”

So there you have it. As long as there are drivers like that out there, the long-nose conventional still has a pulse. □

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Embracing the future

Mastering the fine art of truck maintenance is like chasing a constantly moving target. One year it's a new set of emissions controls and all the related electronics. The next it's a matter of getting up to speed on repairing and maintaining the latest fuel-saving equipment.

You'd be hard-pressed to find another line of work in which the need for continuous learning is so essential. Continuously upgrading your skills is not an option for the heavy truck technician, but a requirement.

This year's Report on Maintenance focuses on several changes coming down the pike for maintenance managers and truck operators.

An example of an emerging issue for technicians is the cleaning requirement for diesel particulate filters (DPFs). These filters have been a fairly low-maintenance item since they burst onto the scene in 2007. Now, they're coming due for their first cleanings and the results may not be pretty.

Early findings from one of the first fleets in Canada to invest in the cleaning equipment and begin pulling filters are showing some causes for concern. Cracks have been discovered on the cores of many of the filters. Just another problem needing a solution in the shop.

Maintenance managers and technicians are a special breed. You better enjoy a good challenge – otherwise, you're in the wrong line of work.

I wouldn't last one day in a shop environment without putting a wrench through something expensive.

Another change in the shop I've noticed over the past 10 years is the typical technician is no longer, well, typical. As a shortage of technicians continues to plague the trucking industry, talented people from all walks of life are stepping up to fill the void.

We came across the bright young lady on the cover of this section during a recent visit to Bison Transport's Mississauga shop.

We were there to shoot some video and take some stock photos when we met Josephine Park, a licensed heavy truck and coach technician who graduated from Volvo's prestigious Modified Apprenticeship Program (MAP). Park has a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree as well, and then decided on a career as a heavy truck technician. She and others like her represent the future of the business.

At times, it's hard to believe just how fast things are moving. But it isn't boring, is it? Welcome change and embrace the future and your work will always be gratifying, never boring. The same can be said of any work environment but nowhere does it hold more true than in the shop.

- James Menzies

REPORT ON

Maintenance

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Enhancing energy

Coconut shells, lithium batteries and accumulators all playing a role in energy storage

By John G. Smith

Who would have ever believed that Gilligan's Island could teach us lessons in engineering? The "professor" on the 1960s sitcom seemed to use coconuts to build everything shy of a boat for his fellow castaways. Now modern engineers are using coconut shells to create ultracapacitors, which are expected to play a key role in the development of energy storage systems for hybrid vehicles.

It is no garden-variety coconut shell, says Brendan Andrews of Maxwell Technologies, which makes energy storage and power delivery systems. Most of those with the required characteristics are harvested in an area close to the equator, generating activated carbon that is eventually rolled and formed into sheets.

"We put it into modules, and these modules have the higher energy density and the higher voltages," he says, referring to the can-shaped ultracapacitors that are anywhere from two inches in diameter to the size of a Coke can.

While a battery is used to store energy and can offer long-term voltage stability, an ultracapacitor can support short-term bursts of high power that are needed for tasks such as starting a vehicle or operating the tools on a utility truck. Think of the flow of energy like water escaping from a bucket. If you had a traditional battery, the water would escape from a hole as big as a nail. In a system that incorporates an ultracapacitor, the water could escape through a hole as wide as a basketball.

They are components that will be particularly important in the evolution of heavy-duty hybrid vehicles. An electric car may deal with 30 starts and stops per charge, but its heavy-duty counterpart will need to do that 750 times. And while a car may need 30 kW of peak power, a transit bus might need 200kW.

Refuse vehicles present a perfect application for ultracapacitors, says Rob Delcore, ISE Corporation's director of business development, energy storage systems. The components' high discharge rate makes it possible to launch away from a curb more quickly, without generating as much heat as a device that offers

more resistance. "If your application requires a huge amount of power, ultracapacitors are it," he says.

"You can almost think of an ultracapacitor as something that can accept a lightning bolt," Delcore adds, referring to the high charging rate. And while a lead battery can typically offer 3,000 load cycles, an ultracapacitor can be discharged millions of times.

Systems that blend batteries and ultracapacitors will extend the life of the batteries that like to be discharged gradually, and allow for energy storage systems to be downsized. "It's a really exciting concept," he says.

These components are hardly the tools of Star Trek. "This is proven technology," Andrews says. The ultracapacitors are already being used to increase the cranking power of more than 1,000 buses in service in Asia, the US and Europe. He also referred to the prototype of a 16.2-volt truck starter system has been able to start a 12-litre diesel engine six times on a single charge.

If anything, the ultracapacitors will be crucial to increasing the life of lithium ion batteries that the US Secretary of Energy has suggested will be vital to the future of hybrid vehicles.

The use of lithium batteries will be growing substantially with the introduction of vehicles like the Chevy Volt, says Kevin Snow, chief engineer for hydraulic application development at Eaton. But significant improvements in power density are probably at least eight years away.

Unlike lead acid batteries, the resulting hybrid technologies will need to be part of a larger system that is fully integrated into the chassis, Snow adds.

While lithium ion batteries can be safe, their temperatures need to be controlled to protect performance and the life of the battery itself. As energy storage needs increase, ultracapacitor modules might best be ganged together in a junction box that contains everything from relays to fuses and sensors.

Still, batteries are not the only tools being used to store energy in hybrid vehicles. Another form of hybrid technology has come

in the form of accumulators that have been incorporated into refuse trucks and delivery vehicles used by UPS and FedEx.

Accumulators come in a variety of forms. Some store the energy from a battery, hydraulic accumulators store the potential energy in a fluid, and hydro-pneumatic designs store energy in the form of compressed gas within a fluid container such as a piston or bladder.

Pressurized accumulators made of composite materials were first used in NASA's rocket casings, and moved into commercial applications as an option when making storage tanks for compressed natural gas, says Rafeal Toledo, an applications engineer with Parker Hannifin's hydraulic accumulator division.

It is the type of advancement that supports the use of accumulators in the weight-conscious environment of a vehicle. Parker Hannifin's Runwise system weighs 20% as much as a steel counterpart, can be stored in tighter spaces, and resists corrosion. A 20 US gallon composite model – seen as a typical size for a one-way system – weighs 250 lbs, compared to a 25 US gallon steel version that weighs 1,250 lbs. It can also be charged and dissipated very quickly.

An added advantage is that hydro-pneumatic accumulator bladders can be easily repaired. But they do require care. The high pressures in most applications will require some attention to sizing and handling. For example, those working with bladder-style versions need to add the first 50 psi slowly until the bladder expands within the shell.

"These systems are out there today," adds Guy Rini, chairman of the Technology and Maintenance Council task force looking at hybrid technologies. Three Tier 1 suppliers are working with hybrid hydraulic systems while there are more than a dozen working with hybrid electric systems. "On the capacitor, side I know of three systems that are on the road," he adds.

With all the energy being directed into hybrid vehicle development, there are likely more to come. ■





Electronic evolution

Added sensors, quicker links and new ideas continue to extend the reach of vehicle electronics

By John G. Smith

Engineers are usually dreaming up ways to protect sensors and their connectors from the forces of vibration. But near the end of a Technology and Maintenance Council presentation about vehicle electronics, Paul Menig mused about the way these forces could be captured and put to work.

"Imagine a little sensor with a springboard going up and down," said the Daimler Trucks North America's chief engineer, mechatronics, describing the piezoelectric devices that are emerging in laboratory settings. "You can actually create enough electricity to sense something and send it out wirelessly."

Within one or two decades, vehicle sensors may not require wires at all.

As far-fetched as that may sound, the electronics in a modern truck have evolved at a staggering rate, particularly in the face of tightening emission rules. Kevin Otto, the director of service for Cummins Emissions Solutions, points out the number of sensors and actuators when describing the change. One engine built in 1992 included a mere six sensors and seven actuators. This year, you can find a series of 28 sensors and 15 actuators on an engine block, and some of these actuators even incorporate sensors of their own to help manage different activities.

"The amount of information about the engine has become just staggering," he said.

In relative terms, it has been a rapid evolution. Electronics didn't make their first real push into heavy-duty trucks until 1987, when electronic unit injectors began to deliver their precise shots of fuel in the name of improving fuel economy. All heavy-duty engines were not electronic until 1994, and all medium-duty models followed suit in 1998.

New applications for every packet of data emerged along the way. Integrated instrument clusters emerged in the mid-1990s, anti-lock brakes became a reality in 1997, and by the end of the decade, transmission suppliers were starting to incorporate electronics of their own. In addition to simply monitoring factors such as oil pressure and coolant temperature, electronics allowed engine activities to be changed – limiting idle time, managing shifts, and controlling the actions of accessories as varied as fans and brakes.

The Technology and Maintenance Council itself played a role in helping to ensure that the electronic components could speak to each other.

"This organization came up with the j1708/1587 data link as long ago as the 1980s in anticipation of all those computers," said Menig. "Now people started taking advantage of the data." Once the j1939 standard was introduced, engines and transmissions were able to share information, and the technology opened the door to support traction control.

In some cases, economics were the only factors to slow a related change. Mechanics who replaced

electronics of their own, from ABS equipment to automatic traction control. Six-channel sensor and control valves emerged, giving every wheel a sensor. "Then not only could we turn air off, but we could turn air on," Lindley added. And the Power Line Carrier (PLC) standard governing the pigtail between trucks and trailers made it possible to introduce anti-lock brakes on trailers, and set the stage for stability controls that track the position of steering wheels, yaw rate and G-forces.

"If it physically senses the vehicle doing one thing but the driver is doing something else with a steering wheel, there must be an

things that could happen."

"What drives the future? It's driven by trying to get more of some things, less of other things," Menig suggests. Regulators defined by almost every letter in the alphabet – EPA, CARB, NHTSA, NTSB and OSHA – all have rules that could be addressed through electronics. For example, Japan already requires vehicles to have collision warning systems with automatic braking, Europe is about to embrace it, and North American trucks are expected to follow suit.

Requirements for Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems still exist, he adds. "They just haven't figured out a way to do it."

"The biggest thing I see out there is carbon footprint regulations," Menig said during another presentation. "In Europe, there is a goal called Vision 2020 which is trying to reduce the carbon footprint of vehicles by 20% by 2020." One of the unknown issues is whether the target will be based on 2005 or 2007 figures. And he also expects electrically-powered systems for coolers and condensers, and waste heat recovery.

Every change will also require added training at a shop level.

"You really must follow the OEM recommendations," Lindley says. "There are no generics on this. You really need to follow the book."

This year alone, smart devices that have traditionally talked over the older j1587 databus are migrating to the quicker j1939 standard. "You're not going to get all the engine information you used to get," Menig says, noting how diagnostics will be affected. In the newest vehicles, however, a central gateway will be used to collect messages from the j1939 bus and put them on the j1587 datalink.

And he expects more in the way of dedicated links for gauges, or from one engine control to the next, some of which will run at baud rates that are 50 to 100 times faster than the data links being replaced.

"There are lots of ideas about what the future holds," he adds, asking for a quick show of hands from people in the audience who own noise-canceling headphones. (Plenty of hands went up throughout the crowd).

An option such as a vibration cancelling seat is not too far-fetched, he suggested.

The electronic evolution shows no sign of stopping. ■



The electronic evolution has paved the way for stability control systems that continuously read data such as steering wheel position and G-forces.

signal flashers every few months would likely have embraced solid state versions of the devices as early as possible, but they didn't really emerge until 2003 because of costs. (The first solid state designs cost \$35 while traditional designs only cost \$2.35, Menig notes).

The electronic evolution has also played a key role in the introduction of safety systems such as the air bags in truck cabs, noted Vince Lindley of Volvo Trucks North America.

"The physics of a truck collision are much different than what you see in a car," he explains. A sensor in the control module is mounted in the bulkhead close to the driver's right knee. "We're interested in what the driver is feeling," he says. Rather than watching for a quick spike in G force, the software monitors deceleration over a period of time.

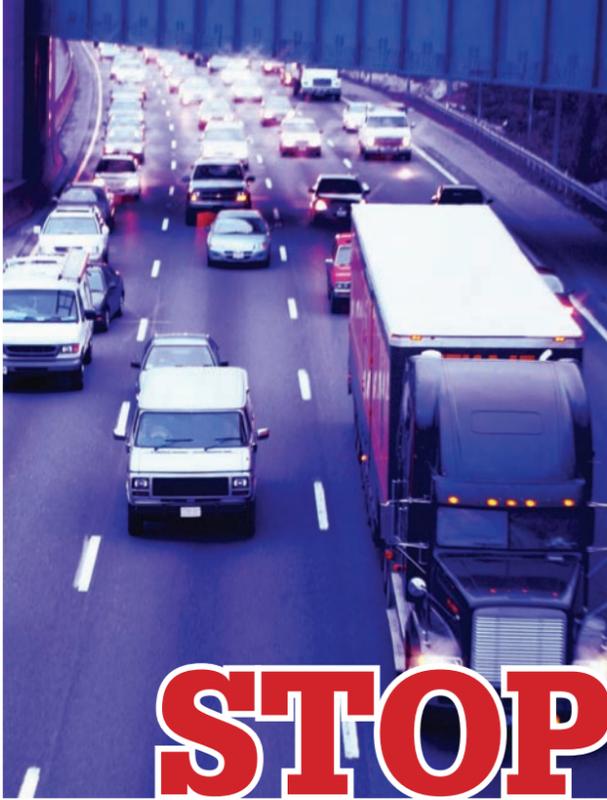
Other safety systems introduced

event," Lindley explains. "These systems can de-throttle the engine, they can apply brakes as necessary, they can also release brakes if necessary ... This will become a mandatory requirement in the very, very near future."

Collision avoidance systems that began with a radar-generated warning and evolved into adaptive cruise control even show the promise of proactive braking and engine de-rating to avoid collisions.

"Active proactive braking will actually be on the throttle as well as cruise control," Lindley adds. "People have already figured out how to use it."

Electronics will likely play a larger role to come, Otto agrees, referring to the potential of the widespread use of variable valve timing or Homogeneous Charge Compression Ignition to reduce the amount of NOx from a combustion event. "There are a lot of



STOPPING POWER

As the industry prepares to build new tractors that can stop more quickly than ever, it can also expect rules to govern trucks after they are put in service

By John G. Smith

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has left no doubt about the fact that the stopping distances for trucks need to change. Today's unloaded tractors are designed to stop from speeds of 60 mph within 335 ft.. In August 2013, that allowable limit will shrink to 235 ft.. Their loaded counterparts that once had to stop within 355 ft. will need to do the job somewhere between 250 and 310 ft., depending on the number of axles and Gross Vehicle Weight Ratings.

The interest in altering brake performance is a matter of saving lives. While large trucks are involved in fewer fatal crashes per 100 million vehicle miles in the US, they continue to account for about 13% of all fatal crashes. When NHTSA unveiled its rule, it suggested that the shift to shorter stopping distances will save 227 lives, 300 serious injuries and US\$169 million in property damage per year.

The question that remains is how truck makers will meet the new requirements.

"Right now the OEMs don't really have a game plan," Jeff Spitzer of Eaton said during a presentation at this year's Technology and Maintenance Council meetings. "They don't have a full understanding of what the parts manufacturers are going to do."

Stopping distances can be met by using additional friction material, more aggressive linings or air disc brakes, but it is still unknown which will become the most popular options.

"What will the fleet do? That's the question," said Mike Colaccino, commercial vehicle safety manager at TMD Friction. "The options are there and they are many."

The changes will largely influence brakes at the front of the truck. A brand new tractor will place a static load of about 12,000 lbs on the steer axle, but the loading and extra torque during a stop will increase that load up to 34,000 lbs as the axles to the rear begin to lift, said Jim Clark of Vehicle Brake System Con-

sulting. The 15-inch brakes on a typical steer axle simply do not produce enough torque to stop the vehicle in time.

"It's only when you come to the panic stop where you get the tremendous surge to the steer axle," he added, noting how a heavy truck experiences about one panic stop a month. Engineers need to focus on the changes that will address these situations. "And any time you change anything, something is going to come up and bite your butt."

The engineering challenges can certainly have an effect on experiences at the fleet level. "The vehicle will feel more aggressive. The drivers might be more sen-

sitive to that," Clark said. The added torque could also present some potential maintenance challenges such as premature tire wear or suspension damage.

"We think we can stop the truck and still not cause an unacceptable amount of degradation to the drum," Colaccino observed, referring to one potential issue. Fleet tests over the next year will be measuring noise, lining and drum life in real world settings to address potential challenges just like that. But suppliers will also want to ensure their products do better than NHTSA's absolute minimums. "Brake manufacturers are requiring an additional margin of 10%, making the real distance 225 ft.," he added.

Future regulations

Nobody knows exactly what NHTSA will eventually require in terms of stopping distances for

trucks that are already in service, but panelists at the recent meeting of the Technology and Maintenance Council expect some sort of change in this regard as well. Research by Battelle Memorial Institute shows why these regulations might be justified. Of 23 randomly selected trucks tested in New Mexico, 13 did not meet the minimum stopping distance requirement of 40 ft. from a speed of 20 mph. Of those 13, three failed under the watch of the Performance Based Brake Tester (PBBTs), and only two were taken out of service after a visual inspection.

"The visual inspections really don't tell you how that vehicle is

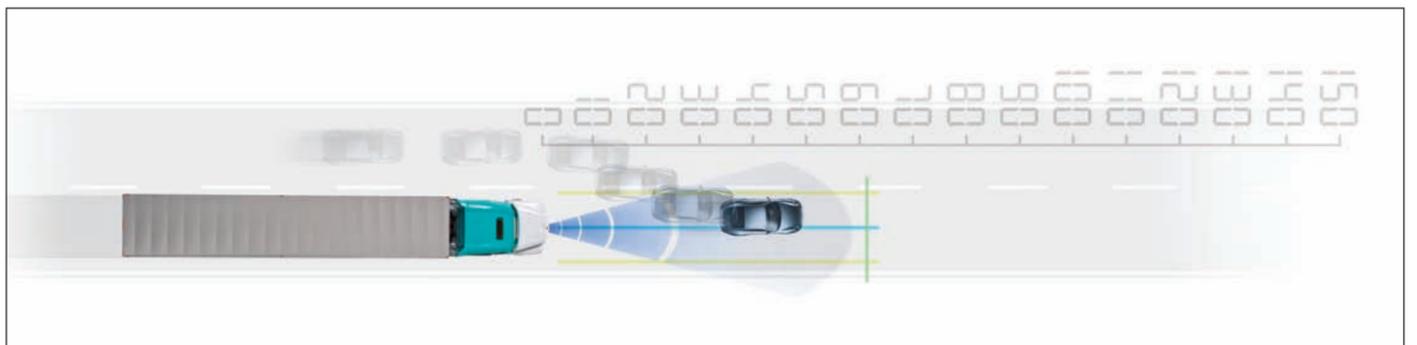
nents. "You want to be more sensitized to your OEM brakes and make sure the stopping capabilities are maintained," Clark said.

Of course, the regulations that affect vehicle stopping characteristics may not end there.

Rear-end crashes accounted for about 20% of all heavy truck crashes in 2004, and the heavy vehicles hit the vehicle ahead of them in 60% of these cases. In 26% of cases, the lead vehicle had stopped, while 14.5% were decelerating and 13.3% were moving at a constant speed.

There are technologies that could make a difference here.

An autonomous cruise control, intelligent cruise control,



Collision warning systems such as Meritor Wabco's OnGuard can help reduce the risk of rear-end collisions, which account for about 20% of heavy truck crashes.

going to stop," Clark noted, referring to the limits of measuring push rod travel.

While there are in-service requirements for stopping distances, they are virtually never enforced by NHTSA, Clark says. But they could be measured with roller dynamometers or other PBBTs.

It is easy to see why there is an interest in regulations governing trucks that are in service. While today's standards govern trucks rolling out of the factory, there are no standards governing the quality of aftermarket brake linings. Colaccino may be understating the issue when he suggests some offshore suppliers have "not fared very well" in terms of performance.

The question is how the stopping distance would change if the equipment is fitted with a lower quality of aftermarket compo-

or active cruise with braking can automatically accelerate or slow a vehicle. Other options including a collision warning system could warn a distracted driver to take action.

A third form of technology comes in a variety of names such as a collision mitigation, dynamic brake assist or automatic brake application.

"This is one where there is a lot of confusion," says Mark Melletat of Meritor Wabco. "This function is on regardless of whether there is cruise control or not." But it does not activate until the moment there is an imminent collision.

Most of the studies on these systems have been limited to light vehicles, but research is underway to test their use in heavy-duty counterparts.

Everyone continues to look for the combinations that will offer the best possible stopping power. ■

Talk it out

Fleets, service providers continue to stress importance of better communication

By John G. Smith

It seems trite to suggest that many of the arguments between fleets and service providers could be addressed through some improved communication, but it is a theme that emerged time and again during a panel discussion hosted by the Technology and Maintenance Council.

The need for a better definition of "shop supplies" offered a clear example of some common challenges that exist.

"What is a shop supply? Is it a doughnut?" asked Paul Wion, corporate fleet supervisor for Lewis Tree Service, a fleet with 4,200 assets. The comment generated a few chuckles from the crowd, but other fleet representatives quickly echoed similar thoughts. There certainly tended to be wide differences in the charges, whether they involve flat fees or calculations based on a fixed percentage of the invoice.

Wayne Corron, road rescue manager for PAM Transport, suggested he's been particularly baffled by miscellaneous shop charges that appear on what should be a labour-only invoice. He wants to see details about all the bolts, nuts and washers that are used.

But fleets have to realize that shop supplies such as those to clean parts are very real, added Chip Huber of Q Fix Truck Service, referring to the figure that he calculates as 4% of the parts costs.

It was just one example of the issues that can emerge when communication falters.

In some cases, communication issues are being addressed by leveraging technology. If the request for a repair on a Waste Management truck is not addressed within 24 hours, for example, e-mails are automatically generated to service representatives, dealers and anyone else who is involved in the job.

"Every fleet out there has their own preferred (communication) method and every service centre out there has their own preferred method," says Gary Cummings, executive vice-president and COO of FleetNet America, which coordinates roadside service and maintenance management services for 500,000 vehicles. But e-mail itself may not solve a problem because the information still needs to be collected in one place.

"We use a portal system to interface with customers. (It) sends estimates to fleet people and it's a quicker response time, which keeps the technician on the truck," says Jim Pennington, service manager at Truck Centers in St. Louis, Mo. That can be a particularly important step in the process. If the mechanic is pulled away from the job, it could set back a repair by eight to 24 hours, he adds.

Some of the tools will be decidedly low-tech. "A telephone call (to pre-approve diagnostic work) is generally right to you, whereas an e-mail can sit in the queue and wait and wait and wait," says Wion.

Corron ensures that there is always staff on duty that can authorize repairs without making yet another phone call. The only challenges seem to emerge if the final dollar figures are higher than an initial estimate. "If it's within reason, you know we're going to pay it and go on," he says.

Still, one of the greatest frustrations of all continues to surround the variations in cost that can take place on the road.

"We've had incidences where we've had a breakdown on the road and we've had to pre-pay," Wion says. "They took advantage of that situation ... are you really getting what

you paid for? That's what you tend to think about."

"We, as dealers, typically don't treat other dealers very well when it comes to a rework situation," Pennington agrees. "You've got the dealers out there who think their way to make a profit is through another dealer's woes."

Some of the issues will be addressed as more service networks move toward national pricing, establishing predictable standards, suggested Dick Hyatt, president of Decisiv Inc., which has a Web portal that connects fleet managers and service locations.

Still, shops agreed they were frustrated by the nature of some of the negotiations that can emerge. Huber, for example, is discouraged by the number of disputes over credit card charges. "There is a lot of consumer cardholder protection, but as far as merchant protection there is very little ... many times the cardholder doesn't even respond." The most vulnerable transactions of all are those completed without a credit card in hand, he adds. Negotiations are also a two-way street, Pennington says.

"You may want to fire that small fleet that may want to beat you up (on price) no matter what." ■



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Gearing up for 2010:

SCR technology requires no major changes for engine oils, manufacturers say

By Julia Kuzeljvich

On-highway diesel engines using selective catalytic reduction (SCR) to meet EPA2010 emissions standards will not require a new grade of engine oil, suppliers say.

For most North American OEMs, according to oil experts, there will be no difference in lubricant needs for SCR, which works by mixing diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) with engine exhaust. This then flows through an SCR catalyst and reacts to form nitrogen and water vapour. DEF consumption will depend on the engine manufacturer, but expectations are that it can be about 1-3% of the diesel fuel consumed.

According to the Diesel Technology Forum (www.dieselforum.org), SCR technology can reduce NOx emissions up to 90%, hydrocarbon and CO2 emissions by 50-90%, and particulate matter (PM) emissions by 30-50%, a win-win for both the trucking business and the environment.

By all accounts, the American Petroleum Institute-designated CJ-4 group of oils, which were formulated for the demands of EPA07 engines with exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) technology and diesel particulate filters (DPFs), should also be suitable for all 2010 engines.

"The recently launched CJ-4 category seems to be performing quite well in the EPA07 engines and is expected to do the same for the new 2010 engines. No new oil specification has been generated for the needs of the 2010 engines," said Allan Murray, category manager for automotive/commercial and industrial engines at Petro-Canada Lubricants.

"Generally, the new CJ-4 products have been well-received by mixed fleets as this new spec' is back serviceable. However, the use of lubricants that do not meet the CJ-4 specification would not be recommended for the 2007 engines and newer," he said.

Dan Arcy, OEM technical manager for Shell Global Solutions (Shell Lubricants), said that while there are two different technologies in the post-2010 engine market, existing oils will work with both.

"Navistar is the one outlier using advanced EGR, which is basically higher levels of exhaust gas recirculation. Everyone else is going with SCR. In both cases though, the recommended oils will be the CJ4, API-recommended oils. I've been in the business over 20 years, working with heavy-duty engine oils. For 2010, this is the first time that oil hasn't had to change to lubricate the new engines. So in one sense one of the real benefits is not having to worry about changing engine oils for the 2010 trucks. These oils are also backwards-compatible, and can be used on 2007 and

earlier engines," said Arcy.

The CJ-4 engine oils came out in 2006 with improvements in wear and deposit control, and restrictions on the amount of sulphated ash that accumulated in the particulate filters when the oil is burned off. The OEMs asked for limits to this sulphated ash, noted Arcy.

"Our tests have shown that SCR does not add any new requirements as far as oil properties are concerned," said Gary M. Parsons, global OEM and industry liaison manager with Chevron Oronite Company (which develops, manufactures, and markets fuel and lubricant additives). "In fact, SCR is less restrictive than DPFs are. DPFs require low SAPS (Sulphated Ash, Phosphorous, and Sulphur) oils to prevent premature plugging due to ash-forming components,"

Drain intervals, DEF and fuel economy

For 2010 engines, required drain intervals will depend, as they usually do, on a variety of factors relative to the fleet's operations, such as OEM recommendations, how much fuel is consumed, and the quality of the oil.

Parsons noted the use of SCR systems allows the OEMs to modify their combustion strategies to optimize their engines for fuel economy and "allow more engine-out NOx knowing the SCR system will take care of the NOx reduction in the exhaust aftertreatment system."

"In those cases, EGR rates will be reduced from 2007 levels which may allow for extended drains," he said. "Lower EGR rates should reduce soot loading, operating temperatures, and acid formation. All of those should lead to directionally longer drain intervals. However, operators do need to employ used oil analysis because nitration may become more of an issue than in the past. Nitration leads to nitric acids which will deplete the total base number (TBN) of the oil," said Parsons.

Parsons noted that he has not heard of any specific scepticism regarding oil technology.

"The SCR/DEF OEMs are all recommending 35,000 to 60,000 mile drain intervals. Navistar, which is using 'optimized EGR' has recommended 25,000 mile drains," said Parsons.

Shell's Arcy said engine oil can also contribute to improved fuel economy with new or existing engines.

"With fuel pricing starting to inch up a little bit, fuel economy is definitely a topic of conversation. We see some of the OEMs starting to lean in that direction. From an oil standpoint, we can improve fuel economy with synthetics or semi-synthetics in

the engine. Most are already using them in the driveline," said Arcy.

"We have seen a 1.6% reduction in fuel use using a 10W30 in the engine. Some of these little numbers do add up. We see this as a trend. Volvo is factory filling with 10W30 right now. The synthetics offer better cold starting, and it is worth checking for fleets if this may be an option," he added.

Fleets and owner/operators running APUs may also want to consider a 5W40 synthetic oil, Arcy noted, "because if the truck is going back and forth from a northern climate and then heading south, the engine on the APU must be able to start in extreme climates. Synthetics were designed to protect under extreme conditions, both extreme hot and extreme cold."

With regard to diesel exhaust fluid and access to refills, fleets will have to decide the approach that works best for them, said Arcy.

"The fleets will have to decide whether they will top it up at the fleet's terminal or have them top up on the road. It will mean extra equipment.

"If they're terminalling it, they're going to have to have it somewhere warm because diesel exhaust fluid will freeze. Those are things they are going to want to talk about with their supplier," he said.

Are fleets prepared for 2010?

Increases in truck prices in both 2007 and 2010 related to more stringent exhaust emissions standards have made fleets aware of the extra equipment on the trucks.

"I believe that learnings from the EPA07 engine introductions were not lost on the 2010 engine introductions," noted Murray.

"From what we have heard, the diesel particulate filters have proven to be very durable and most fleets have not accumulated enough mileage since 2007 to require a removal and cleaning of the DPF ash yet," said Parsons.

He noted that the move away from APICI-4PLUS to APICJ-4 was slow to begin with for a couple of reasons. "First, the number of post-2007 trucks in the fleet requiring API CJ-4 oil is relatively small, especially with the drop in new truck sales due to the downturn in the economy. The fleets have had good success with API CI-4 PLUS oils in the pre-2007 trucks and have little incentive to change to API CJ-4 until an appreciable number of post 2007 trucks are in the fleet. Second, until the start of 2010, the off-highway market is still allowed the use of low-sulfur diesel fuel (up to 500 ppm sulfur). API CI-4 Plus has a higher TBN and is better formulated to neutralize the higher levels of crankcase acids formed due to higher fuel sulfur levels."

However, the switch to CJ-4 oils is gaining momentum, Parsons noted.

"Beginning in 2010, all diesel fuel has to be ultra low-sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD = 15 ppm sulfur maximum). Now that all the diesel fuel is ULSD, many of the on- and off-highway fleets can and will switch to API CJ-4 oils. In addition, many of the major lubricant marketers have discontinued the widespread availability of API CI-4 Plus oils in favor of API CJ-4 oils," said Parsons.

With regard to any scepticism about the emergence and adoption of the 2010 engines, Parsons said that with additional costs announced by the OEMs for 2010 trucks (about US\$8,000-\$10,000 more than equivalent 2007 trucks), and with the slowdown in the economy and financing still difficult in some areas, purchasing new trucks is difficult.

"It remains to be seen if the diesel exhaust fluid infrastructure will be an issue for early adopters, but that is a concern. The OEMs such as Volvo, Daimler, and Cummins are all advertising up to 5% fuel economy gains of 2010 trucks versus 2007 trucks. That's exciting to the fleets and will become an even bigger factor if fuel prices rise," he said. ■

Want more info?

Check out the following Web sites for more information on your 2010 oil and lube requirements:

Castrol: www.castroltectionextra.com

Chevron: www.deloperformance.com

Imperial Oil: www.imperialoil.ca

Petro-Canada: www.lubricants.petro-canada.ca

Shell: www.shell.ca/rotella

Total Lubricants: www.total-lubricants.ca

A DPF dilemma

By James Menzies

Fleets running post-2007 model year trucks will soon need to develop a diesel particulate filter (DPF) cleaning program. While the DPFs, found on all truck makes since 2007, have thus far exceeded EPA requirements for longevity, some fleets are beginning to pull the first of those filters for cleaning and are making some alarming discoveries in the process.

After exploring the various options for having its DPFs cleaned, Bison Transport opted to invest in the necessary equipment and do its filter cleaning in-house. It's no small investment, with each of the company's three FSX DPF cleaning machines costing about \$80,000.

However, what's more upsetting than the cost of the equipment, as far as director of fleet assets Itamar Levine is concerned, is the potential costs of replacing the significant number of cracked filters the company has discovered. So far, Levine said about one-third of the DPFs pulled off Bison trucks have had hairline cracking along the filter core, Levine said. He's frustrated that the filters are no longer covered by warranty and the

OEMs seem to have no answers as to what caused the cracking. Levine is confident the cracking wasn't caused by the way the fleet



Diesel particulate filters have been quietly going about their business relatively problem-free since they were introduced in 2007. But as they come due for their first cleaning, a major fleet says there's cause for concern.

operated its vehicles.

"We can't do anything to make that filter crack by the way we operate the truck," he said. "This whole issue is really puzzling to us. The frustrating part is, I seem to be the only guy who's having this problem according to the OEs. It's definitely not something just Bison Transport is going to see. This is something we're going to hear a lot

of talk about six months down the road or a year down the road."

Initially, Levine was replacing each of the cracked filters. But at a cost of a couple grand each, it was no longer feasible to do so. Since then, he has put dozens of cracked filters back into service, yet he wonders if they're doing the job they're designed to perform.

"I've installed dozens of cracked DPF filters back onto my tractors, which may not be the right thing to do as far as having the system do what it's supposed to do and clean the air," he said.

What exactly has caused the cracking remains a mystery. There are many theories, but the one Levine believes is that the cracking was caused by specific events, such as the many EGR valve

failures Bison experienced on its early generation EPA07 engines.

A catastrophic event such as an EGR valve failure can cause excessive heat in the filter, Levine said.

"I'm absolutely convinced that the many other problems we've had with those engines over the last two to three years and the many EGR valves we've had fail, that every time you have one of those

events where you create really high heat build-up in the DPF is what's causing this," he said. "Every time one of those (EGR valves) fails, you are creating tremendous stress in the exhaust system and overloading the DPF and creating really high temperatures. The only thing that'll crack the DPF is if it runs too hot."

Levine said he's frustrated that suppliers haven't been more accountable and he's surprised more fleets haven't yet had similar findings. At this year's Technology and Maintenance Council meetings, Levine stood up during a Shop Talk forum and voiced his concern. To his surprise, not one other maintenance manager in attendance complained of similar problems. Levine feels that's not because their filters are fine, but rather because they've yet to clean and inspect them.

"In talking to other fleets, it's all Greek to them right now," he said.

For now, Levine said he'll continue putting cracked filters back into service, but he'd like to see the issue addressed – even if it means bringing it to the attention of the EPA. In the meantime, the fleet's putting its new cleaning machines to good use and shortening cleaning intervals in hopes more frequent cleanings will help prevent further cracking. ■

A DPF cleaning primer

By James Menzies

There may come a time when every fleet has a diesel particulate filter (DPF) cleaning machine in its shop. But for now, it's still a pretty rare piece of machinery.

Bison Transport believes it's among the first fleets to invest in its own DPF cleaning equipment. It chose the FSX cleaning machine, which has earned a reputation as the cleaner of choice among most OEMs and their dealers.

We visited Bison Transport's Mississauga terminal to see a filter cleaning first-hand. Demonstrating the technology was Mark Irwin, regional maintenance manager with Bison. He said before the fleet could even begin operating its DPF cleaning machines, it had to upgrade its facilities to accommodate its newest toy.

"We initially thought we'd just have to do a quick and simple installation, but it turned out to be a little more complicated than that,"

he said. "We had to increase the shop air, we needed a 160 cfm air compressor for the shop and with the additional air requirements, we needed additional power requirements. So there was a little bit of infrastructure required."

The cleaning process begins with an evaluation of the filter's current condition, using the FSX Trap Tester. The tester measures the volumetric efficiency of the filter before the cleaning takes place, Irwin explained. The Trap Tester subjects the filter to roughly the same amount of airflow the filter would experience while on a truck travelling down the road at 60 mph. This stage also involves a pin test, which measures 17 different areas of the filter to measure the thickness of the ash in the filter core, Irwin explained.

Next, it's time for the cleaning itself. The filter is placed in the FSX cleaning machine where it sits on

a turntable. Streams of high-volume air are blown into the filter core from both the top and the bottom, which is aimed at removing the ash. Plumes of black ash are seen billowing from the filter during the cleaning process. An ash vacuum, as Irwin describes it, collects the ash and deposits it into a pail. It will then be disposed of along with the company's waste oil.

Once the cleaning has been completed, the filter goes back to the Trap Tester to ensure it was properly cleaned and is ready to be placed back into service. If the cleaning didn't restore the filter to acceptable OEM levels, it is then placed into a kiln and baked for eight or nine hours, which is followed by a three-hour cooling down process, Irwin explained.

Now that Bison has a better understanding of particulate filters and their requirements, the com-



In its performance tests, PAC-CAR Parts found that the FSX diesel particulate filter cleaning machine got filters 9% cleaner than the next best performing machine. A two-stage HEPA filtration system called SootSucker 2 captures ash from each DPF, eliminating the problem of dust settling back on the filters.

pany is establishing a preventive maintenance program.

"We're anticipating the first cleaning to be around 400,000 kms and the second cleaning will be around 300,000 kms," Irwin said. ■

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MATS



NO DIESEL REQUIRED: Webasto's new BlueCool Hybrid APU allows drivers to enjoy battery-powered cooling and hotel load power.

Webasto unveils hybrid APU

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Webasto has introduced a BlueCool Hybrid thermal storage auxiliary power unit (APU) that has the ability to use shore power to provide bunk cooling and hotel load power.

“Because it uses electricity from a land-based source, BlueCool Hybrid can produce cool air indefinitely unlike most battery-powered systems that need to be recharged by the engine after a single rest period,” explained John Thomas, general manager of Webasto’s commercial vehicle division. “Plus, it can deliver AC power for standard household appliances, including laptops and other sensitive electronics, without having to use an inverter or the vehicle’s electrical system.”

When plugged in, BlueCool Hybrid uses a standard 120V AC power source. It comes with an electrical cord, a junction box with relays, fuses and circuit breakers, a 30-amp battery charger and a 120V AC GFCI receptacle for the truck’s interior.

The system automatically switches to shore power mode when it is plugged into a power source.

Cooling is provided using thermal energy stored in a frozen graphite/water matrix.

Coolant is circulated by a high-efficiency pump and the cool air is distributed by four fans, which draw in warm air and pass it over the exchanger, converting it to cool air.

The system runs independently of the truck’s own air-conditioning system. When not connected to shore power, Webasto officials say the system can provide up to 10 hours cooling by using energy that was stored during highway operation.

It can be combined with Webasto’s Air Top 2000 ST cab heater to provide a full heating and cooling solution.

“The BlueCool Hybrid APU helps fleets and owner/operators take advantage of an emerging market for cost-effective, idle-free power,” Thomas said. “Whether it’s at a truck stop, private terminal location or the truck operator’s driveway.”

The new system is now available for order through the WheelTimes distribution network and truck dealers. □

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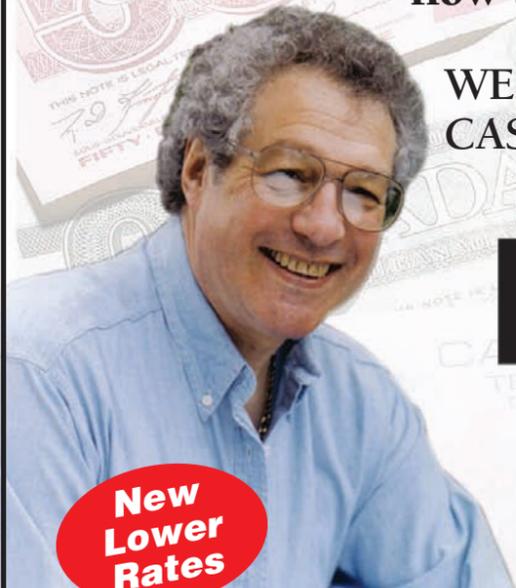
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MATS

Kenworth debuts T700 tractor

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – A new Class 8 highway truck from Kenworth was among the sexiest new products unveiled at this year's Mid-America Trucking Show.

Kenworth claims its latest model is the most aerodynamic truck in the industry, bettering its own T660 with

3% less drag. That could amount to fuel savings totaling US\$4,500 per year based on current diesel prices, the company pointed out.

"We're extremely proud to introduce the Kenworth T700, the latest evolution of our industry-leading aerodynamic product line. We be-



IMPROVED AERO: The Kenworth T700 boasts 3% less drag than the T660, the company claims.



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lieve that the all-new, wide-cab T700 is truly the truck to beat when it comes to outstanding fuel efficiency results," said Bill Kozek, Kenworth general manager and Paccar vice-president.

The T700 is available with the Paccar MX engine which boasts a one million mile B10 life, meaning 90% of all Paccar MX engines will still be in operation at a million miles, the company claims. Kenworth's newest truck will also come with the company's new NavPlus system, which combines truck-specific GPS, communication and diagnostics tools and Internet access via a 7-inch touch screen mounted on the dash. NavPlus is standard on all premium trim offerings and optional on all other trim levels, Kenworth announced.

Kenworth's chief engineer, Preston Feight, gave trucking journalists a tour of the new truck, claiming it boasts the lowest aerodynamic drag of any truck in Kenworth's history. The exterior features a stylish grille, a lightweight, sloped aerodynamic hood and Kenworth's popu-



ANOTHER PLUS: Kenworth's new NavPlus infotainment system combines work tools like truck-specific GPS with entertainment options such as integrated satellite radio.

lar forward lighting system. A new high roof is key to the truck's aerodynamics, Feight explained, pointing out the truck has no exterior sun visor and all LED marker lights are mounted flush for improved air flow.

Inside, the sleeper features an 8-foot "cathedral ceiling" allowing most drivers to sit upright in the upper bunk.

The sleeper also features a 42-inch liftable lower bunk, pull-out desk, full-length door-enclosed hanging closet, a variety of storage areas, wall-to-wall carpet and plentiful lighting.

Kenworth executives expect the T700 and its standard 75-inch Aerodyne sleeper to be popular with line-haul and regional fleets as well as team operations where space and comfort are important. The company pointed out the T700 has nearly 25% more interior volume than a similarly-spec'd T660.

There's nearly 30 inches between the driver and passenger seats for convenient access to the sleeper – especially when spec'd with the UltraShift Plus transmission – a new option that clears up even more room between the seats.

Also new from Kenworth is a natural gas-powered version of its T440 truck, aimed at local, regional and vocational applications. The truck is powered by the Cummins Westport ISL G engine and can meet EPA2010 emissions requirements without selective catalytic reduction (SCR) or diesel particulate filters (DPFs). Kenworth announced the new truck at the Mid-America Trucking Show and says it's now accepting orders. □

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Cummins sees bright future as independent engine manufacturer

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Cummins is projecting a bright future for its engine business despite the loss of one OEM partner and the arrival of a new competitor in Paccar products.

Navistar will no longer offer Cummins power and Kenworth and Peterbilt trucks are now available with Paccar's own 13-litre MX engine, but the changing landscape is nothing new for Cummins, president Rich Freeland told a gathering of trucking industry reporters on the eve of the Mid-America Trucking Show.

"We sell to people who make their own engines," Freeland said of the arrival of the Paccar MX. "We partner with them to figure out where we can supply them engines or components and that's not going to change, we know how to play in that world and we'll continue to play in it."

He noted the MX uses a significant amount of Cummins componentry and that it simply replaces the Cat C13 option in Paccar trucks. Even with the Cat C13, Cummins enjoyed significant market share in Paccar's heavy-duty products, he pointed out.

On losing Navistar as a partner, Freeland said Cummins is confident it made the right decision in adopting selective catalytic reduction (SCR) for its 2010 products, even if it meant the end of its partnership with the truck maker.

"In each emissions cycle there's a decision: can you stretch and get a little more out of the technology you've got? Our conclusion was that trying to stretch some more out of the 07 technology was going to have a very negative impact on our customers, so we made the decision to move to the new technology," said Freeland, who began his career with Cummins 31 years ago as a shop foreman.

He said the other reason for adopting SCR was "the learning curve on the new technology if you don't move to it. We saw that back in the 02 timeframe, if you don't move to it, you start out two years behind and that's a very bad place to be. We think moving to the new technology was critically important and the right decision for us to make."

Freeland's predecessor, former engine business president and current vice-president, enterprise initiatives, Jim Kelly, said Cummins has built and delivered more than 2,500 EPA2010 engines and those engines are delivering fuel economy improvements of at least 5%, with "at least a half dozen to a dozen major Class 8 fleet owners reporting double digit fuel economy advantages compared to what they were used to."

Kelly said drivers enjoy the performance of the new engines.

"We're hearing things like 'Are you sure this is a 425?' 'I can outrun everyone on the road with this thing.' 'This pulls really well.' We will be back to where we were three years ago where you couldn't find drivers, so having power-

ful products that are responsive to the driver and provide a positive experience from a noise and vibration standpoint is going to be important," said Kelly.

As for reliability, Kelly admitted "it's far too early to tell." However, he said "The data we have today compared to the most optimistic data we had in the past (engine releases) suggest we're in a good place."

Looking ahead, Freeland declared that fuel economy will be the next battleground. "Whoever does that best, wins," said Freeland, adding Cummins will be moving "aggressively" on improving fuel economy.

Cummins also addressed the future viability of liquid urea-

based SCR.

"I don't see SCR going away," said Sean Milloy, chief technical officer, Cummins Engine Business.

He said the 2010 engines have about a 90% NOx conversion efficiency and the challenge will be to improve on that going forward.

As far as alternative ammonia delivery systems are concerned, Milloy said "We

selected the fluid (diesel exhaust fluid) option because we felt it was the right technology for our 2010 products. As we look at solid type delivery systems, they have some potential benefits but we don't think the technology is ready yet. They may have some

benefits under low temperatures but as we look at the on-highway line-haul application running down the highway, it's still our assessment that (liquid DEF) offers a 2-3% fuel economy performance improvement."

As the truck engine market slowly recovers in North America, Cummins execs said they are bullish about the company's future. Kelly said Cummins expects to be "a little bit stronger" in 2010 than in 09 from an earnings standpoint but he added in 2012 the company is anticipating it will exceed its record earnings performance from 2008.

"We are committed to a \$20 billion sales goal by 2014," he said, which would be about double its revenues from last year.

"I'm very bullish about our prospects." □

'I don't see SCR going away.'

Sean Milloy, Cummins

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MATS

Bulldog bullish about 2010

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Of all the trucking industry prognosticators who gave state-of-the-industry addresses at the Mid-America Trucking Show, it was perhaps the bulldog that was the most bullish about where the industry could be headed this year.

Kevin Flaherty, senior vice-president, US and Canada for Mack Trucks, said it's possible Class 8 retail sales could see a 20-30% improvement this year if the long-awaited effects of stimulus spending finally kick in. His outlook was considerably more optimistic than other executives who gave industry overviews at the truck show.

"What we're seeing in 2010 right now, we're starting to feel there is some bubbling of activity out there," said Flaherty. "Could we

see a 20-30% improvement over 2009? I don't know. There's a possibility we could see that. Personally, I think we have a shot as an industry of growing towards that 20%-plus this year, but obviously we're going to have to have more positive indicators and we're going to have to see more stimulus funding kicking in."

Flaherty said the overall mood on Wall Street has improved and fleets are beginning to place orders for new trucks. This after a dismal 2009, in which Class 8 retail sales totaled less than 95,000 units in the US and between 11,000 and 12,000 units in Canada.

"These are historical lows," Flaherty pointed out. "We're pleased 2009 is over."

Flaherty said Mack is receiving positive feedback from customers with its EPA2010 products using

selective catalytic reduction (SCR).

"Two-thousand-and-ten technology with SCR is quite frankly going to be a non-event," Flaherty said. "By the fall, it's not going to be an issue."

Another reason for optimism is that the Volvo Group's used truck division, Arrow Truck Sales, is also seeing a recent increase in sales.

"That is a very good sign that things are improving," Flaherty said. "We're seeing fleets taking that first step, saying 'You know what, I need some trucks. I'm not fully committed to buying new right now, but I'm in the market to take on some late-model trucks.'"

As for its core markets, Flaherty said Mack's construction truck segment is still suffering from a weak housing sector.

"We need housing, that's very important," he said. "We're not going to see housing for quite a while, so we need roadwork. We hope the

stimulus will kick in and get that going. We can't have another 12-18 months where contractors are just repaving roads. That's what we're seeing, but we need some big projects to kick in."

The refuse segment, another where Mack is traditionally very strong, has also softened, but Flaherty said he expects it to bounce back strong in 2011.

As far as highway tractors are concerned, Flaherty admitted Mack has lost some ground, but vowed the company will fight to recover that market share.

"You're going to see a very intense focus out of Mack to get our share back on the tractor side," he said. "You'll see Mack bring back that tractor business going forward over the next couple years."

Finally, Flaherty made a point of emphasizing several times that Mack trucks will continue to be built in the US. Noting Mack was founded in Brooklyn, N.Y. over 100 years ago, Flaherty said "Can you see the day we should be building that product in Mexico? We export trucks, we don't export jobs." □

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Eaton expands availability, coverage of UltraShift Plus

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – The popularity of its new UltraShift Plus automated transmission has prompted Eaton and its OEM partners to accelerate the roll-out of the product, the company announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

"We have been working diligently with all of the North American truck and engine makers for several years now to provide our customers with the best possible transmission choice in virtually any application," said Staci Kroon, senior vice-president and general manager for Eaton's Commercial Vehicle Transmission business.

"Similarly, we have been reaching out to fleets of all vocations including line-haul, heavy-haul, construction and more to ensure they are getting the best possible transmission solution."

Eaton points out its UltraShift Plus is available in thousands of transmission/engine configurations for practically every imaginable application. The newest automated transmission from Eaton, introduced last year, is now available in Freightliner, International, Kenworth, Peterbilt and Western Star trucks.

They've also been approved for use with Cummins ISX engines the Paccar MX, Detroit Diesel DD13 and DD15 and the International MaxxForce 11 and 13. Eaton is also now offering an extended protection plan for its UltraShift Plus.

Plans are available for all makes and models and include warranty coverage of up to five years or 750,000 miles, the company announced. □

Auto tranny highlights Mack product introductions

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Mack Trucks introduced a new Mack mDRIVE automated mechanical transmission at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The new AMT was derived from the Volvo I-Shift and retooled specifically for use in Mack trucks with Mack engines, the company announced. Mack said it can improve fuel economy by up to 1.5%.

The mDRIVE will be available on Mack Pinnacle highway tractors equipped with Mack's own MP7 and MP8 engines. Orders are being accepted already with deliveries to commence in the early fourth quarter, the company announced.

The mDRIVE has 12 forward and four reverse speeds, with a torque capacity of 1,920 lb.-ft. and a dry weight of 615 lbs, the company announced. The dash-mounted console eliminates the shift lever altogether.

The transmission can be operated in Economy or Performance mode. Economy mode maximizes the time spent in top gear while Performance mode allows for improved gradeability, company officials explained.

Features first introduced in the I-Shift, such as a kick-down feature that provides improved acceleration in passing situations and a hill-start assist feature called Grade Gripper, have been



MACK'S OWN: Mack now has its own integrated automated transmission, the mDRIVE.

adapted for use in the mDRIVE. The new automated transmission is available in Fleet and Premium versions.

The fleet package includes basic shifter controls with Grade Gripper (hill-start assist) and MackCellerator (kick-down) available as options.

The Premium package comes standard with Grade Gripper and MackCellerator as well as other features for greater driver control, such as manual shift inputs. The mDRIVE also offers an Easy Shift option catered specifically to liquid bulk, livestock and other applications where abrupt movements must be avoided.

Other features include: Cruise'n Brake, which limits engine brake operation while the truck is in cruise control until the cruise speed has been reached; gear se-

lection adjustment, which allows the driver to manually choose the starting gear using the Premium shifter; low speed modulation control, which enables clutch management at low speeds when using the brake pedal to control speed, such as when backing into a loading dock; and auto-neutral, which automatically puts the transmission into neutral when the engine has been shut off while in gear or after four minutes of idling.

"Customers who have tested mDRIVE tell me this is one very smart transmission," said David McKenna, director of powertrain sales and marketing. "mDRIVE's intelligence, its light weight and its intuitive performance help customers achieve up to an additional 1.5% improvement in fuel economy while making drivers happier."

Cab-mounted exhaust

Also announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show was a new cab-mounted exhaust option on all Mack Granite models. The exhaust is mounted onto the cab's right-hand B-pillar, leaving a completely clean back-of-cab.

Econodyne

Mack also introduced a new Econodyne engine family that delivers more torque at low speeds, improving fuel economy and hill-



CLEANER LOOK: The Mack Granite is now offered with a clean back of cab configuration that will please body builders.

pulling performance. The system uses a new intelligent torque management system called EconoBoost, the company explained. It gives drivers extra pulling power to maintain speed under full engine loads and reducing the need to downshift.

The new Econodyne is available now on Mack MP7 and MP8 engines in the Pinnacle highway tractor.

Rear axle carriers

Mack also unveiled new C150/151 rear axle carriers with improved rear axle ratios for highway and vocational applications, the company announced. The company said they're lighter, stronger and stiffer than previous designs. The new carriers are compatible with all Mack's current suspensions with rear axle ratios running from 3.11:1 to 5.66:1. □



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Virtual Technician to ride shotgun in new Freightliners, Western Stars

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Freightliner and Western Star trucks with Detroit Diesel engines will soon come standard with a real-time remote diagnostics system dubbed Virtual Technician.

The program was announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show and will be in place on 2011 model year equipment.

Virtual Technician is a proprietary program developed by Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA), which provides real-time vehicle system analysis via remote telemetric vehicle tracking systems, the company explained. The program reads engine diagnostic codes from sensors and components, analyzes and packages the data and then create reports providing recommended remedial actions for the vehicle operator.

The goal is to predict problems before they happen, maximizing uptime and revenue generation. Virtual Technician can also schedule repairs on the driver's behalf and provide advance notice to the repair facility so the necessary parts are ready and waiting when the truck arrives for service.

"While trucks introduced this year are more powerful, more reliable and more fuel-efficient than ever, they are also more dependent on the electronics systems for control of the engine and aftertreatment," explained Dale Allemang, Virtual Technician program manager and

director of field service at DTNA. "This complexity and the systems that monitor the technology lead to more data and information that can be telemetrically shared in real-time to the benefit of the customer, repair facility and manufacturer."

"With Virtual Technician, maintenance teams will be solving problems as they occur, and better yet, before – making today's numbers on both the frequency and severity of problems in the field a thing of the past," added Dave Hames, general manager, marketing and strategy with DTNA.

Cascadia driver lounge

Other product developments announced at MATS included a new driver's lounge offering for Freightliner Cascadias with 72-inch sleepers. The lounge includes new

seat and bed configurations that make the sleeper more "livable."

Features include a lounge table and cushioned seating area that seats two and can be reconfigured into a fold-away bed.

"For many owner/operators, their truck serves as a home away from home, so we wanted to create a comfortable, livable environment," said Melissa Clausen, director of product marketing for Freightliner. The driver's lounge will be an option on the Freightliner Cascadia with 72-inch sleeper beginning this summer.

Victory Lane Edition

Freightliner also announced it's offering a Victory Lane Edition option for its revamped Coronado. The package allows owner/operators to customize their truck by choosing from a selection of chrome, graphics

and branded accessory options.

The options include: a 20-inch chrome front bumper; a stainless drop visor, rear quarter fenders and 60-inch frame cover; custom rear tail light panel with LED lights and chrome bezels; chrome exhaust pipes; Chrome Shop Mafia seats; and dual-branded Freightliner Trucks and Chrome Shop Mafia floor mats and sleeper carpet.

"Freightliner Trucks provides the right tools for owner/operators to really showcase their personality through their trucks," Clausen said. "The new Victory Lane Edition option package will provide even more choices to help make these already sharp-looking trucks turn heads both on and off the road, as well as appeal to the owner/operator market that follows NASCAR."

Western Star lightweight spec' option

On the Western Star side of the business, Daimler announced it's now offering a lightweight spec' option for its 4900 Series trucks.

They're intended for liquid and dry bulk applications and agricultural markets where weight is an issue and can save up to 1,200 lbs. The lightweight spec' option includes more than 200 options from which to choose. Options include a wide range of aluminum parts such as rear engine supports, clutch housings, air tanks and fifth wheel, the company announced. □

Detroit Diesel offers extended coverage

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Detroit Diesel said it will allow its customers to choose the warranty package that best suits their needs for its EPA2010 BlueTec SCR aftertreatment system.

All Detroit Diesel engines come standard with a two-year, unlimited warranty on parts and labour. Injectors are covered for 200,000 miles and parts costs for major components are covered for five years or 500,000 miles, the company said. However, customers will also be able to choose between four different levels of coverage ranging between three and seven years and 150,000 to 500,000 miles.

Options are also available that cover major components for up to seven years or 750,000 miles, the company announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show. □

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Peterbilt introduces new Models 587, 382

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Peterbilt introduced an EPA SmartWay-certified Model 587 highway tractor and a regional haul Model 382 at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

Model 587

The Model 587 will replace the Model 387, improving on fuel efficiency, technology and serviceability, the company announced. The 587 is available with two sleepers and as a day cab and is well-suited for long-haul fleets, teams and owner/operators, the company announced. The cab interior has swivel seats, dual arm rests and a 30-inch walk-through space between the driver and passenger seats.

Peterbilt said it improved aerodynamics by 2.5% resulting in a 1.25% fuel economy improvement over the Model 387. The improvements result from a more streamlined hood design and molded bumper. An extra two feet of forward visibility has been added and curb-to-curb maneuverability was improved by 12%, Peterbilt claimed.

Forward lighting has also been improved by 35% on the Model 587, thanks to Peterbilt's standard halogen lights and a projector module designed to provide better low-beam coverage. The 587 comes with Bendix air disc brakes as standard equipment on the steer axle, making it the first truck maker to make disc brakes standard in North America, officials said.

Pete launches new telematics and infotainment system

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Peterbilt trucks will soon be available with an in-dash telematics and infotainment system dubbed SmartNav. The system features truck-specific navigation, telematics, phone, audio and camera capabilities all controlled using an in-dash touch screen display.

"SmartNav was developed to increase driver safety and vehicle performance, as well as lower costs by decreasing driving routes errors and missed vehicle maintenance," said Bill Jackson, Peterbilt general manager. "SmartNav also features infotainment previously never seen in the trucking industry, allowing drivers to experience the ultimate in connectivity and entertainment – all in their cab."

The truck-specific GPS is provided by Garmin and will warn drivers of important information such as bridge heights and weight restrictions. Drivers will also be able to use an optional modem to connect to the Internet during their travels. The phone will be voice recognition-enabled and can log calls, store contact info and enable text messaging.

The audio will include integrated Sirius satellite radio as well as AM and FM bands, a CD player and a USB port for memory devices. The system will also be used to communicate information about the truck, such as pressure, torque, horsepower, fuel use, idle-time and current fuel flow rate. SmartNav will be standard on all Peterbilt Premium level interiors and available as an option on other interiors. □

The truck comes with the new Paccar MX engine rated at 380-485 hp but can also be spec'd with the Cummins ISX15 with 400-600 hp. Fuller automatic and manual transmissions are available, including the new Eaton UltraShift Plus.

Model 382

Also new from Peterbilt was an all-new Model 382 aimed at regional and short-haul applications. Available as a day cab, the Model 382 combines aerodynamic styling with excellent maneuverability and serviceability, the company announced.

It comes with the Cummins ISL9 under the hood, offering 345-380 hp and up to 1,300 lb.-ft. of torque.

"The Model 382 is a perfect blend of horsepower, efficiency, strong construction and task flexibility for the growing regional haul market," said Bill Jackson,



STANDARD DISCS: Peterbilt announced its new Model 587 is the first truck to come standard with air disc brakes on the steer axle.

Peterbilt general manager and Paccar vice-president. "The combination of advanced aerodynamics and the Cummins ISL9 engine ensures a low cost of operation, highly fuel-efficient regional haul

trucking solution."

The truck can be ordered with Peterbilt's Aerodynamic Package, which includes a proprietary roof fairing that reduces drag by up to 30%. □

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MATS

Navistar launches reconditioning program

LOUISVILLE, KY. – Navistar wants to make turning old into new a viable approach to fleet renewal during these tight times.

Navistar's new ReStar reconditioning program is designed for late-

model Class 5-8 commercial trucks and analyzes, recommends and replaces key mechanical and aesthetic components based on the application, age and history of each truck.

"From powertrains to wiper

blades, brakes to hoses, every truck has unique requirements," said Jim Hebe, Navistar senior vice-president, North American sales operations. "With ReStar, we can provide customers with a customized refresh package that maximizes vehicle uptime and increases

brand reputation."

Hebe said industry giant US Express is already on-board with about 100 planned reburshings. The ReStar program is available for most truck makes and models – International brand trucks or those built by other OEMs. □



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2007 FORD F550, Power Stroke Diesel, 4x4, 2 compartment aluminum tank, single pumping, Midcom, CSA-B620, DOT. **Stock #629**



2002 Freightliner, Cat C-15, 20,000 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering, bottom load, vapor recovery, safety rails, trailer package, CSA-B620, DOT. **Stock #628**



20,000 litre 2 compartment pup trailer. **Stock #566**



2004 International, 20,000 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, single pumping and metering, bottom load, CSA-B620, DOT. **Stock #615**



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



1994 GMC TOP KICK, c/w aluminum tank and rear bucket box. Perfect for Mobile Wash Truck. Safetied and Certified. **Stock #535**



2002 FREIGHTLINER CABOVER, 18,500 litre 4 compartment aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering, safetied and certified. **Stock #579**



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Navistar unveils new generation ProStar

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Navistar went through its ProStar Class 8 truck “with a fine tooth comb” and came up with enough improvements to warrant introducing a new generation of its top-selling truck, dubbed the International 2010 ProStar+.

The new generation includes improvements to the truck’s aerodynamics and a reduction in curb weight, as well as a number of improvements to the cab’s interior.

The truck is powered by the company’s Advanced EGR MaxxForce 11 and MaxxForce 13 engines, which don’t require liquid urea to meet the 2010 emissions regulations.

The aerodynamic enhancements include optional full-length chassis skirts for sleepers as well as a new cab roof air fairing for day cab models.

ProStar+ also includes many new powertrain features that improve fuel economy, including a clutched air compressor, variable speed fan, low viscosity engine



THAT’S A PLUS: International introduced a new generation ProStar+ with aerodynamic and interior enhancements.

oil and fuel-efficient rear axle lubricant.

As vehicle weight continues to be a top priority for customers,

the ProStar+ is 700 lbs lighter than its predecessor. When you include the MaxxForce 13, with its compacted graphite iron (CGI)

cylinder block, and MaxxForce Advanced EGR emissions technology, the ProStar+ has an additional 600-lb advantage versus the leading 15-litre engine, providing an extra 1,300 lbs of added payload capacity and fuel economy benefits, according to Jim Hebe, vice-president sales for North America.

The ProStar+ also includes dramatically refined interior functionality.

A re-engineered overhead console allows for easier reach and even includes an in-cab paper towel dispenser.

Storage has been dramatically improved, with the Hi-Rise model seeing a 150% increase in captured storage and a 50% improvement in total storage.

In addition, the ProStar+ cab environment has become even quieter. ProStar+ cab noise levels have dropped 9% compared to last year’s ProStar.

Other driver satisfaction improvements include a 20-lb force reduction in clutch feel for better driver comfort, providing easier shifting and less fatigue. □

Cummins says its EPA2010 engines showing well, training now available

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Cummins expressed confidence its 2010 engine line-up will meet its customers’ fuel economy and performance expectations and noted many are already exceeding expectations in the field.

Cummins officials kicked off the Mid-America Trucking Show by revealing more than 2,500 EPA2010 engines have been built and put into service and that some major fleets are enjoying double-digit fuel economy gains over previous engine designs.

Cummins has been tracking nearly 240 variables on many of its field test engines, using a proprietary datalogger that provides Cummins engineers with a steady stream of data. The goal is to identify and address potential problems before the products are rolled out, Cummins execs explained.

Cummins now has 2010 engines available in 180 vehicle installation applications with more than 60 vehicle manufacturers, the company said.

“The data that we are collecting

from our internal product testing, coupled with the feedback from our customers, is validating that our 2010 engines are delivering on our promises, and there are cases where the results are even better,” said Jeff Jones, vice-president of sales and market communications.

Cummins’ EPA2010 engines will use exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), a single variable geometry turbocharger and Cummins’ selective catalytic reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment system.

The ISX15 features a new Cummins Xtra-High Pressure Injection (XPI) fuel system the company says can produce extremely high pressure regardless of engine speed. Cummins is promising up to 5% fuel economy improvements over its EPA07 engines but in reality, officials said some fleets may achieve even greater improvements.

In addition to the ISX15 and its mid-range ISB6.7, ISC8.3 and ISL9 engines, Cummins will be releasing an ISX11.9 for on-highway applications. The ISX11.9 will enter full production in August, the

company noted.

Training available

Cummins also announced it is offering a multimedia driver training kit to help customers learn how to get the most out of their EPA2010 engines. The kit features a DVD, CD and Tips Card.

The DVD provides information on maximizing fuel economy and familiarizes drivers with the SCR system using visual aids. The audio-only CD format covers the same topics and allows the drivers to learn distraction-free while driving. The Driver Tips Cards provide a quick reference tool on information such as dash lamps, required driver actions and what to expect from their SCR-equipped Cummins engine.

The tools are available through Cummins dealers and online at everytime.cummins.com by clicking the ‘Customer Center’ tab and choosing the ‘Driver Training’ link.

New QuickCheck 5200

Cummins has also released a new



QUICKCHECK 5200

QuickCheck 5200 handheld device customers can use to more quickly adjust engine features and read trip information. Cummins says the new device boasts a processor that’s twice as fast as the QuickCheck 5100.

The device features a new colour screen and allows customers to easily adjust individual parameter settings in the ECM (engine control module). The new device will be available in May via Cummins distributors or online at powerstore.cummins.com. □

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

Licence renewed

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

Mark is looking for a load. Bud has a sweet one to California that won't be ready for a few days. In the meantime, Bud asks Mark to help an older driver, Charlie Knowles, get his licence renewed. Charlie's a real character and Mark agrees to help out.

Mark had agreed to help prepare Charlie Knowles for all the tests he needed to complete in order to get his commercial driver's licence renewed, but what that meant, Mark didn't have a clue. Other than a physical every few years, Mark hadn't been tested on his driving ability since he'd first received his licence and that had been some 15 years ago. How could he prepare someone for something he didn't know anything about?

So he logged onto the Internet and checked out the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Web site, but was unable to find anything about driver licence renewals for commercial drivers 65 and over. Although Mark wasn't a computer genius, he'd used the Internet before and could usually find what he was looking for, so his results were puzzling. There was a section for drivers renewing their licences over 80, and all kinds of help with renewing expired licences and booking appointments for new tests, but nothing about what Mark wanted to know. Mark wondered if he'd missed something on the site, but to the best of his abilities he couldn't find anything about the MTO's licensing policy regarding older commercial drivers.

Mark had hoped that the Web site would help him understand the reasoning behind the policy, but the fact that he couldn't find anything – even using the site's own search engine – made him think that perhaps the program was too new, or the ministry wasn't very proud of it, or it was just another tax-grab kind of program like Drive Clean. There had to be some real reasons drivers were required to jump through all sorts of hoops just because their most recent birthday was their 65th? Mark wanted to know what they were, so he decided to call them up and ask.

It took a while before he got connected to a human being who could answer his questions, but when the right woman finally came on the line she was both pleasant and professional.

"How can I help you?"

Mark decided to start slowly. "Yeah, my dad is a truck driver and he's 64

right now, but his birthday's coming up in a month, and he's scared to death of losing his licence. That isn't going to happen is it?"

"Not if he renews his licence."

"This year?"

"And every year after 65."

"That doesn't seem fair. He hasn't had a problem in years...in fact he's never had an accident in his life."

"That's admirable sir, but research has shown that older drivers are more likely to develop medical conditions that affect their ability to drive. After 65, drivers are one-and-a-half times more likely to have an accident than drivers between 45 and 64."

She knew her stuff, that was for sure. And Mark could concede the fact that as drivers got older they had more health issues. So an eye test and a physical were probably a good idea, but that didn't explain the rest of it. "So why do they have to be road-tested too?"

She paused, as if thinking. "The licence renewal process has been developed with the help and consultation of the people in the industry to enhance truck safety. That includes re-assessment of a person's driving ability."

Mark sighed, knowing he probably wasn't going to get anywhere with this woman. "You know, a lot of drivers have to rent trucks and trailers to take their tests, costing them money and a day off work just to keep their licence."

"That's unfortunate."

"And if a driver has been on the road 40 years without a problem, why should he have to prove he can still drive? That seems like age discrimination to me."

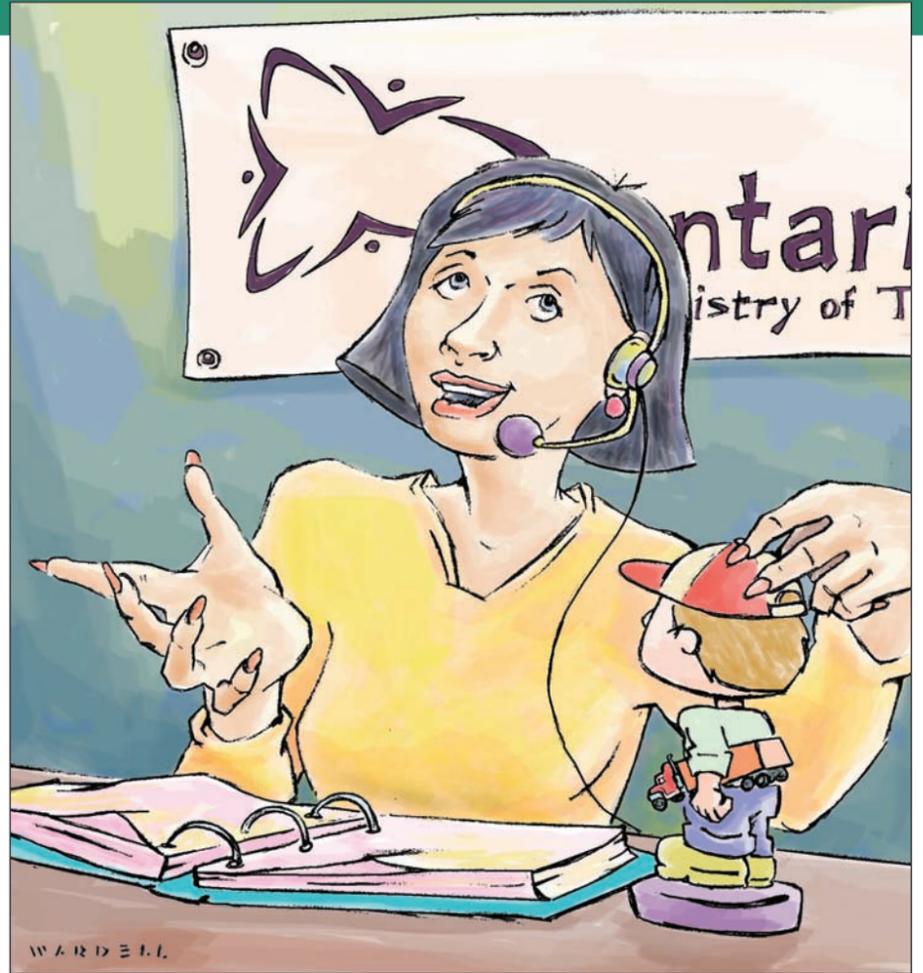
"The ministry regularly reviews the renewal requirements. If you have concerns – as you obviously do – then I suggest writing to the Ontario Transport Minister, or your member of provincial parliament."

"Write a letter?"

"Yes, sir."

Mark hung up the phone. 'So be it,' thought Mark. If there's a test, then it was his job to make sure Charlie passed it.

Mark met Charlie in the parking lot of a truck yard out by the airport. Charlie was sitting in his pick-up at the far end of the yard and when Mark pulled in, he wasted no time getting out of his truck and hopping into Mother Load. He scaled the cab so easily and slipped in the open passenger side door so effortlessly, Mark would have never have guessed the man was a



senior citizen.

"You Mark Dalton?" Charlie asked in his thick Scottish accent.

"You don't remember me?"

Charlie looked at him strangely. "Should I?"

Mark smiled and related the story of the early days of his truck driving career when he'd been recently divorced and he'd let his personal appearance get out of hand. He'd looked like a bum, but Charlie had called him a loser. "Do you remember that?"

Charlie's eyes narrowed as he looked Mark over. "Aye, I remember. You were a loser then. You still could be. I don't know that much about you."

Mark had considered thanking the man for shaking him up enough to get his life back on track, but it didn't seem the right time for it now.

"How much you gonna charge me?"

"What?" Mark said. He hadn't thought to charge anything. As far as he knew he was doing Bud a favour. "Did Bud tell you you'd have to pay?"

"He didn't, but I've called around to the schools and some of them charge \$3,000... and that's just for a refresher course."

"That's a lot of money."

"You bet it's a lot of money, especially when I've been driving truck twice as long as the snot-nosed boy who'll be teaching me has been on the planet."

Mark was aware of the insult, but he couldn't help but smile. Charlie was such a character. Who else could insult someone who was doing something nice for them? "Bud asked me to do this. I wasn't going to charge you anything."

What passed for a smile appeared

on Charlie's face. "Then the price is right," he said, continuing to stare at Mark through narrowed eyes. "And what about using your truck for the test? You'll be charging me for that, I suppose?"

Again, Mark hadn't thought about what truck Charlie would use. Obviously the man had no truck of his own and would have to rent one to do the test. Renting a truck was a costly endeavour, especially when it would be for just a few hours. "I guess I could let you use my truck."

"For free?"

Mark didn't like the word free. He was doing a favour for Bud and that implied that Bud would return the favour some day. But as far as Charlie was concerned, the use of truck would indeed be free. "Yes," he said at last. "Free."

Charlie nodded. "Good. But you better get a trailer. I can't exactly drop a trailer on the day of the test if there isn't one attached to the truck now, can I?"

Speaking of tests, Mark had been interacting with Charlie for all of five minutes and he felt like he was the one who was being tested – most of all his patience. "I'll make sure," he sighed at last.

"Right then! Let's get started." □

– Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3 of Licence Renewed.

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

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Refocused ArvinMeritor unveils new drive axle

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Vowing that it is emerging from its restructuring re-energized and refocused on the heavy-duty market, ArvinMeritor unveiled an all-new Meritor 14X tandem drive axle at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The new drivetrain component is an axle system built on the legacy of the company's RT145, a tandem axle of which there are more than two million in the market that have logged over three trillion miles in service. It proved a very successful product for ArvinMeritor but it was designed at a time when engines produced considerably less torque than today's powerplants. The new axle includes a more robust and efficient inter-axle differential, the fastest ratio and widest range of axle ratios, and several other design enhancements, yet continues to be the lightest axle in its class according to

the company. The 14X goes into production in June 2010 with planned deliveries to all major North American OEMs.

The axle has been in testing for two years with many carriers of various sizes accumulating more than six million miles of operation with the axle. According to Joe Plomin, vice-president, truck, the 14X axle provides three primary benefits:

- More robust inter-axle differential – the strength was added to the right critical component. The inter-axle differential (now 20% larger) can accommodate the increased nominal torque, up to 2,050 ft.-lb. in certain applications, of today's high-torque rise diesel engines. The unit includes helical gear needle bearings for reduced heat and wear; upsized main differential side bearings for more capacity; and larger input shaft

and rear side bearing for strength.

- Premium Amboid design now standard equipment for all end-users – the above-centerline design of the inter-axle driveline provides significant improvements: reduced operating pressures for increased driveline life, less driveline angularity, vibration and energy loss; improved ride quality; and overall longer component life.

- Most complete range of ratios – the 14X offers the fastest ratio in the industry, 2.47:1 and all the way up to 7.17:1. The extensive range ensures coverage for nearly every application and specific engine manufacturers' EPA2010 recommendations.

ArvinMeritor executives noted the gradual trucking industry recovery and cited the timing as "ideal" for

a major new drivetrain component introduction.

"We are cranking out components at much increased levels compared to a year ago and we see that continuing into the second quarter before dropping off in the third quarter," said Carsten Reinhardt, COO.

"We are very, very bullish this industry is going to come back and it's going to come back fast and furious. Our job is to prepare for that. We believe 2011 is going to be a good year and it's going to continue to be good for many years after that."

ArvinMeritor officials also repeatedly emphasized the importance of the restructuring the company has undergone over the past two years in preparing them for the future.

One of the most important changes was moving away from the light vehicle market and focusing all the company efforts on trailers, heavy-duty trucks and industrial applications such as construction. □

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MATS

Michelin launches new wide single drive tire

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Michelin is celebrating its 10th year of X One wide single truck tires with the introduction of what it claims to be the industry's most fuel-efficient drive tire to date, the X One XDA Energy tire.

Announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show, the tire was part of commissioned independent tests where the Michelin tires were proven to be more than 7% better than top competitors' most fuel-efficient tires, according to Don Baldwin, product marketing manager, Michelin Americas Truck Tires.

"For long-haul truck fleet managers and owner/operators still

sitting on the fence about wide single tires, now is the time to make the switch from traditional duals," said Baldwin.

Baldwin explained that the new tire is more fuel-efficient thanks to its belt design and compounds used. The company's wide single tires employ Infini-Coil Technology – more than a quarter-of-a-mile of steel cord wrapped circumferentially around the crown of every X One tire. The Infini-Coil reduces casing growth and stabilizes the contact patch, reducing irregular wear, Baldwin says. In addition, Matrix Siping Technology helps provide ex-

ceptional traction on dry and slippery surfaces. The three-dimensional Matrix sipes lock together for the stability normally associated with solid tread blocks.

"The Matrix zig-zag sipes provide traction on dry and slippery surfaces along with the stability of a solid block pattern," Baldwin said.

The X One XDA Energy tire is available in size 445/50R22.5 coast-to-coast, and will replace the Michelin X One XDA tire. With more than 550,000 wheel positions currently on the road, Michelin offers X One tires for various appli-

cations such as on-highway, off-highway, urban, waste hauling and recreational vehicles.

Michelin officials also released some numbers on how their single tires are reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Since their introduction in 2000, the tires have saved more than 58 million gallons of diesel fuel and more than 591,000 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas (CO₂). A four-year US Dept. of Energy study released in 2009 showed wide single tires, like X One tires, increased vehicle fuel economy by 6-10%. □

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Hankook offers new line-haul drive tire

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Hankook introduced a new DL07 line-haul drive tire at the Mid-America Trucking Show that features an aggressive block pattern for improved traction and performance in all weather conditions.

The tire, which will also be available in Canada, is designed to provide a premium offering that's affordable for small fleets and owner/operators, said Brian Sheehy, director of commercial tires with Hankook Tire America. The DL07 uses wider and deeper, four-channel zig-zag grooves with stone ejector platforms to reduce stone drilling on the groove bottom and extend removal mileage, the company said. A new casing construction is designed to improve durability and retreadability.

Hankook says the tire will go head-to-head with competitive offerings such as the Michelin XDA5, Goodyear G372A and Bridgestone M726EL.

"We recognize that in these tough economic times return-on-investment and cost-per-mile is crucial within the commercial tire industry," said Sheehy. "The DL07 delivers exceptional value, increased fuel efficiency and next generation technology all backed by one of the industry's best commercial tire warranties, with a price tag that's lower than the competition."

The new tire is initially available in size 285/75R24.5 (14PR) with additional sizes to come later in the year. The DL07 was not designed to SmartWay requirements, the company pointed out.

Hankook officials also boasted of a strong 2009, in which the company increased sales, improved market share and did it at a profit, said Bill Bainbridge, director of brand communications with Hankook. □

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Not out of the woods yet, Bendix president warns

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – There was a renewed sense of optimism among suppliers at this year's Mid-America Trucking Show, but Bendix president Joe McAleese warned manufacturers are not completely out of the woods yet and may be in for some more hurt before the industry fully recovers.

McAleese said Bendix enjoyed a strong first quarter, but acknowledged conditions may deteriorate once more, now that EPA07 engine inventory has dried up and only the more costly 2010 engines are now available.

"The first quarter has been good in the aftermarket and OE (businesses), driven by the fact tonnage is up somewhat, because at end of the day that's what's going to drive our industry. But I think those good times are about to come to a close,"

McAleese warned. "I think we're going to see a recovery, the question is when and I don't think it's going to be until late this year from a manufacturing standpoint."

The timing of the recovery will hinge on the economy, freight volumes and the performance of the EPA2010 engines, McAleese predicted. Unfortunately, he said it may be 2012 before truck sales reach Q1 2007 levels, which at the time were thought to be abysmal.

"To put things in perspective, 2006 was a big boom year for us and everyone was talking about the cliff event that was going to happen for us in the first quarter of 2007 and how bad it would be – and it was," McAleese said. "It was awful. And I think we're longing for the day in 2012 where we get back to the first quarter of 2007 build levels. I don't think we're going to see 07 build

levels again until 2012 and I think we're going to be very happy (to see them)."

The economic crisis of the past couple years has forced OEMs to re-establish their focal points, focusing more strongly on markets like Brazil, Russia, India and China, which for the most part escaped the global recession, McAleese pointed out. For Bendix's part, the company focused strongly on developing products that fleets would benefit from using – products that enhanced safety and provided a fast payback.

"Our focal point in all these technologies is to develop a value proposition where it makes sense for a fleet to put this technology on their vehicles because they're going to save lives and will make economic sense for them with a payback in a reasonable amount of time," McAleese said.

Meanwhile, the company is lobbying government to provide incentives to help small and mid-sized fleets reap the benefits of safety systems such as electronic stability and collision mitigation systems such as the company's Wingman ACB.

McAleese said it's only a matter of time before government mandates the use of proven safety technologies, likely beginning with stability systems as early as this year.

"We believe there will be a stability mandate come out before the end of 2010, implemented in 2012, 2013 or 2014," McAleese said. "In the longer term, we think we'll have some kind of collision mitigation mandate in 2014 or 2015. As the real benefits of these systems becomes apparent, we're going to see mandates in some of these areas. I think that's just inevitable. Our focal point is making sure these systems have strong payback for fleets." □

Bendix Wingman ACB now has stationary object detection

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Bendix Wingman ACB (Active Cruise with Braking) is now available on International, Kenworth and Peterbilt trucks, Bendix announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

The truck makers join Mack and Volvo in offering the active safety system, which provides collision warning and mitigation.

"These OEMs represent a significant presence in various segments of the commercial vehicle market, and Bendix is honoured that they are making our active safety technologies available to their customers," said Fred Andersky, Bendix director of marketing, controls.

Bendix also announced its Wingman ACB now features stationary object detection.

The new feature provides 'always-on' audible and visual alerts when the truck approaches a stationary metallic object such as a car, steel drum, or other object.

The alert gives the driver up to 2.8 seconds of warning before a potential impact, Andersky explained, allowing the driver to take action to avoid the collision.

"By providing a warning for stationary objects, the driver can respond and brake, change lanes, or swerve to avoid the potential collision," Andersky explained.

The company also announced fleets and owner/operators will be able to upgrade their Wingman ACB system as new features become available.

For instance, it's expected 'always-on' interventions will be offered later this year, and customers who already have Wingman ACB will be able to upgrade their system to include the new functionality. (Currently, audible and visual warnings occur at all times, but active braking only intervenes when the vehicle is in cruise). □

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AGENDA

7:30 AM – 8:00 AM – Registration
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM – Breakfast

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM – **The Major Factors Affecting the Freight Environment in 2010-2011**, Carlos Gomes, Senior Economist, Scotiabank

9:00 – 9:30 AM – **Reigniting your Company's Sales Engine**, Dan Goodwill, President, Dan Goodwill & Associates Inc.

9:30 – 10:00 AM – **Creating an accurate Freight Costing Model**, Kenneth M. Manning, President, Transportation Costing Group Inc.

10:00 AM – 10:15 AM – Refreshments and Networking

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM – **Real Estate Strategies for 2010**, Mark Cascagnette, Vice President, Industrial Global Supply Chain Solutions, Cushman & Wakefield Ltd.

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM – **The Packaging Revolution**, Jack Ampuja, President, Supply Chain Optimizers

11:15 AM – 12:00 AM – **Shipper/Participant Expectations in a Recovering Economy** – Panel led by Lou Smyrlis, Editorial Director, Transportation Media

Participants: Mark Gallant, Director, Canadian Transportation, Home Depot of Canada Inc., Mike Owens, Vice President of Physical Logistics, Nestle Canada Inc., Ginnie Venslovaitis, Manager, Transportation Services, Unilever Canada and Unilever Foodsolutions

12:00 – 1:00 PM – Lunch

1:00 AM – 1:45 AM – **Carrier/Participant Recovery Strategies** - Panel led by Lou Smyrlis, Editorial Director, Transportation Media

Participants: Dan Einwechter, President, Challenger Motor Freight, Peter Di Tecco, President, Armbrro Transport, Doug Munro, President, Maritime-Ontario Freight Lines Limited

1:45 PM – 2:15 PM – **Effective Workforce Management Strategies**, Kevin Snobel, General Manager, Caravan Logistics

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM – **You survived 2009. Now what?**, Rebuilding the Value of your Trucking Business, Elian Terner, Director, Investment Banking, Scotia Capital

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM - Refreshments and Networking

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM – **Results from Research Study on Transportation Management Software Systems for Trucking Companies**, Jim Papineau, Director, Supply Chain Systems & Automation, Dan Goodwill & Associates Inc.

3:30 PM – 4:15 PM - **Small Group Workshops**
Business Development – led by Dan Goodwill
Freight Costing Models – led by Ken Manning

4:15 PM – 5:00 PM - **Small Group Workshops**
Real Estate Strategies – led by Mark Cascagnette
Trucking Company Computer Systems – led by Jim Papineau

5:00 Networking/Cash Bar

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NEW MULTI-TEMP: A new multi-temp TRU from Carrier Transicold offers fuel savings and greater cooling capacity than the unit it replaces.

Carrier unveils new multi-temp trailer reefer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Carrier Transicold has introduced a new hybrid multi-temp trailer refrigeration unit (TRU) it says is 20% more fuel efficient than the model it replaces.

The Vector 6600MT hybrid multi-temp TRU features an electric standby option that can provide significant savings when loading and unloading.

The new unit also provides greater cooling capacity. David Kiefer, director of marketing and product management for Carrier Transicold said it offers 15% more capacity than its closest competitor and 9% better cooling capacity than its predecessor.

“By taking advantage of AC power, fuel is conserved, emissions are eliminated, noise is reduced and operating savings of 40-70% can be realized,” Kiefer said.

Features include Carrier’s Tru-Demand operating software that allows for optimal cooling performance while reducing fuel consumption.

A Novation heat exchanger features parallel-flow micro-channels and all-aluminum alloy construction to provide a more efficient condenser coil that’s lighter than traditional copper tube and aluminum fin coils, Kiefer explained.

The system also features an upgraded electric motor and the elimination of the second evaporator fan. The Vector 6600MT also requires 39% less refrigerant than Carrier’s conventional multi-temp unit, the company claims.

“Using a frame size larger than our original hybrid model enables many of the enhancements and allows us to more efficiently move air and dissipate heat without an increase in weight,” said Kiefer. For more info, see a dealer or visit www.trucktrailer.carrier.com. □

Want more MATS?

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OEM/Dealer News



GIVING BACK: Shell Rotella global brand manager, Mark Reed (right) presents a check for \$10,000 for the OOIDA Mary Johnston Scholarship Fund during the Mid-America Trucking Show. Accepting the check on behalf of OOIDA are (l-r): foundation research assistance, Denise Volmer; executive vice-president, Todd Spencer; and board member and scholarship committee chairman, Bill Rode. The scholarship benefits children, grandchildren and legal dependents of OOIDA members. The selection process challenges applicants to compose an essay about how a trucker has influenced their lives; the way their educational goals reflect their personality and suggestions on ways OOIDA can improve the public image of trucking. □

Hankook adds distribution centre in Richmond

RICHMOND, B.C. – Hankook Tire Canada has opened its second Canadian distribution centre. The new warehouse is located in Richmond, B.C. and will support retailers and multiple distribution points throughout Western Canada, the company announced.

“Hankook Tire experienced great success and a strong presence in Western Canada,” said Bill Hume, vice-president of Hankook Tire Canada. “We strategically chose the Vancouver region for our second distribution centre to better support our retail customers and distributors, expediting our time to market. This new distribution centre is an integral part of our growth strategy in Canada and part of our global long-term strategy to become the next generation tire company.”

The distribution centre is located at 12291 Riverside Way in Richmond. Dealers will enjoy easy access to Hankook’s complete tire line and the facility is expected to reduce lead time for product delivery, Hankook announced. Hankook also operates a distribution centre in Brampton, Ont. □

Trailer orders reach two-year high in February, FTR reports

COLUMBUS, Ind. – Commercial trailer net orders rose 168% year-over-year in February, reaching their highest levels in two years according to the latest data from ACT Research’s *State of the Industry: US Trailers* report.

Dry van orders posted triple digit gains on both a month-over-month and year-over-year basis, the company reported.

There were improvements in seven of nine trailer segments. Reefer van orders increased 45% year-over-year and trailer backlogs reached their highest levels in 17 months, according to the researcher.

“Over the past several weeks, numerous indicators and comments from trucking companies have pointed to a rapid tightening of truck capacity,” said Kenny Vieth, partner and senior analyst with ACT Research.

“With tighter capacity comes increasing freight rates and profitability for fleets, which is a precursor for both new tractor and trailer demand. The strong dry van orders, especially one large order from a major private carrier, indicate increasing optimism within the truckload industry.” □

International MaxxForce engine EPA-certified

WARRENVILLE, Ill. – Navistar announced its International MaxxForce DT mid-range engine has been certified by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The company claims it is the first of its engines to be certified, with more announcements to come over the coming weeks.

All its engines use advanced exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) to meet EPA2010 emissions standards.

The MaxxForce DT is usually found under the hoods of DuraStar and WorkStar medium-duty and severe-service International trucks.

“Receiving EPA certification is an important milestone and marks one of our last stages prior to the launch of our 2010 trucks and engines,” said Ramin Younessi, Navistar group vice-president, product development and strategy.

“We anticipate receiving additional EPA certifications for our other engine families in the days and weeks ahead as our manufacturing plants begin to ramp-up for full production of our 2010 line-up of trucks and buses.” □

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Lions Gate/PTR acquire remaining GE Trailer Fleet Services locations

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – After acquiring the Moncton GE Trailer Fleet Services division in December, Lions Gate Trailers and Provincial Trailer Rentals have decided to take over the entire chain in Canada.

The companies have announced they have acquired the six remaining Canadian GE Trailer Fleet Services facilities. Lions Gate announced it will retain many of the company's technicians. The acquisitions bring Lions Gate/Provincial Trailer Rentals' combined trailer fleet to more than 20,000 units, the companies announced.

Lions Gate Trailers purchased Provincial Trailer Rentals in 2006 and the companies now run 26 locations providing a range of trailers and container chassis. □

Arrow Truck Sales to celebrate 60 years in business

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Arrow Truck Sales is turning 60 this year and will be hosting customer and dealer events over the summer to celebrate the milestone.

The truck dealer was founded in April, 1950 as a small used truck lot in Kansas City by Jerry Nerman and the late Melvin Spitcaufsky. The two partners invested \$8,000 into the operation. Today, Arrow Truck Sales boasts 19 retail locations in the US and Canada including Arrow Trucks Toronto which was recently named the 2009 Branch of the Year. The dealer's branches carry an inventory of about 2,500 units of all makes and models.

In its formative years, Arrow was primarily a wholesaler but by the early 70s it expanded rapidly. Arrow built its current headquarters in Kansas City in 1977 and in the early 80s its wholesale business benefited from deregulation.

The company opened its first retail location in the 1980s with its Atlanta retail dealership opening its doors in 1984, the company re-counts. The Volvo Group bought 50% of Arrow Truck Sales in 1998 and completed the acquisition in 2001. Founder Jerry Nerman turned 90 this year and subsequently announced his retirement after 60 years with the company. Asked why he was stepping down, he quipped "to pursue other interests." Nerman is also known as the founder of the Used Truck Association. He's an avid art collector.

"It's truly amazing, and even a bit humbling, to realize where Arrow started as a company, and see where we are today," said Carl Heikel, president and CEO of the company since 2004. "Our success and growth through the years is a direct reflection of our dedicated people, quality products, exceptional customer satisfaction and perseverance in an extremely competitive industry." □

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Opinion

Getting driver's licence reinstated can be an obstacle course

A few weeks ago I noticed an article in the *Toronto Sun* detailing the bureaucracy surrounding reinstating a driver's licence after it has been suspended for medical reasons.

I can tell you that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation has a lot of work to do in this area.

For years I've had calls complaining about the slow process. Sadly (and I apologize) I haven't addressed the issue until now. Unfortunately, I've had a firsthand look into how it works and it's not pretty.

Last July I experienced what is called a 'Lobar Intracerebral Hemorrhage.' It's part of the stroke family and a very scary experience. I'm one of the lucky ones since the odds of surviving weren't in my favour.

Anyway, I did (as you can tell),

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



but I found out rather quickly that the Ministry of Transportation has some real issues with stroke victims driving around after experiencing one of these events. A few days into my recovery, I was informed that my licence had been pulled.

To be honest, it was the right call. I had lost almost all of my left peripheral vision and judging distance was a real problem.

Fast forward to Jan. 6. My eyesight had returned to normal (the brain really is an amazing piece of work) and I was off to the op-

tometrists for my eye tests as requested by the Ministry.

I passed with flying colours and I sent my results in the same day. It should be noted that before I did, I called to verify exactly what they needed in terms of paperwork. At that time the nice lady informed me there would be a two- to six-week waiting period before the decision would be made.

I'm not going to bore you with the details, but after countless phone calls, hours of waiting to speak with a live person, promises that it was being looked at "as we speak" or "your request has been elevated," I received confirmation my licence had been re-instated as of March 15.

I should count my blessings it didn't take longer. The *Toronto Sun's* article pointed out that one

person had been waiting five months (and counting) for a decision.

I don't think anyone would argue with the role the Ministry plays in keeping our roads safe from medically unfit drivers. It's the process that really needs to be looked at. I can imagine the anguish an owner/operator must go through looking at their rig, parked and not bringing in a dime, while he or she waits for the Ministry to get to their case.

I don't pretend to have the answer but something has got to be done. □

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

Mail

LCVs could eliminate jobs

Dear Editor:

In the April issue, you speak of how great the LCV program is going to be for the industry.

You see the double trailers going behind one power unit and think of the savings the large company is enjoying.

I see them going, and I see one driver out of work because another driver has decided to take two loads. I see a large company that has funding to invest in LCV technology now hauling cheap freight in that second trailer while a smaller sub-50 unit fleet, or even an owner/op, can't compete with the slashed rate.

There are two sides to every story, and I see the LCV program as bad news for the little guy in the long term. □

T. Murphy, FTE
Via e-mail

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— No. of Truck-Tractors _____ No. of Buses _____

— No. of Off-Road Vehicles _____

3) Does this location operate, control or administer one or more vehicles in any of the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) categories? Please check YES or NO:

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11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)...	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.).....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

4) This location operates, controls or administers:

Diesel powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Refrigerated vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Pickups or Utility Vans.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Propane powered vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

5) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? IF YES, do you employ mechanics?.....

<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

6) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

- a) For Hire/Contract Trucking (hauling for others)
- b) Lease/Rental
- c) Food Production / Distribution / Beverages
- d) Farming
- e) Government (Fed., Prov., Local)
- f) Public Utility (electric, gas, telephone)
- g) Construction / Mining / Sand & Gravel
- h) Petroleum / Dry Bulk / Chemicals / Tank
- i) Manufacturing / Processing
- j) Retail
- ji) Wholesale
- k) Logging / Lumber
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- m) Other (Please specify) _____

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People

MacKinnon Transport executive director **Ray Haight** has announced his resignation from the company.

Haight has served as executive director of MacKinnon Transport since 2005. Prior to that, he filled various roles with the company, including partner, vice-president, president and COO.

In recent years, he represented the company at the Truckload Carriers Association, where Haight served as chairman in 2008/2009.

“Now, after 19 years of participation at MacKinnon Transport, it is time for us to sever business ties,” Haight said. “My 15 odd years in a leadership role at MacKinnon Transport were rewarding and profitable we took the company from under 100 trucks to the 300 truck mark and enjoyed and earned a place of respect within the community and the industry during this period. I wish MacKinnon Transport Inc. a long and successful future.”

Meyers Transportation Services has announced the promotion of two senior managers to the positions of executive vice-president.

Roman Slugocki and **Dave Scott**, both long-time members of the Meyers Transportation executive team, have garnered promotions, the company announced. Slugocki will continue focusing on the LTL, truckload and cartage operations in his expanded role with the company. He has been with Meyers for more than 10 years and in the transportation in-

dustry for 33 years.

Scott, in his new role, will focus on further developing pricing, IT systems, maintenance and logistics services, the company announced. Scott has been in the industry for 25 years. Family-owned Meyers Transportation was recently passed on to Jacquie and Natalie Meyers, who oversee operations today.

Eassons Transport president **Paul Easson** has been elected chairman of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

He'll serve a two-year term, replacing Bruno Muller of Caron Transport who just concluded a two-year term of his own.

Easson has worked for the family trucking company for more than 25 years. The fleet operates more than 150 reefer trailers, 60 dry vans and 160 tractors serving all points Canada and the US. It also runs an LTL service from Toronto and Montreal to Atlantic Canada.

Easson said he's well aware he's taking over the helm at the CTA during a challenging time.

“The major immediate challenge as I see it is over-capacity,” he said. “That is really depressing the marketplace virtually everywhere in North America.”

Longer term, Easson said priorities will include attracting and retaining quality people, environmental sustainability and shifting trade patterns away from the US.

Easson said CTA will create a forum for carriers across the country to share best practices that will benefit the industry as a whole. □

Goodyear crowns 2009 Highway Hero

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Oregon truck driver Junichi Shimizu, who helped save the lives of three people involved in a fiery traffic accident, has taken the title of Goodyear North America Highway Hero.

Shimizu accepted the award and a \$10,000 US Savings Bond during the 27th installment of the award series at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

On Feb. 20, 2009, Shimizu, a driver for Chipman Relocations, was driving westbound on Highway 12 near Fairfield, Calif., and witnessed a vehicle cross the centerline of the road and strike an automobile in front of his truck. The auto spun into the ditch, and the other vehicle then hit his tractor twice before bursting into flames.

Upon coming to a stop, Shimizu called for assistance and then headed to the vehicle that was in flames. Unable to open the driver's side door due to the damage, he told the driver to protect his face and he punched out the glass in order to pull the driver free of the car. Gaining help from another motorist, he was able to free the driver's foot, which was wedged under the dashboard, then carry the driver to safety. Running to the other car, he quickly assessed that the driver was deceased, but there were two injured passengers inside. The passengers were removed, and Shimizu retrieved his fire extinguisher to keep the blaze under control until the local fire department arrived.

Shimizu, of Gladstone, Ore., has also been recognized by the California Highway Patrol with a certificate of commendation for his role in the lifesaving effort associated with the 2009 crash.

“In this terrible accident, one driver perished, and our thoughts and prayers go out to this family,” said Joseph Copeland, Goodyear's vice-president of commercial tire systems.

“But we also honour the quick actions and selflessness of Junichi Shimizu. Although his own rig was struck in this accident, he remained calm and immediately pulled his vehicle to a stop and called for help. He then reacted quickly and put himself in harm's way, in order to help rescue strangers who were in peril. Because of that decision, three lives were saved. For this, Junichi has earned the right to be called a hero.”

Shimizu was selected along with three other truck drivers as finalists for the 2009 award. Other finalists included: George Lantzy, of Turtle Creek, Pa., a driver for Fubar Trucking; Stephen Page, of Gloucester, Mass., a driver for Pit Bull Trucking; and Jesse Lee Seal, of Alma, Ark., a driver for PDP Unlimited.

To nominate a professional truck driver for the 2010 Goodyear Highway Hero Award, go to www.goodyear.com/truck/news/hero.html. □

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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – At the recent annual meeting of the Technology and Maintenance Council, Navistar executive Jim Hebe proclaimed that the market for long-nose conventional trucks is “dead and gone.”

Citing concerns with fuel costs and vehicle depreciation, as well as an increase in intermodal shipments and shorter truck hauls, the outspoken senior vice-president of North American sales operations said that more aerodynamic rigs are likely the way of the future for the trucking industry. However, fans of the classic long-nose style say driver pride and comfort will still trump environmental and financial concerns. We stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see whether drivers think there is still a future for long-nose conventionals.

Iannick Pelletier, a driver with J.R. Denis out of Montreal, Que., says



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Managing Editor

Is there still a future for long-nose conventional rigs?



Iannick Pelletier

conventional rigs are more stable and classic than their aerodynamic counterparts and he questions the real benefit to fuel economy with

rigs like the Cascadia and ProStar. “When you put the fender in between the tractor and the trailer they say you’ll save one mile per gallon. If you add little wings on it, they say you will get one more mile per gallon. If you get better tires, the same. So everybody should do 13 miles per gallon, but nobody does. It’s the engine that does the good fuel economy. Aerodynamics help a little, but not that much.”

Jeff Cedine, a company driver with Celadon out of Indianapolis, Ind., was one of the few drivers to agree

with Hebe, stating that the fuel mileage achieved with aerodynamic rigs can’t be ignored.

“There will probably be a small market (for long-nose) if they can afford it, but they would be wiser to go with something a little more fuel-efficient unless they are doing really heavy hauling; then it probably isn’t going to matter, so they might want the big powerful rigs then,” Cedine told *Truck News*.



Geoff Yates

Geoff Yates, a Cobourg, Ont.-based driver with 11 years under his belt, says that long-nose will continue to exist so long as pride exists with drivers and they’re willing to shell out the extra cash.

“The price of fuel makes a difference, but when you live in a truck for as long as these guys do, I think they’ll splurge and still keep with the bigger ones,” he said. “They’re making us haul heavier and heavier and we need the bigger motors and we need the bigger gears. The bigger the truck, the better.”



Kevin Wilkins

Kevin Wilkins, an owner/operator from Fenelon Falls, Ont., says he’s content with the mileage he’s currently getting out of his 379 Peterbilt, adding that the newer trucks are just too expensive for what drivers are earning.

“Our remuneration is so low that for us to go out and spend \$140,000 for a new truck that isn’t as good as my old one is ridiculous. In order to justify that kind of an investment, we need an extra 60-70 cents per mile. I would rather sacrifice a mile to the gallon, which is all I’m doing at best, and have something that’s affordable and something I choose to drive,” he says. “Long-nose conventionals are nearing their end, but...I have no intentions of running a slippery truck ever. I will rebuild my Peterbilt 100 times before I’ll buy a truck like that.”

William Cook, a Lindsay, Ont.-based owner/operator, says he much prefers long-nose rigs like his Kenworth W900. “I run about high eight (mpg) and I pull heavy loads anywhere from 50,000 to 53,000 and I don’t have a problem with it. It doesn’t make a difference really about the aerodynamics on trucks because with what these new trucks are getting right now, I’ve got no motor.” □

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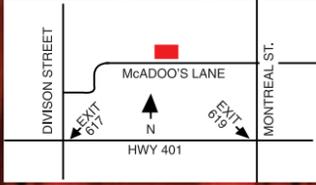
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